One Thousand and One Nights

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ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS

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The Guide

ARABIAN SOCIETY IN THE MIDDLE AGES by Edward William Lane

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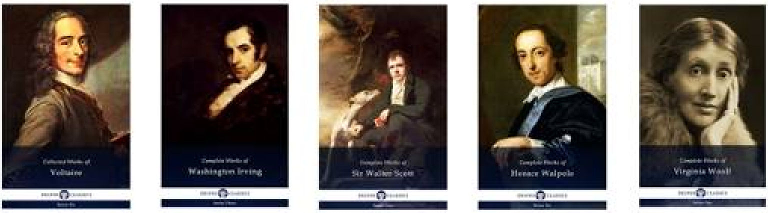
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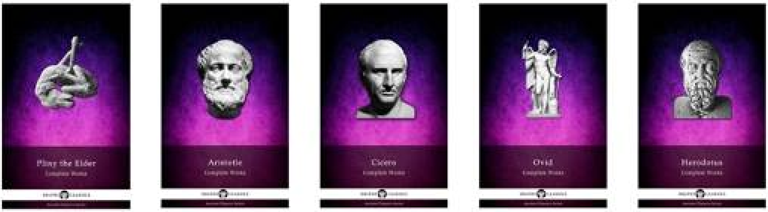
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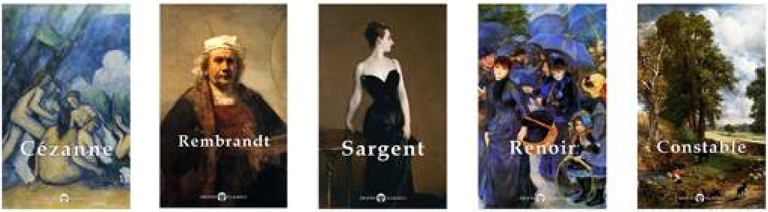
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The Complete Collection

ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS

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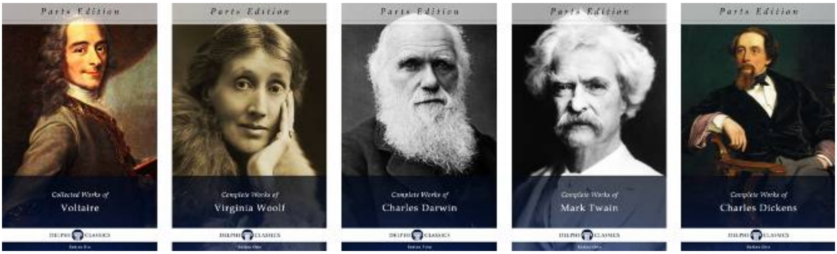
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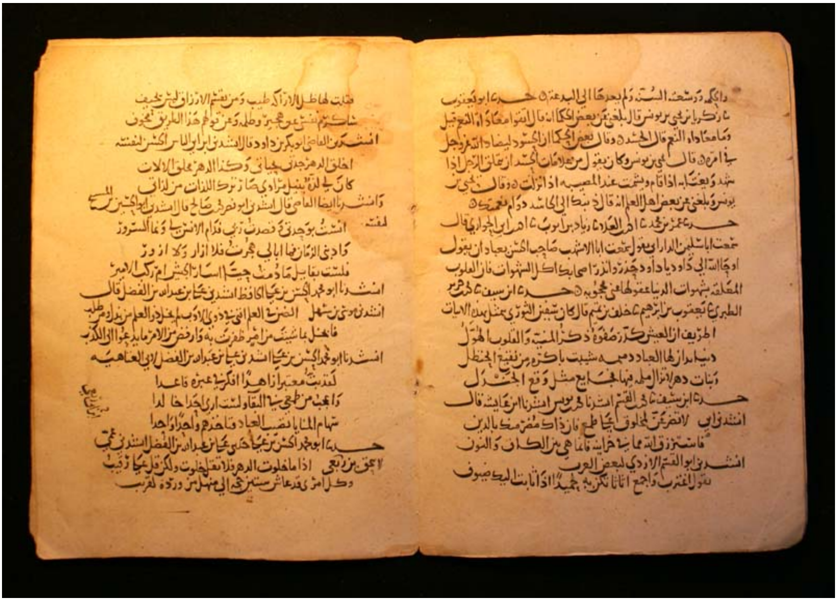

A manuscript of the ‘One Thousand and One Nights’

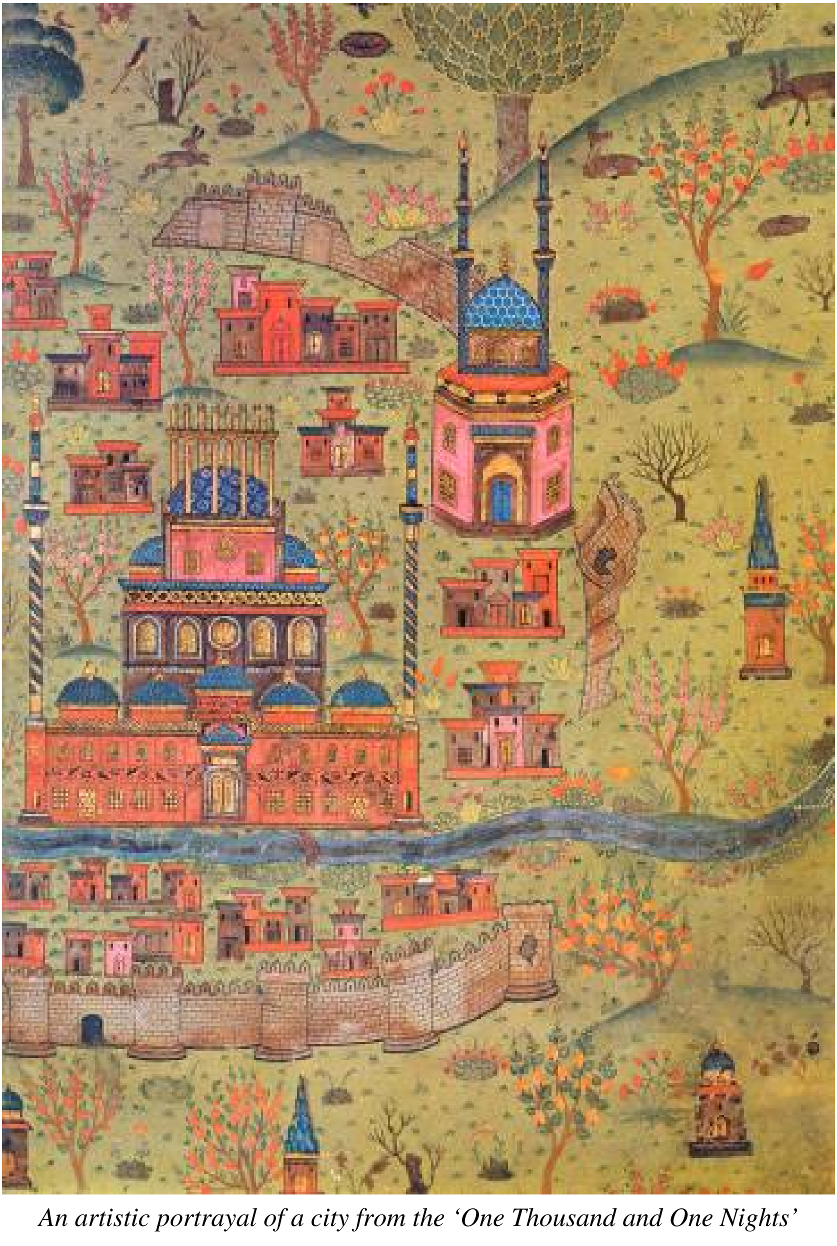

An artistic portrayal of a city from the 'One Thousand and One Nights'

ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS

This famous collection of Middle Eastern and South Asian stories and folk tales was compiled in Arabic during the Islamic Golden Age and is often known in English as the *Arabian Nights*, due to the 1706 first English language edition being titled *The Arabian Nights' Entertainment*. The tales were collected over many centuries by various authors, translators and scholars across West, Central and South Asia and North Africa, revealing influences from ancient and medieval Arabic, Persian, Mesopotamian, Indian and Egyptian literature. In particular, many tales were originally folk stories from the Caliphate era, while others, especially the frame story, are most likely drawn from the Pahlavi Persian work *Hazār Afsān*, which in turn relied partly on Indian elements.

The stories are connected by the frame story concerning the ruler Shahryār (Persian for "king") and his wife Scheherazade (Persian for "of noble lineage"), while other tales are introduced within the frame story by its characters. Some editions of *One Thousand and One Nights* contain only a few hundred nights' tales, while others include 1,001 or even more. The majority of the text is written in prose, though verse is occasionally used for songs and riddles and to express heightened emotion. Most of the poems are single couplets or quatrains, although some are longer.

The main frame story introduces Shahryar, whom the narrator calls a "Sasanian king" ruling in "India and China", who is shocked to discover that his brother's wife has been unfaithful. Discovering that his own wife's infidelity has been even more flagrant, he has her executed and in his bitterness and grief decides that all women are the same. Shahryar begins to marry a succession of virgins only to execute each one the next morning, before she has a chance to dishonour him. Eventually, the vizier, whose duty it is to provide them, cannot find any more virgins. Devising a cunning plan, Scheherazade, the vizier's daughter, offers herself as the next bride and her father reluctantly agrees. On the night of their marriage, Scheherazade begins to tell the king a tale, but does not end it. The king, curious about how the story will end, is thus forced to postpone her execution in order to hear the conclusion. The next night, as soon as she finishes the tale, she begins a new one, before pausing for the night, Eager to hear the conclusion, the king postpones her execution once again and so the pattern continues for a total of 1,001 nights.

The Arabian Nights tales vary widely, including historical tales, love stories, tragedies, comedies, poems, burlesques and various forms of erotica. Numerous stories depict jinns, ghouls, apes, sorcerers, magicians and legendary places, which are often intermingled with real-life people and geographical locations, though not always rationally. Typical protagonists include the historical Abbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid, his Grand Vizier, Jafar al-Barmaki and the famous poet Abu Nuwas, despite the fact that these figures lived some 200 years after the fall of the Sassanid Empire in which the frame tale of Scheherazade is set. Sometimes a character in Scheherazade's tale will begin telling other characters a story of his own, and that story may have another one told within it, resulting in a richly layered narrative texture.

Devices found in Sanskrit literature, including the use of frame stories and animal fables, have been identified by some scholars as lying at the root of the conception of the *One Thousand and One Nights* collection. Indian folklore is represented by certain animal stories, reflecting influence from ancient Sanskrit fables, while the influence of the Panchatantra and Baital Pachisi is particularly notable. The Jataka Tales are a collection of 547 Buddhist stories, which are for the most part moral stories with an ethical purpose.

The first European version (1704–1717) was translated into French by Antoine Galland from an Arabic text of the Syrian recension and other sources. The twelve volume work, *Les Mille et une nuits, contes arabes traduits en français* (Thousand and one nights, Arab stories translated into French), included stories that were not in the original Arabic manuscript. *Aladdin's Lamp* and *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, as well as several other, lesser known tales, actually appeared first in Galland's translation and cannot be found in any of the original manuscripts of the collection. Galland recorded that he heard them from a Syrian Christian storyteller from

Aleppo, a Maronite scholar whom he called “Hanna Diab.” Galland’s version of the *One Thousand and One Nights* proved to be so popular throughout Europe that later versions were issued by his publisher using Galland’s name without his consent.

As scholars were looking for the presumed “complete” and “original” form of the *One Thousand and One Nights*, they naturally turned to the more voluminous texts of the Egyptian recension, which soon came to be viewed as the standard version. The first translations of this kind, such as that published by Edward Lane (1840, 1859), were bowdlerized. Unabridged and unexpurgated translations were made, first by John Payne, under the title *The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night* (1882, nine volumes), and then by Sir Richard Francis Burton, entitled *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night* (1885, ten volumes).

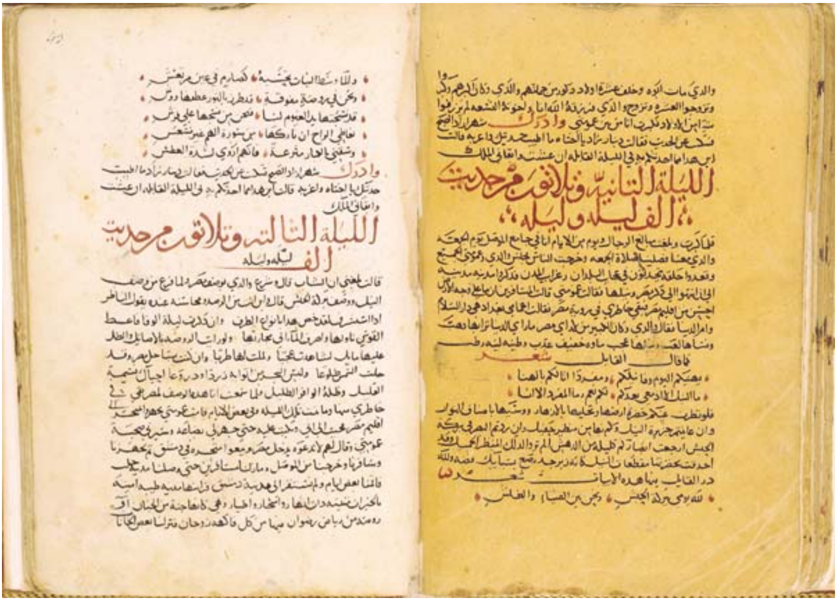

Another manuscript of ‘One Thousand and One Nights’ dating back to the 14th century

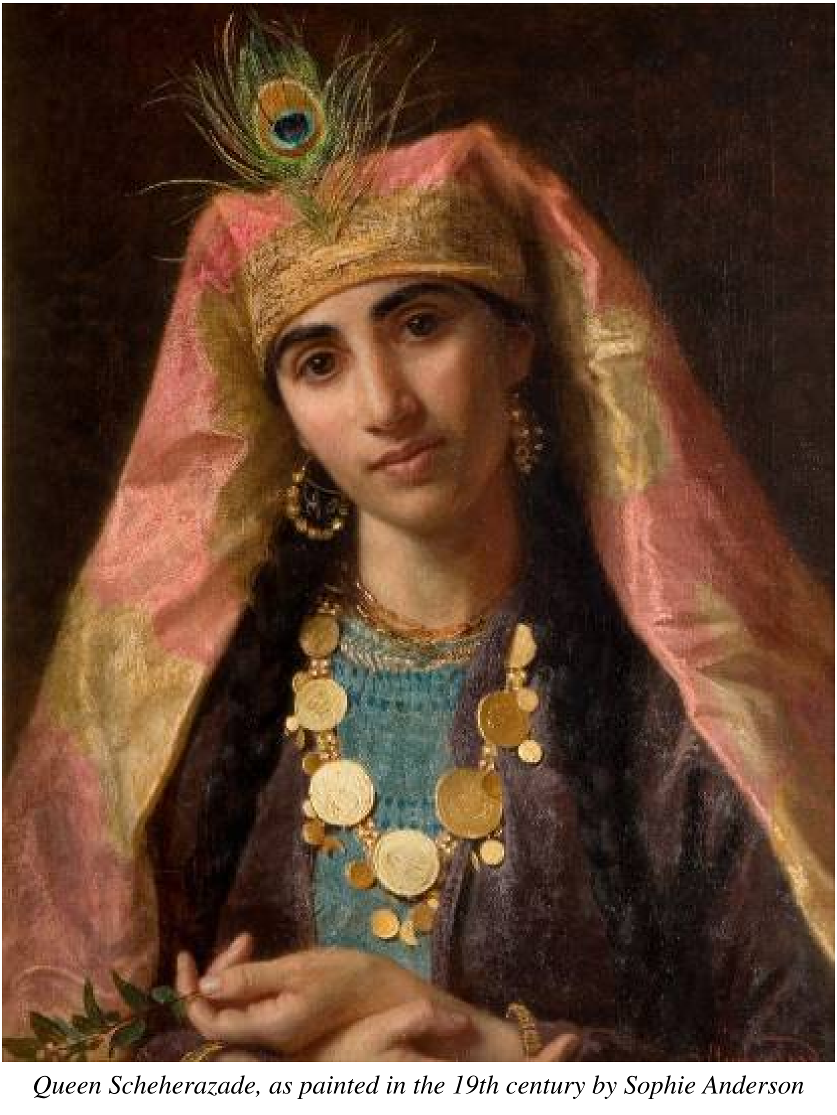

Queen Scheherazade, as painted in the 19th century by Sophie Anderson

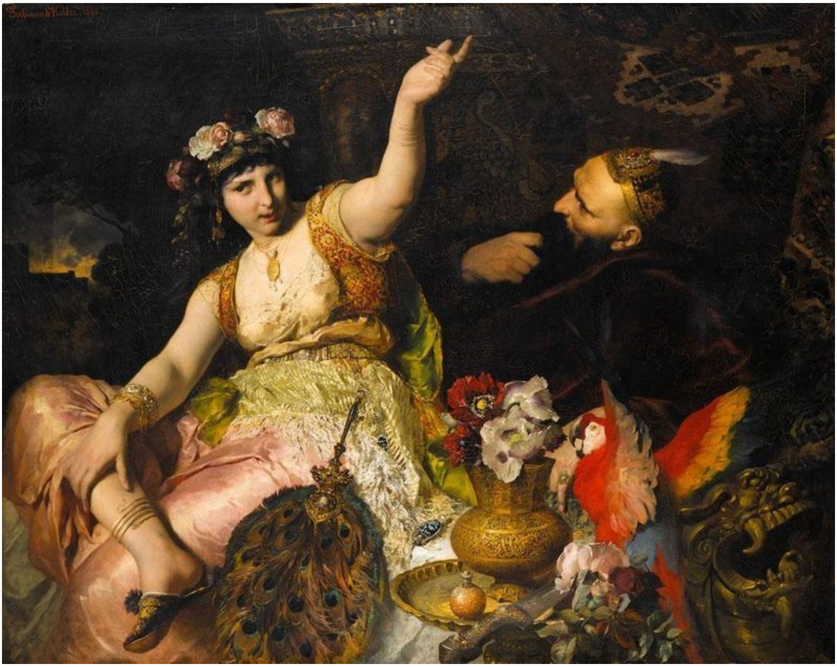

Scheherazade and Shahryār by Ferdinand Keller, 1880

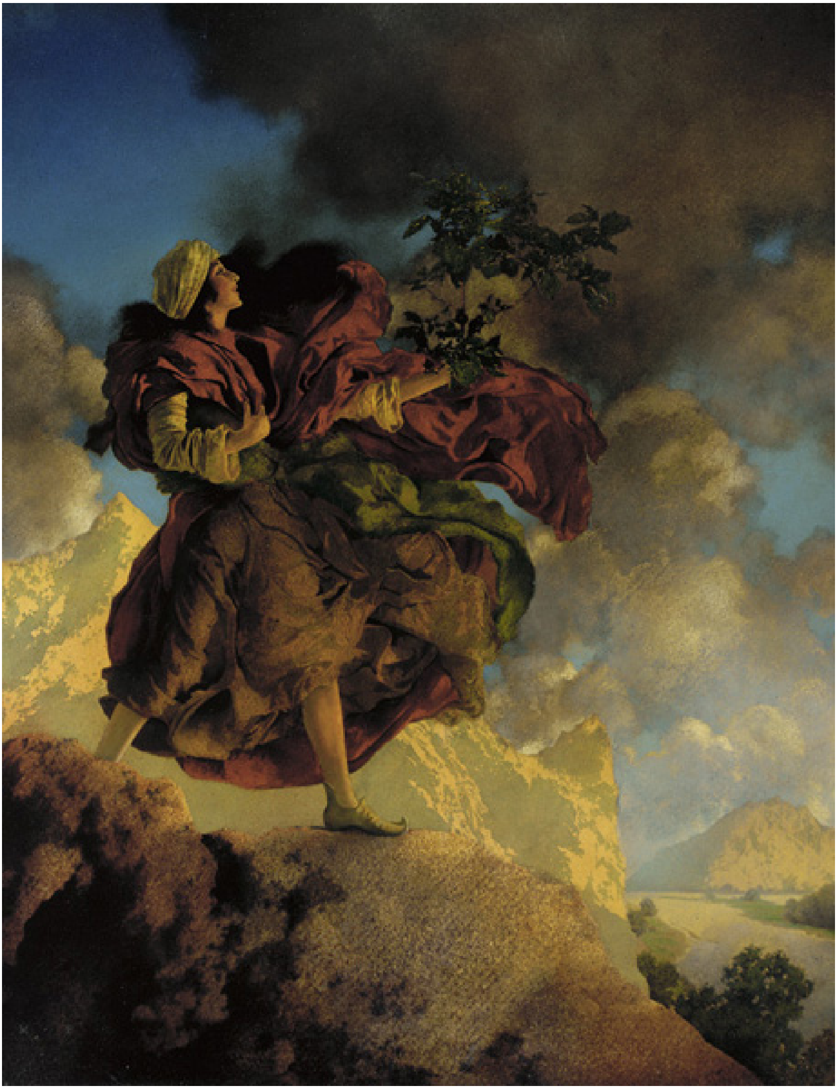

‘The story of Princess Parizade and the Magic Tree’ by Maxfield Parrish

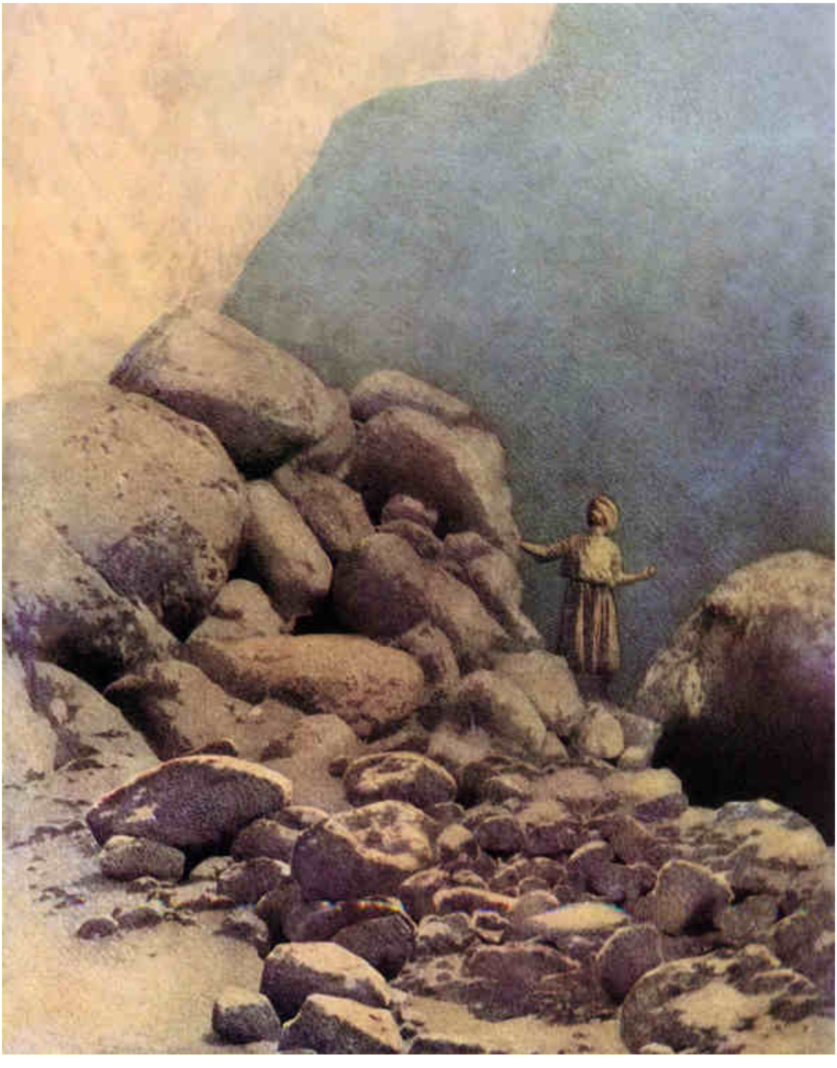

‘Sindbad and the Valley of Diamonds, from the Second Voyage’ by Maxfield Parrish

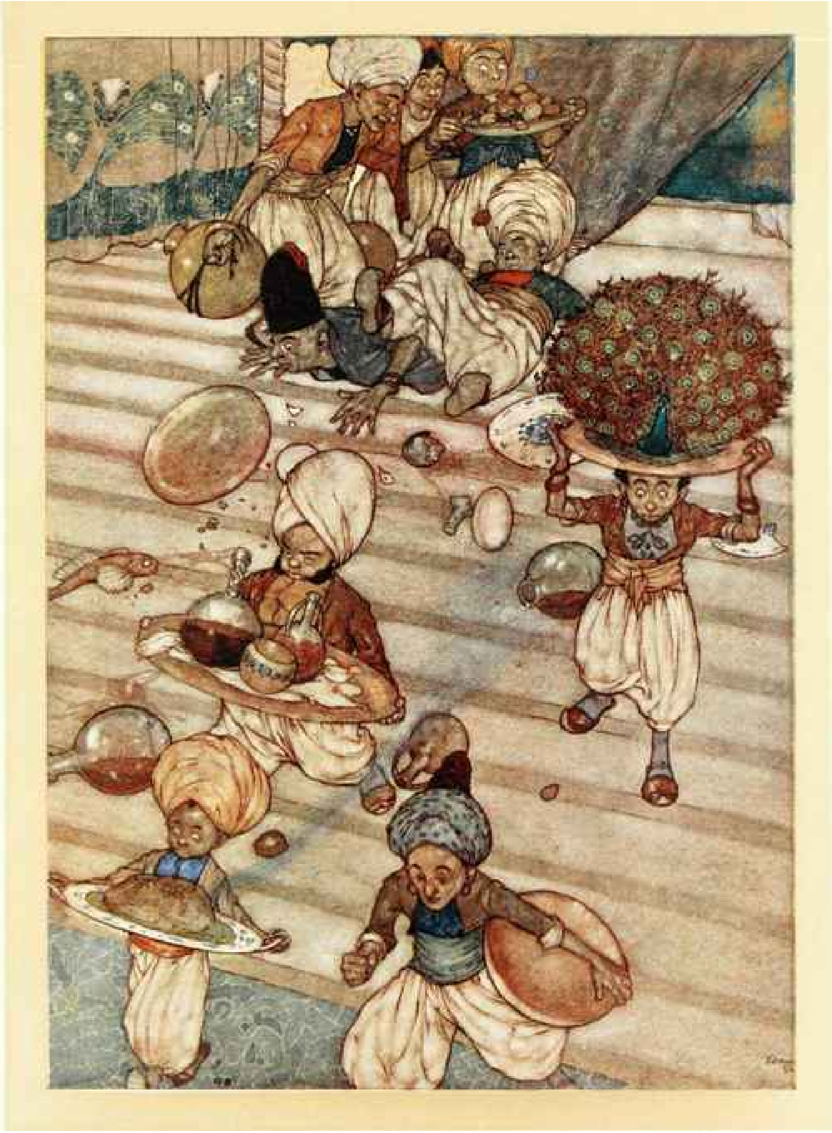

'The Story Of The Magic Horse' by Maxfield Parrish

JONATHAN SCOTT 1811 TRANSLATION

Jonathan Scott (1754–1829) was an English orientalist, best known for the following translation of the *One Thousand and One Nights*. In 1802 Scott was appointed professor of oriental languages at the Royal Military College, but resigned that post in 1805. He held, about the same time, a similar position at the East India College at Haileybury. In 1805 the honorary degree of D.C.L. was conferred upon him by the University of Oxford in recognition of his attainments in oriental literature.

In 1811 Scott published his edition of the *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, after his friend Edward Wortley Montagu had brought back from Turkey a nearly complete manuscript of the work (now in the Bodleian Library), composed in 1764. Scott proposed to make a fresh translation from this manuscript, and printed a description of it, together with a table of contents, in William Ouseley's *Oriental Collection*. He abandoned the idea later on, and contented himself with revising Antoine Galland's French version (1704–1717), saying that he found it so correct that it would be pointless to go over the original again. He prefixed a copious introduction, and added some additional tales from other sources. The work was the earliest effort to render the *Arabian Nights* into literary English and was commercially popular, being republished in London in 1882 and again in 1890.

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VOLUME 1

THE PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

This, the "Aldine Edition" of "The Arabian Nights Entertainments," forms the first four volumes of a proposed series of reprints of the Standard works of fiction which have appeared in the English language.

It is our intention to publish the series in an artistic way, well illustrating a text typographically as perfect as possible. The texts in all cases will be carefully chosen from approved editions.

The series is intended for those who appreciate well printed and illustrated books, or who are in want of a handy and handsome edition of such works to place upon their bookshelves.

The exact origin of the Tales, which appear in the Arabic as "The Thousand and One Nights," is unknown. The Caliph Haroon al Rusheed, who, figures in so lifelike a manner in many of the stories, was a contemporary of the Emperor Charlemagne, and there is internal evidence that the collection was made in the Arabic language about the end of the tenth century.

They undoubtedly convey a picturesque impression of the manners, sentiments, and customs of Eastern Mediaeval Life.

The stories were translated from the Arabic by M. Galland and first found their way into English in 1704, when they were retranslated from M. Galland's French text and at once became exceedingly popular.

This process of double translation had great disadvantages; it induced Dr. Jonathan Scott, Oriental Professor, to publish in 1811, a new edition, revised and corrected from the Arabic.

It is upon this text that the present edition is formed.

It will be found free from that grossness which is unavoidable in a strictly literal translation of the original into English; and which has rendered the splendid translations of Sir R. Burton and Mr. J. Payne quite unsuitable as the basis of a popular edition, though at the same time stamping the works as the two most perfect editions for the student.

The scholarly translation of Lane, by the too strict an adherence to Oriental forms of expression, and somewhat pedantic rendering of the spelling of proper names, is found to be tedious to a very large number of readers attracted by the rich imagination, romance, and humour of these tales.

The Arabian Nights Entertainments.

The chronicles of the Sassanians, ancient kings of Persia, who extended their empire into the Indies, over all the adjacent islands, and a great way beyond the Ganges, as far as China, acquaint us, that there was formerly a king of that potent family, who was regarded as the most excellent prince of his time. He was as much beloved by his subjects for his wisdom and prudence, as he was dreaded by his neighbours, on account of his velour, and well-disciplined troops. He had two sons; the elder Shier-ear, the worthy heir of his father, and endowed with all his virtues; the younger Shaw-zummaun, a prince of equal merit.

After a long and glorious reign, this king died; and Shier-ear mounted his throne. Shaw-zummaun, being excluded from all share in the government by the laws of the empire, and obliged to live a private life, was so far from envying the happiness of his brother, that he made it his whole business to please him, and in this succeeded without much difficulty. Shier-ear, who had naturally a great affection the prince his brother, gave him the kingdom of Great Tartary. Shaw-zummaun went immediately and took possession of it, and fixed the seat of his government at Samarcand, the metropolis of the country.

After they had been separated ten years, Shier-ear, being very desirous of seeing his brother, resolved to send an ambassador to invite him to his court. He made choice of his prime vizier for the embassy, and sent him to Tartary, with a retinue answerable to his dignity. The vizier proceeded with all possible expedition to Samarcand. When he came near the city, Shaw-zummaun was informed of his approach, and went to meet him attended by the principal lords of his court, who, to shew the greater honour to the sultan's minister, appeared in magnificent apparel. The king of Tartary received the ambassador with the greatest demonstrations of joy; and immediately asked him concerning the welfare of the sultan his brother. The vizier having acquainted him that he was in health, informed him of the purpose of his embassy. Shaw-zummaun was much affected, and answered: "Sage vizier, the sultan my brother does me too much honour; nothing could be more agreeable to me, for I as ardently long to see him as he does to see me. Time has not diminished my friendship more than his. My kingdom is in peace, and I want no more than ten days to get myself ready to return with you. There is therefore no necessity for your entering the city for so short a period. I pray you to pitch your tents here, and I will order everything necessary to be provided for yourself and your attendants." The vizier readily complied; and as soon as the king returned to the city, he sent him a prodigious quantity of provisions of all sorts, with presents of great value.

In the meanwhile, Shaw-zummaun prepared for his journey, gave orders about his most important affairs, appointed a council to govern in his absence, and named a minister, of whose wisdom he had sufficient experience, and in whom he had entire confidence, to be their president. At the end of ten days, his equipage being ready, he took leave of the queen his wife, and went out of town in the evening with his retinue. He pitched his royal pavilion near the vizier's tent, and conversed with him till midnight. Wishing once more to see the queen, whom he ardently loved, he returned alone to his palace, and went directly to her majesty's apartments. But she, not expecting his return, had taken one of the meanest officers of her household to her bed.

The king entered without noise, and pleased himself to think how he should surprise his wife who he thought loved him with reciprocal tenderness. But how great was his astonishment, when, by the light of the flambeau, he beheld a man in her arms! He stood immovable for some time, not knowing how to believe his own eyes. But finding there was no room for doubt, "How!" said he to himself, "I am scarcely out of my palace, and but just under the walls of Samarcand, and dare they put such an outrage upon me? Perfidious wretches! your crime shall not go unpunished. As a king, I am bound to punish wickedness committed in my dominions; and as an enraged husband, I must sacrifice you to my just resentment." The unfortunate prince, giving way to his rage, then drew his cimeter, and approaching the bed killed them both with one blow, their sleep into death; and afterwards taking them up, he threw them out of a window into the ditch that surrounded the palace.

Having thus avenged himself, he returned to his pavilion without saying one word of what had happened, gave orders that the tents should be struck, and everything made ready for his journey. All was speedily prepared, and before day he began his march, with kettle-drums and other instruments of music, that filled everyone with joy, excepting the king; he was so much afflicted by the disloyalty of his wife, that he was seized with extreme melancholy, which preyed upon his spirits during the whole of his journey.

When he drew near the capital of the Indies, the sultan Shier-ear and all his court came out to meet him. The princes were overjoyed to see one another, and having alighted, after mutual embraces and other marks of affection and respect, remounted, and entered the city, amidst the acclamations of the people. The sultan conducted his brother to the palace provided for him, which had a communication with his own by a garden. It was so much the more magnificent as it was set apart as a banqueting-house for public entertainments, and other diversions of the court, and its splendour had been lately augmented by new furniture.

Shier-ear immediately left the king of Tartary, that he might give him time to bathe, and to change his apparel. As soon as he had done, he returned to him again, and they sat down together on a sofa or alcove. The courtiers out of respect kept at a distance, and the two princes entertained one another suitably to their friendship, their consanguinity, and their long separation. The time of supper being come, they ate together, after which they renewed their conversation, which continued till Shier-ear, perceiving that it was very late, left his brother to repose.

The unfortunate Shaw-zummaun retired to bed. Though the conversation of his brother had suspended his grief for some time, it returned again with increased violence; so that, instead of taking his necessary rest, he tormented himself with the bitterest reflections. All the circumstances of his wife's disloyalty presented themselves afresh to his imagination, in so lively a manner, that he was like one distracted being able to sleep, he arose, and abandoned himself to the most afflicting thoughts, which made such an impression upon his countenance, as it was impossible for the sultan not to observe. "What," said he, "can be the matter with the king of Tartary that he is so melancholy? Has he any cause to complain of his reception? No, surely; I have received him as a brother whom I love, so that I can charge myself with no omission in that respect. Perhaps it grieves him to be at such a distance from his dominions, or from the queen his wife? If that be the case, I must forthwith give him the presents I designed for him, that he may return to Samarcand." Accordingly the next day Shier-ear sent him part of those presents, being the greatest rarities and the richest things that the Indies could afford. At the same time he endeavoured to divert his brother every day by new objects of pleasure, and the most splendid entertainments. But these, instead of affording him ease, only increased his sorrow.

One day, Shier-ear having appointed a great hunting-match, about two days journey from his capital, in a place that abounded with deer, Shaw-zummaun besought him to excuse his attendance, for his health would not allow him to bear him company. The sultan, unwilling to put any constraint upon him, left him at his liberty, and went a-hunting with his nobles. The king of Tartary being thus left alone, shut himself up in his apartment, and sat down at a window that looked into the garden. That delicious place, and the sweet harmony of an infinite number of birds, which chose it for their retreat, must certainly have diverted him, had he been capable of taking pleasure in anything; but being perpetually tormented with the fatal remembrance of his queen's infamous conduct, his eyes were not so much fixed upon the garden, as lifted up to heaven to bewail his misfortune.

While he was thus absorbed in grief, a circumstance occurred which attracted the whole of his attention. A secret gate of the sultan's palace suddenly opened, and there came out of it twenty women, in the midst of whom walked the sultaness, who was easily distinguished from the rest by her majestic air. This princess thinking that the king of Tartary was gone a-hunting with his brother the sultan, came with her retinue near the windows of his apartment. For the prince had so placed himself that he could see all that passed in the garden without being perceived himself. He observed, that the persons who accompanied the sultaness threw off their veils and long robes, that they might be more at their ease, but he was greatly surprised to find that ten of them were black men, and that each of these took his mistress. The sultaness, on her part, was not long without her gallant. She clapped her hands, and called "Masoud, Masoud," and immediately a black descended from a tree, and ran towards her with great speed.

Modesty will not allow, nor is it necessary, to relate what passed between the blacks and the ladies. It is sufficient to say, that Shaw-zummaun saw enough to convince him, that his brother was as much to be pitied as himself. This amorous company continued together till midnight, and having bathed together in a great piece of water, which was one of the chief ornaments of the garden, they dressed themselves, and re-entered the palace by the secret door, all except Masoud, who climbed up his tree, and got over the garden wall as he had come in.

These things having passed in the king of Tartary's sight, filled him with a multitude of reflections. "How little reason had I," said he, "to think that none was so unfortunate as myself? It is surely the unavoidable fate of all husbands, since even the sultan my brother, who is sovereign of so-many dominions, and the greatest prince of the earth, could not escape. Such being the case, what a fool am I to kill myself with grief? I am resolved that the remembrance of a misfortune so common shall never more disturb my peace."

From that moment he forbore afflicting himself. He called for his supper, ate with a better appetite than he had done since his leaving Samarcand, and listened with some degree of pleasure to the agreeable concert of vocal and instrumental music that was appointed to entertain him while at table.

He continued after this very cheerful; and when he was informed that the sultan was returning, went to meet him, and paid him his compliments with great gaiety. Shier-ear at first took no notice of this alteration. He politely expostulated with him for not bearing him company, and without giving him time to reply, entertained him with an account of the great number of deer and other game they had killed, and the pleasure he had received in the chase. Shaw-zummaun heard him with attention; and being now relieved from the melancholy which had before depressed his spirits, and clouded his talents, took up the conversation in his turn, and spoke a thousand agreeable and pleasant things to the sultan.

Shier-ear, who expected to have found him in the same state as he had left him, was overjoyed to see him so cheerful: “Dear brother,” said he, “I return thanks to heaven for the happy change it has wrought in you during my absence. I am indeed extremely rejoiced. But I have a request to make to you, and conjure you not to deny me.” “I can refuse you nothing,” replied the king of Tartary; “you may command Shaw-zummaun as you please: speak, I am impatient to know what you desire of me.” “Ever since you came to my court,” resumed Shier-ear, “I have found you immersed in a deep melancholy, and I have in vain attempted to remove it by different diversions. I imagined it might be occasioned by your distance from your dominions, or that love might have a great share in it; and that the queen of Samarcand, who, no doubt, is an accomplished beauty, might be the cause. I do not know whether I am mistaken in my conjecture; but I must own, that it was for this very reason I would not importune you upon the subject, for fear of making you uneasy. But without myself contributing anything towards effecting the change, I find on my return that your mind is entirely delivered from the black vapour which disturbed it. Pray do me the favour to tell me why you were so melancholy, and wherefore you are no longer so.”

The king of Tartary continued for some time as if he had been meditating and contriving what he should answer; but at last replied, “You are my sultan and master; but excuse me, I beseech you, from answering your question.” “No, dear brother,” said the sultan, “you must answer me, I will take no denial.” Shaw-zummaun, not being able to withstand these pressing entreaties, replied, “Well then, brother, I will satisfy you, since you command me;” and having told him the story of the queen of Samarcand’s treachery “This,” said he, “was the cause of my grief; judge whether I had not sufficient reason for my depression.”

“O! my brother,” said the sultan, (in a tone which shewed what interest he took in the king of Tartary’s affliction), “what a horrible event do you tell me! I commend you for punishing the traitors who offered you such an outrage. None can blame you for what you have done. It was just; and for my part, had the case been mine, I should scarcely have been so moderate. I could not have satisfied myself with the life of one woman; I should have sacrificed a thousand to my fury. I now cease to wonder at your melancholy. The cause was too afflicting and too mortifying not to overwhelm you. O heaven! what a strange adventure! Nor do I believe the like ever befell any man but yourself. But I must bless God, who has comforted you; and since I doubt not but your consolation is well-grounded, be so good as to inform me what it is, and conceal nothing from me." Shawzummaun was not so easily prevailed upon in this point as he had been in the other, on his brother's account. But being obliged to yield to his pressing instances, answered, "I must obey you then, since your command is absolute, yet I am afraid that my obedience will occasion your trouble to be greater than my own. But you must blame yourself, since you force me to reveal what I should otherwise have buried in eternal Oblivion." "What you say," answered Shierear, "serves only to increase my curiosity. Discover the secret, whatever it be." The king of Tartary being no longer able to refuse, related to him the particulars of the blacks in disguise, of the ungoverned passion of the sultaness, and her ladies; nor did he forget Masoud. After having been witness to these infamous actions, he continued, "I believed all women to be naturally lewd; and that they could not resist their inclination. Being of this opinion, it seemed to me to be in men an unaccountable weakness to place any confidence in their fidelity. This reflection brought on many others; and in short, I thought the best thing I could do was to make myself easy. It cost me some pains indeed, but at last I grew reconciled; and if you will take my advice, you will follow my example."

Though the advice was good, the sultan could not approve of it, but fell into a rage. "What!" said he, "is the sultaness of the Indies capable of prostituting herself in so base a manner! No, brother, I cannot believe what you state unless I beheld it with my own eyes. Yours must needs have deceived you; the matter is so important that I must be satisfied of it myself." "Dear brother," answered Shawzummaun, "that you may without much difficulty. Appoint another hunting-match, and when we are out of town with your court and mine, we will rest under our tents, and at night let you and I return unattended to my apartments. I am certain the next day you will see a repetition of the scene." The sultan approving the stratagem, immediately appointed another hunting-match. And that same day the tents were pitched at the place appointed.

The next day the two princes set out with all their retinue; they arrived at the place of encampment, and stayed there till night. Shierear then called his grand vizier, and, without acquainting him with his design, commanded him during his absence to suffer no person to quit the camp on any presence whatever. As soon as he had given this order, the king of Grand Tartary and he took horse, passed through the camp incognito, returned to the city, and went to Shaw-zummaun's apartment. They had scarcely placed themselves in the window whence the king of Tartary had beheld the scene of the disguised blacks, when the secret gate opened, the sultaness and her ladies entered the garden with the blacks, and she having called to Masoud, the sultan saw more than enough fully to convince him of his dishonour and misfortune.

"Oh heavens!" he exclaimed, "what indignity! What horror! Can the wife of a sovereign be capable of such infamous conduct? After this, let no prince boast of being perfectly happy. Alas! my brother," continued he, embracing the king of Tartery, "let us both renounce the world, honour is banished out of it; if it flatter us one day, it betrays us the next. Let us abandon our dominions, and go into foreign countries, where we may lead an obscure life, and conceal our misfortunes." Shaw-zummaun did not at all approve of this plan, but did not think fit to contradict Shierear in the heat of his passion. "Dear brother," he replied, "your will shall be mine. I am ready to follow you whithersoever you please: but promise me that you will return, if we meet with any one more unhappy than ourselves." "To this I agree," said the sultan, "but doubt much whether we shall." "I am not of your opinion in this," replied the king of Tartary; "I fancy our journey will be but short." Having thus resolved, they went secretly out of the palace. They travelled as long as day-light continued; and lay the first night under trees. They arose about break of day, went on till they came to a fine meadow on the seashore, that was be-sprinkled with large trees They sat down under one of them to rest and refresh themselves, and the chief subject of their conversation was the infidelity or their wives.

They had not rested long, before they heard a frightful noise from the sea, and a terrible cry, which filled them with fear. The sea then opened, and there arose something like a great black column, which reached almost to the clouds. This redoubled their terror, made them rise with haste, and climb up into a tree to bide themselves. They had scarcely got up, when looking to the place from whence the noise proceeded, and where the sea had opened, they observed that the black column advanced, winding about towards the shore, cleaving the water before it. They could not at first think what this could mean, but in a little time they found that it was one of those malignant genies that are mortal enemies to mankind, and are always doing them mischief. He was black and frightful, had the shape of a giant, of a prodigious stature, and carried on his head a large glass box, fastened with four locks of fine steel. He entered the meadow with his burden, which he laid down just at the foot of the tree where the two princes were concealed, who gave themselves over as lost. The genie sat down by his box, and opening it with four keys that he had at his girdle, there came out a lady magnificently appareled, of a majestic stature, and perfect beauty. The monster made her sit down by him, and eyeing her with an amorous look, said, "Lady, nay, most accomplished of all ladies who are admired for their beauty, my charming mistress, whom I carried off on your wedding-day, and have loved so constantly ever since, let me sleep a few moments by you; for I found myself so very drowsy that I came to this place to take a little rest." Having spoken thus, he laid down his huge head upon the lady's knees, and stretching out his legs, which reached as far as the sea, he fell asleep presently, and snored so loud that he made the shores echo.

The lady happening at this time to look up, saw the two princes in the tree, and made a sign to them with her hand to come down without making any noise. Their fear was extreme when they found themselves discovered, and they prayed the lady, by other signs, to excuse them. But she, after having laid the monster's head softly on the ground, rose up and spoke to them, with a low but eager voice, to come down to her; she would take no denial. They informed her by signs that they were afraid of the genie, and would fain have been excused. Upon which she ordered them to come down, and threatened if they did not make haste, to awaken the genie, and cause him to put them to death.

These words so much intimidated the princes, that they began to descend with all possible precaution lest they should awake the genie. When they had come down, the lady took them by the hand, and going a little farther with them under the trees, made them a very urgent proposal. At first they rejected it, but she obliged them to comply by her threats. Having obtained what she desired, she perceived that each of them had a ring on his finger, which she demanded. As soon as she had received them, she pulled out a string of other rings, which she shewed the princes, and asked them if they knew what those jewels meant? "No," said they, "we hope you will be pleased to inform us." "These are," she replied, "the rings of all the men to whom I have granted my favours. There are fourscore and eighteen, which I keep as memorials of them; and I asked for yours to make up the hundred. So that I have had a hundred gallants already, notwithstanding the vigilance of this wicked genie, who never leaves me. He may lock me up in this glass box and hide me in the bottom of the sea; but I find methods to elude his vigilance. You may see by this, that when a woman has formed a project, there is no husband or lover that can prevent her from putting it in execution. Men had better not put their wives under such restraint, as it only serves to teach them cunning." Having spoken thus to them, she put their rings on the same string with the rest, and sitting down by the monster, as before, laid his head again upon her lap, end made a sign to the princes to depart.

They returned immediately the way they had come, and when they were out of sight of the lady and the genie Shier-ear said to Shaw-zummaun "Well, brother, what do you think of this adventure? Has not the genie a very faithful mistress? And do you not agree that there is no wickedness equal to that of women?" "Yes, brother," answered the king of Great Tartary; "and you must also agree that the monster is more unfortunate, and more to be pitied than ourselves. Therefore, since we have found what we sought for, let us return to our dominions, and let not this hinder us from marrying. For my part, I know a method by which to preserve the fidelity of my wife inviolable. I will say no more at present, but you will hear of it in a little time, and I am sure you will follow my example." The sultan agreed with his brother; and continuing their journey, they arrived in the camp the third night after their departure.

The news of the sultan's return being spread, the courtiers came betimes in the morning before his pavilion to wait his pleasure. He ordered them to enter, received them with a more pleasant air than he had formerly done, and gave each of them a present. After which, he told them he would go no farther, ordered them to take horse, and returned with expedition to his palace.

As soon as he arrived, he proceeded to the sultaness's apartment, commanded her to be bound before him, and delivered her to his grand vizier, with an order to strangle her, which was accordingly executed by that minister, without inquiring into her crime. The enraged prince did not stop here, but cut off the heads of all the sultaness's ladies with his own hand. After this rigorous punishment, being persuaded that no woman was chaste, he resolved, in order to prevent the disloyalty of such as he should afterwards marry, to wed one every night, and have her strangled next morning. Having imposed this cruel law upon himself, he swore that he would put it in force immediately after the departure of the king of Tartary, who shortly took leave of him, and being laden with magnificent presents, set forward on his journey.

Shaw-zummaun having departed, Shier-ear ordered his grand vizier to bring him the daughter of one of his generals. The vizier obeyed. The sultan lay with her, and putting her next morning into his hands again in order to have her strangled, commanded him to provide him another the next night. Whatever reluctance the vizier might feel to put such orders in execution, as he owed blind obedience to the sultan his master, he was forced to submit. He brought him then the daughter of a subaltern, whom he also put to death the next day. After her he brought a citizen's daughter; and, in a word, there was every day a maid married, and a wife murdered.

The rumour of this unparalleled barbarity occasioned a general consternation in the city, where there was nothing but crying and lamentation. Here, a father in tears, and inconsolable for the loss of his daughter; and there, tender mothers dreating lest their daughters should share the same fate, filling the air with cries of distress and apprehension. So that, instead of the commendation and blessings which the sultan had hitherto received from his subjects, their mouths were now filled with imprecations.

The grand vizier who, as has been already observed, was the unwilling executioner of this horrid course of injustice, had two daughters, the elder called Scheherazade, and the younger Dinarzade. The latter was highly accomplished; but the former possessed courage, wit, and penetration, infinitely above her sex. She had read much, and had so admirable a memory, that she never forgot any thing she had read. She had successfully applied herself to philosophy, medicine, history, and the liberal arts; and her poetry excelled the compositions of the best writers of her time. Besides this, she was a perfect beauty, and all her accomplishments were crowned by solid virtue.

The vizier loved this daughter, so worthy of his affection. One day, as they were conversing together, she said to him, “Father, I have one favour to beg of you, and most humbly pray you to grant it.” “I will not refuse,” answered he, “provided it be just and reasonable.” “For the justice of it,” resumed she, “there can be no question, and you may judge of this by the motive which obliges me to make the request. I wish to stop that barbarity which the sultan exercises upon the families of this city. I would dispel those painful apprehensions which so many mothers feel of losing their daughters in such a fatal manner.” “Your design, daughter,” replied the vizier “is very commendable; but the evil you would remedy seems to me incurable. How do you propose to effect your purpose?” “Father,” said Scheherazade, “since by your means the sultan makes every day a new marriage, I conjure you, by the tender affection you bear me, to procure me the honour of his bed.” The vizier could not hear this without horror. “O heaven!” he replied in a passion, “have you lost your senses, daughter, that you make such a dangerous request? You know the sultan has sworn, that he will never lie above one night with the same woman, and to command her to be killed the next morning; would you then have me propose you to him? Consider well to what your indiscreet zeal will expose you.” “Yes, dear father,” replied the virtuous daughter, “I know the risk I run; but that does not alarm me. If I perish, my death will be glorious; and if I succeed, I shall do my country an important service.” “No, no,” said the vizier “whatever you may offer to induce me to let you throw yourself into such imminent danger, do not imagine that I will ever consent. When the sultan shall command me to strike my poniard into your heart, alas! I must obey; and what an employment will that be for a father! Ah! if you do not dread death, at least cherish some fears of afflicting me with the mortal grief of imbuing my hands in your blood." "Once more father," replied Scheherazade, "grant me the favour I solicit." "Your stubbornness," resumed the vizier "will rouse my anger; why will you run headlong to your ruin? They who do not foresee the end of a dangerous enterprise can never conduct it to a happy issue. I am afraid the same thing will happen to you as befell the ass, which was well off, but could not remain so." "What misfortune befell the ass?" demanded Scheherazade. "I will tell you," replied the vizier, "if you will hear me."

The Ass, the Ox, and the Labourer.

A very wealthy merchant possessed several country-houses, where he kept a large number of cattle of every kind. He retired with his wife and family to one of these estates, in order to improve it under his own direction. He had the gift of understanding the language of beasts, but with this condition, that he should not, on pain of death, interpret it to any one else. And this hindered him from communicating to others what he learned by means of this faculty.

He kept in the same stall an ox and an ass. One day as he sat near them, and was amusing himself in looking at his children who were playing about him, he heard the ox say to the ass, "Sprightly, O! how happy do I think you, when I consider the ease you enjoy, and the little labour that is required of you. You are carefully rubbed down and washed, you have well-dressed corn, and fresh clean water. Your greatest business is to carry the merchant, our master, when he has any little journey to make, and were it not for that you would be perfectly idle. I am treated in a very different manner, and my condition is as deplorable as yours is fortunate. Daylight no sooner appears than I am fastened to a plough, and made to work till night, which so fatigues me, that sometimes my strength entirely fails. Besides, the labourer, who is always behind me, beats me continually. By drawing the plough, my tail is all flayed; and in short, after having laboured from morning to night, when I am brought in they give me nothing to eat but sorry dry beans, not so much as cleansed from dirt, or other food equally bad; and to heighten my misery, when I have filled my belly with such ordinary stuff, I am forced to lie all night in my own dung: so that you see I have reason to envy your lot."

The ass did not interrupt the ox; but when he had concluded, answered, "They that called you a foolish beast did not lie. You are too simple; you suffer them to conduct you whither they please, and shew no manner of resolution. In the mean time, what advantage do you reap from all the indignities you suffer. You kill yourself for the ease, pleasure, and profit of those who give you no thanks for your service. But they would not treat you so, if you had as much courage as strength. When they come to fasten you to the stall, why do you not resist? why do you not gore them with your horns, and shew that you are angry, by striking your foot against the ground? And, in short, why do not you frighten them by bellowing aloud? Nature has furnished you with means to command respect; but you do not use them. They bring you sorry beans and bad straw; eat none of them, only smell and then leave them. If you follow my advice, you will soon experience a change, for which you will thank me."

The ox took the ass's advice in very good part, and owned he was much obliged to him. "Dear Sprightly," added he, "I will not fail to do as you direct, and you shall see how I will acquit myself." Here ended their conversation, of which the merchant lost not a word.

Early the next morning the labourer went for the ox. He fastened him to the plough and conducted him to his usual work. The ox, who had not forgotten the ass's counsel, was very troublesome and untowardly all that day, and in the evening, when the labourer brought him back to the stall, and began to fasten him, the malicious beast instead of presenting his head willingly as he used to do, was restive, and drew back bellowing; and then made at the labourer, as if he would have gored him with his horns. In a word, he did all that the ass had advised him. The day following, the labourer came as usual, to take the ox to his labour; but finding the stall full of beans, the straw that he had put in the night before not touched, and the ox lying on the ground with his legs stretched out, and panting in a strange manner, he believed him to be unwell, pitied him, and thinking that it was not proper to take him to work, went immediately and acquainted his master with his condition. The merchant perceiving that the ox had followed all the mischievous advice of the ass, determined to punish the latter, and accordingly ordered the labourer to go and put him in the ox's place, and to be sure to work him hard. The labourer did as he was desired. The ass was forced to draw the plough all that day, which fatigued him so much the more, as he was not accustomed to that kind of labour; besides he had been so soundly beaten, that he could scarcely stand when he came back.

Meanwhile, the ox was mightily pleased; he ate up all that was in his stall, and rested himself the whole day. He rejoiced that he had followed the ass's advice, blessed him a thousand times for the kindness he had done him, and did not fail to express his obligations when the ass had returned. The ass made no reply, so vexed was he at the ill treatment he had received; but he said within himself, "It is by my own imprudence I have brought this misfortune upon myself. I lived happily, every thing smiled upon me; I had all that I could wish; it is my own fault that I am brought to this miserable condition; and if I cannot contrive some way to get out of it, I am certainly undone." As he spoke, his strength was so much exhausted that he fell down in his stall, as if he had been half dead.

Here the grand vizier, himself to Scheherazade, and said, "Daughter, you act just like this ass; you will expose yourself to destruction by your erroneous policy. Take my advice, remain quiet, and do not seek to hasten your death." "Father," replied Scheherazade, "the example you have set before me will not induce me to change my resolution. I will never cease importuning you until you present me to the sultan as his bride." The vizier, perceiving that she persisted in her demand, replied, "Alas! then, since you will continue obstinate, I shall be obliged to treat you in the same manner as the merchant whom I before referred to treated his wife a short time after."

The merchant understanding that the ass was in a lamentable condition, was desirous of knowing what passed between him and the ox, therefore after supper he went out by moonlight, and sat down by them, his wife bearing him company. After his arrival, he heard the ass say to the ox "Comrade, tell me, I pray you, what you intend to do to-morrow, when the labourer brings you meat?" "What will I do?" replied the ox, "I will continue to act as you taught me. I will draw back from him and threaten him with my horns, as I did yesterday: I will feign myself ill, and at the point of death." "Beware of that," replied the ass, "it will ruin you; for as I came home this evening, I heard the merchant, our master, say something that makes me tremble for you." "Alas! what did you hear?" demanded the ox; "as you love me, withhold nothing from me, my dear Sprightly." "Our master," replied the ass, "addressed himself thus to the labourer: Since the ox does not eat, and is not able to work, I would have him killed to-morrow, and we will give his flesh as an alms to the poor for God's sake, as for the skin, that will be of use to us, and I would have you give it the currier to dress; therefore be sure to send for the butcher.' This is what I had to tell you," said the ass. "The interest I feel in your preservation, and my friendship for you, obliged me to make it known to you, and to give you new advice. As soon as they bring you your bran and straw, rise up and eat heartily. Our master will by this think that you are recovered, and no doubt will recall his orders for killing you; but, if you act otherwise, you will certainly be slaughtered."

This discourse had the effect which the ass designed. The ox was greatly alarmed, and bellowed for fear. The merchant, who heard the conversation very attentively, fell into a loud fit of laughter. His wife was greatly surprised, and asked, "Pray, husband, tell me what you laugh at so heartily, that I may laugh with you." "Wife," replied he, "you must content yourself with hearing me laugh." "No," returned she, "I will know the reason." "I cannot afford you that satisfaction," he, "and can only inform you that I laugh at what our ass just now said to the ox. The rest is a secret, which I am not allowed to reveal." "What," demanded she "hinders you from revealing the secret?" "If I tell it you," replied he, "I shall forfeit my life." "You only jeer me," cried his wife, "what you would have me believe cannot be true. If you do not directly satisfy me as to what you laugh at, and tell me what the ox and the ass said to one another, I swear by heaven that you and I shall never bed together again."

Having spoken thus, she went into the house, and seating herself in a corner, cried there all night. Her husband lay alone, and finding next morning that she continued in the same humour, told her, she was very foolish to afflict herself in that manner; that the thing was not worth so much; that it concerned her very little to know while it was of the utmost consequence to him to keep the secret: "therefore," continued he, "I conjure you to think no more of it." "I shall still think so much of it," replied she, "as never to forbear weeping till you have satisfied my curiosity." "But I tell you very seriously," answered he, "that it will cost me my life if I yield to your indiscreet solicitations." "Let what will happen," said she, "I do insist upon it." "I perceive," resumed the merchant, "that it is impossible to bring you to reason, and since I foresee that you will occasion your own death by your obstinacy, I will call in your children, that they may see you before you die." Accordingly he called for them, and sent for her father and mother, and other relations. When they were come and had heard the reason of their being summoned, they did all they could to convince her that she was in the wrong, but to no purpose: she told them she would rather die than yield that point to her husband. Her father and mother spoke to her by herself, and told her that what she desired to know was of no importance to her; but they could produce no effect upon her, either by their authority or intreaties. When her children saw that nothing would prevail to draw her out of that sullen temper, they wept bitterly. The merchant himself was half frantic, and almost ready to risk his own life to save that of his wife, whom he sincerely loved.

The merchant had fifty hens and one cock, with a dog that gave good heed to all that passed. While the merchant was considering what he had best do, he saw his dog run towards the cock as he was treading a hen, and heard him say to him: "Cock, I am sure heaven will not let you live long; are you not ashamed to ad thus to-day?" The cock standing up on tiptoe, answered fiercely: "And why not to-day as well as other days?" "If you do not know," replied the dog, "then I will tell you, that this day our master is in great perplexity. His wife would have him reveal a secret which is of such a nature, that the disclosure would cost him his life. Things are come to that pass, that it is to be feared he will scarcely have resolution enough to resist his wife's obstinacy; for he loves her, and is affected by the tears she continually sheds. We are all alarmed at his situation, while you only insult our melancholy, and have the impudence to divert yourself with your hens."

The cock answered the dog's reproof thus: "What, has our master so little sense? he has but one wife, and cannot govern her, and though I have fifty, I make them all do what I please. Let him use his reason, he will soon find a way to rid himself of his trouble." "How?" demanded the dog; "what would you have him do?" "Let him go into the room where his wife is," resumed the cock, "lock the door, and take a stick and thrash her well; and I will answer for it, that will bring her to her senses, and make her forbear to importune him to discover what he ought not to reveal." The merchant had no sooner heard what the cock said, than he took up a stick, went to his wife, whom he found still crying, and shutting the door, belaboured her so soundly, that she cried out, "Enough, husband, enough, forbear, and I will never ask the question more." Upon this, perceiving that she repented of her impertinent curiosity, he desisted; and opening the door, her friends came in, were glad to find her cured of her obstinacy, and complimented her husband upon this happy expedient to bring his wife to reason.

"Daughter," added the grand vizier, "you deserve to be treated as the merchant treated his wife."

"Father," replied Scheherazade, "I beg you would not take it ill that I persist in my opinion. I am nothing moved by the story of this woman. I could relate many, to persuade you that you ought not to oppose my design. Besides, pardon me for declaring, that your opposition is vain; for if your paternal affection should hinder you from granting my request, I will go and offer myself to the sultan." In short, the father, being overcome by the resolution of his daughter, yielded to her importunity, and though he was much grieved that he could not divert her from so fatal a resolution, he went instantly to acquaint the sultan, that next night he would bring him Scheherazade.

The sultan was much surprized at the sacrifice which the grand vizier proposed to make. "How could you", said he, "resolve to bring me your own daughter?" "Sir," answered the vizier, "it is her own offer. The sad destiny that awaits her could not intimidate her; she prefers the honour of being your majesty's wile for one night, to her life." "But do not act under a mistake, vizier," said the sultan; "to-morrow when I place Scheherazade in your hands, I expect you will put her to death; and if you fail, I swear that your own life shall answer." "Sir," rejoined the vizier "my heart without doubt will be full of grief to execute your commands; but it is to no purpose for nature to murmur. Though I am her father, I will answer for the fidelity of my hand to obey your order." Shier-ear accepted his minister's offer, and told him he might bring his daughter when he pleased.

The grand vizier went with the intelligence to Schcherazade, who received it with as much joy as if it had been the most agreeable information she could have received. She thanked her father for having so greatly obliged her; and perceiving that he was overwhelmed with grief, told him for his consolation, that she hoped he would never repent of having married her to the sultan; and that, on the contrary, he should have reason to rejoice at his compliance all his days.

Her business now was to adorn herself to appear before the sultan; but before she went, she took her sister Dinarzade apart, and said to her, "My dear sister, I have need of your assistance in a matter of great importance, and must pray you not to deny it me. My father is going to conduct me to the sultan; do not let this alarm you, but hear me with patience. As soon as I am in his presence, I will pray him to allow you to lie in the bride-chamber, that I may enjoy your company this one night more. If I obtain that favour, as I hope to do, remember to awake me to-morrow an hour before day, and to address me in these or some such words: 'My sister, if you be not asleep, I pray you that till day-break, which will be very shortly, you will relate to me one of the entertaining stories of which you have read so many.' I will immediately tell you one; and I hope by this means to deliver the city from the consternation it is under at present." Dinarzade answered that she would with pleasure act as she required her.

The grand vizier conducted Schcherazade to the palace, and retired, after having introduced her into the sultan's apartment. As soon as the sultan was left alone with her, he ordered her to uncover her face: he found her so beautiful that he was perfectly charmed; but perceiving her to be in tears, demanded the reason. "Sir," answered Scheherazade, "I have a sister who loves me tenderly, and I could wish that she might be allowed to pass the night in this chamber, that I might see her, and once more bid her adieu. Will you be pleased to allow me the consolation of giving her this last testimony of my affection?" Shier-ear having consented, Dinarzade was sent for, who came with all possible expedition.

An hour before day, Dinarzade failed not to do as her sister had ordered. "My dear sister," cried she, "if you be not asleep, I pray that until daybreak, which will be very shortly, you will tell me one of those pleasant stories you have read. Alas! this may perhaps be the last time that I shall enjoy that pleasure."

Scheherazade, instead of answering her sister, addressed herself to the sultan: "Sir, will your majesty be pleased to allow me to afford my sister this satisfaction?" "With all my heart," replied the sultan. Scheherazade then bade her sister attend, and afterwards, addressing herself to Shier-ear, proceeded as follows.

THE MERCHANT AND THE GENIE.

There was formerly a merchant who possessed much property in lands, goods, and money, and had a great number of clerks, factors, and slaves. He was obliged from time to time to visit his correspondents on business; and one day being under the necessity of going a long journey on an affair of importance, he took horse, and carried with him a wallet containing biscuits and dates, because he had a great desert to pass over, where he could procure no sort of provisions. He arrived without any accident at the end of his journey; and having dispatched his affairs, took horse again, in order to return home.

The fourth day of his journey, he was so much incommoded by the heat of the sun, and the reflection of that heat from the earth, that he turned out of the road, to refresh himself under some trees. He found at the root of a large tree a fountain of very clear running water. Having alighted, he tied his horse to a branch, and sitting down by the fountain, took some biscuits and dates out of his wallet. As he ate his dates, he threw the shells carelessly in different directions. When he had finished his repast, being a good Moosulmaun, he washed his hands, face, and feet, and said his prayers. Before he had finished, and while he was yet on his knees, he saw a genie, white with age, and of a monstrous bulk, advancing towards him with a cimeter in his hand. The genie spoke to him in a terrible voice: “Rise, that I may kill thee with this cimeter, as thou hast killed my son;” and accompanied these words with a frightful cry. The merchant being as much alarmed at the hideous shape of the monster as at his threatening language, answered him, trembling, “Alas! my good lord, of what crime can I be guilty towards you, that you should take away my life?” “I will,” replied the genie, “kill thee, as thou hast killed my son.” “Heavens,” exclaimed the merchant, “how could I kill your son? I never knew, never saw him.” “Did not you sit down when you came hither?” demanded the genie: “did you not take dates out of your wallet, and as you ate them, did not you throw the shells about in different directions?” “I did all that you say,” answered the merchant, “I cannot deny it.” “If it be so,” resumed the genie, “I tell thee that thou hast killed my son; and in this manner: When thou wert throwing the shells about, my son was passing by, and thou didst throw one into his eye, which killed him; therefore I must kill thee.” “Ah! my lord! pardon me!” cried the merchant. “No pardon,” exclaimed the genie, “no mercy. Is it not just to kill him that has killed another?” “I agree it is,” replied the merchant, “but certainly I never killed your son; and if I have, it was unknown to me, and I did it innocently; I beg you therefore to pardon me, and suffer me to live.” “No, no,” returned the genie, persisting in his resolution, “I must kill thee, since thou hast killed my son.” Then taking the merchant by the arm, he threw him with his face on the ground, and lifted up his cimeter to cut off his head.

The merchant, with tears, protested he was innocent, bewailed his wife and children, and supplicated the genie, in the most moving expressions. The genie, with his cimeter still lifted up, had the patience to hear his unfortunate victims to the end of his lamentations, but would not relent. “All this whining,” said the monster, “is to no purpose; though you should shed tears of blood, they should not hinder me from killing thee, as thou hast killed my son.” “What!” exclaimed the merchant, “can nothing prevail with you? Will you absolutely take away the life of a poor innocent?” “Yes,” replied the genie, “I am resolved.”

As soon as she had spoken these words, perceiving it was day, and knowing that the sultan rose early in the morning to say his prayers, and hold his council, Scheherazade discontinued her story. “Dear sister,” said Dinarzade, “what a wonderful story is this!” “The remainder of it,” replied Scheherazade “is more surprising, and you will be of this opinion, if the sultan will but permit me to live over this day, and allow me to proceed with the relation the ensuing night.” Shier-ear, who had listened to Scheherazade with much interest, said to himself, “I will wait till to-morrow, for I can at any time put her to death when she has concluded her story.” Having thus resolved not to put Scheherazade to death that day, he rose and went to his prayers, and to attend his council.

During this time the grand vizier was in the utmost distress. Instead of sleeping, he spent the night in sighs and groans, bewailing the lot of his daughter, of whom he believed he should himself shortly be the executioner. As, with this melancholy prospect before him, he dreaded to meet the sultan, he was agreeably surprised when he found the prince entered the council chamber without giving him the fatal orders he expected.

The sultan, according to his custom, spent the day in regulating his affairs; and when the night had closed in, retired with Scheherazade. The next morning before day, Dinarzade failed not to call to her sister: “My dear sister, if you be not asleep, I pray you till day-break, which is very near, to go on with the story you began last night.” The sultan, without waiting for Scheherazade to ask his permission, bade her proceed with the story of the genie and the merchant; upon which Scheherazade continued her relation as follows. [FN: In the original work Scheherazade continually breaks off to ask the sultan to spare her life for another day, that she may finish the story she is relating. As these interruptions considerably interfere with the continued interest of the stories, it has been deemed advisable to omit them.]

When the merchant saw that the genie was going to cut off his head, he cried out aloud to him, “For heaven’s sake hold your hand! Allow me one word. Have the goodness to grant me some respite, to bid my wife and children adieu, and to divide my estate among them by will, that they may not go to law after my death. When I have done this, I will come back and submit to whatever you shall please to command.” “But,” said the genie, “if I grant you the time you ask, I doubt you will never return?” “If you will believe my oath,” answered the merchant, “I swear by all that is sacred, that I will come and meet you here without fail.” “What time do you require then?” demanded the genie. “I ask a year,” said the merchant; “I cannot in less settle my affairs, and prepare myself to die without regret. But I promise you, that this day twelve months I will return under these trees, to put myself into your hands.” “Do you take heaven to be witness to this promise?” said the genie. “I do,” answered the merchant, “and you may rely on my oath.” Upon this the genie left him near the fountain, and disappeared.

The merchant being recovered from his terror, mounted his horse, and proceeded on his journey, glad on the one hand that he had escaped so great a danger, but grieved on the other, when he reflected on his fatal oath. When he reached home, his wife and children received him with all the demonstrations of perfect joy. But he, instead of returning their caresses, wept so bitterly, that his family apprehended something calamitous had befallen him. His wife enquire reason of his excessive grief and tears; “We are all overjoyed,” said she, “at your return; but you alarm us by your lamentations; pray tell us the cause of your sorrow.” “Alas!” replied the husband, “I have but a year to live.” He then related what had passed betwixt him and the genie, and informed her that he had given him his oath to return at the end of the year, to receive death from his hands.

When they heard this afflicting intelligence, they all began to lament in the most distressing manner. His wife uttered the most piteous cries, beat her face, and tore her hair. The children, all in tears, made the house resound with their groans; and the father, not being able to resist the impulse of nature, mingled his tears with theirs: so that, in a word, they exhibited the most affecting spectacle possible.

On the following morning the merchant applied himself to put his affairs in order; and first of all to pay his debts. He made presents to his friends, gave liberal alms to the poor, set his slaves of both sexes at liberty, divided his property among his children, appointed guardians for such of them as were not of age; and after restoring to his wife all that was due to her by their marriage contract, he gave her in addition as much as the law would allow him.

At last the year expired, and he was obliged to depart. He put his burial clothes in his wallet; but when he came to bid his wife and children adieu, their grief surpassed description. They could not reconcile their minds to the separation, but resolved to go and die with him. When, however, it became necessary for him to tear himself from these dear objects, he addressed them in the following terms: “My dear wife and children, I obey the will of heaven in quitting you. Follow my example, submit with fortitude to this necessity, and consider that it is the destiny of man to die.” Having thus spoken, he went out of the hearing of the cries of his family; and pursuing his journey, arrived on the day appointed at the place where he had promised to meet the genie. He alighted, and seating himself down by the fountain, waited the coming of the genie, with all the sorrow imaginable. Whilst he languished under this painful expectation, an old man leading a hind appeared and drew near him. After they had saluted one another, the old man said to him, “Brother, may I ask why you are come into this desert place, which is possessed solely by evil spirits, and where consequently you cannot be safe? From the beautiful trees which are seen here, one might indeed suppose the place inhabited; but it is in reality a wilderness, where it is dangerous to remain long.”

The merchant satisfied his curiosity, and related to him the adventure which obliged him to be there. The old man listened with astonishment, and when he had done, exclaimed, “This is the most surprising thing in the world! and you are bound by the most inviolable oath. However, I will be witness of your interview with the genie.” He then seated himself by the merchant, and they entered into conversation.

“But I see day,” said Scheherazade, “and must leave off; yet the best of the story is to come.” The sultan resolving to hear the end of it, suffered her to live that day also.

The next morning Dinarzade made the same request to her sister as before: “My dear sister,” said she, “if you be not asleep, tell me one of those pleasant stories that you have read.” But the sultan, wishing to learn what followed betwixt the merchant and the genie, bade her proceed with that, which she did as follows.

Sir, while the merchant and the old man who led the hind were conversing, they saw another old man coming towards them, followed by two black dogs; after they had saluted one another, he asked them what they did in that place? The old man with the hind told him the adventure of the merchant and genie, with all that had passed between them, particularly the merchant’s oath. He added, that it was the day agreed on, and that he was resolved to stay and see the issue.

The second old man thinking it also worth his curiosity, resolved to do the same, and took his seat by them. They had scarcely begun to converse together, when there arrived a third old man leading a mule. He addressed himself to the two former, and asked why the merchant who sat with them looked so melancholy? They told him the reason, which appeared to him so extraordinary, that he also resolved to witness the result; and for that purpose sat down with them.

In a short time they perceived a thick vapour, like a cloud of dust raised by a whirlwind, advancing towards them. When it had come up to them it suddenly vanished, and the genie appeared; who, without saluting them, went to the merchant with a drawn cimeter, and taking him by the arm, said, “Get thee up, that I may kill thee, as thou didst my son.” The merchant and the three old men began to lament and fill the air with their cries.

When the old man who led the hind saw the genie lay hold of the merchant, and about to kill him, he threw himself at the feet of the monster, and kissing them, said to him, “Prince of genies, I most humbly request you to suspend your anger, and do me the favour to hear me. I will tell you the history of my life, and of the hind you see; and if you think it more wonderful and surprising than the adventure of the merchant, I hope you will pardon the unfortunate man a third of his offence.” The genie took some time to deliberate on this proposal, but answered at last, “Well then, I agree.”

The Story of the First Old Man and the Hind.

I shall begin my story then; listen to me, I pray you, with attention. This hind you see is my cousin; nay, what is more, my wife. She was only twelve years of age when I married her, so that I may justly say, she ought to regard me equally as her father, her kinsman, and her husband.

We lived together twenty years, without any children. Her barrenness did not effect any change in my love; I still treated her with much kindness and affection. My desire of having children only induced me to purchase a slave, by whom I had a son, who was extremely promising. My wife being jealous, cherished a hatred for both mother and child, but concealed her aversion so well, that I knew nothing of it till it was too late.

Mean time my son grew up, and was ten years old, when I was obliged to undertake a long journey. Before I went, I recommended to my wife, of whom I had no mistrust, the slave and her son, and prayed her to take care of them during my absence, which was to be for a whole year. She however employed that time to satisfy her hatred. She applied herself to magic, and when she had learnt enough of that diabolical art to execute her horrible design, the wretch carried my son to a desolate place, where, by her enchantments, she changed him into a calf, and gave him to my farmer to fatten, pretending she had bought him. Her enmity did not stop at this abominable action, but she likewise changed the slave into a cow, and gave her also to my farmer.

At my return, I enquired for the mother and child. “Your slave,” said she, “is dead; and as for your son, I know not what is become of him, I have not seen him this two months.” I was afflicted at the death of the slave, but as she informed me my son had only disappeared, I was in hopes he would shortly return. However, eight months passed, and I heard nothing of him. When the festival of the great Bairam was to be celebrated, I sent to my farmer for one of the fattest cows to sacrifice. He accordingly sent me one, and the cow which was brought me proved to be my slave, the unfortunate mother of my son. I bound her, but as I was going to sacrifice her, she bellowed piteously, and I could perceive tears streaming from her eyes. This seemed to me very extraordinary, and finding myself moved with compassion, I could not find in my heart to give her a blow, but ordered my farmer to get me another.

My wife, who was present, was enraged at my tenderness, and resisting an order which disappointed her malice, she cried out, “What are you doing, husband? Sacrifice that cow; your farmer has not a finer, nor one fitter for the festival.” Out of deference to my wife, I came again to the cow, and combating my compassion, which suspended the sacrifice, was going to give her the fatal blow, when the victim redoubling her tears, and bellowing, disarmed me a second time. I then put the mallet into the farmer’s hands, and desired him to take it and sacrifice her himself, for her tears and bellowing pierced my heart.

The farmer, less compassionate than myself; sacrificed her; but when he flayed her, found her to be nothing except bones, though to she seemed very fat. “Take her yourself,” said I to him, “dispose of her in alms, or any way you please: and if you have a very fat calf, bring it me in her stead.” I did not enquire what he did with the cow, but soon after he had taken her away, he returned with a fat calf. Though I knew not the calf was my son, yet I could not forbear being moved at the sight of him. On his part, as soon as he beheld me, he made so great an effort to come near me, that he broke his cord, threw himself at my feet, with his head against the ground, as if he meant to excite my compassion, conjuring me not to be so cruel as to take his life; and did as much as was possible for him, to signify that he was my son.

I was more surprised and affected with this action, than with the tears of the cow. I felt a tender pity, which interested me on his behalf, or rather, nature did its duty. “Go,” said I to the farmer, “carry home that calf, take great care of him, and bring me another in his stead immediately.”

As soon as my wife heard me give this order, she exclaimed, “What are you about, husband? Take my advice, sacrifice no other calf but that.” “Wife,” I replied, “I will not sacrifice him, I will spare him, and pray do not you oppose me.” The wicked woman had no regard to my wishes; she hated my son too much to consent that I should save him. I tied the poor creature, and taking up the fatal knife, was going to plunge it into my son's throat, when turning his eyes bathed with tears, in a languishing manner, towards me, he affected me so much that I had not strength to kill him. I let the knife fall, and told my wife positively that I would have another calf to sacrifice, and not that. She used all her endeavours to persuade me to change my resolution; but I continued firm, and pacified her a little, by promising that I would sacrifice him against the Bairam of the following year.

The next morning my farmer desired to speak with me alone. "I come," said he, "to communicate to you a piece of intelligence, for which I hope you will return me thanks. I have a daughter that has some skill in magic. Yesterday, as I carried back the calf which you would not sacrifice, I perceived she laughed when she saw him, and in a moment after fell a weeping. I asked her why she acted two such opposite parts at one and the same time. 'rather,' replied she, 'the calf you bring back is our landlord's son; I laughed for joy to see him still alive, and wept at the remembrance of the sacrifice that was made the other day of his mother, who was changed into a cow. These two metamorphoses were made by the enchantments of our master's wife, who hated both the mother and son.' This is what my daughter told me," said the farmer, "and I come to acquaint you with it."

I leave you to judge how much I was surprised. I went immediately to my farmer, to speak to his daughter myself. As soon as I arrived, I went forthwith to the stall where my son was kept; he could not return my embraces, but received them in such a manner, as fully satisfied me he was my son.

The farmer's daughter then came to us: "My good maid," said I, "can you restore my son to his former shape?" "Yes," she replied, "I can." "Ah!" said I, "if you do, I will make you mistress of all my fortune." She answered me, smiling, "You are our master, and I well know what I owe to you; but I cannot restore your son to his former shape, except on two conditions: the first is, that you give him to me for my husband; and the second, that you allow me to punish the person who changed him into a calf." "As to the first," I replied, "I agree with all my heart: nay, I promise you more, a considerable fortune for yourself, independently of what I design for my son: in a word, you shall see how I will reward the great service I expect from you. As to what relates to my wife, I also agree; a person who has been capable of committing such a criminal action, justly deserves to be punished. I leave her to your disposal, only I must pray you not to take her life." "I am going then," answered she, "to treat her as she treated your son." "To this I consent," said I, "provided you first of all restore to me my son."

The damsel then took a vessel full of water, pronounced over it words that I did not understand, and addressing herself to the calf, "O calf, if thou west created by the almighty and sovereign master of the world such as thou appearest at this time, continue in that form; but if thou be a man, and art changed into a calf by enchantment, return to thy natural shape, by the permission of the sovereign Creator." As she spoke, she threw water upon him, and in an instant he recovered his natural form.

"My son, my dear son," cried I, immediately embracing him with such a transport of joy that I knew not what I was doing, "it is heaven that hath sent us this young maid, to remove the horrible charm by which you were enchanted, and to avenge the injury done to you and your mother. I doubt not but in acknowledgment you will make your deliverer your wife, as I have promised." He joyfully consented; but before they married, she changed my wife into a hind; and this is she whom you see here. I desired she might have this shape, rather than another less agreeable, that we might see her in the family without horror.

Since that time, my son is become a widower, and gone to travel. It being now several years since I heard of him, I am come abroad to inquire after him; and not being willing to trust anybody with my wife, till I should return home, I thought fit to take her everywhere with me.

"This is the history of myself and this hind: is it not one of the most wonderful and surprising?" "I admit it is," said the genie, "and on that account forgive the merchant one third of his crime."

When the first old man had finished his story, the second, who led the two black dogs, addressed the genie, and said: "I am going to tell you what happened to me, and these two black dogs you see by me;

and I am certain you will say, that my story is yet more surprising than that which you have just heard. But when I have done this, I hope you will be pleased to pardon the merchant another third of his offence.” “I will,” replied the genie, “provided your story surpass that of the hind.” Then the second old man began in this manner —

The Story of the Second old Man and the Two Black Dogs.

Great prince of genies, you must know that we are three brothers, the two black dogs and myself. Our father, when he died, left each of us one thousand sequins. With that sum, we all became merchants. A little time after we had opened shop, my eldest brother, one of these two dogs, resolved to travel and trade in foreign countries. With this view, he sold his estate, and bought goods suited to the trade intended to follow.

He went away, and was absent a whole year. At the expiration of this time, a poor man, who I thought had come to ask alms, presented himself before me in my shop. I said to him, “God help you.” He returned my salutation, and continued, “Is it possible you do not know me?” Upon this I looked at him narrowly, and recognised him: “Ah, brother,” cried I, embracing him, “how could I know you in this condition?” I made him come into my house, and asked him concerning his health and the success of his travels. “Do not ask me that question,” said he; “when you see me, you see all: it would only renew my grief, to relate to you the particulars of the misfortunes I have experienced since I left you, which have reduced me to my present condition.”

I immediately shut up my shop, and taking him to a bath, gave him the best clothes I had. Finding on examining my books, that I had doubled my stock, that is to say, that I was worth two thousand sequins, I gave him one half; “With that,” said I, “brother, you may make up your loss.” He joyfully accepted the present, and having repaired his fortunes, we lived together, as before.

Some time after, my second brother, who is the other of these two dogs, would also sell his estate. His elder brother and myself did all we could to divert him from his purpose, but without effect. He disposed of it, and with the money bought such goods as were suitable to the trade which he designed to follow. He joined a caravan, and departed. At the end of the year he returned in the same condition as my other brother. Having myself by this time gained another thousand sequins, I made him a present of them. With this sum he furnished his shop, and continued his trade.

Some time after, one of my brothers came to me to propose that I should join them in a trading voyage; I immediately declined. “You have travelled,” said I, “and what have you gained by it? Who can assure me, that I shall be more successful than you have been?” It was in vain that they urged open me all the considerations they thought likely to gain me over to their design, for I constantly refused; but after having resisted their solicitations five whole years, they importuned me so much, that at last they overcame my resolution. When, however, the time arrived that we were to make preparations for our voyage, to buy the goods necessary to the undertaking, I found they had spent all, and had not one dirhem left of the thousand sequins I had given to each of them. I did not, on this account, upbraid them. On the contrary, my stock being still six thousand sequins, I shared the half of it with them, telling them, “My brothers, we must venture these three thousand sequins, and hide the rest in some secure place: that in case our voyage be not more successful than yours was formerly, we may have wherewith to assist us, and to enable us to follow our ancient way of living.” I gave each of them a thousand sequins, and keeping as much for myself, I buried the other three thousand in a corner of my house. We purchased goods, and having embarked them on board a vessel, which we freighted betwixt us, we put to sea with a favourable wind.

After two months sail, we arrived happily at port, where we landed, and had a very good market for our goods. I, especially, sold mine so well, that I gained ten to one. With the produce we bought commodities of that country, to carry back with us for sale.

When we were ready to embark on our return, I met on the sea-shore a lady, handsome enough, but poorly clad. She walked up to me gracefully, kissed my hand, besought me with the greatest earnestness imaginable to marry her, and take her along with me. I made some difficulty to agree to this proposal; but she urged so many things to persuade me that I ought not to object to her on account of her poverty, and that I should have all the reason in the world to be satisfied with her conduct, that at last I yielded. I ordered proper apparel to be made for her; and after having married her, according to form, I took her on board, and we set sail. I found my wife possessed so many good qualities, that my love to her every day increased. In the mean time my two brothers, who had not managed their affairs as successfully as I had mine, envied my prosperity; and suffered their feelings to carry them so far, that they conspired against my life; and one night, when my wife and I were asleep, threw us both into the sea.

My wife proved to be a fairy, and, by consequence, a genie, so that she could not be drowned; but for me, it is certain I must have perished, without her help. I had scarcely fallen into the water, when she took me up, and carried me to an island. When day appeared, she said to me, “You see, husband, that by saving your life, I have not rewarded you ill for your kindness to me. You must know, that I am a fairy, and being upon the sea-shore, when you were going to embark, I felt a strong desire to have you for my husband; I had a mind to try your goodness, and presented myself before you in disguise. You have dealt generously by me, and I am glad of an opportunity of returning my acknowledgment. But I am incensed against your brothers, and nothing will satisfy me but their lives.”

I listened to this discourse with admiration; I thanked the fairy the best way I could, for the great kindness she had done me; “But, Madam,” said I, “as for my brothers, I beg you to pardon them; whatever cause of resentment they have given me, I am not cruel enough to desire their death.” I then informed her what I had done for them, but this increased her indignation; and she exclaimed, “I must immediately pursue those ungrateful traitors, and take speedy vengeance on them. I will destroy their vessel, and sink them into the bottom of the sea.” “My good lady,” replied I, “for heaven’s sake forbear; moderate your anger, consider that they are my brothers, and that we ought to return good for evil.”

I pacified her by these words; and as soon as I had concluded, she transported me in a moment from the island to the roof of my own house, which was terraced, and instantly disappeared. I descended, opened the doors, and dug up the three thousand sequins I had formerly secreted. I went afterwards to my shop, which I also opened; and was complimented by the merchants, my neighbours, upon my return. When I went back to my house, I perceived there two black dogs, which came up to me in a very submissive manner: I could not divine the meaning of this circumstance, which greatly astonished me. But the fairy, who immediately appeared, said, "Husband, be not surprised to see these dogs, they are your brothers." I was troubled at this declaration, and asked her by what power they were so transformed. "I did it," said she, "or at least authorised one of my sisters to do it, who at the same time sunk their ship. You have lost the goods you had on board, but I will compensate you another way. As to your two brothers, I have condemned them to remain five years in that shape. Their perfidiousness too well deserves such a penance." Having thus spoken and told me where I might hear of her, she disappeared.

"The five years being now nearly expired, I am travelling in quest of her; and as I passed this way, I met this merchant, and the good old man who led the hind, and sat down by them. This is my history, O prince of genies! do not you think it very extraordinary?"

"I own it is," replied the genie, "and on that account I remit the merchant the second third of the crime which he has committed against me."

As soon as the second old man had finished, the third began his story, after repeating the request of the two former, that the genie would pardon the merchant the other third of his crime, provided what he should relate surpassed in singularity of incidents the narratives he had already heard. The genie made him the same promise as he had given the others.

The third old man related his story to the genie; and it exceeded the two former stories so much, in the variety of wonderful adventures, that the genie was astonished; and no sooner heard the conclusion, than he said to the old man, "I remit the other third of the merchant's crime on account of your story. He is greatly obliged to all of you, for having delivered him out of his danger by what you have related, for to this he owes his life." Having spoken thus he disappeared, to the great contentment of the company.

The merchant failed not to make due acknowledgment to his deliverers. They rejoiced to see him out of danger; and bidding him adieu, each of them proceeded on his way. The merchant returned to his wife and children, and passed the rest of his days with them in peace.

THE STORY OF THE FISHERMAN.

There was an aged fisherman, who was so poor, that he could scarcely as much as would maintain himself, his wife, and three children. He went every day to fish betimes in the morning; and imposed it as a law upon himself, not to cast his nets above four times a-day. He went one morning by moon-light, and coming to the seaside, undressed himself, and cast in his nets. As he drew them towards the shore, he found them very heavy, and thought he had a good draught of fish, at which he rejoiced; but in a moment after, perceiving that instead of fish his nets contained nothing but the carcass of an ass, he was much vexed.

When the fisherman had mended his nets, which the carcass of the ass had broken in several places, he threw them in a second time; and when he drew them, found a great deal of resistance, which made him think he had taken abundance of fish; but he found nothing except a basket full of gravel and slime, which grieved him extremely. “O fortune!” cried he, with a lamentable tone, “be not angry with me, nor persecute a wretch who prays thee to spare him. I came hither from my house to seek for my livelihood, and thou pronouncest against me a sentence of death. I have no other trade but this to subsist by: and notwithstanding all my care, I can scarcely provide what is absolutely necessary for my family. But I am to blame to complain of thee; thou takest pleasure to persecute honest people, and to leave great men in obscurity, while thou shewest favour to the wicked, and advancest those who have no virtue to recommend them.”

Having finished this complaint, he fretfully threw away the basket, and washing his nets from the slime, cast them the third time; but brought up nothing, except stones, shells, and mud. No language can express his disappointment; he was almost distracted. However, when day began to appear, he did not forget to say his prayers, like a good Moosulmaun, and he added to them this petition: “Lord, thou knowest that I cast my nets only four times a day; I have already drawn them three times, without the least reward for my labour: I am only to cast them once more; I pray thee to render the sea favourable to me, as thou didst to Moses."

The fisherman having finished this prayer, cast his nets the fourth time; and when he thought it was proper, drew them as formerly, with great difficulty; but instead of fish, found nothing in them but a vessel of yellow copper, which from its weight seemed not to be empty; and he observed that it was shut up and sealed with lead, having the impression of a seal upon it. This turn of fortune rejoiced him; "I will sell it," said he, "to the founder, and with the money buy a measure of corn." He examined the vessel on all sides, and shook it, to try if its contents made any noise, but heard nothing. This circumstance, with the impression of the seal upon the leaden cover, made him think it inclosed something precious. To try this, he took a knife, and opened it with very little labour. He turned the mouth downward, but nothing came out; which surprised him extremely. He placed it before him, but while he viewed it attentively, there came out a very thick smoke, which obliged him to retire two or three paces back.

The smoke ascended to the clouds, and extending itself along the sea and upon the shore formed a great mist, which we may well imagine filled the fisherman with astonishment. When the smoke was all out of the vessel, it re-united and became a solid body, of which was formed a genie twice as high as the greatest of giants. At the sight of a monster of such an unwieldy bulk, the fisherman would fain have fled, but was so frightened, that he could not move.

"Solomon," cried the genie immediately, "Solomon, the great prophet, pardon, pardon; I will never more oppose your will, I will obey all your commands."

When the fisherman heard these words of the genie, he recovered his courage, and said to him, "Thou proud spirit, what is it you say? It is above eighteen hundred years since the prophet Solomon died, and we are now at the end of time. Tell me your history, and how you came to be shut up in this vessel."

The genie turning to the fisherman, with a fierce look, said. "Thou must speak to me with more respect; thou art a presumptuous fellow to call me a proud spirit." "Very well," replied the fisherman, "shall I speak to you more civilly, and call you the owl of good luck?" "I say," answered the genie, "speak to me more respectfully, or I will kill thee.” “Ah!” replied the fisherman, “why would you kill me? Did I not just now set you at liberty, and have you already forgotten my services?” “Yes, I remember it,” said the genie, “but that shall not save thy life: I have only one favour to grant thee.” “And what is that?” asked the fisherman. “It is,” answered the genie, “to give thee thy choice, in what manner thou wouldst have me put thee to death.” “But wherein have I offended you?” demanded the fisherman. “Is that your reward for the service I have rendered you?” “I cannot treat thee otherwise,” said the genie; “and that thou mayest know the reason, hearken to my story.”

“I am one of those rebellious spirits that opposed the will of heaven; nearly all the other genies owned Solomon, the great prophet, and yielded to his authority. Sabhir and I were the only two that would never be guilty of a mean submission: and to avenge himself, that great monarch sent Asaph, the son of Barakhia, his chief minister, to apprehend me. That was accordingly done. Asaph seized my person, and brought me by force before his master’s throne.

“Solomon, the son of David, commanded me to acknowledge his power, and to submit to his commands: I bravely refused, and told him, I would rather expose myself to his resentment, than swear fealty as he required. To punish me, he shut me up in this copper vessel; and that I might not break my prison, he himself stamps upon this leaden cover, his seal with the great name of God engraver upon it. He then gave the vessel to one of the genies who had submitted, with orders to throw me into the sea, which to my sorrow were executed.

“During the first hundred years of my imprisonment, I swore that if any one should deliver me before the expiration of that period, I would make him rich, even after his death: but that century ran out, and nobody did me that good office. During the second, I made an oath, that I would open all the treasures of the earth to any one that might set me at liberty; but with no better success. In the third, I promised to make my deliverer a potent monarch, to be always near him in spirit, and to grant him every day three requests, of what nature soever they might be: but this century passed as well as the two former, and I continued in prison. At last being angry, or rather mad, to find myself a prisoner so long, I swore, that if afterwards any one should deliver me, I would kill him without mercy, and grant him no other favour but to choose the manner of his death; and therefore, since thou hast delivered me to-day, I give thee that choice."

This discourse afflicted the fisherman extremely: "I am very unfortunate," cried he, "to come hither to do such a kindness to one that is so ungrateful. I beg you to consider your injustice, and revoke such an unreasonable oath; pardon me, and heaven will pardon you; if you grant me my life, heaven will protest you from all attempts against your own." "No, thy death is resolved on," said the genie, "only choose in what manner you will die." The fisherman perceiving the genie to be resolute, was extremely grieved, not so much for himself, as on account of his three children; and bewailed the misery they must be reduced to by his death. He endeavoured still to appease the genie, and said, "Alas! be pleased to take pity on me, in consideration of the service I have done you." "I have told thee already," replied the genie, "it is for that very reason I must kill thee." "That is strange," said the fisherman, "are you resolved to reward good with evil? The proverb says, 'That he who does good to one who deserves it not is always ill rewarded.' I must confess, I thought it was false; for certainly there can be nothing more contrary to reason, or the laws of society. Nevertheless, I find now by cruel experience that it is but too true." "Do not lose time," interrupted the genie; "all thy reasonings shall not divert me from my purpose: make haste, and tell me what kind of death thou preferest?"

Necessity is the mother of invention. The fisherman bethought himself of a stratagem. "Since I must die then," said he to the genie, "I submit to the will of heaven; but before I choose the manner of my death, I conjure you by the great name which was engraver upon the seal of the prophet Solomon, the son of David, to answer me truly the question I am going to ask you."

The genie finding himself obliged to a positive answer by this adjuration, trembled; and replied to the fisherman, "Ask what thou wilt, but make haste."

The fisherman then said to him, "I wish to know if you were actually in this vessel: Dare you swear it by the name of the great

God?" "Yes," replied the genie, "I do swear by that great name, that I was." "In good faith," answered the fisherman, "I cannot believe you; the vessel is not capable of holding one of your size, and how should it be possible that your whole body should lie in it?" "I swear to thee, notwithstanding," replied the genie, "that I was there just as you see me here: Is it possible, that thou cost not believe me after the solemn oath I have taken?" "Truly not I," said the fisherman; "nor will I believe you, unless you go into the vessel again."

Upon which the body of the genie dissolved and changed itself into smoke, extending as before upon the sea shore; and at last, being collected, it began to re-enter the vessel, which it continued to do by a slow and equal motion, till no part remained out; when immediately a voice came forth, which said to the fisherman, "Well now, incredulous fellow, I am in the vessel, do not you believe me now?"

The fisherman, instead of answering the genie, took the cover of lead, and having speedily replaced it on the vessel, "Genie," cried he, "now it is your turn to beg my favour, and to choose which way I shall put you to death; but not so, it is better that I should throw you into the sea, whence I took you: and then I will build a house upon the shore, where I will reside and give notice to all fishermen who come to throw in their nets, to beware of such a wicked genie as thou art, who hast made an oath to kill him that shall set thee at liberty."

The genie, enraged at these expressions, struggled to set himself at liberty; but it was impossible, for the impression of Solomon's seal prevented him. Perceiving that the fisherman had got the advantage of him, for he thought fit to dissemble his anger; "Fishermen," said he, "take heed you do not what you threaten; for what I spoke to you was only by way of jest." "O genie!" replied the fisherman, "thou who wast but a moment ago the greatest of all genies, and now art the least of them, thy crafty discourse will signify nothing, to the sea thou shalt return. If thou hast been there already so long as thou hast told me, thou may'st very well stay there till the day of judgment. I begged of thee in God's name not to take away my life, and thou didst reject my prayers; I am obliged to treat thee in the same manner."

The genie omitted nothing that he thought likely to prevail with the fisherman: “Open the vessel,” said he, “give me my liberty, and I promise to satisfy thee to thy own content.” “Thou art a traitor,” replied the fisherman, “I should deserve to lose my life, if I were such a fool as to trust thee: thou wilt not fail to treat me in the same manner as a certain Grecian king treated the physician Douban. It is a story I have a mind to tell thee, therefore listen to it.”

The Story of the Grecian King and the Physician Douban.

There was in the country of Yunaun or Greece, a king who was leprous, and his physicians had in vain endeavoured his cure; when a very able physician, named Douban, arrived at his court.

This physician had learnt the theory of his profession in Greek, Persian, Turkish, Arabic, Latin, Syriac, and Hebrew books; he was an experienced natural philosopher, and fully understood the good and bad qualities of plants and drugs. As soon as he was informed of the king's distemper, and understood that his physicians had given him over, he found means to present himself before him. "I know," said he, after the usual ceremonials, "that your majesty's physicians have not been able to heal you of the leprosy; but if you will accept my service, I will engage to cure you without potions, or external applications."

The king listened to what he said, and answered, "If you be able to perform what you promise, I will enrich you and your posterity. Do you assure me that you will cure my leprosy without potion, or applying any external medicine?" "Yes, Sire," replied the physician, "I promise myself success, through God's assistance, and to-morrow, with your majesty's permission, I will make the trial."

The physician returned to his quarters, made a hollow mace, and at the handle he put in his drugs; he made also a ball in such a manner as suited his purpose, with which next morning he presented himself before the king, and falling down at his feet, kissed the ground.

The physician Douban rose up, and after a profound reverence, said to the king, he judged it meet that his majesty should take horse, and go to the place where he used to play at mall. The king did so, and when he arrived there, the physician came to him with the mace, and said, "Exercise yourself with this mace, and strike the ball until you find your hands and body perspire. When the medicine I have put up in the handle of the mace is heated with your hand, it will penetrate your whole body; and as soon as you perspire, you may leave off the exercise, for then the medicine will have had its effect.

Immediately on your return to your palace, go into the bath, and cause yourself to be well washed and rubbed; then retire to bed, and when you rise to-morrow you will find yourself cured."

The king took the mace, and struck the ball, which was returned by his officers who played with him; he played so long, that his hands and his whole body were in a sweat, and then the medicine shut up in the handle of the mace had its operation, as the physician had said. Upon this the king left off play, returned to his palace, entered the bath, and observed very exactly his physician had prescribed to him.

The next morning when he arose, he perceived with equal wonder and joy, that his leprosy was cured, and his body as clean as if it had never been affected. As soon as he was dressed, he came into the hall of audience, where he ascended his throne, and shewed himself to his courtiers: who, eager to know the success of the new medicine, came thither betimes, and when they saw the king perfectly cured, expressed great joy. The physician Douban entering the hall, bowed himself before the throne, with his face to the ground. The king perceiving him, made him sit down by his side, presented him to the assembly, and gave him all the commendation he deserved. His majesty did not stop here: but as he treated all his court that day, made him eat at his table alone with him.

The Grecian king was not satisfied with having admitted the physician Douban to his table, but caused him to be clad in a rich robe, ordered him two thousand pieces of gold, and thinking that he could never sufficiently acknowledge his obligations to him, continued every day to load him with new favours. But this king had a vizier, who was avaricious, envious, and naturally capable of every kind of mischief. He could not behold without envy the presents that were given to the physician, whose other merits had already begun to make him jealous, and he therefore resolved to lessen him in the king's esteem. To effect this, he went to the king, and told him in private, that he had some information of the greatest consequence to communicate. The king having asked what it was? "Sire," said he, "it is highly dangerous for a monarch to confide in a man whose fidelity he has never tried. Though you heap favours upon the physician Douban, your majesty does not know that he is a traitor, sent by your enemies to take away your life." "From whom," demanded the king, "have you the suggestion which you dare pronounce? Consider to whom you are speaking, and that you are advancing what I shall not easily believe." "Sire," replied the vizier, "I am well informed of what I have had the honour to reveal to your majesty; therefore do not rest in dangerous security: if your majesty be asleep, be pleased to awake; for I once more repeat, that the physician Douban left his native country, and came to settle himself at your court, for the sole purpose of executing the horrible design which I have intimated."

"No, no, vizier," interrupted the king; "I am certain, that this physician, whom you suspect to be a villain and a traitor, is one of the best and most virtuous of men. You know by what medicine, or rather by what miracle, he cured me of my leprosy: If he had had a design upon my life, why did he save me then? He needed only to have left me to my disease; I could not have escaped it, as life was fast decaying. Forbear then to fill me with unjust suspicions: instead of listening to you, I tell you, that from this day forward I will give that great man a pension of a thousand pieces of gold per month for his life; nay, though I were to share with him all my riches and dominions, I should never pay him sufficiently for what he has done. I perceive it to be his virtue that raises your envy; but do not think I will be unjustly prejudiced against him. I remember too well what a vizier said to king Sinbad, his master, to prevent his putting to death the prince his son."

What the Grecian king said about king Sinbad raised the vizier's curiosity, who said, "I pray your majesty to pardon me, if I have the boldness to ask what the vizier of king Sinbad said to his master to divert him from putting the prince his son to death." The Grecian king had the condescension to satisfy him: "That vizier," said he, "after having represented to king Sinbad, that he ought to beware, lest on the accusation of a mother-in-law he should commit an action of which he might afterwards repent, told him this story."

The Story of the Husband and the Parrot.

A certain man had a beautiful wife, whom he loved so dearly, that he could scarcely allow her to be out of his sight. One day, some urgent affairs obliging him to go from home, he went to a place where all sorts of birds were sold, and bought a parrot, which not only spoke well, but could also give an account of every thing that was done in its presence. He brought it in a cage to his house, desired his wife to put it in his chamber, and take care of it during his absence, and then departed.

On his return, he questioned the parrot concerning what had passed while he was from home, and the bird told him such things as gave him occasion to upbraid his wife. She concluded some of her slaves had betrayed her, but all of them swore they had been faithful, and agreed that the parrot must have been the tell-tale.

Upon this, the wife began to devise how she might remove her husband's jealousy, and at the same time revenge herself on the parrot. Her husband being gone another journey, she commanded a slave in the night-time to turn a hand-mill under the parrot's cage; she ordered another to sprinkle water, in resemblance of rain, over the cage; and a third to move a looking-glass, backward and forward against a candle, before the parrot. The slaves spent a great part of the night in doing what their mistress desired them, and acquitted themselves with much skill.

Next night the husband returned, and examined the parrot again about what had passed during his absence. The bird answered, "Good master, the lightning, thunder, and rain so much disturbed me all night, that I cannot tell how much I suffered." The husband, who knew that there had been neither thunder, lightning, nor rain in the night, fancied that the parrot, not having spoken truth in this, might also have lied in the other relation; upon which he took it out of the cage, and threw it with so much force to the ground that he killed it. Yet afterwards he understood from his neigbours, that the poor parrot had not deceived him in what it had stated of his wife's base conduct, made him repent that he had killed it.

When the Grecian king had finished the story of the parrot, he added, “And you, vizier, because of the hatred you bear to the physician Douban, who never did you any injury, you would have me cut him off; but I will beware lest I should repent as the husband did after killing his parrot.”

The mischievous vizier was too desirous of effecting the ruin of the physician Douban to stop here. “Sir,” said he, “the death of the parrot was but a trifle, and I believe his master did not mourn for him long: but why should your fear of wronging an innocent man, hinder your putting this physician to death? Is it not sufficient justification that he is accused of a design against your life? When the business in question is to secure the life of a king, bare suspicion ought to pass for certainty; and it is better to sacrifice the innocent than to spare the guilty. But, Sir, this is not a doubtful case; the physician Douban has certainly a mind to assassinate you. It is not envy which makes me his enemy; it is only my zeal, with the concern I have for preserving your majesty’s life, that makes me give you my advice in a matter of this importance. If the accusation be false, I deserve to be punished in the same manner as a vizier formerly was.” “What had the vizier done,” demands the Grecian king, “to deserve punishment?” “I will inform your majesty,” said the vizier, “if you will be pleased to hear me.”

The Story of the Vizier that was Punished.

There was a king who had a son that loved hunting. He allowed him to pursue that diversion often; but gave orders to his grand vizier always to attend him.

One hunting day, the huntsman having roused a deer, the prince, who thought the vizier followed him, pursued the game so far, and with so much earnestness, that he separated himself from the company. Perceiving he had lost his way he stopped, and endeavoured to return to the vizier; but not knowing the country he wandered farther.

Whilst he was thus riding about, he met on his way a handsome lady, who wept bitterly. He stopped his horse, and enquired who she was, how she came to be alone in that place, and what she wanted. “I am,” replied she, “the daughter of an Indian king. As I was taking the air on horseback, in the country, I grew sleepy, and fell from my horse, who is run away, and I know not what is become of him.” The young prince taking compassion on her, requested her to get up behind him, which she willingly did.

As they were passing by the ruins of a house, the lady expressed a desire to alight. The prince stopped, and having put her down, dismounted himself, and went near the building, leading his horse after him. But you may judge how much he was surprised, when he heard the pretended lady utter these words: “Be glad, my children, I bring you a young man for your repast;” and other voices, which answered immediately, “Where is he, for we are very hungry?”

The prince heard enough to convince him of his danger. He perceived that the lady, who called herself the daughter of an Indian king, was one of those savage demons, called Gholes, who live in desolated places, and employ a thousand wiles to surprise passengers, whom they afterwards devour. The prince instantly remounted his horse, and luckily escaped.

The pretended princess appeared that very moment, and perceiving she had missed her prey, exclaimed, “Fear nothing, prince: Who are you? Whom do you seek?” “I have lost my way,” replied he, “and am endeavouring to find it.” “If you have lost your way," said she, "recommend yourself to God, he will deliver you out of your perplexity."

After the counterfeit Indian princess had bidden the young prince recommend himself to God, he could not believe she spoke sincerely, but thought herself sure of him; and therefore lifting up his hands to heaven, said, "Almighty Lord, cast shine eyes upon me, and deliver me from this enemy." After this prayer, the ghole entered the ruins again, and the prince rode off with all possible haste. He happily found his way, and arrived safe at the court of his father, to whom he gave a particular account of the danger he had been in through the vizier's neglect: upon which the king, being incensed against that minister, ordered him to be immediately strangled.

"Sir," continued the Grecian king's vizier, "to return to the physician Douban, if you do not take care, the confidence you put in him will be fatal to you; I am very well assured that he is a spy sent by your enemies to attempt your majesty's life. He has cured you, you will say: but alas! who can assure you of that? He has perhaps cured you only in appearance, and not radically; who knows but the medicine he has given you, may in time have pernicious effects?"

The Grecian king was not able to discover the wicked design of his vizier, nor had he firmness enough to persist in his first opinion. This discourse staggered him: "Vizier," said he, "thou art in the right; he may be come on purpose to take away my life, which he may easily do by the smell of his drugs."

When the vizier found the king in such a temper as he wished, "Sir," said he, "the surest and speediest method you can take to secure your life, is to send immediately for the physician Douban, and order his head to be struck off." "In truth," said the king, "I believe that is the way we must take to frustrate his design." When he had spoken thus, he called for one of his officers, and ordered him to go for the physician; who, knowing nothing of the king's purpose, came to the palace in haste.

"Knowest thou," said the king, when he saw him, "why I sent for thee?" "No, Sir," answered he; "I wait till your majesty be pleased to inform me." "I sent for thee," replied the king, "to rid myself of thee, by taking away thy life."

No man can express the surprise of the physician, when he heard the sentence of death pronounced against him. “Sir,” said he, “why would your majesty take my life? What crime have I committed?” “I am informed,” replied the king, “that you came to my court only to attempt my life; but to prevent you, I will be sure of yours. Give the blow,” said he to the executioner, who was present, “and deliver me from a perfidious wretch, who came hither on purpose to assassinate me.”

When the physician heard this cruel order, he readily judged that the honours and presents he had received from the king had procured him enemies, and that the weak prince was imposed on. He repented that he had cured him of his leprosy; but it was now too late. “Is it thus,” asked the physician, “that you reward me for curing you?” The king would not hearken to him, but a second time ordered the executioner to strike the fatal blow. The physician then had recourse to his prayers; “Alas, Sir,” cried he, “prolong my days, and God will prolong yours; do not put me to death, lest God treat you in the same manner.”

The fisherman broke off his discourse here, to apply it to the genie. “Well, genie,” said he, “you see that what passed betwixt the Grecian king and his physician Douban is acted just now by us.”

The Grecian king, continued he, instead of having regard to the prayers of the physician, who begged him to spare his life, cruelly replied, “No, no; I must of necessity cut you off, otherwise you may assassinate with as much art as you cured me.” The physician, without bewailing himself for being so ill rewarded by the king, prepared for death. The executioner tied his hands, and was going to draw his cimeter.

The courtiers who were present, being moved with compassion, begged the king to pardon him, assuring his majesty that he was not guilty of the crime laid to his charge, and that they would answer for his innocence: but the king was inflexible.

The physician being on his knees, his eyes tied up, and ready to receive the fatal blow, addressed himself once more to the king: “Sir,” said he, “since your majesty will not revoke the sentence of death, I beg, at least, that you would give me leave to return to my house, to give orders about my burial, to bid farewell to my family, to give alms, and to bequeath my books to those who are capable of making good use of them. I have one particularly I would present to your majesty; it is a very precious book, and worthy of being laid up carefully in your treasury." "What is it," demanded the king, "that makes it so valuable?" "Sir," replied the physician, "it possesses many singular and curious properties; of which the chief is, that if your majesty will give yourself the trouble to open it at the sixth leaf, and read the third line of the left page, my head, after being cut off, will answer all the questions you ask it." The king being curious, deferred his death till next day, and sent him home under a strong guard.

The physician, during that time, put his affairs in order; and the report being spread, that an unheard of prodigy was to happen after his death, the viziers, emirs, officers of the guard, and, in a word, the whole court, repaired next day to the hall of audience, that they might be witnesses of it.

The physician Douban was brought in, and advancing to the foot of the throne, with a book in his hand, he called for a basin, and laid upon it the cover in which the book was wrapped; then presenting the book to the king, "Take this," said he, "and after my head is cut off, order that it be put into the basin upon that cover; as soon as it is placed there, the blood will stop; then open the book, and my head will answer your questions. But permit me once more to implore your majesty's clemency; for God's sake grant my request, I protest to you that I am innocent." "Your prayers," answered the king, "are in vain; and were it for nothing but to hear your head speak after your death, it is my will you should die." As he said this, he took the book out of the physician's hand, and ordered the executioner to do his duty.

The head was so dexterously cut off that it fell into the basin, and was no sooner laid upon the cover of the book than the blood stopped; then to the great surprise of the king, and all the spectators, its eyes, and said, "Sir, will your majesty be pleased to open the book?" The king proceeded to do so; but finding that the leaves adhered to each other, that he might turn them with more ease, he put his finger to his mouth, and wetted it with spittle. He did thus till he came to the sixth leaf, and finding no writing on the place where he was desired to look for it, "Physician," said he, "there is nothing written.” “Turn over some more leaves,” replied the head. The king went on, putting always his finger to his mouth, until the poison with which each leaf was imbued, coming to have its effect, the prince found himself suddenly taken with an extraordinary fit, his eye-sight failed, and he fell down at the foot of the throne in violent convulsions.

When the physician Douban, or rather his head, saw that the poison had taken effect, and that the king had but a few moments to live; “Tyrant,” it cried, “now you see how princes are treated, who, abusing their authority, cut off innocent men: God punishes soon or late their injustice and cruelty.” Scarcely had the head spoken these words, when the king fell down dead, and the head itself lost what life it had.

As soon as the fisherman had concluded the history of the Greek king and his physician Douban, he made the application to the genie, whom he still kept shut up in the vessel. “If the Grecian king,” said he, “had suffered the physician to live, God would have continued his life also; but he rejected his most humble prayers, and the case is the same with thee, O genie! Could I have prevailed with thee to grant me the favour I supplicated, I should now take pity on thee; but since, notwithstanding the extreme obligation thou west under to me, for having set thee at liberty, thou didst persist in thy design to kill me, I am obliged, in my turn, to be equally hard-hearted to thee.”

“My good friend fisherman,” replied the genie, “I conjure thee once more, not to be guilty of such cruelty; consider, that it is not good to avenge one’s self, and that on the other hand, it is commendable to do good for evil; do not treat me as Imama formerly treated Ateca.” “And what did Imama to Ateca?” enquired the fisherman. “Ho!” says the genie, “if you have a mind to be informed, open the vessel: do you think that I can be in an humour to relate stories in so strait a prison? I will tell you as many as you please, when you have let me out.” “No,” said the fisherman, “I will not let thee out; it is in vain to talk of it; I am just going to throw thee into the bottom of the sea.” “Hear me one word more,” cried the genie; “I promise to do thee no hurt; nay, far from that, I will shew thee a way to become exceedingly rich.”

The hope of delivering himself from poverty, prevailed with the fisherman. “I could listen to thee,” said he, “were there any credit to be given to thy word; swear to me by the great name of God, that you will faithfully perform what you promise, and I will open the vessel; I do not believe you will dare to break such an oath.”

The genie swore to him, upon which the fisherman immediately took off the covering of the vessel. At that instant the smoke ascended, and the genie having resumed his form, the first thing he did was to kick the vessel into the sea. This action alarmed the fisherman. “Genie,” said he, “will not you keep the oath you just now made? And must I say to you, as the physician Douban said to the Grecian king, suffer me to live, and God will prolong your days.”

The genie laughed at the fisherman’s fear, and answered, “No, fisherman, be not afraid, I only did it to divert myself, and to see if thou wouldst be alarmed at it: but to convince thee that I am in earnest, take thy nets and follow me.” As he spoke these words, he walked before the fisherman, who having taken up his nets, followed him, but with some distrust. They passed by the town, and came to the top of a mountain, from whence they descended into a vast plain, which brought them to a lake, that lay betwixt four hills.

When they reached the side of the lake, the genie said to the fisherman, “Cast in thy nets, and catch fish;” the fisherman did not doubt of taking some, because he saw a great number in the water; but he was extremely surprised, when he found they were of four colours, that is to say, white, red, blue, and yellow. He threw in his nets, and brought out one of each colour. Having never seen the like before, he could not but admire them, and judging that he might get a considerable sum for them, he was very joyful. “Carry those fish,” said the genie to him, “and present them to thy sultan; he will give thee more money for them. Thou mayest come every day to fish in this lake; but I give thee warning not to throw in thy nets above once a day, otherwise thou wilt repent.” Having spoken thus, he struck his foot upon the ground, which opened, and after it had swallowed him up closed again.

The fisherman being resolved to follow the genie’s advice, forbore casting in his nets a second time; and returned to the town very well satisfied; and making a thousand reflections upon his adventure. He went immediately to the sultan’s palace, to offer his fish.

The sultan was much surprised, when he saw the four fish which the fisherman presented. He took them up one after another, and viewed them with attention; and after having admired them a long time, “Take those fish,” said he to his vizier, “and carry them to the cook, whom the emperor of the Greeks has sent me. I cannot imagine but that they must be as good as they are beautiful.”

The vizier, carried them as he was directed, and delivering them to the cook, said, “Here are four fish just brought to the sultan; he orders you to dress them:” he then returned to the sultan his master, who ordered him to give the fisherman four hundred pieces of gold of the coin of that country, which he did accordingly.

The fisherman, who had never seen so much money, could scarcely believe his good fortune, but thought the whole must be a dream, until he found it otherwise, by being able to provide necessaries for his family with the produce of his fish.

As soon as the sultan’s cook had gutted the fish, she put them upon the fire in a frying-pan, with oil, and when she thought them fried enough on one side, she turned them upon the other; but, O monstrous prodigy! scarcely were they turned, when the wall of the kitchen divided, and a young lady of wonderful beauty entered from the opening. She was clad in flowered satin, after the Egyptian manner, with pendants in her ears, a necklace of large pearls, and bracelets of gold set with rubies, with a rod in her hand. She moved towards the frying-pan, to the great amazement of the cook, who continued fixed by the sight, and striking one of the fish with the end of the rod, said, “Fish, fish, are you in duty?” The fish having answered nothing, she repeated these words, and then the four fish lifted up their heads, and replied, “Yes, yes: if you reckon, we reckon; if you pay your debts, we pay ours; if you fly, we overcome, and are content.” As soon as they had finished these words, the lady overturned the frying-pan, and returned into the open part of the wall, which closed immediately, and became as it was before.

The cook was greatly frightened at what had happened, and coming a little to herself, went to take up the fish that had fallen on the hearth, but found them blacker than coal, and not fit to be carried to the sultan. This grievously troubled her, and she fell to weeping most bitterly. “Alas!” said she, “what will become of me? If I tell the sultan what I have seen, I am sure he will not believe me, but will be enraged against me.”

While she was thus bewailing herself, the grand vizier entered, and asked her if the fish were ready? She told him all that had occurred, which we may easily imagine astonished him; but without speaking a word of it to the sultan, he invented an excuse that satisfied him, and sending immediately for the fisherman, bid him bring four more such fish, for a misfortune had befallen the others, so that they were not fit to be carried to the sultan. The fisherman, without saying any thing of what the genie had told him, in order to excuse himself from bringing them that day, told the vizier, he had a great way to go for them, but would certainly bring them on the morrow.

Accordingly the fisherman went away by night, and coming to the lake, threw in his nets betimes next morning, took four fish like the former, and brought them to the vizier, at the hour appointed. The minister took them himself, carried them to the kitchen, and shutting himself up with the cook, she gutted them, and put them on the fire, as she had done the four others the day before. When they were fried on one side, and she had turned them upon the other, the kitchen wall again opened, and the same lady came in with the rod in her hand, struck one of the fish, spoke to it as before, and all four gave her the same answer.

After the four fish had answered the young lady, she overturned the frying-pan with her rod, and retired into the wall. The grand vizier, being witness to what had passed: “This is too wonderful and extraordinary,” said he, “to be concealed from the sultan; I will inform him of this prodigy.”

The sultan, being much surprised, sent immediately for the fisherman, and said to him, “Friend, cannot you bring me four more such fish?” The fisherman replied, “If your majesty will be pleased to allow me three days, I will do it.” Having obtained his time, he went to the lake immediately, and at the first throwing in of his net, he caught four fish, and brought them directly to the sultan; who was so much the more rejoiced, as he did not expect them so soon, and ordered him four hundred pieces of gold. As soon as the sultan had the fish, he ordered them to be carried into his closet, with all that was necessary for frying them; and having shut himself up with the vizier, the minister gutted them, put them into the pan, and when they were fried on one side, turned them upon the other; then the wall of the closet opened, but instead of the young lady, there came out a black, in the habit of a slave, and of a gigantic stature, with a great green staff in his hand. He advanced towards the pan, and touching one of the fish with his staff, said with a terrible voice, "Fish, are you in your duty?" At these words, the fish raised up their heads, and answered, "Yes, yes; we are: if you reckon, we reckon; if you pay your debts, we pay ours; if you fly, we overcome, and are content."

The fish had no sooner finished these words, than the black threw the pan into the middle of the closet, and reduced the fish to a coal. Having done this, he retired fiercely, and entering again into the aperture, it closed, and the wall appeared just as it did before.

"After what I have seen," said the sultan to the vizier, "it will not be possible for me to be easy: these fish, without doubt, signify something extraordinary." He sent for the fisherman, and when he came, said to him, "Fisherman, the fish you have brought us, make me very uneasy; where did you catch them?" "Sir," answered he, "I fished for them in a lake situated betwixt four hills, beyond the mountain that we see from hence." "Knowst thou not that lake?" said the sultan to the vizier. "No," replied the vizier. "I never so much as heard of it, although I have for sixty years hunted beyond that mountain." The sultan asked the fisherman, how far the lake might be from the palace? The fisherman answered, it was not above three hours journey; upon this assurance, the sultan commanded all his court to take horse, and the fisherman served them for a guide. They all ascended the mountain, and at the foot of it they saw, to their great surprise, a vast plain, that nobody had observed till then, and at last they came to the lake, which they found to be situated betwixt four hills as the fisherman had described. The water was so transparent, that they observed all the fish to be like those which the fisherman had brought to the palace.

The sultan stood upon the bank of the lake, and after beholding the fish with admiration, demanded of his courtiers, if it were possible they had never seen this lake, which was within so short a distance of the town. They all answered, that they had never so much as heard of it.

“Since you all agree that you never heard of it, and as I am no less astonished than you are, at this novelty, I am resolved not to return to my palace till I learn how this lake came here, and why all the fish in it are of four colours.” Having spoken thus, he ordered his court to encamp; and immediately his pavilion and the tents of his household were planted upon the banks of the lake.

When night came, the sultan retired under his pavilion, and spoke to the grand vizier thus: “Vizier, my mind is uneasy: this lake transported hither; the black that appeared to us in my closet, and the fish that we heard speak; all these things so much excite my curiosity, that I cannot resist my impatient desire to have it satisfied. To this end, I am resolved to withdraw alone from the camp, and I order you to keep my absence secret: stay in my pavilion, and to-morrow morning, when the emirs and courtiers come to attend my levee, send them away, and tell them, that I am somewhat indisposed, and wish to be alone; and the following days tell them the same thing, till I return.”

The grand vizier endeavoured to divert the sultan from this design; he represented to him the danger to which he might be exposed, and that all his labour might perhaps be in vain: but it was to no purpose; the sultan was resolved. He put on a suit fit for walking, and took his cimeter; and as soon as he found that all was quiet in the camp, went out alone, and passed over one of the hills without much difficulty; he found the descent still more easy, and when he came to the plain, walked on till the sun arose, and then he saw before him, at a considerable distance, a vast building. He rejoiced at the sight, in hopes of receiving there the information he sought. When he drew near, he found it was a magnificent palace, or rather a strong castle, of black polished marble, and covered with fine steel, as smooth as glass. Being highly pleased that he had so speedily met with something worthy his curiosity, he stopped before the front of the castle, and considered it with attention.

He then advanced towards the gate, which had two leaves, one of them open; though he might immediately have entered, yet he thought it best to knock. This he did at first softly, and waited for some time; but seeing no one, and supposing he had not been heard, he knocked harder the second time, and after that he knocked again and again, but no one yet appearing, he was exceedingly surprised; for he could not think that a castle in such repair was without inhabitants. “If there be no one in it,” said he to himself, “I have nothing to fear; and if it be inhabited, I have wherewith to defend myself.”

At last he entered, and when he came within the porch, he cried, “Is there no one here to receive a stranger, who comes in for some refreshment as he passes by?” He repeated the same words two or three times; but though he spoke very loud, he was not answered. The silence increased his astonishment: he came into a spacious court, and looked on every side for inhabitants, but discovered none.

The sultan entered the grand halls, which were hung with silk tapestry, the alcoves and sofas were covered with stuffs of Mecca, and the porches with the richest stuffs of India, mixed with gold and silver. He came afterwards into a superb saloon, in the middle of which was a fountain, with a lion of massy gold at each angle: water issued from the mouths of the four lions; and as it fell, formed diamonds and pearls, resembling a jet d’eau, which springing from the middle of the fountain, rose nearly to the top of a cupola painted in Arabesque.

The castle, on three sides, was encompassed by a garden, with parterres of flowers, shrubbery, and whatever could concur to embellish it; and to complete the beauty of the place, an infinite number of birds filled the air with their harmonious notes, and always remained there, nets being spread over the garden, and fastened to the palace to confine them. The sultan walked from apartment to apartment, where he found every thing rich and magnificent. Being tired with walking, he sat down in a verandah or arcade closet, which had a view over the garden, reflecting what he had already seen, and then beheld: when suddenly he heard the voice of one complaining, in lamentable tones. He listened with attention, and heard distinctly these words: “O fortune! thou who wouldst not suffer me longer to enjoy a happy lot, forbear to persecute me, and by a speedy death put an end to my sorrows. Alas! is it possible that I am still alive, after so many torments as I have suffered!"

The sultan rose up, advanced toward the place whence he heard the voice; and coming to the door of a great hall, opened it, and saw a handsome young man, richly habited, seated upon a throne raised a little above the ground. Melancholy was painted on his countenance. The sultan drew near, and saluted him; the young man returned his salutation by an inclination of his head, not being able to rise, at the same time saying, "My lord, I should rise to receive you; but am hindered by sad necessity, and therefore hope you will not be offended." "My lord," replied the sultan, "I am much obliged to you for having so good an opinion of me: as to the reason of your not rising, whatever your apology be, I heartily accept it. Being drawn hither by your complaints, and afflicted by your grief, I come to offer you my help; would to God that it lay in my power to ease you of your trouble! I would do my utmost to effect it. I flatter myself that you will relate to me the history of your misfortunes; but inform me first of the meaning of the lake near the palace, where the fish are of four colours? whose this castle is? how you came to be here? and why you are alone?"

Instead of answering these questions, the young man began to weep bitterly. "How inconstant is fortune!" cried he; "she takes pleasure to pull down those she had raised. Where are they who enjoy quietly the happiness which they hold of her, and whose day is always clear and serene?"

The sultan, moved with compassion to see him in such a condition, prayed him to relate the cause of his excessive grief. "Alas! my lord," replied the young man, "how is it possible but I should grieve, and my eyes be inexhaustible fountains of tears?" At these words, lifting up his robe, he shewed the sultan that he was a man only from the head to the girdle, and that the other half of his body was black marble.

The sultan was much surprised, when he saw the deplorable condition of the young man. "That which you shew me," said he, "while it fills me with horror, excites my curiosity, so that I am impatient to hear your history, which, no doubt, must be extraordinary, and I am persuaded that the lake and the fish make some part of it; therefore I conjure you to relate it. You will find some comfort in so doing, since it is certain, that the unfortunate find relief in making known their distress." "I will not refuse your request," replied the young man, "though I cannot comply without renewing my grief. But I give you notice before hand, to prepare your ears, your mind, and even your eyes, for things which surpass all that the imagination can conceive."

The History of the Young King of the Black Isles.

You must know that my father, named Mahmoud, was king of this country. This is the kingdom of the Black Isles, which takes its name from the four small neighbouring mountains; for these mountains were formerly isles: the capital where the king my father resided was situated on the spot now occupied by the lake you have seen. The sequel of my history will inform you of those changes.

The king my father died when he was seventy years of age; I had no sooner succeeded him, than I married, and the lady I chose to share the royal dignity with me, was my cousin. I had so much reason to be satisfied with her affection, and, on my part, loved her with so much tenderness, that nothing could surpass the harmony and pleasure of our union. This lasted five years, at the end of which time, I perceived the queen, my cousin, ceased to delight in my attentions.

One day, after dinner, while she was at the bath, I found myself inclined to repose and lay down upon a sofa. Two of her ladies, who were then in my chamber, came and sat down, one at my head, and the other at my feet, with fans in their hands to moderate the heat, and to prevent the flies from disturbing me. They thought I was asleep, and spoke in whispers; but as I only closed my eyes, I heard all their conversation.

One of them said to the other, “Is not the queen wrong, not to love so amiable a prince?” “Certainly,” replied the other; “I do not understand the reason, neither can I conceive why she goes out every night, and leaves him alone!” “Is it possible that he does not perceive it?” “Alas!” said the first, “how should he? she mixes every evening in his liquor, the juice of a certain herb, which makes him sleep so sound all night, that she has time to go where she pleases, and as day begins to appear, she comes and lies down by him again, and wakes him by the smell of something she puts under his nostrils.”

You may guess, my lord, how much I was surprised at this conversation, and with what sentiments it inspired me; yet, whatever emotion it excited, I had sufficient self-command to dissemble, and feigned to awake without having heard a word.

The queen returned from the bath, we supped together and she presented me with a cup full of such water as I was accustomed to drink; but instead of putting it to my mouth, I went to a window that was open, and threw out the water so quickly, that she did not perceive it, and returned.

We went to bed together, and soon after, believing that I was asleep, she got up with so little precaution, that she said loud enough for me to hear her distinctly, “Sleep on, and may you never wake again!” She dressed herself, and went out of the chamber.

As soon as the queen my wife was gone, I dressed myself in haste, took my cimeter, and followed her so quickly, that I soon heard the sound of her feet before me, and then walked softly after her, for fear of being heard. She passed through several gates, which opened upon her pronouncing some magical words, and the last she opened was that of the garden, which she entered. I stopt at this gate, that she might not perceive me, as she passed along a parterre; then looking after her as far as the darkness of the night permitted, I saw her enter a little wood, whose walks were guarded by thick palisadoes. I went thither by another way, and concealing myself behind the palisadoes of a long walk, I saw her walking there with a man.

I did not fail to lend the most attentive ear to their discourse, and heard her address herself thus to her gallant: “I do not deserve to be reproached by you for want of diligence. You well know the reason; but if all the proofs of affection I have already given you be not sufficient to convince you of my sincerity, I am ready to give you others more decisive: you need but command me, you know my power; I will, if you desire it, before sun-rise convert this great city, and this superb palace, into frightful ruins, inhabited only by wolves, owls, and ravens. If you would have me transport all the stones of those walls so solidly built, beyond mount Caucasus, or the bounds of the habitable world, speak but the word, and all shall be changed.”

As the queen finished these words she and her lover came to the end of the walk, turned to enter another, and passed before me. I had already drawn my cimeter, and her lover being next me, I struck him on the neck, and brought him to the ground. I concluded I had killed him, and therefore retired speedily without making myself known to the queen, whom I chose to spare, because she was my kinswoman.

The wound I had given her lover was mortal; but by her enchantments she preserved him in an existence in which he could not be said to be either dead or alive. As I crossed the garden to return to the palace, I heard the queen loudly lamenting, and judging by her cries how much she was grieved, I was pleased that I had spared her life.

As soon as I had reached my apartment, I went to bed, and being satisfied with having punished the villain who had injured me, fell asleep; and when I awoke next morning, found the queen lying. I cannot tell you whether she slept or not; but I arose, went to my closet, and dressed myself. I afterwards held my council. At my return, the queen, clad in mourning, her hair dishevelled, and part of it torn off, presented herself before me, and said; "I come to beg your majesty not to be surprised to see me in this condition. My heavy affliction is occasioned by intelligence of three distressing events which I have just received." "Alas! what are they, madam?" said I. "The death of the queen my dear mother," she replied, "that of the king my father killed in battle, and of one of my brothers, who has fallen down a precipice."

I was not displeased that she used this pretext to conceal the true cause of her grief, and I concluded she had not suspected me of being the author of her lover's death. "Madam," said I, "so far from blaming, I assure you I heartily commiserate your sorrow. I should feel surprise if you were insensible to such heavy calamities: weep on; your tears are so many proofs of your tenderness; but I hope that time and reflection will moderate your grief."

She retired into her apartment, where, giving herself wholly up to sorrow, she spent a whole year in mourning and lamentation. At the end of that period, she begged permission to erect a burying place for herself, within the bounds of the palace, where she would continue, she told me, to the end of her days: I consented, and she built a stately edifice, crowned by a cupola, which may be seen from hence, and called it the Palace of Tears. When it was finished, she caused her lover to be conveyed thither, from the place to which she had caused him to be carried the night I wounded him: she had hitherto prevented his dying, by potions which she had administered to him; and she continued to convey them to him herself every day after he came to the Palace of Tears.

Yet, with all her enchantments, she could not cure him; he was not only unable to walk or support himself, but had also lost the use of his speech, and exhibited no sign of life except in his looks. Though the queen had no other consolation but to see him, and to say to him all that her senseless passion could inspire, yet every day she made him two long visits. I was well apprised of this, but pretended ignorance.

One day my curiosity induced me to go to the Palace of Tears, to observe how the princess employed herself, and from a place where she could not see me, I heard her thus address her lover: “I am afflicted to the highest degree to behold you in this condition; I am as sensible as yourself of the tormenting pain you endure; but, dear soul, I am continually speaking to you, and you do not answer me: how long will you remain silent? Speak only one word: alas! the sweetest moments of my life are these I spend here in partaking of your grief. I cannot live at a distance from you, and would prefer the pleasure of having you always before me, to the empire of the universe.”

At these words, which were several times interrupted by her sighs and sobs, I lost all patience: and discovering myself, came up to her, and said, “Madam, you have wept enough, it is time to give over this sorrow, which dishonours both; you have too much forgotten what you owe to me and to yourself.” “Sire,” said she, “if you have any kindness or compassion for me left, I beseech you to put no restraint upon me; allow me to indulge my grief, which it is impossible for time to assuage.”

When I perceived that my remonstrance, instead of restoring her to a sense of duty, served only to increase her anguish, I gave over and retired. She continued every day to visit her lover, and for two whole years abandoned herself to grief and despair.

I went a second time to the Palace of Tears, while she was there. I concealed myself again, and heard her thus address her lover: “It is now three years since you spoke one word to me; you answer not the proofs I give you of my love by my sighs and lamentations. Is it from insensibility, or contempt? O tomb! hast thou destroyed that excess of affection which he bare me? Hast thou closed those eyes that evinced so much love, and were all my delight? No, no, this I cannot think. Tell me rather, by what miracle thou becamest the depositary of the rarest treasure the world ever contained."

I must confess, my lord, I was enraged at these expressions; for, in truth, this beloved, this adored mortal, was by no means what you would imagine him to have been. He was a black Indian, one of the original natives of this country. I was so enraged at the language addressed to him, that I discovered myself, and apostrophising the tomb in my turn; I cried, "O tomb! why dost not thou swallow up that monster so revolting to human nature, or rather why dost not thou swallow up both the lover and his mistress?"

I had scarcely uttered these words, when the queen, who sat by the black, rose up like a fury. "Miscreant!" said she "thou art the cause of my grief; do not think I am ignorant of this, I have dissembled too long. It was thy barbarous hand that brought the objets of my fondness into this lamentable condition; and thou hast the cruelty to come and insult a despairing lover." "Yes," said I, in a rage, "it was I that chastised that monster, according to his desert; I ought to have treated thee in the same manner; I now repent that I did not; thou hast too long abused my goodness." As I spoke these words, I drew out my cimeter, and lifted up my hand to punish her; but regarding me stedfastly, she said with a jeering smile, "Moderate thy anger." At the same time, she pronounced words I did not understand; and afterwards added, "By virtue of my enchantments, I command thee to become half marble and half man." Immediately, my lord, I became what you see, a dead man among the living, and a living man among the dead.

After the cruel sorceress, unworthy of the name of queen, had metamorphosed me thus, and brought me into this hall, by another enchantment she destroyed my capital, which was very flourishing and populous; she annihilated the houses, the public places and markets, and reduced the site of the whole to the lake and desert plain you have seen; the fishes of four colours in the lake are the four kinds of inhabitants of different religions, which the city contained. The white are the Moosulmauns; the red, the Persians, who worship fire; the blue, the Christians and the yellow, the Jews. The four little hills were the four islands that gave name to this kingdom. I learned all this from the enchantress, who, to add to my affliction, related to me these effects of her rage. But this is not all; her revenge not being satisfied with the destruction of my dominions, and the metamorphosis of my person, she comes every day, and gives me over my naked shoulders a hundred lashes with a whip until I am covered with blood. When she has finished this part of my punishment, she throws over me a coarse stuff of goat's hair, and over that this robe of brocade, not to honour, but to mock me.

When he came to this part of the narrative, the young king could not restrain his tears; and the sultan was himself so affected by the relation, that he could not find utterance for any words of consolation. Shortly after, the young king, lifting up his eyes to heaven, exclaimed, "Mighty creator of all things, I submit myself to thy judgments, and to the decrees of thy providence: I endure my calamities with patience, since it is thy will things should be as they are; but I hope thy infinite goodness will ultimately reward me."

The sultan, greatly moved by the recital of this affecting story, and anxious to avenge the sufferings of the unfortunate prince, said to him, "Inform me whither this perfidious sorceress retires, and where may be found her vile paramour, who is entombed before his death." "My lord," replied the prince, "her lover, as I have already told you, is lodged in the Palace of Tears, in a superb tomb constructed in the form of a dome: this palace joins the castle on the side in which the gate is placed. As to the queen, I cannot tell you precisely whither she retires, but every day at sun-rise she goes to visit her paramour, after having executed her bloody vengeance upon me; and you see I am not in a condition to defend myself. She carries to him the potion with which she had hitherto prevented his dying, and always complains of his never having spoken to her since he was wounded."

"Prince," said the sultan, "your condition can never be sufficiently deplored: no one can be more sensibly affected by your misfortunes than I am. Never did any thing so extraordinary befall any man, and those who write your history will have the advantage of relating what surpasses all that has hitherto been recorded. One thing only is wanting; the revenge to which you are entitled, and I will omit nothing in my power to effect it."

In his subsequent conversation with the young prince, the sultan told him who he was, and for what purpose he had entered the castle; and afterwards informed him of a mode of revenge which he had devised. They agreed upon the measures they were to take for accomplishing their design, but deferred the execution of it till the following day. In the mean time, the night being far spent, the sultan took some rest; but the young prince passed the night as usual, without sleep, having never slept since he was enchanted, still indulging some hopes of being speedily delivered from his misery.

Next morning the sultan arose with the dawn, and prepared to execute his design, hiding his upper garment, which might encumber him; he then proceeded to the Palace of Tears. He found it lighted up with an infinite number of flambeaux of white wax, and perfumed by a delicious scent issuing from several censers of fine gold of admirable workmanship. As soon as he perceived the bed where the black lay, he drew his cimeter, and without resistance deprived him of his wretched life, dragged his corpse into the court of the castle, and threw it into a well. After this, he went and lay down in the black's bed, placed his cimeter under the covering, and waited to complete his design.

The queen arrived shortly after. She first went into the chamber of her husband, the king of the Black Islands, stripped him, and with unexampled barbarity gave him a hundred stripes. The unfortunate prince filled the palace with his lamentations, and conjured her in the most affecting tone to take pity on him; but the cruel wretch ceased not till she had given the usual number of blows. “You had no compassion on my lover,” said she, “and you are to expect none from me.”

After the enchantress had given the king, her husband, a hundred blows with the whip, she put on again his covering of goat's hair, and his brocade gown over all; she went afterwards to the Palace of Tears, and as she entered renewed her tears and lamentations: then approaching the bed, where she thought her paramour lay, “What cruelty,” cried she, “was it to disturb the satisfaction so tender and passionate a lover as I am? O cruel prince, who reproachest me that I am inhuman, when I make thee feel the effects of my resentment! Does not thy barbarity surpass my vengeance? Traitor! in attempting the life of the object which I adore, hast thou not robbed me of mine?

Alas!” said she, addressing herself to the sultan, conceiving him to be the black “My sun, my life, will you always be silent! Are you resolved to let me die, without affording me the comfort of hearing again from your own lips that you love me? My soul, speak one word to me at least, I conjure you.”

The sultan, as if he had awaked out of a deep sleep, and counterfeiting the pronunciation of the blacks, answered the queen with a grave tone, “There is no strength or power but in God alone, who is almighty.” At these words the enchantress, who did not expect them, uttered a loud exclamation of joy. “My dear lord,” cried she, “do not I deceive myself; is it certain that I hear you, and that you speak to me?” “Unhappy woman,” said the sultan, “art thou worthy that I should answer thee?” “Alas!” replied the queen, “why do you reproach me thus?” “The cries,” returned the sultan, “the groans and tears of thy husband, whom thou treatest every day with so much indignity and barbarity, prevent my sleeping night or day. Hadst thou disenchanted him, I should long since have been cured, and have recovered the use of my speech. This is the cause of my silence, of which you complain.” “Well,” said the enchantress, “to pacify you, I am ready to execute your commands; would you have me restore him?” “Yes,” replied the sultan; “make haste to set him at liberty, that I be no longer disturbed by his lamentations.”

The enchantress went immediately out of the Palace of Tears; she took a cup of water, and pronounced some words over it, which caused it to boil, as if it had been on the fire. She afterwards proceeded to the young king her husband, and threw the water upon him, saying, “If the creator of all things did form thee as thou art at present; or if he be angry with thee, do not change; but if thou art in that condition merely by virtue of my enchantments, resume thy natural shape, and become what thou west before.” She had scarcely spoken these words, when the prince, finding himself restored to his former condition, rose up and returned thanks to God. The enchantress then said to him, “Get thee from this castle, and never return on pain of death.” The young king, yielding to necessity, went away from the enchantress, without replying a word; and retired to a remote place, where he patiently awaited the event of the design which the sultan had so happily begun. Meanwhile, the enchantress returned to the Palace of Tears, and supposing that she still spoke to the black, said, “Dear love, I have done what you required; nothing now prevents your rising and giving me the satisfaction of which I have so long been deprived.”

The sultan, still counterfeiting the pronunciation of the blacks, said, “What you have now done is by no means sufficient for my cure; you have only removed a part of the evil; you must cut it up by the root.” “My lovely black,” resumed the queen, “what do you mean by the root?” “Wretched woman,” replied the sultan, “understand you not that I allude to the town, and its inhabitants, and the four islands, destroyed by thy enchantments? The fish every night at midnight raise their heads out of the lake, and cry for vengeance against thee and me. This is the true cause of the delay of my cure. Go speedily, restore things to their former state, and at thy return I will give thee my hand, and thou shalt help me to arise.”

The enchantress, inspired with hope from these words, cried out in a transport of joy, “My heart, my soul, you shall soon be restored to your health, for I will immediately do as you command me.” Accordingly she went that instant, and when she came to the brink of the lake, she took a little water in her hand, and sprinkling it, had no sooner pronounced some words over the fish and the lake, than the city was immediately restored. The fish became men, women, and children; Mahummedans, Christians, Persians, or Jews; freemen or slaves, as they were before: every one having recovered his natural form. The houses and shops were immediately filled with their inhabitants, who found all things as they were before the enchantment. The sultan’s numerous retinue, who found themselves encamped in the largest square, were astonished to see themselves in an instant in the middle of a large, handsome, well-peopled city.

To return to the enchantress: As soon as she had effected this wonderful change, she returned with all expedition to the Palace of Tears, that she might receive her reward. “My dear lord,” cried she, as she entered, “I come to rejoice with you in the return of your health: I have done all that you required of me, then pray rise, and give me your hand.” “Come near,” said the sultan, still counterfeiting the pronunciation of the blacks. She did so. “You are not near enough,” he continued, “approach nearer.” She obeyed. He then rose up, and seizing her by the arm so suddenly, that she had not time to discover him, he with a blow of his cimeter cut her in two, so that one half fell one way and the other another. This done he left the body on the spot, and going out of the Palace of Tears, went to seek the young king of the Black Isles, who waited for him with great impatience. When he found him, "Prince," said he, embracing him, "rejoice; you have now nothing to fear; your cruel enemy is dead."

The young prince returned thanks to the sultan in a manner that sufficiently the sincerity of his gratitude, and in return wished him long life and happiness. "You may henceforward," said the sultan, "dwell peaceably in your capital, unless you will accompany me to mine, which is near: you shall there be welcome, and have as much honour and respect shown you as if you were in your own kingdom." "Potent monarch, to whom I am so much indebted," replied the king, "you think then that you are near your capital?" "Yes," said the sultan, "I know it is not above four or five hours' journey." "It will take you a whole year to return," said the prince "I do indeed believe that you came hither from your capital in the time you mention, because mine was enchanted; but since the enchantment is taken off, things are changed: however, this shall not prevent my following you, were it to the utmost corners of the earth. You are my deliverer, and that I may give you proofs of my acknowledging this during my whole life, I am willing to accompany you, and to leave my kingdom without regret."

The sultan was extremely surprised to understand that he was so far from his dominions, and could not imagine how it could be. But the young king of the Black Islands convinced him beyond a possibility of doubt. Then the sultan replied, "It is no matter; the trouble of returning to my own country is sufficiently recompensed by the satisfaction of having obliged you, and by acquiring you for a son; for since you will do me the honour to accompany me, as I have no child, I look upon you as such, and from this moment appoint you my heir and successor."

The conversation between the sultan and the king of the Black Islands concluded with most affectionate embraces, after which the young prince employed himself in making preparations for his journey, which were finished in three weeks, to the great regret of his court and subjects, who agreed to receive at his hands one of his nearest kindred for their monarch.

At length, the sultan and the young prince began their journey, with a hundred camels laden with inestimable riches from the treasury of the young king, followed by fifty handsome gentlemen on horseback, perfectly well mounted and dressed They had a pleasant journey; and when the sultan, who had sent couriers to give advice of his delay, and of the adventure which had occasioned it, approached his capital, the principal officers came to receive him, and to assure him that his long absence had occasioned no alteration in his empire. The inhabitants also came out in great crowds, received him with acclamations, and made public rejoicings for several days.

The day after his arrival the sultan gave all his courtiers a very ample account of the circumstances, which, contrary to his expectation, had detained him so long. He acquainted them with his having adopted the king of the Four Black Islands, who was willing to leave a great kingdom, to accompany and live with him; and, in reward for their loyalty, he made each of them presents according to their rank.

As for the fisherman, as he was the first cause of the deliverance of the young prince, the sultan gave him a plentiful fortune, which made him and his family happy the rest of their days.

STORY OF THE THREE CALENDERS, SONS OF SULTANS; AND OF THE FIVE LADIES OF BAGDAD.

In the reign of Caliph Haroon al Rusheed, there was at Bagdad, a porter, who, notwithstanding his mean and laborious business, was a fellow of wit and good humour. One morning as he was at the place where he usually plyed, with a great basket, waiting for employment, a handsome young lady, covered with a great muslin veil, accosted him, and said with a pleasant air, “Hark you, porter, take your basket and follow me.” The porter, charmed with these words, pronounced in so agreeable a manner, took his basket immediately, set it on his head, and followed the lady, exclaiming, “O happy day, O day of good luck!”

In a short time the lady stopped before a gate that was shut, and knocked: a Christian, with a venerable long white beard, opened it; and she put money into his hand, without speaking; but the Christian, who knew what she wanted, went in, and in a little time, brought a large jug of excellent wine. “Take this jug,” said the lady to the porter, “and put it in your basket.” This being done, she commanded him to follow her; and as she proceeded, the porter continued his exclamation, “O happy day! This is a day of agreeable surprise and joy.”

The lady stopped at a fruit-shop, where she bought several sorts of apples, apricots, peaches, quinces, lemons, citrons, oranges; myrtles, sweet basil, lilies, jessamin, and some other flowers and fragrant plants; she bid the porter put all into his basket, and follow her. As she went by a butcher’s stall, she made him weigh her twenty five pounds of his best meat, which she ordered the porter to put also into his basket. At another shop, she took capers, tarragon, cucumbers, sassafras, and other herbs, preserved in vinegar: at another, she bought pistachios, walnuts, filberts, almonds, kernels of pine-apples, and such other fruits; and at another, all sorts of confectionery. When the porter had put all these things into his basket, and perceived that it grew full, “My good lady,” said he, “you ought to have given me notice that you had so much provision to carry, and then I would have brought a horse, or rather a camel, for the purpose; for if you buy ever so little more, I shall not be able to bear it." The lady laughed at the fellow's pleasant humour, and ordered him still to follow her.

She then went to a druggist, where she furnished herself with all manner of sweet-scented waters, cloves, musk, pepper, ginger, and a great piece of ambergris, and several other Indian spices; this quite filled the porter's basket, and she ordered him to follow her. They walked till they came to a magnificent house, whose front was adorned with fine columns, and had a gate of ivory. There they stopped, and the lady knocked softly.

While the young lady and the porter waited for the opening of the gate, the porter made a thousand reflections. He wondered that such a fine lady should come abroad to buy provisions; he concluded she could not be a slave, her air was too noble, and therefore he thought she must needs be a woman of quality. Just as he was about to ask her some questions upon this head, another lady came to open the gate, and appeared to him so beautiful, that he was perfectly surprised, or rather so much struck with her charms, that he had nearly suffered his basket to fall, for he had never seen any beauty that equalled her.

The lady who brought the porter with her, perceiving his disorder, and knowing the cause, was greatly diverted, and took so much pleasure in watching his looks, that she forgot the gate was opened. "Pray, Sister," said the beautiful portress, "come in, what do you stay for? Do not you see this poor man so heavy laden, that he is scarcely able to stand."

When she entered with the porter, the lady who had opened the gate shut it, and all three, after having passed through a splendid vestibule, entered a spacious court, encompassed with an open gallery, which had a communication with several apartments of extraordinary magnificence. At the farther end of the court there was a platform, richly furnished, with a throne of amber in the middle, supported by four columns of ebony, enriched with diamonds and pearls of an extraordinary size, and covered with red satin embroidered with Indian gold of admirable workmanship. In the middle of the court there was a fountain, faced with white marble, and full of clear water, which was copiously supplied out of the mouth of a lion of brass.

The porter, though heavy laden, could not but admire the magnificence of this house, and the excellent order in which every thing was placed; but what particularly captivated his attention, was a third lady, who seemed to be more beautiful than the second, and was seated upon the throne just mentioned; she descended as soon as she saw the two others, and advanced towards them: he judged by the respect which the other ladies showed her, that she was the chief, in which he was not mistaken. This lady was called Zobeide, she who opened the gate Safie, and she who went to buy the provisions was named Amene.

Zobeide said to the two ladies, when she came to them, “Sisters, do not you see that this honest man is ready to sink under his burden, why do not you ease him of it?” Then Amene and Safie took the basket, the one before and the other behind; Zobeide also assisted, and all three together set it on the ground; then emptied it; and when they had done, the beautiful Amene took out money, and paid the porter liberally.

The porter was well satisfied with the money he had received; but when he ought to have departed, he could not summon sufficient resolution for the purpose. He was chained to the spot by the pleasure of beholding three such beauties, who appeared to him equally charming; for Amene having now laid aside her veil, proved to be as handsome as either of the others. What surprised him most was, that he saw no man about the house, yet most of the provisions he had brought in, as the dry fruits, and the several sorts of cakes and confections, were adapted chiefly for those who could drink and make merry.

Zobeide thought at first, that the porter staid only to take breath, but perceiving that he remained too long, “What do you wait for,” said she, “are you not sufficiently paid?” And turning to Amene, she continued, “Sister, give him something more, that he may depart satisfied.” “Madam,” replied the porter, “it is not that which detains me, I am already more than paid for my services; I am sensible that I act rudely in staying longer than I ought, but I hope you will the goodness to pardon me, when I tell you, that I am astonished not to see a man with three ladies of such extraordinary beauty: and you know that a company of women without men is as melancholy as a company of men without women.” To this he added several other pleasant things, to prove what he said, and did not forget the Bagdad proverb, “That the table is not completely furnished, except there be four in company:” and so concluded, that since they were but three, they wanted another.

The ladies fell a laughing at the porter’s reasoning; after which Zobeide gravely addressed him, “Friend, you presume rather too much; and though you do not deserve that I should enter into any explanation with you, I have no objection to inform you that we are three sisters, who transact our affairs with so much secrecy that no one knows any thing of them. We have but too much reason to be cautious of acquainting indiscreet persons with our counsel; and a good author that we have read, says, ‘Keep thy own secret, and do not reveal it to any one. He that makes his secret known it no longer its master. If thy own breast cannot keep thy counsel, how canst thou expect the breast of another to be more faithful?’”

“My ladies,” replied the porter, “by your very air, I judged at first that you were persons of extraordinary merit, and I conceive that I am not mistaken. Though fortune has not given me wealth enough to raise me above my mean profession, yet I have not omitted to cultivate my mind as much as I could, by reading books of science and history; and allow me, I beseech you, to say, that I have also read in another author a maxim which I have always happily followed: ‘We conceal our secret from such persons only as are known to all the world to want discretion, and would abuse our confidence; but we hesitate not to discover it to the prudent, because we know that with them it is safe.’ A secret in my keeping is as secure as if it were locked up in a cabinet, the key of which is lost, and the door sealed up.”

Zobeide perceiving that the porter was not deficient in wit, but thinking he wished to share in their festivity, answered him, smiling, “You know that we have been making preparations to regale ourselves, and that, as you have seen, at a considerable expense; it is not just that you should now partake of the entertainment without contributing to the cost." The beautiful Safie seconded her sister, and said to the porter, "Friend, have you never heard the common saying, 'If you bring something with you, you shall carry something away, but if you bring nothing, you shall depart empty?'"

The porter, notwithstanding his rhetoric, must, in all probability, have retired in confusion, if Amene had not taken his part, and said to Zobeide and Safie, "My dear sisters, I conjure you to let him remain; I need not tell you that he will afford us some diversion, of this you perceive he is capable: I assure you, had it not been for his readiness, his alacrity, and courage to follow me, I could not have done so much business, in so short a time; besides, where I to repeat to you all the obliging expressions he addressed to me by the way, you would not feel surprised at my taking his part."

At these words of Amene, the porter was so transported with joy, that he fell on his knees, kissed the ground at her feet, and raising himself up, said, "Most beautiful lady, you began my good fortune to-day, and now you complete it by this generous conduct; I cannot adequately express my acknowledgments. As to the rest, ladies," said he, addressing himself to all the three sisters, "since you do me so great an honour, do not think that I will abuse it, or look upon myself as deserving of the distinction. No, I shall always look upon myself as one of your most humble slaves." When he had spoken these words he would have returned the money he had received, but Zobeide ordered him to keep it. "What we have once given," said she, "to reward those who have served us, we never take back. My friend, in consenting to your staying with us, I must forewarn you, that it is not the only condition we impose upon you that you keep inviolable the secret we may entrust to you, but we also require you to attend to the strictest rules of good manners." During this address, the charming Amene put off the apparel she went abroad with, and fastened her robe to her girdle that she might act with the greater freedom; she then brought in several sorts of meat, wine, and cups of gold. Soon after, the ladies took their places, and made the porter sit down by them, who was overjoyed to see himself seated with three such admirable beauties. After they had eaten a little, Amene took a cup, poured some wine into it, and drank first herself; she then filled the cup to her sisters, who drank in course as they sat; and at last she filled it the fourth time for the porter, who, as he received it, kissed Amene's hand; and before he drank, sung a song to this purpose. That as the wind bears with it the sweet scents of the perfumed places over which it passes, so the wine he was going to drink, coming from her fair hands, received a more exquisite flavour than it naturally possessed. The song pleased the ladies much, and each of them afterwards sung one in her turn. In short, they were all very pleasant during the repast, which lasted a considerable time, and nothing was wanting that could serve to render it agreeable. The day drawing to a close, Safie spoke in the name of the three ladies, and said to the porter, "Arise, it is time for you to depart." But the porter, not willing to leave good company, cried, "Alas! ladies, whither do you command me to go in my present condition? What with drinking and your society, I am quite beside myself. I shall never find the way home; allow me this night to recover myself, in any place you please, but go when I will, I shall leave the best part of myself behind."

Amene pleaded the second time for the porter, saying, "Sisters, he is right, I am pleased with the request, he having already diverted us so well; and, if you will take my advice, or if you love me as much as I think you do, let us keep him for the remainder of the night." "Sister," answered Zobeide, "we can refuse you nothing;" and then turning to the porter, said, "We are willing once more to grant your request, but upon this new condition, that, whatever we do in your presence relating either to ourselves or any thing else, you do not so much as open your mouth to ask the reason; for if you put any questions respecting what does not concern you, you may chance to hear what you will not like; beware therefore, and be not too inquisitive to pry into the motives of our actions.

"Madam," replied the porter, "I promise to abide by this condition, that you shall have no cause to complain, and far less to punish my indiscretion; my tongue shall be immovable on this occasion, and my eye like a looking-glass, which retains nothing of the objets that is set before it." "To shew you," said Zobeide with a serious countenance, "that what we demand of you is not a new thing among us, read what is written over our gate on the inside."

The porter went and read these words, written in large characters of gold: "He who speaks of things that do not concern him, shall hear things that will not please him.” Returning again to the three sisters, “Ladies,” said he, “I swear to you that you shall never hear me utter a word respecting what does not relate to me, or wherein you may have any concern.”

These preliminaries being settled, Amene brought in supper, and after she had lighted up the room with tapers, made of aloe-wood and ambergris, which yield a most agreeable perfume, as well as a delicate light, she sat down with her sisters and the porter. They began again to eat and drink, to sing, and repeat verses. The ladies diverted themselves in intoxicating the porter, under pretext of making him drink their healths, and the repast was enlivened by reciprocal flashes of wit. When they were all in the best humour possible, they heard a knocking at the gate.

When the ladies heard the knocking, they all three got up to open the gate; but Safie was the nimblest; which her sisters perceiving, they resumed their seats. Safie returning, said, “Sisters, we have a very fine opportunity of passing a good part of the night pleasantly, and if you agree with me, you will not suffer it to go by. There are three calenders at our gate, at least they appear to be such by their habit; but what will surprise you is, they are all three blind of the right eye, and have their heads, beards, and eye-brows shaved. They say, they are but just come to Bagdad, where they never were before; it being night, and not knowing where to find a lodging, they happened by chance to knock at this gate, and pray us, for the love of heaven, to have compassion on them, and receive them into the house. They care not what place we put them in, provided they may be under shelter; they would be satisfied with a stable. They are young and handsome, and seem not to want spirit. But I cannot without laughing think of their amusing and uniform figure.” Here Safie laughed so heartily, that the two sisters and the porter could not refrain from laughing also. “My dear sisters,” said she, “you will permit them to come in; it is impossible but that with such persons as I have described them to be, we shall finish the day better than we began it; they will afford us diversion enough, and put us to no charge, because they desire shelter only for this night, and resolve to leave us as soon as day appears.”

Zobeide and Amene made some difficulty to grant Safie’s request, for reasons which she herself well knew. But being very desirous to obtain this favour, they could not refuse her; “Go then,” said Zobeide, “and bring them in, but do not forget to acquaint them that they must not speak of any thing which does not concern them, and cause them to read what is written over the gate.” Safie ran out with joy, and in a little time after returned with the three calenders.

At their entrance they made a profound obeisance to the ladies, who rose up to receive them, and told them courteously that they were welcome, that they were glad of the opportunity to oblige them, and to contribute towards relieving the fatigues of their journey, and at last invited them to sit down with them.

The magnificence of the place, and the civility they received, inspired the calenders with high respect for the ladies: but, before they sat down, having by chance cast their eyes upon the porter, whom they saw clad almost like those devotees with whom they have continual disputes respecting several points of discipline, because they never shave their beards nor eye-brows; one of them said, “I believe we have got here one of our revolted Arabian brethren.”

The porter having his head warm with wine, took offence and with a fierce look, without stirring from his place, answered, “Sit you down, and do not meddle with what does not concern you: have you not read the inscription over the gate? Do not pretend to make people live after your fashion, but follow ours.”

“Honest man,” said the calender, “do not put yourself in a passion; we should be sorry to give you the least occasion; on the contrary, we are ready to receive your commands.” Upon which, to put an end to the dispute, the ladies interposed, and pacified them. When the calenders were seated, the ladies served them with meat; and Safie, being highly pleased with them, did not let them want for wine.

After the calenders had eaten and drunk liberally, they signified to the ladies, that they wished to entertain them with a concert of music, if they had any instruments in the house, and would cause them to be brought: they willingly accepted the proposal, and fair Safie going to fetch them, returned again in a moment, and presented them with a flute of her own country fashion, another of the Persian, and a tabor.

Each man took the instrument he liked, and all three together began to play a tune The ladies, who knew the words of a merry song that suited the air, joined the concert with their voices; but the words of the song made them now and then stop, and fall into excessive laughter.

In the height of this diversion, when the company were in the midst of their jollity, a knocking was heard at the gate; Safie left off singing, and went to see who it was. The caliph Haroon al Rusheed was frequently in the habit of walking abroad in disguise by night, that he might discover if every thing was quiet in the city, and see that no disorders were committed.

This night the caliph went out on his rambles, accompanied by Jaaffier his grand vizier, and Mesrour the chief of the eunuchs of his palace, all disguised in merchants' habits; and passing through the street where the three ladies dwelt, he heard the sound of music and fits of loud laughter; upon which he commanded the vizier, to knock, as he wished to enter to ascertain the reason. The vizier, in vain represented to him that the noise proceeded from some women who were merry-making, that without question their heads were warm with wine, and that it would not be proper he should expose himself to be affronted by them: besides, it was not yet an unlawful hour, and therefore he ought not to disturb them in their mirth. "No matter," said the caliph, "I command you to knock." Jaaffier complied; Safie opened the gate, and the vizier, perceiving by the light in her hand, that she was an incomparable beauty, with a very low salutation said, "We are three merchants of Mossoul, who arrived here about ten days ago with rich merchandise, which we have in a warehouse at a caravan-serai, where we have also our lodging. We happened this evening to be with a merchant of this city, who invited us to his house, where we had a splendid entertainment: and the wine having put us in good humour, he sent for a company of dancers. Night being come on, and the music and dancers making a great noise, the watch, passing by, caused the gate to be opened and some of the company to be taken up; but we had the good fortune to escape by getting over the wall. Being strangers, and somewhat overcome with wine, we are afraid of meeting that or some other watch, before we get home to our khan. Besides, before we can arrive there the gates will be shut, and will not be opened till morning: wherefore, hearing, as we passed by this way, the sound of music, we supposed you were not yet going to rest, and made bold to knock at your gate, to beg the favour of lodging ourselves in the house till morning; and if you think us worthy of your good company, we will endeavour to contribute to your diversion to the best of our power, to make some amends for the interruption we have given you; if not, we only beg the favour of staying this night in your vestibule."

Whilst Jaaffier was speaking, Safie had time to observe the vizier, and his two companions, who were said to be merchants like himself, and told them that she was not mistress of the house; but if they would have a minute's patience, she would return with an answer.

Safie made the business known to her sisters, who considered for some time what to do: but being naturally of a good disposition, and having granted the same favour to the three calenders, they at last consented to let them in.

The caliph, his grand vizier, and the chief of the eunuchs, being introduced by the fair Safie, very courteously saluted the ladies and the calenders. The ladies returned their salutations, supposing them to be merchants. Zobeide, as the chief, addressed them with a grave and serious countenance, which was natural to her, and said, "You are welcome. But before I proceed farther, I hope you will not take it ill if we desire one favour of you." "Alas!" said the vizier, "what favour? We can refuse nothing to such fair ladies." Zobeide continued, "It is that, while here, you would have eyes, but no tongues; that you question us not for the reason of any thing you may see, and speak not of any thing that does not concern you, lest you hear what will by no means please you."

"Madam," replied the vizier, "you shall be obeyed. We are not censorious, nor impertinently curious; it is enough for us to notice affairs that concern us, without meddling with what does not belong to us." Upon this they all sat down, and the company being united, they drank to the health of the new-comers.

While the vizier, entertained the ladies in conversation, the caliph could not forbear admiring their extraordinary beauty, graceful behaviour, pleasant humour, and ready wit; on the other hand, nothing struck him with more surprise than the calenders being all three blind of the right eye. He would gladly have learnt the cause of this singularity; but the conditions so lately imposed upon himself and his companions would not allow him to speak. These circumstances, with the richness of the furniture, the exact order of every thing, and the neatness of the house, made him think they were in some enchanted place.

Their conversation happening to turn upon diversions, and the different ways of making merry; the calenders arose, and danced after their fashion, which augmented the good opinion the ladies had conceived of them, and procured them the esteem of the caliph and his companions.

When the three calenders had finished their dance, Zobeide arose, and taking Amene by the hand, said, “Pray, sister, arise, for the company will not be offended if we use our freedom, and their presence need not hinder the performance of our customary exercise.” Amene understanding her sister’s meaning, rose from her seat, carried away the dishes, the flasks and cups, together with the instruments which the calenders had played upon.

Safie was not idle, but swept the room, put every thing again in its place, trimmed the lamps, and put fresh aloes and ambergris to them; this being done, she requested the three calenders to sit down upon the sofa at one side, and the caliph with his companions on the other: then addressing herself to the porter, she said, “Get up, and prepare yourself to assist us in what we are going to do; a man like you, who is one of the family, ought not to be idle.” The porter, being somewhat recovered from his wine, arose immediately, and having tied the sleeve of his gown to his belt, answered, “Here am I, ready to obey your commands.” “Very well,” replied Safie, “stay till you are spoken to; and you shall not be idle long.” A little time after, Amene came in with a chair, which she placed in the middle of the room; and then went towards a closet. Having opened the door, she beckoned to the porter, and said, “Come hither and assist me.” He obeyed, and entered the closet, and returned immediately, leading two black bitches, each of them secured by a collar and chain; they appeared as if they had been severely whipped with rods, and he brought them into the middle of the apartment.

Zobeide, rising from her seat between the calenders and the caliph, moved very gravely towards the porter; “Come,” said she, heaving a deep sigh, “let us perform our duty:” she then tucked up her sleeves above her elbows, and receiving a rod from Safie, “Porter,” said she, “deliver one of the bitches to my sister Amene, and bring the other to me.”

The porter did as he was commanded. Upon this the bitch that he held in his hand began to howl, and turning towards Zobeide, held her head up in a supplicating posture; but Zobeide, having no regard to the sad countenance of the animal, which would have moved pity, nor to her cries that resounded through the house, whipped her with the rod till she was out of breath; and having spent her strength, threw down the rod, and taking the chain from the porter, lifted up the bitch by her paws, and looking upon her with a sad and pitiful countenance, they both wept: after which, Zobeide, with her handkerchief, wiped the tears from the bitch’s eye, kissed her, returned the chain to the porter, desired him to carry her to the place whence he took her, and bring her the other. The porter led back the whipped bitch to the closet, and receiving the other from Amene, presented her to Zobeide, who requested him to hold her as he had done the first, took up the rod, and treated her after the same manner; and when she had wept over her, she dried her eyes, kissed her, and returned her to the porter: but Amene spared him the trouble of leading her back into the closet, and did it herself. The three calenders, with the caliph and his companions, were extremely surprised at this exhibition, and could not comprehend why Zobeide, after having so furiously beaten those two bitches, that by the moosulman religion are reckoned unclean animals, should weep with them, wipe off their tears, and kiss them. They muttered among themselves, and the caliph, who, being more impatient than the rest, longed exceedingly to be informed of the cause of so strange a proceeding, could not forbear making signs to the vizier to ask the question: the vizier turned his head another way; but being pressed by repeated signs, he answered by others, that it was not yet time for the caliph to satisfy his curiosity.

Zobeide sat still some time in the middle of the room, where she had whipped the two bitches, to recover herself of her fatigue; and Safie called to her, “Dear sister, will you not be pleased to return to your place, that I may also aft my part?” “Yes, sister,” replied Zobeide; and then went, and sat down upon the sofa, having the caliph, Jaaffier, and Mesrour, on her right hand, and the three calenders, with the porter, on her left.

After Zobeide had taken her seat, the whole company remained silent for some time; at last, Safie, sitting on a chair in the middle of the room, spoke to her sister Amene, “Dear sister, I conjure you to rise; you know what I would say.” Amene rose, and went into another closet, near to that where the bitches were, and brought out a case covered with yellow satin, richly embroidered with gold and green silk. She went towards Safie and opened the case, from whence she took a lute, and presented it to her: and after some time spent in tuning it, Safie began to play, and accompanying the instrument with her voice, sung a song about the torments that absence creates to lovers, with so much sweetness, that it charmed the caliph and all the company. Having sung with much passion and action, she said to Amene, “Pray take it, sister, for my voice fails me; oblige the company with a tune, and a song in my stead.” “Very willingly,” replied Amene, who, taking the lute from her sister Safie, sat down in her place.

Amene played and sung almost as long upon the same subject, but with so much vehemence, and was so much affected, or rather transported, by the words of the song, that her strength failed her as she finished.

Zobeide, desirous of testifying her satisfaction, said, “Sister, you have done wonders, and we may easily see that you feel the grief you have expressed in so lively a manner.” Amene was prevented from answering this civility, her heart being so sensibly touched at the moment, that she was obliged, for air, to uncover her neck and bosom, which did not appear so fair as might have been expected; but, on the contrary, were black and full of scars, which surprised and affected all the spectators. However, this gave her no ease, for she fell into a fit.

When Zobeide and Safie had run to help their sister, one of the calenders could not forbear saying, “We had better have slept in the streets than have come hither to behold such spectacles.” The caliph, who heard this, came to him and the other calenders, and asked them what might be the meaning of all this? They answered, “We know no more than you do.” “What,” said the caliph, “are you not of the family? Can you not resolve us concerning the two black bitches and the lady that fainted away, who appears to have been so basely abused?” “Sir,” said the calenders, “this is the first time of our being in the house; we came in but a few minutes before you.”

This increased the caliph’s astonishment: “Probably,” said he, “this man who is with you may know something of the matter.” One of the calenders beckoned the porter to come near; and asked him, whether he knew why those two black bitches had been whipped, and why Amene’s bosom was so scarred. “Sir,” said the porter, “I can swear by heaven, that if you know nothing of all this, I know as little as you do. It is true, I live in this city, but I never was in the house until now, and if you are surprised to see me I am as much so to find myself in your company; and that which increases my wonder is, that I have not seen one man with these ladies.”

The caliph and his company, as well as the calenders, had supposed the porter to be one of the family, and hoped he would have been able to give them the information they sought; but finding he could not, and resolving to satisfy his curiosity, the caliph said to the rest, “We are seven men, and have but three women to deal with; let us try if we can oblige them to explain what we have seen, and if they refuse by fair means, we are in a condition to compel them by force.”

The grand vizier Jaaffier objected to this, and shewed the caliph what might be the consequence. Without discovering the prince to the calenders, he addressed him as if he had been a merchant, and said, “Consider, I pray you, that our reputation is at stake. You know the conditions on which these ladies consented to receive us, and which we agreed to observe; what will they say of us if we break them? We shall be still more to blame, if any mischief befall us; for it is not likely that they would have extorted such a promise from us, without knowing themselves to be in a condition to punish us for its violation.”

Here the vizier took the caliph aside, and whispered to him, “The night will soon be at an end, and if your majesty will only be pleased to have so much patience, I will to-morrow morning bring these ladies before your throne, where you may be informed of all that you desire to know." Though this advice was very judicious, the caliph rejected it, desired the vizier to hold his tongue, and said, he would not wait so long, but would immediately have his curiosity satisfied.

The next business was to settle who should carry the message. The caliph endeavoured to prevail with the calenders to speak first; but they excused themselves, and at last they agreed that the porter should be the man: as they were consulting how to word this fatal question, Zobeide returned from her sister Amene, who was recovered of her fit. She drew near them, and having overheard them speaking pretty loud, said, "Gentlemen, what is the subject of your conversation? What are you disputing about?"

The porter answered immediately, "Madam, these gentlemen beseech you to inform them why you wept over your two bitches after you had whipped them so severely, and how the bosom of that lady who lately fainted away came to be so full of scars? These are the questions I am ordered to ask in their name."

At these words, Zobeide put on a stern countenance, and turning towards the caliph and the rest of the company, "Is it true, gentlemen," said she, "that you desired him to ask me these questions?" All of them, except the vizier Jaaffier, who spoke not a word, answered, "Yes." On which she exclaimed, in a tone that sufficiently expressed her resentment, "Before we granted you the favour of receiving you into our house, and to prevent all occasion of trouble from you, because we are alone, we imposed the condition that you should not speak of any thing that did not concern you, lest you might hear that which would not please you; and yet after having received and entertained you, you make no scruple to break your promise. It is true that our easy temper has occasioned this, but that shall not excuse your rudeness." As she spoke these words, she gave three stamps with her foot, and clapping her hands as often together, cried, "Come quickly:" upon this, a door flew open, and seven black slaves rushed in; every one seized a man, threw him on the ground, and dragged him into the middle of the room, brandishing a cimeter over his head.

We may easily conceive the caliph then repented, but too late, that he had not taken the advice of his vizier, who, with Mesrour, the calenders and porter, was from his ill-timed curiosity on the point of forfeiting his life. Before they would strike the fatal blow, one of the slaves said to Zobeide, and her sisters: “High, mighty, and adorable mistresses, do you command us to strike off their heads?” “Stay,” said Zobeide, “I must examine them first.” The frightened porter interrupted her thus: “In the name of heaven, do not put me to death for another man’s crime. I am innocent; they are to blame.” “Alas!” said he, weeping, “how pleasantly did we pass our time! those blind calenders are the cause of this misfortune; there is no town in the world but suffers wherever these inauspicious fellows come. Madam, I beg you not to destroy the innocent with the guilty, and consider, that it is more glorious to pardon such a wretch as I am, who have no way to help myself, than to sacrifice me to your resentment.”

Zobeide, notwithstanding her anger, could not but laugh within herself at the porter’s lamentation: but without replying to him, she spoke a second time to the rest; “Answer me, and say who you are, otherwise you shall not live one moment longer: I cannot believe you to be honest men, or persons of authority or distinction in your own countries; for if you were, you would have been more modest and more respectful to us.”

The caliph, naturally warm, was infinitely more indignant than the rest, to find his life depending upon the command of a woman: but he began to conceive some hopes, when he found she wished to know who they all were; for he imagined she would not put him to death, when informed of his quality; therefore he spoke with a low voice to the vizier, who was near him, to declare it speedily: but the vizier, more prudent, resolved to save his master’s honour, and not let the world know the affront he had brought upon himself by his own imprudence; and therefore answered, “We have what we deserve.” But if he had intended to speak as the caliph commanded him, Zobeide would not have allowed him time: for having turned to the calenders, and seeing them all blind with one eye, she asked if they were brothers. One of them answered, “No, madam, no otherwise than as we are calenders; that is to say, as we observe the same rules.” “Were you born blind of the right eye,” continued she? “No, madam,” answered he; “I lost my eye in such a surprising adventure, that it would be instructive to every body were it in writing: after that misfortune I shaved my beard and eyebrows, and took the habit of a calender which I now wear."

Zobeide asked the other two calenders the same question, and had the same answers; but the last who spoke added, "Madam, to shew you that we are no common fellows, and that you may have some consideration for us, be pleased to know, that we are all three sons of sultans; and though we never met together till this evening, yet we have had time enough to make that known to one another; and I assure you that the sultans from whom we derive our being were famous in the world."

At this discourse Zobeide suppressed her anger, and said to the slaves, "Give them their liberty a while, but remain where you are. Those who tell us their history, and the occasion of their coming, do them no hurt, let them go where they please; but do not spare those who refuse to give us that satisfaction."

The three calendars, the caliph, the grand vizier, Jaaffier, the eunuch Mesrour, and the porter, were all in the middle of the hall, seated upon a carpet in the presence of the three ladies, who reclined upon a sofa, and the slaves stood ready to do whatever their mistresses should command.

The porter, understanding that he might extricate himself from danger by telling his history, spoke first, and said, "Madam, you know my history already, and the occasion of my coming hither; so that what I have to say will be very short. My lady, your sister, called me this morning at the place where I plyed as porter to see if any body would employ me, that I might get my bread; I followed her to a vintner's, then to a herb-shop, then to one where oranges, lemons, and citrons were sold, then to a grocer's, next to a confectioner's, and a druggist's, with my basket upon my head as full as I was able to carry it; then I came hither, where you had the goodness to suffer me to continue till now, a favour that I shall never forget. This, madam, is my history."

When the porter had done, Zobeide said to him, "Depart, let us see you here no more." "Madam," replied the porter, "I beg you to let me stay; it would not be just, after the rest have had the pleasure to hear my history, that I should not also have the satisfaction of hearing theirs." And having spoken thus, he sat down at the end of the sofa, glad at heart to have escaped the danger that had frightened him so much. After him, one of the three calenders directing his speech to Zobeide, as the principal of the three ladies, began thus:

The History of the First Calender.

Madam, in order to inform you how I lost my right eye, and why I was obliged to put myself into a calender's habit, I must tell you, that I am a sultan's son born: my father had a brother who reigned over a neighbouring kingdom; and the prince his son and I were nearly of the same age.

After I had learned my exercises, the sultan my father granted me such liberty as suited my dignity. I went regularly every year to see my uncle, at whose court I amused myself for a month or two, and then returned again to my father's. These journeys cemented a firm and intimate friendship between the prince my cousin and myself. The last time I saw him, he received me with greater demonstrations of tenderness than he had done at any time before; and resolving one day to give me a treat, he made great preparations for that purpose. We continued a long time at table, and after we had both supped; "Cousin," said he, "you will hardly be able to guess how I have been employed since your last departure from hence, about a year past. I have had a great many men at work to perfect a design I have formed; I have caused an edifice to be built, which is now finished so as to be habitable: you will not be displeased if I shew it you. But first you are to promise me upon oath, that you will keep my secret, according to the confidence I repose in you."

The affection and familiarity that subsisted between us would not allow me to refuse him any thing. I very readily took the oath required of me: upon which he said to me, "Stay here till I return, I will be with you in a moment;" and accordingly he came with a lady in his hand, of singular beauty, and magnificently apparelled: he did not intimate who she was, neither did I think it would be polite to enquire. We sat down again with this lady at table, where we continued some time, conversing upon indifferent subjects; and now and then filling a glass to each other's health. After which the prince said, "Cousin, we must lose no time; therefore pray oblige me by taking this lady along with you, and conducting her to such a place, where you will see a tomb newly built in form of a dome: you will easily know it; the gate is open; enter it together, and tarry till I come, which will be very speedily."

Being true to my oath, I made no farther enquiry, but took the lady by the hand, and by the directions which the prince my cousin had given me, I brought her to the place. We were scarcely got thither, when we saw the prince following us, carrying a pitcher of water, a hatchet, and a little bag of mortar.

The hatchet served him to break down the empty sepulchre in the middle of the tomb; he took away the stones one after another, and laid them in a corner; he then dug up the ground, where I saw a trap-door under the sepulchre, which he lifted up, and underneath perceived the head of a staircase leading into a vault. Then my cousin, speaking to the lady, said, "Madam, it is by this way that we are to go to the place I told you of:" upon which the lady advanced, and went down, and the prince began to follow; but first turning to me, said, "My dear cousin, I am infinitely obliged to you for the trouble you have taken; I thank you. Adieu." "Dear cousin," I cried, "what is the meaning of this?" "Be content," replied he; "you may return the way you came."

I could get nothing farther from him, but was obliged to take my leave. As I returned to my uncle's palace, the vapours of the wine got up into my head; however, I reached my apartment, and went to bed. Next morning, when I awoke, I began to reflect upon what had happened, and after recollecting all the circumstances of such a singular adventure, I fancied it was nothing but a dream. Full of these thoughts, I sent to enquire if the prince my cousin was ready to receive a visit from me; but when they brought word back that he did not lie in his own lodgings that night, that they knew not what was become of him, and were in much trouble in consequence, I conceived that the strange event of the tomb was too true. I was sensibly afflicted, and went to the public burying-place, where there were several tombs like that which I had seen: I spent the day in viewing them one after another, but could not find that I sought for, and thus I spent four days successively in vain.

You must know, that all this while the sultan my uncle was absent, and had been hunting for several days; I grew weary of waiting for him, and having prayed his ministers to make my apology at his return, left his palace, and set out towards my father's court. I left the ministers of the sultan my uncle in great trouble, surmising what was become of the prince: but because of my oath to keep his secret, I durst not tell them what I had seen.

I arrived at my father's capital, where, contrary to custom, I found a numerous guard at the gate of the palace, who surrounded me as I entered. I asked the reason, and the commanding officer replied, "Prince, the army has proclaimed the grand vizier, instead of your father, who is dead, and I take you prisoner in the name of the new sultan." At these words the guards laid hold of me, and carried me before the tyrant: I leave you to judge, madam, how much I was surprised and grieved.

This rebel vizier, had long entertained a mortal hatred against me; for this reason. When I was a stripling, I loved to shoot with a cross-bow; and being one day upon the terrace of the palace with my bow, a bird happening to come by, I shot but missed him, and the ball by misfortune hit the vizier, who was taking the air upon the terrace of his own house, and put out one of his eyes. As soon as I understood this, I not only sent to make my excuse to him, but did it in person: yet he never forgave me, and, as opportunity offered, made me sensible of his resentment. But now that he had me in his power, he expressed his feelings; for he came to me like a madman, as soon as he saw me, and thrusting his finger into my right eye, pulled it out, and thus I became blind of one eye.

But the usurper's cruelty did not stop here; he ordered me to be shut up in a machine, and commanded the executioner to carry me into the country, to cut off my head, and leave me to be devoured by birds of prey. The executioner conveyed me thus shut up into the country, in order to execute the barbarous sentence; but by my prayers and tears, I moved the man's compassion: "Go," said he to me, "get you speedily out of the kingdom, and take heed of returning, or you will certainly meet your own ruin, and be the cause of mine." I thanked him for the favour he did me; and as soon as I was left alone, comforted myself for the loss of my eye, by considering that I had very narrowly escaped a much greater evil.

Being in such a condition, I could not travel far at a time; I retired to remote places during the day, and travelled as far by night as my strength would allow me. At last I arrived in the dominions of the sultan my uncle, and came to his capital.

I gave him a long detail of the tragical cause of my return, and of the sad condition he saw me in. “Alas!” cried he, “was it not enough for me to have lost my son, but must I have also news of the death of a brother I loved so dearly, and see you reduced to this deplorable condition?” He told me how uneasy he was that he could hear nothing of his son, notwithstanding all the enquiry he could make. At these words, the unfortunate father burst into tears, and was so much afflicted, that pitying his grief, it was impossible for me to keep the secret any longer; so that, notwithstanding my oath to the prince my cousin, I told the sultan all that I knew.

His majesty listened to me with some sort of comfort, and when I had done, “Nephew,” said he, “what you tell me gives me some hope. I knew that my son ordered that tomb to be built, and I can guess pretty nearly the place; and with the idea you still have of it, I fancy we shall find it: but since he ordered it to be built privately, and you took your oath to keep his secret, I am of opinion, that we ought to go in quest of it without other attendants.” But he had another reason for keeping the matter secret, which he did not then tell me, and an important one it was, as you will perceive by the sequel of my story.

We disguised ourselves and went out by a door of the garden which opened into the fields, and soon found what we sought for. I knew the tomb, and was the more rejoiced, because I had formerly sought it a long time in vain. We entered, and found the iron trap pulled down at the head of the staircase; we had great difficulty in raising it, because the prince had fastened it inside with the water and mortar formerly mentioned, but at last we succeeded.

The sultan my uncle descended first, I followed, and we went down about fifty steps. When we came to the foot of the stairs, we found a sort of antechamber, full of thick smoke of an ill scent, which obscured the lamp, that gave a very faint light.

From this antechamber we came into another, very large, supported by columns, and lighted by several branched candlesticks. There was a cistern in the middle, and provisions of several sorts stood on one side of it; but we were much surprised not to see any person. Before us there appeared a high estrade, which we mounted by several steps, and upon this there was a large bed, with curtains drawn. The sultan went up, and opening the curtains, perceived the prince his son and the lady in bed together, but burnt and changed to cinder, as if they had been thrown into a fire, and taken out before they were consumed.

But what surprised me most was, that though this spectacle filled me with horror, the sultan my uncle, instead of testifying his sorrow to see the prince his son in such a condition, spat on his face, and exclaimed, with a disdainful air, "This is the punishment of this world, but that of the other will last to eternity;" and not content with this, he pulled off his sandal, and gave the corpse of his son a blow on the cheek.

I cannot adequately express how much I was astonished when I saw the sultan my uncle abuse his son thus after he was dead. "Sir," said I, "whatever grief this dismal sight has impressed upon me, I am forced to suspend it, to enquire of your majesty what crime the prince my cousin may have committed, that his corpse should deserve such indignant treatment?" "Nephew," replied the sultan, "I must tell you, that my son (who is unworthy of that name) loved his sister from his infancy, as she did him: I did not check their growing fondness, because I did not foresee its pernicious consequence. This tenderness increased as they grew in years, and to such a height, that I dreaded the end of it. At last, I applied such remedies as were in my power: I not only gave my son a severe reprimand in private, laying before him the horrible nature of the passion he entertained, and the eternal disgrace he would bring upon my family, if he persisted; but I also represented the same to my daughter, and shut her up so close that she could have no conversation with her brother. But that unfortunate creature had swallowed so much of the poison, that all the obstacles which by my prudence I could lay in the way served only to inflame her love.

"My son being persuaded of his sister's constancy, on presence of building a tomb, caused this subterraneous habitation to be made, in hopes of finding one day or other an opportunity to possess himself of that objets which was the cause of his flame, and to bring her hither. He took advantage of my absence, to enter by force into the place of his sister's confinement; but this was a circumstance which my honour would not suffer me to make public. And after so damnable an action, he came and shut himself up with her in this place, which he has supplied, as you see, with all sorts of provisions, that he might enjoy detestable pleasures, which ought to be a subject of horror to all the world; but God, who would not suffer such an abomination, has justly punished them both.” At these words, he melted into tears, and I joined mine with his.

After a while, casting his eyes upon me, “Dear nephew,” cried he, embracing me, “if I have lost that unworthy son, I shall happily find in you what will better supply his place.” The reflections he made on the doleful end of the prince and princess his daughter made us both weep afresh.

We ascended the stairs again, and departed at last from that dismal place. We let down the trap door, and covered it with earth, and such other materials as the tomb was built of, on purpose to hide, as much as lay in our power, so terrible an effect of the wrath of God.

We had not been long returned to the palace, unperceived by any one, but we heard a confused noise of trumpets, drums, and other instruments of war. We soon understood by the thick cloud of dust, which almost darkened the air, that it was the arrival of a formidable army: and it proved to be the same vizier that had dethroned my father, and usurped his place, who with a vast number of troops was come to possess himself of that also of the sultan my uncle.

My uncle, who then had only his usual guards about him, could not resist so numerous an enemy; they invested the city, and the gates being opened to them without any resistance, soon became masters of it, and broke into the palace where my uncle defended himself, and sold his life at a dear rate. I fought as valiantly for a while; but seeing we were forced to submit to a superior power, I thought on my retreat, which I had the good fortune to effect by some back ways, and got to one of the sultan’s servants on whose fidelity I could depend.

Being thus surrounded with sorrows and persecuted by fortune, I had recourse to a stratagem, which was the only means left me to save my life: I caused my beard and eye-brows to be shaved, and putting on a calender’s habit, I passed, unknown by any, out of the city; after that, by degrees, I found it easy to quit my uncle’s kingdom, by taking the bye-roads.

I avoided passing through towns, until I had reached the empire of the mighty governor of the Moosulmauns, the glorious and renowned caliph Haroon al Rusheed, when I thought myself out of danger; and considering what I was to do, I resolved to come to Bagdad, intending to throw myself at the feet of that monarch, whose generosity is renowned throughout the world. “I shall move him to compassion,” said I to myself, “by the relation of my uncommon misfortunes, and without doubt he will take pity on a persecuted prince, and not suffer me to implore his assistance in vain.”

In short, after a journey of several months, I arrived yesterday at the gate of this city, into which I entered about the dusk of evening; and stopping a little while to consider which way I was to turn, another calender came up; he saluted me, and I him: “You appear,” said I, “to be a stranger, as I am.” “You are not mistaken,” replied he. He had no sooner returned this answer, than a third calender overtook us. He saluted us, and told us he was a stranger newly come to Bagdad; so that as brethren we joined together, resolving not to separate from one another.

It was now late, and we knew not where to seek a lodging in the city, where we had never been before. But good fortune having brought us to your gate, we made bold to knock, when you received us with so much kindness, that we are incapable of rendering suitable thanks. “This, madam,” said he, “is, in obedience to your commands, the account I was to give how I lost my right eye, wherefore my beard and eye-brows are shaved, and how I came to be with you at this time.”

“It is enough,” said Zobeide; “you may retire to what place you think fit.” The calender begged the ladies’ permission to stay till he had heard the relations of his two comrades, “Whom I cannot,” said he, “leave with honour;” and that he might also hear those of the three other persons in company.

The story of the first calender seemed wonderful to the whole company, but especially to the caliph, who, notwithstanding the slaves stood by with their cimeters drawn, could not forbear whispering to the vizier “Many stories have I heard, but never any that equalled in surprising incident that of the calender.” Whilst he was saying this, the second calender began, addressing himself to Zobeide.

The Story of the Second Calender.

Madam, to obey your commands, and to shew you by what strange accident I became blind of the right eye, I must of necessity give you the account of my life.

I was scarcely past my infancy, when the sultan my father (for you must know I am a prince by birth) perceived that I was endowed with good natural ability, and spared nothing proper for improving it.

No sooner was I able to read and write, but I learned the Koraun from beginning to end by heart, that admirable book, which contains the foundation, the precepts, and the rules of our religion; and that I might be thoroughly instructed in it, I read the works of the most approved divines, by whose commentaries it had been explained. I added to this study, that of all the traditions collected from the mouth of our prophet, by the great men that were contemporary with him. I was not satisfied with the knowledge of all that had any relation to our religion, but made also a particular search into our histories. I made myself perfect in polite learning, in the works of poets, and versification. I applied myself to geography, chronology, and to speak the Arabian language in its purity; not forgetting in the meantime all such exercises as were proper for a prince to understand. But one thing which I was fond of, and succeeded in, was penmanship; wherein I surpassed all the celebrated scribes of our kingdom.

Fame did me more honour than I deserved, for she not only spread the renown of my talents through all the dominions of the sultan my father, but carried it as far as the empire of Hindoostan, whose potent monarch, desirous to see me, sent an ambassador with rich presents: my father, who rejoiced at this embassy for several reasons, was persuaded, that nothing could be more improving to a prince of my age than to travel and visit foreign courts; and he wished to gain the friendship of the Indian monarch. I departed with the ambassador, but with no great retinue.

When we had travelled about a month, we discovered at a distance a cloud of dust, and under that we saw very soon fifty horsemen well armed, who were robbers, advancing towards us at full speed.

As we had ten horses laden with baggage, and presents to the sultan of Hindoostan, from my father, and my retinue was but small, you may easily judge that these robbers came boldly up to us; and not being in a posture to make any opposition, we told them, that we were ambassadors, and hoped they would attempt nothing contrary to the respect due to such sacred characters, thinking by this means to save our equipage and our lives: but the robbers most insolently replied, "For what reason would you have us shew any respect to the sultan your master? We are none of his subjects, nor are we upon his territories:" having spoken thus, they surrounded and fell upon us: I defended myself as long as I could; but finding myself wounded, and seeing the ambassador with his attendants and mine lying on the ground, I made use of what strength was yet remaining in my horse, who was also very much wounded, and rode away as fast as he could carry me; but he shortly after, from weariness and the loss of blood, fell down dead. I cleared myself from him unhurt, and finding that I was not pursued, judged the robbers were not willing to quit the booty they had obtained.

Here you see me, alone, wounded, destitute of help, and in a strange country. I durst not take the high road, fearing I might fall again into the hands of these robbers. When I had bound up my wound, which was not dangerous, I walked on the rest of the day, and arrived at the foot of the mountain, where I perceived a passage into a cave; I went in, and staid there that night with little satisfaction, after I had eaten some fruits that I had gathered by the way.

I continued my journey for several days following, without finding any place of abode: but after a month's time, I came to a large town well inhabited, and situated so much the more advantageously, as it was surrounded by several streams, so that it enjoyed perpetual spring.

The pleasant objects which then presented themselves to my view afforded me some joy, and suspended for a time the sorrow with which I was overwhelmed. My face, hands, and feet were black and sun-burnt; and, by my long journey, my boots were quite worn out, so that I was forced to walk bare-footed; and besides, my clothes were all in rags I entered the town to inform myself where I was, and addressed myself to a tailor that was at work in his shop; who, perceiving by my air that I was a person of more note than my outward appearance bespoke, made me sit down by him, and asked me who I was, from whence I came, and what had brought me thither? I did not conceal anything that had befallen me, nor made I any scruple to discover my quality.

The tailor listened to me with attention; but after had done speaking, instead of giving me any consolation, he augmented my sorrow: “Take heed,” said he, “how you discover to any person what you have related to me; for the prince of this country is the greatest enemy your father has, and he will certainly do you some mischief, should he hear of your being in this city.” I made no doubt of the tailor’s sincerity, when he named the prince: but since that enmity which is between my father and him has no relation to my adventures, I pass it over in silence.

I returned the tailor thanks for his advice, expressed himself disposed to follow his counsel, and assured him that his favours should never be forgotten. He ordered something to be brought for me to eat, and offered me at the same time a lodging in his house, which I accepted. Some days after, finding me tolerably well recovered of the fatigue I had endured by a long and tedious journey, and reflecting that most princes of our religion applied themselves to some art or calling that might be serviceable to them upon occasion, he asked me, if I had learned any whereby I might get a livelihood, and not be burdensome to others? I told him that I understood the laws, both divine and human; that I was a grammarian and poet; and above all, that I could write with great perfection. “By all this,” said he, “you will not be able, in this country, to purchase yourself one morsel of bread; nothing is of less use here than those sciences; but if you will be advised by me, dress yourself in a labourer’s habit; and since you appear to be strong, and of a good constitution, you shall go into the next forest and cut fire-wood, which you may bring to the market to be sold; and I can assure you this employment will turn to so good an account that you may live by it, without dependence upon any man; and by this means you will be in a condition to wait for the favourable minute, when heaven shall think fit to dispel those clouds of misfortune that thwart your happiness, and oblige you to conceal your birth; I will take care to supply you with a rope and a hatchet."

The fear of being known, and the necessity I was under of getting a livelihood, made me agree to this proposal, notwithstanding the meanness and hardships that attended it. The day following the tailor brought me a rope, a hatchet, and a short coat, and recommended me to some poor people who gained their bread after the same manner, that they might take me into their company. They conducted me to the wood, and the first day I brought in as much upon my head as procured me half a piece of gold, of the money of that country; for though the wood was not far distant from the town, yet it was very scarce, by reason that few would be at the trouble of fetching it for themselves. I gained a good sum of money in a short time, and repaid my tailor what he had advanced to me.

I continued this way of living for a whole year. One day, having by chance penetrated farther into the wood than usual, I happened to light on a pleasant spot, where I began to cut; and in pulling up the root of a tree, I espied an iron ring, fastened to a trap door of the same metal. I took away the earth that covered it, and having lifted it up, discovered a flight of stairs, which I descended with my axe in my hand.

When I had reached the bottom, I found myself in a palace, and felt great consternation, on account of a great light which appeared as clear in it as if it had been above ground in the open air. I went forward along a gallery, supported by pillars of jasper, the base and capitals of messy gold: but seeing a lady of a noble and graceful air, extremely beautiful, coming towards me, my eyes were taken off from every other objets.

Being desirous to spare the lady the trouble of coming to me, I hastened to meet her; and as I was saluting her with a low obeisance, she asked me, "What are you, a man or a genie?" "A man, madam," said I; "I have no correspondence with genies." "By what adventure," said she, fetching a deep sigh, "are you come hither? I have lived here twenty-five years, and you are the first man I have beheld in that time."

Her great beauty, which had already smitten me, and the sweetness and civility wherewith she received me, emboldened me to say, “Madam, before I have the honour to satisfy your curiosity, give me leave to tell you, that I am infinitely gratified with this unexpected meeting, which offers me an occasion of consolation in the midst of my affliction; and perhaps it may give me an opportunity of making you also more happy than you are.” I related to her by what strange accident she beheld me, the son of a sultan, in such a condition as I appeared in her presence; and how fortune had directed that I should discover the entrance into that magnificent prison where I had found her, according to appearance, in an unpleasant situation.

“Alas! prince,” said she, sighing once more, “you have just cause to believe this rich and pompous prison cannot be otherwise than a most wearisome abode: the most charming place in the world being no way delightful when we are detained there contrary to our will. It is not possible but you have heard of the sultan of the isle of Ebene, so called from that precious wood which it produces in abundance; I am the princess his daughter.

“The sultan, my father, had chosen for me a husband, a prince who was my cousin; but on my wedding-night, in the midst of the rejoicings of the court and capital, before I was conducted to my husband, a genie took me away. I fainted with alarm, and when I recovered, found myself in this place. I was long inconsolable, but time and necessity have accustomed me to see and receive the genie. Twenty-five years I have continued in this place, where, I must confess, I have all that I can wish for necessary to life, and also every thing that can satisfy a princess fond of dress and splendour.

“Every ten days,” continued the princess, “the genie comes hither, and remains with me one night, which he never exceeds; and the excuse he makes for it is, that he is married to another wife, who would grow jealous if she should know his infidelity. Meanwhile, if I have occasion for him by day or night, as soon as I touch a talisman, which is at the entrance into my chamber, the genie appears. It is now the fourth day since he was here, and I do not expect him before the end of six more; so, if you please, you may stay five days, and I will endeavour to entertain you according to your quality and merit.” I thought myself too fortunate, to have obtained so great a favour without asking, to refuse so obliging an offer. The princess made me go into a bath, the most commodious, and the most sumptuous imaginable; and when I came forth, instead of my own clothes I found another very costly suit, which I did not esteem so much for its richness, as because it made me appear worthy to be in her company. We sat down on a sofa covered with rich tapestry, with cushions of the rarest Indian brocade; and some time after she covered a table with several dishes of delicate meats. We ate, and passed the remaining part of the day with much satisfaction, as also the evening, together.

The next day, as she contrived every means to please me, she brought in, at dinner, a bottle of old wine, the most excellent that ever was tasted, and out of complaisance drank some part of it with me. When my head grew warm with the agreeable liquor, "Fair princess," said I, "you have been too long thus buried alive; follow me, enjoy the real day, of which you have been deprived so many years, and abandon this artificial though brilliant glare." "Prince," replied she, with a smile, "leave this discourse; if you out of ten days will grant me nine, and resign the last to the genie, the fairest day would be nothing in my esteem." "Princess," said I, "it is the fear of the genie that makes you speak thus; for my part, I value him so little, that I will break in pieces his talisman, with the conjuration that is written about it. Let him come, I will expect him; and how brave or redoubtable soever he be, I will make him feel the weight of my arm: I swear solemnly that I will extirpate all the genies in the world, and him first." The princess, who knew the consequence, conjured me not to touch the talisman. "For that would be the means," said she, "of ruining both you and me; I know what belongs to genies better than you." The fumes of the wine did not suffer me to hearken to her reasons; but I gave the talisman a kick with my foot, and broke it in several pieces.

The talisman was no sooner broken than the palace began to shake, and seemed ready to fall, with a hideous noise like thunder, accompanied with flashes of lightning, and alternate darkness. This terrible noise in a moment dispelled the fumes of my wine, and made me sensible, but too late, of the folly I had committed. "Princess," cried I, "what means all this?" She answered, without any concern for her own misfortune, "Alas! you are undone, if you do not fly immediately."

I followed her advice, but my fears were so great, that I forgot my hatchet and cords. I had scarcely reached the stairs by which I had descended, when the enchanted palace opened at once, and made a passage for the genie: he asked the princess in great anger, “What has happened to you, and why did you call me?” “A violent spasm,” said the princess, “made me fetch this bottle which you see here, out of which I drank twice or thrice, and by mischance made a false step, and fell upon the talisman, which is broken, and that is all.”

At this answer, the furious genie told her, “You are a false woman, and speak not the truth; how came that axe and those cords there?” “I never saw them till this moment,” said the princess. “Your coming in such an impetuous manner has, it may be, forced them up in some place as you came along, and so brought them hither without your knowing it.”

The genie made no other answer but what was accompanied with reproaches and blows, of which I heard the noise. I could not endure to hear the pitiful cries of the princess so cruelly abused. I had already taken off the suit she had presented to me, and put on my own, which I had laid on the stairs the day before, when I came out of the bagnio: I made haste upstairs, the more distracted with sorrow and compassion, as I had been the cause of so great a misfortune; and by sacrificing the fairest princess on earth to the barbarity of a merciless genie, I was becoming the most criminal and ungrateful of mankind. “It is true,” said I, “she has been a prisoner these twenty-five years; but, liberty excepted she wanted nothing that could make her happy. My folly has put an end to her happiness, and brought upon her the cruelty of an unmerciful devil.” I let down the trap-door, covered it again with earth, and returned to the city with a burden of wood, which I bound up without knowing what I did, so great was my trouble and sorrow.

My landlord, the tailor, was very much rejoiced to see me: “Your absence,” said he, “has disquieted me much, as you had entrusted me with the secret of your birth, and I knew not what to think; I was afraid somebody had discovered you; God be praised for your return.” I thanked him for his zeal and affection, but not a word durst I say of what had passed, nor of the reason why I came back without my hatchet and cords.

I retired to my chamber, where I reproached myself a thousand times for my excessive imprudence: "Nothing," said I, "could have paralleled the princess's good fortune and mine, had I forborne to break the talisman."

While I was thus giving myself over to melancholy thoughts, the tailor came in and said, "An old man, whom I do not know, brings your hatchet and cords, which he found in his way as he tells me, and says he understood from your comrades that you lodge here; come out and speak to him, for he will deliver them to none but yourself."

At these words I changed colour, and fell a trembling. While the tailor was asking me the reason, my chamber-door opened, and the old man, having no patience to stay, appeared to us with my hatchet and cords. This was the genie, the ravisher of the fair princess of the isle of Ebene, who had thus disguised himself, after he had treated her with the utmost barbarity. "I am a genie," said he, speaking to me, "son of the daughter of Eblis, prince of genies: is not this your hatchet, and are not these your cords?"

After the genie had put the question to me, he gave me no time to answer, nor was it in my power, so much had his terrible aspect disordered me. He grasped me by the middle, dragged me out of the chamber, and mounting into the air, carried me up to the skies with such swiftness, that I was not able to take notice of the way he conveyed me. He descended again in like manner to the earth, which on a sudden he caused to open with a stroke of his foot, and sunk down at once, when I found myself in the enchanted palace, before the fair princess of the isle of Ebene. But, alas! what a spectacle was there! I saw what pierced me to the heart; this poor princess was quite naked, weltering in her blood, and laid upon the ground, more like one dead than alive, with her cheeks bathed in tears.

"Perfidious wretch!" said the genie to her, pointing at me, "is not this your gallant?" She cast her languishing eyes upon me, and answered mournfully, "I do not know him, I never saw him till this moment." "What!" said the genie, "he is the cause of thy being in the condition thou art justly in; and yet darest thou say thou cost not know him?" "If I do not know him," said the princess, "would you have me lie on purpose to ruin him?" "Oh then," said the genie, pulling out a cimeter and presenting it to the princess, "if you never saw him before, take this, and cut off his head." "Alas," replied the princess, "how is it possible that I should execute such an act? My strength is so far spent that I cannot lift up my arm; and if I could, how should I have the heart to take away the life of an innocent man, and one whom I do not know?" "This refusal," said the genie to the princess, "sufficiently informs me of your crime." Upon which, turning to me, "And thou," said he, "dost thou not know her?"

I should have been the most ungrateful wretch, and the most perfidious of all mankind, if I had not strewn myself as faithful to the princess as she had been to me, who had been the cause of her misfortunes. I therefore answered the genie, "How should I know her, when I never saw her till now?" "If it be so," said he, "take the cimeter and cut off her head: on this condition I will set thee at liberty, for then I shall be convinced that thou hast never seen her till this moment, as thou gayest." "With all my heart," replied I, and took the cimeter in my hand.

Do not think, madam, that I drew near to the fair princess of the isle of Ebene to be the executioner of the genie's barbarity. I did it only to demonstrate by my behaviour, as much as possible, that as she had strewn her resolution to sacrifice her life for my sake, I would not refuse to sacrifice mine for hers. The princess, notwithstanding her pain and suffering, understood my meaning; which she signified by an obliging look, and made me understand her willingness to die for me; and that she was satisfied to see how ready I was also to die for her. Upon this I stepped back, and threw the cimeter on the ground. "I should for ever," said I to the genie, "be hateful to all mankind were I to be so base as to murder, not only a person whom I do not know, but a lady like this, who is already on the point of expiring: do with me what you please, since I am in your power; I cannot obey your barbarous commands."

"I see," said the genie, "that you both out-brave me, and insult my jealousy; but both of you shall know by my treatment of you of what I am capable." At these words the monster took up the cimeter and cut off one of her hands, which left her only so much life as to give me a token with the other that she bade me for ever adieu. For the blood she had lost before, and that which gushed out then, did not permit her to live above one or two moments after this barbarous cruelty; the sight of which threw me into a fit. When I was come to myself again, I expostulated with the genie, why he made me languish in expectation of death: “Strike,” cried I, “for I am ready to receive the mortal blow, and expect it as the greatest favour you can show me.” But instead of agreeing to that, “Behold,” said he, “how genies treat their wives whom they suspect of unfaithfulness; she has received thee here, and were I certain that she had put any further affront upon me, I would put thee to death this minute: but I will content myself with transforming thee into a dog, ape, lion, or bird; take thy choice of any of these, I will leave it to thyself.”

These words gave me some hopes of being able to appease him: “O genie,” said I, “moderate your passion, and since you will not take away my life, give it me generously. I shall always remember your clemency, if you pardon me, as one of the best men in the world pardoned one of his neighbours that bore him a mortal hatred.” The genie asked me what had passed between those two neighbours, and said, he would have patience till he heard the story, which I related to him; and I believe, madam, you will not be displeased if I now repeat it.

The Story of the Envious Man, and of him that he Envied.

In a considerable town two persons dwelt in adjoining houses. One of them conceived such a violent hatred against the other, that the hated party resolved to remove to a distance, being persuaded that their being neighbours was the only cause of this animosity; for though he had done him several pieces of service, he found that his hatred was not diminished; he therefore sold his house, with what goods he had left, and retired to the capital city of a kingdom which was not far distant. Here he bought a little spot of ground, which lay about half a league from the city; where he had a convenient house, with a garden, and a pretty spacious court, wherein there was a deep well, which was not in use.

The honest man having made this purchase put on a dervise's habit, intending to lead a retired life, and caused several cells to be made in the house, where in a short time he established a numerous society of dervises. He soon came to be publicly known by his virtue, through which he acquired the esteem of many people, as well of the commonalty as of the chief of the city. In short, he was much honoured and courted by all ranks. People came from afar to recommend themselves to his prayers; and all who visited him, published what blessings they received through his means.

The great reputation of this honest man having spread to the town from whence he had come, it touched the envious man so much to the quick, that he left his house and affairs with a resolution to ruin him. With this intent he went to the new convent of dervises, of which his former neighbour was the head, who received him with all imaginable tokens of friendship. The envious man told him that he was come on purpose to communicate a business of importance, which he could not do but in private; and "that nobody may hear us, let us," said he, "take a walk in your court; and seeing night begins to draw on, command your dervises to retire to their cells." The chief of the dervises did as he was required.

When the envious man saw that he was alone with this good man, he began to tell him his errand, walking side by side in the court, till he saw his opportunity; and getting the good man near the brink of the well, he gave him a thrust, and pushed him into it, without being seen by any one. Having done thus, he returned, got out at the gate of the convent without being known, and reached his own house well satisfied with his journey, being fully persuaded that the object of his hatred was no more; but he found himself mistaken.

This old well was inhabited by fairies and genies, which happened luckily for the relief of the head of the convent; for they received and supported him, and carried him to the bottom, so that he got no hurt. He perceived that there was something extraordinary in his fall, which must otherwise have cost him his life; but he neither saw nor felt anything. He soon heard a voice, however, which said, “Do you know what honest man this is, to whom we have done this piece of service?” Another voice answered, “No.” To which the first replied, “Then I will tell you. This man out of charity, the purest ever known, left the town he lived in, and has established himself in this place, in hopes to cure one of his neighbours of the envy he had conceived against him; he had acquired such a general esteem, that the envious man, not able to endure it, came hither on purpose to ruin him; and he would have accomplished his design, had it not been for the assistance we have given this honest man, whose reputation is so great, that the sultan, who keeps his residence in the neighbouring city, was to pay him a visit to-morrow, to recommend the princess his daughter to his prayers.”

Another voice asked, “What need had the princess of the dervise’s prayers?” To which the first answered, “You do not know, it seems, that she is possessed by genie Maimoun, the son of Dimdim, who is fallen in love with her. But I well know how this good head of the dervises may cure her; the thing is very easy, and I will explain it to you. He has a black cat in his convent, with a white spot at the end of her tail, about the bigness of a small piece of Arabian money; let him only pull seven hairs out of the white spot, burn them, and smoke the princess’s head with the fume, she will not only be immediately cured, but be so safely delivered from Maimoun, the son of Dimdim, that he will never dare to approach her again.”

The head of the dervises remembered every word of the conversation between the fairies and the genies, who remained silent the remainder of the night. The next morning, as soon as daylight appeared, and he could discern the nature of his situation, the well being broken down in several places, he saw a hole, by which he crept out with ease.

The other dervises, who had been seeking for him, were rejoiced to see him; he gave them a brief account of the wickedness of the man to whom he had given so kind a reception the day before, and retired into his cell. Shortly after the black cat, which the fairies and the genies had mentioned the night before, came to fawn upon her master, as she was accustomed to do; he took her up, and pulled seven hairs from the white spot that was upon her tail, and laid them aside for his use when occasion should serve.

Soon after sunrise the sultan, who would leave no means untried that he thought likely to restore the princess to perfect health, arrived at the gate of the convent. He commanded his guards to halt, whilst he with his principal officers went in. The dervises received him with profound respect.

The sultan called their chief aside, and said, "Good Sheik, you may probably be already acquainted with the cause of my visit." "Yes, Sir," replied he gravely, "if I do not mistake, it is the disease of the princess which procures me this unmerited honour." "That is the real case," replied the sultan. "You will give me new life if your prayers, as I hope they may, restore my daughter's health." "Sir," said the good man, "if your majesty will be pleased to let her come hither, I am in hopes, through God's assistance and favour, that she will be effectually cured."

The prince, transported with joy, sent immediately for his daughter, who soon appeared with a numerous train of ladies and eunuchs, but veiled, so that her face was not seen. The chief of the dervises caused a pall to be held over her head, and he had no sooner thrown the seven hairs upon the burning coals, than the genie Maimoun, the son of Dimdim, uttered a great cry, and without being seen, left the princess at liberty; upon which, she took the veil from her face, and rose up to see where she was, saying, "Where am I, and who brought me hither?" At these words the sultan, overcome with excess of joy, embraced his daughter, and kissed her eyes; he also kissed the chief of the dervises' hands, and said to his officers, "What reward does he deserve that has thus cured my daughter?” They all cried, “He deserves her in marriage.” “That is what I had in my thoughts,” said the sultan; “and I make him my son-in-law from this moment.” Some time after the prime vizier died, and the sultan conferred the place on the dervise. The sultan himself also died without heirs male; upon which the religious orders and the militia consulted together, and the good man was declared and acknowledged sultan by general consent.

The honest dervise, having ascended the throne of his father-in-law, as he was one day in the midst of his courtiers on a march, espied the envious man among the crowd that stood as he passed along, and calling one of the viziers that attended him, whispered him in his ear, “Go, bring me that man you see there; but take care you do not frighten him.” The vizier obeyed, and when the envious man was brought into his presence, the sultan said, “Friend, I am extremely glad to see you.” Upon which he called an officer, “Go immediately,” said he, “and cause to be paid to this man out of my treasury, one hundred pieces of gold: let him have also twenty loads of the richest merchandize in my storehouses, and a sufficient guard to conduit him to his house.” After he had given this charge to the officer, he bade the envious man farewell, and proceeded on his march.

When I had finished the recital of this story to the genie, the murderer of the princess of the isle of Ebene, I made an application of it to himself: “O genie!” said I, “this bountiful sultan was not satisfied with merely overlooking the design of the envious man to take away his life, but also treated him kindly, and sent him back loaded with the favours I have enumerated.” In short, I employed all my eloquence to persuade him to imitate so good an example, and to grant me pardon; but it was impossible to move his compassion.

“All that I can do for thee,” said he, “is, to grant thee thy life; but do not flatter thyself that I will allow thee to return safe and well; I must let thee feel what I am able to do by my enchantments.” So saying, he seized me violently, and carried me through the arched roof of the subterraneous palace, which opened to give him passage; he ascended with me into the air to such a height, that the earth appeared like a little white cloud; he then descended again like lightning, and alighted upon the summit of a mountain.

Here he took up a handful of earth, and pronouncing, or rather muttering, some words which I did not understand, threw it upon me. “Quit,” said he, “the form of a man, and take that of an ape.” He instantly disappeared, and left me alone, transformed into an ape, and overwhelmed with sorrow in a strange country, not knowing whether I was near or far from my father’s dominions.

I descended the mountain, and entered a plain level country, which took me a month to travel over, and then I came to the sea-side. It happened at the time to be perfectly calm, and I espied a vessel about half a league from the shore: unwilling to lose so good an opportunity, I broke off a large branch from a tree, carried it into the sea, and placed myself astride upon it, with a stick in each hand to serve me for oars.

I launched out in this posture, and rowed towards the ship. When I had approached sufficiently near to be seen, I exhibited to the seamen and passengers on the deck an extraordinary spectacle, and all of them regarded me with astonishment. In the meantime I got on board, and laying hold of a rope, jumped upon the deck, but having lost my speech I found myself in great perplexity: and indeed the risk I ran was not less than when I was at the mercy of the genie.

The merchants, being both superstitious and scrupulous, thought if they received me on board I should be the occasion of some misfortune to them during their voyage. On this account one of them said, “I will destroy him with a blow of this handspike;” another, “I will shoot an arrow through his body;” and a third, “Let us throw him into the sea.” Some one of them would not have failed to carry his threat into execution had I not gone to the captain, thrown myself at his feet, and taken hold of his skirt in a supplicating posture. This action, together with the tears which he saw gush from my eyes, moved his compassion. He took me under his protection, threatened to be revenged on any one that would do me the least hurt, and loaded me with a thousand caresses. On my part, though I had not power to speak, I showed by my gestures every mark of gratitude in my power.

The wind that succeeded the calm was not strong, but favourable; it continued to blow in the same direction for fifty days, and brought us safe to the port of a city, well peopled, and of great trade, the capital of a powerful state, where we came to anchor.

Our vessel was instantly surrounded with an infinite number of boats full of people, who came to congratulate their friends on their safe arrival, or to inquire for those they had left behind them in the country from whence they had come, or out of curiosity to see a ship that had performed so long a voyage.

Amongst the rest, some officers came on board, desiring in the name of the sultan to speak with the merchants. The merchants appearing, one of the officers told them, “The sultan our master hath commanded us to acquaint you, that he rejoices in your safe arrival, and beseeches each of you to take the trouble to write a few lines upon this roll. That you may understand the design of this request, you must know that we had a prime vizier, who besides possessing great abilities for the management of public affairs could write in the highest perfection. This minister a few days since died. The event has greatly affected the sultan; and since he can never behold his writing without admiration, he has made a solemn vow, not to give the place to any one who cannot write equally well. Many have presented specimens of their skill; but to this day, no one in the empire has been judged worthy to supply the vizier’s place.”

Those of the merchants who thought they could write well enough to aspire to this high dignity, wrote one after another what they thought fit. After they had done, I advanced, and took the roll out of the gentleman’s hand; but all the people, especially the merchants, cried out, that I would tear it, or throw it into the sea, till they saw how properly I held the roll, and made a sign that I would write in my turn: their apprehensions then changed into wonder. However, as they had never seen an ape that could write, and could not be persuaded that I was more ingenious than others of my kind, they wished to take the roll out of my hand; but the captain took my part once more. “Let him alone,” said he, “allow him to write. If he only scribbles the paper, I promise you that I will immediately punish him. If, on the contrary, he writes well, as I hope he will, because I never saw an ape so clever and ingenious, and so quick of apprehension, I declare that I will adopt him as my son.” Perceiving that no one opposed my design, I took the pen, and wrote six sorts of hands used among the Arabians, and each specimen contained an extemporary distich or quatrain in praise of the sultan. My writing not only excelled that of the merchants, but was such as they had not before seen in that country. When I had done, the officers took the roll, and carried it to the sultan.

The sultan took little notice of any of the writings, except mine, which pleased him so much that he said to the officers, "Take the finest horse in my stable, with the richest trappings, and a robe of the most sumptuous brocade to put on the person who wrote the six hands, and bring him thither." At this command the officers could not forbear laughing. The sultan was incensed at their rudeness, and would have punished them had they not explained: "Sir," said they, "we humbly beg your majesty's pardon: these hands were not written by a man, but by an ape." "What do you say?" exclaimed the sultan. "Those admirable characters, are they not written by the hands of a man?" "No, Sir," replied the officers; "we assure your majesty that it was an ape, who wrote them in our presence." The sultan was too much surprised at this account not to desire a sight of me, and therefore said, "Do what I command you, and bring me speedily that wonderful ape."

The officers returned to the vessel and shewed the captain their order, who answered, "The sultan's command must be obeyed." Whereupon they clothed me with the rich brocade robe, and carried me ashore, where they set me on horseback, whilst the sultan waited for me at his palace with a great number of courtiers, whom he gathered together to do me the more honour.

The procession commenced; the harbour, the streets, the public places, windows, terraces, palaces, and houses, were filled with an infinite number of people of all ranks, who flocked from every part of the city to see me; for the rumour was spread in a moment, that the sultan had chosen an ape to be his grand vizier, and after having served for a spectacle to the people, who could not forbear to express their surprise by redoubling their shouts and cries, I arrived at the sultan's palace.

I found the prince on his throne in the midst of the grandees; I made my obeisance three times very low, and at last kneeled and kissed the ground before him, and afterwards took my seat in the posture of an ape. The whole assembly viewed me with admiration, and could not comprehend how it was possible that an ape should so well understand how to pay the sultan his due respect; and he himself was more astonished than any. In short, the usual ceremony of the audience would have been complete, could I have added speech to my behaviour; but apes never speak, and the advantage I had of having been a man did not now yield me that privilege.

The sultan dismissed his courtiers, and none remained by him but the chief of the eunuchs, a little young slave, and myself. He went from his chamber of audience into his own apartment, where he ordered dinner to be brought. As he sat at table he made me a sign to approach and eat with them: to shew my obedience I kissed the ground, arose, and placed myself at the table, and ate with discretion and moderation.

Before the table was cleared, I espied a standish, which I made a sign to have brought me; having got it, I wrote upon a large peach some verses expressive of my acknowledgment to the sultan; who having read them after I had presented the peach to him, was still more astonished. When the things were removed, they brought him a particular liquor, of which he caused them to give me a glass. I drank, and wrote upon the glass some new verses, which explained the state I was reduced to, after many sufferings. The sultan read these likewise, and said, “A man that was capable of doing so much would be above the greatest of his species.”

The sultan caused to be brought to him a chessboard, and asked me by a sign if I understood that game, and would play with him? I kissed the ground, and laying my hand upon my head, signified that I was ready to receive that honour. He won the first game, but I won the second and third; and perceiving he was somewhat displeased at my success, I made a quatrain to satisfy him; in which I told him that two potent armies had been fighting furiously all day, but that they concluded a peace towards the evening, and passed the remaining part of the night very amicably together upon the field of battle.

So many circumstances appearing to the sultan beyond whatever had either been seen or known of the cleverness or sense of apes, he determined not to be the only witness of these prodigies himself, but having a daughter, called the Lady of Beauty, on whom the chief of the eunuchs, then present, waited; “Go,” said the sultan to him, “and bid your lady come hither: I am desirous she should share my pleasure.”

The eunuch went, and immediately brought the princess, who had her face uncovered; but she had no sooner come into the room, than she put on her veil, and said to the sultan, “Sir, your majesty must needs have forgotten yourself; I am surprised that your majesty has sent for me to appear among men.” “How, daughter!” said the sultan, “you do not know what you say: there is no one here, but the little slave, the eunuch your governor, and myself, who have the liberty to see your face; and yet you lower your veil, and blame me for having sent for you.” “Sir,” said the princess, “your majesty shall soon understand that I am not in the wrong. That seeming ape is a young prince, son of a powerful sultan, and has been metamorphosed into an ape by enchantment. A genie, son of the daughter of Eblis, has maliciously done him this wrong, after having cruelly taken away the life of the princess of the isle of Ebene.”

The sultan, astonished at this declaration, turned towards me, and speaking no more by signs, but in plain words, asked me, if what his daughter said was true? Finding I could not speak, I put my hand to my head’ to signify that what the princess spoke was correct. Upon this the sultan said again to his daughter, “How do you know that this prince has been transformed by enchantments into an ape?” “Sir,” replied the Lady of Beauty, “your majesty may remember that when I was past my infancy I had an old lady who waited on me; she was a most expert magician, and taught me seventy rules of magic, by virtue of which I can, in the twinkling of an eye, transport your capital into the midst of the sea, or beyond mount Caucasus. By this science I know all enchanted persons at first sight: I know who they are, and by whom they have been enchanted; therefore do not be surprised if I should forthwith relieve this prince, in spite of the enchantments, from that which prevents his appearing in your sight in his natural form.” “Daughter,” said the sultan, “I did not believe you to have understood so much.” “Sir,” replied the princess, “these things are curious and worth knowing; but I think I ought not to boast of them.” “Since it is so,” said the sultan, “you can dispel the prince’s enchantment.” “Yes, sir,” said the princess, “I can restore him to his original shape.” “Do it then,” said the sultan, “you cannot do me a greater pleasure; for I will have him to be my vizier, and he shall marry you.” “Sir,” said the princess, “I am ready to obey you in all that you should be pleased to command me.”

The princess, the Lady of Beauty, went into her apartment, and brought thence a knife, which had some Hebrew words engraven on the blade: she made the sultan, the master of the eunuchs, the little slave, and myself, descend into a private court of the palace, and there left us under a gallery that went round it. She placed herself in the middle of the court, where she made a great circle, and within it she wrote several words in Arabian characters, some of them ancient.

When she had finished and prepared the circle as she thought fit, she placed herself in the centre of it, where she began incantations, and repeated verses of the Koraun. The air grew insensibly dark, as if it had been night, and the whole world were about to be dissolved: we found ourselves struck with consternation, and our fear increased when we saw the genie, the son of the daughter of Eblis, appear suddenly in the shape of a lion of a gigantic size.

As soon as the princess perceived this monster, “Dog,” said she, “instead of creeping before me, dare you present yourself in this shape, thinking to frighten me?” “And thou,” replied the lion, “art thou not afraid to break the treaty which was solemnly made and confirmed between us by oath, not to wrong or do one another any injury?” “Wretch,” replied the princess, “I justly may reproach thee with having done so.” The lion answered fiercely, “Thou shalt quickly have thy reward for the trouble thou hast given me:” with that he opened his monstrous jaws, and sprang forward to devour her; but she, being on her guard, stepped back, got time to pull out one of her hairs, and by pronouncing three or four words, changed it into a sharp sword, with which she cut the lion in two through the middle.

The two parts of the lion disappeared, while the head changed into a large scorpion. Immediately the princess turned herself into a serpent, and fought the scorpion, who, finding himself worsted, took the shape of an eagle, and flew away: but the serpent at the same time took also the shape of an eagle, that was black and much stronger, and pursued him, so that we lost sight of them both.

Some time after they had disappeared, the ground opened before us, and out of it came forth a black and white cat, with her hair standing on end, and mewing in a frightful manner; a black wolf followed close after her, and gave her no time to rest. The cat, being thus hard pressed, changed into a worm, and being near a pomegranate accidentally fallen from a tree on the side of a canal which was deep, but not broad, pierced the pomegranate in an instant, and hid itself, but the pomegranate swelled immediately, and became as big as a gourd, which, mounting up to the roof of the gallery, rolled there for some time backward and forward; it then fell down again into the court, and broke into several pieces.

The wolf had in the meanwhile transformed itself into a cock, and now fell to picking up the seeds of the pomegranate one after another; but finding no more, he came towards us with his wings spread, making a great noise, as if he would ask us whether there were any more seed. There was one lying on the brink of the canal, which the cock perceiving as he went back, ran speedily thither; but just as he was going to pick it up, the seed rolled into the river, and turned into a little fish.

The cock leaped into the river, turned into a pike, and pursued the small fish; they continued both under water above two hours, and we knew not what was become of them, but suddenly we heard terrible cries, which made us tremble, and a little while after we saw the genie and princess all in flames. They threw flashes of fire out of their mouths at each other, till they came to close combat; then the two fires increased, with a thick burning smoke which mounted so high that we had reason to apprehend it would set the palace on fire. But we very soon had a more pressing occasion of fear, for the genie having got loose from the princess, came to the gallery where we stood, and blew flames of fire upon us. We must all have perished had not the princess, running to our assistance, forced him to retire, and defend himself against her; yet, notwithstanding all her exertions, she could not hinder the sultan’s beard from being burnt, and his face scorched, the chief of the eunuchs from being stifled, and a spark from entering my right eye, and making it blind. The sultan and I expected but death, when we heard a cry of “Victory! Victory!” and instantly the princess appeared in her natural shape, but the genie was reduced to a heap of ashes.

The princess approached us, and hastily called for a cup-full of water, which the young slave, who had received no hurt, brought her. She took it, and after pronouncing some words over it, threw it upon me, saying, “If thou art become an ape by enchantment, change thy shape, and take that of a man which thou hadst before.” These words were hardly uttered, when I again became a man, in every respect as I was before my transformation, excepting the loss of my eye.

I was prepared to return the princess my thanks, but she prevented me by addressing herself to her father: “Sir, I have gained the victory over the genie, as your majesty may see; but it is a victory that costs me dear; I have but a few minutes to live, and you will not have the satisfaction to make the match you intended; the fire has pierced me during the terrible combat, and I find it is gradually consuming me. This would not have happened, had I perceived the last of the pomegranate seeds, and swallowed it, as I did the others when I was changed into a cock: the genie had fled thither as to his last intrenchment, and upon that the success of the combat depended, which would have been successful, and without danger to me. This oversight obliged me to have recourse to fire, and to fight with those mighty arms as I did, between heaven and earth, in your presence; for, in spite of all his redoubtable art and experience, I made the genie know that I understood more than he; I have conquered and reduced him to ashes, but I cannot escape death, which is approaching.”

The sultan suffered the princess, the Lady of Beauty, to go on with the recital of her combat, and when she had done, addressed her in a tone that sufficiently testified his grief; “My daughter,” said he, “you see in what condition your father is; alas! I wonder that I am yet alive! Your governor, the eunuch, is dead, and the prince whom you have delivered from his enchantment has lost one of his eyes.” He could say no more, for his tears, sighs, and sobs, deprived him of the power of utterance.

Suddenly the princess exclaimed, “I burn! I burn!” She found that the fire had at last seized upon her vital parts, which made her still cry “I burn!” until death had put an end to her intolerable pains. The effect of that fire was so extraordinary, that in a few moments she was wholly reduced to ashes, as the genie had been.

I cannot tell you, madam, how much I was grieved at so dismal a spectacle; I had rather all my life have continued an ape or a dog, than to have seen my benefactress thus miserably perish. The sultan being afflicted all that can be imagined, cried piteously, and beat himself on his head and breast, until being quite overcome with grief, he fainted away, which made me fear for his life. In the mean time, the eunuchs and officers came running at the sultan's lamentations, and with much difficulty brought him to himself. It was not necessary that the prince or myself should relate the circumstances of the adventure, to convince them of the affliction it had occasioned us. The two heaps of ashes, to which the princess and the genie had been reduced, were a sufficient demonstration. The sultan was hardly able to stand, but was under the necessity of being supported to his apartment.

When the knowledge of this tragical event had spread through the palace and the city, all the people bewailed the misfortune of the princess, the Lady of Beauty, and commiserated the sultan's affliction. Public mourning was observed for seven days, and many ceremonies were performed. The ashes of the genie were thrown into the air, but those of the princess were collected into a precious urn, to be preserved, and the urn was deposited in a superb mausoleum, constructed for that purpose on the spot where the princess had been consumed.

The grief of the sultan for the loss of his daughter confined him to his chamber for a whole month. Before he had fully recovered his strength he sent for me: "Prince," said he, "attend to the commands I now give you; your life must answer if you do not carry them into execution." I assured him of exalt obedience; upon which he went on thus: "I have constantly lived in perfect felicity, but by your arrival all the happiness I possessed has vanished; my daughter is dead, her governor is no more, and it is only through a miracle that I am myself yet alive You are the cause of all these misfortunes, under which it is impossible that I should be comforted; depart hence therefore in peace, without farther delay, for I must myself perish if you remain any longer. I am persuaded that your presence brings misfortune with it. Depart, and take care never to appear again in my dominions. No consideration whatever shall hinder me from making you repent your temerity should you violate my injunction.” I was going to speak, but he prevented me by words full of anger; and I was obliged to quit the palace, rejected, banished, an outcast from the world. Before I left the city I went into a bagnio, here I caused my beard and eyebrows to be shaved, and put on a calender’s habit. I began my journey, not so much deploring my own miseries, as the death of the two fair princesses, of which I have been the occasion. I passed through many countries without making myself known; at last I resolved to come to Bagdad, in hopes of getting myself introduced to the commander of the faithful, to move his compassion by relating to him my unfortunate adventures. I arrived this evening, and the first man I met was this calender, our brother, who spoke before me. You know the remaining part, madam, and the cause of my having the honour to be here.

When the second calender had concluded his story, Zobeide, to whom he had addressed his speech, said, “It is well, you are at liberty.” But instead of departing, he also petitioned the lady to shew him the same favour vouchsafed to the first calender, and went and sat down by him.

The History of the Third Calender.

My story, most honourable lady, very much differs from what you have already heard. The two princes who have spoken before me have each lost an eye by the pure effects of their destiny, but mine I lost through my own fault, and by hastening to seek my own misfortune, as you shall hear by the sequel of the story.

My name is Agib, and I am the son of a sultan who was called Cassib. After his death I took possession of his dominions, and continued in the city where he had resided. It is situated on the sea-coast, has one of the finest and safest harbours in the world, an arsenal capable of fitting out for sea one hundred and fifty men of war, besides merchantmen and light vessels. My kingdom is composed of several fine provinces upon the main land, besides a number of valuable islands, which lie almost in sight of my capital.

My first object was to visit the provinces: I afterwards caused my whole fleet to be fitted out, and went to my islands to gain the hearts of my subjects by my presence, and to confirm them in their loyalty. These voyages gave me some taste for navigation, in which I took so much pleasure, that I resolved to make some discoveries beyond my own territories; to which end I caused ten ships to be fitted out, embarked, and set sail.

Our voyage was very pleasant for forty days successively, but on the forty-first night the wind became contrary, and withal so boisterous that we were near being lost: about break of day the storm abated, the clouds dispersed, and the weather became fair. We reached an island, where we remained two days to take in fresh provisions; and then put off again to sea. After ten days' sail we were in hopes of seeing land, for the tempests we had experienced had so much abated my curiosity, that I gave orders to steer back to my own coast; but I perceived at the same time that my pilot knew not where we were. Upon the tenth day, a seaman being sent to look out for land from the mast head, gave notice that on starboard and larboard he could see nothing but sky and sea, but that right a-head he perceived a great blackness.

The pilot changed colour at this account, and throwing his turban on the deck with one hand, and beating his breast with the other, cried, “Oh, Sir, we are all lost; not one of us can escape; and with all my skill it is not in my power to effect our deliverance.” Having spoken thus, he lamented like a man who foresaw unavoidable ruin; his despondence threw the whole ship’s crew into consternation. I asked him what reason he had thus to despair? He exclaimed, “The tempest has brought us so far out of our course, that to-morrow about noon we shall be near the black mountain, or mine of adamant, which at this very minute draws all your fleet towards it, by virtue of the iron in your ships; and when we approach within a certain distance, the attraction of the adamant will have such force, that all the nails will be drawn out of the sides and bottoms of the ships, and fasten to the mountain, so that your vessels will fall to pieces and sink.

“This mountain,” continued the pilot, “is inaccessible. On the summit there is a dome of fine brass, supported by pillars of the same metal, and on the top of that dome stands a horse, likewise of brass, with a rider on his back, who has a plate or lead fixed to his breast, upon which some talismanic characters are engraver. Sir, the tradition is, that this statue is the chief cause why so many ships and men have been lost and sunk in this place, and that it will ever continue to be fatal to all those who have the misfortune to approach, until it shall be thrown down.”

The pilot having finished his discourse, began to weep afresh, and all the rest of the ship’s company did the same. I had no other thought but that my days were there to terminate. In the mean time every one began to provide for his own safety, and to that end took all imaginable precaution; and being uncertain of the event, they all made one another their heirs, by virtue of a will, for the benefit of those that should happen to be saved.

The next morning we distinctly perceived the black mountain. About noon we were so near, that we found what the pilot had foretold to be true; for all the nails and iron in the ships flew towards the mountain, where they fixed, by the violence of the attraction, with a horrible noise; the ships split asunder, and their cargoes sunk into the sea. All my people were drowned, but God had mercy on me, and permitted me to save myself by means of a plank, which the wind drove ashore just at the foot of the mountain. I did not receive the least hurt, and my good fortune brought me to a landing place, where there were steps that led up to the summit of the mountain.

At the sight of these steps, for there was not a space of ground either on the right or left whereon a man could set his foot, I gave thanks to God; and recommended myself to his holy protection, as I began to ascend the steps, which were so narrow, that had the wind raged it would have thrown me into the sea. But, at last, I reached the top, without accident. I went into the dome, and kneeling on the ground, gave God thanks for his mercies.

I passed the night under the dome. In my sleep an old grave man appeared to me, and said, “Hearken, Agib; as soon as thou art awake dig up the ground under thy feet: thou wilt find a bow of brass, and three arrows of lead, that are made under certain constellations, to deliver mankind from the many calamities that threaten them. Shoot the three arrows at the statue, and the rider will fall into the sea, but the horse will fall by thy side; thou must bury it in the place where thou findest the bow and arrows: this being done, the sea will swell and rise to the foot of the dome. When it has come so high, thou wilt perceive a boat with one man holding an oar in each hand; this man is also of metal, but different from that thou hast thrown down; step on board, but without mentioning the name of God, and let him conduct thee. He will in ten days’ time bring thee into another sea, where thou shalt find an opportunity to return to thy country, provided, as I have told thee, thou dost not mention the name of God during the whole voyage.”

This was the substance of the old man’s discourse. When I awoke I felt much comforted by the vision, and did not fail to observe everything that he had commanded me. I took the bow and arrows out of the ground, shot at the horseman, and with the third arrow I overthrew him; he fell into the sea, and the horse fell by my side; I buried it in the place whence I took the bow and arrows. In the mean time, the sea swelled and rose up by degrees. When it came as high as the foot of the dome upon the top of the mountain, I saw, afar off, a boat rowing towards me, and I returned God thanks that everything succeeded according to my dream.

At last the boat made land, and I perceived the man was made of metal, as I had dreamt. I stept aboard, and took great heed not to pronounce the name of God, neither spoke I one word. I sat down, and the man of metal began to row off from the mountain. He rowed without ceasing till the ninth day, when I saw some islands, which gave me hopes that I should escape all the danger that I feared. The excess of my joy made me forget what I was forbidden: “Blessed be God,” said I; “God be praised.”

I had no sooner spoken these words, than the boat sunk with the man of metal, leaving me upon the surface. I swam the remaining part of the day towards that land which appeared nearest. A very dark night succeeded, and not knowing where I was, I swam at random. My strength at last began to fail, and I despaired of being able to save myself, but the wind began to blow hard, and a wave vast as a mountain threw me on a flat, where it left me, and retreated. I made haste ashore, fearing another wave might wash me back. The first thing I did was to strip, wring the water out of my clothes, and lay them on the dry sand, which was still warm from the heat of the day.

Next morning the sun dried my clothes; I put them on, and went forward to discover what sort of country I was in. I had not walked far before I found I was upon a desert, though a very pleasant, island, as it displayed several sorts of trees and wild shrubs bearing fruit; but I perceived it was far from the continent, which much diminished the joy I felt at having escaped the danger of the seas. Nevertheless, I recommended myself to God and prayed him to dispose of me according to his will. Immediately after, I saw a vessel coming from the main land, before the wind, directly towards the island. I doubted not but they were coming to anchor there; and being uncertain what sort of people they might be, whether friends or foes, I thought it not safe to be seen. I got up into a very thick tree, from whence I might safely view them. The vessel came into a little creek, where ten slaves landed, carrying a spade and other instruments for digging up the ground. They went towards the middle of the island, where I saw them stop, and dig for a considerable time, after which I thought I perceived them lift up a trap door. They returned again to the vessel, and unloaded several sorts of provisions and furniture, which they carried to the place where they had been digging: they then descended, which made me suppose it led to a subterraneous dwelling.

I saw them once more go to the ship, and return soon after with an old man, who led in his hand a handsome lad of about fourteen or fifteen years of age. They all descended when the trap door had been opened. After they had again come up, they let down the trap door, covered it over with earth, and returned to the creek where the ship lay, but I saw not the young man in their company. This made me believe that he had staid behind in the subterraneous place, a circumstance which exceedingly surprised me.

The old man and the slaves went on board, and getting the vessel under weigh, steered their course towards the main land. When I perceived they had proceeded to such a distance that I could not be seen by them, I came down from the tree, and went directly to the place where I had seen the ground broken. I removed the earth by degrees, till I came to a stone that was two or three feet square. I lifted it up, and found that it covered the head of a flight of stairs, which were also of stone. I descended, and at the bottom found myself in a large room, furnished with a carpet, a couch covered with tapestry, and cushions of rich stuff, upon which the young man sat, with a fan in his hand. These things, together with fruits and flower-pot standing about him, I saw by the light of two wax tapers. The young man, when he perceived me was considerably alarmed; but to quiet his apprehensions, I said to him as I entered, “Whoever you are, Sir, do not fear; a sultan, and the son of a sultan, as I am, is not capable of doing you any injury: on the contrary, it is probable that your good destiny may have brought me hither to deliver you out of this tomb, where it seems you have been buried alive, for reasons to me unknown. But what surprises me (for you must know that I have been witness to all that hath passed since your coming into this island), is, that you suffered yourself to be entombed in this place without any resistance.”

The young man felt assured at these words, and with a smiling countenance requested me to take a seat by him. When I had complied, he said “Prince, I am to acquaint you with what will surprise you by its singularity.

“My father is a merchant jeweller, who, by his industry and professional skill, has acquired considerable property. He has many slaves, and also agents, whom he employs as supercargoes in his own ships, to maintain his correspondence at the several courts, which he furnishes with precious stones.

"He had been long married without having issue, when it was intimated to him in a dream that he should have a son, though his life would be but short; at which he was much concerned when he awoke. Some days after, my mother acquainted him that she was with child, and what she supposed to be the time of her conception agreed exactly with the day of his dream. At the end of nine months she was brought to bed of me; which occasioned great joy in the family.

"My father, who had observed the very moment of my birth, consulted astrologers about my nativity; and was answered, 'Your son shall live happily till the age of fifteen, when his life will be exposed to a danger which he will hardly be able to escape. But if his good destiny preserve him beyond that time, he will live to a great age. It will be' (said they) 'when the statue of brass, that stands upon the summit of the mountain of adamant, shall be thrown into the sea by prince Agib, son of king Cassib; and, as the stars prognosticate, your son will be killed fifty days afterwards by that prince.'

"My father took all imaginable care of my education until this year, which is the fifteenth of my age. He had notice given him yesterday, that the statue of brass had been thrown into the sea about ten days ago. This news alarmed him much.

"Upon the prediction the astrologers, he sought by all means possible to falsify my horoscope, and to preserve my life. He took the precaution to form this subterranean habitation to hide me in, till the expiration of the fifty days after the throwing down of the statue; and therefore, as it is ten days since this happened, he came hastily hither to conceal me, and promised at the end of forty days to return and fetch me away. For my own part I am sanguine in my hopes, and cannot believe that prince Agib will seek for me in a place under ground, in the midst of a desert island."

While the jeweller's son was relating this story, I laughed at the astrologers who had foretold that I should take away his life; for I thought myself so far from being likely to verify their prediction, that he had scarcely done speaking, when I told him with great joy, "Dear

Sir, trust in the goodness of God, and fear nothing; consider it as a debt you had to pay; but that you are acquitted of it from this hour. I rejoice that after my shipwreck I came so fortunately hither to defend you against all who would attempt your life. I will not leave you till the forty days have expired, of which the foolish astrologers have made you apprehensive; and in the mean while I will do you all the service in my power: after which, with leave of your father and yourself, I shall have the benefit of getting to the main land in your vessel; and when I am returned into my kingdom, I will remember the obligations I owe you, and endeavour to demonstrate my gratitude by suitable acknowledgments."

This discourse encouraged the jeweller's son, and inspired him with confidence. I took care not to inform him I was the very Agib whom he dreaded, lest I should alarm his fears, and used every precaution not to give him any cause to suspect who I was. We passed the time in various conversation till night came on. I found the young man of ready wit, and partook with him of his provisions, of which he had enough to have lasted beyond the forty days, though he had had more guests than myself. After supper we conversed for some time; and at last retired to bed.

The next morning, when he arose, I held the basin of water to him; I also provided dinner, and at the proper time placed it on the table: after we had dined I invented a play for our amusement, not only for that day, but for those that followed. I prepared supper after the same manner as I had done the dinner; and having supped, we retired to bed as before. We had sufficient time to contrast mutual friendship and esteem for each other. I found he loved me; and I on my part regarded him with so much affection, that I often said to myself, "Those astrologers who predicted to his father that his son should die by my hand were impostors; for it is not possible that I could commit so base a crime." In short, madam, we spent thirty-nine days in the pleasantest manner possible in this subterraneous abode.

The fortieth day appeared: and in the morning, when the young man awoke, he said to me with a transport of joy that he could not restrain, "Prince, this is the fortieth day, and I am not dead, thanks to God and your good company. My father will not fail to make you, very shortly, every acknowledgment of his gratitude for your attentions, and will furnish you with every necessary accommodation for your return to your kingdom: but," continued he, "while we are waiting his arrival, I beg you will provide me some warm water in that portable bath, that I may wash my body and change my dress, to receive my father with the more respect."

I set the water on the fire, and when it was hot poured it into the moveable bath; the youth went in, and I both washed and rubbed him. At last he came out, and laid himself down in his bed that I had prepared. After he had slept a while, he awoke, and said, "Dear prince, pray do me the favour to fetch me a melon and some sugar, that I may eat some to refresh me."

Out of several melons that remained I took the best, and laid it on a plate; and as I could not find a knife to cut it with, I asked the young man if he knew where there was one. "There is one," said he, "upon this cornice over my head:" I accordingly saw it there, and made so much haste to reach it, that, while I had it in my hand, my foot being entangled in the carpet, I fell most unhappily upon the young man, and the knife pierced his heart.

At this spectacle I cried out with agony. I beat my head, my face, and breast; I tore my clothes; I threw myself on the ground with unspeakable sorrow and grief! "Alas!" I exclaimed, "there were only some hours wanting to have put him out of that danger from which he sought sanctuary here; and when I thought the danger past, then I became his murderer, and verified the prediction. But, O Lord!" said I, lifting up my face and my hands to heaven, "I intreat thy pardon, and if I be guilty of his death, let me not live any longer."

After this misfortune I would have embraced death without any reluctance, had it presented itself to me. But what we wish, whether it be good or evil, will not always happen according to our desire. Nevertheless, considering that all my tears and sorrows would not restore the young man to life, and, the forty days being expired, I might be surprised by his father, I quitted the subterranean dwelling, laid down the great stone upon the entrance, and covered it with earth.

I had scarcely done, when, casting my eyes upon the sea towards the main land, I perceived the vessel coming to fetch away the young man. I began then to consider what I had best do. I said to myself, “If I am seen by the old man, he will certainly seize me, and perhaps cause me to be massacred by his slaves, when he has discovered that his son is killed: all that I can allege to justify myself will not convince him of my innocence. It is better then to withdraw while it is in my power, than to expose myself to his resentment.”

There happened to be near a large tree thick with leaves, which I ascended in hopes of concealment, and was no sooner fixed in a place where I could not be perceived, than I saw the vessel come to the creek where she lay the first time.

The old man with his slaves landed immediately, and advanced towards the subterranean dwelling, with a countenance that shewed some hope; but when they saw the earth had been newly removed, they changed colour, particularly the old man. They lifted up the stone, and went down; they called the young man by his name, but he not answering, their fears increased. They proceeded to seek him; and at length found him lying upon the bed with the knife in his heart, for I had not power to take it out. At this sight they cried out lamentably, which increased my sorrow: the old man fell down in a swoon. The slaves, to give him air, brought him up in their arms, and laid him at the foot of the tree where I was concealed; but notwithstanding all the pains they took to recover him, the unfortunate father continued a long while insensible, and made them more than once despair of his life; but at last he came to himself. The slaves then brought up his son’s corpse, dressed in his best apparel, and when they had made a grave they buried it. The old man, supported by two slaves, and his face covered with tears, threw the first earth upon the body, after which the slaves filled up the grave.

This being done, all the furniture was brought up, and, with the remaining provisions, put on board the vessel. The old man, overcome with sorrow, and not being able to stand, was laid upon a litter, and carried to the ship, which stood out to sea, and in a short time was out of sight.

After the old man and his slaves were gone, I was left alone upon the island. I lay that night in the subterranean dwelling, which they had shut up, and when the day came, I walked round the island, and stopped in such places as I thought most proper for repose.

I led this wearisome life for a whole month. At the expiration of this time I perceived that the sea had receded; that the island had increased in dimensions; the main land too seemed to be drawing nearer. In fact, the water sunk so low, that there remained between me and the continent but a small stream, which I crossed, and the water did not reach above the middle of my leg. I walked so long a way upon the slime and sand that I was very weary: at last I got upon more firm ground, and when I had proceeded some distance from the sea, I saw a good way before me something that resembled a great fire, which afforded me some comfort; for I said to myself, I shall find here some persons, it not being possible that this fire should kindle of itself. As I drew nearer, however, I found my error, and discovered that what I had taken for a fire was a castle of red copper, which the beams of the sun made to appear at a distance like flames.

I stopped in the neighbourhood of the castle, and sat down to admire its noble structure, and to rest myself. Before I had taken such a view of this magnificent building as it deserved, I saw ten handsome young men coming along, as if they had been taking a walk; but what surprised me was, that they were all blind of the right eye. They were accompanied by an old man, who was very tall, and of a venerable aspect.

I could not suppress my astonishment at the sight of so many half blind men in company, and every one deprived of the same eye. As I was conjecturing by what adventure these men could come together, they approached, and seemed glad to see me. After the first salutations, they inquired what had brought me thither. I told them my story would be somewhat tedious, but if they would take the trouble to sit down, I would satisfy their curiosity. They did so, and I related to them all that had happened to me since I had left my kingdom, which filled them with astonishment.

After I had concluded my account, the young gentlemen prayed me to accompany them into the castle. I accepted their offer, and we passed through a great many halls, ante-chambers, bed-chambers, and closets, very well furnished, and came at last into a spacious hall, where there were ten small blue sofas set round, separate from one another, on which they sat by day and slept at night. In the middle of this circle stood an eleventh sofa, not so high as the rest, but of the same colour, upon which the old man before-mentioned sat down, and the young gentlemen occupied the other ten. But as each sofa could only contain one man, one of the young men said to me, “Comrade, sit down upon that carpet in the middle of the room, and do not inquire into anything that concerns us, nor the reason why we are all blind of the right eye; be content with what you see, and let not your curiosity extend any farther.”

The old man having sat a short time, arose, and went out; but he returned in a minute or two, brought in supper, distributed to each man separately his proportion, and likewise brought me mine, which I ate apart, as the rest did; and when supper was almost ended, he presented to each of us a cup of wine.

They thought my story so extraordinary, that they made me repeat it after supper, and it furnished conversation for a good part of the night. One of the gentlemen observing that it was late, said to the old man, “You do not bring us that with which we may acquit ourselves of our duty.” At these words the old man arose, and went into a closet, and brought out thence upon his head ten basins, one after another, all covered with blue stuff; he placed one before every gentleman, together with a light.

They uncovered their basins, which contained ashes, coal-dust, and lamp-black; they mixed all together, and rubbed and bedaubed their faces with it in such a manner as to make themselves look very frightful. After having thus blackened themselves, they wept and lamented, beating their heads and breasts, and crying continually, “This is the fruit of our idleness and debauches.”

They continued this strange employment nearly the whole of the night, and when they left off, the old man brought them water, with which they washed their faces and hands; they changed all their clothes, which were spoiled, and put on others; so that they exhibited no appearance of what they had been doing.

You may judge how uneasy I felt all this time. I wished a thousand times to break the silence which had been imposed upon me, and ask questions; nor was it possible for me to sleep that night.

The next day, soon after we had arisen, we went out to walk, and then I said to them, “Gentlemen, I declare to you, that I must renounce the law which you prescribed to me last night, for I cannot observe it. You are men of sense, you have convinced me that you do not want understanding; yet, I have seen you do such actions as none but madmen could be capable of. Whatever misfortune befalls me, I cannot forbear asking, why you bedaubed your faces with black? How it has happened that each of you has but one eye? Some singular circumstance must certainly be the cause; therefore I conjure you to satisfy my curiosity." To these pressing instances they answered only, that it was no business of mine to make such inquiries, and that I should do well to hold my peace.

We passed that day in conversation upon indifferent subjects; and when night was come and every man had supped, the old man brought in the blue basins, and the young gentlemen as before bedaubed their faces, wept and beat themselves, crying, "This is the fruit of our idleness and debauches," and continued the same actions the following night. At last, not being able to resist my curiosity, I earnestly prayed them to satisfy me, or to shew me how to return to my own kingdom; for it was impossible for me to keep them company any longer, and to see every night such an odd exhibition, without being permitted to know the reason.

One of the gentlemen answered on behalf of the rest, "Do not wonder at our conduit in regard to yourself, and that hitherto we have not granted your request: it is out of kindness, to save you the pain of being reduced to the same condition with ourselves. If you have a mind to try our unfortunate destiny, you need but speak, and we will give you the satisfaction you desire." I told them I was resolved on it, let what would be the consequence. "Once more," said the same gentleman, "we advise you to restrain your curiosity: it will cost you the loss of your right eye." "No matter," I replied; "be assured that if such a misfortune befall me, I will not impute it to you, but to myself."

He farther represented to me, that when I had lost an eye I must not hope to remain with them, if I were so disposed, because their number was complete, and no addition could be made to it. I told them, that it would be a great satisfaction to me never to part from such agreeable gentlemen, but if there were a necessity for it, I was ready to submit; and let it cost me what it would, I begged them to grant my request.

The ten gentlemen perceiving that I was so fixed in my resolution, took a sheep, killed it, and after they had taken off the skin, presented me with a knife, telling me it would be useful to me on an occasion which they would soon explain. “We must sew you in this skin,” said they, “and then leave you; upon which a bird of a monstrous size, called a roc, will appear in the air, and taking you for a sheep, will pounce upon you, and soar with you to the sky: but let not that alarm you; he will descend with you again, and lay you on the top of a mountain. When you find yourself on the ground, cut the skin with your knife, and throw it off. As soon as the roc sees you, he will fly away for fear, and leave you at liberty. Do not stay, but walk on till you come to a spacious castle, covered with plates of gold, large emeralds, and other precious stones: go up to the gate, which always stands open, and walk in. We have each of us been in that castle; but will tell you nothing of what we saw, or what befell us there; you will learn by your own experience. All that we can inform you is, that it has cost each of us our right eye, and the penance which you have been witness to, is what we are obliged to observe in consequence of having been there. The history of each of us is so full of extraordinary adventures, that a large volume would not contain them. But we cannot explain ourselves farther.”

When the gentleman had thus spoken, I wrapt myself in the sheep’s skin, held fast the knife which was given me; and after the young gentlemen had been at the trouble to sew the skin about me, they retired into the hall, and left me alone. The roc they spoke of soon arrived; he pounced upon me, took me in his talons like a sheep, and carried me up the summit of the mountain.

When I found myself on the ground, I cut the skin with the knife, and throwing it off, the roc at the sight of me flew sway. This roc is a white bird, of a monstrous size; his strength is such, that he can lift up elephants from the plains, and carry them to the tops of mountains, where he feeds upon them.

Being impatient to reach the castle, I lost no time; but made so much haste, that I got thither in half a day’s journey, and I must say that I found it surpassed the description they had given me of its magnificence.

The gate being open, I entered a square court, so large that there were round it ninety-nine gates of wood of sanders and aloes, and one of gold, without reckoning those of several superb staircases, that led to apartments above, besides many more which I could not see. The hundred doors I spoke of opened into gardens or storehouses full of riches, or into apartments which contained many things wonderful to be seen.

I saw a door standing open just before me, through which I entered into a large hall. Here I found forty young ladies of such perfect beauty as imagination could not surpass: they were all most sumptuously appareled. As soon as they saw me they arose, and without waiting my salutations, said to me, with demonstrations of joy, "Noble Sir, you are welcome." And one thus addressed me in the name of the rest, "We have long been in expectation of such a gentleman as you; your mien assures us, that you are master of all the good qualities we can desire; and we hope you will not find our company disagreeable or unworthy of yours."

They obliged me, notwithstanding all the opposition I could make, to sit down on a seat that was higher than their own; and when I expressed my uneasiness, "That is your place," said they, "you are at present our lord, master, and judge, and we are your slaves, ready to obey your commands."

Nothing, madam, so much astonished me, as the solicitude and eagerness of those fair ladies to do me all possible service. One brought hot water to wash my feet, a second poured sweet scented water on my hands; others brought me all kinds of necessaries, and change of apparel; others again brought in a magnificent collation; and the rest came with glasses in their hands to fill me delicious wines, all in good order, and in the most charming manner possible. I ate and drank; after which the ladies placed themselves about me, and desired an account of my travels. I gave them a full relation of my adventures, which lasted till night came on.

When I had finished my narrative to the forty ladies, some of them who sat nearest me staid to keep me company, whilst the rest, seeing it was dark, rose to fetch tapers. They brought a prodigious number, which by the wonderful light they emitted exhibited the resemblance of day, and they disposed them with so much taste as to produce the most beautiful effect possible.

Other ladies covered a table with dry fruits, sweetmeats, and everything proper to relish the liquor; a side-board was set out with several sorts of wine and other liquors. Some of the ladies brought in musical instruments, and when everything was ready, they invited me to sit down to supper. The ladies sat down with me, and we continued a long while at our repast. They that were to play upon the instruments and sing arose, and formed a most charming concert. The others began a kind of ball, and danced two and two, couple after couple, with admirable grace.

It was past midnight ere these amusements ended. At length one of the ladies said to me, "You are doubtless wearied by the journey you have taken to-day; it is time for you to retire to rest; your lodging is prepared: but before you depart choose which of us you like best to be your bedfellow." I answered, "That I knew not how to make my own choice, as they were all equally beautiful, witty, and worthy of my respects and service, and that I would not be guilty of so much incivility as to prefer one before another."

The lady who had spoken to me before answered, "We are very well satisfied of your civility, and find it is your fear to create jealousy among us that occasions your diffidence; but let not this hinder you. We assure you, that the good fortune of her whom you choose shall cause no feeling of the kind; for we are agreed among ourselves, that every one of us shall in her turn have the same honour; and when forty days are past, to begin again; therefore make your selection, and lose no time to take the repose you need." I was obliged to yield to their entreaties, and offered my hand to the lady who spoke, and who, in return, gave me hers. We were conducted to a sumptuous apartment, where they left us; and then every one retired to her own chamber.

I was scarcely dressed next morning, when the other thirty-nine ladies came into my chamber, all in different dresses from those they had worn the day before: they bade me good-morrow, and inquired after my health. After which they conveyed me to a bath, where they washed me themselves, and whether I would or no, served me with everything I needed; and when I came out of the bath, they made me put on another suit much richer than the former.

We passed the whole day almost constantly at table; and when it was bed-time, they prayed me again to make choice of one of them for my companion In short, madam, not to weary you with repetitions, I must tell you that I continued a whole year among those forty ladies, and received them into my bed one after another: and during all the time of this voluptuous life, we met not with the least kind of trouble. When the year was expired, I was greatly surprised that these forty ladies, instead of appearing with their usual cheerfulness to ask me how I did, entered my chamber one morning all in tears. They embraced me with great tenderness one after another, saying, "Adieu, dear prince, adieu! for we must leave you." Their tears affected. I prayed them to tell me the reason of their grief, and of the separation they spoke of. "Fair ladies, let me know," said I, "if it be in my power to comfort you, or if my assistance can be any way useful to you." Instead of returning a direct answer, "Would," said they, "we had never seen or known you! Several gentlemen have honoured us with their company before you; but never one of them had that comeliness, that sweetness, that pleasantness of humour, and that merit which you possess; we know not how to live without you." After they had spoken these words, they began to weep bitterly. "My dear ladies," said I, "have the kindness not to keep me any longer in suspense: tell me the cause of your sorrow." "Alas!" said they, "what but the necessity of parting from you could thus afflict us? Perhaps we shall never see you more; but if it be your wish we should, and if you possess sufficient self-command for the purpose, it is not impossible but that we may again enjoy the pleasure of your company." "Ladies," I replied, "I understand not what you mean; pray explain yourselves more clearly."

"Well," said one of them, "to satisfy you, we must acquaint you that we are all princesses, daughters of kings. We live here together in the manner you have seen; but at the end of every year we are obliged to be absent forty days upon indispensable duties, which we are not permitted to reveal: and afterwards we return again to this castle. Yesterday was the last of the year; to day we must leave you, and this circumstance is the cause of our grief. Before we depart we will leave you the keys of everything, especially those of the hundred doors, where you will find enough to satisfy your curiosity, and to relieve your solitude during our absence. But for your benefit, and our own personal interests, we recommend you to forbear opening the golden door; for if you do we shall never see you again; and the apprehension of this augments our grief. We hope, nevertheless, that you will attend to our advice; your own peace, and the happiness of your life, depends upon your compliance; therefore take heed. If you suffer yourself to be swayed by a foolish curiosity, you will do yourself a considerable injury. We conjure you to avoid the indiscretion, and to give us the satisfaction finding you here again at the end of forty days. We would willingly take the key of the golden door with us; but that it would be an affront to a prince like you to question your discretion and firmness."

This speech of the fair princesses grieved me extremely. I omitted not to declare how much their absence would afflict me. I thanked then for their good advice, assuring them that I would follow it, and expressed my willingness to perform what was much more difficult, to secure the happiness of passing the rest of my days with ladies of such beauty and accomplishments. We separated with much tenderness, and after I had embraced them all, they departed, and I remained alone in the castle.

The agreeableness of their company, their hospitality, their musical entertainments, and other amusements, had so much absorbed my attention during the whole year, that I neither had time nor desire to see the wonders contained in this enchanted palace. I did not even notice a thousand curious objects that every day offered themselves to my view, so much was I charmed by the beauty of those ladies, and the pleasure they seemed to take in promoting my gratification. Their departure sensibly afflicted me; and though their absence was to be only forty days, it seemed to me an age to live without them.

I determined not to forget the important advice they had given me, not to open the golden door; but as I was permitted to satisfy my curiosity in everything else, I took the first of the keys of the other doors, which were hung in regular order.

I opened the first door, and entered an orchard, which I believe the universe could not equal. I could not imagine any thing to surpass it, except that which our religion promises us after death. The symmetry, the neatness, the admirable order of the trees, the abundance and diversity of unknown fruits, their freshness and beauty, delighted my senses.

Nor must I omit to inform you, that this delicious orchard was watered in a very particular manner. There were channels so artificially and proportionately dug, that they carried water in considerable quantities to the roots of such trees as required much moisture. Others conveyed it in smaller quantities to those whose fruits were already formed: some carried still less to those whose fruits were swelling, and others carried only so much as was just requisite to water those which had their fruits come to perfection, and only wanted to be ripened. They far exceeded in size the ordinary fruits of our gardens. Lastly, those channels that watered the trees whose fruit was ripe had no more moisture than just what would preserve them from withering.

I should never have tired in examining and admiring so delightful a place; nor have left it, had I not conceived a still higher idea of the other things which I had not seen. I went out at last with my mind filled with the wonders I had viewed: I shut the door, and opened the next.

Instead of an orchard, I found here a flower garden, which was no less extraordinary in its kind. It contained a spacious plot, not watered so profusely as the former, but with greater niceness, furnishing no more water than just what each flower required. The roses, jessamines, violets, daffodils, hyacinths, anemonies, tulips, pinks, lilies, and an infinite number of flowers, which do not grow in other places but at certain times, were there flourishing all at once, and nothing could be more delicious than the fragrant smell which they emitted.

I opened the third door, and found a large aviary, paved with marble of several fine and uncommon colours. The trellis work was made of sandal wood and wood of aloes. It contained a vast number of nightingales, gold-finches, canary birds, larks, and other rare singing-birds, which I had never heard of; and the vessels that held their seed and water were of the most precious jasper or agate.

Besides, this aviary was so exceedingly neat, that, considering its extent, I judged there must be not less than a hundred persons to keep it clean; but all this while not one appeared, either here or in the gardens I had before examined; and yet I could not perceive a weed, or any thing superfluous or offensive to sight. The sun went down, and I retired, charmed with the chirping notes of the multitude of birds, who then began to perch upon such places as suited them for repose during the night. I went to my chamber, resolving on the following days to open all the rest of the doors, excepting that of gold.

The next day I opened the fourth door. If what I had seen before was capable of exciting my surprise, what I now beheld transported me into perfect ecstacy. I entered a large court surrounded with buildings of an admirable structure, the description of which I will omit, to avoid prolixity.

This building had forty doors, all open, and through each of them was an entrance into a treasury: several of these treasuries contained as much wealth as the largest kingdoms. The first was stored with heaps of pearls: and, what is almost incredible, the number of those stones which are most precious, and as large as pigeons' eggs, exceeded the number of those of the ordinary size. In the second treasury, there were diamonds, carbuncles, and rubies; in the third, emeralds; in the fourth, ingots of gold; in the fifth, money; in the sixth, ingots of silver; and in the two following, money. The rest contained amethysts, chrysolites, topazes, opals, turquoises, and hyacinths, with all the other stones known to us, without mentioning agate, jasper, cornelian, and coral, of which there was a store house filled, not only with branches, but whole trees.

Filled with astonishment and admiration at the view of all these riches, I exclaimed, "If all the treasures of the kings of the universe were gathered together in one place, they could not equal the value of these. How fortunate am I to possess all this wealth with so many admirable princesses!"

I will not tire you, madam, with a detail of all the other objects of curiosity and value which I discovered on the following day. I shall only say, that thirty-nine days afforded me but just as much time as was necessary to open ninety-nine doors, and to admire all that presented itself to my view, so that there was only the hundredth door left, which I was forbidden to open.

The fortieth day after the departure of those charming princesses arrived, and had I but retained so much self-command as I ought to have had, I should have been this day the happiest of all mankind, whereas now I am the most unfortunate. They were to return the next day, and the pleasure of seeing them again ought to have restrained my curiosity: but through my weakness, which I shall ever repent, I yielded to the temptations of the evil spirit, who allowed me no rest till I had involved myself in the misfortunes I have since suffered.

I opened that fatal door! But before I had moved my foot to enter, a smell pleasant enough, but too powerful for my senses, made me faint away. However, I soon recovered: but instead of taking warning from this incident to close the door, and restrain my curiosity, after waiting some time for the external air to correct the effluvia of the place, I entered, and felt myself no longer incommoded. I found myself in a spacious vaulted apartment, the pavement of which was strewed with saffron. It was illuminated by several large tapers which emitted the perfume of aloes and ambergris, and were placed in candlesticks of solid gold. This light was augmented by gold and silver lamps, burning perfumed oils of various kinds.

Among the many objects that attracted my attention was a black horse, of the most perfect symmetry and beauty that ever was beheld. I approached in order the better to observe him, and found he had on a saddle and bridle of massive gold, curiously wrought. One part of his manger was filled with clean barley and sesame, and the other with rose-water. I laid hold of his bridle, and led him out to view him by daylight. I mounted, and endeavoured to make him move: but finding he did not stir, I struck him with a switch I had taken up in his magnificent stable. He had no sooner felt the blow, than he began to neigh in a most horrible manner, and extending his wings, which I had not before perceived, flew up with me into the air. My thoughts were fully in keeping my seat; and considering the fear that had seized me, I sat well. At length he directed his course towards the earth, and lighted upon the terrace of a castle, and, without giving me time to dismount, shook me out of the saddle with such force, as to throw me behind him, and with the end of his tail he struck out my eye.

Thus it was I became blind of one eye. I then recollected the predictions of the ten young gentlemen. The horse again took wing, and soon disappeared. I got up much vexed at the misfortune I had brought upon myself. I walked upon the terrace, covering my eye with one of my hands, for it pained me exceedingly, and then descended, and entered into a hall. I soon discovered by the ten sofas in a circle, and the eleventh in the middle, lower than the rest, that I was in the castle whence I had been carried by the roc.

The ten young gentlemen were not in the hall when I entered; but came in soon after, attended by the old man. They seemed not at all surprised to see me, nor at the loss of my eye; but said, "We are sorry that we cannot congratulate you on your return, as we could wish; but we are not the cause of your misfortune." "I should do you wrong," I replied, "to lay it to your charge; I have only myself to accuse." "If," said they, "it be a subject of consolation to the afflicted to know that others share their sufferings, you have in us this alleviation of your misfortune. All that has happened to you we have also endured; we each of us tasted the same pleasures during a year; and we had still continued to enjoy them, had we not opened the golden door, when the princesses were absent. You have been no wiser than we, and have incurred the same punishment. We would gladly receive you into our company, to join with us in the penance to which we are bound, and the duration of which we know not. But we have already stated to you the reasons that render this impossible: depart, therefore, and proceed to the court of Bagdad, where you will meet with the person who is to decide your destiny." After they had explained to me the road I was to travel, I departed.

On the road I caused my beard and eye-brows to be shaven, and assumed a calender's habit. I have had a long journey, but at last I arrived this evening, and met these my brother calenders at the gate, being strangers as well as myself. We were mutually surprised at one another, to see that we were all blind of the same eye; but we had not leisure to converse long on the subject of our misfortunes. We have only had time enough to bring us hither, to implore those favours which you have been generously pleased to grant us.

The third calender having finished this relation of his adventures, Zobeide addressed him and his fellow calenders thus: "Go wherever you think proper, you are at liberty." But one of them answered, "Madam, we beg you to pardon our curiosity, and permit us to hear the stories of those gentlemen who have not yet spoken." Then the lady turned to the caliph, the vizier Jaaffier, and Mesrour, and said to them, "It is now your turn to relate your adventures, therefore speak."

The grand vizier who had all along been the spokesman, answered Zobeide: "Madam, in order to obey you, we need only repeat what we have already said. We are merchants of Moussol come to Bagdad to sell our merchandize, which lies in the khan where we lodge. We dined today with several other persons of our condition, at a merchant's house of this city; who, after he had treated us with choice dainties and excellent wines, sent for men and women dancers, and musicians. The great noise we made brought in the watch, who arrested some of the company, and we had the good fortune to escape: but it being already late, and the door of our khan shut up, we knew not whither to retire. We chanced as we passed along this street to hear mirth at your house, which made us determine to knock at your gate. This is all the account that we can give you, in obedience to your commands."

Zobeide having heard this statement, seemed to hesitate what to say, which the calenders perceiving, prayed her to grant the same favour to the three Moussol merchants as she had done to them. "Well then," said she, "you shall all be equally obliged to me; I pardon you all, provided you immediately depart."

Zobeide having given this command in a tone that signified she would be obeyed, the caliph, the vizier Mesrour, the three calenders, and the porter departed, without saying one word: for the presence of the seven slaves with their weapons awed them into silence. As soon as they had quitted the house, and the gate was closed after them, the caliph said to the calenders, without making himself known, "You gentlemen, who are newly come to town, which way do you design to go, since it is not yet day?" "It is this," they replied, "that perplexes us." "Follow us," resumed the caliph, "and we will convey you out of danger." He then whispered to the vizier, "Take them along with you, and tomorrow morning bring them to me; I will cause their history to be put in writing, for it deserves a place in the annals of my reign."

The vizier Jaaffier took the three calenders along with him; the porter went to his quarters, and the caliph and Mesrour returned to the palace. The caliph went to bed, but could not sleep, being perplexed by the extraordinary things he had seen and heard. But above all, he was most concerned to know the history of Zobeide; what reason she could have to be so severe to the two black bitches, and why Amene had her bosom so scarred. Day began to appear whilst he was thinking upon these things; he arose and went to his council chamber, and sat upon his throne.

The grand vizier entered soon after, and paid his respects as usual. "Vizier," said the caliph, "the affairs that we have to consider at present are not very pressing; that of the three ladies and the two black bitches is the most urgent: my mind cannot rest till I am thoroughly satisfied, in all those matters that have so much surprised me. Go, bring those ladies and the calenders at the same time; make haste, and remember that I impatiently expect your return."

The vizier who knew his master's quick and fiery temper, hastened to obey, and went to the ladies, to whom he communicated, in a civil way, the orders with which he was charged, to bring them before the caliph, without taking any notice of what had passed the night before at their house.

The ladies put on their veils, and went with the vizier As he passed his own house, he took along with him the three calenders, who in the interval had learnt that they had seen and spoken with the caliph, without knowing him. The vizier conducted them to the palace with so much expedition, that the caliph was much pleased. This prince, that he might observe proper decorum before the officers of his court who were then present, ordered that the ladies should be placed behind the hangings of the door which led to his own chamber, and placed the three calenders near his person, who, by their respectful behaviour, sufficiently evinced that they were not ignorant before whom they had the honour to appear.

When the ladies were thus disposed of, the caliph turned towards them, and said, "When I acquaint you that I was last night in your house, disguised in a merchant's habit, you may probably be alarmed, lest you may have given me offence; you may perhaps believe that I have sent for you for no other purpose than to shew some marks of my resentment; but be not afraid; you may rest assured that I have forgotten all that has past, and am well satisfied with your conduct. I wish that all the ladies of Bagdad had as much discretion as you evinced before me. I shall always remember the moderation with which you acted, after the rudeness of which we were guilty. I was then a merchant of Moussol, but am at present Haroon al Rusheed, the fifth caliph of the glorious house of Abbas, and hold the place of our great prophet. I have only sent for you to know who you are, and to ask for what reason one of you, after severely whipping the two black bitches, wept with them? And I am no less curious to know, why another of you has her bosom so full of scars."

Though the caliph pronounced these words very distinctly, the three ladies heard him well enough, yet the vizier out of ceremony, repeated them.

Zobeide, after the caliph by his address had encouraged her, began thus:

The Story of Zobeide.

Commander of the faithful, the relation which I am about to give your majesty is singularly extraordinary. The two black bitches and myself are sisters by the same father and mother; and I shall acquaint you by what strange accident they came to be metamorphosed. The two ladies who live with me, and are now here, are also my sisters by the father's side, but by another mother: she that has the scars upon her breast is named Amene; the name of the other is Safie, and my own Zobeide.

After our father's death, the property that he left was equally divided among us, and as soon as these two sisters received their portions, they left me to live with their mother. My other two sisters and myself stayed with our mother, who was then alive, and who when she afterwards died left each of us a thousand sequins. As soon as we had received our portions, the two eldest (for I am the youngest) married, and left me alone. Some time after, my eldest sister's husband sold all that he had, and with that money and my sister's portion they went both into Africa, where her husband, by riotous living and debauchery' spent all; and finding himself reduced to poverty, found a pretext for divorcing my sister, and put her away.

She returned to this city, and having suffered incredible hardships by the way, came to me in so lamentable a condition that it would have moved the hardest heart to compassion to behold her. I received her with every possible tenderness, and inquiring into the cause of her distress, she told me with tears how inhumanly her husband had behaved towards her. Her misfortunes affected me: and I mingled my tears with hers. I took her to a bath, clothed her with my own apparel, and thus addressed her: "Sister, you are the elder, and I esteem you as my mother: during your absence, God has blest the portion that fell to my share, and the employment I follow of breeding silk-worms. Assure yourself there is nothing I have but is at your service, and as much at your disposal as my own."

We lived very comfortably together for some months. As we were one day conversing about our third sister, and wondering we received no intelligence of her, she came in as bad a condition as the eldest:

her husband had treated her after the same manner; and I received her likewise with the same affection as I had done the former.

Some time after, my two sisters, on presence that they would not be chargeable to me, told me they intended to marry again. I observed, that if putting me to expense was the only reason, they might lay those thoughts aside, and be welcome to remain: for what I had would be sufficient to maintain us all three, in a manner answerable to our condition. “But,” I added, “I rather believe you wish to marry again; I shall feel much surprised if such be the case. After the experience you have had of the little satisfaction there is in wedlock, is it possible you dare venture a second time? You know how rare it is to meet with a husband perfectly virtuous and deserving. Believe what I say, and let us live together as comfortably as we can.” All my persuasion was in vain; they were resolved to marry, and soon accomplished their wishes. But after some months were past, they returned again, and begged my pardon a thousand times for not following my advice. “You are our youngest sister,” said they, “but abundantly more wise than we; if you will vouchsafe to receive us once more into your house, and account us your slaves, we shall never commit a similar fault again.” My answer was, “Dear sisters, I have not altered my mind with respect to you since we last parted: come again, and take part of what I have.” Upon this I embraced them, and we lived together as before.

We continued thus a whole year in perfect love and harmony. Seeing that God had increased my small stock, I projected a voyage, to embark some of it in a commercial speculation. To this end, I went with my two sisters to Bussorah, where I bought a ship ready fitted for sea, and laded her with such merchandise as I had carried with me from Bagdad. We set sail with a fair wind, and soon cleared the Persian gulf; when we had reached the open sea, we steered our course to the Indies; and the twentieth day saw land. It was a very high mountain, at the bottom of which we perceived a great town: having a fresh gale, we soon reached the harbour, and cast anchor.

I had not patience to wait till my sisters were dressed to go along with me, but went ashore alone in the boat. Making directly to the gate of the town, I saw there a great number of men upon guard, some sitting, and others standing with sticks in their hands; and they had all such dreadful countenances that I was greatly alarmed; but perceiving they remained stationary, and did not so much as move their eyes, I took courage, and went nearer, when I found they were all turned into stones. I entered the town and passed through several streets, where at different intervals stood men in various attitudes, but all motionless and petrified. In the quarter inhabited by the merchants I found most of the shops shut, and in such as were open I likewise found the people petrified.

Having reached a vast square, in the heart of the city, I perceived a large folding gate, covered with plates of gold, which stood open; a curtain of silk stuff seemed to be drawn before it: a lamp hung over the entrance. After I had surveyed the building, I made no doubt but it was the palace of the prince who reigned over that country: and being much astonished that I had not met with one living creature, I approached in hopes to find some. I lifted up the curtain, and was surprised at beholding no one but the guards in the vestibule all petrified; some standing, some sitting, and some lying.

I came to a large court, where I saw before me a stately building, the windows of which were inclosed with gates of messy gold: I concluded it to be the queen's apartments. I entered; and in a large hall I found several black eunuchs turned into stone. I went from thence into a room richly furnished, where I perceived a lady in the same situation. I knew it to be the queen, by the crown of gold on her head, and a necklace of pearls about her neck, each of them as large as a nut; I approached her to have a nearer view of it, and never beheld a finer objets.

I stood some time admiring the riches and magnificence of the room; but above all, the carpet, the cushions, and the sofas, which were all ornamented with Indian stuff of gold, and representations of men and beasts in silver, admirably executed.

I quitted the chamber where the petrified queen was, and passed through several other apartments and closets richly furnished, and at last came into a large room, where there was a throne of massive gold, raised several steps above the floor, and enriched with large enchased emeralds, and upon the throne there was a bed of rich stuff embroidered with pearls. What surprised me most was a sparkling light which came from above the bed. Being curious to know whence it proceeded, I ascended the steps, and lifting up my head, saw a diamond as large as the egg of an ostrich, lying upon a low stool; it was so pure, that I could not find the least blemish in it, and it sparkled with so much brilliancy, that when I saw it by day-light I could not endure its lustre.

At the head of the bed there stood on each side a lighted flambeau, but for what use I could not comprehend; however, it made me imagine that there was some living creature in this place; for I could not believe that the torches continued thus burning of themselves. Several other rarities detained my curiosity in this room, which was inestimable in value, were it only for the diamond I mentioned.

The doors being all open, or but half shut, I surveyed some other apartments, that were as beautiful as those I had already seen. I looked into the offices and store-rooms, which were full of riches. In short, the wonders that everywhere appeared so wholly engrossed my attention, that I forgot my ship and my sisters, and thought of nothing but gratifying my curiosity. In the mean time night came on, which reminded me that it was time to retire. I proposed to return the way I had entered, but I could not find it; I lost myself among the apartments; and perceiving I was come back again to the large room, where the throne, the couch, the large diamond, and the torches stood, I resolved to take my night’s lodging there, and to depart the next morning early, to get aboard my ship. I laid myself down upon a couch, not without some dread to be alone in a desolate place; and this fear hindered my sleep.

About midnight I heard a voice like that of a man reading the Koraun, after the same manner, and in the same tone as it is read in our mosques. Being extremely glad to hear it, I immediately arose, and taking a torch in my hand, passed from one chamber to another on that side from whence the sound proceeded. I came to the closet-door, and stood still, not doubting that it came from thence. I set down my torch upon the ground, and looking through a window, found it to be an oratory. It had, as we have in our mosques, a niche, to direct us whither we are to turn to say our prayers: there were also lamps hung up, and two candlesticks with large tapers of white wax burning.

I saw a little carpet laid down like those we have to kneel upon when we say our prayers, and a comely young man sat on this carpet reading with great devotion the Koraun, which lay before him on a desk. At this sight I was transported with admiration. I wondered how it came to pass that he should be the only living creature in a town where all the people were turned into stones, and I did not doubt but there was something in the circumstance very extraordinary.

The door being only half shut, I opened it, went in, and standing upright before the niche, I repeated this prayer aloud: "Praise be to God, who has favoured us with a happy voyage, and may he be graciously pleased to protect us in the same manner, until we arrive again in our own country. Hear me, O Lord, and grant my request."

The young man turned his eyes towards me, and said, "My good lady, pray let me know who you are, and what has brought you to this desolate city? And, in return, I will you who I am, what has happened to me, why the inhabitants of this city are reduced to the state you see them in, and why I alone am safe in the midst of such a terrible disaster."

I told him in a few words whence I had come, what had made me undertake the voyage, and how I safely arrived at the port after twenty days' sailing; when I had done, I prayed him to perform his promise, and told him how much I was struck by the frightful desolation which I had seen in the city.

"Lady," said the young man, "have patience for a moment." At these words he shut the Koraun, put it into a rich case, and laid it in the niche. I took that opportunity to observe him, and perceiving in him so much good nature and beauty, I felt emotions I had never known before. He made me sit down by him, and before he began his discourse, I could not forbear saying, with an air that discovered the sentiments I felt, "Amiable sir, dear object of my soul, I can scarcely have patience to wait for an account of all these wonderful objects that I have seen since I came into your city; and my curiosity cannot be satisfied too soon: therefore pray, sir, let me know by what miracle you alone are left alive among so many persons that have died in so strange a manner."

"Madam," said the young man, "by the prayer you just now addressed to him, you have given me to understand that you have a knowledge of the true God. I will acquaint you with the most remarkable effect of his greatness and power. You must know, that this city was the metropolis of a mighty kingdom, over which the sultan my father reigned. That prince, his whole court, the inhabitants of the city, and all his other subjects, were magi, worshippers of fire, and of Nardoun, the ancient king of the giants, who rebelled against God.

"But though I was born of an idolatrous father and mother, I had the good fortune in my youth to have a governess who was a good Moosulmaun. 'Dear prince,' would she oftentimes say, 'there is but one true God; take heed that you do not acknowledge and adore any other.' She taught me to read Arabic, and the book she gave me to study was the Koraun. As soon as I was capable of understanding it, she explained to me all the passages of this excellent book, and infused piety into my mind, unknown to my father or any other person. She happened to die, but not before she had perfectly instructed me in all that was necessary to convince me of the truth of the Moosulmaun religion. After her death I persisted with constancy in the belief of its divinity: and I abhor the false god Nardoun, and the adoration of fire.

"About three years and some months ago, a thundering voice was suddenly sounded so distinctly, through the whole city, that nobody could miss hearing it. The words were these: 'Inhabitants, abandon the worship of Nardoun, and of fire, and worship the only God who shews mercy.'

"This voice was heard three years successively, but no one was converted. On the last day of that year, at four o'clock in the morning, all the inhabitants were changed in an instant into stone, every one in the condition and posture they happened to be in. The sultan, my father, shared the same fate, for he was metamorphosed into a black stone, as he is to be seen in this palace, and the queen, my mother, had the like destiny.

"I am the only person who did not suffer under that heavy judgment, and ever since I have continued to serve God with more fervency than before. I am persuaded, dear lady, that he has sent you hither for my comfort, for which I render him infinite thanks; for I must own that this solitary life is extremely irksome."

All these expressions, and particularly the last, greatly increased my love for him. “Prince,” said I, “there is no doubt but Providence has brought me into your port, to afford you an opportunity of withdrawing from this dismal place. The ship I came in may serve in some measure to convince you that I am in some esteem at Bagdad, where I have left considerable property; and I dare engage to promise you sanctuary there, until the mighty commander of the faithful, vicegerent to our prophet whom you acknowledge, shew you the honour that is due to your merit. This renowned prince lives at Bagdad, and as soon as he is informed of your arrival in his capital, you will find that it is not in vain to implore his assistance. It is impossible you can stay any longer in a city where all the objects you behold must renew your grief: my vessel is at your service, where you may absolutely command as you shall think fit.” He accepted the offer, and we conversed the remainder of the night concerning our embarkation.

As soon as it was day we left the palace, and went aboard my ship, where we found my sisters, the captain, and the slaves, all much troubled at my absence. After I had presented my sisters to the prince, I told them what had hindered my return the day before, how I had met with the young prince, his story, and the cause of the desolation of so fine a city.

The seamen were taken up several days in unlading the merchandize I brought with me, and embarking in its stead all the precious things in the palace, such as jewels, gold, and money. We left the furniture and goods, which consisted of an infinite quantity of plate, &c., because our vessel could not carry it, for it would have required several vessels more to convey to Bagdad all the riches that we might have chosen to take with us.

After we had laden the vessel with what we thought most desirable, we took such provisions and water aboard as were necessary for our voyage (for we had still a great deal of those provisions left that we had taken in at Bussorah); at last we set sail with a wind as favourable as we could wish.

The young prince, my sisters and myself, enjoyed ourselves for some time very agreeably. But alas! this good understanding did not last long, for my sisters grew jealous of the friendship between the prince and myself, and maliciously asked me one day, what we should do with him when we came to Bagdad? I perceived immediately that they put this question on purpose to discover my inclinations; therefore, resolving to put it off with a jest, I answered, "I will take him for my husband;" and upon that, turning myself to the prince, said, "Sir, I humbly beg of you to give your consent, for as soon as we come to Bagdad I desire to offer you my person to be your slave, to do you all the service that is in my power, and to resign myself wholly to your commands."

The prince replied, "I know not, madam, whether you be in jest or no; but for my part, I seriously declare before these ladies, your sisters, that from this moment I heartily accept your offer, not with any intention to have you as a slave, but as my lady and mistress: nor will I pretend to have any power over your actions." At these words my sisters changed colour, and I could perceive afterwards that they did not love me as before.

We entered the Persian gulf, and had come within a short distance of Bussorah (where I hoped, considering the fair wind, we might have arrived the day following), when in the night, while I was asleep, my sisters watched their opportunity, and threw me overboard. They did the same to the prince, who was drowned. I floated some minutes on the water, and by good fortune, or rather miracle, I felt ground. I went towards a dark spot, that, by what I could discern, seemed to be land, and proved to be a flat on the coast, which, when day appeared, I found to be a desert island, lying about twenty miles from Bussorah. I soon dried my clothes in the sun, and as I walked along I found several kinds of fruit, and likewise fresh water, which gave me some hopes of preserving my life.

I had just laid myself down to rest in a shade, when I perceived a very large winged serpent coming towards me, with an irregular waving movement, and hanging out its tongue, which induced me to conclude it had received some injury. I instantly arose, and perceived that it was pursued by a larger serpent which had hold of its tail, and was endeavouring to devour it. This perilous situation of the first serpent excited my pity, and instead of retreating I assumed courage to take up a stone that lay near me, and to throw it with all my strength at the other, which I hit upon the head and killed. The other, finding itself at liberty, took wing and flew away. I looked after it for some time till it disappeared. I then sought another shady spot for repose, and fell asleep.

Judge what was my surprise when I awoke, to see standing by me a black woman of lively and agreeable features, who held in her hand two bitches of the same colour, fastened together. I sat up, and asked her who she was? "I am," said she, "the serpent whom you lately delivered from my mortal enemy. I did not know in what way I could better requite the important services you have rendered me than by what I have just done. The treachery of your sisters was well known to me, and to avenge your wrongs, as soon as I was liberated by your generous assistance, I called together several of my companions, fairies like myself, conveyed into your storehouses at Bagdad all the lading of your vessel, and afterwards sunk it.

"These two black bitches are your sisters, whom I have transformed into this shape. But this punishment will not suffice; and my will is that you treat them hereafter in the way I shall direst."

As soon as she had thus spoken the fairy took me under one of her arms, and the two bitches under the other, and conveyed us to my house in Bagdad; where I found in my storehouses all the riches with which my vessel had been laden. Before she left me, she delivered to me the two bitches, and said, "If you would not be changed into a similar form, I command you, in the name of him that governs the sea, to give each of your sisters every night one hundred lashes with a rod, as the punishment of the crime they have committed against yourself, and the young prince, whom they have drowned." I was forced to promise obedience. Since that time I have whipped them every night, though with regret, whereof your majesty has been a witness. My tears testify with how much sorrow and reluctance I perform this painful duty; and in this your majesty may see I am more to be pitied than blamed. If there be any thing else relating to myself that you desire to know, my sister Amene will give you full information in the relation of her story.

After the caliph had heard Zobeide with much astonishment, he desired his grand vizier to request Amene to acquaint him wherefore her breast was disfigured with so many scars.

Amene addressed herself to the caliph, and began her story after this manner:

The Story of Amene.

Commander of the faithful, to avoid repeating what your majesty has already heard in my sister's story, I shall only add, that after my mother had taken a house for herself to live in, during her widowhood, she gave me in marriage, with the portion my father left me, to a gentleman who had one of the best estates in the city.

I had scarcely been a year married when I became a widow, and was left in possession of all my husband's property, which amounted to 90,000 sequins. The interest of this money was sufficient to maintain me very honourably. When the first six months of my mourning was over, I caused to be made for me ten different dresses, of such magnificence that each came to a thousand sequins; and at the end of the year I began to wear them.

One day, while I was alone engaged in my domestic affairs, I was told that a lady desired to speak to me. I gave orders that she should be admitted. She was a person advanced in years; she saluted me by kissing the ground, and said to me kneeling, "Dear lady, excuse the freedom I take to trouble you, the confidence I have in your charity makes me thus bold. I must acquaint your ladyship that I have an orphan daughter, who is to be married this day. She and I are both strangers, and have no acquaintance in this town; which much perplexes me, for we wish the numerous family with whom we are going to ally ourselves to think we are not altogether unknown and without credit: therefore, most beautiful lady, if you would vouchsafe to honour the wedding with your presence, we shall be infinitely obliged, because the ladies of our country, when informed that a lady of your rank has strewn us this respect, will then know that we are not regarded here as unworthy and despised persons. But, alas! madam, if you refuse this request, how great will be our mortification! we know not where else to apply."

This poor woman's address, which she spoke with tears, moved my compassion. "Good woman," said I, "do not afflict yourself, I will grant you the favour you desire; tell me whither I must go, and I will meet you as soon as I am dressed." The old woman was so transported with joy at my answer, that she kissed my feet before I had time to prevent her. “My compassionate lady,” said she, rising, “God will reward the kindness you have shewed to your servants, and make your heart as joyful as you have made theirs. You need not at present trouble yourself; it will be time enough for you to go when I call for you in the evening. So farewell, madam, till I have the honour to see you again.”

As soon as she was gone, I took the suit I liked best, with a necklace of large pearls, bracelets, pendents for my ears, and rings set with the finest and most sparkling diamonds; for my mind presaged what would befall me.

When the night closed in, the old woman called upon me, with a countenance full of joy. She kissed my hands, and said, “My dear lady, the relations of my son-in-law, who are the principal ladies of the city, are now met together; you may come when you please; I am ready to conduct you.” We immediately set out; she walked before me, and I was followed by a number of my women and slaves properly dressed for the occasion. We stopt in a wide street, newly swept and watered, at a spacious gate with a lamp, by the light of which I read this inscription in golden letters over the entrance: “This is the everlasting abode of pleasure and joy.” The old woman knocked, and the gate was opened immediately.

I was conducted towards the lower end of the court, into a large hall, where I was received by a young lady of admirable beauty. She drew near, and after having embraced me, made me sit down by her upon a sofa, on which was raised a throne of precious wood set with diamonds. “Madam,” said she, “you are brought hither to assist at a wedding; but I hope it will be a different wedding from what you expected. I have a brother, one of the handsomest men in the world: he is fallen so much in love with the fame of your beauty, that his fate depends wholly upon you, and he will be the unhappiest of men if you do not take pity on him. He knows your quality, and I can assure you he is in no respect unworthy of your alliance. If my prayers, madam, can prevail, I shall join them with his, and humbly beg you will not refuse the proposal of being his wife.”

After the death of my husband I had not thought of marrying again. But I had no power to refuse the solicitation of so charming a lady. As soon as I had given consent by my silence, accompanied with a blush, the young lady claps her hands, and immediately a closet-door opened, out of which came a young man of a majestic air, and so graceful a behaviour, that I thought myself happy to have made so great a conquest. He sat down by me, and I found from his conversation that his merits far exceeded the eulogium of his sister.

When she perceived that we were satisfied with one another, she claps her hands a second time, and out came a Cauzee, who wrote our contract of marriage, signed it himself, and caused it to be attested by four witnesses he brought along with him. The only condition that my new husband imposed upon me was, that I should not be seen by nor speak to any other man but himself, and he vowed to me that, if I complied in this respect, I should have no reason to complain of him. Our marriage was concluded and finished after this manner; so I became the principal actress in a wedding to which I had only been invited as a guest.

About a month after our marriage, having occasion for some stuffs, I asked my husband's permission to go out to buy them, which he granted; and I took with me the old woman of whom I spoke before, she being one of the family, and two of my own female slaves.

When we came to the street where the merchants reside, the old woman said, "Dear mistress, since you want silk stuffs, I must take you to a young merchant of my acquaintance, who has a great variety; and that you may not fatigue yourself by running from shop to shop, I can assure you that you will find in his what no other can furnish." I was easily persuaded, and we entered a shop belonging to a young merchant who was tolerably handsome. I sat down, and bade the old woman desire him to shew me the finest silk stuffs he had. The woman desired me to speak myself; but I told her it was one of the articles of my marriage contract not to speak to any man but my husband, which I ought to keep.

The merchant shewed me several stuffs, of which one pleased me better than the rest; but I bade her ask the price. He answered the old woman, "I will not sell it for gold or money, but I will make her a present of it, if she will give me leave to kiss her cheek." I ordered the old woman to tell him, that he was very rude to propose such a freedom. But instead of obeying me, she said, "What the merchant desires of you is no such great matter; you need not speak, but only present him your cheek." The stuff pleased me so much, that I was foolish enough to take her advice. The old woman and my slaves stood up, that nobody might see, and I put up my veil; but instead of kissing me, the merchant bit me so violently as to draw blood.

The pain and my surprise were so great, that I fell down in a swoon, and continued insensible so long, that the merchant had time to escape. When I came to myself, I found my cheek covered with blood: the old woman and my slaves took care to cover it with my veil, that the people who came about us could not perceive it, but supposed I had only had a fainting fit.

The old woman who accompanied me being extremely troubled at this accident, endeavoured to comfort me. "My dear mistress," said she, "I beg your pardon, for I am the cause of this misfortune, having brought you to this merchant, because he is my countryman: but I never thought he would be guilty of such a villainous action. But do not grieve; let us hasten home, I will apply a remedy that shall in three days so perfectly cure you, that not the least mark shall be visible." The fit had made me so weak, that I was scarcely able to walk. But at last I got home, where I again fainted, as I went into my chamber. Meanwhile, the old woman applied her remedy; I came to myself, and went to bed.

My husband came to me at night, and seeing my head bound up, asked me the reason. I told him I had the head-ache, which I hoped would have satisfied him, but he took a candle, and saw my cheek was hurt: "How comes this wound?" said he. Though I did not consider myself as guilty of any great offence, yet I could not think of owning the truth. Besides, to make such an avowal to a husband, I considered as somewhat indecorous; I therefore said, "That as I was going, under his permission, to purchase some silk stuff, a porter, carrying a load of wood, came so near to me, in a narrow street, that one of the sticks grazed my cheek; but had not done me much hurt." This account put my husband into a violent passion. "This act," said he, "shall not go unpunished. I will to-morrow order the lieutenant of the police to seize all those brutes of porters, and cause them to be hanged." Fearful of occasioning the death of so many innocent persons, I said, "Sir, I should be sorry so great a piece of injustice should be committed. Pray refrain; for I should deem myself unpardonable, were I to be the cause of so much mischief." "Then tell me sincerely," said he, "how came you by this wound." I answered, "That it was occasioned by the inadvertency of a broom-seller upon an ass, who coming behind me, while he was looking another way, his ass came against me with so much violence, that I fell down, and hurt my cheek upon some glass." "If that is the case," said my husband, "to-morrow morning, before sun-rise, the grand vizier Jaaffier shall be informed of this insolence, and cause all the broom-sellers to be put to death." "For the love of God, Sir," said I, "let me beg of you to pardon them, for they are not guilty." "How, madam," he demanded, "what then am I to believe? Speak, for I am resolved to know the truth from your own mouth." "Sir," I replied, "I was taken with a giddiness, and fell down, and that is the whole matter."

At these words my husband lost all patience. "I have," said he, "too long listened to your falsehoods." As he spoke he clapped his hands, and in came three slaves: "Pull her out of bed," said he, "and lay her in the middle of the floor." The slaves obeyed, one holding me by the head, another by the feet; he commanded the third to fetch a cimeter, and when he had brought it, "Strike," said he, "cut her in two, and then throw her into the Tygris. This is the punishment I inflict on those to whom I have given my heart, when they falsify their promise." When he saw that the slave hesitated to obey him, "Why do you not strike?" said he. "What do you wait for?"

"Madam," said the slave then, "you are near the last moment of your life, consider if you have any thing to dispose of before you die." I begged permission to speak one word, which was granted me. I lifted up my head, and casting an affectionate look on my husband, said, "Alas! to what a condition am I reduced! must I then die in the prime of my youth!" I could say no more, for my tears and sighs choked my utterance. My husband was not at all moved, but, on the contrary, went on to reproach me; and it would have been in vain to attempt a reply. I had recourse to intreaties and prayers; but he had no regard to them, and commanded the slaves to proceed to execution. The old woman, who had been his nurse, came in just at that moment, fell down upon her knees, and endeavoured to appease his wrath. “My son,” said she, “since I have been your nurse and brought you up, let me beg the favour of you to grant me her life. Consider, that he who kills shall be killed, and that you will stain your reputation, and forfeit the esteem of mankind. What will the world say of such sanguinary violence?” She spoke these words in such an affecting manner, accompanied with tears, that she prevailed upon him at last to abandon his purpose.

“Well then,” said he to his nurse, “for your sake I will spare her life; but she shall bear about her person some marks to make her remember her offence.” When he had thus spoken, one of the slaves, by his order, gave me upon my sides and breast so many blows, with a little cane, that he tore away both skin and flesh, which threw me into a swoon. In this state he caused the same slaves, the executioners of his fury, to carry me into a house, where the old woman took care of me. I kept my bed four months; at last I recovered: the scars which, contrary to my wish, you saw yesterday, have remained ever since.

As soon as I was able to walk, and go abroad, I resolved to retire to the house which was left me by my first husband, but I could not find the site whereon it had stood. My second husband, in the heat of his resentment, was not satisfied with the demolition of that, but caused every other house in the same street to be razed to the ground. I believe such an act of violence was never heard of before; but against whom could I complain? The perpetrator had taken good care to conceal himself. But suppose I had discovered him, is it not easily seen that his conduct must have proceeded from absolute power? How then could I dare to complain?

Being left thus destitute and helpless, I had recourse to my dear sister Zobeide, whose adventures your majesty has just heard. To her I made known my misfortune; she received me with her accustomed goodness, and advised me to bear my ambition patience. “This is the way of the world,” said she, “which either robs us of our property, our friends, or our lovers; and some times of all together.” In confirmation of her remark, she at the same time gave me an account of the loss of the young prince, occasioned by the jealousy of her two sisters. She told me also by what accident they were transformed into bitches: and in the last place, after a thousand testimonials of her love towards me, she introduced me to my youngest sister, who had likewise taken sanctuary with her after the death of her mother.

Having returned our grateful acknowledgments to God for having thus brought us together, we resolved to preserve our freedom, and never again to separate. We have now long enjoyed this tranquil life. As it was my business to manage the affairs of the house, I always took pleasure in going myself to purchase what we wanted. I happened to go abroad yesterday for this purpose, and the things I bought I caused to be carried home by a porter, who proving to be a sensible and jocose fellow, we kept with us for a little diversion. Three calenders happened to come to our door as it began to grow dark, and prayed us to give them shelter till the next morning We admitted them upon certain conditions which they agreed to observe; and after we had made them sit at table with us, they in their own way entertained us with a concert of music. At this time we heard knocking at our gate. This proceeded from three merchants of Moussol, men of good appearance, who begged the same favour which the calenders had obtained before. We consented upon the same conditions, but neither of them kept their promise. Though we had power, as well as justice on our side, to punish them, yet we contented ourselves with demanding from them the history of their lives; and afterwards confined our revenge to dismissing them, after they had done, and denying them the asylum they requested.

The caliph was well pleased to be thus informed of what he desired to know; and publicly expressed his admiration of what he had heard.

The caliph having satisfied his curiosity, thought himself obliged to shew his generosity to the calender princes, and also to give the three ladies some proof of his bounty. He himself, without making use of his minister, the grand vizier, spoke to Zobeide. “Madam, did not this fairy, that shewed herself to you in the shape of a serpent, and imposed such a rigorous command upon you, tell you where her place of abode was? Or rather, did she not promise to see you, and restore those bitches to their natural shape?”

“Commander of the faithful,” answered Zobeide, “I forgot to tell your majesty that the fairy left with me a bundle of hair, saying, that her presence would one day be of use to me; and then, if I only burnt two tufts of this hair, she would be with me in a moment, though she were beyond mount Caucasus." "Madam," demanded the caliph, "where is the bundle of hair?" She answered, "Ever since that time I have been so careful of it, that I always carry it about me." Upon which she pulled it out, opened the case which contained it, and shewed it to him. "Well then," said the caliph, "let us bring the fairy hither; you could not call her in a better time, for I long to see her."

Zobeide having consented, fire was brought in, and she threw the whole bundle of hair into it. The palace at that instant began to shake, and the fairy appeared before the caliph in the form of a lady very richly dressed.

"Commander of the faithful," said she to the prince, "you see I am ready to receive your commands. The lady who gave me this call by your order did me essential service. To evince my gratitude, I revenged her of her sisters' inhumanity, by changing them to bitches; but if your majesty commands me, I will restore them to their former shape."

"Generous fairy," replied the caliph, "you cannot do me a greater pleasure; vouchsafe them that favour, and I will find some means to comfort them for their hard penance. But besides, I have another boon to ask in favour of that lady, who has had such cruel usage from an unknown husband. As you undoubtedly know all things, oblige me with the name of this barbarous wretch, who could not be contented to exercise his outrageous and unmanly cruelty upon her person, but has also most unjustly taken from her all her substance. I only wonder how such an unjust and inhuman action could be performed under my authority, and even in my residence, without having come to my knowledge."

"To oblige your majesty," answered the fairy, "I will restore the two bitches to their former state, and I will so cure the lady of her scars, that it shall never appear she was so beaten; and I will also tell you who it was that abused her."

The caliph sent for the two bitches from Zobeide's house, and when they came, a glass of water was brought to the fairy by her desire. She pronounced over it some words which nobody understood; then throwing some part of it upon Amene, and the rest upon the bitches, the latter became two ladies of surprising beauty, and the scars that were upon Amene disappeared. After which the fairy said to the caliph, “Commander of the faithful, I must now discover to you the unknown husband you enquire after. He is very nearly related to yourself, for it is prince Amin, your eldest son, who falling passionately in love with this lady from the fame of her beauty, by stratagem had her brought to his house, where he married her. As to the blows he caused to be given her, he is in some measure excusable; for the lady his spouse had been a little too easy, and the excuses she had made were calculated to lead him to believe she was more faulty than she really was. This is all I can say to satisfy your curiosity.” At these words she saluted the caliph, and vanished.

The prince being filled with admiration, and having much satisfaction in the changes that had happened through his means, acted in such a manner as will perpetuate his memory to all ages. First, he sent for his son Amin, told him that he was informed of his secret marriage, and how he had ill-treated Amene upon a very slight cause. Upon this the prince did not wait for his father’s commands, but received her again immediately.

After which the caliph declared that he would give his own heart and hand to Zobeide, and offered the other three sisters to the calenders, sons of sultans, who accepted them for their brides with much joy. The caliph assigned each of them a magnificent palace in the city of Bagdad, promoted them to the highest dignities of his empire, and admitted them to his councils.

The chief Cauzee of Bagdad being called, with witnesses, wrote the contracts of marriage; and the caliph in promoting by his patronage the happiness of many persons who had suffered such incredible calamities, drew a thousand blessings upon himself.

THE STORY OF SINBAD THE VOYAGER.

In the reign of the same caliph Haroun al Rusheed, whom I have already mentioned, there lived at Bagdad a poor porter called Hindbad. One day, when the weather was excessively hot, he was employed to carry a heavy burden from one end of the town to the other. Being much fatigued, and having still a great way to go, he came into a street where a refreshing breeze blew on his face, and the pavement was sprinkled with rose-water. As he could not desire a better place to rest and recruit himself, he took off his load and sat upon it, near a large mansion.

He was much pleased that he stopped in this place; for the agreeable smell of wood of aloes, and of pastils that came from the house, mixing with the scent of the rose-water, completely perfumed and embalmed the air. Besides, he heard from within a concert of instrumental music, accompanied with the harmonious notes of nightingales, and other birds, peculiar to the climate. This charming melody, and the smell of several sorts of savoury dishes, made the porter conclude there was a feast, with great rejoicings within. His business seldom leading him that way, he knew not to whom the mansion belonged; but to satisfy his curiosity, he went to some of the servants, whom he saw standing at the gate in magnificent apparel, and asked the name of the proprietor. “How,” replied one of them, “do you live in Bagdad, and know not that this is the house of Sinbad, the sailor, that famous voyager, who has sailed round the world?” The porter, who had heard of this Sinbad’s riches, could not but envy a man whose condition he thought to be as happy as his own was deplorable: and his mind being fretted with these reflections, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said loud enough to be heard, “Almighty creator of all things, consider the difference between Sinbad and me! I am every day exposed to fatigues and calamities, and can scarcely get coarse barley-bread for myself and my family, whilst happy Sinbad profusely expends immense riches, and leads a life of continual pleasure. What has he done to obtain from thee a lot so agreeable? And what have I done to deserve one so wretched?” Having finished his expostulation, he struck his foot against the ground, like a man absorbed in grief and despair.

Whilst the porter was thus indulging his melancholy, a servant came out of the house, and taking him by the arm, bade him follow him, for Sinbad, his master, wanted to speak to him.

Sir, your majesty may easily imagine, that the repining Hindbad was not a little surprised at this compliment. For, considering what he had said, he was afraid Sinbad had sent for him to punish him: therefore he would have excused himself, alleging, that he could not leave his burden in the middle of the street. But Sinbad's servants assured him they would look to it, and were so urgent with him, that he was obliged to yield.

The servants brought him into a great hall, where a number of people sat round a table, covered with all sorts of savoury dishes. At the upper end sat a comely venerable gentleman, with a long white beard, and behind him stood a number of officers and domestics, all ready to attend his pleasure. This personage was Sinbad. The porter, whose fear was increased at the sight of so many people, and of a banquet so sumptuous, saluted the company trembling. Sinbad bade him draw near, and seating him at his right hand, served him himself, and gave him excellent wine, of which there was abundance upon the sideboard.

When the repast was over, Sinbad addressed his conversation to Hindbad; and calling him brother, according to the manner of the Arabians, when they are familiar one with another, enquired his name and employment.

"My lord," answered he, "my name is Hindbad." "I am very glad to see you," replied Sinbad; "and I daresay the same on behalf of all the company: but I wish to hear from your own mouth what it was you lately said in the street." Sinbad had himself heard the porter complain through the window, and this it was that induced him to have him brought in.

At this request, Hindbad hung down his head in confusion, and replied, "My lord, I confess that my fatigue put me out of humour, and occasioned me to utter some indiscreet words, which I beg you to pardon." "Do not think I am so unjust," resumed Sinbad, "as to resent such a complaint. I consider your condition, and instead of upbraiding, commiserate you. But I must rectify your error concerning myself. You think, no doubt, that I have acquired, without labour and trouble, the ease and indulgence which I now enjoy. But do not mistake; I did not attain to this happy condition, without enduring for several years more trouble of body and mind than can well be imagined. Yes, gentlemen," he added, speaking to the whole company, "I can assure you, my troubles were so extraordinary, that they were calculated to discourage the most covetous from undertaking such voyages as I did, to acquire riches. Perhaps you have never heard a distinct account of my wonderful adventures, and the dangers I encountered, in my seven voyages; and since I have this opportunity, I will give you a faithful account of them, not doubting but it will be acceptable."

As Sinbad wished to relate his adventures chiefly on the porter's account, he ordered his burden to be carried to the place of its destination, and then proceeded.

The First Voyage.

I inherited from my father considerable property, the greater part of which I squandered in my youth in dissipation; but I perceived my error, and reflected that riches were perishable, and quickly consumed by such ill managers as myself. I farther considered, that by my irregular way of living I wretchedly misspent my time; which is, of all things, the most valuable. I remembered the saying of the great Solomon, which I had frequently heard from my father; That death is more tolerable than poverty. Struck with these reflections, I collected the remains of my fortune, and sold all my effects by public auction. I then entered into a contract with some merchants, who traded by sea. I took the advice of such as I thought most capable of assisting me: and resolving to improve what money I had, I went to Bussorah, and embarked with several merchants on board a ship which we had jointly fitted out.

We set sail, and steered our course towards the Indies, through the Persian gulf, which is formed by the coasts of Arabia Felix on the right, and by those of Persia on the left, and, according to common opinion is seventy leagues wide at the broadest place. The eastern sea, as well as that of the Indies, is very spacious. It is bounded on one side by the coasts of Abyssinia, and is 4,500 leagues in length to the isles of Vakvak. At first I was troubled with the sea-sickness, but speedily recovered my health, and was not afterwards subject to that complaint.

In our voyage we touched at several islands, where we sold or exchanged our goods. One day, whilst under sail, we were becalmed near a small island, but little elevated above the level of the water, and resembling a green meadow. The captain ordered his sails to be furled, and permitted such persons as were so inclined to land; of this number I was one.

But while we were enjoying ourselves in eating and drinking, and recovering ourselves from the fatigue of the sea, the island on a sudden trembled, and shook us terribly.

The trembling of the island was perceived on board the ship, and we were called upon to re-embark speedily, or we should all be lost;

for what we took for an island proved to be the back of a sea monster. The nimblest got into the sloop, others betook themselves to swimming; but for myself I was still upon the back of the creature, when he dived into the sea, and I had time only to catch hold of a piece of wood that we had brought out of the ship to make a fire. Meanwhile, the captain, having received those on board who were in the sloop, and taken up some of those that swam, resolved to improve the favourable gale that had just risen, and hoisting his sails pursued his voyage, so that it was impossible for me to recover the ship.

Thus was I exposed to the mercy of the waves. I struggled for my life all the rest of the day and the following night. By this time I found my strength gone, and despaired of saving my life, when happily a wave threw me against an island, The bank was high and rugged; so that I could scarcely have got up, had it not been for some roots of trees, which fortune seemed to have preserved in this place for my safety. Having reached the land, I lay down upon the ground half dead, until the sun appeared. Then, though I was very feeble, both from hard labour and want of food, I crept along to find some herbs fit to eat, and had the good luck not only to procure some, but likewise to discover a spring of excellent water, which contributed much to recover me. After this I advanced farther into the island, and at last reached a fine plain, where at a great distance I perceived a horse feeding. I went towards it, fluctuating between hope and fear, for I knew not whether in advancing I was more likely to endanger or to preserve my life. As I approached, I perceived it to be a very fine mare, tied to a stake. Whilst I was admiring its beauty, I heard from beneath the voice of a man, who immediately appeared, and asked me who I was? I related to him my adventure, after which, taking me by the hand, he led me into a cave, where there were several other people, no less amazed to see me than I was to see them.

I partook of some provisions which they offered me. I then asked them what they did in such a desert place? to which they answered, that they were grooms belonging to Maha-raja, sovereign of the island; that every year, at the same season, they brought thither the king’s mares, and fastened them as I had seen, until they were covered by a sea-horse, who afterwards endeavoured to destroy the mares; but was prevented by their noise, and obliged to return to the sea. The mares when in foal were taken back, and the horses thus produced were kept for the king's use, and called seahorses. They added, that they were to return home on the morrow, and had I been one day later, I must have perished, because the inhabited part of the island was at a great distance, and it would have been impossible for me to have got thither without a guide.

While they entertained me thus, the horse came out of the sea, as they had told me, covered the mare, and afterwards would have devoured her; but upon a great noise made by the grooms, he left her, and plunged into the sea.

Next morning they returned with their mares to the capital of the island, took me with them, and presented me to the Maha-raja. He asked me who I was, and by what adventure I had come into his dominions? After I had satisfied him, he told me he was much concerned for my misfortune, and at the same time ordered that I should want nothing; which commands his officers were so generous and careful as to see exactly fulfilled.

Being a merchant, I frequented men of my own profession, and particularly enquired for those who were strangers, that perchance I might hear news from Bagdad, or find an opportunity to return. For the Maha-raja's capital is situated on the sea-coast, and has a fine harbour, where ships arrive daily from the different quarters of the world. I frequented also the society of the learned Indians, and took delight to hear them converse; but withal, I took care to make my court regularly to the Maha-raja, and conversed with the governors and petty kings, his tributaries, that were about him. They put a thousand questions respecting my country; and I being willing to inform myself as to their laws and customs, asked them concerning every thing which I thought worth knowing.

There belongs to this king an island named Cassel. They assured me that every night a noise of drums was heard there, whence the mariners fancied that it was the residence of Degial. I determined to visit this wonderful place, and in my way thither saw fishes of 100 and 200 cubits long, that occasion more fear than hurt; for they are so timorous, that they will fly upon the rattling of two sticks or boards. I saw likewise other fish about a cubit in length, that had heads like owls.

As I was one day at the port after my return, a ship arrived, and as soon as she cast anchor, they began to unload her, and the merchants on board ordered their goods to be carried into the customhouse. As I cast my eye upon some bales, and looked to the name, I found my own, and perceived the bales to be the same that I had embarked at Bussorah. I also knew the captain; but being persuaded that he believed me to be drowned, I went, and asked him whose bales these were? He replied, that they belonged to a merchant at Bagdad, called Sinbad, who came to sea with him; but one day, being near an island, as was supposed, he went ashore, with several other passengers, upon this island, which was only a monstrous fish, that lay asleep upon the the sur-face of the water: but as soon as he felt the heat of the fire they had kindled upon his back, to dress some victuals, began to move, and dived under water. Most of the persons who were upon him perished, and among them the unfortunate Sinbad. Those bales belonged to him, and I am resolved to trade with them until I meet with some of his family, to whom I may return the profit. "I am that Sinbad," said I, "whom you thought to be dead, and those bales are mine."

When the captain heard me speak thus, "Heavens!" he exclaimed, "whom can we trust in these times? There is no faith left among men. I saw Sinbad perish with my own eyes, as did also the passengers on board, and yet you tell me you are that Sinbad. What impudence is this? To look on you, one would take you to be a man of probity, and yet you tell a horrible falsehood, in order to possess yourself of what does not belong to you." "Have patience," replied I; "do me the favour to hear what I have to say." "Very well," said he, "speak, I am ready to hear you." Then I told him how I had escaped, and by what adventure I met with the grooms of Maha-raja, who had brought me to his court.

His confidence began to abate upon this declaration, and he was at length persuaded that I was no cheat: for there came people from his ship who knew me, paid me great compliments, and expressed much joy at seeing me alive. At last he recollected me himself, and embracing me, "Heaven be praised," said he, "for your happy escape. I cannot express the joy it affords, me; there are your goods, take and do with them as you please.” I thanked him, acknowledged his probity, and in requital, offered him part of my goods as a present, which he generously refused.

I took out what was most valuable in my bales, and presented them to the Maha-raja, who, knowing my misfortune, asked me how I came by such rarities. I acquainted him with the circumstance of their recovery. He was pleased at my good luck, accepted my present, and in return gave me one much more considerable. Upon this, I took leave of him, and went aboard the same ship, after I had exchanged my goods for the commodities of that country. I carried with me wood of aloes, sandal, camphire, nutmegs, cloves, pepper, and ginger. We passed by several islands, and at last arrived at Bussorah, from whence I came to this city, with the value of 100,000 sequins. My family and I received one another with all the transports of sincere affection. I bought slaves of both sexes, and a landed estate, and built a magnificent house. Thus I settled myself, resolving to forget the miseries I had suffered, and to enjoy the pleasures of life.

Sinbad stopped here, and ordered the musicians to proceed with their concert, which the story had interrupted. The company continued enjoying themselves till the evening, and it was time to retire, when Sinbad sent for a purse of 100 sequins and giving it to the porter, said, “Take this, Hindbad, return to your home, and come back to-morrow to hear more of my adventures.” The porter went away, astonished at the honour done, and the present made him. The account of this adventure proved very agreeable to his wife and children, who did not fail to return thanks to God for what providence had sent him by the hand of Sinbad.

Hindbad put on his best apparel next day, and returned to the bountiful traveller, who received him with a pleasant air, and welcomed him heartily. When all the guests had arrived, dinner was served, and continued a long time. When it was ended, Sinbad, addressing himself to the company, said, “Gentlemen, be pleased to listen to the adventures of my second voyage; they deserve your attention even more than those of the first.” Upon which every one held his peace, and Sinbad proceeded.

The Second Voyage.

I designed, after my first voyage, to spend the rest of my days at Bagdad, as I had the honour to tell you yesterday; but it was not long ere I grew weary of an indolent life. My inclination to trade revived. I bought goods proper for the commerce I intended, and put to sea a second time with merchants of known probity. We embarked on board a good ship, and after recommending ourselves to God, set sail. We traded from island to island, and exchanged commodities with great profit. One day we landed in an island covered with several sorts of fruit-trees, but we could see neither man nor animal. We went to take a little fresh air in the meadows, along the streams that watered them. Whilst some diverted themselves with gathering flowers, and other fruits, I took my wine and provisions, and sat down near a stream betwixt two high trees, which formed a thick shade. I made a good meal, and afterwards fell asleep. I cannot tell how long I slept, but when I awoke the ship was gone.

I was much alarmed at finding the ship gone. I got up and looked around me, but could not see one of the merchants who landed with me. I perceived the ship under sail, but at such a distance, that I lost sight of her in a short time.

I leave you to guess at my melancholy reflections in this sad condition: I was ready to die with grief. I cried out in agony; beat my head and breast, and threw myself upon the ground, where I lay some time in despair, one afflicting thought being succeeded by another still more afflicting. I upbraided myself a hundred times for not being content with the produce of my first voyage, that might have sufficed me all my life. But all this was in vain, and my repentance too late.

At last I resigned myself to the will of God. Not knowing what to do, I climbed up to the top of a lofty tree, from whence I looked about on all sides, to see if I could discover any thing that could give me hopes. When I gazed towards the sea I could see nothing but sky and water; but looking over the land I beheld something white; and coming down, I took what provision I had left, and went towards it, the distance being so great, that I could not distinguish what it was.

As I approached, I thought it to be a white dome, of a prodigious height and extent; and when I came up to it, I touched it, and found it to be very smooth. I went round to see if it was open on any side, but saw it was not, and that there was no climbing up to the top as it was so smooth. It was at least fifty paces round.

By this time the sun was about to set, and all of a sudden the sky became as dark as if it had been covered with a thick cloud. I was much astonished at this sudden darkness, but much more when I found it occasioned by a bird of a monstrous size, that came flying toward me. I remembered that I had often heard mariners speak of a miraculous bird called Roc, and conceived that the great dome which I so much admired must be its egg. In short, the bird alighted, and sat over the egg. As I perceived her coming, I crept to the egg, so that I had before me one of the legs of the bird, which was as big as the trunk of a tree. I tied myself strongly to it with my turban, in hopes that the roc next morning would carry me with her out of this desert island. After having passed the night in this condition, the bird flew away as soon as it was daylight, and carried me so high, that I could not discern the earth; she afterwards descended with so much rapidity that I lost my senses. But when I found myself on the ground, I speedily untied the knot, and had scarcely done so, when the roc, having taken up a serpent of a monstrous length in her bill, flew away.

The spot where it left me was encompassed on all sides by mountains, that seemed to reach above the clouds, and so steep that there was no possibility of getting out of the valley. This was a new perplexity: so that when I compared this place with the desert island from which the roc had brought me, I found that I had gained nothing by the change.

As I walked through this valley, I perceived it was strewed with diamonds, some of which were of a surprising bigness. I took pleasure in looking upon them; but shortly saw at a distance such objects as greatly diminished my satisfaction, and which I could not view without terror, namely, a great number of serpents, so monstrous, that the least of them was capable of swallowing an elephant. They retired in the day-time to their dens, where they hid themselves from the roc their enemy, and came out only in the night.

I spent the day in walking about in the valley, resting myself at times in such places as I thought most convenient. When night came on, I went into a cave, where I thought I might repose in safety. I secured the entrance, which was low and narrow, with a great stone to preserve me from the serpents; but not so far as to exclude the light. I supped on part of my provisions, but the serpents, which began hissing round me, put me into such extreme fear, that you may easily imagine I did not sleep. When day appeared, the serpents retired, and I came out of the cave trembling. I can justly say, that I walked upon diamonds, without feeling any inclination to touch them. At last I sat down, and notwithstanding my apprehensions, not having closed my eyes during the night, fell asleep, after having eaten a little more of my provision. But I had scarcely shut my eyes, when something that fell by me with a great noise awaked me. This was a large piece of raw meat; and at the same time I saw several others fall down from the rocks in different places.

I had always regarded as fabulous what I had heard sailors and others relate of the valley of diamonds, and of the stratagems employed by merchants to obtain jewels from thence; but now I found that they had stated nothing but truth. For the fact is, that the merchants come to the neighbourhood of this valley, when the eagles have young ones, and throwing great joints of meat into the valley, the diamonds, upon whose points they fall, stick to them; the eagles, which are stronger in this country than any where else, pounce with great force upon those pieces of meat, and carry them to their nests on the precipices of the rocks to feed their young: the merchants at this time run to their nests, disturb and drive off the eagles by their shouts, and take away the diamonds that stick to the meat.

Until I perceived the device I had concluded it to be impossible for me to get from this abyss, which I regarded as my grave; but now I changed my opinion, and began to think upon the means of my deliverance.

I began to collect together the largest diamonds I could find, and put them into the leather bag in which I used to carry my provisions. I afterwards took the largest of the pieces of meat, tied it close round me with the cloth of my turban, and then laid myself upon the ground with my face downward, the bag of diamonds being made fast to my girdle.

I had scarcely placed myself in this posture when the eagles came. Each of them seized a piece of meat, and one of the strongest having taken me up, with the piece of meat to which I was fastened, carried me to his nest on the top of the mountain. The merchants immediately began their shouting to frighten the eagles; and when they had obliged them to quit their prey, one of them came to the nest where I was. He was much alarmed when he saw me; but recovering himself, instead of enquiring how I came thither began to quarrel with me, and asked, why I stole his goods? “You will treat me,” replied I, “with more civility, when you know me better. Do not be uneasy, I have diamonds enough for you and myself, more than all the other merchants together. Whatever they have they owe to chance, but I selected for myself in the bottom of the valley those which you see in this bag.” I had scarcely done speaking, when the other merchants came crowding about us, much astonished to see me; but they were much more surprised when I told them my story. Yet they did not so much admire my stratagem to effect my deliverance, as my courage in putting it into execution.

They conducted me to their encampment, and there having opened my bag, they were surprised at the largeness of my diamonds, and confessed that in all the courts which they had visited they had never seen any of such size and perfection. I prayed the merchant, who owned the nest to which I had been carried (for every merchant had his own), to take as many for his share as he pleased. He contented himself with one, and that too the least of them; and when I pressed him to take more, without fear of doing me any injury, “No,” said he, “I am very well satisfied with this, which is valuable enough to save me the trouble of making any more voyages, and will raise as great a fortune as I desire.”

I spent the night with the merchants, to whom I related my story a second time, for the satisfaction of those who had not heard it. I could not moderate my joy when I found myself delivered from the danger I have mentioned. I thought myself in a dream, and could scarcely believe myself out of danger.

The merchants had thrown their pieces of meat into the valley for several days. And each of them being satisfied with the diamonds that had fallen to his lot, we left the place the next morning, and travelled near high mountains, where there were serpents of a prodigious length, which we had the good fortune to escape. We took shipping at the first port we reached, and touched at the isle of Roha, where the trees grow that yield camphire. This tree is so large, and its branches so thick, that one hundred men may easily sit under its shade. The juice, of which the camphire is made, exudes from a hole bored in the upper part of the tree, is received in a vessel, where it thickens to a consistency, and becomes what we call camphire; after the juice is thus drawn out, the tree withers and dies.

In this island is also found the rhinoceros, an animal less than the elephant, but larger than the buffalo. It has a horn upon its nose, about a cubit in length; this horn is solid, and cleft through the middle, upon this may be seen white lines, representing the figure of a man. The rhinoceros fights with the elephant, runs his horn into his belly, and carries him off upon his head but the blood and the fat of the elephant running into his eyes, and making him blind, he falls to the ground; and then, strange to relate! the roc comes and carries them both away in her claws, for food for her young ones.

I pass over many other things peculiar to this island, lest I should be troublesome to you. Here I exchanged some of my diamonds for merchandize. From hence we went to other islands, and at last, having touched at several trading towns of the continent, we landed at Bussorah, from whence I proceeded to Bagdad. There I immediately gave large presents to the poor, and lived honourably upon the vast riches I had brought, and gained with so much fatigue.

Thus Sinbad ended the relation of the second voyage, gave Hindbad another hundred sequins, and invited him to come the next day to hear the account of the third. The rest of the guests returned to their homes, and came again the following day at the same hour, and one may be sure the porter did not fail, having by this time almost forgotten his former poverty. When dinner was over, Sinbad demanded attention, and gave them an account of his third voyage, as follows.

The Third Voyage.

I soon lost in the pleasures of life the remembrance of the perils I had encountered in my two former voyages; and being in the flower of my age, I grew weary of living without business, and hardening myself against the thought of any danger I might incur, went from Bagdad to Bussorah with the richest commodities of the country. There I embarked again with some merchants. We made a long voyage, and touched at several ports, where we carried on a considerable trade. One day, being out in the main ocean, we were overtaken by a dreadful tempest, which drove us from our course. The tempest continued several days, and brought us before the port of an island, which the captain was very unwilling to enter; but we were obliged to cast anchor. When we had furled our sails, the captain told us, that this, and some other neighbouring islands, were inhabited by hairy savages, who would speedily attack us; and though they were but dwarfs, yet our misfortune was such, that we must make no resistance, for they were more in number than the locusts; and if we happened to kill one of them, they would all fall upon us and destroy us.

This account of the captain, continued Sinbad put the whole company into great consternation and we soon found that what he had told us was but too true; an innumerable multitude of frightful savages, about two feet high, covered all over with red hair, came swimming towards us, and encompassed our ship. They spoke to us as they came near, but we understood not their language; they climbed up the sides of the ship with such agility as surprised us. We beheld all this with dread, but without daring to defend ourselves, or to divert them from their mischievous design. In short, they took down our sails, cut the cable, and hauling to the shore, made us all get out, and afterwards carried the ship into another island from whence they had come. All voyagers carefully avoided the island where they left us, it being very dangerous to stay there, for a reason you shall presently hear; but we were forced to bear our affliction with patience.

We went forward into the island, where we gathered some fruits and herbs to prolong our lives as long as we could; but we expected nothing but death. As we advanced, we perceived at a distance a vast pile of building, and made towards it. We found it to be a palace, elegantly built, and very lofty, with a gate of ebony of two leaves, which we forced open. We entered the court, where we saw before us a large apartment, with a porch, having on one side a heap of human bones, and on the other a vast number of roasting spits. We trembled at this spectacle, and being fatigued with travelling, fell to the ground, seized with deadly apprehension, and lay a long time motionless.

The sun set, and whilst we were in the lamentable condition I have described, the gate of the apartment opened with a loud crash, and there came out the horrible figure of a black man, as tall as a lofty palm-tree. He had but one eye, and that in the middle of his forehead, where it looked as red as a burning coal. His fore-teeth were very long and sharp, and stood out of his mouth, which was as deep as that of a horse. His upper lip hung down upon his breast. His ears resembled those of an elephant, and covered his shoulders; and his nails were as long and crooked as the talons of the greatest birds. At the sight of so frightful a giant, we became insensible, and lay like dead men.

At last we came to ourselves, and saw him sitting in the porch looking at us. When he had considered us well, he advanced towards us, and laying his hand upon me, took me up by the nape of my neck, and turned round as a butcher would do a sheep’s head. After having examined me, and perceiving me to be so lean that I had nothing but skin and bone, he let me go. He took up all the rest one by one, and viewed them in the same manner. The captain being the fattest, he held him with one hand, as I would do a sparrow, and thrust a spit through him; he then kindled a great fire, roasted, and ate him in his apartment for his supper. Having finished his repast, he returned to his porch, where he lay and fell asleep, snoring louder than thunder. He slept thus till morning. As to ourselves, it was not possible for us to enjoy any rest, so that we passed the night in the most painful apprehension that can be imagined. When day appeared the giant awoke, got up, went out, and left us in the palace.

When we thought him at a distance, we broke the melancholy silence we had preserved the whole of the night, and filled the palace with our lamentations and groans. Though we were several in number, and had but one enemy, it never occurred to us to effect our deliverance by putting him to death. This enterprize however, though difficult of execution, was the only design we ought naturally to have formed.

We thought of several other expedients, but determined upon none; and submitting ourselves to what it should please God to order concerning us, we spent the day in traversing the island, supporting ourselves with fruits and herbs as we had done the day before. In the evening we sought for some place of shelter, but found none; so that we were forced, whether we would or not, to return to the palace.

The giant failed not to return, and supped once more upon one of our companions, after which he slept, and snored till day, and then went out and left us as before. Our situation appeared to us so dreadful, that several of my comrades designed to throw themselves into the sea, rather than die so painful a death; and endeavoured to persuade the others to follow their example. Upon which one of the company answered, "That we were forbidden to destroy ourselves: but even if that were not the case, it was much more reasonable to devise some method to rid ourselves of the monster who had destined us to so horrible a fate."

Having thought of a project for this purpose, I communicated it to my comrades, who approved it. "Brethren," said I, "you know there is much timber floating upon the coast; if you will be advised by me, let us make several rafts capable of bearing us, and when they are done, leave them there till we find it convenient to use them. In the mean time, we will carry into execution the design I proposed to you for our deliverance from the giant, and if it succeed, we may remain here patiently awaiting the arrival of some ship to carry us out of this fatal island; but if it happen to miscarry, we will take to our rafts, and put to sea. I admit that by exposing ourselves to the fury of the waves, we run a risk of losing our lives; but is it not better to be buried in the sea than in the entrails of this monster, who has already devoured two of our number?" My advice was approved, and we made rafts capable of carrying three persons on each.

We returned to the palace towards the evening, and the giant arrived shortly after. We were forced to submit to seeing another of our comrades roasted. But at last we revenged ourselves on the brutish giant in the following manner. After he had finished his cursed supper, he lay down on his back, and fell asleep. As soon as we heard him snore, according to his custom, nine of the boldest among us, and myself, took each of us a spit, and putting the points of them into the fire till they were burning hot, we thrust them into his eye all at once, and blinded him. The pain made him break out into a frightful yell: he started up, and stretched out his hands, in order to sacrifice some of us to his rage: but we ran to such places as he could not reach; and after having sought for us in vain, he groped for the gate, and went out, howling in agony.

We quitted the palace after the giant, and came to the shore, where we had left our rafts, and put them immediately to sea. We waited till day, in order to get upon them, in case the giant should come towards us with any guide of his own species, but we hoped if he did not appear by sun-rising, and gave over his howling, which we still heard, that he would prove to be dead; and if that happened to be the case, we resolved to stay in that island, and not to risk our lives upon the rafts: but day had scarcely appeared, when we perceived our cruel enemy, accompanied with two others almost of the same size, leading him; and a great number more coming before him at a quick pace.

We did not hesitate to take to our rafts, and put to sea with all the speed we could. The giants, who perceived this, took up great stones, and running to the shore, entered the water up to the middle, and threw so exactly, that they sunk all the rafts but that I was upon; and all my companions, except the two with me, were drowned. We rowed with all our might, and got out of the reach of the giants. But when we got out to sea, we were exposed to the mercy of the waves and winds, and tossed about, sometimes on one side, and sometimes on another, and spent that night and the following day under the most painful uncertainty as to our fate; but next morning we had the good fortune to be thrown upon an island, where we landed with much joy. We found excellent fruit, which afforded us great relief, and recruited our strength.

At night we went to sleep on the sea-shore but were awakened by the noise of a serpent of surprising length and thickness, whose scales made a rustling noise as he wound himself along. It swallowed up one of my comrades, notwithstanding his loud cries, and the efforts he made to extricate himself from it; dashing him several times against the ground, it crushed him, and we could hear it gnaw and tear the poor wretch's bones, though we had fled to a considerable distance. The following day, to our great terror, we saw the serpent again, when I exclaimed, "O heaven, to what dangers are we exposed! We rejoiced yesterday at having escaped from the cruelty of a giant and the rage of the waves, now are we fallen into another danger equally dreadful."

As we walked about, we saw a large tall tree upon which we designed to pass the following night, for our security; and having satisfied our hunger with fruit, we mounted it according. Shortly after, the serpent came hissing to the foot of the tree; raised himself up against the trunk of it, and meeting with my comrade, who sat lower than I, swallowed him at once, and went off.

I remained upon the tree till it was day, and then came down, more like a dead man than one alive, expecting the same fate with my two companions. This filled me with horror, and I advanced some steps to throw myself into the sea; but the natural love of life prompting us to prolong it as long as we can, I withstood this dictate of despair, and submitted myself to the will of God, who disposes of our lives at his pleasure.

In the mean time I collected together a great quantity of small wood, brambles, and dry thorns, and making them up into faggots, made a wide circle with them round the tree, and also tied some of them to the branches over my head. Having done this, when the evening came, I shut myself up within this circle, with the melancholy satisfaction, that I had neglected nothing which could preserve me from the cruel destiny with which I was threatened. The serpent failed not to come at the usual hour, and went round the tree, seeking for an opportunity to devour me, but was prevented by the rampart I had made; so that he lay till day, like a cat watching in vain for a mouse that has fortunately reached a place of safety. When day appeared, he retired, but I dared not to leave my fort until the sun arose.

I felt so much fatigued by the labour to which it had put me, and suffered so much from his poisonous breath, that death seemed more eligible to me than the horrors of such a state. I came down from the tree, and, not thinking of the resignation I had the preceding day resolved to exercise, I ran towards the sea, with a design to throw myself into it.

God took compassion on my hopeless state; for just as I was going to throw myself into the sea, I perceived a ship at a considerable distance. I called as loud as I could, and taking the linen from my turban, displayed it, that they might observe me. This had the desired effect; the crew perceived me, and the captain sent his boat for me. As soon as I came on board, the merchants and seamen flocked about me, to know how I came into that desert island; and after I had related to them all that had befallen me, the oldest among them said to me, they had several times heard of the giants that dwelt in that island, that they were cannibals, and ate men raw as well as roasted; and as to the serpents, they added, that there were abundance in the island that hid themselves by day, and came abroad by night. After having testified their joy at my escaping so many dangers, they brought me the best of their provisions; and the captain, seeing that I was in rags, was so generous as to give me one of his own suits. We continued at sea for some time, touched at several islands, and at last landed at that of Salabat, where sandal wood is obtained, which is of great use in medicine. We entered the port, and came to anchor. The merchants began to unload their goods, in order to sell or exchange them. In the mean time, the captain came to me, and said, “Brother, I have here some goods that belonged to a merchant, who sailed some time on board this ship, and he being dead, I design to dispose of them for the benefit of his heirs, when I find who they are.” The bales he spoke of lay on the deck, and shewing them to me, he said, “There are the goods; I hope you will take care to sell them, and you shall have factorage.” I thanked him for thus affording me an opportunity of employing myself, because I hated to be idle.

The clerk of the ship took an account of all the bales, with the names of the merchants to whom they belonged. And when he asked the captain in whose name he should enter those he had given me the charge of; “Enter them,” said the captain, “in the name of Sinbad.” I could not hear myself named without some emotion; and looking stedfastly on the captain, I knew him to be the person who, in my second voyage, had left me in the island where I fell asleep, and sailed without me, or sending to see for me. But I could not recollect him at first, he was so much altered since I had seen him.

I was not surprised that he, believing me to be dead, did not recognize me. “Captain,” said I, “was the merchant’s name, to whom those bales belonged, Sinbad?” “Yes,” replied he, “that was his name; he came from Bagdad, and embarked on board my ship at Bussorah. One day, when we landed at an island to take in water and other refreshments, I knew not by what mistake, I sailed without observing that he did not re-embark with us; neither I nor the merchants perceived it till four hours after. We had the wind in our stern, and so fresh a gale, that it was not then possible for us to tack about for him.” “You believe him then to be dead?” said I. “Certainly,” answered he. “No, captain,” I resumed; “look at me, and you may know that I am Sinbad, whom you left in that desert island.”

The captain, continued Sinbad, having considered me attentively, recognized me. “God be praised,” said he, embracing me; “I rejoice that fortune has rectified my fault. There are your goods, which I always took care to preserve.” I took them from him, and made him the acknowledgments to which he was entitled.

From the isle of Salabat, we went to another, where I furnished myself with cloves, cinnamon, and other spices. As we sailed from this island, we saw a tortoise twenty cubits in length and breadth. We observed also an amphibious animal like a cow, which gave milk; its skin is so hard, that they usually make bucklers of it. I saw another, which had the shape and colour of a camel.

In short, after a long voyage, I arrived at Bussorah, and from thence returned to Bagdad, with so much wealth that I knew not its extent. I gave a great deal to the poor, and bought another considerable estate in addition to what I had already.

Thus Sinbad finished the history of his third voyage; gave another hundred sequins to Hindbad, invited him to dinner again the next day, to hear the story of his fourth voyage. Hindbad and the company retired; and on the following day, when they returned, Sinbad after dinner continued the relation of his adventures.

The Fourth Voyage.

The pleasures and amusements which I enjoyed after my third voyage had not charms sufficient to divert me from another. My passion for trade, and my love of novelty, again prevailed. I therefore settled my affairs, and having provided a stock of goods fit for the traffic I designed to engage in, I set out on my journey. I took the route of Persia, travelled over several provinces, and then arrived at a port, where I embarked. We hoisted our sails, and touched at several ports of the continent, and some of the eastern islands, and put out to sea: we were overtaken by such a sudden gust of wind, as obliged the captain to lower his yards, and take all other necessary precautions to prevent the danger that threatened us. But all was in vain our endeavours had no effect; the sails were split in a thousand pieces, and the ship was stranded; several of the merchants and seamen were drowned and the cargo was lost.

I had the good fortune, with several of the merchants and mariners, to get upon some planks, and we were carried by the current to an island which lay before us. There we found fruit and spring water, which preserved our lives. We staid all night near the place where we had been cast ashore, without consulting what we should do; our misfortune had so much dispirited us that we could not deliberate.

Next morning, as soon as the sun was up, we walked from the shore, and advancing into the island, saw some houses, which we approached. As soon as we drew near, we were encompassed by a great number of negroes, who seized us, shared us among them, and carried us to their respective habitations.

I, and five of my comrades, were carried to one place; here they made us sit down, and gave us a certain herb, which they made signs to us to eat. My comrades not taking notice that the blacks ate none of it themselves, thought only of satisfying their hunger, and ate with greediness. But I, suspecting some trick, would not so much as taste it, which happened well for me; for in little time after, I perceived my companions had lost their senses, and that when they spoke to me, they knew not what they said.

The negroes fed us afterwards with rice, prepared with oil of cocoa-nuts; and my comrades, who had lost their reason, ate of it greedily. I also partook of it, but very sparingly. They gave us that herb at first on purpose to deprive us of our senses, that we might not be aware of the sad destiny prepared for us; and they supplied us with rice to fatten us; for, being cannibals, their design was to eat us as soon as we grew fat. This accordingly happened, for they devoured my comrades, who were not sensible of their condition; but my senses being entire, you may easily guess that instead of growing fat, as the rest did, I grew leaner every day. The fear of death under which I laboured, turned all my food into poison. I fell into a languishing distemper, which proved my safety; for the negroes, having killed and eaten my companions, seeing me to be withered, lean, and sick, deferred my death.

Meanwhile I had much liberty, so that scarcely any notice was taken of what I did, and this gave me an opportunity one day to get at a distance from the houses, and to make my escape. An old man, who saw me, and suspected my design, called to me as loud as he could to return; but instead of obeying him, I redoubled my speed, and quickly got out of sight. At that time there was none but the old man about the houses, the rest being abroad, and not to return till night, which was usual with them. Therefore, being sure that they could not arrive time enough to pursue me, I went on till night, when I stopped to rest a little, and to eat some of the provisions I had secured; but I speedily set forward again, and travelled seven days, avoiding those places which seemed to be inhabited, and lived for the most part upon cocoa-nuts, which served me both for meat and drink. On the eighth day I came near the sea, and saw some white people like myself, gathering pepper, of which there was great plenty in that place. This I took to be a good omen, and went to them without any scruple.

The people who gathered pepper came to meet me as soon as they saw me, and asked me in Arabic who I was, and whence I came? I was overjoyed to hear them speak in my own language, and satisfied their curiosity, by giving them an account of my shipwreck, and how I fell into the hands of the negroes. “Those negroes,” replied they, “eat men, and by what miracle did you escape their cruelty?” I related to them the circumstances I have just mentioned, at which they were wonderfully surprised.

I staid with them till they had gathered their quantity of pepper, and then sailed with them to the island from whence they had come. They presented me to their king, who was a good prince. He had the patience to hear the relation of my adventures, which surprised him; and he afterwards gave me clothes, and commanded care to be taken of me.

The island was very well peopled, plentiful in everything, and the capital a place of great trade. This agreeable retreat was very comfortable to me after my misfortunes, and the kindness of this generous prince completed my satisfaction. In a word, there was not a person more in favour with him than myself; and, consequently, every man in court and city sought to oblige me; so that in a very little time I was looked upon rather as a native than a stranger.

I observed one thing, which to me appeared very extraordinary. All the people, the king himself not excepted, rode their horses without saddle, bridle, or stirrups. This made me one day take the liberty to ask the king how it came to pass? His majesty answered, that I talked to him of things which nobody knew the use of in his dominions.

I went immediately to a workman, and gave him a model for making the stock of a saddle. When that was done, I covered it myself with velvet and leather, and embroidered it with gold. I afterwards went to a smith, who made me a bit, according to the pattern I shewed him, and also some stirrups. When I had all things completed, I presented them to the king, and put them upon one of his horses. His majesty mounted immediately, and was so pleased with them, that he testified his satisfaction by large presents. I could not avoid making several others for the ministers and principal officers of his household, who all of them made me presents that enriched me in a little time. I also made some for the people of best quality in the city, which gained me great reputation and regard.

As I paid my court very constantly to the king, he said to me one day, “Sinbad, I love thee; and all my subjects who know thee, treat thee according to my example. I have one thing to demand of thee, which thou must grant.” “Sir,” answered I, “there is nothing but I will do, as a mark of my obedience to your majesty, whose power over me is absolute." "I have a mind thou shouldst marry," replied he, "that so thou mayst stay in my dominions, and think no more of thy own country." I durst not resist the prince's will, and he gave me one of the ladies of his court, noble, beautiful, and rich. The ceremonies of marriage being over, I went and dwelt with my wife, and for some time we lived together in perfect harmony. I was not, however, satisfied with my banishment, therefore designed to make my escape the first opportunity, and to return to Bagdad; which my present settlement, how advantageous soever, could not make me forget.

At this time the wife of one of my neighbours, with whom I had contrasted a very strict friendship, fell sick, and died. I went to see and comfort him in his affliction, and finding him absorbed in sorrow, I said to him as soon as I saw him, "God preserve you and grant you a long life." "Alas!" replied he, "how do you think I should obtain the favour you wish me? I have not above an hour to live." "Pray," said I, "do not entertain such a melancholy thought; I hope I shall enjoy your company many years." "I wish you," he replied, "a long life; but my days are at an end, for I must be buried this day with my wife. This is a law which our ancestors established in this island, and it is always observed inviolably. The living husband is interred with the dead wife, and the living wife with the dead husband. Nothing can save me; every one must submit to this law."

While he was giving me an account of this barbarous custom, the very relation of which chilled my blood, his kindred, friends, and neighbours, came in a body to assist at the funeral. They dressed the corpse of the woman in her richest apparel, and all her jewels, as if it had been her wedding-day; then they placed her on an open coffin, and began their march to the place of burial. The husband walked at the head of the company, and followed the corpse. They proceeded to a high mountain, and when they had reached the place of their destination, they took up a large stone, which covered the mouth of a deep pit, and let down the corpse with all its apparel and jewels. Then the husband, embracing his kindred and friends, suffered himself to be put into another open coffin without resistance, with a pot of water, and seven small loaves, and was let down in the same manner. The mountain was of considerable length, and extended along the sea-shore, and the pit was very deep. The ceremony being over, the aperture was again covered with the stone, and the company returned.

It is needless for me to tell you that I was a most melancholy spectator this funeral, while the rest were scarcely moved, the custom was to them so familiar. I could not forbear communicating to the king my sentiment respecting the practice: "Sir," I said, "I cannot but feel astonished at the strange usage observed in this country, of burying the living with the dead. I have been a great traveller, and seen many countries, but never heard of so cruel a law." "What do you mean, Sinbad?" replied the king: "it is a common law. I shall be interred with the queen, my wife, if she die first." "But, Sir," said I, "may I presume to ask your majesty, if strangers be obliged to observe this law?" "Without doubt," returned the king (smiling at the occasion of my question), "they are not exempted, if they be married in this island."

I returned home much depressed by this answer; for the fear of my wife's dying first, and that I should be interred alive with her, occasioned me very uneasy reflections. But there was no remedy; I must have patience, and submit to the will of God. I trembled however at every little indisposition of my wife. Alas! in a little time my fears were realized, for she fell sick, and died.

Judge of my sorrow; to be interred alive, seemed to me as deplorable a termination of life as to be devoured by cannibals. It was necessary, however, to submit. The king and all his court expressed their wish to honour the funeral with their presence, and the most considerable people of the city did the same. When all was ready for the ceremony, the corpse was put into a coffin, with all her jewels and her most magnificent apparel. The procession began, and as second actor in this doleful tragedy, I went next the corpse, with my eyes full of tears, bewailing my deplorable fate. Before we reached the mountain, I made an attempt to affect the minds of the spectators: I addressed myself to the king first, and then to all those that were round me; bowing before them to the earth, and kissing the border of their garments, I prayed them to have compassion upon me. "Consider," said I, "that I am a stranger, and ought not to be subject to this rigorous law, and that I have another wife and children in my own country." Although I spoke in the most pathetic manner, no one was moved by my address; on the contrary, they ridiculed my dread of death as cowardly, made haste to let my wife's corpse into the pit, and lowered me down the next moment in an open coffin, with full of water and seven loaves. In short, the fatal ceremony being performed, they covered over the mouth of the pit, notwithstanding my grief and piteous lamentations.

As I approached the bottom, I discovered by the aid of the little light that came from above the nature of this subterranean place, it seemed an endless cavern, and might be about fifty fathom deep. I was annoyed by an insufferable stench proceeding from the multitude of bodies which I saw on the right and left; nay, I fancied that I heard some of them sigh out their last. However, when I got down, I immediately left my coffin, and getting at a distance from the bodies, held my nose, and lay down upon the ground, where I stayed a considerable time, bathed in tears. At last, reflecting on my melancholy case, "It is true," said I, "that God disposes all things according to the degrees of his providence; but, unhappy Sinbad, hast thou any but thyself to blame that thou art brought to die so strange a death? Would to God thou hadst perished in some of those tempests which thou hast escaped! then thy death had not been so lingering, and so terrible in all its circumstances. But thou hast drawn all this upon thyself by thy inordinate avarice. Ah, unfortunate wretch! shouldst thou not rather have remained at home, and quietly enjoyed the fruits of thy labour?"

Such were the vain complaints with which I filled the cave, beating my head and breast out of rage and despair, and abandoning myself to the most afflicting thoughts. Nevertheless, I must tell you, that instead of calling death to my assistance in that miserable condition, I felt still an inclination to live, and to do all I could to prolong my days. I went groping about, with my nose stopped, for the bread and water that was in my coffin, and took some of it. Though the darkness of the cave was so great that I could not distinguish day and night, yet I always found my coffin again, and the cave seemed to be more spacious and fuller of bodies than it had appeared to be at first. I lived for some days upon my bread and water, which being all spent, I at last prepared for death.

As I was thinking of death, I heard the stone lifted up from the mouth of the cave, and immediately the corpse of a man was let down When reduced to necessity, it is natural to come to extreme resolutions. While they let down the woman I approached the place where her coffin was to be put, and as soon as I perceived they were again covering the mouth of the cave, gave the unfortunate wretch two or three violent blows over the head, with a large bone; which stunned, or, to say the truth, killed her. I committed this inhuman action merely for the sake of the bread and water that was in her coffin, and thus I had provision for some days more. When that was spent, they letdown another dead woman, and a living man; I killed the man in the same manner, and, as there was then a sort of mortality in the town, by continuing this practice I did not want for provisions.

One day after I had dispatched another woman, I heard something tread, and breathing or panting as it walked. I advanced towards that side from whence I heard the noise, and on my approach the creature puffed and blew harder, as if running away from me. I followed the noise, and the thing seemed to stop sometimes, but always fled and blew as I approached. I pursued it for a considerable time, till at last I perceived a light, resembling a star; I went on, sometimes lost sight of it, but always found it again, and at last discovered that it came through a hole in the rock, large enough to admit a man.

Upon this, I stopped some time to rest, being much fatigued with the rapidity of my progress: afterwards coming up to the hole, I got through, and found myself upon the sea shore. I leave you to guess the excess of my joy: it was such, that I could scarcely persuade myself that the whole was not a dream.

But when I was recovered from my surprise, and convinced of the reality of my escape, I perceived what I had followed to be a creature which came out of the sea, and was accustomed to enter the cavern and feed upon the bodies of the dead.

I examined the mountain, and found it to be situated betwixt the sea and the town, but without any passage to or communication with the latter; the rocks on the sea side being high and perpendicularly steep. I prostrated myself on the shore to thank God for this mercy, and afterwards entered the cave again to fetch bread and water, which I ate by daylight with a better appetite than I had done since my interment in the dark cavern.

I returned thither a second time, and groped among the coffins for all the diamonds, rubies, pearls, gold bracelets, and rich stuffs I could find; these I brought to the shore, and tying them up neatly into bales, with the cords that let down the coffins, I laid them together upon the beach, waiting till some ship might appear, without fear of rain, for it was then the dry season.

After two or three days, I perceived a ship just come out of the harbour, making for the place where I was. I made a sign with the linen of my turban, and called to the crew as loud as I could. They heard me, and sent a boat to bring me on board, when they asked by what misfortune I came thither; I told them that I had suffered shipwreck two days before, and made shift to get ashore with the goods they saw. It was fortunate for me that these people did not consider the place where I was, nor enquire into the probability of what I told them; but without hesitation took me on board with my goods. When I came to the ship, the captain was so well pleased to have saved me, and so much taken up with his own affairs, that he also took the story of my pretended shipwreck upon trust, and generously refused some jewels which I offered him.

We passed by several islands, and among others that called the isle of Bells, about ten days' sail from Serendib, with a regular wind, and six from that of Kela, where we landed. This island produces lead mines, Indian canes, and excellent camphire.

The king of the isle of Kela is very rich and powerful, and the isle of Bells, which is about two days journey in extent, is also subject to him. The inhabitants are so barbarous that they still eat human flesh. After we had finished our traffic in that island, we put to sea again, and touched at several other ports; at last I arrived happily at Bagdad with infinite riches, of which it is needless to trouble you with the detail. Out of gratitude to God for his mercies, I contributed liberally towards the support of several mosques, and the subsistence of the poor, gave myself up to the society of my kindred and friends, enjoying myself with them in festivities and amusements.

Here Sinbad finished the relation of his fourth voyage, which appeared more surprising to the company than the three former. He made a new present of one hundred sequins to Hindbad, whom he requested to return with the rest next day at the same hour to dine with him, and hear the story of his fifth voyage. Hindbad and the other guests took their leave and retired. Next morning when they all met, they sat down at table, and when dinner was over, Sinbad began the relation of his fifth voyage as follows.

The Fifth Voyage.

The pleasures I enjoyed had again charms enough to make me forget all the troubles and calamities I had undergone, but could not cure me of my inclination to make new voyages. I therefore bought goods, departed with them for the best sea-port; and there, that I might not be obliged to depend upon a captain, but have a ship at my own command, I remained till one was built on purpose, at my own charge. When the ship was ready, I went on board with my goods; but not having enough to load her, I agreed to take with me several merchants of different nations with their merchandize.

We sailed with the first fair wind, and after a long navigation the first place we touched at was a desert island, where we found an egg of a roe, equal in size to that I formerly mentioned. There was a young roc it just ready to be hatched, and its bill had begun to appear.

The merchants whom I had taken on board, and who landed with me, broke the egg with hatchets, and made a hole in it, pulled out the young roc piecemeal, and roasted it. I had earnestly intreated them not to meddle with the egg, but they would not listen to me.

Scarcely had they finished their repast, when there appeared in the air at a considerable distance from us two great clouds. The captain whom I had hired to navigate my ship, knowing by experience what they meant, said they were the male and female roc that belonged to the young one, and pressed us to re-embark with all speed, to prevent the misfortune which he saw would otherwise befall us. We hastened on board, and set sail with all possible expedition.

In the mean time, the two roes approached with a frightful noise, which they redoubled when they saw the egg broken, and their young one gone. They flew back in the direction they had come, and disappeared for some time, while we made all the sail we could to endeavour to prevent that which unhappily befell us.

They soon returned, and we observed that each of them carried between its talons stones, or rather rocks, of a monstrous size. When they came directly over my ship, they hovered, and one of them let fall a stone, but by the dexterity of the steersman it missed us, and falling into the sea, divided the water so that we could almost see the bottom. The other roe, to our misfortune, threw his messy burden so exactly upon the middle of the ship, as to split it into a thousand pieces. The mariners and passengers were all crushed to death, or sunk. I myself was of the number of the latter; but as I came up again, I fortunately caught hold of a piece of the wreck, and swimming sometimes with one hand, and sometimes with the other, but always holding fast my board, the wind and the tide favouring me, I came to an island, whose shore was very steep. I overcame that difficulty, however, and got ashore.

I sat down upon the grass, to recover myself from my fatigue, after which I went into the island to explore it. It seemed to be a delicious garden. I found trees everywhere, some of them bearing green, and others ripe fruits, and streams of fresh pure water running in pleasant meanders. I ate of the fruits, which I found excellent; and drank of the water, which was very light and good.

When night closed in, I lay down upon the grass in a convenient spot, but could not sleep an hour at a time, my mind being apprehensive of danger. I spent best part of the night in alarm, and reproached myself for my imprudence in not remaining at home, rather than undertaking this last voyage. These reflections carried me so far, that I began to form a design against my life; but daylight dispersed these melancholy thoughts. I got up, and walked among the trees, but not without some fears.

When I was a little advanced into the island, I saw an old man, who appeared very weak and infirm. He was sitting on the bank of a stream, and at first I took him to be one who had been shipwrecked like myself. I went towards him and saluted him, but he only slightly bowed his head. I asked him why he sat so still, but instead of answering me, he made a sign for me to take him upon my back, and carry him over the brook, signifying that it was to gather fruit.

I believed him really to stand in need of my assistance, took him upon my back, and having carried him over, bade him get down, and for that end stooped, that he might get off with ease; but instead of doing so (which I laugh at every time I think of it) the old man, who to me appeared quite decrepit, clasped his legs nimbly about my neck, when I perceived his skin to resemble that of a cow. He sat astride upon my shoulders, and held my throat so tight, that I thought he would have strangled me, the apprehension of which make me swoon and fall down.

Notwithstanding my fainting, the ill-natured old fellow kept fast about my neck, but opened his legs a little to give me time to recover my breath. When I had done so, he thrust one of his feet against my stomach, and struck me so rudely on the side with the other, that he forced me to rise up against my will. Having arisen, he made me walk under the trees, and forced me now and then to stop, to gather and eat fruit such as we found. He never left me all day, and when I lay down to rest at night, laid himself down with me, holding always fast about my neck. Every morning he pushed me to make me awake, and afterwards obliged me to get up and walk, and pressed me with his feet. You may judge then, gentlemen, what trouble I was in, to be loaded with such a burden of which I could not get rid.

One day I found in my way several dry calebashes that had fallen from a tree. I took a large one, and after cleaning it, pressed into it some juice of grapes, which abounded in the island; having filled the calebash, I put it by in a convenient place, and going thither again some days after, I tasted it, and found the wine so good, that it soon made me forget my sorrow, gave me new vigour, and so exhilarated my spirits, that I began to sing and dance as I walked along.

The old man, perceiving the effect which this liquor had upon me, and that I carried him with more ease than before, made me a sign to give him some of it. I handed him the calebash, and the liquor pleasing his palate, he drank it all off. There being a considerable quantity of it, he became drunk immediately, and the fumes getting up into his head, he began to sing after his manner, and to dance with his breech upon my shoulders. His jolting made him vomit, and he loosened his legs from about me by degrees. Finding that he did not press me as before, I threw him upon the ground, where he lay without motion; I then took up a great stone, and crushed his head to pieces.

I was extremely glad to be thus freed for ever from this troublesome fellow. I now walked towards the beach, where I met the crew of a ship that had cast anchor, to take in water. They were surprised to see me, but more so at hearing the particulars of my adventures. “You fell,” said they, “into the hands of the old man of the sea, and are the first who ever escaped strangling by his malicious tricks. He never quitted those he had once made himself master of, till he had destroyed them, and he has made this island notorious by the number of men he has slain; so that the merchants and mariners who landed upon it, durst not advance into the island but in numbers at a time.”

After having informed me of these things, they carried me with them to the ship; the captain received me with great kindness, when they told him what had befallen me. He put out again to sea, and after some days’ sail, we arrived at the harbour of a great city, the houses of which were built with hewn stone.

One of the merchants who had taken me into his friendship invited me to go along with him, and carried me to a place appointed for the accommodation of foreign merchants. He gave me a large bag, and having recommended me to some people of the town, who used to gather cocoa-nuts, desired them to take me with them. “Go,” said he, “follow them, and act as you see them do, but do not separate from them, otherwise you may endanger your life.” Having thus spoken, he gave me provisions for the journey, and I went with them.

We came to a thick forest of cocoa-trees, very lofty, with trunks so smooth that it was not possible to climb to the branches that bore the fruit. When we entered the forest we saw a great number of apes of several sizes, who fled as soon as they perceived us, and climbed up to the top of the trees with surprising swiftness.

The merchants with whom I was, gathered stones and threw them at the apes on the trees. I did the same, and the apes out of revenge threw cocoa-nuts at us so fast, and with such gestures, as sufficiently testified their anger and resentment. We gathered up the cocoa-nuts, and from time to time threw stones to provoke the apes; so that by this stratagem we filled our bags with cocoa-nuts, which it had been impossible otherwise to have done.

When we had gathered our number, we returned to the city, where the merchant, who had sent me to the forest, gave me the value of the cocoas I brought: “Go on,” said he, “and do the like every day, until you have got money enough to carry you home.” I thanked him for his advice, and gradually collected as many cocoa-nuts as produced me a considerable sum.

The vessel in which I had come sailed with some merchants, who loaded her with cocoa-nuts. I expected the arrival of another, which anchored soon after for the like loading. I embarked in her all the cocoa-nuts I had, and when she was ready to sail, took leave of the merchant who had been so kind to me; but he could not embark with me, because he had not finished his business at the port.

We sailed towards the islands, where pepper grows in great plenty. From thence we went to the isle of Comari, where the best species of wood of aloes grows, and whose inhabitants have made it an inviolable law to themselves to drink no wine, and suffer no place of debauch. I exchanged my cocoa in those two islands for pepper and wood of aloes, and went with other merchants a pearl-fishing. I hired divers, who brought me up some that were very large and pure. I embarked in a vessel that happily arrived at Bussorah; from thence I returned to Bagdad, where I made vast sums of my pepper, wood of aloes, and pearls. I gave the tenth of my gains in alms, as I had done upon my return from my other voyages, and endeavoured to dissipate my fatigues by amusements of different kinds.

When Sinbad had finished his story, he ordered one hundred sequins to be given to Hindbad, who retired with the other guests; but next morning the same company returned to dine with rich Sinbad; who, after having treated them as formerly, requested their attention, and gave the following account of his sixth voyage.

The Sixth Voyage.

Gentlemen, you long without doubt to know, how, after having been shipwrecked five times, and escaped so many dangers, I could resolve again to tempt fortune, and expose myself to new hardships? I am, myself, astonished at my conduct when I reflect upon it, and must certainly have been actuated by my destiny. But be that as it may, after a year's rest I prepared for a sixth voyage, notwithstanding the intreaties of my kindred and friends, who did all in their power to dissuade me.

Instead of taking my way by the Persian gulf, I travelled once more through several provinces of Persia and the Indies, and arrived at a sea-port, where I embarked in a ship, the captain of which was bound on a long voyage. It was long indeed, and at the same time so unfortunate, that the captain and pilot lost their course. They however at last discovered where they were, but we had no reason to rejoice at the circumstance. Suddenly we saw the captain quit his post, uttering loud lamentations. He threw off his turban, pulled his beard, and beat his head like a madman. We asked him the reason, and he answered, that he was in the most dangerous place in all the ocean. "A rapid current carries the ship along with it, and we shall all perish in less than a quarter of an hour. Pray to God to deliver us from this peril; we cannot escape, if he do not take pity on us." At these words he ordered the sails to be lowered; but all the ropes broke, and the ship was carried by the current to the foot of an inaccessible mountain, where she struck and went to pieces, yet in such a manner that we saved our lives, our provisions, and the best of our goods.

This being over, the captain said to us, "God has done what pleased him. Each of us may dig his grave, and bid the world adieu; for we are all in so fatal a place, that none shipwrecked here ever returned to their homes." His discourse afflicted us sensibly, and we embraced each other, bewailing our deplorable lot.

The mountain at the foot of which we were wrecked formed part of the coast of a very large island. It was covered with wrecks, and from the vast number of human bones we saw everywhere, and which filled us with horror, we concluded that multitudes of people had perished there. It is also incredible what a quantity of goods and riches we found cast ashore. All these objects served only to augment our despair. In all other places, rivers run from their channels into the sea, but here a river of fresh water runs out of the sea into a dark cavern, whose entrance is very high and spacious. What is most remarkable in this place is, that the stones of the mountain are of crystal, rubies, or other precious stones. Here is also a sort of fountain of pitch or bitumen, that runs into the sea, which the fish swallow, and evacuate soon afterwards, turned into ambergris: and this the waves throw up on the beach in great quantities. Trees also grow here, most of which are wood of aloes, equal in goodness to those of Comari.

To finish the description of this place, which may well be called a gulf, since nothing ever returns from it, it is not possible for ships to get off when once they approach within a certain distance. If they be driven thither by a wind from the sea, the wind and the current impel them; and if they come into it when a land-wind blows, which might seem to favour their getting out again, the height of the mountain stops the wind, and occasions a calm, so that the force of the current carries them ashore: and what completes the misfortune is, that there is no possibility of ascending the mountain, or of escaping by sea.

We continued upon the shore in a state of despair, and expected death every day. At first we divided our provisions as equally as we could, and thus every one lived a longer or shorter time, according to his temperance, and the use he made of his provisions.

Those who died first were interred by the survivors, and I paid the last duty to all my companions: nor are you to wonder at this; for besides that I husbanded the provision that fell to my share better than they, I had some of my own which I did not share with my comrades; yet when I buried the last, I had so little remaining, that I thought I could not long survive: I dug a grave, resolving to lie down in it, because there was no one left to inter me. I must confess to you at the same time, that while I was thus employed, I could not but reproach myself as the cause of my own ruin, and repented that I had ever undertaken this last voyage. Nor did I stop at reflections only, but had well nigh hastened my own death, and began to tear my hands with my teeth.

But it pleased God once more to take compassion on me, and put it in my mind to go to the bank of the river which ran into the great cavern. Considering its probable course with great attention, I said to myself, “This river, which runs thus under ground, must somewhere have an issue. If I make a raft, and leave myself to the current, it will convey me to some inhabited country, or I shall perish. If I be drowned, I lose nothing, but only change one kind of death for another; and if I get out of this fatal place, I shall not only avoid the sad fate of my comrades, but perhaps find some new occasion of enriching myself. Who knows but fortune waits, upon my getting off this dangerous shelf, to compensate my shipwreck with usury.”

I immediately went to work upon large pieces of timber and cables, for I had choice of them, and tied them together so strongly, that I soon made a very solid raft. When I had finished, I loaded it with some bulses of rubies, emeralds, ambergris, rock-crystal, and bales of rich stuffs. Having balanced my cargo exactly, and fastened it well to the raft, I went on board with two oars that I had made, and leaving it to the course of the river, resigned myself to the will of God.

As soon as I entered the cavern, I lost all light, and the stream carried me I knew not whither. Thus I floated some days in perfect darkness, and once found the arch so low, that it very nearly touched my head, which made me cautious afterwards to avoid the like danger. All this while I ate nothing but what was just necessary to support nature; yet, notwithstanding my frugality, all my provisions were spent. Then a pleasing stupor seized upon me. I cannot tell how long it continued; but when I revived, I was surprised to find myself in an extensive plain on the brink of a river, where my raft was tied, amidst a great number of negroes. I got up as soon as I saw them, and saluted them. They spoke to me, but I did not understand their language. I was so transported with joy, that I knew not whether I was asleep or awake; but being persuaded that I was not asleep, I recited the following words in Arabic aloud: “Call upon the Almighty, he will help thee; thou needest not perplex thyself about any thing else: shut thy eyes, and while thou art asleep, God will change thy bad fortune into good.”

One of the blacks, who understood Arabic, hearing me speak thus, came towards me, and said, “Brother, be not surprised to see us, we are inhabitants of this country, and came hither to-day to water our fields, by digging little canals from this river, which comes out of the neighbouring mountain. We observed something floating upon the water, went to see what it was, and, perceiving your raft, one of us swam into the river, and brought it thither, where we fastened it, as you see, until you should awake. Pray tell us your history, for it must be extraordinary; how did you venture yourself into this river, and whence did you come?” “I begged of them first to give me something to eat, and then I would satisfy their curiosity. They gave me several sorts of food, and when I had satisfied my hunger, I related all that had befallen me, which they listened to with attentive surprise. As soon as I had finished, they told me, by the person who spoke Arabic and interpreted to them what I said, that it was one of the most wonderful stories they had ever heard, and that I must go along with them, and tell it their king myself; it being too extraordinary to be related by any other than the person to whom the events had happened. I assured them that I was ready to do whatever they pleased.”

They immediately sent for a horse, which was brought in a little time; and having helped me to mount, some of them walked before to shew the way, while the rest took my raft and cargo and followed.

We marched till we came to the capital of Serendib, for it was in that island I had landed. The blacks presented me to their king; I approached his throne, and saluted him as I used to do the kings of the Indies; that is to say, I prostrated myself at his feet. The prince ordered me to rise, received me with an obliging air, and made me sit down near him. He first asked me my name, and I answered, “People call me Sinbad the voyager, because of the many voyages I have undertaken, and I am a citizen of Bagdad.” “But,” resumed he, “how came you into my dominions, and from whence came you last?”

I concealed nothing from the king; I related to him all that I have told you, and his majesty was so surprised and pleased, that he commanded my adventures to be written in letters of gold, and laid up in the archives of his kingdom. At last my raft was brought in, and the bales opened in his presence; he admired the quantity of wood of aloes and ambergris, but, above all, the rubies and emeralds, for he had none in his treasury that equalled them.

Observing that he looked on my jewels with pleasure, and viewed the most remarkable among them one after another, I fell prostrate at his feet, and took the liberty to say to him, “Sir, not only my person is at your majesty’s service, but the cargo of the raft, and I would beg of you to dispose of it as your own.” He answered me with a smile, “Sinbad, I will take care not to covet any thing of yours, or to take any thing from you that God has given you; far from lessening your wealth, I design to augment it, and will not let you quit my dominions without marks of my liberality.” All the answer I returned were prayers for the prosperity of that nobly minded prince, and commendations of his generosity and bounty. He charged one of his officers to take care of me, and ordered people to serve me at his own expence. The officer was very faithful in the execution of his commission, and caused all the goods to be carried to the lodgings provided for me.

I went every day at a set hour to make my court to the king, and spent the rest of my time in viewing the city, and what was most worthy of notice.

The isle of Serendib is situated just under the equinoctial line; so that the days and nights there are always of twelve hours each, and the island is eighty parasangs in length, and as many in breadth.

The capital stands at the end of a fine valley, in the middle of the island, encompassed by mountains the highest in the world. They are seen three days’ sail off at sea. Rubies and several sorts of minerals abound, and the rocks are for the most part composed of a metalline stone made use of to cut and polish other precious stones. All kinds of rare plants and trees grow there, especially cedars and cocoa-nut. There is also a pearl-fishing in the mouth of its principal river; and in some of its valleys are found diamonds. I made, by way of devotion, a pilgrimage to the place where Adam was confined after his banishment from Paradise, and had the curiosity to go to the top of the mountain.

When I returned to the city, I prayed the king to allow me to return to my own country, and he granted me permission in the most obliging and most honourable manner. He would needs force a rich present upon me; and when I went to take my leave of him, he gave me one much more considerable, and at the same time charged me with a letter for the commander of the faithful, our sovereign, saying to me, “I pray you give this present from me, and this letter to the caliph, and assure him of my friendship.” I took the present and letter in a very respectful manner, and promised his majesty punctually to execute the commission with which he was pleased to honour me. Before I embarked, this prince sent for the captain and the merchants who were to go with me, and ordered them to treat me with all possible respect.

The letter from the king of Serendib was written on the skin of a certain animal of great value, because of its being so scarce, and of a yellowish colour. The characters of this letter were of azure, and the contents as follows:

“The king of the Indies, before whom march one hundred elephants, who lives in a palace that shines with one hundred thousand rubies, and who has in his treasury twenty thousand crowns enriched with diamonds, to caliph Haroon al Rusheed.

“Though the present we send you be inconsiderable, receive it however as a brother and a friend, in consideration of the hearty friendship which we bear for you, and of which we are willing to give you proof. We desire the same part in your friendship, considering that we believe it to be our merit, being of the same dignity with yourself. We conjure you this in quality of a brother. Adieu.”

The present consisted first, of one single ruby made into a cup, about half a foot high, an inch thick, and filled with round pearls of half a drachm each. 2. The skin of a serpent, whose scales were as large as an ordinary piece of gold, and had the virtue to preserve from sickness those who lay upon it. 3. Fifty thousand drachms of the best wood of aloes, with thirty grains of camphire as big as pistachios. 4. A female slave of ravishing beauty, whose apparel was all covered over with jewels.

The ship set sail, and after a very successful navigation we landed at Bussorah, and from thence I went to Bagdad, where the first thing I did was to acquit myself of my commission.

Scheherazade stopped, because day appeared, and next night proceeded thus.

I took the king of Serendib's letter, and went to present myself at the gate of the commander of the faithful, followed by the beautiful slave, and such of my own family as carried the presents. I stated the reason of my coming, and was immediately conducted to the throne of the caliph. I made my reverence, and, after a short speech, gave him the letter and present. When he had read what the king of Serendib wrote to him, he asked me, if that prince were really so rich and potent as he represented himself in his letter? I prostrated myself a second time, and rising again, said, "Commander of the faithful, I can assure your majesty he doth not exceed the truth. I bear him witness. Nothing is more worthy of admiration than the magnificence of his palace. When the prince appears in public, he has a throne fixed on the back of an elephant, and marches betwixt two ranks of his ministers, favourites, and other people of his court; before him, upon the same elephant, an officer carries a golden lance in his hand; and behind the throne there is another, who stands upright, with a column of gold, on the top of which is an emerald half a foot long, and an inch thick; before him march a guard of one thousand men, clad in cloth of gold and silk, and mounted on elephants richly caparisoned.

"While the king is on his march, the officer, who is before him on the same elephant, cries from time to time, with a loud voice, 'Behold the great monarch, the potent and redoubtable sultan of the Indies, whose palace is covered with one hundred thousand rubies, and who possesses twenty thousand crowns of diamonds. Behold the monarch greater than Solomon, and the powerful Maha-raja.' After he has pronounced those words, the officer behind the throne cries in his turn, 'This monarch, so great and so powerful, must die, must die, must die.' And the officer before replies, 'Praise be to him who lives for ever.'

"Farther, the king of Serendib is so just, that there are no judges in his dominions. His people have no need of them. They understand and observe justice rigidly of themselves."

The caliph was much pleased with my account. "The wisdom of that king," said he, "appears in his letter, and after what you tell me, I must confess, that his wisdom is worthy of his people, and his people deserve so wise a prince." Having spoken thus, he dismissed me, and sent me home with a rich present.

Sinbad left off, and his company retired, Hindbad having first received one hundred sequins; and next day they returned to hear the relation of his seventh and last voyage.

The Seventh and Last Voyage.

Being returned from my sixth voyage, said Sinbad, I absolutely laid aside all thoughts of travelling; for, besides that my age now required rest, I was resolved no more to expose myself to such risks as I had encountered; so that I thought of nothing but to pass the rest of my days in tranquillity. One day as I was treating my friends, one of my servants came and told me that an officer of the caliph's enquired for me. I rose from table, and went to him. "The caliph," he said, "has sent me to tell you, that he must speak with you." I followed the officer to the palace, where being presented to the caliph, I saluted him by prostrating myself at his feet. "Sinbad," said he to me, "I stand in need of your service; you must carry my answer and present to the king of Serendib. It is but just I should return his civility."

This command of the caliph was to me like a clap of thunder. "Commander of the faithful," I replied, "I am ready to do whatever your majesty shall think fit to command; but I beseech you most humbly to consider what I have undergone. I have also made a vow never to go out of Bagdad." Hence I took occasion to give him a full and particular account of all my adventures, which he had the patience to hear out.

As soon as I had finished, "I confess," said he, "that the things you tell me are very extraordinary, yet you must for my sake undertake this voyage which I propose to you. You will only have to go to the isle of Serendib, and deliver the commission which I give you. After that you are at liberty to return. But you must go; for you know it would not comport with my dignity, to be indebted to the king of that island." Perceiving that the caliph insisted upon my compliance, I submitted, and told him that I was willing to obey. He was very well pleased, and ordered me one thousand sequins for the expences of my journey.

I prepared for my departure in a few days, and as soon as the caliph's letter and present were delivered to me, I went to Bussorah, where I embarked, and had a very happy voyage. Having arrived at the isle of Serendib, I acquainted the king's ministers with my commission, and prayed them to get me speedy audience. They did so, and I was conducted to the palace in an honourable manner, where I saluted the king by prostration, according to custom. That prince knew me immediately, and testified very great joy at seeing me. “Sinbad,” said he, “you are welcome; I have many times thought of you since you departed; I bless the day on which we see one another once more.” I made my compliment to him, and after having thanked him for his kindness, delivered the caliph’s letter and present, which he received with all imaginable satisfaction.

The caliph’s present was a complete suit of cloth of gold, valued at one thousand sequins; fifty robes of rich stuff, a hundred of white cloth, the finest of Cairo, Suez, and Alexandria; a vessel of agate broader than deep, an inch thick, and half a foot wide, the bottom of which represented in bass relief a man with one knee on the ground, who held bow and an arrow, ready to discharge at a lion. He sent him also a rich tablet, which, according to tradition, belonged to the great Solomon. The caliph’s letter was as follows:

“Greeting, in the name of the sovereign guide of the right way, from the dependent on God, Haroon al Rusheed, whom God hath set in the place of vicegerent to his prophet, after his ancestors of happy memory, to the potent and esteemed Raja of Serendib.

“We received your letter with joy, and send you this from our imperial residence, the garden of superior wits. We hope when you look upon it, you will perceive our good intention and be pleased with it. Adieu.”

The king of Serendib was highly gratified that the caliph answered his friendship. A little time after this audience, I solicited leave to depart, and had much difficulty to obtain it. I procured it however at last, and the king, when he dismissed me, made me a very considerable present. I embarked immediately to return to Bagdad, but had not the good fortune to arrive there so speedily as I had hoped. God ordered it otherwise.

Three or four days after my departure, we were attacked by corsairs, who easily seized upon our ship, because it was no vessel of force. Some of the crew offered resistance, which cost them their lives. But for myself and the rest, who were not so imprudent, the corsairs saved us on purpose to make slaves of us.

We were all stripped, and instead of our own clothes, they gave us sorry rags, and carried us into a remote island, where they sold us.

I fell into the hands of a rich merchant, who, as soon as he bought me, carried me to his house, treated me well, and clad me handsomely for a slave. Some days after, not knowing who I was, he asked me if I understood any trade? I answered, that I was no mechanic, but a merchant, and that the corsairs, who sold me, had robbed me of all I possessed. “But tell me,” replied he, “can you shoot with a bow?” I answered, that the bow was one of my exercises in my youth. He gave me a bow and arrows, and, taking me behind him upon an elephant, carried me to a thick forest some leagues from the town. We penetrated a great way into the wood, and when he thought fit to stop, he bade me alight; then shewing me a great tree, “Climb up that,” said he, “and shoot at the elephants as you see them pass by, for there is a prodigious number of them in this forest, and if any of them fall, come and give me notice.” Having spoken thus, he left me victuals, and returned to the town, and I continued upon the tree all night.

I saw no elephant during that time, but next morning, as soon as the sun was up, I perceived a great number. I shot several arrows among them, and at last one of the elephants fell, when the rest retired immediately, and left me at liberty to go and acquaint my patron with my booty. When I had informed him, he gave me a good meal, commended my dexterity, and caressed me highly. We went afterwards together to the forest, where we dug a hole for the elephant; my patron designing to return when it was rotten, and take his teeth to trade with.

I continued this employment for two months, and killed an elephant every day, getting sometimes upon one tree, and sometimes upon another. One morning, as I looked for the elephants, I perceived with extreme amazement, that, instead of passing by me across the forest as usual, they stopped, and came to me with a horrible noise, in such number that the plain was covered, and shook under them. They encompassed the tree in which I was concealed, with their trunks extended, and all fixed their eyes upon. At this alarming spectacle I continued immoveable, and was so much terrified, that my bow and arrows fell out of my hand.

My fears were not without cause; for after the elephants had stared upon me some time, one of the largest of them put his trunk round the foot of the tree, plucked it up, and threw it on the ground; I fell with the tree, and the elephant taking me up with his trunk, laid me on his back, where I sat more like one dead than alive, with my quiver on my shoulder. He put himself afterwards at the head of the rest, who followed him in troops, carried me a considerable way, then laid me down on the ground, and retired with all his companions. Conceive, if you can, the condition I was in: I thought myself in a dream. After having lain some time, and seeing the elephants gone, I got up, and found I was upon a long and broad hill, almost covered with the bones and teeth of elephants. I confess to you, that this object furnished me with abundance of reflections. I admired the instinct of those animals; I doubted not but that was their burying place, and that they carried me thither on purpose to tell me that I should forbear to persecute them, since I did it only for their teeth. I did not stay on the hill, but turned towards the city, and, after having travelled a day and a night, I came to my patron. I met no elephant in my way, which made me think they had retired farther into the forest, to leave me at liberty to come back to the hill without any obstacle.

As soon as my patron saw me; "Ah, poor Sinbad," exclaimed he, "I was in great trouble to know what was become of you. I have been at the forest, where I found a tree newly pulled up, and a bow and arrows on the ground, and after having sought for you in vain, I despaired of ever, seeing you more. Pray tell me what befell you, and by what good chance thou art still alive." I satisfied his curiosity, and going both of us next morning to the hill, he found to his great joy that what I had told him was true. We loaded the elephant which had carried us with as many teeth as he could bear; and when we were returned, "Brother," said my patron, "for I will treat you no more as my slave, after having made such a discovery as will enrich me, God bless you with all happiness and prosperity. I declare before him, that I give you your liberty. I concealed from you what I am now going to tell you.

"The elephants of our forest have every year killed us a great many slaves, whom we sent to seek ivory. For all the cautions we could give them, those crafty animals destroyed them one time or other. God has delivered you from their fury, and has bestowed that favour upon you only. It is a sign that he loves you, and has some use for your service in the world. You have procured me incredible wealth. Formerly we could not procure ivory but by exposing the lives of our slaves, and now our whole city is enriched by your means. Do not think I pretend to have rewarded you by giving you your liberty, I will also give you considerable riches. I could engage all our city to contribute towards making your fortune, but I will have the glory of doing it myself."

To this obliging declaration I replied, "Patron, God preserve you. Your giving me my liberty is enough to discharge what you owe me, and I desire no other reward for the service I had the good fortune to do to you and your city, but leave to return to my own country." "Very well," said he, "the monsoon will in a little time bring ships for ivory. I will then send you home, and give you wherewith to bear your charges." I thanked him again for my liberty and his good intentions towards me. I staid with him expecting the monsoon; and during that time, we made so many journeys to the hill, that we filled all our warehouses with ivory. The other merchants, who traded in it, did the same, for it could not be long concealed from them.

The ships arrived at last, and my patron, himself having made choice of the ship wherein I was to embark, loaded half of it with ivory on my account, laid in provisions in abundance for my passage, and besides obliged me to accept a present of some curiosities of the country of great value. After I had returned him a thousand thanks for all his favours, I went aboard. We set sail, and as the adventure which procured me this liberty was very extraordinary, I had it continually in my thoughts.

We stopped at some islands to take in fresh provisions. Our vessel being come to a port on the main land in the Indies, we touched there, and not being willing to venture by sea to Bussorah, I landed my proportion of the ivory, resolving to proceed on my journey by land. I made vast sums of my ivory, bought several rarities, which I intended for presents, and when my equipage was ready, set out in company with a large caravan of merchants. I was a long time on the way, and suffered much, but endured all with patience, when I considered that I had nothing to fear from the seas, from pirates, from serpents, or from the other perils to which I had been exposed.

All these fatigues ended at last, and I arrived safe at Bagdad. I went immediately to wait upon the caliph, and gave him an account of my embassy. That prince said he had been uneasy, as I was so long in returning, but that he always hoped God would preserve me. When I told him the adventure of the elephants, he seemed much surprised, and would never have given any credit to it had he not known my veracity. He deemed this story, and the other relations I had given him, to be so curious, that he ordered one of his secretaries to write them in characters of gold, and lay them up in his treasury. I retired well satisfied with the honours I received, and the presents which he gave me; and ever since I have devoted myself wholly to my family, kindred, and friends.

Sinbad here finished the relation of his seventh and last voyage, and then addressing himself to Hindbad, “Well, friend,” said he, “did you ever hear of any person that suffered so much as I have done, or of any mortal that has gone through so many vicissitudes? Is it not reasonable that, after all this I should enjoy a quiet and pleasant life?” As he said this, Hindbad drew near to him, and kissing his hand, said, “I must acknowledge, sir, that you have gone through many imminent dangers; my troubles are not comparable to yours: if they afflict me for a time, I comfort myself with the thoughts of the profit I get by them. You not only deserve a quiet life, but are worthy of all the riches you enjoy, because you make of them such a good and generous use. May you therefore continue to live in happiness and joy till the day of your death!” Sinbad gave him one hundred sequins more, received him into the number of his friends, desired him to quit his porter’s employment, and come and dine every day with him, that he might have reason to remember Sinbad the voyager.

THE THREE APPLES.

The Caliph Haroon al Rusheed one day commanded the grand vizier Jaffier to come to his palace the night following. “Vizier,” said he, “I will take a walk round the town, to inform myself what people say, and particularly how they are pleased with my officers of justice. If there be any against whom they have cause of just complaint, we will turn them out, and put others in their stead, who shall officiate better. If, on the contrary, there be any that have gained their applause, we will have that esteem for them which they deserve.” The grand vizier being come to the palace at the hour appointed, the caliph, he, and Mesrour the chief of the eunuchs, disguised themselves so that they could not be known, and went out all three together.

They passed through several places, and by several markets. As they entered a small street, they perceived by the light of the moon, a tall man, with a white beard, who carried nets on his head, and a staff in his hand. “To judge from his appearance,” said the caliph, “that old man is not rich; let us go to him and inquire into his circumstances.” “Honest man,” said the vizier, “who art thou?” The old man replied, “Sir, I am a fisher, but one of the poorest and most miserable of the trade. I went from my house about noon a fishing, and from that time to this I have not been able to catch one fish; at the same time I have a wife and small children, and nothing to maintain them.”

The caliph, moved with compassion, said to the fisherman, “Hast thou the courage to go back and cast thy net once more? We will give thee a hundred sequins for what thou shalt bring up.” At this proposal, the fisherman, forgetting all his day’s toil, took the caliph at his word, and returned to the Tigris, accompanied by the caliph, Jaaffier, and Mesrour; saying to himself as he went, “These gentlemen seem too honest and reasonable not to reward my pains; and if they give me the hundredth part of what they promise, it will be an ample recompence.”

They came to the bank of the river, and the fisherman, having thrown in his net, when he drew it again, brought up a trunk close shut, and very heavy. The caliph made the grand vizier pay him one hundred sequins immediately, and sent him away. Mesrour, by his master's order, carried the trunk on his shoulder, and the caliph was so very eager to know what it contained, that he returned to the palace with all speed. When the trunk was opened, they found in it a large basket made of palm-leaves, shut up, and the covering of it sewed with red thread. To satisfy the caliph's impatience, they would not take time to undo it, but cut the thread with a knife, and took out of the basket a package wrapt up in a sorry piece of hanging, and bound about with a rope; which being untied, they found, to their great amazement, the corpse of a young lady, whiter than snow, all cut in pieces.

The astonishment of the caliph was great at this dreadful spectacle. His surprise was instantly changed into passion, and darting an angry look at the vizier, "Thou wretch," said he, "is this your inspection into the actions of my people? Do they commit such impious murders under thy ministry in my capital, and throw my subjects into the Tigris, that they may cry for vengeance against me at the day of judgment? If thou dost not speedily avenge the murder of this woman, by the death of her murderer, I swear by heaven, that I will cause thee and forty more of thy kindred to be impaled." "Commander of the faithful," replied the grand vizier, "I beg your majesty to grant me time to make enquiry." "I will allow thee no more," said the caliph, "than three days."

The vizier Jaaffier went home in great perplexity. "Alas!" said he "how is it possible that in such a vast and populous city as Bagdad, I should be able to detect a murderer, who undoubtedly committed the crime without witness, and perhaps may be already gone from hence? Any other vizier than I would take some wretched person out of prison, and cause him to be put to death to satisfy the caliph; but I will not burden my conscience with such a barbarous action; I will rather die than preserve my life by the sacrifice of another innocent person."

He ordered the officers of the police and justice to make strict search for the criminal. They sent their servants about, and they were not idle themselves, for they were no less concerned in this matter than the vizier. But all their endeavours were to no purpose; what pains soever they took they could not discover the murderer; so that the vizier concluded his life to be lost.

The third day being arrived, an officer came to the unfortunate minister, with a summons to follow him, which the vizier obeyed. The caliph asked him for the murderer. He answered, “Commander of the faithful, I have not found any person that could give me the least account of him.” The caliph, full of fury and rage, gave him many reproachful words, and ordered that he and forty Bermukkees should be impaled at the gate of the palace.

In the mean while the stakes were preparing, and orders were sent to seize forty Bermukkees in their houses; a public crier was sent about the city by the caliph’s order, to cry thus: “Those who have a desire to see the grand vizier Jaaffier impaled, with forty of his kindred, let them come to the square before the palace.”

When all things were ready, the criminal judge, and many officers belonging to the palace, having brought out the grand vizier with the forty Bermukkees, set each by the stake designed for him. The multitude of people that filled the square could not without grief and tears behold this tragical sight; for the grand vizier and the Bermukkees were loved and honoured on account of their probity, bounty, and impartiality, not only in Bagdad, but through all the dominions of the caliph.

Nothing could prevent the execution of this prince’s severe and irrevocable sentence, and the lives of the most deserving people in the city were just going to be sacrificed, when a young man of handsome mien pressed through the crowd till he came up to the grand vizier, and after he had kissed his hand, said, “Most excellent vizier, chief of the emirs of this court, and comforter of the poor, you are not guilty of the crime for which you stand here. Withdraw, and let me expiate the death of the lady that was thrown into the Tigris. It is I who murdered her, and I deserve to be punished for my offence.”

Though these words occasioned great joy to the vizier, yet he could not but pity the young man, in whose look he saw something that instead of evincing guilt was engaging: but as he was about to answer him, a tall man advanced in years, who had likewise forced his way through the crowd, came up to him, saying, “Do not believe what this young man tells you, I killed that lady who was found in the trunk, and this punishment ought only to fall upon me. I conjure you in the name of God not to punish the innocent for the guilty." "Sir," said the young man to the vizier, "I do protest that I am he who committed this vile act, and nobody else had any concern in it." "My son," said the old man, "it is despair that brought you hither, and you would anticipate your destiny. I have lived a long while in the world, and it is time for me to be gone; let me therefore sacrifice my life for yours." "Sir," said he again to the vizier, "I tell you once more I am the murderer; let me die without delay."

The controversy between the old and the young man induced the grand vizier to carry them both before the caliph, to which the judge criminal consented, being glad to serve the vizier. When he came before the prince, he kissed the ground seven times, and spake after this manner: "Commander of the faithful, I have brought here before your majesty this old and this young man, each of whom declares himself to be the sole murderer of the lady." The caliph asked the criminals which of them it was that so cruelly murdered the lady, and threw her into the Tigris? The young man assured him it was he, but the old man maintained the contrary. "Go," said the caliph to the grand vizier, "and cause them both to be impaled." "But, Sir," said the vizier, "if only one of them be guilty, it would be unjust to take the lives of both." At these words the young man spoke again, "I swear by the great God, who has raised the heavens so high, that I am the man who killed the lady, cut her in pieces, and about four days ago threw her into the Tigris. I renounce my part of happiness amongst the just at the day of judgment, if what I say be not truth; therefore I am he that ought to suffer." The caliph being surprised at this oath, believed him; especially since the old man made no answer. Whereupon, turning to the young man, "Wretch," said he, "what made thee commit that detestable crime, and what is it that moves thee to offer thyself voluntarily to die?" "Commander of the faithful," said he, "if all that has past between that lady and me were set down in writing, it would be a history that might be useful to other men." "I command thee then to relate it," said the caliph. The young man obeyed, and began his history.

The Story of the Lady who was Murdered, and of the Young Man her

Husband.

Commander of the faithful, this murdered lady was my wife, daughter of this old man, who is my uncle by the father's side. She was not above twelve years old, when eleven years ago he gave her to me. I have three children by her, all boys, yet alive, and I must do her the justice to say, that she never gave me the least occasion for offence; she was chaste, of good behaviour, and made it her whole business to please me. And on my part I ardently loved her, and in every thing rather anticipated than opposed her wishes.

About two months ago she fell sick; I took all imaginable care of her, and spared nothing that could promote her speedy recovery. After a month thus passed she began to grow better, and expressed a wish to go to the bath. Before she went, "Cousin," said she (for so she used to call me out of familiarity), "I long for some apples; if you would get me any, you would greatly please me. I have longed for them a great while, and I must own it is come to that height, that if I be not satisfied very soon, I fear some misfortune will befall me." "I will cheerfully try," said I, "and do all in my power to make you easy."

I went immediately round all the markets and shops in the town to seek for apples, but I could not get one, though I offered to pay a sequin a piece. I returned home much dissatisfied at my failure; and for my wife, when she returned from the bagnio, and saw no apples, she became so very uneasy, that she could not sleep all night. I got up by times in the morning, and went through all the gardens, but had no better success than the day before; only I happened to meet an old gardener, who told me, that all my pains would signify nothing, for I could not expect to find apples any where but in your majesty's garden at Bussorah. As I loved my wife passionately, and would not neglect to satisfy her, I dressed myself in a traveller's habit, and after I had told her my design, went to Bussorah, and made my journey with such speed, that I returned at the end of fifteen days with three apples, which cost me a sequin apiece, for as there were no more left, the gardener would not let me have them for less. As soon as I came home, I presented them to my wife, but her longing had ceased, she satisfied herself with receiving them, and laid them down by her. In the mean time she continued sickly, and I knew not what remedy to procure for her relief.

Some few days after I returned from my journey, sitting in my shop in the public place where all sorts of fine stuffs are sold, I saw an ugly, tall, black slave come in, with an apple in his hand, which I knew to be one of those I had brought from Bussorah. I had no reason to doubt it, because I was certain there was not one to be had in Bagdad, nor in any of the gardens in the vicinity. I called to him, and said, "Good slave, pr'ythee tell me where thou hadst this apple?" "It is a present" (said he, smiling) "from my mistress. I went to see her to-day, and found her out of order. I saw three apples lying by her, and asked her where she had them. She told me the good man, her husband, had made a fortnight's journey on purpose, and brought them to her. We had a collation together; and, when I took my leave of her, I brought away this apple."

This account rendered me distracted. I rose, shut up my shop, ran home with all speed, and going to my wife's chamber, looked immediately for the apples, and seeing only two, asked what was become of the third. My wife, turning her head to the place where the apples lay, and perceiving there were but two, answered me coldly, "Cousin, I know not what is become of it." At this reply I was convinced what the slave had told me was true; and giving myself up to madness and jealousy, drew my knife from my girdle, and thrust it into the unfortunate creature's throat. I afterwards cut off her head, and divided her body into four quarters, which I packed up in a bundle, sewed it up with a thread of red yarn, put all together in a trunk, and when night came, carried it on my shoulder down to the Tigris, where I sunk it.

The two youngest of my children were asleep, the third was out; but at my return, I found him sitting by my gate, weeping. I asked him the reason; "Father," said he, "I took this morning from my mother, without her knowledge, one of those three apples you brought her, and kept it a long while; but, as I was playing some time ago with my little brother in the street, a tall slave passing by snatched it out of my hands, and carried it away. I ran after him, demanding it back, and besides told him, that it belonged to my mother, who was sick; and that you had made a fortnight's journey to procure it; but all to no purpose, he would not restore it. And as I still followed him, crying out, he turned and beat me, and then ran away as fast as he could from one lane to another, till at length I lost sight of him. I have since been walking without the town expecting your return, to pray you, dear father, not to tell my mother of it, lest it should make her worse!” When he had thus spoken he fell a weeping again more bitterly than before.

My son’s account afflicted me beyond measure. I then found myself guilty of an enormous crime, and repented too late of having so easily believed the calumnies of a wretched slave, who, from what he had learnt of my son, had invented that fatal falsehood.

My uncle here present came just at that time to see his daughter, but instead of finding her alive, understood from me that she was dead, for I concealed nothing from him; and without staying for his censure, declared myself the greatest criminal in the world.

Upon this, instead of reproaching me, he joined his tears with mine, and we together wept three days without intermission, he for the loss of a daughter whom he had loved tenderly; and I for the loss of a beloved wife, of whom I had deprived myself in so cruel a manner by giving too easy credit to the report of a lying slave.

This, commander of the faithful, is the sincere confession your majesty required from me. You have now heard all the circumstances of my crime, and I must humbly beg of you to order the punishment due for it; how severe soever it may be, I shall not in the least complain, but esteem it too easy and light.

The caliph was much astonished at the young man’s relation. But this just prince, finding he was rather to be pitied than condemned, began to speak in his favour: “This young man’s crime,” said he, “is pardonable before God, and excusable with men. The wicked slave is the sole cause of this murder; it is he alone that must be punished: wherefore,” continued he, looking upon the grand vizier, “I give you three days’ time to find him out; if you do not bring him within that space, you shall die in his stead.” The unfortunate Jaaffier, had thought himself out of danger, was perplexed at this order of the caliph; but as he durst not return any answer to the prince, whose hasty temper he knew too well, he departed from his presence, and retired melancholy to his house, convinced that he had but three days to live; for he was so fully persuaded that he should not find the slave, that he made not the least enquiry after him. “Is it possible,” said he, “that in such a city as Bagdad, where there is an infinite number of negro slaves, I should be able to find him out that is guilty? Unless God be pleased to interpose as he hath already to detest the murderer, nothing can save my life.”

He spent the first two days in mourning with his family, who sat round him weeping and complaining of the caliph’s cruelty. The third day being arrived, he prepared himself to die with courage, as an honest minister, and one who had nothing to trouble his conscience; he sent for notaries and witnesses’ who signed his will. After which he took leave of his wife and children, and bade them farewell. All his family were drowned in tears, so that there never was a more sorrowful spectacle. At last a messenger came from the caliph to tell him that he was out of all patience, having heard nothing from him concerning the negro slave whom he had commanded him to search for; “I am therefore ordered,” said the messenger, “to bring you before his throne.” The afflicted vizier, obeyed the mandate, but as he was going out, they brought him his youngest daughter, about five or six years of age, to receive his last blessing.

As he had a particular affection for that child, he prayed the messenger to give him leave to stop a moment, and taking his daughter in his arms, kissed her several times: as he kissed her, he perceived she had something in her bosom that looked bulky, and had a sweet scent. “My dear little one,” said he, “what hast thou in thy bosom?” “My dear father,” she replied, “it is an apple which our slave Rihan sold me for two sequins.”

At these words apple and slave, the grand vizier, uttered an exclamation of surprise, intermixed with joy, and putting his hand into the child’s bosom, pulled out the apple. He caused the slave, who was not far off, to be brought immediately, and when he came, “Rascal,” said he, “where hadst thou this apple?” “My lord,” replied the slave, “I swear to you that I neither stole it in your house, nor out of the commander of the faithful’s garden; but the other day, as I was passing through a street where three or four children were at play, one of them having it in his hand, I snatched it from him, and carried it away. The child ran after me, telling me it was not his own, but belonged mother, who was sick; and that his father, to satisfy her longing, had made a long journey, and brought home three apples, whereof this was one, which he had taken from his mother without her knowledge. He said all he could to prevail upon me to give it him back, but I refused, and so brought it home, and sold it for two sequins to the little lady your daughter."

Jaaffier could not reflect without astonishment that the mischievousness of a slave had been the cause of an innocent woman's death, and nearly of his own. He carried the slave along with him, and when he came before the caliph, gave the prince an exact account of what the slave had told him, and the chance which led him to the discovery of his crime.

Never was any surprise so great as that of the caliph, yet he could not refrain from falling into excessive fits of laughter. At last he recovered himself, and with a serious air told the vizier, that since his slave had been the occasion of murder, he deserved an exemplary punishment. "I must own it," said the vizier, "but his guilt is not unpardonable: I remember the wonderful history of a vizier, of Cairo, and am ready to relate it, upon condition that if your majesty finds it more astonishing than that which gives me occasion to tell it, you will be pleased to pardon my slave." "I consent," said the caliph; "but you undertake a hard task, for I do not believe you can save your slave, the story of the apples being so very singular." Upon this, Jaaffier began his story thus:

The Story of Noor ad Deen Ali and Buddir ad Deen Houssun.

Commander of the faithful, there was formerly a sultan of Egypt, a strict observer of justice, gracious, merciful, and liberal, and his valour made him terrible to his neighbours. He loved the poor, and protected the learned, whom he advanced to the highest dignities. This sultan had a vizier, who was prudent, wise, sagacious, and well versed in all sciences. This minister had two sons, who in every thing followed his footsteps. The eldest was called Shumse ad Deen Mahummud, and the younger Noor ad Deen Ali. The latter was endowed with all the good qualities that man could possess.

The vizier their father being dead, the sultan caused them both to put on the robes of a vizier, "I am as sorry," said he, "as you are for the loss of your father; and because I know you live together, and love one another cordially, I will bestow his dignity upon you conjointly; go, and imitate your father's conduct."

The two new viziers humbly thanked the sultan, and retired to make due preparation for their father's interment. They did not go abroad for a month, after which they repaired to court, and attended their duties. When the sultan hunted, one of the brothers accompanied him, and this honour they had by turns. One evening as they were conversing together after a cheerful meal, the next day being the elder brother's turn to hunt with the sultan, he said to his younger brother, "Since neither of us is yet married, and we live so affectionately together, let us both wed the same day sisters out of some family that may suit our quality. What do you think of this plan?" "Brother," answered the other vizier, "there cannot be a better thought; for my part, I will agree to any thing you approve." "But this is not all," said the elder; "my fancy carries me farther: Suppose both our wives should conceive the first night of our marriage, and should happen to be brought to bed on one day, yours of a son, and mine of a daughter, we will give them to each other in marriage." "Nay," said Noor ad Deen aloud, "I must acknowledge that this prospect is admirable; such a marriage will perfect our union, and I willingly consent to it. But then, brother," said he farther, "if this marriage should happen, would you expect that my son should settle a jointure on your daughter?” “There is no difficulty in that,” replied the other; “for I am persuaded, that besides the usual articles of the marriage contract, you will not fail to promise in his name at least three thousand sequins, three landed estates, and three slaves.” “No,” said the younger “I will not consent to that; are we not brethren, and equal in title and dignity? Do not you and I know what is just? The male being nobler than the female, it is your part to give a large dowry with your daughter. By what I perceive, you are a man that would have your business done at another’s charge.”

Although Noor ad Deen spoke these words in jest, his brother being of a hasty temper, was offended, and falling into a passion said, “A mischief upon your son, since you prefer him before my daughter. I wonder you had so much confidence as to believe him worthy of her; you must needs have lost your judgment to think you are my equal, and say we are colleagues. I would have you to know, that since you are so vain, I would not marry my daughter to your son though you would give him more than you are worth.” This pleasant quarrel between two brothers about the marriage of their children before they were born went so far, that Shumse ad Deen concluded by threatening: “Were I not to-morrow,” said he, “to attend the sultan, I would treat you as you deserve; but at my return, I will make you sensible that it does not become a younger brother to speak so insolently to his elder as you have done to me.” Upon this he retired to his apartment in anger.

Shumse ad Deen rising early next morning, attended the sultan, who went to hunt near the pyramids. As for Noor ad Deen, he was very uneasy all night, and supposing it would not be possible to live longer with a brother who had treated him with so much haughtiness, he provided a stout mule, furnished himself with money and jewels, and having told his people that he was going on a private journey for two or three days, departed.

When out of Cairo, he rode by way of the desert towards Arabia; but his mule happening to tire, was forced to continue his journey on foot. A courier who was going to Bussorah, by good fortune overtaking him, took him up behind him. As soon as the courier reached that city, Noor ad Deen alighted, and returned him thanks for his kindness. As he went about to seek for a lodging, he saw a person of quality with a numerous retinue, to whom all the people shewed the greatest respect, and stood still till he had passed. This personage was grand vizier, to the sultan of Bussorah, who was passing through the city to see that the inhabitants kept good order and discipline.

This minister casting his eyes by chance on Noor ad Deen Ali, perceiving something extraordinary in his aspect, looked very attentively upon him, and as he saw him in a traveller's habit, stopped his train, asked him who he was, and from whence he came? "Sir," said Noor ad Deen, "I am an Egyptian, born at Cairo, and have left my country, because of the unkindness of a near relation, resolved to travel through the world, and rather to die than return home." The grand vizier, who was a good-natured man, after hearing these words, said to him, "Son, beware; do not pursue your design; you are not sensible of the hardships you must endure. Follow me; I may perhaps make you forget the misfortunes which have forced you to leave your own country."

Noor ad Deen followed the grand vizier, who soon discovered his good qualities, and conceived for him so great an affection, that one day he said to him in private, "My son, I am, as you see, so far gone in years, that it is not probable I shall live much longer. Heaven has bestowed on me only one daughter, who is as beautiful as you are handsome, and now fit for marriage. Several nobles of the highest rank at this court have sought her for their sons, but I would not grant their request. I have an affection for you, and think you so worthy to be received into my family, that, preferring you before all those who have demanded her, I am ready to accept you for my son-in-law. If you like the proposal, I will acquaint the sultan my master that I have adopted you by this marriage, and intreat him to grant you the reversion of my dignity of grand vizier in the kingdom of Bussorah. In the mean time, nothing being more requisite for me than ease in my old age, I will not only put you in possession of great part of my estate, but leave the administration of public affairs to your management."

When the grand vizier had concluded this kind and generous proposal, Noor ad Deen fell at his feet, and expressing himself in terms that demonstrated his joy and gratitude, assured him, that he was at his command in every way. Upon this the vizier sent for his chief domestics, ordered them to adorn the great hall of his palace, and prepare a splendid feast. He afterwards sent to invite the nobility of the court and city, to honour him with their company; and when they were all met (Noor ad Deen having made known his quality), he said to the noblemen present, for he thought it proper to speak thus on purpose to satisfy those to whom he had refused his alliance, "I am now, my lords, to discover a circumstance which hitherto I have keep a secret. I have a brother, who is grand vizier to the sultan of Egypt. This brother has but one son, whom he would not marry in the court of Egypt, but sent him hither to wed my daughter in order that both branches of our family may be united. His son, whom I knew to be my nephew as soon as I saw him, is the young man I now present to you as my son-in-law. I hope you will do me the honour to be present at his wedding, which I am resolved to celebrate this day." The noblemen, who could not be offended at his preferring his nephew to the great matches that had been proposed, allowed that he had very good reason for his choice, were willing to be witnesses to the ceremony, and wished that God might prolong his days to enjoy the satisfaction of the happy match.

The lords met at the vizier of Bussorah's palace, having testified their satisfaction at the marriage of his daughter with Noor ad Deen Ali, sat down to a magnificent repast, after which, notaries came in with the marriage contrast, and the chief lords signed it; and when the company had departed, the grand vizier ordered his servants to have every thing in readiness for Noor ad Deen Ali, to bathe. He had fine new linen, and rich vestments provided for him in the greatest profusion. Having bathed and dressed, he was perfumed with the most odoriferous essences, and went to compliment the vizier, his father-in-law, who was exceedingly pleased with his noble demeanour. Having made him sit down, "My son," said he, "you have declared to me who you are, and the office you held at the court of Egypt. You have also told me of a difference betwixt you and your brother, which occasioned you to leave your country. I desire you to make me your entire confidant, and to acquaint me with the cause of your quarrel; for now you have no reason either to doubt my affection, or to conceal any thing from me."

Noor ad Deen informed him of every circumstance of the quarrel; at which the vizier, burst out into a fit of laughter, and said, “This is one of the strangest occurrences I ever heard. Is it possible, my son, that your quarrel should rise so high about an imaginary marriage? I am sorry you fell out with your elder brother upon such a frivolous matter; but he was also wrong in being angry at what you only spoke in jest, and I ought to thank heaven for that difference which has procured me such a son-in-law. But,” continued the vizier, “it is late, and time for you to retire; go to your bride, my son, she expects you: to-morrow, I will present you to the sultan, and hope he will receive you in such a manner as shall satisfy us both.” Noor ad Deen Ali took leave of his father-in-law, and retired to his bridal apartment.

It is remarkable that Shumse ad Deen Mahummud happened also to marry at Cairo the very same day that this marriage was solemnized at Bussorah, the particulars of which are as follow:

After Noor ad Deen Ali left Cairo, with an intention never to return, his elder brother, who was hunting with the sultan of Egypt, was absent for a month; for the sultan being fond of the chase, continued it often for so long a period. At his return, Shumse ad Deen was much surprised when he understood, that under presence of taking a short journey his brother departed from Cairo on a mule the same day as the sultan, and had never appeared since. It vexed him so much the more, because he did not doubt but the harsh words he had used had occasioned his flight. He sent a messenger in search of him, who went to Damascus, and as far as Aleppo, but Noor ad Deen was then at Bussorah. When the courier returned and brought no news of him, Shumse ad Deen intended to make further inquiry after him in other parts; but in the meantime matched with the daughter of one of the greatest lords in Cairo, upon the same day in which his brother married the daughter of the grand vizier, of Bussorah.

At the end of nine months the wife of Shumse ad Deen was brought to bed of a daughter at Cairo, and on the same day the lady of Noor ad Deen was delivered of a son at Bussorah, who was called Buddir ad Deen Houssun.

The grand vizier, of Bussorah testified his joy for the birth of his grandson by gifts and public entertainments. And to shew his son-in-law the great esteem he had for him, he went to the palace, and most humbly besought the sultan to grant Noor ad Deen Ali his office, that he might have the comfort before his death to see his son in-law made grand vizier, in his stead.

The sultan, who had conceived a distinguished regard for Noor ad Deen when the vizier, had presensed him upon his marriage, and had ever since heard every body speak well of him, readily granted his father-in-law's request, and caused Noor ad Deen immediately to be invested with the robe and insignia of the vizarut, such as state drums, standards, and writing apparatus of gold richly enamelled and set with jewels.

The next day, when the father saw his son-in-law preside in council, as he himself had done, and perform all the offices of grand vizier, his joy was complete. Noor ad Deen Ali conducted himself with that dignity and propriety which shewed him to have been used to state affairs, and engaged the approbation of the sultan, and reverence and affection of the people.

The old vizier of Bussorah died about four years afterwards with great satisfaction, seeing a branch of his family that promised so fair to support its future consequence and respectability.

Noor ad Deen Ali, performed his last duty to him with all possible love and gratitude. And as soon as his son Buddir ad Deen Houssun had attained the age of seven years, provided him an excellent tutor, who taught him such things as became his birth. The child had a ready wit, and a genius capable of receiving all the good instructions that could be given.

After Buddir ad Deen had been two years under the tuition of his master, who taught him perfectly to read, he learnt the Koran by heart. His father put him afterwards to other tutors, by whom his mind was cultivated to such a degree, that when he was twelve years of age he had no more occasion for them. And then, as his physiognomy promised wonders, he was admired by all who saw him.

Hitherto his father had kept him to study, but now he introduced him to the sultan, who received him graciously. The people who saw him in the streets were charmed with his demeanour, and gave him a thousand blessings.

His father proposing to render him capable of supplying his place, accustomed him to business of the greatest moment, on purpose to qualify him betimes. In short, he omitted nothing to advance a son he loved so well. But as he began to enjoy the fruits of his labour, he was suddenly seized by a violent fit of sickness; and finding himself past recovery, disposed himself to die a good Mussulmaun.

In that last and precious moment he forgot not his son, but called for him, and said, “My son, you see this world is transitory; there is nothing durable but in that to which I shall speedily go. You must therefore from henceforth begin to fit yourself for this change, as I have done; you must prepare for it without murmuring, so as to have no trouble of conscience for not having acted the part of a really honest man. As for your religion, you are sufficiently instructed in it, by what you have learnt from your tutors, and your own study; and as to what belongs to an upright man, I shall give you some instructions, of which I hope you will make good use. As it is a necessary thing to know one’s self, and you cannot come to that knowledge without you first understand who I am, I shall now inform you.

“I am a native of Egypt; my father, your grandfather, was first minister to the sultan of that kingdom. I had myself the honour to be vizier, to that sultan, and so has my brother, your uncle, who I suppose is yet alive; his name is Shumse ad Deen Mahummud. I was obliged to leave him, and come into this country, where I have raised myself to the high dignity I now enjoy. But you will understand all these matters more fully by a manuscript that I shall give you.”

At the same time, Noor ad Deen Ali gave to his son a memorandum book, saying, “Take and read it at your leisure; you will find, among other things, the day of my marriage, and that of your birth. These are circumstances which perhaps you may hereafter have occasion to know, therefore you must keep it very carefully.”

Buddir ad Deen Houssun being sincerely afflicted to see his father in this condition, and sensibly touched with his discourse, could not but weep when he received the memorandum book, and promised at the same time never to part with it.

That very moment Noor ad Deen fainted, so that it was thought he would have expired; but he came to himself again, and spoke as follows:

"My son, the first instruction I give you, is, Not to make yourself familiar with all sorts of people. The way to live happy is to keep your mind to yourself, and not to tell your thoughts too easily.

"Secondly, Not to do violence to any body whatever, for in that case you will draw every body's hatred upon you. You ought to consider the world as a creditor, to whom you owe moderation, compassion, and forbearance.

"Thirdly, Not to say a word when you are reproached; for, as the proverb says, 'He that keeps silence is out of danger.' And in this case particularly you ought to practice it. You also know what one of our poets says upon this subject, 'That silence is the ornament and safe-guard of life'; That our speech ought not to be like a storm of hail that spoils all. Never did any man yet repent of having spoken too little, whereas many have been sorry that they spoke so much.

"Fourthly, To drink no wine, for that is the source of all vices.

"Fifthly, To be frugal in your way of living; if you do not squander your estate, it will maintain you in time of necessity. I do not mean you should be either profuse or niggardly; for though you have little, if you husband it well, and lay it out on proper occasions, you will have many friends; but if on the contrary you have great riches, and make but a bad use of them, all the world will forsake you, and leave you to yourself."

In short, the virtuous Noor ad Deen continued till the last aspiration of his breath to give good advice to his son; and when he was dead he was magnificently interred.

Noor ad Deen was buried with all the honours due to his rank. Buddir ad Deen Houssun of Bussorah, for so he was called, because born in that city, was with grief for the death of his father, that instead of a month's time to mourn, according to custom, he kept himself shut up in tears and solitude about two months, without seeing any body, or so much as going abroad to pay his duty to his sovereign. The sultan being displeased at his neglect, and looking upon it as a alight, suffered his passion to prevail, and in his anger, called for the new grand vizier, (for he had created another on the death of Noor ad Deen), commanded him to go to the house of the deceased, and seize upon it, with all his other houses, lands, and effects, without leaving any thing for Buddir ad Deen Houssun, and to confine his person.

The new grand vizier, accompanied by his officers, went immediately to execute his commission. But one of Buddir ad Deen Houssun's slaves happening accidentally to come into the crowd, no sooner understood the vizier's errand, than he ran before to give his master warning. He found him sitting in the vestibule of his house, as melancholy as if his father had been but newly dead. He fell down at his feet out of breath, and alter he had kissed the hem of his garment, cried out, "My lord, save yourself immediately." The unfortunate youth lifting up his head, exclaimed, "What news dost thou bring?" "My lord," said he, "there is no time to be lost; the sultan is incensed against you, has sent to confiscate your estates, and to seize your person."

The words of this faithful and affectionate slave occasioned Buddir ad Deen Houssun great alarm. "May not I have so much time," said he, "as to take some money and jewels along with me?" "No, Sir," replied the slave, "the grand vizier, will be here this moment; be gone immediately, save yourself." The unhappy youth rose hastily from his sofa, put his feet in his sandals, and after he had covered his head with the skirt of his vest, that his face might not be known, fled, without knowing what way to go, to avoid the impending danger.

He ran without stopping till he came to the public burying-ground, and as it was growing dark, resolved to pass that night in his father's tomb. It was a large edifice, covered by a dome, which Noor ad Deen Ali, as is common with the Mussulmauns, had erected for his sepulture. On the way Buddir ad Deen met a Jew, who was a banker and merchant, and was returning from a place where his affairs had called him, to the city.

The Jew, knowing Buddir ad Deen, stopped, and saluted him very courteously.

Isaac the Jew, after he had paid his respects to Buddir ad Deen Houssun, by kissing his hand, said, "My lord, dare I be so bold as to ask whither you are going at this time of night alone, and so much troubled? Has any thing disquieted you?" "Yes," said Buddir ad Deen, "a while ago I was asleep, and my father appeared to me in a dream, looking very fiercely upon me, as if much displeased. I started out of my sleep in alarm, and came out immediately to go and pray upon his tomb."

"My lord," said the Jew (who did not know the true reason why Buddir ad Deen had left the town), "your father of happy memory, and my good lord, had store of merchandize in several vessels, which are yet at sea, and belong to you; I beg the favour of you to grant me the refusal of them before any other merchant. I am able to pay down ready money for all the goods that are in your ships: and to begin, if you will give me those that happen to come in the first that arrives in safety, I will pay you down in part of payment a thousand sequins," and drawing out a bag from under his vest, he shewed it him sealed up with one seal.

Buddir ad Deen Houssun being banished from home, and dispossessed of all that he had in the world, looked on this proposal of the Jew as a favour from heaven, and therefore accepted it with joy. "My lord," said the Jew, "then you sell me for a thousand sequins the lading of the first of your ships that shall arrive in port?" "Yes," answered Buddir ad Deen, "I sell it to you for a thousand sequins; it is done." Upon this the Jew delivered him the bag of a thousand sequins, and offered to count them, but Buddir ad Deen said he would trust his word. "Since it is so, my lord," said he, "be pleased to favour me with a small note of the bargain we have made." As he spoke, he pulled the inkhorn from his girdle, and taking a small reed out of it neatly cut for writing, presented it to him with a piece of paper. Buddir ad Deen Houssun wrote these words:

"This writing is to testify, that Buddir ad Deen Houssun of Bussorah, has sold to Isaac the Jew, for the sum of one thousand sequins, received in hand, the lading of the first of his ships that shall arrive in this port."

This note he delivered to the Jew, after having stamped it with his seal, and then took his leave of him.

While Isaac pursued his journey to the city, Buddir ad Deen made the best of his way to his father's tomb. When he came to it, he prostrated himself to the ground, and, with his eyes full of tears, deplored his miserable condition. “Alas!” said he, “unfortunate Buddir ad Deen, what will become of thee? Whither canst thou fly for refuge against the unjust prince who persecutes thee? Was it not enough to be afflicted by the death of so dear a father? Must fortune needs add new misfortunes to just complaints?” He continued a long time in this posture, but at last rose up, and leaning his head upon his father’s tombstone, his sorrows returned more violently than before; so that he sighed and mourned, till, overcome with heaviness, he sunk upon the floor, and drops asleep.

He had not slept long, when a genie, who had retired to the cemetery during the day, and was intending, according to his custom, to range about the world at night, entered the sepulchre, and finding Buddir ad Deen lying on his back, was surprised at his beauty.

When the genie had attentively considered Buddir ad Deen Houssun, he said to himself, “To judge of this creature by his beauty, he would seem to be an angel of the terrestrial paradise, whom God has sent to put the world in a flame by his charms.” At last, after he had satisfied himself with looking at him, he tool; a flight into the air, where meeting by chance with a perie, they saluted one another; after which he said to her, “Pray descend with me into the cemetery, where I dwell, and I will shew you a beauty worthy your admiration.” The perie consented, and both descended in an instant; they came into the tomb. “Look,” said the genie, shewing her Buddir ad Deen Houssun, “did you ever see a youth more beautiful?”

The perie having attentively observed Buddir ad Deen, replied, “I must confess that he is a very handsome man, but I am just come from seeing an objets at Cairo, more admirable than this; and if you will hear me, I will relate her unhappy fate.” “You will very much oblige me,” answered the genie. “You must know then,” said the perie, “that the sultan of Egypt has a vizier, Shumse ad Deen Mahummud, who has a daughter most beautiful and accomplished. The sultan having heard of this young lady’s beauty, sent the other day for her father, and said, ‘I understand you have a daughter to marry; I would have her for my bride: will not you consent?’ The vizier, who did not expect this proposal, was troubled, and instead of accepting it joyfully, which another in his place would certainly have done, he answered the sultan: ‘May it please your majesty, I am not worthy of the honour you would confer upon me, and I most humbly beseech you to pardon me, if I do not accede to your request. You know I had a brother, who had the honour, as well as myself, to be one of your viziers: we had some difference together, which was the cause of his leaving me suddenly. Since that time I have had no account of him till within these four days, that I heard he died at Bussorah, being grand vizier to the sultan of that kingdom.

"'He has left a son, and there having been an agreement between us to match our children together, I am persuaded he intended that match when he died; and being desirous to fulfil the promise on my part, I conjure your majesty to grant me permission.'

"The sultan of Egypt, provoked at this denial of his vizier said to him in anger which he could not restrain: 'Is this the way in which you requite my condescension in stooping so low as to desire your alliance? I know how to revenge your presumption in daring to prefer another to me, and I swear that your daughter shall be married to the most contemptible and ugly of my slaves.' Having thus spoken, he angrily commanded the vizier to quit his presence. The vizier retired to his palace full of confusion, and overwhelmed in despair.

"This very day the sultan sent for one of his grooms, who is hump-backed, big-bellied, crook legged, and as ugly as a hobgoblin; and after having commanded the vizier to marry his daughter to this ghastly slave, he caused the contract to be made and signed by witnesses in his own presence. The preparations for this fantastical wedding are all ready, and this very moment all the slaves belonging to the lords of the court of Egypt are waiting at the door of a bath, each with a flambeau in his hand, for the crook-back groom, who is bathing, to go along with them to his bride, who is already dressed to receive him; and when I departed from Cairo, the ladies met for that purpose were going to conduct her in her nuptial attire to the hall, where she is to receive her hump-backed bridegroom, and is this minute expecting him. I have seen her, and do assure you, that no person can behold her without admiration."

When the perie left off speaking, the genie said to her, "Whatever you think or say, I cannot be persuaded that the girl's beauty exceeds that of this young man." "I will not dispute it with you," answered the perie; "for I must confess he deserves to be married to that charming creature, whom they design for hump-back; and I think it were a deed worthy of us to obstruct the sultan of Egypt's injustice, and put this young gentleman in the room of the slave." "You are in the right," answered the genie; "I am extremely obliged to you for so good a thought; let us deceive him. I consent to your revenge upon the sultan of Egypt; let us comfort a distressed father, and make his daughter as happy as she thinks herself miserable. I will do my utmost endeavours to make this project succeed, and I am persuaded you will not be backward. I will be at the pains to carry him to Cairo before he awakes, and afterwards leave it to your care to carry him elsewhere, when we have accomplished our design."

The perie and the genie having thus concerted what they had to do, the genie lifted up Buddir ad Deen Houssun gently, and with an inconceivable swiftness conveyed him through the air and set him down at the door of a building next to the bath, whence hump-back was to come with a train of slaves that waited for him. Buddir ad Deen awoke, and was naturally alarmed at finding himself in the middle of a city he knew not; he was going to cry out, but the genie touched him gently on the shoulder, and forbad him to speak. He then put a torch in his hand, saying, "Go, and mix with the crowd at the door of the bath; follow them till you come into a hall, where they are going to celebrate a marriage. The bridegroom is a hump-backed fellow, and by that you will easily know him. Put yourself at the right hand as you go in, open the purse of sequins you have in your bosom, distribute them among the musicians and dancers as they go along; and when you are got into the hall, give money also to the female slaves you see about the bride; but every time you put your hand in your purse, be sure to take out a whole handful, and do not spare them. Observe to do everything exactly as I have desired you; be not afraid of any person, and leave the rest to a superior power, who will order matters as he thinks fit."

Buddir ad Deen, being well instructed in all that he was to do, advanced towards the door of the bath. The first thing he did was to light his torch at that of a slave; and then mixing among them as if he belonged to some noblemen of Cairo, he marched along as they did, and followed humpback, who came out of the bath, and mounted a horse from the sultan's own stable.

Buddir ad Deen coming near to the musicians, and men and women dancers, who went just before the bridegroom, pulled out time after time whole handfuls of sequins, which he distributed among them: and as he thus gave his money with an unparalleled grace and engaging mien, all who received it fixed their eyes upon him; and after they had a full view of his face, they found him so handsome that they could not withdraw their attention.

At last they came to the gates of the vizier who little thought his nephew was so near. The doorkeepers, to prevent any disorder, kept back all the slaves that carried torches, and would not admit them. Buddir ad Deen was likewise refused; but the musicians, who had free entrance, stood still, and protested they would not go in, if they hindered him from accompanying them. "He is not one of the slaves'" said they; "look upon him, and you will soon be satisfied. He is certainly a young stranger, who is curious to see the ceremonies observed at marriages in this city;" and saying thus, they put him in the midst of them, and carried him with them in spite of the porters. They took his torch out of his hand, gave it to the first they met, and having brought him into the hall, placed him at the right hand of the hump-backed bridegroom, who sat near the vizier's daughter on a throne most richly adorned.

She appeared very lovely, but in her face there was nothing to be seen but vexation and grief. The cause of this was easily to be guessed, when she had by her side a bridegroom so very deformed, and so unworthy of her love. The nuptial seat was in the midst of an estrade. The ladies of the emirs, viziers, those of the sultan's bed-chamber, and several other ladies of the court and city, were placed on each side, a little lower, every one according to her rank, and richly dressed, holding a large wax taper in her hands.

When they saw Buddir ad Deen Houssun, all fixed their eyes upon him, and admiring his shape, his behaviour, and the beauty of his face, they could not forbear looking upon him. When he was seated every one deft their seats, came near him to have a full view of his face, and all found themselves moved with love and admiration.

The disparity between Buddir ad Deen Houssun and the hump-backed groom, who made such a contemptible figure, occasioned great murmuring among the company; insomuch that the ladies cried out, “We must give our bride to this handsome young gentleman, and not to this ugly humpback.” Nor did they rest here, but uttered imprecations against the sultan, who, abusing his absolute power, would unite ugliness and beauty together. They also mocked the bridegroom, so as to put him out of countenance, to the great satisfaction of the spectators, whose shouts for some time put a stop to the concert of music in the hall. At last the musicians began again, and the women who had dressed the bride surrounded her.

Each time that the bride retired to change her dress, she on her return passed by hump-back without giving him one look, and went towards Buddir ad Deen, before whom she presented herself in her new attire. On this occasion, Buddir ad Deen, according to the instructions given him by the genie, failed not to put his hands in his purse, and pulled out handfuls of sequins, which he distributed among the women that followed the bride. Nor did he forget the players and dancers, but also threw money to them. It was pleasant to see how they pushed one another to gather it up. They shewed themselves thankful for his liberality.

When the ceremony of changing habits was passed, the music ceased and the company retired. The bride repaired to the nuptial chamber, whither her attendants followed to undress her, and none remained in the hall but the hump-back groom, Buddir ad Deen, and some of the domestics.

Hump-back, who was enraged at Buddir ad Deen, suspecting him to be his rival, gave him a cross look, and said, “And thou, what dost thou wait for? Why art thou not gone as well as the rest? Depart!” Buddir ad Deen having no pretence to stay, withdrew, not knowing what to do with himself. But before he got out of the vestibule, the genie and the perie met and stopped him. “Whither are you going?” said the perie; “stay, hump-back is not in the hall, return, and introduce yourself into the bride’s chamber. As soon as you are alone with her, tell her boldly that you are her husband, that the sultan’s intention was only to make sport with the groom. In the mean time we will take care that the hump-back shall not return, and let nothing hinder your passing the night with your bride, for she is yours and not his.”

While the perie thus encouraged Buddir ad Deen, and instructed him how he should behave himself, hump-back had really gone out of the room for a moment. The genie went to him in the shape of a monstrous cat, mewing at a most fearful rate. Hump-back called to the cat, he clapped his hands to drive her away, but instead of retreating, she stood upon her hinder feet, staring with her eyes like fire, looking fiercely at him, mewing louder than she did at first, and increasing in size till she was as large as an ass. At this sight, hump-back would have cried out for help, but his fear was so great, that he stood gaping and could not utter one word. That he might have no time to recover, the genie changed himself immediately into a large buffalo, and in this stripe called to him, with a voice that redoubled his fear, "Thou hump-backed villain!" At these words the affrighted groom cast himself upon the ground, and covering his face with his vest, that he might not see this dreadful beast, "Sovereign prince of buffaloes," said he, "what is it you want of me?" "Woe be to thee," replied the genie, "hast thou the presumption to venture to marry my mistress?" "O my lord," said hump-back, "I pray you to pardon me, if I am guilty, it is through ignorance. I did not know that this lady had a buffalo to her sweetheart: command me in anything you please, I give you my oath that I am ready to obey you." "By death," replied the genie; "if thou goest out from hence, or speakest a word till the sun rises, I will crush thy head to pieces. I warn thee to obey, for if thou hast the impudence to return, it shall cost thee thy life." When the genie had done speaking, he transformed himself into the shape of a man, took hump-back by the legs, and after having set him against the wall with his head downwards, "If thou stir," said he, "before the sun rise, as I have told thee already, I will take thee by the heels again, and dash thy head in a thousand pieces against the wall."

To return to Buddir ad Deen. Prompted by the genie and the presence of the perie, he returned to the hall, from whence he slips into the bride-chamber, where he sat down, expecting the success of his adventure. After a while the bride arrived, conducted by an old matron, who came no farther than the door, without looking in to see whether it were hump-back or another that was there, and then retired.

The beautiful bride was agreeably surprised to find instead of hump-back a handsome youth, who gracefully addressed her. “What! my dear friend,” said she, “by your being here at this time of night you must be my husband’s comrade?” “No, madam,” said Buddir ad Deen, “I am of another quality than that ugly hump-back.” “But,” said she, “you do not consider that you speak degradingly of my husband.” “He your husband,” replied he: “can you retain those thoughts so long? Be convinced of your mistake, for so much beauty must never be sacrificed to the most contemptible of mankind. It is I that am the happy mortal for whom it is reserved. The sultan had a mind to make himself merry, by putting this trick upon the vizier your father, but he chose me to be your real husband. You might have observed how the ladies, the musicians, the dancers, your women, and all the servants of your family, were pleased with this comedy. We have sent hump-back to his stable again.”

At this discourse the vizier’s daughter (who was more like one dead than alive when she came into the bride-chamber) put on a gay air, which made her so handsome, that Buddir ad Deen was charmed with her graces.

“I did not expect,” said she, “to meet with so pleasing a surprise; and I had condemned myself to live unhappy all my days. But my good fortune is so much the greater, that I possess in you a man worthy of my tenderest affection.”

Buddir ad Deen, overjoyed to see himself possessor of so many charms, retired with his bride, and laid his vesture aside, with the bag that he had from the Jew; which, notwithstanding all the money he had dispersed, was still full.

Towards morning, while the two lovers were asleep, the genie, who had met again with the perie, said, “It is time to finish what we have so successfully carried on; let us not be overtaken by day-light, which will soon appear; go you and bring off the young man again without awaking him.”

The perie went into the bed-chamber where the two lovers were fast asleep, took up Buddir ad Deen in his under vest and drawers; and in company with the genie with wonderful swiftness fled away with him to the gates of Damascus in Syria, where they arrived just at the time when the officers of the mosques, appointed for that end, were calling the people to prayers at break of day. The perie laid

Buddir ad Deen softly on the ground, close by the gate, and departed with the genie.

The gate of the city being opened, and many people assembled, they were surprised to see a youth lying in his shirt and drawers upon the ground. One said, “He has been hard put to it to get away from his mistress, that he could not get time to put on his clothes.” “Look,” said another, “how people expose themselves; sure enough he has spent most part of the night in drinking with his friends, till he has got drunk, and then, perhaps, having occasion to go out, instead of returning, is come this length, and not having his senses about him, was overtaken with sleep.” Others were of another opinion; but nobody could guess what had been the real occasion of his coming thither.

A small puff of wind happening to blow at this time, uncovered his breast, which was whiter than snow. Every one being struck with admiration at the fineness of his complexion, they spoke so loud that they awaked him.

His surprise was as great as theirs, when he found himself at the gate of a city where he had never been before, and encompassed by a crowd of people gazing at him. “Inform me,” said he, “for God’s sake, where I am, and what you would have?” One of the crowd spoke to him saying, “Young man, the gates of the city were just now opened, and as we came out we found you lying here in this condition: have you lain here all night? and do not you know that you are at one of the gates of Damascus?” “At one of the gates of Damascus!” answered Buddir ad Deen, “surely you mock me. When I lay down to sleep last night I was at Cairo.” When he had said this, some of the people, moved with compassion for him, exclaimed, “It is a pity that such a handsome young man should have lost his senses;” and so went away.

“My son,” said an old man to him, “you know not what you say. How is it possible that you, being this morning at Damascus, could be last night at Cairo?” “It is true,” said Buddir ad Deen, “and I swear to you, that I was all day yesterday at Bussorah.” He had no sooner said this than all the people fell into a fit of laughter, and cried out, “He’s a fool, he’s a madman.” There were some, however, that pitied him because of his youth; and one among the company said to him, “My son, you must certainly be crazed, you do not consider what you say. Is it possible that a man could yesterday be at Bussorah, the same night at Cairo, and this morning at Damascus? Surely you are asleep still, come rouse up your spirits.” “What I say,” answered Buddir ad Deen Houssun, “is so true that last night I was married in the city of Cairo.” All those who laughed before, could not forbear again at this declaration. “Recollect yourself,” said the same person who spoke before; “you must have dreamt all this, and the fancy still possesses your brain.” “I am sensible of what I say,” answered the young man. “Pray can you tell me how it was possible for me to go in a dream to Cairo, where I am very certain I was in person, and where my bride was seven times brought before me, each time dressed in a different habit, and where I saw an ugly hump backed fellow, to whom they intended to give her? Besides, I want to know what is become of my vest, my turban, and the bag of sequins I had at Cairo?”

Though he assured them that all these things were matters of fact, yet they could not forbear to laugh at him: which put him into such confusion, that he knew not what to think of all those adventures.

After Buddir ad Deen Houssun had confidently affirmed all that he said to be true, he rose up to go into the town, and every one who followed him called out, “A madman, a fool.” Upon this some looked out at their windows, some came to their doors, and others joined with those that were about him, calling out as they did, “A madman;” but not knowing for what. In this perplexity the affrighted young man happened to come before a pastry-cook’s shop, and went into it to avoid the rabble.

This pastry-cook had formerly been captain to a troop of Arabian robbers, who plundered the caravans; and though he was become a citizen of Damascus, where he behaved himself to every one’s satisfaction, yet he was dreaded by all who knew him; wherefore, as soon as he came out to the rabble who followed Buddir ad Deen, they dispersed.

The pastry-cook asked him who he was, and what brought him thither. Buddir ad Deen told him all, not concealing his birth, nor the death of his father the grand vizier. He afterwards gave him an account why he had left Bussorah; how, after he had fallen asleep the night following upon his father's tomb, he found himself when he awoke at Cairo, where he had married a lady; and at last, in what amazement he was, when he found himself at Damascus, without being able to penetrate into all those wonderful adventures.

"Your history is one of the most surprising," said the pastry-cook; "but if you will follow my advice, you will let no man know those matters you have revealed to me, but patiently wait till heaven thinks fit to put an end to your misfortunes. You shall be welcome to stay with me till then; and as I have no children, I will own you for my son, if you consent; after you are so adopted, you may freely walk the city, without being exposed any more to the insults of the rabble."

Though this adoption was below the son of a grand vizier, Buddir ad Deen was glad to accept of the pastry-cook's proposal, judging it the best thing he could do, considering his circumstances. The cook clothed him, called for witnesses, and went before a notary, where he acknowledged him for his son. After this, Buddir ad Deen lived with him under the name of Houssun, and learned the pastry-trade.

While this passed at Damascus, the daughter of Shumse ad Deen awoke, and finding Buddir ad Deen gone, supposed he had risen softly for fear of disturbing her, but would soon return. As she was in expectation of him, her father the vizier, (who was vexed at the affront put upon him by the sultan) came and knocked at her chamber-door, to bewail her sad destiny. He called her by her name, and she knowing him by his voice, immediately got up, and opened the door. She kissed his hand, and received him with so much pleasure in her countenance, that she surprised the vizier who expected to find her drowned in tears, and as much grieved as himself. "Unhappy wretch!" said he in a passion, "do you appear before me thus? after the hideous sacrifice you have just consummated, can you see me with so much satisfaction?"

The new bride seeing her father angry at her pleasant countenance, said to him, "For God's sake, sir, do not reproach me wrongfully; it is not the hump-back fellow, whom I abhor more than death, it is not that monster I have married. Every body laughed him to scorn, and put him so out of countenance, that he was forced to run away and hide himself, to make room for a noble youth, who is my real husband.” “What fable do you tell me?” said Shumse ad Deen, roughly. “What! Did not crook-back lie with you tonight?” “No, sir,” said she, “it was the youth I mentioned, who has large eyes and black eyebrows.” At these words the vizier, lost all patience, and exclaimed in anger, “Ah, wicked woman! you will make me distracted!” “It is you, father,” said she, “that put me out of my senses by your incredulity.” “So, it is not true,” replied the vizier, “that hump-back — —” “Let us talk no more of hump-back,” said she, “a curse upon hump-back. Father, I assure you once more, that I did not bed with him, but with my dear spouse, who, I believe, is not far off.”

Shumse ad Deen went out to seek him, but, instead of seeing Buddir ad Deen, was surprised to find hump-back with his head on the ground, and his heels uppermost, as the genie had set him against the wall. “What is the meaning of this?” said he; “who placed you thus?” Crookback, knowing it to be the vizier answered, “Alas! alas! it is you then that would marry me to the mistress of a genie in the form of a buffalo.”

Shumse ad Deen Mahummud, when he heard hump-back speak thus, thought he was raving, bade him move, and stand upon his legs. “I will take care how I stir,” said hump-back, “unless the sun be risen. Know, sir, that when I came last night to your palace, suddenly a black cat appeared to me, and in an instant grew as big as a buffalo. I have not forgotten what he enjoined me, therefore you may depart, and leave me here.” The vizier instead of going away, took him by the heels, and made him stand up, when hump-back ran off, without looking behind him; and coming to the palace presented himself to the sultan, who laughed heartily when informed how the genie had served him.

Shumse ad Deen returned to his daughter’s chamber, more astonished than before. “My abused daughter,” said he, “can you give me no farther light in this miraculous affair?” “Sir,” replied she, “I can give you no other account than I have done already. Here are my husband’s clothes, which he put off last night; perhaps you may find something among them that may solve your doubt.” She then shewed him Buddir ad Deen’s turban, which he examined narrowly on all sides, saying, “I should take this to be a vizier’s turban, if it were not made after the Bussorah fashion." But perceiving something to be sewed between the stuff and the lining, he called for scissors, and having unripped it, found the paper which Noor ad Deen Ali had given to his son upon his deathbed, and which Buddir ad Deen Houssun had sewn in his turban for security.

Shumse ad Deen having opened the paper, knew his brother's hand, and found this superscription, "For my son Buddir ad Deen Houssun." Before he could make any reflections upon it, his daughter delivered him the bag, that lay under the garments, which he likewise opened, and found it full of sequins: for, notwithstanding all the liberality of Buddir ad Deen, it was still kept full by the genie and perie. He read the following words upon a note in the bag: "A thousand sequins belonging to Isaac the Jew." And these lines underneath, which the Jew had written, "Delivered to my lord Buddir ad Deen Houssun, for the cargo of the first of those ships that formerly belonged to the noble vizier, his father, of blessed memory, sold to me upon its arrival in this place." He had scarcely read these words, when he groaned heavily, and fainted away.

The vizier Shumse ad Deen being recovered from his fit by the aid of his daughter, and the women she called to her assistance; "Daughter," said he, "do not alarm yourself at this accident, occasioned by what is scarcely credible. Your bridegroom is your cousin, the son of my beloved and deceased brother. The thousand sequins in the bag reminds me of a quarrel I had with him, and is without the dowry he gives you. God be praised for all things, and particularly for this miraculous adventure, which demonstrates his almighty power." Then looking again upon his brother's writing, he kissed it several times, shedding abundance of tears.

He looked over the book from beginning to end. In it he found the date of his brother's arrival at Bussorah, of his marriage, and of the birth of his son; and when he compared them with the day of his own marriage, and the birth of his daughter at Cairo, he wondered at the exact coincidence which appeared in every circumstance.

The happy discovery put him into such a transport of joy, that he took the book, with the ticket of the bag, and shewed them to the sultan, who pardoned what was past, and was so much pleased with the relation of this adventure, that he caused it with all its circumstances to be put in writing for the information of posterity.

Meanwhile, the vizier. Shumse ad Deen could not comprehend the reason why his nephew did not appear; he expected him every moment, and was impatient to receive him to his arms. After he had waited seven days in vain, he searched through all Cairo, but could procure no intelligence of him, which threw him into great perplexity. “This is the strangest occurrence,” said he, “that ever happened.” In order to certify it, he thought fit to draw up in writing with his own hand an account of the manner in which the wedding had been solemnized; how the hall and his daughter’s bed-chamber were furnished, with the other circumstances. He likewise made the turban, the bag, and the rest of Buddir ad Deen’s raiment into a bundle, and locked them up.

After some days were past, the vizier’s daughter perceived herself pregnant, and after nine months was brought to bed of a son. A nurse was provided for the child, besides other women and slaves to wait upon him; and his grandfather called him Agib.

When young Agib had attained the age of seven, the vizier, instead of teaching him to read at home, put him to school with a master who was in great esteem; and two slaves were ordered to wait upon him. Agib used to play with his schoolfellows, and as they were all inferior to him in rank, they shewed him great respect, according to the example of their master, who many times would pass by faults in him that he would correct in his other pupils. This indulgence spoiled Agib; he became proud and insolent, would have his play-fellows bear all from him, and would submit to nothing from them, but be master every where; and if any took the liberty to thwart him, he would call them a thousand names, and many times beat them.

In short, all the scholars grew weary of his insolence, and complained of him to their master. He answered, “That they must have patience.” But when he saw that Agib grew still more and more overbearing, and occasioned him much trouble, “Children,” said he to his scholars, “I find Agib is a little insolent gentleman; I will shew you how to mortify him, so that he shall never torment you any more. Nay, I believe it will make him leave the school. When he comes again to-morrow, place yourselves round him, and let one of you call out, ‘Come, let us play, but upon condition, that every one who desires to play shall tell his own name, and the names of his father and mother; they who refuse shall be esteemed bastards, and not be suffered to play in our company.'"

Next day when they were gathered together, they failed not to follow their master's instructions. They placed themselves round Agib, and one of them called out, "Let us begin a play, but on condition that he who cannot tell his own name, and that of his father and mother, shall not play at all." They all cried out, and so did Agib, "We consent." Then he that spoke first asked every one the question, and all fulfilled the condition except Agib, who answered, "My name is Agib, my mother is called the lady of beauty, and my father Shumse ad Deen Mahummud, vizier to the sultan."

At these words all the children cried out, "Agib, what do you say? That is not the name of your father, but your grandfather." "A curse on you," said he in a passion. "What! dare you say that the vizier is not my father?" "No, no," cried they with great laughter, "he is your grandfather, and you shall not play with us. Nay we will take care how we come into your company." Having spoken thus, they all left him, scoffing him, and laughing among themselves, which mortified Agib so much that he wept.

The schoolmaster who was near, and heard all that passed, came up, and speaking to Agib, said, "Agib, do not you know that the vizier is not your father, but your grandfather, and the father of your mother the lady of beauty? We know not the name of your father any more than you do. We only know that the sultan was going to marry your mother to one of his grooms, a humpback fellow; but a genie lay with her. This is hard upon you, but ought to teach you to treat your schoolfellows with less haughtiness."

Agib being nettled at this, ran hastily out of the school. He went directly sobbing to his mother's chamber, who being alarmed to see him thus grieved, asked the reason. He could not answer for tears, so great was his mortification, and it was long ere he could speak plain enough to repeat what had been said to him, and had occasioned his sorrow.

When he came to himself. "Mother," said he "for the love of God be pleased to tell me who is my father?" "My son," she replied, "Shumse ad Deen Mahummud, who every day caresses you so kindly, is your father." "You do not tell me truth," returned Agib; "he is your father, and none of mine. But whose son am I?" At this question, the lady of beauty calling to mind her wedding night, which had been succeeded by a long widowhood, began to shed tears, repining bitterly at the loss of so handsome a husband as Buddir ad Deen.

Whilst the lady of beauty and Agib were both weeping, the vizier entered, who demanded the reason of their sorrow. The lady told him the shame Agib had undergone at school, which so much affected the vizier that he joined his tears with theirs, and judging from this that the misfortune which had happened to his daughter was the common discourse of the town, he was mortified to the quick.

Being thus afflicted, he went to the sultan's palace, and falling prostrate at his feet, most humbly intreated permission to make a journey in search of his nephew Buddir ad Deen Houssun. For he could not bear any longer that the people of the city should believe a genie had disgraced his daughter.

The sultan was much concerned at the vizier's affliction, approved his resolution, and gave him leave to travel. He caused a passport also to be written for him, requesting in the strongest terms all kings and princes in whose dominions Buddir ad Deen might sojourn, to grant that the vizier might conduct him to Cairo.

Shumse ad Deen, not knowing how to express his gratitude to the sultan, fell down before him a second time, while the floods of tears he shed bore sufficient testimony to his feelings. At last, having wished the sultan all manner of prosperity, he took his leave and returned to his house, where he disposed every thing for his journey; and the preparations were carried on with so much diligence, that in four days after he left the city, accompanied with his daughter the lady of beauty, and his grandson Agib.

They travelled nineteen days without intermission; but on the twentieth, arriving at a pleasant mead, a small distance from the gate of Damascus, they halted, and pitched their tents upon the banks of a river which fertilizes the vicinity, and runs through the town, one of the pleasantest in Syria, once the capital of the caliphs; and celebrated for its elegant buildings, the politeness of its inhabitants, and the abundance of its conveniences.

The vizier declared he would stay in that pleasant place two days, and pursue his journey on the third. In the mean time he gave his retinue leave to go to Damascus; and almost all of them made use of it: some influenced by curiosity to see a city they had heard so much of, and others by the opportunity of vending the Egyptian goods they had brought with them, or buying stuffs, and the rarities of the country. The beautiful lady desiring her son Agib might share in the satisfaction of viewing that celebrated city, ordered the black eunuch, who acted in quality of his governor, to conduct him thither.

Agib, in magnificent apparel, went with the eunuch, who had a large cane in his hand. They had no sooner entered the city, than Agib, fair and glorious as the day, attracted the eyes of the people. Some got out of their houses to gain a nearer and narrower view of him; others put their heads out of the windows, and those who passed along the street were not satisfied in stopping to look upon him, but kept pace with him, to prolong the pleasure of the agreeable sight: in fine, there was not a person that did not admire him, and bestow a thousand benedictions on the father and mother that had given being to so fine a child. By chance the eunuch and he passed by the shop of Buddir ad Deen Houssun, and there the crowd was so great, that they were forced to halt.

The pastry-cook who had adopted Buddir ad Deen Houssun had died some years before, and left him his shop and all his property, and he conducted the pastry trade so dexterously, that he had gained great reputation in Damascus. Buddir ad Deen seeing so great a crowd before his door, who were gazing so attentively upon Agib and the black eunuch, stepped out to see them himself.

Having cast his eyes upon Agib, Buddir ad Deen found himself moved, he knew not how, nor for what reason. He was not struck like the people with the brilliant beauty of the boy; another cause unknown to him gave rise to the uneasiness and emotion he felt. It was the force of blood that wrought in this tender father; who, laying aside his business, made up to Agib, and with an engaging air, said to him: “My little lord, who hast won my soul, be so kind as to come into my shop, and eat a bit of such fare as I have; that I may have the pleasure of admiring you at my ease.” These words he pronounced with such tenderness, that tears trickled from his eyes. Little Agib was moved when he saw his emotion; and turning to the eunuch, said, “This honest man speaks in such an affectionate manner, that I cannot avoid complying with his request; let us step into his house, and taste his pastry.” “It would be a fine thing truly,” replied the slave, “to see the son of a vizier go into a pastry-cook’s shop to eat; do not imagine that I will suffer any such thing.” “Alas! my lord,” cried Buddir ad Deen, “it is cruelty to trust the conduct of you in the hands of a person who treats you so harshly.” Then applying himself to the eunuch, “My good friend,” continued he, “pray do not hinder this young lord from granting me the favour I ask; do not put such mortification upon me: rather do me the honour to walk in along with him, and by so doing, you will let the world know, that, though your outside is brown like a chestnut, your inside is as white. Do you know,” continued he, “that I am master of the secret to make you white, instead of being black as you are?” This set the eunuch a laughing, and then he asked what that secret was. “I will tell you,” replied Buddir ad Deen, who repeated some verses in praise of black eunuchs, implying, that it was by their ministry that the honour of princes and of all great men was secured. The eunuch was so charmed with these verses, that, without further hesitation, he suffered Agib to go into the shop, and went in with him himself.

Buddir ad Deen Houssun was overjoyed at having obtained what he had so passionately desired, and, falling again to the work he had discontinued “I was making,” said he, “cream-tarts; and you must, with submission, eat of them. I am persuaded you will find them good; for my own mother, who made them incomparably well, taught me, and the people send to buy them of me from all quarters of the town.” This said, he took a cream-tart out of the oven, and after strewing upon it some pomegranate kernels and sugar, set it before Agib, who found it very delicious.

Another was served up to the eunuch, and he gave the same judgment.

While they were both eating, Buddir ad Deen viewed Agib very attentively; and after looking upon him again and again, it came into his mind that possibly he might have such a son by his charming wife, from whom he had been so soon and so cruelly separated; and the very thought drew tears from his eyes. He intended to have put some questions to little Agib about his journey to Damascus; but the child had no time to gratify his curiosity, for the eunuch pressing him to return to his grandfather's tent, took him away as soon as he had done eating. Buddir ad Deen Houssun, not contented with looking after him, shut up his shop immediately, and followed him.

Buddir ad Deen Houssun ran after Agib and the eunuch, and overtook them before they had reached the gate of the city. The eunuch perceiving he followed them, was extremely surprised: "You impertinent fellow," said he, with an angry tone, "what do you want?" "My dear friend," replied Buddir ad Deen, "do not trouble yourself; I have a little business out of town, and I must needs go and look after it." This answer, however, did not at all satisfy the eunuch, who turning to Agib, said, "This is all owing to you; I foresaw I should repent of my complaisance; you would needs go into the man's shop; it was not wisely done in me to give you leave." "Perhaps," replied Agib, "he has real business out of town, and the road is free to every body." While this passed they kept walking together, without looking behind them, till they came near the vizier's tents, upon which they turned about to see if Buddir ad Deen followed them. Agib, perceiving he was within two paces of him, reddened and whitened alternately, according to the different emotions that affected him. He was afraid the grand vizier his grandfather should come to know he had been in the pastry shop, and had eaten there. In this dread, he took up a large stone that lay at his foot and throwing it at Buddir ad Deen, hit him in the forehead, and wounded him so that his face was covered with blood. The eunuch gave Buddir ad Deen to understand, he had no reason to complain of a mischance that he had merited and brought upon himself.

Buddir ad Deen turned towards the city staunching the blood of the wound with his apron, which he had not put off. “I was a fool,” said he within himself, “for leaving my house, to take so much pains about this brat; for doubtless he would never have used me after this manner, if he had not thought I had some ill design against him.” When he got home, he had his wound dressed, and softened the sense of his mischance by the reflection that there was an infinite number of people upon the earth, who were yet more unfortunate than he.

Buddir ad Deen kept on the pastry-trade at Damascus, and his uncle Shumse ad Deen Mahummud went from thence three days after his arrival. He went by way of Emaus, Hanah, and Halep; then crossed the Euphrates, and after passing through Mardin, Moussoul, Singier, Diarbeker, and several other towns, arrived at last at Bussorah. Immediately after his arrival he desired audience of the sultan, who was no sooner informed of his quality than he admitted him to his presence, received him very favourably, and inquired the occasion of his journey to Bussorah. “Sire,” replied the vizier “I come to know what is become of the son of my brother, who has had the honour to serve your majesty.” “Noor ad Deen Ali,” said the sultan, “has been long dead; as for his son, all I can tell you of him is, that he disappeared suddenly, about two months after his father’s death, and nobody has seen him since, notwithstanding all the inquiry I ordered to be made. But his mother, who is the daughter of one of my viziers, is still alive.” Shumse ad Deen Mahummud desired leave of the sultan to take her to Egypt; and having obtained permission, without waiting till the next day, inquired after her place of abode, and that very hour went to her house, accompanied with his daughter and his grandson.

The widow of Noor ad Deen Ali resided still in the same place where her husband had lived. It was a stately fabric, adorned with marble pillars: but Shumse ad Deen did not stop to view it. At his entry he kissed the gate, and the piece of marble upon which his brother’s name was written in letters of gold. He asked to speak with his sister-in-law, and was told by her servants, that she was in a small building covered by a dome, to which they directed in the middle of a very spacious court. This tender mother used to spend the greatest part of the day and night in that room which she had built as a representation of the tomb of her son Buddir ad Deen Houssun, whom she supposed to be dead after so long an absence. She was pouring tears over his memorial when Shumse ad Deen entering, found her buried in the deepest affliction.

He made his compliment, and after beseeching her to suspend her tears and sighs, informed her he had the honour to be her brother-in-law, and acquainted her with the reason of his journey from Cairo to Bussorah.

Shumse ad Deen Mahummud, after acquainting his sister-in-law with all that had passed at Cairo on his daughter's wedding-night, and informing her of the surprise occasioned by the discovery of the paper sewed up in Buddir ad Deen's turban, presented to her Agib and the beautiful lady.

The widow of Noor ad Deen, who had still continued sitting like a woman dejected, and weaned from the affairs of this world, no sooner understood by his discourse that her dear son, whom she lamented so bitterly, might still be alive, than she arose, and repeatedly embraced the beautiful lady and her grandchild Agib; and perceiving in the youth the features of Buddir ad Deen, drops tears different from what she had been so long accustomed to shed. She could not forbear kissing the youth, who, for his part, received her embraces with all the demonstrations of joy he was capable of shewing. "Sister," said Shumse ad Deen, "it is time to dry your tears, and suppress your sighs; you must think of going with us to Egypt. The sultan of Bussorah gives me leave to carry you thither, and I doubt not you will consent. I am in hopes we shall at last find out your son my nephew; and if we do, the history of him, of you, of my own daughter, and of my own adventures, will deserve to be committed to writing, and transmitted to posterity."

The widow of Noor ad Deen heard this proposal with pleasure, and ordered preparations to be made for her departure. While they were making, Shumse ad Deen desired a second audience, and after taking leave of the sultan, who dismissed him with ample marks of respect, and gave him a considerable present for himself, and another of great value for the sultan of Egypt, he set out from Bussorah once more for the city of Damascus.

When he arrived in the neighbourhood of Damascus, he ordered his tents to be pitched without the gate, at which he designed to enter the city; and gave out he would tarry there three days, to give his suit rest, and buy up curiosities to present to the sultan of Egypt.

While he was employed in selecting the finest stuffs which the principal merchants had brought to his tents, Agib begged the black eunuch his governor to carry him through the city, in order to see what he had not had leisure to view before; and to inquire what was become of the pastry cook whom he had wounded. The eunuch complying with his request, went along with him towards the city, after leave obtained of the beautiful lady his mother.

They entered Damascus by the Paradise-gate, which lay next to the tents of the vizier They walked through the great squares and the public places where the richest goods were sold, and took a view of the superb mosque at the hour of prayer, between noon and sun-set. When they passed by the shop of Buddir ad Deen Houssun, whom they still found employed in making cream tarts, "I salute you sir," said Agib; "do you know me? Do you remember you ever saw me before?" Buddir ad Deen hearing these words, fixed his eyes upon him, and recognizing him (such was the surprising effect of paternal love!), felt the same emotion as when he saw him first; he was confused, and instead of making any answer, continued a long time without uttering a word. At length, recovering himself, "My lord," said he, "be so kind as to come once more with your governor into my house, and taste a cream-tart. I beg your lordship's pardon, for the trouble I gave you in following you out of town; I was at that time not myself, I did not know what I did. You drew me after you, and the violence of the attraction was so soft, that I could not withstand it."

Agib, astonished at what Buddir ad Deen said, replied: "There is an excess in the kindness you express, and unless you engage under oath not to follow me when I go from hence, I will not enter your house. If you give me your promise, and prove a man of your word, I will visit you again to-morrow, since the vizier my grandfather, is still employed in buying up rarities for a present to the sultan of Egypt." "My lord," replied Buddir ad Deen, "I will do whatever you would have me." This said, Agib and the eunuch went into the shop.

Presently after, Buddir ad Deen set before them a cream-tart, that was full as good as what they had eaten before; “Come,” said Agib, “sit down by me, and eat with us.” Buddir ad Deen sat down, and attempted to embrace Agib, as a testimony of the joy he conceived upon sitting by him. But Agib pushed him away, desiring him not to be too familiar. Buddir ad Deen obeyed, and repeated some extempore verses in praise of Agib: he did not eat, but made it his business to serve his guests. When they had done, he brought them water to wash, and a very white napkin to wipe their hands. Then he filled a large china cup with sherbet, and put snow into it; and offering it to Agib, “This,” said he, “is sherbet of roses; and I am sure you never tasted better.” Agib having drunk of it with pleasure, Buddir ad Deen took the cup from him, and presented it to the eunuch, who drank it all off at once.

In fine, Agib and his governor having fared well, returned thanks to the pastry-cook for their good entertainment, and moved homewards, it being then late. When they arrived at the tents of Shumse ad Deen Mahummud, Agib’s grandmother received him with transports of joy: her son ran always in her mind, and in embracing Agib, the remembrance of him drew tears from her eyes. “Ah, my child!” said she, “my joy would be perfect, if I had the pleasure of embracing your father as I now embrace you.” She made Agib sit by her, and put several questions to him, relating to the walk he had been taking with the eunuch; and when he complained of being hungry, she gave him a piece of cream-tart, which she had made for herself, and was indeed very good: she likewise gave some to the eunuch.

Agib no sooner touched the piece of cream-tart that had been set before him, than he pretended he did not like it, and left it uncut; and Shubbaunee (which was the eunuch’s name) did the same. The widow of Noor ad Deen Ali observed with regret that her grandson did not like the tart. “What!” said she, “does my child thus despise the work of my hands? Be it known to you, no one in the world can make such besides myself and your father, whom I taught.” “My good mother,” replied Agib, “give me leave to tell you, if you do not know how to make better, there is a pastry-cook in this town that outdoes you. We were at his shop, and ate of one much better than yours.”

On hearing this, the grandmother, frowning upon the eunuch, said, “How now, Shubbaunee, was the care of my grandchild committed to you, to carry him to eat at pastry-shops like a beggar?” “Madam,” replied the eunuch, “it is true, we did stop a little while and talked with the pastry-cook, but we did not eat with him.” “Pardon me,” said Agib, “we went into his shop, and there ate a cream-tart.” Upon this, the lady, more incensed against the eunuch than before, rose in a passion from the table, and running to the tent of Shumse ad Deen, informed him of the eunuch’s crime; and that in such terms, as tended more to inflame the vizier than to dispose him to excuse it.

The vizier who was naturally passionate, did not fail on this occasion to display his anger. He went forthwith to his sister-in-law’s tent, and said to the eunuch, “Wretch, have you the impudence to abuse the trust I repose in you?” Shubbaunee, though sufficiently convicted by Agib’s testimony, denied the fact still. But the child persisting in what he had affirmed, “Grandfather,” said he, “I can assure you we not only ate, but that so very heartily, that we have no occasion for supper: besides, the pastry-cook treated us also with a great bowl of sherbet.” “Well,” cried Shumse ad Deen, “after all this, will you continue to deny that you entered the pastry-cook’s house, and ate there?” Shubbaunee had still the impudence to swear it was not true. “Then you are a liar,” said the vizier “I believe my grandchild; but after all, if you can eat up this cream-tart I shall be persuaded you have truth on your side.”

Though Shubbaunee had crammed himself up to the throat before, he agreed to stand that test, and accordingly took a piece of tart; but his stomach rising against it, he was obliged to spit it out of his mouth. Yet he still pursued the lie, and pretended he had over-eaten himself the day before, and had not recovered his appetite. The vizier irritated with all the eunuch’s frivolous presences, and convinced of his guilt, ordered him to be soundly bastinadoed. In undergoing this punishment, the poor wretch shrieked out aloud, and at last confessed the truth; “I own,” cried he, “that we did eat a cream-tart at the pastry cook’s, and that it was much better than that upon the table.”

The widow of Noor ad Deen thought it was out of spite to her, and with a desire to mortify her, that Shubbaunee commended the pastry-cook’s tart; and accordingly said, “I cannot believe the cook’s tarts are better than mine; I am resolved to satisfy myself upon that head. Where does he live? Go immediately and buy me one of his tarts." The eunuch repaired to Buddir ad Deen's shop, and said, "Let me have one of your cream-tarts; one of our ladies wants to taste them." Buddir ad Deen chose one of the best, and gave it to the eunuch.

Shubbaunee returned speedily to the tents, gave the tart to Noor ad Deen's widow, who, snatching it greedily, broke a piece off; but no sooner put it to her mouth, than she cried out and swooned away. The vizier was extremely surprised at the accident; he threw water upon her face, and was very active in recovering her. As soon as she came to herself, "My God!" cried she, "it must needs be my son, my dear Buddir ad Deen who made this tart."

When the vizier Shumse ad Deen heard his sister-in-law say, that the maker of the tart, brought by the eunuch, must needs be her son, he was overjoyed; but reflecting that his joy might prove groundless, and the conjecture of Noor ad Deen's widow be false, "Madam," said he, "do you think there may not be a pastry-cook in the world, who knows how to make cream-tarts as well as your son?" "I own," replied she, "there may be pastry-cooks that can make as good tarts as he; but as I make them in a peculiar manner, and only my son was let into the secret, it must absolutely be he that made this. Come, my brother," added she in a transport, "let us call up mirth and joy; we have at last found what we have been so long looking for." "Madam," said the vizier answer, "I entreat you to moderate your impatience, for we shall quickly know the truth. All we have to do, is to bring the pastry-cook hither; and then you and my daughter will readily distinguish whether he be your son or not. But you must both be concealed so as to have a view of Buddir ad Deen while he cannot see you; for I would not have our interview and mutual discovery happen at Damascus. My design is to delay the discovery till we return to Cairo."

This said, he left the ladies in their tent, and retired to his own; where he called for fifty of his men, and said to them: "Take each of you a stick in your hands, and follow Shubbaunee, who will conduct you to a pastry-cook in this city. When you arrive there, break and dash in pieces all you find in the shop: if he demand the reason of your outrage, only ask him in return if it was not he that made the cream-tart that was brought from his house. If he answer in the affirmative, seize his person, fetter him, and bring him along with you; but take care you do not beat him, nor do him the least harm. Go, and lose no time."

The vizier's orders were immediately executed. The detachment, conducted by the black eunuch, went with expedition to Buddir ad Deen's house, broke in pieces the plates, kettles, copper pans, and all the other moveables and utensils they met with, and inundated the sherbet-shop with cream and comfits. Buddir ad Deen, astonished at the sight, said with a pitiful tone, "Pray, good people, why do you serve me so? What is the matter? What have I done?" "Was it not you," said they, "that sold this eunuch the cream-tart?" "Yes," replied he, "I am the man; and who says any thing against it? I defy any one to make a better." Instead of giving him an answer, they continued to break all round them, and the oven itself was not spared.

In the mean time the neighbours took the alarm, and surprised to see fifty armed men committing such a disorder, asked the reason of such violence; and Buddir ad Deen said once more to the rioters, "Pray tell me what crime I have committed to deserve this usage?" "Was it not you," replied they, "that made the cream-tart you sold to the eunuch?" "Yes, yes, it was I," replied he; "I maintain it is a good one. I do not deserve this treatment." However, without listening to him, they seized his person, and, snatching the cloth off his turban, tied his hands with it behind his back, and, after dragging him by force out of his shop, marched off.

The mob gathering, from compassion to Buddir ad Deen, took his part; but officers from the governor of the city dispersed the people, and favoured the carrying off of Buddir ad Deen, for Shumse ad Deen Mahummud had in the mean time gone to the governor's house to acquaint him with the order he had given, and to demand the interposition of force to favour the execution; and the governor, who commanded all Syria in the name of the sultan of Egypt, was unwilling to refuse any thing to his master's vizier.

It was in vain for Buddir ad Deen to ask those who carried him off, what fault had been found with his cream-tart: they gave him no answer. In short, they conducted him to the tents, and made him wait there till Shumse ad Deen returned from the governor of Damascus.

Upon the vizier’s return, the pretended culprit was brought before him. “My lord,” said Buddir ad Deen, with tears in his eyes, “pray do me the favour to let me know wherein I have displeased you.” “Why, you wretch,” exclaimed the vizier “was it not you that made the cream-tart you sent me?” “I own I am the man,” replied Buddir ad Deen, “but pray what crime is that?” “I will punish you according to your deserts,” said Shumse ad Deen, “it shall cost you your life, for sending me such a sorry tart.” “Ah!” exclaimed Buddir ad Deen, “is it a capital crime to make a bad cream-tart?” “Yes,” said the vizier “and you are to expect no other usage from me.”

While this interview lasted, the ladies, who were concealed behind curtains, saw Buddir ad Deen, and recognized him, notwithstanding he had been so long absent. They were so transported with joy, that they swooned away; and when they recovered, would fain have run up and fallen upon his neck, but the promise they had made to the vizier of not discovering themselves, restrained the tender emotions of love and of nature.

Shumse ad Deen having resolved to set out that night, ordered the tents to be struck, and the necessary preparations to be made for his journey. He ordered Buddir ad Deen to be secured in a sort of cage, and laid on a camel. The vizier and his retinue began their march, and travelled the rest of that night, and all the next day, without stopping In the evening they halted, and Buddir ad Deen was taken out of his cage, in order to be served with the necessary refreshments, but still carefully kept at a distance from his mother and his wife; and during the whole expedition, which lasted twenty days, was served in the same manner.

When they arrived at Cairo, they encamped in the neighbourhood of the city; Shumse ad Deen called for Buddir ad Deen, and gave orders, in his presence, to prepare a stake. “Alas!” said Buddir ad Deen, “what do you mean to do with a stake?” “Why, to impale you,” replied Shumse ad Deen, “and then to have you carried through all the quarters of the town, that the people may have the spectacle of a worthless pastry-cook, who makes cream-tarts without pepper.” This said, Buddir ad Deen cried out so ludicrously, that Shumse ad Deen could hardly keep his countenance: “Alas!” said he, “must I suffer a death as cruel as it is ignominious, for not putting pepper in a cream-tart?"

"How," said Buddir ad Deen, "must I be rifled; must I be imprisoned in a chest, and at last impaled, and all for not putting pepper in a cream-tart? Are these the actions of Moosulmauns, of persons who make a profession of probity, justice, and good works?" With these words he shed tears, and then renewing his complaint; "No," continued he, "never was a man used so unjustly, nor so severely. Is it possible they should be capable of taking a man's life for not putting pepper in a cream-tart? Cursed be all cream-tarts, as well as the hour in which I was born! Would to God I had died that minute!"

The disconsolate Buddir ad Deen did not cease his lamentations; and when the stake was brought, cried out bitterly at the horrid sight. "Heaven!" said he, "can you suffer me to die an ignominious and painful death? And all this, for what crime? not for robbery or murder, or renouncing my religion, but for not putting pepper in a cream tart."

Night being then pretty far advanced, the vizier ordered Buddir ad Deen to be conveyed again to his cage, saying to him, "Stay there till to-morrow; the day shall not elapse before I give orders for your death." The chest or cage then was carried away and laid upon the camel that had brought it from Damascus: at the same time all the other camels were loaded again; and the vizier mounting his horse, ordered the camel that carried his nephew to march before him, and entered the city with all his suit. After passing through several streets, where no one appeared, he arrived at his palace, where he ordered the chest to be taken down, but not opened till farther orders.

While his retinue were unlading the other camels, he took Buddir ad Deen's mother and his daughter aside; and addressed himself to the latter: "God be praised," said he, "my child, for this happy occasion of meeting your cousin and your husband! You remember, of course, what order your chamber was in on your wedding night: go and put all things as they were then placed; and if your memory do not serve you, I can aid it by a written account, which I caused to be taken upon that occasion."

The beautiful lady went joyfully to execute her father's orders; and he at the same time commanded the hall to be adorned as when

Buddir ad Deen Houssun was there with the sultan of Egypt's hunchbacked groom. As he went over his manuscript, his domestics placed every moveable in the described order. The throne was not forgotten, nor the lighted wax candles. When every thing was arranged in the hall, the vizier went into his daughter's chamber and put in their due place Buddir ad Deen's apparel, with the purse of sequins. This done, he said to the beautiful lady, "Undress yourself, my child, and go to bed. As soon as Buddir ad Deen enters your room, complain of his being from you so long, and tell him, that when you awoke, you were astonished you did not find him by you. Press him to come to bed again; and to-morrow morning you will divert your mother-in-law and me, by giving us an account of your interview." This said, he went from his daughter's apartment, and left her to undress herself and go to bed.

Shumse ad Deen Mahummud ordered all his domestics to depart the hall, excepting two or three, whom he desired to remain. These he commanded to go and take Buddir ad Deen out of the cage, to strip him to his under vest and drawers, to conduct him in that condition to the hall, to leave him there alone, and shut the door upon him.

Buddir ad Deen, though overwhelmed with grief, was asleep so soundly, that the vizier's domestics had taken him out of the chest and stripped him before he awoke; and they carried him so suddenly into the hall, that they did not give him time to see where he was. When he found himself alone in the hall, he looked round him, and the objects he beheld recalling to his memory the circumstances of his marriage, he perceived, with astonishment, that it was the place where he had seen the sultan's groom of the stables. His surprise was still the greater, when approaching softly the door of a chamber which he found open, he spied his own raiments where he remembered to have left them on his wedding night. "My God!" said he, rubbing his eyes, "am I asleep or awake?"

The beautiful lady, who in the mean time was diverting herself with his astonishment, opened the curtains of her bed suddenly, and bending her head forward, "My dear lord," said she, with a soft, tender air, "what do you do at the door? You have been out of bed a long time. I was strangely surprised when I awoke in not finding you by me." Buddir ad Deen was enraptured; he entered the room, but reverting to all that had passed during a ten years' interval, and not being able to persuade himself that it could all have happened in the compass of one night, he went to the place where his vestments lay with the purse of sequins; and after examining them very carefully, exclaimed, "By Allah these are mysteries which I can by no means comprehend!" The lady, who was pleased to see his confusion, said, once more, "My lord, what do you wait for?" He stepped towards the bed, and said to her, "Is it long since I left you?" "The question," answered she, "surprises me. Did not you rise from me but now? Surely your mind is deranged." "Madam," replied Buddir ad Deen, "I do assure you my thoughts are not very composed. I remember indeed to have been with you, but I remember at the same time, that I have since lived ten years at Damascus. Now, if I was actually in bed with you this night, I cannot have been from you so long. These two points are inconsistent. Pray tell me what I am to think; whether my marriage with you is an illusion, or whether my absence from you is only a dream?" "Yes, my lord," cried she, "doubtless you were light-headed when you thought you were at Damascus." Upon this Buddir ad Deen laughed heartily, and said, "What a comical fancy is this! I assure you, madam, this dream of mine will be very pleasant to you. Do but imagine, if you please, that I was at the gate of Damascus in my shirt and drawers, as I am here now; that I entered the town with the halloo of a mob who followed and insulted me; that I fled to a pastry cook who adopted me, taught me his trade, and left me all he had when he died; that after his death I kept a shop. In fine, I had an infinity of other adventures, too tedious to recount: and all I can say is, that it was well that I awoke, for they were going to impale me!" "And for what," cried the lady, feigning astonishment, "would they have used you so cruelly? Surely you must have committed some enormous crime." "Not the least," replied Buddir ad Deen; "it was for nothing but a mere trifle, the most ridiculous thing you can imagine. All the crime I was charged with, was selling a cream-tart that had no pepper in it." "As for that matter," said the beautiful lady laughing heartily, "I must say they did you great injustice." "Ah!" replied he, "that was not all. For this cursed cream-tart was every thing in my shop broken to pieces, myself bound and fettered, and flung into a chest, where I lay so close, that methinks I am there still, but thanks be to God all was a dream."

Buddir ad Deen was not easy all night. He awoke from time to time, and put the question to himself, whether he dreamed or was awake. He distrusted his felicity; and, to be sure whether it was true or not, looked round the room. "I am not mistaken," said he; "this is the same chamber where I entered instead of the hunch-backed groom of the stables; and I am now in bed with the fair lady designed for him." Day-light, which then appeared, had not yet dispelled his uneasiness, when the vizier Shumse ad Deen, his uncle, knocked at the door, and at the same time went in to bid him good morrow.

Buddir ad Deen was extremely surprised to see a man he knew so well, and who now appeared with a different air from that with which he pronounced the terrible sentence of death against him. "Ah!" cried Buddir ad Deen, "it was you who condemned me so unjustly to a kind of death, the thoughts of which make me shudder, and all for a cream-tart without pepper." The vizier fell a laughing, and to put him out of suspense, told him how, by the ministry of a genie (for hunch-back's relation made him suspect the adventure), he had been at his palace, and had married his daughter instead of the sultan's groom of the stables; then he acquainted him that he had discovered him to be his nephew by the memorandum of his father, and pursuant to that discovery had gone from Cairo to Bussorah in quest of him. "My dear nephew," added he, embracing him with every expression of tenderness, "I ask your pardon for all I have made you undergo since I discovered you. I resolved to bring you to my palace before I told you your happiness; which ought now to be so much the dearer to you, as it has cost you so much perplexity and distress. To atone for all your afflictions, comfort yourself with the joy of being in the company of those who ought to be dearest to you. While you are dressing yourself I will go and acquaint your mother, who is beyond measure impatient to see you; and will likewise bring to you your son, whom you saw at Damascus, and for whom, without knowing him, you shewed so much affection."

No words can adequately express the joy of Buddir ad Deen, when he saw his mother and his son. They embraced, and shewed all the transports that love and tenderness could inspire. The mother spoke to Buddir ad Deen in the most moving terms; she mentioned the grief she had felt for his long absence, and the tears she had shed. Little Ajib, instead of flying his father's embraces, as at Damascus, received them with all the marks of pleasure. And Buddir ad Deen Houssun, divided between two objects so worthy of his love, thought he could not give sufficient testimonies of his affection.

While this passed, the vizier was gone to the palace, to give the sultan an account of the happy success of his travels; and the sultan was so moved with the recital of the story, that he ordered it to be taken down in writing, and carefully preserved among the archives of the kingdom. After Shumse ad Deen's return to his palace, he sat down with his family, and all the household passed the day in festivity and mirth.

The vizier Jaaffier having thus concluded the story of Buddir ad Deen, told the caliph that this was what he had to relate to his majesty. The caliph found the story so surprising, that without farther hesitation he granted his slave Rihan's pardon; and to console the young man for the grief of having unhappily deprived himself of a woman whom he had loved so tenderly, married him to one of his slaves, bestowed liberal gifts upon him, and maintained him till he died.

THE HISTORY OF GANEM, SON OF ABOU AYOUB, AND KNOWN BY THE SURNAME OF LOVE'S SLAVE.

There was formerly at Damascus a merchant, who had by care and industry acquired great wealth, on which he lived in a very honourable manner. His name was Abou Ayoub, and he had one son and a daughter. The son was called Ganem, but afterwards surnamed Love's slave. His person was graceful, and the excellent qualities of his mind had been improved by able masters. The daughter's name was Alcolom, signifying Ravisher of hearts, because her beauty was so perfect that whoever saw her could not avoid loving her.

Abou Ayoub died, and left immense riches: a hundred loads of brocades and other silks that lay in his warehouse were the least part. The loads were ready made up, and on every bale was written in large characters, "For Bagdad."

Mahummud, the son of Soliman, surnamed Zinebi, reigned at that time at Damascus, the capital of Syria. His kinsman, Haroon al Rusheed, had bestowed that kingdom on him as his tributary.

Soon after the death of Abou Ayoub, Ganem conversed with his mother about their domestic affairs, and concerning the loads of merchandize in the warehouse, asked her the meaning of what was written upon each bale. "My son," answered his mother, "your father used to travel sometimes into one province, and sometimes into another; and it was customary with him, before he set out, to write the name of the city he designed to repair to on every bade. He had provided all things to take a journey to Bagdad, and was on the point of setting out, when death" —— She had not power to finish; the lively remembrance of the loss of her husband would not permit her to say more, and drew from her a shower of tears.

Ganem could not see his mother so sensibly affected, without being equally so himself. They continued some time silent; but at length he recovered himself, and as soon as he found his mother calm enough to listen to him, said, "Since my father designed these goods for Bagdad, I will prepare myself to perform that journey; and I think it will be proper for me to hasten my departure, for fear those commodities should perish, or that we should lose the opportunity of selling them to the best advantage."

Abou Ayoub's widow, who tenderly loved her son, was much concerned at this resolution, and replied, "My dear child, I cannot but commend you for designing to follow your father's example; but consider, that you are too young, inexperienced, and unaccustomed to the fatigue of travelling. Besides, can you think of leaving me, and adding to that sorrow with which I am already oppressed? Is it not better to sell those goods to the merchants of Damascus, and take up with a moderate profit, than expose yourself to the danger of perishing?"

It was in vain for her to oppose Ganem's resolution by the strongest arguments; they had no weight with him. An inclination to travel, and to accomplish himself by a thorough knowledge of the world, urged him to set out, and prevailed over all his mother's remonstrances, her entreaties, and even her tears. He went to the market where slaves were sold, and bought such as were able-bodied, hired a hundred camels, and having provided all other necessaries, entered upon his journey, with five or six merchants of Damascus, who were going to trade at Bagdad.

Those merchants, attended by their slaves, and accompanied by several other travellers, made up such a considerable caravan, that they had nothing to fear from the Bedouin Arabs, who make it their only profession to range the country; and attack and plunder the caravans when they are not strong enough to repulse them. They had no other difficulty to encounter, than the usual fatigues of a long journey, which were easily forgotten when they came in sight of the city of Bagdad, where they arrived in safety.

They alighted at the most magnificent and most frequented khan in the city; but Ganem chose to be lodged conveniently, and by himself. He only left his goods there in a warehouse for their greater security, and hired a spacious house in the neighbourhood, richly furnished, having a garden which was very delightful, on account of its many waterworks and shady groves.

Some days after this young merchant had been settled in his house, and perfectly recovered of the fatigue of his journey, he dressed himself richly, and repaired to the public place, where the merchants met to transact business. A slave followed him, carrying a parcel of fine stuffs and silks.

The merchants received Ganem very courteously, and their syndic, or chief, to whom he first made application, bought all his parcel, at the price set down in the ticket annexed to every piece of stuff. Ganem continued his trade so successfully, that he every day sold all the goods he exposed.

He had but one bale left, which he had caused to be carried from the warehouse to his own house; he then went to the public rendezvous, where he found all the shops shut. This seemed somewhat extraordinary to him and having asked the cause, he was told, that one of the first merchants, whom he knew, was dead, and that all his brother traders were gone to his funeral.

Ganem inquired for the mosque, where prayer was to be said, and whence the body was to be conducted to the grave; and having been informed, sent back his slave with the goods, and walked towards the mosque. He got thither before the prayers were ended, which were said in a hall hung with black satin. The corpse was taken up, and followed by the kindred, the merchants, and Ganem, to the place of burial, which was at some distance without the city. It was a stone structure, in form of a dome, purposely built to receive the bodies of all the family of the deceased, and being very small, they had pitched tents around, that all the company might be sheltered during the ceremony. The monument was opened, and the corpse laid in it, after which it was shut up. Then the imam, and other ministers of the mosque, sat down in a ring on carpets, in the largest tent, and recited the rest of the prayers. They also read the Fateah, or introductory chapter of the Koraun, appointed for the burial of the dead. The kindred and merchants sat round, in the same manner, behind the ministers.

It was near night before all was ended: Ganem who had not expected such a long ceremony, began to be uneasy, and the more so, when he saw meat served up, in memory of the deceased, according to the custom of the Mahummedans. He was also told that the tents had been set up not only against the heat of the sun, but also against the evening dew, because they should not return to the city before the next morning. These words perplexed Ganem. “I am a stranger,” said he to himself, “and have the reputation of being a rich merchant; thieves may take the opportunity of my absence, and rob my house. My slaves may be tempted by so favourable an opportunity; they may run away with all the gold I have received for my goods, and whither shall I go to look for them?” Full of these thoughts, he ate a few mouthfuls hastily, and slipped away from the company.

He made all possible haste; but, as it often happens that the more a man hurries the less he advances, he went astray in the dark, so that it was near midnight when he came to the city gate; which, to add to his misfortune, was shut. This was a fresh affliction to him, and he was obliged to look for some convenient place in which to pass the rest of the night till the gate was opened. He went into a burial-place, so spacious, that it reached from the city to the very place he had left. He advanced to some high walls, which enclosed a small field, being the mausoleum of a family, and in which there was a palm-tree. Ganem, finding that the burial-place where the palm-tree grew was open, went into it, and shut the door after him. He lay down on the grass and tried to sleep; but his uneasiness at being absent from home would not permit him. He got up, and after having passed before the door several times, opened it, without knowing why, and immediately perceived at a distance a light, which seemed to come towards him. He was startled at the sight, closed the door, which had nothing to secure it but a latch, and got up as fast as he could to the top of the palm-tree; looking upon that as the safest retreat under his present apprehensions.

No sooner was he up, than by the help of the light which had alarmed him, he plainly perceived three men, whom, by their habit, he knew to be slaves, enter into the burial-place. One of them advanced with a lantern, and the two others followed him, loaded with a chest, between five and six feet long, which they carried on their shoulders. They set it down, and then one of the three slaves said to his comrades, “Brethren, if you will be advised by me, we will leave the chest here, and return to the city.” “No, no,” replied another, “that would not be executing our mistress’s orders; we may have cause to repent not doing as we were commanded. Let us bury the chest, since we are enjoined so to do.” The two other slaves complied. They began to break ground with the tools they had brought for that purpose. When they had made a deep trench, they put the chest into it, and covered it with the earth they had taken out, and then departed.

Ganem, who from the top of the palm-tree had heard every word the slaves had spoken, could not tell what to think of the adventure. He concluded that the chest must contain something of value, and that the person to whom it belonged had some particular reasons for causing it to be buried in the cemetery. He resolved immediately to satisfy his curiosity, came down from the palm-tree, the departure of the slaves having dissipated his fear, and fell to work upon the pit, plying his hands and feet so well, that in a short time he uncovered the chest, but found it secured by a padlock. This new obstacle to the satisfying of his curiosity was no small mortification to him, yet he was not discouraged, but the day beginning then to appear, he saw several great stones about the burial-place. He picked out one, with which he easily knocked off the padlock, and then with much impatience opened the chest. Ganem was strangely surprised, when, instead of money, he discovered a young lady of incomparable beauty. Her fresh and rosy complexion, and her gentle regular breathing, satisfied him she was alive, but he could not conceive why, if she were only asleep, she had not awaked at the noise he made in forcing off the padlock. Her habit was so costly, with bracelets and pendants of diamonds, and a necklace of pearls, so large, that he made not the least doubt of her being one of the principal ladies of the court. At the sight of so beautiful an object, not only compassion and natural inclination to relieve persons in danger, but something more powerful, which Ganem could not then account for, prevailed on him to afford the unfortunate beauty all the assistance in his power.

He first shut the gate of the burial-place, which the slaves had left open; then, returning, took the lady in his arms, and laid her on the soft earth which he had thrown off the chest. As soon as she was exposed to the air, she sneezed, and, by the motion in turning her head, there came from her mouth a liquor, with which her stomach seemed to have been loaded; then opening and rubbing her eyes, she with such a voice as charmed Ganem, whom she did not see, cried out, “Zohorob Bostan, Shijher al Mirjaun, Casabos Souccar, Nouron Nihar, Nagmatos Sohi, Nonzbetos Zaman, why do you not answer? where are you?” These were the names of six female slaves that used to wait on her. She called them, and wondered that nobody answered; but at length looking about, and perceiving she was in a burial-place, was seized with fear. “What,” cried she, much louder than before, “are the dead raised? Is the day of judgment come? What a wonderful change is this from evening to morning?”

Ganem did not think fit to leave the lady any longer in her perplexity, but presented himself before her with all possible respect, and in the most courteous manner. “Madam,” said he, “I am not able to express my joy at having happened to be here to do you the service I have, and to offer you all the assistance you may need under your present circumstances.”

In order to persuade the lady to repose confidence in him, he, in the first place, told her who he was, and what accident had brought him to that place. Next he acquainted her with the coming of the three slaves, and how they had buried the chest. The lady, who had covered her face with her veil as soon as Ganem appeared, was extremely sensible of the obligations she owed him. “I return thanks to God,” said she “for having sent so worthy a person as you are to deliver me from death; but since you have begun so charitable a work, I conjure you not to leave it imperfect. Let me beg of you to go into the city, and provide a muleteer, to come with his mule, and carry me to your house in this chest; for, should I go with you on foot, my dress being different from that of the city ladies, some one might take notice of it, and follow me, which it highly concerns me to prevent. When I shall be in your house, I will give you an account of myself; and in the mean time be assured that you have not obliged an ungrateful person.”

Before the young merchant left the lady, he drew the chest out of the pit, which he filled up with earth, laid her again in the chest, and shut it in such a manner, that it did not look as if the padlock had been forced off; but for fear of stifling her, he did not put it quite close, leaving room for the admittance of air. Going out of the burial-place, he drew the door after him; and the city gate being then open, soon found what he sought. He returned with speed to the burial place, and helped the muleteer to lay the chest across his mule, telling him, to remove all cause of suspicion, that he came to that place the night before, with another muleteer, who, being in haste to return home, had laid down the chest where he saw it.

Ganem, who, since his arrival at Bagdad, had minded nothing but his business, was still unacquainted with the power of love, and now felt its first attacks. It had not been in his power to look upon the young lady without being dazzled; and the uneasiness he felt at following the muleteer at a distance, and the fear lest any accident might happen by the way that should deprive him of his conquest, taught him to unravel his thoughts. He was more than usually delighted, when, being arrived safe at home, he saw the chest unloaded. He dismissed the muleteer, and having caused a slave to shut the door of his house, opened the chest, helped the lady out, gave her his hand, and conducted her to his apartment, lamenting how much she must have endured in such close confinement. "If I have suffered," said she, "I have satisfaction sufficient in what you have done for me, and in the pleasure of seeing myself out of danger."

Though Ganem's apartment was very richly furnished, the lady did not so much regard its appearance, as she did the handsome presence and engaging mien of her deliverer, whose politeness and obliging behaviour heightened her gratitude. She sat down on a sofa, and to give the merchant to understand how sensible she was of the service done her, took off her veil. Ganem on his part was sensible of the favour so lovely a lady did in uncovering her face to him, or rather felt he had already a most violent passion for her. Whatever obligations she owed him, he thought himself more than requited by so singular a favour.

The lady dived into Ganem's thoughts, yet was not at all alarmed, because he appeared very respectful. He, judging she might have occasion to eat, and not willing to trust any but himself with the care of entertaining so charming a guest, went out with a slave to an eating-house, to give directions for an entertainment. From thence he went to a fruiterer, where he chose the finest and best fruit; buying also the choicest wine, and the same bread that was eaten at the caliph's table.

As soon as he returned home, he with his own hands made a pyramid of the fruit he had bought, and serving it up himself to the lady in a large dish, of the finest china-ware, “Madam,” said he, “be pleased to make choice of some of this fruit, while a more solid entertainment, and more worthy yourself, is preparing.” He would have continued standing before her, but she declared she would not touch any thing, unless he sat down and ate with her. He obeyed; and when they had eaten a little, Ganem observing that the lady’s veil, which she laid down by her on a sofa, was embroidered along the edge with golden letters, begged her permission to look on the embroidery. The lady immediately took up the veil, and delivered it to him, asking him whether he could read? “Madam,” replied he, with a modest air, “a merchant would be ill-qualified to manage his business if he could not at least read and write.” “Well, then,” said she, “read the words which are embroidered on that veil, which gives me an opportunity of telling you my story.”

Ganem took the veil, and read these words, “I am yours, and you are mine, thou descendant from the prophet’s uncle.” That descendant from the prophet’s uncle was the caliph Haroon al Rusheed, who then reigned, and was descended from Abbas, Mahummud’s uncle.

When Ganem perceived these words, “Alas! madam,” said he, in a melancholy tone, “I have just saved your life, and this writing is my death! I do not comprehend all the mystery; but it convinces me I am the most unfortunate of men. Pardon, madam, the liberty I take, but it was impossible for me to see you without giving you my heart. You are not ignorant yourself, that it was not in my power to refuse it you, and that makes my presumption excusable. I proposed to myself to touch your heart by my respectful behaviour, my care, my assiduity, my submission, my constancy; and no sooner have I formed the flattering design, than I am robbed of all my hopes. I cannot long survive so great a misfortune. But, be that as it will, I shall have the satisfaction of dying entirely yours. Proceed, madam, I conjure you, and give me full information of my unhappy fate.”

He could not utter those words without letting fall some tears. The lady was moved; but was so far from being displeased at the declaration he made, that she felt secret joy; for her heart began to yield. However, she concealed her feelings, and as if she had not regarded what Ganem had said. “I should have been very cautious,” answered she, “of shewing you my veil, had I thought it would have given you so much uneasiness; but I do not perceive that what I have to say to you can make your condition so deplorable as you imagine.”

“You must understand,” proceeded she, “in order to acquaint you with my story, that my name is Fetnah (which signifies disturbance), which was given me at my birth, because it was judged that the sight of me would one day occasion many calamities. Of this you cannot be ignorant, since there is nobody in Bagdad but knows that the caliph, my sovereign lord and yours, has a favourite so called.

“I was carried into his palace in my tenderest years, and I have been brought up with all the care that is usually taken with such persons of my sex as are destined to reside there. I made no little progress in all they took the pains to teach me; and that, with some share of beauty, gained me the affection of the caliph, who allotted me a particular apartment adjoining to his own. That prince was not satisfied with such a mark of distinction; he appointed twenty women to wait on me, and as many eunuchs; and ever since he has made me such considerable presents, that I saw myself richer than any queen in the world. You may judge by what I have said, that Zobeide, the caliph’s wife and kinswoman, could not but be jealous of my happiness. Though Haroon has all the regard imaginable for her, she has taken every possible opportunity to ruin me.

“Hitherto I had secured myself against all her snares, but at length I fell under the last effort of her jealousy; and, had it not been for you, must now have been exposed to inevitable death. I question not but she had corrupted one of my slaves, who last night, in some lemonade, gave me a drug, which causes such a dead sleep, that it is easy to dispose of those who have taken it; for that sleep is so profound, that nothing can dispel it for the space of seven or eight hours. I have the more reason to judge so, because naturally I am a very bad sleeper, and apt to wake at the least noise.

“Zobeide, the better to put her design in execution, has availed herself of the absence of the caliph, who went lately to put himself at the head of his troops, to chastise some neighbouring kings, who have formed a league of rebellion. Were it not for this opportunity, my rival, outrageous as she is, durst not have presumed to attempt any thing against my life. I know not what she will do to conceal this action from the caliph, but you see it highly concerns me that you should keep my secret. My life depends on it. I shall be safe in your house as long as the caliph is from Bagdad. It concerns you to keep my adventure private; for should Zobeide know the obligation I owe you, she would punish you for having saved me.

"When the caliph returns, I shall not need to be so much upon my guard. I shall find means to acquaint him with all that has happened, and I am fully persuaded he will be more earnest than myself to requite a service which restores me to his love."

As soon as Haroon al Rusheed's beautiful favourite had done speaking, Ganem said, "Madam, I return you a thousand thanks for having given me the information I took the liberty to desire of you; and I beg of you to believe, that you are here in safety; the sentiments you have inspired are a pledge of my secrecy.

"As for my slaves, they may perhaps fail of the fidelity they owe me, should they know by what accident and in what place I had the happiness to find you. I dare assure you, however, that they will not have the curiosity to inquire. It is so natural for young men to purchase beautiful slaves, that it will be no way surprising to them to see you here, believing you to be one, and that I have bought you. They will also conclude that I have some particular reasons for bringing you home as they saw I did. Set your heart, therefore, at rest, as to that point, and remain satisfied that you shall be served with all the respect that is due to the favourite of so great a monarch as our sovereign the caliph. But great as he is, give me leave, madam, to declare, that nothing can make me recall the present I have made you of my heart. I know, and shall never forget, 'that what belongs to the master is forbidden to the slave;' but I loved you before you told me that you were engaged to the caliph; it is not in my power to overcome a passion which, though now in its infancy, has all the force of a love strengthened by a perfect of situation. I wish your august and most fortunate lover may avenge you of the malice of Zobeide, by calling you back to him; and when you shall be restored to his wishes, that you may remember the unfortunate Ganem, who is no less your conquest than the caliph. Powerful as that prince is, I flatter myself he will not be able to blot me out of your remembrance. He cannot love you more passionately than I do; and I shall never cease to love you into whatever part of the world I may go to expire, after having lost you."

Fetnah perceived that Ganem was under the greatest of afflictions, and his situation affected her; but considering the uneasiness she was likely to bring upon herself, by prosecuting the conversation on that subject, which might insensibly lead her to discover the inclination she felt for him; "I perceive," said she, "that this conversation gives you too much uneasiness; let us change the subject, and talk of the infinite obligation I owe you. I can never sufficiently express my gratitude, when I reflect that, without your assistance, I should never again have beheld the light of the sun."

It was happy for them both, that somebody just then knocked at the door; Ganem went to see who it was, and found it to be one of his slaves come to acquaint him that the entertainment was ready. Ganem, who, by way of precaution, would have none of his slaves come into the room where Fetnah was, took what was brought, and served it up himself to his beautiful guest, whose soul was ravished to behold what attention he paid her.

When they had eaten, Ganem took away, as he had covered the table; and having delivered all things at the door of the apartment to his slaves, "Madam," said he to Fetnah, "you may now perhaps desire to take some rest; I will leave you, and when you have reposed yourself, you shall find me ready to receive your commands."

Having thus spoken, he left her, and went to purchase two women-slaves. He also bought two parcels, one of fine linen, and the other of all such things as were proper to make up a toilet fit for the caliph's favourite. Having conducted home the two women-slaves, he presented them to Fetnah, saying, "Madam, a person of your quality cannot be without two waiting-maids, at least, to serve you; be pleased to accept of these."

Fetnah, admiring Ganem's attention, said, "My lord, I perceive you are not one that will do things by halves: you add by your courtesy to the obligations I owe you already; but I hope I shall not die ungrateful, and that heaven will soon place me in a condition to requite all your acts of generosity."

When the women-slaves were withdrawn into a chamber adjoining, he sat down on the sofa, but at some distance from Fetnah, in token of respect. He then began to discourse of his passion. "I dare not so much as hope," said he, "to excite the least sensibility in a heart like yours, destined for the greatest prince in the world. Alas! it would be a comfort to me in my misfortune, if I could but flatter myself, that you have not looked upon the excess of my love with indifference." "My lord," answered Fetnah "Alas! madam," said Ganem, interrupting her at the word lord, "this is the second time you have done me the honour to call me lord; the presence of the women-slaves hindered me the first time from taking notice of it to you: in the name of God, madam, do not give me this title of honour; it does not belong to me; treat me, I beseech you, as your slave: I am, and shall never cease to be so."

"No, no," replied Fetnah, interrupting him in her turn, "I shall be cautious how I treat with such disrespect a man to whom I owe my life. I should be ungrateful, could I say or do any thing that did not become you. Leave me, therefore, to follow the dictates of my gratitude, and do not require of me, that I should misbehave myself towards you, in return for the benefits I have received. I shall never be guilty of such conduct; I am too sensible of your respectful behaviour to abuse it; and I will not hesitate to own, that I do not regard your care with indifference. You know the reasons that condemn me to silence."

Ganem was enraptured at this declaration; he wept for joy, and not being able to find expressions significant enough, in his own opinion, to return Fetnah thanks, was satisfied with telling her, that as she knew what she owed to the caliph, he, on his part, was not ignorant "that what belongs to the master is forbidden to the slave."

Night drawing on, he rose up to fetch a light, which he brought in himself, as also a collation.

They both sat down at table, and at first complimented each other on the fruit as they presented it reciprocally. The excellence of the wine insensibly drew them both to drink; and having drunk two or three glasses, they agreed that neither should take another glass without first singing some air. Ganem sung verses ex tempore, expressive of the vehemence of his passion; and Fetnah, encouraged by his example, composed and sung verses relating to her adventure, and always containing something which Ganem might take in a sense favourable to himself; except in this, she most exactly observed the fidelity due to the caliph. The collation continued till very late, and the night was far advanced before they thought of parting. Ganem then withdrew to another apartment, leaving Fetnah where she was, the women slaves he had bought coming in to wait upon her.

They lived together in this manner for several days. The young merchant went not abroad, unless upon of the utmost consequence, and even for that took the time when the lady was reposing; for he could not prevail upon himself to lose a moment that might be spent in her company. All his thoughts were taken up with his dear Fetnah, who, on her side, gave way to her inclination, confessed she had no less affection for him than he had for her. However, fond as they were of each other, their respect for the caliph kept them within due bounds, which still heightened their passion.

Whilst Fetnah, thus snatched from the jaws of death, passed her time so agreeably with Ganem, Zobeide was not without some apprehensions in the palace of Haroon al Rusheed.

No sooner had the three slaves, entrusted with the execution of her revenge, carried away the chest, without knowing what it contained, or so much as the least curiosity to inquire (being used to pay a blind obedience to her commands), than she was seized with a tormenting uneasiness; a thousand perplexing thoughts disturbed her rest; sleep fled from her eyes, and she spent the night in contriving how to conceal her crime. “My consort,” said she, “loves Fetnah more than ever he did any of his favourites. What shall I say to him at his return, when he inquires of me after her?” Many contrivances occurred to her, but none were satisfactory. Still she met with difficulties, and knew not where to fix. There lived with her a lady advanced in years, who had bred her up from her infancy. As soon as it was day, she sent for her, and having entrusted her with the secret, said, “My good mother, you have always assisted me with your advice; if ever I stood in need of it, it is now, when the business before you is to still my thoughts, distracted by a mortal anxiety, and to show me some way to satisfy the caliph.”

"My dear mistress," replied the old lady, "it had been much better not to have run yourself into the difficulties you labour under; but since the thing is done, the best consolation is to think no more of it. All that must now be thought of, is how to deceive the commander of the believers; and I am of opinion, that you should immediately cause a wooden image resembling a dead body to be carved. We will shroud it up in linen, and when shut up in a coffin, it shall be buried in some part of the palace; you shall then immediately cause a marble mausoleum to be built, in the form of a dome, over the burial place, and erect a tomb, which shall be covered with embroidered cloth, and set about with great candlesticks and large wax tapers. There is another thing," added the old lady, "which ought not to be forgotten; you must put on mourning, and cause the same to be done by your own and Fetnah's women, your eunuchs, and all the officers of the palace. When the caliph returns, and sees you all and the palace in mourning, he will not fail to ask the occasion of it. You will then have an opportunity of insinuating yourself into his favour, by saying, it was out of respect to him that you paid the last honours to Fetnah, snatched away by sudden death. You may tell him, you have caused a mausoleum to be built, and, in short, that you have paid all the last honours to his favourite, as he would have done himself had he been present. His passion for her being extraordinary, he will certainly go to shed tears upon her grave; and perhaps," added the old woman, "he will not believe she is really dead. He may, possibly, suspect you have turned her out of the palace through jealousy, and look upon all the mourning as an artifice to deceive him, and prevent his making inquiries after her. It is likely he will cause the coffin to be taken up and opened, and it is certain he will be convinced of her death, as soon as he shall see the figure of a dead body buried. He will be pleased with all you shall have done, and express his gratitude. As for the wooden image, I will myself undertake to have it cut by a carver in the city, who shall not know the purpose for which it is designed. As for your part, madam, order Fetnah's woman, who yesterday gave her the lemonade, to give out, among her companions, that she has just found her mistress dead in her bed; and in order that they may only think of lamenting, without offering to go into her chamber, let her add, she has already acquainted you with the circumstance, and that you have ordered Mesrour to cause her to be buried."

As soon as the old lady had spoken, Zobeide took a rich diamond ring out of her casket, and putting it on her finger, and embracing her in a transport of joy, said, "How infinitely am I beholden to you, my good mother! I should never have thought of so ingenious a contrivance. It cannot fail of success, and I begin to recover my peace. I leave the care of the wooden figure to you, and will go myself to order the rest."

The wooden image was got ready with as much expedition as Zobeide could have wished, and then conveyed by the old lady herself into Fetnah's bed-chamber, where she dressed it like a dead body, and put it into a coffin. Then Mesrour, who was himself deceived by it, caused the coffin and the representation of Fetnah to be carried away, and buried with the usual ceremonies in the place appointed by Zobeide, the favourite's women weeping and lamenting, she who had given her the lemonade setting them an example by her cries and lamentations.

That very day Zobeide sent for the architect of the palace, and, according to orders, the mausoleum was finished in a short time. Such potent princesses as the consort of a monarch, whose power extended from east to west, are always punctually obeyed in whatsoever they command. She soon put on mourning with all the court; so that the news of Fetnah's death was quickly spread over the city.

Ganem was one of the last who heard of it; for, as I have before observed, he hardly ever went abroad. Being, however, at length informed of it, "Madam," said he to the caliph's fair favourite, "you are supposed in Bagdad to be dead, and I do not question but that Zobeide herself believes it. I bless heaven that I am the cause, and the happy witness of your being alive; would to God, that, taking advantage of this false report, you would share my fortune, and go far from hence to reign in my heart! But whither does this pleasing transport carry me? I do not consider that you are born to make the greatest prince in the world happy; and that only Haroon al Rusheed is worthy of you. Supposing you could resolve to give him up for me, and that you would follow me, ought I to consent? No, it is my part always to remember, 'that what belongs to the master is forbidden to the slave.'"

The lovely Fetnah, though moved by the tenderness of the passion he expressed, yet prevailed with herself not to encourage it. "My lord," said she to him, "we cannot obstruct the momentary triumph of Zobeide. I am not surprised at the artifice she uses to conceal her guilt: but let her go on; I flatter myself that sorrow will soon follow her triumph. The caliph will return, and we shall find the means privately to inform him of all that has happened. In the mean time let us be more cautious than ever, that she may not know I am alive. I have already told you the consequences to be apprehended from such a discovery."

At the end of three months the caliph returned to Bagdad with glory, having vanquished all his enemies. He entered the palace with impatience to embrace Fetnah; but was amazed to see all the officers in mourning; and his concern was redoubled when, approaching the apartment of Zobeide, he beheld that princess coming to meet him in mourning with all her women. He immediately asked her the cause, with much agitation. "Commander of the believers," answered Zobeide, "I am in mourning for your slave Fetnah; who died so suddenly that it was impossible to apply any remedy to her disorder." She would have proceeded, but the caliph did not give her time, being so agitated at the news, that he uttered a feeble exclamation, and fainted. On recovering himself, he, with a feeble voice, which sufficiently expressed his extreme grief, asked where his dear Fetnah had been buried. "Sir," said Zobeide, "I myself took care of her funeral, and spared no cost to make it magnificent. I have caused a marble mausoleum to be built over her grave, and will attend you thither if you desire."

The caliph would not permit Zobeide to take that trouble, but contented himself to have Mesrour to conduct him. He went thither just as he was, in his camp dress. When he saw the tomb, the wax-lights round it, and the magnificence of the mausoleum, he was amazed that Zobeide should have performed the obsequies of her rival with so much pomp; and being naturally of a jealous temper, suspected his wife's generosity and fancied his mistress might perhaps be yet alive; that Zobeide, taking advantage of his long absence, might have turned her out of the palace, ordering those she had entrusted to conduct her, to convey her so far off that she might never more be heard of. This was all he suspected; for he did not think Zobeide wicked enough to have attempted the life of his favourite.

The better to discover the truth himself, he ordered the tomb to be removed, and caused the grave and the coffin to be opened in his presence; but when he saw the linen wrapped round the wooden image, he durst not proceed any farther. This devout caliph thought it would be a sacrilegious act to suffer the body of the dead lady to be touched; and this scrupulous fear prevailed over his love and curiosity. He doubted not of Fetnah's death. He caused the coffin to be shut up again, the grave to be filled, and the tomb to be made as it was before.

The caliph thinking himself obliged to pay some respect to the grave of his favourite, sent for the ministers of religion, the officers of the palace, and the readers of the Koraun; and, whilst they were collecting together, he remained in the mausoleum, moistening with his tears the marble that covered the phantom of his mistress. When all the persons he had sent for were come, he stood before the tomb, and recited long prayers; after which the readers of the Koraun read several, chapters.

The same ceremony was performed every day for a whole month, morning and evening, the caliph being always present, with the grand vizier, and the principal officers of the court, all of them in mourning, as well as the caliph himself, who all the time ceased not to honour the memory of Fetnah with his tears, and would not hear of any business.

The last day of the month, the prayers and reading of the Koraun lasted from morning till break of day the next morning. The caliph, being tired with sitting up so long, went to take some rest in his apartment, and fell asleep upon a sofa, between two of the court ladies, one of them sitting at the bed's-head, and the other at the feet, who, whilst he slept, were working some embroidery, and observed a profound silence.

She who sat at the bed's-head, and whose name was Nouron-Nihar, perceiving the caliph was asleep, whispered to the other, called Nagmatos Sohi, “There is great news! The commander of the believers our master will be overjoyed when he awakes, and hears what I have to tell him; Fetnah is not dead, she is in perfect health.” “O heavens!” cried Nagmatos Sohi, in a transport of joy, “is it possible, that the beautiful, the charming, the incomparable Fetnah should be still among the living?” She uttered these words with so much vivacity, and so loud, that the caliph awoke. He asked why they had disturbed his rest? “Alas! my sovereign lord,” answered the slave, “pardon me this indiscretion; I could not without transport hear that Fetnah is still alive; it caused such emotion in me, as I could not suppress.” “What then is become of her,” demanded the caliph, “if she is not dead?” “Chief of the believers,” replied the other, “I this evening received a note from a person unknown, written with Fetnah’s own hand; she gives me an account of her melancholy adventure, and orders me to acquaint you with it. I thought fit, before I fulfilled my commission, to let you take some few moments’ rest, believing you must stand in need of it, after your fatigue; and — —”

“Give me that note,” said the caliph, interrupting her eagerly, “you were wrong to defer delivering it to me.”

The slave immediately presented to him the note, which he opened with much impatience, and in it Fetnah gave a particular account of all that had befallen her, but enlarged a little too much on the attentions of Ganem. The caliph, who was naturally jealous, instead of being provoked at the inhumanity of Zobeide, was more concerned at the infidelity he fancied Fetnah had been guilty of towards him. “Is it so?” said he, after reading the note; “the perfidious wretch has been four months with a young merchant, and has the effrontery to boast of his attention to her. Thirty days are past since my return to Bagdad, and she now thinks of sending me news of herself. Ungrateful creature! whilst I spend the days in bewailing her, she passes them in betraying me. Go to, let us take vengeance of a bold woman, and that bold youth who affronts me.” Having spoken these words, the caliph rose, and went into a hall where he used to appear in public, and give audience to his court. The first gate was opened, and immediately all the courtiers, who were waiting without, entered. The grand vizier, came in, and prostrated himself before the throne. Then rising, he stood before his master, who, in a tone which denoted he would be instantly obeyed, said to him, “Jaaffier, your presence is requisite, for putting in execution an important affair I am about to commit to you. Take four hundred men of my guards with you, and first inquire where a merchant of Damascus lives whose name is Ganem, the son of Abou Ayoub. When you have learnt this, repair to his house, and cause it to be razed to the foundations; but first secure Ganem, and bring him hither, with my slave Fetnah, who has lived with him these four months. I will punish her, and make an example of that insolent man, who has presumed to fail in respell to me.”

The grand vizier, having received this positive command, made a low prostration to the caliph, having his hand on his head, in token that he would rather lose it than disobey him, and departed. The first thing he did, was to send to the syndic of the dealers in foreign stuffs and silks, with strict orders to find out the house of the unfortunate merchant. The officer he sent with these orders brought him back word, that he had scarcely been seen for some months, and no man knew what could keep him at home, if he was there. The same officer likewise told Jaaffier where Ganem lived.

Upon this information, that minister, without losing time, went to the judge of the police, whom he caused to bear him company, and attended by a great number of carpenters and masons, with the necessary tools for razing a house, came to Ganem’s residence; and finding it stood detached from any other, he posted his soldiers round it, to prevent the young merchant’s making his escape.

Fetnah and Ganem had just dined: the lady was sitting at a window next the street; hearing a noise, she looked out through the lattice, and seeing the grand vizier, approach with his attendants, concluded she was their object as well as Ganem. She perceived her note had been received, but had not expected such a consequence, having hoped that the caliph would have taken the matter in a different light. She knew not how long the prince had been returned from his campaign, and though she was acquainted with his jealous temper, yet apprehended nothing on that account. However, the sight of the grand vizier, and the soldiers made her tremble, not indeed for herself, but for Ganem: she did not question clearing herself, provided the caliph would but hear her. As for Ganem, whom she loved less out of gratitude than inclination, she plainly foresaw that his incensed rival might be apt to condemn him, on account of his youth and person. Full of this thought, she turned to the young merchant and said, “Alas! Ganem, we are undone.” Ganem looked through the lattice, and was seized with dread, when he beheld the caliph’s guards with their naked cimeters, and the grand vizier, with the civil magistrate at the head of them. At this sight he stood motionless, and had not power to utter one word. “Ganem,” said the favourite, “there is no time to be lost; if you love me, put on the habit of one of your slaves immediately, and disfigure your face and arms with soot. Then put some of these dishes on your head; you may be taken for a servant belonging to the eating house, and they will let you pass. If they happen to ask you where the master of the house is, answer, without any hesitation, that he is within.” “Alas! madam,” answered Harem, concerned for himself than for Fetnah, “you only take care of me, what will become of you?” “Let not that trouble you,” replied Fetnah, “it is my part to look to that. As for what you leave in this house, I will take care of it, and I hope it will be one day faithfully restored to you, when the caliph’s anger shall be over; but at present avoid his fury. The orders he gives in the heat of passion are always fatal.” The young merchant’s affliction was so great, that he knew not what course to pursue, and would certainly have suffered himself to be seized by the caliph’s soldiers, had not Fetnah pressed him to disguise himself. He submitted to her persuasions, put on the habit of a slave, daubed himself with soot, and as they were knocking at the door, all they could do was to embrace each other tenderly. They were both so overwhelmed with sorrow, that they could not utter a word. Thus they parted. Ganem went out with some dishes on his head: he was taken for the servant of an eating-house, and no one offered to stop him. On the contrary, the grand vizier, who was the first that met him, gave way and let him pass, little thinking that he was the man he looked for. Those who were behind the grand vizier, made way as he had done, and thus favoured his escape He soon reached one of the gates, and got clear of the city.

Whilst he was making the best of his way from the grand vizier, that minister came into the room where Fetnah was sitting on a sofa, and where there were many chests full of Ganem’s clothes, and of the money he had made of his goods.

As soon as Fetnah saw the grand vizier, come into the room, she fell upon her face, and continuing in that posture, as it were to receive her death; “My lord,” said she, “I am ready to undergo the sentence passed against me by the commander of the believers; you need only make it known to me.” “Madam,” answered Jaaffier, falling also down till she had raised herself, “God forbid any man should presume to lay profane hands on you. I do not intend to offer you the least harm. I have no farther orders, than to intreat you will be pleased to go with me to the palace, and to conduct you thither, with the merchant that lives in this house.” “My lord,” replied the favourite, “let us go; I am ready to follow you. As for the young merchant, to whom I am indebted for my life, he is not here, he has been gone about a month since to Damascus, whither his business called him, and has left these chests you see under my care, till he returns. I conjure you to cause them to be carried to the palace, and order them to be secured, that I may perform the promise I made him to take all possible care of them.”

“You shall be obeyed,” said Jaaffier, and immediately sent for porters, whom he commanded to take up the chests, and carry them to Mesrour.

As soon as the porters were gone, he whispered the civil magistrate, committing to him the care of seeing the house razed, but first to cause diligent search to be made for Ganem, who, he suspected, might be hidden, notwithstanding what Fetnah had told him. He then went out, taking her with him, attended by the two slaves who waited on her. As for Ganem’s slaves, they were not regarded; they ran in among the crowd, and it was not known what became of them.

No sooner was Jaaffier out of the house, than the masons and carpenters began to demolish it, and did their business so effectually, that in a few hours none of it remained. But the civil magistrate, not finding Ganem, after the strictest search, sent to acquaint the grand vizier, before that minister reached the palace. “Well,” said Haroon al Rusheed, seeing him come into his closet, “have you executed my orders?” “Yes,” answered Jaaffier “the house Ganem lived in is levelled with the ground, and I have brought you your favourite

Fetnah; she is at your closet door, and I will call her in, if you command me. As for the young merchant, we could not find him, though every place has been searched, and Fetnah affirms that he has been gone a month to Damascus."

Never was passion equal to that of the caliph, when he heard that Ganem had made his escape. As for his favourite, believing that she had been false to him, he would neither see nor speak to her. "Mesrour," said he to the chief of the eunuchs, who was then present, "take the ungrateful and perfidious Fetnah, and shut her up in the dark tower." That tower was within the precinct of the palace, and commonly served as a prison for the favourites who any way offended the caliph.

Mesrour being used to execute his sovereign's orders, however unjust, without making any answer, obeyed this with some reluctance. He signified his concern to Fetnah, who was the more grieved because she had assured herself, that the caliph would not refuse to speak to her. She was obliged to submit to her hard fate, and to follow Mesrour, who conducted her to the dark tower, and there left her.

In the mean time, the enraged caliph dismissed his grand vizier, and only hearkening to his passion, wrote the following letter with his own hand to the king of Syria, his cousin and tributary, who resided at Damascus.

"This letter is to inform you, that a merchant of Damascus, whose name is Ganem, the son of Abou Ayoub, has seduced the most amiable of my women slaves, called Fetnah, and is fled. It is my will, that when you have read my letter, you cause search to be made for Ganem, and secure him. When he is in your power, you shall cause him to be loaded with irons, and for three days successively let him receive fifty strokes of the bastinado. Then let him be led through all parts of the city by a crier, proclaiming, 'This is the smallest punishment the commander of the believers inflicts on him that offends his lord, and debauches one of his slaves.' After that you shall send him to me under a strong guard. It is my will that you cause his house to be plundered; and after it has been razed, order the materials to be carried out of the city into the middle of the plain. Besides this, if he has father, mother, sister, wives, daughters, or other kindred, cause them to be stripped; and when they are naked, expose them three days to the whole city, forbidding any person on pain of death to afford them shelter. I expect you will without delay execute my command."

The caliph having written this letter, dispatched it by an express, ordering him to make all possible speed, and to take pigeons along with him, that he might the sooner hear what had been done by Mahummud Zinebi.

The pigeons of Bagdad have this peculiar quality, that from wherever they may be carried to, they return to Bagdad as soon as they are set at liberty, especially when they have young ones. A letter rolled up is made fast under their wing, and by that means advice is speedily received from such places as it is desired.

The caliph's courier travelled night and day, as his master's impatience required; and being come to Damascus, went directly to king Zinebi's palace, who sat upon his throne to receive the caliph's letter. The courier having delivered it, Mahummud looking at it, and knowing the hand, stood up to shew his respect, kissed the letter, and laid it on his head, to denote he was ready submissively to obey the orders it contained. He opened it, and having read it, immediately descended from his throne, and without losing time, mounted on horseback with the principal officers of his household. He sent for the civil magistrate; and went directly to Ganem's house, attended by all his guards.

Ganem's mother had never received any letter from him since he had left Damascus; but the other merchants with whom he went to Bagdad were returned, and all of them told her they had left her son in perfect however, seeing he did not return, she could not but be persuaded that he was dead, and was so fully convinced of this in her imagination, that she went into mourning. She bewailed Ganem as if she had seen him die, and had herself closed his eyes: never mother expressed greater sorrow; and so far was she from seeking any comfort, that she delighted in indulging her grief. She had caused a dome to be built in the middle of the court belonging to her house, in which she placed a tomb. She spent the greatest part of the days and nights in weeping under that dome, as if her son had been buried there: her daughter bore her company, and mixed her tears with hers.

It was now some time since they had thus devoted themselves to sorrow, and the neighbourhood, hearing their cries and lamentations, pitied such tender relations, when king Mahummud Zinebi knocked at the door, which being opened by a slave belonging to the family, he hastily entered the house, inquiring for Ganem, the son of Abou Ayoub.

Though the slave had never seen king Zinebi, she guessed by his retinue that he must be one of the principal officers of Damascus. "My lord," said she, "that Ganem you inquire for is dead; my mistress, his mother, is in that monument, lamenting him." The king, not regarding what was said by the slave, caused all the house to be diligently searched by his guards for Ganem. He then advanced towards the monument, where he saw the mother and daughter sitting on a mat, and their faces appeared to him bathed in tears. These poor women immediately veiled themselves, as soon as they beheld a man at the door of the dome; but the mother, knowing the king of Damascus, got up, and ran to cast herself at his feet. "My good lady," said he, "I was looking for your son, Ganem, is he here?" "Alas! sir," cried the mother, "it is a long time since he has ceased to be: would to God I had at least put him into his coffin with my own hands, and had had the comfort of having his bones in this monument! O my son, my dear son!" She would have said more, but was oppressed with such violent sorrow that she was unable to proceed.

Zinebi was moved; for he was a prince of a mild nature, and had much compassion for the sufferings of the unfortunate. "If Ganem alone be guilty," thought he to himself, "why should the mother and the daughter, who are innocent, be punished? Ah! cruel Haroon al Rusheed! what a mortification do you put upon me, in making me the executioner of your vengeance, obliging me to persecute persons who have not offended you."

The guards whom the king had ordered to search for Ganem, came and told him their search had been vain. He was fully convinced of this; the tears of those two women would not leave him any room to doubt. It distracted him to be obliged to execute the caliph's order. "My good lady," said he to Ganem's mother, "quit this monument with your daughter, it is no place of safety for you."

They went out, and he, to secure them against any insult, took off his own robe, and covered them both with it, bidding them keep close to him. He then ordered the populace to be let in to plunder, which was performed with the utmost rapaciousness, and with shouts which terrified Ganem's mother and sister the more, because they knew not the reason. The rabble carried off the richest goods, chests full of wealth, fine Persian and Indian carpets, cushions covered with cloth of gold and silver, fine China ware; in short, all was taken away, till nothing remained but the bare walls of the house: and it was a dismal spectacle for the unhappy ladies, to see all their goods plundered, without knowing why they were so cruelly treated.

When the house was plundered, Mahummud ordered the civil magistrate to raze the house and monument; and while that was doing, he carried away the mother and daughter to his palace. There it was he redoubled their affliction, by acquainting them with the caliph's will. "He commands me," said he to them, "to cause you to be stripped, and exposed naked for three days to the view of the people. It is with the utmost reluctance that I execute such a cruel and ignominious sentence." The king delivered these words with such an air, as plainly made it appear his heart was really pierced with grief and compassion. Though the fear of being dethroned prevented his following the dictates of his pity, yet he in some measure moderated the rigour of the caliph's orders, by causing large shifts, without sleeves, to be made of coarse horse-hair for Ganem's mother, and his sister.

The next day, these two victims of the caliph's rage were stripped of their clothes, and their horse-hair shifts put upon them; their head-dress was also taken away, so that their dishevelled hair hung floating on their backs. The daughter had the finest hair, and it hung down to the ground. In this condition they were exposed to the people. The civil magistrate, attended by his officers, were along with them, and they were conducted through the city. A crier went before them, who every now and then cried, "This is the punishment due to those who have drawn on themselves the indignation of the commander of the believers."

Whilst they walked in this manner along the streets of Damascus, with their arms and feet naked, clad in such a strange garment, and endeavouring to hide their confusion under their hair, with which they covered their faces, all the people were dissolved in tears; more especially the ladies, considering them as innocent persons, as they beheld them through their lattice windows, and being particularly moved by the daughter's youth and beauty, they made the air ring with their shrieks, as they passed before their houses. The very children, frightened at those shrieks, and at the spectacle that occasioned them, mixed their cries with the general lamentation. In short, had an enemy been in Damascus, putting all to fire and sword, the consternation could not have been greater.

It was near night when this dismal scene concluded. The mother and daughter were both conducted back to king Mahummud's palace. Not being used to walk bare-foot, they were so spent, that they lay a long time in a swoon. The queen of Damascus, highly afflicted at their misfortunes, notwithstanding the caliph's prohibition to relieve them, sent some of her women to comfort them, with all sorts of refreshments and wine, to recover their spirits.

The queen's women found them still in a swoon, and almost past receiving any benefit by what they offered them. However, with much difficulty they were brought to themselves. Ganem's mother immediately returned them thanks for their courtesy. "My good madam," said one of the queen's ladies to her, "we are highly concerned at your affliction, and the queen of Syria, our mistress, has done us a favour in employing us to assist you. We can assure you, that princess is much afflicted at your misfortunes, as well as the king her consort." Ganem's mother entreated the queen's women to return her majesty a thousand thanks from her and her daughter, and then directing her discourse to the lady who spoke to her, "Madam," said she, "the king has not told me why the chief of the believers inflicts so many outrages on us: pray be pleased to tell us what crimes we have been guilty of." "My good lady," answered the other, "the origin of your misfortunes proceeds from your son Ganem. He is not dead, as you imagine. He is accused of having seduced the beautiful Fetnah, the best beloved of the caliph's favourites; but having, by flight, withdrawn himself from that prince's indignation, the punishment is fallen on you. All condemn the caliph's resentment, but all fear him; and you see king Zinebi himself dares not resist his orders, for fear of incurring his displeasure. All we can do is to pity you, and exhort you to have patience."

"I know my son," answered Ganem's mother; "I have educated him carefully, and in that respect which is due to the commander of the believers. He cannot have committed the crime he is accused of; I dare answer for his innocence. But I will cease to murmur and complain, since it is for him that I suffer, and he is not dead. O Ganem!" added she, in a transport of affection and joy, "my dear son Ganem! is possible that you are still alive? I am no longer concerned for the loss of my fortune; and how harsh and unjust soever the caliph's orders may be, I forgive him, provided heaven has preserved my son. I am only concerned for my daughter; her sufferings alone afflict me; yet I believe her to be so good a sister as to follow my example."

On hearing these words, the young lady, who till then had appeared insensible, turned to her mother, and clasping her arms about her neck, "Yes, dear mother," said she, "I will always follow your example, whatever extremity your love for my brother may reduce us to."

The mother and daughter thus interchanging their sighs and tears, continued a considerable time in such moving embraces. In the mean time the queen's women, who were much affected at the spectacle, omitted no persuasions to prevail with Ganem's mother to take some sustenance. She ate a morsel out of complaisance, and her daughter did the like.

The caliph having ordered that Ganem's kindred should be exposed three days successively to the sight of the people, in the condition already mentioned, the unhappy ladies afforded the same spectacle the second time next day, from morning till night. But that day and the following, the streets, which at first had been full of people, were now quite empty. All the merchants, incensed at the ill usage of Abou Ayoub's widow and daughter, shut up their shops, and kept themselves close within their houses. The ladies, instead of looking through their lattice windows, withdrew into the back parts of their houses. There was not a person to be seen in the public places through which those unfortunate women were carried. It seemed as if all the inhabitants of Damascus had abandoned their city.

On the fourth day, the king resolving punctually to obey the caliph's orders, though he did not approve of them, sent criers into all quarters of the city to make proclamation, strictly commanding all the inhabitants of Damascus, and strangers, of what condition soever, upon pain of death, and having their bodies cast to the dogs to be devoured, not to receive Ganem's mother and sister into their houses, or give them a morsel of bread or a drop of water, and, in a word, not to afford them the least support, or hold the least correspondence with them.

When the criers had performed what the king had enjoined them, that prince ordered the mother and the daughter to be turned out of the palace, and left to their choice to go where they thought fit. As soon as they appeared, all persons fled from them, so great an impression had the late prohibition made upon all. They easily perceived that every body shunned them; but not knowing the reason, were much surprised; and their amazement was the greater, when coming into any street, or among any persons, they recollected some of their best friends, who immediately retreated with as much haste as the rest. "What is the meaning of this," said Ganem's mother; "do we carry the plague about us? Must the unjust and barbarous usage we have received render us odious to our fellow-citizens? Come, my child," added she, "let us depart from Damascus with all speed; let us not stay any longer in a city where we are become frightful to our very friends."

The two wretched ladies, discoursing in this manner, came to one of the extremities of the city, and retired to a ruined house to pass the night. Thither some Mussulmauns, out of charity and compassion, resorted to them after the day was shut in. They carried them provisions, but durst not stay to comfort them, for fear of being discovered, and punished for disobeying the caliph's orders.

In the mean time king Zinebi had let fly a pigeon to give the caliph an account of his exact obedience. He informed him of all that had been executed, and conjured him to direct what he would have done with Ganem's mother and sister. He soon received the caliph's answer in the same way, which was, that he should banish them from Damascus for ever. Immediately the king of Syria sent men to the old house, with orders to take the mother and daughter, and to conduct them three days' journey from Damascus, and there to leave them, forbidding them ever to return to the city.

Zinebi's men executed their commission, but being less exact their master, in the strict performance of the caliph's orders, they in pity gave the wretched ladies some small pieces of money, and each of them a scrip, which they hung about their necks, to carry their provisions.

In this miserable state they came to the first village. The peasants' wives flocked about them, and, as it appeared through their disguise that they were people of some condition, asked them what was the occasion of their travelling in a habit that did not seem to belong to them. Instead of answering the question, they fell to weeping, which only served to heighten the curiosity of the peasants, and to move their compassion. Ganem's mother told them what she and her daughter had endured; at which the good countrywomen were sensibly afflicted, and endeavoured to comfort them. They treated them as well as their poverty would permit, took off their horse-hair shifts, which were very uneasy to them, and put on them others which they gave them, with shoes, and something to cover their heads, and save their hair.

Having expressed their gratitude to those charitable women, Jalib al Koolloob and her mother departed from that village, taking short journeys towards Aleppo. They used at dusk to retire near or into the mosques, where they passed the night on the mat, if there was any, or else on the bare pavement; and sometimes rested in the public places appointed for the use of travellers. As for sustenance, they did not want, for they often came to places where bread, boiled rice, and other provisions are distributed to all travellers who desire it.

At length they came to Aleppo, but would not stay there, and continuing their journey towards the Euphrates, crossed the river, and entered Mesopotamia, which they traversed as far as Moussoul. Thence, notwithstanding all they had endured, they proceeded to Bagdad. That was the place they had fixed their thoughts upon, hoping to find Ganem, though they ought not to have fancied that he was in a city where the caliph resided; but they hoped, because they wished it; their affection for him increasing instead of diminishing, with their misfortunes. Their conversation was generally about him, and they inquired for him of all they met. But let us leave Jalib al Koolloob and her mother, and return to Fetnah.

She was still confined closely in the dark tower, since the day that had been so fatal to Ganem and herself. However, disagreeable as her prison was to her, it was much less grievous than the thoughts of Ganem's misfortune, the uncertainty of whose fate was a killing affliction. There was scarcely a moment in which she did not lament him.

The caliph was accustomed to walk frequently at night within the enclosure of his palace, for he was the most inquisitive prince in the world, and sometimes, by those night-walks, came to the knowledge of things that happened in his court, which would otherwise never have reached his ear. One of those nights, in his walk, he happened to pass by the dark tower, and fancying he heard somebody talk, stops, and drawing near the door to listen, distinctly heard these words, which Fetnah, whose thoughts were always on Ganem, uttered with a loud voice: "O Ganem, too unfortunate Ganem! where are you at this time, whither has thy cruel fate led thee? Alas! it is I that have made you wretched! why did you not let me perish miserably, rather than afford me your generous relief? What melancholy return have you received for your care and respect? The commander of the faithful, who ought to have rewarded, persecutes you; and in requital for having always regarded me as a person reserved for his bed, you lose your fortune, and are obliged to seek for safety in flight. O caliph, barbarous caliph, how can you exculpate yourself, when you shall appear with Ganem before the tribunal of the Supreme Judge, and the angels shall testify the truth before your face? All the power you are now invested with, and which makes almost the whole world tremble, will not prevent your being condemned and punished for your violent and unjust proceedings." Here Fetnah ceased her complaints, her sighs and tears putting a stop to her utterance.

This was enough to make the caliph reflect. He plainly perceived, that if what he had heard was true, his favourite must be innocent, and that he had been too hasty in giving such orders against Ganem and his family. Being resolved to be rightly informed in an affair which so nearly concerned him in point of equity, on which he valued himself, he immediately returned to his apartment, and that moment ordered Mesrour to repair to the dark tower, and bring Fetnah before him.

By this command, and much more by the caliph's manner of speaking, the chief of the eunuchs guessed that his master designed to pardon his favourite, and take her to him again. He was overjoyed at the thought, for he respected Fetnah, and had been much concerned at her disgrace; therefore flying instantly to the tower, "Madam," said he to the favourite, with such an air as expressed his satisfaction, "be pleased to follow me; I hope you will never more return to this melancholy abode: the commander of the faithful wishes to speak with you, and I draw from this a happy omen."

Fetnah followed Mesrour, who conducted her into the caliph's closet. She prostrated herself before him, and so continued, her face bathed in tears. "Fetnah," said the caliph, without bidding her rise, "I think you charge me with violence and injustice. Who is he, that, notwithstanding the regard and respell he had for me, is in a miserable condition? Speak freely, you know the natural goodness of my disposition, and that I love to do justice."

By these words the favourite was convinced that the caliph had heard what she had said, and availed herself of so favourable an opportunity to clear Ganem. "Commander of the true believers," said she, "if I have let fall any word that is not agreeable to your majesty, I most humbly beseech you to forgive me; but he whose innocence and wretched state you desire to be informed of is Ganem, the unhappy son of Abou Ayoub, late a rich merchant of Damascus. He saved my life from a grave, and afforded me a sanctuary in his house. I must own, that, from the first moment he saw me, he perhaps designed to devote himself to me, and conceived hopes of engaging me to admit his love. I guessed at this, by the eagerness which he shewed in entertaining me, and doing me all the good offices I so much wanted under the circumstances I was then in; but as soon as he heard that I had the honour to belong to you, 'Ah, madam,' said he, 'that which belongs to the master is forbidden to the slave.' From that moment, I owe this justice to his virtue to declare, his behaviour was always suitable to his words. You, commander of the true believers, well know with what rigour you have treated him, and you will answer for it before the tribunal of God.”

The caliph was not displeased with Fetnah for the freedom of these words; “But may I,” said he, “rely on the assurance you give me of Ganem’s virtue?” “Yes,” replied Fetnah, “you may. I would not for the world conceal the truth from you; and to prove to you that I am sincere, I must make a confession, which perhaps may displease you, but I beg pardon of your majesty beforehand.” “Speak, daughter,” said Haroon al Rusheed, “I forgive you all, provided you conceal nothing from me.” “Well, then,” replied Fetnah, “let me inform you, that Ganem’s respectful behaviour, joined to all the good offices he did me, gained him my esteem. I went further yet: you know the tyranny of love: I felt some tender inclination rising in my breast. He perceived it; but far from availing himself of my frailty, and notwithstanding the flame which consumed him, he still remained steady in his duty, and all that his passion could force from him were the words I have already repeated to your majesty, ‘That which belongs to the master is forbidden to the slave.’”

This ingenuous confession might have provoked any other man than the caliph; but it completely appeased that prince. He commanded her to rise, and making her sit by him, “Tell me your story,” said he, “from the beginning to the end.” She did so, with artless simplicity, passing slightly over what regarded Zobeide, and enlarging on the obligations she owed to Ganem; but above all, she highly extolled his discretion, endeavouring by that means to make the caliph sensible that she had been under the necessity of remaining concealed in Ganem’s house, to deceive Zobeide. She concluded with the young merchant’s escape, which she plainly told the caliph she had compelled him to, that he might avoid his indignation.

When she had done speaking, the caliph said to her, “I believe all you have told me; but why was it so long before you let me hear from you? Was there any need of staying a whole month after my return, before you sent me word where you were?” “Commander of the true believers,” answered Fetnah, “Ganem went abroad so very seldom, that you need not wonder we were not the first that heard of your return. Besides, Ganem, who took upon him to deliver the letter I wrote to Nouron Nihar, was a long time before he could find an opportunity of putting it into her own hands."

"It is enough, Fetnah," replied the caliph; "I acknowledge my fault, and would willingly make amends for it, by heaping favours on the young merchant of Damascus. Consider, therefore, what I can do for him. Ask what you think fit, and I will grant it." Hereupon the favourite fell down at the caliph's feet, with her face to the ground; and rising again, said, "Commander of the true believers, after returning your majesty thanks for Ganem, I most humbly entreat you to cause it to be published throughout your do minions, that you pardon the son of Abou Ayoub, and that he may safely come to you." "I must do more," rejoined the prince, "in requital for having saved your life, and the respect he has strewn for me, to make amends for the loss of his fortune. In short, to repair the wrong I have done to himself and his family, I give him to you for a husband." Fetnah had no words expressive enough to thank the caliph for his generosity: she then withdrew into the apartment she had occupied before her melancholy adventure. The same furniture was still in it, nothing had been removed; but that which pleased her most was, to find Ganem's chests and bales, which Mesrour had received the caliph's orders to convey thither.

The next day Haroon al Rusheed ordered the grand vizier, to cause proclamation to be made throughout all his dominions, that he pardoned Ganem the son of Abou Ayoub; but this proved of no effect, for a long time elapsed without any news of the young merchant. Fetnah concluded, that he had not been able to survive the pain of losing her. A dreadful uneasiness seized her mind; but as hope is the last thing which forsakes lovers, she entreated the caliph to give her leave to seek for Ganem herself; which being granted, she took a purse containing a thousand pieces of gold, and went one morning out of the palace, mounted on a mule from the caliph's stables, very richly caparisoned. Black eunuchs attended her, with a hand placed on each side of the mule's back.

Thus she went from mosque to mosque, bestowing her alms among the devotees of the Mahummedan religion, desiring their prayers for the accomplishment of an affair, on which the happiness of two persons, she told them, depended. She spend the whole day and the thousand pieces of gold in giving alms at the mosques, and returned to the palace in the evening.

The next day she took another purse of the same value, and in the like equipage as the day before, went to the square of the jewellers' shops, and stopping at the gateway without alighting, sent one of her black eunuchs for the syndic or chief of them. The syndic, who was a most charitable man, and spent above two-thirds of his income in relieving poor strangers, sick or in distress, did not make Fetnah wait, knowing by her dress that she was a lady belonging to the palace. "I apply myself to you," said she, putting the purse into his hands, "as a person whose piety is celebrated throughout the city. I desire you to distribute that gold among the poor strangers you relieve, for I know you make it your business to assist those who apply to your charity. I am also satisfied that you prevent their wants, and that nothing is more grateful to you, than to have an opportunity of relieving their misery." "Madam," answered the syndic, "I shall obey your commands with pleasure; but if you desire to exercise your charity in person, and will be pleased to step to my house, you will there see two women worthy of your compassion; I met them yesterday as they were coming into the city; they were in a deplorable condition, and it moved me the more, because I thought they were persons of rank. Through all the rags that covered them, notwithstanding the impression the sun has made on their faces, I discovered a noble air, not to be commonly found in those people I relieve. I carried them both to my house, and delivered them to my wife, who was of the same opinion with me. She caused her slaves to provide them good beds, whilst she herself led them to our warm bath, and gave them clean linen. We know not as yet who they are, because we wish to let them take some rest before we trouble them with our questions."

Fetnah, without knowing why, felt a curiosity to see them. The syndic would have conducted her to his house, but she would not give him the trouble, and was satisfied that a slave should shew her the way. She alighted at the door, and followed the syndic's slave, who was gone before to give notice to his mistress, she being then in the chamber with Jalib al Koolloob and her mother, for they were the persons the syndic had been speaking of to Fetnah.

The syndic's wife being informed by the slave, that a lady from the palace was in her house, was hastening to meet her; but Fetnah, who had followed the slave, did not give her time: on her coming into the chamber, the syndic's wife prostrated herself before her, to express the respect she had for all who belonged to the caliph. Fetnah raised her up, and said, "My good lady, I desire you will let me speak with those two strangers that arrived at Bagdad last night." "Madam," answered the syndic's wife, "they lie in those beds you see by each other." The favourite immediately drew near the mother's, and viewing her carefully, "Good woman," said she, "I come to offer you my assistance: I have considerable interest in this city, and may be of service to you and your companion." "Madam," answered Ganem's mother, "I perceive by your obliging offers, that Heaven has not quite forsaken us, though we had cause to believe it had, after so many misfortunes as have befallen us." Having uttered these words, she wept so bitterly that Fetnah and the syndic's wife could not forbear letting fall some tears.

The caliph's favourite having dried up hers, said to Ganem's mother, "Be so kind as to tell us your misfortunes, and recount your story. You cannot make the relation to any persons better disposed to use all possible means to comfort you." "Madam," replied Abou Ayoub's disconsolate widow, "a favourite of the commander of the true believers, a lady whose name is Fetnah, is the occasion of all our misfortunes." These words were like a thunderbolt to the favourite; but suppressing her agitation and concern, she suffered Ganem's mother to proceed in the following manner: "I am the widow of Abou Ayoub, a merchant of Damascus; I had a son called Ganem, who, coming to trade at Bagdad, has been accused of carrying off Fetnah. The caliph caused search to be made for him every where, to put him to death; but not finding him, he wrote to the king of Damascus, to cause our house to be plundered and razed, and to expose my daughter and myself three days successively, naked, to the populace, and then to banish us out of Syria for ever. But how unworthy soever our usage has been, I should be still comforted were my son alive, and I could meet with him. What a pleasure would it be for his sister and me to see him again! Embracing him we should forget the loss of our property, and all the evils we have suffered on his account. Alas! I am fully persuaded he is only the innocent cause of them; and that he is no more guilty towards the caliph than his sister and myself."

"No doubt of it," said Fetnah, interrupting her there, "he is no more guilty than you are; I can assure you of his innocence; for I am that very Fetnah, you so much complain of; who, through some fatality in my stars, have occasioned you so many misfortunes. To me you must impute the loss of your son, if he is no more; but if I have occasioned your misfortune, I can in some measure relieve it. I have already justified Ganem to the caliph; who has caused it to be proclaimed throughout his dominions, that he pardons the son of Abou Ayoub; and doubt not he will do you as much good as he has done you injury. You are no longer his enemies. He waits for Ganem, to requite the service he has done me, by uniting our fortunes; he gives me to him for his consort, therefore look on me as your daughter, and permit me to vow eternal duty and affection." Having so said, she bowed down on Ganem's mother, who was so astonished that she could return no answer. Fetnah held her long in her arms, and only left her to embrace the daughter, who, sitting up, held out her arms to receive her.

When the caliph's favourite had strewn the mother and daughter all tokens of affection, as Ganem's wife, she said to them, "The wealth Ganem had in this city is not lost, it is in my apartment in the palace; but I know all the treasure of the world cannot comfort you without Ganem, if I may judge of you by myself. Blood is no less powerful than love in great minds; but why should we despair of seeing him again? We shall find him; the happiness of meeting with you makes me conceive fresh hopes. Perhaps this is the last day of your sufferings, and the beginning of a greater felicity than you enjoyed in Damascus, when Ganem was with you."

Fetnah would have proceeded, but the syndic of the jewellers coming in interrupted her: "Madam," said he to her, "I come from seeing a very moving object, it is a young man, whom a camel-driver had just carried to an hospital: he was bound with cords on a camel, because he had not strength enough to sit. They had already unbound him, and were carrying him into the hospital, when I happened to pass by. I went up to the young man, viewed him attentively, and fancied his countenance was not altogether unknown to me. I asked him some questions concerning his family and his country; but all the answers I could get were sighs and tears. I took pity on him, and being so much used to sick people, perceived that he had need to have particular care taken of him. I would not permit him to be put into the hospital; for I am too well acquainted with their way of managing the sick, and am sensible of the incapacity of the physicians. I have caused him to be brought to my own house, by my slaves; and they are now in a private room where I placed him, putting on some of my own linen, and treating him as they would do myself."

Fetnah's heart beat at these words of the jeweller, and she felt a sudden emotion, for which she could not account: "Shew me," said she to the syndic, "into the sick man's room; I should be glad to see him." The syndic conducted her, and whilst she was going thither, Ganem's mother said to Jalib al Koolloob, "Alas! daughter, wretched as that sick stranger is, your brother, if he be living, is not perhaps in a more happy condition."

The caliph's favourite coming into the chamber of the sick stranger, drew near the bed, in which the syndic's slaves had already laid him. She saw a young man, whose eyes were closed, his countenance pale, disfigured, and bathed in tears. She gazed earnestly on him, her heart beat, and she fancied she beheld Ganem; but yet she would not believe her eyes. Though she found something of Ganem in the objets she beheld, yet in other respects he appeared so different, that she durst not imagine it was he that lay before her. Unable, however, to withstand the earnest desire of being satisfied, "Ganem," said she, with a trembling voice, "is it you I behold?" Having spoken these words, she stopped to give the young man time to answer, but observing that he seemed insensible; "Alas! Ganem," added she, "it is not you that I address! My imagination being overcharged with your image, has given to a stranger a deceitful resemblance. The son of Abou Ayoub, however indisposed, would know the voice of Fetnah." At the name of Fetnah, Ganem (for it was really he) opened his eyes, sprang up, and knowing the caliph's favourite; "Ah! madam," said he, "by what miracle" He could say no more; such a sudden transport of joy seized him that he fainted away. Fetnah and the syndic did all they could to bring him to himself; but as soon as they perceived he began to revive, the syndic desired the lady to withdraw, lest the sight of her should heighten his disorder.

The young man having recovered, looked all around, and not seeing what he sought, exclaimed, “What is become of you, charming Fetnah? Did you really appear before my eyes, or was it only an illusion?” “No, sir,” said the syndic, “it was no illusion. It was I that caused the lady to withdraw, but you shall see her again, as soon as you are in a condition to bear the interview. You now stand in need of rest, and nothing ought to obstruct your taking it. The situation of your affairs is altered, since you are, as I suppose, that Ganem, in favour of whom the commander of the true believers has caused a proclamation to be made in Bagdad, declaring, that he forgives him what is passed. Be satisfied, for the present, with knowing so much; the lady, who just now spoke to you, will acquaint you with the rest, therefore think of nothing but recovering your health; I will contribute all in my power towards it.” Having spoke these words, he left Ganem to take his rest, and went himself to provide for him such medicines as were proper to recover his strength, exhausted by hard living and toil.

During this time Fetnah was in the room with Jalib al Koolloob and her mother, where almost the same scene was acted over again; for when Ganem’s mother understood that the sick stranger whom the syndic had brought into his house was Ganem himself, she was so overjoyed, that she also swooned away, and when, with the assistance of Fetnah and the syndic’s wife, she was again come to herself, she would have arisen to go and see her son; but the syndic coming in, hindered her, representing that Ganem was so weak and emaciated, that it would endanger his life to excite in him those emotions, which must be the consequence of the unexpected sight of a beloved mother and sister. There was no occasion for the syndic’s saying any more to Ganem’s mother; as soon as she was told that she could not converse with her son, without hazarding his life, she ceased insisting to go and see him. Fetnah then said, “Let us bless Heaven for having brought us all together. I will return to the palace to give the caliph an account of these adventures, and tomorrow morning I will return to you.” This said, she embraced the mother and the daughter, and went away. As soon as she came to the palace, she sent Mesrour to request a private audience of the caliph, which was immediately granted; and being brought into the prince's closet, where he was alone, she prostrated herself at his feet, with her face on the ground, according to custom. He commanded her to rise, and having made her sit down, asked whether she had heard any news of Ganem? "Commander of the true believers," said she, "I have been so successful, that I have found him, and also his mother and sister." The caliph was curious to know how she had discovered them in so short a time, and she satisfied his inquiries, saying so many things in commendation of Ganem's mother and sister, he desired to see them as well as the young merchant.

Though Haroon al Rusheed was passionate, and in his heat sometimes guilty of cruel actions; yet he was just, and the most generous prince in the world, when the storm of anger was over, and he was made sensible of the wrong he had done. Having therefore no longer cause to doubt but that he had unjustly persecuted Ganem and his family, and had publicly wronged them, he resolved to make them public satisfaction. "I am overjoyed," said he to Fetnah, "that your search has proved so successful; it is a real satisfaction to me, not so much for your sake as for my own. I will keep the promise I have made you. You shall marry Ganem, and I here declare you are no longer my slave; you are free. Go back to that young merchant, and as soon as he has recovered his health, you shall bring him to me with his mother and sister."

The next morning early Fetnah repaired to the syndic of the jewellers, being impatient to hear of Ganem's health, and tell the mother and daughter the good news she had for them. The first person she met was the syndic, who told her that Ganem had rested well that night; and that his disorder proceeding altogether from melancholy, the cause being removed, he would soon recover his health.

Accordingly the son of Abou Ayoub was speedily much amended. Rest, and the good medicines he had taken, but above all the different situation of his mind, had wrought so good an effect, that the syndic thought he might without danger see his mother, his sister, and his mistress, provided he was prepared to receive them; because there was ground to fear, that, not knowing his mother and sister were at

Bagdad, the sight of them might occasion too great surprise and joy. It was therefore resolved, that Fetnah should first go alone into Ganem's chamber, and then make a sign to the two other ladies to appear, when she thought it was proper.

Matters being so ordered, the syndic announced Fetnah's coming to the sick man, who was so transported to see her, that he was again near fainting away, "Well, Ganem," said she, drawing near to his bed, "you have again found your Fetnah, whom you thought you had lost for ever." "Ah! madam," exclaimed he, eagerly interrupting her, "what miracle has restored you to my sight? I thought you were in the caliph's palace; he has doubtless listened to you. You have dispelled his jealousy, and he has restored you to his favour."

"Yes, my dear Ganem," answered Fetnah, "I have cleared myself before the commander of the true believers, who, to make amends for the wrong he has done you, bestows me on you for a wife." These last words occasioned such an excess of joy in Ganem, that he knew not for a while how to express himself, otherwise than by that passionate silence so well known to lovers. At length he broke out in these words: "Beautiful Fetnah, may I give credit to what you tell me? May I believe that the caliph really resigns you to Abou Ayoub's son?" "Nothing is more certain," answered the lady. "The caliph, who before caused search to be made for you, to take away your life, and who in his fury caused your mother and your sister to suffer a thousand indignities, desires now to see you, that he may reward the respect you had for him; and there is no question but that he will load your family with favours."

Ganem asked, what the caliph had done to his mother and sister, which Fetnah told him; and he could not forbear letting fall some tears at the relation, notwithstanding the thoughts which arose in his mind at the prospect of being married to his mistress. But when Fetnah informed him, that they were actually in Bagdad, and in the same house with him, he appeared so impatient to see them, that the favourite could no longer defer giving him the satisfaction; and accordingly called them in. They were at the door waiting for that moment. They entered, went up to Ganem, and embracing him in their turns, kissed him a thousand times. What tears were shed amidst those embraces! Ganem's face was bathed with them, as well as his mother's and sisters; and Fetnah let fall abundance. The syndic himself and his wife were so moved at the spectacle, that they could not forbear weeping, nor sufficiently admire the secret workings of Providence which had brought together into their house four persons, whom fortune had so cruelly persecuted.

When they had dried up their tears, Ganem drew them afresh, by the recital of what he had suffered from the day he left Fetnah, till the moment the syndic brought him to his house. He told them, that having taken refuge in a small village, he there fell sick; that some charitable peasants had taken care of him, but finding he did not recover, a camel-driver had undertaken to carry him to the hospital at Bagdad. Fetnah also told them all the uneasiness of her imprisonment, how the caliph, having heard her talk in the tower, had sent for her into his closet, and how she had cleared herself. In conclusion, when they had related what accidents had befallen them, Fetnah said, "Let us bless Heaven, which has brought us all together again, and let us think of nothing but the happiness that awaits us. As soon as Ganem has recovered his health, he must appear before the caliph, with his mother and sister; but I will go and make some provision for them."

This said, she went to the palace, and soon returned with a purse containing a thousand pieces of gold, which she delivered to the syndic, desiring him to buy apparel for the mother and daughter. The syndic, who was a man of a good taste, chose such as were very handsome, and had them made up with all expedition. They were finished in three days, and Ganem finding himself strong enough, prepared to go abroad; but on the day he had appointed to pay his respects to the caliph, while he was making ready, with his mother and sister, the grand vizier, Jaaffier came to the syndic's house.

He had come on horseback, attended by a great number of officers. "Sir," said he to Ganem, as soon as he entered, "I am come from the commander of the true believers, my master and yours; the orders I have differ much from those which I do not wish to revive in your memory; I am to bear you company, and to present you to the caliph, who is desirous to see you." Ganem returned no other answer to the vizier's compliment, than by profoundly bowing his head, and then mounted a horse brought from the caliph's stables, which he managed very gracefully. The mother and daughter were mounted on mules belonging to the palace, and whilst Fetnah on another mule led them by a bye-way to the prince's court, Jaaffier conducted Ganem, and brought him into the hall of audience. The caliph was sitting on his throne, encompassed with emirs, viziers, and other attendants and courtiers, Arabs, Persians, Egyptians, Africans, and Syrians, of his own dominions, not to mention strangers.

When the vizier had conducted Ganem to the foot of the throne, the young merchant paid his obeisance, prostrating himself with his face to the ground, and then rising, made a handsome compliment in verse, which, though the effusion of the moment, met with the approbation of the whole court. After his compliment, the caliph caused him to approach, and said, "I am glad to see you, and desire to hear from your own mouth where you found my favourite, and all that you have done for her." Ganem obeyed, and appeared so sincere, that the caliph was convinced of his veracity. He ordered a very rich vest to be given him, according to the custom observed towards those who are admitted to audience. After which he said to him, "Ganem, I will have you live in my court." "Commander of the true believers," answered the young merchant, "a slave has no will but his master's, on whom his life and fortune depend." The caliph was highly pleased with Ganem's reply, and assigned him a considerable pension. He then descended from his throne, and causing only Ganem and the grand vizier, follow him, retired into his own apartment.

Not questioning but that Fetnah was in waiting, with Abou Ayoub's widow and daughter, he caused them to be called in. They prostrated themselves before him: he made them rise; and was so charmed by Jalib al Koolloob's beauty, that, after viewing her very attentively, he said, "I am so sorry for having treated your charms so unworthily, that I owe them such a satisfaction as may surpass the injury I have done. I take you to wife; and by that means shall punish Zobeide, who shall become the first cause of your good fortune, as she was of your past sufferings. This is not all," added he, turning towards Ganem's mother; "you are still young, I believe you will not disdain to be allied to my grand vizier, I give you to Jaaffier, and you, Fetnah, to Ganem. Let a cauzee and witnesses be called, and the three contracts be drawn up and signed immediately." Ganem would have represented to the caliph, that it would be honour enough for his sister to be one of his favourites; but he was resolved to marry her.

Haroon thought this such an extraordinary story, that he ordered his historiographer to commit it to writing with all its circumstances. It was afterwards laid up in his library, and many copies being transcribed, it became public.

VOLUME 2

THE STORY OF THE LITTLE HUNCH-BACK.

There was in former times at Casgar, on the extreme boundaries of Tartary, a tailor who had a pretty wife, whom he affectionately loved, and by whom he was beloved with reciprocal tenderness. One day while he was at work, a little hunch-back seated himself at the shop door and began to sing, and play upon a tabor. The tailor was pleased with his performance, and resolved to take him to his house to entertain his wife: “This little fellow,” said he, “will divert us both this evening.” He accordingly invited him, and the other readily accepted the invitation: so the tailor shut up his shop, and carried him home. Immediately after their arrival the tailor’s wife placed before them a good dish of fish; but as the little man was eating, he unluckily swallowed a bone, which, notwithstanding all that the tailor and his wife could do, choked him. This accident greatly alarmed them both, dreading, if the magistrates should hear of it, that they would be punished as murderers. However, the husband devised a scheme to get rid of the corpse. He reflected that a Jewish doctor lived just by, and having formed his plan, his wife and he took the corpse, the one by the feet and the other by the head, and carried it to the physician’s house. They knocked at the door, from which a steep flight of stairs led to his chamber. The servant maid came down without any light, and opening the door, asked what they wanted. “Have the goodness,” said the tailor, “to go up again, and tell your master we have brought him a man who is very ill, and wants his advice. Here,” continued he, putting a piece of money into her hand, “give him that beforehand, to convince him that we do not mean to impose.” While the servant was gone up to inform her master, the tailor and his wife hastily conveyed the hunchbacked corpse to the head of the stairs, and leaving it there, hurried away.

In the mean time, the maid told the doctor, that a man and woman waited for him at the door, desiring he would come down and look at a sick man whom they had brought with them, and clapped into his hand the money she had received. The doctor was transported with joy; being paid beforehand, he thought it must needs be a good patient, and should not be neglected. “Light, light,” cried he to the maid; “follow me quickly.” As he spoke, he hastily ran towards the head of the stairs without waiting for a light, and came against the corpse with so much violence that he precipitated it to the bottom, and had nearly fallen with it. “Bring me a light,” cried he to the maid; “quick, quick.” At last she brought one, and he went down stairs with her; but when he saw that what he had kicked down was a dead man, he was so frightened, that he invoked Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Esdras, and all the other prophets of his nation. “Unhappy man that I am,” said he, “why did I attempt to come without a light! I have killed the poor fellow who was brought to me to be cured: doubtless I am the cause of his death, and unless Esdras’s ass come to assist me, I am ruined: Mercy on me, they will be here out of hand, and drag me out of my house for a murderer.”

Notwithstanding the perplexity and confusion into which he was thrown, he had the precaution to shut his door, for fear any one passing by should observe the accident of which he reckoned himself to be the author. He then took the corpse into his wife’s chamber, who was ready to swoon at the sight. “Alas,” cried she, “we are utterly ruined and undone, unless we can devise some expedient to get the corpse out of our house this night. If we harbour it till morning we are lost. What a deplorable misfortune is this! What have you done to kill this man?” “That is not now the question,” replied the Jew; “our business at present is, to find a remedy for the evil which threatens us.”

The doctor and his wife consulted how to dispose of the corpse that night. The doctor racked his brain in vain, he could not think of any stratagem to relieve his embarrassment; but his wife, who was more fertile in invention, said, “A thought is just come into my head; let us carry the corpse to the terrace of our house, and throw it down the chimney of our Mussulmaun neighbour.”

This Mussulmaun was one of the sultan’s purveyors for furnishing oil, butter, and articles of a similar nature, and had a magazine in his house, where the rats and mice made prodigious havoc.

The Jewish doctor approving the proposed expedient, the wife and he took the little hunch-back up to the roof of the house; and clapping ropes under his arm-pits, let him down the chimney into the purveyor’s chamber so dexterously that he stood upright against the wall, as if he had been alive. When they found he had reached the bottom, they pulled up the ropes, and left the corpse in that posture. They were scarcely got down into their chamber, when the purveyor, who had just returned from a wedding feast, went into his room, with a lanthorn in his hand. He was not a little surprised to discover a man standing in his chimney; but being a stout fellow, and apprehending him to be a thief, he took up a stick, and making straight up to the hunch-back, “Ah!” said he, “I thought the rats and mice ate my butter and tallow; but it is you who come down the chimney to rob me? However, I think you will have no wish to come here again.” Upon this he attacked hunch-back, and struck him several times with his stick. The corpse fell down flat on the ground, and the purveyor redoubled his blows. But, observing that the body did not move, he stood a little time to regard it; and then, perceiving it to be dead, fear succeeded his anger. “Wretched man that I am,” said he, “what have I done! I have killed a man; alas, I have carried my revenge too far. Good God, unless thou pity me my life is gone! Cursed, ten thousand times accursed, be the fat and the oil that occasioned me to commit so criminal an action.” He stood pale and thunderstruck; he fancied he already saw the officers come to drag him to condign punishment, and could not tell what resolution to take.

The sultan of Casgar’s purveyor had never noticed the little man’s hump-back when he was beating him, but as soon as he perceived it, he uttered a thousand imprecations against him. “Ah, thou cursed hunch-back,” cried he, “thou crooked wretch, would to God thou hadst robbed me of all my fat, and I had not found thee here. I then should not have been thrown into this perplexity on account of this and thy vile hunch. Ye stars that twinkle in the heavens, give your light to none but me in this dangerous juncture.” As soon as he had uttered these words, he took the crooked corpse upon his shoulders, and carried it to the end of the street, where he placed it in an upright posture against a shop; he then returned without once looking behind him.

A few minutes before day-break, a Christian merchant, who was very rich, and furnished the sultan’s palace with various articles, having sat up all night at a debauch, happened to come from his house in this direction on his way to the bath. Though he was intoxicated, he was sensible that the night was far spent, and that the people would soon be called to morning prayers; he therefore quickened his pace to get to the bath in time, lest some Mussulmaun, in his way to the mosque, should meet him and carry him to prison for a drunkard. When he came to the end of the street, he had occasion to stop by the shop where the sultan's purveyor had put the hunch-backed corpse; which being jostled by him, tumbled upon the merchant's back. The merchant thinking he was attacked by a robber, knocked it down, and after redoubling his blows, cried out "Thieves!"

The outcry alarmed the watch, who came up immediately, and finding a Christian beating a Mussulmaun (for hump-back was of our religion), "What reason have you," said he, "to abuse a Mussulmaun in this manner?" "He would have robbed me," replied the merchant, "and jumped upon my back in order to take me by the throat." "If he did," said the watch, "you have revenged yourself sufficiently; come, get off him." At the same time he stretched out his hand to help little hump-back up, but observing he was dead, "Oh!" said he, "is it thus that a Christian dares to assassinate a Mussulmaun?" So saying, he laid hold of the Christian, and carried him to the house of the officer of the police, where he was kept till the judge was stirring, and ready to examine him. In the mean time, the Christian merchant became sober, and the more he reflected upon his adventure, the less could he conceive how such slight blows of his fist could have killed the man.

The judge having heard the report of the watch, and viewed the corpse, which they had taken care to bring to his house, interrogated the Christian merchant, who could not deny the crime, though he had not committed it. But the judge considering that little hump-back belonged to the sultan, for he was one of his buffoons, would not put the Christian to death till he knew the sultan's pleasure. For this end he went to the palace, and acquainted the sultan with what had happened; and received this answer: "I have no mercy to show to a Christian who kills a Mussulmaun." Upon this the judge ordered a stake to be prepared, and sent criers all over the city to proclaim that they were about to impale a Christian for killing a Mussulmaun.

At length the merchant was brought to the place of execution; and the executioner was about to do his duty, when the sultan's purveyor pushed through the crowd, calling to him to stop for that the Christian had not committed the murder, but he himself had done it. Upon that, the officer who attended the execution began to question the purveyor, who told him every circumstance of his having killed the little hunchback, and how he had conveyed his corpse to the place where the Christian merchant had found it. “You were about,” added he, “to put to death an innocent person; for how can he be guilty of the death of a man who was dead before he touched him? It is enough for me to have killed a Mussulmaun without loading my conscience with the death of a Christian who is not guilty.”

The sultan of Casgar’s purveyor having publicly charged himself with the death of the little hunchbacked man, the officer could do no less than execute justice on the merchant. “Let the Christian go,” said he to the executioner, “and impale this man in his stead, since it appears by his own confession that he is guilty.” Thereupon the executioner released the merchant, and seized the purveyor; but just as he was going to impale him, he heard the voice of the Jewish doctor, earnestly intreating him to suspend the execution, and make room for him to approach.

When he appeared before the judge, “My lord,” said he, “this Mussulmaun you are going to execute is not guilty. I am the criminal. Last night a man and a woman, unknown to me, came to my door with a sick man; my maid went and opened it without a light, and received from them a piece of money with a commission to come and desire me, in their name, to step down and look at the patient. While she was delivering her message, they conveyed the sick person to the stair-head, and disappeared. I went, without staying till my servant had lighted a candle, and in the dark happened to stumble upon the sick person, and kick him down stairs. At length I saw he was dead, and that it was the crooked Mussulmaun whose death you are now about to avenge. My wife and I took the corpse, and, after conveying it up to the roof of the purveyor, our next neighbour, whom you were going to put to death unjustly, let it down the chimney into his chamber. The purveyor finding it in his house, took the little man for a thief, and after beating him concluded he had killed him. But that it was not so you will be convinced by this my deposition; I am the sole author of the murder; and though it was committed undesignedly, I am resolved to expiate my crime, that I may not have to charge myself with the death of two Mussulmauns."

The chief justice being persuaded that the Jewish doctor was the murderer, gave orders to the executioner to seize him and release the purveyor. Accordingly the doctor was just going to be impaled, when the tailor appeared, crying to the executioner to hold his hand, and make room for him, that he might come and make his confession to the chief judge. Room being made, "My lord," said he, "you have narrowly escaped taking away the lives of three innocent persons; but if you will have the patience to hear me, I will discover to you the real murderer of the crook backed man. If his death is to be expiated by another, that must be mine. Yesterday, towards the evening, as I was at work in my shop, and was disposed to be merry, the little hunch-back came to my door half-drunk, and sat down. He sung a little, and so I invited him to pass the evening at my house. He accepted the invitation and went in with me. We sat down to supper and I gave him a plate of fish; but in eating, a bone stuck in his throat, and though my wife and I did our utmost to relieve him, he died in a few minutes. His death afflicted us extremely, and for fear of being charged with it, we carried the corpse to the Jewish doctor's house and knocked. The maid came and opened the door; I desired her to go up again and ask her master to come down and give his advice to a sick person whom we had brought along with us; and withal, to encourage him, I charged her to give him a piece of money, which I put into her hand. When she was gone, I carried the hunch-back up stairs, and laid him upon the uppermost step, and then my wife and I made the best of our way home. The doctor coming, threw the corpse down stairs, and concluded himself to be the author of his death. This being the case," continued he, "release the doctor, and let me die in his stead."

The chief justice, and all the spectators, wondered at the strange events which had ensued upon the death of the little hunch-back. "Let the Jewish doctor go," said the judge, "and seize the tailor, since he confesses the crime. It is certain this history is very uncommon, and deserves to be recorded in letters of gold." The executioner having dismissed the doctor prepared to impale the tailor.

While the executioner was making ready to impale the tailor, the sultan of Casgar, wanting the company of his crooked jester, asked where he was; and one of his officers told him; "The hunch-back, Sir, whom you inquire after, got drunk last night, and contrary to his custom slipped out of the palace, and went strolling about the city, and this morning was found dead. A man was brought before the chief justice, and charged with the murder of him; but when he was going to be impaled, up came a man, and after him another, who took the charge upon themselves and cleared one another, and the judge is now examining a third, who gives himself out for the real author of the murder."

Upon this intelligence the sultan of Casgar sent an officer to the place of execution. "Go," said he, "with all expedition, and tell the judge to bring the accused persons before me immediately and bring also the corpse of poor hunch-back, that I may see him once more." Accordingly the officer went, and happened to arrive at the place of execution at the very time that the executioner had laid his hands upon the tailor. He called aloud to him to suspend the execution. The executioner knowing the officer, did not dare to proceed, but released the tailor; and then the officer acquainted the judge with the sultan's pleasure. The judge obeyed, and went directly to the palace accompanied by the tailor, the Jewish doctor, and the Christian merchant; and made four of his men carry the hunch-backed corpse along with him.

When they appeared in the sultan's presence, the judge threw himself at the prince's feet and after recovering himself, gave him a faithful relation of what he knew of the story of the hunch-backed man. The story appeared so extraordinary to the sultan, that he ordered his own historian to write it down with all its circumstances. Then addressing himself to the audience; "Did you ever hear," said he, "such a surprising event as has happened on the account of my little crooked buffoon?" The Christian merchant, after falling down, and touching the earth with his forehead, spoke as follows: "Most puissant monarch, I know a story yet more astonishing than this; if your majesty will give me leave, I will relate it. The circumstances are such, that no one can hear them without emotion." "Well," said the sultan, "you have my permission:" and the merchant went on as follows:

The Story told by the Christian Merchant.

Sir, before I commence the recital of the story you have permitted me to relate, I beg leave to acquaint you, that I have not the honour to be born in any part of your majesty's empire. I am a stranger, born at Cairo in Egypt, a Copt by nation, and by religion a Christian. My father was a broker, and realized considerable property, which he left me at his death. I followed his example, and pursued the same employment. While I was standing in the public inn frequented by the corn merchants, there came up to me a handsome young man, well dressed, and mounted on an ass. He saluted me, and pulling out a handkerchief, in which he had a sample of sesame or Turkey corn, asked me how much a bushel of such sesame would fetch.

I examined the corn the young man shewed me, and told him it was worth a hundred dirhems of silver per bushel. "Pray," said he, "look out for some merchant to take it at that price, and come to me at the Victory gate, where you will see a khan at a distance from the houses." So saying, he left me the sample, and I shewed it to several merchants, who told me, that they would take as much as I could spare at a hundred and ten dirhems per bushel, so that I reckoned on getting ten dirhems per bushel for my commission. Full of the expectation of this profit, I went to the Victory gate, where I found the young merchant expecting me, and he took me into his granary, which was full of sesame. He had then a hundred and fifty bushels, which I measured out, and having carried them off upon asses, sold them for five thousand dirhems of silver. "Out of this sum," said the young man, "there are five hundred dirhems coming to you, at the rate of ten dirhems per bushel. This I give you; and as for the rest which pertains to me, take it out of the merchants' hands, and keep it till I call or send for it, for I have no occasion for it at present." I answered, it should be ready for him whenever he pleased to demand it; and so, kissing his hand, took leave of him, with a grateful sense of his generosity.

A month passed before he came near me: then he asked for the sum he had committed to my trust. I told him it was ready, and should be counted to him immediately. He was mounted on his ass, and I desired him to alight, and do me the honour to eat a mouthful with me before he received his money. “No,” said he, “I cannot alight at present, I have urgent business that obliges me to be at a place just by; but I will return this way, and then take the money which I desired you would have in readiness.” This said, he disappeared, and I still expected his return, but it was a full month before I saw him again. “This young merchant,” thought I, “has great confidence in me, leaving so great a sum in my hands without knowing me; any other man would have been afraid I should have run away with it.” To be short, he came again at the end of the third month, and was still mounted on his ass, but more handsomely dressed than before.

As soon as I saw the young man, I intreated him to alight, and asked him if he would not take his money? “There is no hurry,” said he, with a pleasant easy air, “I know it is in good hands; I will come and take it when my other money is all gone. Adieu,” continued he, “I will return towards the end of the week.” With that he struck the ass, and soon disappeared. “Well,” thought I, “he says he will see me towards the end of the week, but he may not perhaps return for a great while; I will make the most I can of his money, which may bring me much profit.”

As it happened, I was not deceived in my conjecture; for it was a full year before I saw my young merchant again. He then appeared as richly appareled as before, but seemed to have something on his spirits. I asked him to do me the honour to walk into my house. “For this time,” replied he, “I will: but on this condition, that you shall put yourself to no extraordinary charge on my account.” “I will do just as you please,” said I, “only do me the favour to alight and walk in.” Accordingly he complied. I gave orders to have a repast prepared, and while this was doing, we entered into conversation. All things being ready, we sat down. I observed he took the first mouthful with his left hand, and not with the right. I was at a loss what to think of this. “Ever since I have known this young man,” said I inwardly, “he has always appeared very polite; is it possible he can do this out of contempt? What can be the reason he does not use his right hand?”

After we had done eating, and every thing was taken away, we sat upon a sofa, and I presented him with a lozenge by way of dainty;

but still he took it with his left hand. I said to him, “Pardon, Sir, the liberty I take in asking you what reason you have for not using your right hand? Perhaps you have some complaint in that hand.” Instead of answering, he heaved a deep sigh, and pulling out his right arm, which he had hitherto kept under his vest, shewed me, to my great astonishment, that it had been cut off. “Doubtless you were displeased,” said he, “to see me feed myself with the left hand; but I leave you to judge, whether it was in my power to do otherwise.” “May one ask,” said I, “by what mischance you lost your right hand?” Upon that he burst into tears, and after wiping his eyes, gave me the following relation.

You must know that I am a native of Bagdad, the son of a rich merchant, the most eminent in that city for rank and opulence. I had scarcely launched into the world, when falling into the company of travellers, and hearing their wonderful accounts of Egypt, especially of Grand Cairo, I was interested by their discourse, and felt a strong desire to travel. But my father was then alive, and would not grant me permission. At length he died; and being then my own master, I resolved to take a journey to Cairo. I laid out a large sum of money in the purchase of several sorts of fine stuffs of Bagdad and Moussol and departed.

Arriving at Cairo, I went to the khan, called the khan of Mesrour, and there took lodgings, with a warehouse for my bales, which I had brought with me upon camels. This done, I retired to my chamber to rest, after the fatigue of my journey, and gave some money to my servants, with orders to buy some provisions and dress them. After I had eaten, I went to view the castle, some mosques, the public squares, and the other most remarkable places.

Next day I dressed myself, and ordered some of the finest and richest of my bales to be selected and carried by my slaves to the Circassian bazaar, whither I followed. I had no sooner made my appearance, than I was surrounded with brokers and criers who had heard of my arrival. I gave patterns of my stuffs to several of the criers, who shewed them all over the bazaar; but none of the merchants offered near so much as prime cost and carriage. This vexed me, and the criers observing I was dissatisfied, said, “If you will take our advice, we will put you in a way to sell your goods without loss."

The brokers and the criers, having thus promised to put me in a way of losing nothing by my goods, I asked them what course they would have me pursue. "Divide your goods," said they, "among several merchants, they will sell them by retail; and twice a week, that is on Mondays and Thursdays, you may receive what money they may have taken. By this means, instead of losing, you will turn your goods to advantage, and the merchants will gain by you. In the mean while you will have time to take your pleasure about the town or go upon the Nile."

I took their advice, and conducted them to my warehouse; from whence I brought all my goods to the bazaar, and there divided them among the merchants whom they represented as most reputable and able to pay; and the merchants gave me a formal receipt before witnesses, stipulating that I should not making any demands upon them for the first month.

Having thus regulated my affairs, my mind was occupied with ordinary pleasures. I contracted acquaintance with divers persons of nearly the same age with myself, which made the time pass agreeably. After the first month had expired, I began to visit my merchants twice a week, taking with me a public officer to inspect their books of sale, and a banker to see that they paid me in good money, and to regulate the value of the several coins. Every pay-day, I had a good sum of money to carry home to my lodging at the khan of Mesrour. I went on other days to pass the morning sometimes at one merchant's house, and sometimes at that of another. In short, I amused myself in conversing with them, and seeing what passed in the bazaar.

One Monday, as I was sitting in a merchant's shop, whose name was Buddir ad Deen, a lady of quality, as might easily be perceived by her air, her apparel, and by a well-dressed slave attending her, came into the shop, and sat down by me. Her external appearance, joined to a natural grace that shone in all her actions, prepossessed me in her favour, and inspired me with a desire to be better acquainted with her. I know not whether she observed that I took pleasure in gazing on her, and whether this attention on my part was not agreeable to her; but she let down the crepe that hung over the muslin which covered her face, and gave me the opportunity of seeing her large black eyes; which perfectly charmed me. In fine, she inflamed my love to the height by the agreeable sound of her voice, her graceful carriage in saluting the merchant, and asking him how he did since she had seen him last.

After conversing with him some time upon indifferent subjects, she gave him to understand that she wanted a particular kind of stuff with a gold ground; that she came to his shop, as affording the best choice of any in all the bazaar; and that if he had any such as she asked for, he would oblige her in showing them. Buddir ad Deen produced several pieces, one of which she pitched upon, and he asked for it eleven hundred dirhems of silver. "I will," said she, "give you your price for it, but I have not money enough about me; so I hope you will give me credit till to-morrow, and in the mean time allow me to carry home the stuff. I shall not fail," added she, "to send you tomorrow the eleven hundred dirhems." "Madam," said Buddir ad Deen, "I would give you credit with all my heart if the stuff were mine; but it belongs to the young man you see here, and this is the day on which we settle our accounts." "Why," said the lady in surprise, "do you use me so? Am not I a customer to your shop And when I have bought of you, and carried home the things without paying ready money for them, did I in any instance fail to send you your money next morning?" "Madam," said the merchant, "all this is true, but this very day I have occasion for the money." "There," said she, throwing the stuff to him, "take your stuff, I care not for you nor any of the merchants. You are all alike; you respect no one." As she spoke, she rose up in anger, and walked out.

When I saw that the lady walked away, I felt interested on her behalf, and called her back, saying, "Madam, do me the favour to return, perhaps I can find a way to satisfy you both." She returned, saying, it was on my account that she complied. "Buddir ad Deen," said I to the merchant, "what is the price you must have for this stuff that belongs to me?" "I must have," replied he, "eleven hundred dirhems, I cannot take less." "Give it to the lady then," said I, "let her take it home with her; I allow a hundred dirhems profit to yourself, and shall now write you a note, empowering you to deduct that sum upon the produce of the other goods you have of mine." In fine, I wrote, signed, and gave him the note, and then delivered the stuff to the lady. "Madam," said I, "you may take the stuff with you, and as for the money, you may either send it to-morrow or the next day; or, if you will, accept it as a present from me." "Pardon me," returned she, "I mean no such thing. You treat me with so much politeness, that I should be unworthy to appear in the world again, were I to omit making you my best acknowledgments. May God reward you, by an increase of your fortune; may you live many years after I am dead; may the gate of paradise be open to you when you remove to the other world, and may all the city proclaim your generosity."

These words inspired me with some assurance. "Madam," I replied, "I desire no other reward for the service I have done you than the happiness of seeing your face; which will repay me with interest." I had no sooner spoken than she turned towards me, took off her veil, and discovered to me a wonderful beauty. I became speechless with admiration. I could have gazed upon her for ever; but fearing any one should observe her, she quickly covered her face, and letting down the crepe, took up the piece of stuff, and went away, leaving me in a very different state of mind from that in which I had entered the shop. I continued for some time in great confusion and perplexity. Before I took leave of the merchant, I asked him, if he knew the lady; "Yes," said he, "she is the daughter of an emir."

I went back to the khan of Mesrour, and sat down to supper, but could not eat, neither could I shut my eyes all the night, which seemed the longest in my life. As soon as it was day I arose, in hopes of once more beholding the object that disturbed my repose: and to engage her affection, I dressed myself much richer than I had done the day before.

I had but just reached Buddir ad Deen's shop, when I saw the lady coming in more magnificent apparel than before, and attended by her slave. When she entered, she did not regard the merchant, but addressing herself to me, said, "Sir, you see I am punctual to my word. I am come for the express purpose of paying the sum you were so kind as to pass your word for yesterday, though you had no knowledge of me. Such uncommon generosity I shall never forget."

"Madam," said I, "you had no occasion to be in such haste; I was well satisfied as to my money, and am sorry you should put yourself to so much trouble." "I had been very unjust," answered she, "if I had abused your generosity." With these words she put the money into my hand, and sat down by me.

Having this opportunity of conversing with her, I determined to improve it, and mentioned to her the love I had for her; but she rose and left me very abruptly, as if she had been angry with the declaration I had made. I followed her with my eyes as long as she continued in sight; then taking leave of the merchant walked out of the bazaar, without knowing where I went. I was musing on this adventure, when I felt somebody pulling me behind, and turning to see who it was, I was agreeably surprised to perceive it was the lady's slave. "My mistress," said she, "I mean the young lady you spoke to in the merchant's shop, wants to speak with you, if you please to give yourself the trouble to follow me." Accordingly I followed her, and found her mistress sitting waiting for me in a banker's shop.

She made me sit down by her, and spoke to this purpose. "Do not be surprised, that I left you so abruptly. I thought it not proper, before that merchant, to give a favourable answer to the discovery you made of your affection for me. But to speak the truth, I was so far from being offended at it, that it gave me pleasure; and I account myself infinitely happy in having a man of your merit for my lover. I do not know what impression the first sight of me may have made on you, but I assure you, I had no sooner beheld you than I found my heart moved with the tenderest emotions of love. Since yesterday I have done nothing but think of what you said to me; and my eagerness to seek you this morning may convince you of my regard." "Madam," I replied, transported with love and joy, "nothing can be more agreeable to me than this declaration. No passion can exceed that with which I love you. My eyes were dazzled with so many charms, that my heart yielded without resistance." "Let us not trifle away the time in needless discourse," said she, interrupting me; "make no doubt of your sincerity, and you shall quickly be convinced of mine. Will you do me the honour to come to my residence? Or if you will I will go to yours." "Madam," I returned, "I am a stranger lodged in a khan, which is not the proper place for the reception of a lady of your quality. It is more proper, madam, that I should visit you at your house; have the goodness to tell me where it is." The lady consented; "Come," said she, "on Friday, which is the day after to-morrow, after noon-prayers, and ask for the house of Abou Schama, surnamed Bercour, late master of the emirs; there you will find me." This said, we parted; and I passed the next day in great impatience.

On Friday I put on my richest apparel, and took fifty pieces of gold in my purse. I mounted an ass I had bespoken the day before, and set out, accompanied by the man who let me the ass. I directed the owner of the ass to inquire for the house I wanted; he found it, and conducted me thither. I paid him liberally, directing him to observe narrowly where he left me, and not to fail to return next morning with the ass, to carry me again to the khan of Mesrour.

I knocked at the door, and presently two little female slaves, white as snow, and neatly dressed came and opened it. "Be pleased to come in, Sir," said they, "our mistress expects you impatiently; these two days she has talked of nothing but you." I entered the court, and saw a pavilion raised seven steps, and surrounded with iron rails that parted it from a very pleasant garden. Besides the trees which only embellished the place, and formed an agreeable shade, there was an infinite number of others loaded with all sorts of fruit. I was charmed with the warbling of a great number of birds, that joined their notes to the murmurings of a fountain, in the middle of a parterre enamelled with flowers. This fountain formed a very agreeable object; four large gilded dragons at the angles of the basin, which was of a square form, spouted out water clearer than rock-crystal. This delicious place gave me a charming idea of the conquest I had made. The two little slaves conducted me into a saloon magnificently furnished; and while one of them went to acquaint her mistress with my arrival, the other tarried with me, and pointed out to me the beauties of the hall.

I did not wait long in the hall, ere the lady I loved appeared, adorned with pearls and diamonds; but the splendour of her eyes far outshone that of her jewels. Her shape, which was now not disguised by the habit she wore in the city, appeared the most slender and delicate. I need not mention with what joy we met once more; it far exceeded all expression. When the first compliments were over, we sat down upon a sofa, and there conversed together with the highest satisfaction. We had the most delicious refreshments served up to us; and after eating, continued our conversation till night. We then had excellent wine brought up, and fruit adapted to promote drinking, and timed our cups to the sound of musical instruments, joined to the voices of the slaves. The lady of the house sung herself, and by her songs raised my passion to the height. In short, I passed the night in full enjoyment.

Next morning I slipped under the bolster of the bed the purse with the fifty pieces of gold I had brought with me, and took leave of the lady, who asked me when I would see her again. “Madam,” said I, “I give you my promise to return this night.” She seemed to be transported with my answer, and conducting me to the door, conjured me at parting to be mindful of my promise.

The same man who had carried me thither waited for me with his ass, which I mounted, and went directly to the khan; ordering the man to come to me again in the afternoon at a certain hour, to secure which, I deferred paying him till that time came.

As soon as I arrived at my lodging, my first care was to order my people to buy a lamb, and several sorts of cakes, which I sent by a porter as a present to the lady. When that was done I attended to my business till the owner of the ass arrived. I then went along with him to the lady’s house, and was received by her with as much joy as before, and entertained with equal magnificence.

Next morning I took leave, left her another purse with fifty pieces of gold, and returned to my khan.

I continued to visit the lady every day, and to leave her every time a purse with fifty pieces of gold, till the merchants whom I employed to sell my goods, and whom I visited regularly twice a week, had paid me the whole amount of my goods and, in short, I came at last to be moneyless, and hopeless of having any more.

In this forlorn condition I walked out of my lodging, not knowing what course to take, and by chance went towards the castle, where there was a great crowd to witness a spectacle given by the sultan of Egypt. As soon as I came up, I wedged in among the crowd, and by chance happened to stand by a horseman well mounted and handsomely clothed, who had upon the pommel of his saddle a bag, half open, with a string of green silk hanging out of it. I clapped my hand to the bag, concluding the silk-twist might be the string of a purse within: in the mean time a porter, with a load of wood upon his back, passed by on the other side of the horse so near, that the rider was forced to turn his head towards him, to avoid being hurt, or having his clothes torn by the wood. In that moment the devil tempted me; I took the string in one hand, and with the other pulled out the purse so dexterously, that nobody perceived me. The purse was heavy, and I did not doubt but it contained gold or silver.

As soon as the porter had passed, the horseman, who probably had some suspicion of what I had done while his head was turned, presently put his hand to his bag, and finding his purse was gone, gave me such a blow, that he knocked me down. This violence shocked all who saw it. Some took hold of the horse's bridle to stop the gentleman, and asked him what reason he had to strike me, or how he came to treat a Mussulmaun so rudely. "Do not you trouble yourselves," said he briskly, "I had reason for what I did; this fellow is a thief." At these words I started up, and from my appearance every one took my part, and cried out he was a liar, for that it was incredible a young man such as I was should be guilty of so base an action: but while they were holding his horse by the bridle to favour my escape, unfortunately passed by the judge, who seeing such a crowd about the gentleman on horseback, came up and asked what the matter was. Every body present reflected on the gentleman for treating me so unjustly upon the presence of robbery.

The judge did not give ear to all that was said; but asked the cavalier if he suspected any body else beside me? The cavalier told him he did not, and gave his reasons why he believed his suspicions not to be groundless. Upon this the judge ordered his followers to seize me, which they presently did; and finding the purse upon me, exposed it to the view of all the people. The disgrace was so great, I could not bear it, and I swooned away. In the mean time the judge called for the purse.

When the judge had got the purse in his hand, he asked the horseman if it was his, and how much money it contained. The cavalier knew it to be his own, and assured the judge he had put twenty sequins into it. Upon which the judge called me before him;

"Come, young man," said he, "confess the truth. Was it you that took the gentleman's purse from him? Do not wait for the torture to extort confession." Then with downcast eyes, thinking that if I denied the fact, they, having found the purse upon me, would convict me of a lie, to avoid a double punishment I looked up and confessed my guilt. I had no sooner made the confession, than the judge called people to witness it, and ordered my hand to be cutoff. This sentence was immediately put in execution, to the great regret of all the spectators; nay, I observed, by the cavalier's countenance, that he was moved with pity as much as the rest. The judge would likewise have ordered my foot to be cut off, but I begged the cavalier to intercede for my pardon; which he did, and obtained it.

When the judge was gone, the cavalier came up to me, and holding out the purse, said, "I see plainly that necessity drove you to an action so disgraceful and unworthy of such a young man as you appear. Here, take that fatal purse; I freely give it you, and am heartily sorry for the misfortune you have undergone." Having thus spoken, he went away. Being very weak by loss of blood, some of the good people of the neighbourhood had the kindness to carry me into a house and give me a glass of cordial; they likewise dressed my arm, and wrapped up the dismembered hand in a cloth, which I carried away with me fastened to my girdle.

Had I returned to the khan of Mesrour in this melancholy condition, I should not have found there such relief as I wanted; and to offer to go to the young lady was running a great hazard, it being likely she would not look upon me after being informed of my disgrace. I resolved, however, to put her to the trial; and to tire out the crowd that followed me, I turned down several by-streets, and at last arrived at the lady's house very weak, and so much fatigued, that I presently threw myself down upon a sofa, keeping my right arm under my garment, for I took great care to conceal my misfortune.

In the mean time the lady, hearing of my arrival, and that I was not well, came to me in haste; and seeing me pale and dejected, said, "My dear love, what is the matter with you?" "Madam," I replied, dissembling, "I have a violent pain in my head." The lady seemed to be much concerned, and asked me to sit down, for I had arisen to receive her. "Tell me," said she, "how your illness was occasioned.

The last time I had the pleasure to see you, you were very well. There must be something that you conceal from me, let me know what it is." I stood silent, and instead of an answer, tears trickled down my cheeks. "I cannot conceive," resumed she, "what it is that afflicts you. Have I unthinkingly given you any occasion of uneasiness? Or do you come on purpose to tell me you no longer love me?" "It is not that, madam," said I, heaving a deep sigh; "your unjust suspicion adds to my misfortune."

I could not think of discovering to her the true cause. When night came, supper was brought, and she pressed me to eat; but considering I could only feed myself with my left hand, I begged to be excused upon the plea of having no appetite. "It will return," said she, "if you would but discover what you so obstinately conceal from me. Your want of appetite, without doubt, is only owing to your irresolution."

"Alas! madam," returned I, "I find I must resolve at last." I had no sooner spoken, than she filled me a cup full of wine, and offering it to me, "Drink that," said she, "it will give you courage." I reached out my left hand, and took the cup.

When I had taken the cup in my hand, I redoubled my tears and sighs. "Why do you sigh and weep so bitterly?" asked the lady; "and why do you take the cup with your left hand, rather than your right?" "Ah! madam," I replied, "I beseech you excuse me; I have a swelling in my right hand." "Let me see that swelling," said she; "I will open it." I desired to be excused, alleging it was not ripe enough for such an operation; and drank off the cup, which was very large. The fumes of the wine, joined to my weakness and weariness, set me asleep, and I slept very soundly till morning.

In the mean time the lady, curious to know what ailed my right hand, lifted up my garment that covered it; and saw to her great astonishment that it was cut off, and that I had brought it along with me wrapped up in a cloth. She presently apprehended what was my reason for declining a discovery, notwithstanding all her pressing solicitation; and passed the night in the greatest uneasiness on account of my disgrace, which she concluded had been occasioned only by the love I bore to her.

When I awoke, I discerned by her countenance that she was extremely grieved. However, that she might not increase my uneasiness she said not a word. She called for jelly-broth of fowl, which she had ordered to be prepared, and made me eat and drink to recruit my strength. After that, I offered to take leave of her; but she declared I should not go out of her doors. “Though you tell me nothing of the matter,” said she, “I am persuaded I am the cause of the misfortune that has befallen you. The grief that I feel on that account will soon end my days, but before I die, I must execute a design for your benefit.” She had no sooner spoken, than she called for a judge and witnesses, and ordered a writing to be drawn up, putting me in possession of her whole property. After this was done, and every body dismissed, she opened a large trunk where lay all the purses I had given her from the commencement of our amour. “There they are all entire,” said she; “I have not touched one of them. Here is the key; take it, for all is yours.” After I had returned her thanks for her generosity and goodness; “What I have done for you,” said she, “is nothing; I shall not be satisfied unless I die, to show how much I love you.” I conjured her, by all the powers of love, to relinquish such a fatal resolution. But all my remonstrances were ineffectual: she was so afflicted to see me have but one hand, that she sickened, and died after five or six weeks’ illness.

After mourning for her death as long as was decent, I took possession of all her property, a particular account of which she gave me before she died; and the corn you sold for me was part of it.

“What I have now told you,” said he, “will plead my excuse for eating with my left hand. I am highly obliged to you for the trouble you have given yourself on my account. I can never sufficiently recompense your fidelity. Since I have still, thanks to God, a competent estate, notwithstanding I have spent a great deal, I beg you to accept of the sum now in your hand, as a present from me. I have besides a proposal to make to you. As I am obliged, on account of this fatal accident, to quit Cairo, I am resolved never to return to it again. If you choose to accompany me, we will trade together as equal partners, and share the profits.”

I thanked the young man for the present he had made me, and I willingly embraced the proposal of travelling with him, assuring him, that his interest should always be as dear to me as my own.

We fixed a day for our departure, and accordingly entered upon our travels. We passed through Syria and Mesopotamia, travelled over Persia, and after stopping at several cities, came at last, sir, to your capital. Some time after our arrival here, the young man having formed a design of returning to Persia, and settling there, we balanced our accounts, and parted very good friends. He went from hence, and I, sir, continue here in your majesty's service. This is the story I had to relate. Does not your majesty find it more surprising than that of the hunch-back buffoon?

The sultan of Casgar fell into a passion against the Christian merchant. "Thou art a presumptuous fellow," said he, "to tell me a story so little worth hearing, and then to compare it to that of my jester. Canst thou flatter thyself so far as to believe that the trifling adventures of a young debauchee are more interesting than those of my jester? I will have you all four impaled, to revenge his death."

Hearing this, the purveyor prostrated himself at the sultan's feet. "Sir," said he, "I humbly beseech your majesty to suspend your wrath, and hear my story; and if it appears to be more extraordinary than that of your jester, to pardon us." The sultan having granted his request, the purveyor began thus.

The Story told by the Sultan of Casgar's Purveyor.

Sir, a person of quality invited me yesterday to his daughter's wedding. I went to his house in the evening at the hour appointed, and found there a large company of men of the law, ministers of justice, and others of the first rank in the city. After the ceremony was over, we partook of a splendid feast. Among other dishes set upon the table, there was one seasoned with garlic, which was very delicious, and generally relished. We observed, however, that one of the guests did not touch it, though it stood just before him. We invited him to taste it, but he intreated us not to press him. "I will take good care," said he, "how I touch any dish that is seasoned with garlic; I have not yet forgotten what the tasting of such a dish once cost me." We requested him to inform us what the reason was of his aversion to garlic. But before he had time to answer, the master of the house exclaimed, "Is it thus you honour my table? This dish is excellent, do not expect to be excused from eating of it; you must do me that favour as well as the rest." "Sir," said the gentleman, who was a Bagdad merchant, "I hope you do not think my refusal proceeds from any mistaken delicacy; if you insist on my compliance I will submit, but it must be on this condition, that after having eaten, I may, with your permission, wash my hands with alkali forty times, forty times more with ashes, and forty times again with soap. I hope you will not feel displeased at this stipulation, as I have made an oath never to taste garlic but on these terms."

As the master of the house, continued the purveyor of the sultan of Casgar, would not dispense with the merchant's partaking of the dish seasoned with garlic, he ordered his servants to provide a basin of water, together with some alkali, the ashes, and soap, that the merchant might wash as often as he pleased. After he had given these instructions, he addressed the merchant and said, "I hope you will now do as we do."

The merchant, apparently displeased with the constraint put upon him, took up a bit, which he put to his mouth trembling, and ate with a reluctance that astonished us. But what surprised us yet more was, that he had no thumb; which none of us had observed before, though he had eaten of other dishes. "You have lost your thumb," said the master of the house. "This must have been occasioned by some extraordinary accident, a relation of which will be agreeable to the company." "Sir," replied the merchant, "I have no thumb on either the right or the left hand." As he spoke he put out his left hand, and shewed us that what he said was true. "But this is not all," continued he: "I have no great toe on either of my feet: I was maimed in this manner by an unheard-of adventure, which I am willing to relate, if you will have the patience to hear me. The account will excite at once your astonishment and your pity. Only allow me first to wash my hands." With this he rose from the table, and after washing his hands a hundred and twenty times, reseated himself, and proceeded with his narrative as follows.

In the reign of the caliph Haroon al Rusheed, my father lived at Bagdad, the place of my nativity, and was reputed one of the richest merchants in the city. But being a man addicted to his pleasures, and neglecting his private affairs, instead of leaving me an ample fortune, he died in such embarrassed circumstances, that I was reduced to the necessity of using all the economy possible to discharge the debts he had contracted. I at last, however, paid them all; and by care and good management my little fortune began to wear a smiling aspect.

One morning, as I opened my shop, a lady mounted upon a mule, and attended by an eunuch and two slaves, stopped near my door, and with the assistance of the eunuch alighted. "Madam," said the eunuch, "I told you you would be too early; you see there is no one yet in the bazaar: had you taken my advice, you might have saved yourself the trouble of waiting here." The lady looked and perceiving no shop open but mine, asked permission to sit in it till the other merchants arrived. With this request I of course readily complied.

The lady took a seat in my shop, and observing there was no one in the bazaar but the eunuch and myself, uncovered her face to take the air. I had never beheld any thing so beautiful. I became instantly enamoured, and kept my eyes fixed upon her. I flattered myself that my attention was not unpleasant to her; for she allowed me time to view her deliberately, and only concealed her face so far as she thought necessary to avoid being observed.

After she had again lowered her veil, she told me she wanted several sorts of the richest and finest stuffs, and asked me if I had them. “Alas! madam,” I replied, “I am but a young man just beginning the world; I have not capital sufficient for such extensive traffic. I am much mortified not to be able to accommodate you with the articles you want. But to save you the trouble of going from shop to shop, when the merchants arrive, I will, if you please, go and get those articles from them, and ascertain the lowest prices.” She assented to this proposal, and entered into conversation with me, which I prolonged, making her believe the merchants that could furnish what she wanted were not yet come.

I was not less charmed with her wit than I had been before with the beauty of her face; but was obliged to forego the pleasure of her conversation. I ran for the stuffs she wanted, and after she had fixed upon what she liked, we agreed for five thousand dirhems of coined silver; I wrapped up the stuffs in a small bundle, and gave it to the eunuch, who put it under his arm. She then rose and took leave. I followed her with my eyes till she had reached the bazaar gate, and even after she had remounted her mule.

The lady had no sooner disappeared, than I perceived that love had led me to a serious oversight. It had so engrossed my thoughts, that I did not reflect that she went away without paying, and that I had not informed myself who she was, or where she resided. I soon felt sensible, however, that I was accountable for a large sum to the merchants, who, perhaps, would not have patience to wait for their money: I went to them, and made the best excuse I could, pretending that I knew the lady; and then returned home, equally affected with love, and with the burden of such a heavy debt.

I had desired my creditors to wait eight days for their money: when this period had elapsed, they did not fail to dun me. I then intreated them to give me eight days more, to which they consented; but the next day I saw the lady enter the bazaar, mounted on her mule, with the same attendants as before, and exactly the same hour of the day.

She came straight to my shop. “I have made you wait some time,” said she, “but here is your money at last; carry it to the banker, and see that it is all good and right.” The eunuch who carried the money went along with me to the banker, and we found it quite right. I returned, and had the happiness of conversing with the lady till all the shops of the bazaar were open. Though we talked but of ordinary things, she gave them such a turn, that they appeared new and uncommon; and convinced me that I was not mistaken in admiring her wit at our first interview.

As soon as the merchants had arrived and opened their shops, I carried to the respective owners the money due for their stuffs, and was readily intrusted with more, which the lady had desired to see. She chose some from these to the value of one thousand pieces of gold, and carried them away as before without paying; nay, without speaking a word, or informing me who she was. What distressed me was the consideration that while at this rate she risked nothing, she left me without any security against being made answerable for the goods in case she did not return. "She has paid me," thought I, "a considerable sum; but she leaves me responsible for a greater, Surely she cannot be a cheat. The merchants do not know her, they will all come upon me." In short, my love was not so powerful as to stifle the uneasiness I felt, when I reflected upon the circumstances in which I was placed. A whole month passed before I heard any thing of the lady again; and during that time my alarm increased. The merchants were impatient for their money, and to satisfy them, I was going to sell off all I had, when one morning the lady returned with the same equipage as before.

"Take your weights," said she, "and weigh the gold I have brought you." These words dispelled my fear, and inflamed my love. Before we counted the money, she asked me several questions, and particularly if I was married. I answered I never had been. Then reaching out the gold to the eunuch, "Let us have your interposition," said she, "to accommodate our matters." Upon which the eunuch fell a laughing, and calling me aside, made me weigh the gold. While I was thus occupied, the eunuch whispered in my ear, "I know by your eyes you love this lady, and I am surprised that you have not the courage to disclose your passion. She loves you more ardently than you do her. Do not imagine that she has any real occasion for your stuffs. She only makes this her presence to come here, because you have inspired her with a violent passion. It was for this reason she asked you if you were married. It will be your own fault, if you do not marry her.” “It is true,” I replied, “I have loved her since I first beheld her; but I durst not aspire to the happiness of thinking my attachment could meet her approbation. I am entirely hers, and shall not fail to retain a grateful sense of your good offices in this affair.”

I finished weighing the gold, and while I was putting it into the bag, the eunuch turned to the lady, and told her I was satisfied; that being the word they had agreed upon between themselves. Presently after, the lady rose and took her leave; telling me she would send her eunuch to me, and that I had only to obey the directions he might give me in her name.

I carried each of the merchants their money, and waited some days with impatience for the eunuch. At last he came.

I received the eunuch very kindly, and inquired after his mistress’s health. “You are,” said he, “the happiest lover in the world; she is impatient to see you; and were she mistress of her own conduct, would not fail to come to you herself, and willingly pass in your society all the days of her life.” “Her noble mien and graceful carriage,” I replied, “convinced me, that she was a lady beyond the common rank.” “You have not erred in your judgment on that head,” said the eunuch; “she is the favourite of Zobeide the caliph’s wife, who is the more affectionately attached to her from having brought her up from her infancy, and intrusts her with all her affairs. Having a wish to marry, she has declared to her mistress that she has fixed her affections upon you, and has desired her consent. Zobeide told her, she would not withhold her consent; but that she would see you first, in order to judge if she had made a good choice; in which case she meant herself to defray the expenses of the wedding. Thus you see your felicity is certain; since you have pleased the favourite, you will be equally agreeable to the mistress, who seeks only to oblige her, and would by no means thwart her inclination. All you have to do is to come to the palace. I am sent hither to invite you.” “My resolution is already formed,” said I, “and I am ready to follow you whithersoever you please.” “Very well,” said the eunuch; “but you know men are not allowed to enter the ladies’ apartments in the palace, and you must be introduced with great secrecy. The favourite lady has contrived the matter well. On your side you must act your part discreetly; for if you do not, your life is at stake."

I gave him repeated assurances punctually to perform whatever he might require. "Then," said he, "in the evening, you must be at the mosque built by the caliph's lady on the bank of the Tigris, and wait there till somebody comes to conduct you." To this I agreed; and after passing the day in great impatience, went in the evening to the prayer that is said an hour and a half after sun-set in the mosque, and remained there after all the people had departed.

Soon after I saw a boat making up to the mosque, the rowers of which were all eunuchs, who came on shore, put several large trunks into the mosque, and then retired. One of them stayed behind, whom I perceived to be the eunuch that had accompanied the lady, and had been with me that morning. I saw the lady also enter the mosque; and approaching her, told her I was ready to obey her orders. "We have no time to lose," said she; and opening one of the trunks, desired me to get into it, that being necessary both for her safety and mine. "Fear nothing," added she, "leave the management of all to me." I considered with myself that I had gone too far to recede, and obeyed her orders; when she immediately locked the trunk. This done, the eunuch her confidant called the other eunuchs who had brought in the trunks, and ordered them to carry them on board again. The lady and the eunuch re-embarked, and the boatmen rowed to Zobeide's apartment.

In the meantime I reflected very seriously upon the danger to which I had exposed myself, and made vows and prayers, though it was then too late.

The boat stopped at the palace-gate, and the trunks were carried into the apartment of the officer of the eunuchs, who keeps the key of the ladies' apartments, and suffers nothing to enter without a narrow inspection. The officer was then in bed, and it was necessary to call him up.

The officer of the eunuchs was displeased at having his rest disturbed, and severely chid the favourite lady for coming home so late. "You shall not come off so easily as you think," said he: "not one of these trunks shall pass till I have opened it." At the same time he commanded the eunuchs to bring them before him, and open them one by one. The first they took was that wherein I lay, which put me into inexpressible fear.

The favourite lady, who had the key, protested it should not be opened. “You know very well,” said she, “I bring nothing hither but what is for the use of Zobeide, your mistress and mine. This trunk is filled with rich goods, which I purchased from some merchants lately arrived, besides a number of bottles of Zemzem water sent from Mecca; and if any of these should happen to break, the goods will be spoiled, and you must answer for them; depend upon it, Zobeide will resent your insolence.” She insisted upon this in such peremptory terms, that the officer did not dare to open any of the trunks. “Let them go,” said he angrily; “you may take them away.” Upon this the door of the women’s apartment was opened, and all the trunks were carried in.

This had been scarcely accomplished, when I heard the people cry, “Here is the caliph! Here comes the caliph!” This put me in such alarm, that I wonder I did not die upon the spot; for as they announced, it proved to be the caliph. “What hast thou got in these trunks?” said he to the favourite. “Some stuffs,” she replied, “lately arrived, which the empress wishes to see.” “Open them,” cried he, “and let me see them.” She excused herself, alleging the stuffs were only proper for ladies, and that by opening them, his lady would be deprived of the pleasure of seeing them first. “I say open them,” resumed the caliph; “I will see them.” She still represented that her mistress would be angry with her, if she complied: “No, no,” said he, “I will engage she shall not say a word to you. Come, come, open them, and do not keep me waiting.”

It was necessary to obey, which gave me such alarm, that I tremble every time I recollect my situation. The caliph sat down; and the favourite ordered all the trunks to be brought before him one after another. She opened some of them; and to lengthen out the time, displayed the beauties of each particular stuff, thinking in this manner to tire out his patience; but her stratagem did not succeed. Being as unwilling as myself to have the trunk where I lay opened, she left that to the last. When all the rest were viewed, “Come,” said the caliph, “let us see what is in that.” I am at a loss to tell you whether I was dead or alive that moment; for I little thought of escaping such imminent danger.

When Zobeide's favourite saw that the caliph persisted in having this trunk opened: "As for this," said she, "your majesty will please to dispense with the opening of it; there are some things in it which I cannot shew you without your lady be present." "Well, well," said the caliph, "since that is the case, I am satisfied; order the trunks to be carried away." The words were no sooner spoken than they were moved into her chamber, where I began to revive again.

As soon as the eunuchs, who had brought them, were gone, she opened the trunk in which I was confined. "Come out," said she; "go up these stairs that lead to an upper room, and wait there till I come to you." The door, which led to the stairs, she locked after me; and that was no sooner done, than the caliph came and sat down on the very trunk which had been my prison. The occasion of this visit did not respect me. He wished to question the lady about what she had seen or heard in the city. So they conversed together some time; he then left her, and retired to his apartment.

When she found the coast clear, she came to the chamber where I lay concealed, and made many apologies for the alarms she had given me. "My uneasiness," said she, "was no less than yours; you cannot well doubt of that, since I have run the same risk out of love to you. Perhaps another person in my situation would not, upon so delicate an occasion, have had the presence of mind to manage so difficult a business with so much dexterity; nothing less than the love I had for you could have inspired me with courage to do what I have. But come, take heart, the danger is now over." After much tender conversation, she told me it was time to go to rest, and that she would not fail to introduce me to Zobeide her mistress, some hour on the morrow, "which will be very easy," added she; "for the caliph never sees her but at night." Encouraged by these words, I slept very well, or if my sleep was interrupted, it was by agreeable disquietudes, caused by the hopes of possessing a lady blest with so much wit and beauty.

The next day, before I was introduced to Zobeide, her favourite instructed me how to conduct myself, mentioning what questions she would probably put to me, and dictating the answers I was to return. She then carried me into a very magnificent and richly furnished hall. I had no sooner entered, than twenty female slaves, advanced in age, dressed in rich and uniform habits, came out of Zobeide's apartment, and placed themselves before the throne in two equal rows; they were followed by twenty other younger ladies, clothed after the same fashion, only their habits appeared somewhat gayer. In the middle of these appeared Zobeide with a majestic air, and so laden with jewels, that she could scarcely walk. She ascended the throne, and the favourite lady, who had accompanied her, stood just by her right hand; the other ladies, who were slaves, being placed at some distance on each side of the throne.

As soon as the caliph's lady was seated, the slaves who came in first made a sign for me to approach. I advanced between the two rows they had formed, and prostrated myself upon the carpet that was under the princess's feet. She ordered me to rise, did me the honour to ask my name, my family, and the state of my fortune; to all which I gave her satisfactory answers, as I perceived, not only by her countenance, but by her words. "I am glad," said she, "that my daughter," (so she used to call the favourite lady,) "for I look upon her as such after the care I have take of her education, has made this choice; I approve of it, and consent to your marriage. I will myself give orders for having it solemnized; but I wish my daughter to remain with me ten days before the solemnity; in that time I will speak to the caliph, and obtain his consent: mean while do you remain here; you shall be taken care of."

Pursuant to the commands of the caliph's lady, I remained ten days in the women's apartments, and during that time was deprived of the pleasure of seeing the favourite lady: but was so well used by her orders, that I had no reason to be dissatisfied.

Zobeide told the caliph her resolution of marrying the favourite lady; and the caliph leaving to her the liberty to act in the business as she thought proper, granted the favourite a considerable sum by way of settlement. When the ten days were expired, Zobeide ordered the contract of marriage to be drawn up and brought to her, and the necessary preparations being made for the solemnity, the musicians and the dancers, both male and female, were called in, and there were great rejoicings in the palace for nine days. The tenth day being appointed for the last ceremony of the marriage, the favourite lady was conducted to a bath, and I to another. At night I had all manner of dishes served up to me, and among others, one seasoned with garlic, such as you have now forced me to eat. This I liked so well, that I scarcely touched any of the other dishes. But to my misfortune, when I rose from table, instead of washing my hands well, I only wiped them; a piece of negligence of which I had never before been guilty.

As it was then night, the whole apartment of the ladies was lighted up so as to equal the brightness of day. Nothing was to be heard through the palace but musical instruments, dances, and acclamations of joy. My bride and I were introduced into a great hall, where we were placed upon two thrones. The women who attended her made her robe herself several times, according to the usual custom on wedding days; and they shewed her to me every time she changed her habit.

All these ceremonies being over, we were conducted to the nuptial chamber: as soon as the company retired, I approached my wife; but instead of returning my transports, she pushed me away, and cried out, upon which all the ladies of the apartment came running in to inquire the cause: and for my own part, I was so thunderstruck, that I stood like a statue, without the power of even asking what she meant. “Dear sister,” said they to her, “what has happened since we left you? Let us know, that we may try to relieve you.” “Take,” said she, “take that vile fellow out of my sight.” “Why, madam?” I asked, “wherein have I deserved your displeasure?” “You are a villain,” said she in a furious passion, “to eat garlic, and not wash your hands! Do you think I would suffer such a polluted wretch to poison me? Down with him, down with him on the ground,” continued she, addressing herself to the ladies, “and bring me a bastinado.” They immediately did as they were desired; and while some held my hands, and others my feet, my wife, who was presently furnished with a weapon, laid on me as long as she could stand. She then said to the ladies, “Take him, send him to the judge, and let the hand be cut off with which he fed upon the garlic dish.”

“Alas!” cried I, “must I be beaten unmercifully, and, to complete my affliction, have my hand cut off, for partaking of a dish seasoned with garlic, and forgetting to wash my hands? What proportion is there between the punishment and the crime? Curse on the dish, on the cook who dressed it, and on him who served it up."

All the ladies who had seen me receive the thousand strokes, took pity on me, when they heard the cutting off of my hand mentioned. "Dear madam, dear sister," said they to the favourite lady, "you carry your resentment too far. We own he is a man quite ignorant of the world, of your quality, and the respect that is due to you: but we beseech you to overlook and pardon his fault." "I have not received adequate satisfaction," said she; "I will teach him to know the world; I will make him bear sensible marks of his impertinence, and be cautious hereafter how he tastes a dish seasoned with garlic without washing his hands." They renewed their solicitations, fell down at her feet, and kissing her fair hands, said, "Good madam, moderate your anger, and grant us the favour we supplicate." She made no reply, but got up, and after uttering a thousand reproaches against me, walked out of the chamber: all the ladies followed her, leaving me in inconceivable affliction.

I continued thus ten days, without seeing any body but an old female slave that brought me victuals. I asked her what was become of the favourite lady. "She is sick," said the old woman; "she is sick of the poisoned smell with which you infected her. Why did you not take care to wash your hands after eating of that cursed dish?" "Is it possible," thought I, "that these ladies can be so nice, and so vindictive for such a trifling fault!" I loved my wife notwithstanding all her cruelty, and could not help pitying her.

One day the old woman told me my spouse was recovered, and gone to bathe, and would come to see me the next day. "So," said she, "I would have you call up your patience, and endeavour to accommodate yourself to her humour. For she is in other respects a woman of good sense and discretion, and beloved by all the ladies about the court of our respected mistress Zobeide."

My wife accordingly came on the following evening, and accosted me thus: "You perceive that I must possess much tenderness to you, after the affront you have offered me: but still I cannot be reconciled till I have punished you according to your demerit, in not washing your hands after eating of the garlic dish." She then called the ladies, who, by her order, threw me upon the ground; and after binding me fast, she had the barbarity to cut off my thumbs and great toes herself, with a razor. One of the ladies applied a certain root to staunch the blood; but by bleeding and by the pain, I swooned away.

When I came to myself, they gave me wine to drink, to recruit my strength. “Ah! madam,” said I to my wife, “if ever I again eat of a dish with garlic in it, I solemnly swear to wash my hands a hundred and twenty times with alkali, with ashes, and with soap.” “Well,” replied she, “upon that condition I am willing to forget what is past, and live with you as my husband.”

“This,” continued the Bagdad merchant, addressing himself to the company, “is the reason why I refused to eat of the dish seasoned with what is now on the table.”

The ladies applied to my wounds not only the root I mentioned, but likewise some balsam of Mecca, which they were well assured was not adulterated, because they had it out of the caliph’s own dispensatory. By virtue of that admirable balsam, I was in a few days perfectly cured, and my wife and I lived together as agreeably as if I had never eaten of the garlic dish. But having been all my lifetime used to enjoy my liberty, I grew weary of being confined to the caliph’s palace; yet I said nothing to my wife on the subject, for fear of displeasing her. However, she suspected my feelings; and eagerly wished for liberty herself, for it was gratitude alone that made her continue with Zobeide. She represented to her mistress in such lively terms the constraint I was under, in not living in the city with people of my own rank, as I had always done, that the good princess chose rather to deprive herself of the pleasure of having her favourite about her than not to grant what we both equally desired.

A month after our marriage, my wife came into my room with several eunuchs, each carrying a bag of silver. When the eunuchs were gone; “You never told me,” said she, “that you were uneasy in being confined to court; but I perceived it, and have happily found means to make you contented. My mistress Zobeide gives us permission to quit the palace; and here are fifty thousand sequins, of which she has made us a present, in order to enable us to live comfortably in the city. Take ten thousand of them, and go and buy us a house.”

I quickly found a house for the money, and after furnishing it richly, we went to reside in it, kept a great many slaves of both sexes, and made a good figure. We thus began to live in a very agreeable manner: but my felicity was of short continuance; for at the end of a year my wife fell sick and died.

I might have married again, and lived honourably at Bagdad; but curiosity to see the world put me upon another plan. I sold my house, and after purchasing several kinds of merchandize, went with a caravan to Persia; from Persia I travelled to Samarcand, and from thence to this city.

"This," said the purveyor to the sultan of Casgar, "is the story that the Bagdad merchant related in a company where I was yesterday." "This story," said the sultan, "has something in it extraordinary; but it does not come near that of the little hunch-back." The Jewish physician prostrated himself before the sultan's throne, and addressed the prince in the following manner: "Sir, if you will be so good as to hear me, I flatter myself you will be pleased with a story I have to tell you." "Well spoken," said the sultan; "but if it be not more surprising than that of little hunch-back, you must not expect to live."

The Jewish physician, finding the sultan of Casgar disposed to hear him, gave the following relation.

The Story told by the Jewish Physician.

When I was studying physic at Damascus, and was just beginning to practise that noble profession with some reputation, a slave called me to see a patient in the governor of the city's family. Accordingly I went, and was conducted into a room, where I found a very handsome young man, much dejected by his disorder. I saluted him, and sat down by him; but he made no return to my compliments, only a sign with his eyes that he heard me, and thanked me. "Pray, sir," said I, "give me your hand, that I may feel your pulse." But instead of stretching out his right, he gave me his left hand, at which I was extremely surprised. However, I felt his pulse, wrote him a prescription, and took leave.

I continued my visits for nine days, and every time I felt his pulse, he still gave me his left hand. On the tenth day he seemed to be so far recovered, that I only deemed it necessary to prescribe bathing to him. The governor of Damascus, who was by, in testimony of his satisfaction with my service, invested me with a very rich robe, saying, he had appointed me a physician of the city hospital, and physician in ordinary to his house, where I might eat at his table when I pleased.

The young man likewise shewed me many civilities, and asked me to accompany him to the bath. Accordingly we went together, and when his attendants had undressed him, I perceived he wanted the right hand, and that it had not long been cut off, which had been the occasion of his disorder, though concealed from me; for while the people about him were applying proper remedies externally, they had called me to prevent the ill consequence of the fever which was on him. I was much surprised and concerned on seeing his misfortune; which he observed by my countenance. "Doctor," cried he, "do not be astonished that my hand is cut off; some day or other I will tell you the cause; and in that relation you will hear very surprising adventures."

After we had returned from the bath, we sat down to a collation; and he asked me if it would be any prejudice to his health if he went and took a walk out of town in the governor's garden? I made answer, that the air would be of service to him. “Then,” said he, “if you will give me your company, I will recount to you my history.” I replied I was at his command for all that day. Upon which he presently called his servants, and we went to the governor’s garden. Having taken two or three turns there, we seated ourselves on a carpet that his servants had spread under a tree, which gave a pleasant shade. The young man then gave me his history in the following terms:

I was born at Moussol, of one of the most considerable families in the city. My father was the eldest of ten brothers, who were all alive and married when my grandfather died. All the brothers were childless, except my father; and he had no child but me. He took particular care of my education; and made me learn every thing proper for my rank.

When I was grown up, and began to enter into the world, I happened one Friday to be at noon-prayers with my father and my uncles in the great mosque of Moussol. After prayers were over, the rest of the company going away, my father and my uncles continued sitting upon the best carpet in the mosque; and I sat down by them. They discoursed of several things, but the conversation fell insensibly, I know not how, upon the subject of travelling. They extolled the beauties and peculiar rarities of some kingdoms, and of their principal cities. But one of my uncles said, that according to the uniform report of an infinite number of voyagers, there was not in the world a pleasanter country than Egypt, on account of the Nile; and the description he gave infused into me such high admiration, that from that moment I had a desire to travel thither. Whatever my other uncles said, by way of preference to Bagdad and the Tigris, in calling Bagdad the residence of the Mussulmaun religion, and the metropolis of all the cities of the earth, made no impression upon me. My father joined in opinion with those of his brothers who had spoken in favour of Egypt; which filled me with joy. “Say what you will,” said he, “the man that has not seen Egypt has not seen the greatest rarity in the world. All the land there is golden; I mean, it is so fertile, that it enriches its inhabitants. All the women of that country charm you by their beauty and their agreeable carriage. If you speak of the Nile, where is there a more wonderful river? What water was ever lighter or more delicious? The very slime it carries along in its overflowing fattens the fields, which produce a thousand times more than other countries that are cultivated with the greatest labour. Observe what a poet said of the Egyptians, when he was obliged to depart from Egypt: ‘Your Nile loads you with blessings every day; it is for you only that it runs from such a distance. Alas! in removing from you, my tears will flow as abundantly as its waters; you are to continue in the enjoyment of its sweetnesses, while I am condemned to deprive myself of them against my will.’

“If you look,” added my father, “towards the island that is formed by the two greatest branches of the Nile, what variety of verdure! What enamel of all sorts of flowers! What a prodigious number of cities, villages, canals, and a thousand other agreeable objects! If you turn your eyes on the other side, up towards Ethiopia, how many other subjects of admiration! I cannot compare the verdure of so many plains, watered by the different canals of the island, better than to brilliant emeralds set in silver. Is not Grand Cairo the largest, the most populous, and the richest city in the world? What a number of magnificent edifices both public and private! If you view the pyramids, you will be filled with astonishment at the sight of the masses of stone of an enormous thickness, which rear their heads to the skies! You will be obliged to confess, that the Pharaohs, who employed such riches, and so many men in building them, must have surpassed in magnificence and invention all the monarchs who have appeared since, not only in Egypt, but in all the world, for having left monuments so worthy of their memory: monuments so ancient, that the learned cannot agree upon the date of their erection; yet such as will last to the end of time. I pass over in silence the maritime cities of the kingdom of Egypt, such as Damietta, Rosetta, and Alexandria, where nations come for various sorts of grain, cloth, and an infinite number of commodities calculated for accommodation and delight. I speak of what I know; for I spent some years there in my youth, which I shall always reckon the most agreeable part of my life.”

My uncles could make no reply, and assented to all my father had said of the Nile, of Cairo, and of the whole kingdom of Egypt. My imagination was so full of these subjects, I could not sleep that night. Soon after, my uncles declared how much they were struck with my father’s account. They made a proposal to him, that they should travel all together into Egypt. To this he assented; and being rich merchants, they resolved to carry with them such commodities as were likely to suit the market. When I found that they were making preparations for their departure, I went to my father, and begged of him, with tears in my eyes, that he would suffer me to make one of the party, and allow me some stock of goods to trade with on my own account. “You are too young,” said he, “to travel into Egypt; the fatigue is too great for you; and, besides, I am sure you will come off a loser in your traffic.” These words, however, did not suppress my eager desire to travel. I made use of my uncles’ interest with my father, who at last granted me permission to go as far as Damascus, where they were to leave me, till they had travelled through Egypt. “The city of Damascus,” said my father, “may likewise glory in its beauties, and my son must be content with leave to go so far.” Though my curiosity to see Egypt was very pressing, I considered he was my father, and submitted to his will.

I set out from Moussol in company with him and my uncles. We travelled through Mesopotamia, passed the Euphrates, and arrived at Aleppo, where we stayed some days. From thence we went to Damascus, the first sight of which struck me with agreeable surprise We lodged all together in one khan; and I had the view of a city that was large, populous, full of handsome people, and well fortified. We employed some days in walking up and down the delicious gardens that surrounded it; and we all agreed that Damascus was justly said to be seated in a paradise. At last my uncles thought of pursuing their journey; but took care, before they went, to sell my goods so advantageously for me, that I gained by them five hundred per cent. This sale brought me a sum so considerable, as to fill me with delight.

My father and my uncles left me in Damascus, and pursued their journey. After their departure, I used great caution not to lay out my money idly. But at the same time I took a stately house, built of marble, adorned with paintings of gold, silver foliage, and a garden with fine water-works. I furnished it, not so richly indeed as the magnificence of the place deserved, but at least handsomely enough for a young man of my rank. It formerly belonged to one of the principal lords of the city; but was then the property of a rich jewel-merchant, to whom I paid for it only two sherifs a month. I had a number of domestics, and lived honourably; sometimes I gave entertainments to such people as I had made an acquaintance with, and sometimes was treated by them. Thus did I spend my time at Damascus, waiting for my father's return; no passion disturbed my repose, and my only employment was conversing with people of credit.

One day, as I sat taking the cool air at my gate, a very handsome, well-dressed lady came to me, and asked if I did not sell stuffs? She had no sooner spoken the words, than she went into my house.

When I saw that the lady had entered the house, I rose, and having shut the gate, conducted into a hall, and prayed her to sit down. "Madam," said I, "I have had stuffs fit to be strewn to you, but at present, I am sorry to say, I have none." She removed the veil from her face, and discovered such beauty as affected me with emotions I had never felt before. "I have no occasion for stuffs," replied she, "I only come to see you, and, if you please, to pass the evening in your company; all I ask of you is a light collation."

Transported with joy, I ordered the servants to bring us several sorts of fruit, and some bottles of wine. These being speedily served, we ate, drank, and made merry till midnight. In short, I had not before passed a night so agreeably as this. Next morning I would have put ten sherifs into the lady's hands, but she drew back instantly. "I am not come to see you," said she, "from interested motives; you therefore do me wrong. So far from receiving money from you, I must insist on your taking some from me, or else I will see you no more." In speaking this, she put her hand into her purse, took out ten sherifs, and forced me to take them, saying, "You may expect me three days hence after sun-set. She then took leave of me, and I felt that when she went she carried my heart along with her."

She did not fail to return at the appointed hour three days after; and I received her with all the joy of a person who waited impatiently for her arrival. The evening and the night we spent as before; and next day at parting she promised to return the third day after. She did not, however, leave me without forcing me to take ten sherifs more.

She returned a third time; and at that interview, when we were both warm with wine, she spoke thus: “My dear love, what do you think of me? Am I not handsome and agreeable?” “Madam,” I replied, “I think this an unnecessary question: the love which I shew you ought to persuade you that I admire you; I am charmed to see and to possess you. You are my queen, my sultaness; in you lies all the felicity of my life.” “Ah!” returned she, “I am sure you would speak otherwise, if you saw a certain lady of my acquaintance, who is younger and handsomer than I am. She is of such a pleasant lively temper, that she would make the most melancholy people merry: I must bring her hither; I spoke of you to her, and from the account I have given of you she is dying with desire to see you. She intreated me to procure her that pleasure, but I did not dare to promise her without speaking to you beforehand.” “Madam,” said I, “do what you please; but whatever you may say of your friend, I defy all her charms to tear my heart from you, to whom it is so inviolably attached, that nothing can disengage it.” “Be not too positive,” returned she; “I now tell you, I am about to put your heart to a severe trial.”

We continued together all night, and next morning at parting, instead of ten sherifs she gave me fifteen, which I was forced to accept. “Remember,” said she, “that in two days’ time you are to have a new guest; pray take care to give her a good reception: we will come at the usual hour.” I had my hall put in great order, and a handsome collation prepared against they came.

I waited for the two ladies with impatience and at last they arrived at the close of the day. They both unveiled, and as I had been surprised with the beauty of the first, I had reason to be much more so when I saw her friend. She had regular features, an elegant person, and such sparkling eyes, that I could hardly bear their splendour. I thanked her for the honour she did me, and entreated her to excuse me if I did not give her the reception she deserved. “No compliments,” replied she; “it should be my part to make them to you, for allowing my friend to bring me hither. But since you are pleased to suffer it, let us lay aside all ceremony, and think only of amusing ourselves.”

I had given orders, as soon as the ladies arrived, to have the collation served up, and we soon sat down to our entertainment. I placed myself opposite the stranger, who never ceased looking upon me with a smiling countenance. I could not resist her conquering eyes, and she made herself mistress of my heart, without opposition. But while she inspired me with a flame, she caught it herself; and so far from appearing to be under any constraint, she conversed in very free and lively language.

The other lady, who observed us, did nothing at first but laugh. “I told you,” said she, addressing herself to me, “you would find my friend full of charms; and I perceive you have already violated the oath you made of being faithful to me.” “Madam,” replied I, laughing as well as she, “you would have reason to complain, if I were wanting in civility to a lady whom you brought hither, and who is your intimate friend; both of you might then upbraid me for not performing duly the rites of hospitality.”

We continued to drink; but as the wine warmed us, the strange lady and I ogled one another with so little reserve, that her friend grew jealous, and quickly gave us a dismal proof of the inveteracy of her feelings. She rose from the table and went out, saying, she would be with us presently again: but in a few moments after, the lady who stayed with me changed countenance, fell into violent convulsions, and expired in my arms while I was calling for assistance to relieve her. I went out immediately, and enquired for the other lady; when my people told me, she had opened the street door and was gone. I then suspected what was but too true, that she had been the cause of her friend’s death. She had the dexterity, and the malice, to put some very strong poison into the last glass, which she gave her with her own hand.

I was afflicted beyond measure with the accident. “What shall I do?” I exclaimed in agony. “What will become of me?” I considered there was no time to lose, and it being then moon-light, I ordered my servants to take up one of the large pieces of marble, with which the court of my house was paved, dig a hole, and there inter the corpse of the young lady. After replacing the stone, I put on a travelling suit, took what money I had; and having locked up every thing, affixed my own seal on the door of my house. This done I went to the jewel-merchant my landlord, paid him what I owed, with a year’s rent in advance and giving him the key, prayed him to keep it for me. “A very urgent affair," said I, "obliges me to be absent for some time; I am under the necessity of going to visit my uncles at Cairo." I took my leave of him, immediately mounted my horse, and departed with my attendants from Damascus.

I had a good journey, and arrived at Cairo without any accident. There I met with my uncles, who were much surprised to see me. To excuse myself, I pretended I was tired of waiting; and hearing nothing of them, was so uneasy, that I could not be satisfied without coming to Cairo. They received me kindly, and promised that my father should not be displeased with me for leaving Damascus without his permission. I lodged in the same khan with them, and saw all the curiosities of Cairo.

Having finished their traffic, they began to talk of returning to Moussol, and to make preparations for their departure; but I, having a wish to view in Egypt what I had not yet seen, left my uncles, and went to lodge in another quarter at a distance from their khan, and did not appear any more till they were gone. They sought for me all over the city; but not finding me, supposed remorse for having come to Egypt without my father's consent had occasioned me to return to Damascus, without saying any thing to them. So they began their journey, expecting to find me at Damascus, and there to take me up.

After their departure I continued at Cairo three years, more completely to indulge my curiosity in seeing all the wonders of Egypt. During that time I took care to remit money to the jewel-merchant, ordering him to keep my house for me; for I designed to return to Damascus, and reside there some years longer. I had no adventure at Cairo worth relating; but doubtless you will be much surprised at that which befell me on my return to Damascus.

Arriving at this city, I went to the jewel-merchant's, who received me joyfully, and would accompany me to my house, to shew me that no one had entered it whilst I was absent. The seal was still entire upon the lock; and when I went in, I found every thing in the order in which I had left it.

In sweeping and cleaning out the hall where I had eaten with the ladies, one of my servants found a gold chain necklace, with ten very large and perfect pearls strung upon it at certain distances. He brought it to me, when I knew it to be the same I had seen upon the lady's neck who was poisoned; and concluded it had broken off and fallen. I could not look upon it without shedding tears, when I called to mind the lovely creature I had seen die in such a shocking manner. I wrapped it up, and put it in my bosom.

I rested some days to recover from the fatigues of my journey; after which, I began to visit my former acquaintance. I abandoned myself to every species of pleasure, and gradually squandered away all my money. Being thus reduced, instead of selling my furniture, I resolved to part with the necklace; but I had so little skill in pearls, that I took my measures very ill, as you shall hear.

I went to the bazaar, where I called a crier aside, and shewing him the necklace, told him I wished to sell it, and desired him to show it to the principal jewellers. The crier was surprised to see such a valuable ornament. "How beautiful," exclaimed he, gazing upon it with admiration, "never did our merchants see any thing so rich; I am sure I shall oblige them highly in shewing it to them; and you need not doubt they will set a high price upon it, in emulation of each other." He carried me to a shop which proved to be my landlord's: "Stop here," said the crier, "I will return presently and bring you an answer."

While he was running about to shew the necklace, I sat with the jeweller, who was glad to see me, and we conversed on different subjects. The crier returned, and calling me aside, instead of telling me the necklace was valued at two thousand sherifs, assured me nobody would give me more than fifty. "The reason is," added he, "the pearls are false; consider if you will part with it at that price." I took him at his word, wanting money. "Go," said I, "I take your word, and that of those who know better than myself; deliver it to them, and bring me the money immediately."

The crier had been ordered to offer me fifty sherifs by one of the richest jewellers in town who had only made that offer to sound me, and try if I was well acquainted with the value of the pearls. He had no sooner received my answer, than he carried the crier to the judge, and shewing him the necklace; "Sir," said he, "here is a necklace which was stolen from me, and the thief, under the character of a merchant, has had the impudence to offer it to sale, and is at this minute in the bazaar. He is willing to take fifty sherifs for a necklace that is worth two thousand which is a clear proof of his having stolen it."

The Judge sent immediately to seize me, and when I came before him, he asked me if the necklace he had in his hand was not the same that I had exposed to sale in the bazaar. I told him it was. "Is it true," demanded he, "that you are willing to sell it for fifty sherifs?" I answered I was. "Well," continued he, in a scoffing way "give him the bastinado; he will quickly confess notwithstanding his merchant's disguise, that he is only an artful thief; let him be beaten till he owns his guilt." The pain of the torture made me tell a lie; I confessed, though it was not true that I had stolen the necklace; and the judge ordered my hand to be cut off according to the sentence of our law.

This made a great noise in the bazaar, and I was scarcely returned to my house when my landlord came. "My son," said he, "you seem to be a young man well educated, and of good sense; how is it possible you could be guilty of such an unworthy action, as that I hear talked of? You gave me an account of your property yourself, and I do not doubt but the account was just. Why did not you request money of me, and I would have lent it you? However, after what has happened, I cannot allow you to remain longer in my house; you must go and seek for other lodgings." I was extremely troubled at this; and entreated the jeweller, with tears in my eyes, to let me stay three days longer; which he granted.

"Alas," thought I, "this misfortune and affront are unsufferable; how shall I dare to return to Moussol? Nothing I can say to my father will persuade him that I am innocent."

Three hours after this fatal accident my house was forcibly entered by the judge's officers, accompanied by my landlord, and the merchant who had falsely accused me of having stolen the necklace. I asked them, what brought them there? But instead of giving me any answer, they bound and gagged me, calling me a thousand abusive names, and telling me the necklace belonged to the governor of Damascus, who had lost it above three years before, and that one of his daughters had not been heard of since. Judge of my sensations when I heard this intelligence. However, I summoned all my resolution, "I will," thought I, "tell the governor the truth, and it will rest with him either to put me to death, or to protect my innocence."

When I was brought before him, I observed he looked upon me with an eye of compassion, from whence I augured well. He ordered me to be untied, and addressing himself to the jeweller who accused me, and to my landlord: "Is this the man," asked he, "that sold the pearl necklace?" They had no sooner answered yes, than he continued, "I am sure he did not steal the necklace, and I am much astonished at the injustice that has been done him." These words giving me courage: "Sir," said I, "I do assure you I am perfectly innocent. I am likewise fully persuaded the necklace never did belong to my accuser, whom I never saw, and whose horrible perfidy is the cause of my unjust treatment. It is true, I made a confession as if I had stolen it; but this I did contrary to my conscience, through the force of torture, and for another reason that I am ready to give you, if you will have the goodness to hear me." "I know enough of it already," replied the governor, "to do you one part of the justice to which you are entitled. Take from hence," continued he, "the false accuser; let him undergo the same punishment as he caused to be inflicted on this young man, whose innocence is known to myself."

The governor's orders were immediately put in execution; the jeweller was punished as he deserved. Then the governor, having ordered all present to withdraw, said to me: "My son, tell me without fear how this necklace fell into your hands, conceal nothing from me." I related plainly all that had passed, and declared I had chosen rather to pass for a thief than to reveal that tragical adventure. "Good God," exclaimed the governor, "thy judgments are incomprehensible, and we ought to submit to them without murmuring. I receive, with entire submission, the stroke thou hast been pleased to inflict upon me." Then directing his discourse to me: "My son," said he, "having now heard the cause of your disgrace, for which I am truly concerned, I will give you an account of the affliction which has befallen myself. Know then, that I am the father of both the young ladies you were speaking of. The first lady, who had the impudence to come to your house, was my eldest daughter. I had given her in marriage at Cairo to one of her cousins, my brother's son. Her husband died, and she returned home corrupted by every vice too often contracted in Egypt. Before I took her home, her younger sister, who died in that deplorable manner in your arms, was a truly virtuous girl, and had never given me any occasion to complain of her conduce. But after that, the elder sister became very intimate with her, and insensibly made her as wicked as herself. The day after the death of the younger not finding her at home, I asked her elder sister what was become of her; but she, instead of answering, affected to weep bitterly; from whence I formed a fatal presage. I pressed her to inform me of what she knew respecting her sister 'Father,' replied she, sobbing, 'I can tell you no more than that my sister put on yesterday her richest dress, with her valuable pearl necklace, went out, and has not been heard of since.' I searched for her all over the town, but could learn nothing of her unhappy fate. In the mean time the elder, who doubtless repented of her jealous fury, became melancholy, and incessantly bewailed the death of her sister; she denied her self all manner of food, and so put an end to her deplorable days. Such is the condition of mankind! such are the misfortunes to which we are exposed! However, my son," added he, "since we are both of us equally unfortunate, let us unite our sorrow, and not abandon one another. I will give you in marriage a third daughter I have still left, she is younger than her sisters, and in no respect imitates their conduct; besides, she is handsomer, and I assure you is of a disposition calculated to make you happy. You shall have no other house but mine, and, after my death, you and she shall be heirs to all my property." "My lord," I replied, "I am overcome by your favours, and shall never be able to make a sufficient acknowledgment." "Enough," said he, interrupting me, "let us not waste time in idle words." He then called for witnesses, ordered the contract of marriage to be drawn, and I became the husband of his third daughter. He was not satisfied with punishing the jeweller, who had falsely accused me, but confiscated for my use all his property, which was very considerable. As for the rest, since you have been called to the governor's house, you may have seen what respect they pay me there. I must tell you further, that a person despatched by my uncles to Egypt, on purpose to inquire for me there, passing through this city found me out last night, and delivered me a letter from them. They inform me of my father's death, and invite me to come and take possession of his property at Moussol.

But as the alliance and friendship of the governor have fixed me here, and will not suffer me to leave him, I have sent back the express with a power, which will secure to me my inheritance. After what you have heard, I hope you will pardon my seeming incivility during the course of my illness, in giving you my left instead of my right hand.

"This," said the Jewish physician, "is the story I heard from the young man of Moussol. I continued at Damascus as long as the governor lived; after his death, being still in the vigour of my age, I had the curiosity to travel. Accordingly I went through Persia to the Indies, and came at last to settle in this your capital, where I have practised physic with reputation."

The sultan of Casgar was well pleased with this story. "I must confess," said he to the Jew, "the story you have told me is very singular; but I declare freely, that of the little hump-back is: yet more extraordinary, and much more diverting; so you are not to expect that I will give you your life, any more than the rest. I will have you all four executed." "Pray, sir, stay a minute," said the tailor, advancing, and prostrating himself at the sultan's feet. "Since your majesty loves pleasant stories, I have one to tell you that will not displease you." "Well, I will hear thee too," said the sultan; "but do not flatter thyself that I will suffer thee to live, unless thou tellest me some adventure that is yet more diverting than that of my hump-backed jester." Upon this the tailor, as if he had been sure of success, spoke boldly to the following purpose.

The Story told by the Tailor.

A citizen of this city did me the honour two days ago to invite me to an entertainment, which he was to give to his friends yesterday morning. Accordingly I went early, and found there about twenty persons.

The master of the house was gone out upon some business, but in a short time returned, and brought with him a young man, a stranger, very well dressed, and handsome, but lame. When he entered, we all rose, and out of respect to the master of the house, invited the young man to sit down with us upon the estrade. He was going to comply; but suddenly perceiving a barber in our company, flew backwards, and made towards the door. The master of the house, surprised at his behaviour, stopped him. "Where are you going?" demanded he. "I bring you along with me to do me the honour of being my guest among the rest of my friends, and you are no sooner got into my house, than you are for running away." "Sir," replied the young man, "for God's sake do not stop me, let me go, I cannot without horror look upon that abominable barber, who, though he was born in a country where all the natives are white, resembles an Ethiopian; and his soul is yet blacker and more horrible than his face."

We were all surprised to hear the young man speak in this manner, and began to have a very bad opinion of the barber, without knowing what ground the young man had for what he said. Nay, we protested we would not suffer any one to remain in our company, who bore so horrid a character. The master of the house intreated the stranger to tell us what reason he had for hating the barber. "Gentlemen," resumed the young man, "you must know this cursed barber is the cause of my being lame, and having fallen into the most ridiculous and teasing situation you can imagine. For this reason I have sworn to avoid all the places where he is, and even not to stay in the cities where he resides. It was for this reason that I left Bagdad, where he then dwelt; and travelled so far to settle in this city, at the extremity of Tartary; a place where I flattered myself I should never see him. And now, after all, contrary to my expectation, I find him here. This obliges me, gentlemen, against my will, to deprive myself of the honour of being merry with you. This very day I shall take leave of your town, and go, if I can, to hide my head where he cannot come.” This said, he would have left us, but the master of the house earnestly intreated him to stay, and tell us the cause of his aversion for the barber, who all this while looked down and said not a word. We joined with the master of the house in his request; and at last the young man, yielding to our importunities, sat down; and, after turning his back on the barber, that he might not see him, gave us the following narrative of his adventures.

My father’s quality might have entitled him to the highest posts in the city of Bagdad, but he always preferred a quiet life to the honours of a public station. I was his only child, and when he died I had finished my education, and was of age to dispose of the plentiful fortune he had left me; which I did not squander away foolishly, but applied to such uses as obtained for me everybody’s respect. I had not yet been disturbed by any passion: I was so far from being sensible of love, that I bashfully avoided the conversation of women. One day, walking in the streets, I saw a large party of ladies before me; and that I might not meet them, I turned down a narrow lane, and sat down upon a bench by a door. I was placed opposite a window, where stood a pot of beautiful flowers, on which I had my eyes fixed, when the window opened, and a young lady appeared, whose beauty struck me. Immediately she fixed her eyes upon me; and in watering the flowerpot with a hand whiter than alabaster, looked upon me with a smile, that inspired me with as much love for her as I had formerly aversion for all women. After having watered her flowers, and darted upon me a glance full of charms that pierced my heart, she shut the window, and left me in inconceivable perplexity, from which I should not have recovered, if a noise in the street had not brought me to myself. I lifted up my head, and turning, saw the first cauzee of the city, mounted on a mule, and attended by five or six servants: he alighted at the door of the house, where the young lady had opened the window, and went in; from whence I concluded he was her father. I went home in an altered state of mind; agitated by a passion the more violent, as I had never felt its assaults before: I retired to bed in a violent fever, at which all the family were much concerned. My relations, who had a great affection for me, were so alarmed by the sudden disorder, that they importuned me to tell the cause; which I took care not to discover. My silence created an uneasiness that the physicians could not dispel, because they knew nothing of my distemper, and by their medicines rather inflamed than checked it. My relations began to despair of my life, when an old lady of our acquaintance, hearing I was ill, came to see me. She considered me with great attention, and after having examined me, penetrated, I know not how, into the real cause of my illness. She took my relations aside, and desired all my people would retire out of the room, and leave her with me alone.

When the room was clear, she sat down on the side of my bed. “My son,” said she, “you have obstinately concealed the cause of your illness; but you have no occasion to reveal it to me. I have experience enough to penetrate into a secret; you will not deny when I tell you it is love that makes you sick. I can find a way to cure you, if you will but inform me who that happy lady is, that could move a heart so insensible as yours; for you have the character of a woman-hater, and I was not the last who perceived that such was your disposition; but what I foresaw has come to pass, and I am now glad of the opportunity to employ my talents in relieving your pain.”

The old lady having thus spoken, paused, expecting my answer; but though what she had said had made a strong impression upon me, I durst not lay open to her the bottom of my heart; I only turned to her, and heaved a deep sigh, without replying a word. “Is it bashfulness,” said she, “that keeps you silent? Or is it want of confidence in me? Do you doubt the effect of my promise? I could mention to you a number of young men of your acquaintance, who have been in the same condition with yourself, and have received relief from me.”

The good lady told me so many more circumstances that I broke silence, declared to her my complaint, pointed out to her the place where I had seen the object which occasioned it, and unravelled all the circumstances of my adventure. “If you succeed,” added I, “and procure me the happiness of seeing that charming beauty, and revealing to her the passion with which I burn for her, you may depend upon it I will be grateful.” “My son,” replied the old woman, “I know the lady you speak of; she is, as you rightly judged, the daughter of the first cauzee of this city: I am not surprised that you are in love with her. She is the handsomest and most lovely lady in Bagdad, but very proud, and of difficult access. You know how strict our judges are, in enjoining the punctual observance of the severe laws that confine women; and they are yet more strict in the observation of them in their own families; the cauzee you saw is more rigid in that point than any of the other magistrates. They are always preaching to their daughters what a heinous crime it is to shew themselves to men; and the girls themselves are so prepossessed with the notion, that they make no other use of their own eves but to conduct them along the street, when necessity obliges them to go abroad. I do not say absolutely that the first cauzee's daughter is of that humour; but that does not hinder my fearing to meet with as great obstacles on her side, as on her father's. Would to God you had loved any other, then I should not have had so many difficulties to surmount. However, I will employ all my wits to compass the matter; but it requires time. In the mean while take courage and trust to me."

The old woman took leave; and as I weighed within myself all the obstacles she had been talking of, the fear of her not succeeding in her undertaking inflamed my disorder. Next day she came again, and I read in her countenance that she had no favourable news to impart. She spoke thus: "My son, I was not mistaken, I have somewhat else to conquer besides the vigilance of a father. You love an insensible object, who takes pleasure in making every one miserable who suffers himself to be charmed by her; she will not deign them the least comfort: she heard me with pleasure, when I spoke of nothing but the torment she made you undergo; but I no sooner opened my mouth to engage her to allow you to see her, and converse with her, but casting at me a terrible look, 'You are very presumptuous,' said she, 'to make such a proposal to me; I charge you never to insult me again with such language.'

"Do not let this cast you down," continued she; "I am not easily disheartened, and am not without hope but I shall compass my end." To shorten my story, this good woman made several fruitless attacks in my behalf on the proud enemy of my rest. The vexation I suffered inflamed my distemper to that degree, that my physicians gave me over. I was considered as a dead man, when the old woman came to recall me to life.

That no one might hear what was said, she whispered in my ear; “Remember the present you owe for the good news I bring you.” These words produced a marvellous effect; I raised myself up in the bed, and with transport replied, “You shall not go without a present; but what is the news you bring me?” “Dear sir,” said she “you shall not die; I shall speedily have the pleasure to see you in perfect health, and very well satisfied with me. Yesterday I went to see the lady you love, and found her in good humour. As soon as I entered, I put on a sad countenance heaved many deep sighs, and began to squeeze out some tears. ‘My good mother,’ demanded she ‘what is the matter with you, why are you so cast down?’ ‘Alas, my dear and honourable lady,’ I replied, ‘I have just been with the young gentleman of whom I spoke to you the other day, who is dying on your account.’ ‘I am at a loss to know,’ said she, ‘how you make me to be the cause of his death. How can I have contributed to it?’ ‘How?’ replied I; ‘did not you tell me the other day, that he sat down before your window when you opened it to water your flower-pot? He then saw that prodigy of beauty, those charms that your mirror daily represents to you. From that moment he languished, and his disorder has so increased, that he is reduced to the deplorable condition I have mentioned.’

“‘You well remember,’ added I, ‘how harshly you treated me at our last interview; when I was speaking to you of his illness, and proposing a way to save him from the threatened consequences of his complaint. After I left you I went directly to his house, and he no sooner learnt from my countenance that I had brought no favourable answer than his distemper increased. From that time, madam, he has been at the point of death; and I doubt whether your compassion would not now come too late to save his life.’ The fear of your death alarmed her, and I saw her face change colour. ‘Is your account true?’ she asked. ‘Has he actually no other disorder than what is occasioned by his love of me?’ ‘Ah, madam!’ I replied, ‘it is too true; would it were false!’ ‘Do you believe,’ said she, ‘that the hopes of seeing me would at all contribute to rescue him from his danger?’ I answered, ‘Perhaps it may, and if you will permit me, I will try the remedy.’? ‘Well,’ resumed she, sighing, ‘give him hopes of seeing me; but he must pretend to no other favours, unless he aspire to marry me, and obtains my father's consent.' 'Madam,' replied I. 'your goodness overcomes me; I will instantly seek the young gentleman, and tell him he is to have the pleasure of an interview with you.' 'The best opportunity I can think of,' said she, 'for granting him that favour, will be next Friday at the hour of noon prayers. Let him observe when my father goes out, and then, if his health permits him to be abroad, come and place himself opposite the house. I shall then see him from my window, and will come down and open the door for him: we will converse together during prayer-time; but he must depart before my father returns.'

"It is now Tuesday," continued the old lady "you have the interval between this and Friday to recover your strength, and make the necessary dispositions for the interview." While the good old lady was speaking, I felt my illness decrease, or rather, by the time she had done, I found myself perfectly recovered. "Here, take this," said I, reaching out to her my purse, which was full, "it is to you alone that I owe my cure. I reckon this money better employed than all that I gave the physicians, who have only tormented me during my illness."

When the lady was gone, I found I had strength enough to get up: and my relations finding me so well, complimented me on the occasion, and went home.

On Friday morning the old woman came, just as I was dressing, and choosing out the richest clothes in my wardrobe, said, "I do not ask you how you are, what you are about is intimation enough of your health; but will not you bathe before you go?" "That will take up too much time," I replied; "I will content myself with sending for a barber, to shave my head." Immediately I ordered one of my slaves to call a barber that could do his business cleverly and expeditiously.

The slave brought me the wretch you see here, who came, and after saluting me, said, "Sir, you look as if you were not well." I told him I was just recovered from a fit of sickness. "May God," resumed he, "deliver you from all mischance; may his grace always go along with you." "I hope he will grant your wish, for which I am obliged to you." "Since you are recovering from a fit of sickness," he continued, "I pray God preserve your health; but now let me know what I am to do; I have brought my razors and my lancets, do you desire to be shaved or to be bled?” I replied, “I am just recovered from a fit of sickness, and you may readily judge I only want to be shaved: come, do not lose time in prattling; for I am in haste, and have an appointment precisely at noon.”

The barber spent much time in opening his case, and preparing his razors Instead of putting water into the basin, he took a very handsome astrolabe out of his case, and went very gravely out of my room to the middle of the court to take the height of the sun: he returned with the same grave pace, and entering my room, said, “Sir, you will be pleased to know this day is Friday the 18th of the moon Suffir, in the year 653, from the retreat of our great prophet from Mecca to Medina, and in the year 7320 of the epocha of the great Iskender with two horns; and that the conjunction of Mars and Mercury signifies you cannot choose a better time than this very day and hour for being shaved. But, on the other hand, the same conjunction is a bad presage to you. I learn from it, that this day you run a great risk, not indeed of losing your life, but of an inconvenience which will attend you while you live. You are obliged to me for the advice I now give you, to avoid this accident; I shall be sorry if it befall you.”

You may guess, gentlemen, how vexed I was at having fallen into the hands of such a prattling, impertinent fellow; what an unseasonable adventure was it for a lover preparing for an interview with his mistress! I was quite irritated. “I care not,” said I, in anger, “for your advice and predictions; I did not call you to consult your astrology; you came hither to shave me; shave me, or begone.” “I will call another barber, sir,” replied he, with a coolness that put me out of all patience; “what reason have you to be angry with me? You do not know, that all of my profession are not like me; and that if you made it your business to search, you would not find such another. You only sent for a barber; but here, in my person, you have the best barber in Bagdad, an experienced physician, a profound chemist, an infallible astrologer, a finished grammarian, a complete orator, a subtle logician, a mathematician perfectly well versed in geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and all the refinements of algebra; an historian fully master of the histories of all the kingdoms of the universe. Besides, I understand all parts of philosophy. I have all our sacred traditions by heart. I am a poet, I am an architect; and what is it I am not? There is nothing in nature hidden from me. Your deceased father, to whose memory I pay a tribute of tears every time I think of him, was fully convinced of my merit; he was fond of me, and spoke of me in all companies as the first man in the world. Out of gratitude and friendship for him, I am willing to attach myself to you, to take you under my protection, and guard you from all the evils that your stars may threaten."

When I heard all this jargon, I could not forbear laughing, notwithstanding my anger. "You impertinent prattler!" said I, "will you have done, and begin to shave me?"

"Sir," replied the barber, "you affront me in calling me a prattler; on the contrary, all the world gives me the honourable title of Silent. I had six brothers, whom you might justly have called prattlers. These indeed were impertinent chatterers, but for me, who am a younger brother, I am grave and concise in my discourse."

For God's sake, gentlemen, do but suppose you had been in my place. What could I say when I saw myself so cruelly delayed? "Give him three pieces of gold," said I to the slave who was my housekeeper, "and send him away, that he may disturb me no more; I will not be shaved this day." "Sir," said the barber, "pray what do you mean? I did not come to seek for you, you sent for me; and as that is the case I swear by the faith of a Moosulmaun, I will not stir out of these doors till I have shaved you. If you do not know my value, it is not my fault. Your deceased father did me more justice. Every time he sent for me to let him blood, he made me sit down by him, and was charmed with hearing what witty things I said. I kept him in a continual strain of admiration; I elevated him; and when I had finished my discourse, 'My God,' he would exclaim, 'you are an inexhaustible source of science, no man can reach the depth of your knowledge.' 'My dear sir,' I would answer, 'you do me more honour than deserve. If I say anything that is worth hearing, it is owing to the favourable audience you vouchsafe me; it is your liberality that inspires me with the sublime thoughts which have the happiness to please you.' One day, when he was charmed with an admirable discourse I had made him, he said, 'Give him a hundred pieces of gold, and invest him with one of my richest robes.' I instantly received the present. I then drew his horoscope, and found it the happiest in the world. Nay I carried my gratitude further; I let him blood with cupping-glasses."

This was not all; he spun out another harangue that was a full half hour long. Tired with hearing him, and fretted at the loss of time, which was almost spent before I was half ready, I did not know what to say. "It is impossible," I exclaimed, "there should be such another man in the world who takes pleasure, as you do, in making people mad."

I thought I might perhaps succeed better if I dealt mildly with my barber. "In the name of God," said I, "leave off talking, and shave me directly: business of the last importance calls me, as I have already told you." At these words he fell a laughing: "It would be fortunate," said he, "if our minds were always in the same state; if we were always wise and prudent. I am willing, however, to believe, that if you are angry with me, it is your disorder that has caused the change in your temper, for which reason you stand in need of some instructions, and you cannot do better than follow the example of your father and grandfather. They came and consulted me upon all occasions, and I can say, without vanity, that they always highly prized my advice. Pray observe, sir, men never succeed in their undertakings without the counsel of persons of understanding. A man cannot, says the proverb, be wise without receiving advice from the wise. I am entirely at service, and you have only to command me."

"What! cannot I prevail with you then," I demanded, interrupting him, "to leave off these long speeches, that tend to nothing but to distract my head, and detain me from my business? Shave me, I say, or begone:" with that I started up in anger, stamping my foot against the ground.

When he saw I was in earnest, he said, "Sir, do not be angry, we are going to begin." He lathered my head, and began to shave me; but had not given four strokes with his razor before he stopped, and addressed me, "Sir, you are hasty, you should avoid these transports that only come from the devil. I am entitled to some consideration on account of my age, my knowledge, and my great virtues."

"Go on and shave me," said I, interrupting him again, "and talk no more.” “That is to say,” replied he, “you have some urgent business to go about; I will lay you a wager I guess right.” “Why I told you two hours ago,” I returned, “you ought to have shaved me before.” “Moderate your passion,” replied he; “perhaps you have not maturely weighed what you are going about; when things are done precipitately, they are generally repented of. I wish you would tell me what mighty business this is you are so earnest upon. I would tell you my opinion of it; besides, you have time enough, since your appointment is not till noon, and it wants three hours of that yet.” “I do not mind that,” said I; “persons of honour and of their word are rather before their time than after. But I forget that by reasoning with you, I give into the faults of you prattling barbers; have done, have done; shave me.”

The more haste I was in, the less speed he made. He laid down the razor, and took up his astrolabe; then laid down his astrolabe, and took up his razor again.

The barber quitted his razor again, and took up his astrolabe a second time; and so left me half shaved, to go and see precisely what hour it was. Back he came, and exclaimed, “Sir, I knew I was not mistaken, it wants three hours of noon. I am sure of it, or else all the rules of astronomy are false.” “Just heaven!” cried I, “my patience is exhausted, I can bear this no longer. You cursed barber, you barber of mischief, I can scarcely forbear falling upon you and strangling you.” “Softly, sir,” said he, very calmly, without being moved by my anger: “are you not afraid of a relapse? Be not in a passion, I am going to shave you this minute.” In speaking these words, he clapped his astrolabe in his case, took up his razor, and passing it over the strap which was fixed to his belt, fell to shaving me again; but all the while he was thus employed, the dog could not forbear prattling. “If you would be pleased, sir,” said he, “to tell me what the business is you are going about at noon, I could give you some advice that might be of use to you.” To satisfy the fellow, I told him I was going to meet some friends at an entertainment at noon, to make merry with me on the recovery of my health.

When the barber heard me talk of regaling; “God bless you this day, as well as all other days!” he cried: “you put me in mind that yesterday I invited four or five friends to come and eat with me as this day; indeed I had forgotten the engagement, and have made no preparation for them.” “Do not let that trouble you,” said I; “though I dine abroad, my larder is always well furnished. I make you a present of all that it contains; and besides, I will order you as much wine as you have occasion for; I have excellent wine in my cellar; only you must hasten to finish shaving me: and pray remember, as my father made you presents to encourage you to speak, I give you mine to induce you to be silent.”

He was not satisfied with my promise, but exclaimed, “God reward you, sir, for your kindness: pray shew me these provisions now, that I may see if there will be enough to entertain my friends. I would have them satisfied with the good fare I make them.” “I have,” said I, “a lamb, six capons, a dozen chickens, and enough to make four courses.” I ordered a slave to bring all before him, with four great pitchers of wine. “It is very well,” returned the barber; “but we shall want fruit, and sauce for the meat.” These I ordered likewise; but then he left off shaving, to look over every thing one after another; and this survey lasted almost half an hour. I raged and stormed like a madman; but it signified nothing, the wretch made no more haste. However, he took up his razor again, and shaved me for some minutes; then stopping suddenly, exclaimed, “I could not have believed, sir, that you would have been so liberal; I begin to perceive that your deceased father lives again in you. Most certainly, I do not deserve the favours with which you have loaded me; and I assure you I shall have them in perpetual remembrance; for, sir, to let you know, I have nothing but what I obtain from the generosity of such gentlemen as you: in which respect, I am like to Zantout, who rubs the people in the baths; to Sali, who cries boiled peas in the streets; to Salout, who sells beans; to Akerscha, who sells greens; to Aboumecarez, who sprinkles the streets to lay the dust; and to Cassem, the caliph’s lifeguard man. Of all these persons, not one is apt so be melancholy; they are neither impertinent nor quarrelsome; they are more contented with their lot, than the caliph in the midst of his court; they are always gay, ready to sing and dance, and have each of them their peculiar song and dance, with which they divert the city of Bagdad; but what I esteem most in them is, that they are no great talkers, any more than your slave, that has bow the honour to speak to you. Here, sir, is the song and dance of Zantout, who rubs the people in the baths; mind me, pray, and see if I do not imitate it exactly."

The barber sung the song, and danced the dance of Zantout; and let me say what I could to oblige him to finish his buffooneries, he did not cease till he had imitated, in like manner, the songs and dances of the other persons he had named. "After that," addressing himself to me, "I am going," said he, "to invite all these honest men to my house; if you will take my advice you will join us, and disappoint your friends, who perhaps are great talkers. They will only teaze you to death with their impertinent discourse, and make you relapse into a disorder worse than that from which you are so lately recovered; whereas at my house you shall have nothing but pleasure."

Notwithstanding my anger, I could not forbear laughing at the fellow's impertinence. "I wish I had no business upon my hands," I replied, "I would accept your invitation, and go with all my heart to partake of your entertainment; but I beg to be excused, I am too much engaged; another day I shall be more at leisure, and then we will make up the same party. Come, finish shaving me, and make haste home; perhaps your friends are already arrived at your house." "Sir," replied he, "do not refuse me the favour I ask of you; were you but once in our company, it would afford you so much pleasure as abundantly to compensate you for forsaking your friends." "Let us talk no more of that," said I; "I cannot be your guest."

I found I gained no ground by mild terms. "Since you will not come to my house," replied the barber, "you must allow me to go along with you: I will carry these things to my house, where my friends may eat of them if they like, and I will return immediately; I would not be so uncivil as to leave you alone. You deserve this piece of complaisance at my hands." "Heavens!" cried I, "then I shall not get clear of this troublesome fellow to-day. In the name of the living God, leave off your unreasonable jargon; go to your friends, drink, eat, and be merry with them, and leave me at liberty to go to mine. I must go alone, I have no occasion for company; besides, I must needs tell you, the place to which I go is not one where you can be received." "You jest, sir," said he; "if your friends have invited you to a feast, what should prevent you from allowing me to go with you? You will please them, I am sure, by introducing to them a man who can talk wittily like me, and knows how to divert company. But say what you will, I am determined to accompany you."

These words, gentlemen, perplexed me much. "How," thought I, "shall I get rid of this cursed barber? If I persist in contradicting him, we shall never have done."

Besides, I heard at this instant the first call to noon-prayers, and it was time for me to go. In fine, I resolved to say nothing, and to make as if I consented to his accompanying me. He then finished shaving me, and I said to him, "Take some of my servants to carry these provisions along with you, and return hither; I will stay for you, and shall not go without you."

At last he went, and I dressed myself as expeditiously as I could. I heard the last call to prayers, and hastened to set out: but the malicious barber, who guessed my intention, went with my servants only within sight of the house and stood there till he saw them enter it, after which he concealed himself at the corner of the street, with an intent to observe and follow me. In fine, when I arrived at the cauzee's door, I looked back and saw him at the head of the street which alarmed me to the last degree.

The cauzee's door was half open, and as I went in I saw an old woman waiting for me, who, after she had shut the door, conducted me to the chamber of the young lady who was the object of my love; but we had scarcely begun to converse, when we heard a noise in the streets. The young lady put her head to the window, and saw through the gate that it was her father already returning from prayers. At the same time I looked, and saw the barber sitting over-against the house, on the bench from which I had first seen the young lady.

I had then two things to fear, the arrival of the cauzee, and the presence of the barber. The young lady mitigated my apprehension on the first head, by assuring me the cauzee, came but seldom to her chamber, and as she had forseen that this misadventure might happen, she had contrived a way to convey me out safely: but the indiscretion of the accursed barber made me very uneasy; and you shall hear that my uneasiness was not without ground.

As soon as the cauzee was come in, he caned one of his slaves, who had deserved chastisement. This slave made a horrid noise, which was heard in the streets; the barber thought it was I who cried out, and was maltreated. Prepossessed with this thought, he roared out aloud, rent his clothes, threw dust upon his head, and called the neighbourhood to his assistance. The neighbours collected, and asked what assistance he wanted? "Alas!" cried he, "they are assassinating my master, my dear patron;" and without saying anything more, he ran all the way to my house, with the very same cry in his mouth. From thence he returned, followed by all my domestics armed with sticks. They knocked with inconceivable fury at the door, and the cauzee sent slave to see what was the matter; but the slave being frightened, returned to his master, crying, "Sir, above ten thousand men are going to break into your house by force."

Immediately the cauzee himself ran, opened the door, and asked what they wanted. His venerable presence could not inspire them with respect. They insolently said to him, "You cursed cauzee, what reason have you to assassinate our master? What has he done to you?" "Good people," replied the magistrate, "for what should I assassinate your master, whom I do not know and who has done me no harm? my house is open to you, come and search." "You bastinadoed him," said the barber; "I heard his cries not a minute ago." "What harm could your master do to me," replied the cauzee, "to oblige me to abuse him at that rate? Is he in my house? If he is, how came he in, or who could have introduced him?" "Ah! wretched cauzee," cried the barber, "you and your long beard shall never make me believe you; I know your daughter is in love with our master, and appointed him a meeting during the time of noon-prayer, you without doubt have had notice of it, returned home, and surprised him, and made your slaves bastinado him: but this your wicked action shall not pass with impunity; the caliph shall be acquainted with it, and he will give true and brief justice. Let him come out, deliver him to us immediately; or if you do not, we will go in and take him out to your shame." "There is no occasion for so many words," replied the cauzee, "nor to make so great a noise: if what you say is true, go and find him out, I give you free liberty." Thereupon the barber and my domestics rushed into the house like furies, and looked for me all about.

As I heard all that the barber said to the cauzee, I sought for a place to conceal myself, and could find nothing but a large empty trunk, in which I lay down, and shut it upon me. The barber, after he had searched everywhere, came into the chamber where I was, and opened the trunk. As soon as he saw me, he took it upon his head and carried it away. He descended a high staircase into a court, which he crossed hastily, and at length reached the street door. While he was carrying me, the trunk unfortunately flew open, and not being able to endure the shame of being exposed to the view and shouts of the mob who followed us, I leaped out into the street with so much haste, that I have been lame ever since. I was not sensible of the hurt at first, and therefore got up quickly to avoid the people, who laughed at me; nay, I threw handfuls of gold and silver among them, and whilst they were gathering it up, I made my escape by cross streets and alleys. But the cursed barber followed me close, crying, "Stay, sir; why do you run so fast? If you knew how much I am afflicted at the ill treatment you received from the cauzee, you, who are so generous, and to whom I and my friends are so much obliged! Did I not tell you truly, that you would expose your life by your obstinate refusal to let me go with you? See what has happened to you, by your own fault; and if I had not resolutely followed, to see whither you went, what would have become of you? Whither do you go, sir? Stay for me."

Thus the barber cried aloud in the street it was not enough for him to have occasioned so great a scandal in the quarter where the cauzee lived, but he would have it known through the whole town. I was in such a rage, that I had a great mind to stop and cut his throat; but considering this would have perplexed me farther, I chose another course. Perceiving that his calling after me exposed me to vast numbers of people, who crowded to the doors or windows, or stopped in the street to gaze at me, I entered an inn, the chamberlain of which knew me, and finding him at the gate, whither the noise had brought him, I prayed him, for the sake of heaven, to hinder that madman from coming in after me. He promised to do so, and was as good as his word, but not without a great deal of trouble; for the obstinate barber would enter in spite of him, and did not retire without calling him a thousand names. After the chamberlain had shut the gate, the barber continued telling all he met what great service he had done me. Thus I rid myself of that troublesome fellow. After this, the chamberlain prayed me to tell him my adventure, which I did, and then desired him to let me have an apartment until I was cured. “But sir,” said he, “will it not be more convenient for you to go home?” “I will not return thither,” replied I: “for the detestable barber will continue plaguing me there, and I shall die of vexation to be continually teazed by him. Besides, after what has befallen me to-day, I cannot think of staying any longer in this town; I must go whither my ill-fortune leads me.” Accordingly, when I was cured, I took all the money I thought necessary for my travels, and divided the rest of my property among my kindred.

Thus, gentlemen, I left Bagdad, and came hither. I had ground to hope that I should not meet this pernicious barber in a country so far from my own, and yet I find him amongst you. Be not surprised then at my haste to be gone: you may easily judge how unpleasant to me is the sight of a man who was the occasion of my lameness, and of my being reduced to the melancholy necessity of living so far from my kindred, friends, and country.

When he had spoken these words, the lame young man rose up and went out; the master of the house conducted him to the gate, and told him, he was sorry that he had given him, though innocently, so great a subject of mortification.

When the young man was gone, continued the tailor, we were all astonished at the story, and turning to the barber, told him he was very much to-blame, if what we had just heard was true. “Gentlemen,” answered he, raising up his head, which till then he had held down, “my silence during the young man’s discourse is sufficient to testify that he advanced nothing that was not true: but for all that he has said to you, I maintain that I ought to have done what I did; I leave you to be judges. Did not he throw himself into danger, and could he have come off so well without my assistance? He may think himself happy to have escaped with the lame leg Did not I expose myself to greater danger to get him out of a house where I thought he was ill-treated? Has he any reason to complain of and abuse me? This is what one gets by serving unthankful people. He accuses me of being a prattling fellow, which is a mere slander: of seven brothers, I speak least, and have most wit to my share; and to convince you of this, gentlemen, I need only relate my own story and theirs. Honour me, I beseech you, with your attention.”

The Story of the Barber.

In the reign of the caliph Mustunsir Billah, that is, seeking victory of God, a prince so famous for his liberality towards the poor, ten highwaymen infested the roads about Bagdad, and for a long time committed unheard-of robberies and cruelties. The caliph, having notice of this, sent for the judge of the police, some days before the feast of Bairam, and ordered him, on pain of death, to bring all the ten to him.

The judge of the police used so much diligence, and sent so many people in pursuit of the ten robbers, that they were taken on the very day of Bairam. I was walking at the time on the banks of the Tigris, and saw ten men richly appareled go into a boat. Had I but observed the guards who had them in custody, I might have concluded they were robbers; but my attention was fixed on the men themselves, and thinking they were people who designed to spend the festival in jollity, I entered the boat with them, hoping they would not object to my making one of the company. We descended the Tigris, and landed before the caliph's palace: I had by this time had leisure to reflect, and to discover my mistake. When we quitted the boat, we were surrounded by a new troop of the judge of the police's guard, who bound us all, and carried us before the caliph. I suffered myself to be bound as well as the rest, without speaking one word: for what would it have availed to have spoken, or made any resistance? That had been the way to have got myself ill-treated by the guards, who would not have listened to me, for they are brutish fellows, who will hear no reason: I was with the robbers, and that was enough to make them believe me to be one of their number.

When we had been brought before the caliph, he ordered the ten highwaymen's heads to be cut off immediately. The executioner drew us up in a file within reach of his arm, and by good fortune I was placed last. He cut off the heads of the ten highwaymen, beginning at the first; and when he came to me, he stopped. The caliph perceiving that he did not strike me, grew angry: "Did not I command thee," said he, "to cut off the heads of ten highwaymen, and why hast thou cut off but nine?" "Commander of the faithful," he replied, “Heaven preserve me from disobeying your majesty’s orders: here are ten bodies upon the ground, and as many heads which I have cut off; your majesty may count them.” When the caliph saw that what the executioner said was true, he looked at me with amazement, and perceiving that I had not the face of a highwayman, said to me, “Good old man, how came you to be among those wretches, who have deserved a thousand deaths?” I answered, “Commander of the faithful, I will make a true confession. This morning I saw those ten persons, whose punishment is a proof of your majesty’s justice, take boat: I embarked with them, thinking they were men going to celebrate this day, which is the most distinguished in our religion.” The caliph could not forbear laughing at my adventure; and instead of treating me as a prattling fellow, as this lame young man did, he admired my discretion and taciturnity. “Commander of the faithful,” I resumed, “your majesty need not wonder at my silence on such an occasion, as would have made another apt to speak. I make a particular profession of holding my peace, and on that account have acquired the glorious title of Silent; by which I am distinguished from my six brothers. This is the effect of my philosophy; and, in a word, in this virtue consists my glory and happiness.” “I am glad,” said the caliph, smiling, “that they gave you a title which you know so well how to use. But tell me what sort of men were your brothers, were they like you?” “By no means,” I replied; “they were all of them loquacious, prating fellows. And as to their persons, there was still a greater difference betwixt them and me. The first was hump-backed; the second had rotten teeth; the third had but one eye; the fourth was blind; the fifth had his ears cut off; and the sixth had hare-lips. They had met with such adventures as would enable you to judge of their characters, had I the honour of relating them to your majesty:” and the caliph seemed desirous to hear their several stories, I went on without waiting his commands.

The Story of the Barber's Eldest Brother.

My eldest brother, whose name was Bacbouc the hump-back, was a tailor: when he came out of his apprenticeship, he hired a shop opposite a mill, and having but very little business, could scarcely maintain himself. The miller, on the contrary, was very wealthy, and had a handsome wife. One day as my brother was at work in his shop, he saw the miller's wife looking out of the window, and was charmed with her beauty. The woman took no notice of him, but shut her window, and made her appearance no more that day The poor tailor did nothing all day long but lift up his eyes towards the mill. He pricked his finger oftener than once, and his work was not very regular. At night, when he was to shut his shop, he could scarcely tell how to do it, because he still hoped the miller's wife would once more come to the window; but at last he was forced to shut up, and go home, where he passed but a very uncomfortable night. He arose betimes in the morning, and ran to his shop, in hopes to see his mistress; but he was no happier than the day before, for the miller's wife did not appear at the window above a minute in the course of the day, but that minute made the tailor the most amorous man that ever lived. The third day he had more ground of satisfaction, for the miller's wife cast her eyes upon him by chance, and surprised him as he was gazing at her, which convinced her of what passed in his mind.

No sooner did the miller's wife perceive my brother's inclination, than, instead of allowing it to excite her resentment, she resolved to divert herself with it. She looked at him with a smiling countenance, and my brother returned her smile, but in so ludicrous a way, that the miller's wife hastily shut her window, lest her loud laughter should make him sensible that she only ridiculed him. Poor Bacbouc interpreted her carriage to his own advantage, and flattered himself that she looked upon him with pleasure.

The miller's wife resolved to have sport with my brother: she had a piece of very fine stuff, with which she had a long time designed to make a vest; she wrapped it up in a fine embroidered silk handkerchief, and sent it to him by a young slave whom she kept;

who being taught her lesson, went to the tailor's shop, and told him, "My mistress gives you her service, and prays you to make her a vest of this stuff according to this pattern; she changes her dress often, so that her custom will be profitable to you." My brother doubted not but the miller's wife loved him, and thought she had sent him work so soon after what had passed betwixt them, only to signify that she knew his mind, and convince him that he had obtained her favour. He charged the slave to tell her mistress, that he would lay aside all work for hers and that the vest should be ready next morning. He worked at it with so much diligence, that he finished it in the course of the same day. Next morning the young slave came to see if the vest was ready. Bacbouc delivered it to her neatly folded up, telling her, "I am too much concerned to please your mistress to neglect her work; I would engage her by my diligence to employ no other than myself for the time to come." The young slave went some steps as if she had intended to go away, and then coming back, whispered to my brother, "I had forgotten part of my commission; my mistress charged me to make her compliments to you, and to ask how you passed the night; as for her, poor woman, she loves you to that degree that she could not sleep." "Tell her," answered my silly brother, "I have so strong a passion for her, that for these four nights I have not slept one wink." After such a compliment from the miller's wife, my brother thought she would not let him languish long in expectation of her favours.

About a quarter of an hour after, the slave returned to my brother with a piece of satin: "My mistress," said she, "is very well pleased with her vest, nothing in the world can fit her better, and as it is very handsome, she will not wear it without a new pair of drawers; she prays you to make her one, as soon as you can, of this piece of satin." "Enough," said Bacbouc, "I will do it before I leave my shop: you shall have it in the evening." The miller's wife shewed herself often at her window, and was very prodigal of her charms, to encourage my brother. You would have laughed to see him work. The pair of drawers was soon made, and the slave came for it, but brought the tailor no money, neither for the trimming he had bought for the vest, nor for the making. In the mean time, this unfortunate lover, whom they only amused, though he could not see it, had eaten nothing all that day, and was forced to borrow money at night to buy his supper. Next morning, as soon as he arrived at his shop, the young slave came to tell him that the miller wanted to speak to him. “My mistress,” said she, “spoke to him so much in your praise, when she shewed him your work, that he has a mind you should work for him also; she does this on purpose, that the connection she wishes to form betwixt you and him may crown your mutual wishes with success.” My brother was easily persuaded, and went to the mill with the slave. The miller received him very kindly, and shewed him a piece of cloth, and told him he wanted shirts, bade him make it into twenty, and return him again what was left.

My brother had work enough for five or six days to make twenty shirts for the miller, who afterwards gave him another piece of cloth to make him as many pair of drawers. When they were finished, Bacbouc carried them to the miller, who asked him what he must have for his pains. My brother answered, he would be content with twenty dirhems of silver. The miller immediately called the young slave, and bade her bring him his weights to see if his money was right. The slave, who had her lesson, looked at my brother with an angry countenance, to signify to him, that he would spoil all if he took money. He knew her meaning, and refused to take any, though he wanted it so much that he was forced to borrow some to buy the thread to sew the shirts and drawers. When he left the miller, he came to me to borrow money to purchase provisions, and told me they did not pay him. I gave him some copper money I had in my purse, and upon that he subsisted for some days. It is true, indeed, he lived upon nothing but broth, nor had he his fill of that.

One day he went to the miller, who was busy at his work, and thinking my brother came for money, offered him some; but the young slave being present, made him another sign not to take it, which he complied with, and told the miller he did not come for his money, but only to know how he did. The miller thanked him, and gave him an upper garment to make. Bacbouc carried it to him the next day. When the miller drew out his purse, the young slave gave my brother the usual sign, on which he said to the miller, “Neighbour, there is no haste, we will reckon another time;” so that the poor ninny went to his shop again, with three terrible distempers, love, hunger, and an empty purse. The miller's wife was not only avaricious, but ill-natured; for, not content with cheating my brother of his due, she provoked her husband to revenge himself upon him for making love to her, which they accomplished thus. The miller invited Bacbouc one night to supper, and after giving him a very sorry treat, said to him, "Brother, it is too late for you to return home, you had better stay here all night," and then took him to a place in the mill, where there was a bed; there he left him, and went to bed with his wife. About the middle of the night, the miller came to my brother, and said, "Neighbour, are you asleep? My mule is ill, and I have a quantity of corn to grind; you will do me a great kindness if you will turn the mill in her stead." Bacbouc, to shew his good nature, told him, he was ready to do him that service, if he would shew him how. The miller tied him by the middle in the mule's place, and whipping him soundly over the back, said to him, "Go on, neighbour." "Ho!" exclaimed my brother, "why do you beat me?" "It is to make you brisk," replied the miller, "for without a whip my mule will not go." Bacbouc was amazed at this treatment, but durst not complain. When he had gone five or six rounds, he would fain have rested; but the miller gave him a dozen sound lashes, saying, "Courage, neighbour! do not stop, pray; you must go on without taking breath, otherwise you will spoil my meal."

The miller obliged my brother to turn the mill thus all night. About break of day he left him without untying him, and went to his wife's chamber. Bacbouc continued there for some time, and at last the young slave came and untied him. "Ah!" said the treacherous wretch, "how my mistress and I pitied you! We had no hand in this wicked trick which her husband has played you." The wretched Bacbouc answered not a word, he was so much fatigued with work and blows; but crept home to his house, resolving never to think more of the miller's wife.

The telling of this story, continued the barber, made the caliph laugh. "Go home," said he to me, "I have ordered something to be given you to make up for the loss of the good dinner you expected." "Commander of the faithful," I replied, "I pray your majesty to let me stay till I have told the story of my other brothers." The caliph having signified by his silence that he was willing to hear me, I went on thus.

The Story of the Barber's Second Brother.

My second brother, who was called Backbarah the Toothless, going one day through the city, met in a distant street an old woman, who came up to him, and said, "I want one word with you, pray stop a moment." He did so, and asked what she would have. "If you have time to come with me," said she, "I will bring you into a stately palace, where you shall see a lady as fair as the day. She will receive you with much pleasure, and treat you with excellent wine. I need say no more." "But is what you say true?" demanded my brother. "I am no lying hussy," replied the old woman. "I say nothing to you but what is true. But hark, I have something to ask of you. You must be prudent, say but little, and be extremely polite." Backbarah agreed to all this. The old woman went on, and he followed her. They came to the gate of a great palace, where there was a number of officers and domestics. Some of them would have stopped my brother, but no sooner did the old woman speak to them than they let him pass. Then turning to my brother, she said to him, "You must remember that the young lady I bring you to loves good-nature and modesty, and cannot endure to be contradicted; if you please her in these respects, you may be sure to obtain of her what you please." Backbarah thanked her for this advice, and promised to follow it.

She brought him into a superb court, answerable to the magnificence of the palace. There was a gallery round it, and a garden in the middle. The old woman made him sit down on a handsome sofa, and bade him stay a moment, till she went to acquaint the young lady with his arrival.

My brother, who had never been in such a stately palace before, gazed on the fine things that he saw; and judging of his good fortune by the magnificence of the palace, he was scarcely able to contain himself for joy. In a short time he heard a great noise, occasioned by a troop of merry slaves, who came towards him with loud fits of laughter; and in the middle of them he perceived a young lady of extraordinary beauty, who was easily known to be their mistress by the respect they paid her. Backbarah, who expected private conversation with the lady, was extremely surprised when he saw so much company with her. In the mean time, the slaves, as they drew near, put on a grave countenance; and when the young lady came up to the sofa, my brother rose and made her a low obeisance. She took the upper seat, prayed him to sit down, and said to him with a smiling countenance, “I am much pleased to see you, and wish you all the happiness you can desire.” “Madam,” replied Backbarah, “I cannot desire a greater happiness than to be in your company.” “You seem to be of a pleasant humour,” said she, “and to be disposed to pass the time agreeably.”

She commanded a collation to be brought; and immediately a table was covered with several baskets of fruit and sweetmeats. The lady sat down at the table with the slaves and my brother; and he being placed just opposite to her, when he opened his mouth to eat, she perceived he had no teeth; and taking notice of this to her slaves, she and they laughed heartily. Backbarah, from time to time, lifted up his head to look at her, and perceiving her laugh, concluded it was from the pleasure she derived from his company, and flattered himself that she would speedily send away her slaves, and remain with him alone. She guessed his thoughts, and amusing herself to flatter him in this mistake, addressed him in the most pleasant language, and presented him the best of every thing with her own hand. The entertainment being finished, they rose from the table; ten slaves took musical instruments, and began to play and sing, and others to dance. My brother, to please them, danced likewise, and the lady danced with them. After they had danced some time, they sat down to take breath, and the young lady calling for a glass of wine, looked upon my brother with a smiling countenance, to signify that she was going to drink his health. He rose and stood while she drank. When she had done instead of giving back the glass, she ordered it to be filled, and presented it to my brother, that he might pledge her.

My brother took the glass from the young lady’s hand, which he kissed at the same time and stood and drank to her, in return for the favour she had done him. The lady then made him sit down by her, and began to caress him. She put her hand behind his head, and gave him some tips from time to time with her fingers: ravished with these favours, he thought himself the happiest man in the world, and felt disposed to kiss the charming lady, but durst not take that liberty before so many slaves, who had their eyes upon him, and laughed at their lady's wanton tricks. The young lady continued to tip him with her fingers, but at last gave him such a sound box on the ear, that he grew angry; the colour came into his face, and he rose up to remove to a greater distance from such a rude playfellow. Then the old woman, who brought him thither, gave him a look, to let him know that he was in the wrong, and that he had forgotten her advice, to be very complaisant. He owned his fault, and to make amends, went near the young lady again, pretending that he did not remove out of any ill-humour. She drew him by the arm, made him sit down by her, and gave him a thousand malicious squeezes. Her slaves took their part in the diversion; one gave poor Backbarah several fillips on the nose with all her might; another pulled him by the ears, as if she would have pulled them off; and others boxed him in a manner that might have made it appear they were not in jest. My brother bore all this with admirable patience, affecting a gay air, and looking at the old woman, said to her with a forced smile, "You told me, indeed, that I should find the lady perfectly kind, pleasant, and charming; I am mightily obliged to you!" "All this is nothing," replied the old woman; "let her go on, you will see other things by and by." Then the young lady said to him, "Brother, you are a brave man; I am glad to find you are so good-humoured and complaisant to bear with my little caprices, and that your humour is so conformable to mine." "Madam," replied Backbarah, who was charmed with this address, "I am no more at my own disposal, I am wholly yours, you may do with me as you please." "How you oblige me," returned the lady, "by such submission! I am well pleased with you, and would have you be so with me: bring him perfume, and rose-water." Upon this, two slaves went out and returned speedily, one with a silver casket, filled with the best of aloes wood, with which she perfumed him; and the other with rose-water, which she sprinkled on his face and hands. My brother was quite enraptured with this handsome treatment. After this ceremony, the young lady commanded the slaves, who had already played on their instruments and sung, to renew their concerts. They obeyed, and while they were thus employed, the lady called another slave, and ordered her to take my brother with her, and do what she knew, and bring him back to her again. Backbarah, who heard this order, got up quickly, and going to the old woman, who also rose to accompany him and the slave, prayed her to inform him what they were to do with him. “My mistress is only curious,” replied the old woman softly; “she has a mind to see how you look in a woman’s dress, and this slave, who is desired to take you with her, has orders to paint your eyebrows, to cut off your whiskers, and to dress you like a woman.” “You may paint my eyebrows as much as you please,” said my brother, “I consent to that, because I can wash it off again; but to shave me, you know I must not permit. How can I appear abroad again without moustaches?” “Beware of refusing what is asked of you,” returned the old woman, “you will spoil your fortune, which is now in as favourable a train as heart can wish. The lady loves you, and has a mind to make you happy; and will you, for a nasty whisker, renounce the most delicious favours that man can obtain?” Backbarah listened to the old woman, and without saying a word went to a chamber with the slave, where they painted his eyebrows with red, cut off his whiskers, and were going to do the like with his beard. My brother’s patience then began to fail: “Oh!” said he, “I will never part with my beard.” The slave told him, that it was to no purpose to have parted with his whiskers, if he would not also part with his beard, which could never comport with “woman’s dress;” and she wondered that a man, who was upon the point of being loved by the finest lady in Bagdad, should be concerned about his beard. The old woman threatened him with the loss of the young lady’s favour; so that at last he allowed them to do what they would. When he was dressed in female attire, they brought him before the young lady, who laughed so heartily when she saw him, that she fell backward on the sofa. The slaves laughed and clapped their hands, so that my brother was quite out of countenance. The young lady got up, and still laughing, said to him, “After so much complaisance, I should be very much to blame not to love you with all my heart: but there is one thing more you must do for me, and that is, to dance as we do.” He obeyed, and the young lady and her slaves danced with him, laughing as if they had been mad. After they had danced some time, they all fell upon the poor wretch, and did so box and kick him, that he fell down like one out of his senses. The old woman helped him up again: and that he might not have time to think of his ill-treatment, bade him take courage, and whispered in his ear, that all his sufferings were at an end, and that he was just about to receive his reward.

The old woman continued her discourse to Backbarah thus: “You have only one thing more to do, and that is but a small one. You must know that my mistress has a custom, when she has drunk a little, as you see she has done to-day, to let no one that she loves come near her, except they be stripped to their shirt; and when they have done so, she takes a little advantage of them and begins running before them through the gallery, and from chamber to chamber, till they catch her. This is one more of her humours: what advantage soever she takes of you, considering your nimbleness, you will soon overtake her; strip yourself then to your shirt, undress yourself without ceremony.”

My silly brother had done too much to hesitate at anything now. He undressed himself; and in the mean time the young lady was stripped to her shift and drawers, that she might run the more nimbly. When they were ready, the young lady took the advantage of twenty paces, and then began to run with surprising swiftness: my brother followed as fast as he could, the slaves in the mean time laughing heartily and clapping their hands. The young lady, instead of losing ground, gained upon my brother: she made him run two or three times round the gallery, and then entering a long dark passage, made her escape. Backbarah, who still followed, having lost sight of her in the passage, was obliged to slacken his pace, because of the darkness of the place: at last perceiving a light, he ran towards it, and went out at a door, which was immediately shut after him. You may imagine how he was surprised to find himself in a street inhabited by curriers, and they were no less surprised to see him in his shirt, his eyes painted red, and without beard or moustaches: they began to clap their hands and shout at him, and some of them ran after him and lashed his back with leather straps. They then took him and set him upon an ass which they met by chance, and carried him through the town exposed to the laughter of the people.

To complete his misfortune, as he went by the judge’s house, he would needs know the cause of the tumult. The curriers told him, that they saw him come in that condition from the gate of the apartments of the grand vizier's women, which opened into their street; upon which the judge ordered unfortunate Backbarah to have a hundred blows with a cane on the soles of his feet, and sent him out of the town with orders never to return.

"Thus, commander of the faithful," said I to the caliph, "I have given an account of the adventure of my second brother, who did not know that our greatest ladies divert themselves sometimes by putting such tricks upon young people, who are so foolish as to be caught in the snare."

The barber, without breaking off, told the story of his third brother in the following manner.

The Story of the Barber's Third Brother.

Commander of the faithful, my third brother, whose name was Backbac, was blind, and his evil destiny reduced him to beg from door to door. He had been so long accustomed to walk through the streets alone, that he wanted none to lead him: he had a custom to knock at people's doors, and not to answer till they opened to him. One day he knocked thus, and the master of the house, who was alone, cried, "Who is there?" My brother made no answer, and knocked a second time: the master of the house asked again and again, "Who is there?" but to no purpose, no one answered; upon which he came down, opened the door, and asked my brother what he wanted? "Give me something for Heaven's sake," said Backbac. "You seem to be blind," replied the master of the house. "Yes, to my sorrow," answered my brother. "Give me your hand," resumed the master of the house. My brother did so, thinking he was going to give him alms; but he only took him by the hand to lead him up to his chamber. Backbac thought he had been carrying him to dine with him, as many other people had done. When they reached the chamber, the man let go his hand, and sitting down, asked him again what he wanted? "I have already told you," said Backbac, "that I want something for God's sake." "Good blind man," replied the master of the house, "all that I can do for you is to wish that God may restore you your sight." "You might have told me that at the door," replied my brother, "and not have given me the trouble to come up stairs." "And why, fool," said the man of the house, "do not you answer at first, when people ask you who is there? Why do you give any body the trouble to come and open the door when they speak to you?" "What will you do with me then?" asked my brother. "I tell you again," said the man of the house, "I have nothing to give you." "Help me down the stairs then, as you brought me up." "The stairs are before you," said the man of the house, "and you may go down by yourself if you will." My brother attempted to descend, but missing a step about the middle of the stairs, fell to the bottom and hurt his head and his back: he got up again with much difficulty, and went out cursing the master of the house who laughed at his fall.

As my brother went out of the house, two blind men, his companions, were going by, knew him by his voice, and asked him what was the matter? He told them what had happened; and afterwards said, “I have eaten nothing to-day; I conjure you to go along with me to my house, that I may take some of the money that we three have in common to buy me something for supper.” The two blind men agreed, and they went home with him.

You must know that the master of the house where my brother was so ill used was a robber, and of a cunning and malicious disposition. He overheard from his window what Backbac had said to his companions, and came down and followed them to my brother’s house. The blind men being seated, Backbac said to them, “Brothers, we must shut the door, and take care there be no stranger with us.” At this the robber was much perplexed, but perceiving a rope hanging down from a beam, he caught hold of it, and hung by it, while the blind men shut the door, and felt about the room with their sticks. When they had done, and had sat down again in their places, the robber left his rope, and seated himself softly by my brother, who thinking himself alone with his blind comrades, said to them, “Brothers, since you have trusted me with the money, which we have been a long time gathering, I will show you that I am not unworthy of the confidence you repose in me. The last time we reckoned, you know we had ten thousand dirhems, and that we put them into ten bags; I will shew you that I have not touched one of them:” having so said, he put his hand among some old clothes, and taking out the bags one after another, gave them to his comrades, saying, “There they are; you may judge by their weight that they are whole, or you may tell them if you please.” His comrades answered there was no need, they did not mistrust him; so he opened one of the bags, and took out ten dirhems, and each of the other blind men did the like.

My brother put the bags into their place again: after which, one of the blind men said to him, “There is no need to lay out anything for supper, for I have collected as much victuals from good people as will serve us all.” At the same time he took out of his bag bread and cheese, and some fruit, and putting all upon the table, they began to eat, The robber, who sat at my brother’s right hand, picked out the best, and eat with them; but whatever care he took to make no noise, Backbac heard his chaps going, and cried out immediately, “We are undone, there is a stranger among us:” having so said, he stretched out his hand, and caught hold of the robber by the arm, cried out “Thieves!” fell upon him, and struck him. The other blind men fell upon him in like manner; the robber defended himself as well as he could, and being young and vigorous, besides having the advantage of his eyes, gave furious blows, sometimes to one, sometimes to another, and cried out “Thieves!” louder than they did. The neighbours came running at the noise, broke open the door, and had much ado to separate the combatants; but having at last succeeded, they asked the cause of their quarrel. My brother, who still had hold of the robber, cried out, “Gentlemen, this man I have hold of is a thief, and stole in with us on purpose to rob us of the little money we have.” The thief, who shut his eyes as soon as the neighbours came, feigned himself blind, and exclaimed, “Gentlemen, he is a liar. I swear to you by heaven, and by the life of the caliph, that I am their companion, and they refuse to give me my just share. They have all three fallen upon me, and I demand justice.” The neighbours would not interfere in their quarrel, but carried them all before the judge.

When they came before the magistrate, the robber, without staying to be examined, cried out, still feigning himself blind, “Sir, since you are deputed to administer justice by the caliph, whom God prosper, I declare to you that we are equally criminal, my three comrades and I; but we have all engaged, upon oath, to confess nothing except we be bastinadoed; so that if you would know our crime, you need only order us to be bastinadoed, and begin with me.” My brother would have spoken, but was not allowed to do so: and the robber was put under the bastinado.

The robber being under the bastinado, had the courage to bear twenty or thirty blows; when, pretended to be overcome with pain, he first opened one eve, and then the other, and crying out for mercy, begged the judge would put a stop to the blows. The judge perceiving that he looked upon him with his eyes open, was much surprised, and said to him, “Rogue, what is the meaning of this miracle?” “Sir,” replied the robber, “I will discover to you an important secret, if you will pardon me, and give me, as a pledge that you will keep your word, the seal-ring which you have on your finger.” The judge consented, gave him his ring, and promised him pardon. “Under this promise,” continued the robber, “I must confess to you sir, that I and my three comrades do all of us see very well. We feigned ourselves to be blind, that we might freely enter people’s houses, and women’s apartments, where we abuse their weakness. I must farther confess to you, that by this trick we have gained together ten thousand dirhems. This day I demanded of my partners two thousand five hundred that belonged to my share, but they refused because I told them I would leave them; and they were afraid I should accuse them. Upon my pressing still to have my share, they fell upon me; for which I appeal to those people who brought us before you. I expect from your justice, sir, that you will make them deliver me the two thousand five hundred dirhems which is my due; and if you have a mind that my comrades should confess the truth, you must order them three times as many blows as I have had, and you will find they will open their eyes as well as I have done.”

My brother and the other two blind men would have cleared themselves of this horrid charge, but the judge would not hear them: “Villains,” said he, “do you feign yourselves blind then, and, under that pretext of moving their compassion, cheat people, and commit such crimes?” “He is an impostor,” cried my brother, “and we take God to witness that none of us can see.”

All that my brother could say was in vain, his comrades and he received each of them two hundred blows. The judge expected them to open their eyes, and ascribed to their obstinacy what really they could not do. All the while the robber said to the blind men, “Poor fools that you are, open your eyes, and do not suffer yourselves to be beaten to death.” Then addressing himself to the judge, said, “I perceive, sir, that they will be maliciously obstinate to the last, and will never open their eyes. They wish certainly to avoid the shame of reading their own condemnation in the face of every one that looks upon them; it were better, if you think fit, to pardon them, and to send some person along with me for the ten thousand dirhems they have hidden.”

The judge consented to give the robber two thousand five hundred dirhems, and kept the rest himself; and as for my brother and his two companions, he thought he shewed them pity by sentencing them only to be banished. As soon as I heard what had befallen my brother, I went to him; he told me his misfortune, and I brought him back secretly to the town. I could easily have justified him to the judge, and have had the robber punished as he deserved, but durst not make the attempt, for fear of bringing myself into danger of assassination. Thus I finished the sad adventure of my honest blind brother. The caliph laughed at it, as much as at those he had heard before, and ordered again that something should be given me; but without staying for it, I began the story of my fourth brother.

The Story of the Barber's Fourth Brother.

Alcouz was the name of the fourth brother who lost one of his eyes, upon an occasion that I shall have the honour to relate to your majesty. He was a butcher by profession, and had a particular way of teaching rams to fight, by which he gained the acquaintance and friendship of the chief lords of the country, who loved that sport, and for that end kept rams at their houses. He had besides a very good trade, and had his shop always full of the best meat, because he spared no cost for the prime of every sort. One day when he was in his shop, an old man with a long white beard came and bought six pounds of meat of him, gave him money for it, and went his way. My brother thought the money so pure and well coined, that he put it apart by itself: the same old man came every day for five months together, bought a like quantity of meat, and paid for it in the same kind of money, which my brother continued to lay apart.

At the end of five months, Alcouz having a mind to buy a lot of sheep, and to pay for them in this money, opened his chest; but instead of finding his money, was extremely surprised to see nothing in the place where he had laid it, but a parcel of leaves clipped round. He beat his head, and cried out aloud, which presently brought the neighbours about him, who were as much surprised as he, when he told them the story. "O!" cried my brother, weeping, "that this treacherous old fellow would come now with his hypocritical looks!" He had scarcely spoken, when he saw him at a distance; he ran to him, and laid hands on him; "Moosulmauns," cried he, as loud as he could, "help! hear what a cheat this wicked fellow has put upon me," and at the same time told a great crowd of people, who came about him, what he had formerly told his neighbours. When he had done, the old man said to him very gravely and calmly, "You had better let me go, and by that means make amends for the affront you have put upon me before so many people, for fear I should put a greater affront upon you, which I should be sorry to do." "How," said my brother, "what have you to say against me? I am an honest man in my business, and fear not you, nor any body." "You would have me speak out then," resumed the old man in the same tone; and turning to the crowd, said to them, “Know, good people, that this fellow, instead of selling mutton as he ought to do, sells human flesh.” “You are a cheat,” said my brother. “No, no,” continued the old man; “good people, this very minute while I am speaking to him, there is a man with his throat cut hung up in the shop like a sheep; do any of you go thither, and see if what I say be not true.”

Just before my brother had opened his chest he had killed a sheep, dressed it, and exposed it in the shop, according to custom: he protested that what the old man said was false; but notwithstanding all his protestations, the credulous mob, prejudiced against a man accused of such a heinous crime, would go to see whether the charge were true. They obliged my brother to quit the old man, laid hold of him, and ran like madmen into his shop, where they saw, to all appearance, a man hung up with his throat cut, as the old man had told them; for he was a magician, and deceived the eyes of all people, as he did my brother, when he made him take leaves instead of money. At this sight, one of those who held Alcouz gave him a violent blow with his fist, and said to him, “Thou wicked villain, dost thou make us eat man’s flesh instead of mutton?” And at the same time the old man gave him another blow, which beat out one of his eyes. Every body that could get near him struck him; and not content with that, they carried him before a judge, with the pretended carcase of the man, to be evidence against him. “Sir,” said the old magician to the judge, “we have brought you a man, who is so barbarous as to murder people, and to sell their flesh instead of mutton. The public expects that you will punish him in an exemplary manner.” The judge heard my brother with patience, but would believe nothing of the story of the money changed into leaves, called my brother a cheat, told him he would believe his own eyes, and ordered him to receive five hundred blows. He afterwards made him tell him where his money was, took it all from him, and banished him for ever, after having made him ride three days through the city upon a camel, exposed to the insults of the people.

I was not at Bagdad when this tragical adventure befell my fourth brother. He retired into a remote place, where he lay concealed till he was cured of the blows with which his back was terribly mangled. When he was able to walk, he went by night to a certain town where nobody knew him; and there he took a lodging, from whence he seldom moved; but being weary of this confined life, he went to walk in one of the suburbs, where suddenly he heard a noise of horsemen coming behind him. He was then by chance near the gate of a house, and fearing, after what had befallen him, that these horsemen were pursuing him, he opened the gate in order to hide himself, and after he had shut it, entered a court, where immediately two servants came and collared him, saying, "Heaven be praised, that you have come of your own accord to surrender yourself; you have alarmed us so much these three last nights, that we could not sleep; nor would you have spared our lives, if we had not prevented your design." You may well imagine my brother was much surprised. "Good people," said he, "I know not what you mean; you certainly take me for somebody else." "No, no," replied they, "we know that you and your comrades are robbers: you were not contented to rob our master of all that he had, and to reduce him to beggary, but you conspired to take his life. Let us see if you have not a knife about you, which you had in your hand when you pursued us last night." Having said thus, they searched him, and found he had a knife. "Ho! ho!" cried they, laying hold of him, "and dare you say that you are not a robber?" "Why," said my brother, "cannot a man carry a knife about him without being a robber? If you will hearken to my story, instead of having so bad an opinion of me, you will be touched with compassion at my misfortunes." But far from attending to him, they fell upon him, trod upon him, took away his clothes, and tore his shirt. Then seeing the scars on his back, "O dog," said they, redoubling their blows, "would you have us believe you are an honest man, when your back shews us the contrary?" "Alas!" said my brother, "my crimes must be very great, since, after having been abused already so unjustly, I am thus treated a second time without being more culpable!"

The two servants, no way moved with his complaint, carried him before the judge, who asked him how he durst presume to go into their house, and pursue them with a drawn knife? "Sir," replied the unfortunate Alcouz, "I am the most innocent man in the world, and am undone if you will not be pleased to hear me patiently: no one deserves more compassion." "Sir," exclaimed one of the domestics, "will you listen to a robber, who enters people's houses to plunder and murder them? If you will not believe us, only look upon his back;" and while he said so he uncovered my brother's back, and shewed it to the judge, who, without any other information, commanded his officers immediately to give him a hundred lashes over the shoulders, and made him afterwards be carried through the town on a camel, with one crying before him, "Thus are men punished who enter people's houses by force." After having treated him thus, they banished him the town, and forbad him ever to return. Some people, who met him after the second misfortune, brought me word where he was; I went, brought him to Bagdad privately, and gave him all the assistance I could. The caliph did not laugh so much at this story as at the other. He was pleased to pity the unfortunate Alcouz, and ordered something to be given me. But without giving his servants time to obey his orders, I continued my discourse, and said to him: "My sovereign lord and master, you see that I do not talk much; and since your majesty has been pleased to do me the favour to listen to me so far, I beg you would likewise hear the adventures of my two other brothers; I hope they will be as diverting as those of the former. You may make a complete history of them, that will not be unworthy of your library: I shall do myself the honour then to acquaint you, that the fifth brother was called Alnaschar."

The Story of the Barber's Fifth Brother.

Alnaschar, as long as our father lived, was very lazy; instead of working he used to beg in the evening, and live upon what he got. Our father died at a very old age, and left among us seven hundred dirhems: we divided equally, so that each of us had a hundred for his share. Alnaschar, who had never before possessed so much money, was much perplexed to know what he should do with it. He consulted a long time with himself, and at last resolved to lay it out in glass-ware which he bought of a wholesale dealer. He put all in an open basket, and sat with it before him, and his back against a wall, in a place where he might sell it. In this posture, with his eyes fixed on his basket, he began to meditate; during which he spoke as follows: "This basket cost me a hundred dirhems, which is all I have in the world. I shall make two hundred of them by retailing my glass, and of these two hundred, which I will again lay out in glass-ware, I shall make four hundred; and going on thus, I shall at last make four thousand dirhems; of four thousand I shall easily make eight thousand, and when I come to ten thousand, I will leave off selling glass and turn jeweller; I will trade in diamonds, pearls, and all sorts of precious stones: then when I am as rich as I can wish, I will buy a fine mansion, a great estate, slaves, eunuchs, and horses. I will keep a good house, and make a great figure in the world; I will send for all the musicians and dancers of both sexes in town. Nor will I stop here, for, I will, by the favour of Heaven, go on till I get one hundred thousand dirhems, and when I have amassed so much, I will send to demand the grand vizier's daughter in marriage; and represent to that minister, that I have heard much of the wonderful beauty, understanding, wit, and all the other qualities of his daughter; in a word, that I will give him a thousand pieces of gold the first night after we are married; and if the vizier be so uncivil as to refuse his daughter, which cannot be supposed, I will go and carry her off before his face, and take her to my house whether he will or no. As soon as I have married the grand vizier's daughter, I will buy her ten young black eunuchs, the handsomest that can be had; I will clothe my self like a prince, and mounted upon a fine horse, with a saddle of fine gold, with housings of cloth of gold, finely embroidered with diamonds and pearls, I will ride through the city, attended by slaves before and behind. I will go to the vizier's palace in view of all the people great and small, who will show me the most profound respect. When I alight at the foot of the vizier's staircase, I will ascend through my own people, ranged in files on the right and left; and the grand vizier, receiving me as his son-in-law, shall give me the right hand and set me above him, to do me the more honour. If this comes to pass, as I hope it will, two of my people shall each of them have a purse with a thousand pieces of gold, which they shall carry with them. I will take one, and presenting it to the grand vizier, tell him, 'There is the thousand pieces of gold that I promised the first night of marriage:' and I will offer him the other and say to him, 'There is as much more, to shew you that I am a man of my word, and even better than my promise.' After such an action as this, all the world will talk of my generosity. I will return to my own house in the same pomp. My wife will send some officer to compliment me, on account of my visit to the vizier, her father: I will honour the officer with a fine robe, and send him back with a rich present. If she send me a present, I will not accept it, but dismiss the bearer. I will not suffer her to go out of her apartment on any account whatever, without giving me notice: and when I have a mind to come to her apartment, it shall be in such a manner as to make her respect me. In short, no house shall be better ordered than mine. I will be always richly clad. When I retire with my wife in the evening, I will sit on the upper seat, I will affect a grave air, without turning my head to one side or the other. I will speak little; and whilst my wife, beautiful as the full moon, stands before me in all her charms, I will make as if I did not see her. Her women about her will say to me, 'Our dear lord and master, here is your spouse, your humble servant, before you, ready to receive your caresses, but much mortified that you do not vouchsafe to look upon her; she is wearied with standing so long, bid her, at least, sit down.' I will make no answer, which will increase their surprise and grief. They will prostrate themselves at my feet; and after they have for a considerable time entreated me to relent, I will at last lift up my head, give her a careless look, and resume my former posture: they will suppose that my wife is not handsomely enough dressed, and will carry her to her closet to change her apparel. At the same time I will get up and put on a more magnificent suit; they will return and address me as before, but I will not so much as look upon my wife, till they have prayed and entreated as long as they did at first. Thus I will begin on the first day of marriage, to teach her what she is to expect during the rest of her life.

"After the ceremonies of the marriage, I will take from one of my servants, who shall be about me, a purse of five hundred pieces of gold, which I will give to the tire-women, that they may leave me alone with my spouse: when they are gone, my wife shall go to bed first; then I will lie down by her with my back towards her, and will not say one wore to her all night. The next morning she will certainly complain of my contempt and of my pride, to her mother the grand vizier's wife, which will rejoice my heart. Her mother will come to wait upon me, respectfully kiss my hands, and say to me, 'Sir' (for she will not dare to call me son-in-law, for fear of provoking me by such a familiar style), 'I entreat you not to disdain to look on my daughter, and refuse to come near her. I assure you that her chief delight is to please you, and that she loves you with all her soul.' But in spite of all my mother-in-law can say, I will not answer her one word, but keep an obstinate gravity. Then she will throw herself at my feet, kiss them repeatedly, and say to me, 'Sir, is it possible that you can suspect my daughter's virtue? You are the first man who ever saw her face: do not mortify her so much; do her the favour to look upon her, to speak to her, and confirm her in her good intentions to satisfy you in every thing.' But nothing of this shall prevail with me. Upon which my mother-in-law will take a glass of wine, and putting it in the hand of her daughter my wife, will say, 'Go, present him this glass of wine yourself; perhaps he will not be so cruel as to refuse it from so fair a hand.' My wife will come with the glass and stand trembling before me; and when she finds that I do not look towards her, but that I continue to disdain her, she will say to me with tears in her eyes, 'My heart, my dear soul, my amiable lord, I conjure you, by the favours which heaven heaps upon you, to receive this glass of wine from the hand of your most humble servant:' but I will not look upon her still, nor answer her. 'My charming spouse,' will she say, redoubling her tears, and putting the glass to my mouth, ‘I will never cease till I prevail with you to drink;’ then, wearied with her entreaties, I will dart a terrible look at her, shake my hand in her face, and spurn her from me with my foot.”

My brother was so full of these chimerical visions, that he acted with his foot as if she had been really before him, and unfortunately gave such a push to his basket and glasses, that they were thrown down, and broken into a thousand pieces.

On this fatal accident, he came to himself, and perceiving that he had brought misfortune upon himself by his insupportable pride, beat his face, tore his clothes, and cried so loud, that the neighbours came about him; and the people, who were going to their noon prayers, stopped to know what was the matter. Being on a Friday, more people went to prayers than usual; some of them took pity on Alnaschar, and others only laughed at his extravagance. In the mean time, his vanity being dispersed with his property, he bitterly bewailed his loss; and a lady of rank passing by upon a mule richly caparisoned, my brother’s situation moved her compassion. She asked who he was, and what he cried for? They told her, that he was a poor man, who had laid out the little money he possessed in the purchase of a basket of glassware, that the basket had fallen, and all his glasses were broken. The lady immediately turned to an eunuch who attended her, and said to him, “Give the poor man what you have about you.” The eunuch obeyed, and put into my brother’s hands a purse with five hundred pieces of gold. Alnaschar was ready to die with joy when he received it. He gave a thousand blessings to the lady, and shutting up his shop, where he had no more occasion to sit, went to his house.

While he was pondering over his good luck, he heard somebody knock at his door. Before he opened, he asked who it was, and knowing by the voice that it was a woman, he let her in. “My son,” said she, “I have a favour to beg of you: the hour of prayer is come, let me perform my ablutions in your house, that I may be fit to say my prayers.” My brother looking at her, and seeing that she was well advanced in years, though he knew her not, granted her request, and sat down again still full of his new adventure. He put his gold in a long strait purse, proper to carry at his girdle. The old woman in the mean time said her prayers, and when she had done, came to my brother and bowed twice to the ground, so low, that she touched it with her forehead: then rising up, she wished him all happiness.

The old woman then bowed again, and thanked him for his civility. Being meanly clad, and very humble, he thought she asked alms; upon which he offered her two pieces of gold. The old woman stepped back in a sort of surprise, as if my brother had affronted her. "Good God!" said she, "what is the meaning of this? Is it possible, sir, that you took me for one of those impudent beggars who push into people's houses to ask alms? Take back your money: thank heaven, I need it not. I belong to a young lady of this city, who is a perfect beauty, and very rich; she lets me want for nothing."

My brother was not cunning enough to perceive the craft of the old woman, who only refused the two pieces of gold, that she might catch more. He asked her, if she could not procure him the honour of seeing that lady. "With all my heart," she replied; "she will be very glad to marry you, and to put you in possession of her fortune, by making you master of her person. Take up your money, and follow me." My brother, transported with his good luck in finding so great a sum of money, and almost at the same time a beautiful and rich wife, shut his eyes to all other considerations; so that he took his five hundred pieces of gold, and followed the old woman. She walked on, and he followed at a distance, to the gate of a great house, where she knocked. He came up just as a young Greek slave opened the gate. The old woman made him enter first, crossed a well-paved court, and introduced him into a hall, the furniture of which confirmed him in the good opinion he had conceived of the mistress of the house. While the old woman went to acquaint the lady, he sat down, and the weather being hot, put off his turban, and laid it by him. He speedily saw the young lady enter: her beauty and rich apparel perfectly surprised him; he arose as soon as he saw her. The lady, with a smiling countenance, prayed him to sit down again, and placed herself by him. She told him, she was very glad to see him; and after having spoken some engaging words, said, "We do not sit here at our ease. Come, give me your hand." At these words she presented him hers, and conducted him into an inner chamber, where she conversed with him for some time: she then left him, saying that she would be with him in a moment. He waited for her; but instead of the lady came in a great black slave with a cimeter in his hand, and looking upon my brother with a terrible aspect, said to him fiercely, “What have you to do here?” Alnaschar was so frightened, that he had no power to answer. The black stripped him, carried off his gold, and gave him several flesh wounds with his cimeter. My unhappy brother fell to the ground, where he lay without motion, though he had still the use of his senses. The black thinking him to be dead, asked for salt: the Greek slave brought him a basin full: they rubbed my brother’s wounds with it, but he had so much command of himself, notwithstanding the intolerable pain it put him to, that he lay still without giving any sign of life. The black and the Greek slave having retired, the old woman, who had enticed my brother into the snare, came and dragged him by the feet to a trapdoor, which she opened, and threw him into a place under ground, among the bodies of several other people who had been murdered. He perceived this as soon as he came to himself, for the violence of the fall had taken away his senses. The salt rubbed into his wounds preserved his life, and he recovered strength by degrees, so as to be able to walk. After two days he opened the trap-door in the night, and finding in the court a place proper to hide himself in, continued there till break of day, when he saw the cursed old woman open the street gate, and go out to seek another victim. He stayed in the place some time after she was gone, that she might not see him, and then came to me for shelter, when he told me of his adventures.

In a month’s time he was perfectly cured of his wounds by medicines that I gave him, and resolved to avenge himself of the old woman, who had put such a barbarous cheat upon him. To this end he took a bag, large enough to contain five hundred pieces of gold, and filled it with pieces of glass.

My brother fastened the bag of glass about him, disguised himself like an old woman, and took a cimeter under his gown. One morning he met the old woman walking through the town to seek her prey; he went up to her, and counterfeiting a woman’s voice, said, “Cannot you lend me a pair of scales? I am newly come from Persia, have brought five hundred pieces of gold with me, and would know if they are weight.” “Good woman,” answered the old hag, “you could not have applied to a fitter person: follow me, I will conduct you to my son, who changes money, and will weigh them himself to save you the trouble. Let us make haste, for fear he should go to his shop." My brother followed her to the house where she carried him at first, and the Greek slave opened the door.

The old woman took my brother to the hall where she desired him to wait till she called her son. The pretended son came, and proved to be the villainous black slave. "Come, old woman," said he to my brother, "rise and follow me:" having spoken thus, he went before to conduct him to the place where he designed to murder him. Alnaschar got up, followed him, and drawing his cimeter, gave him such a dexterous blow behind on the neck, that he cut off his head, which he took in one hand, and dragging the corpse with the other, threw them both into the place under ground before-mentioned. The Greek slave, who was accustomed to the trade, came presently with a basin of salt; but when she saw Alnaschar with his cimeter in his hand, and without his veil, she laid down the basin, and fled. But my brother overtaking her, cut off her head also. The wicked old woman came running at the noise, and my brother seizing her, said to her, "Treacherous wretch, do not you know me?" "Alas, Sir!" answered she trembling, "who are you? I do not remember that I ever saw you." "I am," replied he, "the person to whose house you came the other day to wash and say your prayers. Hypocritical hag, do not you remember?" Then she fell on her knees to beg his pardon, but he cut her in four pieces.

There remained only the lady, who knew nothing of what had passed: he sought her out, and found her in a chamber, where she was ready to sink when she saw him: she begged her life, which he generously granted. "Madam," said he, "how could you live with such wicked people, as I have so justly revenged myself upon?" "I was," she answered, "wife to an honest merchant; and the old woman, whose wickedness I did not then know, used sometimes to come to see me; 'Madam,' said she to me one day, 'we have a wedding at our house, which you will be pleased to see, if you will give us the honour of your company:' I was persuaded by her, put on my best apparel, and took with me a hundred pieces of gold. I followed her; she brought me to this house, where the black has since kept me by force, and I have been three years here to my great sorrow.” “By the trade which that cursed black followed,” replied my brother, “he must have gathered together a vast deal of riches.” “There is so much,” said she “that you will be made for ever, if you can carry them off: follow me, and you shall see them.” Alnaschar followed her to a chamber, where she shewed him several coffers full of gold, which he beheld with admiration. “Go,” said she, “and fetch people to carry it all off.” My brother went out, got ten men together, and brought them with him, but was much surprised to find the gate open, the lady and the coffers gone, for she being more diligent than he, had conveyed them all off and disappeared. However, being resolved not to return empty-handed, he carried off all the furniture of the house, which was a great deal more than enough to make up the five hundred pieces of gold he had been robbed of; but when he went out of the house, he forgot to shut the gate. The neighbours, who saw my brother and the porters come and go, went and acquainted the magistrate, for they looked upon my brother’s conduct as suspicious. Alnaschar slept well enough all night, but the next morning, when he came out of his house, twenty of the magistrate’s men seized him. “Come along with us,” said they, “our master would speak with you.” My brother prayed them to have patience for a moment, and offered them a sum of money to let him escape; but instead of listening to him, they bound him, and forced him to go with them. They met in the street an old acquaintance of my brother’s, who stopped them awhile, asked them why they had seized my brother, offered them a considerable sum to let him escape, and tell the magistrate they could not find him, but in vain.

When the officers brought him before the magistrate, he asked him where he had the goods which he had carried home the preceding evening? “Sir,” replied Alnaschar, “I am ready to tell you all the truth; but allow me first to have recourse to your clemency, and to beg your promise, that I shall not be punished.” “I give it you,” said the magistrate. My brother then told him the whole story without disguise, from the period the old woman came into his house to say her prayers, to the time the lady made her escape, after he had killed the black, the Greek slave, and the old woman: and as for what he had carried to his house, he prayed the judge to leave him part of it, for the five hundred pieces of gold of which he had been robbed.

The judge, without promising any thing, sent his officers to bring off the whole, and having put the goods into his own warehouse, commanded my brother to quit the town immediately, and never to return, for he was afraid, if he had stayed in the city, he would have found some way to represent this injustice to the caliph. In the mean time, Alnaschar obeyed without murmuring, and left that town to go to another. By the way, he met with highwaymen, who stripped him naked; and when the ill news was brought to me, I carried him a suit, and brought him secretly into the town, where I took the like care of him as I did of his other brothers.

The Story of the Barber’s Sixth Brother.

I have now only to relate the story of my sixth brother, called Schacabac, with the hare lips. At first he was industrious enough to improve the hundred dirhems of silver which fell to his share, and went on very well; but a reverse of fortune brought him to beg his bread, which he did with a great deal of dexterity. He studied chiefly to get into great men’s houses by means of their servants and officers, that he might have access to their masters, and obtain their charity. One day as he passed by a magnificent house, whose high gate shewed a very spacious court, where there was a multitude of servants, he went to one of them, and asked him to whom that house belonged? “Good man,” replied the servant, “whence do you come that you ask me such a question? Does not all that you behold point out to you that it is the palace of a Barmecide?” My brother, who very well knew the liberality and generosity of the Barmecides, addressed himself to one of his porters (for he had more than one), and prayed him to give him alms. “Go in,” said he, “nobody hinders you, and address yourself to the master of the house; he will send you back satisfied.”

My brother, who expected no such civility, thanked the porters, and with their permission entered the palace, which was so large, that it took him a considerable time to reach the Barmecide’s apartment; at last he came to an arcade square building of an excellent architecture, and entered by parterres of flowers intersected by walks of several colours, extremely pleasant to the eye: the lower apartments round this square were most of them open, and were shut only with great curtains to keep out the sun, which were opened again when the heat was over to let in the fresh air.

Such an agreeable place would have struck my brother with admiration, even if his mind had been more at ease than it was. He went on till he came into a hall richly furnished and adorned with painting of gold and azure foliage, where he saw a venerable man with a long white beard, sitting at the upper end on a sofa, whence he concluded him to be the master of the house; and in fact it was the Barmecide himself, who said to my brother in a very civil manner, that he was welcome; and asked him what he wanted? "My lord," answered my brother, in a begging tone, "I am a poor man who stands in need of the help of such rich and generous persons as yourself." He could not have addressed himself to a fitter person than this lord, who had a thousand good qualities.

The Barmecide seemed to be astonished at my brother's answer, and putting both his hands to his stomach, as if he would rend his clothes for grief, "Is it possible," cried he, "that I am at Bagdad, and that such a man as you is so poor as you say? this is what must never be." My brother, fancying that he was going to give him some singular mark of his bounty, blessed him a thousand times, and wished him all happiness. "It shall not be said," replied the Barmecide, "that I will abandon you, nor will I have you leave me." "Sir," replied my brother, "I swear to you I have not eaten one bit to-day." "Is it true," demanded the Barmecide, "that you are fasting till now? Alas, poor man! he is ready to die for hunger. Ho, boy," cried he, with a loud voice, "bring a basin and water presently, that we may wash our hands." Though no boy appeared, and my brother saw neither water nor basin, the Barmecide fell to rubbing his hands as if one had poured water upon them, and bade my brother come and wash with him. Schacabac judged by this, that the Barmecide lord loved to be merry, and he himself understanding raillery, and knowing that the poor must be complaisant to the rich, if they would have any thing from them, came forward and did as he was required.

"Come on," said the Barmecide, "bring us something to eat, and do not let us wait." When he had spoken, though nothing appeared, he began to cut as if something had been brought him upon a plate, and putting his hand to his mouth began to chew, and said to my brother, "Come, friend, eat as freely as if you were at home; come, eat; you said you were like to die of hunger, but you eat as if you had no appetite." "Pardon me, my lord," said Schacabac, who perfectly imitated what he did, "you see I lose no time, and that I play my part well enough." "How like you this bread," said the Barmecide; "do not you find it very good?" "O! my lord," replied my brother, who saw neither bread nor meat, "I have never eaten anything so white and so fine." "Eat your belly-full," said the Barmecide; "I assure you the woman who bakes me this good bread cost me five hundred pieces of gold to purchase her."

The Barmecide, after having boasted so much of his bread, which my brother ate only in idea, cried, "Boy, bring us another dish:" and though no boy appeared, "Come, my good friend," continued he, "taste this new dish; and tell me if ever you ate better mutton and barley-broth than this." "It is admirably good," replied my brother, "and therefore you see I eat heartily." "You oblige me highly," resumed the Barmecide; "I conjure you then, by the satisfaction I have to see you eat so heartily, that you eat all up, since you like it so well." A little while after he called for a goose and sweet sauce, made up of vinegar, honey, dry raisins, grey peas, and dry figs, which were brought just in the same manner as the others had. "The goose is very fat," said the Barmecide, "eat only a leg and a wing; we must save our stomachs, for we have abundance of other dishes to come." He actually called for several others, of which my brother, who was ready to die of hunger, pretended to eat; but what he boasted of more than all the rest was a lamb fed with pistachio nuts, which he ordered to be brought up in the same manner. "Here is a dish," said the Barmecide "that you will see at nobody's table but my own; I would have you eat your belly-full of it." Having spoken thus, he stretched out his hand as if he had had a piece of lamb in it, and putting it to my brother's mouth, "There," said he, "swallow that, and you will judge whether I had not reason to boast of this dish." My brother thrust out his head, opened his mouth, and made as if he took the piece of lamb, and eat it with extreme pleasure. "I knew you would like it," said the Barmecide. "There is nothing in the world finer," replied my brother; "your table is most delicious." "Come, bring the ragout; I fancy you will like that as well as you did the lamb: Well, how do you relish it?" "O! it is wonderful," replied Schacabac; "for here we taste all at once, amber, cloves, nutmeg, ginger, pepper, and the most odoriferous herbs, and all these delicacies are so well mixed, that one does not prevent our tasting the other." "How pleasant! Honour this ragout," said the Barmecide, "by eating heartily of it. Ho, boy, bring us another ragout." "No, my lord, if it please you," replied my brother, "for indeed I can eat no more."

"Come, take away then," said the Barmecide, "and bring the fruit." He stayed a moment as it were to give time for his servants to carry away; after which, he addressed my brother, "Taste these almonds, they are good and fresh gathered." Both of them made as if they had peeled the almonds, and eaten them; after this, the Barmecide invited my brother to eat something else. "Look," said he, "there are all sorts of fruits, cakes, dry sweetmeats, and conserves, take what you like;" then stretching out his hand, as if he had reached my brother something, "Look," he continued, "there is a lozenge, very good for digestion." Schacabac made as if he ate it, and said, "My lord, there is no want of musk here." "These lozenges," replied the Barmecide, "are made at my own house, where nothing is wanting to make every article good." He still bade my brother eat, and said to him, "Methinks you do not eat as if you had been so hungry as you complained you were when you came in." "My lord," replied Schacabac, whose jaws ached with moving and having nothing to eat, "I assure you I am so full that I cannot eat one bit more."

"Well, then, friend," resumed the Barmecide, "we must drink now, after we have eaten so well." "You may drink wine, my lord," replied my brother, "but I will drink none if you please, because I am forbidden." "You are too scrupulous," rejoined the Barmecide; "do as I do." "I will drink then out of complaisance," said Schacabac, "for I see you will have nothing wanting to make your treat complete; but since I am not accustomed to drink wine, I am afraid I shall commit some error in point of good breeding, and contrary to the respect that is due to you; therefore I pray you, once more, to excuse me from drinking any wine; I will be content with water." "No, no," said the Barmecide, "you shall drink wine," and at the same time he commanded some to be brought, in the same manner as the meat and fruit had been served before. He made as if he poured out wine, and drank first himself, and then pouring out for my brother, presented him the glass, saying, "Drink my health, and let us know if you think this wine good." My brother made as if he took the glass, and looked as if the colour was good, and put it to his nose to try the flavour: he then made a low salute to the Barmecide, to signify that he took the liberty to drink his health, and lastly he appeared to drink with all the signs of a man that drinks with pleasure: "My lord," said he, "this is very excellent wine, but I think it is not strong enough." "If you would have stronger," answered the Barmecide, "you need only speak, for I have several sorts in my cellar. Try how you like this." Upon which he made as if he poured out another glass for himself, and one for my brother; and did this so often, that Schacabac, feigning to be intoxicated with the wine, and acting a drunken man, lifted up his hand, and gave the Barmecide such a box on the ear as made him fall down. He was going to give him another blow, but the Barmecide holding up his hand to ward it off, cried, "Are you mad?" Then my brother, making as if he had come to himself again, said, "My lord, you have been so good as to admit your slave into your house, and give him a treat; you should have been satisfied with making me eat, and not have obliged me to drink wine; for I told you beforehand, that it might occasion me to fail in my respect for you. I am very sorry for it, and beg you a thousand pardons."

Scarcely had he finished these words, when the Barmecide, instead of being in a passion, fell a laughing with all his might. "I have been long," said he, "seeking a man of your character."

The Barmecide caressed Schacabac mightily, and told him, "I not only forgive the blow you have given me, but I desire henceforward we should be friends, and that you take my house for your home: you have had the complaisance to accommodate yourself to my humour, and the patience to keep the jest up to the last; we will now eat in good earnest." When he had finished these words, he clapped his hands, and commanded his servants, who then appeared, to cover the table; which was speedily done, and my brother was treated with all those dishes in reality, which he ate of before in fancy. At last they cleared the table, and brought in the wine, and at the same time a number of handsome slaves, richly appareled, came and sung some agreeable airs to their musical instruments. In a word, Schacabac had all the reason in the world to be satisfied with the Barmecide's civility and bounty; for he treated him as his familiar friend, and ordered him a suit from his wardrobe.

The Barmecide found my brother to be a man of so much wit and understanding, that in a few days after he entrusted him with the care of his household and all his affairs. My brother acquitted himself very well in that employment for twenty years; at the end of which the generous Barmecide died, and leaving no heirs, all his property was confiscated to the use of the prince; and my brother lost all he had acquired. Being reduced to his first condition, he joined a caravan of pilgrims going to Mecca, designing to accomplish that pilgrimage by their charity; but unfortunately the caravan was attacked and plundered by a number of Bedouins, superior to that of the pilgrims. My brother was then taken as a slave by one of the Bedouins, who put him under the bastinado for several days, to oblige him to ransom himself. Schacabac protested that it was all in vain. "I am your slave," said he, "you may dispose of me as you please; but I declare to you that I am extremely poor, and not able to redeem myself." In a word, my brother discovered to him all his misfortunes, and endeavoured to soften him with tears; but the Bedouin was not to be moved, and being vexed to find himself disappointed of a considerable sum of which he reckoned himself sure, he took his knife and slit my brother's lips, to avenge himself by this inhumanity for the loss that he thought he had sustained.

The Bedouin had a handsome wife, and frequently when he went on his excursions left my brother alone with her. At such times she used all her endeavours to comfort my brother under the rigour of his slavery. She gave him tokens enough that she loved him, but he durst not return her passion, for fear he should repent; and therefore avoided being alone with her, as much as she sought the opportunity to be alone with him. She was so much in the habit of caressing and playing with the miserable Schacabac, whenever she saw him, that one day she happened to act in the same manner, in the presence of her husband. My brother, without taking notice that he observed them (so his sins would have it), played likewise with her. The Bedouin, immediately supposing that they lived together in a criminal manner, fell upon my brother in a rage, and after he had mutilated him in a barbarous manner, carried him on a camel to the top of a desert mountain, where he left him. The mountain was on the road to Bagdad, so that the passengers who saw him there informed me where he was. I went thither speedily, and found unfortunate Schacabac in a deplorable condition: I gave him what help he stood in need of, and brought him back to the city.

This is what I told the caliph; that prince applauded me with new fits of laughter. “Now,” said he, “I cannot doubt but they justly give you the surname of Silent. No one can say the contrary for certain reasons, however, I command you to depart this town immediately, and let me hear no more of you.” I yielded to necessity, and travelled for several years in distant countries. Understanding at last that the caliph was dead, I returned to Bagdad, where I found not one of my brothers alive. It was on my return to this city that I did the lame young man the important service which you have heard. You are, however, witnesses of his ingratitude, and of the injurious manner in which he treated me; instead of testifying his obligation, he rather chose to fly from me and leave his own country. When I understood that he was not at Bagdad, though no one could tell me whither he was gone, I determined to seek him. I travelled from province to province a long time; and when I least expected, met him this day, but I little thought to find him so incensed against me.

When the barber had concluded his story, we found that the young man was not to blame for calling him a great chatterer. However, he wished him to stay with us, and partake of the entertainment which the master of the house had prepared. We sat down to table, and were merry together till afternoon prayers; when all the company parted, and I went to my shop, till it was time to return home. It was during this interval that humpback came half drunk before my shop, where he sung and played on his tabor. I thought that, by carrying him home with me, I should divert my wife, therefore I took him in: my wife gave us a dish of fish, and I presented humpback with some, which he ate, without taking notice of a bone. He fell down dead before us, and after having in vain essayed to help him, in the trouble and fear occasioned by such an unlucky accident, we carried the corpse out, and dexterously lodged him with the Jewish doctor. The Jewish doctor put him into the chamber of the purveyor, and the purveyor carried him out into the street, where it was believed the merchant had killed him. “This sir,” added the tailor, “is what I had to say to satisfy your majesty, who must pronounce whether we be worthy of mercy or wrath, life or death.”

The sultan of Casgar shewed a satisfaction in his countenance, which restored the tailor and his comrades to life. “I cannot but acknowledge,” said he, “that I am more struck with the history of the young cripple, with that of the barber, and with the adventures of his brothers, than with the story of my jester: but before I send you all away, and we proceed to bury humpback, I should like to see the barber who is the occasion of my pardoning you; since he is in my capital, it is easy to satisfy my curiosity." At the same time he sent an officer with the tailor to find him.

The officer and the tailor went immediately and brought the barber, whom they presented to the sultan: the barber was a venerable man about ninety years of age; his eye-brows and beard were white as snow, his ears hanging down, and his nose very long. The sultan could not forbear laughing when he saw him. "Silent man," said he to him, "I understand that you know wonderful stories, will you tell me some of them?"

"Sir," answered the barber, "let us forbear the stories, if you please, at present. I most humbly beg your majesty to permit me to ask what that Christian, that Jew, that Moosulmaun and that dead humpback, who ties on the ground, do here before your majesty?" The sultan smiled at the barber's freedom, and replied, "Why do you ask?" "Sir," replied the barber, "it concerns me to ask, that your majesty may know I am not so great a talker as some represent me, but a man justly called Silent."

The sultan commanded them to tell him the story of the humpback, which he seemed earnestly to wish for. When the barber heard it, he shook his head, as if he would say, there was something under this which he did not understand. "Truly," cried he, "this is a surprising story; but I wish to examine humpback a little nearer." He approached him, sat down on the ground, took his head between his knees, and after he had looked upon him steadfastly, fell into so great a fit of laughter, and had so little command of himself, that he fell backwards on the ground, without considering that he was before the sultan of Casgar. As soon as he came to himself, "It is said," cried he, "and not without reason, that no man dies without a cause. If ever any history deserved to be written in letters of gold, it is that of this humpback."

At this all the people looked on the barber as a buffoon, or an old dotard. "Silent man," said the sultan, "why do you laugh?" "Sir," answered the barber, "I swear by your majesty's benevolence, that humpback is not dead: he is yet alive, and I shall be content to pass for a madman if I do not convince you this minute." So saying, he took a box wherein he had several medicines that he carried about him to use as occasion might require; and drew out a little phial of balsam, with which he rubbed humpback's neck a long time; then he took out of his case a neat iron instrument, which he put betwixt his teeth, and after he had opened his mouth, he thrust down his throat a pair of small pincers, with which he took out a bit of fish and bone, which he shewed to all the people. Immediately humpback sneezed, stretched forth his arms and feet, opened his eyes, and shewed several other signs of life.

The sultan of Casgar, and all who were witnesses of this operation, were less surprised to see humpback revive, after he had passed a whole night, and great part of a day, without giving any sign of life, than at the merit and capacity of the barber, who performed this; and notwithstanding all his faults, began to look upon him as a great physician. The sultan, transported with joy and admiration, ordered the story of humpback to be written down, with that of the barber, that the memory of them might, as it deserved, be preserved for ever. Nor did he stop here; but, that the tailor, Jewish doctor, purveyor, and Christian merchant might remember the adventure, which the accident of humpback had occasioned to them, with pleasure, he did not send them away till he had given each of them a very rich robe, with which he caused them to be clothed in his presence. As for the barber, he honoured him with a great pension, and kept him near his person.

The History of Aboulhassen Ali Ebn Becar, and Schemselnihar, Favourite of Caliph Maroon Al Rusheed.

In the reign of the caliph Haroon al Rusheed, there lived at Bagdad a druggist, named Alboussan Ebn Thaher, a very rich handsome man. He had more wit and politeness than people of his profession generally possess: his integrity, sincerity, and good humour made him beloved and sought after by all sorts of people. The caliph, who knew his merit, had entire confidence in him. He held him in such high esteem, that he entrusted him to provide his favourite ladies with all the things they stood in need of. He chose for them their clothes, furniture, and jewels, with admirable taste.

His good qualities, and the favour of the caliph, occasioned the sons of emirs, and other officers of the first rank, to be always about him: his house was the rendezvous of all the nobility of the court Among the young lords that went daily to visit him, was one whom he took more notice of than the rest, and with whom he contrasted a particular friendship, called Aboulhassen Ali Ebn Becar, originally of an ancient royal family of Persia. This family had continued at Bagdad ever since the conquest of that kingdom. Nature seemed to have taken pleasure in endowing this young prince with the rarest qualities of body and mind: his face was so very beautiful, his shape so fine, his air so easy, and his physiognomy so engaging, that it was impossible to see him without immediately loving him. When he spoke, he expressed himself in terms proper and well chosen, with a new and agreeable turn, and his voice charmed all that heard him: he had besides so much wit and judgment, that he thought and spoke of all subjects with admirable exactness. He was so reserved and modest, that he advanced nothing till after he had taken all possible care to avoid giving any ground of suspicion that he preferred his own opinion to that of others.

Being such a person as I have represented him, we need not wonder that Ebn Thaher distinguished him from all the other young noblemen of the court, most of whom had the vices which composed the opposites to his virtues. One day, when the prince was with Ebn Thaher, there came a lady mounted on a piebald mule, in the midst of ten female slaves who accompanied her on foot, all very handsome, as far as could be judged by their air, and through their veils which covered their faces. The lady had a girdle of a rose colour, four inches broad, embroidered with pearls and diamonds of an extraordinary bigness; and for beauty it was easy to perceive that she surpassed all her women, as far as the full moon does that of two days old. She came to buy something, and as she wanted to speak to Ebn Thaher, entered his shop, which was very neat and spacious; and he received her with all the marks of the most profound respect, entreating her to sit down, and directing her to the most honourable place.

In the mean time, the prince of Persia, unwilling to lose such an opportunity of shewing his good breeding and gallantry, adjusted the cushion of cloth of gold, for the lady to lean on; after which he hastily retired, that she might sit down; and having saluted her, by kissing the carpet under her feet, rose and stood before her at the lower end of the sofa. It being her custom to be free with Ebn Thaher, she lifted up her veil, and discovered to the prince of Persia such an extraordinary beauty as struck him to the heart. On the other hand, the lady could not refrain from looking upon the prince, the sight of whom had made the same impressions upon her. “My lord,” said she to him, with an obliging air, “pray sit down.” The prince of Persia obeyed, and sat on the edge of the sofa. He had his eyes constantly fixed upon her, and swallowed large draughts of the sweet poison of love. She quickly perceived what passed in his heart, and this discovery served to inflame her the more towards him. She arose, went to Ebn Thaher, and after she had whispered to him the cause of her coming, asked the name and country of the prince. “Madam,” answered Ebn Thaher, “this young nobleman’s name is Aboulhassen Ali Ebn Becar, and he is a prince of the blood royal of Persia.”

The lady was transported at hearing that the person she already loved so passionately was of so high a rank. “Do you really mean,” said she, “that he is descended from the kings of Persia?” “Yes, madam,” replied Ebn Thaher, “the last kings of Persia were his ancestors, and since the conquest of that kingdom, the princes of his family have always made themselves very acceptable at the court of our caliphs.” “You will oblige me much,” added she, “by making me acquainted with this young nobleman: when I send this woman,” pointing to one of her slaves, “to give you notice to come and see me, pray bring him with you; I shall be glad to afford him the opportunity of seeing the magnificence of my house, that he may have it in his power to say, that avarice does not reign at Bagdad among persons of quality. You know what I mean.”

Ebn Thaher was a man of too much penetration not to perceive the lady’s mind by these words: “My princess, my queen,” replied he, “God preserve me from giving you any occasion of anger: I shall always make it a law to obey your commands.” At this answer, the lady bowed to Ebn Thaher, and took her leave; and after she had given a favorable look to the prince of Persia, she remounted her mule, and departed.

The prince of Persia was so deeply in love with the lady, that he looked after her as far as he could; and long after she was out of sight directed his eyes that way. Ebn Thaher told him, that he remarked several persons observing him, and began to laugh to see him in this posture. “Alas!” said the prince, “the world and you would pity me, if you knew that the beautiful lady, who is just gone from you, has carried with her the best part of me, and that the remaining part seeks for an opportunity to go after her. Tell me, I conjure you,” added he, “what cruel lady is this, who forces people to love her, without giving them time to reflect?” “My lord,” answered Ebn Thaher, “this is the celebrated Schemselnihar, the principal favourite of the caliph, our master.” “She is justly so called,” added the prince, “since she is more beautiful than the sun at noonday.” “True,” replied Ebn Thaher; “therefore the commander of the faithful loves, or rather adores her. He gave me express orders to furnish her with all that she asked for, and to anticipate her wishes as far as lies in my power.”

He spoke thus to hinder him from engaging in a passion which could not but prove unfortunate to him; but this served only to inflame it the more. “I feared, charming Schemselnihar,” cried he, “I should not be allowed so much as to think of you; I perceive, however, that without hopes of being loved in return, I cannot forbear loving you; I will love you then, and bless my lot that I am the slave of an object fairer than the meridian sun.”

While the prince of Persia thus consecrated his heart to the fair Schemselnihar, this lady, as she went home, contrived how she might see, and have free converse with him. She no sooner entered her palace, than she sent to Ebn Thaher the woman she had pointed out to him, and in whom she placed all her confidence, to tell him to come and see her without delay, and bring the prince of Persia with him. The slave came to Ebn Thaher’s shop, while he was speaking to the prince, and endeavouring to dissuade him, by very strong arguments, from loving the caliph’s favourite. When she saw them together, “Gentlemen,” said she, “my honourable mistress Schemselnihar the chief favourite of the commander of the faithful, entreats you to come to her palace, where she waits for you." Ebn Thaher, to testify his obedience, rose up immediately, without answering the slave, and followed her, not without some reluctance. The prince also followed he, without reflecting on the danger there might be in such a visit. The presence of Ebn Thaher, who had liberty to go to the favourite when he pleased, made the prince very easy: they followed the slave, who went a little before them, and entered after her into the caliph's palace, and joined her at the gate of Schemselnihar's pavilion, which was ready open. She introduced them into a great hall, where she prayed them to be seated.

The prince of Persia thought himself in one of those delicious palaces that are promised to us in the other world: he had never seen any thing that came near the magnificence of the place. The carpets, cushions, and other appendages of the sofa, the furniture, ornaments, and architecture, were surprisingly rich and beautiful. A little time after Ebn Thaher and he had seated themselves, a very handsome black slave brought in a table covered with several delicacies, the admirable smell of which evinced how deliciously they were seasoned. While they were eating, the slave who brought them in waited upon them; she took particular care to invite them to eat of what she knew to be the greatest dainties. The other slaves brought them excellent wine after they had eaten. When they had done, there was presented to each of them a gold basin full of water to wash their hands; after which, they brought them a golden pot full of the wood of aloes, with which they perfumed their beards and clothes. Odoriferous water was not forgotten, but served in a golden vessel enriched with diamonds and rubies, and it was thrown upon their beards and faces according to custom; they then resumed their places, but had scarcely sat down, when the slave entreated them to arise and follow her. She opened a door, and conducted them into a large saloon of wonderful structure. It was a dome of the most agreeable form, supported by a hundred pillars of marble, white as alabaster. The bases and chapiters of the pillars were adorned with four-footed beasts, and birds of various sorts, gilded. The carpet of this noble saloon consisted of one piece of cloth of gold, embroidered with bunches of roses in red and white silk; and the dome painted in the same manner, after the Arabian fashion, presented to the mind one of the most charming objects. In every space between the columns was a little sofa adorned in the same manner, and great vessels of china, crystal, jasper, jet, porphyry, agate, and other precious materials, garnished with gold and jewels; in these spaces were also so many large windows, with balconies projecting breast high, fitted up as the sofas, and looking out into the most delicious garden; the walks were of little pebbles of different colours, of the same pattern as the carpet of the saloon; so that, looking upon the carpet within and without it seemed as if the dome and the garden with all its ornaments had been upon the same carpet. The prospect was, at the end of the walks, terminated by two canals of clear water, of the same circular figure as the dome, one of which being higher than the other, emptied its water into the lowermost, in form of a sheet; and curious pots of gilt brass, with flowers and shrubs, were set upon the banks of the canals at equal distances. Those walks lay betwixt great plots of ground planted with straight and bushy trees, where a thousand birds formed a melodious concert, and diverted the eye by flying about, and playing together, or fighting in the air.

The prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher were a long time engaged in viewing the magnificence of the place, and expressed their surprise at every thing thing saw, especially the prince, who had never beheld any thing like it. Ebn Thaher, though he had been several times in that delicious place, could not but observe many new beauties, In a word they never grew weary in admiring so many singularities, and were thus agreeably employed, when they perceived a company of ladies richly appareled sitting without, at some distance from the dome, each of them upon a seat of Indian plane wood inlaid with silver filigree in compartments, with instruments of music in their hands, waiting for orders to play. They both went forward, and had a full view of the ladies, and on the right they saw a great court with a stair up from the garden, encompassed with beautiful apartments. The slave had left them, and being alone, they conversed together; “For you, who are a wise man,” said the prince of Persia, “I doubt not but you look with a great deal of satisfaction upon all these marks of grandeur and power; for my part, I do not think there is any thing in the world more surprising. But when I consider that this is the glorious habitation of the lovely Schemselnihar, and that the greatest monarch of the earth keeps her here, I confess to you that I look upon myself to be the most unfortunate of all mankind, and that no destiny can be more cruel than mine, to love an object possessed by my rival, and that too in a place where he is so potent, that I cannot think myself sure of my life one moment."

Ebn Thaher, hearing the prince of Persia speak, replied, "Sir, I wish you could give me as good assurance of the happy success of your passion, as I can give you of the safety of your life. Though this stately palace belongs to the caliph, who built it on purpose for Schemselnihar, and called it the palace of eternal pleasures, and though it makes part of his own palace, yet you must know that this lady lives here at absolute liberty. She is not beset by eunuchs to be spies upon her; this is her private house, absolutely at her disposal. She goes into the city when she pleases, and returns again, without asking leave of any body: and the caliph never comes to see her, but he sends Mesrour, the chief of his eunuchs, to give her notice, that she may be prepared to receive him. Therefore you may be easy, and give full attention to the concert of music, which, I perceive, Schemselnihar is preparing for you."

Just as Ebn Thaher had spoken these words, the prince of Persia, and he, saw the favourite's trusty slave giving orders to the ladies to begin to sing, and play with the instruments: they all began immediately to play together as a prelude, and after they had played some time, one of them began to sing alone, and accompanied herself at the same time admirably upon her lute, being informed beforehand upon what subject she was to sing. The words were so agreeable to the prince of Persia's sentiments, that he could not forbear applauding her at the end of the couplet. "Is it possible," cried he, "that you have the gift of knowing people's hearts, and that the knowledge of what is passing in my mind has occasioned you to give us a taste of your charming voice by those words? I should not express myself otherwise, were I to choose." The lady made no reply, but went on and sung several other stanzas, with which the prince was so affected, that he repeated some of them with tears in his eyes; which discovered plainly enough that he applied them to himself. When she had finished, she and her companions rose up and sung a chorus, signifying by their words, that the full moon was going to rise in all her splendour, and that they should speedily see her approach the sun. Intimating, that Schemselnihar was coming, and that the prince of Persia would soon have the pleasure of beholding her.

In fact, as they looked towards the court, they saw Schemselnihar's confidant coming towards them, followed by ten black women, who, with much difficulty, carried a throne of massive silver curiously wrought, which they set down before them at a certain distance; the black slaves then retired behind the trees, to the entrance of a walk. After this came twenty handsome ladies richly appareled alike; they advanced in two rows, each singing and playing upon instruments which she held in her hands, and placed themselves on each side of the throne.

All these things kept the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher in so much the greater expectation, as they were curious to know how they would end. At length they saw advancing from the gate through which the ten black women had proceeded ten other ladies equally handsome, and well dressed, who halted a few moments, expecting the favourite, who came out last, and placed herself in the midst of them.

Schemselnihar was easily distinguished from the rest, by her fine shape and majestic air, as well as by a sort of mantle, of a very fine stuff of gold and sky-blue, fastened to her shoulders, over her other apparel, which was the most handsome, most magnificent, and best contrived that could be imagined.

The pearls, rubies, and diamonds, which adorned her, were well disposed; not many in number, but chosen with taste, and of inestimable value. She came forward, with a majesty resembling the sun in its course amidst the clouds, which receive his splendour without hiding his lustre, and sat upon the silver throne that had been brought for her.

As soon as the prince of Persia saw Schemselnihar, his eyes were rivetted on her. "We cease inquiring," said he to Ebn Thaher, "after what we seek, when once it is in view; and no doubt remains, when once the truth is made apparent. Do you see this charming beauty? She is the cause of all my sufferings, which I bless, and will never forbear to bless, however severe and lasting. At the sight of this objets, I am not my own master; my soul is disturbed, and rebels, and seems disposed to leave me. Go then, my soul, I allow thee; but let it be for the welfare and preservation of this weak body. It is you, cruel Ebn Thaher, who are the cause of this disorder, in bringing me hither. You thought to do me a great pleasure; but I perceive I am only come to complete my ruin. Pardon me," he continued, interrupting himself; "I am mistaken. I would come, and can blame no one but myself;" and at these words he burst into tears. "I am glad," said Ebn Thaher, "that you do me justice. When I told you at first, that Schemselnihar was the caliph's chief favourite, I did it on purpose to prevent that fatal passion which you please yourself with entertaining. All that you see here ought to disengage you, and you are to think of nothing but of acknowledging the honour which Schemselnihar has done you, by ordering me to bring you with me; recall then your wandering reason, and prepare to appear before her, as good breeding requires. See, she advances: were we to begin again, I would take other measures, but since the thing is done, I pray God we may not have cause to repent. All that I have now to say to you is, that love is a traitor, who may involve you in difficulties from which you will never be able to extricate yourself."

Ebn Thaher had no time to say more, because Schemselnihar approached, and sitting down upon her throne, saluted them both by bowing her head; but she fixed her eyes on the prince of Persia, and they spoke to one another in a silent language intermixed with sighs; by which in a few moments they spoke more than they could have done by words in a much longer time. The more Schemselnihar, looked upon the prince, the more she found in his looks to confirm her opinion that he was in love with her; and being thus persuaded of his passion, thought herself the happiest woman in the world. At last she turned her eyes from him, to command the women, who began to sing first, to come near; they rose, and as they advanced, the black women, who came out of the walk into which they had retired, brought their seats, and placed them near the window, in the front of the dome where Ebn Thaher and the prince of Persia stood, and their seats were so disposed, that, with the favourite's throne and the women on each side of her, they formed a semicircle before them.

The women, who were sitting before she came resumed their places, with the permission of Schemselnihar, who ordered them by a sign; that charming favourite chose one of those women to sing, who, after she had spent some moments in tuning her lute, sung a song, the meaning whereof was, that when two lovers entirely loved one another with affection boundless, their hearts, though in two bodies, were united; and, when any thing opposed their desires, could say with tears in their eyes, "If we love because we find one another amiable, ought we to be blamed? Let destiny bear the blame."

Schemselnihar evinced so plainly by her eyes and gestures that those words were applicable to herself and the prince of Persia, that he could not contain himself. He arose, and advancing to a balustrade, which he leaned upon, beckoned to one of the companions of the woman who had just done singing, to approach. When she had got near enough, he said to her, "Do me the favour to accompany me with your lute, in a song which you shall hear me sing." He then sung with an air so tender and passionate, as perfectly expressed the violence of his love. As soon as he had done, Schemselnihar, following his example, said to one of the women, "Attend to me likewise, and accompany my song." At the same time she sung in such a manner, as more deeply to penetrate the heart of the prince of Persia, who answered her by a new air, more passionate than the former.

The two lovers having declared their mutual affection by their songs, Schemselnihar yielded to the force of hers. She arose from her throne in transport, and advanced towards the door of the hall. The prince, who perceived her design, rose up immediately, and went to meet her. They met at the door, where they took one another by the hand, and embraced with so much passion, that they fainted, and would have fallen, if the woman who followed Schemselnihar had not hindered them. They supported them to a sofa, where they were brought to themselves, by throwing odoriferous water on their faces, and applying pungent odours to their nostrils.

When they had recovered, the first thing Schemselnihar did was to look about: and not seeing Ebn Thaher, she asked, with eagerness, where he was? He had withdrawn out of respect whilst her women were engaged in recovering her, and dreaded, not without reason, that some disagreeable consequence might follow what he had seen; but as soon as he heard Schemselnihar inquire for him, he came forward.

Schemselnihar was much pleased to see Ebn Thaher, and expressed her joy in the most obliging terms: “Ebn Thaher, I know not how to make you proper returns for the great obligations you have put upon me; without you, I should never have seen the prince of Persia, nor have loved the most amiable person in the world. Assure yourself I shall not die ungrateful, and that my gratitude, if possible, shall be equal to the obligation.” Ebn Thaher answered this compliment by a low obeisance, and wished the favourite the accomplishment of all her desires.

Schemselnihar, turning towards the prince of Persia, who sat by her, and looking upon him with some confusion after what had passed, said to him, “I am well assured you love me, and how great soever your love may be to me, you need not doubt but mine is as great towards you: but let us not flatter ourselves; for, notwithstanding this conformity of our sentiments, I see nothing for you and me but trouble, impatience, and tormenting grief. There is no other remedy for our evils but to love one another constantly, to refer ourselves to the disposal of Heaven, and to wait its determination of our destiny.” “Madam,” replied the prince of Persia, “you will do me the greatest injustice, if you doubt for a moment the continuance of my love. It is so interwoven with my soul, that I can justly say it makes the best part of it, and will continue so after death. Pains, torments, obstacles, nothing shall prevent my loving you.” Speaking these words he shed tears in abundance, and Schemselnihar was not able to restrain hers.

Ebn Thaher took this opportunity to speak to the favourite. “Madam, allow me to represent to you, that, instead of melting into tears, you ought to rejoice that you are now together. I understand not this grief. What will it be when you are obliged to part? But why do I talk of that? We have been a long while here, and you know, madam, it is time for us to be going.” “Ah! how cruel are you!” replied Schemselnihar, “You, who know the cause of my tears, have you no pity for my unfortunate condition? Oh! sad fatality! What have I done to subject myself to the severe law of not being able to join with the only person I love?"

Persuaded as she was that Ebn Thaher spoke to her only out of friendship, she did not take amiss what he said, but made a proper use of his intimation She made a sign to the slave her confidant, who immediately went out, and in a little time brought a collation of fruits upon a small silver table, which she set down betwixt her mistress and the prince of Persia. Schemselnihar took some of the best, and presented it to the prince, praying him to eat it for her sake; he took it, and put to his mouth that part which she had touched; and then he presented some to her, which she took, and ate in the same manner. She did not forget to invite Ebn Thaher to eat with them; but he thinking himself not safe in that place, and wishing himself at home, ate only out of complaisance. After the collation was taken away, they brought a silver basin, with water in a vessel of gold, and washed together; they afterwards returned to their places, and three of the ten black women brought each a cup of rock crystal full of exquisite wine, upon a golden salver; which they placed before Schemselnihar, the prince of Persia, and Ebn Thaher. That they might be the more private, Schemselnihar kept with her only ten black women, with ten others who began to sing, and play upon instruments; and after she had sent away all the rest, she took up one of the cups, and holding it in her hand sung some tender words, which one of her women accompanied with her lute. When she had done, she drank, and afterwards took up one of the other cups and presented it to the prince, praying him to drink for love of her, as she had drunk for love of him. He received the cup with a transport of love and joy; but before he drank, he sung also a song, which another woman accompanied with an instrument: and as he sang the tears fell from his eyes in such abundance, that he could not forbear expressing in his song, that he knew not whether he was going to drink the wine she had presented to him, or his own tears. Schemselnihar at last presented the third cup to Ebn Thaher, who thanked her for her kindness, and for the honour she did him.

After this she took a lute from one of her women, and sung to it in such a passionate manner, that she seemed to be transported out of herself: and the prince of Persia stood with his eyes fixed upon her, as if he had been enchanted. At this instant, her trusty slave came in great alarm, and addressing herself to her mistress, said, “Madam Mesrour and two other officers, with several eunuchs that attend them, are at the gate, and want to speak with you from the caliph.” When the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher heard these words, they changed colour, and began to tremble as if they had been undone: but Schemselnihar who perceived their agitation, revived their courage by a sigh.

After Schemselnihar had quieted the fears of the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher, she ordered the slave, her confidant, to go and speak to Mesrour, and the two other officers, till she had put herself in a condition to receive them, and could send her to introduce them. Immediately she ordered all the windows of’ the saloon to be shut, and the painted cloth on the side of the garden to be let down: and after having assured the prince and Ebn Thaher that they might continue there without any fear, she went out at the gate leading to the garden, and closed it upon them: but whatever assurance she had given them of their safety, they were full of apprehension all the while they remained there.

As soon as Schemselnihar had reached the garden with the women that had followed her, she ordered all the seats, which served the women who played on the instruments, to be placed near the window, where the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher heard them; and having got things in order, she sat down upon her silver throne: she then sent notice to the slave her confidant to bring in the chief of the eunuchs, and his two subaltern officers.

They appeared, followed by twenty black eunuchs all handsomely clothed, with cimeters by their sides, and gold belts of four inches broad. As soon as they perceived the favourite Schemselnihar at a distance, they made her a profound reverence, which she returned them from her throne. When they approached, she arose and went to meet Mesrour, who advanced first; she asked what news he brought? He answered, “Madam, the commander of the faithful has sent me to signify that he cannot live longer without seeing you; he designs to do himself that pleasure this night, and I am come to give you notice, that you may be ready to receive him. He hopes, madam, that you will receive him with as much pleasure as he feels impatience to see you."

At these words the favourite Schemselnihar prostrated herself to the ground, as a mark of that submission with which she received the caliph's order. When she rose, she said, "Pray tell the commander of the faithful, that I shall always reckon it my glory to execute his majesty's commands, and that his slave will do her utmost to receive him with all the respect that is due to him." At the same time she ordered the slave her confidant to tell the black women appointed for that service to get the palace ready to receive the caliph, and dismissing the chief of the eunuchs, said to him, "You see it requires some time to get all things ready, therefore I entreat you to curb his majesty's impatience, that, when he arrives, he may not find things out of order."

The chief of the eunuchs and his retinue being gone, Schemselnihar returned to the saloon, extremely concerned at the necessity she was under of sending back the prince of Persia sooner than she had intended. She came up to him again with tears in her eyes, which heightened Ebn Thaher's fear, who thought it no good omen. "Madam," said the prince to her, "I perceive you are come to tell me that we must part: if there be nothing more to dread, I hope Heaven will give me the patience which is necessary to support your absence." "Alas!" replied the too tender Schemselnihar, "how happy do I think you, and how unhappy do I think myself, when I compare your lot with my sad destiny! No doubt you will suffer by my absence, but that is all, and you may comfort yourself with hopes of seeing me again; but as for me, just Heaven! what a terrible trial am I brought to! I must not only be deprived of the sight of the only person whom I love, but I must be tormented with the presence of one whom you have made hateful to me. Will not the arrival of the caliph put me in mind of your departure? And how can I, when I am taken up with your dear image, express to that prince the joy which he always observed in my eyes whenever he came to see me? I shall have my mind perplexed when I speak to him, and the least complaisance which I shew to his love will stab me to the heart. Can I relish his kind words and caresses? Think, prince, to what torments I shall be exposed when I can see you no more." Her tears and sighs hindered her from going on, and the prince of Persia would have replied, but his own grief, and that of his mistress, deprived him of the power of speech.

Ebn Thaher, who only wished to get out of the palace, was obliged to comfort them, and to exhort them to have patience: but the trusty slave again interrupted them. “Madam,” said she to Schemselnihar, “you have no time to lose; the eunuchs begin to arrive, and you know the caliph will be here immediately.” “O Heaven! how cruel is this separation!” cried the favourite. “Make haste,” said she to the confidant, “take them both to the gallery which looks into the garden on the one side, and to the Tigris on the other; and when the night grows dark, let them out by the back gate, that they may retire with safety.” Having spoken thus, she tenderly embraced the prince of Persia, without being able to say one word more, and went to meet the caliph in such disorder as cannot well be imagined.

In the mean time, the trusty slave conducted the prince and Ebn Thaher to the gallery, as Schemselnihar had appointed; and left them there, assuring them, as she closed the door upon them, that they had nothing to fear, and that she would come for them when it was time.

When Schemselnihar’s trusty slave had left the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher, they forgot she had assured them they had nothing to apprehend. They examined the gallery, and were seized with extreme fear, because they knew no means of escape, if the caliph or any of his officers should happen to come there.

A great light, which they suddenly beheld through the lattices on the garden side, caused them to approach them to see from whence it came. It was occasioned by a hundred flambeaux of white wax, carried by as many young eunuchs: these were followed by more than a hundred others, who guarded the ladies of the caliph’s palace, clothed, and armed with cimeters, in the same manner as those I spoke of before; and the caliph came after them, betwixt Mesrour their captain on his right, and Vassif their second officer on his left hand.

Schemselnihar waited for the caliph at the entrance of a walk, accompanied by twenty women all of surprising beauty, adorned with necklaces and ear-rings of large diamonds; they played and sung on their instruments, and formed a charming concert. The favourite no sooner saw the prince appear, but she advanced and prostrated herself at his feet; and while she was doing this, “Prince of Persia,” said she, within herself, “if your sad eyes witness what I do, judge of my hard lot; if I were humbling myself so before you, my heart would feel no reluctance.”

The caliph was delighted to see Schemselnihar: “Rise, madam,” said he to her, “come near, I am angry with myself that I should have deprived myself so long of the pleasure of seeing you.” As he spoke, he took her by the hand, and, with many tender expressions, went and sat down upon the silver throne which Schemselnihar caused to be brought for him, and she sat down on a seat before him. The twenty women made a circle round them upon other seats, while the young eunuchs, who carried flambeaux, dispersed themselves at a certain distance from one another, that the caliph might the better enjoy the cool of the evening.

When the caliph had seated himself, he looked round him, and beheld with great satisfaction the garden illuminated with many other lights, besides those flambeaux which the young eunuchs held; but taking notice that the saloon was shut, expressed his surprise, and demanded the reason. It was done on purpose to surprise him; for he had no sooner spoken, than all the windows flew open at once, and he saw it illuminated within and without, in a much better manner than ever he had beheld it before. “Charming Schemselnihar,” cried he, at this sight, “I understand you; you would have me know there are as fine nights as days. After what I have seen, I cannot deny this.”

Let us return to the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher, whom we left in the gallery. Ebn Thaher could not enough admire all that he saw: “I am not young,” said he, “and I have seen great entertainments in my time; but I do not think any thing can be seen so surprising and magnificent! All that is said of enchanted palaces does not come up to the prodigious spectacle we now behold. What riches and magnificence united!”

The prince of Persia was not at all interested by the objects which so delighted Ebn Thaher; he could look on nothing but Schemselnihar, and the presence of the caliph threw him into inconceivable grief. “Dear Ebn Thaher,” he exclaimed, “would to God I had my mind as much at liberty to attend to those objects of admiration as you! But alas! I am in a quite different situation, all these things serve only to increase my torment. Can I see the caliph familiar with the objets of my love, and not die of grief? Must so ardent a passion as mine be disturbed with so potent a rival? O heavens! How cruel and strange is my destiny! It is but a moment since I esteemed myself the most fortunate lover in the world, and at this instant I feel a death stroke to my heart. I cannot resist it, my dear Ebn Thaher; my patience is exhausted, my disorder overwhelms me, and my courage fails." While he was speaking, he saw something pass in the garden, which obliged him to be silent and to turn all his attention that way.

The caliph had ordered one of the women, who was near him, to play upon her lute, and she began to sing. The words she sung were very passionate, and the caliph, persuaded that she sung thus by order of Schemselnihar, who had frequently entertained him with the like testimonies of her affection, interpreted them in his own favour. But this was not now Schemselnihar's meaning; she applied them to her dear Ali Ebn Becar, and was so sensibly touched with grief, to have before her an object whose presence she could no longer enjoy, that she fainted and fell backwards upon her seat, which having no arms to support her, she must have fallen, had not some of the women given her timely assistance, taken her up, and carried her into the saloon.

Ebn Thaher, who was in the gallery, being surprised at this accident, turned towards the prince of Persia; but instead of finding him standing, and looking through the window as before, he was extremely amazed to discover him lying at his feet motionless. This convinced him of the violence of the prince's passion for Schemselnihar, and he admired that strange effect of sympathy, which put him into a mortal fear on account of the place they were in. He did all he could to recover the prince, but in vain. Ebn Thaher was in this perplexity, when Schemselnihar's confidant opened the gallery door, and entered out of breath, as one who knew not where she was. "Come speedily," cried she "that I may let you out; all is in confusion here; and I fear this will be the last of our days." "Alas! how would you have us go?" replied Ebn Thaher, with a mournful voice; "approach, and see what a condition the prince of Persia is in."

When the slave saw him in a swoon, she ran for water, and returned in an instant.

At last the prince of Persia, after they had thrown water on his face, recovered. “Prince,” said Ebn Thaher to him, “we run the risk of perishing if we stay here any longer; exert yourself, therefore, let us endeavour to save our lives.” He was so feeble, that he could not rise alone; Ebn Thaher and the confidant lent him their hands, and supported him on each side. They reached a little iron gate which opened towards the Tigris, went out at it, and came to the side of a little canal which communicated with the river. The confidant clapped her hands, and immediately a little boat appeared, and came towards them with one rower. Ali Ebn Becar and his comrade went aboard, and the confidant remained at the side of the canal. As soon as the prince was seated in the boat, he stretched out one hand towards the palace, and laying the other on his heart, exclaimed with a feeble voice, “Dear object of my soul, receive my faith with this hand, while I assure you with the other, that my heart shall for ever preserve the fire with which it burns for you.”

In the mean time the boatman rowed with all his might, and Schemselnihar’s confidant accompanied the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher walking along the side of the canal, until they came to the Tigris, and when she could go no farther she took leave of them and returned.

The prince of Persia continued very feeble. Ebn Thaher comforted him, and exhorted him to take courage. “Consider,” said he, “that when we are landed, we have a great way to walk before we reach my house, and I would not advise you to go to your palace, which is a great deal farther, at this hour and in this condition.” At last they went out of the boat, but the prince had so little strength that he could not walk, which put Ebn Thaher into great perplexity. He recollected he had a friend in the neighbourhood, and carried the prince thither with great difficulty. His friend received him very cheerfully, and when he had made them sit down, he asked them where they had been so late. Ebn Thaher answered, “I heard this evening that a man who owed me a considerable sum of money was setting out on a long voyage. I lost no time to find him, and by the way I met with this young nobleman, to whom I am under a thousand obligations; for knowing my debtor, he did me the favour to go along with me. We had a great deal of trouble to bring the man to reason. We have at length succeeded, and that is the cause of our being so late. In our return home, this good lord, to whom I am for ever bound to shew all possible respect, was attacked by a sudden illness, which made me take the liberty to knock at your door, flattering myself that you would be pleased to lodge us this night."

Ebn Thaher's friend took all this for truth, told them they were welcome, and offered the prince of Persia, whom he knew not, all the assistance he could desire; but Ebn Thaher spoke for the prince, and said, that his distemper was of such a nature as to require nothing but rest. His friend understood by this that they desired to go to bed. Upon which he conducted them to an apartment, where he left them.

Though the prince of Persia slept, he was interrupted by troublesome dreams, which represented Schemselnihar in a swoon at the caliph's feet, and increased his affliction. Ebn Thaher was very impatient to be at home, and doubted not but his family was under great apprehension, because he never used to sleep out. He arose and departed early in the morning, after he had taken leave of his friend, who rose at break of day to prayers At last he reached his house, and the first thing the prince of Persia did, who had walked so far with much trouble, was to lie down upon a sofa, as weary as if he had been a long journey. Not being in a state to go to his own palace, Ebn Thaher ordered a chamber to be prepared for him, and sent to acquaint his friends with his condition, and where he was. In the mean time he begged him to compose himself, to command in his house, and to dispose of all things as he pleased. "I thank you heartily for your obliging offers," said the prince; "but that I may not be any ways troublesome to you, I conjure you to deal with me as if I were not at your house. I would not stay one moment, if I thought my presence would incommode you in the least."

As soon as Ebn Thaher had time to recollect himself, he told his family all that had passed at Schemselnihar's palace, and concluded by thanking God, who had delivered him from the danger he had been in. The prince of Persia's principal domestics came to receive his orders at Ebn Thaher's house, and in a little time there arrived several of his friends, who had notice of his indisposition. Those friends passed the greatest part of the day with him; and though their conversation could not extinguish those melancholy ideas which were the cause of his trouble, yet it afforded him some relief. He would have taken his leave of Ebn Thaher towards the evening; but this faithful friend found him still so weak, that he obliged him to stay till next day, and in the mean time, to divert him, gave a concert of vocal and instrumental music in the evening; but this concert served only to remind him of the preceding night, and renewed his trouble, instead of assuaging it; so that next day his distemper seemed to increase. Upon this Ebn Thaher did not oppose his going home, but took care to accompany him; and when he was with him alone in his chamber, he represented to him all those arguments which might influence him to a generous effort to overcome his passion, which in the end would neither prove fortunate to himself nor to the favourite. “Ah! dear Ebn Thaher,” exclaimed the prince, “how easy is it for you to give this advice, but how hard for me to follow it! I am sensible of its importance, but am not able to profit by it. I have said already, that I shall carry to the grave the love I bear to Schemselnihar.” When Ebn Thaher saw that he could gain nothing upon the prince, he took his leave, and would have retired.

The prince of Persia interrupted him, and said, “Kind Ebn Thaher, since I have declared to you that it is not in my power to follow your wise counsels, I beg you would not charge it on me as a crime, nor forbear to give me the usual testimonies of your friendship. You cannot do me a greater favour than to inform me of the destiny of my dear Schemselnihar, when you hear of her. The uncertainty I am in concerning her fate, and the apprehensions her fainting have occasioned in me, keep me in this languishing condition you reproach me with.” “My lord,” answered Ebn Thaher, “you have reason to hope that her fainting was not attended with any bad consequences: her confidant will quickly come and inform me of the issue; and as soon as I know the particulars, I will not fail to impart them.”

Ebn Thaher left the prince in this hope, and returned home, where he expected Schemselnihar’s confidant all the rest of the day, but in vain, nor did she come on the following. His uneasiness to know the state of the prince of Persia’s health would not suffer him to wait any longer without seeing him. He went to his palace to exhort him to patience, and found him lying on his bed as ill as ever, surrounded by a great many of his friends, and several physicians, who used all their art to discover the cause of his disorder. As soon as he saw Ebn Thaher, he looked at him with a smile, to signify that he had two things to tell him; the one, that he was glad to see him; the other how much the physicians, who could not discover the cause of his illness, were out in their reasonings.

His friends and physicians retired one after another, so that Ebn Thaher being alone with him, approached his bed to ask him how he had been since he had last seen him. "I must tell you," answered the prince, "that my passion, which continually gathers new strength, and the uncertainty of the lovely Schemselnihar's fate, augment my disorder every moment, and cast me into such a state as afflicts my kindred and friends, and breaks the measures of my physicians, who do not understand it. You cannot think," he added, "how much I suffer by seeing so many people about me, who importune me, and whom I cannot in civility put away. Your company alone relieves me; but I conjure you not to dissemble with me: what news do you bring of Schemselnihar? Have you seen her confidant? What says she to you?" Ebn Thaher answered, that he had not seen her yet. No sooner had he communicated to the prince of Persia this sad intelligence, than the tears came into his eyes; he could not answer one word, his heart was so oppressed. "Prince," added Ebn Thaher, "suffer me to tell you, that you are too ingenious in tormenting yourself. In the name of God, wipe away your tears: if any of your people should come in, they would discover you by this, notwithstanding the care you ought to take to conceal your thoughts." Whatever his judicious adviser could say, it was not possible for the prince to refrain from weeping. "Wise Ebn Thaher," said he, when he had recovered his speech, "I may indeed hinder my tongue from revealing the secrets of my heart, but I have no power over my tears, upon such an alarming subject as Schemselnihar's danger. If that adorable and only objets of my desires be no longer in the world, I shall not survive her a moment." "Reject so afflicting a thought," replied Ebn Thaher; "Schemselnihar is yet alive, you need not doubt it: if you have heard no news of her, it is because she could find no opportunity to send to you, and I hope you will hear from her to-day.” To this he added several other consoling arguments, and then withdrew.

Ebn Thaher had scarcely reached his own house, when Schemselnihar’s confidant arrived with a melancholy countenance, which he reckoned a bad omen. He asked news of her mistress. “Tell me yours first,” said the confidant, “for I was in great trouble to see the prince of Persia go away in that condition.” Ebn Thaher told her all that she wished to know, and when he had done, the slave began thus: “If the prince of Persia has suffered, and does still suffer for my mistress, she suffers no less for him. After I departed from you, I returned to the saloon, where I found Schemselnihar not yet recovered from her swoon, notwithstanding all the assistance they endeavoured to give her. The caliph was sitting near her with all the signs of real grief. He asked all the women, and me in particular, if we knew the cause of her disorder; but we kept all secret, and told him we were altogether ignorant of it. In the mean time we all wept to see her suffer so long, and forgot nothing that might any ways relieve her. In a word, it was almost midnight before she came to herself. The caliph, who had the patience to wait the event, was rejoiced at her recovery, and asked Schemselnihar the cause of her illness. As soon as she heard him speak, she endeavoured to recover her seat; and after she had kissed his feet, before he could hinder her, ‘Sir,’ said she, ‘I have reason to complain of heaven, that it did not allow me to expire at your majesty’s feet to testify thereby how sensible I am of your favours.’

“‘I am persuaded you love me,’ replied the caliph, ‘and I command you to preserve yourself for my sake. You have probably exceeded in something to-day, which has occasioned this indisposition; take care, I entreat you; abstain from it for the future. I am glad to see you better, and advise you to stay here to-night, and not return to your chamber, for fear the motion should affect you.’ He then commanded a little wine to be brought to strengthen her; and taking leave of her, returned to his apartment.

“As soon as the caliph had departed, my mistress gave me a sign to come near her. She asked me earnestly concerning you: I assured her that you had been gone a long time, which made her easy on that head. I took care not to speak of the prince of Persia's fainting, lest she should fall into the same state, from which we had so much trouble to recover her: but my precautions were in vain, as you shall hear. 'Prince,' exclaimed she, 'I henceforth renounce all pleasure as long as I am deprived of the sight of you. If I have understood your heart right, I only follow your example. You will not cease to weep and mourn until I see you.' At these words, which she uttered in a manner expressive of the violence of her passion, she fainted a second time in my arms.

"My companions and I were a long time recovering her; at last she came to herself; and then I said to her, 'Madam, are you resolved to kill yourself, and to make us also die with you? I entreat you, in the name of the prince of Persia, who is so deeply interested in your life, to preserve it.' 'I am much obliged to you,' replied she, 'for your care, your zeal, and your advice; but alas! they are useless to me: you are not to flatter us with any hopes, for we can expect no end of our torment but in the grave.'

"One of my companions would have diverted these sad thoughts by playing on the lute, but she commanded her to be silent, and ordered all of them to retire, except me, whom she kept all night with her. O heavens! what a night it was! she passed it in tears and groans, and incessantly naming the prince of Persia. She lamented her lot, that had destined her to the caliph, whom she could not love, and not for him whom she loved so dearly.

"Next morning, as she was not commodiously lodged in the saloon, I helped her to her chamber, which she had no sooner reached, than all the physicians of the palace came to see her, by order of the caliph, who was not long before he arrived himself. The medicines which the physicians prescribed to Schemselnihar were ineffectual, because they were ignorant of the cause of her malady, which was augmented by the presence of the caliph. She got a little rest however this night, and as soon as she awoke, she charged me to come to you, to learn some news of the prince of Persia." "I have already informed you of his case," said Ebn Thaher; "so return to your mistress, and assure her, that the prince of Persia waits for some account of her with an impatience equal to her own. Above all, exhort her to moderation, and to overcome her feelings, for fear she should drop before the caliph some word, which may prove fatal to us all.” “As for me,” replied the confidant, “I confess I dread her transports. I have taken the liberty to tell her my mind, and am persuaded that she will not take it ill that I tell her this from you.”

Ebn Thaher, who had but just come from the prince of Persia’s lodgings, thought it not convenient to return so soon, and neglect his own important affairs; he therefore went not till the evening. The prince was alone, and no better than in the morning. “Ebn Thaher,” said he to him, as soon as he saw him, “you have doubtless many friends, but they do not know your worth, which you discover to me by your zeal, your care, and the trouble you give yourself to oblige me. I am confounded with all that you do for me with so much affection, and I know not how I shall be able to express my gratitude.” “Prince,” answered Ebn Thaher, “do not speak thus, I entreat you. I am ready, not only to give one of my eyes to save one of yours, but to sacrifice my life for you. But this is not the present business. I come to tell you that Schemselnihar sent her confidant to ask me about you, and at the same time to inform me of her condition. You may assure yourself that I said nothing but what might confirm the excess of your passion for her mistress, and the constancy with which you love her.” Then Ebn Thaher gave him a particular account of all that had passed betwixt the trusty slave and him. The prince listened with all the different emotions of fear, jealousy, affection, and compassion, which this conversation could inspire, making, upon every thing which he heard, all the afflicting or comforting reflections that so passionate a lover was capable of.

Their conversation continued so long that the night was far advanced, so that the prince of Persia obliged Ebn Thaher to stay with him. The next morning, as this trusty friend returned home, there came a woman to him whom he knew to be Schemselnihar’s confidant, and immediately she spoke to him thus: “My mistress salutes you, and I am come to entreat you in her name to deliver this letter to the prince of Persia.” The zealous Ebn Thaher took the letter, and returned to the prince, accompanied by the confidant slave.

When Ebn Thaher entered the prince of Persia’s house with Schemselnihar’s confidant, he prayed her to stay, and wait for him a moment in the ante-room. As soon as the prince saw him, he asked earnestly what news he had to communicate? “The best you can expect,” answered Ebn Thaher: “you are as dearly beloved as you love; Schemselnihar’s confidant is in your anteroom; she has brought you a letter from her mistress, and waits for your orders to come in.” “Let her enter,” cried the prince, with a transport of joy; and so saying, sat up to receive her.

The prince’s attendants retired as soon as they saw Ebn Thaher, and left him alone with their master. Ebn Thaher opened the door himself, and brought in the confidant. The prince knew her, and received her with great politeness. “My lord,” said she to him, “I am sensible of the affliction you have endured since I had the honour to conduct you to the boat which waited to bring you back; but I hope the letter I have brought will contribute to your cure.” So saying, she presented him the letter. He took it, and after he had kissed it several times, opened it, and read as follows:

Letter from Schemselnihar to the Prince of Persia.

“The person who will deliver to you this letter will give you more correct information concerning me than I can, for I have not been myself since I saw you. Deprived of your presence, I endeavour to deceive myself by conversing with you by these ill-written lines, with the same pleasure as if I had the happiness of speaking to you in person.

“It is said that patience is a cure for all evils, but instead of relieving it heightens my sufferings. Although your picture is deeply engraver in my heart, my eyes desire to have the original continually before them; and they will lose all their light, if they be any considerable time deprived of this felicity. May I flatter myself that yours have the same impatience to see me? Yes, I can; their tender glances have sufficiently assured me of this. How happy, prince, would it be for you, how happy for Schemselnihar, if our united desires were not thwarted by invincible obstacles; obstacles which afflict me the more sensibly as they affect you.

“These thoughts which my fingers write, and which I express with incredible pleasure, repeating them again and again, proceed from the bottom of my heart, and from the incurable wound which you have made in it; a wound which I bless a thousand times, notwithstanding the cruel torments I endure through your absence. I would reckon all that opposes our love nothing, were I only allowed to see you sometimes with freedom; I should then enjoy your company, and what could I desire more?

“Do not imagine that I say more than I think. Alas! whatever expressions I use, I feel that I think more than I can tell you. My eyes, which are continually watching and weeping for your return; my afflicted heart, which desires you alone; the sighs that escape me as often as I think on you, and that is every moment; my imagination, which represents no other object to me than my dear prince; the complaints that I make to heaven for the rigour of my destiny; in a word, my grief, my distress, my torments, which have allowed me no ease since I was deprived of your presence, will vouch for what I write.

"Am not I unhappy to be born to dove, without hope of enjoying the object of my passion? This afflicting thought oppresses me so that I should die, were I not persuaded that you love me: but this sweet comfort balances my despair, and preserves my life. Tell me that you love me always. I will keep your letter carefully, and read it a thousand times a-day: I shall endure my afflictions with less impatience: I pray heaven may cease to be angry at us, and grant us an opportunity to say that we love one another without fear; and that we shall never cease thus to love. Adieu. I salute Ebn Thaher, to whom we are so much obliged."

The prince of Persia was not satisfied with reading the letter once; he thought he had perused it with too little attention, and therefore read it again with more leisure; and while so doing, sometimes heaved deep sighs, sometimes shed tears, and sometimes broke out into transports of joy and tenderness as the contents affected him. In short, he could not keep his eyes off those characters drawn by so beloved a hand, and was beginning to read it a third time, when Ebn Thaher observed to him that the confidant had no time to lose, and that he ought to think of giving an answer. "Alas!" cried the prince, "how would you have me reply to so kind a letter! In what terms shall I express myself in my present disturbed state! My mind is tossed with a thousand tormenting thoughts, which are lost the moment they are conceived, to make way for others. So long as my body is influenced by the impressions of my mind, how shall I be able to hold the paper, or guide a reed to write."

So saying, he took out of a little desk which was near him, paper, a cane ready cut, and an inkhorn.

The prince of Persia, before he began to write, gave Schemselnihar's letter to Ebn Thaher, and prayed him to hold it open while he wrote, that by casting his eyes upon it he might the better see what to answer. He began to write; but the tears that fell from his eyes upon the paper obliged him several times to stop, that they might fall the more freely. At last he finished his letter, and giving it to Ebn Thaher, "Read it, I pray," said he, "and do me the favour to see if the disorder of my mind has allowed me to give a favourable answer." Ebn Thaher took it, and read as follows:

The Prince of Persia’s Answer to Schemselnihar’s Letter.

“I was plunged in the deepest grief when I received your letter, but at the sight of it I was transported with unspeakable joy. When I beheld the characters written by your fair hand, my eyes were enlightened by a stronger light than they lost, when yours were suddenly closed at the feet of my rival. The words contained in your kind epistle are so many rays which have dispelled the darkness wherewith my soul was obscured; they shew me how much you suffer from your love of me, and that you are not ignorant of what I endure on your account. Thus they comfort me in my afflictions. On the one hand they cause me to shed tears in abundance; and on the other, inflame my heart with a fire which supports it, and prevents my dying of grief. I have not had one moment’s rest since our cruel separation. Your letter alone gave me some ease. I kept a mournful silence till the moment I received it, and then recovered my speech. I was buried in profound melancholy, but it inspired me with joy, which immediately appeared in my eyes and countenance. But my surprise at receiving a favour which I had not yet deserved was so great, that I knew not how to begin to testify my thankfulness. In a word, after having kissed it several times, as a precious pledge of your goodness, I read it over and over, and was confounded at the excess of my good fortune. You would have me declare that I always love you. Ah! did I not love you so perfectly as I do, I could not forbear adoring you, after all the marks you have given me of an affection so uncommon: yes, I love you, my dear soul, and shall account it my glory to burn all my days with that sweet fire you have kindled in my heart. I will never complain of that ardour with which I feel it consumes me: and how rigorous soever the evils I suffer, I will bear them with fortitude, in hopes some time or other to see you. Would to heaven it were to-day, and that, instead of sending you my letter, I might be allowed to come and assure you in person, that I die for you! My tears hinder me from saying more. Adieu.”

Ebn Thaher could not read these last lines without weeping. He returned the letter to the prince of Persia, and assured him it wanted no correction. The prince closed it, and when he had sealed it, he desired the trusty slave to come near, and said to her, “This is my answer to you dear mistress’s letter. I conjure you to carry it to her, and to salute her in my name.” The slave took the letter, and retired with Ebn Thaher.

After Ebn Thaher had walked some way with the slave, he left her, and went to his house, and began to think in earnest upon the amorous intrigue in which he found himself unhappily engaged. He considered, that the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar, notwithstanding their interest to conceal their correspondence, conducted themselves with so little discretion, that it could not be long a secret. He drew all the consequences from it, which a man of good sense might have anticipated. “Were Schemselnihar,” said he to himself, “a lady of common rank, I would contribute all in my power to make her and her lover happy; but she is the caliph’s favourite, and no man can without danger attempt to engage the affections of the objets of his choice. His anger would fall in the first instance on Schemselnihar; it will next cost the prince of Persia his life, and I should be involved in his misfortune. In the mean time I have my honour, my quiet, my family, and my property to preserve. I must, while I can, extricate myself out of such a perilous situation.”

These thoughts occupied his mind all that day. Next morning he went to the prince of Persia, with a design of making one more effort to induce him to conquer his passion. He represented to him what he had before urged in vain; that it would be much better for him to summon all his resolution, to overcome his inclination for Schemselnihar, than to suffer himself to be hurried away by it; and that his passion was so much the more dangerous, as his rival was powerful. “In short, sir,” added he, “if you will hearken to me, you ought to think of nothing but to triumph over your love; otherwise you run the risk of destroying yourself with Schemselnihar, whose life ought to be dearer to you than your own. I give you this advice as a friend, for which you will some time or other thank me.”

The prince heard Ebn Thaher with great impatience, but suffered him to speak his mind, and then replied to him thus: “Ebn Thaher, do you think I can cease to love Schemselnihar, who loves me so tenderly? She is not afraid to expose her life for me, and would you have me regard mine? No; whatever misfortunes befall me, I will love Schemselnihar to my last breath.”

Ebn Thaher, shocked at the obstinacy of the prince of Persia, left him hastily, and going to his own house, recalled his former reflections, and began to think seriously what he should do. In the mean time a jeweller, one of his intimate friends, came to see him. The jeweller had perceived that Schemselnihar’s confidant came oftener to Ebn Thaher than usual, and that he was constantly with the prince of Persia, whose sickness was known to every one, though not the cause. This had awakened the jeweller’s suspicions, and finding Ebn Thaher very pensive, he presently judged that he was perplexed with some important affair, and fancying that he knew the cause, he asked what Schemselnihar’s confidant wanted with him? Ebn Thaher being struck with this question, would have dissembled, and told him, that it was on some trifling errand she came so frequently to him. “You do not tell me the truth,” said the jeweller, “and your dissimulation only serves to prove to me that this trifle is a more important affair than at first I thought it to be.”

Ebn Thaher, perceiving that his friend pressed him so much, said to him, “It is true, that it is an affair of the greatest consequence. I had resolved to keep it secret, but since I know how much you are my friend, I choose rather to make you my confidant, than to suffer you to be under a mistake about it. I do not bind you to secrecy, for you will easily judge by what I am going to tell you how impossible it is to keep it unknown.” After this preamble, he told him the amour between Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia. “You know,” he continued, “in what esteem I am at court, in the city, and with lords and ladies of the greatest quality; what a disgrace would it be for me, should this rash amour come to be discovered? But what do I say; should not I and my family be completely ruined! That is what perplexes my mind; but I have just formed my resolution: I will go immediately and satisfy my creditors, and recover my debts, and when I have secured my property, will retire to Bussorah, and stay till the storm, that I foresee, is blown over. My friendship for Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia makes me very sensible to what dangers they are exposed. I pray heaven to convince them of their peril, and to preserve them; but if their evil destiny should bring their attachment to the knowledge of the caliph, I shall, at least, be out of the reach of his resentment; for I do not think them so wicked as to design to involve me in their misfortunes. It would be the height of ingratitude, and a bad reward for the service I have done them, and the good advice I have given, particularly to the prince of Persia, who may save both himself and his mistress from this precipice. He may as easily leave Bagdad as I; and absence will insensibly disenage him from a passion, which will only increase whilst he continues in this place."

The jeweller was extremely surprised at what Ebn Thaher told him. "What you say," said he, "is of so much importance, that I cannot understand how Schemselnihar and the prince could have abandoned themselves to such a violent passion. What inclination soever they may have for one another, instead of yielding to it, they ought to resist it, and make a better use of their reason. Is it possible they can be insensible of the danger of their correspondence? How deplorable is their blindness! I anticipate all its consequences as well as yourself; but you are wise and prudent, and I approve your resolution; as it is the only way to deliver yourself from the fatal events which you have reason to fear." After this conversation the jeweller rose, and took his leave of Ebn Thaher.

Before the jeweller retired, Ebn Thaher conjured him by the friendship betwixt them, to say nothing of what he had heard. "Fear not," replied the jeweller, "I will keep this secret at the peril of my life."

Two days after, the jeweller went to Ebn Thaher's shop, and seeing it shut, he doubted not but he had executed his design; but, to be more sure, he asked a neighbour, if he knew why it was not opened? The neighbour answered that he knew not, unless Ebn Thaher was gone a journey. There was no need of his enquiring farther, and he immediately thought of the prince of Persia: "Unhappy prince," said he to himself, "what will be your grief when you hear this news? How will you now carry on your correspondence with Schemselnihar? I fear you will die of despair. I pity you, and must repair your loss of a too timid confidant."

The business that obliged him to come abroad was of no consequence, so that he neglected it, and though he had no knowledge of the prince of Persia, only by having sold him some jewels, he went to his house. He addressed himself to one of his servants, and desired him to tell his master, that he wished to speak with him about business of very great importance. The servant returned immediately to the jeweller, and introduced him to the prince’s chamber. He was leaning on a sofa, with his head on a cushion. As soon as the prince saw him, he rose up to receive and welcome him, and entreated him to sit down; asked him if he could serve him in any thing, or if he came to tell him any thing interesting concerning himself. “Prince,” answered the jeweller, “though I have not the honour to be particularly acquainted with you, yet the desire of testifying my zeal has made me take the liberty to come to your house, to impart to you a piece of news that concerns you. I hope you will pardon my boldness for my good intention.”

After this introduction, the jeweller entered upon the matter, and continued: “Prince, I shall have the honour to tell you, that it is a long time since conformity of disposition, and some business we have had together, united Ebn Thaher and myself in strict friendship. I know you are acquainted with him, and that he has employed himself in obliging you to his utmost. I have learnt this from himself, for he keeps nothing secret from me, nor I from him. I went just now to his shop, and was surprised to find it shut. I addressed myself to one of his neighbours, to ask the reason; he answered me, that two days ago Ebn Thaher took leave of him, and other neighbours, offering them his service at Bussorah, whither he is gone, said he, about an affair of great importance. Not being satisfied with this answer, my concern for his welfare determined me to come and ask if you knew any thing particular concerning this his sudden departure.”

At this discourse, which the jeweller accommodated to the subject, the better to compass his design, the prince of Persia changed colour, and looked at the jeweller in a manner which convinced him how much he was disconcerted at the intelligence. “I am surprised at what you inform me,” said he; “a greater misfortune could not befall me: Ah!” he continued, with tears in his eyes, “if what you tell me be true, I am undone! Has Ebn Thaher, who was all my comfort, in whom I put all my confidence, left me? I cannot think of living after so cruel a blow."

The jeweller needed no more to convince him fully of the prince of Persia's violent passion, which Ebn Thaher had told him of: mere friendship would not make him speak so; nothing but love could produce such lively sensations.

The prince continued some moments absorbed in melancholy thoughts; at last he lifted up his head, and calling one of his servants, said, "Go, to Ebn Thaher's house, and ask some of his domestics if he be gone to Bussorah: run, and come back quickly with the answer." While the servant was gone, the jeweller endeavoured to entertain the prince of Persia with indifferent subjects; but the prince gave little heed to him. He was a prey to fatal grief: sometimes he could not persuade himself that Ebn Thaher was gone, and at others he did not doubt of it, when he reflected upon the conversation he had had with him the last time he had seen him, and the abrupt manner in which he had left him.

At last the prince's servant returned, and reported that he had spoken with one of Ebn Thaher's servants, who assured him that he had been gone two days to Bussorah. "As I came from Ebn Thaher's house," added the servant, "a slave well dressed met me, and after she had asked me if I had the honour to belong to you, told me she wanted to speak with you, and begged at the same time that she might accompany me: she is in the outer room, and I believe has a letter to deliver to you from some person of consequence." The prince commanded her to be immediately introduced, not doubting but it was Schemselnihar's confidant slave, as indeed it was. The jeweller knew her, having seen her several times at Ebn Thaher's house: she could not have come at a better time to save the prince from despair. She saluted him. The prince of Persia returned the salute of Schemselnihar's confidant. The jeweller arose as soon as he saw her and retired, to leave them at liberty to converse together. The confidant, after she had spoken some time with the prince, took her leave and departed. She left him quite another person from what he was before; his eyes appeared brighter, and his countenance more gay, which satisfied the jeweller that the good slave came to tell him something favourable to his amour.

The jeweller having taken his place again near the prince, said to him smiling, “I see, prince, you have business of importance at the caliph’s palace.” The prince of Persia, astonished and alarmed at these words, answered the jeweller, “What leads you to suppose that I have business at the caliph’s palace?” “I judge so,” replied the jeweller, “by the slave who has just left you.” “And to whom, think you, belongs this slave?” demanded the prince. “To Schemselnihar the caliph’s favourite,” answered the jeweller: “I know,” continued he, “both the slave and her mistress, who has several times done me the honour to come to my house, and buy jewels. Besides, I know that Schemselnihar keeps nothing secret from this slave; and I have seen her pass backwards and forwards for several days along the streets, as I thought very much troubled; I imagined that it was for some affair of consequence concerning her mistress.”

The jeweller’s words greatly troubled the prince of Persia. “He would not say so,” said he to himself, “if he did not suspect, or rather were not acquainted with my secret.” He remained silent for some time, not knowing what course to take. At last he began, and said to the jeweller, “You have told me things which make me believe that you know yet more than you have acquainted me with; it concerns my repose that I be perfectly informed; I conjure you therefore not to conceal any thing from me.”

Then the jeweller, who desired nothing more, gave him a particular account of what had passed betwixt Ebn Thaher and himself. He informed him that he was apprised of his correspondence with Schemselnihar and forgot not to tell him that Ebn Thaher, alarmed at the danger of being his confidant in the matter, had communicated to him his intention of retiring to Bussorah, until the storm which he dreaded should be blown over. “This he has executed,” added the jeweller, “and I am surprised how he could determine to abandon you, in the condition he informed me you were in. As for me, prince, I confess, I am moved with compassion towards you, and am come to offer you my service. If you do me the favour to accept of it, I engage myself to be as faithful to you as Ebn Thaher; besides, I promise to be more resolute. I am ready to sacrifice my honour and life for you: and, that you may not doubt of my sincerity, I swear by all that is sacred in our religion, to keep your secret inviolable. Be persuaded then, prince, that you will find in me the friend whom you have lost." This declaration encouraged the prince, and comforted him under Ebn Thaher's absence. "I am glad," said he to the jeweller, "to find in you a reparation of my loss; I want words to express the obligations I am under to you. I pray God to recompense your generosity, and I accept your obliging offer with all my heart. Believe me," continued he, "Schemselnihar's confidant came to speak to me concerning you. She told me that it was you who advised Ebn Thaher to go from Bagdad; these were the last words she spoke to me, as she went away, and she seemed persuaded of what she said; but they do not do you justice. I doubt not, after what you have told me, she is deceived." "Prince" replied the jeweller, "I have had the honour to give you a faithful account of my conversation with Ebn Thaher. It is true, when he told me he meant to retire to Bussorah, I did not oppose his design; but let not this prevent your putting confidence in me. I am ready to serve you with all imaginable zeal. If you do not use my service, this shall not hinder me from keeping your secret religiously, according to my oath." "I have already told you," replied the prince, "that I did not believe what the confidant said: it is her zeal which inspired her with this groundless suspicion, and you ought to excuse it, as I do."

They continued their conversation for some time, and consulted together about the most convenient means to keep up the prince's correspondence with Schemselnihar. They agreed to begin by undeceiving the confidant, who was so unjustly prepossessed against the jeweller. The prince engaged to remove her mistake the first time he saw her again, and to intreat her to address herself to the jeweller whenever she might bring letters, or any other information from her mistress to him. In short, they determined, that she ought not to come so frequently to the prince's house, because thereby she might lead to the discovery of what it was of so great importance to conceal. At last the jeweller arose, and, after having again intreated the prince of Persia to place an unreserved confidence in him, withdrew.

The jeweller returning to his house perceived before him a letter, which somebody had dropped in the street. He took it up, and as it was not sealed, he opened it, and read as follows:

Letter from Schemselnihar to the Prince of Persia.

"I have received from my confidant intelligence which gives me no less concern than it must give you. In Ebn Thaher, we have indeed sustained a great loss; but let this not hinder you, dear prince, from thinking of your own preservation. If our friend has abandoned us through fear, let us consider that it is a misfortune which we could not avoid. I confess Ebn Thaher has left us at a time when we most needed his assistance; but let us bear this unexpected stroke with patience, and let us not forbear to love one another constantly. Fortify your heart under this misfortune. The object of our wishes is not to be obtained without trouble. Let us not be discouraged, but hope that heaven will favour us, and that, after so many afflictions, we shall see a happy accomplishment of our desires. Adieu."

While the jeweller was conversing with the prince of Persia, the confidant had time to return to the palace and communicate to her mistress the ill news of Ebn Thaher's departure. Schemselnihar immediately wrote this letter, and sent back her confidant with it to the prince of Persia, but she negligently dropped it on her way.

The jeweller was glad to find it, for it furnished him with an opportunity of justifying himself to the confidant, and bringing her to the point he desired. When he had read it, he perceived the slave seeking for it with the greatest anxiety. He closed it again quickly, and put it into his bosom; but the slave observed him, and running to him, said, "Sir, I have dropped a letter, which you had just now in your hand; I beseech you to restore it." The jeweller, pretending not to hear her, continued his way till he came to his house. He left his door open, that the confidant, who followed him, might enter after him. She followed him in, and when she came to his apartment, said, "Sir, you can make no use of that letter you have found, and you would not hesitate to return it to me, if you knew from whom it came, and to whom it is directed. Besides, allow me to tell you, you cannot honestly keep it."

Before the jeweller returned her any answer he made her sit down, and then said to her, "Is not this letter from Schemselnihar, and is it not directed to the prince of Persia?" The slave, who expected no such question, blushed. “The question embarrasses you,” continued he; “but I assure you I do not put it rashly: I could have given you the letter in the street, but I wished you to follow me, on purpose that I might come to some explanation with you. Is it just, tell me, to impute a misfortune to persons who have no ways contributed towards it? Yet this you have done, in telling the prince of Persia that it was I who advised Ebn Thaher to leave Bagdad for his own safety. I do not intend to waste time in justifying myself; it is enough that the prince of Persia is fully persuaded of my innocence; I will only tell you, that instead of contributing to Ebn Thaher’s departure, I have been extremely afflicted at it, not so much from my friendship to him, as out of compassion for the condition in which he left the prince of Persia, whose correspondence with Schemselnihar he has discovered to me. As soon as I knew certainly that Ebn Thaher was gone from Bagdad, I went and presented myself to the prince, in whose house you found me, to inform him of this event, and to offer to undertake the service in which he had been employed; and provided you put the same confidence in me, that you did in Ebn Thaher, it will be your own fault if you do not make my assistance of use to you. Inform your mistress of what I have told you, and assure her, that though I should die for engaging in so dangerous an intrigue, I should not repent of having sacrificed myself for two lovers so worthy of one another.”

The confidant, after having heard the jeweller with great satisfaction, begged him to pardon the ill opinion she had conceived of him, for the zeal she had for her mistress’s interest. “I am beyond measure glad,” she added, “that Schemselnihar and the prince have found in you a person so fit to supply Ebn Thaher’s place I will not fail to convince my mistress of the good-will you bear her.”

After the confidant had testified to the jeweller her joy to see him so well disposed to serve Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia, the jeweller took the letter out of his bosom, and restored it to her, saying, “Go, carry it quickly to the prince, and return this way that I may see his reply. Forget not to give him an account of our conversation.”

The confidant took the letter and carried it to the prince, who answered it immediately. She returned to the jeweller’s house to shew him the answer, which was in these words:

The Prince of Persia’s Answer to Schemselnihar.

“Your precious letter has had a great effect upon me, but not so great as I could have wished. You endeavour to comfort me for the loss of Ebn Thaher; alas! however sensible I am of this, it is but the least of my troubles. You know these troubles, and you know also that your presence alone can cure me. When will the time come that I shall enjoy it without fear of a separation? How distant does it seem to me! or shall we flatter ourselves that we may ever see it? You command me to preserve myself; I will obey you, since I have renounced my own will to follow only yours. Adieu.”

After the jeweller had read this letter, he returned it to the confidant, who said, as she was going away, “I will desire my mistress to put the same confidence in you that she did in Ebn Thaher. You shall hear of me to-morrow.” Accordingly, next day she returned with a pleasant countenance. “Your very looks,” said he to her, “inform me that you have brought Schemselnihar to the point you wished.” “It is true,” replied the confidant, “and you shall hear how I succeeded. I found yesterday, on my return, Schemselnihar expecting me with impatience, I gave her the prince of Persia’s letter, and she read it with tears in her eyes. When she had done, I saw that she had abandoned herself to her usual sorrow. ‘Madam,’ said I to her, ‘it is doubtless Ebn Thaher’s removal that troubles you; but suffer me to conjure you in the name of God, to alarm yourself no farther on this account. We have found another Ebn Thaher, who offers to oblige you with equal zeal; and, what is yet more important, with greater courage.’ Then I spoke to her of you,” continued the slave, “and acquainted her with the motive which led you to the prince of Persia’s house. In short, I assured her that you would keep inviolably the secret betwixt her and the prince of Persia, and that you were resolved to favour their amour with all your might. She seemed to be much relieved by my discourse. ‘Ah! what obligations,’ said she, ‘are the prince of Persia and I under to that honest man you speak of! I must be acquainted with him and see him, that I may hear from his own mouth what you tell me, and thank him for such unheard-of generosity towards persons on whose account he is no way obliged to interest himself. The sight of him will give me pleasure, and I shall omit nothing to confirm him in those good sentiments. Fail not to bring him to me to-morrow.' Therefore, sir, be so good as to accompany me to the palace."

The confidant's proposal perplexed the jeweller. "Your mistress," replied he, "must allow me to say that she has not duly considered what she requires of me. Ebn Thaher's access to the caliph gave him admission every where; and the officers who knew him, allowed him free access to Schemselnihar's palace; but as for me, how dare I enter? You see clearly that it is impossible. I entreat you to represent to Schemselnihar the reasons which prevent me from affording her that satisfaction; and acquaint her with all the ill consequences that would attend my compliance. If she considered it ever so little, she would find that it would expose me needlessly to very imminent danger."

The confidant endeavoured to encourage the jeweller. "Can you believe," said she, "that Schemselnihar is so unreasonable as to expose you to the least danger by bringing you to her, from whom she expects such important services? Consider with yourself that there is not the least appearance of risk. My mistress and I are too much interested in this affair to involve you in any danger. You may depend upon me, and leave yourself to my conduit. After the thing is over you will be the first to confess that your apprehensions were groundless."

The jeweller yielded to the confidant's assurances, and rose up to follow her, but notwithstanding his boasted courage, he was seized with such terror that his whole body trembled. "In your present state," said she, "I perceive it will be better for you to remain at home, and that Schemselnihar should take other measures to see you. It is not to be doubted but that to satisfy her desire she will come hither herself: the case being so, sir, I would not have you go: I am persuaded it will not be long ere you see her here." The confidant foresaw this; for she no sooner informed Schemselnihar of the jeweller's fear, but she prepared to go to his house.

He received her with all the expressions of profound respect. When she sat down, being a little fatigued, she unveiled herself, and exhibited to the jeweller such beauty as convinced him that the prince of Persia was excusable in giving his heart to the caliph's favourite. Then she saluted the jeweller with a graceful air, and said to him, "I could not hear with what zeal you have engaged in the prince of Persia's concerns and mine, without immediately determining to express my gratitude in person. I thank heaven for having so soon made up to us the loss of Ebn Thaher."

Schemselnihar said many other obliging things to the jeweller, after which she returned to her palace. The jeweller went immediately to give an account of this visit to the prince of Persia; who said to him, as soon as he saw him, "I have expected you impatiently. The trusty slave has brought me a letter from her mistress, but it does not relieve me. Whatever the lovely Schemselnihar says, I dare not hope, and my patience is exhausted; I know not now what measures to pursue; Ebn Thaher's departure reduces me to despair. He was my only support: in him I have lost every thing. I had flattered myself with some hopes by reason of his access to Schemselnihar."

After these words, which the prince spoke with so much eagerness, that he gave the jeweller no time to interrupt him, he said to the prince, "No man can take more interest in your affliction than I do; and if you will have patience to hear me you will perceive that I can relieve you." Upon this the prince became silent, and listened to him. "I see," said the jeweller, "that the only way to give you satisfaction is to devise a plan that will afford you an opportunity of conversing freely with Schemselnihar. This I wish to procure you, and to-morrow will make the attempt. You must by no means expose yourself to enter Schemselnihar's palace; you know by experience the danger of that step. I know a fitter place for this interview, where you will be safe." When the jeweller had finished, the prince embraced him with transports of joy. "You revive," said he, "by this promise, a wretched lover, who was condemned to die. You have fully repaired the loss of Ebn Thaher; whatever you do will be well performed; I leave myself entirely to your conduct."

After the prince had thus thanked him for his zeal, the jeweller returned home, and next morning Schemselnihar's confidant came to him. He told her that he had given the prince of Persia hopes that he should shortly see her mistress. "I am come on purpose," answered she, “to concert measures with you for that end. I think this house will be convenient enough for their interview.” “I could receive them very well here,” replied he, “but I think they will have more liberty in another house of mine where no one resides at present; I will immediately furnish it for their reception.” “There remains nothing then for me to do,” replied the confidant, “but to bring Schemselnihar to consent to this. I will go and speak to her, and return speedily with an answer.”

She was as diligent as her promise, and returning to the jeweller, told him that her mistress would not fail to keep the appointment in the evening. In the mean time she gave him a purse, and told him it was to prepare a collation. He carried her immediately to the house where the lovers were to meet, that she might know whither to bring her mistress: and when she was gone, he went to borrow from his friends gold and silver plate, tapestry, rich cushions, and other furniture, with which he furnished the house very magnificently; and when he had put all things in order, went to the prince of Persia.

You may easily conceive the prince of Persia’s joy, when the jeweller told him that he came to conduct him to the house he had prepared to receive him and Schemselnihar. This news made him forget all his former trouble. He put on a magnificent robe, and went without his retinue along with the jeweller; who led him through several by-streets that nobody might observe them, and at last brought him to the house, where they conversed together until Schemselnihar’s arrival.

They did not wait long for this passionate lover. She came after evening prayer, with her confidant, and two other slaves. It is impossible to express the excess of joy that seized these two lovers when they saw one another. They sat down together upon a sofa, looking upon one another for some time, without being able to speak, they were so much overjoyed: but when their speech returned, they soon made up for their silence. They said to each other so many tender things, as made the jeweller, the confidant, and the two other slaves weep. The jeweller however restrained his tears, to attend the collation, which he brought in himself. The lovers ate and drank little, after which they sat down again upon the sofa: Schemselnihar asked the jeweller if he had a lute, or any other instrument, The jeweller, who took care to provide all that could please her, brought her a lute: she spent some time in tuning it, and then sung.

While Schemselnihar was charming the prince of Persia, and expressing her passion by words composed extempore, a great noise was heard; and immediately the slave, whom the jeweller had brought with him, came in great alarm to tell him that some people were breaking in at the gate; that he asked who they were, but instead of any answer the blows were redoubled. The jeweller, being alarmed, left Schemselnihar and the prince to inform himself of the truth of this intelligence. No sooner had he got to the court, than he perceived, notwithstanding the darkness of the night, a company of men armed with spears and cimeters, who had broken the gate, and came directly towards him. He stood close to a wall for fear of his life, and saw ten of them pass without being perceived by them. Finding he could give no great assistance to the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar, he contented himself with lamenting their fate, and fled for refuge to a neighbour's house, who was not yet gone to bed. He did not doubt but this unexpected violence was by the caliph's order, who, he thought, had been informed of his favourite's meeting the prince of Persia there. He heard a great noise in his house, which continued till midnight: and when all was quiet, as he thought, he desired his neighbour to lend him a cimeter; and being thus armed, went on till he came to the gate of his own house: he entered the court full of fear, and perceived a man, who asked him who he was; he knew by his voice that it was his own slave. "How did you manage," said he, "to avoid being taken by the watch?" "Sir," answered the slave, "I hid myself in a corner of the court, and I went out as soon as I heard the noise. But it was not the watch who broke into your house: they were robbers, who within these few days robbed another house in this neighbourhood. They doubtless had notice of the rich furniture you brought hither, and had that in view."

The jeweller thought his slave's conjecture probable enough. He entered the house, and saw that the robbers had taken all the furniture out of the apartment where he received Schemselnihar and her lover, that they had also carried off the gold and silver plate, and, in a word, had left nothing. Perceiving this desolation, he exclaimed, "O heaven! I am irrecoverably ruined! What will my friends say, and what excuse can I make when I shall tell them that the robbers have broken into my house, and robbed me of all they had generously lent me? I shall never be able to make up their loss. Besides, what is become of Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia? This business will be so public, that it will be impossible but it must reach the caliph's ears. He will get notice of this meeting, and I shall fall a sacrifice to his fury." The slave, who was very much attached to him, endeavoured to comfort him. "As to Schemselnihar," said he, "the robbers would probably consent themselves with stripping her, and you have reason to think that she is retired to her palace with her slaves. The prince of Persia too has probably escaped, so that you have reason to hope the caliph will never know of this adventure. As for the loss your friends have sustained, that is a misfortune that you could not avoid. They know very well the robbers are numerous, that they have not only pillaged the house I have already spoken of, but many other houses of the principal noblemen of the court: and they are not ignorant that, notwithstanding the orders given to apprehend them, nobody has been yet able to seize any of them. You will be acquitted by restoring your friends the value of the things that are stolen, and, blessed be God, you will have enough left."

While they were waiting for day-light, the jeweller ordered the slave to mend the street door, which was broken, as well as he could: after which he returned to his usual residence with his slave, making melancholy reflections on what had happened. "Ebn Thaher," said he to himself, "has been wiser than I; he foresaw the misfortune into which I have blindly thrown myself: would to God I had never meddled in this intrigue, which will, perhaps, cost me my life!"

It was scarcely day when the report of the robbery spread through the city, and a great many of his friends and neighbours came to his house to express their concern for his misfortune; but were curious to know the particulars. He thanked them for their affection, and had at least the consolation, that he heard no one mention Schemselnihar or the prince of Persia: which made him believe they were at their houses, or in some secure place.

When the jeweller was alone, his servants brought him something to eat, but he had no appetite. About noon one of his slaves came to tell him there was a man at the gate, whom he knew not, that desired to speak with him. The jeweller, not choosing to receive a stranger into his house, rose up, and went to speak to him. “Though you do not know me,” said the man; “I know you, and I am come to talk to you about an important affair.” The jeweller desired him to come in. “No,” answered the stranger “if you please, rather take the trouble to go with me to your other house.” “How know you,” asked the jeweller, “that I have another house?” “I know very well,” answered the stranger; “follow me, and do not fear any thing: I have something to communicate which will please you.” The jeweller went immediately with him; and after he had considered by the way how the house they were going to had been robbed, he said to him that it was not fit to receive him.

When they were before the house, and the stranger saw the gate half broken down, he said to the jeweller, “I see you have told me the truth. I will conduct you to a place where we shall be better accommodated.” When he had thus spoken, he went on, and walked all the rest of the day without stopping. The jeweller being fatigued with his walk, vexed to see night approach, and that the stranger went on without telling him where he was going, began to lose his patience, when they came to a path which led to the Tigris. As soon as they reached the river, they embarked in a little boat, and went over. The stranger led the jeweller through a long street, where he had never been before; and after he had brought him through several by-streets, he stopped at a gate, which he opened. He made the jeweller go in before him, he then shut and bolted the gate, with a huge iron bolt, and conducted him to a chamber, where there were ten other men, all of them as great strangers to the jeweller as he who had brought him hither.

These ten men received him without much ceremony. They desired him to sit down, of which he had great need; for he was not only out of breath with walking so far, but his terror at finding himself with people whom he thought he had reason to fear would have disabled him from standing. They waited for their leader to go to supper, and as soon as he came it was served up. They washed their hands, obliged the jeweller to do the like, and to sit at table with them. After supper the men asked him, if he knew whom he spoke to? He answered, “No; and that he knew not the place he was in.”

"Tell us your last night's adventure," said they to him, "and conceal nothing from us." The jeweller, being astonished at this request, answered, "Gentlemen, it is probable you know it already." "That is true," replied they; "the young man and the young lady, who were at your house yesternight, told it us; but we would know it from your own mouth." The jeweller needed no more to inform him that he spoke to the robbers who had broken into and plundered his house. "Gentlemen," said he, "I am much troubled for that young man and lady; can you give me any tidings of them?"

Upon the jeweller's inquiry of the thieves, if they knew any thing of the young man and the young lady, they answered, "Be not concerned for them, they are safe and well," so saying, they shewed him two closets, where they assured him they were separately shut up. They added, "We are informed you alone know what relates to them, which we no sooner came to understand, but we shewed them all imaginable respect, and were so far from doing them any injury, that we treated them with all possible kindness on your account. We answer for the same," proceeded they, "for your own person, you may put unlimited confidence in us."

The jeweller being encouraged by this assurance, and overjoyed to hear that the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar were safe, resolved to engage the robbers yet farther in their interest. He commended them, flattered them, and gave them a thousand benedictions. "Gentlemen," said he, "I must confess I have not the honour to know you, yet it is no small happiness to me that I am not wholly unknown to you; and I can never be sufficiently grateful for the favours which that knowledge has procured me at your hands. Not to mention your great humanity, I am fully persuaded now, that persons of your character are capable of keeping a secret faithfully, and none are so fit to undertake a great enterprise, which you can best bring to a good issue by your zeal, courage, and intrepidity. Confiding in these qualities, which are so much your due, I hesitate not to tell you my whole history, with that of those two persons you found in my house, with all the fidelity you desire me."

After the jeweller had thus secured, as he thought, the confidence of the robbers, he made no scruple to relate to them the whole amour of the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar, from the beginning of it to the time he had received them into his house.

The robbers were greatly astonished at all the particulars they heard, and could not forbear exclaiming, “How! is it possible that the young man should be the illustrious Ali Ebn Becar, prince of Persia, and the young lady the fair and celebrated beauty Schemselnihar?” The jeweller assured them nothing was more certain, and that they need not think it strange, that persons of so distinguished a character should wish not to be known.

Upon this assurance of their quality, the robbers went immediately, one after another, and threw themselves at their feet, imploring their pardon, and protesting that nothing of the kind would have happened to them, had they been informed of the quality of their persons before they broke into the house; and that they would by their future conduct endeavour to make amends for the crime they had thus ignorantly committed. Then turning to the jeweller, they told him, they were heartily sorry they could not restore to him all that had been taken from him, part of it being no longer in their possession, but as for what remained, if he would content himself with his plate, it should be forthwith put into his hand.

The jeweller was overjoyed at the favour done him, and after the robbers had delivered to him the plate, they required of the prince, Schemselnihar, and him, to promise them upon oath, that they would not betray them, and they would carry them to a place whence they might easily return to their respective homes. The prince, Schemselnihar, and the jeweller, replied, that they might rely on their words, but since they desired an oath of them, they solemnly swore not to discover them. The thieves, satisfied with this, immediately went out with them.

On the way, the jeweller, uneasy at not seeing the confidant and the two slaves, came up to Schemselnihar, and begged her to inform him what was become of them. She answered, she knew nothing of them, and that all she could tell him was, that she was carried away from his house, ferried over the river, and brought to the place from whence they were just come.

Schemselnihar and the jeweller had no farther conversation; they let the robbers conduit them with the prince to the river’s side, when the robbers immediately took boat, and carried them over to the opposite bank.

While the prince, Schemselnihar, and the jeweller were landing, they heard the noise of the horse patrol coming towards them, just as the boat had conveyed the robbers back.

The commander of the brigade demanded of the prince, Schemselnihar, and the jeweller, who they were, and whence they had come so late? Frightened as they were, and apprehensive of saying any thing that might prejudice them, they could not speak; but at length it was necessary they should. The jeweller's mind being most at ease, he said, "Sir, I can assure you, we are respectable people of the city. The persons who have just landed us, and are now returned to the other side of the water, are thieves, who having last night broke open the house where we were, pillaged it, and afterwards carried us to their quarters, whence by fair words, we prevailed on them to let us have our liberty; and they brought us hither. They have restored us part of the booty they had taken from us." At which words he shewed the parcel of plate he had recovered.

The commander, not satisfied with what the jeweller had told him, came up to him and the prince of Persia, and looking steadfastly at them, said, "Tell me truly, who is this lady? How came you to know her?"

These questions embarrassed them so much that neither of them could answer; till at length Schemselnihar extricated them from their difficulty, and taking the commander aside, told him who she was; which he no sooner heard, than he alighted with expressions of great respect and politeness, and ordered his men to bring two boats.

When the boats were come, he put Schemselnihar into one, and the prince of Persia and the jeweller into the other, with two of his people in each boat; with orders to accompany each of them whithersoever they were bound. The boats took different routes, but we shall at present speak only of that which contained the prince and the jeweller.

The prince, to save his guides trouble, bade them land the jeweller at his house, naming the place. The guide, by this direction, stopped just before the caliph's palace, which put both him and the jeweller into great alarm; for although they had heard the commander's orders to his men, they could not help imagining they were to be delivered up to the guard, to be brought before the caliph next morning.

This nevertheless was not the intention of the guides. For after they had landed them, they, by their master's command, recommended them to an officer of the caliph's guard who assigned them two soldiers to conduct them by land to the prince's house, which was at some distance from the river. They arrived there, but so tired and weary that they could hardly move.

The prince being come home, with the fatigue of his journey, and this misadventure to himself and Schemselnihar, which deprived him of all hope of ever seeing her more, fell into a swoon on his sofa. While the greatest part of his servants were endeavoring to recover him, the rest gathered about the jeweller, and begged him to tell them what had happened to the prince their lord, whose absence had occasioned them such inexpressible uneasiness.

While the greatest part of the prince's domestics were endeavouring to recover him from his swoon, others of them got about the jeweller, desiring to know what had happened to their lord. The jeweller, who took care to discover nothing that was not proper for them to know, told them that it was an extraordinary case, but that it was not a time to relate it, and that they would do better to go and assist the prince. By good fortune the prince came to himself that moment, and those that but just before required his history with so much earnestness retreated to a respectful distance.

Although the prince had in some measure recovered his recollection, he continued so weak that he could not open his mouth to speak. He answered only by signs, even to his nearest relations, when they spoke to him. He remained in this condition till next morning, when the jeweller came to take leave of him. He could answer only by a movement of his eyes, and holding out his right hand; but when he saw he was laden with a bundle of plate, which the thieves had returned to him, he made a sign to his servants that they should take it and carry it to his house.

The jeweller had been expected with great impatience by his family the day he departed with the stranger; but now he was quite given over, and it was no longer doubted but some disaster had befallen him. His wife, children, and servants, were in the greatest alarm, and lamenting him. When he arrived, their joy was excessive;

yet they were troubled to see that he was so much altered in the short interval, that he was hardly to be known. This was occasioned by the great fatigue of the preceding day, and the fears he had undergone all night, which would not permit him to sleep. Finding himself much indisposed, he continued at home two days, and would admit only one of his intimate friends to visit him.

The third day, finding himself something better, he thought he might recover strength by going abroad to take the air; and therefore went to the shop of a rich merchant of his acquaintance, with whom he continued long in conversation. As he was rising to take leave of his friend to return home, he observed a woman making a sign to him, whom he presently knew to be the confidant of Schemselnihar. Between fear and joy, he made what haste he could away, without looking at her; but she followed him, as he feared she would, the place they were in being by no means proper to converse in. As he quickened his pace, she, not being able to overtake him, every now and then called out to him to stay.

He heard her; but after what had happened, he did not think fit to speak to her in public, for fear of giving cause to suspect that he was connected with Schemselnihar. It was known to every body in Bagdad, that this woman belonged to her, and executed all her little commissions. He continued the same pace, and at length reached a mosque, where he knew but few people came. He entered, and she followed him, and they had a long conversation together, without any body overhearing them.

Both the jeweller and confidant expressed much joy at seeing each other, after the strange adventure of the robbers, and their reciprocal apprehension for each other, without regarding their own particular persons.

The jeweller wished her to relate to him how she escaped with the two slaves, and what she knew of Schemselnihar from the time he lost sight of her; but so great was her eagerness to know what had happened to him from the time of their unexpected separation, that he found himself obliged to satisfy her. “Having given you the detail you desired,” said he, “oblige me in your turn,” which she did in the following manner.

“When I first saw the robbers, I hastily imagined that they were soldiers of the caliph's guard, and that the caliph being informed of Schemselnihar's going out, had sent them to put her, the prince, and all of us to death. Under this impression I immediately got up to the terrace of your house, when the thieves entered the apartment where the prince and Schemselnihar were, and I was soon after followed by that lady's two slaves. From terrace to terrace, we came at last to a house of very honest people, who received us with much civility, and with whom we lodged that night.

"Next morning, after thanking the master of the house for our good usage, we returned to Schemselnihar's palace, where we entered in great disorder and distress, because we could not learn the fate of the two unfortunate lovers. The other women of Schemselnihar were astonished to see me return without their lady. We told them, we had left her at the house of one of her female friends, and that she would send for us when she wished to come home; with which excuse they seemed well satisfied.

"For my part, I spent the day in great uneasiness, and when night arrived, opening a small private gate, I espied a little boat on the canal which seemed driven by the stream. I called to the waterman, and desired him to row up each side of the river, and look if he could not see a lady; and if he found her, to bring her along with him. The two slaves and I waited impatiently for his return, and at length, about midnight, we saw the boat coming down with two men in it, and a woman lying along in the stern. When the boat was come up, the two men helped the woman to rise, and then it was I knew her to be Schemselnihar. I cannot express my joy at seeing her.

"I gave my hand to Schemselnihar to help her out of the boat; she had great need of my assistance, for she could hardly stand. When she was landed, she whispered me in a tone expressive of her affliction, and bade me go and take a purse of one thousand pieces of gold and give it to the two soldiers that had accompanied her. I left her to the care of the two slaves to support her, and having ordered the two soldiers to wait for me a moment, I took the purse, and returned instantly; I gave it to them, and having paid the waterman, shut the door.

"I then followed my lady, and overtook her before she had reached her chamber. We immediately undressed her, and put her to bed, where she had not long been, before she became so ill that for the whole of the night we almost despaired of her life. The day following, her other women expressed a great desire to see her; but I told them she had been greatly fatigued, and wanted rest. The other two women and I gave her all the assistance in our power; but we should have given over every hope of her recovery, had I not at last perceived that the wine which we every now and then gave her had a sensible effect in recruiting her strength. By importunity we at length prevailed with her to eat.

"When she recovered the use of her speech, for she had hitherto only wept, groaned, and sighed, I begged of her to tell me how she had escaped out of the hands of the robbers. 'Why would you require of me,' said she, with a profound sigh, 'to renew my grief? Would to God the robbers had taken away my life, rather than have preserved it; my misfortunes would then have had an end, whereas I live but to increase my sufferings.'

"Madam,' I replied, 'I beg you would not refuse me this favour. You cannot but know that the wretched feel a consolation in relating their greatest misfortunes; what I ask would alleviate yours, if you would have the goodness to gratify me.'

"'Hear then,' said she, 'the most afflicting adventure that could possibly have happened to one so deeply in love as myself, who considered myself as at the utmost point of my wishes. You must know, when I first saw the robbers enter, sword in hand, I considered it as the last moment of our lives. But death was not an object of regret, since I thought I was to die with the prince of Persia. However, instead of murdering us, as I expected, two of the robbers were ordered to take care of us, whilst their companions were busied in packing up the goods they found in the house. When they had done, and got their bundles upon their backs, they went out, and took us with them.

"'As we went along, one of those that had charge of us demanded of me who I was? I answered, I was a dancer. He put the same question to the prince, who replied, he was a citizen.

"'When we had reached the place of our destination, a new alarm seized us. They gathered about us, and after having considered my dress, and the rich jewels I was adorned with, they seemed to suspect

I had disguised my quality." "Dancers," said they, "do not use to be dressed as you are. Tell us truly who you are?"

"'When they saw I made no reply, they asked the prince once more who he was, for they told him they plainly perceived he was not the person he pretended to be. He did not satisfy them much more than I had done; he only told them he came to see the jeweller, naming him, who was the owner of the house where they found us." "I know this jeweller," replied one of the rogues, who seemed to have some authority over the rest: "I owe him some obligations, which he knows nothing of, and I take upon me to bring him hither to-morrow morning; but you must not expect," continued he, "to be released till he arrives and tells us who you are; in the mean time, I promise you there shall be no injury offered to you."

"The jeweller was brought next morning, who thinking to oblige us, as he really did, declared to the robbers the whole truth. They immediately came and asked my pardon, and I believe did the like to the prince, who was shut up in another room. They protested to me, they would not have broken open the house where we were, had they known it was the jeweller's. They soon after took us (the prince, the jeweller, and myself), carried us to the river side, put us aboard a boat, and rowed us across the water; but we were no sooner landed, than a party of horse-patrol came up to us.

"The robbers fled; I took the commander aside, and told him my name, and that the night before I had been seized by robbers, who forced me along with them; but having been told who I was, released me, and the two persons he saw with me, on my account. He alighted out of respect to me; and expressing great joy at being able to oblige me, caused two boats to be brought: putting me and two of his soldiers, whom you have seen, into one, he escorted me hither: but what is become of the prince and his friend I cannot tell.

"'I trust,' added she, melting into tears, 'no harm has befallen them since our separation; and I do not doubt but the prince's concern for me is equal to mine for him. The jeweller, to whom we have been so much obliged, ought to be recompensed for the loss he has sustained on our account. Fail not, therefore, to take two purses of a thousand pieces of gold in each, and carry them to him to-morrow morning in my name, and be sure to inquire after the prince's welfare.'

"When my good mistress had done speaking, I endeavoured, as to the last article of inquiring into the prince's welfare, to persuade her to endeavour to triumph over her passion, after the danger she had so lately escaped almost by miracle. 'Make me no answer,' said she, 'but do what I require.'

"I was obliged to be silent, and am come hither to obey her commands. I have been at your house, but not finding you at home, and uncertain as I was of where you might be found, was about going to the prince of Persia; but not daring to attempt the journey, I have left the two purses with a particular friend, and if you will wait here, I will go and fetch them immediately."

The confidant soon returned to the jeweller in the mosque, where she had left him, and giving him the two purses, bade him out of them satisfy his friends. "They are much more than is necessary," said he, "but I dare not refuse the present from so good and generous a lady to her most humble servant; I beseech you to assure her from me, that I shall preserve an eternal remembrance of her goodness." He then agreed with the confidant, that she should find him at the house where she had first seen him, whenever she had occasion to impart any thing from Schemselnihar, or to hear any tidings of the prince of Persia: and so they parted.

The jeweller returned home well pleased, not only that he had got wherewithal so fully to satisfy his friends, but also to think that no person in Bagdad could possibly know that the prince and Schemselnihar had been in his other house when it was robbed. It is true, he had acquainted the thieves with it, but on their secrecy he thought he might very well depend. Next morning he visited the friends who had obliged him, and found no difficulty in satisfying them. He had money in hand to furnish his other house, in which he placed servants. Thus he forgot all his past danger, and the next evening waited on the prince of Persia.

The prince's domestics told the jeweller, that he came very opportunely, as the prince, since he had parted with him, was reduced to such a state that his life was in danger. They introduced him softly into his chamber, and he found him in a condition that excited his pity. He was lying on his bed, with his eyes closed; but when the jeweller saluted him, and exhorted him to take courage, he recollected him, opened his eyes, and gave him a look that sufficiently declared the greatness of his affliction, infinitely beyond what he felt after he first saw Schemselnihar. He grasped him by the hand, to testify his friendship, and told him, in a feeble voice, that he was extremely obliged to him for coming so far to visit one so unhappy and wretched.

"Prince," replied the jeweller, "mention not, I beseech you, any obligations you owe to me. I wish the good offices I have endeavoured to do you had had a better effect; but at present, let us talk only of your health; which, in the state I see you, I fear you greatly injure by unreasonably abstaining from proper nourishment."

The prince's servants took this opportunity to tell him, it was with the greatest difficulty they had prevailed on their master to take the smallest refreshment, and that for some time he had taken nothing. This obliged the jeweller to entreat the prince to let his servants bring him something to eat.

After the prince had, through the persuasion of the jeweller, eaten more than he had hitherto done, he commanded the servants to leave him alone with his friend. When the room was clear, he said, "Besides the misfortune that distracts me, I have been exceedingly concerned to think what a loss you have sustained on my account; and it is but just I should make you some recompence. But before I do this, after begging your pardon a thousand times, I conjure you to tell me whether you have learnt any tidings of Schemselnihar, since I had the misfortune to be parted from her."

Here the jeweller, instructed by the confidant, related to him all that he knew of Schemselnihar's arrival at her palace, her state of health from that time till she recovered, and how she had sent her confidant to him to inquire after his welfare.

To all this the prince replied only by sighs and tears. He made an effort to get up, and calling his servants, went himself to his wardrobe, and having caused several bundles of rich furniture and plate to be packed up, he ordered them to be carried to the jeweller's house.

The jeweller would fain have declined this kind offer; but although he represented that Schemselnihar had already made him more than sufficient amends for what he had lost, the prince would be obeyed. The jeweller was therefore obliged to make all possible acknowledgments, and protested how much he was confounded at his highness's liberality. He would then have taken his leave, but the prince desired him to stay, and they passed good part of the night in conversation.

Next morning the jeweller waited again on the prince, who made him sit down by him. "You know," said he, "there is an end proposed in all things: that which the lover proposes, is to enjoy the beloved object in spite of all opposition. If once he loses that hope, he must not think to live. Such is my hard case; for twice when I have been at the very point of fulfilling my desires, I have suddenly been torn from her I loved in the most cruel manner imaginable. It remains for me only to think of death, and I had sought it, but that our holy religion forbids suicide; but I need not anticipate it; I need not wait long." Here he stopped, and vented his passion in groans, sighs, sobs, and tears, which flowed abundantly.

The jeweller, who knew no better way of diverting him from his despair than by bringing Schemselnihar into his mind, and giving him some shadow of hope, told him, he feared the confidant might be come from her lady, and therefore it would not be proper to stay any longer from home. "I will let you go," said the prince, "but conjure you, that if you see her, you recommend to her to assure Schemselnihar, that if I die, as I expect to do shortly, I shall love her to the last moment, even in the grave."

The jeweller returned home, and waited in expectation of seeing the confidant, who came some hours after, but all in tears, and in great affliction. The jeweller alarmed, asked her what was the matter? She answered, that Schemselnihar, the prince, herself, and he, were all ruined. "Hear the sad news," said she, "as it was told me just upon my entering the palace after I had left you.

"Schemselnihar had for some fault chastised one of the slaves you saw with her when you met in your other house. The slave, enraged at the ill treatment, ran immediately away, and finding the gate open, went out; so that we have just reason to believe she has discovered all to an eunuch of the guard, who gave her protection.

"But this is not all; the other slave her companion has fled too, and has taken refuge in the caliph's palace. So that we may well fear she has borne her part in this discovery: for just as I came away, the caliph had sent twenty of his eunuchs for Schemselnihar, who have carried her to the palace. I just found means to come and tell you this. I know not what has passed, yet I fear no good; but above all, I recommend to you to keep the secret inviolate."

The confidant added to what she had related before to the jeweller, that it was proper he should go immediately and acquaint the prince with the whole affair, that he might be prepared for every event, and keep faithful to the common cause. She went away in haste, without staying for any answer.

What answer could the jeweller have made in the condition he was in? He stood motionless as if thunderstruck. He found, however, that there was no time to be lost, and immediately went to give the prince information. He addressed him with an air, that sufficiently shewed the bad news he brought. "Prince," said he, "arm yourself with courage and patience, and prepare to receive the most terrible shock that ever you had to encounter."

"Tell me in a few words," replied the prince, "what is the matter, without keeping me in suspense; I am, if necessary, prepared to die."

Then the jeweller repeated all that he had learnt from the confidant. "You see," continued he, "your destruction is inevitable. Rise, save yourself by flight, for the time is precious. You, of all men, must not expose yourself to the anger of the caliph, and, less than any, confess in the midst of torture."

At these words the prince was ready to expire through grief, affliction, and fear. However, he recovered himself, and asked the jeweller what resolution he would advise him to take in this conjuncture, every moment of which ought to be employed. The jeweller told him, he thought nothing remained, but that he should immediately take horse, and hasten away towards Anbar, that he might get thither before day. "Take what servants and swift horses you think necessary," continued he, "and suffer me to escape with you."

The prince, seeing nothing more to be done, immediately gave orders to prepare such an equipage as would be least troublesome; took money and jewels, and having taken leave of his mother, departed with the jeweller and such servants as he had chosen.

They travelled all night without stopping, till at length, both their horses and themselves being spent with so long a journey, they halted to rest themselves.

They had hardly alighted before they found themselves surrounded and assaulted by a band of robbers. They defended their lives for some time courageously; but at length the prince's servants being all killed, both he and the jeweller were obliged to yield at discretion. The robbers, however, spared their dives, but after they had seized the horses and baggage, they took away their clothes and left them naked.

When the thieves were gone, the prince said to the jeweller, "What think you of our adventure and condition? Had I not better have tarried in Bagdad, and awaited my death?" "Prince," replied the jeweller, "it is the decree of Heaven that we should thus suffer. It has pleased God to add affliction to affliction and we must not murmur, but receive his chastisements with submission. Let us stay no longer here, but seek for some retreat where we may perhaps be relieved."

"Let me die," said the prince; "for what signifies it whether I die here or elsewhere. Perhaps while we are talking, Schemselnihar is no more, and why should I endeavour to live after she is dead!" The jeweller, by his entreaty, at length prevailed on him, and they had not gone far before they came to a mosque, which was open; they entered it, and passed there the remainder of the night.

At day-break a man came into the mosque. When he had ended his prayer, as he turned about to go away, he perceived the prince and jeweller, who were sitting in a corner. He came up to them, and after having saluted them with a great deal of civility, said, "I perceive you are strangers."

The jeweller answered, "You are not deceived. We have been robbed to-night in coming from Bagdad, as you may see, and have retired hither for shelter, but we know not to whom to apply." "If you think fit to accompany me to my house," answered the man, "I will give you all the assistance in my power."

Upon this obliging offer, the jeweller turned to the prince, and whispered, "This man, as you perceive, sir, does not know us, and we have reason to fear that somebody else may come who does. We cannot, I think, refuse his offer." "Do as you please," said the prince; "I am willing to be guided by your discretion."

The man observing the prince and jeweller consulting together, and thinking they made some difficulty to accept his offer, asked them if they were resolved what to do? The jeweller answered "We are ready to follow you; all we hesitate about is that we are ashamed to appear thus naked."

Fortunately the man had it in his power to cover them sufficiently till they could get to his house. As soon as they had entered, he brought a very handsome suit for each of them. As he thought they must be hungry, and might wish to be alone, he had several dishes brought to them by a slave; but they ate little, especially the prince who was so dejected and dispirited, that he gave the jeweller cause to fear he would die. Their host visited them several times in the course of the day, and in the evening, as he knew they wanted rest, he left them early. But he was no sooner in bed, than the jeweller was forced to call him again to assist at the death of the prince of Persia. He found him breathe short, and with difficulty, which gave him reason to fear he had but few minutes to live. Coming near him, the prince said, "It is all over, and I am glad you are witness of my last words. I quit life with a great deal of satisfaction; I need not tell you the reason, for you know it already. All my concern is, that I cannot die in the arms of my dear mother, who has always loved me tenderly, and for whom I had a reciprocal affection. Let her know how much I was concerned at this, and request her in my name to have my body removed to Bagdad, that she may have an opportunity to bedew my tomb with her tears, and assist my departed soul with her prayers." He then took notice of the master of the house, and thanked him for his kindness in taking him in; and after desiring him to let his body rest with him till it should be conveyed to Bagdad, he expired.

The day after the prince's death, the jeweller took the opportunity of a numerous caravan that was going to Bagdad, and arrived there in safety. He first went home to change his clothes, and then hastened to the prince's palace, where every body was alarmed at not seeing the prince with him. He desired them to acquaint the prince's mother that he wished to speak with her, and it was not long before he was introduced to her in a hall, with several of her women about her.

“Madam,” said he to her, with an air that sufficiently denoted the ill news he brought, “God preserve you, and shower down upon you the choicest of his blessings. You cannot be ignorant that he alone disposes of us at his pleasure.”

The princess would not permit him to proceed, but exclaimed, “Alas! you bring me the news of my son’s death?” She and her women at the same time wept and sobbed loudly. At length she checked her sighs and groans, and begged of him to continue without concealing from her the least circumstance of such a melancholy separation. He satisfied her, and when he had done, she farther demanded of him, if her son the prince had not given him in charge something more particular in his last moments? He assured her his last words were, that it was to him the most afflicting circumstance that he must die so far distant from his dear mother, and that the only thing he wished was, that she would have his corpse transported to Bagdad. Accordingly early next morning the princess set out with her women and great part of her slaves, to bring her son’s body to her own palace.

When the jeweller, whom she had detained, had seen her depart, he returned home very sad and melancholy, at the reflection that so accomplished and amiable a prince was thus cut off in the flower of his age.

As he walked towards his house, dejected and musing, he saw a woman standing before him. He recognized her to be Schemselnihar’s confidant. At the sight of her, his tears began to flow afresh but he said nothing to her; and going into his own house, she followed him.

They sat down; when the jeweller beginning the conversation, asked the confidant, with a deep sigh, if she had heard of the death of the prince of Persia, and if it was on his account that she grieved. “Alas!” answered she, “What! is that charming prince then dead? He has not lived long after his dear Schemselnihar. Beauteous souls,” continued she, “in whatsoever place ye now are, ye must be happy that your loves will no more be interrupted. Your bodies were an obstacle to your wishes; but Heaven has delivered you from them; ye may now form the closest union.”

The jeweller, who had heard nothing of Schemselnihar’s death, and had not reflected that the confidant was in mourning, suffered fresh grief at this intelligence. “Is Schemselnihar then dead?” cried he. “She is,” replied the confidant, weeping afresh, “and it is for her I wear these weeds. The circumstances of her death were extraordinary,” continued she, “and deserve to be known to you: but before I give you an account of them, I beg you to acquaint me with those of the prince of Persia, whom, with my dearest friend and mistress, I shall lament as long as I live.”

The jeweller then gave the confidant the information she desired; and after he had told her all, even to the departure of the prince’s mother to bring her son’s body to Bagdad, she began and said, “You have not forgotten that I told you the caliph had sent for Schemselnihar to his palace. He had, as we had every reason to believe, been informed of the amour betwixt her and the prince by the two slaves, whom he had examined apart. You may imagine, he would be exceedingly enraged at Schemselnihar’s conduct, and give striking proofs of his jealousy and of his impending vengeance against the prince. But this was by no means the case. He pitied Schemselnihar, and in some measure blamed himself for what had happened, in giving her so much freedom to walk about the city without being attended by his eunuchs. This is the only conclusion that could be drawn from his extraordinary behavior towards her, as you will hear.

“He received her with an open countenance; and when he observed that the melancholy which oppressed her did not lessen her beauty (for she appeared thus before him without surprise or fear), with a goodness worthy himself, he said ‘Schemselnihar, I cannot bear your appearing before me thus with an air which gives me infinite pain. You must needs be sensible how much I have always loved you, and be convinced of the sincerity of my passion by the continued demonstrations I have given of it. I can never change my mind, for I love you more than ever. You have enemies, Schemselnihar,’ proceeded he, ‘and those enemies have insinuated things against your conduct, but all they have said against you has not made the least impression upon me. Shake off then this melancholy, and prepare to entertain me this night with some amusing conversation, after your accustomed manner.’ He said many other obliging things to her, and then desired her to step into a magnificent apartment near her own, and wait for him.

"The afflicted Schemselnihar was very sensible of the caliph's kindness; but the more she thought herself obliged to him, the more she was concerned that she was so far removed, perhaps for ever, from her prince, without whom she could not live.

"This interview between the caliph and Schemselnihar," continued the confidant, "took place whilst I was come to speak to you, and I learned the particulars of it from my companions who were present. But I had no sooner left you," proceeded she, "than I went to my dear mistress again, and was eye-witness to what happened in the evening. I found her in the apartment I told you of; and as she though I came from you, she drew near me, and whispering me, said, 'I am much obliged to you for the service you have done me, but I feel it will be the last.' She said no more; but I was not in a place proper to offer any thing to comfort her.

"The caliph was introduced at night with the sound of instruments which her women played upon, and the collation was immediately served up. He took his mistress by the hand, and made her sit down with him on the sofa; she put such a force upon herself to please him, that she expired a few minutes after. In short, she was hardly set down, when she fell backwards. The caliph believed she had only fainted, and so we all thought; but she never recovered, and in this manner we lost her.

"The caliph did her the honour to weep over her, not being able to refrain from tears; and before he left the room ordered all the musical instruments to be broken; this was immediately done. I stayed with her corpse all night, and next morning washed and dressed her for her funeral, bathing her with my tears. The caliph had her interred in a magnificent tomb he had erected for her in her lifetime, in a place she had desired to be buried in. Now since you tell me," said she, "the prince of Persia's body is to be brought to Bagdad, I will use my best endeavours that he shall be interred in the same tomb."

The jeweller was much surprised at this resolution of the confidant, and said, "Certainly you do not consider that the caliph will never suffer this?" "You think the thing impossible," replied she; "it is not. You will alter your opinion when I tell you that the caliph has given liberty to all her slaves, with a pension to each for their support. He has committed to me the care and keeping of my mistress’s tomb, and allotted me an annual income for that purpose, and for my maintenance. Besides, the caliph, who was not ignorant of the amour between Schemselnihar and the prince, as I have already told you, without being offended, will not be sorry if after her death he be buried with her.” To all this the jeweller had not a word to say. He earnestly entreated the confidant to conduct him to her mistress’s tomb, that he might say his prayers over her. When he came in sight of it, he was not a little surprised to find a vast concourse of people of both sexes, who were come thither from all parts of Bagdad. As he could not come near the tomb, he said his prayers at a distance; and then going to the confidant, who was waiting hard by, said to her, “I am now so far from thinking that what you proposed cannot be put in execution, that you and I need only publish abroad what we know of the amour of this unfortunate couple, and how the prince died much about the same time with his mistress. Before his corpse arrives, all Bagdad will concur to desire that two such faithful lovers, whom nothing could divide in affection whilst they lived, should not be separated when dead.” It happened as he said; for as soon as it was known that the corpse was within a day’s journey of the city, an infinite number of people went above twenty miles to meet it, and afterwards walked before it till it came to the city gate; where the confidant, waiting for that purpose, presented herself before the prince’s mother, and begged of her in the name of the whole city, who earnestly desired it, that she would be pleased to consent that the bodies of the two lovers, who had but one heart whilst they lived, from the time their mutual passion commenced, might be buried in the same tomb. The princess immediately consented; and the corpse of the prince, instead of being deposited in his own burying-place, was laid by Schemselnihar’s side, after it had been carried along in procession at the head of an infinite number of people of all ranks. From that time all the inhabitants of Bagdad, and even strangers from all parts of the world where the Mahummedan religion prevails have held that tomb in the highest veneration, and pay their devotions at it.

The Story of the Loves of Kummir Al Zummaun, Prince of the Isles of the Children of Khaledan, and of Badoura, Princess of China.

About twenty days' sail from the coast of Persia, there are islands in the main ocean called the Islands of the Children of Khaledan. These islands are divided into four great provinces, which have all of them very flourishing and populous cities, forming together a powerful kingdom. It was formerly governed by a king named Shaw Zummaun, who had four lawful wives, all daughters of kings, and sixty concubines.

Shaw Zummaun thought himself the most happy monarch of the world, on account of his peaceful and prosperous reign. One thing only disturbed his happiness; which was, that he was advanced in years, and had no children, though he had so many wives. He knew not to what to attribute this barrenness; and what increased his affliction was, that he was likely to leave his kingdom without a successor. He dissembled his discontent, and this dissimulation only heightened his uneasiness. At length he broke silence; and one day after he had complained bitterly of his misfortune to his grand vizier, he asked him if he knew any remedy for it?

That wise minister replied, "If what your majesty requires of me had depended on the ordinary rules of human wisdom, you had soon had an answer to your satisfaction; but my experience and knowledge fall far short of your question. It is to God only that we can apply in cases of this kind. In the midst of our prosperities, which often tempt us to forget him, he is pleased to mortify us in some instance, that we may address our thoughts to him, acknowledge his omnipotence, and ask of him what we ought to expect from him alone. Your majesty has subjects," proceeded he "who make a profession of honouring and serving God, and suffering great hardships for his sake; to them I would advise you to have recourse, and engage them, by alms, to join their prayers with yours. Perhaps some one among them may be so pure and pleasing to God as to obtain a hearing for your prayers."

Shaw Zummaun approved this advice, and thanked his vizier. He immediately caused alms to be given to every community of these holy men in his dominions: and having sent for the superiors, declared to them his intention, and desired them to acquaint their devout men with it.

The king obtained of Heaven what he requested, for in nine months' time he had a son by one of his wives. To express his gratitude to Heaven, he sent fresh alms to the communities of devotees, and the prince's birth-day was celebrated not only in his capital, but throughout his dominions, for a whole week. The prince was brought to him as soon as born, and he found him so beautiful that he gave him the name of Kummir al Zummaun, or Moon of the Age.

He was brought up with all imaginable care; and when he had arrived at a proper age, his father appointed him an experienced governor and able preceptors. These persons, distinguished by their capacity, found in him a ready wit capable of receiving all the instructions that were proper to be given him, as well in relation to morals as other knowledge which a prince ought to possess. As he grew up, he learned all his exercises, and acquitted himself with such grace and wonderful address, as to charm all that saw him, and particularly the sultan his father.

When he had attained the age of fifteen, the sultan, who tenderly loved him, and gave him every day new marks of his affection, proposed to afford a still higher demonstration by resigning his throne to him, and he accordingly acquainted his grand vizier with his intentions. "I fear," said he, "lest my son should lose in the inactivity of youth those advantages which nature and my education have give him; therefore, since I am advanced in age, and ought to think of retirement I propose to resign the government to him, and pass the remainder of my days in the satisfaction of seeing him reign. I have borne the fatigue of a crown till I am weary of it, and think it is now proper for me to retire."

The grand vizier declined offering all the reasons he could have alleged to dissuade the sultan from such a proceeding; on the contrary, he appeared to acquiesce with him in his opinion. "Sir," replied he, "the prince is yet but young, and it would not, in my humble opinion, be advisable to burden him with the weight of a crown so soon. Your majesty fears, with great reason, his youth may be corrupted by indolence: but to avoid this danger, do not you think it would be proper to marry him? Marriage forms attachment, and prevents dissipation. Your majesty might then admit him of your council, where he would learn by degrees the art of reigning; and so be prepared to receive your authority, whenever by your own experience you shall think him qualified."

Shaw Zummaun approved the advice of his prime minister; and summoned the prince to appear before him, at the same time that he dismissed the grand vizier.

The prince, who had been accustomed to see his father only at certain times without being sent for, was a little startled at this summons; when, therefore, he came into his presence, he saluted him with great respect, and stood with his eyes fixed on the ground.

The sultan perceiving his constraint, addressed him with great mildness, "Do you know, son, for what reason I have sent for you?" The prince modestly replied, "God alone knows the heart: I shall hear it from your majesty with pleasure." "I sent for you," resumed the sultan, "to inform you that it is my intention to provide a proper marriage for you: what do you think of my design?"

The prince heard this with great uneasiness: he was greatly agitated, and knew not what answer to make. After a few moments silence, he replied, "Sir, I beseech you to pardon me if I seem surprised at the declaration you have made. I did not expect such proposals at my present age. I know not whether I could prevail on myself to marry, on account of the trouble incident to a married life, and the many treacheries of women, which I have read of. I may not be always of the same mind, yet I conceive it will require time to determine on what your majesty requires of me."

The prince's answer extremely afflicted his father. He was not a little grieved to discover his aversion to marriage; yet would not charge him with disobedience, nor exert his paternal authority. He contented himself with telling him, he would not force his inclinations, but give him time to consider of the proposal; and reflect, that a prince destined to govern a great kingdom ought to take some care to leave a successor; and that in giving himself that satisfaction he communicated it to his father, who would be glad to see himself revive in his son and his issue.

Shaw Zummaun said no more to the prince but admitted him into his council, and gave him every reason to be satisfied. At the end of the year he took him aside, and said to him; “My son, have you thoroughly considered what I proposed to you last year about marrying? Will you still refuse me that pleasure I expect from your obedience, and suffer me to die without affording me that satisfaction?”

The prince seemed less disconcerted than before; and was not long answering his father to this effect: “Sir, I have not neglected to consider of your proposal; but after the maturest reflection find myself more confirmed in my resolution to continue in a state of celibacy. The infinite mischief which women have caused in the world, and which are on record in our histories, and the accounts I daily hear to their disadvantage, are the motives which powerfully influence me against having any thing to do with them; so that I hope your majesty will pardon me if I presume to tell you, it will be in vain to solicit me any further upon this subject.” As soon as he had thus spoken, he quitted the sultan abruptly without waiting his answer.

Any monarch but Shaw Zummaun would have been angry at such freedom in a son, and would have made him repent; but he loved him, and preferred gentle methods before he proceeded to compulsion. He communicated this new cause of discontent to his prime minister. “I have followed your advice,” said he, “but Kummir al Zummaun is farther than ever from complying with my desires. He delivered his determination in such free terms, that it required all my reason and moderation to keep my temper. Fathers who so earnestly desire children as I did this son are fools, who seek to deprive themselves of that rest which it is in their own power to enjoy without control. Tell me, I beseech you, how I shall reclaim a disposition so rebellious to my will?”

“Sir,” answered the grand vizier, “patience brings many things about that before seemed impracticable; but it may be this affair is of a nature not likely to succeed that way. Your majesty will have no cause to reproach yourself for precipitation, if you would give the prince another year to consider your proposal. If in this interval he return to his duty, you will have the greater satisfaction, as you will have employed only paternal love to induce him; and if he still continue averse when this is expired, your majesty may in full council observe, that it is highly necessary for the good of the state that he should marry; and it is not likely he will refuse to comply before so grave an assembly, which you honour with your presence."

The sultan, who so anxiously desired to see his son married, thought this long delay an age; however, though with much difficulty, he yielded to his grand vizier's reasons, which he could not disapprove.

After the grand vizier was gone, the sultan went to the apartment of the mother of prince Kummir al Zummaun, to whom he had often expressed his desire to see the prince married. When he had told her, with much concern, how his son had a second time refused to comply with his wishes, and the indulgence which, by the advice of his grand vizier, he was inclined to shew him; he said, "I know he has more confidence in you than he has in me, and will be more likely to attend to your advice. I therefore desire you would take an opportunity to talk to him seriously, and urge upon him, that if he persists in his obstinacy, he will oblige me to have recourse to measures which would be disagreeable to me, and which would give him cause to repent having disobeyed me."

Fatima, for so was the lady called, told the prince the first time she saw him, that she had been informed of his second refusal to marry; and how much chagrin his resolution had occasioned his father. "Madam," replied the prince, "I beseech you not to renew my grief upon that head. I fear, under my present uneasiness, something may escape me, which may not be consistent with the respect I owe you." Fatima judged from this answer that this was not a proper time to speak to him, and therefore deferred what she had to say to another opportunity.

Some considerable time after, Fatima thought she had found a more favourable season, which gave her hopes of being heard upon that subject. "Son," said she, "I beg of you, if it be not disagreeable, to tell me what reason you have for your great aversion to marriage? If it be the wickedness of some women, nothing can be more unreasonable and weak. I will not undertake the defence of those that are bad; there are a great number of them undoubtedly; but it would be the height of injustice on their account to condemn all the sex. Alas! my son, you have in your books read of many bad women, who have occasioned great mischief, and I will not excuse them: but you do not consider how many monarchs, sultans, and other princes there have been in the world, whose tyrannies, barbarities, and cruelties astonish those that read of them, as well as myself. Now, for one wicked woman, you will meet with a thousand tyrants and barbarians; and what torment do you think must a good woman undergo, who is matched with any of these wretches?”

“Madam,” replied the prince, “I doubt not there are a great number of wise, virtuous, good, affable, and well-behaved women in the world; would to God they all resembled you! But what deters me is, the hazardous choice a man is obliged to make, and oftentimes one has not the liberty of following his inclination.

“Let us suppose then, madam,” continued he, “that I had a mind to marry, as the sultan my father so earnestly desires; what wife, think you, would he be likely to provide for me? Probably a princess whom he would demand of some neighbouring prince, and who would think it an honour done him to send her. Handsome or ugly, she must be taken; nay, suppose no other princess excelled her in beauty, who can be certain that her temper would be good; that she would be affable, complaisant, easy, obliging, and the like? That her conversation would generally turn on solid subjects, and not on dress, fashions, ornaments, and a thousand such fooleries, which would disgust any man of sense? In a word, that she would not be haughty, proud, arrogant, impertinent, scornful, and waste an estate in frivolous expenses, such as gay clothes, jewels, toys, and foolish mistaken magnificence?

“You see, madam,” continued he, “by one single article, how many reasons a man may have to be disgusted at marriage. Let this princess be ever so perfect, accomplished, and irreproachable in her conduct, I have yet a great many more reasons not to alter my opinion and resolution.”

“What, son,” exclaimed Fatima; “have you then more reasons after those you have already alleged? I do not doubt of being able to answer them, and stop your mouth with a word.” “You may proceed, madam,” returned the prince, “and perhaps I may find a reply to your answer."

"I mean, son," said Fatima, "that it is easy for a prince, who has had the misfortune to marry such a wife as you describe, to get rid of her, and take care that she may not ruin the state." "Ah, madam," replied the prince, "but you do not consider what a mortification it would be to a person of my quality to be obliged to come to such an extremity. Would it not have been more for his honour and quiet that he had never run such a risk?"

"But, son," said Fatima once more, "as you take the case, I apprehend you have a mind to be the last king of your race, who have reigned so long and gloriously over the isles of the children of Khaledan?"

"Madam," replied the prince, "for myself I do not desire to survive the king my father; and if I should die before him, it would be no great matter of wonder, since so many children have died before their parents. But it is always glorious to a race of kings, that it should end with a prince worthy to be so, as I should endeavour to make myself like my predecessors, and like the first of our race."

From that time Fatima had frequent conferences with her son the prince on the same subject; and she omitted no opportunity or argument to endeavour to root out his aversion to the fair sex; but he eluded all her reasonings by such arguments as she could not well answer, and continued unaltered.

The year expired, and, to the great regret of the sultan, prince Kummir al Zummaun gave not the least proof of having changed his sentiments. One day, therefore, when there was a great council held, the prime vizier, the other viziers, the principal officers of the crown, and the generals of the army being present, the sultan thus addressed the prince: "My son, it is now a long while since I expressed to you my earnest desire to see you married, and I imagined you would have had more complaisance for a father, who required nothing unreasonable of you, than to oppose him so long. But after such a resistance on your part, which has almost worn out my patience, I have thought fit to propose the same thing once more to you in the presence of my council. It is not merely to oblige a parent that you ought to have acceded to my wish, the well-being of my dominions requires your compliance, and this assembly join with me in expecting it: declare yourself, then; that your answer may regulate my proceedings."

The prince answered with so little reserve, or rather with so much warmth, that the sultan, enraged to see himself thwarted by him in full council, exclaimed, "How, unnatural son! have you the insolence to talk thus to your father and sultan?" He ordered the guards to take him away, and carry him to an old tower that had been long unoccupied; where he was shut up, with only a bed, a little furniture, some books, and one slave to attend him.

Kummir al Zummaun, thus deprived of liberty, was nevertheless pleased that he had the freedom to converse with his books, which made him regard his confinement with indifference. In the evening he bathed and said his prayers; and after having read some chapters in the Koraun, with the same tranquillity of mind as if he had been in the sultan's palace, he undressed himself and went to bed, leaving his lamp burning by him while he slept.

In this tower was a well, which served in the daytime for a retreat to a certain fairy, named Maimoune, daughter of Damriat, king or head of a legion of genies. It was about midnight when Maimoune sprung lightly to the mouth of the well, to wander about the world after her wonted custom, where her curiosity led her. She was surprised to see a light in the prince's chamber. She entered, and without stopping at the slave who lay at the door, approached the bed.

The prince had but half covered his face with the bed-clothes, which Maimoune lifted up, and perceived the finest young man she had ever seen in her rambles through the world. "What beauty, or rather what prodigy of beauty," said she within herself, "must this youth appear, when the eyes, concealed by such well-formed eyelids, shall be open? What crime can he have committed, that a man of his high rank can deserve to be treated thus rigorously?" for she had already heard his story, and could hardly believe it.

She could not forbear admiring the prince, till at length having kissed him gently on both cheeks, and in the middle of the forehead, without waking him, she laid the bed-clothes in the order they were in before, and took her flight into the air. As she was ascending into the middle region, she heard a great flapping of wings, towards which she directed her course; and when she approached, she knew it was a genie who made the noise, but it was one of those that are rebellious against God. As for Maimoune, she belonged to that class whom the great Solomon had compelled to acknowledge him.

This genie, whose name was Danhasch, and son of Schamhourasch, knew Maimoune, and was seized with fear, being sensible how much power she had over him by her submission to the Almighty. He would fain have avoided her, but she was so near him, he must either fight or yield. He therefore broke silence first.

"Brave Maimoune," said he, in the tone of a suppliant, "swear to me in the name of the great God, that you will not hurt me; and I swear also on my part not to do you any harm."

"Cursed genie," replied Maimoune, "what hurt canst thou do me? I fear thee not; but I will grant thee this favour; I will swear not to do thee any harm. Tell me then, wandering spirit, whence thou comest, what thou hast seen, and what thou hast done this night?" "Fair lady," answered Danhasch, "you meet me in a good time to hear something very wonderful."

Danhasch, the genie rebellious against God, proceeded and said to Maimoune, "Since you desire, I will inform you that I have come from the utmost limits of China, which comprise the remotest islands of this hemisphere. . . . . But, charming Maimoune," said Danhasch, who trembled with fear at the sight of this fairy, so that he could hardly speak, "promise me at least you will forgive me, and let me proceed after I have satisfied your request."

"Go on, cursed spirit," replied Maimoune; "go on, and fear nothing. Dost thou think I am as perfidious as thyself, and capable of breaking the solemn oath I have made? Be sure you relate nothing but what is true, or I shall clip thy wings, and treat thee as thou deserves."

Danhasch, a little encouraged by the words of Maimoune, said, "My dear lady, I will tell you nothing but what is strictly true, if you will but have the goodness to hear me. The country of China, from whence I come, is one of the largest and most powerful kingdoms of the earth, on which depend the remotest islands of this hemisphere, as I have already told you. The king of this country is at present Gaiour, who has an only daughter, the finest woman that ever was seen in the world since it has been a world. Neither you nor I, neither your class nor mine, nor all our respective genies, have expressions forcible enough, nor eloquence sufficient to convey an adequate description of her charms. Her hair is brown, and of such length as to trail on the ground; and so thick, that when she has fastened it in buckles on her head, it may be fitly compared to one of those fine clusters of grapes whose fruit is so very large. Her forehead is as smooth as the best polished mirror, and admirably formed. Her eyes are black, sparkling, and full of fire. Her nose is neither too long nor too short, and her mouth small and of a vermilion colour. Her teeth are like two rows of pearls, and surpass the finest in whiteness. When she moves her tongue to speak, she utters a sweet and most agreeable voice; and expresses herself in such terms, as sufficiently indicate the vivacity of her wit. The whitest alabaster is not fairer than her neck. In a word, by this imperfect sketch, you may guess there is no beauty likely to exceed her in the world.

"Any one that did not know the king, the father of this incomparable princess, would be apt to imagine, from the great respect and kindness he shews her, that he was enamoured with her. Never did a lover more for the most beloved mistress than he has been seen to do for her. The most violent jealousy never suggested such measures as his care has led him to adopt, to keep her from every one but the man who is to marry her: and that the retreat in which he has resolved to place her may not seem irksome, he has built for her seven palaces, the most extraordinary and magnificent that ever were known.

"The first palace is of rock crystal, the second of brass, the third of fine steel, the fourth of another kind of brass more valuable than the former and also than steel, the fifth of touchstone, the sixth of silver, and the seventh of massive gold. He has furnished these palaces most sumptuously, each in a manner corresponding to the materials of the structure. He has embellished the gardens with parterres of grass and flowers, intermixed with pieces of water, water-works, jets d'eau, canals, cascades, and several great groves of trees, where the eye is lost in the perspective, and where the sun never enters, and all differently arranged. King Gaiour, in a word, has shewn that his paternal love has led him to spare no expense.

"Upon the fame of this incomparable princess's beauty, the most powerful neighbouring kings have sent ambassadors to solicit her in marriage. The king of China received them all in the same obliging manner; but as he resolved not to marry his daughter without her consent, and she did not like any of the parties, the ambassadors were forced to return as they came, as to the subject of their embassy; they were perfectly satisfied with the great honours and civilities they had received.

"'Sir,' said the princess to the king her father, 'you have an inclination to see me married, and think to oblige me by it; but where shall I find such stately palaces and delicious gardens as are furnished me by your majesty? Through your good pleasure I am under no constraint, and have the same honours shewn to me as are paid to yourself. These are advantages I cannot expect to find any where else, whoever may be my husband; men love to be masters, and I have no inclination to be commanded.'

"After several other embassies on the same occasion, there arrived one from a king more opulent and powerful than any of the preceding. This prince the king of China recommended to his daughter for her husband, urging many forcible arguments to shew how much it would be to her advantage to accept him, but she entreated her father to excuse her compliance for the reasons she had before urged. He pressed her; but instead of consenting, she lost all the respect due to the king her father: 'Sir,' said she, in anger, 'talk to me no more of this or any other match, unless you would have me plunge this dagger in my bosom, to deliver myself from your importunities.'

"The king, greatly enraged, said, 'Daughter, you are mad, and I must treat you accordingly.' In a word, he had her shut up in a single apartment of one of his palaces, and allowed her only ten old women to wait upon her, and keep her company, the chief of whom had been her nurse That the kings his neighbours, who had sent embassies to him on her account, might not think any more of her, he despatched envoys to them severally, to let them know how averse his daughter was to marriage; and as he did not doubt but she was really mad, he charged them to make known in every court, that if there were any physician that would undertake to cure her, he should, if he succeeded, have her for his pains.

“Fair Maimoune,” continued Danhasch, “all that I have told you is true; and I have gone every day regularly to contemplate this incomparable beauty, to whom I would be sorry to do the least harm, notwithstanding my natural inclination to mischief. Come and see her, I conjure you; it would be well worth your while. When you have seen from your own observation that I am no liar, I am persuaded you will think yourself obliged to me for the sight of a princess unequalled in beauty.”

Instead of answering Danhasch, Maimoune burst out into violent laughter, which lasted for some time; and Danhasch, not knowing what might be the occasion of it, was astonished beyond measure. When she had done laughing, she exclaimed, “Good, good, very good! You would have me then believe all you have told me? I thought you designed to tell me something surprising and extraordinary, and you have been talking all this while of a mad woman. Fie, fie! what would you say, cursed genie, if you had seen the beautiful prince from whom I am just come, and whom I love as he deserves. I am confident you would soon give up the contest, and not pretend to compare your choice with mine.”

“Agreeable Maimoune,” replied Danhasch, “may I presume to ask who this prince you speak of is?” “Know,” answered Maimoune, “the same thing has happened to him as to your princess. The king his father would have married him against his will; but after much importunity, he frankly told him he would have nothing to do with a wife. For this reason he is at this moment imprisoned in an old tower where I reside.”

“I will not absolutely contradict you,” replied Danhasch; “but, my pretty lady, you must give me leave to be of opinion, till I have seen your prince, that no mortal upon earth can equal my princess in beauty.” “Hold thy tongue, cursed sprite,” replied Maimoune. “I tell thee once more thou art wrong.” “I will not contend with you,” said Danhasch, “but the way to be convinced, whether what I say be true or false, is to accept of my proposal to go and see my princess, and after that I will go with you to your prince.”

“There is no need I should be at so much trouble,” replied Maimoune; “there is another way to satisfy us both; and that is, for you to bring your princess, and place her at my prince's bed-side: by this means it will be easy for us to compare them together, and determine the dispute."

Danhasch consented, and determined to set out immediately for China. But Maimoune drew him aside, and told him, she must first shew him the tower whither he was to bring the princess. They flew together to the tower, and when Maimoune had strewn it to Danhasch, she cried, "Go fetch your princess, and do it quickly, you will find me here."

Danhasch left Maimoune, and flew towards China, whence he soon returned with incredible speed, bringing the fair princess along with him asleep. Maimoune received him, and introduced him into the chamber of Kummir al Zummaun, where they placed the princess by the prince's side.

When the prince and princess were thus laid together, there arose a sharp contest between the genie and the fairy about the preference of their beauty. They were some time admiring and comparing them without speaking; at length Danhasch said to Maimoune, "You see, and I have already told you, my princess was handsomer than your prince; now, I hope, you are convinced."

"How! convinced!" replied Maimoune; "I am not convinced, and you must be blind, if you cannot see that my prince excels in the comparison. That the princess is fair, I do not deny; but if you compare them together without prejudice, you will soon see the difference."

"How much soever I may compare them," returned Danhasch, "I shall never change my opinion. I saw at first sight what I now behold, and time will not make me see differently: however, this shall not hinder my yielding to you, charming Maimoune, if you desire it." "What! have you yield to me as a favour! I scorn it," said Maimoune, "I would not receive a favour at the hand of such a wicked genie. I will refer the matter to an umpire, and if you do not consent, I shall win by your refusal."

Danhasch, who was ready to have shewn a different kind of complaisance, no sooner gave his consent, than Maimoune stamped with her foot. The earth opened, and out came a hideous, hump-backed, squinting, and lame genie, with six horns upon his head, and claws on his hands and feet. As soon as he was come out, and the earth had closed, perceiving Maimoune, he threw himself at her feet, and then rising on one knee, inquired her commands.

"Rise, Caschcasch," said Maimoune, "I brought you hither to determine a difference between me and this cursed Danhasch. Look on that bed, and tell me without partiality who is the handsomer of those two that lie there asleep, the young man or the young lady."

Caschcasch looked on the prince and princess with great attention, admiration, and surprise; and after he had considered them a good while, without being able to determine, he turned to Maimoune, and said, "Madam, I must confess I should deceive you, and betray myself, if I pretended to say one was handsomer than the other. The more I examine them, the more clearly it appears to me each possesses, in a sovereign degree, the beauty of which both partake. Neither of them appears to have the least defect, to yield to the other the palm of superiority; but if there be any difference, the best way to determine it is, to awaken them one after the other, and to agree that the person who shall express most love for the other by ardour, eagerness, and passion, shall be deemed to have in some respect less beauty."

This proposal of Caschcasch's pleased both Maimoune and Danhasch. Maimoune then changed herself into a flea, and leaping on the prince's neck, stung him so smartly, that he awoke, and put up his hand to the place; but Maimoune skipped away, and resumed her pristine form, which, like those of the two genies, was invisible, the better to observe what he would do.

In drawing back his hand, the prince chanced to let it fall on that of the princess of China. He opened his eyes, and was exceedingly surprised to find lying by him a lady of the greatest beauty. He raised his head, and leaned on his elbow, the better to observe her. Her blooming youth and incomparable beauty fired him in a moment with a flame of which he had never yet been sensible, and from which he had hitherto guarded himself with the greatest attention.

Love seized on his heart in the most lively manner, and he exclaimed, "What beauty! what charms! my heart! my soul!" As he spoke he kissed her forehead, her cheeks, and her mouth with so little caution, that he would have awakened her, had she not slept sounder than ordinary, through the enchantment of Danhasch.

"How!" said the prince, "do you not awake at these testimonies of love?" He was going to awake her, but suddenly refrained. "Is not this she," said he, "that the sultan my father would have had me marry? He was in the wrong not to let me see her sooner. I should not have offended him by my disobedience and passionate language to him in public, and he would have spared himself the confusion which I have occasioned him."

The prince began to repent sincerely of the fault he had committed, and was once more on the point of awaking the princess of China. "It may be," said he, "that the sultan my father has a mind to surprise me; and has sent this young lady to try if I had really that aversion to marriage which I pretended. Who knows but he has brought her himself, and is hidden behind the hangings, to observe me, and make me ashamed of my dissimulation? The second fault would be greater than the first. At all events, I will content myself with this ring, as a remembrance of her."

He then gently drew off a ring which the princess had on her finger, and immediately replaced it with one of his own. After this he fell into a more profound sleep than before, through the enchantment of the genies.

Danhasch now transformed himself into a flea in his turn, and bit the princess so rudely on the lip, that she awoke, started up, and on opening her eyes, was not a little surprised to see a man lying by her side. From surprise she proceeded to admiration, and from admiration to a transport of joy, at beholding so beautiful and lovely a youth.

"What!" cried she, "is it you the king my father has designed me for a husband? Would that I had known it, for then I should not have displeased him, nor been deprived of a husband whom I cannot forbear loving. Wake then, awake!"

So saying, she took the prince by the arm, and shook him so violently, that he would have awaked, had not Maimoune increased his sleep by her enchantment. She shook him several times, and finding he did not awake, exclaimed, "What is come to thee? what jealous rival, envying thy happiness and mine, has had recourse to magic to throw thee into this unconquerable drowsiness when thou shouldst be most awake?" Tired at length with her fruitless endeavours to awaken the prince; "Since," said she, "I find it is not in my power to awake thee, I will no longer disturb thy repose, but wait our next meeting." After having kissed his cheek, she lay down and fell asleep by enchantment.

Maimoune now cried out to Danhasch, "Ah, cursed genie, art thou not now convinced how much thy princess is inferior to my prince? Another time believe me when I assert any thing." Then turning to Caschcasch, "As for you," said she, "I thank you for your trouble; take the princess, in conjunction with Danhasch, and convey her back again to her bed, from whence he has taken her." Danhasch and Caschcasch did as they were commanded, and Maimoune retired to her well.

Kummir al Zummaun on waking next morning, looked if the lady whom he had seen the night before were by him. When he found she was gone, he cried out, "I thought indeed this was a trick the king my father designed to play me. I am glad I was aware of it." He then awaked the slave, who was still asleep, and after he had washed and said his prayers, took a book and read some time.

After these usual exercises, he called the slave, and said to him, "Come hither, and be sure you do not tell me a lie. How came the lady hither who lay with me to-night, and who brought her?"

"My lord," answered the slave with great astonishment, "I know not what lady your highness speaks of." "I speak," said the prince, "of her who came, or rather was brought hither, and lay with me to-night." "My lord," replied the slave, "I swear I know of no such lady; and how should she come in without my knowledge, since I lay at the door?"

"You are a lying knave," replied the prince, "and in the plot to vex and provoke me." He then gave him a box on the ear, which knocked him down; and after having stamped upon him for some time, he tied the well-rope under his arms, and plunged him several times into the water, neck and heels. "I will drown thee," cried he, "if thou dost not tell me directly who this lady was, and who brought her."

The slave, perplexed and half dead, said within himself, "The prince must have lost his senses through grief, and I shall not escape if I do not tell him a falsehood. My lord," cried he, in a suppliant tone, “I beseech your highness to spare my life, and I will tell you the truth.”

The prince drew the slave up, and pressed him to tell him. As soon as he was out of the well, “My lord,” said he, trembling, “your highness must perceive it is impossible for me to satisfy you in my present condition; I beg you to give me leave first to go and change my clothes.” “I permit you, but do it quickly,” said the prince; “and be sure you conceal nothing.”

The slave went out, and having locked the door upon the prince, ran to the palace just as he was. The king was at that time in discourse with his prime vizier, to whom he had just related the grief in which he had passed the night on account of his son’s disobedience and opposition to his will.

The minister endeavoured to comfort his master, by telling him, the prince himself had given him cause for his severity. “Sir,” said he, “your majesty need not repent of having treated your son in this manner. Have but patience to let him continue a while in prison, and assure yourself his heat will abate, and he will submit to all you require.”

The grand vizier had but just done speaking when the slave came in, and cast himself at the feet of the sovereign. “My lord,” said he, “I am sorry to be the messenger of ill news to your majesty, which I know must occasion you fresh affliction. The prince is distracted; he raves of a lady having lain with him all night, and his treatment of me, as you may see, too plainly proves the state of his mind.” Then he proceeded to relate the particulars of what the prince had said, and the violence with which he had been treated.

The king, who did not expect to hear any thing of this afflicting kind, said to the prime minister, “This is a melancholy turn, very different from the hopes you gave me: go immediately and examine the condition of my son.”

The grand vizier obeyed; and coming into the prince’s chamber, found him sitting on his bed with a book in his hand, which he was reading.

After mutual salutations, the vizier said, “My lord, I wish that a slave of yours were punished for coming to alarm the king your father by news that he has brought him.”

“What is it,” demanded the prince, “that could give my father so much uneasiness?”

“Prince,” answered the vizier, “God forbid that the intelligence he has conveyed to your father concerning you should be true; indeed, I find it to be false, by the calm temper in which I observe you, and which I pray you to continue.”

“It may be,” replied the prince, “he did not make himself well understood; but since you are come, who ought to know something of the matter, permit me to ask you who that lady was that lay with me last night?”

The grand vizier was thunderstruck at this question; he recovered himself and said, “My lord, be not surprised at my astonishment at your question. Is it possible, that a lady or any other person should penetrate by night into this place without entering at the door, and walking over the body of your slave? I beseech you, recollect yourself, and you will find it is only a dream which has made this impression on you.”

“I give no ear to what you say,” replied the prince, raising his voice. “I must know from you absolutely what is become of the lady; and if you hesitate, I am in a place where I shall soon be able to force you to obey me.”

At this stern language, the grand vizier began to feel more alarmed than before, and to think how he could extricate himself. He endeavoured to pacify the prince, and begged of him, in the most humble and guarded manner, to tell him if he had seen this lady.

“Yes, yes,” answered the prince, “I have seen her, and am very well satisfied you sent her here to tempt me. She played the part in which you had instructed her admirably well. She pretended to be asleep, and I had no sooner fallen into a slumber, than she arose and left me. You know all this; for I doubt not she has been to make her report to you.”

“My lord,” replied the vizier, “I swear to you nothing of this kind has been acted; neither your father nor I sent this lady you speak of; permit me therefore once more to suggest to your highness, that you have only seen this lady in a dream.”

“Do you come to affront and contradict me,” said the prince in a rage, “and to tell me to my face, that what I have told you is a dream?" At the same time he took him by the beard, and loaded him with blows, as long as he could stand.

The grand vizier endured with respectful patience all the violence of the prince's indignation, and could not help saying within himself, "Now am I in as bad a condition as the slave, and shall think myself happy, if I can, like him, escape from any further danger." In the midst of repeated blows, he cried out but for a moment's audience, which the prince, after he had nearly tired himself with beating him, consented to give him.

"I own, my prince," said the grand vizier dissembling, "there is something in what your highness suspects; but you cannot be ignorant of the necessity a minister is under to obey his royal master's commands: yet, if you will but be pleased to set me at liberty, I will go and tell him any thing on your behalf that you shall think fit to require." "Go then," said the prince, "and tell him from me, if he pleases, I will marry the lady he sent me, or, rather, that was brought to me last night. Do this immediately, and bring me a speedy answer." The grand vizier made a profound reverence and went away, not thinking himself altogether safe till he had got out of the tower, and had closed the door on the prince.

He came and presented himself before Shaw Zummaun, with a countenance that sufficiently shewed he had been ill used, and which the king could not behold without concern. "Well," said the king, "in what condition did you find my son?" "Sir," answered the vizier, "what the slave reported to your majesty is but too true." He then began to relate his interview with the prince, how he flew into a passion upon his endeavouring to persuade him it was impossible the lady he spoke of should have been introduced; the ill treatment he had received from him; how he had used him, and by what means he had made his escape.

The king, the more concerned as he loved the prince with excessive tenderness, resolved to find out the truth, and therefore proposed to go himself and see his son in the tower, accompanied by the grand vizier.

The prince received his father in the tower, where he was confined, with great respect. The king put several questions to him, which he answered calmly. The king every now and then looked on the grand vizier, as intimating he did not find his son had lost his wits, but rather thought he had lost his.

The king at length spoke of the lady to the prince. “My son,” said he, “I desire you to tell me what lady it was who lay with you last night.”

“Sir,” answered the prince, “I beg of your majesty not to give me more vexation on that head, but rather to oblige me by letting me have her in marriage; whatever aversion I may hitherto have discovered for women, this young lady has charmed me to that degree, that I cannot help confessing my weakness. I am ready to receive her at your majesty’s hands, with the deepest gratitude.”

Shaw Zummaun was surprised at this answer of the prince, so remote, as he thought, from the good sense he had strewn before. “My son,” said he, “you fill me with the greatest astonishment by what you say: I swear to you I know nothing of the lady you mention; and if any such has come to you, it was without my knowledge or privily. But how could she get into this tower without my consent? For whatever my grand vizier told you, it was only to appease your anger, it must therefore be a mere dream; and I beg of you not to believe otherwise, but recover your senses.”

“Sir,” replied the prince, “I should be for ever unworthy of your majesty’s favour, if I did not give entire credit to what you are pleased to say but I humbly beseech you at the same time to give a patient hearing to what I shall relate, and then to judge whether what I have the honour to tell you be a dream or not.”

The prince then related to his father how he had been awaked, exaggerating the beauty and charms of the lady he found by his side, the instantaneous love he conceived for her, and the pains he took to awaken her without effect. Shewing the king the ring he had taken from her finger he added, “After this, I hope you will be convinced that I have not lost my senses, as you have been almost made to believe.”

Shaw Zummaun was so perfectly convinced of the truth of what his son had been telling him, that he could make no reply, remaining astonished for some time, and not being able to utter a syllable.

The prince took advantage of this opportunity, and said, “The passion I have conceived for this charming lady, whose lovely image

I bear continually in my mind, is so ardent, that I cannot resist it. I entreat you therefore to have compassion, and procure me the happiness of being united to her."

"Son," replied the king, "after what I have just heard, and what I see by the ring on your finger, I cannot doubt but that your passion is real, and that you have seen this lady, who is the object of it. Would to God I knew who she was. I would instantly comply with your wishes, and should be the happiest father in the world! But where shall I seek her? How came she here, and by what conveyance, without my consent? Why did she come to sleep with you only to display her beauty, to kindle a flame of love while she slept, and then leave you while you were in a slumber? These things, I must confess, I do not understand; and if heaven do not favour us in our perplexity, I fear we must both go down to the grave together." As he spoke, he took the prince by the hand, and said, "Come then, my son, let us go and grieve together; you with hopeless love, and I with seeing your affliction, without being able to afford you relief."

Shaw Zummaun then led his son out of the tower, and conveyed him to the palace, where he had no sooner arrived, than in despair at loving an unknown object he fell sick, and took to his bed; the king shut himself up with him, without attending to the affairs of his kingdom for many days.

The prime minister, who was the only person that had admittance, at length informed him, that the whole court, and even the people, began to murmur at not seeing him, and that he did not administer justice every day as he was wont to do; adding, he knew not what disorder it might occasion. "I humbly beg your majesty, therefore," proceeded he, "to pay some attention. I am sensible your majesty's company is a great comfort to the prince, and that his tends to relieve your grief; but you must not run the risk of letting all be lost. Permit me to propose to your majesty, to remove with the prince to the castle near the port, where you may give audience to your subjects twice a week only. During these absences the prince will be so agreeably amused with the beauty, prospect, and good air of the place, that he will bear them with the less uneasiness."

The king approved this proposal: he removed thither with the prince; and, excepting when he gave audience, never left him, but passed all his time endeavouring to comfort him by sharing his distress.

Whilst matters passed thus in the capital of Shaw Zummaun, the two genies, Danhasch and Caschcasch, had carried the princess of China back to the palace where the king her father had confined her, and laid her in her bed as before.

When she awoke next morning, and found that prince Kummir al Zummaun was not by her, she cried out in such a manner to her women, that she soon brought them to her bed. Her nurse, who arrived first, desired to be informed if any thing disagreeable had happened to her.

"Tell me," said the princess, "what is become of the young man that has passed the night with me, and whom I love with all my soul?" "Madam," replied the nurse, "we cannot understand your highness, unless you will be pleased to explain yourself."

"A young man, the handsomest and most amiable," said the princess, "slept with me last night, whom, with all my caresses, I could not awake; I ask you where he is?"'

"Madam," answered the nurse, "your highness asks us these questions in jest. I beseech you to rise." "I am in earnest," said the princess, "and I must know where this young man is." "Madam," insisted the nurse, "you were alone when you went to bed last night; and how any man could come to you without our knowledge we cannot imagine, for we all lay about the door of your chamber, which was locked, and I had the key in my pocket."

At this the princess lost all patience, and taking her nurse by the hair of her head, and giving her two or three sound cuffs, cried, "You shall tell me where this young man is, you old sorceress, or I will put you to death."

The nurse struggled to get from her, and at last succeeded. She went immediately with tears in her eyes, and her face all bloody, to complain to the queen, who was not a little surprised to see her in this condition, and asked who had misused her.

"Madam," began the nurse, "you see how the princess has treated me; she had certainly murdered me, if I had not had the good fortune to escape out of her hands." She then related what had been the cause of all that violent passion in the princess. The queen was surprised at her account, and could not guess how she came to be so infatuated as to take that for a reality which could be no other than a dream. “Your majesty must conclude from all this,” continued the nurse, “that the princess is out of her senses. You will think so yourself if you will go and see her.”

The queen’s affection for the princess deeply interested her in what she heard; she ordered the nurse to follow her; and they immediately went together to the princess’s palace.

The queen of China sat down by her daughter’s bed-side on her arrival in her apartment, and after she had informed herself about her health began to ask her what had made her so angry with her nurse, as to treat her in the manner she had done. “Daughter,” said she, “this is not right, and a great princess like you should not suffer herself to be so transported by passion.”

“Madam,” replied the princess, “I plainly perceive your majesty is come to mock me; but I declare I will never let you rest till you consent to my marrying the young man who lay with me last night. You must know where he is, and therefore I beg of your majesty to let him come to me again.”

“Daughter,” answered the queen, “you surprise me; I do not understand your meaning.” The princess now forgot all respect for the queen; “Madam,” replied she, “the king my father and you have persecuted me about marrying, when I had no inclination; I now have an inclination, and I will have this young man I told you of for my husband, or I will destroy myself.”

The queen endeavoured to calm the princess by conciliatory language: “Daughter,” said she, “you know well you are guarded in this apartment, how then could any man come to you?” But instead of attending to her, the princess interrupted her, by such extravagancies as obliged the queen to leave her, and retire in great affliction, to inform the king of all that had passed.

When the king had heard the account, he wished likewise to be satisfied in person, and coming to his daughter’s apartment, asked her, if what he had been told was true? “Sir,” replied the princess, “let us talk no more of that; I only beseech your majesty to grant me the favour, that I may marry the young man I lay with last night.”

“What! daughter,” said the king, “has any one lain with you last night?” “How, sir,” replied the princess, without giving him time to go on, “do you ask me if any one lay with me last night? Your majesty knows that but too well. He was the most beautiful youth the sun ever saw: I ask him of you for my husband; I entreat you do not refuse me. But that your majesty may not longer doubt whether I have seen this young man, whether he has lain with me, whether I have caressed him, or whether I did not my utmost to awake him without succeeding, see, if you please, this ring.” She then reached forth her hand, and shewed the king a man’s ring on her finger. The king was perplexed what to think. He had confined his daughter as mad, he began now to think her more insane than ever. Without saying any thing more to her, lest she might do violence to herself or somebody about her, he had her chained, and confined more closely than before, allowing her only the nurse to wait on her, with a good guard at the door.

The king, exceedingly concerned at this indisposition of his daughter, sought all possible means to effect her cure. He assembled his council, and after having acquainted them with her condition “If any of you,” said he, “is capable of undertaking to restore her to health, and succeed, I will give her to him in marriage, and make him heir to my dominions.”

The desire of obtaining a handsome young princess, and the hopes of one day governing so great a kingdom as that of China, had a powerful effect on an emir, already advanced in years, who was present at this council. As he was well skilled in magic, he offered the king to recover his daughter, and flattered himself with success. “I consent to the trial,” said the king; “but I forgot to tell you one condition, and that is, that if you do not succeed, you shall lose your head. It would not be reasonable you should have so great a reward, and yet run no risk: and what I say to you,” continued the king, “I say to all others who shall come after you, that they may consider beforehand what they undertake.”

The emir accepted the condition, and the king conducted him to the princess’s place of confinement. She covered her face as soon as she saw them enter, and exclaimed, “Your majesty surprises me, in bringing with you a man whom I do not know, and by whom my religion forbids me to let myself be seen.” “Daughter,” replied the king, “you need not be scandalized, it is only one of my emirs who is come to demand you in marriage.” “It is not, I perceive, the person that you have already given me, and whose faith is plighted by the ring I wear,” replied the princess; “be not offended that I will never marry any other.”

The emir expected the princess would have said or done some extravagant thing, and was not a little disappointed when he heard her talk so calmly and rationally; for he then concluded that her disease was nothing but a violent and deep-rooted passion. He therefore threw himself at his majesty’s feet, and said, “After what I have heard and observed, sir, it will be to no purpose for me to think of curing the princess, since I have no remedies proper for her malady; for which reason I humbly submit my life to your majesty’s pleasure.” The king, enraged at his incapacity, and the trouble he had given him, caused him to be immediately beheaded.

Some days after, unwilling to have it said that he had neglected his daughter’s cure, the king put forth a proclamation in his capital, importing, that if there were any physician, astrologer, or magician who would undertake to restore the princess to her senses, he needed only to offer himself, and he should be employed, on condition of losing his head if he failed. He had the same published in the other principal cities and towns of his dominions, and in the courts of the princes his neighbours.

The first that presented himself was an astrologer and magician, whom the king caused to be conducted to the princess’s prison by an eunuch. The astrologer drew forth, out of a bag he carried under his arm, an astrolabe, a small sphere, a chafing-dish, several sorts of drugs proper for fumigations, a brass pot, with many other articles, and desired he might have a fire.

The princess demanded what all these preparations were for. “Madam,” answered the eunuch, “they are to exorcise the evil spirit that possesses you, to shut him up in this pot, and throw him into the sea.”

“Foolish astrologer,” replied the princess, “I have no occasion for any of your preparations, but am in my perfect senses, and you alone are mad. If your art can bring him I love to me, I shall be obliged to you; otherwise you may go about your business, for I have nothing to do with you.” “Madam,” said the astrologer, “if your case be so, I shall desist from all endeavours, believing the king your father only can remove your disorder:” so putting up his trinkets again, he marched away, much concerned that he had so easily undertaken to cure an imaginary malady.

The eunuch conducted the astrologer to the king, whom the astrologer thus addressed: “According to what your majesty published in your proclamation, and what you were pleased to confirm to me yourself, I thought the princess was insane, and depended on being able to recover her by the secrets I have long been acquainted with; but I soon found she had no other disease but that of love, over which my art has no power: your majesty alone is the physician who can cure her, by giving her in marriage the person whom she desires.”

The king was much enraged at the astrologer, and had his head instantly cut off. A hundred and fifty astrologers, physicians, and magicians, came on this account, who all underwent the same fate; and their heads were set upon poles on every gate of the city.

The princess of China’s nurse had a son whose name was Marzavan, who had been foster-brother to the princess, and brought up with her, The friendship was so great during their childhood, and all the time they had been together, that as they grew up, even some time after their separation, they treated each other as brother and sister.

Marzavan, among other studies, had from his youth been much addicted to judicial astrology, geomancy, and the like secret arts, wherein he became exceedingly skilful. Not satisfied with what he had learned from masters, he travelled, and there was hardly any person of note in any science or art, but he sought him in the most remote cities, to obtain information, so great was his thirst after knowledge.

After several years’ absence in foreign parts, he returned to the capital of his native country, where, seeing so many heads on the gate by which he entered, he was exceedingly surprised, and demanded for what reason they had been placed there; but he more particularly inquired after the princess his foster-sister. As he could not receive an answer to one inquiry without the other, he heard at length a general account of what had happened, and waited for further particulars till he could see his mother, the princess's nurse.

Although the nurse, the mother of Marzavan, was much employed about the princess, yet she no sooner heard her son was returned, than she found time to come out, embrace him, and converse with him a little. Having told him, with tears in her eyes, the unhappy condition of the princess, and for what reason the king her father had confined her; her son desired to know if she could not procure him a private view of her royal mistress, without the king's knowledge. After some pause, she told him she could give him no answer for the present; but if he would meet her the next day at the same hour, she would inform him.

The nurse knowing none could approach the princess but herself; without leave of the eunuch, who commanded the guard at the gate, addressed: herself to him, and said, "You know I have brought up and suckled the princess, and you may likewise have heard that I had a daughter whom I brought up along with her. This daughter has been since married, yet the princess still does her the honour to love her, and wishes to see her, without any person's observing her enter or depart."

The nurse was proceeding, but the eunuch interrupted her and exclaimed, "Say no more, I will with pleasure do any thing to oblige the princess; go and fetch your daughter, or send for her about midnight, and the gate shall be open for you."

As soon as it was dark, the nurse went to Marzavan, and having dressed him so well in women's clothes, that nobody could suspect he was a man, carried him along with her; and the eunuch believing it was her daughter, admitted them.

The nurse, before she presented Marzavan, went to the princess, and said, "Madam, this is not a woman I have brought to you, it is my son Marzavan in disguise, newly arrived from his travels; having a great desire to kiss your hand, I hope your highness will vouchsafe him that honour."

"What! my brother Marzavan," exclaimed the princess, with great joy; "approach, and take off that veil; for it is not unreasonable that a brother and a sister should see each other without covering their faces."

Marzavan saluted her with profound respect, while, without giving him time to speak, she continued, “I rejoice to see you returned in good health, after so many years’ absence, and without sending any account of your welfare, even to your good mother.”

“Madam,” replied Marzavan, “I am infinitely obliged to your goodness. I hoped to have heard a better account of your health than has been given me, and which I lament to find confirmed by your appearance. It gives me pleasure, however, to have come so seasonably to bring your highness that remedy which your situation requires. Should I reap no other benefit from my studies and travels, I should think myself amply recompensed.”

Having thus spoken, Marzavan drew out of his pocket a book and some other things, which from the account he had had from his mother of the princess’s distemper, he thought he might want. The princess, observing these preparations, exclaimed, “What! brother, are you one of those who believe me mad? Undeceive yourself, and hear me.”

The princess then related to Marzavan all the particulars of her story, without omitting the least circumstance, even to the ring which was exchanged for hers, and which she shewed him. “I have not concealed the least incident from you,” continued she; “there is something in this business which I cannot comprehend, and which has given occasion for some persons to think me mad. But no one will attend to the rest, which is literally as I have stated.”

After the princess had concluded, Marzavan, filled with wonder and astonishment, remained for some time with his eyes fixed on the ground, without speaking a word; but at length he lifted up his head, and said, “If it be as your highness says, and which I do not in the least doubt, I do not despair of being able to procure you the gratification of your wishes. But I must first entreat your highness to arm yourself with patience, till I have travelled over kingdoms which I have not yet visited, and when you hear of my return, be assured the object of your desire is not far distant.” Having thus spoken, Marzavan took leave of the princess, and set out the next morning on his intended travels.

He journeyed from city to city, from province to province, and from island to island; and in every place he visited, he could hear of nothing but the princess Badoura (which was the princess of China's name) and her history.

About four months after, our traveller arrived at Torf, a sea-port town, large and populous, where the theme was changed; he no more heard of the princess Badoura, but all the talk was of prince Kummir al Zummaun, who was sick, and whose history greatly resembled hers. Marzavan was extremely delighted on hearing this, and informed himself where the prince was to be found. There were two ways to it; one, by land and sea; the other, by sea only, which was the shortest.

Marzavan chose the latter; and embarking on board a merchant ship, arrived safely in sight of Shaw Zummaun's capital; but just before it entered the port, the ship struck upon a rock, by the unskilfulness of the pilot, and foundered: it went down in sight of the castle, where at that time were the king and his grand vizier.

Marzavan, who could swim well, immediately upon the ship's sinking cast himself into the sea, and got safe on shore under the castle, where he was soon relieved by the grand vizier's order. After he had changed his clothes, and been well treated, he was introduced to the grand vizier, who lead sent for him.

Marzavan being a young man of good address, the minister received him with great politeness; and was induced, from the just and pertinent answers he returned to the questions put to him, to regard him with great esteem. Finding by degrees that he possessed great variety and extent of information, he said to him, "From what I can understand, I perceive you are no common man; you have travelled much: would to God you had discovered some remedy for a malady which has been long a source of great affliction at this court."

Marzavan replied, if he knew what malady it was, he might perhaps find a remedy applicable to it.

The grand vizier then related to him the story of prince Kummir al Zummaun. He concealed nothing relating to his birth, which had been so earnestly desired, his education, the wish of the king his father to see him early married, his resistance and extraordinary aversion from marriage, his disobeying his father in full council, his imprisonment, his extravagancies in prison, which were afterwards changed into a violent passion for some unknown lady, who, he pretended, had exchanged a ring with him, though, for his part, he verily believed there was no such person in the world.

Marzavan gave great attention to all the grand vizier said, and was infinitely rejoiced to find that, by means of his shipwreck, he had so fortunately lighted on the person he was seeking. He saw no reason to doubt that the prince was the man whom the princess of China so ardently loved, and that this princess was equally the object of his passion. Without explaining himself farther to the vizier, he desired to see the prince, that he might be better able to judge of his disorder and its cure. "Follow me," said the grand vizier, "and you will find the king with him, who has already desired I should introduce you."

On entering the prince's chamber, the first thing Marzavan observed was the prince upon his bed languishing, and with his eyes shut. Notwithstanding his condition, and regardless of the presence of the king his father, who was sitting by him, he could not avoid exclaiming, "Heavens! was there ever a greater resemblance?" He meant to the princess of China; for it seems the princess and the prince were much alike.

This exclamation of Marzavan excited the prince's curiosity; he opened his eyes and looked at him. Marzavan, who had a ready wit, seized that opportunity, and made his compliment in extempore verse; but in such a disguised manner, that neither the king nor the grand vizier under stood his meaning. He represented so exactly what had happened to him with the princess of China, that the prince had no reason to doubt he knew her, and could give him tidings of her. His countenance immediately brightened up with joy.

After Marzavan had finished his compliment in verse, which surprised Kummir al Zummaun so agreeably, the prince took the liberty of making a sign to the king his father, to give his place to Marzavan, and allow him to sit by him.

The king, overjoyed at this alteration, which inspired him with hopes of his son's speedy recovery, quitted his place, and taking Marzavan by the hand, led him to it, obliging him to sit. He then demanded of him who he was, and whence he had come? And upon Marzavan's answering he was a subject of China, and came from that kingdom, the king exclaimed, "Heaven grant you may be able to recover my son from this profound melancholy; I shall be eternally obliged to you, and all the world shall see how handsomely I will reward you." Having said thus, he left the prince to converse at full liberty with the stranger, whilst he went and rejoiced with the grand vizier on this happy incident.

Marzavan leaning down to the prince, addressed him in a low voice: "Prince, it is time you should cease to grieve. The lady, for whom you suffer, is the princess Badoura, daughter of Gaiour, king of China. This I can assure your highness from what she has told me of her adventure, and what I have learned of yours. She has suffered no less on your account than you have on hers." Here he related all that he knew of the princess's story, from the night of their extraordinary interview.

He omitted not to acquaint him how the king had treated those who had failed in their endeavours to cure the princess of her indisposition. "But your highness is the only person," added he, "that can cure her effectually, and you may present yourself without fear. However, before you undertake so long a voyage, I would have you perfectly recovered, and then we will take what measures may be necessary. Think then immediately of the recovery of your health."

This account had a marvellous effect on the prince. The hopes of speedily fulfilling his desires so much relieved him, that he felt he had strength sufficient to rise, and begged permission of his father to dress himself, with such an air as gave him incredible pleasure.

Shaw Zummaun, without inquiring into the means he had used to produce this wonderful effect, could not refrain from embracing Marzavan, and soon after went out of the prince's chamber with the grand vizier, to publish the agreeable tidings. He ordered public rejoicings for several days together, gave great largesses to his officers and the people, and alms to the poor, and caused the prisoners to be set at liberty throughout his kingdom The joy was soon general in the capital, and in every part of his dominions.

Kummir al Zummaun, though extremely weakened by almost continual privation of sleep and long abstinence, soon recovered his health. When he found himself in a condition to undertake the voyage, he took Marzavan aside, and said, "Dear Marzavan, it is now time to perform the promise you have made me. My impatience to behold the charming princess, and to relieve her of the torments she is now suffering on my account, is such, that if we do not shortly depart, I shall relapse into my former indisposition. One thing still afflicts me," continued he, "and that is the difficulty I shall find, from his tender affection for me, to obtain my father's permission to travel into a distant country. You observe he scarcely allows me to be a moment out of his sight."

At these words the prince wept. Marzavan then replied, "I foresaw this difficulty, and I will take care it shall not obstruct us. My principal design in this voyage was to cure the princess of China of her malady, and this on account of the mutual affection which we have borne to each other from our birth, as well as from the zeal and affection I otherwise owe her. I should therefore be wanting in my duty to her, if I did not use my best endeavours to effect her cure and yours. This is then the mode I have devised to obtain the king your father's consent. You have not stirred abroad for some time, therefore request his permission to go upon a hunting party with me. He will no doubt comply. When you have obtained his leave, obtain two fleet coursers for each of us to be got ready, one to mount, the other to change, and leave the rest to me."

The following day the prince did as he had been instructed. He acquainted the king he was desirous of taking the air, and, if he pleased, would go and hunt for two or three days with Marzavan. The king gave his consent, but wished him not to be absent more than one night, since too much exercise at first might impair his health and a longer absence would make him uneasy. He then ordered him to choose the best horses in the royal stable, and took particular care that nothing should be wanting for his accommodation. When all was ready, he embraced the prince, and having recommended to Marzavan to be careful of him, he let him go. Kummir al Zummaun and Marzavan were soon mounted, when, to amuse the two grooms who led the spare horses, they made as if they were going to hunt, and under this pretence got as far from the city and out of the high road as was possible. When night began to approach, they alighted at a caravanserai or inn, where they supped, and slept till about midnight; when Marzavan awakened the prince, and desired his highness to let him have his dress, and to take another for himself, which was brought in his baggage. Thus equipped, they mounted the fresh horses, and after Marzavan had taken one of the grooms' horses by the bridle, they left the caravanserai.

At day-break they found themselves in a forest, where four roads met. Here Marzavan, desiring the prince to wait for him a little, went into the wood. He then cut the throat of the groom's horse, and after having torn the suit which the prince had taken off, and besmeared it with blood, threw it into the highway.

The prince inquired his reason for what he had done. He replied, he was sure that when the king his father found he did not return, and should learn that he had departed without the grooms, he would suspect something wrong, and immediately send in quest of them, "they who may come this way, finding this bloody habit, will conclude you are devoured by wild beasts, and that I have escaped to avoid the king's anger. The king, concluding you are dead, will stop further pursuit, and we may have leisure to continue our journey without fear of being followed." "I must confess," continued Marzavan, "it is a violent way of proceeding, to alarm a fond father with the death of his son, but his joy will be the greater when he shall hear you are alive and happy." "Breve Marzavan," replied the prince, "I cannot but approve such an ingenious stratagem, or sufficiently admire your conduct: you place me under fresh obligations to you."

The prince and Marzavan being well provided for their expenses, continued their journey both by land and sea, and found no other obstacle but the length of the time which it necessarily took up. They arrived at length at the capital of China, where Marzavan, instead of going to his house, carried the prince to a public inn. They remained there incognito three days, to rest themselves after the fatigue of the voyage; during which time Marzavan caused an astrologer's habit to be made for the prince. The three days being expired, they went together to the bath, where the prince put on his astrologer's dress: from thence Marzavan conducted him to the neighbourhood of the king of China's palace, where he left him, to go and inform his mother of his arrival.

Kummir al Zummaun, instructed by Marzavan what he was to do, came next morning to the gate of the king's palace, and cried aloud, "I am an astrologer, and am come to cure the illustrious princess Badoura, daughter of the most high and mighty monarch Gaiour king of China, on the conditions proposed by his majesty, to marry her if I succeed, or else to lose my life for my fruitless and presumptuous attempt."

Besides the guards and porters at the gate, this incident drew together a great number of people about the prince. There had no physician, astrologer, or magician appeared for a long time on this account, being deterred by the many tragical examples of ill success that appeared before; it was therefore thought there remained no more of these professions in the world, or none so mad as those that had already forfeited their lives.

The prince's appearance, his noble air, and blooming youth, made every one who saw him pity him. "What mean you, sir," said some that were nearest to him, "thus to expose a life of such promising expectations to certain death? Cannot the heads you see on all the gates of this city deter you from such an undertaking? In the name of God consider what you do! abandon this rash attempt, and depart."

The prince continued firm, notwithstanding all these remonstrances; and as he saw no one coming to introduce him, he repeated the same cry with a boldness that made every body tremble. They all then exclaimed, "Let him alone, he is resolved to die; God have mercy on his youth and his soul!" He then proceeded to cry a third time in the same manner, when the grand vizier came in person, and introduced him to the king of China.

As soon as the prince came into the presence, he bowed and kissed the ground. The king, who, among all that had hitherto presumptuously exposed their lives on this occasion, had not before seen one worthy of his attention, felt real compassion for Kummir al Zummaun, on account of the danger to which he exposed himself. "Young man," said he, "I can hardly believe that at this age you can have acquired experience enough to dare attempt the cure of my daughter. I wish you may succeed, and would give her to you in marriage with all my heart, and with the greatest joy, more willingly than I should have done to others that have offered themselves before you; but I must declare to you at the same time, though with great concern, that if you fail, notwithstanding your noble appearance and your youth, you must lose your head."

"Sir," replied the prince, "I have infinite obligations to your majesty for the honour you design me, and the great goodness you shew to a stranger; but I desire your majesty to believe I would not have come from so remote a country as I have done, the name of which perhaps may be unknown in your dominions, if I had not been certain of the cure I propose. What would not the world say of my fickleness, if, after such great fatigues and so many dangers as I have undergone in the pursuit, I should abandon this generous enterprise? Even your majesty would lose that esteem you have conceived for me. If I perish, I shall die with the satisfaction of not having forfeited your good opinion. I beseech your majesty therefore to keep me no longer from displaying the certainty of my art, by the proof I am ready to afford."

The king now commanded the eunuch, who had the custody of the princess, to introduce Kummir al Zummaun into her apartment: but before he would let him go, reminded him once more that he was at liberty to renounce his design; but the prince paid no regard to this, and with astonishing resolution and eagerness followed the eunuch.

When they had entered a long gallery, at the end of which was the princess's apartment, the prince, who saw himself so near the objets of his wishes, who had occasioned him so many tears, pushed on, and got before the eunuch.

The eunuch redoubling his pace, with difficulty got up to him, "Wither so fast?" cried he, taking him by the arm; "you cannot get in without me; and it should seem you have a great desire for death, thus to run to it headlong. Not one of all those many astrologers and magicians I have introduced before made such haste as yourself, to a place whence I fear you will come but too soon."

"Friend," replied the prince, looking earnestly on the eunuch, and continuing his pace, "this was because none of the astrologers you speak of were so confident in their art as I am: they were certain indeed they should die, if they did not succeed, but they had no certainty of their success. On this account they had reason to tremble on approaching this spot, where I am sure to find my happiness." He had just spoken these words when he reached the door. The eunuch opened it, and introduced him into a great hall, whence was an entrance into the princess's apartment, divided from it only by a piece of tapestry.

The prince stopped before he entered, speaking more softly to the eunuch for fear of being heard by the princess. “To convince you,” said he; “there is neither presumption, nor whim, nor youthful conceit in my undertaking, I leave it to your choice whether I shall cure the princess in her presence, or where we are, without going any farther, or seeing her?”

The eunuch was amazed to hear the prince talk to him with such confidence: he left off jeering, and said seriously to him, “It is no matter where it is done, provided it be effected: cure her how you will, if you succeed you will gain immortal honour, not only in this court, but over all the world.”

The prince replied, “It will be best then to cure her without seeing her, that you may be witness of my skill; notwithstanding my impatience to see a princess of her rank, who is to be my wife, yet out of respect to you, I will deprive myself of that pleasure for a little while.” Being furnished with every thing proper for an astrologer to carry about him, he took pen, ink, and paper our of his pocket, and wrote the following billet to the princess.

“The impassioned Kummir al Zummaun cannot recite the inexpressible pain he has endured since that fatal night in which your charms deprived him of the liberty which he had resolved to preserve. He only tells you that he devoted his heart to you in your charming slumbers; those obstinate slumbers which hindered him from beholding the brightness of your piercing eyes, notwithstanding all his endeavours to oblige you to open them. He presumed to present you with his ring as a token of his passion; and to take yours in exchange, which he encloses. If you condescend to return his as a reciprocal pledge of love, he will esteem himself the happiest of mankind. If not, the sentence of death, which your refusal must draw upon him, will be received with resignation, since he will perish on account of his love for you.”

When the prince had finished his billet, he folded it up, and enclosed in it the princess’s ring. “There, friend,” said he to the eunuch, “carry this to your mistress; if it does not cure her as soon as she reads it, and sees what it contains, I give you leave to tell every body, that I am the most ignorant and impudent astrologer that ever existed.”

The eunuch entering the princess of China's apartment, gave her the packet, saying, "The boldest astrologer that ever lived is arrived here, and pretends, that on reading this letter and seeing what it encloses, you will be cured; I wish he may prove neither a liar nor an impostor."

The princess Badoura took the billet, and opened it with indifference: but when she saw the ring, she had not patience to read it through: she rose hastily, broke the chain that held her, ran to the door and opened it. They immediately recognized each other, tenderly embraced, and without being able to speak for excess of joy, looked at one another, wondering how they met again after their first interview. The princess's nurse, who ran to the door with her, made them come into her apartment, where the princess Badoura gave the prince her ring, saying, "Take it, I cannot keep it without restoring yours; which I will never part with; neither can it be in better hands."

The eunuch went immediately to inform the king of China of what had happened: "Sir," said he, "all the astrologers and doctors who have hitherto pretended to cure the princess were fools compared with the present. He made use neither of schemes nor conjurations, of perfumes, nor any thing else, but cured her without seeing her." The monarch was agreeably surprised at this intelligence, and going to the princess's apartment, he embraced her, and afterwards the prince, and taking his hand joined it to the princess's, saying, "Happy stranger, whoever you are, I will keep my word, and give you my daughter for your wife; though, by what I see in you, it is impossible for me to believe you are really what you pretend, and would have me take you to be."

Kummir al Zummaun thanked the king in the most humble expressions, that he might the better shew his gratitude. "As for my condition," said he, "I must own I am not an astrologer, as your majesty has guessed; I only put on the habit of one, that I might succeed the more easily in my ambition to be allied to the most potent monarch in the world. I was born a prince, and the son of a king and of a queen; my name is Kummir al Zummaun; my father is Shaw Zummaun, who now reigns over the islands that are well known by the name of the Islands of the Children of Khaledan." He then related to him his history, and how wonderful had been the origin of his love; that the princess's was altogether as marvellous; and that both were confirmed by the exchange of the two rings.

When the prince had done speaking, the king said to him, "This history is so extraordinary, it deserves to be known to posterity; I will take care it shall; and the original being deposited in my royal archives, I will spread copies of it abroad, that my own kingdoms and the kingdoms around me may know it."

The marriage was solemnized the same day, and the rejoicings were universal all over the empire of China. Nor was Marzavan forgotten: the king gave him an honourable post in his court, and a promise of further advancement.

The prince and princess enjoyed the fulness of their wishes in the sweets of marriage; and the king kept continual feastings for several months, to manifest his joy on the occasion.

In the midst of these pleasures Kummir al Zummaun dreamt one night that he saw his father on his bed at the point of death, and heard him thus address his attendants: "My son, to whom I gave birth; my son, whom I so tenderly loved whom I bred with so much fondness, so much care, has abandoned me, and is himself the cause of my death." He awoke with a profound sigh, which alarmed the princess, who asked him the cause.

"Alas! my love," replied the prince, "perhaps at the very moment while I am speaking, the king my father is no more." He then acquainted her with his melancholy dream, which occasioned him so much uneasiness. The princess, who studied to please him in every thing, went to her father the next day, kissed his hand, and thus addressed him: "I have a favour to beg of your majesty, and I beseech you not to deny me; but that you may not believe I ask it at the solicitation of the prince my husband, I assure you beforehand he knows nothing of my request: it is, that you will grant me your permission to go with him and visit his father."

"Daughter," replied the king, "though I shall be sorry to part with you for so long a time as a journey to a place so distant will require, yet I cannot disapprove of your resolution; it is worthy of yourself: go, child, I give you leave, but on condition that you stay no longer than a year in Shaw Zummaun's court. I hope the king will agree to this, that we shall alternately see, he his son and his daughter-in-law, and I my daughter and my son-in-law.”

The princess communicated the king of China’s consent to her husband, who was transported to receive it, and returned her thanks for this new token of her love.

The king of China gave orders for preparations to be made for their departure; and when all things were ready, he accompanied the prince and princess several days’ journey on their way; they parted at length with much affliction on both sides: the king embraced them; and having desired the prince to be kind to his daughter, and to love her always with the same tenderness he now did, he left them to proceed, and to divert himself, hunted as he returned to his capital.

When the prince and princess had recovered from their grief, they comforted themselves with considering how glad Shaw Zummaun would be to see them, and how they should rejoice to see the king.

After travelling about a month, they one day entered a plain of great extent, planted at convenient distances with tall trees, forming an agreeable shade. The day being unusually hot, the prince thought it best to encamp there, and proposed it to Badoura, who, having the same wish, the more readily consented. They alighted in one of the finest spots; a tent was presently set up; the princess, rising from the shade under which she had sat down, entered it. The prince then ordered his attendants to pitch their tents, and went himself to give directions. The princess, weary with the fatigues of the journey, bade her women untie her girdle, which they laid down by her; and she falling asleep, they left her alone.

Kummir al Zummaun having seen all things in order, came to the tent where the princess was sleeping: he entered, and sat down without making any noise, intending to repose himself; but observing the princess’s girdle lying by her, he took it up, and looked at the diamonds and rubies one by one. In viewing it he observed a little purse hanging to it, sewed neatly on the stuff, and tied fast with a riband; he felt it, and found it contained something solid. Desirous to know what it was, he opened the purse, and took out a cornelian, engraven with unknown figures and characters. “This cornelian,” said the prince to himself, “must be something very valuable, or my princess would not carry it with so much care.” It was Badoura’s talisman, which the queen of China had given her daughter as a charm, that would keep her, as she said, from any harm as long as she had it about her.

The prince, the better to look at the talisman, took it out to the light, the tent being dark; and while he was holding it up in his hand, a bird darted down from the air and snatched it away from him.

One will easily conceive the concern and grief of the prince, when he saw the bird fly away with the talisman. He was more troubled than words can express, and cursed his unseasonable curiosity, by which his dear princess had lost a treasure, that was so precious, and so valued by her.

The bird having got its prize, settled on the ground not far off, with the talisman in its mouth. The prince drew near it, hoping it would drop it; but as he approached, the bird took wing, and settled again on the ground further off. Kummir al Zummaun followed, and the bird took a further flight: the prince being very dexterous at a mark, thought to kill it with a stone, and still pursued; the further it flew, the more eager he grew in pursuing, keeping it always in view. Thus the bird drew him along from hill to valley, and valley to hill, all the day, every step leading him out of the way from the plain where he had left his camp and the princess Badoura: and instead of perching at night on a bush, where he might probably have taken it, roosted on a high tree, safe from his pursuit. The prince, vexed to the heart at having taken so much pains to no purpose, thought of returning; "But," said he to himself, "which way shall I return? Shall I go down the hills and valleys which I have passed overt' Shall I wander in darkness? and will my strength bear me out? How shall I dare appear before my princess without her talisman?" Overwhelmed with such thoughts, and tired with the pursuit, sleep came upon him, and he lay down under a tree, where he passed the night.

He awoke the next morning before the bird had left the tree, and as soon as he saw it on the wing, followed it again the whole of that day, with no better success than he had done the last, eating nothing but herbs and fruits as he went. He did the same for ten days together, pursuing the bird, and keeping it in view from morning to night, lying always under the tree where it roosted. On the eleventh day, the bird continued flying, and Kummir al Zummaun pursuing it, came near a great city. When the bird had reached the walls, it flew over them, and the prince saw no more of it; so that he despaired of ever recovering the princess Badoura's talisman.

The prince, whose grief was beyond expression, went into the city, which was built on the seaside, and had a fine port; he walked up and down the streets without knowing where he was, or where to stop. At last he came to the port, in as great uncertainty as ever what he should do. Walking along the shore, he perceived the gate of a garden open, and an old gardener at work in it; the good man looking up, saw he was a stranger and a Moosulmaun, and asked him to come in, and shut the door after him.

Kummir al Zummaun entered, and demanded of the gardener why he was so cautious? "Because," replied the old man, "I see you are a stranger newly arrived; and this city is inhabited for the most part by idolaters, who have a mortal aversion to us Moosulmauns, and treat a few of us that are here with great barbarity. I suppose you did not know this, and it is a miracle that you have escaped as you have thus far: these idolaters being very apt to fall upon strangers, or draw them into a snare. I bless God, who has brought you into a place of safety."

Kummir al Zummaun thanked the honest gardener for his advice, and the security he offered him in his house; he would have said more, but the good man interrupted him, saying, "Let us leave complimenting; you are weary, and must want to refresh yourself. Come in, and rest." He conducted him into his little hut; and after the prince had eaten heartily of what he set before him, with a cordiality that charmed him, he requested him to relate how he had come there.

The prince complied; and when he had finished his story, without concealing any part of it, asked him which was the nearest route to his father's territories; saying, "It is in vain for me to think of finding my princess where I left her, after wandering eleven days from the spot by so extraordinary an adventure. Ah!" continued he, "how do I know she is alive?" and saying this, he burst into tears. The gardener replied, "There was no possibility of his going thither by land, the ways were so difficult, and the journey so long; besides, there was no accommodation for his subsistence; or, if there were, he must necessarily pass through the countries of so many barbarous nations, that he would never reach his father's. It was a year's journey from the city where he then was to any country inhabited only by Moosulmauns; that the quickest passage for him would be to go to the isle of Ebene, whence he might easily transport himself to the isles of the children of Khaledan; that a ship sailed from the port every year to Ebene, and he might take that opportunity of returning to those islands." "The ship departed," said he, "but a few days ago; if you had come a little sooner, you might have taken your passage in it. You must wait till it makes the voyage again, and if you will stay with me and accept of my house, such as it is, you shall be as welcome to it as to your own."

The prince was glad he had met with such an asylum, in a place where he had no acquaintance. He accepted the offer, and lived with the gardener till the time arrived that the ship was to sail to the isle of Ebene. He spent the interval in working by day in the garden, and passing the night in sighs, tears, and complaints, thinking of his dear princess Badoura. We must leave him in this place, to return to the princess, whom we left asleep in her tent.

The princess slept a long time, and when she awoke, wondered that the prince was not with her; she called her women, and asked if they knew where he was. They told her they saw him enter the tent, but did not see him go out. While they were talking to her, she took up her girdle, found her little purse open, and that the talisman was gone. She did not doubt but that the prince had taken it to see what it was, and that he would bring it back with him. She waited for him impatiently till night, and could not imagine what made him stay away from her so long.

When it was quite dark, and she could hear no tidings of him, she fell into violent grief: she cursed the talisman, and him that made it; and, had not she been restrained by duty, would have cursed the queen her mother, who had given her such a fatal present. She was the more troubled, because she could not imagine how her talisman should have caused the prince's separation from her; she did not however lose her judgment, and came to a courageous resolution, not common with persons of her sex.

Only herself and her women knew of the prince's absence; for his men were reposing or asleep in their tents. The princess, fearing they would betray her, if they had any knowledge of this circumstance, moderated her grief, and forbade her women to say or do any thing that might create the least suspicion. She then laid aside her own habit, and put on one of Kummir al Zummaun's. She was so much like him, that the next day, when she came abroad, the male attendants took her for the prince.

She commanded them to pack up their baggage and begin their march; and when all things were ready, she ordered one of her women to go into her litter, she herself mounting on horseback, and riding by her side.

She travelled several months by land and sea; the princess continuing the journey under the name of Kummir al Zummaun. They touched at Ebene in their way to the isles of the children of Khaledan, and went to the capital of the island, where a king reigned, whose name was Armanos. The persons who first landed, giving out that the ship carried prince Kummir al Zummaun, who was returning from a long voyage, and was forced in by a storm, the news of his arrival was soon carried to court.

King Armanos, accompanied by his courtiers' went immediately to wait on the prince, and met the princess just as she was landing, and going to the palace that had been prepared for her. He received her as the son of a king, who was his friend, and with whom he always kept up a good understanding: he conducted her to the palace, where an apartment was prepared for her and all her attendants; though she would fain have excused herself. He shewed her all possible honour, and entertained her three days together with extraordinary magnificence. At the end of this time king Armanos understanding that the princess intended proceeding on her voyage, charmed with the air and qualities of such an accomplished prince, as he supposed her, took an opportunity when she was alone, and spoke to her in this manner: "You see, prince, that I am old, and to my great mortification have not a son to whom I may leave my crown. Heaven has only blest me with one daughter, whose beauty cannot be better matched than with a prince of your rank and accomplishments. Instead of going home, stay and accept my crown, which I will resign in your favour. It is time for me to rest, and nothing could be a greater pleasure to me in my retirement, than to see my people ruled by so worthy a successor to my throne."

The king's offer to bestow his only daughter in marriage, and with her his kingdom, on the princess Badoura, put her into unexpected perplexity. She thought it would not become a princess of her rank to undeceive the king, and to own that she was not prince Kummir al Zummaun, whose part she had hitherto acted so well. She was also afraid to decline the honour he offered her, lest, being so much bent upon the conclusion of the marriage, his kindness might turn to aversion, and he might attempt something even against her life.

These considerations, added to the prospect of obtaining a kingdom for the prince her husband, in case she found him again, determined her to accept the proposal of king Armanos, and marry his daughter. After having stood silent for some minutes, she with blushes, which the king took for a sign of modesty, answered, "I am infinitely obliged to your majesty for your good opinion of me, for the honour you do me, and the great favour you offer, which I cannot pretend to merit, and dare not refuse."

"But," continued she, "I cannot accept this great alliance on any other condition, than that your majesty will assist me with your counsels, and that I do nothing without having first obtained your approbation."

The marriage treaty being thus concluded, the ceremony was put off till the next day. In the mean time princess Badoura gave notice to her officers, who still took her for their prince, of what she was about to do, that they might not be surprised, assuring them the princess Badoura consented. She talked also to her women, and charged them to continue to keep the secret she had entrusted to them.

The king of the isle of Ebene, rejoicing that he had found a son-in-law so much to his satisfaction, next morning summoned his council, and acquainted them with his design of marrying his daughter to prince Kummir al Zummaun, whom he introduced to them, and told them he resigned the crown to him, and required them to acknowledge him for their king, and swear fealty to him. Having said this, he descended from his throne, and the princess Badoura, by his order, ascended it. As soon as the council broke up, the new king was proclaimed through the city, rejoicings were appointed for several days, and couriers despatched over all the kingdom, to see the same ceremonies observed with the usual demonstrations of joy.

At night there were extraordinary feastings at the palace, and the princess Haiatalnefous was conducted to the princess Badoura, whom every body took for a man, dressed like a royal bride: the wedding was solemnized with the utmost splendour: they were left together, and retired to bed. In the morning, while the princess Badoura went to receive the compliments of the nobility in the hall of audience, where they congratulated her on her marriage and accession to the throne, king Armanos and his queen went to the apartment of their daughter to inquire after her health. Instead of answering, she held down her head, and by her looks they saw plainly enough that she was disappointed.

King Armanos, to comfort the princess Haiatalnefous, bade her not be troubled. “Prince Kummir al Zummaun,” said he, “when he landed here might think only of going to his father’s court. Though we have engaged him to stay by arguments, with which he ought to be well satisfied, yet it is probable he grieves at being so suddenly deprived of the hopes of seeing either his father or any of his family. You must wait till those first emotions of filial love are over; he will then conduct himself towards you as a good husband ought to do.”

The princess Badoura, under the name and character of Kummir al Zummaun, the king of Ebene, spent the whole day in receiving the compliments of the courtiers and the nobility of the kingdom who were in and about the city, and in reviewing the regular troops of her household; and entered on the administration of affairs with so much dignity and judgment, that she gained the general applause of all who were witnesses of her conduct.

It was evening before she returned to queen Haiatalnefous’s apartment, and she perceived by the reception she gave her, that the bride was not at all pleased with the preceding night. She endeavoured to dissipate her grief by a long conversation, in which she employed all the wit she had (and she possessed a good share), to persuade her she loved her entirely. She then gave her time to go to bed, and while she was undressing she went to her devotions; her prayers were so long, that queen Haiatalnefous was asleep before they were ended. She then left off, and lay down softly by the new queen, without waking her, and was as much afflicted at being forced to act a part which did not belong to her, as in the loss of her dear Kummir al Zummaun, for whom she: ceased not to sigh. She rose as soon as it was day, before Haiatalnefous was awake; and, being dressed in her royal robes as king, went to council.

King Armanos, as he had done the day before, came early to visit the queen his daughter, whom he found in tears; he wanted nothing more to be informed of the cause of her trouble. Provoked at the contempt, as he thought, put upon his daughter, of which he could not imagine the reason: "Daughter," said he, "have patience for another night. I raised your husband to the throne, and can pull him down again, and drive him thence with shame, unless he shews you proper regard. His treatment of you has provoked me so much, I cannot tell to what my resentment may transport me; the affront is as great to me as to you."

It was late again before the princess Badoura came to queen Haiatalnefous. She talked to her as she had done the night before, and after the same manner went to her devotions, desiring the queen to go to bed. But Haiatalnefous would not be so served; she held her back, and obliged her to sit down. "Tell me, I beseech you," said she, "what can you dislike in a princess of my youth and beauty, who not only loves but adores you, and thinks herself the happiest of women in having so amiable a prince for her husband. Any body but me would be not merely offended but shocked by the slight, or rather the unpardonable affront you have put upon me, and abandon you to your evil destiny. However, though I did not love you so well as I do, yet out of pure good-nature and humanity, which makes me pity the misfortunes of persons for whom I am less concerned, I cannot forbear telling you, that the king my father is enraged against you for your behaviour towards me, and to-morrow will make you feel the weight of his just anger, if you continue to neglect me as you have hitherto done. Do not therefore drive to despair a princess, who, notwithstanding all your ill usage, cannot help loving you."

This address embarrassed the princess Badoura inexpressibly. She did not doubt the truth of what Haiatalnefous had said. King Armanos's coldness to her the day before had given her but too much reason to see he was highly dissatisfied with her. The only way to justify her conduit was, to communicate her sex to the princess

Haiatalnefous. But though she had foreseen she should be under a necessity of making such a discovery to her, yet her uncertainty as to the manner in which she would receive it, made her tremble; but, considering that if Kummir al Zummaun was alive, he must necessarily touch at the isle of Ebene in his way to his father's kingdom, she ought to preserve herself for his sake; and that it was impossible to do this, if she did not let the princess Haiatalnefous know who and what she was, she resolved to venture the experiment.

The princess Badoura stood as one who had been struck dumb, and Haiatalnefous being impatient to hear what she could say, was about to speak to her again, when she prevented her by these words: "Lovely and too charming princess! I own I have been in the wrong, and I condemn myself for it; but I hope you will pardon me, and keep the secret I am going to reveal to you for my justification."

She then opened her bosom, and proceeded thus: "See, princess, if a woman like yourself does not deserve to be forgiven. I believe you will be so generous, at least when you know my story, and the afflicting circumstance that forced me to act the part I have done."

The princess Badoura having discovered her sex to the princess of the isle of Ebene, she again prayed her to keep the secret, and to pretend to be satisfied with her as a husband, till the prince's arrival, which she hoped would be in a little time.

"Princess," replied Haiatalnefous, "your fortune is indeed strange, that a marriage, so happy as yours, should be shortened by so unaccountable an accident, after a passion so reciprocal and full of wonders. Pray heaven you may soon meet with your husband again, and assure yourself I will keep religiously the secret committed to me. It will be to me the greatest pleasure in the world to be the only person in the great kingdom of the isle of Ebene who knows what and who you are, while you go on governing the people as happily as you have begun. I only ask of you at present to be your friend." Then the two princesses tenderly embraced each other, and after a thousand expressions of mutual friendship lay down to rest.

The two princesses having decided on a way to make belief that the marriage had been consummated: queen Haiatalnefous's women were deceived themselves next morning, and it deceived Armanos, his queen, and the whole court. From this time the princess Badoura rose in the king's esteem and affection, governing the kingdom peaceably and prosperously.

While things passed as already mentioned in the court of the isle of Ebene, prince Kummir al Zummaun remained in the city of idolaters with the gardener, who had offered him his house for a retreat till the ship should sail to convey him away.

One morning early, when the prince was as usual preparing to work in the garden, the gardener prevented him, saying, "This day is a great festival among the idolaters, and because they abstain from all work themselves, to spend the time in their assemblies and public rejoicings, they will not let the Moosulmauns labour; who, to gain their favour, generally attend their shows, which are worth seeing. You will therefore have nothing to do to-day: I leave you here. As the time approaches, at which it is usual for the ship to sail for the isle of Ebene, I will call on some of my friends to know when it will depart, and secure you a passage." The gardener put on his best apparel, and went out.

When the prince was alone, instead of going out to share in the public joy of the city, his solitude brought to his mind, with more than usual violence, the loss of his dear princess. He walked up and down the garden sighing and lamenting, till the noise which two birds made on a neighbouring tree led him to lift up his head, to see what was the matter.

Kummir al Zummaun was surprised to observe that the birds were fighting furiously: in a very little while, one of them fell down dead at the foot of the tree; the victorious bird took wing again, and flew away.

In an instant, two other large birds, that had beheld the battle at a distance, came from the other side of the garden, and pitched on the ground, one at the feet, and the other at the head of the dead bird: they looked at it for some time, shaking their heads in token of grief; after which they dug a grave with their talons, and buried it.

When they had filled up the grave with the earth they had turned up, they flew away, but returned in a few minutes, bringing with them the bird that had committed the murder, one holding one of its wings in its beak, and the other one of its legs; the criminal all the while crying out in a doleful manner, and struggling to escape. They carried it to the grave of the bird which it had lately sacrificed to its rage, and there killed it in just revenge for the murder it had committed. They opened its belly, tore out the entrails, left the body on the spot unburied, and flew away.

The prince had remained in astonishment all the time that he stood beholding this singular spectacle. He now drew near the tree where this scene had passed, and casting his eyes on the scattered entrails of the bird that had been last killed, spied something red hanging out of the stomach. He took it up, and found it was his beloved princess Badoura's talisman, which had cost him so much pain and sorrow, and so many sighs, since the bird had snatched it out of his hand. "Ah, cruel!" said he to himself; still looking on the bird, "thou took'st delight in doing mischief, so I have the less reason to complain of that which thou didst to me: but the greater it was, the more do I wish well to those that revenged my quarrel, punishing thee for the murder of one of their own kind."

It is impossible to express the prince's joy: "Dear princess," continued he to himself, "this happy minute, which restores to me a treasure so precious to thee, is, without doubt, a presage of our meeting again, and perhaps sooner than I think of. Thank heaven who sent me this good fortune, and gives me hope of the greatest felicity that my heart can desire."

Saying this, he kissed the talisman, wrapped it up in a riband, and tied it carefully about his arm. He had been almost every night a stranger to rest, the recollection of his misfortunes keeping him awake, but this night he enjoyed calm repose: he rose somewhat later the next morning than he used to do, and went to the gardener for orders. The good man bade him root up an old tree which bore no fruit.

Kummir al Zummaun took an axe and began his work. In cutting off a branch of the root, he found his axe struck against something that resisted the blow. He removed the earth, and discovered a broad plate of brass, under which was a staircase of ten steps. He went down, and at the bottom saw a cavity about six yards square with fifty brass urns placed in order, each with a cover over it. He opened them all, one after another, and found they were all of them full of gold-dust. He came out of the cave, rejoicing that he had found such a vast treasure, put the brass plate on the staircase, and had the tree rooted up by the gardener's return.

The gardener had ascertained that the ship which was bound for the isle of Ebene, would sail in a few days, but the exact time was not yet fixed. His friend promised to let him know the day, if he called upon him on the morrow; and while the prince was rooting up the tree, he went to have his answer. He returned with a joyful countenance, by which the prince guessed he brought him good news. "Son," said the old man (so he always called him on account of the difference of years between him and the prince) "be joyful, and prepare to embark in three days; the ship will then certainly sail; I have agreed with the captain for your passage."

"In my present situation," replied Kummir al Zummaun, "you could not bring me more agreeable intelligence; and in return, I have also tidings that will be as welcome to you: come along with me, and you shall see what good fortune heaven has in store for you."

The prince led the gardener to the place where he had rooted up the tree, made him go down into the cave, shewed him what a treasure he had discovered, thanking Providence for rewarding his virtue, and the pains he had been at for so many years. "What do you mean?" replied the gardener: "do you imagine I will take these riches as mine? The property is yours: I have no right to it. For fourscore years, since my father's death, I have done nothing but dig in this garden, and could not discover this treasure, which is a sign it was destined for you, since God has permitted you to find it. It is better suited to a prince like you than to me; I have one foot in the grave, and am in no want of any thing. Providence has bestowed it upon you, just when you are returning to that country, which will one day be your own, where you will make good use of it."

Kummir al Zummaun would not be surpassed in generosity by the gardener. They disputed for some time. At last the prince solemnly protested, that he would have none of it, unless the gardener would divide it with him. The good man, to please the prince, consented; so they shared it between them, and each had twenty-five urns.

"Having thus divided it, son," said the gardener to the prince, "it is not enough that you have got this treasure; we must now contrive to carry it privately aboard, otherwise you will run the risk of losing it. There are no olives in the isle of Ebene, those that are exported hence are a good commodity there: you know I have plenty of them, take what you will; fill fifty pots, half with the gold-dust and half with olives, and I will get them carried to the ship when you embark."

The prince followed this advice, and spent the rest of the day in packing up the gold and the olives in the fifty pots, and fearing the talisman, which he wore on his arm, might be lost again, he carefully put it into one of the pots, with a particular mark to distinguish it from the rest. When they were all ready to be shipped, night coming on, the prince retired with the gardener, and related to him the battle of the birds, with the circumstance by which he had found the talisman. The gardener was equally surprised and joyful to hear it on his account. Whether the old man was quite worn out with age, or had exhausted himself too much that day, the gardener had a very bad night; he grew worse the next day, and on the third day, when the prince was to embark, was so ill, that it was plain he was near his end. As soon as day broke, the captain of the ship came with several seamen to the gardener's; they knocked at the garden-door, which the prince opened to them. They asked him for the passenger who was to go with them. The prince answered, "I am he; the gardener who agreed with you for my passage is sick, and cannot be spoken with; come in, and let your men carry those pots of olives and my baggage aboard for me; I will only take leave of the gardener, and follow you."

The seamen took the pots and the baggage, and the captain bade the prince make haste, the wind being fair.

When the captain and his men were gone, Kummir al Zummaun went to the gardener to take his leave of him, and thanked him for all his good offices; but found him in the agonies of death, and had scarcely time to bid him rehearse the articles of his faith, which all good Moosulmauns do before they die, before the gardener expired.

The prince being under the necessity of embarking immediately, hastened to pay the last duty to the deceased. He washed his body, buried him in his own garden, and having nobody to assist him, it was almost evening before he had put him into the ground. As soon as he had done, he ran to the water-side, carrying with him the key of the garden, designing, if he had time, to give it to the landlord; otherwise to deposit it in some trusty person's hand before a witness, that he might have it after he was gone. When he reached the port, he was told the ship had sailed several hours, and was already out of sight. It had waited three hours for him, and the wind standing fair, the captain durst not stay longer.

It is easy to imagine that Kummir al Zummaun was exceedingly grieved at being forced to remain longer in a country where he neither had, nor wished to have, any acquaintance; to think that he must wait another year for the opportunity he had lost. But the greatest affliction of all was, his having parted with the princess Badoura's talisman, which he now considered lost. The only course left him was to return to the garden from whence he had come, to rent it of the landlord and continue to cultivate it by himself, deploring his misery and misfortunes. He hired a boy to assist him to do some part of the drudgery: that he might not lose the other half of the treasure which came to him by the death of the gardener, who died without heirs, he put the gold-dust into fifty other jars, which he filled up with olives, to be ready against the ship's return.

While the prince was beginning another year of labour, sorrow, and impatience, the ship having a fair wind, continued her voyage to the isle of Ebene, and happily arrived at the capital.

The palace being by the sea side, the new king, or rather the princess Badoura, espying the ship as she was entering into the port, with all her flags, asked what vessel it was: she was answered, that it came annually from the city of the idolaters, and was generally richly laden.

The princess, who always had Kummir al Zummaun in her mind, imagined that the prince might be aboard; and resolved to visit the ship and meet him, without discovering herself; but to observe him, and take proper measures for their making themselves mutually known. Under pretence of inquiring what merchandize was on board, and having the first sight of the goods, she commanded a horse to be brought, which she mounted, accompanied by several officers in waiting, and arrived at the port, just as the captain came ashore. She ordered him to be brought before her, asked whence he had come, how long he had been on his voyage, and what good or bad fortune he had met with: if he had no stranger of quality aboard, and particularly with what his ship was laden.

The captain gave a satisfactory answer to all her demands; and as to passengers, assured her there were none but merchants in his ship, who used to come every year, and bring rich stuffs from several parts of the world to trade with, the finest linens painted and plain, diamonds, musk, ambergris, camphire, civet, spices, drugs, olives, and many other articles.

The princess Badoura loved olives extremely when she heard the captain speak of them, “Land them,” said she, “I will take them off your hands; as to the other goods, tell the merchants to bring them to me, and let me see them before they dispose of, or shew them to any one.”

The captain taking her for the king of the isle of Ebene, replied, “Sire, there are fifty great jars of olives, but they belong to a merchant whom I was forced to leave behind. I gave him notice myself that I stayed for him, and waited a long time, but he not coming, and the wind offering, I was afraid of losing the opportunity, and so set sail.” The princess answered, “No matter, bring them ashore; we will nevertheless make a bargain for them.”

The captain sent the boat, which in a little time returned with the olives. The princess demanded how much the fifty jars might be worth in the isle of Ebene? “Sir,” replied the captain, “the merchant is very poor, and your majesty will do him a singular favour if you give him one thousand pieces of silver.”

“To satisfy him,” said the princess, “and because you tell me he is poor, I will order you one thousand pieces of gold for him, which do you take care to give him.” The money was accordingly paid, and the jars carried to the palace.

Night drawing on the princess withdrew into the inner palace, and went to the princess Haiatalnefous’s apartment, ordering the olives to be brought thither. She opened one jar to let the princess Haiatalnefous taste them, and poured them into a dish. Great was her astonishment, when she found the olives were mingled with gold-dust. “What can this mean!” said she, “It is wonderful beyond comprehension.” Her curiosity increasing from so extraordinary an adventure, she ordered Haiatalnefous’s women to open and empty all the jars in her presence; and her wonder was still greater, when she saw that the olives in all of them were mixed with gold-dust; but when she saw her talisman drop out, she was so surprised that she fainted away. Haiatalnefous and her women brought the princess to herself, by throwing cold water in her face. When she recovered, she took the talisman, and kissed it again and again; but not being willing that the princess Haiatalnefous's women, who were ignorant of her disguise, should hear what she said, and it growing late, she dismissed them. "Princess," said she to Haiatalnefous, as soon as they were gone, "you who have heard my story, doubtless, guessed it was at the sight of the talisman that I fainted. This is that talisman, and the fatal cause of my dosing my husband; but as it was that which caused our separation, so I foresee it will be the means of our meeting."

The next day, as soon as it was light, she sent for the captain of the ship; and when he came, spoke to him thus: "I want to know something more of the merchant to whom the olives belong, that I bought of you yesterday. I think you told me you left him behind in the city of the idolaters; can you tell me what is his employment there?"

"Yes," replied the captain, "I can speak from my own knowledge. I agreed for his passage with a very old gardener, who told me I should find him in his garden, where he worked under him. He shewed me the place, and for that reason I told your majesty he was poor. I went thither to call him. I told him what haste I was in, spoke to him myself in the garden, and cannot be mistaken in the man."

"If what you say is true," replied the princess, "you must set sail this very day for the city of idolaters, and bring me that gardener's man, who is my debtor; else I will not only confiscate all your goods and those of your merchants, but your life and theirs shall answer for his. I have ordered my seal to be put on the warehouses where their goods are deposited, which shall not be taken off till your return: this is all I have to say to you; go and do as I command you."

The captain could make no reply to this order, the disobeying of which must have proved of such loss to him and his merchants. He acquainted them with it; and they hastened him away as fast as they could, after he had laid in a stock of provisions and fresh water for his voyage.

They were so diligent, that he set sail the same day. He had a prosperous voyage to the city of the idolaters, where he arrived in the night. When he was got as near the city as he thought convenient, he would not cast anchor, but lay to off shore; and going into his boat, with six of his stoutest seamen, landed a little way off the port, whence he went directly to the garden of Kummir al Zummaun.

Though it was about midnight when he came there, the prince was not asleep. His separation from the fair princess of China his wife afflicted him as usual. He cursed the minute in which his curiosity tempted him to touch the fatal girdle.

Thus was he passing those hours which are devoted to rest, when he heard somebody knock at the garden-door: he ran hastily to it; but he had no sooner opened it than the captain and his seamen took hold of him, and carried him to the boat, and so on ship-board. As soon as he was safely lodged, they set sail, and made the best of their way to the isle of Ebene.

Hitherto Kummir al Zummaun, the captain, and his men, had not said a word to one another; at last the prince asked the captain, whom he knew again, why they had taken him away by force? The captain in his turn demanded of the prince, whether he was not a debtor of the king of Ebene? “I the king of Ebene’s debtor!” replied the prince in amazement; “I do not know him, and have never set foot in his kingdom.” The captain answered, “You should know that better than I; you will talk to him yourself in a little while; till then stay here and have patience.”

The captain was not long on his voyage back to the isle of Ebene. Though it was night when he cast anchor in the port, he landed immediately, and taking his prisoner with him, hastened to the palace, where he demanded to be introduced to the king.

The princess Badoura had withdrawn into the inner palace, but as soon as she heard of the captain’s return, she came out to speak to him. Immediately as she cast her eyes on the prince, for whom she had shed so many tears, she recognized him in his gardener’s habit. As for the prince, who trembled in the presence of a king, as he thought her, to whom he was to answer for an imaginary debt, it could not enter into his thoughts, that the person whom he so earnestly desired to see stood before him. If the princess had followed the dictates of her inclination, she would have run to him, and, by embracing, discovered herself to him; but she put a constraint on herself, believing that it was for the interest of both that she should act the king a little longer before she made herself known. She contented herself for the present to put him into the hands of an officer, who was then in waiting, charging him to take care of him, and use him well, till the next day.

When the princess Badoura had provided for Kummir al Zummaun, she turned to the captain, whom she was now to reward for the important service he had done her. She commanded another officer to go immediately to take the seal off the warehouse which contained his goods, and gave him a rich diamond, worth much more than the expense he had been at in both his voyages. She also bade him keep the thousand pieces of gold she had given for the olives, telling him she would make up the account with the merchant whom he had brought with him.

This done, she returned to the princess of the isle of Ebene's apartment, to whom she communicated her joy, praying her to keep the secret still. She told how she intended to manage the discovering of herself to Kummir al Zummaun, and resignation of the kingdom to him; adding, there was so vast a distance between a gardener, as he would appear to the public, and a great prince, that it might be dangerous to raise him at once from the lowest condition of the people to the highest honour, however justice might require it should be done. The princess of the isle of Ebene was so far from betraying her, that she rejoiced with her, and entered into the design.

The next morning the princess of China ordered Kummir al Zummaun to be conducted early to the bath, and then to be appareled in the robes of an emir or governor of a province. She commanded him to be introduced into the council, where his fine person and majestic air drew upon him the eyes of all the lords present.

The princess Badoura herself was charmed to see him look as lovely as ever, and her pleasure inspired her to speak the more warmly in his praise. When she spoke to the council, having ordered the prince to take his seat among the emirs, she addressed them thus: "My lords, Kummir al Zummaun, whom I have advanced to the same dignity with yourselves, is not unworthy of the place assigned him. I have known enough of him in my travels to answer for him, and I can assure you he will make his merit known to all of you, as well by his velour, as by a thousand other brilliant qualities, and the extent of his genius."

The prince was extremely amazed to hear the king of the isle of Ebene, whom he was far from taking for a woman, much less for his dear princess, name him, and declare that he knew him, while he thought himself certain he had never seen him before. He was much more surprised when he heard him praise him so highly. Those praises however from the mouth of majesty did not disconcert him, though he received them with such modesty, as shewed that he deserved them. He prostrated himself before the throne of the king, and rising again, said, "Sire, I want words to express my gratitude to your majesty for the honour you have done me; I shall do all in my power to render myself worthy of your royal favour."

From the council-board the prince was conducted to a palace, which the princess Badoura had ordered to be fitted up for him; where he found officers and domestics ready to obey his commands, a stable full of fine horses, and every thing suitable to the quality of an emir. When he was in his closet, the steward of his household brought him a strong box full of gold for his expenses.

The less he could conceive whence his happiness proceeded, the more he wondered, but he never once imagined that he owed it to the princess of China.

Two or three days after, the princess Badoura, that he might be nearer her person and in a more distinguished post, made him high treasurer, which office had lately become vacant. He conducted himself in his new charge with so much integrity, yet obliging every body, that he not only gained the friendship of the great, but also the affections of the people, by his uprightness and bounty.

Kummir al Zummaun had been the happiest man in the world, to see himself in so high favour with a foreign king as he conceived, and increasing in the esteem of all his subjects, if he had had his princess with him. In the midst of his good fortune he never ceased lamenting her, and grieved that he could hear no tidings of her, especially in a country which she must necessarily have visited in her way to his father's court after their separation. He would have mistrusted something, had the princess still gone by the name of Kummir al Zummaun, which she took with his habit; but on her accession to the throne, she had changed it, and taken that of Armanos, in honour of the old king her father-in-law.

The princess desiring that her husband should owe the discovery of her to herself alone, resolved to put an end to her own torments and his; for she had observed, that as often as she discoursed with him about the affairs of office, he heaved such deep sighs, as could be addressed to nobody but her. While she herself lived in such a constraint, that she could endure it no longer.

The princess Badoura had no sooner formed her resolution in concert with the princess Haiatalnefous, than she the same day took Kummir al Zummaun aside, saying, "I must talk with you about an affair which requires much consideration, and on which I want your advice. As I do not see how it can be done so conveniently as in the night, come hither in the evening, and leave word at home not to be waited for; I will take care to provide you a lodging."

Kummir al Zummaun came punctually to the palace at the hour appointed by the princess; she took him with her into the inner apartment, and having told the chief eunuch, who prepared to follow her, that she had no occasion for his service, conducted him into a different apartment from that of the princess Haiatalnefous, where she used to sleep.

When the prince and princess entered the chamber, she shut the door, and taking the talisman out of a little box, gave it to Kummir al Zummaun, saying, "It is not long since an astrologer presented me with this talisman; you being skilful in all things, may perhaps tell me its use."

Kummir al Zummaun took the talisman, and drew near a lamp to view it. As soon as he recollected it, with an astonishment which gave the princess great pleasure, "Sire," said he to the prince, "your majesty asked me the use of this talisman. Alas! its only purpose is to kill me with grief and despair, if I do not quickly find the most charming and lovely princess in the world to whom it belonged, whose loss it occasioned me by a strange adventure, the recital of which will move your majesty to pity such an unfortunate husband

and lover as I am."

"You shall tell me the particulars another time," replied the princess; "I know something of them already: remain here a little, and I will soon return to you."

At these words she went into her closet, put off her royal turban, and in a few minutes dressed herself in her female attire; and having the girdle round her, which she had on the day of their separation, re-entered the chamber.

Kummir al Zummaun immediately recognized his dear princess, ran to her, and tenderly embraced her, exclaiming, "How much am I obliged to the king who has so agreeably surprised me!" "Do not expect to see the king any more," replied the princess, embracing him in her turn, with tears in her eyes: "you see him in me; sit down, and I will explain this enigma to you."

They seated themselves, and the princess related the plan she had formed in the plain where they were encamped the last time they were together, as soon as she perceived she waited for him to no purpose; how she went through with it till she arrived at the isle of Ebene, where she had been obliged to marry the princess Haiatalnefous, and accept of the crown, which king Armanos offered her as a condition of the marriage: how the princess, whose merit she highly extolled, had obliged her to make declaration of her sex: and how she found the talisman in the pots of olives mingled with the gold-dust, which she had bought, and how this circumstance had proved the cause of her sending for him from the city of the idolaters.

When she had concluded her adventure, she obliged the prince to tell her by what means the talisman had occasioned their separation. He satisfied her inquiries; after which, it growing late, they retired to rest.

The princess Badoura and Kummir al Zummaun rose next morning as soon as it was light, but the princess would no more put on her royal robes as king; she dressed herself in her female attire, and then sent the chief eunuch to king Armanos, her father-in-law, to desire he would oblige her by coming to her apartment.

When the king entered the chamber, he was amazed at seeing a lady who was unknown to him, and the high treasurer with her, who was not by etiquette permitted to come within the inner palace. He sat down, and asked where the king was.

The princess answered, “Yesterday I was king, but to-day I am only princess of China, wife to the true prince Kummir al Zummaun. If your majesty will have patience to hear our adventures, I hope you will not condemn me for putting an innocent deceit upon you.” The king bade her go on, and heard her narrative from beginning to end with astonishment. The princess on finishing said to him, “Sir, though women do not easily comply with the liberty assumed by men to have several wives; yet if your majesty will consent to give your daughter the princess Haiatalnefous in marriage to the prince, I will with all my heart yield up to her the rank and quality of queen, which of right belongs to her, and content myself with the second place. If this precedence were not her due, I would resign it to her, after the obligation I have to her for keeping my secret so generously. If your majesty refer it to her consent, I am sure of that, having already consulted her; and I will pass my word that she will be very well satisfied.”

King Armanos listened to the princess with astonishment, and when she had done, turned to Kummir al Zummaun, saying, “Son, since the princess Badoura your wife, whom I have all along thought to be my son-in-law, through a deceit of which I cannot complain, assures me, that she will divide your bed with my daughter; I would know if you are willing to marry her, and accept of the crown, which the princess Badoura would deservedly wear, if she did not quit it out of love to you.” “Sir,” replied Kummir al Zummaun, “though I desire nothing so earnestly as to see the king my father, yet the obligations I have to your majesty and the princess Haiatalnefous are so weighty, I can refuse her nothing.” The prince was then proclaimed king, and married the same day with all possible demonstrations of joy; and had every reason to be well pleased with the princess Haiatalnefous’s beauty, wit, and love for him.

The two queens lived together afterwards on the same friendly terms and in the same cordiality as they had done before, both being contented with Kummir al Zummaun’s equal carriage towards them.

The next year each brought him a son at the same time, and the births of the two princes were celebrated with extraordinary rejoicings: the first, whom the princess Badoura was delivered of, was named Amgiad (most illustrious); and the other, born of queen Haiatalnefous, Assad (most virtuous).

The Story of the Princes Amgiad and Assad.

The two princes were brought up with great care; and, when they were old enough, had the same governor, the same instructors in the arts and sciences, and the same master for each exercise. The affection which from their infancy they conceived for each other occasioned an uniformity of manners and inclination, which increased it. When they were of an age to have separate households, they loved one another so tenderly, that they begged the king to let them live together. He consented, and they had the same domestics, the same equipages, the same apartment, and the same table. Kummir al Zummaun had formed so good an opinion of their capacity and integrity, that he made no scruple of admitting them into his council at the age of eighteen, and letting them, by turns, preside there, while he took the diversion of hunting, or amused himself with his queens at his houses of pleasure.

The princes being equally handsome, the two queens loved them with incredible tenderness; but the princess Badoura had a greater kindness for prince Assad, queen Haiatalnefous's son, than for her own; and queen Haiatalnefous loved Amgiad, the princess Badoura's son, better than her own son Assad.

The two queens thought at first this inclination was nothing but a regard which proceeded from an excess of their own friendship for each other, which they still preserved: but as the two princes advanced in years, that friendship grew into a violent love, when they appeared in their eyes to possess graces that blinded their reason. They knew how criminal their passion was, and did all they could to resist it; but the familiar intercourse with them, and the habit of admiring, praising, and caressing them from their infancy, which they could not restrain when they grew up, inflamed their desires to such a height as to overcome their reason and virtue. It was their and the princes' ill-fortune, that the latter being used to be so treated by them, had not the least suspicion of their infamous passion.

The two queens had not concealed from each other this passion, but had not the boldness to declare it to the princes they loved; they at last resolved to do it by a letter, and to execute their wicked design, availed themselves of the king's absence, when he was gone on a hunting party for three or four days.

Prince Amgiad presided at the council on the day of his father's departure, and administered justice till two or three o'clock in the afternoon. As he returned to the palace from the council-chamber, an eunuch took him aside, and gave him a letter from queen Haiatalnefous. Amgiad took it, and read it with horror. "Traitor," said he, to the eunuch as soon as he had perused it through, "is this the fidelity thou owest thy master and thy king?" At these words he drew his sabre and cut off his head.

Having done this in a transport of anger he ran to the princess Badoura his mother, shewed her the letter, told her the contents of it, and from whom it came. Instead of hearkening to him, she fell into a passion, and said, "Son, it is all a calumny and imposture; queen Haiatalnefous is a very discreet princess, and you are very bold to talk to me against her." The prince, enraged at his mother, exclaimed, "You are both equally wicked, and were it not for the respect I owe my father, this day should have been the last of Haiatalnefous's life."

Queen Badoura might have imagined by the example of her son Amgiad, that prince Assad, who was not less virtuous, would not receive more favourably a declaration of love, similar to that which had been made to his brother. Yet that did not hinder her persisting in her abominable design; she, the next day, wrote him a letter, which she entrusted to an old woman who had access to the palace, to convey to him.

The old woman watched her opportunity to put it into his hands as he was coming from the council-chamber, where he presided that day in his turn. The prince took it, and reading it, fell into such a rage, that, without giving himself time to finish it, he drew his sabre and punished the old woman as she deserved. He ran immediately to the apartment of his mother queen Haiatalnefous, with the letter in his hand: he would have shewn it to her, but she did not give him time, crying out, "I know what you mean; you are as impertinent as your brother Amgiad: be gone, and never come into my presence again."

Assad stood as one thunder-struck at these words, so little expected. He was so enraged, that he had like to have given fatal demonstrations of his anger; but he contained himself, and withdrew without making any reply, fearing if he stayed he might say something unworthy the greatness of his soul. Amgiad had not mentioned to him the letter which he had received the preceding day; and finding by what his mother had said to him that she was altogether as criminal as queen Haiatalnefous, he went to his brother, to chide him for not communicating the hated secret to him, and to mingle his own sorrow with his.

The two queens, rendered desperate by finding in the two princes such virtue as should have made them look inwardly on themselves, renounced all sentiments of nature and of mothers and conspired together to destroy them. They made their women believe the two princes had attempted their virtue: they counterfeited the matter to the life by their tears, cries, and curses; and lay in the same bed, as if the resistance they pretended to have made had reduced them almost to death's-door.

When Kummir al Zummaun returned to the palace from hunting, he was much surprised to find them in bed together, in tears, acting despondency so well, that he was touched with compassion. He asked them with earnestness what had happened to them.

At this question, the dissembling queens wept and sobbed more bitterly than before; and after he had pressed them again and again to tell him, queen Badoura at last answered him: "Sir, our grief is so well founded, that we ought not to see the light of the sun, or live a day, after the violence that has been offered us by the unparalleled brutality of the princes your sons. They formed a horrid design, encouraged by your absence, and had the boldness and insolence to attempt our honour. Your majesty will excuse us from saying any more; you may guess the rest by our affliction."

The king sent for the two princes, and would have killed them both with his own hand, had not old king Armanos his father-in-law, who was present, held his hand: "Son," said he, "what are you going to do? Will you stain your hands and your palace with your own blood? There are other ways of punishing them, if they are really guilty."

He endeavoured thus to appease him, and desired him to examine whether they did indeed commit the crime of which they were accused.

It was no difficult matter for Kummir al Zummaun to restrain himself so far as not to butcher his own children. He ordered them to be put under arrest, and sent for an emir called Jehaun-dar, whom he commanded to conduct them out of the city, and put them to death, at a great distance, and in what place he pleased, but not to see him again, unless he brought their clothes with him, as a token of his having executed his orders.

Jehaun-dar travelled with them all night, and early next morning made them alight, telling them, with tears in his eyes, the commands he had received. "Believe me, princes," said he, "it is a trying duty imposed on me by your father, to execute this cruel order: would to heaven I could avoid it!" The princes replied, "Do your duty; we know well you are not the cause of our death, and forgive you with all our hearts."

They then embraced, and bade each other a last adieu with so much tenderness, that it was a long time before they could leave one another's arms. Prince Assad was the first who prepared himself for the fatal stroke. "Begin with me," said he "that I may not have the affliction to see my dear brother Amgiad die." To this Amgiad objected; and Jehaun-dar could not, without weeping more than before, be witness of this dispute between them; which shewed how perfect and sincere was their affection.

At last they determined the contest, by desiring Jehaun-dar to tie them together, and put them in the most convenient posture for him to give them the fatal stroke at one blow. "Do not refuse the comfort of dying together to two unfortunate brothers, who from their birth have shared every thing, even their innocence," said the generous princes.

Jehaun-dar granted their request; he tied them to each other, breast to breast; and when he had placed them so that he thought he might strike the blow with more certainty, asked them if they had any thing to command him before they died.

"We have only one thing to desire of you," replied the princes, "which is, to assure the king our father on your return, that we are innocent; but that we do not charge him with our deaths, knowing he is not well informed of the truth of the crime of which we are accused."

Jehaun-dar promised to do what they desired and drew his sabre, when his horse, being tied to a tree just by, started at the sight of the sabre, which glittered against the sun, broke his bridle, and ran away into the country.

He was a very valuable horse, and so richly caparisoned, that the emir could not bear the loss of him. This accident so vexed him, that instead of beheading the two princes, he threw away his sabre, and ran after his horse.

The horse galloped on before him, and led him several miles into a wood. Jehaun-dar followed him, and the horse's neighing roused a lion that was asleep. The lion started up, and instead of running after the horse, made directly towards Jehaun-dar, who thought no more of his horse, but how to save his life. He ran into the thickest of the wood, the lion keeping him in view, pursuing him among the trees. In this extremity he said to himself, "Heaven had not punished me in this manner, but to shew the innocence of the princes whom I was commanded to put to death; and now, to my misfortune, I have not my sabre to defend myself."

While Jehaun-dar was gone, the two princes were seized with a violent thirst, occasioned by the fear of death, notwithstanding their noble resolution to submit to the king their father's cruel order.

Prince Amgiad told the prince his brother there was a spring not far off. "Ah! brother," said Assad, "we have so little time to live, what need have we to quench our thirst? We can bear it a few minutes longer."

Amgiad taking no notice of his brother's remonstrance, unbound himself, and the prince his brother. They went to the spring, and having refreshed themselves, heard the roaring of the lion. They also heard Jehaun-dar's dreadful cries in the wood, which he and the horse had entered. Amgiad took up the sabre which lay on the ground, saying to Assad, "Come, brother, let us go and save the unfortunate Jehaun-dar; perhaps we may arrive soon enough to deliver him from the danger to which he is now exposed."

The two princes ran to the wood, and entered it just as the lion was going to fall on Jehaun-dar. The beast seeing prince Amgiad advancing towards him with a sabre in his hand, left his prey, and rushed towards him with great fury. The prince met him intrepidly, and gave him a blow so forcibly and dexterously, that it felled him to the ground.

When Jehaun-dar saw that he owed his life to the two princes, he threw himself at their feet, and thanked them for the obligation, in words which sufficiently testified his gratitude. “Princes,” said he, rising up and kissing their hands, with tears in his eyes, “God forbid that ever I should attempt any thing against your lives, after you have so kindly and bravely saved mine. It shall never be said that the emir Jehaun-dar was guilty of such ingratitude.”

“The service we have done you,” answered the princes, “ought not to prevent you from executing the orders you have received: let us first catch your horse, and then return to the place where you left us.” — They were at no great trouble to take the horse, whose mettle was abated with running. When they had restored him to Jehaun-dar, and were come near the fountain, they begged of him to do as their father had commanded; but all to no purpose. “I only take the liberty to desire,” said Jehaun-dar, “and I pray you not to deny me, that you will divide my clothes between you, and give me yours; and go to such a distance, that the king your father may never hear of you more.”

The princes were forced to comply with his request. Each of them gave him his clothes, and covered themselves with what he could spare them of his. He also gave them all the money he had about him, and took his leave of them.

After the emir Jehaun-dar had parted from the princes, he passed through the wood where Amgiad had killed the lion, in whose blood he dipped their clothes: which having done, he proceeded on his way to the capital of the isle of Ebene.

On his arrival there, Kummir al Zummaun inquired if he had done as commanded? Jehaun-dar replied, “Behold, sir, the proofs of my obedience;” giving him at the same time the princes’ clothes.

“How did they bear their punishment?” Jehaun-dar answered, “With wonderful constancy and resignation to the decrees of heaven, which shewed how sincerely they made profession of their religion: but particularly with great respect towards your majesty, and an inconceivable submission to the sentence of death. ‘We die innocent,’ said they; ‘but we do not murmur: we take our death from the hand of heaven, and forgive our father; for we know he has not been rightly informed of the truth.'"

Kummir al Zummaun was sensibly touched at Jehaun-dar's relation. A thought occurred to him to search the princes' pockets; he began with prince Amgiad's where he found a letter open, which he read. He no sooner recognized the hand-writing than he was chilled with horror. He then, trembling, put his hand into that of Assad, and finding there queen Badoura's letter, his horror was so great, that he fainted.

Never was grief equal to Kummir all Zummaun's, when he recovered from his fit: "Barbarous father," cried he, "what hast thou done? Thou hast murdered thy own children, thy innocent children! Did not their wisdom, their modesty, their obedience, their submission to thy will in all things, their virtue, all plead in their behalf? Blind and insensible father! dost thou deserve to live after the execrable crime thou hast committed? I have brought this abomination on my own head; and heaven chastises me for not persevering in that aversion to women with which I was born. And, oh ye detestable wives! I will not, no, I will not, as ye deserve, wash off the guilt of your sins with your blood; ye are unworthy of my rage: but I will never see you more!"

Kummir al Zummaun was a man of too much religion to break his vow: he commanded the two queens to be lodged in separate apartments that very day, where they were kept under strong guards, and he never saw them again as long as he lived.

While the king of the isle of Ebene was afflicting himself for the loss of his sons, of whose death he thought he had been the author by his too rashly condemning them, the royal youths wandered through deserts, endeavouring to avoid all places that were inhabited, and shun every human creature. They lived on herbs and wild fruits, and drank only rain-water, which they found in the crevices of the rocks. They slept and watched by turns at night, for fear of wild beasts.

When they had travelled about a month, they came to the foot of a frightful mountain of black stones, and to all appearance inaccessible. They at last espied a kind of path, but so narrow and difficult that they durst not venture to follow it: this obliged them to go along by the foot of the mountain, in hopes of finding a more easy way to reach the summit, but could discover nothing like a path, so they were forced to return to that which they had neglected. They still thought it would be in vain for them to attempt it. They deliberated for a long time what they should do, and at last, encouraging one another, resolved to ascend.

The more they advanced the higher and steeper the mountain appeared, which made them think several times of giving over their enterprise. When the one was weary, the other stopped, and they took breath together; sometimes they were both so tired, that they wanted strength to proceed: then despairing of being able to reach the top they thought they must lie down and die of fatigue and weariness. A few minutes after, when they found they recovered strength, they animated each other and went on.

Notwithstanding all their endeavours, their courage and perseverance, they could not reach the summit that day; night came on, and prince Assad was so spent, that he stopped and said to Amgiad, "Brother, I can go no farther, I am just dying." "Let us rest ourselves," replied prince Amgiad, "as long as you will, and have a good heart: it is but a little way to the top, and the moon befriends us."

They rested about half an hour, and then Assad making a new effort, they ascended what remained of the way to the summit, where they both at last arrived, and lay down. Amgiad rose first, and advancing, saw a tree at a little distance. He went to it, and found it was a pomegranate, with large fruit upon it, and he perceived there was a spring at its foot: he ran to his brother Assad to tell him the good news, and conduct him to the tree by the fountain side. Here they refreshed themselves by eating each a pomegranate, after which they fell asleep.

When they awoke the next morning, "Come, brother," said Amgiad to Assad, "let us go on; I see the mountain is easier to be travelled over on this side than the other, all our way now is down hill." But Assad was so tired with the preceding day's exertions, that he wanted three days' repose to recover himself.

They spent these days as they had done many before, in conversing on their mothers' inordinate passion, which had reduced them to such a deplorable state: but, said they, "Since heaven has so visibly declared itself in our favour, we ought to bear our misfortunes with patience, and comfort ourselves with hopes that we shall see an end of them."

After having rested three days, the two brothers continued their travels. As the mountain on that side was composed of several shelves of extensive flat, they were five days in descending before they came into the plain. They then discovered a large city, at which they rejoiced: "Brother," said Amgiad to Assad, "are not you of my opinion that you should stay in some place out of the city, where I may find you again, while I go and inform myself what country we are in, and when I come back I will bring provisions with me? It may not be safe for us to go there together."

"Brother," replied Assad, "your plan is both safe and prudent, and I approve of what you say but if one of us must part from the other on that account, I will not suffer it shall be you; you must allow me to go; for what shall I suffer, if any accident should befall you?"

"But, brother," answered Amgiad, "the very accident you fear would befall me, I have as much reason to fear would happen to you: I entreat you to let me go, and do you remain here patiently." "I will never consent to this," said Assad; "if any ill happen to me, it will be some comfort to think you are safe." Amgiad was forced to submit, and Assad going towards the city, he stayed under the trees at the foot of the mountain.

Prince Assad took the purse of money which Amgiad had in charge, and went forwards towards the city. He had not proceeded far in the first street, before he met with a reverend old man with a cane in his hand. He was neatly dressed, and the prince took him for a man of note in the place, who would not put a trick upon him, so he accosted him thus: "Pray, my lord, which is the way to the market-place?" The old man looked at prince Assad smiling; "Child," said he, "it is plain you are a stranger, or you would not have asked that question."

"Yes, my lord, I am a stranger," replied Assad. The old man answered, "You are welcome then; our country will be honoured by the presence of so handsome a young man as you are: tell me what business you have at the market-place."

"My lord," replied Assad, "it is near two months since my brother and I set out from our own country: we have not ceased travelling, and we arrived here but to-day; my brother, tired with such a long journey, stays at the foot of the mountain, and I am come to buy some provisions for him and myself."

"Son," said the old man, "you could not have come in a better time, and I am glad of it for your and your brother's sake. I made a feast today for some friends of mine: come along with me; you shall eat as much as you please; and when you have done, I will give you enough to last your brother and yourself several days. Do not spend your money, when there is no occasion; travellers are always in want of it: while you are eating I will give you an account of our city, which no one can do better than myself, who have borne all the honourable offices in it. It is well for you that you happen to light upon me; for I must tell you, all our citizens cannot so well assist and inform you. I can assure you some of them are very wicked. Come, you shall see the difference between a real honest man, as I am, and such as boast of being so, and are not."

"I am infinitely obliged to you," replied Assad, "for your kindness; I put myself entirely into your hands, and am ready to go with you where you please."

The old man, as he walked along by his side, laughed inwardly, to think he had got the prince in his clutches; and all the way, lest he should perceive his dissimulation, talked of various subjects, to preserve the favourable opinion Assad had of him. Among other things, he said, "It must be confessed you were very fortunate to have spoken to me, rather than to any one else: I thank God I met with you; you will know why, when you come to my house."

At length they arrived at the residence of the old man, who introduced Assad into a hall, where there were forty such old fellows as himself, who made a circle round a flaming fire, which they were adoring. The prince was not less struck with horror at the sight of so many men mistakenly worshipping the creature for the Creator, than he was with fear at finding himself betrayed into so abominable a place.

While the prince stood motionless with astonishment, the old cheat saluted the forty gray-headed men. "Devout adorers of fire," said he to them, "this is a happy day for us; where is Gazban? call him.”

He spake these words aloud, when a negro who waited at the lower end of the hall immediately came up to him. This black was Gazban, who, as soon as he saw the disconsolate Assad, imagined for what purpose he was called. He rushed upon him immediately, threw him down, and bound his hands with wonderful activity. When he had done, “Carry him down,” said the old man, “and fail not to order my daughters, Bostama and Cavama, to give him every day a severe bastinado, with only a loaf morning and night for his subsistence; this is enough to keep him alive till the next ship departs for the blue sea and the fiery mountain, where he shall be offered up an acceptable sacrifice to our divinity.”

As soon as the old man had given the cruel order, Gazban hurried prince Assad under the hall, through several doors, till they came to a dungeon, down to which led twenty steps; there he left him in chains of prodigious weight and bigness, fastened to his feet. When he had done, he went to give the old man’s daughters notice: but their father had before sent for them, and given them their instructions himself: “Daughters,” said he to them, “go down and give the Mussulmaun I just now brought in the bastinado: do not spare him; you cannot better shew your zeal for the worship of the fire.”

Bostama and Cavama, who were bred up in their hatred to the faithful, received this order with joy. They descended into the dungeon that instant, stripped Assad, and bastinadoed him unmercifully, till the blood issued out of his wounds and he was almost dead. After this cruel treatment, they put a loaf of bread and a pot of water by him, and retired.

Assad did not come to himself again for a long time; when he revived, he burst out into a flood of tears, deploring his misery. His comfort however was, that this misfortune had not happened to his brother.

Amgiad waited for his brother till evening with impatience; as two, three, or four of the clock in the morning arrived, and Assad did not return, he was in despair. He spent the night in extreme uneasiness; and as soon as it was day went to the city, where he was surprised to see but very few Mussulmauns. He accosted the first he met, and asked him the name of the place. He was told it was the city of the Magicians, so called from the great number of magicians, who adored the fire; and that it contained but few Mussulmauns. Amgiad then demanded how far it was to the isle of Ebene? He was answered, four months' voyage by sea, and a year's journey by land. The man he talked to left him hastily, having satisfied him as to these two questions.

Amgiad, who had been but six weeks coming from the isle of Ebene with his brother Assad, could not comprehend how they had reached this city in so short a time, unless it was by enchantment, or that the way across the mountain was a much shorter one, but not frequented because of its difficulty.

Going farther into the town, he stopped at a tailor's shop, whom he knew to be a Mussulmaun by his dress. Having saluted him, he sat down, and told him the occasion of the trouble he was in.

When prince Amgiad had done talking, the tailor replied, "If your brother has fallen into the hands of some magicians, depend upon it you will never see him more. He is lost past all recovery; and I advise you to comfort yourself as well as you can, and to beware of falling into the same misfortune: to which end, if you will take my advice, you shall stay at my house, and I will tell you all the tricks of these magicians, that you may take care of yourself, when you go out." Amgiad, afflicted for the loss of his brother, accepted the tailor's offer and thanked him a thousand times for his kindness to him.

The Story of the Prince Amgiad and a Lady of the City of the Magicians.

For a whole month prince Amgiad never went out of the tailor's house without being accompanied by his host. At last he ventured to go alone to the bath. As he was returning home, he met a lady on the way. Seeing a handsome young man, she lifted up her veil, asked him with a smiling air, and bewitching look, whither he was going? Amgiad was overpowered by her charms, and replied, "Madam, I am going to my own house, or, if you please, I will go to yours."

"My lord," resumed the lady, with a smile, "ladies of my quality never take men to their houses, they always accompany them to theirs."

Amgiad was much perplexed by this unexpected reply. He durst not venture to take her home to his landlord's house, lest he should give him offence, and thereby lose his protection, of which he had so much need, in a city which required him to be always on his guard. He knew so little of the town, that he could not tell where to convey her, and he could not make up his mind to suffer the adventure to go unimproved. In this uncertainty, he determined to throw himself upon chance; and without making any answer, went on, and the lady followed him. Amgiad led her from street to street, from square to square, till they were both weary with walking. At last they entered a street, at the end of which was a closed gateway leading to a handsome mansion. On each side of the gateway was a bench. Amgiad sat down on one of them, as if to take breath: and the lady, more weary than he, seated herself on the other.

When she had taken her seat, she asked him, whether that was his house? "You see it, madam," said Amgiad. "Why do you not open the gate then," demanded the lady; "what do you wait for?" "Fair lady," answered Amgiad, "I have not the key; I left it with my slave, when I sent him on an errand, and he cannot be come back yet: besides, I ordered him afterwards to provide something good for dinner; so that I am afraid we shall wait a long time for him."

The prince, meeting with so many obstacles to the satisfying of his passion, began to repent of having proceeded so far, and contrived this answer, in hopes that the lady would take the hint, would leave him out of resentment, and seek elsewhere for a lover; but he was mistaken.

"This is a most impertinent slave," said the lady, "to make us wait so long. I will chastise him myself as he deserves, if you do not, when he comes back. It is not decent that I should sit here alone with a man." Saying this, she arose, and took up a stone to break the lock, which was only of wood, and weak, according to the fashion of the country.

Amgiad gave himself over for a lost man, when he saw the door forced open. He paused to consider whether he should go into the house or make off as fast as he could, to avoid the danger which he believed was inevitable; and he was going to fly when the lady returned.

Seeing he did not enter, she asked, “Why do not you come into your house?” The prince answered, “I am looking to see if my slave is coming, fearing we have nothing ready.” “Come in, come in,” resumed she, “we had better wait for him within doors than without.”

Amgiad, much against his will, followed her into the house. Passing through a spacious court, neatly paved, they ascended by several steps into a grand vestibule, which led to a large open hall very well furnished, where he and the lady found a table ready spread with all sorts of delicacies, another heaped with fruit, and a sideboard covered with bottles of wine.

When Amgiad beheld these preparations, he gave himself up for lost. “Unfortunate Amgiad,” said he to himself, “thou wilt soon follow thy dear brother Assad.”

The lady, on the contrary, transported at the sight, exclaimed, “How, my lord, did you fear there was nothing ready? You see your slave has done more than you expected. But, if I am not mistaken, these preparations were made for some other lady, and not for me: no matter, let her come, I promise you I will not be jealous; I only beg the favour of you to permit me to wait on her and you.”

Amgiad, greatly as he was troubled at this accident, could not help laughing at the lady’s pleasantry. “Madam,” said he, thinking of something else that tormented his mind, “there is nothing in what you imagine; this is my common dinner, and no extraordinary preparation, I assure you.” As he could not bring himself to sit down at a table which was not provided for him, he would have taken his seat on a sofa, but the lady would not permit him. “Come, sir,” said she, “you must be hungry after bathing, let us eat and enjoy ourselves.”

Amgiad was forced to comply: they both sat down, and began to regale themselves. After having taken a little, the lady took a bottle and glass, poured out some wine, and when she had drunk herself, filled another glass, and gave it to Amgiad, who pledged her. The more the prince reflected on this adventure, the more he was amazed that the master of the house did not appear; and that a mansion, so rich and well provided, should be left without a servant. “It will be fortunate,” said he to himself, “if the master of the house do not return till I am got clear of this intrigue.” While he was occupied with these thoughts, and others more troublesome, she ate and drank heartily, and obliged him to do the same. Just as they were proceeding to the dessert, the master of the house arrived.

It happened to be Bahader, master of the horse to the king of the magicians. This mansion belonged to him, but he commonly resided in another; and seldom came to this, unless to regale himself with two or three chosen friends He always sent provisions from his other house on such occasions, and had done so this day by some of his servants, who were just gone when the lady and Amgiad entered.

Bahader came as he used to do, in disguise, and without attendants, and a little before the time appointed for the assembling of his friends. He was not a little surprised to find the door broken open; he entered, making no noise, and hearing some persons talking and making merry in the hall, he stole along under the wall, and put his head half way within the door to see who they were.

Perceiving a young man and a young lady eating at his table the victuals that had been provided for his friends and himself, and that there was no great harm done, he resolved to divert himself with the adventure.

The lady’s back was a little turned towards him, and she did not see the master of the horse, but Amgiad perceived him immediately. The glass was at the time in his hand, and he was going to drink; he changed colour at the sight of Bahader, who made a sign to him not to say a word, but to come and speak to him.

Amgiad drank and rose: “Where are you going?” inquired the lady. The prince answered, “Pray, madam, stay here a little; I shall return directly.” Bahader waited for him in the vestibule, and led him into the court to talk to him without being overheard by the lady.

When Bahader and Amgiad were in the court, Bahader demanded of the prince, how the lady came into his house? and why they broke open his door? “My lord,” replied Amgiad, “you may very reasonably think me guilty of a very unwarrantable action: but if you will have patience to hear me, I hope I shall convince you of my innocence.” He then related, in a few words, what had happened, without disguising any part of the truth; and to shew him that he was not capable of committing such an action as to break into a house, told him he was a prince, and informed him of the reason of his coming to the city of the magicians.

Bahader, who was a good man, was pleased with an opportunity of obliging one of Amgiad's rank: for by his air, his actions, and his well-turned conversation, he did not in the least doubt the truth of what he had asserted. "Prince," said Bahader, "I am glad I can oblige you in so pleasant an adventure. Far from disturbing the feast, it will gratify me to contribute to your satisfaction in any thing. Before I say any more on this subject, I must inform you my name is Bahader; I am master of the horse to the king of the magicians; I commonly reside in another house, which I have in the city, and come here sometimes to have the more liberty with my friends. You have made this lady believe you have a slave, though you have none; I will personate that slave, and that this may not make you uneasy, and to prevent your excuses, I repeat again, that I will positively have it to be so; you will soon know my reason. Go to your place, and continue to divert yourself. When I return again, and come to you in a slave's habit, chide me for staying so long, do not be afraid even to strike me. I will wait upon you while you are at table till night; you shall sleep here, and so shall the lady, and to-morrow morning you may send her home with honour. I shall afterwards endeavour to do you more important services: go, and lose no time." Amgiad would have made him an answer, but the master of the horse would not suffer him, forcing him to return to the lady. He had scarcely reentered the hall before Bahader's friends, whom he had invited, arrived. Bahader excused himself for not entertaining them that day, telling them they would approve of his reason when they should be informed of it, which they should be in due time. When they were gone, he went and dressed himself in a slave's habit.

Prince Amgiad returned to the lady much pleased at finding the house belonged to a man of quality, who had received him so courteously. When he sat down again, he said, "Madam, I beg a thousand pardons for my rudeness. I was vexed that my slave should tarry so long; the rascal shall pay for it when he comes: I will teach him to make me wait so for him."

"Let not that trouble you," said the lady. "The evil is his; if he is guilty of any faults, let him pay for it: but do not let us think of him, we will enjoy ourselves without him."

They continued at the table with the more pleasure, as Amgiad was under no apprehensions of the consequence of the lady's indiscretion in breaking open the door. The prince was now as merry as the lady: they said a thousand pleasant things, and drank more than they ate, till Bahader arrived in his disguise.

Bahader entered like a slave who feared his master's displeasure for staying out when he had company with him. He fell down at his feet and kissed the ground, to implore his clemency; and when he had done, stood behind him with his hands across, waiting his commands.

"Sirrah," said Amgiad, with a fierce tone, and angry look, "where have you been? What have you been doing, that you came no sooner?"

"My lord," replied Bahader, "I ask your pardon; I was executing your orders, and did not think you would return home so early."

"You are a rascal," said Amgiad, "and I will break your bones, to teach you to lie, and disappoint me." He then rose up, took a stick, and gave him two or three slight blows; after which he sat down again.

The lady was not satisfied with this chastisement. She also rose, took the stick, and fell upon Bahader so unmercifully, that the tears came into his eyes. Amgiad, offended to the last degree at the freedom she took, and that she should use one of the king's chief officers so ill, called out to her in vain to forbear. "Let me alone," said she "I will give him enough, and teach him to be absent so long another time." She continued beating him with great fury, till Amgiad rose from the table, and forced the stick out of her hand which she did not relinquish without much struggling. When she found she could beat Bahader no longer, she sat down, railed at and cursed him.

Bahader wiped his eyes, and stood up to fill out wine When he saw they had done eating and drinking, he took away the cloth, cleared the hall, put every thing in its place; and night coming on, lighted up the lamps. Every time he came in, or went out, the lady muttered, threatened him, and gave him abusive language, to Amgiad's great regret, who would have hindered her, but could not.

When it was time for them to retire to bed, Bahader prepared one for them on the sofa, and withdrew into a chamber, where he laid himself down, and soon fell asleep, having been fatigued with his beating. Amgiad and the lady entertained one another for some time afterwards. The lady before she went to bed having occasion to go to another part of the house, passing through the vestibule, heard Bahader snore, and having seen a sabre hanging up in the hall, turned back, and said to Amgiad, "My lord, as you love me, do one thing for me." "In what can I serve you?" asked the prince. "Oblige me so far as to take down this sabre and cut off your slave's head." Amgiad was astonished at such a proposal from a lady, and made no doubt but it was the wine she had drunk that induced her to make it. "Madam," said he, "let us suffer him to rest, he is not worthy of your farther notice: I have beaten him, and you have beaten him: that ought to be sufficient; besides, I am in other respects well satisfied with him."

"That shall not satisfy me," replied the lady, in a violent passion; "the rascal shall die, if not by your hands, by mine." As she spoke, she took down the sabre from the place where it hung, drew it out of the scabbard, and prepared to execute her wicked design.

Amgiad met her in the vestibule, saying, "You shall be satisfied, madam, since you will have it so; but I should be sorry that any one besides myself should kill my slave." When she had given him the sabre, "Come, follow me," said he; "make no noise, lest we should awaken him." They went into Bahader's chamber, where Amgiad, instead of striking him, aimed his blow at the lady, and cut off her head, which fell upon Bahader.

Bahader was awakened by the head of the lady falling upon him. He was amazed to see Amgiad standing by him with a bloody sabre, and the body of the lady lying headless on the ground. The prince told him what had passed, and said, "I had no other way to prevent this furious woman from killing you, but to take away her life." "My lord," replied Bahader, full of gratitude, "persons of your rank and generosity are incapable of doing such a wicked action: as she desired of you. You are my deliverer, and I cannot sufficiently thank you." After having embraced him, to evince the sense he entertained of his obligations to him, he said, "We must carry this corpse out before it is quite day; leave it to me, I will do it.” Amgiad would not consent to this, saying, “He would carry it away himself, since he had struck the blow.” Bahader replied, “You are a stranger in this city, and cannot do it so well as one who is acquainted with the place. I must do it, if for no other reason, yet for the safety of both of us, to prevent our being questioned about her death. Remain you here, and if I do not return before day, you may be sure the watch has seized me; and for fear of the worst, I will by writing give this house and furniture for your habitation.”

When he had written, signed, and delivered the paper to prince Amgiad, he put the lady’s body in a bag, head and all; laid it on his shoulder, and went out with it from one street to another, taking the way to the sea-side. He had not proceeded far before he met one of the judges of the city, who was going the rounds in person. Bahader was stopped by the judge’s followers, who, opening the bag, found the body of a murdered lady, bundled up with the head. The judge, who knew the master of the horse notwithstanding his disguise, took him home to his house, and not daring to put him to death without telling the king, on account of his rank, carried him to court as soon as it was day. When the king had been informed by the judge of the crime Bahader had, as he believed from the circumstances, committed, he addressed himself to the master of the horse as follows: “It is thus then that thou murderess my subjects, to rob them, and then wouldst throw their dead bodies into the sea, to hide thy villainy? Let us get rid of him; execute him immediately.”

Innocent as Bahader was, he received sentence of death with resignation, and said not a word in his justification. The judge carried him to his house, and while the pale was preparing, sent a crier to publish throughout the city, that at noon the master of the horse was to be impaled for a murder.

Prince Amgiad, who had in vain expected Bahader’s return, was struck with consternation when he heard the crier publish the approaching execution of the master of the horse. “If,” said he to himself, “any one ought to die for the murder of such a wicked woman, it is I, and not Bahader; I will never suffer an innocent man to be punished for the guilty.” Without deliberating, he then hastened to the place of execution, whither the people were running from all parts.

When Amgiad saw the judge bringing Bahader to the pale, he went up to him, and said, “I am come to assure you, that the master of the horse, whom you are leading to execution, is wholly innocent of the lady’s death; I alone am guilty of the crime, if it be one, to have killed a detestable woman, who would have murdered Bahader.” He then related to him how it had happened.

The prince having informed the judge of the manner in which he had met her coming from the bath; how she had occasioned his going into the master of the horse’s pleasure-house, and all that had passed to the moment in which he was forced to cut off her head, to save Bahader’s life; the judge ordered execution to be stopped, and conducted Amgiad to the king, taking the master of the horse with them.

The king wished to hear the story from Amgiad himself; and the prince, the better to prove his own innocence and that of the master of the horse, embraced the opportunity to discover who he was, and what had driven him and his brother Assad to that city, with all the accidents that had befallen them, from their departure from the Isle of Ebene.

The prince having finished his account, the king said to him, “I rejoice that I have by this means been made acquainted with you; I not only give you your own life, and that of my master of the horse, whom I commend for his kindness to you, but I restore him to his office; and as for you, prince, I declare you my grand vizier, to make amends for your father’s unjust usage, though it is also excusable, and I permit you to employ all the authority with which I now invest you to find out prince Assad.”

Amgiad having thanked the king for the honour he had done him, on taking possession of his office of grand vizier used every possible means to find out the prince his brother. He ordered the common criers to promise a great reward to any who should discover him, or give any tidings of him. He sent men up and down the country to the same purpose; but in vain.

Assad in the meanwhile continued in the dungeon in chains; Bostama and Cavama, the cunning old conjuror’s daughters, treating him daily with the same cruelty and inhumanity as at first.

The solemn festival of the adorers of fire approached; and a ship was fitted out for the fiery mountain as usual: the captain's name was Behram, a great bigot to his religion. He loaded it with proper merchandize; and when it was ready to sail, put Assad in a chest, which was half full of goods, a few crevices being left between the boards to give him air.

Before the ship sailed, the grand vizier Amgiad, who had been told that the adorers of fire used to sacrifice a Mussulmaun every year on the fiery mountain, suspecting that Assad might have fallen into their hands, and be designed for a victim, resolved to search the ship in person. He ordered all the passengers and seamen to be brought upon deck, and commanded his men to search all over the ship, which they did, but Assad could not be found, he was so well concealed.

When the grand vizier had done searching the vessel, she sailed. As soon as Behram was got out to sea, he ordered prince Assad to be taken out of the chest, and fettered, to secure him, lest he should throw himself into the sea in despair since he knew he was going to be sacrificed.

The wind was very favourable for a few days, after which there arose a furious storm. The vessel was driven out of her course, so that neither Behram nor his pilot knew where they were. They were afraid of being wrecked on the rocks, for in the violence of the storm they discovered land, and a dangerous shoal before them. Behram perceived that he was driven into the port and capital of queen Margiana, which occasioned him great mortification.

This queen Margiana was a devout professor of the Mahummedan faith, and a mortal enemy to the adorers of fire. She had banished all of them out of her dominions, and would not suffer their ships to touch at her ports.

It was no longer in the power of Behram to avoid putting into the harbour, for he had no alternative but to be dashed to pieces against the frightful rocks that lay off the shore. In this extremity he held a council with his pilot and seamen. "My lads," said he, "you see to what a necessity we are reduced. We must choose one of two things; either to resolve to be swallowed up by the waves, or put into queen Margiana's port, whose hatred to all persons of our religion you well know. She will certainly seize our vessel and put us all to death, without mercy. I see but one way to escape her, which is, to take off the fetters from the Mussulmaun we have aboard, and dress him like a slave. When queen Margiana commands me to come before her, and asks what trade I follow, I will tell her I deal in slaves; that I have sold all I had, but one, whom I keep to be my clerk, because he can read and write. She will by this means see him, and he being handsome, and of her own religion, will have pity on him. No doubt she will then ask to buy him of me, and on this account will let us stay in the port till the weather is fair. If any of you have any thing else to propose that will be preferable, I am ready to attend to it." The pilot and seamen applauded his judgment, and agreed to follow his advice.

Behram commanded prince Assad's chains to be taken off, and had him neatly habited like a slave, as became one who was to pass for his clerk before the queen of the country. They had scarcely time to do this, before the ship drove into the port, and dropped anchor.

Queen Margiana's palace was so near the sea, that her garden extended down to the shore. She saw the ship anchor, and sent to the captain to come to her, and the sooner to satisfy her curiosity waited for him in her garden.

Behram landed with prince Assad, whom he required to confirm what he had said of his being a slave, and his clerk. When he was introduced to the queen, he threw himself at her feet, and informed her of the necessity he was under to put into her port: that he dealt in slaves, and had sold all he had but one, who was Assad, whom he kept for his clerk.

The queen was taken with Assad from the moment she first saw him, and was extremely glad to hear that he was a slave; resolving to buy him, cost what he would. She asked Assad what was his name.

"Great queen," he replied, with tears in his eyes, "does your majesty ask what my name was formerly, or what it is now?" The queen answered, "Have you two names then?" "Alas! I have," said Assad: "I was once called Assad (most happy); and now my name is Motar" (devoted to be sacrificed).

Margiana not being able to comprehend the meaning of his answer, interpreted it to refer to his condition of a slave. "Since you are clerk to the captain," said she, "no doubt you can write well; let me see your hand."

Behram had furnished Assad with pen, ink, and paper, as a token of his office, that the queen might take him for what he designed she should.

The prince stepped a little aside, and wrote as follows, suitable to his wretched circumstances:

"The blind man avoids the ditch into which the clear-sighted falls. Fools advance themselves to honours, by discourses which signify nothing, while men of sense and eloquence live in poverty and contempt. The Mussulmaun with all his riches is miserable. The infidel triumphs. We cannot hope things will be otherwise. The Almighty has decreed it shall be so."

Assad presented the paper to queen Margiana, who admired alike the moral of the sentences, and the goodness of the writing. She needed no more to have her heart inflamed, and to feel a sincere concern for his misfortunes. She had no sooner read the lines, than she addressed herself to Behram, saying, "Do which you will, either sell me this slave, or make me a present of him; perhaps it will turn most to your account to do the latter."

Behram answered insolently, that he could neither give nor sell him; that he wanted his slave, and would keep him.

Queen Margiana, provoked at his rudeness, would not talk to him any more on the subject. She took the prince by the arm, and turned him before her to the palace, sending Behram word, that if he stayed the night in her port, she would confiscate his goods, and burn his ship. He was therefore forced to return to his vessel, and prepare to put to sea again, notwithstanding the tempest had not yet subsided.

Queen Margiana, on entering her palace, commanded supper to be got ready; and while it was providing, she ordered Assad to be brought into her apartment, where she bade him sit down. Assad would have excused himself: "It becomes not a slave," said he, "to presume to this honour."

"To a slave!" replied the queen: "you were so a moment ago; henceforward you are no more a slave. Sit down near me, and tell me the story of your life; for by what you wrote, and the insolence of that slave-merchant, I guess there is something extraordinary in your history.”

Prince Assad obeyed her; and sitting down, began thus: “Mighty queen, your majesty is not mistaken, in thinking there is something extraordinary in the story of my life: it is indeed more so than you can imagine. The ills, the incredible torments I have suffered, and the death to which I was devoted, and from which I am delivered by your royal generosity, will shew the greatness of my obligation to you, never to be forgotten. But before I enter into particulars of my miseries, which will strike horror into the hearts of all that hear them, I must trace the origin of them to its source.”

This preamble increased queen Margiana’s curiosity. The prince then told her of his royal birth; of his brother Amgiad, and their mutual friendship; of their mothers’ criminal passion, the cause of all their sufferings; of the king his father’s rage; how miraculously their lives were saved; how he had lost his brother; how he had been long imprisoned and tortured, and was devoted to be sacrificed on the fiery mountain.

When Assad had finished his recital’ the queen was more than ever enraged at the adorers of fire. “Prince,” said she, “though I have always had an aversion to the adorers of fire, yet hitherto I have had some humanity for them: but after their barbarous usage of you, and their execrable design to sacrifice you, I will henceforth wage perpetual war against them.”

She was proceeding, but supper being served in, she made prince Assad sit down at table with her, being charmed with his beauty and eloquence, and touched with a passion which she hoped soon to have an opportunity of making known to him “Prince,” said she, “we must make you amends for so many fasts and wretched meals, to which the pitiless adorers of fire made you submit; you must want nourishment after such sufferings.” With conversation of this kind she helped him at supper; and ordered him to drink a good deal of wine to recover his spirits; by which means he drank more than he could well bear.

The cloth being taken away, Assad having occasion to go out, took an opportunity when the queen did not observe him. He descended into the court, and seeing the garden-door open, went into it. Being tempted by the pleasantness of the place, he walked there for some time. At last he came to a fountain, where he washed his face and hands to refresh himself, and lying down on the turf by the fountain, fell asleep.

Behram, to prevent the queen from executing her threats, had weighed anchor, vexed at the loss of Assad, by which he was disappointed of a most acceptable sacrifice. He comforted himself as well as he could, with the thoughts that the storm was over, and that a land breeze favoured his getting off the coast. As soon as he was towed out of the port by the help of his boat, before it was hoisted up into the ship again, "Stop, my lads," said he to the seamen, "do not come on board yet; I will give you some casks to fill with water, and wait for you." Behram had observed, while he was talking to the queen in the garden, that there was a fountain at the end of it, near the port. "Go," said he, "land before the palace-garden; the wall is not above breast high, you may easily get over; there is a basin in the middle of the garden, where you may fill all your barrels, and hand them aboard without difficulty."

The sailors went ashore at the place he directed them to, and laying their casks on their shoulders easily got over the wall.

As they approached the basin, they perceived a man sleeping on the grass, and knew him to be Assad. They immediately divided themselves; and while some of the crew filled their barrels with as little noise as possible, others surrounded Assad, and watched to seize him if he should awake.

He slept on undisturbed, giving them time to fill all their casks; which they afterwards handed over the wall to others of the crew who waited to carry them aboard.

They next seized Assad, and conveyed him away, without giving him time to recollect himself. They got him over the wall into their boat with the casks, and rowed to the ship. When they drew near her they cried out for joy, "Captain, sound your trumpets, beat your drums, we have brought you your slave."

Behram, who could not imagine how the seamen could find and take him again, and did not see Assad in the boat, it being night, waited their arrival with impatience, to ask what they meant; but when he saw him, he could not contain himself for joy. He commanded him to be chained, without staying to inquire how they came by him; and having hoisted the boat on board, set sail for the fiery mountain.

In the meanwhile queen Margiana was in alarm. She was not at first apprehensive when she found prince Assad was gone out, because she did not doubt but he would soon return When some time had passed without his appearing, she began to be uneasy, and commanded her women to look for him. They sought for him in every direction, and at night renewed their search by torch-light, but all to no purpose.

Queen Margiana was so impatient and alarmed, that she went herself with lights, and finding the garden-door open, entered, and walked all over it with her women to seek for him. Passing by the fountain and basin, she espied a slipper, which she took up, and knew it to be prince Assad's, her women also recognized it to be his. This circumstance, together with the water being spilt about the edge of the basin, induced her to believe that Behram had carried him off. She sent immediately to see if he was still in the port; and hearing he had sailed a little before it was dark, that he lay-to some time off the shore, while he sent his boat for water from the fountain, she sent word to the commander of ten ships of war, which lay always ready in the harbour, to sail on the shortest notice, that she would embark herself next morning as soon as it was day. The commander lost no time, ordered the captains, seamen and soldiers aboard, and was ready to sail at the time appointed. She embarked, and when the squadron was at sea, told the commander her intention. "Make all the sail you can," said she, "and chase the merchantman that sailed last night out of this port. If you capture it, I assign it to you as your property; but if you fail, your life shall answer."

The ten ships chased Behram's vessel two whole days without seeing her. The third day in the morning they discovered her, and at noon had so surrounded her, that she could not escape.

As soon as Behram espied the ten ships of war, he made sure it was queen Margiana's squadron in pursuit of him; and upon that he ordered Assad to be bastinadoed, which he had done every day. He was much perplexed what to do, when he found he was surrounded. To keep Assad, was to declare himself guilty; to kill him was as dangerous, for he feared some marks of the murder might be seen.

He therefore commanded him to be unfettered and brought from the bottom of the hold where he lay. When he came before him, “It is thou,” said he, “that art the cause of my being pursued;” and so saying, he flung him into the sea.

Prince Assad being an expert swimmer, made such good use of his feet and hands, that he reached the shore in safety. The first thing he did after he had landed, was to thank God who had delivered him from so great a danger, and once more rescued him out of the hands of the adorers of fire. He then stripped himself, and wringing the water out of his clothes, spread them on a rock, where, by the heat of the sun, and of the rock, they soon dried. After this he lay down to rest himself, deploring his miserable condition, not knowing in what country he was nor which way to direct his course. He dressed himself again and walked on, keeping as near the sea-side as he could. At last he entered a kind of path, which he followed, and travelled on ten days through an uninhabited country, living on herbs, plants, and wild fruits. At last he approached a city, which he recognized to be that of the magicians, where he had been so ill used and where his brother Amgiad was grand vizier.

He rejoiced to discover where he was, but resolved not to approach any of the adorers of fire, and to converse only with Moosulmauns, for he remembered he had seen some the first time he entered the town. It being late, and knowing the shops were already shut, and few people in the streets, he resolved to remain in a burying ground near the city, where there were several tombs built in the form of mausoleums. He found the door of one of them open, which he entered, designing to pass the night there.

We must now return to Behram’s ship, which, after he had thrown prince Assad overboard, was soon surrounded on all sides by queen Margiana’s squadron. The ship in which queen Margiana was in person first came up with him, and Behram, being in no condition of defence against so many, furled his sails as a mark of his submission.

The queen herself boarded his ship, and demanded where the clerk was, whom he had the boldness to take or cause to be taken out of her palace. Behram replied, “O queen! I swear by your majesty, he is not in my ship; you will, by searching, be convinced of my innocence.”

Margiana ordered the ship to be searched as narrowly as possible, but she could not find the man, whom she so much wished to recover, as well on account of her love for him, as of the generosity for which she was distinguished. She once resolved to kill Behram with her own hand, but refrained, and contented herself with seizing his ship and cargo, and turning him and his men on shore in their boat.

Behram and his seamen arrived at the city of the magicians the same night as Assad, and stopped at the same burying-ground, the city gates being shut, intending to stay in some tomb till the next day, when they should be opened again.

To Assad's misfortune, Behram came to that in which the prince was sleeping with his head wrapped up in his habit, and entered it. Assad awoke at the noise of his footsteps, and demanded who was there.

Behram immediately recognized him. "Hah, hah," said he, "thou art the man who has ruined me for ever; thou hast escaped being sacrificed this year, but depend on it thou shalt not be so fortunate the next." Saying this, he flew upon him, clapped his handkerchief into his mouth to prevent his making a noise, and with the assistance of his seamen bound him.

The next morning as soon as the city gates were open, Behram and his men easily carried Assad through streets, where no one was yet stirring, to the old man's house, where he had been so inhumanly treated. As soon as he was brought in, he was again thrown into the same dungeon. Behram acquainted the old man with the unfortunate circumstances of his return, and the ill success of his voyage. The old savage, upon this, commanded his two daughters Bostama and Cavama to treat him, if possible, more cruelly than before.

Assad was overwhelmed with terror at seeing himself again in the hands of persecutors from whom he had suffered so much, and expected the repetition of the torments from which he hoped that he had been delivered. He was lamenting the severity of his fate, when Bostama entered with a stick in her hand, a loaf and a pitcher of water. He trembled at the sight of this unmerciful wretch, and at the very thoughts of the sufferings he was to endure for another year, at the conclusion of which he was to die the most horrible death.

Bostama treated prince Assad as inhumanly as she had done during his first confinement. But his cries, lamentations, and earnest entreaties to her to spare him, joined with his tears, were so affecting, that she could not help shedding tears. “My lord,” said she, covering his shoulders again, “I ask a thousand pardons for my inhuman treatment of you formerly, and for making you once more feel its effect. Till now I was afraid of disobeying a father, who is unjustly enraged against you, and resolved on your destruction, but at last I abhor this barbarity. Be comforted, your evil days are over. I will endeavour by better treatment to make amends for all my crimes, of the enormity of which you will find I am duly sensible. You have hitherto regarded me as an infidel; henceforth believe me one of your own religion; having been taught it by a slave, I hope your lessons will complete my conversion. To convince you of my sincerity, I first beg pardon of the true God for all my sins, in dealing so cruelly by you, and I trust he will put it in my power to set you entirely at liberty.”

This address afforded the prince much comfort. He thanked the Almighty for the change wrought in her heart, He also thanked her for her favourable disposition towards him, and omitted no arguments which he thought would have any effect in confirming her conversion to the Moosulmaun religion. He afterwards related to her the whole story of his life to that time. When he was fully assured of her good intentions respecting him, he asked her how she could continue to keep her sister Cavama in ignorance of them; and prevent her treating him as barbarously as she used to do? “Let not that trouble you,” replied Bostama; “I know how to order matters so that she shall never come near you.”

She accordingly every day prevented her sister’s coming down into the dungeon, where she often visited the prince. Instead of carrying him bread and water, she now brought him the best wine and the choicest victuals she could procure, which were prepared by her twelve Mahommedan slaves. She ate with him herself from time to time, and did all in her power to alleviate his misfortunes.

A few days afterwards, Bostama, as she stood at her father’s door, observed the public crier making proclamation, but she could not hear what it was about, being too far off. As he was proceeding in the direction of her father's house, she went in, and holding the door half open, perceived that he went before the grand vizier Amgiad, brother to Assad; who was accompanied by several officers, and other attendants.

The crier, a few steps from the house, repeated the proclamation with a loud voice, as follows: "The most excellent and illustrious grand vizier is come in person to seek for his dear brother, from whom he was separated about a year ago. He is a young man of such an appearance; if any one has him in keeping, or knows where he is, his excellency commands that they bring him forth, or give him notice where to find him, promising a great reward to the person that shall give the information. If any one conceal him, and he be hereafter found, his excellency declares' he shall be punished with death, together with his wife, children, and all his family, and his house to be razed to the ground."

Bostama, as soon as she had heard this, shut the door as fast as she could, and ran to Assad in the dungeon. "Prince," said she, with joy, "your troubles are at an end; follow me immediately." She had taken off his fetters the day he was brought in, and the prince followed her into the street, where she cried, "There he is, there he is!"

The grand vizier, who was not far from the house, returned. Assad knew him to be his brother, ran to him, and embraced him. Amgiad, who immediately recollected him, returned his embrace with all possible tenderness; made him mount one of his officers' horses, who alighted for that purpose; and conducted him in triumph to the palace, where he presented him to the king, by whom he was advanced to the post of a vizier.

Bostama not wishing to return to her father's house, which was the next day razed to the ground, was sent to the queen's apartments.

The old man her father, Behram, and all their families were brought before the king, who condemned them to be beheaded. They threw themselves at his feet, and implored his mercy. "There is no mercy for you to expect," said the king, "unless you renounce the adoration of fire, and profess the Mahummedan religion."

They accepted the condition, and were pardoned at the intercession of Assad, in consideration of Bostama's friendship; for whose sake Cavama’s life, and the lives of the rest of their families were saved.

Amgiad, in consideration of Behram turning Mussulmaun, and to compensate for the loss which he had suffered before he deserved his favour, made him one of his principal officers, and lodged him in his house. Behram, being informed of Amgiad and his brother Assad’s story, proposed to his benefactor, to fit out a vessel to convey them to their father’s court: “For,” said he, “the king must certainly have heard of your innocence, and impatiently desire to see you: otherwise we can easily inform him of the truth before we land, and if he is still in the same mind, you can but return.”

The two brothers accepted the proposal, communicated it to the king of the city of the magicians, who approved of it; and commanded a ship to be equipped. Behram undertook the employment cheerfully, and soon got in readiness to sail. The two princes, when they understood the ship was ready, waited upon the king to take leave. While they were making their compliments, and thanking the king for his favours, they were interrupted by a great tumult in the city: and presently an officer came to give them notice that a numerous army was advancing against the city, nobody knowing who they were, or whence they had come.

The king being alarmed at the intelligence, Amgiad addressed him thus: “Sir, though I have just resigned into your majesty’s hands the dignity of your first minister, with which you were pleased to honour me, I am ready to do you all the service in my power. I desire therefore that you would be pleased to let me go and see who this enemy is, that comes to attack you in your capital, without having first declared war.”

The king desired him to do so. Amgiad departed immediately, with a very small retinue, to see what enemy approached, and what was the reason of their coming.

It was not long before prince Amgiad descried the army, which appeared very formidable, and which approached nearer and nearer. The advanced guards received him favourably, and conducted him to a princess, who stopped, and commanded her army to halt, while she talked with the prince; who, bowing profoundly to her, demanded if she came as a friend or an enemy: if as an enemy, what cause of complaint she had against the king his master?

"I come as a friend," replied the princess, "and have no cause of complaint against the king of the city of the magicians. His territories and mine are so situated, that it is almost impossible for us to have any dispute. I only come to require a slave named Assad, to be delivered up to me. He was carried away by one Behram, a captain of a ship belonging to this city, the most insolent man in the world. I hope your king will do me justice, when he knows I am Margiana."

The prince answered, "Mighty queen, the slave whom you take so much pains to seek is my brother: I lost him, and have found him again. Come, and I will deliver him up to you myself; and will do myself the honour to tell you the rest of the story: the king my master will rejoice to see you."

The queen ordered her army to pitch their tents, and encamp where they were; and accompanied prince Amgiad to the city and palace, where he presented her to the king; who received her in a manner becoming her dignity. Assad, who was present, and knew her as soon as he saw her, also paid his respects to her. She appeared greatly rejoiced to see him. While they were thus engaged, tidings came, that an army more powerful than the former approached on the other side of the city.

The king of the magicians was more terrified than before, understanding the second army was more numerous than the first, for he saw this by the clouds of dust they raised, which hid the face of the heavens. "Amgiad," cried he, "what shall we do now? a new army comes to destroy us." Amgiad guessed what the king meant; he mounted on horseback again, and galloped towards the second army. He demanded of the advanced guards to speak with their general, and they conducted him to their king. When he drew near him, he alighted, prostrated himself to the ground, and asked what he required of the king his master.

The monarch replied, "I am Gaiour, king of China; my desire to learn tidings of a daughter, whose name is Badoura, whom I married to Kummir al Zummaun, son of Shaw Zummaun, king of the isles of the children of Khaledan, obliged me to leave my dominions. I suffered that prince to go to see his father, on condition that he came back in a year with my daughter; from that time I have heard nothing of them. Your king will lay an infinite obligation on an afflicted father, by telling him if he knows what is become of them."

Prince Amgiad, perceiving by his discourse that the king was his grandfather, kissed his hand with tenderness, and answered him thus: "I hope your majesty will pardon my freedom, when you know that I only pay my duty to my grandfather. I am the son of Kummir al Zummaun, king of the isle of Ebene, and of queen Badoura, for whom you are thus troubled; and I doubt not but they are both in good health in their kingdom."

The king of China, overjoyed to see his grandson, tenderly embraced him. Such a meeting, so happy and unexpected, drew tears from both. The king inquiring on what occasion he had come into a strange country, the prince told him all that had happened to him and his brother Assad. When he had finished his relation, "My son," replied the king of China, "it is not just that such innocent princes as you are should be longer ill used. Comfort yourself, I will carry you and your brother home, and make your peace. Return, and acquaint your brother with my arrival."

While the king of China encamped in the place where prince Amgiad met him, the prince returned to inform the king of the magicians, who waited for him impatiently, how he had succeeded.

The king was astonished that so mighty a king as that of China should undertake such a long and troublesome journey, out of a desire to see his daughter. He gave orders to make preparations for his reception, and went forth to meet him.

While these things were transacting, a great dust was seen on another side of the town; and suddenly news was brought of the arrival of a third army, which obliged the king to stop, and to desire prince Amgiad once more to see who they were, and on what account they came.

Amgiad went accordingly, and prince Assad accompanied him. They found it was Kummir al Zummaun their father's army, with whom he was coming to seek for them. He was so grieved for the loss of his sons, that at last emir Jehaun-dar declared that he had saved their lives, which made him resolve to seek for them wherever he was likely to find them.

The afflicted father embraced the two princes with tears of joy, which put an end to those he had a long time shed for grief. The princes had no sooner told him the king of China, his father-in-law, was arrived, than, accompanied by them and a small party, he rode to wait upon him in his camp. They had not gone far, before they saw a fourth army advancing in good order, which seemed to come from Persia.

Kummir al Zummaun desired the two princes to go and see what army it was, and he would in the meanwhile wait for them. They departed immediately, and coming up to it, were presented to the king to whom the army belonged; and, after having saluted him with due reverence, they demanded on what design he approached so near the king of the magicians' capital. The grand vizier, who was present, answered in the name of the king his master, "The monarch to whom you speak is Shaw Zummaun, king of the isles of the children of Khaledan, who has a longtime travelled, thus attended, to seek his son, who left his dominions many years ago: if you know any thing of him, you cannot oblige him more than by communicating to him all the information in your power."

The princes only replied, that they would shortly bring him an answer, and galloping back as fast as they could, told Kummir al Zummaun that the king his father was approaching with his army.

Wonder, surprise, joy, and grief, had such an effect on Kummir al Zummaun, that he fainted as soon as he heard he was so near. Prince Amgiad and prince Assad, by their assiduities, at length brought him to himself; and when he had recovered his strength, he went to his father's tent, and threw himself at his feet.

Never was there a more affecting interview. Shaw Zummaun gently upbraided his son with unkindness in so cruelly leaving him; and Kummir al Zummaun discovered a hearty sorrow for the fault which love had urged him to commit.

The three kings, and queen Margiana, stayed three days at the court of the king of the magicians, who treated them magnificently. These three days were rendered more remarkable by prince Assad's marriage with queen Margiana, and prince Amgiad with Bostama, for the service she had done his brother Assad.

At length the three kings, and queen Margiana, with her husband Assad, returned to their respective kingdoms. As for Amgiad, the king of the magicians had such an affection for him, he could not part with him; and being very old, he resigned his crown to him. Amgiad, when he had the supreme authority, did his utmost to exterminate the worship of fire, and establish the Mahummedan religion throughout his dominions.

THE STORY OF NOOR AD DEEN AND THE FAIR PERSIAN.

The city of Bussorah was for many years the capital of a kingdom tributary to the caliphs of Arabia. The king who governed it in the days of the caliph Haroon al Rusheed was named Zinebi, who not thinking it proper to commit the administration of his affairs to a single vizier, made choice of two, Khacan and Saouy.

Khacan was of a sweet, generous, and affable temper, and took pleasure in obliging, to the utmost of his power, those with whom he had any business to transact, without violating the justice which it became him to dispense to all. He was therefore universally respected, at court, in the city, and throughout the whole kingdom; and the praises he so highly deserved were the general theme.

Saouy was of a very different character: he was always sullen and morose, and disgusted every body, without regard to their rank or quality. Instead of commanding respect by the liberal distribution of his immense wealth, he was so perfect a miser as to deny himself the necessaries of life. In short, nobody could endure him; and nothing good was said of him. But what rendered him most hateful to the people, was his implacable aversion to Khacan. He was always putting the worst construction on the actions of that worthy minister, and endeavouring as much as possible to prejudice him with the king.

One day after council, the king of Bussorah amused himself with his two viziers and some other members. The conversation turned upon the female slaves that are daily bought and sold, and who hold nearly the same rank as the lawful wives. Some were of opinion, that personal beauty in slaves so purchased was of itself sufficient to render them proper substitutes for wives, which, often on account of alliance or interest in families, men are obliged to marry, though they are not always possessed of any perfection, either of mind or body.

Others maintained, and amongst the rest Khacan, that personal charms were by no means the only qualifications to be desired in a slave; but that they ought to be accompanied with a great share of wit, a cultivated understanding, modesty, and, if possible, every agreeable accomplishment. The reason they gave was, that nothing could be more gratifying to persons on whom the management of important affairs devolved, than, after having spent the day in fatiguing employment, to have a companion in their retirement, whose conversation would be not only pleasing, but useful and instructive: for, in short, continued they, there is but little difference between brutes and those men who keep a slave only to look at, and to gratify a passion that we have in common with them.

The king entirely concurred in this opinion, and accordingly ordered Khacan to buy him a slave, of perfect beauty, mistress of all the qualifications they had enumerated, and possessed, above all things, of an enlightened understanding.

Saouy, jealous of the honour the king had done Khacan, and differing widely with him in opinion, said, "Sire, it will be very difficult to find a slave so accomplished as your majesty requires; and should such a one be discovered, which I scarcely believe possible, she will be cheap at ten thousand pieces of gold." "Saouy," replied the king, "I perceive plainly you think the sum too great; it may be so for you, though not for me." Then turning to his high treasurer, he ordered him to send the ten thousand pieces of gold to the vizier's house.

Khacan, as soon as he had returned home, sent for all the brokers who used to deal in women-slaves, and strictly charged them, that, if ever they met with one who answered the description he gave them, they should immediately apprise him. The brokers, partly to oblige the vizier, and partly for their own interest, promised to use their utmost endeavours to procure for him one that would accord with his wishes. Scarcely a day passed but they brought him a slave for his inspection, but he always discovered in each something defective.

One day, early in the morning, as Khacan was mounting his horse to go to court, a broker came to him, and, taking hold of the stirrup with great eagerness, told him a Persian merchant had arrived very late the day before, who had a slave to sell, so surprisingly beautiful that she excelled all the women his eyes had ever beheld; "And for wit and knowledge," added he, "the merchant engages she shall match the most acute and learned persons of the age."

Khacan, overjoyed at this intelligence, which promised him a favourable opportunity for making his court, ordered him to bring the slave to his palace against his return, and departed.

The broker failed not to be at the vizier's at the appointed hour; and Khacan, finding the lovely slave so much beyond his expectation, immediately gave her the name of the fair Persian. As he had himself much wit and learning, he soon perceived by her conversation, that it was in vain to search further for a slave that surpassed her in any of the qualifications required by the king; and therefore he asked the broker at what sum the Persian merchant valued her.

"Sir," replied the broker, "he is a man of few words in bargaining, and he tells me, that the very lowest price he will take for her is ten thousand pieces of gold: he has also sworn to me, that, without reckoning his care and pains from the time of his first taking her under his charge, he has laid out nearly that sum on her education in masters to improve her form and cultivate her mind, besides what she has cost him in clothes and maintenance. As he always thought her fit for a king, he has from her infancy, when he first bought her, been sparing of nothing that might contribute towards advancing her to that high distinction. She plays upon all kinds of instruments to perfection; she sings, dances, writes better than the most celebrated authors, makes verses, and there is scarcely any book but she has read; so that there never was a slave so accomplished heard of before."

The vizier Khacan, who could estimate the merits of the fair Persian better than the broker, who only reported what he had heard from the merchant, was unwilling to defer the bargain to a future opportunity, and therefore sent one of his servants to look for the merchant, where the broker told him he was to be found.

As soon as the Persian merchant arrived, "It is not for myself, but for the king," said the vizier Khacan, "that I buy your slave; but, nevertheless, you must let him have her at a more reasonable price than you have set upon her."

"Sir," replied the merchant, "I should do myself unspeakable honour in offering her as a present to his majesty, if it became a person in my situation to make him one of such inestimable value. I ask no more than her education and accomplishments have cost me;

and all I have to say is, that I believe his majesty will be extremely pleased with the purchase."

The vizier Khacan would stand no longer bargaining with the merchant, but paid him the money immediately. "Sir," said he to the vizier, upon taking his leave of him, "since the slave is designed for the king's use, give me leave to tell you, that being extremely fatigued with our long journey, you see her at present under great disadvantage. Though she has not her equal in the world for beauty, yet if you please to keep her at your own house for a fortnight, she will appear quite another creature. You may then present her to the king with honour and credit; for which I hope you will think yourself much obliged to me. The sun, you perceive, has a little injured her complexion; but after two or three times bathing, and when you have dressed her as you think proper, she will be so changed, that she will appear infinitely more charming."

Khacan was pleased with the instructions the merchant gave him, and resolved to abide by them. He assigned the fair Persian a particular apartment near his lady's, whom he desired to invite her to an entertainment, and thenceforth to treat her as a person designed for the king: he also provided for her several suits of the richest clothes that could be had, and would become her best. Before he took his leave of the fair Persian, he said "Your happiness, madam, cannot be greater than what I am about to procure for you; you shall judge for yourself; it is for the king I have purchased you; and I hope he will be even more pleased with possessing you than I am in having discharged the commission with which his majesty has honoured me. I think it, however, my duty to warn you that I have a son, who, though he does not want wit, is yet young, insinuating, and forward; and to caution you how you suffer him to come near you." The fair Persian thanked him for his advice; and after she had given him assurance of her intention to follow it, he withdrew.

Noor ad Deen, for so the vizier's son was named, had free access to the apartment of his mother, with whom he usually ate his meals. He was young, handsome in person, agreeable in manners, and firm in his temper; and having great readiness of wit, and fluency of language, was perfect master of the art of persuasion. He saw the fair Persian; and from their first interview, though he knew his father had bought her purposely for the king, and had so informed him, yet he never used the least endeavour to check the violence of his passion. In short, he resigned himself wholly to the power of her charms, by which his heart was at first captivated; and, from his first conversation with her, resolved to use his utmost endeavours to keep her from the king.

The fair Persian, on her part, had no dislike to Noor ad Deen. “The vizier,” said she to herself, “has done me honour in purchasing me for the king; but I should have thought myself very happy if he had designed me only for his own son.”

Noor ad Deen was not remiss in improving the advantage he enjoyed of seeing and conversing with a beauty of whom he was so passionately enamoured; for he would never leave her till obliged by his mother. “My son,” she would say, “it is not proper for a young man like you to be always in the women’s apartments; go, mind your studies, and endeavour to qualify yourself to succeed to the honours of your father.”

The fair Persian not having bathed for a considerable time on account of the length of her journey, the vizier’s lady, five or six days after she was purchased, ordered the bath in her own house to be got ready purposely for her. She sent her to it accompanied by many other women-slaves, who were charged by the vizier’s lady to be as attentive to her as to herself, and, after bathing, to put her on a very rich suit of clothes that she had provided for her. She was the more careful in order to ingratiate herself with her husband, by letting him see how much she interested herself in every thing that contributed to his pleasure.

As soon as she came out of the bath, the fair Persian, a thousand times more beautiful than she had appeared to Khacan when he bought her, went to visit his lady, who at first hardly knew her. The fair Persian gracefully kissed her hand, and said, “Madam, I know not how you like me in this dress you have been pleased to order for me; but your women, who tell me it becomes me so extremely well they should scarcely know me, certainly flatter me. From you alone I expect to hear the truth; but, if what they say be really so, I am indebted to you, madam, for the advantage it has given me.”

“Oh! my daughter,” cried the vizier’s lady, transported with joy, "you have no reason to believe my women have flattered you; I am better skilled in beauty than they; and, setting aside your dress, which becomes you admirably well, your beauty is so much improved by the bath, that I hardly knew you myself. If I thought the bath was warm enough, I would take my turn; for I am now of an age to require its frequent use." "Madam," replied the fair Persian, "I have nothing to say to the undeserved civilities you have been pleased to shew me. As for the bath, it is in fine order; and if you design to go in, you have no time to lose, as your women can inform you."

The vizier's lady, considering that she had not bathed for some days, was desirous to avail herself of that opportunity; and accordingly acquainted her women with her intention, who immediately prepared all things necessary for the occasion. The fair Persian withdrew to her apartment; and the vizier's lady, before she went to bathe, ordered two little female slaves to stay with her, with a strict charge that if Noor ad Deen came, they should not give him admittance.

While the vizier's lady was bathing, and the fair slave was alone in her apartment, Noor ad Deen came in, and not finding his mother in her chamber, went directly towards the fair Persian's, and found the two little slaves in the antechamber. He asked them where his mother was? They told him in the bath. "Where is the fair Persian, then?" demanded Noor ad Deen. "In her chamber," answered the slaves; "but we have positive orders from your mother not to admit you."

The entrance into the fair Persian's chamber being only covered with a piece of tapestry, Noor ad Deen went to lift it up, in order to enter, but was opposed by the two slaves, who placed themselves before it, to stop his passage. He presently caught them both by the arms, and, thrusting them out of the antechamber, locked the door upon them. They immediately ran with loud lamentations to the bath, and with tears in their eyes, told their lady, that Noor ad Deen, having driven them away by force, had gone into the fair Persian's chamber.

The vizier's lady received the account of her son's presumption with the greatest concern. She immediately left the bath, and dressing herself with all possible speed, came directly to the fair Persian's chamber; but before she could get thither, Noor ad Deen had gone away.

The fair Persian was extremely surprised to see the vizier's lady enter her chamber in tears, and in the utmost confusion. "Madam," said she, "may I presume to ask you the occasion of your concern; and what accident has happened in the bath, to make you leave it so soon?"

"What!" cried the vizier's lady, "can you so calmly ask that question, after my son has been with you alone in your chamber? Can there happen a greater misfortune to him or me?"

"I beseech you, madam," replied the fair slave, "what prejudice can this action of Noor ad Deen's do to you or him?"

"How," returned the vizier's lady, "did not my husband tell you that you were designed for the king, and sufficiently caution you to beware of our son?"

"I have not forgotten that, madam," replied the fair Persian; "but your son came to tell me the vizier his father had changed his purpose, and instead of reserving me for the king, as he first designed, had made him a present of my person. I easily believed him; for, oh! think how a slave as I am, accustomed from my infant years to the laws of servitude, could or ought to resist him! I must own I did it with the less reluctance, on account of the affection for him, which the freedom of our conversation and daily intercourse has excited in my heart. I could without regret resign the hope of ever being the king's, and think myself perfectly happy in spending my whole life with Noor ad Deen."

At this discourse of the fair Persian's, the vizier's lady exclaimed, "Would to God that what you say were true! I should hear it with joy; but, believe me, Noor ad Deen has deceived you; for it is impossible his father should ever make him such a present. Ah! wretched youth, how miserable has he made me! and more especially his father, by the dismal consequences we must all expect to share with him! Neither my prayers nor tears will be able to prevail, or obtain a pardon for him; for as soon as his father hears of his violence to you, he will inevitably sacrifice him to his resentment." At these words she wept bitterly; and the slaves, who were as much alarmed for Noor ad Deen as herself, joined in her tears.

Shortly after the vizier Khacan entered; and being surprised to find his lady and her slaves all in tears, and the fair Persian very melancholy asked the reason; but instead of answering him his wife and the slaves continued weeping and lamenting. This astonished him still more; at last, addressing himself to his wife, "I command you," said he, "to let me know the reason of your tears, and to tell me the whole truth."

The disconsolate lady could no longer refuse to satisfy her husband. "Sir," said she, "first promise not to use me unkindly on account of what I shall inform you, since I assure you, that what has happened has not been occasioned by any fault of mine." Without waiting for his answer, she then proceeded, "whilst I was bathing with my women, your son seizing that fatal opportunity to ruin us both, came hither, and made the fair Persian believe, that instead of reserving her for the king, you had given her to him as a present. I will not say what he did after such a wicked falsehood, but shall leave you to judge. This is the cause of my affliction, on your account, and his, for whom I want confidence to implore your pardon."

It is impossible to express the vizier Khacan's distraction at this account of the insolence of his son. "Ah!" cried he, beating his breast, and tearing his beard, "miserable son! unworthy of life! hast thou at last thrown thy father from the highest pinnacle of happiness into a misfortune that must inevitably involve thee also in his ruin? neither will the king be satisfied with thy blood or mine, to avenge the affront offered to his royal person."

His lady endeavoured to comfort him. "Afflict yourself no more," said she; "I shall easily raise, with part of my jewels, ten thousand pieces of gold, and you may buy another slave, more beautiful and more worthy of the king."

"Ah!" replied the vizier, "could you think me capable of being so extremely afflicted at losing ten thousand pieces of gold? It is not that loss, nor the loss of all I am worth, for that I should not feel; but the forfeiting my honour, more precious than all the riches in the world, that distresses me." "However," replied the lady, "a loss that can be repaired by money cannot be so very great."

“How!” exclaimed the vizier; “do you not know that Saouy is my mortal enemy; and as soon as this affair comes to his knowledge, do you think he will not exult over me before the king? ‘Your majesty,’ will he not say to him, is always talking of Khacan’s zeal and affection for your service; but see what a proof he has lately given of his claim to the regard you have hitherto shewn him. He has received ten thousand pieces of gold to buy a slave; and, to do him justice, he has most honourably acquitted himself of that commission, by purchasing the most beautiful that ever eyes beheld; but, instead of bringing her to your majesty, he has thought it better to make a present of her to his son. “Here, my son,” said he, “take this slave, since thou art more worthy of her than the king.” Then, with his usual malice, will he not go on. His son has her now entirely in his possession, and every day revels in her arms, without the least disturbance. This, sir, is the exact truth, that I have done myself the honour of acquainting you with; and if your majesty questions my veracity, you may easily satisfy yourself. Do you not plainly see,” continued the vizier, “how, upon such a malicious insinuation as this, I am every moment liable to have my house forced by the king’s guards, and the fair Persian taken from me, besides a thousand other misfortunes that will unavoidably follow?” “Sir,” replied the vizier’s lady to her husband, “I am sensible the malice of Saouy is very great, and that, if he have but the least intimation of this affair, he will certainly give it a turn very disadvantageous to your interest; but how is it possible that he or any one else should know what has been privately transacted in your family? Suppose it comes to the king’s ears, and he should ask you about it; cannot you say, that upon a strict examination you did not deem the slave so fit for his majesty’s use as you had at first thought her; that the merchant has cheated you; that, indeed, she has considerable beauty, but is by no means so accomplished as she had been represented. The king will certainly believe what you say, and Saouy be vexed to the soul, to see all his malicious design of ruining you disappointed. Take courage then, and, if you will follow my advice, send for all the brokers, tell them you do not like the fair Persian, and order them to be as expeditious as possible in procuring for you another slave.”

As this advice appeared rational to the vizier Khacan, and as his passion began to cool, he resolved to abide by it, but his indignation against his son remained as violent as ever.

Noor ad Deen did not make his appearance during the whole of that day, and not daring to hide himself among his young companions, lest his father should search for him in their houses, he went a little way out of town, and took sanctuary in a garden, where he had never been before, and where he was totally unknown. He did not return home till it was very late, when he knew his father was in bed; and then his mother's women, opening the door very softly; admitted him without any noise. He quitted the house again next morning before his father was stirring; and this plan he pursued for a whole month, to his great mortification. Indeed, the women never flattered him, but told him plainly, his father's anger was not at all diminished, and that he protested if he came into his sight he would certainly kill him.

The vizier's lady learnt from her women that Noor ad Deen slept every night in the house, but she could not summon resolution to supplicate her husband for his pardon. At last, however, she ventured. One day she said to him, "I have hitherto been silent, sir, not daring to take the liberty of talking to you about your son; but now give me leave to ask what you design to do with him? It is impossible for a son to have acted more criminally towards a father than he has done, in depriving you of the honour and gratification of presenting to the king a slave so accomplished as the fair Persian. This I acknowledge; but, after all, are you resolved to destroy him, and, instead of a light evil no more to be thought of, to draw upon yourself a far greater than perhaps you at present apprehend? Are you not afraid that the malicious world, which inquires after the reason of your son's absconding, may find out the true cause, which you are so desirous of concealing? Should that happen, you would justly fall into a misfortune, which it is so much your interest to avoid."

"Madam," returned the vizier, "there is much reason in what you have urged; but I cannot think of pardoning our son, till I have mortified him as he deserves." "He will be sufficiently mortified," replied the lady, "if you will only do what has just suggested itself to my mind. Your son comes home every night after you have retired;

he sleeps here, and steals out every morning before you are stirring. Wait for his coming in to-night, make as if you designed to kill him, upon which I will run to his assistance, and when he finds he owes his life entirely to my prayers and entreaties, you may oblige him to take the fair Persian on what condition you please. He loves her, and I am well satisfied the fair slave has no aversion for him."

Khacan readily consented to this stratagem. Accordingly, when Noor ad Deen came at the usual hour, before the door was opened, he placed himself behind it: as soon as he entered, he rushed suddenly upon him, and got him down under his feet. Noor ad Deen, lifting up his head, saw his father with a dagger in his hand, ready to stab him.

At that instant his mother arrived, and catching hold of the vizier's arm, cried, "Sir, what are you doing?" "Let me alone," replied the vizier, "that I may kill this base, unworthy son." "You shall kill me first," returned the mother; "never will I suffer you to imbue your hands in your own blood." Noor ad Deen improved this moment. "My father," cried he with tears in his eyes, "I implore your clemency and compassion; nor must you deny me pardon, since I ask it in his name before whom we must all appear at the last day."

Khacan suffered the dagger to be taken out of his hand; and as soon as Noor ad Deen was released, he threw himself at his father's feet and kissed them, to shew how sincerely he repented of having offended him. "Son," said the vizier, "return thanks to your mother, since it is for her sake I pardon you. I propose also to give you the fair Persian, on condition that you will bind yourself by an oath not to regard her any longer as a slave, but as your wife; that you will not sell her, nor ever be divorced from her. As she possesses an excellent understanding, and abundantly more wit and prudence than yourself, I doubt not but that she will be able to moderate those rash sallies of youth, which are otherwise so likely to effect your ruin."

Noor ad Deen, who little expected such indulgent treatment, returned his father a thousand thanks, and the fair Persian and he were well pleased with being united to each other.

The vizier Khacan, without waiting for the king's inquiries about the success of the commission he had given him, took particular care to mention the subject often, representing to his majesty the many difficulties he met, and how fearful he was of not acquitting himself to his majesty's satisfaction. In short, he managed the business with so much address, that the king insensibly forgot it. Though Saouy had gained some intimation of the transaction, yet Khacan was so much in the king's favour, that he was afraid to divulge what he had heard.

This delicate affair had now been kept rather more than a year with greater secrecy than the vizier at first expected, when being one day in the bath, and some important business obliging him to leave it, warm as he was, the air, which was then cold, struck to his breast, caused a defluxion to fall upon his lungs, which threw him into a violent fever, and confined him to his bed. His illness increasing every day, and perceiving he had not long to live, he thus addressed himself to his son, who never quitted him during the whole of his illness: "My son," said he, "I know not whether I have well employed the riches heaven has blessed me with, but you see they are not able to save me from the hands of death. The last thing I desire of you with my dying breath is, that you would be mindful of the promise you made me concerning the fair Persian, and in this assurance I shall die content."

These were the vizier Khacan's last words. He expired a few moments after, and left his family, the court, and the whole city, in great affliction, The king lamented him as a wise, zealous, and faithful minister; and the people bewailed him as their protector and benefactor.. Never was there a funeral in Bussorah solemnized with greater pomp and magnificence. The viziers, emirs, and in general all the grandees of the court, strove for the honour of bearing his coffin, one after another, upon their shoulders, to the place of burial; and both rich and poor accompanied him, dissolved in tears.

Noor ad Deen exhibited all the demonstrations of a sorrow proportioned to the loss he had sustained, and long refrained from seeing any company. At last he admitted of a visit from an intimate acquaintance. His friend endeavoured to comfort him; and finding him inclined to hear reason, told him, that having paid what was due to the memory of his father, and fully satisfied all that decency required of him, it was now high time to appear again in the world, to converse with his friends, and maintain a character suitable to his birth and talents. "For," continued he, "though we should sin against the laws both of nature and society, and be thought insensible, if on the death of our fathers we neglected to pay them the duties which filial love imposes upon us; yet having performed these, and put it out of the power of any to reproach us for our conduct, it behoves us to return to the world, and our customary occupations. Dry up your tears then, and reassume that wonted air of gaiety which has always inspired with joy those who have had the honour of your friendship."

This advice seemed too reasonable to be rejected, and had Noor ad Deen strictly abided by it, he would certainly have avoided all the misfortunes that afterwards befell him. He entertained his friend honourably; and when he took his leave, desired him to come again the next day, and bring with him three or four friends of their acquaintance. By this means he insensibly fell into the society of about ten young men nearly of his own age, with whom he spent his time in continual feasting and entertainments; and scarcely a day passed but he made every one of them some considerable present.

The fair Persian, who never approved of his extravagant way of living, often spoke her mind freely. "I question not," said she, "but the vizier your father has left you an ample fortune: but great as it may be, be not displeased with your slave for telling you, that at this rate of living you will quickly see an end of it. We may sometimes indeed treat our friends, and be merry with them; but to make a daily practice of it, is certainly the high road to ruin and destruction: for your own honour and reputation, you would do better to follow the footsteps of your deceased father, that in time you may rise to that dignity by which he acquired so much glory and renown."

Noor ad Deen hearkened to the fair Persian with a smile: and when she had done, "My charmer," said he, with the same air of gaiety, "say no more of that; let us talk of nothing but mirth and pleasure. In my father's lifetime I was always under restraint; and I am now resolved to enjoy the liberty I so much sighed for before his death. It will be time enough for me hereafter to think of leading the sober, regular life you talk of; and a man of my age ought to taste the pleasures of youth."

What contributed still more to the ruin of Noor ad Deen's fortune, was his unwillingness to reckon with his steward; for whenever he brought in his accounts, he still sent him away without examining them: “Go, go,” said he, “I trust wholly to your honesty; only take care to provide good entertainments for my friends.”

“You are the master, sir,” replied he, “and I but the steward; however, you would do well to think upon the proverb, ‘He that spends much, and has but little, must at last insensibly be reduced to poverty.’ You are not contented with keeping an extravagant table, but you must lavish away your estate with both hands: and were your coffers as large as mountains, they would not be sufficient to maintain you.” “Begone,” replied Noor ad Deen, “I want not your grave lessons; only take care to provide good eating and drinking, and trouble your head no farther about the rest.”

In the meantime, Noor ad Deen’s friends were constant guests at his table, and never failed to take advantage of the easiness of his temper. They praised and flattered him, extolling his most indifferent actions; but, above all, they took particular care to commend whatever belonged to him; and in this they found their account. “Sir,” said one of them, “I came the other day by your estate that lies in such a place; nothing can be so magnificent or so handsomely furnished as your house; and the garden belonging to it is a paradise upon earth.” “I am very glad it pleases you,” replied Noor ad Deen: “bring me pen, ink, and paper; without more words, it is at your service; I make you a present of it.” No sooner had others commended one of his houses, baths, or public buildings erected for the use of strangers, the yearly revenue of which was very considerable, than he immediately gave them away. The fair Persian could not forbear stating to him how much injury he did himself; but, instead of paying any regard to her remonstrances, he continued his extravagances, and the first opportunity that offered, squandered away the little he had left.

In short, Noor ad Deen did nothing for a whole year but feast and make merry, wasting and consuming, with the utmost prodigality, the great wealth that his predecessors, and the good vizier his father, had with so much pains and care acquired and preserved.

The year was but just expired, when a person one day knocked at the door of the hall, where he and his friends were at dinner together by themselves, having sent away the slaves, that they might enjoy the greater liberty.

One of his friends offered to rise; but Noor ad Deen stepping before him, opened the door himself. It was the steward; and Noor ad Deen, going a little out of the hall to know his business, left the door half open.

The friend that offered to rise from his seat, seeing it was the steward, and being curious to know what he had to say, placed himself between the hangings and the door, where he plainly overheard the steward's discourse to his master. "Sir," said he, "I ask a thousand pardons for coming to disturb you in the height of your pleasure; but what I have to say is of such importance, that I thought myself bound in duty to acquaint you with it. I am come, sir, to make up my last accounts, and to tell you, that what I all along foresaw, and have often warned you of, is at last come to pass. I have not the smallest piece left of all the sums I have received from you for your expenses; the other funds you assigned me are all exhausted. The farmers, and those that owe you rent, have made it so plainly appear to me, that you have assigned over to others what they held of you, that it is impossible for me to get any more from them on your account. Here are my books; if you please, examine them; and if you wish I should continue useful to you, assign me other funds, or else give me leave to quit your service." Noor ad Deen was so astonished at his statement, that he gave him no answer.

The friend who had been listening all this while, and had heard every syllable of what the steward said, immediately came in, and told the company what he had overheard. "It is your business, gentlemen," said he, "to make your use of this caution; for my part, I declare to you, this is the last visit I design ever to make Noor ad Deen." "Nay," replied they, "if matters go thus, we have as little business here as you; and for the future shall take care not to trouble him with our company."

Noor ad Deen returned presently after; notwithstanding all his efforts to appear gay to his guests, he could not so dissemble his concern, but they plainly perceived the truth of what they had heard. He was scarcely sat down in his place, when one of his friends arose: "Sir," said he, "I am sorry I cannot have the honour of keeping you company any longer; and therefore I hope you will excuse my rudeness in leaving you so soon." "What urgent affair," demanded

Noor ad Deen, “obliges you to be going so soon?” “My wife, sir,” he replied, “is brought to bed to-day; and upon such an occasion, you know a husband’s company is always necessary.” So making a very low bow, he went away. A minute afterwards a second took his leave, with another excuse. The rest did the same, one after another, till at last not one of the ten friends that had hitherto kept Noor ad Deen company remained.

As soon as they were gone, Noor ad Deen, little suspecting the resolution they had formed never to see him again, went directly to the fair Persian’s apartment; to whom he related all the steward had told him, and seemed extremely concerned at the ill state of his affairs. “Sir,” said the fair Persian, “allow me to say, you would never take my advice, but always managed your concerns after your own way, and now you see the fatal consequences. I find I was not mistaken, when I presaged to what a miserable condition you would bring yourself at last: but what afflicts me the more is, that at present you do not see the worst of your misfortunes. Whenever I presumed freely to remonstrate with you, ‘Let us be merry,’ you replied, ‘and improve the time that Fortune offers us; perhaps she will not always be so prodigal of her favours:’ but was I to blame in telling you, that we are ourselves the makers of our own fortunes by a prudent management of them? You would not hearken to me; and I was forced, however reluctantly, to let you go on.”

“I must own,” replied Noor ad Deen, “I was extremely in the wrong in not following the advice which with such admirable prudence you gave me. It is true, I have spent my estate; but do you not consider, it is among a chosen set of friends, whom I have long known, and who, I am persuaded, have more generosity and gratitude than to abandon me in distress?” “Sir,” replied the fair Persian, “if you have nothing but the gratitude of your friends to depend on, your case is desperate; for, believe me, that hope is ill-grounded, and you will tell me so yourself in time.”

To this Noor ad Deen replied, “Charming Persian, I have a better opinion of my friends’ generosity: to-morrow I design to visit them all, before the usual time of their coming hither; and you shall see me return with a round sum that they will assist me with. I am resolved to alter my way of living, and, with the money they lend me, to set up in some business.”

Next morning, Noor ad Deen visited his ten friends, who lived in the same street. He knocked at the first door, where one of the richest of them resided. A slave came to the door: but before he would open it, asked who was there. “Tell your master,” said he to the slave, “it is Noor ad Deen, the late vizier Khacan’s son.” The slave opened the door, and shewed him into a hall, where he left him, in order to inform his master, who was in an inner room, that Noor ad Deen was come to wait on him, “Noor ad Deen!” cried he, in a disdainful tone, loud enough for him to hear: “go tell him I am not at home; and whenever he may come again, be sure you give him the same answer.” The slave returned, and told Noor ad Deen he thought his master was within, but was mistaken.

Noor ad Deen came away in the greatest confusion. “Ah! base, ungrateful wretch!” cried he, “to treat me so to-day after the vows and protestations of friendship that he made me yesterday.” He went to another door, but that friend ordered his slave also to say he was gone out. He had the same answer at the third; and, in short, all the rest denied themselves, though every one was at home.

Noor ad Deen now began in earnest to reflect with himself, and see the folly of relying upon the protestations of attachment that his false friends had solemnly made him in the time of his prosperity, when he could treat them sumptuously, and load them with favours. “It is true,” said he to himself, “that a fortunate man, as I was, may be compared to a tree laden with fruit, which, as long as there is any on its boughs, people will be crowding round, and gathering; but as soon as it is stripped of all, they immediately leave it, and go to another.” He smothered his passion as much as possible while he was abroad; but no sooner was he got home than he gave a loose to his affliction, and discovered it to the fair Persian.

The fair Persian seeing him so extremely concerned, guessed he had not found his friends so ready to assist him as he expected. “Well, sir,” said she, “are you now convinced of the truth of what I told you?” “Ah!” cried he, “thou hast been too true a prophetess; for not one of them would know me, see me, or speak to me. Who could ever have believed, that persons so highly obliged to me, and on whom I have spent my estate, could have used me so ungratefully? I am distracted; and I fear shall commit some action unworthy myself, in the deplorable and desperate condition I am reduced to, unless you assist me with your prudent advice." "Sir," replied the fair Persian, "I see no other way of supporting yourself in your misfortunes, but selling off your slaves and furniture, and living on the money they produce, till heaven points out some other means to deliver you from your present misery."

Noor ad Deen was loth to resort to this expedient; but what could he do in the necessitous circumstances to which he was reduced? He first sold off his slaves, those unprofitable mouths, which would have been a greater expense to him than in his present condition he could bear. He lived on the money for some time; and when it was spent, ordered his goods to be carried into the market-place, where they were sold for half their value, though there were among them several articles that had cost immense sums. Upon the produce of these he lived a considerable time; but this supply failing at last, he had nothing left by which he could raise any more money, of which he informed the fair Persian in the most sorrowful expressions.

Noor ad Deen little expected the answer this prudent woman made him. "Sir," said she, "I am your slave; and the late vizier your father gave ten thousand pieces of gold for me. I know I am a little sunk in value since that time; but I believe I shall sell for pretty near that sum. Let me entreat you then instantly to carry me to the market, and expose me to sale; and with the money that you get for me, which will be very considerable, you may turn merchant in some city where you are not known, and by that means find a way of living, if not in splendour, yet with happiness and content."

"Lovely and adorable Persian!" cried Noor ad Deen, "is it possible you can entertain such a thought? Have I given you such slender proofs of my love, that you should think me capable of so base an action? But suppose me so vile a wretch, could I do it without being guilty of perjury, after the oath I have taken to my late father never to sell you? I would sooner die than break it, and part with you, whom I love infinitely beyond myself; though, by the unreasonable proposal you have made me, you shew me that your love is by no means reciprocal."

"Sir," replied the fair Persian, "I am convinced that your passion for me is as sincere as you express; and heaven, who knows with what reluctance I have made this proposal which induces you to think so hardly of me, is my witness, that mine is as great as yours; but to silence your reasons, I need only bid you remember, that necessity has no law. I love you to that degree that it is impossible for you to love me more; and be assured, that to what master soever I shall belong, my love for you will continue undiminished; and if you are ever able to redeem me, as I hope you may, it will be the greatest pleasure in the world to be restored to you again. I confess it is a fatal and cruel necessity to which we are driven; but I see no other way of freeing ourselves from the misery that involves us both."

Noor ad Deen, convinced of the truth of what the fair Persian had said, and that there was no other way of avoiding a shameful poverty, was forced to yield to her proposal. Accordingly he led her to the market where the women-slaves are exposed to sale, with a regret that cannot easily be expressed. He applied himself to a broker, named Hagi Hassan. "Hagi Hassan," said he, "here is a slave whom I mean to sell; what will they give for her?"

Hagi Hassan desired Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian to walk into a room; and when she had pulled off the veil that covered her face, "Sir," said Hagi Hassan, in surprise, "if I am not mistaken, this is the slave your father, the late vizier, gave ten thousand pieces of gold for?" Noor ad Deen assured him she was the same and Hagi Hassan gave him some hopes of selling her at a high price, and promised to use all his art to raise her value as high as he could.

Hagi Hassan and Noor ad Deen went out of the room; and Hagi Hassan locked the fair Persian in. He went immediately to the merchants; but they being busy in buying slaves from different countries, Greeks, Franks, Africans, Tartars, and others, he was forced to wait till the market was over. When the sale was ended, and the greatest part of them were got together again, "My masters," said he to them, with an air of gaiety in his looks and actions, "every thing that is round is not a nut, every thing that is long is not a fig, all that is red is not flesh, and all eggs are not fresh; it is true you have seen and bought a great many slaves in your lives, but you never yet saw one comparable to her I am going to tell you of. She is the very pearl of slaves. Come, follow me, you shall see her yourselves, and judge at what rate I shall cry her."

The merchants followed Hagi Hassan into the apartment where he had left the fair Persian, and as soon as they beheld her were so surprised at her beauty, that they unanimously agreed, four thousand pieces of gold was the very lowest price they could set upon her. The merchants left the room; and Hagi Hassan, who came out with them, without going any farther, proclaimed with a loud voice, "Four thousand pieces of gold for a Persian slave."

None of the merchants had yet offered anything, and were consulting together about what they might afford to give for her, when the vizier Saouy appeared. Perceiving Noor ad Deen in the market, he said to himself, "Noor ad Deen is certainly still making money of his goods" (for he knew he had exposed them to sale), "and is come hither to buy a slave with the product." He advanced forward just as Hagi Hassan began to proclaim a second time, "Four thousand pieces of gold for a Persian slave."

The vizier Saouy, who concluded by the high price, that the slave must be extraordinarily beautiful, was very desirous to see her; so spurring his horse forward, he rode up to Hagi Hassan, who was surrounded by the merchants. "Open the door," said he, "and let me see the slave." It was not the custom to shew a slave to a particular person after the merchants had seen her, and were treating for her; but none of them durst dispute their right with the vizier; and Hagi Hassan was obliged to open the door, and he made a sign to the fair Persian to come forward, that Saouy might see her, without alighting from his horse.

The vizier was astonished at the sight of so beautiful a slave; and knowing the broker's name (having formerly dealt with him), "Hagi Hassan," said he, "is it not at four thousand pieces of gold that you cry her?" "Yes, sir," answered he; "the merchants just now agreed that I should put her up at that price: I wait their advance; and I question not but they will give a great deal more."

"If no one offers more, I will give that sum," replied Saouy, looking at the merchants at the same time with a countenance that forbad them to advance the price. He was so universally dreaded, that no one durst speak a word, even to complain of his encroaching upon their privilege.

The vizier having stayed some time, and finding none of the merchants outbid him, “What do you stay for?” said he to Hagi Hassan. “Inquire after the seller, and strike a bargain with him at four thousand pieces of gold, or ask if he demands more.”

Hagi Hassan having locked the chamber-door, went to confer with Noor ad Deen. “Sir,” said he to him, “I am very sorry to bring you the ill news of your slave’s going to be sold for nothing.” “How so?” replied Noor ad Deen. “Why sir,” continued Hagi Hassan, “you must know that the business at first went on well; for as soon as the merchants had seen your slave, they ordered me, without hesitation, to cry her at four thousand pieces of gold; accordingly I cried her at that price, but presently the vizier Saouy came, and his presence has stopped the mouths of all the merchants, who seemed disposed to raise her, at least to the same price your deceased father gave for her. Saouy will give no more than four thousand pieces; and it is much against my inclination that I am come to tell you his despicable offer. The slave indeed is your own; but I will never advise you to part with her upon those terms, since you and every one else are sensible of her being worth infinitely more; besides, he is base enough to contrive a way to trick you out of the money.”

“Hagi Hassan,” replied Noor ad Deen, “I am highly obliged to thee for thy advice: do not think I will ever sell my slave to any enemy of our family; my necessities, indeed, are at present very great; but I would sooner die in the utmost poverty than consent to delivering her up to him. I have only one thing to beg of thee, who art skilful in all the turns and shifts of sale, that thou wouldst put me in a way to prevent the completion of the bargain.”

“Sir,” said Hagi Hassan, “nothing is more easy: you must pretend that, being in a violent passion with your slave, you swore to expose her in the market, and for the sake of your oath have now brought her hither, without any intention of selling her. This will satisfy every one; and Saouy will have nothing to say against it. Come along with me then; and just as I am presenting her to Saouy as if it were by your own consent, pull her to you, give her two or three blows, and send her home.” “I thank thee for thy counsel,” said Noor ad Deen, “and will make use of it.”

Hagi Hassan went back to the chamber; and having privately acquainted the fair Persian with their design, that she might not be surprised, took her by the hand, and led her to the vizier Saouy, who was still on horseback at the door "Sir," said he, "here is the slave, she is yours; take her."

The words were scarcely out of Hagi Hassan's mouth, when Noor ad Deen, catching hold of the fair Persian, pulled her to him, and giving her a box on the ear, "Come hither, impertinence," said he, "and get you home again; for though your ill-humour obliged me to swear I should bring you hither, yet I never intended to sell you: I have business for you to do yet; and it will be time enough to part with you when I have nothing else left."

This conduct of Noor ad Deen put the vizier Saouy into a violent passion. "Miserable debauchee," cried he, "wouldst thou have me believe thou hast any thing else left to make money of but thy slave?" and at the same instant, spurring his horse directly against him, endeavoured to carry off the fair Persian. Noor ad Deen nettled to the quick at the affront the vizier had put upon him, quitted the fair Persian, and laying hold of his horse's bridle, made him run two or three paces backwards. "Vile dotard," said he to the vizier, "I would tear thy soul out of thy body this moment, were it not out of respect for the crowd of people here present."

The vizier Saouy being hated by all, there was not one among them but was pleased to see Noor ad Deen mortify him; and by signs they gave him to understand, that he might revenge himself upon him as much as he pleased, for nobody would interfere in their quarrel.

Saouy endeavoured to force Noor ad Deen to quit the bridle; but he being a lusty, vigorous man, and encouraged by those that stood by, pulled him off his horse, gave him several blows, and dashed his head against the stones, till it was all over blood. The slaves who waited upon the vizier would have drawn their cimeters, and fallen upon Noor ad Deen; but the merchants interposing prevented them. "What do you mean?" said they to them; "do you not see that one is a vizier, the other a vizier's son? Let them fight it out; perhaps they will be reconciled one time or another; whereas, if you had killed Noor ad Deen, your master, with all his greatness, could not have been able to protest you against the law?"

Noor ad Deen having given over beating the vizier Saouy, left him in the mire, and taking the fair Persian, marched home with her, attended by the people, with shouts and acclamations for the action he had performed.

The vizier, cruelly bruised with the blows he had received, made shift to get up, with the assistance of his slaves, and had the mortification to see himself besmeared with blood and dirt. He leaned on the shoulders of two slaves, and in that condition went straight to the palace in the sight of all the people, with the greater confusion, because no one pitied him. As soon as he reached the king's apartment, he began to cry out, and call for justice in a lamentable tone. The king ordered him to be admitted; and asked who it was that had abused and put him into that miserable plight. "Sire," cried Saouy, "it is the favour of your majesty, and being admitted into your sacred councils, that has occasioned me to be so barbarously treated." "Say no more of that," replied the king, "only let me hear the whole story simply, and who the offender is; and if he is in the wrong, you may depend upon it he shall be severely punished."

"Sire," said Saouy, telling the whole matter to his own advantage, "having occasion for a cook, I went to the market of women-slaves to buy one: when I came thither, there was a slave just cried at four thousand pieces of gold; I ordered them to bring her before me, and I think my eyes never did nor will behold a more beautiful creature: I had no sooner examined her beauty with the highest satisfaction, than I immediately asked to whom she belonged; and upon inquiry found that Noor ad Deen, son to the late vizier Khacan, had the disposing of her.

"Your majesty may remember, that about two or three years ago, you gave that vizier ten thousand pieces of gold, strictly charging him to buy you a slave with that sum. The money, indeed, was laid out upon this very slave; but instead of bringing her to your majesty, thinking his son deserved her better, he made him a present of her. Noor ad Deen, since his father's death, having wasted his whole fortune in riot and feasting, has nothing left but this slave, whom he at last resolved to part with; and she was to be sold in his name, I sent for him; and, without mentioning any thing of his father's prevarication, or rather treachery to your majesty, I in the civilest manner said to him, ‘Noor ad Deen, the merchants, I perceive, have put your slave up at four thousand pieces of gold; and I question not, but, in emulation of each other, they will raise the price considerably: let me have her for the four thousand pieces; I am going to buy her for the king our lord and master; this will be a handsome opportunity of making your court to him: and his favour will be worth far more than the merchants can propose to give you.’

“Instead of returning me a civil answer, the insolent wretch, beholding me with a fierce air, “Impotent villain,” said he, ‘I would rather give my slave to a Jew for nothing than to thee for money.’ ‘Noor ad Deen,’ I replied, without passion, though I had some reason to be a little warm, ‘you do not consider, that by talking in this manner you affront the king, who raised both your father and me to the honours we have enjoyed.’

“This admonition, instead of softening him, only provoked him to a higher degree; so that, falling upon me like a madman, without regard to my age or rank, he pulled me off my horse, and put me into this miserable plight. I beseech your majesty to consider, that it is on your account I have been so publicly affronted.”

The abused king, highly incensed against Noor ad Deen by this relation, so full of malice and artifice, discovered by his countenance the violence of his anger; and turning to the captain of his guards, who stood near him, “Take forty of your soldiers,” said he, “immediately plunder Noor ad Deen’s house, and having ordered it to be razed to the ground, bring him and his slave to the presence.”

Before the captain of the guards was gone out of the king’s presence, an officer belonging to the court, who overheard the order given, hastened out. His name was Sangiar; and he had been formerly a slave of the vizier Khacan who had introduced him at court, where by degrees he had raised himself.

Sangiar, full of gratitude to his old master and affection for Noor ad Deen, whom he remembered a child, being no stranger to Saouy’s hatred of Khacan’s family, could not hear the order without concern. “This action,” said he to himself, “may not be altogether so black as Saouy has represented it. He has prejudiced the king against him, who will certainly put him to death, without allowing him time to justify himself.” He made so much haste to Noor ad Deen’s house, as to get thither soon enough to acquaint him with what had passed at court, and give him time to provide for his own and the fair Persian's safety. He knocked so violently at the door, that Noor ad Deen, who had been a great while without any servant, ran immediately to open it. "My dear lord," said Sangiar, "there is no safety for you in Bussorah; you must lose no time, but depart hence this moment."

"How so?" demanded Noor ad Deen. "What is the reason I must be gone so soon?" "Make haste away, sir," replied Sangiar, "and take your slave with you. In short, Saouy has been just now acquainting the king, after his own way of telling it, all that passed between you and him; and the captain of the guards will be here in an instant, with forty soldiers, to seize you and the fair Persian. Take these forty pieces of gold to assist you in repairing to some place of safety. I would give you more if I had it about me. Excuse my not staying any longer; I leave you with reluctance." Sangiar gave Noor ad Deen but just time to thank him, and departed.

Noor ad Deen acquainted the fair Persian with the absolute necessity of their going that moment. She only put on her veil; they both stole out of the house, and were fortunate enough not only to get clear of the city, but also safely to arrive at the Euphrates, which was not far off, where they embarked in a vessel that lay ready to weigh anchor.

As soon as they were on board, the captain came on deck amongst his passengers. "Children," said he to them, "are you all here? have any of you any more business to do in the city? or have you left any thing behind you?" They were all there, they answered him, and ready; so that he might sail as soon as he pleased. When Noor ad Deen came aboard, the first question he asked was, whither the vessel was bound? and being told for Bagdad, he rejoiced at it. The captain, having weighed anchor, set sail; and the vessel, with a very favourable wind, lost sight of Bussorah.

The captain of the guards came to Noor ad Deen's house, and knocked at the door; but no one answering, he ordered his soldiers to break it open, who immediately obeyed him, and rushed in. They searched the house; but neither he nor the fair Persian were to be found. The captain of the guards made them inquire of the neighbours; and he himself asked if they had seen them lately. It was all in vain; for if they had seen him go out of his house, so universally beloved was Noor ad Deen by the people, that not one of them would have said the least word to his prejudice. While they were rifling the house, and levelling it to the ground, he went to acquaint the king with the news. “Look for them,” said he, “every where; for I am resolved to have them.”

The captain of the guards made a second search, and the king dismissed the vizier Saouy with honour. “Go home,” said he, “trouble yourself no farther to punish Noor ad Deen; I will revenge your injuries.”

Without delay the king ordered to be proclaimed throughout the whole city a reward of a thousand pieces of gold for any person that should apprehend Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian, also a severe punishment upon those who should conceal them. No tidings however could be heard of them; and the vizier Saouy had only the comfort of seeing the king espouse his quarrel.

In the mean time, Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian, after a prosperous voyage, landed safe at Bagdad. As soon as the captain came within sight of that city, pleased that his voyage was at an end, “Rejoice, my children,” cried he to the passengers; “yonder is that great and wonderful city, where there is a perpetual concourse of people from all parts of the world: there you shall meet with innumerable crowds, and never feel the extremity of cold in winter, nor the excess of heat in summer, but enjoy an eternal spring with all its flowers, and the delicious fruits of autumn.”

When the vessel came to anchor, a little below the city, the passengers went ashore, each to their respective place of abode. Noor ad Deen gave the captain five pieces of gold for his passage, and went ashore also with the fair Persian; but being a perfect stranger in Bagdad, was at a loss for a lodging. They rambled a considerable time along the gardens that bordered on the Tigris, and keeping close to one of them that was enclosed with a very long wall, at the end of it they turned into a street well paved, where they perceived a magnificent gateway and a fountain near it.

The inner door happened to be shut, but the portal was open, in which there was an estrade on each side. “This is a very convenient place for us,” said Noor ad Deen to the fair Persian; “night comes on apace; and though we have eaten nothing since our landing, I am for passing the night here, and to-morrow we shall have time enough to look for a lodging." "Sir," replied the fair Persian, "you know your wishes are mine; let us go no farther, since you are willing to stay here." Each of them having drunk a draught of water at the fountain, they laid themselves down upon one of the estrades; and after a little chat, being soothed by the agreeable murmur of the water, fell asleep.

The garden belonged to the caliph: and in the middle of it there was a pavilion, called the pavilion of pictures, because its chief ornaments were pictures after the Persian manner, drawn by the most celebrated painters in Persia, whom the caliph had sent for on purpose. The stately hall within this pavilion was lighted by fourscore arches and a lustre in each; but these were lighted only when the caliph came thither to spend the evening. On such occasions they made a glorious illumination, and could be seen at a great distance in the country on that side, and by great part of the city.

The office of keeper of this pleasure house was at this time held by a very aged officer, named Scheich Ibrahim, whom the caliph, for some important service, had put into that employment, with strict charge not to let all sorts of people in, but especially to suffer no one either to sit or lie down on the estrades at the outward door, that they might always be clean; and whenever he found any body there, to punish them severely.

Some business had obliged this officer to go abroad, and he was not yet returned. When he came back, there was just day-light enough for him to discern two persons asleep upon one of the estrades, with their heads under a piece of linen, to defend them from the gnats. "Very well," said Scheich Ibrahim to himself; "these people disobey the caliph's orders: but I will take care to teach them better manners." Upon this he opened the door very softly, and a moment after returned with a cane in his hand, and his sleeve tucked up to the elbow: he was just going to lay on them both with all his might, but withholding his arm, began to reason with himself after this manner: "Thou wast going, without reflection, to strike these people, who perhaps are strangers, destitute of a lodging, and utterly ignorant of the caliph's order; so that it would be advisable to know first who they are." Upon this he gently lifted up the linen that covered their heads, and was astonished to see a young man so well shaped, and a young woman so beautiful; he then waked Noor ad Deen, by pulling him softly by the feet.

Noor ad Deen, lifting up his head, and seeing an old man with a long white beard standing at his feet, got up, and throwing himself upon his knees, and taking his hand, kissed it. "Good father," said he, "Heaven preserve you!" "What do you want, my son?" replied Scheich Ibrahim; "who are you, and whence came you?" "We are strangers newly arrived," answered Noor ad Deen, "and would fain tarry here till to-morrow." "This is not a proper place for you," said Scheich Ibrahim; "come in with me, and I will find one fitter for you to sleep in than this; and the sight of the garden, which is very fine, will please you, when you see it to-morrow by day light." "Is this garden your own?" asked Noor ad Deen. "Yes," replied Scheich Ibrahim, smiling; "it is an inheritance left me by my father: pray walk in, for I am sure you will not repent seeing it."

Noor ad Deen rose to thank Scheich Ibrahim for the civility he had strewn, as did afterwards the fair Persian; and they entered the garden. Scheich Ibrahim locked the door, and going before, led them to a spot from whence, at one view, they might see the disposition, grandeur, and beauty of the whole.

Noor ad Deen had seen very fine gardens, but never any comparable to this. Having satisfied his curiosity, as he was walking in one of the walks, he turned about to the officer, and asked his name. As soon as he had told him it was Scheich Ibrahim; "Scheich Ibrahim," said he to him, "I must confess this is a charming garden indeed. Heaven send you long to enjoy the pleasures of it; we cannot sufficiently thank you for the favour you have done by shewing us a place so well worth seeing; however, it is but just that we should make you some amends for your kindness; here are two pieces of gold; take them and get us something to eat, that we may be merry together."

At the sight of the two pieces of gold, Scheich Ibrahim, who was a great admirer of that metal, laughed in his sleeve: he took them, and leaving Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian by themselves, went to provide what was necessary; for he was alone. Said he to himself with great joy, “these are generous people; I should have done very wrong, if, through imprudence, I had ill-treated and driven them away. A tenth part of the money will suffice to treat them; and the rest I will keep for my pains.”

While Scheich Ibrahim was gone to fetch something for his own supper, as well as for his guests Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian walked up and down the garden, till at last they came to the pavilion of pictures. They stood awhile to admire its wonderful structure, size, and loftiness; and after taking a full view of it on every side, went up many steps of fine white marble to the hall-door, which they found locked.

They were but just returned to the bottom of the steps, when Scheich Ibrahim arrived, loaded with provisions. “Scheich Ibrahim,” said Noor ad Deen, in great surprise, “did you not tell us that this was your garden?” “I did,” replied Scheich Ibrahim, “and do so still.” “And does this magnificent pavilion also belong to you?” Scheich Ibrahim was staggered at this unexpected question. “If,” said he to himself, ‘I should say it is none of mine, they will ask me how I can be master of the garden and not of the pavilion.’ As he had made them believe the garden was his, he said the same of the pavilion. “My son,” said he, “the pavilion is not distinct from the garden; but they both belong to me.” “If so,” said Noor ad Deen, “since you invite us to be your guests to-night, do us the favour to shew us the inside of it; for if we may judge by the outward appearance, it must certainly be extraordinarily magnificent.”

It would have been a great piece of incivility in Scheich Ibrahim to refuse this favour, after what he had already done: moreover, he considered that the caliph not having given him notice, according to his usual custom, it was likely he would not be there that night, and therefore resolved to treat his guests, and sup with them in the pavilion. He laid the provisions on the first step, while he went to his apartment for the key: he soon returned with a light, and opened the door.

Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian entered the hall, and were never tired with admiring the beauty and richness of the place. Indeed, without saying anything of the pictures which were admirably well drawn, the sofas were very noble and costly; and besides lustres suspended from every arch, there was between each a silver branch supporting a wax candle. Noor ad Deen could not behold these glorious objects without recollecting his former splendour, and sighing.

In the mean time Scheich Ibrahim was getting supper ready; and the cloth being laid upon a sofa, and every thing in order, Noor ad Deen, the fair Persian, and he sat down and ate together. When supper was finished, and they had washed their hands, Noor ad Deen opened a lattice, and calling the fair Persian to him, “Come hither,” said he, “and with me admire the charming prospect and beauty of the garden by moon-light; nothing can be more agreeable.” She came to him; and they both enjoyed the view, while Scheich Ibrahim was busy in taking away the cloth.

When Scheich Ibrahim came to his guests again, Noor ad Deen asked him whether he had any liquor to treat them with. “What liquor would you have?” replied Scheich Ibrahim— “Sherbet? I have the best in the world; but sherbet, you know, my son, is never drunk after supper.”

“I know that very well,” said Noor ad Deen; “it is not sherbet, but another sort of liquor that we ask you for, and I am surprised at your not understanding me.” “It is wine then you mean?” said Scheich Ibrahim. “You guess right,” replied Noor ad Deen, “and if you have any, oblige us with a bottle: you know a bottle after supper is a very proper companion to spend the hours with till bed-time.”

“Heaven defend me from keeping wine in my house,” cried Scheich Ibrahim, “and from ever coming to a place where any is found! A man who, like me, has been a pilgrimage four times to Mecca, has renounced wine for ever.”

“You would do us a singular kindness,” said Noor ad Deen, “in getting a little for our own drinking; and if it be not too much trouble, I will put you in a way how you may do it, without going into a vintner’s shop, or so much as laying your hand upon the vessel that contains it.” “Upon that condition I will do it,” replied Scheich Ibrahim, “only let me know what I am to do.”

“Why then,” said Noor ad Deen, “we just now saw an ass tied at the entrance of your garden, which certainly must be yours, and which you may make use of in this extremity: here are two pieces of gold more; take them, and lead your ass with the panniers to the next vintner's; you may stand at as great a distance as you please, do but give something to the first person that comes by, and desire him to go with your ass, and procure two pitchers of wine; put one in one pannier, in another, another, which he must pay for out of the money you give him, and so let him bring the ass back to you: you will have nothing to do, but to drive the beast hither before you; we will take the wine out of the panniers: by this means you will do nothing that will give you any scruple."

The two last pieces of gold that Scheich Ibrahim was going to receive wrought wonderfully upon his mind. "Ah! my son," cried he, "you have an excellent contrivance; and had it not been for your invention, I should never have thought of this way of getting you some wine without any scruple of conscience." Away he went to execute the orders, which he did in a little time; and, upon his return, Noor ad Deen taking the pitchers out of the panniers, carried them into the hall.

Scheich Ibrahim having led the ass to the place from whence he took him, came back again, "Scheich Ibrahim," said Noor ad Deen, "we cannot enough thank you for the trouble we have already given you; but we want something yet." "What is that?" replied Scheich: "what more service can I do you?" "We have no cups to drink out of," said Noor ad Deen, "and a little fruit, if you had any, would be very acceptable." "Do but say what you have a mind to," replied Scheich Ibrahim, "and you shall have every thing to your heart's content."

Down went Scheich Ibrahim, and in a short time spread a carpet for them with beautiful porcelain dishes, full of all sorts of delicious fruits, besides gold and silver cups to drink out of; and having asked them if they wanted any thing else, he withdrew, though they pressed him earnestly to stay.

Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian sat down again, and drank each a cup. They were pleased with the wine, which was excellent. "Well, my dear," said Noor ad Deen to the fair Persian, "are we not the most fortunate persons in the world, after so many dangers, to meet with so charming and agreeable a place? Let us be merry, and think no more on the hardships of our voyage. Can my happiness be greater in this world, than to have you on one side of me, and my glass on the other?" They drank freely, and diverted themselves with agreeable conversation, each singing a song.

Both having very fine voices, but especially the fair Persian, their singing attracted Scheich Ibrahim, who had stood hearkening a great while on the steps, without discovering himself. He could contain himself no longer; but thrusting his head in at the door, "Courage, sir," said he to Noor ad Deen, whom he took to be quite drunk, "I am glad to see you so pleased."

"Ah! Scheich Ibrahim," cried Noor ad Deen, turning to him, "you are a glorious man, and we are extremely obliged to you. We dare not ask you to drink a cup; but walk in; come, sit down, and let us have the honour at least of your company." "Go on, go on," said Scheich Ibrahim; "the pleasure of hearing your songs is sufficient for me." Upon this he immediately retired.

The fair Persian perceiving Scheich Ibrahim, through one of the windows, standing upon the steps, told Noor ad Deen of it. "Sir," said she, "you see what an aversion he has for wine; yet I question not in the least to make him drink, if you will do as I would have you." Noor ad Deen asked her what it was. "Do but say the word," replied he, "and I am ready to do what you please." "Prevail with him then only to come in, and bear us company; some time after fill up a bumper, and give it him; if he refuses, drink it yourself, pretend to be asleep, and leave the rest to me."

Noor ad Deen understood the fair Persian's design, and called to Scheich Ibrahim, who came again to the door. "Scheich Ibrahim," said he, "we are your guests; you have entertained us in the most obliging manner, and will you now refuse our solicitations to honour us with your company? We do not ask you to drink, but only the favour of seeing you."

Scheich Ibrahim being at last prevailed upon, came into the hall, and sat down on the edge of a sofa nearest to the door. "You do not sit well there," said Noor ad Deen, "and we cannot have the honour of seeing you; pray come nearer, and sit you down by the lady; she will like it much." "I will obey you," replied Scheich Ibrahim, so coming forward, simpering, to think he should be seated near so beautiful a creature, he placed himself at some distance from the fair Persian. Noor ad Deen desired a song of her, in return for the honour Scheich Ibrahim had done them; and she sung one that charmed him.

When the fair Persian had ended her song, Noor ad Deen poured out a cup of wine, and presented it to Scheich Ibrahim. "Scheich Ibrahim," said he, "I entreat you, drink this to our healths." "Sir," replied he, starting back, as if he abhorred the very sight of the wine, "I beseech you to excuse me; I have already told you that I have forsworn the use of wine these many years." "Then since you will not drink our healths," said Noor ad Deen, "give me leave to drink yours."

While Noor ad Deen was drinking, the fair Persian cut half an apple, and presented it to Scheich Ibrahim. "Though you refused drinking," said she, "yet I believe you will not refuse tasting this apple; it is very excellent." Scheich Ibrahim had no power to refuse it from so fair a hand; but taking it with a very low bow, put it in his mouth. She said a great many pleasant things on the occasion; and Noor ad Deen, falling back upon a sofa, pretended to fall fast asleep. The fair Persian presently advanced towards Scheich Ibrahim, and speaking in a low voice, "Look at him," said she, "thus in all our merry parties he constantly serves me; and no sooner has he drunk a cup or two, but he falls asleep, and leaves me alone; but I hope you will have the goodness to keep me company till he awakes."

At this the fair Persian took a cup, and filling it with wine, offered it to Scheich Ibrahim. "Here," said she, "drink off this to my health; I am going to pledge you." Scheich Ibrahim made a great many difficulties, and begged her to excuse him from drinking; but she pressed him so, that overcome by her charms and entreaties he took the cup, and drank off every drop of the wine.

The good old man loved a chirruping cup to his heart, but was ashamed to drink among strangers. He often went to the tavern in private, as many other people do; and he did not take the precaution recommended, but went directly where he was well known (night serving him instead of a cloak), and saved the money that Noor ad Deen had ordered him to give the messenger who was to have gone for the wine.

While Scheich Ibrahim was eating fruit after his draught, the fair

Persian filled him out another, which he received with less difficulty than the former, but made none at all at the third. In short, a fourth was quaffing, when Noor ad Deen started up from his pretended sleep; and bursting out into a violent fit of laughter, and looking at him, “Ha! ha!” said he, “Scheich Ibrahim, have I caught you at last? did you not tell me you had forsworn wine? and now you have drunk it all up from me.”

Scheich Ibrahim, not expecting to be surprised, blushed a little; however, that did not spoil his draught; but when he had done, “Sir,” said he laughing, “if there is any crime in what I have done, it lies at this fair lady’s door, not mine: for who could possibly resist so many charms?”

The fair Persian, who perfectly understood Noor ad Deen, took Scheich Ibrahim’s part. “Let him talk,” said she, “Scheich Ibrahim, take no notice of him, but let us drink on and be merry.” Awhile after Noor ad Deen filled out a cup for himself and the fair Persian; but when Scheich Ibrahim saw that Noor ad Deen had forgotten him in his turn, he took his cup, and presenting it to the fair Persian, “Madam,” said he, “do you suppose I cannot drink as well as you?”

At these words Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian laughed very heartily. They poured him out some wine; and sat laughing, chatting, and drinking, till near midnight. About that hour the fair Persian began to notice that there was but one candle on the carpet. “Scheich Ibrahim,” said she to the good old officer, “you have afforded us but one candle, when there are so many wax-lights yonder; pray do us the favour to light some of them, that we may see a little better what we are doing.”

Scheich Ibrahim making use of the liberty that wine inspires when it gets into the head, and not caring to be interrupted in his discourse, bade the fair Persian light them herself. “It is fitter for a young person like you to do it,” said he, “than for me; but be sure not to light above five or six” Up rose the fair Persian immediately, and taking a wax candle in her hand, lighted it with that which stood upon the carpet, and without any regard to Scheich Ibrahim’s order, lighted up the whole fourscore.

By and by, while Scheich Ibrahim was entertaining the fair Persian with some discourse, Noor ad Deen took his turn to desire him to light up some of the candles in the lustres, not taking notice that all the wax-lights were already in a blaze. “Certainly,” replied Scheich Ibrahim, “you must be very lazy, or less vigorous than I am, that you are not able to light them yourself; get you gone, and light them; but be sure you light no more than three.” To work he went; but instead of that number, he lighted them all, and opened the shutters of the fourscore windows, before Scheich Ibrahim, who was deeply engaged with the fair Persian, knew any thing of the matter.

The caliph Haroon al Rusheed being not yet gone to rest, was in a room of his palace on the river Tigris, from whence he could command a view both of the garden and pavilion. He accidentally opened the casement, and was extremely surprised at seeing the pavilion illuminated; and at first, by the greatness of the light, thought the city was on fire. The grand vizier Jaaffier was still with him, waiting for his going to rest. The caliph, in a great rage, called the vizier to him. “Careless vizier,” said he, “come hither, come hither; look at the pavilion of pictures, and tell me the reason of its being illuminated at this hour, now I am not there.”

The grand vizier at this account fell into a violent trembling; but when he came nearer, and with his own eyes saw the truth of what the caliph had told him, he was more alarmed than before. Some excuse must be made to appease the caliph’s anger. “Commander of the true believers,” said he, “all that I can say to your majesty about this matter is, that some five or six days ago Scheich Ibrahim came to acquaint me, that he had a design to assemble the ministers of his mosque, to assist at a ceremony he was ambitious of performing in honour of your majesty’s auspicious reign. I asked him if I could be any way serviceable to him in this affair; upon which he entreated me to get leave of your majesty to perform the ceremony in the pavilion. I sent him away with leave to hold the assembly, telling him I would take care to acquaint your majesty with it; and I ask pardon for having quite forgotten it.” “Scheich Ibrahim,” continued he, “has certainly made choice of this day for the ceremony; and after treating the ministers of his mosque, was willing to indulge them with the sight of this illumination.”

“Jaaffier,” said the caliph, with a tone that plainly shewed his anger was a little mollified, “according to your own account, you have committed three faults; the first, in giving Scheich Ibrahim leave to perform this ceremony in my pavilion, for a person in such an office is not worthy of so great an honour; the second, in not acquainting me with it; and the third, in not diving into the bottom of the good old man's intention. For my part, I am persuaded he only did it to try if he could get any money towards bearing the charge of it; but that never came into your head."

The grand vizier, overjoyed to hear the caliph put the matter upon that footing, very willingly owned the faults he reproached him with, and freely confessed he was to blame in not giving Scheich Ibrahim a few pieces of gold. "Since the case is so," added the caliph, "it is just that thou shouldst be punished for thy mistakes, but thy punishment shall be light: thou shalt spend the remainder of the night as I mean to do, with these honest people, whose company I shall be well pleased with; and while I am putting on a citizen's habit, go thou and disguise thyself with Mesrour, and come both of you along with me."

The vizier would have persuaded him it was late, and that all the company would be gone before he could get thither: but the caliph said he would positively go. The vizier, who knew that not a syllable of what he had said was true, began to be in great consternation; but there was no reply to be made, and go he must.

The caliph then, disguised like a citizen, with the grand vizier Jaaffier and Mesrour, chief of the eunuchs, stole out of the palace together. They rambled through the streets of Bagdad till they came to the garden; the door, through the carelessness of Scheich Ibrahim, was open, he having forgotten to shut it when he came back with the wine. The caliph was very angry at this. "Jaaffier," said he to the grand vizier, "what excuse have you for the door's being open at this unseasonable hour?" "Is it possible that Scheich Ibrahim makes a custom of leaving it thus all night? I rather believe the hurry of the feast has been the occasion of this neglect."

The caliph went into the garden; and when he came to the pavilion, resolving not to go into the hall till he knew what was doing, consulted with the grand vizier whether it was not his best way to climb up into one of the trees that was near, to observe what was going forward. The grand vizier casting his eyes upon the door, perceived it stood half open, and told the caliph. It seems Scheich

Ibrahim had left it so, when he was prevailed upon to come in and bear Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian company.

The caliph laying aside his first design, stole softly up to the hall-door, which standing half open, he could see all the company within, without being discovered himself.

But how was he surprised, when he saw a lady of incomparable beauty and a handsome young man sitting, with Scheich Ibrahim by them. Scheich Ibraham held a cup in his hand. “My fair lady,” said he to the fair Persian, “a true toper never drinks without singing a song first: if you please to hear, I will give you one of my best songs.”

Scheich Ibrahim sung, and the caliph was the more surprised, because till that moment he never knew of his drinking wine, but always took him for a grave, solid man, as he seemed to be to outward appearance. The caliph retired from the door with the same caution as he had made his approaches to it; and coming to the grand vizier, who was standing on the steps a little lower, “Come up,” said he to him, “and see if those within are the ministers of the mosque, as you would have made me believe.”

By the tone of voice in which the caliph spoke these last words, the vizier understood that things went ill on his side: however, he went up the steps; but when he had peeped in at the door, and saw the three sitting in that condition, he trembled for his life. He returned to the caliph, but in such confusion, that he knew not what to say. “What riotous doings are here?” said the caliph to him: “who are these people that have presumed to take the liberty of diverting themselves in my garden and pavilion? and how durst Scheich Ibrahim give them admittance, and partake of the diversion with them? I must, however, confess, I never saw two persons more beautiful or better paired in my life; and therefore, before I discover my anger, I will inform myself better, and know who they are, and the reason of their being here.” He went to the door again to observe them more narrowly; and the vizier, who followed, stood behind him, while he fixed his eyes upon them. They both plainly heard every word that Scheich Ibrahim said to the fair Persian. “Is there any thing, my charming lady, wanting to render the pleasure of the evening more complete?” “Nothing but a lute,” replied the fair

Persian, "and methinks, if you could get me one, all would be well." "Can you play upon it?" said Scheich Ibrahim. "Fetch me one," replied the fair Persian, "and you shall hear whether I can or not."

Scheich Ibrahim, without stirring very far from his place, took a lute out of a press, and presented it to the fair Persian, who begun to tune it. The caliph, in the mean time, turning to the grand vizier, "Jaaffier," said he, "the young lady is going to play upon the lute; and if she performs well, I will forgive her, and the young man for her sake; but as for thee, I will have thee impaled." "Commander of the true believers," replied the grand vizier, "if that is your intention, I wish to God she may play ill." "Why so?" said the caliph. "Because," replied the grand vizier, "the longer we live in this world, the more reason we shall have to comfort ourselves with the hopes of dying in good sociable company." The caliph, who loved a repartee, began to laugh at this; and putting his ear to the opening of the door, listened to hear the fair Persian play.

The fair Persian began in such a style, that, from the first moment of her touching the lute, the caliph perceived she did it with a masterly hand. Afterwards accompanying the lute with her voice, which was admirably fine, she sung and played with so much skill and sweetness, that the caliph was quite ravished to hear her.

As soon as the fair Persian had finished her song, the caliph went down the steps, and the vizier followed him. When he came to the bottom, "I never," said he to the vizier, "heard a more charming voice, or a lute better touched. Isaac, whom I thought the most skilful player in the world, does not come up to her. I am so charmed with her music, that I will go in, and hear her play before me. We must, therefore, consider how I can do it."

"Commander of the true believers," said the grand vizier, "if you should go in, and Scheich Ibrahim chance to know you, he would infallibly die with the fright." "It is that which hurts me," replied the caliph, "and I should be loth to be the occasion of his death, after so many years service. A thought is just come into my head, that may succeed; stay here with Mesrour, and wait for me in the next walk."

The neighbourhood of the Tigris had given the caliph an opportunity of turning the stream under a stately bridge into his garden, through a piece of water, whither the choicest fish of the river used to retire. The fishermen knew it well; but the caliph had expressly charged Scheich Ibrahim not to suffer any of them to come near it. However, that night, a fisherman passing by the garden-door, which the caliph had left open as he found it, made use of the opportunity, and going in, went directly to the canal.

The fisherman immediately fell to work with his nets, and was just ready to draw them, when the caliph, fearing what would be the effect of Scheich Ibrahim's negligence, but willing to make use of it to bring his design about, came to the same place. The fisherman, in spite of his disguise, knew him, and throwing himself at his feet, humbly implored his pardon, and excused himself on account of his poverty. "Rise," said the caliph, "and be not afraid; only draw your nets, that I may see what fish you have got."

The fisherman, recovered of his fright, quickly obeyed the caliph's orders. He drew out five or six very large fishes; and the caliph choosing the two biggest, tied them together by the head, with the twig of a tree. "After this," said he to the fisherman, "give me thy clothes, and take mine." The exchange was soon made; and the caliph being dressed like a fisherman, even to his boots and turban, "Take thy nets," said he to the fisherman, "and get thee about thy business."

When the fisherman, well pleased with his good fortune, was gone, the caliph, taking the two fishes in his hand, went to look after the grand vizier and Mesrour; he first met Jaaffier, who, not knowing him, asked what he wanted, and bade him go about his business. The caliph fell a laughing; by which the vizier recognising him, "Commander of the true believers," said he, "is it possible it can be you? I knew you not; and I ask a thousand pardons for my rudeness. You are so disguised that you may venture into the hall without any fear of being discovered by Scheich Ibrahim." "Stay you here with Mesrour," said the caliph, "while I go and play my part."

The caliph went up to the hall, and knocked at the door. Noor ad Deen hearing him first, told Scheich Ibrahim of it, who asked who was there? The caliph opened the door, and stepping a little way into the hall to shew himself, "Scheich Ibrahim," said he, "I am the fisherman Kerim, who being informed of your design to treat some of your friends, have brought you two very fine fishes, fresh caught, to ask if you have any occasion for them."

Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian were pleased to hear him name fish. "Pray," said the latter to Scheich Ibrahim, "let him come in, that we may look at them." Scheich Ibrahim, by this time, was incapable of asking this counterfeit fisherman how or which way he came thither, his whole thought being only to oblige the fair Persian. With much ado he turned his head towards the door, being quite drunk, and, in a stammering tone, calling to the caliph, whom he took to be a fisherman, "Come hither, thou nightly thief," said he, "and let us see what thou hast got."

The caliph went forwards, and counterfeiting all the actions of a fisherman, presented the two fishes. "These are very fine ones indeed," said the fair Persian, "and if they were well dressed and seasoned, I should be glad to eat some of them." "The lady is in the right," answered Scheich Ibrahim; "but what can you do with your fish, unless it were dressed? Go, dress it thyself, and bring it to us; thou wilt find every thing necessary in my kitchen."

The caliph went back to the grand vizier. "Jaaffier," said he, "I have been very well received; but they want the fish to be dressed." "I will take care to dress it myself," said the grand vizier, "and they shall have it in a moment." "Nay," replied the caliph, "so eager am I to accomplish my design, that I will take that trouble myself; for since I have personated the fisherman so well, surely I can play the cook for once; in my younger days, I dealt a little in cookery, and always came off with credit." So saying, he went directly towards Scheich Ibrahim's lodgings, and the grand vizier and Mesrour followed him.

They all fell to work; and though Scheich Ibrahim's kitchen was not very large, yet there was every thing in it that they wanted. The fish was quickly cooked; and the caliph served it up, putting to every one's place a lemon to squeeze into the sauce, if they thought proper. They all ate very heartily, but especially Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian; and the caliph stood before them.

As soon as the repast was over, Noor ad Deen looking at the caliph, "Fisherman," said he, "there never was better fish eaten; and you have done us the greatest favour." At the same time, putting his hand into his bosom, and pulling out a purse of thirty pieces of gold, the remainder of forty that Sangiar, the officer of the king of Bussorah, had given him just upon his departure, “Take it,” said he to him; “if I had any more, thou shouldst have it; had I known thee in my prosperity, I would have taken care to secure thee from want: do not refuse the small present I make thee, but accept of it as kindly as if it were much greater.”

The caliph took the purse, thanked Noor ad Deen, and perceiving by the weight that it contained gold, “Sir,” said he to him, “I cannot enough thank you for your liberality, and I think myself very fortunate in having to do with a person of your generosity; but before I take my leave I have a favour to ask, which I beg you not to deny me. Yonder is a lute, which makes me believe that the lady understands playing upon it; and if you can prevail with her to play but one tune, I shall go away perfectly satisfied; for a lute, sir, is an instrument I am particularly fond of.”

“Fair Persian,” said Noor ad Deen, immediately addressing himself to her, “I ask that favour of you, and I hope you will not refuse me.” She took up the lute without more entreaties, and putting it presently in tune, played and sung with such an air, as charmed the very soul of the caliph. Afterwards she played upon the lute without singing, but with so much strength and softness, as to transport him into an ecstasy.

When the fair Persian had given over playing, the caliph cried out, “What a voice! what a hand! what skill! Was there ever finer singing, or better playing upon the lute? Never was there any seen or heard like it.”

Noor ad Deen, who was accustomed to give all that belonged to him to persons who praised him, said, “Fisherman, I find thou hast some taste for music; since thou art so delighted with her performance, she is thine, I make thee a present of her.” At the same time he rose up, and taking his robe which he had laid by, was going away, and leaving the caliph, whom he believed to be no other than a fisherman, in possession of the fair Persian.

The fair Persian was extremely surprised at Noor ad Deen’s liberality; she took hold of him, and looking tenderly at him, “Whither, sir,” said she, “are you going? sit down in your place, I entreat you, and hearken to what I am going to sing and play.” He did as she desired him, and then the fair Persian, touching the lute, and looking upon him with tears in her eyes, sung some verses that she had made ex tempore, to reproach him with his indifference, and the easiness as well as cruelty with which he resigned her to Kerim. She only hinted, without explaining herself any farther to a fisherman; for she, as well as Noor ad Deen, was ignorant of his being the caliph. When she had done playing, she put the lute down by her, and clapped a handkerchief to her face, to hide the tears she could not repress.

Noor ad Deen made no answer to all these reproaches, but by his silence seemed to declare he did not repent of what he had done The caliph, surprised at what he had heard, said, “Sir, as far as I see, this beautiful, rare, and accomplished lady, of whom so generously you have made me a present, is your slave?” “It is very true, Kerim,” replied Noor ad Deen, “and thou wouldst be more surprised than thou art now, should I tell thee all the misfortunes that have happened to me upon her account.” “Ah! I beseech you, sir,” replied the caliph, still behaving like a fisherman, “oblige me so far as to let me hear part of your story.”

Noor ad Deen, who had already obliged him in several things of more consequence, was so complaisant as to relate the whole story to him. He began with the vizier his father’s buying the fair Persian for the king of Bussorah, and omitted nothing of what he had done, or what had happened to him, from that time to their arrival at Bagdad, and to the very moment he was talking to him.

When Noor ad Deen had ended his story, “And whither are you going now?” asked the caliph. “Where Heaven shall direct me,” answered Noor ad Deen. “If you will believe me,” replied the caliph, “you shall go no farther, but, on the contrary, you must return to Bussorah: I will write a short letter, which you shall give the king in my name: you shall see upon the reading it, he will give you a very handsome reception, and nobody will dare to speak against you.”

“Kerim,” said Noor ad Deen, “what thou hast told me is very singular; I never heard that a poor fisherman, as thou art, had any correspondence with a king?” “Be not astonished at that,” replied the caliph: “you must know, that we both studied together under the same masters, and were always the best friends in the world: it is true, fortune has not been equally favourable to us; she has made him a king, and me a fisherman. But this inequality has not lessened our friendship. He has often expressed a readiness and desire to advance my fortune, but I always refused; and am better pleased with the satisfaction of knowing that he will never deny me whatever I ask for the service and advantage of my friends: let me do it, and you shall see the success."

Noor ad Deen consented to what the caliph had proposed; and there being every thing necessary for writing in the hall, the caliph wrote a letter to the king of Bussorah; at the top of which he placed this form, "In the name of the most merciful God," to shew he would be absolutely obeyed.

"Haroon al Rusheed, son of Mhadi, sends this letter to Zinebi, his cousin. As soon as Noor ad Deen, son to the late vizier Khacan, the bearer, has delivered you this letter, and you have read it, pull off the royal vestments, put them on his shoulders, and place him in thy seat without fail. Farewell."

The caliph folded up the letter, sealed it, and giving it to Noor ad Deen, without saying any thing of what was in it, "Go," said he, "embark immediately in a vessel that is ready to go off (as there did constantly every day at the same hour); you may sleep when you are aboard."

Noor ad Deen took the letter, and departed with the little money he had about him when Sangiar gave him his purse; and the fair Persian, distracted with grief at his departure, retired to one of the sofas, and wept bitterly.

Noor ad Deen was scarcely gone out of the hall, when Scheich Ibrahim, who had been silent during the whole transaction, looking steadfastly upon the caliph, whom he still took for the fisherman Kerim, "Hark'e," said he, "Kerim, thou hast brought us two fishes, that are worth twenty pieces of copper at most, and thou hast got a purse and a slave: but dost thou think to have all for thyself? I here declare, that I will go halves with thee in the slave; and as for the purse, shew me what is in the inside: if it is silver, thou shalt have one piece for thyself; but if it is gold, I will have it all, and give thee in exchange some pieces of copper which I have in my purse."

The caliph, before his serving up the fish, had dispatched the grand vizier to his palace, with orders to get four slaves with a rich habit, and to wait on the other side of the pavilion till he gave a signal with his finger against the window. The grand vizier performed his commission; and he, Mesrour, and the four slaves, waited at the appointed place, expecting the sign.

The caliph, still personating the fisherman, answered Scheich Ibrahim boldly, "I know not what there is in the purse; gold or silver, you shall freely go my halves: but as to the slave, I will have her all to myself; and if you will not accept these conditions, you shall have nothing."

Scheich Ibrahim, enraged to the last degree at this insolence, considering him only as a fisherman, snatched up one of the china dishes which were on the table, and flung it at the caliph's head. The caliph easily avoided the blow, being thrown by a person in liquor; but the dish striking against the wall, was dashed into a thousand pieces. Scheich Ibrahim grew more enraged at having missed his aim, and catching up the candle that stood upon the table, rose from his seat, and went staggering down a pair of back-stairs to look for a cane.

The caliph took this opportunity, and striking his hands against the window, the grand vizier, Mesrour, and the four slaves were with him in an instant: the slaves quickly pulled off the fisherman's clothes, and put him on the habit they had brought. They had not quite dressed the caliph, who had seated himself on the throne that was in the hall, but were busy about him when Scheich Ibrahim, spurred on by interest, came back with a cane in his hand, with which he designed to pay the pretended fisherman soundly; but instead of finding him, he saw his clothes in the middle of the hall, and the caliph on his throne, with the grand vizier and Mesrour on each side of him. He stood awhile gazing on this unexpected sight, doubting whether he was awake or asleep. The caliph fell a laughing at his astonishment; and calling to him, "Scheich Ibrahim," said he, "What dost thou want? whom dost thou look after?"

Scheich Ibrahim, no longer doubting that it was the caliph, immediately threw himself at his feet, with his face and long beard to the ground. "Commander of the true believers," cried he, "your vile slave has offended you; but he implores your clemency, and asks a thousand pardons for his offence." As soon as the slaves had finished dressing him, he came down from his throne, and advancing towards him, "Rise," said he, "I forgive thee."

The caliph then addressed himself to the fair Persian, who had suspended her sorrow as soon as she understood that the garden and pavilion belonged to that prince, and not to Scheich Ibrahim, as he had all along made her believe, and that it was he himself disguised in the fisherman's clothes. "Fair Persian," said he, "rise, and follow me: by what you have lately seen, you ought to know who I am, and to believe that I am above taking any advantage of the present which Noor ad Deen, with a generosity not to be paralleled, has made me of your person. I have sent him to Bussorah as king; and when I have given him the dispatches necessary for his establishment, you shall go thither and be queen. In the mean time I am going to order an apartment for you in my palace, where you shall be treated according to your desert."

This discourse encouraged the fair Persian, and comforted her very sensibly. The joy for the advancement of Noor ad Deen, whom she passionately loved, to so high an honour, made her sufficient amends for her affliction. The caliph kept his promise, and recommended her to the care of his empress Zobeide, whom he acquainted with the esteem he had entertained for Noor ad Deen.

Noor ad Deen's return to Bussorah was more fortunate, and speedier by some days than he could have expected. Upon his arrival, without visiting any of his friends or relations he went directly to the palace, where the king at that time was giving public audience. With the letter held up in his hand, he pressed through the crowd, who presently made way for him to come forward and deliver it. The king took and opened it, and his colour changed in reading it; he kissed it thrice, and was just about to obey the caliph's orders, when he bethought himself of shewing it to the vizier Saony, Noor ad Deen's irreconcilable enemy.

Saouy, who had discovered Noor ad Deen, and began to conjecture, with great uneasiness, what might be the design of his coming, was no less surprised than the king at the order contained in the letter; and being as much concerned in it, he instantly devised a method to evade it. He pretended not to have read the letter quite through, and therefore desiring a second view of it, turned himself a little on one side as if he wanted a better light, and, without being perceived by any body, dexterously tore off from the top of it the form which shewed the caliph would be absolutely obeyed, and putting it into his mouth, swallowed it.

After this egregious piece of villainy, Saouy turned to the king, and giving him the letter, "Sir," said he to him in a low voice, "what does your majesty intend to do?" "What the caliph has commanded me," replied the king. "Have a care, sir," said the wicked vizier, "what you do. It is true this is the caliph's hand, but the form is not to it." The king had observed it, but in his confusion thought his eyes had deceived him when he saw it was gone.

"Sir," continued the vizier, "we have no reason to doubt but that the caliph, on the complaints he has made against your majesty and myself, has granted him this letter to get rid of him, and not with any intention of having the order contained in it executed. Besides, we must consider he has sent no express with a patent; and without that the order is of no force. And since a king like your majesty was never deposed without that formality, any other man as well as Noor ad Deen might come with a forged letter: let who will bring such a letter as this, it ought not to be put in execution. Your majesty may depend upon it, that is never done; and I will take upon myself all the consequence of disobeying this order."

King Zinebi, easily persuaded by this pernicious counsel, left Noor ad Deen entirely to the discretion of the vizier Saouy, who led him to his house in a very insulting manner; and after causing him to be bastinadoed till he was almost dead, he ordered him to a prison, where he commanded him to be put into the darkest and deepest dungeon, with a strict charge to the gaoler to give him nothing but bread and water.

When Noor ad Deen, half dead with the strokes, came to himself, and found what a dismal dungeon he was in, he bewailed his misfortunes in the most pathetic manner. "Ah! fisherman," cried he, "how hast thou cheated me; and how easy have I been in believing thee! Could I, after the civility I shewed thee, expect such inhuman and barbarous usage? However, may Heaven reward thee; for I cannot persuade myself that thy intention was so base; and I will with patience wait the end of my afflictions."

The disconsolate Noor ad Deen remained six whole days in this miserable condition; and Saouy did not forget that he had confined him there; but being resolved to put him to a shameful death, and not daring to do it by his own authority, to accomplish his villainous design, loaded some of his slaves with rich presents, which he, at the head of them, went and presented to the king. "Behold, sire," said he, with the blackest malice, "what the new king has sent you upon his accession to the crown, and begs your majesty to accept."

The king taking the matter just as Saouy intended, "What!" replied he, "is that wretch still living? I thought you had put him to death already." "Sire, I have no power," answered the vizier, "to take any person's life; that only belongs to your majesty." "Go," said the king, "behead him instantly; I give you full authority." "Sire," replied the vizier Saouy, "I am infinitely obliged to your majesty for the justice you do me; but since Noor ad Deen has publicly affronted me, I humbly beg the favour, that his execution may be performed before the palace; and that the criers may publish it in every quarter of the city, so that every body may be satisfied he has made a sufficient reparation for the affront." The king granted his request; and the criers in performing their office diffused universal sorrow through the whole city. The memory of his father's virtues being yet fresh among them, no one could hear, without horror and indignation, that the son was going to suffer an ignominious death.

Saouy went in person to the prison, accompanied by twenty slaves, ministers of his cruelty, who took Noor ad Deen out of the dungeon, and put him upon a shabby horse without a saddle. When Noor ad Deen saw himself in the hands of his enemy, "Thou triumphest now," said he, "and abusest thy power; but I trust in the truth of what is written in our scripture, 'You judge unjustly, and in a little time you shall be judged yourself.'" The vizier Saouy triumphed in his heart. "What! insolent," said he, "darest thou insult me yet? but I care not what may happen to me, so I have the pleasure of seeing thee lose thy head in the public view of all Bussorah. Thou oughtest also to remember what another of our books says, 'What signifies if one dies the next day after the death of his enemy?'"

The vizier, implacable in his hatred and enmity, surrounded by his slaves in arms, conducted Noor ad Deen towards the palace. The people were ready to fall upon him as he passed; and if any one had set the example, would certainly have stoned him to death. When he had brought him to the place of suffering, which was to be in sight of the king's apartment, he left him in the executioner's hands, and went straight to the king, who was in his closet, ready to glut his eyes with the bloody spectacle he had prepared.

The king's guard and the vizier's slaves, who made a circle round Noor ad Deen, had much trouble to withstand the people, who made all possible efforts to break through, and carry him off by force. The executioner coming up to him, said, "I hope you will forgive me, I am but a slave, and cannot help doing my duty. If you have no occasion for any thing more, I beseech you to prepare yourself; for the king is just going to give me orders to strike the blow."

The unfortunate Noor ad Deen, at that moment, looking round upon the people, "Will no charitable body," cried he, "bring me a little water to quench my thirst?" Which immediately they did, and handed it up to him upon the scaffold. The vizier Saouy perceiving this delay, called out to the executioner from the king's closet window, where he had planted himself, "Strike, what dost thou stay for?" At these inhuman words the whole place echoed with loud imprecations against him; and the king, jealous of his authority, made it appear, by enjoining him to stop awhile, that he was angry at his presumption. But there was another reason; for the king that very moment casting his eye towards a street that faced him, saw a troop of horsemen advancing full speed towards the palace. "Vizier," said the king immediately, "look yonder; what is the meaning of those horsemen?" Saouy, who knew not who they might be, earnestly pressed the king to give the executioner the sign. "No," replied the king; "I will first know who those horsemen are." It was the vizier Jaaffier, with his train, who came in person from Bagdad by the caliph's order.

To understand the occasion of this minister's coming to Bussorah, we must observe, that after Noor ad Deen's departure with the letter, the caliph the next day, nor for several days after, thought not of sending him the patent which he mentioned to the fair Persian. He happened one day to be in the inner palace, which was that of the women, and passing by her apartment, heard the sound of a fine voice: he listened to it; and he had no sooner heard the words of one complaining for the absence of somebody, than he asked the officer of the eunuchs who attended him who the woman was that lived in that apartment? The officer told him it was the young stranger's slave whom he had sent to Bussorah to be king in the room of Mahummud Zinebi.

"Ah! poor Noor ad Deen," cried the caliph, "I had forgotten thee; but hasten," said he to the officer, "and bid Jaaffier come to me." The vizier was with him in an instant. As soon as he came, "Jaaffier," said he, "I have hitherto neglected sending the patent which was to confirm Noor ad Deen king of Bussorah; but we have no time now to draw up one; therefore immediately take post-horses, and with some of your servants, make what haste you can to that city. If Noor ad Deen is no longer alive, but put to death by them, order the vizier Saouy to be impaled; but if he is living, bring him to me with the king and the vizier."

The grand vizier stayed no longer than just to get on horseback; and being attended by a great train of officers belonging to his household departed for Bussorah, where he arrived in the manner and at the time already mentioned. As soon as he came to the palace-yard, the people cleared the way for him, crying out, "A pardon for Noor ad Deen!" and with his whole train he rode into the palace, even to the very stairs, where he alighted.

The king of Bussorah, knowing him to be the caliph's chief minister, went to meet him, and received him at the entrance of his apartment. The first question the vizier asked was, If Noor ad Deen was living? and if he was, he desired that he might be sent for. The king made answer, he was alive, and gave orders to have him brought in. Accordingly he soon made his appearance as he was, bound with cords. The grand vizier Jaaffier caused him to be unbound, and setting him at liberty, ordered the vizier Saouy to be seized, and bound him with the same cords.

The grand vizier remained but one night at Bussorah; and, according to the order he had received, carried Saouy, the king of Bussorah, and Noor ad Deen, along with him. Upon his arrival at Bagdad, he presented them to the caliph: and after he had given him an account of his journey, and particularly the miserable condition in which he found Noor ad Deen, and his ill-usage by the advice and malice of Saony, the caliph desired Noor ad Deen to behead the vizier himself. “Commander of the true believers,” said the generous youth, “notwithstanding the injury this wicked man has done me, and the mischief he endeavoured to do my deceased father, I should think myself the basest of mankind if I stained my hands with his blood.” The caliph was pleased with his generosity, and ordered justice to be done by the executioner.

The caliph would fain have sent Noor ad Deen to Bussorah as king: but he humbly begged to be excused from accepting the offer. “Commander of the true believers,” said Noor ad Deen, “the city of Bussorah, after the misfortunes that have happened to me there, will be so much my aversion, that I beseech your majesty to give me leave to keep the oath which I have made, of never returning thither again; and I shall think it my greatest glory to serve near your royal person, if you are pleased to allow me the honour.” The caliph consented; and placing him among the number of those courtiers who were his greatest favourites, restored the fair Persian to him again. To all these favours he added a plentiful fortune; and he and the fair Persian lived together thenceforth, with all the happiness this world could afford.

As for the king of Bussorah, the caliph contented himself with hinting how careful he ought to be in the choice of his viziers, and sent him back to his kingdom.

VOLUME 3

THE STORY OF BEDER, PRINCE OF PERSIA, AND JEHAUN-ARA, PRINCESS OF SAMANDAL, OR SUMMUNDER.

Persia was an empire of such vast extent, that its ancient monarchs, not without reason, assumed the haughty title of King of kings. For not to mention those subdued by their arms, there were kingdoms and provinces whose kings were not only tributary, but also in as great subjection as governors in other nations are to the monarchs.

One of these kings, who in the beginning of his reign had signalized himself by many glorious and successful conquests, enjoyed so profound a peace and tranquillity, as rendered him the happiest of princes. The only point in which he thought himself unfortunate was, that amongst all his wives, not one had brought him a son; and being now far advanced in years, he was desirous of an heir. He had above a hundred ladies, all lodged in separate apartments, with women-slaves to wait upon and eunuchs to guard them; yet, notwithstanding all his endeavours to please their taste, and anticipate their wishes, there was not one that answered his expectation. He had women frequently brought him from the most remote countries; and if they pleased him, he not only gave the merchants their full price, but loaded them with honours and benedictions, in hopes that at last he might be so happy as to meet with one by whom he might have a son. There was scarcely an act of charity but he performed, to prevail with heaven. He gave immense sums to the poor, besides large donations to the religious; building for their use many noble colleges richly endowed, in hopes of obtaining by their prayers what he so earnestly desired.

One day, according to the custom of his royal predecessors, during their residence in their capital, he held an assembly of his courtiers, at which all the ambassadors and strangers of quality about the court were present; and where they not only entertained one another with news and politics, but also by conversing on the sciences, history, poetry, literature, and whatever else was capable of diverting the mind. On that day a eunuch came to acquaint him with the arrival of a certain merchant from a distant country, who, having brought a slave with him, desired leave to shew her to his majesty. “Give him admittance instantly,” said the king, “and after the assembly is over I will talk with him.” The merchant was introduced, and seated in a convenient place, from whence he might easily have a full view of the king, and hear him talk familiarly to those that stood near his person. The king observed this rule to all strangers, in order that by degrees they might grow acquainted with him; so that, when they saw with what freedom and civility he addressed himself to all, they might be encouraged to talk to him in the same manner, without being abashed at the pomp and splendour of his appearance, which was enough to deprive those of their power of speech who were not used to it. He treated the ambassadors also after the same manner. He ate with them, and during the repast asked them several questions concerning their health, their journey, and the peculiarities of their country. After they had been thus encouraged, he gave them audience.

When the assembly was over, and all the company had retired, the merchant, who was the only person left, fell prostrate before the king’s throne, with his face to the earth, wishing his majesty an accomplishment of all his desires As soon as he arose, the king asked him if the report of his having brought a slave for him was true, and whether she were handsome.

“Sire,” replied the merchant, “I doubt not but your majesty has many very beautiful women, since you search every corner of the earth for them; but I may boldly affirm, without overvaluing my merchandise, that you never yet saw a woman that could stand in competition with her for shape and beauty, agreeable qualifications, and all the perfections that she is mistress of.” “Where is she?” demanded the king; “bring her to me instantly.” “Sire,” replied the merchant, “I have delivered her into the hands of one of your chief eunuchs; and your majesty may send for her at your pleasure.”

The fair slave was immediately brought in; and no sooner had the king cast his eyes on her, but he was charmed with her beautiful and easy shape. He went directly into a closet, and was followed by the merchant and a few eunuchs. The fair slave wore, over her face, a red satin veil striped with gold; and when the merchant had taken it off, the king of Persia beheld a female that surpassed in beauty, not only his present ladies, but all that he had ever had before. He immediately fell passionately in love with her, and desired the merchant to name his price.

"Sire," said he, "I gave a thousand pieces of gold to the person of whom I bought her; and in my three years' journey to your court, I reckon I have spent as much more: but I shall forbear setting any price to so great a monarch; and therefore, if your majesty likes her, I humbly beg you would accept of her as a present." "I am highly obliged to you," replied the king; "but it is never my custom to treat merchants, who come hither for my pleasure, in so ungenerous a manner; I am going to order thee ten thousand pieces of gold; will that be sufficient?" "Sire," answered the merchant, "I should have esteemed myself happy in your majesty's acceptance of her; yet I dare not refuse so generous an offer. I will not fail to publish your liberality in my own country, and in every place through which I may pass." The money was paid; and before he departed, the king made him put on a rich suit of cloth of gold.

The king caused the fair slave to be lodged in the apartment next his own, and gave particular orders to the matrons, and the female slaves appointed to attend her, that after bathing they should dress her in the richest habit they could find, and carry her the finest pearl necklaces, the brightest diamonds, and other richest precious stones, that she might choose those she liked best.

The officious matrons, whose only care was to please the king, were astonished at her beauty; and being good judges, they told his majesty, that if he would allow them but three days, they would engage to make her so much handsomer than she was at present, that he would scarcely know her again. The king could hardly prevail with himself to delay so long the pleasure of seeing her, but at last he consented.

The king of Persia's capital was situated in an island; and his palace, which was very magnificent, was built on the shore: his apartment looked on the water; the fair slave's, which was near it, had also the same prospect, and was the more agreeable, on account of the sea's beating almost against the walls.

At the three days' end, the fair slave, magnificently dressed, was alone in her chamber, sitting on a sofa, and leaning against one of the windows that faced the sea, when the king, being informed that he might visit her, came in. The slave, hearing somebody walk in the room with an air quite different from that of the female slaves, who had hitherto attended her, immediately turned her head about to see who it was. She knew him to be the king, but without discovering the least surprise, or so much as rising from her seat to salute or receive him, as if he had been the most indifferent person in the world, she put herself in the same posture again.

The king of Persia was extremely surprised to see a slave of so beauteous a form so ignorant of the world. He attributed this to the narrowness of her education, and the little care that had been taken to instruct her in the first rules of civility. He went to her at the window, where, notwithstanding the coldness and indifference with which she had received him, she suffered herself to be admired, caressed, and embraced, as much as he pleased.

In the midst of these amorous embraces and tender endearments, the king paused awhile, to gaze upon, or rather to devour her with his eyes. "My lovely fair one! my charmer!" exclaimed he; "whence came you, and where do those happy parents live who brought into the world so surprising a masterpiece of nature? How do I love thee, and shall always continue to do. Never did I feel for a woman what I now feel for you; and though I have seen, and every day behold a vast number of beauties, yet never did my eyes contemplate so many charms in one person — charms which have so transported me, that I shall entirely devote myself to you. My dearest life," continued he, "you neither answer, nor by any visible token give me the least reason to believe that you are sensible of the demonstrations I have given you of the ardour of my passion; neither will you turn your eyes on me, to afford mine the pleasure of meeting them, and to convince you that it is impossible to love in a higher degree than I do you. Why will you still preserve this obstinate silence, which chills me, and whence proceeds the seriousness, or rather sorrow, that torments me to the soul? Do you mourn for your country, your friends or your relations? Alas! Is not the king of Persia, who loves and adores you, capable of comforting you, and making you amends for every loss?"

Notwithstanding all the protestations of love the king of Persia made the fair slave, and all he could say to induce her to speak to him, she remained unaltered; and keeping her eyes still fixed upon the ground, would neither look at him, nor utter a word.

The king of Persia, delighted with the purchase he had made of a slave that pleased him so well, pressed her no farther, in hopes that by treating her kindly he might prevail upon her to change her behaviour. He clapped his hands; and the women who waited in an outward room entered: he commanded them to bring in supper. When it was arranged, "My love," said he to the slave, "come hither and sup with me." She rose from her seat; and being seated opposite the king, his majesty helped her, before he began eating himself; and did so of every dish during supper. The slave ate as well as the king, but still with downcast eyes, and without speaking a word; though he often asked her how she liked the entertainment, and whether it was dressed according to her taste.

The king, willing to change the conversation, asked her what her name was, how she liked the clothes and the jewels she had on, what she thought of her apartment and the rich furniture, and whether the prospect of the sea was not very agreeable? But to all these questions she made no reply; so that the king was at a loss what to think of her silence. He imagined at first, that she might perhaps be dumb: "But then," said he to himself, "can it be possible that heaven should forge a creature so beautiful, so perfect, and so accomplished, and at the same time with so great an imperfection? Were it however so, I could not love her with less passion than I do." When the king of Persia rose, he washed his hands on one side, while the fair slave washed hers on the other. He took that opportunity to ask the woman who held the basin and napkin, if ever they had heard her speak. One of them replied, "Sire, we have neither seen her open her lips, nor heard her speak any more than your majesty has; we have rendered her our services in the bath; we have dressed her head, put on her clothes, and waited upon her in her chamber; but she has never opened her lips, so much as to say, that is well, or I like this. We have often asked her, "Madam, do you want anything? Is there anything you wish for? Do but ask, and command us," but we have never been able to draw a word from her. We cannot tell whether her sorrow proceeds from pride, sorrow, stupidity, or dumbness."

The king was more astonished at hearing this than he had been before: however, believing the slave might have some cause of sorrow, he was willing to endeavour to divert and amuse her. Accordingly he appointed a very splendid assembly, which all the ladies of the court attended; and those who were skilful in playing upon musical instruments performed their parts, while others sung or danced, or did both together: they played at all sorts of games, which much diverted the king. The fair slave was the only person who took no pleasure in these attempts to amuse her; she never moved from her place, but remained with her eyes fixed on the ground with so much indifference, that all the ladies were not less surprised than the king. After the assembly was over, every one retired to her apartment; and the king was left alone with the fair slave.

The next morning the king of Persia rose more pleased than he had been with all the women he had seen before, and more enamoured with the fair slave than ever. Indeed, he soon made it appear, by resolving henceforth to attach himself to her alone; and performed his resolution. On the same day he dismissed all his other women, giving every one of them their jewels, and other valuables, besides a considerable fortune, with free leave to marry whom they thought fit; and only kept the matrons and a few other elderly women to wait upon the fair slave. However, for a whole year together, she never afforded him the pleasure of one single word; yet the king continued his assiduities to please her, and to give her the most signal proofs of sincere love.

After the expiration of the year, the king sitting one day by his mistress, protested to her that his love, instead of being diminished, grew every day more violent. "My queen," said he, "I cannot divine what your thoughts are; but nothing is more true, and I swear to you, that having the happiness of possessing you, there remains nothing for me to desire. I esteem my kingdom, great as it is, less than an atom, when I have the pleasure of beholding you, and of telling you a thousand times that I adore you. I desire not that my words alone should oblige you to believe me. Surely you can no longer doubt of my devotion to you after the sacrifice which I have made to your beauty of so many women, whom I before kept in my palace. You may remember it is about a year since I sent them all away; and I as little repent of it now, as I did the moment of their departure; and I never shall repent. Nothing would be wanting to complete my happiness and crown my joy, would you but speak one single word to me, by which I might be assured that you thought yourself at all obliged. But how can you speak to me if you are dumb? and alas! I feel but too apprehensive that this is the case. How can I doubt, since you still torment me with silence, after having for a whole year in vain supplicated you to speak? If it is possible for me to obtain of you that consolation, may heaven at least grant me the blessing of a son by you, to succeed me. I every day find myself growing old, and I begin already to want one to assist me in bearing the weight of my crown. Still I cannot conceal the desire I have of hearing you speak; for something within me tells me you are not dumb: and I beseech, I conjure you, dear madam, to break through this long silence, and speak but one word to me; after that I care not how soon I die."

At this discourse the fair slave, who, according to her usual custom, had hearkened to the king with downcast eyes, and had given him cause to believe not only that she was dumb, but that she had never laughed, began to smile. The king of Persia perceived it with a surprise that made him break forth into an exclamation of joy; and no longer doubting but that she was going to speak, he waited for that happy moment with an eagerness and attention that cannot easily be expressed.

At last the fair slave thus addressed herself to the king: "Sire, I have so many things to say to your majesty, that, having once broken silence, I know not where to begin. However, in the first place, I think myself bound to thank you for all the favours and honours you have been pleased to confer upon me, and to implore heaven to bless and prosper you, to prevent the wicked designs of your enemies, and not suffer you to die after hearing me speak, but to grant you a long life. After this, sire, I cannot give you greater satisfaction than by acquainting you that I am with child; and I wish, as you do, it may be a son. Had it never been my fortune to be pregnant, I was resolved (I beg your majesty to pardon the sincerity of my intention) never to have loved you, and to have kept an eternal silence; but now I love you as I ought to do."

The king of Persia, ravished to hear the fair slave not only speak, but tell him tidings in which he was so nearly concerned, embraced her tenderly. “Staining light of my eyes,” said he, “it is impossible for me to receive greater delight than you have now given me: you have spoken to me, and you have declared your being with child, which I did not expect. After these two occasions of joy I am transported out of myself.”

The king of Persia, in the transport of his feelings, said no more to the fair slave. He left her, but in such a manner as made her perceive his intention was speedily to return: and being willing that the occasion of his joys should be made public, he declared it to his officers, and sent for the grand vizier. As soon as he came, he ordered him to distribute a thousand pieces of gold among the holy men of his religion, who made vows of poverty; as also among the hospitals and the poor, by way of returning thanks to heaven: and his will was obeyed by the direction of that minister.

After the king of Persia had given this order, he returned to the fair slave again. “Madam,” said he, “pardon me for leaving you so abruptly, since you have been the occasion of it; but I hope you will indulge me with some conversation, since I am desirous to know of you several things of much greater consequence. Tell me, my dearest soul, what were the powerful reasons that induced you to persist in that obstinate silence for a whole year together, though every day you saw me, heard me talk to you, ate and drank with me, and every night slept with me? I shall pass by your not speaking; but how you could carry yourself so as that I could never discover whether you were sensible of what I said to you or no, I confess, surpasses my understanding; and I cannot yet comprehend how you could contain yourself so long; therefore I must conclude the occasion of it to be very extraordinary.”

“To satisfy the king of Persia’s curiosity,” replied the lady, “think whether or no to be a slave, far from my own country, without any hopes of ever seeing it again, to have a heart torn with grief, at being separated forever from my mother, my brother, my friends, and my acquaintance, are not these sufficient reasons for the silence your majesty has thought so strange and unaccountable?”

“The love of our native country is as natural to us as that of our parents; and the loss of liberty is insupportable to everyone who is not wholly destitute of common sense, and knows how to set a value on it. The body indeed may be enslaved, and under the subjection of a master, who has the power and authority in his hands; the will can never be conquered, but remains free and unconfined, depending on itself alone, as your majesty has found in my case; and it is a wonder that I have not followed the example of many unfortunate wretches, whom the loss of liberty has reduced to the melancholy resolution of procuring their own deaths in a thousand ways, by a liberty which cannot be taken from them."

"Madam," replied the king, "I am convinced of the truth of what you say; but till this moment I was of opinion, that a person beautiful, of good understanding, like yourself, whom her evil destiny had condemned to be a slave, ought to think herself very happy in meeting with a king for her master."

"Sire," replied the lady, "whatever the slave be, as I have already observed to your majesty, there is no king on earth can tyrannize over her will. When indeed you speak of a slave mistress of charms sufficient to captivate a monarch, and induce him to love her; if she be of a rank infinitely below him, I am of your opinion, she ought to think herself happy in her misfortunes: still what happiness can it be, when she considers herself only as a slave, torn from a parent's arms, and perhaps from those of a lover, her passion for whom death only can extinguish; but when this very slave is in nothing inferior to the king who has purchased her, your majesty shall judge yourself of the rigour of her destiny, her misery and her sorrow, and to what desperate attempts the anguish of despair may drive her."

The king of Persia, astonished at this discourse, "Madam," said he, "can it be possible that you are of royal blood, as by your words you seem to intimate? Explain the whole secret to me, I beseech you, and no longer augment my impatience. Let me instantly know who are the happy parents of so great a prodigy of beauty; who are your brothers, your sisters, and your relations; but, above all, tell me your name?"

"Sire," said the fair slave, "my name is Gulnare of the Sea: and my father, who is dead, was one of the most potent monarchs of the ocean. When he died, he left his kingdom to a brother of mine, named Saleh, and to the queen, my mother, who is also a princess, the daughter of another puissant monarch of the sea. We enjoyed profound peace and tranquillity through the whole kingdom, till a neighbouring prince, envious of our happiness, invaded our dominions with a mighty army; and penetrating as far as our capital, made himself master of it; and we had but just time to save ourselves in an impenetrable and inaccessible place, with a few trusty officers, who did not forsake us in our distress.

"In this retreat my brother was not negligent in contriving means to drive the unjust invaders from our dominions. One day taking me into his closet, 'Sister,' said he, 'the events of the smallest undertakings are always dubious. For my own part, I may fail in the attempt I design to make to recover my kingdom; and I shall be less concerned for my own disgrace than what may possibly happen to you. To secure you from all accident, I would fain see you married. But in the present miserable condition of our affairs, I see no probability of matching you to any of the princes of the sea; and therefore I should be glad if you would concur in my opinion, and think of marrying one of the princes of the earth. I am ready to contribute all that lies in my power towards accomplishing this; and am certain there is not one of them, however powerful, but, considering your beauty, would be proud of sharing his crown with you.'

"At this discourse of my brother's, I fell into a violent passion. 'Brother,' said I, 'you know that I am descended, as well as you, from the kings and queens of the sea, without any mixture of alliance with those of the earth; therefore I do not design to marry below myself, and I have taken an oath to that effect. The condition to which we are reduced shall never oblige me to alter my resolution; and if you perish in the execution of your design, I am prepared to fall with you, rather than follow the advice I so little expected from you.'

"My brother, who was still earnest for my marriage, however improper for me, endeavoured to make me believe that there were kings of the earth who were no ways inferior to those of the sea. This put me into a more violent passion, which occasioned him to say several bitter reflecting things, that nettled me to the quick. He left me, as much dissatisfied with myself as he could possibly be with me; and in this peevish mood I gave a spring from the bottom of the sea up to the Island of the Moon.

"Notwithstanding the violent discontent that made me cast myself upon that island, I lived content in retirement. But in spite of all my precautions, a person of distinction, attended by his servants, surprised me sleeping, and carried me to his own house. He expressed much love to me, and omitted nothing which he thought might induce me to return his passion. When he saw that fair means would not prevail upon me, he attempted to use force: but I soon made him repent of his insolence. He resolved to sell me, which he did to the merchant who brought me hither, and sold me to your majesty. He was a prudent, courteous, humane man; and during the whole of the long journey, never gave me the least reason to complain.

"As for your majesty," continued the princess Gulnare, "if you had not shown me all the respect you have hitherto done (for which I am extremely obliged to your goodness), and given me such undeniable marks of your affection, that I can no longer doubt of it; if you had not immediately sent away your women; I hesitate not to tell you, that I should not have remained with you. I would have thrown myself into the sea out of this window, where you accosted me when you first came into this apartment; and have gone in search of my mother, my brother, and the rest of my relations. I should have persisted in that design, and would have put it in execution, if after a certain time I had found myself deceived in the hopes of being with child; but in the condition I am in, all I could say to my mother or my brother would never convince them that I have been a slave to a king like your majesty. They would never believe it, but would for ever upbraid me with the crime I have voluntarily committed against my honour. However, sire, be it a prince or princess that I may bring into the world, it will be a pledge to engage me never to be parted from your majesty; and therefore I hope you will no longer regard me as a slave, but as a princess worthy your alliance."

In this manner the Princess Gulnare discovered herself to the king of Persia, and finished her story. "My charming, my adorable princess," cried he, "what wonders have I heard! and what ample matter for my curiosity, to ask a thousand questions concerning those strange and unheard of things which you have related! But first, I ought to thank you for your goodness and patience in making trial of the truth and constancy of my passion. I thought it impossible for me to love you more than I did; but since I know you to be a princess, I love you a thousand times more. Princess! did I say, madam? you are no longer so; but you are my queen, the queen of Persia; and by that title you shall soon be proclaimed throughout the whole kingdom. To-morrow the ceremony shall be performed in my capital with a pomp and magnificence never yet beheld; which will plainly shew that you are my queen and my lawful wife. This should long ago have been done, had you sooner convinced me of my error: for from the first moment of my seeing you, I have been of the same opinion as now, to love you always, and never to place my affections on any other.

"But that I may satisfy myself, and pay you all the respect that is your due, I beseech you, madam, to inform me more particularly of the kingdom and people of the sea, who are altogether unknown to me. I have heard much talk, indeed, of the inhabitants of the sea, but I always looked upon such accounts merely as tales or fables; by what you have told me, I am convinced there is nothing more true; and I have a proof of it in your own person, who are one of them, and are pleased to condescend to be my wife; which is an honour no other inhabitant on the earth can boast. There is one point however which yet perplexes me; therefore I must beg the favour of you to explain it; that is, I cannot comprehend how it is possible for you to live or move in water without being drowned. There are few amongst us who have the art of staying under water; and they would surely perish, if, after a certain time, according to their activity and strength, they did not come up again."

"Sire," replied the Queen Gulnare, "I shall with pleasure satisfy the king of Persia. We can walk at the bottom of the sea with as much ease as you can upon land; and we can breathe in the water as you do in the air; so that instead of suffocating us, as it does you, it absolutely contributes to the preservation of our lives. What is yet more remarkable is, that it never wets our clothes; so that when we wish to visit the earth, we have no occasion to dry them. Our language is the same with that of the writing engraved upon the seal of the great prophet Solomon the son of David.

"I must not forget to inform you further, that the water does not in the least hinder us from seeing: for we can open our eyes without any inconvenience: and as we have quick, piercing sight, we can discern any objects as clearly in the deepest part of the sea as upon land. We have also there a succession of day and night; the moon affords us her light; and even the planets and the stars appear visible to us. I have already spoken of our kingdoms; but as the sea is much more spacious than the earth, so there are a great number of them, and of great extent. They are divided into provinces; and in each province are several great cities well peopled. In short there is an infinite number of nations differing in manners and customs, as they do on the earth.

"The palaces of the kings and princes are sumptuous and magnificent. Some of them are constructed of marble of various colours; others of rock-crystal, with which the sea abounds, mother of pearl, coral, and of other materials more valuable; gold, silver, and all sorts of precious stones are more plentiful there than on earth. I say nothing of the pearls, since the largest that ever were seen upon earth would not be valued amongst us; and none but the very lowest rank of citizens would wear them.

"As we have a marvellous and incredible agility to transport ourselves whither we please in the twinkling of an eye, we have no occasion for carriages or horses; not but the king has his stables and his stud of sea horses; but they are seldom used, except upon public feasts or rejoicing days. Some, after they have trained them, take delight in riding and shewing their skill and dexterity in races; others put them to chariots of mother of pearl, adorned with an infinite number of shells of all sorts, of the liveliest colours. These chariots are open; and in the middle is a throne on which the king sits, and shows himself to the public view of his subjects. The horses are trained to draw by themselves; so that there is no occasion for a charioteer to guide them. I pass over a thousand other curious particulars relating to these submarine countries, which would be very entertaining to your majesty; but you must permit me to defer them to a future opportunity, to speak of something of much greater consequence, which is, that the method of delivering, and the way of managing the women of the sea in their lying-in, is very different from those of the women of the earth; and I am afraid to trust myself in the hands of the midwives of this country: therefore, since my safe delivery equally concerns us both, with your majesty's permission, I think it proper, for greater security, to send for my mother and my cousins, to assist at my labour; at the same time to desire the king my brother's company, to whom I have a great desire to be reconciled. They will be glad to see me again, when they understand I am wife to the mighty king of Persia. I beseech your majesty to give me leave to send for them. I am sure they will be happy to pay their respects to you; and I venture to say you will be pleased to see them."

"Madam," replied the king of Persia, "you are mistress; do whatever you please; I will endeavour to receive them with all the honours they deserve. But I would fain know how you will acquaint them with what you desire, and when they will arrive, that I may give orders to make preparation for their reception, and go myself in person to meet them." "Sire," replied the Queen Gulnare, "there is no need of these ceremonies; they will be here in a moment; and if your majesty will but step into the closet, and look through the lattice, you shall see the manner of their arrival."

As soon as the king of Persia was in the closet, Queen Gulnare ordered one of her women to bring her a fire-pan with a little fire. After that she bade her retire, and shut the door. When she was alone, she took a piece of aloes-wood out of a box, and put it into the fire-pan. As soon as she saw the smoke rise, she repeated some words unknown to the king of Persia, who observed with great attention all that she did. She had no sooner ended, than the sea began to be disturbed. The closet the king was in was so contrived, that looking through the lattice on the same side with the windows that faced the sea, he could plainly perceive it.

At length the sea opened at some distance; and presently there arose out of it a tall, handsome young man, with whiskers of a sea-green colour; a little behind him, a lady, advanced in years, but of a majestic air, attended by five young ladies, nothing inferior in beauty to the Queen Gulnare.

Queen Gulnare immediately came to one of the windows, and saw the king her brother, the queen her mother, and the rest of her relations, who at the same time perceived her also. The company advanced, supported, as it were, upon the waves. When they came to the edge, they nimbly, one after another, sprung in at the window. King Saleh, the queen her mother, and the rest of her relations, embraced her tenderly on their first entrance, with tears in their eyes.

After Queen Gulnare had received them with all imaginable honour, and made them sit down upon a sofa, the queen her mother addressed herself to her: "Daughter," said she, "I am overjoyed to see you again after so long an absence; and I am confident that your brother and your relations are no less so. Your leaving us without acquainting any one with your intention, involved us in inexpressible concern; and it is impossible to tell you how many tears we have shed on your account. We know of no reason that could induce you to take such a resolution, but what your brother related to us respecting the conversation that passed between him and you. The advice he gave you seemed to him at that time advantageous for settling you in the world, and suitable to the then posture of our affairs. If you had not approved of his proposal, you ought not to have been so much alarmed; and give me leave to tell you, you took his advice in a different light from what you ought to have done. But no more of this; it serves only to renew the occasion of our sorrow and complaint, which we and you ought to bury forever in oblivion; give us now an account of all that has happened to you since we saw you last, and of your present situation, but especially let us know if you are married."

Gulnare immediately threw herself at her mother's feet, and kissing her hand, "Madam," said she, "I own I have been guilty of a fault, and I am indebted to your goodness for the pardon which you are pleased to grant me. What I am going to say, in obedience to your commands, will soon convince you, that it is often in vain for us to have an aversion for certain measures; I have myself experienced that the only thing I had an abhorrence to, is that to which my destiny has led me." She then related the whole of what had befallen her since she quitted the sea for the earth. As soon as she had concluded, and acquainted them with her having been sold to the king of Persia, in whose palace she was at present; "Sister," said the king her brother, “you have been wrong to suffer so many indignities, but you can properly blame nobody but yourself; you have it in your power now to free yourself, and I cannot but admire your patience, that you could endure so long a slavery. Rise, and return with us into my kingdom, which I have reconquered from the proud usurper who had made himself master of it.”

The king of Persia, who heard these words from the closet where he stood, was in the utmost alarm; “Ah!” said he to himself, “I am ruined, and if my queen, my Gulnare, hearken to this advice, and leave me, I shall surely die, for it is impossible for me to live without her.” Queen Gulnare soon put him out of his fears.

“Brother,” said she smiling, “what I have just heard gives me a greater proof than ever of the sincerity of your affection; I could not brook your proposing to me a match with a prince of the earth: now I can scarcely forbear being angry with you for advising me to break the engagement I have made with the most puissant and most renowned monarch in the world. I do not speak here of an engagement between a slave and her master; it would be easy to return the ten thousand pieces of gold he gave for me; but I speak now of a contract between a wife and a husband — and a wife who has not the least reason to complain. He is a religious, wise, and temperate king, and has given me the most essential demonstrations of his love. What can be a greater proof of the sincerity of his passion, than sending away all his women (of which he had a great number) immediately upon my arrival, and confining himself to me alone? I am now his wife, and he has lately declared me queen of Persia, to share with him in his councils; besides, I am pregnant, and if heaven permit me to give him a son, that will be another motive to engage my affections to him the more.”

“So that, brother,” continued the queen Gulnare, “instead of following your advice, you see I have all the reason in the world, not only to love the king of Persia as passionately as he loves me, but also to live and die with him, more out of gratitude than duty. I hope then neither my mother, nor you, nor any of my cousins, will disapprove of the resolution or the alliance I have made, which will do equal honour to the kings of the sea and earth. Excuse me for giving you the trouble of coming hither from the bottom of the deep, to communicate it to you; and to enjoy the pleasure of seeing you after so long a separation."

"Sister," replied King Saleh, "the proposal I made you of going back with us into my kingdom, upon the recital of your adventures (which I could not hear without concern), was only to let you see how much we all love you, and how much I in particular honour you, and that nothing is so dear to me as your happiness. Upon the same account then, for my own part, I cannot condemn a resolution so reasonable and so worthy of yourself, after what you have told us of the king of Persia your husband, and the great obligations you owe him; and I am persuaded that the queen our mother will be of the same opinion."

The queen confirmed what her son had spoken, and addressing herself to Gulnare, said, "I am glad to hear you are pleased; and I have nothing to add to what your brother has said. I should have been the first to condemn you, had you not expressed all the gratitude you owe to a monarch that loves you so passionately."

As the king of Persia had been extremely concerned under the apprehension of losing his beloved queen, so now he was transported with joy at her resolution never to forsake him; and having no room to doubt of her love after so open a declaration, he resolved to evince his gratitude in every possible way.

While the king was indulging incredible pleasure, Queen Gulnare clapped her hands, and immediately some of her slaves entered, whom she had ordered to bring in a collation: as soon as it was served up, she invited the queen her mother, the king her brother, and her cousins to partake. They began to reflect that they were in the palace of a mighty king, who had never seen or heard of them, and that it would be rudeness to eat at his table without him. This reflection raised a blush in their faces, and in their emotion, their eyes glowing like fire, they breathed flames at their mouths and nostrils.

This unexpected sight put the king of Persia, who was totally ignorant of the cause of it, into a dreadful consternation. Queen Gulnare, suspecting this, and understanding the intention of her relations, rose from her seat, and told them she would be back in a moment. She went directly to the closet, and by her presence recovered the king of Persia from his surprise; “Sir,” said she, “I doubt not but that your majesty is well pleased with the acknowledgment I have made of the many favours for which I am indebted to you. I might have complied with the wishes of my relations, and gone back with them into their dominions; but I am not capable of such ingratitude, for which I should have been the first to condemn myself.” “Ah! my queen,” cried the king of Persia, “speak no more of your obligations to me; you have none; I am under so many to you, that I shall never be able to repay them. I never thought it possible you could have loved me so tenderly as you do, and as you have made appear to me in the most endearing manner.” “Ah! sir,” replied Gulnare “could I do less? I fear I have not done enough, considering all the honours that your majesty has heaped upon me; and it is impossible for me to remain insensible of your love, after so many convincing proofs as you have given me.”

“But, sir,” continued Gulnare, “let us drop this subject, and give me leave to assure you of the sincere friendship the queen my mother and the king my brother are pleased to honour you with; they earnestly desire to see you, and tell you so themselves: I intended to have had some conversation with them by ordering a banquet for them, before I introduced them to your majesty; but they are impatient to pay their respects to you; and therefore I beseech your majesty to be pleased to honour them with your presence.”

“Madam,” said the king of Persia, “I should be glad to salute persons who have the honour to be so nearly related to you, but I am afraid of the flames they breathe at their mouths and nostrils.” “Sir,” replied the queen laughing, “you need not in the least fear those flames, which are nothing but a sign of their unwillingness to eat in your palace, without your honouring them with your presence, and eating with them.”

The king of Persia, encouraged by these words, rose and went into the apartment with his Queen Gulnare She presented him to the queen her mother, to the king her brother, and to her other relations; who instantly threw themselves at his feet, with their faces to the ground. The king of Persia ran to them, and lifting them up, embraced them one after another. After they were all seated, King Saleh began: “Sir;” said he to the king of Persia, “we are at a loss for words to express our joy, to think that the queen my sister, in her disgrace, should have the happiness of falling under the protection of so powerful a monarch. We can assure you, she is not unworthy of the high rank to which you have been pleased to raise her; and we have always had so much love and tenderness for her, that we could never think or parting with her to any of the puissant princes of the sea, who have often demanded her in marriage before she came of age. Heaven has reserved her for you, and we have no better way of testifying our gratitude for the favour it has done her, than beseeching it to grant your majesty a long and happy life with her, and to crown you with prosperity and satisfaction.

"Certainly," replied the king of Persia, "heaven reserved her for me, as you observe. I love her with so tender and ardent a passion, that I am satisfied I never loved any woman till I saw her. I cannot sufficiently thank either the queen her mother or you, prince, or your whole family, for the generosity with which you have consented to receive me into an alliance so glorious to me as yours." So saying he invited them to take part of the collation, and he and his queen sat down with them. After the collation, the king of Persia conversed with them till it was very late; and when they thought it convenient to retire, he waited upon them himself to the several apartments he had ordered to be prepared for them.

The king of Persia treated his illustrious guests with continual feasts; in which he omitted nothing that might shew his grandeur and magnificence, and insensibly prevailed with them to stay with him till the queen was brought to bed. When the time of her lying-in drew near, he gave particular orders that nothing should be wanting proper for such an occasion. At length she was brought to bed of a son, to the great joy of the queen her mother, who assisted at the labour, and presented him to the king.

The king of Persia received this present with a joy easier to be imagined than expressed. The young prince being of a beautiful countenance, he thought no name so proper for him as that of Beder, which in the Arabian language signifies the Full Moon. To return thanks to heaven, he was very liberal in his alms to the poor, caused the prison doors to be set open, and gave all his slaves of both sexes their liberty. He distributed vast sums among the ministers and holy men of his religion. He also gave large donations to his courtiers, besides a considerable sum that was thrown amongst the people; and by proclamation, ordered rejoicings to be kept for several days through the whole city.

One day, after the queen was recovered, as the king of Persia, Gulnare, the queen her mother, King Saleh her brother, and the princesses their relations, were discoursing together in her majesty's bed-chamber, the nurse came in with the young prince Beder in her arms. King Saleh as soon as he saw him, ran to embrace him, and taking him in his arms, kissed and caressed him with the greatest demonstrations of tenderness. He took several turns with him about the room, dancing and tossing him about, when all of a sudden, through a transport of joy, the window being open, he sprung out, and plunged with him into the sea.

The king of Persia, who expected no such sight, believing he should either see the prince his son no more, or else that he should see him drowned, was overwhelmed in affliction. "Sir," said queen Gulnare (with a quiet and undisturbed countenance, the better to comfort him), "let your majesty fear nothing; the young prince is my son as well as yours, and I do not love him less than yourself. You see I am not alarmed; neither in truth ought I to be. He runs no risk, and you will soon see the king his uncle appear with him again, and bring him back safe. Although he be born of your blood, he is equally of mine, and will have the same advantage his uncle and I possess, of living equally in the sea, and upon the land." The queen his mother and the princesses his relations affirmed the same thing; yet all they said had no effect on the king, who could not recover from his alarm till he again saw prince Beder.

The sea at length became troubled, when immediately King Saleh arose with the young prince in his arms, and holding him up in the air, reentered at the window from which he had leaped. The king of Persia being overjoyed to see Prince Beder again, and astonished that he was as calm as before he lost sight of him; King Saleh said, "Sir, was not your majesty in alarm, when you first saw me plunge into the sea with the prince my nephew?" "Alas prince," answered the king of Persia, "I cannot express my concern. I thought him lost from that very moment, and you now restore life to me by bringing him again."

"I thought as much," replied King Saleh, "though you had not the least reason to apprehend danger; for before I plunged into the sea, I pronounced over him certain mysterious words, which were engraved on the seal of the great Solomon the son of David. We practise the like in relation to all those children that are born in the regions at the bottom of the sea, by virtue whereof they receive the same privileges as we have over those people who inhabit the earth. From what your majesty has observed, you may easily see what advantage your son Prince Beder has acquired by his birth on the part of his mother Gulnare my sister: for as long as he lives, and as often as he pleases, he will be at liberty to plunge into the sea, and traverse the vast empires it contains in its bosom."

Having so spoken, King Saleh, who had restored Prince Beder to his nurse's arms, opened a box he had fetched from his palace in the little time he had disappeared, which was filled with three hundred diamonds, as large as pigeons' eggs; a like number of rubies of extraordinary size; as many emerald wands, each half a foot long, and thirty strings or necklaces of pearl consisting each of ten feet. "Sir," said he to the king of Persia, presenting him with this box, "when I was first summoned by the queen my sister, I knew not what part of the earth she was in, or that she had the honour to be married to so great a monarch. This made us come without a present. As we cannot express how much we have been obliged to your majesty, I beg you to accept this small token of gratitude in acknowledgment of the many favours you have been pleased to shew her, wherein we take equal interest."

It is impossible to express how greatly the king of Persia was surprised at the sight of so much riches, enclosed in so little compass. "What! prince," cried he, "do you call so inestimable a present a small token of your gratitude, when you never have been indebted to me? I declare once more you have never been in the least obliged to me, neither the queen your mother nor you. I esteem myself but too happy in the consent you have given to the alliance I have contracted with you. Madam," continued he, turning to Gulnare, "the king your brother has put me into the greatest confusion; and I would beg of him to permit me to refuse his present, were I not afraid of disobliging him: do you therefore endeavour to obtain his leave that I may be excused accepting it."

"Sir," replied King Saleh, "I am not at all surprised that your majesty thinks this present so extraordinary. I know you are not accustomed upon earth to see precious stones of this quality and number: but if you knew, as I do, the mines whence these jewels were taken, and that it is in my power to form a treasure greater than those of all the kings of the earth, you would wonder we should have the boldness to make you so small a present. I beseech you therefore not to regard its trifling value, but consider the sincere friendship which obliges us to offer it to you, and not give us the mortification of refusing it." These engaging expressions obliged the king of Persia to accept the present, for which he returned many thanks both to King Saleh and the queen his mother.

A few days after, King Saleh gave the king of Persia to understand, that the queen his mother, the princesses his relations, and himself, could have no greater pleasure than to spend their whole lives at his court; but that having been so long absent from their own kingdom, where their presence was absolutely necessary, they begged of him to excuse them if they took leave of him and Queen Gulnare. The king of Persia assured them, he was sorry it was not in his power to return their visit in their own dominions; but added, "As I am persuaded you will not forget Gulnare, I hope I shall have the honour to see you again more than once."

Many tears were shed on both sides upon their separation. King Saleh departed first; but the queen his mother and the princesses his relations were obliged to force themselves from the embraces of Gulnare, who could not prevail with herself to let them go. This royal company were no sooner out of sight, than the king of Persia said to Gulnare, "Madam, I should have looked upon the person who had pretended to pass those upon me for true wonders, of which I myself have been eye-witness from the time I have been honoured with your illustrious family at my court, as one who would have abused my credulity. But I cannot refuse to believe my senses; and shall remember them while I live, and never cease to bless heaven for directing you to me, in preference to any other prince."

Beder was brought up and educated in the palace under the care of the king and queen of Persia, who both saw him grow and increase in beauty to their great satisfaction. He gave them yet greater pleasure as he advanced in years, by his continual sprightliness, his agreeable manners, and the justness and vivacity of his wit; and this satisfaction was the more sensible, because King Saleh his uncle, the queen his grandmother, and the princesses his relations, came from time to time to partake of it.

He was easily taught to read and write, and was instructed with the same facility in all the sciences that became a prince of his rank.

When he arrived at the age of fifteen, he acquitted himself in all his exercises with infinitely better address and grace than his masters. He was withal wise and prudent. The king, who had almost from his cradle discovered in him virtues so necessary for a monarch, and who moreover began to perceive the infirmities of old age coming upon himself every day, would not stay till death gave him possession of his throne, but purposed to resign it to him. He had no great difficulty to make his council consent to this arrangement: and the people heard his resolution with so much the more joy, as they conceived Prince Beder worthy to govern them. In a word, as the king had not for a long time appeared in public, they had the opportunity of observing that he had not that disdainful, proud, and distant air, which most princes have, who look upon all below them with scorn and contempt. They saw, on the contrary, that he treated all mankind with that goodness which invited them to approach him; that he heard favourably all who had anything to say to him; that he answered everybody with a goodness that was peculiar to him; and that he refused nobody any thing that had the least appearance of justice.

The day for the ceremony was appointed, when in the midst of the whole assembly, which was then more numerous than ordinary, the king of Persia came down from his throne, took the crown from his head, put it on that of Prince Beder, and having seated him in his place, kissed his hand as a token that he resigned his authority to him. After which he took his place among the crowd of viziers and emirs below the throne.

Hereupon the viziers, emirs, and other principal officers, came immediately and threw themselves at the new king's feet, taking each the oath of fidelity according to their rank. Then the grand vizier made a report of divers important matters, on which the young king gave judgment with that admirable prudence and sagacity that surprised all the council. He next turned out several governors convicted of mal-administration, and put others in their room, with such wonderful and just discernment, as exalted the acclamations of every body, which were so much the more honourable, as flattery had no share in them. He at length left the council, accompanied by his father, and went to wait on his mother Queen Gulnare at her apartment. The queen no sooner saw him coming with his crown upon his head, than she ran to him and embraced him with tenderness, wishing him a long and prosperous reign.

The first year of his reign King Beder acquitted himself of all his royal functions with great assiduity. Above all, he took care to inform himself of the state of his affairs, and all that might any way contribute towards the happiness of his people. Next year, having left the administration to his council, under the direction of his father, he left his capital, under pretence of diverting himself with hunting; but his real intention was to visit all the provinces of his kingdom, that he might reform abuses, establish good order, and deprive all ill-minded princes, his neighbours, of any opportunities of attempting anything against the security and tranquillity of his subjects, by shewing himself on his frontiers.

It required no less than a whole year for the young monarch to execute a design so worthy of him. Soon after his return, the old king his father fell so dangerously ill, that he knew at once he should never recover. He waited for his last moment with great tranquillity, and his only care was to recommend to the ministers and other lords of his son’s court, to persevere in the fidelity they had sworn to him: and there was not one but willingly renewed his oath as freely as at first. He died at length, to the great grief of King Beder and Queen Gulnare, who caused his corpse to be borne to a stately mausoleum, worthy of his rank and dignity.

The funeral obsequies ended, King Beder found no difficulty to comply with that ancient custom in Persia to mourn for the dead a whole month and not to be seen by anybody during that time. He had mourned the death of his father his whole life, had he yielded to his excessive affliction, and had it been right for a great prince thus to abandon himself to sorrow. During this interval the Queen Gulnare's mother, and King Saleh, together with the princesses their relations, arrived at the Persian court to condole with their relations.

When the month was expired, the king could not refuse admittance to the grand vizier and the other lords of his court, who besought him to lay aside his mourning, to shew himself to his subjects, and take upon him the administration of affairs as before.

He shewed so much reluctance to comply with their request, that the grand vizier was forced to take upon himself to say; "Sir, it were needless to represent to your majesty, that it belongs only to women to persist in perpetual mourning. We doubt not but you are fully convinced of this, and that it is not your intention to follow their example. Neither our tears nor yours are capable of restoring life to the good king your father, though we should lament him all our days. He has submitted to the common law of all men, which subjects them to pay the indispensable tribute of death. Yet we cannot say absolutely that he is dead, since we see in him your sacred person. He did not himself doubt, when he was dying, but he should revive in you, and to your majesty it belongs to show that he was not deceived."

King Beder could no longer oppose such pressing instances; he laid aside his mourning; and after he had resumed the royal habit and ornaments, began to provide for the necessities of his kingdom and subjects with the same assiduity as before his father's death. He acquitted himself with universal approbation: and as he was exact in maintaining the ordinances of his predecessor, the people did not perceive they had changed their sovereign.

King Saleh, who was returned to his dominions in the sea with the queen his mother and the princesses, no sooner saw that King Beder had resumed the government, but he at the end of the year came alone to visit him; and King Beder and Queen Gulnare were overjoyed to see him. One evening, talking of various matters, King Saleh fell insensibly on the praises of the king his nephew, and expressed to the queen his sister how glad he was to see him govern so prudently, as to acquire such high reputation, not only among his neighbours, but more remote princes. King Beder, who could not bear to hear himself so well spoken of, and not being willing, through good manners, to interrupt the king his uncle, turned on one side, and feigned to be asleep, leaning his head against a cushion that was behind him.

From these commendations, which regarded only the conduct and genius of Beder, King Saleh came to speak of the perfections of his person, which he extolled as prodigies, having nothing equal to them upon earth, or in all the kingdoms under the waters, with which he was acquainted.

“Sister,” said he, “I wonder you have not thought of marrying him: if I mistake not, he is in his twentieth year; and, at that age, no prince ought to be suffered to be without a wife. I will think of a match for him myself, since you will not, and marry him to some princess of our lower world that may be worthy of him.”

“Brother,” replied queen Gulnare, “you call to my attention what I must own has never occurred to me. As he discovered no inclination for marriage, I never thought of mentioning it to him. I like your proposal of one of our princesses; and I desire you to name one so beautiful and accomplished that the king my son may be obliged to love her.”

“I know one,” replied king Saleh, softly; “but before I tell you who she is, let us see if the king my nephew be asleep, and I will tell you afterwards why it is necessary we should take that precaution.” Queen Gulnare turned about and looked at her son, and thought she had no reason to doubt but he was in a profound sleep. King Beder, nevertheless, far from sleeping, redoubled his attention, unwilling to lose any thing the king his uncle said with so much secrecy. “There is no necessity for your speaking so low,” said the queen to the king her brother; “you may speak out with freedom, without fear of being heard.”

“It is by no means proper,” replied King Saleh, “that the king my nephew should as yet have any knowledge of what I am going to say. Love, you know, sometimes enters at the ear, and it is not necessary he should thus conceive a passion for the lady I am about to name. Indeed I see many difficulties to be surmounted, not on the lady’s part, as I hope, but on that of her father. I need only mention to you the princess Jehaun-ara, daughter of the king of Samandal.”

“How! brother,” replied Queen Gulnare, “is not the princess yet married? I remember to have seen her before I left your palace; she was then about eighteen months old, surprisingly beautiful, and must needs be the wonder of the world, if her charms have increased with her years. The few years she is older than the king my son ought not to prevent us from doing our utmost to effect the match. Let me but know the difficulties in the way, and we will surmount them."

"Sister," replied King Saleh, "the greatest difficulty is, that the king of Samandal is insupportably vain, looking upon all others as his inferiors: it is not likely we shall easily get him to enter into this alliance. I will however go to him in person, and demand of him the princess his daughter; and, in case he refuses her, we will address ourselves elsewhere, where we shall be more favourably heard. For this reason, as you may perceive," added he, "it is as well for the king my nephew not to know any thing of our design, till we have the consent of the king of Samandal." They discoursed a little longer upon this point and, before they parted, agreed that King Saleh should forthwith return to his own dominions, and demand the princess for the king of Persia his nephew.

This done, Queen Gulnare and King Saleh, who believed King Beder asleep, agreed to awake him before they retired; and he dissembled so well that he seemed to awake from a profound sleep. He had heard every word, and the character they gave of the princess had inflamed his heart with a new passion. He had conceived such an idea of her beauty, that the desire of possessing her made him pass the night very uneasy without closing his eyes.

Next day King Saleh proposed taking leave of Gulnare and the king his nephew. The young king, who knew his uncle would not have departed so soon but to go and promote without loss of time his happiness, changed colour when he heard him mention his departure. His passion was become so violent, it would not suffer him to wait so long for the sight of his mistress as would be required to accomplish the marriage. He more than once resolved to desire his uncle to bring her away with him: but as he did not wish to let the queen his mother understand he knew anything of what had passed, he desired him only to stay with him one day more, that they might hunt together, intending to take that opportunity to discover his mind to him.

The day for hunting was fixed, and King Beder had many opportunities of being alone with his uncle; but he had not courage to acquaint him with his design.

In the heat of the chase, when King Saleh was separated from him, and not one of his officers or attendants was near him, he alighted by a rivulet; and having tied his horse to a tree, which, with several others growing along the banks, afforded a very pleasing shade, he laid himself on the grass, and gave free course to his tears, which flowed in great abundance, accompanied with many sighs.

He remained a good while in this condition, absorbed in thought, without speaking a word. King Saleh, in the meantime, missing the king his nephew, began to be much concerned to know what was become of him; but could meet no one who could give any tidings of him. He therefore left his company to seek for him, and at length perceived him at a distance. He had observed the day before, and more plainly that day, that he was not so lively as he used to be; and that, if he was asked a question, he either answered not at all, or nothing to the purpose; but never in the least suspected the cause. As soon as he saw him dying in that disconsolate posture, he immediately guessed he had not only heard what had passed between him and Queen Gulnare, but was become passionately in love. He alighted at some distance from him, and having tied his horse to a tree, came upon him so softly, that he heard him pronounce the following words:

“Amiable princess of the kingdom of Samandal, I have no doubt had but an imperfect sketch of your incomparable beauty; I hold you to be still more beautiful in preference to all the princesses in the world, and to excel them as much as the sun does the moon and stars. I would this moment go and offer you my heart, if I knew where to find you; it belongs to you, and no princess shall be possessor of it but yourself!”

King Saleh would hear no more; he advanced immediately, and discovered himself to Beder. “From what I see, nephew,” said he, “you heard what the queen your mother and I said the other day of the princess Jehaun-ara. It was not our intention you should have known any thing respecting her, and we thought you were asleep.” “My dear uncle,” replied King Beder, “I heard every word, and have sufficiently experienced the effect you foretold; which it was not in your power to prevent. I detained you on purpose to acquaint you with my love before your departure; but the shame of disclosing my weakness, if it be any to love a princess so worthy of my affection, sealed up my mouth. I beseech you then, by the friendship you profess for a prince who has the honour to be so nearly allied to you, that you would pity me, and not wait to procure me the consent of the divine Jehaun-ara, till you have gained that of the king of Samandal that I may marry his daughter, unless you had rather see me die with love, before I behold her."

These words of the king of Persia greatly embarrassed King Saleh. He represented to him how difficult it was to give him the satisfaction he desired, and that he could not do it without carrying him along with him; which might be of dangerous consequence, since his presence was so absolutely necessary in his kingdom. He conjured him, therefore, to moderate his passion, till such time as he had put things into a train to satisfy him, assuring him he would use his utmost diligence, and would come to acquaint him in a few days. But these reasons were not sufficient to satisfy the king of Persia. "Cruel uncle," said he. "I find you do not love me so much as you pretended, and that you had rather see me die than grant the first request I ever made."

"I am ready to convince your majesty," replied King Saleh, "that I would do any thing to serve you; but as for carrying you along with me, I cannot do that till I have spoken to the queen your mother. What would she say of you and me? If she consents, I am ready to do all you would have me, and will join my entreaties to yours." "You cannot be ignorant," replied the king of Persia, "that the queen my mother would never willingly part with me; and therefore this excuse does but farther convince me of your unkindness. If you really love me, as you would have me believe, you must return to your kingdom immediately, and take me with you."

King Saleh, finding himself obliged to yield to his nephew's importunity, drew from his finger a ring, on which were engraved the same mysterious names of God that were upon Solomon's seal, which had wrought so many wonders by their virtue. "Here, take this ring," said he, "put it on your finger, and fear neither the waters of the sea, nor their depth." The king of Persia took the ring, and when he had put it on his finger, King Saleh said to him, “Do as I do.” At the same time they both mounted lightly up into the air, and made towards the sea, which was not far distant, and they both plunged into it.

The sea-king was not long in arriving at his palace, with the king of Persia, whom he immediately carried to the queen’s apartments, and presented to her. The king of Persia kissed the queen his grandmother’s hands, and she embraced him with great demonstrations of joy. “I do not ask you how you do,” said she, “I see you are very well, and am rejoiced at it; but I desire to know how my daughter your mother Queen Gulnare does.” The king of Persia took great care not to let her know that he had come away with out taking leave of her; on the contrary he told her, the queen his mother was in perfect health, and had enjoined him to pay her duty to her. The queen then presented him to the princesses; and while he was in conversation with them, she left him, and went with King Saleh into a closet, who told her how the king of Persia was fallen in love with the Princess Jehaun-ara, upon the bare relation of her beauty, and contrary to his intention; that he had, against his own wishes, brought him along with him, and that he was going to concert measures to procure the princess for him in marriage.

Although King Saleh was, to do him justice, perfectly innocent of the king of Persia’s passion, yet the queen could hardly forgive his indiscretion in mentioning the princess Jehaun-ara before him, “Your imprudence is not to be forgiven,” said she; “can you think that the king of Samandal, whose character is so well known, will have greater consideration for you, than the many other kings to whom he has refused his daughter, with such evident contempt? Would you have him send you away with the same confusion?

“Madam,” replied King Saleh, “I have already told you it was contrary to my intention that the king my nephew heard what I related of the beauty of the princess to the queen my sister. The fault is committed, and we must consider what a violent passion he has for this princess, and that he will die with grief and affliction, if we do not speedily obtain her for him. For my part, I shall omit nothing that can contribute to effect their union: since I was, though innocently, the cause of the malady, I will do all I can to remedy it. I hope, madam, you will approve of my resolution, to go myself and wait on the king of Samandal, with a rich present of precious stones, and demand the princess his daughter of him for the king of Persia. I have some reason to believe he will not refuse, but will be pleased with an alliance with one of the greatest potentates of the earth."

"It were to have been wished," replied the queen, "that we had not been under a necessity of making this demand, since the success of our attempt is not so certain as we could desire; but since my grandson's peace and content depend upon it, I freely give my consent. But, above all, I charge you, since you well know the humour of the king of Samandal, that you take care to speak to him with due respect, and in a manner that cannot possibly offend him."

The queen prepared the present herself, composing it of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and strings of pearl, all which she put into a rich box. Next morning King Saleh took leave of her majesty and the king of Persia, and departed with a chosen and small troop of officers, and attendants. He soon arrived at the kingdom, and the palace of the king of Samandal, who delayed not to give him audience. He rose from his throne as soon as he perceived him; and King Saleh, forgetting his character for some moments, knowing whom he had to deal with, prostrated himself at his feet, wishing him the accomplishment of all his desires. The king of Samandal stooped to raise him, and after he had placed him on his left hand, told him he was welcome, and asked him if there was any thing he could do to serve him.

"Sir," answered King Saleh, "though I should have no other motive than that of paying my respects to the most potent, most prudent, and most valiant prince in the world, feeble would be my language to express how much I honour your majesty. Could you penetrate into my inmost soul, you would be convinced of the great veneration I have for you, and of my ardent desire to testify my attachment." Having spoke these words, he took the box of jewels from one of his servants, and having opened it, presented it to the king, imploring him to accept of it for his sake.

"Prince," replied the king of Samandal, "you would not make me such a present unless you had a request proportionable to it to propose. If there be any thing in my power to grant, you may freely command me, and I shall feel the greatest pleasure in complying with your wishes. Speak, and tell me frankly, wherein I can serve you?"

"I must own ingenuously," replied King Saleh, "I have a boon to ask of your majesty; and I shall take care to ask nothing but what is in your power to bestow. The thing depends so absolutely on yourself, that it would be to no purpose to ask it of any one else. I ask it then with all possible earnestness, and I beg of you not to refuse me." "If it be so," replied the king of Samandal, "you have nothing to do but acquaint me what it is, and you shall see after what manner I can oblige when it is in my power."

"Sir," said King Saleh, "after the confidence with which your majesty has been pleased to inspire me, I will not dissemble any longer, that I came to beg of you to honour our house with your alliance by the marriage of your daughter, and to strengthen the good understanding that has so long subsisted between our two crowns."

At these words the king of Samandal burst into a loud laugh, falling back in his throne against a cushion that supported him, and with an imperious and scornful air, said, "King Saleh, I have always hitherto thought you a prince of great wisdom, and prudence; but what you say convinces me I was mistaken. Tell me, I beseech you, where was your wit or discretion, when you formed to yourself such a chimera as you have proposed to me? Could you conceive a thought of aspiring in marriage to a princess, the daughter of so powerful a monarch as myself? You ought to have considered the great distance between us, and not run the risk of losing in a moment the esteem I always had for you."

King Saleh was hurt at this affronting answer, and could scarcely restrain his resentment; however he replied with all possible moderation, "God reward your majesty as you deserve! I have the honour to inform you, I do not demand the princess your daughter in marriage for myself; had I done even that, your majesty and the princess, so far from being offended, should have thought it an honour done to both. Your majesty well knows I am one of the kings of the sea as well as yourself; that my ancestors yield not in antiquity to any royal house; and that the kingdom I inherit is no less potent and flourishing than your own. If your majesty had not interrupted me, you had soon understood that the favour I asked was not for myself, but for the young king of Persia my nephew, whose power and grandeur, no less than his personal good qualities, cannot be unknown to you. Everybody acknowledges the Princess Jehaun-ara to be the most beautiful under ocean: but it is no less true, that the king of Persia is the handsomest and most accomplished prince on earth. Thus the favour that is asked being likely to redound to the honour both of your majesty and the princess your daughter, you ought not to doubt that your consent to an alliance so equal will be unanimously approved in all the kingdoms of the sea. The princess is worthy of the king of Persia, and the king of Persia is no less worthy of her."

The king of Samandal had not permitted King Saleh to speak so long, but that rage deprived him of all power of speech. At length, however, he broke out into outrageous and insulting expressions, unworthy of a great king. "Dog," cried he, "dare you talk to me after this manner, and so much as mention my daughter's name in my presence Can you think the son of your sister Gulnare worthy to come in competition with my daughter? Who are you? Who was your father? Who is your sister? And who your nephew? Was not his father a dog, and the son of a dog, like you? Guards, seize the insolent wretch, and strike off his head."

The few officers who were about the king of Samandal were immediately going to obey his orders, when King Saleh, who was in the flower of his age, nimble and vigorous, got from them, before they could draw their sabres; and having reached the palace-gate, found there a thousand men of his relations and friends, well armed and equipped, who were just arrived. The queen his mother having considered the small number of attendants he had taken with him, and foreseeing the reception he would probably meet from the king of Samandal, had sent these troops to protect and defend him in case of danger, ordering them to make haste. Those of his relations who were at the head of this troop had reason to rejoice at their seasonable arrival, when they beheld him and his attendants running in great disorder, and pursued. "Sire," cried his friends, the moment he joined them, "who has insulted you? We are ready to revenge you: you need only command us."

King Saleh related his case to them in few words, and putting himself at the head of a troop, while some seized the gates, he re-entered the palace. The few officers and guards who had pursued him, being soon dispersed, he forced the king of Samandal's apartment, who, being abandoned by his attendants, was soon seized. King Saleh left sufficient guards to secure his person, and then went from apartment to apartment, to search after the Princess Jehaun-ara. But she, on the first alarm, had, together with her women, sprung up to the surface of the sea, and escaped to a desert island.

While this passed in the palace of the king of Samandal, those of King Saleh's attendants who had fled at the first menaces of that king, put the queen mother into terrible consternation, on relating the danger of her son. King Beder, who was present at the time, was the more concerned, as he looked upon himself as the principal author of the mischief that might ensue: therefore, not caring to abide the queen's presence any longer, whilst she was giving the orders necessary at that conjuncture, he darted up from the bottom of the sea; and not knowing how to find his way to the kingdom of Persia, happened to land on the island where the Princess Jehaun-ara had saved herself.

The prince, not a little disturbed in mind, seated himself under the shade of a large tree, surrounded by others. Whilst he was endeavouring to recover himself, he heard somebody talking, but was too far off to understand what was said. He arose, and advanced softly towards the place whence the sound proceeded, where, among the branches, he perceived a beauty that dazzled him. "Doubtless," said he, within himself, stopping and considering her with great attention, "this must be the princess Jehaun-ara, whom fear has obliged to abandon her father's palace; or if it be not, she no less deserves my love." This said, he came forward, and discovering himself, approached the princess with profound reverence. "Madam," said he, "I can never sufficiently thank Heaven for the favour it has done me in presenting to my eyes so much beauty. A greater happiness could not have befallen me than this opportunity to offer you my services. I beseech you, therefore, madam, to accept them, it being impossible that a lady in this solitude should not want assistance."

"True, my lord," replied Jehaun-ara, sorrowfully; "it is not a little extraordinary for a lady of my quality to be in this situation. I am a princess, daughter of the king of Samandal, and my name is Jehaunara. I was at ease in my father's palace, in my apartment, when suddenly I heard a dreadful noise: news was immediately brought me, that king Saleh, I know not for what reason, had forced the palace, seized the king my father, and murdered all the guards who made any resistance. I had only time to save myself, and escape hither from his violence."

At these words King Beder began to be concerned that he had quitted his grandmother so hastily, without staying to hear from her an explanation of the news that had been brought. But he was, on the other hand, overjoyed to find that the king his uncle had rendered himself master of the king of Samandal's person, not doubting but he would consent to give up the princess for his liberty. "Adorable princess," continued he, "your concern is most just, but it is easy to put an end both to that and your father's captivity. You will agree with me, when I shall tell you that I am Beder, king of Persia, and King Saleh is my uncle: I assure you, madam, he has no design to seize the king your father's dominions; his only intention is to obtain your father's consent, that I may have the honour and happiness of being his son-in-law. I had already given my heart to you, upon the bare relation of your beauty and charms; and now, far from repenting, I beg of you to accept it, and to be assured that I will love you as long as I live. I dare flatter myself you will not refuse this favour, but be ready to acknowledge that a king, who quitted his dominions purely on your account, deserves some acknowledgment. Permit me then, beauteous princess! to have the honour to present you to the king my uncle; and the king your father shall no sooner have consented to our marriage, than King Saleh will leave him sovereign of his dominions as before."

This declaration of King Beder did not produce the effect he expected. It is true, the princess no sooner saw him, than his person, air, and the grace wherewith he accosted her, led her to regard him as one who would not have been disagreeable to her; but when she heard that he had been the occasion of all the ill treatment her father had suffered, of the grief and fright she had endured, and especially the necessity she was reduced to of flying her country; she looked upon him as an enemy with whom she ought to have no connection. Whatever inclination she might have to agree to the marriage which he desired, she determined never to consent, reflecting that one of the reasons her father might have against this match might be, that King Beder was son of a king of the earth.

She would not, however, let King Beder know her resentment; but sought an occasion to deliver herself dexterously out of his hands; and seeming in the meantime to have a great kindness for him, “Are you then,” said she, with all possible civility, “son of the Queen Gulnare, so famous for her wit and beauty? I am glad of it, and rejoice that you are the son of so worthy a mother. The king my father was much in the wrong so strongly to oppose our union: had he but seen you, he must have consented to make us happy.” Saying so, she reached forth her hand to him as a token of friendship.

King Beder, believing himself arrived at the very pinnacle of happiness, held forth his hand, and taking that of the princess, stooped down to kiss it, when she, pushing him back, and spitting in his face for want of water to throw at him, said, “Wretch, quit the form of a man, and take that of a white bird, with a red bill and feet.” Upon her pronouncing these words, King Beder was immediately changed into a bird of that description, to his great surprise and mortification. “Take him,” said she to one of her women, “and carry him to the Dry Island.” This island was only one frightful rock, where not a drop of water was to be had.

The waiting-woman took the bird, but in executing her princess’s orders, had compassion on King Beder’s misfortune. “It would be great pity,” said she to herself, “to let a prince so worthy to live die of hunger and thirst. The princess, who is good and gentle, will, it may be, repent of this cruel order, when she comes to herself; it were better that I carried him to a place where he may die a natural death.” She accordingly carried him to a well-frequented island, and left him in a charming plain, planted with all sorts of fruit-trees, and watered by divers rivulets.

Let us return to King Saleh. After he had sought for the princess Jehaun-ara to no purpose, he caused the king of Samandal to be shut up in his own palace, under a strong guard; and having given the necessary orders for governing the kingdom in his absence, returned to give the queen his mother an account of what he had done. The first question he asked on his arrival was, “Where was the king his nephew?” and he learned with great surprise and vexation that he could not be found. “News being brought me,” said the queen, “of the danger you were in at the palace of the king of Samandal, whilst I was giving orders to send you other troops to avenge you, he disappeared. He must have been alarmed at hearing of your being in such great danger, and did not think himself in sufficient security with us.”

This news exceedingly afflicted King Saleh, who now repented being so easily wrought upon by King Beder as to carry him away with him without his mother’s consent. He sent everywhere to seek for him, but could hear no tidings of him; and instead of the joy he felt at having carried on so far the marriage, which he looked upon as his own work, his grief for this accident was more mortifying. Whilst he was under this suspense about his nephew, he left his kingdom under the administration of his mother, and went to govern that of the king of Samandal, whom he continued to keep with great vigilance, though with all due respect to his character.

The same day that King Saleh returned to the kingdom of Samandal, Queen Gulnare arrived at the court of the queen her mother. The princess was not at all surprised to find her son did not return the same day he set out: it being not uncommon for him to go farther than he proposed in the heat of the chase; but when she saw he neither returned the next day, nor the day after, she began to be alarmed, as may easily be imagined from her affection for him. This alarm was augmented, when the officers, who had accompanied the king, and were obliged to return after they had for a long time sought in vain both for him and his uncle, came and told her majesty they must of necessity have come to some harm, or must be together in some place which they could not guess; since, notwithstanding all the diligence they had used, they could hear no tidings of them. Their horses indeed they had found, but as for their persons, they knew not where to look for them. The queen hearing this, had resolved to dissemble and conceal her affliction, bidding the officers to search once more with their utmost diligence; but in the meantime she plunged into the sea, to satisfy herself as to the suspicion she had entertained that king Saleh must have carried his nephew with him.

This great queen would have been more affectionately received by her mother, had she not, on first seeing her, guessed the occasion of her coming. "Daughter," said she, "I plainly perceive you are not come hither to visit me; you come to inquire after the king your son; and the only news I can tell you will augment both your grief and mine. I no sooner saw him arrive in our territories, than I rejoiced; yet when I came to understand he had come away without your knowledge, I began to participate with you the concern you must needs suffer." Then she related to her with what zeal King Saleh went to demand the Princess Jehaun-ara in marriage for King Beder, and what had happened, till her son disappeared. "I have sought diligently after him," added she, "and the king my son, who is but just gone to govern the kingdom of Samandal, has done all that lay in his power. All our endeavours have hitherto proved unsuccessful, but we must hope nevertheless to see him again, perhaps when we least expect it."

Queen Gulnare was not satisfied with this hope: she looked upon the king her son as lost, and lamented him bitterly, laying all the blame on the king his uncle. The queen her mother made her consider the necessity of not yielding too much to grief. "The king your brother," said she, "ought not, it is true, to have talked to you so inconsiderately about that marriage, nor ever have consented to carry away the king my grandson, without acquainting you; yet, since it is not certain that the king of Persia is absolutely lost, you ought to neglect nothing to preserve his kingdom for him: lose then no more time, but return to your capital; your presence there will be necessary, and it will not be difficult for you to preserve the public peace, by causing it to be published, that the king of Persia was gone to visit his grandmother."

This was sufficient to oblige Queen Gulnare to yield. She took leave of the queen her mother, and returned to the palace of the capital of Persia before she had been missed. She immediately despatched persons to recall the officers she had sent after the king, to tell them that she knew where his majesty was, and that they should soon see him again. She also caused the same report to be spread throughout the city, and governed, in concert with the prime minister and council, with the same tranquillity as if the king had been present.

To return to King Beder, whom the Princess Jehaun-ara's waiting-woman had left in the island before mentioned; that monarch was not a little surprised when he found himself alone, and under the form of a bird. He esteemed himself yet more unhappy, in that he knew not where he was, or in what part of the world the kingdom of Persia lay. But if he had known, and had tried the force of his wings, to hazard the traversing so many extensive watery regions, and had reached it, what could he have gained, but the mortification to continue still in the same form, and not to be accounted even a man, much less acknowledged king of Persia? He was forced to remain where he was, live upon such food as birds of his kind were wont to have, and to pass the night on a tree.

A few days afterwards, a peasant, skilled in taking birds with nets, chanced to come to the place where he was; when perceiving so fine a bird, the like of which he had never seen, though he had followed that employment for a long while, he began greatly to rejoice. He employed all his art to ensnare him; and at length succeeded and took him. Overjoyed at so great a prize, which he looked upon to be of more worth than all the other birds he commonly took, he shut it up in a cage, and carried it to the city. As soon as he was come into the market, a citizen stops him, and asked how much he would have for his bird?

Instead of answering, the peasant demanded of the citizen what he would do with him in case he should buy him? "What wouldst thou have me to do with him," answered the citizen, "but roast and eat him?" "If that be the case," replied the peasant, "I suppose you would think me very well paid, if you should give me the smallest piece of silver for him. I set a much higher value upon him, and you should not have him for a piece of gold. Although I am advanced in years, I never saw such a bird in my life. I intend to make a present of him to the king; he will know its value better than you."

Without staying any longer in the market, the peasant went directly to the palace, and placed himself exactly before the king's apartment. His majesty, being at a window where he could see all that passed in the court, no sooner cast his eyes on this beautiful bird, than he sent an officer of his eunuchs to buy it for him. The officer going to the peasant, demanded of him how much he would have for the bird? “If it be for his majesty,” answered the peasant, “I humbly beg of him to accept it of me as a present, and I desire you to carry it to him.” The officer took the bird to the king, who found it so great a rarity, that he ordered the same officer to take ten pieces of gold, and carry them to the peasant, who departed very well satisfied. The king ordered the bird to be put into a magnificent cage, and gave it corn and water in rich vessels.

The king being then ready to mount on horseback to go a hunting, had not time to consider the bird, therefore had it brought to him as soon as he returned. The officer brought the cage, and the king, that he might the better view the bird, took it out himself; and perched it upon his hand. Looking earnestly upon it, he demanded of the officer, if he had seen it eat. “Sir,” replied the officer, “your majesty may observe the vessel with his food is still full, and I have not observed that he has touched any of it.” Then the king ordered him meat of divers sorts, that he might take what he liked best.

The table being spread, and dinner served up just as the king had given these orders, as soon as the dishes were placed, the bird, clapping his wings, leaped off the king’s hand, flew upon the table, where he began to peck the bread and victuals, sometimes on one plate and sometimes on another. The king was so surprised that he immediately sent the officer of the eunuchs to desire the queen to come and see this wonder. The officer related it to her majesty, and she came forthwith; but she no sooner saw the bird, than she covered her face with her veil, and would have retired. The king, surprised at her proceeding, as there was none present in the chamber but the eunuchs and the women who attended her, asked the reason of her conduct.

“Sir,” answered the queen, “your majesty will no longer be surprised, when you understand, that this is not as you suppose a bird, but a man.” “Madam,” said the king, more astonished than before, “you mean to banter me; but you shall never persuade me that a bird can be a man.” “Sir,” replied the queen, “far be it from me to banter your majesty; nothing is more certain than what I have had the honour to tell you. I can assure your majesty, it is the king of Persia, named Beder, son of the celebrated Gulnare, princess of one of the largest kingdoms of the sea, nephew of Saleh, king of that kingdom, and grandson of Queen Farasche, mother of Gulnare and Saleh; and it was the Princess Jehaun-ara, daughter of the king of Samandal, who thus metamorphosed him into a bird." That the king might no longer doubt of what she affirmed, she told him the whole story, and stated that the Princess Jehaun-ara had thus revenged herself for the ill treatment which King Saleh had used towards the king of Samandal her father.

The king had the less difficulty to believe this assertion of the queen, as he knew her to be a skilful magician. And as she knew everything which passed in every part of the world, he was always by her means timely informed of the designs of the kings his neighbours against him, and prevented them. His majesty had compassion on the king of Persia, and earnestly besought his queen to break the enchantment, that he might return to his own form.

The queen consented with great willingness. "Sir," said she to the king, "be pleased to take the bird into your closet, and I will shew you a king worthy of the consideration you have for him." The bird, which had ceased eating, and attended to what the king and queen said, would not give his majesty the trouble to take him, but hopped into the closet before him; and the queen came in soon after, with a vessel full of water in her hand. She pronounced over the vessel some words unknown to the king, till the water began to boil; when she took some of it in her hand, and sprinkling a little upon the bird, said, "By virtue of those holy and mysterious words I have just pronounced, and in the name of the Creator of heaven and earth, who raises the dead, and supports the universe, quit the form of a bird, and re-assume that received from thy Creator."

The words were scarcely out of the queen's mouth, when, instead of a bird, the king saw a young prince of good shape, air, and mien. King Beder immediately fell on his knees, and thanked God for the favour that had been bestowed upon him. He then took the king's hand, who helped him up, and kissed it in token of gratitude; but the king embraced him with great joy, and testified to him the satisfaction he had to see him. He would then have made his acknowledgments to the queen, but she was already retired to her apartment. The king made him sit at the table with him, and prayed him to relate how the Princess Jehaun-ara could have the inhumanity to transform into a bird so amiable a prince; and the king of Persia immediately satisfied him. When he had ended, the king, provoked at the proceeding of the princess, could not help blaming her. “It was commendable,” said he, “in the princess of Samandal not to be insensible of the king her father’s ill treatment; but to carry her vengeance so far, and especially against a prince who was not culpable, was what she could never be able to justify herself for. But let us have done with this subject, and tell me, I beseech you, in what I can farther serve you.”

“Sir,” answered King Beder, “my obligation to your majesty is so great, that I ought to remain with you all my life to testify my gratitude; but since your majesty sets no limits to your generosity, I entreat you to grant me one of your ships to transport me to Persia, where I fear my absence, which has been but too long, may have occasioned some disorder, and that the queen my mother, from whom I concealed my departure, may be distracted under the uncertainty whether I am alive or dead.”

The king readily granted what he desired, and immediately gave orders for equipping one of his largest ships, and the best sailors in his numerous fleet. The ship was soon furnished with all its complement of men, provisions, and ammunition; and as soon as the wind became fair, King Beder embarked, after having taken leave of the king, and thanked him for all his favours.

The ship sailed before the wind for ten days together, but on the eleventh the wind changed, and there followed a furious tempest. The ship was not only driven out of its course, but so violently tossed, that all its masts were brought by the board; and driving along at the pleasure of the wind, it at length struck against a rock and bulged.

The greatest part of the people were instantly drowned. Some few were saved by swimming, and others by getting on pieces of the wreck. King Beder was among the latter, when, after having been tossed about for some time by the waves and torrents, under great uncertainty of his fate, he at length perceived himself near the shore, and not far from a city that seemed of great extent. He exerted his remaining strength to reach the land, and was at length so fortunate as to be able to touch the ground with his feet. He immediately abandoned his piece of wood, which had been of such great service to him; but when he came pretty near the shore, was greatly surprised to see horses, camels, mules, asses, oxen, cows, bulls, and other animals crowding to the shore, and putting themselves in a posture to oppose his landing. He had the utmost difficulty to conquer their obstinacy and force his way, but at length he succeeded, and sheltered himself among the rocks till he had recovered his breath, and dried his clothes in the sun.

When the prince advanced to enter the city, he met with the same opposition from these animals, who seemed to intend to make him forego his design, and give him to understand it was dangerous to proceed.

King Beder, however, entered the city, and saw many fair and spacious streets, but was surprised to find no human beings. This made him think it was not without cause that so many animals had opposed his passage. Going forward, nevertheless, he observed divers shops open, which gave him reason to believe the place was not so destitute of inhabitants as he imagined. He approached one of these shops, where several sorts of fruits were exposed for sale, and saluted very courteously an old man who was sitting within.

The old man, who was busy about something, lifted up his head, and seeing a youth who had an appearance of grandeur in his air, started, asked him whence he came, and what business had brought him there? King Beder satisfied him in a few words; and the old man farther asked him if he had met anybody on the road? “You are the first person I have seen,” answered the king, “and I cannot comprehend how so fine and large a city comes to be without inhabitants.” “Come in, sir; stay no longer upon the threshold,” replied the old man, “or peradventure some misfortune may happen to you. I will satisfy your curiosity at leisure, and give you a reason why it is necessary you should take this precaution.”

King Beder entered the shop, and sat down by the old man. The latter, who had received from him an account of his misfortunes, knew he must want nourishment, therefore immediately presented him what was necessary to recover his strength; and although King

Beder was very earnest to know why he had taken the precaution to make him enter the shop, he would nevertheless not be prevailed upon to tell him anything till he had done eating, for fear the sad things he had to relate might spoil his appetite. When he found he ate no longer, he said to him, “You have great reason to thank God that you got hither without any accident.” “Alas! why?” demanded King Beder, much surprised and alarmed.

“Because,” answered he, “this city is the City of Enchantments, and is governed by a queen, who is not only one of the finest of her sex, but likewise a notorious and dangerous sorceress. You will be convinced of this,” added he, “when you know that these horses, mules, and other animals which you have seen, are so many men, like ourselves, whom she has transformed by her diabolical art. And when young men, like you, enter the city, she has persons planted to stop and bring them, either by fair means or force, before her. She receives them in the most obliging manner; caresses them, regales them, lodges them magnificently, and gives them so many reasons to believe that she loves them, that she never fails of success. But she does not suffer them long to enjoy this happiness. There is not one of them but she has transformed into some animal or bird at the end of forty days. You told me all these animals presented themselves to oppose your landing, and hinder you entering the city. This was the only way in which they could make you comprehend the danger you were going to expose yourself to, and they did all in their power to prevent you.”

This account exceedingly afflicted the young king of Persia: “Alas!” cried he, “to what extremities has my ill fortune reduced me! I am hardly freed from one enchantment, which I look back upon with horror, but I find myself exposed to another much more terrible.” This gave him occasion to relate his story to the old man more at length, and to acquaint him of his birth, quality, his passion for the princess of Samandal, and her cruelty in changing him into a bird the very moment he had seen her and declared his love to her.

When the prince came to speak of his good fortune in finding a queen who broke the enchantment, the old man to encourage him said, “Notwithstanding all I have told you of the magic queen is true, that ought not to give you the least disquiet, since I am generally beloved throughout the city, and am not unknown to the queen herself, who has much respect for me; therefore it was your peculiar good fortune which led you to address yourself to me rather than to anyone else. You are secure in my house, where I advise you to continue, if you think fit; and, provided you do not stray from hence, I dare assure you, you will have no just cause to complain of my insincerity."

King Beder thanked the old man for his kind reception, and the protection he was pleased so readily to afford him. He sat down at the entrance of the shop, where he no sooner appeared, but his youth and good person attracted the eyes of all who passed that way. Many stopped and complimented the old man on his having acquired so fine a slave, as they imagined the king to be; and they were the more surprised as they could not comprehend how so beautiful a youth could escape the queen's knowledge. "Believe not," said the old man, "this is a slave: you all know that I am not rich enough nor of rank to have one of this consequence. He is my nephew, son of a brother of mine who is dead; and as I had no children of my own, I sent for him to keep me company." They congratulated his good fortune in having so fine a young man for his relation; but could not help telling him they feared the queen would take him from him. "You know her well," said they to him, "and you cannot be ignorant of the danger to which you are exposed, after all the examples you have seen. How grieved would you be if she should serve him as she has done so many others whom we knew."

"I am obliged to you," replied the old man, "for your good will towards me, and I heartily thank you for the care you seem to take of my interest; but I shall never entertain the least thought that the queen will do me any injury, after all the kindness she has professed for me. In case she happens to hear of this young man, and speaks to me about him, I doubt not she will cease to think of him, as soon as she comes to know he is my nephew."

The old man was exceedingly glad to hear the commendations they bestowed on the young king of Persia. He was as much affected with them as if he had been his own son, and he conceived a kindness for him, which augmented every day during the stay he made with him.

They had lived about a month together, when, as King Beder was sitting at the shop-door, after his ordinary manner, Queen Labe (so was this magic queen named) happened to come by with great pomp. The young king no sooner perceived the guards advancing before her, than he arose, and going into the shop, asked the old man what all that show meant. "The queen is coming by," answered he, "but stand still and fear nothing."

The queen's guards, clothed in purple uniform, and well armed and mounted, marched to the number of a thousand in four files, with their sabres drawn, and every one of their officers, as they passed by the shop, saluted the old man. Then followed a like number of eunuchs, habited in brocaded silk, and better mounted, whose officers did the old man the like honour. Next came as many young ladies on foot, equally beautiful, richly dressed, and ornamented with precious stones. They marched gravely, with half pikes in their hands; and in the midst of them appeared Queen Labe, on a horse glittering with diamonds, with a golden saddle, and a housing of inestimable value. All the young ladies saluted the old man as they passed him; and the queen, struck with the good mien of King Beder, stopped as soon as she came before the shop. "Abdallah," (so was the old man named) said she to him, "tell me, I beseech thee, does that beautiful and charming slave belong to thee? and hast thou long been in possession of him?"

Abdallah, before he answered the queen, threw himself on the ground, and rising again, said, "Madam, he is my nephew, son of a brother, who has not long been dead. Having no children, I look upon him as my son, and sent for him to come and comfort me, intending to leave him what I have when I die."

Queen Labe, who had never yet seen any one to compare with King Beder, began to conceive a passion for him, and thought immediately of getting the old man to abandon him to her. "Father," said she, "will you not oblige me so far as to make me a present of this young man? Do not refuse me, I conjure you; and I swear by the fire and the light, I will make him so great and powerful, that no individual in the world ever arrived at such good fortune. Although my purpose be to do evil to all mankind, he shall be an exception. I trust you will grant me what I desire, more on account of the friendship I am assured you have for me, than for the esteem you know I always had, and shall ever have for you."

"Madam," replied the good Abdallah, "I am infinitely obliged to your majesty for all the kindness you have for me, and the honours you propose to do my nephew. He is not worthy to approach so great a queen, and I humbly beseech your majesty to excuse him."

"Abdallah," replied the queen, "I all along flattered myself you loved me, and I could never have thought you would have shewn me so much disrespect as to slight my request. But I here swear once more by the fire and light, and even by whatsoever is most sacred in my religion, that I will pass on no farther till I have conquered your obstinacy. I understand well what raises your apprehensions; but I promise, you shall never have any occasion to repent having obliged me in so sensible a manner."

Old Abdallah was exceeding grieved, both on his own account and King Beder's, at being in a manner forced to obey the queen. "Madam," replied he, "I would not willingly have your majesty entertain an ill opinion of the respect I have for you, and my zeal always to contribute whatever I can to oblige you. I put entire confidence in your royal word, and I do not in the least doubt you will keep it. I only beg of your majesty, to delay doing this great honour to my nephew till you shall again pass this way." "That shall be to-morrow," said the queen; who inclined her head, as a token of her being pleased, and so went forward towards her palace.

When queen Labe and all her attendants were out of sight, the good Abdallah said to King Beder, "Son" (for so he was wont to call him, for fear of some time or other discovering him when he spoke of him in public), "it has not been in my power, as you may have observed, to refuse the queen what she demanded of me with so much earnestness, to the end I might not force her to employ her magic against both you and myself openly or secretly, and treat you as much from resentment to you as to me with more signal cruelty than all those she has had in her power, as I have already told you. But I have some reason to believe she will use you well, as she promised me, on account of that particular esteem she professes for me. This you may have seen by the respect shewn, and the honours paid, me by all her court. She would be a vile creature indeed, if she should deceive me; but she shall not deceive me unpunished, for I know how to revenge myself."

These assurances, which appeared very doubtful, were not sufficient to support King Beder's spirits. "After all you have told me of this queen's wickedness," replied he, "you cannot wonder if I am somewhat fearful to approach her: I should, it may be, slight all you could tell me of her, and suffer myself to be dazzled by the lustre of grandeur that surrounds her, did I not know by experience what it is to be at the mercy of a sorceress. The condition I was in, through the enchantment of the Princess Jehaun-ara, and from which I was delivered only to fall almost immediately into the power of another, has made me look upon such a fate with horror." His tears hindered him from going on, and sufficiently shewed with what repugnance he beheld himself under the fatal necessity of being delivered to queen Labe.

"Son," replied old Abdallah, "do not afflict yourself; for though I must own, there is no great stress to be laid upon the promises and oaths of so perfidious a queen, yet I must withal acquaint you, her power extends not to me. She knows this full well; and that is the reason, and no other, why she pays me so much respect. I can quickly hinder her from doing you the least harm, if she should be perfidious enough to attempt it. You may depend upon me, and, provided you follow exactly the advice I shall give you, before I abandon you to her, she shall have no more power over you than she has over myself."

The magic queen did not fail to pass by the old man's shop the next day, with the same pomp as the preceding, and Abdallah waited for her with great respect. "Father," cried she, "you may judge of my impatience to have your nephew with me, by my punctually coming to remind you of your promise. I know you are a man of your word, and I cannot think you will break it with me."

Abdallah, who fell on his face as soon as he saw the queen approaching, rose up when she had done speaking; and as he would have no one hear what he had to say to her, he advanced with great respect as far as her horse's head, and then said softly, "Puissant queen! I am persuaded your majesty will not be offended at my seeming unwillingness to trust my nephew with you yesterday, since you cannot be ignorant of the reasons I had for it; but I conjure you to lay aside the secrets of that art which you possess in so wonderful a degree. I regard my nephew as my own son; and your majesty would reduce me to despair, if you should deal with him as you have done with others."

"I promise you I will not," replied the queen; "and I once more repeat the oath I made yesterday, that neither you nor your nephew shall have any cause to be offended at me. I see plainly," added she, "you are not yet well enough acquainted with me; you never saw me yet but through my veil; but as I find your nephew deserving of my friendship, I will shew you I am not any ways unworthy of his." With that she threw off her veil, and discovered to King Beder, who came near her with Abdallah, an incomparable beauty. But King Beder was little charmed: "It is not enough," said he within himself, "to be beautiful; one's actions ought to correspond in regularity with one's features."

Whilst King Beder was making these reflections with his eyes fixed on queen Labe, the old man turned towards him, and taking him by the arm, presented him to her: "Madam," said he, "I beg of your majesty once more to remember he is my nephew, and to let him come and see me sometimes." The queen promised he should; and to give a further mark of her gratitude, she caused a bag of a thousand pieces of gold to be given him. He excused himself at first from receiving them, but she insisted absolutely upon it, and he could not refuse. She had caused a horse to be brought as richly caparisoned as her own, for the king of Persia. Whilst he was mounting, "I forgot," said the queen to Abdallah, "to ask you your nephew's name; pray how is he called?" He answering his name was Beder (the full moon), her majesty replied, "Surely your ancestors were mistaken, they ought to have given you the name of Shems (the sun)."

When King Beder was mounted, he would have taken his station behind the queen, but she would not suffer him, and made him ride on her left hand. She looked at Abdallah, and after having made him an inclination with her head, departed.

Instead of observing a satisfaction in the people's faces, at the sight of their sovereign, King Beder took notice that they looked at her with contempt, and even cursed her. “The sorceress,” said some, “has got a new subject to exercise her wickedness upon; will heaven never deliver the world from her tyranny?” “Poor stranger!” exclaimed others, “thou art much deceived, if thou thinkest thy happiness will last long. It is only to render thy fall more terrible, that thou art raised so high.” These exclamations gave King Beder to understand Abdallah had told him nothing but the truth of Queen Labe; but as it now depended no longer on himself to escape the mischief, he committed himself to the will of heaven.

The magic queen arrived at her palace, immediately alighted, and giving her hand to King Beder, entered with him, accompanied by her women and the officers of her eunuchs. She herself shewed him all her apartments, where there was nothing to be seen but massive gold, precious stones, and furniture of wonderful magnificence. When she had carried him into her closet, she led him out into a balcony, from whence he observed a garden of surprising beauty. King Beder commended all he saw, but nevertheless so that he might not be discovered to be any other than old Abdallah’s nephew. They discoursed of indifferent matters, till the queen was informed that dinner was served.

The queen and King Beder arose, and went to place themselves at the table, which was of massive gold, and the dishes of the same metal. They began to eat, but drank hardly at all till the dessert came, when the queen caused a cup to be filled for her with excellent wine. She took it and drank to King Beder’s health; then without putting it out of her hand, caused it to be filled again, and presented it to him. King Beder received it with profound respect, and by a very low bow signified to her majesty that he in return drank to her health.

At the same time, ten of Queen Labe’s women entered with musical instruments, with which and their voices they made an agreeable concert, while they continued drinking till late at night. At length both began so to be heated with wine; that King Beder insensibly forgot he had to do with a magic queen, and looked upon her only as the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. As soon as the queen perceived she had wrought him to the pitch she desired, she made a sign to her eunuchs and women to retire.

Next morning the queen and King Beder went to the bath; the women who had served the king there, presented him with fine linen and a magnificent habit. The queen likewise, who was more splendidly dressed than the day before, came to receive him, and they went together to her apartments, where they had a repast brought them, and spent the remainder of the day in walking in the garden and in various other amusements.

Queen Labe treated King Beder after this manner for forty days, as she had been accustomed to do all her lovers. The fortieth night, as they were in bed together, she, believing he was really asleep, arose without making any noise; but he was awake, and perceiving she had some design upon him watched all her motions. Being up, she opened a chest, from whence she took a little box full of a yellow powder; taking some of the powder, she laid a train of it across the chamber, and it immediately flowed in a rivulet of water, to the great astonishment of King Beder. He trembled with fear, but still pretended to sleep.

Queen Labe next took up some of the water in a vessel, poured it into a basin that contained some flour; with which she made a paste, and kneaded it for a long time: then she mixed with it certain drugs which she took from different boxes, and made a cake, which she put into a covered baking-pan. As she had taken care first of all to make a good fire, she took some of the coals, and set the pan upon them; and while the cake was baking, she put up the vessels and boxes in their places again; and on her pronouncing certain words, the rivulet disappeared. When the cake was baked, she took it off the coals, carried it into her closet, and afterwards returned to King Beder, who dissembled so well, that she had not the least suspicion of his having seen what she had done.

King Beder, whom the pleasures and amusements of a court had made to forget his good host Abdallah, began now to think of him again, and believed he had more than ordinary occasion for his advice, after all he had seen the queen do that night. As soon as he was up, therefore, he expressed a great desire to go and see his uncle, and begged of her majesty to permit him. “What! my dear Beder,” cried the queen, “are you then already tired, I will not say with living in so superb a palace as mine is, where you must find so many pleasures, but with the company of a queen, who loves you so passionately as I do, and has given you so many marks of affection?"

"Great queen!" answered king Beder, "how can I be tired of so many favours and graces as your majesty perpetually heaps upon me? So far from it, I desire this permission, madam, purely to go and give my uncle an account of the mighty obligations I have to your majesty. I must own, likewise, that my uncle loving me so tenderly, as I well know he does, having been absent from him now forty days, I would not give him reason to think, that I consent to remain longer without seeing him." "Go," said the queen, "you have my consent; but you will not be long before you return, if you consider I cannot possibly live without you." This said, she ordered him a horse richly caparisoned, and he departed.

Old Abdallah was overjoyed to see king Beder. Without regard to his quality, he embraced him tenderly, and King Beder returned his embrace, that nobody might doubt but that he was his nephew. As soon as they were sat down, "well," said Abdallah to the king, "and how have you passed your time with that abominable sorceress?"

"Hitherto," answered King Beder, "I must needs own she has been extraordinarily kind to me, and has done all she could to persuade me that she loves me faithfully; but I observed something last night, which gives me just reason to suspect that all her kindness was but dissimulation. Whilst she thought me asleep, although I was really awake, she stole from me with a great deal of precaution, which made me suspect her intention, and therefore I resolved to watch her, still feigning myself asleep." He then related to Abdallah in what manner he had seen her make the cake; and then added, "Hitherto," said he, "I must needs confess, I had almost forgotten, not only you, but all the advice you gave me concerning the wickedness of this queen; but this last action of hers gives me reason to fear she intends to observe none of her promises or solemn oaths to you. I thought of you immediately, and I esteem myself happy that I have obtained permission to come to you."

"You are not mistaken," replied old Abdallah with a smile, which showed he did not himself believe she would have acted otherwise; "nothing is capable of obliging a perfidious woman to amend. But fear nothing. I know how to make the mischief she intends you fall upon herself. You are alarmed in time; and you could not have done better than to have recourse to me. It is her ordinary practice to keep her lovers only forty days; and after that time, instead of seeding them home, to turn them into animals, to stock her forests and parks; but I thought of measures yesterday to prevent her doing you the same harm. The earth has borne this monster long enough, and it is now high time she should be treated as she deserves."

So saying, Abdallah put two cakes into king Beder's hands, bidding him keep them to be used as he should direct. "You told me," continued he, "the sorceress made a cake last night; it was for you to eat; but do not touch it. Nevertheless, do not refuse to receive it, when she offers it you; but instead of tasting it, break off part of one of the two I shall give you, unobserved, and eat that. As soon as she thinks you have swallowed it, she will not fail to attempt transforming you into some animal, but she shall not succeed; when she sees that she has failed, she will immediately turn her proceeding into pleasantry, as if what she had done was only out of joke to frighten you; but she will conceal a mortal grief in her heart, and think she has omitted something in the composition of her cake. As for the other cake, you shall make a present of it to her, and press her to eat it; which she will not refuse to do, were it only to convince you she does not mistrust you, though she has given you so much reason to mistrust her. When she has eaten of it, take a little water in the hollow of your hand, and throwing it in her face, say, "Quit that form you now wear, and take that of such or such animal," as you shall think fit; which done, come to me with the animal, and I will tell you what you shall do afterwards."

King Beder expressed to Abdallah, in the warmest terms, his great obligations to him, for his endeavours to defend him from the power of a pestilent sorceress; and after some further conversation took his leave of him, and returned to the palace. Upon his arrival, he understood that the queen waited for him with great impatience in the garden. He went to her, and she no sooner perceived him, than she came in great haste to meet him. "My dear Beder!" exclaimed she, "it is said, with a great deal of reason, that nothing more forcibly shews the excess of love than absence from the object beloved. I have had no quiet since I saw you, and it seems ages since I have been separated from you. If you had stayed ever so little longer, I was preparing to come and fetch you once more to my arms."

"Madam," replied king Beder, "I can assure your majesty, I was no less impatient to rejoin you; but I could not refuse to stay with an uncle who loves me, and had not seen me for so long a time. He would have kept me still longer, but I tore myself away from him, to come where love calls me. Of all the collations he prepared for me, I have only brought away this cake, which I desire your majesty to accept." King Beder, having wrapped up one of the two cakes in a handkerchief, took it out, and presented it to the queen, saying, "I beg your majesty to accept of it."

"I do accept it with all my heart," replied the queen, receiving it, "and will eat it with pleasure for yours and your good uncle's sake; but before I taste of it, I desire you will, for my sake, eat a piece of this, which I have made for you during your absence." "Fair queen," answered king Beder, receiving it with great respect, "such hands as your majesty's can never make anything but what is excellent, and I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the favour you do me."

King Beder then artfully substituted in the place of the queen's cake the other which old Abdallah had given him, and having broken off a piece, he put it in his mouth, and cried, while he was eating, "Ah! queen, I never tasted anything so excellent in my life." They being near a cascade, the sorceress seeing him swallow one bit of the cake, and ready to eat another, took a little water in the palm of her hand, and throwing it in the king's face, said, "Wretch! quit that form of a man, and take that of a vile horse, blind and lame."

These words not having the desired effect, the sorceress was strangely surprised to find King Beder still in the same form, and that he only started for fear. Her cheeks reddened; and as she saw that she had missed her aim, "Dear Beder," cried she, "this is nothing; recover yourself. I did not intend you any harm; I only did it to see what you would say. I should be the most miserable and most execrable of women, should I attempt so black a deed; not only on account of all the oaths I have sworn, but also of the many testimonies of love I have given you."

"Puissant queen," replied King Beder, "persuaded as I am, that what your majesty did was only to divert yourself, I could not help being surprised. What could hinder me from being a little moved at the pronouncing of so strange a transformation? But, madam," continued he, "let us drop this discourse; and since I have eaten of your cake, would you do me the favour to taste mine?"

Queen Labe, who could not better justify herself than by showing this mark of confidence in the king of Persia, broke off a piece of his cake and ate it. She had no sooner swallowed it than she appeared much troubled, and remained as it were motionless. King Beder lost no time, but took water out of the same basin, and throwing it in her face, cried, "Abominable sorceress! quit the form of woman, and be turned instantly into a mare."

The same moment, Queen Labe was transformed into a very beautiful mare; and her confusion was so great to find herself in that condition, that she shed tears in great abundance. She bowed her head to the feet of King Beder, thinking to move him to compassion; but though he could have been so moved, it was absolutely out of his power to repair the mischief he had done. He led her into the stable belonging to the palace, and put her into the hands of a groom, to bridle and saddle; but of all the bridles which the groom tried upon her, not one would fit. This made him cause two horses to be saddled, one for the groom and the other for himself; and the groom led the mare after him to old Abdallah's.

Abdallah seeing at a distance King Beder coming with the mare, doubted not but he had done what he had advised him. "Cursed sorceress!" said he immediately to himself in a transport of joy, "heaven has at length punished thee as thou deservest." King Beder alighted at Abdallah's door and entered with him into the shop, embracing and thanking him for all the signal services he had done him. He related to him the whole matter, with all its circumstances, and moreover told him, he could find no bridle fit for the mare. Abdallah bridled the mare himself, and as soon as King Beder had sent back the groom with the two horses, he said to him, "My lord, you have no reason to stay any longer in this city: mount the mare, and return to your kingdom. I have but one thing more to recommend to you; and that is, if you should ever happen to part with the mare, be sure not to give up the bridle." King Beder promised to remember this; and having taken leave of the good old man, he departed.

The young king of Persia had no sooner got out of the city, than he began to reflect with joy on his deliverance, and that he had the sorceress in his power, who had given him so much cause to tremble. Three days after he arrived at a great city, where, entering the suburbs, he met a venerable old man, walking towards a pleasure-house. “Sir,” said the old man, stopping him, “may I presume to ask from what part of the world you come?” The king halted to satisfy him, and as they were conversing together, an old woman came up; who, stopping likewise, wept and sighed heavily at the sight of the mare.

King Beder and the old man left off discoursing, to look at the old woman, whom the king asked, what cause she had to be so much afflicted? “Alas! sir,” replied she, “it is because your mare resembles so perfectly one my son had, and which I still mourn the loss of on his account, and should think yours were the same, did I not know she was dead. Sell her to me, I beseech you; I will give you more than she is worth and thank you too.’

“Good woman,” replied King Beder, “I am heartily sorry I cannot comply with your request: my mare is not to be sold.” “Alas! sir,” continued the old woman, “do not refuse me this favour for the love of God. My son and I shall certainly die with grief, if you do not grant it.” “Good mother,” replied the king, “I would grant it with all my heart, if I were disposed to part with so good a beast; but if I were so disposed, I believe you would hardly give a thousand pieces of gold for her, and I could not sell her for less.” “Why should I not give so much?” replied the old woman: “if that be the lowest price, you need only say you will take it, and I will fetch you the money.”

King Beder, seeing the old woman so poorly dressed, could not imagine she could find such a sum; and said, to try her, “Go, fetch me the money, and the mare is yours.” The old woman immediately unloosed a purse she carried fastened to her girdle, and desiring him to alight, bade him tell over the money, and in case he found it came short of the sum demanded, she said her house was not far off; and she could quickly fetch the rest.

The surprise of King Beder, at the sight of the purse, was not small. “Good woman,” said he, “do you not perceive I have bantered you all this while? I assure you my mare is not to be sold.”

The old man, who had been witness to all that had passed, now began to speak. “Son,” said he to King Beder, “it is necessary you should know one thing, which I find you are ignorant of; and that is, that in this city it is not permitted to any one to tell a lie, on any account whatsoever, on pain of death. You cannot refuse taking this good woman’s money, and delivering your mare, when she gives you the sum according to the agreement; and this you had better do without any noise, than expose yourself to what may ensue.”

King Beder, mortified to find himself thus trapped by his rash proffer, alighted with great regret. The old woman stood ready to seize the reins, immediately unbridled the mare, and taking some water in her hand, from a stream that ran in the middle of the street, threw it in the mare’s face, uttering these words, “Daughter, quit that strange shape, and re-assume thy own.” The transformation was effected in a moment, and king Beder, who swooned as soon as he saw Queen Labe appear, would have fallen to the ground, if the old man had not hindered him.

The old woman, who was the mother of queen Labe, and had instructed her in all her magic secrets, had no sooner embraced her daughter, than to shew her fury, she in an instant by whistling, caused to rise a genie of a gigantic form and stature. This genie immediately took King Beder on one shoulder, and the old woman with the magic queen on the other, and transported them in a few minutes to the palace of Queen Labe in the City of Enchantments.

The magic queen immediately fell upon King Beder, reproaching him violently. “Is it thus,” said she, “ungrateful wretch! that thy unworthy uncle and thou repay me for all the kindnesses I have done you? I shall soon make you both feel what you deserve.” She said no more, but taking water in her hand, threw it in his face with these words, “Quit the form of man, and take that of an owl.” These words were soon followed by the effect, and immediately she commanded one of her women to shut up the owl in a cage, and give him neither meat nor drink.

The woman took the cage, but without regarding what the queen had ordered, gave him both meat and drink; and being old Abdallah’s friend, sent him word privately how the queen had treated his nephew, and apprised him of her design to destroy both him and King Beder, that he might take measures to prevent her intentions, and secure himself.

Abdallah knew no common means would do with Queen Labe: he therefore whistled in a peculiar manner, and there immediately arose a giant, with four wings, who presenting himself before him, asked what he would have? “Lightning,” said Abdallah to him (for so was the genie called), “I command you to preserve the life of King Beder, son of Queen Gulnare. Go to the palace of the magic queen, and transport immediately to the capital of Persia the compassionate woman who has the cage in custody, to the end she may inform Queen Gulnare of the danger the king her son is in, and the occasion he has for her assistance. Take care not to frighten her when you come before her, and acquaint her from me what she ought to do.”

Lightning immediately disappeared, and in an instant reached the palace of the magic queen. He instructed the woman, lifted her up into the air, and transported her to the capital of Persia, where he placed her on the terrace of Gulnare’s palace. She descended into her apartment, and there found Queen Gulnare and Queen Farasche her mother lamenting their mutual misfortunes. She made them a profound reverence, and by the relation she gave them, they soon understood the great need King Beder had of their assistance.

Queen Gulnare was so overjoyed at the news, that rising from her seat, she went and embraced the good woman, telling her how much she was obliged to her for the service she had done her. Then going immediately out, she commanded the trumpets to sound, and the drums to beat, to acquaint the city, that the king of Persia would suddenly return safe to his kingdom. She then went, and found King Saleh her brother, whom Farasche had caused to come speedily thither by a certain fumigation. “Brother,” said she to him, “the king your nephew, my dear son, is in the City of Enchantments, under the power of Queen Labe. Both you and I must go to deliver him, for there is no time to be lost.”

King Saleh forthwith assembled a puissant body of his marine troops, who soon rose out of the sea. He also called to his assistance the genii his allies, who appeared with a much more numerous army than his own. As soon as the two armies were joined, he put himself at the head of them, with Queen Farasche, Queen Gulnare, and the princesses, who would all have their share in this enterprize. They then ascended into the air, and soon poured down on the palace and City of Enchantments, where the magic queen, her mother, and all the adorers of fire, were destroyed in an instant.

Queen Gulnare had ordered the woman who brought the account of queen Labe's transforming and imprisoning her son, to follow her close, and bade her, in the confusion, go and seize the cage, and bring it to her. This order was executed as she wished, and queen Gulnare was no sooner in possession of the cage, than she opened it, and took out the owl, saying, as she sprinkled a little water upon him, "My dear son, quit that strange form, and resume thy natural one of a man."

In a moment Queen Gulnare, instead of the hideous owl, beheld King Beder her son. She immediately embraced him with an excess of joy, her tears supplying more forcibly the place of words. She could not let him go; and Queen Farasche was obliged to force him from her in her turn. After her, he was likewise embraced by the king his uncle and his relations.

Queen Gulnare's first care was to look out for old Abdallah, to whom she had been obliged for the recovery of the king of Persia; and who being brought to her, she said to him, "My obligations to you have been so great, that there is nothing within my power but I would freely do for you, as a token of my acknowledgment. Do but inform me in what I can serve you." "Great queen," replied Abdallah, "if the lady whom I sent to your majesty will but consent to the marriage I offer her, and the king of Persia will give me leave to reside at his court, I will spend the remainder of my days in his service." The queen then turned to the lady who was present, and finding by her modest shame that she was not averse to the match proposed, she caused them to join hands, and the king of Persia and she took care of their fortune.

This marriage occasioned the king of Persia to speak thus to the queen: "Madam," said he, "I am heartily glad of this match which your majesty has just made. There remains one more, which I desire you to think of." Queen Gulnare did not at first comprehend what marriage he meant; but after a little considering, she said, "Of yours, you mean, son. I consent to it with all my heart." Then turning, and looking at her brother's sea attendants, and the genii who were still present, “Go,” said she, “and traverse both sea and land, to seek the most lovely and amiable princess, worthy of the king my son, and when you have found her, come and tell us.”

“Madam,” replied king Beder, “it is to no purpose for them to take all that trouble. You have no doubt heard that I have already given my heart to the princess of Samandal upon the bare relation of her beauty. I have seen her, and do not repent of the present I then made her. In a word, neither earth nor sea, in my opinion, can furnish a princess like her. It is true upon my declaring my love, she treated me in a way that would have extinguished any flame less strong than mine. But I hold her excused; she could not treat me with less rigour, after your imprisoning the king her father, of which I was the innocent cause. But the king of Samandal may, perhaps, have changed his resolution; and his daughter the princess may consent to love me, when she sees her father has agreed to it.”

“Son,” replied queen Gulnare, “if only the Princess Jehaun-ara can make you happy, it is not my design to oppose you. The king your uncle need only have the king of Samandal brought, and we shall see whether he be still of the same untractable temper.”

Strictly as the king of Samandal had been kept during his captivity by King Saleh’s orders, yet he always had great respect shewn him. King Saleh caused a chafing-dish of coals to be brought, into which he threw a certain composition, uttering at the same time some mysterious words. As soon as the smoke began to arise, the palace shook, and immediately the king of Samandal, with King Saleh’s officers, appeared. The king of Persia cast himself at the king of Samandal’s feet, and, kneeling, said, “It is no longer King Saleh that demands of your majesty the honour of your alliance for the king of Persia; it is the king of Persia himself that humbly begs that boon; and I persuade myself your majesty will not persist in being the cause of the death of a king, who can no longer live if he does not share life with the amiable Princess Jehaun-ara.”

The king of Samandal did not long suffer the king of Persia to remain at his feet. He embraced him, and obliging him to rise, said, “I shall be sorry to have contributed in the least to the death of a monarch who is so worthy to live. If it be true that so precious a life cannot be preserved without the possession of my daughter, live, sir, she is yours. She has always been obedient to my will, and I cannot think she will now oppose it." Speaking these words, he ordered one of his officers, whom King Saleh had permitted to attend him, to go for the princess, and bring her to him immediately.

The princess continued where the king of Persia had left her. The officer perceived her, and brought her soon with her women. The king of Samandal embraced her, and said, "Daughter, I have provided a husband for you; it is the king of Persia, the most accomplished monarch at present in the universe. The preference he has given you over all other princesses obliges us both to express our gratitude."

"Sir," replied the princess Jehaun-ara, "your majesty well knows I never have presumed to disobey your will: I shall always be ready to obey you; and I hope the king of Persia will forget my ill treatment of him, and consider it was duty, not inclination, that forced me to it."

The nuptials were celebrated in the palace of the City of Enchantments, with the greatest solemnity, as all the lovers of the magic queen, who had resumed their pristine forms as soon as she ceased to live, assisted at them, and came to return their thanks to the king of Persia, Queen Gulnare, and King Saleh. They were all sons of kings, princes, or persons of high rank.

King Saleh conducted the king of Samandal to his dominions, and put him again in possession of his throne. The king of Persia, at the height of his wishes, returned to his capital with Queen Gulnare, Queen Farasche, and the princesses; the Queen Farasche and the princesses continued there till King Saleh came to reconduct them to his kingdom under the waves of the sea.

THE HISTORY OF PRINCE ZEYN ALASNAM AND THE SULTAN OF THE GENII.

A sultan of Bussorah, who possessed great wealth, and was well beloved by his subjects, had no children, which occasioned him great affliction; and therefore he made presents to all the holy persons in his dominions, to engage them to beg a son for him of Heaven: and their prayers being effectual, the queen proved with child, and was happily delivered of a prince who was named Zeyn Alasnam, which signifies Ornament of the Statues.

The sultan caused all the astrologers in his kingdom to be assembled, and ordered them to calculate the infant's nativity. They found by their observations that he would live long, and be very brave; but that all his courage would be little enough to carry him through the misfortunes that threatened him. The sultan was not daunted at this prediction: "My son," said he, "is not to be pitied, since he will be brave: it is fit that princes should have a taste of misfortunes; for adversity tries virtue, and they are the better qualified to reign."

He rewarded the astrologers, and dismissed them; and caused Zeyn to be educated with the greatest care, appointing him able masters as soon as he was of age to receive their instructions. In short, he proposed to make him an accomplished prince, when on a sudden this good sultan fell sick of a disorder, which all the skill of his physicians could not cure. Perceiving his disease was mortal, he sent for his son, and among other things advised him rather to endeavour to be loved, than to be feared by his people; not to give ear to flatterers; to be as slow in rewarding as in punishing, because it often happens that monarchs misled by false appearances, load wicked men with favours, and oppress the innocent.

As soon as the sultan was dead, prince Zeyn went into mourning, which he wore seven days, and on the eighth he ascended the throne, taking his father's seal off the royal treasury, and putting on his own, beginning thus to taste the sweets of ruling, the pleasure of seeing all his courtiers bow down before him, and make it their whole study to shew their zeal and obedience. In a word, the sovereign power was too agreeable to him. He only regarded what his subjects owed to him, without considering what was his duty towards them, and consequently took little care to govern them well. He revelled in all sorts of debauchery among the voluptuous youth, on whom he conferred the prime employments in the kingdom. He lost all command of his power. Being naturally prodigal, he set no bounds to his grants, so that his women and his favourites insensibly drained his treasury.

The queen his mother was still living, a discreet, wise princess. She had several times unsuccessfully tried to check her son's prodigality and debauchery, giving him to understand, that, if he did not soon take another course, he would not only squander his wealth, but also alienate the minds of his people, and occasion some revolution, which perhaps might cost him his crown and his life. What she had predicted had nearly happened: the people began to murmur against the government, and their murmurs had certainly been followed by a general revolt, had not the queen had the address to prevent it. That princess being acquainted with the ill posture of affairs, informed the sultan, who at last suffered himself to be prevailed upon. He committed the government to discreet aged men, who knew how to keep the people within the bounds of duty.

Zeyn, seeing all his wealth consumed, repented that he had made no better use of it. He fell into a profound melancholy, and nothing could comfort him. One night he saw in a dream a venerable old man coming towards him, who with a smiling countenance said, "Know, Zeyn, that there is no sorrow but what is followed by mirth, no misfortune but what in the end brings some happiness. If you desire to see the end of your affliction, set out for Egypt, go to Grand Cairo, where great prosperity awaits you."

The young sultan was struck with his dream, and spoke of it very seriously to his mother, who only laughed at it. "My son," said she to him, "would you go into Egypt on the faith of an illusive dream?" "Why not, madam," answered Zeyn, "do you imagine all dreams are chimerical? No, no, some of them are mysterious. My preceptors have told me a thousand incidents, which will not permit me to doubt of it. Besides, though I were not otherwise convinced, I could not forbear giving some credit to my dreams. The old man who appeared to me had something supernatural, he was not one of those men whom nothing but age makes venerable; there appeared a divine air about his person. In short, he was such a one as our great prophet is represented; and if you will have me tell you what I think, I believe it was he, who, pitying my affliction, designs to relieve it. I rely on the confidence he has inspired me with. I am full of his promises, and have resolved to follow his advice.” The queen endeavoured to dissuade him, but in vain. The sultan committed to her the government of the kingdom, set out one night very privately from his palace, and took the road to Cairo, without suffering any person to attend him.

After much trouble and fatigue, he arrived at that famous city, like which there are few in the world, either for extent or beauty. He alighted at the gate of a mosque, where, being spent with weariness, he lay down. No sooner was he fallen asleep, than he saw the same old man, who said to him, “I am pleased with you, my son, you have given credit to my words. You are come hither, without being deterred by the length or the difficulties of the way: but know I have not put you upon undertaking such a long journey, with any other design than to try you. I find you have courage and resolution. You deserve I should make you the richest and happiest prince in the world. Return to Bussorah, and you shall find immense wealth in your palace. No king ever possessed so rich a treasure.”

The sultan was not pleased with this dream. “Alas!” thought he to himself, when he awoke, “how much was I mistaken? That old man, whom I took for our prophet, is no other than the production of my disturbed imagination. My fancy was so full of him, that it is no wonder I have seen him again. I had best return to Bussorah; what should I do here any longer? It is fortunate that I told none but my mother the motive of my journey: I should become a jest to my people, if they knew it.”

Accordingly, he set out again for his kingdom, and as soon as he arrived there, the queen asked him, whether he returned well pleased? He told her all that had happened, and was so much concerned for having been so credulous, that the queen, instead of adding to his vexation, by reproving or laughing at him, comforted him. “Forbear afflicting yourself, my son,” said she; “if God has appointed you riches, you will have them without any trouble. Be contented; all that I recommend to you is, to be virtuous; renounce the delights of dancing, music, and wine: shun all these pleasures, they have already almost ruined you; apply yourself to make your subjects happy; by securing their happiness, you will establish your own."

Sultan Zeyn vowed that he would for the future follow his mother's advice, and be directed by the wise viziers she had chosen to assist him in supporting the weight of government. But the very night after he returned to his palace, he saw the old man the third time in a dream, who said to him, "The time of your prosperity is come, brave Zeyn: to-morrow morning, as soon as you are up, take a little pick-axe, and dig in the late sultan's closet; you will there find a rich treasure."

As soon as the sultan awoke, he got up, ran to the queen's apartment, and with much eagerness told her the new dream of that night. "Really, my son," said the queen smiling, "this is a very positive old man; he is not satisfied with having deceived you twice: have you a mind to believe him again?" "No, madam," answered Zeyn, "I give no credit to what he has said; but I will, for my own satisfaction, search my father's closet." "I really fancied so," cried the queen, laughing heartily: "go, my son, satisfy yourself; my comfort is, that work is not so fatiguing as the journey to Egypt."

"Well madam," answered the sultan, "I must own, that this third dream has restored my confidence, for it is connected with the two others; let us examine the old man's words. He first directed me to go into Egypt; there he told me, he had put me upon taking that journey, only to try me. 'Return to Bussorah,' said he, 'that is the place where you are to find treasures;' this night he has exactly pointed out to me the place where they are: these three dreams in my opinion, are connected. After all, they may be chimerical: but I would rather search in vain, than blame myself as long as I live, for having perhaps missed great riches, by being unseasonably incredulous."

Having spoken thus, he left the queen's apartment, caused a pick-axe to be brought him, and went alone into the late sultan's closet. He immediately began to break up the ground, and took up above half the square stones it was paved with, but yet saw not the least appearance of what he sought. He ceased working to take a little rest, thinking within himself, “I am much afraid my mother had cause enough to laugh at me.” However, he took heart, and went on with his labour, nor had he cause to repent; for on a sudden he discovered a white slab, which he took up, and under it found a door, made fast with a steel padlock, which he broke with the pick-axe, and opened the door, which covered a staircase of white marble. He immediately lighted a lamp, and went down the stairs into a room, the floor whereof was laid with tiles of chinaware, and the roof and walls were of crystal; but he particularly fixed his eyes on four shelves, a little raised above the rest of the floor, on each of which were ten urns of porphyry. He fancied they were full of wine: “Well,” said he, “that wine must be very old, I do not question but it is excellent.” He went up to one of the urns, took off the cover, and with no less joy than surprise perceived it was full of pieces of gold. He searched all the forty, one after another, and found them full of the same coin, took out a handful, and carried it to the queen.

The princess, it may be imagined, was amazed, when the sultan gave her an account of what he had discovered. “O! my son,” said she, “take heed you do not lavish away all this wealth foolishly, as you have already done the royal treasure. Let not your enemies have so much occasion to rejoice.” “No, madam,” answered Zeyn, “I will from henceforward live in such a manner as shall be pleasing to you.”

The queen desired her son to conduct her to the wonderful subterraneous place, which the late sultan her husband had made with such secrecy, that she had never heard of it. Zeyn led her to the closet, down the marble stairs, and into the chamber where the urns were. She observed every thing with the eye of curiosity, and in a corner spied a little urn of the same sort of stone as the others. The prince had not before taken notice of it, but opening, found in it a golden key. “My son,” said the queen, “this key certainly belongs to some other treasure; let us search well, perhaps we may discover the use it is designed for.”

They examined the chamber with the utmost exactness, and at length found a key-hole in one of the panels of the wall. The sultan immediately tried, and as readily opened the door, which led into a chamber, in the midst of which were nine pedestals of massive gold, on eight of which stood as many statues, each of them made of a single diamond, and from them darted such a brightness, that the whole room was perfectly light.

"O Heavens!" cried Zeyn, in astonishment, "where could my father find such rarities?" The ninth pedestal redoubled this amazement, for it was covered with a piece of white satin, on which were written these words, "Dear son, it cost me much toil to procure these eight statues; but though they are extraordinarily beautiful, you must understand that there is a ninth in the world, which surpasses them all: that alone is worth more than a thousand such as these: if you desire to be master of it, go to the city of Cairo in Egypt; one of my old slaves, whose name is Mobarec, lives there, you will easily find him; the first person you meet will shew you his house; visit him, and tell him all that has befallen you: he will know you to be my son, and conduct you to the place where that wonderful statue is, which you will obtain with safety."

The young sultan having read these words, said to the queen, "I should be sorry to be without that ninth statue; it must certainly be a very rare piece, since all these together are not of so much value. I will set out for Grand Cairo; nor do I believe, madam, that you will now oppose my design." "No, my son," answered the queen, "I am not against it: you are certainly under the special protection of our great prophet, he will not suffer you to perish in this journey. Set out when you think fit: your viziers and I will take care of the government during your absence." The prince made ready his equipage, but would take only a small number of slaves with him.

Nothing remarkable befell him by the way, but arriving at Cairo, he inquired for Mobarec. The people told him he was one of the wealthiest inhabitants of the city; that he lived like a great lord, and that his house was open, especially for strangers. Zeyn was conducted thither, knocked at the gate, which a slave opened, and demanded, "What is it you want, and who are you?" "I am a stranger," answered the prince, "and having heard much of the lord Mobarec's generosity, am come to take up my lodging with him." The slave desired Zeyn to wait while he went to acquaint his master, who ordered him to request the stranger to walk in. The slave returned to the gate, and told the prince he was welcome.

Zeyn went in, crossed a large court, and entered a hall magnificently furnished, where Mobarec expected him, and received him very courteously, returning thanks for the honour he did him in accepting a lodging in his house. The prince, having answered his compliment, said to Mobarec, “I am the son of the late sultan of Bussorah, and my name is Zeyn Alasnam.” “That sovereign,” said Mobarec, “was formerly my master; but, my lord, I never knew of any children he had: what is your age?” “I am twenty years old,” answered the sultan. “How long is it since you left my father’s court?” “Almost two-and-twenty years,” replied Mobarec; “but how can you convince me that you are his son?” “My father,” rejoined Zeyn, “had a subterraneous place under his closet, in which I have found forty porphyry urns full of gold.” “And what more is there?” said Mobarec. “There are,” answered the prince, “nine pedestals of massive gold: on eight whereof are as many diamond statues; and on the ninth a piece of white satin, on which my father has written what I am to do to procure another statue, more valuable than all those together. You know where that statue is; for it is mentioned on the satin, that you will conduct me to it.”

As soon as he had spoke these words, Mobarec fell down at his feet, and kissing one of his hands several times, said, “I bless God for having brought you hither: I know you to be the sultan of Bussorah’s son. If you will go to the place where the wonderful statue is, I will conduct you; but you must first rest here a few days. This day I treat the great men of the court; we were at table when word was brought me of your being at the door. Will you vouchsafe to come and be merry with us?” “I shall be very glad,” replied Zeyn, “to be admitted to your feast.” Mobarec immediately led him under a dome where the company was, seated him at the table, and served him on the knee. The nobles of Cairo were surprised, and whispered to one another, “Who is this stranger, to whom Mobarec pays so much respect?”

When they had dined, Mobarec directing his discourse to the company, said, “Nobles of Cairo, do not think much to see me serve this young stranger in this manner: know that he is the son of the sultan of Bussorah, my master. His father purchased me, and died without making me free; so that I am still a slave, and consequently all I have of right belongs to this young prince, his sole heir." Here Zeyn interrupted him: "Mobarec," said he, "I declare, before all these lords, that I make you free from this moment, and that I renounce all right to your person, and all you possess. Consider what you would have me do more for you." Mobarec kissed the ground, and returned the prince most hearty thanks. Wine was then brought in, they drank all day, and towards evening presents were distributed among the guests, who departed.

The next day Zeyn said to Mobarec, "I have taken rest enough. I came not to Cairo to take my pleasure; my design is to obtain the ninth statue; it is time for us to set out in search of it." "Sir," said Mobarec, "I am ready to comply with your desires; but you know not what dangers you must encounter to make this precious acquisition." "Whatsoever the danger may be," answered the prince, "I have resolved to make the attempt; I will either perish or succeed. All that happens in this world is by God's direction. Do you but bear me company, and let your resolution be equal to mine."

Mobarec, finding him determined to set out, called his servants, and ordered them to make ready his equipage. The prince and he then performed the ablution, and the prayer enjoined, which is called Farz; and that done, they set out. On their way they took notice of abundance of strange and wonderful things, and travelled many days, at length, being come to a delightful spot, they alighted from their horses. Mobarec then said to all the servants that attended them, "Do you remain in this place, and take care of our equipage till we return." Then he said to Zeyn, "Now, sir, let us advance by ourselves. We are near the dreadful place, where the ninth statue is kept. You will stand in need of all your courage."

They soon came to a vast lake: Mobarec set down on the brink of it, saying to the prince, "We must cross this sea." "How can we," answered Zeyn, "when we have no boat?" "You will see one appear in a moment," replied Mobarec; "the enchanted boat of the sultan of the genii will come for us. But do not forget what I am going to say to you: you must observe a profound silence: do not speak to the boatman, though his figure seem strange to you: whatever extraordinary circumstance you observe, say nothing; for I tell you beforehand, that if you utter one word when we are embarked, the boat will sink." "I shall take care to hold my peace," said the prince; "you need only tell me what I am to do, and I will strictly comply."

Whilst they were talking, he spied on a sudden a boat in the lake, made of red sandal wood. It had a mast of fine amber, and a blue satin flag: there was only one boatman in it, whose head was like an elephant's, and his body like that of a tiger. When the boat was come up to the prince and Mobarec, the monstrous boatman took them up one after another with his trunk, put them into his boat, and carried them over the lake in a moment. He then again took them up with his trunk, set them ashore, and immediately vanished with his boat.

"Now we may talk," said Mobarec: "the island we are in belongs to the sultan of the genii. Look round you, prince; can there be a more delightful spot? It is certainly a lively representation of the charming place God has appointed for the faithful observers of our law. Behold the fields adorned with all sorts of flowers and odoriferous plants: admire those beautiful trees whose delicious fruit makes the branches bend down to the ground; enjoy the pleasure of those harmonious songs formed in the air by a thousand birds of as many various sorts, unknown in other countries." Zeyn could not sufficiently admire the beauties with which he was surrounded, and still found something new, as he advanced farther into the island.

At length they came before a palace built of emeralds, encompassed by a wide moat, on the banks whereof, at certain distances, were planted such tall trees, that they shaded the whole palace. Before the gate, which was of massive gold, was a bridge, formed of one single shell of a fish, though it was at least six fathoms long, and three in breadth. At the head of the bridge stood a company of genii, of a prodigious height, who guarded the entrance into the castle with great clubs of China steel.

"Let us at present proceed no farther," said Mobarec, "these genii will destroy us: and in order to prevent their coming to us, we must perform a magical ceremony." He then drew out of a purse which he had under his garment, four long slips of yellow taffety; one he put about his middle, and laid the other on his back, giving the other two to the prince, who did the like. Then Mobarec laid on the ground two large table-cloths, on the edges whereof he scattered some precious stones, musk, and amber. Afterwards he sat down on one of the cloths, and Zeyn on the other; and Mobarec said to the prince, “I shall now, sir, conjure the sultan of the genii, who lives in the palace that is before us; may he come in a peaceable mood to us! I confess I am not without apprehension about the reception he may give us. If our coming into this island is displeasing to him, he will appear in the shape of a dreadful monster; but if he approves of your design, he will shew himself in the shape of a handsome man. As soon as he appears before us, you must rise and salute him, without going off your cloth; for you would certainly perish, should you stir from it. You must say to him, ‘Sovereign lord of the genii, my father, who was your servant, has been taken away by the angel of death; I wish your majesty may protect me, as you always protected my father.’ If the sultan of the genii,” added Mobarec, “ask you what favour you desire of him, you must answer, ‘I most humbly beg of you to give me the ninth statue.’”

Mobarec, having thus instructed prince Zeyn, began his conjuration. Immediately their eyes were dazzled by a long flash of lightning, which was followed by a clap of thunder. The whole island was covered with a thick darkness, a furious storm of wind blew, a dreadful cry was heard, the island felt a shock, and there was such an earthquake, as that which Asrayel is to cause on the day of judgment.

Zeyn was startled, and began to regard these concussions of the elements as a very ill omen, when Mobarec, who knew better than he what to judge, began to smile, and said, “Take courage, my prince, all goes well.” In short, that very moment, the sultan of the genii appeared in the shape of a very handsome man, yet there was something of a sternness in his air.

As soon as sultan Zeyn had made him the compliment he had been taught by Mobarec, the sultan of the genii smiling, answered, “My son, I loved your father, and every time he came to pay me his respects, I presented him with a statue, which he carried away with him. I have no less kindness for you. I obliged your father, some days before he died, to write that which you read on the piece of white satin. I promised him to receive you under my protection, and to give you the ninth statue, which in beauty surpasses those you have already. I had begun to perform my promise to him. It was I whom you saw in a dream in the shape of an old man; I caused you to open the subterraneous place, where the urns and the statues are deposited: I have a great share in all that has befallen you, or rather am the occasion of all. I know the motive that brought you hither; you shall obtain what you desire. Though I had not promised your father to give it, I would willingly grant it to you: but you must first swear to me by all that is sacred, that you will return to this island, and that you will bring me a maid who is in her fifteenth year, has never loved, nor desired to. She must also be perfectly beautiful: and you so much a master of yourself, as not even to desire her as you are conducting her hither."

Sultan Zeyn took the rash oath demanded of him. "But, my lord," said he, "suppose I should be so fortunate as to meet with such a maid as you require, how shall I know that I have found her?" "I own," answered the sultan of the genii, smiling, "that you might be mistaken in her appearance: that knowledge is above the sons of Adam, and therefore I do not mean to depend upon your judgment in that particular: I will give you a looking-glass which will be more certain than your conjectures. When you shall have seen a maiden fifteen years of age, perfectly beautiful, you need only look into the glass in which you shall see her figure. If she be chaste, the glass will remain clean and unsullied; but if, on the contrary, it sullies, that will be a certain sign that she has not always been prudent, or at least that she has desired to cease to be so. Do not forget the oath you have taken: keep it like a man of honour; otherwise I will take away your life, notwithstanding the kindness I have for you." Zeyn Alasnam protested again that he would faithfully keep his word. The sultan of the genii then delivered to him a looking-glass, saying, "My son, you may return when you please, there is the glass you are to use." Zeyn and Mobarec took leave of the sultan of the genii, and went towards the lake. The boatman with the elephant's head brought the boat, and ferried them over the lake as he had done before. They joined their servants, and returned with them again to Cairo.

The young sultan rested a few days at Mobarec's house, and then said to him, "Let us go to Bagdad, to seek a maiden for the sovereign of the genii." "Why, are we not at Grand Cairo?" said Mobarec: "shall we not there find beautiful maidens?" "You are in the right," answered the prince; “but how shall we explore where they are?” “Do not trouble yourself about that,” answered Mobarec; “I know a very shrewd old woman, whom I will entrust with the affair, and she will acquit herself well.”

Accordingly the old woman found means to shew the sultan a considerable number of beautiful maidens of fifteen years of age; but when he had viewed them, and came to consult his looking-glass, the fatal touchstone of their virtue, the glass always appeared sullied. All the maidens in the court and city, who were in their fifteenth year, underwent the trial one after another, but the glass never remained bright and clear.

When they saw there were no chaste maidens to be found in Cairo, they went to Bagdad, where they hired a magnificent palace in one of the chief quarters of the city, and began to live splendidly. They kept open house; and after all people had eaten in the palace, the fragments were carried to the dervises, who by that means had comfortable subsistence.

There lived in that quarter a pedant, whose name was Boubekir Muezin, a vain, haughty, and envious person: he hated the rich, only because he was poor, his misery making him angry at his neighbour’s prosperity. He heard talk of Zeyn Alasnam, and of the plenty his house afforded. This was enough for him to take an aversion to that prince; and it proceeded so far, that one day after the evening prayer in the mosque, he said to the people, “Brethren, I have been told there is come to live in our ward a stranger, who every day gives away immense sums. How do we know but that this unknown person is some villain, who has committed a robbery in his own country, and comes hither to enjoy himself? Let us take care, brethren; if the caliph should be informed that such a man is in our ward, it is to be feared he will punish us for not acquainting him with it. I declare for my part I wash my hands of the affair, and if any thing should happen amiss, it shall not lie at my door.” The multitude, who are easily led away, with one voice cried to Boubekir, “It is your business, do you acquaint the council with it.” The muezin went home well pleased, and drew up a memorial, resolving to present it to the caliph next day.

But Mobarec, who had been at prayers, and heard all that was said by the muezin, put five hundred pieces of gold into a handkerchief, made up with a parcel of several silks, and went to Boubekir's house. The muezin asked him in a harsh tone what he wanted. "Holy father," answered Mobarec with an obliging air, and at the same time putting into his hand the gold and the silk, "I am your neighbour and your servant: I come from prince Zeyn, who lives in this ward: he has heard of your worth, and has ordered me to come and tell you, that he desires to be acquainted with you, and in the mean time desires you to accept of this small present." Boubekir was transported with joy, and answered Mobarec thus: "Be pleased, sir, to beg the prince's pardon for me: I am ashamed I have not yet been to see him, but I will atone for my fault, and wait on him to-morrow."

Accordingly the next day after morning prayer he said to the people, "You must know from your own experience, brethren, that no man is without some enemies: envy pursues those chiefly who are very rich. The stranger I spoke to you about yesterday in the evening is no bad man, as some ill-designing persons would have persuaded me: he is a young prince, endowed with every virtue. It behoves us to take care how we give any injurious report of him to the caliph."

Boubekir having thus wiped off the impression he had the day before given the people concerning Zeyn, returned home, put on his best apparel and went to visit the young prince, who gave him a courteous reception. After several compliments had passed on both sides, Boubekir said to the prince, "Sir, do you design to stay long at Bagdad?" "I shall stay," answered Zeyn, "till I can find a maid fifteen years of age, perfectly beautiful, and so chaste, that she has not only never loved a man, but even never desired to do so." "You seek after a great rarity," replied the muezin; "and I should be apt to fear your search would prove unsuccessful, did I not know where there is a maid of that character. Her father was formerly vizier; but has left the court, and lived a long time in a lone house, where he applies himself solely to the education of his daughter. If you please, I will ask her of him for you: I do not question but he will be overjoyed to have a son-in-law of your quality." "Not so fast," said the prince, "I shall not marry the maid before I know whether I like her. As for her beauty, I can depend on you; but what assurance can you give me in relation to her virtue?" "What assurance do you require?" said Boubekir. "I must see her face," answered Zeyn; "that is enough to determine my resolution." "You are skilled then in physiognomy?" replied the muezin, smiling. "Well, come along with me to her father's: I will desire him to let you see her one moment in his presence."

The muezin conducted the prince to the vizier's; who, as soon as he was acquainted with the prince's birth and design, called his daughter, and made her take off her veil. Never had the young sultan of Bussorah beheld such a perfect and striking beauty. He stood amazed; and since he could then try whether the maid was as chaste as fair, he pulled out his glass, which remained bright and unsullied.

When he perceived he had at length found such a person as he desired, he entreated the vizier to grant her to him. Immediately the cauzee was sent for, the contract signed, and the marriage prayer said. After this ceremony, Zeyn conducted the vizier to his house, where he treated him magnificently, and gave him considerable presents. Next day he sent a prodigious quantity of jewels by Mobarec, who conducted the bride home, where the wedding was kept with all the pomp that became Zeyn's quality. When all the company was dismissed Mobarec said to his master, "Let us begone, sir, let us not stay any longer at Bagdad, but return to Cairo: remember the promise you made the sultan of the genii." "Let us go," answered the prince; "I must take care to perform it exactly; yet I must confess, my dear Mobarec, that, if I obey the sultan of the genii, it is not without reluctance. The damsel I have married is so charming, that I am tempted to carry her to Bussorah, and place her on the throne." "Alas! sir," answered Mobarec, "take heed how you give way to your inclination: make yourself master of your passions, and whatever it costs you, be as good as your word to the sultan of the genii." "Well, then, Mobarec," said the prince, "do you take care to conceal the lovely maid from me; let her never appear in my sight; perhaps I have already seen too much of her."

Mobarec made all ready for their departure; they returned to Cairo, and thence set out for the island of the sultan of the genii. When they were arrived, the maid who had performed the journey in a horse-litter, and whom the prince had never seen since his wedding-day, said to Mobarec, "Where are we? Shall we be soon in the dominions of the prince my husband?" "Madam," answered

Mobarec, “it is time to undeceive you. Prince Zeyn married you only in order to get you from your father: he did not engage his faith to make you sovereign of Bussorah, but to deliver you to the sultan of the genii, who has asked of him a virgin of your character.” At these words, she began to weep bitterly, which moved the prince and Mobarec. “Take pity on me,” said she; “I am a stranger, you will be accountable to God for your treachery towards me.”

Her tears and complaints were of no effect, for she was presented to the sultan of the genii, who having gazed on her with attention, said to Zeyn, “Prince, I am satisfied with your behaviour; the virgin you have brought me is beautiful and chaste, and I am pleased with the restraint you have put upon yourself to be as good as your promise to me. Return to your dominions, and when you shall enter the subterraneous room, where the eight statues are, you shall find the ninth which I promised you. I will make my genii carry it thither.” Zeyn thanked the sultan, and returned to Cairo with Mobarec, but did not stay long in Egypt, for his impatience to see the ninth statue made him hasten his departure. However, he could not but often think regretfully of the young virgin he had married; and blaming himself for having deceived her, he looked upon himself as the cause and instrument of her misfortune. “Alas!” said he to himself, “I have taken her from a tender father, to sacrifice her to a genie. O incomparable beauty! you deserve a better fate.”

Sultan Zeyn, disturbed with these thoughts, at length reached Bussorah, where his subjects made extraordinary rejoicings for his return. He went directly to give an account of his journey to his mother, who was in a rapture to hear that he had obtained the ninth statue. “Let us go, my son,” said she, “let us go and see it, for it is certainly in the subterraneous chamber, since the sultan of the genii told you you should find it there.” The young sultan and his mother, being both impatient to see the wonderful statue, went down into the room of the statues; but how great was their surprise, when, instead of a statue of diamonds, they beheld on the ninth pedestal a most beautiful virgin, whom the prince knew to be the same whom he had conducted into the island of the genii! “Prince,” said the young maid, “you are surprised to see me here; you expected to have found something more precious than me, and I question not but that you now repent having taken so much trouble: you expected a better reward.” “Madam,” answered Zeyn, “heaven is my witness, that I more than once had nearly broken my word with the sultan of the genii, to keep you to myself. Whatever be the value of a diamond statue, is it worth the satisfaction of having you mine? I love you above all the diamonds and wealth in the world.”

Just as he had done speaking, a clap of thunder was heard, which shook the subterranean place. Zeyn’s mother was alarmed, but the sultan of the genii immediately appearing, dispelled her fear. “Madam,” said he to her, “I protect and love your son: I had a mind to try, whether, at his age, he could subdue his passions. I know the charms of this young lady have wrought on him, and that he did not punctually keep the promise he had made me, not to desire her; but I am well acquainted with the frailty of human nature. This is the ninth statue I designed for him; it is more rare and precious than the others.” “Live,” said he (directing his discourse to the young prince), “live happy, Zeyn, with this young lady, who is your wife; and if you would have her true and constant to you, love her always, and love her only. Give her no rival, and I will answer for her fidelity.” Having spoken these words, the sultan of the genii vanished, and Zeyn, enchanted with the young lady, the same day caused her to be proclaimed queen of Bussorah, over which they reigned in mutual happiness to an advanced age.

THE HISTORY OF CODADAD, AND HIS BROTHERS.

Those who have written the history of Diarbekir inform us that there formerly reigned in the city of Harran a most magnificent and potent sultan, who loved his subjects, and was equally beloved by them. He was endued with all virtues, and wanted nothing to complete his happiness but an heir. Though he had the finest women in the world in his seraglio, yet was he destitute of children. He continually prayed to heaven for them; and one night in his sleep, a comely person, or rather a prophet, appeared to him, and said, "Your prayers are heard; you have obtained what you have desired; rise as soon as you awake, go to your prayers, and make two genuflexions, then walk into the garden of your palace, call your gardener, and bid him bring you a pomegranate, eat as many of the seeds as you please, and your wishes shall be accomplished."

The sultan calling to mind his dream when he awoke, returned thanks to heaven, got up, prayed, made two genuflexions, and then went into his garden, where he took fifty pomegranate seeds, which he counted, and ate. He had fifty wives who shared his bed; they all proved with child; but there was one called Pirouzè, who did not appear to be pregnant. He took an aversion to this lady, and would have her put to death. "Her barrenness," said he, "is a certain token that heaven does not judge Pirouzè worthy to bear a prince; it is my duty to deliver the world from an object that is odious to the Lord." He would have executed his cruel purpose had not his vizier prevented him; representing to him that all women were not of the same constitution, and that it was not impossible but that Pirouzè might be with child, though it did not yet appear. "Well," answered the sultan, "let her live; but let her depart my court; for I cannot endure her." "Your majesty," replied the vizier, "may send her to sultan Samer, your cousin." The sultan approved of this advice; he sent Pirouzè to Samaria, with a letter, in which he ordered his cousin to treat her well, and, in case she proved with child, to give him notice of her being brought to bed.

No sooner was Pirouzè arrived in that country, than it appeared that she was pregnant, and at length she was delivered of a most beautiful prince. The prince of Samaria wrote immediately to the sultan of Harran, to acquaint him with the birth of a son, and to congratulate him on the occasion. The sultan was much rejoiced at this intelligence, and answered prince Samer as follows: “Cousin, all my other wives have each been delivered of a prince. I desire you to educate that of Pirouzè, to give him the name of Codadad, and to send him to me when I may apply for him.”

The prince of Samaria spared nothing that might improve the education of his nephew. He taught him to ride, draw the bow, and all other accomplishments becoming the son of a sovereign; so that Codadad, at eighteen years of age, was looked upon as a prodigy. The young prince, being inspired with a courage worthy of his birth, said one day to his mother, “Madam, I begin to grow weary of Samaria; I feel a passion for glory; give me leave to seek it amidst the perils of war. My father, the sultan of Harran, has many enemies. Why does he not call me to his assistance? Why does he leave me here so long in obscurity? Must I spend my life in sloth, when all my brothers have the happiness to be fighting by his side?” “My son,” answered Pirouzè, “I am no less impatient to have your name become famous; I could wish you had already signalized yourself against your father’s enemies; but we must wait till he requires it.” “No, madam,” replied Codadad, “I have already waited but too long. I burn to see the sultan, and am tempted to offer him my service, as a young stranger: no doubt but he will accept of it, and I will not discover myself, till I have performed some glorious actions: I desire to merit his esteem before he knows who I am.” Pirouzè approved of his generous resolutions, and Codadad departed from Samaria, as if he had been going to the chase, without acquainting prince Samer, lest he should thwart his design.

He was mounted on a white charger, who had a bit and shoes of gold, his housing was of blue satin embroidered with pearls; the hilt of his scimitar was of one single diamond, and the scabbard of sandal-wood, adorned with emeralds and rubies, and on his shoulder he carried his bow and quiver. In this equipage, which greatly set off his handsome person, he arrived at the city of Harran, and soon found means to offer his service to the sultan; who being charmed with his beauty and promising appearance, and perhaps indeed by natural sympathy, gave him a favourable reception, and asked his name and quality. “Sir,” answered Codadad, “I am son to an emir of Grand Cairo; an inclination to travel has made me quit my country, and understanding, in my passage through your dominions, that you were engaged in war, I am come to your court to offer your majesty my service.” The sultan shewed him extraordinary kindness, and gave him a command in his army.

The young prince soon signalized his bravery. He gained the esteem of the officers, and was admired by the soldiers. Having no less wit than courage, he so far advanced himself in the sultan’s esteem, as to become his favourite. All the ministers and other courtiers daily resorted to Codadad, and were so eager to purchase his friendship, that they neglected the sultan’s sons. The princes could not but resent this conduct, and imputing it to the stranger, all conceived an implacable hatred against him; but the sultan’s affection daily increasing, he was never weary of giving him fresh testimonies of his regard. He always would have him near his person; admired his conversation, ever full of wit and discretion; and to shew his high opinion of his wisdom and prudence, committed to his care the other princes, though he was of the same age as they; so that Codadad was made governor of his brothers.

This only served to heighten their hatred. “Is it come to this,” said they, “that the sultan, not satisfied with loving a stranger more than us, will have him to be our governor, and not allow us to act without his leave? this is not to be endured. We must rid ourselves of this foreigner.” “Let us go together,” said one of them, “and dispatch him.” “No, no,” answered another; “we had better be cautious how we sacrifice ourselves. His death would render us odious to the sultan, who in return would declare us all unworthy to reign. Let us destroy him by some stratagem. We will ask his permission to hunt, and when at a distance from the palace, proceed to some other city, and stay there some time. The sultan will wonder at our absence, and perceiving we do not return, perhaps put the stranger to death, or at least will banish him from court, for suffering us to leave the palace.”

All the princes applauded this artifice. They went together to Codadad, and desired him to allow them to take the diversion of hunting, promising to return the same day. Pirouzè's son was taken in the snare, and granted the permission his brothers desired. They set out, but never returned. They had been three days absent, when the sultan asked Codadad where the princes were, for it was long since he had seen them. "Sir," answered Codadad, after making a profound reverence, "they have been hunting these three days, but they promised me they would return sooner." The sultan grew uneasy, and his uneasiness increased when he perceived the princes did not return the next day. He could not check his anger: "Indiscreet stranger," said he to Codadad, "why did you let my sons go without bearing them company? Is it thus you discharge the trust I have reposed in you? Go, seek them immediately, and bring them to me, or your life shall be forfeited."

These words chilled with alarm Pirouzè's unfortunate son. He armed himself, departed from the city, and like a shepherd, who had lost his flock, searched the country for his brothers, inquiring at every village whether they had been seen: but hearing no news of them, abandoned himself to the most lively grief. "Alas! my brothers," said he, "what is become of you? Are you fallen into the hands of our enemies? Am I come to the court of Harran to be the occasion of giving the sultan so much anxiety?" He was inconsolable for having given the princes permission to hunt, or for not having borne them company.

After some days spent in fruitless search, he came to a plain of prodigious extent, in the midst whereof was a palace built of black marble. He drew near, and at one of the windows beheld a most beautiful lady; but set off with no other ornament than her own charms; for her hair was dishevelled, her garments torn, and on her countenance appeared all the marks of the greatest affliction. As soon as she saw Codadad, and judged he might hear her, she directed her discourse to him, saying, "Young man, depart from this fatal place, or you will soon fall into the hands of the monster that inhabits it: a black, who feeds only on human blood, resides in this palace; he seizes all persons whom their ill-fate conducts to this plain, and shuts them up in his dark dungeons, whence they are never released, but to be devoured by him."

"Madam," answered Codadad, "tell me who you are, and be not concerned for myself." "I am a young woman of quality of Grand Cairo," replied the lady; "I was passing by this castle yesterday, in my way to Bagdad, and met with the black, who killed all my attendants, and brought me hither; I wish I had nothing but death to fear, but to add to my calamity, this monster would persuade me to love him, and, in case I do not yield to-morrow to his brutality, I must expect the last violence. Once more," added she, "make your escape: the black will soon return; he is gone out to pursue some travellers he espied at a distance on the plain. Lose no time; I know not whether you can escape him by a speedy flight."

She had scarcely done speaking before the black appeared. He was of monstrous bulk, and of a dreadful aspect, mounted on a large Tartar horse, and bore such a heavy scimitar, that none but himself could wield. The prince seeing him, was amazed at his gigantic stature, directed his prayers to heaven to assist him, then drew his scimitar, and firmly awaited his approach. The monster, despising so inconsiderable an enemy, called to him to submit without fighting. Codadad by his conduct shewed that he was resolved to defend his life; for rushing upon him, he wounded him on the knee. The black, feeling himself wounded, uttered such a dreadful yell as made all the plain resound. He grew furious and foamed with rage, and raising himself on his stirrups, made at Codadad with his dreadful scimitar. The blow was so violent, that it would have put an end to the young prince, had not he avoided it by a sudden spring. The scimitar made a horrible hissing in the air: but, before the black could have time to make a second blow, Codadad struck him on his right arm, with such force, that he cut it off. The dreadful scimitar fell with the hand that held it, and the black yielding under the violence of the stroke, lost his stirrups, and made the earth shake with the weight of his fall. The prince alighted at the same time, and cut off his enemy's head. Just then, the lady, who had been a spectator of the combat, and was still offering up her earnest prayers to heaven for the young hero, whom she admired, uttered a shriek of joy, and said to Codadad, "Prince (for the dangerous victory you have obtained, as well as your noble air, convinces me that you are of no common rank), finish the work you have begun; the black has the keys of this castle, take them and deliver me out of prison." The prince searched the wretch as he lay stretched on the ground, and found several keys.

He opened the first door, and entered a court, where he saw the lady coming to meet him; she would have cast herself at his feet, the better to express her gratitude, but he would not permit her. She commended his valour, and extolled him above all the heroes in the world. He returned her compliments; and she appeared still more lovely to him near, than she had done at a distance. I know not whether she felt more joy at being delivered from the desperate danger she had been in, than he for having done so considerable a service to so beautiful a person.

Their conversation was interrupted by dismal cries and groans. "What do I hear?" said Codadad: "Whence come these miserable lamentations, which pierce my ears?" "My lord," said the lady to him, pointing to a little door in the court, "they come from thence. There are I know not how many wretched persons whom fate has thrown into the hands of the black. They are all chained, and the monster drew out one every day to devour."

"It is an addition to my joy," answered the young prince, "to understand that my victory will save the lives of those unfortunate beings. Come along with me, madam, to partake in the satisfaction of giving them their liberty. You may judge by your own feelings how welcome we shall be to them." Having so said, they advanced towards the door of the dungeon, and the nearer they drew, the more distinctly they heard the lamentations of the prisoners. Codadad pitying them, and impatient to put an end to their sufferings, presently put one of the keys into the lock. The noise made all the unfortunate captives, who concluded it was the black coming, according to custom, to seize one of them to devour, redouble their cries and groans. Lamentable voices were heard, which seemed to come from the centre of the earth.

In the mean time, the prince had opened the door; he went down a very steep staircase into a large and deep vault, which received some feeble light from a little window, and in which there were above a hundred persons, bound to stakes, and their hands tied. "Unfortunate travellers," said he to them, "wretched victims, who only expected the moment of an approaching cruel death, give thanks to heaven, which has this day delivered you by my means. I have slain the black by whom you were to be devoured, and am come to knock off your chains." The prisoners hearing these words, gave a shout of mingled joy and surprise. Codadad and the lady began to unbind them; and as soon as any of them were loose, they helped to take off the fetters from the rest; so that in a short time they were all at liberty.

They then kneeled down, and having returned thanks to Codadad for what he had done for them, went out of the dungeon; but when they were come into the court, how was the prince surprised to see among the prisoners, those he was in search of, and almost without hopes to find! "Princes," cried he, "am I not deceived? Is it you whom I behold? May I flatter myself that it may be in my power to restore you to the sultan your father, who is inconsolable for the loss of you? But will he not have some one to lament? Are you all here alive? Alas! the death of one of you will suffice to damp the joy I feel for having delivered you!"

The forty-nine princes all made themselves known to Codadad, who embraced them one after another, and told them how uneasy their father was on account of their absence. They gave their deliverer all the commendations he deserved, as did the other prisoners, who could not find words expressive enough to declare their gratitude. Codadad, with them, searched the whole castle, where was immense wealth; curious silks, gold brocades, Persian carpets, China satins, and an infinite quantity of other goods, which the black had taken from the caravans he had plundered, a considerable part whereof belonged to the prisoners Codadad had then liberated. Every man knew and claimed his property. The prince restored them their own, and divided the rest of the merchandise among them. Then he said to them, "How will you carry away your goods? We are here in a desert place, and there is no likelihood of your getting horses." "My lord," answered one of the prisoners, "the black robbed us of our camels as well as our goods, and perhaps they may be in the stables of this castle." "This is not unlikely," replied Codadad; "let us examine." Accordingly they went to the stables, where they not only found the camels, but also the horses belonging to the sultan of Harran's sons. There were some black slaves in the stables, who seeing all the prisoners released, and guessing thereby that their master had been killed, fled through by-ways well known to them.

Nobody minded to pursue them. All the merchants, overjoyed that they had recovered their goods and camels, together with their liberty, thought of nothing but prosecuting their journey; but first repeated their thanks to their deliverer.

When they were gone, Codadad, directing his discourse to the lady, said, “What place, madam, do you desire to go to? Whither were you bound when you were seized by the black? I intend to bear you company to the place you shall choose for your retreat, and I question not but that all these princes will do the same.” The sultan of Harran’s sons protested to the lady, that they would not leave her till she was restored to her friends.

“Princes,” said she, “I am of a country too remote from hence; and, besides that, it would be abusing your generosity to oblige you to travel so far. I must confess that I have left my native country for ever. I told you that I was a lady of Grand Cairo; but since you have shewn me so much favour, and I am so highly obliged to you,” added she, looking upon Codadad, “I should be much in the wrong in concealing the truth from you; I am a sultan’s daughter. An usurper has possessed himself of my father’s throne, after having murdered him, and I have been forced to fly to save my life.”

Codadad and his brothers requested the princess to tell them her story, assuring her they felt a particular interest in her misfortunes, and were determined to spare nothing that might contribute to render her more happy. After thanking them for their repeated protestations of readiness to serve her, she could not refuse to satisfy their curiosity, and began the recital of her adventures in the following manner.

The History of the Princess of Deryabar.

There was in a certain island a great city called Deryabar, governed by a potent, magnificent, and virtuous sultan, who had no children, which was the only blessing wanting to make him happy. He continually addressed his prayers to heaven, but heaven only partially granted his requests, for the queen his wife, after a long expectation, brought forth a daughter.

I am the unfortunate princess; my father was rather grieved than pleased at my birth; but he submitted to the will of God, and caused me to be educated with all possible care, being resolved, since he had no son, to teach me the art of ruling, that I might supply his place after his death.

One day when he was taking the diversion of hunting, he espied a wild ass, which he chased, lost his company, and was carried away so far by his eagerness as to ride on till night. He then alighted, and sat down at the entrance of a wood, in which the ass had sheltered. No sooner was the day shut in than he discovered among the trees a light, which made him conclude that he was not far from some village; he rejoiced at this, hoping that he might pass the night there, and find some person to send to his followers and acquaint them where he was; accordingly he rose and walked towards the light, which served to guide him.

He soon found he had been deceived, the light being no other than a fire blazing in a hut; however, he drew near, and, with amazement, beheld a black man, or rather a giant, sitting on a sofa. Before the monster was a great pitcher of wine, and he was roasting an ox he had newly killed. Sometimes he drank out of the pitcher, and sometimes cut slices off the ox and greedily devoured them. But what most attracted my father's attention was a beautiful woman whom he saw in the hut. She seemed overwhelmed with grief; her hands were bound, and at her feet was a little child about two or three years old, who, as if he was sensible of his mother's misfortunes, wept without ceasing, and rent the air with his cries.

My father, moved with this pitiable object, thought at first to enter the hut and attack the giant; but considering how unequal the combat would be, he stopped, and resolved, since he had not strength enough to prevail by open force, to use art. In the mean time, the giant having emptied the pitcher, and devoured above half the ox, turned to the woman and said, “Beautiful princess, why do you oblige me by your obstinacy to treat you with severity? It is in your own power to be happy. You need only resolve to love, and be true to me, and I shall treat you with more mildness.” “Thou hideous satyr,” answered the lady, “never expect that time should wear away my abhorrence of thee. Thou wilt ever be a monster in my eyes.” To these words she added so many reproaches, that the giant grew enraged. “This is too much,” cried he, in a furious tone; “my love despised is turned into rage. Your hatred has at last excited mine; I find it triumphs over my desires, and that I now wish your death more ardently than your enjoyment.” Having spoken these words, he took the wretched lady by the hair, held her up with one hand in the air, and drawing his scimitar with the other, was just going to strike off her head, when the sultan my father let fly an arrow which pierced the giant’s breast, so that he staggered, and dropped down dead.

My father entered the hut, unbound the lady’s hands, inquired who she was, and how she came thither. “My lord,” said she, “there are along the sea-coast some families of Saracens, who live under a prince who is my husband; this giant you have killed was one of his principal officers. The wretch fell desperately in love with me, but took care to conceal his passion, till he could put in execution the design he had formed of forcing me from home. Fortune oftener favours wicked designs than virtuous resolutions. The giant one day surprised me and my child in a by-place. He seized us both, and to disappoint the search he well knew my husband would cause to be made for me, removed from the country inhabited by those Saracens, and brought us into this wood, where he has kept me some days. Deplorable as my condition is, it is still a great satisfaction to me to think that the giant, though so brutal, never used force to obtain what I always refused to his entreaties. Not but that he has a hundred times threatened that he would have recourse to the worst of extremities, in case he could not otherwise prevail upon me; and I must confess to you, that awhile ago, when I provoked his anger by my words, I was less concerned for my life than for my honour.

“This, my lord,” said the prince of the Saracens’ wife, “is the faithful account of my misfortunes, and I question not but you will think me worthy of your compassion, and that you will not repent having so generously relieved me.” “Madam,” answered my father, “be assured your troubles have affected me, and I will do all in my power to make you happy. To-morrow, as soon as day appears, we will quit this wood, and endeavour to fall into the road which leads to the great city of Deryabar, of which I am sovereign; and if you think fit, you shall be lodged in my palace, till the prince your husband comes to claim you.”

The Saracen lady accepted the offer, and the next day followed the sultan my father, who found all his retinue upon the skirts of the wood, they having spent the night in searching for him, and being very uneasy because they could not find him. They were no less rejoiced to meet with, than amazed to see him with a lady, whose beauty surprised them. He told them how he had found her, and the risk he had run in approaching the hut, where he must certainly have lost his life had the giant discovered him. One of his servants took up the lady behind him, and another carried the child.

Thus they arrived at the palace of my father, who assigned the beautiful Saracen lady an apartment, and caused her child to be carefully educated. The lady was not insensible of the sultan’s goodness to her, and expressed as much gratitude as he could desire. She had at first appeared very uneasy and impatient that her husband did not claim her; but by degrees she lost that uneasiness. The respect my father paid her dispelled her impatience; and I am of opinion she would at last have blamed fortune more for restoring her to her kindred, than she did for removing her from them.

In the mean time the lady’s son grew up; he was very handsome, and not wanting ability, found means to please the sultan my father, who conceived a great friendship for him. All the courtiers perceived it, and guessed that the young man might in the end be my husband. In this idea, and looking on him already as heir to the crown, they made their court to him, and every one endeavoured to gain his favour. He soon saw into their designs, grew conceited of himself, and forgetting the distance there was between our conditions, flattered himself with the hopes that my father was fond enough of him, to prefer him before all the princes in the world. He went farther; for the sultan not offering me to him as soon as he could have wished, he had the boldness to ask me of him. Whatever punishment his insolence deserved, my father was satisfied with telling him he had other thoughts in relation to me, and shewed him no further resentment. The youth was incensed at this refusal; he resented the contempt, as if he had asked some maid of ordinary extraction, or as if his birth had been equal to mine. Nor did he stop here, but resolved to be revenged on the sultan, and with unparalleled ingratitude conspired against him. In short, he murdered him, and caused himself to be proclaimed sovereign of Deryabar. The first thing he did after the murder of my father was to come into my apartment, at the head of a party of the conspirators. His design was either to take my life or oblige me to marry him. The grand vizier, however, who had been always loyal to his master, while the usurper was butchering my father, came to carry me away from the palace, and secured me in a friend's house, till a vessel he had provided was ready to sail. I then left the island, attended only by a governess and that generous minister, who chose rather to follow his master's daughter, and share her misfortunes, than to submit to a tyrant.

The grand vizier designed to carry me to the courts of the neighbouring sultans, to implore their assistance, and excite them to revenge my father's death; but heaven did not concur in a resolution we thought so just. When we had been but a few days at sea, there arose such a furious storm, that, in spite of all the mariners' art, our vessel, carried away by the violence of the winds and waves, was dashed in pieces against a rock. I will not spend time in describing our shipwreck. I can but faintly represent to you how my governess, the grand vizier, and all that attended me, were swallowed up by the sea. The dread I was seized with did not permit me to observe all the horror of our condition. I lost my senses; and whether I was thrown upon the coast upon any part of the wreck, or whether heaven, which reserved me for other misfortunes, wrought a miracle for my deliverance, I found myself on shore when my senses returned.

Misfortunes very often make us forget our duty. Instead of returning thanks to God for so singular a favour shewn me, I only lifted up my eyes to heaven, to complain because I had been preserved. I was so far from bewailing the vizier and my governess, that I envied their fate, and dreadful imaginations by degrees prevailing over my reason, I resolved to cast myself into the sea; I was on the point of doing so, when I heard behind me a great noise of men and horses. I looked about to see what it might be, and espied several armed horsemen, among whom was one mounted on an Arabian horse. He had on a garment embroidered with silver, a girdle set with precious stones, and a crown of gold on his head. Though his habit had not convinced me that he was chief of the company, I should have judged it by the air of grandeur which appeared in his person. He was a young man extraordinarily well shaped, and perfectly beautiful. Surprised to see a young lady alone in that place, he sent some of his officers to ask who I was. I answered only by weeping. The shore being covered with the wreck of our ship, they concluded that I was certainly some person who had escaped from the vessel. This conjecture, and my inconsolable condition, excited the curiosity of the officers, who began to ask me a thousand questions, with assurances, that their master was a generous prince, and that I should receive protection at his court.

The sultan, impatient to know who I was, grew weary of waiting the return of his officers, and drew near to me. He gazed on me very earnestly, and observing that I did not cease weeping and afflicting myself, without being able to return an answer to their questions, he forbad them troubling me any more; and directing his discourse to me, “Madam,” said he, “I conjure you to moderate your excessive affliction. Though heaven in its dispensations has laid this calamity upon you, it does not behove you to despair. I beseech you shew more resolution. Fortune, which has hitherto persecuted you, is inconstant, and may soon change. I dare assure you, that, if your misfortunes are capable of receiving any relief, you shall find it in my dominions. My palace is at your service. You shall live with the queen my mother, who will endeavour by her kindness to ease your affliction. I know not yet who you are; but I find I already take an interest in your welfare.”

I thanked the young sultan for his goodness to me, accepted his obliging offers; and to convince him that I was not unworthy of them, told him my condition. I described to him the insolence of the young

Saracen, and found it was enough to recount my misfortunes, to excite compassion in him and all his officers, who heard me. When I had done speaking, the prince began again, assuring me that he was deeply concerned at my misfortunes. He then conducted me to his palace, and presented me to the queen his mother, to whom I was obliged again to repeat my misfortunes and to renew my tears. The queen seemed very sensible of my trouble, and conceived extreme affection for me. On the other hand, the sultan her son fell desperately in love with me, and soon offered me his person and his crown. I was so taken up with the thoughts of my calamities, that the prince, though so lovely a person, did not make so great an impression on me as he might have done at another time. However, gratitude prevailing, I did not refuse to make him happy, and our nuptials were concluded with all imaginable splendour.

While the people were taken up with the celebration of their sovereign's nuptials, a neighbouring prince, his enemy, made a descent by night on the island with a great number of troops. That formidable enemy was the king of Zanguebar. He surprised and cut to pieces my husband's subjects. He was very near taking us both. We escaped very narrowly, for he had already entered the palace with some of his followers, but we found means to slip away, and to get to the seacoast, where we threw ourselves into a fishing boat which we had the good fortune to meet with. Two days we were driven about by the winds, without knowing what would become of us. The third day we espied a vessel making towards us under sail. We rejoiced at first, believing it had been a merchant ship which might take us aboard; but what was our consternation, when, as it drew near, we saw ten or twelve armed pirates appear on the deck. Having boarded, five or six of them leaped into our boat, seized us, bound the prince, and conveyed us into their ship, where they immediately took off my veil. My youth and features touched them, and they all declared how much they were charmed at the sight of me. Instead of casting lots, each of them claimed the preference, and me as his right. The dispute grew warm, they came to blows, and fought like madmen. The deck was soon covered with dead bodies, and they were all killed but one, who being left sole possessor of me, said, "You are mine. I will carry you to Grand Cairo, to deliver you to a friend of mine, to whom I have promised a beautiful slave. But who," added he, looking upon the sultan my husband, "is that man? What relation does he bear to you? Are you allied by blood or love?" "Sir," answered I, "he is my husband." "If so," replied the pirate, "in pity I must rid myself of him: it would be too great an affliction to him to see you in my friend's arms." Having spoken these words, he took up the unhappy prince, who was bound, and threw him into the sea, notwithstanding all my endeavours to prevent him.

I shrieked in a dreadful manner at the sight of what he had done, and had certainly cast myself headlong into the sea, but that the pirate held me. He saw my design, and therefore bound me with cords to the main-mast, then hoisting sail, made towards the land, and got ashore. He unbound me and led me to a little town, where he bought camels, tents, and slaves, and then set out for Grand Cairo, designing, as he still said, to present me to his friend, according to his promise.

We had been several days upon the road, when, as we were crossing this plain yesterday, we descried the black who inhabited this castle. At a distance we took him for a tower, and when near us, could scarcely believe him to be a man. He drew his huge scimitar, and summoned the pirate to yield himself prisoner, with all his slaves, and the lady he was conducting. The pirate was daring; and being seconded by his slaves, who promised to stand by him, he attacked the black. The combat lasted a considerable time; but at length the pirate fell under his enemy's deadly blows, as did all his slaves, who chose rather to die than forsake him. The black then conducted me to the castle, whither he also brought the pirate's body, which he devoured that night. After his inhuman repast, perceiving that I ceased not weeping, he said to me, "Young lady, prepare to love me, rather than continue thus to afflict yourself. Make a virtue of necessity, and comply. I will give you till to-morrow to consider. Let me then find you comforted for all your misfortunes, and overjoyed at having been reserved for me." Having spoken these words, he conducted me to a chamber, and withdrew to his own, after locking up the castle gates. He opened them this morning, and presently locked them after him again, to pursue some travellers he perceived at a distance; but it is likely they made their escape, since he was returning alone, and without any booty, when you attacked him.

As soon as the princess had finished the recital of her adventures, Codadad declared to her that he was deeply concerned at her misfortunes. “But, madam,” added he, “it shall be your own fault if you do not live at ease for the future. The sultan of Harran’s sons offer you a safe retreat in the court of their father; be pleased to accept of it. You will be there cherished by that sovereign, and respected by all; and if you do not disdain the affection of your deliverer, permit me to assure you of it, and to espouse you before all these princes; let them be witnesses to our contract.” The princess consented, and the marriage was concluded that very day in the castle, where they found all sorts of provisions. The kitchens were full of flesh and other eatables the black used to feed on, when he was weary of feeding on human bodies. There was also a variety of fruits, excellent in their kinds; and, to complete their pleasure, abundance of delicious wine and other liquors.

They all sat down at table; and after having eaten and drunk plentifully, took with them the rest of the provisions, and set out for the sultan of Harran’s court: they travelled several days, encamping in the pleasantest places they could find, and were within one day’s journey of Harran, when having halted and drunk all their wine, being under no longer concern to make it hold out, Codadad directing his discourse to all his company, said “Princes, I have too long concealed from you who I am. Behold your brother Codadad! I have received my being, as well as you, from the sultan of Harran, the prince of Samaria brought me up, and the princess Pirouzè is my mother. Madam,” added he, addressing himself to the Princess of Deryabar, “do you also forgive me for having concealed my birth from you? Perhaps, by discovering it sooner, I might have prevented some disagreeable reflections, which may have been occasioned by a match you may have thought unequal.” “No, sir,” answered the princess, “the opinion I at first conceived of you heightened every moment, and you did not stand in need of the extraction you now discover to make me happy.”

The princes congratulated Codadad on his birth, and expressed much satisfaction at being made acquainted with it. But in reality, instead of rejoicing, their hatred of so amiable a brother was increased. They met together at night, whilst Codadad and the princess his wife lay asleep in their tent. Those ungrateful, those envious brothers, forgetting that had it not been for the brave son of Pirouzè they must have been devoured by the black, agreed among themselves to murder him. “We have no other course to choose,” said one of them, “for the moment our father shall come to understand that this stranger of whom he is already so fond, is our brother, and that he alone has been able to destroy a giant, whom we could not all of us together conquer, he will declare him his heir, to the prejudice of all his brothers, who will be obliged to obey and fall down before him.” He added much more, which made such an impression on their envious and unnatural minds, that they immediately repaired to Codadad, then asleep, stabbed him repeatedly, and leaving him for dead in the arms of the princess of Deryabar, proceeded on their journey for the city of Harran, where they arrived the next day.

The sultan their father conceived the greater joy at their return, because he had despaired of ever seeing them again: he asked what had been the occasion of their stay? But they took care not to acquaint him with it, making no mention either of the black or of Codadad; and only said, that, being curious to see different countries, they had spent some time in the neighbouring cities.

In the mean time Codadad lay in his tent weltering in his blood, and little differing from a dead man, with the princess his wife, who seemed to be in not much better condition than himself. She rent the air with her dismal shrieks, tore her hair, and bathing her husband’s body with her tears, “Alas! Codadad, my dear Codadad,” cried she, “is it you whom I behold just departing this life? What cruel hands have put you into this condition? Can I believe these are your brothers who have treated you so unmercifully, those brothers whom thy valour had saved? No, they are rather devils, who under characters so dear came to murder you. O barbarous wretches! how could you make so ungrateful a return for the service he has done you? But why should I complain of your brothers, unfortunate Codadad! I alone am to blame for your death. You would join your fate with mine, and all the ill fortune that has attended me since I left my father’s palace has fallen upon you. O Heaven! which has condemned me to lead a life of calamities, if you will not permit me to have a consort, why did you permit me to find one? Behold you have now robbed me of two, just as I began to be attached to them."

By these and other moving expressions, the afflicted princess of Deryabar vented her sorrow, fixing her eyes on the unfortunate Codadad, who could not hear her; but he was not dead, and his consort observing that he still breathed, ran to a large town she espied in the plain, to inquire for a surgeon. She was directed to one, who went immediately with her; but when they came to the tent, they could not find Codadad, which made them conclude he had been dragged away by some wild beast to be devoured. The princess renewed her complaints and lamentations in a most affecting manner. The surgeon was moved and being unwilling to leave her in so distressed a condition, proposed to her to return to the town offering her his house and service.

She suffered herself to be prevailed on. The surgeon conducted her to his house, and without knowing, as yet, who she was, treated her with all imaginable courtesy and respect. He used all his endeavours to comfort her, but it was vain to think of removing her sorrow, which was rather heightened than diminished. "Madam," said he to her one day, "be pleased to recount to me your misfortunes; tell me your country and your condition. Perhaps I may give you some good advice, when I am acquainted with all the circumstances of your calamity. You do nothing but afflict yourself, without considering that remedies may be found for the most desperate diseases."

The surgeon's words were so efficacious, that they wrought on the princess, who recounted to him all her adventures: and when she had done, the surgeon directed his discourse to her; "Madam," said he, "you ought not thus to give way to your sorrow; you ought rather to arm yourself with resolution, and perform what the name and the duty of a wife require of you. You are bound to avenge your husband. If you please, I will wait on you as your attendant. Let us go to the sultan of Harran's court; he is a good and a just prince. You need only represent to him in lively colours, how prince Codadad has been treated by his brothers. I am persuaded he will do you justice." "I submit to your reasons," answered the princess; "it is my duty to endeavour to avenge Codadad; and since you are so generous as to offer to attend me, I am ready to set out." No sooner had she fixed this resolution, than the surgeon ordered two camels to be made ready, on which the princess and he mounted, and repaired to Harran.

They alighted at the first caravanserai they found, and inquired of the host the news at court. "It is," said he, "in very great perplexity. The sultan had a son, who lived long with him as a stranger, and none can tell what is become of the young prince. One of the sultan's wives, named Pirouzè, is his mother; she has made all possible inquiry, but to no purpose. All are concerned at the loss of this prince, because he had great merit. The sultan has forty-nine other sons, all by different mothers, but not one of them has virtue enough to comfort him for the death of Codadad; I say, his death, because it is impossible he should be still alive, since no intelligence has been heard of him, notwithstanding so much search has been made."

The surgeon having heard this account from the host, concluded that the best course the princess of Deryabar could take was to wait upon Pirouzè; but that step was not without some danger, and required much precaution: for it was to be feared, that if the sultan of Harran's sons should happen to hear of the arrival of their sister-in-law, and her design, they might cause her to be conveyed away before she could discover herself to Codadad's mother. The surgeon weighed all these circumstances, considered what risk he might run himself, and therefore, that he might manage matters with discretion, desired the princess to remain in the caravanserai, whilst he repaired to the palace, to observe which might be the safest way to conduct her to Pirouzè.

He went accordingly into the city, and was walking towards the palace, like one led only by curiosity to see the court, when he beheld a lady mounted on a mule richly accoutred. She was followed by several ladies mounted also on mules, with a great number of guards and black slaves. All the people formed a lane to see her pass along, and saluted her by prostrating themselves on the ground. The surgeon paid her the same respect, and then asked a calender, who happened to stand by him, "Whether that lady was one of the sultan's wives?" "Yes, brother," answered the calender, "she is, and the most honoured and beloved by the people, because she is the mother of prince Codadad, of whom you must have heard."

The surgeon asked no more questions, but followed Pirouzè to a mosque, into which she went to distribute alms, and assist at the public prayers which the sultan had ordered to be offered up for the safe return of Codadad. The people, who were highly concerned for that young prince, ran in crowds to join their vows to the prayers of the priests, so that the mosque was quite full. The surgeon broke through the throng, and advanced to Pirouzè's guards. He waited the conclusion of the prayers, and when the princess went out, stepped up to one of her slaves, and whispered him in the ear, "Brother, I have a secret of moment to impart to the princess Pirouzè; may not I, by your means, be introduced into her apartment?" "If that secret," answered the slave, "relate to prince Codadad, I dare promise you shall have audience of her this very day; but if it concern not him, it is needless for you to endeavour to be introduced; for her thoughts are all engrossed by her son, and she will not hear of any other subject." "It is only about that dear son," replied the surgeon, "that I wish to speak to her." "If so," said the slave, "you need only follow us to the palace, and you shall soon have the opportunity."

Accordingly, as soon as Pirouzè was returned to her apartment, the slave acquainted her that a person unknown had some important information to communicate to her, and that it related to prince Codadad. No sooner had he uttered these words, than Pirouzè expressed her impatience to see the stranger. The slave immediately conducted him into the princess's closet, who ordered all her women to withdraw, except two, from whom she concealed nothing. As soon as she saw the surgeon, she asked him eagerly, what news he had to tell her of Codadad? "Madam," answered the surgeon, after having prostrated himself on the ground, "I have a long account to give you, and such as will surprise you." He then related all the particulars of what had passed between Codadad and his brothers, which she listened to with eager attention; but when he came to speak of the murder, the tender mother fainted away on her sofa, as if she had herself been stabbed like her son. Her two women used proper means, and soon brought her to herself. The surgeon continued his relation; and when he had concluded, Pirouzè said to him, "Go back to the princess of Deryabar, and assure her from me that the sultan shall soon own her for his daughter-in-law; and as for yourself, be satisfied, that your services shall be rewarded as liberally as they deserve."

When the surgeon was gone, Pirouzè remained on the sofa, in such a state of affliction as may easily be imagined; and yielding to her tenderness at the recollection of Codadad, "O my son," said she, "I must never then expect to see you more! Alas! when I gave you leave to depart from Samaria, and you took leave of me, I did not imagine that so unfortunate a death awaited you at such a distance from me. Unfortunate Codadad! Why did you leave me? You would not, it is true, have acquired so much renown, but you had been still alive, and not have cost your mother so many tears." While she uttered these words, she wept bitterly, and her two attendants moved by her grief, mingled their tears with hers.

Whilst they were all three in this manner vying in affliction, the sultan came into the closet, and seeing them in this condition, asked Pirouzè whether she had received any bad news concerning Codadad? "Alas! sir," said she, "all is over, my son has lost his life, and to add to my sorrow, I cannot pay him the funeral rites; for, in all probability, wild beasts have devoured him." She then told him all she had heard from the surgeon, and did not fail to enlarge on the inhuman manner in which Codadad had been murdered by his brothers.

The sultan did not give Pirouzè time to finish her relation, but transported with anger, and giving way to his passion, "Madam," said he to the princess, "those perfidious wretches who cause you to shed these tears, and are the occasion of mortal grief to their father, shall soon feel the punishment due to their guilt." The sultan having spoken these words, with indignation in his countenance, went directly to the presence-chamber where all his courtiers attended, and such of the people as had petitions to present to him. They were alarmed to see him in passion, and thought his anger had been kindled against his people. Their hearts were chilled with fear. He ascended the throne, and causing his grand vizier to approach, "Hassan," said he, "go immediately, take a thousand of my guards, and seize all the princes, my sons; shut them up in the tower used as a prison for murderers, and let this be done in a moment." All who were present trembled at this extraordinary command; and the grand vizier, without uttering a word, laid his hand on his head, to express his obedience, and hastened from the hall to execute his orders. In the mean time the sultan dismissed those who attended for audience, and declared he would not hear of any business for a month to come. He was still in the hall when the vizier returned. “Are all my sons,” demanded he, “in the tower?” “They are, sir,” answered the vizier, “I have obeyed your orders.” “This is not all,” replied the sultan, “I have further commands for you;” and so saying he went out of the hall of audience, and returned to Pirouzè’s apartment, the vizier following him. He asked the princess where Codadad’s widow had taken up her lodging? Pirouzè’s women told him, for the surgeon had not forgotten that in his relation. The sultan then turning to his minister, “Go,” said he, “to this caravanserai, and conduct a young princess who lodges there, with all the respect due to her quality, to my palace.”

The vizier was not long in performing what he was ordered. He mounted on horseback with all the emirs and courtiers, and repaired to the caravanserai, where the princess of Deryabar was lodged, whom he acquainted with his orders; and presented her, from the sultan, a fine white mule, whose saddle and bridle were adorned with gold, rubies, and diamonds. She mounted, and proceeded to the palace. The surgeon attended her, mounted on a beautiful Tartar horse which the vizier had provided for him. All the people were at their windows, or in the streets, to see the cavalcade; and it being given out that the princess, whom they conducted in such state to court, was Codadad’s wife, the city resounded with acclamations, the air rung with shouts of joy, which would have been turned into lamentations had that prince’s fatal adventure been known; so much was he beloved by all.

The princess of Deryabar found the sultan at the palace-gate, waiting to receive her: he took her by the hand, and led her to Pirouzè’s apartment, where a very moving scene took place. Codadad’s wife found her affliction redouble at the sight of her husband’s father and mother; as, on the other hand, those parents could not look on their son’s wife without being much affected. She cast herself at the sultan’s feet, and having bathed them with tears, was so overcome with grief, that she was not able to speak. Pirouzè was in no better state. And the sultan, moved by these affecting objects, gave way to his own feelings, and wept. All three, mingling their tears and sighs, for some time observed a silence, equally tender and pitiful. At length the princess of Deryabar, being somewhat recovered, recounted the adventure of the castle, and Codadad's disaster. Then she demanded justice for the treachery of the princes. "Yes, madam," said the sultan, "those ungrateful wretches shall perish; but Codadad's death must be first made public, that the punishment of his brothers may not cause my subjects to rebel; and though we have not my son's body, we will not omit paying him the last duties." This said, he directed his discourse to the vizier, and ordered him to cause to be erected a dome of white marble, in a delightful plain, in the midst of which the city of Harran stands. Then he appointed the princess of Deryabar a suitable apartment in his palace, acknowledging her for his daughter-in-law.

Hassan caused the work to be carried on with such diligence, and employed so many workmen, that the dome was soon finished. Within it was erected a tomb, which was covered with gold brocade. When all was completed, the sultan ordered prayers to be said, and appointed a day for the obsequies of his son.

On that day all the inhabitants of the city went out upon the plain to see the ceremony performed, which was after the following manner. The sultan, attended by his vizier and the principal lords of the court, proceeded towards the dome, and being come to it, he went in and sat down with them on carpets of black satin embroidered with gold flowers. A great body of horse-guards hanging their heads, drew up close about the dome, and marched round it twice, observing a profound silence; but at the third round they halted before the door, and all of them with a loud voice pronounced these words: "O prince! son to the sultan, could we by dint of sword, and human valour, repair your misfortune, we would bring you back to life; but the King of kings has commanded, and the angel of death has obeyed." Having uttered these words, they drew off, to make way for a hundred old men, all of them mounted on black mules, and having long grey beards. These were anchorites, who had lived all their days concealed in caves. They never appeared in sight of the world, but when they were to assist at the obsequies of the sultans of Harran, and of the princes of their family. Each of these venerable persons carried on his head a book, which he held with one hand. They took three turns round the dome without uttering a word; then stopping before the door, one of them said, "O prince! what can we do for thee? If thou couldst be restored to life by prayer or learning, we would rub our grey beards at thy feet, and recite prayers; but the King of the universe has taken thee away for ever."

This said, the old men moved to a distance from the dome, and immediately fifty beautiful young maidens drew near to it; each of them mounted on a little white horse; they wore no veils, and carried gold baskets full of all sorts of precious stones. They also rode thrice round the dome, and halting at the same place as the others had done, the youngest of them spoke in the name of all, as follows: "O prince! once so beautiful, what relief can you expect from us? If we could restore you to life by our charms, we would become your slaves. But you are no longer sensible to beauty, and have no more occasion for us."

When the young maids were withdrawn, the sultan and his courtiers arose, and having walked thrice around the tomb, the sultan spoke as follows: "O my dear son, light of my eyes, I have then lost thee for ever!" He accompanied these words with sighs, and watered the tomb with his tears; his courtiers weeping with him. The gate of the dome was then closed, and all the people returned to the city. Next day there were public prayers in all the mosques, and the same was continued for eight days successively. On the ninth the king resolved to cause the princes his sons to be beheaded. The people incensed at their cruelty towards Codadad, impatiently expected to see them executed. The scaffolds were erecting, but the execution was respited, because, on a sudden, intelligence was brought that the neighbouring princes, who had before made war on the sultan of Harran, were advancing with more numerous forces than on the first invasion, and were then not far from the city. It had been long known that they were preparing for war, but their preparations caused no alarm. This news occasioned general consternation, and gave new cause to lament the loss of Codadad, who had signalized himself in the former war against the same enemies. "Alas!" said they, "were the brave Codadad alive, we should little regard those princes who are coming to surprise us.” The sultan, nothing dismayed, raised men with all possible speed, formed a considerable army, and being too brave to await the enemy’s coming to attack him within his walls, marched out to meet them. They, on their side, being informed by their advanced parties that the sultan of Harran was marching to engage them, halted in the plain, and formed their army.

As soon as the sultan discovered them, he also drew up his forces, and ranged them in order of battle. The signal was given and he attacked them with extraordinary vigour; nor was the opposition inferior. Much blood was shed on both sides, and the victory remained long dubious; but at length it seemed to incline to the sultan of Harran’s enemies, who, being more numerous, were upon the point of surrounding him, when a great body of cavalry appeared on the plain, and approached the two armies. The sight of this fresh party daunted both sides, neither knowing what to think of them: but their doubts were soon cleared; for they fell upon the flank of the sultan of Harran’s enemies with such a furious charge, that they soon broke and routed them. Nor did they stop here; they pursued them, and cut most of them in pieces.

The sultan of Harran, who had attentively observed all that passed, admired the bravery of this strange body of cavalry, whose unexpected arrival had given the victory to his army. But, above all, he was charmed with their chief, whom he had seen fighting with a more than ordinary valour. He longed to know the name of the generous hero. Impatient to see and thank him, he advanced towards him, but perceived he was coming to prevent him. The two princes drew near, and the sultan of Harran discovering Codadad in the brave warrior who had just assisted him, or rather defeated his enemies, became motionless with joy and surprise. “Father,” said Codadad to him, “you have sufficient cause to be astonished at the sudden appearance before your majesty of a man, whom perhaps you concluded to be dead. I should have been so had not heaven preserved me still to serve you against your enemies.” “O my son!” cried the sultan, “is it possible that you are restored to me? Alas! I despaired of seeing you more.” So saying he stretched out his arms to the young prince, who flew to such a tender embrace.

"I know all, my son," said the sultan again, after having long held him in his arms. "I know what return your brothers have made you for delivering them out of the hands of the black; but you shall be revenged to-morrow. Let us now go to the palace where your mother, who has shed so many tears on your account, expects me to rejoice with us for the defeat of our enemies. What a joy will it be to her to be informed, that my victory is your work!" "Sir," said Codadad, "give me leave to ask how you could know the adventure of the castle? Have any of my brothers, repenting, owned it to you?" "No," answered the sultan; "the princess of Deryabar has given us an account of every thing, for she is in my palace and came thither to demand justice against your brothers." Codadad was transported with joy, to learn that the princess his wife was at the court. "Let us go, sir," cried he to his father in rapture, "let us go to my mother, who waits for us. I am impatient to dry up her tears, as well as those of the princess of Deryabar."

The sultan immediately returned to the city with his army, and re-entered his palace victorious, amidst the acclamations of the people, who followed him in crowds, praying to heaven to prolong his life, and extolling Codadad to the skies. They found Pirouzè and her daughter-in-law waiting to congratulate the sultan; but words cannot express the transports of joy they felt, when they saw the young prince with him: their embraces were mingled with tears of a very different kind from those they had before shed for him. When they had sufficiently yielded to all the emotions that the ties of blood and love inspired, they asked Codadad by what miracle he came to be still alive?

He answered, that a peasant mounted on a mule happening accidentally to come into the tent, where he lay senseless, and perceiving him alone, and stabbed in several places, had made him fast on his mule, and carried him to his house, where he applied to his wounds certain herbs chewed, which recovered him. "When I found myself well," added he, "I returned thanks to the peasant, and gave him all the diamonds I had. I then made for the city of Harran; but being informed by the way, that some neighbouring princes had gathered forces, and were on their march against the sultan's subjects, I made myself known to the villagers, and stirred them up to undertake his defence. I armed a great number of young men, and heading them, happened to arrive at the time when the two armies were engaged.”

When he had done speaking, the sultan said, “Let us return thanks to God for having preserved Codadad; but it is requisite that the traitors, who would have destroyed him, should perish.” “Sir,” answered the generous prince, “though they are wicked and ungrateful, consider they are your own flesh and blood: they are my brothers; I forgive their offence, and beg you to pardon them.” This generosity drew tears from the sultan, who caused the people to be assembled and declared Codadad his heir. He then ordered the princes, who were prisoners, to be brought out loaded with irons. Pirouzè’s son struck off their chains, and embraced them all successively, with as much sincerity and affection as he had done in the court of the black’s castle. The people were charmed with Codadad’s generosity, and loaded him with applause. The surgeon was next nobly rewarded in requital of the services he had done the princess of Deryabar.

THE STORY OF ABOU HASSAN, OR THE SLEEPER AWAKENED.

In the reign of the caliph Haroon al Rusheed, there lived at Bagdad a very rich merchant, who, having married a woman advanced in years, had but one son, whom he named Abou Hassan, and educated with great restraint: when his son was thirty years old, the merchant dying, left him his sole heir, and master of great riches, amassed together by much frugality and close application to business. Abou Hassan, whose views and inclinations were very different from those of his father, determined to make another use of his wealth; for as his father had never allowed him any money but what was just necessary for subsistence, and he had always envied those young persons of his age who wanted for nothing, and who debarred themselves from none of those pleasures to which youth are so much addicted, he resolved in his turn to distinguish himself by extravagancies proportionable to his fortune. To this end he divided his riches into two parts; with one half he bought houses in town, and land in the country, with a resolution never to touch the income of his real estate, which was considerable enough to live upon very handsomely, but lay it all by as he received it. With the other half, which consisted of ready money, he designed to make himself amends for the time he had lost by the severe restraint in which his father had always kept him.

With this intent, Abou Hassan formed a society with youths of his own age and condition, who thought of nothing but how to make their time pass agreeably. Every day he gave them splendid entertainments, at which the most delicate viands were served up, and the most exquisite wines flowed in profusion, while concerts of the best vocal and instrumental music by performers of both sexes heightened their pleasures, and this young band of debauchees with the glasses in their hands, joined their songs with the music. These feasts were accompanied by ballets, for which the best dancers of both sexes were engaged. These entertainments, renewed every day, were so expensive to Abou Hassan, that he could not support the extravagance above a year: and the great sum which he had appropriated to this prodigality and the year ended together. As soon as he discontinued keeping this table, his friends forsook him; whenever they saw him they avoided him, and if by chance he met any of them, and went to stop them, they always excused themselves on some presence or other.

Abou Hassan was more affected by this behaviour of his friends, who had forsaken him so basely and ungratefully, after all the protestations they had made him, of inviolable attachment, than by the loss of all the money he had so foolishly squandered. He went melancholy and thoughtful, his countenance expressive of deep vexation, into his mother's apartment, and sat down on the end of a sofa at a distance from her. "What is the matter with you, son?" said his mother, seeing him thus depressed. "Why are you so altered, so dejected, and so different from yourself? You could not certainly be more concerned, if you had lost all you had. I know you have lived very extravagantly, and believe all your money is spent; you have still, however, a good estate; and the reason that I did not so much oppose your irregular way of living was, that I knew the wise precaution you had taken to preserve half your property. I do not, therefore, see why you should plunge yourself into this deep melancholy."

At these words Abou Hassan melted into tears; and in the midst of his sighs exclaimed, "Ah! mother, I see at last how insupportable poverty must be; I am sensible that it deprives us of joy, as the setting of the sun does of light. As poverty makes us forget all the commendations passed upon us before our fall, it makes us endeavour to conceal ourselves, and spend our nights in tears and sorrow. In short, a poor man is looked upon, both by friends and relations, as a stranger. You know, mother, how I have treated my friends for this year past; I have entertained them with all imaginable generosity, till I have spent all my money, and now they have left me, when they suppose I can treat them no longer. For my real estate, I thank heaven for having given me grace to keep the oath I made not to encroach upon that. I shall now know how to use what is left. But I will, however, try how far my friends, who deserve not that I should call them so, will carry their ingratitude. I will go to them one after another, and when I have represented to them what I have done on their account, ask them to make up a sum of money, to relieve me, merely to try if I can find any sentiment of gratitude remaining in them."

"I do not pretend, son," said Abou Hassan's mother, "to dissuade you from your design; but I can tell you beforehand, that you have no ground for hope. Believe me, you will kind no relief but from the estate you have reserved. I see you do not, but will soon, know those people, who, among persons of your sort, are generally called friends, and I wish to heaven you may know it in the manner I desire, for your own good." "Mother," replied Abou Hassan, "I am persuaded of the truth of what you say, but shall be more certain of a fact which concerns me so nearly, when I shall have informed myself fully of their baseness and insensibility." Abou Hassan went immediately to his friends, whom he found at home; represented to them the great need he was in, and begged of them to assist him. He promised to give bonds to pay them the money they might lend him; giving them to understand at the same time, that it was, in a great measure, on their account that he was so distressed. That he might the more powerfully excite their generosity, he forgot not to allure them with the hopes of being once again entertained in the same manner as before.

Not one of his companions was affected with the arguments which the afflicted Abou Hassan used to persuade them; and he had the mortification to find, that many of them told him plainly they did not know him.

He returned home full of indignation; and going into his mother's apartment, said, "Ah! madam, you were right; instead of friends, I have found none but perfidious ungrateful wretches, who deserve not my friendship; I renounce them, and promise you I will never see them more." He resolved to be as good as his word, and took every precaution to avoid falling again into the inconvenience which his former prodigality had occasioned; taking an oath never to give an inhabitant of Bagdad any entertainment while he lived. He drew the strong box into which he had put the rents received from his estates from the recess where he had placed it in reserve, put it in the room of that he had emptied, and resolved to take out every day no more than was sufficient to defray the expense of a single person to sup with him, who, according to the oath he had taken, was not of Bagdad, but a stranger arrived in the city the same day, and who must take his leave of him the following morning.

Conformably to this plan, Abou Hassan took care every morning to provide whatever was necessary, and towards the close of the evening, went and sat at the end of Bagdad bridge; and as soon as he saw a stranger, accosted him civilly invited him to sup and lodge with him that night, and after having informed him of the law he had imposed upon himself, conducted him to his house. The repast with which Abou Hassan regaled his guests was not costly, but well dressed, with plenty of good wine, and generally lasted till the night was pretty far advanced; instead of entertaining his guests with the affairs of state, his family, or business, as is too frequent, he conversed on different agreeable subjects. He was naturally of so gay and pleasant a temper, that he could give the most agreeable turns to every subject, and make the most melancholy persons merry. When he sent away his guest the next morning, he always said, “God preserve you from all sorrow wherever you go; when I invited you yesterday to come and sup with me, I informed you of the law I have imposed on myself; therefore do not take it ill if I tell you that we must never see one another again, nor drink together, either at home or any where else, for reasons best known to myself: so God conduct you.”

Abou Hassan was very exact in the observance of this oath, and never looked upon or spoke to the strangers he had once entertained; if he met them afterwards in the streets, the squares, or any public assemblies, he affected not to see them, and turned away to avoid them, that they might not speak to him, or he have any communication with them. He had acted for a long time in this manner, when, one afternoon, a little before sunset, as he sat upon the bridge according to custom, the caliph Haroon al Rusheed came by, but so disguised that it was impossible to know him; for that monarch, though his chief ministers and officers of justice acquitted themselves of their duty very punctually, would nevertheless inform himself of every thing, and for that purpose often disguised himself in different ways, and walked through the city and suburbs of Bagdad, sometimes one way and sometimes another. That day, being the first of the month, he was dressed like a merchant of Moussul, and was followed by a tall stout slave.

As the caliph had in his disguise a grave and respectable appearance, Abou Hassan, who thought him to be a Moussul merchant, rose up, and after having saluted him with a graceful air, said to him, “Sir, I congratulate you on your happy arrival in Bagdad, I beg you to do me the honour to sup with me, and repose yourself at my house for this night, after the fatigue of your journey.” He then told him his custom of entertaining the first stranger he met with. The caliph found something so odd and singular in Abou Hassan’s whim, that he was very desirous to know the cause; and told him that he could not better merit a civility, which he did not expect as a stranger, than by accepting the obliging offer made him; that he had only to lead the way, and he was ready to follow him.

Abou Hassan treated the caliph as his equal, conducted him home, and led him into a room very neatly furnished, where he set him on a sofa, in the most honourable place. Supper was ready, and the cloth laid. Abou Hassan’s mother, who took upon herself the care of the kitchen, sent up three dishes; the first contained a capon and four large pullets, which was set in the middle; and the second and third, placed on each side, contained, one a fat roasted goose, and the other broiled pigeons. This was all; but they were good of the kind and well flavoured, with proper sauces.

Abou Hassan sat down opposite his guest, and he and the caliph began to eat heartily of what they liked best, without speaking or drinking, according to the custom of the country. When they had done eating, the caliph’s slave brought them water to wash their hands: and in the mean time Abou Hassan’s mother cleared the table, and brought up a dessert of all the various sorts or fruits then in season; as grapes, peaches, apples, pears, and various pastes of dried almonds, &c. As soon as it grew dark, wax candles were lighted, and Abou Hassan, after requesting his mother to take care of the caliph’s slave, set on bottles and glasses.

Abou Hassan sitting down with the pretended Moussul merchant again, filled out a glass of wine before he touched the fruit; and holding it in his hand, said to the caliph, “You know, sir, that the cock never drinks before he calls to his hens to come and drink with him; I invite you to follow my example. I do not know what you may think; but, for my part, I cannot reckon him a wise man who does not love wine. Let us leave that sort of people to their dull melancholy humours, and seek for mirth, which is only to be found in a bumper."

While Abou Hassan was drinking' the caliph taking the glass that was set for him, said, "You are an honest fellow; I like your pleasant temper, and expect you will fill me as much." Abou Hassan, as soon as he had drunk, filled the caliph's glass, and giving it to him, "Taste this wine, sir," said he, "I will warrant it good." "I am well persuaded of that," replied the caliph, laughing, "you know how to choose the best." "O," replied Abou Hassan, while the caliph was drinking his glass, "one need only look in your face to be assured that you have seen the world, and know what good living is. If," added he in Arabic verse, "my house could think and express its joy, how happy would it be to possess you, and, bowing before you, would exclaim, 'How overjoyed am I to see myself honoured with the company of so accomplished and polite a personage, and for meeting with a man of your merit.'"

The caliph, naturally fond of merriment, was highly diverted with these sallies of Abou Hassan, and artfully promoted drinking, often asking for wine, thinking that when it began to operate, he might from his talkativeness satisfy his curiosity. He asked him his name, his business, and how he spent his life. "My name, sir," replied he, "is Abou Hassan. I lost my father, who was a merchant of Bagdad, and though not the richest, yet lived very comfortably. When he died, he left me money enough to live free from business; but as he always kept a very strict hand over me, I was willing, when he was gone, to make up for the time I thought I had lost. Notwithstanding this," continued Abou Hassan, "I was more prudent than most young people who give themselves up to debauchery, without any thought, pursue it till they reduce themselves to the utmost poverty, and are forced to do penance during the rest of their lives. To avoid this misfortune, I divided what I had left me into two parts, landed estate and ready money. I destined the ready money to supply the expenses of entertaining my acquaintance. I meditated, and took a fixed resolution not to touch my rents. I associated with young people of my own age, and with my ready money, which I spent profusely, treated them splendidly every day; and in short, spared for no sort of pleasure. But this course did not last long; for by the time the year was out, I had got to the bottom of my box, and then all my table-friends vanished. I made a visit to every one of them successively, and represented to them the miserable condition I was in, but none of them offered to relieve me. Upon this I renounced their friendship, and retrenched so far, as to live within the compass of my income, bound myself to keep company with none but the first stranger I might meet with coming every day into Bagdad, and to entertain him but one day and one night. I have told you the rest before; and I thank my good fortune this day for having met with a stranger of so much worth."

The caliph was well satisfied with this information, and said to Abou Hassan, "I cannot enough commend the measures you have taken, and the prudence with which you have acted, by forsaking your debauchery; a conduct rarely to be met with in young persons; and I esteem you the more for being steady to your resolution. It was a slippery path you trod in, and I cannot but admire your self-command, that, after having seen the end of your ready money, you could so far refrain as not to enter upon your rents, or even your estate. In short, I must own, I envy your situation. You are the happiest man in the world, to enjoy every day the company of some one with whom you can discourse freely and agreeably, and to whom you give an opportunity to declare, wherever he goes, how handsome he was received by you. But we talk too long without drinking; come, drink, and pour out a glass for me."

In this manner the caliph and Abou Hassan conversed together, drinking and talking of indifferent subjects, till the night was pretty far advanced; when the caliph, pretending to be fatigued after his journey, told his host he stood in need of a little rest. "But," added he, "as I would not deprive you of yours on my account, before we part (because to-morrow I may be gone before you are stirring), I should be glad to shew you how sensible I am of your civility, and the good cheer and hospitality you have strewn me. The only thing that troubles me is, that I know not which way to make you any acknowledgment. I beg of you, therefore, to let me understand how I may do it' and you shall see I will not be ungrateful; for it is impossible but a man like you must have some business, some want, or wish for something agreeable to you. Speak freely, and open your mind; for though I am but a merchant, it may be in my power to oblige you myself, or by some friend."

To these offers of the caliph, Abou Hassan, taking him still for a Moussul merchant, replied, "I am very well persuaded, sir, that it is not out of compliment that you make me these generous tenders; but upon the word of an honest man, I assure you, I have nothing that troubles me, no business, nor desires, and I ask nothing of any body. I have not the least ambition, as I told you before; and am satisfied with my condition: therefore, I can only thank you for your obliging proffers, and the honour you have done me in condescending to partake of my frugal fare. Yet I must tell you," pursued Abou Hassan, "there is one thing gives me uneasiness, without, however, disturbing my rest. You must know the town of Bagdad is divided into quarters, in each of which there is a mosque with an imaum to perform service at certain hours, at the head of the quarter which assembles there. The imaum of the division I live in is a surly curmudgeon, of an austere countenance, and the greatest hypocrite in the world. Four old men of this neighbourhood, who are people of the same stamp, meet regularly every day at this imaum's house. There they vent their slander, calumny, and malice against me and the whole quarter, to the disturbance of the peace of the neighbourhood, and the promotion of dissension. Some they threaten, others they frighten; and, in short, would be lords paramount, and have every one govern himself according to their caprice, though they know not how to govern themselves. Indeed, I am sorry to see that they meddle with any thing but their Koraun, and will not let the world live quietly."

"Well, I suppose," said the caliph, "you wish to have a stop put to this disorder?" "You have guessed right," answered Abou Hassan; "and the only thing I should pray for, would be to be caliph but for one day, in the stead of our sovereign lord and master Haroon al Rusheed, commander of the faithful." "What would you do if you were?" said the caliph. "I would make examples of them," answered Abou Hassan, "to the satisfaction of all honest men. I would punish the four old men with each a hundred bastinadoes on the soles of their feet, and the imaum with four hundred, to teach them not to disturb and abuse their neighbours in future."

The caliph was extremely pleased with this thought of Abou Hassan's; and as he loved adventures, resolved to make this a very singular one. "Indeed," said he, "I approve much of your wish, which proceeds from an upright heart, that cannot bear the malice of such officious hypocrites; I could like to see it realized, and it is not so impossible as you may imagine. I am persuaded that the caliph would willingly put his authority for twenty-four hours into your hands if he knew your intentions, and the good use you would make of it. Though a foreign merchant, I have credit enough to contribute in some degree to the execution of this plan." "I see," said Abou Hassan, "you laugh at my foolish fancy, and the caliph himself would laugh at my extravagance if he knew it: yet it would be a means of informing him of the behaviour of the imaum and his companions, and induce him to chastise them."

"Heaven forbid," replied the caliph, "that I, who have been so handsomely entertained by you, should laugh at you; neither do I believe, as much a stranger as I am to you, that the caliph would be displeased: but let us leave off talking; it is almost midnight, and time to go to bed." "With all my heart," said Abou Hassan; "I would not be any hindrance to your going to rest; but there is still some wine in the bottle, and if you please we will drink it off first, and then retire. The only thing that I have to recommend to you is, that when you go out in the morning, if I am not up, you will not leave the door open, but give yourself the trouble of shutting it after you." This the caliph promised to do: and while Abou Hassan was talking, took the bottle and two glasses, filled his own first, saying, "Here is a cup of thanks to you," and then filling the other, put into it artfully a little opiate powder, which he had about him and giving it to Abou Hassan, said, "You have taken the pains to fill for me all night, and it is the least I can do to save you the trouble once: I beg you to take this glass; drink it off for my sake."

Abou Hassan took the glass, and to shew his guest with how much pleasure he received the honour, drank it off at once; but had scarcely set the glass upon the table, when the powder began to operate; he fell into so sound a sleep, and his head knocked against his knees so suddenly, that the caliph could not help laughing. The caliph commanded the slave he had brought with him, who entered the room as soon as he had supped, and had waited to receive orders, to take Abou Hassan upon his back, and follow him; but to be sure to observe the house, that he might know it again. In this manner the caliph, followed by the slave with his sleeping load, went out of the house, but without shutting the door after him as he had been desired, went directly to his palace, and by a private door into his own apartment, where the officers of his chamber were in waiting, whom he ordered to undress Abou Hassan, and put him into his bed, which they immediately performed.

The caliph then sent for all the officers and ladies of the palace, and said to them, "I would have all those whose business it is to attend my levee wait to-morrow morning upon the man who lies in my bed, pay the same respect to him as to myself, and obey him in whatever he may command; let him be refused nothing that he asks, and be addressed and answered as if he were the commander of the faithful. In short, I expect that you attend to him as the true caliph, without regarding me; and disobey him not in the least circumstance."

The officers and ladies, who understood that the caliph meant to divert himself, answered by low bows, and then withdrew, every one preparing to contribute to the best of their power to perform their respective parts adroitly.

The caliph next sent for the grand vizier: "Jaaffier," said he, "I have sent for you to instruct you, and to prevent your being surprised to-morrow when you come to audience, at seeing this man seated on my throne in the royal robes: accost him with the same reverence and respect as you pay to myself: observe and punctually execute whatever he bids you do, the same as if I commanded you. He will exercise great liberality, and commission you with the distribution of it. Do all he commands; even if his liberality should extend so far as to empty all the coffers in my treasury; and remember to acquaint all my emirs, and the officers without the palace, to pay him the same honour at audience as to myself, and to carry on the matter so well, that he may not perceive the least thing that may interrupt the diversion which I design myself."

After the grand vizier had retired, the caliph went to bed in another apartment, and gave Mesrour, the chief of his eunuchs, the orders which he was to execute, that every thing should succeed as he intended, so that he might see how Abou Hassan would use the power and authority of the caliph for the short time he had desired to have it. Above all, he charged him not to fail to awaken him at the usual hour, before he awakened Abou Hassan, because he wished to be present when he arose.

Mesrour failed not to do as the caliph had commanded, and as soon as the caliph went into the room where Abou Hassan lay, he placed himself in a little raised closet, from whence he could see all that passed. All the officers and ladies, who were to attend Abou Hassan's levee, went in at the same time, and took their posts according to their rank, ready to acquit themselves of their respective duties, as if the caliph himself had been going to rise.

As it was just day-break, and time to prepare for the morning prayer before sun rise, the officer who stood nearest to the head of the bed put a sponge steeped in vinegar to Abou Hassan's nose, who immediately turning his head about, without opening his eyes, discharged a kind of phlegm, which was received in a little golden basin before it fell on the carpet. This was the usual effect of the caliph's powder, the sleep lasting longer or shorter, in proportion to the dose. When Abou Hassan laid down his head on the bolster, he opened his eyes; and by the dawning light that appeared, found himself in a large room, magnificently furnished, the ceiling of which was finely painted in Arabesque, adorned with vases of gold and silver, and the floor covered with a rich silk tapestry. He saw himself surrounded by many young and handsome ladies, many of them having instruments of music in their hands, and black eunuchs richly clothed, all standing with great modesty and respect. After casting his eyes on the covering of the bed, he perceived it was cloth of gold richly embossed with pearl and diamonds; and near the bed lay, on a cushion, a habit of tissue embroidered with jewels, with a caliph's turban.

At the sight of these glittering objects, Abou Hassan was in the most inexpressible amazement, and looked upon all he saw as a dream; yet a dream he wished it not to be. "So," said he to himself, "I am caliph; but," added he, recollecting himself, "it is only a dream, the effect of the wish I entertained my guest with last night;" and then he turned himself about and shut his eyes to sleep. At the same time the eunuch said very respectfully, "Commander of the faithful, it is time for your majesty to rise to prayers, the morning begins to advance."

These words very much surprised Abou Hassan. "Am I awake, or do I sleep?" said he to himself. "Ah, certainly I am asleep!" continued he, keeping his eyes shut; "there is no reason to doubt of it."

Immediately the eunuch, who saw he had no inclination to get up, said again, "Your majesty must permit me to repeat once more that it is time to rise to morning prayer, unless you choose to let it pass; the sun is just rising, and you never neglect this duty." "I am mistaken," said Abou Hassan immediately, "I am not asleep, but awake; for those who sleep do not hear, and I hear somebody speak to me;" then opening his eyes again, he saw plainly by broad day-light, what he had seen but indistinctly before; and started up, with a smiling countenance, like a man overjoyed at sudden promotion. The caliph, from his recess, penetrated his thoughts with great delight.

The young ladies of the palace now prostrated themselves with their faces to the ground before Abou Hassan, and those who had instruments of music in their hands wished him a good morrow, by a concert of soft flutes, hautboys, theorboes, and other harmonious instruments, with which he was enchanted, and in such an ecstacy, that he knew not whether he was himself; but reverting to his first idea, he still doubted whether what he saw and heard was a dream or reality. He clapped his hands before his eyes, and lowering his head, said to himself, "What means all this? Where am I? and to whom does this palace belong? What can these eunuchs, handsome well-dressed officers, beautiful ladies, and musicians mean: How is it possible for me to distinguish whether I am in my right senses or in a dream?"

When he took his hands from his eyes, opened them, and lifted up his head, the sun shone full in at the chamber window; and at that instant Mesrour, the chief of the eunuchs, came in, prostrated himself before Abou Hassan, and said, "Commander of the faithful, your majesty will excuse me for representing to you, that you used not to rise so late, and that the time of prayer is over. If your majesty has not had a bad night, it is time to ascend your throne and hold a council as usual; all your generals, governors, and other great officers of state, wait your presence in the council-hall."

At this discourse, Abou Hassan was persuaded that he was neither asleep nor in a dream; but at the same time was not less embarrassed and confused under his uncertainty what steps to take: at last, looking earnestly at Mesrour, he said to him in a serious tone, "Whom is it you speak to, and call the commander of the faithful? I do not know you, and you must mistake me for somebody else."

Any person but Mesrour would have been puzzled at these questions of Abou Hassan; but he had been so well instructed by the caliph, that he played his part admirably. "My imperial lord and master," said he, "your majesty only speaks thus to try me. Is not your majesty the commander of the faithful, monarch of the world from east to west, and vicar on earth to the prophet sent of God? Mesrour, your poor slave, has not forgotten you, after so many years that he has had the honour and happiness to serve and pay his respects to your majesty. He would think himself the most unhappy of men, if he has incurred your displeasure, and begs of you most humbly to remove his fears; but had rather suppose that you have been disturbed by some troublesome dream."

Abou Hassan burst out laughing at these words, and fell backwards upon the bolster, which pleased the caliph so much that he would have laughed as loud himself, if he had not been afraid of putting a stop too soon to the pleasant scene he had promised himself.

Abou Hassan, when he had tired himself with laughing, sat up again, and speaking to a little eunuch that stood by him, black as Mesrour, said, "Hark ye, tell me whom I am?" "Sir," answered the little boy, modestly, "your majesty is the commander of the believers, and God's vicar on earth." "You are a little liar, black face," said Abou Hassan. Then he called the lady that stood nearest to him; "Come hither, fair one," said he, holding out his hand, "bite the end of my finger, that I may feel whether I am asleep or awake."

The lady, who knew the caliph saw all that passed, was overjoyed to have an opportunity of shewing her power of diverting him, went with a grave countenance, and putting his finger between her teeth, bit it so hard that she put him to violent pain. Snatching his hand quickly back again, he said, “I find I am awake and not asleep. But by what miracle am I become caliph in a night’s time! this is certainly the most strange and surprising event in the world!” Then addressing himself to the same lady, he said, “I conjure you, by the protection of God, in whom you trust as well as I, not to hide the truth from me; am I really the commander of the faithful?” “It is so true,” answered the lady, “that we who are your slaves are amazed to find that you will not believe yourself to be so.” “You are a deceiver,” replied Abou Hassan: “I know very well who I am.”

As the chief of the eunuchs perceived that Abou Hassan now wished to rise, he offered him his hand, and helped him to get out of bed. No sooner were his feet set on the floor, than the chamber rang with the repeated acclamations of the officers and ladies, who cried out all together, “Commander of the faithful, God give your majesty a good day.” “O heaven!” cried Abou Hassan, “what a strange thing this is! Last night I was Abou Hassan, and this morning I am the commander of the believers! I cannot comprehend this sudden and surprising change.” Presently some of the officers began to dress him; and when they had done, Mesrour led him through all the eunuchs and ladies, who were ranged on both sides, quite to the council chamber door, which was opened by one of the officers. Mesrour walked before him to the foot of the throne, where he stopped, and putting one hand under one arm, while another officer who followed did the same by the other, they helped him to ascend the throne. Abou Hassan sat down amidst the acclamations of the officers, who wished him all happiness and prosperity, and turning to the right and left he saw the officers of the guards ranged in order, and making a fine appearance.

The caliph in the mean time came out of the closet, and went into another, which looked into the hall, from whence he could see and hear all that passed in council, where his grand vizier presided in his place. What pleased him highly, was to see Abou Hassan fill his throne with almost as much gravity as himself.

As soon as Abou Hassan had seated himself, the grand vizier prostrated himself at the foot of the throne, and rising, said, “Commander of the faithful, God shower down blessings on your majesty in this life, receive you into his paradise in the other world, and confound your enemies.”

Abou Hassan, after all that had happened that morning, at these words of the grand vizier, never doubted but that he was caliph, as he wished to be; and without examining any farther, how or by what adventure, or sudden change of fortune, he had become so, immediately began to exercise his power, and looking very gravely at the vizier, asked him what he had to say? “Commander of the faithful,” replied the grand vizier, “the emirs, Vizier, and other officers of your council, wait without till your majesty gives them leave to pay their accustomed respects.” Abou Hassan ordered the door to be opened, and the grand vizier addressing himself to the officers in waiting, said, “Chief of the door-keepers, the commander of the faithful orders you to do your duty.”

When the door was opened, the viziers, emirs, and principal officers of the court, all dressed magnificently in their habits of ceremony, went in their order to the foot of the throne, paid their respects to Abou Hassan; and bowing their heads down to the carpet, saluted him with the title of commander of the faithful, according to the instructions of the grand vizier, and afterwards took their seats.

When this ceremony was over, and they were all placed, there was a profound silence. The grand vizier always standing before the throne, began according to the order of papers in his hand to make his report of affairs, which at that time were of very little consequence. Nevertheless, the caliph could not but admire how Abou Hassan acquitted himself in his exalted station without the least hesitation or embarrassment, and decided well in all matters, as his own good sense suggested. But before the grand vizier had finished his report, Abou Hassan perceived the judge of the police, whom he knew by sight, sitting in his place. “Stop,” said he, to the grand vizier, interrupting him; “I have an order of consequence to give to the judge of the police.” The judge of the police perceiving that Abou Hassan looked at him, and hearing his name mentioned, arose from his seat, and went gravely to the foot of the throne, where he prostrated himself with his face to the ground. “Judge of the police," said Abou Hassan, "go immediately to such a quarter, where you will find a mosque, seize the imaum and four old grey beards, give each of the old men a hundred bastinadoes, and the imaum four hundred. After that, mount them all five, clothed in rags, on camels, with their faces to the tails, and lead them through the whole city, with a crier before them, who shall proclaim with a loud voice, 'This is the punishment of all those who trouble their heads with other people's affairs, make it their business to create disturbances and misunderstandings in families in their neighbourhood, and do them all the mischief in their power.' My intention is also, that you enjoin them to leave that quarter, and never to set foot in it more: and while your lieutenant is conducting them through the town, return, and give me an account of the execution of my orders." The judge of the police laid his hand upon his head, to shew his obedience, and prostrating himself a second time retired to execute the mandate.

The caliph was highly pleased at the firmness with which this order was given, and perceived that Abou Hassan was resolved not to lose the opportunity of punishing the imaum and the other four old hypocrites of his quarter. In the mean time the grand vizier went on with his report, and had just finished, when the judge of the police came back from executing his commission. He approached the throne with the usual ceremony, and said, "Commander of the faithful, I found the imaum and his four companions in the mosque, which your majesty pointed out; and as a proof that I have punctually obeyed your commands, I have brought an instrument signed by the principal inhabitants of the ward." At the same time he pulled a paper out of his bosom, and presented it to the pretended caliph.

Abou Hassan took the paper, and reading it over cautiously with the names of the witnesses, who were all people he knew, said to the judge of the police, smiling, "It is well; I am satisfied; return to your seat." "These old hypocrites," said he to himself, with an air of satisfaction "who thought fit to censure my actions, and find fault with my entertaining honest people, deserved this punishment." The caliph all the time penetrated his thoughts, and felt inconceivable delight at his frolic.

Abou Hassan, then addressing himself to the grand vizier, said, "Go to the high treasurer for a purse of a thousand pieces of gold, and carry it to the mother of one Abou Hassan, who is known by the name of the debauchee; she lives in the same quarter to which I sent the judge of the police. Go, and return immediately."

The grand vizier, after laying his hand upon his head, and prostrating himself before the throne, went to the high treasurer, who gave him the money, which he ordered a slave to take, and to follow him to Abou Hassan's mother, to whom he gave it, saying only, "The caliph makes you this present." She received it with the greatest surprise imaginable.

During the grand vizier's absence, the judge of the police made the usual report of his office, which lasted till the vizier returned. As soon as he came into the council-chamber, and had assured Abou Hassan that he had executed his orders, Mesrour, the chief of the eunuchs, made a sign to the viziers, the emirs, and other officers, that the council was over, and that they might all retire; which they did, by making the same prostration at the foot of the throne as when they entered.

Abou Hassan descended from the caliph's throne, and Mesrour went before him, to shew him the way into an inner apartment, where there was a table spread; several eunuchs ran to tell the musicians that the sham caliph was coming, when they immediately began a concert of vocal and instrumental music, with which Abou Hassan was so charmed and transported, that he could not tell what to think of all he saw and heard. "If this is a dream," said he, "it is a long one. But certainly," continued he, "it is no dream; for I can see and feel, walk and hear, and argue reasonably; whatever it is, I trust in God; I cannot but believe that I am the commander of the faithful, for no other person could live in this splendour. The honour and respect that has been strewn me, and the obedience paid to my commands, are sufficient proofs of my exaltation."

In short, Abou Hassan took it for granted that he was the commander of the faithful; but was still more convinced of it when he entered a magnificent and spacious hall, which was finely painted with the brightest colours intermixed with gold. Seven bands of female musicians, more beautiful than the others, were placed round the hall, and as many gold chandeliers hung from the ceiling, which was painted with blue and gold, intermixed with wonderful effect. In the middle of the hall was spread a table covered with massive gold plates and dishes, which scented the apartment with the spices and amber wherewith the meat was seasoned; and seven young and most beautiful ladies, dressed in the richest habits of the most vivid colours, stood round this table, each with a fan in her hand, to fan Abou Hassan when at dinner.

If ever mortal was charmed, Abou Hassan was when he entered this stately hall. At every step he took, he could not help stopping to contemplate at leisure all the wonders that regaled his eyes, and turned first to one side, and then to the other; which gave the caliph, who viewed him with attention, very great pleasure. At last he sat down at the table, and presently all the ladies began to fan the new caliph. He looked first at one, then at another, and admired the grace with which they acquitted themselves. He told them with a smile, that he believed one of them was enough to give him all the air he wanted, and would have six of the ladies sit at table with him, three on his right hand, and three on his left; and he placed them so, that as the table was round, which way soever he turned, his eyes might be saluted with agreeable objects.

The six ladies obeyed; and Abou Hassan taking notice, that out of respect they did not eat, helped them himself, and invited them to eat in the most pressing and obliging terms. Afterwards he asked their names, which they told him were Alabaster Neck, Coral Lips, Moon Face, Sunshine, Eye’s Delight, Heart’s Delight, and she who fanned him was Sugar Cane. The many soft things he said upon their names shewed him to be a man of sprightly wit, and it is not to be conceived how much it increased the esteem which the caliph (who saw every thing) had already conceived for him.

When the ladies observed that Abou Hassan had done eating, one of them said to the eunuchs who waited, “The commander of the faithful will go into the hall where the dessert is laid; bring some water;” upon which they all rose from the table, and taking from the eunuch, one a gold basin, another an ewer of the same metal, and a third a towel, kneeled before Abou Hassan, and presented them to him to wash his hands. As soon as he had done, he got up, and after an eunuch had opened the door, went, preceded by Mesrour, who never left him, into another hall, as large as the former, adorned with paintings by the best masters, and furnished with gold and silver vessels, carpets, and other rich furniture. There seven different bands of music began a concert as soon as Abou Hassan appeared. In this hall there were seven large lustres, a table in the middle covered with dried sweetmeats, the choicest and most exquisite fruits of the season, raised in pyramids, in seven gold basins; and seven ladies more beautiful than the others standing round it, each with a fan in her hand.

These new objects raised still greater admiration in Abou Hassan; who, after he had made a full stop, and given the most sensible marks of surprise and astonishment, went directly to the table, where sitting down, he gazed a considerable time at the seven ladies, with an embarrassment that plainly shewed he knew not to which to give the preference. At last he ordered them all to lay aside their fans and sit down, and eat with him, telling them that it was not so hot, but he could spare them that trouble.

When the ladies were all placed about him, the first thing he did was to ask their names, which were different from the other seven, and expressed some perfection of mind or body, which distinguished them from one another: upon which he took an opportunity, when he presented them with fruit, &c., to say something gallant. “Eat this fig for my sake,” said he to Chain of Hearts, who sat on his right hand; “and render the fetters, with which you loaded me the first moment I saw you, more supportable.” Then, presenting a bunch of grapes to Soul’s Torment, “Take this cluster of grapes,” said he, “on condition you instantly abate the torments which I suffer for your sake;” and so on to the rest. By these sallies Abou Hassan more and more amused the caliph, who was delighted with his words and actions, and pleased to think he had found in him a man who diverted him so agreeably.

After Abou Hassan had tasted all the fruits in the basin, he got up and followed Mesrour into a third hall, much more magnificently furnished than the other two; where he was received by the same number of musicians and ladies, who stood round a table covered with all manner of wet sweetmeats. After he had looked about him with new wonder, he advanced to the table, the music playing all the time till he sat down. The seven ladies, by his order, sat down with him, helped themselves, as he desired, to what they liked best; and he afterwards informed himself of their names, which pleased him as much as the others had done, and led him to say as many soft things to them, to the great diversion of the caliph, who lost not a word.

By this time the day beginning to close, Abou Hassan was conducted into a fourth hall, much more superb and magnificently furnished, lighted with wax in seven gold lustres, which gave a splendid light. Abou Hassan found the same number of musicians here as he had done in the three other halls, performing in concert in the most agreeable manner, and seeming to inspire greater joy; and he saw as many ladies standing round a table covered with seven gold basins filled with cakes, dried sweetmeats, and all such relishes as were calculated to promote drinking. There he saw, which he had not observed in any of the other halls, a sideboard set out with seven large silver flagons full of the choicest wines, and by them seven crystal glasses of the finest workmanship.

Hitherto, in the three first halls, Abou Hassan had drunk nothing but water, according to the custom observed at Bagdad, from the highest to the lowest and at the caliph's court, never to drink wine till the evening; all who transgress this rule being accounted debauchees, who dare not shew themselves in the day-time. This custom is the more laudable, as it requires a clear head to apply to business in the course of the day; and as no wine is drunk till evening, no drunken people are seen in the streets in open day creating disturbance in the city.

As soon as Abou Hassan entered the fourth hall, he went to the table, sat down, and was a long time in a kind of ecstasy at the sight of the seven ladies who surrounded him, and were much more beautiful than any he had beheld in the other halls. He was very desirous to know their names; but as the music played so loud, and particularly the tambour, that he could not hear them speak, he clapped his hands for the musicians to cease, when a profound silence ensued. Taking by the hand the lady who stood on the right next to him, he made her sit down by him, and presenting her with a cake, asked her name. "Commander of the faithful," said the lady, "I am called Cluster of Pearls." "No name," replied Abou Hassan, "could have more properly expressed your worth; and indeed your teeth exceed the finest pearls. Cluster of Pearls," added he, "since that is your name, oblige me with a glass of wine from your fair hand." The lady went to the sideboard and brought him a glass of wine, which she presented to him with a pleasant air. Abou Hassan took the glass with a smile, and looking passionately at her, said, "Cluster of Pearls, I drink your health; I desire you to fill out as much for yourself, and pledge me." She ran to the sideboard, and returned with a glass in her hand; but before she drank, she sung a song, which charmed him as much by the sweetness of her voice as by its novelty.

After Abou Hassan had drunk, he made another lady sit down by him, and presenting her with what she chose in the basins, asked her name, which she told him was Morning Star. "Your bright eyes," said he, "shine with greater lustre than that star whose name you bear. Do me the pleasure to bring me some wine," which she did with the best grace in the world. Then turning to the third lady, whose name was Day-light, he ordered her to do the same, and so on to the seventh, to the extreme satisfaction of the caliph.

When they had all filled him a glass round, Cluster of Pearls, whom he had just addressed, went to the sideboard, poured out a glass of wine, and putting in a pinch of the same powder the caliph had used the night before, presented it to Abou Hassan; "Commander of the faithful," said she, "I beg of your majesty to take this glass of wine, and before you drink it, do me the favour to hear a song I have composed to-day, and which I flatter myself will not displease you. I never sung it before." "With all my heart," said Abou Hassan, taking the glass, "and, as commander of the faithful, I command you to sing it; for I am persuaded that so beautiful a lady cannot compose a song which does not abound with wit and pleasantry." The lady took a lute, and tuning it to her voice, sung with so much justness, grace, and expression, that Abou Hassan was in perfect ecstasy all the time, and was so much delighted, that he ordered her to sing it again, and was as much charmed with it as at first.

When the lady had concluded, Abou Hassan drank off his glass, and turned his head towards her to give her those praises which he thought she merited, but was prevented by the opiate, which operated so suddenly, that his mouth was instantly wide open, and his eyes close shut, and dropping his head on the cushions, he slept as profoundly as the day before when the caliph had given him the powder. One of the ladies stood ready to catch the glass, which fell out of his hand; and then the caliph, who enjoyed greater satisfaction in this scene than he had promised himself, and was all along a spectator of what had passed, came into the hall to them, overjoyed at the success of his plan. He ordered Abou Hassan to be dressed in his own clothes, and carried back to his house by the slave who had brought him, charging him to lay him on a sofa in the same room, without making any noise, and to leave the door open when he came away.

The slave took Abou Hassan upon his shoulders, carried him home by a back door of the palace, placed him in his own house as he was ordered, and returned with speed, to acquaint the caliph. "Well," said the caliph, "Abou Hassan wished only to be caliph for one day, to punish the imaum of the mosque of his quarter, and the four old men who had displeased him: I have procured him the means of doing this, and he ought to be content."

In the mean time, Abou Hassan, who was laid upon his sofa by the slave, slept till very late the next morning. When the powder was worked off, he awoke, opened his eyes, and finding himself at home, was in the utmost surprise. "Cluster of Pearls! Morning Star! Coral Lips! Moon Face!" cried he, calling the ladies of the palace by their names, as he remembered them; "where are you? come hither."

Abou Hassan called so loud, that his mother, who was in her own apartment, heard him, and running to him upon the noise he made, said "What ails you, son? what has happened to you?" At these words Abou Hassan lifted up his head, and looking haughtily at his mother, said, "Good woman! who is it you call son?" "Why you," answered his mother very mildly; "are not you Abou Hassan my son? It is strange that you have forgotten yourself so soon." "I your son! old bull!" replied Abou Hassan; "you are a liar, and know not what you say! I am not Abou Hassan, I tell you, but the commander of the faithful!"

"Hold your tongue, son," answered the mother "one would think you are a fool, to hear you talk thus." "You are an old fool yourself," replied Abou Hassan; "I tell you once more I am the commander of the faithful, and God's vicar on earth!" "Ah! child," cried the mother, "is it possible that I should hear you utter such words that shew you are distracted! What evil genius possesses you, to make you talk at this rate? God bless you, and preserve you from the power of Satan. You are my son Abou Hassan, and I am your mother."

After she had used all the arguments she could think of to bring him to himself, and to shew how great an error he was in, she said, "Do not you see that the room you are now in is your own, and is not like a chamber in a palace fit for the commander of the believers? and that you have never left it since you were born, but lived quietly at home with me. Think seriously of what I say, and do not fancy things that are not, nor ever can be. Once more, my son, think seriously of it."

Abou Hassan heard all these remonstrances of his mother very patiently, holding down his eyes, and clapping his hands under his chin, like a man recollecting himself, to examine the truth of what he saw and heard. At last, he said to his mother, just as if he was awaking out of a deep sleep, and with his hand in the same posture, "I believe you are right, methinks I am Abou Hassan, you are my mother, and I am in my own room." Then looking at her again, and at every object before him, he added, "I am Abou Hassan, there is no doubt of it, and I cannot comprehend how this fancy came into my head."

The mother really believed that her son was cured of the disorder of his mind, which she ascribed to a dream, began to laugh with him, and ask him questions about it; when suddenly he started up, and looking crossly at his mother, said, "Old sorceress, you know not what you say. I am not your son, nor you my mother. You deceive yourself and would deceive me. I tell you I am the commander of the faithful, and you shall never persuade me to the contrary!" "For heaven's sake, son," said the mother, "let us leave off this discourse; recommend yourself to God, for fear some misfortune should happen to us; let us talk of something else. I will tell you what happened yesterday in our quarter to the imaum of the mosque, and the four scheiks our neighbours: the judge of the police came and seized them, and gave each of them I know not how many strokes with a bastinado, while a crier proclaimed, 'That such was the punishment of all those who troubled themselves about other people's business, and employed themselves in setting their neighbours at variance:' he afterwards led them through all the streets, and ordered them never to come into our quarter again." Abou Hassan's mother little thought her son had any share in this adventure, and therefore had turned the discourse on purpose to put him out of the conceit of being the commander of the faithful; but instead of effacing that idea, she recalled it, and impressed the more deeply in his mind, that it was not imaginary but real.

Abou Hassan no sooner heard this relation, but he cried out, "I am neither thy son, nor Abou Hassan, but certainly the commander of the believers. I cannot doubt after what you have told me. Know then that it was by my order the imaum and the four scheiks were punished, and I tell you I am certainly the commander of the faithful: therefore say no more of its being a dream. I was not asleep, but as much awake as I am now. You do me much pleasure to confirm what the judge of the police told me he had executed punctually according to my order; I am overjoyed that the imaum and the four scheiks, those great hypocrites, were so chastised, and I should be glad to know how I came here. God be praised for all things! I am certainly commander of the faithful, and all thy arguments shall not convince me of the contrary."

The mother, who could not imagine why her son so strenuously and positively maintained himself to be caliph, no longer doubted but that he had lost his senses, when she found he insisted so much on a thing that was so incredible; and in this thought said, "I pray God, son, to have mercy upon you! Pray do not talk so madly. Beseech God to forgive you, and give you grace to talk more reasonably. What would the world say to hear you rave in this manner? Do you not know that 'walls have ears?'"

These remonstrances only enraged Abou Hassan the more; and he was so provoked at his mother, that he said, "Old woman, I have desired you once already to hold your tongue. If you do not, I shall rise and give you cause to repent all your lifetime. I am the caliph and the commander of the believers; and you ought to credit me when I say so."

The good woman supposing that he was more distracted than ever, abandoned herself to tears, and beating her face and breast, expressed the utmost grief and astonishment to see her son in such a state. Abou Hassan, instead of being appeased or moved by his mother's tears, lost all the respect due from a son to his mother. Getting up hastily, and laying hold of a switch, he ran to his mother in great fury, and in a threatening manner that would have frightened any one but a mother so partial to him, said, "Tell me directly, wicked woman, who I am." "I do not believe, son," replied she, looking at him tenderly, and without fear, "that you are so abandoned by God as not to know your mother, who brought you into the world, and to mistake yourself. You are indeed my son Abou Hassan, and are much in the wrong to arrogate to yourself the title which belongs only to our sovereign lord the caliph Haroon al Rusheed, especially after the noble and generous present the monarch made us yesterday. I forgot to tell you, that the grand vizier Jaaffier came to me yesterday, and putting a purse of a thousand pieces of gold into my hands, bade me pray for the commander of the faithful, who had sent me that present; and does not this liberality concern you more than me, who have but a short time to live?"

At these words Abou Hassan grew quite mad. The circumstance of the caliph's liberality persuaded him more than ever that he was caliph, remembering that he had sent the vizier. "Well, old hag," cried he, "will you be convinced when I tell you that I sent you those thousand pieces of gold by my grand vizier Jaaffier, who obeyed my commands, as I was commander of the faithful? But instead of believing me, you endeavour to distract me by your contradictions, and maintain with obstinacy that I am your son; but you shall not go long unpunished." After these words, he was so unnatural, in the height of his frenzy, as to beat her cruelly with his cane.

The poor mother, who could not have thought that her son would have come so soon from words to blows, called out for help so loud, that the neighbours ran in to her assistance. Abou Hassan continued to beat her, at every stroke asking her if he was the commander of the faithful? to which she always answered tenderly, that he was her son.

By the time the neighbours came in Abou Hassan's rage began to abate. The first who entered the room got between him and his mother, and taking the switch out of his hand, said to him, "What are you doing, Abou Hassan? have you lost all fear of God and your reason? Did ever a son so well brought up as you dare to strike his mother? are you not ashamed so to treat yours, who loves you so tenderly?" Abou Hassan, still full of fury, looked at him who spoke without returning an answer; and then staring on all the rest of his neighbours who had followed, said, "Who is that Abou Hassan you speak of? Is it me you call by that name?"

This question disconcerted the neighbours. "How!" said he who spoke first, "do not you know your mother who brought you up, and with whom you have always lived?" "Be gone, you are impertinent vagabonds," replied Abou Hassan; "I neither knew her nor you, and will not know her. I am not Abou Hassan; I am the commander of the faithful, and will make you feel it to your cost."

At this speech the neighbours no longer doubted that he was mad: and to prevent his repeating his outrages, seized him, notwithstanding his resistance, and bound him hand and foot, But though apparently disabled from doing any mischief, they did not choose to leave him alone with his mother. Two of them ran for the keeper of the hospital for insane persons, who came presently with chains, handcuffs, a bastinado, and many attendants. When they entered the room, Abou Hassan, who little expected such treatment, struggled to unloose himself; but after his keeper had given him two or three smart strokes upon the shoulders, he lay so quiet, that the keeper and his people did what they pleased with him. As soon as they had bound and manacled him, they took him with them to the hospital. When he was got out of the house into the street, the people crowded round him, one buffeted him, another boxed him, and others called him fool and madman. To all this treatment he replied, "There is no greatness and power but in God most high and almighty. I am treated as a fool, though I am in my right senses. I suffer all these injuries and indignities for the love of God." He was conducted to the hospital, where he was lodged in a grated cell; but before he was shut up, the keeper, who was hardened to such terrible execution, regaled him without pity with fifty strokes of the bastinado on his shoulders, which he repeated every day for three weeks, bidding him remember that he was not the commander of the faithful. "I am not mad," said Abou Hassan, "but if I wanted your assistance, nothing would so effectually make me mad as your cruel treatment. I want not your advice."

Abou Hassan's mother went every day to visit her son, and could not forbear weeping at beholding him fall away, and sigh and complain at the hardships he endured. In short, his shoulders, back, and sides were so black and bruised, that he could not turn himself. His mother would willingly have talked with him, to comfort him, and to sound him whether he still retained the notion of being caliph; but whenever she opened her mouth, he stopped her with so much fury, that she was forced to leave him, and return home inconsolable at his obstinacy.

By degrees, however, those strong and lively ideas, which Abou Hassan had entertained, of having been clothed in the caliph's habit, having exercised his authority, and been punctually obeyed and treated like the true caliph, the assurance of which had persuaded him that he was so, began to wear away. Sometimes he would say to himself, "If I was the caliph and commander of the believers, how came I, when I awoke, to find myself at home dressed in my own apparel? Why should I not have been attended by eunuchs, and their chief, and a crowd of beautiful ladies? Why should the grand vizier, and all those emirs and governors of provinces, who prostrated themselves at my feet, forsake me? Undoubtedly if I had any authority over them, they would have delivered me long ago out of the miserable condition I am in; certainly I ought to look upon all as a dream. It is true, however, that I commanded the judge of the police to punish the imaum, and the four old men his companions; I ordered the grand vizier to carry my mother a thousand pieces of gold; and my commands were executed. All these points are obstacles to my believing it a dream; but there are so many things that I cannot comprehend, nor ever shall, that I will put my trust in God, who knows all things."

Abou Hassan was taken up with these thoughts and reflections when his mother came to see him. She found him so much altered and emaciated that she shed a torrent of tears; in the midst of which she saluted him as she used to do, and he returned her salutation, which he had never done before since he had been in the hospital. This she looked upon to be a good sign. "Well, my son," said she, wiping her tears, “how do you do, and how do you find yourself? Have you renounced all those whims and fancies which the devil had put into your head?” “Indeed, mother,” replied Abou Hassan, very rationally and calmly, and in a tone expressive of his grief for the excesses he had been transported to against her, “I acknowledge my error, and beg of you to forgive the execrable crime which I have been guilty of towards you, and which I detest. I ask pardon also of my neighbours whom I have abused. I have been deceived by a dream; but by so extraordinary a one, and so like to truth, that I venture to affirm any other person, to whom such a thing might have happened, would have been guilty of as great or greater extravagancies; and I am this instant so much perplexed about it, that while I am speaking I can hardly persuade myself but that what befell me was matter of fact, so like was it to what happens to people who are broad awake. But whatever it was, I do, and shall always regard it as a dream and an illusion. I am convinced that I am not that shadow of a caliph and commander of the faithful, but Abou Hassan your son, the son of a person whom I always honoured till that fatal day, the remembrance of which will cover me with confusion, and whom in future I shall honour and respect all my life as I ought.”

At this rational declaration, the tears of sorrow and affliction which the mother of Abou Hassan had so long shed were changed into those of joy. “My son!” cried she, transported with pleasure, “my satisfaction and comfort to hear you talk so reasonably is inexpressible: and it gives me as much joy as if I had brought you into the world a second time; but I must tell you my opinion of this adventure, and observe one thing which you may not have noticed; the stranger whom you brought home the evening before your illness to sup with you went away without shutting your chamber-door after him, as you desired; which I believe gave the devil an opportunity to enter, and throw you into the horrible illusion you have been in: therefore, my son, you ought to return God thanks for your deliverance, and beseech him to keep you from falling again into the snares of the evil spirit.”

“You have found out the source of our misfortunes,” answered Abou Hassan. “It was that very night I had this dream which turned my brain. I bade the merchant expressly to shut the door after him;

and now I find he did not do it. I am persuaded, as well as you, the devil finding it open came in, and filled my head full of these fancies. The people of Moussul, from whence this merchant came, may not know how we at Bagdad are convinced from experience that the devil is the cause of troublesome dreams when we leave our chamber-doors open. But since, mother, you see I am, by the grace of God, so well recovered, for God's sake get me out of this horrible place, which will infallibly shorten my days if I stay here any longer." The mother, glad to hear her son was so well cured of his foolish imagination of being caliph, went immediately to the keeper, and assuring him that he was very sensible and well, he came, examined, and released him in her presence.

When Abou Hassan came home, he stayed within doors some days to recover his health by better living than he had found at the hospital. But when he had recovered his strength, and felt no longer the effect of the harsh treatment he had suffered in his confinement, he began to be weary of spending his evenings alone. He accordingly entered again upon the same plan as he had before pursued; which was, to provide enough every day to regale a stranger at night.

The day on which Abou Hassan renewed his custom of going about sun-set to the end of Bagdad bridge to stop the first stranger thee offered, and invite him to do him the honour of supping with him, happened to be the first day of the month, that which the caliph always set apart to go in disguise out of some one of the gates to observe what was committed contrary to the good government of the city, as established and regulated at the beginning of his reign. Abou Hassan had not been long arrived at the bridge, when, looking about him, he perceived the Moussul merchant, followed by the same slave. Persuaded that all his misfortunes were owing to the merchant's having left his door open, he shuddered at the sight of him. "God preserve me," said he to himself; "if I am not deceived, there is again the magician who enchanted me!" He trembled with agitation, and looked over the side railing into the river, that he might not see him till he was past.

The caliph, who wished to renew the diversion he had received, had taken care to inform himself of all that had happened to Abou Hassan, and enjoyed much pleasure at the relation given him, especially at his being sent to a mad-house. But as this monarch was both just and generous, and had taken a great liking to Abou Hassan, as capable of contributing further to his amusement, and had doubted whether, after renouncing his frenzied character of a caliph, he would return to his usual manner of living; with a view therefore to bring him to his palace, he disguised himself again like a merchant of Moussul, the better to execute his plan. He perceived Abou Hassan at the same time that he saw him, and presently guessed by his action that he was angry, and wished to shun him. This made him walk close to the side railing; and when he came nigh him, he put his head over to look him in the face. "Ho, brother Abou Hassan," said he, "is it you? I greet you! Give me leave to embrace you?"

"Not I," replied Abou Hassan, pettishly, without looking at the pretended Moussul merchant; "I do not greet you; I will have neither your greeting nor your embraces. Go along!"

"What!" answered the caliph, "do you not know me? Do you not remember the evening we spent together at your house this day month, where you did me the honour to treat me very generously?" "No," replied Abou Hassan in the same tone, "I do not know you, nor what you talk about; go, I say again, about your business."

The caliph was not to be diverted from his purpose by this rude behaviour. He well knew the law Abou Hassan had imposed on himself, never to have commerce again with a stranger he had once entertained; but pretended to be ignorant of it. "I cannot believe," said he, "but you must know me again; it is not possible that you should have forgotten me in so short a time. Certainly some misfortune has befallen you, which inspires you with this aversion for me. However, you ought to remember, that I shewed my gratitude by my good wishes, and that I offered you my interest, which is not to be slighted, in an affair which you had much at heart."

"I do not know," replied Abou Hassan, "what your interest may be, and I have no desire to make use of it: but I am sensible the utmost of your good wishes ended in making me mad. In God's name, I say once more, go your way, and trouble me no more."

"Ah! brother Abou Hassan," replied the caliph, embracing him, "I do not intend to part with you thus, since I have had the good fortune to meet with you a second time; you must exercise the same hospitality towards me again that you shewed me a month ago, when I had the honour to drink with you."

"I have protested against this," said Abou Hassan, "and have so much power over myself, as to decline receiving a second time as my guest, a man like you who carries misfortunes with him. You know the proverb, 'Take up your drum and begone.' Make the application to yourself. How often must I repeat my refusal. God be with you! You have been the cause of my sufferings, and I will not trust myself with you again." "My good friend Abou Hassan," said the caliph, embracing him, "you treat me in a way I little expected. I beg of you not to speak to me thus harshly, but be persuaded of my friendship. Do me the favour to tell me what has happened to you; for I assure you I wished you well, and still do so; and would be glad of an opportunity to make you any amends for the trouble I have caused you, if it has been really my fault." Abou Hassan yielded to the solicitations of the caliph. "Your incredulity and importunity," said he, "have tired my patience; and what I am going to relate will shew you that I do not accuse you wrongfully."

The caliph seated himself by Abou Hassan, while he told him all that had happened to him, from his waking in the palace to his waking again in his own house, all which he described as a mere dream, and recounted all the circumstances, which the caliph knew as well as himself, and which renewed his pleasure. He enlarged afterwards on the impression which the dream of being caliph and commander of the faithful had made upon him, which, he said, threw him into such extravagancies, that his neighbours were obliged to carry him to a mad-house, where he was treated in a manner which he deemed most barbarous and inhuman. "But," said he, "what will surprise you, and what you little think of, is, that it was altogether your fault that these things happened to me; for, if you remember, I desired you to shut the door after you, which you neglected, and the devil, finding it open, entered and put this dream into my head, which, though it was very agreeable, was the cause of the misfortune I complain of: you therefore, for your negligence, are answerable for the horrid and detestable crime I have committed in lifting my hand against my mother, whom I might have killed (I blush for shame when I think of it), because she said I was her son, and would not acknowledge me for commander of the faithful, as I thought and positively insisted on to her that I was. You are the cause of the offence I have given my neighbours, when, running in at the cries of my poor mother, they surprised me in the horrid act of felling her at my feet; which would never have happened, if you had taken care to shut my door when you went away, as I desired you. They would not have come into my house without my leave; and, what troubles me most of all, they would not have been witnesses of my folly. I should not have been obliged to strike them in my own defence, and they would not have bound and fettered me, to carry and shut me up in the hospital for madmen, where I assure you every day that I remained confined in that hell, I received a score of strokes with a bastinado." Abou Hassan recounted his complaints with great warmth and vehemence to the caliph, who knew as well as himself what had passed, and was delighted to find that he had succeeded so well in his plan to throw him into the vagaries from which he still was not entirely free. He could not help laughing at the simplicity wherewith he related them.

Abou Hassan, who thought that his story should rather have moved compassion, and that every one ought to be as much concerned at it as himself, warmly resented the pretended Moussul merchant's laughter. "What!" said he, "do you make a jest of me and laugh in my face, or do you believe I laugh at you when I speak seriously? If you want proof of what I advance, look yourself and see whether or no I tell you the truth;" with that, stooping down and baring his shoulders, he shewed the caliph the scars and weals which the bastinado had left.

The caliph could not behold these marks of cruelty without horror. He pitied Abou Hassan, and felt sorry he had carried the jest so far. "Come, rise, dear brother," said he to him eagerly, and embracing Abou Hassan heartily in his arms; "let me go to your house, and enjoy the happiness of being merry with you to-night; and to-morrow, if it please God, all things will go well."

Abou Hassan, notwithstanding his resolution never to admit the same stranger a second time, could not resist the caresses of the caliph, whom he still took for a merchant of Moussul. "I will consent," said he, "if you will swear to shut my door after you, that the devil may not come in to distract my brain again." The caliph promised that he would; upon which they both arose, walked towards the city, and, followed by the caliph's slave, reached Abou Hassan's house by the time it was dark.

The caliph, the more to blind Abou Hassan, said to him, "Place confidence in me; I promise you on my honour I will not break my word. You need not hesitate to trust a person who wishes you all happiness and prosperity, of which confidence you will see the effects." "I desire not that," said Abou Hassan, stopping him short. "I yield to your importunity; but I dispense with your good wishes, and beg you in God's name to form none for me. All the mischief that has hitherto befallen me arose from those you expressed for me, and from your leaving the door open." "Well," replied the caliph, still laughing at the misguided imagination of Abou Hassan, "since you will have it so, I promise you I will form none." "You give me pleasure by speaking so," said Abou Hassan; "I desire no more; I shall be more than satisfied provided you keep your word, and I shall forgive you all the rest."

As soon as Abou Hassan entered his house, he called for his mother and for candles, desired his guest to sit down upon a sofa, and then placed himself by him. A little time after, supper was brought up, and they both began to eat without ceremony. When they had done, Abou Hassan's mother cleared the table, set on a small dessert of fruit, wine, and glasses by her son, then withdrew, and appeared no more. Abou Hassan first filled out his own glass, and then the caliph's: and after they had drunk some time, and talked of indifferent matters, the caliph, perceiving that his host grew warm with liquor, began to talk of love, and asked him if he had ever felt that passion.

"Brother," replied Abou Hassan, familiarly thinking his guest was his equal, "I never looked upon love or marriage but as a slavery, to which I was always unwilling to submit; and must own to you, that I never loved any thing but good cheer and good wine; in short, to divert and entertain myself agreeably with my friends. Yet I do not tell you that I am indifferent to marriage, or incapable of attachment, if I could meet with a woman of such beauty and sweetness of temper as her I saw in my dream that fatal night in which I first received you into my house, and you, to my misfortune, left my door open, who would pass the whole night with me drinking, singing, and playing on some instrument, and in agreeable conversation, and who would study to please and divert me: I believe, on the contrary, I should change all my indifference into a perfect attachment to such a person, and, I think, should live very happily with her. But where is such a woman to be found except in the caliph's palace, or in those of the grand vizier or some great lords of the court, who want not money to provide them? I choose therefore to stick to my bottle, which is a much cheaper pleasure, and which I can enjoy as well as the greatest." Saying these words, he filled out his own and the caliph's glass, and said, "Come, take your glass, and let us pursue this charming pleasure."

When they had drunk off their wine, "It is great pity," said the caliph, "that so gallant a man as you, who owns himself not insensible of love, should lead so solitary a life." "I prefer the easy quiet life I live," replied Abou Hassan, "before the company of a wife, whose beauty might not please me, and who, besides, might create me a great deal of trouble by her imperfections and ill-humour." The conversation lasted a long time, and the caliph seeing Abou Hassan had drunk to the pitch he desired, said, "Let me alone, since you have the same good taste as every other honest man, I warrant you I will find you a wife that shall please you." Then taking Abou Hassan's glass, and putting a pinch of the same powder into it, filled him up a bumper, and presenting it to him, said, "Come, let us drink beforehand the fair lady's health, who is to make you happy. I am sure you will like her."

Abou Hassan took the glass laughing, and shaking his head, said, "Be it so; since you desire it, I cannot be guilty of so great a piece of incivility, nor disoblige a guest of so much merit in such a trifling matter. I will drink the health of the lady you promise me, though I am very well contented as I am, and do not rely on your keeping your word." No sooner had Abou Hassan drank off his bumper, than he was seized with as deep a sleep as before; and the caliph ordered the same slave to take him and carry him to the palace. The slave obeyed, and the caliph, who did not intend to send back Abou Hassan as before, shut the door after him, as he had promised, and followed.

When they arrived at the palace, the caliph ordered Abou Hassan to be laid on a sofa, in the fourth hall, from whence he had been carried home fast asleep a month before; but first he bade the attendants to put him on the same habit in which he had acted the caliph, which was done. He then charged all the eunuchs, officers, ladies, and musicians who were in the hall, when he drank the last glass of wine which had put him to sleep, to be there by daybreak, and to take care to act their parts well when he should awake. He then retired to rest, charging Mesrour to awake him before they went into the hall, that he might conceal himself in the closet as before.

Mesrour, at the hour appointed, awakened the caliph, who immediately rose, and went to the hall where Abou Hassan lay still asleep, and when he had placed himself in his closet, Mesrour and the other officers, ladies, and musicians, who waited for him, went in, and placed themselves about the sofa, so as not to hinder the caliph from seeing what passed, and noticing all his actions.

Things being thus disposed, and the caliph's powder having had its effect, Abou Hassan began to awake without opening his eyes, and threw off the phlegm, which was received in a gold basin as before. At that instant, the seven bands of singers joined their voices to the sound of hautboys, fifes, flutes, and other instruments, forming a very agreeable concert. Abou Hassan was in great surprise to hear the delightful harmony; but when he opened his eyes, and saw the ladies and officers about him, whom he thought he recognized, his amazement increased. The hall that he was in seemed to be the same he had seen in his first dream, and he observed the same lustres, and the same furniture and ornaments.

The concert ceased, to give the caliph an opportunity of attending to the countenance of his guest, and all that he might say in his surprise. The ladies, Mesrour, and all the officers of the chamber, waited in profound and respectful silence. Abou Hassan bit his finger, and cried loud enough for the caliph to hear him, "Alas! I am fallen again into the same dream and illusion that happened to me a month ago, and must expect again the bastinado and grated cell at the mad-house. Almighty God," added he, "I commit myself into the hands of thy divine providence. He was a wicked man that I entertained at my house last night, who has been the cause of this illusion, and the hardships I must again undergo. The base wretch swore to shut the door after him, but did not, and the devil came in and has turned my brain with this wicked dream of being commander of the faithful, and other phantoms which bewitch my eyes. God confound thee, Satan? and crush thee under some mountain of stones."

After these words, Abou Hassan closed his eyes, and remained some time thoughtful and much perplexed; then opening them again, and looking about him, cried out a second time with less surprise, and smiling at the various objects before him, "Great God! I commit myself into the hands of thy providence, preserve me from the temptation of Satan." Then shutting them again, he said, "I will go to sleep until Satan leaves me, and returns as he came, were I to wait till noon." They did not give him time to go to sleep again as he promised himself; for Strength of Hearts, one of the ladies whom he had seen before, approached, and sitting down on the sofa by him, said to him respectfully, "Commander of the faithful, I entreat your majesty to forgive me for taking the liberty to tell you not to go to sleep; day appears, and it is time to rise." "Begone, Satan!" answered Abou Hassan, raising his voice; but looking at the lady, he said, "Is it me you call the commander of the faithful? Certainly you take me for somebody else." "It is to your majesty I give that title," replied the lady, "to whom it belongs, as you are sovereign of the world, and I am your most humble slave. Undoubtedly," added she, "your majesty means to divert yourself by pretending to have forgotten yourself, or this is the effect of some troublesome dream; but if you would but open your eyes, the mists which disturb your imagination would soon be dispelled, and you would find yourself in your own palace, surrounded by your officers and slaves, who all wait your commands: and that your majesty may not be surprised to find yourself in this hall, and not in bed, I beg leave to inform you, that you fell so suddenly asleep last night, that we were unwilling to awake you, to conduit you to your chamber, but laid you carefully upon this sofa." In short, she said to him so many things which appeared probable, that at last he sat up, opened his eyes, and recollected her and all the ladies again. They all approached him, and she who spoke first, resuming the discourse, said, “Commander of the faithful, and vicar of the prophet on earth, be not displeased if I acquaint your majesty once more that it is time to rise, for day appears.”

“You are very troublesome and importunate,” replied Abou Hassan, rubbing his eyes; “I am not the commander of the faithful, but Abou Hassan; I know it well, and you shall not persuade me otherwise.” “We do not know that Abou Hassan you majesty speaks of, nor desire to know him,” answered the lady; “but we know you to be the commander of the believers, and you cannot persuade us to the contrary.”

Abou Hassan looking about, and finding himself in the same hall, attributed all he saw and heard to such a dream as he had had before, and greatly feared the dreadful consequences. “Allah have mercy on me!” said he, lifting up his hands and eyes, like a man who knew not where he was; “I commit myself into his hands. I cannot doubt, after what I have seen, but that the devil, who came into my chamber, possesses me, and fills my imagination full of all these visions.”

The caliph, who saw him all the time, and heard these exclamations, began to shake so heartily, that he had much difficulty to forbear bursting into loud laughter.

Abou Hassan laying himself down again, and shutting his eyes, the same lady said, “Commander of the faithful, since your majesty does not rise, after we have, according to our duty, informed you it is day, and the dispatch of business requires your presence, we shall use the liberty you give us in such cases.” Then taking him by one arm, and calling to one of the other ladies to do the same by the other, they lifted him up, and carried him into the middle of the hall, where they seated him, and all taking hands, danced and skipped round him while the music played and sounded loudly in his ears.

Abou Hassan was in inexpressible perplexity, and exclaimed, “What! am I indeed caliph, and commander of the faithful!” And in his uncertainty, would have said more, but the music was so loud, that he could not be heard. At last he made a sign to String of Pearls and Morning Star, two of the ladies who were dancing, that he wanted to speak with them; upon which they forbore, and went to him. “Do not lie now,” said he, “but tell me truly who I am?”

“Commander of the faithful,” replied Morning Star, “your majesty means either to surprise us, by asking this question, as if you did not know that you are commander of the faithful, and vicar on earth of the prophet of God, master of both worlds, that whereon we now are and that to come after death, or else you must have had some extraordinary dream that has made you forget who you are; which may well be, considering that your majesty has slept longer than ordinary; however, if you will give me leave, I will refresh your memory with what passed yesterday." She then told him how he went to council, punished the imaum, and the four old men, and had sent a present by his grand vizier of a thousand pieces of gold to the mother of one Abou Hassan; what he did in the inner part of the palace, and what passed at the three meals which he took in the three halls, adding, "In the fourth your majesty did us the honour to make us sit down by you, to hear our songs, and received wine from our hands, until your majesty fell asleep, as Strength of Hearts has told you. From that time your majesty has continued, contrary to custom, in a sound sleep until now. Strength of Hearts, all your other slaves, and the officers present, can confirm what I say, and it is now time you should go to prayers."

"Very well," replied Abou Hassan, shaking his head, "you would have me believe all this; but I tell you, you are all fools, or mad, and that is great pity, for you are very handsome. Since I saw you I have been at home, where I used my mother so ill that they sent me to a mad-house, and kept me there three weeks against my will, beat me unmercifully every day, and yet you would make me believe all this to be a dream." "Commander of the faithful," answered Morning Star, "you are mistaken, we are ready to swear by all your majesty holds most dear, that all you relate can be only a dream. You have never stirred out of this hall since yesterday, but slept here all night."

The confidence with which the lady assured Abou Hassan that all she said was truth, and that he had never been out of the hall since that time, bewildered his senses so that he was at a loss what to believe. "O Heaven!" said he to himself, "am I Abou Hassan, or the commander of the faithful! Almighty God, enlighten my understanding, and inform me of the truth, that I may know what to trust." He then uncovered his shoulders, and shewed the ladies the livid weals of the blows he had received. "Look," said he, "judge whether these strokes could come to me in a dream, or when I was asleep. For my part, I can affirm, that they were real blows; I feel the smart of them yet, and that is a testimonial there is no room to doubt. Now if I received these strokes in my sleep, it is the most extraordinary thing in the world, and surpasses my comprehension."

In this uncertainty Abou Hassan called to one of the officers that stood near him: "Come hither," said he, "and bite the tip of my ear, that I may know whether I am asleep or awake." The officer obeyed, and bit so hard, that he made him cry out loudly with the pain; the music struck up at the same time, and the officers and ladies all began to sing, dance, and skip about Abou Hassan, and made such a noise, that he was in a perfect ecstasy, and played a thousand ridiculous pranks. He threw off his caliph's habit, and his turban, jumped up in his shirt and drawers, and taking hold of two of the ladies' hands, began singing, jumping and cutting capers, so that the caliph could not contain himself, but burst into such violent laughter, that he fell backwards, and was heard above the noise of all the musicians. He was so long before he could check himself, that it had like to have been fatal. At last he got up, opened the lattice, and putting out his head, cried "Abou Hassan, Abou Hassan, have you a mind to kill me with laughing?"

As soon as the caliph's voice was heard, every body was silent, and Abou Hassan, among the rest, who, turning his head to see from whence the voice came, knew the caliph, and in him recognised the Moussul merchant, but was not in the least daunted; on the contrary he became convinced that he was awake, and that all that had happened to him had been real, and not a dream. He entered into the caliph's pleasantry. "Ha! ha!" said he, looking at him with good assurance, "you are a merchant of Moussul, and complain that I would kill you; you have been the occasion of my using my mother so ill, and of my being sent to a mad-house. It was you who treated the imaum and the four scheiks in the manner they were used, and not me; I wash my hands of it. It is you who have been the cause of all my disorders and sufferings: in short, you are the aggressor, and I the injured person."

"Indeed, you are in the right, Abou Hassan," answered the caliph, laughing all the while; "but to comfort you, and make you amends for all your troubles, I call Heaven to witness, I am ready and willing to make you what reparation you please to ask." After these words, he came out of the closet into the hall, ordered one of his most magnificent habits to be brought, commanded the ladies to dress Abou Hassan in it, and when they had done, he said, embracing him, "Thou art my brother; ask what thou wilt, and thou shalt have it."

"Commander of the faithful," replied Abou Hassan, "I beg of your majesty to do me the favour to tell me what you did to disturb my brain in this manner, and what was your design; for it is a thing of the greatest importance for me to know, that I may perfectly recover my senses."

The caliph was ready to give him this satisfaction, and said, "First, you are to know, that I often disguise myself, and particularly at night, to observe if all goes right in Bagdad; and as I wish to know what passes in its environs, I set apart the first day of every month to make an excursion, sometimes on one side, sometimes on another, and always return by the bridge. The evening that you invited me to supper, I was beginning my rounds, and in our conversation you told me, that the only thing you wished for was to be caliph for four-and-twenty hours, to punish the imaum of your mosque and his four counsellors. I fancied that this desire of yours would afford me diversion, and thought immediately how I might procure you the satisfaction you wished. I had about me a certain powder, which immediately throws the person who takes it into a sound sleep for a certain time. I put a dose of it, without being perceived by you, into the last glass I presented to you, upon which you fell fast asleep, and I ordered my slave to carry you to my palace, and came away without shutting the door. I have no occasion to repeat what happened when you awoke, nor during the whole day till evening, but after you had been regaled by my orders, one of the ladies put another dose of the same powder into a glass she gave you; you fell asleep as before, and the same slave carried you home, and left the door open. You have told me all that happened to you afterwards. I never imagined that you could have suffered so much as you have done. But as I have a great regard for you, I will do every thing to comfort you, and make you forget all your sufferings; think of what I can do to serve you, and ask me boldly what you wish."

"Commander of the faithful," replied Abou Hassan, "how great soever my tortures may have been, they are all blotted out of my remembrance, since I understand my sovereign lord and master had a share in them. I doubt not in the least of your majesty's bounty; but as interest never governed me, and you give me liberty to ask a favour, I beg that it may be that of having access to your person, to enjoy the happiness of admiring, all my lifetime, your virtues."

This proof of disinterestedness in Abou Hassan confirmed the esteem the caliph had entertained for him. "I am pleased with your request," said he, "and grant you free access to my person at all times and all hours." At the same time he assigned him an apartment in the palace, and, in regard to his pension, told him, that he would not have him apply to his treasurer, but come always to him for an order upon him, and immediately commanded his private treasurer to give him a purse containing a thousand pieces of gold. Abou Hassan made a low prostration, and the caliph left him to go to council.

Abou Hassan took this opportunity to go and inform his mother of his good fortune, and that what had happened was not a dream; for that he had actually been caliph, had acted as such, and received all the honours; and that she had no reason to doubt of it, since he had this confirmed by the caliph himself.

It was not long before this story of Abou Hassan was spread throughout Bagdad, and carried into all the provinces both far and near, without the omission of a single circumstance.

The new favourite Abou Hassan was always with the caliph; for, as he was a man of a pleasant temper, and created mirth wherever he went by his wit and drollery, the caliph formed no party of diversion without him, and sometimes carried him to visit his consort Zobeide, to whom he had related his story. Zobeide, who observed that every time he came with the caliph, he had his eyes always fixed upon one of her slaves, called Nouzhatoul-aouadat, resolved to tell the caliph of it. "Commander of the faithful," said she one day, "you do not observe that every time Abou Hassan attends you in your visits to me, he never keeps his eyes off Nouzhatoul-aouadat, and makes her blush, which is almost a certain sign that she entertains no aversion for him. If you approve of it, we will make a match between them."

"Madam," replied the caliph, "you remind me of what I ought to have done before. I know Abou Hassan's opinion respecting marriage from himself, and have always promised him a wife that should please him. I am glad you mentioned the circumstance; for I know not how I came to forget it. But it is better that Abou Hassan should follow his own inclination, and choose for himself. If Nouzhatoul-aouadat is not averse to it, we ought not to hesitate upon their marriage; and since they are both present, they have only to say that they consent."

Abou Hassan threw himself at the caliph's and Zobeide's feet, to shew the sense he had of their goodness; and rising up, said, "I cannot receive a wife from better hands, but dare not hope that Nouzhatoul-aouadat will give me her hand as readily as I give her mine." At these words he looked at the princess's slave, who shewed by her respectful silence, and the sudden blush that arose in her cheeks, that she was disposed to obey the caliph and her mistress Zobeide.

The marriage was solemnized, and the nuptials celebrated in the palace, with great rejoicings, which lasted several days. Zobeide made her slave considerable presents, and the caliph did the same to Abou Hassan. The bride was conducted to the apartment the caliph had assigned Abou Hassan, who waited for her with all the impatience of a bridegroom, and received her with the sound of all sorts of instruments, and musicians of both sexes, who made the air echo with their concert.

After these feasts and rejoicings, which lasted several days, the newly-married couple were left to pursue their loves in peace. Abou Hassan and his spouse were charmed with each other, lived together in perfect union, and seldom were asunder, but when either he paid his respects to the caliph, or she hers to Zobeide. Indeed, Nouzhatoul-aouadat was endued with every qualification capable of gaining Abou Hassan's love and attachment, was just such a wife as he had described to the caliph, and fit to sit at the head of his table. With these dispositions they could not fail to pass their lives agreeably. They kept a good table covered with the nicest and choicest rarities in season, by an excellent cook, who took upon him to provide every thing. Their sideboard was always stored with exquisite wines placed within their reach when at table, where they enjoyed themselves in agreeable conversation, and afterwards entertained each other with some pleasantry or other, which made them laugh more or less, as they had in the day met with something to divert them; and in the evenings, which they consecrated to mirth, they had generally some slight repast of dried sweetmeats, choice fruits, and cakes, and at each glass invited each other by new songs to drink, and sometimes accompanied their voices with a lute, or other instruments which they could both touch.

Abou Hassan and Nouzhatoul-aouadat led this pleasant life unattentive to expense, until at length the caterer, who had disbursed all his and their money for these expenses, brought them in a long bill in hope of having an advance of cash. They found the amount to be so considerable, that all the presents which the caliph and Zobeide had given them at their marriage were but just enough to pay him. This made them reflect seriously on what was passed, which, however, was no remedy for the present evil. But they agreed to pay the caterer; and having sent for him, gave him all they owed him, without considering the difficulty they should be in immediately after.

The caterer went away highly pleased at receiving so large a sum, though Abou Hassan and his wife were not so well satisfied with seeing the bottom of their purse, but remained a long time silent, and very much embarrassed, to find themselves reduced to poverty the very first year of their marriage. Abou Hassan remembered that the caliph, when he took him into the palace, had promised never to let him want. But when he considered how prodigal he had been of his money, was unwilling to expose himself to the shame of letting the caliph know the ill use he had made of his bounty, and that he wanted a supply. Besides, he had made over his patrimony to his mother, when the caliph had received him near his person, and was afraid to apply to her, lest she should discover that he had returned to the same extravagance he had been guilty of after his father's death. His wife, on the other hand, regarded Zobeide's generosity, and the liberty she had given her to marry, as more than a sufficient recompense for her service, and thought she had no right to ask more.

Abou Hassan at last broke silence, and looking at his wife, said, "I see you are in the same embarrassment as myself, and thinking what we must do in this unhappy juncture, when our money fails us so unexpectedly. I do not know what your sentiments may be; but mine are, let what will happen, not to retrench our expenses in the least; and I believe you will come into my opinion. The point is, how to support them without stooping to ask the caliph or Zobeide: and I think I have fallen on the means; but we must assist each other."

This discourse of Abou Hassan very much pleased his wife, and gave her some hopes. "I was thinking so as well as you," said she; "but durst not explain my thoughts, because I do not know how we can help ourselves; and must confess, that what you tell me gives me a revival of pleasure. Since you say you have found out a resource, and my assistance is necessary, you need but tell me in what way, and I will do all that lies in my power."

"I was sure," replied Abou Hassan, "that you would not fail me in a business which concerns us both; and therefore I must tell you, this want of money has made me think of a plan which will supply us, at least for a time. It consists in a little trick we must put, I upon the caliph and you upon Zobeide, and at which, as I am sure they will both be diverted, it will answer advantageously for us. You and I will both die." "Not I indeed," interrupted Nouzhatoul-aouadat; "you may die by yourself, if you please, but I am not so weary of this life; and whether you are pleased or not, will not die so soon. If you have nothing else to propose, you may die by yourself; for I assure you I shall not join you."

"You are a woman of such vivacity and wonderful quickness," replied Abou Hassan, "that you scarcely give me time to explain my design. Have but a little patience, and you shall find that you will be ready enough to die such a death as I intend; for surely you could not think I meant a real death?" "Well," said his wife, "if it is but a sham death you design, I am at your service, and you may depend on my zeal to second you in this manner of dying; but I must tell you truly, I am very unwilling to die, as I apprehended you at first."

"Be but silent a little," said Abou Hassan, "and I will tell you what I promise. I will feign myself dead, and you shall lay me out in the middle of my chamber, with my turban upon my face, my feet towards Mecca, as if ready to be carried out to burial. When you have done this, you must lament, and weep bitterly, as is usual in such cases, tear your clothes and hair, or pretend to do it, and go all in tears, with your locks dishevelled, to Zobeide. The princess will of course inquire the cause of your grief; and when you have told her, with words intermixed with sobs, she will pity you, give you money to defray the expense of my funeral, and a piece of good brocade to cover my body, that my interment may be the more magnificent, and to make you a new dress in the room of that you will have torn. As soon as you return with the money and the brocade, I will rise, lay you in my place, and go and act the same part with the caliph, who I dare say will be as generous to me as Zobeide will have been to you."

Nouzhatoul-aouadat highly approved the project, and said to Abou Hassan, "Come, lose no time; strip to your shirt and drawers, while I prepare a winding sheet. I know how to bury as well as any body; for while I was in Zobeide's service, when any of my fellow-slaves died, I had the conducting of the funeral." Abou Hassan did as his wife mentioned, and laid himself on the sheet which she had spread on the carpet in the middle of the room. As soon as he had crossed his arms, his wife wrapped him up, turned his feet towards Mecca, and put a piece of fine muslin and his turban upon his face, so that nothing seemed wanting but to carry him out to be buried. After this she pulled off her head-dress, and with tears in her eyes, her hair dishevelled, and seeming to tear it off, with a dismal cry and lamentation, beating her face and breast with all the marks of the most lively grief, ran across the court to Zobeide's apartments, who, hearing the voice of a person crying very loud, commanded some of her women to see who it was; they returned and told her that it was Nouzhatoul-aouadat, who was approaching in a deplorable condition.

The princess, impatient to know what had happened to her, rose up immediately, and went to meet her at the door of her ante-chamber. Nouzhatoul-aouadat played her part to perfection. As soon as she saw Zobeide, who held the door open, she redoubled her cries, tore her hair off by handfuls, beat her face and breast, and threw herself at her feet, bathing them with her tears.

Zobeide, amazed to see her slave in such extraordinary affliction, asked what had happened; but, instead of answering, she continued her sobs; and at last feigning to strive to check them, said, with words interrupted with sighs, “Alas! my most honoured lady and mistress, what greater misfortune could have befallen me than this, which obliges me to throw myself at your highness’s feet. God prolong your days, my most respectable princess, in perfect health, and grant you many happy years! Abou Hassan! poor Abou Hassan! whom you honoured with your esteem, and gave me for a husband, is no more!”

At these words Nouzhatoul-aouadat redoubled her tears and sighs, and threw herself again at the princess’s feet. Zobeide was extremely concerned at this news. “Abou Hassan dead!” cried she; “that agreeable, pleasant man! I did not expect his death so soon; he seemed to promise a long life, and well deserved to enjoy it!” She then also burst into tears, as did all her women, who had been often witnesses of Abou Hassan’s pleasantries when the caliph brought him to amuse the princess Zobeide, and all together continued for some time bewailing his loss. At length the princess Zobeide broke silence: “Wicked woman!” cried she, addressing herself to the false widow, “perhaps you may have occasioned his death. Your ill temper has given him so much vexation, that you have at last brought him to his grave.” Nouzhatoul-aouadat seemed much hurt at the reproaches of Zobeide: “Ah, madam,” cried she, “I do not think I ever gave your majesty, while I was your slave, reason to entertain so disadvantageous an opinion of my conduct to a husband who was so dear to me. I should think myself the most wretched of women if you were persuaded of this. I behaved to Abou Hassan as a wife should do to a husband for whom she has a sincere affection; and I may say, without vanity, that I had for him the same regard he had for me. I am persuaded he would, were he alive, justify me fully to your majesty; but, madam,” added she, renewing her tears, “his time was come, and that was the only cause of his death.”

Zobeide, as she had really observed in her slave a uniformly equal temper, mildness, great docility and zeal for her service, which shewed she was rather actuated by inclination than duty, hesitated not to believe her on her word, and ordered her treasurer to fetch a hundred pieces of gold and a piece of rich brocade.

The slave soon returned with the purse and piece of brocade, which, by Zobeide's order, she delivered to Nouzhatoul-aouadat, who threw herself again at the princess's feet, and thanked her with great self-satisfaction at finding she had succeeded so well. "Go," said Zobeide, "use that brocade to cover the corpse of your husband, and with the money bury him handsomely, as he deserves. Moderate the transport of your afflictions: I will take care of you."

As soon as Nouzhatoul-aouadat got out of the princess's presence, she dried up her tears, and returned with joy to Abou Hassan, to give him an account of her good success. When she came home she burst out a laughing on seeing her husband still stretched out in the middle of the floor; she ran to him, bade him rise and see the fruits of his stratagem. He arose, and rejoiced with his wife at the sight of the purse and brocade. Unable to contain herself at the success of her artifice, "Come, husband," said she, laughing, "let me act the dead part, and see if you can manage the caliph as well as I have done Zobeide."

"That is the temper of all women," replied Abou Hassan, "who, we may well say, have always the vanity to believe they can do things better than men, though at the same time what good they do is by their advice. It would be odd indeed, if I, who laid this plot myself, could not carry it on as well as you. But let us lose no time in idle discourse; lie down in my place, and witness if I do not come off with as much applause."

Abou Hassan wrapped up his wife as she had done him, and with his turban unrolled, like a man in the greatest affliction, ran to the caliph, who was holding a private council with Jaaffier and other confidential viziers. He presented himself at the door, and the officer, knowing he had free access, opened it. He entered holding with one hand his handkerchief before his eyes, to hide the feigned tears, which trickled down his cheeks, and striking his breast with the other, with exclamations expressing extraordinary grief.

The caliph, always used to see Abou Hassan with a merry countenance, was very much surprised to behold him in so much distress. He interrupted the business of the council to inquire the cause of his grief. "Commander of the faithful," answered Abou Hassan, with repeated sighs and sobs, "God preserve your majesty on the throne, which you fill so gloriously! a greater calamity could not have befallen me than what I now lament. Alas! Nouzhatoul-aouadat whom you in your bounty gave me for a wife to gladden my existence, alas!” at this exclamation Abou Hassan pretended to have his heart so full, that he could not utter more, but poured forth a flood of tears.

The caliph, who now understood that Abou Hassan came to tell him of the death of his wife, seemed much concerned, and said to him with an air which shewed how much he regretted her loss, “God be merciful to her: she was a good slave, and we gave her to you with an intention to make you happy: she deserved a longer life.” The tears then ran down his face, so that he was obliged to pull out his handkerchief to wipe them off. The grief of Abou Hassan, and the tears of the caliph, excited those of Jaaffier and the other viziers. They bewailed the death of Nouzhatoul-aouadat, who, on her part, was only impatient to hear how Abou Hassan succeeded.

The caliph had the same suspicion of the husband that Zobeide had of the wife, and imagined that he had occasioned her death. “Wretch!” said he, in a tone of indignation, “have not you been the cause of your wife’s death by your ill treatment of her? You ought at least to have had some regard for the princess my consort, who loved her more than the rest of her slaves, yet consented to give her to you. What a return for her kindness!”

“Commander of the faithful,” replied Abou Hassan, affecting to weep more bitterly than before, “can your majesty for a moment suppose that Abou Hassan, whom you have loaded with your favours and kindness, and on whom you have conferred honours he could never have aspired to, can have been capable of such ingratitude? I loved Nouzhatoul-aouadat my wife as much on these accounts, as for the many good qualities she possessed, and which drew from me all the attachment, tenderness, and love she deserved. But, my lord,” added he, “she was to die, and God would no longer suffer me to enjoy a happiness for which I was indebted to your majesty and your beloved consort.”

Abou Hassan dissembled so well, that the caliph, who had never heard how extravagantly he and his wife had lived, no longer doubting his sincerity, ordered his treasurer, who was present, to give Abou Hassan a purse of a hundred pieces of gold and a piece of brocade. Abou Hassan immediately cast himself at the caliph's feet, and thanked him for his present. "Follow the treasurer," said the monarch; "throw the brocade over the corpse, and with the money shew the last testimony of thy love for thy wife."

Abou Hassan made no reply to these obliging words of the caliph, but retiring with a low prostration, followed the treasurer; and as soon as he had got the purse and piece of brocade, went home, well pleased with having found out so quick and easy a way of supplying the necessity which had given him so much uneasiness.

Nouzhatoul-aouadat, weary with lying so long in one posture, waited not till Abou Hassan bade her rise; but as soon as she heard the door open, sprang up, ran to her husband, and asked him if he had imposed on the caliph as cleverly as she had done on Zobeide. "You see," said he, shewing her the stuff, and shaking the purse, "that I can act a sorrowful husband for a living wife, as well as you can a weeping widow for a husband not dead." Abou Hassan, however, was not without his fears that this double plot might be attended with some ill consequences. He thought it would not be amiss to put his wife on her guard as to what might happen, that they might aft in concert. "For," added he, "the better we succeed in embarrassing the caliph and Zobeide, the more they will be pleased at last, and perhaps may shew their satisfaction by greater liberality." This last consideration induced them to carry on their stratagem farther.

The caliph, though he had important affairs to decide, was so impatient to condole with the princess on the death of her slave, that he rose up as soon as Abou Hassan was gone, and put off the council to another day. "Follow me," said he to Mesrour, who always attended him wherever he went, and was in all his councils, "let us go and share with the princess the grief which the death of her slave Nouzhatoul-aouadat must have occasioned."

Accordingly they went to Zobeide's apartment, whom the caliph found sitting on a sofa, much afflicted, and still in tears. "Madam," said the caliph, going up to her, "it is unnecessary to tell you how much I partake with you in your affliction; since you must be sensible that what gives you pleasure or trouble, has the same effect on me. But we are all mortal, and must surrender up to God that life he has given us, when he requires it. Nouzhatoul-aouadat, your faithful slave, was endued with qualifications that deserved your esteem, and I cannot but approve your expressing it after her death; but consider all your grief will not restore her to life. Therefore, madam, if you love me, and will take my advice, be comforted for this loss, take care of a life which you know is precious to me, and constitutes all the happiness of mine."

If the princess was charmed with these tender sentiments which the caliph expressed in his compliments, she was amazed to hear of Nouzhatoulaouadat's death. This news threw her into such astonishment, that she was not able to return an answer for some time. At last recovering, she replied with an air expressive of surprise, "Commander of the faithful, I am very sensible of all your tender sentiments; but give me leave to say, I cannot comprehend the news you tell me of the death of my slave, who is in perfect health. My affliction is for the death of Abou Hassan, her husband, your favourite, whom I esteemed, as much for the regard you had for him, as his having so often diverted me agreeably, and for whom I had as great a value as yourself. But the little concern you shew for his death, and your so soon forgetting a man in whose company you have so often told me you took so much pleasure, surprises me; and this insensibility seems the greater, from the deception you would put upon me in changing his death for that of my slave."

The caliph, who thought that he was perfectly well informed of the death of the slave, and had just reason to believe so, because he had both seen and heard Abou Hassan, laughed, and shrugged up his shoulders, to hear Zobeide talk in this manner. "Mesrour," said he, to the eunuch, "what do you think of the princess's discourse? Do not women sometimes lose their senses; for you have heard and seen all as well as myself?" Then turning to Zobeide, "Madam," said he, "shed no more tears for Abou Hassan, for I can assure you he is well; but rather bewail the death of your dear slave. It is not many moments since her husband came in the most inexpressible affliction, to tell me of the death of his wife. I gave him a purse of a hundred pieces of gold and a piece of brocade, to comfort him, and bury her; and Mesrour, who was present, can tell you the same."

The princess took this discourse of the caliph's to be all a jest, and thought he had a mind to impose upon her. "Commander of the faithful," replied she, "though you are used to banter, I must tell you, this is not a proper time for pleasantry. What I tell you is very serious; I do not talk of my slave's death, but of Abou Hassan's, her husband, whose fate I bewail, and so ought you too." "Madam," said the caliph, putting on a grave countenance, "I tell you without raillery that you are deceived; Nouzhatoul-aouadat is dead, and Abou Hassan is alive, and in perfect health."

Zobeide was much piqued at this dry answer of the caliph. "Commander of the faithful," replied she smartly, "God preserve you from continuing longer in this mistake, surely you would make me think your mind is not as usual. Give me leave to repeat to you once more, that it is Abou Hassan who is dead, and that my slave Nouzhatoul-aouadat, his widow, is living. It is not an hour since she went from hence. She came here in so disconsolate a state, that the sight of her was enough to have drawn tears from my eyes, if she had not told me her affliction. All my women, who wept with me, can bear me witness, and tell you also that I made her a present of a hundred pieces of gold and a piece of brocade; the grief which you found me in, was on account of the death of her husband; and just at the instant you entered, I was going to send you a compliment of condolence."

At these words of Zobeide, the caliph cried out in a fit of laughter, "This, madam, is a strange piece of obstinacy; but," continued he seriously, "you may depend upon Nouzhatoul-aouadat's being dead." "I tell you no, sir," replied Zobeide sharply; "it is Abou Hassan that is dead, and you shall never make me believe otherwise."

Upon this the caliph's anger rose in his countenance. He seated himself on the sofa at some distance from the princess, and speaking to Mesrour, said, "Go immediately, see which it is, and bring me word; for though I am certain that it is Nouzhatoul-aouadat, I would rather take this method than be any longer obstinately positive about the matter, though of its certainty I am perfectly satisfied." No sooner had the caliph commanded than Mesrour was gone. "You will see," continued he, addressing himself to Zobeide, "in a moment, which of us is right." "For my part," replied Zobeide, "I know very well that I am in the right, and you will find it to be Abou Hassan." "And for myself," returned the caliph, "I am so sure that it is Nouzhatoul-aouadat, that I will lay you what wager you please that Abou Hassan is well."

"Do not think to come off so," said Zobeide; "I accept your wager, and I am so well persuaded of his death, that I would willingly lay the thing dearest to me in the world against what you will, though it were of less value. You know what I have in my disposal, and what I value most; propose the bet, and I will stand to it."

"Since it is so," said the caliph, "I will lay my garden of pleasures against your palace of paintings, though the one is worth much more than the other." "Is the question at present," replied Zobeide, "if your garden is more valuable than my palace? That is not the point. You have made choice of what you thought fit belonging to me, as an equivalent against what you lay; I accept the wager, and that I will abide by it, I take God to witness." The caliph took the same oath, and both waited Mesrour's return.

While the caliph and Zobeide were disputing so earnestly, and with so much warmth, Abou Hassan, who foresaw their difference, was very attentive to whatever might happen. As soon as he perceived Mesrour through a window, at which he sat talking with his wife, and observed that he was coming directly to their apartment, he guessed his commission, and bade his wife make haste to act the dead part once more, as they had agreed, without loss of time; but they were so pressed, that Abou Hassan had much ado to wrap up his wife, and lay the piece of brocade which the caliph had given him upon her, before Mesrour reached the house. This done, he opened the door of his apartment, and with a melancholy, dejected countenance, and his handkerchief before his eyes, went and sat down at the head of the pretended deceased.

By the time he was seated, Mesrour came into the room. The dismal sight which met his eyes, gave him a secret joy on account of the errand the caliph had sent him on. Abou Hassan rose up to meet him, and kissing his hand out of respect, said, sighing and sobbing, "You see me under the greatest calamity that ever could have befallen me the death of my dear wife, Nouzhatoul-aouadat, whom you honoured with your favours."

Mesrour, affected by this discourse, could not refuse some tears to the memory of the deceased. He lifted up the cloth a little at the head, and peeping under it, let it down again, and said, with a deep sigh, "There is no other God but Allah, we must all submit to his will, and every creature must return to him. Nouzhatoul-aouadat, my good sister," added he, sighing, "thy days have been few: God have mercy on thee." Then turning to Abou Hassan, who was all the time in tears, "We may well say," added he, "that women sometimes have whims, and lose their senses in a most unpardonable manner; for Zobeide, good mistress as she is, is in that situation at present; she will maintain to the caliph that you are dead, and not your wife; and whatever the caliph can say to the contrary, he cannot persuade her otherwise. He called me to witness and confirm this truth; for you know I was present when you came and told him the sorrowful news: but all signifies nothing. They are both positive; and the caliph, to convince Zobeide, has sent me to know the truth, but I fear I shall not be believed; for when women once take up a thing, they are not to be beaten out of it."

"God keep the commander of the faithful in the possession and right use of his senses," replied Abou Hassan, still sighing and weeping; "you see how it is, and that I have not imposed upon his majesty. And I wish to Heaven," continued he, to dissemble the better, "that I had no occasion to have told him the melancholy and afflicting news. Alas! I cannot enough express my irreparable loss!" "That is true," replied Mesrour, "and I can assure you I take a great share in your affliction; but you must be comforted, and not abandon yourself to your grief. I leave you with reluctance, to return to the caliph; but I beg the favour of you not to bury the corpse till I come again; for I will assist at the interment, and accompany it with my prayers." Mesrour went to give an account of his visit. Abou Hassan attended him to the door, told him he did not deserve the honour he intended him: and for fear Mesrour should return to say something else, followed him with his eyes for some time, and when he saw him at a distance, returned to his wife and released her. "This is already," said he, "a new scene of mirth, but I fancy it will not be the last; for certainly the princess Zobeide will not believe Mesrour, but will laugh at him, since she has too substantial a reason to the contrary; therefore we must expect some new event." While Abou Hassan was talking thus, Nouzhatoul-aouadat had time to put on her clothes again, and both went and sat down on a sofa opposite to the window, where they could see all that passed.

In the mean time, Mesrour reached Zobeide's apartment, and going into her closet laughing, clapped his hands like one who had something very agreeable to tell.

The caliph, naturally impatient, and piqued a little at the princess's contradiction, as soon as he saw Mesrour, "Vile slave," said he, "is this a time to laugh? Why do not you tell me which is dead, the husband or the wife?"

"Commander of the faithful," answered Mesrour, putting on a serious countenance, "it is Nouzhatoul-aouadat who is dead, for the loss of whom About Hassan is as much afflicted as when he appeared before your majesty." The caliph not giving him time to pursue his story, interrupted him, and cried out, laughing heartily, "Good news! Zobeide, your mistress, was a moment ago possessed of the palace of paintings, and now it is mine. She staked it against my garden of pleasures, since you went; therefore you could not have done me greater pleasure. I will take care to reward you: but give me a true account of what you saw."

"Commander of the faithful," said Mesrour, "when I came to Abou Hassan's apartment, I found the door open, and he was bewailing the death of his wife. He sat at the head of the deceased, who was laid out in the middle of the room, with her feet towards Mecca, and was covered with the piece of brocade which your majesty presented to Abou Hassan. After I had expressed the share I took in his grief, I went and lifted up the pall at the head, and knew Nouzhatoul-aouadat, though her face was much swelled and changed. I exhorted Abou Hassan in the best manner I could to be comforted; and when I came away, told him I would attend at his wife's funeral, and desired him not to remove the corpse till I came. This is all I can tell your majesty." "I ask no more," said the caliph, laughing heartily, "and I am well satisfied with your exactness." Then addressing himself to Zobeide, "Well, madam," said he, "have you yet any thing to say against so certain a truth? Will you still believe that Nouzhatoul-aouadat is alive, and that Abou Hassan is dead? And will you not own that you have lost your wager?"

"How, sir," replied Zobeide, who would not believe one word

Mesrour said, “do you think that I regard that impertinent fellow of a slave, who knows not what he says? I am not blind or mad. With these eyes I saw Nouzhatoul-aouadat in the greatest affliction; I spoke to her myself, and she told me that her husband was dead.” “Madam,” replied Mesrour, “I swear to you by your own life, and that of the commander of the faithful, which are both dear to me, that Nouzhatoul-aouadat is dead, and Abou Hassan is living.”

“Thou liest, base despicable slave,” said Zobeide in a rage, “and I will confound thee immediately.” Clapping her hands together, she called her women, who all approached. “Come hither,” said the princess to them, “and speak the truth. Who was that who came and spoke with me a little before the caliph entered?” The women all answered that it was poor afflicted Nouzhatoul-aouadat. “And what,” added she, addressing herself to her treasurer, “did I order you to give her?” “Madam,” answered the treasurer, “I gave Nouzhatoul-aouadat, by your orders, a purse of a hundred pieces of gold and a piece of brocade, which she carried away with her.” “Well, then, sorry slave,” said Zobeide to Mesrour, in passion, “what have you to say to all this? Whom do you think now I ought to believe, you or my treasurer, my women, and myself?”

Mesrour did not want for arguments to contradict the princess; but, as he was afraid of provoking her too much, chose rather to be silent, though he was satisfied that the wife was dead, and not the husband.

During the whole of this dispute between Zobeide and Mesrour, the caliph, who heard the evidence on both sides, and was persuaded of the contrary of what the princess asserted, because he had himself seen and spoken to Abou Hassan, and from what Mesrour had told him, laughed heartily to see Zobeide so exasperated. “Madam,” said he to her, “once more I repeat that I know not who was the author of that saying, that ‘Women sometimes lose their wits,’ but I am sure you make it good. Mesrour has just come from Abou Hassan’s, and tells you that he saw Nouzhatoul-aouadat lying dead in the middle of the room, Abou Hassan alive, and sitting by her; and yet you will not believe this evidence, which nobody can reasonably refuse; I cannot comprehend this conduit.”

Zobeide would not hear the caliph. “Pardon me, commander of the faithful," replied she, "if I suspect you: I see that you have contrived with Mesrour to vex me, and to try my patience. And as I perceive that this report was concerted between you, I beg leave to send a person to Abou Hassan's, to know whether or not I am in the wrong."

The caliph consented, and the princess charged with this important commission an old nurse, who had lived with her from her infancy. "Hark you nurse," said she, "you see my dispute with the commander of the faithful, and Mesrour; I need tell you no more. Go to Abou Hassan's or rather to Nouzhatoul-aouadat's, for Abou Hassan is dead, and clear up this matter for me. If you bring me good news, a handsome present is your reward: make haste, and return immediately."

The nurse set out, to the great joy of the caliph, who was delighted to see Zobeide in this embarrassment; but Mesrour, extremely mortified to find the princess so angry with him, did all he could to appease her, and to make her and the caliph both satisfied with him. He was overjoyed when Zobeide sent the nurse; because he was persuaded that the report she must make would agree with his, justify him, and restore him to her favour.

In the mean time Abou Hassan, who watched at the window, perceived the nurse at a distance, and guessing that she was sent by Zobeide, called his wife, and told her that the princess's nurse was coming to know the truth. "Therefore," said he, "make haste and lay me out." Accordingly Nouzhatoul-aouadat covered him with the brocade Zobeide had given her, and put his turban upon his face. The nurse, eager to acquit herself of her commission, hobbled as fast as age would allow her, and entering the room, perceived Nouzhatoul-aouadat in tears, her hair dishevelled, and seated at the head of her husband, beating her breast, with all the expressions of violent grief.

The good old nurse went directly to the false widow. "My dear Nouzhatoul-aouadat," said she, with a sorrowful countenance, "I come not to interrupt your grief and tears for a husband whom you loved so tenderly." "Ah! good mother," replied the counterfeit widow, "you see my misfortune, and how unhappy I am from the loss of my beloved Abou Hassan. Abou Hassan, my dear husband!" cried she, "what have I done that you should leave me so soon? Have

I not always preferred your will to my own? Alas! what will become of poor Nouzhatoul-aouadat?”

“This black-faced Mesrour,” cried the nurse, lifting up her hands, “deserves to be punished for having caused so great a difference between my good mistress and the commander of the faithful, by the falsehood he has told them. Daughter,” continued she, “that villain Mesrour has asserted, with inconceivable impudence, before our good mistress, that you were dead, and Abou Hassan was alive.”

“Alas! my good mother,” cried Nouzhatoul-aouadat, “I wish to Heaven that it was true! I should not be in this sorrowful state, nor bewail a husband so dear to me!” At these words she wept afresh, and with redoubled tears and cries feigned the deepest sorrow.

The nurse was so much moved by her tears, that she sat down by her, and cried too. Then gently lifting up the turban and cloth, looked at the face of the corpse. “Ah! poor Abou Hassan,” she cried, covering his face again, “God have mercy upon thee. Adieu, child,” said she to Nouzhatoul-aouadat: “if I could stay longer with you, I would with all my heart; but I am obliged to return immediately, to deliver my mistress from the uneasiness that black villain has occasioned her, by his impudent lie, assuring her with an oath that you were dead.”

As soon as the nurse was gone, Nouzhatoul-aouadat wiped her eyes and released Abou Hassan; they both went and sat down on a sofa against the window, expecting what would be the end of this stratagem, and to be ready to act according as circumstances might require.

The nurse, in the mean time, made all the haste she could to Zobeide. The pleasure of carrying the princess news favourable to her wager, but still more the hopes of a good reward, added wings to her feet, and running into the princess’s closet quite out of breath, she gave her a true account of all she had seen. Zobeide hearkened to the old woman’s relation with a most sensible pleasure; and when she had done, said, with a tone which shewed triumph at having, as she supposed, won her wager: “Repeat it once more before the caliph, who looks upon us all to be fools, would make us believe we have no sense of religion, nor fear of God; and tell your story to that wicked black slave, who had the insolence to assert a wilful falsehood.”

Mesrour, who expected the nurse’s report would prove favourable on his side, was much mortified to find it so much the contrary, and so vexed at the anger Zobeide expressed against him, for a thing which he thought himself surer of than any body, that he was glad of an opportunity of speaking his mind freely to the old women, which he durst not do to the princess. “Old toothless,” said he to the nurse, “you are a liar, and there is no truth in what you say; for I saw with my own eyes Nouzhatoul-aouadat laid out in the middle of the room.”

“You are a notorious liar yourself,” replied the nurse, with an insulting air, “to dare maintain so great a falsity before my face, who am just come from seeing Abou Hassan dead, laid out, and have left his wife alive.” “I am not an impostor,” replied Mesrour; “it is you who endeavour to lead us all into error.”

“What impudence,” said the nurse, “to dare tell me I lie in the presence of their majesties, when I saw just now with my own eyes what I have had the honour to tell them.” “Indeed, nurse,” answered Mesrour again, “you had better hold your tongue, for you certainly doat.”

Zobeide, who could no longer endure this want of respect in Mesrour, who, without any regard to her, treated her nurse so injuriously in her presence, without giving the old lady time to reply to so gross an affront, said to the caliph, “Commander of the faithful, I demand justice for this insolence to us both.” She was so enraged she could say no more, but burst into tears.

The caliph, who had heard all the dispute, thought it very intricate. He mused some time, and could not tell what to think of so many contradictions. The princess on her part, as well as Mesrour, the nurse, and all the women slaves, who were present, were as much puzzled, and remained silent. At last the caliph, addressing himself to Zobeide, said, “I see we are all liars; myself first, then you, Mesrour, and you, nurse; or at least it seems not one can be believed more than the other; therefore let us go ourselves to examine the truth, for I can see no other way to clear up these doubts.”

So saying, the caliph arose, the princess followed him, and Mesrour went before to open the doors. “Commander of the faithful," said he, "I am overjoyed that your majesty has taken this course; and shall be much more, when I shall make it plainly appear to the nurse, not that she doats, since the expression is unfortunately displeasing to my good mistress, but that her report is not true."

The nurse wanted not a reply; "Hold your tongue, black face," said she; "you doat yourself."

Zobeide, who was much provoked at Mesrour, could not bear to hear him attack her nurse again without taking her part: "Vile slave," said she, "say what you will, I maintain my nurse speaks the truth, and look upon you as a mere liar." "Madam," replied Mesrour, "if nurse is so very certain that Nouzhatoul-aouadat is alive, and Abou Hassan dead, I will lay her what she dares of it." The nurse was as ready as he; "I dare," said she, "take you at your word: let us see if you dare unsay it." Mesrour stood to his word; and they laid a piece of gold brocade with silver flowers before the caliph and the princess.

The apartment from which the caliph and Zobeide set out, though distant from Abou Hassan's, was nevertheless just opposite, so that he perceived them coming, and told his wife that he was much mistaken if the caliph and Zobeide, preceded by Mesrour, and followed by a great number of women, were not about to do them the honour of a visit. She looked through a lattice and saw them, seemed frightened, and cried out, "What shall we do? we are ruined." "Fear nothing," replied Abou Hassan. "Have you forgotten already what we agreed on? We will both feign ourselves dead, and you shall see all will go well. At the slow rate they are coming, we shall be ready before they reach the door." Accordingly, Abou Hassan and his wife wrapped up and covered themselves with the pieces of brocade, and waited patiently for their visitors.

Mesrour, who came first, opened the door, and the caliph and Zobeide, followed by their attendants, entered the room; but were struck with horror, and stood motionless, at the spectacle which presented itself to their view, not knowing what to think. At length Zobeide breaking silence, said to the caliph, "Alas! they are both dead! You have done much," continued she, looking at the caliph and Mesrour, "to endeavour to make me believe that my dear slave was dead, and I find it is true: grief at the loss of her husband has certainly killed her." "Say rather, madam," answered the caliph, prepossessed to the contrary, that Nouzhatoul-aouadat died first, "the afflicted Abou Hassan sunk under his grief, and could not survive his dear wife; you ought, therefore, to confess that you have lost your wager, and that your palace of paintings is mine."

"Hold there," answered Zobeide, warmed at being contradicted by the caliph; "I will maintain you have lost your garden of pleasures. Abou Hassan died first; since my nurse told you, as well as me, that she saw her alive, and weeping for the death of her husband."

The dispute of the caliph and Zobeide brought on another between Mesrour and the nurse, who had wagered as well as they; each affirmed to have won, and at length they proceeded to abuse each other very grossly.

At last the caliph, reflecting on what had passed, began to think that Zobeide had as much reason as himself to maintain that she had won. In this embarrassment of not being able to find out the truth, he advanced towards the corpses, and sat down at the head, searching for some expedient that might gain him the victory over Zobeide. "I swear," cried he presently after, "by the holy name of God, that I will give a thousand pieces of gold to him who can tell me which of these two died first."

No sooner were these words out of the caliph's mouth, than he heard a voice under Abou Hassan's piece of brocade say, "Commander of the faithful, I died first, give me the thousand pieces of gold." At the same instant Abou Hassan threw off the piece of brocade, and springing up, prostrated himself at his feet, while his wife did the same to Zobeide, keeping on her piece of brocade out of decency. The princess at first shrieked out, but recovering herself, expressed great joy to see her dear slave rise again, just when she was almost inconsolable at having seen her dead. "Ah! wicked Nouzhatoul-aouadat," cried she, "what have I suffered for your sake? However, I forgive you from my heart, since you are not dead."

The caliph was not so much surprised, when he heard Abou Hassan's voice: but thought he should have died with laughing at this unravelling of the mystery, and to hear Abou Hassan ask so seriously for the thousand pieces of gold. "What, Abou Hassan," said he, continuing to laugh aloud, "hast thou conspired against my life, to kill me a second time with laughing? How came this thought into your head, to surprise Zobeide and me thus, when we least thought of such a trick?"

"Commander of the faithful," replied Abou Hassan, "I will declare to your majesty the whole truth, without the least reserve. Your majesty knows that I always loved to eat and drink well' and the wife you gave me rather increased than restrained this propensity. With these dispositions your majesty may easily suppose we might spend a good estate; and to make short of my story, we were not sparing of what your majesty so generously gave us. This morning, accounting with our caterer, who took care to provide every thing for us, and paying what we owed him, we found we had nothing left. Then, reflections on what was past, and resolutions to manage better for the future, crowded into our thoughts; we formed a thousand projects, all of which we rejected. At last, the shame of seeing ourselves reduced to so low a condition, and not daring to tell your majesty, made us contrive this stratagem to relieve our necessities, and to divert you, which we hope your majesty will be pleased to pardon."

The caliph was satisfied with Abou Hassan's sincerity, and Zobeide, who had till now been very serious, began to laugh at the thought of Abou Hassan's scheme. The caliph, who had not ceased laughing at the singularity of the adventure, rising, said to Abou Hassan and his wife, "Follow me; I will give you the thousand pieces of gold I promised, for joy to find you are not dead." Zobeide desired him to let her make her slave a present of the same sum, for the same reason. By this means Abou Hassan and his wife Nouzhatoul-aouadat preserved the favour of the caliph Haroon al Rusheed and the princess Zobeide, and by their liberalities were enabled to pursue their pleasures.

THE STORY OF ALLA AD DEEN; OR, THE WONDERFUL LAMP.

In the capital of one of the large and rich provinces of the kingdom of China, the name of which I do not recollect, there lived a tailor, named Mustapha, who was so poor, that he could hardly, by his daily labour, maintain himself and his family, which consisted of a wife and son.

His son, who was called Alla ad Deen, had been brought up in a very careless and idle manner, and by that means had contracted many vicious habits. He was wicked, obstinate, and disobedient to his father and mother, who, when he grew up, could not keep him within doors. He was in the habit of going out early in the morning, and would stay out all day, playing in the streets and public places with idle children of his own age.

When he was old enough to learn a trade, his father not being able to put him out to any other, took him into his own shop, and taught him how to use his needle: but neither fair words nor the fear of chastisement were capable of fixing his lively genius. All his father's endeavours to keep him to his work were in vain; for no sooner was his back turned, than he was gone for that day. Mustapha chastised him, but Alla ad Deen was incorrigible, and his father, to his great grief, was forced to abandon him to his idleness: and was so much troubled at not being able to reclaim him, that it threw him into a fit of sickness, of which he died in a few months.

The mother, finding that her son would not follow his father's business, shut up the shop, sold off the implements of trade, and with the money she received for them, and what she could get by spinning cotton, thought to maintain herself and her son. Alla ad Deen, who was now no longer restrained by the fear of a father, and who cared so little for his mother, that whenever she chid him, he would abuse her, gave himself entirely over to his idle habits, and was never out of the streets from his companions. This course he followed till he was fifteen years old, without giving his mind to any useful pursuit, or the least reflection on what would become of him. In this situation, as he was one day playing according to custom in the street, with his vagabond associates, a stranger passing by stood to observe him.

This stranger was a sorcerer, called by the writer of this story, the African magician; he was a native of Africa, and had been but two days arrived from thence.

The African magician, who was a good physiognomist, observing in Alla ad Deen's countenance something absolutely necessary for the execution of the design he was engaged in, inquired artfully about his family, who he was, and what were his inclinations; and when he had learned all he desired to know, went up to him, and taking him aside from his comrades, said, "Child, was not your father called Mustapha the tailor?" "Yes, sir," answered the boy; "but he has been dead a long time."

At these words, the African magician threw his arms about Alla ad Deen's neck, and kissed him several times with tears in his eyes. Alla ad Deen, who observed his tears, asked him what made him weep. "Alas! my son," cried the African magician with a sigh, "how can I forbear?

"I am your uncle; your worthy father was my own brother. I have been many years abroad, and now I am come home with the hopes of seeing him, you tell me he is dead. I assure you it is a sensible grief to me to be deprived of the comfort I expected. But it is some relief to my affliction, that as far as I can remember him, I knew you at first sight, you are so like him; and I see I am not deceived." Then he asked Alla ad Deen, putting his hand into his purse, where his mother lived; and as soon as he had informed him, gave him a handful of small money, saying, "Go, my son, to your mother, give my love to her, and tell her that I will visit her to-morrow, if I have time, that I may have the satisfaction of seeing where my good brother lived so long, and ended his days."

As soon as the African magician left his newly-adopted nephew, Alla ad Deen ran to his mother, overjoyed at the money his uncle had given him. "Mother," said he, "have I an uncle?" "No, child," replied his mother, "you have no uncle by your father's side, or mine." "I am just now come," said Alla ad Deen, "from a man who says he is my uncle by my father's side, assuring me that he is his brother. He cried and kissed me when I told him my father was dead; and to shew you that what I tell you is truth," added he, pulling out the money, "see what he has given me. He charged me to give his love to you, and to tell you, if he has any time to-morrow, he will come and pay you a visit, that he may see the house my father lived and died in." "Indeed, child," replied the mother, "your father had a brother, but he has been dead a long time, and I never heard of another."

The mother and son talked no more then of the African magician; but the next day Alla ad Deen's uncle found him playing in another part of the town with other children, and embracing him as before, put two pieces of gold into his hand, and said to him, "Carry this, child, to your mother, tell her that I will come and see her tonight, and bid her get us something for supper; but first shew me the house where you live."

After Alla ad Deen had shewed the African magician the house, he carried the two pieces of gold to his mother, and when he had told her of his uncle's intention, she went out and bought provisions; and considering she wanted various utensils, borrowed them of her neighbours. She spent the whole day in preparing the supper; and at night when it was ready, said to her son, "Perhaps your uncle knows not how to find our house; go and bring him if you meet with him."

Though Alla ad Deen had shewed the magician the house, he was ready to go, when somebody knocked at the door, which he immediately opened: and the magician came in loaded with wine, and all sorts of fruits, which he brought for a dessert.

After the African magician had given what he brought into Alla ad Deen's hands, he saluted his mother, and desired her to shew him the place where his brother Mustapha used to sit on the sofa; and when she had so done, he fell down and kissed it several times, crying out with tears in his eyes, "My poor brother! How unhappy am I, not to have come soon enough to give you one last embrace." Alla ad Deen's mother desired him to sit down in the same place, but he declined. "No," said he, "I shall take care how I do that; but give me leave to sit opposite to it, that although I am deprived of the satisfaction of seeing the master of a family so dear to me, I may at least have the pleasure of beholding the place where he used to sit." The widow pressed him no farther, but left him at liberty to sit where he pleased.

When the magician had made choice of a place, and sat down, he began to enter into discourse with Alla ad Deen's mother. "My good sister," said he, "do not be surprised at your never having seen me all the time you have been married to my brother Mustapha of happy memory. I have been forty years absent from this country, which is my native place, as well as my late brother's; and during that time have travelled into the Indies, Persia, Arabia, Syria, and Egypt, have resided in the finest towns of those countries; and afterwards crossed over into Africa, where I made a longer stay. At last, as it is natural for a man, how distant soever it may be, to remember his native country, relations, and acquaintance, I was desirous to see mine again, and to embrace my dear brother; and finding I had strength enough to undertake so long a journey, I immediately made the necessary preparations, and set out. I will not tell you the length of time it took me, all the obstacles I met with, and what fatigues I have endured, to come hither; but nothing ever mortified and afflicted me so much, as hearing of my brother's death, for whom I always had a brotherly love and friendship. I observed his features in the face of my nephew, your son, and distinguished him among a number of children with whom he was at play; he can tell you how I received the most melancholy news that ever reached my ears. But God be praised for all things! It is a comfort for me to find, as it were, my brother in a son, who has his most remarkable features."

The African magician perceiving that the widow began to weep at the remembrance of her husband, changed the conversation, and turning towards her son, asked him his name. "I am called Alla ad Deen," said he. "Well, Alla ad Deen," replied the magician, "what business do you follow? Are you of any trade?"

At this question the youth hung down his head, and was not a little abashed when his mother answered, "Alla ad Deen is an idle fellow; his father, when alive, strove all he could to teach him his trade, but could not succeed; and since his death, notwithstanding all I can say to him, he does nothing but idle away his time in the streets, as you saw him, without considering he is no longer a child; and if you do not make him ashamed of it, I despair of his ever coming to any good. He knows that his father left him no fortune, and sees me endeavour to get bread by spinning cotton; for my part, I am resolved one of these days to turn him out of doors, and let him provide for himself."

After these words, Alla ad Deen's mother burst into tears; and the magician said, "This is not well, nephew; you must think of helping yourself, and getting your livelihood. There are many sorts of trades, consider if you have not an inclination to some of them; perhaps you did not like your father's, and would prefer another: come, do not disguise your sentiments from me; I will endeavour to help you." But finding that Alla ad Deen returned no answer, "If you have no mind," continued he, "to learn any handicraft, I will take a shop for you, furnish it with all sorts of fine stuffs and linens; and with the money you make of them lay in fresh goods, and then you will live in an honourable way. Consult your inclination, and tell me freely what you think of my proposal: you shall always find me ready to keep my word."

This plan greatly flattered Alla ad Deen, who hated work, but had sense enough to know that such shops were much frequented, and the owners respected. He told the magician he had a greater inclination to that business than to any other, and that he should be much obliged to him for his kindness. "Since this profession is agreeable to you," said the African magician, "I will carry you with me to-morrow, clothe you as handsomely as the best merchants in the city, and afterwards we will think of opening a shop as I mentioned."

The widow, who never till then could believe that the magician was her husband's brother, no longer doubted after his promises of kindness to her son. She thanked him for his good intentions; and after having exhorted Alla ad Deen to render himself worthy of his uncle's favour by good behaviour, served up supper, at which they talked of several indifferent matters; and then the magician, who saw that the night was pretty far advanced, took his leave, and retired.

He came again the next day, as he had promised, and took Alla ad Deen with him to a merchant, who sold all sorts of clothes for different ages and ranks ready made, and a variety of fine stuffs. He asked to see some that suited Alla ad Deen in size; and after choosing a suit for himself which he liked best, and rejecting others which he did not think handsome enough, he bade Alla ad Deen choose those he preferred. Alla ad Deen, charmed with the liberality of his new uncle, made choice of one, and the magician immediately paid for it.

When Alla ad Deen found himself so handsomely equipped, he returned his uncle thanks; who promised never to forsake him, but always to take him along with him; which he did to the most frequented places in the city, and particularly where the principal merchants kept their shops.

When he brought him into the street where they sold the richest stuffs, and finest linens, he said to Alla ad Deen, "As you are soon to be a merchant, it is proper you should frequent these shops, and be acquainted with them." He then shewed him the largest and finest mosques, carried him to the khans or inns where the merchants and travellers lodged, and afterwards to the sultan's palace, where he had free access; and at last brought him to his own khan, where meeting with some merchants he had become acquainted with since his arrival, he gave them a treat, to bring them and his pretended nephew acquainted.

This entertainment lasted till night, when Alla ad Deen would have taken leave of his uncle to go home; the magician would not let him go by himself, but conducted him to his mother, who, as soon as she saw him so well dressed, was transported with joy, and bestowed a thousand blessings upon the magician, for being at so great an expense upon her child. "Generous relation!" said she, "I know not how to thank you for your liberality! I know that my son is not deserving of your favours; and were he ever so grateful, and answered your good intentions, he would be unworthy of them. I thank you with all my soul, and wish you may live long enough to witness my son's gratitude, which he cannot better shew than by regulating his conduct by your good advice." "Alla ad Deen," replied the magician, "is a good boy, and I believe we shall do very well; but I am sorry for one thing, which is, that I cannot perform to-morrow what I promised, because, as it is Friday, the shops will be shut up, and therefore we cannot hire or furnish one, but must wait till Saturday. I will, however, call on him to-morrow and take him to walk in the gardens, where people of the best fashion generally resort. Perhaps he has never seen these amusements, he has only hitherto been among children; but now he must see men." The African magician took his leave of the mother and the son, and retired. Alla ad Deen, who was overjoyed to be so well clothed, anticipated the pleasure of walking in the gardens. He had never been out of the town, nor seen the environs, which were very beautiful and pleasant.

Alla ad Deen rose early the next morning, dressed himself, to be ready when his uncle called on him; and after he had waited some time, began to be impatient, and stood watching at the door; but as soon as he perceived him coming, he told his mother, took his leave of her, and ran to meet him.

The magician caressed Alla ad Deen, and said, “Come, my dear child, and I will shew you fine things.” He then led him out at one of the gates of the city, to some magnificent houses, or rather palaces, to each of which belonged beautiful gardens, into which anybody might enter. At every building he came to, he asked Alla ad Deen if he did not think it fine; and the youth was ready to answer when any one presented itself, crying out, “Here is a finer house, uncle, than any we have seen yet.” By this artifice, the cunning magician led Alla ad Deen some way into the country; and as he meant to carry him farther, to execute his design, he took an opportunity to sit down in one of the gardens on the brink of a fountain of clear water, which discharged itself by a lion’s mouth of bronze into a basin, pretending to be tired. “Come, nephew,” said he, “you must be weary as well as I; let us rest ourselves, and we shall be better able to pursue our walk.”

After they had sat down, the magician pulled from his girdle a handkerchief with cakes and fruit, which he had provided, and laid them on the edge of the basin. He broke a cake in two, gave one half to Alla ad Deen, and ate the other himself; and in regard to the fruit, left him at liberty to take which sort he liked best. During this short repast, he exhorted his nephew to leave off keeping company with vagabonds, and seek that of wise and prudent men, to improve by their conversation. “For,” said he, “you will soon be at man’s estate, and you cannot too early begin to imitate their example.” When they had eaten as much as they liked, they got up, and pursued their walk through gardens separated from one another only by small ditches, which marked out the limits without interrupting the communication; so great was the confidence the inhabitants reposed in each other. By this means, the African magician drew Alla ad Deen insensibly beyond the gardens, and crossed the country, till they nearly reached the mountains.

Alla ad Deen, who had never been so far before, began to find himself much tired with so long a walk, and said to the magician, “Where are we going, uncle? We have left the gardens a great way behind us, and I see nothing but mountains; if we go much further, I do not know whether I shall be able to reach the town again?” “Never fear, nephew,” said the false uncle; “I will shew you another garden which surpasses all we have yet seen; it is not far off; and when we come there, you will say that you would have been sorry to have been so nigh, and not seen it.” Alla ad Deen was soon persuaded; and the magician, to make the way seem shorter and less fatiguing, told him a great many stories.

At last they arrived between two mountains of moderate height, and equal size, divided by a narrow valley, which was the place where the magician intended to execute the design that had brought him from Africa to China. “We will go no farther now,” said he to Alla ad Deen: “I will shew you here some extraordinary things, which, when you have seen, you will thank me for: but while I strike a light, gather up all the loose dry sticks you can see, to kindle a fire with.”

Alla ad Deen found so many dried sticks, that before the magician had made a light, he had collected a great heap. The magician presently set them on fire, and when they were in a blaze, threw in some incense which raised a cloud of smoke. This he dispersed on each side, by pronouncing several magical words which Alla ad Deen did not understand.

At the same time the earth trembling, opened just before the magician, and uncovered a stone, laid horizontally, with a brass ring fixed into the middle. Alla ad Deen was so frightened at what he saw, that he would have run away; but the magician caught hold of him, abused him, and gave him such a box on the ear, that he knocked him down. Alla ad Deen got up trembling, and with tears in his eyes, said to the magician, “What have I done, uncle, to be treated in this severe manner?” “I have my reasons,” answered the magician: “I am your uncle, I supply the place of your father, and you ought to make no reply. But, child,” added he, softening, “do not be afraid; for I shall not ask any thing of you, but that you obey me punctually, if you would reap the advantages which I intend you.” These fair promises calmed Alla ad Deen’s fears and resentment; and when the magician saw that he was appeased, he said to him, “You see what I have done by virtue of my incense, and the words I pronounced. Know then, that under this stone there is hidden a treasure, destined to be yours, and which will make you richer than the greatest monarch in the world: no person but yourself is permitted to lift this stone, or enter the cave; so you must punctually execute what I may command, for it is a matter of great consequence both to you and me.”

Alla ad Deen, amazed at all he saw and heard the magician say of the treasure which was to make him happy, forgot what was past, and rising, said, “Well, uncle, what is to be done? Command me, I am ready to obey.” “I am overjoyed, child,” said the African magician, embracing him; “take hold of the ring, and lift up that stone.” “Indeed, uncle,” replied Alla ad Deen, “I am not strong enough, you must help me.” “You have no occasion for my assistance,” answered the magician; “if I help you, we shall be able to do nothing; take hold of the ring, pronounce the names of your father and grandfather, then lift it up, and you will find it will come easily.” Alla ad Deen did as the magician bade him, raised the stone with ease, and laid it on one side.

When the stone was pulled up, there appeared a cavity of about three or four feet deep, with a little door, and steps to go down lower. “Observe, my son,” said the African magician, “what I direct. Descend into the cave, and when you are at the bottom of those steps you will find a door open, which will lead you into a spacious vault, divided into three great halls, in each of which you will see four large brass cisterns placed on each side, full of gold and silver; but take care you do not meddle with them. Before you enter the first hall, be sure to tuck up your vest, wrap it about you, and then pass through the second into the third without stopping. Above all things, have a care that you do not touch the walls, so much as with your clothes; for if you do, you will die instantly. At the end of the third hall, you will find a door which opens into a garden planted with fine trees loaded with fruit; walk directly across the garden by a path which will lead you to five steps that will bring you upon a terrace, where you will see a niche before you, and in that niche a lighted lamp. Take the lamp down, and extinguish it: when you have thrown away the wick, and poured out the liquor, put it in your vestband and bring it to me. Do not be afraid that the liquor will spoil your clothes, for it is not oil; and the lamp will be dry as soon as it is thrown out. If you should wish for any of the fruit of the garden, you may gather as much as you please."

After these words, the magician drew a ring off his finger, and put it on one of Alla ad Deen's, telling him that it was a preservative against all evil, while he should observe what he had prescribed to him. After this instruction he said, "Go down boldly, child, and we shall both be rich all our lives."

Alla ad Deen jumped into the cave, descended the steps, and found the three halls just as the African magician had described. He went through them with all the precaution the fear of death could inspire; crossed the garden without stopping, took down the lamp from the niche, threw out the wick and the liquor, and, as the magician had desired, put it in his vestband. But as he came down from the terrace, seeing it was perfectly dry, he stopped in the garden to observe the fruit, which he only had a glimpse of in crossing it. All the trees were loaded with extraordinary fruit, of different colours on each tree. Some bore fruit entirely white, and some clear and transparent as crystal; some pale red, and others deeper; some green, blue, and purple, and others yellow: in short, there was fruit of all colours. The white were pearls; the clear and transparent, diamonds; the deep red, rubies; the paler, rubies; the green, emeralds; the blue, turquoises; the purple, amethysts; and those that were of yellow cast, sapphires. Alla ad Deen was altogether ignorant of their worth, and would have preferred figs and grapes, or any other fruits. But though he took them only for coloured glass of little value, yet he was so pleased with the variety of the colours, and the beauty and extraordinary size of the seeming fruit, that he resolved to gather some of every sort; and accordingly filled the two new purses his uncle had bought for him with his clothes. Some he wrapped up in the skirts of his vest, which was of silk, large and wrapping, and crammed his bosom as full as it could hold.

Alla ad Deen, having thus loaded himself with riches he knew not the value of, returned through the three halls with the same precaution, made all the haste he could, that he might not make his uncle wait, and soon arrived at the mouth of the cave, where the African magician expected him with the utmost impatience. As soon as Alla ad Deen saw him, he cried out, “Pray, uncle, lend me your hand, to help me out.” “Give me the lamp first,” replied the magician; “it will be troublesome to you.” “Indeed, uncle,” answered Alla ad Deen, “I cannot now; it is not troublesome to me: but I will as soon as I am up.” The African magician was so obstinate, that he would have the lamp before he would help him up; and Alla ad Deen, who had encumbered himself so much with his fruit that he could not well get at it, refused to give it to him till he was out of the cave. The African magician, provoked at this obstinate refusal, flew into a passion, threw a little of his incense into the fire, which he had taken care to keep in, and no sooner pronounced two magical words, than the stone which had closed the mouth of the cave moved into its place, with the earth over it in the same manner as it lay at the arrival of the magician and Alla ad Deen.

This action of the African magician’s plainly shewed him to be neither Alla ad Deen’s uncle, nor Mustapha the tailor’s brother; but a true African. Africa is a country whose inhabitants delight most in magic of any in the whole world, and he had applied himself to it from his youth. After forty years’ experience in enchantments, geomancy, fumigations, and reading of magic books, he had found out that there was in the world a wonderful lamp, the possession of which would render him more powerful than any monarch; and by a late operation of geomancy, he had discovered that this lamp lay concealed in a subterraneous place in the midst of China, in the situation already described. Fully persuaded of the truth of this discovery, he set out from the farthest part of Africa; and after a long and fatiguing journey, came to the town nearest to this treasure. But though he had a certain knowledge of the place where the lamp was, he was not permitted to take it himself, nor to enter the subterraneous place, but must receive it from the hands of another person. For this reason he had addressed himself to Alla ad Deen, whom he looked upon as a young lad whose life was of no consequence, and fit to serve his purpose, resolving, as soon as he should get the lamp into his hands, to sacrifice him to his avarice and wickedness, by making the fumigation mentioned before, and repeating two magical words, the effect of which would remove the stone into its place, so that no witness would remain of the transaction.

The blow he had given Alla ad Deen was intended to make him obey the more readily, and give him the lamp as soon as he should ask for it. But his too great precipitation, and his fear lest somebody should come that way during their dispute, and discover what he wished to keep secret, produced an effect quite contrary to what he had proposed to himself.

When the African magician saw that all his hopes were frustrated forever, he returned the same day for Africa; but went quite round the town, and at some distance from it, lest some persons who had observed him walk out with the boy, on seeing him come back without him, should entertain any suspicions, and stop him.

According to all appearances, there was no prospects of Alla ad Deen being any more heard of. But the magician, when he had contrived his death, forgot the ring he had put upon his finger, which preserved him, though he knew not its virtue. It may seem astonishing that the loss of that, together with the lamp, did not drive the magician to despair; but magicians are so much used to misfortunes, and events contrary to their wishes, that they do not lay them to heart, but still feed themselves, to the end of life, with unsubstantial notions and chimeras.

The surprise of Alla ad Deen, who had never suspected this treachery from his pretended uncle, after all his caresses and what he had done for him, is more easily to be imagined than expressed. When he found himself buried alive, he cried, and called out to his uncle, to tell him he was ready to give him the lamp; but in vain, since his cries could not be heard. He descended to the bottom of the steps, with a design to get into the garden, but the door, which was opened before by enchantment, was now shut by the same means. He then redoubled his cries and tears, sat down on the steps, without any hopes of ever seeing light again, and in a melancholy certainty of passing from the present darkness into that of a speedy death.

Alla ad Deen remained in this state two days, without eating or drinking, and on the third looked upon death as inevitable. Clasping his hands with an entire resignation to the will of God, he said, "There is no strength or power but in the great and high God." In this action of joining his hands he rubbed the ring which the magician had put on his finger, and of which he knew not yet the virtue. Immediately a genie of enormous size and frightful aspect rose out of the earth, his head reaching the roof of the vault, and said to him, "What wouldst thou have? I am ready to obey thee as thy slave, and the slave of all who may possess the ring on thy finger; I, and the other slaves of that ring."

At another time, Alla ad Deen, who had not been used to such appearances, would have been so frightened at the sight of so extraordinary a figure that he would not have been able to speak; but the danger he was in made him answer without hesitation, "Whoever thou art, deliver me from this place, if thou art able." He had no sooner spoken these words, than he found himself on the very spot where the magician had caused the earth to open.

It was some time before his eyes could bear the light, after being so long in total darkness: but after he had endeavoured by degrees to support it, and began to look about him, he was much surprised not to find the earth open, and could not comprehend how he had got so soon out of its bowels. There was nothing to be seen but the place where the fire had been, by which he could nearly judge the situation of the cave. Then turning himself towards the town, he perceived it at a distance in the midst of the gardens that surrounded it, and saw the way by which the magician had brought him. Returning God thanks to find himself once more in the world, he made the best of his way home. When he got within his mother's door, the joy to see her and his weakness for want of sustenance for three days made him faint, and he remained for a long time as dead. His mother, who had given him over for lost, seeing him in this condition, omitted nothing to bring him to himself. As soon as he recovered, the first words he spoke, were, "Pray, mother, give me something to eat, for I have not put a morsel of anything into my mouth these three days." His mother brought what she had, and set it before him. "My son," said she, "be not too eager, for it is dangerous; eat but little at a time, and take care of yourself. Besides, I would not have you talk; you will have time enough to tell me what has happened to you when you are recovered. It is a great comfort to me to see you again, after the affliction I have been in since Friday, and the pains I have taken to learn what was become of you."

Alla ad Deen took his mother's advice, and ate and drank moderately. When he had done, "Mother," said he to her, "I cannot help complaining of you, for abandoning me so easily to the discretion of a man who had a design to kill me and who at this very moment thinks my death certain. You believed he was my uncle, as well as I; and what other thoughts could we entertain of a man who was so kind to me, and made such advantageous proffers? But I must tell you, mother, he is a rogue and a cheat, and only made me those promises to accomplish my death; but for what reason neither you nor I can guess. For my part, I can assure you, I never gave him any cause to justify the least ill treatment from him. You shall judge yourself, when you have heard all that passed from the time I left you, till he came to the execution of his wicked design."

Alla ad Deen then related to his mother all that had happened to him from the Friday, when the magician took him to see the palaces and gardens about the town, and what fell out in the way, till they came to the place between the two mountains where the great prodigy was to be performed; how, with incense which the magician threw into the fire, and some magical words which he pronounced, the earth opened, and discovered a cave, which led to an inestimable treasure. He forgot not the blow the magician had given him, in what manner he softened again, and engaged him by great promises, and putting a ring to his finger, to go down into the cave. He did not omit the least circumstance of what he saw in crossing the three halls and the garden, and his taking the lamp, which he pulled out of his bosom and shewed to his mother, as well as the transparent fruit of different colours, which he had gathered in the garden as he returned. But, though these fruits were precious stones, brilliant as the sun, and the reflection of a lamp which then lighted the room might have led them to think they were of great value, she was as ignorant of their worth as her son, and cared nothing for them. She had been bred in a low rank of life, and her husband's poverty prevented his being possessed of jewels, nor had she, her relations, or neighbours, ever seen any; so that we must not wonder that she regarded them as things of no value, and only pleasing to the eye by the variety of their colours.

Alla ad Deen put them behind one of the cushions of the sofa, and continued his story, telling his mother, that when he returned to the mouth of the cave, upon his refusal to give the magician the lamp till he should get out, the stone, by his throwing some incense into the fire, and using two or three magical words, shut him in, and the earth closed. He could not help bursting into tears at the representation of the miserable condition he was in, at finding himself buried alive in a dismal cave, till by the touching of his ring, the virtue of which he was till then an entire stranger to, he, properly speaking, came to life again. When he had finished his story, he said to his mother, "I need say no more, you know the rest. This is my adventure, and the danger I have been exposed to since you saw me."

Alla ad Deen's mother heard with so much patience as not to interrupt him this surprising and wonderful relation, notwithstanding it could be no small affliction to a mother, who loved her son tenderly: but yet in the most moving part which discovered the perfidy of the African magician, she could not help shewing, by marks of the greatest indignation, how much she detested him; and when her son had finished his story, she broke out into a thousand reproaches against that vile impostor. She called him perfidious traitor, barbarian, assassin, deceiver, magician, and an enemy and destroyer of mankind. "Without doubt, child," added she, "he is a magician, and they are plagues to the world, and by their enchantments and sorceries have commerce with the devil. Bless God for preserving you from his wicked designs; for your death would have been inevitable, if you had not called upon him, and implored his assistance." She said a great deal more against the magician's treachery; but finding that whilst she talked, Alla ad Deen, who had not slept for three days and nights, began to doze, she left him to his repose and retired.

Alla ad Deen, who had not closed his eyes while he was in the subterraneous abode, slept very soundly till late the next morning; when the first thing he said to his mother was that he wanted something to eat, and that she could not do him a greater kindness than to give him his breakfast. "Alas! child," said she, "I have not a bit of bread to give you, you ate up all the provisions I had in the house yesterday; but have a little patience, and it shall not be long before I will bring you some: I have a little cotton, which I have spun; I will go and sell it, buy bread, and something for our dinner." "Mother," replied Alla ad Deen, "keep your cotton for another time, and give me the lamp I brought home with me yesterday; I will go and sell it, and the money I shall get for it will serve both for breakfast and dinner, and perhaps supper too."

Alla ad Deen's mother took the lamp, and said to her son, "Here it is, but it is very dirty; if it was a little cleaner I believe it would bring something more." She took some fine sand and water to clean it; but had no sooner begun to rub it, than in an instant a hideous genie of gigantic size appeared before her, and said to her in a voice like thunder, "What wouldst thou have? I am ready to obey thee as thy slave, and the slave of all those who have that lamp in their hands; I and the other slaves of the lamp."

Alla ad Deen's mother, terrified at the sight of the genie, fainted; when Alla ad Deen, who had seen such a phantom in the cavern, snatched the lamp out of his mother's hand, and said to the genie boldly, "I am hungry, bring me something to eat." The genie disappeared immediately, and in an instant returned with a large silver tray, holding twelve covered dishes of the same metal, which contained the most delicious viands; six large white bread cakes on two plates, two flagons of wine, and two silver cups. All these he placed upon a carpet, and disappeared; this was done before Alla ad Deen's mother recovered from her swoon.

Alla ad Deen had fetched some water, and sprinkled it in her face, to recover her: whether that or the smell of the meat brought her to life again, it was not long before she came to herself. "Mother," said Alla ad Deen, "do not mind this; get up, and come and eat; here is what will put you in heart, and at the same time satisfy my extreme hunger: do not let such delicious meat get cold."

His mother was much surprised to see the great tray, twelve dishes, six loaves, the two flagons and cups, and to smell the savoury odour which exhaled from the dishes. "Child," said she, "to whom are we obliged for this great plenty and liberality? Has the sultan been made acquainted with our poverty, and had compassion on us?"

“It is no matter, mother,” said Alla ad Deen, “let us sit down and eat; for you have almost as much need of a good breakfast as myself; when we have done, I will tell you.” Accordingly both mother and son sat down, and ate with the better relish as the table was so well furnished. But all the time Alla ad Deen’s mother could not forbear looking at and admiring the tray and dishes, though she could not judge whether they were silver or any other metal, and the novelty more than the value attracted her attention.

The mother and son sat at breakfast till it was dinner-time, and then they thought it would be best to put the two meals together; yet after this they found they should have enough left for supper, and two meals for the next day.

When Alla ad Deen’s mother had taken away and set by what was left, she went and sat down by her son on the sofa, saying, “I expect now that you should satisfy my impatience, and tell me exactly what passed between the genie and you while I was in a swoon;” which he readily complied with.

She was in as great amazement at what her son told her, as at the appearance of the genie; and said to him, “But, son, what have we to do with genii? I never heard that any of my acquaintance had ever seen one. How came that vile genie to address himself to me, and not to you, to whom he had appeared before in the cave?” “Mother,” answered Alla ad Deen, “the genie you saw is not the one who appeared to me, though he resembles him in size; no, they had quite different persons and habits; they belong to different masters. If you remember, he that I first saw, called himself the slave of the ring on my finger; and this you saw, called himself the slave of the lamp you had in your hand: but I believe you did not hear him, for I think you fainted as soon as he began to speak.”

“What!” cried the mother, “was your lamp then the occasion of that cursed genie addressing himself rather to me than to you? Ah my son, take it out of my sight, and put it where you please. I will never touch it. I had rather you would sell it, than run the hazard of being frightened to death again by touching it: and if you would take my advice, you would part also with the ring, and not have any thing to do with genii, who, as our prophet has told us, are only devils.”

“With your leave, mother,” replied Alla ad Deen, “I shall now take care how I sell a lamp, which may be so serviceable both to you and me. Have not you been an eye-witness of what it has procured us? and it shall still continue to furnish us with subsistence and maintenance. You may suppose as I do, that my false and wicked uncle would not have taken so much pains, and undertaken so long and tedious a journey, if it had not been to get into his possession this wonderful lamp, which he preferred before all the gold and silver which he knew was in the halls, and which I have seen with my own eyes. He knew too well the worth of this lamp, not to prefer it to so great a treasure; and since chance hath discovered the virtue of it to us, let us make a profitable use of it, without making any great shew, and exciting the envy and jealousy of our neighbours. However, since the genii frighten you so much, I will take it out of your sight, and put it where I may find it when I want it. The ring I cannot resolve to part with; for without that you had never seen me again; and though I am alive now, perhaps, if it was gone, I might not be so some moments hence; therefore I hope you will give me leave to keep it, and to wear it always on my finger. Who knows what dangers you and I may be exposed to, which neither of us can foresee, and from which it may deliver us." As Alla ad Deen's arguments were just, his mother had nothing to say against them; she only replied, that he might do what he pleased, for her part, she would have nothing to do with genii, but would wash her hands of them, and never say anything more about them.

By the next night they had eaten all the provisions the genie had brought; and the next day Alla ad Deen, who could not bear the thoughts of hunger, putting one of the silver dishes under his vest, went out early to sell it, and addressing himself to a Jew whom he met in the streets, took him aside, and pulling out the plate, asked him if he would buy it. The cunning Jew took the dish, examined it, and as soon as he found that it was good silver, asked Alla ad Deen at how much he valued it. Alla ad Deen, who knew not its value, and never had been used to such traffic, told him he would trust to his judgment and honour. The Jew was somewhat confounded at this plain dealing; and doubting whether Alla ad Deen understood the material or the full value of what he offered to sell, took a piece of gold out of his purse and gave it him, though it was but the sixtieth part of the worth of the plate. Alla ad Deen, taking the money very eagerly, retired with so much haste, that the Jew, not content with the exorbitancy of his profit, was vexed he had not penetrated into his ignorance, and was going to run after him, to endeavour to get some change out of the piece of gold; but he ran so fast, and had got so far, that it would have been impossible for him to overtake him.

Before Alla ad Deen went home, he called at a baker's, bought some cakes of bread, changed his money, and on his return gave the rest to his mother, who went and purchased provisions enough to last them some time. After this manner they lived, till Alla ad Deen had sold the twelve dishes singly, as necessity pressed, to the Jew, for the same money; who, after the first time, durst not offer him less, for fear of losing so good a bargain. When he had sold the last dish, he had recourse to the tray, which weighed ten times as much as the dishes, and would have carried it to his old purchaser, but that it was too large and cumbersome; therefore he was obliged to bring him home with him to his mother's, where, after the Jew had examined the weight of the tray, he laid down ten pieces of gold, with which Alla ad Deen was very well satisfied.

They lived on these ten pieces in a frugal manner, and Alla ad Deen, though used to an idle life, had left off playing with young lads of his own age ever since his adventure with the African magician. He spent his time in walking about, and conversing with decent people, with whom he gradually got acquainted. Sometimes he would stop at the principal merchants' shops, where people of distinction met, and listen to their discourse, by which he gained some little knowledge of the world.

When all the money was spent, Alla ad Deen had recourse again to the lamp. He took it in his hand, looked for the part where his mother had rubbed it with the sand, rubbed it also, when the genie immediately appeared, and said, "What wouldst thou have? I am ready to obey thee as thy slave, and the slave of all those who have that lamp in their hands; I, and the other slaves of the lamp." "I am hungry," said Alla ad Deen, "bring me something to eat." The genie disappeared, and presently returned with a tray, the same number of covered dishes as before, set them down, and vanished.

Alla ad Deen's mother, knowing what her son was going to do, went out about some business, on purpose to avoid being in the way when the genie came; and when she returned, was almost as much surprised as before at the prodigious effect of the lamp. However, she sat down with her son, and when they had eaten as much as they liked, she set enough by to last them two or three days.

As soon as Alla ad Deen found that their provisions were expended, he took one of the dishes, and went to look for his Jew chapman; but passing by a goldsmith's shop, who had the character of a very fair and honest man, the goldsmith perceiving him, called to him, and said, "My lad, I have often observed you go by, loaded as you are at present, and talk with such a Jew, and then come back again empty handed. I imagine that you carry something which you sell to him; but perhaps you do not know that he is the greatest rogue even among the Jews, and is so well known, that nobody of prudence will have anything to do with him. What I tell you is for your own good. If you will shew me what you now carry, and it is to be sold, I will give you the full worth of it; or I will direct you to other merchants who will not cheat you."

The hopes of getting more money for his plate induced Alla ad Deen to pull it from under his vest, and shew it to the goldsmith, who at first sight saw that it was made of the finest silver, asked him if he had sold such as that to the Jew, when Alla ad Deen told him that he had sold him twelve such, for a piece of gold each. "What a villain!" cried the goldsmith; "but," added he, "my son, what is passed cannot be recalled. By shewing you the value of this plate, which is of the finest silver we use in our shops, I will let you see how much the Jew has cheated you."

The goldsmith took a pair of scales, weighed the dish, and after he had mentioned how much an ounce of fine silver cost, assured him that his plate would fetch by weight sixty pieces of gold, which he offered to pay down immediately. "If you dispute my honesty," said he, "you may go to any other of our trade, and if he gives you more, I will be bound to forfeit twice as much; for we gain only the fashion of the plate we buy, and that the fairest dealing Jews are not contented with."

Alla ad Deen thanked him for his fair dealing, so greatly to his advantage, took the gold, and never after went to any other person, but sold him all his dishes and the tray, and had as much for them as the weight came to.

Though Alla ad Deen and his mother had an inexhaustible treasure in their lamp, and might have had whatever they wished for, yet they lived with the same frugality as before, except that Alla ad Deen dressed better; as for his mother, she wore no clothes but what she earned by spinning cotton. After their manner of living, it may easily be supposed, that the money for which Alla ad Deen had sold the dishes and tray was sufficient to maintain them some time.

During this interval, Alla ad Deen frequented the shops of the principal merchants, where they sold cloth of gold and silver, linens, silk stuffs, and jewellery, and oftentimes joining in their conversation, acquired a knowledge of the world, and respectable demeanour. By his acquaintance among the jewellers, he came to know that the fruits which he had gathered when he took the lamp were, instead of coloured glass, stones of inestimable value; but he had the prudence not to mention this to any one, not even to his mother.

One day as Alla ad Deen was walking about the town, he heard an order proclaimed, commanding the people to shut up their shops and houses, and keep within doors, while the princess Buddir al Buddoor, the sultan’s daughter, went to the baths and returned.

This proclamation inspired Alla ad Deen with eager curiosity to see the princess’s face, which he could not do without admission into the house of some acquaintance, and then only through a window; which did not satisfy him, when he considered that the princess, when she went to the baths, would be closely veiled; but to gratify his curiosity, he presently thought of a scheme, which succeeded; it was to place himself behind the door of the bath, which was so situated that he could not fail of seeing her face.

Alla ad Deen had not waited long before the princess came, and he could see her plainly through a chink of the door without being discovered. She was attended by a great crowd of ladies, slaves and eunuchs, who walked on each side, and behind her. When she came within three or four paces of the door of the baths, she took off her veil, and gave Alla ad Deen an opportunity of a full view.

As soon as Alla ad Deen had seen the princess, his heart could not withstand those inclinations so charming an object always inspires. The princess was the most beautiful brunette in the world; her eyes were large, lively, and sparkling; her looks sweet and modest; her nose was of a just proportion and without a fault, her mouth small, her lips of a vermilion red and charmingly agreeable symmetry; in a word, all the features of her face were perfectly regular. It is not therefore surprising that Alla ad Deen, who had never before seen such a blaze of charms, was dazzled, and his senses ravished by such an assemblage. With all these perfections the princess had so fine a form, and so majestic an air, that the sight of her was sufficient to inspire love and admiration.

After the princess had passed by, and entered the baths, Alla ad Deen remained some time astonished, and in a kind of ecstacy, retracing and imprinting the idea of so charming an object deeply in his mind. But at last, considering that the princess was gone past him, and that when she returned from the bath her back would be towards him, and then veiled, he resolved to quit his hiding place and go home. He could not so far conceal his uneasiness but that his mother perceived it, was surprised to see him so much more thoughtful and melancholy than usual; and asked what had happened to make him so, or if he was ill? He returned her no answer, but sat carelessly down on the sofa, and remained silent, musing on the image of the charming Buddir al Buddoor. His mother, who was dressing supper, pressed him no more. When it was ready, she served it up, and perceiving that he gave no attention to it, urged him to eat, but had much ado to persuade him to change his place; which when he did, he ate much less than usual, all the time cast down his eyes, and observed so profound a silence, that she could not obtain a word in answer to all the questions she put, in order to find the reason of so extraordinary an alteration.

After supper, she asked him again why he was so melancholy, but could get no information, and he determined to go to bed rather than give her the least satisfaction. Without examining how he passed the night, his mind full as it was with the charms of the princess, I shall only observe that as he sat next day on the sofa, opposite his mother, as she was spinning cotton, he spoke to her in these words: “I perceive, mother, that my silence yesterday has much troubled you; I was not, nor am I sick, as I fancy you believed; but I assure you, that what I felt then, and now endure, is worse than any disease. I cannot explain what ails me; but doubt not what I am going to relate will inform you.

"It was not proclaimed in this quarter of the town, and therefore you could know nothing of it, that the sultan's daughter was yesterday to go to the baths. I heard this as I walked about the town, and an order was issued that all the shops should be shut up in her way thither, and everybody keep within doors, to leave the streets free for her and her attendants. As I was not then far from the bath, I had a great curiosity to see the princess's face; and as it occurred to me that the princess, when she came nigh the door of the bath, would pull her veil off, I resolved to conceal myself behind the door. You know the situation of the door, and may imagine that I must have had a full view of her. The princess threw off her veil, and I had the happiness of seeing her lovely face with the greatest security. This, mother, was the cause of my melancholy and silence yesterday; I love the princess with more violence than I can express; and as my passion increases every moment, I cannot live without the possession of the amiable Buddir al Buddoor, and am resolved to ask her in marriage of the sultan her father."

Alla ad Deen's mother listened with surprise to what her son told her; but when he talked of asking the princess in marriage, she could not help bursting out into a loud laugh. Alla ad Deen would have gone on with his rhapsody, but she interrupted him. "Alas! child," said she, "what are you thinking of? you must be mad to talk thus."

"I assure you, mother," replied Alla ad Deen, "that I am not mad, but in my right senses; I foresaw that you would reproach me with folly and extravagance; but I must tell you once more that I am resolved to demand the princess of the sultan in marriage, and your remonstrances shall not prevent me."

"Indeed, son," replied the mother seriously, "I cannot help telling you that you have forgotten yourself; and if you would put this resolution of yours in execution, I do not see whom you can prevail upon to venture to make the proposal for you." "You yourself," replied he immediately. "I go to the sultan!" answered the mother, amazed and surprised. "I shall be cautious how I engage in such an errand. Why, who are you, son," continued she, "that you can have the assurance to think of your sultan's daughter? Have you forgotten that your father was one of the poorest tailors in the capital, and that I am of no better extraction; and do not you know that sultans never marry their daughters but to princes, sons of sovereigns like themselves?"

"Mother," answered Alla ad Deen, "I have already told you that I foresaw all that you have said, or can say: and tell you again, that neither your discourse nor your remonstrances shall make me change my mind. I have told you that you must ask the princess in marriage for me: it is a favour I desire of you, and I beg of you not to refuse, unless you would rather see me in my grave, than by your compliance give me new life."

The good old woman was much embarrassed, when she found Alla ad Deen obstinately persisting in so wild a design. "My son," said she again, "I am your mother, who brought you into the world, and there is nothing that is reasonable but I would readily do for you. If I were to go and treat about your marriage with some neighbour's daughter, whose circumstances were equal with yours, I would do it with all my heart; and even then they would expect you should have some little estate or fortune, or be of some trade. When such poor folks as we are wish to marry, the first thing they ought to think of, is how to live. But without reflecting on the meanness of your birth, and the little merit and fortune you have to recommend you, you aim at the highest pitch of exaltation; and your pretensions are no less than to demand in marriage the daughter of your sovereign, who with one single word can crush you to pieces. I say nothing of what respects yourself. I leave you to reflect on what you have to do, if you have ever so little thought. I come now to consider what concerns myself. How could so extraordinary a thought come into your head, as that I should go to the sultan and make a proposal to him to give his daughter in marriage to you? Suppose I had, not to say the boldness, but the impudence to present myself before the sultan, and make so extravagant a request, to whom should I address myself to be introduced to his majesty? Do you not think the first person I should speak to would take me for a mad woman, and chastise me as I should deserve? Suppose, however, that there is no difficulty in presenting myself for an audience of the sultan, and I know there is none to those who go to petition for justice, which he distributes equally among his subjects; I know too that to those who ask a favour he grants it with pleasure when he sees it is deserved, and the persons are worthy of it. But is that your case? Do you think you have merited the honour you would have me ask for you? Are you worthy of it? What have you done to claim such a favour, either for your prince or country? How have you distinguished yourself? If you have done nothing to merit so high a distinction, nor are worthy of it, with what face shall I ask it? How can I open my mouth to make the proposal to the sultan? His majestic presence and the lustre of his court would absolutely confound me, who used even to tremble before my dear husband your father, when I asked him for any thing. There is another reason, my son, which you do not think of, which is that nobody ever goes to ask a favour of the sultan without a present. But what presents have you to make? And if you had any that were worthy of the least attention of so great a monarch, what proportion could they bear to the favour you would ask? Therefore, reflect well on what you are about, and consider, that you aspire to an object which it is impossible for you to obtain."

Alla ad Deen heard very calmly all that his mother could say to dissuade him from his design, and after he had weighed her representations in all points, replied: "I own, mother, it is great rashness in me to presume to carry my pretensions so far; and a great want of consideration to ask you with so much heat and precipitancy to go and make the proposal to the sultan, without first taking proper measures to procure a favourable reception, and therefore beg your pardon. But be not surprised that through the violence of my passion I did not at first see every measure necessary to procure me the happiness I seek. I love the princess, or rather I adore her, and shall always persevere in my design of marrying her. I am obliged to you for the hint you have given me, and look upon it as the first step I ought to take to procure the happy issue I promise myself.

"You say it is not customary to go to the sultan without a present, and that I have nothing worthy of his acceptance. As to the necessity of a present, I agree with you, and own that I never thought of it; but as to what you say that I have nothing fit to offer, do not you think, mother, that what I brought home with me the day on which I was delivered from an inevitable death, may be an acceptable present? I mean what you and I both took for coloured glass: but now I am undeceived, and can tell you that they are jewels of inestimable value, and fit for the greatest monarchs. I know the worth of them by frequenting the shops; and you may take my word that all the precious stones which I saw in the most capital jewellers' possessions were not to be compared to those we have, either for size or beauty, and yet they value theirs at an excessive price. In short, neither you nor I know the value of ours; but be it as it may, by the little experience I have, I am persuaded that they will be received very favourably by the sultan: you have a large porcelain dish fit to hold them; fetch it, and let us see how they will look, when we have arranged them according to their different colours."

Alla ad Deen's mother brought the china dish, when he took the jewels out of the two purses in which he had kept them, and placed them in order according to his fancy. But the brightness and lustre they emitted in the day-time, and the variety of the colours, so dazzled the eyes both of mother and son, that they were astonished beyond measure; for they had only seen them by the light of a lamp; and though the latter had beheld them pendant on the trees like fruit beautiful to the eye, yet as he was then but a boy, he looked on them only as glittering playthings.

After they had admired the beauty of the jewels some time, Alla ad Deen said to his mother, "Now you cannot excuse yourself from going to the sultan, under pretext of not having a present to make him, since here is one which will gain you a favourable reception."

Though the good widow, notwithstanding the beauty and lustre of the precious stones, did not believe them so valuable as her son estimated them, she thought such a present might nevertheless be agreeable to the sultan, but still she hesitated at the request. "My son," said she, "I cannot conceive that your present will have its desired effect, or that the sultan will look upon me with a favourable eye; I am sure, that if I attempt to deliver your strange message, I shall have no power to open my mouth; therefore I shall not only lose my labour, but the present, which you say is so invaluable, and shall return home again in confusion, to tell you that your hopes are frustrated. I have represented the consequence, and you ought to believe me; but," added she, "I will exert my best endeavour to please you, and wish I may have power to ask the sultan as you would have me; but certainly he will either laugh at me, send me back like a fool, or be in so great a rage, as to make us both the victims of his fury."

She used many other arguments to endeavour to make him change his mind; but the charms of the princess had made too great an impression on his heart for him to be dissuaded from his design. He persisted in importuning his mother to execute his resolution, and she, as much out of tenderness as for fear he should be guilty of greater extravagance, complied with his request.

As it was now late, and the time for admission to the palace was passed, it was put off till the next day. The mother and son talked of different matters the remaining part of the day; and Alla ad Deen strove to encourage her in the task she had undertaken; while she, notwithstanding all his arguments, could not persuade herself she should succeed; and it must be confessed she had reason enough to doubt. "Child," said she to Alla ad Deen, "if the sultan should receive me as favourably as I wish for your sake, should even hear my proposal with calmness, and after this scarcely-to-be-expected reception should think of asking me where lie your riches and your estate (for he will sooner inquire after these than your person), if, I say, he should ask me these questions, what answer would you have me return him?"

"Let us not be uneasy, mother," replied Alla ad Deen, "about what may never happen. First, let us see how the sultan receives, and what answer he gives you. If it should so fall out, that he desires to be informed of what you mention, I have thought of an answer, and am confident that the lamp which hath supported us so long will not fail me in time of need."

The tailor's widow could not say any thing against what her son then proposed; but reflected that the lamp might be capable of doing greater wonders than just providing victuals for them. This consideration satisfied her, and at the same time removed all the difficulties which might have prevented her from undertaking the service she had promised her son with the sultan. Alla ad Deen, who penetrated into his mother's thoughts, said to her, "Above all things, mother, be sure to keep secret our possession of the lamp, for thereon depends the success we have to expect;" and after this caution, Alla ad Deen and his mother parted to go to rest. But violent love, and the great prospect of so immense a fortune, had so much possessed the son's thoughts, that he could not repose himself so well as he could have wished. He rose before day-break, awakened his mother, pressing her to get herself dressed to go to the sultan's palace, and to get admittance, if possible, before the grand vizier, the other viziers, and the great officers of state went in to take their seats in the divan, where the sultan always assisted in person.

Alla ad Deen's mother took the china dish, in which they had put the jewels the day before, wrapped in two napkins, one finer than the other, which was tied at the four corners for more easy carriage, and set forward for the sultan's palace. When she came to the gates, the grand vizier, the other viziers and most distinguished lords of the court, were just gone in; but, notwithstanding the crowd of people who had business was great, she got into the divan, a spacious hall, the entrance into which was very magnificent. She placed herself just before the sultan, grand vizier, and the great lords, who sat in council, on his right and left hand. Several causes were called, according to their order, pleaded and adjudged, until the time the divan generally broke up, when the sultan rising, returned to his apartment, attended by the grand vizier; the other viziers and ministers of state then retired, as also did those whose business had called them thither; some pleased with gaining their causes, others dissatisfied at the sentences pronounced against them, and some in expectation of theirs being heard the next sitting.

Alla ad Deen's mother, seeing the sultan retire, and all the people depart, judged rightly that he would not sit again that day, and resolved to go home. When Alla ad Deen saw her return with the present designed for the sultan, he knew not what to think of her success, and in his fear lest she should bring him some ill news, had not courage to ask her any questions; but she, who had never set foot in the sultan's palace before, and knew not what was every day practised there, freed him from his embarrassment, and said to him, with a great deal of simplicity, "Son, I have seen the sultan, and am very well persuaded he has seen me too; for I placed myself just before him; but he was so much taken up with those who attended on all sides of him, that I pitied him, and wondered at his patience. At last I believe he was heartily tired, for he rose up suddenly, and would not hear a great many who were ready prepared to speak to him, but went away, at which I was well pleased, for indeed I began to lose all patience, and was extremely fatigued with staying so long. But there is no harm done; I will go again to-morrow; perhaps the sultan may not be so busy."

Though his passion was very violent, Alla ad Deen was forced to be satisfied with this delay, and to fortify himself with patience. He had at least the satisfaction to find that his mother had got over the greatest difficulty, which was to procure access to the sultan, and hoped that the example of those she saw speak to him would embolden her to acquit herself better of her commission when a favourable opportunity might offer to speak to him.

The next morning she repaired to the sultan's palace with the present, as early as the day before, but when she came there, she found the gates of the divan shut, and understood that the council sat but every other day, therefore she must come again the next. This news she carried to her son, whose only relief was to guard himself with patience. She went six times afterwards on the days appointed, placed herself always directly before the sultan, but with as little success as the first morning, and might have perhaps come a thousand times to as little purpose, if luckily the sultan himself had not taken particular notice of her: for only those who came with petitions approached the sultan, when each pleaded their cause in its turn, and Alla ad Deen's mother was not one of them.

On the sixth day, however, after the divan was broken up, when the sultan returned to his own apartment, he said to his grand vizier, "I have for some time observed a certain woman, who attends constantly every day that I give audience, with something wrapped up in a napkin: she always stands up from the beginning to the breaking up of the audience, and affects to place herself just before me. Do you know what she wants?"

"Sir," replied the grand vizier, who knew no more than the sultan what she wanted, but did not wish to seem uninformed, "your majesty knows that women often make complaints on trifles; perhaps she may come to complain to your majesty that somebody has sold her some bad flour, or some such trifling matter." The sultan was not satisfied with this answer, but replied, "If this woman comes to our next audience, do not fail to call her, that I may hear what she has to say." The grand vizier made answer by lowering his hand, and then lifting it up above his head, signifying his willingness to lose it if he failed.

By this time, the tailor's widow was so much used to go to audience, and stand before the sultan, that she did not think it any trouble, if she could but satisfy her son that she neglected nothing that lay in her power to please him: the next audience day she went to the divan, placed herself in front of the sultan as usual; and before the grand vizier had made his report of business, the sultan perceived her, and compassionating her for having waited so long, said to the vizier, "Before you enter upon any business, remember the woman I spoke to you about; bid her come near, and let us hear and dispatch her business first." The grand vizier immediately called the chief of the mace-bearers who stood ready to obey his commands; and pointing to her, bade him go to that woman, and tell her to come before the sultan.

The chief of the officers went to Alla ad Deen's mother, and at a sign he gave her, she followed him to the foot of the sultan's throne, where he left her, and retired to his place by the grand vizier. The old woman, after the example of others whom she saw salute the sultan, bowed her head down to the carpet, which covered the platform of the throne, and remained in that posture till the sultan bade her rise, which she had no sooner done, than he said to her, "Good woman, I have observed you to stand a long time, from the beginning to the rising of the divan; what business brings you here?"

After these words, Alla ad Deen's mother prostrated herself a second time; and when she arose, said, "Monarch of monarchs, before I tell your majesty the extraordinary and almost incredible business which brings me before your high throne, I beg of you to pardon the boldness or rather impudence of the demand I am going to make, which is so uncommon, that I tremble, and am ashamed to propose it to my sovereign." In order to give her the more freedom to explain herself, the sultan ordered all to quit the divan but the grand vizier, and then told her she might speak without restraint.

Alla ad Deen’s mother, not content with this favour of the sultan’s to save her the trouble and confusion of speaking before so many people, was notwithstanding for securing herself against his anger, which, from the proposal she was going to make, she was not a little apprehensive of; therefore resuming her discourse, she said, “I beg of your majesty, if you should think my demand the least injurious or offensive, to assure me first of your pardon and forgiveness.” “Well,” replied the sultan, “I will forgive you, be it what it may, and no hurt shall come to you: speak boldly.”

When Alla ad Deen’s mother had taken all these precautions, for fear of the sultan’s anger, she told him faithfully how Alla ad Deen had seen the princess Buddir al Buddoor, the violent love that fatal sight had inspired him with, the declaration he had made to her of it when he came home, and what representations she had made “to dissuade him from a passion no less disrespectful,” said she, “to your majesty, as sultan, than to the princess your daughter. But,” continued she, “my son, instead of taking my advice and reflecting on his presumption, was so obstinate as to persevere, and to threaten me with some desperate act, if I refused to come and ask the princess in marriage of your majesty; and it was not without the greatest reluctance that I was led to accede to his request, for which I beg your majesty once more to pardon not only me, but also Alla ad Deen my son, for entertaining so rash a project as to aspire to so high an alliance.”

The sultan hearkened to this discourse with mildness, and without shewing the least anger; but before he gave her any answer, asked her what she had brought tied up in the napkin. She took the china dish, which she had set down at the foot of the throne, before she prostrated herself before him; untied it, and presented it to the sultan.

The sultan’s amazement and surprise were inexpressible, when he saw so many large, beautiful, and valuable jewels collected in the dish. He remained for some time motionless with admiration. At last, when he had recovered himself, he received the present from Alla ad Deen’s mother’s hand, crying out in a transport of joy, “How rich, how beautiful!” After he had admired and handled all the jewels, one after another, he turned to his grand vizier, and shewing him the dish, said, "Behold, admire, wonder, and confess that your eyes never beheld jewels so rich and beautiful before." The vizier was charmed. "Well," continued the sultan, "what sayst thou to such a present? Is it not worthy of the princess my daughter? And ought I not to bestow her on one who values her at so great price?"

These words put the grand vizier into extreme agitation. The sultan had some time before signified to him his intention of bestowing the princess on a son of his; therefore he was afraid, and not without grounds, that the sultan, dazzled by so rich and extraordinary a present, might change his mind. Therefore going to him, and whispering him in the ear, he said, "I cannot but own that the present is worthy of the princess; but I beg of your majesty to grant me three months before you come to a final resolution. I hope, before that time, my son, on whom you have had the goodness to look with a favourable eye, will be able to make a nobler present than Alla ad Deen, who is an entire stranger to Your majesty."

The sultan, though he was fully persuaded that it was not possible for the vizier to provide so considerable a present for his son to make the princess, yet as he had given him hopes, hearkened to him, and granted his request. Turning therefore to the old widow, he said to her, "Good woman, go home, and tell your son that I agree to the proposal you have made me; but I cannot marry the princess my daughter, till the paraphernalia I design for her be got ready, which cannot be finished these three months; but at the expiration of that time come again."

Alla ad Deen's mother returned home much more gratified than she had expected, since she had met with a favourable answer, instead of the refusal and confusion she had dreaded. From two circumstances Alla ad Deen, when he saw his mother returning, judged that she brought him good news; the one was, that she returned sooner than ordinary; and the other, the gaiety of her countenance. "Well, mother," said he, "may I entertain any hopes, or must I die with despair?" When she had pulled off her veil, and had seated herself on the sofa by him, she said to him, "Not to keep you long in suspense, son, I will begin by telling you, that instead of thinking of dying, you have every reason to be well satisfied." Then pursuing her discourse, she told him, that she had an audience before everybody else which made her come home so soon; the precautions she had taken lest she should have displeased the sultan, by making the proposal of marriage between him and the princess Buddir al Buddoor, and the condescending answer she had received from the sultan's own mouth; and that as far as she could judge, the present had wrought a powerful effect. "But when I least expected it," said she, "and he was going to give me an answer, and I fancied a favourable one, the grand vizier whispered him in the ear, and I was afraid might be some obstacle to his good intentions towards us, and so it happened, for the sultan desired me to come to audience again this day three months."

Alla ad Deen thought himself the most happy of all men at hearing this news, and thanked his mother for the pains she had taken in the affair, the good success of which was of so great importance to his peace. Though from his impatience to obtain the object of his passion, three months seemed an age, yet he disposed himself to wait with patience, relying on the sultan's word, which he looked upon to be irrevocable. But all that time he not only counted the hours, days, and weeks, but every moment. When two of the three months were past, his mother one evening going to light the lamp, and finding no oil in the house, went out to buy some, and when she came into the city, found a general rejoicing. The shops, instead of being shut up, were open, dressed with foliage, silks, and carpeting, every one striving to show their zeal in the most distinguished manner according to his ability. The streets were crowded with officers in habits of ceremony, mounted on horses richly caparisoned, each attended by a great many footmen. Alla ad Deen's mother asked the oil-merchant what was the meaning of all this preparation of public festivity. "Whence came you, good woman," said he, "that you don't know that the grand vizier's son is to marry the princess Buddir al Buddoor, the sultan's daughter, to-night? She will presently return from the baths; and these officers whom you see are to assist at the cavalcade to the palace, where the ceremony is to be solemnized."

This was news enough for Alla ad Deen's mother. She ran till she was quite out of breath home to her son, who little suspected any such event. "Child," cried she, "you are undone! You depend upon the sultan's fine promises, but they will come to nothing." Alla ad Deen was alarmed at these words. "Mother," replied he, "how do you know the sultan has been guilty of a breach of promise?" "This night," answered the mother, "the grand vizier's son is to marry the princess Buddir al Buddoor." She then related how she had heard it; so that from all circumstances, he had no reason to doubt the truth of what she said.

At this account, Alla ad Deen was thunder-struck. Any other man would have sunk under the shock; but a sudden hope of disappointing his rival soon roused his spirits, and he bethought himself of the lamp, which had on every emergence been so useful to him; and without venting his rage in empty words against the sultan, the vizier, or his son, he only said, "Perhaps, mother, the vizier's son may not be so happy to-night as he promises himself: while I go into my chamber a moment, do you get supper ready." She accordingly went about it, but guessed that her son was going to make use of the lamp, to prevent, if possible, the consummation of the marriage.

When Alla ad Deen had got into his chamber, he took the lamp, rubbed it in the same place as before, when immediately the genie appeared, and said to him, "What wouldst thou have? I am ready to obey thee as thy slave, and the slave of all those who have that lamp in their possession; I and the other slaves of the lamp." "Hear me," said Alla ad Deen; "thou hast hitherto brought me whatever I wanted as to provisions; but now I have business of the greatest importance for thee to execute. I have demanded the princess Buddir al Buddoor in marriage of the sultan her father; he promised her to me, only requiring three months delay; but instead of keeping that promise, has this night married her to the grand vizier's son. What I ask of you is, that as soon as the bride and bridegroom are retired, you bring them both hither in their bed." "Master," replied the genie, "I will obey you. Have you any other commands?" "None at present," answered Alla ad Deen; the genie then disappeared.

Alla ad Deen having left his chamber, supped with his mother, with the same tranquillity of mind as usual; and after supper talked of the princess's marriage as of an affair wherein he had not the least concern'; he then retired to his own chamber again, and left his mother to go to bed; but sat up waiting the execution of his orders to the genie.

In the meantime, everything was prepared with the greatest magnificence in the sultan's palace to celebrate the princess's nuptials; and the evening was spent with all the usual ceremonies and great rejoicings till midnight, when the grand vizier's son, on a signal given him by the chief of the princess's eunuchs, slipped away from the company, and was introduced by that officer into the princess's apartment, where the nuptial bed was prepared. He went to bed first, and in a little time after, the sultaness, accompanied by her own women, and those of the princess, brought the bride, who, according to the custom of new-married ladies, made great resistance. The sultaness herself helped to undress her, put her into bed by a kind of violence: and after having kissed her, and wished her good night, retired with the women to her own apartments.

No sooner was the door shut, than the genie, as the faithful slave of the lamp, and punctual in executing the command of those who possessed it, without giving the bridegroom the least time to caress his bride, to the great amazement of them both, took up the bed, and transported it in an instant into Alla ad Deen's chamber, where he set it down.

Alla ad Deen, who had waited impatiently for this moment, did not suffer the vizier's son to remain long in bed with the princess. "Take this new-married man," said he to the genie, "shut him up in the out-house, and come again tomorrow morning before day-break." The genie instantly forced the vizier's son out of bed, carried him whither Alla ad Deen had commanded him; and after he had breathed upon him, which prevented him stirring, left him there.

Passionate as was Alla ad Deen's love for the princess, he did not talk much to her when they were alone; but only said with a respectful air, "Fear nothing, adorable princess, you are here in safety; for, notwithstanding the violence of my passion, which your charms have kindled, it shall never exceed the bounds of the profound adoration I owe you. If I have been forced to come to this extremity, it is not with any intention of affronting you, but to prevent an unjust rival's possessing you, contrary to the sultan your father's promise in favour of myself."

The princess, who knew nothing of these particulars, gave very little attention to what Alla ad Deen could say. The fright and amazement of so surprising and unexpected an adventure had alarmed her so much that he could not get one word from her. However, he undressed himself, took the bridegroom's place, but lay with his back to the princess, putting a sabre between himself and her, to shew that he deserved to be put to death, if he attempted anything against her honour. Alla ad Deen, satisfied with having thus deprived his rival of the happiness he had flattered himself with, slept very soundly, though the princess Buddir al Buddoor never passed a night so ill in her life; and if we consider the condition in which the genie left the grand vizier's son, we may imagine that the new bridegroom spent it much worse.

Alla ad Deen had no occasion the next morning to rub the lamp to call the genie; who appeared at the hour appointed, just when he had done dressing himself, and said to him, "I am here, master, what are your commands?" "Go," said Alla ad Deen, "fetch the vizier's son out of the place where you left him, put him into his bed again, and carry it to the sultan's palace, from whence you brought it." The genie presently returned with the vizier's son. Alla ad Deen took up his sabre, the bridegroom was laid by the princess, and in an instant the nuptial-bed was transported into the same chamber of the palace from whence it had been brought. But we must observe, that all this time the genie never was visible either to the princess or the grand vizier's son. His hideous form would have made them die with fear. Neither did they hear any thing of the discourse between Alla ad Deen and him; they only perceived the motion of the bed, and their transportation from one place to another; which we may well imagine was enough to alarm them.

As soon as the genie had set down the nuptial bed in its proper place, the sultan tapped at the door to wish her good morning. The grand vizier's son, who was almost perished with cold, by standing in his thin under garment all night, and had not had time to warm himself in bed, no sooner heard the knocking at the door than he got out of bed, and ran into the robing-chamber, where he had undressed himself the night before.

The sultan having opened the door, went to the bed-side, kissed the princess between the eyes, according to custom, wishing her a good morrow, but was extremely surprised to see her so melancholy. She only cast at him a sorrowful look, expressive of great affliction or great dissatisfaction. He said a few words to her; but finding that he could not get a word from her, attributed it to her modesty, and retired. Nevertheless, he suspected that there was something extraordinary in this silence, and thereupon went immediately to the sultaness's apartment, told her in what a state he had found the princess, and how she had received him. "Sir," said the sultaness, "your majesty ought not to be surprised at this behaviour; new-married people have naturally a reserve about them; two or three days hence she will receive the sultan her father as she ought: but I will go and see her," added she; "I am much deceived if she receives me in the same manner."

As soon as the sultaness was dressed, she went to the princess's apartment, who was still in bed. She undrew the curtain, wished her good morrow, and kissed her. But how great was her surprise when she returned no answer; and looking more attentively at her, she perceived her to be much dejected, which made her judge that something had happened, which she did not understand "How comes it, child," said the sultaness, "that you do not return my caresses? Ought you to treat your mother after this manner? I am induced to believe something extraordinary has happened; come, tell me freely, and leave me no longer in a painful suspense."

At last the princess broke silence with a deep sigh, and said, "Alas! most honoured mother, forgive me if I have failed in the respect I owe you. My mind is so full of the extraordinary circumstances which have befallen me this night, that I have not yet recovered my amazement and alarm." She then told her, how the instant after she and her husband were together, the bed was transported into a dark dirty room, where he was taken from her and carried away, but where she knew not; and that she was left alone with a young man, who, after he had said something to her, which her fright did not suffer her to hear, laid himself in her husband's place, but first put his sabre between them; and in the morning her husband was brought to her again, when the bed was transported back to her own chamber in an instant. "All this," said she, "was but just done, when the sultan my father came into my chamber. I was so overwhelmed with grief, that I had not power to speak, and am afraid that he is offended at the manner in which I received the honour he did me; but I hope he will forgive me, when he knows my melancholy adventure, and the miserable state I am in at present."

The sultaness heard all the princess told her very patiently, but would not believe it. "You did well, child," said she, "not to speak of this to your father: take care not to mention it to anybody; for you will certainly be thought mad if you talk in this manner." "Madam," replied the princess, "I can assure you I am in my right senses; ask my husband, and he will tell you the same circumstances." "I will," said the sultaness, "but if he should talk in the same manner, I shall not be better persuaded of the truth. Come, rise, and throw off this idle fancy; it will be a strange event, if all the feasts and rejoicings in the kingdom should be interrupted by such a vision. Do not you hear the trumpets of congratulation, and concerts of the finest music? Cannot these inspire you with joy and pleasure, and make you forget the fancies of an imagination disturbed by what can have been only a dream?" At the same time the sultaness called the princess's women, and after she had seen her get up, and begin dressing, went to the sultan's apartment, told him that her daughter had got some odd notions in her head, but that there was nothing in them but idle phantasy.

She then sent for the vizier's son, to know of him something of what the princess had told her; but he, thinking himself highly honoured to be allied to the sultan, and not willing to lose the princess, denied what had happened. "That is enough," answered the sultaness, "I ask no more, I see you are wiser than my daughter."

The rejoicings lasted all that day in the palace, and the sultaness, who never left the princess, forgot nothing to divert her, and induce her to take part in the various diversions and shows; but she was so struck with the idea of what had happened to her in the night, that it was easy to see her thoughts were entirely taken up with it. Neither was the grand vizier's son in less tribulation, though his ambition made him disguise his feelings so well, that nobody doubted of his being a happy bridegroom.

Alla ad Deen, who was well acquainted with what passed in the palace, was sure the new-married couple were to sleep together again, notwithstanding the troublesome adventure of the night before; and therefore, having as great an inclination to disturb them, had recourse to his lamp, and when the genie appeared, and offered his service, he said to him, “The grand vizier’s son and the princess Buddir al Buddoor are to sleep together again to-night: go, and as soon as they are in bed, bring the bed hither, as thou didst yesterday.”

The genie obeyed as faithfully and exactly as the day before; the grand vizier’s son passed the night as coldly and disagreeably, and the princess had the mortification again to have Alla ad Deen for her bed-fellow, with the sabre between them. The genie, according to orders, came the next morning, brought the bridegroom, laid him by his bride, and then carried the bed and new-married couple back again to the palace.

The sultan, after the reception the princess had given him, was very anxious to know how she had passed the second night, and therefore went into her chamber as early as the morning before. The grand vizier’s son, more ashamed and mortified with the ill success of this last night, no sooner heard him coming, than he jumped out of bed, and ran hastily into the robing-chamber. The sultan went to the princess’s bed-side, and after the same caresses he had given her the former morning, bade her good morrow. “Well daughter,” said he, “are you in a better humour than yesterday?” Still the princess was silent, and the sultan perceiving her to be more troubled, and in greater confusion than before, doubted not that something very extraordinary was the cause; but provoked that his daughter should conceal it, he said to her in a rage, with his sabre in his hand, “Daughter, tell me what is the matter, or I will cut off your head immediately.”

The princess, more frightened at the menaces and tone of the enraged sultan than at the sight of the drawn sabre, at last broke silence, and said with tears in her eyes, “My dear father and sultan, I ask your majesty’s pardon if I have offended you, and hope, that out of your goodness and clemency you will have compassion on me, when I shall have told you in what a miserable condition I have spent this last night, as well as the preceding.”

After this preamble, which appeased and affected the sultan, she told him what had happened to her in so moving a manner, that he, who loved her tenderly, was most sensibly grieved. She added, “If your majesty doubts the truth of this account, you may inform yourself from my husband, who, I am persuaded, will tell you the same thing.”

The sultan immediately felt all the extreme uneasiness so surprising an adventure must have given the princess. “Daughter,” said he, “you are much to blame for not telling me this yesterday, since it concerns me as much as yourself. I did not marry you with an intention to make you miserable, but that you might enjoy all the happiness you deserve and might hope for from a husband who to me seemed agreeable to you. Efface all these troublesome ideas from your memory; I will take care that you shall have no more disagreeable and insupportable nights.”

As soon as the sultan had returned to his own apartment, he sent for the grand vizier: “Vizier,” said he, “have you seen your son, and has he told you anything?” The vizier replied, “No.” The sultan related all the circumstances of which the princess had informed him, and afterwards said, “I do not doubt but that my daughter has told me the truth; but nevertheless I should be glad to have it confirmed by your son, therefore go and ask him how it was.”

The grand vizier went immediately to his son, communicated what the sultan had told him, and enjoined him to conceal nothing, but to relate the whole truth. “I will disguise nothing from you, father,” replied the son, “for indeed all that the princess has stated is true; but what relates particularly to myself she knows nothing of. Since my marriage, I have passed two nights beyond imagination or expression disagreeable, not to mention the fright I was in at finding my bed lifted four times, transported from one place to another, without being able to guess how it was done. You may judge of the miserable condition I was in, passing two whole nights in nothing but my under vestments, standing in a kind of closet, unable to stir out of the place or to make the least movement, though I could not perceive any obstacle to prevent me. Yet I must tell you, that all this ill usage does not in the least lessen those sentiments of love, respect, and gratitude I entertain for the princess, and of which she is so deserving; but I must confess, that notwithstanding all the honour and splendour that attends marrying my sovereign’s daughter, I would much rather die, than continue in so exalted an alliance if I must undergo nightly much longer what I have already endured. I do not doubt but that the princess entertains the same sentiments, and that she will readily agree to a separation, which is so necessary both for her repose and mine. Therefore, father, I beg, by the same tenderness which led you to procure me so great an honour, to obtain the sultan's consent that our marriage may be declared null and void."

Notwithstanding the grand vizier's ambition to have his son allied to the sultan, the firm resolution he saw he had formed to be separated from the princess made him not think it proper to propose to him to have patience for a few days, to see if this disappointment would not have an end; but he left him to give an account of what he had related to him, and without waiting till the sultan himself, whom he found disposed to it, spoke of setting aside the marriage, he begged of him to give his son leave to retire from the palace, alleging it was not just that the princess should be a moment longer exposed to so terrible a persecution upon his son's account.

The grand vizier found no great difficulty to obtain what he asked, as the sultan had determined already; orders were given to put a stop to all rejoicings in the palace and town, and expresses dispatched to all parts of his dominions to countermand them; and, in a short time, all rejoicings ceased.

This sudden and unexpected change gave rise both in the city and kingdom to various speculations and inquiries; but no other account could be given of it, except that both the vizier and his son went out of the palace very much dejected. Nobody but Alla ad Deen knew the secret. He rejoiced within himself at the happy success procured by his lamp, which now he had no more occasion to rub, to produce the genie to prevent the consummation of the marriage, as he had certain information it was broken off, and that his rival had left the palace. Neither the sultan nor the grand vizier, who had forgotten Alla ad Deen and his request, had the least thought that he had any concern in the enchantment which caused the dissolution of the marriage.

Alla ad Deen waited till the three months were completed, which the sultan had appointed for the consummation of the marriage between the princess Buddir al Buddoor and himself; and the next day sent his mother to the palace, to remind the sultan of his promise.

Alla ad Deen's mother went to the palace, and stood in the same place as before in the hall of audience. The sultan no sooner cast his eyes upon her than he knew her again, remembered her business, and how long he had put her off: therefore when the grand vizier was beginning to make his report, the sultan interrupted him, and said, "Vizier, I see the good woman who made me the present of jewels some months ago; forbear your report, till I have heard what she has to say." The vizier looking about the divan, perceived the tailor's widow, and sent the chief of the mace-bearers to conduct her to the sultan.

Alla ad Deen's mother came to the foot of the throne, prostrated herself as usual, and when she rose, the sultan asked her what she would have. "Sir," said she, "I come to represent to your majesty, in the name of my son Alla ad Deen, that the three months, at the end of which you ordered me to come again, are expired; and to beg you to remember your promise."

The sultan, when he had fixed a time to answer the request of this good woman, little thought of hearing any more of a marriage, which he imagined must be very disagreeable to the princess, when he considered the meanness and poverty of her dress and appearance; but this summons for him to fulfill his promise was somewhat embarrassing; he declined giving an answer till he had consulted his vizier, and signified to trim the little inclination he had to conclude a match for his daughter with a stranger, whose rank he supposed to be very mean.

The grand vizier freely told the sultan his thoughts, and said to him, "In my opinion, sir, there is an infallible way for your majesty to avoid a match so disproportionable, without giving Alla ad Deen, were he known to your majesty, any cause of complaint; which is, to set so high a price upon the princess, that, however rich he may be, he cannot comply with. This is the only evasion to make him desist from so bold, not to say rash, an undertaking, which he never weighed before he engaged in it."

The sultan, approving of the grand vizier's advice, turned to the tailor's widow, and said to her, "Good woman, it is true sultans ought to abide by their word, and I am ready to keep mine, by making your son happy in marriage with the princess my daughter. But as I cannot marry her without some further valuable consideration from your son, you may tell him, I will fulfill my promise as soon as he shall send me forty trays of massive gold, full of the same sort of jewels you have already made me a present of, and carried by the like number of black slaves, who shall be led by as many young and handsome white slaves, all dressed magnificently. On these conditions I am ready to bestow the princess my daughter upon him; therefore, good woman, go and tell him so, and I will wait till you bring me his answer."

Alla ad Deen's mother prostrated herself a second time before the sultan's throne, and retired. In her way home, she laughed within herself at her son's foolish imagination. "Where," says she, "can he get so many large gold trays, and such precious stones to fill them? Must he go again to that subterraneous abode, the entrance into which is stopped up, and gather them off the trees? But where will he get so many such slaves as the sultan requires? It is altogether out of his power, and I believe he will not be much pleased with my embassy this time." When she came home, full of these thoughts, she said to her son, "Indeed, child, I would not have you think any farther of your marriage with the princess. The sultan received me very kindly, and I believe he was well inclined to you; but if I am not much deceived the grand vizier has made him change his mind, as you will guess from what I have to tell you. After I had represented to his majesty that the three months were expired, and begged of him to remember his promise, I observed that he whispered with his grand vizier before he gave me his answer." She then gave her son an exact account of what the sultan had said to her, and the conditions on which he consented to the match. Afterwards she said to him, "The sultan expects your answer immediately; but," continued she, laughing, "I believe he may wait long enough."

"Not so long, mother, as you imagine," replied Alla ad Deen: "the sultan is mistaken, if he thinks by this exorbitant demand to prevent my entertaining thoughts of the princess. I expected greater difficulties, and that he would have set a higher price upon her incomparable charms. I am very well pleased; his demand is but a trifle to what I could have done for her. But while I think of satisfying his request, go and get something for our dinner, and leave the rest to me."

As soon as his mother was gone out to market, Alla ad Deen took the lamp, and rubbing it, the genie appeared, and offered his service as usual. "The sultan," said Alla ad Deen to him, "gives me the princess his daughter in marriage; but demands first forty large trays of massive gold, full of the fruits of the garden from whence I took this lamp; and these he expects to have carried by as many black slaves, each preceded by a young handsome white slave, richly clothed. Go, and fetch me this present as soon as possible, that I may send it to him before the divan breaks up."

The genie told him his command should be immediately obeyed, and disappeared.

In a little time afterwards the genie returned with forty black slaves, each bearing on his head a heavy tray of pure gold, full of pearls, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and every sort of precious stones, all larger and more beautiful than those presented to the sultan. Each tray was covered with silver tissue, embroidered with flowers of gold; these, together with the white slaves, quite filled the house, which was but a small one, the little court before it, and a small garden behind. The genie asked if he had any other commands, and Alla ad Deen telling him that he wanted nothing farther, he disappeared.

When Alla ad Deen's mother came from market, she was much surprised to see so many people and such vast riches. As soon as she had laid down her provisions, she was going to pull off her veil; but he prevented her, and said, "Mother, let us lose no time; before the sultan and the divan rise, I would have you return to the palace with this present as the dowry demanded for the princess, that he may judge by my diligence and exactness of the ardent and sincere desire I have to procure myself the honour of this alliance." Without waiting for his mother's reply, Alla ad Deen opened the street-door, and made the slaves walk out; each white slave followed by a black with a tray upon his head. When they were all out, the mother followed the last black slave; he shut the door, and then retired to his chamber, full of hopes that the sultan, after this present, which was such as he required, would receive him as his son-in-law.

The first white slave who went out made all the people who were going by stop; and before they were all clear of the house, the streets were crowded with spectators, who ran to see so extraordinary and magnificent a procession. The dress of each slave was so rich, both for the stuff and the jewels, that those who were dealers in them valued each at no less than a million of money; besides the neatness and propriety of the dress, the noble air, fine shape and proportion of each slave were unparalleled; their grave walk at an equal distance from each other, the lustre of the jewels curiously set in their girdles of gold, in beautiful symmetry, and the egrets of precious stones in their turbans, which were of an unusual but elegant taste, put the spectators into such great admiration, that they could not avoid gazing at them, and following them with their eyes as far as possible; but the streets were so crowded with people, that none could move out of the spot they stood on. As they had to pass through several streets to the palace, a great part of the city had an opportunity of seeing them. As soon as the first of these slaves arrived at the palace gate, the porters formed themselves into order, taking him for a prince from the richness and magnificence of his habit, and were going to kiss the hem of his garment; but the slave, who was instructed by the genie, prevented them, and said, “We are only slaves, our master will appear at a proper time.”

The first slave, followed by the rest, advanced into the second court, which was very spacious, and in which the sultan’s household was ranged during the sitting of the divan. The magnificence of the officers, who stood at the head of their troops, was considerably eclipsed by the slaves who bore Alla ad Deen’s present, of which they themselves made a part. Nothing was ever seen so beautiful and brilliant in the sultan’s palace; and all the lustre of the lords of his court was not to be compared to them.

As the sultan, who had been informed of their march, and approach to the palace, had given orders for them to be admitted, they met with no obstacle, but went into the divan in regular order, one part filing to the right, and the other to the left. After they were all entered, and had formed a semicircle before the sultan’s throne, the black slaves laid the golden trays on the carpet, prostrated themselves, touching the carpet with their foreheads, and at the same time the white slaves did the same. When they rose, the black slaves uncovered the trays, and then all stood with their arms crossed over their breasts.

In the meantime Alla ad Deen's mother advanced to the foot of the throne, and having paid her respects, said to the sultan, "Sir, my son is sensible this present, which he has sent your majesty, is much below the princess Buddir al Buddoor's worth; but hopes, nevertheless, that your majesty will accept of it, and make it agreeable to the princess, and with the greater confidence since he has endeavoured to conform to the conditions you were pleased to impose."

The sultan was not able to give the least attention to this compliment. The moment he cast his eyes on the forty trays, full of the most precious, brilliant, and beautiful jewels he had ever seen, and the fourscore slaves, who appeared by the elegance of their persons, and the richness and magnificence of their dress, like so many princes, he was so struck, that he could not recover from his admiration. Instead of answering the compliment of Alla ad Deen's mother, he addressed himself to the grand vizier, who could not any more than the sultan comprehend from whence such a profusion of richness could come. "Well, vizier," said he aloud, "who do you think it can be that has sent me so extraordinary a present, and neither of us know? Do you think him worthy of the princess Buddir al Buddoor, my daughter?"

The vizier, notwithstanding his envy and grief to see a stranger preferred to be the sultan's son-in-law before his son, durst not disguise his sentiments. It was too visible that Alla ad Deen's present was more than sufficient to merit his being received into royal alliance; therefore, consulting his master's feelings, he returned this answer: "I am so far from having any thoughts that the person who has made your majesty so noble a present is unworthy of the honour you would do him, that I should say he deserved much more, if I was not persuaded that the greatest treasure in the world ought not to be put in competition with the princess your majesty's daughter." This speech was applauded by all the lords who were then in council.

The sultan made no longer hesitation, nor thought of informing himself whether Alla ad Deen was endowed with all the qualifications requisite in one who aspired to be his son-in-law. The sight alone of such immense riches, and Alla ad Deen's quickness in satisfying his demand, without starting the least difficulty at the exorbitant conditions he had imposed, easily persuaded him, that he could want nothing to render him accomplished, and such as he desired. Therefore, to send Alla ad Deen's mother back with all the satisfaction she could desire, he said to her, "My good lady, go and tell your son that I wait with open arms to embrace him, and the more haste he makes to come and receive the princess my daughter from my hands, the greater pleasure he will do me."

As soon as the tailor's widow had retired, overjoyed as a woman in her condition must have been, to see her son raised beyond all expectations to such exalted fortune, the sultan put an end to the audience; and rising from his throne, ordered that the princess's eunuchs should come and carry the trays into their mistress's apartment, whither he went himself to examine them with her at his leisure. The fourscore slaves were conducted in to the palace; and the sultan, telling the princess of their magnificent appearance, ordered them to be brought before her apartment, that she might see through the lattices he had not exaggerated in his account of them.

In the meantime Alla ad Deen's mother got home, and shewed in her air and countenance the good news she brought her son "My son," said she to him, "you have now all the reason in the world to be pleased: you are, contrary to my expectations, arrived at the height of your desires. Not to keep you too long in suspense, the sultan, with the approbation of the whole court, has declared that you are worthy to possess the princess Buddir al Buddoor, waits to embrace you and conclude your marriage; therefore, you must think of making some preparations for your interview, which may answer the high opinion he has formed of your person; and after the wonders I have seen you do, I am persuaded nothing can be wanting. But I must not forget to tell you the sultan waits for you with great impatience, therefore lose no time in paying your respects."

Alla ad Deen, enraptured with this news, and full of the object which possessed his soul, made his mother very little reply, but retired to his chamber. There, after he had rubbed his lamp, which had never failed him in whatever he wished for, the obedient genie appeared. “Genie,” said Alla ad Deen, “I want to bathe immediately, and you must afterwards provide me the richest and most magnificent habit ever worn by a monarch.” No sooner were the words out of his mouth than the genie rendered him, as well as himself, invisible, and transported him into a hummum of the finest marble of all sorts of colours; where he was undressed, without seeing by whom, in a magnificent and spacious hall. From the hall he was led to the bath, which was of a moderate heat, and he was there rubbed and washed with various scented waters. After he had passed through several degrees of heat, he came out, quite a different man from what he was before. His skin was clear white and red, his body lightsome and free; and when he returned into the hall, he found, instead of his own, a suit, the magnificence of which astonished him. The genie helped him to dress, and when he had done, transported him back to his own chamber, where he asked him if he had any other commands. “Yes,” answered Alla ad Deen, “I expect you to bring me as soon as possible a charger, that surpasses in beauty and goodness the best in the sultan’s stables, with a saddle, bridle, and other caparisons worth a million of money. I want also twenty slaves, as richly clothed as those who carried the present to the sultan, to walk by my side and follow me, and twenty more to go before me in two ranks. Besides these, bring my mother six women slaves to attend her, as richly dressed at least as any of the princess Buddir al Buddoor’s, each carrying a complete dress fit for any sultaness. I want also ten thousand pieces of gold in ten purses; go, and make haste.”

As soon as Alla ad Deen had given these orders, the genie disappeared, but presently returned with the horse, the forty slaves, ten of whom carried each a purse containing ten thousand pieces of gold, and six women slaves, each carrying on her head a different dress for Alla ad Deen’s mother, wrapped up in a piece of silver tissue, and presented them all to Alla ad Deen.

Of the ten purses Alla ad Deen took four, which he gave to his mother, telling her, those were to supply her with necessaries; the other six he left in the hands of the slaves who brought them, with an order to throw them by handfuls among the people as they went to the sultan’s palace. The six slaves who carried the purses he ordered likewise to march before him, three on the right hand and three on the left. Afterwards he presented the six women slaves to his mother, telling her they were her slaves, and that the dresses they had brought were for her use.

When Alla ad Deen had thus settled matters, he told the genie he would call for him when he wanted him, and thereupon the genie disappeared. Alla ad Deen's thoughts now were only upon answering, as soon as possible, the desire the sultan had shown to see him. He dispatched one of the forty slaves to the palace, with an order to address himself to the chief of the porters, to know when he might have the honour to come and throw himself at the sultan's feet. The slave soon acquitted himself of his commission, and brought for answer, that the sultan waited for him with impatience.

Alla ad Deen immediately mounted his charger, and began his march, in the order we have already described; and though he never was on horseback before, appeared with such extraordinary grace, that the most experienced horseman would not have taken him for a novice. The streets through which he was to pass were almost instantly filled with an innumerable concourse of people, who made the air echo with acclamations, especially every time the six slaves who carried the purses threw handfuls of gold among the populace. Neither did these acclamations and shouts of joy come from those alone who scrambled for the money, but from a superior rank of people, who could not forbear applauding Alla ad Deen's generosity. Not only those who knew him when he played in the streets like a vagabond did not recollect him, but those who saw him but a little while before hardly recognised him, so much were his features altered: such were the effects of the lamp, as to procure by degrees to those who possessed it perfections suitable to the rank to which the right use of it advanced them. Much more attention was paid to Alla ad Deen's person than to the pomp and magnificence of his attendants, as a similar show had been seen the day before when the slaves walked in procession with the present to the sultan. Nevertheless the horse was much admired by good judges, who knew how to discern his beauties, without being dazzled by the jewels and richness of the furniture. When the report was everywhere spread, that the sultan was going to give the princess in marriage to Alla ad

Deen, nobody regarded his birth, nor envied his good fortune, so worthy he seemed of it in the public opinion.

When he arrived at the palace, everything was prepared for his reception; and when he came to the gate of the second court, he would have alighted from his horse, agreeably to the custom observed by the grand vizier, the commander in chief of the empire, and governors of provinces of the first rank; but the chief of the mace-bearers who waited on him by the sultan's order prevented him, and attended him to the grand hall of audience, where he helped him to dismount; though Alla ad Deen endeavoured to prevent him, but could not prevail. The officers formed themselves into two ranks at the entrance of the hall. The chief put Alla ad Deen on his right hand, and through the midst of them led him to the sultan's throne.

As soon as the sultan perceived Alla ad Deen, he was no less surprised to see him more richly and magnificently habited than ever he had been himself, than struck at his good mien, fine shape, and a certain air of unexpected dignity, very different from the meanness of his mother's late appearance.

But, notwithstanding, his amazement and surprise did not hinder him from rising off his throne, and descending two or three steps, quick enough to prevent Alla ad Deen's throwing himself at his feet. He embraced him with all the demonstrations of joy at his arrival. After this civility Alla ad Deen would have thrown himself at his feet again; but he held him fast by the hand, and obliged him to sit close to the throne.

Alla ad Deen then addressed the sultan, saying, "I receive the honour which your majesty out of your great condescension is pleased to confer; but permit me to assure you, that I have not forgotten that I am your slave; that I know the greatness of your power, and that I am not in sensible how much my birth is below the splendour and lustre of the high rank to which I am raised. If any way," continued he, "I could have merited so favourable a reception, I confess I owe it merely to the boldness which chance inspired in me to raise my eyes, thoughts, and desires to the divine princess, who is the object of my wishes. I ask your majesty's pardon for my rashness, but I cannot dissemble, that I should die with grief were I to lose my hopes of seeing them accomplished."

"My son," answered the sultan, embracing him a second time, "you would wrong me to doubt for a moment of my sincerity: your life from this moment is too dear to me not to preserve it, by presenting you with the remedy which is at my disposal. I prefer the pleasure of seeing and hearing you before all your treasure added to my own."

After these words, the sultan gave a signal, and immediately the air echoed with the sound of trumpets, hautboys, and other musical instruments: and at the same time the sultan led Alla ad Deen into a magnificent hall, where was laid out a most splendid collation. The sultan and Alla ad Deen ate by themselves, while the grand vizier and the great lords of the court, according to their dignity and rank, sat at different tables. The conversation turned on different subjects; but all the while the sultan took so much pleasure in looking at his intended son-in-law, that he hardly ever took his eyes off him; and throughout the whole of their conversation Alla ad Deen showed so much good sense, as confirmed the sultan in the high opinion he had formed of him.

After the feast, the sultan sent for the chief judge of his capital, and ordered him to draw up immediately a contract of marriage between the princess Buddir al Buddoor his daughter and Alla ad Deen. In the mean time the sultan and he entered into another conversation on various subjects, in the presence of the grand vizier and the lords of the court, who all admired the solidity of his wit, the great ease and freedom wherewith he delivered himself, the justness of his remarks, and his energy in expressing them.

When the judge had drawn up the contract in all the requisite forms, the sultan asked Alla ad Deen if he would stay in the palace, and solemnize the ceremonies of marriage that day. To which he answered, "Sir, though great is my impatience to enjoy your majesty's goodness, yet I beg of you to give me leave to defer it till I have built a palace fit to receive the princess; therefore I petition you to grant me a convenient spot of ground near your palace, that I may the more frequently pay my respects, and I will take care to have it finished with all diligence." "Son," said the sultan, "take what ground you think proper, there is space enough on every quarter round my palace; but consider, I cannot see you too soon united with my daughter, which alone is wanting to complete my happiness." After these words he embraced Alla ad Deen again, who took his leave with as much politeness as if he had been bred up and had always lived at court.

Alla ad Deen returned home in the order he had come, amidst the acclamations of the people, who wished him all happiness and prosperity. As soon as he dismounted, he retired to his own chamber, took the lamp, and called the genie as before, who in the usual manner made him a tender of his service. "Genie," said Alla ad Deen, "I have every reason to commend your exactness in executing hitherto punctually whatever I have demanded; but now if you have any regard for the lamp your protector, you must show, if possible, more zeal and diligence than ever. I would have you build me, as soon as you can, a palace opposite, but at a proper distance from the sultan's, fit to receive my spouse the princess Buddir al Buddoor. I leave the choice of the materials to you, that is to say, porphyry, jasper, agate, lapis lazuli, or the finest marble of various colours, and also the architecture of the building. But I expect that on the terraced roof of this palace you will build me a large hall crowned with a dome, and having four equal fronts; and that instead of layers of bricks, the walls be formed of massive gold and silver, laid alternately; that each front shall contain six windows, the lattices of all which, except one, which must be left unfinished, shall be so enriched in the most tasteful workmanship, with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, that they shall exceed every thing of the kind ever seen in the world. I would have an inner and outer court in front of the palace, and a spacious garden; but above all things, take care that there be laid in a place which you shall point out to me a treasure of gold and silver coin. Besides, the edifice must be well provided with kitchens and offices, storehouses, and rooms to keep choice furniture in, for every season of the year. I must have stables full of the finest horses, with their equerries and grooms, and hunting equipage. There must be officers to attend the kitchens and offices, and women slaves to wait on the princess. You understand what I mean; therefore go about it, and come and tell me when all is finished."

By the time Alla ad Deen had instructed the genie resetting the building of his palace, the sun was set. The next morning, before break of day, our bridegroom, whose love for the princess would not let him sleep, was up, when the genie presented himself, and said, "Sir, your palace is finished, come and see how you like it." Alla ad Deen had no sooner signified his consent, than the genie transported him thither in an instant, and he found it so much beyond his expectation, that he could not enough admire it. The genie led him through all the apartments, where he met with nothing but what was rich and magnificent, with officers and slaves, all habited according to their rank and the services to which they were appointed. The genie then showed him the treasury, which was opened by a treasurer, where Alla ad Deen saw heaps of purses, of different sizes, piled up to the top of the ceiling, and disposed in most excellent order. The genie assured him of the treasurer's fidelity, and thence led him to the stables, where he showed him some of the finest horses in the world, and the grooms busy in dressing them; from thence they went to the store-houses, which were filled with all things necessary, both for food and ornament.

When Alla ad Deen had examined the palace from top to bottom, and particularly the hall with the four-and-twenty windows, and found it much beyond whatever he could have imagined, he said, "Genie, no one can be better satisfied than I am; and indeed I should be much to blame if I found any fault. There is only one thing wanting which I forgot to mention; that is, to lay from the sultan's palace to the door of the apartment designed for the princess, a carpet of fine velvet for her to walk upon." The genie immediately disappeared, and Alla ad Deen saw what he desired executed in an instant. The genie then returned, and carried him home before the gates of the sultan's palace were opened.

When the porters, who had always been used to an open prospect, came to open the gates, they were amazed to find it obstructed, and to see a carpet of velvet spread from the grand entrance. They did not immediately look how far it extended; but when they could discern Alla ad Deen's palace distinctly, their surprise was increased. The news of so extraordinary a wonder was presently spread through the palace. The grand vizier, who arrived soon after the gates were open, being no less amazed than others at this novelty, ran and acquainted the sultan, but endeavoured to make him believe it to be all enchantment. “Vizier,” replied the sultan, “why will you have it to be enchantment? You know as well as I that it must be Alla ad Deen’s palace, which I gave him leave to build, for the reception of my daughter. After the proof we have had of his riches, can we think it strange, that he should raise a palace in so short a time? He wished to surprise us, and let us see what wonders are to be done with money in only one night. Confess sincerely that the enchantment you talk of proceeds from a little envy on account of your son’s disappointment.” The hour of going to council put an end to the conversation.

When Alla ad Deen had been conveyed home, and had dismissed the genie, he found his mother up, and dressing herself in one of those suits which had been brought her. By the time the sultan rose from the council, Alla ad Deen had prepared his mother to go to the palace with her slaves, and desired her, if she saw the sultan, to tell him she should do herself the honour to attend the princess towards evening to her palace. Accordingly she went; but though she and the women slaves who followed her were all dressed like sultanesses, yet the crowd was not near so great as the preceding day, because they were all veiled, and had each an upper garment on agreeable to the richness and magnificence of their habits. Alla ad Deen mounted his horse, and took leave of his paternal house forever, taking care not to forget his wonderful lamp, by the assistance of which he had reaped such advantages, and arrived at the utmost height of his wishes, and went to the palace in the same pomp as the day before.

As soon as the porters of the sultan’s palace saw Alla ad Deen’s mother, they went and informed the sultan, who immediately ordered the bands of trumpets, cymbals, drums, fifes and hautboys, placed in different parts of the palace, to play, so that the air resounded with concerts which inspired the whole city with joy: the merchants began to adorn their shops and houses with fine carpets and silks, and to prepare illuminations against night. The artisans of every description left their work, and the populace repaired to the great space between the royal palace and that of Alla ad Deen; which last drew all their attention, not only because it was new to them, but because there was no comparison between the two buildings. But their amazement was to comprehend by what unheard-of miracle so magnificent a palace could have been so soon erected, it being apparent to all that there were no prepared materials, or any foundations laid the day before.

Alla ad Deen's mother was received in the palace with honour, and introduced into the princess Buddir al Buddoor's apartment by the chief of the eunuchs. As soon as the princess saw her, she rose, saluted, and desired her to sit down on a sofa; and while her women finished dressing and adorning her with the jewels which Alla ad Deen had presented to her, a collation was served up. At the same time the sultan, who wished to be as much with his daughter as possible before he parted with her, came in and paid the old lady great respect. Alla ad Deen's mother had talked to the sultan in public, but he had never seen her with her veil off, as she was then; and though she was somewhat advanced in years, she had the remains of a good face, which showed what she had been in her youth. The sultan, who had always seen her dressed very meanly, not to say poorly, was surprised to find her as richly and magnificently attired as the princess his daughter. This made him think Alla ad Deen equally prudent and wise in whatever he undertook.

When it was night, the princess took her leave of the sultan her father: their adieus were tender, and accompanied with tears. They embraced each other several times, and at last the princess left her own apartment for Alla ad Deen's palace, with his mother on her left hand carried in a superb litter, followed by a hundred women slaves, dressed with surprising magnificence. All the bands of music, which had played from the time Alla ad Deen's mother arrived, being joined together, led the procession, followed by a hundred state ushers, and the like number of black eunuchs, in two files, with their officers at their head. Four hundred of the sultan's young pages carried flambeaux on each side, which, together with the illuminations of the sultan's and Alla ad Deen's palaces, made it as light as day.

In this order the princess proceeded in her litter on the carpet, which was spread from the sultan's palace, preceded by bands of musicians, who, as they advanced, joining with those on the terraces of Alla ad Deen's palace, formed a concert, which increased the joyful sensations not only of the crowd assembled in the great square, but of the metropolis and its environs.

At length the princess arrived at the new palace. Alla ad Deen ran with all imaginable joy to receive her at the grand entrance. His mother had taken care to point him out to the princess, in the midst of the officers who surrounded him, and she was charmed with his person. “Adorable princess,” said Alla ad Deen, accosting her, and saluting her respectfully, as soon as she had entered her apartment, “if I have the misfortune to have displeased you by my boldness in aspiring to the possession of so lovely a princess, and my sultan’s daughter, I must tell you, that you ought to blame your bright eyes and charms, not me.” “Prince (as I may now call you),” answered the princess, “I am obedient to the will of my father; and it is enough for me to have seen you to tell you that I obey without reluctance.”

Alla ad Deen, charmed with so agreeable and satisfactory an answer, would not keep the princess standing; but took her by the hand, which he kissed with the greatest demonstration of joy, and led her into a large hall, illuminated with an infinite number of wax candles, where, by the care of the genie, a noble feast was served up. The dishes were of massive gold, and contained the most delicate viands. The vases, basins, and goblets, were gold also, and of exquisite workmanship, and all the other ornaments and embellishments of the hall were answerable to this display. The princess, dazzled to see so much riches collected in one place, said to Alla ad Deen, “I thought, prince, that nothing in the world was so beautiful as the sultan my father’s palace, but the sight of this hall alone is sufficient to show I was deceived.”

Alla ad Deen led the princess to the place appointed for her, and as soon as she and his mother were seated, a band of the most harmonious instruments, accompanied with the voices of beautiful ladies, began a concert, which lasted without intermission to the end of the repast. The princess was so charmed, that she declared she had never heard anything like it in the sultan her father’s court; but she knew not that these musicians were fairies chosen by the genie, the slave of the lamp.

When the supper was ended, there entered a company of female dancers, who performed, according to the custom of the country, several figure dances, singing at the same time verses in praise of the bride and bridegroom. About midnight Alla ad Deen’s mother conducted the bride to the nuptial apartment, and he soon after retired.

The next morning when Alla ad Deen left the bridal chamber, his attendants presented themselves to dress him, and brought him another habit as rich and magnificent as that worn the day before. He then ordered one of the horses appointed for his use to be got ready, mounted him, and went in the midst of a large troop of slaves to the sultan's palace. The sultan received him with the same honours as before, embraced him, placed him on the throne near him, and ordered a collation. Alla ad Deen said, "I beg your majesty will dispense with my eating with you to-day; I came to entreat you to take a repast in the princess's palace, attended by your grand vizier, and all the lords of your court." The sultan consented with pleasure, rose up immediately, and, preceded by the principal officers of his palace, and followed by all the great lords of his court, accompanied Alla ad Deen.

The nearer the sultan approached Alla ad Deen's palace, the more he was struck with its beauty, but was much more amazed when he entered it; and could not forbear breaking out into exclamations of approbation. But when he came into the hall, and cast his eyes on the windows, enriched with diamonds, rubies, emeralds, all large perfect stones, he was so much surprised, that he remained some time motionless. After he recovered himself, he said to his vizier, "Is it possible that there should be such a stately palace so near my own, and I be an utter stranger to it till now?" "Sir," replied the grand vizier, "your majesty may remember that the day before yesterday you gave Alla ad Deen, whom you accepted for your son-in-law, leave to build a palace opposite your own, and that very day at sunset there was no palace on this spot, but yesterday I had the honour first to tell you that the palace was built and finished." "I remember," replied the sultan, "but never imagined that the palace was one of the wonders of the world; for where in all the world besides shall we find walls built of massive gold and silver, instead of brick, stone, or marble; and diamonds, rubies, and emeralds composing the windows!"

The sultan would examine and admire the beauty of all the windows, and counting them, found that there were but three-and-twenty so richly adorned, and he was greatly astonished that the twenty-fourth was left imperfect. “Vizier,” said he, for that minister made a point of never leaving him, “I am surprised that a hall of this magnificence should be left thus imperfect.” “Sir,” replied the grand vizier, “without doubt Alla ad Deen only wanted time to finish this window like the rest; for it is not to be supposed but that he has sufficient jewels for the purpose, or that he will not complete it the first opportunity.”

Alla ad Deen, who had left the sultan to go and give some orders, returned just as the vizier had finished his remark. “Son,” said the sultan to him, “this hall is the most worthy of admiration of any in the world; there is only one thing that surprises me, which is to find one of the windows unfinished. Is it from the forgetfulness or negligence of the workmen, or want of time, that they have not put the finishing stroke to so beautiful a piece of architecture?” “Sir,” answered Alla ad Deen, “it was for none of these reasons that your majesty sees it in this state. The omission was by design, it was by my orders that the workmen left it thus, since I wished that your majesty should have the glory of finishing this hall, and of course the palace.” “If you did it with this intention,” replied the sultan, “I take it kindly, and will give orders about it immediately.” He accordingly sent for the most considerable jewellers and goldsmiths in his capital.

Alla ad Deen then conducted the sultan into the saloon where he had regaled his bride the preceding night. The princess entered immediately afterwards, and received the sultan her father with an air that showed how happy she was with her marriage. Two tables were immediately spread with the most delicious meats, all served up in gold dishes. The sultan, princess, Alla ad Deen, his mother, and the grand vizier, sat down at the first, and all the lords of the court at the second, which was very long. The sultan was much pleased with the cookery, and owned he had never eaten anything more excellent. He said the same of the wines, which were delicious; but what he most of all admired, were four large sideboards, profusely furnished with large flagons, basins, and cups, all of massive gold, set with jewels. He was besides charmed with several bands of music, which were ranged along the hall, and formed most agreeable concerts.

When the sultan rose from table, he was informed that the jewellers and goldsmiths attended; upon which he returned to the hall, and showed them the window which was unfinished. “I sent for you,” said he, “to fit up this window in as great perfection as the rest; examine them well and make all the dispatch you can.”

The jewellers and goldsmiths examined the three-and-twenty windows with great attention, and after they had consulted together, to know what each could furnish, they returned, and presented themselves before the sultan, whose principal jeweller, undertaking to speak for the rest, said, “Sir, we are all willing to exert our utmost care and industry to obey your majesty; but among us all we cannot furnish jewels enough for so great a work.” “I have more than are necessary,” said the sultan; “come to my palace, and you shall choose what may answer your purpose.”

When the sultan returned to his palace, he ordered his jewels to be brought out, and the jewellers took a great quantity, particularly those Alla ad Deen had made him a present of, which they soon used, without making any greet advance in their work. They came again several times for more, and in a month’s time had not finished half their work. In short, they used all the jewels the sultan had, and borrowed of the vizier, but yet the work was not half done.

Alla ad Deen, who knew that all the sultan’s endeavours to make this window like the rest were in vain, sent for the jewellers and goldsmiths, and not only commanded them to desist from their work, but ordered them to undo what they had begun, and to carry all their jewels back to the sultan and to the vizier. They undid in a few hours what they had been six weeks about, and retired, leaving Alla ad Deen alone in the hall. He took the lamp which he carried about him, rubbed it, and presently the genie appeared. “Genie,” said Alla ad Deen, “I ordered thee to leave one of the four-and-twenty windows of this hall imperfect, and thus hast executed my commands punctually; now I would have thee make it like the rest.” The genie immediately disappeared. Alla ad Deen went out of the hall, and returning soon after, found the window, as he wished it to be, like the others.

In the meantime, the jewellers and goldsmiths repaired to the palace, and were introduced into the sultan’s presence; where the chief jeweller, presenting the precious stones which he had brought back, said, in the name of all the rest, “Your majesty knows how long we have been upon the work you were pleased to set us about, in which we used all imaginable industry. It was far advanced, when prince Alla ad Deen commanded us not only to leave off, but to undo what we had already begun, and bring your majesty your jewels back.” The sultan asked them if Alla ad Deen had given them any reason for so doing, and they answering that he had given them none, he ordered a horse to be brought, which he mounted, and rode to his son-in law’s palace, with some few attendants on foot. When he came there, he alighted at the stair-case, which led up to the hall with the twenty-four windows, and went directly up to it, without giving previous notice to Alla ad Deen; but it happened that at that very juncture Alla ad Deen was opportunely there, and had just time to receive him at the door.

The sultan, without giving Alla ad Deen time to complain obligingly of his not having given notice, that he might have acquitted himself with the more becoming respect, said to him, “Son, I come myself to know the reason why you commanded the jewellers to desist from work, and take to pieces what they had done.”

Alla ad Deen disguised the true reason, which was, that the sultan was not rich enough in jewels to be at so great an expense, but said, “I beg of you now to see if any thing is wanting.”

The sultan went directly to the window which was left imperfect, and when he found it like the rest, fancied that he was mistaken, examined the two windows on each side, and afterwards all the four-and-twenty; but when he was convinced that the window which several workmen had been so long about was finished in so short a time, he embraced Alla ad Deen, and kissed him between his eyes. “My son,” said he, “what a man you are to do such surprising things always in the twinkling of an eye; there is not your fellow in the world; the more I know, the more I admire you.”

Alla ad Deen received these praises from the sultan with modesty, and replied in these words: “Sir, it is a great honour to me to deserve your majesty’s good-will and approbation, and I assure you, I shall study to deserve them more.”

The sultan returned to his palace, but would not let Alla ad Deen attend him. When he came there, he found his grand vizier waiting, to whom he related the wonder he had witnessed, with the utmost admiration, and in such terms as left the minister no room to doubt but that the facet was as the sultan related it; though he was the more confirmed in his belief, that Alla ad Deen's palace was the effect of enchantment, as he had told the sultan the first moment he saw it. He was going to repeat the observation, but the sultan interrupted him, and said, "You told me so once before; I see, vizier, you have not forgotten your son's espousals to my daughter." The frank vizier plainly saw how much the sultan was prepossessed, therefore avoided disputes and let him remain in his own opinion. The sultan as soon as he rose every morning went into the closet, to look at Alla ad Deen's palace, and would go many times in a day to contemplate and admire it.

Alla ad Deen did not confine himself in his palace; but took care to shew himself once or twice a week in the town, by going sometimes to one mosque, and sometimes to another, to prayers, or to visit the grand vizier, who affected to pay his court to him on certain days, or to do the principal lords of the court the honour to return their visits after he had regaled them at his palace. Every time he went out, he caused two slaves, who walked by the side of his horse, to throw handfuls of money among the people as he passed through the streets and squares, which were generally on those occasions crowded. Besides, no one came to his palace gates to ask alms, but returned satisfied with his liberality. In short, he so divided his time, that not a week passed but he went either once or twice a hunting, sometimes in the environs of the city, sometimes farther off; at which time the villages through which he passed felt the effects of his generosity, which gained him the love and blessings of the people: and it was common for them to swear by his head. Thus, without giving the least umbrage to the sultan, to whom he paid all imaginable respect, Alla ad Deen, by his affable behaviour and liberality, had won the affections of the people, and was more beloved than the sultan himself. With all these good qualities he shewed a courage and a zeal for the public good which could not be sufficiently applauded. He gave sufficient proofs of both in a revolt on the borders of the kingdom; for he no sooner understood that the sultan was levying an army to disperse the rebels than he begged the command of it, which he found not difficult to obtain. As soon as he was empowered, he marched with so much expedition, that the sultan heard of the defeat of the rebels before he had received an account of his arrival in the army. And though this action rendered his name famous throughout the kingdom, it made no alteration in his disposition; but he was as affable after his victory as before.

Alla ad Deen had conducted himself in this manner several years, when the African magician, who undesignedly had been the instrument of raising him to so high a pitch of prosperity, recalled him to his recollection in Africa, whither, after his expedition, he had returned. And though he was almost persuaded that Alla ad Deen must have died miserably in the subterraneous abode where he had left him, yet he had the curiosity to inform himself about his end with certainty; and as he was a great geomancer, he took out of a cupboard a square covered box, which he used in his geomantic observations: then sat himself down on the sofa, set it before him, and uncovered it. After he had prepared and levelled the sand which was in it, with an intention to discover whether or no Alla ad Deen had died in the subterraneous abode, he cast the points, drew the figures, and formed a horoscope, by which, when he came to examine it, he found that Alla ad Deen, instead of dying in the cave, had made his escape, lived splendidly, was in possession of the wonderful lamp, had married a princess, and was much honoured and respected.

The magician no sooner understood by the rules of his diabolical art, that Alla ad Deen had arrived to this height of good fortune, than his face became inflamed with anger, and he cried out in a rage, “This sorry tailor’s son has discovered the secret and virtue of the lamp! I believed his death to be certain; but find that he enjoys the fruit of my labour and study! I will, however, prevent his enjoying it long, or perish in the attempt.” He was not a great while deliberating on what he should do, but the next morning mounted a barb, set forwards, and never stopped but to refresh himself and horse, till he arrived at the capital of China. He alighted, took up his lodging in a khan, and stayed there the remainder of the day and the night, to refresh himself after so long a journey.

The next day, his first object was to inquire what people said of

Alla ad Deen; and, taking a walk through the town, he went to the most public and frequented places, where persons of the best distinction met to drink a certain warm liquor, which he had drunk often during his former visit.

As soon as he had seated himself, he was presented with a cup of it, which he took; but listening at the same time to the discourse of the company on each side of him, he heard them talking of Alla ad Deen's palace. When he had drunk off his liquor, he joined them, and taking this opportunity, inquired particularly of what palace they spoke with so much commendation. "From whence come you?" said the person to whom he addressed himself; "you must certainly be a stranger not to have seen or heard talk of Prince Alla ad Deen's palace" (for he was called so after his marriage with the princess). "I do not say," continued the man, "that it is one of the wonders of the world, but that it is the only wonder of the world; since nothing so grand, rich, and magnificent was ever beheld. Certainly you must have come from a great distance, or some obscure corner, not to have heard of it, for it must have been talked of all over the world. Go and see it, and then judge whether I have told you more than the truth." "Forgive my ignorance," replied the African magician; "I arrived here but yesterday, and came from the farthest part of Africa, where the fame of this palace had not reached when I came away. The business which brought me hither was so urgent, that my sole objets was to arrive as soon as I could, without stopping anywhere, or making any acquaintance. But I will not fail to go and see it; my impatience is so great, I will go immediately and satisfy my curiosity, if you will do me the favour to shew me the way thither."

The person to whom the African magician addressed himself took a pleasure in shewing him the way to Alla ad Deen's palace, and he got up and went thither instantly. When he came to the palace, and had examined it on all sides, he doubted not but that Alla ad Deen had made use of the lamp to build it. Without attending to the inability of a poor tailor's son, he knew that none but the genii, the slaves of the lamp, the attaining of which he had missed, could have performed such wonders; and piqued to the quick at Alla ad Deen's happiness and splendour, he returned to the khan where he lodged.

The next point was to ascertain where the lamp was; whether Alla ad Deen carried it about with him, or where he kept it; and this he was to discover by an operation of geomancy. As soon as he entered his lodging, he took his square box of sand, which he always carried with him when he travelled, and after he had performed some operations, he found that the lamp was in Alla ad Deen's palace, and so great was his joy at the discovery that he could hardly contain himself. "Well," said he, "I shall have the lamp, and defy Alla ad Deen's preventing my carrying it off, and making him sink to his original meanness, from which he has taken so high a flight."

It was Alla ad Deen's misfortune at that time to be absent in the chase for eight days, and only three were expired, which the magician came to know by this means. After he had performed the magical operation, which gave him so much joy, he went to the superintendent of the khan, entered into conversation with him on indifferent subjects, and among the rest, told him he had been to see Alla ad Deen's palace; and after exaggerating on all that he had seen most worthy of observation, added, "But my curiosity leads me farther, and I shall not be satisfied till I have seen the person to whom this wonderful edifice belongs." "That will be no difficult matter," replied the master of the khan, "there is not a day passes but he gives an opportunity when he is in town, but at present he is not at the palace, and has been gone these three days on a hunting-match, which will last eight."

The magician wanted to know no more; he took his leave of the superintendent of the khan, and returning to his own chamber, said to himself, "This is an opportunity I ought by no means to neglect, but must make the best use of it." To that end, he went to a coppersmith, and asked for a dozen copper lamps: the master of the shop told him he had not so many by him, but if he would have patience till the next day, he would have them ready. The magician appointed his time, and desired him to take care that they should be handsome and well polished. After promising to pay him well, he returned to his inn.

The next day the magician called for the twelve lamps, paid the man his full price, put them into a basket which he bought on purpose, and with the basket hanging on his arm, went directly to Alla ad Deen's palace: as he approached he began crying, "Who will change old lamps for new ones?” As he went along, a crowd of children collected, who hooted, and thought him, as did all who chanced to be passing by, a madman or a fool, to offer to change new lamps for old ones.

The African magician regarded not their scoffs, hootings, or all they could say to him, but still continued crying, “Who will change old lamps for new?” He repeated this so often, walking backwards and forwards in front of the palace, that the princess, who was then in the hall with the four-and-twenty windows, hearing a man cry something, and not being able to distinguish his words, owing to the hooting of the children and increasing mob about him, sent one of her women slaves to know what he cried.

The slave was not long before she returned, and ran into the hall, laughing so heartily, that the princess could not forbear herself. “Well, giggler,” said the princess, “will you tell me what you laugh at?” “Madam,” answered the slave, laughing still, “who can forbear laughing, to see a fool with a basket on his arm, full of fine new lamps, ask to change them for old ones; the children and mob, crowding about him so that he can hardly stir, make all the noise they can in derision of him.”

Another female slave hearing this, said, “Now you speak of lamps, I know not whether the princess may have observed it, but there is an old one upon a shelf of the prince’s robing-room, and whoever owns it will not be sorry to find a new one in its stead. If the princess chooses, she may have the pleasure of trying if this fool is so silly as to give a new lamp for an old one, without taking any thing for the exchange.”

The lamp this slave spoke of was the wonderful lamp, which Alla ad Deen had laid upon the shelf before he departed for the chase; this he had done several times before; but neither the princess, the slaves, nor the eunuchs, had ever taken notice of it. At all other times except when hunting he carried it about his person.

The princess, who knew not the value of this lamp, and the interest that Alla ad Deen, not to mention herself, had to keep it safe, entered into the pleasantry, and commanded a eunuch to take it, and make the exchange. The eunuch obeyed, went out of the hall, and no sooner got to the palace gates than he saw the African magician, called to him, and shewing him the old lamp, said, “Give me a new lamp for this.”

The magician never doubted but this was the lamp he wanted. There could be no other such in this palace, where every utensil was gold or silver. He snatched it eagerly out of the eunuch’s hand, and thrusting it as far as he could into his breast, offered him his basket, and bade him choose which he liked best. The eunuch picked out one, and carried it to the princess; but the exchange was no sooner made than the place rung with the shouts of the children, deriding the magician’s folly.

The African magician gave everybody leave to laugh as much as they pleased; he stayed not long near the palace, but made the best of his way, without crying any longer, “New lamps for old ones.” His end was answered, and by his silence he got rid of the children and the mob.

As soon as he was out of the square between the two palaces, he hastened down the streets which were the least frequented; and having no more occasion for his lamps or basket, set all down in an alley where nobody saw him: then going down another street or two, he walked till he came to one of the city gates, and pursuing his way through the suburbs, which were very extensive, at length reached a lonely spot, where he stopped for a time to execute the design he had in contemplation, never caring for his horse which he had left at the khan, but thinking himself perfectly compensated by the treasure he had acquired.

In this place the African magician passed the remainder of the day, till the darkest time of night, when he pulled the lamp out of his breast and rubbed it. At that summons the genie appeared, and said, “What wouldst thou have? I am ready to obey thee as thy slave, and the slave of all those who have that lamp in their hands; both I and the other slaves of the lamp.” “I command thee,” replied the magician, “to transport me immediately and the palace which thou and the other slaves of the lamp have built in this city, with all the people in it, to Africa.” The genie made no reply, but with the assistance of the other genii, the slaves of the lamp immediately transported him and the palace entire, to the spot whither he was desired to convey it.

As soon as the sultan rose the next morning, according to custom, he went into his closet, to have the pleasure of contemplating and admiring Alla ad Deen’s palace; but when he first looked that way, and instead of a palace saw an empty space such as it was before the palace was built, he thought he was mistaken, and rubbed his eyes; but when he looked again, he still saw nothing more the second time than the first, though the weather was fine, the sky clear, and the dawn advancing had made all objects very distinct. He looked again in front, to the right and left, but beheld nothing more than he had formerly been used to see from his window. His amazement was so great, that he stood for some time turning his eyes to the spot where the palace had stood, but where it was no longer to be seen. He could not comprehend how so large a palace as Alla ad Deen’s, which he had seen plainly every day for some years, and but the day before, should vanish so soon, and not leave the least remains behind. “Certainly,” said he to himself, “I am not mistaken; it stood there: if it had fallen, the materials would have lain in heaps; and if it had been swallowed up by an earthquake, there would be some mark left.” At last, though he was convinced that no palace stood now opposite his own, he could not help staying some time at his window, to see whether he might not be mistaken. At last he retired to his apartment, not without looking behind him before he quitted the spot ordered the grand vizier to be sent for with expedition, and in the meantime sat down, his mind agitated by so many different conjectures that he knew not what to resolve.

The grand vizier did not make the sultan wait long for him, but came with so much precipitation, that neither he nor his attendants, as they passed, missed Alla ad Deen’s palace; neither did the porters, when they opened the palace gates observe any alteration.

When he came into the sultan’s presence, he said to him, “the haste in which your majesty sent for me makes me believe something extraordinary has happened, since you know that this is a day of public audience, and I should not have failed of attending at the usual time.” “Indeed,” said the sultan, “it is something very extraordinary, as you say, and you will allow it to be so: tell me what is become of Alla ad Deen’s palace?” “His palace!” replied the grand vizier, in amazement, “I thought as I passed it stood in its usual place; such substantial buildings are not so easily removed." "Go into my closet," said the sultan, "and tell me if you can see it."

The grand vizier went into the closet, where he was struck with no less amazement than the sultan had been. When he was well assured that there was not the least appearance of this palace, he returned to the sultan. "Well," said the sultan, "have you seen Alla ad Deen's palace?" "No," answered the vizier; "but your majesty may remember that I had the honour to tell you, that palace, which was the subject of your admiration, with all its immense riches, was only the work of magic and a magician; but your majesty would not pay the least attention to what I said."

The sultan, who could not deny what the grand vizier had represented to him, flew into the greater passion: "Where is that impostor, that wicked wretch," said he, "that I may have his head taken off immediately?" "Sir," replied the grand vizier, "it is some days since he came to take his leave of your majesty, on pretence of hunting; he ought to be sent for, to know what is become of his palace, since he cannot be ignorant of what has been transacted." "That is too great an indulgence," replied the sultan: "command a detachment of horse to bring him to me loaded with chains." The grand vizier gave orders for a detachment, and instructed the officer who commanded them how they were to act, that Alla ad Deen might not escape. The detachment pursued their orders; and about five or six leagues from the town met him returning from the chase. The officer advanced respectfully, and informed him the sultan was so impatient to see him, that he had sent his party to accompany him home.

Alla ad Deen had not the least suspicion of the true reason of their meeting him; but when he came within half a league of the city, the detachment surrounded him, when the officer addressed himself to him, and said, "Prince, it is with great regret that I declare to you the sultan's order to arrest you, and to carry you before him as a criminal: I beg of you not to take it ill that we acquit ourselves of our duty, and to forgive us."

Alla ad Deen, who felt himself innocent, was much surprised at this declaration, and asked the officer if he knew what crime he was accused of; who replied, he did not. Then Alla ad Deen, finding that his retinue was much interior to this detachment, alighted off his horse, and said to the officers, “Execute your orders; I am not conscious that I have committed any offence against the sultan’s person or government.” A heavy chain was immediately put about his neck, and fastened round his body, so that both his arms were pinioned down; the officer then put himself at the head of the detachment, and one of the troopers taking hold of the end of the chain and proceeding after the officer, led Alla ad Deen, who was obliged to follow him on foot, into the city.

When this detachment entered the suburbs, the people, who saw Alla ad Deen thus led as a state criminal, never doubted but that his head was to be cut off; and as he was generally beloved, some took sabres and other arms; and those who had none gathered stones, and followed the escort. The last division faced about to disperse them; but their numbers presently increased so much, that the soldiery began to think it would be well if they could get into the sultan’s palace before Alla ad Deen was rescued; to prevent which, according to the different extent of the streets, they took care to cover the ground by extending or closing. In this manner they with much difficulty arrived at the palace square, and there drew up in a line, till their officer and troopers with Alla ad Deen had got within the gates, which were immediately shut.

Alla ad Deen was carried before the sultan, who waited for him, attended by the grand vizier, in a balcony; and as soon as he saw him, he ordered the executioner, who waited there for the purpose, to strike off his head without hearing him or giving him leave to clear himself.

As soon as the executioner had taken off the chain that was fastened about Alla ad Deen’s neck and body, and laid down a skin stained with the blood of the many he had executed, he made the supposed criminal kneel down, and tied a bandage over his eyes. Then drawing his sabre, took his aim by flourishing it three times in the air, waiting for the sultan’s giving the signal to strike.

At that instant the grand vizier perceiving that the populace had forced the guard of horse, crowded the great square before the palace, and were scaling the walls in several places, and beginning to pull them down to force their way in; he said to the sultan, before he gave the signal, "I beg of your majesty to consider what you are going to do, since you will hazard your palace being destroyed; and who knows what fatal consequence may follow?" "My palace forced!" replied the sultan; "who can have that audacity?" "Sir," answered the grand vizier, "if your majesty will but cast your eyes towards the great square, and on the palace walls, you will perceive the truth of what I say."

The sultan was so much alarmed when he saw so great a crowd, and how enraged they were, that he ordered the executioner to put his sabre immediately into the scabbard, to unbind Alla ad Deen, and at the same time commanded the porters to declare to the people that the sultan had pardoned him, and that they might retire.

Those who had already got upon the walls, and were witnesses of what had passed, abandoned their design and got quickly down, overjoyed that they had saved the life of a man they dearly loved, and published the news amongst the rest, which was presently confirmed by the mace-bearers from the top of the terraces. The justice which the sultan had done to Alla ad Deen soon disarmed the populace of their rage; the tumult abated, and the mob dispersed.

When Alla ad Deen found himself at liberty, he turned towards the balcony, and perceiving the sultan, raised his voice, and said to him in a moving manner, "I beg of your majesty to add one favour more to that which I have already received, which is, to let me know my crime?" "Your crime," answered the sultan; "perfidious wretch! Do you not know it? Come hither, and I will shew it you."

Alla ad Deen went up, when the sultan, going before him without looking at him, said, "Follow me;" and then led him into his closet. When he came to the door, he said, "Go in; you ought to know whereabouts your palace stood: look round and tell me what is become of it?"

Alla ad Deen looked, but saw nothing. He perceived the spot upon which his palace had stood; but not being able to divine how it had disappeared, was thrown into such great confusion and amazement, that he could not return one word of answer.

The sultan growing impatient, demanded of him again, "Where is your palace, and what is become of my daughter?" Alla ad Deen, breaking silence, replied, "Sir, I perceive and own that the palace which I have built is not in its place, but is vanished; neither can I tell your majesty where it may be, but can assure you I had no concern in its removal."

"I am not so much concerned about your palace," replied the sultan, "I value my daughter ten thousand times more, and would have you find her out, otherwise I will cause your head to be struck off, and no consideration shall divert me from my purpose."

"I beg of your majesty," answered Alla ad Deen, "to grant me forty days to make my inquiries; and if in that time I have not the success I wish, I will offer my head at the foot of your throne, to be disposed of at your pleasure." "I give you the forty days you ask," said the sultan; "but think not to abuse the favour I shew you, by imagining you shall escape my resentment; for I will find you out in whatsoever part of the world you may conceal yourself."

Alla ad Deen went out of the sultan's presence with great humiliation, and in a condition worthy of pity. He crossed the courts of the palace, hanging down his head, and in such great confusion, that he durst not lift up his eyes. The principal officers of the court, who had all professed themselves his friends, and whom he had never disobliged, instead of going up to him to comfort him, and offer him a retreat in their houses, turned their backs to avoid seeing him. But had they accosted him with a word of comfort or offer of service, they would have no more known Alla ad Deen. He did not know himself, and was no longer in his senses, as plainly appeared by his asking everybody he met, and at every house, if they had seen his palace, or could tell him any news of it.

These questions made the generality believe that Alla ad Deen was mad. Some laughed at him, but people of sense and humanity, particularly those who had had any connection of business or friendship with him, really pitied him. For three days he rambled about the city in this manner, without coming to any resolution, or eating anything but what some compassionate people forced him to take out of charity.

At last, as he could no longer in his unhappy condition stay in a city where he had lately been next to the sultan, he took the road to the country; and after he had traversed several fields in wild uncertainty, at the approach of night came to the bank of a river.

There, possessed by his despair, he said to himself, “Where shall I seek my palace? In what province, country, or part of the world, shall I find that and my dear princess, whom the sultan expects from me? I shall never succeed; I had better free myself at once from fruitless endeavours, and such bitter grief as preys upon me.” He was just going to throw himself into the river, but, as a good Moosulmaun, true to his religion, he thought he should not do it without first saying his prayers. Going to prepare himself, he went to the river’s brink, in order to perform the usual ablutions. The place being steep and slippery, from the water beating against it, he slid down, and had certainly fallen into the river, but for a little rock which projected about two feet out of the earth. Happily also for him he still had on the ring which the African magician had put on his finger before he went down into the subterraneous abode to fetch the precious lamp. In slipping down the bank he rubbed the ring so hard by holding on the rock, that immediately the same genie appeared whom he had seen in the cave where the magician had left him. “What wouldst thou have?” said the genie. “I am ready to obey thee as thy slave, and the slave of all those that have that ring on their finger; both I and the other slaves of the ring.”

Alla ad Deen, agreeably surprised at an apparition he so little expected in his present calamity, replied, “Save my life, genie, a second time, either by shewing me to the place where the palace I caused to be built now stands, or immediately transporting it back where it first stood.” “What you command me,” answered the genie, “is not wholly in my power; I am only the slave of the ring; you must address yourself to the slave of the lamp.” “If that be the case,” replied Alla ad Deen, “I command thee, by the power of the ring, to transport me to the spot where my palace stands, in what part of the world soever it may be, and set me down under the window of the princess Buddir al Buddoor.” These words were no sooner out of his mouth, than the genie transported him into Africa, to the midst of a large plain, where his palace stood, at no great distance from a city, and placing him exactly under the window of the princess’s apartment, left him. All this was done almost in an instant.

Alla ad Deen, notwithstanding the darkness of the night, knew his palace and the princess Buddir al Buddoor’s apartment again; but as the night was far advanced, and all was quiet in the palace, he retired to some distance, and sat down at the foot of a large tree. There, full of hopes, and reflecting on his happiness, for which he was indebted to chance, he found himself in a much more comfortable situation than when he was arrested and carried before the sultan; being now delivered from the immediate danger of losing his life. He amused himself for some time with these agreeable thoughts; but not having slept for two days, was not able to resist the drowsiness which came upon him, but fell fast asleep.

The next morning, as soon as day appeared, Alla ad Deen was agreeably awakened by the singing not only of the birds which had roosted in the tree under which he had passed the night, but also of those which frequented the thick groves of the palace garden. When he cast his eyes on that wonderful edifice, he felt inexpressible joy at thinking he might possibly soon be master of it again, and once more possess his dear princess Buddir al Buddoor. Pleased with these hopes, he immediately arose, went towards the princess's apartment, and walked some time under her window in expectation of her rising, that he might see her. During this expectation, he began to consider with himself whence the cause of his misfortune had proceeded; and after mature reflection, no longer doubted that it was owing to having trusted the lamp out of his sight. He accused himself of negligence in letting it be a moment away from him. But what puzzled him most was, that he could not imagine who had been so envious of his happiness. He would soon have guessed this, if he had known that both he and his palace were in Africa, the very name of which would soon have made him remember the magician his declared enemy; but the genie, the slave of the ring, had not made the least mention of the name of the country, nor had Alla ad Deen inquired.

The princess rose earlier that morning than she had done since her transportation into Africa by the magician, whose presence she was forced to support once a day, because he was master of the palace; but she had always treated him so harshly that he dared not reside in it. As she was dressing, one of the women looking through the window, perceived Alla ad Deen, and instantly told her mistress. The princess, who could not believe the joyful tidings, hastened herself to the window, and seeing Alla ad Deen, immediately opened it. The noise of opening the window made Alla ad Deen turn his head that way, and perceiving the princess he saluted her with an air that expressed his joy. “To lose no time,” said she to him, “I have sent to have the private door opened for you; enter, and come up.”

The private door, which was just under the princess’s apartment, was soon opened, and Alla ad Deen conducted up into the chamber. It is impossible to express the joy of both at seeing each other, after so cruel a separation. After embracing and shedding tears of joy, they sat down, and Alla ad Deen said, “I beg of you, princess, in God’s name, before we talk of anything else, to tell me, both for your own sake, the sultan your father’s, and mine, what is become of an old lamp which I left upon a shelf in my robing-chamber, when I departed for the chase.”

“Alas! dear husband,” answered the princess, “I was afraid our misfortune might be owing to that lamp: and what grieves me most is, that I have been the cause of it.” “Princess,” replied Alla ad Deen, “do not blame yourself, since it was entirely my fault, for I ought to have taken more care of it. But let us now think only of repairing the loss; tell me what has happened, and into whose hands it has fallen.”

The princess then related how she had changed the old lamp for a new one, which she ordered to be fetched, that he might see it, and how the next morning she found herself in the unknown country they were then in, which she was told was Africa, by the traitor, who had transported her thither by his magic art.

“Princess,” said Alla ad Deen, interrupting her, “you have informed me who the traitor is, by telling me we are in Africa. He is the most perfidious of men; but this is neither a time nor place to give you a full account of his villainies. I desire you only to tell me what he has done with the lamp, and where he has put it?” “He carries it carefully wrapped up in his bosom,” said the princess; “and this I can assure you, because he pulled it out before me, and shewed it to me in triumph.”

“Princess,” said Alla ad Deen, “do not be displeased that I trouble you with so many questions, since they are equally important to us both. But to come to what most particularly concerns me; tell me, I conjure you, how so wicked and perfidious a man treats you?” “Since I have been here,” replied the princess, “he repairs once every day to see me; and I am persuaded the little satisfaction he receives from his visits makes him come no oftener. All his addresses tend to persuade me to break that faith I have pledged to you, and to take him for my husband; giving me to understand, I need not entertain hopes of ever seeing you again, for that you were dead, having had your head struck off by the sultan my father's order. He added, to justify himself, that you were an ungrateful wretch; that your good fortune was owing to him, and a great many other things of that nature which I forbear to repeat: but as he received no other answer from me but grievous complaints and tears, he was always forced to retire with as little satisfaction as he came. I doubt not his intention is to allow me time to overcome my grief, in hopes that afterwards I may change my sentiments; and if I persevere in an obstinate refusal, to use violence. But my dear husband's presence removes all my apprehensions."

"I am confident my attempts to punish the magician will not be in vain," replied Alla ad Deen, "since my princess's fears are removed, and I think I have found the means to deliver you from both your enemy and mine; to execute this design, it is necessary for me to go to the town. I shall return by noon, will then communicate my design, and what must be done by you to ensure success. But that you may not be surprised, I think it proper to acquaint you, that I shall change my apparel, and beg of you to give orders that I may not wait long at the private door, but that it may be opened at the first knock;" all which the princess promised to observe.

When Alla ad Deen was out of the palace, he looked round him on all sides, and perceiving a peasant going into the country, hastened after him; and when he had overtaken him, made a proposal to him to change habits, which the man agreed to. When they had made the exchange, the countryman went about his business, and Alla ad Deen to the city. After traversing several streets, he came to that part of the town where all descriptions of merchants and artisans had their particular streets, according to their trades. He went into that of the druggists; and going into one of the largest and best furnished shops, asked the druggist if he had a certain powder which he named.

The druggist, judging Alla ad Deen by his habit to be very poor, and that he had not money enough to pay for it, told him he had it, but that it was very dear; upon which Alla ad Deen penetrated his thoughts, pulled out his purse, and shewing him some gold, asked for half a dram of the powder; which the druggist weighed, wrapped up in paper, and gave him, telling him the price was a piece of gold. Alla ad Deen put the money into his hand, and staying no longer in the town than just to get a little refreshment, returned to the palace, where he waited not long at the private door. When he came into the princess's apartment, he said to her, "Princess, perhaps the aversion you tell me you have for your ravisher may be an objection to your executing what I am going to propose; but permit me to say it is proper that you should at this juncture dissemble a little, and do violence to your inclinations, if you would deliver yourself from him, and give my lord the sultan your father the satisfaction of seeing you again." "If you will take my advice," continued he, "dress yourself this moment in one of your richest habits, and when the African magician comes, make no difficulty to give him the best reception; receive him with a cheerful countenance, so that he may imagine time has removed your affliction and disgust at his addresses. In your conversation, let him understand that you strive to forget me; and that he may be the more fully convinced of your sincerity, invite him to sup with you, and tell him you should be glad to taste of some of the best wines of his country. He will presently go to fetch you some. During his absence, put into one of the cups you are accustomed to drink out of this powder, and setting it by, charge the slave you may order that night to attend you, on a signal you shall agree upon, to bring that cup to you. When the magician and you have eaten and drunk as much as you choose, let her bring you the cup, and then change cups with him. He will esteem it so great a favour that he will not refuse, but eagerly quaff it off; but no sooner will he have drunk, than you will see him fall backwards. If you have any reluctance to drink out of his cup, you may pretend only to do it, without fear of being discovered; for the effect of the powder is so quick, that he will not have time to know whether you drink or not."

When Alla ad Deen had finished, "I own," answered the princess, "I shall do myself great violence in consenting to make the magician such advances as I see are absolutely necessary; but what cannot one resolve to do against a cruel enemy? I will therefore follow your advice, since both my repose and yours depend upon it." After the princess had agreed to the measures proposed by Alla ad Deen, he took his leave, and went and spent the rest of the day in the neighbourhood of the palace till it was night, and he might safely return to the private door.

The princess, who had remained inconsolable at being separated not only from her husband, whom she had loved from the first moment, and still continued to love more out of inclination than duty, but also from the sultan her father, who had always showed the most tender and paternal affection for her, had, ever since their cruel separation, lived in great neglect of her person. She had almost forgotten the neatness so becoming persons of her sex and quality, particularly after the first time the magician paid her a visit; and she had understood by some of the women, who knew him again, that it was he who had taken the old lamp in exchange for a new one, which rendered the sight of him more abhorred. However, the opportunity of taking the revenge he deserved made her resolve to gratify Alla ad Deen. As soon, therefore, as he was gone, she sat down to dress, and was attired by her women to the best advantage in the richest habit of her wardrobe. Her girdle was of the finest and largest diamonds set in gold, her necklace of pearls, six on a side, so well proportioned to that in the middle, which was the largest ever seen, and invaluable, that the greatest sultanesses would have been proud to have been adorned with only two of the smallest. Her bracelets, which were of diamonds and rubies intermixed, corresponded admirably to the richness of the girdle and necklace.

When the princess Buddir al Buddoor was completely dressed, she consulted her glass and women upon her adjustment; and when she found she wanted no charms to flatter the foolish passion of the African magician, she sat down on a sofa expecting his arrival.

The magician came at the usual hour, and as soon as he entered the great hall where the princess waited to receive him, she rose with an enchanting grace and smile, and pointed with her hand to the most honourable place, waiting till he sat down, that she might sit at the same time which was a civility she had never shown him before.

The African magician, dazzled more with the lustre of the princess's eyes than the glittering of the jewels with which she was adorned, was much surprised. The smiling and graceful air with which she received him, so opposite to her former behaviour, quite fascinated his heart.

When he was seated, the princess, to free him from his embarrassment, broke silence first, locking at him all the time in such a manner as to make him believe that he was not so odious to her as she had given him to understand hitherto and said, "You are doubtless amazed to find me so much altered to-day; but your surprise will not be so great when I acquaint you, that I am naturally of a disposition so opposite to melancholy and grief, sorrow and uneasiness, that I always strive to put them as far away as possible when I find the subject of them is past. I have reflected on what you told me of Alla ad Deen's fate, and know my father's temper so well, that I am persuaded with you he could not escape the terrible effects of the sultan's rage; therefore, should I continue to lament him all my life, my tears cannot recall him. For this reason, since I have paid all the duties decency requires of me to his memory, now he is in the grave I think I ought to endeavour to comfort myself. These are the motives of the change you see in me; I am resolved to banish melancholy entirely; and, persuaded that you will bear me company tonight, I have ordered a supper to be prepared; but as I have no wines but those of China, I have a great desire to taste of the produce of Africa, and doubt not your procuring some of the best."

The African magician, who had looked upon the happiness of getting so soon and so easily into the princess Buddir al Buddoor's good graces as impossible, could not think of words expressive enough to testify how sensible he was of her favours: but to put an end the sooner to a conversation which would have embarrassed him, if he had engaged farther in it, he turned it upon the wines of Africa, and said, "Of all the advantages Africa can boast, that of producing the most excellent wines is one of the principal. I have a vessel of seven years old, which has never been broached; and it is indeed not praising it too much to say it is the finest wine in the world. If my princess," added he, "will give me leave, I will go and fetch two bottles, and return again immediately." "I should be sorry to give you that trouble," replied the princess; "you had better send for them." "It is necessary I should go myself," answered the African magician; "for nobody but myself knows where the key of the cellar is laid, or has the secret to unlock the door." "If it be so," said the princess, "make haste back; for the longer you stay, the greater will be my impatience, and we shall sit down to supper as soon as you return."

The African magician, full of hopes of his expected happiness, rather flew than ran, and returned quickly with the wine. The princess, not doubting but he would make haste, put with her own hand the powder Alla ad Deen had given her into the cup set apart for that purpose. They sat down at the table opposite to each other, the magician's back towards the sideboard. The princess presented him with the best at the table, and said to him, "If you please, I will entertain you with a concert of vocal and instrumental music; but, as we are only two, I think conversation maybe more agreeable." This the magician took as a new favour.

After they had eaten some time, the princess called for some wine, drank the magician's health, and afterwards said to him, "Indeed you had a full right to commend your wine, since I never tasted any so delicious." "Charming princess," said he, holding in his hand the cup which had been presented to him, "my wine becomes more exquisite by your approbation." "Then drink my health," replied the princess; "you will find I understand wines." He drank the princess's health, and returning the cup, said, "I think myself fortunate, princess, that I reserved this wine for so happy an occasion; and own I never before drank any in every respect so excellent."

When they had each drunk two or three cups more, the princess, who had completely charmed the African magician by her civility and obliging behaviour, gave the signal to the slave who served them with wine, bidding her bring the cup which had been filled for her, and at the same time bring the magician a full goblet. When they both had their cups in their hands, she said to him, "I know not how you express your loves in these parts when drinking together? With us in China the lover and his mistress reciprocally exchange cups, and drink each other's health." At the same time she presented to him the cup which was in her hand, and held out her hand to receive his. He hastened to make the exchange with the more pleasure, because he looked upon this favour as the most certain token of an entire conquest over the princess, which raised his rapture to the highest pitch. Before he drank, he said to her, with the cup in his hand, "Indeed, princess, we Africans are not so refined in the art of love as you Chinese: and your instructing me in a lesson I was ignorant of, informs me how sensible I ought to be of the favour done me. I shall never, lovely princess, forget my recovering, by drinking out of your cup, that life, which your cruelty, had it continued, must have made me despair of."

The princess, who began to be tired with this impertinent declaration of the African magician, interrupted him, and said, "Let us drink first, and then say what you will afterwards;" at the same time she set the cup to her lips, while the African magician, who was eager to get his wine off first, drank up the very last drop. In finishing it, he had reclined his head back to shew his eagerness, and remained some time in that state. The princess kept the cup at her lips, till she saw his eyes turn in his head, when he fell backwards lifeless on the sofa.

The princess had no occasion to order the private door to be opened to Alla ad Deen; for her women were so disposed from the great hall to the foot of the staircase, that the word was no sooner given that the African magician was fallen backwards, than the door was immediately opened.

As soon as Alla ad Deen entered the hall, he saw the magician stretched backwards on the sofa. The princess rose from her seat, and ran overjoyed to embrace him; but he stopped her, and said, "Princess, it is not yet time; oblige me by retiring to your apartment; and let me be left alone a moment, while I endeavour to transport you back to China as speedily as you were brought from thence."

When the princess, her women and eunuchs, were gone out of the hall, Alla ad Deen shut the door, and going directly to the dead body of the magician, opened his vest, took out the lamp, which was carefully wrapped up, as the princess had told him, and unfolding and rubbing it, the genie immediately appeared. "Genie," said Alla ad Deen, "I have called to command thee, on the part of thy good mistress this lamp, to transport this palace instantly into China, to the place from whence it was brought hither." The genie bowed his head in token of obedience, and disappeared. Immediately the palace was transported into China, and its removal was only felt by two little shocks, the one when it was lifted up, the other when it was set down, and both in a very short interval of time.

Alla ad Deen went to the princess's apartment, and embracing her, said, "I can assure you, princess, that your joy and mine will be complete tomorrow morning." The princess, guessing that Alla ad Deen must be hungry, ordered the dishes, served up in the great hall, to be brought down. The princess and Alla ad Deen ate as much as they thought fit, and drank of the African magician's old wine; during which time their conversation could not be otherwise than satisfactory, and then they retired to their own chamber.

From the time of the transportation of Alla ad Deen's palace, the princess's father had been inconsolable for the loss of her. He could take no rest, and instead of avoiding what might continue his affliction, he indulged it without restraint. Before the disaster he used to go every morning into his closet to please himself with viewing the palace, he went now many times in the day to renew his tears, and plunge himself into the deepest melancholy, by the idea of no more seeing that which once gave him so much pleasure, and reflecting how he had lost what was most dear to him in this world.

The very morning of the return of Alla ad Deen's palace, the sultan went, by break of day, into his closet to indulge his sorrows. Absorbed in himself, and in a pensive mood, he cast his eyes towards the spot, expecting only to see an open space; but perceiving the vacancy filled up, he at first imagined the appearance to be the effect of a fog; looking more attentively, he was convinced beyond the power of doubt it was his son-in-law's palace. Joy and gladness succeeded to sorrow and grief. He returned immediately into his apartment, and ordered a horse to be saddled and brought to him without delay, which he mounted that instant, thinking he could not make haste enough to the palace.

Alla ad Deen, who foresaw what would happen, rose that morning by day-break, put on one of the most magnificent habits his wardrobe afforded, and went up into the hall of twenty-four windows, from whence he perceived the sultan approaching, and got down soon enough to receive him at the foot of the great staircase, and to help him to dismount. "Alla ad Deen," said the sultan, "I cannot speak to you till I have seen and embraced my daughter."

He led the sultan into the princess's apartment. The happy father embraced her with his face bathed in tears of joy; and the princess, on her side, shewed him all the testimonies of the extreme pleasure the sight of him afforded her.

The sultan was some time before he could open his lips, so great was his surprise and joy to find his daughter again, after he had given her up for lost; and the princess, upon seeing her father, let fall tears of rapture and affection.

At last the sultan broke silence, and said, "I would believe, daughter, your joy to see me makes you seem as little changed as if no misfortune had befallen you; yet I cannot be persuaded but that you have suffered much alarm; for a large palace cannot be so suddenly transported as yours has been, without causing great fright and apprehension I would have you tell me all that has happened, and conceal nothing from me."

The princess, who took great pleasure in giving the sultan the satisfaction he demanded, said, "If I appear so little altered, I beg of your majesty to consider that I received new life yesterday morning by the presence of my dear husband and deliverer Alla ad Deen, whom I looked upon and bewailed as lost to me; and the happiness of seeing and embracing of whom has almost recovered me to my former state of health. My greatest suffering was only to find myself forced from your majesty and my dear husband; not only from the love I bore my husband, but from the uneasiness I laboured under through fear that he, though innocent, might feel the effects of your anger, to which I knew he was left exposed. I suffered but little from the insolence of the wretch who had carried me off; for having secured the ascendant over him, I always put a stop to his disagreeable overtures, and was as little constrained as I am at present.

"As to what relates to my transportation, Alla ad Deen had no concern in it; I was myself the innocent cause of it." To persuade the sultan of the truth of what she said, she gave him a full account of how the African magician had disguised himself, and offered to change new lamps for old ones; how she had amused herself in making that exchange, being entirely ignorant of the secret and importance of the wonderful lamp; how the palace and herself were carried away and transported into Africa, with the African magician, who was recognised by two of her women and the eunuch who made the exchange of the lamp, when he had the audacity, after the success of his daring enterprise, to propose himself for her husband; how he persecuted her till Alla ad Deen's arrival; how they had concerted measures to get the lamp from him again, and the success they had fortunately met with by her dissimulation in inviting him to supper, and giving him the cup with the powder prepared for him. "For the rest," added she, "I leave it to Alla ad Deen to recount."

Alla ad Deen had not much to tell the sultan, but only said, "When the private door was opened I went up into the great hall, where I found the magician lying dead on the sofa, and as I thought it not proper for the princess to stay there any longer, I desired her to go down into her own apartment, with her women and eunuchs. As soon as I was alone, and had taken the lamp out of the magician's breast, I made use of the same secret he had done, to remove the palace, and carry off the princess; and by that means the palace was re-conveyed to the place where it stood before; and I have the happiness to restore the princess to your majesty, as you commanded me. But that your majesty may not think that I impose upon you, if you will give yourself the trouble to go up into the hall, you may see the magician punished as he deserved."

The sultan, to be assured of the truth, rose instantly, and went into the hall, where, when he saw the African magician dead, and his face already livid by the strength of the poison, he embraced Alla ad Deen with great tenderness, and said, "My son, be not displeased at my proceedings against you; they arose from my paternal love; and therefore you ought to forgive the excesses to which it hurried me." "Sir," replied Alla ad Deen, "I have not the least reason to complain of your majesty's conduct, since you did nothing but what your duty required. This infamous magician, the basest of men, was the sole cause of my misfortune. When your majesty has leisure, I will give you an account of another villanous action he was guilty of towards me, which was no less black and base than this, from which I was preserved by the providence of God in a very miraculous way." "I will take an opportunity, and that very shortly," replied the sultan, "to hear it; but in the mean time let us think only of rejoicing, and the removal of this odious object."

Alla ad Deen ordered the magician's corpse to be removed and thrown upon a dunghill, for birds and beasts to prey upon. In the mean time, the sultan commanded the drums, trumpets, cymbals, and other instruments of music to announce his joy to the public, and a festival of ten days to be proclaimed for the return of the princess and Alla ad Deen.

Thus Alla ad Deen escaped once more the almost inevitable danger of losing his life; but this was not the last, since he ran as great a hazard a third time.

The African magician had a younger brother, who was equally skilful as a necromancer, and even surpassed him in villany and pernicious designs. As they did not live together, or in the same city, but oftentimes when one was in the east, the other was in the west, they failed not every year to inform themselves, by their art, each where the other resided, and whether they stood in need of one another's assistance.

Some time after the African magician had failed in his enterprise against Alla ad Deen, his younger brother, who had heard no tidings of him, and was not in Africa, but in a distant country, had the wish to know in what part of the world he sojourned, the state of his health, and what he was doing; and as he, as well as his brother, always carried a geomantic square instrument about him, he prepared the sand, cast the points, and drew the figures. On examining the planetary mansions, he found that his brother was no longer living, but had been poisoned; and by another observation, that he was in the capital of the kingdom of China; also that the person who had poisoned him was of mean birth, though married to a princess, a sultan's daughter.

When the magician had informed himself of his brother's fate, he lost no time in useless regret, which could not restore him to life; but resolving immediately to revenge his death, departed for China; where, after crossing plains, rivers, mountains, deserts, and a long tract of country without delay, he arrived after incredible fatigues.

When he came to the capital of China, he took a lodging. The next day he walked through the town, not so much to observe the beauties, which were indifferent to him, as to take proper measures to execute his pernicious designs. He introduced himself into the most frequented places, where he listened to everybody's discourse. In a place where people resort to divert themselves with games of various kinds, and where some were conversing, while others played, he heard some persons talk of the virtue and piety of a woman called Fatima, who was retired from the world, and of the miracles she wrought. As he fancied that this woman might be serviceable to him in the project he had conceived, he took one of the company aside, and requested to be informed more particularly who that holy woman was, and what sort of miracles she performed.

"What!" said the person whom he addressed, "have you never seen or heard of her? She is the admiration of the whole town, for her fasting, her austerities, and her exemplary life. Except Mondays and Fridays, she never stirs out of her little cell; and on those days on which she comes into the town she does an infinite deal of good; for there is not a person that has the headache but is cured by her laying her hand upon them."

The magician wanted no further information. He only asked the person in what part of the town this holy woman's cell was situated. After he had informed himself on this head, he determined on the detestable design of murdering her and assuming her character. With this view he watched all her steps the first day she went out after he had made this inquiry, without losing sight of her till evening, when he saw her re-enter her cell. When he had fully observed the place, he went to one of those houses where they sell a certain hot liquor, and where any person may pass the night, particularly in the great heats, when the people of that country prefer lying on a mat to a bed. About midnight, after the magician had satisfied the master of the house for what little he had called for, he went out, and proceeded directly to the cell of Fatima. He had no difficulty to open the door, which was only fastened with a latch, and he shut it again after he had entered, without any noise. When he entered the cell, he perceived Fatima by moonlight lying in the air on a sofa covered only by an old mat, with her head leaning against the wall. He awakened her, and clapped a dagger to her breast.

The pious Fatima opening her eyes, was much surprised to see a man with a dagger at her breast ready to stab her, and who said to her, “If you cry out, or make the least noise, I will kill you; but get up, and do as I shall direct you.”

Fatima, who had lain down in her habit, got up, trembling with fear. “Do not be so much frightened,” said the magician; “I only want your habit, give it me and take mine.” Accordingly Fatima and he changed clothes. He then said to her, “Colour my face, that I may be like you;” but perceiving that the poor creature could not help trembling, to encourage her he said, “I tell you again you need not fear anything: I swear by the name of God I will not take away your life.” Fatima lighted her lamp, led him into the cell, and dipping a soft brush in a certain liquor, rubbed it over his face, assured him the colour would not change, and that his face was of the same hue as her own: after which, she put her own head-dress on his head, also a veil, with which she shewed him how to hide his face as he passed through the town. After this, she put a long string of beads about his neck, which hung down to the middle of his body, and giving him the stick she used to walk with in his hand, brought him a looking-glass, and bade him look if he was not as like her as possible. The magician found himself disguised as he wished to be; but he did not keep the oath he so solemnly swore to the good Fatima; but instead of stabbing her, for fear the blood might discover him, he strangled her; and when he found she was dead, threw her body into a cistern just by the cell.

The magician, thus disguised like the holy woman Fatima, spent the remainder of the night in the cell. The next morning, two hours after sunrise, though it was not a day the holy woman used to go out on, he crept out of the cell, being well persuaded that nobody would ask him any questions; or, if they should, he had an answer ready for them. As one of the first things he did after his arrival was to find out Alla ad Deen’s palace, where he was to complete his designs, he went directly thither.

As soon as the people saw the holy woman, as they imagined him to be, they presently gathered about him in a great crowd. Some begged his blessing, others kissed his hand, and others, more reserved, only the hem of his garment; while others, whether their heads ached, or they wished to be preserved against that disorder, stooped for him to lay his hands upon them; which he did, muttering some words in form of prayer; and, in short, counterfeited so well, that everybody took him for the holy woman.

After frequently stopping to satisfy people of this description, who received neither good nor harm from this imposition of hands, he came at last to the square before Alla ad Deen's palace. The crowd was so great that the eagerness to get at him increased in proportion. Those who were the most zealous and strong forced their way through the crowd. There were such quarrels, and so great a noise, that the princess, who was in the hall of four-and-twenty windows, heard it, and asked what was the matter; but nobody being able to give her an answer, she ordered them to inquire and inform her. One of her women looked out of a window, and then told her it was a great crowd of people collected about the holy woman to be cured of the headache by the imposition of her hands.

The princess, who had long heard of this holy woman, but had never seen her, was very desirous to have some conversation with her, which the chief of the eunuchs perceiving, told her it was an easy matter to bring her to her, if she desired and commanded it; and the princess expressing her wishes, he immediately sent four eunuchs for the pretended holy woman.

As soon as the crowd saw the eunuchs, they made way, and the magician perceiving also that they were coming for him, advanced to meet them, overjoyed to find his plot proceeded so well. "Holy woman," said one of the eunuchs, "the princess wants to see you, and has sent us for you." "The princess does me too great an honour," replied the false Fatima; "I am ready to obey her command," and at the same time followed the eunuchs to the palace.

When the magician, who under a holy garment disguised a wicked heart, was introduced into the great hall, and perceived the princess, he began a prayer, which contained a long enumeration of vows and good wishes for the princess's health and prosperity, and that she might have every thing she desired. He then displayed all his hypocritical rhetoric, to insinuate himself into the princess's favour under the cloak of piety, which it was no hard matter for him to do; for as the princess herself was naturally good, she was easily persuaded that all the world were like her, especially those who made profession of serving God in solitude.

When the pretended Fatima had finished his long harangue, the princess said to him, “I thank you, good mother, for your prayers: I have great confidence in them, and hope God will hear them. Come, and sit by me.” The false Fatima sat down with affected modesty: the princess then resuming her discourse, said, “My good mother, I have one thing to request, which you must not refuse me; it is to stay with me, that you may edify me with your way of living; and that I may learn from your good example how to serve God.” “Princess,” said the counterfeit Fatima, “I beg of you not to ask what I cannot consent to, without neglecting my prayers and devotion.” “That shall be no hinderance to you,” answered the princess; “I have a great many apartments unoccupied; you shall choose which you like best, and have as much liberty to perform your devotions as if you were in your own cell.”

The magician, who desired nothing more than to introduce himself into the palace, where it would be a much easier matter for him to execute his designs, under the favour and protection of the princess, than if he had been forced to come and go from the cell to the palace, did not urge much to excuse himself from accepting the obliging offer which the princess made him. “Princess,” said he, “whatever resolution a poor wretched woman as I am may have made me renounce the pomp and grandeur of this world, I dare not presume to oppose the will and commands of so pious and charitable a princess.”

Upon this the princess, rising up, said, “Come with me, I will shew you what vacant apartments I have, that you may make choice of that you like best.” The magician followed the princess, and of all the apartments she shewed him, made choice of that which was the worst furnished, saying it was too good for him, and that he only accepted of it to please her.

Afterwards the princess would have brought him back again into the great hall to make him dine with her; but he considering that he should then be obliged to shew his face, which he had always taken care to conceal; and fearing that the princess should find out that he was not Fatima, he begged of her earnestly to excuse him, telling her that he never ate anything but bread and dried fruits, and desiring to eat that slight repast in his own apartment. The princess granted his request, saying, “You may be as free here, good mother, as if you were in your own cell: I will order you a dinner, but remember I expect you as soon as you have finished your repast.”

After the princess had dined, and the false Fatima had been informed by one of the eunuchs that she was risen from table, he failed not to wait upon her. “My good mother,” said the princess, “I am overjoyed to have the company of so holy a woman as yourself, who will confer a blessing upon this palace. But now I am speaking of the palace, pray how do you like it? And before I shew it all to you, tell me first what you think of this hall.”

Upon this question, the counterfeit Fatima, who, to act his part the better, affected to hang down his head, without so much as ever once lifting it, at last looked up, and surveyed the hall from one end to the other. When he had examined it well, he said to the princess, “As far as such a solitary being as I am, who am unacquainted with what the world calls beautiful, can judge, this hall is truly admirable and most beautiful; there wants but one thing.” “What is that, good mother?” demanded the princess; “tell me, I conjure you. For my part, I always believed, and have heard say, it wanted nothing; but if it does, it shall be supplied.”

“Princess,” said the false Fatima, with great dissimulation, “forgive me the liberty I have taken; but my opinion is, if it can be of any importance, that if a roe’s egg were hung up in the middle of the dome, this hall would have no parallel in the four quarters of the world, and your palace would be the wonder of the unit verse.”

“My good mother,” said the princess, “what bird is a roe, and where may one get an egg?” “Princess,” replied the pretended Fatima, “it is a bird of prodigious size, which inhabits the summit of mount Caucasus; the architect who built your palace can get you one.”

After the princess had thanked the false Fatima for what she believed her good advice, she conversed with her upon other matters; but could not forget the roe’s egg, which she resolved to request of Alla ad Deen when he returned from hunting. He had been gone six days, which the magician knew, and therefore took advantage of his absence; but he returned that evening after the false Fatima had taken leave of the princess, and retired to his apartment. As soon as he arrived, he went directly to the princess's apartment, saluted and embraced her, but she seemed to receive him coldly. "My princess," said he, "I think you are not so cheerful as you used to be; has any thing happened during my absence, which has displeased you, or given you any trouble or dissatisfaction In the name of God, do not conceal it from me; I will leave nothing undone that is in my power to please you." "It is a trifling matter," replied the princess, "which gives me so little concern that I could not have thought you could have perceived it in my countenance; but since you have unexpectedly discovered some alteration, I will no longer disguise a matter of so little consequence from you."

"I always believed," continued the princess, "that our palace was the most superb, magnificent, and complete in the world: but I will tell you now what I find fault with, upon examining the hall of four-and-twenty windows. Do not you think with me, that it would be complete if a roe's egg were hung up in the midst of the dome?" "Princess," replied Alla ad Deen, "it is enough that you think there wants such an ornament; you shall see by the diligence used to supply that deficiency, that there is nothing which I would not do for your sake."

Alla ad Deen left the princess Buddir al Buddoor that moment, and went up into the hall of four-and-twenty windows, where pulling out of his bosom the lamp, which, after the danger he had been exposed to, he always carried about him, he rubbed it; upon which the genie immediately appeared. "Genie," said Alla ad Deen, "there wants a roe's egg to be hung up in the midst of the dome; I command thee, in the name of this lamp, to repair the deficiency." Alla ad Deen had no sooner pronounced these words, than the genie gave so loud and terrible a cry, that the hall shook, and Alla ad Deen could scarcely stand upright. "What! wretch," said the genie, in a voice that would have made the most undaunted man tremble, "is it not enough that I and my companions have done every thing for you, but you, by an unheard-of ingratitude, must command me to bring my master, and hang him up in the midst of this dome? This attempt deserves that you, your wife, and your palace, should be immediately reduced to ashes: but you are happy that this request does not come from yourself. Know then, that the true author is the brother of the African magician, your enemy, whom you have destroyed as he deserved. He is now in your palace, disguised in the habit of the holy woman Fatima, whom he has murdered; and it is he who has suggested to your wife to make this pernicious demand. His design is to kill you, therefore take care of yourself." After these words, the genie disappeared.

Alla ad Deen lost not a word of what the genie had said. He had heard talk of the holy woman Fatima, and how she pretended to cure the headache. He returned to the princess's apartment, and without mentioning a word of what had happened, sat down, and complained of a great pain which had suddenly seized his head; upon which the princess ordered the holy woman to be called, and then told him how she had invited her to the palace, and that she had appointed her an apartment.

When the pretended Fatima came, Alla ad Deen said, "Come hither, good mother; I am glad to see you here at so fortunate a time; I am tormented with a violent pain in my head, and request your assistance, by the confidence I have in your good prayers, and hope you will not refuse me that favour which you do to so many persons afflicted with this complaint." So saying, he arose, but held down his head. The counterfeit Fatima advanced towards him, with his hand all the time on a dagger concealed in his girdle under his gown; which Alla ad Deen observing, he seized his hand before he had drawn it, pierced him to the heart with his own dagger, and then pushed him down on the floor.

"My dear husband, what have you done?" cried the princess in surprise. "You have killed the holy woman." "No, my princess," answered Alla ad Deen, with emotion, "I have not killed Fatima, but a villain, who would have assassinated me, if I had not prevented him. This wicked wretch," added he, uncovering his face, "has strangled Fatima, whom you accuse me of killing, and disguised himself in her clothes with intent to murder me: but that you may know him better, he is brother to the African magician." Alla ad Deen then informed her how he came to know these particulars, and afterwards ordered the dead body to be taken away.

Thus was Alla ad Deen delivered from the persecution of two brothers, who were magicians. Within a few years afterwards, the sultan died in a good old age, and as he left no male children, the princess Buddir al Buddoor, as lawful heir of the throne, succeeded him, and communicating the power to Alla ad Deen, they reigned together many years, and left a numerous and illustrious posterity.

ADVENTURE OF THE CALIPH HAROON AL RUSHEED.

The caliph Haroon al Rusheed was one day suffering from depression of spirits, when his faithful and favourite grand vizier Jaaffier came to him. This minister finding him alone, which was seldom the case, and perceiving as he approached that he was in a very melancholy humour, and never lifted up his eyes, stopped till he should vouchsafe to look at him.

At last the caliph turned his eyes towards him, but presently withdrew them again, and remained in the same posture motionless as before.

The grand vizier, observing nothing in the caliph's eyes which regarded him personally, took the liberty to speak to him, and said, "Commander of the faithful, will your majesty give me leave to ask whence proceeds this melancholy, of which you always seemed to me so little susceptible?"

"Indeed, vizier," answered the caliph, brightening up his countenance, "I am very little subject to it, and had not perceived it but for you, but I will remain no longer in this hippish mood. If no new affair brought you hither, you will gratify me by inventing something to dispel it."

"Commander of the faithful," replied the grand vizier, "my duty obliged me to wait on you, and I take the liberty to remind your majesty, that this is the day which you have appointed to inform yourself of the good government of your capital and its environs; and this occasion very opportunely presents itself to dispel those clouds which obscure your natural gaiety."

"You do well to remind me," replied the caliph, "for I had entirely forgotten it; go and change your dress, while I do the same."

They each put on the habit of a foreign merchant, and under that disguise went out by a private door of the palace-garden, which led into the country. After they had gone round part of the city to the banks of the Euphrates, at some distance from the walls, without having observed anything disorderly, they crossed the river in the first boat they met, and making a tour on the other side, crossed the bridge, which formed the communication betwixt the two parts of the town.

At the foot of this bridge they met an old blind man, who asked alms of them; the caliph turned about, and put a piece of gold into his hand. The blind man instantly caught hold of his hand, and stopped him; "Charitable person," said he, "whoever you are, whom God hath inspired to bestow alms on me, do not refuse the favour I ask of you, to give me a box on the ear, for I deserve that, and a greater punishment." Having thus spoken, he let the caliph's hand go, that he might strike, but for fear he should pass on without doing it, held him fast by his clothes.

The caliph, surprised both at the words and action of the blind man, said, "I cannot comply with your request. I will not lessen the merit of my charity, by treating you as you would have me." After these words, he endeavoured to get away from the blind man.

The blind man, who expected this reluctance of his benefactor, exerted himself to detain him. "Sir," said he, "forgive my boldness and importunity; I desire you would either give me a box on the ear, or take your alms back again, for I cannot receive it but on that condition, without breaking a solemn oath, which I have sworn to God; and if you knew the reason, you would agree with me that the punishment is very slight."

The caliph, unwilling to be detained any longer, yielded to the importunity of the blind man, and gave him a very slight blow: whereupon he immediately let him go, thanked and blessed him. When the caliph and vizier had got so me small distance from the blind man, the caliph said to Jaaffier, "This blind man must certainly have some very uncommon reasons, which make him behave himself in this manner to all who give him alms. I should be glad to know them; therefore return, tell him who I am, and bid him not fail to come to my palace about prayer-time in the afternoon of to-morrow, that I may have some conversation with him."

The grand vizier returned, bestowed his alms on the blind man, and after he had given him a box on the ear, told him the caliph's order, and then returned to the caliph.

When they came into the town, they found in a square a great crowd of spectators, looking at a handsome well-shaped young man, who was mounted on a mare, which he drove and urged full speed round the place, spurring and whipping the poor creature so barbarously, that she was all over sweat and blood.

The caliph, amazed at the inhumanity of the rider, stopped to ask the people if they knew why he used the mare so ill; but could learn nothing, except that for some time past he had every day, at the same hour, treated her in the same manner.

At they went along, the caliph bade the grand vizier take particular notice of the place, and not fail to order the young man to attend the next day at the hour appointed to the blind man. But before the caliph got to his palace, he observed in a street, which he had not passed through a long time before, an edifice newly built, which seemed to him to be the palace of some one of the great lords of the court. He asked the grand vizier if he knew to whom it belonged; who answered he did not, but would inquire; and thereupon asked a neighbour, who told him that the house was that of one Khaujeh Hassan, surnamed Al Hubbaul, on account of his original trade of rope-making, which he had seen him work at himself, when poor; that without knowing how fortune had favoured him, he supposed he must have acquired great wealth, as he defrayed honourably and splendidly the expenses he had been at in building.

The grand vizier rejoined the caliph, and gave him a full account of what he had heard. “I must see this fortunate rope-maker,” said the caliph, “therefore go and tell him to come to my palace at the same hour you have ordered the other two.” Accordingly the vizier obeyed.

The next day, after afternoon prayers, the caliph retired to his own apartment, when the grand vizier introduced the three persons we have been speaking of, and presented them to the caliph.

They all three prostrated themselves before the throne, and when they rose up, the caliph asked the blind man his name, who answered, it was Baba Abdoollah.

“Baba Abdoollah,” replied the caliph, “your manner of asking alms seemed so strange to me yesterday, that if it had not been for some private considerations I should not have complied with your request, but should have prevented you from giving any more offence to the public. I ordered you to come hither, to know from yourself what could have induced you to make the indiscreet oath you told me of, that I may judge whether you have done well, and if I ought to suffer you to continue a practice that appears to me to set so ill an example. Tell me freely how so extravagant a thought came into your head, and do not disguise any thing from me, for I will absolutely know the truth."

Baba Abdoollah, intimidated by this reprimand, cast himself a second time at the foot of the caliph's throne, with his face to the ground, and when he rose up, said, "Commander of the faithful, I most humbly ask your majesty's pardon for my presumption, in daring to have required, and almost forced you to do a thing which indeed appears so contrary to reason. I acknowledge my offence, but as I did not then know your majesty, I implore your clemency, and hope you will consider my ignorance.

"As to the extravagance of my action, I own it, and own also that it must seem strange to mankind; but in the eye of God it is a slight penance I have enjoined myself for an enormous crime of which I have been guilty, and for which, if all the people in the world were each to give me a box on the ear, it would not be a sufficient atonement. Your majesty will judge of this yourself, when, in telling my story, in obedience to your commands I shall inform you what that heinous crime was."

The Story of Baba Abdoollah.

Commander of the faithful, I was born at Bagdad, had a moderate fortune left me by my father and mother, who died within a few days of each other. Though I was then but young, I did not squander away my fortune as most young men do, in idle expenses and debauchery; on the contrary, I neglected no opportunity to increase it by my industry. At last I became rich enough to purchase fourscore camels, which I let out to merchants for caravans, who paid me well for every journey I went with them throughout the extent of your majesty's dominions.

In the midst of this prosperity, and with an ardent desire of growing much richer, as I was returning one day with my camels unloaded from Bussorah, whither I had carried some bales that were to be embarked for the Indies, I met with good pasturage, at some distance from any habitation; made a halt, and let my beasts graze for some time. While I was seated, a dervish, who was walking to Bussorah, came and sat down by me to rest himself: I asked him whence he came, and where he was going; he put the same questions to me: and when we had satisfied each other's curiosity, we produced our provisions and ate together.

During our repast, after we had talked on many indifferent subjects, the dervish told me that he knew of a spot a small distance from thence, where there were such immense riches, that if all my fourscore camels were loaded with the gold and jewels that might be taken from it, they would not be missed.

This intelligence surprised and charmed me; and I was so overjoyed, that I could scarcely contain myself. I could not believe that the dervish was capable of telling me a falsehood; therefore I fell upon his neck, and said, “Good dervish, I know you value not the riches of this world, therefore of what service can the knowledge of this treasure be to you? You are alone, and cannot carry much of it away; shew me where it is, I will load all my camels, and as an acknowledgment of the favour done me, will present you with one of them.”

Indeed I offered very little, but after he had communicated the secret to me, my desire of riches was become so violent, that I thought it a great deal, and looked upon the seventy-nine camel loads which I reserved for myself as nothing in comparison of what I allowed him.

The dervish, though he saw my avarice, was not however angry at the unreasonable return I proposed to make him, but replied without the least concern, “You are sensible, brother, that what you offer me is not proportionable to the valuable favour you ask of me. I might have chosen whether I would communicate my secret to you or not, and have kept the treasure to myself: but what I have told you is sufficient to shew my good intentions; it is in my power to oblige you, and make both our fortunes. I have, however, another proposition more just and equitable to make to you; it lies in your own breast whether or no you will agree to it.

“You say,” continued the dervish, “that you have fourscore camels: I am ready to conduct you to the place where the treasure lies, and we will load them with as much jewels and gold as they can carry, on condition that when they are so loaded you will let me have one half, and you be contented with the other; after which we will separate, and take our camels where we may think fit. You see there is nothing but what is strictly equitable in this division; for if you give me forty camels, you will procure by my means wherewithal to purchase thousands.”

I could not but agree there was a great deal of justice in what the dervish said: but without considering what riches I should gain in accepting of the condition he proposed, I could not without reluctance think of parting with my forty camels, especially when I reflected that the dervish would then be as rich as myself. Avarice made me unmindful that I was beforehand making an ungrateful return for a favour, purely gratuitous. But there was no time to hesitate; I must either accept of the proposal, or resolve to repent all my lifetime of losing, by my own fault, an opportunity of obtaining an immense fortune. That instant I collected all my camels, and after we had travelled some time, we came into a valley, the pass into which was so narrow, that two camels could not go a-breast. The two mountains which bounded this valley formed nearly a circle, but were so high, craggy, and steep, that there was no fear of our being seen by any body.

When we came between these two mountains, the dervish said to me, “Stop your camels, make them kneel that we may load them the easier, and I will proceed to discover the treasure.”

I did as the dervish directed; and going to him soon after, found him with a match in one hand, gathering sticks to light a fire; which he had no sooner done, than he cast some incense into it, and pronouncing certain words which I did not understand, there presently arose a thick cloud. He divided this cloud, when the rock, though of a prodigious perpendicular height, opened like two folding doors, and exposed to view a magnificent palace in the hollow of the mountain, which I supposed to be rather the workmanship of genii than of men; for man could hardly have attempted such a bold and surprising work.

But this, I must tell your majesty, was an afterthought which did not occur to me at the moment; so eager was I for the treasures which displayed themselves to my view, that I did not even stop to admire the magnificent columns and arcades which I saw on all sides; and, without attention to the regularity with which the treasures were ranged, like an eagle seizing her prey, I fell upon the first heap of golden coin that was near me. My sacks were all large, and with my good will I would have filled them all; but I was obliged to proportion my burden to the strength of my camels. The dervish did the same; but I perceived he paid more attention to the jewels, and when he told me the reason, I followed his example, so that we took away much more jewels than gold. When we had filled our sacks, and loaded our camels, we had nothing left to do but to shut up the treasure and go our way.

But before we parted, the dervish went again into the treasury, where there were a great many wrought vessels of gold of different forms. I observed that he took out of one of these vessels a little box of a certain wood, which I knew not, and put it into his breast; but first shewed me that it contained only a kind of glutinous ointment.

The dervish used the same incantations to shut the treasury as he had done to open it; and after he pronounced certain words, the doors closed, and the rock seemed as solid and entire as before.

We now divided our camels. I put myself at the head of the forty which I had reserved for myself, and the dervish placed himself at the head of the rest which I had given him. We came out of the valley by the way we had entered, and travelled together till we came to the great road, where we were to part; the dervish to go to Bussorah, and I to Bagdad. To thank him for so great a kindness, I made use of the most expressive terms, testifying my gratitude for the preference he had given me before all other men in letting me have a share of such riches. We embraced each other with great joy, and taking our leave, pursued our different routes.

I had not gone far, following my camels, which paced quietly on in the track I had put them into, before the demon of ingratitude and envy took possession of my heart, and I deplored the loss of my other forty, but much more the riches wherewith they were loaded. "The dervish," said I to myself, "has no occasion for all this wealth, since he is master of the treasure, and may have as much as he pleases;" so I gave myself up to the blackest ingratitude, and determined immediately to take the camels with their loading from him.

To execute this design, I first stopped my own camels, then ran after the dervish, and called to him as loud as I could, giving him to understand that I had something material to say to him, and made a sign to him to stop, which he accordingly did.

When I came up to him, I said, "Brother, I had no sooner parted from you, but a thought came into my head, which neither of us had reflected on before. You are a recluse dervish, used to live in tranquillity, disengaged from all the cares of the world, and intent only upon serving God. You know not, perhaps, what trouble you have taken upon yourself, to take care of so many camels. If you would take my advice, you would keep but thirty; you will find them sufficiently troublesome to manage. Take my word; I have had experience."

"I believe you are right," replied the dervish, who found he was not able to contend with me; "I own I never thought of this. I begin already to be uneasy at what you have stated. Choose which ten you please, and take them, and go on in God's keeping."

I set ten apart, and after I had driven them off, I put them in the road to follow my others. I could not have imagined that the dervish would be so easily persuaded to part with his camels, which increased my covetousness, and made me flatter myself, that it would be no hard matter to get ten more: wherefore, instead of thanking him for his present, I said to him again; “Brother, the interest I take in your repose is so great, that I cannot resolve to part from you without desiring you to consider once more how difficult a thing it is to govern thirty loaded camels, especially for you who are not used to such work: you will find it much better to return me as many more back as you have done already. What I tell you is not for my own sake and interest, but to do you the greater kindness. Ease yourself then of the camels, and leave them to me, who can manage a hundred as well as one.”

My discourse had the desired effect upon the dervish, who gave me, without any hesitation, the other ten camels; so that he had but twenty left and I was master of sixty, and might boast of greater riches than any sovereign princes. Any one would have thought I should now have been content; but as a person afflicted with a dropsy, the more he drinks the more thirsty he is, so I became more greedy and desirous of the other twenty camels.

I redoubled my solicitations and importunities, to make the dervish condescend to grant me ten of the twenty, which he did with a good grace: and as to the other ten he had left, I embraced him, kissed his feet, and caressed him, conjuring him not to refuse me, but to complete the obligation I should ever have to him, so that at length he crowned my joy, by giving me them also. “Make a good use of them, brother,” said the dervish, “and remember that God can take away riches as well as give them, if we do not assist the poor, whom he suffers to be in want, on purpose that the rich may merit by their charity a recompense in the other world.”

My infatuation was so great that I could not profit by such wholesome advice. I was not content, though I had my forty camels again, and knew they were loaded with an inestimable treasure. But a thought came into my head, that the little box of ointment which the dervish shewed me had something in it more precious than all the riches which I was obliged to him for: the place from whence the dervish took it, said I to myself, and his care to secure it, makes me believe there is something mysterious in it. This determined me to obtain it. I had just embraced him and bade him adieu; but as I turned about from him, I said, "What will you do with that little box of ointment? It seems such a trifle, it is not worth your carrying away. I entreat you to make me a present of it; for what occasion has a dervish, as you are, who has renounced the vanities of the world, for perfumes, or scented ointments?"

Would to heaven he had refused me that box; but if he had, I was stronger than he, and resolved to have taken it from him by force; that for my complete satisfaction it might not be said he had carried away the smallest part of the treasure.

The dervish, far from denying me, readily pulled it out of his bosom, and presenting it to me with the best grace in the world, said, "Here, take it, brother, and be content; if I could do more for you, you needed but to have asked me; I should have been ready to satisfy you."

When I had the box in my hand, I opened it, and looking at the ointment, said to him, "Since you are so good, I am sure you will not refuse me the favour to tell me the particular use of this ointment."

"The use is very surprising and wonderful," replied the dervish: "if you apply a little of it round the left eye, and upon the lid, you will see at once all the treasures contained in the bosom of the earth; but if you apply it to the right eye, it will make you blind."

"I would make the experiment myself. Take the box," said I to the dervish, "and apply some to my left eye. You understand how to do it better than I, and I long to experience what seems so incredible." Accordingly I shut my left eye, and the dervish took the trouble to apply the unguent; I opened my eye, and was convinced he had told me truth. I saw immense treasures, and such prodigious riches, so diversified, that it is impossible for me to give an account of them; but as I was obliged to keep my right eye shut with my hand, and that tired me, I desired the dervish to apply some of the pomatum to that eye.

"I am ready to do it," said the dervish; "but you must remember what I told you, that if you put any of it upon your right eye, you would immediately be blind; such is the virtue of the ointment."

Far from being persuaded of the truth of what the dervish said, I imagined, on the contrary, that there was some new mystery, which he meant to hide from me. "Brother," replied I, smiling, "I see plainly you wish to mislead me; it is not natural that this ointment should have two such contrary effects."

"The matter is as I tell you," replied the dervish, taking the name of God to bear witness; "you ought to believe me, for I cannot disguise the truth."

I would not believe the dervish, who spoke like an honest man. My insurmountable desire of seeing at my will all the treasures in the world and perhaps of enjoying those treasures to the extent I coveted, had such an effect upon me, that I could not hearken to his remonstrances, nor be persuaded of what was however but too true, as to my lasting misfortune I soon experienced.

I persuaded myself that if the ointment, by being applied to the left eye, had the virtue of shewing me all the treasures of the earth, by being applied to the right, it might have the power of putting them in my disposal. Possessed with this thought, I obstinately pressed the dervish to apply the ointment to my right eye; but he as positively refused. "Brother," said he, "after I have done you so much service, I cannot resolve to do you so great an injury; consider with yourself what a misfortune it is to be deprived of one's eye-sight: do not reduce me to the hard necessity of obliging you in a thing which you will repent of all your life."

I persisted in my obstinacy, and said to him in strong terms, "Brother, I earnestly desire you to lay aside all your difficulties. You have granted me most generously all that I have asked of you hitherto, and would you have me go away dissatisfied with you at last about a thing of so little consequence? For God's sake grant me this last favour; whatever happens I will not lay the blame on you, but take it upon myself alone."

The dervish made all the resistance possible, but seeing that I was able to force him to do it, he said, "Since you will absolutely have it so, I will satisfy you;" and thereupon he took a little of the fatal ointment, and applied it to my right eye, which I kept shut; but alas! when I came to open it, I could distinguish nothing with either eye but thick darkness, and became blind as you see me now.

"Ah! dervish," I exclaimed in agony, "what you forewarned me of has proved but too true. Fatal curiosity," added I, "insatiable desire of riches, into what an abyss of miseries have they cast me! I am now sensible what a misfortune I have brought upon myself; but you, dear brother," cried I, addressing myself to the dervish, "who are so charitable and good, among the many wonderful secrets you are acquainted with, have you not one to restore to me my sight again?"

"Miserable wretch!" answered the dervish, "if you would have been advised by me, you would have avoided this misfortune, but you have your deserts; the blindness of your mind was the cause of the loss of your eyes. It is true I have secrets, some of which, during the short time we have been together, you have by my liberality witnessed; but I have none to restore to you your sight. Pray to God, therefore, if you believe there is one; it is he alone that can restore it to you. He gave you riches, of which you were unworthy, on that account takes them from you again, and will by my hands give them to men not so ungrateful as yourself."

The dervish said no more, and I had nothing to reply. He left me to myself overwhelmed with confusion, and plunged in inexpressible grief. After he had collected my camels, he drove them away, and pursued the road to Bussorah.

I cried out loudly as he was departing, and entreated him not to leave me in that miserable condition, but to conduct me at least to the first caravanserai; but he was deaf to my prayers and entreaties. Thus deprived of sight and all I had in the world, I should have died with affliction and hunger, if the next day a caravan returning from Bussorah had not received me charitably, and brought me back to Bagdad.

After this manner was I reduced without remedy from a condition worthy the envy of princes for riches and magnificence, though not for power, to beggary without resource. I had no other way to subsist but by asking charity, which I have done till now. But to expiate my offence against God, I enjoined myself, by way of penance, a box on the ear from every charitable person who should commiserate my condition.

"This, commander of the faithful, is the motive which seemed so strange to your majesty yesterday, and for which I ought to incur your indignation. I ask your pardon once more as your slave, and submit to receive the chastisement I deserve. And if you vouchsafe to pronounce any thing beyond the penance I have imposed upon myself, I am ready to undergo it, since I am persuaded you must think it too slight and much too little for my crime."

The blind man having concluded his story, the caliph said, "Baba Abdoollah, your sin has been great; but God be praised, you feel the enormity of your guilt, and your penance proves your repentance. You must continue it, not ceasing to ask of God pardon in every prayer your religion obliges you to say daily: but that you may not be prevented from your devotions by the care of getting your living, I will settle a charity on you during your life, of four silver dirhems a day, which my grand vizier shall give you daily with the penance, therefore do not go away, but wait till he has executed my orders."

At these words, Baba Abdoollah prostrated himself before the caliph's throne, returned him thanks, and wished him all happiness and prosperity.

The caliph, very well satisfied with the story of Baba Abdoollah and the dervish, addressed himself to the young man who used his mare so ill, and asked him his name; to which he replied, it was Syed Naomaun.

"Syed Naomaun," resumed the caliph, "I have seen horses exercised all my life, and have often exercised them myself, but never in so barbarous a manner as you yesterday treated your mare in the full square, to the great offence of all the spectators, who murmured loudly at your conduct. I myself was not less displeased, and had nearly, contrary to my intention, discovered who I was, to have punished your cruelty. By your air and behaviour you do not seem to be a barbarous or cruel man; and therefore I would fain believe that you had reason for what you did, since I am informed that this was not the first time, but that you practise the same treatment every day. I would know what is the cause, and sent for you for that purpose, that you should tell me the truth, and disguise nothing from me."

Syed Naomaun understood what the caliph demanded of him. The relation was painful to him. He changed colour several times, and could not help shewing how greatly he was embarrassed. However, he must resolve to tell his story; but before he spoke, he prostrated himself before the caliph's throne, and after he rose up, endeavoured to speak to satisfy the caliph, but was so confounded, not so much at the presence of the caliph, as by the nature of his relation, that he was speechless.

The caliph, notwithstanding his natural impatience to be obeyed, shewed not the least anger at Syed Naomaun's silence: he saw plainly, that he either had not assurance to speak before him, or was intimidated by the tone of his voice; or, in short, that there was something to be concealed in his story.

"Syed Naomaun," said the caliph, to encourage him, "recollect yourself, but tell your story as if you were speaking not to me, but to your most familiar friend. If there is any thing in your relation which troubles you, and you think I may be offended at it, I pardon you beforehand: therefore be not uneasy, but speak boldly and freely, and disguise nothing."

Syed Naomaun, encouraged by these words, said, "Commander of the faithful, whatever apprehensions a man may be under at your majesty's presence, I am sensible those respectful sensations would not deprive me of the use of my speech, so as to fail in my obedience, in giving you satisfaction in any other matter but this you now ask of me. I dare not say I am the most perfect of men; yet I am not wicked enough to have committed, or to have had an intention of committing any thing against the laws to fear their severity; and yet I cannot say I am exempt from sin through ignorance. In this case I do not say that I depend upon your majesty's pardon, but will submit myself to your justice, and receive the punishment I deserve. I own, that the manner in which I have for some time treated my mare, and which your majesty has witnessed, is strange, and sets an ill example: but I hope you will think the motive well grounded, and that I am more worthy of compassion than chastisement: but not to keep your majesty any longer in suspense by a long preamble, I will tell you my story."

The Story of Syed Naomaun.

I shall not trouble your majesty with my birth, which is not illustrious enough to merit your attention. For my situation, my parents, by their good economy, left me enough to live on like an honest man, free from ambition, or being burdensome to any one.

With these advantages, the only blessing I wanted to render my happiness complete was an amiable wife, who might share them with me; but that was a blessing it did not please God to grant me: on the contrary, it was my misfortune to have one, who, the very next day after our wedding, began to exercise my patience in a manner not to be conceived by any one who has not had the same trial.

As it is the custom for us to marry without seeing or knowing whom we are to espouse, your majesty is sensible that a husband has no reason to complain, when he finds that the wife who has been chosen for him is not horribly ugly and deformed, and that her carriage, wit, and behaviour make amends for any slight bodily imperfections.

The first time I saw my wife with her face uncovered, after she was brought home with the usual ceremonies to my house, I rejoiced to find that I had not been imposed upon in the description of her person, which pleased me, and she was perfectly agreeable to my inclination.

The next day after our wedding, when our dinner was served up, which consisted of several dishes, I went into the room where the cloth was laid, and not finding my wife there, ordered her to be called. After making me wait a long time, she came. I dissembled my impatience, we sat down, and I began with the rice, which I took up as usual.

On the other hand, my wife, instead of using her hand as everybody does, pulled a little case out of her pocket, and took out of it a kind of bodkin, with which she picked up the rice, and put it into her mouth, grain by grain.

Surprised at this manner of eating, I said to her, “Ameeneh,” (which was her name,) “are you used to eat rice so in your family, or do you do it because you are a little eater, or would you count the grains, that you may not eat more at one time than another? If you do it out of frugality, or to teach me not to be extravagant, you have no reason to fear, as I can assure you we shall not ruin ourselves that way. We have, God be thanked! enough to live at our ease, without depriving ourselves of necessaries. Do not restrain yourself, my dear Ameeneh, but eat as you see me eat.” The kind manner in which I made these remonstrances might have produced some obliging answer; but she, without saying a word, continued to eat as she had begun. At last, to make me the more uneasy, she ate a grain of rice at intervals only; and instead of eating any of the other meats with me, she only now and then put some crumbs of bread into her mouth, but not so much as a sparrow would have pecked.

I was much provoked at her obstinacy; but yet, to indulge and excuse her, I imagined that she had not been used to eat with men, before whom she might perhaps have been taught to restrain herself; but at the same time thought she carried it too far out of pure simplicity. I fancied again that she might have breakfasted late, or that she might have a wish to eat alone, and more at liberty. These considerations prevented me from saying more to her then, to ruffle her temper, by shewing any sign of dissatisfaction. After dinner I left her, but not with an air that shewed any displeasure.

At supper, and the next day, and every time we ate together, she behaved herself in the same manner. I knew it was impossible for a woman to live on so little food as she took, and that there must be some mystery in her conduct, which I did not understand. This made me resolve to dissemble; I appeared to take no notice of her actions, in hopes that time would bring her to live with me as I desired she should. But my hopes were in vain, and it was not long before I was convinced they were so.

One night, when Ameeneh thought me fast asleep, she got out of bed softly, dressed herself with great precaution, not to make a noise for fear of awaking me. I could not comprehend her design, but curiosity made me feign a sound sleep. As soon as she had dressed herself, she went softly out of the room.

When she was gone, I arose, threw my cloak over my shoulders, and had time enough to see from a window that looked into my court-yard, that she opened the street-door and went out.

I immediately ran down to the door, which she had left half open, and followed her by moonlight, till I saw her enter a burying-ground just by our house. I got to the end of the wall, taking care not to be seen, and looking over, saw Ameeneh with a ghoul.

Your majesty knows that the ghouls of both sexes are wandering demons, which generally infest old buildings; from whence they rush out, by surprise, on people that pass by, kill them, and eat their flesh; and for want of such prey, will sometimes go in the night into burying-grounds, and feed on dead bodies which they dig up.

I was struck with astonishment and horror to see my wife with this ghoul. They dug up a dead body which had been buried but that day, and the ghoul cut off pieces of the flesh, which they ate together by the grave-side, conversing during their shocking and inhuman repast. But I was too far off to hear their discourse, which must have been as strange as their meal, the remembrance of which still makes me shudder.

When they had finished this horrible feast, they threw the remains of the dead body into the grave again, and filled it up with the earth which they had dug out. I left them at their work, made haste home, and leaving the door half open as I had found it, went into my chamber, and to bed again, where I pretended to be fast asleep.

Soon afterwards Ameeneh returned without the least noise, undressed herself, and came to bed, rejoicing, as I imagined, that she had succeeded so well without being discovered.

My mind was so full of the idea of such an abominable action as I had witnessed, that I felt great reluctance to lie by a person who could have had any share in the guilt of it, and was a long time before I could fall asleep. However, I got a short nap; but waked at the first call to public prayers at day-break, got up, dressed myself, and went to the mosque.

After prayers I went out of the town, spent the morning in walking in the gardens, and thinking what I should do to oblige my wife to change her mode of living. I rejected all the violent measures that suggested themselves to my thoughts, and resolved to use gentle means to cure her unhappy and depraved inclination. In this state of reverie I insensibly reached home by dinner-time.

As soon as Ameeneh saw me enter the house, she ordered dinner to be served up; and as I observed she continued to eat her rice in the same manner, by single grains, I said to her, with all the mildness possible, “You know, Ameeneh, what reason I had to be surprised, when the day after our marriage I saw you eat rice in so small a quantity, and in a manner which would have offended any other husband but myself: you know also, I contented myself with telling you that I was uneasy at it, and desired you to eat of the other meats, which I had ordered to be dressed several ways to endeavour to suit your taste, and I am sure my table did not want for variety: but all my remonstrances have had no effect, and you persist in your sullen abstemiousness. I have said nothing, because I would not constrain you, and should be sorry that any thing I now say should make you uneasy; but tell me, Ameeneh, I conjure you, are not the meats served up at my table better than the flesh of a human corpse?”

I had no sooner pronounced these words than Ameeneh, who perceived that I had discovered her last night’s horrid voraciousness with the ghoul, flew into a rage beyond imagination. Her face became as red as scarlet, her eyes ready to start out of her head, and she foamed with passion.

The terrible state in which she appeared alarmed me so much, that I stood motionless, and was not able to defend myself against the horrible wickedness she meditated against me, and which will surprise your majesty. In the violence of her passion, she dipped her hand into a basin of water, which stood by her, and muttering between her teeth some words, which I could not hear, she threw some water in my face, and exclaimed, in a furious tone, “Wretch, receive the punishment of thy prying curiosity, and become a dog!”

Ameeneh, whom I did not before know to be a sorceress, had no sooner pronounced these diabolical words, than I was immediately transformed into a dog. My amazement and surprise at so sudden and unexpected a metamorphosis prevented my thinking at first of providing for my safety. Availing herself of this suspense, she took up a great stick, with which she laid on me such heavy blows, that I wonder they did not kill me. I thought to have escaped her rage, by running into the yard; but she pursued me with the same fury, and notwithstanding all my activity I could not avoid her blows. At last, when she was tired of running after and beating me, and enraged that she had not killed me, as she desired, she thought of another method to effect her purpose: she half opened the street-door, that she might endeavour to squeeze me to death, as I ran out to preserve my life. Dog as I was, I instantly perceived her pernicious design; and as present danger inspires a presence of mind, to elude her vigilance I watched her face and motions so well, that I took my opportunity, and passed through quick enough to save myself and escape her malice, though she pinched the end of my tail.

The pain I felt made me cry out and howl as I ran along the streets, which collected all the dogs about me, and I got bit by several of them; but to avoid their pursuit, I ran into the shop of a man who sold boiled sheep's heads, tongues, and feet, where I saved myself.

The man at first took my part with much compassion, by driving away the dogs that followed me, and would have run into his house. My first care was to creep into a corner to hide myself; but I found not the sanctuary and protection I hoped for. My host was one of those extravagantly superstitious persons who think dogs unclean creatures, and if by chance one happens to touch them in the streets, cannot use soap and water enough to wash their garments clean. After the dogs who chased me were all dispersed and gone, he did all he could to drive me out of his house, but I was concealed out of his reach, and spent that night in his shop in spite of him; and indeed I had need of rest to recover from Ameeneh's ill-treatment.

Not to weary your majesty with trifling circumstances, I shall not particularize the melancholy reflections I made on my metamorphosis; but only tell you, that my host having gone out the next morning to lay in a stock of sheep's heads, tongues, and trotters, when he returned, he opened his shop, and while he was laying out his goods, I crept from my corner, and got among some other dogs of the neighbourhood, who had followed my host by the scent of his meat, and surrounded the shop, in expectation of having some offal thrown to them. I joined them, and put myself among them in a begging posture. My host observing me, and considering that I had eaten nothing while I lay in the shop, distinguished me from the rest, by throwing me larger pieces of meat, and oftener than the other dogs. After he had given me as much as he thought fit, I looked at him earnestly, and wagged my tail, to shew him I begged he would repeat his favours. But he was inflexible, and opposed my entrance with a stick in his hand, and with so stern a look, that I felt myself obliged to seek a new habitation.

I stopped at the shop of a baker in the neighbourhood, who was of a lively gay temper, quite the reverse of the offal butcher. He was then at breakfast, and though I made no sign that I wanted any thing, threw me a piece of bread. Instead of catching it up greedily, as dogs usually do, I looked at him, moving my head and wagging my tail, to shew my gratitude; at which he was pleased, and smiled. Though I was not hungry, I ate the piece of bread to please him, and I ate slowly to shew him that it was out of respect to him. He observed this, and permitted me to continue near the shop. I sat down and turned myself to the street, to shew him I then only wanted his protection; which he not only granted, but by his caresses encouraged me to come into the house. This I did in a way that shewed it was with his leave. He was pleased, and pointed me out a place where to lie, of which I took possession, and kept while I lived with him. I was always well treated; and whenever he breakfasted, dined, or supped, I had my share of provisions; and, in return, I loved him, and was faithful, as gratitude required of me. I always had my eyes upon him, and he scarcely stirred out of doors, or went into the city on business, but I was at his heels. I was the more exact, because I perceived my attention pleased him; for whenever he went out, without giving me time to see him, he would call Chance, which was the name he gave me.

At this name I used to spring from my place, jump, caper, run before the door, and never cease fawning on him, till he went out; and then I always either followed him, or ran before him, continually looking at him to shew my joy.

I had lived some time with this baker, when a woman came one day into the shop to buy some bread, who gave my master a piece of bad money among some good, which he returned, and requested her to exchange.

The woman refused to take it again, and affirmed it to be good. The baker maintained the contrary, and in the dispute told the woman, he was sure that the piece of money was so visibly bad, that his dog could distinguish it; upon which he called me by name. I immediately jumped on the counter, and the baker throwing the money down before me, said, “See, and tell me which of these pieces is bad?” I looked over all the pieces of money, and then set my paw upon that which was bad, separated it from the rest, looking in my master’s face, to shew it him.

The baker, who had only called me to banter the woman, was much surprised to see me so immediately pitch upon the bad money. The woman thus convicted had nothing to say for herself, but was obliged to give another piece instead of the bad one. As soon as she was gone, my master called in some neighbours, and enlarged very much on my capacity, telling them what had happened.

The neighbours desired to make the experiment, and of all the bad money they shewed me, mixed with good, there was not one which I did not set my paw upon, and separate from the rest.

The woman also failed not to tell everybody she met what had happened; so that the fame of my skill in distinguishing good money from bad was not only spread throughout the neighbourhood, but over all that part of the town, and insensibly through the whole city.

I had business enough every day; for I was obliged to shew my skill to all customers who came to buy bread of my master. In short, my reputation procured my master more business than he could manage, and brought him customers from the most distant parts of the town; this run of business lasted so long, that he owned to his friends and neighbours, that I was a treasure to him.

My little knowledge made many people envy my master’s good fortune, and lay snares to steal me away, which obliged him always to keep me in his sight. One day a woman came like the rest out of curiosity to buy some bread, and seeing me sit upon the counter, threw down before me six pieces of money, among which was one that was bad. I separated it presently from the others, and setting my paw upon it, looked in the woman’s face, as much as to say, “Is it not so?” The woman looking at me replied, “Yes, you are in the right, it is bad:” and staying some time in the shop, to look at and admire me, at last paid my master for his bread, but when she went out of the shop, made a sign, unknown to him, for me to follow her.

I was always attentive to any means likely to deliver me out of so strange a metamorphosis, and had observed that the woman examined me with an extraordinary attention. I imagined that she might know something of my misfortune, and the melancholy condition I was reduced to: however, I let her go, and contented myself with looking at her. After walking two or three steps, she turned about, and seeing that I only looked at her, without stirring from my place, made me another sign to follow her.

Without deliberating any longer, and observing that my master was busy cleaning his oven, and did not mind me, I jumped off the counter, and followed the woman, who seemed overjoyed.

After we had gone some way, she stopped at a house, opened the door, and called to me to come in, saying, “You will not repent following me.” When I had entered, she shut the door, and conducted me to her chamber, where I saw a beautiful young lady working embroidery. This lady, who was daughter to the charitable woman who had brought me from the baker’s, was a very skilful enchantress, as I found afterwards.

“Daughter,” said the mother, “I have brought you the much-talked-of baker’s dog, that can tell good money from bad. You know I gave you my opinion respecting him when I first heard of him, and told you, I fancied he was a man changed into a dog by some wicked magician. To-day I determined to go to that baker for some bread, and was myself a witness of the wonders performed by this dog, who has made such a noise in Bagdad. What say you, daughter, am I deceived in my conjecture?” “Mother, you are not,” answered the daughter, “and I will disenchant him immediately.”

The young lady arose from her sofa, put her hand into a basin of water, and throwing some upon me, said, “If thou wert born a dog, remain so, but if thou wert born a man, resume thy former shape, by the virtue of this water.” At that instant the enchantment was broken, and I became restored to my natural form.

Penetrated with the greatness of this kindness, I threw myself at my deliverer’s feet; and after I had kissed the hem of her garment, said, “My dear deliverer, I am so sensible of your unparalleled humanity towards a stranger, as I am, that I beg of you to tell me yourself what I can do to shew my gratitude; or rather dispose of me as a slave, to whom you have a just right, since I am no more my own, but entirely yours: and that you may know who I am, I will tell you my story in as few words as possible.”

After I had informed her who I was, I gave her an account of my marriage with Ameeneh, of the complaisance I had shewn her, my patience in bearing with her humour, her extraordinary behaviour, and the savage inhumanity with which she had treated me out of her inconceivable wickedness, and finished my story with my transformation, and thanking her mother for the inexpressible happiness she had procured me.

“Syed Naomaun,” said the daughter to me, “let us not talk of the obligation you say you owe me; it is enough for me that I have done any service to so honest a man. But let us talk of Ameeneh your wife. I was acquainted with her before your marriage; and as I know her to be a sorceress, she also is sensible that I have some of the same kind of knowledge as herself, since we both learnt it of the same mistress. We often meet at the baths, but as our tempers are different, I avoid all opportunities of contracting an intimacy with her, which is no difficult matter, as she does the same by me. I am not at all surprised at her wickedness: but what I have already done for you is not sufficient; I must complete what I have begun. It is not enough to have broken the enchantment by which she has so long excluded you from the society of men. You must punish her as she deserves, by going home again, and assuming the authority which belongs to you. I will give you the proper means. Converse a little with my mother till I return to you.”

My deliveress went into a closet, and while she was absent, I repeated my obligations to the mother as well as the daughter. She said to me, “You see my daughter has as much skill in the magic art as the wicked Ameeneh; but makes such use of it, that you would be surprised to know the good she has done, and daily does, by exercising her science. This induces me to let her practise it; for I should not permit her, if I perceived she made an improper application of it in the smallest instance.”

The mother then related some of the wonders she had seen her perform: by this time the daughter returned with a little bottle in her hand. “Syed Naomaun,” said she, “my books which I have been consulting tell me that Ameeneh is now abroad, but will be at home presently. They also inform me that she pretended before your servants to be very uneasy at your absence, and made them believe, that at dinner you recollected some business which obliged you to go out immediately; that as you went, you left the door open, and a dog running into the hall where she was at dinner, she had beaten him out with a great stick.

"Take this little bottle, go home immediately, and wait in your own chamber till Ameeneh comes in, which she will do shortly. As soon as she returns, run down into the court, and meet her face to face. In her surprise at seeing you so unexpectedly, she will turn her back to run away; have the bottle ready, and throw some of the liquor it contains upon her, pronouncing at the same time these words: 'Receive the chastisement of thy wickedness.' I will tell you no more; you will see the effect."

After these instructions I took leave of my benefactress, and her mother, with all the testimonies of the most perfect gratitude, and a sincere protestation never to forget my obligation to them; and then went home.

All things happened as the beautiful and humane enchantress had foretold. Ameeneh was not long before she came home. As she entered the court, I met her with the bottle in my hand. Upon seeing me, she shrieked; and as she turned to run towards the door, I threw the liquor upon her, pronouncing the words which the young lady had taught me, when she was instantly transformed into the mare which your majesty saw me upon yesterday.

At that instant, owing to the surprise she was in, I easily seized her by the mane, and notwithstanding her resistance, led her into the stable, where I put a halter upon her head, and when I had tied her to the rack, reproaching her with her baseness, I chastised her with a whip till I was tired, and have punished her every day since in the manner which your majesty has witnessed.

"I hope, commander of the faithful," concluded Syed Naomaun, "your majesty will not disapprove of my conduct, but will rather think I have shewn so wicked and pernicious a woman more indulgence than she deserved."

When the caliph found that Syed Naomaun had ended his story, he said to him, "Your adventure is very singular, and the wickedness of your wife inexcusable; therefore I do not condemn the chastisement you have hitherto given her; but I would have you consider how great a punishment it is to be reduced to the condition of beasts, and wish you would be content with the chastisement you have already inflicted. I would order you to go and address yourself to the young enchantress, to end the metamorphosis she has inflicted, but that I know the obstinacy and incorrigible cruelty of magicians of both sexes, who abuse their art; which makes me apprehensive that a second effect of your wife's revenge might be more fatal than the first."

The caliph, who was naturally mild and compassionate to all criminals, after he had declared his mind to Syed Naomaun, addressed himself to the third person the grand vizier had summoned to attend him. "Khaujeh Hassan," said he, "passing yesterday by your house, it seemed so magnificent that I felt a curiosity to know to whom it belonged, and was told that you, whose trade is so mean that a man can scarcely get his bread by it, have built this house after you had followed this trade some years. I was likewise informed that you make a good use of the riches God has blessed you with, and your neighbours speak well of you.

"All this pleases me well," added the caliph, "but I am persuaded that the means by which Providence has been pleased to bestow these gifts on you must have been very extraordinary. I am curious to know the particulars from your own mouth, and sent for you on purpose to have that satisfaction. Speak truly, that when I know your story, I may rejoice in your good fortune.

"But that you may not suspect my curiosity, and believe I have any other interest than what I tell you, I declare, that far from having any pretensions, I give you my word you shall enjoy freely all you possess."

On these assurances of the caliph, Khaujeh Hassan prostrated himself before the throne, with his forehead down to the carpet, and when he rose up, said, "Commander of the faithful, some persons might have been alarmed at having been summoned to appear before your majesty; but knowing that my conscience was clear, and that I had committed nothing against the laws or your majesty, but, on the contrary, had always the most respectful sentiments and the profoundest veneration for your person, my only fear was, that I should not be able to support the splendour of your presence. But nevertheless on the public report of your majesty's receiving favourably, and hearing the meanest of your subjects, I took courage, and never doubted but I should have confidence enough to give you all the satisfaction you might require of me. Besides, your majesty has given me a proof of your goodness, by granting me your protection before you know whether I deserve it. I hope, however, you will retain the favourable sentiments you have conceived of me, when, in obedience to your command, I shall have related my adventures."

After this compliment to conciliate the caliph's good-will and attention, and after some moments' recollection, Khaujeh Hassan related his story in the following manner:

The Story of Khaujeh Hassan al Hubbaul.

Commander of the faithful, that your majesty may the better understand by what means I arrived at the happiness I now enjoy, I must acquaint you, there are two intimate friends, citizens of Bagdad, who can testify the truth of what I shall relate, and to whom, after God, the author of all good, I owe my prosperity.

These two friends are called, the one Saadi, the other Saad. Saadi, who is very rich, was always of opinion that no man could be happy in this world without wealth, to live independent of every one.

Saad was of a different opinion; he agreed that riches were necessary to comfort, but maintained that the happiness of a man's life consisted in virtue, without any farther eagerness after worldly goods than what was requisite for decent subsistence, and benevolent purposes.

Saad himself is one of this number, and lives very happily and contentedly in his station: but though Saadi is infinitely more opulent, their friendship is very sincere, and the richest sets no more value on himself than the other. They never had any dispute but on this point; in all other things their union of opinion has been very strict.

One day as they were talking upon this subject, as I have since been informed by them both, Saadi affirmed, that poverty proceeded from men's being born poor, or spending their fortunes in luxury and debauchery, or by some of those unforeseen fatalities which do not often occur. "My opinion," said he, "is, that most people's poverty is owing to their wanting at first a sufficient sum of money to raise them above want, by employing their industry to improve it; for," continued he, "if they once had such a sum, and made a right use of it, they would not only live well, but would in time infallibly grow rich."

Saad could not agree in this sentiment: "The way," said he, "which you propose to make a poor man rich, is not so certain as you imagine. Your plan is very hazardous, and I can bring many good arguments against your opinion, but that they would carry us too far into dispute, I believe, with as much probability, that a poor man may become rich by other means as well as by money: and there are people who have raised as large and surprising fortunes by mere chance, as others have done by money, with all their good economy and management to increase it by the best conducted trade."

"Saad," replied Saadi, "I see we shall not come to any determination by my persisting to oppose my opinion against yours. I will make an experiment to convince you, by giving, for example, a sum of money to some artisan, whose ancestors from father to son have always been poor, lived only from day to day, and died as indigent as they were born. If I have not the success I expect, you shall try if you will have better by the means you shall employ."

Some days after this dispute, the two friends happened to walk out together, and passing through the street where I was at work at my trade of rope-making, which I learnt of my father, who learnt of his, and he of his ancestors; and by my dress and appearance, it was no hard matter for them to guess my poverty.

Saad, remembering Saadi's engagement, said, "If you have not forgotten what you said to me, there is a man," pointing to me, "whom I can remember a long time working at his trade of rope-making, and in the same poverty: he is a worthy subject for your liberality, and a proper person to make your experiment upon." "I so well remember the conversation," replied Saadi, "that I have ever since carried a sufficient sum about me for the purpose, but only waited for an opportunity of our being together, that you might be witness of the fact. Let us go to him, and know if he is really necessitous."

The two friends came to me, and I, seeing that they wished to speak to me, left off work: they both accosted me with the common salutation, and Saadi, wishing me peace, asked me my name.

I returned their salutation, and answered Saadi's question, saying to him, "Sir, my name is Hassan; but by reason of my trade, I am commonly known by the name of Hassan al Hubbaul."

"Hassan," replied Saadi, "as there is no occupation but what a man may live by, I doubt not but yours produces enough for you to live well upon; and I am amazed, that during the long time you have worked at your trade, you have not saved enough to lay in a good stock of hemp to extend your manufacture and employ more hands, by the profit of whose work you would soon increase your income."

"Sir," replied I, "you will be no longer amazed that I have not saved money and taken the way you mention to become rich, when you come to know that, let me work as hard as I may from morning till night, I can hardly get enough to keep my family in bread and pulse. I have a wife and five children, not one of whom is old enough to be of the least assistance to me. I must feed and clothe them, and in our poor way of living, they still want many necessaries, which they can ill do without And though hemp is not very dear, I must have money to buy it. This is the first thing I do with any money I receive for my work; otherwise I and my family must starve.

"Now judge, sir," added I, "if it be possible that I should save any thing for myself and family: it is enough that we are content with the little God sends us, and that we have not the knowledge or desire of more than we want, but can live as we have been always bred up, and are not reduced to beg."

When I had given Saadi this account, he said to me, "Hassan, I am not so much surprised as I was, for I comprehend what obliges you to be content in your station. But if I should make you a present of a purse of two hundred pieces of gold, would not you make a good use of it? and do not you believe, that with such a sum you could become soon as rich as the principal of your occupation?"

"Sir," replied I, "you seem to be so good a gentleman, that I am persuaded you would not banter me, but that the offer you make me is serious; and I dare say, without presuming too much upon myself, that a considerably less sum would be sufficient to make me not only as rich as the first of our trade, but that in time I should be richer than all of them in this city together, though Bagdad is so large and populous."

The generous Saadi showed me immediately that in what he said he was serious. He pulled a purse out of his bosom, and putting it into my hands, said, "Here, take this purse; you will find it contains two hundred pieces of gold: I pray God bless you with them, and give you grace to make the good use of them I desire; and believe me, my friend Saad, whom you see here, and I shall both take great pleasure in finding they may contribute towards making you more happy than you now are."

When I had got the purse, the first thing I did was to put it into my bosom; but the transport of my joy was so great, and I was so much penetrated with gratitude, that my speech failed me and I could give my benefactor no other tokens of my feelings than by laying hold of the hem of his garment and kissing it; but he drew it from me hastily, and he and his friend pursued their walk.

As soon as they were gone, I returned to my work, and my first thought was, what I should do with my purse to keep it safe. I had in my poor house neither box nor cupboard to lock it up in, nor any other place where I could be sure it would not be discovered if I concealed it.

In this perplexity, as I had been used, like many poor people of my condition, to put the little money I had in the folds of my turban, I left my work, and went into the house, under pretence of wrapping my turban up anew. I took such precautions that neither my wife nor children saw what I was doing. But first I laid aside ten pieces of gold for present necessaries, and wrapped the rest up in the folds of the linen which went about my cap.

The principal expense I was at that day was to lay in a good stock of hemp, and afterwards, as my family had eaten no flesh meat a long time, I went to the shambles, and bought something for supper.

As I was carrying home the meat I had bought, a famished vulture flew upon me, and would have taken it away, if I had not held it very fast; but, alas! I had better have parted with it than lost my money; the faster I held my meat, the more the bird struggled to get it, drawing me sometimes on one side, and sometimes on another, but would not quit the prize; till unfortunately in my efforts my turban fell on the ground.

The vulture immediately let go his hold, but seizing my turban, flew away with it. I cried out so loud, that I alarmed all the men, women, and children in the neighbourhood, who joined their shouts and cries to make the vulture quit his hold; for by such means these voracious birds are often frightened so as to quit their prey. But our cries did not avail; he carried off my turban, and we soon lost sight of him, and it would have been in vain for me to fatigue myself with running after him.

I went home very melancholy at the loss of my money. I was obliged to buy a new turban, which diminished the small remainder of the ten pieces; for I had laid out several in hemp. The little that was left was not sufficient to give me reason to indulge the great hopes I had conceived.

But what troubled me most, was the little satisfaction I should be able to give my benefactor for his ineffectual generosity, when he should come to hear what a misfortune I had met with, which he would perhaps regard as incredible, and consequently an idle excuse.

While the remainder of the ten pieces lasted, my little family and I lived better than usual; but I soon relapsed into the same poverty, and the same inability to extricate myself from wretchedness. However, I never murmured nor repined; "God," said I, "was pleased to give me riches when I least expelled them; he has thought fit to take them from me again almost at the same time, because it so pleased him, and they were at his disposal; yet I will praise his name for all the benefits I have received, as it was his good pleasure, and submit myself, as I have ever done hitherto, to his will."

These were my sentiments, while my wife, from whom I could not keep secret the loss I had sustained, was inconsolable. In my trouble I had told my neighbours, that when I lost my turban I lost a hundred and ninety pieces of gold; but as they knew my poverty, and could not comprehend how I should have got so great a sum by my work, they only laughed at me.

About six months after this misfortune, which I have related to your majesty, the two friends walking through that part of the town where I lived, the neighbourhood brought me to Saad's recollection. "We are now," said he to Saadi, "not far from the street where Hassan the ropemaker lives; let us call and see what use he has made of the two hundred pieces of gold you gave him, and whether they have enabled him to take any steps towards bettering his fortune."

"With all my heart," replied Saadi; "I have been thinking of him some days, and it will be a great pleasure and satisfaction to me to have you with me, as a witness of the proof of my argument. You will see undoubtedly a great alteration. I expect we shall hardly know him again."

Just as Saadi said this, the two friends turned the corner of the street, and Saad, who perceived me first at a distance, said to his friend, “I believe you reckon without your host. I see Hassan, but can discern no change in his person, for he is as shabbily dressed as when we saw him before; the only difference that I can perceive is, that his turban looks something better. Observe him yourself, and see whether I am in the wrong.”

As they drew nearer to me, Saadi saw me too, and found Saad was in the right, but could not tell to what he should attribute the little alteration he saw in my person; and was so much amazed, that he could not speak when he came up to me. “Well, Hassan,” said Saad, “we do not ask you how affairs go since we saw you last; without doubt they are in a better train.”

“Gentlemen,” replied I, addressing myself to them both, “I have the great mortification to tell you, that your desires, wishes, and hopes, as well as mine, have not had the success you had reason to expect, and I had promised myself; you will scarcely believe the extraordinary adventure that has befallen me. I assure you nevertheless, on the word of an honest man, and you ought to believe me, for nothing is more true than what I am going to tell you.” I then related to them my adventure, with the same circumstances I had the honour to tell your majesty.

Saadi rejected my assertion, and said, “Hassan, you joke, and would deceive me; for what you say is a thing incredible. What have vultures to do with turbans? They only search for something to satisfy their hunger. You have done as all such people as yourself generally do. If they have made any extraordinary gain, or any good fortune happens to them, which they never expected, they throw aside their work, take their pleasure, make merry, while the money lasts; and when they have eaten and drunk it all out, are reduced to the same necessity and want as before. You would not be so miserable, but because you deserve it, and render yourself unworthy of any service done to you.”

“Sir,” I replied, “I bear all these reproaches, and am ready to bear as many more, if they were more severe, and all with the greater patience because I do not think I deserve them. The thing is so publicly known in this part of the town, that there is nobody but can satisfy you of the truth of my assertions. If you inquire, you will find that I do not impose upon you. I own, I never heard of vultures flying away with turbans; but this has actually happened to me, like many other things, which do not fall out every day, and yet have actually happened.”

Saad took my part, and told Saadi a great many as surprising stories of vultures, some of which he affirmed he knew to be true, insomuch that at last he pulled his purse out of his vestband, and counted out two hundred pieces of gold into my hand, which I put into my bosom for want of a purse.

When Saadi had presented me with this sum, he said, “Hassan, I make you a present of these two hundred pieces; but take care to put them in a safer place, that you may not lose them so unfortunately as you have done the others, and employ them in such a manner that they may procure you the advantages which the others would have done.” I told him that the obligation of this his second kindness was much greater than I deserved, after what had happened, and that I should be sure to make good use of his advice. I would have said a great deal more, but he did not give me time, for he went away, and continued his walk with his friend.

As soon as they were gone, I left off work, and went home, but finding neither my wife nor children within, I pulled out my money, put ten pieces by, and wrapped up the rest in a clean linen cloth, tying it fast with a knot; but then I was to consider where I should hide this linen cloth that it might be safe. After I had considered some time, I resolved to put it in the bottom of an earthen vessel full of bran, which stood in a corner, which I imagined neither my wife nor children would look into. My wife came home soon after, and as I had but little hemp in the house, I told her I should go out to buy some, without saying any thing to her about the two friends.

While I was absent, a sandman, who sells scouring earth for the hair and body, which women use in the baths, passed through our street, and called, “Cleansing, ho!” My wife, who wanted some, beckoned to him: but as she had no money, asked him if he would make an exchange of some earth for some bran. The sandman asked to see the bran. My wife shewed him the pot; the bargain was made; she had the cleansing earth, with which she filled a dust hole I had made to the house, and the sandman took the pot and bran along with him.

Not long after I came home with as much hemp as I could carry, and followed by five porters loaded also with hemp. After I had satisfied them for their trouble, I sat down to rest myself; and looking about me, could not see the pot of bran.

It is impossible for me to express to your majesty my surprise and the effect it had on me at the moment. I asked my wife hastily what was become of it; when she told me the bargain she had made with the sandman, which she thought to be a very good one.

"Ah! unfortunate woman!" cried I, "you know not the injury you have done me, yourself, and our children, by making that bargain, which has ruined us for ever. You thought you only sold the bran, but with the bran you have enriched the sandman with a hundred and ninety pieces of gold, which Saadi with his friend came and made me a second present of."

My wife was like one distracted, when she knew what a fault she had committed through ignorance. She cried, beat her breast, and tore her hair and clothes. "Unhappy wretch that I am," cried she, "am I fit to live after so dreadful a mistake! Where shall I find this sandman? I know him not, I never saw him in our street before. Oh! husband," added she, "you were much to blame to be so reserved in a matter of such importance This had never happened, if you had communicated the secret to me." In short, I should never finish my story were I to tell your majesty what her grief made her say. You are not ignorant how eloquent women often are in their afflictions.

"Wife," said I, "moderate your grief: by your weeping and howling you will alarm the neighbourhood, and there is no reason they should be informed of our misfortunes. They will only laugh at, instead of pitying us. We had best bear our loss patiently, and submit ourselves to the will of God, and bless him, for that out of two hundred pieces of gold which he had given us, he has taken back but a hundred and ninety, and left us ten, which, by the use I shall make of them will be a great relief to us."

My wife at first did not relish my arguments; but as time softens the greatest misfortunes, and makes them more supportable, she at last grew easy, and had almost forgotten them. "It is true," said I to her, "we live but poorly; but what have the rich which we have not? Do not we breathe the same air, enjoy the same light and the same warmth of the sun? Therefore what conveniences have they more than we, that we should envy their happiness? They die as well as we. In short, while we live in the fear of God, as we should always do, the advantage they have over us is so very inconsiderable, that we ought not to covet it."

I will not tire your majesty any longer with my moral reflections. My wife and I comforted ourselves, and I pursued my trade with as much alacrity as before these two mortifying losses, which followed one another so quickly. The only thing that troubled me sometimes was, how I should look Saadi in the face when he should come and ask me how I had improved his two hundred pieces of gold, and advanced my fortune by means of his liberality. I saw no remedy but to resolve to submit to the confusion I should feel, though it was by no fault of mine this time, any more than before, that our misfortune had happened.

The two friends stayed away longer this time than the former, though Saad had often spoken to Saadi, who always put it off; for, said he, "The longer we stay away, the richer Hassan will be, and I shall have the greater satisfaction."

Saad, who had not the same opinion of the effect of his friend's generosity, replied, "You fancy then that your last present will have been turned to a better account than the former. I would advise you not to flatter yourself too much, for fear you may be more sensibly mortified if it should prove otherwise." "Why," replied Saadi, "vultures do not fly away with turbans every day; and Hassan will have been more cautious this time."

"I do not doubt it," replied Saad; "but," added he, "there are other accidents that neither you nor I can think of; therefore, I say again, moderate your expectations, and do not depend too much on Hassan's success; for to tell you what I think, and what I always thought (whether you like to hear it or not), I have a secret presentiment that you will not have accomplished your purpose, and that I shall succeed better in proving that a poor man may sooner become rich by other means than money."

One day, when Saad and Saadi were disputing upon this subject, Saad observed that enough had been said; "I am resolved," continued he, "to inform myself this very day what has passed; it is a pleasing time for walking, let us not lose it, but go and see which of us has lost the wager." I saw them at a distance, was overcome with confusion, and was just going to leave my work, to run and hide myself. However I refrained, appeared very earnest at work, made as if I had not seen them, and never lifted up my eyes till they were close to me and had saluted me, and then I could not help myself. I hung down my head, told them my last misfortune, with all the circumstances, and that I was as poor as when they first saw me.

"After that," I added, "you may say that I ought to have hidden my money in another place than in a pot of bran, which was carried out of my house the same day: but that pot had stood there many years, and had never been removed, whenever my wife parted with the bran. Could I guess that a sandman should come by that very day, my wife have no money, and would make such an exchange? You may indeed allege, that I ought to have told my wife of it; but I will never believe that such prudent persons, as I am persuaded you are, would have given me that advice; and if I had put my money anywhere else, what certainty could I have had that it would be more secure?"

"I see, sir," said I, addressing myself to Saadi, "that it has pleased God, whose ways are secret and impenetrable, that I should not be enriched by your liberality, but that I must remain poor: however, the obligation is the same as if it had wrought the desired effect."

After these words I was silent; and Saadi replied, "Though I would persuade myself, Hassan, that all you tell us is true, and not owing to your debauchery or ill management, yet I must not be extravagant, and ruin myself for the sake of an experiment. I do not regret in the least the four hundred pieces of gold I gave you to raise you in the world. I did it in duty to God, without expecting any recompense but the pleasure of doing good. If any thing makes me repent, it is, that I did not address myself to another, who might have made a better use of my charity." Then turning about to his friend, "Saad," continued he, "you may know by what I have said that I do not entirely give up the cause. You may now make your experiment, and let me see that there are ways, besides giving money, to make a poor man's fortune. Let Hassan be the man. I dare say, whatever you may give him he will not be richer than he was with four hundred pieces of gold.” Saad had a piece of lead in his hand, which he shewed Saadi. “You saw me,” said he, “take up this piece of lead, which I found on the ground; I will give it Hassan, and you shall see what it is worth.”

Saadi, burst out laughing at Saad. “What is that bit of lead worth,” said he, “a farthing? What can Hassan do with that?” Saad presented it to me, and said, “Take it, Hassan; let Saadi laugh, you will tell us some news of the good luck it has brought you one time or another.” I thought Saad was in jest, and had a mind to divert himself: however I took the lead, and thanked him. The two friends pursued their walk, and I fell to work again.

At night when I pulled off my clothes to go to bed, the piece of lead, which I had never thought of from the time he gave it me, tumbled out of my pocket. I took it up, and laid it on the place that was nearest me. The same night it happened that a fisherman, a neighbour, mending his nets, found a piece of lead wanting; and it being too late to buy any, as the shops were shut, and he must either fish that night, or his family go without bread the next day, he called to his wife and bade her inquire among the neighbours for a piece. She went from door to door on both sides of the street, but could not get any, and returned to tell her husband her ill success. He asked her if she had been to several of their neighbours, naming them, and among the rest my house. “No indeed,” said the wife, “I have not been there; that was too far off, and if I had gone, do you think I should have found any? I know by experience they never have any thing when one wants it.” “No matter,” said the fisherman, “you are an idle hussy; you must go there; for though you have been there a hundred times before without getting any thing, you may chance to obtain what we want now. You must go.”

The fisherman’s wife went out grumbling, came and knocked at my door, and waked me out of a sound sleep. I asked her what she wanted. “Hassan,” said she, as loud as she could bawl, “my husband wants a bit of lead to load his nets with; and if you have a piece, desires you to give it him.”

The piece of lead which Saad had given me was so fresh in my memory, and had so lately dropped out of my clothes, that I could not forget it. I told my neighbour I had some; and if she would stay a moment my wife should give it to her. Accordingly, my wife, who was wakened by the noise as well as myself, got up, and groping about where I directed her, found the lead, opened the door, and gave it to the fisherman's wife, who was so overjoyed that she promised my wife, that in return for the kindness she did her and her husband, she would answer for him we should have the first cast of the nets.

The fisherman was so much rejoiced to see the lead, which he so little expected, that he much approved his wife's promise. He finished mending his nets, and went a-fishing two hours before day, according to custom. At the first throw he caught but one fish, about a yard long, and proportionable in thickness; but afterwards had a great many successful casts; though of all the fish he took none equalled the first in size.

When the fisherman had done fishing, he went home, where his first care was to think of me. I was extremely surprised, when at my work, to see him come to me with a large fish in his hand. "Neighbour," said he, "my wife promised you last night, in return for your kindness, whatever fish I should catch at my first throw; and I approved her promise. It pleased God to send me no more than this one for you, which, such as it is, I desire you to accept. I wish it had been better. Had he sent me my net full, they should all have been yours."

"Neighbour," said I, "the bit of lead which I sent you was such a trifle, that it ought not to be valued at so high a rate: neighbours should assist each other in their little wants. I have done no more for you than I should have expected from you had I been in your situation; therefore I would refuse your present, if I were not persuaded you gave it me freely, and that I should offend you; and since you will have it so, I take it, and return you my hearty thanks."

After these civilities, I took the fish, and carried it home to my wife. "Here," said I, "take this fish, which the fisherman our neighbour has made me a present of, in return for the bit of lead he sent to us for last night: I believe it is all we can expect from the present Saad made me yesterday, promising me that it would bring me good luck;" and then I told her what had passed between the two friends.

My wife was much startled to see so large a fish. "What would you have me do with it?" said she. "Our gridiron is only fit to broil small fish; and we have not a pot big enough to boil it." "That is your business," answered I; "dress it as you will, I shall like it either way." I then went to my work again.

In gutting the fish, my wife found a large diamond, which, when she washed it, she took for a piece of glass: indeed she had heard talk of diamonds, but if she had ever seen or handled any she would not have known how to distinguish them. She gave it to the youngest of our children for a plaything, and his brothers and sisters handed it about from one to another, to admire its brightness and beauty.

At night when the lamp was lighted, and the children were still playing with the diamond, they perceived that it gave a light, when my wife, who was getting them their supper, stood between them and the lamp; upon which they snatched it from one another to try it; and the younger children fell a-crying, that the elder would not let them have it long enough. But as a little matter amuses children, and makes them squabble and fall out, my wife and I took no notice of their noise, which presently ceased, when the bigger ones supped with us, and my wife had given the younger each their share.

After supper the children got together again, and began to make the same noise. I then called to the eldest to know what was the matter, who told me it was about a piece of glass, which gave a light when his back was to the lamp. I bade him bring it to me, made the experiment myself, and it appeared so extraordinary, that I asked my wife what it was. She told me it was a piece of glass, which she had found in gutting the fish.

I thought no more than herself but that it was a bit of glass, but I was resolved to make a farther experiment of it; and therefore bade my wife put the lamp in the chimney, which she did, and still found that the supposed piece of glass gave so great a light, that we might see to go to bed without the lamp. So I put it out, and placed the bit of glass upon the chimney to light us. "Look," said I, "this is another advantage that Saad's piece of lead procures us: it will spare us the expense of oil."

When the children saw the lamp was put out, and the bit of glass supplied the place, they cried out so loud, and made so great a noise from astonishment, that it was enough to alarm the neighbourhood;

and before my wife and I could quiet them we were forced to make a greater noise, nor could we silence them till we had put them to bed; where after talking a long while in their way about the wonderful light of a bit of glass, they fell asleep. After they were asleep, my wife and I went to bed by them; and next morning, without thinking any more of the glass, I went to my work as usual; which ought not to seem strange for such a man as I, who had never seen any diamonds, or if I had, never attended to their value.

But before I proceed, I must tell your majesty that there was but a very slight partition-wall between my house and my next neighbour's, who was a very rich Jew, and a jeweller; and the chamber that he and his wife lay in joined to ours. They were both in bed, and the noise my children made awakened them.

The next morning the jeweller's wife came to mine to complain of being disturbed out of their first sleep. "Good neighbour Rachel," (which was the Jew's wife's name,) said my wife, "I am very sorry for what happened, and hope you will excuse it: you know it was caused by the children, and they will laugh and cry for a trifle. Come in, and I will shew you what was the occasion of the noise."

The Jewess went in with her, and my wife taking the diamond (for such it really was, and a very extraordinary one) out of the chimney, put it into her hands. "See here," said she, "it was this piece of glass that caused all the noise;" and while the Jewess, who understood all sorts of precious stones, was examining the diamond with admiration, my wife told her how she found it in the fish's belly, and what happened.

"Indeed, Ayesha," (which was my wife's name,) said the jeweller's wife, giving her the diamond again, "I believe as you do it is a piece of glass; but as it is more beautiful than common glass, and I have just such another piece at home, I will buy it, if you will sell it."

The children, who heard them talking of selling their plaything, presently interrupted their conversation, crying and begging their mother not to part with it, who, to quiet them, promised she would not.

The Jewess being thus prevented in her intended swindling bargain by my children, went away, but first whispered my wife, who followed her to the door, if she had a mind to sell it, not to shew it to anybody without acquainting her.

The Jew went out early in the morning to his shop in that part of the town where the jewellers sell their goods. Thither his wife followed, and told him the discovery she had made. She gave him an account of the size and weight of the diamond as nearly as she could guess, also of its beauty, water, and lustre, and particularly of the light which it gave in the night according to my wife's account, which was the more credible as she was uninformed.

The Jew sent his wife immediately to treat, to offer her a trifle at first, as she should think fit, and then to raise her price by degrees; but be sure to bring it, cost what it would. Accordingly his wife came again to mine privately, and asked her if she would take twenty pieces of gold for the piece of glass she had shown her.

My wife, thinking the sum too considerable for a mere piece of glass as she had thought it, would not make any bargain; but told her, she could not part with it till she had spoken to me. In the mean time I came from my work to dinner. As they were talking at the door, my wife stopped me, and asked if I would sell the piece of glass she had found in the fish's belly for twenty pieces of gold, which our neighbour offered her. I returned no answer; but reflected immediately on the assurance with which Saad, in giving me the piece of lead, told me it would make my fortune. The Jewess, fancying that the low price she had offered was the reason I made no reply, said, "I will give you fifty, neighbour, if that will do."

As soon as I found that she rose so suddenly from twenty to fifty, I told her that I expected a great deal more. "Well, neighbour," said she, "I will give you a hundred, and that is so much, I know not whether my husband will approve my offering it." At this new advance, I told her I would have a hundred thousand pieces of gold for it; that I saw plainly that the diamond, for such I now guessed it must be, was worth a great deal more, but to oblige her and her husband, as they were neighbours, I would limit myself to that price, which I was determined to have; and if they refused to give it, other jewellers should have it, who would give a great deal more.

The Jewess confirmed me in this resolution, by her eagerness to conclude a bargain; and by coming up at several biddings to fifty thousand pieces, which I refused. “I can offer you no more,” said she, “without my husband’s consent. He will be at home at night; and I would beg the favour of you to let him see it, which I promised.”

At night when the Jew came home, his wife told him what she had done; that she had got no forwarder with my wife or me; that she offered, and I had refused, fifty thousand pieces of gold; but that I had promised to stay till night at her request. He observed the time when I left off work, and came to me. “Neighbour Hassan”, said he, “I desire you would shew me the diamond your wife shewed to mine.” I brought him in, and shewed it to him. As it was very dark, and my lamp was not lighted, he knew instantly, by the light the diamond gave, and by the lustre it cast in my hand, that his wife had given him a true account of it. He looked at and admired it a long time. “Well, neighbour,” said he, “my wife tells me she offered you fifty thousand pieces of gold: I will give you twenty thousand more.”

“Neighbour,” said I, “your wife can tell you that I valued my diamond at a hundred thousand pieces, and I will take nothing less.” He haggled a long time with me, in hopes that I would make some abatement: but finding at last that I was positive, and for fear that I should shew it to other jewellers, as I certainly should have done, he would not leave me till the bargain was concluded on my own terms. He told me that he had not so much money at home, but would pay it all to me on the morrow, that very instant fetched two bags of a thousand pieces each, as an earnest; and the next day, though I do not know how he raised the money, whether he borrowed it of his friends, or let some other jewellers into partnership with him, he brought me the sum we had agreed for at the time appointed, and I delivered to him the diamond.

Having thus sold my diamond, and being rich, infinitely beyond my hopes, I thanked God for his bounty; and would have gone and thrown myself at Saad’s feet to express my gratitude, if I had known where he lived; as also at Saadi’s, to whom I was first obliged, though his good intention had not the same success.

Afterwards I thought of the use I ought to make of so considerable a sum. My wife, with the vanity natural to her sex, proposed immediately to buy rich clothes for herself and children; to purchase a house, and furnish it handsomely. I told her we ought not to begin with such expenses; “for,” said I, “money should only be spent, so that it may produce a fund from which we may draw without its failing. This I intend, and shall begin to-morrow.”

I spent all that day and the next in going to the people of my own trade, who worked as hard every day for their bread as I had done; and giving them money beforehand, engaged them to work for me in different sorts of rope-making, according to their skill and ability, with a promise not to make them wait for their money, but to pay them as soon as their work was done.

By this means I engrossed almost all the business of Bagdad, and everybody was pleased with my exactness and punctual payment.

As so great a number of workmen produced, as your majesty may judge, a large quantity of work, I hired warehouses in several parts of the town to hold my goods, and appointed over each a clerk, to sell both wholesale and retail; and by this economy received considerable profit and income. Afterwards, to unite my concerns in one spot, I bought a large house, which stood on a great deal of ground, but was ruinous, pulled it down, and built that your majesty saw yesterday, which, though it makes so great an appearance, consists, for the most part, of warehouses for my business, with apartments absolutely necessary for myself and family.

Some time after I had left my old mean habitation, and removed to this, Saad and Saadi, who had scarcely thought of me from the last time they had been with me, as they were one day walking together, and passing by our street, resolved to call upon me: but great was their surprise when they did not see me at work. They asked what was become of me, and if I was alive or dead. Their amazement was redoubled, when they were told I was become a great manufacturer, and was no longer called plain Hassan, but Khaujeh Hassan al Hubbaul, and that I had built in a street, which was named to them, a house like a palace.

The two friends went directly to the street, and in the way, as Saadi could not imagine that the bit of lead which Saad had given me could have been the raising of my fortune, he said to him, “I am overjoyed to have made Hassan’s fortune: but I cannot forgive the two lies he told me, to get four hundred pieces instead of two; for I cannot attribute it to the piece of lead you gave him.”

“So you think,” replied Saad: “but so do not I. I do not see why you should do Khaujeh Hassan so much injustice as to take him for a liar. You must give me leave to believe that he told us the truth, disguised nothing from us, that the piece of lead which I gave him is the cause of his prosperity: and you will find he will presently tell us so.”

During their discourse the two friends came into the street where I lived, asked whereabouts my house stood; and being shewn it, could hardly believe it to be mine.

They knocked at the door, and my porter opened it; when Saadi, fearing to be guilty of rudeness in taking the house of a nobleman for that he was inquiring after, said to the porter, “We are informed that this is the house of Khaujeh Hassan al Hubbaul: tell us if we are mistaken.” “You are very right, sir,” said the porter, opening the door wider; “it is the same; come in; he is in the hall, and any of the slaves will point him out to you.”

I had no sooner set my eyes upon the two friends, than I knew them. I rose from my seat, ran to them, and would have kissed the hem of their garments; but they would not suffer it, and embraced me. I invited them to a sofa made to hold four persons, which was placed full in view of my garden. I desired them to sit down, and they would have me take the place of honour. I assured them I had not forgotten that I was poor Hassan the ropemaker, nor the obligations I had to them; but were this not the case, I knew the respect due to them, and begged them not to expose me. They sat down in the proper place, and I seated myself opposite to them.

Then Saadi, addressing himself to me, said, “Khaujeh Hassan, I cannot express my joy to see you in the condition I wished you, when I twice made you a present of two hundred pieces of gold, for I mean not to upbraid you; though I am persuaded that those four hundred pieces have made this wonderful change in your fortune, which I behold with pleasure. One thing only vexes me, which is, that you should twice disguise the truth from me, pretending that your losses were the effect of misfortunes which now seem to me more than ever incredible. Was it not because, when we were together the last time, you had so little advanced your small income with the four hundred pieces of gold, that you were ashamed to own it? I am willing to believe this, and wait to be confirmed in my opinion."

Saad heard this speech of Saadi's with impatience, not to say indignation, which he shewed by casting down his eyes and shaking his head: he did not, however, interrupt him. When he had done, he said to him, "Forgive me, Saadi, if I anticipate Khaujeh Hassan, before he answers you, to tell you, that I am vexed at your prepossession against his sincerity, and that you still persist in not believing the assurances he has already given you. I have told you before, and I repeat it once more, that I believe those two accidents which befell him, upon his bare assertion; and whatever you may say, I am persuaded they are true; but let him speak himself, and say which of us does him justice."

After this discourse of the two friends, I said, addressing myself to them both, "Gentlemen, I should condemn myself to perpetual silence, on the explanation you ask of me, if I were not certain the dispute you have had on my account cannot break that friendship which subsists between you; therefore I will declare to you the truth, since you require it; and with the same sincerity as before." I then told them every circumstance your majesty has heard, without forgetting the least.

All my protestations had no effect on Saadi, to cure him of his prejudice. "Khaujeh Hassan," replied he, "the adventure of the fish, and diamond found in his belly, appears to me as incredible as the vulture's flying away with your turban, and the exchange of the scouring earth. Be it as it may, I am equally convinced that you are no longer poor, but rich as I intended you should be, by my means; and I rejoice sincerely."

As it grew late, they arose up to depart; when I stopped them, and said, "Gentlemen, there is one favour I have to ask; I beg of you not to refuse to do me the honour to stay and take a slight supper with me, also a bed to-night, and to-morrow I will carry you by water to a small country-house, which I bought for the sake of the air, and we will return the same day on my horses."

"If Saad has no business that calls him elsewhere," said Saadi, "I consent." Saad told him that nothing should prevent his enjoying his company. We have only to send a slave to my house, that we may not be waited for. I provided a slave; and while they were giving him their orders, I went and ordered supper.

While it was getting ready, I shewed my benefactors my house, and all my offices, which they thought very extensive considering my fortune: I call them both benefactors without distinction, because without Saadi, Saad would never have given me the piece of lead; and without Saad, Saadi would not have given me the four hundred pieces of gold. Then I brought them back again into the hall, where they asked me several questions about my concerns; and I gave them such answers as satisfied them.

During this conversation, my servants came to tell me that supper was served up. I led them into another hall, where they admired the manner in which it was lighted, the furniture, and the entertainment I had provided. I regaled them also with a concert of vocal and instrumental music during the repast, and afterwards with a company of dancers, and other entertainments, endeavouring as much as possible to shew them my gratitude.

The next morning, as we had agreed to set out early to enjoy the fresh air, we repaired to the river-side by sun-rise, and went on board a pleasure-boat well carpeted that waited for us; and in less than an hour and a half, with six good rowers, and the stream, we arrived at my country house.

When we went ashore, the two friends stopped to observe the beauty of the architecture of my house, and to admire its advantageous situation for prospects, which were neither too much limited nor too extensive, but such as made it very agreeable. I then conducted them into all the apartments, and shewed them the out-houses and conveniences; with all which they were very well pleased.

Afterwards we walked in the gardens, where what they were most struck with was a grove of orange and lemon trees, loaded with fruit and flowers, which were planted at equal distances, and watered by channels cut from a neighbouring stream. The close shade, the fragrant smell which perfumed the air, the soft murmurings of the water, the harmonious notes of an infinite number of birds, and many other agreeable circumstances, struck them in such a manner, that they frequently stopped to express how much they were obliged to me for bringing them to so delightful a place, and to congratulate me on my great acquisitions, with other compliments. I led them to the end of the grove, which was very long and broad, where I shewed them a wood of large trees, which terminated my garden, and afterwards a summer-house, open on all sides, shaded by a clump of palm-trees, but not so as to injure the prospect; I then invited them to walk in, and repose themselves on a sofa covered with carpets and cushions.

Two of my boys, whom I had sent into the country, with a tutor, for the air, had gone just then into the wood, and seeing a nest which was built in the branches of a lofty tree, they attempted to get at it; but as they had neither strength nor skill to accomplish their object, they shewed it to the slave who waited on them, and bade him climb the tree for it. The slave, when he came to it, was much surprised to find it composed of a turban: however he took it, brought it down, and shewed it to my children; and as he thought that I might like to see a nest that was so uncommon, he gave it to the eldest boy to bring to me.

I saw the children at a distance, coming back to us, overjoyed to have procured a nest. “Father,” said the eldest, “we have found a nest in a turban.” The two friends and I were very much surprised at the novelty; but I much more, when I recognized the turban to be that which the vulture had flown away with. After I had examined it well, and turned it about, I said to my guests, “Gentlemen, have you memories good enough to remember the turban I had on the day you did me the honour first to speak to me?” “I do not think,” said Saad, “that either my friend or I gave any attention to it; but if the hundred and ninety pieces of gold are in it, we cannot doubt of it.”

“Sir,” replied I, “there is no doubt but it is the same turban; for besides that I know it perfectly well, I feel by the weight it is too heavy to be any other, and you will perceive this if you give yourself the trouble to take it in your hand.” Then after taking out the birds, and giving them to the children, I put it into his hands, and he gave it to Saadi. “Indeed,” said Saadi, “I believe it to be your turban; which I shall, however, be better convinced of when I see the hundred and ninety pieces of gold.”

“Now, sir,” added I, taking the turban again, “observe well before

I unwrap it, that it is of no very fresh date in the tree; and the state in which you see it, and the nest so neatly made in it, without having been touched by the hand of man, are sufficient proofs that the vulture drops or laid it in the tree upon the day it was seized; and that the branches hindered it from falling to the ground. Excuse my making this remark, since it concerns me so much to remove all suspicions of fraud." Saad backed me in what I urged; and said, "Saadi, this regards you and not me, for I am verily persuaded that Khaujeh Hassan does not impose upon us."

While Saad was talking, I pulled off the linen cloth which was wrapped about the cap of the turban, and took out the purse, which Saadi knew to be the same he had given me. I emptied it on the carpet before them, and said, "There, gentlemen, there is the money, count it, and see if it be right;" which Saad did, and found it to be one hundred and ninety pieces of gold. Then Saadi, who could not deny so manifest a truth, addressing himself to me said, "I agree, Khaujeh Hassan, that this money could not serve to enrich you; but the other hundred and ninety pieces, which you would make me believe you hid in a pot of bran, might." "Sir," answered I, "I have told you the truth in regard to both sums: you would not have me retract, to make myself a liar."

"Khaujeh Hassan," said Saad, "leave Saadi to his own opinion; I consent with all my heart that he believes you are obliged to him for one part of your good fortune, by means of the last sum he gave you, provided he will agree that I contributed to the other half by the bit of lead, and will not pretend to dispute the valuable diamond found in the fish's belly." "I agree to it," answered Saadi, "but still you must give me liberty to believe that money is not to be amassed without money."

"What," replied Saad, "if chance should throw a diamond in my way worth fifty thousand pieces of gold, and I should have that sum given me for it, can it be said I got that sum by money?"

They disputed no farther at this time; we rose, and went into the house, just as dinner was serving up. After dinner, I left my guests together, to pass away the heat of the day more at their liberty, and with great composure, while I went to give orders to my housekeeper and gardener.

Afterwards I returned to them again, and we talked of indifferent matters till it grew a little cooler; when we returned into the garden for fresh air, and stayed till sun-set. We then mounted on horseback, and got to Bagdad by moonlight, two hours after, followed by one of my slaves.

It happened, I know not by what negligence of my servants, that we were then out of grain for the horses, and the storehouses were all shut up; when one of my slaves seeking about the neighbourhood for some, met with a pot of bran in a shop; bought the bran, and brought the pot along with him, promising to carry it back again the next day. The slave emptied the bran, and dividing it with his hands among the horses, felt a linen cloth tied up, and very heavy; he brought the cloth to me in the condition that he found it, and presented it to me, telling me, that it might perhaps be the cloth he had often heard me talk of among my friends.

Overjoyed, I said to my two benefactors, "Gentlemen, it has pleased God that you should not part from me without being fully convinced of the truth of what I have assured you. There are the other hundred and ninety pieces of gold which you gave me," continued I, addressing myself to Saadi; "I know it well by the cloth, which I tied up with my own hands;" and then I told out the money before them. I ordered the pot to be brought to me, knew it to be the same; and sent to my wife to ask if she recognized it, ordering them to say nothing to her of what had happened. She knew it immediately, and sent me word that it was the same pot she had exchanged full of bran for the scouring-earth.

Saadi readily submitted, renounced his incredulity; and said to Saad, "I yield to you, and acknowledge that money is not always the means of becoming rich."

When Saadi had spoken, I said to him, "I dare not propose to return you the three hundred and eighty pieces of gold which it hath pleased God should be found, to undeceive you as to the opinion of my honesty. I am persuaded that you did not give them to me with an intention that I should return them; but as I ought to be content with what Providence has sent me from other quarters, and I do not design to make use of them; if you approve of my proposal, to-morrow I will give them to the poor, that God may bless us both."

The two friends lay at my house that night also; and next day, after embracing me, returned home, well pleased with the reception I had given them, and to find I did not make an improper use of the riches Heaven had blessed me with. I thanked them both, and regarded the permission they gave me to cultivate their friendship, and to visit them, as a great honour.

The caliph was so attentive to Khaujeh Hassan's story, that he had not perceived the end of it, but by his silence. "Khaujeh Hassan," said he, "I have not for a long time heard any thing that has given me so much pleasure, as having been informed of the wonderful ways by which God gave thee thy riches to make thee happy in this world. Thou oughtest to continue to return him thanks by the good use thou makest of his blessings. I am glad I can tell thee, that the same diamond which made thy fortune is now in my treasury; and I am happy to learn how it came there: but because there may remain in Saadi some doubts on the singularity of this diamond, which I esteem the most precious and valuable jewel I possess, I would have you carry him with Saad to my treasurer, who shall shew it them, to remove Saadi's unbelief, and to let him see that money is not the only means of making a poor man rich in a short time, without labour. I would also have you tell the keeper of my treasury this story, that he may have it put into writing, and that it may be kept with the diamond."

After these words the caliph signified to Khaujeh Hassan, Syed Naomaun, and Baba Abdoollah, by bowing of his head, that he was satisfied with them; they all took their leaves, by prostrating themselves at the throne, and then retired.

THE STORY OF ALI BABA AND THE FORTY ROBBERS DESTROYED BY A SLAVE.

In a town in Persia, there lived two brothers, one named Cassim, the other Ali Baba. Their father left them scarcely any thing; but as he had divided his little property equally between them, it should seem their fortune ought to have been equal; but chance determined otherwise.

Cassim married a wife who soon after became heiress to a large sum, and a warehouse full of rich goods; so that he all at once became one of the richest and most considerable merchants, and lived at his ease.

Ali Baba on the other hand, who had married a woman as poor as himself, lived in a very wretched habitation, and had no other means to maintain his wife and children but his daily labour of cutting wood, and bringing it upon three asses, which were his whole substance, to town to sell.

One day, when Ali Baba was in the forest, and had just cut wood enough to load his asses, he saw at a distance a great cloud of dust, which seemed to be driven towards him: he observed it very attentively, and distinguished soon after a body of horse. Though there had been no rumour of robbers in that country, Ali Baba began to think that they might prove such, and without considering what might become of his asses, was resolved to save himself. He climbed up a large, thick tree, whose branches, at a little distance from the ground, were so close to one another that there was but little space between them. He placed himself in the middle, from whence he could see all that passed without being discovered; and the tree stood at the base of a single rock, so steep and craggy that nobody could climb up it.

The troop, who were all well mounted and armed, came to the foot of this rock, and there dismounted. Ali Baba counted forty of them, and, from their looks and equipage, was assured that they were robbers. Nor was he mistaken in his opinion: for they were a troop of banditti, who, without doing any harm to the neighbourhood, robbed at a distance, and made that place their rendezvous; but what confirmed him in his opinion was, that every man unbridled his horse, tied him to some shrub, and hung about his neck a bag of corn which they brought behind them. Then each of them took his saddle wallet, which seemed to Ali Baba to be full of gold and silver from its weight. One, who was the most personable amongst them, and whom he took to be their captain, came with his wallet on his back under the tree in which Ali Baba was concealed, and making his way through some shrubs, pronounced these words so distinctly, "Open, Sesame," that Ali Baba heard him. As soon as the captain of the robbers had uttered these words, a door opened in the rock; and after he had made all his troop enter before him, he followed them, when the door shut again of itself.

The robbers stayed some time within the rock, and Ali Baba, who feared that some one, or all of them together, might come out and catch him, if he should endeavour to make his escape, was obliged to sit patiently in the tree. He was nevertheless tempted to get down, mount one of their horses, and lead another, driving his asses before him with all the haste he could to town; but the uncertainty of the event made him choose the safest course.

At last the door opened again, and the forty robbers came out. As the captain went in last, he came out first, and stood to see them all pass by him; when Ali Baba heard him make the door close by pronouncing these words, "Shut, Sesame." Every man went and bridled his horse, fastened his wallet, and mounted again; and when the captain saw them all ready, he put himself at their head, and they returned the way they had come.

Ali Baba did not immediately quit his tree; for, said he to himself, they may have forgotten something and may come back again, and then I shall be taken. He followed them with his eyes as far as he could see them; and afterwards stayed a considerable time before he descended. Remembering the words the captain of the robbers used to cause the door to open and shut, he had the curiosity to try if his pronouncing them would have the same effect. Accordingly, he went among the shrubs, and perceiving the door concealed behind them, stood before it, and said, "Open, Sesame." The door instantly flew wide open.

Ali Baba, who expected a dark dismal cavern, was surprised to see it well lighted and spacious, in form of a vault, which received the light from an opening at the top of the rock. He saw all sorts of provisions, rich bales of silk, stuff, brocade, and valuable carpeting, piled upon one another; gold and silver ingots in great heaps, and money in bags. The sight of all these riches made him suppose that this cave must have been occupied for ages by robbers, who had succeeded one another.

Ali Baba did not stand long to consider what he should do, but went immediately into the cave, and as soon as he had entered, the door shut of itself. But this did not disturb him, because he knew the secret to open it again. He never regarded the silver, but made the best use of his time in carrying out as much of the gold coin, which was in bags, at several times, as he thought his three asses could carry. He collected his asses, which were dispersed, and when he had loaded them with the bags, laid wood over in such a manner that they could not be seen. When he had done he stood before the door, and pronouncing the words, “Shut, Sesame,” the door closed after him, for it had shut of itself while he was within, but remained open while he was out. He then made the best of his way to town.

When Ali Baba got home, he drove his asses into a little yard, shut the gates very carefully, threw off the wood that covered the bags, carried them into his house, and ranged them in order before his wife, who sat on a sofa.

His wife handled the bags, and finding them full of money, suspected that her husband had been robbing, insomuch that she could not help saying, “Ali Baba, have you been so unhappy as to.” “Be quiet, wife,” interrupted Ali Baba, “do not frighten yourself, I am no robber, unless he may be one who steals from robbers. You will no longer entertain an ill opinion of me, when I shall tell you my good fortune.” He then emptied the bags, which raised such a great heap of gold, as dazzled his wife’s eyes; and when he had done, told her the whole adventure from beginning to end; and, above all, recommended her to keep it secret.

The wife, cured of her fears, rejoiced with her husband at their good fortune, and would count all the gold, piece by piece. “Wife,” replied Ali Baba, “you do not know what you undertake, when you pretend to count the money; you will never have done. I will dig a hole, and bury it; there is no time to be lost". "You are in the right, husband," replied she; "but let us know, as nigh as possible, how much we have. I will borrow a small measure in the neighbourhood, and measure it, while you dig the hole." "What you are going to do is to no purpose, wife," said Ali Baba; "if you would take my advice, you had better let it alone, but keep the secret, and do what you please."

Away the wife ran to her brother-in-law Cassim, who lived just by, but was not then at home; and addressing herself to his wife, desired her to lend her a measure for a little while. Her sister-in-law asked her, whether she would have a great or a small one? The other asked for a small one. She bade her stay a little, and she would readily fetch one.

The sister-in-law did so, but as she knew Ali Baba's poverty, she was curious to know what sort of grain his wife wanted to measure, and artfully putting some suet at the bottom of the measure, brought it to her with an excuse, that she was sorry that she had made her stay so long, but that she could not find it sooner.

Ali Baba's wife went home, set the measure upon the heap of gold, filled it and emptied it often upon the sofa, till she had done: when she was very well satisfied to find the number of measures amounted to so many as they did, and went to tell her husband, who had almost finished digging the hole. While Ali Baba was burying the gold, his wife, to shew her exactness and diligence to her sister-in-law, carried the measure back again, but without taking notice that a piece of gold had stuck to the bottom. "Sister," said she, giving it to her again, "you see that I have not kept your measure long; I am obliged to you for it, and return it with thanks."

As soon as Ali Baba's wife was gone, Cassim's looked at the bottom of the measure, and was in inexpressible surprise to find a piece of gold stuck to it. Envy immediately possessed her breast. "What!" said she, "has Ali Baba gold so plentiful as to measure it? Where has that poor wretch got all this wealth?" Cassim, her husband, was not at home, but at his counting-house, which he left always in the evening. His wife waited for him, and thought the time an age; so great was her impatience to tell him the circumstance, at which she guessed he would be as much surprised as herself.

When Cassim came home, his wife said to him, “Cassim, I know you think yourself rich, but you are much mistaken; Ali Baba is infinitely richer than you; he does not count his money but measures it.” Cassim desired her to explain the riddle, which she did, by telling him the stratagem she had used to make the discovery, and shewed him the piece of money, which was so old that they could not tell in what prince’s reign it was coined.

Cassim, instead of being pleased, conceived a base envy at his brother’s prosperity; he could not sleep all that night, and went to him in the morning before sun-rise. Cassim, after he had married the rich widow, had never treated Ali Baba as a brother, but neglected him. “All Baba,” said he, accosting him, “you are very reserved in your affairs; you pretend to be miserably poor, and yet you measure gold.” “How, brother?” replied Ali Baba; “I do not know what you mean: explain yourself.” “Do not pretend ignorance,” replied Cassim, shewing him the piece of gold his wife had given him. “How many of these pieces,” added he, “have you? My wife found this at the bottom of the measure you borrowed yesterday.”

By this discourse, Ali Baba perceived that Cassim and his wife, through his own wife’s folly, knew what they had so much reason to conceal; but what was done could not be recalled; therefore, without shewing the least surprise or trouble, he confessed all, told his brother by what chance he had discovered this retreat of the thieves, in what place it was; and offered him part of his treasure to keep the secret. “I expect as much,” replied Cassim haughtily; “but I must know exactly where this treasure is, and how I may visit it myself when I choose; otherwise I will go and inform against you, and then you will not only get no more, but will lose all you have, and I shall have a share for my information.”

Ali Baba, more out of his natural good temper, than frightened by the insulting menaces of his unnatural brother, told him all he desired, and even the very words he was to use to gain admission into the cave.

Cassim, who wanted no more of Ali Baba, left him, resolving to be beforehand with him, and hoping to get all the treasure to himself. He rose the next morning, long before the sun, and set out for the forest with ten mules bearing great chests, which he designed to fill;

and followed the road which Ali Baba had pointed out to him. He was not long before he reached the rock, and found out the place by the tree, and other marks which his brother had given him. When he reached the entrance of the cavern, he pronounced the words, “Open, Sesame,” the door immediately opened, and when he was in, closed upon him. In examining the cave, he was in great admiration to find much more riches than he had apprehended from Ali Baba’s relation. He was so covetous, and greedy of wealth, that he could have spent the whole day in feasting his eyes with so much treasure, if the thought that he came to carry some away had not hindered him. He laid as many bags of gold as he could carry at the door of the cavern, but his thoughts were so full of the great riches he should possess, that he could not think of the necessary word to make it open, but instead of Sesame, said “Open, Barley,” and was much amazed to find that the door remained fast shut. He named several sorts of grain, but still the door would not open.

Cassim had never expected such an incident, and was so alarmed at the danger he was in, that the more he endeavoured to remember the word Sesame, the more his memory was confounded, and he had as much forgotten it as if he had never heard it mentioned. He threw down the bags he had loaded himself with, and walked distractedly up and down the cave, without having the least regard to the riches that were round him.

About noon the robbers chanced to visit their cave, and at some distance from it saw Cassim’s mules straggling about the rock, with great chests on their backs. Alarmed at this novelty, they galloped full speed to the cave. They drove away the mules, which Cassim had neglected to fasten, and they strayed through the forest so far, that they were soon out of sight. The robbers never gave themselves the trouble to pursue them, being more concerned to know who they belonged to. And while some of them searched about the rock, the captain and the rest went directly to the door, with their naked sabres in their hands, and pronouncing the proper words, it opened.

Cassim, who heard the noise of the horses’ feet from the middle of the cave, never doubted of the arrival of the robbers, and his approaching death; but was resolved to make one effort to escape from them. To this end he rushed to the door, and no sooner heard the word Sesame, which he had forgotten, and saw the door open, than he ran out and threw the leader down, but could not escape the other robbers, who with their sabres soon deprived him of life.

The first care of the robbers after this was to examine the cave. They found all the bags which Cassim had brought to the door, to be ready to load his mules, and carried them again to their places, without missing what Ali Baba had taken away before. Then holding a council, and deliberating upon this occurrence, they guessed that Cassim, when he was in, could not get out again; but could not imagine how he had entered. It came into their heads that he might have got down by the top of the cave; but the aperture by which it received light was so high, and the rock so inaccessible without, besides that nothing shewed that he had done so, that they gave up this conjecture. That he came in at the door they could not believe however, unless he had the secret of making it open. In short, none of them could imagine which way he had entered; for they were all persuaded nobody knew their secret, little imagining that Ali Baba had watched them. It was a matter of the greatest importance to them to secure their riches. They agreed therefore to cut Cassim's body into four quarters, to hang two on one side and two on the other, within the door of the cave, to terrify any person who should attempt the same thing, determining not to return to the cave till the stench of the body was completely exhaled. They had no sooner taken this resolution than they put it in execution, and when they had nothing more to detain them, left the place of their hoards well closed. They mounted their horses, went to beat the roads again, and to attack the caravans they might meet.

In the mean time, Cassim's wife was very uneasy when night came, and her husband was not returned. She ran to Ali Baba in alarm, and said, "I believe, brother-in-law, that you know Cassim, your brother, is gone to the forest, and upon what account; it is now night, and he is not returned; I am afraid some misfortune has happened to him." Ali Baba, who had expected that his brother, after what he had said, would go to the forest, had declined going himself that day, for fear of giving him any umbrage; therefore told her, without any reflection upon her husband's unhandsome behaviour, that she need not frighten herself, for that certainly Cassim would not think it proper to come into the town till the night should be pretty far advanced.

Cassim's wife, considering how much it concerned her husband to keep the business secret, was the more easily persuaded to believe her brother-in-law. She went home again, and waited patiently till midnight. Then her fear redoubled, and her grief was the more sensible because she was forced to keep it to herself. She repented of her foolish curiosity, and cursed her desire of penetrating into the affairs of her brother and sister-in-law. She spent all the night in weeping; and as soon as it was day, went to them, telling them, by her tears, the cause of her coming.

Ali Baba did not wait for his sister-in-law to desire him to go to see what was become of Cassim, but departed immediately with his three asses, begging of her first to moderate her affliction. He went to the forest, and when he came near the rock, having seen neither his brother nor the mules in his way, was seriously alarmed at finding some blood spilt near the door, which he took for an ill omen; but when he had pronounced the word, and the door had opened, he was struck with horror at the dismal sight of his brother's quarters. He was not long in determining how he should pay the last dues to his brother, but without adverting to the little fraternal affection he had shown for him, went into the cave, to find something to enshroud his remains, and having loaded one of his asses with them, covered them over with wood. The other two asses he loaded with bags of gold, covering them with wood also as before; and then bidding the door shut, came away; but was so cautious as to stop some time at the end of the forest, that he might not go into the town before night. When he came home, he drove the two asses loaded with gold into his little yard, and left the care of unloading them to his wife, while he led the other to his sister-in-law's house.

Ali Baba knocked at the door, which was opened by Morgiana, an intelligent slave, fruitful in inventions to insure success in the most difficult undertakings: and Ali Baba knew her to be such. When he came into the court, he unloaded the ass, and taking Morgiana aside, said to her, "The first thing I ask of you is an inviolable secrecy, which you will find is necessary both for your mistress's sake and mine. Your master's body is contained in these two bundles, and our business is, to bury him as if he had died a natural death. Go, tell your mistress I want to speak with her; and mind what I have said to you."

Morgiana went to her mistress, and Ali Baba followed her. "Well, brother," said she, with great impatience, "what news do you bring me of my husband? I perceive no comfort in your countenance." "Sister," answered Ali Baba, "I cannot satisfy your inquiries unless you hear my story from the beginning to the end, without speaking a word; for it is of as great importance to you as to me to keep what has happened secret." "Alas!" said she, "this preamble lets me know that my husband is not to be found; but at the same time I know the necessity of the secrecy you require, and I must constrain myself: say on, I will hear you."

Ali Baba then detailed the incidents of his journey, till he came to the finding of Cassim's body. "Now," said he, "sister, I have something to relate which will afflict you the more, because it is perhaps what you so little expect; but it cannot now be remedied; if my endeavours can comfort you, I offer to put that which God hath sent me to what you have, and marry you: assuring you that my wife will not be jealous, and that we shall live happily together. If this proposal is agreeable to you, we mast think of acting so as that my brother should appear to have died a natural death. I think you may leave the management of the business to Morgiana, and I will contribute all that lies in my power to your consolation."

What could Cassim's widow do better than accept of this proposal? For though her first husband had left behind him a plentiful substance, his brother was now much richer, and by the discovery of this treasure might be still more so. Instead, therefore, of rejecting the offer, she regarded it as the sure means of comfort; and drying up her tears, which had begun to flow abundantly, and suppressing the outcries usual with women who have lost their husbands, shewed Ali Baba that she approved of his proposal. Ali Baba left the widow, recommended to Morgiana to act her part well, and then returned home with his ass.

Morgiana went out at the same time to an apothecary, and asked for a sort of lozenges, which he prepared, and were very efficacious in the most dangerous disorders. The apothecary inquired who was ill at her master's? She replied with a sigh, "Her good master Cassim himself: that they knew not what his disorder was, but that he could neither eat nor speak." After these words, Morgiana carried the lozenges home with her, and the next morning went to the same apothecary's again, and with tears in her eyes, asked for an essence which they used to give to sick people only when at the last extremity. "Alas!" said she, taking it from the apothecary, "I am afraid that this remedy will have no better effect than the lozenges; and that I shall lose my good master."

On the other hand, as Ali Baba and his wife were often seen to go between Cassim's and their own house all that day, and to seem melancholy, nobody was surprised in the evening to hear the lamentable shrieks and cries of Cassim's wife and Morgiana, who gave out every where that her master was dead.

The next morning, soon after day appeared, Morgiana, who knew a certain old cobbler that opened his stall early, before other people, went to him, and bidding him good morrow, put a piece of gold into his hand. "Well," said Baba Mustapha, which was his name, and who was a merry old fellow, looking at the gold, though it was hardly day-light, and seeing what it was, "this is good hansel: what must I do for it? I am ready."

"Baba Mustapha," said Morgiana, "you must take with you your sewing tackle, and go with me; but I must tell you, I shall blindfold you when you come to such a place."

Baba Mustapha seemed to hesitate a little at these words. "Oh! oh!" replied he, "you would have me do something against my conscience, or against my honour?" "God forbid!" said Morgiana, putting another piece of gold into his hand, "that I should ask any thing that is contrary to your honour; only come along with me, and fear nothing."

Baba Mustapha went with Morgiana, who, after she had bound his eyes with a handkerchief at the place she had mentioned, conveyed him to her deceased master's house, and never unloosed his eyes till he had entered the room where she had put the corpse together. "Baba Mustapha," said she, "you must make haste and sew these quarters together; and when you have done, I will give you another piece of gold."

After Baba Mustapha had finished his task, she blindfolded him again, gave him the third piece of gold as she had promised, and recommending secrecy to him, carried him back to the place where she first bound his eyes, pulled off the bandage, and let him go home, but watched him that he returned towards his stall, till he was quite out of sight, for fear he should have the curiosity to return and dodge her; she then went home.

By the time Morgiana had warmed some water to wash the body, Ali Baba came with incense to embalm it, after which it was sewn up in a winding sheet. Not long after, the joiner, according to Ali Baba's orders, brought the bier, which Morgiana received at the door, and helped Ali Baba to put the body into it; when she went to the mosque to inform the imaum that they were ready. The people of the mosque, whose business it was to wash the dead, offered to perform their duty, but she told them that it was done already.

Morgiana had scarcely got home before the imaum and the other ministers of the mosque arrived. Four neighbours carried the corpse on their shoulders to the burying-ground, following the imaum, who recited some prayers. Morgiana, as a slave to the deceased, followed the corpse, weeping, beating her breast, and tearing her hair: and Ali Baba came after with some neighbours, who often relieved the others in carrying the corpse to the burying-ground.

Cassim's wife stayed at home mourning, uttering lamentable cries with the women of the neighbourhood, who came according to custom during the funeral, and joining their lamentations with hers, filled the quarter far and near with sorrow.

In this manner Cassim's melancholy death was concealed, and hushed up between Ali Baba, his wife, Cassim's widow, and Morgiana, with so much contrivance, that nobody in the city had the least knowledge or suspicion of the cause of it.

Three or four days after the funeral, Ali Baba removed his few goods openly to the widow's house; but the money he had taken from the robbers he conveyed thither by night; soon after the marriage with his sister-in-law was published, and as these marriages are common, nobody was surprised.

As for Cassim's warehouse, Ali Baba gave it to his own eldest son, promising that if he managed it well, he would soon give him a fortune to marry very advantageously according to his situation.

Let us now leave Ali Baba to enjoy the beginning of his good fortune, and return to the forty robbers.

They came again at the appointed time to visit their retreat in the forest; but great was their surprise to find Cassim's body taken away, with some of their bags of gold. "We are certainly discovered," said the captain, "and if we do not speedily apply some remedy, shall gradually lose all the riches which our ancestors and ourselves have, with so much pains and danger, been so many years amassing together. All that we can think of the loss which we have sustained is, that the thief whom we surprised had the secret of opening the door, and we came luckily as he was coming out: but his body being removed, and with it some of our money, plainly shews that he had an accomplice; and as it is likely that there were but two who had discovered our secret, and one has been caught, we must look narrowly after the other. What say you, my lads?"

All the robbers thought the captain's proposal so advisable, that they unanimously approved of it, and agreed that they must lay all other enterprises aside, to follow this closely, and not give it up till they had succeeded.

"I expected no less," said the captain, "from your fidelity to our cause: but, first of all, one of you who is bold, artful, and enterprising, must go into the town, disguised as a traveller and a stranger, to try if he can hear any talk of the strange death of the man whom we have killed, as he deserved; and endeavour to find out who he was, and where he lived. This is a matter of the first importance for us to ascertain, that we may do nothing which we may have reason to repent of, by discovering ourselves in a country where we have lived so long unknown, and where we have so much reason to continue: but to warn him who shall take upon himself this commission, and to prevent our being deceived by his giving us a false report, which may be the cause of our ruin; I ask you all, if you do not think that in case of treachery, or even error of judgment, he should suffer death?"

Without waiting for the suffrages of his companions, one of the robbers started up, and said, "I submit to this condition, and think it an honour to expose my life, by taking the commission upon me; but remember, at least, if I do not succeed, that I neither wanted courage nor good will to serve the troop."

After this robber had received great commendations from the captain and his comrades, he disguised himself so that nobody would take him for what he was; and taking his leave of the troop that night, went into the town just at day-break; and walked up and down, till accidentally he came to Baba Mustapha's stall, which was always open before any of the shops.

Baba Mustapha was seated with an awl in his hand, just going to work. The robber saluted him, bidding him good morrow; and perceiving that he was old, said, "Honest man, you begin to work very early: is it possible that one of your age can see so well? I question, even if it were somewhat lighter, whether you could see to stitch."

"Certainly," replied Baba Mustapha, "you must be a stranger, and do not know me; for old as I am, I have extraordinary good eyes; and you will not doubt it when I tell you that I sewed a dead body together in a place where I had not so much light as I have now."

The robber was overjoyed to think that he had addressed himself, at his first coming into the town, to a man who in all probability could give him the intelligence he wanted. "A dead body!" replied he with affected amazement, to make him explain himself. "What could you sew up a dead body for? You mean, you sewed up his winding sheet." "No, no," answered Baba Mustapha, "I perceive your meaning; you want to have me speak out, but you shall know no more."

The robber wanted no farther assurance to be persuaded that he had discovered what he sought. He pulled out a piece of gold, and putting it into Baba Mustapha's hand, said to him, "I do not want to learn your secret, though I can assure you I would not divulge it, if you trusted me with it. The only thing which I desire of you is, to do me the favour to shew me the house where You stitched up the dead body."

"If I were disposed to do you that favour," replied Baba Mustapha, holding the money in his hand, ready to return it, "I assure you I cannot; and you may believe me, on my word. I was taken to a certain place, where I was blinded, I was then led to the house, and afterwards brought back again in the same manner; you see, therefore, the impossibility of my doing what you desire."

"Well," replied the robber, "you may, however, remember a little of the way that you were led blindfolded. Come, let me blind your eyes at the same place. We will walk together; perhaps you may recognize some part; and as every body ought to be paid for their trouble, there is another piece of gold for you; gratify me in what I ask you." So saying, he put another piece of gold into his hand.

The two pieces of gold were great temptations to Baba Mustapha. He looked at them a long time in his hand, without saying a word, thinking with himself what he should do; but at last he pulled out his purse, and put them in. "I cannot assure you," said he to the robber, "that I can remember the way exactly; but since you desire, I will try what I can do." At these words Baba Mustapha rose up, to the great joy of the robber, and without shutting his shop, where he had nothing valuable to lose, he led the robber to the place where Morgiana had bound his eyes. "It was here," said Baba Mustapha, "I was blindfolded; and I turned as you see me." The robber, who had his handkerchief ready, tied it over his eyes, walked by him till he stopped, partly leading, and partly guided by him. "I think," said Baba Mustapha, "I went no farther," and he had now stopped directly at Cassim's house, where Ali Baba then lived. The thief, before he pulled off the band, marked the door with a piece of chalk, which he had ready in his hand; and then asked him if he knew whose house that was? to which Baba Mustapha replied, that as he did not live in that neighbourhood he could not tell.

The robber, finding he could discover no more from Baba Mustapha, thanked him for the trouble he had taken, and left him to go back to his stall, while he returned to the forest, persuaded that he should be very well received.

A little after the robber and Baba Mustapha had parted, Morgiana went out of Ali Baba's house upon some errand, and upon her return, seeing the mark the robber had made, stopped to observe it. "What can be the meaning of this mark?" said she to herself; "somebody intends my master no good: however, with whatever intention it was done, it is advisable to guard against the worst." Accordingly, she fetched a piece of chalk, and marked two or three doors on each side, in the same manner, without saying a word to her master or mistress.

In the mean time the thief rejoined his troop in the forest, and recounted to them his success; expatiating upon his good fortune, in meeting so soon with the only person who could inform him of what he wanted to know. All the robbers listened to him with the utmost satisfaction; when the captain, after commending his diligence, addressing himself to them all, said, "Comrades, we have no time to lose: let us set off well armed, without its appearing who we are; but that we may not excite any suspicion, let only one or two go into the town together, and join at our rendezvous, which shall be the great square. In the mean time our comrade, who brought us the good news, and I, will go and find out the house, that we may consult what had best be done."

This speech and plan were approved of by all, and they were soon ready. They filed off in parties of two each, after some interval of time, and got into the town without being in the least suspected. The captain and he who had visited the town in the morning as spy, came in the last. He led the captain into the street where he had marked Ali Baba's residence; and when they came to the first of the houses which Morgiana had marked, he pointed it out. But the captain observed that the next door was chalked in the same manner, and in the same place; and shewing it to his guide, asked him which house it was, that, or the first? The guide was so confounded, that he knew not what answer to make; but still more puzzled, when he and the captain saw five or six houses similarly marked. He assured the captain, with an oath, that he had marked but one, And could not tell who had chalked the rest, so that he could not distinguish the house which the cobbler had stopped at.

The captain, finding that their design had proved abortive, went directly to the place of rendezvous, and told the first of his troops whom he met that they had lost their labour, and must return to their cave. He himself set them the example, and they all returned as they had come.

When the troop was all got together, the captain told them the reason of their returning; and presently the conductor was declared by all worthy of death. He condemned himself, acknowledging that he ought to have taken better precaution, and prepared to receive the stroke from him who was appointed to cut off his head.

But as the safety of the troop required that an injury should not go unpunished, another of the gang, who promised himself that he should succeed better, presented himself, and his offer being accepted, he went and corrupted Baba Mustapha, as the other had done; and being shewn the house, marked it in a place more remote from sight, with red chalk.

Not long after Morgiana, whose eyes nothing could escape, went out, and seeing the red chalk, and arguing with herself as she had done before, marked the other neighbours' houses in the same place and manner.

The robber, at his return to his company, valued himself much on the precaution he had taken, which he looked upon as an infallible way of distinguishing Ali Baba's house from the others; and the captain and all of them thought it must succeed. They conveyed themselves into the town with the same precaution as before; but when the robber and his captain came to the street, they found the same difficulty; at which the captain was enraged, and the robber in as great confusion as his predecessor.

Thus the captain and his troop were forced to retire a second time, and much more dissatisfied; while the robber, who had been the author of the mistake, underwent the same punishment; which he willingly submitted to.

The captain, having lost two brave fellows of his troop, was afraid of diminishing it too much by pursuing this plan to get information of the residence of their plunderer. He found by their example that their heads were not so good as their hands on such occasions; and therefore resolved to take upon himself the important commission.

Accordingly he went and addressed himself to Baba Mustapha, who did him the same service he had done to the other robbers. He did not set any particular mark on the house, but examined and observed it so carefully, by passing often by it, that it was impossible for him to mistake it.

The captain, well satisfied with his attempt, and informed of what he wanted to know, returned to the forest; and when he came into the cave, where the troop waited for him, said, "Now, comrades, nothing can prevent our full revenge, as I am certain of the house, and in my way hither I have thought how to put it into execution, but if any one can form a better expedient, let him communicate it." He then told them his contrivance; and as they approved of it, ordered them to go into the villages about, and buy nineteen mules, with thirty-eight large leather jars, one full of oil, and the others empty.

In two or three days' time the robbers had purchased the mules and jars, and as the mouths of the jars were rather too narrow for his purpose, the captain caused them to be widened; and after having put one of his men into each, with the weapons which he thought fit, leaving open the seam which had been undone to leave them room to breathe, he rubbed the jars on the outside with oil from the full vessel.

Things being thus prepared, when the nineteen mules were loaded with thirty-seven robbers in jars, and the jar of oil, the captain, as their driver, set out with them, and reached the town by the dusk of the evening, as he had intended. He led them through the streets till he came to Ali Baba's, at whose door he designed to have knocked; but was prevented by his sitting there after supper to take a little fresh air. He stopped his mules, addressed himself to him, and said, "I have brought some oil a great way, to sell at to-morrow's market; and it is now so late that I do not know where to lodge. If I should not be troublesome to you, do me the favour to let me pass the night with you, and I shall be very much obliged by your hospitality."

Though Ali Baba had seen the captain of the robbers in the forest, and had heard him speak, it was impossible to know him in the disguise of an oil-merchant. He told him he should be welcome, and immediately opened his gates for the mules to go into the yard. At the same time he called to a slave, and ordered him, when the mules were unloaded, not only to put them into the stable, but to give them fodder; and then went to Morgiana, to bid her get a good supper for his guest.

He did more. To make his guest as welcome as possible, when he saw the captain had unloaded his mules, and that they were put into the stables as he had ordered, and he was looking for a place to pass the night in the air, he brought him into the hall where he received his company, telling him he would not suffer him to be in the court. The captain excused himself on pretence of not being troublesome;

but really to have room to execute his design, and it was not till after the most pressing importunity that he yielded. Ali Baba, not content to keep company with the man who had a design on his life till supper was ready, continued talking with him till it was ended, and repeating his offer of service.

The captain rose up at the same time with his host; and while Ali Baba went to speak to Morgiana he withdrew into the yard, under pretence of looking at his mules. Ali Baba, after charging Morgiana afresh to take care of his guest, said to her, "To-morrow morning I design to go to the bath before day; take care my bathing-linen be ready, give them to Abdoollah," which was the slave's name, "and make me some good broth against I return." After this he went to bed.

In the mean time the captain of the robbers went from the stable to give his people orders what to do; and beginning at the first jar, and so on to the last, said to each man: "As soon as I throw some stones out of the chamber window where I lie, do not fail to cut the jar open with the knife you have about you for the purpose, and come out, and I will immediately join you." After this he returned into the house, when Morgiana taking up a light, conducted him to his chamber, where she left him; and he, to avoid any suspicion, put the light out soon after, and laid himself down in his clothes, that he might be the more ready to rise.

Morgiana, remembering Ali Baba's orders, got his bathing-linen ready, and ordered Abdoollah to set on the pot for the broth; but while she was preparing it, the lamp went out, and there was no more oil in the house, nor any candles. What to do she did not know, for the broth must be made. Abdoollah seeing her very uneasy, said, "Do not fret and teaze yourself, but go into the yard, and take some oil out of one of the jars."

Morgiana thanked Abdoollah for his advice, took the oil-pot, and went into the yard; when as she came nigh the first jar, the robber within said softly, "Is it time?"

Though the robber spoke low, Morgiana was struck with the voice the more, because the captain, when he unloaded the mules, had taken the lids off this and all the other jars to give air to his men, who were ill enough at their ease, almost wanting room to breathe.

As much surprised as Morgiana naturally was at finding a man in a jar instead of the oil she wanted, many would have made such a noise as to have given an alarm, which would have been attended with fatal consequences; whereas Morgiana comprehending immediately the importance of keeping silence, from the danger Ali Baba, his family, and herself were in, and the necessity of applying a speedy remedy without noise, conceived at once the means, and collecting herself without shewing the least emotions, answered, “Not yet, but presently.” She went in this manner to all the jars, giving the same answer, till she came to the jar of oil.

By this means, Morgiana found that her master Ali Baba, who thought that he had entertained an oil merchant, had admitted thirty-eight robbers into his house, regarding this pretended merchant as their captain. She made what haste she could to fill her oil-pot, and returned into her kitchen; where, as soon as she had lighted her lamp, she took a great kettle, went again to the oil-jar, filled the kettle, set it on a large wood-fire, and as soon as it boiled went and poured enough into every jar to stifle and destroy the robber within.

When this action, worthy of the courage of Morgiana, was executed without any noise, as she had projected, she returned into the kitchen with the empty kettle; and having put out the great fire she had made to boil the oil, and leaving just enough to make the broth, put out the lamp also, and remained silent; resolving not to go to rest till she had observed what might follow through a window of the kitchen, which opened into the yard.

She had not waited long before the captain of the robbers got up, opened the window, and finding no light, and hearing no noise, or any one stirring in the house, gave the appointed signal, by throwing little stones, several of which hit the jars, as he doubted not by the sound they gave. He then listened, but not hearing or perceiving any thing, whereby he could judge that his companions stirred, he began to grow very uneasy, threw stones again a second and also a third time, and could not comprehend the reason that none of them should answer his signal. Much alarmed, he went softly down into the yard, and going to the first jar, whilst asking the robber whom he thought alive if he was in readiness, smelt the hot boiled oil, which sent forth a steam out of the jar. Hence he suspected that his plot to murder Ali

Baba and plunder his house was discovered. Examining all the jars one after another, he found that all his gang were dead; and by the oil he missed out of the last jar guessed the means and manner of their death. Enraged to despair at having failed in his design, he forced the lock of a door that led from the yard to the garden, and climbing over the walls, made his escape.

When Morgiana heard no noise, and found, after waiting some time, that the captain did not return, she concluded that he had chosen rather to make his escape by the garden than the street-door, which was double locked. Satisfied and pleased to have succeeded so well, in saving her master and family, she went to bed.

Ali Baba rose before day, and, followed by his slave, went to the baths, entirely ignorant of the important event which had happened at home; for Morgiana had not thought it safe to wake him before, for fear of losing her opportunity; and after her successful exploit she thought it needless to disturb him.

When he returned from the baths, the sun was risen; he was very much surprised to see the oil-jars, and that the merchant was not gone with the mules. He asked Morgiana, who opened the door, and had let all things stand as they were, that he might see them, the reason of it? “My good master,” answered she, “God preserve you and all your family; you will be better informed of what you wish to know when you have seen what I have to shew you, if you will but give yourself the trouble to follow me.”

As soon as Morgiana had shut the door, Ali Baba followed her; when she requested him to look into the first jar and see if there was any oil. Ali Baba did so, and seeing a man, started back in alarm, and cried out. “Do not be afraid,” said Morgiana, “the man you see there can neither do you nor any body else any harm. He is dead.” “Ah, Morgiana!” said Ali Baba, “what is it you shew me? Explain yourself.” “I will,” replied Morgiana; “moderate your astonishment, and do not excite the curiosity of your neighbours; for it is of great importance to keep this affair secret. Look into all the other jars.”

Ali Baba examined all the other jars, one after another: and when he came to that which had the oil in, found it prodigiously sunk, and stood for some time motionless, sometimes looking at the jars, and sometimes at Morgiana, without saying a word, so great was his surprise: at last, when he had recovered himself, he said, “And what is become of the merchant?”

“Merchant!” answered she, “he is as much one as I am; I will tell you who he is, and what is become of him; but you had better hear the story in your own chamber; for it is time for your health that you had your broth after your bathing.”

While Ali Baba retired to his chamber, Morgiana went into the kitchen to fetch the broth, but before he would drink it, he first entreated her to satisfy his impatience, and tell him what had happened, with all the circumstances; and she obeyed him.

“Last night, sir,” said she, “when you were gone to bed, I got your bathing-linens ready, and gave them to Abdoollah; afterwards I set on the pot for the broth, but as I was preparing the materials, the lamp, for want of oil, went out; and as there was not a drop more in the house, I looked for a candle, but could not find one: Abdoollah seeing me vexed, put me in mind of the jars of oil which stood in the yard. I took the oil-pot, went directly to the jar which stood nearest to me; and when I came to it, heard a voice within, saying, ‘Is it time?’ Without being dismayed, and comprehending immediately the malicious intention of the pretended oil-merchant, I answered, ‘Not yet, but presently.’ I then went to the next, when another voice asked me the same question, and I returned the same answer; and so on, till I came to the last, which I found full of oil; with which I filled my pot.

“When I considered that there were thirty seven robbers in the yard, who only waited for a signal to be given by the captain, whom you took to be an oil-merchant, and entertained so handsomely, I thought there was no time to be lost; I carried my pot of oil into the kitchen, lighted the lamp, afterwards took the biggest kettle I had, went and filled it full of oil, set it on the fire to boil, and then poured as much into each jar as was sufficient to prevent them from executing the pernicious design they had meditated: after this I retired into the kitchen, and put out the lamp; but before I went to bed, waited at the window to know what measures the pretended merchant would take.

“After I had watched some time for the signal, he threw some stones out of the window against the jars, but neither hearing nor perceiving any body stirring, after throwing three times, he came down, when I saw him go to every jar, after which, through the darkness of the night, I lost sight of him. I waited some time longer, and finding that he did not return, doubted not but that, seeing he had missed his aim, he had made his escape over the walls of the garden. Persuaded that the house was now safe, I went to bed.

"This," said Morgiana, "is the account you asked of me; and I am convinced it is the consequence of what I observed some days ago, but did not think fit to acquaint you with: for when I came in one morning early, I found our street door marked with white chalk, and the next morning with red; upon which, both times, without knowing what was the intention of those chalks, I marked two or three neighbours' doors on each side in the same manner. If you reflect on this, and what has since happened, you will find it to be a plot of the robbers of the forest, of whose gang there are two wanting, and now they are reduced to three: all this shews that they had sworn your destruction, and it is proper you should be upon your guard, while there is one of them alive: for my part I shall neglect nothing necessary to your preservation, as I am in duty bound."

When Morgiana had left off speaking, Ali Baba was so sensible of the great service she had done him, that he said to her, "I will not die without rewarding you as you deserve: I owe my life to you, and for the first token of my acknowledgment, give you your liberty from this moment, till I can complete your recompense as I intend. I am persuaded with you, that the forty robbers have laid snares for my destruction. God, by your means, has delivered me from them as yet, and I hope will continue to preserve me from their wicked designs, and by averting the danger which threatened me, will deliver the world from their persecution and their cursed race. All that we have to do is to bury the bodies of these pests of mankind immediately, and with all the secrecy imaginable, that nobody may suspect what is become of them. But that labour Abdoollah and I will undertake."

Ali Baba's garden was very long, and shaded at the farther end by a great number of large trees. Under these he and the slave dug a trench, long and wide enough to hold all the robbers, and as the earth was light, they were not long in doing it. Afterwards they lifted the bodies out of the jars, took away their weapons, carried them to the end of the garden, laid them in the trench, and levelled the ground again. When this was done, Ali Baba hid the jars and weapons; and as he had no occasion for the mules, he sent them at different times to be sold in the market by his slave.

While Ali Baba took these measures to prevent the public from knowing how he came by his riches in so short a time, the captain of the forty robbers returned to the forest with inconceivable mortification; and in his agitation, or rather confusion, at his ill success, so contrary to what he had promised himself, entered the cave, not being able, all the way from the town, to come to any resolution how to revenge himself of Ali Baba.

The loneliness of the gloomy cavern became frightful to him. “Where are you, my brave lads,” cried he, “old companions of my watchings, inroads, and labour? What can I do without you? Did I collect you only to lose you by so base a fate, and so unworthy of your courage! Had you died with your sabres in your hands, like brave men, my regret had been less! When shall I enlist so gallant a troop again? And if I could, can I undertake it without exposing so much gold and treasure to him who hath already enriched himself out of it? I cannot, I ought not to think of it, before I have taken away his life. I will undertake that alone which I could not accomplish with your powerful assistance; and when I have taken measures to secure this treasure from being pillaged, I will provide for it new masters and successors after me, who shall preserve and augment it to all posterity.” This resolution being taken, he was not at a loss how to execute his purpose; but easy in his mind, and full of hopes, slept all that night very quietly.

When he awoke early next morning, he dressed himself, agreeably to the project he had formed, went to the town, and took a lodging in a khan. As he expected what had happened at Ali Baba’s might make a great noise, he asked his host what news there was in the city? Upon which the inn-keeper told him a great many circumstances, which did not concern him in the least. He judged by this, that the reason why Ali Baba kept his affairs so secret, was for fear people should know where the treasure lay; and because he knew his life would be sought on account of it. This urged him the more to neglect nothing to rid himself of so cautious an enemy.

The captain now assumed the character of a merchant, and conveyed gradually a great many sorts of rich stuffs and fine linen to his lodging from the cavern, but with all the necessary precautions imaginable to conceal the place whence he brought them. In order to dispose of the merchandizes, when he had amassed them together, he took a warehouse, which happened to be opposite to Cassim's, which Ali Baba's son had occupied since the death of his uncle.

He took the name of Khaujeh Houssain, and as a new-comer, was, according to custom, extremely civil and complaisant to all the merchants his neighbours. Ali Baba's son was from his vicinity one of the first to converse with Khaujeh Houssain, who strove to cultivate his friendship more particularly, when, two or three days after he was settled, he recognized Ali Baba, who came to see his son, and stopped to talk with him as he was accustomed to do. When he was gone, the impostor learnt from his son who he was. He increased his assiduities, caressed him in the most engaging manner, made him some small presents, and often asked him to dine and sup with him; when he treated him very handsomely.

Ali Baba's son did not choose to lie under such obligation to Khaujeh Houssain, without making the like return; but was so much straitened for want of room in his house, that he could not entertain him so well as he wished; he therefore acquainted his father Ali Baba with his intention, and told him that it did not look well for him to receive such favours from Khaujeh Houssain, without inviting him in return.

Ali Baba, with great pleasure, took the treat upon himself. "Son," said he, "to-morrow being Friday, which is a day that the shops of such great merchants as Khaujeh Houssain and yourself are shut, get him to take a walk with you, and as you come back, pass by my door, and call in. It will look better to have it happen accidentally, than if you gave him a formal invitation. I will go and order Morgiana to provide a supper."

The next day Ali Baba's son and Khaujeh Houssain met by appointment, took their walk, and as they returned, Ali Baba's son led Khaujeh Houssain through the street where his father lived; and when they came to the house, stopped and knocked at the door. "This, sir," said he, "is my father's house; who, from the account I have given him of your friendship, charged me to procure him the honour of your acquaintance; and I desire you to add this pleasure to those for which I am already indebted to you."

Though it was the sole aim of Khaujeh Houssain to introduce himself into Ali Baba's house, that he might kill him without hazarding his own life or making any noise; yet he excused himself, and offered to take his leave. But a slave having opened the door, Ali Baba's son took him obligingly by the hand, and in a manner forced him in.

Ali Baba received Khaujeh Houssain with a smiling countenance, and in the most obliging manner he could wish. He thanked him for all the favours he had done his son; adding withal, the obligation was the greater, as he was a young man not much acquainted with the world, and that he might contribute to his information.

Khaujeh Houssain returned the compliment, by assuring Ali Baba, that though his son might not have acquired the experience of older men, he had good sense equal to the experience of many others. After a little more conversation on different subjects, he offered again to take his leave; when Ali Baba, stopping him, said, "Where are you going, sir, in so much haste? I beg you would do me the honour to sup with me, though what I have to give you is not worth your acceptance; but such as it is, I hope you will accept it as heartily as I give it." "Sir," replied Khaujeh Houssain, "I am thoroughly persuaded of your good-will; and if I ask the favour of you not to take it ill that I do not accept your obliging invitation, I beg of you to believe that it does not proceed from any slight or intention to affront, but from a reason which you would approve if you knew it."

"And what may that reason be, sir," replied Ali Baba, "if I may be so bold as to ask you?" "It is," answered Khaujeh Houssain, "that I can eat no victuals that have any salt in them; therefore judge how I should feel at your table." "If that is the only reason," said Ali Baba, "it ought not to deprive me of the honour of your company at supper; for, in the first place, there is no salt ever put into my bread, and as to the meat we shall have to-night, I promise you there shall be none in that. Therefore you must do me the favour to stay. I will return immediately."

Ali Baba went into the kitchen, and ordered Morgiana to put no salt to the meat that was to be dressed that night; and to make quickly two or three ragouts besides what he had ordered, but be sure to put no salt in them.

Morgiana, who was always ready to obey her master, could not help, this time, seeming somewhat dissatisfied at his strange order. “Who is this difficult man,” said she, “who eats no salt with his meat? Your supper will be spoiled, if I keep it back so long.” “Do not be angry, Morgiana,” replied Ali Baba: “he is an honest man; therefore do as I bid you.”

Morgiana obeyed, though with no little reluctance, and had a curiosity to see this man who ate no salt. To this end, when she had finished what she had to do in the kitchen, she helped Abdoollah to carry up the dishes; and looking at Khaujeh Houssain, knew him at first sight, notwithstanding his disguise, to be the captain of the robbers, and examining him very carefully, perceived that he had a dagger under his garment. “I am not in the least amazed,” said she to herself, “that this wicked wretch, who is my master’s greatest enemy, would eat no salt with him, since he intends to assassinate him; but I will prevent him”.

Morgiana, while they were eating, made the necessary preparations for executing one of the boldest acts ever meditated, and had just determined, when Abdoollah came for the dessert of fruit, which she carried up, and as soon as Abdoollah had taken the meat away, set it upon the table; after that, she placed three glasses by Ali Baba, and going out, took Abdoollah with her to sup, and to give Ali Baba the more liberty of conversation with his guest.

Khaujeh Houssain, or rather the captain of the robbers, thought he had now a favourable opportunity of being revenged on Ali Baba. “I will,” said he to himself, “make the father and son both drunk: the son, whose life I intend to spare, will not be able to prevent my stabbing his father to the heart; and while the slaves are at supper, or asleep in the kitchen, I can make my escape over the gardens as before.”

Instead of going to supper, Morgiana, who had penetrated the intentions of the counterfeit Khaujeh Houssain, would not give him time to put his villanous design into execution, but dressed herself neatly with a suitable head-dress like a dancer, girded her waist with a silver-gilt girdle, to which there hung a poniard with a hilt and guard of the same metal, and put a handsome mask on her face. When she had thus disguised herself, she said to Abdoollah, "Take your tabor, and let us go and divert our master and his son's guest, as we do sometimes when he is alone."

Abdoollah took his tabor and played all the way into the hall before Morgiana, who, when she came to the door, made a low obeisance, with a deliberate air, in order to draw attention, and by way of asking leave to exhibit her skill. Abdoollah, seeing that his master had a mind to say something, left off playing. "Come in, Morgiana," said Ali Baba, "and let Khaujeh Houssain see what you can do, that he may tell us what he thinks of you." "But, sir," said he, turning towards his guest, "do not think that I put myself to any expense to give you this diversion, since these are my slave and my cook and housekeeper; and I hope you will not find the entertainment they give us disagreeable."

Khaujeh Houssain, who did not expect this diversion after supper, began to fear he should not be able to improve the opportunity he thought he had found; but hoped, if he now missed his aim, to secure it another time, by keeping up a friendly correspondence with the father and son; therefore, though he could have wished Ali Baba would have declined the dance, he pretended to be obliged to him for it, and had the complaisance to express his satisfaction at what he saw pleased his host.

As soon as Abdoollah saw that Ali Baba and Khaujeh Houssain had done talking, he began to play on the tabor, and accompanied it with an air; to which Morgiana, who was an excellent performer, danced in such a manner as would have created admiration in any other company besides that before which she now exhibited, among whom, perhaps, none but the false Khaujeh Houssain was in the least attentive to her, the rest having seen her so frequently.

After she had danced several dances with equal propriety and grace, she drew the poniard, and holding it in her hand, began a dance, in which she outdid herself, by the many different figures, light movements, and the surprising leaps and wonderful exertions with which she accompanied it. Sometimes she presented the poniard to one's breast, sometimes to another's, and oftentimes seeming to strike her own. At last, as if she was out of breath, she snatched the tabor from Abdoollah with her left hand, and holding the dagger in her right, presented the other side of the tabor, after the manner of those who get a livelihood by dancing, and solicit the liberality of the spectators.

Ali Baba put a piece of gold into the tabor, as did also his son; and Khaujeh Houssain seeing that she was coming to him, had pulled his purse out of his bosom to make her a present; but while he was putting his hand into it, Morgiana, with a courage and resolution worthy of herself, plunged the poniard into his heart.

Ali Baba and his son, shocked at this action, cried out aloud. "Unhappy wretch!" exclaimed Ali Baba, "what have you done to ruin me and my family?" "It was to preserve, not to ruin you," answered Morgiana; "for see here," continued she (opening the pretended Khaujeh Houssain's garment, and shewing the dagger), "what an enemy you had entertained! Look well at him, and you will find him to be both the fictitious oil-merchant, and the captain of the gang of forty robbers. Remember, too, that he would eat no salt with you; and what would you have more to persuade you of his wicked design? Before I saw him I suspected him as soon as you told me you had such a guest. I knew him, and you now find that my suspicion was not groundless."

Ali Baba, who immediately felt the new obligation he had to Morgiana for saving his life a second time, embraced her: "Morgiana," said he, "I gave you your liberty, and then promised you that my gratitude should not stop there, but that I would soon give you higher proofs of its sincerity, which I now do by making you my daughter-in-law." Then addressing himself to his son, he said, "I believe you, son, to be so dutiful a child, that you will not refuse Morgiana for your wife. You see that Khaujeh Houssain sought your friendship with a treacherous design to take away my life; and, if he had succeeded, there is no doubt but he would have sacrificed you also to his revenge. Consider, that by marrying Morgiana you marry the preserver of my family and your own."

The son, far from shewing any dislike, readily consented to the marriage; not only because he would not disobey his father, but also because it was agreeable to his inclination.

After this, they thought of burying the captain of the robbers with his comrades, and did it so privately that nobody discovered their bones till many years after, when no one had any concern in the publication of this remarkable history.

A few days afterwards, Ali Baba celebrated the nuptials of his son and Morgiana with great solemnity, a sumptuous feast, and the usual dancing and spectacles; and had the satisfaction to see that his friends and neighbours, whom he invited, had no knowledge of the true motives of the marriage; but that those who were not unacquainted with Morgiana's good qualities commended his generosity and goodness of heart.

Ali Baba forbore, after this marriage, from going again to the robbers' cave, as he had done from the time he had brought away his brother Cassim's mangled remains, for fear of being surprised. He kept away after the death of the thirty-seven robbers and their captain, supposing the other two, whom he could get no account of, might be alive.

At the year's end, when he found they had not made any attempt to disturb him, he had the curiosity to make another journey, taking the necessary precautions for his safety. He mounted his horse, and when he came to the cave, and saw no footsteps of men or horses, looked upon it as a good sign. He alighted, tied his horse to a tree, then approaching the entrance, and pronouncing the words, Open, Sesame, the door opened. He entered the cavern, and by the condition he found things in, judged that nobody had been there since the false Khaujeh Houssain, when he had fetched the goods for his shop, that the gang of forty robbers was completely destroyed, and no longer doubted that he was the only person in the world who had the secret of opening the cave, so that all the treasure was at his sole disposal. Having brought with him a wallet, he put into it as much gold as his horse would carry, and returned to town.

Afterwards Ali Baba carried his son to the cave, taught him the secret, which they handed down to their posterity, who, using their good fortune with moderation, lived in great honour and splendour.

THE STORY OF ALI KHAUJEH, A MERCHANT OF BAGDAD.

In the reign of the caliph Haroon al Rusheed, there lived at Bagdad a merchant whose name was Ali Khaujeh, who was neither one of the richest nor poorest of his line. He was a bachelor, and lived in the house which had been his father's, independent and content with the profit he made by his trade. But happening to dream for three successive nights that a venerable old man came to him, and, with a severe look, reprimanded him for not having made a pilgrimage to Mecca, he was much troubled.

As a good Mussulmaun, he knew he was obliged to undertake a pilgrimage; but as he had a house, shop, and goods, he had always believed that they might stand for a sufficient reason to excuse him, endeavouring by his charity, and other good works, to atone for that neglect. After this dream, however, his conscience was so much pricked, that the fear lest any misfortune should befall him made him resolve not to defer it any longer; and to be able to go that year, he sold off his household goods, his shop, and with it the greatest part of his merchandize, reserving only some articles, which he thought might turn to a better account at Mecca; and meeting with a tenant for his house, let that also.

His affairs being thus disposed, he was ready to depart when the Bagdad caravan set out for Mecca: the only thing he had to do was to lodge in some place of security a sum of a thousand pieces of gold, which would have been troublesome to carry with him, with the money he had set apart to defray his expenses on the road, and for other purposes. To this end, he made choice of a jar of a suitable size, put the thousand pieces of gold into it, and covered them over with olives. When he had closed the mouth of the jar, he carried it to a merchant, a particular friend of his, and said to him, "You know, brother, that in a few days I mean to depart with the caravan, on my pilgrimage to Mecca. I beg the favour of you to take charge of a jar of olives, and keep it for me till I return." The merchant promised him he would, and in an obliging manner said, "Here, take the key of my warehouse, and set your jar where you please. I promise you shall find it there when you return."

On the day the caravan was to set out Ali Khaujeh joined it, with a camel loaded with what goods he had thought fit to carry, which also served him to ride on. He arrived safe at Mecca, where he visited, with other pilgrims, the temple so much celebrated and frequented by the faithful of all nations every year, who came from all parts of the world, and observed religiously the ceremonies prescribed them. When he had acquitted himself of the duties of his pilgrimage, he exposed the merchandize he had brought with him for sale or barter, as might be most profitable.

Two merchants passing by, and seeing Ali Khaujeh's goods, thought them so choice, that they stopped some time to look at, though they had no occasion for them; and when they had satisfied their curiosity, one of them said to the other, as they were going away, "If this merchant knew to what profit these goods would turn at Cairo he would carry them thither, and not sell them here, though this is a good mart."

Ali Khaujeh heard these words; and as he had often heard talk of the beauties of Egypt, he was resolved to take the opportunity of seeing them, by performing a journey thither. Therefore, after having packed up his goods again, instead of returning to Bagdad, he set out for Egypt, with the caravan of Cairo. When he came thither, he found his account in his journey, and in a few days sold all his goods to a greater advantage than he had hoped for. With the money he bought others, with an intent to go to Damascus: and while he waited for the opportunity of a caravan, which was to depart in six weeks, visited all the curiosities of Cairo, as also the pyramids, and sailing up the Nile, viewed the famous towns on each side of that river.

As the Damascus caravan took Jerusalem in their way, our Bagdad merchant had the opportunity of visiting the temple, regarded by the Mussulmauns to be the most holy, after that of Mecca, whence this city takes its name of Biel al Mukkuddus, or most sacred mansion.

Ali Khaujeh found Damascus so delicious a place, being environed by verdant meadows, pleasantly watered, and delightful gardens, that it exceeded the descriptions given of it in the journals of travellers. Here he made a long abode, but, nevertheless, did not forget his native Bagdad: for which place he at length set out, and arrived at Aleppo, where he made some stay; and from thence, after having passed the Euphrates, he bent his course to Moussoul, with an intention, in his return, to come by a shorter way down the Tigris.

When Ali Khaujeh came to Moussoul, some Persian merchants, with whom he had travelled from Aleppo, and with whom he had contracted a great friendship, had obtained so great an influence over him by their civilities and agreeable conversation, that they easily persuaded him not to leave them till he should have visited Sheerauz, from whence he might easily return to Bagdad with a considerable profit. They led him through the towns of Sultania, Rei, Coam, Caschan, Ispahan, and from thence to Sheerauz; from whence he had the complaisance to bear them company to Hindoostan, and then returned with them again to Sheerauz; insomuch, that including the stay made in every town, he was seven years absent from Bagdad, whither he then resolved to return.

All this time his friend, with whom he had left his jar of olives, neither thought of him nor them; but at the time when he was on the road with a caravan from Sheerauz, one evening as this merchant was supping with his family, the discourse happened to fall upon olives, and his wife was desirous to eat some, saying, she had not tasted any for a long while. “Now you speak of olives,” said the merchant, “you put me in mind of a jar which Ali Khaujeh left with me seven years ago, when he went to Mecca; and put it himself in my warehouse to be kept for him against he returned. What is become of him I know not; though, when the caravan came back, they told me he was gone for Egypt. Certainly he must be dead, since he has not returned in all this time; and we may eat the olives, if they prove good. Give me a plate and a candle, I will go and fetch some of them, and we will taste them.”

“For God’s sake, husband,” said the wife, “do not commit so base an action; you know that nothing is more sacred than what is committed to one’s care and trust. You say Ali Khaujeh has left Mecca, and is not returned; but you have been told that he is gone into Egypt; and how do you know but that he may be gone farther? As you have no intelligence of his death, he may return to-morrow for any thing you can tell: and what a disgrace would it be to you and your family if he should come, and you not restore him his jar in the same condition he left it? I declare I have no desire for the olives, and will not taste them, for when I mentioned them it was only by way of conversation; besides, do you think that they can be good, after they have been kept so long? They most be all mouldy, and spoiled; and if Ali Khaujeh should return, as I have a strong persuasion he will, and should find they had been opened, what will he think of your honour? I beg of you to let them alone."

The wife had not argued so long with her husband, but that she read his obstinacy in his face. In short, he never regarded what she said, but got up, took a candle and a plate, and went into the warehouse. "Well, husband," said the wife again, "remember I have no hand in this business; and that you cannot lay any thing to my charge, if you should have cause to repent of your conduit."

The merchant's ears were deaf to these remonstrances of his wife, and he persisted in his design. When he came into the warehouse, he opened the jar, and found the olives mouldy; but to see if they were all so to the bottom, he turned some of them upon the plate; and by shaking the jar, some of the gold tumbled out.

At the sight of the gold, the merchant, who was naturally covetous, looked into the jar, perceived that he had shaken out almost all the olives, and what remained was gold coin. He immediately put the olives into the jar again, covered it up, and returned to his wife. "Indeed, wife," said he, "you were in the right to say that the olives were all mouldy; for I found them so, and have made up the jar just as Ali Khaujeh left it; so that he will not perceive that they have been touched, if he should return." "You had better have taken my advice," said the wife, "and not have meddled with them. God grant no mischief happens in consequence!"

The merchant was not more affected with his wife's last words than he had been by her former, but spent almost the whole night in thinking how he might appropriate Ali Khaujeh's gold to his own use, and keep possession of it in case he should return and ask him for the jar. The next morning he went and bought some olives of that year, took out the old with the gold, and filled the jar with the new, covered it up, and put it in the place where Ali Khaujeh had left it.

About a month after the merchant had committed this unworthy action, Ali Khaujeh arrived at Bagdad; and as he had let his house, alighted at a khan, choosing to stay there till he had announced his arrival to his tenant, and given him time to provide himself with another residence.

The next morning Ali Khaujeh went to pay a visit to the merchant his friend, who received him in the most obliging manner; and expressed great joy at his return, after so many years absence; telling him, that he had begun to lose all hopes of ever seeing him again.

After the usual compliments on both sides on such a meeting, Ali Khaujeh desired the merchant to return him the jar of olives which he had left with him, and to excuse the liberty he had taken in giving him so much trouble.

"My dear friend," replied the merchant, "you are to blame to make these apologies, your vessel has been no inconvenience to me; on such an occasion I should have made as free with you: there is the key of my warehouse, go and fetch your jar; you will find it in the place where you left it."

Ali Khaujeh went into the merchant's warehouse, took his jar; and after having returned him the key with thanks for the favour he had done: him, returned with it to the khan where he lodged; but on opening the jar, and putting his hand down as low as the pieces of gold had lain, was greatly surprised to find none. At first he thought he might perhaps be mistaken; and, to discover the truth, poured out all the olives into his travelling kitchen-utensils, but without so much as finding one single piece of money. His astonishment was so great, that he stood for some time motionless; then lifting up his hands and eyes to Heaven, he exclaimed, "Is it possible that a man, whom I took for my friend, should be guilty of such baseness?"

Ali Khaujeh, alarmed at the apprehension of so considerable a loss, returned immediately to the merchant. "My good friend," said he, "be not surprised to see me come back so soon. I own the jar of olives to be the same I placed in your warehouse; but with the olives I put into it a thousand pieces of gold, which I do not find. Perhaps you might have occasion for them, and have employed them in trade: if so they are at your service till it may be convenient for you to return them; only put me out of my pain, and give me an acknowledgment, after which you may pay me at your own convenience."

The merchant, who had expected that Ali Khaujeh would come with such a complaint, had meditated an answer. "Friend Ali Khaujeh," said he, "when you brought your jar to me did I touch it? did not I give you the key of my warehouse, did not you carry it there yourself, and did not you find it in the same place, covered in the same manner as when you left it? And if you had put gold in it, you must have found it. You told me it contained olives, and I believed you. This is all I know of the matter: you may disbelieve me if you please; but I never touched them."

Ali Khaujeh used all the mild methods he could think of to oblige the merchant to restore his property. "I love peace and quietness," said he to him, "and shall be sorry to come to those extremities which will bring the greatest disgrace upon you; consider, that merchants, as we are, ought to abandon all interest to preserve a good reputation. Once again I tell you, I shall be greatly concerned if your obstinacy oblige me to force you to do me justice; for I would rather almost lose what is my right than have recourse to law."

"Ali Khaujeh," replied the merchant, "you agree that you left a jar of olives with me; and now you have taken it away, you come and ask me for a thousand pieces of gold. Did you ever tell me that such a sum was in the jar? I did not even know that they were olives, for you never showed them to me. I wonder you do not ask me for diamonds and pearls instead of gold; be gone about your business, and do not raise a mob about my warehouse;" for some persons had already collected. These words were pronounced in such great heat and passion, as not only made those who stood about the warehouse already stay longer, and create a greater mob, but the neighbouring merchants came out of their shops to learn what the dispute was between Ali Khaujeh and the merchant, and endeavoured to reconcile them; but when Ali Khaujeh had informed them of his grievance, they asked the merchant what he had to say.

The merchant owned that he had kept the jar for Ali Khaujeh in his warehouse, but denied that ever he had meddled with it; swore that he knew it contained olives, only because Ali Khaujeh told him so, and requested them all to bear witness of the insult and affront offered him. "You bring it upon yourself," said Ali Khaujeh taking him by the arm; “but since you use me so basely, I cite you to the law of God: let us see whether you will have the assurance to say the same thing before the cauzee.”

The merchant could not refuse the summons, which every Mussulmaun is bound to observe, or be declared a rebel against religion; but said, “With all my heart; we shall soon see who is in the wrong.”

Ali Khaujeh carried the merchant before the magistrate, where he accused him of having, by breach of trust, defrauded him of a thousand pieces of gold, which he had left with him. The cauzee demanded if he had any witnesses; to which he replied, that he had not taken that precaution, because he had believed the person he trusted his money with to be his friend, and always took him for an honest man.

The merchant made the same defence he had done before the merchants his neighbours, offering to make oath that he never had the money he was accused of, and that he did not so much as know there was such a sum; upon which the cauzee took his oath, and dismissed him acquitted for want of evidence.

Ali Khaujeh, extremely mortified to find that he must sit down with so considerable a loss, protested against the sentence, declaring to the cauzee that he would appeal to the caliph, who would do him justice; which protestation the magistrate regarded as the effect of the common resentment of those who lose their cause; and thought he had done his duty in acquitting a person who had been accused without witnesses.

While the merchant returned home triumphing over Ali Khaujeh and overjoyed at his good fortune, the latter went and drew up a petition; and the next day observing the time when the caliph came from noon tide prayers, placed himself in the street he was to pass through; and holding out his hand with the petition, an officer appointed for that purpose, who always goes before the caliph, came and took it to present it.

As Ali Khaujeh knew that it was the caliph’s custom to read the petitions at his return to the palace, he went into the court, and waited till the officer who had taken the petition came out of the caliph’s apartment, who told him that the caliph had appointed an hour to hear him next day; and then asking him where the merchant lived, he sent to notify to him to attend at the same time.

That same evening, the caliph, accompanied by the grand vizier Jaaffier, and Mesrour the chief of the eunuchs, went disguised through the town, as it was his custom occasionally to do; when, on passing through a street, the caliph heard a noise, and mending his pace, came to a gateway, which led into a little court, in which he perceived ten or twelve children playing by moonlight.

The caliph, who was curious to know at what play the children were engaged, sat down on a stone bench just by; and heard one of the liveliest of the children say, “Let us play at the cauzee I will be the magistrate; bring Ali Khaujeh and the merchant who cheated him of the thousand pieces of gold before me.”

These words of the child put the caliph in mind of the petition Ali Khaujeh had given him that day, and made him redouble his attention to see the issue of the trial.

As the affair of Ali Khaujeh and the merchant had made a great noise in Bagdad, it had not escaped the children, who all accepted the proposition with joy, and agreed on the part each was to act: not one of them refused him who made the proposal to be cauzee: and when he had taken his seat, which he did with all the seeming gravity of a judge, another, as an officer of the court, presented two boys before him; one as Ali Khaujeh, and the other as the merchant against whom he complained.

The pretended cauzee then directing his discourse to the feigned Ali Khaujeh, asked him what he had to lay to that merchant’s charge?

Ali Khaujeh after a low obeisance, informed the young cauzee of the fact, related every particular, and afterwards begged that he would use his authority, that he might not lose so considerable a sum of money.

The feigned cauzee, turning about to the merchant, then asked him why he did not return the money which Ali Khaujeh demanded of him?

The feigned merchant alleged the same reasons as the real merchant had done before the cauzee himself, and offered to confirm by oath that what he had said was truth.

“Not so fast,” replied the pretended cauzee; “before you come to your oath, I should be glad to see the jar of olives. Ali Khaujeh,” said he, addressing himself to the boy who acted that part, “have you brought the jar?” “No,” replied he. “Then go and fetch it immediately,” said the other.

The pretended Ali Khaujeh went immediately, and returning, feigned to set a jar before the cauzee, telling him that it was the same he had left with the accused person, and received from him again. But to omit no part of the formality, the supposed cauzee asked the merchant if it was the same; and as by his silence he seemed not to deny it, he ordered it to be opened. He that represented Ali Khaujeh seemed to take off the cover, and the pretended cauzee made as if he looked into it. “They are fine olives,” said he, “let me taste them;” and then pretending to eat some, added, “They are excellent: but,” continued he, “I cannot think that olives will keep seven years, and be so good, therefore send for some olive-merchants, and let me hear what is their opinion.” Two boys, as olive-merchants, then presented themselves. “Are you olive-merchants?” said the sham cauzee. “Tell me how long olives will keep fit to eat.”

“Sir,” replied the two merchants, “let us take what care we can, they will hardly be worth any thing the third year; for then they have neither taste nor colour.” “If it be so,” answered the cauzee, “look into that jar, and tell me how long it is since those olives were put into it?”

The two merchants pretended to examine and to taste the olives, and told the cauzee they were new and good. “You are mistaken,” said the young cauzee; “Ali Khaujeh says he put them into the jar seven years ago.”

“Sir,” replied the merchants, “we can assure you they are of this year’s growth: and we will maintain there is not a merchant in Bagdad but will say the same.”

The feigned merchant who was accused would have objected against the evidence of the olive-merchants; but the pretended cauzee would not suffer him. “Hold your tongue,” said he, “you are a rogue; let him be impaled.” The children then concluded their play, clapping their hands with great joy, and seizing the feigned criminal to carry him to execution.

Words cannot express how much the caliph Haroon al Rusheed admired the sagacity and sense of the boy who had passed so just a sentence, in an affair which was to be pleaded before himself the next day. He withdrew, and rising off the bench, asked the grand vizier, who heard all that had passed, what he thought of it. “Indeed, commander of the true believers,” answered the grand vizier Jaaffier, “I am surprised to find so much sagacity in one so young.”

“But,” answered the caliph, “do you know one thing? I am to pronounce sentence in this very cause to-morrow; the true Ali Khaujeh presented his petition to me to-day; and do you think,” continued he, “that I can give a better sentence?” “I think not,” answered the vizier, “if the case is as the children represented it.” “Take notice then of this house,” said the caliph, “and bring the boy to me to-morrow, that he may try this cause in my presence; and also order the cauzee, who acquitted the merchant, to attend to learn his duty from a child. Take care likewise to bid Ali Khaujeh bring his jar of olives with him, and let two olive-merchants attend.” After this charge he pursued his rounds, without meeting with any thing worth his attention.

The next day the vizier went to the house where the caliph had been a witness of the children’s play, and asked for the master; but he being abroad, his wife appeared thickly veiled. He asked her if she had any children. To which she answered, she had three; and called them. “My brave boys,” said the vizier, “which of you was the cauzee when you played together last night?” The eldest made answer, it was he: but, not knowing why he asked the question, coloured. “Come along with me, my lad,” said the grand vizier; “the commander of the faithful wants to see you.”

The mother was alarmed when she saw the grand vizier would take her son with him, and asked, upon what account the caliph wanted him? The grand vizier encouraged her, and promised that he should return again in less than an hour’s time, when she would know it from himself. “If it be so, sir,” said the mother, “give me leave to dress him first, that he may be fit to appear before the commander of the faithful:” which the vizier readily complied with.

As soon as the child was dressed, the vizier carried him away and presented him to the caliph, at the time he had appointed to hear Ali

Khaujeh and the merchant.

The caliph, who saw that the boy was much abashed, in order to encourage him, said, “Come to me, child, and tell me if it was you that determined the affair between Ali Khaujeh and the merchant who had cheated him of his money? I saw and heard the decision, and am very well pleased with you.” The boy answered modestly, that it was he. “Well, my son,” replied the caliph, “come and sit down by me, and you shall see the true Ali Khaujeh, and the true merchant.”

The caliph then took him by the hand, seated him on the throne by him, and asked for the two parties. When they were introduced, they prostrated themselves before the throne, bowing their heads quite down to the carpet that covered it. Afterwards the caliph said to them, “Plead each of you your causes before this child, who will hear and do you justice: and if he should be at a loss I will assist him.”

Ali Khaujeh and the merchant pleaded one after the other; but when the merchant proposed his oath as before, the child said, “It is too soon; it is proper that we should see the jar of olives.”

At these words Ali Khaujeh presented the jar, placed it at the caliph’s feet, and opened it. The caliph looked at the olives, took one and tasted it, giving another to the boy. Afterwards the merchants were called, who examined the olives, and reported that they were good, and of that year. The boy told them, that Ali Khaujeh affirmed that it was seven years since he had put them up; when they returned the same answer as the children, who had represented them the night before.

Though the wretch who was accused saw plainly that these merchants’ opinion must convict him, yet he would say something in his own justification. But the child, instead of ordering him to be impaled, looked at the caliph, and said “Commander of the faithful, this is no jesting matter; it is your majesty that must condemn him to death, and not I, though I did it yesterday in play.”

The caliph, fully satisfied of the merchant’s villany, delivered him into the hands of the ministers of justice to be impaled. The sentence was executed upon him, after he had confessed where he had concealed the thousand pieces of gold, which were restored to Ali Khaujeh. The monarch, most just and equitable, then turning to the cauzee, bade him learn of that child to acquit himself more exactly of his duty; and embracing the boy, sent him home with a purse of a hundred pieces of gold as a token of his liberality and admiration of his acuteness.

VOLUME 4

THE STORY OF THE ENCHANTED HORSE.

The Nooroze, or the new day, which is the first of the year and spring, is observed as a solemn festival throughout all Persia, which has been continued from the time of idolatry; and our prophet’s religion, pure as it is, and true as we hold it, has not been able to abolish that heathenish custom, and the superstitious ceremonies which are observed, not only in the great cities, but celebrated with extraordinary rejoicings in every little town, village, and hamlet.

But the rejoicings are the most splendid at the court, for the variety of new and surprising spectacles, insomuch that strangers are invited from the neighbouring states, and the most remote parts, by the rewards and liberality of the sovereign, towards those who are the most excellent in their invention and contrivance. In short, nothing in the rest of the world can compare with the magnificence of this festival.

One of these festival days, after the most ingenious artists of the country had repaired to Sheerauz, where the court then resided, had entertained the king and all the court with their productions, and had been bountifully and liberally rewarded according to their merit and to their satisfaction by the monarch; when the assembly was just breaking up, a Hindoo appeared at the foot of the throne, with an artificial horse richly caparisoned, and so naturally imitated, that at first sight he was taken for a living animal.

The Hindoo prostrated himself before the throne; and pointing to the horse, said to the emperor, “Though I present myself the last before your majesty, yet I can assure you that nothing shewn to-day is so wonderful as this horse, on which I beg your majesty would be pleased to cast your eyes.” “I see nothing more in the horse,” said the emperor, “than the natural resemblance the workman has given him; which the skill of another workman may possibly execute as well or better.”

“Sir,” replied the Hindoo, “it is not for his outward form and appearance that I recommend my horse to your majesty’s examination as wonderful, but the use to which I can apply him, and which, when I have communicated the secret to them, any other persons may make of him. Whenever I mount him, be it where it may, if I wish to transport myself through the air to the most distant part of the world, I can do it in a very short time. This, sir, is the wonder of my horse; a wonder which nobody ever heard speak of, and which I offer to shew your majesty, if you command me."

The emperor of Persia, who was fond of every thing that was curious, and notwithstanding the many prodigies of art he had seen had never beheld or heard of anything that came up to this, told the Hindoo, that nothing but the experience of what he asserted could convince him: and that he was ready to see him perform what he had promised.

The Hindoo instantly put his foot into the stirrup, mounted his horse with admirable agility, and when he had fixed himself in the saddle, asked the emperor whither he pleased to command him.

About three leagues from Sheerauz there was a lofty mountain discernible from the large square before the palace, where the emperor, his court, and a great concourse of people, then were. "Do you see that mountain?" said the emperor, pointing to it; "it is not a great distance from hence, but it is far enough to judge of the speed you can make in going and returning. But because it is not possible for the eye to follow you so far, as a proof that you have been there, I expect that you will bring me a branch of a palm-tree that grows at the bottom of the hill."

The emperor of Persia had no sooner declared his will than the Hindoo turned a peg, which was in the hollow of the horse's neck, just by the pummel of the saddle; and in an instant the horse rose off the ground and carried his rider into the air with the rapidity of lightning to such a height, that those who had the strongest sight could not discern him, to the admiration of the emperor and all the spectators. Within less than a quarter of an hour they saw him returning with the palm branch in his hand; but before he descended, he took two or three turns in the air over the spot, amid the acclamations of all the people; then alighted on the spot whence he had set off, without receiving the least shock from the horse to disorder him. He dismounted, and going up to the throne, prostrated himself, and laid the branch of the palm-tree at the feet of the emperor.

The emperor, who had viewed with no less admiration than astonishment this unheard-of sight which the Hindoo had exhibited, conceived a great desire to have the horse; and as he persuaded himself that he should not find it a difficult matter to treat with the Hindoo, for whatever sum of money he should value it at, began to regard it as the most valuable thing in his treasury. “Judging of thy horse by his outward appearance,” said he to the Hindoo, “I did not think him so much worth my consideration. As you have shewn me his merits, I am obliged to you for undeceiving me; and to prove to you how much I esteem it, I will purchase him of you, if he is to be sold.”

“Sir,” replied the Hindoo, “I never doubted that your majesty, who has the character of the most liberal prince on earth, would set a just value on my work as soon as I had shewn you on what account he was worthy your attention. I also foresaw that you would not only admire and commend it, but would desire to have it. Though I know his intrinsic value, and that my continuing master of him would render my name immortal in the world; yet I am not so fond of fame but I can resign him, to gratify your majesty; however, in making this declaration, I have another to add, without which I cannot resolve to part with him, and perhaps you may not approve of it.

“Your majesty will not be displeased,” continued the Hindoo, “if I tell you that I did not buy this horse, but obtained him of the inventor, by giving him my only daughter in marriage, and promising at the same time never to sell him; but if I parted with him to exchange him for something that I should value beyond all else.”

The Hindoo was proceeding, when at the word exchange, the emperor of Persia interrupted him. “I am willing,” said he, “to give you whatever you may ask in exchange. You know my kingdom is large, and contains many great, rich, and populous cities; I will give you the choice of which you like best, in full sovereignty for life.”

This exchange seemed royal and noble to the whole court; but was much below what the Hindoo had proposed to himself, who had raised his thoughts much higher. “I am infinitely obliged to your majesty for the offer you make me,” answered he, “and cannot thank you enough for your generosity; yet I must beg of you not to be displeased if I have the presumption to tell you, that I cannot resign my horse, but by receiving the hand of the princess your daughter as my wife: this is the only price at which I can part with my property."

The courtiers about the emperor of Persia could not forbear laughing aloud at this extravagant demand of the Hindoo; but the prince Firoze Shaw, the eldest son of the emperor, and presumptive heir to the crown, could not hear it without indignation. The emperor was of a very different opinion, and thought he might sacrifice the princess of Persia to the Hindoo, to satisfy his curiosity. He remained however undetermined, considering what he should do.

Prince Firoze Shaw, who saw his father hesitated what answer to make, began to fear lest he should comply with the Hindoo's demand, and regarded it as not only injurious to the royal dignity, and to his sister, but also to himself; therefore to anticipate his father, he said, "Sir, I hope your majesty will forgive me for daring to ask, if it is possible your majesty should hesitate about a denial to so insolent a demand from such an insignificant fellow, and so scandalous a juggler? or give him reason to flatter himself a moment with being allied to one of the most powerful monarchs in the world? I beg of you to consider what you owe to yourself, to your own blood, and the high rank of your ancestors."

"Son," replied the emperor of Persia, "I much approve of your remonstrance, and am sensible of your zeal for preserving the lustre of your birth; but you do not consider sufficiently the excellence of this horse; nor that the Hindoo, if I should refuse him, may make the offer somewhere else, where this nice point of honour may be waived. I shall be in the utmost despair if another prince should boast of having exceeded me in generosity, and deprived me of the glory of possessing what I esteem as the most singular and wonderful thing in the world. I will not say I consent to grant him what he asked. Perhaps he has not well considered his exorbitant demand: and putting my daughter the princess out of the question, I may make another agreement with him that will answer his purpose as well. But before I conclude the bargain with him, I should be glad that you would examine the horse, try him yourself, and give me your opinion."

As it is natural for us to flatter ourselves in what we desire, the Hindoo fancied, from what he had heard, that the emperor was not entirely averse to his alliance, and that the prince might become more favourable to him; therefore, he expressed much joy, ran before the prince to help him to mount, and shewed him how to guide and manage the horse.

The prince mounted without the Hindoo's assisting him; and no sooner had he got his feet in both stirrups, but without staying for the artist's advice, he turned the peg he had seen him use, when instantly the horse darted into the air, quick as an arrow shot out of a bow by the most adroit archer; and in a few moments the emperor his father and the numerous assembly lost sight of him. Neither horse nor prince were to be seen. The Hindoo, alarmed at what had happened, prostrated himself before the throne, and said, "Your majesty must have remarked the prince was so hasty, that he would not permit me to give him the necessary instructions to govern my horse. From what he saw me do, he was ambitious of shewing that he wanted not my advice. He was too eager to shew his address, but knows not the way, which I was going to shew him, to turn the horse, and make him descend at the wish of his rider. Therefore, the favour I ask of your majesty is, not to make me accountable for what accidents may befall him; you are too just to impute to me any misfortune that may attend him."

This address of the Hindoo much surprised and afflicted the emperor, who saw the danger his son was in to be inevitable, if, as the Hindoo said, there was a secret to bring him back, different from that which carried him away; and asked, in a passion, why he did not call him the moment he ascended?

"Sir," answered the Hindoo, "your majesty saw as well as I with what rapidity the horse flew away. The surprise I was then, and still am in, deprived me of the use of my speech; but if I could have spoken, he was got too far to hear me. If he had heard me, he knew not the secret to bring him back, which, through his impatience, he would not stay to learn. But, sir," added he, "there is room to hope that the prince, when he finds himself at a loss, will perceive another peg, and as soon as he turns that, the horse will cease to rise, and descend to the ground, when he may turn him to what place he pleases by guiding him with the bridle."

Notwithstanding all these arguments of the Hindoo, which carried great appearance of probability, the emperor of Persia was much alarmed at the evident danger of his son. “I suppose,” replied he, “it is very uncertain whether my son may perceive the other peg, and make a right use of it; may not the horse, instead of lighting on the ground, fall upon some rock, or tumble into the sea with him?”

“Sir,” replied the Hindoo, “I can deliver your majesty from this apprehension, by assuring you, that the horse crosses seas without ever falling into them, and always carries his rider wherever he may wish to go. And your majesty may assure yourself, that if the prince does but find out the other peg I mentioned, the horse will carry him where he pleases. It is not to be supposed that he will stop any where but where he can find assistance, and make himself known.”

“Be it as it may,” replied the emperor of Persia, “as I cannot depend upon the assurance you give me, your head shall answer for my son’s life, if he does not return safe in three days’ time, or I should hear that he is alive.” He then ordered his officers to secure the Hindoo, and keep him close prisoner; after which he retired to his palace in affliction that the festival of Nooroze should have proved so inauspicious.

In the mean time the prince was carried through the air with prodigious velocity; and in less than an hour’s time had ascended so high, that he could not distinguish any thing on the earth, but mountains and plains seemed confounded together. It was then he began to think of returning, and conceived he might do this by turning the same peg the contrary way, and pulling the bridle at the same time. But when he found that the horse still rose with the same swiftness, his alarm was great. He turned the peg several times, one way and the other, but all in vain. It was then he grew sensible of his fault, in not having learnt the necessary precautions to guide the horse before he mounted. He immediately apprehended the great danger he was in, but that apprehension did not deprive him of his reason. He examined the horse’s head and neck with attention, and perceived behind the right ear another peg, smaller than the other. He turned that peg, and presently perceived that he descended in the same oblique manner as he had mounted, but not so swiftly.

Night had overshadowed that part of the earth over which the prince was when he found out and turned the small peg; and as the horse descended, he by degrees lost sight of the sun, till it grew quite dark; insomuch that, instead of choosing what place he would go to, he was forced to let the bridle lie upon the horse's neck, and wait patiently till he alighted, though not without the dread lest it should be in the desert, a river, or the sea.

At last the horse stopped upon some solid substance about midnight, and the prince dismounted very faint and hungry, having eaten nothing since the morning, when he came out of the palace with his father to assist at the festival. He found himself to be on the terrace of a magnificent palace, surrounded with a balustrade of white marble, breast high; and groping about, reached a staircase, which led down into an apartment, the door of which was half open.

Few but prince Firoze Shaw would have ventured to descend those stairs dark as it was, and in the danger he exposed himself to from friends or foes. But no consideration could stop him. "I do not come," said he to himself, "to do anybody harm; and certainly, whoever meets or sees me first, and finds that I have no arms in my hands, will not attempt any thing against my life, before they hear what I have to say for myself." After this reflection, he opened the door wider, without making any noise, went softly down the stairs, that he might not awaken anybody; and when he came to a landing-place on the staircase, found the door of a great hall, that had a light in it, open.

The prince stopped at the door, and listening, heard no other noise than the snoring of some people who were fast asleep. He advanced a little into the room, and by the light of a lamp saw that those persons were black eunuchs, with naked sabres laid by them; which was enough to inform him that this was the guard-chamber of some sultan or princess; which latter it proved to be.

In the next room to this the princess lay, as appeared by the light, the door being open, through a silk curtain, which drew before the door-way, whither prince Firoze Shaw advanced on tip-toe, without waking the eunuchs. He drew aside the curtain, went in, and without staying to observe the magnificence of the chamber, gave his attention to something of greater importance. He saw many beds; only one of them on a sofa, the rest on the floor. The princess slept in the first, and her women in the others.

This distinction was enough to direct the prince. He crept softly towards the bed, without waking either the princess or her women, and beheld a beauty so extraordinary, that he was charmed, and inflamed with love at the first sight. “O heavens!” said he to himself, “has my fate brought me hither to deprive me of my liberty, which hitherto I have always preserved? How can I avoid certain slavery, when those eyes shall open, since, without doubt, they complete the lustre of this assemblage of charms! I must quickly resolve, since I cannot stir without being my own murderer; for so has necessity ordained.”

After these reflections on his situation, and on the princess’s beauty, he fell on his knees, and twitching gently the princess’s sleeve, pulled it towards him. The princess opened her eyes, and seeing a handsome man on his knees, was in great surprise; yet seemed to shew no sign of fear.

The prince availed himself of this favourable moment, bowed his head to the ground, and rising said, “Beautiful princess, by the most extraordinary and wonderful adventure, you see at your feet a suppliant prince, son of the emperor of Persia, who was yesterday morning in his court, at the celebration of a solemn festival, but is now in a strange country, in danger of his life, if you have not the goodness and generosity to afford him your assistance and protection. These I implore, adorable princess, with confidence that you will not refuse me. I have the more ground to persuade myself, as so much beauty and majesty cannot entertain inhumanity.”

The personage to whom prince Firoze Shaw so happily addressed himself was the princess of Bengal, eldest daughter of the Rajah of that kingdom, who had built this palace at a small distance from his capital, whither she went to take the benefit of the country air. After she had heard the prince with all the candour he could desire, she replied with equal goodness, “Prince, you are not in a barbarous country; take courage; hospitality, humanity, and politeness are to be met with in the kingdom of Bengal, as well as in that of Persia. It is not merely I who grant you the protection you ask; you not only have found it in my palace, but will meet it throughout the whole kingdom; you may believe me, and depend on what I say.”

The prince of Persia would have thanked the princess for her civility, and had already bowed down his head to return the compliment; but she would not give him leave to speak. “Notwithstanding I desire,” said she, “to know by what miracle you have come hither from the capital of Persia in so short a time; and by what enchantment you have been able to penetrate so far as to come to my apartment, and to have evaded the vigilance of my guards; yet, as it is impossible but you must want some refreshment, and regarding you as a welcome guest, I will waive my curiosity, and give orders to my women to regale you, and shew you an apartment, that you may rest yourself after your fatigue, and be better able to satisfy my curiosity.”

The princess’s women, who awoke at the first words which the prince addressed to the princess, were in the utmost surprise to see a man at the princess’s feet, as they could not conceive how he had got thither, without waking them or the eunuchs. They no sooner comprehended the princess’s intentions, than they were ready to obey her commands. They each took a wax candle, of which there were great numbers lighted up in the room; and after the prince had respectfully taken leave, went before and conducted him into a handsome chamber; where, while some were preparing the bed, others went into the kitchen; and notwithstanding it was so unseasonable an hour, they did not make prince Firoze Shaw wait long, but brought him presently a collation; and when he had eaten as much as he chose, removed the trays, and left him to taste the sweets of repose.

In the mean time, the princess of Bengal was so struck with the charms, wit, politeness, and other good qualities which she had discovered in her short interview with the prince, that she could not sleep: but when her women came into her room again asked them if they had taken care of him, if he wanted any thing; and particularly, what they thought of him?

The women, after they had satisfied her as to the first queries, answered to the last: “We do not know what you may think of him, but, for our parts, we are of opinion you would be very happy if your father would marry you to so amiable a youth; for there is not a prince in all the kingdom of Bengal to be compared to him; nor can we hear that any of the neighbouring princes are worthy of you.”

This flattering compliment was not displeasing to the princess of Bengal; but as she had no mind to declare her sentiments, she imposed silence, telling them that they talked without reflection, bidding them return to rest, and let her sleep.

The next day the princess took more pains in dressing and adjusting herself at the glass than she had ever done before. She never tired her women's patience so much, by making them do and undo the same thing several times. She adorned her head, neck, arms, and waist, with the finest and largest diamonds she possessed. The habit she put on was one of the richest stuffs of the Indies, of a most beautiful colour, and made only for kings, princes, and princesses. After she had consulted her glass, and asked her women, one after another, if any thing was wanting to her attire, she sent to know, if the prince of Persia was awake; and as she never doubted but that, if he was up and dressed, he would ask leave to come and pay his respects to her, she charged the messenger to tell him she would make him the visit, and she had her reasons for this.

The prince of Persia, who by the night's rest had recovered the fatigue he had undergone the day before, had just dressed himself, when he received the princess of Bengal's compliments by one of her women. Without giving the lady who brought the message leave to communicate it, he asked her, if it was proper for him then to go and pay his respects to the princess; and when the lady had acquitted herself of her errand, he replied, "It shall be as the princess thinks fit; I came here to be solely at her pleasure."

As soon as the princess understood that the prince of Persia waited for her, she immediately went to pay him a visit. After mutual compliments, the prince asking pardon for having waked the princess out of a profound sleep, and the princess inquiring after his health, and how he had rested, the princess sat down on a sofa, as did also the prince, though at some distance, out of respect.

The princess then resuming the conversation, said, "I would have received you, prince, in the chamber in which you found me last night; but as the chief of my eunuchs has the liberty of entering it, and never comes further without my leave, from my impatience to hear the surprising adventure which procured me the happiness of seeing you, I chose to come hither, that we may not be interrupted;

therefore I beg of you to give me that satisfaction, which will highly oblige me."

Prince Firoze Shaw, to gratify the princess of Bengal, began with describing the festival of the Nooroze, and mentioned the shows which had amazed the court of Persia, and the people of Sheerauz. Afterwards he came to the enchanted horse; the description of which, with the account of the wonders which the Hindoo had performed before so august an assembly, convinced the princess that nothing of that kind could be imagined more surprising in the world. "You may well think, charming princess," continued the prince of Persia, "that the emperor my father, who cares not what he gives for any thing that is rare and curious, would be very desirous to purchase such a curiosity. He asked the Hindoo what he would have for him; who made him an extravagant reply, telling him, that he had not bought him, but taken him in exchange for his only daughter, and could not part with him but on the like condition, which was to have his consent to marry the princess my sister.

"The crowd of courtiers, who stood about the emperor my father, hearing the extravagance of this proposal, laughed loudly; I for my part conceived such great indignation, that I could not disguise it; and the more, because I saw that my father was doubtful what answer he should give. In short, I believe he would have granted him what he asked, if I had not represented to him how injurious it would be to his honour; yet my remonstrance could not bring him entirely to quit his design of sacrificing the princess my sister to so despicable a person. He fancied he should bring me over to his opinion, if once I could comprehend, as he imagined he did, the singular worth of this horse. With this view he would have me mount, and make a trial of him myself.

"To please my father, I mounted the horse, and as soon as I was upon his back, put my hand on a peg, as I had seen the Hindoo do before, to make the horse mount into the air, without stopping to take instructions of the owner for his guidance or descent. The instant I touched the peg, the horse ascended, as swift as an arrow shot out of a bow, and I was presently at such a distance from the earth that I could not distinguish any object. From the swiftness of the motion I was for some time unapprehensive of the danger to which I was exposed; when I grew sensible of it, I endeavoured to turn the peg the contrary way. But the experiment would not answer my expectation, for still the horse rose, and carried me a greater distance from the earth. At last I perceived another peg, which I turned, and then I grew sensible that the horse descended towards the earth, and presently found myself so surrounded with darkness, that it was impossible for me to guide the machine. In this condition I laid the bridle on his neck, and trusted myself to the will of God to dispose of my fate.

"At length the horse stopped, I got off his back, and examining whereabouts I might be, perceived myself on the terrace of this palace, and found the door of the staircase half open. I came softly down the stairs, and seeing a door open, put my head into the room, perceived some eunuchs asleep, and a great light in an adjoining chamber. The necessity I was under, notwithstanding the inevitable danger to which I should be exposed, if the eunuchs had waked, inspired me with the boldness, or rather rashness, to cross that room to get to the other.

"It is needless," added the prince, "to tell you the rest, since you are not unacquainted with all that passed afterwards. But I am obliged in duty to thank you for your goodness and generosity, and to beg of you to let me know how I may shew my gratitude. According to the law of nations I am already your slave, and cannot make you an offer of my person; there only remains my heart: but, alas! princess, what do I say? My heart is no longer my own, your charms have forced it from me, but in such a manner, that I will never ask for it again, but yield it up; give me leave, therefore, to declare you mistress both of my heart and inclination."

These last words of the prince were pronounced with such an air and tone, that the princess of Bengal never doubted of the effect she had expected from her charms; neither did she seem to resent the precipitate declaration of the prince of Persia. Her blushes served but to heighten her beauty, and render her more amiable in his eyes.

As soon as she had recovered herself, she replied, "Prince, you have given me sensible pleasure, by telling me your wonderful adventure. But, on the other hand, I can hardly forbear shuddering, when I think on the height you were in the air; and though I have the good fortune to see you here safe and well, I was in pain till you came to that part where the horse fortunately descended upon the terrace of my palace. The same thing might have happened in a thousand other places. I am glad that chance has given me the preference to the whole world, and of the opportunity of letting you know, that it could not have conducted you to any place where you could have been received with greater pleasure.

"But, prince," continued she, "I should think myself offended, if I believed that the thought you mentioned of being my slave was serious, and that it did not proceed from your politeness rather than from a sincerity of sentiment; for, by the reception I gave you yesterday, you might assure yourself you are here as much at liberty as in the midst of the court of Persia.

"As to your heart," added the princess, in a tone which shewed nothing less than a refusal, "as I am persuaded that you have not lived so long without disposing of it, and that you could not fail of making choice of a princess who deserves it, I should be sorry to give you an occasion to be guilty of infidelity to her."

Prince Firoze Shaw would have protested that when he left Persia he was master of his own heart: but, at that instant, one of the princess's ladies in waiting came to tell that a collation was served up.

This interruption delivered the prince and princess from an explanation, which would have been equally embarrassing to both, and of which they stood in need. The princess of Bengal was fully convinced of the prince of Persia's sincerity; and the prince, though the princess had not explained herself, judged nevertheless from some words she had let fall, that he had no reason to complain.

As the lady held the door open, the princess of Bengal said to the prince, rising off her seat, as he did also from his, "I am not used to eat so early; but as I fancied you might have had but an indifferent supper last night, I ordered breakfast to be got ready sooner than ordinary." After this compliment she led him into a magnificent hall, where a cloth was laid covered with great plenty of choice and excellent viands; and as soon as they were seated, many beautiful slaves of the princess, richly dressed, began a most agreeable concert of vocal and instrumental music, which lasted the whole time of eating.

This concert was so sweet and well managed, that it did not in the least interrupt the prince and princess's conversation. The prince served the princess with the choicest of every thing, and strove to outdo her in civility, both by words and actions, which she returned with many new compliments: and in this reciprocal commerce of civilities and attentions, love made a greater progress in both than a concerted interview would have promoted.

When they rose, the princess conducted the prince into a large and magnificent saloon, embellished with paintings in blue and gold, and richly furnished; there they both sat down in a balcony, which afforded a most agreeable prospect into the palace garden, which prince Firoze Shaw admired for the vast variety of flowers, shrubs, and trees, which were full as beautiful as those of Persia, but quite different. Here taking the opportunity of entering into conversation with the princess, he said, "I always believed, madam, that no part of the world but Persia afforded such stately palaces and beautiful gardens; but now I see, that other great monarchs know as well how to build mansions suitable to their power and greatness; and if there is a difference in the manner of building, there is none in the degree of grandeur and magnificence."

"Prince," replied the princess of Bengal, "as I have no idea of the palaces of Persia, I cannot judge of the comparison you have made of mine. But, however sincere you seem to be, I can hardly think it just, but rather incline to believe it a compliment: I will not despise my palace before you; you have too good an eye, too good a taste not to form a sound judgment. But I assure you, I think it very indifferent when I compare it with the king my father's, which far exceeds it for grandeur, beauty, and richness; you shall tell me yourself what you think of it, when you have seen it: for since a chance has brought you so nigh to the capital of this kingdom, I do not doubt but you will see it, and make my father a visit, that he may pay you all the honour due to a prince of your rank and merit."

The princess flattered herself, that by exciting in the prince of Persia a curiosity to see the capital of Bengal, and to visit her father, the king, seeing him so handsome, wise, and accomplished a prince, might perhaps resolve to propose an alliance with him, by offering her to him as a wife. And as she was well persuaded she was not indifferent to the prince, and that he would be pleased with the proposal, she hoped to attain to the utmost of her wishes, and preserve all the decorum becoming a princess, who would appear resigned to the will of her king and father; but the prince of Persia did not return her an answer according to her expectation.

"Princess," he replied, "the preference which you give the king of Bengal's palace to your own is enough to induce me to believe it much exceeds it: and as to the proposal of my going and paying my respects to the king your father, I should not only do myself a pleasure, but an honour. But judge, princess, yourself, would you advise me to present myself before so great a monarch, like an adventurer, without attendants, and a train suitable to my rank?"

"Prince," replied the princess, "let not that give you any pain; if you will but go, you shall want no money to have what train and attendants you please: I will furnish you; and we have traders here of all nations in great numbers, and you may make choice of as many as you please to form your household."

Prince Firoze Shaw penetrated the princess of Bengal's intention, and this sensible mark of her love still augmented his passion, which, notwithstanding its violence, made him not forget his duty. Without any hesitation he replied, "Princess, I should most willingly accept of the obliging offer you make me, for which I cannot sufficiently shew my gratitude, if the uneasiness my father must feel on account of my absence did not prevent me. I should be unworthy of the tenderness he has always had for me, if I should not return as soon as possible to calm his fears. I know him so well, that while I have the happiness of enjoying the conversation of so lovely a princess, I am persuaded he is plunged into the deepest grief, and has lost all hopes of seeing me again. I trust you will do me the justice to believe, that I cannot, without ingratitude, and being guilty of a crime, dispense with going to restore to him that life, which a too long deferred return may have endangered already.

"After this, princess," continued the prince of Persia, "if you will permit me, and think me worthy to aspire to the happiness of becoming your husband, as my father has always declared that he never would constrain me in my choice, I should find it no difficult matter to get leave to return, not as a stranger, but as a prince, to contract an alliance with your father by our marriage; and I am persuaded that the emperor will be overjoyed when I tell him with what generosity you received me, though a stranger in distress."

The princess of Bengal was too reasonable, after what the prince of Persia had said, to persist any longer in persuading him to pay a visit to the raja of Bengal, or to ask any thing of him contrary to his duty and honour. But she was much alarmed to find he thought of so sudden a departure; fearing, that if he took his leave of her so soon, instead of remembering his promise, he would forget when he ceased to see her. To divert him from his purpose, she said to him, "Prince, my intention of proposing a visit to my father was not to oppose so just a duty as that you mention, and which I did not foresee. But I cannot approve of your going so soon as you propose; at least grant me the favour I ask of a little longer acquaintance; and since I have had the happiness to have you alight in the kingdom of Bengal, rather than in the midst of a desert, or on the top of some steep craggy rock, from which it would have been impossible for you to descend, I desire you will stay long enough to enable you to give a better account at the court of Persia of what you may see here."

The sole end the princess had in this request was, that the prince of Persia, by a longer stay, might become insensibly more passionately enamoured of her charms; hoping thereby that his ardent desire of returning would diminish, and then he might be brought to appear in public, and pay a visit to the Rajah of Bengal. The prince of Persia could not well refuse her the favour she asked, after the kind reception she had given him; and therefore politely complied with her request; and the princess's thoughts were directed to render his stay agreeable by all the amusements she could devise.

Nothing went forward for several days but concerts of music, accompanied with magnificent feasts and collations in the gardens, or hunting-parties in the vicinity of the palace, which abounded with all sorts of game, stags, hinds, and fallow deer, and other beasts peculiar to the kingdom of Bengal, which the princess could pursue without danger. After the chase, the prince and princess met in some beautiful spot, where a carpet was spread, and cushions laid for their accommodation. There resting themselves, after their violent exercise, they conversed on various subjects. The princess took pains to turn the conversation on the grandeur, power, riches, and government of Persia; that from the prince's replies she might have an opportunity to talk of the kingdom of Bengal, and its advantages, and engage him to resolve to make a longer stay there; but she was disappointed in her expectations.

The prince of Persia, without the least exaggeration, gave so advantageous an account of the extent of the kingdom of Persia, its magnificence and riches, its military force, its commerce by sea and land with the most remote parts of the world, some of which were unknown even to him; the vast number of large cities it contained, almost as populous as that which the emperor had chosen for his residence, where he had palaces furnished ready to receive him at all seasons of the year; so that he had his choice always to enjoy a perpetual spring; that before he had concluded, the princess found the kingdom of Bengal to be very much inferior to that of Persia in a great many respects. When he had finished his relation, he begged of her to entertain him with a description of Bengal.

The princess after much entreaty gave prince Firoze Shaw that satisfaction; but by lessening a great many advantages the kingdom of Bengal was well known to have over that of Persia, she betrayed the disposition she felt to accompany him, so that he believed she would consent at the first proposition he should make; but he thought it would not be proper to make it till he had shewed her so much deference as to stay with her long enough to make the blame fall on herself, in case she wished to detain him from returning to his father.

Two whole months the prince of Persia abandoned himself entirely to the will of the princess of Bengal, yielding to all the amusements she contrived for him, for she neglected nothing to divert him, as if she thought he had nothing else to do but to pass his whole life with her in this manner. But he now declared seriously he could not stay longer, and begged of her to give him leave to return to his father; repeating again the promise he had made her to come back soon in a style worthy of her and himself, and to demand her in marriage of the Rajah of Bengal.

"And, princess," observed the prince of Persia, "that you may not suspect the truth of what I say; and that by my asking this permission you may not rank me among those false lovers who forget the object of their affection as soon as absent from them; to shew that my passion is real, and not feigned, and that life cannot be pleasant to me when absent from so lovely a princess, whose love to me I cannot doubt is mutual; I would presume, were I not afraid you would be offended at my request, to ask the favour of taking you along with me."

As the prince saw that the princess blushed at these words, without any mark of anger, he proceeded, and said, "Princess, as for my father's consent, and the reception he will give you, I venture to assure you he will receive you with pleasure into his alliance; and as for the Rajah of Bengal, after all the love and tender regard he has always expressed for you, he must be the reverse of what you have described him, an enemy to your repose and happiness, if he should not receive in a friendly manner the embassy which my father will send to him for his approbation of our marriage."

The princess returned no answer to this address of the prince of Persia; but her silence, and eyes cast down, were sufficient to inform him that she had no reluctance to accompany him into Persia. The only difficulty she felt was, that the prince knew not well enough how to govern the horse, and she was apprehensive of being involved with him in the same difficulty as when he first made the experiment. But the prince soon removed her fear, by assuring her she might trust herself with him, for that after the experience he had acquired, he defied the Hindoo himself to manage him better. She thought therefore only of concerting measures to get off with him so secretly, that nobody belonging to the palace should have the least suspicion of their design.

The next morning, a little before day-break, when all the attendants were asleep, they went upon the terrace of the palace. The prince turned the horse towards Persia, and placed him where the princess could easily get up behind him; which she had no sooner done, and was well settled with her arms about his waist, for her better security, than he turned the peg, when the horse mounted into the air, and making his usual haste, under the guidance of the prince, in two hours time the prince discovered the capital of Persia.

He would not alight at the great square from whence he had set out, nor in the palace, but directed his course towards a pleasure-house at a little distance from the capital. He led the princess into a handsome apartment, where he told her, that to do her all the honour that was due to her, he would go and inform his father of their arrival, and return to her immediately. He ordered the housekeeper of the palace, who was then present, to provide the princess with whatever she had occasion for.

After the prince had taken his leave of the princess, he ordered a horse to be saddled, which he mounted, after sending back the housekeeper to the princess, with orders to provide her refreshments immediately, and then set forwards for the palace. As he passed through the streets he was received with acclamations by the people, who were overjoyed to see him again. The emperor his father was giving audience, when he appeared before him in the midst of his council. He received him with ecstacy, and embracing him with tears of joy and tenderness, asked him, what was become of the Hindoo’s horse.

This question gave the prince an opportunity of describing the embarrassment and danger he was in when the horse ascended into the air, and how he had arrived at last at the princess of Bengal’s palace, the kind reception he had met with there, and that the motive which had induced him to stay so long with her was the affection she had shewn him; also, that after promising to marry her, he had persuaded her to accompany him into Persia. “But, sir,” added the prince, “I felt assured that you would not refuse your consent, and have brought her with me on the enchanted horse, to a palace where your majesty often goes for your pleasure; and have left her there, till I could return and assure her that my promise was not in vain.”

After these words, the prince prostrated himself before the emperor to obtain his consent, when his father raised him up, embraced him a second time, and said to him, “Son, I not only consent to your marriage with the princess of Bengal, but will go and meet her myself, and thank her for the obligation I in particular have to her, and will bring her to my palace, and celebrate your nuptials this day.”

The emperor now gave orders for his court to make preparations for the princess’s entry; that the rejoicings should be announced by the royal band of military music, and that the Hindoo should be fetched out of prison and brought before him. When the Hindoo was conducted before the emperor, he said to him, “I secured thy person, that thy life, though not a sufficient victim to my rage and grief, might answer for that of the prince my son, whom, however, thanks to God! I have found again: go, take your horse, and never let me see your face more.”

As the Hindoo had learned of those who brought him out of prison that prince Firoze Shaw was returned with a princess, and was also informed of the place where he had alighted and left her, and that the emperor was making preparations to go and bring her to his palace; as soon as he got out of the presence, he bethought himself of being revenged upon the emperor and the prince. Without losing any time, he went directly to the palace, and addressing himself to the keeper, told him, he came from the prince of Persia for the princess of Bengal, and to conduct her behind him through the air to the emperor, who waited in the great square of his palace to gratify the whole court and city of Sheerauz with that wonderful sight.

The palace-keeper, who knew the Hindoo, and that the emperor had imprisoned him, gave the more credit to what he said, because he saw that he was at liberty. He presented him to the princess of Bengal; who no sooner understood that he came from the prince of Persia than she consented to what the prince, as she thought, had desired of her.

The Hindoo, overjoyed at his success, and the ease with which he had accomplished his villany, mounted his horse, took the princess behind him, with the assistance of the keeper, turned the peg, and instantly the horse mounted into the air.

At the same time the emperor of Persia, attended by his court, was on the road to the palace where the princess of Bengal had been left, and the prince of Persia was advanced before, to prepare the princess to receive his father; when the Hindoo, to brave them both, and revenge himself for the ill-treatment he had received, appeared over their heads with his prize.

When the emperor of Persia saw the ravisher, he stopped. His surprise and affliction were the more sensible, because it was not in his power to punish so high an affront. He loaded him with a thousand imprecations, as did also all the courtiers, who were witnesses of so signal a piece of insolence and unparalleled artifice and treachery.

The Hindoo, little moved with their curses, which just reached his ears, continued his way, while the emperor, extremely mortified at so great an insult, but more so that he could not punish the author, returned to his palace in rage and vexation.

But what was prince Firoze Shaw's grief at beholding the Hindoo hurrying away the princess of Bengal, whom he loved so passionately that he could not live without her! At a spectacle so little expected he was confounded, and before he could deliberate with himself what measures to pursue, the horse was out of sight. He could not resolve how to act, whether he should return to his father's palace, and shut himself in his apartment, to give himself entirely up to his affliction, without attempting to pursue the ravisher. But as his generosity, love, and courage, would not suffer this, he continued on his way to the palace where he had left his princess.

When he arrived, the palace-keeper, who was by this time convinced of his fatal credulity, in believing the artful Hindoo, threw himself at his feet with tears in his eyes, accused himself of the crime, which unintentionally he had committed, and condemned himself to die by his hand. "Rise," said the prince to him, "I do not impute the loss of my princess to thee, but to my own want of precaution. But not to lose time, fetch me a dervish's habit, and take care you do not give the least hint that it is for me."

Not far from this palace there stood a convent of dervishes, the superior of which was the palace-keeper's particular friend. He went to his chief, and telling him that a considerable officer at court and a man of worth, to whom he had been very much obliged and wished to favour, by giving him an opportunity to withdraw from some sudden displeasure of the emperor, readily obtained a complete dervish's habit, and carried it to prince Firoze Shaw. The prince immediately pulled off his own dress, put it on, and being so disguised, and provided with a box of jewels, which he had brought as a present to the princess, left the palace, uncertain which way to go, but resolved not to return till he had found out his princess, and brought her back again, or perish in the attempt.

But to return to the Hindoo; he governed his enchanted horse so well, that he arrived early next morning in a wood, near the capital of the kingdom of Cashmeer. Being hungry, and concluding the princess was so also, he alighted in that wood, in an open part of it, and left the princess on a grassy spot, close to a rivulet of clear fresh water.

During the Hindoo's absence, the princess of Bengal, who knew that she was in the power of a base ravisher, whose violence she dreaded, thought of escaping from him, and seeking out for some sanctuary. But as she had eaten scarcely any thing on her arrival at the palace, was so faint, that she could not execute her design, but was forced to abandon it and stay where she was, without any other resource than her courage, and a firm resolution rather to suffer death than be unfaithful to the prince of Persia. When the Hindoo returned, she did not wait to be entreated, but ate with him, and recovered herself enough to answer with courage to the insolent language he now began to hold to her. After many threats, as she saw that the Hindoo was preparing to use violence, she rose up to make resistance, and by her cries and shrieks drew towards them a company of horsemen, which happened to be the sultan of Cashmeer and his attendants, who, as they were returning from hunting, happily for the princess of Bengal, passed through that part of the wood, and ran to her assistance, at the noise she made.

The sultan addressed himself to the Hindoo, demanded who he was, and wherefore he ill treated the lady? The Hindoo, with great impudence, replied, "That she was his wife, and what had any one to do with his quarrel with her?"

The princess, who neither knew the rank nor quality of the person who came so seasonably to her relief, told the Hindoo he was a liar; and said to the sultan, "My lord, whoever you are whom Heaven has sent to my assistance, have compassion on a princess, and give no credit to that impostor. Heaven forbid that I should be the wife of so vile and despicable a Hindoo! a wicked magician, who has forced me away from the prince of Persia, to whom I was going to be united, and has brought me hither on the enchanted horse you behold there."

The princess of Bengal had no occasion to say more to persuade the sultan of Cashmeer that what she told him was truth. Her beauty, majestic air, and tears, spoke sufficiently for her. Justly enraged at the insolence of the Hindoo, he ordered his guards to surround him, and strike off his head: which sentence was immediately executed.

The princess, thus delivered from the persecution of the Hindoo, fell into another no less afflicting. The sultan conducted her to his palace, where he lodged her in the most magnificent apartment, next his own, commanded a great number of women slaves to attend her, and ordered a guard of eunuchs. He led her himself into the apartment he had assigned her; where, without giving her time to thank him for the great obligation she had received, he said to her, "As I am certain, princess, that you must want rest, I will take my leave of you till to-morrow, when you will be better able to relate to me the circumstances of this strange adventure;" and then left her.

The princess of Bengal's joy was inexpressible at finding herself delivered from the violence of the Hindoo, of whom she could not think without horror. She flattered herself that the sultan of Cashmeer would complete his generosity by sending her back to the prince of Persia when she should have told him her story, and asked that favour of him; but she was much deceived in these hopes; for her deliverer had resolved to marry her himself the next day; and for that end had ordered rejoicings to be made by day-break, by beating of drums, sounding of trumpets, and other instruments expressive of joy; which not only echoed through the palace, but throughout the whole city.

The princess of Bengal was awakened by these tumultuous concerts; but attributed them to a very different cause from the true one. When the sultan of Cashmeer, who had given orders that he should be informed when the princess was ready to receive a visit, came to wait upon her; after he had inquired after her health, he acquainted her that all those rejoicings were to render their nuptials the more solemn; and at the same time desired her assent to the union. This declaration put her into such agitation that she fainted away.

The women-slaves, who were present, ran to her assistance; and the sultan did all he could to bring her to herself, though it was a long time before they succeeded. But when she recovered, rather than break the promise she had made to prince Firoze Shaw, by consenting to marry the sultan of Cashmeer, who had proclaimed their nuptials before he had asked her consent, she resolved to feign madness. She began to utter the most extravagant expressions before the sultan, and even rose off her seat as if to attack him; insomuch that he was greatly alarmed and afflicted, that he had made such a proposal so unseasonably.

When he found that her frenzy rather increased than abated, he left her with her women, charging them never to leave her alone, but to take great care of her. He sent often that day to inquire how she did; but received no other answer than that she was rather worse than better. At night she seemed more indisposed than she had been all day, insomuch that the sultan deferred the happiness he had promised himself.

The princess of Bengal continued to talk wildly, and shew other marks of a disordered mind, next day and the following; so that the sultan was induced to send for all the physicians belonging to his court, to consult them upon her disease, and to ask if they could cure her.

The physicians all agreed that there were several sorts and degrees of this disorder, some curable and others not; and told the sultan, that they could not judge of the princess of Bengal's unless they might see her; upon which the sultan ordered the eunuchs to introduce them into the princess's chamber, one after another, according to their rank.

The princess, who foresaw what would happen, and feared, that if she let the physicians feel her pulse, the least experienced of them would soon know that she was in good health, and that her madness was only feigned, flew into such a well-dissembled rage and passion, that she appeared ready to injure those who came near her; so none of them durst approach her.

Some who pretended to be more skilful than the rest, and boasted of judging of diseases only by sight, ordered her some potions, which she made the less difficulty to take, well knowing she could be sick or well at pleasure, and that they could do her no harm.

When the sultan of Cashmeer saw that his court physicians could not cure her, he called in the most celebrated and experienced of the city, who had no better success. Afterwards he sent for the most famous in the kingdom, who met with no better reception than the others from the princess, and what they prescribed had no effect. Afterwards he dispatched expresses to the courts of neighbouring sultans, with the princess's case, to be distributed among the most famous physicians, with a promise of a munificent reward to any of them who should come and effect her cure.

Various physicians arrived from all parts, and tried their skill; but none could boast of better success than their predecessors, or of restoring the princess's faculties, since it was a case that did not depend on medicine, but on the will of the princess herself.

During this interval Firoze Shaw, disguised in the habit of a dervish, travelled through many provinces and towns, involved in grief; and endured excessive fatigue, not knowing which way to direct his course, or whether he might not be pursuing the very opposite road from what he ought, in order to hear the tidings he was in search of. He made diligent inquiry after her at every place he came to; till at last passing through a city of Hindoostan, he heard the people talk much of a princess of Bengal, who ran mad on the day of the intended celebration of her nuptials with the sultan of Cashmeer. At the name of the princess of Bengal, and supposing that there could exist no other princess of Bengal than her upon whose account he had undertaken his travels, he hastened towards the kingdom of Cashmeer, and upon his arrival at the capital took up his lodging at a khan, where the same day he was informed of the story of the princess, and the fate of the Hindoo magician, which he had so richly deserved. From the circumstances, the prince was convinced that she was the beloved object he had sought so long.

Being informed of all these particulars, he provided himself against the next day with a physician's habit, and having let his beard grow during his travels, he passed the more easily for the character he assumed, went to the palace, impatient to behold his beloved, where he presented himself to the chief of the officers, and observed modestly, that perhaps it might be looked upon as a rash undertaking to attempt the cure of the princess, after so many had failed; but that he hoped some specifics, from which he had experienced success, might effect the desired relief. The chief of the officers told him he was welcome, that the sultan would receive him with pleasure, and that if he should have the good fortune to restore the princess to her former health, he might expect a considerable reward from his master's liberality: "Stay a moment," added he, "I will come to you again immediately."

Some time had elapsed since any physician had offered himself; and the sultan of Cashmeer with great grief had begun to lose all hope of ever seeing the princess restored to health, that he might marry, and shew how much he loved her. He ordered the officer to introduce the physician he had announced.

The prince of Persia was presented, when the sultan, without wasting time in superfluous discourse, after having told him the princess of Bengal could not bear the sight of a physician without falling into most violent transports, which increased her malady, conducted him into a closet, from whence, through a lattice, he might see her without being observed.

There Firoze Shaw beheld his lovely princess sitting melancholy, with tears in her eyes, and singing an air in which she deplored her unhappy fate, which had deprived her, perhaps, for ever, of the object she loved so tenderly.

The prince was sensibly affected at the melancholy condition in which he found his dear princess, but he wanted no other signs to comprehend that her disorder was feigned, or that it was for love of him that she was under so grievous an affliction. When he came out of the closet, he told the sultan that he had discovered the nature of the princess's complaint, and that she was not incurable; but added withal, that he must speak with her in private, and alone, as, notwithstanding her violent agitation at the sight of physicians, he hoped she would hear and receive him favourably.

The sultan ordered the princess's chamber door to be opened, and Firoze Shaw went in. As soon as the princess saw him (taking him by his habit to be a physician), she rose up in a rage, threatening him, and giving him the most abusive language. He made directly towards her, and when he was nigh enough for her to hear him, for he did not wish to be heard by any one else, said to her, in a low voice, "Princess, I am not a physician, but the prince of Persia, and am come to procure you your liberty."

The princess, who knew the sound of the voice, and the upper features of his face, notwithstanding he had let his beard grow so long, grew calm at once, and a secret joy and pleasure overspread her face, the effect of seeing the person so much desired so unexpectedly. Her agreeable surprise deprived her for some time of the use of speech, and gave Firoze Shaw time to tell her as briefly as possible, how despair had seized him when he saw the Hindoo carry her away; the resolution he afterwards had taken to leave every thing to find her out, and never to return home till he had regained her out of the hands of the perfidious wretch; and by what good fortune, at last, after a long and fatiguing journey, he had the satisfaction to find her in the palace of the sultan of Cashmeer. He then desired the princess to inform him of all that happened to her, from the time she was taken away, till that moment when he had the happiness to converse with her, telling her, that it was of the greatest importance to know this, that he might take the most proper measures to deliver her from the tyranny of the sultan of Cashmeer.

The princess informed him how she was delivered from the Hindoo's violence by the sultan, as he was returning from hunting; how she was alarmed the next day, by a declaration he had made of his precipitate design to marry her, without even the ceremony of asking her consent; that this violent and tyrannical conduct put her into a swoon; after which she thought she had no other way than what she had taken, to preserve herself for a prince to whom she had given her heart and faith; or die, rather than marry the sultan, whom she neither loved, nor could ever love.

The prince of Persia then asked her, if she knew what became of the horse, after the death of the Hindoo magician. To which she answered, that she knew not what orders the sultan had given; but supposed, after the account she had given him of it, he would take care of it as a curiosity.

As Firoze Shaw never doubted but that the sultan had the horse, he communicated to the princess his design of making use of it to convey them both into Persia; and after they had consulted together on the measures they should take, they agreed that the princess should dress herself the next day, and receive the sultan civilly, but without speaking to him.

The sultan of Cashmeer was overjoyed when the prince of Persia stated to him what effect his first visit had had towards the cure of the princess. On the following day, when the princess received him in such a manner as persuaded him her cure was far advanced, he regarded him as the greatest physician in the world; and seeing her in this state, contented himself with telling her how rejoiced he was at her being likely soon to recover her health. He exhorted her to follow the directions of so skilful a physician, in order to complete what he had so well begun; and then retired without waiting for her answer.

The prince of Persia, who attended the sultan of Cashmeer out of the princess's chamber, as he accompanied him, asked if, without failing in due respect, he might inquire, how the princess of Bengal came into the dominions of Cashmeer thus alone, since her own country was far distant? This he said on purpose to introduce some conversation about the enchanted horse, and to know what was become of it.

The sultan, who could not penetrate into the prince's motive, concealed nothing from him; but informed him of what the princess had related, when he had delivered her from the Hindoo magician: adding, that he had ordered the enchanted horse to be kept safe in his treasury as a great curiosity, though he knew not the use of it.

"Sir," replied the pretended physician, "the information which your majesty has given your devoted slave affords me a means of curing the princess. As she was brought hither on this horse, and the horse is enchanted, she hath contracted something of the enchantment, which can be dissipated only by a certain incense which I am acquainted with. If your majesty would entertain yourself, your court, and the people of your capital, with the most surprising sight that ever was beheld, let the horse be brought into the great square before the palace, and leave the rest to me. I promise to show you, and all that assembly, in a few moments time, the princess of Bengal completely restored in body and mind. But the better to effect what I propose, it will be requisite that the princess, should be dressed as magnificently as possible, and adorned with the most valuable jewels your majesty may possess." The sultan would have undertaken much more difficult things to have arrived at the enjoyment of his desires, which he expected soon to accomplish.

The next day, the enchanted horse was, by his order, taken out of the treasury, and placed early in the great square before the palace. A report was spread through the town that there was something extraordinary to be seen, and crowds of people flocked thither from all parts, insomuch that the sultan's guards were placed to prevent disorder, and to keep space enough round the horse.

The sultan of Cashmeer, surrounded by all his nobles and ministers of state, was placed on a scaffold erected on purpose. The princess of Bengal, attended by a number of ladies whom the sultan had assigned her, went up to the enchanted horse, and the women helped her to mount. When she was fixed in the saddle, and had the bridle in her hand, the pretended physician placed round the horse at a proper distance many vessels full of lighted charcoal, which he had ordered to be brought, and going round them with a solemn pace, cast in a strong and grateful perfume; then collected in himself, with downcast eyes, and his hands upon his breast, he ran three times about the horse, making as if he pronounced some mystical words. The moment the pots sent forth a dark cloud of pleasant smell, which so surrounded the princess, that neither she nor the horse could be discerned, watching his opportunity, the prince jumped nimbly up behind her, and reaching his hand to the peg, turned it; and just as the horse rose with them into the air, he pronounced these words, which the sultan heard distinctly, "Sultan of Cashmeer, when you would marry princesses who implore your protection, learn first to obtain their consent."

Thus the prince delivered the princess of Bengal, and carried her the same day to the capital of Persia, where he alighted in the square of the palace, before the emperor his father's apartment, who deferred the solemnization of the marriage no longer than till he could make the preparations necessary to render the ceremony pompous and magnificent, and evince the interest he took in it.

After the days appointed for the rejoicings were over, the emperor of Persia's first care was to name and appoint an ambassador to go to the Rajah of Bengal with an account of what had passed, and to demand his approbation and ratification of the alliance contracted by this marriage; which the Rajah of Bengal took as an honour, and granted with great pleasure and satisfaction.

THE STORY OF PRINCE AHMED, AND THE FAIRY PERIE BANOU.

There was a sultan who had peaceably filled the throne of India many years, and had the satisfaction in his old age to have three sons the worthy imitators of his virtues, who, with the princess his niece, were the ornaments of his court. The eldest of the princes was called Houssain, the second Ali, the youngest Ahmed, and the princess his niece Nouronnihar.

The princess Nouronnihar was the daughter of the younger brother of the sultan, to whom in his lifetime he had allowed a considerable revenue. But that prince had not been married long before he died, and left the princess very young. The sultan, in consideration of the brotherly love and friendship that had always subsisted between them, besides a great attachment to his person, took upon himself the care of his daughter's education, and brought her up in his palace with the three princes; where her singular beauty and personal accomplishments, joined to a lively wit and irreproachable virtue, distinguished her among all the princesses of her time.

The sultan, her uncle, proposed to marry her when she arrived at a proper age, and by that means to contract an alliance with some neighbouring prince; and was thinking seriously on the subject, when he perceived that the three princes his sons loved her passionately. This gave him much concern, though his grief did not proceed from a consideration that their passion prevented his forming the alliance he designed, but the difficulty he foresaw to make them agree, and that the two youngest should consent to yield her up to their eldest brother. He spoke to each of them apart; and remonstrated on the impossibility of one princess being the wife of three persons, and the troubles they would create if they persisted in their attachment. He did all he could to persuade them to abide by a declaration of the princess in favour of one of them; or to desist from their pretensions, to think of other matches which he left them free liberty to choose, and suffer her to be married to a foreign attachment. But as he found them obstinate, he sent for them all together, and said, “My children, since I have not been able to dissuade you from aspiring to marry the princess your cousin; and as I have no inclination to use my authority, to give her to one in preference to his brothers, I trust I have thought of an expedient which will please you all, and preserve harmony among you, if you will but hear me, and follow my advice. I think it would not be amiss if you were to travel separately into different countries, so that you might not meet each other: and as you know I am very curious, and delight in every thing that is rare and singular, I promise my niece in marriage to him who shall bring me the most extraordinary rarity; chance may lead you to form your own judgment of the singularity of the things which you bring, by the comparison you make of them, so that you will have no difficulty to do yourselves justice by yielding the preference to him who has deserved it; and for the expense of travelling, I will give each of you a sum suited to your rank, and for the purchase of the rarity you shall search after; which shall not be laid out in equipage and attendants, as much display, by discovering who you are, would not only deprive you of the liberty to acquit yourselves of your charge, but prevent your observing those things which may merit your attention, and may be most useful to you."

As the three princes were always submissive and obedient to the sultan's will, and each flattered himself fortune might prove favourable to him, and give him possession of the princess Nouronnihar, they all consented to the proposal. The sultan gave them the money he promised; and that very day they issued orders for the preparations for their travels, and took leave of their father, that they might be ready to set out early next morning. They all went out at the same gate of the city, each dressed like a merchant, attended by a trusty officer, habited as a slave, and all well mounted and equipped. They proceeded the first day's journey together; and slept at a caravanserai, where the road divided into three different tracks. At night when they were at supper together, they all agreed to travel for a year, to make their present lodging their rendezvous; and that the first who came should wait for the rest; that as they had all three taken leave together of the sultan, they might return in company. The next morning by break of day, after they had embraced and wished each other reciprocally good success, they mounted their horses, and took each a different road.

Prince Houssain, the eldest brother, who had heard wonders of the extent, power, riches, and splendour of the kingdom of Bisnagar, bent his course towards the Indian coast; and after three months' travelling, joining himself to different caravans, sometimes over deserts and barren mountains, and sometimes through populous and fertile countries, arrived at Bisnagar, the capital of the kingdom of that name, and the residence of its maharajah. He lodged at a khan appointed for foreign merchants; and having learnt that there were four principal divisions where merchants of all sorts kept their shops, in the midst of which stood the castle, or rather the maharajah's palace, on a large extent of ground, as the centre of the city, surrounded by three courts, and each gate distant two leagues from the other, he went to one of these quarters the next day.

Prince Houssain could not view this quarter without admiration. It was large, divided into several streets, all vaulted and shaded from the sun, but yet very light. The shops were all of the same size and proportion; and all who dealt in the same sort of goods, as well as all the artists of the same profession, lived in one street.

The number of shops stocked with all kinds of merchandizes, such as the finest linens from several parts of India, some painted in the most lively colours, and representing men, landscapes, trees, and flowers; silks and brocades from Persia, China, and other places; porcelain from Japan and China; foot carpets of all sizes; surprised him so much, that he knew not how to believe his eyes: but when he came to the shops of the goldsmiths and jewellers (for those two trades were exercised by the same merchants), he was in a kind of ecstasy, at beholding such prodigious quantities of wrought gold and silver, and was dazzled by the lustre of the pearls, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and other precious stones exposed to sale. But if he was amazed at seeing so many treasures in one place, he was much more surprised when he came to judge of the wealth of the whole kingdom, by considering, that except the brahmins, and ministers of the idols, who profess a life retired from worldly vanity, there was not an Indian, man or woman, through the extent of the kingdom, but wore necklaces, bracelets, and ornaments about their legs and feet, made of pearls, and precious stones, which appeared with the greater lustre, as they were blacks, which colour admirably set off their brilliancy.

Another object which prince Houssain particularly admired was the great number of flower-sellers who crowded the streets; for the Indians are such great lovers of flowers that not one will stir without a nosegay of them in his hand, or a garland of them on his head; and the merchants keep them in pots in their shops, so that the air of the whole quarter, however extensive, is perfectly perfumed.

After prince Houssain had passed through that quarter, street by street, his thoughts fully employed on the riches he had seen, he was much fatigued; which a merchant perceiving, civilly invited him to sit down in his shop. He accepted his offer; but had not been seated long, before he saw a crier pass with a piece of carpeting on his arm, about six feet square, and crying it at thirty purses. The prince called to the crier, and asked to see the carpeting, which seemed to him to be valued at an exorbitant price, not only for the size of it, but the meanness of the materials. When he had examined it well, he told the crier that he could not comprehend how so small a piece of carpeting, and of so indifferent an appearance, could be set at so high a price.

The crier, who took him for a merchant, replied, “Sir, if this price seems so extravagant to you, your amazement will be greater when I tell you, I have orders to raise it to forty purses, and not to part with it under.” “Certainly,” answered prince Houssain, “it must have something very extraordinary in it, which I know nothing of.” “You have guessed right, sir,” replied the crier, “and will own it when you come to know, that whoever sits on this piece of carpeting may be transported in an instant wherever he desires to be, without being stopped by any obstacle.”

At this account, the prince of the Indies, considering that the principal motive of his tour was to carry the sultan his father home some singular rarity, thought that he could not meet with any which would afford him more satisfaction. “If the carpeting,” said he to the crier, “has the virtue you attribute to it, I shall not think forty purses too much; but shall make you a present besides.” “Sir,” replied the crier, “I have told you the truth; and it will be an easy matter to convince you of it, as soon as you have made the bargain for forty purses, on condition I shew you the experiment. But as I suppose you have not so much with you, and to receive them, I must go with you to the khan where you lodge; with the leave of the master of this shop we will go into the back warehouse, where I will spread the carpeting; and when we have both sat down, and you have formed the wish to be transported into your apartment at the khan, if we are not conveyed thither, it shall be no bargain, and you shall be at your liberty. As to your present, as I am paid for my trouble by the seller, I shall receive it as a favour, and feel much obliged by your liberality."

On this assurance of the crier, the prince accepted the conditions, and concluded the bargain; then having obtained the master's leave, they went into his back-shop, where they both sat down on the carpeting; and as soon as the prince had formed his wish to be transported into his apartment at the khan, he in an instant found himself and the crier there: as he wanted not a more convincing proof of the virtue of the carpeting, he counted to the crier forty purses of gold, and gave him twenty pieces for himself.

In this manner prince Houssain became the possessor of the carpeting, and was overjoyed that at his arrival at Bisnagar he had found so rare a curiosity, which he never doubted must of course gain him the possession of Nouronnihar. In short, he thought it impossible for the princes, his younger brothers, to meet with any thing to be compared with it. It was in his power, by sitting on this carpeting, to be at the place of rendezvous that very day; but as he would be obliged to wait there for his brothers, as they had agreed, and as he was desirous of seeing the maharajah of Bisnagar and his court, and to inform himself of the strength, laws, customs, and religion of the kingdom, he chose to make a longer abode in this capital, and to spend some months in satisfying his curiosity.

It was the custom of the maharajah of Bisnagar to give all foreign merchants access to his person once a week; so that in his assumed character prince Houssain saw him often: and as this prince was of an engaging presence, sensible and accomplished, he distinguished himself among the merchants, and was preferred before them all by the maharajah, who addressed himself to him to be informed of the person of the sultan of the Indies, and of the government, strength, and riches of his dominions.

The rest of his time the prince employed in viewing what was most remarkable in and about the city; and among the objects which were most worthy of admiration, he visited a temple remarkable for being built all of brass. It was ten cubits square, and fifteen high; but its greatest ornament was an idol of the height of a man, of massive gold; its eyes were two rubies, set so artificially, that it seemed to look at those who viewed it, on which side soever they turned: besides this, there was another not less curious, in the environs of the city, in the midst of a lawn of about ten acres, which was like a delicious garden full of roses and the choicest flowers, surrounded by a low wall, breast high, to keep out the cattle. In the midst of this lawn was raised a terrace, a man's height, and covered with such beautiful cement, that the whole pavement seemed to be but one single stone, most highly polished. A temple was erected in the middle of this terrace, having a spire rising about fifty cubits high from the building, which might be seen for several leagues round. The temple was thirty cubits long, and twenty broad; built of red marble, highly polished. The inside of the spire was adorned with three compartments of fine paintings: and there was not a part in the whole edifice but what was embellished with paintings, or relievos, and gaudy idols from top to bottom.

Every night and morning there were superstitious ceremonies performed in this temple, which were always succeeded by sports, concerts of music, dancing, singing, and feasts. The brahmins of the temple, and the inhabitants of this suburb, had nothing to subsist on but the offerings of pilgrims, who came in crowds from the most distant parts of the kingdom to perform their vows.

Prince Houssain was also spectator of a solemn festival, which was celebrated every year at the court of Bisnagar, at which all the governors of provinces, commanders of fortified places, all heads and magistrates of towns, and the brahmins most celebrated for their learning, were usually present; and some lived so far off, that they were four months in coming. This assembly, composed of such innumerable multitudes of Hindoos encamped in variously coloured tents, on a plain of vast extent, was a splendid sight, as far as the eye could reach. In the centre of this plain was a square of great length and breadth, closed on one side by a large scaffolding of nine stories, supported by forty pillars, raised for the maharajah and his court, and those strangers whom he admitted to audience once a week: within, it was adorned and furnished magnificently with rich carpets and cushions; and on the outside were painted landscapes, wherein all sorts of beasts, birds, and insects, even flies and gnats, were drawn very naturally. Other scaffolds of at least four or five stories, and painted almost all with the same fanciful brilliancy, formed the other three sides. But what was more particular in these scaffolds, they could turn, and make them change their fronts so as to present different decorations to the eye every hour.

On each side of the square, at some little distance from each other, were ranged a thousand elephants, sumptuously caparisoned, each having upon his back a square wooden stage, finely gilt, upon which were musicians and buffoons. The trunks, ears, and bodies of these elephants were painted with cinnabar and other colours, representing grotesque figures.

But what prince Houssain most of all admired, as a proof of the industry, address, and inventive genius of the Hindoos, was to see the largest of these elephants stand with his four feet on a post fixed into the earth, and standing out of it above two feet, playing and beating time with his trunk to the music. Besides this, he admired another elephant as large as the former, placed upon a plank, laid across a strong beam about ten feet high, with a sufficiently heavyweight at the other end, which balanced him, while he kept time, by the motions of his body and trunk, with the music, as well as the other elephant. The Hindoos, after having fastened on the counterpoise, had drawn the other end of the board down to the ground, and made the elephant get upon it.

Prince Houssain might have made a longer stay in the kingdom and court of Bisnagar, where he would have been agreeably diverted by a great variety of other wonders, till the last day of the year, whereon he and his brothers had appointed to meet. But he was so well satisfied with what he had seen, and his thoughts ran so much upon the object of his love, that after such success in meeting with his carpet, reflecting on the beauty and charms of the princess Nouronnihar increased every day the violence of his passion, and he fancied he should be the more easy and happy the nearer he was to her. After he had satisfied the master of the khan for his apartment, and told him the hour when he might come for the key, without mentioning how he should travel, he shut the door, put the key on the outside, and spreading the carpet, he and the officer he had brought with him sat down upon it, and as soon as he had formed his wish, were transported to the caravanserai at which he and his brothers were to meet, and where he passed for a merchant till their arrival.

Prince Ali, the second brother, who had designed to travel into Persia, in conformity with the intention of the sultan of the Indies, took that road, having three days after he parted with his brothers joined a caravan; and in four months arrived at Sheerauz, which was then the capital of the empire of Persia; and having in the way contracted a friendship with some merchants, passed for a jeweller, and lodged in the same khan with them.

The next morning, while the merchants opened their bales of merchandises, prince Ali, who travelled only for his pleasure, and had brought nothing but necessaries with him, after he had dressed himself, took a walk into that quarter of the town where they sold precious stones, gold and silver works, brocades, silks, fine linens, and other choice and valuable articles, and which was at Sheerauz called the bezestein. It was a spacious and well-built street, arched over, within the arcades of which were shops. Prince Ali soon rambled through the bezestein, and with admiration judged of the riches of the place by the prodigious quantities of the most precious merchandises exposed to view.

But among the criers who passed backwards and forwards with several sorts of goods, offering to sell them, he was not a little surprised to see one who held in his hand an ivory tube, of about a foot in length, and about an inch thick, which he cried at forty purses. At first he thought the crier mad, and to inform himself, went to a shop, and said to the merchant who stood at the door, “Pray, sir, is not that man” (pointing to the crier, who cried the ivory tube at forty purses) “mad? If he is not, I am much deceived.” “Indeed, sir,” answered the merchant, “he was in his right senses yesterday; and I can assure you he is one of the ablest criers we have, and the most employed of any, as being to be confided in when any thing valuable is to be sold; and if he cries the ivory tube at forty purses, it must be worth as much or more, on some account or other which does not appear. He will come by presently, when we will call him, and you shall satisfy yourself: in the mean time sit down on my sofa, and rest yourself."

Prince Ali accepted the merchant's obliging offer, and presently afterwards the crier arrived. The merchant called him by his name, and pointing to the prince, said to him, "Tell that gentleman, who asked me if you were in your right senses, what you mean by crying that ivory tube, which seems not to be worth much, at forty purses? I should indeed be much amazed myself, if I did not know you were a sensible man." The crier, addressing himself to prince Ali, said, "Sir, you are not the only person that takes me for a madman, on account of this tube; you shall judge yourself whether I am or no, when I have told you its property; and I hope you will value it at as high a price as those I have shewed it to already, who had as bad an opinion of me as you have.

"First, sir," pursued the crier, presenting the ivory tube to the prince, "observe, that this tube is furnished with a glass at both ends; by looking through one of them, you will see whatever object you wish to behold." "I am," said the prince, "ready to make you all proper reparation for the reflection I have cast upon you, if you can make the truth of what you advance appear; and" (as he had the ivory tube in his hand, after he had looked at the two glasses), he said, "shew me at which of these ends I must look, that I may be satisfied." The crier presently shewed him, and he looked through; wishing, at the same time, to see the sultan his father, whom he immediately beheld in perfect health, sitting on his throne, in the midst of his council. Next, as there was nothing in the world so dear to him, after the sultan, as the princess Nouronnihar, he wished to see her; and instantly beheld her laughing, and in a gay humour, with her women about her.

Prince All wanted no other proof to persuade him that this tube was the most valuable article, not only in the city of Sheerauz, but in all the world; and believed, that if he should neglect to purchase it, he should never meet with an equally wonderful curiosity. He said to the crier, "I am very sorry that I have entertained so erroneous an opinion of you, but hope to make amends by buying the tube, for I should be sorry if any body else had it; so tell me the lowest price the owner has fixed; and do not give yourself any farther trouble to hawk it about, but go with me and I will pay you the money." The crier assured him, with an oath, that his last orders were to take no less than forty purses; and if he disputed the truth of what he said, he would carry him to his employer. The prince believed him, took him to the khan where he lodged, told him out the money, and received the tube.

Prince Ali was overjoyed at his purchase; and persuaded himself, that as his brothers would not be able to meet with any thing so rare and admirable, the princess Nouronnihar must be the recompense of his fatigue and travels. He thought now of only visiting the court of Persia incognito, and seeing whatever was curious in and about Sheerauz, till the caravan with which he came might be ready to return to the Indies. He satisfied his curiosity, and when the caravan took its departure, the prince joined the former party of merchants his friends, and arrived happily without any accident or trouble, further than the length of the journey and fatigue of travelling, at the place of rendezvous, where he found prince Houssain, and both waited for prince Ahmed.

Prince Ahmed took the road of Samarcand, and the day after his arrival, went, as his brothers had done, into the bezestein; where he had not walked long before he heard a crier, who had an artificial apple in his hand, cry it at five-and-thirty purses. He stopped the crier, and said to him, "Let me see that apple, and tell me what virtue or extraordinary property it possesses, to be valued at so high a rate?" "Sir," replied the crier, giving it into his hand, "if you look at the mere outside of this apple it is not very remarkable; but if you consider its properties, and the great use and benefit it is of to mankind, you will say it is invaluable, and that he who possesses it is master of a great treasure. It cures all sick persons of the most mortal diseases, whether fever, pleurisy, plague, or other malignant distempers; for even if the patient is dying, it will recover him immediately, and restore him to perfect health: and this merely by the patient's smelling to it."

"If one may believe you," replied prince Ahmed, "the virtues of this apple are wonderful, and it is indeed invaluable: but what ground has the purchaser to be persuaded that there is no exaggeration in the high praises you bestow on it?” “Sir,” replied the crier, “the truth is known by the whole city of Samarcand; but without going any farther, ask all these merchants you see here, and hear what they say; you will find several of them will tell you they had not been alive this day had they not made use of this excellent remedy; and that you may the better comprehend what it is, I must tell you it is the fruit of the study and experience of a celebrated philosopher of this city, who applied himself all his lifetime to the knowledge of the virtues of plants and minerals, and at last attained to this composition, by which he performed such surprising cures, as will never be forgotten; but died suddenly himself, before he could apply his own sovereign remedy; and left his wife and a great many young children behind in very indifferent circumstances, who, to support her family, and to provide for her children, has resolved to sell it.”

While the crier was detailing to prince Ahmed the virtues of the artificial apple, many persons came about them, and confirmed what he declared; and one amongst the rest said he had a friend dangerously ill, whose life was despaired of; which was a favourable opportunity to shew the experiment. Upon which prince Ahmed told the crier he would give him forty purses for the apple if it cured the sick person by smelling to it.

The crier, who had orders to sell it at that price, said to prince Ahmed, “Come, sir, let us go and make the experiment, and the apple shall be yours; and I say this with the greater confidence, as it is an undoubted fact that it will always have the same effect, as it already has had whenever it has been applied to save from death so many persons whose lives were despaired of.” In short, the experiment succeeded; and the prince, after he had counted out to the crier forty purses, and had received the apple from him, waited with the greatest impatience for the departure of a caravan for the Indies. In the mean time he saw all that was curious at and about Samarcand, and principally the valley of Sogd, which is reckoned by the Arabians one of the four paradises of this world, for the beauty of its fields, gardens, and palaces, and for its fertility in fruit of all sorts, and all the other pleasures enjoyed there in the fine season.

Ahmed joined himself to the first caravan that set out for the Indies, and notwithstanding the inevitable inconveniences of so long a journey, arrived in perfect health at the caravanserai, where the princes Houssain and Ali waited for him.

Ali, who had arrived some time before Ahmed, asked Houssain how long he had been there? who told him, “Three months;” to which he replied, “Then certainly you have not been very far.” “I will tell you nothing now,” said prince Houssain, “of where I have been, but only assure you, I was above three months travelling to the place I went to.” “But then,” replied prince Ali, “you made a short stay there.” “Indeed, brother,” said prince Houssain, “you are mistaken; I resided at one place above four months, and might have stayed longer.” “Unless you flew back,” returned Ali again, “I cannot comprehend how you can have been three months here, as you would make me believe.”

“I tell you the truth,” added Houssain, “and it is a riddle which I shall not explain to you, till our brother Ahmed joins us; when I will let you know what rarity I have purchased in my travels. I know not what you have got, but believe it to be some trifle, because I do not perceive that your baggage is increased.” “And pray what have you brought?” demanded prince Ali, “for I can see nothing but an ordinary piece of carpeting, with which you cover your sofa; and therefore I think I may return your raillery; and as you seem to make what you have brought a secret, you cannot take it amiss that I do the same with respect to what I have procured.”

“I consider the rarity I have purchased,” replied Houssain, “to excel all others whatever, and should not make any difficulty to shew it you, and make you allow that it is so, and at the same time tell you how I came by it, without being in the least apprehensive that what you have got is to be preferred to it: but it is proper that we should wait till our brother Ahmed arrives, when we may communicate our good fortune to each other.”

Prince All would not enter into a dispute with prince Houssain on the preference he gave his rarity, but was persuaded, that if his perspective glass was not preferable, it was impossible it should be inferior to it; and therefore agreed to stay till prince Ahmed arrived, to produce his purchase.

When prince Ahmed joined his brothers, they embraced with tenderness, and complimented each other on the happiness of meeting together at the same place they had set out from. Houssain, as the eldest brother, then assumed the discourse, and said to them, “Brothers, we shall have time enough hereafter to entertain ourselves with the particulars of our travels. Let us come to that which is of the greatest importance for us to know; and as I do not doubt you remember the principal motive which engaged us to travel, let us not conceal from each other the curiosities we have brought, but shew them, that we may do ourselves justice beforehand, and judge to which of us the sultan our father may give the preference.

“To set the example,” continued Houssain, “I will tell you, that the rarity which I have brought from the kingdom of Bisnagar is the carpeting on which I sit, which looks but ordinary, and makes no shew; but when I have declared its virtues, you will be struck with admiration, and confess you never heard of any thing like it. Whoever sits on it, as we do, and desires to be transported to any place, be it ever so far distant, he is immediately carried thither. I made the experiment myself, before I paid the forty purses, which I most readily gave for it; and when I had fully satisfied my curiosity at the court of Bisnagar, and wished to return here, I made use of no other conveyance than this wonderful carpet for myself and servant, who can tell you how long we were on our journey. I will shew you both the experiment whenever you please. I expect now that you should tell me whether what you have brought is to be compared with this carpet.”

Here prince Houssain finished his commendations of the excellency of his carpet; and prince Ali, addressing himself to him, said, “I must own, brother, that your carpet is one of the most surprising curiosities, if it has, as I do not doubt, the property you speak of. But you must allow that there may be other rarities, I will not say more, but at least as wonderful, in another way; and to convince you there are, here is an ivory tube, which appears to the eye no more a prodigy than your carpet; it cost me as much, and I am as well satisfied with my purchase as you can be with yours; and you will be so just as to own that I have not been imposed upon, when you shall know by experience, that by looking at one end you see whatever object you wish to behold. I would not have you take my word,” added prince Ali, presenting the tube to him; “take it, make trial of it yourself."

Houssain took the ivory tube from prince Ali, and put that end to his eye which Ali directed, with an intention to see the princess Nouronnihar; when Ali and prince Ahmed, who kept their eyes fixed upon him, were extremely surprised to see his countenance change in such a manner, as expressed extraordinary alarm and affliction. Prince Houssain did not give them time to ask what was the matter, but cried out, "Alas! princes, to what purpose have we undertaken such long and fatiguing journeys, but with the hopes of being recompensed by the possession of the charming Nouronnihar, when in a few moments that lovely princess will breathe her last. I saw her in her bed, surrounded by her women and eunuchs, all in tears, who seem to expect her death. Take the tube, behold yourselves the miserable state she is in, and mingle your tears with mine."

Prince Ali took the tube out of Houssain's hand, and after he had seen the same object with sensible grief, presented it to Ahmed, who took it, to behold the melancholy sight which so much concerned them all.

When prince Ahmed had taken the tube out of Ali's hands, and saw that the princess Nouronnihar's end was so near, he addressed himself to his two brothers, and said, "Princes, the princess Nouronnihar, equally the object of our vows, is indeed just at death's door; but provided we make haste and lose no time, we may preserve her life." He then took the artificial apple out of his bosom, and shewing it to his brothers, resumed, "This apple cost me as much and more than either the carpet or tube. The opportunity which now presents itself to shew you its wonderful property makes me not regret the forty purses I gave for it. But not to keep you longer in suspense, it has this virtue; if a sick person smells to it, though in the last agonies, it will restore him to perfect health immediately. I have made the experiment, and can show you its wonderful effect on the person of the princess Nouronnihar, if we hasten to assist her."

"If that be all," replied prince Houssain, "we cannot make more dispatch than by transporting ourselves instantly into her chamber by means of my carpet. Come, lose no time, sit down, it is large enough to hold us all: but first let us give orders to our servants to set out immediately, and join us at the palace."

As soon as the order was given, the princes Ali and Ahmed sat down by Houssain, and as their interest was the same, they all framed the same wish, and were transported instantaneously into the princess Nouronnihar's chamber.

The presence of the three princes, who were so little expected, alarmed the princess's women and eunuchs, who could not comprehend by what enchantment three men should be among them; for they did not know them at first; and the eunuchs were ready to fall upon them, as people who had got into a part of the palace where they were not allowed to come; but they presently found their mistake.

Prince Ahmed no sooner saw himself in Nouronnihar's chamber, and perceived the princess dying, but he rose off the carpet, as did also the other two princes, went to the bed-side, and put the apple to her nostrils. The princess instantly opened her eyes, and turned her head from one side to another, looking at the persons who stood about her; she then rose up in the bed, and asked to be dressed, with the same freedom and recollection as if she had awaked out of a sound sleep. Her women presently informed her, in a manner that shewed their joy, that she was obliged to the three princes her cousins, and particularly to prince Ahmed, for the sudden recovery of her health. She immediately expressed her joy at seeing them, and thanked them all together, but afterwards prince Ahmed in particular. As she desired to dress, the princes contented themselves with telling her how great a pleasure it was to them to have come soon enough to contribute each in any degree towards relieving her from the imminent danger she was in, and what ardent prayers they had offered for the continuance of her life; after which they retired.

While the princess was dressing, the princes went to throw themselves at the sultan their father's feet; but when they came to him, they found he had been previously informed of their unexpected arrival by the chief of the princess's eunuchs, and by what means the princess had been so suddenly cured. The sultan received and embraced them with the greatest joy, both for their return, and the wonderful recovery of the princess his niece, whom he loved as if she had been his own daughter, and who had been given over by the physicians. After the usual compliments, the princes presented each the rarity which he had brought: prince Houssain his carpet, prince Ali his ivory tube, and prince Ahmed the artificial apple; and after each had commended his present, as he put it into the sultan's hands, they begged of him to pronounce their fate, and declare to which of them he would give the princess Nouronnihar, according to his promise.

The sultan of the Indies having kindly heard all that the princes had to say in favour of their rarities, without interrupting them, and being well informed of what had happened in relation to the princess Nouronnihar's cure, remained some time silent, considering what answer he should make. At last he broke silence, and said to them in terms full of wisdom, "I would declare for one of you, my children, if I could do it with justice; but consider whether I can? It is true, Ahmed, the princess my niece is obliged to your artificial apple for her cure: but let me ask you, whether you could have been so serviceable to her if you had not known by Ali's tube the danger she was in, and if Houssain's carpet had not brought you to her so soon? Your tube, Ali, informed you and your brothers that you were likely to lose the princess your cousin, and so far she is greatly obliged to you. You must also grant, that the knowledge of her illness would have been of no service without the artificial apple and the carpet. And as for you, Houssain, the princess would be very ungrateful if she did not show her sense of the value of your carpet, which was so necessary a means towards effecting her cure. But consider, it would have been of little use, if you had not been acquainted with her illness by Ali's tube, or if Ahmed had not applied his artificial apple. Therefore, as neither the carpet, the ivory tube, nor the artificial apple has the least preference to the other articles, but as, on the contrary, their value has been perfectly equal, I cannot grant the princess to any one of you; and the only fruit you have reaped from your travels is the glory of having equally contributed to restore her to health.

"As this is the case," added the sultan, "you see that I must have recourse to other means to determine me with certainty in the choice I ought to make; and as there is time enough between this and night, I will do it to-day. Go and procure each of you a bow and arrow, repair to the plain where the horses are exercised; I will soon join you, and will give the princess Nouronnihar to him who shoots the farthest.

“I do not, however, forget to thank you all in general, and each in particular, for the present you have brought me. I have many rarities in my collection already, but nothing that comes up to the miraculous properties of the carpet, the ivory tube, and the artificial apple, which shall have the first places among them, and shall be preserved carefully, not only for curiosity, but for service upon all proper occasions.”

The three princes had nothing to object to the decision of the sultan. When they were dismissed his presence, they each provided themselves with a bow and arrow, which they delivered to one of their officers, and went to the plain appointed, followed by a great concourse of people.

The sultan did not make them wait long for him: as soon as he arrived, prince Houssain, as the eldest, took his bow and arrow, and shot first. Prince Ali shot next, and much beyond him; and prince Ahmed last of all; but it so happened, that nobody could see where his arrow fell; and notwithstanding all the search made by himself and all the spectators, it was not to be found. Though it was believed that he had shot the farthest, and had therefore deserved the princess Nouronnihar, it was however necessary that his arrow should be found, to make the matter more evident and certain; but notwithstanding his remonstrances, the sultan determined in favour of prince Ali, and gave orders for preparations to be made for the solemnization of the nuptials, which were celebrated a few days after with great magnificence.

Prince Houssain would not honour the feast with his presence; his passion for the princess Nouronnihar was so sincere and ardent, that he could scarcely support with patience the mortification of seeing her in the arms of prince Ali: who, he said, did not deserve her better nor love her more than himself. In short, his grief was so violent and insupportable, that he left the court, and renounced all right of succession to the crown, to turn dervish, and put himself under the discipline of a famous chief, who had gained great reputation for his exemplary life; and had taken up his abode, and that of his disciples, whose number was great, in an agreeable solitude.

Prince Ahmed, urged by the same motive, did not assist at prince

Ali and the princess Nouronnihar's nuptials, any more than his brother Houssain, yet did not renounce the world as he had done. But as he could not imagine what could have become of his arrow, he resolved to search for it, that he might not have any thing to reproach himself with. With this intent he went to the place where the princes Houssain's and Ali's were gathered up, and proceeding straight forwards from thence looked carefully on both sides as he advanced. He went so far, that at last he began to think his labour was in vain; yet he could not help proceeding till he came to some steep craggy rocks, which would have obliged him to return, had he been ever so desirous to continue his course.

As he approached these rocks, he perceived an arrow, which he took up, looked earnestly at it, and was in the greatest astonishment to find it was the same he had shot. "Certainly," said he to himself, "neither I, nor any man living, could shoot an arrow so far; and finding it laid flat, not sticking into the ground, he judged that it had rebounded from the rock. There must be some mystery in this, said he to himself again, and it may be to my advantage. Perhaps fortune, to make amends for depriving me of what I thought the greatest happiness of my life, may have reserved a greater blessing for my comfort."

As these rocks were full of sharp points and indentures between them, the prince meditating, entered into one of the cavities, and looking about, beheld an iron door, which seemed to have no lock. He feared it was fastened; but pushing against it, it opened, and discovered an easy descent, which he walked down with his arrow in his hand. At first he thought he was going into a dark place, but presently a light quite different from that which he had quitted succeeded; and entering into a spacious square, he, to his surprise, beheld a magnificent palace, the admirable structure of which he had not time to look at: for at the same instant, a lady of majestic air, and of a beauty to which the richness of her habit and the jewels which adorned her person added no advantage, advanced, attended by a troop of ladies, or whom it was difficult to distinguish which was the mistress, as all were so magnificently dressed.

As soon as Ahmed perceived the lady, he hastened to pay his respects; and the lady seeing him coming, prevented him. Addressing him first, she said, “Come near, prince Ahmed, you are welcome.”

It was with no small surprise that the prince heard himself named in a palace he had never heard of, though so nigh to his father’s capital, and he could not comprehend how he should be known to a lady who was a stranger to him. At last he returned the lady’s compliment, by throwing himself at her feet, and rising up, said to her, “Lady, I return you a thousand thanks for the assurance you give me of welcome to a place where I had reason to believe my imprudent curiosity had made me penetrate too far. But may I, without being guilty of rudeness, presume to inquire by what adventure you know me? and how you who live in the same neighbourhood should be so little known by me?” “Prince,” said the lady, “let us go into the hall; there I will gratify you in your request more commodiously for us both.”

After these words, the lady led prince Ahmed into the hall, the noble structure of which, displaying the gold and azure which embellished the dome, and the inestimable richness of the furniture, appeared so great a novelty to him, that he could not forbear his admiration, but exclaimed, that he had never beheld its equal. “I can assure you,” replied the lady, “that this is but a small part of my palace, as you will judge when you have seen all the apartments.” She then sat down on a sofa; and when the prince at her entreaty had seated himself by her, she continued, “You are surprised, you say, that I know you, and am not known by you; but you will be no longer surprised when I inform you who I am. You cannot be ignorant, as the Koran informs you, that the world is inhabited by genii as well as men: I am the daughter of one of the most powerful and distinguished of these genii, and my name is Perie Banou; therefore you ought not to wonder that I know you, the sultan your father, the princes your brothers, and the princess Nouronnihar. I am no stranger to your loves or your travels, of which I could tell you all the circumstances, since it was I myself who exposed to sale the artificial apple which you bought at Samarcand, the carpet which prince Houssain purchased at Bisnagar, and the tube which prince Ali brought from Sheerauz. This is sufficient to let you know that I am not unacquainted with every thing that relates to you. I have to add, that you seemed to me worthy of a more happy fate than that of possessing the princess Nouronnihar; and that you might attain to it, I was present when you drew your arrow, and foresaw it would not go beyond prince Houssain's. I seized it in the air, and gave it the necessary motion to strike against the rocks near which you found it. It is in your power to avail yourself of the favourable opportunity which presents itself to make you happy."

As the fairy Perie Banou pronounced the last words with a different tone, and looked at the same time tenderly at the prince, with downcast eyes and a modest blush upon her cheeks, it was not difficult for him to comprehend what happiness she meant. He reflected that the princess Nouronnihar could never be his, saw that Perie Banou excelled her infinitely in beauty and accomplishments, and, as far as he could conjecture by the magnificence of the palace, in immense riches. He blessed the moment that he thought of seeking after his arrow a second time, and yielding to his inclination, which drew him towards the new object which had fired his heart: he then replied, "Should I, all my life, have the happiness of being your slave, and the admirer of the many charms which ravish my soul, I should think myself the happiest of men. Pardon the presumption which inspires me to ask this favour, and do not refuse to admit into your court a prince who is entirely devoted to you."

"Prince," answered the fairy, "as I have been, long my own mistress, and have no dependence on a parent's consent, it is not as a slave that I would admit you into my court, but as master of my person, and all that belongs to me, by pledging your faith to me, and taking me as your wife. I hope you will not think it indecorous, that I anticipate you in this proposal. I am, as I said, mistress of my will; and must add, that the same customs are not observed among fairies as with human-kind, in whom it would not have been decent to have made such advances: but it is what we do, and we suppose we confer obligation by the practice."

Ahmed made no answer to this declaration, but was so penetrated with gratitude, that he thought he could not express it better than by prostration to kiss the hem of her garment; which she would not give him time to do, but presented her hand, which he kissed a thousand times, and kept fast locked in his. "Well, prince Ahmed," said she, "will you pledge your faith to me, as I do mine to you?" "Yes, madam," replied the prince, in an ecstacy of joy. "What can I do more fortunate for myself, or with greater pleasure? Yes, my sultaness, I give it you with my heart without the least reserve." "Then," answered the fairy, "you are my husband, and I am your wife. Our fairy marriages are contracted with no other ceremonies, and yet are more firm and indissoluble than those among men, with all their formalities. But as I suppose," pursued she, "that you have eaten nothing to-day, a slight repast shall be served up for you while preparations are making for our nuptial feast this evening, and then I will shew you the apartments of my palace."

Some of the fairy's women who came into the hall with them, and guessed her intentions, went immediately out, and returned with some excellent viands and wines.

When Ahmed had refreshed himself, the fairy led him through all the apartments, where he saw diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and all sorts of fine jewels, intermixed with pearls, agate, jasper, porphyry, and all kinds of the most precious marbles; not to mention the richness of the furniture, which was inestimable; the whole disposed in such elegant profusion, that the prince acknowledged there could not be any thing in the world equal to it. "Prince," said the fairy, "if you admire my humble abode so much, what would you say to the palaces of the chiefs of our genii, which are much more beautiful, spacious, and magnificent? I could also shew you my garden; but we will leave that till another time. Night draws near, and it will be time to go to supper."

The next hall which the fairy led the prince into, where the cloth was laid for the feast, was the only apartment he had not seen, and it was not in the least inferior to the others. At his entrance, he admired the infinite number of wax candles perfumed with amber, the multitude of which, instead of being confused, were placed with so just a symmetry, as to form an agreeable and pleasant light. A large beaufet was set out with all sorts of gold plate, so finely wrought, that the workmanship was much more valuable than the weight of the gold. Several bands of beautiful women richly dressed, and whose voices were ravishing, began a concert, accompanied by the most harmonious instruments he had ever heard. When they were seated, the fairy took care to help prince Ahmed to the most delicious meats, which she named as she invited him to eat of them, and which the prince had never heard of, but found so exquisite, that he commended them in the highest terms, saying, that the entertainment which she gave him far surpassed those among men. He found also the same excellence in the wines, which neither he nor the fairy tasted till the dessert was served up, which consisted of the choicest sweetmeats and fruits.

After the dessert, the fairy Perie Banou and prince Ahmed rose and repaired to a sofa, with cushions of fine silk, curiously embroidered with all sorts of large flowers, laid at their backs. Presently after a great number of genii and fairies danced before them to the chamber where the nuptial bed was prepared; and when they came to the entrance, divided themselves into two rows, to let them pass, after which they made obeisance and retired.

The nuptial festivity was renewed the next day; or rather, every day following the celebration was a continued feast, which the fairy Perie Banou knew how to diversify, by new delicacies, new concerts, new dances, new shows, and new diversions; which were all so gratifying to his senses, that Ahmed, if he had lived a thousand years among men, could not have experienced equal enjoyment.

The fairy's intention was not only to give the prince convincing proofs of the sincerity of her love, by so many attentions; but to let him see, that as he had no pretensions at his father's court, he could meet with nothing comparable to the happiness he enjoyed with her, independently of her beauty and attractions, and to attach him entirely to herself. In this attempt she succeeded so well, that Ahmed's passion was not in the least diminished by possession; but increased so much, that if he had been so inclined, it was not in his power to forbear loving her.

At the end of six months, prince Ahmed, who always loved and honoured the sultan his father, felt a great desire to know how he was; and as that desire could not be satisfied without his absenting himself, he mentioned his wish to the fairy, and requested she would give him leave to visit the sultan.

This request alarmed the fairy, and made her fear it was only an excuse to leave her. She said to him, "What disgust can I have given to you to ask me this permission? Is it possible you should have forgotten that you have pledged your faith to me, or have you ceased to love one who is so passionately fond of you? Are not the proofs I have repeatedly given you of my affection sufficient?"

"My queen," replied the prince, "I am perfectly convinced of your love, and should be unworthy of it, if I did not testify my gratitude by a reciprocal affection. If you are offended at the permission I solicit, I entreat you to forgive me, and I will make all the reparation in my power. I did not make the request with any intention of displeasing you, but from a motive of respect towards my father, whom I wish to free from the affliction in which my so long absence must have overwhelmed him, and which must be the greater, as, I have reason to presume, he believes that I am dead. But since you do not consent that I should go and afford him that comfort, I will deny myself the pleasure, as there is nothing to which I would not submit to please you."

Ahmed did not dissemble, for he loved her at heart as much as he had assured her by this declaration; and the fairy expressed her satisfaction. But as he could not absolutely abandon his design, he frequently took an opportunity to speak to her of the great qualifications of the sultan his father: and above all, of his particular tenderness towards himself, in hopes he might at length be able to move her.

As the prince had supposed, the sultan of the Indies, in the midst of the rejoicings on account of the nuptials of prince Ali and the princess Nouronnihar, was sensibly afflicted at the absence of the other two princes his sons, though it was not long before he was informed of the resolution Houssain had taken to forsake the world, and the place he had chosen for his retreat. As a good father, whose happiness consists in seeing his children about him, especially when they are deserving of his tenderness, he would have been better pleased had he stayed at his court, near his person; but as he could not disapprove of his choice of the state of perfection which he had entered, he supported his absence more patiently. He made the most diligent search after Ahmed, and dispatched couriers to all the provinces of his dominions, with orders to the governors to stop him, and oblige him to return to court: but all the pains he took had not the desired success, and his affliction, instead of diminishing, increased.

He would make it the subject of his conversation with his grand vizier; and would say to him, “Vizier, thou knowest I always loved Ahmed the most of all my sons; and thou art not insensible of the means I have in vain used to find him out. My grief is so heavy, I shall sink under it, if thou hast not compassion on me; if thou hast any regard for the preservation of my life, I conjure thee to assist and advise me.”

The grand vizier, no less attached to the person of the sultan than zealous to acquit himself well of the administration of the affairs of state, considering how to give his sovereign some ease, recollected a sorceress, of whom he had heard wonders, and proposed to send for and consult her. The sultan consented, and the grand vizier, upon her arrival, introduced her into the presence.

The sultan said to the sorceress, “The affliction I have been in since the marriage of my son prince Ali to the princess Nouronnihar, my niece, on account of the absence of prince Ahmed, is so well known, and so public, that thou canst be no stranger to it. By thy art and skill canst thou tell me what is become of him? If he be alive, where he is? what he is doing? and if I may hope ever to see him again?” To this the sorceress replied, “It is impossible, sir, for me, however skilful in my profession, to answer immediately the questions your majesty asks; but if you allow me till to-morrow, I will endeavour to satisfy you.” The sultan granted her the time, and permitted her to retire, with a promise to recompense her munificently, if her answer proved agreeable to his hopes.

The sorceress returned the next day, and the grand vizier presented her a second time to the sultan. “Sir,” said she, “notwithstanding all the diligence I have used in applying the rules of my art to obey your majesty in what you desire to know, I have not been able to discover any thing more than that prince Ahmed is alive. This is certain, and you may depend upon it; but as to where he is I cannot discover.”

The sultan of the Indies was obliged to remain satisfied with this answer; which left him in the same uneasiness as before as to the prince’s situation.

To return to prince Ahmed. He so often entertained the fairy Perie Banou with talking about his father, though without speaking any more of his desire to visit him, that she fully comprehended what he meant; and perceiving the restraint he put upon himself, and his fear of displeasing her after her first refusal, she inferred, from the repeated proofs he had given her, that his love for her was sincere; and judging by herself of the injustice she committed in opposing a son's tenderness for his father, and endeavouring to make him renounce that natural affection, she resolved to grant him the permission which she knew he so ardently desired. One day she said to him, "Prince, the request you made to be allowed to go and see the sultan your father gave me apprehension that it was only a pretext to conceal inconstancy, and that was the sole motive of my refusal; but now, as I am fully convinced by your actions and words that I can depend on your honour and the fidelity of your love, I change my resolution, and grant you the permission you seek, on condition that you will first swear to me that your absence shall not be long. You ought not to be uneasy at this condition, as if I asked it out of distrust. I impose it only because I know that it will give you no concern, convinced, as I have already told you I am, of the sincerity of your love."

Prince Ahmed would have thrown himself at the fairy's feet to shew his gratitude, but she prevented him. "My sultaness," said he, "I am sensible of the great favour you grant me; but want words to express my thanks. Supply this defect, I conjure you, by your own feelings, and be persuaded I think much more. You may believe that the oath will give me no uneasiness, and I take it more willingly, since it is not possible for me to live without you. I go, but the haste I will make to return shall shew you, that it is not the fear of being foresworn, but my inclination, which is to live with you for ever, that urges me; and if with your consent I now and then deprive myself of your society, I shall always avoid the pain a too long absence would occasion me."

"Prince," replied Perie Banou, delighted with his sentiments, "go when you please; but do not take it amiss that I give you some advice how you shall conduct yourself. First, I do not think it proper for you to inform your father of our marriage, neither of my quality, nor the place of our residence. Beg of him to be satisfied with knowing that you are happy, that you want nothing from him, and let him know that the sole end of your visit is to make him easy respecting your fate."

Perie Banou then appointed twenty horsemen, well mounted and equipped, to attend him. When all was ready, prince Ahmed took his leave of the fairy, embraced her, and renewed his promise to return soon. A charger, which was most richly caparisoned, and as beautiful a creature as any in the sultan of the Indies' stables, was brought to him, which he mounted with extraordinary grace, which gave great pleasure to the fairy; and after he had bidden her adieu, he set forward on his journey.

As it was no great distance to his father's capital, prince Ahmed soon arrived there. The people, rejoiced to see him again, received him with acclamations, and followed him in crowds to the palace. The sultan received and embraced him with great joy; complaining at the same time, with a fatherly tenderness, of the affliction his long absence had occasioned; which, he said, was the more distressing, as fortune having decided in favour of prince Ali his brother, he was afraid he might have committed some act of despair.

"Sir," replied prince Ahmed, "I leave it to your majesty to consider, if after having lost the princess Nouronnihar, who was the only object of my desires, I could bear to be a witness of Ali's happiness. If I had been capable of such unworthy apathy, what would the court and city have thought of my love, or what your majesty? Love is a passion we cannot suppress at our will; while it lasts, it rules and governs us in spite of our boasted reason. Your majesty knows, that when I shot my arrow, the most extraordinary accident that ever befell mortal happened to me, for surely it was such, that in so large and level a plain as that where the horses are exercised, it should not be possible to find my arrow. I lost your decision in my favour, which was as much due to my love, as to that of the princes my brothers. Though thus vanquished by the caprice of fate, I lost no time in vain complaints; but to satisfy my perplexed mind, upon what I could not comprehend, I left my attendants, and returned alone to look for my arrow. I sought all about the place where Houssain's and Ali's arrows were found, and where I imagined mine must have fallen, but all my labour was in vain. I was not discouraged, but continued my search in a direct line, and after this manner had gone above a league, without being able to meet with any thing like an arrow, when I reflected that it was not possible that mine should have flown so far. I stopped, and asked myself whether I was in my right senses, to flatter myself with having had strength to shoot an arrow so much farther than any of the strongest archers in the world were able to do. After I had argued thus with myself, I was ready to abandon my enterprise; but when on the point of putting my resolution in execution, I found myself drawn forward against my will; and after having gone four leagues, to that part of the plain where it is bounded by rocks, I perceived an arrow. I ran, took it up, and knew it to be the same which I had shot. Far from thinking your majesty had done me any injustice in declaring for my brother Ali, I interpreted what had happened to me quite otherwise, and never doubted there was a mystery in it to my advantage; the discovery of which I ought not to neglect, and which I found out without going from the spot. But as to this mystery I beg your majesty will not be offended if I remain silent, and that you will be satisfied to know from my own mouth that I am happy, and content with my fate.

"In the midst of my happiness, the only thing that troubled me, or was capable of disturbing me, was the uneasiness I feared your majesty would experience on account of my leaving the court, and your not knowing what was become of me. I thought it my duty to satisfy you in this point. This was the only motive which brought me hither; the only favour I ask of your majesty is to give me leave to come occasionally to pay you my duty, and inquire after your health."

"Son," answered the sultan of the Indies, "I cannot refuse you the permission you ask, but I should much rather you would resolve to stay with me. At least tell me where I may hear of you, if you should fail to come, or when I may think your presence necessary." "Sir," replied the prince, "what your majesty requires is part of the mystery I spoke of. I beg of you to allow me to remain silent on this head; for I shall come so frequently where my duty calls, that I am afraid I shall sooner be thought troublesome than be accused of negligence, when my presence may be necessary."

The sultan of the Indies pressed Ahmed no more, but said to him, “Son, I wish to penetrate no farther into your secrets, but leave you at your liberty. I can only tell you, that you could not have done me greater pleasure than by your presence, having restored to me the joy I have not felt for a long time; and that you shall always be welcome when you can come, without interrupting your business or your pleasure.”

Prince Ahmed stayed but three days at his father’s court, and on the fourth returned to the fairy Perie Banou, who received him with the greater joy, as she did not expect him so soon. His expedition made her condemn herself for suspecting his want of fidelity. She never dissembled, but frankly owned her weakness to the prince, and asked his pardon. So perfect was the union of the two lovers, that they had but one will.

A month after prince Ahmed’s return from visiting his father, as the fairy had observed that since the time when he gave her an account of his journey, and his conversation with his father, in which he asked his permission to come and see him from time to time, he had never spoken of the sultan, whereas before he was frequently mentioning him, she thought he forebore on her account, and therefore took an opportunity to say to him one day, “Tell me, prince, have you forgotten the sultan your father? Do not you remember the promise you made to pay your duty to him occasionally? I have not forgotten what you told me at your return, and put you in mind of it, that you may acquit yourself of your promise when you may feel inclined.”

“Madam,” replied Ahmed, with equal animation, “as I know I am not guilty of the forgetfulness you lay to my charge, I rather choose to be thus reproached, however undeservedly, than expose myself to a refusal, by manifesting a desire for what it might have given you pain to grant.” “Prince,” said the fairy, “I would not have you in this affair have so much consideration for me, since it is a month since you have seen the sultan your father. I think you should not be longer in renewing your visits. Pay him one to-morrow, and after that, go and visit once a month, without speaking to me, or waiting for my permission. I readily consent to such an arrangement.”

Prince Ahmed went the next morning with the same attendants as before, but much more magnificently mounted, equipped, and dressed, and was received by the sultan with the same joy and satisfaction. For several months he constantly paid him visits, and always in a richer and more brilliant equipage.

At last the sultan's favourites, who judged of prince Ahmed's power by the splendour of his appearance, abused the privilege the sultan accorded them of speaking to him with freedom, to make him jealous of his son. They represented that it was but common prudence to discover where the prince had retired, and how he could afford to live so magnificently, since he had no revenue assigned for his expenses; that he seemed to come to court only to insult him, by affecting to shew that he wanted nothing from his father to enable him to live like a prince; and that it was to be feared he might court the people's favour and dethrone him.

The sultan of the Indies was so far from thinking that prince Ahmed could be capable of so wicked a design, that he said to them in displeasure, "You are mistaken, my son loves me, and I am the more assured of his tenderness and fidelity, as I have given him no reason to be disgusted."

At these words, one of the favourites took an opportunity to say, "Your majesty, in the opinion of the most sensible people, could not have taken a better method than you did with the three princes, respecting their marriage with the princess Nouronnihar; but who knows whether prince Ahmed has submitted to his fate with the same resignation as prince Houssain? May not he imagine that he alone deserved her; and that your majesty, by leaving the match to be decided by chance, has done him injustice?

"Your majesty may say," added the malicious favourite, "that prince Ahmed has manifested no appearance of dissatisfaction; that our fears are vain; that we are too easily alarmed, and are to blame in suggesting to you suspicions of this kind, which may, perhaps, be unfounded, against a prince of your blood. But, sir," pursued the favourite, "it may be also, that these suspicions are well grounded. Your majesty must be sensible, that in so nice and important an affair you cannot be too much on your guard, and should take the safest course. Consider, it is the prince's interest to dissemble, amuse, and deceive you; and the danger is the greater, as he resides not far from your capital; and if your majesty give but the same attention that we do, you may observe that every time he comes his attendants are different, their habits new, and their arms clean and bright, as if just come from the maker's hands; and their horses look as if they had only been walked out. These are sufficient proofs that prince Ahmed does not travel far, so that we should think ourselves wanting in our duty did we not make our humble remonstrances, in order that, for your own preservation and the good of your people, your majesty may take such measures as you shall think advisable."

When the favourite had concluded these insinuations, the sultan said, "I do not believe my son Ahmed is so wicked as you would persuade me he is; however, I am obliged to you for your advice, and do not doubt that it proceeds from good intention and loyalty to my person."

The sultan of the Indies said this, that his favourites might not know the impressions their observations had made on his mind. He was, however, so much alarmed by them, that he resolved to have prince Ahmed watched, unknown to his grand vizier. For this end he sent for the sorceress, who was introduced by a private door into his closet. "You told me the truth," said he, "when you assured me my son Ahmed was alive, for which I am obliged to you. You must do me another kindness. I have seen him since, and he comes to my court every month; but I cannot learn from him where he resides, and do not wish to force his secret from him; but believe you are capable of satisfying my curiosity, without letting him, or any of my court, know any thing of the discovery. You know that he is at this time with me, and usually departs without taking leave of me, or any of my court. Place yourself immediately upon the road, and watch him so as to find out where he retires, and bring me information."

The sorceress left the sultan, and knowing the place where prince Ahmed had found his arrow, went immediately thither, and concealed herself near the rocks, so as not to be seen.

The next morning prince Ahmed set out by daybreak, without taking leave either of the sultan or any of his court, according to custom. The sorceress seeing him coming, followed him with her eyes, till suddenly she lost sight of him and his attendants.

The steepness of the rocks formed an insurmountable barrier to men, whether on horseback or on foot, so that the sorceress judged that the prince retired either into some cavern, or some subterraneous place, the abode of genies or fairies. When she thought the prince and his attendants must have far advanced into whatever concealment they inhabited, she came out of the place where she had hidden herself, and explored the hollow way where she had lost sight of them. She entered it, and proceeding to the spot where it terminated after many windings, looked carefully on all sides. But notwithstanding all her acuteness she could perceive no opening, nor the iron gate which prince Ahmed had discovered. For this door was to be seen by or opened to none but men, and only to those whose presence was agreeable to the fairy Perie Banou, but not at all to women.

The sorceress, who saw it was in vain for her to search any farther, was obliged to be satisfied with the insufficient discovery she had made, and returned to communicate it to the sultan. When she had told him what she had explored, she added, "Your majesty may easily understand, after what I have had the honour to tell you, that it will be no difficult matter to obtain you the satisfaction you desire concerning prince Ahmed's conduct. To do this, I only ask time, that you will have patience, and give me leave to act, without inquiring what measures I design to take."

The sultan was pleased with the conduct of the sorceress, and said to her, "Do you as you think fit; I will wait patiently the event of your promises:" and to encourage her, he presented her with a diamond of great value, telling her, it was only an earnest of the ample recompense she should receive when she should have performed the important service which he left to her management.

As prince Ahmed, after he had obtained the fairy Perie Banou's leave, never failed once a month to visit his father, the sorceress knowing the time, went a day or two before to the foot of the rock where she had lost sight of him and his attendants, and waited there to execute the project she had formed.

The next morning prince Ahmed went out as usual at the iron gate, with the same attendants as before, passed the sorceress, and seeing her lie with her head on the rock, complaining as if she was in great pain, he pitied her, turned his horse, and asked what he could do to relieve her?

The artful sorceress, without lifting up her head, looked at the prince in such a manner as to increase his compassion, and answered in broken accents and sighs, as if she could hardly breathe, that she was going to the city; but in the way was taken with so violent a fever, that her strength failed her, and she was forced to stop and lie down where he saw her, far from any habitation, and without any hopes of assistance.

"Good woman," replied the prince, "you are not so far from help as you imagine. I will assist you, and convey you where you shall not only have all possible care taken of you, but where you will find a speedy cure: rise, and let one of my people take you behind him."

At these words, the sorceress, who pretended sickness only to explore where the prince resided, and his situation, did not refuse the charitable offer, and to shew her acceptance rather by her actions than her words, made many affected efforts to rise, pretending that the violence of her illness prevented her. At the same time, two of the prince's attendants alighting, helped her up, and placed her behind another. They mounted their horses again, and followed the prince, who turned back to the iron gate, which was opened by one of his retinue. When he came into the outward court of the fairy's palace, without dismounting himself, he sent to tell her he wanted to speak with her.

The fairy came with all imaginable haste, not knowing what had made prince Ahmed return so soon; who, not giving her time to ask, said, "My princess, I desire you would have compassion on this good woman," pointing to the sorceress, who was taken off the horse by two of his retinue; "I found her in the condition you see her, and promised her the assistance she requires. I recommend her to your care, and am persuaded that you, from inclination, as well as my request, will not abandon her."

The fairy, who had her eyes fixed on the pretended sick woman all the time the prince was speaking, ordered two of her women to take her from the men who supported her, conduct her into an apartment of the palace, and take as much care of her as they would of herself.

Whilst the two women were executing the fairy's commands, she went up to prince Ahmed, and whispering him in the ear, said, "Prince, I commend your compassion, which is worthy of you and your birth. I take great pleasure in gratifying your good intention; but permit me to tell you I am afraid it will be but ill rewarded. This woman is not so sick as she pretends to be; and I am much mistaken if she is not sent hither on purpose to occasion you great trouble. But do not be concerned, let what will be devised against you; be persuaded that I will deliver you out of all the snares that shall be laid for you. Go and pursue your journey."

This address of the fairy's did not in the least alarm prince Ahmed. "My princess," said he, "as I do not remember I ever did, or designed to do, any body injury, I cannot believe any one can have a thought of injuring me; but if they have, I shall not forbear doing good whenever I have an opportunity." So saying, he took leave of the fairy, and set forward again for his father's capital, where he soon arrived, and was received as usual by the sultan, who constrained himself as much as possible, to disguise the anxiety arising from the suspicions suggested by his favourites.

In the mean time, the two women to whom Perie Banou had given her orders conveyed the sorceress into an elegant apartment, richly furnished. They first set her down upon a sofa, with her back supported by a cushion of gold brocade, while they made a bed on the same sofa, the quilt of which was finely embroidered with silk, the sheets of the finest linen, and the coverlid cloth of gold. When they had put her into bed (for the old sorceress pretended that her fever was so violent she could not help herself in the least), one of the women went out, and returned soon with a china cup in her hand, full of a certain liquor, which she presented to the sorceress, while the other helped her to sit up. "Drink this," said the attendant, "it is the water of the fountain of lions, and a sovereign remedy against fevers. You will find the effect of it in less than an hour's time."

The sorceress, the better to dissemble, took it, after a great deal of entreaty, as if she did it with reluctance. When she was laid down again, the two women covered her up: "Lie quiet," said she, who brought her the china cup, "and get a little sleep, if you can: we will leave you, and hope to find you perfectly recovered when we return an hour hence."

The sorceress, who came not to act a sick part long, but to discover prince Ahmed's retreat, being fully satisfied in what she wanted to know, would willingly have declared that the potion had then had its effect, so great was her desire to return to the sultan, to inform him of the success of her commission: but as she had been told that the potion did not operate immediately, she was forced to wait the women's return.

The two women came again at the time they had mentioned, and found the sorceress seated on the sofa; who, when she saw them open the door of the apartment, cried out, "O the admirable potion! it has wrought its cure much sooner than you told me it would, and I have waited with impatience to desire you to conduct me to your charitable mistress, to thank her for her kindness, for which I shall always feel obliged; but being thus cured as by a miracle, I would not lose time, but prosecute my journey."

The two women, who were fairies as well as their mistress, after they had told the sorceress how glad they were that she was cured so soon, walked before her, and conducted her through several apartments, all more superb than that wherein she had lain, into a large hall, the most richly and magnificently furnished of all the palace.

Perie Banou was seated in this hall, upon a throne of massive gold, enriched with diamonds, rubies, and pearls of an extraordinary size, and attended on each hand by a great number of beautiful fairies, all richly dressed. At the sight of so much splendour, the sorceress was not only dazzled, but so struck, that after she had prostrated herself before the throne, she could not open her lips to thank the fairy, as she had proposed. However, Perie Banou saved her the trouble, and said, "Good woman, I am glad I had an opportunity to oblige you, and that you are able to pursue your journey. I will not detain you; but perhaps you may not be displeased to see my palace: follow my women, and they will shew it you."

The old sorceress, who had not power nor courage to say a word, prostrated herself a second time, with her head on the carpet that covered the foot of the throne, took her leave, and was conducted by the two fairies through the same apartments which were shewn to prince Ahmed at his first arrival, and at sight of their uncommon magnificence she made frequent exclamations. But what surprised her most of all was, that the two fairies told her, that all she saw and so much admired was a mere sketch of their mistress's grandeur and riches; for that in the extent of her dominions she had so many palaces that they could not tell the number of them, all of different plans and architecture, but equally magnificent. In speaking of many other particulars, they led her at last to the iron gate at which prince Ahmed had brought her in; and after she had taken her leave of them, and thanked them for their trouble, they opened it, and wished her a good journey.

After the sorceress had gone a little way, she turned to observe the door, that she might know it again, but all in vain; for, as was before observed, it was invisible to her and all other women. Except in this circumstance, she was very well satisfied with her success, and posted away to the sultan. When she came to the capital, she went by many by-ways to the private door of the palace. The sultan being informed of her arrival, sent for her into his apartment, and perceiving a melancholy hang upon her countenance, thought she had not succeeded, and said to her, "By your looks, I guess that your journey has been to no purpose, and that you have not made the discovery I expected from your diligence." "Sir," replied the sorceress, "your majesty must give me leave to represent that you ought not to judge by my looks whether or no I have acquitted myself well in the execution of the commands you were pleased to honour me with; but by the faithful report I shall make you of all that has happened to me, and by which you will find that I have not neglected any thing that could render me worthy of your approbation. The melancholy you observe proceeds from another cause than the want of success, which I hope your majesty will have ample reason to be satisfied with. I do not tell you the cause; the relation I shall give will inform you."

The sorceress now related to the sultan of the Indies how, pretending to be sick, prince Ahmed compassionating her, had her carried into a subterraneous abode, and presented and recommended her to a fairy of incomparable beauty, desiring her by her care to restore her health. She then told him with how much condescension the fairy had immediately ordered two women to take care of her, and not to leave her till she was recovered; which great condescension, said she, could proceed from no other female, but from a wife to a husband. Afterwards the old sorceress failed not to dwell on her surprise at the front of the palace, which she said had not its equal for magnificence in the world. She gave a particular account of the care they took of her, after they had led her into an apartment; of the potion they made her drink, and of the quickness of her cure; which she had pretended as well as her sickness, though she doubted not the virtue of the draught; the majesty of the fairy seated on a throne, brilliant with jewels, the value of which exceeded all the riches of the kingdom of the Indies, and all the other treasures beyond computation contained in that vast palace.

Here the sorceress finishing the relation of the success of her commission, and continuing her discourse, said, "What does your majesty think of these unheard-of riches of the fairy? Perhaps you will say, you are struck with admiration, and rejoice at the good fortune of prince Ahmed your son, who enjoys them in common with the fairy. For my part, sir, I beg of your majesty to forgive me if I take the liberty to say that I think otherwise, and that I shudder when I consider the misfortunes which may happen to you from his present situation. And this is the cause of the melancholy which I could not so well dissemble, but that you soon perceived it. I would believe that prince Ahmed, by his own good disposition, is incapable of undertaking anything against your majesty; but who can answer that the fairy, by her attractions and caresses, and the influence she has over him, may not inspire him with the unnatural design of dethroning your majesty, and seizing the crown of the Indies? This is what your majesty ought to consider as of the utmost importance."

Though the sultan of the Indies was persuaded that prince Ahmed's natural disposition was good, yet he could not help being moved at the representations of the old sorceress, and said, "I thank you for the pains you have taken, and your wholesome caution. I am so sensible of its great importance that I shall take advice upon it."

He was consulting with his favourites, when he was told of the sorceress's arrival. He ordered her to follow him to them. He acquainted them with what he had learnt, communicated to them the reason he had to fear the fairy's influence over the prince, and asked them what measures they thought most proper to be taken to prevent so great a misfortune as might possibly happen. One of the favourites, taking upon himself to speak for the rest, said, “Your majesty knows who must be the author of this mischief. In order to prevent it, now he is in your court, and in your power, you ought not to hesitate to put him under arrest; I will not say take away his life, for that would make too much noise; but make him a close prisoner.” This advice all the other favourites unanimously applauded.

The sorceress, who thought it too violent, asked the sultan leave to speak, which being granted, she said, “I am persuaded it is the zeal of your counsellors for your majesty’s interest that makes them propose arresting prince Ahmed. But they will not take it amiss if I offer to your and their consideration, that if you arrest the prince you must also detain his retinue. But they are all genies. Do they think it will be so easy to surprise, seize, and secure their persons? will they not disappear, by the property they possess of rendering themselves invisible, and transport themselves instantly to the fairy, and give her an account of the insult offered her husband? And can it be supposed she will let it go unrevenged? Would it not be better, if by any other means which might not make so great a noise, the sultan could secure himself against any ill designs prince Ahmed may have, and not involve his majesty’s honour? If his majesty has any confidence in my advice, as genies and fairies can do things impracticable to men, he will rather trust prince Ahmed’s honour, and engage him by means of the fairy to procure certain advantages, by flattering his ambition, and at the same time narrowly watching him. For example; every time your majesty takes the field, you are obliged to be at a great expense, not only in pavilions and tents for yourself and army, but likewise in mules and camels, and other beasts of burden, to carry their baggage. Request the prince to procure you a tent, which can be carried in a man’s hand, but so large as to shelter your whole army.

“I need say no more to your majesty. If the prince brings such a tent, you may make other demands of the same nature, so that at last he may sink under the difficulties and the impossibility of executing them, however fertile in means and inventions the fairy, who has enticed him from you by her enchantments, may be; so that in time he will be ashamed to appear, and will be forced to pass the rest of his life with the fairy, excluded from any commerce with this world;

when your majesty will have nothing to fear from him, and cannot be reproached with so detestable an action as the shedding of a son's blood, or confining him for life in a prison."

When the sorceress had finished her speech, the sultan asked his favourites if they had any thing better to propose; and finding them all silent, determined to follow her advice, as the most reasonable and most agreeable to his mild manner of government.

The next day when the prince came into his father's presence, who was talking with his favourites, and had sat down by him, after a conversation on different subjects, the sultan, addressing himself to prince Ahmed, said, "Son, when you came and dispelled those clouds of melancholy which your long absence had brought upon me, you made the place you had chosen for your retreat a mastery. I was satisfied with seeing you again, and knowing that you were content with your condition, sought not to penetrate into your secret, which I found you did not wish I should. I know not what reason you had thus to treat a father, who ever was and still continues anxious for your happiness. I now know your good fortune. I rejoice with you, and much approve of your conduct in marrying a fairy so worthy of your love, and so rich and powerful as I am informed she is. Powerful as I am, it was not possible for me to have procured for you so great a match. Now you are raised to so high a rank, as to be envied by all but a father, I not only desire to preserve the good understanding which has hitherto subsisted between us, but request that you will use your influence with your wife, to obtain her assistance when I may want it. I will therefore make a trial of your interest this day.

"You are not insensible at what a great expense, not to say trouble to my generals, officers, and myself, every time I take the field, they provide tents, mules, camels, and other beasts of burden, to carry them. If you consider the pleasure you would do me, I am persuaded you could easily procure from the fairy a pavilion that might be carried in a man's hand, and which would extend over my whole army; especially when you let her know it is for me. Though it may be a difficult thing to procure, she will not refuse you. All the world knows fairies are capable of executing most extraordinary undertakings."

Prince Ahmed never expected that the sultan his father would have made a demand like this, which appeared to him so difficult, not to say impossible. Though he knew not absolutely how great the power of genii and fairies was, he doubted whether it extended so far as to furnish such a tent as his father desired. Moreover, he had never asked any thing of the fairy Perie Banou, but was satisfied with the continual proofs she had given him of her passion, and had neglected nothing to persuade her that his heart perfectly corresponded without any views beyond maintaining himself in her good graces: he was therefore in the greatest embarrassment what answer to make. At last he replied, "If, sir, I have concealed from your majesty what has happened to me, and what course I took after finding my arrow, the reason was, that I thought it of no great importance to you to be informed of such circumstances; and though I know not how this mystery has been revealed to you, I cannot deny but your information is correct. I have married the fairy you speak of. I love her, and am persuaded she loves me in return. But I can say nothing as to the influence your majesty believes I have over her. It is what I have not yet proved, nor thought of trying, but could wish you would dispense with my making the experiment, and let me enjoy the happiness of loving and being beloved, with all that disinterestedness I had proposed to myself. However, the demand of a father is a command upon every child, who, like me, thinks it his duty to obey him in every thing. And though it is with the greatest reluctance, I will not fail to ask my wife the favour your majesty desires, but cannot promise you to obtain it; and if I should not have the honour to come again to pay you my respects, it will be the sign that I have not been able to succeed in my request: but beforehand, I desire you to forgive me, and consider that you yourself have reduced me to this extremity."

"Son," replied the sultan of the Indies, "I should be sorry that what I ask should oblige you to deprive me of the gratification of seeing you as usual. I find you do not know the power a husband has over a wife; and yours would shew that her love to you was very slight, if, with the power she possesses as a fairy, she should refuse so trifling a request as that I have begged you to make. Lay aside your fears, which proceed from your believing yourself not to be loved so well as you love her. Go; only ask her. You will find the fairy loves you better than you imagine; and remember that people, for want of requesting, often lose great advantages. Think with yourself, that as you love her, you could refuse her nothing; therefore, if she loves you, she will not deny your requests."

All these representations of the sultan of the Indies could not satisfy prince Ahmed, who would rather he had asked anything else than, as he supposed, what must expose him to the hazard of displeasing his beloved Perie Banou; and so great was his vexation that he left the court two days sooner than he used to do.

When he returned, the fairy, to whom he always before had appeared with a gay countenance, asked him the cause of the alteration she perceived in his looks; and finding that instead of answering he inquired after her health, to avoid satisfying her, she said to him, "I will answer your question when you have answered mine." The prince declined a long time, protesting that nothing was the matter with him; but the more he denied the more she pressed him, and said, "I cannot bear to see you thus: tell me what makes you uneasy, that I may remove the cause, whatever it may be; for it must be very extraordinary if it is out of my power, unless it be the death of the sultan your father; in that case, time, with all that I will contribute on my part, can alone comfort you."

Prince Ahmed could not long withstand the pressing instances of the fairy. "Madam," said he, "God prolong the sultan my father's life, and bless him to the end of his days. I left him alive and in perfect health; therefore that is not the cause of the melancholy you perceive in me. The sultan, however, is the occasion of it, and I am the more concerned because he has imposed upon me the disagreeable necessity of importuning you. You know the care I have at your desire taken to conceal from him the happiness I have enjoyed in living with you, and of having received the pledge of your faith after having pledged my love to you. How he has been informed of it I cannot tell."

Here the fairy interrupted prince Ahmed, and said, "But I know. Remember what I told you of the woman who made you believe she was sick, on whom you took so much compassion. It is she who has acquainted your father with what you have taken so much care to hide from him. I told you that she was no more sick than you or I, and she has made it appear so; for, in short, after the two women, whom I charged to take care of her, had given her the water sovereign against all fevers, but which however she had no occasion for, she pretended that it had cured her, and was brought to take her leave of me that she might go the sooner to give an account of the success of her undertaking. She was in so much haste, that she would have gone away without seeing my palace if I had not, by bidding my two women shew it her, given her to understand that it was worth her seeing. But proceed and tell me what is the necessity your father has imposed on you to be so importunate, which, be persuaded, however, you can never be to your affectionate wife."

"Madam," pursued prince Ahmed, "you may have observed that hitherto I have been content with your love, and have never asked you any other favour: for what, after the possession of so amiable a wife, can I desire more? I know how great your power is, but I have taken care not to make proof of it to please myself. Consider then, I conjure you, that it is not myself, but the sultan my father, who, indiscreetly as I think, asks of you a pavilion large enough to shelter him, his court, and army, from the violence of the weather, when he takes the field, and which a man may carry in his hand. Once more remember it is not I, but the sultan my father who asks this favour."

"Prince," replied the fairy smiling, "I am sorry that so trifling a matter should disturb and make you so uneasy as you appear. I see plainly two things have contributed towards it: one is, the law you have imposed on yourself, to be content with loving me, being beloved by me, and deny yourself the liberty of soliciting the least favour that might try my power. The other, I do not doubt, whatever you may say, was, that you thought that what your father asked was out of my power. As to the first, I commend you, and shall love you the better, if possible, for it; and for the second, I must tell you that what the sultan your father requests is a trifle; as upon occasion I can do him more important service. Therefore be easy in your mind, and persuaded that far from thinking myself importuned I shall always take real pleasure in performing whatever you can desire." Perie Banou then sent for her treasurer, to whom, when she came, she said, "Noor-Jehaun" (which was her name), "bring me the largest pavilion in my treasury." Noor-Jehaun returned presently with a pavilion, which could not only be held, but concealed in the palm of the hand, when it was closed, and presented it to her mistress, who gave it prince Ahmed to look at.

When prince Ahmed saw the pavilion, which the fairy called the largest in her treasury, he fancied she had a mind to banter him, and his surprise soon appeared in his countenance; which Perie Banou perceiving, she burst out a laughing. "What! prince," cried she, "do you think I jest with you? You will see that I am in earnest. Noor-Jehaun," said she to her treasurer, taking the tent out of prince Ahmed's hands, "go and set it up, that he may judge whether the sultan his father will think it large enough."

The treasurer went out immediately with it from the palace, and carried it to such a distance, that when she had set it up, one end reached to the palace. The prince, so far from thinking it small, found it large enough to shelter two armies as numerous as that of the sultan his father; and then said to Perie Banou, "I ask my princess a thousand pardons for my incredulity: after what I have seen, I believe there is nothing impossible to you." "You see," said the fairy, "that the pavilion is larger than your father may have occasion for; but you are to observe that it has one property, that it becomes larger or smaller, according to the extent of the army it is to cover, without applying any hands to it."

The treasurer took down the tent again, reduced it to its first size, brought it and put it into the prince's hands. He took it, and without staying longer than till the next day, mounted his horse, and went with the usual attendants to the sultan his father.

The sultan, who was persuaded that such a tent as he had asked for was beyond all possibility, was in great surprise at the prince's speedy return. He took the tent, but after he had admired its smallness, his amazement was so great that he could not recover himself when he had set it up in the great plain before-mentioned, and found it large enough to shelter an army twice as large as he could bring into the field. Regarding this excess in its dimension as what might be troublesome in the use, prince Ahmed told him that its size would always be proportionable to his army.

To outward appearance the sultan expressed great obligation to the prince for so noble a present, desiring him to return his thanks to the fairy; and to shew what a value he set upon it, ordered it to be carefully laid up in his treasury. But within himself he felt greater jealousy than his flatterers and the sorceress had suggested to him; considering, that by the fairy's assistance the prince his son might perform things infinitely above his own power, notwithstanding his greatness and riches; therefore, more intent upon his ruin, he went to consult the sorceress again, who advised him to engage the prince to bring him some of the water of the fountain of lions.

In the evening, when the sultan was surrounded as usual by all his court, and the prince came to pay his respects among the rest, he addressed himself to him in these words: "Son, I have already expressed to you how much I am obliged for the present of the tent you have procured me, which I esteem the most valuable curiosity in my treasury: but you must do one thing more, which will be no less agreeable to me. I am informed that the fairy your spouse makes use of a certain water, called the water of the fountain of lions, which cures all sorts of fevers, even the most dangerous; and as I am perfectly well persuaded my health is dear to you, I do not doubt but you will ask her for a bottle of that water, and bring it me as a sovereign remedy, which I may use as I have occasion. Do me this important service, and complete the duty of a good son towards a tender father."

Prince Ahmed, who believed that the sultan his father would have been satisfied with so singular and useful a tent as that which he had brought, and that he would not have imposed any new task upon him which might hazard the fairy's displeasure, was thunderstruck at this new request, notwithstanding the assurance she had given him of granting him whatever lay in her power. After a long silence, he said, "I beg of your majesty to be assured, that there is nothing I would not undertake to procure which may contribute to the prolonging of your life, but I could wish it might not be by the means of my wife. For this reason I dare not promise to bring the water. All I can do is, to assure you I will request it of her; but it will be with as great reluctance as I asked for the tent."

The next morning prince Ahmed returned to the fairy Perie Banou, and related to her sincerely and faithfully all that had passed at his father's court from the giving of the tent, which he told her he received with the utmost gratitude, to the new request he had charged him to make. He added: "But, my princess, I only tell you this as a plain account of what passed between me and my father. I leave you to your own pleasure, whether you will gratify or reject this his new desire. It shall be as you please."

"No, no," replied the fairy, "I am glad that the sultan of the Indies knows that you are not indifferent to me. I will satisfy him, and whatever advice the sorceress may give him (for I see that he hearkens to her counsel), he shall find no fault with you or me. There is much wickedness in this demand, as you will understand by what I am going to tell you. The fountain of lions is situated in the middle of a court of a great castle, the entrance into which is guarded by four fierce lions, two of which sleep alternately, while the other two are awake. But let not that frighten you. I will supply you with means to pass by them without danger."

The fairy Perie Banou was at that time at work with her needle; and as she had by her several clues of thread, she took up one, and presenting it to prince Ahmed, said, "First take this clue of thread, I will tell you presently the use of it. In the second place, you must have two horses; one you must ride yourself, and the other you must lead, which must be loaded with a sheep cut into four quarters, that must be killed to-day. In the third place, you must be provided with a bottle, which I will give you, to bring the water in. Set out early to-morrow morning, and when you have passed the iron gate throw before you the clue of thread, which will roll till it reaches the gates of the castle. Follow it, and when it stops, as the gates will be open, you will see the four lions. The two that are awake will, by their roaring, wake the other two. Be not alarmed, but throw each of them a quarter of the sheep, and then clap spurs to your horse, and ride to the fountain. Fill your bottle without alighting, and return with the same expedition. The lions will be so busy eating they will let you pass unmolested."

Prince Ahmed set out the next morning at the time appointed him by the fairy, and followed her directions punctually. When he arrived at the gates of the castle, he distributed the quarters of the sheep among the four lions, and passing through the midst of them with intrepidity, got to the fountain, filled his bottle, and returned safe. When he had got a little distance from the castle gates, he turned about; and perceiving two of the lions coming after him, drew his sabre, and prepared himself for defence. But as he went forwards, he saw one of them turn out of the road at some distance, and shewed by his head and tail that he did not come to do him any harm, but only to go before him, and that the other stayed behind to follow. He therefore put his sword again into its scabbard. Guarded in this manner he arrived at the capital of the Indies; but the lions never left him till they had conducted him to the gates of the sultan's palace; after which they returned the way they had come, though not without alarming the populace, who fled or hid themselves to avoid them, notwithstanding they walked gently and shewed no signs of fierceness.

A number of officers came to attend the prince while he dismounted, and conduct him to the sultan's apartment, who was at that time conversing with his favourites. He approached the throne, laid the bottle at the sultan's feet, kissed the rich carpet which covered the footstool, and rising, said, "I have brought you, sir, the salutary water which your majesty so much desired to store up among other rarities in your treasury; but at the same time wish you such health as never to have occasion to make use of it."

After the prince had concluded his compliment, the sultan placed him on his right hand, and said, "Son, I am much obliged to you for this valuable present; as also for the great danger you have exposed yourself to on my account (which I have been informed of by the sorceress, who knows the fountain of lions); but do me the pleasure, continued he, to inform me by what address, or rather by what incredible power, you have been preserved."

"Sir," replied prince Ahmed, "I have no share in the compliment your majesty is pleased to make me; all the honour is due to the fairy my spouse, and I take no other merit than that of having followed her advice." Then he informed the sultan what that advice was, by the relation of his expedition, and how he had conducted himself. When he had done, the sultan, who shewed outwardly all the demonstrations of joy, but secretly became more and more jealous, retired into an inward apartment, whence he sent for the sorceress.

The sorceress, on her arrival, saved the sultan the trouble of telling her of the success of prince Ahmed's journey, which she had heard before she came, and therefore was prepared with a new request. This she communicated to the sultan, who declared it the next day to the prince, in the midst of all his courtiers, in these words: "Son, I have one thing yet to ask of you; after which, I shall expect nothing more from your obedience, nor your interest with your wife. This request is, to bring me a man not above a foot and a half high, whose beard is thirty feet long, who carries upon his shoulders a bar of iron of five hundred weight, which he uses as a quarter-staff, and who can speak."

Prince Ahmed, who did not believe that there was such a man in the world as his father had described, would gladly have excused himself; but the sultan persisted in his demand, and told him the fairy could do more incredible things.

Next day the prince returned to the subterraneous kingdom of Perie Banou, to whom he related his father's new demand, which, he said, he looked upon to be a thing more impossible than the two first. "For," added he, "I cannot imagine there is or can be such a man in the world; without doubt he has a mind to try whether I am silly enough to search, or if there is such a man he seeks my ruin. In short, how can we suppose that I should lay hold of a man so small, armed as he describes? what arms can I use to reduce him to submission? If there are any means, I beg you will tell me how I may come off with honour this time also."

"Do not alarm yourself, prince," replied the fairy: "you ran a risk in fetching the water of the fountain of the lions for your father; but there is no danger in finding this man. It is my brother Schaibar, who is so far from being like me, though we both had the same father, that he is of so violent a nature, that nothing can prevent his giving bloody marks of his resentment for a slight offence; yet, on the other hand, is so liberal as to oblige any one in whatever they desire. He is made exactly as the sultan your father has described him; and has no other arms than a bar of iron of five hundred pounds weight, without which he never stirs, and which makes him respected. I will send for him, and you shall judge of the truth of what I tell you; but prepare yourself not to be alarmed at his extraordinary figure." "What! my queen," replied prince Ahmed, "do you say Schaibar is your brother? Let him be ever so ugly or deformed I shall be so far from being frightened at his appearance, that I shall love and honour him, and consider him as my nearest relation."

The fairy ordered a gold chafing-dish to be set with a fire in it under the porch of her palace, with a box of the same metal: out of the latter she took some incense, and threw it into the fire, when there arose a thick cloud of smoke.

Some moments after, the fairy said to prince Ahmed, "Prince, there comes my brother; do you see him?" The prince immediately perceived Schaibar, who was but a foot and a half high, coming gravely with his heavy bar on his shoulder; his beard thirty feet long, which supported itself before him, and a pair of thick moustaches in proportion, tucked up to his ears, and almost covering his face: his eyes were very small, like a pig's, and deep sunk in his head, which was of an enormous size, and on which he wore a pointed cap: besides all this, he had a hump behind and and before.

If prince Ahmed had not known that Schaibar was Perie Banou's brother, he would not have been able to behold him without fear; but knowing who he was, he waited for him with the fairy, and received him without the least concern.

Schaibar, as he came forwards, looked at the prince with an eye that would have chilled his soul in his body, and asked Perie Banou, when he first accosted her, who that man was? To which she replied, "He is my husband, brother; his name is Ahmed; he is a son of the sultan of the Indies. The reason why I did not invite you to my wedding was, I was unwilling to divert you from the expedition you were engaged in, and from which I heard with pleasure you returned victorious; on his account I have taken the liberty now to call for you."

At these words, Schaibar, looking at prince Ahmed with a favourable eye, which however diminished neither his fierceness nor savage look, said, "Is there any thing, sister, wherein I can serve him? he has only to speak. It is enough for me that he is your husband, to engage me to do for him whatever he desires." "The sultan his father," replied Perie Banou, "has a curiosity to see you, and I desire he may be your guide to the sultan's court." "He needs but lead the way; I will follow him," replied Schaibar. "Brother," resumed Perie Banou, "it is too late to go to-day, therefore stay till to-morrow morning; and in the mean time, as it is fit you should know all that has passed between the sultan of the Indies and prince Ahmed since our marriage, I will inform you this evening."

The next morning, after Schaibar had been informed of all that was proper for him to know, he set out with prince Ahmed, who was to present him to the sultan. When they arrived at the gates of the capital, the people, as soon as they saw Schaibar, ran and hid themselves in their shops and houses, shutting their doors, while others taking to their heels, communicated their fear to all they met, who stayed not to look behind them; insomuch, that Schaibar and prince Ahmed, as they went along, found all the streets and squares desolate, till they came to the palace, where the porters, instead of preventing Schaibar from entering, ran away too; so that the prince and he advanced without any obstacle to the council-hall, where the sultan was seated on his throne and giving audience. Here likewise the officers, at the approach of Schaibar, abandoned their posts, and gave them free admittance.

Schaibar, carrying his head erect, went fiercely up to the throne, without waiting to be presented by prince Ahmed, and accosted the sultan of the Indies in these words: "You have asked for me," said he; "see, here I am, what would you have with me?"

The sultan, instead of answering, clapped his hands before his eyes, and turned away his head, to avoid the sight of so terrible an object. Schaibar was so much provoked at this uncivil and rude reception, after he had given him the trouble to come so far, that he instantly lifted up his iron bar, saying, "Speak, then;" let it fall on his head, and killed him, before prince Ahmed could intercede in his behalf. All that he could do was to prevent his killing the grand vizier, who sat not far from him on his right hand, representing to him that he had always given the sultan his father good advice. "These are they then," said Schaibar, "who gave him bad;" and as he pronounced these words, he killed all the other viziers on the right and left, flatterers and favourites of the sultan, who were prince Ahmed's enemies. Every time he struck he crushed some one or other, and none escaped but those who, not rendered motionless by fear, saved themselves by flight.

When this terrible execution was over, Schaibar came out of the council-hall into the court-yard with the iron bar upon his shoulder, and looking at the grand vizier, who owed his life to prince Ahmed, said, “I know there is here a certain sorceress, who is a greater enemy of the prince my brother-in-law than all those base favourites I have chastised; let her be brought to me immediately.” The grand vizier instantly sent for her, and as soon as she was brought, Schaibar, knocking her down with his iron bar, said, “Take the reward of thy pernicious counsel, and learn to feign sickness again;” he left her dead on the spot.

After this he said, “This is not yet enough; I will treat the whole city in the same manner, if they do not immediately acknowledge prince Ahmed my brother-in-law as sultan of the Indies.” Then all who were present made the air ring with the repeated acclamations of “Long life to sultan Ahmed;” and immediately after, he was proclaimed through the whole metropolis. Schaibar caused him to be clothed in the royal vestments, installed him on the throne, and after he had made all swear homage and fidelity, returned to his sister Perie Banou, whom he brought with great pomp, and made her to be owned sultaness of the Indies.

As for prince Ali and princess Nouronnihar, as they had no concern in the conspiracy, prince Ahmed assigned them a considerable province, with its capital, where they spent the rest of their lives. Afterwards he sent an officer to Houssain, to acquaint him with the change, and make him an offer of any province he might choose; but that prince thought himself so happy in his solitude, that he desired the officer to return his brother thanks for the kindness he designed him, assuring him of his submission; but that the only favour he desired was, to be indulged with leave to live retired in the place he had chosen for his retreat.

THE STORY OF THE SISTERS WHO ENVIED THEIR YOUNGER SISTER.

There was an emperor of Persia named Khoosroo Shaw, who, when he first came to his crown, in order to obtain a knowledge of affairs, took great pleasure in night adventures, attended by a trusty minister. He often walked in disguise through the city, and met with many adventures.

After the ceremonies of his father's funeral-rites and his own inauguration were over, the new sultan, as well from inclination as duty, went out one evening attended by his grand vizier, disguised like himself, to observe what was transacting in the city. As he was passing through a street in that part of the town inhabited only by the meaner sort, he heard some people talking very loud; and going close to the house whence the noise proceeded, and looking through a crack in the door, perceived a light, and three sisters sitting on a sofa, conversing together after supper. By what the eldest said, he presently understood the subject of their conversation was wishes: "For," said she, "since we have got upon wishes, mine shall be to have the sultan's baker for my husband, for then I shall eat my fill of that bread, which by way of excellence is called the sultan's: let us see if your tastes are as good as mine." "For my part," replied the second sister, "I wish I was wife to the sultan's chief cook, for then I should eat of the most excellent dishes; and as I am persuaded that the sultan's bread is common in the palace, I should not want any of that; therefore you see," addressing herself to her eldest sister, "that I have a better taste than you."

The youngest sister, who was very beautiful, and had more charms and wit than the two elder, spoke in her turn: "For my part, sisters," said she, "I shall not limit my desires to such trifles, but take a higher flight; and since we are upon wishing, I wish to be the emperor's queen consort. I would make him father of a prince, whose hair should be gold on one side of his head, and silver on the other; when he cried, the tears from his eyes should be pearl; and when he smiled, his vermilion lips should look like a rose-bud fresh blown."

The three sisters' wishes, particularly that of the youngest, seemed so singular to the sultan, that he resolved to gratify them in their desires; but without communicating his design to his grand vizier, he charged him only to take notice of the house, and bring the three sisters before him the following day.

The grand vizier, in executing the emperor's orders, would but just give the sisters time to dress themselves to appear before him, without telling them the reason. He brought them to the palace, and presented them to the emperor, who said to them, "Do you remember the wishes you expressed last night, when you were all in so pleasant a mood? Speak the truth; I must know what they were."

At these unexpected words of the emperor, the three sisters were much confounded. They cast down their eyes and blushed, and the colour which rose in the cheeks of the youngest quite captivated the emperor's heart. Modesty, and fear lest they might have offended the emperor by their conversation, kept them silent. The emperor perceiving their confusion, said, to encourage them, "Fear nothing, I did not send for you to distress you; and since I see that is the effect of the question I asked, without my intending it, as I know the wish of each, I will relieve you from your fears. You," added he, "who wished to be my wife shall have your desire this day; and you," continued he, addressing himself to the two elder sisters, "shall also be married to my chief baker and cook."

As soon as the sultan had declared his pleasure, the youngest sister, setting her eldest an example, threw herself at the emperor's feet, to express her gratitude. "Sir," said she, "my wish, since it is come to your majesty's knowledge, was expressed only in the way of conversation and amusement. I am unworthy of the honour you do me, and supplicate your pardon for my presumption." The two other sisters would have excused themselves also; but the emperor interrupting them, said, "No, no; it shall be as I have declared; every one's wish shall be fulfilled."

The nuptials were all celebrated that day, as the emperor had resolved, but in a different manner. The youngest sister's were solemnized with all the rejoicings usual at the marriages of the emperors of Persia; and those of the other two sisters according to the quality and distinction of their husbands; the one as the sultan's chief baker, and the other as head cook.

The two elder felt strongly the disproportion of their marriages to that of their younger sister. This consideration made them far from being content, though they were arrived at the utmost height of their late wishes, and much beyond their hopes. They gave themselves up to an excess of jealousy, which not only disturbed their joy, but was the cause of great troubles and afflictions to the queen consort their younger sister. They had not an opportunity to communicate their thoughts to each other on the preference the emperor had given her, but were altogether employed in preparing themselves for the celebration of their marriages. Some days afterwards, when they had an opportunity of seeing each other at the public baths, the eldest said to the other, “Well, what say you to our sister’s great fortune? Is not she a fine person to be a queen!” “I must own,” said the other sister, “I cannot conceive what charms the emperor could discover to be so bewitched by the young gipsy. Was it a reason sufficient for him not to cast his eyes on you, because she was somewhat younger? You were as worthy of his bed; and in justice he ought to have preferred you.”

“Sister,” said the elder, “I should not have regretted if his majesty had but pitched upon you; but that he should choose that hussy really grieves me. But I will revenge myself; and you, I think, are as much concerned as me; therefore I propose that we should contrive measures, and act in concert in a common cause: communicate to me what you think the likeliest way to mortify her, while I, on my side, will inform you what my desire of revenge shall suggest to me.”

After this wicked agreement, the two sisters saw each other frequently, and consulted how they might disturb and interrupt the happiness of the queen. They proposed a great many ways, but in deliberating about the manner of executing them, found so many difficulties, that they durst not attempt them. In the mean time, they often went together to make her visits with a detestable dissimulation, and every time shewed her all the marks of affection they could devise, to persuade her how overjoyed they were to have a sister raised to so high a fortune. The queen, on her part, constantly received them with all the demonstrations of esteem they could expect: from a sister who was not puffed up with her high dignity, and loved them as cordially as before.

Some months after her marriage, the queen found herself to be with child. The emperor expressed great joy, which was communicated to all the court, and spread throughout the empire of Persia. Upon this news the two sisters came to pay their compliments, and proffered their service to deliver her, desiring her, if not provided with a midwife, to accept of them.

The queen said to them most obligingly, “Sisters, I should desire nothing more, if it was absolutely in my power to make the choice. I am however obliged to you for your good-will, but must submit to what the emperor shall order on this occasion. Let your husbands employ their friends to make interest, and get some courtier to ask this favour of his majesty; and if he speaks to me about it, be assured that I shall not only express the pleasure he does me, but thank him for making choice of you.”

The two husbands applied themselves to some courtiers their patrons, and begged of them to use their interest to procure their wives the honour they aspired to. Those patrons exerted themselves so much in their behalf, that the emperor promised them to consider of the matter, and was as good as his word; for in conversation with the queen, he told her, that he thought her sisters were the most proper persons to assist her in her labour; but would not name them before he had asked her consent. The queen, sensible of the deference the emperor so obligingly paid her, said to him, “Sir, I was prepared to do as your majesty might please to command. But since you have been so kind as to think of my sisters, I thank you for the regard you have shewn them for my sake; and therefore I shall not dissemble, that I had rather have them than strangers.”

The emperor named the queen’s two sisters to be her midwives; and from that time they went frequently to the palace, overjoyed at the opportunity they should have of executing the detestable wickedness they had meditated against the queen.

When the queen’s time was up she was safely delivered of a young prince, as bright as the day; but neither his innocence nor beauty could move the cruel hearts of the merciless sisters. They wrapped him up carelessly in his cloths, and put him into a basket, which they abandoned to the stream of a small canal, that ran under the queen’s apartment, and declared that she was delivered of a little dead dog, which they produced. This disagreeable intelligence was announced to the emperor, who became so angry at the circumstance, that he was likely to have occasioned the queen's death, if his grand vizier had not represented to him, that he could not, without injustice, make her answerable for the caprices of nature.

In the mean time, the basket in which the little prince was exposed was carried by the stream beyond a wall, which bounded the prospect of the queen's apartment, and from thence floated with the current down the gardens. By chance the intendant of the emperor's gardens, one of the principal and most considerable officers of the kingdom, was walking in the garden by the side of this canal, and perceiving a basket floating, called to a gardener, who was not far off, to bring it to shore, that he might see what it contained. The gardener, with a rake which he had in his hand, drew the basket to the side of the canal, took it up, and gave it to him.

The intendant of the gardens was extremely surprised to see in the basket a child, which, though he knew it could be but just born, had very fine features. This officer had been married several years, but though he had always been desirous of having children, Heaven had never blessed him with any. This accident interrupted his walk: he made the gardener follow him with the child; and when he came to his own house, which was situated at the entrance into the gardens of the palace, went into his wife's apartment. "Wife," said he, "as we have no children of our own, God has sent us one. I recommend him to you; provide him a nurse, and take as much care of him as if he were our own son; for, from this moment, I acknowledge him as such." The intendant's wife received the child with great joy, and took particular pleasure in the care of him. The intendant himself would not inquire too narrowly whence the child came. He saw plainly it came not far off the queen's apartment; but it was not his business to examine too closely into what had passed, nor to create disturbances in a place where peace was so necessary.

The following year the queen consort was brought to bed of another prince, on whom the unnatural sisters had no more compassion than on his brother; but exposed him likewise in a basket, and set him adrift in the canal, pretending this time that the sultaness was delivered of a cat. It was happy also for this child that the intendant of the gardens was walking by the canal side, who had it carried to his wife, and charged her to take as much care of it as of the former; which was as agreeable to her inclination as it was to that of the intendant.

The emperor of Persia was more enraged this time against the queen than before, and she had felt the effects of his anger if the grand vizier's remonstrances had not prevailed.

The third time the queen lay in she was delivered of a princess, which innocent babe underwent the same fate as the princes her brothers; for the two sisters being determined not to desist from their detestable schemes, till they had seen the queen their younger sister at least cast off, turned out, and humbled, exposed this infant also on the canal. But the princess, as well as the two princes her brothers, was preserved from death by the compassion and charity of the intendant of the gardens.

To this inhumanity the two sisters added a lie and deceit as before. They produced a piece of wood, and affirmed it to be a false birth of which the queen had been delivered.

Khoosroo Shaw could no longer contain himself, when he was informed of the new extraordinary birth. "What!" said he; "this woman, unworthy of my bed, will fill my palace with monsters, if I let her live any longer! No, it shall not be; she is a monster herself, and I must rid the world of her." He pronounced sentence of death, and ordered the grand vizier to see it executed.

The grand vizier and the courtiers who were present cast themselves at the emperor's feet, to beg of him to revoke the sentence. "Your majesty, I hope, will give me leave," said the grand vizier, "to represent to you, that the laws which condemn persons to death were made to punish crimes; the three extraordinary labours of the queen are not crimes; for in what can she be said to have contributed towards them? Many other women have had, and have the same every day, and are to be pitied, but not punished. Your majesty may abstain from seeing her, but let her live. The affliction in which she will spend the rest of her life, after the loss of your favour, will be a punishment sufficiently distressing."

The emperor of Persia considered with himself, and reflecting that it was unjust to condemn the queen to death for what had happened, said, “Let her live then; I will spare her life; but it shall be on this condition, that she shall desire to die more than once every day. Let a wooden shed be built for her at the gate of the principal mosque, with iron bars to the windows, and let her be put into it, in the coarsest habit; and every Mussulmaun that shall go into the mosque to prayers shall spit in her face. If any one fail, I will have him exposed to the same punishment; and that I maybe punctually obeyed, I charge you, vizier, to appoint persons to see this done.”

The emperor pronounced his sentence in such a tone that the grand vizier durst not further remonstrate; and it was executed, to the great satisfaction of the two envious sisters. A shed was built, and the queen, truly worthy of compassion, was put into it, and exposed ignominiously to the contempt of the people; which usage, as she did not deserve it, she bore with a patient resignation that excited the admiration as well as compassion of those who judged of things better than the vulgar.

The two princes and the princess were, in the mean time, nursed and brought up by the intendant of the gardens and his wife with all the tenderness of a father and mother; and as they advanced in age, they all shewed marks of superior dignity, but the princess in particular, which discovered itself every day by their docility and inclinations above trifles, different from those of common children, and by a certain air which could only belong to exalted birth. All this increased the affections of the intendant and his wife, who called the eldest prince Bahman, and the second Perviz, both of them names of the most ancient emperors of Persia, and the princess, Perie-zadeh, which name also had been borne by several queens and princesses of the kingdom.

As soon as the two princes were old enough, the intendant provided proper masters to teach them to read and write; and the princess their sister, who was often with them, shewing a great desire to learn, the intendant, pleased with her quickness, employed the same master to teach her also. Her emulation, vivacity, and piercing wit, made her in a little time as great a proficient as her brothers.

From that time the brothers and sister had the same masters in geography, poetry, history, and even the secret sciences; and made so wonderful a progress, that their tutors were amazed, and frankly owned that they could teach them no farther. At the hours of recreation, the princess learned to sing and play upon all sorts of instruments; and when the princes were learning to ride she would not permit them to have that advantage over her, but went through all the exercises with them, learning to ride also, to bend the bow, and dart the reed or javelin, and often-times outdid them in the race, and other contests of agility.

The intendant of the gardens was so overjoyed to find his adopted children so accomplished in all the perfections of body and mind, and that they so well requited the expense he had been at in their education, that he resolved to be at a still greater: for as he had till then been content only with his lodge at the entrance of the garden, and kept no country house, he purchased a country seat at a short distance from the city, surrounded by a large tract of arable land, meadows, and woods. As the house was not sufficiently handsome nor convenient, he pulled it down, and spared no expense in building a mansion more magnificent. He went every day to hasten, by his presence, the great number of workmen he employed; and as soon as there was an apartment ready to receive him, passed several days together there when his presence was not necessary at court; and by the same exertions, the interior was furnished in the richest manner, answerably to the magnificence of the edifice. Afterwards he made gardens, according to a plan drawn by himself. He took in a large extent of ground, which he walled round, and stocked with fallow deer, that the princes and princess might divert themselves with hunting when they chose.

When this country seat was finished and fit for habitation, the intendant of the gardens went and cast himself at the emperor’s feet, and after representing how long he had served, and the infirmities of age which he found growing upon him, begged he would permit him to resign his charge into his majesty’s disposal, and retire. The emperor gave him leave, with the more pleasure because he was satisfied with his long services, both in his father’s reign and his own; and when he granted it, asked what he should do to recompense him? “Sir,” replied the intendant of the gardens, “I have received so many obligations from your majesty and the late emperor your father of happy memory, that I desire no more than the honour of dying in your favour."

He took his leave of the emperor, and retired with the two princes and the princess to the country retreat he had built. His wife had been dead some years, and he himself had not lived above six months with them before he was surprised by so sudden a death, that he had not time to give them the least account of the manner in which he had discovered them.

The princes Bahman and Perviz, and the princess Perie-zadeh, who knew no other father than the intendant of the emperor's gardens, regretted and bewailed him as such, and paid all the honours in his funeral obsequies which love and filial gratitude required of them. Satisfied with the plentiful fortune he had left them, they lived together in perfect union, free from the ambition of distinguishing themselves at court, or aspiring to places of honour and dignity, which they might easily have obtained.

One day when the two princes were hunting, and the princess had remained at home, a religious old woman came to the gate, and desired leave to go in to say her prayers, it being then the hour. The servants asked the princess's permission, who ordered them to shew her into the oratory, which the intendant of the emperor's gardens had taken care to fit up in his house, for want of a mosque in the neighbourhood. She bade them also, after the good woman had finished her prayers, shew her the house and gardens, and then bring her to her.

The old woman went into the oratory, said her prayers, and when she came out two of the princess's women invited her to see the house and gardens; which civility she accepted, followed them from one apartment to another, and observed, like a person who understood what belonged to furniture, the nice arrangement of every thing. They conducted her also into the garden, the disposition of which she found so well planned, that she admired it, observing that the person who had formed it must have been an excellent master of his art. Afterwards she was brought before the princess, who waited for her in the great hall, which in beauty and richness exceeded all that she had admired in the other apartments.

As soon as the princess saw the devout woman, she said to her, "My good mother, come near and sit down by me. I am overjoyed at the happiness of having the opportunity of profiting for some moments by the good example and conversation of such a person as you, who have taken the right way by dedicating yourself to the service of God. I wish every one were as wise."

The devout woman, instead of sitting on a sofa, would only sit upon the edge of one. The princess would not permit her to do so, but rising from her seat,'and taking her by the hand, obliged her to come and sit by her. The good woman, sensible of the civility, said, "Madam, I ought not to have so much respect shewn me; but since you command, and are mistress of your own house, I will obey you." When she had seated herself, before they entered into any conversation, one of the princess's women brought a little low stand of mother of pearl and ebony, with a china dish full of cakes upon it, and many others set round it full of fruits in season, and wet and dry sweetmeats.

The princess took up one of the cakes, and presenting her with it, said, "Eat, good mother, and make choice of what you like best; you had need to eat after coming so far." "Madam," replied the good woman, "I am not used to eat such delicacies; but will not refuse what God has sent me by so liberal a hand as yours."

While the devout woman was eating, the princess ate a little too, to bear her company, and asked her many questions upon the exercise of devotion which she practised, and how she lived: all which she answered with great modesty. Talking of several things, at last she asked her what she thought of the house, and how she liked it.

"Madam," answered the devout woman, "I must certainly have very bad taste to disapprove any thing in it, since it is beautiful, regular, and magnificently furnished with exactness and judgment, and all its ornaments adjusted in the best manner. Its situation is an agreeable spot, and no garden can be more delightful; but yet if you will give me leave to speak my mind freely, I will take the liberty to tell you, that this house would be incomparable if it had three things which are wanting to complete it." "My good mother," replied the princess Perie-zadeh, "what are those? I conjure you, in God's name, to tell me what they are: I will spare nothing to get them, if it be possible."

"Madam," replied the devout woman, "the first of these three things is the speaking bird, so singular a creature, that it draws round it all the singing birds of the neighbourhood, which come to accompany his song. The second is the singing tree, the leaves of which are so many mouths, which form an harmonious concert of different voices, and never cease. The third is the yellow water of a gold colour, a single drop of which being poured into a vessel properly prepared, it increases so as to fill it immediately, and rises up in the middle like a fountain, which continually plays, and yet the basin never overflows."

"Ah! my good mother," cried the princess, "how much am I obliged to you for the knowledge of these curiosities! They are surprising, and I never before heard there were such wonderful rarities in the world; but as I am persuaded that you know, I expect that you should do me the favour to inform me where they are to be found."

"Madam," replied the good woman, "I should be unworthy the hospitality you have with so much goodness shewn me, if I should refuse to satisfy your curiosity in that point; and am glad to have the honour to tell you, that these curiosities are all to be met with in the same spot on the confines of this kingdom, towards India. The road to it lies before your house, and whoever you send needs but follow it for twenty days, and on the twentieth let him only ask the first person he meets where the speaking bird, singing tree, and yellow water are, and he will be informed." After saying this, she rose from her seat, took her leave, and went her way.

The princess Perie-zadeh's thoughts were so taken up with what the devout woman had told her of the speaking bird, singing tree, and yellow water, that she never perceived her departure, till she wanted to ask her some question for her better information; for she thought that what she had told her was not a sufficient reason for exposing herself by undertaking a long journey, possibly to no purpose. However, she would not send after her, but endeavoured to remember all she had told her; and when she thought she had recollected every word, took real pleasure in thinking of the satisfaction she should have if she could get these wonderful curiosities into her possession; but the difficulties she apprehended, and the fear of not succeeding, made her very uneasy.

She was absorbed in these thoughts when her brothers returned from hunting; who, when they entered the great hall, instead of finding her lively and gay, as she used to be be, were amazed to see her so pensive, and hanging down her head as if something troubled her.

"Sister," said prince Bahman, "what is become of all your mirth and gaiety? Are you not well? or has some misfortune befallen you? Has any body given you reason to be so melancholy? Tell us, that we may know how to act, and give you some relief. If any one has affronted you, we will resent his insolence."

The princess remained in the same posture some time without answering; but at last lifted up her eyes to look at her brothers, and then held them down again, telling them nothing disturbed her.

"Sister," said prince Bahman, "you conceal the truth from us; there must be something of consequence. It is impossible we could observe so sudden a change if nothing was the matter with you. You would not have us satisfied with the evasive answer you have given: do not conceal any thing, unless you would have us suspect that you renounce the strict union which has hitherto subsisted between us from our infancy."

The princess, who had not the smallest intention to offend her brothers, would not suffer them to entertain such a thought, but said, "When I told you nothing disturbed me, I meant nothing that was of importance to you; but to me it is of some consequence; and since you press me to tell you by our strict union and friendship, which are so dear to me, I will. You think, and I always believed so too, that this house was so complete that nothing was wanting. But this day I have learned that it wants three rarities, which would render it so perfect that no country seat in the world could be compared with it. These three things are, the speaking bird, the singing tree, and the yellow water. After she had informed them wherein consisted the excellency of these rarities," "A devout woman," added she, "has made this discovery to me, told me the place where they are to be found, and the way thither. Perhaps you may imagine these things to be trifles, and of little consequence to render our house complete, that without these additions it will always be thought sufficiently elegant with what it already contains, and that we can do without them. You may think as you please; but I cannot help telling you that I am persuaded they are absolutely necessary, and I shall not be easy without them. Therefore, whether you value them or not, I desire you to consider what person you may think proper for me to send in search of the curiosities I have mentioned."

"Sister," replied prince Bahman, "nothing can concern you in which we have not an equal interest. It is enough that you have an earnest desire for the things you mention to oblige us to take the same interest; but if you had not, we feel ourselves inclined of our own accord and for our own individual satisfaction. I am persuaded my brother is of the same opinion, and therefore we ought to undertake this conquest; for the importance and singularity of the undertaking deserve that name. I will take that charge upon myself; only tell me the place, and the way to it, and I will defer my journey no longer than till to-morrow."

"Brother," said prince Perviz, "it is not proper that you, who are the head and director of our family, should be absent. I desire my sister would join with me to oblige you to abandon your design, and allow me to undertake it. I hope to acquit myself as well as you, and it will be a more regular proceeding." "I am persuaded of your good-will, brother," replied prince Bahman, "and that you would succeed as well as myself in this journey; but I have resolved, and will undertake it. You shall stay at home with our sister, and I need not recommend her to you." He spent the remainder of the day in making preparations for his journey, and informing himself from the princess of the directions which the devout woman had left her.

The next morning Bahman mounted his horse, and Perviz and the princess embraced, and wished him a good journey. But in the midst of their adieus, the princess recollected what she had not thought of before. "Brother," said she, "I had quite forgotten the accidents which attend travellers. Who knows whether I shall ever see you again? Alight, I beseech you, and give up this journey. I would rather be deprived of the sight and possession of the speaking bird, singing tree, and yellow water, than run the risk of never seeing you more."

"Sister," replied Bahman, smiling at the sudden fears of the princess, "my resolution is fixed, but were it not, I should determine upon it now, and you must allow me to execute it. The accidents you speak of befall only those who are unfortunate; but there are more who are not so. However, as events are uncertain, and I may fail in this undertaking, all I can do is to leave you this knife."

Bahman, pulling a knife from his vestband, and presenting it in the sheath to the princess, said, "Take this knife, sister, and give yourself the trouble sometimes to pull it out of the sheath: while you see it clean as it is now, it will be a sign that I am alive; but if you find it stained with blood, then you may believe me dead, and indulge me with your prayers."

The princess could obtain nothing more of Bahman. He bade adieu to her and prince Perviz for the last time, and rode away. When he got into the road he never turned to the right hand nor to the left, but went directly forward towards India. The twentieth day he perceived on the road side a hideous old man, who sat under a tree some small distance from a thatched house, which was his retreat from the weather.

His eye-brows were as white as snow, as was also the hair of his head; his whiskers covered his mouth, and his beard and hair reached down to his feet. The nails of his hands and feet were grown to an extensive length; a flat broad umbrella covered his head. He had no clothes, but only a mat thrown round his body.

This old man was a dervish, for many years retired from the world, to give himself up entirely to the service of God; so that at last he became what we have described.

Prince Bahman, who had been all that morning very attentive to see if he could meet with any body who could give him information of the place he was in search of, stopped when he came near the dervish, alighted, in conformity to the directions which the devout woman had given the princess Perie-zadeh, and leading his horse by the bridle, advanced towards him, and saluting him, said, "God prolong your days, good father, and grant you the accomplishment of your desires."

The dervish returned the prince's salutation, but so unintelligibly that he could not understand one word he said: prince Bahman perceiving that this difficulty proceeded from the dervish's whiskers hanging over his mouth, and unwilling to go any farther without the instructions he wanted, pulled out a pair of scissors he had about him, and having tied his horse to a branch of the tree, said, “Good dervish, I want to have some talk with you: but your whiskers prevent my understanding what you say: and if you will consent, I will cut off some part of them and of your eye-brows, which disfigure you so much that you look more like a bear than a man.”

The dervish did not oppose the offer; and when the prince had cut off as much hair as he thought fit, he perceived that the dervish had a good complexion, and that he did not seem so old as he really was. “Good dervish,” said he, “if I had a glass I would shew you how young you look: you are now a man, but before nobody could tell what you were.”

The kind behaviour of prince Bahman made the dervish smile, and return his compliment. “Sir,” said he, “whoever you are, I am obliged by the good office you have performed, and am ready to shew my gratitude by doing any thing in my power for you. You must have alighted here upon some account or other. Tell me what it is, and I will endeavour to serve you.”

“Good dervish,” replied prince Bahman, “I am in search of the speaking bird, the singing tree, and the yellow water; I know these three rarities are not far from hence, but cannot tell exactly the place where they are to be found; if you know, I conjure you to shew me the way, that I may not lose my labour after so long a journey.”

The prince, while he spoke, observed that the dervish changed countenance, held down his eyes, looked very serious, and instead of making any reply, remained silent; which obliged him to say to him again, “Good father, I fancy you heard me; tell me whether you know what I ask you, that I may not lose my time, but inform myself somewhere else.”

At last the dervish broke silence. “Sir,” said he to prince Bahman, “I know the way you ask of me; but the regard which I conceived for you the first moment I saw you, and which is grown stronger by the service you have done me, kept me in suspense, whether I should give you the satisfaction you desire.” “What motive can hinder you?” replied the prince; “and what difficulties do you find in so doing?” “I will tell you,” replied the dervish; “the danger you are going to expose yourself to is greater than you may suppose. A number of gentlemen of as much bravery and courage as you can possibly possess have passed this way, and asked me the same question. When I had used all my endeavours to persuade them to desist, they would not believe me; at last, I yielded, to their importunities; I was compelled to shew them the way, and I can assure you they have all perished, for I have not seen one come back. Therefore, if you have any regard for your life, take my advice, go no farther, but return home."

Prince Bahman persisted in his resolution. "I will not suppose," said he to the dervish, "but that your advice is sincere. I am obliged to you for the friendship you express for me; but whatever may be the danger, nothing shall make me change my intention: whoever attacks me, I am well armed, and can say I am as brave as any one." "But they who will attack you are not to be seen," replied the dervish; "how will you defend yourself against invisible persons?" "It is no matter," answered the prince; "all you say shall not persuade me to do any thing contrary to my duty. Since you know the way, I conjure you once more to inform me."

When the dervish found he could not prevail upon prince Bahman, and that he was obstinately bent to pursue his journey notwithstanding his friendly remonstrance, he put his hand into a bag that lay by him and pulled out a bowl, which he presented to him. "Since I cannot prevail on you to attend to my advice," said he, "take this bowl; when you are on horseback throw it before you, and follow it to the foot of a mountain, where it will stop. As soon as the bowl stops, alight, leave your horse with the bridle over his neck, and he will stand in the same place till you return. As you ascend you will see on your right and left a great number of large black stones, and will hear on all sides a confusion of voices, which will utter a thousand injurious abuses to discourage you, and prevent your reaching the summit of the mountain. Be not afraid; but above all things, do not turn your head to look behind you; for in that instant you will be changed into such a black stone as those you see, which are all youths who have failed in this enterprise. If you escape the danger of which I give you but a faint idea, and get to the top of the mountain, you will see a cage, and in that cage is the bird you seek; ask him which are the singing tree and the yellow water, and he will tell you. I have nothing more to say; this is what you have to do, and the danger you have to avoid; but if you are prudent, you will take my advice, and not expose your life. Consider once more while you have time that the difficulty is almost insuperable."

"I am obliged to you for your repeated advice," replied prince Bahman, after he had received the bowl, "but cannot follow it. However, I will endeavour to conform myself to that part of it which bids me not look behind me as I shall ascend the mountain, and I hope to come and see you again soon, and thank you when I have obtained what I am seeking." After these words, to which the dervish made no other answer than that he should be overjoyed to see him again, the prince mounted his horse, took his leave of the dervish with a respectful salute, and threw the bowl before him.

The bowl rolled away unceasingly with as much swiftness as when prince Bahman first hurled it from his hand, which obliged him to put his horse to the same pace to avoid losing sight of it, and when it had reached the foot of the mountain it stopped. The prince alighted from his horse, laid the bridle on his neck; and having first surveyed the mountain, and seen the black stones, began to ascend; but had not gone four steps, before he heard the voices mentioned by the dervish, though he could see nobody. Some said, "Where is that fool going? where is he going? what would he have? do not let him pass." Others, "Stop him, catch him, kill him;" and others with a voice like thunder, "Thief! assassin! murderer!" while some in a gibing tone cried, "No, no, do not hurt him; let the pretty fellow pass, the cage and bird are kept for him."

Notwithstanding all these troublesome voices, prince Bahman ascended with courage and resolution for some time, but the voices redoubled with so loud a din near him, both behind and before, that at last he was seized with dread, his legs trembled under him, he staggered, and finding that his strength failed him, he forgot the dervish's advice, turned about to run down the hill, and was that instant changed into a black stone; a metamorphosis which had happened to many before him, who had attempted the ascent. His horse likewise underwent the same change.

From the time of prince Bahman's departure, the princess Periezadeh always wore the knife and sheath in her girdle, and pulled it out several times in a day, to know whether her brother was alive. She had the consolation to understand he was in perfect health, and to talk of him frequently with prince Perviz, who sometimes prevented her by asking her what news.

On the fatal day that prince Bahman was transformed into a stone, as prince Perviz and the princess were talking together in the evening, as usual, the prince desired his sister to pull out the knife to know how their brother did. The princess readily complied, and seeing the blood run down the point was seized with so much horror that she threw it down. “Ah! my dear brother,” cried she, “I have been the cause of your death, and shall never see you more! Why did I tell you of the speaking bird, singing tree, and yellow water; or rather, of what importance was it to me to know whether the devout woman thought this house ugly or handsome, or complete or not? I wish to Heaven she had never addressed herself to me? Deceitful hypocrite!” added she, “is this the return you have made for the kind reception I gave you? Why did you tell me of a bird, a tree, and a water, which, imaginary as I am persuaded they are, by my dear brother’s death, yet disturb me by your enchantment?”

Prince Perviz was as much afflicted at the death of prince Bahman as the princess; but not to waste time in needless regret, as he knew that she still passionately desired possession of the speaking bird, the singing tree, and the golden water, he interrupted her, saying, “Sister, our regret for our brother is vain and useless; our grief and lamentations cannot restore him to life; it is the will of God, we must submit to it, and adore the decrees of the Almighty without searching into them. Why should you now doubt of the truth of what the holy woman told you? do you think she spoke to you of three things that were not in being? and that she invented them on purpose to deceive you, who had given her no cause to do so, but received her with so much goodness and civility? Let us rather believe that our brother’s death is owing to some error on his part, or some accident which we cannot conceive. It ought not therefore to prevent us from pursuing our object. I offered to go this journey, and am now more resolved than ever; his example has no effect upon my resolution; to-morrow I will depart.”

The princess did all she could to dissuade prince Perviz, conjuring him not to expose her to the danger of losing two brothers; but he was obstinate, and all the remonstrances she could urge had no effect upon him. Before he went, that she might know what success he had, he left her a string of a hundred pearls, telling her, that if they would not run when she should count them upon the string, but remain fixed, that would be a certain sign he had undergone the same fate as his brother; but at the same time told her he hoped it would never happen, but that he should have the happiness to see her again to their mutual satisfaction.

Prince Perviz, on the twentieth day after his departure, met the same dervish in the same place as his brother Bahman had done before him. He went directly up to him, and after he had saluted, asked him, if he could tell him where to find the speaking bird, the singing tree, and the golden water? The dervish urged the same difficulties and remonstrances as he had done to prince Bahman, telling him, that a young gentleman, who very much resembled him, was with him a short time before; that, overcome by his importunity and pressing instances, he had shewn him the way, given him a guide, and told him how he should act to succeed; but that he had not seen him since, and doubted not but he had shared the same fate as all other adventurers.

"Good dervish," answered prince Perviz, "I know whom you speak of; he was my elder brother, and I am informed of the certainty of his death, but know not the cause." "I can tell you," replied the dervise; "he was changed into a black stone, as all I speak of have been; and you must expect the same transformation, unless you observe more exactly than he has done the advice I gave him, in case you persist in your resolution, which I once more entreat you to renounce."

"Dervish," said prince Perviz, "I cannot sufficiently express how much I am obliged for the concern you take in my life, who am a stranger to you, and have done nothing to deserve your kindness: but I thoroughly considered this enterprise before I undertook it, and I cannot now relinquish it: therefore I beg of you to do me the same favour you have done my brother. Perhaps I may have better success in following your directions." "Since I cannot prevail with you," said the dervish, "to give up your obstinate resolution, if my age did not prevent me, and I could stand, I would get up to reach you a bowl I have here, which will shew you the way."

Without giving the dervish time to say more, the prince alighted from his horse and went to the dervish, who had taken a bowl out of his bag, in which he had a great many, and gave it him, with the same directions he had given prince Bahman; and after warning him not to be discouraged by the voices he should hear without seeing any body, however threatening they might be, but to continue his way up the hill till he saw the cage and bird, he let him depart.

Prince Perviz thanked the dervish, and when he had remounted, and taken leave, threw the bowl before his horse, and spurring him at the same time, followed it. When the bowl came to the bottom of the hill it stopped, the prince alighted, and stood some time to recollect the dervish's directions. He encouraged himself, and began to walk up with a resolution to reach the summit; but before he had gone above six steps, he heard a voice, which seemed to be near, as of a man behind him, say in an insulting tone, "Stay, rash youth, that I may punish you for your presumption."

Upon this affront the prince, forgetting the dervish's advice, clapped his hand upon his sword, drew it, and turned about to revenge himself; but had scarcely time to see that nobody followed him before he and his horse were changed into black stones.

In the mean time the princess Perie-zadeh, several times a day after her brother's departure, counted her chaplet. She did not omit it at night, but when she went to bed put it about her neck; and in the morning when she awoke counted over the pearls again to see if they would slide.

The day that prince Perviz was transformed into a stone, she was counting over the pearls as she used to do, when all at once they became immoveably fixed, a certain token that the prince her brother was dead. As she had determined what to do in case it should so happen, she lost no time in outward demonstrations of grief, which she concealed as much as possible; but having disguised herself in man's apparel, armed and equipped, she mounted her horse the next morning, having told her servants she should return in two or three days, and took the same road her brothers had done.

The princess, who had been used to ride on horseback in hunting, supported the fatigue of so long a journey better than most ladies could have done; and as she made the same stages as her brothers, she also met with the dervish on the twentieth day. When she came near him, she alighted off her horse, leading him by the bridle, went and sat down by the dervish, and after she had saluted him, said, "Good dervish, give me leave to rest myself; and do me the favour to tell me if you have not heard that there are somewhere in this neighbourhood a speaking bird, a singing tree, and golden water."

"Princess," answered the dervish, "for so I must call you, since by your voice I know you to be a woman disguised in man's apparel, I thank you for your compliment, and receive the honour you do me with great pleasure. I know the place well where these things are to be found: but what makes you ask me this question?"

"Good dervish," replied the princess, "I have had such a flattering relation of them given me, that I have a great desire to possess them." "Madam," replied the dervish, "you have been told the truth. These curiosities are more singular and surprising than they have been represented to you: but you have not been made acquainted with the difficulties which must be surmounted in order to obtain them. If you had been fully informed of these, you would not have undertaken so troublesome and dangerous an enterprise. Take my advice, go no farther, return, and do not urge me to contribute towards your ruin."

"Good father," said the princess, "I have travelled a great way, and should be sorry to return without executing my design. You talk of difficulties, and danger of life; but you do not tell me what those difficulties are, and wherein the danger consists. This is what I desire to know, that I may consider and judge whether I can trust my courage and strength to brave them."

The dervish repeated to the princess what he had said to the princes Bahman and Perviz, exaggerating the difficulties of climbing up to the top of the mountain, where she was to make herself mistress of the bird, which would inform her of the singing tree and golden water. He magnified the noise and din of the terrible threatening voices which she would hear on all sides of her, without seeing any body, and the great number of black stones, alone sufficient to strike terror. He entreated her to reflect that those stones were so many brave gentlemen, so metamorphosed for having omitted to observe the principal condition of success in the perilous undertaking, which was not to look behind them before they had got possession of the cage.

When the dervish had done, the princess replied, “By what I comprehend from your discourse, the difficulties of succeeding in this affair are, first, the getting up to the cage without being frightened at the terrible din of voices I shall hear; and secondly, not to look behind me: for this last, I hope I shall be mistress enough of myself to observe it. As to the first, I own that those voices, such as you represent them to be, are capable of striking terror into the most undaunted; but as in all enterprises and dangers every one may use stratagem, I desire to know of you if I may use any in one of so great importance.” “And what stratagem is it you would employ?” said the dervish. “To stop my ears with cotton,” answered the princess, “that the voices, however loud and terrible, may make the less impression upon my imagination, and my mind remain free from that disturbance which might cause me to lose the use of my reason.”

“Princess,” replied the dervish, “of all the persons who have addressed themselves to me for information, I do not know that ever one made use of the contrivance you propose. All I know is, that they all perished. If you persist in your design, you may make the experiment. You will be fortunate if it succeeds; but I would advise you not to expose yourself to the danger.”

“My good father,” replied the princess, “nothing can hinder my persisting in my design. I am sure my precaution will succeed, and am resolved to try the experiment. Nothing remains for me but to know which way I must go; I conjure you not to deny me the favour of that information.” The dervish exhorted her again, for the last time, to consider well what she was going to do; but finding her resolute, he took out a bowl, and presenting it to her, said, “Take this bowl; mount your horse again, and when you have thrown it before you, follow it through all its windings, till it stops at the bottom of the mountain, there alight, and ascend the hill. Go; you know the rest.”

After the princess had thanked the dervish, and taken her leave of him, she mounted her horse, threw the bowl before her, and followed it till it stopped at the foot of the mountain.

The princess alighted, stopped her ears with cotton; and after she had well examined the path leading to the summit, began with a moderate pace, and walked up with intrepidity. She heard the voices, and perceived the great service the cotton was to her. The higher she went, the louder and more numerous the voices seemed; but they were not capable of making any impression upon her. She heard a great many affronting speeches and raillery very disagreeable to a woman, which she only laughed at. "I mind not," said she to herself, "all that can be said, were it worse; I only laugh at them, and shall pursue my way." At last she got so high, that she could perceive the cage and the bird, which endeavoured, with the voices, to frighten her, crying in a thundering tone, notwithstanding the smallness of its size, "Retire, fool, and approach no nearer."

The princess, encouraged by this object, redoubled her speed, and by effort gained the summit of the mountain, where the ground was level; then running directly to the cage, and clapping her hand upon it, cried, "Bird, I have you, and you shall not escape me."

While Perie-zadeh was pulling the cotton out of her ears, the bird said to her, "Heroic princess, be not angry with me for joining with those who exerted themselves to preserve my liberty. Though in a cage, I was content with my condition; but since I am destined to be a slave, I would rather be yours than any other person's, since you have obtained me so courageously. From this instant, I swear inviolable fidelity, and an entire submission to all your commands. I know who you are; you do not: but the time will come when I shall do you essential service, which I hope you will think yourself obliged to me for. As a proof of my sincerity, tell me what you desire, and I am ready to obey you."

The princess's joy was the more inexpressible, because the conquest she had made had cost her the lives of two beloved brothers, and given her more trouble and danger than she could have imagined, notwithstanding what the dervish had represented to her. "Bird," said she, "it was my intention to have told you that I wish for many things which are of importance; but I am overjoyed that you have shewn your good-will and prevented me. I have been told that there is not far off a golden water, the property of which is very wonderful; before all things, I ask you to tell me where it is." The bird shewed her the place, which was just by, and she went and filled a little silver flagon which she had brought with her. She returned to the bird and said, “Bird, this is not enough; I want also the singing tree; tell me where it is.” “Turn about,” said the bird, “and you will see behind you a wood, where you will find this tree.” The princess went into the wood, and by the harmonious concert she heard soon knew the tree among many others, but it was very large and high. She came back to the bird, and said to it, “Bird, I have found the singing tree, but I can neither pull it up by the roots, nor carry it.” The bird replied, “It is not necessary that you should take it up by the roots; it will be sufficient to break off a branch, and carry it to plant in your garden; it will take root as soon as it is put into the earth, and in a little time will grow to as fine a tree as that you have seen.”

When the princess had obtained possession of the three things which the devout woman had told her of, and for which she had conceived so great a desire, she said again to the bird, “Bird, what you have yet done for me is not sufficient. You have been the cause of the death of my two brothers, who must be among the black stones which I saw as I ascended the mountain. I wish to take them home with me.”

The bird seemed reluctant to satisfy the princess in this point, and indeed made some difficulty to comply. “Bird,” said the princess, “remember you told me that you were my slave. You are so; and your life is in my disposal.” “That I cannot deny,” answered the bird; “but although what you now ask is more difficult than all the rest, yet I will do it for you. Cast your eyes around,” added he, “and look if you can see a little pitcher.” “I see it already,” said the princess. “Take it then,” said he, “and as you descend the mountain, sprinkle a little of the water that is in it upon every black stone.”

The princess took up the pitcher accordingly, carried with her the cage and bird, the flagon of golden water, and the branch of the singing tree, and as she descended the mountain, threw a little of the water on every black stone, which was changed immediately into a man; and as she did not miss one stone, all the horses, both of the princes her brothers, and of the other gentlemen, resumed their natural forms. She instantly recognized Bahman and Perviz, as they did her, and ran to embrace her. She returned their embraces, and expressed her amazement. "What do you here, my dear brothers?" said she; they told her they had been asleep. "Yes," replied she, "and if it had not been for me, perhaps you might have slept till the day of judgment. Do not you remember that you came to fetch the speaking bird, the singing tree, and the yellow water? and did not you see, as you came along, the place covered with black stones? Look and see if there be any now. The gentlemen and their horses who surround us, and you yourselves, were these black stones. If you desire to know how this wonder was performed," continued she, shewing the pitcher, which she set down at the foot of the mountain, having no further use for it, "it was done by virtue of the water which was in this pitcher, with which I sprinkled every stone. After I had made the speaking bird (which you see in this cage) my slave, by his directions I found out the singing tree, a branch of which I have now in my hand; and the yellow water, which this flagon is filled with; but being still unwilling to return without taking you with me, I constrained the bird, by the power I had over him, to afford me the means. He told me where to find this pitcher, and the use I was to make of it."

The princes Bahman and Perviz learnt by this relation the obligation they had to the princess their sister; as did all the other gentlemen, who were collected round, and expressed to the princess, that, far from envying her happiness in the conquest she had made, and which they all had aspired to, they thought they could not any otherwise acknowledge the favour she had done them, or better express their gratitude to her for restoring them to life again, than by declaring themselves all her slaves, and that they were ready to obey her in whatever she should command.

"Gentlemen," replied the princess, "if you had given any attention to my words you might have observed that I had no other intention in what I have done than to recover my brothers; therefore, if you have received any benefit, you owe me no obligation, and I have no further share in your compliment than your politeness towards me, for which I return you my thanks. In other respects, I regard each of you individually as free as you were before your misfortunes, and I rejoice with you at the happiness which has accrued to you by my means. Let us however stay no longer in a place where we have nothing to detain us; but mount our horses, and return to our respective homes."

The princess took her horse, which stood in the place where she had left him. — Before she mounted, prince Bahman desired her to give him the cage to carry. "Brother," replied the princess, "the bird is my slave, and I will carry him myself; if you will take the pains to carry the branch of the singing tree, there it is; only hold the cage while I get on horseback." When she had mounted her horse; and prince Bahman had given her the cage, she turned about and said to prince Perviz, "I leave the flagon of golden water to your care, if it will not be too much trouble for you to carry it." Prince Perviz took charge of it with pleasure.

When Bahman, Perviz, and all the gentlemen had mounted their horses, the princess waited for some of them to lead the way. The two princes paid that compliment to the gentlemen, and they again to the princess, who, finding that none of them would accept of the honour, but that it was reserved for her, addressed herself to them and said, "Gentlemen, I expect that some of you should lead the way;" to which one who was nearest to her, in the name of the rest, replied, "Madam, were we ignorant of the respect due to your sex, yet after what you have done for us there is no deference we would not willingly pay you, notwithstanding your modesty; we entreat you no longer to deprive us of the happiness of following you."

"Gentlemen," said the princess, "I do not deserve the honour you do me, and accept it only because you desire it." At the same time she led the way, and the two princes and the gentlemen followed.

This illustrious company called upon the dervish as they passed, to thank him for his reception and wholesome advice, which they had all found to be sincere. But he was dead: whether of old age, or because he was no longer necessary to shew the way to the obtaining the three rarities which the princess Perie-zadeh had secured, did not appear. They pursued their route, but lessened in their numbers every day. The gentlemen who, as we said before, had come from different countries, after severally repeating their obligations to the princess and her brothers, took leave of them one after another as they approached the road they had come.

As soon as the princess reached home, she placed the cage in the garden; and the bird no sooner began to warble than he was surrounded by nightingales, chaffinches, larks, linnets, goldfinches, and every species of birds of the country. And the branch of the singing tree was no sooner set in the midst of the parterre, a little distance from the house, than it took root, and in a short time became a large tree, the leaves of which gave as harmonious a concert as those of the tree from which it was gathered. A large basin of beautiful marble was placed in the garden; and when it was finished, the princess poured into it all the yellow water from the flagon, which instantly increased and swelled so much that it soon reached up to the edges of the basin, and afterwards formed in the middle a fountain twenty feet high, which fell again into the basin perpetually without running over.

The report of these wonders was presently spread abroad, and as the gates of the house and those of the gardens were shut to nobody, a great number of people came to admire them.

Some days after, when the princes Bahman and Perviz had recovered from the fatigue of their journey, they resumed their former way of living; and as their usual diversion was hunting, they mounted their horses and went for the first time since their return, not to their own demesne, but two or three leagues from their house. As they pursued their sport, the emperor of Persia came in pursuit of game upon the same ground. When they perceived by the number of horsemen in different places that he would soon be up, they resolved to discontinue their chase, and retire to avoid encountering him; but in the very road they took they chanced to meet him in so narrow a way that they could not retreat without being seen. In their surprise they had only time to alight, and prostrate themselves before the emperor, without lifting up their heads to look at him. The emperor, who saw they were as well mounted and dressed as if they had belonged to his court, had the curiosity to see their faces. He stopped, and commanded them to rise. The princes rose up, and stood before him with an easy and graceful air, accompanied with respectful modest countenances. The emperor took some time to view them before he spoke: and after he had admired their good air and mien, asked them who they were, and where they lived.

“Sir,” said prince Bahman, “we are the sons of the late intendant of your majesty’s gardens: and live in a house which he built a little before he died, till we should be fit to serve your majesty, and ask of you some employ when opportunity offered."

"By what I perceive," replied the emperor, "you love hunting." "Sir," replied prince Bahman, "it is our common exercise, and what none of your majesty's subjects who intend to bear arms in your armies ought, according to the ancient custom of the kingdom, to neglect." The emperor, charmed with so prudent an answer, said, "Since it is so, I should be glad to see your expertness in the chase; choose your own game."

The princes mounted their horses again, and followed the emperor; but had not gone far before they saw many wild beasts together. Prince Bahman chose a lion, and prince Perviz a bear; and pursued them with so much intrepidity, that the emperor was surprised. They came up with their game nearly at the same time, and darted their javelins with so much skill and address, that they pierced, the one the lion, and the other the bear, so effectually, that the emperor saw them fall one after the other. Immediately afterwards prince Bahman pursued another bear, and prince Perviz another lion, and killed them in a short time, and would have beaten out for fresh game, but the emperor would not let them, and sent to them to come to him. When they approached he said, "If I would have given you leave, you would soon have destroyed all my game: but it is not that which I would preserve, but your persons; for I am so well assured your bravery may one time or other be serviceable to me, that from this moment your lives will be always dear to me."

The emperor, in short, conceived so great a kindness for the two princes, that he invited them immediately to make him a visit: to which prince Bahman replied, "Your majesty does us an honour we do not deserve; and we beg you will excuse us."

The emperor, who could not comprehend what reason the princes could have to refuse this token of his favour, pressed them to tell him why they excused themselves. "Sir," said prince Bahman, "we have a sister younger than ourselves, with whom we live in such perfect union, that we undertake nothing before we consult her, nor she any thing without asking our advice." "I commend your brotherly affection," answered the emperor. "Consult your sister, meet me here tomorrow, and give me an answer."

The princes went home, but neglected to speak of their adventure in meeting the emperor, and hunting with him, and also of the honour he had done them, by asking them to go home with him; yet did not the next morning fail to meet him at the place appointed. “Well,” said the emperor, “have you spoken to your sister? And has she consented to the pleasure I expect of seeing you?” The two princes looked at each other and blushed. “Sir,” said prince Bahman, “we beg your majesty to excuse us: for both my brother and I forgot.” “Then remember to-day,” replied the emperor, “and be sure to bring me an answer to-morrow.”

The princes were guilty of the same fault a second time, and the emperor was so good-natured as to forgive their negligence; but to prevent their forgetfulness the third time, he pulled three little golden balls out of a purse, and put them into prince Bahman’s bosom. “These balls,” said he, smiling, “will prevent your forgetting a third time what I wish you to do for my sake; since the noise they will make by falling on the floor, when you undress, will remind you, if you do not recollect it before.” The event happened just as the emperor foresaw; and without these balls the princes had not thought of speaking to their sister of this affair. For as prince Bahman unloosed his girdle to go to bed the balls dropped on the floor, upon which he ran into prince Perviz’s chamber, when both went into the princess Perie-zadeh’s apartment, and after they had asked her pardon for coming at so unseasonable a time, they told her all the circumstances of their meeting the emperor.

The princess was somewhat surprised at this intelligence. “Your meeting with the emperor,” said she, “is happy and honourable, and may in the end be highly advantageous to you, but it is very disagreeable and distrustful to me. It was on my account, I know, you refused the emperor, and I am infinitely obliged to you for doing so. I know by this your affection is equal to my own, since you would rather be guilty of incivility towards the emperor than violate the brotherly union we have sworn to each other. You judge right, for if you had once gone you would insensibly have been engaged to leave me, to devote yourselves to him. But do you think it an easy matter absolutely to refuse the emperor what he seems so earnestly to desire? Monarchs will be obeyed in their desires, and it may be dangerous to oppose them; therefore, if to follow my inclination I should dissuade you from shewing the complaisance he expects from you, it may expose you to his resentment, and may render myself and you miserable. These are my sentiments: but before we conclude upon any thing let us consult the speaking bird, and hear what he says; he is penetrating, and has promised his assistance in all difficulties."

The princess sent for the cage, and after she had related the circumstances to the bird in the presence of her brothers, asked him what they should do in this perplexity? The bird answered, "The princes your brothers must conform to the emperor's pleasure, and in their turn invite him to come and see your house."

"But, bird," replied the princess, "my brothers and I love one another, and our friendship is yet undisturbed. Will not this step be injurious to that friendship?" "Not at all," replied the bird; "it will tend rather to cement it." "Then," answered the princess, "the emperor will see me." The bird told her it was necessary he should, and that everything would go better afterwards.

Next morning the princes met the emperor hunting, who, at as great a distance as he could make himself be heard, asked them if they had remembered to speak to their sister? Prince Bahman approached, and answered, "Sir, your majesty may dispose of us as you please; we are ready to obey you; for we have not only obtained our sister's consent with great ease, but she took it amiss that we should pay her that deference in a matter wherein our duty to your majesty was concerned. But if we have offended, we hope you will pardon us." "Do not be uneasy on that account," replied the emperor; "so far from taking amiss what you have done, I highly approve of your conduct, and hope you will have the same deference and attachment to my person, if I have ever so little share in your friendship." The princes, confounded at the emperor's goodness, returned no other answer but a low obeisance, to shew the great respect with which they received it.

The emperor, contrary to his usual custom, did not hunt long that day. Presuming that the princes possessed wit equal to their courage and bravery, he longed with impatience to converse with them more at liberty. He made them ride on each side of him, an honour which, without speaking of the principal courtiers who accompanied him, was envied by the grand vizier, who was much mortified to see them preferred before him.

When the emperor entered his capital, the eyes of the people, who stood in crowds in the streets, were fixed upon the two princes Bahman and Perviz; and they were earnest to know who they might be, whether foreigners or natives.

All, however, agreed in wishing that the emperor had been blessed with two such handsome princes, and said, "He might have had children as old, if the queen, who had suffered the punishment of her misfortune, had been more fortunate in her lyings-in."

The first thing that the emperor did when he arrived at his palace was to conduct the princes into the principal apartments; who praised without affectation, like persons conversant in such matters, the beauty and symmetry of the rooms, and the richness of the furniture and ornaments. Afterwards a magnificent repast was served up, and the emperor made them sit with him, which they at first refused; but finding it was his pleasure, they obeyed.

The emperor, who had himself much learning, particularly in history, foresaw that the princes, out of modesty and respect, would not take the liberty of beginning any conversation. Therefore, to give them an opportunity, he furnished them with subjects all dinner-time. But whatever subject he introduced, they shewed so much wit, judgment, and discernment, that he was struck with admiration. "Were these my own children," said he to himself, "and I had improved their talents by suitable education, they could not have been more accomplished or better informed." In short, he took such great pleasure in their conversation, that after having sat longer than usual he led them into his closet, where he pursued his conversation with them, and at last said, "I never supposed that there were among my subjects in the country youths so well brought up, so lively, so capable; and I never was better pleased with any conversation than yours: but it is time now we should relax our minds with some diversion; and as nothing is more capable of enlivening the mind than music, you shall hear a vocal and instrumental concert which may not be disagreeable to you."

The emperor had no sooner spoken for them than the musicians, who had orders to attend, entered, and answered fully the expectations the princes had been led to entertain of their abilities. After the concerts, an excellent farce was acted, and the entertainment was concluded by dancers of both sexes.

The two princes seeing night approach, prostrated themselves at the emperor’s feet; and having first thanked him for the favours and honours he had heaped upon them, asked his permission to retire; which was granted by the emperor, who, in dismissing them, said, “I give you leave to go; but remember I brought you to the palace myself only to shew you the way; you will be always welcome, and the oftener you come the greater pleasure you will do me.”

Before they went out of the emperor’s presence, prince Bahman said, “Sir, may we presume to request that your majesty will do us and our sister the honour to pass by our house, and rest and refresh yourself after your fatigue, the first time you take the diversion of hunting in that neighbourhood? It is not worthy your presence; but monarchs sometimes have vouchsafed to take shelter in a cottage.” “My children,” replied the emperor; “your house cannot be otherwise than beautiful, and worthy of its owners. I will call and see it with pleasure, which will be the greater for having for my hosts you and your sister, who is already dear to me from the account you give me of the rare qualities with which she is endowed; and this satisfaction I will defer no longer than to-morrow. Early in the morning I will be at the place where I shall never forget that I first saw you. Meet me, and you shall be my guides.”

When the princes Bahman and Perviz had returned home, they gave the princess an account of the distinguished reception the emperor had given them; and told her that they had invited him to do them the honour, as he passed by, to call at their house; and that he had appointed the next day.

“If it be so,” replied the princess, “we must think of preparing a repast fit for his majesty; and for that purpose I think it would be proper we should consult the speaking bird, he will tell us perhaps what meats the emperor likes best.” The princes approved of her plan, and after they had retired she consulted the bird alone. “Bird,” said she, “the emperor will do us the honour to-morrow to come and see our house, and we are to entertain him; tell us what we shall do to acquit ourselves to his satisfaction."

"Good mistress," replied the bird, "you have excellent cooks, let them do the best they can; but above all things, let them prepare a dish of cucumbers stuffed full of pearls, which must be set before the emperor in the first course before all the other dishes."

"Cucumbers stuffed full of pearls!" cried princess Perie-zadeh, with amazement; "surely, bird, you do not know what you say; it is an unheard-of dish. The emperor may admire it as a piece of magnificence, but he will sit down to eat, and not to admire pearls; besides, all the pearls I possess are not enough for such a dish."

"Mistress," said the bird, "do what I say, and be not uneasy about what may happen. Nothing but good will follow. As for the pearls, go early to-morrow morning to the foot of the first tree on your right hand in the park, dig under it, and you will find more than you want."

That night the princess ordered a gardener to be ready to attend her, and the next morning early led him to the tree which the bird had told her of, and bade him dig at its foot. When the gardener came to a certain depth, he found some resistance to the spade, and presently discovered a gold box about a foot square, which he shewed the princess. "This," said she, "is what I brought you for; take care not to injure it with the spade."

When the gardener took up the box, he gave it into the princess's hands, who, as it was only fastened with neat little hasps, soon opened it, and found it full of pearls of a moderate size, but equal, and fit for the use that was to be made of them. Very well satisfied with having found this treasure, after she had shut the box again she put it under her arm, and went back to the house, while the gardener threw the earth into the hole at the foot of the tree as it had been before.

The princes Bahman and Perviz, who, as they were dressing themselves in their own apartments, saw the princess their sister in the garden earlier than usual, as soon as they could get out went to her, and met her as she was returning, with a gold box under her arm, which much surprised them. "Sister," said Bahman, "you carried nothing with you when we saw you before with the gardener, and now we see you have a golden box: is this some treasure found by the gardener, and did he come and tell you of it?"

“No, brother,” answered the princess; “I took the gardener to the place where this casket was concealed, and shewed him where to dig: but you will be more amazed when you see what it contains.”

The princess opened the box, and when the princes saw that it was full of pearls, which, though small, were of great value; they asked her how she came to the knowledge of this treasure? “Brothers,” said she, “if nothing more pressing calls you elsewhere, come with me, and I will tell you.” “What more pressing business,” said prince Perviz, “can we have than to be informed of what concerns us so much? We have nothing to do to prevent our attending you.” The princess, as they returned to the house, gave them an account of her having consulted the bird, as they had agreed she should, and the answer he had given her; the objection she had raised to preparing a dish of cucumbers stuffed full of pearls, and how he had told her where to find this box. The princes and princess formed many conjectures to penetrate into what the bird could mean by ordering them to prepare such a dish; and after much conversation, though they could not by any means guess at his reason, they nevertheless agreed to follow his advice exactly.

As soon as the princess entered the house, she called for the head cook; and after she had given him directions about the entertainment for the emperor, said to him, “Besides all this, you must dress an extraordinary dish for the emperor’s own eating, which nobody else must have any thing to do with besides yourself. This dish must be of cucumbers stuffed with these pearls;” and at the same time she opened him the box, and shewed him the pearls.

The chief cook, who had never heard of such a dish, started back, and shewed his thoughts by his looks; which the princess penetrating, said, “I see you take me to be mad to order such a dish, which you never heard of, and which one may say with certainty was never made. I know this as well as you; but I am not mad, and give you these orders with the most perfect recollection. You must invent and do the best you can, and bring me back what pearls are left.” The cook could make no reply, but took the box and retired: and afterwards the princess gave directions to all the domestics to have every thing in order, both in the house and gardens, to receive the emperor.

Next day the two princes went to the place appointed; and as soon as the emperor of Persia arrived the chase began, which lasted till the heat of the sun obliged him to leave off. While prince Bahman stayed to conduit the emperor to their house, prince Perviz rode before to shew the way, and when he came in sight of the house, spurred his horse, to inform the princess Perie-zadeh that the emperor was approaching; but she had been told by some servants whom she had placed to give notice, and the prince found her waiting ready to receive him.

When the emperor had entered the court-yard, and alighted at the portico, the princess came and threw herself at his feet, and the two princes informed him she was their sister, and besought him to accept her respects.

The emperor stooped to raise her, and after he had gazed some time on her beauty, struck with her fine person and dignified air, he said, “The brothers are worthy of the sister, and she worthy of them; since, if I may judge of her understanding by her person, I am not amazed that the brothers would do nothing without their sister’s consent; but,” added he, “I hope to be better acquainted with you, my daughter, after I have seen the house.”

“Sir,” said the princess, “it is only a plain country residence, fit for such people as we are, who live retired from the great world. It is not to be compared with houses in great cities, much less with the magnificent palaces of emperors.” “I cannot perfectly agree with you in opinion,” said the emperor very obligingly, “for its first appearance makes me suspect you; however, I will not pass my judgment upon it till I have seen it all; therefore be pleased to conduct me through the apartments.”

The princess led the emperor through all the rooms except the hall; and, after he had considered them very attentively and admired their variety, “My daughter,” said he to the princess, “do you call this a country house? The finest and largest cities would soon be deserted, if all country houses were like yours. I am no longer surprised that you take so much delight in it, and despise the town. Now let me see the garden, which I doubt not is answerable to the house.”

The princess opened a door which led into the garden; and the first object which presented itself to the emperor's view was the golden fountain. Surprised at so rare an object, he asked from whence that wonderful water, which gave so much pleasure to behold, had been procured; where was its source; and by what art it was made to play so high, that he thought nothing in the world was to be compared to it? He said he would presently take a nearer view of it.

The princess then led him to the spot where the harmonious tree was planted; and there the emperor heard a concert, different from all he had ever heard before; and stopping to see where the musicians were, he could discern nobody far or near; but still distinctly heard the music, which ravished his senses. "My daughter," said he to the princess, "where are the musicians whom I hear? Are they under ground, or invisible in the air? Such excellent performers will hazard nothing by being seen; on the contrary, they would please the more."

"Sir," answered the princess smiling, "they are not musicians, but the leaves of the trees your majesty sees before you, which form this concert; and if you will give yourself the trouble to go a little nearer, you will be convinced, and the voices will be the more distinct."

The emperor went nearer, and was so charmed with the sweet harmony, that he would never have been tired with hearing it, but that his desire to have a nearer view of the fountain of yellow water forced him away. "Daughter," said he, "tell me, I pray you, whether this wonderful tree was found in your garden by chance, or was a present made to you, or have you procured it from some foreign country? It must certainly have come from a great distance, otherwise, curious as I am after natural rarities, I should have heard of it. What name do you call it by?"

"Sir," replied the princess, "this tree has no other name than that of the singing tree, and is not a native of this country. It would at present take up too much time to tell your majesty by what adventures it came here; its history is connected with the yellow water, and the speaking bird, which came to me at the same time, and which your majesty may see after you have taken a nearer view of the golden water. But if it be agreeable to your majesty, after you have rested yourself, and recovered the fatigue of hunting, which must be the greater because of the sun's intense heat, I will do myself the honour of relating it to you."

"My daughter," replied the emperor, "my fatigue is so well recompensed by the wonderful things you have shewn me, that I do not feel it the least. I think only of the trouble I give you. Let us finish by seeing the yellow water. I am impatient to see and admire the speaking bird."

When the emperor came to the yellow water, his eyes were fixed so steadfastly upon the fountain, that he could not take them off. At last, addressing himself to the princess, he said, "As you tell me, daughter, that this water has no spring or communication, I conclude that it is foreign, as well as the singing tree."

"Sir," replied the princess, "it is as your majesty conjectures; and to let you know that this water has no communication with any spring, I must inform you that the basin is one entire stone, so that the water cannot come in at the sides or underneath. But what your majesty will think most wonderful is, that all this water proceeded but from one small flagon, emptied into this basin, which increased to the quantity you see, by a property peculiar to itself, and formed this fountain." "Well," said the emperor, going from the fountain, "this is enough for one time. I promise myself the pleasure to come and visit it often; but now let us go and see the speaking bird."

As he went towards the hall, the emperor perceived a prodigious number of singing birds in the trees around, filling the air with their songs and warblings, and asked, why there were so many there, and none on the other trees in the garden? "The reason, sir," answered the princess, "is, because they come from all parts to accompany the song of the speaking bird, which your majesty may see in a cage in one of the windows of the hall we are approaching; and if you attend, you will perceive that his notes are sweeter than those of any of the other birds, even the nightingale."

The emperor went into the hall; and as the bird continued singing, the princess raised her voice, and said, "My slave, here is the emperor, pay your compliments to him." The bird left off singing that instant, when all the other birds ceased also, and it said, "The emperor is welcome; God prosper him, and prolong his life." As the entertainment was served on the sofa near the window where the bird was placed, the sultan replied, as he was taking his seat, "Bird, I thank you, and am overjoyed to find in you the sultan and king of birds."

As soon as the emperor saw the dish of cucumbers set before him, thinking it was stuffed in the best manner, he reached out his hand and took one; but when he cut it, was in extreme surprise to find it stuffed with pearls. "What novelty is this?" said he "and with what design were these cucumbers stuffed thus with pearls, since pearls are not to be eaten?" He looked at the two princes and princess to ask them the meaning: when the bird interrupting him, said, "Can your majesty be in such great astonishment at cucumbers stuffed with pearls, which you see with your own eyes, and yet so easily believe that the queen your wife was delivered of a dog, a cat, and a piece of wood?" "I believed these things," replied the emperor, "because the midwives assured me of the facts." "Those midwives, sir," replied the bird, "were the queen's two sisters, who, envious of her happiness in being preferred by your majesty before them, to satisfy their envy and revenge, have abused your majesty's credulity. If you interrogate them, they will confess their crime. The two brothers and the sister whom you see before you are your own children, whom they exposed, and who were taken in by the intendant of your gardens, who provided nurses for them, and took care of their education."

This speech of the bird's presently cleared up the emperor's understanding. "Bird," cried he, "I believe the truth which you discover to me. The inclination which drew me to them told me plainly they must be my own blood. Come then, my sons, come, my daughter, let me embrace you, and give you the first marks of a father's love and tenderness." The emperor then rose, and after having embraced the two princes and the princess, and mingled his tears with theirs, said, "It is not enough, my children; you must embrace each other, not as the children of the intendant of my gardens, to whom I have been so much obliged for preserving your lives, but as my own children, of the royal blood of the monarchs of Persia, whose glory, I am persuaded, you will maintain."

After the two princes and princess had embraced mutually with new satisfaction, the emperor sat down again with them, and finished his meal in haste; and when he had done, said, "My children, you see in me your father; to-morrow I will bring the queen your mother, therefore prepare to receive her."

The emperor afterwards mounted his horse, and returned with expedition to his capital. The first thing he did, as soon as he had alighted and entered his palace, was to command the grand vizier to seize the queen's two sisters. They were taken from their houses separately, convicted, and condemned to be quartered; which sentence was put in execution within an hour.

In the mean time the emperor Khoosroo Shaw, followed by all the lords of his court who were then present, went on foot to the door of the great mosque; and after he had taken the queen out of the strict confinement she had languished under for so many years, embracing her in the miserable condition to which she was then reduced, said to her with tears in his eyes, "I come to entreat your pardon for the injustice I have done you, and to make you the reparation I ought; which I have begun, by punishing the unnatural wretches who put the abominable cheat upon me; and I hope you will look upon it as complete, when I present to you two accomplished princes, and a lovely princess, our children. Come and resume your former rank, with all the honours which are your due." All this was done and said before great crowds of people, who flocked from all parts at the first news of what was passing, and immediately spread the joyful intelligence through the city.

Next morning early the emperor and queen, whose mournful humiliating dress was changed for magnificent robes, went with all their court to the house built by the intendant of the gardens, where the emperor presented the princes Bahman and Perviz, and the princess Perie-zadeh, to their enraptured mother. "These, much injured wife," said he, "are the two princes your sons, and this princess your daughter; embrace them with the same tenderness I have done, since they are worthy both of me and you." The tears flowed plentifully down their cheeks at these tender embraces, especially the queen's, from the comfort and joy of having two such princes for her sons, and such a princess for her daughter, on whose account she had so long endured the severest afflictions.

The two princes and the princess had prepared a magnificent repast for the emperor and queen, and their court. As soon as that was over, the emperor led the queen into the garden, and shewed her the harmonious tree and the beautiful effect of the yellow fountain. She had seen the bird in his cage, and the emperor had spared no panegyric in his praise during the repast.

When there was nothing to detain the emperor any longer, he took horse, and with the princes Bahman and Perviz on his right hand, and the queen consort and the princess at his left, preceded and followed by all the officers of his court, according to their rank, returned to his capital. Crowds of people came out to meet them, and with acclamations of joy ushered them into the city, where all eyes were fixed not only upon the queen, the two princes, and the princess, but also upon the bird, which the princess carried before her in his cage, admiring his sweet notes, which had drawn all the other birds about him, which followed him, flying from tree to tree in the country, and from one house-top to another in the city. The princes Bahman and Perviz, and the princess Perie-zadeh, where at length brought to the palace with this pomp, and nothing was to be seen or heard all that night but illuminations and rejoicings both in the palace and in the utmost parts of the city, which lasted many days, and were continued throughout the empire of Persia, as intelligence of the joyful event reached the several provinces.

STORY OF THE SULTAN OF YEMEN AND HIS THREE SONS.

There was in the land of Yemen (Arabia Felix) a sultan, under whom were three tributary princes. He had four children, three sons and a daughter. He possessed greater treasures than could be estimated, as well as innumerable camels, horses, and flocks of sheep; and was held in awe by all contemporary sovereigns.

After a long and prosperous reign, age brought with it infirmity, and he at length became incapable of appearing in his hall of audience; upon which he commanded his sons to his presence, and said to them, "My wish is to divide among you, before my death, all my possessions, that you may be satisfied, and live in unanimity and brotherly affection with each other, and in obedience to my dying commands." They exclaimed, "To hear is to obey."

The sultan then said, "My will is, that the eldest be sovereign in my room; that the second possess my treasures; and the third every description of animals. Let no, one encroach upon another, but all assist each other." He then caused them to sign an agreement to abide by his bequests, and shortly afterwards was received into the mercy of the Almighty; upon which his sons prepared what was suitable to his dignity for his funeral. They washed the corpse, enshrouded it, prayed over it, and having committed it to the earth, returned to their palaces; where the viziers, officers of state, and inhabitants of the metropolis, high and low, rich and poor, attended to console with them on the loss of their father. The news of the death of the sultan was soon spread abroad into all the provinces, and deputations from every city came to condole with the princes.

After these ceremonies, the eldest prince demanded that he should be inaugurated sultan in the room of the deceased monarch, agreeably to his will; but this was not possible, as each of the other brothers was ambitious of being sovereign. Contention and disputes now arose between them for the government, till at length the elder brother, wishing to avoid civil war, said, "Let us go and submit to the arbitration of one of the tributary sultans, and to let him whom he adjudges the kingdom peaceably enjoy it." To this they assented, as did also the viziers; and they departed, unattended, towards the capital of one of the tributary sultans.

When the princes had proceeded about half way on their journey, they reached a verdant spot, abounding in herbage and flowers, with a clear rivulet running through it, the convenience of which made them halt to refresh themselves. They sat down and were eating, when one of the brothers casting his eyes on the grass, said, “A camel has lately passed this way loaded, half with sweetmeats and half with grain.” “True,” cried another, “and he was blind of one eye.” “Yes,” exclaimed the third, “and he had lost his tail.” They had scarcely concluded their remarks, when the owner of the camel came up to them (for he had heard what they had said, and was convinced, as they had described the beast and his load, that they must have stopped him), crying out, that they had stolen his camel. “We have not seen him,” answered the princes, “nor touched him.” “By Allah!” replied he, “none but you can have taken him; and if you will not deliver him up, I will complain of you to the sultan.” They rejoined, “It is well; let us go to the sultan.”

When all four had reached the palace, information was given of the arrival of the princes, and they were admitted to an audience, the owner of the camel following, who bawled out, “These men, my lord, by their own confession, have stolen my property, for they described him and the load he carried.”

The man then related what each of the princes, had said; upon which the sultan demanded if it was true. They answered, “My lord, we have not seen the camel; but we chanced, as we were sitting on the grass taking some refreshment, to observe that part of the pasture had been grazed; upon which we supposed that the camel must have been blind of an eye, as the grass was only eaten on one side. We then observed the dung of a camel in one heap on the ground, which made us agree that its tail must have been cut off, as it is the custom for camels to shake their tails, and scatter it abroad. On the grass where the camel had lain down, we saw on one side flies collected in great numbers, but none on the other: this made us conclude that one of the panniers must have contained sweets, and the other only grain.” Upon hearing the above, the sultan said to the complainant, “Friend, go and look for thy camel, for these observations do not prove the theft on the accused, but only the strength of their understandings and penetration."

The sultan now ordered apartments for the princes, and directed that they should be entertained in a manner befitting their rank; after which he left them to their repose. In the evening, when the usual meal was brought in, the elder prince having taken up a cake of bread, said, "This bread, I am sure, was made by a sick woman." The second, on tasting some kid, exclaimed, "This kid was suckled by a bitch:" and the third cried out, "Certainly this sultan must be illegitimate." At this instant the sultan, who had been listening, entered hastily, and exclaimed, "Wherefore utter ye these affronting speeches?" "Inquire," replied the princes, "into what you have heard, and you will find all true."

The sultan now retired to his haram, and on inquiry, found that the woman who had kneaded the bread was sick. He then sent for the shepherd, who owned that the dam of the kid having died, he had suckled it upon a bitch. Next, in a violent passion, he proceeded to the apartments of the sultana mother, and brandishing his cimeter — threatened her with death, unless she confessed whether he was son to the late sultan or not.

The sultana was alarmed, and said, "To preserve my life, I must speak truth. Know then that thou art the son of a cook. Thy father had no male offspring, at which he was uneasy: on the same day myself and the wife of the cook lay in, I of a daughter and she of a son. I was fearful of the coolness of the sultan, and imposed upon him the son of the cook for his own: that son art thou, who now enjoyest an empire."

The spurious sultan left the sultana in astonishment at the penetration of the brothers, whom he summoned to his presence, and inquired of them on what grounds they had founded their just suspicions respecting the bread, the kid, and himself. "My lord," replied the elder prince, "when I broke the cake, the flour fell out in lumps; and hence I guessed that she who made it had not strength to knead it sufficiently, and must have been unwell." "It is as thou hast said," replied the sultan. "The fat of the kid," continued the second brother, "was all next the bone, and the flesh of every other animal but the dog has it next the skin. Hence my surmise that it must have been suckled by a bitch.” “Thou wert right,” answered the sultan; “but now for myself.”

“My reason for supposing thee illegitimate,” said the youngest prince, “was, because thou didst not associate with us, who are of the same rank with thyself. Every man has properties which he inherits from his father, his grandfather, or his mother. From his father, generosity, or avarice; from his grandfather, valour or cowardice; from his mother, bashfulness or impudence.” “Thou hast spoken justly,” replied the sultan; “but why came ye to ask judgment of me, since ye are so much better able to decide difficult questions than myself? Return home, and agree among yourselves.” The princes did so; and obeyed the will of their father.

STORY OF THE THREE SHARPERS AND THE SULTAN.

Three very ingenious sharpers who associated together, being much distressed, agreed, in hopes of obtaining immediate relief, that they would go to the sultan, and pretend each to superior ability in some occupation. Accordingly they proceeded to the metropolis, but found admission to the presence difficult; the sultan being at a garden palace surrounded by guards, who would not let them approach. Upon this they consulted, and agreed to feign a quarrel, in hopes that their clamour would draw the notice of the sultan. It did so: he commanded them to be brought before him, inquired who they were, and the cause of their dispute. “We were disputing,” said they, “concerning the superiority of our professions; for each of us possesses complete skill in his own.” “What are your professions?” replied the sultan. “I am,” said one, “O sovereign, a lapidary of wonderful skill.” “I fear thou art an astonishing rascal,” exclaimed the sultan.

“I am,” said the second sharper, “a genealogist of horses.” “And I,” continued the third, “a genealogist of mankind, knowing every one’s true descent; an art much more wonderful than that of either of my companions, for no one possesses it but myself, nor ever did before me.” The sultan was astonished, but gave little credit to their pretensions: yet he said to himself, “If these men speak truth, they are worthy of encouragement. I will keep them near me till I have occasion to try them; when, if they prove their abilities, I will promote them; but if not, I will put them to death.” He then allotted them an apartment, with an allowance of three cakes of bread and a mess of pottage daily; but placed spies over them, fearing lest they might escape.

Not long after this, a present of rarities was brought to the sultan, among which were two precious stones; one of them remarkably clear in its water, and the other with a flaw. The sultan now bethought himself of the lapidary, and sent for him to his presence, when he gave him the clear jewel to examine, and demanded what he thought it was worth.

The sharper took the stone, and with much gravity turned it backwards and forwards in his hands, examining it with minute attention on every part; after which he said, “My lord, this jewel has a flaw in the very centre of it.” When the sultan heard this, he was enraged against the sharper, and gave orders to strike off his head; saying, “This stone is free from blemish, and yet thou pretendest it hath a flaw.” The executioner now advanced, laid hold of the sharper, bound him, and was going to strike, when the vizier entered, and seeing the sultan enraged, and the sharper under the cimeter, inquired the cause. Being informed, he advanced towards the sultan, and said, “My lord, act not thus, but first break the stone: should a flaw appear in it, the words of this man are true; but if it be found free from blemish, put him to death.” The sultan replied, “Thy advice is just:” and broke it in two with his mace. In the middle he found a flaw, at which he was astonished, and exclaimed to the sharper, “By what means couldst thou discover the blemish?” He replied, “By the acuteness of my sight.” The sultan then released him, and said, “Take him back to his companions, allow him a mess of pottage to himself, and two cakes of bread.”

Some time after this a tribute came from one of the provinces, part of which consisted of a beautiful black colt, in colour resembling the hue of the darkest night. The sultan was delighted with the animal, and spent whole days in admiring him. At length he bethought himself of the sharper who had pretended to be a genealogist of horses, and commanded him to his presence. When he appeared, the sultan said, “Art thou a judge of horses?” He replied, “Yes, my lord,” upon which the sultan exclaimed, “It is well! but I swear by him who appointed me guardian of his subjects, and said to the universe, Be! and it was, that should I find untruth in thy declaration, I will strike off thy head.” The man replied, “To hear is to submit.” After this they brought out the colt, that he might examine him.

The sharper desired the groom to mount the colt and pace him before him, which he did backwards and forwards, the fiery animal all the while plunging and rearing. At length the genealogist said, “It is enough:” and turning to the sultan exclaimed, “My lord, this colt is singularly beautiful, of true blood by his sire, his paces exquisite and proportions just; but in him there is one blemish; could that be done away, he would be all perfection; nor would there be upon the face of the earth his equal among all the various breeds of horses." "What can that blemish be?" said the sultan. "His sire," rejoined the genealogist, "was of true blood, but his dam of another species of animal; and, if commanded, I will inform you." "Speak," said the sultan. "The dam of this beautiful colt," continued the genealogist, "was a buffalo."

When the sultan heard this he flew into a rage, and commanded an executioner to strike off the head of the sharper; exclaiming, "Thou accursed dog! how could a buffalo bring forth a colt?" "My lord," replied the sharper, "the executioner is in attendance; but send for the person who presented the colt, and inquire of him the truth. If my words prove just, my skill will be ascertained; but if what I have said be false, then let my head pay the forfeit for my tongue." Upon this the sultan sent for the master of the colt to attend his presence.

When the master of the colt appeared before him, the sultan inquired whether it was purchased of another person, or had been bred by himself? To which the man replied, "My lord, I will relate nothing but the truth. The production of this colt is surprising. His sire belonged to me, and was of the true breed of sea-horses: he was always kept in an enclosure by himself, as I was fearful of his being injured; but it happened one day in the spring, that the groom took him for air into the country, and picqueted him in the plain. By chance a cow-buffalo coming near the spot, the stallion became outrageous, broke his heel-ropes, joined the buffalo, which after the usual period of gestation, produced this colt, to our great astonishment."

The sultan was surprised at this relation. He commanded the genealogist to be sent for, and upon his arrival said, "Thy words have proved true, and thy wonderful skill in the breed of horses is ascertained; but by what mark couldst thou know that the dam of this colt was a buffalo?" The man replied, "My lord, the mark is visible in the colt itself. It is not unknown to any person of observation, that the hoof of a horse is nearly round, but the hoof of a buffalo thick and longish, like this colt's: hence I judged that the dam must certainly have been a buffalo." The sultan now dismissed him graciously, and commanded that he should be allowed daily a mess of pottage, and two cakes of bread.

Not long after this the sultan bethought himself of the third sharper, who pretended that he was the genealogist of man, and sent for him to the presence. On his appearance he said, “Thou canst trace the descent of man?” “Yes, my lord,” replied the genealogist. Upon this the sultan commanded an eunuch to take him into his haram, that he might examine the descent of his favourite mistress. Upon his introduction, he looked at the lady on this side and on that, through her veil, till he was satisfied, when he came out; and the sultan exclaimed, “Well, what hast thou discovered in my mistress?” He replied, “My lord, she is all perfect in elegance, beauty, grace, stature, bloom, modesty, accomplishments, and knowledge, so that every thing desirable centres in herself; but still there is one point that disgraces her, from which if she was free, it is not possible she could be excelled in anything among the whole of the fair sex.” When the sultan had heard this, he rose up angrily, and drawing his cimeter, ran towards the genealogist, intending to strike off his head.

Just as he was going to strike, some of the attendants said, “My lord, put not the man to death before thou art convinced of his falsehood.” Upon which the sultan exclaimed, “What fault appeared to thee in my mistress?” “O sultan,” replied the man, “she is, as to herself, all perfect; but her mother was a rope-dancer.” Upon this the sultan immediately sent for the father of the lady, and said, “Inform me truly who was the mother of thy daughter, or I will put thee to death.” “Mighty prince,” replied the father, “there is no safety for man but in the truth. Her mother was a rope-dancer, whom I took when very young from a company of strolling mummers, and educated. She grew up most beautiful and accomplished: I married her, and she produced me the girl whom thou hast chosen.”

When the sultan heard this, his rage cooled, but he was filled with astonishment; and said to the genealogist, “Inform me what could shew thee that my mistress was the daughter of a rope-dancer?” “My lord,” replied the man, “this cast of people have always their eyes very black, and their eyebrows bushy; such are hers: and from them I guessed her descent.” The sultan was now convinced of his skill, dismissed him graciously, and commanded that he should be allowed a mess of pottage and three cakes of bread daily, which was done accordingly.

Some time after this the sultan reflected on the three sharpers, and said to himself, “These men have proved their skill in whatever I have tried them. The lapidary was singularly excellent in his art, the horse genealogist in his, and the last has proved his upon my mistress. I have an inclination to know my own descent beyond a doubt.” He then ordered the genealogist into his presence, and said, “Dost thou think thou canst prove my descent?” “Yes, my lord,” replied the man, “but on condition that you spare my life after I shall have informed you; for the proverb says, ‘When the sultan is present, beware of his anger, as there is no delay when he commands to strike.’” “There shall be safety for thee,” exclaimed the sultan, “in my promise, an obligation that can never be forfeited.”

“O sultan,” continued the genealogist, “when I shall inform thee of thy parentage and descent, let not there be any present who may hear me.” “Wherefore?” replied the sultan. “My lord,” answered the sharper, “you know the attributes of the Deity should be veiled in mystery.” The sultan now commanded all his attendants to retire, and when they were alone, the genealogist advanced and said, “Mighty prince, thou art illegitimate, and the son of an adulteress.”

As soon as the sultan heard this, his colour changed, he turned pale, and fainted away. When he was recovered, he remained some time in deep contemplation, after which he exclaimed, “By him who constituted me the guardian of his people, I swear that if thy assertion be found true I will abdicate my kingdom, and resign it to thee, for royalty cannot longer become me; but should thy words prove void of foundation, I will put thee to instant death.” “To hear is to assent,” replied the sharper.

The sultan now arose, entered the haram, and bursting into his mother’s apartment with his cimeter drawn, exclaimed, “By him who divided the heavens from the earth, shouldst thou not answer faithfully to what I shall inquire, I will cut thee to pieces with this cimeter.” The queen, trembling with alarm, said, “What dost thou ask of me?” “Inform me,” replied the sultan, “of whom am I the son?” “Since truth only can save me,” cried the princess, “know that thou art the offspring of a cook. My husband had no children either male or female, on which account he became sad, and lost his health and appetite. In a court of the haram we had several sorts of birds, and one day the sultan fancying he should relish one of them, ordered the cook to kill and dress it. I happened then to be in the bath alone.

"As I was in the bath," continued the sultana, "I saw the cook endeavouring to catch the birds. At that instant it occurred to my mind from the instigation of Satan, that if I bore not a son, after the death of the sultan my influence would be lost. I tempted the man, and thou art the produce of my crime. The signs of my pregnancy soon appeared; and when the sultan was informed of them, he recovered his health, and rejoiced exceedingly, and conferred favours and presents on his ministers and courtiers daily, till the time of my delivery. On that day he chanced to be upon a hunting excursion at a country palace; but when intelligence was brought him of the birth of a son, he instantly returned to me, and issued orders for the city to be decorated, which was done for forty days together, out of respect to the sultan. Such was my crime, and such was thy birth."

The sultan now returned to the adventurer, and commanded him to pull off his clothes, which he did; when the sultan, disrobing himself, habited him in the royal vestments, after which he said, "Inform me whence thou judgest that I was a bastard?"

"My lord," replied the adventurer, "when each of us shewed our skill in what was demanded, you ordered him only an allowance of a mess of pottage and three cakes of bread. Hence I judged you to be the offspring of a cook, for it is the custom of princes to reward the deserving with wealth and honours, but you only gratified us with victuals from your kitchen." The sultan replied, "Thou hast spoken truly." He then made him put on the rest of the royal robes and ornaments, and seated him upon the throne; after which he disguised himself in the habit of a dervish, and wandered from his abdicated dominions. When the lucky adventurer found himself in possession of the throne, he sent for his companions; and finding they did not recognize him in his royal habiliments, dismissed them with liberal presents, but commanded them to quit his territories with the utmost expedition, lest they should discover him. After this, with a satisfied mind, he fulfilled the duties of his new station with a liberality and dignity that made the inhabitants of the metropolis and all the provinces bless him, and pray for the prolongation of his reign.

The Adventures of the Abdicated Sultan.

The abdicated prince, disguised as a dervish, did not cease travelling in a solitary mood till he came to the city of Cairo, which he perceived to be in repose and security, and well regulated. Here he amused himself with walking through several streets, till he had reached the royal palace, and was admiring its magnificent architecture and extent, and the crowds passing in and out, when the sultan with his train appeared in sight returning from a hunting excursion, upon which he retired to one side of the road. The sultan observing his dignified demeanour, commanded one of his attendants to invite him to the palace, and entertain him till he should inquire after him.

When the sultan had reposed himself from the fatigue of his exercise, he sent for the supposed dervish to his presence, and said, “From what kingdom art thou arrived?” He answered, “I am, my lord, a wandering dervish.” “Well,” replied the sultan, “but inform me on what account thou art come here.” On which he said, “My lord, this cannot be done but in privacy.” “Let it be so,” rejoined the sultan; and rising up, led him into a retired apartment of the palace. The supposed dervish then related what had befallen him, the cause of his having abdicated his kingdom, and taken upon himself the character of a religious. The sultan was astonished at his self-denial, and exclaimed, “Blessed be his holy name, who exalteth and humbleth whom he will by his almighty power; but my history is more surprising than thine. I will relate it to thee, and conceal nothing.”

History of Mahummud, Sultan of Cairo.

At my first outset in the world I was an indigent man, and possessed none of the conveniences of life, till at length I became possessed of ten pieces of silver, which I resolved to expend in amusing myself. With this intention, I one day walked into the principal market, intending first to purchase somewhat delicate to feast upon. While I was looking about me, a man passed by, with a great crowd following and laughing at him, for he led in an iron chain a monstrous baboon, which he cried for sale at the price of ten pieces of silver. Something instinctively impelled me to purchase the creature, so I paid him the money, and took my bargain to my lodging; but on my arrival, was at a loss how to procure a meal for myself or the baboon. While I was considering what I should do, the baboon having made several springs, became suddenly transformed into a handsome young man, beautiful as the moon at the fourteenth night of its appearance, and addressed me, saying, "Shekh Mahummud, thou hast purchased me for ten pieces of silver, being all thou hadst, and art now thinking how thou canst procure food for me and thyself." "That is true," replied I; "but in the name of Allah, from whence dost thou come?" "Ask no questions," replied my companion, "but take this piece of gold, and purchase us somewhat to eat and drink." I took the gold, did as he had desired, and we spent the evening merrily together in feasting and conversation, till it was time to repose.

In the morning the young man said, "My friend, this lodging is not fitting for us; go, and hire a better." "To hear is to obey," replied I, and departed to the principal serai, where I hired an upper apartment, to which we removed. He then gave me ten deenars, with orders to purchase carpets and cushions, which I did, and on my return found before him a package, containing princely vestments. These he gave to me, desiring that I would go to the bath, and, after bathing, put them on. I obeyed his commands, dressed myself, and found in each pocket a hundred deenars. I was not a little proud of my improved appearance in the rich robes. On my return, he praised my figure, and seated me by him, when we refreshed ourselves, and chatted on various subjects. At length he gave me a bundle, desiring that I would present it to the sultan, and at the same time demand his daughter in marriage for myself, assuring me that my request would meet a ready compliance.

The young man commanded a slave he had bought to attend me, who carried the bundle, and I set out for the palace; near which I found a great crowd of grandees, officers, and guards, who seeing me so richly habited, inquired respectfully what I wanted. Upon my replying that my business was with the sultan, they informed the ushers, who introduced me to the presence. I made the customary obeisance, and the sultan returned my salute; after which I presented the bundle before him, saying, "Will my lord accept this trifle, becoming my humble situation to offer, but certainly not worthy the royal dignity to receive?" The sultan commanded the package to be opened; when, lo! it contained a complete dress of royal apparel, richer than had ever been before seen, at which the sultan was astonished, and exclaimed, "Heavens! I have nothing like this, nor ever possessed so magnificent a suit; it shall be accepted: but inform me, Shekh, what thou requirest in return for so valuable an offering." "Mighty sovereign," replied I, "my wish is to become thy relation by espousing that precious gem of the casket of beauty, thy incomparable daughter."

When the sultan had heard this request, he turned towards his vizier and said, "Advise me how I should act in this affair." Upon which the minister replied, "Shew him, my lord, your most valuable diamond, and inquire if he has any one equally precious to match it as a marriage present for your daughter." The sultan did so; when I said, "If I present two, will you give me your daughter?" To which he assented, and I took my leave, carrying with me the diamond, to shew the young man as a model. Upon my arrival at our serai, I informed him of what passed, when he examined the diamond, and said, "The day is now far spent, but tomorrow I will procure ten like it, which thou shalt present to the sultan." Accordingly in the morning he walked out, and in the space of an hour returned with ten diamonds, which he gave me, and I hastened with them to the sultan. When he beheld the precious stones he was enraptured at their brilliancy, and again consulted his vizier how he should act in this business. “My lord,” replied the minister, “you only required one diamond of the Shekh, and he has presented you with ten: it is therefore incumbent upon you to give him your daughter.”

The sultan now sent for the cauzees and effendis, who drew up the deed of espousals, which they gave me, when I returned to our serai, and shewed it to the young man, who said, “It is well; go and complete thy marriage; but I entreat that thou wilt not consummate thy nuptials till I shall give thee permission.” “To hear is to obey,” replied I. When it was night I entered the princess’s apartment, but sat down at a distance from her, and did not speak till morning, when I bade her farewell, and took my leave for the day. I observed the same conduct the second night and the third, upon which, offended at my coldness, she complained to her mother, who informed the sultan of my affronting behaviour.

The sultan sent for me to his presence, and with much anger threatened, if I should continue my coldness to the princess another evening, that he would put me to death. Upon this I hastened to inform my friend at the serai, who commanded, that when I should next be alone with my wife I should demand of her a bracelet which she wore upon her right arm, and bring it to him, after which I might consummate my nuptials. I replied, “To hear is to obey;” and the next evening, when I entered the apartment, said to my wife, “If thou desirest that we should live happily together, give me the bracelet on thy right arm.” She did so immediately, when I carried it to the young man, and, returning to the palace, slept, as I supposed, with the princess till morning. Guess, however, what was my surprise, when on awaking I found myself lying in my first humble lodging, stripped of my rich vestments, and saw on the ground my former mean attire; namely, an old vest, a pair of tattered drawers, and a ragged turban, as full of holes as a sieve. When I had somewhat recovered my senses, I put them on and walked out in a melancholy mood, regretting my lost happiness, and not knowing what I should do to recover it. As I strolled towards the palace, I beheld sitting in the street a fortune-teller, who had some written papers before him, and was casting omens for the bystanders. I advanced, and made him a salute, which he returned kindly; and after looking attentively in my face, exclaimed, “What! has that accursed wretch betrayed thee, and torn thee from thy wife?" I replied, "Yes." Upon this he desired me to wait a little, and seated me by him. When his employers were departed, he said, "My friend, the ape which you purchased for ten pieces of silver, and who soon after was transformed into a young man, is not of human race, but a genie deeply in love with the princess whom you married. However, he could not approach her while she wore the bracelet, containing a powerful charm, upon her right arm, and therefore made use of thee to obtain it. He is now with her, but I will soon effect his destruction, that genii and men may be secure from his wickedness, for he is one of the rebellious and accursed spirits who disobeyed our lord Solomon, son of David."

After this, the fortune-teller wrote a note, which having sealed and directed, he gave it to me, saying, "Go to a certain spot, wait there, and observe those who may approach. Fortify thy mind, and when thou shall see a great personage attended by a numerous train, present to him this letter, when he will accomplish thy desires." I took the note, immediately departed for the place to which the fortune-teller had directed me, and after travelling all night and half the next day reached it, and sat down to wait for what might happen. The evening shut in, and about a fourth part of the night had passed, when a great glare of lights appeared advancing towards me from a distance; and as it shone nearer, I perceived persons carrying flambeaux and lanterns, also a numerous train of attendants, as if belonging to some mighty sultan. My mind was alarmed, but I recovered myself, and resolved to stay where I was. A great concourse passed by me, marching two and two, and at length there appeared a sultan of the genii, surrounded by a splendid attendance; upon which I advanced as boldly as I could, and having prostrated myself, presented the letter, which he opened, and read aloud, as follows:

"Be it known unto thee, O sultan of the genii, that the bearer of this is in distress, from which thou must relieve him by destroying his enemy. Shouldst thou not assist him, beware of thy own safety. Farewell."

When the sultan of the genii had read the note, he called out to one of his messengers, who immediately attended before him, and commanded him to bring into his presence without delay the genie who had enchanted the daughter of the sultan of Cairo. “To hear is to obey,” replied the messenger, and instantly disappearing, was absent for about an hour, when he returned with the criminal, and placed him before the sultan of the genii, who exclaimed, “Accursed wretch, hast thou ill-treated this man?”

“Mighty sovereign,” replied the genie, “my crime proceeded from love of the princess, who wore a charm in her bracelet which prevented my approaching her, and therefore I made use of this man. He procured me the charm, and I now have her in my power; but I love her tenderly, and have not injured her.” “Return the bracelet instantly,” replied the sultan of the genii, “that the man may recover his wife, or I will command an executioner to strike off thy head.” The offending genie, who was of an accursed and obstinate race, upon hearing these words was inflamed with passion, and insolently cried out, “I will not return the bracelet, for no one shall possess the princess but myself.” Having said thus, he attempted to fly away, but in vain.

The sultan of the genii now commanded his attendants to bind the criminal in chains, which they did, and having forced the bracelet from him, struck off his head. The sultan then presented me the charm, which was no sooner in my hand than all the genii vanished from my sight, and I found myself dressed as before, in the rich habit given me by the pretended young man. I proceeded to the city, which I entered, and when I came near the palace was recognized by the guards and courtiers, who cried out in raptures of joy, “Our lost prince is at length returned.” They paid their respects, and I entered the apartment of the princess, whom I found in a deep sleep, in which state she had been ever since my departure. On my replacing the bracelet on her arm, she awoke. After this we lived together in all happiness till the death of her father, who appointed me his successor, having no son, so that I am what I am.

When the sultan of Cairo had finished his narrative, the abdicated prince expressed his surprise at his adventures: upon which the sultan said, “Wonder not, my brother, at the dispensations of the Almighty, for he worketh in secret, and when he pleaseth revealeth his mysteries. Since thou hast quitted thy kingdom, if thou choosest, thou shalt be my vizier, and we will live together as friends and brothers.” “To hear is to obey,” replied the prince. The sultan then constituted him vizier, enrobed him in a rich uniform, and committed to him his seal, the inkstand, and other insignia of office, at the same time conferring upon him a magnificent palace, superbly furnished with gorgeous carpets, musnuds, and cushions: belonging to it were also extensive gardens. The vizier entered immediately upon his new office; held his divans regularly twice every day, and judged so equitably on all appeals brought before him, that his fame for justice and impartiality was soon spread abroad; insomuch, that whoever had a cause or dispute willingly referred it to his decision, and was satisfied with it, praying for his life and prosperity. In this state he remained for many years, the sovereign pleased with him, and he happy under the protection of the sultan of Cairo, so that he did not regret his abdicated kingdom.

It happened one evening that the mind of the sultan was depressed, upon which he sent for the vizier, who attended; when he said, “Vizier, my mind is so uneasy that nothing will amuse me.” “Enter then,” replied the minister, “into thy cabinet, and look at thy jewels, the examination of which may perhaps entertain thee.” The sultan did so, but it had no effect on his lassitude; when he said, “Vizier, this dispiritedness will not quit me, and nothing gives me pleasure within my palace; let us, therefore, walk out in disguise.” “To hear is to obey,” replied the vizier. They then retired into a private chamber, and putting on the habits of dervishes of Arabia, strolled through the city till they reached a hospital for lunatics, which they entered. Here they beheld two men, one reading and the other listening to him; when the sultan said to himself, “This is surprising;” and addressed the men, saying, “Are you really mad?” They replied, “We are not mad, but our stories are so wonderful, that were they recorded on a tablet of adamant, they would remain for examples to them who would be advised.” “Let us hear them,” said the sultan; upon which, the man who had been reading exclaimed, “Hear mine first!” and thus began.

Story of the First Lunatic.

I was a merchant, and had a warehouse in which were Indian goods of all sorts, and of the highest value, and I bought and sold to great advantage. One day as I was sitting in my warehouse, according to custom, busy in buying and selling, an old woman came in, telling her beads, and greeted me. I returned her salute, when she sat down, and said, "Sir, have you any choice Indian cloths?" "Yes, my mistress," replied I, "of all sorts that you can possibly wish for." "Bring them," said she. I showed her a piece of great value, with which she was highly pleased, and inquired the price. "Five hundred deenars," replied I: she took out her purse, paid me the money, and went away with the cloth; upon which I had a profit of one hundred and fifty deenars. She returned the next day, bought another piece, paid for it, and, in short, did the same for fifteen days successively, paying me regularly for each purchase. On the sixteenth day she came to my shop as usual, chose the cloth and was going to pay me, but missed her purse; upon which she said, "Sir, I have unfortunately left my purse at home." "Mistress," replied I, "it is of no consequence; take the cloth, and if you return, well, if not, you are welcome to this trifle:" she would not take it: I pressed her, but in vain. Much friendly argument passed between us, till at length she said, "Sir, you contradict, and I contradict, but we shall never agree unless you will favour me by accompanying me to my house to receive the value of your goods; so lock up your warehouse, lest any thing should be lost in your absence." Accordingly I fastened my doors, and accompanied her; we walked on conversing, till we came near her house, when she pulled out a handkerchief from her girdle, and said, "My desire is to tie this over thy eyes." "On what account?" replied I. "Because," said she, "in our way are several houses, the gates of which are open, and the women sitting in their balconies, so that possibly thy eyes may glance upon some one of them, and thy heart be distracted with love; for in this part are many beautiful damsels, who would fascinate even a religious, and therefore I am alarmed for thy peace."

Upon this I said to myself, "This old woman advises me properly," and I consented to her demand; when she bound the handkerchief over my eyes, and we proceeded till we arrived at her house. She knocked at the door, which was opened by a damsel, and we entered. The old lady then took the handkerchief from my eyes, when I looked around me, and perceived that I was in a mansion having several quadrangles, highly ornamented, and resembling the palaces of the sultan.

The old lady now desired me to retire into a room, which I did, and there beheld heaped together all the pieces of cloth which she had purchased of me, at which I was surprised, but still more so when two damsels beautiful as resplendent moons approached, and having divided a piece of cloth into halves, each took one, and wrapped it round her hand. They then sprinkled the floor with rose water and other scents, wiping it with the cloth, and rubbing it till it became bright as silver; after which they withdrew into an adjoining room, and brought out at least fifty stools, which they set down, and placed over each a rich covering, with cushions of tissue. They then fetched a large stool of gold, and having put upon it a carpet and cushions of gold brocade, retired. Not long after this, there descended from the staircase by two and two, as many damsels in number as the stools; upon each of which one sat down. At last descended a lady attended by ten damsels, who placed herself upon the larger stool. When I beheld her, my lord, my senses forsook me, and I was in raptures at her beauty, her stature, and elegance, as she chatted and laughed with her companions.

At length she exclaimed, "My dear mother!" when the old woman entered; to whom she said, "Hast thou brought the young man?" She replied, "Yes, my daughter, he is ready to attend thee." Upon which the lady said, "Introduce him to me." When I heard this I was alarmed, and said to myself, "There is no refuge but in the most high God; doubtless she has discovered my being here, and will command me to be put to death." The old woman came to me, and leading me by the hand, took me before the lady seated on the golden stool, who, on seeing me, smiled, made a graceful salute, and waved her hand for a seat to be brought, which was done, and placed close to her own. She then commanded me to sit down, which I did with much confusion.

When I was seated, the lady began to chat and joke with me, saying, “What think you of my appearance and my beauty, do you judge me worthy of your affection? shall I be your partner and you mine?” When I had heard these words, I replied, “How, dear lady, dare I presume, who am not worthy to be your servant, to arrive at such an honour?” Upon this, she said, “Young man, my words have no evasion in them; be not discouraged, or fearful of returning me an answer, for my heart is devoted to thy love.” I now perceived, my lord, that the lady was anxious to marry me; but could not conceive on what account, or who could have given her intelligence concerning me. She continued to shew me so many pleasing attentions, that at length I was emboldened to say, “Lady, if your words to me are sincere, according to the proverb, no time is so favourable as the present.” “There cannot,” said she, “be a more fortunate day than this for our union.” Upon this I replied, “My dear lady, how can I allot for you a proper dowry?” “The value of the cloth you intrusted to the old lady, who is my mother,” answered she, “is sufficient.” “That cannot be enough,” rejoined I. “Nothing more shall be added,” exclaimed the lady; “and my intention is this instant to send for the cauzee and witnesses, and I will choose a trustee, that they may unite us without delay. We will celebrate our nuptials this very evening, but upon one condition.” “What is that?” replied I. She answered, “That you bind yourself not to address or hold conversation with any woman but myself.” My lord, I was eager to be in possession of so beautiful a woman, and therefore said to her, “I agree, and will never contradict thee either by my words or actions.” She then sent for the cauzee and witnesses, and appointed a trustee, after which we were married. After the ceremony, she ordered coffee and sherbet, gave money to the cauzee, a dress of honour to her trustee, and they departed.

I was lost in astonishment, and said to myself, “Do I dream, or am I awake?” She now commanded her damsels to empty the warm bath, fill it afresh, and prepare cloths and necessaries for bathing. When they had done as she desired, she ordered the eunuchs in waiting to conduct me to the hummaum, and gave them a rich dress. They led me into an elegant apartment, difficult for speech to describe. They spread many-coloured carpets, upon which I sat down and undressed; after which I entered the hummaum, and perceived delightful odours from sandal wood, of comorin, and other sweets diffusing from every part. Here they seated me, covered me with perfumed soaps, and rubbed me till my body became bright as silver; when they brought the basins, and I washed with warm water, after which they gave me rose-water, and I poured it over me. They next brought in sweet-smelling salves, which I rubbed over me, and then repaired to the hummaum, where I found a royal dress, in which the eunuchs arrayed me; and after perfuming me with incense of sandal wood, brought in confections, coffee, and sherberts of various sorts, with which I refreshed myself. I then left the bath with my attendants, who shewed me into the grand hall of the palace, which was spread with most magnificent carpets, stools, and cushions. Here the lady met me, attired in a new habit, more sumptuous than I had seen her in before.

When I beheld my bride, she appeared to me, from the richness of her ornaments, like a concealed treasure from which the talisman had just been removed. She sat down by me, and smiled so fascinatingly upon me, I could no longer contain my rapture. In a short time she retired, but soon returned again in a dress richer than her last. I again embraced her, and in short, my lord, we remained together for ten days in the height of happiness and enjoyment. At the end of this period I recollected my mother, and said to my wife, “It is so long since I have been absent from home, and since my mother has not seen me, that I am certain she must be anxious concerning me. Will you permit me to visit her and look after my warehouse?” “There can be no impediment,” replied she; “you may visit your mother daily, and employ yourself in your warehouse, but the old woman must conduct you and bring you back;” to which I assented.

The old lady then came in, tied a handkerchief over my eyes, conducted me to the spot where she had first blindfolded me, and said, “You will return here about the time of evening prayer, and will find me waiting.” I left her, and repaired to my mother, whom I found in great affliction at my absence, and weeping bitterly. Upon seeing me, she ran and embraced me with tears of joy. I said, “Weep not, my dear mother, for my absence has been owing to the highest good fortune.” I then informed her of my lucky adventure, when she exclaimed, “May Allah protect thee, my son, but visit me at least every two days, that my affection for thee may be gratified.” I then went to my warehouse, and employed myself as usual till evening, when I returned to the place appointed, where I found the old lady, who blindfolded me as before, and conducted me to the palace of my wife, who received me with fondness. For three months I continued to go and come in this manner, but I could not help wishing to know whom I had married, and wondering at the affluence, splendour, and attendance that appeared around her.

At length I found an opportunity of being in private with one of her black slaves, and questioned her concerning her mistress. “My lord,” replied she, “the history of my mistress is wonderful; but I dare not relate it, lest she should put me to death.” Upon this, I assured her, that if she would inform me, no one should know it but myself, and I took an oath of secrecy, when she began as follows:

“My mistress one day went to a public bath, intending to amuse herself, for which purpose she made such preparations of delicacies and rarities, as were worth a camel’s load of treasure, and when she left the hummaum, made an excursion to a garden, where a splendid collation was laid out. Here she continued enjoying herself till evening, when she ordered her retinue to make ready for departure, and the fragments of the entertainment to be distributed among the poor. On her return, she passed through the street in which is your warehouse. It was upon a Friday, when you were sitting in conversation with a friend, arrayed in your best attire. She beheld you, her heart was stricken with love, but no one perceived her emotion. However, she had no sooner reached her palace than she became low and melancholy, and her appetite failed her. At length she took to her bed, her colour left her, sleep forsook her, and she became very weak. Upon this her mother went to call in a physician, that he might consider what might be the cause of her daughter’s indisposition; but on the way she met a skilful old lady, with whom she returned home.

“The old lady on feeling the pulse of her patient, and after asking several questions, could perceive in her no bodily ailment or pain; upon which she judged she was in love, but did not venture to speak to her before her mother of her suspicions. She took leave, and said, ‘By God’s blessing thou wilt soon recover; I will return tomorrow, and bring with me an infallible medicine.’ She then took her mother aside, and said, ‘My good lady, be not angry at what I shall remark, but thy daughter has no bodily disorder; she is in love, and there can be no cure for her but by a union with her beloved.’ The mother, on the departure of the old lady, repaired to her daughter, and with much difficulty, after twenty days of denial (for my mistress’s modesty was hurt), obtained from her a description of your person, and the street in which you lived; upon which she behaved to you in the manner you are well acquainted with, brought you here, and you know what followed. Such is her history,” concluded the black slave, “which you must not reveal.” “I will not,” replied I; and after this I continued to live very happily with my wife, going daily to see my mother, to attend in my warehouse, and return in the evening, conducted as usual by the old lady my mother-in-law.

One day, after the expiration of some months, as I was sitting in my warehouse, a damsel came into the street with the image of a cock, composed of jewelry. It was set with pearls, diamonds, and other precious stones, and she offered it to the merchants for sale; when they began bidding for it at five hundred deenars, and went to nine hundred and fifty; all which I observed in silence and did not interfere by speaking or bidding. At length the damsel came up to me, and said, “My lord, all the merchants have increased in bidding for my precious toy, but you have neither bidden, nor taken any notice of me.” “I have no occasion for it,” replied I. “Nay,” exclaimed she, “but you must bid something more.” “Since I must,” I answered, “I will give fifty deenars more, which will be just a thousand.” She accepted the price, and I went into my warehouse to fetch the money to pay her, saying to myself, “I will present this curiosity to my wife, as it may please her.” When I was going to pay the money, the damsel would not take it, but said, “My lord, I have a request to make, which is, that I may snatch one kiss from your cheek as the price of my jewelry, for I want nothing else.” Upon this, I thought to myself, a single kiss of my cheek is an easy price for the value of a thousand deenars, and consented; when she came up to me and gave me a kiss, but at the same time a most severe bite; left the piece of jewelry, and went away with the greatest haste.

In the evening I repaired to the house of my wife, and found the old lady waiting as usual at the accustomed spot. She tied the handkerchief over my eyes, and when she had conducted me home, took it off. I found my wife sitting upon her golden stool, but dressed in scarlet, and with an angry countenance; upon which I said to myself, “God grant all may be well.” I approached her, took out the toy set with diamonds and rubies (thinking that on sight of it her ill-humour would vanish), and said, “My mistress, accept this, for it is curious, and I purchased it for thee.” She took it into her hand, and examined it on all sides; after which she exclaimed, “Didst thou really purchase this on my account?” “By heavens,” replied I, “I bought it for thy sake, for a thousand deenars.” Upon this she frowned angrily upon me, and exclaimed, “What means that wound upon thy cheek?” I was overwhelmed with confusion.

While I was in this state, she called out to her attendants, who immediately descended the staircase, carrying the headless corpse of a young girl, the head placed upon the middle of the body. I looked, and knew it to be the head of the damsel who had sold me the piece of jewelry for a kiss, and had bitten my cheek. My wife now exclaimed, “I had no occasion for such baubles, for I have many of them; but I wished to know if thou wert so faithful to thy agreement with me, as not to address another woman than myself, and sent the girl to try thee. Since thy promise has been broken, begone, and return no more.”

When my wife had finished her speech, the old woman took me by the hand, tied the handkerchief over my eyes, and conducted me to the usual spot, when she said, “Begone!” and disappeared. I was so overcome by the sad adventure, and the loss of my wife, that I ran through the streets like one frantic, crying, “Ah, what beauty, what grace, what elegance did she possess!” upon which, the people, supposing me distracted, conducted me to this hospital, and bound me in fetters, as you see.

When the sultan had heard the young man’s story, he was much affected, inclined his head for some instants in deep thought, then said to his vizier, “By Allah, who has intrusted me with sovereignty, if thou dost not discover the lady who married this young man, thy head shall be forfeited.” The vizier was alarmed, but recovering himself, replied, “Allow me three days to search,” to which the sultan consented. The vizier then took with him the young man, and for two days was at a loss how to find out the house. At length he inquired if he should know the spot where the handkerchief was tied over his eyes, and the gateway at which it was taken off, of both which the youth professed to be certain. He conducted the minister to the street where he was blindfolded, and they reached a gateway, at which the vizier knocked. It was opened by the domestics, who knowing the vizier, and seeing the young man with him, were alarmed, and ran to communicate the quality of the visitants to their mistress. She desired to know the commands of the vizier, who informed her, that it was the sultan’s pleasure she should be reconciled to her husband; to which she replied, “Since the sultan hath commanded, my duty is obedience.” The young man was reunited to his wife, who was the daughter of a former sultan of Cairo.

Such were the adventures of the young man who was reading in the hospital. We now recite those of the youth who was listening to him. Upon the sultan’s inquiring his story, he began as follows.

Story of the Second Lunatic.

My lord, I was by profession a merchant, and on my commencing business the youngest of my trade, having but just entered my sixteenth year. As I was one day busy in my warehouse, a damsel entering, put into my hands a packet, which, on opening, I found to contain several copies of verses in praise of myself, with a letter expressive of ardent affection for my person. Supposing them meant only as banter, I foolishly flew into a passion, seized the bearer, and beat her severely. On her departure, I reflected on my improper behaviour, dreaded lest she should complain to her relations, and that they might revenge themselves upon me by some sudden assault. I repented of what I had done, but alas! it was when repentance would not avail.

Ten days had passed, when, as I was sitting in my warehouse as usual, a young lady entered most superbly dressed, and odoriferously perfumed. She resembled in brightness the moon on its fourteenth night, so that when I gazed upon her my senses forsook me, and I was incapable of attention to any thing but herself. She addressed me, saying, “Young man, have you in your warehouse any female ornaments?” to which I replied, “Of all sorts, my lady, that you can possibly require.” Upon this she desired to see some bracelets for the ankles, which I shewed her, when holding out her foot, she desired me to try them on. I did so. After this, she asked for a necklace, and opening her veil, made me tie it on. She then chose a pair of bracelets, and extending her hands, desired me to put them on her wrists, which I did; after which, she inquired the amount of the whole, when I exclaimed, “Fair lady, accept them as a present, and inform me whose daughter thou art.” She replied, “I am the daughter of the chief magistrate;” when I said, “My wish is to demand thee in marriage of thy father.” She consented that I should, but observed, “When you ask me of my father, he will say, I have only one daughter, who is a cripple, and wretchedly deformed. Do thou, however, reply, that thou art willing to accept her, and if he remonstrates, still insist upon wedding her.” I then asked when I should make my proposals. She replied, “The best time to visit my father is on the Eed al Koorbaun, which is three days hence, as thou wilt then find with him all his relations and friends, and our espousals will add to his festivity."

Agreeably to the lady's instructions, on the third day following I repaired with several of my friends to the house of the chief magistrate, and found him sitting in state, receiving the compliments of the day from the chief inhabitants of the city. We made our obeisance, which he graciously noticed, received us with kindness, and entered familiarly into conversation. A collation was brought in, the cloth spread, and we partook with him of the viands, after which we drank coffee. I then stood up, saying, "My lord, I am desirous of espousing the chaste lady your daughter, more precious than the richest gem."

When the chief magistrate heard my speech, he inclined his head for some time towards the earth in deep thought, after which he said, "Son, my daughter is an unfortunate cripple, miserably deformed." To this I replied, "To have her for my wife is all I wish." The magistrate then said, "If thou wilt have a wife of this description, it must be on condition that she shall not be taken from my house, that thou shalt consummate the marriage here, and abide with me." I replied, "To hear is to obey;" believing that she was the beautiful damsel who had visited my warehouse, and whose charms I had so rapturously beheld. In short, the nuptial ceremony was performed, when I said to myself, "Heavens! is it possible that I am become master of this beautiful damsel, and shall possess her charms!"

When night set in, the domestics of the chief magistrate introduced me into the chamber of my bride. I ran eagerly to gaze upon her beauty, but guess my mortification when I beheld her a wretched dwarf, a cripple, and deformed, as her father had represented. I was overcome with horror at the sight of her, distracted with disappointment, and ashamed of my own foolish credulity, but I dared not complain, as I had voluntarily accepted her as my wife from the magistrate: I sat down silently in one corner of the chamber, and she in another, for I could not bring myself to approach her, as she was disgusting to the sight of man, and my soul could not endure her company.

At day-break I left the house of my father-in-law, repaired to my warehouse, which I opened, and sat down much distressed in mind, with my head dizzy, like one suffering from intoxication, when lo! who should appear before me but the lady who had put upon me so mortifying a trick. She entered, and paid me the customary salute. I was enraged, and began to abuse her, saying, "Wherefore hast thou put upon me such a stratagem?" when she replied, "Wretch, recollect the day that I brought thee a packet, in return for which you seized, beat, reviled, and drove me scornfully away. In retaliation for such treatment, I have taken revenge by giving thee such a delectable bride." I now fell at her feet, entreated her forgiveness, and expressed my repentance; upon which, smiling upon me, she said, "Be not uneasy, for as I have plunged thee into a dilemma, I will also relieve thee from it. Go to the aga of the leather-dressers, give him a sum of money, and desire him to call thee his son; then repair with him, attended by his followers and musicians, to the house of the chief magistrate. When he inquires the cause of their coming, let the aga say, 'My lord, we are come to congratulate thy son-in-law, who is my beloved child, on his marriage with thy daughter, and to rejoice with him.' The magistrate will be furiously enraged, and exclaim, 'Dog, is it possible that, being a leather-dresser, thou durst marry the daughter of the chief magistrate?' Do thou then reply, 'My lord, my ambition was to be ennobled by your alliance, and as I have married your lordship's daughter, the mean appellation of leather-dresser will soon be forgotten and lost in the glorious title of the son-in-law of your lordship; I shall be promoted under your protection, and purified from the odour of the tan-pit, so that my offspring will smell as sweet as that of a syed."

I did as the lady had directed me, and having bribed the chief of the leather-dressers, he accompanied me with the body of his trade, and a numerous party of musicians, vocal and instrumental, to my father-in-law's house, before which they began to sing and dance with great clamour every now and then crying out, "Long live our noble kinsman! Long live the son-in-law of the chief magistrate!" The magistrate inquired into the cause of our intrusive rejoicing, when I told him my kinsfolk were congratulating me upon my alliance with his illustrious house, and come to thank him for the honour he had done the whole body of leather-dressers in my person.

The chief magistrate on hearing this was passionately enraged, and abused me; but reflecting that without my consent the supposed disgrace of his noble house could not be done away, he became calm, and offered me money to divorce his daughter. At first I pretended unwillingness, but at length affecting to be moved by his earnest entreaties, accepted forty purses of gold, which he gave me to repudiate my deformed wife, and I returned home with a lightened heart. The day following, the lady came to my warehouse, when I thanked her for having freed me from my ridiculous marriage, and begged her to accept of me as a husband. To this she consented, but said she was, she feared, too meanly born for me to marry, as her father was but a cook, though of eminence in his way, and very rich. I replied, "Even though he were a leather-dresser, thy charms would grace a throne." In short, my lord, we were married, and have lived together very happily from the day of our union to the present time.

Such is my story, but it is not so surprising as that of the learned man and his pupil, whose adventures were among the miracles of the age, which I will relate.

Story of the retired Sage and his Pupil, related to the Sultan by the Second Lunatic,

There was a learned and devout sage, who in order to enjoy his studies and contemplations uninterrupted, had secluded himself from the world in one of the cells of the principal mosque of the city, which he never left but upon the most pressing occasions. He had led this retired life some years, when a boy one day entered his cell, and earnestly begged to be received as his pupil and domestic. The sage liked his appearance, consented to his request, inquired who were his parents, and whence he came; but the lad could not inform him, and said, "Ask not who I am, for I am an orphan, and know not whether I belong to heaven or earth." The shekh did not press him, and the boy served him with the most undeviating punctuality and attention for twelve years, during which he received his instructions in every branch of learning, and became a most accomplished youth. At the end of the twelve years, the youth one day heard some young men praising the beauty of the sultan's daughter, and saying that her charms were unequalled by those of all the princesses of the age. This discourse excited his curiosity to behold so lovely a creature. He repaired to his master, saying, “My lord, I understand that the sultan hath a most beautiful daughter, and my soul longs ardently for an opportunity of beholding her, if only for an instant.” The sage exclaimed, “What have such as we to do, my son, with the daughters of sovereigns or of others? We are a secluded order, and should refrain ourselves from associating with the great ones of this world.” The old man continued to warn his pupil against the vanities of the age, and to divert him from his purpose; but the more he advised and remonstrated, the more intent the youth became on his object, which affected his mind so much, that he grew very uneasy, and was continually weeping.

The sage observing his distress was afflicted at it, and at length said to the youth, “Will one look at the princess satisfy thy wishes?” “It shall,” replied the pupil. The sage then anointed one of his eyes with a sort of ointment; when lo! he became to appearance as a man divided into half, and the sage ordered him to go and hop about the city. The youth obeyed his commands, but he had no sooner got into the street than he was surrounded by a crowd of passengers, who gazed with astonishment at his appearance. The report of so strange a phenomenon as a half man soon spread throughout the city, and reached the palace of the sultan, who sent for the supposed monster to the presence. The youth was conveyed to the palace, where the whole court gazed upon him with wonder; after which he was taken into the haram, to gratify the curiosity of the women. He beheld the princess, and was fascinated by the brilliancy of her charms, insomuch, that he said to himself, “If I cannot wed her, I will put myself to death.”

The youth being at length dismissed from the palace, returned home; his heart tortured with love for the daughter of the sultan. On his arrival, the sage inquired if he had seen the princess. “I have,” replied the youth, “but one look is not enough, and I cannot rest until I shall sit beside her, and feast my eyes till they are wearied with gazing upon her.” “Alas! my son,” exclaimed the old man, “I fear for thy safety: we are religious men, and should avoid temptations; nor does it become us to have any thing to do with the sultan.” To this the youth replied, “My lord, unless I shall sit beside her, and touch her neck with my hands, I shall, through despair, put myself to death."

At these words, the sage was alarmed for the safety of his pupil, and said to himself, "I will, if possible, preserve this amiable youth, and perchance Allah may gratify his wishes." He then anointed both his eyes with an ointment, which had the effect of rendering him invisible to human sight. After this, he said, "Go, my son, and gratify thy wishes, but return again, and be not too long absent from thy duty."

The youth hastened towards the royal palace, which he entered unperceived, and proceeded into the haram, where he seated himself near the daughter of the sultan. For some time he contented himself with gazing on her beauty, but at length extending his hands, touched her softly on the neck. As soon as she felt his touch, the princess, alarmed, shrieked out violently, and exclaimed, "I seek refuge with Allah, from Satan the accursed." Her mother and the ladies present, affrighted at her outcries, eagerly inquired the cause; when she said, "Eblees, or some other evil spirit, hath this instant touched me on the neck."

Upon this, the mother was alarmed and sent for her nurse, who, when informed of what had happened, declared, "That nothing was so specific to drive away evil spirits as the smoke of camel's hair;" a quantity of which was instantly brought, and being set fire to, the smoke of it filled the whole apartment, and so affected the eyes of the young man, that they watered exceedingly, when he unthinkingly wiped them with his handkerchief, so that with his tears the ointment was soon washed off.

The ointment was no sooner wiped away from his eyes than the young man became visible, and the princess, her mother, and the ladies, all at once uttered a general cry of astonishment and alarm; upon which the eunuchs rushed into the apartment. Seeing the youth, they surrounded him, beat him unmercifully, then bound him with cords, and dragged him before the sultan, whom they informed of his having been found in the royal haram. The sultan, enraged, sent for an executioner, and commanded him to seize the culprit, to clothe him in a black habit patched over with flame colour, to mount him upon a camel, and after parading with him through the streets of the city, to put him to death.

The executioner took the young man, dressed him as he had been directed, placed him upon the camel, and led him through the city, preceded by guards and a crier, who bawled out, “Behold the merited punishment of him who has dared to violate the sanctuary of the royal haram.” The procession was followed by an incalculable crowd of people, who were astonished at the beauty of the young man, and the little concern he seemed to feel at his own situation.

At length the procession arrived in the square before the great mosque, when the sage, disturbed by the noise and concourse of the people, looked from the window of his cell, and beheld the disgraceful situation of his pupil. He was moved to pity, and instantly calling upon the genii (for by his knowledge of magic and every abstruse science he had them all under his control), commanded them to bring him the youth from the camel, and place in his room, without being perceived, some superannuated man. They did so, and when the multitude saw the youth, as it were, transformed into a well-known venerable shekh, they were stricken with awe, and said, “Heavens! the young man turns out to be our reverend chief of the herb-sellers;” for the old man had long been accustomed to dispose of greens and sugarcane at the college gate near the great mosque, and was the oldest in his trade.

The executioner, on beholding the change of appearance in his prisoner, was confounded. He returned to the palace with the old man upon the camel, and followed by the crowd. He hastened or contrive my death to the sultan, and said, “My lord, the young man is vanished, and in his room became seated upon the camel this venerable shekh, well known to the whole city.” On hearing this, the sultan was alarmed, and said to himself, “Whoever has been able to perform this, can do things much more surprising He may depose me from my kingdom.”

The sultan’s fears increased so much, that he was at a loss how to act. He summoned his vizier, and said, “Advise me what to do in the affair of this strange youth, for I am utterly confounded.” The vizier for some time inclined his head towards the ground in profound thought, then addressing the sultan, said, “My lord, no one could have done this but by the help of genii, or by a power which we cannot comprehend, and he may possibly, if irritated, do you in future a greater injury respecting your daughter. I advise, therefore, that you cause it to be proclaimed throughout the city, that whoever has done this, if he will appear before you shall have pardon on the word of a sultan, which can never be broken. Should he then surrender himself, espouse him to your daughter, when perhaps his mind may be reconciled by her love. He has already beheld her, and seen the ladies of the haram, so that nothing can save your honour but his union with the princess."

The sultan approved the advice of his vizier, the proclamation was issued, and the crier proceeded through several streets, till at length he reached the square of the great mosque. The pupil hearing the proclamation, was enraptured, and running to his patron, declared his intention of surrendering himself to the sultan. "My son," said the sage, "why shouldst thou do so? Hast thou not already suffered sufficiently?" The youth replied, "Nothing shall prevent me." Upon which the sage exclaimed, "Go then, my son, and my midnight prayers shall attend thee."

The youth now repaired to the hummaum, and having bathed, dressed himself in his richest habit; after which he discovered himself to the crier, who conducted him to the palace. He made a profound obeisance to the sultan, at the same time uttering an eloquent prayer for his long life and prosperity. The sultan was struck with his manly beauty, the gracefulness of his demeanour, and the propriety of his delivery, and said, "Young stranger, who art thou, and from whence dost thou come?" "I am," replied the youth, "the half man whom you saw, and have done what you are already acquainted with."

The sultan now requested him to sit in the most honourable place, and entered into conversation on various subjects. He put to him several difficult questions in science, to which the youth replied with such judgment, that his abilities astonished him, and he said to himself, "This young man is truly worthy of my daughter." He then addressed him, saying, "Young man, my wish is to unite thee to my daughter, for thou hast already seen her, also her mother, and after what has passed no one will marry her." The youth replied, "I am ready in obedience, but must advise with my friends." "Go then," said the sultan, "consult with thy friends, and return quickly."

The young man repaired to the sage, and having informed him of what had passed between himself and the sultan, signified his wish to marry the princess, when the shekh replied, “Do so, my son; there can be in the measure no crime, as it is a lawful alliance.” “But I wish,” said the youth, “to invite the sultan to visit you.” “By all means,” answered the sage. “My lord,” rejoined the pupil, “since I first came, and you honoured me in your service, I have beheld you in no other residence but this confined cell, from which you have never stirred night or day. How can I invite the sultan here?” “My son,” exclaimed the shekh, “go to the sultan, rely upon Allah, who can work miracles in favour of whom he chooseth, and say unto him, ‘My patron greets thee, and requests thy company to an entertainment five days hence.’” The youth did as he was directed, and having returned to his master, waited upon him as before, but anxiously wishing for the fifth day to arrive.

On the fifth day, the sage said to his impatient pupil, “Let us remove to our own house, that we may prepare for the reception of the sultan, whom you must conduct to me.” They arose, and walked, till on coming to a ruinous building about the middle of the city, the walls of which were fallen in heaps, the shekh said, “My son, this is my mansion, hasten and bring the sultan.” The pupil, in astonishment, exclaimed, “My lord, this abode is a heap of ruins, how can I invite the sultan here, it would only disgrace us?” “Go,” repeated the sage, “and dread not the consequences.” Upon this the youth departed, but as he went on could not help saying to himself, “Surely my master must be insane, or means to make a jest of us.” When he had reached the palace he found the sultan expecting him; upon which he made his obeisance, and said, “Will my lord honour me by his company?”

The sultan arose, mounted his horse, and attended by his whole court, followed the youth to the place chosen by the venerable shekh. It now appeared a royal mansion, at the gates of which were ranged numerous attendants in costly habits, respectfully waiting. The young man, at sight of this transformed appearance, was confounded in such a manner that he could hardly retain his senses. He said to himself, “It was but this instant that I beheld this place a heap of ruins, yet now it is a palace far more magnificent than any belonging to this sultan. I am astonished, but must keep the secret to myself."

The sultan alighted, as did also his courtiers, and entered the palace. They were surprised and delighted at the splendour of the first court, but much more so at the superior magnificence of a second; into which they were ushered, and introduced into a spacious hall, where they found the venerable shekh sitting to receive them. The sultan made a low obeisance; upon which the sage just moved his head, but did not rise. The sultan then sat down, when the shekh greeted him, and they entered into conversation on various subjects; but the senses of the sultan were confounded at the dignified demeanour of his host, and the splendid objects around him. At length the shekh desired his pupil to knock at a door and order breakfast to be brought in, which he did: when lo! the door opened, and there entered a hundred slaves, bearing upon their heads golden trays, on which were placed dishes of agate, cornelian, and other stones, filled with various eatables, which they arranged in order before the sultan. He was astonished, for he had nothing so magnificent in his own possession. He then partook of the sumptuous collation, as did also the venerable shekh, and all the courtiers, till they were satisfied; after which they drank coffee and sherbets of various sorts, when the sultan and the sage conversed on religious and literary subjects, and the former was edified by the remarks of the latter.

When it was noon the shekh again desired his pupil to knock at another door, and order dinner to be brought in. He had no sooner done so, than immediately a hundred slaves, different from the former, entered, bearing trays of the richest viands. They spread the cloth before the sultan, and arranged the dishes, which were each thickly set with precious stones, at which he was more astonished than before. When all had eaten till they were satisfied, basins and ewers, some of gold and others of agate, were carried round, and they washed their hands; after which the shekh said to the sultan, "Have you fixed what my son must give as the dower of your daughter?" To this, the sultan replied, "I have already received it." This he said out of compliment; but the shekh replied, "My lord, the marriage cannot be valid without a dower." He then presented a vast sum of money, with many jewels, for the purpose to his pupil; after which he retired with the sultan into a chamber, and arrayed him in a splendid habit; rich dresses were also given to each of his attendants according to their rank. The sultan then took leave of the shekh, and returned with his intended son-in-law to the palace.

When evening arrived the young man was introduced into the apartment of the princess, which he found spread with the richest carpets, and perfumed with costly essences, but his bride was absent: at which he was somewhat surprised, but supposed her coming was put off till midnight, for which he waited with impatience. Midnight came, but no bride appeared; when a thousand uneasy sensations afflicted his mind, and he continued in restless anxiety till morning: nor were the father and mother of the princess less impatient; for supposing she was with her husband, they waited anxiously, and were mortified at the delay.

At daylight, the mother, unable to bear longer suspense, entered the chamber; when the young man, rather angrily, inquired what had delayed the coming of his bride. “She entered before thee,” replied the mother. “I have not seen her,” answered the bridegroom. Upon this the sultana shrieked with affright, calling aloud on her daughter, for she had no other child but her. Her cries alarmed the sultan, who rushing into the apartment, was informed that the princess was missing, and had not been seen since her entrance in the evening. Search was now made in every quarter of the palace, but in vain; and the sultan, sultana, and the bridegroom, were involved in the deepest distress.

To account for the sudden disappearance of the princess, be it known, that a genie used often to divert himself with visiting the haram of the sultan; and happening to be there on the marriage night, was so captivated by the charms of the bride, that he resolved to steal her away. Accordingly, having rendered himself invisible, he waited in the nuptial chamber, and upon her entering bore her off, and soared into the air. At length he alighted with his prey in a delightful garden, far distant from the city; placed the princess in a shady arbour, and set before her delicious fruits; but contented himself with gazing upon her beauty.

The young bridegroom, when recovered from his first alarm, bethought himself of his tutor, and, together with the sultan, repaired to the palace where the splendid entertainment had been given. Here they found every thing in the same order as on the day of festivity, and were kindly received by the venerable shekh; who on hearing of the loss of the princess, desired them to be comforted. He then commanded a chafing-dish of lighted charcoal to be set before him, and after some moments of contemplation, cast into it some perfumes, over which he pronounced incantations. He had scarcely ended them, when lo! the earth shook, whirlwinds arose, lightnings flashed, and clouds of dust darkened the air, from which speedily descended winged troops, bearing superb standards and massive spears. In the centre of them appeared three sultans of the genii, who bowing low before the shekh, exclaimed all at once, "Master, hail! we are come to obey thy commands."

The shekh now addressed them, saying, "My orders are, that you instantly bring me the accursed spirit who hath carried off the bride of my son;" when the genii replied, "To hear is to obey:" and immediately detached fifty of their followers to reconduct the princess to her chamber, and drag the culprit to the presence of the sage. These commands were no sooner issued than they were performed. Ten of the genii carefully conveyed the bride to her apartment, while the rest having seized the offending genie, dragged him before the sage, who commanded the three sultans to burn him to ashes, which was executed in an instant. All this was done in the presence of the sultan, who was wrapt in astonishment, and viewed with awe the tremendously gigantic figures of the genii, wondering at the submissive readiness with which they obeyed the commands of the venerable shekh. When the offending genie was consumed to ashes, the shekh renewed his incantations; during which the sultans of the genii, with their followers, bowed themselves before him, and when he had ended, vanished from sight.

The sultan and the bridegroom having taken leave of the shekh, returned to the palace, where all was now gladness for the safe return of the princess. The marriage was consummated, and the young man was so happy with his bride, that he did not quit the haram for seven days. On the eighth, the sultan ordered public rejoicings to be made, and invited all the inhabitants of the city to feast at the royal cost; causing it to be proclaimed, that no one, either rich or poor, should for three days presume to eat at home, light a fire, or burn a lamp in his own house, but all repair to the nuptial festival of the daughter of the sultan. Ample provision was made for all comers in the courts of the palace, and the officers of the household attended day and night to serve the guests according to their quality. During one of the nights of this grand festival, the sultan being anxious to know if his proclamation was generally obeyed, resolved to walk through the city in disguise. Accordingly he and his vizier, in the habit of dervishes of Persia, having quitted the palace privately, began their excursion, and narrowly examined several streets. At length they came to a close alley, in one of the houses of which they perceived a light, and heard the sound of voices. When they had reached the door, they heard a person say to another, "Our sultan understands not how to treat properly, nor is he liberal, since the poor have it not in their option to partake of the costly feast he has prepared for his daughter's nuptials. He should have distributed his bounty among the wretched, who dare not presume to enter the palace in their ragged garments, by sending it to their home."

The sultan, upon hearing this, said to the vizier, "We must enter this house;" and knocked at the door, when a person cried out, "Who is there?" "Guests," replied the sultan. "You shall be welcome to what we have," answered the person, and opened the door. On entering, the sultan beheld three mean-looking old men, one of whom was lame, the second broken-backed, and the third wry-mouthed. He then inquired the cause of their misfortunes; to which they answered, "Our infirmities proceeded from the weakness of our understandings." The sultan upon this replied in a whisper to his vizier, that at the conclusion of the festival he should bring the three men to his presence, in order that he might learn their adventures.

When they had tasted of their homely fare, the sultan and vizier rose up, and having presented the three maimed companions with a few deenars, took leave and departed. They strolled onwards. It was now near midnight when they reached a house in which, through a lattice, they could perceive three girls with their mother eating a slender meal; during which, at intervals, one of them sung, and the other two laughed and talked. The sultan resolved to enter the house, and commanded the vizier to knock at the door, which he did; when one of the sisters cried out, “Who knocks at our door at this advanced time of night?” “We are two foreign dervishes,” replied the vizier; to which the ladies answered, “We are women of virtue, and have no men in our house to whom you can be introduced: repair to the festival of the sultan, who will entertain you!” “Alas!” continued the vizier, “we are strangers unacquainted with the way to the palace, and dread lest the magistrate of the police should meet and apprehend us. We beg that you will afford us lodging till daylight: we will then depart, and you need not apprehend from us any improper behaviour.”

When the mother of the ladies heard this she pitied the strangers, and commanded them to open the door: upon which the sultan and vizier having entered, paid their respects and sat down; but the former, on observing the beauty of the sisters and their elegant demeanour, could not contain himself, and said, “How comes it that you dwell by yourselves, have no husbands or any male to protect you?” The younger sister replied, “Impertinent dervish, withhold thy inquiries! our story is surprising; but unless thou wert sultan, and thy companion vizier, you could not appreciate our adventures.” The sultan upon this remark became silent on the subject, and they discoursed upon indifferent matters till near daylight, when the pretended dervishes took a respectful leave, and departed. At the door the sultan commanded the vizier to mark it, so that he might know it again, being resolved, when the nuptial festivities should be concluded, to send for the ladies and hear their story.

On the last evening of the festival the sultan bestowed dresses of honour on all his courtiers; and on the following day, affairs returning to their usual course, he commanded his vizier to bring before him the three maimed men, and ordered them to relate the cause of their misfortunes, which they did as follows.

Story of the Broken-backed Schoolmaster.

Formerly, O mighty sultan, was a schoolmaster, and had under my tuition nearly seventy scholars, of whose manners I was as careful as of their learning: so much did I make them respect me, that whenever I sneezed they laid down their writing boards, stood up with arms crossed, and with one voice exclaimed, "God have mercy upon our tutor!" to which I replied, "May he have mercy upon me and you, and all who have children." If any one of the boys did not join in this prayer, I used to beat him severely. One fine afternoon my scholars requested leave to visit a certain garden some distance from the town, which I granted; and they clubbed their pittances to purchase sweetmeats and fruits. I attended them on this excursion, and was as much delighted as themselves with the pleasure they enjoyed, and their childish gambols. When evening approached we returned homewards, and on the way, my boys having fatigued themselves with play, as well as eaten much sweets and fruit, were seized with extreme thirst, of which they heavily complained. At length we reached a draw-well, but, alas! it had no bucket or cord. I pitied their situation, and resolved, if possible, to relieve them. I requested them to give me their turbans, which I tied to each other; but as they were altogether not long enough to reach the water, I fixed one of the turbans round my body, and made them let one down into the well, where I filled a small cup I had with me, which they drew up repeatedly till their thirst was satisfied. I then desired them to draw me up again, which they attempted; and I had reached nearly the mouth of the well, when I was unfortunately seized with a fit of sneezing; upon which the boys mechanically, as they had been accustomed to do in school, one and all let go their hold, crossed their arms, and exclaimed, "God have mercy upon our venerable tutor!" while I tumbled at once to the bottom of the well, and broke my back. I cried out from the agony of pain, and the children ran on all sides for help. At length some charitable passengers drew me out, and placing me upon an ass, carried me home; where I languished for a considerable time, and never could recover my health sufficiently again to attend to my school. Thus did I suffer for my foolish pride:

for had I not been so tenacious of respect from my scholars, they would not upon my sneezing have let go their hold and broken my back.

When the broken-backed schoolmaster had finished his story, the old man with the wry-mouth thus began:

Story of the Wry-mouthed Schoolmaster.

I also, O sultan, was a schoolmaster; and so strict with my pupils, that I allowed them no indulgence, but even kept them to their studies frequently after the usual hours. At length, one more cunning than the rest resolved, in revenge, to play me a trick. He instructed the lads as they came into school to say to me, “Dear master, how pale you look!” Not feeling myself ill, I, though surprised at their remarks, did not much regard them on the first day; but a second, and so on to a fifth passing, on each of which all the pupils on entrance uttered the same exclamation, I began to think some fatal disorder had seized me, and resolved, by way of prevention, to take physic. I did so the following morning, and remained in my wife’s apartments; upon which the unlucky lads, clubbing their pittances together to the amount of about a hundred faloose, requested my acceptance of the money as an offering for my recovery; and I was so pleased with the present that I gave them a holiday. The receipt of cash in so easy a manner was so agreeable to me, that I feigned illness for some days; my pupils made an offering as usual, and were allowed to play. On the tenth day the cunning urchin who had planned the scheme came into my chamber, as customary, with an offering of faloose. I happened then to have before me a boiled egg, which, upon seeing him enter, I clapped into my mouth, supposing, that if he perceived me well enough to eat he might not give me the money. He, however, observed the trick, and coming up to me with affected condolence, exclaimed, “Dear master, how your cheeks are swelled!” at the same time pressing his hands upon my face. The egg was boiling hot, and gave me intolerable pain, while the young wit pretended compassionately to stroke my visage. At length, he pressed my jaws together so hard that the egg broke, when the scalding yolk ran down my throat, and over my beard: upon which the artful lad cried out in seeming joy, “God be praised, my dear master, that the dreadful imposthume has discharged itself; we, your pupils, will all return thanks for your happy recovery.” My mouth was contracted by the scald in the manner you behold, and I became so ridiculed for my folly, that I was obliged to shut up my school.

The sultan having heard the other man's story, which was of but little interest, dismissed the three foolish schoolmasters with a present, commanded the vizier to go and recognize the house of the three ladies and their mother, it being his intention to visit them again in disguise and hear their adventures. The vizier hastened to the street, but to his surprise and mortification found all the houses marked in the same manner, for the youngest sister having overheard the sultan's instructions, had done this to prevent a discovery of their residence. The vizier returned to the sultan, and informed him of the trick which had been played. He was much vexed, but the circumstance excited his curiosity in a greater degree. At length the vizier bethought himself of a stratagem, and said, "My lord, let a proclamation be issued for four days successively throughout the city, that whoever presumes after the first watch of the night to have a lamp lighted in his house, shall have his head struck off, his goods confiscated, his house razed to the ground, and his women dishonoured. It is possible, as these ladies did not regard your proclamation at the nuptials of the princess, they may disobey this, and by that means we may discover their residence."

The sultan approved the contrivance of the vizier, caused the proclamation to be made, and waited impatiently for the fourth night, when he and his minister having disguised themselves as before, proceeded to the street in which the ladies lived. A light appeared only in one house, which it being now tolerably certain was that they were in quest of, they knocked at the door.

Immediately on their knocking the youngest sister called out, "Who is at the door?" and they replied, "We are dervishes, and entreat to be your guests." She exclaimed, "What can you want at such a late hour, and where did you lodge last night?" They answered, "Our quarters are at a certain serai, but we have lost our way, and are fearful of being apprehended by the officers of police. Let your kindness then induce you to open the door, and afford us shelter for the remainder of the night: it will be a meritorious act in the eye of heaven." The mother overhearing what was said, ordered the door to be opened.

When they were admitted, the old lady and her daughters rose up, received them respectfully, and having seated them, placed refreshments before them, of which they partook, and were delighted with their treatment. At length the sultan said, “Daughters, you cannot but know of the royal proclamation; how comes it that you alone of all the inhabitants of the city have disobeyed it by having lights in your house after the first watch of the night?” Upon this the youngest sister replied, “Good dervish, even the sultan should not be obeyed but in his reasonable commands, and as this proclamation against lighting our lamps is tyrannical, it ought not to be complied with, consistently with the law of scripture; for the Koraun says, ‘Obedience to a creature in a criminal matter, is a sin against the Creator.’ The sultan (may God pardon him!) acts against scripture, and obeys the dictates of Satan. We three sisters, with our good mother, make it a rule to spin every night a certain quantity of cotton, which in the morning we dispose of, and of the price of our labour we lay out a part in provisions, and the remainder in a new supply of materials for working to procure us a subsistence.”

The sultan now whispered to his vizier, saying, “This damsel astonishes me by her answers; endeavour to think of some question that may perplex her.” “My lord,” replied the vizier, “we are here in the characters of strangers and dervishes as their guests: how then can we presume to disturb them by improper questions?” The sultan still insisted upon his addressing them: upon which, the vizier said to the ladies, “Obedience to the sultan’s orders is incumbent upon all subjects.” “It is true he is our sovereign,” exclaimed the youngest sister, “but how can he know whether we are starving or in affluence?” “Suppose,” replied the vizier, “he should send for you to the presence, and question you concerning your disobedience to his commands, what could you advance in excuse for yourselves?” “I would say to the sultan,” rejoined she, “‘Your majesty has acted in contradiction to the divine law.’”

The vizier upon this turned towards the sultan, and said in a whisper, “Let us leave off disputing further with this lady on points of law or conscience, and inquire if she understands the fine arts.” The sultan put the question; upon which she replied, “I am perfect in all:” and he then requested her to play and sing. She retired immediately, but soon returning with a lute, sat down, tuned it, and played in a plaintive strain, which she accompanied with the following verses:

“It is praiseworthy in subjects to obey their sovereigns, but his reign will continue long who gains their affections by kindness. Be liberal in thy manners, and he who is dependent upon thee will pray for thy life, for the free man alone can feel gratitude. To him who confers gifts man will ever resort, for bounty is fascinating. Sadden not with denial the countenance of the man of genius, for the liberal mind is disgusted at stinginess and haughty demeanour. Not a tenth part of mankind understand what is right, for human nature is ignorant, rebellious, and ungrateful.”

When the sultan had heard these verses, he remained for some time immersed in thought; then whispering his vizier, said, “This quotation was certainly meant in allusion to ourselves, and I am convinced they must know that I am their sultan, and thou vizier, for the whole tenor of their conversation shews their knowledge of us.” He then addressed the lady, saying, “Your music, your performance, your voice, and the subject of your stanzas have delighted me beyond expression.” Upon this she sang the following verse:

“Men endeavour to attain station and riches during an age of toil and oppression, while, alas! their accounts to heaven and their graves are decreed from their very birth.”

The sultan, from the purport of these last verses, was more assured than ever that she knew his quality. She did not leave off singing and playing till day-light, when she retired, and brought in a breakfast, of which the sultan and the vizier partook; after which she said, “I hope you will return to us this night at the conclusion of the first watch, and be our guests.” The sultan promised, and departed in admiration at the beauty of the sisters, their accomplishments, and graceful manners; saying to the vizier, “My soul is delighted with the charms of these elegant women.”

The following evening the sultan and vizier, disguised as usual, repaired to the house of the sisters, taking with them some purses of deenars, and were received with the same respectful welcome. Being seated, supper was set before them, and after it basins and ewers to wash their hands. Coffee was then served up, and conversation on various subjects amused them till the prayer time of the first watch; they then arose, performed their ablutions, and prayed. When, their devotions were ended, the sultan presented a purse of a thousand deenars to the youngest sister, and said, “Expend this upon your necessary occasions.” She took the purse with a profound obeisance, kissed his hands, and was convinced, as she had before suspected, that he must be the sultan; at the same time hinting privately to her mother and sisters the quality of their guests, and prostrating herself before him.

The other ladies upon this arose, and followed the example of their sister; when the sultan said aside to his vizier, “They certainly know us:” and then turning to the ladies, addressed them saying, “We are merely dervishes, and you pay us a respect only due to sovereigns; I beseech you refrain.” The youngest sister again fell at his feet, and repeated the following verse:

“May prosperous fortune daily accompany thee in spite of the malice of the envious! May thy days be bright and those of thy enemies gloomy!”

“I am convinced thou art the sultan, and thy companion thy vizier.” The sultan replied, “What reason have you for such a supposition?” She answered, “From your dignified demeanour and liberal conduct, for the signs of royalty cannot be concealed even in the habit of a recluse.”

The sultan replied, “You have indeed judged truly, but inform me how happens it, that you have with you no male protectors?” She answered, “My lord the sultan, our history is so wonderful, that were it written on a tablet of adamant it might serve as an example in future ages to such as would be advised.” The sultan requested her to relate it, which she did in the following manner.

Story of the Sisters and the Sultana their Mother.

We are not, my lord the sultan, natives of this city, but of Eerauk, of which country our father was sovereign, and our mother his sultana the most beautiful woman of her time, insomuch that her fame was celebrated throughout distant regions. It chanced that in our infancy our father the sultan marched upon a hunting excursion throughout his dominions, for some months, leaving his vizier to conduct affairs at the capital. Not long after the departure of the sultan, our mother, taking the air on the roof of the palace, which adjoined that of the vizier, who was then sitting upon his terrace, her image was reflected in a mirror which he held in his hand. He was fascinated with her beauty, and resolved, if possible, to seduce her to infidelity and compliance with his wishes.

The day following he sent the female superintendant of his haram with a package, containing a most superb dress, and many inestimable jewels, to the sultana, requesting her acceptance of them, and that she would allow him to see her either at the palace or at his own house. My mother, when the old woman was admitted into her apartments, received her with kindness, supposing that she must be intrusted with some confidential message from the vizier respecting the affairs of her husband, or with letters from him.

The old woman having paid her obeisance, opened the bundle, and displayed the rich dress and dazzling jewels; when my mother, admiring them much, inquired the value, and what merchant had brought them to dispose of. The wretched old woman, supposing that the virtue of the sultana would not be proof against such a valuable present, impudently disclosed the passion of the vizier: upon which my mother, indignant with rage at this insult offered to her virtue and dignity, drew a sabre, which was near, and exerting all her strength, struck off the head of the procuress, which, with the body, she commanded her attendants to cast into the common sewer of the palace.

The vizier finding his messenger did not return, the next day despatched another, to signify that he had sent a present to the sultana, but had not heard whether it had been delivered. My mother commanded the infamous wretch to be strangled, and the corpse to be thrown into the same place as that of the old woman, but she did not make public the vizier's baseness, hoping that he would reform. He, however, continued every day to send a female domestic, and my mother to treat her in the same way as the others till the sultan's return; but my mother, not wishing to destroy the vizier, and still trusting that he would repent of his conduct, for in other respects he was a faithful and prudent minister, kept his treachery a secret from my father.

Some years after this, the sultan my father resolved on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and having, as before, left the vizier in charge of his kingdom, departed. When he had been gone ten days, the vizier, still rapturously in love, and yet presumtuously hoping to attain his wishes, sent a female domestic, who, being admitted into the apartment of the sultana, said, "For Heaven's sake have compassion on my master, for his heart is devoted to love, his senses are disturbed, and his body is wasted away. Pity his condition, revive his heart, and restore his health by the smiles of condescension."

When my mother heard this insolent message, she in a rage commanded her attendants to seize the unfortunate bearer, and having strangled her, to leave the carcase for public view in the outer court of the palace, but without divulging the cause of her displeasure. Her orders were obeyed. When the officers of state and others saw the body they informed the vizier, who, resolving to be revenged, desired them for the present to be silent, and on the sultan's return he would make known on what account the sultana had put to death his domestic, of which they could bear testimony.

When the time of the sultan's return from Mecca approached, and the treacherous vizier judged he was on his march, he wrote and despatched to him the following letter:

"After prayers for thy health, be it known, that since thy absence the sultana has sent to me five times, requesting improper compliances, to which I would not consent, and returned for answer, that however she might wish to abuse my sovereign, I could not do it, for I was left by him guardian of his honour and his kingdom: to say more would be superfluous."

The messenger reached the sultan's camp when distant eight days' journey from the city, and delivered the letter. On reading it the countenance of my father became pale, his eyes rolled with horror, he instantly ordered his tents to be struck, and moved by forced marches till he arrived within two days' journey of his capital. He then commanded a halting day, and despatched two confidential attendants with orders to conduct our innocent and unfortunate mother, with us three sisters, a day's distance from the city, and then to put us to death. They accordingly dragged us from the haram, and carried us into the country; but on arriving at the spot intended for our execution, their hearts were moved with compassion, for our mother had conferred many obligations on these men and their families. They said one to another, "By heavens, we cannot murder them!" and informed us of what the vizier had written to our father: upon which the sultana exclaimed, "God knows that he hath most falsely accused me;" and she then related to them all that she had done, with the strictest fidelity.

The men were moved even to tears at her misfortunes, and said, "We are convinced that thou hast spoken truly." They then caught some fawns of the antelope, killed them, and having required an under garment from each of us, dipped it in the blood, after which they broiled the flesh, with which we satisfied our hunger. Our preservers now bade us farewell, saying, "We intrust you to the protection of the Almighty, who never forsaketh those who are committed to his care;" and then departed from us. We wandered for ten days in the desert, living on such fruits as we could find, without beholding any signs of population, when, at length, fortunately we reached a verdant spot, abounding in various sorts of excellent vegetables and fruits. Here also was a cave, in which we resolved to shelter ourselves till a caravan might pass by. On the fourth day of our arrival one encamped near our asylum. We did not discover ourselves, but when the caravan marched, speedily followed its track at some distance, and after many days of painful exertion reached this city, where, having taken up our lodging in a serai, we returned thanks to the almighty assister of the distressed innocent for our miraculous escape from death and the perils of the desert.

We must now quit for awhile the unfortunate sultana and her daughters, to learn the adventures of the sultan her husband. As he drew near his capital, the treacherous vizier, attended by the officers of government and the principal inhabitants of the city, came out to meet him; and both high and low congratulated his safe return from the sacred pilgrimage.

The sultan, as soon as he had alighted at his palace, retired with the vizier alone, and commanded him to relate the particulars of the atrocious conduct of his wife; upon which he said, "My lord, the sultana in your absence despatched to me a slave, desiring me to visit her, but I would not, and I put the slave to death that the secret might be hidden; hoping she might repent of her weakness, but she did not, and repeated her wicked invitation five times. On the fifth I was alarmed for your honour, and acquainted you of her atrocious behaviour."

The sultan, on hearing the relation of the vizier, held down his head for some time in profound thought, then lifting it up, commanded the two attendants whom he had despatched with orders to put his wife and children to death to be brought before him. On their appearance, he said, "What have you done in execution of the charge I gave you?" they replied, "We have performed that which you commanded to be done, and as a testimony of our fidelity, behold these garments dyed with the blood of the offenders!" The sultan took the garments; but the recollection of his beauteous consort, her former affectionate endearments, of the happiness he had enjoyed with her, and of the innocence of his guiltless children, so affected his mind, that he wept bitterly and fainted away. On his recovery he turned to the vizier, and said, "Is it possible thou canst have spoken the truth?" He replied, "I have."

The sultan, after a long pause, again said to the two attendants, "Have you really put to death my innocent children with their guilty mother?" They remained silent. The sultan exclaimed, "Why answer ye not, and wherefore are ye silent?" They replied, "My lord, the honest man cannot support a lie, for lying is the distinction of traitors." When the vizier heard these words his colour changed, his whole frame was disordered, and a trembling seized him, which the sultan perceiving, he said to the attendants, "What mean you by remarking that lying is the distinction of traitors? Is it possible that ye have not put them to death? Declare the truth instantly, or by the

God who hath appointed me guardian of his people, I will have you executed with the most excruciating torments."

The two men now fell at the feet of the sultan, and said, "Dread sovereign, we conveyed, as thou commandest us, the unfortunate sultana and thy daughters to the middle of the desert, when we informed them of the accusation of the vizier and thy orders concerning them. The sultana, after listening to us with fortitude, exclaimed, 'There is no refuge or asylum but with the Almighty; from God we came, and to God we must return; but if you put us to death, you will do it wrongfully, for the treacherous vizier hath accused me falsely, and he alone is guilty.' She then informed us of his having endeavoured to corrupt her by rich presents, and that she had put his messengers to death."

The sultan at these words exclaimed in agony, "Have ye slain them, or do they yet live?" "My lord," replied the attendants, "We were so convinced of the innocence of the sultana, that we could not put her to death. We caught some fawn antelopes, killed them, and having dipped these garments belonging to the abused mother and your children in their blood, dressed the flesh, and gave it to our unfortunate mistress and thy daughters, after which we said to them, 'We leave you in charge of a gracious God who never deserts his trust; your innocence will protect you.' We then left them in the midst of the desert, and returned to the city."

The sultan turned in fury towards the vizier, and exclaimed, "Wretched traitor! and is it thus thou hast estranged from me my beloved wife and innocent children?" The self-convicted minister uttered not a word, but trembled like one afflicted with the palsy. The sultan commanded instantly an enormous pile of wood to be kindled, and the vizier, being bound hand and foot, was forced into an engine, and cast from it into the fire, which rapidly consumed him to ashes. His house was then razed to the ground, his effects left to the plunder of the populace, and the women of his haram and his children sold for slaves.

We now return to the three princesses and their mother. When the sultan had heard their adventures, he sympathized with their misfortunes, and was astonished at the fortitude with which they had borne their afflictions, saying to his vizier, "How sad has been their lot! but blessed be Allah, who, as he separateth friends, can, when he pleaseth, give them a joyful meeting.” He then caused the sultana and the princesses to be conveyed to his palace, appointed them proper attendants and apartments suitable to their rank, and despatched couriers to inform the sultan their father of their safety. The messengers travelled with the greatest expedition, and on their arrival at the capital, being introduced, presented their despatches. The sultan opened them, and began to read; but when he perceived the contents, was so overcome with joy, that, uttering a loud exclamation of rapture, he fell to the ground and fainted away. His attendants were alarmed, lifted him up, and took means for his recovery. When he was revived, he informed them of his sultana and daughters being still alive, and ordered a vessel to be prepared to convey them home.

The ship was soon ready, and being laden with every necessary for the accommodation of his family, also rich presents for the friendly sultan who had afforded them protection, sailed with a favourable wind, and speedily arrived at the desired haven.

The commander of the vessel was welcomely received by the sultan, who issued orders for his entertainment and that of his whole crew at the royal cost, and at the expiration of three days the sultana and her daughters, being anxious to return home after so long an absence, and that so unfortunate, took leave and embarked. The sultan made them valuable presents, and the wind being fair they set sail. For three days the weather was propitious, but on the evening of the last a contrary gale arose, when they cast anchor, and lowered their topmasts. At length the storm increased to such violence that the anchor parted, the masts fell overboard, and the crew gave themselves over for lost. The vessel was driven about at the mercy of the tempest till midnight, all on board weeping and wailing, when at length she struck upon the rocks, and went to pieces. Such of the crew whose deaths were decreed perished, and those whose longer life was predestined escaped to shore, some on planks, some on chests, and some on the broken timbers of the ship, but all separated from each other.

The sultana mother was tossed about till daylight on a plank, when she was perceived by the commander of the vessel, who with three of his crew had taken to the ship’s boat. He took her in, and after three days' rowing they reached a mountainous coast, on which they landed, and advanced into the country. They had not proceeded far when they perceived a great dust, which clearing up, displayed an approaching army. To their joyful surprise it proved to be that of the sultan, who, after the departure of the vessel, dreading lest an accident might happen, had marched in hopes of reaching the city where they were before his wife and daughters should sail, in order to conduct them home by land. It is impossible to describe the meeting of the sultan and his consort, but their joy was clouded by the absence of their daughters, and the dreadful uncertainty of their fate. When the first raptures of meeting were over, they wept together, and exclaimed, "We are from God, and to God we must return." After forty days' march they arrived at their capital, but continually regretting the princesses, saying, "Alas, alas! most probably they have been drowned, but even should they have escaped to shore, perhaps they may have been separated; and ah! what calamities may have befallen them!" Constantly did they bemoan together in this manner, immersed in grief, and taking no pleasure in the enjoyments of life.

The youngest princess, after struggling with the waves till almost exhausted, was fortunately cast ashore on a pleasant coast, where she found some excellent fruits and clear fresh water. Being revived, she reposed herself awhile, and then walked from the beach into the country; but she had not proceeded far, when a young man on horseback with some dogs following him met her, and upon hearing that she had just escaped shipwreck, mounted her before him, and having conveyed her to his house, committed her to the care of his mother. She received her with compassionate kindness, and during a whole month assiduously attended her, till by degrees she recovered her health and beauty.

The young man was legal heir to the kingdom, but his succession had been wrested from him by a usurper, who, however, dying soon after the arrival of the princess, he was reinstated in his rights and placed on the throne, when he offered her his hand; but she said, "How can I think of marriage while I know not the condition of my unfortunate family, or enjoy repose while my mother and sisters are perhaps suffering misery? When I have intelligence of their welfare I will be grateful to my deliverer."

The young sultan was so much in love with the princess, that the most distant hope gave him comfort, and he endeavoured to wait patiently her pleasure; but the nobles of the country were anxious to see him wedded, he being the last of his race, and importuned him to marry. He promised to conform to their wishes, but much time elapsing, they became importunate and discontented, when his mother, dreading a rebellion, earnestly entreated the princess to consent to a union as the only measure that could prevent disturbances. The princess, who really loved her preserver, was unwilling to endanger the safety of one to whom she owed such important obligations, and at length consented, when the marriage was celebrated with the greatest pomp and rejoicings. At the expiration of three years the sultana was delivered of two sons, whose birth added to the felicity of the union.

The second princess, after being long driven about by the waves upon a plank, was at length cast on shore near a large city, which she entered, and was fortunately compassionated by a venerable matron, who invited her to her house, and adopted her as a daughter in the room of her own, who had lately died. Here she soon recovered her health and beauty. It chanced that the sultan of this city, who was much beloved for his gentle government and liberality, was taken ill, and not withstanding the skill of the most celebrated physicians, daily became worse, insomuch that his life was despaired of, to the general grief of the people. The princess having heard her venerable protectress lament the danger of the sultan, said, "My dear mother, I will prepare a dish of pottage, which, if you will carry to the sultan, and he can be prevailed upon to eat it, will, by the blessing of Allah, recover him from his disorder." "I fear," replied the matron, "I shall hardly be allowed admittance to the palace, much less to present him the pottage." "You can but try," answered the princess; "and even the attempt at a good action is acceptable to God." "Well," rejoined the old woman, "prepare your pottage, my dear daughter, and I will endeavour to get admission."

The princess prepared the dish of pottage, composed of various minerals, herbs, and perfumes, and when it was ready the old woman took it to the sultan's palace. The guards and eunuchs inquired what she had brought, when she said, “A dish of pottage, which I request you will present to the sultan, and beg him to eat as much of it as he can, for by God’s help it will restore him to health.” The eunuchs introduced her into the chamber of their sick sovereign, when the old woman taking off the cover of the dish, such a grateful perfume exhaled from the contents as revived his spirits. Being informed what the venerable matron had brought, he thanked her and tasted the pottage, which was so agreeably flavoured that he ate part of it with an appetite to which he had been long a stranger. He then presented the bearer with a purse of deenars, when she returned home, informed the princess of her welcome reception, and of the present she had received.

The sultan had no sooner eaten part of the pottage than he felt an inclination to repose, and sunk into a refreshing sleep, which lasted for some hours. On his awakening he found himself wonderfully revived, and having a desire afresh to eat, finished the whole. He now wished for more, and inquired after the old woman, but none of his attendants could inform him where she lived. However, in the evening she brought another mess, which the princess had prepared, and the sultan ate it with renewed appetite; after which, though before quite helpless, he was now able to sit up and even to walk. He inquired of the old woman if it was her own preparation; to which she replied, “No, my lord, but my daughter dressed it, and entreated me to bring it.” The sultan exclaimed, “She cannot be thy own daughter, as her skill shews her of much higher quality.” He then made her a present, and requested that she would bring him every morning a fresh supply, to which she said, “To hear is to obey;” and retired.

The princess sent regularly for seven mornings successively a dish of pottage, and the sultan as regularly presented her adopted mother with a purse of deenars; for such was the rapidity of his recovery, that at the expiration of the sixth day he was perfectly well, and on the seventh he mounted his horse and repaired to his country palace to make the absolution of health and enjoy the fresh air. During her visits he had questioned the old lady concerning her adopted daughter, and she so described her beauty, virtues, and accomplishments, that his heart was smitten, and he became anxious to see her.

The sultan, in order to gratify his curiosity, disguised himself one day in the habit of a dervish, and repairing to the house of the old woman, knocked at the door. On being questioned what he wanted, he replied, “I am a wandering dervish, a stranger in this city, and distressed with hunger.” The old woman being fearful of admitting an unknown person, would have sent him away, but the princess exclaimed, “Hospitality to strangers is incumbent upon us, especially to the religious poor.” Upon this he was admitted, and the princess having seated him respectfully, set victuals before him, of which he ate till he was satisfied, and having washed, rose up, thanked the old woman and her supposed daughter for their bounty, and retired, but his sight was fascinated with her beauty, and his heart devoted to her love.

The sultan on his return to the palace sent for the old woman, and on her arrival presented her with a rich dress and valuable jewels, desiring that she would give them to her daughter, and prevail upon her to put them on. The old lady promised obedience, and as she walked homewards, said to herself, “If this adopted daughter of mine is wise, she will comply with the sultan’s desires, and put on the dress, but if she does not, I will expel her from my house.” When she reached home, she displayed the superb habit and the dazzling ornaments; but the princess at first refused to accept them, till at length, moved by the entreaties of her protectress, whom she could not disoblige, she put them on, and the old lady was delighted with her appearance.

The sultan, who had slipped on a female dress, having covered himself with a close veil, followed the old woman to her house, and listened at the door to know if the daughter would accept his present. When he found that she had put on the dress, he was overcome with rapture, and hastening back to his palace, sent again for the old lady, to whom he signified his wish to marry her daughter. When the princess was informed of the offer she consented, and the sultan, attended by a splendid cavalcade, conducted her that evening to his palace, where the cauzee united them in marriage. A general feast was made for all the inhabitants of the city for seven days successively, and the sultan and the princess enjoyed the height of felicity. In the course of five years the Almighty blessed them with a son and two daughters.

The eldest princess on the wreck of the ship having clung to a piece of timber, was after much distress floated on shore, where she found a man's habit, and thinking it a safe disguise for the protection of her honour, she dressed herself in it, and proceeded to a city which appeared near the coast. On her entrance she was accosted by a maker of cotton wallets for travelling, who observing that she was a stranger, and supposing her a man, asked if she would live with him, as he wanted an assistant. Being glad to secure any asylum, she accepted his offer of maintenance, and daily wages of half a dirhem. He conducted her to his house, and treated her with kindness. The next day she entered upon her business, and so neat was the work she executed, that in a short time her master's shop was more frequented than any other.

It happened that the shop was situated near the palace of the sultan. One morning the princess his daughter looking through the lattice of a balcony beheld the seeming young man at work, with the sleeves of his vest drawn up to his shoulder: his arms were white and polished as silver, and his countenance brilliant as the sun unobscured by clouds. The daughter of the sultan was captivated in the snare of love.

The sultan's daughter continued gazing at the supposed young man till he withdrew from work, when she retired to her apartment; but so much was she fascinated by his charms, that she became restless, and at length indisposed. Her nurse who attended her felt her pulse, and asked her several questions, but could find no symptoms of bodily illness upon her. She said, "My dear daughter, I am convinced that nothing has afflicted thee but desire of some youth with whom thou art in love." The princess exclaimed, "My dear mother, as thou hast discovered my secret, thou wilt, I trust, not only keep it sacred, but bring to me the man I love." The nurse replied, "No one can keep a secret closer than myself, so that you may safely confide it to my care." The princess then said, "Mother, my heart is captivated by the young man who works in the shop opposite my windows, and if I cannot meet him I shall die of grief."

The nurse replied, "My dear mistress, he is the most beautiful youth of the age, and the women of the whole city are distracted with his charms; yet he is so bashful as to answer no advances, and shrinks from notice like a school-boy, but I will endeavour to overcome his shyness, and procure you a meeting.” Having said thus, she went immediately to the wallet-maker’s, and giving him a piece of gold, desired he would let his assistant accompany her home with two of his best wallets. The man was pleased with her generosity, and selecting his choicest manufacture, commanded his journeyman to accompany the nurse.

The old woman led the disguised princess through by-paths to a private passage of the palace, and introduced her into the apartments of the daughter of the sultan, who received her supposed beloved with emotions of joy too violent to be concealed. Pretending to admire the goods, she asked some questions, and giving him twenty pieces of gold, desired him to return with more goods on the following evening, to which the seeming journeyman replied, “To hear is to obey.”

The disguised princess on her return home delivered the twenty pieces of gold to her employer, who was alarmed, and inquired from whence they came: upon which she informed him of her adventure, when the wallet-maker was in greater terror than before, and said to himself, “If this intrigue goes on, the sultan will discover it, I shall be put to death, and my family ruined on account of this young man and his follies.” He then besought him not to repeat his visit, but he answered, “I cannot forbear, though I dread my death may be the consequence.” In short, the disguised princess went every evening with the old nurse to the apartments of the sultan’s daughter, till at length the sultan one night suddenly entered, and perceiving, he supposed, a man with the princess, commanded him to be seized and bound hand and foot.

The sultan then sent for an executioner, resolved to put the culprit to death. The executioner on his arrival seized the disguised princess; but what was the surprise of all present, when, on taking off the turban and vest, they discovered her sex. The sultan commanded her to be conducted to his haram, and inquired her story, when having no resource but the truth, she related her adventures.

When the princess had informed the sultan of the treachery of the vizier, the consequent conduct of her father, the distress of her mother, her sisters and herself, their being relieved, and her escape from shipwreck, with what had happened since, he was filled with wonder and compassion, and ordered his daughter to accommodate her in the haram. The love of the latter was now changed to sincere friendship, and under her care and attentions the unfortunate princess in a few months recovered her former beauty. It chanced that the sultan visiting his daughter was fascinated with the charms of the princess, but unwilling to infringe the rules of hospitality concealed his love, till at length he became dangerously ill, when the daughter suspecting the matter, prevailed upon him to reveal the cause of his complaint. She then informed her friend, and entreated her to accept her father in marriage; but the princess said, at the same time weeping bitterly, "Misfortune hath separated me from my family; I know not whether my sisters, my father and my mother, are living, or, if so, what is their condition. How can I be happy or merry, while they are perhaps involved in misery?"

The daughter of the sultan did not refrain from comforting the unfortunate princess, at the same time representing the hopeless condition of her father, till at length she consented to the marriage. This joyful intelligence speedily revived the love-lorn sultan, and the nuptials were celebrated with the utmost joy and magnificence.

The aged sultan and sultana continued to lament the loss of their daughters for some years, when at length the former resolved to travel in search of them, and having left the government in charge of his wife, departed, attended only by his vizier. They both assumed the habit of dervishes, and after a month's uninterrupted travelling reached a large city extending along the sea coast, close upon which the sultan of it had erected a magnificent pleasure house, where the pretended dervishes beheld him sitting in one of the pavilions with his two sons, one six and the other seven years old. They approached, made their obeisance, and uttered a long invocation, agreeably to the usage of the religious, for his prosperity. The sultan returned their compliment, desired them to be seated, and having conversed with them till evening, dismissed them with a present, when they repaired to a caravanserai, and hired an apartment. On the following day, after amusing themselves with viewing the city, they again repaired to the beach, and saw the sultan sitting with his children, as before. While they were admiring the beauty of the structure, the younger prince, impelled by an unaccountable impulse, came up to them, gazed eagerly at them, and when they retired followed them to their lodging, which they did not perceive till he had entered with them and sat down. The old sultan was astonished at the child's behaviour, took him in his arms, kissed and fondled him, after which he desired him to return to his parents, but the boy insisted upon staying, and remained four days, during which the pretended dervishes did not stir from their caravanserai.

The sultan missing his son, supposed that he had gone to his mother, and she imagined that he was still with his father; but on the latter entering the haram the loss was discovered. Messengers were despatched every way, but no tidings of the boy could be obtained. The miserable parents now supposed that he had fallen into the sea and was drowned. Nets were dragged, and divers employed for three days, but in vain. On the fifth day orders were issued to search every house in the city, when the infant prince was at length discovered at the caravanserai in the apartment of the pretended dervishes, who were ignominiously dragged before the sultan.

The sultan was transported with joy at the recovery of his son, but supposing the dervishes had meant to steal him away, he ordered them instantly to be put to death. The executioners seized them, bound their hands behind them, and were going to strike, when the child with loud outcries ran up, and clinging to the knees of the elder victim could not be forced away. The sultan was astonished, and ordering the execution for the present to be delayed, went and informed the mother of the child of his wonderful behaviour.

The sultana, on hearing it, was no less surprised than the sultan, and felt a curiosity to hear from the dervish himself on what account he had enticed away her son. She said, "It is truly extraordinary that the boy should express such affection for a strange dervish. Send for him to your closet, and order him to relate his adventures, to which I will listen from behind a curtain."

The sultan sent for the supposed dervish, and commanding all his attendants to retire, withdrew with him into his closet, and desired him to be seated; after which he said, "Wicked dervish, what could have induced thee to entice away my son, or to visit my kingdom?" He replied, "Heaven knows, O sultan, I did not entice him. The boy followed me to my lodging, when I said, 'My son, return to thy father,' but he would not; and I remained in continual dread till what was decreed occurred." The sultan was softened, spoke kindly to him, and begged him to relate his adventures, when the pretended dervish wept, and said, "My history is a wonderful one. I had a friend whom I left as my agent and guardian to my family, while I was performing a pilgrimage to Mecca; but had scarcely left my house ten days, when accidently seeing my wife he endeavoured to debauch her, and sent an old woman with a rich present to declare his adulterous love. My wife was enraged, and put the infamous messenger to death. He sent a second, and a third, whom she also killed."

These last words were scarcely spoken, when the sultana bursting from her concealment ran up to the dervish, fell upon his neck, and embraced him: upon which, the sultan her husband was enraged, put his hand to his cimeter, and exclaimed, "What means this shameless behaviour?" The sultana, at once laughing and crying with rapture, informed him that the supposed dervish was her father: upon which the sultan also fell at his feet and welcomed him. He then ordered the other dervish his vizier to be released, commanded royal robes to be brought for his father-in-law, and a suite of apartments in the palace to be prepared for his reception, with an attendance befitting his dignity.

When the old sultan had spent some time with his youngest daughter thus happily recovered, he became anxious to search after the others, and signified his intention of departing; but his son-in-law declared that he would accompany him on the expedition with a number of his nobles, and an army, lest some fatal accident might occur from his being unattended. Preparations were accordingly made for march, the two sultans encamped without the city, and in a few days began their expedition, which proved successful to their wishes. The aged monarch having recovered his children retired to his own kingdom, where he reigned prosperously till the angel of death summoned him to Paradise.

STORY OF THE BANG-EATER AND THE CAUZEE.

In a certain city there was a vagabond fellow much addicted to the use of bang, who got his livelihood by fishing. When he had sold the product of his day’s labour, he laid part of it out in provisions and part in bang, with which (his day’s, work over) he solaced himself till he became intoxicated, and such was his constant practice. One night, having indulged more than ordinary, his senses were unusually stupefied; and in this, condition he had occasion to come down into the square in which was his lodging. It happened to be the fourteenth night of the moon, when she shone uncommonly bright, and shed such a lustre upon the ground, that the bang-eater from the dizziness of his head mistook the bright undulations of her reflection on the pavement for water, and fancied he was upon the brink of the river. He returned to his chamber, and brought down his line, supposing that he should catch his usual prey.

The bang-eater threw out his line, made of strong cord, and baited on several hooks with bits of flesh, into the square, when a dog, allured by the scent, swallowed one of the pieces, and feeling pain from the hook which stuck in his throat, pulled strongly at the cord. The bang-eater, supposing he had caught a monstrous fish, lugged stoutly, but in vain. The dog, agonized by the hook, resisted; at the same time yelping hideously, when the bang-eater, unwilling to quit his prey, yet fearing he should be dragged into the imaginary river, bellowed aloud for help. The watch came up, seized him, and perceiving him intoxicated, carried him bound to the cauzee.

It happened that the cauzee often privately indulged himself with bang. Seeing the intoxicated situation of the fisherman, he pitied his condition, and ordered him to be put into a chamber to sleep off his disorder; at the same time saying to himself, “This is a man after my own heart, and to-morrow evening I will enjoy myself with him.” The fisherman was well taken care of during the day, and at night the cauzee sent for him to his apartment; where, after eating, they took each a powerful dose of bang, which soon operating upon their brains, they began to sing, dance, and commit a thousand extravagancies.

The noise which they made attracted the notice of the sultan, who with his vizier was traversing the city, disguised as merchants. Finding the doors open, they entered, and beheld the cauzee and his companion in the height of their mirth, who welcomed them, and they sat down. At length, after many ridiculous tricks, the fisherman starting up, exclaimed, “I am the sultan!” “And I,” rejoined the cauzee, “am my lord the bashaw!” “Bashaw!” continued the fisherman, “if I choose I can strike off thy head.” “I know it,” returned the cauzee, “but at present I am not worth beheading; give me first a rich government, that I may be worth punishing.” “Thou sayest true,” answered the fisherman; “I must make thee fat before thou wilt be fit for killing.”

The sultan laughed at their extravagancies, and said to his vizier, “I will amuse myself with these vagabonds to-morrow evening:” then rising up, he and his minister departed.

The next evening the cauzee and the fisherman indulged themselves as before, and while they were making merry, the sultan and his vizier entered, but in different disguises from those they had worn on the former night. They brought with them a strong confection of opium, which they presented to their hosts, who, highly delighted, greedily devoured it, and such were the effects that they became madder than ever. At length, the fisherman starting up, exclaimed, “The sultan is deposed, and I am sovereign in his stead.” “Suppose the sultan should hear thee,” replied the prince. “If he opposes me,” cried the fisherman, “I will order my bashaw to strike off his head; but I will now punish thee for thy insolent question.” He then ran up and seized the sultan by the nose, the cauzee at the same time attacking the vizier: it was with difficulty that they made their escape from the house.

The sultan, notwithstanding his tweak by the nose, resolved to divert himself further with the bang-eaters, and the next evening putting on a fresh disguise, repaired to the cauzee’s house with his vizier; where he found the happy companions in high glee. They had taken it into their heads to dance, which they did with such vehemence, and for so long a time, that at length they fell down with fatigue. When they had rested a little, the fisherman perceiving the sultan, said, “Whence comest thou?” “We are strangers,” replied the sultan, “and only reached this city to-night; but on our way through the streets, hearing your mirth, we made bold to enter, that we might participate it with you. Are ye not, however, fearful lest the sultan should hear you on his rounds, and punish you for an infringement of the laws?” “How should the sultan hear us?” answered the fisherman; “he is in his palace, and we in our own house, though, perhaps, much merrier than he, poor fellow, with the cares of state upon his mind, notwithstanding his splendour.”

“How comes it,” rejoined the sovereign, “that you have not visited the sultan? for you are merry fellows, and I think he would encourage you.” “We fear,” replied the fisherman, “his guards would beat us away.” “Never mind them,” said the sultan; “if you choose I will give you a letter of recommendation, which I am sure he will pay attention to, for we were intimate when youths.” “Let us have it,” cried the fisherman. The sultan wrote a note, directed to himself, and departed.

In the morning the cauzee and the fisherman repaired to the palace, and delivered the note to one of the guards, who, on sight of it, placed it on his head, prostrated himself to the ground, and then introduced them to the sultan. Having read the letter, the sultan commanded them to be led into separate apartments, and to be treated respectfully. At noon a handsome collation was served up to each, and at sunset a full service, after which they were presented with coffee. When about two hours of the night had passed, the sultan ordered them into his presence, and on their making their obeisance returned their salutes, and desired them to be seated, saying, “Where is the person who gave you this letter?”

“Mighty sultan,” replied the fisherman, “two men who last night visited our house inquired why we did not repair to your majesty, and partake of your bounty. We replied, that we feared the guards would drive us away; when one of them gave us this note, saying, ‘Fear not; take this recommendation to the sultan, with whom in my youth I was intimate.’ We followed his direction, and have found his words to be true. We inquired whence they came; but they would not tell us more than that they were strangers in this city.” “It is,” continued the sultan, “absolutely necessary that you should bring them to my presence, for it is long since I have beheld my old friends." "Permit us then to return home, where they may possibly visit us again," said the fisherman, "and we will oblige them to come with us." "How can you do that," replied the sultan, "when the other evening you could not prevent your guest escaping, though you had him by the nose?"

The poor fisherman, and his companion the cauzee, were now confounded at the discovery that it was the sultan himself who had witnessed their intoxication and ridiculous transports. They trembled, turned pale, and fell prostrate to the ground, crying, "Pardon, pardon, gracious sovereign, for the offences we have committed, and the insult which in our madness we offered to the sacred person of your majesty."

The sultan, after laughing heartily at their distress, replied, "Your pardon is granted, for the insult was involuntary, though deserved, as I was an impertinent intruder on your privacy; make yourselves easy, and sit down; but you must each of you relate to me your adventures, or some story that you have heard." The cauzee and the fisherman, having recovered from their confusion, obeyed the commands of the sultan, and being seated, the latter related the following tale.

Story of the Bang-eater and His Wife.

There lived formerly, near Bagdad, a half-witted fellow, who was much addicted to the use of bang. Being reduced to poverty, he was obliged to sell his stock. One day he went to the market to dispose of a cow; but the animal being in bad order, no one would bid for it, and after waiting till he was weary he returned homewards. On the way he stopped to repose himself under a tree, and tied the cow to one of the branches while he ate some bread, and drank of an infusion of his beloved bang, which he always carried with him. In a short time it began to operate, so as to bereave him of the little sense he possessed, and his head was filled with ridiculous reveries. While he was musing, a magpie beginning to chatter from her nest in the tree, he fancied it was a human voice, and that some woman had asked to purchase his cow: upon which he said, "Reverend mother of Solomon, dost thou wish to buy my cow?" The bird croaked again. "Well," replied he, "what wilt thou give if I will sell her a bargain." The bird repeated her croak. "Never mind," said the foolish fellow, "for though thou hast forgotten to bring thy purse, yet, as I dare say thou art an honest woman, and hast bidden me ten deenars, I will trust thee with the cow, and call on Friday for the money." The bird renewed her croaking, which he fancied to be thanks for his confidence; so leaving the cow tied to the branch of the tree, he returned home exulting in the good bargain he had made for the animal.

When he entered the house, his wife inquired what he had gotten for the cow; to which he replied, that he had sold her to an honest woman named Am Solomon, who had promised to pay him on the next Friday ten pieces of gold. The wife was contented, and when Friday arrived, her idiot of a husband having, as usual, taken a dose of bang, repaired to the tree, and hearing the bird chattering, as before, said, "Well, my good mother, hast thou brought the gold?" The bird croaked. Supposing the imaginary woman refused to pay him, he became angry, and threw up his spade, which frightening the bird, it flew from the nest, and alighted on a heap of soil at some distance. He fancied that Am Solomon had desired him to take his money from the heap, into which he dug with his spade, and found a brazen vessel full of gold coin. This discovery convinced him he was right, and being, notwithstanding his weakness, naturally honest, he only took ten pieces; then replacing the soil, said, “May Allah requite thee for thy punctuality, good mother!” and returned to his wife, to whom he gave the money, informing her at the same time of the great treasure his friend Am Solomon possessed, and where it was concealed. The wife waited till night, when she went and brought away the pot of gold; which her husband observing, said, “It is dishonest to rob one who has paid us so punctually, and if thou dost not return it to its place, I will inform the (walee) officer of police.”

The wife laughed at his folly; but fearing the ill consequences of his executing his threat, she planned a stratagem to prevent them. Going to the market, she purchased some broiled meat and fish ready dressed, which she brought privately home, and concealed in the house. At night, the husband having regaled himself with his beloved bang, retired to sleep off his intoxication; but about midnight she strewed the provisions she had brought at the door, and awakening her partner, cried out, in pretended astonishment, “Dear husband, a most wonderful phenomenon has occurred; there has been a violent storm while you slept, and, strange to tell, it has rained pieces of broiled meat and fish, which now lie at the door!” The husband, still in a state of stupefaction from the bang, got up, went to the door, and seeing the provisions, was persuaded of the truth of his wife’s story. The fish and flesh were gathered up, and he partook with much glee of the miraculous treat; but he still threatened to inform the walee of her having stolen the treasure of the good old woman Am Solomon.

In the morning the foolish bang-eater actually repaired to the walee, and informed him that his wife had stolen a pot of gold, which she had still in her possession. The walee upon this apprehended the woman, who denied the accusation, when she was threatened with death. She then said, “My lord, the power is in your hands; but I am an injured woman, as you will find by questioning my unfortunate husband; who, alas! is deranged in his intellects. Ask him when I committed the theft.” The walee did so; to which he replied, “It was on the evening of that night on which it rained broiled flesh and fish ready dressed.” “Wretch!” exclaimed the walee, “dost thou dare to utter falsehoods before me? Who ever saw it rain any thing but water?” “As I hope for life, my lord,” replied the bang-eater, “I speak the truth; for my wife and myself ate of the fish and flesh which fell from the clouds.” The woman being appealed to, denied the assertion of her husband.

The walee being now convinced that the man was crazy, released his wife, and sent the husband to the madhouse; where he remained some days, till the wife, pitying his condition, contrived to get him released by the following stratagem. She visited her husband, and desired him when any one inquired of him if he had seen it rain flesh and fish, to answer, “No: who ever saw it rain any thing but water?” She then informed the keeper that he was come to his senses, and desired him to put the question. On his answering properly he was released.

The fisherman had not long been in the service of the sultan, when walking one day near the house of a principal merchant, his daughter chanced to look through a window, and the buffoon was so struck with her beauty that he became devoted to love. Daily did he repair to the same spot for weeks together in hopes of once seeing her, but in vain; for she did not again appear at the window. At length, his passion had such an effect upon him that he fell sick, kept his bed, and began to rave, exclaiming, “Ah! what charming eyes, what a beautiful complexion, what a graceful stature has my beloved!” In this situation he was attended by an old woman, who, compassionating his case, desired him to reveal the cause of his uneasiness.

“My dear mother,” replied he, “I thank thee for thy kindness; but unless thou canst assist me I must soon die.” He then related what he had seen, and described to her the house of the merchant. When she said, “Son, be of good cheer; for no one could so readily have assisted thee in this dilemma as myself. Have patience, and I will speedily return with intelligence of thy beloved.” Having spoken thus, she departed, and upon reaching her own house disguised herself as a devotee. Throwing over her shoulders a coarse woollen gown, holding in one hand a long string of beads, in the other a walking staff, she proceeded to the merchant’s house, at the gate of which she cried, “God is God, there is no God but God; may his holy name be praised, and may God be with you," in a most devout tone.

The merchant's daughter, on hearing this devout ejaculation, came to the door, saluted the old woman with great respect, and said, "Dear mother, pray for me:" when she exclaimed, "May Allah protect thee, my beloved child, from all injury!" The young lady then introduced her into the house, seated her in the most honourable place, and with her mother sat down by her. They conversed on religious subjects till noon, when the old woman called for water, performed her ablutions, and recited prayers of an unusual length: upon which the mother and daughter remarked to one another that the aged matron must certainly be a most religious character. When prayers were ended, they set a collation before her; but she declined partaking, saying, "I am to day observing a fast." This increased their respect and admiration of her sanctity, so that they requested her to remain with them till sunset, and break her fast with them, to which she consented. At sunset she prayed again, after which she ate a little, and then uttered many pious exhortations. In short, the mother and daughter were so pleased with her, that they invited her to stay all night. In the morning, she rose early, made her ablutions, prayed for a considerable time, and concluded with a blessing upon her entertainers in learned words, which they could not understand. When she rose up, they supported her by the arms respectfully, and entreated her longer stay; but she declined it, and having taken leave, departed; promising, however, with the permission of Allah, to make them soon another visit.

On the second day following, the old woman repaired again to the merchant's house, and was joyfully received by the mother and daughter; who, kissing her hands and feet, welcomed her return. She behaved the same as before, and inspired them with stronger veneration for her sandity. Her visits now grew frequent, and she was always a welcome guest in the merchant's family. At length, one evening she entered, and said, "I have an only daughter, whose espousals are now celebrating, and this night the bride goes in state to her husband's house. My desire is that my good young lady should attend the ceremony, and receive the benefit of my prayers." The mother replied, "I am unwilling to let her go, lest some accident should befall her:" upon which the pretended religious exclaimed, "What canst thou fear, while I and other devout women shall be with her?" The daughter expressing great eagerness to attend the nuptials, her mother at length consented.

When the merchant's daughter had adorned herself in her richest habit, she accompanied the old woman; who, after leading her through several streets, conducted her to the lodging of the late fisherman, but now favourite to the sultan, who was eagerly expecting her arrival. The young lady was astonished on her entrance at beholding a comely looking man; who, she saw, could hardly restrain his raptures at the sight of her. Her first alarm was great at finding herself betrayed into such a snare by the hypocritical beldam; but having naturally much presence of mind, she concealed her fears, and considered how she might escape. She sat down, and after looking round the apartment affected to laugh, saying to the gallant, "It is commonly usual when a lover invites his mistress to his house to have an entertainment prepared; for what is love without the accompaniment of a feast? If you wish, therefore, that I should spend the evening here, go and bring in some good cheer, that our joy may be complete. I will with my good mother wait your return."

The gallant, rejoiced at her commands, exclaimed, "Thou hast spoken truly, and to hear is to obey;" after which, he went towards the market to order a splendid entertainment. When he was gone, the young lady locked the door after him, and thanking the old woman for introducing her to so handsome a lover, threw her off her guard, while she walked about the apartment meditating her escape. At length she found in one corner of it a sharp sabre, and drawing up her sleeve to her elbow, she grasped the weapon, which she struck with such force at her false friend, who was reclining on a sofa, as to cleave the head of the abandoned procuress in two, and she fell down weltering in her blood, to rise no more.

The merchant's daughter now searched the room, and finding a rich dress which the favourite usually wore when he visited the sultan, rolled it up in a bundle, and carrying it under her veil, unlocked the door, and hastened homewards. Luckily she reached her father's house without interruption. Her mother welcomed her with joy; but on perceiving the bundle, said, "My dear daughter, what can have been given thee at the nuptials of a poor religious?" The daughter, whose mind had been over agitated with her late adventure, was not able to answer; her spirits sunk at the recollection of her narrow escape, and she fainted away. The mother shrieked aloud with affright, which brought in her husband and attendants, who used various means for the young lady's recovery; and at length, having regained her senses, she related what had passed. The merchant having cursed the memory of the old woman for her hypocritical deception, comforted his virtuous daughter, and taking up the dress which he knew, and to whom it belonged, hastened to make his complaint to the sultan.

When the sultan had heard the complaint of the merchant, he was enraged against his unworthy favourite, and commanded him to be apprehended; but he could no where be found, for having on his return home seen the old woman weltering in her blood, he guessed what had happened; and apprehensive of being called to an account, putting on a mean disguise, made his escape from the city. Fortunately for him a caravan was just taking its departure, and with it he travelled for five days successively, with a mind tortured by disappointed love, and the fear of discovery. At length the caravan passed the confines of his late master, and encamped before a large city, which he entered, and having hired a room at a caravanserai, he resolved to repose, and seek out for some employment less dangerous than making love, or serving princes.

When he had rested himself for some days, he repaired to a market, where labourers stood to be hired; and had not waited long, when a woman coming up asked if he wanted work, to which he replied in the affirmative. She then said, "Part of the wall round the court of my house is so much decayed, that I must have it taken down and rebuilt, and if thou art willing to undertake the job I will employ thee." On his consenting, she led him to her house, and shewing him the wall, gave him a pick-axe, directing him as he went on to place the stones in one heap and the rubbish in another. He replied, "To hear is to obey." She then brought him some provision and water, when he refreshed himself, and having thanked God that he had escaped, and was able to get his living, began his task, which he continued till sunset. His employer paid him ten pieces of silver for his day's work, and he returned contented to his lodging.

The following morning he again went to labour, and was treated with the same kindness as before. About noon, as he was stocking up the foundation of the wall he found a copper vessel, which upon examination proved to be full of golden coin. He carried the vessel to his lodging, where he counted the money, upwards of a hundred deenars, and returned to his work. As he was coming home in the evening, he saw a crowd following a man who carried upon his head a large chest, which he offered for sale at a hundred deenars, but refused to mention the contents.

The fisherman was seized with an irresistible impulse to purchase the chest, and having a small silver coin of not more value than a silver penny, said to himself, "I will try my fate, possibly it may contain something valuable; but if not, I will disregard the disappointment;" ordered it to be conveyed to his lodging, and paid the price demanded. He then locked his door and opened the chest, when, to his astonishment, he beheld in it a beautiful girl very richly dressed, but apparently lifeless. However, on putting his hand to her mouth, he perceived that she breathed, and was only in a deep sleep, from which he endeavoured to awake her, but in vain. He then took her out of the chest, laid her gently on his carpet, and continued to gaze at her charms; till at length about midnight she awoke, and in an exclamation of alarm and surprise exclaimed, "Gracious Allah, where am I?"

When the lady's first alarm had subsided, she asked the fisherman how he had brought her to his lodging, and on being informed of the circumstances her mind became easy; for he behaved towards her with respectful attention. Concealing for the present her condition and adventures, she said, "This lodging is too mean, on the morrow you must hire a better. Serve me with fidelity, do as I desire, and you shall be amply rewarded." The fisherman, who, cautioned by his last love adventure, was fearful of taking liberties, and awed by her dignified demeanour, made a profound obeisance, and professed himself her slave. He set before her the best refreshments he could procure, and when she had supped left her, and retired to sleep in a separate chamber.

Early the next morning he went and hired a decent house, to which he conveyed her in a covered litter, and did not cease to attend upon her in all her commands for twenty days, she supplying him with money to purchase necessaries.

It is proper now to mention, that the lady bought by the fisherman in the chest was the favourite mistress of the sultan: having deserted for her all his other women, they had become envious; but the sultana, who, before the arrival of Koout al Koolloob (for such was her name) had presided over the haram, was more mortified than the rest, and had resolved to effect her removal. For this a favourable opportunity soon occurred, owing to the sultan's departure for twenty days upon a hunting excursion. In a day or two after his absence, the sultana invited Koout al Koolloob to an entertainment, and having mixed a strong soporific in some sherbet, presented it her to drink. The effect of the potion was instantaneous, and she sunk into a trance; when the sultana putting her into the chest, commanded it to be given to a broker, and sold without examination of the contents, for a hundred deenars; hoping, that whoever might be the purchaser, he would be so fascinated with the charms of the beautiful Koout al Koolloob, as to enjoy his good fortune in secrecy; and that she should thus get rid of a rival without the crime of assassination.

When the sultan returned from his excursion, immediately on entering the palace he inquired for his favourite; when the sultana entering with affected sadness, said, "Alas! my lord, the beautiful and affectionate Koout al Koolloob, unable to bear the pangs of absence, three days after your departure fell sick, and having lingered for seven days, was gathered to the mercy of the Almighty." The sultan, on hearing this, burst into an agony of grief, and exclaimed, "There is no asylum or refuge but with God; from God we came, and to God we must return." He was overcome with affliction, and remained the whole night involved in melancholy. In the morning he sent for his vizier, and commanded him to look out for a spot on the bank of the river for the erection of a building in which he might sit retired, and meditate on his beloved Koout al Koolloob.

The vizier replied, "To hear is to obey;" and taking with him an architect, fixed upon a pleasant spot, on which he ordered him to mark out a space of ninety yards in length and seventy in breadth for the intended building. The necessary materials, of stone and marbles, were soon collected, and the work was begun upon; which the minister for two days superintended in person. On the third the sultan came to view the progress. He approved of the plan, and said, "It is truly beautiful; but, alas! only worthy of the residence of Koout al Koolloob;" after which he wept bitterly. Seeing the distress of the sultan, his vizier said, "My lord, be resigned under distress; for the wise have written, Be moderate when prosperity occurs, and when calamity afflicts thee exercise patience.'"

The sultan replied, "It is true, O vizier, that resignation is praiseworthy, and impatience blamable; for a poet has justly said, 'Be calm under adversity; for calmness can alone extricate from danger.' To affliction joy often succeeds, and after trouble we generally enjoy repose; but, alas! human nature cannot divest itself of feeling; and Koout al Koolloob was so dear to me, and so delighted my soul, that I dread I shall never find another mistress her equal in beauty and accomplishments." The vizier consoled his master, and at length prevailed upon him to submit to his misfortune with some degree of resignation.

The sultan and vizier daily repaired to view the progress of the new edifice, the report of which had spread through the city, and at length reached Koout al Koolloob, who said to the fisherman, "We are every day expending our money, and getting nothing: suppose, therefore, you seek employment in the building which the sultan is erecting. Report says that he is liberal, so that possibly advantage may accrue." The fisherman replied, "My dear mistress, how shall I bear the least absence from you?" for he loved her, and she perceiving it, often dreaded that he would have made advances; but the remembrance of what he had endured from the conduct of the merchant's daughter had made him cautious. She replied, "Dost thou really love me?" "Canst thou doubt it?" answered he; "thou art my life, and the light of my eyes!" "If so," exclaimed she, "take this necklace, and when you think of me as you are working, look at it, and it will console you till your return home."

The fisherman obeyed the commands of Koout al Koolloob, repaired to the spot where the edifice was erecting, and beheld the sultan and vizier observing the workmen. The former inquired if he wanted employment, to which he replied in the affirmative, and was hired. He began his labour; but so much was his mind engaged with his mistress, that every now and then, dropping his implements, he drew out the necklace, and looking upon it heaved a deep sigh, which the sultan observing, said to his vizier, “This man, perchance, is more unhappy than myself; let us call him to us, and inquire into his circumstances.” The vizier brought him to the presence, and desired him to tell honestly why he had sighed so deeply. “Alas!” replied he, “I am absent from my beloved, who gave me this necklace to look at whenever I might think upon her; and my mind is so taken up with her, that I cannot help laying down my tools, and admiring it constantly.”

When the sultan saw the necklace, he recollected that it was one which he had purchased for Koout al Koolloob for a thousand deenars. He concealed his agitation, and said, “To whom does this necklace belong?” “To my slave,” replied the labourer, “whom I purchased for a hundred deenars.” “Canst thou admit us to thy lodging,” rejoined the sultan, “that we may see her?” “I dread,” answered the labourer, “that her modesty may be offended; but I will consult her, and if she assents, I will invite you to my lodging.” “That is but just,” said the sultan, “and no more than what is proper.”

The labourer at sunset returned home, and informed Koout al Koolloob of his adventure, when she desired him on the morrow to purchase what was requisite for a decent entertainment, at the same time giving him five deenars. In the morning he bought what she had desired, and going to his work, informed the sultan and vizier that they were welcome to his homely fare, and to see his slave; or rather, said he, “My divinity, for as such I have at humble distance adored her.”

The sultan and vizier accompanied the labourer to his house where they were astonished to find prepared an elegant collation, of which they partook; after which they drank sherbet and coffee. The sultan then desired to see his slave, who just made her appearance, but retired immediately. However, the sultan knew her; and said to the labourer, “Wilt thou dispose of this damsel?” “I cannot, my lord,” replied the labourer, “for my soul is wholly occupied with her love, though as yet unreturned.” “May thy love be rewarded!” exclaimed the sultan; “but bring her with thee at sunset to the palace.” “To hear is to obey,” replied the labourer.

At sunset the labourer conducted his slave to the palace, when the eunuchs attended, and would have led her into the haram; but he clung round her, and exclaimed, “She is my beloved, and I cannot part with her.” Upon this the sultan related the circumstances of his having lost her; and requested him to give her up. Knowing that he durst not oppose the sovereign, he submitted to his commands with resignation, when the sultan presented him with fifteen hundred deenars, and a beautiful slave, also a rich dress, at the same time receiving him among the most distinguished of his officers. So well did he conduct himself in his new station, that in a short time he was promoted to the rank of prime minister, and fulfilled the duties of it with such ability and integrity, that he became celebrated by the title of the Just Vizier.

Such was the celebrity of the vizier’s decisions, that in a short time appeals were made from the most distant provinces to his judgment. One of the most remarkable cases was the following. Two women belonging to one man conceived on the same day, and were delivered, one of a boy, the other of a girl, at the same time, and in one apartment. The female infant died, when each laid claim to the male child. The magistrates, unable to decide between the mothers, referred the decision to the just vizier; who, on hearing the circumstances, commanded two eggs to be brought, and the contents to be drawn out without breaking the shells; after which he ordered them to be filled with milk from the breast of each woman. This being done, he placed the shells in separate scales, and finding one outweigh the other, declared that she whose milk was heaviest must be the mother of the male child; but the other woman was not satisfied with this decision, and still affirmed she was the mother of the boy.

The vizier, vexed at her obstinacy, now commanded the infant to be cut in two; when she, whom he had said was the mother, fell into agonies, and besought its life; but the other was unmoved, and assented to the death of the child. He then ordered her to be severely punished, and committed the boy to its afflicted mother. On being asked on what proofs he had grounded his decision, he replied, “On two: the first, because the milk of a woman having produced a male child is always heavier than that of the mother of a female infant: the second, because the pretended mother consented to the boy's death; and I supposed it impossible for a woman to agree to the destruction of her offspring, which is a part of herself."

THE SULTAN AND THE TRAVELLER MHAMOOD AL HYJEMMEE.

There was a sultan, who one evening being somewhat low-spirited, sent for his vizier, and said, “I know not the cause, but my mind is uneasy, and I want something to divert it.” “If so,” replied the vizier, “I have a friend, named Mhamood al Hyjemmee, a celebrated traveller, who has witnessed many wonderful occurrences, and can relate a variety of astonishing narratives. Shall I send for him to the presence?” “By all means,” answered the sultan, “that I may hear his relations.” The minister departed, and informed his friend that the sultan desired to see him. “To hear is to obey,” replied Mhamood, and hastened with the vizier to the palace.

When they had entered the palace, Mhamood made the obeisance usual to the caliphs, and uttered a poetical invocation for the prosperity of the sultan, who returned his salute; and after desiring him to be seated, said, “Mhamood, my mind is uneasy, and as I hear you are acquainted with many curious events, I wish you to relate some of them to amuse me.” Mhamood replied, “To hear is to obey;” and thus began an adventure of his own.

The Koord Robber.

Some years ago I took a journey from my own country to the land of Yemen, accompanied by a slave, who was a lad of much ready wit, and who carried a wallet containing a few necessaries. As we were entering a town, a rascally koord snatched the wallet from his hands, and asserted that it was his own, which we had stolen from him: upon which, I called out to some passengers to assist me in the recovery of my property, and they helped me to carry the sharper before the cauzee, to whom I complained of his assault. The magistrate asked the koord what he had to allege in his defence; to which he replied, "My lord, I lost this wallet some days since, and found it in possession of the complainant, who pretends that it is his own, and will not resign it." "If it be thine," rejoined the cauzee, "describe to me what it contains, when I shall be satisfied that thou speakest the truth."

The koord assented, and with a loud voice cried out, "In this wallet, my lord, are two chests, in which are collyrium for the eyes, a number of rich napkins, drinking vessels of gold, lamps, cooking utensils, dishes, basins, and ewers; also bales of merchandize, jewels, gold, silks, and other precious articles, with a variety of wearing apparel, carpets, cushions, eating cloths, and other things too tedious to enumerate; besides, I can bring a number of my brother koords to testify to the truth of what I have said, and that the wallet is mine."

When the koord had finished, the cauzee smiled, and asked me and my slave what we could describe to be in the wallet: upon which, my slave said, "My lord, there is nothing in it of what the koord has mentioned, for it contains only both worlds, with all their lands, seas, cities, habitations, men, animals, and productions of every kind." The cauzee laughed, and turning to the koord, said, "Friend, thou hast heard what has past; what further canst thou say?" "The bag is mine," continued the koord: upon which, the cauzee ordered it to be emptied; when, lo! there were found in it some cakes of bread, a few limes, a little pepper, and a cruet of oil. Seeing this, the koord exclaimed, "Pardon me, my lord the cauzee, I have been mistaken, the wallet is not mine; but I must away and search for the thief who has stolen my valuable property.” Having said this, he ran off, leaving the cauzee, myself, and the spectators bursting with laughter at his impudent knavery.

The sultan was much diverted with the relation of Mhamood, and requested him to relate another story, which he did as follows.

Story of the Husbandman.

A certain husbandman having reared some choice vegetables and fruits earlier than usual, resolved to present them to the sultan, in hopes of receiving a handsome present. He accordingly loaded his ass and set off for the capital, on the road to which he met the sultan, whom he had never before seen; and who being on a hunting excursion had separated from his attendants. The sultan inquired where he was going, and what he carried. “I am repairing,” said the husbandman, “to our lord the sultan, in hopes that he will reward me with a handsome price for my fruits and vegetables, which I have reared earlier than usual.” “What dost thou mean to ask him?” replied the sultan. “A thousand deenars,” answered the husbandman; “which if he refuses to give, I will demand five hundred; should he think that sum too much, I will come down to two hundred; and if he declines to give so much, I will ask thirty deenars, from which price I will not depart.”

The sultan now left the husbandman, and hastening to the city, entered the palace, where the latter soon after arrived with his fruits, and was introduced to the presence. Having made his obeisance, the sultan returning his salute, said, “Father, what hast thou brought with thee?” “Fruits, reared earlier than usual,” answered the husbandman: to which the sultan replied, “They are acceptable,” and uncovering them, sent a part by the eunuchs into his haram, and distributed the rest to his courtiers, excepting a few which he ate himself, talking all the while to the countryman, whose sensible remarks gave him much pleasure. He presented him with two hundred deenars, and the ladies of the haram sent him a present of half that sum. The sultan then desired him to return home, give the money to his family, and come back with speed, as he wished to enjoy his conversation. The husbandman having replied, “To hear is to obey,” blessed the sultan for his bounty, and hastening home gave the deenars to his wife, informing her that he was invited to spend the evening at court, and took his leave. It was sunset when he arrived at the palace, and the sultan being at his evening meal invited him to partake. When they were satisfied, they performed their ablutions, and having said the evening prayer, and read a portion of the Koraun, the sultan, desiring him to be seated, commanded the husbandman to relate him some narrative. The husbandman being seated, thus began.

Story of the Three Princes and Enchanting Bird.

It has been lately related that there was formerly a sovereign of the East who had three sons, the eldest of whom had heard some traveller describe a particular country where there was a bird called Bulbul al Syach, who transformed any passenger who came near him into stone. The prince resolved to see this wonderful bird; and requested leave to travel from his father, who endeavoured in vain to divert him from his purpose. He took leave, and on his departure, pulling off a ring set with a magical gem, gave it to his second brother, saying, “Whenever you perceive this ring press hard upon your finger, be assured that I am lost beyond recovery.” Having begun his journey, he did not cease travelling till he reached the spot where was the bird’s cage, in which it used to pass the night, but in the daytime it flew about for exercise and food.

It was the custom of the bird to return about sunset to the cage; when, if it perceived any person near, it would cry out in a plaintive tone, “Who will say to a poor wanderer, Lodge? who will say to an unhappy Bulbul, Lodge?” and if the person replied, “Lodge, poor bird!” it immediately hovered over his head, and scattering upon him some earth from its bill, the person became transformed into a stone. Such proved the fate of the unfortunate prince.

The transformation of the eldest prince had no sooner taken place than the ring pressed hard upon the finger of the second, who exclaimed, “Alas! alas! my brother is lost; but I will travel, and endeavour to find out his condition.” It was in vain that the sultan his father, and the sultana his mother, remonstrated. He departed after he had delivered the magical ring to his younger brother, and journeyed till he reached the cage of the bird; who having ensnared him to pronounce the word lodge, scattered some earth upon his head, when he, also, immediately became transformed into stone.

At this instant the youngest prince was sitting at a banquet with his father; when the ring pressed so hard to his finger, as to put him to much pain. He rose up, and exclaimed, “There is no refuge or asylum but with God; for his we are, and to him we must return.” The sultan, upon this, inquired the cause of his grief; when he said, "My brother has perished."

The old sultan was loudly lamenting the loss of his two children, when the youngest continued, "I will travel and learn the fate of my brothers." "Alas!" said the father, "is it not enough that I have lost them, but thou also wilt rush into destruction? I entreat thee not to leave me." "Father," replied the prince, "fate impels me to search for my brothers, whom, perhaps, I may recover; but if I fail, I shall only have done my duty." Having said this, he departed, in spite of the tears and lamentations of his parents, and travelled till he had reached the residence of the bird; where he found his brothers transformed into images of stone. At sunset the bird began its usual tone; but the prince suspecting some deceit, forbore to speak, till at length the Bulbul retired to his cage, and fell asleep; when watching the opportunity, the prince darted upon it, and fastened the door. The bird awoke at the noise, and seeing himself caught, said, "Thou hast won the prize, O glorious son of a mighty sultan!" "If so," exclaimed the prince, "inform me by what means thou hast enchanted so many persons as I see around me changed into images of marble, and how I may release them from their unhappy state." "Behold," replied the bird, "yonder two heaps of earth, one white and the other blue. The blue enchants, and the other will recover from transformation."

The prince immediately took up handfuls of the white earth, and scattering it over the numerous images, they instantly became animated and restored to all their functions. He embraced his two brothers, and received their thanks; also those of the sons of many sultans, bashaws, and great personages, for giving them new life. They informed him that near the spot was a city, all the inhabitants of which had been, like them, transformed into stone. To this he repaired, and having relieved them from their enchantment, the people out of gratitude made him rich presents, and would have chosen him for their sovereign, but he declined their offer, and resolved to conduct his brothers in safety to their father.

The two elder princes, notwithstanding they owed the restoration of their lives to their brother, became envious of the valuable presents he had received, and of the fame he would acquire at home for his achievement. They said to one another, "When we reach the capital the people will applaud him, and say, 'Lo! the two elder brothers have been rescued from destruction by the youngest.'"

The youngest prince being supplied with horses, camels, and carriages, for himself and companions, began his march homewards, and proceeded by easy stages towards the capital of his father; within one day's journey of which was a reservoir of water lined with marble. On the brink of this he ordered his tents to be pitched, resolving to pass the night and enjoy himself in feasting with his brothers. An elegant entertainment was prepared, and he sat with them till it was time to repose; when they retired to their tents, and he lay down to sleep, having on his finger a ring, which he had found in the cage of the Bulbul.

The envious brothers thinking this a fit opportunity to destroy their generous preserver, arose in the dead of night, and taking up the prince, cast him into the reservoir, and escaped to their tents undiscovered. In the morning they issued orders of march, the tents were struck, and the camels loaded; but the attendants missing the youngest prince, inquired after him; to which the brothers replied, that being asleep in his tent, they were unwilling to disturb him. This satisfied them, and having pursued their march they reached the capital of their father, who was overjoyed at their return, and admired the beauty of the Bulbul, which they had carried with them; but he inquired with eagerness what was become of their brother.

The brothers replied, "We know nothing of him, and did not till now hear of his departure in search of the bird, which we have brought with us." The sultan dearly loved his youngest son; and on hearing that his brothers had not seen him, beat his hands together, exclaiming, "Alas! alas! there is no refuge or asylum but with the Almighty, from whom we came, and to whom we must return."

We must now return to the youngest brother. When he was cast into the reservoir he awoke, and finding himself in danger, exclaimed, "I seek deliverance from that God who relieveth his servants from the snares of the wicked." His prayer was heard, and he reached the bottom of the reservoir unhurt; where he seated himself on a ledge, when he heard persons talking. One said to another, "Some son of man is near." "Yes," replied the other, "he is the youngest son of our virtuous sultan; who, after having delivered his two brothers from enchantment, hath been treacherously cast into this reservoir." "Well," answered the first voice, "he may easily escape, for he has a ring upon his finger, which if he will rub a genie will appear to him and perform whatever he may command."

The prince no sooner heard these words than he rubbed his hand over the ring, when a good genie appearing, said, "Prince, what are thy commands?"

"I command," replied the prince, "that thou instantly prepare me tents, camels, domestics, guards, and every thing suitable to my condition." "All is ready," answered the genie; who, at the same instant taking him from the ledge, conducted him into a splendid encampment, where the troops received him with acclamations. He ordered signals of march to be sounded, and proceeded towards the capital of his father. When he had arrived near the city, he commanded his tents to be pitched on the plain. Immediately his orders were obeyed, the tents were raised (a most magnificent one for himself), before which the servants raised a gorgeous awning, and sprinkled water to lay the dust. The cooks lighted their fires, and a great smoke ascended, which filled the plain.

The inhabitants of the city were astonished at the approach of the army, and when they saw the encampment pitched, supposed it to be that of a powerful enemy preparing for assaulting them. Intelligence of this unexpected host was conveyed to the sultan; who, on hearing it, instead of alarm, felt a pleasure which he could not account for, and said, "Gracious Allah! my heart is filled with delight; but why I know not." Immediately he commanded his suite to attend, and repaired to the encampment of his son, to whom he was introduced; but the prince being habited very richly, and differently from what he had seen him in, was not known by the sultan.

The prince received his father with the honours due to his rank, and when they were seated, and had entered into conversation, said, "What is become of thy youngest son?" The words were scarcely uttered, when the old sultan fell fainting to the earth. On his recovery, he exclaimed, "Alas! my son's imprudence led him to travel, and he has fallen a prey to the beasts of the forest." "Be comforted," replied the prince; "the disasters of fortune have not reached thy son, for he is alive and in health." "Is it possible?" cried the sultan; "ah! tell me where I shall find him!" "He is before thee," replied the prince: upon which, the sultan looking more closely, knew him, fell upon his neck, wept, and sunk to the earth overpowered with ecstacy.

When the sultan had recovered, he desired his son to relate his adventures, which he did from first to last. Just as he had finished the elder brothers arrived, and seeing him in such splendour, hung down their heads, abashed and unable to speak; but yet more envious than ever. The old sultan would have put them to death for their treachery, but the youngest prince said, “Let us leave them to the Almighty, for whoever commits sin will meet its punishment in himself.”

When the husbandman had concluded the above story, the sultan was so highly pleased that he presented him with a large sum of money, and a beautiful slave, inquiring at the same time if he could divert him with another story, to which he replied in the affirmative.

On another night, when the sultan and the countryman had sat down to converse, the former desired him to relate some ancient story, when the latter began as follows.

Story of a Sultan of Yemen and his three Sons.

It has been related, that in the kingdom of Yemen there was a sultan who had three sons, two of whom were born of the same mother, and the third of another wife, with whom becoming disgusted from some caprice, and having degraded her to the station of a domestic, he suffered her and her son to live unnoticed among the servants of the haram. The two former, one day, addressed their father, requesting his permission to hunt: upon which he presented them each with a horse of true blood, richly caparisoned, and ordered proper domestics to attend them to the chase.

When they had departed, the unfortunate youngest brother repaired to his unhappy mother, and expressed his wishes to enjoy, like the elder princes, the pleasures of the field. “My son,” replied she, “it is not in my power to procure thee a horse or other necessaries.” Upon this he wept bitterly; when she gave him some of her silver ornaments, which he took, and having sold them, with the price purchased a foundered steed. Having mounted it, and provided himself with some bread, he followed the track of his brothers for two days, but on the third lost his way. After wandering two days more he beheld upon the plain a string of emeralds and pearls, which shone with great lustre. Having taken it up, he wreathed it round his turban, and returned homewards exulting in his prize; but when he had arrived near the city his brothers met him, pulled him from his horse, beat him, and forced it from him. He excelled them both in prowess and vigour, but he was fearful of the sultan’s displeasure, and his mother’s safety, should he punish his insulters. He therefore submitted to the indignity and loss, and retired.

The two cowardly princes entered the palace, and presented the string of jewels to the sultan; who, after admiring it, said, “I shall not rest satisfied till the bird arrives to whom this certainly must have belonged:” upon which the brothers replied, “We will travel in search of it, and bring it to our august father and sultan.”

Preparations being made, the brothers departed, and the youngest prince having mounted his lame steed followed them. After three days’ journey he reached an arid desert, which having passed over by great exertion, he arrived almost exhausted at a city; which on entering he found resounding with the shrieks of lamentation and woe. At length he met with a venerable old man, to whom having made a respectful salute, he inquired of him the cause of such universal mourning. “My son,” replied the old man, “on a certain day during the last forty-three years, a terrible monster has appeared before our city, demanding a beautiful virgin to be delivered up to him, threatening to destroy it in case of refusal. Unable to defend ourselves, we have complied with his demand, and the damsels of the city have drawn lots for the dreadful sacrifice; but this year the chance has fallen upon the beautiful daughter of our sultan. This is the day of the monster’s usual arrival, and we are involved in universal lamentation for her unhappy fate.”

When the young prince heard the above, he, under the direction of the old man, repaired to the place of the monster’s resort, resolved to conquer him or die. Scarcely had he reached it, when the princess approached it, splendidly habited, but with a dejected head, and drowned in tears. He made a respectful salute, which she returned, saying, “Hasten, young man, from this spot, for a monster will soon appear, to whom, by my unhappy fate, I am destined. Should he discover thee, he will tear thee in pieces.” “Princess,” replied he, “I know the circumstance, and am resolved to become a ransom for thy beauty.”

The prince had hardly uttered these words, when a column of dust arose; from which with dreadful howlings and fury the monster issued, lashing his gigantic sides with his thick tail. The princess shrieked, and wept in the agonies of fear; but the prince drawing his sabre, put himself in the way of the savage monster; who, enraged, snorted fire from his wide nostrils, and made a spring at the prince. The gallant youth with wonderful agility evaded his talons, and darting from side to side of the monster, watched his opportunity, till rushing upon him, he cleft his head asunder just between his eyes, when the huge creature fell down and growled his last in a tremendous roar.

The princess, on seeing the monster expire, ran to her deliverer, wiped the dust and sweat from his face with her veil, uttering grateful thanks, to which he replied, “Return to thy lamenting parents;” but she would not, and said, “My lord, and light of my eyes, thou must be mine and I thine.” “That is perhaps impossible,” rejoined the prince; and hastening from her, he returned to the city, where he took up his lodging in an obscure corner. She now repaired to the palace. On her entrance, the sultan and her mother were astonished, and inquired in alarm the cause of her return; fearing that she had escaped from the monster, who would in revenge destroy the city.

The princess related the story of her deliverance by a handsome youth: upon which, the sultan, with his attendants, and most of the inhabitants of the place, repaired to view the monster, whom they found extended dead on the earth. The whole city was now filled with grateful thanksgivings and universal rejoicing. The sultan, eager to shew his gratitude to the gallant youth, said to the princess, “Shouldst thou know thy deliverer wert thou to see him again?” “Certainly!” replied she; for love had impressed his image on her mind too strongly to be ever erased.

The sultan, upon this, issued a proclamation, commanding every male in the city to pass under the windows of his daughter’s apartment; which was done successively for three days; but she did not recognize her beloved champion. The sultan then inquired if all the men of the city had obeyed his commands, and was informed that all had done so, except a young man at a certain serai, who was a foreigner, and therefore had not attended. The sultan ordered him to appear; and he had no sooner approached the window than the princess threw down upon his head an embroidered handkerchief, exclaiming, “This is our deliverer from the fangs of the monster.”

The sultan now ordered the young prince to be introduced to his presence, to which he advanced, making the obeisances customary to royal personages in a graceful manner. “Art thou the destroyer of the monster?” exclaimed the sultan. “I am,” answered the prince. “Tell me how I can reward thee?” replied the sultan. “My request to God and your majesty,” answered the prince, “is, that the princess thy daughter may be given me in marriage.” “Rather ask me a portion of my treasures,” rejoined the sultan. Upon this, the officers of the court observed, that as he had saved the princess from death, he was worthy of her; and the sultan at length consenting, the marriage knot was tied. The young prince received his bride, and the nuptials were consummated. Towards the close of night he arose, and having taken off her ring, put his own in its room on her finger, and wrote upon the palm of her hand, “I am called Alla ad Deen, the son of a potent sultan, who rules in Yemen; if thou canst come to me there, well; otherwise remain with thy father.”

When the prince had done as above related, he left his bride asleep, and quitting the palace and city, pursued his travels; during which he married another wife, whom he had saved from an elephant in a similar way: he left her in the same manner as the first.

When the prince had left his second wife, he proceeded in search of the bird to whom the string of emeralds and pearls had belonged, and at length reached the city of its mistress, who was daughter to the sultan, a very powerful monarch. Having entered the capital, he walked through several streets, till at last he perceived a venerable old man, whose age seemed to be, at least, that of a hundred years, sitting alone. He approached him, and having paid his respects, sat down, and entering into conversation, at length said, “Canst thou, my uncle, afford me any information respecting a bird, whose chain is composed of pearls and emeralds, or of its mistress?”

The old man remained silent, involved in thought, for some instants; after which, he said, “My son, many sultans and princes have wished to attain this bird and the princess, but failed in the attempt; however, do thou procure seven lambs, kill them, flay and cut them up into halves. In the palace are eight courts, at the gates of seven of which are placed two hungry lions; and in the latter, where the princess resides, are stationed forty slaves. Go, and try thy fortune.”

The prince having thanked the old man, took his leave, procured the lambs, cut them up as directed, and towards midnight, when the step of man had ceased from passing, repaired to the first gate of the palace, before which he beheld two monstrous lions, their eyes flaming like the mouth of a lighted oven. He cast before each half a lamb, and while they were devouring it passed on. By the same stratagem he arrived safely into the eighth court: at the gate of which lay the forty slaves sunk in profound sleep. He entered cautiously, and beheld the princess in a magnificent hall, reposing on a splendid bed; near which hung her bird in a cage of gold wire strung with valuable jewels. He approached gently, and wrote upon the palm of her hand, “I am Alla ad Deen, son of a sultan of Yemen. I have seen thee sleeping, and taken away thy bird. Shouldst thou love me, or wish to recover thy favourite, come to my father’s capital.” He then departed from the palace, and having reached the plain, stopped to repose till morning.

The prince being refreshed, at day-light having invoked Allah to protect him from discovery, travelled till sunset, when he discovered an Arab encampment, to which he repaired and requested shelter. His petition was readily attended to by the chief; who seeing him in possession of the bird, which he knew, said to himself, “This young man must be a favourite of heaven, or he could not have obtained a prize for which so many potent sultans, princes, and viziers, have vainly fallen sacrifices.” He entertained him with hospitality, but asked no questions, and in the morning dismissed him with prayers for his welfare, and a present of a beautiful horse. Alla ad Deen having thanked his generous host took leave, and proceeded unceasingly till he arrived within sight of his father’s capital. On the plain he was again overtaken by his two brothers, returning from their unsuccessful expedition, who seeing the bird and splendid cage in his possession, dragged him suddenly from his horse, beat him cruelly, and left him. They entered the city, and presenting the cage to their father, framed an artful tale of danger and escapes that they had undergone in procuring it; on hearing which, the sultan loaded them with caresses and praises, while the unfortunate Alla ad Deen retired bruised and melancholy to his unhappy mother.

The young prince informed his mother of his adventures, complained heavily of his loss, and expressed his resolves to be revenged upon his envious brothers. She comforted him, entreated him to be patient, and wait for the dispensations of Allah; who, in proper season, would shew his power in the revealment of justice. We now return to the princess who had lost her bird.

When she awoke in the morning, and missed her bird, she was alarmed; but on perceiving what was written upon her palm still more so. She shrieked aloud; her attendants ran in, and finding her in a frantic state, informed the sultan; who, anxious for her safety, hastened to the apartment. The princess being somewhat recovered, related the loss of her bird, shewed the writing on her hand, and declared that she would marry no one but him who had seen her asleep. The sultan finding remonstrances vain, agreed to accompany his daughter in search of the prince, and issued orders for his army to prepare for a march to Yemen.

When the troops were assembled, the sultan conducted his daughter to the camp, and on the day following marched; the princess with her ladies being conveyed in magnificent equipages. No halt was made till the army arrived near the city, where Alia ad Deen had delivered the daughter of its sultan by killing the elephant. A friendly ambassador being dispatched to request permission to encamp and purchase a supply of provisions, he was honourably received, and the sultan of the city proceeded in great pomp to visit his brother monarch, who then informed him of the object of his expedition. This convinced the other sultan that the stealer of the bird must also have been the deliverer of his daughter, and he resolved to join in the search. Accordingly, after three days of splendid entertainments and rejoicings, the two sultans, with the two princesses, and their united forces, moved towards Yemen. Their route lay through the capital, the daughter of whose sultan Alla ad Deen had saved from the fangs of the savage monster.

On the arrival of the allies at this city an explanation similar to the last took place, and the third sultan resolved to accompany them in search of the husband of his daughter, who readily agreed to join the other princesses. They marched; and on the route the princess who had lost her bird was fully informed by the others of the beauty, prowess, and manly vigour of Alla ad Deen; which involved her more than ever in anxious impatience to meet him. At length, by continued and uninterrupted movements, the three sultans reached Yemen, and pitched their encampments about sunset on a verdant plain well watered, near the capital.

It was with much dread and apprehension that the sultan of Yemen beheld such a numerous host encamped so near his residence; but he concealed his fears, and gave proper orders for securing it from surprise during the night. With the morning his alarms were removed, as the allied sultans dispatched an ambassador with rich presents, assurances that they had no hostile intentions, and a request that he would honour them by a visit to their camp, and furnish it with supplies. The sultan complied with the invitation, and the suite being prepared, he proceeded, attended by all his courtiers in the highest magnificence, to the encampment; where he was received with due honours. At the outposts the three sultans met him, and after the usual greetings of ceremony conducted him to a splendid tent made of crimson velvet, the fringes and ropes of which were composed of gold threads, the pins of solid silver, and the lining of the richest silver tissue, embroidered with flowers of raised work in silks of all colours, intermixed with foils and gold. It was covered with superb carpets, and at the upper end on a platform spread with gold brocade were placed four stools, the coverings of which, and the cushions, were magnificent beyond description, being made of Persian velvet, fringed and flowered with costly pearls.

When the four sultans were seated, and some conversation had taken place, in which the latter was informed of the occasion of the others having marched into his country, the cloth was spread, and a magnificent entertainment served up in dishes of agate, crystal, and gold. The basins and ewers for washing were of pure gold set with jewels. Such was the richness of every thing, that the sultan with difficulty refrained from shewing his surprise, and inwardly exclaimed, “By Allah, till now I never have beheld such a profusion of splendour, elegance, and valuable furniture!” When the meal was ended, coffee, various sorts of confections, and sherbets were brought in; after which the company conversed. The three sultans inquired of their royal guest if he had any children, to which he replied that he had two sons.

The sultans then requested that he would send for them: upon which, their father dispatched a messenger to summon them to his presence. They repaired to the camp, mounted on chargers richly caparisoned, and most splendidly dressed. On their entering the tent, the princesses, who were seated in a recess concealed from view by blinds of gold wire, gazed eagerly at them; and she who had lost her bird inquired of the other two if either of them was their husband. They replied in the negative, remarking that he was of personal beauty, and dignified appearance, far superior to these princes. The three sultans, also, questioned their daughters on the subject, and received similar answers.

The sultans, upon this, inquired of the father of the princes if he had any other sons; to which he replied that he had one; but that he had long rejected him, and also his mother, from notice; and that they lived among the domestics of the palace. The sultans entreated to see him, and he was introduced, but in a mean habit. The two princesses whom he had delivered from the monsters and married immediately recognized him, and exclaimed together, “This is truly our beloved husband!” He was then embraced by the sultans, and admitted to his wives; who fell upon his neck in transports of joy and rapture, kissing him between his eyes, while the princess who had lost the bird prostrated herself before him, covered with a veil, and kissed his hand.

After this scene the young prince returned to his father, and the other sultans, who received him respectfully, and seated him by them, at which the father was astonished; but more so, when, turning to his brothers, he addressed them, saying, “Which of you first found the string of emeralds and pearls?” To this they made no reply: when he continued, “Who of you killed the monster, destroyed the elephant, or, fortifying his mind, dared to enter the palace of this sultan, and bring away the cage with the bird? When you both, coward-like, rushed upon me, robbed me of my prizes, and wounded me, I could easily have overcome you; but I felt that there was a season appointed by Providence for justice upon you and my wretched father, who rejected my mother and myself, depriving us of our just claims.” Having thus spoken, he drew his sabre, and rushing upon the two guilty princes struck them dead, each at one blow. He would, in his rage, have attacked his father; but the sultans prevented him, and having reconciled them, the old sultan promised to leave him his heir, and to restore his mother to her former rank and consequence. His nuptials with the third princess were then celebrated; and their fathers, after participating for forty days in the magnificent entertainments given on the occasion, took leave, and returned to their several kingdoms. The old sultan finding himself, from age, incapable of the cares of government, resigned the throne to his son, whose authority was gladly submitted to by the people, who admired his prowess and gallantry.

Some time after his accession to the kingdom, attended only by some select courtiers, and without the cumbrous appendages of royalty, he left his capital upon a hunting excursion. In the course of the sport, passing over a desert plain, he came to a spot where was the opening of a cave, into which he entered, and observed domestic utensils and other marks of its being inhabited; but no one was then within it.

The curiosity of the sultan being excited, he resolved to wait until the owners of the cave should appear, and cautioned his attendants not to mention his rank. He had not sat long, when a man was seen advancing with a load of provisions and two skins of water. On his coming to the mouth of the cave, the sultan addressed him, saying, "Whence comest thou, where art thou going, and what dost thou carry?" "I am," replied the man, "one of three companions, who inhabit this cave, having fled from our city to avoid imprisonment, and every ten days one of us goes to purchase provisions: to-day was my turn, and my friends will be here presently." "What was the cause of your flight?" rejoined the sultan. "As to that," answered the man, "it can only be communicated by the relation of our adventures, which are curious, and if you wish to hear them, stay with us to-night, and we will each, in our turn, relate his own story."

The sultan upon this, said to himself, "I will not move from this spot until I have heard their adventures;" and immediately dispatched his attendants, excepting a few, with orders to bring from the city some necessaries for the night. "For," thought he, "hearing these stories will be pleasanter than hunting, as they may, perhaps, inform my mind." He remained in the cave with his few followers; and soon after arrived the two other inmates, who were succeeded by the sultan's messengers with the requisites for a substantial repast, of which all partook without ceremony. When it was finished, the sultan desired the owners of the cave to relate their adventures; and they replied, "To hear is to obey:" the first beginning as follows.

Story of the First Sharper in the Cave.

My father died when I was a youth, leaving my mother and myself with little property, but an old she-goat, which we sold, and with the price bought a calf, and nourished her as well as we could for a whole year; when my mother desired me to go and dispose of her in the market. Accordingly I went, and soon perceived that there was not a fatter or finer beast in the market. The company of butchers, composed of forty persons, fixed their eyes upon the calf, and supposing me an ignorant lad, resolved to have her for little or nothing, and feast themselves upon her flesh. After concerting among themselves, one of them coming up, said, “My lad, dost thou mean to sell this she-goat?” “Goat!” replied I, “it is a calf.” “Nay,” answered he, “surely thou must be blind or under enchantment; but, old as the goat is, if thou wilt sell it, I will give thee a koorsh for her.” I angrily refused, and he went away; when presently up came another; and, in short, in regular succession the whole forty, the last of whom was the chief of the butchers. I perceived the connivance to cheat me, and resolving to be revenged, said, “I am convinced I am deceived, so you shall have the goat, if such she is, for the koorsh, provided you let me have her tail.” This was agreed to, and it being cut off, I delivered my calf to the chief of the butchers, received the money, and returned home.

On my arrival at home, my mother asked if I had sold the calf; to which I replied, “Yes, for a koorsh, and her tail into the bargain.” She thought me stupid or mad, and inquired what I would do with the latter. I answered, “I will be amply revenged on the sharpers, who pretended that my calf was a she-goat, and force from them, at least, a thousand times the price they gave me.” After this, I skinned the tail, cut the leather into thongs, and twisted them into a whip with hard thick knots. I then disguised myself in female attire, taking pains to make myself look as handsome as possible with the assistance of my mother, who put soorma into my eyelids, and arranged my eyebrows, stained my hands with hinna, and directed me how to ogle and smile. In short, as I was then a beardless lad, and reckoned comely, I appeared as a very desirable maiden in my disguise.

On my arrival at the house of the chief of the butchers, I found him sitting with his companions in the court. The whole of my calf had been cooked in various ways, and they were just going to spread the cloth and feast upon it. On my entrance I made a profound salutation: upon which they all rose up to return it, and having treated me welcomely, whispered one to another, saying, "By Allah, this will be a night of glorious festivity, illumined by so much beauty! however, our chief must have the preference, this night shall be his; after which we will all cast lots for his turn of enjoyment."

When we had feasted on my calf, and the night was far advanced, the butchers took leave, departed to their homes, and I remained alone with the chief, who began to entertain me with amusing conversation. Observing a rope hanging from the ceiling of an apartment, I, as if ignorant of its purpose, inquired the use of it; when the venerable chief of the butchers informed me it was for suspending animals to cut up; also, occasionally his dependants, whose crimes required the punishment of flogging. Upon this I expressed a great desire to be tied with the rope, drawn up, and swung for amusement. "My dear lady," replied he, "the cord will hurt thy delicate skin; but thou shall put it round me, draw me up, and see the use without injuring thyself."

I consented to the wish of the chief butcher, placed the cord under his arms, and drew him up till the ends of his toes scarcely touched the ground. I then secured the rope, and for some moments kept running playfully round him, and tickling his sides, which made him laugh with delight. At length, tired of his posture, he desired me to release him; but I refused, saying, "My dear chief, I have not yet finished my amusement;" after which I tore the clothes from his back, as if in merriment. When I had done this, I pulled out my whip, which was well knotted, saying, "This is the tail of a she-goat, and not of a calf." The butcher now began to be somewhat alarmed, asking me who I was, and whence I came? to which I replied, "I am the owner of the fat calf, of which thou and thy villanous companions so rascally cheated me." I then bared my arm to my elbow, and so belaboured his back and sides with my whip that he roared in agony; nor did I leave off till his skin was completely flayed, and he fainted from the pain. After this I searched the apartment, found a bag containing three hundred deenars, some handsome dresses, and other valuable articles, all of which I bundled up, and carried off; leaving the chief of the butchers, suspended, to his fate. When I had reached home, I gave my prize to my mother, saying, "This is only part of the value of my calf, which I have just received of the purchaser."

Early in the morning the butchers repaired, as usual, to the residence of their chief, and finding the door of the court-yard locked, joked one with another, saying, "Our old gentleman has been so fatigued with his happiness that he sleeps longer than ordinary." They waited till near noon, when they called out for admittance; but receiving no answer, became apprehensive of some disaster, and forcing the door, found their chief suspended, almost lifeless, and his scars dropping blood. To their inquiries into the cause of his doleful situation, he replied, "That pretended vixen was no woman, but a brawny youth, the owner of the calf; who, in return for our roguery, has flogged me thus, and carried off all he could find in my chamber worth having." The butchers vowed revenge, saying, "We will seize and put him to death;" but their chief requested them for the present to be patient, and carry him to a warm bath, that he might wash and get his wounds dressed.

I observed the chief butcher enter the bathing house alone, while his followers waited at the gate: upon which I went to a slaughter-house, poured over my back the blood of a sheep, dabbed it with plaisters of cotton, and leaning on a crutch, as if in agony of pain, repaired to the bath. At first the butchers refused me admittance, saying their chief was within; but on my entreating their compassion for my miserable condition, they at length permitted me to enter. Passing through the different rooms, I came to the bath, in which I found the unfortunate chief washing his scars. I pulled out my whip, and having said to him, "Shekh, this is the tail of my calf!" flogged him again so severely that he fainted; after which I made my escape by another entrance to the hummaum, which opened into a different street.

The butchers growing impatient at the long stay of their chief in the bath, at length entered, and found him in extreme agony. He informed them of this second revenge of the owner of the calf, and requested that he would take him into the country, pitch a tent for his reception, and remain to guard him till he should be cured of his wounds. They did so; but I watched their motions, and disguising myself, repaired in the evening towards the tent. Here I found a Bedouin Arab, whom I bribed with a piece of gold to cry out, “I am the owner of the calf, and will have the life of your chief!” cautioning him at the same time, after he had so exclaimed, to make his escape as quickly as possible from the butchers, who would pursue him. “I shall not heed them,” replied he, “though they may be mounted on the fleetest coursers.”

Having said this, the Bedouin went up close to the tents, bawling out vociferously, as I had directed him: upon which all the butchers started up and pursued him, but in vain, to a great distance. I then entered the tent in which the chief was reposing alone, and pulling out my whip, once more flogged him till he roared with agony. When I was tired I bundled up such articles as I could lay my hands on; and returning home, presented them to my mother, saying, “Here is the balance of the price of our calf.”

The butchers having attempted to overtake the Bedouin, till they were wearied with running, but in vain, returned to their chief, whom they found in a fainting fit from the pain of his wounds. Having sprinkled water on his face, they recovered him so far that he was able to inform them of what had happened; and to request them to convey him once more to his own house, to give out that he was dead of his wounds, and make a mock funeral; when, possibly, the owner of the calf, believing him departed this life, might cease to torment him.

The butchers obeyed the commands of their chief, and reporting that he was dead, laid him in a litter, and marched in mournful procession towards the burying ground, followed by a great concourse of people. Mixing with the crowd, in disguise, I at length stooped under the litter, and giving the chief, who lay extended in a winding sheet, a smart poke with a pointed stick, up he jumped, to the astonishment of the beholders; who cried out, “A miracle! a miracle! the dead is raised to life!” while I made my escape in the throng; but being fearful that the many tricks I had played, especially this last, might excite inquiry, and lead to a discovery, I fled from the city, and resolved to remain in this cave till curiosity should subside.

The sultan exclaimed, “These adventures are surprising;” when the second inhabitant of the cave said, “My lord, my story is much more wonderful than the last; for I contrived not only to be dead and buried, but to escape from the tomb.” “Possibly,” said the sultan, “thy adventures may have been stranger than those of this man; but if any of you are acquainted with the memoirs of ancient monarchs, I could wish you to relate them; however, at present, I must take you with me to the palace, that I may make you welcome.” When the men heard this proposition, they were alarmed, and cried out, “What, my lord, would you carry us to the city from which we have escaped to save our lives?” “Fear not,” replied he, “I am the sultan, and was amusing myself with hunting when I chanced to discover your cave.” They bowed themselves before him, and exclaimed, “To hear is to obey;” after which they attended him to the city. On their arrival, the sultan ordered them proper apartments and suitable entertainment, and invested each of them with a rich habit. For some days they remained enjoying themselves; when, at length, one evening the sultan commanded them to his presence, and requested a narrative, when one of them related the following story.

History of the Sultan of Hind.

In ancient days there lived a sultan of Hind, than whom no prince of the age was greater in extent of territory, riches, or force; but Heaven had not allotted to him offspring, either male or female: on which account he was involved in sorrow. One morning, being even more melancholy than usual, he put on a red habit, and repaired to his divan; when his vizier, alarmed at the robes of mourning, said, "What can have occasioned my lord to put on this gloomy habit?" "Alas!" replied the sultan, "my soul is this morning overclouded with melancholy." "Repair then to the treasury," said the vizier, "and view thy wealth; as, perhaps, the lustre of gold, and the brilliant sparkling of jewels, may amuse thy senses and disperse thy sorrow." "Vizier," answered the sultan, "this world to me is all vanity; I regard nothing but the contemplation of the Deity: yet how can I be relieved from melancholy, since I have lived to this age and he has not blessed me with children, either sons or daughters, who are the ornaments of manhood in this world?"

The sultan had scarcely ceased speaking, when a human figure of a dusky hue appeared before him, and said, "My sovereign, here is a confection left me by my ancestors, with an assurance, that whoever might eat of it would have offspring." The sultan eagerly took the confection, and by the blessing of Allah, one of the ladies of his haram conceived that very night. When her pregnancy was made known to him, the sultan was overjoyed, distributed large sums in charity to the poor, and every day comforted the distressed by his bounty.

When the sultana had gone her full time, she was delivered of a son beautiful in aspect, and of graceful person; at which the sultan became overjoyed, and on that day set apart one half of his treasures for the use of the infant prince, who was intrusted to the charge of experienced nurses. After he had thrived sufficiently at the breast he was weaned, and at six years of age put under the care of learned tutors, who taught him to write, to read the Koran, and instructed him in the other several branches of literature. When he had completed his twelfth year, he was accomplished in horsemanship, archery, and throwing the lance, till at length he became a distinguished cavalier, and excelled the most celebrated equestrians.

The young prince being on a certain day hunting in the vicinity of the capital, there suddenly appeared soaring and wheeling in the air a bird, whose plumage was of the most beautiful and glossy green. The prince let fly an arrow, but without effect, and the bird suddenly disappeared. It was in vain that he turned his eye to all quarters, in hopes of again discovering his wished-for prey, for the bird had flown out of sight, and the prince after searching in all directions till the close of day, returned vexed and much disappointed to his father's palace. On his entrance, the sultan and sultana perceiving his countenance gloomy, inquired the cause of his melancholy, when he informed them of the bird: upon which, they said, "Dear son, the creatures of the Almighty are innumerably diversified; and, doubtless, there are many birds as beautiful, and wonderfully more so than this, whose escape you so much regret." "It may be so," replied the prince; "but unless I shall be able to take this, which has so captivated my fancy, I will abstain from food."

On the following morning the prince repaired again to the chase, and having reached the same spot on the plain, to his great joy beheld the green bird. Having taken a cautious aim, he let fly an arrow; but she evaded it, and soared before him in the air. The prince spurred his courser and followed, keeping his desired prey in sight unceasingly till sunset; when both himself and his horse being exhausted he gave up the pursuit, and returned towards the city. As he was riding slowly, and almost fainting with hunger and fatigue, there met him a venerable looking personage, who said, "Prince, both thyself and thy charger seem exhausted; what can have been the cause of such over exercise?" "Father," answered the prince, "I have been pursuing, but in vain, a beautiful green bird, on which I had set my mind." "Son," replied the sage, "if thou wert to follow it for a whole year's journey, thy pursuit would be useless; for thou couldst never take it. This bird comes from a city in the country of Kafoor, in which are most delightful gardens abounding in such birds as this, and many other species still more beautiful, some of which sing enchantingly, and others talk like human beings; but, alas thou canst never reach that happy spot. Give up then all thoughts of the bird, and seek some other object for a favourite that thou mayst enjoy repose, and no longer vex thyself for impossibilities.” When the prince heard this from the old man, he exclaimed, “By Allah! nothing shall prevent me from visiting the charming country thou hast mentioned;” and leaving the sage, he rode homewards, his mind wholly taken up in meditating on the land of Kafoor.

When the prince had reached the palace, the sultan perceiving his disordered state, inquired the adventures of the day; and being informed of his fruitless pursuit, and the remarks of the old man, said, “My son, discharge this idle chimera from thy mind, nor perplex thyself longer, since he who wishes for an impossibility may pine himself to death, but can never gain his desires: calm then thy soul, nor vex thyself longer in vain.” “By Allah!” answered the prince, “my soul, O my father, is captivated with the desire of possessing this bird more strongly than ever, from the words of the venerable old man; nor is it possible I can enjoy repose till I have travelled to the island of Kafoor, and beheld the gardens containing such a wonderful feathered species.” “Alas! my dear son,” exclaimed the sultan, “think how afflicting must be to myself and thy mother thy absence from our sight, and for our sakes give up such a fruitless expedition.”

The prince, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his father, continued obstinate, and said, “My travelling is inevitable: grant me then permission, or I will put myself to death.” “If so,” exclaimed the affrighted sultan, “there is no refuge or help but from the omnipotent Allah: well has the proverb remarked, that the nestling would not be restrained from the air, when suddenly the raven pounced upon it and bore it away. Heaven guard my son from the consequences of his imprudence.” Having said thus, the sultan commanded preparations for the requisites of travel, and ordered a force to accompany the headstrong prince; who, having taken leave of his afflicted parents, began his expedition towards the country of Kafoor.

The prince pursued his journey without any extraordinary adventure for a whole month, and at the expiration of it arrived at a spot from which branched out three roads. At the junction of them was erected a lofty pyramid, each face fronting one of the roads. On one face was inscribed, “This is named the Path of Safety:” on the second, “This is called the Way of Repentance:” and on the third, “Whoever follows this road will not probably return.” “I will pursue this last,” said the prince to himself, and accordingly striking into it, proceeded onwards for twenty days, at the end of which he encamped near a desolated city, crumbling into ruin, wholly destitute of inhabitants. He commanded his attendants, as no provisions could be found in the city, to kill five sheep of the flocks he had brought with him, and dress them for their refreshment in various ways. When all were ready, and the simmaut was spread out, having performed his ablutions, he sat down with his principal followers.

The prince and his company had scarcely seated themselves, when, lo! there advanced from the desolated city a Genie, whom the prince seeing, stood up, and thus accosted, “Hail! and welcome to the sovereign of the Aoon, friendly to his brethren, and ruler of this extensive desert.” He then addressed him, flatteringly, in fluent language and eloquent expression. The hair of this Oone Genie hung shaggily over his eyes, and flowed in matted tresses upon his shoulders. The prince took out a pair of scissors, and having condescendingly cut his hair, pared his nails, and washed him, seated him at the cloth, and placed before him the dish dressed peculiarly for himself.

The Oone ate, and was delighted with the affability of the prince, whom he addressed, saying, “By Allah, O Mahummud, son of a sultan! I am doomed to death by thy arrival here; but what, my lord, was thy object in coming?” Upon this the prince informed him of his having seen the bird, his vain attempts to take her, the account he had received from the old man, and his resolution, in consequence of his information, to penetrate to the kingdom of Kafoor, to visit the gardens, and bring away some of the wonderful birds.

When the Oone heard this, he said, “O son of a sultan, that country to thee is impenetrable, thou canst not reach it; for the distance from hence is a journey of three hundred years to the most laborious traveller; how then canst thou hope to arrive at it, much more return? But, my son, the good old proverb remarks, that kindness should be returned with kindness, and evil with evil, and that none are so cruel or so benevolent as the inhabitants of the desert. As thou hast treated me kindly, so, God willing, shalt thou have a return for thy goodness; but thou must leave here thy attendants and thy effects. Thou and I only will go together, and I will accomplish thy wish in gratitude for what thou hast done for me.” The prince immediately retired from his encampment with the Oone, who said, “Mount upon my shoulders.”

The prince obeyed the commands of the Oone, who having first stopped his rider’s ears with cotton, mounted into the air, and after soaring for some hours descended; when the prince found himself in the island of Kafoor, and near the desired garden. Having alighted from the shoulders of the generous Oone, he examined the spot, beheld groves, blooming shrubs, flowers bordering clear streams, and beautiful birds chanting various melodies. The Oone said, “Behold the object, of thy search, enter the garden!” Upon this the prince left him, passed the gate, which was open, and entered. He walked on every quarter, and depending from the branches of flowering shrubs saw cages holding a variety of beautiful birds, two birds in each cage.

The prince took down a large cage, and having examined the birds, placed in it such as pleased him to the number of six, with which he was preparing to leave the garden; when at the gate a watchman met him, who cried out loudly, “A robber! a robber!” Instantly numerous guards rushing out, seized the prince, bound, and carried him before the sultan, to whom they complained, saying, “We found in the garden this young man, carrying off a cage with six birds. He must certainly be a robber.”

The sultan addressed the prince, saying, “What induced thee, youthful stranger, to violate my property, trespass on the garden, and attempt stealing these birds?” The prince returned no answer: upon which the sultan exclaimed, “Young man, thou art verging upon death; yet still, if thy soul is bent upon having these birds, bring me from the Black Island some bunches of grapes, which are composed of emeralds and diamonds, and I will give thee six birds in addition to those thou hast stolen.” Having said this, the sultan released the prince, who repaired to his generous friend the Oone, whom he informed of the unlucky conclusion of his adventure. “Our task is an easy one,” answered the Oone; “mount upon my shoulders.”

The prince did as he was desired, and after two hours flight the

Oone descended and alighted, when the prince found himself in the Black Island. He immediately advanced towards the garden in which was the fruit composed of emeralds and diamonds. On the way a monster met him of terrible appearance.

The monster sprung at the prince, who, with surprising agility, drawing his sword, wounded the furious beast on the forehead with such effect, that, uttering a dreadful groan, he fell dead at his feet. It happened, by divine decree, that the sultan's daughter looking from a window of the haram, beheld the combat, and, stricken with the manly beauty and prowess of the prince, exclaimed, "Who can withstand thy courage, or who resist thy all conquering charms?" But he did not see the princess, or hear her applause.

The prince, after having slain the monster, proceeded to the garden, the gate of which he found open, and on entering, perceived variety of artificial trees composed of precious stones. Among them was one resembling the vine, the fruits of which were of emeralds and diamonds. He plucked off six bunches, and was quitting the garden when a sentinel met him; who, being alarmed, cried out, "A robber! a robber!" The guards rushed out, and having bound him, carried him before the sultan, saying, "My lord, we found this youth stealing the fruit from the garden of jewels."

The sultan was enraged, and on the point of ordering him to be put to death, when a number of persons entered, crying out, "Good tidings to our sovereign." "On what account?" exclaimed the sultan. "The horrible monster," replied they, "who used annually to appear and devour our sons and daughters, we have just now found dead and cloven in two." The sultan was so rejoiced at this happy event, that he refrained from the blood of the prince, and exclaimed, "Whoever has destroyed this monster let him come to me, and I swear by Allah, who has invested me with royalty, that I will give him my daughter in marriage; and whatever else he may desire, even to the half of my empire."

Upon the sultan's declaration being proclaimed, several young men appeared, pretending that they had killed the monster, and gave various accounts of the combat, which made the prince smile. "By Allah! it is strange," said the sultan, "that a youth in such a perilous situation should be so unconcerned as to smile." While the sultan was ruminating on this occurrence, a eunuch entered from the haram, requesting that he would come and speak to the princess his daughter, who had business of importance to communicate; upon which the sultan arose, and retired from the hall of audience.

When the sultan had entered the princess's apartment, he said, "What can have happened which has occasioned you to send for me so suddenly?" She replied, "Is it thy wish to know who slew the monster, and to reward the courageous hero?" "By Allah," answered the sultan, "who created subjects and their sovereigns, if I can discover him, my first offer to him shall be to espouse thee, whatever be his condition, or though he dwell in the most distant region." The princess rejoined, "No one slew the monster but the youth who entered the garden of gems, and was bearing off the fruit, whom thou wast just now on the point of putting to death."

When the sultan heard the above from his daughter, he returned to the divan, and calling the prince before him, said, "Young man, I grant thee thy pardon; art thou he who destroyed the monster?" "I am," replied the prince. The sultan would instantly have summoned the cauzee to perform the espousals; but the prince said, "I have a friend to consult; permit me to retire, and I will soon return." The sultan consented, saying, "Thy request is but reasonable; but come back quickly." The prince having repaired to his friend the Oone, informed him of what had happened to him, and of the offer of the sultan's daughter in marriage: upon which the Oone said, "Accept the princess; but on condition that, if you marry her, you shall be allowed to carry her to your own kingdom." The prince having returned to the sultan, proposed his terms, which were readily agreed to, and the nuptials were celebrated with the most splendid magnificence. After abiding in the palace of the sultan for a month and three days, he requested permission to depart with his bride towards his own country, which was granted.

On the departure of the prince, his father-in-law presented him with a hundred bunches of the grapes composed of emeralds and diamonds, and he repaired to his friend the Oone; who, having first stopped their ears with cotton, mounted them upon his shoulders, and soaring into the air, after two hours descended near the capital of the island of Kafoor. The prince, taking four bunches of the jewelled fruit, hastened to the palace, and laid them before the sultan; who, in astonishment, exclaimed, “Surely, this young stranger must be a powerful magician, or how could he have travelled the distance of three hundred years’ journey, and have accomplished his purpose in less time than three months! Such an action is truly miraculous. Hast thou, indeed, young man,” said the sultan, “been at the Black Island?” “I have,” answered the prince. “Describe it to me,” replied the sultan, “its appearance, its buildings, its gardens, and rivers.” The prince having answered all his queries, the sultan said, “Noble youth, you may assuredly ask of me whatever you wish!” “I want nothing but the birds,” rejoined the prince. “They are thine,” returned the sultan; “but annually on a certain day, and this is it, there descends from yonder mountain a monstrous vulture, which tears in pieces our men, women, and children; and having flown away with them in his gigantic talons devours their flesh. I have a beautiful daughter, whom, if thou canst overcome this calamitous monster, I will give to thee in marriage.”

The prince replied, “I will consult my friend;” and then returned to the Oone, whom he informed of the offer; but he had scarcely done speaking, when, lo! the vulture appeared: upon which the Oone, ascending into the air, attacked the monster, and after a fierce combat, tore him into halves; after which he descended to the prince, and said, “Go to the sultan, and acquaint him that his destructive enemy is slain.”

The prince did as he was directed: upon which the sultan with his train, and an immense crowd of the inhabitants of the city, came out on horseback, and beheld the monstrous vulture, stretched dead on the ground, torn in halves. The sultan then conducted the prince of Hind to the palace; where his marriage with the princess was instantly celebrated, amid the highest festivity and rejoicings; and after remaining a full month at the sultan’s court, he requested leave to depart; when his father-in-law presented him with ten cages, in each of which were four of the beautiful birds of variously coloured plumage, and dismissed him, after an affectionate farewell, with his daughter.

The prince having departed from the sultan repaired to his faithful friend the Oone, who welcomed his return; and having mounted him upon his back with his two brides, his jewel fruit, and the cages, immediately ascended into the air, from whence, after soaring for some hours, he gradually descended, and alighted near the ruined city, where the prince had left his tents, cattle, and followers, whom he found anxiously expecting his arrival. The friendly Oone had scarcely set him down, when he said to the prince, “My young friend Mahummud, the obligation already conferred upon me by thy coming here was great; but I have one more favour to request.” “What can that be?” replied the prince. “That thou leave not this spot,” continued the Oone, “until thou hast washed my corpse, enshrouded, and laid it in the grave.” Having said thus, the Oone suddenly uttered one loud groan, and instantly his soul took its flight from the body. The astonished prince stood for some time overpowered with sorrow; but at length recovering himself, he, with the assistance of his domestics, washed the corpse, wrapped it in a winding sheet, and having prayed over it, deposited it in the earth.

The funeral ceremonies of his friend being over, he commenced his march homewards, and after three days arrived in sight of the inscribed pyramid, near which he perceived an extensive encampment, which, on reconnoitring, he found to be that of his father. The aged sultan, unable to bear the absence of his son, had marched from his capital in hopes of overtaking him; but on his arrival at the junction of the three ways, being confounded at the sight of the inscriptions, he had halted, not knowing where to proceed. Great was his joy on discovering the prince advancing towards that face of the pyramid on which was engraved, “Whoever travels this road will probably never return.” When the raptures of meeting and mutual congratulations were over, the prince informed the sultan of his wonderful and successful adventures, which overpowered him with astonishment and joy. After reposing a few days, they proceeded towards the capital of the sultan; where tidings having arrived of their approach, the inhabitants ornamented the city with silks, carpets, and transparent paintings; and the nobles and respectable persons issued forth with splendid trains to meet and congratulate their sovereign and the prince, who entered in triumphal procession, amid the greatest rejoicings and prayers for their welfare and prosperity.

STORY OF THE FISHERMAN’S SON.

A fisherman’s son having in company with his father caught a large fish, the latter proposed to present it to the sultan, in hopes of receiving a great reward. While he was gone home to fetch a basket, the son, moved by compassion, returned the fish into the water; but fearful of his father’s anger, fled from his country, and repaired to a distant city, where he was entertained by a person as a servant. Strolling one day in the market, he saw a Jew purchase of a lad a cock at a very high price, and send it by his slave to his wife, with orders to keep it safely till his return home. The fisherman’s son supposing that as the Jew gave so great a price for the cock it must possess some extraordinary property, resolved to obtain it; and, accordingly, having bought two large fowls, carried them to the Jew’s wife, whom he informed that her husband had sent him for the cock, which he had exchanged for the fowls. She gave it him; and he having retired, killed the bird, in whose entrails he found a magical ring; which being rubbed by his touch, a voice proceeded from it demanding what were the commands of its possessor, which should be immediately executed by the genii who were servants of the ring. The fisherman’s son was rejoiced at his good fortune, and while meditating what use he should make of his ring, passed by the sultan’s palace, at the gates of which were suspended many human heads. He inquired the reason, and was informed that they were those of unfortunate princes, who having failed in performing the conditions on which the sultan’s daughter was offered them in marriage, had been put to death. Hoping to be more fortunate than them by the aid of his ring, he resolved to demand the princess’s hand. He rubbed the ring, when the voice asked his commands: upon which he required a rich dress, and it was instantly laid before him. He put it on, repaired to the palace, and being introduced to the sultan, demanded his daughter to wife. The sultan consented, on condition that his life should be forfeited unless he should remove a lofty and extensive mound of sand that lay on one side of the palace, which must be done before he could wed the princess. He accepted the condition; but demanded an interval of forty days to perform the task. This being agreed to, he took his leave, and having repaired to his lodging, rubbed his ring, commanded the genii to remove the mound, and erect on the space it covered a magnificent palace, and to furnish it suitably for a royal residence. In fifteen days the task was completed; he was wedded to the princess, and declared heir to the sultan. In the mean while, the Jew whom he had tricked of the cock and the magical ring resolved to travel in search of his lost prize, and at last arrived at the city, where he was informed of the wonderful removal of the mound, and the erection of the palace. He guessed that it must have been done by means of his ring, to recover which he planned the following stratagem. Having disguised himself as a merchant, he repaired to the palace, and cried for sale valuable jewels. The princess hearing him, sent an attendant to examine them and inquire their price, when the Jew asked in exchange only old rings. This being told to the princess, she recollected that her husband kept an old shabby looking ring in his writing stand, and he being asleep, she took it out, and sent it to the Jew; who, knowing it to be the one he had so long sought for, eagerly gave for it all the jewels in his basket. He retired with his prize, and having rubbed the ring, commanded the genii to convey the palace and all its inhabitants, excepting the fisherman’s son, into a distant desert island, which was done instantly. The fisherman’s son, on awaking in the morning, found himself lying on the mound of sand, which had reoccupied its old spot. He arose, and in alarm lest the sultan should put him to death in revenge for the loss of his daughter, fled to another kingdom as quickly as possible. Here he endured a disconsolate life, subsisting on the sale of some jewels, which he happened to have upon his dress at his flight. Wandering one day through a town, a man offered him for sale a dog, a cat, and a rat, which he purchased, and kept, diverting his melancholy with their tricks, and uncommon playfulness together. These seeming animals proved to be magicians; who, in return for his kindness, agreed to recover for their master his lost prize, and informed him of their intention. He eagerly thanked them, and they all set out in search of the palace, the ring, and the princess. At length they reached the shore of the ocean, after much travel, and descried the island on which it stood, when the dog swam over, carrying on his back the cat and the rat. Being landed, they proceeded to the palace; when the rat entered, and perceived the Jew asleep upon a sofa, with the ring laid before him, which he seized in his mouth, and then returned to his companions. They began to cross the sea, as before, but when about half over the dog expressed a wish to carry the ring in his mouth. The rat refused, lest he should drop it; but the dog threatened, unless he would give it him, to dive and drown them both in the sea. The rat, alarmed for his life, complied with his demand: but the dog missed his aim in snatching at the ring, which fell into the ocean. They landed, and informed the fisherman's son of his loss: upon which he, in despair, resolved to drown himself; when suddenly, as he was going to execute his purpose, a great fish appearing with the ring in his mouth, swam close to shore, and having dropped it within reach of the despairing youth, miraculously exclaimed, "I am the fish which you released from captivity, and thus reward you for your generosity." The fisherman's son, overjoyed, returned to his father-in-law's capital, and at night rubbing the ring, commanded the genii to convey the palace to its old site. This being done in an instant, he entered the palace, and seized the Jew, whom he commanded to be cast alive into a burning pile, in which he was consumed. From this period he lived happily with his princess, and on the death of the sultan succeeded to his dominions.

STORY OF ABOU NEEUT AND ABOU NEEUTEEN; OR, THE WELL-INTENTIONED AND THE DOUBLE-MINDED.

A person named Abou Neeut, or the well-intentioned, being much distressed in his own country, resolved to seek a better livelihood in another. Accordingly he took with him all he possessed, being only one single sherif, and began his journey. He had not travelled far when there overtook him a man, who entertained him with his conversation; in the course of which it appeared that his name was Abou Neeuteen, or double-minded. Being upon the same scheme, they agreed to seek their fortunes together, and it was settled that Abou Neeut should be the purse-bearer of the common stock. The other possessed ten sherifs.

After some days of toilsome journey they reached a city; on entering which, a beggar accosted them, crying out, "Worthy believers, disburse your alms and ye shall be rewarded ten-fold." Upon this, Abou Neeut gave him a sherif; when his companion, enraged at what he thought prodigality, demanded back his money, which was given him, and he marched off leaving his new friend without any thing. Abou Neeut, resigned to his fate, and relying on Providence, proceeded to a mosque to pay his devotions, hoping to meet some charitable person who would relieve his necessities; but he was mistaken. For a night and day he remained in the mosque, but no one offered him charity. Pressed by hunger, he in the dusk of evening stole out, and wandered with fainting steps through the streets. At length perceiving a servant throwing the fragments from an eating cloth, he advanced, and gathering them up, sat down in a corner, and gnawed the bones and half-eaten morsels with eagerness; after which, lifting up his eyes towards heaven, he thanked God for his scanty meal. The servant, who had observed his motions, was surprised and affected at his wretched condition and devotion, of which he informed his master; who, being a charitable man, took from his purse ten sherifs, which he ordered the servant to give to Abou Neeut.

The servant, through avarice, having retained one sherif as a perquisite, delivered the rest to Abou Neeut; who, having counted the money, thanked God for his bounty; but said, agreeably to the scriptural declaration he ought to have had ten-fold for the sherif he had given to the beggar. The master of the servant overhearing this, called Abou Neeut up stairs; and having seated him, inquired his story, which he faithfully related to his host, who was a capital merchant, and was so much pleased at his pious simplicity, that he resolved to befriend him, and desired him to abide for the present in his house.

Abou Neeut had resided some days with his friendly host, when the season arrived at which the merchant, who was punctual in discharging the duties of religion, having examined his stock, set apart the tenth of it in kind, and bestowed it upon his guest, whom he advised to open a shop and try his fortune in trade. Abou Neeut did so, and was so successful, that in a few years he became one of the most reputable merchants in the place.

At the end of this period, sitting one day in his warehouse, he saw in the streets wretchedly habited, lean, and with eyes sunken and dim, his old companion Abou Neeuteen, begging alms of passengers with the importunate cry of distress. Abou Neeut compassionating his miserable situation, ordered a servant to call him to him; and on his arrival, having seated him, sent for refreshments to relieve his immediate want. He then invited him to spend the night at his house; and in the evening, having shut up his warehouse, conducted him home, where a bath was made warm for him, and when he had bathed, he was presented with a change of handsome apparel. Supper was served, and when they had eaten till they were satisfied they conversed on several subjects. At length Abou Neeut exclaimed, “Dost thou not recollect me, my brother?” “No, by Allah, most liberal host,” replied the other; “but who art thou?” “I was,” answered Abou Neeut, “the companion of thy travel at such a period; but my disposition is still unchanged, nor have I forgotten our old connection. Half of what I possess is thine.”

Having said this, Abou Neeut balanced his accounts, and gave half of his property to his distressed fellow traveller; who with it stocked a warehouse, and traded for himself with good success. For some time the two friends lived near each other in great repute, when Abou Neeuteen growing restless, requested Abou Neeut to quit their present abode, and travel for recreation and profit. “My dear friend,” replied Abou Neeut, “why should we travel? have we not here affluence and ease, and what more can we enjoy in any part of the world?” This remonstrance had no effect on Abou Neeuteen, who became so importunate, that at length his kind friend yielded to his whim; they loaded an ample stock of merchandize on mules and camels, and departed for the city of Moussul.

After travelling ten days, they one evening encamped near a deep well, round which they took up their lodging. In the morning Abou Neeut, by his own desire, was let down into the well, more readily to fill the water bags for the use of the caravan, men and cattle, little apprehending what was by Providence decreed to befall him; for his ungrateful friend, who envied his prosperity, and coveted his wealth, having loaded the beasts, cut the rope at the top of the well, and leaving him to his fate, departed.

Abou Neeut remained all day without food, but humbly putting his trust in Allah for deliverance. About the middle of the following night he overheard two Afreets in conversation with each other, when one said, “I am now perfectly happy: for at length I have possessed the beautiful princess of Moussul, and no one can drive me away, unless by sprinkling the infusion of wormwood under her feet on a Friday during divine service in the great mosque, a recipe which will hardly be found out.” “I,” continued the other Afreet, “have been as fortunate as yourself: for I am in possession of such a hidden treasure of gold and jewels, under the mound near Moussul, as cannot be computed, the talisman of which cannot be opened to any one unless by killing on the mound a white cock, and pouring over it the blood; which secret I judge, will not be found out by man.” Having said this, the Afreets took their flight from the well.

Abou Neeut treasured up in his mind the conversation of the Afreets, and at day-light was happily delivered from the well by the arrival of a caravan, some of the followers of which were let down to fill water, and having discovered him, charitably drew him up, and gave him some refreshments. When he was somewhat revived by them, they inquired by what accident he had remained in the well;

and he, concealing the treachery of his ungrateful companion, informed them that having reposed to sleep on the edge he had fallen in, and not being missed at the time by his fellow travellers, the caravan had proceeded on its journey. He then begged leave to accompany his generous deliverers to Moussul, to which they agreed, and liberally furnished him with a conveyance.

On entering the city Abou Neeut perceived all the people in motion, and on inquiring the reason, was informed that they were hastening to the great square before the palace, to see the beheading of a physician, who had failed in attempting to expel an evil spirit that had long possessed the daughter of the sultan, and that such had been the fate of many unhappy men who had tried their skill upon the unfortunate princess. Upon this intelligence he hastened with all speed to the palace, and having obtained admission to the sultan, made the usual prostrations; after which he offered to expel the evil spirit, and begged as part of his reward the sparing of the life of the unsuccessful physician. To this the sultan for the present agreed; but declared, that should Abou Neeut fail in his undertaking, he would execute them together, as ignorant pretenders in their art. Abou Neeut then begged that the trial of his skill might be deferred till the Friday, which he requested of the sultan might be solemnly observed, as the devout prayers of all true believers would draw down a blessing on his operations. The sultan consented; the unfortunate physician was released from the executioner, and commanded to be kept in the palace, in which Abou Neeut had also an apartment allotted him. Proclamation was then made through the city for the strict celebration of the approaching sabbath, under pain of the royal displeasure on those who should neglect it.

Friday being arrived, and the whole city assembled at prayers, Abou Neeut prepared his infusion of wormwood, as the Afreet had mentioned. Being introduced into the apartment of the princess, who lay in a melancholy stupor, he poured the infusion upon her feet, when a loud yell was heard near her, and she starting up, as if from sleep, called upon her attendants to assist her in rising. News was immediately conveyed to the sultan of the princess’s recovery, and he came overjoyed to witness her returned senses. He commanded public rejoicings to be made, large sums to be distributed in alms, and desired Abou Neeut to demand what he chose in reward for his important service, at the same time ordering the unsuccessful physician to be set at liberty, with a handsome present.

Abou Neeut, who had been captivated by the beauty of the princess, asked, as his reward, her hand in marriage: upon which the sultan consulted with his viziers, who advised him to dismiss the petitioner for the present, with orders to return in the morning, when he should receive the sultan's decision on a request which demanded much consideration. When Abou Neeut had retired, the viziers represented to the sultan, that it was fitting the husband of his daughter should at least possess great wealth: for though Abou Neeut had expelled the evil spirit, yet if he could not support her in a manner becoming her rank, he was not worthy to marry her. They, therefore, advised him to select a number of his most valuable jewels, to shew them to Abou Neeut, and demand as a dowry for the princess some of equal estimation; which if he could produce he was ready to receive him as his son-in-law; but if not, he must accept a compensation for his services more suited to his condition than the royal alliance.

On Abou Neeut's appearance at court the next morning the sultan displayed the jewels, and made the proposal advised by his viziers; when looking with the utmost indifference upon the brilliant stones before him, he assured the sultan that he would the next day present him with ten times the number, of superior value and lustre; which declaration astonished the whole court, as it was known that no prince possessed richer gems than those in possession of the sultan of Moussul.

Abou Neeut having taken leave of the sultan proceeded to the poultry market, and having purchased a cock entirely white and free from blemish, brought it to his lodgings, where he continued till the rising of the moon, when he walked out of the city alone, and speeded to the mound of blueish earth mentioned by the Afreet of the well to contain the invaluable hidden treasure. Being arrived at the mound, he ascended it, cut the throat of the cock, whose blood began to flow, when, lo! the earth shook, and soon made an opening, through which, to his great satisfaction, he perceived such heaps of inestimable precious stones, of all sorts, as are not to be adequately described, Abou Neeut now went back to the city, where, having procured ten camels, with two panniers on each, he returned and loaded them with his treasure, which he conveyed to his lodging, having first filled up the cavity of the mound.

In the morning Abou Neeut repaired with his loaded camels to the palace, and entering the court of the divan, in which the sultan sat expecting him, after a profound obeisance, cried out, "Descend for a moment, my lord, and examine the dowry of the princess." The sultan, arising from his throne, came down the steps of the hall, and the camels being made to kneel, he examined the panniers, and was so astonished at the richness of their contents, being jewels far surpassing his own in size and lustre, that he exclaimed, "By Allah! if the treasuries of all the sultans of the world were brought together they could not afford gems equal to these." When somewhat recovered from his surprise, he inquired of his viziers how he should now act towards Abou Neeut; when they all unanimously cried out, "By all means give him your daughter." The marriage was then immediately celebrated with great splendour, and Abou Neeut conducted himself so well in his high station, that the sultan his father-in-law committed to him the giving public audience in his stead, and the decision of all appeals, three days in each week.

Some time had elapsed after his elevation, when Abou Neeut one day giving audience in the magnificent hall of one of his country palaces, beheld a man among the crowd of a sorrowful aspect, dressed in a wretched habit, who cried, "O true believers, O charitable gentlemen, relieve the distressed!" Abou Neeut commanded one of his mace-bearers to bring him to his presence, and on his appearance recognized his treacherous companion who had left him in the well. Without making himself known, or betraying any emotion but that of compassion, he ordered attendants to conduct him to the warm bath; in which being refreshed, he was arrayed in a magnificent habit, and again brought to the divan. Abou Neeut having retired with him into a closet, said, "Knowest them me not, my old friend?" "No, by Allah," replied the other. "Know then," returned he, "that I am Abou Neeut, thy benefactor and companion, whom you treacherously left in the well." He then related all his adventures, concluding them with an assurance, that so far from resenting his treachery, he regarded his conduit as the impulse of fate, and as the means by which he, himself, had attained his present dignity and affluence, which he would share with him. The envious heart of Abou Neeuteen was unconquerable; and instead of thanking the noble-minded Abou Neeut for his forgiveness and liberality, he exclaimed, "Since the well has been to thee so fortunate, why should it not prove so also to me?" Having said this, he hastily rose up and quitted Abou Neeut, who would not punish such rudeness, even without taking leave.

Abou Neeuteen hastened with all speed to the well, and having descended by a rope, sat down, impatiently expecting the arrival of the Afreets, who about midnight alighted, and resting themselves on the terrace above, began to inquire each other's adventures. "Since we met last," said one, "I have been rendered miserable; for a cunning Mussulmaun found out the secret of overpowering me, and has married my princess, nor can I revenge myself, for he is under the protection of a converted genie, whom the prophet has appointed to watch over him." "I," continued the other Afreet, "have been equally unfortunate with thyself; for the same man who has wedded thy mistress discovered my hidden treasure, and keeps it in spite of my attempts to recover it: but let us fill up this abominable well, which must have been the cause of all our disasters." Having said thus, the two Afreets immediately hurled the terrace and large stones into the well, which crushed the ungrateful and envious Abou Neeuteen to atoms. Some days after this, the good Abou Neeut, finding he did not return, repaired to the well, and seeing it fallen in, ordered it to be cleared; when the discovery of the body proved to him that the malicious spirit of the wretch had been the cause of his own destruction. He with reverence exclaimed, "There is no refuge but with the Almighty; may he preserve us from envy, which is destructive to the envious alone!"

Abou Neeut returned to the capital, where, not long after, his father-in-law the sultan dying, left him heir to his kingdom. His succession was disputed by the husbands of the two elder sisters of his wife; but the ministers and people being in favour of the sultan's will, they resigned their pretensions and submitted to his authority. His wife being brought to bed of a son, her sisters bribed the midwife to pretend that the sultana had produced a dog. They did the same by another son. At the third lying-in of the sultana Abou Neeut resolved to be present, and a beautiful princess appeared. The two infant princes having been thrown at the gate of one of the royal palaces, were taken up by the gardener and his wife, who brought them up as their own. Abou Neeut in visiting the garden with his daughter, who shewed an instinctive affection for them, from this, and their martial play with each other (having made horses of clay, bows and arrows, &c.), was induced to inquire of the gardener whether they were really his own children. The gardener upon this related the circumstance of his having found them exposed at the gate of the palace, and mentioned the times, which agreed exactly with those of the sultana's delivery. Abou Neeut then questioned the midwife, who confessed the imposition and wickedness of the sisters, whom he left to be punished by the pangs of their own consciences, convinced that envy is its own severest tormentor. The young princes were acknowledged; and the good Abou Neeut had the satisfaction of seeing them grow up to follow his example.

ADVENTURE OF A COURTIER, RELATED BY HIMSELF TO HIS PATRON, AN AMEER OF EGYPT.

It is related by an historian that there was an ameer of the land of Egypt, whose mind being one night unusually disturbed, he sent for one of his courtiers, a convivial companion, and said to him, “To-night my bosom, from what cause I know not, is uncommonly restless, and I wish thee to divert me by some amusing narrative.” The courtier replied, “To hear is to obey: I will describe an adventure which I encountered in the youthful part of my life.”

When a very young man I was deeply in love with a beautiful Arab maiden, adorned by every elegance and grace, who resided with her parents; and I used frequently to visit their camp, for her family was one of the desert tribes. One day my mind felt uncommonly anxious concerning her, and I resolved to seek relief by a visit; but when I reached the spot found neither my beloved nor any of her kindred. I questioned some passengers, who informed me that the family had removed their encampment from scarcity of forage for their herds and camels. I remained for some time on the ground; but observing no signs of their return, my impatience of absence became intolerable, and my love compelled me to travel in search of my charmer. Though the shades of evening were falling, I replaced the saddle upon my camel, put on my vestments, and girding on my sabre proceeded. I had advanced some distance, when the night became dismally black, and from the darkness I now sunk into sands and hollows, and now ascended declivities, while the yells of wild beasts resounded on every quarter. My heart beat with apprehension, and my tongue did not cease to repeat the attributes of the Almighty, our only defender in time of need. At length stupor overcame my senses, and I slept; while my camel quitted the track, and wandered from the route I had meant to pursue all night. Suddenly my head was violently intercepted by the branch of a tree, and I was awakened by the blow, which gave me infinite pain. As I recovered myself I beheld trees, verdure sprinkled with flowers, and a clear rivulet; also a variety of birds, whose notes were melodiously sweet. I alighted from my camel, and laid the bridle on my arm, as the underwood of the thicket was closely entwined.

I did not cease leading my camel till I was out of the thicket, when I remounted; but at a loss which way to go, and unknowing where Providence might direct me, I reached the desert, and cast my eyes over the expanse; when, lo! at length a smoke appeared in the midst of it. I whipped my camel, and at length reached a fire, and near it observed a handsome tent, before which was a standard planted, surrounded by spears, horses picketted, and camels grazing. I said to myself, "What can mean this tent, which has a grand appearance, in so solitary a plain?" I then went to the rear of the tent, and exclaimed, "Health to you, O inhabitants of this tent, and may the Almighty to you be merciful!" Upon this there advanced from it a youth, seemingly about nineteen, who appeared graceful as the rising moon, and valour and benevolence gleamed upon his aspect. He returned my salutation, and said, "Brother Arab, perchance thou hast missed thy way." I answered, "Yes, shew it, and may God requite thee!" upon which he replied, "My dwelling, brother Arab, is at present in this wild spot; but the night is dreary, and shouldst thou proceed there is no surety against wild beasts tearing thee in pieces. Lodge, then, at present with me in safety, and repose, and when day shall appear I will direct thee on thy way." I alighted, when he took my camel, picketted her, and gave her water and fodder. He then retired for a while; but returned with a sheep, which he killed, flayed, and cut up; then lighted a fire, and when it was of a proper glow broiled part of the sheep, which he had previously seasoned with sundry dried herbs, seeds, and spices, and when ready presented his cookery to me.

During his hospitalities I observed that my kind host sometimes beat his breast and wept, from which I guessed that he was in love, and a wanderer, like myself. My curiosity was raised; but I said within myself, "I am his guest, why should I intrude upon him by painful questions?" and refrained from inquiry. When I had eaten as much as sufficed me, the youth arose, went into his tent, and brought out a basin and ewer, with a napkin embroidered with silk and fringed with gold; also a cruet of rose water, in which musk had been infused. I was astonished at his proceedings, and the politeness of his demeanour, and exclaimed inwardly, “How wonderful is the abode of so accomplished a personage in this wild desert.” We made our ablutions, and conversed awhile upon various subjects; after which my gentle host went to his tent, from whence he brought out a piece of red silk damask, which he divided between us, saying, “Brother Arab, go into my tent and choose thy place of repose, for last night and to-day great must have been thy hardship and fatigue.”

I entered the tent, and in one partition of it found a mattress of green damask: upon which, having pulled off my upper garments, I lay down, and slept so soundly that I never enjoyed, before or since, so refreshing a repose. At length I awoke, when night was far advanced, and became involved in thought respecting my hospitable host; but knew not what to conjecture, and was sinking again into slumber, when, lo! gentle murmurs struck my ears, than which I never heard sound more soft or tenderly affecting. I lifted up the curtain of my partition, and looked around, when I beheld a damsel more beautiful than any I had ever seen, seated by the generous owner of the tent. They wept and complained of the agonies of love, of separation and interruptions to their desire of frequent meetings. Then I said within myself, “There is a wonderfully dignified appearance in this amiable youth, yet he lives alone, and I have seen no other tent on the plain. What can I conjecture, but that this damsel must be a daughter of one of the good genii, who has fallen in love with him, and upon her account he has retired to this solitary spot?” Respect for their love made me drop the curtain; I drew the coverlid over me, and again fell asleep.

When the morning dawned I awoke, dressed, and having performed my ablutions and prayers, said to the young man, who had already risen, “Brother Arab, if in addition to thy hospitalities already shewn thou wilt put me in my way, my obligations will be complete.” He looked kindly, and said, “If convenient, my brother, let me entertain thee as my guest for three days.” I could not refuse his hospitable request, and abode with him. On the third day I ventured to inquire his name and family, when he replied, “I am of the noble tribe of Azzra,” and I discovered that he was the son of my father’s brother. “Son of my uncle,” exclaimed I, “what can have induced thee to court the seclusion of this desert spot, and to quit thy kinsmen, neighbours, and dependents?”

Upon hearing these words, the eyes of the youth became suffused with tears, he sighed, and said, “Ah! my cousin, I passionately admired the daughter of my uncle, and was so devoted to her love that I asked her in marriage; but he refused me, and wedded her to another of our tribe richer than myself, who carried her to his abode. When she was thus torn from me, despair agitated my soul, I quitted my relations, friends, and companions, became enamoured of solitude, and retired to this lonely spot.”

When he had finished his communication, I said, “But where is the abode of thy beloved and thy successful rival?” He replied, “Near the summit of yonder mountain, from whence, as frequently as opportunity will allow, in the stillness of night, when sleep hath overpowered the eyes of the village, she ventures to my tent, and we enjoy the company of each other; but believe me, my brother, our passion is innocent as devotional love. Hence I dwell here in the manner you have witnessed, and while she visits me delightful will pass the hours, until Allah shall execute his appointed decrees, and reward our constancy in this world, or consign us to the grave together.”

When the unfortunate youth had concluded his narration, at which I was affected with sincere compassion for his circumstances, an eager desire to relieve the lovers from their oppressors occupied my mind, and after much consideration I addressed him thus: “If thou choosest, I think I can point out a plan which, under the blessing of Allah, may end the sufferings of thyself and thy beloved.” He replied, “O son of my uncle, reveal it to me!” and I continued, saying, “When night shall arrive, and the damsel cometh, let us seat her upon my camel; for she is sure-footed and swift of pace; do thou then mount thy steed, and I will accompany you upon one of your camels. We will travel all night, and ere morning shall have passed the forest, when you will be safe, and thy heart will be rendered happy with thy beloved. The land of God is wide enough to afford us an asylum; and by Heaven I swear, that while life remains I will be thy friend.” The youth replied, “Son of my uncle, I will consult upon thy plan with my beloved, for she is prudent and well-informed.”

When night had shut in, and the usual hour of the damsel's coming approached, my kind host impatiently expected her arrival; but in vain, for she did not appear. He rose, stood in the doorway of the tent, opened his mouth, and drew in the exhalations of the gale, then returned, sat down pensively for a few minutes, and at last bursting into tears, exclaimed, "Ah! my cousin, there are no tidings of the daughter of my uncle, some, mishap must have befallen her. Remain here while I go in search of intelligence." Having said thus, he took up his sabre, his lance, and departed.

When somewhat more than an hour had elapsed, I heard his footstep, and soon perceived him advancing, bearing something bulky in his arms, while he called loudly upon me in a distressful tone. I hastened towards him, and upon my arrival he exclaimed, "Alas, alas! the beloved daughter of my uncle is no more, and I bear her remains. She was hastening, as usual, to my tent, when suddenly a lion sprung upon her in the path, and tore her in pieces. These relics are all that remain of my beloved." He then laid them down, and, lo! the thigh bones of the damsel and part of her ribs. He wept piteously, and said, "Remain here till I return;" after which he departed with the swiftness of an arrow. In about an hour he returned, and in his hand was the head of the lion, which he threw down, and asked eagerly for water, which I brought him. He then washed his hands, cleansed the mouth of the lion, which he rapturously kissed, and wept bitterly for some moments. He then exclaimed, "By Allah, I conjure thee, O son of my uncle, and by the ties of relationship between us, that thou observe my will; for within this hour I shall follow my beloved; be thou our mourner, and bury her remains with mine in the same grave." Having said this, he retired into the sleeping partition of the tent; where he remained at his devotions for an hour, then came out, beat his breast, sighed deeply, and at length heaved his expiring groan, saying, "I come, I come, my beloved, I come!" and his pure soul took flight for the mansions of Paradise.

When I beheld his corpse, sad indeed was my condition, and from excess of sorrow I found it difficult to perform my promise; but at length I arose, washed, enshrouded, and laid the remains of these constant lovers in the same grave, near which I remained for three days in prayer and lamentation; after which I departed homewards:

but have not failed annually to visit the spot, to bedew their grave with my tears, and pray for the mercy of Allah to their souls and my own errors.

STORY OF THE PRINCE OF SIND, AND FATIMA, DAUGHTER OF AMIR BIN NAOMAUN.

Some ages back a certain sultan of Sind had a son by a concubine, who behaved so rudely to his sultana, that she became dispirited and lost her health, which her favourite woman observing, resolved by stratagem to get rid of the prince. She advised her mistress, when he might next insult her, to say to him, "That he would never appear becoming his rank till he was beloved by Fatima, daughter of a sultan named Amir bin Naomaun." The queen having followed the woman's directions, the prince resolved to travel to the country of the princess, and demand her in marriage. Accordingly, having obtained the consent of the sultan his father, he departed with an attendance suitable to his rank. After marching for some time he entered a desert, which was covered with a numberless flight of locusts, that had fallen exhausted for want of food. Pitying their distress, he ordered meal to be spread on the ground, when the locusts having refreshed themselves flew away. Some days after this incident he reached a thick forest crowded with elephants, and herds of wild animals of every description; but as they did not attempt to attack him, and were in a starving condition, he ordered some of his cattle to be killed, and distributed to them for food. Having satisfied themselves they retired, shewing every sign that dumbness would allow of being pleased with his kind treatment. On his march onwards the prince met a venerable old man, of whom he inquired the route to the territories of Amir bin Naomaun, and was informed that they were at no great distance; but only to be entered by a range of rugged and steep mountains composed of iron-stone, and next to impassable; also, that should he succeed in overcoming this difficulty, it was in vain to hope to attain the princess. The prince inquiring the reason, the old man continued, "Sultan Amir bin Naomaun has resolved that no one shall wed his daughter unless he can perform three tasks which he will impose, and these are of so difficult a nature as not to be executed by the labour or ingenuity of man, and many unhappy princes have lost their heads in the attempt; for he puts them to death instantly on failure: be advised, therefore, and give up so fruitless an expedition." The prince, instead of listening to the admonition of the old man, resolved to proceed; and having requested his prayers and benedictions, continued his march. In a short time, having entered the passes of the mountains, he discovered vast caverns inhabited by a species of genii, who were employed in working upon masses of iron-stone, which they dug from the rock. The prince having entertained them with a hospitable feast, they, in return, shewed him the easiest route through the stupendous mountains, and he at length arrived in safety before the capital of sultan Amir bin Naomaun, to whom he sent an envoy, requesting leave to encamp on the plain, and to offer himself as a candidate for the beautiful princess his daughter. The sultan, in reply, acceded to his petition, and invited him to the palace; where, in the evening, he was led into a court, in which was placed an immense vessel filled with three kinds of grain mixed together, which (as his first task towards obtaining the princess) he was to separate entirely from each other, and put into three heaps; which if not accomplished before sunrise, he was then to forfeit his head in punishment for his temerity. It being now too late to recede, the prince resigned himself to Providence; and the gates of the court being locked upon him, he prayed to Allah, and began to separate the grains; but finding his progress vain, his spirits deserted him about midnight, and he left off his fruitless labour in despair, endeavouring to reconcile himself to death. While he was praying for fortitude to bear him up in his last moments, a voice was heard, saying, "Be comforted, and receive the reward of thy charity to famished insects." Immediately after this the heavens were obscured, as if by thick clouds, which descended on the court, when, lo! this phenomenon proved to be myriads of locusts; who, alighting on the vessel, in a few hours emptied it of all the grain, which they disposed of, each in its kind, in three several heaps, and having given a general buzzing of salutation, took flight, and vanished into the air. The prince was overjoyed at the miraculous accomplishment of his task by the grateful locusts, and having offered up thanks to Allah and the prophet for his deliverance from impending destruction, composed himself to rest, doubting not but that they would assist him to overcome the two remaining labours. Great was the surprise of the sultan Amir bin Naomaun, when, on coming at daylight to the court, he beheld his intended victim in a profound sleep, and the grain in three separate heaps, neatly piled up in the form of domes. The prince awaking, saluted him, and demanded to be informed of his next task; but the sultan put him off to the evening, until when he entertained him at the palace with a most magnificent feast; and his obdurate heart was so softened by the noble address and demeanour of his guest, that he wished he might be able to overcome the remaining impositions and become his son-in-law. The princess, also, who had the curiosity to look at him through the blinds of her apartments, was so fascinated with his appearance that she prayed for his success.

When night had set in, the prince was conducted to an open plain in front of the palace, in the centre of which was a large reservoir full of clear water, which the sultan commanded him to drain off before sunrise, or forfeit his life. The prince remained alone on the brink of the reservoir with rather somewhat more hope of success than he had felt of overcoming his task of the preceding night; nor was he disappointed, for about midnight a voice was heard exclaiming, "Prince, benevolence is never unrequited:" and, lo! the plain was filled with elephants, rhinoceroses, camels, dromedaries, lions, tigers, and every species of wild beasts, in such immense droves as could not be numbered, who, advancing in turn to the reservoir, drank in such quantity that it, at length, was completely emptied, and became as dry as if just finished. The beasts then expressing pleasure by their varying natural noises at having served their benefactor departed, and left him to enjoy the deliverance from the labour imposed upon him.

The prince, now more assured than ever that he was the favourite of Allah and the prophet, after offering up prayers with a relieved heart, slept comfortably in a building creeled on the margin of the reservoir, and was only awakened by the call of the sultan at sun-rise, who was more astonished at the accomplishment of this labour than the former, though certainly each was equally difficult. He conducted the prince to his palace, and the day was spent in the highest festivity.

At the approach of night the prince was conducted to his third task, which was to complete and fit up before daylight from a vast mass of planks of the choicest timber ready stored the doors, windows, and balconies of an unfinished palace, much larger than that which the sultan inhabited. The prince at the apprehension of the consequences of failure was somewhat alarmed; but the recollection of his former aids supported him, and after offering up his devotions he sat down, composedly waiting for the decision of Providence on his fate. His resignation was accepted, for at midnight he was roused from his contemplations by the sounds of sawing, planing, hammering, nailing, and the songs of happy work-men. Looking up he perceived his friends of the iron mountains; who, all saluting him, cried out, “Prince, set your heart at rest, for we are come to repay you for your hospitable feast.” Before daylight the palace was fitted up in a manner more elegant than can be described, and every door, window, and balcony painted with the most brilliant colours, flowered with silver and gold. The grateful labourers of the iron mountains having finished their work, respectfully saluted the prince and departed.

The prince having taken a grateful leave of his useful friends, walked through the palace, and was eagerly employed in admiring its elegance and the magnificence of their finishing hand, when the sultan Amir bin Naomaun, who from his apartments at sun-rise had observed the miraculous completion, appeared, having hastened to examine the superb workmanship, and to congratulate his son-in-law, for as such he now acknowledged him, and as the favoured of Allah, and of the last of prophets. He conducted the prince to the palace, and the most magnificent preparations being made, the nuptials with his daughter were celebrated in the new edifice, where the bride and bridegroom enjoyed themselves for three months, at the expiration of which the prince begged permission to return to his father’s dominions, which he reached just in time to release him from the attack of an inimical sultan, who had invaded the country, and laid close siege to his capital. His father received him with rapture, and the prince having made an apology to the sultana for his former rude behaviour, she received his excuses, and having no child of her own readily adopted him as her son; so that the royal family lived henceforth in the utmost harmony, till the death of the sultan and sultana, when the prince succeeded to the empire.

STORY OF THE LOVERS OF SYRIA; OR, THE HEROINE.

There formerly dwelt in the city of Damascus two brothers, one poor and the other rich, the former of whom had a son, and the latter a daughter. The poor man dying left his son, just emerging from infancy, to the protection of his wealthy uncle, who behaved to his unfortunate charge with paternal tenderness, till the youth, who had exchanged vows of love with his cousin, requested her in marriage; when the father refused, and expelled him from his house. The young lady, however, who ardently loved him, agreed to elope, and having one night escaped from her father's dwelling, repaired to the object of her affection; who, having had notice of her intentions, had prepared two horses and a mule to carry their baggage. They travelled all night, and by morning reached a sea-port, where they found a ship ready to sail, in which, having secured a passage, the lady immediately embarked; but the lover remained on shore to dispose of the horses and mule. While he was seeking for a purchaser in the market, a fair wind sprung up, and the master of the ship having weighed anchor, hoisted sail and departed: the lady in vain entreating him to wait the return of her beloved, or send her on shore, for he was captivated with her beauty. Finding herself thus ensnared, as she was a woman of strong mind, instead of indulging in unavailing complaint, she assumed a satisfied air; and as the only way to preserve her honour, received the addresses of the treacherous master with pretended complacency, and consented to receive him as a husband at the first port at which the ship might touch. With these assurances he was contented, and behaved to her with honourable deference, and affectionate respect. At length the vessel anchored near a city, to which the captain went to make preparations for his marriage; but the lady, while he was on shore, addressed the ship's crew, setting forth with such force his treacherous conduct to herself, and offering such rewards if they would convey her to her lover at the port they had left, that the honest sailors were moved in her favour, agreed to obey her as their mistress, and hoisting sail, left the master to shift for himself. After some days of favourable weather, a contrary gale blowing hard, the vessel was driven far out of her course, and for shelter obliged to anchor in the first haven that offered, which proved to be that of a large city, the capital of a potent sultan, whose officers came on board to examine the vessel, and inquire into her cargo and destination. These men, to their great surprise, finding it commanded by a lady of exquisite beauty, reported her charms to the sultan, who resolved to possess them, and sent her an offer of marriage; to which she seemingly consented, and the sultan commanded the most splendid preparations to be made for the nuptials. When all was ready, he sent onboard the vessel the daughter of his vizier, with other ladies, thirty-nine in number, magnificently attired, to wait upon his bride, and attend her on shore. They were graciously received by the politic lady, and invited to refresh themselves in the grand cabin, which she had elegantly adorned with costly hangings, and prepared in it a superb collation, to which they sat down. She then dismissed the boats in which they came, sending a message to the sultan that she should entertain the ladies on board till the next morning, when she would repair on shore and conclude their marriage. She behaved towards her new guests with such winning affability, that they one and all admired their expected sultana, and partook of the entertainment with the highest satisfaction; but what was their surprise when, in the middle of the night, she commanded the crew to weigh anchor, having first warned them, on pain of her displeasure and immediate death, to keep silence, and raise no alarm in the harbour. The vessel sailed, and put to sea without being molested, when the intrepid commandress consoled the affrighted ladies, related to them her own adventures, and assured them that when she should have rejoined her lover, they should, if they chose it, be honourably restored to their homes; but in the mean time she hoped they would contentedly share her fortunes. This behaviour, by degrees, so won upon their minds, that the ladies forgot their sorrows, became pleased with their situation, and in a short time were so attached to their new mistress, that they would not have left her had it been in their power. After some weeks sail, it became necessary to steer towards the first coast that should present itself, to lay in a supply of fresh water and provisions, and land appearing, the vessel anchored, when the lady with her companions went on shore. Here they were surrounded by forty robbers, who threatened to take them prisoners; when the heroic lady, desiring her friends to conceal their fears, assumed a smiling countenance, and addressing the chief of the banditti, assured him there would be no occasion for force, as she and her companions were ready to share their love, being women who were above the prejudices of their sex, and had devoted themselves to pleasure, in search of which they roved on board their vessel from one coast to another, and would now stay with them as long as they might wish for their company. This declaration suiting the depraved minds of the robbers, they laid aside their fierce looks and warlike weapons, bringing abundance of all sorts of provisions to regale their expected mistresses, with whom they sat down to a plentiful repast, which was heightened by a store of wines which the lady had brought in her boats from the ship. Mirth and jollity prevailed; but the fumes of the liquors, in which the politic lady had infused strong opiates, suddenly operated upon their senses, and they fell down one and all in a state of stupefaction. She then with her companions drew the sabres of their brutal admirers and put them all to death excepting the chief, whom they bound hand and foot with strong cords, and after cutting off his beard and mustachios, tied his own cimeter round his neck, leaving him to feel mortification worse than death on the recovery of his senses, namely, the sight of his slaughtered fellows, and regret at the loss of his imagined happiness. The ladies then stripped the caves of the robbers of the vast wealth which they had hoarded up from their plunders, and having carried it on board their boats, with a stock of water and provisions, returned to the ship, weighed anchor, and sailed triumphant and rejoicing from such a dangerous coast. After some weeks' sail they again descried land, to which they approached, and discovered a spacious harbour, round which rose a vast city, the buildings of which were sublimely lofty, adorned with flights of marble steps to the water's edge, and crowned with domes and minarets topped with pinnacles of gold. The enterprising lady having anchored, clothed herself and her companions in magnificent male habits; after which she ordered the boats to be hoisted out, and they were rowed ashore by part of their crew richly dressed. On landing, they found all the inhabitants of the city in mourning, and making doleful lamentation for their late sultan, who had died only a few days before. The gallant appearance of a stranger so nobly attended created much surprise, and intelligence of the arrival was instantly conveyed to the vizier, who acted as regent till the election of a new monarch, which ceremony was just on the point of taking place. The minister, who thought he perceived in such a critical arrival the work of fate, immediately waited on the now supposed prince, whom he invited to be present at the election; at the same time informing him that when in this kingdom a sultan died without issue, the laws appointed that his successor should be chosen by the alighting of a bird on his shoulder, which bird would be let fly among the crowd assembled in the square before the palace. The seeming prince accepted the invitation, and with the disguised ladies was conducted to a gorgeous pavilion, open on all sides, to view the ceremony. The ominous bird being loosened from his chain, soared into the air to a great height, then gradually descending, flew round and round the square repeatedly, even with the faces of the spectators. At length it darted into the pavilion, where the lady and her companions were seated, fluttered around her head, and at length rested upon her shoulder, giving at the same time a cry of exultation, stretching its neck, and flapping its wings. Immediately upon this, the viziers and courtiers bowed themselves to the ground, and the assembled crowd prostrated themselves on the earth, crying out, “Long live our glorious sultan, the chosen of Providence, the elected by the decrees of fate!” The disguised lady was instantly conducted to the palace, seated on a splendid throne, and proclaimed amidst the acclamations of the people, sovereign of an extensive empire; nor were the abilities of her mind unequal to the task of government. In a few days the vizier offered to the supposed sultan his daughter in marriage; and his offer being accepted, the nuptials were celebrated with the utmost magnificence; but what was the astonishment of the bride, when, instead of being caressed, the sultan on retiring with her became cold and reserved, rose from her, and spent the night in prayer. In the morning the sultana was questioned by her mother; who, on her relating the behaviour of the husband, observed, that possibly from his youth he might be over reserved; but that love would naturally in time operate its effect. Several evenings past in the same manner, when the bride, mortified at such coldness, could no longer restrain herself, and said, “Why, my lord, if you disliked me, did you take me to wife? but if you love not as other men, tell me so, and I will suffer my misfortune in silence.” The lady, moved by this remonstrance, replied, “Most virtuous princess, would that for your sake I were of the sex you suppose me; but, alas! I am like you a woman, disappointed in love.” She then related to her the wonderful adventures she had undergone since leaving her father’s house, at which the vizier’s daughter was so affected that she vowed for her a lasting friendship, agreed to keep her secret, and live with her till such times as chance should restore her lover. In return for this kindness the lady promised that should the object of her affections ever arrive, he should marry them both, and that she should have the precedence in the ceremony of union. The two friends having thus agreed, the vizier’s daughter regained her cheerfulness, and means were taken to convince her father, mother, and friends of the consummation of the nuptials. From this time they lived in perfect happiness together, one exercising the authority of sultan to the satisfaction of the subject, and the other acting the part of a satisfied and obedient wife; but still both were anxious to meet their mutual husband. As the capital of the kingdom was a mart for most nations of the world, the pretended sultan formed the following stratagem for discovering her beloved, not doubting but that he would travel over all parts of the world in search of the object of his affection. She erected a most magnificent caravanserai, furnished with baths hot and cold, and every convenience for the weary traveller. When it was finished, she issued a proclamation, that sojourners from all parts should be welcome to lodge in it, and be provided with every necessary till they could accommodate themselves in the city, or pursued, if only travellers, their journey to another part. Over the gate of this edifice she placed an exact statue of herself, and gave orders to the guards that whatever stranger, on looking at it, should shew signs of agitation, or utter words signifying that he knew the original, should be immediately seized and confined in the palace. Many weeks had not passed when the father of this enterprising lady, who had travelled many thousands of miles in search of his daughter, arrived at the gate, and on seeing the statue, exclaimed, “Alas! alas! how like my poor, lost child!” He was immediately carried to the palace, lodged in a magnificent apartment, treated with the highest respect; but kept in complete ignorance as to the cause of his confinement and his future fate. Not long after this, his disconsolate nephew, who, on the departure of the treacherous captain, had wandered from city to city in hopes of finding his mistress, arrived, and repaired to the caravanserai.

On sight of the statue his feelings overcame him; he sighed and fainted: when he was taken up by the guards and lodged in the palace, where being come to himself, he was astonished at the respect and attention paid him by the domestics, and the splendid manner in which he was entertained; but it was in vain that he inquired the cause of his detention, the only answer he could get being, “Have patience, my lord, and repose yourself till Providence shall free you from our confinement.” Soon after this the master of the ship, who had visited port after port in hopes of recovering his vessel, reached the city, and hearing of the hospitality with which all strangers were received at the caravanserai of the sultan, repaired to the gateway; but no sooner had he cast his eyes on the statue, than he exclaimed, “Ah! how like to the artful yet virtuous woman who cheated me of my property by stealing my ship.” Immediately he was seized by the guards, and conveyed to the palace, but treated with kindness. Many days had not succeeded to this event, when the sultan and the vizier, whose daughter with the thirty-nine ladies had been so artfully carried away from them by the enterprising heroine of this history, made their appearance at the gateway of the caravanserai, and on beholding the statue, cried out, “Surely this is the likeness of her who deprived us of our children; ah! that we could find her and be revenged on her hypocrisy!” On saying this they were apprehended and taken to the palace, where they were conducted to apartments suitable to their rank. In a few days afterwards the chief of the banditti, who, burning with the ireful resolution of revenging the deaths of his associates, had travelled from place to place in hopes of finding the object of his fury, arrived at the gateway, and observing the statue, roared out in a rage, “Surely this is the resemblance of my tormenter; oh! that I could meet thy original, so that I might have the satisfaction of making her blood atone for the murder of my friends!” Instantly, as he had spoken, the guards at the gate rushing upon him, bound him hand and foot, conveyed him to the palace, where he was confined in a loathsome dungeon, and fed on the coarsest viands.

The pretended sultan having now all the parties in her power, one morning ascended her throne in full audience, and commanded them to be brought before her. When they had made their obeisance, she commanded them to relate the cause of their having journeyed to her capital; but the royal presence rendered them incapable of uttering a word: upon which she exclaimed, “Since you cannot speak, I will;” and then discovered to their astonished minds the adventures of each, which had occasioned their travelling. She then discovered herself, and fell upon the necks of her father and lover, with whom she retired into the private apartments. The sultan and his vizier were made happy in the company of the daughter of the latter and the other ladies. The master of the ship, as his troubles had atoned for his irregular behaviour, was received into favour, and had his vessel restored; but the savage chief of the banditti was put to death, by being cast into a burning pile, that no further injury might be offered to mankind. In a few days, the most magnificent preparations being made, the double nuptials of the heroic lady and her friend the vizier’s daughter were celebrated with her constant lover, to whom she resigned her throne, and the happy wives lived together in felicity, undisturbed by jealousy of the husband’s attention to either, so equally did they share his love. The sultan and vizier, after being long entertained at the court, took leave, and returned, under an escort, to their own country; but the daughter and the thirty-nine ladies could not be prevailed upon to accompany them, only to visit and bid farewell to their parents, for such was their attachment to their gallant mistress, that they came back immediately, and were espoused to the principle nobles of her court. Years of unusual happiness passed over the heads of the fortunate adventurers of this history, until death, the destroyer of all things, conducted them to a grave which must one day be the resting-place for ages of us all, till the receiving angel shall sound his trumpet.

STORY OF HYJAUJE, THE TYRANNICAL GOVERNOR OF COUFEH, AND THE YOUNG SYED.

As Hyjauje (the Ommiad caliph) was was one day seated in his hall of audience, surrounded by his nobles and dependents, tremblingly awaiting his commands, for his countenance resembled that of an enraged lion, there suddenly entered, unceremoniously, into the assembly a beardless youth of noble but sickly aspect, arrayed in tattered garments, for misfortune had changed his original situation, and poverty had withered the freshness of his opening youth. He made the customary obeisance to the governor, who returned his salute, and said, "Who art thou, boy? what hast thou to say, and wherefore hast thou intruded thyself into the company of princes, as if thou wert invited? who art thou, and of whom art thou the son?" "Of my father and mother," replied the youth. "But how earnest thou here?" "In my clothes." "From whence?" "From behind me." "Where art thou going?" "Before me." "Upon what dost thou travel?" "Upon the earth" Hyjauje, vexed at the pertness of the youth, exclaimed, "Quit this trifling, and inform me whence thou comest." "From Egypt." "Art thou from Cairo?" "Why askest thou?" said the boy? "Because," replied Hyjauje, "her sands are of gold, and her river Nile miraculously fruitful; but her women are wanton, free to every conqueror, and her men unstable." "I am not from thence, but from Damascus," cried the youth. "Then," said Hyjauje, "thou art from a most rebellious place, filled with wretched inhabitants, a wavering race, neither Jews nor Christians." "But I am not from thence," replied the youth, "but from Khorassan." "That is a most impure country," said Hyjauje, "whose religion is worthless, for the inhabitants are of all barbarians the most savage. Plunderers of flocks, they know not mercy, their poor are greedy, and their rich men misers." "I am not of them," cried the youth, "but of Moussul." "Then," exclaimed Hyjauje, "thou art of an unnatural and adulterous race, whose youths are catamites, and whose old men are obstinate as asses." "But I am from Yemen," said the boy. "If so," answered the tyrant, “thou belongest to a comfortless region, where the most honourable profession is robbery, where the middling ranks tan hides, and where a wretched poor spin wool and weave coarse mantles.” “But I am from Mecca,” said the boy. “Then,” replied Hyjauje, “thou comest from a mine of perverseness, stupidity, ignorance, and slothfulness; for from among its people God raised up his prophet, whom they disbelieved, rejected, and forced away to a strange nation, who loved, venerated, and assisted him in spite of the men of Mecca. But whence comest thou, youth? for thy pertness is become troublesome, and my inclination leads me to punish thee for thy impertinence.” “Had I been assured that thou durst kill me,” cried the youth, “I should not have appeared before thee; but thou canst not.” “Woe to thee, rash boy,” exclaimed Hyjauje; “who is he that can prevent my executing thee instantly?” “To thee be thy woe,” replied the youth: “he can prevent thee who directs man and his inmost thoughts, and who never falsifieth his gracious promises.” “He it is,” cried the tyrant, “who instigates me to put thee to death.” “Withhold thy blaspheming,” replied the youth; “it is not God, but Satan that prompts thy mind to my murder, and with God I hope for refuge from the accursed: but know, that I am from the glorious Medina, the seat of religion, virtue, respectability, and honour, descended of the race of Bin Ghalib, and family of Ali, son of Abou Talib, whom God has glorified and approved, and will protect all his posterity, which you would extirpate; but you cannot root it out, for it will flourish even to the last day of the existence of this world.”

The tyrant was now overcome with rage, and commanded the youthful Syed to be slain; but his nobles and officers interceded for him, saying, while they bowed their necks before him, “Pardon, pardon; behold our heads and our lives a ransom for his! For God’s sake accept our intercession, O ameer, for this youth is not deserving of death.” “Forbear your entreaties,” exclaimed the tyrant, “for were an angel to cry from Heaven, ‘Do not slay him!’ I would not attend.” Upon this the young Syed said, “Thou ravest, O Hyjauje; who art thou that an angel should be commissioned for thy sake?” The tyrant, struck with his magnanimity, became calm, and commanding the executioner to release the youth, said, “For the present I forbear, and will not kill thee unless thy answers to my further questions shall deserve it." They then entered on the following dialogue; Hyjauje hoping to entrap him in discourse.

Hyjauje. How can the creature approach the perfection of the Almighty?

Syed. By prayer, by fasting, by the commanded alms, by pilgrimage, and fighting for the cause of God.

H. I serve him by shedding the blood of infidel man. You pretend that Hassan and Houssain, your ancestors, were descendants of the prophet; but how can that be, when God has declared in the Koran Mahummud was not of your obstinate race; but the prophet of God, and last of divine messengers?

S. Hear the answer to that in the verse following it. "Hath not a prophet come unto you of your own nation? Receive him, and from what he hath forbidden be forbidden." Surely, then, God hath forbidden the shedding of the blood of him whom he sanctified.

H. Thou hast spoken justly, young man; but inform me what God hath daily and nightly commanded us as obligatory to do?

S. To pray five times.

H. What to observe in each year?

S. To keep the month of Ramzaun as a fast.

H. What to perform in the course of life?

S. To make a pilgrimage to Mecca, the temple of God.

H. Truly said; but what hath mostly dignified and enlightened Arabia?

S. The tribe of Koreish.

H. Wherefore?

S. Because of our holy prophet's being a member of it.

H. Who were the most skilful in horsemanship in all Arabia, the most valiant, and of best conduct in war?

S. The tribe of Hashim.

H. Why think you so?

S. Because my grandfather Imaum Ali, son of Abou Talib, was one of it.

H. What tribe of Arabs is most famous for benevolence, and celebrated for liberality?

S. The family of Tai.

H. Wherefore?

S. Because Hatim belonged to it.

H. Which of the tribes have been most disgraceful to Arabia, and most oppressive to its inhabitants?

S. The tribe of Sukkeef.

H. Why so?

S. Because thou belongest to it.

The tyrant could scarcely now contain his anger; but said, hoping to cut the youth off from reply, "Tell me, is the Capricorn of the heavens male or female?" To which he answered, "Shew me its tail, that I may inform thee." The tyrant laughed, and continued his questions as follows:

H. Wert thou ever in love?

S. Yes, completely immersed in it.

H. With whom?

S. With my God, who will, I trust, pardon me for my errors, and deliver me from thee this day.

H. Knowest thou thy God?

S. Yes.

H. By what means?

S. By the scriptures, which he caused to descend to his prophet.

H. Dost thou guard the Koran?

S. Does it fly from me, that I should guard it?

H. What dost thou learn from it?

S. That God commanded its rules to be obeyed.

H. Hast thou read and understood it?

S. Yes.

H. If so, tell me, first, What passage in it is most sublime. Secondly, Which most commanding. Thirdly, Which most just. Fourthly, Which most alarming. Fifthly, Which most encouraging. Sixthly, That which Jews and Christians both believe in. Seventhly, That in which God has spoken purely of himself; that where he speaks of the angels; that in which he mentions the prophets; that where he alludes to those destined to Paradise; and that in which he speaks of those devoted to hell; that which includes ten points; and that which Eblis the accursed delivered.

S. By God's help I will answer thee. The most sublime passage is the Koorsee: the most commanding, "God insisteth on justice:" the most just, "Whoever diminishes the least of a measure, God will requite him doubly, and the same to whoever addeth the least:" the most alarming, "All expect to enter Paradise:" the most encouraging, "O my servants, who have mortified yourselves, despair not of the mercy of God!" that in which are ten points, "God created the heavens and the earth, the revolutions of night and day; also, the firmament over the waters that it might profit man:" that which is believed alike by jews and christians, "The Jew saith that the Christian is in error, and the Christian saith that the Jew is mistaken, they both believe so; and both are in error:" that in which God hath spoken purely of himself, "I have not created genii and men but to worship me:" that in which he speaks of the angels, "They said, we have no knowledge, but what thou hast taught us; for thou only art wise and all-knowing:" that which speaks of the prophets, "How could we deliver you a verse without the order of God, on whom the faithful will rely:" that which mentions the devoted to hell, "God hath cast us down from heaven, for we were transgressors:" that which describes the blessed, "Praised be God, who hath divested us of all sorrow, for our Lord is merciful and gracious:" that which satan spoke, "None will profit by thy mercy but thy servants the blessed."

Hyjauje involuntarily exclaimed, "Praised be God, who giveth wisdom to whom it pleaseth him; but I have found none so learned of such tender age." Having thus spoken, he put many other questions to the youth in every science, and he answered them so readily that the tyrant was overcome with admiration, and offered him a residence at his court; but the young man declined it, and requested his dismission, which he granted, conferring upon him a beautiful female slave richly habited, a thousand pieces of gold, and a steed elegantly caparisoned. The courtiers were astonished at the bounty of the tyrant, which he perceiving, said, "Be not surprised, for the advice he hath given me was worthy of reward, and 'Cursed is he who doth not requite a sincere adviser,' declareth our sacred Koran."

STORY OF INS AL WUJJOOD AND WIRD AL IKMAUM, DAUGHTER OF IBRAHIM, VIZIER TO SULTAN SHAMIKH.

Many ages past there was a very powerful sultan who had a vizier named Ibrahim, and this minister had a daughter the most beautiful of her sex and accomplished of her age, so that she became distinguished by the appellation of Wird al Ikmaum, or the rose among flowers. It was the custom of sultan Shamikh to hold annually a general assembly of all the nobles of his kingdom, and persons eminent for science or the arts, during which they were magnificently entertained at the royal expense. The former displayed their prowess in martial exercises before the sovereign, and the latter the productions of their genius and skill; when valuable prizes were bestowed by the arbitration of appointed judges on those who deserved them. On one of the days of this festival, the vizier's daughter from a latticed balcony of the palace, in which she sat to view the sports, was so struck with the manly figure and agility of a young nobleman named Ins al Wujjood (or the perfection of human nature), that love took possession of her mind. She pointed him out to a female confidant, and gave her a letter to convey to the object of her affections. The young nobleman, who had heard her praises, was enraptured by his good fortune, and the next day, having obtained as full a sight of her beauties as could be had through the golden wires of the balcony, retired overcome by love. Letters now passed daily, and almost hourly, between them; but they were impatient for a meeting, which was at length planned; but the note fixing the place and time was unfortunately dropped by the confidant and carried to the vizier; who, alarmed for the honour of his family, sent his daughter the same night to a far distant castle belonging to himself, and situated on an island in a vast lake, surrounded by mountainous deserts thinly inhabited. The unfortunate lady was obliged to submit to her fate, but before her departure contrived to write on the outside of her balcony the following words, "They are carrying me off, but I know not where." In the morning her lover repairing, as usual, in hopes of seeing his mistress in the balcony, read the unwelcome intelligence, which for a time deprived him of his senses. When somewhat recovered he resolved to leave the court, though then the chief favourite of the sultan, and go in search of his beloved. Having put on the habit of a wandering devotee, he, on the following evening, quitted the city, and recommending himself to Providence, set out, but knew not whither. Many weeks did he travel, but could find no traces of his beloved object; when suddenly, passing through a thick forest, there met him a monstrous lion, from whom he thought it impossible to escape, and having uttered a prayer for the happiness of his beloved, and repeated the testimony of martyrdom, he resigned himself to his fate, and waited the spring of his expected devourer. What was his surprise when the majestic animal, instead of making him his prey, on approaching close to him, having looked compassionately in his face, licked his hands, and turning round, walked gently onwards, moving his head, as if to signify the youth should follow him. Ins al Wujjood did so, and was conducted through the forest by the lion; who, ascending a high mountain, suddenly stopped at the entrance of a cave, to which was a door of iron, then moving his head, and once more licking the hands of his companion, the generous animal left him, and retired back to the woods. The youth now went to the cave, and having knocked at the door, it was opened by a venerable hermit, who bade him welcome, brought him warm water to wash his feet, and set before him refreshments of various kinds. When he had eaten, he inquired the cause of his coming to such a desolate country; and Ins al Wujjood having related his adventures, the old man exclaimed, “Thou art a favourite of Heaven, or the lion would have devoured thee; despair not, therefore, of success, for my mind presages that thou wilt be happy, nor shalt thou want my assistance.” Ins al Wujjood having thanked him for his hospitality and generous offers, the hermit informed him, that for nearly twenty years past he had not beheld a human face till a few days prior to his coming, when, wandering over the mountains, he had seen an encampment on the margin of the great lake below, in which appeared a crowd of men and women, some very richly habited, part of whom had embarked on board a stately yacht, and the remainder having taken leave of them, struck their tents, and returned by the road they had come. “Most probably,” said the hermit, “the yacht may have conveyed thy mistress to the castle which stands on an island in the middle of the lake, and if so thou shalt soon be safely landed: for the rest Providence must be thy guide. I will this night remember thee in my prayers, and meditate on what can be done for thy benefit.” Having said this, the hermit conducted the wanderer to a chamber, and left him to his repose.

The beautiful Wird al Ikmaum during this time remained overwhelmed with uneasiness in her confinement, and it was in vain that her attendants tried to amuse her. She wandered melancholy through the magnificent gardens of the castle, the groves of which were filled with every variety of birds, whose harmony was delightful; but the soft cooing of the turtle dove and the plaintive note of the lovelorn nightingale alone caught her attention. To these she would listen for hours together, reclined on a mossy bank, and fancy their pensive strains the language of her beloved. Such was her daily employment, nor would she quit the garden till forced by her attendants to take shelter from the falling dews of night. We now return to her lover.

Fatigue and the consoling assurances of the friendly hermit had greatly composed the mind of Ins al Wujjood, who enjoyed a refreshing sleep, nor did he awake till the sun was mounted high in the heavens, when he joined his venerable host in his devotions; after which they partook of a repast of bread, milk, and fresh fruits. This ended, the old man requested him to fetch from the forest a bundle of the filaments of palm bark, which, when brought to him, he plaited into a shape resembling a little boat, and giving it to Ins al Wujjood, said, “Repair to the lake, and put this into the water, when it will become instantly large enough to hold thee, then embark in it, and trust to Heaven for the rest. Farewell!”

Ins al Wujjood having taken leave of his venerable friend the hermit, with many thanks, did as he had been commanded, and soon arrived on the margin of the lake, into which he launched his little vessel, when, to his great surprise, it instantaneously became a handsome boat with the sails set. He got into it, and a fair wind springing up was soon out of sight of land. For some days he was wafted over the deep; but at length the shore of an island appeared, on which he landed, and made his boat fast to the trunk of a large tree. He then walked into the country, and found it beautifully interspersed with green meadows, clear streams, and shady groves of bending fruit trees, on the branches of which all sorts of birds were warbling in their different strains. Having refreshed himself with several fruits, he proceeded onwards, and at length came in sight of a superb edifice, to the gateway of which he advanced; but found it locked. For three days he waited in hopes of seeing some of its inhabitants, but in vain. However on the fourth morning the gate was opened by a man, who seeing Ins al Wujjood, advanced towards him, and inquired who he was, whence he came, and what was his reason for waiting at the gate. "I am of Ispahaun," replied Ins al Wujjood, "and was shipwrecked in a trading voyage upon this coast, to the shore of which I alone of all my companions had the good fortune to escape." Upon hearing this the man burst into tears, embraced him, and said, "May God preserve thee from future calamities! I am also a native of Ispahaun, where also dwelt my cousin, whom I dearly loved, and by whom I was beloved. At this happy period of my youth a nation stronger than ours made war against us, overcame us, and among other captives forced me from my country; after which they sold me as a slave to my present master: but come, my dear countryman, enter the palace, and repose thyself in my apartment, where we will endeavour to console each other under our misfortunes till Providence shall restore us to our homes."

Ins al Wujjood gladly accepted such a friendly invitation, and on entering the court beheld a lofty and wide-spreading tree, from the branches of which were suspended several golden cages, each inhabited by a beautiful bird, and each striving to rival the other in melody, as if in welcome of his approach. He inquired of his host to whom the splendid edifice belonged, and was informed to the vizier of sultan Shamikh; who, to secure his daughter from the vicissitudes of fortune, had lodged her here, and only visited her annually to inquire after her health, and bring the necessary supplies for her convenience and the support of her attendants in the castle. Upon hearing the above circumstances, Ins al Wujjood was nearly overcome with ecstacy; but restraining his feelings, exclaimed to himself, "At length I have reached the abode of my beloved, and may hope for success;” which was yet, however, afar off. His charming mistress, little thinking that her lover was so near, and weary of absence and the solitude of her abode, had that very evening resolved to escape from confinement. In the darkness of night she accordingly let herself down from the battlements by a silken rope, which she had twisted from slips of various robes, and reached the ground unhurt. With haste she fled towards the sea shore, where she perceived a fishing boat, the owner of which, though at first alarmed, supposing her, from her dazzling appearance (for she was covered with jewels), to be an ensnaring genie, at length, on her assurances that she was really a woman, admitted her into his vessel. She thanked him for his kindness, which she rewarded by the gift of many rich jewels, and requested to be conveyed across the lake. The fisherman hoisted sail, and for some hours the wind was prosperous; but now a heavy tempest arose, which tossed them constantly in imminent danger for three days, and drove them far from their intended course. At length the gale subsided, the sea became assuaged, and land appeared. As they approached the shore a stately city rose to their view, the buildings of which seemed unusually magnificent. Under the terrace of the sultan’s palace they safely, at last, cast anchor; and it chanced that the prince, who was named Dara, was then sitting with his daughter in a balcony to enjoy the fresh sea breeze, and the view of the extensive harbour, crowded with the vessels of every country. Perceiving the boat, the sultan commanded his officers to bring the master and his crew to the presence. Great was his surprise at the introduction of the beautiful Wird al Ikmaum. From her rich dress, dignified air, and demeanour, he concluded her to be of superior rank, and having seated her near his daughter, he graciously requested to be informed of the name of her country, and the cause of her having travelled to his capital; to which she replied in eloquent language, giving a summary detail of all her adventures. The sultan consoled her by encouraging assurances of his protection, promised to exert his authority to effect a union with her beloved, and immediately dispatched his vizier with costly presents to sultan Shamikh, requesting him to send Ins al Wujjood to his court.

The vizier, after a prosperous voyage, having reached the capital of sultan Shamikh, presented his offerings, and made known the request of his master; to which the sultan replied, That nearly a year had elapsed since Ins al Wujjood had, to his great regret, absented himself from his court, nor had any tidings been obtained of the place of his retirement; but that he would order his vizier to accompany the ambassador in search of his retreat, being willing to oblige his master the sultan to the utmost of his power. Accordingly, after a repose of some days, the two viziers departed in search of Ins al Wujjood, but without knowing where to bend their journey. At length they reached the shore of the ocean of Kunnooz, on which they embarked in a hired vessel, and sailed to the mountainous island of Tukkalla, of which the vizier of sultan Shamikh gave to his companion the following account. "This island was some ages back inhabited by genii; a princess of whom became violently enamoured of a handsome young man, a son of an ameer of the city of Misr, or Cairo, whom she beheld in her flight sleeping in his father's garden in the heat of the day. She sat down by him, and having gently awoke him, the youth, on looking up, to his astonishment and rapture saw a most beautiful damsel who courted his addresses: he was not backward in offering them; and mutual protestations of love and constancy took place. After some hours of happiness the genie princess took an affectionate leave, promising soon to visit him again, and vanished from sight. The youth remained musing on his fortunate adventure till the dews of night began to fall, when his parents, fearful of some injury, sent attendants to conduct him to their palace, but he refused to go; and talked, as it appeared to them, so incoherently concerning his beloved, that they thought him distracted; seized him roughly, and forced him homewards. His father and mother were alarmed: it was in vain that they courted him to partake of refreshment; he was sullen and gloomy, and at length abruptly retired to his chamber, where he remained in restless anxiety all night, waiting impatiently for morning, that he might revisit the happy spot where his charmer had promised again to meet him.

"At early dawn the ameer's son repaired to the garden, and was soon gratified with the sight of his beloved; but while they were exchanging mutual protestations of regard, the mother of the genie princess, who had suspected from her daughter's conduct that she was carrying on some intrigue, and had followed her in the air unperceived, suddenly appeared. Rushing upon the lovers, she seized her daughter by the hair, beat, and abused her in the harshest language for having disgraced the honour of the genii by an amour with a wretched son of mortality: to all which the genie princess replied, that her remonstrances were vain; she had fixed her affections, and would rather be torn into a thousand pieces than desert the object of her heart. The mother upon this finding the case desperate, and being herself softened by the uncommon beauty of the youth, who had fallen at her feet, entreating mercy for his beloved, at length relented, and agreed to sanctify their loves by her consent to their marriage. It was accordingly celebrated; and this island, which after the name of the genie princess was called Tukkalla, was fixed upon for the place of their residence. Its magnificent palace still remains, after the lapse of many ages, and is at present in my possession. Here I hope to meet my only daughter, whom I brought to reside in it nearly a year ago, to secure her from the attempts of a young courtier, on whom she had, against my consent, fixed her affections."

The two viziers now disembarked, and proceeded up the island; but what was the astonishment and mortification of Ibrahim on learning, when he arrived at the palace, that his daughter had escaped, nor had the attendants heard of her since her departure, though they had repeatedly searched every quarter of the island. Perceiving among his attendants whom he had left at the palace a strange young man of pallid countenance, wasted frame, and melancholy air, the vizier inquired how he had come among them; and received for reply, that he was a shipwrecked merchant of Ispahaun, whom they had taken in for the sake of charity. Ibrahim now requested of the vizier of sultan Dara that he would return to his master, and inform him of their vain search after Ins al Wujjood; at the same time desiring him to receive into his suite the supposed merchant as far as the city of Ispahaun, which lay in his route. To this the vizier of sultan Dara consented: and the two ministers having taken a friendly leave of each other separated, and departed for their several capitals.

The vizier of sultan Dara, in the course of the journey, became so pleased with the agreeable manners of the supposed merchant, that he often conversed with him familiarly; and at length the young man, emboldened by his condescending attention, ventured to inquire the cause of his travels to regions so distant from his own country: upon which he was informed of the arrival of the beautiful Wird al Ikmaum at the court of sultan Dara; of the compassion of that sultan for her misfortunes; his generous protection; and his own fruitless mission in search of her lover Ins al Wujjood. A this happy intelligence, the latter, overcome with ecstacy, could no longer contain himself, but discovered who he was; and the vizier was also overjoyed at knowing, when least expected, that he had found the despaired of object of his long journey. He embraced the young man, congratulated him upon the speedy termination of absence from his beloved, and the happy union which awaited him. He then made him an inmate of his own tents, supplied him with rich attire, and every necessary becoming the condition of a person for whose fortunes he knew his sovereign to be so highly concerned. Ins al Wujjood, now easy in mind, and renovated by the happy prospects before him, daily recovered health and strength, so that by the time of their arrival at the capital of sultan Dara he had regained his pristine manliness and vigour.

When the vizier waited upon his master the sultan Dara to communicate his successful commission, the sultan commanded the youth to his presence. Ins al Wujjood performed the usual obeisance of kissing the ground before the throne, with the graceful demeanour of one who had been used to a court. The sultan graciously returned his salutation, and commanded him to be seated; after which he requested him to relate his adventures, which he did in eloquent language, interspersing in his narrative poetical quotations, and extempore verses applicable to the various incidents and situations. The sultan was charmed with his story; and when he had finished its relation, sent for a cauzee and witnesses to tie the marriage knot between the happy Ins al Wujjood and the beautiful Wird al Ikmaum; at the same time dispatching a messenger to announce the celebration of the nuptials to sultan Shamikh and Ibrahim his vizier, who were bewailing their supposed irrecoverable losses; one that of his favourite, and the latter that of his daughter. Sultan Dara detained the happy couple at his court for some time, after which he dismissed them with valuable presents to their own country, which they reached in safety, and were received with the most heart-felt rejoicings by the sultan and the repentant vizier, who now recompensed them by his kindness for the former cruelty of his behaviour towards them; so that in favour with the sultan, and happy in their own family, the lovers henceforth enjoyed every earthly felicity, sweetened by the reflection on past distresses, till the angel of death summoned them to submit to the final destination of mortality.

THE ADVENTURES OF MAZIN OF KHORASSAUN.

In ancient days there resided in the city of Khorassaun a youth named Mazin, who, though brought up by his mother, a poor widow, to the humble occupation of a dyer, was so celebrated for his personal accomplishments and capacity as to become the admiration of crowds, who daily flocked to his shop to enjoy the pleasure of his conversation. This young man was as good as he was able, nor did flattery take away his humility, or make him dissatisfied with his laborious occupation, which he followed with industry unceasing, and maintained his mother and himself decently from the fruits of his labour. So delicate was his taste in the choice of colours, that veils, turbans, and vests of Mazin's dyeing were sought after by all the young and gay of Khorassaun; and many of the females would often cast a wishful glance at him from under their veils as they gave him their orders. Mazin, however, was destined by fate not always to remain a dyer, but for higher fortunes and surprising adventures.

As he was one day busy in his occupation, a man of Hijjem came to his shop, and after looking at him earnestly for some moments, exclaimed, "Alas, that such a noble youth should be confined to drudge at so mean an employment!" "I thank you, father, for your compassion," replied Mazin, "but honest industry can never be disgraceful." "True," said the old man of Hijjem, "yet if Providence puts affluence and distinction in our way, should we refuse it?" "By no means," said Mazin; "canst thou point me out the way to it without making me forfeit my integrity? If so, I assure thee I am not so fond of my trade but I would be glad to live at ease in an honest manner without it; for I should like to enjoy leisure to follow my studies, which have already gained me some little celebrity." "Son," said the Hijjemmee, "thy wishes shall be satisfied: thou hast no father, but I will be one to thee; from this instant I adopt thee as my son. I possess the art of transmuting common metals into gold: be ready at thy shop early in the morning, when I will meet thee. Farewell!" Having thus said, the old man took leave.

Mazin's curiosity and ambition were raised: he shut up his shop sooner than usual, and returned with a full heart to his mother, to whom he communicated the offered kindness of the Hijjemmee. The good woman, after some moments of reflection, said, “Son, I fear some evil lurks under this apparent kindness, for we live in wicked days, when men profess more than they mean to do for the sake of attaining an object; be cautious then, and do not till thou hast proof of his sincerity regard his office. We have at present all we want, and what can riches give more?” Mazin agreed to the propriety of his mother’s advice, and promised to be wary. They ate their usual cheerful meal, and retired to rest; but the young man could sleep but little, and he longed with impatience for the morning that was to put him into possession of the art of transmuting metals into gold.

The morning arrived, and Mazin repaired impatiently to his shop, where he had soon after the satisfaction of seeing his adopted father, who came bearing in his hands a crucible. “Welcome, son!” “Welcome, father!” was the mutual salutation; after which the Hijjemmee desired Mazin to kindle a fire: he did so, when the old man inquired of Mazin if he had any old metal, iron, brass, copper, &c. Mazin produced some pieces of an old pot of the latter metal, which were put into the crucible. When melted, the Hijiemmee took from his turban a paper containing powder of a yellowish hue, which he threw into the crucible, over which he repeated some cabalistic words while he stirred the melting metal. At length he took it from the fire, and to his astonishment Mazin beheld a large lump of pure gold, which the Hijiemmee desired him to carry to a goldsmith’s and get it exchanged for coin He did did so, and received a handsome sum, with which he returned to his adopted father.

“Well, my son,” said the Hijjemmee, “art thou now convinced of my skill, and my sincerity in offering to promote thy fortunes?” “I am,” said Mazin, “and am ready to follow wherever thou choosest, in hopes of learning this invaluable secret” “That shall soon be thine,” replied the transmuter of metals; “I will sup with thee this evening, and in the privacy of retirement give thee the necessary instruction.” Mazin, overjoyed, immediately shut up his shop, and with his adopted father repaired to his own house, where he seated him in his best apartment. He then went to his mother, desiring that she would go and spend the night at a neighbour’s, shewing her the gold which his broken copper had procured, as a proof of the sincerity of his new friend. The old lady no longer doubted upon such evidence, and cheerfully took leave and departed to a friend's house.

Mazin next went to a cook's shop, from which he returned laden with every sort of refreshment, nor was wine forgotten, though forbidden to the faithful. The adopted father and son ate heartily, at the same time pushing about the spirit-stirring liquor, till at last Mazin, who had not been used to drink wine, became intoxicated. The wily magician, for such in fact was his pretended friend, watching his opportunity, infused into the goblet of his unsuspecting host a certain potent drug, which Mazin had scarcely drunk oft, when he fell back upon his cushion totally insensible, the treacherous wizard tumbled him into a large chest, and shutting the lid, locked it. He then ransacked the apartments of the house of every thing portable worth having, which, with the gold, he put into another chest, then fetching in porters, he made them take up the chests and follow him to the seaside, where a vessel waited his orders to sail, and embarked with the unfortunate Mazin and his plunder. The anchor was weighed, and the wind being fair, the ship was soon out of sight of the land.

Mazin's mother early in the morning returning to her house found the door open, her son missing, and the rooms ransacked of all her valuables. She gave a loud shriek, tore her hair, beat her bosom, and threw herself on the ground, crying out for her son, who she thought must have been murdered by the treacherous magician, against whose professions she had warned him to be cautious, till the sight of the transmuted gold had deceived her, as well as the unfortunate victim of his accursed arts. Some neighbours hearing her lamentations rushed in, lifted her from the ground, and inquired the cause of her distress; which, when informed of, they endeavoured to alleviate by every consolation in their power, but in vain: the afflicted old lady was not to be comforted. She commanded a tombstone to be raised in the court-yard, over which she sat night and day bewailing her son, taking scarcely food sufficient to preserve her miserable existence.

The infidel Hijjemmee, who was a wicked magician and a worshipper of fire, by name Bharam, hated the true believers, one of whom annually for several years past he had inveigled by his offers of instructing in the science of transmuting metals into his power; and after making him subservient to his purposes in procuring the ingredients necessary for his art, had treacherously put him to death, lest the secret should be divulged: such was now his intention towards the unfortunate Mazin.

On the evening of the second day after the sailing of the vessel, Bharam thought proper to awaken his victim to a sense of his misery. He opened the chest, which had been placed in his cabin, and poured a certain liquid down the throat of Mazin, who instantly sneezed several times; then opening his eyes, gazed for some minutes wildly around him. At length, seeing the magician, observing the sea, and feeling the motion of the ship, his mind surmised to him the misfortune which had happened; and he guessed his having fallen into the snares of the treacherous Bharam, against which his mother had warned him, but in vain. Still, being a virtuous Mussulmaun, he would not complain against the decrees of Heaven; and instead of lamentation uttered the following verse of the sacred Koran: “There is no support or refuge but from the Almighty, whose we are, and to whom we must return. Deal gently with me, O my God, in the dictates of thy omnipotence; and make me resigned under thy chastening, O Lord of all being.”

Having finished the above prayer, Mazin turning humbly towards his accursed betrayer, said in a supplicating tone, “What hast thou done, my father? didst thou not promise me enjoyment and pleasure?” The magician, after striking him, with a scowling and malignant sneer, exclaimed, “Thou dog! son of a dog! my pleasure is in thy destruction. Nine and thirty such ill-devoted wretches as thyself have I already sacrificed, and thou shalt make the fortieth victim to my enjoyment, unless thou wilt abjure thy faith, and become, like me, a worshipper of the sacred fire, in which case thou shalt be my son, and I will teach thee the art of making gold.” “Cursed be thou, thy religion, and thy art,” exclaimed the enraged Mazin: “God forbid that for the pleasures of this world I should apostatize from our holy prophet, and give up the glorious rewards reserved in certain store for his faithful disciples. Thou mayest indeed destroy my body, but my soul despises thy torments” “Vile dog!” roared out the now furious sorcerer, “I will try thy constancy.”

He then called in his slaves, who held Mazin on the floor of the cabin while their abominable master beat him with a knotted whip till he was covered with a gore of blood, but the resolute youth, instead of complaining, uttered only prayers to Heaven for divine support under his pangs, and strength of fortitude to acquire the glory of martyrdom. At length the magician, exhausted by his cruel exercise, desisted, and making his slaves load his unfortunate victim with heavy fetters, chained him down with only a coarse mat to lie upon in a dark closet, in which was placed some stinking water and coarse bread, just sufficient to keep up his miserable existence. Mazin's courage was not to be overcome He washed his wounds, and comforted himself with the hope that if he died he should enjoy the blisses of Paradise, or if Providence had decreed his continuance in life, that the same Providence would present a mode of relief from his present and future afflictions. In this assurance he took a little of his wretched fare, and in spite of the agony of his wounds fell asleep, but only to awake to fresh misery In the morning he was again persecuted by his cruel tormentor, who for three months daily harassed him with blows, with revilings, and every sort of insult that malice could invent or cruelty devise.

Hitherto the wind had been fair, and the vessel had nearly reached the desired haven, when suddenly it changed, and a most tremendous storm arose The waves threatened to swallow up or dash the vessel in pieces, so that all gave themselves over for lost. At this crisis the sailors, who believed that the tempest was sent by Heaven as a judgment for their suffering the unfortunate Mazin to be so cruelly tormented, went in a body to the accursed Bharam, and accused him of having brought down the wrath of God upon the crew by his persecution of the young Mussulmaun; at the same time threatening to cast him overboard if he did not instantly release the youth from his confinement. To show the seriousness of their resolves, the sailors seized the slaves who had been the instruments of the magician's cruelty, and threw them into the sea, which so alarmed the treacherous Bharam that he immediately released Mazin from his chains, fell at his feet, begging pardon for his hard usage, and promising if they escaped the storm to conduct him safely to his own country, and fulfil his promise of instructing him in the secret of making gold. Wonderful to relate! But no sooner was Mazin freed from his fetters than the violence of the tempest lessened, by degrees the winds subsided, the waves abated their swell, and the sea no longer threatened to overwhelm them: in a few hours all was calm and security, and a prosperous gale enabled the shattered vessel to resume her course.

The sailors now regarding Mazin as one immediately befriended by Heaven, treated him with the greatest respect and attention; and the hypocritical magician pretending sorrow for his late cruelties, strove to procure his forgiveness and good opinion by every art of flattery and affected contrition; which had such an effect on the ingenuous youth that he forgot his treachery, again believed his fair promises and assurances that the torments he had undergone had only been inflicted as trials of his constancy and belief in the true religion, virtues necessary to be proved before the grand secret of transmuting metals could be trusted to his keeping.

The remainder of the voyage was prosperous and happy, and at the expiration of three months more the vessel anchored on the wished for coast, which was rocky, and the beach strewed with pebbles of every colour. The magician having given orders to the master of the vessel to wait a month for their return, disembarked with Mazin, and they proceeded together into the country. When they had got out of sight of the ship the magician sat down, and taking from his vestband a small drum, began to beat upon it with two sticks, when instantly a whirlwind arose, and a thick column of dust rolled towards them from the desert. Mazin was alarmed, and began to repent having left the vessel; when the magician, seeing his colour change, desired him to calm his apprehensions, for which there was no cause, that he had only to obey his orders and be happy. He had scarcely spoken when the wind ceased, the dust dispersed, and three camels stood before them, one of which was laden with water and provisions; the others were bridled and very richly caparisoned. Bharam having mounted one, and, at his desire, Mazin the other, they travelled without ceasing, except to take the necessary refreshment and repose, for seven days and nights successively over a wild and sandy desert.

On the eighth morning they reached a beautifully fertile tract, delightfully watered by clear streams; the ground verdant, shaded by spreading trees laden with fruit, on whose branches various birds warbled melodiously, and beneath them antelopes and other forest animals sported unmolested. At the end of a thick avenue rose to view a capacious dome of blue and green enamel, resting upon four columns of solid gold, each pillar exceeding in value the treasures of the sovereigns of Persia and Greece. They approached the dome, stopped their camels and dismounted, and turned the animals to graze. This splendid building was surrounded by a delightful garden, in which the now happy Mazin and the magician reposed themselves all that day and night. At some distance from this enchanting spot appeared a stupendous fabric, whose numerous turrets and lofty pinnacles glittered to the eye, and denoted a palace of uncommon magnificence, so that the curiosity of Mazin was raised, and he could not help inquiring of his companion to whom such a superb edifice might belong. The magician, rather roughly, desired him for the present to ask no questions concerning a place which belonged to his most bitter enemies, who were evil genii, and of whom at a proper time he would give him the history. Mazin was silent, but from the magician's manner he began to forbode some new treachery.

In the morning Bharam beat his magical drum, and the three camels appealed, when Mazin and his companion mounted, pursuing their journey in the same manner as before for seven days, with a speed more resembling flight than the pace of travel, for their camels were supernatural. On the eighth morning the magician inquired of Mazin what he saw on the horizon. "I behold," said he, "to appearance, a range of thick black clouds extending from east to west." "They are not clouds," replied Bharam, "but lofty mountains, called the Jubbal al Sohaub, or mountains of clouds, from their cloud-like appearance, on their summit lies the object of our journey, which with thy assistance we shall soon obtain, and return to our vessel more enriched than all the sovereigns of the world, but thou must be sure to obey me in whatever I may command." Mazin promised to do so, but his heart trembled within him as he beheld the gloomy prospect before him, and recollected the boast which the accursed magician had made of his having sacrificed thirty-nine youthful victims on these mountains, and also his threat on board the ship to make the fortieth offering of himself. He repented of having trusted himself from the vessel, but it was now too late to recede. He resigned himself to the same Providence who had relieved his sufferings in his voyage, and concealed, as well as he could, his uneasiness from the magician, who now endeavoured to sooth and flatter him with artful promises and caresses.

For four days longer they pursued their route, when it was stopped by the black mountains, which formed, as it were, a wall inaccessible, for the precipices were perpendicular, as if scarped by art, and their tremendous height cast a dark and gloomy shade to a vast distance. They now dismounted, and turned their camels to graze, when the magician took out of his package three loaves and a sum of water, after which he lighted a fire; then having beat his talismanic drum, the camels again appeared, the smallest of which he killed, embowelled, and carefully flayed off the skin, the inside of which he washed with water. Having done thus, he addressed Mazin, saying, “My son, the task must now be thine to crown our labours with success. Enter this skin, with these loaves and this water bag for thy sustenance while thou remainest on the summit of the mountain. Be not afraid, for no harm can happen I will sew up the skin, leaving room enough for the admission of air. By and by a roc will descend, and seizing it in her talons carry thee easily through the air. When she shall have alighted on the table-land of the mountain, rip open the stitches of the skin with thy dagger, and the roc on seeing thee will be instantly scared, and fly far away. Then arise, gather as much as possible of a black dust which thou wilt find thickly strewed on the ground; put it into this bag, and throw it down to me, after which I will contrive an easy means for thy descent, and when thou hast rejoined me we will return to our vessel, and I will convey thee safely back to thy own country. The dust, which has the quality of transmuting metals into gold, we will share between us, and shall each have enough to rival all the treasuries on earth.”

Mazin finding it in vain to oppose, allowed himself to be sewn up in the camel’s skin with the loaves and water, recommending himself by mental prayer to the protection of Allah and his prophet. The magician having finished his work retired to some distance, when, as he had said, a monstrous roc, darting from a craggy precipice, descended with the rapidity of lightning, grasped the skin in her widely extended talons, and soaring swifter than the eagle soon alighted on the table-land of the mountain; when Mazin, feeling himself on the ground, ripped the stitches of his dangerous enclosure, and the roc being alarmed, uttered a loud scream and flew away. Mazin now arose, and walked upon the surface of the mountain, which he found covered with black dust; but he beheld also the skeletons of the young men whom the accursed Bharam, after they had served his purpose, had left to perish. His blood became chilled with horror at the view, as he apprehended the same unhappy fate: he however filled his bag with the black powder, and advanced to the edge of a precipice, from which he beheld the magician eagerly looking upwards to discover him. Mazin called out; and when the hypocrite saw him, he began dancing and capering for joy, at the same time exclaiming, "Welcome, welcome, my son! my best friend, beloved child! all our dangers are now over, throw me down the bag." "I will not," said Mazin, "but will give it thee when thou hast conveyed me safely from this perilous summit." "That is not in my power," answered Bharam, "till I shall have the bag: cast it down, and I swear by the fire which I worship immediately to procure thee a safe descent." Mazin, relying on his oath, and seeing no other chance of escape, cast down the bag; which having taken up, the accursed sorcerer mounted his camel and was departing. The unhappy Mazin in agony called after him, saying, "Surely thou wilt not forfeit thy oath, nor leave me to perish!" "Perish thou must, Mussulmaun dog!" exclaimed the treacherous magician, "that my secret may be kept, nor can thy boasted prophet save thee from destruction; for around thee are mountains impassable, and below a fathomless sea. I have obtained what I wished, and leave thee to thy fate." Having said thus he speeded onwards, and was soon out of sight.

Mazin was now in an agony of despair, not a ray of hope comforted his mind; he beat his bosom, threw himself on the ground amid the mouldering skeletons of the former victims to the treachery of the magician, and lay for some time in a state of insensibility. At length the calls of hunger and thirst forced him back to a sense of wretched existence; and the love of life, however miserable, made him have recourse to his water and his loaves. Being somewhat revived, religion came to his aid, and he began to pray for resignation to submit to the decrees of Heaven, however painful. He then walked to the edge of the mountain overhanging the sea, which he observed to wash the base of the rock without any beach, at sight of which a desperate chance of escape struck his mind: this was, to throw himself from the precipice into the ocean, in hopes, should he survive the fall and rise to the surface, he might reach land. He commended himself to God, shut his eyes, held in his breath, and giving a desperate spring, plunged headlong into the dreadful abyss, which providentially received him unhurt, and a friendly wave drove him on shore; where, however, he remained some minutes in a lifeless stupor, owing to the rapidity of his descent from the brain-sickening precipice.

When his senses returned Mazin looked wildly around him, at first scarcely able to bear the light from the recollection of the dizzy eminence from which he had plunged; and an uneasy interval elapsed before he could persuade himself that the certainty of death was past. Convinced at length of this, he prostrated himself to the earth, and exclaimed, “In God alone is our refuge and support! I thought I should have perished, but his providence has sustained me.” He then wept exceedingly, entreated forgiveness of his offences, read several passages from the Koran, which he had preserved in his vestband, repeated the whole of his rosary, and besought the intercession of the prophet for his deliverance from future dangers. After this he walked onwards till evening, the fruits of the forest his food, his drink the water of the streams, and his resting place the green turf. Such was his progress, that after three days he reached the spot under the mountain where he had been taken up by the roc in the camel’s skin. He now recognized the road he had come; and after measuring back his steps for nine days, beheld on the last the superb palace, concerning which he had inquired of the magician, who had informed him it was inhabited by evil genii, his most bitter enemies.

For some time Mazin hesitated whether he should advance to the gates of the palace; but considering that no greater calamity could happen to him than he had already endured, he contemned danger, and boldly advanced to a grand lodge built of white marble exquisitely polished. He entered, and beheld on one of the raised platforms which skirted the passage into the court two beautiful damsels playing at the game of chess; one of whom on beholding him exclaimed, “Surely, sister, this is the young man who passed this way about a month ago with Bharam the magician?” “I am he!” exclaimed Mazin, at the same time throwing himself at her feet, “and entreat your hospitable protection.” The lady, raising him from the ground, said, “Stranger, you resemble so much a once beloved brother, that I feel inclined to adopt thee as such, if my sister will also agree to do so.” The other lady readily assented. They then embraced Mazin, seated him between them, and requested to be informed of his adventures, of which he gave them a true narration.

When Mazin had concluded his story, the ladies expressed compassion for his misfortunes, and the strongest resentment against the accursed magician, whom they vowed to punish by a tormenting death for having had the insolence to accuse them of being evil genii. They then proceeded to acquaint him with the cause of their residence in this secluded palace, saying, “Brother, for as such we shall henceforward regard you, our father is a most potent sultan of a race of good genii, who were converted by Solomon, the son of David, to the true faith; we are seven daughters by the same mother; but for some cause which we do not know the sultan our father, being fearful of our becoming connected with mankind, has placed us in this solitary spot. This palace was erected by genii for our accommodation; the meadows and forests around it are delightful, and we often amuse ourselves with field sports, there being plenty of every sort of game, as you must have observed. When we want horses or camels we have only to beat a small magical drum, and they instantly attend our call, ready caparisoned. Our five sisters are at present at the chase, but will soon return. Set thy heart at rest, forget thy misfortunes, which are now at an end, and thou shall live with us in ease and pleasure.”

The five sisters soon returned, and Mazin’s adventures being recounted to them they also adopted him as their brother; and he continued with these ladies, who strove to divert him all in their power by repeated rounds of amusements: one day they hunted, another hawked, another fished, and their indoor pleasures were varied and delightful; so that Mazin soon recovered his health, and was happy to the extent of his wishes. A year had elapsed, when Mazin one day riding out for his amusement to the enamelled dome supported on four golden columns, perceived under it the accursed magician, and with him a youth, whom, like himself, he had inveigled into his snares, and devoted also to destruction. The rage of Mazin was kindled at the sight; he drew his sabre, and rushing unperceived behind the sorcerer, who was in the act of flaying a camel for the purposes already described, seized him by his hair, and exclaimed, "Wretch! the judgment of Heaven at length hath overtaken thee, and soon shall thy impure soul be plunged into that fire thou hast blasphemously adored." The magician struggled, but in vain. He then implored for mercy and forgiveness; but Mazin, convinced by experience that he deserved none, struck off his head at one blow. Then informing the intended victim, who stood near gazing with astonishment, of the wicked arts of the accursed Bharam, and of his own narrow escape from almost certain destruction, he advised the young man to remount his camel, and return to the spot where he had disembarked from the vessel, which would safely convey him back to his own country. The youth, having thanked him for his deliverance, took his leave; and Mazin returned to the palace, carrying with him the head of the magician as a trophy of his victory. He was highly applauded for his prowess by the sisters, who rejoiced in the destruction of so cruel an enemy to mankind.

Many days had not elapsed after this event, when one morning Mazin and the sisters sitting together in a gallery of the palace, observed a thick cloud of dust rising from the desert and approaching towards them. As it came nearer they perceived through it a troop of horsemen; upon which the sisters, desiring Mazin to retire into an inner chamber, went to the gateway to inquire who the strangers might be. They were servants of the genie sultan, father to the ladies, and sent by him to conduct them to his presence, in order to attend the nuptials of a near relation. Upon this summons the sisters prepared for the journey, and at the end of three days departed, assuring Mazin that they would return in a month. At taking leave they gave him the keys of every apartment in the palace, telling him that he might open every door except one, which to enter might be attended with unpleasant consequences, and therefore had better be avoided. Mazin promised to observe their caution; and for many days was so well amused in examining the magnificent rooms and curiosities of the palace, that he did not feel a wish to transgress till the forbidden door alone remained unopened. Having then nothing to divert him, he could not resist the impulse of curiosity, but unlocked the door, which opened on a marble staircase by which he ascended to the terraced roof of the palace, from whence a most delightful prospect feasted his sight. On one side his eye was arrested by an extensive garden, in the centre of which, under shady trees, was a basin of clear water, lined with gems of every colour and description. He resolved to visit this enchanting object; and descending the staircase, explored his way through a long arcade, which led him at length into the garden, in which he diverted himself with the scenery it afforded for some time. He then retired to an alcove on the margin of the basin, and sat down; but had not rested many moments, when to his astonishment he beheld descending from the sky a company of beautiful damsels, whose robes of light green silk floating in the air seemed their only support. Alarmed at such a preternatural appearance, he retired to the end of the alcove, from whence he watched their motions. They alighted on the brink of the water, and having thrown off their robes, stood to the enraptured view of Mazin in native loveliness. Never had he beheld such enchanting beauty; but one even more exquisitely charming than the rest attracted his gaze, and from the instant fixed the affections of his heart. They now plunged into the basin, where for some time they amused themselves by swimming, every now and then playfully dashing the water over themselves and at each other. When satiated with frolic they came out of the water, sat for some time on the verdant margin, then dressed themselves, and adjusting their robes to the air, soared aloft, and were soon far from the sight of the enamoured Mazin, who followed them till his eyes could stretch no farther; then despairing of ever again beholding the object of his affections, he fainted on the grass, and it was some time before he recovered his senses. He returned melancholy to the palace, and spent the night in reposeless agitation.

The following morning the seven sisters returned; and she who had first welcomed him to their abode, and had ever since retained for Mazin the purest affection, ran with eagerness to inquire after his health. Great was her affliction on beholding him upon his bed, pale, and apparently in a state of rapid decay. After many kind questions, to which he returned no answers, she entreated earnestly, by the vow of brotherly and sisterly adoption which had past between them, that he would inform her of the cause of his unhappy dejection; assuring him that she would use every exertion to remove it, and gratify his wishes, be they what they might, however difficult to be obtained. Mazin upon this, in a feeble tone, related his adventure in the garden; and declared that unless the beautiful (he supposed celestial) damsel could be obtained for him he must die of grief. The sister bade him be comforted, for in a short time his desires should be satisfied, which revived his spirits, and he accompanied his kind hostess to welcome home her sisters, who received him with their usual hospitality, but were grieved and alarmed at the sad alteration in his appearance, of which they inquired the reason, and were informed that it was the effect of absence from his generous patronesses.

The next morning the sisters went upon a hunting excursion for ten days, only one (his kindest friend) remained in the palace, under pretence of attending Mazin, whose health, she said, was too delicate to bear the exercise of the chase. When the others were departed, she informed Mazin that the beautiful beings he had seen in the garden were of a race of genie much more powerful than her own, that they inhabited a country surrounded by seas and deserts not to be approached by human exertion, that the ladies he beheld were sisters to the queen of these genii, whose subjects were entirely female, occasionally visited by male genii, with whom they were in alliance for the sake of population, and to whom all the males were sent away as soon as born. She further told him, that these females had the power, from their silken robes, of soaring through the air with a flight an hundred times swifter than that of any bird, that they were fond of recreating in verdant spots, and bathing in the clearest waters, and that the garden he had seen them in was a favourite place of their resort, so that they would probably soon visit it again. “Possibly,” continued she, “they may recreate themselves there to-day; we will be on the watch, and if they appear, you must fix your eye on your favourite, mark where she places her robes, and while they are in the water seize and conceal them, for deprived of these she cannot fly away, and you may make her your prisoner. Bring her to the palace, and endeavour by tenderness and endearing attention to gain her affection and consent to marriage; but remember when she is in your power to keep her robes from her, for should she regain possession of them she would certainly return to the Flying Islands, and you would see her no more."

Mazin and his adopted sister now repaired to the garden, and seated themselves in the alcove, nor had they been there long when the fair genii appeared as before, descended on the margin of the basin, and all having undressed, each laying her robes by themselves, rushed playfully into the water, in which they began to swim, dive, and besprinkle playfully each other. Mazin, whose eager eye had ardently watched his beloved, swiftly, but cautiously, snatching up the robes of his mistress, conveyed them to the alcove unobserved by the fair bathers; who, when they had sufficiently amused themselves, quitted the water, and ascending the bank, began to dress; but how can we describe the distressful confusion of the unhappy genie whose robes had been stolen? Big tears rolled down her beautiful cheeks, she beat her bosom, tore her hair, and uttered loud shrieks, while her sisters, instead of consoling her, were concerned only for their own safety, and dressing themselves with confused haste, bade her farewell, mounted into the air, and disappeared. On their departure, Mazin and his adopted sister approached, and saluting the disconsolate genie endeavoured to console her, but for the present in vain, her mind being intent only on the sad captivity she thought awaited her, and the loss of her native country and relations. They led her gently to the palace, and Mazin, retiring respectfully, left her to the care of his adopted sister, who by a thousand endearments and attentions so gained upon her, that in two days the genie began to recover her spirits, and consented to receive Mazin as her husband, when the ladies should return from the chase. On their arrival at the palace they were informed by their sisters of what had happened, and introduced to the fair stranger; who, diverted by their company and attentions, now scarcely regretted her captivity. Preparations were made for the nuptials, and in a short time Mazin was made happy in the possession of his beloved genie. A round of festivities succeeded their marriage, and the seven sisters strove with each other who should by invention of new amusements make their residence among them most delightful to the happy pair Mazin, however, now began to think of his mother and his native city with fond regret, and at length begged leave of his kind patronesses to return home, to which request they, from admiration of his filial love, though unwilling to part, consented, and a day was fixed for his departure. The time being arrived, the sisters beat their magical drum, when several camels appeared at the gates of the palace heavily laden with the richest goods, a large sum of money, valuable jewels, and refreshments for the journey, led by proper attendants. One camel carried a splendid litter for the conveyance of his wife, and another was richly caparisoned for the use of Mazin, who, having taken an affectionate leave of his generous benefactresses, whom he promised to revisit at some future time, departed, and pursued the route back towards the sea shore, where he had disembarked with the magician. On the journey nothing remarkable occurred, and on their arrival at the coast they found a vessel ready to receive them, when the wind proving fair, a short time carried them safely to Bussorah, where Mazin had the satisfaction of finding his mother alive, though greatly wasted with constant grief and lamentation for his loss. To describe the joy of their meeting is impossible, for never was there more tender affection between parent and child than subsisted between Mazin and his mother. She seemed to gain new life from his recovery, and again to grow young. The fair genie, who was now in the way of being a mother, appeared perfectly contented in her situation, and Mazin, so unexpectedly restored to his country, was happy in the possession of all he wished; for the generous sisters had bestowed such wealth upon him, that, in addition to the domestic felicity he enjoyed, he was now one of the richest persons in all Bussorah.

Three years had rolled away in undisturbed happiness, during which the fair genie had borne him two sons, when Mazin thought it grateful to perform his promise to the seven sisters, the benevolent foundresses of his good fortune. Having accordingly made preparations for his journey, he committed his wife’s native robes to the care of his mother, giving her the key of a secret recess in which he had lodged them, but with a strict charge not to let the genie put them on, lest an irresistible impulse might inspire her to fly away to her own country; for though in general she had seemed contented, he had heard her now and then express a wish to be again with her own friends and species. The mother promised obedience, and Mazin having taken an affectionate leave of her, his wife and children, with assurances of speedy return, embarked on board a vessel and pursued his voyage, which was uncommonly prosperous. On his landing he found camels waiting his arrival on the beach, for the genie ladies, by magic arts, knew of his coming, and had stationed them for his conveyance to their palace, which he reached in safety, and was received with the most affectionate welcomes and hospitality.

Some time after the departure of Mazin, his wife requested her mother-in-law's permission to amuse herself at a public bath, and the old lady willingly accompanied her and the children to the most celebrated hummaum in the city, which was frequented by the ladies and those of the chief personages of the court, the caliph Haroon al Rusheed then happening to be at Bussorah. When they reached the bath there were then in it some of the principal female slaves, attendants of Zobeide, who, on the entrance of Mazin's wife, were struck with her uncommon beauty, and instantly collecting round her, rapturously gazed upon her as she was undressing.

The slaves of Zobeide did not cease to admire Mazin's wife till she left the hummaum, and even followed her till she entered her own house, when dusk had begun to gloom, and they became apprehensive of their mistress's being displeased at their long absence, and so it happened.

Upon entering into her presence, Zobeide exclaimed, "Where have ye loitered, and what has been the cause of your unusually long stay at the hummaum?" Upon which they looked confusedly at each other, and remained silent. The sultana then said in anger, "Instantly inform me of the cause of your delay!" when they related the wonderful beauty of Mazin's wife, and dwelt so much upon her charms, that Zobeide was overcome by curiosity to behold them. On the following day she sent for the mother of Mazin, who obeyed the summons with fear and trembling, wondering what could have made the caliph's consort desirous of seeing a person of her inferior rank.

Mazin's mother prostrated herself, and kissed the feet of the sultana, who graciously raising her, said, “Am Mazin, our wish is that you introduce to me your son’s wife, of whose beauty I have heard such a description, that I long to behold her.”

When the mother of Mazin heard these words, her heart sunk within her, she trembled, but dared not refuse the command of Zobeide, and she said, “To hear is to obey!” after which she took leave, with the usual ceremony of prostration before the throne of the sultana.

When the mother of Mazin left the princess Zobeide she returned towards her own house; and when she had reached it, entered to her son’s wife, and said, “Our sultana Zobeide hath invited thee to an entertainment.” The wife of Mazin was delighted, instantly rose up, arrayed herself in the richest apparel she was mistress of, and dressed her two children in their choicest garments and ornaments Then with them, the mother of her husband, and a black slave, she proceeded, till they reached the palace of the princess Zobeide, which they entered, and found her sitting in impatient expectation. They kissed the ground be fore her, and prayed for her prosperity.

When the sultana Zobeide beheld the wife of Mazin her senses were confounded, her heart fluttered, she was astonished at her beauty, elegance, graceful stature, and blooming complexion, and exclaimed, “Gracious heaven! Where could such a form as this have been created?” Then she seated her guests, and ordered a collation to be brought in, which was done immediately, when they ate and were satisfied, but Zobeide could not keep her eyes from the wife of Mazin of Bussorah. She kissed her, and questioned her concerning what had befallen herself and her husband. Her astonishment was redoubled on the relation of their adventures.

The wife of Mazin then said, “My princess, if you are thus surprised, though you have not seen me in my native robes, how would you be delighted at my appearance in them! If, therefore, you wish to gratify your curiosity by beholding a miracle, you must command the mother of my husband to bring my country dress.” Upon this Zobeide commanded the mother of Mazin to fetch the flying robes, and as she dared not disobey the sultana of the caliph, she went home, and speedily returned with them. Zobeide took them into her hands, examined them, and was surprised at their fashion and texture. At length she gave them to the wife of Mazin.

When the wife of Mazin had received the robes, she unfolded them, and going into the open court of the palace, arrayed herself in them, then taking her children in her arms, mounted with them suddenly into the air. When she had ascended to about the height of sixty feet, she called out to the mother of her husband, saying, “Give my adieu, dear mother, to my lord, and tell him, should ardent love for me affect him he may come to me in the islands of Waak al Waak.” After this speech she soared towards the clouds, till she was hidden from their eyes, and speeded to her own country.

When the mother of Mazin beheld her in the air, she beat her cheeks, scattered dust upon her head, and cried aloud to the princess Zobeide, “This is thy mischief.” Zobeide was not able to answer or reprove her boldness from the excess of her sorrow and regret, which made her repent, when repentance could not avail. The old lady returned in despair to her own habitation.

Thus it happened to the persons above mentioned, but how was it with the affairs of Mazin? He did not cease travelling for some time, till he arrived at the palace of the seven sisters, and paid his respects. They were rejoiced at his arrival, and inquired after his wife, when he informed them she was well, and that God had blessed him with two children, both sons, which added to their satisfaction. He remained with them for some time, after which he entreated their permission to depart. They took a tender leave of him, when he bade them farewell, and returned towards his own country; nor did he halt till he arrived in safety at Bussorah. When he entered his house he found his mother alone, mournfully weeping and lamenting what had happened in his absence. Seeing her in this state, he inquired the cause, upon which she informed him of all that had occurred, from the beginning to the conclusion.

When Mazin had heard the unwelcome intelligence, he cried out in an agony of distress for the loss of his wife and children, fell fainting to the ground, and forgot his own existence. His mother, on beholding his condition, beat her cheeks, and sprinkled water upon his face till he came to himself, when he wept and said to his mother, “Inform me what my wife may have spoken on her departure.” She repeated her farewell words: upon hearing which his distress and ardent longing for his wife and children was redoubled. He remained mournfully at home for the space of ten days, after which he resolved upon the journey to the islands of Waak al Waak, distant from Bussorah one hundred and fifty years of travel.

Mazin departed from his mother after he had taken leave and entreated her prayers for his success, but the aged matron was so affected that she ordered her tomb to be prepared, and did nothing but weep and lament night and day for her son, who did not halt till he had reached the palace of the seven sisters. When they saw him they were surprised, and said to one another, “There must be some urgent cause for his returning so speedily.” They saluted him, and inquired after his affairs: upon which he informed them of the desertion of his wife, what she had said at going away, and of his resolves to travel to the islands of Waak al Waak. The seven ladies replied, “This expedition is impossible to be accomplished either by thee or any of thy race; for these islands are distant a hundred and fifty years’ journey, so that thou canst not live to reach them.” Mazin exclaimed, “My attempting it, however, is incumbent upon me, though I may perish on the road: if God has decreed my reunion with my wife I shall meet her again; but if not, I shall die and be received into the mercy of the Almighty.” The sisters did not cease to importune him to lay aside the journey, but it was impossible for him to obey them or remain at ease; upon which their grief for his situation increased. They knew that the distance was such as he could never overcome by human aid, or rejoin his wife, but they respected his ardent love for her and his children.

On this account they consulted with one another how to assist him on the journey. He remained with them a month, but unable to repose or enjoy their entertainments. The sisters had two uncles, one named Abd al Kuddoos, and the other Abd al Sulleeb, who lived at three months distance from them, to whom they wrote in recommendation of Mazin as follows.

“The bearer is our friend Mazin of Bussorah. If you can direct him how to reach the islands of Waak al Waak, assist him; but if not, prevent him from proceeding, lest he plunge himself into destruction. At present he will not attend to our advice or reproofs, from excess of love to his wife and children, but through you there may finally occur to him safety and success."

When they had sealed this letter they gave it to Mazin, and bestowed also upon him, of water and provisions, what would suffice for three months' consumption, laden upon camels, and a steed for his conveyance, upon which he took leave of them with many thanks, fully resolved to pursue his journey to the islands of Waak al Waak.

With much pain and difficulty he pursued his journey, nor had he any pleasure either in eating or drinking during the three months of his pilgrimage. At length he reached a verdant pasturage, in which was a variety of flowers, flocks of sheep, and cattle feeding. It was indeed a paradise upon earth. In one part of it he perceived a pleasant eminence on which were buildings: he advanced to them, and entered a court. Within it he beheld a venerable looking personage, his beard flowing to his middle, whom he saluted; when the sage returned his compliments, welcomed him with respectful demeanour, and congratulated him on his arrival. He seated him, and laid before him a collation, of which they both ate till they were satisfied.

Mazin lodged with him that night, and in the morning the sage inquired of him his situation, and the reason of his coming to such a sequestered spot.

Mazin informed him; and, behold! this personage was Abd al Kuddoos; who, when he heard his guest mention particulars of his brother's children, redoubled his attentions to him, and said, "Did they give you any letter?" Mazin replied, "Yes." He eagerly exclaimed, "Give it to me." He gave it him, when he opened it, read it to himself, and considered the contents word byword.

Abd al Kuddoos gazed earnestly at Mazin; reflected on his adventures, at which he was astonished; and how he had plunged himself into danger and difficulty in such a wild pursuit. He then said to him, "My son, my advice is, that thou return by the way which thou hast come, and no longer vex thy soul on account of impossibilities, for this business thou canst not accomplish. I will write to the daughters of my brother what shall make thee happy with them, and restore thy peace. Return then to them, and perplex not thyself farther, for between this spot and the islands of Waak al Waak is the distance of a hundred and fifty years' journey. On the way also are numerous perils, for in it are the abodes of genii, the haunts of wild beasts, and monstrous serpents, and some parts also where food cannot be had or thirst be gratified. Have compassion then, my son, upon thyself, and rush not on destruction."

Abd al Kuddoos continued to dissuade him from his resolution during three days, but he would not hear advice or reproof. On the third he prepared to depart, being sufficiently refreshed; upon which the old man, seeing his steadiness, arose, kindled a fire, cast into it some perfumes, and uttered incantations, to Mazin unintelligible; when suddenly appeared a genie, in stature forty cubits; he was one of the subdued spirits of our lord Solomon. He muttered and growled, saying, "For what, my lord, hast thou summoned me here? shall I tear up this eminence by the roots, and hurl it beyond the mountains of Kaaf?"

Abd al Kuddoos replied, "God be merciful to thee; I have occasion for thee, and request that thou wilt accomplish my wish in one day:" upon which the genie answered, "To hear is to obey."

Abd al Kuddoos then said to the genie, "Take up this young man, and convey him to my brother Abd al Sullecb." He consented, though the distance was a common journey of seventy years. The genie advanced, seized Mazin, and placing him upon his shoulders, soared with him through the air from morning till sunset, when he descended before Abd al Sulleeb, paid his respects, and informed him of the commands of his brother Abd al Kuddoos. Upon this he greeted Mazin, who presented him the letter from the daughters of his brother, which he opened and read. When he had examined the contents, he was astonished at the circumstances which had befallen Mazin, his arrival with him, and his resolve to penetrate to the islands of Waak al Waak. He then said to him, "My son, I advise that thou vex not thyself with these difficulties and dangers, for thou canst never attain thy object, or reach these islands."

Mazin now began to despair, and at the remembrance of his wife and children to weep bitterly, insomuch that he fainted, which, when Abd al Sulleeb beheld, his heart sympathized with his unhappy condition. He perceived that he would not return from his pursuit, or be controlled, and therefore thought it best to assist his progress towards the islands. Going into another apartment, he kindled a fire, over which he sprinkled some perfumes, and uttered incantations; when, lo! ten genii presented themselves before him, and said, “Inform us, my lord, what thou desirest, and we will bring it thee in an instant.” He replied, “May God be gracious unto you!” and related to them the story of Maxin, his wife, and children.

When the ten genii had heard the narration, they exclaimed, “This affair is wonderful and miraculous; however, we will take and convey him safely over the mountains and deserts, to the extent of our country and dominion, and leave him there, but cannot promise further assistance, as we dare not pass a step beyond our own territories, for the land belongs to others. In it are innumerable horrors, and we dread the inhabitants.” Mazin having heard what they said, exclaimed, “I accept your offer with gratitude.”

The ten genii now took up Mazin, soared with him through the air for a night and day, till they came to the limits of their territories, and then set him down in a country called the land of Kafoor, took, their leaves, and vanished from his sight. He walked onwards, and did not neglect to employ his tongue in prayer, beseeching from God deliverance and the attainment of his wishes. Often would he exclaim, “O God, deliverer from bondage, who canst guide in safety over mountains, who feedest the wild beasts of the forest, who decreest life and death, thou canst grant me if thou choosest relief from all my distress, and free me from all my sorrows.”

In this manner did he travel onwards during ten days; on the last of which he beheld three persons contending with each other, each man trying to kill his fellow. He was astonished at their conduit, but advanced towards them. Upon his approach they desisted from combat, and one and all exclaimed, “We will be judged before his young man, and whoever contradicts his opinion shall be deemed in the wrong.” To this they agreed, and coming up to Mazin, demanded from him a just arbitration in their dispute. They then displayed before him a cap, a small copper drum, and a wooden ball, saying, “We are three brothers, by the same father and mother, who are both received into the mercy of God, leaving behind them these articles. They are three, and we are three; but a dispute hath fallen out among us respecting their allotment, as each of us says, ‘I will have the cap.’ Our contention made us proceed to blows, but now we are desirous that thou shouldst arbitrate between us, and allot an article to each of us as thou shall judge best, when we will rest satisfied with thy decision, but should either contradict it he shall be adjuged an offender."

When Mazin heard the above he was surprised, and said to himself, "These articles are so paltry and of such trifling value as not to be worth an arbitration; for surely this shabby cap, the drum, and the wooden ball, cannot be worth altogether more than half a deenar; but I will inquire farther about them." He then said, "My brethren, wherein lies the value of these three things about which you were contending, for to me they appear of very little worth." They replied, "Dear uncle, each of them has a property worth treasuries of wealth, and to each of them belongs a tale so wonderful, that wert thou to write it on a tablet of adamant it would remain an example for those who will be admonished."

Mazin then requested that they would relate to him the stories of the three articles, when they said, "The eldest brother shall first deliver the account of one, its properties, what can be gained from them, and we will not conceal any thing from thee."

"This cap," said the elder brother, "is called the cap of invisibility, by which, whoever possesseth it may become sovereign of the world. When he puts it on, he may enter where he pleases, for none can perceive him, either genii or men, so that he may convey away whatever he chooses, unseen, in security. He may enter the cabinets of kings and statesmen, and hear all they converse upon respecting political intrigues. Does he covet wealth, he may visit the royal treasuries, and plunder them at his pleasure; or does he wish for revenge, he can kill his enemy without being detected. In short, he may act as he pleases without fear of discovery."

Mazin now said to himself, "This cap can become nobody but me, to whom it will be most advantageous in the object of my expedition. Perhaps it may conduct me to my wife and children, and I may obtain from its possession all I wish. It is certainly one of the wonders of the world and rarities of the age, not to be found among the riches of kings of the present day." When he had ruminated thus, he said, "I am acquainted with the properties of the cap, what are those of the drum?"

The second brother began, saying, “Whoever has this drum in his possession, should he be involved in a difficult situation, let him take it out of its case, and with the sticks gently beat upon the characters engraven on the copper; when, if his mind be collected and his courage firm, there will appear to him wonderful matters. The virtue of it consists in the words inscribed upon it, which were written by our lord Solomon Bin David in talismanic characters, each of which has control over certain spirits and princes of the genii, and a power that cannot be described in speech. Hence, whoever is master of this drum may become superior to all the monarchs of the present day, for, on his beating it in the manner already described, when he is pressed for help, all the princes of the genii, with their sons, will appear also their troops and followers, ready to obey his commands. Whatever he may order them to execute they will perform by virtue of the talisman of our lord Solomon Bin David.”

When Mazin of Bussorah had heard the above, he said to himself, “This drum is fitting only for me, as I have much more need of it than the brothers. It will protect me from all evil in the islands of Waak al Waak, should I reach them, and meet with my wife and children. It is true, if I take only the cap I may be able to enter all places, but this drum will keep injury from me, and with it I shall be secure from all enemies.” After this, he said, “I have been informed of the virtues of the cap, and the properties of the drum, there now only remains the account of the wooden ball, that I may give judgment between you, therefore let the third brother speak.” He answered, “To hear is to obey.”

The third brother said, “My dear uncle, whoever possesses this ball will find in it wonderful properties, for it brings distant parts near, and makes near distant, it shortens long journeys, and lengthens short ones If any person wish to perform one of two hundred years in two days, let him take it from its case, then lay it upon the ground and mention what place he desires to go, it will instantly be in motion, and rush over the earth like the blast of the stormy gale. He must then follow it till he arrives at the place desired, which he will have the power to do with ease.”

When the youth had concluded his description of the virtue of the wooden ball, Mazin resolved within himself to take this also from the brothers, and said, “If your wish be that I should arbitrate between you, I must first prove the virtues of these three articles, and afterwards let each take that which may fall to him by decision.” The three brothers exclaimed, “We have heard, and we consent; act as thou thinkest best, and may God protect thee in thy undertakings!” Mazin then put on the cap, placed the drum under his vestband, took up the ball and placed it on the ground, when it speeded before him swiftly as the gale. He followed it till it came to the gate of a building which it entered, and Mazin also went in with it. The brothers ran till they were fatigued, and cried out, “Thou hast sufficiently tried them;” but in vain, for by this time there was between him and them the distance of ten years’ journey. Mazin now rested, took the drum in his hands, rubbed his fingers over the talismanic characters, hesitated whether he should strike them with the sticks, then labored lightly upon them, when, lo! a voice exclaimed, “Mazin, thou hast gained thy desires.

“Thou wilt not, however,” continued the voice, “arrive at thy object till after much trouble, but take care of the ball in this spot, for thou art at present in the land of the evil genii.” Upon this, Mazin took up the ball and concealed it in his clothes; but he was overcome with astonishment at hearing words without seeing the speaker, and exclaimed, “Who art thou, my lord?” “I am,” replied the voice, “one of the slaves of the characters which thou seest engraved upon the drum, and unremittingly in attendance; but the other servants will not appear except the drum be beaten loudly, when three hundred and sixty chiefs will attend thy commands, each of whom has under his authority ten thousand genii, and every individual of them numerous followers.”

Mazin now inquired the distance of the islands of Waak al Waak; to which the voice replied, “Three years’ journey:” upon which he struck the ball before him, and followed it. He next arrived in a region infested by serpents, dragons, and ravenous beasts, in the mountains of which were mines of copper. He now again tabored gently upon the drum, when the voice exclaimed, “I am ready to obey thy commands.”

“Inform me,” said Mazin, “what is the name of this country?” “It is called,” answered the voice, “the Land of Dragons and Ravenous

Animals. Be careful then of thyself, and make no delay, nor regard fatigue, for these mountains are not to be passed without a chance of trouble from the inhabitants, who are genii, and in their caves are furious wild beasts.” Upon this he struck the ball afresh, and followed it unceasingly, till at length he reached the sea shore, and perceived the islands of Waak al Waak at a distance, whose mountains appeared of a fiery red, like the sky gilded by the beams of the setting sun. When he beheld them he was struck with awe and dread; but recovering, he said to himself, “Why should I be afraid? since God has conducted me hither, he will protect me; or, if I die, I shall be relieved from my troubles, and be received into the mercy of God.” He then gathered some fruits, which he ate, drank some water, and having performed his devotions, laid himself down to sleep, nor did he awake till the morning.

In the morning Mazin had recourse to his drum, which he rubbed gently, when the voice inquired his commands. “How am I,” said he, “to pass this sea, and enter the islands?” “That is not to be done,” replied the voice, “without the assistance of a sage who resides in a cell on yonder mountains, distant from hence a day’s journey, but the ball will conduct thee there in half an hour. When you reach his abode, knock softly at the door, when he will appear, and inquire whence you come, and what you want. On entering he will receive thee kindly, and desire thee to relate thy adventures from beginning to end. Conceal nothing from him, for he alone can assist thee in passing the sea.”

Mazin then struck the ball, and followed it till he arrived at the abode of the hermit, the gate of which he found locked He knocked, when a voice from within said, “Who is at the gate?” “A guest,” replied Mazin upon which the sage arose and opened the door, admitted him, and entertained him kindly for a whole night and day, after which Mazin ventured to inquire how he might pass the sea The sage replied, “What occasions thy searching after such an object?” Mazin answered, “My lord, I intend to enter the islands, and with that view have I travelled far distant from my own country.” When the sage heard this, he stood up before him, took a book, opened it, and read in it to himself for some time, every now and then casting a look of astonishment upon Mazin. At length he raised his head and said, “Heavens! what troubles, disasters, and afflictions in exile have been decreed to this youth in the search of his object!” Upon this Mazin exclaimed, “Wherefore, my lord, did you look at the book and then at me so earnestly?” The sage replied, “My son, I would instruct thee how to reach the islands, since such is thy desire, but thou canst not succeed in thy desires till after much labour and inconvenience. However, at present relate to me thy adventures from first to last” Mazin rejoined, “My story, my lord, is such a surprising one, that were it engraven on tablets of adamant, it would be an example for such as would take warning.”

When he had related his story from beginning to end, the sage exclaimed, “God willing thou wilt attain thy wishes:” upon which Mazin inquired concerning the sea surrounding the islands, and how he could overcome such an impediment to his progress; when the sage answered, “By God’s permission, in the morning we will repair to the mountains, and I will shew thee the wonders of the seas.”

When God permitted morning to dawn the hermit arose, took Mazin with him, and they ascended the mountains, till they reached a structure resembling a fortress, which they entered, and proceeded into the inmost court, in which was an immense colossal statue of brass, hollowed into pipes, having in the midst of it a reservoir lined with marble, the work of magicians. When Mazin beheld this he was astonished, and began to tremble with fear at the vastness of the statue, and what miraculous power it might contain. The hermit now kindled a fire, threw into it some perfumes, and muttered some unintelligible words, when suddenly dark clouds arose, from which burst out eddies of tempestuous wind, lightnings, claps of thunder, groans, and frightful noises, and in the midst of the reservoir appeared boiling waves, for it was near the ocean surrounding the islands. The hermit did not cease to utter his incantations, until the hurricane and noises had subsided by his authority, for he was more powerful than any of the magicians, and had command over the rebellious genii. He now said to Mazin, “Go out, and look towards the ocean surrounding the islands.”

Mazin repaired to the summit of the mountain, and looked towards the sea, but could not discover the smallest trace of its existence: upon which he was astonished at the miraculous power of the hermit. He returned to him, exclaiming, “I can behold no remains of the ocean, and the islands appear joined to the main land;” when the sage said, “My son, place thy reliance on God and pursue thy object,” after which he vanished from sight.

Mazin now proceeded into the islands, and did not stop till he had reached a verdant spot watered by clear rivulets, and shaded by lofty trees. It was now sunrise, and among the wonders which he beheld was a tree like the weeping willow, on which hung, by way of fruit, beautiful damsels, who exclaimed, “Praised be God our creator, and former of the islands of Waak al Waak.” They then dropped from the tree and expired. At sight of this prodigy his senses were confounded, and he exclaimed, “By heavens, this is miraculously surprising!” When he had recovered himself, he roamed through the groves, and admired the contrivances of the Almighty till sunset, when he sat down to rest.

He had not sat long when there approached towards him a masculinely looking old woman of disagreeable countenance, at sight of whom Mazin was alarmed. The matron guessing that he was in fear of her, said to him, “What is thy name, what are thy wants? art thou of this country? Inform me; be not afraid or apprehensive, for I will request of God that I may be the means of forwarding thy wishes.” On hearing these words the heart of Mazin was encouraged, and he rerelated to her his adventures from first to last. When she had heard them, she knew that he must be husband to the sister of her mistress, who was queen of the islands of Waak al Waak, and said, “Thy object is a difficult one, but I will assist thee all in my power.”

The old woman now conducted Mazin through by-paths to the capital of the island, and led him unperceived in the darkness of night, when the inhabitants had ceased to pass through the streets, to her own house. She then set before him refreshments, and having eaten and drunk till he was satisfied, he praised God for his arrival; when the matron informed him concerning his wife, that she had endured great troubles and afflictions since her separation, and repented sincerely of her flight. Upon hearing this, Mazin wept bitterly, and fainted with anguish. When revived by the exertions of the old woman, she comforted him by promises of speedy assistance to complete his wishes, and left him to his repose.

Next morning the old woman desiring Mazin to wait patiently for her return, repaired to the palace, where she found the queen and her sisters in consultation concerning the wife of Mazin, and saying, “This wretch hath espoused a man, by whom she has children, but now she is returned, we will put her to death after divers tortures.” Upon the entrance of the old lady they arose, saluted her with great respect, and seated her, for she had been their nurse. When she had rested a little, she said, “Were you not conversing about your unfortunate sister? but can ye reverse the decrees of God?” “Dear nurse,” replied they, “no one can avoid the will of heaven, and had she wedded one of our own nature there would have been no disgrace, but she has married a human being of Bussorah, and has children by him, so that our species will despise us, and tauntingly say, ‘Your sister is a harlot.’ Her death is therefore not to be avoided.” The nurse rejoined, “If you put her to death your scandal will be greater than hers, for she was wedded lawfully, and her offspring is legitimate; but I wish to see her.” The eldest sister answered, “She is now confined in a subterraneous dungeon;” upon which the nurse requested permission to visit her, which was granted, and one of the sisters attended to conduct her to the prison.

The nurse, on her arrival at the prison, found the wife of Mazin in great distress from the cruelty of her sisters. Her children were playing about her, but very pallid, from the closeness of their confinement. On the entrance of the nurse she stood up, made her obeisance, and began to weep, saying, “My dear nurse, I have been long in this dungeon, and know not what in the end may be my fate.” The old woman kissed her cheeks, and said, “My dear daughter, God will bring thee relief, perchance on this very day.”

When the wife of Mazin heard this, she said, “Good heavens! your words, my dear nurse, recall a gleam of comfort that last night struck across my mind from a voice, which said, ‘Be comforted, O wife of Mazin, for thy deliverance is near.’” Upon this the old woman replied, “Thou shalt indeed be comforted, for thy husband is at my abode, and will speedily release thee.” The unfortunate prisoner, overcome with joy, fainted away, but was soon restored by the nurse’s sprinkling water upon her face, when she opened her eyes and said, “I conjure thee by heaven, my dear nurse, inform me if thou speakest truth, or dissemblest." "I not only speak truth," answered the nurse, "but by God's help thou shalt meet thy husband this day." After this she left her.

The nurse, upon her return home, inquired of Mazin if he had skill to take his wife away, provided he was admitted into the dungeon at night. He replied, "Yes." When night was set in, she conducted him to the spot where she was confined, left him near the gate, and went her way. He then put on his cap of invisibility, and remained unperceived all night by any one. Early in the morning the queen, his wife's eldest sister, advanced, opened the gate of the prison, and entered, when he followed unseen behind her, and seated himself in a corner of the apartment. The queen went up to her sister, and beat her cruelly with a whip, while her children wept around her, till the blood appeared upon her body, when she left her hanging by her hair from a pillar, went out, and locked the door of the dungeon. Mazin now arose, unloosed his wife's hair, and pulling off the cap, appeared before her, when she exclaimed, "From whence didst thou come?" They then embraced each other, and he said. "Ah, why didst thou act thus, leave me in such affliction, and plunge thyself into such distress, which, indeed, thy conduct hath almost deserved?" "It is true," replied she; "but what is past is past, and reproach will not avail, unless thus canst effect our escape:" upon which he exclaimed, "Does thy inclination really lead thee to accompany me to my own country?" She answered,

"Yes; do with me what thou choosest."

They remained in endearment with their children until evening, when the keeper of the dungeon approaching, Mazin put on his cap of invisibility. The keeper having set down the provisions for the night, retired into a recess of the dungeon and fell asleep; when Mazin and his family sat down and refreshed themselves. Perceiving the keeper asleep, Mazin tried the door and found it unlocked; upon which, he, with his wife and children, left the prison, and travelled as quickly as possible all night. When the queen, in the morning, was informed of her sister's escape she was enraged, and made incantations, on which seven thousand genii attended, with whom she marched out in pursuit, resolved to cut the fugitives in pieces.

Mazin, looking behind him, perceived a cloud of dust, and soon appeared the forces of his wife's sister, who cried out on seeing him, with dreadful howls, "Where will ye go, ye wretches, ye accursed? where can ye hide yourselves?" Upon this Mazin took out his drum, and beat it violently, when, lo! there appeared before him legions of genii, in number more than could be reckoned, and they fought with the armies of the queen, who was taken prisoner, with her principal attendants.

When the wife of Mazin beheld her sister in this distress her compassion was moved towards her, and she said to her husband, "Hurt not my sister, nor use her ill, for she is my elder:" upon which he treated her respectfully, and commanded tents to be pitched for her and her court.

Peace being established, the sisters took an affectionate leave, and Mazin, with his family, departed for the residence of Abd al Sulleeb, which they speedily reached with the assistance of the genii, and the directing ball. The old man received him kindly, and inquired his adventures, when he related them to him; at which he was surprised, especially at the account of the cap, the drum, and the ball; of which last Mazin begged his acceptance, being now near home, and having no farther occasion for its use. Abd al Sulleeb was much pleased, and entertained him magnificently for three days, when Mazin wishing to depart, the old man presented him with rich gifts, and dismissed him.

Mazin was continuing his route, when suddenly a band of a hundred banditti appeared, resolved to plunder and put him and his companions to death, with which design they kept advancing. Mazin called out to them, "Brother Arabs, let the covenant of God be between you and me, keep at a distance from me." When they heard this they increased their insolence, surrounded him, and supposed they should easily seize all that he had; but especially when they beheld his wife, and the beauty she was endowed with, they said one to another, "Let us put him to death, and not suffer him to live." Each man resolved within himself, saying, "I will seize this damsel, and not take the plunder."

When Mazin saw that they were bent upon attacking him, to seize his wife and plunder his effects, he took out his drum and beat upon it in a slight manner, when, behold! ten genii appeared before him, requiring his commands. He replied, "I wish the dispersion of yonder horsemen;” upon which one of the ten advanced among the hundred banditti, and uttered such a tremendous yell as made the mountains reverberate the sound. Immediately as he sent forth the yell, the banditti, in alarm, dispersed themselves among the rocks, when such as fell from their horses’ backs fled on foot; so that they lost their reputation, and were ridiculed among the chiefs of the Abbasside tribes. Mazin now pursued his journey, and did not halt till he had reached the abode of Abd al Kuddoos, who advanced to meet him and saluted him, but was astonished when he beheld his company, and the wealth he had obtained. Mazin related what had befallen him, of dangers, and hunger, and thirst; his safe arrival in the islands of Waak al Waak; the deliverance of his wife from prison, and the defeat of the army sent to oppose his return. He mentioned also the reconciliation between the sisters of his wife, and whatever had happened to him from first to last.

Abd al Kuddoos was greatly astonished at these adventures, and said to Mazin of Bussorah, “Truly, my son, these events are most surprising, and can have never occurred to any but thyself.” Mazin remained three days to repose himself, and was treated with hospitality and respect until the fourth, when he resolved to continue his journey, and took leave. He proceeded towards his own country, and did not halt on the way till he arrived with the seven sisters, the owners of the palace, who had so much befriended him.

When Mazin of Bussorah arrived near the palace of the seven sisters, they came out to meet him, saluted him and his wife, and conducted them within; but they were astonished at his return, and at first could scarcely believe his success, wondering that he had not perished on the road, or been torn in pieces by the wild beasts of the desert; for they had regarded it as impossible that he should ever reach the islands of Waak al Waak.

When they were seated, they requested him to relate to them all that had befallen him, which he did from first to last, and they were more than ever astonished at his uncommon adventures. After this they introduced a collation, and spread the cloth, when they ate till they were satisfied, and then wrote a letter and dispatched it to the mother of Mazin, congratulating her on the health of her son, and his safe return with his wife and children.

Mazin remained with the ladies a month, enjoying himself in feasting and amusements, after which he begged permission to depart to his own country, for his heart was anxious for his mother. They dismissed him, and he travelled unceasingly till he arrived at Bussorah. He entered the city at sunset, and proceeded to his own house, when his mother came out, saluted him, and embraced him. She had erected her tomb in the court of her house, and had wept night and day till she became blind, but when the letter arrived from the sisters, from the rapture of joy her sight returned unto her again. She beheld the children of her son, embraced them, and that night was to her as an eed or festival.

When God had caused the morning to dawn, the chief personages of Bussorah visited Mazin to congratulate him on his return, and the principal ladies came to his mother, and rejoiced with her on the safety of her son. At length intelligence of it reached the caliph Haroon al Rusheed, who sent for Mazin to his presence. Having entered the audience chamber, he made the usual obeisance, when the caliph returned his salute, and commanded him to sit. When he was seated, the caliph demanded that he should relate the whole of what had befallen him, to which he answered, "To hear is to obey."

Mazin then recited his adventures from the time the fire-worshipper who had stolen him from his mother by his stratagems, the mode of his coming to the palace of the seven ladies, the manner in which he obtained his wife, her flight from the palace of the empress Zobeide, his journey to the islands of Waak al Waak, also the dangers and difficulties he had encountered from first to last. The caliph was astonished, and said, "The substance of these adventures must not be lost or concealed, but shall be recorded in writing." He then commanded an amanuensis to attend, and seated Mazin of Bussorah by him, until he had taken down his adventures from beginning to end.

STORY OF THE SULTAN, THE DERVISH, AND THE BARBER’S SON.

In the capital of a sultan named Rammaud lived a barber, who had a son growing up to manhood, possessing great accomplishments of mind and person, and whose wit and humour drew numerous customers to his shop. One day a venerable dervish entering it, sat down, and calling for a looking glass, adjusted his beard and whiskers, at the same time asking many questions of the young man; after which he laid down a sherif, rose up, and departed. The next day he came again, and for several days following, always finishing his visit by leaving a piece of gold upon the looking-glass, to the great satisfaction of the barber, who from his other customers never usually received more than sonic coppers of little value; but though he liked the gold, his suspicions were raised against the generous donor, supposing him to be a necromancer, who had some evil design against his son, whom, therefore, he cautioned to be upon his guard. The visits of the dervish were continued as usual for some time; when one day he found the barber’s son alone in the shop, and was informed that his father had gone to divert himself with viewing some experiments which the sultan was making of the mixture of various metals, being an adept in chemistry, and eager in search of the philosopher’s stone. The dervish now invited the young man to accompany him to the spot where the experiments were making, and on their arrival they saw a vast furnace, into which the sultan and his attendants cast pieces of metal of various sorts. The dervish having taken a lump of ore from his wallet threw it into the furnace; then addressing the young barber, said, “I must for the present bid you farewell, as I have a journey to take; but if the sultan should inquire after me, let him know I am to be found in a certain city, and will attend his summons.” Having said this, the dervish presented the barber’s son with a purse of gold, took his leave, and the youth returned home. Great was the surprise of the sultan, when the metals in the furnace were all melted, to find them converted into a mass of solid gold, which proved, on assay, to be of the purest quality. Every one was questioned as to what he had cast into the furnace, when there appeared no reason to suppose the transmutation could have been effected by such an accidental mixture of metals. At length it was remarked, that a dervish, accompanying the barber's son, had cast in a lump of ore, and immediately disappeared. Upon this the sultan summoned the youth to his presence, and inquiring after his companion, was informed of the place of his residence, and of what, on his departure, he had said to him. The sultan was overjoyed at the welcome intelligence, and dispatched the young man, with an honourable attendance, to conduct the venerable dervish to his presence, where being arrived, he was received with the most distinguishing attention, and the barber's son was promoted to high office. After some days, the sultan requested the dervish to instruct him in the transmutation of metals, which he readily did, as well as in many other occult mysteries; which so gratified his royal patron, that he trusted the administration of government to his care. This disgusted the ministers and courtiers, who could not bear to be controlled by a stranger, and therefore resolved to effect his ruin. By degrees they persuaded their credulous master that the dervish was a magician, who would in time possess himself of his throne, and the sultan, alarmed, resolved to put him to death. With this intention, calling him to the presence, he accused him of sorcery, and commanded an executioner to strike off his head. “Forbear awhile,” exclaimed the dervish, “and let me live till I have shown you the most wonderful specimen of my art.” To this the sultan consented, when the dervish, with chalk, drew a circle of considerable extent round the sultan and his attendants, then stepping into the middle of it, he drew a small circle round himself, and said, “Now seize me if you can;” and immediately disappeared from sight. At the same instant, the sultan and his courtiers found themselves assaulted by invisible agents, who, tearing off their robes, whipped them with scourges till the blood flowed in streams from their lacerated backs. At length the punishment ceased, but the mortification of the sultan did not end here, for all the gold which the dervish had transmuted returned to its original metals. Thus, by his unjust credulity, was a weak prince punished for his ungrateful folly. The barber and his son also were not to be found, so that the sultan could gain no intelligence of the dervish, and he and his courtiers became the laughingstock of the populace for years after their merited chastisement.

ADVENTURES OF ALEEFA, DAUGHTER OF MHEREJAUN, SULTAN OF HIND, AND EUSUFF, SON OF SOHUL, SULTAN OF SIND.

Mherejaun, sultan of Hind, was many years without any progeny, and immersed in melancholy at the thought of his kingdom's passing to another family. One evening, while indulging his gloomy thoughts, he dropped into a doze, from which he was roused by a voice exclaiming, "Sultan, thy wife this night shall conceive. If she bears a son, he will increase the glory of thy house; but if a daughter, she will occasion thee disgrace and misfortune." In due time the favourite sultana was delivered of a daughter, to the great mortification of the parents, who would have destroyed her had not her infant smiles diverted their anger. She was brought up in the strictest privacy, and at the end of twelve years the sultan had her conveyed to a strong citadel erected in the middle of a deep lake, hoping in such a confinement to prevent her from fulfilling the prediction which had been made concerning her. Nothing could excel the magnificence of her abode, where she was left only with female attendants of the highest accomplishments, but no male was allowed to approach even the borders of the lake, except when supplies were conveyed for the use of its fair inhabitants, who were then restricted to their apartments. The gate of the citadel was entrusted to the care of an old lady, the princess's nurse. For three years the fair Aleefa lived happy in her splendid prison, but the decree of fate was not to be overcome, and an event predestined by heaven overturned the cautious project of sultan Mherejaun.

Eusuff, a dissipated young prince, son to the sultan of Sind, having offended his father, fled from his court, and with a few attendants reached the borders of the lake, in his way to seek an asylum in the territories of Mherejaun. Curious to know who inhabited the citadel in the midst of it, he swam over the lake, and landed at the gate, which he found shut, but no one answered his loudest call for admission. Upon this he wrote a note, requesting compassion to a helpless stranger, and having fixed it to an arrow, shot it over the battlements. It luckily for him fell at the feet of the princess, then walking in one of the courts of her palace. She prevailed upon her nurse to open the gate, and at sight of Eusuff fell in love with him, as he did with her. He was admitted, and the tenderest interviews took place between them. Joy and pleasure prevailed in the citadel, while the prince's attendants remained, expecting his return, on the banks of the lake.

After some time, sultan Sohul wishing to be reconciled to his son, and having learnt the route he had taken, dispatched his nephew named Yiah to assure him of forgiveness, and invite him to return to Sind. Yiah arriving at the lake, was informed by Eusuff's attendants that the prince had entered the citadel, since which they had not seen or heard anything of him. Yiah, upon this, penned a note expressive of the sultan's forgiveness, and his wish to see the prince, which he fixed to an arrow and shot it into the palace, in the garden of which it fell, as Eusuff and Aleefa were walking for their amusement. The prince, on reading the note, overcome with joy at the intelligence of his father's forgiveness of his errors, resolved to return home and pay his duty to his parents. He communicated his design to the princess, who was plunged into the deepest sorrow at the thought of his departure, but he comforted her by assurances of his speedy return, declaring that nothing but filial duty could have torn him from her, even for a moment. She now implored him to to take her with him, but Eusuff prudently represented that such a step could only disgrace her fame and enrage her father, who, on discovery of her flight, would invade the kingdom of Sind with his powerful armies, and a scene of unnecessary bloodshed would ensue. On the contrary, it they waited patiently, sultan Mherejaun might be prevailed upon to consent to their union; but, in the mean time, he would visit her often, while their meetings might, through the fidelity of their mutual attendants, be kept secret. Aleefa, though unwilling, was obliged to acknowledge the justice of his reasoning, and consented to his departure; but on his taking leave, with tears and embraces entreated him not to be long absent, which he promised, and with truth, for his love was sincere, and it was with difficulty he submitted to the call of duty to a forgiving parent.

Eusuff having swam the lake with his bow and quiver upon his head, as before, rejoined his companions, who rejoiced to see him. He was received by his cousin Yiah with transports of affection, and informed of what had happened since his departure from court; after which the prince related his love adventure with the fair Aleefa, at the same time requesting his secrecy, and that he would charge the same on his attendants, as to his having been in the citadel, which he should earnestly beg also of his companions to observe. After a night's repose the two princes marched towards Sind, and when within a day's distance from the capital, dispatched a courier to give notice of their approach. Sultan Sohul, overcome with joy at the recovery of his son, having commanded the city to be ornamented and splendid entertainments to be made for his triumphal entry, with his whole court in their most magnificent array advanced to meet him. The prince, on seeing his father's train, dismounted, fell on his face, then running up, eagerly embraced the stirrup of the old sultan, who threw himself upon his neck in a transport of joy, and wept over him with tears of affectionate rapture. A horse sumptuously caparisoned was now brought for the prince's mounting, and the father and son rode side by side into the city, amid the acclamations of all ranks of people; while, as they proceeded, basins full of silver and gold, coined for the occasion, were showered amongst the assembled crowds in the streets. It is impossible to describe the tender interview between the prince and the queen his mother, whose heart had been nearly broken on the flight of her son, or the glad transports of Eusuff's own ladies, who were in number three wives and forty concubines. Suffice it to say, that all was joy and pleasure in the palace, except in the breast of Eusuff; who mingled with the satisfaction of return to his family an ardent desire to meet again the beautiful Aleefa, so that the caresses of his women gave him no pleasure; and when he retired to his apartment, he did not, as was usual, call any of them to his presence, but passed the night alone, thinking of his beloved. Morning invited him to new scenes of festivity, prepared by his happy parents, who little suspected how soon they were again to lose their son.

Eusuff having sacrificed a few days (to him long as the eve of dissolution) to his sense of duty, could no longer restrain his impatience, but with a faithful slave named Hullaul, mounted on a favourite courser behind him, left the palace undiscovered in the darkness of night, and speeded with the swiftness of the gale towards the citadel of Aleefa. Being arrived on the banks of the lake, he secured his saddle and bridle among some bushes, and was carried with his attendant safely through the water by his noble steed. Unbounded was the joy of the princess at again meeting her faithful lover, nor was his rapture less than hers. Having committed Hullaul to the care of the ladies of Aleefa, they retired to their apartment. Thirty days rolled on almost unperceived by Eusuff, who forgot his parents, his family, and country, in the delights of love.

On the thirtieth evening, as Eusuff and Aleefa were viewing the beautiful prospect from the terrace of the palace, they perceived a boat sailing towards it, which, as it drew nearer, the princess knew to belong to her father the sultan Mherejaun; upon which she requested her lover to keep himself concealed from view, while she received the persons in the vessel. Eusuff accordingly withdrew into a chamber, the lattice of which looked upon the lake; but how can we express his indignant surprise, and furious jealousy, when he beheld landing from the boat two handsome young men, into the arms of one of whom Aleefa threw herself with eager transport, and after mutual embraces they withdrew together into the palace. Without considering that his supposed rival might be a near relation to the princess, as he in fact was, being her first cousin, who had been brought up with her till her confinement to the lake; Eusuff suffered himself to be overcome by unworthy suspicion, and resolved to quit for ever a faithless mistress. Having written an angry letter upraiding her with falsehood, and bidding her farewell, he with his attendant Hullaul mounted his courser; then delivering his note to one of the females, to be given to the princess, he swam over the lake and speeded rapidly to his own country, where he was once more joyfully received by his parents and family; and in order to forget the charms of Aleefa, he indulged himself in mirth and pleasure with his lately forsaken ladies, who, delighted with the long-wished-for return of his affection, strove with each ether who should please him best.

The unsuspecting Aleefa was engaged with her cousin Sohaul and Ali Bin Ibrahim, a faithful eunuch who was his attendant, asking a thousand questions and listening to the news of her father's court, when Eusuff's letter was put into her hands. Rising up, she withdrew into a closet, opened it, and was much vexed at its ungrateful contents; but knowing herself innocent, and trusting that her lover would return when convinced of his mistake, she composed her mind as firmly as she, could till the departure of her cousin, who after some days took leave and returned to the capital of Mherejaun, leaving behind him the eunuch, to the great satisfaction of the princess, who hoped to make him the mediator between her and her beloved. Nor was she mistaken. When unfolding to him the whole of her adventures with Eusuff, he agreed to be the bearer of a letter, and explain to him the cause of his needless suspicion. Having swam the lake with the fair Aleefa's packet wrapped in his clothes upon his head, the faithful Ah in twenty days reached the city of Sind, and demanding an audience in private, which was readily granted, delivered his commission to the prince. Eusuff, whose anger was now calmed, and who had already begun to feel uneasy at absence from the still reigning favourite of his heart, on perusing her letter was overcome with joy. He listened eagerly to the account of his fancied rival by the eloquent Ali Bin Ibrohim, to whom he expressed his conviction of her constancy, his own sorrow for his unreasonable desertion of her, and his intention of departing to visit her the next night, till when he desired the eunuch to repose himself after his fatigue. Ali Bin Ibrahim was then lodged, by the prince's orders, in one of the most splendid apartments of the palace, and respectfully waited upon by the domestics of his court. The night following, Eusuff having ordered his favourite Hullaul to make preparations, departed from Sind as before, with the eunuch mounted on a second courser. They in a few days reached the borders of the lake, swam over, and to the great joy of the once more happy Aleefa arrived at the citadel. The recollection of the pains of absence added a zest to the transports of reunion, and the lovers were, if possible, more delighted with each other than before their separation. The faithful Ali Bin Ibrahim was now dismissed with invaluable presents of precious stones, and returned to the court of Mherejaun, the time for his stay at the citadel of the lake being expired. On his arrival, the sultan, anxious for intelligence of his daughter's health, took him into his closet, and while he was questioning him, by some accident the eunuch's turban unfortunately falling off, the precious stones, which, with a summary of the adventures of Eusuff and Aleefa, and his own embassy to Sind, were wrapped in the folds, tumbled upon the floor. The sultan knew the jewels, and examining the turban, to make farther discoveries, found the paper, which he eagerly read; and furious was his wrath, when from the contents it appeared that all his caution to guard against the decrees of heaven had been vain, that the princess had been seduced, and his house dishonoured. He sternly inquired of the trembling Ali if Eusuff was yet with his daughter, and was answered in the affirmative, when he immediately gave orders for vessels to be prepared for his departure, hoping to take him prisoner, and at the same time commanded his army to march along the banks of the lake and encamp opposite the citadel. The unfortunate eunuch was thrown into a dungeon and loaded with heavy chains, after he had been bastinadoed almost to death; but still faithful to the lovers, he prevailed upon his gaoler by a large bribe during the night to permit him to dispatch a note by a trusty messenger to the princess, apprising her of the misfortune which had happened, in hopes that she would have time to escape with Eusuff towards his own country before her father's arrival. Fortunately for the lovers, this information reached them the next morning, when they consulted what measures to pursue, and it was agreed, that instead of both quitting the citadel, only Eusuff and Hullaul should return to Sind, as the princess was unequal to such a rapid journey, but that in order to ensure her safety, the slaves should, on the sultan's arrival, assure him that she had gone off with her lover, when he would either return home or pursue the prince with his army; who, however, mounted as he was on so swift a courser, could not be overtaken. It was also settled that Eusuff, on his arrival in his own country, should send an embassy to Mherejaun, declaring his marriage with Aleefa, and requesting pardon, and leave to pay his duty as his son-in-law. This stratagem had in part its effect, but no precaution could ward off the fulfilment of the prediction at the princess's birth, which was that she should occasion the disgrace and death of her father.

Mherejaun armed at the citadel a few hours after Eusuff's escape, and was informed by her attendants that she had also accompanied him in his flight; upon which the enraged sultan, hurried on by fate, without stopping to search the palace in which his daughter was concealed, hastened to join his troops on the banks of the lake, and with a vast army pursued the Sindian prince, who, however, reached his capital in safety. On his arrival, having informed his father of his adventures, the old sultan, eager to gratify his son, approved of his additional marriage with the fair Aleefa, and dispatched an embassy to Mherejaun, who by this time was in the territory of Sind, laying it waste with fire and sword, no troops scarcely being opposed to his sudden invasion. He received the ambassador with mortifying haughtiness, bidding him return to his master, and inform him that he never would forgive the seduction of his daughter, in revenge for which he had taken a solemn oath to overturn the kingdom of Sind, raze the capital, and feast his eyes with the blood of the old sultan and his son. On receipt of this ungracious reply to his proposals, the sultan and Eusuff had no alternative but to oppose so inveterate a foe. They collected their troops, by whom they were much beloved, and marched to meet the enemy, whom, after an obstinate battle, they defeated, and Mherejaun was slain in the action. It is impossible to resist the decrees of heaven. From God we came, and to God we must return.

Eusuff, after the action, behaved with the greatest humility to the conquered, and had the body of the unfortunate Mherejaun embalmed and laid in a splendid litter, in which it was conducted by a numerous escort, in respectful solemnity, to the capital of Hind, and deposited with funeral pomp, becoming the rank of the deceased, in a magnificent mausoleum, which had been erected by himself, as is customary among the sovereigns of Asia. The prince, at the same time, dispatched letters of condolence to the mother of Aleefa, lamenting the fate of Mherejaun, whom he had been, much against his will, necessitated to oppose in battle, and expressing his ardent love for her daughter, a marriage with whom was his highest hope, as it was his first wish to console the mother of his beloved in her misfortunes.

The sultana, who had received intelligence of the decisive victory and the death of her husband, and who expected, instead of such conduct, to see the victor besieging her capital, felt some alleviation of her sorrow in the prospect of saving her people from destruction, by consenting to an union between Eusuff and Aleefa. Her answer accordingly was favourable, upon which the prince of Sind repaired to the lake, and conducting his willing bride to the capital of Hind, at the expiration of the stated time of mourning for Mherejaun, their nuptials were celebrated with all possible magnificence, amid the united acclamations of the subjects, who readily acknowledged his authority, and had no cause to repent of their submission to his yoke. His next care was to inform the caliph Mamoon, who was then commander of the faithful at Bagdad, of the events which had happened, accompanying his petition with a great sum of money, and offerings of all the rarities the countries of Hind and Sind afforded; among which were ten beautiful slaves, highly accomplished in singing, dancing, and a talent for poetry. They recited extempore verses before the caliph, but the subject of each was so expressive of their wish to return to their beloved sovereign, and delivered in so affecting a manner, that Mamoon, though delighted with their wit and beauty, sacrificed his own pleasure to their feelings, and sent them back to Eusuff by the officer who carried the edict, confirming him in his dominions, where the prince of Sind and the fair Aleefa continued long, amid a numerous progeny, to live the protectors of their happy subjects.

ADVENTURES OF THE THREE PRINCES, SONS OF THE SULTAN OF CHINA.

A sultaness of China being seized with an alarming illness was given over by the physicians, who declared her case incurable by any other means than the water of life, which they feared it was next to impossible to obtain before nature would be exhausted; the country in which, if anywhere, it was to be found, being so very distant. Such, however, was the affection of the sultaness's three sons, that in hopes of saving their mother they resolved to go in search of the precious medicine, and departed immediately in the route pointed out by the physicians. After travelling without success to their inquiries through divers countries, they agreed to separate, in hopes that one of them at least might be fortunate enough to procure the wished-for miraculous liquid, and return home in time to save their mother. Having taken an affectionate farewell, each pursued his journey alone. The eldest prince, after a fatiguing walk (for the brothers had thought it prudent to lay aside their dignity, and as safest to disguise themselves in mean habits) over a wild country, arrived at last within sight of a large city, inhabited by blasphemous Jews, near which, in a superb synagogue, he laid himself down on a carpet to repose, being quite exhausted with toil and hunger. He had not rested long, when a Jew rabbi entering the building, the prince begged for the love of God a little refreshment; but the wicked infidel, who hated true believers, instead of relieving, cruelly put him to death with his sabre, and wrapping the corpse in a mat, threw it into a corner of the synagogue. By ill fortune, on the day following the second prince arrived, and was treated in the same manner by the barbarous Jew, and on the next came also the youngest brother to the same place, where he was met by the base assassin, who would have killed him also, had not the extraordinary beauty of the young prince struck his covetous mind with the idea of making him a slave, and selling him for a large sum of money. Speaking therefore to him in a kind manner he brought him refreshments, and inquired if he was willing to be his servant, and employ himself in cleaning the synagogue and lighting the lamps; to which the prince, being in an exhausted condition, seemingly assented, seeing no other means of present support, but secretly resolved to escape when recovered from his fatigue. The Jew now took him to his house in the city, and showed him, apparently, the same tenderness as he used towards his own children. The next day the prince repaired to his allotted task of cleaning the synagogue, where, to his grief and horror, he presently discovered the bodies of his unfortunate brothers. While he lamented their unhappy fate with showers of tears, the recollection of his own perilous situation, in the power of their murderer, filled his mind with terror; but after the agonies of thought were over, the natural courage of a princely heart rose in his bosom, and he meditated how to revenge the death of his brothers on the savage infidel. An opportunity happened that same night. The prince having composed his mind, finished his work, and when the Jew arrived to examine it, dissembled so well, that no appearance of his inward melancholy was displayed. The Jew applauded his diligence, and taking him home, made him sit down to supper with himself and family, consisting of a wife and two young lads. It being the middle of summer, and the weather sultry, they retired to sleep on the open terrace of the house, which was very lofty. In the dead of night, when the Jew and his family were fast locked in the arms of slumber, the prince, who had purposely kept himself awake, seized the sabre of the treacherous infidel, and with a dexterous blow struck off his head; then snatching up the two children, hurled them headlong from the terrace, so that their brains were dashed out on the stone pavement of the court below. He then uplifted the sabre to destroy the Jew's wife, but the thought that she might be of use to him withheld his hand. He awoke her gently, commanded her to make no noise, and follow him down stairs, where, by degrees, he informed her of his adventures, the discovery he had made of the murder of his brothers, and his revenge on her treacherous husband and ill-fated children, whom, however, he would not have destroyed had he not been apprehensive of their cries alarming the neighbourhood. The Moosulmaun woman, for such she secretly was, did not regard the death of the wicked Jew, who had married her against her will, and often used her with great harshness, and her sorrows for the children were softened by the salvation of her own life. She also felt sentiments of tenderness towards the prince, whose injuries in the murder of his unfortunate brothers had compelled him to revenge, and felt herself obliged to his mercy in letting her live. She now informed him that in the Jew's laboratory were many valuable medicines, and among them the very water of life he was in search of; which intelligence was most gratifying to the prince, who offered to take the woman under his protection, and she willingly consented to accompany him to a country inhabited by true believers. Having packed up the medicines, with some valuable jewels, and put them, with various refreshments and necessaries, on two camels, they mounted and left the city undiscovered, nor did any accident occur on their journey; but on reaching the capital of China, the prince found that his father was dead, while his mother, contrary to expectation, lingered in painful existence. The ministers, who had with difficulty, in hopes of the three brothers' arrival, kept the next relations of the throne from disputing their right to ascend it, were rejoiced at his return; and on being informed of the untimely end of the two elder princes, immediately proclaimed him sultan. His first care was to administer comfort and relief to his afflicted mother, on whom the water of life had an instantaneous effect; his next, to regulate the affairs of his government, which he did with such ability, justice, and moderation, that he became endeared to his subjects, and an example to other sovereigns.

As the sultan, some time after his accession, was one day amusing himself in the chase, he saw a venerable Arab, accompanied by his daughter, travelling on horseback. By accident the young female's veil being blown aside, displayed such beauty to the eyes of the sultan, as instantly fascinated his heart, and made him wish to have her for his sultana. He immediately made offers to her father of his alliance; but great was his mortification and surprise when the Arab rejected them, saying, "That he had sworn not to give his daughter to any one who was not master of some useful trade, by which a livelihood might be earned." "Father," replied the sultan, "what occasion is there that I should learn a mean occupation, when I have the wealth of a kingdom at my command?" "Because," rejoined the Arab, "such are the vicissitudes of the world, that you may lose your kingdom and starve, if not able to work in some way for your living.” The sultan, unlike some princes, who would have seized the lady and punished the Arab for his freedom, felt the force of his remark, applauded his wisdom, and requested that he would not betroth her to another, as he was resolved to make himself worthy of becoming his son-in-law by learning some handicraft, till when he hoped they would accept of an abode near the palace. To this the old man readily consented; and in a short time the sultan, eager to possess his bride, became such an adept in the handicraft of making ornamental mats for sofas and cushions of cane and reeds, that the Arab agreed to the nuptials, which were celebrated with all possible splendour and rejoicing, while the subjects admired more than ever the justice and moderation of their sovereign; so true is it, that, unless in depraved states, a good prince makes a good people.

Some years rolled on in uninterrupted felicity to the sultan and his beloved partner. It was the custom of the former frequently to visit in the disguise of a dervish the various quarters of the city, by which means he learnt the opinions of the people, and inspected the conduct of the police. One day in an excursion of this sort he passed by a cook’s shop, and being hungry, stepped in to take some refreshment. He was, with seeming respect, conducted to a back room spread with flowered carpeting, over which was a covering of muslin transparently fine. Pulling off his slippers, he entered the room and sat down upon a neat musnud, but to his surprise and terror it instantly sunk under him, and he found himself at the bottom of a dark vault, where by a glimmering light he could discern several naked bodies of unfortunate persons who had been murdered, and presently appeared, descending from a narrow staircase, a black slave of savage countenance, who, brandishing a huge cimeter, cried out, “Wretch, prepare thyself to die!” The sultan was alarmed, but his presence of mind did not forsake him. “What good,” said he, “will my death do you or your employers? I have nothing about me but the humble habit I wear; but if you spare my life, I possess an art that will produce your employers considerable wealth.” Upon this, the slave going to the master of the house informed him of what the supposed dervish had said, when the treacherous cook came to inquire after the promised riches. “Give me only some reeds and canes, varnished of different colours,” said the sultan, “and I will make a mat, which if you carry to the palace and present to the vizier, he will purchase it for a thousand pieces of gold." The desired articles were furnished, and the sultan setting to work, in a few days finished a mat, in which he ingeniously contrived to plait in flowery characters, known only to himself and his vizier, the account of his situation. When finished, he gave it to his treacherous host, who admired the beauty of the workmanship, and not doubting of the reward, carried it to the palace, where he demanded admission, saying he had a curiosity to offer for sale. The vizier, who was then giving audience to petitioners, commanded him to be brought in; but what was his astonishment when the mat was unfolded, to see pourtrayed upon it the imminent danger of the sultan, whom he supposed to be in his haram, and whose absence the sultana had, in order to prevent confusion, commanded to be kept secret, hoping for his speedy return. The vizier instantly summoning his guards seized the villanous cook, and proceeding to his house, released the sultan from his confinement. The house was razed to the ground, and the abominable owner, with his guilty family, put to death. The sultan exultingly felt the use of having learnt a useful art, which had been the means of saving his life.

STORY OF THE GOOD VIZIER UNJUSTLY IMPRISONED.

A certain vizier, though perfectly loyal and of the strictest integrity, having been falsely accused by his enemies, was, without due examination of the charges brought against him, thrown into prison, where, by orders from the sultan, he was confined to a gloomy dungeon, and allowed only bread and water for his daily food. In this wretched abode he lay for seven years, at the expiration of which, the sultan his master, who was in the habit of walking about the city in disguise to amuse himself, chanced to pass by the house of his injured minister, dressed as a dervish. To his surprise he saw it open, and a crowd of domestics busy in cleaning the apartments, and preparing for the reception of the owner, who, they said, had commanded them by a messenger from the prison to put things in order, as he should that day be restored to the sultan's favour, and return home. The sultan, who, so far from intending to release the unfortunate vizier, had almost erased the remembrance of him from his mind, was astonished at the report of the domestics, but thought his long confinement might possibly have disturbed the brain of his prisoner, who in his madness might have fancied his deliverance to be at hand. He resolved however to go and visit the prison disguised as he was, and see the vizier. Having purchased a quantity of bread and cakes, he proceeded to the gaol, and requested, under pretence of fulfilling a vow he had made to feed the prisoners, to be admitted, and allowed to distribute his charity among them. The gaoler granted his request, and permitted him to visit the different cells. At length he came to that of the vizier, who was employed earnestly at his devotions, which on the entrance of the supposed dervish he suspended, and inquired his business. "I come," said he, "for though unknown to you I have always prayed for your welfare, to congratulate you on your approaching deliverance, which I understand you have announced to your domestics, but fear without foundation, not having heard of any orders for the purpose from the sultan." "That may be true, charitable dervish," said the vizier, "but depend upon it before night I shall be released and restored to office.” “I wish it may be so,” replied the sultan; “but upon what ground do you build an expectation, the gratification of which appears to me so improbable?” “Be seated, good dervish, and I will tell you,” rejoined the vizier, and began as follows: “Know then, my friend, experience has convinced me that the height of prosperity is always quickly succeeded by adverse fortune, and the depth of affliction by sudden relief. When I was in office, beloved by the people for my lenient administration, and distinguished by the sultan, whose honour and advantage were the constant objects of my care, and for whose welfare I have never ceased to pray even in this gloomy dungeon, I was one evening taking the air upon the river in a splendid barge with some favourite companions. As we were drinking coffee, the cup I held in my hand, which was made of a single emerald of immense value, and which I highly prized, slipped from it and fell into the water; upon which I ordered the barge to be stopped, and sent for a diver, to whom I promised an ample reward should he recover the cup. He undressed, and desired me to point out the place at which it fell; when I, having in my hand a rich diamond ring, heedlessly, in a fit of absence, threw it into that part of the river. While I was exclaiming against my own stupidity, the diver made a plunge towards where I had cast the ring, and in less than two minutes reappeared with the coffee-cup in his hand, when to my great surprise within it I found also my ring. I rewarded him liberally, and was exulting in the recovery of my jewels, when it suddenly struck my mind, that such unusual good fortune must speedily be followed by some disaster. This reflection made me melancholy, and I returned home with a foreboding sadness, nor without cause, for that very night my enemies accused me falsely of treason to the sultan, who believed the charge, and next morning I was hurried to this gloomy cell, where I have now remained seven years with only bread and water for my support. God, however, has given me resignation to his decrees, and this day an accident occurred which makes me confident of release before night, and restoration to the sultan’s favour, which, as I have always done, I will endeavour to deserve. You must know, venerable dervish, that this morning I felt an unconquerable longing to taste a bit of flesh, and earnestly entreated my keeper, giving him at the same time a piece of gold, to indulge my wish. The man, softened by the present, brought me a stew, on which I prepared to make a delicious meal; but while, according to custom before eating, I was performing my ablutions, guess my mortification, when a huge rat running from his hole leaped into the dish which was placed upon the floor. I was near fainting with agony at the sight, and could not refrain from tears; but at length recovering from the poignancy of disappointment, the rays of comfort darted upon my mind, and I reflected that as disgrace and imprisonment had instantaneously followed the fortunate recovery of my cup and ring, so this mortification, a greater than which could not have happened, would be immediately succeeded by returning prosperity. In this conviction I prevailed on the gaoler to order my domestics to make ready my house and expect my return."

The disguised sultan, who, while the vizier was speaking, felt every word impress him more and more with the conviction of his innocence, had much difficulty to support his assumed character; but not choosing his visit to the prison should be known at present, he restrained his feelings, and when the minister had finished took his leave, saying, he hoped his presage would be fulfilled. He then returned undiscovered to the palace, and entering his cabinet, resumed his usual habit; after which he issued orders for the release of the vizier, sending him a robe of honour and splendid attendants to escort him to court, at the same time condemning to confiscation and imprisonment his malicious accusers. On his arrival, the sultan received the vizier with the most gracious distinction; and having presented him with the canopy of state, the seal and the inkstand set with rich jewels, the insignia of office, conducted him to a private chamber, where falling upon his neck he embraced him, and requesting him to forget past oppression, informed him of his disguised visit to the prison; after which he dismissed him to his own palace.

STORY OF THE LADY OF CAIRO AND HER FOUR GALLANTS.

A virtuous lady of Cairo, who seldom left her house but upon urgent business, one day returning from the bath, passed by the tribunal of the cauzee just as it was breaking up, when the magistrate perceived her, and struck with her dignity and elegance of gait, from which he judged of her beauty, called her to him, and in a soft whisper expressed his desire of a private interview. The lady being resolved to punish him for his unworthy conduct, seemingly consented, and desired him to repair to her house that evening, which he gladly promised. She then pursued her route homewards, but was on the way accosted by three other men, who made her similar proposals, all which she accepted, and fixed that evening for receiving their visits. The first of these gallants was the customs tax-collector of Cairo, the second the chief of the butchers, and the third a rich merchant.

When the lady returned to her house she informed her husband of what had happened, and begged him to permit her to execute a stratagem that she had formed to punish their insolence, which would not only afford himself and her much laughable amusement, but solid advantage, as doubtless the lovers would each bring with him a handsome present. The husband, who knew he could trust the virtue of his wife, readily consented, and the lady having prepared a handsome entertainment, adorned herself in her richest apparel, and seated herself to receive her guests. Evening had just shut in, when the venerable cauzee having finished his sunset devotions, impatiently repaired first to his mistress and knocked at the door, which the lady opened and led him upstairs, where he presented her with a rosary of valuable pearl; after which she made him undress, and in place of his robes put on a loose vest of yellow muslin, and a parti-coloured cap, her husband all the while looking at them through the door of a closet, and ready to burst his sides with laughter as he beheld the tender grimaces of the enamoured magistrate. The happiness of the venerable gallant was however soon changed to frightful alarm, for he had scarcely sat down and begun to partake of some refreshment, when a loud rap was heard at the door; upon which the lady starting up in well-affected terror, cried out, “Mahummud protect us! for this is my husband’s knock, and if he finds you here, he will put us both to death.” The cauzee’s heart sank within him, and he became more dead than alive; but the lady somewhat revived him by thrusting him into her bed-chamber, desiring him to remain still, as possibly a way might be found for his escape. He gladly retired, secretly vowing that if spared from his present threatening distress, Satan should no more tempt him to make love or break the sacred law.

The lady having disposed of the cauzee, hastened to the door, where she found the expecting tax-collector, who brought with him, as a present, a set of jewels. She shewed him upstairs, took off his rich clothes, and made him put on a crimson vest, and a green cap with black spots. He had scarcely sat down when the door again resounded, and she played over the same game as she had done with the cauzee, who on his also entering the bed-chamber was somewhat pleased at seeing a brother magistrate in the same ridiculous plight with himself. The venerable lovers condoled by signs with each other, but dared not speak for fear of discovery. The chief of the butchers, on his arrival, was next ushered up stairs, and his present received, then made to undress and put on a blue vest with a scarlet cap, ornamented with sea shells and bits of tinsel; but he had scarce time to finish, when a fourth loud rap was heard at the door, the scene of alarm was renewed, and the frightened gallant hurried into the room to keep company with his rivals. Now appeared the respectable merchant, who presented the cunning lady with several rich veils, pieces of silk, and embroidered muslins, after which he was asked to undress and enrobe himself in a sky coloured vest and a cap striped with red and white; which he had hardly put on when a thundering knock at the gate put an end to his transports, and the wife pretending great alarm, as it was her husband’s rap, forced him into the bed-chamber, where, to his surprise he discovered three of his intimate acquaintance.

The husband, who had left his hiding place and knocked at the door, now entered, and after saluting his wife, sat down, when having partaken of the refreshments provided for the gallants, the happy couple entered into conversation loud enough to be overheard by the wretched inamorati, who were quaking for fear of discovery. “Light of my eyes,” said the husband, “didst thou meet with any thing amusing to-day in thy visit to the bath? and if so, divert me with an account of it.” “I did, indeed,” said the lady, “for I met with four antic creatures, whom” (at hearing this the unfortunate lovers gave themselves over for lost) “I had a great inclination to bring home with me” (here they recovered a little from their alarm) “to divert us, but fearful of your displeasure I did not; however, if agreeable, we can send for them to-morrow.” The frighted gallants now indulged some hope of escape through the kindness of their cunning mistress, and began to breathe a little freer, but very short was the suspension of their fears. “I am sorry thou didst not bring them,” said the husband, “because business will to-morrow call me from home, and I shall be absent for some days.” Upon this, the lady laughing, said, “Well, then, you must know that in fact I have brought them, and was diverting myself with them when you came in, but fearful you might suspect something wrong I hurried them into our bed-chamber, in order to conceal them till I had tried your temper, hoping, should you not be in good humour, to find some means of letting them out undiscovered.” It is impossible to describe the alarm into which the wretched gallants were now plunged, especially when the husband commanded his wife to bring them out one by one, saying, “Let each entertain us with a dance and then recite a story, but if they do not please me, I will strike off their heads.” “Heaven protect us,” said the cauzee, “how can men of our gravity dance? but there is no resisting the decrees of fate, nor do I see any chance of escape from this artful baggage and her savage husband but by performing as well as we can.” His companions were of the same opinion, and mustered what courage they could to act as they should be ordered.

The wife now entered the chamber, and putting a tambourine into the cauzee’s hands, led him out and began to play a merry tune upon her lute, to which the affrighted magistrate danced with a thousand antics and grimaces like an old baboon, beating time with the tambourine, to the great delight of the husband, who every now and then jeeringly cried out, “Really wife, if I did not know this fellow was a buffoon, I should take him for our cauzee; but God forgive me, I know our worthy magistrate is either at his devotions, or employed in investigating cases for to-morrow’s decision.” Upon this the cauzee danced with redoubled vigour, and more ridiculous gestures, in hopes of evading discovery. At length he was overpowered by such unusual exercise; but the husband had no mercy upon his sufferings, and made him continue capering by threatening the bastinado, till the tired judge was exhausted, and fainted upon the floor in a bath of perspiration, when they held him up, and pouring a goblet of wine down his throat it somewhat revived him. He was now suffered to breathe a little, and something given him to eat, which, with a second cup of liquor, recovered his strength. The husband now demanded his story; and the cauzee, assuming the gesture of a coffee-house droll, began as follows.

The Cauzee's Story.

A young tailor, whose shop was opposite the house of an officer, was so attracted from his work by the appearance of a beautiful young lady, his wife, in her balcony, that he became desperately in love, and would sit whole days waiting her coming, and when she showed herself make signs of his passion. For some time his ridiculous action diverted her, but at length she grew tired of the farce she had kept up by answering his signals, and of the interruption it gave to her taking the fresh air, so that she resolved to punish him for his presumption, and oblige him to quit his stall. Having laid her plan, one day when her husband was gone out for a few hours she dispatched a female slave to invite the tailor to drink coffee. To express the rapture of the happy snip is impossible. He fell at the feet of the slave, which he kissed as the welcome messengers of good tidings, gave her a piece of gold, and uttered some nonsensical verses that he had composed in praise of his beloved; then dressing himself in his best habit, he folded his turban in the most tasty manner, and curled his mustachios to the greatest advantage, after which he hastened exultingly to the lady's house, and was admitted to her presence. She sat upon a rich musnud, and gracefully lifting up her veil welcomed the tailor, who was so overcome that he had nearly fainted away with excess of rapture. She desired him to be seated, but such was his bashfulness that he would not approach farther than the corner of the carpet. Coffee was brought in, and a cup presented him; but not being used to such magnificence and form, and his eyes, also, being staringly fixed on the beauties of the lady, instead of carrying the cup to his mouth, he hit his nose and overthrew the liquid upon his vest. The lady smiled, and ordered him another cup; but while he was endeavouring to drink it with a little more composure, a loud knock was heard at the door, and she starting up, cried out with great agitation, "Good heavens! this is my husband's knock; if he finds us together he will sacrifice us to his fury!" The poor tailor, in terror, fell flat upon the carpet, when the lady and her slave threw some cold water upon his face, and when a little recovered hurried him away to a chamber, into which they forced him, and desired him to remain quiet, as the only means of saving his life. Here he remained quivering and trembling, more alive than dead, but perfectly cured of his love, and vowing never again to look up at a balcony.

When the tailor was disposed of, the lady again sat down upon her stool, and ordered her slave to open the gate. Upon her husband's entering the room he was surprised at beholding things set out for an entertainment, and inquired who had been with her; when she replied tartly, "A lover." "And where is he now?" angrily replied the officer. "In yonder chamber, and if you please you may sacrifice him to your fury, and myself afterwards." The officer demanded the key, which she gave him; but while this was passing, the agony of the unfortunate tailor was worse than death; he fully expecting every moment to have his head struck off: in short, he was in a most pitiable condition. The officer went to the door, and had put the key into the lock, when his wife burst suddenly into a fit of laughter: upon which he exclaimed angrily, "Who do you laugh at?" "Why, at yourself, to be sure, my wise lord," replied the lady; "for who but yourself could suppose a woman serious when she told him where to find out a concealed lover? I wanted to discover how far jealousy would carry you, and invented this trick for the purpose," The officer, upon this, was struck with admiration of his wife's pleasantry and his own credulity, which so tickled his fancy that he laughed immoderately, begged pardon for his foolish conduct, and they spent the evening cheerfully together; after which, the husband going to the bath, his wife charitably released the almost dead tailor, and reproving him for his impertinence, declared if he ever again looked up at her balcony she would contrive his death. The tailor, perfectly cured of love for his superior in life, made the most abject submission, thanked her for his deliverance, hurried home, prayed heartily for his escape, and the very next day took care to move from so dangerous a neighbourhood.

The husband and wife were highly diverted with the cauzee's story, and after another dance permitted him to depart, and get home as well as he could in his ridiculous habit. How he got there, and what excuse he was able to make for so unmagisterial an appearance, we are not informed; but strange whispers went about the city, and the cauzee's dance became the favourite one or the strolling drolls, whom he had often the mortification of seeing taking him off as he passed to and from the tribunal, and not unfrequently in causes of adultery the evidences and culprits would laugh in his face. He, however, never again suffered Satan to tempt him, and was scarcely able to look at a strange woman, so great was his fear of being led astray.

When the cauzee was gone, the lady, repairing to the apartment, brought out the grave tax-collector, whom her husband addressed by name, saying, “Venerable sir, how long have you turned droll? can you favour me with a dance?” The tax-collector made no reply, but began capering, nor was he permitted to stop till quite tired. He was then allowed to sit, some refreshment was given him, and when revived he was desired to tell a story: knowing resistance vain, he complied. After having finished he was dismissed, and the other gallants were brought in and treated in a like manner.

STORY OF THE MERCHANT, HIS DAUGHTER, AND THE PRINCE OF EERAUK.

A certain rich merchant was constantly repining, because Providence had not added to his numerous blessings that of a child to inherit his vast wealth. This want destroyed the power of affluence to make him happy, and he importuned heaven with unceasing prayers. At length one evening, just as he had concluded his devotions, he heard a voice, saying, "Thy request has been heard, and thou wilt have a daughter, but she will give thee much uneasiness in her fourteenth year by an amour with the prince of Eerauk, and remember there is no avoiding the decrees of fate."

The merchant's wife that same night conceived, and at the usual time brought forth a daughter, who grew up an exquisite beauty. No pains were spared in her education, so that at thirteen she became most accomplished, and the fame of her charms and perfections was spread throughout the city. The merchant enjoyed the graces of his child, but at the same time his heart was heavy with anxiety for her fate, whenever he called to mind the prediction concerning her; so that at length he determined to consult a celebrated dervish, his friend, on the possible means of averting the fulfilment of the prophecy. The dervish gave him but little hopes of being able to counteract the will of heaven, but advised him to carry the beautiful maiden to a sequestered mansion, situated among unfrequented mountains surrounding it on all sides, and the only entrance to which was by a dark cavern hewn out of the solid rock, which might be safely guarded by a few faithful domestics. "Here," said the dervish, "your daughter may pass the predicted year, and if any human care can avail she may be thus saved from the threatened dishonour; but it is in vain for man to fight against the arms of heaven, therefore prepare thy mind for resignation to its decrees."

The merchant followed the advice of his friend, and having made the necessary preparations, accompanied by him, and attended by some white and black slaves of both sexes, arrived, after a month's journey, with his daughter, at the desired mansion; in which having placed her, he, after a day's repose, took his departure homewards with the dervish. Ample stores of all necessaries for her accommodation had been laid in, and slaves male and female were left for her attendance and protection. Not many days, had elapsed when an incident occurred, clearly proving the emptiness of human caution against the predestination of fate. The prince of Eerauk being upon a hunting excursion outrode his attendants, and missing his way, reached the gate of the cavern leading to the mansion, which was guarded by two black slaves, who seeing a stranger, cried out to him to withdraw. He stopped his horse, and in a supplicating tone requested protection and refreshment for the night, as he had wandered from the road, and was almost exhausted from weariness and want of food. The slaves were moved by the representation of his distress, as well as awed by his noble appearance, and apprehending no danger from a single person, conducted him through the cavern, into the beautiful valley, in which stood the mansion. They then informed their mistress of his arrival, who commanded him to be introduced into an apartment, in which an elegant entertainment was provided, where she gave him the most hospitable reception. To become known to each other was to love; nor was it long ere the prediction respecting the merchant's daughter proved fully verified. Some months passed in mutual happiness; when the prince, becoming anxious to return to his friends, took leave of his mistress, promising when he had seen his family to visit her again, and make her his wife.

On his way he met the merchant, who was coming to see his daughter. Halting at the same spot they fell into conversation, in which each inquired after the other's situation, and the prince, little aware to whom he was speaking, related his late adventure. The merchant, convinced that all his caution had been vain, concealed his uneasiness, resolved to take his daughter home, make the best of what had happened, and never again to struggle against fate. On his arrival at the cavern he found his daughter unwell; and before they reached their own abode she was delivered of a male infant, who, to save her credit, was left exposed in a small tent with a sum of money laid under its pillow, in hopes that the first passenger would take the child under his care. It so happened, that a caravan passing by, the leader of it, on examining the tent and seeing the infant, took it up, and having no children adopted it as his own. The prince of Eerauk having seen his parents, again repaired to visit his beautiful mistress, and on his journey to the cavern once more met the merchant, who, at his daughter's request, was travelling towards Eerauk to acquaint him with her situation. The prince, overjoyed, accompanied the merchant home, married the young lady, and with her parents returned to his dominions. Their exposed son, after long inquiry, was discovered, and liberal rewards bestowed on the leader of the caravan, who at his own request was permitted to reside in the palace of Eerauk, and superintend the education of his adopted son.

ADVENTURES OF THE CAUZEE, HIS WIFE, &c.

In the capital of Bagdad there was formerly a cauzee, who filled the seat of justice with the purest integrity, and who by his example in private life gave force to the strictness of his public decrees. After some years spent in this honourable post, he became anxious to make the pilgrimage to Mecca; and having obtained permission of the caliph, departed on his pious journey, leaving his wife, a beautiful woman, under the protection of his brother, who promised to respect her as his daughter. The cauzee, however, had not long left home, when the brother, instigated by passion, made love to his sister-in-law, which she rejected with scorn; being, however, unwilling to expose so near a relative to her husband, she endeavoured to divert him from his purpose by argument on the heinousness of his intended crime, but in vain. The abominable wretch, instead of repenting, a gain and again offered his love, and at last threatened, if she would not accept his love, to accuse her of adultery, and bring upon her the punishment of the law. This threat having no effect, the atrocious villain suborned evidences to swear that they had seen her in the act of infidelity, and she was sentenced to receive one hundred strokes with a knotted whip, and be banished from the city. Having endured this disgraceful punishment, the unhappy lady was led through Bagdad by the public executioner, amid the taunts and scorns of the populace; after which she was thrust oat of the gates and left to shift for herself. Relying on Providence, and without complaining of its decrees, she resolved to travel to Mecca, in hopes of meeting her husband, and clearing her defamed character to him, whose opinion alone she valued. When advanced some days on her journey she entered a city, and perceived a great crowd of people following the executioner, who led a young man by a rope tied about his neck. Inquiring the crime of the culprit, she was informed that he owed a hundred deenars, which being unable to pay, he was sentenced to be hung, such being the punishment of insolvent debtors in that city. The cauzee's wife, moved with compassion, immediately tendered the sum, being nearly all she had, when the young man was released, and falling upon his knees before her, vowed to dedicate his life to her service. She related to him her intention of making the pilgrimage to Mecca, upon which the young man requested to accompany and protect her, to which she consented. They set out on their journey; but had not proceeded many days, when the youth forgot his obligations, and giving way to impulse, insulted his benefactress by offering her his love. The unfortunate lady reasoned with him on the ingratitude of his conduct, and the youth seemed to be convinced and repentant, but revenge rankled in his heart. Some days after this they reached the sea-shore, where the young man perceiving a ship, made a signal to speak with it, and the master letting down his boat sent it to land; upon which the young man going on board the vessel, informed the master that he had for sale a handsome female slave, for whom he asked a thousand deenars. The master, who had been used to purchase slaves upon that coast, went on shore, and looking at the cauzee's wife, paid the money to the wicked young man, who went his way, and the lady was carried on board the ship, supposing that her companion had taken the opportunity of easing her fatigue, by procuring her a passage to some sea-port near Mecca: but her persecution was not to end here. In the evening she was insulted by attentions of the master of the vessel, who being surprised at her coolness, informed her that he had purchased her as his slave for a thousand deenars. The unfortunate lady told him that she was a free woman, but this had no effect on the brutish sailor, who finding tenderness ineffectual proceeded to force and blows in order to reduce her to submit to his authority. Her strength was almost exhausted, when suddenly the ship struck upon a rock, the master was hurried upon deck, and in a few moments the vessel went to pieces. Providentially the virtuous wife laying hold of a plank was wafted to the shore, after being for several hours buffeted by the waves. Having recovered her senses she walked inland, and found a pleasant country abounding in fruits and clear streams, which satisfied her hunger and thirst. On the second day she arrived at a magnificent city, and on entering it was conducted to the sultan, who inquiring her story, she informed him that she was a woman devoted to a religious life, and was proceeding on the pilgrimage to Mecca, when her vessel was shipwrecked on his coast, and whether any of the crew had escaped she knew not, as she had seen none of them since her being cast ashore on a plank; but as now the hopes of her reaching the sacred house were cut off, if the sultan would allot her a small hut, and a trifling pittance for her support, she would spend the remainder of her days in prayers for the prosperity of himself and his subjects.

The sultan, who was truly devout, and pitied the misfortune of the lady, gladly acceded to her request, and allotted a pleasant garden-house near his palace for her residence, at which he often visited her, and conversed with her on religious topics, to his great edification and comfort, for she was sensibly pious. Not long after her arrival, several refractory vassals who had for years withheld their usual tribute, and against whom the good sultan, unwilling to shed blood, though his treasury much felt the defalcation, had not sent a force to compel payment, unexpectedly sent in their arrears; submissively begged pardon for their late disobedience, and promised in future to be loyal in their duty. The sultan, who attributed this fortunate event to the successful prayers of his virtuous guest, mentioned his opinion to his courtiers in full divan, and they to their dependents. As, according to the proverb, the sheep always follow their leader, so it was in the present instance. All ranks of people on every emergency flocked to beg the prayers and counsel of the sultan's favourite devotee; and such was their efficacy, that her clients every day became more numerous, nor were they ungrateful; so that in a short time the offerings made to her amounted in value to an incalculable sum. Her reputation was not confined to the kingdom of her protector, but spread gradually abroad through all the countries in the possession of true believers, who came from all parts of Asia to solicit her prayers. Her residence was enlarged to a vast extent, in which she supported great numbers of destitute persons, as well as entertained the crowds of poor people who came in pilgrimage to so holy a personage as she was now esteemed. But we must now return to her pious husband.

The good cauzee having finished the ceremonies of his pilgrimage at Mecca, where he resided one year, and visited all the holy spots around, returned to Bagdad: but dreadful was his agony and grief when informed that his wife had played the harlot, and that his brother, unable to bear the disgrace of his family, had left the city, and had not been heard of since. This sad intelligence had such an effect upon his mind, that he resolved to give up worldly concerns, and adopt the life of a wandering religious, to move from place to place, from country to country, and visit the devotees celebrated for sanctity in each. For two years he travelled through various kingdoms, and at length hearing of his wife's fame, though he little supposed the much-talked-of female saint stood in that relation to himself, he resolved to pay his respects to so holy a personage. With this view he journeyed towards the capital of the sultan her protector, hoping to receive benefit from her pious conversation and prayers.

The cauzee on his way overtook his treacherous brother, who, repenting of his wicked life, had turned mendicant, and was going to confess his sins, and ask the prayers for absolution of the far-famed religious woman. Time and alteration of dress, for they were both habited as dervishes, caused the brothers not to know each other. As fellow travellers they entered into conversation; and finding they were both bound the same way, agreed to continue their journey together. They had not proceeded many days when they came up with a driver of camels, who informed them that he was upon the same errand as themselves, having been guilty of a horrid crime, the reflection upon which tormented his conscience, and made life miserable; that he was going to confess his sins to the pious devotee, and consult her on whatever penance could atone for his villany, of which he had heartily repented, and hoped to obtain the mercy of heaven by a sincere reformation of life. The crime of this wretch was no less than murder; the circumstances of which we forgot to detail in its proper place. The cauzee's wife immediately after her expulsion from Bagdad, and before she had met the young man who sold her for a slave, had taken shelter in the hut of a camel breeder, whose wife owed her great obligations, and who received her with true hospitality and kindness; consoling her in her misfortunes, dressing her wounds, and insisting on her stay till she should be fully recovered of the painful effects of her unjust and disgraceful punishment; and in this she was seconded by the honest husband. With this humble couple, who had an infant son, she remained some time, and was recovering her spirits and beauty when the wicked camel breeder, first mentioned, arrived on a visit to her host; and being struck with her beauty made love to her, which she mildly but firmly rejected, informing him that she was a married woman. Blinded by passion, the wretch pressed his addresses repeatedly, but in vain; till at length, irritated by refusal, he changed his love into furious anger, and resolved to revenge his disappointed lust by her death. With this view he armed himself with a poniard; and about midnight, when the family were asleep, stole into the chamber where she reposed, and close by her the infant son of her generous host. The villain being in the dark made a random stroke, not knowing of the infant, and instead of stabbing the object of his revenge, plunged his weapon into the bosom of the child, who uttered loud screams; upon which the assassin, fearful of detection, ran away, and escaped from the house. The cauzee's wife awaking in a fright, alarmed her unhappy hosts, who, striking a light, came to her assistance; but how can we describe their agonizing affliction when they beheld their beloved child expiring, and their unfortunate guest, who had swooned away, bathed in the infant's blood. From such a scene we turn away, as the pen is incapable of description. The unhappy lady at length revived, but their darling boy was gone for ever. Some days after this tragical event she began her pilgrimage, and, as above stated, reached the city where she released the young man from his cruel creditors, and was shortly afterwards ungratefully sold by him as a slave. But to return to the good cauzee and his wicked companions.

They had not travelled far when they overtook a young man, who saluted them, and inquired their course; of which being informed, he begged to join in company, saying, that he also was going to pay his respects to the celebrated religious, in hopes that by her prayers he might obtain pardon of God for a most flagitious ingratitude; the remorse for which had rendered him a burthen to himself ever since the commission of the crime. The four pilgrims pursued their journey, and a few days afterwards overtook the master of a vessel, who told them he had some time back suffered shipwreck; since which he had undergone the severest distress, and was now going to request the aid of the far-famed woman, whose charities and miraculous prayers had been noised abroad through all countries. The companions then invited him to join them, and they proceeded on the pilgrimage together, till at length they reached the capital of the good sultan who protected the cauzee's wife.

The five pilgrims having entered the city, repaired immediately to the abode of the respected devotee; the courts of which were crowded with petitioners from all parts, so that they could with difficulty gain admission. Some of her domestics seeing they were strangers newly arrived, and seemingly fatigued, kindly invited them, into an apartment, and to repose themselves while they informed their mistress of their arrival; which having done, they brought word that she would see them when the crowd was dispersed, and hear their petitions at her leisure. Refreshments were then brought in, of which they were desired to partake, and the pilgrims having make their ablutions, sat down to eat, all the while admiring and praising the hospitality of their pious hostess; who, unperceived by them, was examining their persons and features through the lattice of a balcony, at one end of the hall. Her heart beat with joyful rapture when she beheld her long lost husband, whose absence she had never ceased to deplore, but scarcely expected ever to meet him again; and great was her surprise to find him in company with his treacherous brother, her infamous intending assassin, her ungrateful betrayer the young man, and the master of the vessel to whom he had sold her as a slave. It was with difficulty she restrained her feelings; but not choosing to discover herself till she should hear their adventures, she withdrew into her chamber, and being relieved by tears prostrated herself on the earth, and offered up thanksgivings to the protector of the just, who had rewarded her patience under affliction by succeeding blessings, and at length restored to her the partner of her heart. Having finished her devotions, she sent to the sultan requesting him to send her a confidential officer, who might witness the relations of five visitors whom she was going to examine. On his arrival she placed him where he could listen unseen; and covering herself with a veil, sat down on her stool to receive the pilgrims, who being admitted, bowed their foreheads to the ground; when requesting them to arise, she addressed them as follows: "You are welcome, brethren, to my humble abode, to my counsel and my prayers, which, by God's mercy, have sometimes relieved the repentant sinner; but as it is impossible I can give advice without hearing a case, or pray without knowing the wants of him who entreats me, you must relate your histories with the strictest truth, for equivocation, evasion, or concealment, will prevent my being of any service; and this you may depend upon, that the prayers of a liar tend only to his own destruction.” Having said this, she ordered the cauzee to remain, but the other four to withdraw; as she should, to spare their shame before each other, hear their cases separately. The good cauzee having no sins to confess related his pilgrimage to Mecca; the supposed infidelity of his wife; and his consequent resolve to spend his days in visiting sacred places and holy personages, among whom she stood so famous, that to hear her edifying conversation, and entreat the benefit of her prayers for his unhappy wife, was the object of his having travelled to her sacred abode. When he had finished his narrative the lady dismissed him to another chamber, and heard one by one the confessions of his companions; who not daring to conceal any thing, related their cruel conduct towards herself, as above-mentioned; but little suspecting that they were acknowledging their guilt to the intended victim of their evil passions. After this the cauzee’s wife commanded the officer to conduct all five to the sultan, and inform him of what he had heard them confess. The sultan, enraged at the wicked behaviour of the cauzee’s brother, the camel-driver, the young man, and the master of the vessel, condemned them to death; and the executioner was preparing to put the sentence in force, when the lady arriving at the presence demanded their pardon; and to his unspeakable joy discovered herself to her delighted husband. The sultan complying with her request, dismissed the criminals; but prevailed on the cauzee to remain at his court, where for the remainder of his life this upright judge filled the high office of chief magistrate with honour to himself, and satisfaction to all who had causes tried before him; while he and his faithful partner continued striking examples of virtue and conjugal felicity. The sultan was unbounded in his favour towards them, and would often pass whole evenings in their company in friendly conversation, which generally turned upon the vicissitudes of life, and the goodness of Providence in relieving the sufferings of the faithful, by divine interposition, at the very instant when ready to sink under them and overwhelmed with calamity. “I myself,” said the sultan, “am an example of the protection of heaven, as you, my friends, will learn from my adventures.” He then began as follows.

The Sultan's Story of Himself.

Though now seated on a throne, I was not born to such exalted rank, but am the son of a rich merchant in a country far distant from this which I now govern. My father brought me up to his own profession; and by instruction and example encouraged me to be virtuous, diligent, and honest. Soon after I had attained to the age of manhood death snatched away this valuable parent, who in his last moments gave me instructions for my future conduct; but particularly requested that nothing might ever prevail upon me to take an oath, though ever so just or necessary to my concerns. I assured him it would not: soon after which he breathed his last, leaving me, my mother, and sister in sincere grief for his loss. After the funeral I examined his property, and found myself in possession of a vast sum of money, besides an ample stock in trade, two-thirds of which I immediately paid to my mother and sister, who retired to a house which they purchased for themselves. Many weeks had not elapsed when a merchant set up a claim on my father's estate for a sum of money equal to nearly the whole that I possessed: I asked him for his bond, but he had none, yet swore solemnly to the justice of his demand. I had no doubt of the falsity of his oath, but as I had promised never to swear, I could not disprove it by mine, and therefore was obliged to pay the money, which I did entirely from my own share, not choosing to distress my mother and sister by lessening theirs. After this, other unjust demands were preferred, and I paid them, rather than falsify my promise to my father, though by so doing I became reduced to the most abject poverty, as still I would not trouble my mother. At length I resolved to quit my native city, and seek for subsistence in a distant country as clerk to a merchant, or in any other way that might offer. I accordingly set out alone, and had travelled some days, when in passing over a sandy desert I met a venerable looking personage dressed in white, who kindly accosting me, inquired the object of my journey: upon which I related my story. The old man blessed me, highly praised the steadfastness of my adherence to the promise I had made to a dying father; and said, "My son, be not dismayed, thy virtuous conduct has been approved by our holy prophet, who has interceded for thee at the throne of bounty: follow me, and reap the reward of thy sufferings." I did as he desired; and we, after some time, reached this city, which was then wholly depopulated, and even this palace in a state of decay. On our entrance my venerable guide bade me welcome, saying, "Here heaven has decreed thee to reign, and thou wilt soon become a powerful sultan." He then conducted me to the palace, and we descended from one of the apartments into a vault, where to my astonishment I beheld vast heaps of gold and silver ingots, large bags of coins of the same metals, and several rich chests filled with jewels of inestimable value, of all which he saluted me master. I was overcome with astonishment; but said, "Of what use is all this wealth in a depopulated city? and how can I be a sultan without subjects?" The old man smiled, and said, "Have patience, my son; this evening a numerous caravan will arrive here composed of emigrants, who are in search of a settlement, and they will elect thee their sovereign." His words proved true; the caravan arrived, when the old man invited them to inhabit the city; his offer was gladly accepted, and by his direction they declared me their sultan. My protector remained with me a whole year, during which he gave me instructions how to govern, and I became what I am. Heaven has prospered my endeavours to do good: the fame of my liberality, justice, and clemency soon spread abroad; the city was soon filled by industrious inhabitants, who repaired the decayed buildings, and erected new ones. The country round became well cultivated, and our port was filled with vessels from every quarter. I shortly after sent for my family, for I had left behind me a wife and two sons; and you may guess from your own joy at meeting after long separation what must have been mine on such an occasion. My venerable patron, at the expiration of the year, one day thus addressed me: "My son, as my mission is completed I must now leave you; but be not alarmed, for provided thou continuest to act as thou hast begun, we shall meet again. Know that I am the prophet Khizzer, and was sent by heaven to protect thee. Mayest thou deserve its blessings!" Having said this he embraced me in his arms, and then vanished, how I know not, from my sight. For some time I continued rapt in astonishment and wonder, which at length gave place to reverential awe and gratitude to heaven; by degrees I recovered myself, and bowed down with fervent devotion. I have endeavoured to follow the admonitions of my holy adviser. It is unnecessary to say more; you see my state and the happiness I enjoy.

CONCLUSION.

The sultan of the Indies could not but admire the prodigious and inexhaustible memory of the sultaness his wife, who had entertained him so many nights with such a variety of interesting stories.

A thousand and one nights had passed away in these innocent amusements, which contributed so much towards removing the sultan's unhappy prejudice against the fidelity of women. His temper was softened. He was convinced of the merit and great wisdom of the sultaness Scheherazade. He remembered with what courage she had offered to be his wife, without fearing the death to which she knew she exposed herself, as so many sultanesses had suffered within her knowledge.

These considerations, and the many other good qualities he knew her to possess, induced him at last to forgive her. "I see, lovely Scheherazade," said he, "that you can never be at a loss for these little stories, which have so long diverted me. You have appeased my anger. I freely renounce the law I had imposed on myself. I restore your sex to my favourable opinion, and will have you to be regarded as the deliverer of the many damsels I had resolved to sacrifice to my unjust resentment."

The sultaness cast herself at his feet, and embraced them tenderly with all the marks of the most lively and perfect gratitude.

The grand vizier was the first who learned this agreeable intelligence from the sultan's own mouth. It was instantly carried to the city, towns, and provinces; and gained the sultan, and the lovely Scheherazade his consort, universal applause, and the blessings of all the people of the extensive empire of the Indies.

JOHN PAYNE 1884 TRANSLATION

John Payne (1842-1916) was an English poet and translator, who initially pursued a legal career and was associated with Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Later he became involved with limited edition publishing and the Villon Society. He is now best known for his translations of Boccaccio's *Decameron, The Arabian Nights* and the *Diwan Hafez.*

Payne's translation of *One Thousand and One Nights* was entirely from the Calcutta II manuscript, adding some tales from Calcutta I and Breslau. The text is unabridged and unexpurgated, originally published in 1882 in nine volumes.

John Payne, 1904

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VOLUME I.

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

PREFATORY NOTE.

The present is, I believe, the first complete translation of the great Arabic compendium of romantic fiction that has been attempted in any European language comprising about four times as much matter as that of Galland and three times as much as that of any other translator known to myself; and a short statement of the sources from which it is derived may therefore be acceptable to my readers. Three printed editions, more or less complete, exist of the Arabic text of the Thousand and One Nights; namely, those of Breslau, Boulac (Cairo) and Calcutta (1839), besides an incomplete one, comprising the first two hundred nights only, published at Calcutta in 1814. Of these, the first is horribly corrupt and greatly inferior, both in style and completeness, to the others, and the second (that of Boulac) is also, though in a far less degree, incomplete, whole stories (as, for instance, that of the Envier and the Envied in the present volume) being omitted and hiatuses, varying in extent from a few lines to several pages, being of frequent occurrence, whilst in addition to these defects, the editor, a learned Egyptian, has played havoc with the style of his original, in an ill-judged attempt to improve it, producing a medley, more curious than edifying, of classical and semi-modern diction and now and then, in his unlucky zeal, completely disguising the pristine meaning of certain passages. The third edition, that which we owe to Sir William Macnaghten and which appears to have been printed from a superior copy of the manuscript followed by the Egyptian editor, is by far the most carefully printed and edited of the three and offers, on the whole, the least corrupt and most comprehensive text of the work. I have therefore adopted it as my standard or basis of translation and have, to the best of my power, remedied the defects (such as hiatuses, misprints, doubtful or corrupt passages, etc.) which are of no infrequent occurrence even in this, the best of the existing texts, by carefully collating it with the editions of Boulac and Breslau (to say nothing of occasional references to the earlier Calcutta edition of the first two hundred nights), adopting from one and the other such variants, additions and corrections as seemed to me best calculated to improve the general effect and most homogeneous with the general spirit of the work, and this so freely that the present version may be said, in great part, to represent a variorum text of the original, formed by a collation of the different printed texts; and no proper estimate can, therefore, be made of the fidelity of the translation, except by those who are intimately acquainted with the whole of these latter. Even with the help of the new lights gained by the laborious process of collation and comparison above mentioned, the exact sense of many passages must still remain doubtful, so corrupt are the extant texts and so incomplete our knowledge, as incorporated in dictionaries, etc, of the peculiar dialect, half classical and half modern, in which the original work is written.

One special feature of the present version is the appearance, for the first time, in English metrical shape, preserving the external form and rhyme movement of the originals, of the whole of the poetry with which the Arabic text is so freely interspersed. This great body of verse, equivalent to at least ten thousand twelve-syllable English lines, is of the most unequal quality, varying from poetry worthy of the name to the merest doggrel, and as I have, in pursuance of my original scheme, elected to translate everything, good and bad (with a very few exceptions in cases of manifest mistake or misapplication), I can only hope that my readers will, in judging of my success, take into consideration the enormous difficulties with which I have had to contend and look with indulgence upon my efforts to render, under unusually irksome conditions, the energy and beauty of the original, where these qualities exist, and in their absence, to keep my version from degenerating into absolute doggrel.

The present translation being intended as a purely literary work produced with the sole object of supplying the general body of cultivated readers with a fairly representative and characteristic version of the most famous work of narrative fiction in existence, I have deemed it advisable to depart, in several particulars, from the various systems of transliteration of Oriental proper names followed by modern scholars, as, although doubtless admirably adapted to works having a scientific or non-literary object, they rest mainly upon devices (such as the use of apostrophes, accents, diacritical points and the employment of both vowels and consonants in unusual groups and senses) foreign to the genius of the English language and calculated only to annoy the reader of a work of imagination. Of these points of departure from established usage I need only particularize some of the more important; the others will, in general, be found to speak for themselves. One of the most salient is the case of the short vowel fet-heh, which is usually written [a breve], but which I have thought it better to render, as a rule, by [e breve], as in "bed" (a sound practically equivalent to that of a, as in "beggar," adopted by the late Mr. Lane to represent this vowel), reserving the English a, as in "father," to represent the alif of prolongation or long Arabic a, since I should else have no means of differentiating the latter from the former, save by the use of accents or other clumsy expedients, at once, to my mind, foreign to the purpose and vexatious to the reader of a work of pure literature. In like manner, I have eschewed the use of the letter q, as an equivalent for the dotted or guttural kaf (choosing to run the risk of occasionally misleading the reader as to the original Arabic form of a word by leaving him in ignorance whether the k used is the dotted or undotted one, — a point of no importance whatever to the non-scientific public, — rather than employ an English letter in a manner completely unwarranted by the construction of our language, in which q has no power as a terminal or as moved by any vowel other than u, followed by one of the four others) and have supplied its place, where the dotted kaf occurs as a terminal or as preceding a hard vowel, by the hard c, leaving k to represent it (in common with the undotted kaf generally) in those instances where it is followed by a soft vowel. For similar reasons, I have not attempted to render the Arabic quasi-consonant aïn, save by the English vowel corresponding to that by which it is moved, preferring to leave the guttural element of its sound (for which we have no approach to an equivalent in English) unrepresented, rather than resort to the barbarous and meaningless device of the apostrophe. Again, the principle, in accordance with which I have rendered the proper names of the original, is briefly (and subject to certain variations on the ground of convenience and literary fitness) to preserve unaltered such names as Tigris, Bassora, Cairo, Aleppo, Damascus, etc., which are familiar to us otherwise than by the Arabian Nights and to alter which, for the sake of mere literality, were as gratuitous a piece of pedantry as to insist upon writing Copenhagen Kjobenhavn, or Canton Kouang-tong, and to transliterate the rest as nearly as may consist with a due regard to artistic considerations. The use of untranslated Arabic words, other than proper names, I have, as far as possible, avoided, rendering them, with very few exceptions, by the best English equivalents in my power, careful rather to give the general sense, where capable of being conveyed by reasonable substitution of idiom or otherwise, than to retain the strict letter at the expense of the spirit; nor, on the other hand, have I thought it necessary to alter the traditional manner of spelling certain words which have become incorporated with our language, where (as in the case of the words genie, houri, roe, khalif, vizier, cadi, Bedouin, etc. etc.) the English equivalent is fairly representative of the original Arabic.

I have to return my cordial thanks to Captain Richard F. Burton, the well-known traveller and author, who has most kindly undertaken to give me the benefit of his great practical knowledge of the language and customs of the Arabs in revising the manuscript of my translation for the press.

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THE BOOK OF THE THOUSAND NIGHTS AND ONE NIGHT

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful! Praise be to God, the Lord of the two worlds, and blessing and peace upon the Prince of the Prophets, our lord and master Mohammed, whom God bless and preserve with abiding and continuing peace and blessing until the Day of the Faith! Of a verity, the doings of the ancients become a lesson to those that follow after, so that men look upon the admonitory events that have happened to others and take warning, and come to the knowledge of what befell bygone peoples and are restrained thereby. So glory be to Him who hath appointed the things that have been done aforetime for an example to those that come after! And of these admonitory instances are the histories called the Thousand Nights and One Night, with all their store of illustrious fables and relations.

It is recorded in the chronicles of the things that have been done of time past that there lived once, in the olden days and in bygone ages and times, a king of the kings of the sons of Sasan, who reigned over the Islands of India and China and was lord of armies and guards and servants and retainers. He had two sons, an elder and a younger, who were both valiant cavaliers, but the elder was a stouter horseman than the younger. When their father died, he left his empire to his elder son, whose name was Shehriyar, and he took the government and ruled his subjects justly, so that the people of the country and of the empire loved him well, whilst his brother Shahzeman became King of Samarcand of Tartary. The two kings abode each in his own dominions, ruling justly over their subjects and enjoying the utmost prosperity and happiness, for the space of twenty years, at the end of which time the elder king yearned after his brother and commanded his Vizier to repair to the latter's court and bring him to his own capital. The Vizier replied, "I hear and obey," and set out at once and journeyed till he reached King Shahzeman's court in safety, when he saluted him for his brother and informed him that the latter yearned after him and desired that he would pay him a visit, to which King Shahzeman consented gladly and made ready for the journey and appointed his Vizier to rule the country in his stead during his absence. Then he caused his tents and camels and mules to be brought forth and encamped, with his guards and attendants, without the city, in readiness to set out next morning for his brother's kingdom. In the middle of the night, it chanced that he bethought him of somewhat he had forgotten in his palace; so he returned thither privily and entered his apartments, where he found his wife asleep in his own bed, in the arms of one of his black slaves. When he saw this, the world grew black in his sight, and he said to himself, "If this is what happens whilst I am yet under the city walls, what will be the condition of this accursed woman during my absence at my brother's court?" Then he drew his sword and smote the twain and slew them and left them in the bed and returned presently to his camp, without telling any one what had happened. Then he gave orders for immediate departure and set out a'once and travelled till he drew near his brother's capital when he despatched vaunt-couriers to announce his approach. His brother came forth to meet him and saluted him and rejoiced exceedingly and caused the city to be decorated in his honour. Then he sat down with him to converse and make merry; but King Shahzeman could not forget the perfidy of his wife and grief grew on him more and more and his colour changed and his body became weak. Shehriyar saw his condition, but attributed it to his separation from his country and his kingdom, so let him alone and asked no questions of him, till one day he said to him, "O my brother, I see that thou art grown weak of body and hast lost thy colour." And Shahzeman answered, "O my brother, I have an internal wound," but did not tell him about his wife. Said Shehriyar, "I wish thou wouldst ride forth with me a-hunting; maybe it would lighten thy heart." But Shahzeman refused; so his brother went out to hunt without him. Now there were in King Shahzeman's apartments lattice-windows overlooking his brother's garden, and as the former was sitting looking on the garden, behold a gate of the palace opened, and out came twenty damsels and twenty black slaves, and among them his brother's wife, who was wonderfully fair and beautiful. They all came up to a fountain, where the girls and slaves took off their clothes and sat down together. Then the queen called out, "O Mesoud!" And there came to her a black slave, who embraced her and she him. Then he lay with her, and on likewise did the other slaves with the girls. And they ceased not from kissing and clipping and cricketing and carousing until the day began to wane. When the King of Tartary saw this, he said to himself, “By Allah, my mischance was lighter than this!” And his grief and chagrin relaxed from him and he said, “This is more grievous than what happened to me!” So he put away his melancholy and ate and drank. Presently, his brother came back from hunting and they saluted each other: and Shehriyar looked at Shahzeman and saw that his colour had returned and his face was rosy and he ate heartily, whereas before he ate but little. So he said to him, “O my brother, when I last saw thee, thou wast pale and wan, and now I see that the colour has returned to thy face. Tell me how it is with thee.” Quoth Shahzeman, “I will tell thee what caused my loss of colour, but excuse me from acquainting thee with the cause of its return to me.” Said Shehriyar, “Let me hear first what was the cause of thy pallor and weakness.” “Know then, O my brother,” rejoined Shahzeman, “that when thou sentest thy vizier to bid me to thee, I made ready for the journey and had actually quitted my capital city, when I remembered that I had left behind me a certain jewel, that which I gave thee. So I returned to my palace, where I found my wife asleep in my bed, in the arms of a black slave. I slew them both and came to thee; and it was for brooding over this affair, that I lost my colour and became weak. But forgive me if I tell thee not the cause of my restoration to health.” When his brother heard this, he said to him, “I conjure thee by Allah, tell me the reason of thy recovery!” So he told him all that he had seen, and Shehriyar said, “I must see this with my own eyes.” “Then,” replied Shahzeman, “feign to go forth to hunt and hide thyself in my lodging and thou shalt see all this and have ocular proof of the truth.” So Shehriyar ordered his attendants to prepare to set out at once; whereupon the troops encamped without the city and he himself went forth with them and sat in his pavilion, bidding his servants admit no one. Then he disguised himself and returned secretly to King Shahzeman’s palace and sat with him at the lattice overlooking the garden, until the damsels and their mistress came out with the slaves and did as his brother had reported, till the call to afternoon prayer. When King Shehriyar saw this, he was as one distraught and said to his brother, “Arise, let us depart hence, for we have no concern with kingship, and wander till we find one to whom the like has happened as to us, else our death were better than our life.” Then they went out by a postern of the palace and journeyed days and nights till they came to a tree standing in the midst of a meadow, by a spring of water, on the shore of the salt sea, and they drank of the stream and sat down by it to rest. When the day was somewhat spent, behold, the sea became troubled and there rose from it a black column that ascended to the sky and made towards the meadow. When the princes saw this, they were afraid and climbed up to the top of the tree, which was a high one, that they might see what was the matter; and behold, it was a genie of lofty stature, broad-browed and wide-cheated, bearing on his head a coffer of glass with seven locks of steel. He landed and sat down under the tree, where he set down the coffer, and opening it, took out a smaller one. This also he opened, and there came forth a damsel slender of form and dazzlingly beautiful, as she were a shining sun, as says the poet Uteyeh:

She shines out in the dusk, and lo! the day is here, And all the
 trees flower forth with blossoms bright and clear,
The sun from out her brows arises, and the moon, When she unveils
 her face, cloth hide for shame and fear.
All living things prostrate themselves before her feet, When she
 unshrouds and all her hidden charms appear;
And when she flashes forth the lightnings of her glance, She
 maketh eyes to rain, like showers, with many a tear.

When the genie saw her, he said to her, “O queen of noble ladies, thou whom indeed I stole away on thy wedding night, I have a mind to sleep awhile.” And he laid his head on her knees and fell asleep. Presently the lady raised her eyes to the tree and saw the two kings among the branches; so she lifted the genie’s head from her lap and laid it on the ground, then rose and stood beneath the tree and signed to them to descend, without heeding the Afrit. They answered her, in the same manner, “God on thee excuse us from this.” But she rejoined by signs, as who should say, “If you do not come down, I will wake the Afrit on you, and he will kill you without mercy." So they were afraid and came down to her, whereupon she came up to them and offered them her favours, saying, "To it, both of you, and lustily; or I will set the Afrit on you." So for fear of him, King Shehriyar said to his brother Shahzeman, "O brother, do as she bids thee." But he replied, "Not I; do thou have at her first." And they made signs to each other to pass first, till she said, "Why do I see you make signs to each other? An you come not forward and fall to, I will rouse the Afrit on you." So for fear of the genie, they lay with her one after the other, and when they had done, she bade them arise, and took out of her bosom a purse containing a necklace made of five hundred and seventy rings, and said to them, "Know ye what these are?" They answered, "No." And she said, "Every one of the owners of these rings has had to do with me in despite of this Afrit. And now give me your rings, both of you." So each of them took off a ring and gave it to her. And she said to them, "Know that this genie carried me off on my wedding night and laid me in a box and shut the box up in a glass chest, on which he clapped seven strong locks and sank it to the bottom of the roaring stormy sea, knowing not that nothing can hinder a woman, when she desires aught, even as says one of the poets:

I rede thee put no Faith in womankind, Nor trust the oaths they lavish all in vain:
For on the satisfaction of their lusts Depend alike their love and their disdain.
They proffer lying love, but perfidy Is all indeed their garments do contain.
Take warning, then, by Joseph's history, And how a woman sought to do him bane;
And eke thy father Adam, by their fault To leave the groves of Paradise was fain.

Or as another says:

Out on yon! blame confirms the blamed one in his way. My fault is not so great indeed as you would say.

If I’m in love, forsooth, my case is but the same As that of
other men before me, many a day.
For great the wonder were if any man alive From women and their
wiles escape unharmed away!”

When the two kings heard this, they marvelled and said, “Allah! Allah! There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! We seek aid of God against the malice of women, for indeed their craft is great!” Then she said to them, “Go your ways.” So they returned to the road, and Shehriyar said to Shahzeman, “By Allah, O my brother, this Afrit’s case is more grievous than ours. For this is a genie and stole away his mistress on her wedding night and clapped her in a chest, which he locked with seven locks and sank in the midst of the sea, thinking to guard her from that which was decreed by fate, yet have we seen that she has lain with five hundred and seventy men in his despite, and now with thee and me to boot. Verily, this is a thing that never yet happened to any, and it should surely console us. Let us therefore return to our kingdoms and resolve never again to take a woman to wife; and as for me, I will show thee what I will do.” So they set out at once and presently came to the camp outside Shehriyar’s capital and, entering the royal pavilion, sat down on their bed of estate. Then the chamberlains and amirs and grandees came in to them and Shehriyar commanded them to return to the city. So they returned to the city and Shehriyar went up to his palace, where he summoned his Vizier and bade him forthwith put his wife to death. The Vizier accordingly took the queen and killed her, whilst Shehriyar, going into the slave girls and concubines, drew his sword and slew them all. Then he let bring others in their stead and took an oath that every night he would go in to a maid and in the morning put her to death, for that there was not one chaste woman on the face of the earth. As for Shahzeman, he sought to return to his kingdom at once; so his brother equipped him for the journey and he set out and fared on till he came to his own dominions. Meanwhile, King Shehriyar commanded his Vizier to bring him the bride of the night, that he might go in to her; so he brought him one of the daughters of the amirs and he went in to her, and on the morrow he bade the Vizier cut off her head. The Vizier dared not disobey the King’s commandment, so he put her to death and brought him another girl, of the daughters of the notables of the land. The King went in to her also, and on the morrow he bade the Vizier kill her; and he ceased not to do thus for three years, till the land was stripped of marriageable girls, and all the women and mothers and fathers wept and cried out against the King, cursing him and complaining to the Creator of heaven and earth and calling for succour upon Him who heareth prayer and answereth those that cry to Him; and those that had daughters left fled with them, till at last there remained not a single girl in the city apt for marriage. One day the King ordered the Vizier to bring him a maid as of wont; so the Vizier went out and made search for a girl, but found not one and returned home troubled and careful for fear of the king’s anger. Now this Vizier had two daughters, the elder called Shehrzad and the younger Dunyazad, and the former had read many books and histories and chronicles of ancient kings and stories of people of old time; it is said indeed that she had collected a thousand books of chronicles of past peoples and bygone kings and poets. Moreover, she had read books of science and medicine; her memory was stored with verses and stories and folk-lore and the sayings of kings and sages, and she was wise, witty, prudent and well-bred. She said to her father, “How comes it that I see thee troubled and oppressed with care and anxiety? Quoth one of the poets:

‘Tell him that is of care oppressed, That grief shall not endure
alway,
But even as gladness fleeteth by, So sorrow too shall pass
away.’”

When the Vizier heard his daughter’s words, he told her his case, and she said, “By Allah, O my father, marry me to this king, for either I will be the means of the deliverance of the daughters of the Muslims from slaughter or I will die and perish as others have perished.” “For God’s sake,” answered the Vizier, “do not thus adventure thy life!” But she said, “It must be so.” Whereupon her father was wroth with her and said to her, “Fool that thou art, dost thou not know that the ignorant man who meddles in affairs falls into grievous peril, and that he who looks not to the issue of his actions finds no friend in time of evil fortune? As says the byword, ‘I was sitting at my ease, but my officiousness would not let me rest.’ And I fear lest there happen to thee what happened to the ox and the ass with the husbandman.” “And what happened to them?” asked she. Quoth the Vizier, “Know, O my daughter, that

Story of the Ox and the Ass

There was once a merchant who was rich in goods and cattle, and he had a wife and children and dwelt in the country and was skilled in husbandry. Now God had gifted him to understand the speech of beasts and birds of every kind, but under pain of death if he divulged his gift to any one; so he kept it secret for fear of death. He had in his byre an ox and an ass, each tied up in his stall, hard by the other. One day, as the merchant was sitting near at hand, he heard the ox say to the ass, ‘I give thee joy, O Father Wakeful! Thou enjoyest rest and attention and they keep thy stall always swept and sprinkled, and thine eating is sifted barley and thy drink fresh water, whilst I am always weary, for they take me in the middle of the night and gird the yoke on my neck and set me to plough and I toil without ceasing from break of morn till sunset. I am forced to work more than my strength and suffer all kinds of indignities, such as blows and abuse, from the cruel ploughman; and I return home at the end of the day, and indeed my sides are torn and my neck is flayed. Then they shut me up in the cow-house and throw me beans and straw mixed with earth and husks, and I lie all night in dung and stale. But thy place is always swept and sprinkled and thy manger clean and full of sweet hay and thou art always resting, except that, now and then, our master hath occasion to ride thee and returns speedily with thee; and but for this thou art always resting and I toiling, and thou sleeping and I waking; thou art full and I hungry and thou honoured and I despised.’ ‘O broadhead,’ answered the ass,’ he was in the right who dubbed thee ox , for thou art stupid in the extreme, nor is there in thee thought or craft but thou showest zeal and cost thine utmost endeavour before thy master and fearest and killest thyself for the benefit of another. Thou goest forth at the time of morning prayer and returnest not till sundown and endurest all day all manner of afflictions, now blows now fatigue and now abuse. When thou returnest, the ploughman ties thee to a stinking manger, and thou friskest and pawest the ground and buttest with thy horns and bellowest greatly, and they think thou art content. No sooner have they thrown thee thy fodder than thou fallest on it greedily and hastenest to fill thy belly with it. But if thou wilt follow my counsel, it will be the better for thee and thou wilt get twice as much rest as I. When thou goest forth to the furrow and they lay the yoke on thy neck, lie down, and do not rise, even if they beat thee, or only rise and lie down again; and when they bring thee home, fall prostrate on thy back and refuse thy fodder, when they throw it thee and feign to be sick. Do this for a day or two and thou wilt have rest from toil and weariness.' The ox thanked the ass greatly for his advice and called down blessings on him; and the merchant heard all that passed between them.

Next day the ploughman took the ox and yoked him to the plough and set him to work as usual. The ox began to fall short in his work, and the ploughman beat him till he broke the yoke and fled, following out the ass's precepts; but the man overtook him and beat him till he despaired of life. Yet for all that, he did nothing but stand still and fall down till the evening. Then the ploughman took him home and tied him in his stall; but he withdrew from the manger and neither frisked nor stamped nor bellowed as usual, and the man wondered at this. Then he brought him the beans and straw, but he smelt at them and left them and lay down at a distance and passed the night without eating. Next morning, the ploughman came and found the straw and beans untouched and the ox lying on his back, with his stomach swollen and his legs in the air; so he was concerned for him and said to himself, 'He has certainly fallen ill, and this is why he would not work yesterday.' Then he went to his master and told him that the ox was ill and would not touch his fodder. Now the farmer knew what this meant, for that he had overheard the talk between the ox and the ass as before mentioned. So he said, 'Take that knave of an ass and bind the yoke on his neck and harness him to the plough and try and make him do the ox's work.' So the ploughman took the ass and made him work all day beyond his strength to accomplish the ox's task; and he beat him till his skin and ribs were sore and his neck flayed with the yoke. When the evening came and the ass resumed home, he could hardly drag himself along. But as for the ox, he had lain all day, resting, and had eaten his fodder cheerfully and with a good appetite; and all day long he had called down blessings on the ass for his good counsel, not knowing what had befallen him on his account. So when the night came and the ass returned to the stable, the ox arose and said to him, ‘Mayst thou be gladdened with good news, O Father Wakeful! Through thee, I have rested today and have eaten my food in peace and comfort.’ The ass made him no answer, for rage and vexation and fatigue and the beating he had undergone; but he said to himself, ‘All this comes of my folly in giving another good advice; as the saying goes, “I was lying at full length, but my officiousness would not let me be.” But I will go about with him and return him to his place, else I shall perish.’ Then he went to his manger weary, whilst the ox thanked him and blessed him. “And thou, O my daughter,” said the Vizier, “like the ass, wilt perish through thy lack of sense, so do thou oft quiet and cast not thyself into perdition; indeed I give thee good counsel and am affectionately solicitous for thee.” “O my father,” answered she, “nothing will serve me but I must go up to this king and become his wife.” Quoth he, “An thou hold not thy peace and bide still, I will do with thee even as the merchant did with his wife.” “And what was that?” asked she. “Know,” answered he, “that the merchant and his wife and children came out on the terrace, it being a moonlit night and the moon at its full. Now the terrace overlooked the byre; and presently, as he sat, with his children playing before him, the merchant heard the ass say to the ox, ‘Tell me, O Father Stupid, what dost thou mean to do tomorrow?’ ‘What but that thou advisest me?’ answered the ox. ‘Thine advice was as good as could be and has gotten me complete rest, and I will not depart from it in the least; so when they bring me my fodder, I will refuse it and feign sickness and swell out my belly.’ The ass shook his head and said, ‘Beware of doing that I’ ‘Why?’ asked the ox, and the ass answered, ‘Know that I heard our master say to the labourer, “If the ox do not rise and eat his fodder today, send for the butcher to slaughter him, and give his flesh to the poor and make a rug of his skin.” And I fear for thee on account of this. So take my advice, ere ill-hap betide thee, and when they bring thee the fodder, eat it and arise and bellow and paw the ground with thy feet, or our master will assuredly slaughter thee.' Whereupon the ox arose and bellowed and thanked the ass, and said, 'Tomorrow, I will go with them readily.' Then he ate up all his fodder, even to licking the manger with his tongue.

When the merchant heard this, he was amused at the ass's trick, and laughed, till he fell backward. 'Why dost thou laugh?' asked his wife; and he said, 'I laughed at something that I saw and heard, but it is a secret and I cannot disclose it, or I shall die.' Quoth she, 'There is no help for it but thou must tell me the reason of thy laughter, though thou die for it.' 'I cannot reveal it,' answered he, 'for fear of death.' 'It was at me thou didst laugh,' said she, and ceased not to importune him till he was worn out and distracted. So he assembled all his family and kinsfolk and summoned the Cadi and the witnesses, being minded to make his last dispositions and impart to her the secret and die, for indeed he loved her with a great love, and she was the daughter of his father's brother and the mother of his children. Moreover, he sent for all her family and the neighbours, and when they were all assembled, he told them the state of the case and announced to them the approach of his last hour. Then he gave his wife her portion and appointed guardians of his children and freed his slave girls and took leave of his people. They all wept, and the Cadi and the witnesses wept also and went up to the wife and said to her, 'We conjure thee, by Allah, give up this matter, lest thy husband and the father of thy children die. Did he not know that if he revealed the secret, he would surely die, he would have told thee.' But she replied, 'By Allah, I will not desist from him, till he tell me, though he die for it.' So they forbore to press her. And all who were present wept sore, and there was a general mourning in the house. Then the merchant rose and went to the cow-house, to make his ablutions and pray, intending after to return and disclose his secret and die.

Now he had a cock and fifty hens and a dog, and he heard the latter say in his lingo to the cock, 'How mean is thy wit, O cock! May he be disappointed who reared thee! Our master is in extremity and thou clappest thy wings and crowest and fliest from one hen's back to another's! God confound thee! Is this a time for sport and diversion? Art thou not ashamed of thyself?' 'And what ails our master, O dog?' asked the cock. The dog told him what had happened and how the merchant's wife had importuned him, till he was about to tell her his secret and die, and the cock said, 'Then is our master little of wit and lacking in sense; if he cannot manage his affairs with a single wife, his life is not worth prolonging. See, I have fifty wives. I content this one and anger that, stint one and feed another, and through my good governance they are all under my control. Now, our master pretends to sense and accomplishments, and he has but one wife and yet knows not how to manage her.' Quoth the dog, 'What, then, should our master do?' 'He should take a stick,' replied the cock, 'and beat her soundly, till she says, "I repent, O my lord! I will never again ask a question as long as I live." And when once he has done this, he will be free from care and enjoy life. But he has neither sense nor judgment.'

When the merchant heard what the cock said, he went to his wife (after he had hidden a rattan in an empty store-room) and said to her, 'Come with me into this room, that I may tell thee my secret and die and none see me.' So she entered gladly, thinking that he was about to tell her his secret, and he locked the door; then he took the rattan and brought it down on her back and ribs and shoulders, saying, 'Wilt thou ask questions about what is none of thy business?' He beat her till she was well-nigh senseless, and she cried out, 'By Allah, I will ask thee no more questions, and indeed I repent sincerely!' And she kissed his hands and feet. Then he unlocked the door and went out and told the company what had happened, whereat they rejoiced, and mourning was changed into joy and gladness. So the merchant learnt good management from a cock, and he and his wife lived happily until death.

And thou, O my daughter," added the Vizier, "except thou desist from this thing, I will do with thee even as the merchant did with his wife." "I will never desist," answered she, "nor is it this story that can turn me from my purpose; and an thou yield not to me, I will go up myself to the King and complain to him of thee, in that thou grudges the like of me to the like of him." Quoth her father, "Must it be so?" And she answered "Yes." So being weary of striving with her and despairing of turning her from her purpose, he went up to King Shehriyar and kissing the earth before him, told him about his daughter and how she would have him give her to him that next night; whereat the King marvelled and said to him, “How is this? By Him who raised up the heavens, if thou bring her to me, I shall say to thee on the morrow, ‘Take her and put her to death.’ And if thou kill her not, I will kill thee without fail.” “O king of the age,” answered the Vizier, “it is she who will have it so; and I told her all this, but she will not hear me and insists upon passing this night with thy highness.” “It is well,” answered Shehriyar; “go and make her ready, and tonight bring her to me.” So the Vizier returned to his daughter and told her what had passed, saying, “May God not bereave us of thee!” But Shehrzad rejoiced with an exceeding joy and made ready all that she needed, and said to her sister Dunyazad, “O my sister, note well what I shall enjoin thee. When I go up to the Sultan, I will send after thee, and when thou comest to me and seest that the King has done his will of me, do thou say to me, ‘O my sister, an thou be not asleep, tell us some of thy delightful stories, to pass away the watches of this our night.’ Do this and (God willing) it shall be the means of my deliverance and of the ridding of the folk of this calamity, and by it I will turn the King from his custom.” Dunyazad answered, “It is well.” And the Vizier carried Shehrzad to the King, who took her to his bed and fell to toying with her. But she wept, and he said to her, “Why dost thou weep?” “O king of the age,” answered she, “I have a young sister and I desire to take leave of her this night and that she may take leave of me before the morning.” So he sent for Dunyazad, and she waited till the Sultan had done his desire of her sister and they were all three awake, when she coughed and said, “O my sister, an thou be not asleep, tell us one of thy pleasant stories, to beguile the watches of our night, and I will take leave of thee before the morning.” “With all my heart,” answered Shehrzad, “if the good king give me leave.” The King being wakeful, was pleased to hear a story and said, “Tell on.” Whereat she rejoiced greatly and said, “It is related, O august king, that

THE MERCHANT AND THE GENIE.

There was once a merchant, who had much substance and traded largely in foreign countries. One day, as he was riding through a certain country, whither he had gone to collect what was due to him, there overtook him the heat of the day and presently he espied a garden before him; so he made towards it for shelter and alighting, sat down under a walnut tree, by a spring of water. Then he put his hand to his saddle bags and took out a cake of bread and a date and ate them and threw away the date stone, when behold, there started up before him a gigantic Afrit, with a naked sword in his hand, who came up to him and said, 'Arise, that I may slay thee, even as thou hast slain my son.' 'How did I slay thy son?' asked the merchant, and the genie replied, 'When thou threwest away the date stone, it smote my son, who was passing at the time, on the breast, and he died forthright.' When the merchant heard this, he said, 'Verily we are God's and to Him we return! There is no power and no virtue but in God, the Most High, the Supreme! If I killed him, it was by misadventure, and I prithee pardon me.' But the genie said, 'There is no help for it but I must kill thee.' Then he seized him and throwing him down, raised his sword to strike him: whereupon the merchant wept and said, 'I commit my affair to God!' and recited the following verses:

Fate has two days, untroubled one, the other lowering, And life
two parts, the one content, the other sorrowing.
Say unto him that taunteth us with fortune's perfidy, 'At whom
but those whose heads are high doth Fate its arrows fling?'
If that the hands of Time have made their plaything of our life,
Till for its long protracted kiss ill-hap upon us spring,
Dost thou not see the hurricane, what time the wild winds blow,
Smite down the stately trees alone and spare each lesser
thing?
Lo! in the skies are many stars, no one can tell their tale, But
to the sun and moon alone eclipse brings darkening.
The earth bears many a pleasant herb and many a plant and tree:

But none is stoned save only those to which the fair fruit cling.
Look on the sea and how the waifs float up upon the foam, But in its deepest depths of blue the pearls have sojourning.

‘Cut short thy speech,’ said the genie, ‘for, by Allah, there is no help for it but I must kill thee.’ ‘Know, O Afrit,’ replied the merchant, ‘that I have a wife and children and much substance, and I owe debts and hold pledges: so let me return home and give every one his due, and I vow by all that is most sacred that I will return to thee at the end of the year, that thou mayest do with me as thou wilt, and God is witness of what I say.’ The genie accepted his promise and released him, whereupon he returned to his dwelling-place and paid his debts and settled all his affairs. Moreover, he told his wife and children what had happened and made his last dispositions, and tarried with his family till the end of the year. Then he rose and made his ablutions and took his winding sheet under his arm and bidding his household and kinsfolk and neighbours farewell, set out, much against his will, to perform his promise to the genie; whilst his family set up a great noise of crying and lamentation. He journeyed on till he reached the garden, where he had met with the genie, on the first day of the new year, and there sat down to await his doom. Presently, as he sat weeping over what had befallen him, there came up an old man, leading a gazelle by a chain, and saluted the merchant, saying, ‘What ails thee to sit alone in this place, seeing that it is the resort of the Jinn?’ The merchant told him all that had befallen him with the Afrit, and he wondered and said, ‘By Allah, O my brother, thy good faith is exemplary and thy story is a marvellous one! If it were graven with needles on the corners of the eye, it would serve as a warning to those that can profit by example.’ Then he sat down by his side, saying, ‘By Allah, O my brother, I will not leave thee till I see what befalls thee with this Afrit.’ So they sat conversing, and fear and terror got hold upon the merchant and trouble increased upon him, notwithstanding the old man’s company. Presently another old man came up, leading two black dogs, and saluting them, inquired why they sat in a place known to be haunted by Jinn, whereupon the merchant repeated his story to him. He had not sat long with them when there came up a third old man leading a dappled she-mule, and after putting to them the same question and receiving a like answer, sat down with them to await the issue of the affair. They had sat but a little while longer, when behold, there arose a cloud of dust and a great whirling column approached from the heart of the desert. Then the dust lifted and discovered the genie, with a drawn sword in his hand and sparks of fire issuing from his eyes. He came up to them and dragged the merchant from amongst them, saying, ‘Rise, that I may slay thee as thou slewest my son, the darling of my heart!’ Whereupon the merchant wept and bewailed himself and the three old men joined their cries and lamentations to his. Then came forward the first old man, he of the gazelle, and kissed the Afrit’s hand and said to him, ‘O genie and crown of the kings of the Jinn, if I relate to thee my history with this gazelle and it seem to thee wonderful, wilt thou grant me a third of this merchant’s blood?’ ‘Yes, O old man,’ answered the genie, ‘if thou tell me thy story and I find it wonderful, I will remit to thee a third of his blood.’ Then said the old man, ‘Know, O Afrit, that

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The First Old Man's Story.

This gazelle is the daughter of my father's brother and my own flesh and blood. I married her whilst she was yet of tender age and lived with her near thirty years, without being blessed with a child by her. So I took me a concubine and had by her a son like the rising full moon, with eyes and eyebrows of perfect beauty; and he grew up and flourished till he reached the age of fifteen, when I had occasion to journey to a certain city, and set out thither with great store of merchandise. Now my wife had studied sorcery and magic from her youth: so, I being gone, she turned my son into a calf and his mother into a cow and delivered them both to the cowherd: and when, after a long absence, I returned from my journey and inquired after my son and his mother, my wife said to me, "Thy slave died and her son ran away, whither I know not." I abode for the space of a year, mournful-hearted and weeping-eyed, till the coming of the Greater Festival, when I sent to the herdsman and bade him bring me a fat cow for the purpose of sacrifice. So he brought me the very cow into which my wife had changed my concubine by her art; and I tucked up my skirts and taking the knife in my hand, went up to the cow to slaughter her; but she lowed and moaned so piteously, that I was seized with wonder and compassion and held my hand from her and said to the herd, "Bring me another cow." "Not so!" cried my wife. "Slaughter this one, for we have no finer nor fatter." So I went up to her again, but she cried out, and I left her and ordered the herdsman to kill her and skin her. So he killed her and flayed her, but found on her neither fat nor flesh, only skin and bone. Then I was sorry for having slain her, when repentance availed me not; and I gave her to the herd and said to him, "Bring me a fat calf." So he brought me my son in the guise of a calf; and when he saw me, he broke his halter and came up to me and fawned on me and moaned and wept, till I took pity on him and said to the man, "Bring me a cow and let this calf go." But my wife cried out at me and said, "Not so: thou must sacrifice this calf and none other to-day: for it is a holy and a blessed day, on which it behoves us to offer up none but a good thing, and we have no calf fatter or finer than this one." Quoth I, "Look at the condition of the cow I slaughtered by thine order; we were deceived in her, and now I will not be persuaded by thee to slay this calf this time." "By the great God, the Compassionate, the Merciful," answered she, "thou must without fail sacrifice this calf on this holy day! Else thou art no longer my husband nor am I thy wife." When I heard this harsh speech from her, I went up to the calf, knowing not what she aimed at, and took the knife in my hand.'" Here Shehrzad perceived the day and was silent; and her sister said to her, "What a charming and delightful story!" Quoth Shehrzad, "This is nothing to what I will tell thee to-morrow night, if the King let me live." And the King said to himself, "By Allah, I will not kill her, till I hear the rest of the story!" So they lay together till morning, when the King went out to his hall of audience and the Vizier came in to him, with the winding-sheet under his arm. Then the King ordered and appointed and deposed, without telling the Vizier aught of what had happened, much to the former's surprise, until the end of the day, when the Divan broke up and he retired to his apartments.

And when it was the second night

Dunyazad said to her sister Shehrzad, "O my sister, finish us thy story of the merchant and the genie." "With all my heart," answered she, "if the King give me leave." The king bade her "Say on." So she began as follows: "It has reached me, O august king and wise governor, that the first old man continued his story as follows: 'O lord of the Kings of the Jinn, as I was about to kill the calf, my heart failed me and I said to the herdsman, "Keep this calf with the rest of the cattle." So he took it and went away. Next day the herd came to me, as I was sitting by myself, and said to me, "O my lord, I have that to tell thee will rejoice thee, and I claim a reward for good news." Quoth I, "It is well." And he said, "O merchant, I have a daughter, who learnt the art of magic in her youth from an old woman who lived with us, and yesterday, when I took home the calf that thou gavest me, she looked at it and veiled her face and fell a-weeping. Then she laughed and said to me, 'O my father, am I become of so little account in thine eyes that thou bringest in to me strange men?' 'Where are the strange men?' asked I. 'And why dost thou weep and laugh?' Quoth she, 'The calf thou hast there is our master's son, who has been enchanted, as well as his mother, by his father’s wife. This is why I laughed: and I wept for his mother, because his father slaughtered her.’ I wondered exceedingly at this and the day had no sooner broken than I came to tell thee.” When (continued the old man) I heard the herdsman’s story, O genie, I went out with him, drunken without wine for stress of joy and gladness, and accompanied him to his house, where his daughter welcomed me and kissed my hand; and the calf came up to me and fawned on me. Said I to the girl, “Is it true what I hear about this calf?” “Yes, O my lord,” answered she, “this is indeed thy son and the darling of thy heart.” So I said to her, “O damsel, if thou wilt release him, all that is under thy father’s hand of beasts and goods shall be thine!” But she smiled and said, “O my lord, I care not for wealth, but I will do what thou desirest upon two conditions, the first that thou marry me to this thy son, and the second that thou permit me to bewitch the sorceress and imprison her (in the shape of a beast); else I shall not be safe from her craft.” I answered, “Besides what thou seekest, thou shalt have all that is under thy father’s hand, and as to my wife, it shall be lawful to thee to shed her blood, if thou wilt.” When she heard this, she took a cup full of water, and conjured over it; then sprinkled the calf with the water, saying, “If thou be a calf by the creation of the Almighty, abide in that form and change not: but if thou be enchanted, return to thine original form, with the permission of God the Most High!” With that he shook and became a man: and I fell upon him and said to him, “For God’s sake, tell me what my wife did with thee and thy mother.” So he told me what had befallen them and I said to him, “O my son, God hath sent thee one to deliver and avenge thee.” Then I married him to the herdsman’s daughter, and she transformed my wife into this gazelle, saying to me, “I have given her this graceful form for thy sake, that thou mayest look on her without aversion.” She dwelt with us days and nights and nights and days, till God took her to Himself; and after her death, my son set out on a journey to the land of Ind, which is this merchant’s native country; and after awhile, I took the gazelle and travelled with her from place to place, seeking news of my son, till chance led me to this garden, where I found this merchant sitting weeping; and this is my story.’ Quoth the genie, ‘This is indeed a rare story, and I remit to thee a third part of his blood.’ Then came forward the second old man, he of the two greyhounds, and said to the genie, ‘I will tell thee my story with these two dogs, and if thou find it still rarer and more marvellous, do thou remit to me another third part of his blood. Quoth the genie, ‘I agree to this.’ Then said the second old man, ‘Know, O lord of the Kings of the Jinn, that

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The Second Old Man’s Story.

These two dogs are my elder brothers. Our father died and left us three thousand dinars, and I opened a shop that I might buy and sell therein, and my brothers did each the like. But before long, my eldest brother sold his stock for a thousand dinars and bought goods and merchandise and setting out on his travels, was absent a whole year. One day, as I was sitting in my shop, a beggar stopped before me and I said to him, “God assist thee!” But he said to me, weeping, “Dost thou not recognize me?” I took note of him, and behold, it was my brother. So I rose and welcomed him and made him sit down by me and inquired how he came in such a case: but he answered, “Do not ask me: my wealth is wasted and fortune has turned her back on me.” Then I carried him to the bath and clad him in one of my own suits and took him to live with me. Moreover, I cast up my accounts and found that I had made a thousand dinars profit, so that my capital was now two thousand dinars. I divided this between my brother and myself, saying to him, “Put it that thou hast never travelled nor been abroad.” He took it gladly and opened a shop with it. Presently, my second brother arose like the first and sold his goods and all that belonged to him and determined to travel. We would have dissuaded him, but he would not be dissuaded and bought merchandise with which he set out on his travels, and we saw no more of him for a whole year; at the end of which time he came to us as had done his elder brother, and I said to him, “O my brother, did I not counsel thee not to travel?” And he wept and said, “O my brother, it was decreed: and behold, I am poor, without a dirhem or a shirt to my back.” Then I carried him to the bath and clad him in a new suit of my own and brought him back to my shop, where we ate and drank together; after which, I said to him, “O my brother, I will make up the accounts of my shop, as is my wont once a year, and the increase shall be between thee and me.” So I arose and took stock and found I was worth two thousand dinars increase, in excess of capital, wherefore I praised the Divine Creator and gave my brother a thousand dinars, with which he opened a shop. In this situation we remained for some time, till one day, my brothers came to me and would have me go on a voyage with them; but I refused and said to them, “What did your travels profit you, that I should look to profit by the same venture?” And I would not listen to them; so we abode in our shops, buying and selling, and every year they pressed me to travel, and I declined, until six years had elapsed. At last I yielded to their wishes and said to them, “O my brothers, I will make a voyage with you, but first let me see what you are worth.” So I looked into their affairs and found they had nothing left, having wasted all their substance in eating and drinking and merrymaking. However, I said not a word of reproach to them, but sold my stock and got in all I had and found I was worth six thousand dinars. So I rejoiced and divided the sum into two equal parts and said to my brothers, “These three thousand dinars are for you and me to trade with.” The other three thousand I buried, in case what befell them should befall me also, so that we might still have, on our return, wherewithal to open our shops again. They were content and I gave them each a thousand dinars and kept the like myself. Then we provided ourselves with the necessary merchandise and equipped ourselves for travel and chartered a ship, which we freighted with our goods. After a month’s voyage, we came to a city, in which we sold our goods at a profit of ten dinars on every one (of prime cost). And as we were about to take ship again, we found on the beach a damsel in tattered clothes, who kissed my hand and said to me, “O my lord, is there in thee kindness and charity? I will requite thee for them.” Quoth I, “Indeed I love to do courtesy and charity, though I be not requited.” And she said, “O my lord, I beg thee to marry me and clothe me and take me back to thy country, for I give myself to thee. Entreat me courteously, for indeed I am of those whom it behoves to use with kindness and consideration; and I will requite thee therefor: do not let my condition prejudice thee.” When I heard what she said, my heart inclined to her, that what God (to whom belong might and majesty) willed might come to pass. So I carried her with me and clothed her and spread her a goodly bed in the ship and went in to her and made much of her. Then we set sail again and indeed my heart clove to her with a great love and I left her not night nor day and occupied myself with her to the exclusion of my brothers. Wherefore they were jealous of me and envied me my much substance; and they looked upon it with covetous eyes and took counsel together to kill me and to take my goods, saying, “Let us kill our brother, and all will be ours.” And Satan made this to seem good in their eyes. So they took me sleeping beside my wife and lifted us both up and threw us into the sea. When my wife awoke, she shook herself and becoming an Afriteh, took me up and carried me to an island, where she left me for awhile. In the morning, she returned and said to me, “I have paid thee my debt, for it is I who bore thee up out of the sea and saved thee from death, by permission of God the Most High. Know that I am of the Jinn who believe in God and His Apostle (whom God bless and preserve!) and I saw thee and loved thee for God’s sake. So I came to thee in the plight thou knowest of and thou didst marry me, and now I have saved thee from drowning. But I am wroth with thy brothers, and needs must I kill them.” When I heard her words, I wondered and thanked her for what she had done and begged her not to kill my brothers. Then I told her all that had passed between us, and she said, “This very night will I fly to them and sink their ship and make an end of them.” “God on thee,” answered I, “do not do this, for the proverb says, ‘O thou who dost good to those who do evil, let his deeds suffice the evil doer!’ After all, they are my brothers.” Quoth she, “By Allah, I must kill them.” And I besought her till she lifted me up and flying away with me, set me down on the roof of my own house, where she left me. I went down and unlocked the doors and brought out what I had hidden under the earth and opened my shop, after I had saluted the folk and bought goods. At nightfall, I returned home and found these two dogs tied up in the courtyard: and when they saw me, they came up to me and wept and fawned on me. At the same moment, my wife presented herself and said to me, “These are thy brothers.” “Who has done this thing unto them?” asked I; and she answered, “I sent to my sister, who turned them into this form, and they shall not be delivered from the enchantment till after ten years.” Then she left me, after telling me where to find her; and now, the ten years having expired, I was carrying the dogs to her, that she might release them, when I fell in with this merchant, who acquainted me with what had befallen him. So I determined not to leave him, till I saw what passed between thee and him: and this is my story.’ ‘This is indeed a rare story,’ said the genie, ‘and I remit to thee a third part of his blood and his crime.’ Then came forward the third old man, he of the mule, and said, ‘O genie, I will tell thee a story still more astonishing than the two thou hast heard, and do thou remit to me the remainder of his blood and crime.’ The genie replied, ‘It is well.’ So the third old man said, ‘Know, O Sultan and Chief of the Jinn, that

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The Third Old Man’s Story.

This mule was my wife. Some time ago, I had occasion to travel and was absent from her a whole year; at the end of which time I returned home by night and found my wife in bed with a black slave, talking and laughing and toying and kissing and dallying. When she saw me, she made haste and took a mug of water and muttered over it; then came up to me and sprinkled me with the water, saying, “Leave this form for that of a dog!” And immediately I became a dog. She drove me from the house, and I went out of the door and ceased not running till I came to a butcher’s shop, where I stopped and began to eat the bones. The butcher took me and carried me into his house; but when his daughter saw me, she veiled her face and said to her father, “How is it that thou bringest a man in to me?” “Where is the man?” asked he; and she replied, “This dog is a man, whose wife has enchanted him, and I can release him.” When her father heard this, he said, “I conjure thee by Allah, O my daughter, release him!” So she took a mug of water and muttered over it, then sprinkled a little of it on me, saying, “Leave this shape and return to thy former one.” And immediately I became a man again and kissed her hand and begged her to enchant my wife as she had enchanted me. So she gave me a little of the water and said to me, “When thou seest her asleep, sprinkle her with this water and repeat the words thou hast heard me use, naming the shape thou wouldst have her take, and she will become whatever thou wishest.” So I took the water and returned home and went in to my wife. I found her asleep and sprinkled the water upon her, saying, “Quit this form for that of a mule.” And she at once became a mule; and this is she whom thou seest before thee, O Sultan and Chief of the Kings of the Jinn!’ Then he said to the mule, ‘Is it true?’ And she nodded her head and made signs as who should say, ‘Yes, indeed: this is my history and what befell me.’” Here Shehrzad perceived the day and was silent. And Dunyazad said to her, “O my sister, what a delightful story is this of thine!” “This is nothing,” answered Shehrzad, “to what I will tell thee to-morrow night, if the King let me live.” Quoth the King to himself, “By Allah, I will not put her to death till I hear the rest of her story, for it is wonderful.” And they lay together till the morning. Then the King rose and betook himself to his audience-chamber, and the Vizier and the troops presented themselves and the Court was full. The King judged and appointed and deposed and ordered and forbade till the end of the day, when the Divan broke up and he returned to his apartments.

And when it was the third night

and the King had taken his will of the Vizier’s daughter, Dunyazad said to her sister, “O my sister, finish us thy story.” “With all my heart,” answered Shehrzad. “Know, O august King, that when the genie heard the third old man’s story, he marvelled exceedingly and shook with delight and said, ‘I remit to thee the remainder of his crime.’ Then he released the merchant, who went up to the three old men and thanked them; and they gave him joy of his escape and returned, each to his own country. Nor is this more wonderful than the story of the Fisherman and the Genie.” “What is that?” asked the King: and she said, “I have heard tell, O august King, that

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THE FISHERMAN AND THE GENIE.

There was once a poor fisherman, who was getting on in years and had a wife and three children; and it was his custom every day to cast his net four times and no more. One day he went out at the hour of noon and repaired to the sea-shore, where he set down his basket and tucked up his skirts and plunging into the sea, cast his net and waited till it had settled down in the water. Then he gathered the cords in his hand and found it heavy and pulled at it, but could not bring it up. So he carried the end of the cords ashore and drove in a stake, to which he made them fast. Then he stripped and diving round the net, tugged at it till he brought it ashore. Whereat he rejoiced and landing, put on his clothes; but when he came to examine the net, he found in it a dead ass; and the net was torn. When he saw this, he was vexed and said: 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! This is indeed strange luck!' And he repeated the following verses:

O thou that strivest in the gloom of darkness and distress, Cut
short thine efforts, for in strife alone lies not success!
Seest not the fisherman that seeks his living in the sea, Midmost
the network of the stars that round about him press!
Up to his midst he plunges in: the billows buffet him; But from
the bellying net his eyes cease not in watchfulness;
Till when, contented with his night, he carries home a fish,
Whose throat the hand of Death hath slit with trident
pitiless,
Comes one who buys his prey of him, one who has passed the night,
Safe from the cold, in all delight of peace and blessedness.
Praise be to God who gives to this and cloth to that deny! Some
fish, and others eat the fish caught with such toil and
stress.

Then he said, 'Courage! I shall have better luck next time, please God!' And repeated the following verses:

If misfortune assail thee, clothe thyself thereagainst With
patience, the part of the noble: ‘twere wiselier done.
Complain not to men: that were indeed to complain, To those that
have no mercy, of the Merciful One.

So saying, he threw out the dead ass and wrung the net and spread it out. Then he went down into the sea and cast again, saying, ‘In the name of God!’ and waited till the net had settled down in the water, when he pulled the cords and finding it was heavy and resisted more than before, thought it was full of fish. So he made it fast to the shore and stripped and dived into the water round the net, till he got it free. Then he hauled at it till he brought it ashore, but found in it nothing but a great jar full of sand and mud. When he saw this, he groaned aloud and repeated the following verses:

Anger of Fate, have pity and forbear, Or at the least hold back
thy hand and spare!
I sally forth to seek my daily bread And find my living vanished
into air.
How many a fool’s exalted to the stars, Whilst sages hidden in
the mire must fare!

Then he threw out the jar and wrung out and cleansed his net: after which he asked pardon of God the Most High and returning to the sea a third time, cast the net. He waited till it had settled down, then pulled it up and found in it potsherds and bones and broken bottles: whereat he was exceeding wroth and wept and recited the following verses:

Fortune’s with God: thou mayst not win to bind or set it free:
Nor letter-lore nor any skill can bring good hap to thee.
Fortune, indeed, and benefits by Fate are lotted out: One
country’s blest with fertile fields, whilst others sterile
be.
The shifts of evil chance cast down full many a man of worth And
those, that merit not, uplift to be of high degree.
So come to me, O Death! for life is worthless verily; When

falcons humbled to the dust and geese on high we see.
’Tis little wonder if thou find the noble-minded poor, What while
the loser by main force usurps his sovranty.
One bird will traverse all the earth and fly from East to West:
Another hath his every wish although no step stir he.

Then he lifted his eyes to heaven and said, ‘O my God, Thou knowest that I cast my net but four times a day; and now I have cast it three times and have taken nothing. Grant me then, O my God, my daily bread this time!’ So he said, ‘In the name of God!’ and cast his net and waited till it had settled down in the water, then pulled it, but could not bring it up, for it was caught in the bottom Whereupon, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God!’ said he and repeated the following verses:

Away with the world, if it be like this, away! My part in it’s
nought but misery and dismay!
Though the life of a man in the morning be serene, He must drink
of the cup of woe ere ended day.
And yet if one asked, ‘Who’s the happiest man alive?’ The people
would point to me and ‘He’ would say.

Then he stripped and dived down to the net and strove with it till he brought it to shore, where he opened it and found in it a brazen vessel, full and stoppered with lead, on which was impressed the seal of our lord Solomon, son of David (on whom be peace!). When he saw this, he was glad and said, ‘I will sell this in the copper market, for it is worth half a score diners.’ Then he shook it and found it heavy and said to himself, ‘I wonder what is inside! I will open it and see what is in it, before I sell it.’ So he took out a knife and worked at the leaden seal, till he extracted it from the vessel and laid it aside. Then he turned the vase mouth downward and shook it, to turn out its contents; but nothing came out, and he wondered greatly and laid it on the ground. Presently, there issued from it a smoke, which rose up towards the sky and passed over the face of the earth; then gathered itself together and condensed and quivered and became an Afrit, whose head was in the clouds and his feet in the dust. His head was like a dome, his hands like pitchforks, his legs like masts, his mouth like a cavern, his teeth like rocks, his nostrils like trumpets, his eyes like lamps, and he was stern and lowering of aspect. When the fisherman saw the Afrit, he trembled in every limb; his teeth chattered and his spittle dried up and he knew not what to do. When the Afrit saw him, he said, 'There is no god but God, and Solomon is His prophet! O prophet of God, do not kill me, for I will never again disobey thee or cross thee, either in word or deed !' Quoth the fisherman, 'O Marid, thou sayest, "Solomon is the prophet of God." Solomon is dead these eighteen hundred years, and we are now at the end of time. But what is thy history and how comest thou in this vessel?' When the Marid heard this, he said, 'There is no god but God! I have news for thee, O fisherman!' 'What news?' asked he, and the Afrit answered, 'Even that I am about to slay thee without mercy.' 'O chief of the Afrits,' said the fisherman, 'thou meritest the withdrawal of God's protection from thee for saying this! Why wilt thou kill me and what calls for my death? Did I not deliver thee from the abysses of the sea and bring thee to land and release thee from the vase?' Quoth the Afrit, 'Choose what manner of death thou wilt die and how thou wilt be killed.' 'What is my crime?' asked the fisherman. 'Is this my reward for setting thee free?' The Afrit answered, 'Hear my story, O fisherman!' 'Say on and be brief,' quoth he, 'for my heart is in my mouth.' Then said the Afrit, 'Know, O fisherman, that I was of the schismatic Jinn and rebelled against Solomon son of David (on whom be peace!), I and Sekhr the genie; and he sent his Vizier Asef teen Berkhiya, who took me by force and bound me and carried me, in despite of myself, before Solomon, who invoked God's aid against me and exhorted me to embrace the Faith and submit to his authority: but I refused. Then he sent for this vessel and shut me up in it and stoppered it with lead and sealed it with the Most High Name and commanded the Jinn to take me and throw me into the midst of the sea. There I remained a hundred years, and I said in my heart, "Whoso releaseth me, I will make him rich for ever." But the hundred years passed and no one came to release me, and I entered on another century and said, "Whoso releaseth me, I will open to him the treasures of the earth" But none released me, and other four hundred years passed over me, and I said, "Whoso releaseth me, I will grant him three wishes." But no one set me free. Then I was exceeding wroth and said to myself, "Henceforth, whoso releaseth me, I will kill him and let him choose what death he will die." And now, thou hast released me, and I give thee thy choice of deaths.' When the fisherman heard this, he exclaimed, 'O God, the pity of it that I should not have come to release thee till now!' Then he said to the Afrit, 'Spare me, that God may spare thee, and do not destroy me, lest God set over thee one who will destroy thee.' But he answered, 'There is no help for it, I must kill thee: so choose what death thou wilt die.' The fisherman again returned to the charge, saying, 'Spare me for that I set thee free.' 'Did I not tell thee,' replied the Marid, 'that is why I kill thee?' 'O head of the Afrits,' said the fisherman, 'I did thee a kindness, and thou repayest me with evil: indeed the proverb lieth not that saith:

"We did them good, and they the contrary returned: And this, upon
my life, is what the wicked do!
Who helps those, that deserve it not, shall be repaid As the
hyæna paid the man that helped her through."'

'Make no more words about it,' said the Afrit; 'thou must die.' Quoth the fisherman to himself, 'This is a genie, and I am a man; and God hath given me a good wit. So I will contrive for his destruction by my wit and cunning, even as he plotted mine of his craft and perfidy.' Then he said to the Afrit, 'Is there no help for it, but thou must kill me?' He answered, 'No,' and the fisherman said, 'I conjure thee, by the Most High Name graven upon the ring of Solomon son of David (on whom be peace!), answer me one question truly.' When the Afrit heard him mention the Most High Name, he was agitated and trembled and replied, 'It is well: ask and be brief.' Quoth the fisherman, 'This vessel would not suffice for thy hand or thy foot: so how could it hold the whole of thee?' Said the Afrit, 'Dost thou doubt that I was in it?' 'Yes,' answered the fisherman; 'nor will I believe it till I see it with my own eyes.'" Here Shehrzad perceived the day and was silent.

And when it was the fourth night

Dunyazad said to her sister, "O sister, an thou be not asleep, finish us thy story.” So Shehrzad began, “I have heard tell, O august King, that, when he heard what the fisherman said, the Afrit shook and became a smoke over the sea, which drew together and entered the vessel little by little, till it was all inside. Whereupon the fisherman made haste to take the leaden stopper and clapping it on the mouth of the vessel, called out to the Afrit, saying, ‘Choose what death thou wilt die! By Allah, I will throw thee back into the sea and build myself a house hard by, and all who come hither I will warn against fishing here, and say to them, “There is an Afrit in these waters, that gives those who pull him out their choice of deaths and how he shall kill them.”’ When the Afrit heard this and found himself shut up in the vessel, he knew that the fisherman had outwitted him and strove to get out, but could not, for Solomon’s seal prevented him; so he said to the fisherman, ‘I did but jest with thee.’ ‘Thou liest, O vilest and meanest and foulest of Afrits!’ answered he, and rolled the vessel to the brink of the sea; which when the Afrit felt, he cried out, ‘No! No!’ And the fisherman said, ‘Yes! Yes!’ Then the Afrit made his voice small and humbled himself and said, ‘What wilt thou do with me, O fisherman?’ ‘I mean to throw thee back into the sea,’ replied he; ‘since thou hast lain there already eighteen hundred years, thou shalt lie there now till the hour of judgment. Did I not say to thee, “Spare me, so God may spare thee; and do not kill me, lest God kill thee?” but thou spurnedst my prayers and wouldst deal with me no otherwise than perfidiously. So I used cunning with thee and now God has delivered thee into my hand.’ Said the Afrit, ‘Let me out, that I may confer benefits on thee.’ The fisherman answered, ‘Thou liest, O accursed one! Thou and I are like King Younan’s Vizier and the physician Douban.’ ‘Who are they,’ asked the Afrit, ‘and what is their story?’ Then said the fisherman, ‘Know, O Afrit, that

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Story of the Physician Douban.

There was once in a city of Persia a powerful and wealthy king, named Younan, who had guards and troops and auxiliaries of every kind: but he was afflicted with a leprosy, which defied the efforts of his physicians and wise men. He took potions and powders and used ointments, but all to no avail, and not one of the doctors could cure him. At last, there came to the King's capital city a great physician, stricken in years, whose name was Douban: and he had studied many books, Greek, ancient and modern, and Persian and Turkish and Arabic and Syriac and Hebrew, and was skilled in medicine and astrology, both theoretical and practical. Moreover he was familiar with all plants and herbs and grasses, whether harmful or beneficial, and was versed in the learning of the philosophers; in brief, he had made himself master of all sciences, medical and other. He had not been long in the town before he heard of the leprosy with which God had afflicted the King, and of the failure of the physicians and men of science to cure him; whereupon he passed the night in study; and when the day broke and the morning appeared and shone, he donned his richest apparel and went in to the King and kissing the ground before him, wished him enduring honour and fair fortune, in the choicest words at his command. Then he told him who he was and said to him, "O King, I have learnt what has befallen thee in thy person and how a multitude of physicians have failed to find a means of ridding thee of it: but I will cure thee, O King, and that without giving thee to drink of medicine or anointing thee with ointment." When the King heard this, he wondered and said to him, "How wilt thou do this? By Allah, if thou cure me, I will enrich thee, even to thy children's children, and I will heap favours on thee, and whatever thou desirest shalt be shine, and thou shalt be my companion and my friend." Then he gave him a dress of honour and made much of him, saying, "Wilt thou indeed cure me without drugs or ointment?" "Yes," answered Douban, "I will cure thee from without." Whereat the King marvelled exceedingly and said, "O physician, when wilt thou do as thou hast said? Make haste, O my son!" Quoth Douban, "I hear and obey: it shall be done tomorrow." And he went down into the city and hired a house, in which he deposited his books and medicines. Then he took certain drugs and simples and fashioned them into a mall, which he hollowed out and made thereto a handle and a ball, adapted to it by his art. Next morning he presented himself before the King and kissing the ground before him, ordered him to repair to the tilting ground and play at mall there. So the King mounted and repaired thither with his amirs and chamberlains and viziers, and hardly had he reached the appointed place when the physician Douban came up and presented him with the mall and ball he had prepared, saying, "Take this mall and grip the handle thus and drive into the plain and stretch thyself well and strike this ball till thy hand and thy body sweat, when the drugs will penetrate thy hand and permeate thy body. When thou hast done and the medicine has entered into thee, return to thy palace and enter the bath and wash. Then sleep awhile and thou wilt awake cured, and peace be on thee!" The King took the mall and mounting a swift horse, threw the ball before him and drove after it with all his might and smote it: and his hand gripped the mall firmly. And he ceased not to drive after the bail and strike it, till his hand and all his body sweated, and Douban knew that the drugs had taken effect upon him and ordered him to return and enter the bath at once. So the King returned immediately and ordered the bath to be emptied for him. They turned the people out of the bath, and his servants and attendants hastened thither and made him ready change of linen and all that was necessary: and he went in and washed himself well and put on his clothes. Then he came out of the bath and went up to his palace and slept there. When he awoke, he looked at his body and found it clean as virgin silver, having no trace left of the leprosy: whereat he rejoiced exceedingly and his breast expanded with gladness. Next morning, he repaired to the Divan and sat down on his chair of estate, and the chamberlains and grandees attended on him. Presently, the physician Douban presented himself and kissed the earth before the king and repeated the following verses:

The virtues all exalted are, when thou art styled their sire:
    None else the title dares accept, of all that men admire.
Lord of the radiant brow, whose light dispels the mists of doubt

From every goal of high emprize whereunto folk aspire,
Ne'er may thy visage cease to shine with glory and with joy,
Although the face of Fate should gloom with unremitting ire!
Even as the clouds pour down their dews upon the thirsting hills,
Thy grace pours favour on my head, outrunning my desire.
With liberal hand thou casteth forth thy bounties far and nigh,
And so hast won those heights of fame thou soughtest to acquire.

The King rose to him in haste and embraced him and made him sit down and clad him in a splendid dress of honour. Then tables of rich food were brought in, and Douban ate with the King and ceased not to bear him company all that day. When it was night, the King gave him two thousand diners, besides other presents, and mounted him on his own horse; and the physician returned to his lodging, leaving the King astonished at his skill and saying, "This man cured me from without, without using ointments. By Allah, this is none other than consummate skill! And it behoves me to honour and reward him and make him my companion and bosom friend to the end of time." The King passed the night in great content, rejoicing in the soundness of his body and his deliverance from his malady. On the morrow, he went out and sat down on his throne; and the grandees stood before him, whilst the amirs and viziers sat on his right hand and on his left. Then he sent for the physician, who came and kissed the ground before him, whereupon the King rose to him and made him sit by his side and eat with him, and ceased not to converse with him and make much of him till night; when he commanded five dresses of honour and a thousand diners to be given to him, and he returned to his house, well contented with the King. Next morning, the King repaired as usual to his council-chamber, and the amirs and viziers and chamberlains took their places round him. Now he had among his viziers one who was forbidding of aspect, sordid, avaricious and envious: a man of ill omen, naturally inclined to malevolence: and when he saw the esteem in which the King held Douban and the favours he bestowed on him, he envied him and plotted evil against him; for, as says the byword, "Nobody is free from envy" — and again— "Tyranny is latent in the soul: weakness hides it and strength reveals it.” So he came to the King and kissed the earth before him and said to him “O King of the age, thou in whose bounties I have grown up, I have a grave warning to give thee, which did I conceal from thee, I were a son of shame: wherefore, if thou command me to impart it to thee, I will do so.” Quoth the King (and indeed the Vizier’s words troubled him), “What is thy warning?” “O illustrious King,” answered the Vizier, “the ancients have a saying, ‘Whoso looks not to the issue of events, fortune is no friend of his :’ and indeed I see the King in other than the right way, in that he favours his enemy, who seeks the downfall of his kingdom, and makes much of him and honours him exceedingly and is beyond measure familiar with him: and of a truth I am fearful for the King.” Quoth King Younan (and indeed he was troubled and his colour changed), “Of whom dost thou speak?” The Vizier answered, “If thou sleepest, awake. I mean the physician Douban.” “Out on thee!” said the King. “He is my true friend and the dearest of all men to me; seeing that he medicined me by means of a thing I held in my hand and cured me of my leprosy, which the doctors were unable to cure; and there is not his like to be found in this time, no, not in the whole world, East nor West; and it is of him that thou speakest thus! But from to-day I will assign him stipends and allowances and appoint him a thousand diners a month: and if I should share my kingdom with him, it were but a little thing. Methinks thou sayest this out of pure envy and wouldst have me kill him and after repent, as King Sindbad repented the killing of his falcon.” “Pardon me, O King of the age,” said the Vizier, “but how was that! Quoth the King, “It is said that

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King Sindbad and His Falcon.

There was once a King of Persia, who delighted in hunting; and he had reared a falcon, that left him not day or night, but slept all night long, perched upon his hand. Whenever he went out to hunt, he took the falcon with him; and he let make for it a cup of gold to hang round its neck, that he might give it to drink therein. One day, his chief falconer came in to him and said, ‘O King, now is the time to go a-hunting.’ So the King gave orders accordingly and took the falcon on his wrist and set out, accompanied by his officers and attendants. They rode on till they reached a valley, where they formed the circle of the chase, and behold, a gazelle entered the ring; whereupon quoth the King, ‘Whoso lets the gazelle spring over his head, I will kill him.’ Then they drew the ring closelier round her, and behold, she came to the King’s station and standing still, put her forelegs to her breast, as if to kill the earth before him. He bowed to her, but she sprang over his head and was off into the desert. The King saw his attendants nodding and winking to one another about him and said to his Vizier, ‘O Vizier, what say my men?’ ‘They say,’ answered the Vizier, that thou didst threaten to kill him over whose head the gazelle should spring.’ ‘As my head liveth,’ rejoined the King, ‘I will follow her up, till I bring her back!’ So he pricked on after her and followed her till he came to a mountain and she made for her lair; but the King cast off the falcon, which swooped down on her and pecked at her eyes, till he blinded her and dazed her; whereupon the King threw his mace at her and brought her down. Then he alighted and cut her throat and skinned her and made her fast to his saddle-bow. Now it was the hour of midday rest and the place, where he was, was desert, and the King was athirst and so was his horse. So he searched till he saw a tree, with water dripping slowly, like oil, from its branches. Now the King’s hands were gloved with leather; so he took the cup from the falcon’s neck and filled it with the liquid and set it before himself, when behold, the falcon smote the cup and overturned it. The King took it and refilled it with the falling drops and set it before the bird, thinking that it was athirst: but it smote it again and overturned it. At this, the King was vexed with the falcon and rose and filled the cup a third time and set it before the horse: but the falcon again overturned it with its wing. Then said the King, ‘God confound thee, thou most mischievous of fowls, thou wilt neither drink thyself nor let me nor the horse drink!’ And he smote it with his sword and cut off its wings: whereupon it erected its head and made signs as who should say, ‘Look what is at the top of the tree.’ The King raised his eyes and saw at the top of the tree a brood of snakes, and this was their venom dripping, which he had taken for water. So he repented him of having cut off the falcon’s wings and mounting, rode on till he reached his tents and gave the gazelle to the cook to roast. Then he sat down on his chair, with the falcon on his wrist: and presently the bird gasped and died: whereupon the King cried out in sorrow and lament for having slain the bird that had saved him from death, and repented him when repentance availed him not. This, then, is the story of King Sindbad; and as for thee, O Vizier, envy hath entered into thee, and thou wouldst have me kill the physician and after repent, even as King Sindbad repented.” “O mighty King,” answered the Vizier, “what harm has this physician done me that I should wish his death? Indeed I only do this thing in compassion for thee and that thou mayst know the truth of the matter: else may I perish as perished the Vizier who plotted to destroy the king his master’s son.” “How was that? asked the King, and the Vizier replied, “Know, O King, that

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The King's Son and the Ogress.

There was once a King's son who was passionately fond of the chase; and his father had charged one of his Viziers to attend him wherever he went. One day, the prince went out to hunt, accompanied by the Vizier, and as they were going along, they saw a great wild beast, whereupon the Vizier said to the prince, 'Up and after yonder beast!' So the prince rode after the beast and followed it, till he was lost to sight. After awhile, the beast disappeared in the desert, and the prince found himself alone, not knowing which way to turn. Presently he came upon a damsel, weeping, and said to her, 'Who art thou?' Quoth she, 'I am the daughter of one of the Kings of India, and I was journeying through this country, with a company of people, when sleep overcame me and I fell from my horse, not knowing what I did. My people did not note my fall and went on and left me; and now I am alone and bewildered.' When the prince heard this, he had pity on her case and took her up behind himself and they rode on, till they came to some ruins; when she said to him, 'O my lord, I wish to do an occasion here.' So he put her down, and she entered the ruins and tarried there till he became impatient and went in search of her; when he was ware that she was an ogress, and heard her say to her children, 'O my children, I have brought you to day a fat youth.' 'O mother,' answered they, 'bring him to us, that we may browse on him our bellyful.' When the prince heard this their talk, he trembled in every nerve and made sure of destruction and turned back. The ogress came out after him and finding him terrified and trembling, said to him, 'Why dost thou fear?' Quoth he, 'I have an enemy, of whom I am in fear.' 'Didst thou not say that thou wast a King's son?' asked she, and he answered 'Yes.' 'Then,'said she, 'why dost thou not give thine enemy money and so appease him?' He replied, 'Indeed he will not be satisfied with money nor with aught but life; and I fear him and am an oppressed man.' 'If thou be oppressed as thou sayst,' rejoined she, 'ask help of God; surely He will protect thee from thine enemy and from the mischief thou fearest from him.' So the prince raised his eyes to heaven and said, 'O Thou that answerest the prayer of the distressed, when they call on Thee, and dispellest evil from them, O my God, succour me against mine enemy and turn him back from me, for Thou indeed canst do whatsoever Thou wilt.' When the ogress heard his prayer, she departed from him and he resumed to the King his father and informed him of the Vizier's conduct: whereupon the King sent for the latter and put him to death. And thou, O King" (continued the envious Vizier), "if thou put thy trust in this physician, he will kill thee in the foulest fashion. He, verily, whom thou hast favoured and admitted to thy friendship, plots thy destruction: for know that he is a spy come from a far land with intent to destroy thee. Seest thou not that he cured thee of thy distemper from without, by means of a thing held in thy hand, and how canst thou be sure that he will not kill thee by some like means?" "Thou speakest sooth, O Vizier of good counsel!" said the King. "It must indeed be as thou sayst; this physician doubtless comes as a spy, seeking to destroy me; and indeed, if he could cure me by means of a handle held in my hand, he can kill me by means of something I shall smell. But what is to be done with him?" "Send after him at once," answered the Vizier, "and when he comes, strike off his head and play him false, ere he play thee false; and so shalt thou ward off his mischief and be at peace from him." "Thou art right, O Vizier," rejoined the King and sent for the physician, who came, rejoicing, for he knew not what the Compassionate had decreed unto him. As the saying runs:

Thou that fearest ill fortune, be of good heart and hope! Trust
    thine affairs to Him who fashioned the earth and sea!
What is decreed of God surely shall come to pass; That which is
    not decreed never shall trouble thee.

When Douban entered, he recited the following verses:

If all the thanks I speak come short of that which is your due,
    Say for whom else my verse and prose I make except for you?
You have indeed prevented me with many an unasked boon, Blest
me,
    unhindered of excuse, with favours not a few.
How then should I omit to give your praise its full desert And

celebrate with heart and voice your goodness ever new?
I will indeed proclaim aloud the boons I owe to you, Favours,
that, heavy to the hack, are light the thought unto.

And also the following:

Avert thy face from trouble and from care And trust in God to
order thine affair.
Rejoice in happy fortune near at hand, In which thou shalt forget
the woes that were.
Full many a weary and a troublous thing Is, in its issue,
solaceful and fair.
God orders all according to His will: Oppose Him not in what He
doth prepare.

And these also:

Trust thine affairs to the Subtle, to God that knoweth all, And
rest at peace from the world, for nothing shall thee appal.
Know that the things of the world not, as thou wilt, befall, But
as the Great God orders, to whom all kings are thrall!

And lastly these:

Take heart and rejoice and forget thine every woe, For even the
wit of the wise is eaten away by care.
What shall thought-taking profit a helpless, powerless slave?
Leave it and be at peace in joy enduring fore’er!

When he had finished, the King said to him, “Dost thou know why I have sent for thee?” And the physician answered, “None knoweth the hidden things save God the Most High.” Quoth the King, “I have sent for thee to kill thee and put an end to thy life.” Douban wondered greatly at these words and said, “O King, wherefore wilt thou kill me and what offence have I committed?” “I am told,” replied Younan, “that thou art a spy and comest to kill me, but I will kill thee first.” Then he cried out to his swordbearer, saying, “Strike off the head of this traitor and rid us of his mischief!”

“Spare me,” said Douban; “so may God spare thee; and kill me not, lest God kill thee!” And he repeated these words to him, even as I did to thee, O Afrit, and thou wouldst not spare me, but persistedst in thine intent to put me to death. Then the King said to Douban, “Verily I shall not be secure except I kill thee: for thou curedst me by means of a handle I held in my hand, and I have no assurance but thou wilt kill me by means of perfumes or otherwise.” “O King,” said Douban, “is this my reward from thee? Thou returnest evil for good?” The King replied, “It boots not: thou must die and that without delay.” When the physician saw that the King was irrevocably resolved to kill him, he wept and lamented the good he had done to the undeserving, blaming himself for having sown in an ungrateful soil and repeating the following verses:

Maimouneh has no wit to guide her by, Although her sire among the
wise ranks high.
The man, who has no sense to rule his steps, Slips, he the ground
he treads on wet or dry.

Then the swordbearer came forward and bandaged his eyes and baring his sword, said to the King, “Have I thy leave to strike?” Whereupon the physician wept and said, “Spare me, so God may spare thee: and kill me not, lest God kill thee!” And he recited the following verses:

I acted in good faith and they betrayed: I came to nought: They
prospered, whilst my loyalty brought me to evil case.
If that I live, I will to none good counsel give again: And if I
die, good counsellors be curst of every race!

And he said to the King, “Is this my reward from thee? Thou givest me the crocodile’s recompense.” Quoth the King, “What is the story of the crocodile?” “I cannot tell it,” answered Douban, “and I in this case; but, God on thee, spare me, so may He spare thee!” And he wept sore. Then one of the King’s chief officers rose and said, “O King, grant me this man’s life, for we see not that he has committed any offence against thee nor that he has done aught but cure thee of thy disorder, which baffled the doctors and sages." "Ye know not why I put him to death," answered the King: "it is because I believe him to be a spy, who hath been suborned to kill me and came hither with that intent: and verily he who cured me by means of a handle held in my hand can easily poison me in like manner. If I spare him, he will infallibly destroy me: so needs must I kill him, and then I shall feel myself safe." When the physician was convinced that there was no hope for him, but that the King would indeed put him to death, he said to the latter, "O King, if thou must indeed kill me, grant me a respite, that I may go to my house and discharge my last duties and dispose of my medical books and give my people and friends directions for my burial. Among my books is one that is a rarity of rarities, and I will make thee a present of it, that thou mayst lay it up in thy treasury." "And what is in this book?" asked the King. Quoth Douban, "It contains things without number: the least of its secret virtues is that if, when thou hast cut off my head, thou open the book, turn over six leaves and read three lines of the left-hand page, my head will speak and answer whatever questions thou shalt ask it." At this the King marvelled greatly and shook with delight and said, "O physician, will thy head indeed speak to me, after it is cut off?" And he answered, "Yes, O King." Quoth the King, "This is indeed wonderful!" And sent him under guard to his house, where Douban spent the remainder of the day in setting his affairs in order. Next day, the amirs and viziers and chamberlains and all the great officers and notables of the kingdom came to the court, and the presence chamber was like a flower garden. Presently the physician entered, bearing an old book and a small pot full of powder; and sitting down, called for a dish. So they brought him a dish, and he poured the powder therein and levelled it. Then he said, "O King, take this book, but do not open it till my head has been cut off, placed on this dish and pressed down on the powder, when the blood will cease to flow: then open the book and do as I have enjoined thee." The King took the book and gave the signal to the headsman, who rose and struck off the physician's head and set it on the dish, pressing it down upon the powder, when the blood immediately ceased to flow, and the head unclosed its eyes and said, "Open the book, O King!" Younan opened the book and found the leaves stuck together; so he put his finger to his mouth and took of his spittle and loosened them therewith and turned over the pages in this manner, one after another, for the leaves would not come apart but with difficulty, till he came to the seventh page, but found nothing written thereon and said to the head, “O physician, there is nothing here.” Quoth the head, “Open more leaves.” So the King turned over more leaves in the same manner. Now the book was as poisoned, and before long the poison began to work upon the King, and he fell back in convulsions and cried out, “I am poisoned!” Whereupon the head repeated the following verses:

Lo, these once were kings who governed with a harsh and haughty
sway! In a little, their dominion was as if it ne’er had
been.
Had they swayed the sceptre justly, they had been repaid the
like, But they were unjust, and Fortune guerdoned them with
dole and teen.
Now they’re passed away, the moral of their case bespeaks them
thus, “This is what your sins have earnt you: Fate is not to
blame, I ween.”

No sooner had it done speaking, than the King fell down dead and the head also ceased to live. And know, O Afrit (continued the fisherman), that if King Younan had spared the physician Douban, God would have spared him; but he refused and sought his death; so God killed him. And thou, O Afrit, if thou hadst spared me, I would spare thee; but nothing would serve thee but thou must put me to death; so now I will kill thee by shutting thee up in this vessel and throwing thee into the sea.’ At this the Marid roared out and said, ‘God on thee, O fisherman, do not do that! Spare me and bear me not malice for what I did, for men’s wit is still better than that of Jinn. If I did evil, do thou good, in accordance with the adage, “O thou that dost good to him that does evil, the deed of the evil-doer suffices him.” Do not thou deal with me as did Umameh with Aatikeh.’ ‘And what did Umameh with Aatikeh?’ asked the fisherman. But the Afrit answered, ‘This is no time to tell stories, and I in this duresse: let me out, and I will tell thee.’ Quoth the fisherman, ‘Leave this talk: I must and will throw thee into the sea, and thou shalt never win out again; for I besought thee and humbled myself to thee, but nothing would serve thee but thou must kill me, who had committed no offence against thee deserving this nor done thee any ill, but only kindness, in that I delivered thee from duresse. When thou didst thus by me, I knew thee for an incorrigible evil-doer; and know that, when I have thrown thee back into the sea, I will tell every one what happened between me and thee and warn him, to the end that whoever fishes thee up may throw thee in again; and thou shalt remain in the sea till the end of time and suffer all manner of torments.' Quoth the Afrit, 'Let me out, for this is the season of generosity; and I will make a compact with thee never to do thee hurt and to help thee to what shall enrich thee.' The fisherman accepted his proposal and unsealed the vessel, after he had taken the Afrit's pledge and made him swear by the Most High Name never to hurt him, but on the contrary to do him service. Then the smoke ascended as before and gathered itself together and became an Afrit, who gave the vessel a kick and sent it into the sea. When the fisherman saw this, he let fly in his clothes and gave himself up for lost, saying, 'This bodes no good.' But he took courage and said to the Afrit, 'O Afrit, quoth God the Most High, "Be ye faithful to your covenants, for they shall be enquired of:" and verily thou madest a pact with me and sworest to me that thou wouldst do me no hurt. So play me not false, lest God do the like with thee: for indeed He is a jealous God, who delayeth to punish, yet letteth not the evil-doer escape. And I say to thee, as said the physician Douban to King Younan, "Spare me, so God may spare thee!"' The Afrit laughed and started off inland, saying to the fisherman, 'Follow me.' So he followed him, trembling and not believing that he should escape, and the Afrit led him to the backward of the town: then crossing a hill, descended into a spacious plain, in the midst of which was a lake of water surrounded by four little hills. He led the fisherman into the midst of the lake, where he stood still and bade him throw his net and fish. The fisherman looked into the water and was astonished to see therein fish of four colours, white and red and blue and yellow. Then he took out his net and cast and drawing it in, found in it four fish, one of each colour. At this he rejoiced, and the Afrit said to him, 'Carry them to the Sultan and present them to him, and he will give thee what shall enrich thee. And accept my excuse, for I know not any other way to fulfil my promise to thee, having lain in yonder sea eighteen hundred years and never seen the surface of the earth till this time. But do not fish here more than once a day; and I commend thee to God's care!' So saying, he struck the earth with his foot, and it opened and swallowed him up, whilst the fisherman returned, wondering at all that had befallen him, to his house, where he took a bowl of water and laid therein the fish, which began to frisk about. Then he set the bowl on his head and going up to the palace, as the Afrit had bidden him, presented the fish to the King, who wondered at them greatly, for that he had never seen their like, in shape or kind, and said to his Vizier, 'Give these fish to the cookmaid that the King of the Greeks sent us, and tell her to fry them.' Now this was a damsel that he had received as a present from the King of the Greeks three days before and of whom he had not yet made trial in cookery. So the Vizier carried the fish to the cookmaid and said to her, 'These fish have been brought as a present to the Sultan and he says to thee, "O my tear, I have reserved thee against my stress!" So do thou show us to-day thy skill and the excellence of thy cookery.' Then he returned to the Sultan, who bade him give the fisherman four hundred diners. So he gave them to him and he took the money in his lap and set off home, running and stumbling and falling and rising again and thinking that he was dreaming. And he bought what was needful for his family and returned to his wife, glad and happy. Meanwhile the cookmaid took the fish and cleaned them and set the frying-pan on the fire. Then she poured in oil of sesame and waited till it was hot, when she put in the fish. As soon as one side was done, she fumed them, when lo, the wall of the kitchen opened and out came a handsome and well-shaped young lady, with smooth cheeks and liquid black eyes. She was clad in a tunic of satin, yarded with spangles of Egyptian gold, and on her head she had a silken kerchief, fringed with blue. She wore rings in her ears and bracelets on her wrists and rings on her fingers, with beazels of precious stones, and held in her hand a rod of Indian cane. She came up to the brazier and thrust the rod into the frying-pan saying 'O fish, are you constant to your covenant?' And when the cookmaid heard this she swooned away. Then the damsel repeated her question a second and a third time; and the fish lifted up their heads and cried out with one voice, ‘Yes, yes:

Return, and we return: keep faith, and so will we: Or, if thou wilt, forsake, and we’ll do like to thee!’

With this the damsel overturned the frying-pan and went out by the way she had come, and the wall closed up again as before. Presently the cookmaid came to herself and seeing the four fish burnt black as coal, said, ‘My arms are broken in my first skirmish!’ And fell down again in a swoon. Whilst she was in this state, in came the Vizier, to seek the fish, and found her insensible, not knowing Saturday from Thursday. So he stirred her with his foot and she came to herself and wept and told him what had passed. He marvelled and said, ‘This is indeed a strange thing !’ Then he sent for the fisherman and said to him, ‘O fisherman, bring us four more fish of the same kind.’ So the fisherman repaired to the lake and cast his net and hauling it in, found in it four fish like the first and carried them to the Vizier, who took them to the cookmaid and said to her, ‘Come, fry them before me, that I may see what happens.’ So she cleaned the fish and setting the frying-pan on the fire, threw them into it: and they had not lain long before the wall opened and the damsel appeared, after the same fashion, and thrust the rod into the pan, saying, ‘O fish, O fish, are you constant to the old covenant?’ And behold the fish all lifted up their heads and cried out as before, ‘Yes, yes:

Return, and we return: keep faith, and so will we: Or, if thou wilt, forsake, and we’ll do like to thee!’

Then she overturned the pan and went out as she had come and the wall closed up again. When the Vizier saw this, he said, ‘This is a thing that must not be kept from the King. So he went to him and told him what he had witnessed; and the King said, ‘I must see this with my own eyes.’ Then he sent for the fisherman and commanded him to bring him other four fish like the first; and the fisherman went down at once to the lake and casting his net, caught other four fish and returned with them to the King, who ordered him other four hundred diners and set a guard upon him till he should see what happened. Then he turned to the Vizier and said to him, ‘Come thou and fry the fish before me.' Quoth the Vizier, 'I hear and obey.' So he fetched the frying-pan and setting it on the fire, cleaned the fish and threw them in: but hardly had he turned them, when the wall opened, and out came a black slave, as he were a mountain or one of the survivors of the tribe of Aad, with a branch of a green tree in his hand: and he said, in a terrible voice, 'O fish, O fish, are you constant to the old covenant?' Whereupon they lifted up their heads and cried out' 'Yes, yes; we are constant:

Return, and we return: keep faith, and so will we: Or, if thou wilt, forsake, and we'll do like to thee!'

Then the slave went up to the pan and overturning it with the branch, went out as he had come, and the wall closed up as before. The King looked at the fish and found them black as coal; whereat he was bewildered and said to the Vizier, 'This is a thing about which it is impossible to keep silence; and indeed there must be some strange circumstance connected with these fish.' Then he sent for the fisherman and said to him, 'Hark ye, sirrah, whence hadst thou those fish?' 'From a lake between four hills,' answered he, 'on the thither side of the mountain behind the city.' 'How many days' journey hence?' asked the King; and the fisherman said, 'O my lord Sultan, half an hour's journey.' At this the King was astonished and ordering the troops to mount, set out at once, followed by his suite and preceded by the fisherman, who began to curse the Afrit. They rode on over the mountain and descended into a wide plain, that they had never before set eyes on, whereat they were all amazed. Then they fared on till they came to the lake lying between the four hills and saw the fish therein of four colours, red and white and yellow and blue. The King stood and wondered and said to his attendants, 'Has any one of you ever seen this lake before?' But they answered, 'Never did we set eyes on it in all our lives, O King of the age.' Then he questioned those stricken in years, and they made him the same answer. Quoth he, 'By Allah, I will not return to my capital nor sit down on my chair of estate till I know the secret of this pond and its fish!' Then he ordered his people to encamp at the foot of the hills and called his Vizier, who was a man of learning and experience, sagacious and skilful in business, and said to him, 'I mean to go forth alone to-night and enquire into the matter of the lake and these fish:

wherefore do thou sit down at the door of my pavilion and tell the amirs and viziers and chamberlains and officers and all who ask after me that the Sultan is ailing and hath ordered thee to admit no one, and do thou acquaint none with my purpose.' The Vizier dared not oppose his design; so the King disguised himself and girt on his sword and going forth privily, took a path that led over one of the hills and fared on all that night and the next day, till the heat overcame him and he paused to rest. Then he set out again and fared on the rest of that day and all the next night, till on the morning of the second day, he caught sight of some black thing in the distance, whereat he rejoiced and said, 'Belike I shall find some one who can tell me the secret of the lake and the fish.' So he walked on, till he came to the black object, when he found it a palace built of black stone, plated with iron; and one leaf of its gate was open and the other shut. At this the King rejoiced and went up to the gate and knocked lightly, but heard no answer. So he knocked a second time and a third time, with the same result. Then he knocked loudly, but still no one answered; and he said to himself, 'It must be deserted.' So he took courage and entering the vestibule, cried out, 'Ho, people of the palace! I am a stranger and a wayfarer and hungry. Have ye any victual?' He repeated these words a second and a third time, but none answered. So he took heart and went on boldly into the interior of the palace, which he found hung and furnished with silken stuffs, embroidered with stars of gold, and curtains let down before the doors. In the midst was a spacious courtyard, with four estrades, one on each side, and a bench of stone. Midmost the courtyard was a great basin of water, from which sprang a fountain, and at the corners stood four lions of red gold, spouting forth water as it were pearls and jewels; and the place was full of birds, which were hindered from flying away by a network of gold stretched overhead. The King looked right and left, but there was no one to be seen; whereat he marvelled and was vexed to find none of whom he might enquire concerning the lake and the fish and the palace itself. So he returned to the vestibule and sitting down between the doors, fell to musing upon what he had seen, when lo, he heard a moaning that came from a sorrowful heart, and a voice chanted the following verses:

I hid what I endured from thee: it came to light, And sleep was
changed to wake thenceforward to my sight.
O Fate, thou sparest not nor dost desist from me; Lo, for my
heart is racked with dolour and affright!
Have pity, lady mine, upon the great laid low, Upon the rich made
poor by love and its despite!
Once, jealous of the breeze that blew on thee, I was, Alas! on
whom Fate falls, his eyes are veiled with night.
What boots the archer's skill, if, when the foe draws near, His
bow-string snap and leave him helpless in the fight?
So when afflictions press upon the noble mind, Where shall a man
from Fate and Destiny take flight?

When the King heard this, he rose and followed the sound and found that it came from behind a curtain let down before the doorway of a sitting-chamber. So he raised the curtain and saw a young man seated upon a couch raised a cubit from the ground. He was a handsome well-shaped youth, with flower-white forehead and rosy cheeks and a black mole, like a grain of ambergris, on the table of his cheek, as says the poet:

The slender one! From his brow and the night of his jetty hair,
The world in alternate gloom and splendour of day doth fare.
Blame not the mole on his cheek. Is an anemone's cup Perfect,
except in its midst an eyelet of black it wear?

He was clad in a robe of silk, laced with Egyptian gold, and had on his head a crown set with jewels, but his face bore traces of affliction. The King rejoiced when he saw him and saluted him; and the youth returned his salute in the most courteous wise, though without rising, and said to him, 'O my lord, excuse me if I do not rise to thee, as is thy due; indeed, I am unable to do so.' 'I hold thee excused, O youth!' answered the King. 'I am thy guest and come to thee on a pressing errand, beseeching thee to expound to me the mystery of the lake and the fish and of this palace, and why thou sittest here alone and weeping.' When the young man heard this, the tears ran down his cheeks and he wept sore, till his breast was drenched, and repeated the following verses:

Say unto those that grieve, at whom doth Fate her arrows cast,
    “How many an one hath she raised up but to lay low at last!
Lo, if ye sleep, the eye of God is never closed in sleep. For
    whom indeed is life serene, for whom is Fortune fast?”

Then he gave a heavy sigh and repeated the following:

Trust thine affair to the Ruler of all that be
    And put thought-taking and trouble away from thee:
Say not of aught that is past, “How came it so?”
    All things depend upon the Divine decree.

The King marvelled and said to him, ‘What makes thee weep, O youth?’ ‘How should I not weep,’ answered he ‘being in such a plight?’ Then he put out his hand and lifted the skirt of his robe, and behold, he was stone from the waist downward. When the King saw this his condition, he grieved sore and lamented and cried out, ‘Alas! alas!’ and said, ‘Verily, O youth, thou addest trouble to my trouble. I came to enquire concerning the fish; and now I am concerned to know thy history also. But there is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! Hasten therefore, O youth, and expound to me thy story.’ Quoth the youth, ‘Give me thine ears and understanding:’ and the King replied, ‘I am all attention.’ Then said the youth, ‘There hangs a strange story by these fish and by myself, a story which, were it graven with needles on the corners of the eye, would serve as a warning to those who can profit by example. ‘How so ?’ asked the King and the youth replied, ‘Know, O my lord, that

Story of the Enchanted Youth.

My father was King of the city that stood in this place, and his name was Mohammed, Lord of the Black Islands, which are no other than the four hills of which thou wottest. He reigned seventy years, at the end of which time God took him to Himself, and I succeeded to his throne and took to wife the daughter of my father's brother, who loved me with an exceeding love, so that, whenever I was absent from her, she would neither eat nor drink till she saw me again. With her I lived for five years, till one day she went out to go to the bath, and I bade the cook hasten supper for us against her return. Then I entered the palace and lay down on the bed where we were wont to lie and ordered two slave-girls to sit, one at my head and the other at my feet, and fan me. Now I was disturbed at my wife's absence and could not sleep, but remained awake, although my eyes were closed. Presently I heard the damsel at my head say to the other one, "O Mesoudeh, how unhappy is our lord and how wretched is his youth, and oh, the pity of him with our accursed harlot of a mistress!" "Yes, indeed," replied Mesoudeh; "may God curse all unfaithful women and adulteresses! Indeed, it befits not that the like of our lord should waste his youth with this harlot, who lies abroad every night." Quoth the other, "Is our lord then a fool, that, when he wakes in the night and finds her not by his side, he makes no enquiry after her?" "Out on thee," rejoined Mesoudeh; "has our lord any knowledge of this or does she leave him any choice? Does she not drug him every night in the cup of drink she gives him before he sleeps, in which she puts henbane? So he sleeps like a dead man and knows nothing of what happens. Then she dresses and scents herself and goes forth and is absent till daybreak, when she returns and burns a perfume under his nose and he awakes." When I heard the girls' talk, the light in my eyes became darkness, and I thought the night would never come. Presently, my wife returned from the bath, and they served up supper and we ate and sat awhile drinking and talking as usual. Then she called for my sleeping-draught and gave me the cup: and I feigned to drink it, but made shift to pour it into my bosom and lay down at once and began to snore as if I slept. Then said she, "Sleep out thy night and never rise again! By Allah, I hate thee and I hate thy person; I am sick of thy company and I know not when God will take away thy life!" Then she rose and donned her richest clothes and perfumed herself and girt on my sword and opened the palace gate and went out. I rose and followed her, and she passed through the streets of the city, till she came to the gate, when she muttered words I understood not: and straight-way the locks fell off and the gate opened. She went forth and fared on among the rubbish heaps, I still following her without her knowledge, till she came to a reed fence, within which was a hut of brick. She entered the hut and I climbed up on the roof and looking down, saw my wife standing by a scurvy black slave, with blubber lips, one of which overlapped the other, like a coverlet, and swept up the sand from the gravel floor, lying upon a bed of sugar-cane refuse and wrapped in an old cloak and a few rags. She kissed the earth before him, and he raised his head to her and said, "Out on thee! why hast thou tarried till now? There have been some of my kinsmen the blacks here, drinking; and they have gone away, each with his wench; but I refused to drink on account of thine absence." "O my lord and my love and solace of my eyes," answered she, "dost thou not know that I am married to my cousin, and that I hate to look upon him and abhor myself in his company. Did I not fear for thy sake, I would not let the sun rise again till his city was a heap of ruins wherein the owl and the raven should hoot and wolves and foxes harbour; and I would transport its stones behind the mountain Caf." "Thou liest, O accursed one!" said the black, "and I swear by the valour of the blacks (else may our manhood be as that of the whites!) that if thou tarry again till this hour, I will no longer keep thee company nor join my body to thine! O accursed one, wilt thou play fast and loose with us at thy pleasure, O stinkard, O bitch, O vilest of whites?" When I heard and saw what passed between them, the world grew dark in my eyes and I knew not where I was; whilst my wife stood weeping and humbling herself to him and saying, "O my love and fruit of my heart, if thou be angry with me, who is left me, and if thou reject me, who shall shelter me, O my beloved and light of mine eyes?" And she ceased not to weep and implore him till he forgave her. Then she was glad and rose and putting off her clothes, said to the slave, "O my lord, hast thou aught here for thy handmaid to eat?" "Take the cover off yonder basin," answered he; "thou wilt find under it cooked rats' bones, and there is a little millet beer left in this pot. Eat and drink." So she ate and drank and washed her hands and mouth; then lay down, naked, upon the rushes, beside the slave, and covered herself with the rags. When I saw this, I became as one distraught and coming down from the roof, went in by the door. Then I took the sword she had brought and drew it, thinking to kill them both. I struck first at the slave's neck and thought I had made an end of him; but the blow only severed the flesh and the gullet, without dividing the jugulars. He gave a loud gurgling groan and roused my wife, whereupon I drew back, after I had restored the sword to its place, and resuming to the palace, lay down on my bed till morning, when my wife came and awoke me, and I saw that she had cut off her hair and put on mourning garments. "O my cousin," said she, "do not blame me for this I have done; for I have news that my mother is dead, that my father has fallen in battle and that both my brothers are dead also, one of a snake-bite and the other of a fall from a precipice, so that I have good reason to weep and lament." When I heard this, I did not reproach her, but said to her, "Do what thou wilt: I will not baulk thee." She ceased not to mourn and lament for a whole year, at the end of which time she said to me, "I wish to build me in thy palace a tomb with a cupola and set it apart for mourning and call it House of Lamentations." Quoth I, "Do what seemeth good to thee." So she built herself a house of mourning, roofed with a dome, and a monument in the midst like the tomb of a saint. Thither she transported the slave and lodged him in the tomb. He was exceeding weak and from the day I wounded him he had remained unable to do her any service or to speak or do aught but drink; but he was still alive, because his hour was not yet come. She used to visit him morning and evening in the mausoleum and carry him wine and broths to drink and weep and make moan over him; and thus she did for another year, whilst I ceased not to have patience with her and pay no heed to her doings, till one day I came upon her unawares and found her weeping and saying, "Why art thou absent from my sight, O delight of my heart? Speak to me, O my life! speak to me, O my love!" And she recited the following verses:

My patience fails me for desire: if thou forgettest me, My heart
and all my soul can love none other after thee.
Carry me with thee, body and soul, wherever thou dost fare, And
where thou lightest down to rest, there let me buried be.
Speak but my name above my tomb; the groaning of my bones,
Turning towards thy voice's sound, shall answer drearily.

And she wept and recited the following:

My day of bliss is that whereon thou drawest near to me; And that
whereon thou turn'st away, my day of death and fear.
What though I tremble all the night and be in dread of death, Yet
thine embraces are to me than safety far more dear.

And again the following:

Though unto me were given all that can make life sweet, Though
the Chosroes empire, yea, and the world were mine,
All were to me in value less than a midge's wing, If that mine
eyes must never look on that face of thine!

When she had finished, I said to her, "O my cousin, let thy mourning suffice thee: for weeping profiteth nothing." She replied, "Thwart me not, or I will kill myself." So I held my peace and let her go her way: and she ceased not to mourn and weep for the space of another year. At the end of the third year, I came into the mausoleum one day, vexed at something that had crossed me and weary of this excessive affliction, and found her by the tomb under the dome, saying, "O my lord, I never hear thee speak to me, no, not one word. Why dost thou not answer me, O my lord?" And she recited the following verses:

O tomb, O tomb, have his beauties ceased, or does thy light
indeed, The sheen of the radiant countenance, no more in
thee abound?
O tomb, O tomb, thou art neither earth nor heaven unto me: How
comes it then that sun and moon at once in thee are found?

When I heard this, it added wrath to my wrath, and I said, “Alas! how much more of this mourning?” and I repeated the following [parody of her] verses:

O tomb, O tomb, has his blackness ceased, or does thy light
indeed, The sheen of the filthy countenance, no more in thee
abound?
O tomb, thou art neither kitchen-stove nor sewer-pool for me! How
comes it then that mire and coal at once in thee are found?

When she heard this, she sprang to her feet and said, “Out on thee, thou dog! it was thou that didst thus with me and woundedst the beloved of my heart and hast afflicted me and wasted his youth, so that these three years he hath lain, neither dead nor alive!” “O foulest of harlots and filthiest of whorish doxies of hired slaves,” answered I, “it was indeed I who did this!” And I drew my sword and made at her to kill her; but she laughed and said, “Avaunt, thou dog! Thinkst thou that what is past can recur or the dead come back to life? Verily, God has given into my hand him who did this to me and against whom there was in my heart fire that might not be quenched and insatiable rage.” Then she stood up and pronouncing some words I did not understand, said to me, “Let one half of thee by my enchantments become stone and the other half remain man.” And immediately I became as thou seest me and have remained ever since neither sitting nor standing and neither dead nor alive. Then she enchanted the city with all its streets and gardens and turned it into the lake thou wottest of, and the inhabitants, who were of four religions, Muslims, Christians, Magians and Jews, she changed to fish of various colours, the Muslims white, the Christians blue, the Magians red and the Jews yellow; and the four islands she turned into four mountains encompassing the lake. Moreover, the condition to which she has reduced me does not suffice her: but every day she strips me and gives me a hundred lashes with a whip, so that the blood runs down me and my shoulders are torn. Then she clothes my upper half in a shirt of hair-cloth and over that she throws these rich robes.’ And he wept and repeated the following verses:

Lord, I submit myself to Thee and eke to Fate, Content, if so
Thou please, to suffer and to wait.
My enemies oppress and torture me full sore: But Paradise at
last, belike, shall compensate.
Though Fate press hard on me, I trust in the Elect, The
Accepted One of God, to be my advocate.

With this the King turned to him and said, ‘O youth, after having rid me of one trouble, thou addest another to me: but tell me, where is thy wife and where is the wounded slave?’ ‘The slave lies in the tomb under the dome,’ answered the youth, ‘and she is in the chamber over against the gate. Every day at sunrise, she comes out and repairs first to me and strips off my clothes and gives me a hundred strokes with the whip; and I weep and cry out, but cannot stir to keep her off. When she has done torturing me, she goes down to the slave with the wine and broth on which she feeds him; and to-morrow at sunrise she will come.’ ‘O youth,’ rejoined the King, ‘by Allah, I will assuredly do thee a service by which I shall be remembered and which men shall chronicle to the end of time!’ Then he sat down by the youth and talked with him till nightfall, when they went to sleep. At peep of day, the King rose and put off his clothes and drawing his sword, repaired to the mausoleum, where, after noting the paintings of the place and the candles and Lamps and perfumes burning there, he sought for the slave till he came upon him and slew him with one blow of the sword; after which he took the body on his back and threw it into a well that was in the palace. Then he returned to the dome and wrapping himself in the black’s clothes, lay down in his place, with his drawn sword by his side. After awhile, the accursed enchantress came out and, going first to her husband, stripped him and beat him with the whip, whilst he cried out, ‘Alas! the state I am in suffices me. Have mercy on me, O my cousin!’ But she replied, ‘Didst thou show me any mercy or spare my beloved?’ And beat him till she was tired and the blood ran from his sides. Then she put the hair shirt on him and the royal robes over it, and went down to the dome with a goblet of wine and a bowl of broth in her hands. When she came to the tomb, she fell a-weeping and wailing and said, ‘O my lord, speak to me!’ And repeated the following verse:

How long ere this rigour pass sway and thou relent? Is it not yet enough of the tears that I have spent?'

And she wept and said again, 'O my lord, speak to me!' The King lowered his voice and knotting his tongue, spoke after the fashion of the blacks and said, 'Alack! alack! there is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High the Supreme!' When she heard this, she screamed out for joy and swooned away; and when she revived, she said, 'O my lord, can it be true and didst thou indeed speak to me?' The King made his voice small and said, 'O accursed woman, thou deservest not that I should speak to thee!' 'Why so?' asked she; and he replied, 'Because all day thou tormentest thy husband and his cries disturb me, and all night long he calls upon God for help and invokes curses on thee and me and keeps me awake from nightfall to daybreak and disquiets me; and but for this, I had been well long ago. This is what has hindered me from answering thee.' Quoth she, 'With thy leave, I will release him from his present condition.' 'Do so,' said the King, 'and rid us of his noise.' 'I hear and obey,' answered she, and going out into the palace, took a cup full of water and spoke over it certain words, whereupon the water began to boil and bubble as the cauldron bubbles over the fire. Then she went up to the young King and sprinkled him with it, saying, 'By the virtue of the words I have spoken, if thou art thus by my spells, quit this shape for thy former one.' And immediately he shook and rose to his feet, rejoicing in his deliverance, and said, 'I testify that there is no god but God and that Mohammed is His apostle, may God bless and preserve him!' Then she said to him, 'Depart hence and do not return, or I will kill thee.' And she screamed out in his face. So he went out from before her, and she returned to the dome and going down into the tomb, said, 'O my lord, come forth to me, that I may see thy goodly form!' The King replied in a weak voice, 'What hast thou done? Thou hast rid me of the branch, but not of the root.' 'O my beloved, O my little black,' said she, 'what is the root?' 'Out on thee, O accursed one!' answered he. 'Every night, at the middle hour, the people of the city, whom thou by thine enchantments didst change into fish, lift up their heads from the water and cry to God for help and curse thee and me; and this is what hinders my recovery: so do thou go quickly and set them free, and after return and take me by the hand and raise me up; for indeed health returns to me.’ When she heard this speech of the King, whom she supposed to be the slave, she rejoiced and said, ‘O my lord, on my head and eyes be it, in the name of God!’ Then she went out, full of joy, and ran to the lake and taking a little of the water in her hand, spoke over it words that might not be understood, whereupon there was a great stir among the fish; and they raised their heads to the surface and stood upright and became men as before. Thus was the spell dissolved from the people of the city and the lake became again a populous city, with its streets and bazaars, in which the merchants bought and sold, and every one returned to his employment; whilst the four hills were restored to their original form of islands. Then the enchantress returned to the King and said to him, ‘O my lord, give me thy noble hand and arise.’ ‘Come nearer to me,’ answered he, in a faint voice. So she came close to him, and he took his sword and smote her in the breast, that the steel came forth, gleaming, from her back. He smote her again and cut her in twain, and she fell to the ground in two halves. Then he went out and found the young King standing awaiting him and gave him joy of his deliverance, whereupon the youth rejoiced and thanked him and kissed his hand. Quoth the Sultan, ‘Wilt thou abide in this thy city or come with me to mine?’ ‘O King of the age,’ rejoined he, ‘dost thou know how far it is from here to thy capital?’ And the Sultan replied, ‘Two and a half days’ journey.’ ‘O King,’ said the other, ‘if thou sleepest, awake! Between thee and thy capital is a full year’s journey to a diligent traveller; and thou hadst not come hither in two days and a half, save that the city was enchanted. But, O King, I will never leave thee, no, not for the twinkling of an eye!’ The Sultan rejoiced at his words and said, ‘Praised be God, who hath bestowed thee upon me! Thou shalt be my son, for in all my life I have never been blessed with a son.’ And they embraced each other and rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Then they returned to the palace, and the young King bade his officers make ready for a journey and prepare his baggage and all that he required. The preparations occupied ten days, at the end of which time the young King set out in company of the Sultan, whose heart burned within him at the thought of his long absence from his capital, attended by fifty white slaves and provided with magnificent presents. They journeyed day and night for a whole year, and God ordained them safety, till they drew near the Sultan's capital and sent messengers in advance to acquaint the Vizier with his safe arrival. Then came out the Vizier and the troops, who had given up all hope of the Sultan's return, and kissed the ground before him and gave him joy of his safety. So he entered his palace and sat down on his throne and the Vizier came in to him, to whom he related all that had befallen him with the young King: and the Vizier gave the latter joy of his deliverance. Then all things being set in order, the Sultan gave largesse to many of his people and sending for the fisherman who had brought him the enchanted fish and had thus been the first cause of the delivery of the people of the Black Islands, bestowed on him a dress of honour and enquired of his condition and whether he had any children, to which he replied that he had three children, two daughters and one son. So the King sent for them and taking one daughter to wife, married the other to the young King and made the son his treasurer. Moreover, he invested his Vizier with the sovereignty of the Black Islands and despatched him thither with the fifty officers, who had accompanied the young King thence, giving him robes of honour for all the amirs. So the Vizier kissed hands and set out for the Black Islands. The fisherman became the richest man of his time, and he and his daughters and the two Kings their husbands abode in peace till death came to them.

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THE PORTER AND THE THREE LADIES OF BAGHDAD.

There was once a porter of Baghdad who was a bachelor. One day, as he stood in the market, leant upon his basket, there came to him a lady, swathed in a wrapper of gold embroidered muslin, fringed with gold lace, and wearing embroidered boots and floating tresses plaited with silk and gold. She stopped before him and raising her kerchief, showed a pair of languishing black eyes of perfect beauty, bordered with long drooping lashes. Then she turned to the porter and said, in a clear sweet voice, ‘Take thy basket and follow me.’ No sooner had she spoken than he took up his basket in haste, saying, ‘O day of good luck! O day of God’s grace!’ and followed her till she stopped and knocked at the door of a house, when there came out a Nazarene, to whom she gave a dinar, and he gave her in return an olive-green bottle, full of wine, which she put into the basket, saying to the porter, ‘Hoist up and follow me.’ Said he, ‘By Allah, this is indeed a happy and fortunate day!’ And shouldering the basket, followed her till she came to a fruiterer’s, where she bought Syrian apples and Turkish quinces and Arabian peaches and autumn cucumbers and Sultani oranges and citrons, beside jessamine of Aleppo and Damascus water-lilies and myrtle and basil and henna-blossoms and blood-red anemones and violets and sweet-briar and narcissus and camomile and pomegranate flowers, all of which she put into the porter’s basket, saying, ‘Hoist up!’ So he shouldered the basket and followed her, till she stopped at a butcher’s shop and said to him, ‘Cut me off ten pounds of meat.’ He gave her the meat, wrapped in a banana leaf, and she put it in the basket, saying, ‘Hoist up, O porter!’ and went on to a grocer’s, of whom she took pistachio kernels and shelled almonds and hazel-nuts and walnuts and sugar cane and parched peas and Mecca raisins and all else that pertains to dessert. Thence to a pastry-cook’s, where she bought a covered dish and put therein open-work tarts and honey-fritters and tri-coloured jelly and march-pane, flavoured with lemon and melon, and Zeyneb’s combs and ladies’ fingers and Cadi’s mouthfuls and widow’s bread and meat-and-drink and some of every kind of sweetmeat in the shop and laid the dish in the basket of the porter, who said to her, ‘Thou shouldst have told me, that I might have brought a mule or a camel to carry all these good things.’ She smiled and gave him a tap on the nape, saying, ‘Make haste and leave chattering and God willing, thou shalt have a good wage.’ She stopped next at the shop of a druggist, where she bought rose-water and water-lily water and orange-flower water and willow-flower water and six other kinds of sweet waters and a casting bottle of rose-water mingled with musk, besides two loaves of sugar and frankincense and aloes-wood and ambergris and musk and saffron and candles of Alexandrian wax, all of which she put into the basket. Then she went on to a greengrocer’s, of whom she bought pickled safflower and olives, in brine and fresh, and tarragon and juncates and Syrian cheese and put them all into the basket and said to the porter, ‘Take up thy basket and follow me.’ So he shouldered his load and followed her till she came to a tall handsome house, with a spacious court before it and a two-leaved door of ebony, inlaid with plates of glittering gold. The lady went up to the door and throwing back her kerchief, knocked softly, whilst the porter stood behind her, musing upon her beauty and grace. After awhile the door opened and both the leaves swung back; whereupon he looked to see who opened it, and behold, it was a damsel of dazzling beauty and symmetry, high-bosomed, with flower-white forehead and rosy cheeks, eyes like those of gazelles or wild oxen and eyebrows like the crescent of the new moon of Ramazan, cheeks like blood-red anemones, mouth like Solomon’s seal, lips red as coral and teeth like clustered pearls or camomile-petals, neck like an antelope’s and bosom like a fountain, breasts like double pomegranates, belly like brocade and navel holding an ounce of benzoin ointment, even as says of her the poet:

Look at her, with her slender shape and radiant beauty! this Is
she who is at once the sun and moon of palaces!
Thine eyes shall ne’er see grace combine so featly black and
white As in her visage and the locks that o’er her forehead
kiss.
She in whose cheeks the red flag waves, her beauty testifies Unto
her name, if that to paint her sweet seductions miss.

With swimming gait she walks: I laugh for wonder at her hips, But
weep to see her waist, that all too slight to bear them is.

When the porter saw her, his mind and heart were taken by storm, so that he well-nigh let fall the basket and exclaimed, ‘Never in all my life saw I a more blessed day than this!’ Then said the portress to the cateress, ‘O my Sister, why tarriest thou? Come in from the gate and ease this poor man of his burden.’ So the cateress entered, followed by the portress and the porter, and went on before them to a spacious saloon, elegantly built and handsomely decorated with all manner of colours and carvings and geometrical figures, with balconies and galleries and cupboards and benches and closets with curtains drawn before them. In the midst was a great basin of water, from which rose a fountain, and at the upper end stood a couch of juniper wood, inlaid with precious stones and surmounted by a canopy of red satin, looped up with pearls as big as hazel-nuts or bigger. Thereon sat a lady of radiant countenance and gentle and demure aspect, moonlike in face, with eyes of Babylonian witchcraft and arched eyebrows, sugared lips like cornelian and a shape like the letter I. The radiance of her countenance would have shamed the rising sun, and she resembled one of the chief stars of heaven or a pavilion of gold or a high-born Arabian bride on the night of her unveiling, even as says of her the poet:

Her teeth, when she smiles, like pearls in a cluster show, Or
shredded camomile-petals or flakes of snow:
Her ringlets seem, as it were, the fallen night, And her beauty
shames the dawn and its ruddy glow.

Then she rose and coming with a stately gait to meet her sisters in the middle of the saloon, said to them, ‘Why stand ye still? Relieve this poor porter of his burden.’ So the cateress came and stood before and the portress behind him and with the help of the third damsel, lifted the basket from his head and emptying it, laid everything in its place. Then they gave him two dinars, saying, ‘Go, O porter!’ But he stood, looking at the ladies and admiring, their beauty and pleasant manners, never had he seen goodlier, and wondering greatly at the profusion of wine and meat and fruits and flowers and so forth that they had provided and to see no man with them, and made no movement to go. So the eldest lady said to him, ‘What ails thee that thou dost not go away? Belike, thou grudgest at thy pay?’ And she turned to the cateress and said to her, ‘Give him another dinar.’ ‘No, by Allah, O lady!’ answered the porter. ‘I do not indeed grudge at my pay, for my right hire is scarce two dirhems; but of a truth my heart and soul are taken up with you and how it is that ye are alone and have no man with you and no one to divert you, although ye know that women’s sport is little worth without men, nor is an entertainment complete without four at the table, and ye have no fourth. What says the poet?

Dost thou not see that for pleasure four several things combine,
Instruments four, harp, hautboy and gittern and psaltery?
And unto these, four perfumes answer and correspond, Violets,
roses and myrtle and blood-red anemone.
Nor is our pleasure perfect, unless four things have we, Money
and wine and gardens and mistress fair and free.

And ye are three and need a fourth, who should be a man, witty, sensible and discreet, one who can keep counsel.’ When they heard what he said, it amused them and they laughed at him and replied, ‘What have we to do with that, we who are girls and fear to entrust our secrets to those who will not keep them? For we have read, in such and such a history, what says Ibn eth Thumam:

Tell not thy secrets: keep them with all thy might. A secret
revealed is a secret lost outright.
If thine own bosom cannot thy secrets hold, Why expect more
reserve from another wight?

Or, as well says Abou Nuwas on the same subject:

The fool, that to men doth his secrets avow, Deserves to be marked with a brand on the brow.’

‘By your lives,’ rejoined the porter, ‘I am a man of sense and discretion, well read in books and chronicles. I make known what is fair and conceal what is foul, and as says the poet:

None keeps a secret but the man who's trusty and discreet. A
secret's ever safely placed with honest folk and leal;
And secrets trusted unto me are in a locked-up house Whose keys
are lost and on whose door is set the Cadi's seal.

When the girls heard this, the eldest one said to him, 'Thou knowest that we have laid out much money in preparing this entertainment: hast thou aught to offer us in return? For we will not let thee sit with us and be our boon companion and gaze on our bright fair faces, except thou pay down thy share of the cost. Dost thou not know the saying:

Love without money
Is not worth a penny?'

'If thou have aught, my friend,' added the portress, 'then art thou something: but if thou have nothing, be off without anything.' Here the cateress interposed, saying, 'O sisters, let him be: for by Allah, he has not failed us to-day: another had not been so patient with us. I will pay his share for him.' Whereupon the porter, overjoyed, kissed the earth and thanked her, saying, 'By Allah, it was thou didst handsel me this day! Here are the two dinars I had of you: take them and admit me to your company, not as a guest, but as a servant.' 'Sit down,' answered they; 'thou art welcome.' But the eldest lady said, 'By Allah, we will not admit thee to our society but on one condition; and it is that thou enquire not of what does not concern thee; and if thou meddle, thou shalt be beaten.' Said the porter, 'I agree to this, O my lady, on my head and eyes! Henceforth I am dumb.' Then arose the cateress and girding her middle, laid the table by the fountain and set out the cups and flagons, with flowers and sweet herbs and all the requisites for drinking. Moreover, she strained the wine and set it on; and they sat down, she and her sisters, with the porter, who fancied himself in a dream. The cateress took the flagon of wine and filled a cup and drank it off. Then she filled again and gave it to one of her sisters, who drank and filled another cup and gave it to her other sister: then she filled a fourth time and gave it to the porter, saying:

Drink and fare well and health attend thee still. This drink
indeed's a cure for every ill.

He took the cup in his hand and bowed and returned thanks, reciting the following verses:

Quaff not the cup except with one who is of trusty stuff, One who
is true of thought and deed and eke of good descent.
Wine's like the wind, that, if it breathe on perfume, smells as
sweet, But, if o'er carrion it pass, imbibes its evil scent.

And again:

Drink not of wine except at the hands of a maiden fair, Who, like
unto thee and it, is joyous and debonair.

Then he kissed their hands and drank and was merry with wine and swayed from side to side and recited the following verses:

Hither, by Allah, I conjure thee! Goblets that full of the grape
juice be!
And brim up, I prithee, a cup for me, For this is the water of
life, perdie!

Then the cateress filled the cup and gave it to the portress, who took it from her hand and thanked her and drank. Then she filled again and gave it to the eldest, who filled another cup and handed it to the porter. He gave thanks and drank and recited the following verses:

It is forbidden us to drink of any blood Except it be of that
which gushes from the vine.
So pour it out to me, an offering to thine eyes, To ransom from
thy hands my soul and all that's mine.

Then he turned to the eldest lady, who was the mistress of the house, and said to her, ‘O my lady, I am thy slave and thy servant and thy bondman!’ And repeated the following verses:

There is a slave of all thy caves now standing at thy gate Who
ceases not thy bounties all to sing and celebrate.
May he come in, O lady fair, to gaze upon thy charms? Desire and
I from thee indeed may never separate.

And she said to him, ‘Drink, and health and prosperity attend thee!’ So he took the cup and kissed her hand and sang the following verses:

I brought my love old wine and pure, the likeness of her cheeks,
Whose glowing brightness called to mind a brazier’s heart of
red.
She touched the wine-cup with her lips, and laughing roguishly,
“How canst thou proffer me to drink of my own cheeks?” she
said.
“Drink!” answered I, “it is my tears; its hue is of my blood; And
it was heated at a fire that by my sighs was fed.”

And she answered him with the following verse:

If, O my friend, thou hast indeed wept tears of blood for me, I prithee, give them me to drink, upon thine eyes and head!

Then she took the cup and drank it off to her sisters’ health; and they continued to drink and make merry, dancing and laughing and singing and reciting verses and ballads. The porter fell to toying and kissing and biting and handling and groping and dallying and taking liberties with them: whilst one put a morsel into his mouth and another thumped him, and this one gave him a cuff and that pelted him with flowers; and he led the most delightful life with them, as if he sat in paradise among the houris. They ceased not to drink and carouse thus, till the wine sported in their heads and got the better of their senses, when the portress, arose, and putting off her clothes, let down her hair over her naked body, for a veil. Then she threw herself into the basin and sported in the water and swam about and dived like a duck and took water in her mouth and spurted it at the porter and washed her limbs and the inside of her thighs. Then she came up out of the water and throwing herself into the porter's lap, pointed to her commodity and said to him, 'O my lord O my friend, what is the name of this?' 'Thy kaze,' answered he; but she said, 'Fie! art thou not ashamed!' And cuffed him on the nape of the neck. Quoth he, 'Thy catso.' And she dealt him a second cuff, saying, 'Fie! what an ugly word! Art thou not ashamed?' 'Thy commodity,' said he; and she, 'Fie! is there no shame in thee?' And thumped him and beat him. Then said he, 'Thy coney.' Whereupon the eldest fell on him and beat him, saying, 'Thou shalt not say that.' And whatever he said, they beat him more and more, till his neck ached again; and they made a laughing-stock of him amongst them, till he said at last, 'Well, what is its name amongst you women?' 'The sweet basil of the dykes,' answered they. 'Praised be God for safety!' cried he. 'Good, O sweet basil of the dikes!' Then they passed round the cup and presently the cateress rose and throwing herself into the porter's lap, pointed to her kaze and said to him, 'O light of mine eyes, what is the name of this?' 'Thy commodity,' answered he. 'Art thou not ashamed?' said she, and dealt him a buffet that made the place ring again, repeating, 'Fie! Fie! art thou not ashamed?' Quoth he, 'The sweet basil of the dykes.' 'No! No!' answered she, and beat him and cuffed him on the nape. Then said he, 'Thy kaze, thy tout, thy catso, thy coney.' But they replied, 'No! No!' And he said again, 'The sweet basil of the dykes.' Whereupon they laughed till they fell backward and cuffed him on the neck, saying, 'No; that is not its name.' At last he said, 'O my sisters, what is its name?' And they answered, 'What sayest thou to the peeled barleycorn?' Then the cateress put on her clothes and they sat down again to carouse, whilst the porter lamented over his neck and shoulders. The cup passed round among them awhile, and presently the eldest and handsomest of the ladies rose and put off her clothes; whereupon the porter took his neck in his hand and said, 'My neck and shoulders are in the way of God!' Then she threw herself into the basin and plunged and sported and washed; whilst the porter looked at her, naked, as she were a piece of the moon or the full moon when she waxes or the dawn at its brightest, and noted her shape and breasts and her heavy quivering buttocks, for she was naked as God created her. And he said, ‘Alack!’ Alack!’ and repeated the following verses:

If to the newly-budded branch thy figure I compare, I lay upon my
heart a load of wrong too great to bear;
For that the branch most lovely is, when clad upon with green,
But thou, when free of every veil, art then by far most
fair.

When she heard this, she came up out of the water and sitting down on his knees, pointed to her kaze and said, ‘O my little lord, what is the name of this?’ ‘The sweet basil of the dykes,’ answered he; but she said, ‘No! No!’ Quoth he, ‘The peeled barleycorn.’ And she said, ‘Pshaw!’ Then said he, ‘Thy kaze.’ Fie! Fie!’ cried she. ‘Art thou not ashamed?’ And cuffed him on the nape of the neck. And whatever name he said, they beat him, saying, ‘No! No!’ till at last he said, ‘O my sisters, what is its name?’ ‘The khan of Abou Mensour,’ answered they. And he said, ‘Praised be God for safety! Bravo! Bravo! O khan of Abou Mensour!’ Then the damsel rose and put on her clothes and they returned to their carousing and the cup passed round awhile. Presently, the porter rose and putting off his clothes, plunged into the pool and swam about and washed under his chin and armpits, even as they had done. Then he came out and threw himself into the eldest lady’s lap and putting his arms into the portress’s lap and his feet into that of the cateress pointed to his codpiece and said, ‘O my mistresses, what is the name of this?’ They laughed till they fell backward and one of them answered, ‘Thy yard.’ ‘Art thou not ashamed?’ said he. ‘A forfeit!’ and took of each a kiss. Quoth another, ‘Thy pintle.’ But he replied, ‘No,’ and gave each of them a bite in play. Then said they, ‘Thy pizzle.’ ‘No,’ answered he, and gave each of them a hug; and they kept saying, ‘Thy yard, thy pintle, thy pizzle, thy codpiece!’ whilst he kissed and hugged and fondled them to his heart’s content, and they laughed till they were well nigh dead. At last they said, ‘O our brother, and what is its name?’ ‘Don’t you know?’ asked he; and they said, ‘No.’ Quoth he, ‘This is the mule Break-all, that browses on the basil of the dykes and gobbles up the peeled barleycorn and lies by night in the khan of Abou Mensour.’ And they laughed till they fell backward. Then they fell again to drinking and continued after this fashion till the night came upon them, when they said to the porter, ‘In the name of God, put on thy sandals and be off and let us see the breadth of thy shoulders!’ Quoth he, ‘By Allah, the leaving life were easier to me than the leaving you! Let us join the night to the day, and to-morrow we will each go our own way.’ ‘My life on you!’ said the cateress, ‘let him pass the night with us, that we may laugh at him, for he is a pleasant rogue; and we may never again chance upon the like of him.’ So the mistress of the house said to the porter, ‘Thou shalt pass the night with us on condition that thou submit to our authority and that, whatever thou seest, thou ask no questions about it nor enquire the reason of it.’ ‘It is well,’ answered he; and they said, ‘Go and read what is written over the door.’ So he went to the door and found the following words written thereon in letters of gold, ‘He who speaks of what concerns him not, shall hear what will not please him.’ And he said, ‘Be ye witness against me that I will not speak of what concerns me not.’ Then rose the cateress and prepared food, and they ate: after which they lighted the lamps and candles and strewed on the latter ambergris and aloes-wood; then changed the service and set on fresh fruits and flowers and wine and so forth and sat down again to drink. They ceased not to eat and drink and make merry, hobnobbing and laughing and talking and frolicking, till there came a knocking at the door: whereupon one of them rose and went to the door, without disturbing the party, and presently returned, saying, ‘Verily, our pleasure is to be complete to-night.’ ‘How so?’ asked the others, and she replied, ‘There are three foreign Calenders at the door, with shaven heads and chins and eyebrows and every one blind of the right eye, which is a most extraordinary coincidence. Apparently they are fresh from a journey and indeed the traces of travel are evident on them; and the reason of their knocking at the door is this. They are strangers to Baghdad and this is their first coming to our city: the night surprised them and they could not find a lodging in the city and know no one with whom to take shelter: so they said to each other, “Perhaps the owner of this house will give us the key of a stable or outhouse and let us sleep there.” And, O my sisters, each of them is a laughing-stock after his own fashion; and if we let them in, they will make us sport this night, and on the morrow each shall go his own way.’ And she ceased not to persuade them, till they said, ‘Let them come in, on condition that they ask no questions of what does not concern them, on pain of hearing what will not please them.’ So she rejoiced and going to the door, returned with the three Calenders, who saluted and bowed low and held back; but the ladies rose to them and welcomed them and gave them joy of their safety and made them sit down. The Calenders looked about them and seeing a pleasant place and a table elegantly spread with flowers and fruits and green herbs and dessert and wine, with candles burning and perfumes smoking, and the three maidens, with their faces unveiled, said with one voice ‘‘Fore Allah, it is good!’ Then they turned to the porter and saw that he was tipsy and jaded with drinking and dalliance. So they took him for one of themselves and said, ‘He is a Calender like ourselves, either an Arab or a foreigner.’ When the porter heard this, he rose and fixing his eyes on them, said, ‘Sit still and do not meddle. Have you not read what is written on the door? It befits not folk, like yourselves, who come to us as mendicants, to loose your tongues on us.’ ‘We ask pardon of God, O fakir!’ answered they. ‘Our heads are before thee.’ The ladies laughed and making peace between them, set food before the Calenders. When they had eaten, they all sat down again to carouse, the portress serving the new comers, and the cup passed round awhile, till the porter said to the Calenders, ‘O brothers, have ye no story or rare trait to divert us withal?’ The Calenders, being warm with wine, called for musical instruments; so the portress brought them a tambourine and a lute and a Persian harp; and each Calender took one and tuned it and played and sang; and the girls joined in lustily and made a great noise. Whilst they were thus engaged, some one knocked at the gate and the portress rose and went to see who it was. Now the cause of this knocking was that, that very night, the Khalif Haroun er Reshid had gone down into the City, as was his wont, every now and then, to walk about for his diversion and hear what news was stirring, attended by his Vizier Jaafer and Mesrour his headsman, all three, as usual, disguised as merchants. Their way brought them to the house of the three ladies, where they heard the noise of musical instruments and of singing and merriment, and the

Khalif said to Jaafer, ‘I have a mind to enter this house and listen to this music and see the singers.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Jaafer, ‘these people are certainly drunk, and I fear lest some mischief betide us at their hands.’ ‘It matters not,’ rejoined the Khalif; ‘I must and will go in and I desire that thou contrive some pretext to that end.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ replied the Vizier and going up to the gate, knocked, whereupon the portress came down and opened. Jaafer came forward and kissing the earth before her, said, ‘O lady, we are merchants from Tiberias: we reached Baghdad ten days ago and sold our merchandise and took up our lodging at the khan of the merchants. Now we were bidden to-night to an entertainment at the house of a certain merchant, who set food before us and we ate and caroused with him awhile, till he gave us leave to depart and we went out, intending for our lodging; but being strangers in Baghdad, we lost ourselves and could not find our way back to our khan: so we hope, of your courtesy, that you will admit us to pass the night with you, and God will requite you.’ The portress looked at them and saw that they were dressed like merchants and appeared respectable; so she returned to her sisters and repeated to them Jaafer’s story, and they took compassion on the supposed strangers and bade her admit them. So she resumed and opened the gate to them, and they said, ‘Have we thy leave to enter?’ ‘Enter,’ answered she; whereupon the Khalif and Jaafer and Mesrour entered; and when the girls saw them, they rose and welcomed them and made them sit down and served them, saying, ‘Ye are welcome as our guests, but on one condition.’ ‘What is that?’ asked they; and the mistress of the house answered, ‘It is that you be eyes without tongues and that, whatever you see, you enquire not thereof nor speak of that which concerns you not, lest you hear what will not please you.’ ‘Good,’ answered they: ‘we are no meddlers.’ Then they sat down to carouse; whilst the Khalif looked at the three Calenders and marvelled for that they were all blind of the right eye, and gazed upon the ladies and was amazed at their beauty and goodliness. They fell to drinking and talking and said to the Khalif, ‘Drink.’ But he answered, ‘Excuse me, for I am vowed to the pilgrimage.’ Whereupon the portress rose and spreading a gold-embroidered cloth before him, set thereon a china bowl, into which she poured willow-flower water, with a spoonful of snow and some pounded sugar-candy. The Khalif thanked her and said to himself, ‘By Allah, I will reward her to-morrow for her kind office!’ Then they addressed themselves to carousel, till the wine began to work upon them, when the eldest lady rose and making an obeisance to her guests, took the cateress by the hand and said, ‘Come, sisters, let us do our duty.’ And they answered, ‘It is well.’ So the portress rose and cleared the middle of the saloon, after she had removed the table service and thrown away the remains of the banquet. Then she renewed the perfumes in the censers and made the Calenders sit down on a sofa by the dais and the Khalif and his companions on a sofa at the other end; after which she called to the porter, saying, ‘How dull and slothful thou art! Come and help us: thou art no stranger, but one of the household!’ So he rose and girt his middle and said, ‘What would you have me do?’ And she answered, ‘Stay where thou art.’ Then the cateress rose and setting a chair in the middle of the room, went to a closet, which she opened, saying to the porter, ‘Come and help me.’ So he went to her and she brought out two black bitches, with chains round their necks, and gave them to him, saying, ‘Take them.’ So he took them and carried them to the middle of the saloon; whereupon the mistress of the house tucked up her sleeves and taking a whip, said to the porter, ‘Bring me one of the bitches.’ So he brought it to her by the chain; and the bitch wept and shook its head at the damsel, who brought the whip down on it, whilst the porter held it by the chain. The bitch howled and whined, but the lady ceased not to beat it till her arm was tired; when she threw away the whip and pressing the bitch to her bosom, kissed it on the head and wiped away its tears. Then she said to the porter, ‘Take it back and bring the other.’ He did as she bade him, and she did with the second bitch as she had done with the first. The Khalif’s mind was troubled at her doings and his breast contracted and he could not restrain his impatience to know the meaning of all this. So he winked to Jaafer to ask, but the latter turned and signed to him as who should say, ‘Be silent: this is no time for impertinent curiosity.’ Then said the portress to the mistress of the house, ‘O my lady, rise and go up to thy place, that I in turn may do my part.’ ‘It is well,’ answered she and went up and sat down on the couch of juniper-wood, at the upper end of the dais;

whilst the portress sat down on a chair and said to the cateress, 'Do what thou hast to do.' So the latter rose and going to a closet, brought out a bag of yellow satin, with cords of green silk and tassels of gold, and came and sat down before the portress. Then she opened the bag and took out a lute, which she tuned, and sang the following verses, accompanying herself on the lute:

Thou art my wish, thou art my end; And in thy presence, O my friend,
There is for me abiding joy: Thine absence sets my heart a-flame
For thee distraught, with thee possest, Thou reignest ever in my breast,
Nor in the love I bear to thee Is there for me reproach or shame.
Life's veil for me was torn apart, When Love gat hold upon my heart
For Love still rends the veils in twain And brings dishonour on fair fame.
The cloak of sickness I did on; And straight my fault appeared and shone.
Since that my heart made choice of thee And love and longing on me came,
My eyes are ever wet with tears, And all my secret thought appears,
When with my tears' tumultuous flow Exhales the secret of thy name.
Heal thou my pains, for thou to me Art both disease and remedy.
Yet him, whose cure is in thy hand, Affliction shall for ever claim,
Thy glances set my heart on fire, Slay me with swords of my desire:
How many, truly, of the best Have fallen beneath Love's sword of flame?
Yet may I not from passion cease Nor in forgetting seek release;
For love's my comfort, pride and law, Public and private, aye the same.
Blest eyes that have of thee their fill And look upon thee at their will!

Ay, of my own unforced intent, The slave of passion I became.

When the portress heard this foursome song, she cried out, ‘Alas! Alas! Alas!’ and tore her clothes and fell down in a swoon; and the Khalif saw on her body the marks of beating with rods and whips, and wondered greatly. Then the cateress rose and sprinkled water upon her and brought her a fresh dress and put it on her. When the company saw this, their minds were troubled, for they understood not the reason of these things. And the Khalif said to Jaafer, ‘Didst thou not see the marks of beating with rods upon the girl’s body! I cannot keep silence nor be at rest, except I come at the truth of all this and know the story of this damsel and the two bitches.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Jaafer, ‘they made it a condition with us that we should not speak of what concerns us not, under pain of hearing what should not please us.’ Then said the portress ‘By Allah! O my sister, come and complete thy service to me.’ ‘With all my heart!’ answered the cateress and took the lute and leant it against her breasts. Then she swept the strings with her finger-tips and sang the following verses:

If we complain of absence, what alas! shall we say? Or if longing
assail us, where shall we take our way?
If, to interpret for us, we trust to a messenger, How can a
message rightly a lover’s plaint convey?
Or if we put on patience, short is a lover’s life, After his
heart’s beloved is torn from him away.
Nothing, alas! is left me but sorrow and despair And tears that
adown my cheeks without cessation stray.
Thou that art ever absent from my desireful sight, Thou that art
yet a dweller within my heart alway,
Hast thou kept troth, I wonder, with one who loves thee dear,
Whose faith, whilst time endureth, never shall know decay?
Or hast thou e’en forgotten her who for love of thee, In tears
and sickness and passion, hath wasted many a day?
Alas! though Love unite us again in one embrace, Reproach for thy
past rigour with me full long shall stay.

When the portress heard this second song, she gave a loud scream and exclaimed, ‘By Allah! it is good!’ and putting her hand to her clothes, tore them as before and fell down in a swoon. Whereupon the cateress rose and brought her another dress, after she had sprinkled water on her. Then she sat up again and said to the cateress ‘To it again and help me to do the rest of my duty; for there remains but one more song.’ So the cateress took the lute and sang the following verses:

How long, ah me! shall this rigour last and this inhumanity? Are
not the tears that I have shed enough to soften thee?
If thou, of thy relentless will, estrangement do prolong,
Intending my despite, at last, I pray, contented be!
If treacherous fortune were but just to lovers and their woe,
They would not watch the weary night in sleepless agony.
Have ruth on me, for thy disdain is heavy on my heart; Is it not
time that thou relent at last, my king, to me?
To whom but thee that slayest me should I reveal my pain? What
grief is theirs who love and prove the loved one’s perfidy!
Love and affliction hour by hour redouble in my breast: The days
of exile are prolonged; no end to them I see.
Muslims, avenge a slave of love, the host of wakefulness, Whose
patience hath been trampled out by passion’s tyranny!
Can it be lawful, O my wish, that thou another bless With thine
embraces, whilst I die, in spite of Love’s decree?
Yet in thy presence, by my side, what peace should I enjoy, Since
he I love doth ever strive to heap despite on me?

When the portress heard this third song, she screamed out and putting forth her hand, tore her clothes even to the skirt and fell down in a swoon for the third time, and there appeared once more on her body the marks of beat ing with rods. Then said the three Calenders, ‘Would God we had never entered this house, but had slept on the rubbish-heaps! for verily our entertainment hath been troubled by things that rend the heart.’ The Khalif turned to them and said, ‘How so?’ And they answered, ‘Indeed, our minds are troubled about this matter.’ Quoth he, ‘Are you not then of the household?’ ‘No,’ replied they; ‘nor did we ever see the place till now.’ Said the Khalif, ‘There is the man by you: he will surely know the meaning of all this.' And he winked at the porter. So they questioned the latter and he replied, 'By the Almighty, we are all in one boat! I was brought up at Baghdad, but never in my life did I enter this house till to-day, and the manner of my coming in company with them was curious.' 'By Allah,' said they, 'we thought thee one of them, and now we see thou art but as one of ourselves.' Then said the Khalif, 'We are here seven men, and they are but three women: so let us question them of their case, and if they do not answer willingly, they shall do so by force.' They all agreed to this, except Jaafer, who said, 'This is not well-advised: let them be, for we are their guests, and as ye know, they imposed on us a condition, to which we all agreed. Wherefore it is better that we keep silence concerning this affair, for but a little remains of the night, and each go about his business.' And he winked to the Khalif and whispered to him, 'There is but a little longer to wait, and to-morrow I will bring them before thee and thou canst then question them of their story.' But the Khalif lifted his head and cried out angrily, 'I have not patience to wait till then: let the Calenders ask them.' And Jaafer said, 'This is not well-advised.' Then they consulted together, and there was much talk and dispute between them, who should put the question, before they fixed upon the porter. The noise drew the notice of the lady of the house, who said to them, 'O guests, what is the matter and what are you talking about?' Then the porter came forward and said to her, 'O lady, the company desire that thou acquaint them with the history of the two bitches and why thou didst beat them and after fellest to kissing and weeping over them and also concerning thy sister and why she has been beaten with rods, like a man. This is what they charge me to ask thee, and peace be on thee.' When she heard this, she turned to the others and said to them 'Is this true that he says of you?' And they all replied 'Yes;' except Jaafer, who held his peace. Then said she, 'By Allah! O guests, ye have done us a grievous wrong, for we made it a previous condition with you that whoso spoke of what concerned him not, should hear what should not please him. Is it not enough that we have taken you into our house and fed you with our victual! But the fault is not so much yours as that of her who brought you in to us.' Then she tucked up her sleeves and smote three times on the floor, saying, ‘Come quickly!’ Whereupon the door of a closet opened and out came seven black slaves, with drawn swords in their hands, to whom said the lady, ‘Bind these babblers’ hands behind them and tie them one with another.’ The slaves did as she bade, and said, ‘O noble lady, is it thy will that we strike off their heads?’ ‘Hold your hands awhile,’ answered she, ‘till I question them of their condition, before ye strike off their heads.’ ‘By Allah, O my lady,’ exclaimed the porter ‘do not slay me for another’s fault, for all have erred and offended save myself. And by Allah, our night would have been a pleasant one, had we not been afflicted with these Calenders, whose presence is enough to lay a flourishing city in ruins.’ And he repeated the following verses:

How fair a thing is mercy to the great! And how much more to
those of low estate!
By all the love that has between us been, Doom not the guiltless
to the guilty’s fate!

When the lady heard this, she laughed, in spite of her anger, and coming up to the guests, said to them, ‘Tell me who you are, for ye have but a little while to live, and were you not men of rank and consideration, you had never dared to act thus.’ Then the Khalif said to Jaafer, ‘Out on thee! Tell her who we are, or we shall be slain in a mistake, and speak her fair, ere an abomination befall us.’ ‘It were only a part of thy deserts,’ replied Jaafer. Whereupon the Khalif cried out at him in anger and said, ‘There is a time to jest and a time to be serious.’ Then the lady said to the Calenders, ‘Are ye brothers?’ ‘Not so,’ answered they; ‘we are only poor men and strangers.’ And she said to one of them, ‘Wast thou born blind of one eye?’ ‘No, by Allah!’ replied he; ‘but there hangs a rare story by the loss of my eye, a story which, were it graven with needles on the corners of the eye, would serve as a lesson to those that can profit by example.’ She questioned the two other Calenders, and they made a like reply, saying, ‘By Allah! O our mistress, each one of us comes from a different country and is the son of a king and a sovereign prince ruling over lands and subjects.’ Then she turned to the others and said to them, ‘Let each of you come forward in turn and tell us his history and the manner of his coming hither and after go about his business; but whoso refuses, I will cut off his head.' The first to come forward was the porter, who said, 'O my lady, I am a porter. This lady, the cateress, hired me and took me first to the vintner's, then to the butcher's, from the butcher's to the fruiterer's, from the fruiterer's to the grocer's, from the grocer's to the greengrocer's, from the greengrocer's to the confectioner's and the druggist's, and thence to this place, where there happened to me with you what happened. This is my story; and peace be on thee!' At this the lady laughed and said to him, 'Begone about thy business.' But he said, 'By Allah, I will not budge 'till I hear the others' stories.' Then came forward the first Calender and said, 'Know, O lady, that

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The First Calender’s Story.

My father was a king, and he had a brother, who was also a king over another city. The latter had a son and a daughter, and it chanced that I and the son of my uncle were both born on the same day. In due time we grew up to man’s estate and there was a great affection between us. Now it was my wont every now and then to visit my uncle and abide with him several months at a time. One day, I went to visit him as usual and found him absent a-hunting; but my cousin received me with the utmost courtesy and slaughtered sheep and strained wine for me and we sat down to drink. When the wine had got the mastery of us, my cousin said to me, “O son of my uncle I have a great service to ask of thee, and I beg of thee not to baulk me in what I mean to do.” “With all my heart,” answered I; and he made me swear by the most solemn oaths to do his will. Then he went away and returning in a little, with a lady veiled and perfumed and very richly clad, said to me, “Take this lady and go before me to the burial-ground and enter such and such a sepulchre,” and he described it to me and I knew it, “and wait till I come.” I could not gainsay him, by reason of the oath I had sworn to him; so I took the lady and carried her to the cemetery, and entering the tomb sat down to await my cousin, who soon rejoined us, carrying a vessel of water, a bag containing plaster and an adze. He went up to the tomb in the midst of the sepulchre and loosening its stones with the adze, laid them on one side after which he fell to digging with the adze in the earth till he uncovered a trap of iron, as big as a small door, and raised it, when there appeared beneath it a winding stair. Then he turned to the lady and said to her, “Up and make thy choice.” So she descended the stair and was lost to sight; and he said to me, “O my cousin, when I have descended, complete thy kindness to me by replacing the trap-door and throwing back the earth on it: then mix the plaster in the bag with the water in this vessel and build up the tomb again with the stones and plaster it over as before, lest any see it and say, ‘This tomb has been newly opened, albeit it is an old one;’ for I have been at work here a whole year, unknown to any save God. This then is the service I had to ask of thee, and may God never bereave thy friends of thee, O my cousin!” Then he descended the stair; and when he was out of sight, I replaced the trap-door and did as he had bidden me, till the tomb was restored to its original condition, and I the while in a state of intoxication; after which I returned to the palace, and found my uncle still absent. Next morning I called to mind what had happened and repented of having obeyed my cousin, when repentance was of no avail, but thought that it must have been a dream. So I fell to enquiring after my cousin; but none could give me any news of him; and I went out to the burial-ground and sought for the tomb where I had left him, but could not find it, and ceased not to go from sepulchre to sepulchre and from tomb to tomb, without success, till nightfall. Then I returned to the palace and could neither eat nor drink, for my heart was troubled about my cousin, seeing I knew not what was come of him; and I was extremely chagrined and slept not that night, but lay awake for anxiety till morning. As soon as it was day, I repaired again to the cemetery, pondering what my cousin had done and repenting me of having hearkened to him, and vent round among all the tombs, but could not find the one I sought. Thus I did for the space of seven days, but with no better success, and my trouble and anxiety increased till I was well-nigh mad and could find nothing for it but to return to my father. So I set out and journeyed till I reached his capital; but as I entered the gate of the city, a number of men sprang out on me and tied my hands behind me. At this I was beyond measure amazed, seeing that I was the son of the Sultan and that they were his servants and my own; and great fear fell on me, and I said to myself, “I wonder what has befallen my father!” Then I questioned my captors; but they returned me no answer. However, after awhile, one of them, who had been my servant, said to me, “Fortune has played thy father false; and the troops deserted him. So the Vizier slew him and seized on his throne; and we laid wait for thee by his command.” Then they took me and carried me before the Vizier, well-nigh distraught for this news of my father. Now between me and this Vizier was an old feud, the cause of which was as follows. I was fond of shooting with a pellet-bow, and one day, as I was standing on the terrace of my palace, a bird lighted on the terrace of the Vizier’s house, where the latter chanced to be standing at the time. I let fly at the bird, but, as fate and destiny would have it, the pellet swerved and striking the Vizier on the eye, put it out. As says the poet:

Our footsteps follow on in their predestined way, Nor from the
ordered track can any mortal stray:
And he whom Fate appoints in any land to die, No other place on
earth shall see his dying day.

The Vizier dared say nothing, at the time, because I was the Sultan's son of the city, but thenceforward he nourished a deadly hatred against me. So when they brought me bound before him, he commanded my head to be smitten off; and I said, "For what crime wilt thou put me to death?" "What crime could be greater than this?" answered he, and pointed to his ruined eye. Quoth I, "That I did by misadventure." And he replied, "If thou didst it by misadventure, I will do the like with intent." Then said he, "Bring him to me." So they brought me up to him, and he put his finger into my right eye and pulled it out; and thenceforward I became one-eyed as ye see me. Then he caused me to be bound hand and foot and put in a chest and said to the headsman, "Take this fellow and carry him forth of the city and slay him and leave him for the beasts and birds to eat." So the headsman carried me without the city to the midst of the desert, where he took me out of the chest, bound hand and foot as I was, and would have bandaged my eyes, that he might slay me. But I wept sore till I made him weep, and looking at him, repeated the following verses:

I counted on you as a coat of dart-proof mail toward The foeman's
arrows from my breast. Alas! ye are his sword!
I hoped in you to succour me in every evil chance, Although my
right hand to my left no more should help afford.
Yet stand aloof nor cast your lot with those who do me hate, And
let my foemen shoot their shafts against your whilom lord!
If you refuse to succour me against my enemies, At least be
neutral, nor to me nor them your aid accord.

And these also:

How many of my friends, methought, were coats of mail! And so
they were, indeed, but on my foeman's part.
Unerring shafts and true I deemed them; and they were Unerring
shafts, indeed, alas, but in my heart!

When the headsman heard this (now he had been my father's headsman and I had done him kindness) he said, "O my lord what can I do, being but a slave commanded?" Then he said, "Fly for thy life and never return to this country, or thou art lost and I with thee." As says one of the poets:

Escape with thy life, if oppression betide thee, And let the
house tell of its builder's fate!
Country for country thou'lt find, if thou seek it; Life for life
never, early or late.
It is strange men should dwell in the house of abjection, When
the plain of God's world is so wide and so great!

I kissed his hands, hardly crediting my escape; and recked little of the loss of my eye, in consideration of my deliverance from death. Then I repaired to my uncle's capital and going in to him, told him what had befallen my father and myself; whereat he wept sore and said, "Verily, thou addest affliction to my affliction and sorrow to my sorrow; for thy cousin has been missing these many days; I know not what is become of him, and none can give me any news of him." Then he wept till he swooned away, and my heart was sore for him. When he revived, he would have medicined my eye, but found there was but the socket left and said, "O my son, it is well that it was thine eye and not thy life!" I could not keep silence about my cousin; so I told him all that had passed, and he rejoiced greatly at hearing news of his son and said, "Come, show me the tomb." "By Allah, O my uncle," answered I, "I know it not, for I went after many times to seek for it, but could not find it." However, we went out to the burial-ground and looked right and left, till at last I discovered the tomb. At this we both rejoiced greatly and entering, removed the earth, raised the trapdoor and descended fifty steps, till we came to the foot of the stair, where we were met by a great smoke that blinded our eyes: and my uncle pronounced the words, which whoso says shall never be confounded, that is to say, “There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!” Then we went on and found ourselves in a saloon, raised upon columns, drawing air and light from openings communicating with the surface of the ground and having a cistern in its midst. The place was full of crates and sacks of flour and grain and other victual; and at the upper end stood a couch with a canopy over it. My uncle went up to the bed and drawing the curtains, found his son and the lady in each other’s arms; but they were become black coal, as they had been cast into a well of fire. When he saw this, he spat in his son’s face and taking off his shoe, smote him with it, exclaiming, “Swine that thou art, thou hast thy deserts! This is thy punishment in this world, but there awaits thee a far sorer and more terrible punishment in the world to come!” His behaviour amazed me, and I mourned for my cousin, for that he was become a black coal, and said to the king, “O my uncle, is not that which hath befallen him enough, but thou must beat him with thy shoe?” “O son of my brother,” answered my uncle, “this my son was from his earliest youth madly enamoured of his sister, and I forbade him from her, saying in myself, ‘They are but children.’ But, when they grew up, sin befell between them, notwithstanding that his attendants warned him to abstain from so foul a thing, which none had done before nor would do after him, lest the news of it should be carried abroad by the caravans and he become dishonoured and unvalued among kings to the end of time. I heard of this and believed it not, but took him and upbraided him severely, saying, ‘Have a care lest this thing happen to thee; for I will surely curse thee and put thee to death.’ Then I shut her up and kept them apart, but this accursed girl loved him passionately, and Satan got the upper hand of them and made their deeds to seem good in their eyes. So when my son saw that I had separated them, he made this place under ground and transported victual hither, as thou seest, and taking advantage of my absence a-hunting, came here with his sister, thinking to enjoy her a long while. But the wrath of God descended on them and consumed them; and there awaits them in the world to come a still sorer and more terrible punishment.” Then he wept and I with him, and he looked at me and said, “Henceforth thou art my son in his stead.”

Then I bethought me awhile of the world and its chances and how the Vizier had slain my father and usurped his throne and put out my eye and of the strange events that had befallen my cousin and wept again, and my uncle wept with me. Presently we ascended, and replacing the trap-door, restored the tomb to its former condition. Then we resumed to the palace, but hardly had we sat down when we heard a noise of drums and trumpets and cymbals and galloping of cavalry and clamour of men and clash of arms and clank of bridles and neighing of horses, and the world was filled with clouds of dust raised by the horses' hoofs. At this we were amazed and knew not what could be the matter so we enquired and were told that the Vizier, who had usurped my father's throne, had levied troops and hired the wild Arabs and was come with an army like the sands of the sea, none could tell their number nor could any avail against them. They assaulted the city unawares, and the people, being unable to withstand them, surrendered the place to them. My uncle was slain and I took refuge in the suburbs, knowing that, if I fell into the Vizier's hands, he would put me to death. Wherefore trouble was sore upon me and I bethought me of all that had befallen me and my father and uncle and knew not what to do, for if I showed myself, the people of the city and my father's troops would know me and hasten to win the usurpers favour by putting me to death; and I could find no means of escape but by shaving my face. So I shaved off my beard and eyebrows and donning a Calender's habit, left the town, without being known of any, and made for this city, in the hope that perhaps some one would bring me to the presence of the Commander of the Faithful and Vicar of the Lord of the Two Worlds, that I might relate to him my story and lay my case before him. I arrived here today and was standing, perplexed where I should go, when I saw this second Calender; so I saluted him, saying "I am a stranger," and he replied, "And I also am a stranger." Presently up came our comrade, this other Calender, and saluted us, saying, "I am a stranger." "We also are strangers," answered we; and we walked on together, till darkness overtook us, and destiny led us to your house. This, then, is my history and the manner of the loss of my right eye and the shaving of my beard and eyebrows.' They all marvelled at his story, and the Khalif said to Jaafer, 'By Allah, I never heard or saw the like of what happened to this Calender.’ Then the mistress of the house said to the Calender, ‘Begone about thy business.’ But he answered, ‘I will not budge till I hear the others’ stories.’ Then came forth the second Calender and kissing the earth, said, ‘O my lady, I was not born blind of one eye, and my story is a marvellous one; were it graven with needles on the corners of the eye, it would serve as a warning to those that can profit by example.

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The Second Calender’s Story.

I am a king, son of a king. My father taught me to read and write, and I got the Koran by heart, according to the seven readings, and read all manner of books under the guidance of learned professors; I studied the science of the stars and the sayings of poets and applied myself to all branches of knowledge, till I surpassed all the folk of my time. In particular, my skill in handwriting excelled that of all the scribes, and my fame was noised abroad in all countries and at the courts of all the kings. Amongst others, the King of Ind heard of me and sent to my father to seek me, with gifts and presents such as befit kings. So my father fitted out six ships for me, and we put to sea and sailed for a whole month, till we reached the land. Then we brought out the horses that were with us in the ships, together with ten camels laden with presents for the King of Ind. and set out inland, but had not gone far, before there arose a great dust, that grew till it covered the whole country. After awhile it lifted and discovered fifty steel-clad horsemen, as they were fierce lions, whom we soon found to be Arab highwaymen. When they saw that we were but a small company and had with us ten laden camels, they drove at us with levelled spears. We signed to them with our fingers to do us no hindrance, for that we were ambassadors to the mighty King of Ind; but they replied (in the same manner) that they were not in his dominions nor under his rule. Then they set on us and slew some of my attendants and put the rest to flight; and I also fled, after I had gotten a sore wound whilst the Arabs were taken up with the baggage. I knew not whither to turn, being reduced from high to low estate; so I fled forth at a venture till I came to the top of a mountain, where I took shelter for the night in a cavern. On the morrow, I continued my journey and fared on thus for a whole month, till I reached a safe and pleasant city. The winter had passed away from it with its cold and the spring was come with its roses; its flowers were blowing and its streams welling and its birds warbling. As says the poet, describing the city in question:

A town, wherein who dwells is free from all affray; Security and

peace are masters there alway.
Like Paradise itself, it seemeth, for its folk, With all its
beauties rare decked out in bright array.

I was both glad and sorry to reach the city, glad for that I was weary with my journey and pale for weakness and anxiety, and grieved to enter it in such sorry case. However, I went in, knowing not whither to betake me, and fared on till I came to a tailor sitting in his shop. I saluted him, and he returned my salute and bade me a kindly welcome, and seeing me to be a stranger and noting marks of gentle breeding on me, enquired how I came thither. I told him all that had befallen me; and he was concerned for me and said, "O my son, do not discover thyself to any, for the King of this city is the chief of thy father's foes and hath a mortal feud against him." Then he set meat and drink before me, and I ate and he with me, and we talked together till nightfall, when he lodged me in a chamber beside his own, and brought me a bed and coverlet. I abode with him three days, at the end of which time he said to me, "Dost thou know any craft by which thou mayst earn thy living?" I replied, "I am a doctor of the law and a man of learning, a scribe, a grammarian, a poet, a mathematician and a skilled penman." Quoth he, "Thy trade is not in demand in this country nor are there in this city any who understand science or writing or aught but money-getting." "By Allah," said I, "I know nought but what I have told thee!" And he said, "Gird thy middle and take axe and cord and go and cut firewood in the desert for thy living, till God send thee relief, and tell none who thou art, or they will kill thee." Then he bought me an axe and a cord and gave me in charge to certain woodcutters; with whom I went out into the desert and cut wood all day and carried home a load on my head. I sold it for half a dinar, with part of which I bought victual and laid up the rest. On this wise I lived a whole year, at the end of which time I went out one day into the desert, according to my wont, and straying from my companions, happened on a tract full of trees and running streams, in which there was abundance of firewood; so I entered and coming on the gnarled stump of a great tree, dug round it with my axe and cleared the earth away from it. Presently, the axe struck upon a ring of brass; so I cleared away the earth, till I uncovered a wooden trap-door, which I raised and there appeared beneath it a stair I descended the stair, till I came to a door, which I opened and found myself in a vaulted hall of goodly structure, wherein was a damsel like a pearl of great price, whose aspect banished pain and care and anxiety from the heart and whose speech healed the troubled soul and captivated the wise and the intelligent. She was slender of shape and swelling-breasted, delicate-cheeked and bright of colour and fair of form; and indeed her face shone like the sun through the night of her tresses, and her teeth glittered above the snows of her bosom. As says the poet of her:

Slender of waist, with streaming hair the hue of night, is she,
With hips like hills of sand and shape straight as the balsam-tree.

And as says another:

There are four things that ne'er unite, except it be To shed my heart's best blood and take my soul by storm.
And these are night-black locks and brow as bright as day, Cheeks ruddy as the rose and straight and slender form.

When I looked on her, I prostrated myself before her Maker, for the grace and beauty He had created in her and she looked at me and said, "Art thou a man or a genie?" "I am a man," answered I; and she said, "And who brought thee to this place, where I have dwelt five-and-twenty years without seeing man?" Quoth I (and indeed her speech was sweet to me), "O my lady, my good star brought me hither for the dispelling of my grief and anxiety." And I told her all that had befallen me from first to last. My case was grievous to her and she wept: then she said, "I will tell thee my story in turn. I am the daughter of a King of Farther India, by name Efitamous, Lord of the Ebony Islands, who married me to my cousin, but on my wedding-night an Afrit called Jerjis ben Rejmous, the mother's sister's son of Iblis, carried me off and flying away with me, set me down in this place whither he transported all that I needed of clothes and ornaments and furniture and meat and drink and so forth. Once in every ten days he comes to me and lies the night here, then goes his way; for he took me without the consent of his family: and he has agreed with me that, in case I should ever have occasion for him in the interval between his visits, whether by night or by day, I have only to touch these two lines engraved upon the alcove, and he will be with me before I take away my hand. It is now four days since he was here, and there remain six before he comes again. Wilt thou therefore spend five days with me and depart the day before his coming?" "I will well," answered I. "O rare! if it be not all a dream." At this she rejoiced and taking me by the hand, led me through a vaulted doorway into a small but elegant bath-room, where we put off our clothes and she washed me. Then she clad me in a new suit and seated me by her side on a high divan and gave me to drink of sherbet of sugar flavoured with musk. Then she brought food, and we ate and conversed. After awhile, she said to me, "Lie down and rest, for thou art weary." So I lay down and slept and forgot all that had befallen me. When I awoke, I found her rubbing my feet: so I thanked her and blessed her, and we sat talking awhile. Quoth she, "By Allah, I was sad at heart, for that I have dwelt alone under ground these five-and-twenty years, without any to talk withal. So praised be God who hath sent thee to me!" Then she said, "O youth, art thou for wine?" And I answered, "As thou wilt." Whereupon she went to the cupboard and took out a sealed flask of old wine and decked the table with flowers and green herbs. Then she recited the following verses:

Had we thy coming known, we would for sacrifice Have poured thee
forth heart's blood and blackness of the eyes:
Ay, and we would have laid our cheeks within thy way, That so thy
feet might tread on eyelids, carpet-wise!

I thanked her, for indeed love of her had taken hold of me, and my grief and anxiety left me. We sat carousing till nightfall, and I passed the night with her, never knew I such a night. On the morrow, delight succeeded delight till the middle of the day, when I drank wine, till I lost my senses and rose, staggering from side to side, and said to her, "Come, O fair one! I will carry thee up from under the earth and rid thee of this genie." She laughed and replied, "Be content and hold thy peace. One day in every ten is the genie's, and the other nine shall be thine." Quoth I (and indeed drunkenness had got the better of me), "This very moment will I break the alcove, on which is graven the talisman, and summon the Afrit hither, that I may kill him, for I am used to kill Afrits ten at a time." When she heard this, she conjured me by Allah to refrain and repeated the following verses:

This is a thing wherein thine own destruction lies: I rede thee keep thyself therefrom, if thou be wise.

And also these:

O thou that seek'st to hasten on the feet Of parting's steeds,
the matchless swift of flight,
Forbear, for fortune's nature is deceit, And parting is the end
of love delight.

I paid no heed to her words, but kicked the alcove with all my might, and immediately the place grew dark, it thundered and lightened, the earth trembled and the world was wrapped in gloom. When I saw this, the fumes of the wine left my head and I said to the lady, "What is the matter?" "The Afrit is upon us," answered she "Did I not warn thee of this! By Allah, thou hast ruined me! But fly for thy life and return whence thou camest." So I ascended the stair, but, in the excess of my fear I forgot my sandals and hatchet. When I had mounted two steps, I turned to look, and behold, the ground clove in sunder and out came an Afrit of hideous aspect, who said to the lady, "What is this commotion with which thou disturbest me? What misfortune has befallen thee?" "Nothing has befallen me," answered she, "except that I was heavy at heart and drank a little wine to hearten myself. Then I rose to do an occasion, but my head became heavy and I fell against the alcove." "Thou liest, O harlot!" said he, and looked right and left, till he caught sight of the axe and the sandals and said, "These are some man's gear. Who has been with thee?" Quoth she, "I never set eyes on them till this moment; they must have clung to thee as thou camest hither." But he said, "This talk is absurd and will not impose on me, O strumpet!" Then he stripped her naked and stretching her on the ground, tied her hands and feet to four stakes and proceeded to torture her to make her confess. I could not bear to hear her weeping; so I ascended the stair, quaking for fear. When I reached the top, I replaced the trap-door and covered it over with earth; and I thought of the lady and her beauty and what had befallen her through my folly and repented me sore of what I had done. Then I bethought me of my father and his kingdom and how I had become a woodcutter, and how, after my life had been awhile serene, it had again become troubled, and I wept and repeated the following verse:

What time the cruelties of Fate o'erwhelm thee with distress,
Think that one day must bring thee ease, another day duresse.

Then I went on till I reached the house of my friend, whom I found awaiting me, as he were on coals of fire on my account. When he saw me, he rejoiced and said, "O my brother, where didst thou pass the night? My heart has been full of anxiety on thine account, fearing for thee from the wild beasts or other peril: but praised be God for thy safety!" I thanked him for his solicitude, and retiring to my chamber, fell a-musing on what had passed and reproached myself grievously for my meddlesomeness in kicking the alcove. Presently the tailor came in to me and said, "O my son, there is without an old man, a foreigner, who seeks thee. He has thine axe and sandals and came to the woodcutters and said to them, 'I went out at the hour of the call to morning prayer and happened on these and know not whose they are: direct me to their owner.' They knew thine axe and sent him to thee; and he is now sitting in my shop. So do thou go out to him and thank him and take thy gear." When I heard this, my colour changed and I was sick for terror but before I could think, the floor clove asunder and up came the stranger, and lo, it was the Afrit! Now he had tortured the lady in the most barbarous manner, without being able to make her confess: so he took the axe and sandals, saying, "As sure as I am Jerjis of the lineage of Iblis, I will bring back the owner of this axe and these sandals!" So he went to the woodcutters with the tale aforesaid, and they directed him to me. He snatched me up without parley and flew high into the air, but presently descended and plunged into the ground with me, and I the while unconscious. Then he came up with me in the underground palace, where I saw the lady stretched out naked, with the blood running from her sides. At this sight, my eyes ran over with tears; but the Afrit unbound her and veiling her, said to her, “O wanton, is not this thy lover?” She looked at me and said, “I know not this man, nor have I ever seen him till now.” Quoth he, “Wilt thou not confess after all this torture?” And she answered, “I never saw him in my life, and God forbid that I should lie against him and thou kill him.” “Then,” said he, “if thou know him not, take this sword and cut off his head.” She took the sword and came and stood at my head; and I made signs to her with my eyebrows whilst the tears ran down my cheeks. She understood me and signed to me with her eyes as who should say, “Thou hast brought all this upon us.” And I answered her, in the same fashion, that it was a time for forgiveness; and the tongue of the case spoke the words of the poet:

My looks interpret for my tongue and tell of what I feel: And all
the love appears that I within my heart conceal.
When as we meet and down our cheeks our tears are running fast,
I’m dumb, and yet my speaking eyes my thought of thee
reveal.
She signs to me; and I, I know the things her glances say: I with
my fingers sign, and she conceives the mute appeal.
Our eyebrows of themselves suffice unto our intercourse: We’re
mute; but passion none the less speaks in the looks we
steal.

Then she threw down the sword and said, “How shall I strike off the head of one whom I know not and who has done me no hurt? My religion will not allow of this.” Quoth the Afrit, “It is grievous to thee to kill thy lover. Because he hath lain a night with thee, thou endurest this torture and wilt not confess upon him. It is only like that pities like.” Then he turned to me and said, “O mortal, dost thou not know this woman?” “Who is she?” answered I. “I never saw her till now.” “Then,” said he “take this sword and strike off her head and I will believe that thou knowest her not and will let thee go and do thee no hurt.” Quoth I, “It is well;” and taking the sword, went up to her briskly and raised my hand. But she signed to me with her eyebrows, as who should say, “What hurt have I done thee? Is it thus thou requitest me?" I understood what she would say and replied in the same manner, "I will ransom thee with my life." And the tongue of the case repeated the following verses:

How many a lover with his eyelids speaks And doth his thought
unto his mistress tell
He flashes signals to her with his eyes, And she at once is ware
of what befell.
How swift the looks that pass betwixt the twain! How fair,
indeed, and how delectable!
One with his eyelids writes what he would say: The other with her
eyes the writ doth spell.

Then my eyes ran over with tears and I said, "O mighty Afrit and doughty hero! if a woman, lacking sense and religion, deem it unlawful to strike off my head, how can I, who am a man, bring myself to slay her whom I never saw in my life? Never will I do it, though I drink the cup of death and ruin!" And I threw the sword from my hand. Quoth the Afrit, "Ye show the good understanding between you, but I will let you see the issue of your doings." Then he took the sword and cut off the lady's hands and feet at four strokes; whilst I looked on and made sure of death; and she signed me a farewell with her eyes. Quoth he, "Thou cuckoldest me with thine eyes!" And struck off her head with a blow of his sword. Then he turned to me and said, "O mortal, by our law; when our wives commit adultery, it is lawful to us to put them to death. As for this woman, I stole her away on her wedding-night, when she was a girl of twelve, and she has known no one but myself. I used to come to her once in every ten days in the habit of a man, a foreigner, and pass one night with her; and when I was assured that she had played me false, I slew her. But as for thee, I am not sure that thou west her accomplice: nevertheless, I must not let thee go unharmed; but I will grant thee a favour." At this I rejoiced greatly and said, "What favour wilt thou grant me?" "I will give thee thy choice," replied he, "whether I shall change thee into a dog, an ass or an ape." Quoth I (and indeed I had hoped that he would pardon me), "By Allah, spare me, and God will reward thee for sparing a true believer, who hath done thee no harm.” And I humbled myself before him to the utmost and wept, saying, “Indeed, thou dost me injustice.” “Do not multiply words on me,” answered he; “it is in my power to kill thee: but I give thee thy choice.” “O Afrit,” rejoined I, “it would best become thee to pardon me, even as the envied pardoned the envier.” Quoth he, “And how was that?” “They say, O Afrit,” answered I, “that

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Story of the Envier and the Envied.

There dwelt once in a certain city two men, who occupied adjoining houses, having a common party-wall; and one of them envied the other and looked on him with an evil eye and did his utmost endeavour to work him ill; and his envy grew on him till he could hardly eat or enjoy the delight of sleep for it. But the envied man did nought but prosper, and the more the other strove to do him hurt, the more he increased and throve and flourished. At last the hatred his neighbour bore him and his constant endeavour to do him hurt came to his knowledge and he said, ‘By Allah, I will renounce the world on his account!’ So he left his native place and settled in a distant city, where he bought a piece of land, in which was a dried-up well, that had once been used for watering the fields. Here he built him an oratory, which he fitted up with all that he required, and took up his abode therein, devoting himself with a sincere heart to the service of God the Most High. Fakirs and poor folk soon flocked to him from all sides, and his fame spread abroad in the city, so that the notables resorted to him. After awhile, the news reached the envious man of the good fortune that had befallen his old neighbour and the high consideration in which he was held: so he set out for the town in which the latter dwelt and repaired to the hermitage, where the envied man welcomed him and received him with the utmost honour. Quoth the envier, ‘I have journeyed hither on purpose to tell thee a piece of good news. So order thy fakirs to retire to their cells and go with me apart, for I will not say what I have to tell thee, except privately where none may overhear us.’ Accordingly the envied man ordered the fakirs to retire to their cells; and they did so. Then he took the other by the hand and walked on with him a little way, till they came to the deserted well, when the envious man gave the other a push and cast him into the well, unseen of any; after which, he went out and went his way thinking that he had killed him. Now this well was haunted by Jinn, who bore up the envied man and let him down little by little, so that he reached the bottom unhurt, and they seated him on a stone. Then said one of the Jinn to the others, ‘Know ye who this is?’ And they answered, ‘No.’ Quoth he, ‘This is the envied man who fled from him who envied him and settled in our city, where he built him this oratory and entertains us with his litanies and recitations of the Koran. But the envious man set out and journeyed till he rejoined him and contrived to throw him into this well. Now the news of him hath this very night come to the Sultan of the city and he purposes to visit him to-morrow, on account of his daughter. ‘And what ails his daughter?’ asked another. ‘She is possessed of an evil spirit,’ replied the first, ‘for the genie Meimoun ben Demdem has fallen in love with her; but if the pious man knew the remedy, he could cure her; and it is the easiest of things.’ ‘And what is the remedy?’ asked the other. Quoth the first speaker ‘The black cat that is with him in the oratory has a white spot, the size of a dirhem, at the end of her tail: he should take seven white hairs from this spot and fumigate the princess therewith; whereupon the Marid will leave her and never return, and she will be cured immediately.’ And the envied man heard all this. When the day broke and the morning appeared and shone, the fakirs came to seek their chief and found him rising from the well, wherefore he was magnified in their eyes; and he took the black cat and plucking seven white hairs from the spot at the end of her tail, laid them aside. The sun had hardly risen when the King arrived and entered the hermitage, attended by his chief officers, leaving the rest of his suite without. The envied man bade him welcome and drawing near to him, said, ‘Shall I tell thee the object of thy visit?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the King. And he said, ‘Thou comest to consult me concerning thy daughter.’ Quoth the King, ‘Thou sayst truly, O virtuous elder!’ Then said the envied man, ‘Send and fetch her, and (God willing) I trust to cure her at once.’ The King rejoiced and sent for his daughter; and they brought her bound hand and foot. The envied man made her sit down behind a curtain and taking out the hairs, fumigated her with them; whereupon the Afrit that was in her roared out and departed from her. And she was restored to her right mind and veiled her face, saying, ‘What has happened and who brought me hither?’ At this, the Sultan rejoiced beyond measure and kissed her on the eyes and kissed the envied man’s hand. Then he turned to his officers and said, ‘How say you? What reward doth he deserve who cured my daughter?’ They answered, ‘He deserves to have her to wife;’ and the King, ‘Ye say well.’ So he married him to her, and the envied man became the King’s son-in-law. After awhile, the Vizier died, and the King said, ‘Whom shall we make Vizier in his stead?’ ‘Thy son-in-law,’ answered the courtiers. So the envied man was made Vizier. Presently the Sultan also died, and the grandees determined to appoint the Vizier King in his place. So they made him Sultan, and he became King regnant. One day, as he was riding forth in his royal state, surrounded by his Viziers and Amirs and grandees, his eyes fell on his old neighbour, the envious man; so he turned to one of his viziers and said to him, ‘Bring me yonder man and frighten him not.’ So the Vizier went and returned with the envious man: and the King said, ‘Give him a thousand dinars from my treasury and twenty loads of merchandise and send him under an escort to his own city.’ Then he bade him farewell and sent him away and forbore to punish him for what he had done with him See, O Afrit, how the envied man forgave his envier, who had always hated him and borne him malice and had journeyed to him and made shift to throw him into the well: yet did he not requite him his ill-doing, but on the contrary was bountiful to him and forgave him.” Then I wept before him exceeding sore, and repeated the following verses:

I prithee, pardon mine offence: for men of prudent mind To pardon unto those that sin their sins are still inclined.
If I, alas! contain in me all fashions of offence, Let there in thee forgiveness fair be found in every kind.
For men are bound to pardon those that are beneath their hand, If they themselves with those that be above them grace would find.

Quoth the Afrit, “I will neither kill thee nor let thee go free, but I will assuredly enchant thee.” Then he tore me from the ground and flew up with me into the air, till I saw the earth as it were a platter midmost the water. Presently he set me down on a mountain and took a little earth, over which he muttered some magical words, then sprinkled me with it, saying, “Quit this shape for that of an ape.” And immediately I became an ape, a hundred years old. Then he went away and left me; and when I saw myself in this ugly shape, I wept, but resigned myself to the tyranny of fate, knowing that fortune is constant to no one, and descended to the foot of the mountain, where found a wide plain. I fared on for the space of a month till my course brought me to the shore of the salt sea: where I stood awhile and presently caught sight of a ship in the midst of the sea, making for the land with a fair wind. I hid myself behind a rock on the beach and waited till the ship drew near, when I sprang on board. Quoth one of the passengers, "Turn this unlucky brute out from amongst us!" And the captain said, "Let us kill him." And a third, "I will kill him with this sword." But I laid hold of the captain's skirts and wept, and the tears ran down my face. The captain took pity on me and said, "O merchants, this ape appeals to me for protection, and I will protect him: henceforth he is under my safeguard, and none shall molest or annoy him." Then he entreated me kindly and whatever he said I understood and ministered to all his wants and waited on him, so that he loved me. The ship sailed on with a fair wind for the space of fifty days, at the end of which time we cast anchor over against a great city, wherein were much people, none could tell their number save God. No sooner had we come to an anchor, than we were boarded by officers from the King of the city; who said to the merchants, "Our King gives you joy of your safety and sends you this scroll of paper, on which each one of you is to write a line. For know that the King's Vizier, who was an excellent penman, is dead and the King has sworn a solemn oath that he will make none Vizier in his stead who cannot write like him." Then they gave them a scroll, ten cubits long by one wide, and each of the merchants, who could write, wrote a line therein: after which I rose and snatched the scroll from their hands, and they cried out at me and rated me, fearing that I would tear it or throw it into the sea. But I made signs that I would write; whereat they marvelled, saying, "We never saw an ape write!" And the captain said to them, "Let him alone; if he scrabble, we will drive him away and kill him; but if he write well, I will adopt him as my son, for I never saw so intelligent and well-mannered an ape; and would God my son had his sense and good breeding!" So I took the pen and dipping it in the inkhorn, wrote in an epistolary hand the following verses:

Time hath recorded the virtues of the great: But thine have
remained unchronicled till now.
May God not orphan the human race of thee, For sire and mother of
all good deeds art thou.

Then I wrote the following in a running hand:

Thou hast a pen whose use confers good gifts on every clime; Upon
all creatures of the world its happy favours fall.
What are the bounties of the Nile to thy munificence, Whose
fingers five extend to shower thy benefits on all?

And in an engrossing hand the following:

There is no writer but he shall pass away: Yet what he writes
shall last for ever and aye.
Write, therefore, nought but that which shall gladden thee, When
as it meets thine eye on the Judgment Day.

And in a transcribing hand the following:

When separation is to us by destiny decreed And ‘gainst the cruel
chance of Fate our efforts are in vain,
Unto the inkhorn’s mouth we fly that, by the tongues of pens, Of
parting and its bitterness it may for us complain.

And in a large formal hand the following:

The regal state endureth not to any mortal man. If thou deny
this, where is he who first on earth held sway?
Plant therefore saplings of good deeds, whilst that thou yet art
great Though thou be ousted from thy stead, they shall not
pass away.

And in a court hand the following:

When thou the inkhorn op’st of power and lordship over men, Make
thou thine ink of noble thoughts and generous purpose; then

Write gracious deeds and good therewith, whilst that thy power
endures. So shall thy virtues blazoned be at point of sword
and pen.

Then I gave the scroll to the officers, who took it and returned with it to the King. When he saw it, no writing pleased him but mine; so he said to his officers, "Go to the writer of these lines and dress him in a splendid robe; then mount him on a mule and bring him to me with a band of music before him." At this they smiled, and the King was wroth with them and said, "O accursed ones, I give you an order, and ye laugh at me!" "O King," answered they, "we have good cause to laugh." Quoth he, "What is it?" And they replied, "O King, thou orderest us to bring thee the man who wrote these lines: now he who wrote them is no man, but an ape belonging to the captain of the ship." "Can this be true?" asked he; and they said, "Yea, by thy munificence!" The King was astonished at their report and shook with mirth and said, "I have a mind to buy this ape of the captain." Then he sent messengers to the ship and said to them, "Dress him none the less in the robe and mount him on the mule and bring him hither in state, with the band of music before him." So they came to the ship and took me and clad me in the robe and mounted me on the mule and carried me in procession through the city; whilst the people were astounded and crowded to gaze upon me, and the place was all astir on my account. When I reached the King's presence, I kissed the earth before him three times, and he bade me be seated; so I sat down on my heels; and all the bystanders marvelled at my good manners, and the King most of all. After awhile the King dismissed his courtiers, and there remained but myself, his highness the King, an eunuch and a little white slave. Then the King gave orders and they brought the table of food, containing all kinds of birds that hop and fly and couple in the nests, such as grouse and quails and so forth. He signed to me to eat with him; so I rose and kissed the earth before him then sat down and ate with him. When we had done eating, the table was removed, and I washed my hands seven times. Then I took pen and ink and wrote the following verses:

Weep for the cranes that erst within the porringers did lie, And

for the stews and partridges evanished heave a sigh!
Mourn for the younglings of the grouse; lament unceasingly, As,
for the omelettes and the fowls browned in the pan, do I.
How my heart yearneth for the fish, that in its different kinds,
Upon a paste of wheaten flour lay hidden in the pie!
Praised be God for the roast meat! As in the dish it lay, With
pot-herbs, soaked in vinegar, in porringers hard by!
My hunger was appeased: I lay, intent upon the gleam Of arms that
in the frumenty were buried bracelet high.
I woke my sleeping appetite to eat, as ‘twere in jest, Of all the
tarts that, piled on trays, shone fair unto the eye.
O soul, have patience! For indeed, Fate full of marvel is: If
fortune straiten thee one day, the next relief is nigh.

Then I rose and seated myself at a distance, whilst the King read what I had written and marvelled and said “Strange that an ape should be gifted with such fluency and skill in penmanship! By Allah, this is a wonder of wonders!” Then they set choice wine before the King in flagons of glass; and he drank, then passed the cup to me; and I kissed the earth and drank and wrote the following verses:

They burnt me with fire, to make me speak, And found me
patient and debonair.
For this I am borne on men’s hands on high And kiss the rosy lips
of the fair!

And these also:

Morn struggles through the dusk; so pour me out, I pray, Of wine,
such wine as makes the saddest-hearted gay!
So pure and bright it is, that whether wine in glass Or glass in
wine be held, i’ faith, ’tis hard to say.

The King read them and said, with a sigh, “If a man had this quickness of wit, he would excel all the folk of his age and time.” Then he called for a chess-board and said to me, “Wilt thou play with me?" I signed with my head as who should say, "Yes," and came forward and placed the men and played two games with him, each of which I won, much to his amazement. Then I took the pen and wrote the following verses:

Two hosts throughout the live-long day contend in deadly fight,
That waxes ever till the shades of night upon them creep;
Then, when the darkness puts an end at last unto their strife,
Upon one couch and side by side, they lay them down to sleep.

These verses filled the King with wonder and delight, and he said to the eunuch, "Go to thy mistress, the Lady of Beauty, and bid her come and amuse herself with the sight of this wonderful ape." So the eunuch went out and presently returned with the lady, who, when she saw me, veiled her face, and said, "O my father, how comes it that thou art pleased to send for me and show me to strange men?" "O my daughter," said he, "there is none here save the little slave and the eunuch who reared thee and myself, thy father. From whom then dost thou veil thy face?" Quoth she, "This that thou deemest an ape is a wise and learned man, the son of a king; the Afrit Jerjis of the lineage of Iblis enchanted him thus, after putting to death his own wife, the daughter of King Efitamous, Lord of the Ebony Islands." At this the King wondered and turning to me, said, "Is this true that she says of thee?" And I signed with my head, as who should say, "Yes;" and wept. Then said he to his daughter, "Whence knewest thou that he was enchanted?" "O my father," answered she, "there was with me, in my childhood, an old woman who was skilled in magic and taught me its rules and practice; and I became skilled therein and committed to memory a hundred and seventy magical formulas, by the least of which I could transport the stones of thy?? behind the mountain Caf and make its site an abyss of the sea and its people fishes swimming in its midst." "O my daughter," said her father, "I conjure thee, by my life, to disenchant this young man, that I may make him my Vizier, for he is a right pleasant and ingenious youth." "With all my heart," replied she, and taking a knife, on which were engraved Hebrew characters, drew therewith a circle in the midst of the hall and wrote there in names and talismans and muttered words and charms, some of which we understood and others not. Presently the world darkened upon us, and the Afrit presented himself before us in his own shape and aspect, with hands like pitchforks legs like masts and eyes like flames of fire. We were affrighted at him, but the princess said to him, “An ill welcome to thee, O dog!” Whereupon he took the form of a lion and said to her, “O traitress, thou hast broken thy compact with me! Did we not swear that neither of us should molest the other?” “O accursed one,” answered she, “how could there be a compact between me and the like of thee?” “Then,” said he, “take what thou hast brought on thyself.” And opening his mouth, rushed upon her: but she made haste and plucked a hair from her head and waved it in the air, muttering the while; and it at once became a sharp sword, with which she smote the lion and cut him in two. His head became a scorpion, whereupon the princess transformed herself into a great serpent and fell upon the scorpion and there befell a sore battle between them. Presently the scorpion changed to an eagle, and the serpent at once became a griffin, which pursued the eagle a long while, till the latter became a black cat. Thereupon the griffin became a piebald wolf and they fought long and sore, till the cat finding itself beaten, changed into a worm and crept into a pomegranate which lay beside the fountain in the midst of the hall whereupon the pomegranate swelled till it was as big as a watermelon. The wolf ran to seize it, but it rose into the air and falling on the pavement, broke in pieces, and all the seeds fell out and rolled hither and thither, till the floor was covered with them. Then the wolf shook itself and became a cock, which fell to picking up the seeds, till they were all gone, except one that, by the decree of Fate, had rolled to the side of the basin and lay hidden there. The cock began to crow and clap its wings and signed to us with his beak, as who should say, “Are there any grains left?” But we understood him not; and he gave such a cry that we thought the palace would fall on us. Then he ran about all over the hall, till he saw the remaining pomegranate-seed, and rushed to pick it up, but it sprang into the midst of the water and became a fish, which sank to the bottom of the basin. Thereupon the cock became big fish and plunged in after the other; and we saw nothing of them for a time, but heard a loud crying and screaming and trembled. Presently the Afrit rose out of the water, as he were one great flame, with fire and smoke issuing from his mouth and eyes and nostrils. Immediately after, the princess rose also, like a great coal of fire, and they fought till they were wrapped in flames and the hall was filled with smoke. As for us, we were well-nigh suffocated and hid ourselves and would have plunged into the water, fearing lest we be burnt up and destroyed: and the King said, "There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! We are God's and to Him we return! Would God I had not urged my daughter to attempt the delivery of this ape, whereby I have imposed on her this fearful labour with yonder accursed Afrit, against whom all the other Afrits in the world could not prevail! And would we had never seen this ape, may God's blessing not be on him nor on the hour of his coming! We thought to do him a kindness for the love of God, by freeing him from this enchantment, and lo, we have brought this terrible travail upon ourselves!" But my tongue was tied and I could not say a word to him. Suddenly, the Afrit roared out from under the flames and coming up to us, as we stood on the dais, blew fire in our faces. The princess pursued him and blew flames at him, and the sparks from them both fell upon us; her sparks did us no hurt, but of his one lighted on my right eye and destroyed it; another fell on the King's face and scorched the lower part, burning away half his beard and making his under teeth drop out, and a third lighted on the eunuch's breast and set him on fire, so that he was consumed and died forthright. So we despaired of life and looked for nothing but death; but presently we heard a voice exclaiming, "God is most great! He giveth aid and victory to the true believer and abandoneth him who denieth the religion of Mohammed, the Moon of the Faith!" And lo, the King's daughter had burnt up the Afrit and he was become a heap of ashes! Then she came up to us and said, "Bring me a cup of water." They did so: and she spoke over the water words we understood not and sprinkled me with it, saying, "By the virtue of the Truth and of the Most Great Name of God, return to thine original shape!" And immediately I shook and became a man as before, save that I had lost my right eye. Then she cried out, "The fire! The fire! O my father, I have but an instant to live, for I am not used to fight with Jinn: had he been a man, I had slain him long ago. I had no travail till the time when the pomegranate burst asunder and I overlooked the seed in which was the genie's life. Had I picked it up, he would have died at once; but as fate and destiny would have it, I knew not of this, so that he came upon me unawares and there befell between us a sore strife under the earth and in the air and in the water: and as often as I opened on him a gate (of magic), he opened on me another, till at last he opened on me the gate of fire, and seldom does he on whom the gate of fire is opened escape alive. But Providence aided me against him, so that I consumed him first, after I had summoned him to embrace the faith of Islam. As for me, I am a dead woman and may God supply my place to you!" Then she called upon God for help and ceased not to implore relief from the fire, till presently a tongue of fierce flame broke out from her clothes and shot up to her breast and thence to her face. When it reached her face, she wept and said, "I testify that there is no god but God and that Mohammed is the apostle of God!" And we looked at her and behold, she was a heap of ashes beside those of the genie. We mourned for her and I wished I had been in her place, so had I not seen the fair-faced one who had done me this good office reduced to ashes; but there is no averting the decree of God. When the King saw what had befallen his daughter, he plucked out the rest of his beard and buffeted his face and rent his clothes; and I did the like, and we both wept for her. Then came in the chamberlains and grandees and were amazed to find two heaps of ashes and the Sultan in a swoon. So they stood round him till he revived and told them what had happened, whereat they were sore afflicted and the women and slave-girls shrieked aloud and kept up their lamentation for the space of seven days. Moreover, the King bade build a great dome over his daughter's ashes and burn therein candles and lamps: but the Afrit's ashes they scattered to the winds, committing them to the malediction of God. The King was sick, well-nigh unto death, for a month's space, after which health returned to him and His beard grew again. Then he sent for me and said to me, "O youth, verily we led the happiest of lives, safe from the vicissitudes of fortune, till thou camest to us, when troubles flocked upon us. O that we had never seen thee nor the ugly face of thee! For through our taking pity on thee, we are come to this state of bereavement. I have lost, on thine account, first, my daughter, who was worth a hundred men; secondly, I have suffered what befell me by the fire and the loss of my teeth, and my eunuch also is dead. I do not indeed blame thee for aught of this; for all was decreed of God to us and to thee; and praised be He that my daughter delivered thee, though at the cost of her own life! But now, O my son, depart from my city and let what has befallen us on thine account suffice. Depart in peace, and if I see thee again I will kill thee." And he cried out at me. So I went forth from his presence, knowing not whither I should go, and hardly believing in my escape. And I recalled all that had befallen me from first to last and thanked God that it was my eye that I had lost and not my life. Before I left the town, I entered the bath and shaved my head and put on a hair-cloth garment. Then I fared forth at a venture, and every day I recalled all the misfortunes that had befallen me and wept and repeated the following verses:

By the Compassionate, I'm dazed and know not where I go. Griefs
flock on me from every side, I know not whence they grow.
I will endure till patience' self less patient is than I: I will
have patience till it please the Lord to end my woe.
A vanquished man, without complaint, my doom I will endure, As
the parched traveller in the waste endures the torrid glow.
I will endure till aloes' self confess that I, indeed, Can
'gainst a bitt'rer thing abide than even it can show.
There is no bitt'rer thing; and yet if patience play me false, It
were to me a bitt'rer thing than all the rest, I trow.
The wrinkles graven on my heart would speak my hidden pain If
through my breast the thought could pierce and read what
lies below.
Were but my load on mountains laid, they'd crumble into dust; On
fire it would be quenched outright; on wind, 'twould cease
to blow.
Let who will say that life is sweet; to all there comes a day
When they must needs a bitt'rer thing than aloes
undergo.

Then I journeyed through many lands and cities, intending for the

Abode of Peace, Baghdad, in the hope that I might get speech of the Commander of the Faithful and tell him all that had befallen me. I arrived here this night and found my brother, this first Calender, standing perplexed; so I saluted him and entered into converse with him. Presently up came our brother, this third Calender, and said to us, “Peace be on you! I am a stranger.” “We also are strangers,” answered we, “and have come hither this blessed night.” So we all three walked on together, none of us knowing the others’ story, till chance brought us to this door and we came in to you. This, then, is my story and the manner of the shaving of my face and the loss of my eye.’ Quoth the mistress of the house, ‘Thy story is indeed a rare one: and now begone about thy business.’ But he replied, ‘I will not stir till I hear the others’ stories.’ Then came forward the third Calender and said, ‘O illustrious lady, my history is not like that of these my comrades, but still stranger and more marvellous, in that, whilst destiny and fore-ordained fate overcame them unawares, I with mine own hand drew fate and affliction upon myself, as thou shalt presently hear. Know that

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

Story of the Third Calender.

I also am a king, the son of a king, and my name is Agib, son of Khesib. My father died, and I took the kingdom after him and ruled my subjects with justice and beneficence. My capital city stood on the shore of a wide spreading sea, on which I had fifty merchant ships and fifty smaller vessels for pleasure and a hundred and fifty cruisers equipped for war; and near at hand were many great islands in the midst of the ocean. Now I loved to sail the sea and had a mind to visit the islands aforesaid so I took ship with a month's victual and set out and took my pleasure in the islands and returned to my capital Then, being minded to make a longer voyage upon the ocean, I fitted out half a score ships with provision for two months and sailed twenty days, till one night the wind blew contrary and the sea rose against us with great billows; the waves clashed together and there fell on us a great darkness. So we gave ourselves up for lost and I said, "He who perils himself is not to be commended, though he come off safe." Then we prayed to God and besought Him, but the wind ceased not to rage and the waves to clash together, till daybreak, when the wind fell, the sea became calm and the sun shone out. Presently we sighted an island, where we landed and cooked food and ate and rested two days. Then we set out again and sailed other twenty days, without seeing land; but the currents carried us out of our true course, so that the captain lost his reckoning and finding himself in strange waters, bade the watch go up to the mast-head and look out. So he climbed the mast and looked out and said "O captain, I see nothing to right and left save sky and water, but ahead I see something looming afar off in the midst of the sea, now black and now white." When the captain heard the look-out's words, he cast his turban on the deck and plucked out his beard and buffeted his face and said, "O King, we are all dead men, not one of us can be saved." We all wept for his weeping and I said to him, "O captain, tell us what it is the look-out saw." "O my lord," answered he, "know that we lost our way on the night of the storm and since then we have gone astray one-and-twenty days and there is no wind to bring us back to our true course. To-morrow, by the end of the day, we shall come to a mountain of black stone, called loadstone, for thither the currents bear us perforce. As soon as we come within a certain distance, all the nails in the ships will fly out and fasten to the mountain, and the ships will open and fall to pieces, for that God the Most High has gifted the loadstone with a secret virtue, by reason whereof all iron is attracted to it; and on this mountain is much iron, how much God only knows, from the many ships that have been wrecked there from old time. On its summit there stands a dome of brass, raised on ten columns and on the top of the dome are a horse and horseman of the same metal. The latter holds in his hand a brazen lance and on his breast is a tablet of lead, graven with names and talismans: and, O King, it is nought but this horseman that causeth the folk to perish, nor will the charm be broken till he fall from his horse." Then he wept sore and we all made sure of death and each took leave of his comrade and charged him with his last wishes, in case he should be saved. That night we slept not, and in the morning, we sighted the loadstone mountain, towards which the currents carried us with irresistible force. When the ships came within a certain distance, they opened and the nails started out and all the iron in them sought the loadstone and clove to it; so that by the end of the day, we were all struggling in the sea round the mountain. Some of us were saved, but the most part drowned, and even those who escaped knew not one of the other, being stupefied by the raging wind and the buffeting of the waves. As for me, God preserved me that I might suffer that which He willed to me of trouble and torment and affliction, for I got on a plank from one of the ships and, the wind driving it ashore, I happened on a pathway leading to the top, as it were a stair hewn out of the rock. So I called upon the name of God the Most High and besought His succour and clinging to the steps, addressed myself to climb up little by little. And God stilled the wind and aided me in my ascent, so that I reached the summit in safety. There I found nothing but the dome; so I entered, mightily rejoiced at my escape, and made my ablutions and prayed a two-bow prayer in gratitude to God for my preservation. Then I fell asleep under the dome and saw in a dream one who said to me, "O son of Khesib, when thou awakest, dig under thy feet and thou wilt find a bow of brass and three leaden arrows, inscribed with talismanic characters. Take the bow and shoot the arrows at the horseman on the top of the dome and rid mankind of this great calamity. When thou shootest at him, he will fall into the sea and the horse will drop at thy feet: take it and bury it in the place of the bow. This done, the sea will swell and rise till it is level with the top of the mountain, and there will appear on it a boat containing a man of brass (other than he whom thou shalt have thrown down), with an oar in his hands. He will come to thee, and do thou embark with him, but beware of naming God. He will row with thee for the space of ten days, till he brings thee to a port of safety, where thou shalt find those who will carry thee to thine own country: and all this shall be fulfilled to thee, so thou pronounce not the name of God." I started up from my sleep and hastening to do the bidding of the mysterious voice, found the bow and arrows and shot at the horseman and overthrew him; whereupon he fell into the sea, whilst the horse dropped at my feet and I took it and buried it. Then the sea grew troubled and rose till it reached the top of the mountain; nor had I long to wait before I saw a boat in the midst of the sea coming towards me. So I gave thanks to God: and when the boat came up to me, I saw in it a man of brass, with a tablet of lead on his breast, inscribed with names and talismans; and I embarked without saying a word. The boatman rowed on with me for ten whole days, till I caught sight of islands and mountains and signs of safety; whereat I was beyond measure rejoiced and in the excess of my gladness, I called upon the name of the Almighty and exclaimed, "There is no god but God! God is most great!" When behold, the boat turned over and cast me out into the sea, then righted and sank beneath the water. Now, I knew how to swim, so I swam the whole day till nightfall, when my arms and shoulders failed me for fatigue, and I abode in mortal peril and made the profession of the Faith, looking for nothing but death. Presently, the sea rose, for the greatness of the wind, and a wave like a great rampart took me and bearing me forward, cast me up on the land, that the will of God might be done. I clambered up the beach and, putting off my clothes, wrung them and spread them out to dry, then lay down and slept all night. As soon as it was day, I put on my clothes and rose to look about me. Presently I came to a grove of trees and making a circuit round it, found that I was on a little island, surrounded on all sides by the sea; whereupon I said to myself, “No sooner do I escape from one peril than I fall into a worse.” But as I was pondering my case and wishing for death, I spied a ship afar off making towards me; so I climbed up into a tree and hid myself among the branches. Presently the ship came to an anchor, and ten slaves landed, bearing spades, and made for the middle of the island, where they dug till they uncovered a trapdoor and raised it. Then they returned to the ship and brought thence bread and flour and oil and honey and meat and carpets and all else that was needed to furnish one dwelling there; nor did they leave going back and forth till they had transferred to the underground dwelling all that was in the ship: after which they again repaired to the vessel and returned, laden with wearing apparel of the finest kind and in their midst a very old man, whom time had mauled till he was wasted and worn, as he were a bone wrapped in a rag of blue cloth, through which the winds blew East and West. As says the poet of him:

Time makes us tremble ah, how piteously! For full of violence and
might is he.
Once on a time I walked and was not tired: Now am I tired, yet
have not walked, ah me!

He held by the hand a youth cast in the mould of symmetry and perfection, so fair that his beauty might well be the subject of proverbs; for he was like a tender sapling, ravishing every heart with his beauty and seducing every wit with his amorous grace. It was of him the poet spoke, when he said:

Beauty they brought to liken it with him: But Beauty hung its
head for shame and fear.
“O Beauty,” said they, “dost thou know his like?” It answered,
“Never have I seen his peer.”

They proceeded to the underground, where they descended all and did not reappear for an hour or more, at the end of which time the old man and the slaves came up, without the youth, and replacing the trap-door, covered it again with earth; then returned to the ship and set sail. As soon as they were out of sight, I came down from the tree and going to the place I had seen them fill up, made shift to clear away the earth, till I came to the trap-door, which was of wood, the shape and bigness of a mill-stone, and raised it, when there appeared underneath a winding stair of stone. At this I wondered and descending, came to a fair chamber, spread with various kinds of carpets and hung with silken stuffs, where I saw the youth sitting alone upon a raised couch and leant upon a cushion, with a fan in his hand and sweet-scented flowers and herbs and fruits before him. When he saw me, he turned pale; but I saluted him, saying, “Calm thyself and put away fear; no harm shall come to thee: I am a man like unto thee and a king’s son, whom Providence hath sent to bear thee company in thy solitude. But now tell me thy history and why thou dwellest underground by thyself.” When he was assured that I was of his kind, he was glad and his colour returned; then he made me draw near to him and said, “O my brother, my story is a strange one, and it is as follows. My father is a merchant jeweller, possessed of great wealth and having black and white slaves, who make trading voyages, on his account, in ships and on camels, to the most distant countries; and he has dealings with kings. Until my birth, he had never been blessed with a child, but one night he dreamt that a son had been born to him, who lived but a short time, and awoke weeping and crying out. The following night my mother conceived and he took note of the date of her conception. The days of her pregnancy were accomplished and she gave birth to myself, whereupon my father rejoiced and made banquets and fed the poor and the needy for that I had been vouchsafed to him in his old age. Then he assembled the astrologers and mathematicians of the day and those learned in nativities and horoscopes; and they drew my horoscope and said to my father, ‘Thy son will live till the age of fifteen, at which date there is a break in his line of life, which if he tide over in safety, he shall live long. The danger with which he is threatened is as follows. In the Sea of Peril stands a mountain called the Loadstone Mountain, on whose summit is a horseman of brass, seated on a horse of the same metal, with a tablet of lead on his breast. Fifty days after this horseman falls from his horse, thy son will die, and his slayer will be he who overthrows the statue, a king called Agib, son of Khesib.’ My father was sore concerned at this prediction; but he brought me up and gave me a good education, till I attained my fifteenth year. Ten days ago, news came to him that the horseman had fallen into the sea and that he who overthrew him was Agib, son of King Khesib; whereat he was as one distraught and feared for my life. So he built me this place under the earth and stocking it with all that I need during the forty days that yet remain of the period of danger, transported me hither, that I might be safe from King Agib’s hands. When the forty days are past, he will come back and fetch me; and this is my story and why thou findest me here alone.” When I heard his story, I marvelled and said to myself, “I am that King Agib of whom he speaks; but, by Allah, I will assuredly not kill him!” And I said to him, “O my lord, God willing, thou shalt be spared suffering and death, nor shalt thou see trouble or sorrow or disquiet, for I will abide with thee and serve thee; and when I have borne thee company during the appointed days, I will go with thee to thy dwelling-place and thou shalt bring me to some of thy father’s servants, with whom I may journey to my own country; and God shall requite thee for me.” He rejoiced in my words and we sat conversing till nightfall when I rose and lighted a great wax candle and fed the lamps and set on meat and drink and sweetmeats. We ate and drank and sat talking till late into the night, when he lay down to sleep and I covered him up and went to sleep myself. Next morning, I rose and heated a little water, then woke him gently and brought him the warm water, with which he washed his face and thanked me, saying, “God requite thee with good, O youth! By Allah, if I escape from this my danger and from him they call Agib ben Khesib, I will make my father reward thee!” “May the day never come on which evil shall befall thee,” answered I, “and may God appoint my last day before thine!” Then I set on food and we ate, and I made ready perfumes with which he scented himself. Moreover, I made him a backgammon board, and we played and ate sweetmeats and played again till nightfall when I rose and lighting the lamps, set on food; and we ate and sat talking till the night was far spent. Then he lay down to sleep and I covered him up and went to sleep myself. Thus I did with him, day and night, and the love of him got hold upon my heart and I forgot my troubles and said to myself, “The astrologers lied; by Allah, I will not kill him!" I ceased not to serve him and bear him company and entertain him thus, till nine-and-thirty days were passed and we came to the morning of the fortieth day, when he rejoiced and said to me, "O my brother, the forty days are up to-day, praised be God who hath preserved me from death, and this by thy blessing and the blessing of thy coming to me, and I pray Him to restore thee to thy country! But now, O my brother, I prithee heat me some water, that I may wash my body and change my clothes." "With all my heart," answered I; and heated water in plenty and carrying it in to him, washed his body well with lupin-meal and rubbed him down and changed his clothes and spread him a high bed, on which he lay down to rest after the bath. Then said he, "O my brother, cut me a melon and sweeten it with sugar-candy." So I went to the closet and bringing a fine melon I found there on a platter, said to him, "O my lord, hast thou no knife?" "Here it is," answered he, "on the high shelf at my head." So I got up hurriedly and taking the knife, drew it from its sheath; but in stepping down backward, my foot slipped and I fell heavily on the youth, holding in my hand the knife, which hastened to fulfil that which was ordained and entered his heart, and he died forthright. When I saw that he was no more and that I had indeed killed him, I cried out grievously and buffeted my face and tore my clothes, saying, "We are God's and to Him we return! There remained for this youth but one day of the period of danger that the astrologers had foretold for him, and the death of this fair one was to be at my hand! Verily, my life is nought but disasters and afflictions! Would he had not asked me to cut the melon or would I had died before him! But what God decrees cometh to pass." When I was certain that there was no life left in him, I rose and ascending the stair, replaced the trap-door and covered it with earth. Then I looked out to sea and saw the ship cleaving the waters in the direction of the island. Whereat I was afeared and said, "They will be here anon and will find their son dead and know 'twas I killed him and will slay me without fail." So I climbed up into a high tree and hid myself among the leaves. Hardly had I done so, when the vessel came to an anchor and the slaves landed with the old man and made direct for the place, where they cleared away the earth and were surprised to find it soft. Then they raised the trap-door and going down, found the boy lying dead, clad in clean clothes, with his face shining from the bath and the knife sticking in his breast. At this sight, they shrieked aloud and wept and buffeted their faces and cried out, “Alas! woe worth the day!” whilst the old man swooned away and remained so long insensible, that the slaves thought he would not survive his son. So they wrapped the dead youth in his clothes and carried him up and laid him on the ground, covering him with a shroud of silk. Then they addressed themselves to transport all that was in the place to the ship, and presently the old man revived and coming up after them, saw his son laid out, whereupon he fell on the ground and strewed dust on his head and buffeted his face and tore his beard; and his weeping redoubled, as he hung over his dead son, till he swooned away again. After awhile the slaves came back, with a silken carpet, and laying the old man thereon, sat down at his head. All this time I was in the tree above them, watching them; and indeed my heart became hoary before my head, for all the grief and affliction I had undergone. The old man ceased not from his swoon till nigh upon sundown, when he came to himself and looking upon his dead son, recalled what had happened and how what he had feared had come to pass: and he buffeted his face and head and recited the following verses:

My heart is cleft in twain for severance of loves; The burning
tears pour down in torrents from my eye.
My every wish with him I loved is fled away: What can I do or
say? what help, what hope have I?
Would I had never looked upon his lovely face! Alas, the ways on
me are straitened far and nigh!
What charm can bring me peace, what drink forgetfulness, Whilst
in my heart the fire of love burns fierce and high?
Would that my feet had trod with him the road of death! Then
should I not, as now, in lonely sorrow sigh.
O God, that art my hope, have pity upon me! Unite us twain, I
crave, in Paradise for aye!
How blessed were we once, whilst one house held us both And
twinned in pure content our happy lives passed by!
Till fortune aimed at us the shafts of severance And parted us;

for who her arrows can defy?
For lo! the age's pearl, the darling of his folk, The mould of
every grace, was singled out to die!
I call him back: "Would God thine hour had never come!" What
while the case takes speech and doth forestall my cry.
Which is the speediest way to win to thee, my son! My soul had
paid the price, if that thy life might buy.
The sun could not compare with him, for lo! it sets. Nor yet the
moon that wanes and wasteth from the sky.
Alas, my grief for thee and my complaint of fate! None can
console for thee nor aught thy place supply.
Thy sire is all distraught with languishment for thee; Since
death upon thee came, his hopes are gone awry.
Surely, some foe hath cast an envious eye on us: May he who
wrought this thing his just deserts aby!

Then he sobbed once and gave up the ghost; whereupon the slaves cried out, "Alas, our master!" and strewed dust on their heads and wept sore. Then they carried the two bodies to the ship and set sail. As soon as they were out of sight, I came down from the tree and raising the trap-door, went down into the underground dwelling, where the sight of some of the youth's gear recalled him to my mind, and I repeated the following verses:

I see their traces and pine for longing pain; My tears rain down
on the empty dwelling-place!
And I pray to God, who willed that we should part, One day to
grant us reunion, of His grace!

Then I went up again and spent the day in walking about the island, returning to the underground dwelling for the night. Thus I lived for a month, during which time I became aware that the sea was gradually receding day by day from the western side of the island, till by the end of the month, I found that the water was become low enough to afford a passage to the mainland. At this I rejoiced, making sure of delivery, and fording the little water that remained, made shift to reach the mainland, where I found great heaps of sand, in which even a camel would sink up to the knees. However, I took heart and making my way through the sand, espied something shining afar off, as it were a bright-blazing fire. So I made towards it, thinking to find succour and repeating the following verses:

It may be Fate at last shall draw its bridle-rein And bring me
happy chance; for Fortune changes still;
And things shall happen yet, despite the things fordone, To
further forth my hopes and bring me to my will.

When I drew near the supposed fire, behold, it was a palace, with a gate of brass, whereon, when the sun shone, it gleamed and glistened and showed from afar, as it were a fire. I rejoiced at the sight and sat down before the palace gate; but hardly had I done so, when there came up ten young men, sumptuously clad and all blind of the right eye. They were accompanied by an old man; and I marvelled at their appearance and at their being all blind of the same eye. They saluted me and questioned me of my condition, whereupon I told them all that had befallen me. They wondered at my story and carried me into the palace, where I saw ten couches, with beds and coverlets of blue stuff, ranged in a circle, with a like couch of smaller size in the midst. As we entered, each of the young men went up to his own couch, and the old man seated himself on the smaller one in the middle. Then said they unto me, “O youth, sit down on the ground and enquire not of our doings nor of the loss of our right eyes.” Presently the old man rose and brought each one of the young men and myself his portion of meat and drink in separate vessels; and we sat talking, they questioning me of my adventures and I replying, till the night was far spent. Then said they to the old man, “O elder, wilt thou not bring us our ordinary? The time is come.” “Willingly,” answered he, and rose and entering a closet, disappeared and presently returned, bearing on his head ten dishes, each covered with a piece of blue stuff. He set a dish before each youth and lighting ten wax-candles, set one upon each dish; after which he uncovered the dishes, and lo, they were full of ashes and powdered charcoal and soot. Then all the young men tucked up their sleeves and fell to weeping and lamenting; and they blackened their faces and rent their clothes and buffeted their cheeks and beat their breasts, exclaiming “We were seated at our ease, but our impertinent curiosity would not let us be!” They ceased not to do thus till near daybreak, when the old man rose and heated water for them, and they washed their faces and put on fresh clothes. When I saw this, my senses left me for wonderment and my heart was troubled and my mind perplexed, for their strange behaviour, till I forgot what had befallen me and could not refrain from questioning them; so I said to them, “What makes you do thus, after our sport and merry-making together? Praised be God, ye are whole of wit, yet these are the doings of madmen! I conjure you, by all that is most precious to you, tell me why you behave thus and how ye came to lose each an eye!” At this, they turned to me and said, “O young man, let not thy youth beguile thee, but leave thy questioning.” Then they slept and I with them, and when we awoke, the old man served up food; and after we had eaten and the vessels had been removed, we sat conversing till nightfall, when the old man rose and lit the candles and lamps and set meat and drink before us. We ate and sat talking and carousing till midnight, when they said to the old man, “Bring us our ordinary, for the hour of sleep is at hand.” So he rose and brought them the dishes of soot and ashes, and they did as they had done on the preceding night. I abode with them on this wise for a month, during which time they blackened their faces every night, then washed them and changed their clothes and my trouble and amazement increased upon me till I could neither eat nor drink. At last, I lost patience and said to them, “O young men, if ye will not relieve my concern and acquaint me with the reason of your blackening your faces and the meaning of your words, ‘We were seated at our ease, but our impertinent curiosity would not let us be,’ let me leave you and return to my own people and be at rest from seeing these things, for as says the proverb,

‘Twere wiser and better your presence to leave, For when the eye sees not, the heart does not grieve.”

“O youth,” answered they, “we have not concealed this thing from thee but in our concern for thee, lest what befell us before thee and thou become like unto us.” “It avails not,” said I; “you must tell me.” “We give thee good advice,” rejoined they; “do thou take it and leave questioning us of our case, or thou wilt become one-eyed like unto us.” But I still persisted in my demand and they said, “O youth, if this thing befall thee, we warn thee that we will never again receive thee into our company nor let thee abide with us.” Then they took a ram and slaughtering it, skinned it and gave me a knife, saying, “Lie down on the skin and we will sew thee up in it and leave thee and go away. Presently there will come to thee a bird called the roc, that will catch thee up in its claws and fly away with thee and set thee down on a mountain. As soon as thou feelest it alight with thee, slit the skin with the knife and come forth; whereupon the bird will take fright at thee and fly away and leave thee. Then rise and fare on half a day’s journey, till thou comest to a palace rising high into the air, builded of khelenj and aloes and sandal-wood and plated with red gold, inlaid with all manner emeralds and other jewels. There enter and thou wilt attain thy desire. We all have been in that place, and this is the cause of the loss of our right eyes and the reason why we blacken our faces. Were we to tell thee our stories, it would take too much time, for each lost his eye by a separate adventure.” They then sewed me up in the skin and left me on the ground outside the palace; and the roc carried me off and set me down on the mountain. I cut open the skin and came out, whereupon the bird flew away and I walked on till I reached the palace. The door stood open; so I entered and found myself in a very wide and goodly hall, as big as a tilting-ground, round which were a hundred doors of sandal and aloes-wood, plated with red gold and furnished with rings of silver. At the upper end of the hall, I saw forty young ladies, sumptuously clad and adorned, as they were moons, one could never tire of gazing on them: and they all came up to me, saying, “Welcome and fair welcome, O my lord! This month past have we been expecting the like of thee; and praised be God who hath sent us one who is worthy of us and we of him!” Then they made me sit down on a high divan and said to me, “From to-day thou art our lord and master, and we are thy handmaids; so order us as thou wilt.” And I marvelled at their case. Presently one of them arose and set food before me, and I ate, whilst others heated water and washed my hands and feet and changed my clothes, and yet others made ready sherbets and gave me to drink; and they were all full of joy and delight at my coming. Then they sat down and conversed with me till nightfall, when five of them arose and spreading a mat, covered it with flowers and fruits and confections in profusion and set on wine; and we sat down to drink, while some of them sang and others played the lute and psaltery and recorders and other instruments. So the cup went round amongst us and such gladness possessed me that I forgot all the cares of the world and said, "This is indeed life, but that it is fleeting." We ceased not to drink and make merry till the night was far spent and we were warm with wine, when they said to me, "O our lord, choose from amongst us one who shall be thy bedfellow this night and not lie with thee again till forty days be past." So I chose a girl fair of face, with liquid black eyes and jetty hair, slightly parted teeth and joining eyebrows, perfect in shape and form, as she were a palm-sapling or a stalk of sweet basil; such an one as troubles the heart and bewilders the wit, even as saith of her the poet:

'Twere vain to liken her unto the tender branch, And out on who
compares her form to the gazelle!
Whence should gazelles indeed her shape's perfection get Or yet
her honeyed lips so sweet to taste and smell,
Or those great eyes of hers, so dire to those who love, That bind
their victims fast in passion's fatal spell?
I dote on her with all the folly of a child. What wonder if he
turn a child who loves too well!

And I repeated to her the following verses:

My eyes to gaze on aught but thy grace disdain And none but thou
in my thought shall ever reign.
The love of thee is my sole concern, my fair; In love of thee, I
will die and rise again.

So I lay with her that night, never knew I a fairer, and when it was morning, the ladies carried me to the bath and washed me and clad me in rich clothes. Then they served up food and we ate and drank, and the cup went round amongst us till the night, when I chose from among them one who was fair to look upon and soft of sides, such an one as the poet describes, when he says:

I saw upon her breast two caskets snowy-white, Musk-sealed; she doth forbid to lovers their delight.
She guards them with the darts that glitter from her eyes; And those who would them press, her arrowy glances smite.

I passed a most delightful night with her; and to make a long story short, I led the goodliest life with them, eating and drinking and carousing and every night taking one or other of them to my bed, for a whole year, at the end of which time they came in to me in tears and fell to bidding me farewell and clinging to me, weeping and crying out; whereat I marvelled and said to them, "What ails you? Indeed you break my heart." "Would we had never known thee!" answered they. "We have companied with many men, but never saw we a pleasanter or more courteous than thou: and now we must part from thee. Yet it rests with thee to see us again, and if thou hearken to us, we need never be parted: but our hearts forebode us that thou will not hearken to us; and this is the cause of our weeping" "Tell me how the case stands," said I; and they answered, "Know that we are the daughters of kings, who have lived here together for years past, and once in every year we are absent for forty days; then we return and abide here for the rest of the year, eating and drinking and making merry. We are now about to depart according to our custom, and we fear lest thou disobey our injunctions in our absence, in which case we shall never see thee again; but if thou do as we bid thee, all will yet be well. Take these keys: they are those of the hundred apartments of the palace, each of which contains what will suffice thee for a day's entertainment. Ninety-and-nine of these thou mayst open and take thy pleasure therein, but beware lest thou open the hundredth, that which has a door of red gold; for therein is that which will bring about a separation between us and thee." Quoth I, "I will assuredly not open the hundredth door, if therein be separation from you." Then one of them came up to me and embraced me and repeated the following verses:

If but the days once more our severed loves unite, If but my eyes

once more be gladdened by thy sight,
Then shall the face of Time smile after many a frown, And I will
pardon Fate for all its past despite.

And I repeated the following:

When she drew near to bid farewell, upon our parting day, Whilst
on her heart the double stroke of love and longing smote,
She wept pure pearls, and eke mine eyes did rain cornelians
forth; And lo, they all combined and made a necklace for her
throat!

When I saw her weeping, I said, “By Allah, I will never open the hundredth door!” Then they bade me farewell and departed, leaving me alone in the palace. When the evening drew near, I opened the first door and found myself in an orchard, full of blooming trees, laden with ripe fruit, and the air resounded with the loud singing of birds and the ripple of running waters. The sight brought solace to my soul, and I entered and walked among the trees, inhaling the odours of the flowers and listening to the warble of the birds, that sang the praises of God the One, the Almighty. I looked upon the apple, whose colour is parcel red and parcel yellow, as says the poet:

The apple in itself two colours doth unite, The loved one’s cheek
of red, and yellow of despite.

Then I looked upon the quince and inhaled its fragrance that puts musk and ambergris to shame, even as says the poet:

The quince contains all pleasant things that can delight mankind,
Wherefore above all fruits that be its virtues are renowned.
Its taste is as the taste of wine, its breath the scent of musk;
Its hue is that of virgin gold, its shape the full moon’s
round.

Thence I passed to the pear, whose taste surpasses rose-water and sugar, and the plum, whose beauty delights the eye, as it were a polished ruby. When I had taken my fill of looking on the place, I went and locked the door again. Next day, I opened the second door and found myself in a great pleasaunce, set with many palm-trees and watered by a running stream, whose borders were decked with bushes of rose and jessamine and henna and camomile and marjoram and sweetbriar and carpeted with narcissus and ox-eye and violets and lilies and gillyflowers. The breeze fluttered over all these sweet-smelling plants and scattered their scents right and left, possessing me with complete delight. I took my pleasure in the place awhile, and my chagrin was somewhat lightened. Then I went out and locked the door and opening the third door, found therein a great hall paved with vari-coloured marbles and other precious stones and hung with cages of sandal and aloes wood, full of singing-birds, such as the thousand-voiced nightingale and the cushat and the blackbird and the turtle-dove and the Nubian warbler. My heart was ravished by the song of the birds and I forgot my cares and slept in the aviary till the morning. Then I opened the fourth door and saw a great hall, with forty cabinets ranged on either side. The doors of the latter stood open; so I entered and found them full of pearls and rubies and chrysolites and beryls and emeralds and corals and carbuncles and all manner of precious stones and jewels of gold and silver, such as the tongue fails to describe. I was amazed at what I saw and said in myself “Methinks, if all the kings of the earth joined together they could not produce the like of these treasures!” And my heart dilated and I exclaimed, “Now am I king of my time, for all these riches are mine by the favour of God, and I have forty young ladies under my hand, nor is there any with them but myself!” In short, I passed nine-and-thirty days after this fashion, exploring the riches of the place, till I had opened all the doors, except that which the princesses had charged me not to open, but my thoughts ran ever on this latter and Satan urged me, for my ruin, to open it, nor had I patience to forbear; though there remained but one day of the appointed time. So I opened the hundredth door, that which was plated with red gold, and was met by a perfume, whose like I had never before smelt and which was of so subtle and penetrating a quality, that it invaded my head and I fell down, as if intoxicated, and lay awhile unconscious. Then I revived and took heart and entering, found myself in a place strewn with saffron and blazing with light shed by lamps of gold and candles, that diffused a scent of musk and aloes. In the midst stood two great censers, full of burning aloes wood and ambergris and other perfumes, and the place was full of their fragrance. Presently I espied a horse, black as night at its darkest, girt and bridled and saddled with red gold, standing before two mangers of white crystal, one full of winnowed sesame and the other of rose-water flavoured with musk. When I saw this, I was amazed and said to myself, "Surely this horse must be of extraordinary value!" and the devil tempted me, so that I took him out and mounted him, but he would not stir. So I spurred him with my heel, but he did not move; and I took a. switch and struck him with it. When he felt the blow, he gave a neigh like the roaring thunder, and spreading a pair of wings flew up with me high into the air. After awhile, he descended and set me down on the terrace of a palace; then, shaking me off his back, he smote me on the face with his tail and struck out my right eye and flew away, leaving me there. I went down into the palace and found myself again among the ten one-eyed youths, who exclaimed, when they saw me, "An ill welcome to thee!" Quoth I, "Behold, I am become like unto you, and now I would have you give me a dish of soot, that I may blacken my face and admit me to your company." "By Allah," answered they, "thou shalt not abide with us! Depart hence!" And they drove me away. I was grieved at their rejection of me and went out from them, mourning-hearted and tearful-eyed, saying to myself, "Of a truth, I was sitting at my ease, but my impertinent curiosity would not let me be." Then I shaved my beard and eyebrows and renouncing the world, became a Calender and wandered about God's earth, till by His blessing, I arrived at Baghdad in safety this evening and met with these two other Calenders standing bewildered. So I saluted them, saying, "I am a stranger;" to which they replied, "We also are strangers." And, as it chanced, we were all Calenders and each blind of the right eye. This, then, O my lady, is my story and the manner of the shaving of my face and the loss of my eye.' Quoth the mistress of the house, 'Begone about thy business.' But he said, 'By Allah, I will not go, till I hear the others' stories!' Then she turned to the Khalif and his companions and said, 'Give me an account of yourselves.' So Jaafer came forward and repeated the story he had told the portress;

whereupon the lady said, ‘I pardon you all: go your ways.’ So they all went out; and when they reached the street the Khalif said to the Calenders, ‘O folk, whither are you bound now, seeing that it is not yet day?’ ‘By Allah, O my lord,’ answered they, ‘we know not where to go!’ ‘Then come and pass the rest of the night with us,’ said the Khalif, and turning to Jaafer, said to him, ‘Take them home with thee and to-morrow bring them before me, that we may cause their adventures to be recorded.’ Jaafer did as the Khalif bade him, and the latter returned to his palace. Sleep did not visit him that night, but he lay awake, pondering the adventures of the three Calenders and full of impatience to know the history of the two ladies and the black bitches; and no sooner had the day dawned than he went out and sat down on his chair of estate. Then his courtiers presented themselves and withdrew, whereupon he turned to Jaafer and said to him, ‘Bring me the three ladies and the bitches and the Calenders, and make haste.’ So Jaafer went out and brought them all before him and seated the ladies behind a curtain; then turned to them and said, speaking for the Khalif, ‘O women, we pardon you your rough usage of us, in consideration of your previous kindness and for that ye knew us not: and now I would have you to know that you are in the presence of the fifth of the sons of Abbas, the Commander of the Faithful Haroun er Reshid, son of El Mehdi Mohammed, son of Abou Jaafer el Mensour. So do ye acquaint him with your stories and tell him nothing but the truth.’ When the ladies heard Jaafer’s speech, the eldest came forward and said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, my story is one which, were it graven with needles on the corners of the eye, would serve for an example to those who can profit by example and a warning to those who can take warning. And it is that

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The Eldest Lady's Story.

These two bitches are my elder sisters by the same mother and father, and these two others, she on whom are the marks of blows and the cateress, are my sisters by another mother. When my father died, each took her portion of the heritage, and after awhile my mother died also and left me and my sisters-german a thousand dinars each. After awhile my two sisters married and lived with their husbands for a time; then the latter bought merchandise with their wives' money and set out on their travels, and I heard no more of them for five years: for their husbands spent their wives' fortunes and became bankrupt and deserted them in a foreign land. Presently, my eldest sister came back to me in the guise of a beggar, with tattered clothes and a dirty old veil, and altogether in so sorry a plight, that at first I knew her not; but when I recognised her, I asked her how she came in such a state. "O my sister," answered she, "talking profits not now: the pen hath written what was decreed." Then I sent her to the bath and clothed her in a suit of my own and entreated her kindly and said to her, "O my sister, thou standest to me in the stead of my father and mother; and God has blessed me in the share of the inheritance that fell to me and prospered it to me, so that I am now in flourishing case; and thou shalt share with me in my increase." So she abode with me a whole year, during which time we were much concerned to know what was become of our other sister. At last, she too came back to me, in a worse plight than the other, and I dealt still more kindly by her than by the first, and each of them had a share of my substance. After awhile, they said to me, "O sister, we desire to marry again, for we can no longer endure to live without husbands." "O my dear ones," answered I, "there is no good in marriage, for now-a-days good men are rare to find; nor do I see the advantage of marrying again, since ye have already made trial of matrimony and it has profited you nothing." They would not listen to me, but married without my consent; nevertheless I equipped them and portioned them with my own money and they went away with their husbands. After a little, the latter cheated them of all they had and went away and left them. Then they came to me, in abject case, and made their excuses to me, saying, “Do not reproach us; thou art younger than we, but riper of wit, so take us as thy handmaids, that we may eat our mouthful; and we will never again speak of marriage.” Quoth I, “Ye are welcome, O my sisters: there is nothing dearer to me than you.” And I took them in and redoubled in kindness to them. We lived thus for a whole year, at the end of which time I was minded to travel. So I fitted out a great ship at Bassora and loaded her with merchandise and victual and other necessaries for a voyage, and said to my sisters, “Will you come with me or abide at home till I return?” “We will go with thee,” answered they, “for we cannot endure to be parted from thee.” So I took them and set sail, after dividing my money into two parts, one of which I deposited with a trusty person, saying, “Maybe ill-hap shall betide the ship and yet we remain alive; but now, if we return, we shall find what will be of service to us.” We sailed days and nights, till the captain missed the true course and the ship went astray with us and entered a sea other than that we aimed at. We knew not of this awhile and the wind blew fair for us ten days, at the end of which time, the watch went up to the mast-head, to look out, and cried, “Good news!” Then he came down, rejoicing, and said to us, “I see a city in the distance as it were a dove.” At this we rejoiced and before an hour of the day was past, the city appeared to us afar off: and we said to the captain, “What is the name of yonder city?” “By Allah!” replied he, “I know not, for I never saw it before nor have I ever sailed this sea in my life; but since the affair has issued in safety, ye have nought to do but to land your goods, and if ye find a market, sell and buy and barter, as the occasion serves; if not, we will rest here two days, re-victual and depart.” So we entered the harbour and the captain landed and was absent awhile, after which he returned and said to us, “Arise, go up into the city and marvel at God’s dealings with His creatures and seek to be preserved from His wrath.” So we landed and going up to the city, saw at the gate men with staves in their hands; but when we drew near them, behold, they had been stricken by the wrath of God and were become stones. Then we entered the city and found all its in habitants changed into black stones: there was not a living soul therein, no, not a blower of the fire. At this we were amazed and passed on through the bazaars, where we found all the goods and gold and silver left lying in their places, and rejoiced and said, “Doubtless, there is some mystery in all this.” Then we dispersed about the streets of the city and each busied himself with making prize of the wealth and stuffs lying about and took no heed of his comrades, whilst I went up to the citadel and found it goodly of fashion. I entered the king’s palace and saw all the vessels of gold and silver and the king himself seated in the midst of his officers and grandees, clad in raiment such as confounded the wit. The throne on which he sat was encrusted with pearls and jewels and his robes were of cloth of gold, adorned with all manner jewels, that shone like stars. Around him stood fifty white slaves, with drawn swords in their hands and clad in divers sorts of silken stuffs; but when I drew near to them, behold, they were all black stones. My understanding was confounded at the sight, but I went on and came to the saloon of the harem, which I found hung with tapestries of gold-striped silk and spread with carpets of the same, embroidered with flowers of gold. Here I saw the queen lying, arrayed in a robe covered with fresh pearls as big as hazel-nuts and crowned with a diadem set with all manner jewels. Her neck was covered with collars and necklaces and all her clothes and ornaments were unchanged, but she herself had been smitten of God and was become black stone. Presently I spied an open door, with seven steps leading to it, and going up, found myself in a place paved with marble and hung and carpeted with gold-embroidered stuffs. At the upper end stood an alcove with drawn curtains and I saw a light issuing thence. So I went up to the alcove and found therein a couch of juniper wood, inlaid with pearls and diamonds and set with bosses of emeralds, with silken coverings of bewildering richness and curtains of the same, looped up with pearls. At the head of the bed stood two lighted candles and in the midst of the alcove was a little stool, on which lay a jewel, the size of a goose’s egg, that shone like a lamp and lighted the whole place; but there was no one to be seen. When I saw these things, I wondered and said, “Some one must have lighted these candles.” Then I went out and came to the kitchen and thence to the buttery and the king’s treasuries and continued to explore the palace and to go from place to place; and for wonderment at what I saw, I forgot myself and wandered on, lost in thought, till the night overtook me. Then I would have gone out, but lost my way and could not find the gate; so I returned to the alcove, where I lay down on the bed and covering myself with a quilt, repeated somewhat of the Koran and would have slept, but could not, for restlessness possessed me. In the middle of the night, I heard a low sweet voice reciting the Koran, whereat I rejoiced and rising, followed the sound, till it led me to a chamber with the door ajar. I looked through the chink of the door and saw an oratory, wherein was a prayer-niche, with candles burning and lamps hanging from the ceiling. In the midst was spread a prayer-carpet, on which sat a handsome youth, with a copy of the Koran open before him, from which he was reading. I wondered to see him alone alive of all the people of the city and entered and saluted him; whereupon he raised his eyes and returned my salutation. Then said I, “I implore thee, by the truth of that thou readest from the book of God, to answer me my questions.” He looked at me with a smile and said, “O handmaid of God, tell me first how thou camest hither, and I will tell thee what has befallen me and the people of this city and the manner of my preservation.” So I told him my story, at which he marvelled, and questioned him of the people of the city. Quoth he, “Have patience with me a little, O my sister!” and shutting the Koran, laid it in a bag of satin. Then he made me sit down by his side, and I looked at him and behold, he was like the moon at its full, bright-faced, soft-sided, well-shaped and fair to look upon, as he were a figure of sugar, even as says the poet of the like of him:

A seer of the stars one night was reading the book of the skies,
When lo, in his scroll he saw a lovely youth arise.
Saturn had dyed his hair the hue of the raven’s wing And
sprinkled upon his face the musk of Paradise:
The rose of his cheeks from Mars its ruddy colour drew, And the
Archer winged the shafts that darted from his eyes.
Hermes dowered the youth with his own mercurial wit, And the
Great Bear warded off the baleful glance of spies.
Wonder seized on the sage at the sight of the lovely boy, For the
full moon kissed the earth before him, servant-wise.
And indeed God the Most High had clad him in the garment of
perfection and broidered it with the shining fringes of his

cheeks, even as says the poet of him:

By the perfume of his eyelids and his slender waist I swear, By
the arrows that he feathers with the witchery of his air,
By his sides so soft and tender and his glances bright and keen,
By the whiteness of his forehead and the blackness of his
hair,
By his arched imperious eyebrows, chasing slumber from my eyes,
With their yeas and noes that hold me ‘twixt rejoicing and
despair,
By the myrtle of his whiskers and the roses of his cheeks, By his
lips’ incarnate rubies and his teeth’s fine pearls and rare,
By his neck and by its beauty, by the softness of his breast And
the pair of twin pomegranates that my eyes discover there,
By his heavy hips that tremble, both in motion and repose, And
the slender waist above them, all too slim their weight to
bear,
By his skin’s unsullied satin and the quickness of his spright,
By the matchless combination in his form of all things fair,
By his hand’s perennial bounty and his true and trusty speech, By
the stars that smile upon him, favouring and debonair,
Lo, the smell of musk none other than his very fragrance is, And
the ambergris’s perfume breathes around him everywhere.
Yea, the sun in all its splendour cannot with his grace compare,
Seeming but a shining fragment that he from his nail doth
pare.

I stole a look at him, which cost me a thousand sighs, for my heart was taken with his love, and I said to him, “O my lord, tell me what I asked thee.” “I hear and obey,” answered he. “Know, O handmaid of God, that this city was the capital of my father, who is the king thou sawest on the throne, changed to a black stone, and as for the queen on the bed, she was my mother; and they and all the people of the city were Magians, worshipping the fire, instead of the All-powerful King, and swearing by the fire and the light and the shade and the heat and the revolving sphere. My father had no child, till I was vouchsafed to him in his old age, and he reared me and I grew up and flourished. Now, as my good star would have it, there was with us an old woman stricken in years, who was at heart a Muslim, believing in God and His prophet, but conforming outwardly to the religion of my people. My father had confidence in her, supposing her to be of his own belief, and showed her exceeding favour, for that he knew her to be trusty and virtuous; so when I grew to a fitting age, he committed me to her charge, saying, ‘Take him and do thy best to give him a good education and teach him the things of our faith.’ So she took me and taught me the tenets of Islam and the ordinances of ablution and prayer and made me learn the Koran by heart, bidding me worship none but God the Most High and charging me to keep my faith secret from my father, lest he should kill me. So I hid it from him, and I abode thus till, in a little while, the old woman died and the people of the city redoubled in their impiety and frowardness and in the error of their ways. One day, they heard a voice from on high, proclaiming aloud, with a noise like the resounding thunder, so that all heard it far and near, and saying, ‘O people of the city, turn from your worship of the fire and serve God the Compassionate King!’ At this, fear fell on the people of the city and they crowded to my father and said to him; ‘What is this awful voice that we have heard and that has confounded us with the excess of its terror?’ But he said, ‘Let not a voice fright you nor turn you from your faith.’ Their hearts inclined to his word and they ceased not to worship the fire, but redoubled in their frowardness, till the anniversary of the day on which they had heard the supernatural voice. When they heard it anew, and so again a third time at the end of the second year. Still they persisted in their evil ways, till one day, at break of dawn, judgment descended on them and wrath from heaven, and they were all turned into black stones, they and their beasts and cattle; and none was spared, save myself. From that day to this, I have remained as thou seest me, occupying myself with prayer and fasting and reading the Koran aloud; and indeed I am grown weary of solitude, having none to bear me company.” Then said I to him (and indeed he had won my heart), “O youth, wilt thou go with me to the city of Baghdad and foregather with men of learning and theologians and grow in wisdom and understanding and knowledge of the Law? If so, I will be thy handmaid, albeit I am head of my family and mistress over men and slaves and servants. I have here a ship laden with merchandise; and indeed it was providence drove us to this city, that I might come to the knowledge of these things, for it was fated that we should meet." And I ceased not to speak him fair and persuade him, till he consented to go with me, and I passed the night at his feet, beside myself for joy. When it was day, we repaired to the treasuries and took thence what was little of weight and great of value; then went down into the town, where we met the slaves and the captain seeking for me. When they saw me, they rejoiced and I told them all I had seen and related to them the story of the young man and of the curse that had fallen on the people of the city. At this they wondered: but when my sisters saw me with the prince, they envied me on his account and were enraged and plotted mischief against me in their hearts. Then we took ship again, beside ourselves for joy in the booty we had gotten, though the most of my joy was in the prince, and waited till the wind blew fair for us, when we set sail and departed. As we sat talking, my sisters said to me, "O sister, what wilt thou do with this handsome young man?" "I purpose to make him my husband," answered I; and I turned to the prince and said, "O my lord, I have that to propose to thee, in which I will not have thee cross me: and it is that, when we reach Baghdad, I will give myself to thee as a handmaid in the way of marriage, and thou shalt be my husband and I thy wife." Quoth he, "I hear and obey; thou art my lady and my mistress, and whatever thou dost, I will not cross thee." Then I turned to my sisters and said to them, "This young man suffices me; and those who have gotten aught, it is theirs." "Thou sayest well," replied they; but in their hearts they purposed me evil. We sailed on with a fair wind, till we left the sea of peril and came into safe waters, and in a few days, we came in sight of the walls of Bassora, even as night overtook us. My sisters waited till the prince and I were asleep, when they took us up, bed and all, and threw us into the sea. The prince, who could not swim, was drowned and God wrote him of the company of the martyrs. As for me, would I had been drowned with him! But God decreed that I should be of the saved; so He threw in my way a piece of wood and I got astride of it, and the waters tossed me about till they cast me up on an island. I landed and walked about the island the rest of the night, and when the day broke, I saw a footway, leading to the mainland. By this time, the sun had risen; so I dried my clothes in its rays and ate of the fruits of the island and drank of its waters. Then I set out and fared on till I reached the mainland and found myself but two hours' distant from the city. So I sat down to rest and presently I saw a great serpent, the bigness of a palm-tree, come fleeing towards me, with all her might, whilst her tongue for weariness hung from her mouth a span's length and swept the dust as she went. She was pursued by a dragon, as long and thin as a spear, which presently overtook her and seized her by the tail whereat the tears streamed from her eyes and she wriggled from side to side. I took pity on her and catching up a stone, threw it at the dragon's head and killed him on the spot. Then the serpent spread a pair of wings and flew away out of sight, leaving me wondering. Now I was tired and drowsiness overcoming me, I slept where I was for awhile. When I awoke, I found a damsel sitting at my feet, rubbing them, and with her, two black bitches, and I was ashamed before her; so I sat up and said to her, "O my sister, who art thou?" "How quickly thou hast forgotten me!" answered she. "I am the serpent, whom thou didst deliver from my enemy by killing him, for I am a Jinniyeh and the dragon was a genie; and I was only saved from him by thy kindness. As soon as thou hadst done me this service, I flew on the wind to your ship and transported all that was therein to thy house. Then I sank the vessel and changed thy sisters into two black bitches, for I know all that has passed between thee and them: but as for the young man, he is drowned." So saying, she flew up with me and the two bitches and presently set us down on the roof of my house, where I found all the goods that were in my ship, nor was aught missing. Then she said to me, "By that which is written on the seal of our lord Solomon (on whom be peace!) except thou give each of these bitches three hundred lashes every day, I will come and make thee like unto them." "I hear and obey," answered I; and since then I have never failed to beat them thus, O Commander of the Faithful, pitying them the while; and they know it is no fault of mine that they are beaten and accept my excuse. And this is my story.' The Khalif marvelled at her story and said to the portress, 'And thou, how camest thou by the weals on thy body?' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' answered she:

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Story of the Portress.

‘My father died and left me great wealth, and soon after his death I married one of the richest men of Baghdad. At the end of a year he too died and I inherited from him fourscore thousand dinars, being my lawful share of his property; so that I became passing rich and the report of my wealth spread abroad, for I got me half a score suits of clothes, each worth a thousand dinars. One day, as I was sitting alone, there came in to me an old woman with sunken cheeks and worn eyebrows, bleared eyes and broken teeth, blotched face and bald head, grizzled hair and bent and mangy body, running nose and sallow complexion, even as says the poet of the like of her:

A right pernicious hag! Unshriven be her sins, Nor let her mercy
find what time she comes to die!
So full of wile she is, that with a single thread Of spider’s
silk she’d curb a thousand mules that shy.

She saluted me and kissing the ground before me, said, “I have an orphan daughter whose wedding and unveiling I celebrate to-night. We are strangers in the city and know none of its inhabitants, and verily our hearts are broken so do thou earn through us a recompense and reward in the world to come by being present at her unveiling. When the ladies of the city hear that thou art to be present, they also will attend, and so wilt thou bring healing to her spirit, for now she is broken-hearted and has none to look to but God the Most High.” Then she wept and kissed my feet, repeating the following verses:

Thy presence honoureth us, and we Confess thy magnanimity: If thou forsake us, there is none Can stand to us in stead of thee.

I was moved to pity for her and said, “I hear and obey; and God willing, I will do more than this for her, for she shall not be unveiled but in my clothes and ornaments and jewellery.” At this the old woman rejoiced and fell at my feet and kissed them, saying, “God requite thee with good and gladden thy heart as thou hast gladdened mine! But, O my lady, do not trouble thyself now, but be ready against the evening, when I will come and fetch thee.” So saying, she kissed my hand and went away, whilst I attired myself and made my preparations. At the appointed time, the old woman returned, smiling, and kissed my hand, saying, “O my mistress, the most part of the ladies of the city are assembled; and I told them that thou hadst promised to be present, whereat they rejoiced and they are now awaiting thee and are looking eagerly for thy coming.” So I veiled myself and taking my serving-maids with me, followed the old woman, till we came to a street swept and watered, through which blew a pleasant breeze. Here she stopped at a handsome portico vaulted with marble and leading to a palace that rose from the ground and took hold upon the clouds. The gateway was hung with a black curtain and lighted by a lamp of gold curiously wrought; and on the door were written the following verses:

I am a dwelling, builded for delight; My time is still for
joyance day and night.
Right in my midst a springing fountain wells, Whose waters banish
anguish and despite,
Whose marge with rose, narcissus, camomile, Anemone and myrtle,
is bedight.

The old woman knocked at the gate, which opened; and we entered a carpeted vestibule hung with lighted lamps and candles and adorned with pendants of precious stones and minerals. Through this we passed into a saloon, whose like is not to be found in the world, hung and carpeted with silken stuffs and lighted by hanging lamps and wax candles in rows. At the upper end stood a couch of juniper-wood, set with pearls and jewels and canopied with curtains of satin, looped up with pearls. Hardly had I taken note of all this, when there came out from the alcove a young lady more perfect than the moon at its full, with a forehead brilliant as the morning, when it shines forth, even as says the poet:

Upon the imperial necks she walks, a loveling bright, For
bride-chambers of kings and emperors bedight.
The blossom of her cheek is red as dragon’s blood, And all her
face is flowered with roses red and white.

Slender and sleepy-eyed and languorous of gait, All manner
loveliness is in her sweetest sight.
The locks upon her brow are like a troubled night, From out of
which there shines a morning of delight.

She came down from the dais and said to me, “Welcome, a thousand times welcome to the dear and illustrious sister!” and she recited the following verses:

If the house knew who visits it, it would indeed rejoice And
stoop to kiss the happy place whereon her feet have stood;
And in the voice with which the case, though mute, yet speaks,
exclaim, “Welcome and many a welcome to the generous and
good!”

Then she sat down and said to me, “O my sister, I have a brother, who is handsomer than I; and he saw thee at certain festivals and assemblies and fell passionately in love with thee, for that thou art possessed of beauty and grace beyond thy share. He heard that thou wast thine own mistress, even as he also is the head of his family, and wished to make thine acquaintance; wherefore he used this device to bring thee in company with me; for he desires to marry thee according to the law of God and His prophet, and there is no shame in what is lawful.” When I heard what she said, I bethought me that I was fairly entrapped and answered, “I hear and obey.” At this she was glad and clapped her hands, whereupon a door opened and out came the handsomest of young men, elegantly dressed and perfect in beauty and symmetry and winning grace, with eyebrows like a bended bow and eyes that ravished hearts with lawful enchantments, even as says a poet, describing the like of him:

His face is like unto the new moon’s face With signs, like pearls, of fortune and of grace.

And God bless him who said:

He hath indeed been blest with beauty and with grace, And blest
be He who shaped and fashioned forth his face!
All rarest charms that be unite to make him fair, His witching

loveliness distracts the human race.
Beauty itself hath set these words upon his brow, “Except this
youth there’s none that’s fair in any place.”

When I looked at him, my heart inclined to him and I loved him; and he sat down by me and talked with me awhile. Presently the young lady clapped her hands a second time, and behold, a side door opened and there came out a Cadi and four witnesses, who saluted and sitting down, drew up the contract of marriage between me and the young man and retired. Then he turned to me and said, “May our night be blessed! O my mistress, I have a condition to lay on thee.” Quoth I, “O my lord, what is it?” Whereupon he rose and fetching a copy of the Koran, said to me, “Swear to me that thou wilt never look upon another man than myself, nor incline to him.” I did as he wished and he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and embraced me and my whole heart was taken with love of him. Presently they set food before us and we ate and drank, till we were satisfied and night closed in upon us. Then he took me and went to bed with me and ceased not to kiss and embrace me till the morning. I lived with him in all delight and happiness for a month, at the end of which time I asked his leave to go to the bazaar to buy certain stuffs that I wanted, and he gave me leave. So I veiled myself and taking with me the old woman and a serving-maid, went to the bazaar, where I sat down in the shop of a young merchant, whom the old woman knew and had recommended to me, saying, “The father of this young man died, when he was a boy, and left him great wealth: he has great store of goods, and thou wilt find what thou seekest with him, for none in the bazaar has finer stuffs than he.” So she said to him, “Show this lady thy finest stuffs.” And he answered, “I hear and obey.” Then she began to sound his praises; but I said, “I have no concern with thy praises of him; all I want is to buy what I need of him and return home.” So he brought me what I sought, and I offered him the price, but he refused to take it, saying, “It is a guest-gift to thee on the occasion of thy visit to me this day.” Then I said to the old woman, “If he will not take the money, give him back the stuff.” “By Allah!” said he, “I will take nothing from thee! I make thee a present of it all, in return for one kiss; for that is more precious to me than all that is in my shop.” Quoth the old woman, “What will a kiss profit thee?” Then she said to me, “O my daughter, thou hearest what this young man says. What harm will it do thee, if he take from thee a kiss and thou get the stuffs for nothing?” “Dost thou not know,” answered I, “that I am bound by an oath?” But she said, “Hold thy tongue and let him kiss thee, and thou shalt keep thy money and no harm shall betide thee.” And she ceased not to persuade me till I put my head into the noose and consented. So I veiled my eyes and held up the edge of my veil between me and the street, that the passers-by might not see me; and he put his mouth to my cheek under the veil. But, instead of kissing me, he bit me so hard that he tore the flesh of my cheek, and I swooned away. The old woman took me in her arms and when I came to myself, I found the shop shut up and her lamenting over me and saying, “Thank God it was no worse!” Then she said to me, “Come, take courage and let us go home, lest the thing get wind and thou be disgraced. When thou returnest, do thou feign sickness and lie down and cover thyself up, and I will bring thee a remedy that will soon heal the wound.” So, after awhile, I arose, full of fear and anxiety, and went little by little, till I came to the house, where I lay down and gave out that I was ill. When it was night, my husband came in to me and said, “O my lady, what has befallen thee in this excursion?” Quoth I, “I am not well: I have a pain in my head.” Then he lighted a candle and drew near and looked at me and said, “What is that wound on thy cheek, in the soft part?” Said I, “When I went out to-day to buy stuffs, with thy leave, a camel laden with firewood jostled me and the end of one of the pieces of wood tore my veil and wounded my cheek, as thou seest; for indeed the ways are strait in this city.” “To-morrow,” rejoined he, “I will go to the governor and speak to him, that he may hang every firewood-seller in the city.” “God on thee,” cried I, “do not burden thy conscience with such a sin against any one! The truth is that I was riding on an ass, and it stumbled and threw me down, and my cheek fell on a piece of glass, which wounded it.” “Then,” said he, “to morrow I will go to Jaafer the Barmecide and tell him the case, and he will kill every ass in the city.” “Wilt thou ruin all the folk on my account,” said I, “when this that befell me was decreed of God?” “There is no help for it,” answered he, and springing to his feet, plied me with questions and pressed me, till I was frightened and stammered in my speech, so that he guessed how the case stood and exclaimed, “Thou hast been false to thine oath!” Then he gave a great cry, whereupon a door opened and in came seven black slaves, whom he commanded to drag me from my bed and throw me down in the middle of the room. Moreover, he made one take me by the shoulders and sit upon my head and another sit on my knees and hold my feet and giving a third a naked sword, said to him, “Strike her, O Saad, and cut her in twain and let each take half and throw it into the Tigris that the fish may eat her, for this is the reward of her who breaks her oath and is unfaithful to her love.” And he redoubled in wrath and repeated the following verses:

If any other share with me in her whom I adore, I’ll root out
  passion from my heart, though longing me destroy;
And I will say unto my soul, “Death is the better part;” For love
  is naught that men with me in common do enjoy.

Then he said to the slave, “Smite her, O Saad!” Whereupon the latter bent down to me and said, “O my lady, repeat the profession of the faith and tell us if there be aught thou wouldst have done, for thy last hour is come.” “O good slave,” said I, “grant me a little respite, that I may give thee my last injunctions.” Then I raised my head and considered my case and how I had fallen from high estate into abjection; wherefore the tears streamed from my eyes and I wept passing sore. He looked at me with angry eyes and repeated the following

Say unto her who wronged us, on whom our kisses tire, Her that
  hath chosen another for darling of desire,
Lo, we will spurn thee from us, before thou cast us off! That
  which is past between us suffices to our ire.

When I heard this, I wept and looked at him and repeated the following verses:

You doom my banishment from love and all unmoved remain; You

rob
my wounded lids of rest and sleep whilst I complain.
You make mine eyes familiar with watching and unrest; Yet can my
heart forget you not, nor eyes from tears refrain.
You swore to me that you would keep, for aye, your plighted
faith; But when my heart was yours, you broke the oath that
you had ta'en.
Are you secure against the shifts of time and evil chance, That
you've no mercy on my love nor aught of pity deign?
If I must die, I prithee, write, 'fore God, upon my tomb, "A
slave of passion lieth here, who died of love in vain."
It may be one shall pass that way, who knows the pangs of love,
And looking on a lover's grave, take pity on her pain.

Then I wept; and when he heard what I said and saw my tears, his anger redoubled, and he repeated the following verses:

I left the darling of my heart, not from satiety; But she had
sinned a sin that called aloud for punishment.
She would have ta'en another in to share with me her love, But
the religion of my heart to share will not consent.

Then I wept again and implored him, saying to myself, "I will work on him with words; so haply he may spare my life, though he take all I have." So I complained to him of my sufferings and repeated the following verses:

If thou indeed wert just to me, thou wouldst not take my life.
Alas! against the law of Death no arbiter is there!
Thou layst upon my back the load of passion and desire, When I
for weakness scarce can lift the very gown I wear!
That so my soul should waste away, small wonder is to me; But oh!
I wonder how my flesh can thine estrangement bear.

Then I wept again, and he looked at me and reviled and reproached me, repeating the following verses:

Thou hast forgotten my love in the arms of another than me; Thou

shew’st me estrangement, though I was never unfaithful to
thee.
So I will cast thee away, since thou wast the first to forsake,
And by thy pattern content to live without thee will I be.
And (like thyself) in the arms of another thy charms I’ll forget;
’Tis thou that hast sundered our loves: thou canst not
reproach it to me.

Then he called to the slave with the sword, saying “Cut her in half and rid us of her, for we have no profit of her.” So the slave drew near to me and I gave myself up for lost and committed my affair to God the Most High; but, at this moment, in came the old woman and threw herself at my husband’s feet and kissed them, saying, “O my son, for the sake of my fosterage of thee and my service to thee, spare this young lady, for indeed she has done nothing deserving of death. Thou art a very young man, and I fear lest her death be laid to thy count, for it is said, ‘He who kills shall be killed.’ As for this wretched woman, put her away from thee and from thy thought and heart.” And she ceased not to weep and implore him, till he relented and said, “I pardon her, but I will set a mark on her that shall stay with her all her life.” Then he made the slaves strip off my clothes and hold me down, and taking a rod of quince-wood beat me with it on the back and sides till I lost my senses for excess of pain and despaired of life. Then he commanded slaves, as soon as it was dark, to carry me back to the house in which I had lived before my marriage with him, taking the old woman with them to guide them. They did as he bade them and cast me down in my house and went away. I did not recover from my swoon till the morning, when I applied myself to the dressing of my wounds, and medicined myself and kept my bed for four months, at the end of which time my body healed and I was restored to health; but my sides still bore the marks of the blows, as thou hast seen. As soon as I could walk, I went to the house where all this had happened, but found the whole street pulled down and nothing but heaps of rubbish where the house had stood, nor could I learn how this had come about. Then I betook myself to this my half-sister and found with her these two black bitches. I saluted her and told her what had befallen me; and she said, “O my sister, who is safe from the vicissitudes of fortune? Praised be God, who hath brought thee off with thy life!” And she repeated the following verse:

Fortune indeed was ever thus: endure it patiently, Whether thou suffer loss of wealth or friends depart from thee.

Then she told me her own story, and we abode together, she and I, never mentioning the name of marriage. After awhile there came to live with us this our other sister the cateress, who goes out every day and buys what we require for the day and night. We led this life till yesterday, when our sister went out as usual and fell in with the porter. Presently we were joined by these three Calenders and later on by three respectable merchants from Tiberias, all of whom we admitted to our company on certain conditions, which they infringed. But we forgave them their breach of faith, on condition that they should give us an account of themselves; so they told us their stories and went away; and we heard nothing more till this morning, when we were summoned to appear before thee; and this is our story.’ The Khalif wondered at her story, and ordered it and those of her sister and the Calenders to be recorded in the archives of his reign and laid up in the royal treasury. Then he said to the eldest lady, ‘Knowst thou where to find the Afriteh who enchanted thy sisters?’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered she, ‘she gave me some of her hair, saying, “When thou wouldst see me, burn one or two of these hairs, and I will be with thee presently, though I be behind the mountain Caf.”’ Quoth the Khalif, ‘Bring me the hair.’ So she fetched it and he threw the whole lock into the fire, whereupon the palace shook and they heard a rumbling sound of thunder, and presently the Jinniyeh appeared and saluted the Khalif, saying, ‘Peace be upon thee, O vicar of God!’ ‘And on thee be peace,’ answered he, ‘and the mercy of God and His blessing!’ Quoth she, ‘Know that this lady did me a service for which I cannot enough requite her, in that she saved me from death and slew my enemy. Now I had seen how her sisters dealt with her and felt bound to avenge her on them. At first, I was minded to kill them, but I feared it would be grievous to her, so I turned them into bitches; and now, O Commander of the Faithful, if thou wouldst have me release them, I will do so, out of respect to thee and to her, for I am of the true believers.' 'Release them,' said the Khalif; 'and after we will proceed to look into the affair of the beaten lady, and if her account prove true, we will avenge her on him who wronged her.' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' replied she, 'I will release them forthwith and bring thee to the knowledge of him who maltreated this lady and took her property; and he is the nearest of all men to thee.' So saying, she took a cup of water and muttered over it and spoke words that might not be understood. Then she threw some of the water in the faces of the bitches, saying, 'Return to your former human shape;' whereupon they were restored to their original form, and the Afriteh said to the Khalif, 'O Commander of the Faithful, he who beat this lady is thy son El Amin, brother of El Mamoun, who heard of her beauty and grace and laid a trap for her and married her; and indeed he is not to blame for beating her, for he laid a condition on her and took of her a solemn oath that she would not do a certain thing; but she was false to her vow; and he was minded to kill her, but was restrained by the fear of God the Most High and contented himself with beating her, as thou hast seen, and sending her back to her own place.' When the Khalif heard this, he wondered greatly and said, 'Glory be to God the Most High, the Supreme, who hath vouchsafed me the delivery of these two damsels from enchantment and torment and hath granted me to know the secret of this lady's history! By Allah, I will do a thing that shall be chronicled after me!' Then he summoned his son El Amin and questioned him of the story of the portress, and he told him the truth; whereupon the Khalif sent for Cadis and witnesses and married the eldest lady and her two sisters-german to the three Calenders, whom he made his chamberlains, appointing them stipends and all that they needed and lodging them in his palace at Baghdad. Moreover, he returned the beaten girl to her husband, his son El Amin, renewing the marriage contract between them, and gave her great wealth and bade rebuild the house more handsomely than before. As for himself, he took to wife the cateress and lay with her that night; and on the morrow he assigned her a separate lodging in his seraglio, with a fixed allowance and serving-maids to wait on her; and the people marvelled at his equity and magnificence and generosity.

When Shehrzad had made an end of her story, Dunyazad said to her, “By Allah, this is indeed a pleasant and delightful story, never was heard its like! But now, O my sister, tell us another story, to beguile the rest of the waking hours of our night.” “With all my heart,” answered Shehrzad, “if the King give me leave.” And he said, “Tell thy story, and that quickly.” Then said she, “They say, O King of the age and lord of the time and the day, that

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THE THREE APPLES.

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid summoned his Vizier Jaafer one night and said to him, ‘I have a mind to go down into the city and question the common people of the conduct of the officers charged with its government; and those of whom they complain, we will depose, and those whom they commend, we will advance.’ Quoth Jaafer, ‘I hear and obey.’ So the Khalif and Jaafer and Mesrour went down into the town and walked about the streets and markets till, as they were passing through a certain alley, they came upon an old man walking along at a leisurely pace, with a fishing-net and a basket on his head and a staff in his hand, and heard him repeat the following verses:

They tell me I shine, by my wisdom and wit, Midst the rest of my
 kind, as the moon in the night.
“A truce to your idle discourses!” I cry, “What’s knowledge,
 indeed, unattended by might?”
If you offered me, knowledge and wisdom and all, with my inkhorn
 and papers, in pawn for a mite,
To buy one day’s victual, the pledge they’d reject And cast, like
 an unread petition, from sight.
Sorry, indeed, is the case of the poor, And his life, what a load
 of chagrin and despite!
In summer, he’s pinched for a living and cowers O’er the fire-pot
 in winter, for warmth and for light.
The curs of the street dog his heels, as he goes, And the
 scurviest rascal may rail at the wight.
If he lift up his voice to complain of his case, He finds not a
 soul who will pity his plight.
Since such is the life and the lot of the poor, It were better he
 lay in the graveyard forthright!

When the Khalif heard this, he said to Jaafer, ‘See yonder poor man and note his verses, for they show his necessity.’ Then he went up to him and said, ‘O old man, what is thy trade?’ ‘O my lord,’ replied he, ‘I am a fisherman, with a family to maintain; and I have been out since mid-day, but God has not vouchsafed me aught wherewith to feed them, and indeed I abhor myself and wish for death.' Quoth the Khalif, 'Wilt thou go back with me to the Tigris and cast thy net yet once more on my account, and I will buy of thee whatever comes up for a hundred dinars?' 'On my head be it!' answered the fisherman joyfully. 'I will go back with you.' So he returned with them to the river-bank and cast his net and waited awhile, then drew it up and found in it a chest, locked and heavy. The Khalif lifted it and found it weighty; so he gave the fisherman a hundred dinars, and he went his way; whilst Mesrour carried the chest to the palace, where he set it down before the Khalif and lighted the candles. Then Jaafer and Mesrour broke open the chest and found in it a basket of palm-leaves, sewn together with red worsted. This they cut open and found within a bundle wrapped in a piece of carpet. Under the carpet was a woman's veil and in this a young lady, as she were an ingot of silver, slain and cut in pieces. When the Khalif saw this, he was sore enraged and afflicted; the tears ran down his cheeks and he turned to Jaafer and said, "O dog of a Vizier, shall folk be murdered in my capital city and thrown into the river and their death laid to my account on the Day of Judgment? I must avenge this woman on her murderer and put him to death without mercy! And as surely as I am descended from the sons of Abbas, an thou bring me not him who slew her, that I may do her justice on him, I will hang thee and forty of thy kinsmen at the gate of my palace!' Quoth Jaafer, 'Grant me three days' respite.' And the Khalif said, 'I grant thee this.' So Jaafer went out from before him and returned to his house, full of sorrow and saying to himself, 'How shall I find him who killed the damsel, that I may bring him before the Khalif? If I bring other than the right man, it will be laid to my charge by God. Indeed, I know not what to do.' Then he kept his house three days, and on the fourth day, the Khalif sent one of his chamberlains for him and said to him, 'Where is the murderer of the damsel?' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' replied the Vizier, 'am I inspector of murdered folk, that I should know who killed her?' The Khalif was enraged at his answer and commanded to hang him before his palace-gate and that proclamation should be made in the streets of Baghdad, 'Whoso hath a mind to witness the hanging of

Jaafer the Barmecide, Vizier of the Khalif, and of forty of his kin, before the gate of the Khalif's palace, let him come out to see!' So the people came out from all quarters to witness the execution of Jaafer and his kinsmen, not knowing the reason. Then they set up the gallows and made Jaafer and the others stand underneath in readiness; but whilst they awaited the Khalif's signal for the execution and the people wept for Jaafer and his kinsmen, behold, a handsome and well-dressed young man, with shining face and bright black eyes, flower-white forehead, downy whiskers and rosy cheeks and a mole like a grain of ambergris, pressed through the crowd, till he stood before Jaafer and said to him, 'I come to deliver thee from this strait, O chief of the Amirs and refuge of the poor! I am he who killed the woman ye found in the chest; so hang me for her and do her justice on me!' When Jaafer heard this, he rejoiced at his own deliverance, but grieved for the young man; and whilst they were yet talking, behold, a man far advanced in years made his way when he saluted them and said, 'O Vizier and noble lord, credit not what this young man says. None killed the damsel but I; so do thou avenge her on me, or I do accuse thee before God the Most High.' Then said the youth, 'O Vizier, this is a doting old man, who knows not what he says: it was I killed her, so do thou avenge her on me.' 'O my son,' said the old man, 'thou art young and desirest the things of the world, and I am old and weary of the world. I will ransom thee and the Vizier and his kinsmen with my life. None killed the damsel but I; so God on thee, make haste to hang me, or there is no living for me after her!' The Vizier marvelled at all this and taking the youth and the old man, carried them before the Khalif and said to him, 'O Commander of the Faithful, I bring thee the murderer of the damsel.' 'Where is he?' asked the Khalif, and Jaafer answered, 'This youth says he killed her, but this old man gives him the lie and affirms that he himself killed her: and behold, they are both in thy hands.' The Khalif looked at them and said, 'Which of you killed the damsel?' The youth replied, 'It was I.' And the old man, 'Indeed, none killed her but myself.' Then the Khalif said to Jaafer, 'Take them and hang them both.' But the Vizier replied, 'If one of them be the murderer, to hang the other were unjust.' 'By Him who vaulted the heavens and spread out the earth like a carpet,' cried the youth, 'it was I killed her!’ And he set forth the circumstance of her death and how they had found her body, so that the Khalif was certified that he was the murderer, whereat he wondered and said to him, ‘Why didst thou slay the damsel wrongfully and what made thee come and accuse thyself thus and confess thy crime without being beaten?’ ‘Know, O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered the young man, ‘that this damsel was my wife and the daughter of this old man, who is my father’s brother, and she was a virgin when I married her. God blessed me with three male children by her, and she loved me and served me, and I also loved her with an exceeding love and saw no evil in her. We lived happily together till the beginning of this month, when she fell grievously ill. I fetched the doctors to her and she recovered slowly; and I would have had her take a bath; but she said, “There is something I long for, before I go to the bath.” “What is it?” asked I, and she replied, “I have a longing for an apple, that I may smell it and bite a piece of it.” So I went out into the city at once and sought for apples, but could find none, though, had they been a dinar apiece, I would have bought them. I was vexed at this and went home and said to my wife, “By Allah, my cousin, I can find none.” She was distressed, being yet weak, and her weakness increased greatly on her that night, and I passed the night full of anxiety. As soon as it was day, I went out again and made the round of the gardens, but could find no apples anywhere. At last I met an old gardener, of whom I enquired for them, and he said to me, “O my son, this fruit is rare with us and is not now to be found but in the garden of the Commander of the Faithful at Bassora, where the gardener keeps them for the Khalif’s table.’ I returned home, troubled at my ill-success, and my love and concern for her moved me to undertake the journey to Bassora. So I set out and travelled thither and bought three apples of the gardener there for three dinars, with which I returned to Baghdad, after having been absent fifteen days and nights, going and coming. I went in to my wife and gave her the apples; but she took no pleasure in them and let them lie by her side; for weakness and fever had increased on her and did not leave her for ten days, at the end of which time she began to mend. So I left the house and went to my shop, where I sat buying and selling. About mid-day a great ugly black slave came into the bazaar, having in his hand one of the three apples, with which he was playing; so I called to him and said, “Prithee, good slave, tell me whence thou hadst that apple, that I may get the fellow to it.” He laughed and answered, “I had it of my mistress; for I had been absent and on my return I found her lying ill, with three apples by her side: and she told me that the cuckold her husband had made a journey for them to Bassora, where he had bought them for three dinars. So I ate and drank with her and took this one from her.” When I heard this, the world grew black in my eyes, and I rose and shut my shop and went home, beside myself for excess of rage. I looked for the apples and finding but two of them, said to my wife, “Where is the third apple?” Quoth she, “I know not what is come of it.” This convinced me of the truth of the slave’s story, so I took a knife and coming behind her, without word said, got up on her breast and cut her throat; after which I hewed her in pieces and wrapping her in her veil and a piece of carpet, sewed the whole up hurriedly in the basket. Then I put the basket in the chest and locking it up, set it on my mule and threw it into the Tigris with my own hands. So, God on thee, O Commander of the Faithful, make haste to hang me, for I fear lest she sue for vengeance on me at the Day of Resurrection! For when I had thrown her into the river, unknown of any, I returned home and found my eldest boy weeping, though he knew not what I had done with his mother; and I said to him “Why dost thou weep, my son?” He replied, “I took one of my mother’s apples and went down with it into the street to play with my brothers, when lo, a tall black slave snatched it from my hand, saying, ‘Whence hadst thou this?’ Quoth I, ‘My father journeyed to Bassora for it and brought it to my mother, who is ill, with two other apples for which he paid three dinars. Give it back to me and do not get me into trouble for it.’ He paid no heed to my words and I demanded the apple a second and a third time; but he beat me and went away with it. I was afraid that my mother would beat me on account of the apple; so for fear of her, I went without the city with my brothers and abode there until night closed in upon us, and indeed I am in fear of her: so by Allah, O my father, say nothing to her of this, or it will add to her illness.” When I heard what the child said, I knew that the slave was he who had forged a lie against my wife and was certified that I had killed her wrongfully. So I wept sore, and presently, this old man, her father, came in and I told him what had passed; and he sat down by my side and wept and we ceased not weeping half the night. This was five days ago and from that time to this, we have never ceased to bewail her and mourn for her, sorrowing sore for that she was unjustly put to death. All this came of the lying story of the slave, and this was the manner of my killing her; so I conjure thee, by the honour of thy forefathers, make haste to kill me and do her justice on me, for there is no living for me after her.' The Khalif wondered at his story and said, 'By Allah, the young man is excusable, and I will hang none but the accursed slave!' Then he fumed to Jaafer and said to him, 'Bring me the accursed slave, who was the cause of this calamity, and if thou bring him not in three days, thou shalt suffer in his stead.' And Jaafer went out, weeping and saying, 'Verily, I am beset by deaths; the pitcher does not come off for aye unbroken. I can do nothing in this matter; but He who saved me the first time may save me again. By Allah, I will not leave my house during the three days that remain to me, and God who is the Truth shall do what He will.' So he kept his house three days, and on the fourth day, he summoned Cadis and witnesses and made his last dispositions and bade farewell to his children, weeping. Presently in came a messenger from the Khalif and said to him, 'The Commander of the Faithful is beyond measure wroth and sends to seek thee and swears that the day shall not pass without thy being hanged.' When Jaafer heard this, he wept and his children and slaves and all that were in the house wept with him. Then they brought him his little daughter, that he might bid her farewell. Now he loved her more than all his other children; so he pressed her to his breast and kissed her and wept over his separation from her; when lo, he felt something round in her bosom and said to her, 'What's this in thy bosom?' 'O my father,' answered she, 'it is an apple with the name of our lord the Khalif written on it. Our slave Rihan brought it to me four days ago and would not let me have it, till I gave him two dinars for it.' When Jaafer heard this, he put his hand into her bosom and took out the apple and knew it and rejoiced, saying, 'O swift Dispeller of trouble!' Then he sent for the slave and said to him, 'Harkye Rihan, whence hadst thou this apple?' 'By Allah, O my lord,' replied he, 'though lying might get me off, yet is it safer to tell the truth! I did not steal it from thy palace nor from the palace of His Highness nor the garden of the Commander of the Faithful. The fact is that some days ago, I was passing along a certain alley of this city, when I saw some children playing and this apple in the hand of one of them. So I snatched it from him, and he wept and said, “O youth, this apple is my mother’s and she is ill. She longed for apples, and my father journeyed to Bassora and bought her three for three dinars, and I took one of them to play with.” But I paid no heed to what he said and beat him and went off with the apple and sold it to my little mistress for two dinars.’ When Jaafer heard this, he wondered that the death of the damsel and all this misery should have been caused by his slave and grieved for the relation of the slave to himself, whilst rejoicing over his own delivery: and he repeated the following verses:

If through a servant misfortune befall thee, Spare not to save thine own life at his cost. Servants in plenty thou’lt find to replace him, Life for life never, once it is lost.

Then he carried the slave to the Khalif, to whom he related the whole story; and the Khalif wondered greatly and laughed till he fell backward and ordered the story to be recorded and published among the folk. Then said Jaafer, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, wonder not at this story, for it is not more marvellous than that of Noureddin Ali of Cairo and his son Bedreddin Hassan.’ ‘What is that?’ asked the Khalif; ‘and how can it be more marvellous than this story?’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Jaafer, ‘I will not tell it thee except thou pardon my slave.’ Quoth the Khalif, ‘If it be indeed more marvellous than that of the three apples, I grant thee thy slave’s life; but if not, I will kill him.’ ‘Know, then, O Commander of the Faithful,’ said Jaafer, ‘that

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NOUREDDIN ALI OF CAIRO AND HIS SON BEDREDDIN HASSAN.

There was once in the land of Egypt a just and pious King who loved the poor and companied with the learned, and he had a Vizier, a wise and experienced man, well versed in affairs and in the art of government. This Vizier, who was a very old man, had two sons, as they were two moons, never was seen their like for beauty and grace, the elder called Shemseddin Mohammed and the younger Noureddin Ali; but the younger excelled his brother in comeliness and fair favour, so that folk heard of him in distant lands and journeyed to Egypt to get sight of him. After awhile the Vizier died, to the great grief of the Sultan, who sent for his two sons and invested them with robes of honour, saying, “Let not your hearts be troubled, for you shall stand in your father’s stead and be joint Viziers of Egypt.” At this they were glad and kissed the earth before him and mourned for their father a whole month, at the end of which time they entered upon the Vizierate, and the government passed into their hands, as it had been in those of their father, each ruling for a week at a time. Whenever the Sultan went on a journey, they took it in turns to accompany him; and the two brothers lived in one house, and there was perfect accord between them. It chanced, one night, that the Sultan purposed setting out on a journey on the morrow and the elder, whose turn it was to attend him, was sitting talking with his brother and said to him, “O my brother, it is my wish that we both marry and go in to our wives on the same night.” “O my brother,” replied Noureddin, “do as thou wilt; I will conform to thee.” So they agreed upon this and Shemseddin said, “If it be the will of God that we both marry on the same night, and our wives be brought to bed on the same day, and thy wife bear a boy and mine a girl, we will marry the children to one another, for they will be cousins.” “O my brother,” asked Noureddin, “what dowry wilt thou require of my son for thy daughter!” Quoth the other, “I will have of him three thousand dinars and three gardens and three farms, for it would not be fitting that he bring her a smaller dowry than this.” When Noureddin heard this, he said, “What dowry is this thou wouldst impose on my son? Knowest thou not that we are brothers and both by God’s grace Viziers and equal in rank? It behoves thee to offer thy daughter to my son, without dowry: or if thou must have a dower, it should be something of nominal value, for mere show; for thou knowest the male to be more worthy than the female, and my son is a male, and our memory will be preserved by him, not by thy daughter; but I see thou wouldst do with me according to the saying, ‘If thou wouldst drive away a purchaser, ask him a high price,’ or as did one, who, being asked by a friend to do him a favour, replied, ‘In the name of God; I will comply with thy request, but not till tomorrow.’ Whereupon the other answered him with this verse:

‘When one, of whom a favour’s asked, postpones it till next day,
’Tis, to a man who knows the world, as if he said him nay.’”

Quoth Shemseddin, “Verily, thou errest in that thou wouldst make thy son more worthy than my daughter, and it is plain that thou lackest both judgment and manners. Thou talkest of thy share in the Vizierate, when I only admitted thee to share with me, in pity for thee, not wishing to mortify thee, and that thou mightest help me. But since thou talkest thus, by Allah, I will not marry my daughter to thy son, though thou pay down her weight in gold!” When Noureddin heard this, he was angry and said, “And I, I will never marry my son to thy daughter.” “I would not accept him as a husband for her,” answered the other, “and were I not bound to attend the Sultan on his journey, I would make an example of thee; but when I return, I will let thee see what my dignity demands.” When Noureddin heard this speech from his brother, he was beside himself for rage, but held his peace and stifled his vexation; and each passed the night in his own place, full of wrath against the other. As soon as it was day, the Sultan went out to Ghizeh and made for the Pyramids, accompanied by the Vizier Shemseddin, whilst Noureddin arose, sore enraged, and prayed the morning-prayer. Then he went to his treasury, and taking a small pair of saddle-bags, filled them with gold. And he called to mind his brother’s words and the contempt with which he had treated him and repeated the following verses:

Travel, for yon shall find new friends in place of those you
leave, And labour, for in toil indeed the sweets of life
reside.
Nor gain nor honour comes to him who idly stays at home; So leave
thy native land behind and journey far and wide.
Oft have I seen a stagnant pool corrupt with standing still; If
water run, 'tis sweet, but else grows quickly putrefied.
If the full moon were always high and never waned nor set, Men
would not strain their watchful eyes for it at every tide.
Except the arrow leave the bow, 'twill never hit the mark, Nor
will the lion chance on prey, if in the copse he bide.
The aloes in its native land a kind of firewood is, And precious
metals are but dust whilst in the mine they hide.
The one is sent abroad and grows more precious straight than
gold; The other's brought to light and finds its value
magnified.

Then he bade one of his people saddle him his mule with a padded saddle. Now she was a dapple mule, high-backed, like a dome builded upon columns; her saddle was of cloth of gold and her stirrups of Indian steel, her housings of Ispahan velvet, and she was like a bride on her wedding night. Moreover, he bade lay on her back a carpet of silk and strap the saddle-bags on that and spread a prayer-rug over the whole. The man did as he bade him and Noureddin said to his servants, "I have a mind to ride out a-pleasuring towards Kelyoubiyeh, and I shall lie three nights abroad; but let none of you follow me, for my heart is heavy." Then he mounted the mule in haste and set out from Cairo, taking with him a little victual, and made for the open country. About mid-day, he reached the town of Belbeys, where he alighted and rested himself and the mule. Then he took out food and ate and fared on again in the direction of the desert, after having bought victual and fodder for the mule in the town. Towards nightfall, he came to a town called Saadiyeh, where he alighted and took out food and ate, then spread the carpet on the ground and laying the saddle bags under his head, slept in the open air, for he was still overcome with anger. As soon as it was day, he mounted and rode onward, till he reached the city of Jerusalem and thence to Aleppo, where he alighted at one of the khans and abode three days, to rest himself and the mule. Then, being still intent upon travel, he mounted and setting out again, he knew not whither, journeyed on without ceasing, till he reached the city of Bassora, where he alighted at a certain khan and spread out his prayer-carpet, after having taken the saddle-bags off the mule's back and given her to the porter that he might walk her about. As chance would have it, the Vizier of Bassora, who was a very old man, was sitting at a window of his palace opposite the khan and saw the porter walking the mule up and down. He remarked her costly trappings and took her to be a mule of parade, of such as are ridden by kings and viziers. This set him thinking and he became perplexed and said to one of his servants, "Bring me yonder porter." So the servant went and returned with the porter, who kissed the ground before the Vizier; and the latter said to him, "Who is the owner of that mule, and what manner of man is he?" "O my lord," replied the porter, "he is a comely young man of the sons of the merchants, grave and dignified of aspect." When the Vizier heard this, he rose at once and mounting his horse, rode to the khan and went in to Noureddin, who, seeing him making towards himself, rose and went to meet him and saluted him. The Vizier bade him welcome to Bassora and dismounting, embraced him and made him sit down by his side and said to him, "O my son, whence comest thou and what dost thou seek?" "O my lord." answered Noureddin, "I come from the city of Cairo;" and told him his story from beginning to end, saying, "I am resolved not to return home, till I have seen all the towns and countries of the world." When the Vizier heard this, he said to him, "O my son, follow not the promptings of thy soul, lest they bring thee into peril; for indeed the lands are waste and I fear the issues of Fortune for thee." Then he let load the saddle-bags and the carpets on the mule and carried Noureddin to his own house, where he lodged him in a pleasant place and made much of him, for he had conceived a great affection for him. After awhile, he said to him, "O my son, I am an old man and have no male child, but God has given me a daughter who is thy match for beauty, and I have refused many suitors for her hand. But love of thee has got hold upon my heart; so wilt thou accept of my daughter to thine handmaid and be her husband? If thou consent to this, I will carry thee to the Sultan of Bassora and tell him that thou art my brother's son and bring thee to be appointed Vizier in my stead, that I may keep the house, for, by Allah, O my son, I am a very old man and I am weary." When Noureddin heard the Vizier's proposal, he bowed his head awhile, then raised it and answered, "I hear and obey." At this the Vizier rejoiced and bade his servants decorate the great hall, in which they were wont to celebrate the marriages of nobles. Then he assembled his friends and the notables of the kingdom and the merchants of Bassora and said to them, "I had a brother who was Vizier in Cairo, and God vouchsafed him two sons, whilst to me, as you know, He has given a daughter. My brother proposed to me to marry my daughter to one of his sons, to which I consented; and when my daughter came at a marriageable age, he sent me one of his sons, this young man now present, to whom I purpose now to marry her, for he is better than a stranger, and that he shall go in to her in my house this night. After, if he please, he shall abide with me, or if he please, he shall return with his wife to his father." The guests replied, "It is well seen of thee." And they looked at Noureddin and were pleased with him. So the Vizier sent for Cadis and witnesses, and they drew up the marriage contract, after which the servants perfumed the guests with incense and sprinkled rose-water on them, and they drank sherbet of sugar and went away. Then the Vizier bade his servants take Noureddin to the bath and sent him a suit of the best of his own clothes, besides cups and napkins and perfume-burners and all else that he required. So he went to the bath, and when he came out and put on the suit, he was like the moon on the night of her full. Then he mounted his mule and returning to the Vizier's palace, went in to the latter and kissed his hands. The Vizier welcomed him and said to him, "Arise, go in to thy wife this night, and tomorrow I will carry thee to the Sultan; and I pray God to bless thee with all manner of good!" So Noureddin left him and went in to his wife, the Vizier's daughter. To return to his brother Shemseddin. When he came back to Cairo, after having been absent awhile with the Sultan, he missed his brother and enquired of his servants, who said, "On the day of thy departure with the Sultan, thy brother mounted his mule, caparisoned as for state, saying, 'I am going towards El Kelyoubiyeh and shall be absent a day or two, for I am heavy of heart; and let none follow me.' Then he rode away, and from that time to this we have heard nothing of him." Shemseddin was concerned at his brother's absence and became exceedingly uneasy, when he found that he did not return, and said to himself, "This is because I spoke harshly to him that night, and he has taken it to heart and gone away; but I must send after him." Then he went in to the King and acquainted him with what had happened, and he wrote letters and despatched couriers to his deputies in every province; but after awhile they returned without having been able to come at any news of Noureddin, who had by this time reached Bassora. So Shemseddin despaired of finding his brother and said, "Indeed, I went beyond all bounds in what I said to him, with reference to the marriage of our children. Would it had not been so! This all comes of my lack of sense and judgment." Soon after this he sought in marriage the daughter of a merchant of Cairo and took her to wife and went in to her (as it happened by the will of God the Most High, that so He might carry out what He had decreed to His creatures) on the very night on which Noureddin went in to the Vizier's daughter of Bassora. Moreover, it was as the two brothers had said; for their wives conceived by them and were brought to bed on the same day, the wife of Shemseddin of a daughter, never was seen in Cairo a fairer than she, and the wife of Noureddin of a son, than whom a handsomer was never seen in his time. They named the boy Bedreddin Hassan, and his grandfather, the Vizier of Bassora rejoiced in him and gave feasts and public entertainments, as for the birth of a king's son. Then he took Noureddin and went up with him to the Sultan. When Noureddin came in presence of the King, he kissed the ground before him and repeated the following verses, for he was facile of speech, firm of soul and abounding in good parts and natural gifts:

May all delights of life attend thee, O my lord, And mayst thou
  live as long as night and morning be!
Lo! when meets tongues recall thy magnanimity, The age doth leap
  for Joy and Time claps hands for glee.

The Sultan rose to receive them and after thanking Noureddin for his compliment, asked the Vizier who he was. The Vizier replied, “This is my brother’s son.” And the Sultan said, “How comes it that we have never heard of him?” “O my lord the Sultan,” answered the Vizier, know that my brother was Vizier in Egypt and died, leaving two sons, whereof the elder became Vizier in his father’s stead and the younger, whom thou seest, came to me. I had sworn that I would give my daughter in marriage to none but him; so when he came, I married him to her. Now he is young and I am old; my hearing grows dull and my judgment fails; wherefore I pray our lord the Sultan to make him Vizier in my room, for he is my brother’s son and the husband of my daughter, and he is apt for the Vizierate, being a man of sense and judgment.” The Sultan looked at Noureddin and was pleased with him, so granted the Vizier’s request and appointed him to the Vizierate, presenting him with a splendid dress of honour and one of his choicest mules and allotting him stipends and allowances. Noureddin kissed the Sultan’s hands and went home, he and his father-in-law, rejoicing greatly and saying, “This is of the good fortune of the new-born Hassan.’’ Next day he presented himself before the King and repeated the following verses:

New favours attend thee each day of thy life, And fortune to
counter the craft of thy foes!
May thy days with God’s favour be white to the end, And black be
their days with misfortune and woes!

The Sultan commanded him to sit in the Vizier’s place; so he sat down and applied himself to the business of his office, examining into the folks’ affairs and giving judgment on their suits, after the usage of Viziers, whilst the Sultan watched him and wondered at his wit and good sense and judgment, wherefore he loved him and took him into favour. When the Divan broke up, Noureddin returned to his house and related what had passed to his father-in-law, who rejoiced. Thence-forward Noureddin ceased not so to apply himself to the duties of the Vizierate, that he left not the Sultan day or night and the latter increased his stipends and allowances till he amassed great wealth and became the owner of ships, that made trading voyages for his hand, as well as of slaves and servants, black and white, and laid out many estates and made irrigation-works and planted gardens. When his son Hassan was four years old, his father-in-law, the old Vizier, died, and he buried him with great pomp. Then he occupied himself with the education of his son and when he came to the age of seven, he brought him a doctor of the law, to teach him in his own house, and charged him to give him a good education and teach him good manners. So the tutor taught the boy to read and all manner of useful knowledge, after he had spent some years in committing the Koran to memory; and he grew in stature and beauty and symmetry, even as says the poet:

The moon in the heaven of his grace shines full and fair to see,
And the sun of the morning glows in his cheeks' anemones.
He's such a compend of beauties, meseems, indeed, from him The
world all beauty borrows that lives in lands and seas.

The professor brought him up in his father's palace, and all his years of youth he never left the house, till one day his father clad him in his richest clothes, and mounting him on one of the best of his mules, carried him to the Sultan, who was struck with his beauty and loved him. As for the people of the city, when he passed through the streets on his way to the palace, they were dazzled with his loveliness and sat down in the road, awaiting his return, that they might gaze their fill on his beauty and grace and symmetry. The Sultan made much of the boy and bade his father bring him with him, whenever his affairs called him to the palace. Noureddin replied, "I hear and obey," and ceased not to carry him to the Sultan's court, till he reached the age of fifteen, when his father sickened and calling his son, said to him, "Know, O my son, that this world is but a temporary abode, whilst the next is an eternal one. Before I die, I wish to give thee certain last injunctions, so pay heed to my words and set thy mind to understand them." Then he gave him certain advice as to the proper way of dealing with folk and the conduct of his affairs; after which he called to mind his brother and his native land and wept for his separation from those he loved. Then he wiped away his tears and turning to his son, said to him, "Before I proceed to my parting exhortations, thou must know that thou hast an uncle who is Vizier in Cairo, and I left him and went away without his consent." Then he took a sheet of paper and wrote therein all that had happened to him from the day of the dispute, together with the dates of his marriage and going in to the Vizier's daughter and the birth of his son; after which he folded and sealed the paper and gave it to his son, saying, "keep this paper carefully, for in it is written thy rank and lineage and origin, and if any mishap befall thee, go to Cairo and ask for thine uncle and give him this and tell him that I died in a foreign land, full of longing for him." So Bedreddin took the paper and wrapping it in a piece of waxed cloth, sewed it into the lining of his skull-cap and wound the muslin of his turban over it, weeping the while at the thought of losing his father, whilst himself but a boy. Then said Noureddin, "I have five behests to lay on thee: and the first is that thou be not too familiar with any one, neither frequent him nor foregather with him over-much; so shalt thou be safe from his mischief, for in retirement is safety, and I have heard it said by a poet:

There is no man in all the world, whose love is worth thy trust,
No friend who, if fate play thee false, will true and
constant be.
Wherefore I'd have thee live apart and lean for help on none. In
this I give thee good advice; so let it profit thee.

Secondly, O my son, oppress no one, lest Fortune oppress thee; for the fortune of this world is one day for thee and another against thee, and its goods are but a loan to be repaid. As I have heard a poet say:

Be slow to move and hasten not to snatch thy heart's desire; Be
merciful to all, as thou on mercy reckonest;
For no hand is there but the hand of God is over it, And no
oppressor but shall be with worse than he oppress.

Thirdly, preserve silence and let thy faults distract thee from those of other men; for it is said that in silence is safety; and thereon I have heard the following verses:

Silence is fair and safety lies in taciturnity. So, when thou
speak'st, I counsel thee, give not thy tongue the rein.
Since, for one time that thou repent the having held thy tongue,
Thou shalt of having spoke repent again and yet again.

Fourthly, O my son, beware of drinking wine, for wine is the root of all evils and the thief of wit. Guard thyself from it, for the poet says:

Wine and the drinkers of wine I have put away, And am become of
those that of it mis-say.
For wine indeed diverts from the road of right, And to all kinds
of evil opens the way.

Lastly, O my son, keep thy wealth, that it may keep thee, and watch over it, that it may watch over thee. Squander not thy substance, or thou wilt come to need the meanest of folk. Guard well thy money, for it is a sovereign salve for the wounds of life, even as says the poet:

If wealth should fail, there is no friend will bear thee company,
But whilst thy substance still abounds, all men are friends
to thee.
How many a foe for money's sake hath companied with me! But
when
wealth failed beneath my hand, my dearest friend did flee."

And Noureddin ceased not to exhort his son till his spirit departed and his house became the abode of mourning. The King and all the Amirs grieved for him and buried him; but Bedreddin ceased not to bewail his father for two whole months, during which time he never left the house, nor did he attend the Divan or present himself before the Sultan. At last the latter became wroth with him and made one of his chamberlains Vizier in his stead and bade him seize on all Noureddin's houses and goods and possessions and seal them up. So the new Vizier went forth to do this and take Bedreddin Hassan and bring him before the Sultan, that he might deal with him as he thought fit. Now there was among the troops one who had been a servant of the deceased Vizier, and when he heard this order he spurred his steed and rode at full speed to Bedreddin's house, where he found him sitting at the gate, with downcast head, broken-hearted. So he dismounted and kissing his hand, said to him, "O my lord and son of my lord, hasten, ere destruction light on thee!" When Bedreddin heard this, he trembled and said, "What is the matter?" "The Sultan is wroth with thee," answered the other, "and has given orders for thine arrest, and calamity follows hard upon me, so flee for thy life." Quoth Bedreddin, "Is there time for me to go in and take somewhat to stand me in stead in my strangerhood?" But the other answered, "O my lord, rise at once and save thyself whilst it is yet time, and leave thy house." So Bedreddin covered his face with his skirt and went out and walked on till he came without the city. On his way, he heard the people saying that the Sultan had sent the new Vizier to the late Vizier's house, to seize on his possessions and take his son Bedreddin Hassan and bring him before him, that he might put him to death, and they grieved for him by reason of his beauty and grace. When he heard this, he fled forth at hazard, not knowing whither, and chance led him to the cemetery where his father was buried. So he passed among the tombs, till he came to his father's sepulchre and entering, sat down and let fall from over his head the skirt of his cassock, which was made of brocade, with the following lines embroidered in gold on the hem:

Thou whose face with the rainbow might vie, That art bright as
  the stars of the sky,
May thy fortune ne'er fail to be fair And thy glory for ever be
  high!

As he sat by his father's tomb, there came up a Jew, as he were a money-changer, with a pair of saddle-bags full of gold, and accosted him, saying, "Whither away, O my lord? It is near the end of the day and thou art lightly clad and bearest the marks of chagrin on thy countenance." "I was asleep but now," answered Bedreddin, "when my father appeared to me and reproached me for not having visited his tomb, and I awoke, trembling, and came hither at once, fearing lest the day should pass, without my paying him a visit, which would have been grievous to me." "O my lord," said the Jew, "thy father had many ships at sea, whereof some are now due; and it is my wish to buy of thee the cargo of the first that comes into port for a thousand dinars." "I will well," answered Bedreddin; whereupon the Jew took out a purse of gold and counted out a thousand dinars, which he gave to Bedreddin, saying, "Write me an acknowledgment and seal it." So Bedreddin took pen and paper and wrote the following in double: "The writer, Bedreddin Hassan, son of the Vizier Noureddin of Bassora, has sold to Isaac the Jew all the cargo of the first of his father's ships that comes into port, at the price of a thousand dinars, which he has received in advance." Then he gave one copy to the Jew, who took it and went away, and put the other in the purse, which he thrust into his waistcloth. And he bethought him of his former estate of honour and consideration and wept and repeated the following verses:

Home is no longer home to me, now ye are gone away, Nor are the
neighbours neighbours now, after our parting-day,
The comrade, whom I loved whilere, no more a comrade is, And
even
the very sun and moon' no longer bright are they.
Ye went away and all the world was saddened for your loss, And
all the hills and plains grew dark with sorrow and dismay.
O that the raven of ill-luck, that croaked our parting hour, May
lose his plumes nor find a nest in which his bead to lay!
My patience fails me for desire, my body wasteth sore; How many a
veil the hands of death and parting rend in tway!
I wonder, will our happy nights come ever back again, Or one
house hold us two once more, after the olden way!

Then he wept sore and laying his head on his father's tomb, remained plunged in melancholy thought till drowsiness overcame him and he fell asleep. He slept on till the moon rose, when his head rolled off the tomb and he lay on his back, with his face gleaming in the moon. Now the cemetery was haunted by true-believing Jinn, and presently a Jinniyeh came out and seeing Bedreddin lying asleep, marvelled at his beauty and grace and said, “Glory be to God! This can be no other than one of the children of Paradise.” Then she rose into the air to fly about, as was her wont, and met an Afrit flying, who saluted her, and she said to him, “Whence comest thou?” “From Cairo,” replied he. Quoth she, “Wilt thou come with me and look on the beauty of a youth who sleeps in the burial-ground yonder?” And he said, “I will well.” So they both flew down to the tomb and she showed him Bedreddin, saying, “Sawest thou ever the like of this young man?” The Afrit looked at him and exclaimed, “Blessed be God to whom there is none like! But, O my sister, shall I tell thee what I have seen this day?” “What is that?” asked she; and he answered, “I have seen a young lady in the land of Egypt, who is the counterpart of this youth. She is the daughter of the Vizier Shemseddin of Cairo and is possessed of beauty and grace and symmetry and perfection. When she reached the age of fifteen, the Sultan of Egypt heard of her and sending for the Vizier her father, said to him, ‘O Vizier, it has come to my knowledge that thou hast a daughter and I wish to demand her of thee in marriage.’ ‘O my lord the Sultan,’ replied the Vizier, ‘I prithee accept my excuse and take compassion on my grief, for thou knowest that my brother Noureddin, who was my partner in the Vizierate, left us many years ago and went I know not whither. Now the reason of his departure was that one night we were sitting talking of marriage and children, when we came to words on the subject and he was angry with me and went away in his anger. But on the day her mother bore her, fifteen years ago, I swore that I would marry my daughter to none but my brother’s son. Now, awhile ago, I heard that he is lately dead at Bassora, where he was Vizier, after having married the former Vizier’s daughter and had by her a son; and I will not marry my daughter but to him, in honour of my brother’s memory. Moreover, I recorded the date of my marriage and of the conception and birth of my daughter and drew her horoscope, and she is destined for her cousin and there are girls in plenty for our lord the Sultan.’ When the Sultan heard the Vizier’s answer, he was exceeding wroth and said, ‘When the like of me demands in marriage the daughter of the like of thee, he confers a favour on her, and thou puttest me off with idle excuses! As my head liveth, I will marry her to the meanest of my serving men, to spite thee!' Now the Sultan had a hunchbacked groom, with a hump behind and before, and he sent for him and married him to the Vizier's daughter, whether she would or no, and bade carry him in procession and bring him in to his bride this very night. Now I have just come from Cairo, where I left the hunchback at the door of the bath, surrounded by the King's servants holding lighted flambeaux and making mock of him. As for the Vizier's daughter, she sits among her nurses and tire-women, weeping, for they have forbidden her father access to her. Never, O my sister, saw I one more hideous than the hunchback, whilst the young lady is the likest of all folk to this youth, though she is even handsomer than he." "Thou liest," replied the Jinniyeh; "this youth is handsomer than any one of his day." "By Allah, O my sister," replied the Afrit, "the girl I speak of is handsomer than he, but none but he is worthy of her, for they resemble each other as they were brother and sister or brothers' children. Alas, the pity of her with that hunchback!" Then said she, "O my brother, let us take him up and carry him to Cairo, that we may compare him with the damsel and see whether of them is the handsomer." "I hear and obey," answered the Afrit; "this is right well advised, and I will carry him." So he took Bedreddin up and flew with him through the air, accompanied by the Afriteh, till he alighted in the city of Cairo and set him down on a stone bench. Then he aroused him, and when he found himself no longer on his father's tomb in Bassora, but in a strange city, he would have cried out, but the Afrit gave him a cuff and imposed silence on him. Then he brought him a splendid dress and made him put it on, and giving him a lighted flambeau, said to him, "Know that I have brought thee hither, meaning to do thee a good turn for the love of God; so take this torch and mingle with the people at the door of the bath and accompany them to the house of the wedding festival. Then advance and enter the hall and fear none, but sit down on the right hand of the humpbacked bridegroom; and as often as the tire-women and singers stop before thee, put thy hand into thy pocket and thou wilt find it full of gold. Take it out by handsful and give to all who come to thee and spare not, for as often as thou puttest thy hand into thy pocket, thou wilt find it without fail full of gold. So fear nothing, but put thy trust in Him who created thee, for all this is not by shine own strength but by that of God, that His decrees may take effect upon His creatures.” Quoth Bedreddin to himself, “I wonder what is the meaning of all this!” And taking the torch, went to the bath, where he found the hunchback already on horseback. So he mixed with the people and moved on with the bridal-procession; and as often as the singing-women stopped to collect largesse from the people, he put his hand into his pocket and finding it full of gold, took out a handful and threw it into the singers’ tambourine, till it was full of dinars. The singing women were amazed at his munificence and they and the people wondered at his beauty and grace and the richness of his dress. He ceased not to do thus, till he reached the Vizier’s palace, where the chamberlains drove back the people and forbade them to enter; but the singing women said, “By Allah, we will not enter, unless this young man enter with us, for he has overwhelmed us with his bounties; nor shall the bride be displayed, except he be present.” So the chamberlains let him pass, and he entered the bridal saloon with the singers, who made him sit down, in defiance of the humpbacked bridegroom. The wives of the Viziers and Amirs and chamberlains were ranged, each veiled to the eyes and holding a great lighted flambeau, in two ranks, extending right and left from the bride’s throne to the upper end of the dais, in front of the door from which she was to issue. When the ladies saw Bedreddin and noted his beauty and grace and his face that shone like the new moon, they all inclined to him, and the singers said to all the women present, “You must know that this handsome youth has handselled us with nought but red gold, so fail ye not to wait on him and comply with all that he says.” So all the women crowded round Bedreddin, with their torches, and gazed on his beauty arid envied him his grace; and each would gladly have lain in his bosom an hour or a year. In their intoxication, they let fall their veils from their faces and said, “Happy she who belongs to him or to whom he belongs!” And they cursed the humpbacked groom and him who was the cause of his marriage to that lovely lady; and as often as they invoked blessings on Bedreddin, they followed them up with imprecations on the hunchback, saying, “Indeed, this youth and he alone deserves our bride. Alas, the pity of her with this wretched hunchback, God’s curse be on him and on the Sultan who will have her marry him!”

Then the singers beat their tambourines and raised cries of joy, announcing the coming of the bride; and the Vizier's daughter entered, surrounded by her tire-women, who had perfumed her with essences and incensed her and decked her hair and dressed her in costly robes and ornaments such as were worn by the ancient kings of Persia. Over all she wore a robe embroidered in red gold with figures of birds and beasts with eyes and beaks of precious stones and feet and claws of red rubies and green beryl, and about her neck was clasped a necklace of Yemen work, worth many thousands of dinars, whose beazels were all manner jewels, never had Caesar or King of Yemen its like. She seemed as it were the full moon, when it shines out on the fourteenth night, or one of the houris of Paradise, glory be to Him who made her so splendidly fair! The women encompassed her as they were stars, and she in their midst as the moon breaking through the clouds. As she came forward, swaying gracefully to and fro, the hunchback rose to kiss her, but she turned from him and seeing Bedreddin Hassan seated, with all the company gazing on him, went and stood before him. When the folk saw her thus attracted towards Bedreddin, they laughed and shouted and the singers raised their voices, whereupon he put his hand to his pocket and cast gold by handsful into the tambourines of the singing-women, who rejoiced and said, "Would this bride were thine!" At this he smiled, and the people came round him, with the flambeaux in their hands, whilst the hunchback was left sitting alone, looking like an ape; for as often as they lighted a candle for him, it went out and he abode in darkness, speechless and confounded and grumbling to himself. When Bedreddin saw the bridegroom sitting moping alone and all the lights and people collected round himself, he was confounded and marvelled; but when he looked at his cousin, the Vizier's daughter, he rejoiced and was glad, for indeed her face was radiant with light and brilliancy. Then the tire-women took off the veil and displayed the bride in her first dress of red satin, and she moved to and fro with a languorous grace, till the heads of all the men and women were turned by her loveliness, for she was even as says the excellent poet:

Like a sun at the end of a cane in a hill of sand, She shines in

a dress of the hue of pomegranate-flower.
She gives me to drink of her cheeks and her honeyed lips, And
quenches the flaming fires that my heart devour.

Then they changed her dress and displayed her in a robe of blue; and she reappeared like the moon when it bursts through the clouds, with her coal-black hair and her smiling teeth, her delicate cheeks and her swelling bosom, even as says the sublime poet:

She comes in a robe the colour of ultramarine, Blue as the
stainless sky unflecked with white.
I view her with yearning eyes, and she seems to me A moon of the
summer set in a winter's night.

Then they clad her in a third dress and letting down her long black ringlets, veiled her face to her eyes with the super-abundance of her hair, which vied with the murkiest night in length and blackness; and she smote all hearts with the enchanted arrows of her glances. As says the poet:

With hair that hides her rosy cheeks ev'n to her speaking eyes,
She comes; and I her locks compare unto a sable cloud
And say to her, "Thou curtainest the morning with the night." But
she, "Not so; it is the moon that with the dark I shroud."

Then they displayed her in the fourth dress, and she shone forth like the rising sun, swaying to and fro with amorous languor and turning from side to side with gazelle-like grace. And she pierced hearts with the arrows of her eyelashes; even as says the poet:

A sun of beauty she appears to all that look on her, Glorious in
arch and amorous grace, with coyness beautified;
And when the sun of morning sees her visage and her smile,
Conquered, he hasteneth his face behind the clouds to hide.

Then they displayed her in the fifth dress, with her ringlets let down. The downy hair crept along her cheeks, and she swayed to and fro, like a willow-wand or a gazelle bending down to drink, with graceful motions of the neck and hips. As says the poet, describing her:

Like the full moon she doth appear, on a calm night and fair;
Slender of shape and charming all with her seductive air.
She hath an eye, whose glances pierce the hearts of all mankind,
Nor can cornelian with her cheeks for ruddiness compare.
The sable torrent of her locks falls down unto her hips; Beware
the serpents of her curls, I counsel thee, beware!
Indeed, her glance, her sides are soft, but none the less, alas!
Her heart is harder than the rock; there is no mercy there.
The starry arrows of her looks she darts above her veil; They hit
and never miss the mark, though from afar they fare.
When I clasp hands about her waist, to press her to my heart, The
swelling apples of her breast compel me to forbear.
Alas, her beauty! it outdoes all other loveliness; Her shape
transcends the willow-wand and makes the branch despair.

Then they unveiled her in the sixth dress, which was green. In this she reached the utmost bounds of loveliness, outvying in slender straightness the tawny spear-shaft, and in suppleness and flexile grace the bending branch, whilst the splendours of her face outshone the radiance of the full moon. Indeed, she transcended the fair of all quarters of the world and all hearts were broken by her loveliness; for she was even as says the poet:

A damsel made for love and decked with subtle grace; You'd say
the very sun had borrowed from her face.
She came in robes of green, the likeness of the leaf That the
pomegranate flower cloth in the bud encase.
"How call'st thou this thy dress?" we said to her, and she Made
answer with a word full of malicious grace.
"Breaker of Hearts," quoth she, "I call it, for therewith I've
broken many a heart among the human race."

Then they dressed her in the seventh dress, which was of a colour between saffron and orange, even as says the poet:

Scented with sandal and musk and ambergris, lo! she comes. The
blended hues of her dress ‘twixt orange and saffron show.
Slender and shapely she is; vivacity bids her arise, But the
weight of her hips says, “Sit, or softly and slowly go.”
When I solicit her kiss and sue for my heart’s desire, “Be
gracious,” her beauty says, but her coquetry answers, “No.”

They unveiled the bride, in all her seven dresses, before Bedreddin Hassan, leaving the hunchback sitting by himself; and when she opened her eyes, she said, “O my God, grant that this youth may be my husband and deliver me from this humpbacked groom.” Then they dismissed the company and all who were present retired, except Bedreddin Hassan and the hunchback, whilst the tire-women carried off the bride to undress her and prepare her for the bridegroom. Thereupon the hunchback came up to Bedreddin Hassan and said to him, “O my lord, thou hast cheered us with thy company tonight and overwhelmed us with thy favours. Wilt thou not now rise and depart?” “In the name of God,” replied Bedreddin, and rising, went out of the door, where the Afrit met him and said to him, “Stay where thou art, and when the hunchback goes out to the draught-house, enter thou the bride chamber and do not hesitate, but sit down in the alcove, and when the bride comes, say to her, ‘’Tis I who am thy husband, for the King only played this trick on thee, to conjure the evil eye from us; and he whom thou sawest is one of our grooms.’ Then go up to her and uncover her face and fear nothing, for jealousy hath taken us of this affair and none is worthy to enjoy her youth but thyself.’ As he was yet speaking, the groom came out and entering the closet, sat down on the stool. Hardly had he done so, when the Afrit appeared to him in the shape of a mouse, issuing from the water-trough, and cried “Queek!” Quoth the hunchback, “What ails thee?” And the mouse increased till it became a cat and said, “Miaou! Miaou!” Then it grew still more and became a dog and cried, “Bow! Wow!” When the hunchback saw this, he was terrified and exclaimed, “Begone, O unlucky one!” The dog increased and became an ass-colt, that brayed and cried out in his face, “Heehaw! Heehaw!” Whereupon the hunchback quaked and cried out, “Come to my aid, O people of the house!” But the ass increased and swelled, till it became a buffalo and barred the way against him and said with a human voice, “Out on thee, hunchback, thou stinkard!” The groom was seized with a colic and sat down on the jakes with his clothes on and his teeth chattering. Quoth the Afrit, “Is the world so small that thou canst find none to marry but my mistress?’’ But he was silent, and the Afrit said, “Answer me, or I will make thee a dweller in the dust.” “By Allah,” replied the hunchback, “I am not to blame, for they forced me to marry her, and I knew not that she had a buffalo for a gallant; but I repent to God and to thee. What wilt thou have me do?” Quoth the Afrit, “I swear to thee that, if thou leave this place or speak before sunrise, I will wring thy neck! When the sun rises, go thy way and never return to this house.” So saying, he seized the hunchback and set him upside down against the wall, with his head in the slit and his feet in the air, and said to him, “I will leave thee here and watch thee till sunrise; and if thou stir before then, I will seize thee by the feet and dash out thy brains against the wall.” Meanwhile Bedreddin Hassan entered the bride chamber and sat down in the alcove. Presently, in came the bride, attended by an old woman, who stopped at the door of the chamber and said, “O father of symmetry, arise and take what God sends thee.” Then the old woman went away, and the bride, whose name was the Lady of Beauty, entered, heart-broken and saying to herself, “By Allah, I will never yield myself to him, though he kill me!” When she came to the alcove, she saw Bedreddin sitting there and said, “O my friend, thou here at this hour! By Allah, I was wishing that thou wast my husband or that thou and the groom were partners in me!” “How should the groom have access to thee,” asked Bedreddin, “and how should he share with me in thee?” Quoth she “Who is my husband, thou or he?” “O Lady of Beauty,” replied Bedreddin, “all this was only a device to conjure the evil eye from us. Thy father hired the hunchback for ten diners to that end, and now he has taken his wage and gone away. Didst thou not see the singers and tire-women laughing at him and how thy people displayed thee before me?” When the Lady of Beauty heard this, she smiled and rejoiced and laughed softly. Then she said to him, “Thou hast quenched the fire of my heart, so, by Allah, take me and press me to thy bosom.” Now she was without clothes; so she threw open the veil in which she was wrapped and showed her hidden charms. At this sight, desire stirred in Bedreddin, and he rose and put off his clothes. The purse of a thousand dinars he had received of the Jew he wrapped in his trousers and laid them under the mattress; then took off his turban and hung it on the settle, remaining in a skull-cap and shirt of fine silk, laced with gold. With this arose the Lady of Beauty and drew him to her, and he did the like with her. Then he took her to his embrace and pointing the engine that batters down the fortalice of virginity, stormed the citadel and found her an unpierced pearl and a filly that none but he had ridden. So he took her maidenhead and enjoyed her dower of youth; nor did he stint to return to the assault till he had furnished fifteen courses, and she conceived by him. Then he laid his hand under her head and she did the like, and they embraced and fell asleep in each other's arms, whilst the tongue of the case spoke the words of the poet:

Cleave fast to her thou lov'st and let the envious rail amain,
For calumny and envy ne'er to favour love were fain.
Lo! the Compassionate hath made no fairer thing to see Than when
one couch in its embrace enfoldeth lovers twain,
Each to the other's bosom clasped, clad in their own delight,
Whilst hand with hand and arm with arm about their necks
enchain.
Lo! when two hearts are straitly knit in passion and desire, But
on cold iron smite the folk that chide at them in vain.
If in thy time thou find but one to love thee and be true, I rede
thee cast the world away and with that one remain.

As soon as Bedreddin was asleep, the Afrit said to the Afriteh, "Come, let us take up the young man and carry him back to his place, ere the dawn overtake us, for the day is near." So she took up Bedreddin, as he lay asleep, clad only in his shirt and skull-cap, and flew away with him, accompanied by the Afrit. But the dawn overtook them midway and the muezzins began to chant the call to morning-prayer. Then God let His angels cast at the Afrit with shooting-stars, and he was consumed; but the Afriteh escaped and lighted down with Bedreddin, fearing to carry him further, lest he should come to harm. Now as fate would have it, she had reached the city of Damascus, so she laid Bedreddin down before one of its gates and flew away. As soon as it was day, the gate was thrown open and the folk came out, and seeing a handsome young man, clad in nothing but a shirt and skull-cap, lying on the ground, drowned in sleep by reason of his much swink of the night before, said, "Happy she with whom this youth lay the night! Would he had waited to put on his clothes!" Quoth another, "A sorry race are young men of family! Belike, this fellow but now came forth of the tavern on some occasion or other, but being overcome with drunkenness, missed the place he was making for and strayed till he came to the city gate, and finding it shut, lay down and fell asleep." As they were bandying words about him, the breeze blew on him and raising his shirt, showed a stomach and navel and legs and thighs, firm and clear as crystal and softer than cream; whereupon the bystanders exclaimed, "By Allah, it is good!" And made such a noise, that Bedreddin awoke and finding himself lying at the gate of a city, in the midst of a crowd of people, was astonished and said to them, "O good people, where am I, and why do you crowd round me thus?" "We found thee lying here asleep, at the time of the call to morning-prayer," replied they, "and this is all we know of the matter. Where didst thou lie last night?" "By Allah, good people," answered he, "I lay last night in Cairo!" Quoth one, "Thou hast eaten hashish." And another, "Thou art mad; how couldst thou lie yesternight in Cairo and awake this morning in Damascus?" "By Allah, good people," rejoined he, "I do not lie to you; indeed I lay last night in the city of Cairo and yesterday I was in Bassora." "Good," said one; and another, "This youth is mad." And they clapped their hands at him and said to each other, "Alack, the pity of his youth! By Allah, there is no doubt of his madness." Then said they to him, "Collect thyself and return to thy senses. How couldst thou be in Bassora yesterday and in Cairo last night and yet awake in Damascus this morning?" But he said, "Indeed, I was a bridegroom in Cairo last night." "Doubtless thou hast been dreaming," rejoined they, "and hast seen all this in sleep." So he bethought himself awhile, then said to them, "By Allah, it was no dream! I certainly went to Cairo and they displayed the bride before me, in the presence of the hunchback. By Allah, O my brethren, this was no dream; or if it was a dream, where is the purse of gold I had with me and my turban and trousers and the rest of my clothes?" Then he rose and entered the town and passed through its streets and markets; but the people followed him and pressed on him, crying out, "Madman! Madman!" till he took refuge in a cook's shop. Now this cook had been a robber and a sharper, but God had made him repent and turn from his evil ways and open a cookshop; and all the people of Damascus stood in awe of him and feared his mischief. So when they saw Bedreddin enter his shop, they dispersed for fear of him and went their ways. The cook looked at Bedreddin and noting his beauty and grace, fell in love with him and said to him, "Whence comest thou, O youth? Tell me thy case, for thou art become to me dearer than my soul." So Bedreddin told him all that had befallen him from first to last; and the cook said, "O my lord Bedreddin, this is indeed a strange thing and a rare story; but, O my son, keep thy case secret, till God grant thee relief, and abide here with me meanwhile, for I am childless and will adopt thee as my son." And Bedreddin answered, "I will well, O uncle." With this the cook went to the bazaar, where he bought him a handsome suit of clothes and made him put it on, then carried him to the Cadi and formally acknowledged him as his son. So Bedreddin passed in Damascus for the cook's son and abode with him, sitting in the shop to take the money.

To return to the Lady of Beauty. When the day broke and she awoke from sleep, she missed Bedreddin from her side and thought he had gone to the lavatory, so lay expecting him awhile, when behold, her father entered. Now he was sore at heart by reason of what had passed between him and the Sultan and for that he had married his daughter by force to one of his servants, and he a lump of a hunchbacked groom; and he said to himself, "If she have suffered this damnable fellow to possess her, I will kill her." So he came to the door of the alcove and cried out, "Ho, Lady of Beauty!" She replied, "Here am I, O my lord"; and came out tottering for joy, with a face whose brightness and beauty had redoubled for that she had lain in the arms of that gazelle, and kissed the ground before her father. When the Vizier saw her thus, he said to her, "O accursed woman, dost thou rejoice in this groom?" At these words, the Lady of Beauty smiled and said, “O my lord, let what happened yesterday suffice, when all the folk were laughing at me and flouting me with that groom, who is not worth the paring of one of my husband’s nails. By Allah, I never in all my life passed a pleasanter night! So do not mock me by reminding me of that hunchback.” When her father heard this, he was filled with rage and glared at her, saving, “Out on thee! what words are these? It was the hunchbacked groom that lay with thee.” “For God’s sake,” replied the Lady of Beauty, “do not mention him to me, may God curse his father! And mock me not, for the groom was only hired for ten dinars to conjure the evil eye from us, and he took his hire and departed. As for me, I entered the bridal chamber, where I found my true husband sitting in the alcove, him before whom the singers had unveiled me and who flung them the red gold by handsful, till he made all the poor there rich; and I passed the night in the arms of my sprightly husband, with the black eyes and joined eyebrows.” When her father heard this, the light in his eyes became darkness, and he cried out at her, saying, “O wanton, what is this thou sayest? Where are thy senses?” “O my father,” rejoined she, “thou breakest my heart with thy persistence in making mock of me! Indeed, my husband, who took my maidenhead, is in the wardrobe and I am with child by him.” The Vizier rose, wondering, and entered the draught-house, where he found the hunchbacked groom with his head in the slit and his heels in the air. At this sight he was confounded and said, “This is none other than the hunchback.” So he called to him, “Hallo, hunchback!” The groom made no answer but a grunt, thinking it was the Afrit who spoke to him. But the Vizier cried out at him, saying, “Speak, or I will cut off thy head with this sword.” Then said the hunchback, “By Allah, O Chief of the Afrits, I have not lifted my head since thou didst set me here; so, God on thee, have mercy on me!” “What is this thou sayest?” quoth the Vizier. “I am no Afrit; I am the father of the bride.” “It is enough that though hast already gone nigh to make me lose my life,” replied the hunchback, “go thy ways ere he come upon thee who served me thus. Could ye find none to whom to marry me but the mistress of an Afrit and the beloved of a buffalo? May God curse him who married me to her and him who was the cause of it?” Then said the Vizier to him, “Come, get up out of this place.” “Am I mad," answered the groom, "that I should go with thee without the Afrit's leave? He said to me, 'When the sun rises, get up and go thy way.' So has the sun risen or no? for I dare not budge till then." "Who brought thee hither?" asked the Vizier; and the hunchback replied, "I came here last night to do an occasion, when behold, a mouse came out of the water and squeaked and grew to a buffalo and spoke to me words that entered my ears. Then he left me here and went away, accursed be the bride and he who married me to her!" The Vizier went up to him and set him on his feet; and he went out, running, not crediting that the sun had risen, and repaired to the Sultan, to whom he related what had befallen him with the Afrit. Meanwhile, the Vizier returned to the bride's chamber, troubled in mind about his daughter, and said to her, "O my daughter, expound thy case to me." "O my father," answered she, "what more can I tell thee? Indeed, the bridegroom, he before whom they displayed me yesterday, lay with me all night and took my virginity, and I am with child by him. If thou believe me not, there is his turban, just as he left it, on the settle, and his trousers under the bed, with I know not what wrapped up in them." When her father heard this, he entered the alcove and found Bedreddin's turban; so he took it up and turning it about, said, "This is a Vizier's turban, except that it is of the Mosul cut." Then he perceived an amulet sewn in the cap of the turban so he unsewed the lining and took it out; then took the trousers, in which was the purse of a thousand dinars. In the latter he found the duplicate of Bedreddin's docket of sale to the Jew, naming him as Bedreddin Hassan, son of Noureddin Ali of Cairo. No sooner had he read this, than he cried out and fell down in a swoon; and when he revived, he wondered and said, "There is no god but God the Omnipotent! O my daughter, dost thou know who took thy maidenhead?" "No," answered she; and he said, "It was thy cousin, my brother's son, and these thousand dinars are thy dowry' Glory be to God! Would I knew how this had come about!" Then he opened the amulet and found therein a paper in the handwriting of his brother Noureddin; and when he saw his writing, he knew it and kissed it again and again, weeping and making moan for his brother. Then he read the scroll and found in it a record of the dates of Noureddin's marriage with the Vizier's daughter of Bassora, his going in to her, her conception and the birth of Bedreddin Hassan, and the history of his brother's life till his death. At this he wondered and was moved to joy and comparing the dates with those of his own marriage and the birth of his daughter the Lady of Beauty, found that they agreed in all respects. So he took the scroll and carrying it to the Sultan, told him the whole story from first to last, at which the King wondered and commanded the case to be at once set down in writing. The Vizier abode all that day awaiting his nephew, but he came not; and when seven days were past and he could learn nothing of him, he said, "By Allah, I will do a thing that none has done before me!" So he took pen and ink and paper and drew a plan of the bride-chamber, showing the disposition of all the furniture therein, as that the alcove was in such a place, this or that curtain in another, and so on with all that was in the room. Then he folded the paper and laid it aside, and causing all the furniture to be taken up and stored away, took Bedreddin's purse and turban and clothes and locked them up with an iron padlock, on which he set a seal, against his nephew's coming. As for the Lady of Beauty, she accomplished the months of her pregnancy and bore a son like the full moon, resembling his father in beauty and grace. They cut his navel and blackened his eyelids with kohl and committed him to the nurses, naming him Agib. His day was as a month and his month as a year, and when seven years had passed over him, his grandfather sent him to school, bidding the master teach him to read the Koran and give him a good education; and he remained at the school four years, till he began to bully the little ones and beat them and abuse them, saying, "Which of you is like me? I am the son of the Vizier of Egypt." At last the children came, in a body, to complain to the monitor of Agib's behavior to them, and he said, "I will tell you how to do with him, so that he shall leave coming to the school and you shall never see him again. It is this: when he comes to-morrow, sit down round him and let one of you say to the others, 'By Allah, none shall play at this game except he tell us the names of his father and mother; for he who knows not his parents' names is a bastard and shall not play with us.'" So next day, when Agib came to the school, they all assembled round him, and one of them said, "We will play a game, in which no one shall join except he tell us the names of his father and mother." And they all said, “By Allah, it is good.” Then said one of them, “My name is Majid, my mother’s name is Alawiyeh and my father’s Izeddin.” And the others said the like, till it came to Agib’s turn and he said, “My name is Agib, my mother is the Lady of Beauty and my father Shemseddin, Vizier of Egypt.” “By Allah,” cried they, “the Vizier is not thy father.” Said he, “He is indeed my father.” Then they all laughed and clapped their hands at him, saying, “He does not know his father! Arise and go out from us, for none shall play with us, except he know his father’s name.” Thereupon they dispersed from around him and laughed him to scorn, leaving him choked with tears and mortification. Then said the monitor to him, “O Agib, knowst thou not that the Vizier is thy mother’s father, thy grandfather and not thy father? As for thy father, thou knowest him not nor do we, for the Sultan married thy mother to a humpbacked groom; but the Jinn came and lay with her, and thou hast no known father. Wherefore, do thou leave evening thyself with the boys in the school, till thou know who is thy father; for till then thou wilt pass for a misbegotten brat amongst them. Dost thou not see that the huckster’s son knows his own father? Thy grandfather is the Vizier of Egypt, but as for thy father, we know him not, and we say, thou hast no father. So return to thy senses.” When Agib heard the insulting words of the children and the monitor, he went out at once and ran to his mother, to complain to her; but his tears would not let him speak awhile. When she heard his sobs and saw his tears, her heart was on fire for him and she said to him, “O my son, why dost thou weep? Tell me what is the matter.” So he told her what the children and the monitor had said and said to her, “Who is my father, O my mother?” “Thy father is the Vizier of Egypt,” answered she; but he said, “Do not lie to me. The Vizier is thy father, not mine. Who then is my father? Except thou tell me the truth, I will kill myself with this dagger.” When the Lady of Beauty heard him speak of his father, she wept, as she thought of her cousin and her bridal-night, and repeated the following verses:

Love in my breast, alas! they lit and went away; Far distant is
the camp that holds my soul’s delight!
Patience and reason fled from me, when they withdrew; Sleep

failed me, and despair o'ercame me like a blight.
They left me, and with them departed all my joy; Tranquility and peace with them have taken flight.
They made my lids run down with tears of love laid waste; My eyes for lack of them brim over day and night.
When as my sad soul longs to see them once again And waiting and desire are heavy on my spright;
Midmost my heart of hearts their images I trace, Love and desireful pain and longing for their sight.
O ye, one thought of whom clings round me like a cloak, Whose love it as a shirt about my body dight,
O my beloved ones, how long will ye delay? How long must I endure estrangement and despite?

Then she wept and cried out and her son did the like, when in came the Vizier, whose heart burned within him at the sight of their weeping, and he said, "Why do ye weep?" The Lady of Beauty told him what had happened to Agib, and the Vizier also wept and called to mind his brother and all that had passed between them and what had befallen his daughter, and knew not the secret of the matter. Then he rose at once and going to the Divan, related the matter to the Sultan and begged his leave to travel eastward to the city of Bassora and enquire for his nephew. Moreover, he besought him for letters-patent, authorizing him to take Bedreddin, wherever he should find him. And he wept before the King, who took pity on him and wrote him royal letters-patent to his deputies in all his provinces; whereat the Vizier rejoiced and called down blessings on him. Then taking leave of him, he returned to his house, where he equipped himself and his daughter and grandson for the journey, and set out and travelled till he came to the city of Damascus and found it rich in trees and waters, even as says the poet:

I mind me a night and a day spent in Damascus town, (Time swore 'twould ne'er again their like to man outmete).
We lay in its languorous glades, where the careless calm of the night And the morn, with its smiling eyes and its twy-coloured tresses, meet.

The dew to its branches clings like a glittering chain of pearl,
Whose jewels the zephyr smites and scatters beneath his feet.
The birds on the branches chant from the open book of the lake;
The breezes write on the scroll and the clouds mark the points, as they fleet.

The Vizier alighted without the city and pitched his tents in an open space called the Plain of Pebbles, saying to his servants, "We will rest here two days." So they went down into the city upon their several occasions, this to sell, that to buy, another to go to the bath and a fourth to visit the Mosque of the Ommiades, whose like is not in the world. Agib also went into the city to look about him, followed by an eunuch, carrying a knotted cudgel of almond-tree wood, wherewith if one smote a camel, it would not rise again. When the people of the city saw Agib's beauty and symmetry (for he was a marvel of loveliness and winning grace, blander than the Northern zephyr, sweeter than limpid water to the thirsty and more delightful than recovery to the sick), a great concourse of folk followed him, whilst others ran on before and sat down in the road, against he should come up, that they might gaze on him, till, as Fate would have it, the eunuch stopped before the shop of Bedreddin Hassan. Now the cook was dead and Bedreddin, having been formally adopted by him, had succeeded to his shop and property; and in the course of the twelve years that had passed over him, his beard had grown and his understanding ripened. When his son and the eunuch stopped before him, he had just finished preparing a mess of pomegranate-seed, dressed with sugar; and when he looked at Agib and saw how beautiful he was, his heart throbbed, blood drew to blood and his bowels yearned to him. So he called to him and said, "O my lord, O thou that hast gotten the mastery of my heart and my soul, thou to whom my bowels yearn, wilt thou not enter my shop and solace my heart by eating of my food?" And the tears welled up, uncalled, from his eyes, and he bethought him of his former estate and compared it with his present condition. When Agib heard his words his heart yearned to him, and he said to the eunuch, "Indeed, my heart inclines to this cook, and meseems he hath lost a child, so let us enter and gladden his soul by partaking of his hospitality. Perhaps God may requite us our kindness to him by reuniting us with my father." "By Allah!" replied the eunuch, "it were a fine thing for a Vizier's son to eat in a cookshop! Indeed, I keep off the folk with this stick, lest they look too closely on thee, and I dare not let thee enter a shop." When Bedreddin heard these words, he wondered and turned to the eunuch, with the tears running down his cheeks, and Agib said to the latter, "Indeed, my heart yearns for him." But he answered, "Leave this talk; indeed, thou shalt not go in." Then Bedreddin turned to the eunuch and said, "O noble sir, why wilt thou not gladden my soul by entering my shop? O thou who art as a chestnut, black without, but with a white heart, thou of whom the poet says ...." The eunuch laughed and said, "What? Say on, by Allah, and be quick about it." So Bedreddin repeated the following verses:

Were he not polished and discreet and worthy of all trust, He in
  kings' houses would not be advanced to high estate.
O what a guardian he is for a seraglio! The very angels of the
  skies delight on him to wait.

This pleased the eunuch, who laughed and taking Agib by the hand, entered the shop with him. Bedreddin ladled out a dishful of pomegranate-seed, conserved with almonds and sugar, and set it before them, saying, "Ye do me honour. Eat and may health and enjoyment attend you!" And Agib said to him, "Sit down and eat with us, so haply God may unite us with him for whom we long." "O my son," said Bedreddin, "hast thou then suffered the loss of friends, at thy tender age?" "Yes, O uncle!" answered Agib, "my heart irks me for the loss of a beloved one, who is none other than my father; and indeed my grandfather and myself have come forth to seek for him throughout the world. Alas I how I sigh to be united with him!" Then he wept sore, whilst Bedreddin wept at the sight of his tears and for his bereavement, which recalled to him his own separation from those he loved and from his father and mother, and the eunuch was moved to pity for him. Then they ate together till they were satisfied, and Agib and the eunuch rose and left the shop. At this, Bedreddin felt as if his soul had departed his body and gone with them, for he could not live a moment without their sight, albeit he knew not that Agib was his son. So he rose and shutting his shop, hastened after them and overtook them before they went out at the great gate. The eunuch turned and said to him, "What dost thou want?" "When you left me," replied Bedreddin, "meseemed my soul had quitted my body, and as I had an occasion without the city, I thought to bear you company till I had done my business and so return." The eunuch was vexed and said to Agib, "This is what I feared. Because we entered this fellow's shop and ate that unlucky mouthful, he thinks he has a right to presume upon us, for see, he follows us from place to place." Agib turned and seeing the cook following him, reddened for anger and said to the eunuch, "Let him walk in the high road of the Muslims; but if he follow us when we turn aside to our tents, we will drive him away." Then he bowed his head and walked on, with the eunuch behind him. When they came to the Plain of Pebbles and drew near their tents, Agib turned and saw Bedreddin still following him; whereat he was enraged, fearing least the eunuch should tell his grandfather and vexed that it should be said he had entered a cookshop and the cook had followed him. So he looked at Bedreddin and found his eyes fixed on him, for he was as it were a body without a soul; and it seemed to Agib that his eye was that of a knave or a lewd fellow. So his rage redoubled and he took up a stone and threw it at Bedreddin. It struck him on the forehead and cut it open; and he fell down in a swoon, with the blood streaming down his face, whilst Agib and the eunuch made for the tents. When he came to himself, he wiped away the blood and tore off a piece of the muslin of his turban, with which he bound his head, blaming himself and saying, "I wronged the lad in closing my shop and following him, so that he thought I was some lewd fellow." Then he returned to his shop, where he busied himself with the sale of his meats; and he yearned after his mother at Bassora and wept over her and recited the following verses:

If thou demand fair play of Fate, therein thou dost it wrong; And
  blame it not, for twas not made, indeed, for equity.
Take what lies ready to thy hand and lay concern aside, For
  troubled days and days of peace in life must surely be.

Meanwhile, the Vizier, his uncle, tarried in Damascus three days, then departed for Hems, and passing through that city, fared on by way of Hemah and Aleppo and thence through Diarbekir, Maridin and Mosul, making enquiries at every place he came to, till he arrived at Bassora, where he halted and presented himself before the Sultan, who received him with honour and consideration and asked the reason of his coming. The Vizier related to him his history and told him that Noureddin Ali was his brother, whereupon the Sultan commended the latter's soul to the mercy of God and said, "Sir, he was my Vizier for fifteen years, and I loved him greatly. Then he died, leaving a son, who abode here but two months after his father's death; since which time he hath disappeared and we have never come upon any news of him. But his mother, who was the daughter of my former Vizier, is still with us." Shemseddin rejoiced to hear that his nephew's mother was still alive and said, "O King, I wish to see her." The King at once gave him leave to visit her; so he betook himself to his brother Noureddin's house and went round about it and kissed its threshold. And he bethought him of his brother and how he had died in a strange land and wept and repeated the following verses:

I wander through the halls, the halls where Leila lived, And kiss
 the lifeless walls that of her passage tell.
It is not for the house that I with passion burn, But for the
 cherished ones that erst therein did dwell.

Then he entered the gate and found himself in a spacious courtyard, at the end whereof was a door vaulted over with hard stone, inlaid with vari-coloured marbles. He walked round about the house, and casting his eyes on the walls, saw the name of his brother Noureddin written on them in letters of gold. So he went up to the inscription and kissed it and wept for his brother's loss and repeated the following verses:

I sue unto the rising sun, each morn, for news of thee, And of
 the lightning's lurid gleam I do for thee enquire.
The hands of passion and of pain sport with me all the night; Yet

I complain not of the ills I suffer from desire.
O my beloved, if the times be yet for me prolonged, be all
consumed with separation's fire.
Lo! if thy sight one happy day should bless my longing eyes,
There is no other thing on earth that I of Fate require.
Think not that other loves avail to solace me for thee; My heart
can hold no love but thine, my faith can never tire.

Then he walked on till he came to the lodging of his brother's widow. Now from the day of her son's disappearance, she had given herself up to weeping and lamentation day and night; and when the years grew long upon her, she made him a tomb of marble midmost the saloon and there wept for him day and night, sleeping not but thereby. When the Vizier drew near her apartment, he heard her weeping and repeating verses, so he went in to her and saluting her, informed her that he was her husband's brother and told her all that had passed between them, and how her son Bedreddin Hassan had spent a whole night with his daughter, twelve years ago, but had disappeared in the morning, and how she had conceived by him and borne a son, whom he had brought with him. When Bedreddin's mother heard this news of her son and grandson and that the former was haply still alive and saw her husband's brother, she threw herself at his feet and kissed them, repeating the following verses:

May God be good to him who brought me news that they were come;
For never more delightful news unto my ears were borne.
If he would take a worn-out weds for boon, I'd proffer him A
heart that at the parting hour was all to pieces torn.

Then the Vizier sent for Agib; and his grandmother embraced him and wept, but Shemseddin said to her, "This is no time for weeping; it behoves thee to make ready to go with us to Egypt; perhaps God will reunite us with thy son, my nephew." "I hear and obey," answered she, and rising at once, collected her goods and treasures and equipped herself and her handmaids for the journey, whilst the Vizier went to take his leave of the Sultan of Bassora, who sent by him gifts and rarities to the Sultan of Egypt. Then he set out at once on his homeward journey and travelled till he came to Damascus, where he halted and pitched his tents as before, saying to his suite, “We will halt here a week, to buy presents and curiosities for the Sultan.” Now the tie of blood drew Agib to his father, so he said to the eunuch, “O Laic, I have a mind to go a-walking; so come, let us go down into the streets of Damascus and see what is become of the cook whose victuals we ate and whose head we broke, for indeed he was kind to us and we used him scurvily.” The eunuch replied, “I hear and obey.” So they left the tents and going down into the city, stayed not till they came to the cookshop, where they found Bedreddin Hassan standing at the door. It was near the time of afternoon-prayer, and as chance would have it, he had just prepared a mess of pomegranate-seed. Agib looked at him and saw the scar of the blow on his forehead; wherefore his heart yearned to him and he said, “Peace be on thee! Know that my heart is with thee.” When Bedreddin saw him, his bowels were troubled and his heart throbbed, and he bowed his head and would have spoken, but could not. Then he raised his head and looked at his son humbly and imploringly and repeated the following verses:

I longed to look on him I love; but when I saw his face, I was as
  one amazed and lost the use of tongue and eyes.
I bowed my head down to his feet for reverence and awe, And would
  have hidden what I felt, but could it not disguise.
Volumes of plaining and reproach I had within my heart; Yet, when
  we met, no word I spoke nor uttered aught but sighs.

Then he said to them, “Heal my heart and eat of my food, for, by Allah, I cannot look at you but my heart throbs! I should not have followed you the other day, but that I was beside myself.” “By Allah,” replied Agib, “thou art too fond of us! We ate with thee before and thou madest us repent of it, in that thou followedst us and wouldst have put us to shame; so we will not eat with thee, except thou swear not to go out after us nor follow us. Else we will not visit thee again during our present stay, for we abide here a week, that my grandfather may take presents for the King.” And Bedreddin said, “I grant you this.” So Agib and the eunuch entered, and Bedreddin set before them a dish of pomegranate-seed. Quoth Agib, “Sit down and eat with us, so haply God may grant us relief.” At this Bedreddin was glad and sat down and ate with them, with his eyes fixed on Agib’s face, for indeed his heart and entrails were taken with his love, till the boy said to him, “What a tiresome dotard thou art! Leave thy staring in my face.” When Bedreddin heard this, he repeated the following verses:

Thy face excites in all men’s hearts a love they do not own;
Folded in silence and concealed, it may not be made known.
O thou whose beauty puts to shame the splendour of the moon,
Whose grace recalls the shining sight of morning newly blown,
In thy bright visage is a sign that may not be fulfilled, And there all beauties that incite to tenderness are shown.
Must I then die of thirst, what while thy lips with nectar flow?
Thy face is Paradise to me; must I in hell-fire groan?

So they ate till they were satisfied, when Bedreddin rose and poured water on their hands, wiping them with a napkin of silk, which he loosed from his waist; after which he sprinkled rose-water on them from a casting-bottle he had by him. Then he went out and returned with a pitcher of sherbet, flavoured with rose-water and musk, which he set before them, saying, “Complete your favours to me, by drinking of this sherbet.” So Agib took the pitcher and drank and passed it to the eunuch, and it went round amongst them till their stomachs were full, for they had eaten and drunken beyond their wont. Then they went away and made haste in walking till they reached the tents, and Agib went in to his grandmother, who kissed him, and thinking of her son Bedreddin Hassan, wept and repeated the following verses:

But for my hope that God would yet our severed loves unite, I had not lived for life to me is void of all delight.
I swear there’s nothing in my heart but love of thee alone, By God, who reads the heart and brings the hidden things to light!

And she said to Agib, “O my son, where hast thou been?” Quoth he, “We have been in the city of Damascus. Then she rose and set before him confection of pomegranate-seed and said to the eunuch, “Sit down and eat with thy young master.” The eunuch said to himself, “By Allah, we have no mind to eat!” but he sat down, and so did Agib, though his belly was full of what he had already eaten and drunk. Now the conserve lacked sugar, so he took a piece of bread and dipped it therein and ate, but found it insipid, for that he was already surfeited, and exclaimed, “Faugh! what is this nasty mess?” “O my son,” said his grandmother, “dost thou find fault with my cookery? I cooked this myself, and there is not a cook in the land can compare with me, except it be thy father Bedreddin Hassan.” “O my lady,” replied Agib, “this thy dish is naught; for we saw but now in the city a cook who dresses pomegranate-seed, so that the very smell of it opens the heart and the taste would give a full man an appetite; and as for thy mess, compared with his, it is worth neither much nor little.” When his grandmother heard this, she was exceeding wroth and said to the eunuch, “Out on thee, dost thou corrupt my grandson and take him into cookshops?” The eunuch was frightened and denied, saying, “We did not enter the shop, but only saw it in passing.” “By Allah!” said Agib, “we went in and ate, and it was better than thine.” Then his grandmother rose and went and told her brother-in-law, who was incensed against the eunuch and sending for him, said to him, “Why didst thou take my son into a cookshop?” “We did not go in,” replied the eunuch. But Agib said, “We did go in and ate of pomegranate-seed, till we were full; and the cook gave us to drink of iced sherbet of sugar.” At this, the Vizier’s anger redoubled and he questioned the eunuch, but he still denied. Then said the Vizier, “If what thou sayest be true, sit down and eat before us.” So he sat down and tried to eat, but could not and threw away the morsel, saying, “O my lord, indeed I am full since yesterday.” By this, the Vizier knew that he had eaten at the cook’s and bade his slaves throw him down and beat him. So they drubbed him, till he roared for mercy and said, “O my lord, do not beat me, and I will tell thee the truth.” Whereupon the Vizier stopped the beating and said, “Speak the truth.” Quoth the eunuch, “Know then that we did enter the shop of a cook, who was dressing pomegranate seed, and he set some of it before us; by Allah, I never ate the like of it in my life, nor did I ever taste aught nastier than that which is before us!" Bedreddin's mother was enraged at this and said to the eunuch, "Thou must go back to the cook and fetch us a dish of his pomegranate-seed and show it to thy master, that he may say which is the better, his or mine." "Good," answered he. So she gave him a dish and half a dinar, and he returned to the shop and said to Bedreddin, "We have made a wager about thy cookery in our lord's household, for they have pomegranate-seed there also; so give me half a dinar's worth of thy confection and let it be of thy best, for I have eaten my bellyful of stick on account of thy cookery." Bedreddin laughed and answered, "By Allah, none can dress this dish aright but myself and my mother, and she is far away." Then he filled the dish with pomegranate-seed and finishing it off with musk and rose-water, gave it to the eunuch, who hastened back with it and delivered it to Bedreddin's mother. No sooner had she tasted it and remarked the excellence of its flavour and cookery, than she knew who had dressed it and shrieked and fell down in a swoon, to the amazement of the Vizier, who sprinkled rose-water on her, till she came to herself and said, "If my son be yet of this world, none made this conserve but he! Without doubt, this cook is my son Bedreddin Hassan, for none knew how to dress this dish but he and I, and I taught him." The Vizier rejoiced greatly at her words, and said, "O how I long to see my brother's son! I wonder if the days will indeed reunite us with him! But it is to God alone that we look for reunion with him." Then he went out forthright and said to his men, "Let twenty of you go to the cook's shop and demolish it; then tie his hands behind him with the linen of his turban, saying, 'It was thou madest that vile mess of pomegranate-seed,' and bring him hither by force, but without doing him any hurt." And they replied, "It is well." Then he mounted and riding to the palace, foregathered with the Viceroy of Damascus and showed him the Sultan's letters-patent. He kissed them and laying them on his head, said to the Vizier, "Who is it hath offended against thee?" Quoth the Vizier, "He is a cook of this city." So the Viceroy at once despatched his chamberlains to the shop and they went thither and found it in ruins and everything in it broken; for whilst the Vizier was at the palace, his men had done his bidding and carried Bedreddin to the tents, where they were then awaiting their master's return, whilst Bedreddin said, "I wonder what they can have found in the pomegranate-seed to bring matters to this pass!" When the Vizier returned to the tents, after having gotten the Viceroy's permission to take his debtor and depart with him, he called for the cook, and they brought Bedreddin before him, with his hands bound behind his back. When he saw his uncle, he wept sore and said, "O my lord, what is my offence against thee?" "Art thou he who made the mess of pomegranate-seed?" asked Shemseddin. "Yes," replied Bedreddin; "didst thou find aught in it to call for the cutting off of my head?" Quoth the Vizier, "That were the least of thy desert." "O my lord," said Bedreddin, "wilt thou not tell me my crime and what ails the pomegranate-seed?" "Presently," answered the Vizier and called to his men, saying, "Bring the camels." So they struck camp and the Vizier caused Bedreddin to be put into a chest, which they locked and set on a camel. Then they departed and journeyed till nightfall, when they halted to eat and took Bedreddin out of his chest and fed him and locked him up again. Then they set out again and travelled till they reached Kumreh, where they took him out of the chest and brought him before the Vizier, who said to him, "Art thou he who made the mess of pomegranate-seed?" "Yes, O my lord," answered he; and Shemseddin said, "Shackle him." So they shackled him and returned him to the chest and fared on again, till they arrived at Cairo and halted in the suburb of Er Reidaniyeh. Then the Vizier commanded to take Bedreddin out of his chest and sent for a carpenter, to whom he said, "Make a cross of wood for this fellow." Quoth Bedreddin, "What wilt thou do with it?" "I mean to nail thee upon it," replied the Vizier, "and parade thee throughout the city." "And why wilt thou use me thus? asked Bedreddin; and the Vizier answered, "Because of thy villainous mess of pomegranate-seed and for that it lacked pepper." "And because it lacked pepper," said Bedreddin, "wilt thou do all this to me? Is it not enough that thou hast laid my shop in ruins and smashed my gear and imprisoned me and fed me but once a day?" "It lacked pepper," answered the Vizier; "and nothing less than death is thy desert." At this Bedreddin wondered and mourned for himself, till the Vizier said to him, "Of what art thou thinking?" "I was thinking of crack-brains like unto thee," answered Bedreddin, "for hadst thou any sense, thou wouldst not treat me thus." Quoth the Vizier, "It behoves me to punish thee, lest thou do the like again." And Bedreddin said, "Verily, my offence were over-punished by the least of what thou hast already done to me." "It avails not," answered Shemseddin; "I must crucify thee." All this time the carpenter was shaping the cross, whilst Bedreddin looked on; and thus they did till nightfall, when the Vizier took him and clapped him in the chest, saying, "The thing shall be done tomorrow." Then he waited till he knew Bedreddin to be asleep, when he mounted and taking the chest up before him, rode into the town to his own house, where he alighted and said to his daughter, the Lady of Beauty, "Praised be God who hath reunited thee with thy cousin! Arise and order the house as it was on thy wedding-night." So the servants arose and lit the candles, whilst the Vizier took out his plan of the bride chamber and directed them what to do, till they had set everything in its place, so that whoever saw it would not doubt but it was the very night of the wedding. Then he made them lay Bedreddin's turban on the stool, where he had left it, and his trousers and purse under the mattress, and bade his daughter undress herself and go to bed, as on the wedding-night, adding, "When he comes in to thee, say to him, 'Thou has tarried long in the wardrobe,' and call him to lie with thee and hold him in converse till the morning, when we will explain the whole matter to him." Then he took Bedreddin out of the chest and laid him in the vestibule, after he had unbound him and taken off his clothes, leaving him in a shirt of fine silk, and he still asleep and knowing nothing. Presently he turned over and awoke, and finding himself in a lighted vestibule, said to himself, "Surely, I am dreaming." Then he rose and opening the inner door, found himself in the chamber, where he had passed his wedding-night, and knew the alcove and the stool by the bed-side, with his turban and clothes. When he saw this, he was confounded and advanced one foot and drew the other back, saying, "Am I asleep or awake?" And he began to rub his forehead and say, wondering, "By Allah, this is the chamber of the bride that was unveiled before me! But where can I be? I was surely but now in a chest." Whilst he was debating with himself, the Lady of Beauty lifted the curtain of the alcove and said to him, "O my lord, wilt thou not come in? Thou hast tarried long in the wardrobe.” When he heard what she said and saw her face, he laughed and said, “This is certainly an imbroglio of dreams!” Then he entered, sighing, and recalled what had happened and was perplexed, and his affair became confused to him and he knew not what to think. Presently, he caught sight of his turban and trousers, so he handled the latter and feeling the purse of a thousand dinars, said, “God alone is all knowing! I am certainly in the mazes of a dream.” Then said the Lady of Beauty to him, “What ails thee to stand agape and seem perplexed? Thou wast not thus the first part of the night.” He laughed and said to her, “How long have I been absent from thee?” “God preserve thee!” exclaimed she. “The name of God encompass thee! Thou didst but go out an hour ago to do an occasion and return. Hast thou lost thy wits?” When Bedreddin heard this, he laughed and said, “Thou art right; but when I went out from thee, I forgot myself in the closet and dozed and dreamt that I was a cook in Damascus and abode there twelve years and that there came to me a boy, the son of some great man, and with him an eunuch.” Here he put his hand to his forehead and feeling the scar made by the stone, said, “By Allah, O lady, it must have been true, for here is the scar made by the stone, with which he smote me and cut my forehead open. So it would seem as if it had really happened. But perhaps I dreamt it, when we embraced and fell asleep together: for meseemed I journeyed to Damascus without turban or drawers and set up as a cook there.” Then he was perplexed and considered awhile and said, “By Allah, I fancied also that I made a mess of pomegranate-seed and put too little pepper in it. By Allah, I must have slept in the closet and dreamt all this!” “God on thee,” said the Lady of Beauty, “tell me what else thou didst dream.” “By Allah,” replied he, “had I not woke up, they would have nailed me to a cross of wood!” “Wherefore?” asked she; and he said, “Because of the lack of pepper in the pomegranate-seed. Meseemed they demolished my shop and broke my utensils in pieces and put me in a chest; then they sent for a carpenter to make a cross and would have crucified me thereon. But praised be God who caused all this to happen to me in sleep and not on wake!” The Lady of Beauty laughed and pressed him to her bosom, and he returned her caresses; then he thought again and said, “By Allah, I cannot help thinking it must have been a reality after all!

Indeed I know not what to think of it all.” Then he lay down and passed the night in a state of perplexity, saying now, “I was dreaming,” and now, “I was awake,” till the morning, when his uncle Shemseddin entered and saluted him. When Bedreddin saw him, he said to him, “By Allah, art thou not he who gave orders to bind me and demolish my shop and would have nailed me on a cross, and all because a mess of pomegranate-seed lacked pepper?” “O my son,” replied the Vizier, “know that the truth has appeared and that which was hidden is divulged. Thou art my brother’s son, and I did all this with thee but that I might certify myself that thou wast indeed he who lay with my daughter on her wedding-night. I could not be sure of this, till I saw that thou knewest the chamber and thy turban and clothes and purse and the scrolls in thy handwriting and that of my brother, for I had never seen thee and did not know thee; and I have brought thy mother with me from Bassora.” So saying, he threw himself on him and they embraced and wept for excess of joy. Then said the Vizier to Bedreddin, “O my son, all this came of what passed between thy father and myself.” And he told him what had taken place between them and the manner of his father’s flight to Bassora; after which he sent for Agib, and when his father saw him, he exclaimed, “This is he who threw the stone at me!” Quoth the Vizier, “This is thy son.” And Bedreddin threw himself on Agib and repeated the following verses:

Long time have I bewailed the sev’rance of our loves, With tears
that from my lids streamed down like burning rain,
And vowed that, if the days should reunite us two, My lips should
never speak of severance again.
Joy hath o’erwhelmed me so, that for the very stress Of that
which gladdens me, to weeping I am fain.
Tears are become to you a habit, O my eyes! So that ye weep as
well for gladness as for pain.

Presently, Bedreddin’s mother came in and fell on him, repeating the following verses:

When we met, to each other we both did complain Of the manifold

things that we each had to say;
For the lover's complaint of the anguish he feels The tongue of a
messenger cannot convey.

Then she wept and related to him what had befallen her since his departure, and he told her what he had suffered and they thanked God the Most High for their reunion with one another. Two days after his arrival, the Vizier went in to the Sultan and kissing the earth before him, saluted him after the fashion of salutation to kings. The Sultan rejoiced at his return and received him with distinguished favour. Then he desired to hear what had befallen him in his travels; so the Vizier told him all that had passed, and the Sultan said, "Praised be God for that thou hast attained thy desire and returned in safety to thy kinsfolk and family! I must see thy brother's son, so do thou bring him to the Divan tomorrow." Shemseddin replied, "God willing, thy slave shall be present tomorrow." Then he saluted him and returning to his own house, informed his nephew of the King's wish to see him, to which Bedreddin replied, "The slave is obedient to his lord's commands." So next day he accompanied his uncle to the Divan and after saluting the Sultan in the most punctilious and elegant manner, repeated the following verses:

All ranks and classes kiss the earth, in homage to thy state, For
lo I through thee their every wish is crowned with happy
fate.
For thou the fount of honour art for those that hope in thee, And
from thy hand the bounties flow that make there rich and
great.

The Sultan smiled and signed to him to sit down. So he sat down beside the Vizier, and the King enquired his name. Quoth Bedreddin, "The meanest of thy slaves is known as Bedreddin Hassan of Bassora, who prays for thee day and night." The Sultan was pleased at his words and being minded to try him and prove his knowledge and good-breeding, said to him, "Dost thou remember any verses in praise of a mole on the cheek?" "Yes," replied Bedreddin, and repeated the following:

When I think of my loved one, the sighs from my breast Burst up
and the tears to my eyes quickly start.
She's a mole, that resembles, in beauty and hue, The black of the
eye and the core of the heart.

The Sultan liked these verses and said, “Let us have some more. Heaven bless thy sire! May thy tongue never tire!” So he repeated the following:

The mole's black spot upon her cheek they liken to a grain Of
musk; yet wonder not at that, for wonder were in vain.
But rather wonder at her face, wherein all beauty is: There is no
particle of grace that it doth not contain.

The Sultan shook with delight and said to him, “More! God bless thy life!” So he repeated the following:

O thou, the moles upon whose cheek recall Globules of musk upon
cornelian strewed,
Grant me thy favours, be not hard of heart, O thou, my heart's
desire, my spirit's food!

Then said the King, “Thou hast done well, O Hassan, and hast acquitted thyself most excellently. But tell me how many meanings hath the word khal in the Arabic language.” “Fifty,” replied Hassan, “and some say eight and-fifty.” Quoth the King, “Thou art right. Canst thou tell me the points of excellence in beauty?” “Yes,” answered Bedreddin, “Brightness of face, purity of skin, shapeliness in the nose, softness in the eyes, sweetness in the mouth, elegance in speech, slenderness of shape and quickness of wit; and the perfection of beauty is in the hair. And indeed Es Shihab el Hijazi has brought them all together in the following doggrel:

Say to the face, ‘Be bright,’ and to the skin, say, ‘See, I show
thee what befits thee best: ’tis purity.’
For elegance of shape the nose we chiefly prize, And languor soft
it is, that best becomes the eyes.
Then say unto the mouth, ‘Sweetness, but mark thou me; Let

fragrancy of breath fail never unto thee.'
Chaste be the speech, the shape be slender and well knit, And
quickness mark the thought, the manners and the wit.
Then say that in the hair is ever beauty's prime. Give ear to me
and eke forgive my doggrel rhyme."

The Sultan rejoiced in his converse and said to him "What is the meaning of the popular saying, 'Shureih is more cunning than the fox'?" "Know, O King," answered Bedreddin, "may God aid thee! that Shureih was wont during the days of the plague, to go out to Nejef, and whenever he stood up to pray, there came a fox, which would plant itself over against him and distract him from his devotions by mimicking his movements. This went on for some time, till the man became weary of it; so one day he took off his shirt and put it on a cane and shook out the sleeves. Then he set his turban on top of the cane and tied a girdle round the middle of the effigy and planted it in the place where he used to say his prayers. Presently up came the fox, according to his wont, and stood over against the figure; whereupon Shureih came behind him and took him: hence the saying." When the Sultan heard Bedreddin's explanation, he said to his uncle Shemseddin, "Verily, this thy nephew is perfect in all kinds of culture. I do not believe that his like is to be found in Egypt." At this, Bedreddin arose and kissed the earth and sat down again in the posture of a servant before his master. When the Sultan had thus assured himself of his proficiency in the liberal arts, he rejoiced greatly and bestowing on him a splendid dress of honour, invested him with an office, whereby he might better his condition. Then Bedreddin arose and kissing the earth before the King, wished him enduring glory and craved leave to retire. The Sultan gave him leave; so he returned home with his uncle and they set food before them and they ate, after which Bedreddin repaired to his wife's apartment and told her what had passed between the Sultan and himself. Quoth she, "He cannot fail to make thee his boon-companion and load thee with favours and presents; and by the grace of God, the splendours of thy perfections shall shine like the greater light, wherever thou goest, by land or sea." Then said he, "I purpose to make an ode in the King's praise, that he may redouble in affection for me." "That is well thought," replied she. "Consider it well and word thy thought elegantly, and I doubt not but it will procure thee his favour." So Bedreddin shut himself up and composed the following verses, which he copied in an ornamental hand:

My King hath reached the height of lordlihead; The shining path
of virtue he cloth tread.
His justice blocks the ways against his foes And peace and plenty
showers on every stead.
Bold as a lion, pious, quick of wit, Angel or King, he's
whichsoe'er is said.
He sends the suppliant content away. Words fail, indeed, to paint
his goodlihead.
In time of gifts, he's like the brilliant moon; Like night, in
battle, lowering and dread.
Our necks are girt with his munificence; He rules by favours on
the noble shed.
May God prolong his life for our behoof And ward the blows of
Fortune from his head.

When he had finished transcribing the poem, he despatched it by one of his uncle's slaves to the King, who perused it, and it gladdened his heart; so he read it out to those present before him and they praised it exceedingly. Then he sent for Bedreddin to his sitting-chamber and said to him, "Henceforth thou art my boon-companion and I appoint thee a stipend of a thousand dirhems a month, over and above what I have already given thee." So he arose and kissing the earth three times before the Sultan, wished him abiding glory and length of life. Then Bedreddin increased in honour and estate, so that his report spread into all countries, and he abode in the enjoyment of all the delights and comforts of life, he and his uncle and family, till Death overtook him.'

When the Khalif Haroun er Reshid heard this story from the mouth of his Vizier Jaafer, he wondered and said, 'It behoves that these stories be written in letters of gold.' Then he set the slave at liberty and assigned the young man who had killed his wife such a monthly allowance as sufficed to make his life easy. Moreover he gave him one of his female slaves to wife, and he became one of his boon-companions.

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

STORY OF THE HUNCHBACK

There lived once in the city of Bassora a tailor, who was openhanded and loved pleasure and merrymaking: and he was wont, he and his wife, to go out by times, a-pleasuring, to the public places of recreation. One day they went out as usual and were returning home in the evening, when they fell in with a hunchback, the sight of whom would make the disappointed laugh and dispel chagrin from the sorrowful. So they went up to look at him and invited him to go home and make merry with them that night. He consented and accompanied them to their house; whereupon, the night being now come, the tailor went out to the market and buying fried fish and bread and lemon and conserve of roses by way of dessert, set them before the hunchback, and they ate. Presently, the tailor's wife took a great piece of fish and cramming it into the hunchback's mouth, clapped her hand over it, saying, 'By Allah, thou must swallow it at one gulp; and I will give thee no time to chew it.' So he bolted it; but there was a great bone in it, which stuck in his gullet, and his hour being come, it choked him, and he died at once. When the tailor saw this, he exclaimed, 'There is no power and no virtue but in God! Alas, poor wretch, that he should have come by his death at our hands!' 'Why dost thou waste time in idle lamentation?' rejoined his wife. 'Hast thou not heard it said……?' And she repeated the following verses:

What ails me that I waste the time in idle grief, Until I find no
    friend mishap for me to bear?
Who but a fool would sit upon an unquenched fire? To wait upon
    mischance as great a folly were.

'What is to be done?' asked he; and she replied, 'Rise and take the hunchback in thine arms and cover him with a silk handkerchief: then go out with him, and I will go before thee: and if thou meet any one, say, "This is my son: his mother and I are taking him to the doctor, that he may look at him." So he rose and taking the hunchback in his arms, carried him along the streets, preceded by his wife, who kept saying, ‘O my son, God keep thee! Where has this smallpox attacked thee and in what part dost thou feel pain?’ So that all who saw them said, ‘It is a child ill of smallpox.’ They went along, enquiring for a doctor, till the people directed them to the house of one, who was a Jew. They knocked at the gate, and a black servant-maid came down and opened the door and seeing a man carrying a child and a woman with him, said to them, ‘What is your business?’ ‘We have a sick child here,’ answered the tailor’s wife, ‘whom we want the doctor to look at: so take this quarter-dinar and give it to thy master, and let him come down and see my son.’ The girl went up to tell her master, leaving the tailor and his wife in the vestibule, whereupon the latter said to her husband, ‘Let us leave the hunchback here and be off.’ So the tailor carried the dead man to the top of the stairs and propping him up against the wall, went away, he and his wife. Meanwhile the serving-maid went in to the Jew and said to him, ‘There are a man and a woman at the gate, with a sick child; and they have given me a quarter-dinar for thee, that thou mayst go down and see the child and prescribe for him.’ When the Jew saw the quarter-dinar, he was glad and rose hastily and went down in the dark. Hardly had he made a step, when he stumbled on the dead body and threw it down, and it rolled to the bottom of the stairs. So he cried out to the girl to make haste with the light, and she brought it, whereupon he went down and examining the hunchback, found that he was dead. ‘O Esdras and Moses and the ten Commandments!’ exclaimed he; ‘O Aaron and Joshua, son of Nun! I have stumbled against the sick person and he has fallen downstairs and is dead! How shall I get the body out of my house?’ Then he took it up and carrying it into the house, told his wife what had happened. Quoth she, ‘Why dost thou sit still? If he be found here when the day rises, we shall both of us lose our lives. Let us carry him up to the roof and throw him over into the house of our neighbour the Muslim; for if he abide there a night, the dogs will come down on him from the terraces and eat him all up.’ Now the neighbour in question was controller of the Sultan’s kitchen and was wont to bring home great store of fat and broken meats; but the cats and mice used to eat it, or, if the dogs scented a fat sheep’s tail, they would come down from the roofs and tear at it; and in this way he lost much of what he brought home. So the Jew and his wife carried the hunchback up to the roof, and letting him down, through the windshaft, into the controller's house, stood him up against the wall and went away. Hardly had they done so, when the controller, who had been spending the evening with some of his friends, hearing a recitation of the Koran, came home and going up with a lighted candle, found a man standing in the corner, under the ventilator. When he saw this, he said, 'By Allah, this is a fine thing! He who steals my goods is none other than a man.' Then he turned to the hunchback and said to him, 'So it is thou that stealest the meat and fat. I thought it was the cats and dogs, and I kill the cats and dogs of the quarter and sin against them. And all the while it is thou comest down through the windshaft! But I will take my wreak of thee with my own hand.' So he took-a great cudgel and smote him on the breast, and he fell down. Then he examined him and finding that he was dead, cried out in horror, thinking that he had killed him, and said, 'There is no power and no virtue but in God the Supreme, the Omnipotent!' And he feared for himself and said, 'May God curse the fat and the sheep's tails, that have caused this man's death to be at my hand!' Then he looked at the dead man and seeing him to be humpbacked, said, 'Did it not suffice thee to be a hunchback, but thou must turn thief and steal meat and fat? O Protector, extend to me Thy gracious protection!' Then he took him up on his shoulders and going forth with him, carried him to the beginning of the market, where he set him on his feet against the wall of a shop, at the corner of a dark lane, and went away. After awhile, there came up a Christian, the Sultan's broker, who had sallied forth, in a state of intoxication, intending for the bath, for in his drunkenness he thought that matins were near. He came staggering along, till he drew near the hunchback and squatted down over against him to make water, when, happening to look round, he saw a man standing against the wall. Now some one had snatched off the broker's turban early in the night, and seeing the hunchback standing there he concluded that he meant to play him the same trick. So he clenched his fist and smote him on the neck. Down fell the hunchback, whilst the broker called to the watchman of the market and fell on the dead man, pummelling and throttling him in the excess of his drunken rage. Presently, the watchman came up and finding a Christian kneeling on a Muslim and beating him, said to the former, ‘What is the matter?’ ‘This fellow tried to snatch off my turban,’ answered the broker; and the watchman said, ‘Get up from him.’ So he rose, and the watchman went up to the hunchback and finding him dead, exclaimed, ‘By Allah, it is a fine thing that a Christian should kill a Muslim!’ Then he seized the broker and tying his hands behind him, carried him to the house of the prefect of police, where they passed the night; and all the while the broker kept saying, ‘O Messiah! O Virgin! how came I to kill this man? Indeed, he must have been in a great hurry to die of one blow with the fist!’ And his drunkenness left him and reflection came in its stead. As soon as it was day, the prefect came out and commanded to hang the supposed murderer and bade the executioner make proclamation of the sentence. So they set up a gallows, under which they made the broker stand, and the hangman put the rope round his neck and was about to hoist him up, when behold, the controller of the Sultan’s kitchen, passing by, saw the broker about to be hanged, and pressing through the crowd, cried out to the executioner, saying, ‘Stop! Stop! I am he who killed the hunchback.’ Quoth the prefect, ‘What made thee kill him?’ And he replied, ‘I came home last night and found this man who had come down the windshaft to steal my goods; so I struck him with a cudgel on the breast and he died. Then I took him up and carried him to the market and set him up against the wall in such a place. Is it not enough for me to have killed a Muslim, without burdening my conscience with the death of a Christian also? Hang therefore none but me.’ When the prefect heard this, he released the broker and said to the executioner, ‘Hang up this man on his own confession.’ So he loosed the rope from the broker’s neck and threw it round that of the controller, and placing him under the gallows, was about to hang him, when behold, the Jewish physician pushed through the press and cried out, ‘Stop! It was I and none else who killed him! I was sitting at home last night, when a man and a woman knocked at the door, carrying this hunchback, who was sick, and gave my servant a quarter-dinar, bidding her give it to me and tell me to come down to see him. Whilst she was gone, they brought the hunchback into the house and setting him on the stairs, went away. Presently, I came down and not seeing him, stumbled on him in the dark, and he fell to the foot of the stair and died forthright. Then we took him up, I and my wife, and carried him on to the roof, whence we let him down, through the windshaft, into the house of this controller, which adjoins my own. When he came home and found the hunchback, he took him for a robber and beat him, so that he fell to the ground, and he concluded that he had killed him. So is it not enough for me to have killed one Muslim unwittingly, without burdening myself with the death of another wittingly?' When the prefect heard the Jew's story, he said to the hangman, 'Let the controller go, and hang the Jew.' So the hangman took the Jew and put the rope round his neck, when behold, the tailor pressed through the folk and cried out to him, 'Hold thy hand! None killed him save I, and it fell out thus. I had been out a-pleasuring yesterday and coming back in the evening, met this hunchback, who was drunk and singing lustily to a tambourine. So I carried him to my house and bought fish, and we sat down to eat. Presently, my wife took a piece of fish and crammed it down the hunchback's throat; but it went the wrong way and stuck in his gullet and choked him, so that he died at once. So we lifted him up, I and my wife, and carried him to the Jew's house, where the girl came down and opened the door to us, and I said to her, "Give thy master this quarter-dinar and tell him that there are a man and a woman at the door, who have brought a sick person for him to see." So she went in to tell her master, and whilst she was gone, I carried the hunchback to the top of the stair, where I propped him up, and went away with my wife. When the Jew came out, he stumbled over him and thought that he had killed him.' Then he said to the Jew, 'Is not this the truth?' 'It is,' replied the Jew. And the tailor turned to the prefect and said, 'Let the Jew go, and hang me.' When the prefect heard the tailor's story, he wondered at the adventure of the hunchback and exclaimed, 'Verily, this is a matter that should be recorded in books!' Then he said to the hangman, 'Let the Jew go, and hang the tailor on his own confession.' So the hangman took the tailor and put the rope round his neck, saying, 'I am tired of taking this man and loosing that, and no one hanged after all.'

Now the hunchback in question was the favourite buffoon of the Sultan, who could not bear him out of his sight: so when he got drunk and did not make his appearance that night or next day, the Sultan asked the courtiers about him and they replied, ‘O our lord, the chief of the police has come upon him dead and ordered his murderer to be hanged: but, as the hangman was about to hoist him up, there came a second and a third and a fourth, each declaring himself to be the sole murderer and giving the prefect an account of the manner in which the crime had been committed.’ When the King heard this, he cried out to one of his chamberlains, saying, ‘Go down to the chief of the police and bring me all four of them.’ So the chamberlain went down at once to the place of execution, where he found the hangman on the point of hanging the tailor and cried out to him to stop. Then he gave the King’s order to the prefect, who took the tailor, the physician, the controller and the broker, and brought them all, together with the dead hunchback, before the King. When he came into the presence, he kissed the earth and told the King all that had passed; whereat he was moved to wonder and mirth and commended the story to be written in letters of gold, saying to the courtiers, ‘Did you ever hear a more wonderful story than that of this hunchback?’ With this came forward the Christian broker and said, ‘O King of the age, with thy leave, I will tell thee a thing that happened to myself and which is still stranger and more wonderful and pleasant than the story of the hunchback.’ Quoth the King, ‘Let us hear it.’ Then said the broker, ‘O King of the age, I came to this city with merchandise, and Fate made me settle here with you, but

The Christian Broker's Story.

I am by birth a Copt, and a native of Cairo, where I was brought up. My father was a broker, and when I came to man's estate, he died and I became a broker in his stead. One day, as I was sitting in my shop, there came up to me a young man as handsome as could be, richly clad and riding on an ass. When he saw me, he saluted me, and I rose to do him honour. Then he pulled out a handkerchief, containing a sample of sesame, and said to me, "What is the worth of an ardebb of this?" "A hundred dirhems," replied I; and he said, "Take porters and measures and come to-morrow to the Khan of El Jaweli, by the Gate of Victory, where thou wilt find me." Then he went away, leaving with me the handkerchief containing the sample of sesame; and I went round to the buyers and agreed for a hundred and twenty dirhems an ardebb. Next day, I took four gaugers and carried them to the Khan, where I found him awaiting me. As soon as he saw me, he rose and opened his magazines, and we measured the contents and found them fifty ardebbs of sesame, making five thousand dirhems. Then said he to me, "Thou shalt have ten dirhems an ardebb to thy brokerage; so take the price and lay by four thousand five hundred dirhems for me; and when I have made an end of selling my other goods, I will come to thee and take the amount." "It is well," replied I, and kissed his hand and went away, having made that day a profit of a thousand dirhems, besides the brokerage. I saw no more of him for a month, at the end of which time he came to me and said, "Where is the money?" I rose and saluted him and said to him, "Wilt thou not eat somewhat with me?" But he refused, saying, "Get the money ready, and I will come back for it." So I brought out the money and sat down to await his return, but saw no more of him for another month, at the end of which time he came to me and said, "Where is the money?" I rose and saluted him and said, "Wilt thou not eat a morsel with me?" But he refused, saying, "Have the money ready against my return," and rode away. So I fetched the dirhems and sat awaiting him; but he did not come near me for another month, and I said, "Verily, this young man is the incarnation of liberality." At the end of the month, he came up, riding on a mule and clad in sumptuous raiment. His face shone like the moon at its full and he seemed as if he had just come from the bath, with his rosy cheeks and flower-white forehead and mole like a grain of ambergris, even as says the poet:

Within one mansion of the sky the sun and moon combine; With all
 fair fortune and delight of goodliness they shine.
Their beauty stirs all those that see to passion and to love:
 Good luck to them, for that they move to ravishment divine!
In grace and beauty they increase and aye more perfect grow: All
 souls yearn out to them for love, all hearts to them
 incline.
Blessed be God, whose creatures are so full of wonderment!
 Whate'er He wills He fashions forth, even as He doth design.

When I saw him, I rose and saluted him and kissed his hand, saying, “O my lord, wilt thou not take thy money?” “What hurry is there?” replied he; “wait till I have made an end of my business, when I will come and take it.” Then he went away, and I said to myself, “By Allah, when he comes next time, I must press him to eat with me,” for I had traded with his money and profited largely by it. At the end of the year he came again, dressed even more richly than before, and I conjured him to dismount and eat of my victual; and he said to me, “I consent, on condition that what thou expendest on me shall be of my money in thy hands.” “So be it,” replied I, and made him sit down, whilst I made ready what was needful of meat and drink and so forth and set the tray before him, saying, “In the name of God.” So he came to the table and put out his left hand and ate with me; and I wondered at his using his left hand. When we had done eating, I poured water on his hand and gave him wherewith to wipe it. Then we sat talking, after I had set sweetmeats before him, and I said to him, “O my lord, I prithee relieve my mind by telling me why thou eatest with thy left hand. Belike something ails thy right hand?” When he heard my words, he recited the following verses:

Ask not, I prithee, my friend, of the anguish that burns in my

heart ’Twould but the infirmities show that now in my bosom
lie hid.
If with Selma I company now and harbour with Leila no more,
Believe me, ’tis none of my will; needs must, if necessity
bid.

Then he drew his right arm out from his sleeve, and behold, it was a stump without a hand, the latter having been cut off at the wrist. I was astonished at this, and he said to me, “Thou seest that my eating with the left hand arose, not from conceit, but from necessity; and there hangs a strange story by the cutting off of my right hand.” “And how came it to be cut off?” asked I. “Know,” answered he, “that I am a native of Baghdad and the son of one of the principal men of that city. When I came to man’s estate, I heard the pilgrims and travellers and merchants talk of the land of Egypt, and this abode in my thought till my father died, when I laid out a large sum of money in the purchase of stuffs of Baghdad and Mosul, with which I set out on my travels and God decreed me safety, till I reached this your city.” And he wept and recited the following verses:

It chances oft that the blind man escapes a pit, Whilst he that is clear of sight falls into it: The ignorant man can speak with impunity A word that is death to the wise and the ripe of wit: The true believer is pinched for his daily bread, Whilst infidel rogues enjoy all benefit. What is a man’s resource and what shall he do? It is the Almighty’s will: we must submit.

“So I entered Cairo,” continued he, “and put up at the Khan of Mesrour, where I unpacked my goods and stored them in the magazines. Then I gave the servant money to buy me something to eat and lay down to sleep awhile. When I awoke, I went to the street called Bein el Kesrein and presently returned and passed the night at the Khan. Next morning, I said to myself, ‘I will walk through the bazaars and see the state of the market.’ So I opened a bale and took out certain stuffs, which I gave to one of my servants to carry, then repaired to the Bazaar of Jergis, where I was accosted by the brokers, who had heard of my arrival. They took my stuffs and cried them for sale, but could not get the prime cost of them. I was vexed at this; but the chief of the brokers said to me, ‘O my lord, I will tell thee how thou mayst make a profit of thy goods. Thou shouldst do as the other merchants do and sell thy goods on credit, for a fixed period, on a contract drawn up by a scrivener, and duly witnessed, and employ a money-changer and take thy money every Monday and Thursday. So shalt thou profit two dirhems for every one; and besides this, thou canst amuse thyself meanwhile at leisure in viewing Cairo and the Nile.' Quoth I, 'This advice is good,' and carried the brokers to the Khan. They took my stuffs and transported them to the bazaar, where I sold them to various merchants, taking their bonds for the value. These bonds I deposited with a money-changer, who gave me an acknowledgment in writing, with which I returned to my Khan. Here I abode a month, breaking my fast with a cup of wine every morning and sending out for mutton and sweetmeats, till the time came when my receipts began to fall due. So, every Monday and Thursday, I used to repair to the bazaar and sit in the shop of one or other of the merchants, whilst the scrivener and money-changer went round to collect the money from the different merchants, till after the time of afternoon-prayer, when they brought me the amount, and I counted it and gave receipts for it, then took it and returned to my Khan. One day I went to the bath and retured to the Khan, where I broke my fast on a cup of wine, after which I slept a little. When I awoke, I ate a fowl, and scenting myself, repaired to the shop of a merchant called Bedreddin el Bustani, who welcomed me; and I sat talking with him till the market should open. Presently, there came up a lady of stately figure, wearing a magnificent head-dress and exhaling perfumes, as she walked along with a swimming gait. She stopped before Bedreddin and saluted him, raising her kerchief and showing a pair of large black eyes. He returned her salute and stood talking with her; and when I heard her speech, the love of her got hold upon my heart. Then she said to Bedreddin, 'Hast thou any stuffs of figured cloth of gold?' So he brought out to her a piece that he had had of me and she bought it of him for twelve hundred dirhems, saying, 'I will take it with me and send thee the price.' 'It may not be, O my lady,' answered he. 'This is the owner of the stuff and I owe him the price of it.' 'Out on thee!' said she. 'Do I not use to take great store of costly stuffs of thee, at a greater profit than thou askest, and send thee the money?' 'Yes,' rejoined he; 'but I am in pressing need of the price to-day.’ With this she took the piece of stuff and threw it back into his lap, saying, ‘You merchants have no respect for any one!’ Then she turned to go, and I felt as if my soul went with her; so I rose and stopped her, saying, ‘O my lady, favour me by retracing thy gracious steps!’ She smiled and saying, ‘For thy sake, I will return,’ came back and sat down in the shop opposite me. Then I said to Bedreddin, ‘What is the price set upon this piece?’ And he replied, ‘Eleven hundred dirhems.’ ‘The other hundred shall be thy profit,’ rejoined I. ‘Give me a piece of paper and I will write thee a discharge for it! So I wrote him a docket to that effect and gave the piece of stuff to the lady, saying, ‘Take it and, if thou wilt, bring me the price next market-day; or, better still, accept it as a gift from me to thee.’ ‘May God requite thee with good,’ answered she, ‘and make thee my husband and master of my property!’ (And God heard her prayer.) ‘O my lady,’ replied I, ‘this piece of stuff is thine and another like it, if thou wilt but let me see thy face.’ So she lifted her veil, and I took one look at her face, that caused me a thousand regrets, and fell so violently in love with her, that I was no longer master of my reason. Then she let down her veil and taking the piece of stuff, said, ‘O my lord, leave me not desolate!’ and went away, whilst I remained sitting in the shop till the time of afternoon-prayer was past, lost to the world and fairly distraught for love; and the violence of my passion prompted me to make enquiries about her of the merchant, who replied, ‘She is a lady of wealth, the daughter of an Amir, who died and left her a large fortune.’ Then I took leave of him and returned to the Khan, where they set the evening meal before me; but I could not eat, for thinking of her, and laid down to rest. But sleep came not to me and I lay awake till daylight, when I rose and changed my dress. I broke my fast on a cup of wine and a morsel of bread and going to the market, saluted Bedreddin and sat down by him in his shop. Presently up came the lady, followed by a slave-girl, and more richly dressed than before, and saluting me, instead of Bedreddin, said to me, in a voice than which I never heard a sweeter or softer, ‘Send with me some one to take the twelve hundred dirhems, the price of the stuff.’ ‘What hurry is there?’ asked I. And she said, ‘May we never lose thee!’ And gave me the money. Then I sat talking with her, and presently I made signs to her, by which she understood that I desired to enjoy her and rose hastily, as if vexed with me, and went away. My heart clung to her and I rose and followed in her track; but as I went along, a slave-girl accosted me, saying. ‘O my lord, my mistress would speak with thee.’ At this I was astonished, and said, ‘There is no one who knows me here.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered the slave, ‘how quickly thou hast forgotten her! My mistress is she who was to-day at the shop of the merchant Bedreddin.’ So I followed her to the money-changer’s, where I found the lady, who drew me to her side and said to me, ‘O my beloved, thou hast made prize of my heart, and love of thee has conquered my soul. Since the day I saw thee first, I have taken no delight in sleep nor in meat nor drink.’ ‘My sufferings have been still greater than thine,’ answered I; ‘and my state dispenses me from complaint.’ Then said she, ‘O my lord, shall I come to thee or wilt thou come to me?’ Quoth I, ‘I am a stranger here and have no lodging but the Khan; so by thy favour, it shall be at thy house.’ ‘It is well,’ replied she; ‘to-night is Friday eve, and nothing can be done; but to-morrow, after the morning-prayer, mount thine ass and enquire for the house of Berekat the Syndic, known as Abou Shameh, in the Hebbaniyeh quarter; for I live there; and do not delay, for I shall be expecting thee.’ At this, I rejoiced greatly and took leave of her and returned to the Khan, where I passed a sleepless night. As soon as it was day, I rose and changed my clothes and perfumed myself with essences and sweet-scented smoke. Then I took fifty dinars in a handkerchief and went out to the Zuweyleh Gate, where I hired an ass, bidding the driver carry me to the Hebbaniyeh. So he set off with me and brought me in the twinkling of an eye to a by-street called El Munkeri, where I bade him go in and enquire for the Syndic’s house. After a little he returned and said, ‘Alight.’ But I made him guide me to the house, where I dismounted and giving him a quarter-dinar, said, ‘Come back to-morrow at daybreak and fetch me away.’ ‘In the name of God,’ answered he, and went away. Then I knocked at the gate and there came out two young girls, high-bosomed maids, as they were moons, and said to me, ‘Enter, for our mistress awaits thee, and she slept not last night for joyance in thee.’ So I entered and they brought me, through a vestibule, into an upper chamber with seven doors, paved with vari-coloured marbles and furnished with hangings and carpets of coloured silk. The walls were plastered with stucco-royal, in which one might see his own face, and the roof was ribbed with gold and bordered with inscriptions emblazoned in ultramarine. All around were latticed windows overlooking a garden, full of fruits of all colours, with streams running and birds singing on the branches, and midmost the hall was a fountain, at whose angles stood birds fashioned in red gold, spouting forth water as it were pearls and jewels; and indeed the place comprised all kinds of beauty and dazzled the beholder with its radiance. I entered and sat down; but hardly had I done so, when the lady came up to me, crowned with a diadem of pearls and jewels and having her eyebrows pencilled and her hands stained with henna. When she saw me, she smiled on me and embraced me and pressed me to her bosom; and she set her mouth to mine and sucked my tongue, and I did the like with her. Then she said, ‘Can it be true that thou art indeed come to me?’ ‘I am thy slave,’ answered I; and she said, ‘Welcome, a thousand times! By Allah, since I first saw thee, sleep has not been sweet to me nor food pleasant!’ Quoth I, ‘So has it been with me also.’ Then we sat down to converse, and I bowed my head for bashfulness. Presently, she set before me a tray of the most exquisite meats, such as ragouts and fritters soaked in honey and fricassees and fowls stuffed with sugar and pistachio-nuts, and we ate till we were satisfied. Then they brought ewer and basin and I washed my hands, after which we scented ourselves with rose-water mingled with musk and sat down again to converse. We complained to each other of the sufferings we had undergone, and my love for her took such hold on me, that all my wealth was of little account to me, in comparison with her. We passed the time in toying and kissing and dalliance, till nightfall, when the damsels set before us a banquet of food and wine and we sat carousing half the night. Then we went to bed and I lay with her till the morning, never in my life saw I the like of that night. As soon as it was day, I arose and took leave of her, after having slipped under the mattress the handkerchief containing the dinars; and she wept and said ‘O my lord, when shall I see that fair face again?’ ‘I will be with thee at eventide,’ answered I, and going out, found the ass-man waiting for me at the door. So I mounted and rode to the Khan of Mesrour, where I alighted and gave the driver half a dinar, saying, ‘Come back at sun down.’ And he said, ‘Good.’ Then I broke my fast and went out to seek the price of my stuffs, after which I returned and taking a roast lamb and some sweetmeats, called a porter and despatched them by him to the lady, paying him his hire in advance. I occupied myself with my affairs till sunset, when the ass-driver came for me and I took fifty dinars in a handkerchief and rode to the house, where I found the marble floor swept, the brass burnished, the lamps filled and the candles lighted, the meats ready dished and the wines strained. When my mistress saw me, she threw her arms round my neck and exclaimed, ‘Thou hast desolated me by thine absence!’ Then they set the tables and we ate till we were satisfied, when the serving-maids took away the tray of food and set on wine. We gave not over drinking till midnight, when we went to the sleeping-chamber and lay together till morning. Then I rose and went away, leaving the fifty dinars with her as before. I found the ass-driver at the door and mounting, rode to the Khan, where I slept awhile, then went out to prepare the evening-meal. I took a brace of geese with broth on two platters of dressed rice, together with colocasia-roots, fried and soaked in honey, and wax candles and fruits and conserves and flowers and nuts and almonds, and sent them all to her. As soon as it was night, I mounted the ass as usual, taking with me fifty dinars in a handkerchief, and rode to the house, where we ate and drank and lay together till morning, when I left the handkerchief and dinars with her and rode back to the Khan. I ceased not to lead this life, till one fine morning I found myself without a single dirhem and said, ‘This is Satan’s doing!’ And I repeated the following verses:

When a rich man grows poor, his lustre dies away, Like to the
setting sun that pales with ended day.
Absent, his name is not remembered among men: Present, he hath no
part in life and its array.
He passes through the streets and fain would hide his head And
pours out floods of tears in every desert way.
By Allah, when distress and want descend on men, But strangers
midst their kin and countrymen are they.

Then I left the Khan and walked along Bein el Kesrein till I came to the Zuweyleh Gate, where I found the folk crowded together and the gate blocked up for the much people. As Fate would have it, I saw there a trooper, against whom I pressed, without meaning it, so that my hand came on his pocket and I felt a purse inside. I looked and seeing a string of green silk hanging from the pocket, knew that it belonged to the purse. The crowd increased every moment and just then, a camel bearing a load of wood jostled the trooper on the other side and he turned to ward it off from him, lest it should tear his clothes. When I saw this, Satan tempted me; so I pulled the string and drew out a little purse of blue silk, full of something that chinked like money. Hardly had I done so, when the soldier turned and feeling his pocket lightened, put his hand to it and found it empty; whereupon he turned to me and raising his mace, smote me on the head I fell to the ground, whilst the people came round us and seizing the soldier's horse by the bridle, said to him, 'Is it because he pushed against thee in the throng, that thou smitest this young man such a blow?' But he cried out at them and said, 'This fellow is an accursed thief!' With this I came to myself and stood up, and the folk looked at me and said, 'This is a comely youth and would not steal aught.' Some took part for me and others against me and there was a great clamour, and the people pulled at me and would have rescued me from the trooper; but as Fate would have it, the chief of the police and the captain and officers of the watch entered by the gate at this moment; and the prefect, seeing the crowd about the soldier and myself, enquired what was the matter. 'O my lord,' replied the soldier, 'this fellow is a thief. I had a blue purse in my pocket, containing twenty dinars, and he took it, whilst I was in the crush.' 'Was any one else by thee?' asked the magistrate, and the trooper answered, 'No.' Then the prefect cried out to the officers of the watch, who seized me and stripping me by his order, found the purse in my clothes. He took it and found in it twenty dinars, as the soldier had said, whereat he was wroth and calling to the officers to bring me before him, said to me, 'O young man tell me the truth. Didst thou steal this purse?' At this I hung down my head and said to myself, 'It is useless for me to say I did not steal the purse, for they found it in my clothes: and if I confess to the theft, I fall into trouble.' So I raised my head and said, ‘Yes: I took it.’ When the prefect heard what I said, he wondered and called for witnesses, who came forward and attested by confession. Then he bade the hangman cut off my right hand, and he did so; after which he would have cut off my left foot also; but the trooper took pity on me and interceded for me with the prefect, who left me and went away; whilst the folk remained round me and gave me a cup of wine to drink. As for the trooper, he gave me the purse, saying, ‘Thou art a comely youth, and it befits not that thou be a thief.’ And I repeated the following verses:

By Allah, trusty brother mine, I am indeed no thief, Nor, O most
bountiful of men, a highwayman am I.
But the vicissitudes of fate overthrew me suddenly, And care and
stress and penury full sorely did me try.
It was not thou, but God who cast the fatal shaft at me, The
shaft that made from off my head the crown of honour fly.

Then he left me, and I went away, after having wrapt my hand in a piece of rag and thrust it into my bosom. I betook me to my mistress’s house, faint and ill at ease and pale by reason of what had befallen me, and threw myself on the couch. She saw that my colour was changed and said to me, ‘What ails thee and why do I see thee thus changed?’ ‘My head irks me,’ answered I; ‘I am not well.’ When she heard this, she was vexed and concerned for me and said to me, ‘Fret not my heart, O my lord! Sit up and raise thy head and let me know what has happened to thee to-day, for thy face tells me a tale.’ ‘Spare me this talk,’ replied I. But she wept and said, ‘Meseems thou art tired of me, for I see that thou art contrary to thy wont.’ But I was silent, and she continued to talk to me, though I made her no answer, till nightfall, when she brought me food: but I refused it, fearing to let her see me eat with my left hand, and said to her, ‘I do not care to eat at present.’ Quoth she ‘Tell me what has befallen thee to-day and what ails thee, that thou art troubled and broken in heart and spirit.’ ‘Presently,’ replied I; ‘I will tell thee at my leisure.’ Then she brought me wine, saying, ‘Take it for it will dispel thy care: thou must indeed drink and tell me what is thy matter with thee.’ ‘Must I tell thee?’ said I; and she answered, ‘Yes.’ Then said I, ‘If it must be so, give me to drink with thine own hand.’ So she filled and drank then filled again and gave me the cup. I took it from her with my left hand and repeated the following verses with tears running from my eyes:

When God would execute His will in anything On one endowed with
 sight, hearing and reasoning,
He stops his ears and blinds his eyes and draws his wit From him,
 as one draws out the hairs to paste that cling;
Till, His decrees fulfilled, He gives him back his wit, That
 therewithal he may receive admonishing.

At this she gave a loud cry and said to me, ‘What makes thee weep? Thou settest my heart on fire. And what ails thee to take the cup with thy left hand?’ ‘I have a boil on my right hand,’ answered I; and she said, ‘Put it out and I will lance it for thee.’ ‘It is not ripe for lancing,’ answered I; ‘so do not torment me, for I will not show it thee at present.’ Then I drank off the cup, and she plied me with wine till I became drowsy and fell asleep in my place; whereupon she looked at my right arm and saw that it was but a stump without a hand. So she searched me and found the purse of gold and my severed hand wrapt in a piece of rag. With this, there overcame her such grief as none ever knew, and she ceased not to lament for my sake till the morning. When I awoke, I found she had made me a dish of broth of four boiled fowls, which she brought to me, together with a cup of wine. I ate and drank and laying down the purse, would have gone out; but she said to me, ‘Whither goest thou?’ ‘Where my business calls me,’ replied I; and she said, ‘Thou shalt not go: sit down.’ So I sat down, and she said, ‘Has thy love for me brought thee to such a pass, that thou hast wasted thy substance and lost thy hand on my account? Since this is so, I call God to witness against me that I will never part with thee: and thou shalt see the truth of my words.’ Then she sent for the Cadi and the witnesses and said to them, ‘Draw up a contract of marriage between me and this young man and bear witness that I have received the dowry.’ So they drew up our marriage contract, and she said to them, ‘Be witness that all my money that is in this chest and all that belongs to me and all my slaves, male and female, are the property of this young man.' So they took act of this and withdrew, after having received their fees. Then she took me by the hand and leading me to a closet, opened a large chest and said to me, 'See what is herein.' I looked and behold, it was full of handkerchiefs. Quoth she, 'This is the money I had of thee; for every time thou gavest me a handkerchief, with fifty dinars in it, I wrapped it together and threw it into this chest; so now take thy money, for indeed it returns to thee, and thou to-day art become of high estate. Fate afflicted thee, so that thou didst lose thy right hand for my sake, and I can never requite thee: nay, though I gave my life, it were little and I should still remain thy debtor.' Then she said to me, 'Take possession of thy property!' and transferred the contents of the other chest to that which contained the money I had given her. At this, my heart was gladdened and my grief forsook me, and I rose and kissed and thanked her. Quoth she, 'Thou hast lost thy hand for love of me, and how can I requite thee? By Allah, if I gave my life for thy love, it were far short of thy due!' Then she made over to me by deed all her clothes and jewels and other property and lay not down to sleep that night, being in sore concern on my account, till I told her all that had befallen me. I passed the night with her; but before we had lived together a month's time, she fell grievously ill and sickness was upon her, by reason of her grief for the loss of my hand; and she endured but fifty days before she was numbered of the folk of the other world. So I laid her in the ground and had recitations of the Koran made over her tomb and gave much money in alms for her; after which I returned to the house and found that she had left much substance in money and houses and lands. Among her storehouses was one full of sesame, whereof I sold part to thee; and it was the fact of my being busied in selling the rest of my goods and all that was in the storehouses, that diverted my attention from thee; nor have I till now made an end of receiving the price. This, then, is the reason of the cutting off of my right hand and of my eating with the left. Now thou shalt not baulk me in what I am about to say, for that I have eaten of thy victual; and it is that I make thee a gift of the money that is in thy hands." "Indeed," replied I, "thou hast shown me the utmost kindness and liberality." Then said he, "Wilt thou journey with me to my native country, whither I am about to return with a lading of Cairo and Alexandria stuffs?” “I will well,” answered I, and appointed with him for the end of the month. So I sold all I had and bought merchandise; then we set out, he and I, and journeyed till we came to this town, where he sold his goods, and buying others in their stead, set out again for Egypt. But it was my lot to abide here, so that there befell me in my strangerhood what befell last night. This, then, is my story, O King of the age. Is it not more marvellous than that of the hunchback?’ ‘Not so,’ answered the King; ‘and needs must you all be hanged.’ Then came forward the controller of the Sultan’s kitchen and said, ‘With thy leave, I will tell thee what happened to me but lately and if it be more marvellous than the story of the hunchback, do thou grant us our lives.’ ‘So be it,’ answered the King. Then said the controller, ‘Know, O King, that

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The Controller’s Story.

I was the night before last in company with a number of persons who were assembled for the purpose of hearing a recitation of the Koran. The doctors of the law attended, and when the readers had made an end of reading, the table was spread, and amongst other things they set before us a ragout flavoured with cumin-seed. So we sat down to eat it; but one of our number held back and abstained from eating. We conjured him to eat of the ragout; but he swore that he would not, and we pressed him till he said, “Press me not; what has already befallen me through eating of this dish suffices me.” And he repeated the following verses:

Shoulder thy tray, ‘fore God, and get thee gone with it, And to thine eyes apply such salve as thou deem’st fit.

“For God’s sake,” said we, “tell us the reason of thy refusal to eat of the ragout!” “If I must eat of it,” replied he, “I will not do so, except I may wash my hands forty times with soap, forty times with potash and forty times with galingale, in all a hundred and twenty times.” So the master of the house ordered his servants to bring water and all that he required; and the young man washed his hands as he had said. Then he sat down, as if afraid, and dipping his hand into the ragout, began to eat, though with evident repugnance and as if doing himself violence, whilst we regarded him with the utmost wonder; for his hand trembled and we saw that his thumb had been cut off and he ate with his four fingers only. So we said to him, “God on thee, what has become of thy thumb? Is thy hand thus by the creation of God or has it been mutilated by accident?” “O my brothers, answered he, “it is not this thumb alone that has been cut off, but also that of the other hand and the great toe of each of my feet, as ye shall see.” Then he bared his left hand and his feet, and we saw that the left hand was even as the right and that each of his feet lacked the great toe. At this sight, our amazement increased and we said to him, “We are impatient to know thy history and the manner of the cutting off of thy thumbs and great toes and the reason of thy washing thy hands a hundred and twenty times.” “Know then,” answered he, “that my father was chief of the merchants of Baghdad in the time of the

Khalif Haroun er Reshid; but he was given to drinking wine and listening to the lute and other instruments, so that when he died, he left nothing. I buried him and had recitations of the Koran made over him and mourned for him days and nights. Then I opened his shop and found he had left little but debts. However, I compounded with his creditors for time to pay and betook myself to buying and selling, paying them something week by week on account, till at last I succeeded in clearing off the debts and began to add to my capital. One day, as I sat in my shop, there came up to the entrance of the bazaar a lady, than whom my eyes never saw a fairer, richly clad and decked and riding on a mule, with one slave walking before and another behind her. She halted the mule at the entrance of the bazaar and entered, followed by an eunuch, who said to her, 'O my lady, come out, without telling any one, or thou wilt bring us into trouble.' And he stood before her, whilst she looked at the shops. She found no shop open but mine, so came up, with the eunuch behind her, and sitting down in my shop, saluted me; never did I hear aught sweeter than her voice or more pleasant than her speech. Then she unveiled her face and I saw she was like the moon and stole at her a glance that cost me a thousand sighs. My heart was captivated with her love and I could not take my eyes off her face; and I repeated the following verses:

Say to the fairest fair, her in the dove-coloured veil, "Death
would be welcome to me, to save me from thy bale:
Grant me thy favours, I pray! so I may live perchance. Lo! I
stretch forth my palm: let not thy bounties fail."

When she heard this, she answered me by repeating the following verses:

Power to forget thee, for desire, fails even unto me: My heart
and all my soul will love none other after thee.
If my eyes ever look on aught except thy loveliness, May union
after severance ne'er brighten them with glee!
I've sworn an oath by my right hand ne'er to forget thy grace. My
sad heart pineth for thy love and never may win free.

Passion hath given me to drink a brimming cup of love; Would it
had given the self-same draught to drink, dear heart, to
thee!
If thou shouldst ask me what I'd crave most earnestly of God,
"The Almighty's favour first, then thine," I'd say, "my
prayer shall be."

Then she said to me, 'O youth, hast thou any handsome stuffs?' 'O my lady,' answered I, 'thy slave is poor: but wait till the merchants open their shops, and I will get thee what thou wilt.' Then we sat talking, she and I, whilst I was drowned in the sea of her love and dazed with passion for her, till the merchants opened their shops, when I rose and fetched her all she sought, to the value of five thousand dirhems. She gave the stuffs to the slave and leaving the bazaar, mounted the mule and rode away, without telling me whence she came, and I was ashamed to ask her. So I became answerable to the merchants for the price of the goods and thus took on myself a debt of five thousand dirhems. Then I went home, drunken with love of her, and they set the evening-meal before me. I ate a mouthful and lay down to rest, musing upon her beauty and grace: but sleep came not to me. A week passed thus, and the merchants sought their money of me, but I persuaded them to wait another week, at the end of which time she came up, riding on the mule and attended by an eunuch and two slaves. She saluted me and said, 'O my lord, we have been long in bringing thee the price of the stuffs; but now fetch a money-changer and take the amount.' So I sent for the money-changer, and the eunuch counted me out the money, and we sat talking, the lady and I, till the market opened, when she said to me, 'Get me this and this.' So I got her from the merchants what she wanted, and she took it and went away, without saying a word to me about the price. As soon as she was out of sight, I repented me of what I had done, for the price of what I had bought for her was a thousand dinars, and I said to myself, 'What doting is this? She has brought me five thousand dirhems, and taken a thousand dinars' worth of goods.' And I feared lest I should be beggared, through having to pay the merchants their money, and said, 'They know none but me and this woman is none other than a cheat, who hath cozened me with her beauty and grace, for she saw that I was young and laughed at me; and I did not ask her address.’ She did not come again for more than a month, and I abode in constant distress and perplexity, till at last the merchants dunned me for their money and pressed me so that I put up my property for sale and looked for nothing but ruin. However, as I was sitting in my shop, one day, absorbed in melancholy thought, she rode up and dismounting at the gate of the bazaar, came in and made towards me. When I saw her, my anxiety ceased and I forgot my troubles. She came up to me and greeting me with her pleasant speech, said to me, ‘Fetch the money-changer and take thy money.’ So she gave me the price of the goods I had gotten for her and more, and fell to conversing freely with me, till I was like to die of joy and delight. Presently, she said to me, ‘Hast thou a wife?’ ‘No,’ answered I; ‘I have never known woman.’ And fell a-weeping. Quoth she, ‘Why dost thou weep?’ ‘It is nothing,’ replied I; and giving the eunuch some of the dinars, begged him to use his influence with her for me; but he laughed and said, ‘She is more in love with thee than thou with her. She had no occasion for the stuffs she bought of thee and did all this but out of love for thee. So ask of her what thou wilt; she will not deny thee.’ When she saw me give the eunuch money, she returned and sat down again; and I said to her, ‘Be charitable to thy slave and pardon him what he is about to say.’ Then I told her what was in my mind, and she assented and said to the eunuch, ‘Thou shalt carry my message to him.’ Then to me, ‘Do as the eunuch bids thee.’ Then she rose and went away, and I paid the merchants what I owed them, and they all profited; but as for me, I gained nought but regret for the breaking off of our intercourse. I slept not all that night; but before many days were past, the eunuch came to me, and I made much of him and asked after his mistress. ‘She is sick for love of thee,’ replied he; and I said, ‘Tell me who she is.’ Quoth he, ‘She is one of the waiting-women of the Lady Zubeideh, the wife of the Khalif Haroun er Reshid, who brought her up and advanced her to be stewardess of the harem and granted her the right of going in and out at will. She told her mistress of thee and begged her to marry her to thee; but she said, “I will not do this, till I see the young man; and if he be worthy of thee, I will marry thee to him.” So now we wish to bring thee into the palace at once and if thou succeed in entering without being seen, thou wilt win to marry her; but if the affair get wind, thou wilt lose thy head. What sayst thou?' And I answered, 'I will go with thee and abide the risk of which thou speakest.' Then said he, 'As soon as it is night, go to the mosque built by the Lady Zubeideh on the Tigris and pray and pass the night there.' 'With all my heart,' answered I. So at nightfall I repaired to the mosque, where I prayed and passed the night. Just before daybreak, there came up some eunuchs in a boat, with a number of empty chests, which they deposited in the mosque and went away all, except one who remained behind and whom, on examination, I found to be he who served as our go-between. Presently, in came my mistress herself and I rose to her and embraced her. She kissed me, weeping, and we talked awhile; after which she made me get into one of the chests and locked it upon me. Then the eunuchs came back with a number of packages; and she fell to stowing them in the chests and locking the latter one by one, till she had filled them all. Then they embarked the chests in the boat and made for the Lady Zubeideh's palace. With this, reflection came to me and I said to myself, 'My lust will surely bring me to destruction, nor do I know whether I shall gain my end or no!' And I began to weep, shut up as I was in the chest, and to pray to God to deliver me from the peril I was in, whilst the boat ceased not going till it reached the palace gate, where they lifted out the chests and amongst them that in which I was. Then they carried them into the palace, passing through a troop of eunuchs, guardians of the harem and door-keepers, till they came to the post of the chief of the eunuchs, who started up from sleep and called out to the lady, saying, 'What is in those chests?' Quoth she, 'They are full of wares for the Lady Zubeideh.' 'Open them,' said he, 'one by one, that I may see what is in them.'— 'Why wilt thou open them?' asked she: but he cried out at her, saying, 'Give me no words! They must and shall be opened.' Now the first that they brought to him to open was that in which I was: and when I felt this, my senses failed me and I bepissed myself for terror, and the water ran out of the chest. Then said she to the eunuch, 'O chief, thou hast undone me and thyself also, for thou hast spoiled that which is worth ten thousand dinars. This box contains coloured dresses and four flasks of Zemzem water;

and now one of the bottles has broken loose and the water is running out over the clothes and their colours will be ruined.’ Then said the eunuch, ‘Take up thy chests and begone with God’s malison!’ So the slaves took up the chests and hurried on with them, till suddenly I heard a voice saying, ‘Alas! Alas! the Khalif! the Khalif!’ When I heard this, my heart died within me and I spoke the words which whoso says shall not be confounded, that is to say, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! I have brought this affliction on myself.’ Presently I heard the Khalif say to my mistress, ‘Harkye, what is in those chests of thine ?’ ‘Clothes for the Lady Zubeideh,’ answered she; and he said, ‘Open them to me.’ When I heard this, I gave myself up for lost and said, ‘By Allah, this is the last of my worldly days!’ and began to repeat the profession of the Faith. Then I heard the lady say to the Khalif, ‘These chests have been committed to my charge by the Lady Zubeideh, and she does not wish their contents to be seen of any one.’— ‘No matter,’ said he; ‘I must open them and see what is in them.’ And he cried out to the eunuchs saying, ‘Bring them to me.’ At this, I made sure of death and swooned away. Then the slaves brought the chests up to him and opened them, one after another, and he saw in them perfumes and stuffs and rich clothes, till none remained unopened but that in which I was. They put their hands to it to open it, but the lady made haste and said to the Khalif, ‘This one thou shalt see in the Lady Zubeideh’s presence, for that which is in it is her secret.’ When he heard this, he ordered them to carry in the chests; so they took up that in which I was and carried it, with the rest, into the harem and set it down in the middle of the saloon; and indeed my spittle was dried up for fear. Then my mistress opened the chest and took me out, saying, ‘Fear not: no harm shall befall thee, but be of good courage and sit down, till the Lady Zubeideh comes, and thou shalt surely win thy wish of me.’ So I sat down, and after awhile, in came ten maidens like moons and ranged themselves in two rows, one facing the other, and after them other twenty, high-bosomed maids with the Lady Zubeideh, who could hardly walk for the weight of her dresses and ornaments. As she drew near, the damsels dispersed from around her, and I advanced and kissed the earth before her. She signed to me to be seated and questioned me of my condition and family, to which I made such answers as pleased her, and she said to my mistress, ‘O damsel, our nurturing of thee has not been in vain.’ Then she said to me, ‘Know that this damsel is to us even as our own child, and she is a trust committed to thee by God.’ I kissed the earth again before her, well pleased that I should marry my mistress, and she bade me sojourn ten days in the palace. So I abode there ten days, during which time I saw not my mistress nor any one save a serving-maid, who brought me the morning and evening meals. After this the Lady Zubeideh took counsel with the Khalif on the marriage of her favourite, and he gave leave and assigned her a wedding portion of ten thousand dinars. So the Lady Zubeideh sent for the Cadi and the witnesses, and they drew up our marriage contract, after which the women made sweetmeats and rich viands and distributed them among the inmates of the harem. Thus they did other ten days, at the end of which time my mistress entered the bath. Meanwhile, they set before me a tray of food, on which was a basin containing a ragout of fricasseed fowls’ breasts dressed with cumin-seed and flavoured with sugar and rose-water, mixed with musk, and many another dish, such as amazed the wit; and by Allah, I did not hesitate, but fell upon the ragout and ate my fill of it. Then I wiped my hands, but forgot to wash them and sat till it grew dark, when they lit the candles and the singing-women came with tambourines and proceeded to display the bride and carry her in procession from room to room, receiving largesse of gold and pieces of silk, till they had made the round of the palace. Then they brought her to me and disrobed her. When I found myself alone in bed with her, I embraced her, hardly believing in my good fortune; but she smelt the odour of the ragout on my hands and gave a loud cry, at which the maids came running to her from all sides. I was alarmed and trembled, not knowing what was the matter, and the girls said to her, ‘What ails thee, O sister?’ Quoth she, ‘Take this madman away from me: methought he was a man of sense.’ ‘What makes thee think me mad?’ asked I. ‘O madman,’ answered she, ‘what made thee eat of ragout of cumin-seed, without washing thy hands? By Allah, I will punish thee for thy misconduct! Shall the like of thee come to bed to the like of me, with unwashed hands?’ Then she took from her side a whip of plaited thongs and laid on to my back and buttocks till I swooned away for the much beating; when she said to the maids, ‘Take him and carry him to the chief of the police, that he may cut off the hand wherewith he ate of the ragout and washed it not.’ When I heard this, I said, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God! Wilt thou cut off my hand, because I ate of a ragout and did not wash?’ And the girls interceded with her, saying, ‘O our sister, forgive him this once!’ But she said, ‘By Allah, I must and will dock him of somewhat!’ Then she went away and I saw no more of her for ten days, at the end of which time, she came in to me and said, ‘O black-a-vice, I will not make peace with thee, till I have punished thee for eating ragout of cumin-seed, without washing thy hands!’ Then she cried out to the maids, who bound me; and she took a sharp razor and cut off my thumbs and toes, as ye have seen. Thereupon I swooned away and she sprinkled the severed parts with a powder which staunched the blood; and I said, ‘Never again will I eat of ragout of cumin-seed without washing my hands forty times with potash, forty times with galingale and forty times with soap!’ And she took of me an oath to that effect. So when the ragout was set before me, my colour changed and I said to myself, ‘It was this that was the cause of the cutting off of my thumbs and toes.’ And when ye forced me, I said, ‘I must needs fulfil the oath I have taken.’” “And what befell thee after this?” asked the others. “After this,” replied he, “her heart was appeased and I lay with her that night. We abode thus awhile, till she said to me, one day, ‘It befits not that we continue in the Khalif’s palace: for none ever came hither but thou, and thou wonst not in but by the grace of the Lady Zubeideh. Now she has given me fifty thousand dinars; so take this money and go out and buy us a commodious house.’ So I went forth and bought a handsome and spacious house, whither she transported all her goods and valuables.” Then (continued the controller) we ate and went away: and after, there happened to me with the hunchback that thou wottest of. This then is my story and peace be on thee.’ Quoth the King, ‘This story is not more agreeable than that of the hunchback: on the contrary, it is less so, and you must all be hanged.’ Then came forward the Jewish physician and kissing the earth, said, ‘O King of the age, I will tell thee a story more wonderful than that of the hunchback.’ ‘Tell on,’ answered the King; and the Jew said, ‘The strangest adventure that ever befell me was as follows:

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The Jewish Physician’s Story.

In my younger days I lived at Damascus, where I studied my art; and one day, as I sat in my house, there came to me a servant with a summons from the governor of the city. So I followed him to the house and entering the saloon, saw, lying on a couch of juniper-wood, set with plates of gold, that stood at the upper end, a sick youth, never was seen a handsomer. I sat down at his head and offered up a prayer for his recovery. He made a sign to me with his eyes and I said to him, “O my lord, give me thy hand.” So he put forth his left hand, at which I wondered and said to myself, “By Allah, it is strange that so handsome a young man of high family should lack good breeding! This can be nothing but conceit.” However, I felt his pulse and wrote him a prescription and continued to visit him for ten days, at the end of which time he recovered and went to the bath, whereupon the governor gave me a handsome dress of honour and appointed me superintendent of the hospital at Damascus. I accompanied him to the bath, the whole of which they had cleared for his accommodation, and the servants came in with him and took off his clothes within the bath, when I saw that his right hand had been newly cut off, and this was the cause of his illness. At this I was amazed and grieved for him: then looking at his body I saw on it the marks of beating with rods, for which he had used ointments. I was perplexed at this and my perplexity appeared in my face. The young man looked at me and reading my thought, said to me, “O physician of the age, marvel not at my case. I will tell thee my story, when we leave the bath.” Then we washed and returning to his house, partook of food and rested awhile; after which he said to me, “What sayest thou to taking the air in the garden?” “I will well,” answered I; so he bade the slaves carry out carpets and cushions and roast a lamb and bring us some fruit. They did as he bade them, and we ate of the fruits, he using his left hand for the purpose. After awhile, I said to him, “Tell me thy story.” “O physician of the age,” answered he, “hear what befell me. Know that I am a native of Mosul and my father was the eldest of ten brothers, who were all married, but none of them was blessed with children except my father, to whom God had vouchsafed me. So I grew up among my uncles, who rejoiced in me with exceeding joy, till I came to man's estate. One Friday, I went to the chief mosque of Mosul with my father and my uncles, and we prayed the congregational prayers, after which all the people went out, except my father and uncles, who sat conversing of the wonders of foreign lands and the strange things to be seen in various cities. At last they mentioned Egypt and one of my uncles said, 'Travellers say that there is not on the face of the earth aught fairer than Cairo and its Nile.' Quoth my father, 'Who has not seen Cairo has not seen the world. Its dust is gold and its Nile a wonder; its women are houris and its houses palaces: its air is temperate and the fragrance of its breezes outvies the scent of aloes-wood: and how should it be otherwise, being the mother of the world? Bravo for him who says,' And he repeated the following verses:

Shall I from Cairo wend and leave the sweets of its delight? What
sojourn after it indeed were worth a longing thought?
How shall I leave its fertile plains, whose earth unto the scent
Is very perfume, for the land contains no thing that's
naught?
It is indeed for loveliness a very Paradise, With all its goodly
carpet spread and cushions richly wrought.
A town that maketh heart and eye yearn with its goodliness,
Uniting all that of devout and profligate is sought,
Or comrades true, by God His grace conjoined in brotherhood,
Their meeting-place the groves of palms that cluster round
about.
O men of Cairo, if it be God's will that I depart, Let bonds of
friendship and of love unite us still in thought!
Name not the city to the breeze, lest for its rival lands It
steal the perfumes, wherewithal its garden-ways are fraught.

'And if,' added my father, 'you saw its gardens in the evenings, with the tree-shadows sloping over them, you would behold a marvel and incline to them with delight.' And they fell to describing Cairo and the Nile. When I heard their accounts of Cairo, my mind dwelt on it and I longed to visit it; and when they had done talking, each went to his own dwelling. As for me, I slept not that night, for stress of yearning after Egypt, nor was meat nor drink pleasant to me. After awhile, my uncles prepared to set out for Cairo, and I wept before my father, till he made ready for me merchandise and consented to my going wish them, saying to them, ‘Let him not enter Egypt, but leave him to sell his goods at Damascus.’ Then I took leave of my father and we left Mosul and journeyed till we reached Aleppo, where we abode some days. Then we fared on, till we came to Damascus and found it a city as it were a paradise, abounding in trees and rivers and birds and fruits of all kinds. We alighted at one of the Khans, where my uncles tarried awhile, selling and buying: and they sold my goods also at a profit of five dirhems on every one, to my great satisfaction; after which they left me and went on to Egypt, whilst I abode at Damascus in a handsome house, such as the tongue fails to describe, which I had hired for two dinars a month. Here I remained, eating and drinking and spending the money in my hands, till, one day, as I sat at the door of my lodging, there came up a young lady, clad in costly apparel, never saw my eyes richer. I winked at her; and she entered without hesitation. I entered with her and shut the door, and she raised her kerchief and did off her veil, when I found her of surpassing beauty, and love of her took hold upon my heart. So I rose and fetched a tray of the most delicate viands and fruits and all that was needed for a carouse, and we ate and sported and drank till we were warm with wine. Then I lay with her the most delightful of nights, till the morning, when I offered to give her ten dinars; but she frowned and knit her brows and said, ‘For shame! Thinkest thou I covet thy money?’ And she took out from the bosom of her shift ten dinars and laid them before me, saying, ‘By Allah, except thou take them, I will never come back!’ So I accepted them, and she said to me, ‘O my beloved, expect me again in three days’ time, when I will be with thee between sundown and nightfall; and do thou provide us with these dinars the like of yesterday’s entertainment.’ So saying, she bade me adieu and went away, taking my reason with her. At the end of the three days, she came again, dressed in gold brocade and wearing richer ornaments than before. I had made ready a repast; so we ate and drank and lay together, as before, till the morning, when she gave me other ten dinars and appointed me again for three days thence. Accordingly, I made ready as before, and at the appointed time she came again, more richly dressed than ever, and said to me, 'O my lord, am I not fair?' 'Yea, by Allah!' answered I. Then she said, 'Wilt thou give me leave to bring with me a young lady handsomer than I and younger, that she may frolic with us and that thou and she may laugh and make merry and rejoice her heart, for she has been sad at heart this long time past and has asked me to let her go out and spend the night abroad with me?' 'Ay, by Allah!' answered I; and we drank till we were warm with wine and slept together till the morning, when she gave me twenty dinars and said to me, 'Add to thy usual provision, on account of the young lady who will come with me.' Then she went away, and on the fourth day, I made ready as usual, and soon after sundown she came, accompanied by another damsel, wrapped in a veil. They entered and sat down; and when I saw them, I repeated the following verses:

How lovely and how pleasant is our day! The railer's absent,
reckless of our play,
Love and delight and wine with us abide, Each one enough to charm
the wit away;
The full moon glitters through the falling veil;
Bough-like, the shapes within the vestments sway:
The rose blooms in the cheeks, and in the eyes Narcissus
languishes, in soft decay.
Delight with those I love fulfilled for me And life, as I would
have it, fair and gay!

Then I lighted the candles and received them with joy and gladness. They put off their outer clothing, and the new damsel unveiled her face, when I saw that she was like the moon at its full, never beheld I one more beautiful. Then I rose and set meat and drink before them, and we ate and drank: and I began to feed the new damsel and to fill her cup and drink with her. At this the first lady was secretly jealous and said to me, 'Is not this girl more charming than I?' 'Ay, by Allah!' replied I. Quoth she, 'It is my intent that thou lie with her this night.' And I answered, 'On my head and eyes!' Then she rose and spread the bed for us, and I took the young lady and lay with her that night till the morning, when I awoke and found myself wet, as I thought, with sweat. I sat up and tried to rouse the damsel, but when I shook her by the shoulders, her head rolled off the pillow. Thereupon my reason fled and I cried out, saying, ‘O gracious Protector, extend to me Thy protection!’ Then I saw that she had been murdered, and the world became black in my sight and I sought the lady my first mistress, but could not find her. So I knew that it was she who had murdered the girl, out of jealousy, and said, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! What is to be done?’ I considered awhile, then rose and taking off my clothes, dug a hole midmost the courtyard, in which I laid the dead girl, with her jewellery and ornaments, and throwing back the earth over her, replaced the marble of the pavement. After this I washed and put on clean clothes and taking what money I had left, locked up the house and took courage and went to the owner of the house, to whom I paid a year’s rent, telling him that I was about to join my uncles at Cairo. Then I set out and journeying to Egypt, foregathered with my uncles, who rejoiced in me and I found that they had made an end of selling their goods. They enquired the reason of my coming, and I said, ‘I yearned after you;’ but did not let them know that I had any money with me. I abode with them a year, enjoying the pleasures of the city and the Nile and squandering the rest of my money in feasting and drinking, till the time drew near for my uncles’ departure when I hid myself from them and they sought for me, but could hear no news of me and said, ‘He must have gone back to Damascus.’ So they departed, and I came out from my hiding and sojourned in Cairo three years, sending year by year the rent of the house at Damascus to its owner, until at last I had nothing left but one year’s rent. At this my breast was straitened and I set out and journeyed till I reached Damascus, where my landlord received me with joy. I alighted at the house and found everything locked up as I had left it: so I opened the closets and took out what was in them and found under the bed, where I had lain with the murdered girl, a necklet of gold set with jewels. I took it up and cleansing it of her blood, examined it and wept awhile. Then I abode in the house two days and on the third day, I went to the bath and changed my clothes. I had now no money left and the devil prompted me to sell the necklet, that destiny might be accomplished; so I took it to the market and handed it to a broker, who made me sit down in the shop of my landlord and waited till the market was full, when he took the necklet and offered it for sale privily without my knowledge. The price bidden for it was two thousand dinars; but the broker returned and said to me, ‘This necklet is a brass counterfeit of Frank manufacture, and a thousand dirhems have been bidden for it.’ ‘Yes,’ answered I; ‘I knew it to be brass, for we had it made for such an one, that we might mock her: and now my wife has inherited it and we wish to sell it; so go and take the thousand dirhems.’ When the broker heard this, his suspicions were roused; so he carried the necklet to the chief of the market, who took it to the prefect of police and said to him, ‘This necklet was stolen from me, and we have found the thief in the habit of a merchant.’ So the officers fell on me unawares and brought me to the prefect, who questioned me and I told him what I had told the broker: but he laughed and said, ‘This is not the truth.’ Then, before I knew what was toward, his people stripped me and beat me with rods on my sides, till for the smart of the blows I said, ‘I did steal it,’ bethinking me that it was better to confess that I stole it than let them know that she who owned it had been murdered in my house, lest they should put me to death for her. So they wrote down that I had stolen it and cut off my hand. The stump they seared with boiling oil and I swooned away: but they gave me wine to drink, and I revived and taking up my hand, was returning to my lodging, when the landlord said to me, ‘After what has passed, thou must leave my house and look for another lodging, since thou art convicted of theft.’ ‘O my lord,’ said I, ‘have patience with me two or three days, till I look me out a new lodging.’ ‘So be it,’ he answered and I returned to the house, where I sat weeping and saying, ‘How shall I return to my people with my hand cut off and they know not that I am innocent?’ Then I abode in sore trouble and perplexity for two days, and on the third day the landlord came in to me, and with him some officers of police and the chief of the market, who had accused me of stealing the necklace. I went out to them and enquired what was the matter, but they seized on me, without further parley, and tied my hands behind me and put a chain about my neck, saying, ‘The necklet that was with thee has been shown to the

Governor of Damascus, and he recognizes it as one that belonged to his daughter, who has been missing these three years.' When I heard this, my heart sank within me, and I said to myself, 'I am lost without resource; but I must needs tell the governor my story; and if he will, let him kill me, and if he will, let him pardon me.' So they carried me to the governor's house and made me stand before him. When he saw me, he looked at me out of the corner of his eye and said to those present, 'Why did ye cut off his hand? This man is unfortunate and hath committed no offense; and indeed ye wronged him in cutting off his hand.' When I heard this, I took heart and said to him, 'By Allah, O my lord, I am no thief! But they accused me of this grave offence and beat me with rods in the midst of the market, bidding me confess, till for the pain of the beating, I lied against myself and confessed to the theft, although I am innocent.' 'Fear not,' said the governor; 'no harm shall come to thee.' Then he laid the chief of the market under arrest, saying to him, 'Give this man the price of his hand, or I will hang thee and seize on all thy goods.' And he cried out to the officers, who took him and dragged him away, leaving me with the governor, who made his people unbind me and take the chain off my neck. Then he looked at me and said, 'O my son, speak the truth and tell me how thou camest by the necklet.' And he repeated the following verse:

To tell the whole truth is thy duty, although It bring thee to burn on the brasier of woe!

'By Allah, O my lord,' answered I, 'such is my intent!' And I told him all that had passed between me and the first lady and how she had brought the second one to me and had slain her out of jealousy. When he heard my story, he shook his head and beat hand upon hand; then putting his handkerchief to his eyes, wept awhile and repeated the following verses:

I see that Fortune's maladies are many upon me, For, every
dweller in the world, sick unto death is he.
To every gathering of friends there comes a parting day: And few
indeed on earth are those that are from parting free?

Then he turned to me and said, 'Know, O my son, that she who first came to thee was my eldest daughter. I brought her up in strict seclusion and when she came to womanhood, I sent her to Cairo and married her to my brother's son. After awhile, he died and she came back to me: but she had learnt profligate habits from the natives of Cairo: so she visited thee four times and at last brought her younger sister. Now they were sisters by the same mother and much attached to each other; and when this happened to the elder, she let her sister into her secret, and she desired to go out with her. So she asked thy leave and carried her to thee; after which she returned alone, and I questioned her of her sister, finding her weeping for her; but she said, "I know nothing of her." However, after this, she told her mother privily what had happened and how she had killed her sister; and her mother told me. Then she ceased not to weep and say, "By Allah, I will never leave weeping for her till I die!" And so it fell out. This, O my son, is what happened, and now I desire that thou baulk me not in what I am about to say to thee; it is that I purpose to marry thee to my youngest daughter, for she is a virgin and born of another mother, and I will take no dower from thee, but on the contrary will appoint thee an allowance, and thou shalt be to me as my very son.' 'I will well,' replied I; 'how could I hope for such good fortune?' Then he sent at once for the Cadi and the witnesses and married me to his daughter, and I went in to her. Moreover, he got me a large sum of money from the chief of the market and I became in high favour with him. Soon after, news came to me that my father was dead so the governor despatched a courier to fetch me the property he had left behind him, and now I am living in all prosperity. This is how I came to lose my right hand." His story amazed me (continued the Jew) and I abode with him three days, after which he gave me much money and I set out and travelled, till I reached this thy city. The sojourn liked me well, so I took up my abode here and there befell me what thou knowest with the hunchback.' Quoth the King, 'This thy story is not more wonderful than that of the hunchback, and I will certainly hang you all. However, there still remains the tailor, who was the head of the offending.' Then he said to the tailor, 'O tailor, if thou canst tell me aught more wonderful than the story of the hunchback, I will pardon you all your offenses.' So the tailor came forward and said, 'Know, O King of the age, that a most rare thing happened to me yesterday before I fell in with the hunchback.

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The Tailor’s Story.

Yesterday morning early I was at an entertainment given by a friend of mine, at which there were assembled near twenty men of the people of the city, amongst them tailors and silk-weavers and carpenters and other craftsmen. As soon as the sun had risen, they set food before us that we might eat, when behold, the master of the house entered, and with him a comely young man, a stranger from Baghdad, dressed in the finest of clothes and perfectly handsome, except that he was lame. He saluted us, while we rose to receive him; and he was about to sit down, when he espied amongst us a certain barber; whereupon he refused to sit and would have gone away. But we stopped him and the host seized him and adjured him, saying, “What is the reason of thy coming in and going out again at once?” “By Allah, O my lord,” answered he, “do not hinder me, for the cause of my turning back is yonder barber of ill-omen sitting there.” When the host heard this, he wondered and said, “How comes this young man, who is from Baghdad. to be troubled in his mind about this barber?” Then we looked at the young man and said to him, “Tell us the reason of thine anger against the barber.” “O company,” replied he, “there befell me a strange adventure with this barber in my native city of Baghdad; he was the cause of the breaking of my leg and of my lameness, and I have sworn that I will never sit in the same place with him nor tarry in any city of which he is an inhabitant. I left Baghdad, to be rid of him, and took up my abode in this city and lo, I find him with you! But now not another night shall pass, before I depart hence.” So we begged him to sit down and tell us what had passed between him and the barber in Baghdad, whereat the latter changed colour and hung down his head. Then said the young man, “Know, O company, that my father was one of the chief merchants of Baghdad, and God had vouchsafed him no child but myself. When I grew up to man’s estate, my father was translated to the mercy of God, leaving me great wealth in money and slaves and servants, and I began to dress handsomely and feed daintily. Now God had made me a hater of women, and one day, as I was going along one of the streets of Baghdad, a company of women stopped the way before me; so I fled from them, and entering a by-street without an outlet, sat down upon a stone bench at the other end. I had not sat long, before the lattice of one of the houses in the street opened and a young lady, as she were the moon at its full, never in my life saw I her like, put forth her head and began to water some flowers she had on the balcony. Then she turned right and left and seeing me watching her, smiled and shut the window and went away. Therewithal, fire flamed up in my heart and my mind was taken up with her, and my hatred (of women) was changed to love. I continued sitting there, lost to the world, till sundown, when the Cadi of the city came riding up the street, with slaves before him and servants behind him, and alighting, entered the very house at which the young lady had appeared. By this I guessed that he was her father; so I went home, sorrowful, and fell on my bed, oppressed with melancholy thoughts. My women came in to me and sat round me, puzzled to know what ailed me; but I would not speak to them nor answer their questions, and they wept and lamented over me. Presently, in came an old woman, who looked at me and saw at once what was the matter with me. So she sat down at my head and spoke me fair and said, 'O my son, tell me what ails thee, and I will bring thee to thy desire.' So I told her what had happened to me, and she said, 'O my son, this girl is the Cadi's daughter of Baghdad; she is kept in strict seclusion, and the window at which thou sawest her is that of her apartment, where she dwells alone, her father occupying a great suite of rooms underneath. I often visit her, and thou shalt not come at her but through me; so gird thy middle and be of good cheer.' So saying, she went away, whilst I took comfort at what she said and arose in the morning well, to the great satisfaction of my people. By-and-by the old woman came in, chopfallen, and said to me, 'O my son, do not ask how I have fared with her! When I opened the subject to her, she said to me, "An thou leave not this talk, pestilent hag that thou art, I will assuredly use thee as thou deserves!" But needs must I have at her again.' When I heard this, it added sickness to my sickness: but after some days, the old woman came again and said to me, 'O my son, I must have of thee a present for good news.' With this, life returned to me, and I said, 'Whatever thou wilt is thine.' Then said she, 'O my son, I went yesterday to the young lady, who seeing me broken-spirited and tearful-eyed, said to me, “O my aunt, what ails thee that I see thy heart thus straitened?” Whereupon I wept and replied, “O my lady, I am just come from a youth who loves thee and is like to die for thy sake.” Quoth she (and indeed her heart was moved to pity), “And who is this youth of whom thou speakest?” “He is my son,” answered I, “and the darling of my heart. He saw thee, some days since, at the window, tending thy flowers, and fell madly in love with thee. I told him what passed between thee and me the other day, whereupon his disorder increased and he took to his bed and will surely die.” At this her colour changed and she said, “Is all this on my account?” “Yea, by Allah!” answered I. “What wouldst thou have me do?” Then said she, “Go back to him and salute him for me and tell him that my sufferings are twice as great as his. And on Friday, before the time of prayer, let him come hither and I will come down and open the door to him. Then I will carry him to my chamber, where we can converse awhile and he can go away, before my father comes back from the mosque.”’ When I heard this, my anguish ceased and my heart was comforted. So I took off the clothes I was wearing and gave them to the old woman; and she said, ‘Be of good cheer.’ ‘There is no pain left in me,’ answered I; and she went away. My household and friends rejoiced in my restoration to health, and I abode thus till Friday, when the old woman entered and asked me how I did, to which I replied that I was well and in good case. Then I dressed and perfumed myself and sat down to await the going in of the folk to the mosque, that I might betake myself to the young lady. But the old woman said to me, ‘Thou hast time and to spare; so thou wouldst do well to go to the bath and have thy head shaved, to do away the traces of thy disorder.’ ‘It is well thought,’ answered I; ‘I will first have my head shaved and then go to the bath.’ Then I said to my servant, ‘Go to the market and bring me a barber, and look that he be no meddler, but a man of sense, who will not split my head with his much talk.’ So he went out and returned with this wretched old man. When he came in, he saluted me, and I returned his salutation. Then said he, ‘Surely, I see thee thin of body.’ And I replied, ‘I have been ill.’ Quoth he, ‘God cause affliction and trouble and anxiety to depart from thee!’ ‘May God hear thy prayer!’ answered I: and he said, ‘Be of good cheer, O my lord, for indeed recovery is come to thee. Dost thou wish to be polled or let blood? Indeed, it is reported, on the authority of Ibn Abbas (whom God accept!), that the Prophet said, "Whoso is polled on a Friday, God shall avert from him threescore and ten diseases;" and again, "He who is cupped on a Friday is safe from loss of sight and a host of other ailments."' 'Leave this talk,' said I; 'come, shave my head at once, for I am yet weak.' With this he pulled out a handkerchief, from which he took an astrolabe with seven plates, mounted in silver, and going into the courtyard, held the instrument up to the sun's rays and looked for some time. Then he came back and said to me, 'Know that eight degrees and six minutes have elapsed of this our day, which is Friday, the tenth of Sefer, in the six hundred and fifty-third year of the Flight of the Prophet (upon whom be the most excellent of blessing and peace!) and the seven thousand three hundred and twentieth year of the Alexandrian era, and the planet now in the ascendant, according to the rules of mathematics, is Mars, which being in conjunction with Mercury, denotes a favourable time for cutting hair; and this also indicates to me that thou purposest to foregather with some one and that your interview will be propitious; but after this there occurs a sign, respecting a thing which I will not name to thee.' 'By Allah,' exclaimed I, 'thou weariest me and pesterest me with thy foolish auguries, when I only sent for thee to shave my head! So come, shave me at once and give me no more talk.' 'By Allah,' rejoined he, 'if thou knewest what is about to befall thee, thou wouldst do nothing this day; and I counsel thee to do as I shall tell thee, by observation of the stars.' 'By Allah,' said I, 'I never saw a barber skilled in astrology except thee: but I think and know that thou art prodigal of idle talk. I sent for thee to shave my head, and thou plaguest me with this sorry prate!' 'What more wouldst thou have!' replied he. 'God hath vouchsafed thee a barber, who is an astrologer, versed in the arts of alchemy and white magic, syntax, grammar and lexicology, rhetoric and logic, arithmetic, astronomy and geometry, as well as in the knowledge of the Law and the Traditions of the Prophet and in exegesis. Moreover, I have read many books and digested them and have had experience of affairs and understand them thoroughly. In short, I have examined into all things and studied all arts and crafts and sciences and mastered them; and thy father loved me because of my lack of officiousness, for which reason my service is obligatory on thee. I am no meddler, as thou pretendest, and on this account I am known as the Silent, the Grave One. Wherefore it behoves thee to give thanks to God and not cross me for I am a true counsellor to thee and take an affectionate interest in thee. I would I were in thy service a whole year, that thou mightst do me justice: and I would ask no hire of thee for this.' When I heard this, I said, 'Thou wilt certainly be the death of me this day!' 'O my lord,' replied he, 'I am he whom the folk call the Silent, by reason of my few words, to distinguish me from my six brothers, the eldest of whom was called Becbac, the second Heddar, the third Fekic, the fourth El Kouz el Aswani, the fifth El Feshar, the sixth Shecashic and the seventh (myself) Samit.' Whilst he thus overwhelmed me with his talk, I thought my gall-bladder would burst so I said to the servant, 'Give him a quarter-dinar and let him go, for God's sake! I won't have my head shaved to-day.' 'What words are these, O my lord?' said he. 'By Allah, I will take no hire of thee till I have served thee; and needs must I serve thee, for indeed it is incumbent on me to do so and fulfil thy need; and I care not if I take no money of thee. If thou knowest not my worth, I know thine; and I owe thy father (may God the Most High have mercy on him!) many a kindness, for he was a generous man. By Allah, he sent for me one day as it were this blessed day, and I went in to him and found a company of his friends with him. He would have had me let him blood; but I pulled out my astrolabe and taking an altitude for him, found the aspect inauspicious and the hour unfavourable for the letting of blood. I told him of this and he conformed to my advice and put off the operation to a more convenient season. So I recited the following verses in his honour:

I came one day unto my lord, that I might let him blood, But
    found that for his body's health the season was not good;
So sat me down and talked with him of many a pleasant thing And
    all the treasures of my mind before him freely strewed.
Well pleased, he listened, then, "O mine of knowledge!" he did
    say, "Thy wit and wisdom overpass the bounds of likelihood!"

"Not so," quoth I; "my wit indeed were little, but for thee, O
prince of men, that pour'st on me thy wisdom like a flood!
Thou seem'st indeed the lord of grace, bounty and excellence,
World's treasure-house of knowledge, wit, sense and
mansuetude!"

Thy father was charmed and cried out to the servant, saying, "Give him a hundred and three dinars and a dress of honour." The servant did as he bade, and I waited till a favourable moment, when I let him blood; and he did not cross me, but thanked me, and all present also praised me. When the cupping was over, I could not help saying to him, "By Allah, O my lord, what made thee say to the servant, 'Give him a hundred and three dinars'?" Quoth he, "One dinar was for the astrological observation, another for thine entertaining converse, the third for the bloodletting and the remaining hundred and the dress for thy verses in my honour."' 'May God show no mercy to my father,' exclaimed I, 'for knowing the like of thee?' He laughed and said, 'There is no god but God and Mohammed is His Apostle! Glory be to Him who changes but is not changed! I took thee for a man of sense; but I see thou dotest for illness. God says, in His precious Book, that Paradise is prepared for "those who restrain their wrath and forgive men", and in any case thou art excused. But I am ignorant of the cause of thy haste, and thou must know that thy father and grandfather did nothing without consulting me, for indeed it is said that he with whom one takes counsel should be trustworthy and that he who takes counsel shall not be disappointed. It is said also that he who hath not an elder (to advise him) will never be an elder himself; and indeed the poet says:

Ere thou decide to venture thyself in aught, Consult an experienced man and cross him not.

And indeed thou wilt find none better versed in affairs than I, and I am here standing on my feet to serve thee. I am not vexed with thee: why shouldst thou be vexed with me? But I will bear with thee for the sake of the favours I owe thy father.' 'By Allah,' exclaimed I, 'O thou whose tongue is as long as a jackass's tail, thou persistest in pestering me with talk and pelting me with words, when all I want of thee is to shave my head and take thyself off!' Then he lathered my head, saying, ‘I know that thou art vexed with me, but I bear thee no malice; for thy wit is weak and thou art a boy: it was but yesterday I took thee on my shoulders and carried thee to the school’ ‘O my brother,’. cried I, ‘for God’s sake, do what I want and go thy way!’ And I rent my clothes. When he saw me do this, he took the razor and fell to sharpening it and stinted not, till I was well-nigh distraught. Then he came up to me and shaved a part of my head, then held his hand and said, ‘O my lord, hurry is of the Devil and deliberation of the Merciful One. Methinks thou knowest not my station; verily my hand falls on the heads of kings and amirs and viziers and sages and learned men: and it was of me the poet said:

All the trades are like necklets of jewels and gold And this
barber indeed’s the chief pearl of the strings.
He excelleth all others that boast of their skill. And under his
hand are the topknots of kings.’

‘Leave what concerns thee not,’ said I: ‘indeed thou hast straitened my breast and troubled my mind.’ Quoth he, Meseems thou art in haste. ‘Yes, yes, yes!’ answered I, and he, ‘Thou wouldst do well to proceed with deliberation, for haste is of the Devil and bequeaths repentance and disappointment. Verily he upon whom be blessing and peace hath said, “The best affair is that which is undertaken with deliberation.” By Allah, thy case troubles me, and I would have thee let me know what it is thou art in such haste to do, for I fear me it is other than good.’ Then said he, ‘It wants three hours yet of the time of prayer. However, I do not wish to be in doubt as to this, but am minded to know the time for certain; for speech, when it is conjectural, is but faulty, especially in the like of me, whose merit is plain and known of all men; and it does not befit me to talk at random, as do the common sort of astrologers.’ So saying, he threw down the razor and taking up the astrolabe, went out under the sun and stood a long while, after which he returned and said to me, ‘It wants three hours of the time of prayer, neither more nor less.’ ‘By Allah,’ answered I, ‘hold thy tongue, for thou breakest my heart in pieces!’ So he took his razor and after sharpening it as before, shaved another part of my head. Then he said, ‘I am concerned about thy haste; and indeed thou wouldst do well to tell me the cause of it, for thou knowest that thy father and grandfather did nothing without my counsel.' When I saw that there was no getting rid of him, I said to myself, 'The time of prayer draws near and I wish to go to her before the folk come out from the mosque. If I am delayed much longer, I know not how I shall come at her.' Then I said to him, 'Be quick and leave this prating and officiousness, for I have to go to an entertainment at the house of one of my friends.' When he heard me speak of an entertainment, he said, 'This thy day is a blessed one for me! Verily, yesterday I invited a party of my intimate friends and I have forgotten to provide aught for them to eat. I bethought me of it but now, on hearing thee speak of an entertainment. Alack, how I shall be disgraced in their eyes!' 'Be in no concern for that,' answered I. 'Have I not told thee that I am bidden abroad to-day? All the meat and drink in the house shall be thine, so thou despatch my affair and make haste to shave my head.' 'God requite thee with good!' rejoined he. 'Tell me what thou hast for my guests, that I may know.' Quoth I, 'I have five dishes of meat and ten fricasseed fowls and a roasted lamb.' 'Bring them out to me,' said he, 'that I may see them.' So I had all this brought, and when he saw it, he said, 'There lacks the wine.' 'I have a flagon or two in the house,' answered I; and he said, 'Have it brought out.' So I sent for it, and he exclaimed, 'God bless thee for a generous soul! But there are still the perfumes and the essences.' So I brought him a box, containing fifty dinars' worth of aloes-wood and ambergris and musk and other perfumes. By this, the time began to run short and my heart was straitened; so I said to him, 'Take it all and finish shaving my head, by the life of Mohammed, whom God bless and preserve!' 'By Allah,' said he, 'I will not take it till I see all that is in it.' So I made the servant open the box, and the barber threw down the astrolabe and sitting down on the ground, turned over the contents, till I was well-nigh distracted. Then he took the razor and coming up to me, shaved some little of my head and recited the following verse:

The boy after his father's guise grows up and follows suit As surely as the tree springs up from out its parent root.

Then said he, 'O my son, I know not whether to thank thee or thy father; for my entertainment to-day is all due to thy kindness and liberality, and none of my company is worthy of it; though I have none but men of consideration, such as Zentout the bath-keeper and Selya the corn-chandler and Silet the bean-seller and Akresheh the grocer and Hemid the scavenger and Said the camel-driver and Suweyd the porter and Abou Mukarish the bathman and Cassim the watchman and Kerim the groom. There is not among them all one curmudgeon or make-bate or meddler or spoil-sport; each has his own dance that he dances and his own couplets that he repeats, and the best of them is that they are like thy servant, knowing not abundance of talk nor meddlesomeness. The bath-keeper sings enchantingly to the tambourine and dances and says, “I am going, O my mother, to fill my jar!” As for the corn-chandler, he brings more skill to it than any of them; he dances and says, “O mourner, my mistress, thou dost not fall short!” and draws the very heart out of one for laughing at him. Whilst the scavenger sings, so that the birds stop to listen to him, and dances and says, “News with my wife is not kept in a chest!” And indeed he is a witty, accomplished rogue, and of his excellence I use to say the following:

My life redeem the scavenger! I love him passing dear, For, in
 his goodly gait, he’s like the zephyr-shaken bough.
Fate blessed my eyes with him one night; and I to him did say,
 (Whilst in my bosom, as I spoke, desire did ebb and flow,)
“Thou’st lit thy fire within my heart!” Whereto he answer made
 “What wonder though the scavenger have turned a
 fire-man now?”

And indeed each is perfection in all that can charm the wit with mirth and jollity. But hearing is not like seeing; and indeed if thou wilt join us and put off going to thy friends, it will be better both for us and for thee: for the traces of sickness are yet upon thee and belike thou art going amongst talkative folk, who will prate of what does not concern them, or there may be amongst them some impertinent busybody who will split thy head, and thou still weak from illness.’ ‘This shall be for another day,’ answered I and laughed in spite of my anger. ‘Finish what thou hast to do for me and go in peace and enjoy thyself with thy friends, for they will be awaiting thy coming.’

‘O my lord,’ replied he, ‘I only seek to bring thee in company with these pleasant folk, amongst whom there is neither meddlesomeness nor excess of talk; for never, since I came to years of discretion, could I endure to consort with those who ask of what concerns them not, nor with any except those who are, like myself, men of few words. Verily, if thou wert once to see them and company with them, thou wouldst forsake all thy friends.’ ‘God fulfil thy gladness with them!’ rejoined I. ‘Needs must I foregather with them one of these days.’ And he said, ‘I would it were to be to-day, for I had made up my mind that thou shouldst make one of us: but if thou must indeed go to thy friends to-day, I will take the good things, with which thy bounty hath provided me for them, to my guests, and leave them to eat and drink, without waiting for me, whilst I return to thee in haste and accompany thee whither thou goest; for there is no ceremony between me and my friends to hinder me from leaving them.’ ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ cried I. ‘Go thou to thy friends and make merry with them and let me go to mine and be with them this day, for they expect me.’ ‘I will not let thee go alone,’ replied he: and I said, ‘None can enter where I am going but myself.’ Then said he, ‘I believe thou hast an assignation with some woman to-day; else thou wouldst take me with thee, for it is the like of me that furnishes a merry-making; or if thou go to any one with whom thou wouldst be private, I am the fittest of all men for thy purpose, for I would help thee to what thou desirest and look that none saw thee. I fear lest thou go in to some strange woman and lose thy life; for in this city one cannot do aught of the kind, especially on a day like this and under so keen and masterful a chief of the police as ours of Baghdad.’ ‘Out on thee, O wretched old man!’ cried I. ‘Avaunt! what words are these thou givest me?’ ‘O dolt!’ rejoined he, ‘thou sayest to me what is not true and hidest thy mind from me; but I know that this is so and am certain of it, and I only seek to help thee this day.’ I was fearful lest my people or the neighbours should hear the barber’s talk, so kept silence, whilst he finished shaving my head; by which time the hour of prayer was come and it was wellnigh time for the exhortation. When he had done, I said to him, ‘Take the meat and drink and carry them to thy friends. I will await thy return.’ For I thought it best to dissemble with the accursed fellow and feign compliance with his wishes, so haply he might go away and leave me. Quoth he, ‘Thou art deceiving me and wilt go alone and cast thyself into some peril, from which there will be no escape for thee. For God’s sake, do not go till I return, that I may accompany thee and see what comes of thine affair.’ ‘It is well,’ answered I: ‘do not be long absent.’ Then he took all that I had given him and went out; but, instead of going home with it, the cursed fellow delivered it to a porter, to carry to his house, and hid himself in a by-street. As for me, I rose at once, for the Muezzins had already chanted the Salutation, and, dressing myself in haste, went out and hurried to the house where I had seen the young lady. I found the old woman standing at the door, awaiting me, and went up with her to the young lady’s apartment. Hardly had I done so, when the master of the house returned from the mosque and entering the saloon, shut the door. I looked out from the window and saw this barber (God’s malison on him!) sitting over against the door, and said, ‘How did this devil find me out?’ At this moment, as God had decreed it for my undoing, it befell that a slave-girl belonging to the master of the house committed some offence, for which he beat her. She cried out, and a male slave came in to deliver her, whereupon the Cadi beat him also, and he too cried out. The cursed barber concluded that it was I he was beating and fell to tearing his clothes and strewing dust on his head, shrieking and calling for help. So the folk came round him, and he said to them, ‘My master is being murdered in the Cadi’s house!’ Then he ran, shrieking, to my house, with the folk after him, and told my people and servants: and before I knew what was forward, up they came, with torn clothes and dishevelled hair, calling out, ‘Alas, our master!’ and the barber at their head, in a fine pickle, tearing his clothes and shouting. They made for the house in which I was, headed by the barber, crying out, ‘Woe is us for our murdered master!’ And the Cadi, hearing the uproar at his door, said to one of his servants, ‘Go and see what is the matter.’ The man went out and came back, saying, ‘O my lord, there are more than ten thousand men and women at the door, crying out, “Woe is us for our murdered master!” and pointing to our house.’ When the Cadi heard this, he was troubled and vexed; so he went to the door and opening it, saw a great concourse of people; whereat he was amazed and said, ‘O folk, what is the matter?’ ‘O accursed one, O dog, O hog,’ replied my servants, ‘thou hast killed our master!’ Quoth he, ‘And what has your master done to me that I should kill him? Behold, this my house is open to you!’ ‘Thou didst beat him but now with rods,’ answered the barber; ‘for I heard his cries.’ ‘What has he done that I should beat him?’ repeated the Cadi; ‘and what brings him into my house?’ ‘Be not a vile, perverse old man!’ replied the barber; ‘I know the whole story. The long and the short of it is that thy daughter is in love with him and he with her; and when thou knewest that he had entered the house, thou badest thy servants beat him, and they did so. By Allah, none shall judge between us and thee but the Khalif! So bring us out our master, that his people may take him, before I go and fetch him forth of thy house and thou be put to shame.’ When the Cadi heard this, he was dumb for amazement and confusion before the people, but presently said to the barber, ‘If thou speak truth, come in and fetch him out.’ Whereupon the barber pushed forward and entered the house. When I saw this, I looked about for a means of escape, but saw no hiding-place save a great chest that stood in the room. So I got into the chest and pulled the lid down on me and held my breath. Hardly had I done this, when the barber came straight to the place where I was and catching up the chest, set it on his head and made off with it in haste. At this, my reason forsook me and I was assured that he would not let me be; so I took courage and opening the chest, threw myself to the ground. My leg was broken in the fall, and the door of the house being opened, I saw without a great crowd of people. Now I had much gold in my sleeve, which I had provided against the like of this occasion; so I fell to scattering it among the people, to divert their attention from me; and whilst they were busy scrambling for it, I set off running through the by-streets of Baghdad, and this cursed barber, whom nothing could divert from me, after me. Wherever I went, he followed, crying out, ‘They would have bereft me of my master and slain him who has been a benefactor to me and my family and friends! But praised be God who aided me against them and delivered my lord from their hands! Where wilt thou go now? Thou persistedst in following thine own evil devices, till thou broughtest thyself to this pass, and if God had not vouchsafed me to thee, thou hadst never won free from this strait, for they would have plunged thee into irremediable ruin. How long dost thou expect I shall live to save thee? By Allah, thou hast well-nigh undone me by thy folly and thy perverseness in wishing to go by thyself! But I will not reproach thee with ignorance, for thou art little of wit and hasty.’ ‘Does not what thou hast brought upon me suffice thee,’ replied I, ‘but thou must pursue me with the like of this talk through the public streets?’ And I well-nigh gave up the ghost for excess of rage against him. Then I took refuge in the shop of a weaver in the midst of the market and sought protection of the owner, who drove the barber away. I sat down in the back shop and said to myself, ‘If I return home, I shall never be able to get rid of this accursed barber, for he will be with me night and day, and I cannot endure the sight of him.’ So I sent out at once for witnesses and made a will, dividing the greater part of my money among my people, and appointed a guardian over them, to whom I committed the charge of great and small directing him to sell my house and estates. Then I set out at once on my travels, that I might be free of this ruffian, and came to settle in your town, where I have lived for some time. When you invited me and I came hither the first thing I saw was this accursed pimp seated in the place of honour. How, then, can I be at my ease and how can it be pleasant to me to consort with you, in company with this fellow, who brought all this upon me and was the cause of the breaking of my leg and of my exile from my country and family?” And he refused to sit down and went away. When we heard the young man’s story (continued the tailor), we were beyond measure amazed and diverted and said to the barber, “Is it true that this young man says of thee?” “By Allah,” replied he, “I dealt thus with him of my courtesy and good sense and humanity. But for me, he had perished and none but I was the cause of his escape. Well for him that it was in his leg that he suffered and not in his life! Were I a man of many words or a busybody, I had not done him this kindness; but now I will tell you something that happened to me, that ye may know that I am indeed sparing of speech and no impertinent meddler, as were my six brothers; and it is this:

The Barber’s Story.

I was living at Baghdad, in the time of the Khalif Mustensir Billah, who loved the poor and needy and companied with the learned and the pious. One day, it befell that he was wroth with a band of highway robbers, ten in number, who infested the neighbourhood, and ordered the chief of the Baghdad police to bring them before him on the day of the Festival. So the prefect sallied out and capturing the robbers, embarked with them in a boat. I caught sight of them, as they were embarking, and said to myself, ‘These people are surely bound on some party of pleasure; methinks they mean to spend the day in eating and drinking, and none shall be their messmate but I.’ So, of the greatness of my courtesy and the gravity of my understanding, I embarked in the boat and mingled with them. They rowed across to the opposite bank, where they landed, and there came up soldiers and police officers with chains, which they put round the necks of the robbers. They chained me with the rest, and, O company, is it not a proof of my courtesy and spareness of speech that I kept silence and did not choose to speak? Then they took us away in chains and next morning they carried us all before the Commander of the Faithful, who bade strike off the heads of the ten robbers. So the herdsman came forward and made us kneel before him on the carpet of blood; then drawing his sword, struck off one head after another, till none was left but myself. The Khalif looked at me and said to the headsman, ‘What ails thee thou thou struck off but nine heads?’ ‘God forbid,’ replied he, ‘that I should behead only nine, when thou didst order me to behead ten!’ Quoth the Khalif, ‘Meseems, thou hast beheaded but nine and he who is before thee is the tenth.’ ‘By thy munificence,’ replied the headsman, ‘I have beheaded ten!’ So they counted the dead men, and behold, they were ten. Then said the Khalif to me, ‘What made thee keep silence at such a time and how camest thou in company with these men of blood? Thou art a man of great age, but assuredly thy wit is but little.’ When I heard the Khalif’s words, I replied, ‘Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that I am the Silent Elder, and am thus called to distinguish me from my six brothers. I am a man of great learning, whilst, as for the gravity of my understanding, the excellence of my apprehension and the spareness of my speech, there is no end to them; and by craft I am a barber. I went out early yesterday morning and saw these ten men making for a boat, and thinking they were bound on a party of pleasure, joined myself to them and embarked with them. After awhile, there came up the officers, who put chains round their necks and round mine amongst the rest, but in the excess of my courtesy, I kept silence and did not speak, nor was this other than generosity on my part. Then they brought us before thee and thou didst order the ten robbers' heads to be stricken off; yet did I not make myself known to thee, purely of my great generosity and courtesy, which led me to share with them in their death. But all my life have I dealt thus nobly with the folk, and they still requite me after the foulest fashion.' When the Khalif heard what I said and knew that I was a man of exceeding generosity and few words and no meddler (as this young man would have it, whom I rescued from horrors and who has so scurvily repaid me), he laughed so immoderately that he fell backward. Then said he to me, 'O silent man, are thy six brothers like thee distinguished for wisdom and knowledge and spareness of speech?' 'Never were they like me,' answered I; 'thou dost me injustice, O Commander of the Faithful, and it becomes thee not to even my brothers with me: for, of the abundance of their speech and their lack of conduct and courtesy, each one of them has gotten some bodily defect. One is blind of an eye, another paralysed, a third blind, a fourth cropped of the ears and nose, a fifth crop-lipped and a sixth hunchbacked and a cripple. Thou must not think, O Commander of the Faithful, that I am a man of many words; but I must needs explain to thee that I am a man of greater worth and of fewer words than they. By each one of my brothers hangs a tale of how he came by his defect, and these I will relate to thee. Know then, O Commander of the Faithful that

Story of the Barber’s First Brother.

My first brother, the hunchback, was a tailor in Baghdad, and plied his craft in a shop, which he hired of a very rich man, who dwelt over against him and had a mill in the lower part of the house. One day, as my brother the hunchback was sitting in his shop, sewing, he chanced to raise his head and saw, at the bay-window of his landlord’s house, a lady like the rising full moon, engaged in looking at the passers-by. His heart was taken with love of her and he passed the day gazing at her and neglecting his business, till the evening. Next day, he opened his shop and sat down to sew: but as often as he made a stitch, he looked at the bay-window and saw her as before; and his passion and infatuation for her redoubled. On the third day, as he was sitting in his usual place, gazing on her, she caught sight of him, and perceiving that he had fallen a captive to her love, smiled in his face, and he smiled back at her. Then she withdrew and sent her slave-girl to him with a parcel of red flowered silk. The girl accosted him and said to him, “My lady salutes thee and would have thee cut out for her, with a skilful hand, a shift of this stuff and sew it handsomely.” “I hear and obey,” answered he; and cut out the shift and made an end of sewing it the same day. Next morning early, the girl came back and said to him, “My mistress salutes thee and would fain know how thou hast passed the night; for she has not tasted sleep by reason of her heart being taken up with thee.” Then she laid before him a piece of yellow satin and said to him, “My mistress bids thee cut her two pairs of trousers of this stuff and sew them this day.” “I hear and obey,” answered he; “salute her for me with abundant salutation and say to her, ‘Thy slave is obedient to thy commands so order him as thou wilt.’” Then he applied himself to cut out the trousers and used all diligence in sewing them. Presently the lady appeared at the window and saluted him by signs, now casting down her eyes and now smiling in his face, so that he made sure of getting his will of her. She did not let him budge till he had finished the two pairs of trousers, when she withdrew and sent the slave-girl, to whom he delivered them, and she took them and went away. When it was night, he threw himself on his bed and tossed from side to side, till morning, when he rose and sat down in his shop. By-and-by, the slave-girl came to him and said, “My master calls for thee.” When he heard this, he was afraid; but the girl, seeing his alarm, to him, “Fear not: nought but good shall befall thee. My lady would have thee make acquaintance with my master.” So my brother rejoiced greatly and went out with her. When he came into his landlord’s presence he kissed the earth before him, and the latter returned his salute; then gave him a great piece of linen, saying, “Make this into shirts for me.” “I hear and obey,” replied my brother, and fell to work at once and cut out twenty shirts by nightfall, without stopping to taste food. Then said the husband “What is thy hire for this?” “Twenty dirhems,” answered my brother. So the man cried out to the slave-girl to give him twenty dirhems; but the lady signed to my brother not to take them, and he said, “By Allah, I will take nothing from thee!” And took his work and went away, though he was sorely in want of money. Then he applied himself to do their work, eating and drinking but little for three days, in his great diligence. At the end of this time, the slave-girl came to him and said, “What hast thou done?” Quoth he, “They are finished;” and carried the shirts to his landlord, who would have paid him his hire; but he said, “I will take nothing,” for fear of the lady, and returning to his shop, passed the night without sleep for hunger. Now the lady had told her husband how the case stood, and they had agreed to take advantage of his infatuation to make him sew for them for nothing and laugh at him. Next morning, as he sat in his shop, the servant came to him and said, “My master would speak with thee.” So he accompanied her to the husband, who said to him, “I wish thee to make me five cassocks.” So he cut them out and took the stuff and went away. Then he sewed them and carried them to the man, who praised his work and offered him a purse of money. He put out his hand to take it, but the lady signed to him from behind her husband not to do so, and he replied, “O my lord, there is no hurry: by-and-by.” Then he went out, more abject than an ass, for verily five things at once were sore upon him, love and beggary and hunger and nakedness and toil; nevertheless, he heartened himself with the hope of gaining the lady’s favours. When he had made an end of all their work, they put a cheat upon him and married him to their slave-girl. but when he thought to go in to her, they said to him, “Lie this night in the mill; and to-morrow all will be well.” My brother concluded that there was some good reason for this and passed the night alone in the mill. Now the husband had set on the miller to make my brother turn the mill; so in the middle of the night, the miller came in and began to say, “This ox is lazy and stands still and will not turn, and there is much wheat to be ground. So I will yoke him and make him finish grinding it this night, for the folk are impatient for their flour.” Then he filled the hoppers with grain and going up to my brother, with a rope in his hand, bound him to the yoke and said to him, “Come, turn the mill! Thou thinkest of nothing but eating and voiding.” Then he took a whip and laid on to my brother, who began to weep and cry out; but none came to his aid, and he was forced to grind the wheat till near daylight, when the husband came in and seeing him yoked to the shaft and the miller flogging him, went away. At daybreak the miller went away and left him still yoked and well nigh dead; and soon after in came the slave-girl, who unbound him and said to him, “I am grieved for what has befallen thee, and both I and my lady are full of concern for thee.” But he had no tongue wherewith to answer her, for excess of beating and toil. Then he returned to his lodging, and presently the notary who had drawn up the marriage contract came to him and saluted him, saying, “God give thee long life! May thy marriage be blessed! Thou hast doubtless passed the night clipping and kissing and dalliance from dusk to dawn.” “May God curse thee for a liar, thousandfold cuckold that thou art!” replied my brother. “By Allah, I did nothing but turn the mill in the place of the ox all night!” Quoth the notary, “Tell me thy story.” So my brother told him what had happened, and he said, “Thy star agrees not with hers: but if thou wilt, I can alter the contract for thee.” And my brother answered, “See if thou have another device.” Then the notary left him and he sat down in his shop, till some one should bring him work by which he might earn his day’s bread. Presently the slave-girl came to him and said, “My mistress would speak with thee.” “Go, my good girl,” replied he; “I will have no more to do with thy mistress.” So the girl returned to her mistress and told her what my brother had said, and presently she put her head out of the window, weeping and saying, “O my beloved, why wilt thou have no more to do with me?” But he made her no answer. Then she swore to him that all that had befallen him in the mill was without her sanction and that she was guiltless of the whole affair. When he saw her beauty and grace and heard the sweetness of her speech, he forgot what had befallen him and accepted her excuse and rejoiced in her sight. So he saluted her and talked with her and sat at his sewing awhile, after which the servant came to him and said, “My mistress salutes thee and would have thee to know that her husband purposes to lie this night abroad with some intimate friends of his; so when he is gone, do thou come to us and pass the night with her in all delight till the morning.” Now the man had said to his wile, “How shall we do to turn him away from thee?” Quoth she, “Let me play him another trick and make him a byword in the city.” But my brother knew nothing of the malice of women. As soon as it was night, the servant came to him and carried him to the house; and when the lady saw him, she said to him, “By Allah, O my lord, I have been longing for thee!” “By Allah,” replied he, “make haste and give me a kiss first of all.” Hardly had he spoken, when the master of the house came in from an inner room and seized him, saying, “By Allah, I will not let thee go, till I deliver thee to the chief of the police.” My brother humbled himself to him; but he would not listen to him and carried him to the prefect, who gave him a hundred lashes with a whip and mounting him on a camel, paraded him about the city, whilst the folk proclaimed aloud, “This is the punishment of those who violate people’s harems!” Moreover, he fell off the camel and broke his leg and so became lame. Then the prefect banished him from the city and he went forth, not knowing whither to turn; but I heard of his mishap and going out after him, brought him back and took him to live with me.’

The Khalif laughed at my story and said, ‘Thou hast done well, O Silent One, O man of few words!’ and bade me take a present and go away. But I said, ‘I will take nothing except I tell thee what befell my other brothers: and do not think me a man of many words. Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that

Story of the Barber’s Second Brother.

My second brother’s name was Becbac and he was the paralytic. One day, as he was going about his business, an old woman accosted him and said to him, “Harkye, stop a little, that I may tell thee of somewhat, which, if it please thee, thou shalt do for me.” My brother stopped and she went on, “I will put thee in the way of a certain thing, so thy words be not many.” “Say on,” replied my brother; and she, “What sayest thou to a handsome house and a pleasant garden, with running waters and fruits and wine and a fair-faced one to hold in thine arms from dark till dawn?” “And is all this in the world?” asked my brother. “Yes,” answered she; “and it shall be thine, so thou be reasonable and leave impertinent curiosity and many words and do as I bid thee.” “I will well, O my lady,” rejoined my brother; “but what made thee choose me of all men for this affair and what is it pleases thee in me?” Quoth she, “Did I not bid thee be sparing of speech? Hold thy peace and follow me. Thou must know that the young lady, to whom I shall carry thee, loves to have her own way and hates to be crossed, so if thou fall in with her humour, thou shalt come to thy desire of her.” And my brother said, “I will not thwart her in aught.” Then she went on and he followed her, eager to enjoy what she had promised him, till she brought him to a fine large house, richly furnished and full of servants, and carried him to an upper story. When the people of the house saw him, they said to him, “What dost thou here?” But the old woman bade them, “Let him be and trouble him not; for he is a workman and we have occasion for him.” Then she brought him into a fine great gallery, with a fair garden in its midst, and made him sit down upon a handsome couch. He had not sat long, before he heard a great noise and in came a troop of damsels, with a lady in their midst, as she were the moon on the night of its full. When he saw her, he rose and made an obeisance to her; whereupon she bade him welcome and ordered him to be seated. So he sat down and she said to him. “God advance thee! Is all well with thee?” “O my lady,” replied my brother, “all is well.” Then she called for food, and they brought her a table richly served. So she sat down to eat, making a show of affection to my brother and jesting with him, though all the while she could not keep from laughing: but as often as he looked at her, she signed towards the waiting-maids, as if she laughed at them. My ass of a brother understood nothing, but concluded, in the blindness of his doting, that the lady was in love with him and would admit him to his desire. When they had finished eating, they set on wine, and there came in ten damsels like moons, with strung lutes in their hands, and fell a singing right melodiously; whereupon delight got hold upon him and he took the cup from the lady's hands and drank it off. Then she drank a cup of wine, and he rose and bowed to her, saying, "Health to thee!" She filled him another cup and he drank it off, and she gave him a cuff on the nape of his neck; whereupon he rose and went out in a rage; but the old woman followed him and winked to him to return. So he came back and the lady bade him sit, and he sat down without speaking. Then she dealt him a second cuff, and nothing would serve her but she must make all her maids cuff him also. Quoth he to the old woman, "Never saw I aught finer than this!" And she kept saying, "Enough, enough, I conjure thee, O my lady!" The women cuffed him till he was well-nigh senseless, and he rose and went out again in a rage; but the old woman followed him and said, "Wait a little, and thou shalt come to what thou wishest." "How much longer must I wait?" asked he. "Indeed I am faint with cuffing." "As soon as she is warm with wine," answered she, "thou shalt have thy desire." So he returned to his place and sat down, whereupon all the damsels rose and the lady bade them fumigate him and sprinkle rose-water on his face. Then said she to him, "God advance thee! Thou hast entered my house and submitted to my conditions; for whoso thwarts me, I turn him away, but he who is patient has his desire." "O my lady," replied he, "I am thy slave and in the hollow of thy hand." "Know then," continued she, "that God has made me passionately fond of frolic, and whoso falls in with my humour comes by what he wishes." Then she ordered the damsels to sing with loud voices, and they sang, till the whole company was in ecstasy: after which she said to one of the maids, "Take thy lord and do what is wanting to him and bring him back to me forthright." So the damsel took my brother, who knew not what she would do with him; but the old woman came up to him and said, "Be patient; there remains but little to do.” At this his face cleared and he said, “Tell me what she would have the maid do with me.” “Nothing but good,” replied she, as I am thy ransom. She only wishes to dye thine eyebrows and pluck out thy moustaches.” Quoth he, “As for the dyeing of my eyebrows, that will come off with washing, but the plucking out of my moustaches will be irksome.” “Beware of crossing her,” said the old woman; “for her heart is set on thee.” So my brother suffered them to dye his eyebrows and pluck out his moustaches, after which the damsel returned to her mistress and told her. Quoth she, “There is one thing more to be done; thou must shave his chin, that he may be beardless.” So the maid went back and told my brother what her mistress bade her do, whereupon cried my fool of a brother, “How can I do what will dishonour me among the folk?” But the old woman said, “She only wishes to do thus with thee, that thou mayst be as a beardless youth and that no hair may be left on thy face to prick her; for she is passionately in love with thee. Be patient and thou shalt attain thy desire.” So he submitted to have his beard shaved off and his face rouged, after which they carried him back to the lady. When she saw him with his eyebrows dyed, his whiskers and moustaches plucked out, his beard shaved off and his face rouged, she was affrighted at him, then laughed till she fell backward and said, “O my lord, thou hast won my heart with thy good nature!” Then she conjured him, by her life, to rise and dance; so he began to dance, and there was not a cushion in the place but she threw it at him, whilst the damsels pelted him with oranges and limes and citrons, till he fell down senseless. When he came to himself, the old woman said to him, “Now thou hast attained thy desire. There is no more beating for thee and there remains but one thing more. It is her wont, when she is heated with wine, to let no one have to do with her till she put off her clothes and remain stark naked. Then she will bid thee strip, in like manner, and run before thee from place to place, as if she fled from thee, and thou after her, till thy yard be in good point, when she will stop and give herself up to thee. So now rise and put off thy clothes.” So he rose, well-nigh beside himself, and stripped himself stark naked; whereupon the lady stripped also and saying to my brother, “Follow me, if thou desire aught,” set off running in at one place and out at another and he after her, transported for desire, till his yard rose, as he were mad. Presently she entered a dark passage, and in following her, he trod upon a soft place, which gave way with him, and before he knew where he was, he found himself in the midst of the market of the fell-mongers, who were calling skins for sale and buying and selling. When they saw him in this plight, naked, with yard on end, shaven face, dyed eyebrows and rouged cheeks, they cried out and clapped their hands at him and flogged him with skins upon his naked body, till he swooned away; when they set him on an ass and carried him to the chief of the police, who said, "What is this?" Quoth they, "This fellow came out upon us from the Vizier's house, in this plight." So the prefect gave him a hundred lashes and banished him from Baghdad. However, I went out after him and brought him back privily into the city and made him an allowance for his living, though, but for my generous disposition, I had not put up with such a fellow.

Story of the Barber's Third Brother

The name of my third brother was Fekic and he was blind. One day, chance and destiny led him to a great house and he knocked at the door, desiring speech of the owner, that he might beg of him somewhat. Quoth the master of the house, "Who is at the door?" But my brother was silent and heard him repeat, in a loud voice, "Who is there?" Still he made no answer and presently heard the master come to the door and open it and say, "What dost thou want?" "Charity," replied my brother, "for the love of God the Most High!" "Art thou blind?" asked the man; and my brother said, "Yes." Quoth the other, "Give me thy hand." So my brother put out his hand, thinking that he would give him something; but he took it and drawing him into the house, carried him up, from stair to stair, till they reached the housetop, my brother thinking the while that he would surely give him food or money. Then said he to my brother, "What dost thou want, O blind man?" "Charity, for the love of God!" repeated my brother. "God succour thee!" answered the master of the house. "O man," answered my brother, "why couldst thou not tell me this downstairs?" "O loser," answered he, "why didst thou not answer me, when I asked who was at the door?" Quoth my brother, "What wilt thou with me now?" And the other replied, "I have nothing to give thee." "Then take me down again," said my brother. But he answered, “The way lies before thee.” So my brother rose and made his way down the stairs, till he came within twenty steps of the door, when his foot slipped and he rolled to the bottom and broke his head. Then he went out, knowing not whither to turn, and presently fell in with other two blind men, comrades of his, who enquired how he had fared that day. He told them what had passed and said to them, “O my brothers, I wish to take some of the money in my hands and provide my self with it.” Now the master of the house had followed him and heard what they said, but neither my brother nor his fellows knew of this. So my brother went on to his lodging and sat down to await his comrades, and the owner of the house entered after him without his knowledge. When the other blind men arrived, my brother said to them, “Shut the door and search the house, lest any stranger have followed us.” The intruder, hearing this, caught hold of a rope that hung from the ceiling and clung to it, whilst the blind men searched the whole place, but found nothing. So they came back and sitting down beside my brother, brought out their money, which they counted, and lo, it was twelve thousand dirhems. Each took what he wanted and the rest they buried in a corner of the room. Then they set on food and sat down to eat. Presently my brother heard a strange pair of jaws wagging at his side; so he said to his comrades, “There is a stranger amongst us;” and putting out his hand, caught hold of that of the intruder. Therewith they all fell on him and beat him, crying out, “O Muslims, a thief is come in to us, seeking to take our property!” So much people flocked to them, whereupon the owner of the house caught hold of the blind men and shutting his eyes, feigned to be blind like unto them, so that none doubted of it. Then he complained of them, even as they of him, crying out, “O Muslims, I appeal to God and the Sultan and the chief of the police! I have a grave matter to make known to the chief of the police.” At this moment, up came the watch and seizing them all, dragged them before the chief of the police, who enquired what was the matter. Quoth the spy, “See here; thou shalt come at nought except by torture: so begin by beating me, and after me, beat this my captain.” And he pointed to my brother. So they threw the man down and gave him four hundred strokes on the backside. The beating pained him, and he opened one eye; and as they redoubled their blows, he opened the other. When the chief of the police saw this, he said to him, “What is this, O accursed one?” “Give me the seal-ring of pardon!” replied he. “We are four who feign ourselves blind and impose upon people, that we may enter houses and gaze upon women and contrive for their corruption. In this way, we have gotten much money, even twelve thousand dirhems. So I said to my comrades, ‘Give me my share, three thousand dirhems.’ But they fell on me and beat me and took away my money, and I appeal to God and thee for protection; better thou have my share than they. So, an thou wouldst know the truth of my words, beat each of the others more than thou hast beaten me and he will surely open his eyes.” The prefect bade begin with my brother: so they bound him to the whipping-post, and the prefect said, “O rascals, do ye abjure the gracious gifts of God and pretend to be blind?” “Allah! Allah!” cried my brother, “by Allah, there is not one amongst us who can see!” Then they beat him, till he fainted and the prefect said, “Leave him till he revives and then beat him again.” And he caused each of the others to be beaten with more than three hundred blows, whilst the sham blind man stood by, saying to them, “Open your eyes, or you will be beaten anew.” Then he said to the prefect, “Send some one with me to fetch the money, for these fellows will not open their eyes, lest they be put to shame before the folk.” So the prefect sent to fetch the money and gave the impostor three thousand dirhems to his pretended share. The rest he took for himself and banished the three blind men from the city. But, O Commander of the Faithful, I went out and overtaking my brother, questioned him of his case; whereupon he told me what I have told thee. So I carried him back privily into the city and appointed him in secret wherewithal to eat and drink.’ The Khalif laughed at my story and said, ‘Give him a present and let him go.’ By Allah,’ rejoined I, ‘I will take nothing till I have made known to the Commander of the Faithful what happened to my other brothers, for I am a man of few words.’ Then I went on as follows

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Story of the Barber’s Fourth Brother.

‘My fourth brother, the one-eyed, was a butcher at Baghdad, who sold meat and reared rams; and the notables and men of wealth used to buy meat of him, so that he amassed much wealth and got him cattle and houses. He fared thus a long while’ till one day, as he was sitting in his shop, there came up to him an old man with a long beard, who laid down some money and said, “Give me meat for this.” So he gave him his money’s worth of meat, and the old man went away. My brother looked at the money he had paid him, and seeing that it was brilliantly white, laid it aside by itself. The old man continued to pay him frequent visits for five months, and my brother threw the money he received from him into a chest by itself. At the end of this time, he thought to take out the money to buy sheep; so he opened the chest, but found in it nothing but white paper, cut round. When he saw this, he buffeted his face and cried out, till the folk came round him and he told them his story, at which they wondered. Then he rose, as of his wont, and slaughtering a ram, hung it up within the shop; after which he cut off some of the meat and hung it up outside, saying the while, “Would God that pestilent old man would come!” And surely before long up came the old man, with his money in his hand; whereupon my brother rose and caught hold of him, crying out, “Come to my help, O Muslims, and hear what befell me with this scoundrel!” When the old man heard this, he said to him, “An thou loose me not, I will expose thee before the folk!” “In what wilt thou expose me?” asked my brother, and the other replied, “In that thou sellest man’s flesh for mutton.” “Thou liest, O accursed one!” cried my brother: and the old man said, “He is the accursed one who has a man hanging up in his shop.” “If it be as thou sayest,” rejoined my brother, “I give thee leave to take my property and my life.” Then said the old man, “Ho, people of the city! an ye would prove the truth of my words, enter this man’s shop.” So they rushed into the shop, when they saw the ram was become a dead man hanging up and seized on my brother, crying out, “O infidel! O villain!” And his best friends fell to beating him and saying, “Dost thou give us man’s flesh to eat?” Moreover, the old man struck him on the eye and put it out. Then they carried the carcase to the chief of the police, to whom said the old man, “O Amir, this fellow slaughters men and sells their flesh for mutton, and we have brought him to thee; so arise and execute the justice of God, to whom belong might and majesty!” My brother would have defended himself, but the prefect refused to hear him and sentenced him to receive five hundred blows with a stick and to forfeit all his property. And indeed, but for his wealth, they had put him to death. Then he banished him from the city and my brother fared forth at a venture, till he came to a great city, where he thought well to set up as a cobbler. So he opened a shop and fell to working for his living. One day, as he went on an occasion, he heard the tramp of horse, and enquiring the cause, was told that the King was going out to hunt and stopped to look on his state. It chanced that the King’s eye met his, whereupon he bowed his head, saying, “I take refuge with God from the evil of this day!” And drawing bridle, rode back to his palace, followed by his retinue. Then he gave an order to his guards, who seized my brother and beat him grievously, till he was well-nigh dead, without telling him the reason: after which he returned to his shop, in a sorry plight, and told one of the King’s household, who laughed till he fell backward and said to him, “O my brother, know that the King cannot endure the sight of a one-eyed man; especially if he be blind of the left eye, in which case, he does not let him go without killing him.” When my brother heard this, he resolved to fly that city, so went forth and repaired to another country, where he was known of none. Here he abode a long while, till one day, being heavy at heart for what had befallen him, he went out to divert himself. As he was walking along, he heard the tramp of horse behind him; whereupon he exclaimed, “The judgment of God is upon me!” and looked out for a hiding-place, but found none. At last he saw a closed door, and pushing against it, it yielded and he found himself in a long corridor, in which he took refuge. Hardly had he done so, when two men laid hold of him, exclaiming, “Praise be to God, who hath delivered thee into our hands, O enemy of Allah! These three nights thou hast bereft us of sleep and given us no peace and made us taste the agonies of death!” “O folk,” said my brother, “what ails you?” And they answered, “Thou givest us the change and goest about to dishonour us and to murder the master of the house! Is it not enough that thou hast brought him to beggary, thou and thy comrades? But give us up the knife, wherewith thou threatenest us every night." Then they searched him and found in his girdle the knife he used to cut leather; and he said, "O folk, have the fear of God before your eyes and maltreat me not, for know that my story is a strange one." "What is thy story?" asked they. So he told them what had befallen him, hoping that they would let him go; however, they paid no heed to what he said, but beat him and tore off his clothes, and finding on his sides the marks of beating with rods, said, "O accursed one, these scars bear witness to thy guilt!" Then they carried him to the chief of the police, whilst he said to himself, "I am undone for my sins and none can save me but God the Most High!" The prefect said to him, "O villain, what made thee enter their house with murderous intent?" "O Amir," replied my brother, "I conjure thee by Allah, hear my words and hasten not to condemn me!" But the two men said to the prefect, "Wilt thou listen to a robber, who beggars the folk and has the scars of beating on his back?" When the Amir saw the scars on my brother's sides, he said to him, "They had not done this to thee, save for some great crime." And he sentenced him to receive a hundred lashes. So they flogged him and mounting him on a camel, paraded him about the city, crying out, "This is the reward and the least of the reward of those who break into people's houses!" Then they thrust him forth the city, and he wandered at random, till I heard what had befallen him and going in search of him, questioned him of his case. So he told me all that passed and I carried him back privily to Baghdad, where I made him an allowance for his living.

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Story of the Barber's Fifth Brother.

My fifth brother, he of the cropt ears, O Commander of the Faithful, was a poor man, who used to ask alms by night and live by day on what he got thus. Now, our father, who was an old man, far advanced in years, fell sick and died, leaving us seven hundred dirhems. So we took each of us a hundred; but when my brother received his share, he was at a loss to know what to do with it, till he bethought him to buy glass of all sorts and sell it at a profit. So he bought a hundred dirhems' worth of glass and putting it in a great basket, sat down, to sell it, on a raised bench, at the foot of a wall, against which he leant his back. As he sat, with the basket before him: he fell to musing in himself and said, "I have laid out a hundred dirhems on this glass and I will sell it for two hundred, with which I will buy other glass and sell it for four hundred; nor will I cease to buy and sell thus, till I have gotten much wealth. With this I will buy all kinds of merchandise and jewels and perfumes and gain great profit on them, till, God willing, I will make my capital a hundred thousand dirhems. Then I will buy a handsome house, together with slaves and horses and trappings of gold, and eat and drink, nor will I leave a singing-man or woman in the city but I will have them to sing to me. As soon as I have amassed a hundred thousand dirhems, I will send out marriage-brokers to demand for me in marriage the daughters of kings and viziers; and I will seek the hand of the Vizier's daughter, for I hear that she is perfect in beauty and of surpassing grace. I will give her a dowry of a thousand dinars, and if her father consent, well; if not, I will take her by force, in spite of him. When I return home, I will buy ten little eunuchs and clothes for myself such as are worn by kings and sultans and get me a saddle of gold, set thick with jewels of price. Then I will mount and parade the city, with slaves before and behind me, whilst the folk salute me and call down blessings upon me: after which I will repair to the Vizier, the girl's father, with slaves behind and before me, as well as on my either hand. When he sees me, he will rise and seating me in his own place, sit down below me, for that I am his son-in-law. Now I will have with me two eunuchs with purses, in each a thousand dinars, and I will deliver him the thousand dinars of the dowry and make him a present of other thousand, that he may have cause to know my nobility and generosity and greatness of mind and the littleness of the world in my eyes; and for ten words he proffers me, I will answer him two. Then I will return to my house, and if one come to me on the bride's part, I will make him a present of money and clothe him in a robe of honour; but if he bring me a present, I will return it to him and will not accept it, that they may know that I am great of soul. Then I will command them to bring her to me in state and will order my house fittingly in the meantime. When the time of the unveiling is come, I will don my richest clothes and sit down on a couch of brocaded silk, leaning on a cushion and turning neither to the right nor to the left, for the haughtiness of my mind and the gravity of my understanding. My wife shall stand before me like the full moon, in her robes and ornaments, and I, of my pride and my disdain, will not look at her, till all who are present shall say to me, 'O my lord, thy wife and thy handmaid stands before thee: deign to look upon her! for standing is irksome to her.' And they will kiss the earth before me many times, whereupon I will lift my eyes and give one glance at her, then bend down my head again. Then they will carry her to the bride-chamber, and meanwhile I will rise and change my clothes for a richer suit. When they bring in the bride for the second time, I will not look at her till they have implored me several times, when I will glance at her and bow down my head; nor will I leave to do thus, till they have made an end of displaying her, when I will order one of my eunuchs to fetch a purse of five hundred dinars and giving it to the tire-women, command them to lead me to the bride-chamber. When they leave me alone with the bride, I will not look at her or speak to her, but will lie by her with averted face, that she may say I am high of soul. Presently her mother will come to me and kiss my head and hands and say to me, 'O my lord, look on thy handmaid, for she longs for thy favour, and heal her spirit. But I will give her no answer; and when she sees this, she will come and kiss my feet repeatedly and say, 'O my lord, verily my daughter is a beautiful girl, who has never seen man; and if thou show her this aversion, her heart will break; so do thou incline to her and speak to her.' Then she will rise and fetch a cup of wine, and her daughter will take it and come to me; but I will leave her standing before me, whilst I recline upon a cushion of cloth of gold, and will not look at her for the haughtiness of my heart, so that she will think me to be a Sultan of exceeding dignity and will say to me, ‘O my lord, for God’s sake, do not refuse to take the cup from thy servant’s hand, for indeed I am thy handmaid.’ But I will not speak to her, and she will press me, saying, ‘Needs must thou drink it,’ and put it to my lips. Then I will shake my fist in her face and spurn her with my foot thus.” So saying, he gave a kick with his foot and knocked over the basket of glass, which fell to the ground, and all that was in it was broken. “All this comes of my pride!” cried he, and fell to buffeting his face and tearing his clothes and weeping. The folk who were going to the Friday prayers saw him, and some of them looked at him and pitied him, whilst others paid no heed to him, and in this way my brother lost both capital and profit. Presently there came up a beautiful lady, on her way to the Friday prayers, riding on a mule with a saddle of gold and attended by a number of servants and filling the air with the scent of musk, as she passed along. When she saw the broken glass and my brother weeping, she was moved to pity for him; so she asked what ailed him and was told that he had a basket full of glass, by the sale of which he thought to make his living, but it was broken, and this was the cause of his distress. So she called one of her attendants and said to him, “Give this poor man what is with thee.” And he gave my brother a purse in which he found five hundred dinars, whereupon he was like to die for excess of joy and called down blessings on her. Then he returned to his house, a rich man; and as he sat considering, some one knocked at the door. So he rose and opened and saw an old woman whom he knew not. “O my son,” said she, “the time of prayer is at hand, and I have not yet made the ablution; so I beg thee to let me do so in thy house.” “I hear and obey,” replied he, and bade her come in. So she entered and he brought her an ewer, wherewith to wash, and sat down, beside himself for joy in the dinars When she had made an end of her ablutions, she came up to where he sat and prayed a two-bow prayer, after which she offered up a goodly prayer my brother, who thanked her and putting his hand to the bag of money, gave her two dinars, saying in himself, “This is an alms from me.” “Glory to God!”

exclaimed she. “Why dost thou look on one, who loves thee, as if she were a beggar? Put up thy money! I have no need of it; or if thou want it not, return it to her who gave it thee, when thy glass was broken.” “O my mother,” asked he, “how shall I do to come at her?” “O my son,” replied she, “she hath an inclination for thee, but she is the wife of a wealthy man of the city; so take all thy money with thee and follow me, that I may guide thee to thy desire: and when thou art in company with her, spare neither fair words nor persuasion, and thou shalt enjoy her beauty and her wealth to thy heart’s content.” So my brother took all his money and rose and followed the old woman, hardly believing in his good fortune. She led him on till they came to the door of a great house, at which she knocked, and a Greek slave-girl came out and opened to them. Then the old woman took my brother and brought him into a great saloon, spread with magnificent carpets and hung with curtains, where he sat down, with his money before him and his turban on his knee. Presently in came a young lady richly dressed, never saw eyes handsomer than she; whereupon my brother rose to his feet, but she smiled upon him and welcoming him, signed to him to be seated. Then she bade shut the door and taking my brother by the hand, led him to a private chamber, furnished with various kinds of brocaded silk. Here he sat down and she seated herself by his side and toyed with him awhile; after which she rose and saying, “Do not stir till I come back,” went away. After awhile, in came a great black slave, with a drawn sword in his hand, who said to him, “Woe to thee! who brought thee hither and what dost thou want?” My brother could make no answer, being tongue-tied for fear; so the black seized him and stripping him of his clothes, beat him with the flat of his sword till he swooned away. Then the pestilent black concluded that he was dead, and my brother heard him say, “Where is the salt-wench?” Whereupon in came a slave-girl, with a great dish of salt, and the black strewed salt upon my brother’s wounds; but he did not stir, lest he should know that he was alive and finish him. Then the salt-girl went away and the black cried out, “Where is the cellaress?” With this in came the old woman, and taking my brother by the feet, dragged him to an underground vault, where she threw him down upon a heap of dead bodies. There he remained two whole days, but God made the salt the means of saving his life, for it stayed the flow of blood. Presently, he found himself strong enough to move; so he rose and opening the trap-door, crept out fearfully; and God protected him, so that he went on in the darkness and hid himself in the vestibule till the morning, when he saw the cursed old woman sally forth in quest of other prey. So he went out after her, without her knowledge, and made for his own house, where he dressed his wounds and tended himself till he was whole. Meanwhile he kept a watch upon the old woman and saw her accost one man after another and carry them to the house. However, he said nothing; but as soon as he regained health and strength, he took a piece of stuff and made it into a bag, which he filled with broken glass and tied to his middle. Then he disguised himself in the habit of a foreigner, that none might know him, and hid a sword under his clothes. Then he went out and presently falling in with the old woman, accosted her and said to her, with a foreign accent, "O dame, I am a stranger, but this day arrived here, and know no one. Hast thou a pair of scales wherein I may weigh nine hundred dinars? I will give thee somewhat of the money for thy pains." "I have a son, a moneychanger," replied she, "who has all kinds of scales; so come with me to him, before he goes out, and he will weigh thy gold for thee." And he said, "Lead the way." So she led him to the house and knocked at the door; and the young lady herself came out and opened it; whereupon the old woman smiled in her face, saying, "I bring thee fat meat to-day." Then the damsel took him by the hand and carrying him to the same chamber as before, sat with him awhile, then rose and went out, bidding him stir not till she came back. Ere long in came the villainous black, with his sword drawn, and said to my brother, "Rise, O accursed one!" So he rose and as the slave went on before him, he drew the sword from under his clothes and smiting him with it, made his head fly from his body; after which he dragged the corpse by the feet to the vault and cried out, "Where is the salt-wench?" Up came the girl with the dish of salt, and seeing my brother sword in hand, turned to fly; but he followed her and smote her and struck off her head. Then he called out, "Where is the cellaress?" And in came the old woman, to whom said he, "Dost thou know me, O pestilent old woman?" "No, my lord," replied she; and he said, "I am he of the five hundred dinars, to whose house thou camest to make the ablution and pray, and whom thou didst after lure hither.” “Fear God and spare me!” exclaimed she. But he paid no heed to her and striking her with the sword, cut her in four. Then he went in search of the young lady; and when she saw him, her reason fled and she called out for mercy. So he spared her and said to her, “How camest thou to consort with this black?” Quoth she, “I was slave to a certain merchant and the old woman used to visit me, till I became familiar with her. One day she said to me, ‘We have to-day a wedding at our house, the like of which was never beheld, and I wish thee to see it.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered I, and rising, donned my handsomest clothes and jewellery and took with me a purse containing a hundred dinars. Then she brought me hither, and hardly had I entered the house, when the black seized on me, and I have remained in this case these three years, through the perfidy of the accursed old woman.” Then said my brother, “Is there aught of his in the house?” “He had great store of wealth,” replied she: “and if thou canst carry it away, do so, and may God prosper it to thee!” Then she opened to him several chests full of purses, at which he was confounded, and said to him, “Go now and leave me here and fetch men to carry off the money.” So he went out and hired ten men, but, when he returned, he found the door open and the damsel gone, and nothing left but a little of the money and the household stuff. By this, he knew that she had cheated him; so he opened the closets and took what was in them, together with the rest of the money, leaving nothing in the house, and passed the night in all content. When he arose in the morning, he found at the door a score of troopers, who seized him, saying, “The chief of the police seeks for thee.” My brother implored them to let him return to his house, but they would grant him no delay, though he offered them a large sum of money, and binding him fast with cords, carried him off. On the way, there met them a friend of my brother, who clung to his skirts and implored him to stop and help to deliver him from their hands. So he stopped and enquired what was the matter; to which they replied, “The chief of the police has ordered us to bring this man before him, and we are doing so.” The man interceded with them and offered them five hundred dinars to let my brother go, saying, “Tell the magistrate that ye could not find him.” But they refused and dragged him before the prefect, who said to him, “Whence hadst thou these stuffs and money?” Quoth my brother, “Grant me indemnity.” So the magistrate gave him the handkerchief of pardon, and he told him all that had befallen him, from first to last, including the flight of the damsel, adding, “Take what thou wilt, so thou leave me enough to live on.” But the prefect took the whole of the stuff and money for himself and fearing lest the affair should reach the Sultan’s ears, said to my brother, “Depart from this city, or I will hang thee.” “I hear and obey,” replied my brother, and set out for another town. On the way thieves fell on him and stripped him and beat him and cut off his ears. But I heard of his misfortunes and went out after him, taking him clothes, and brought him back privily to the city, where I made him an allowance for meat and drink.

Story of the Barber’s Sixth Brother

My sixth brother, he of the cropt lips, O Commander of the Faithful, was once rich, but after became poor. One day he went out to seek somewhat to keep life in him and came presently to a handsome house, with a wide and lofty portico and servants and others at the door, ordering and forbidding. My brother enquired of one of those standing there and he told him that the house belonged to one of the Barmecide family. So he accosted the door-keepers and begged an alms of them. “Enter,” said they, “and thou shalt get what thou seekest of our master.” Accordingly, he entered and passing through the vestibule, found himself in a mansion of the utmost beauty and elegance, paved with marble and hung with curtains and having in the midst a garden whose like he had never seen. He stood awhile perplexed, knowing not whither to direct his steps: then seeing the door of a sitting-chamber, he entered and saw at the upper end a man of comely presence and goodly beard. When the latter saw my brother, he rose and welcomed him and enquired how he did; to which he replied that he was in need of charity. Whereupon the other showed great concern and putting his hand to his clothes, rent them, exclaiming, “Art thou hungry in a city of which I am an inhabitant? I cannot endure this!” and promised him all manner of good. Then said he, “Thou must eat with me.” “O my lord,” replied my brother, “I can wait no longer; for I am sore an hungred.” So, the Barmecide cried out, “Ho, boy! bring the ewer and the basin!” and said to my brother, “O my guest, come forward and wash thy hands.” My brother rose to do so, but saw neither ewer nor basin. However, the host made as if he were washing his hands and cried out, “Bring the table.” But my brother saw nothing. Then said the Barmecide, “Honour me by eating of this food and be not ashamed.” And he made as if he ate, saying the while, “Thou eatest but little: do not stint thyself, for I know thou art famished.” So my brother began to make as if he ate, whilst the other said to him, “Eat and note the excellence of this bread and its whiteness.” My brother could see nothing and said to himself, “This man loves to jest with the folk.” So he replied, “O my lord, never in my life have I seen whiter or more delicious bread.” And the host said, “I gave five hundred dinars for the slave-girl who bakes it for me.” Then he called out, “Ho, boy! bring the frumenty first and do not spare butter on it.” And turning to my brother, “O my guest,” said he, “sawst thou ever aught better than this frumenty? Eat, I conjure thee, and be not ashamed!” Then he cried out again, “Ho, boy! bring in the pasty with the fatted grouse in it.” And he said to my brother, “Eat, O my guest, for thou art hungry and needest it.” So my brother began to move his jaws and make as if he chewed; whilst the other ceased not to call for dish after dish and press my brother to eat, though not a thing appeared. Presently, he cried out, “Ho, boy I bring us the chickens stuffed with pistachio-kernels!” And said to my brother, “These chickens have been fattened on pistachio-nuts; eat, for thou hast never tasted the like of them.” “O my lord,” replied my brother, “they are indeed excellent.” Then the host feigned to put his hand to my brother’s mouth, as if to feed him, and ceased not to name various dishes and expatiate upon their excellence. Meanwhile my brother was starving, and hunger was so sore on him that his soul lusted for a cake of barley bread. Quoth the Barmecide, “Didst thou ever taste aught more delicious than the seasoning of these dishes?” “Never, O my lord,” replied my brother. “Eat heartily and be not ashamed,” repeated the host. “O my lord,” said my brother, “I have had enough of meat.” So the Barmecide cried out, “Take away and bring the sweetmeats.” Then he said, “Eat of this almond conserve, for it is excellent, and of these fritters. My life on thee, take this one before the syrup runs out of it!” “May I never be bereaved of thee, O my lord!” replied my brother, and asked him of the abundance of musk in the fritters. “It is my custom,” said the other, “to have three pennyweights of musk and half that quantity of ambergris put into each fritter.” All this time my brother was wagging his jaws and moving his head and mouth, till the host said, “Enough of this! Bring us the dessert.” Then said he to him, “Eat of these almonds and walnuts and raisins and of this and that,” naming different kinds of dried fruits, “and be not ashamed.” “O my lord,” answered my brother, “indeed I am full: I can eat no more.” “O my guest,” repeated the other, “if thou have a mind to eat more, for God’s sake do not remain hungry!” “O my lord,” replied my brother, “how should one who has eaten of all these dishes be hungry?” Then he considered and said to himself “I will do that which shall make him repent of having acted thus.” Presently the host called out, “Bring me the wine,” and making as if it had come, feigned to give my brother to drink, saying, “Take this cup, and if it please thee, let me know.” “O my lord,” replied he, “it has a pleasant smell, but I am used to drink old wine twenty years of age.” “Then knock at this door,” said his host; “for thou canst not drink of aught better.” “O my lord, this is of thy bounty!” replied my brother and made as if he drank. “Health and pleasure to thee!” exclaimed the host, and feigned, in like wise, to fill a cup and drink it off and hand a second cup to my brother, who pretended to drink and made as if he were drunken. Then he took the Barmecide unawares and raising his arm, till the whiteness of his arm-pit appeared, dealt him such a buffet on the neck that the place rang to it. Then he gave him a second cuff and the host exclaimed, “What is this, O vile fellow?” “O my lord,” replied my brother “thou hast graciously admitted thy slave into thine abode and fed him with thy victual and plied him with old wine, till he became drunk and dealt unmannerly by thee; but thou art too noble not to bear with his ignorance and pardon his offence.” When the Barmecide heard my brother’s words, he laughed heartily and exclaimed, “Long have I used to make mock of men and play the fool with those who are apt at jesting and horse-play; but never have I come across any, who had patience and wit to enter into all my humours, but thee; so I pardon thee, and now thou shalt be my boon companion, in very deed, and never leave me.” Then he bade his servants lay the table in good earnest, and they set on all the dishes of which he had spoken, and he and my brother ate till they were satisfied, after which they removed to the drinking-chamber, where they found damsels like moons, who sang all manner of songs and played on all kinds of musical instruments. There they remained, drinking, till drunkenness overcame them, and the host used my brother as a familiar friend, so that he became as it were his brother, and bestowed on him a dress of honour and loved him with an exceeding love. Next morning, they fell again to feasting and carousing, and ceased not to lead this life for twenty years, at the end of which time the Barmecide died and the Sultan laid hands on all his property and squeezed my brother, till he stripped him of all he had. So he left the city and fled forth at random, but the Arabs fell on him midway and taking him prisoner, carried him to their camp, where the Bedouin, his captor, tortured him, saying, “Ransom thyself with money, or I will kill thee.” My brother fell a-weeping and replied, “By Allah, I have nought! I am thy prisoner; do with me as thou wilt.” Thereupon the Bedouin took out a knife and cut off my brother’s lips, still urging his demand. Now this Bedouin had a handsome wife, who used to make advances to my brother, in her husband’s absence, and offer him her favours, but he held off from her. One day, she began to tempt him as usual, and he toyed with her and took her on his knee, when lo, in came the Bedouin, and seeing this, cried out, “Woe to thee, thou villain! Wouldst thou debauch my wife?” Then he took out a knife and cut off my brother’s yard, after which he set him on a camel and carried him to a mountain, where he threw him down and left him. Here he was found by some travellers, who recognized him and gave him meat and drink and acquainted me with his plight, whereupon I went forth to him and brought him back to Baghdad, where I provided him with enough to live on. This then, O Commander of the Faithful, is the history of my brothers, and I was unwilling to go away without relating it to thee, that I might disabuse thee of thine error in confounding me with them. And now thou knowest that I have six brothers and support them all.’ When the Khalif heard my words, he laughed and said, ‘Thou sayst sooth, O Silent One! Thou art neither a man of many words nor an impertinent meddler; but now go out from this city and settle in another.’ And he banished me from the city; so I left Baghdad and travelled in foreign countries, till I heard of his death and the coming of another to the Khalifate. Then I returned to Baghdad, where I found my brothers dead and fell in with this young man, to whom I rendered the best of services, for without me he had been killed. Indeed he accuses me of what is foreign to my nature and what he relates of my impertinence is false; for verily I left Baghdad on his account and wandered in many countries, till I came to this city and happened on him with you; and was not this, O good people, of the generosity of my nature?”

When we heard the barber’s story (continued the tailor) and saw the abundance of his speech and the way in which he had oppressed the young man, we laid hands on him and shut him up, after which we sat down in peace and ate and drank till the time of the call to afternoon-prayer, when I left the company and returned home. My wife was sulky and said to me, “Thou hast taken thy pleasure all day, whilst I have been moping at home. So now, except thou carry me abroad and amuse me for the rest of the day, it will be the cause of my separation from thee.” So I took her out and we amused ourselves till nightfall, when we returned home and met the hunchback, brimming over with drunkenness and repeating the following verses:

The glass is pellucid, and so is the wine: So bring them together
and see them combine:
Tis a puzzle; one moment, all wine and no cup; At another, in
turn, ’tis all cup and no wine.

So I invited him to pass the evening with us and went out to buy fried fish, after which we sat down to eat. Presently my wife took a piece of bread and fish and crammed them into his mouth, and he choked and died. Then I took him up and made shift to throw him into the house of the Jewish physician. He in his turn let him down into the house of the controller, who threw him in the way of the Christian broker. This, then, is my story. Is it not more wonderful than that of the hunchback?’

When the King heard the tailor’s story, he shook his head for delight and showed astonishment, saying, ‘This that passed between the young man and the meddlesome barber is indeed more pleasant and more wonderful than the story of that knave of a hunchback.' Then he bade the tailor take one of the chamberlains and fetch the barber out of his duresse, saying, 'Bring him to me, that I may hear his talk, and it shall be the means of the release of all of you. Then we will bury the hunchback, for he is dead since yesterday, and set up a tomb over him.' So the chamberlain and the tailor went away and presently returned with the barber. The King looked at him and behold, he was a very old man, more than ninety years of age, of a swarthy complexion and white beard and eyebrows, flap-eared, long-nosed and simple and conceited of aspect. The King laughed at his appearance and said to him, 'O silent man, I desire thee to tell me somewhat of thy history.' 'O King of the age,' replied the barber, 'why are all these men and this dead hunchback before thee?' Said the King, 'Why dost thou ask?' 'I ask this,' rejoined the barber, 'that your Majesty may know that I am no impertinent meddler and that I am guiltless of that they lay to my charge of overmuch talk; for I am called the Silent, and indeed I am the man of my name, as says the poet:

Thine eyes shall seldom see a man that doth a nickname bear, But, if thou search, thou'lt find the name his nature doth declare.

So the King said, 'Explain the hunchback's case to him and repeat to him the stories told by the physician, the controller, the broker and the tailor.' They did as he commanded, and the barber shook his head and exclaimed, 'By Allah, this is indeed a wonder of wonders!' Then said he, 'Uncover the hunchback's body, that I may see it.' They did so, and he sat down and taking the hunchback's head in his lap, looked at his face and laughed till he fell backward. Then said he, 'To every death there is a cause; but the story of this hunchback deserves to be recorded in letters of gold!' The bystanders were astounded at his words and the King wondered and said to him, 'O silent man, explain thy words to us.' 'O King of the age,' replied the barber, 'by thy munificence, there is yet life in this hunchback.' Then he pulled out from his girdle a barber's budget, whence he took a pot of ointment and anointed therewith the neck of the hunchback and its veins. Then he took out a pair of tweezers and thrusting them down the hunchback's throat, drew out the piece of fish and its bone, soaked in blood. Thereupon the hunchback sneezed and sat up, and passing his hand over his face, exclaimed, ‘I testify that there is no god but God and that Mohammed is His Apostle!’ At this all present wondered and the King laughed, till he fainted, and so did the others. Then said the King, ‘By Allah, this is the most wonderful thing I ever saw! O Muslims, O soldiers all, did you ever in your lives see a man die and come to life again? For verily, had not God vouchsafed him this barber to be the cause of his preservation, he had been dead!’ ‘By Allah,’ said they, ‘this is a wonder of wonders!’ Then the King caused the whole history to be recorded and laid up in the royal treasury; after which he bestowed splendid dresses of honour on the Jew, the broker and the controller and sent them away. Then he gave the tailor a costly dress of honour and appointed him his own tailor, with a suitable stipend, and made peace between him and the hunchback, on whom he also bestowed a rich and fair dress of honour and made him his boon-companion, appointing him due allowances. As for the barber, he made him a like present and appointed him state barber and one of his boon-companions, assigning him regular allowances and a fixed salary. And they all ceased not from the enjoyment of all the delights and comforts of life, till there overtook them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of companies.

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NOUREDDIN ALI AND THE DAMSEL ENIS EL JELIS.

There was once a King in Bassora who cherished the poor and needy and loved his subjects and bestowed of his wealth on those who believed in Mohammed (whom God bless and preserve!) and he was even as the poet hath described him:

A King who, when the hostile hosts assault him in the field,
  Smites them and hews them, limb from limb, with trenchant sword and spear
Full many a character of red he writes upon the breasts What time the mailed horsemen break before his wild career.

His name was King Mohammed ben Suleiman ez Zeini, and he had two Viziers, one called Muin ben Sawa and the other Fezl ben Khacan. Fezl was the most generous man of his time; noble and upright of life, all hearts concurred in loving him, and the wise complied with his counsel, whilst all the people wished him long life; for that he was a compend of good qualities, encouraging good and preventing evil and mischief. The Vizier Muin, on the contrary, was a hater of mankind and loved not good, being indeed altogether evil; even as says of him the poet:

Look thou consort with the generous, sons of the gen'rous; for
  lo! The generous, sons of the gen'rous, beget the gen'rous, I trow.
And let the mean-minded men, sons of the mean-minded, go, For the
  mean-minded, sons of the mean, beget none other than so.

And as much as the people loved Fezl, so much did they hate Muin. It befell one day, that the King, being seated on his throne, with his officers of state about him, called his Vizier Fezl and said to him, 'I wish to have a slave-girl of unsurpassed beauty, perfect in grace and symmetry and endowed with all praiseworthy qualities.' Said the courtiers, 'Such a girl is not to be had for less than ten thousand dinars!' whereupon the King cried out to his treasurer and bade him carry ten thousand dinars to Fezl's house. The treasurer did so, and the Vizier went away, after the King had charged him to go to the market every day and employ brokers and had given orders that no girl worth more than a thousand dinars should be sold, without being first shown to the Vizier. Accordingly, the brokers brought him all the girls that came into their hands, but none pleased him, till one day a broker came to his house and found him mounting his horse, to go to the palace; so he caught hold of his stirrup and repeated the following verses:

O thou whose bounties have restored the uses of the state, O
Vizier helped of heaven, whose acts are ever fortunate!
Thou hast revived the virtues all were dead among the folk. May
God's acceptance evermore on thine endeavours wait!

Then said he, 'O my lord, she for whom the august mandate was issued is here.' 'Bring her to me,' replied the Vizier. So he went away and returned in a little with a damsel of elegant shape, swelling-breasted, with melting black eyes and smooth cheeks, slender-waisted and heavy-hipped, clad in the richest of clothes. The dew of her lips was sweeter than syrup, her shape more symmetrical than the bending branch and her speech softer than the morning zephyr, even as says one of those who have described her:

A wonder of beauty! Her face full moon of the palace sky; Of a
tribe of gazelles and wild cows the dearest and most high!
The Lord of the empyrean hath given her pride and state,
Elegance, charm and a shape that with the branch may vie;
She hath in the heaven of her face a cluster of seven stars, That
keep the ward of her cheek to guard it from every spy.
So if one think to steal a look, the imps of her glance Consume
him straight with a star, that shoots from her gleaming eye.

When the Vizier saw her she pleased him exceedingly, so he turned to the broker and said to him, 'What is the price of this damsel?' 'Her price is ten thousand dinars,' replied he, 'and her owner swears that this sum will not cover the cost of the chickens she hath eaten, the wine she hath drunk and the dresses of honour bestowed on her teachers; for she hath learnt penmanship and grammar and lexicology and the exposition of the Koran and the rudiments of law and theology, medicine and the calendar, as well as the art of playing on instruments of music.' Then said the Vizier, 'Bring me her master.' So the broker brought him at once, and behold, he was a foreigner, who had lived so long that time had worn him to bones and skin. Quoth the Vizier to him, 'Art thou content to sell this damsel to the Sultan for ten thousand dinars?' 'By Allah,' replied the merchant, 'if I made him a present of her, it were but my duty!' So the Vizier sent for the money and gave it to the slave-dealer, who said, 'By the leave of our lord the Vizier, I have something to say.' 'Speak,' said the Vizier: and the slave-dealer said, 'If thou wilt be ruled by me, thou wilt not carry the damsel to the King to-day, for she is newly off a journey; the change of air has affected her and the journey has fretted her. But let her abide in thy palace ten days, that she may recover her good looks. Then send her to the bath and dress her in the richest of clothes and go up with her to the Sultan, and this will be more to thy profit.' The Vizier considered the man's advice and approved it; so he took her to his palace, where he appointed her a separate lodging and a daily allowance of meat and drink and so forth, and she abode thus awhile.

Now the Vizier Fezl had a son like the rising full moon, with shining visage, red cheeks covered with a tender down and a mole like a grain of ambergris; as says of him the poet and therein errs not:

A moon, whose glances slay the folk, on whom he turns his
eye; A branch, whose graces break all hearts, as he goes
stately by
Slack as the night his browlocks are, his face the hue of gold;
Fair is his person, and his shape the spear-shaft doth
outvie.
Ah me, how hard his heart, how soft and slender is his waist! Why
is the softness not transferred from this to that, ah why?
Were but the softness of his sides made over to his heart, He'd
ne'er to lovers be unjust nor leave them thus to sigh.

O thou that blam’st my love of thee, excuse me rather thou, Nor
chide me, if my body pine for languor like to die.
The fault, indeed, lies not with me, but with my heart and eye;
So chide me not, but let me be in this my misery.

Now he knew not the affair of the damsel, and his father had lessoned her, saying, ‘Know, O my daughter, that I have bought thee for the bed of the King Mohammed ben Suleiman ez Zeini, and I have a son who leaves no girl in the quarter but he has to do with her; so be on thy guard against him and beware of letting him see thy face or hear thy voice.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ replied she; and the Vizier left her and went away. Some days after this it chanced, as Fate would have it, that the damsel went to the bath in the house, where some of the serving-women washed her, after which she arrayed herself in rich apparel, and her beauty and grace redoubled. Then she went in to the Vizier’s wife and kissed her hand; and the lady said to her, ‘May it profit thee, O Enis el Jelis! How didst thou find the bath?’ ‘O my lady,’ answered she, ‘I lacked but thy presence there.’ Thereupon said the mistress to her waiting-women, ‘Come with me to the bath, for it is some days since I went thither.’ ‘We hear and obey,’ answered they; and rose and accompanied her to the bath, after Enis el Jelis had retired to her own chamber and the lady had set two little slave-girls to keep the door, charging them to let none go in to the damsel. Presently, as Enis el Jelis sat resting after the bath, in came the Vizier’s son, whose name was Noureddin Ali, and asked after his mother and her women, to which the two little slaves replied that they had gone to the bath. The damsel heard Noureddin’s voice and said to herself, ‘I wonder what like is this youth, of whom his father says that there is not a girl in the quarter but he has had to do with her. By Allah, I long to see him!’ So she rose, fresh as she was from the bath, and going to the door, looked at Noureddin and saw that he was like the moon at its full. The sight cost her a thousand sighs, and Noureddin, chancing to look that way, caught a glance of her that caused him also a thousand regrets, and each fell into the snare of the other’s love. Then he went up to the two little slaves and cried out at them, whereupon they fled before him and stood afar off to see what he would do. And behold, he went up to the door of the damsel’s chamber and entering, said to her, ‘Art thou she whom my father bought for me?’ ‘Yes,’ answered she: whereupon Noureddin, who was heated with wine, went up to her and embraced her, whilst she wreathed her arms about his neck and met him with kisses and sighs and amorous gestures. Then he sucked her tongue and she his, and he did away her maidenhead. When the two little slaves saw their young master go in to the damsel, they cried out and shrieked. So, as soon as he had done his desire, he rose and fled, fearing the issue of his conduct. When the Vizier’s wife heard the slaves’ cries, she sprang up and came out of the bath, with the sweat dripping from her, saying, ‘What is this clamour in the house?’ Then she came up to the two little slaves, and said to them, ‘Out on you! what is the matter?’ ‘Our lord Noureddin came in and beat us,’ answered they: ‘so we fled and he went in to the damsel and embraced her, and we know not what he did after this: but when we cried out to thee, he fled.’ Thereupon, the mistress went in to Enis el Jelis and enquired what had happened. ‘O my lady,’ answered she, ‘as I was sitting here, there came in a handsome young man, who said to me, “Art thou she whom my father bought for me?” I answered, “Yes;” (for by Allah, O my lady, I believed that he spoke the truth!) and with this he came up to me and embraced me.’ ‘Did he nought else with thee?’ asked the lady. ‘Yes,’ replied Enis el Jelis: ‘he took of me three kisses.’ ‘He did not leave thee without deflowering thee!’ cried the Vizier’s wife, and fell to weeping and buffeting her face, she and her women, fearing that Noureddin’s father would kill him. Whilst they were thus, in came the Vizier and asked what was the matter, and his wife said to him, ‘Swear that thou wilt hearken to what I say.’ ‘It is well,’ replied he. So she told him what his son had done, and he was greatly afflicted and tore his clothes and buffeted his face and plucked out his beard. ‘Do not kill thyself,’ said his wife: ‘I will give thee the ten thousand dinars, her price, of my own money.’ But he raised his head and said to her, ‘Out on thee! I have no need of her price, but I fear to lose both life and goods.’ ‘How so?’ asked his wife, and he said, ‘Dost thou not know that yonder is our enemy Muin ben Sawa, who, when he hears of this affair, will go up to the Sultan and say to him, “Thy Vizier, who thou wilt have it loves thee, had of thee ten thousand dinars and bought therewith a slave-girl, whose like was never seen; but when he saw her, she pleased him and he said to his son, ‘Take her: thou art worthier of her than the Sultan.’ So he took her and did away her maidenhead, and she is now with him.” The King will say, “Thou liest!” To which Muin will reply, “With thy leave, I will fall on him at unawares and bring her to thee.” The King will order him to do this, and he will come down upon the house and take the damsel and bring her before the King, who will question her and she will not be able to deny what has passed. Then Muin will say, “O my lord, thou knowest that I give thee true counsel, but I am not in favour with thee.” Thereupon the Sultan will make an example of me, and I shall be a gazing-stock to all the people and my life will be lost.’ Quoth his wife, ‘Tell none of this thing, which has happened privily, but commit thy case to God and trust in Him to deliver thee from this strait.’ With this the Vizier’s heart was set at rest, and his wrath and chagrin subsided.

Meanwhile, Noureddin, fearing the issue of the affair, spent the whole day in the gardens and came back by night to his mother’s apartment, where he slept and rising before day, returned to the gardens. He lived thus for a whole month, not showing his face to his father, till at last his mother said to the Vizier, ‘O my lord, shall we lose our own son as well as the damsel? If things continue thus for long, the lad will flee forth from us.’ ‘What is to be done?’ said he: and she answered, ‘Do thou watch this night, and when he comes, seize on him and frighten him. I will rescue him from thee and do thou then make peace with him and give him the girl, for she loves him and he her; and I will pay thee her price.’ So the Vizier watched that night and when his son came, he seized him and throwing him down, knelt on his breast and made as if he would cut his throat; but his mother came to his succour and said to her husband, ‘What wilt thou do with him?’ Quoth he, ‘I mean to kill him.’ And Noureddin said to his father ‘Am I of so little account with thee?’ Whereupon the Vizier’s eyes filled with tears and he replied, ‘O my son, is the loss of my goods and my life of so little account in thine eyes?’ Quoth Noureddin, ‘Hear, O my father, what the poet says:

Pardon me: true, I have sinned: yet the sagacious man Ceases
never to pardon freely the erring wight.

Surely, therefore, thy foe may hope for pardon from thee, Since
he is in the abyss and thou on honour’s height!’

Then the Vizier rose from off his breast, saying, ‘O my son, I forgive thee!’ for his heart was softened. Noureddin rose and kissed the hand of his father, who said to him, ‘If I knew that thou wouldst deal fairly by Enis el Jelis, I would give her to thee.’ ‘O my father,’ replied Noureddin, ‘how should I not deal fairly by her?’ Quoth the Vizier, ‘O my son, I charge thee not to take another wife nor concubine to share with her nor sell her.’ ‘O my father,’ answered Noureddin, ‘I swear to thee that I will do none of these things.’ Then he went in to the damsel and abode with her a whole year, whilst God caused the King to forget the affair. The matter, indeed, came to Muin’s ears, but he dared not speak of it, by reason of the favour in which the Vizier Fezl stood with the Sultan. At the end of the year, the Vizier Fezl went one day to the bath and coming out, whilst still in a sweat, the air smote him and he caught cold and took to his bed. His malady gained upon him and sleeplessness was long upon him; so he called his son Noureddin and said to him, ‘O my son, know that fortune is lotted out and the term of life fixed, and needs must every soul drain the cup of death.’ And he repeated the following verses:

I’m dead: yet glory be to Him that dieth not; For that I needs
must die, indeed, full well I wot,
He is no king, who dies with kingship in his hand, For sovranty
belongs to Him that dieth not.

Then he continued, ‘O my son, I have no charge to lay on thee, except that thou fear God and look to the issue of thine actions and cherish the damsel Enis el Jelis.’ ‘O my father,’ said Noureddin, ‘who is like unto thee? Indeed thou art renowned for the practice of virtue and the praying of the preachers for thee in the pulpits.’ Quoth Fezl, ‘O my son, I hope for acceptance from God the Most High.’ Then he pronounced the two professions of the faith and was numbered among the blessed. The palace was filled with crying and lamentation, and the news of his death reached the King and the people of the city, and even the children in the schools wept for Fezi ben Khacan. Then his son Noureddin arose and took order for his funeral, and the Amirs and Viziers and grandees were present, amongst them the Vizier Muin ben Sawa; and as the funeral train came forth of the palace, one of the mourners recited the following verses:

The fifth day I departed and left my friends alone: They laid me
out and washed me upon a slab of stone;
Then stripped me of the raiment that on my body was, That they
might put upon me clothes other than my own
On four men's necks they bore me unto the place of prayer And
prayed a prayer above me by no prostration known.
Then in a vaulted dwelling they laid me. Though the years Shall
waste, its door will never be open to them thrown.

When they had laid him in the earth, Noureddin returned with the folk; and he lamented with groans and tears and the tongue of the case repeated the following verses:

On the fifth day they departed in the eventide, and I Took of
them the last leave-taking, when they went and left me here.
When they turned away and left me, lo! the soul with them did go.
And I said, "Return." It answered, "Where, alas! should I
recur;
Shall I come back to a body whence the life and blood are flown?
Nothing now but bones are left it, rattling in the
sepulchre.
Lo! my eyes, excess of weeping hath put out their sight, I trow,
And a deafness eke is fallen on my ears: I cannot hear."

He abode a long while in great grief for his father, till one day, as he sat in his house, there came a knocking at the door; so he rose and opening the door, found there a man who had been one of his father's friends and boon-companions. He entered and kissing Noureddin's hand, said to him, 'O my lord, he who has left the like of thee is not dead; and to this pass (death) came even the lord of the first and the last. O my lord, take comfort and leave mourning!' Thereupon Noureddin rose and going to the guest-chamber, transported thither all that he needed. Then his friends gathered together to him and he took his slave-girl again and collecting round him ten of the sons of the merchants, began to eat meat and drink wine, giving entertainment after entertainment and dispensing gifts and favours with a lavish hand, till one day his steward came to him and said, 'O my lord Noureddin, hast thou not heard the saying, "He who spends and does not reckon, becomes poor without knowing it?"' And he repeated the following verses:

I'll hold my money fast, knowing, as well as I know, That 'tis my
    sword and shield against my every foe.
If I should lavish it on those who love me not, My luck among the
    folk would change to grief and woe.
So I will eat and drink my wealth for my own good Nor upon any
    man a single doit bestow.
I will preserve with care my money from all those By nature base
    and true to none. 'Tis better so
Than that I e'er should say unto the mean of soul, "Lend me so
    much I'll pay to-morrow five-fold mo,"
And see my friend avert his face and turn away, Leaving my soul
    cast down, as 'twere a dog's, I trow!
O what a sorry lot is his, who hath no pelf, E'en though his
    virtues bright like to the sun should show!

'O my lord,' continued the steward, 'this lavish expense and prodigal giving waste away wealth.' When Noureddin heard his steward's words, he looked at him and said, 'I will not hearken to one word of all thou hast said, for I have heard the following saying of the poet:

If I be blessed with wealth and be not liberal with it, May my
    hand wither and my foot eke paralysed remain!
Show me the niggard who hath won glory by avarice! Show me the
    liberal man his own munificence hath slain!

And he said, ‘Know, O steward, it is my desire that so long as there remains in thy hands enough for my morning meal, thou trouble me not with taking care for my evening meal.’ Therewith the steward went away and Noureddin continued his extravagant way of living; and if any of his boon-companions chanced to say to him, ‘This thing is handsome,’ he would answer, ‘It is thine as a gift;’ or if another said, ‘O my lord, such and such a house is handsome,’ he would say, ‘Take it: it is thine.’ In this manner he continued to live for a whole year, giving his friends a banquet in the morning and another in the evening, till one day as they were sitting together, the damsel Enis el Jelis repeated the following verses:

Thou madest fair thy thought of Fate, when that the days were
fair, And fearedst not the unknown ills that they to thee
might bring:
The nights were fair and calm to thee; thou wert deceived by
them, For in the peace of night is born full many a
troublous thing.

Just as she had finished, there came a knocking at the door; so Noureddin rose to open it, and one of his companions followed him without his knowledge. At the door he found his steward and said to him, ‘What is the matter?’ ‘Omylord,’ replied he, ‘what I feared for thee has come to pass!’ ‘How so?’ asked Noureddin; and the steward said, ‘Know that there remains not a dirhem’s worth, less nor more, in my hands. Here are registers containing an account of the original state of thy property and the way in which thou hast spent it.’ At this, Noureddin bowed his head and exclaimed, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God!’ When the man who had followed him secretly to spy on him heard what the steward said, he returned to his companions and said to them, ‘Look what ye do; for Noureddin Ali is bankrupt.’ When Noureddin returned, they read trouble in his face; so one of them rose and said to him, ‘O my lord, maybe thou wilt give me leave to retire?’ ‘Why wilt thou go away to-day?’ said he. ‘My wife is brought to bed,’ replied the other; ‘and I cannot be absent from her; I wish to return and see how she does.’ So Noureddin gave him leave, whereupon another rose and said, ‘O my lord, I wish to go to my brother, for he circumcises his son to-day.' And each made some excuse to retire, till they were all gone and Noureddin remained alone. Then he called his slave-girl and said to her, 'O Enis el Jelis, hast thou seen what has befallen me?' And he related to her what the steward had told him. 'O my lord,' replied she, 'some nights ago I had it in my mind to speak with thee of this matter; but I heard thee reciting the following verses:

If fortune be lavish to thee, look thou be lavish with it Unto
all classes of men, ere it escapes from thy hand!
Munificence will not undo it, whilst it is constant to thee, Nor,
when it turneth away, will avarice force it to stand.

When I heard thee speak thus, I held my peace and cared not to say aught to thee.' 'O Enis el Jelis,' said Noureddin, 'thou knowest that I have not expended my substance but on my friends, who have beggared me, and I think they will not leave me without help.' 'By Allah,' replied she, 'they will not profit thee in aught.' Said he, 'I will rise at once and go to them and knock at their doors: maybe I shall get of them somewhat with which I may trade and leave pleasure and merry-making.' So he rose and repaired to a certain street, where all his ten comrades lived. He went up to the first door and knocked, whereupon a maid came out and said, 'Who art thou?' 'Tell thy master,' replied he, 'that Noureddin Ali stands at the door and says to him, "Thy slave kisses thy hands and awaits thy bounty."' The girl went in and told her master, who cried out at her, saying, 'Go back and tell him that I am not at home.' So she returned and said to Noureddin, 'O my lord, my master is from home.' With this, he went away, saying to himself, 'Though this fellow be a whoreson knave and deny himself, another may not be so.' Then he came to the second door and sent in a like message to the master of the house, who denied himself as the first had done, whereupon Noureddin repeated the following verse:

They're gone who, if before their door thou didst arrest thy feet,
Would on thy poverty bestow both flesh and roasted meat.

And said 'By Allah, I must try them all: there may be one amongst them who will stand me in the stead of the rest.' So he went round to all the ten, but not one of them opened his door to him or showed himself to him or broke a cake of bread in his face; whereupon he repeated the following verses:

A man in time of affluence is like unto a tree, Round which the
folk collect, as long as fruit thereon they see,
Till, when its burden it hath cast, they turn from it away, Leave
it to suffer heat and dust and all inclemency.
Out on the people of this age! perdition to them all! Since not a
single one of ten is faithful found to be.

Then he returned to his slave-girl, and indeed his concern was doubled, and she said to him, ‘O my lord, did I not tell thee that they would not profit thee aught?’ ‘By Allah,’ replied he, ‘not one of them would show me his face or take any notice of me!’ ‘O my lord! said she, ‘sell some of the furniture and household stuff, little by little, and live on the proceed, against God the Most High provide.’ So he sold all that was in the house, till there was nothing left, when he turned to her and said, ‘What is to be done now?’ ‘O my lord,’ replied she, ‘it is my advice that thou rise and take me down to the market and sell me. Thou knowest that thy father bought me for ten thousand dinars; perhaps God may help thee to near that price, and if it be His will that we be reunited, we shall meet again.’ ‘O Enis el Jelis,’ replied Noureddin, ‘by Allah, I cannot endure to be parted from thee for a single hour!’ ‘By Allah, O my lord,’ rejoined she, ‘nor is it easy to me; but necessity compels, as says the poet:

Necessity in life oft drives one into ways That to the courteous mind are foreign and abhorred. We do not trust our weight unto a rope, unless It be to do some thing adapted to the cord.’

With this, he rose to his feet and took her, whilst the tears streamed down his cheeks like rain and he recited with the tongue of the case what follows:

Stay and vouchsafe me one more look before our parting hour, To
soothe the anguish of a heart well-nigh for reverence slain!
Yet, if it irk thee anywise to grant my last request, Far rather
let me die of love than cause thee aught of pain!

Then he went down to the market and delivered the damsel to a broker, to whom he said, ‘O Hajj Hassan, I would have thee note the value of her thou hast to offer for sale!’ ‘O my lord Noureddin,’ replied the broker, ‘I have not forgotten my business. Is not this Enis el Jelis, whom thy father bought of me for ten thousand dinars?’ ‘Yes,’ said Noureddin. Then the broker went round to the merchants, but found they were not all assembled; so he waited till the rest had arrived and the market was full of all kinds of female slaves, Turks and Franks and Circassians and Abyssinians and Nubians and Egyptians and Tartars and Greeks and Georgians and others; when he came forward and said, ‘O merchants! O men of wealth! every round thing is not a walnut nor every long thing a banana; every thing red is not meat nor everything white fat. O merchants, I have here this unique pearl, this unvalued jewel! What price shall I set on her?’ ‘Say four thousand five hundred dinars,’ cried one. So the broker opened the biddings for her at that sum and as he was yet calling, behold, the Vizier Muin ben Sawa passed through the market and seeing Noureddin standing in a corner, said to himself, ‘What doth the son of Khacan here? Has this gallows-bird aught left to buy girls withal?’ Then he looked round and seeing the broker crying out and the merchants round him, said to himself, ‘Doubtless he is ruined and has brought the damsel Enis el Jelis hither to sell her! What a solace to my heart!’ Then he called the crier, who came up and kissed the ground before him, and he said to him, ‘Show me the girl thou art crying for sale.’ The broker dared not cross him, so he answered, ‘O my lord, in the name of God!’ And brought the damsel and showed her to him. She pleased him and he said, ‘O Hassan, what is bidden for this damsel?’ ‘Four thousand five hundred dinars,’ replied the broker, ‘as an upset price.’ Quoth the Vizier, ‘I take that bid on myself.’ When the merchants heard this, they hung back and dared not bid another dirhem, knowing what they did of the Vizier’s tyranny. Then Muin looked at the broker and said to him, ‘What ails thee to stand still? Go and offer four thousand dinars for her, and the five hundred shall be for thyself.’ So the broker went to Noureddin and said to him, ‘O my lord, thy slave is gone for nothing!’ ‘How so?’ said he. The broker answered, ‘We had opened the biddings for her at four thousand five hundred dinars, when that tyrant Muin ben

Sawa passed through the market and when he saw the damsel, she pleased him and he said to me, “Call me the buyer for four thousand dinars, and thou shalt have five hundred for thyself.” I doubt not but he knows she belongs to thee, and if he would pay thee down her price at once, it were well; but I know, of his avarice and upright, he will give thee a written order on some of his agents and will send after thee to say to them, “Give him nothing.” So as often as thou shalt go to seek the money, they will say, “We will pay thee presently,” and so they will put thee off day after day, for all thy high spirit, till at last, when they are tired of thine importunity, they will say, “Show us the bill.” Then, as soon as they get hold of it, they will tear it up, and so thou wilt lose the girl’s price.’ When Noureddin heard this, he looked at the broker and said to him, ‘What is to be done?’ ‘I will give thee a counsel,’ answered he, ‘which if thou follow, it will be greatly to thine advantage.’ ‘What is that?’ asked Noureddin. ‘Do thou come to me presently,’ said the broker, ‘when I am standing in the midst of the market and taking the girl from my hand, give her a cuff and say to her, “O baggage, I have kept my vow and brought thee down to the market, because I swore that I would put thee up for sale and make the brokers cry thee.” If thou do this, it may be the device will impose upon the Vizier and the folk, and they will believe that thou broughtest her not to the market but for the quittance of thine oath.’ ‘This is a good counsel,’ said Noureddin. Then the broker left him and returning to the midst of the market, took the damsel by the hand; then beckoned to Muin and said to him, ‘O my lord, here comes her owner.’ With this up came Noureddin and snatching the girl from the broker, gave her a cuff and said to her, ‘Out on thee, thou baggage! I have brought thee down to the market for the quittance of my oath; so now begone home and look that thou cross me not again. Out on thee! do I need thy price, that I should sell thee? The furniture of my house would fetch many times thy value, if I sold it.’ When Muin saw this, he said to Noureddin, ‘Out on thee! Hast thou aught left to sell?’ And he made to lay violent hands on him; but the merchants interposed, for they all loved Noureddin, and the latter said to them, ‘Behold, I am in your hands, and ye all know his tyranny!’ ‘By Allah,’ exclaimed the Vizier, ‘but for you, I would have killed him!’ Then all the merchants signed to

Noureddin with their eyes as who should say, ‘Work thy will of him; not one of us will come betwixt him and thee.’ Whereupon Noureddin, who was a stout-hearted fellow, went up to the Vizier and dragging him from his saddle, threw him to the ground. Now there was in that place a mortar-pit, into the midst of which he fell, and Noureddin fell to cuffing and pummelling him, and one of the blows smote his teeth, dyeing his beard with his blood. There were with the Vizier ten armed slaves, who, seeing their master thus evil entreated, clapped their hands to their swords and would have drawn them and fallen on Noureddin, to kill him; but the bystanders said to them, ‘This is a Vizier and that a Vizier’s son; it may be they will make peace with one another anon, in which case you will have gotten the hatred of both of them. Or a blow may fall on your lord, and you will all die the foulest of deaths; so you would do wisely not to interfere.’ So they held aloof and when Noureddin had made an end of beating the Vizier, he took his slave-girl and went home; and Muin rose, with his white clothes dyed of three colours with black mud, red blood and ashes. When he saw himself in this plight, he put a halter round his neck and taking a bundle of coarse grass in either hand, went up to the palace and standing under the King’s windows, cried out, ‘O King of the age, I am a man aggrieved!’ So they brought him before the Sultan, who looked at him and knowing him for his chief Vizier, asked who had entreated him thus. Whereupon he wept and sobbed and repeated the following verses:

Shall fortune oppress me, and that in thy day, O King? Shall
    wolves devour me, whilst thou art a lion proud?
Shall all that are thirsty drink of thy water-tanks And shall I
    thirst in thy courts, whilst thou art a rain-fraught cloud?

‘O my lord,’ continued he, ‘thus fare all who love and serve thee.’ ‘Make haste,’ said the Sultan, ‘and tell me how this happened and who hath dealt thus with thee, whose honour is a part of my own honour.’ ‘Know then, O my lord,’ replied the Vizier, ‘that I went out this day to the slave-market to buy me a cook-maid, when I saw in the bazaar a damsel, whose like for beauty I never beheld. She pleased me and I thought to buy her for our lord the Sultan; so I asked the broker of her and her owner, and he replied, “She belongs to Noureddin Ali son of Fezl ben Khacan.” Now our lord the Sultan aforetime gave his father ten thousand dinars to buy him a handsome slave-girl, and he bought therewith this damsel, who pleased him, so that he grudged her to our lord the Sultan and gave her to his own son. When Fezl died, his son sold all that he possessed of houses and gardens and household stuff and squandered the price, till he became penniless. Then he brought the girl down to the market, to sell her, and handed her to the broker, who cried her and the merchants bid for her, till her price reached four thousand dinars; whereupon I said to myself, “I will buy her for our lord the Sultan, for it was his money that paid for her.” So I said to Noureddin, “O my son, sell her to me for four thousand dinars.” He looked at me and replied, “O pestilent old man, I will sell her to a Jew or a Christian rather than to thee!” “I do not buy her for myself,” said I, “but for our lord and benefactor the Sultan.” When he heard my words, he flew into a passion and dragging me off my horse, for all I am an old man, beat me till he left me as thou seest; and all this has befallen me but because I thought to buy the girl for thee.’ Then the Vizier threw himself on the ground and lay there, weeping and trembling. When the Sultan saw his condition and heard his story, the vein of anger started out between his eyes, and he turned to his guards, who stood before him, forty swordsmen, and said to them, ‘Go down at once to the house of Noureddin ben Fezl, and sack it and raze it; then take him and the damsel and drag them hither with their hands bound behind them.’ ‘We hear and obey,’ answered they: and arming themselves, set out for Noureddin’s house. Now there was with the Sultan a man called Ilmeddin Senjer, who had aforetime been servant to Noureddin’s father Fezl ben Khacan, but had left his service for that of the Sultan, who had advanced him to be one of his chamberlains. When he heard the Sultan’s order and saw the enemies intent upon killing his master’s son, it was grievous to him; so he went out from before the Sultan and mounting his steed, rode to Noureddin’s house and knocked at the door. Noureddin came out and knowing him, would have saluted him: but he said, ‘O my lord, this is no time for greeting or converse.’ ‘O Ilmeddin,’ asked Noureddin, ‘what is the matter?’ ‘Arise and flee for your lives, thou and the damsel,' replied he: 'for Muin ben Sawa hath laid a snare for you; and if you fall into his hands, he will kill you. The Sultan hath despatched forty swordsmen against you and I counsel you flee ere evil overtake you.' Then Senjer put his hand to his pouch and finding there forty dinars, took them and gave them to Noureddin, saying, 'O my lord, take these and journey with them. If I had more, I would give them to thee; but this is no time to take exception.' So Noureddin went in to the damsel and told her what had happened, at which she wrung her hands. Then they went out at once from the city, and God let down the veil of His protection over them, so that they reached the river-bank, where they found a ship about to sail. Her captain stood in the waist, saying, 'Whoso has aught to do, whether in the way of victualling or taking leave of his friends, or who has forgotten any necessary thing, let him do it at once and return, for we are about to sail.' And every one said, 'O captain, we have nothing left to do.' Whereupon he cried out to his crew, saying, 'Ho, there! cast off the moorings and pull up the pickets!' Quoth Noureddin, 'Whither bound, O captain?' 'To the Abode of Peace, Baghdad,' replied he. So Noureddin and the damsel embarked with him, and they launched out and spread the sails, and the ship sped forth, as she were a bird in full flight, even as says right well the poet:

Look at a ship, how ravishing a sight she is and fair! In her
swift course she doth outstrip the breezes of the air.
She seems as 'twere a scudding bird that, lighting from the sky,
Doth on the surface of the stream with outspread pinions
fare.

Meanwhile the King's officers came to Noureddin's house and breaking open the doors, entered and searched the whole place, but could find no trace of him and the damsel; so they demolished the house and returning to the Sultan, told him what they had done; whereupon he said, 'Make search for them, wherever they are!' And they answered, 'We hear and obey.' Then he bestowed upon the Vizier Muin a dress of honour and said to him, 'None shall avenge thee but myself.' So Muin's heart was comforted and he wished the

King long life and returned to his own house. Then the Sultan caused proclamation to be made in the town, saying, ‘O all ye people! It is the will of our lord the Sultan that whoso happens on Noureddin Ali ben Khacan and brings him to the Sultan shall receive a dress of honour and a thousand dinars, and he who conceals him or knows his abiding-place and informs not thereof, deserves the exemplary punishment that shall befall him.’ So search was made for Noureddin, but they could find neither trace nor news of him; and meantime he and the damsel sailed on with a fair wind, till they arrived safely at Baghdad and the captain said to them, ‘This is Baghdad, and it is a city of safety: the winter hath departed from it, with its cold, and the season of the Spring is come, with its roses; its trees are in blossom and its streams flowing.’ So Noureddin landed, he and the damsel, and giving the captain five dinars, walked on awhile, till chance brought them among the gardens and they came to a place swept and sprinkled, with long benches on either hand and hanging pots full of water. Overhead was a trelliswork of canes shading the whole length of the alley, and at the further end was the door of a garden; but this was shut. ‘By Allah,’ said Noureddin to the damsel, ‘this is a pleasant place!’ And she answered, ‘O my lord, let us sit down on these benches and rest awhile.’ So they mounted and sat down on the benches, after having washed their faces and hands; and the air smote on them and they fell asleep, glory be to Him who never sleeps! Now the garden in question was called the Garden of Delight and therein stood a pavilion called the Pavilion of Pictures, belonging to the Khalif Haroun er Reshid, who used, when sad at heart, to repair thither and there sit. In this pavilion were fourscore windows and fourscore hanging lamps and in the midst a great chandelier of gold. When the Khalif entered, he was wont to have all the windows opened and to order his boon-companion Isaac ben Ibrahim and the slave-girls to sing, till his care left him and his heart was lightened. Now the keeper of the garden was an old man by name Gaffer Ibrahim, and he had found, from time to time, on going out on his occasions, idlers taking their case with courtezans in the alley leading to the door of the garden, at which he was sore enraged; so he complained to the Khalif, who said, ‘Whomsoever thou findest at the door of the garden, do with him as thou wilt.’ As chance would have it, he had occasion to go abroad that very day and found these two sleeping at the gate, covered with one veil; whereupon, ‘By Allah,’ said he, ‘this is fine! These two know not that the Khalif has given me leave to kill any one whom I may catch at the door of the garden: but I will give them a sound drubbing, that none may come near the gate in future.’ So he cut a green palm-stick and went out to them and raising his arm, till the whiteness of his armpit appeared, was about to lay on to them, when he bethought himself and said, ‘O Ibrahim, wilt thou beat them, knowing not their case? Maybe they are strangers or wayfarers, and destiny hath led them hither. I will uncover their faces and look on them.’ So he lifted up the veil from their faces and said, ‘They are a handsome pair! It were not fitting that I should beat them.’ Then he covered their faces again, and going to Noureddin’s feet, began to rub them, whereupon the young man awoke, and seeing an old man of venerable appearance rubbing his feet, was abashed and drawing them in, sat up; then took Ibrahim’s hand and kissed it. Quoth the old man, ‘O my son, whence art thou?’ ‘O my lord,’ replied Noureddin, ‘we are strangers.’ And the tears started to his eyes. ‘O my son,’ said Ibrahim, ‘know that the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve!) hath charged us to be hospitable to strangers. Wilt thou not rise, O my son, and pass into the garden and take thy pleasure therein and gladden thy heart?’ ‘O my lord,’ said Noureddin, ‘to whom does the garden belong?’ And he replied, ‘O my son, I inherited it from my family.’ Now his object in saying this was to put them at their ease and induce them to enter the garden. So Noureddin thanked him and rose, he and the damsel, and followed him into the garden. They entered through a gateway, vaulted like a gallery and overhung with vines bearing grapes of various colours, the red like rubies and the black like ebony, and passing under a bower of trellised boughs, found themselves in a garden, and what a garden! There were fruit-trees growing singly and in clusters and birds warbling melodiously on the branches, whilst the thousand-voiced nightingale repeated the various strains: the turtle-dove filled the place with her cooing, and there sang the blackbird, with its warble like a human voice, and the ring-dove, with her notes like a drinker exhilarated with wine. The trees were laden with all manner of ripe fruits, two of each: the apricot in its various kinds, camphor and almond and that of Khorassan, the plum, whose colour is as that of fair women, the cherry, that does away discoloration of the teeth, and the fig of three colours, red and white and green. There bloomed the flower of the bitter orange, as it were pearls and coral, the rose whose redness puts to shame the cheeks of the fair, the violet, like sulphur on fire by night, the myrtle, the gillyflower, the lavender, the peony and the blood-red anemone. The leaves were jewelled with the tears of the clouds; the camomile smiled with her white petals like a lady's teeth, and the narcissus looked at the rose with her negro's eyes: the citrons shone like cups and the limes like balls of gold, and the earth was carpeted with flowers of all colours; for the Spring was come and the place beamed with its brightness; whilst the birds sang and the stream rippled and the breeze blew softly, for the attemperance of the air. Ibrahim carried them up into the pavilion, and they gazed on its beauty and on the lamps aforesaid in the windows; and Noureddin called to mind his banquetings of time past and said, 'By Allah, this is a charming place!' Then they sat down and the gardener set food before them; and they ate their fill and washed their hands; after which Noureddin went up to one of the windows and calling the damsel, fell to gazing on the trees laden with all manner of fruits. Then he turned to the gardener and said to him, 'O Gaffer Ibrahim, hast thou no drink here, for folk use to drink after eating?' The old man brought him some fresh sweet cold water, but he said, 'This is not the kind of drink I want.' 'Belike,' said Ibrahim, 'thou wishest for wine?' 'I do,' replied Noureddin. 'God preserve me from it!' said the old man. 'It is thirteen years since I did this thing, for the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve!) cursed its drinker, its presser, its seller and its carrier.' 'Hear two words from me,' said Noureddin. 'Say on,' replied Ibrahim. 'If,' said Noureddin, 'that unlucky ass there be cursed, will any part of the curse fall on thee?' 'Not so,' replied the old man. 'Then,' said Noureddin, 'take this dinar and these two dirhems and mount the ass and stop at a distance (from the wineshop); then call the first man thou seest buying, and say to him, "Take these two dirhems and buy me this dinar's worth of wine and set it on the ass." Thus thou wilt be neither the purchaser nor the carrier of the wine and no part of the curse will fall on thee.' At this the gardener laughed and said, ‘O my son, never have I seen one readier-witted than thou nor heard aught sweeter than thy speech.’ So he did as Noureddin had said, and the latter thanked him, saying, ‘We are dependent on thee, and it is only fitting that thou comply with our wishes; so bring us what we require.’ ‘O my son,’ replied he, ‘there is my buttery before thee.’ (Now this was the store-room provided for the Commander of the Faithful.) Enter and take what thou wilt; there is more there than thou needest.’ So Noureddin entered the pantry and found therein vessels of gold and silver and crystal, incrusted with all kinds of jewels, and was amazed and delighted at what he saw. Then he took what he wanted and set it on and poured the wine into flagons and decanters, whilst Ibrahim brought them fruits and flowers and withdrew and sat down at a distance. So they drank and made merry, till the wine got the mastery of them, so that their cheeks flushed and their eyes sparkled and their hair became dishevelled. Then said Ibrahim to himself, ‘What ails me to sit apart? Why should I not sit with them? When shall I find myself in company with the like of these two, who are like two moons?’ So he came and sat down at the corner of the dais, and Noureddin said to him, ‘O my lord, my life on thee, come and sit with us!’ So he came and sat by them, and Noureddin filled a cup and said to him, ‘Drink, that thou mayst know the flavour of it.’ ‘God forbid!’ replied he. ‘I have not done such a thing these thirteen years.’ Noureddin did not press him, but drank off the cup, and throwing himself on the ground, feigned to be overcome with drunkenness. Then said the damsel, ‘O Gaffer Ibrahim, see how he serves me!’ ‘O my lady,’ replied he, ‘what ails him?’ ‘This is how he always treats me,’ said she; ‘he drinks awhile, then falls asleep and leaves me alone, with none to bear me company over my cup nor to whom I may sing whilst he drinks.’ ‘By Allah,’ said he (and indeed her words touched his heart and made his soul incline to her), ‘this is not well!’ Then she looked at him and filling a cup said to him, ‘I conjure thee, on my life, not to refuse me, but take this cup and drink it off and solace my heart.’ So he took it and drank it off and she filled a second cup and set it on the chandelier, saying, ‘O my lord, there is still this one left for thee.’ ‘By Allah, I cannot take it,’ answered he; ‘that which I have drunk suffices me.’ ‘By Allah,’ said she, ‘thou must indeed drink it.’ So he took the cup and drank; and she filled him a third cup, which he took and was about to drink, when behold, Noureddin opened his eyes and sitting up, exclaimed, ‘Hello, Gaffer Ibrahim, what is this? Did I not adjure thee just now, and thou refusedst, saying, “I have not done such a thing these thirteen years”?’ ‘By Allah,’ replied he (and indeed he was abashed), ‘it is her fault, not mine.’ Noureddin laughed and they sat down again to carouse, but the damsel turned to Noureddin and whispered to him, ‘O my lord, drink and do not press him, and I will show thee some sport with him.’ Then she began to fill her master’s cup and he to fill to her, and so they did time after time, till at last Ibrahim looked at them and said, ‘What manner of good fellowship is this? God’s malison on the glutton who keeps the cup to himself! Why dost thou not give me to drink, O my brother? What manners are these, O Blessed One!’ At this they laughed till they fell backward; then they drank and gave him to drink and ceased not to carouse thus, till a third part of the night was past. Then said the damsel, ‘O Gaffer Ibrahim, with thy leave, I will light one of these candles.’ ‘Do so,’ said he; ‘but light no more then one.’ So she rose and beginning with one candle, lighted fourscore and sat down again. Presently Noureddin said, ‘O Gaffer Ibrahim, how stands my favour with thee? May I not light one of these lamps ?’ ‘Light one,’ replied he, ‘and plague me no more.’ So Noureddin rose and lighted one lamp after another, till he had lighted the whole eighty and the palace seemed to dance with light. Quoth Ibrahim (and indeed intoxication had mastered him), ‘Ye are more active than I.’ Then he rose and opened all the windows and sat down again; and they fell to carousing and reciting verses, till the place rang with their mirth.

Now as God the All-powerful, who appointeth a cause to everything, had decreed, the Khalif was at that moment seated at one of the windows of his palace, overlooking the Tigris, in the light of the moon. He saw the lustre of the candles and lamps reflected in the river and lifting his eyes, perceived that it came from the garden-palace, which was in a blaze with light. So he called Jaafer the Barmecide and said to him, ‘O dog of a Vizier, has the city of Baghdad been taken from me and thou hast not told me?’ ‘What words are these?’ said Jaafer. ‘If Baghdad were not taken from me,’ rejoined the Khalif, ‘the Pavilion of Pictures would not be illuminated with lamps and candles, nor would its windows be open. Out on thee! Who would dare to do this except the Khalifate were taken from me?’ Quoth Jaafer (and indeed he trembled in every limb), ‘Who told thee that the pavilion was illuminated and the windows open?’ ‘Come hither and look,’ replied the Khalif. So Jaafer came to the window and looking towards the garden, saw the pavilion flaming with light, in the darkness of the night, and thinking that this might be by the leave of the keeper, for some good reason of his own, was minded to make an excuse for him. So he said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, Gaffer Ibrahim said to me last week, “O my lord Jaafer, I desire to circumcise my sons during thy life and that of the Commander of the Faithful.” “What dost thou want?” asked I; and he said, “Get me leave from the Khalif to hold the festival in the pavilion.” So I said to him, “Go, circumcise them, and I will see the Khalif and tell him.” So he went away and I forgot to tell thee.’ ‘O Jaafer,’ said the Khalif, ‘thou hast committed two offences against me, first, in that thou didst not tell me, secondly, in that thou didst not give the old man what he sought; for he only came and told thee this, by way of hinting a request for some small matter of money, to help him out with the expenses; and thou gavest him nothing nor toldest me.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied Jaafer, ‘I forgot.’ ‘By the virtue of my forefathers,’ rejoined the Khalif, ‘I will not pass the rest of the night but with him, for he is a pious man, who consorts with the elders of the faith and the fakirs: doubtless they are now assembled with him and it may be that the prayer of one of them may profit us both in this world and the next. Besides, my presence will advantage him and he will be pleased.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ objected Jaafer, ‘the night is far spent, and they will now be about to break up.’ ‘It matters not,’ replied the Khalif; ‘I must and will go to them.’ And Jaafer was silent, being perplexed and knowing not what to do. Then the Khalif rose to his feet and taking with him Jaafer and Mesrour the eunuch, they all three disguised themselves as merchants and leaving the palace, walked on through the by-streets till they came to the garden. The Khalif went up to the gate and finding it open, was surprised and said to the Vizier, ‘Look, Jaafer, how Gaffer Ibrahim has left the gate open to this hour, contrary to his wont!' They entered and walked on till they came under the pavilion, when the Khalif said, 'O Jaafer, I wish to look in upon them privily before I join them, that I may see what they are about, for up to now I hear no sound nor any fakir naming God.' Then he looked about and seeing a tall walnut-tree, said to Jaafer, 'I will climb this tree, for its branches come near the windows, and so look in upon them.' So he mounted the tree and climbed from branch to branch, till he reached a bough that came up to one of the windows. On this he seated himself and looking in at the window, saw a young lady and a young man as they were two moons (glory be to Him who created them and fashioned them!), and by them Gaffer Ibrahim seated, with a cup in his hand, saying, 'O princess of fair ones, drink without music is nothing worth; indeed I have heard a poet say:

Pass round the wine in the great and the small cup too, And take
    the bowl from the hands of the shining moon.
But without music, I charge you, forbear to drink, For sure I see
    even horses drink to a whistled tune.'

When the Khalif saw this, the vein of anger started out between his eyes and he descended and said to the Vizier, 'O Jaafer, never saw I men of piety in such a case! Do thou mount this tree and look upon them, lest the benisons of the devout escape thee.' So Jaafer climbed up, perplexed at these words, and looking in, saw Noureddin and the damsel and Gaffer Ibrahim with a cup in his hand. At this sight, he made sure of ruin and descending, stood before the Commander of the Faithful, who said to him, 'O Jaafer, praised be God who hath made us of those who observe the external forms of the Divine ordinances!' Jaafer could make no answer for excess of confusion, and the Khalif continued, 'I wonder how these people came hither and who admitted them into my pavilion! But the like of the beauty of this youth and this girl my eyes never beheld!' 'Thou art right, O Commander of the Faithful,' replied Jaafer, hoping to propitiate him. Then said the Khalif, 'O Jaafer, let us both mount the branch that overlooks the window, that we may amuse ourselves with looking at them.' So they both climbed the tree and looking in, heard Ibrahim say, ‘O my lady, I have laid aside gravity in drinking wine, but this is not thoroughly delectable without the melodious sound of the strings. ‘By Allah,’ replied Enis el Jelis, ‘if we had but some musical instrument, our joy would be complete!’ When the old man heard what she said, he rose to his feet, and the Khalif said to Jaafer, ‘I wonder what he is going to do.’ ‘I know not,’ replied Jaafer. Then Ibrahim went out and returned with a lute; and the Khalif looked at it and knew it for that of Isaac the boon-companion. ‘By Allah,’ said he, ‘if this damsel sing ill, I will crucify you, all of you; but if she sing well, I will pardon them and crucify thee.’ ‘God grant she may sing ill!’ said Jaafer ‘Why so?’ asked the Khalif. ‘Because,’ replied Jaafer ‘if thou crucify us all together, we shall keep each other company.’ The Khalif laughed at his speech; then the damsel took the lute and tuning it, played a measure which made all hearts yearn to her, then sang the following verses:

O ye that to help unhappy lovers are fain! We burn with the fire
 of love and longing in vain.
Whatever ye do, we merit it: see, we cast Ourselves on your ruth!
 Do not exult in our pain.
For we are children of sadness and low estate. Do with us what
 you will; we will not complain.
What were your glory to slay us within your courts? Our fear is
 but lest you sin in working us bane.

‘By Allah,’ said the Khalif, ‘it is good, O Jaafer! Never in my life have I heard so enchanting a voice!’ ‘Belike,’ said Jaafer, ‘the Khalif’s wrath hath departed from him.’ ‘Yes,’ said the Khalif, ‘it is gone.’ Then they descended from the tree, and the Khalif said to Jaafer, ‘I wish to go in and sit with them and hear the damsel sing before me.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied Jaafer, ‘if thou go in to them, they will most like be troubled and Gaffer Ibrahim will assuredly die of fright.’ ‘O Jaafer,’ said the Khalif, ‘thou must teach me some device, whereby I may foregather with them, without being known of them.’ So they walked on towards the Tigris, considering of this affair, and presently came upon a fisher man standing fishing under the windows of the pavilion. Now some time before this, the

Khalif (being in the pavilion) had called to Gaffer Ibrahim and said to him, ‘What is this noise I hear under the windows?’ ‘It is the voices of the fishermen, fishing,’ answered he; and the Khalif commanded him to go down and forbid them to resort thither; so the fishermen were forbidden to fish there. However, that night a fisherman named Kerim, happening to pass by and seeing the garden gate open, said to himself, ‘This is a time of negligence: I will take advantage of it to fish.’ So he went in, but had hardly cast his net, when the Khalif came up alone and standing behind him, knew him and called out to him, saying, ‘Ho, Kerim!’ The fisherman, hearing himself called by his name, turned round, and seeing the Khalif, trembled in every limb and exclaimed, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, I did it not in mockery of the edict; but poverty and distress drove me to what thou seest.’ Quoth the Khalif, ‘Make a cast in my name.’ At this the fisherman was glad and going to the bank, cast his net, then waiting till it had spread out to the utmost and settled down, pulled it up and found in it various kinds of fish. The Khalif was pleased and said, ‘O Kerim, put off thy clothes.’ So he put off a gown of coarse woollen stuff, patched in a hundred places and full of disgusting vermin, and a turban that had not been unwound for three years, but to which he had sewn every rag he came across. The Khalif pulled off his cassock and mantle and two vests of Alexandria and Baalbec silk and saying to the fisherman, ‘Take these and put them on,’ donned the latter’s gown and turban and tied a chin band round the lower part of his face. Then said he to the fisherman, ‘Go about thy business.’ So he kissed the Khalif’s feet and thanked him and recited the following verses:

Thou hast heaped benefits on me, past all that I could crave! My
    tongue suffices not to praise thy goodness to thy slave.
So I will thank thee whilst I live; and when I come to die, My
    very bones shall never cease to thank thee in the grave.

Hardly had he finished, when the lice began to crawl over the skin of the Khalif, who fell to snatching them with either hand from his neck and throwing them down, exclaiming, ‘Out on thee, O fisherman, this gown is swarming with vermin!’ ‘O my lord,’ replied the fisherman, ‘they torment thee just now, but before a week has passed, thou wilt not feel them nor think of them.’ The Khalif laughed and said, ‘Out on thee! Dost thou think I mean to leave this gown on my body?’ ‘O my lord,’ said the fisherman, ‘I desire to say one word to thee.’ ‘Say on,’ answered the Khalif. ‘It occurs to me, O Commander of the Faithful,’ said the fisherman, ‘that if thou wish to learn hunting, so thou mayst have an useful trade ready to thy hand, this gown will be the very thing for thee.’ The Khalif laughed, and the fisherman went his way. Then the Khalif took up the basket of fish, and laying a little grass over it, carried it to Jaafer and stood before him. Jaafer, concluding that it was Kerim the fisherman, was alarmed for him and said, ‘O Kerim, what brings thee hither? Flee for thy life, for the Khalif is in the garden to-night, and if he see thee, thou wilt lose thy head.’ At this the Khalif laughed, and Jaafer knew him and said, ‘Surely thou art our lord the Khalif?’ ‘Yes, O Jaafer,’ replied he. ‘And thou art my Vizier and I came hither with thee; yet thou knewest me not; so how should Gaffer Ibrahim know me, and he drunk? Stay here, till I come back.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered Jaafer. Then the Khalif went up to the door of the pavilion and knocked softly, whereupon said Noureddin, ‘O Gaffer Ibrahim, some one knocks at the door.’ ‘Who is at the door?’ cried the old man; and the Khalif replied, ‘It is I, O Gaffer Ibrahim!’ ‘Who art thou?’ asked the gardener. ‘I, Kerim the fisherman,’ rejoined the Khalif. ‘I hear thou hast company, so have brought thee some fine fish.’ When Noureddin heard the mention of fish, he was glad, he and the damsel, and they both said to Ibrahim, ‘O my lord, open the door and let him bring the fish in to us.’ So he opened the door, and the Khalif entered, in his fisherman’s disguise, and began by saluting them. Quoth Ibrahim, ‘Welcome to the brigand, the robber, the gambler! Let us see thy fish.’ So the Khalif showed them the fish and behold, they were still alive and moving, whereupon the damsel exclaimed, ‘O my lord, these are indeed fine fish! Would that they were fried!’ ‘By Allah, O my mistress,’ replied Ibrahim, ‘thou art right.’ Then said he to the Khalif, ‘O fisherman, why didst thou not bring us the fish ready fried? Go now and fry them and bring them to us.’ ‘It shall be done at once,’ answered he. Said they, ‘Be quick about it.’ So he went out, running, and coming up to Jaafer, cried out, ‘Hallo, Jaafer!’

‘Here am I, O Commander of the Faithful!’ replied he. ‘They want the fish fried,’ said the Khalif. ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Jaafer, ‘give it to me and I will fry it for them.’ ‘By the tombs of my forefathers,’ said the Khalif, ‘none shall fry it but I, with my own hand!’ So he repaired to the keeper’s hut, where he searched and found all that he required, even to salt and saffron and marjoram and so forth. Then he laid the fish on the frying-pan and setting it on the brazier, fried them handsomely. When they were done, he laid them on a banana-leaf, and gathering some lemons from the garden, carried the dish to the pavilion and set it before them. So Noureddin and the damsel and Ibrahim came forward and ate, after which they washed their hands and Noureddin said to the Khalif, ‘O fisherman, thou hast done us a right welcome service this night!’ Then he put his hand to his pouch and taking out three of the dinars that Senjer had given him, said, ‘O fisherman, excuse me. By Allah, had I known thee before that which has lately befallen me, I had done away the bitterness of poverty from thy heart; but take this as an earnest of my good will!’ Then he threw the dinars to the Khalif, who took them and kissed them and put them up. Now the Khalif’s sole desire in all this was to hear the damsel sing; so he said to Noureddin, ‘O my lord, thou hast rewarded me munificently, but I beg of thy great bounty that thou wilt let this damsel sing an air, that I may hear her.’ So Noureddin said, ‘O Enis el Jelis!’ ‘Yes,’ replied she. And he said, ‘My life on thee, sing us something for the sake of this fisherman, for he wishes to hear thee.’ So she took the lute and struck the strings, after she had tuned them, and sang the following verses:

The fingers of the lovely maid went wandering o’er the lute, And
    many a soul to ravishment its music did compel.
She sang, and lo, her singing cured the deaf man of his ill, And
    he that erst was dumb exclaimed, “Thou hast indeed done
    well!”

Then she played again, so admirably that she ravished their wits, and sang the following verses:

Thou honour'dst us, when thou didst in our land alight; Thy
lustre hath dispelled the moonless midnight gloom!
Wherefore with camphor white and rose-water and musk It e'en
behoveth us our dwelling to perfume.

At this the Khalif was agitated and so overcome with emotion that he was not master of himself for excess of delight, and he exclaimed, 'By Allah, it is good! By Allah, it is good! By Allah, it is good!' Quoth Noureddin, 'O fisherman, doth this damsel please thee?' 'Ay, by Allah!' replied he. Whereupon said Noureddin, 'I make thee a present of her, the present of a generous man who does not go back on his giving nor will revoke his gift.' Then he sprang to his feet and taking a mantle, threw it over the pretended fisherman and bade him take the damsel and begone. But she looked at him and said, 'O my lord, art thou going away without bidding me adieu? If it must be so, at least, stay whilst I bid thee farewell and make known my case.' And she repeated the following verses:

I am filled full of longing pain and memory and dole, Till I for
languor am become a body without soul.
Say not to me, beloved one, "Thou'lt grow consoled for me;" When
such affliction holds the heart, what is there can console?
If that a creature in his tears could swim as in a sea, I to do
this of all that breathe were surely first and sole.
O thou, the love of whom doth fill my heart and overflow, Even
when wine, with water mixed, fills up the brimming bowl,
O thou for whom desire torments my body and my spright! This
severance is the thing I feared was writ on fortune's
scroll.
O thou, whose love from out my heart shall nevermore depart, O
son of Khacan, thou my wish, my hope unshared and whole,
On my account thou didst transgress against our lord and king And
left'st thy native land for me, to seek a foreign goal.
Thou givest me unto Kerim, may he for aye be praised! And
may th' Almighty for my loss my dearest lord console!

When she had finished, Noureddin answered her by repeating the following:

She bade me adieu on the day of our parting And said, whilst for anguish she wept and she sighed,
"Ah, what wilt thou do, when from me thou art severed?" "Ask that of the man who'll survive," I replied.

When the Khalif heard what she said in her verses, 'Thou hast given me to Kerim,' his interest in her redoubled and it was grievous to him to separate them; so he said to Noureddin, 'O my lord, verily the damsel said in her verses that thou hadst transgressed against her master and him who possessed her; so tell me, against whom didst thou transgress and who is it that has a claim on thee?' 'By Allah, O fisherman,' replied Noureddin 'there hangs a rare story by me and this damsel, a story, which, were it graven with needles on the corners of the eye, would serve as a lesson to him who can profit by example.' Said the Khalif, 'Wilt thou not tell us thy story and acquaint us with thy case? Peradventure it may bring thee relief, for the help of God is near at hand.' 'O fisher man,' said Noureddin, 'wilt thou hear our story in prose or verse?' 'Prose is but words,' replied the Khalif, 'but verse is strung pearls.' Then Noureddin bowed his head and spoke the following verses.

O my friend, I have bidden farewell to repose, And the anguish of exile has doubled my woes
I once had a father, who loved me right dear, But left me, to dwell in the tombs, where all goes.
There fell on me after him hardship and pain And Fate broke in pieces my heart with its blows.
He bought me a slave-girl, the fairest of maids; Her shape shamed the branch and her colour the rose.
I wasted the substance he left me, alas! And lavished it freely on these and on those,
Till for need I was minded to sell the fair maid, Though sorely I grudged at the parting, God knows!
But lo! when the crier 'gan call her for sale, A scurvy old skin-flint to bid for her chose.

At this I was angered beyond all control And snatched her away ere the crier could close;
Whereupon the old rancorous curmudgeon flamed up With despite and beset me with insults and blows.
In my passion I smote him with right hand and left, Till my wrath was assuaged; after which I arose
And returning, betook me in haste to my house, Where I hid me for feat of the wrath of my foes.
Then the king of the city decreed my arrest: But a kind-hearted chamberlain pitied my woes
And warned me to flee from the city forthright, Ere my enemies' springes my life should enclose.
So we fled from our house in the dead of the night And came to Baghdad for a place of repose.
I have nothing of value, nor treasures nor gold, Or I'd handsel thee, fisherman, freely with those!
But I give thee, instead, the beloved of my soul, And in her thou hast gotten my heart's blood, God knows!

When he had finished, the Khalif said to him, 'O my lord Noureddin, explain to me thy case more fully!' So he told him the whole story from beginning to end, and the Khalif said to him, 'Whither dost thou now intend?' 'God's world is wide!' replied he. Quoth the Khalif, 'I will write thee a letter to carry to the Sultan Mohammed ben Suleiman ez Zeini, which when he reads, he will do thee no hurt.' 'Who ever heard of a fisherman writing to kings?' said Noureddin. 'Such a thing can never be.' 'True,' replied the Khalif; 'but I will tell thee the reason. Know that he and I learnt in the same school, under one master, and that I was his monitor. Since that time, fortune has betided him and he is become a Sultan, whilst God hath abased me and made me a fisherman: yet I never send to him to seek aught, but he does my desire; nay, though I should ask of him a thousand favours a day, he would comply.' When Noureddin heard this, he said, 'Good: write that I may see.' So the Khalif took pen and inkhorn and wrote as follows: 'In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful! This letter is from Haroun er Reshid son of el Mehdi to His Highness Mohammed ben Suleiman ez Zeini, whom I have compassed about with my favour and made governor for me in certain of my dominions. The bearer of these presents is Noureddin son of Felz ben Khacan the Vizier. As soon as they come to thy hand, do thou put off thy kingly dignity and invest him therewith, and look thou oppose not my commandment, so peace be on thee.' Then he gave the letter to Noureddin, who took it and kissed it, then put it in his turban and set out at once on his journey. As soon as he was gone, Gaffer Ibrahim fumed to the Khalif and said to him, 'O vilest of fishermen, thou hast brought us a couple of fish, worth a score of paras, and hast gotten three dinars for them; and thinkest thou to take the damsel also?' When the Khalif heard this, he cried out at him and made a sign to Mesrour, who discovered himself and rushed upon him. Now Jaafer had sent one of the gardeners to the doorkeeper of the palace for a suit of the royal raiment for the Commander of the Faithful; so he went and returning with the suit, kissed the earth before the Khalif and gave it to him. Then he threw off the clothes he had on and dressed himself in those which the gardener had brought, to the great amazement of Gaffer Ibrahim, who bit his nails in bewilderment and exclaimed, 'Am I asleep or awake?' 'O Gaffer Ibrahim,' said the Khalif, 'what state is this in which I see thee?' With this, he recovered from his drunkenness and throwing himself on the ground, repeated the following verses:

Forgive the error into which my straying feet did fall, For the
slave sues for clemency from him to whom he's thrall!
Lo, by confessing I have done what the offence requires! Where
then is that for which good grace and generous mercy call?

The Khalif forgave him and bade carry the damsel to the palace, where he assigned her a separate lodging and servants to wait upon her, saying to her, 'Know that we have sent thy master to be Sultan in Bassora, and God willing, we will despatch him a dress of honour and thee with it.'

Meanwhile, Noureddin fared on, till he reached Bassora, when he repaired to the Sultan's palace and gave a loud cry. The Sultan heard him and sent for him; and when he came into his presence, he kissed the earth before him and pulling out the letter, gave it to him. The Sultan, seeing that the superscription was in the handwriting of the Khalif, rose to his feet and kissed the letter three times, then read it and said, ‘I hear and obey God and the Commander of the Faithful!’ Then he summoned the four Cadis and the Amirs and was about to divest himself of the kingly office, when in came the Vizier Muin ben Sawa. The Sultan gave him the Khalif’s letter, and he read it, then tore it in pieces and putting it in his mouth, chewed it and threw it away. ‘Out on thee!’ exclaimed the Sultan (and indeed he was angry); ‘what made thee do that?’ ‘By thy life, O our lord the Sultan,’ replied Muin, ‘this fellow hath never seen the Khalif nor his Vizier: but he is a gallows-bird, a crafty imp who, happening upon a blank sheet in the Khalif’s handwriting, hath written his own desire in it. The Khalif would surely not have sent him to take the Sultanate from thee, without a royal mandate and a patent appended thereto, nor would he have omitted to send with him a chamberlain or a vizier. But he is alone and hath never come from the Khalif, never! never!’ ‘What is to be done?’ said the Sultan. ‘Leave him to me,’ replied the Vizier: ‘I will send him in charge of a chamberlain to the city of Baghdad. If what he says be true, they will bring us back royal letters-patent and a diploma of investiture; and if not, I will pay him what I owe him.’ When the Sultan heard the Vizier’s words, he said, ‘Take him.’ So Muin carried Noureddin to his own house and cried out to his servants, who threw him down and beat him, till he swooned away. Then he caused heavy shackles to be put on his feet and carried him to the prison, where he called the gaoler, whose name was Cuteyt, and said to him, ‘O Cuteyt, take this fellow and throw him into one of the underground cells in the prison and torture him night and day.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ replied he, and taking Noureddin into the prison, locked the door on him. Then he bade sweep a bench behind the door and laying thereon a mattress and a leather rug, made Noureddin sit down. Moreover, he loosed his fetters and treated him kindly. The Vizier sent every day to the gaoler, charging him to beat him, but he abstained from this, and things abode thus forty days’ time. On the forty-first day, there came a present from the Khalif: which when the Sultan saw, it pleased him and he took counsel about it with his Viziers, one of whom said, ‘Mayhap this present was intended for the new Sultan.’ Quoth Muin, ‘We should have done well to put him to death at his first coming;’ and the Sultan said, ‘By Allah, thou remindest me of him! Go down to the prison and fetch him, and I will strike off his head.’ ‘I hear end obey,’ replied Muin. ‘With thy leave I will have proclamation made in the city, “Whoso hath a mind to look upon the beheading of Noureddin Ali ben Khacan, let him repair to the palace!” So, great and small will come out to gaze on him and I shall heal my heart and mortify those that envy me.’ ‘As thou wilt,’ said the Sultan; whereupon the Vizier went out, rejoicing, and commanded the chief of the police to make the aforesaid proclamation. When the folk heard the crier, they all mourned and wept, even to the little ones in the schools and the tradersin the shops, and some hastened to get them places to see the sight, whilst others repaired to the prison thinking to accompany him thence. Presently, the Vizier came to the prison, attended by ten armed slaves, and the gaoler said to him, ‘What seekest thou, O our lord the Vizier?’ ‘Bring me that gallows-bird,’ replied the Vizier; and the gaoler said, ‘He is in the sorriest of plights for the much beating I have given him.’ Then Cuteyt went into the prison, where he found Noureddin repeating the following verses:

Who shall avail me against the woes that my life enwind? Indeed
my disease is sore and the remedy hard to find.
Exile hath worn my heart and my spirit with languishment, And
evil fortune hath turned my very lovers unkind.
O folk, is there none of you all will answer my bitter cry! Is
there never a merciful friend will help me of all mankind?
Yet death and the pains of death are a little thing to me; I have
put off the hope of life and left its sweets behind.
O Thou that sentest the Guide, the Chosen Prophet to men, The
Prince of the Intercessors, gifted to loose and bind,
I prithee, deliver me and pardon me my default, And put the
troubles to flight that crush me, body and mind I

The gaoler took off his clean clothes and clothing him in two filthy garments, carried him to the Vizier. Noureddin looked at him, and knowing him for his enemy who still sought to compass his death, wept and said to him, ‘Art thou then secure against Fate? Hast thou not heard the saying of the poet?

Where are now the old Chosroes, tyrants of a bygone day? Wealth they gathered; but their treasures and themselves have passed away!

O Vizier,’ continued he, ‘know that God (blessed and exalted be He!) doth whatever He will!’ ‘O Ali,’ replied the Vizier, ‘dost thou think to fright me with this talk? Know that I mean this day to strike off thy head in despite of the people of Bassora, and let the days do what they will, I care not; nor will I take thought to thy warning, but rather to what the poet says:

Let the days do what they will, without debate, And brace thy spirit against the doings of Fate.

And also how well says another:

He who lives a day after his foe Hath compassed his wishes, I trow!

Then he ordered his attendants to set Noureddin on the back of a mule, and they said to the youth (for indeed it was grievous to them), ‘Let us stone him and cut him in pieces, though it cost us our lives.’ ‘Do it not,’ replied Noureddin. ‘Have ye not heard what the poet says?

A term’s decreed for me, which I must needs fulfil, And when its
days are spent, I die, do what I will.
Though to their forest dens the lions should me drag, Whilst but
an hour remains, they have no power to kill.’

Then they proceeded to proclaim before Noureddin, ‘This is the least of the punishment of those who impose upon kings with forgery!’ And they paraded him round about Bassora, till they came beneath the windows of the palace, where they made him kneel down on the carpet of blood and the headsman came up to him and said, ‘O my lord, I am but a slave commanded in this matter: if thou hast any desire, let me know, that I may fulfil it; for now there remains of thy life but till the Sultan shall put his head out of the window.’ So Noureddin looked in all directions and repeated the following verses:

I see the headsman and the sword, I see the carpet spread, And
cry “Alas, my sorry plight! Alas, my humbled head!”
How is’t I have no pitying friend to help me in my need? Will no
one answer my complaint or heed the tears I shed?
My time of life is past away and death draws nigh to me: Will no
one earn the grace of God by standing me in stead?
Will none take pity on my state and succour my despair With but a
cup of water cold, to ease my torments dread?

The people fell to weeping for him, and the headsman rose and brought him a draught of water; but the Vizier smote the gugglet with his hand and broke it: then he cried out at the executioner and bade him strike off Noureddin’s head. So he proceeded to bind the latter’s eyes; whilst the people cried out against the Vizier and there befell a great tumult and dispute amongst them. At this moment there arose a great cloud of dust and filled the air and the plain; and when the Sultan, who was sitting in the palace, saw this, he said to his attendants, ‘Go and see what is the meaning of that cloud of dust.’ ‘When we have cut off this fellow’s head,’ replied Muin; but the Sultan said, ‘Wait till we see what this means.’

Now the cloud of dust in question was raised by Jaafer the Barmecide, Vizier to the Khalif, and his retinue; and the reason of his coming was as follows. The Khalif passed thirty days without calling to mind the affair of Noureddin Ali ben Khacan, and none reminded him of it, till one night, as he passed by the apartment of Enis el Jelis, he heard her weeping and reciting the following verse, in a low and sweet voice:

Thine image is ever before me, though thou art far away, Nor doth my tongue give over the naming of thee aye!

And her weeping redoubled; when lo, the Khalif opened the door and entering the chamber, found her in tears. When she saw him, she fell to the earth and kissing his feet three times, repeated the following verses:

O thou pure of royal lineage and exalted in thy birth! O thou
tree of fruitful branches, thou the all unstained of race!
I recall to thee the promise that thy noble bounty made: God

forbid thou shouldst forget it or withhold the gifted grace!

Quoth the Khalif, ‘Who art thou?’ And she answered, ‘I am she whom thou hadst as a present from Noureddin Ali ben Khacan, and I crave the fulfilment of thy promise to send me to him with the dress of honour; for I have now been here thirty days, without tasting sleep.’ Thereupon the Khalif sent for Jaafer and said to him, ‘O Jaafer, it is thirty days since we had news of Noureddin Ali ben Khacan, and I doubt me the Sultan has killed him; but by the life of my head and the tombs of my forefathers, if aught of ill have befallen him, I will make an end of him who was the cause of it, though he be the dearest of all men to myself! So it is my wish that thou set out at once for Bassora and bring me news of my cousin Mohammed ben Suleiman ez Zeini and how he hath dealt with Noureddin; and do thou tell my cousin the young man’s history and how I sent him to him with my letter, and if thou find that the King hath done otherwise than after my commandment, lay hands on him and his Vizier Muin ben Sawa and bring them to us, as thou shalt find them. Nor do thou tarry longer on the road than shall suffice for the journey, or I will strike off thy head.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ replied Jaafer, and made ready at once and set out for Bassora, where he arrived in due course. When he came up and saw the crowd and turmoil, he enquired what was the matter and was told how it stood with Noureddin Ali, whereupon he hastened to go in to the Sultan and saluting him, acquainted him with his errand and the Khalif’s determination, in case of any foul play having befallen Noureddin, to destroy whosoever should have been the cause of it. Then he seized upon the Sultan and his Vizier and laid them in ward, and commanding Noureddin to be released, seated him on the throne in the place of Mohammed ben Suleiman. After this Jaafer abode three days at Bassora, the usual guest-time, and on the morning of the fourth day, Noureddin turned to him and said, ‘I long for the sight of the Commander of the Faithful.’ Then said Jaafer to Mohammed ben Suleiman, ‘Make ready, for we will pray the morning-prayer and take horse for Baghdad.’ And he answered, ‘I hear and obey.’ So they prayed the morning-prayer and set out, all of them, taking with them the Vizier Muin ben Sawa, who began to repent of what he had done. Noureddin rode by Jaafer’s side and they fared on without ceasing, till they arrived in due course at the Abode of Peace, Baghdad, and going in to the Khalif’s presence, told him how they had found Noureddin nigh upon death. The Khalif said to Noureddin, ‘Take this sword and strike off thine enemy’s head.’ So he took the sword and went up to Muin ben Sawa, but the latter looked at him and said, ‘I did according to my nature; do thou according to thine.’ So Noureddin threw the sword from his hand and said to the Khalif, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, he hath beguiled me with his speech,’ and he repeated the following verse:

Lo, with the cunning of his speech my heart he hath beguiled, For generous minds are ever moved by artful words and mild!

‘Leave him, thou,’ said the Khalif, and turning to Mesrour, commanded him to behead Muin. So Mesrour drew his sword and smote off the Vizier’s head. Then said the Khalif to Noureddin, ‘Ask a boon of me.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered he, ‘I have no need of the sovereignty of Bassora: all my desire is to have the honour of serving thee and looking on thy face.’ ‘With all my heart,’ replied the Khalif. Then he sent for Enis el Jelis and bestowed plentiful favours upon them both, assigning them a palace at Baghdad and regular allowances. Moreover, he made Noureddin one of his boon-companions, and the latter abode with him in the enjoyment of the most delectable life, till Death overtook him.

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

GHANIM BEN EYOUB THE SLAVE OF LOVE.

There lived once at Damascus, in the days of the Khalif Haroun er Reshid, a wealthy merchant, who had a son like the moon at its full and withal sweet of speech, called Ghanim ben Eyoub, and a daughter called Fitneh, unique in her beauty and grace. Their father died and left them abundant wealth and amongst other things a hundred loads of silk and brocade and bladders of musk, on each of which was written, ‘This is of the loads intended for Baghdad,’ he having been about to make the journey thither, when God the Most High took him to Himself. After awhile, his son took the loads and bidding farewell to his mother and kindred and townsfolk, set out for Baghdad with a company of merchants, committing himself to God the Most High, who decreed him safety, so that he arrived without hindrance at that city. Here he hired a handsome house, which he furnished with carpets and cushions and hangings, and stored his goods therein and put up his mules and camels. Then he abode awhile, resting, whilst the merchants and notables of Baghdad came and saluted him; after which he took a parcel containing ten pieces of costly stuffs, with the prices written on them, and carried it to the bazaar, where the merchants received him with honour and made him sit down in the shop of the chief of the market, to whom he delivered the parcel of stuffs. He opened it and taking out the stuffs, sold them for him at a profit of two dinars on every one of prime cost. At this Ghanim rejoiced and went on to sell his stuffs, little by little, for a whole year. On the first day of the following year, he repaired, as usual, to the bazaar in the market-place, but found the gate shut and enquiring the reason, was told that one of the merchants was dead and that all the others had gone to wail in his funeral and was asked if he were minded to gain the favour of God by going with them. He assented and enquired where the funeral was to be held, whereupon they directed him to the place. So he made the ablution and repaired with the other merchants to the place of prayer, where they prayed over the dead, then went before the bier to the burial-place without the city and passed among the tombs till they came to the grave. Here they found that the dead man’s people had pitched a tent over the tomb and brought thither lamps and candles. So they buried the dead and sat down to listen to the reading of the Koran over the tomb. Ghanim sat with them, being overcome with bashfulness and saying to himself, ‘I cannot well go away till they do.’ They sat listening to the recitation till nightfall, when the servants set the evening meal and sweetmeats before them and they ate till they were satisfied, then sat down again, after having washed their hands. But Ghanim was troubled for his house and property being in fear of thieves, and said to himself, ‘I am a stranger here and thought to be rich, and if I pass the night abroad, the thieves will steal the money and the goods.’ So he arose and left the company, having first asked leave to go about a necessary business, and following the beaten track, came to the gate of the city, but found it shut and saw none going or coming nor heard aught but the dogs barking and the wolves howling, for it was now the middle of the night. At this he exclaimed, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God! I was in fear for my property and came back on its account, but now I find the gate shut and am become in fear for my life!’ And he retraced his steps, seeking a place where he might pass the night, till he found a tomb enclosed by four walls, with a palm-tree in its midst and a gate of granite. The gate stood open; so he entered and lay down, but sleep came not to him and fright and oppression beset him, for that he was alone among the tombs. So he rose to his feet and opening the door, looked out and saw, in the distance, a light making for the tomb from the direction of the city-gate. At this he was afraid and hastening to shut the gate, climbed up into the palm-tree and hid himself among the branches. The light came nearer and nearer, till he could see three black slaves, two carrying a chest and a third a lantern, an adze and a basket of plaster. When they came to the tomb, one of those who were carrying the chest cried out to the other, ‘Hello, Sewab!’ ‘What ails thee, O Kafour?’ said the other. ‘Were we not here at nightfall,’ asked the first, ‘and did we not leave the gate open?’ ‘True,’ replied Sewab. ‘See,’ said the other, ‘it is now shut and barred.’ ‘How small is your wit!’ broke in the bearer of the lantern, whose name was Bekhit. ‘Do ye not know that the owners of the gardens use to come out of Baghdad to tend them, and when the night overtakes them, they enter this place and shut the gate, for fear the blacks like ourselves should catch them and roast them and eat them?' 'Thou art right,' replied the others; 'but, by Allah, none of us is less of wit than thou!' 'If you do not believe me,' said Bekhit, 'let us go into the tomb and I will unearth the rat for you; I doubt not but that, when he saw the light and us making for the tomb, he took refuge in the palm-tree, for fear of us.' When Ghanim heard this, he said to himself, 'O most damnable of slaves, may God not have thee in His keeping for this thy craft and quickness of wit! There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! How shall I escape from these blacks?' Then said the two bearers to him of the lantern, 'Climb over the wall and open the door to us, O Bekhit, for we are tired of carrying the chest on our shoulders; and thou shalt have one of those that we seize inside, and we will fry him for thee so featly that not a drop of his fat shall be lost.' But he said, 'I am afraid of somewhat that my little sense has suggested to me; we should do better to throw the chest over the wall; for it is our treasure.' 'If we throw it over, it will break,' replied they. And he said, 'I fear lest there be brigands within who kill four and steal their goods; for they are wont when night falls on them, to enter these places and divide their spoil.' 'O thou of little wit!' rejoined they, 'how could they get in here?' Then they set down the chest and climbing the wall, got down and opened the gate, whilst Bekhit held the light for them, after which they shut the door and sat down. Then said one of them, 'O my brothers, we are tired with walking and carrying the chest, and it is now the middle of the night, and we have no breath left to open the tomb and bury the chest: so let us rest two or three hours, then rise and do what we have to do. Meanwhile each of us shall tell how he came to be an eunuch and all that befell him from first to last, to pass away the time, whilst we rest ourselves.' 'Good,' answered the others; and Bekhit said, 'O my brothers, I will begin.' 'Say on,' replied they. So he began as follows, 'Know, O my brothers, that

Story of the Eunuch Bekhit.

I was brought from my native country, when I was five years old, by a slave-merchant, who sold me to one of the royal messengers. My master had a three-year-old daughter, with whom I was reared, and they used to make sport of me, letting me play with the girl and dance and sing to her, till I reached the age of twelve and she that of ten; and even then they did not forbid me from her. One day, I went in to her and found her sitting in an inner room, perfumed with essences and scented woods, and her face shone like the round of the moon on its fourteenth night, as if she had just come out of the bath that was in the house. She began to sport with me, and I with her. Now I had just reached the age of puberty, and my yard rose on end, as it were a great bolt. Then she threw me down and mounting my breast, pulled me hither and thither, till my yard became uncovered. When she saw this, and it in point, she seized it in her hand and fell to rubbing it against the lips of her kaze, outside her trousers. At this, heat stirred in me and I put my arms round her, whilst she wreathed hers about my neck and strained me to her with all her might, till, before I knew what I did, my yard thrust through her trousers, and entering her kaze, did away her maidenhead. When I saw what I had done, I fled and took refuge with one of my comrades. Presently, her mother came in to her, and seeing her in this state, was lost to the world. However, she smoothed the matter over and hid the girl's condition from her father, of the love they bore me, nor did they cease to call to me and coax me, till they took me from where I was. After two months had passed by, her mother married her to a young man, a barber, who used to shave her father, and portioned and fitted her out of her own monies, whilst her father knew nothing of what had passed. Then they took me unawares and gelded me: and when they brought her to her husband, they made me her eunuch, to go before her, wherever she went, whether to the bath or to her father's house. On the wedding-night, they slaughtered a young pigeon and sprinkled the blood on her shift; and I abode with her a long while, enjoying her beauty and grace, by way of kissing and clipping and clicketing, till she died and her husband and father and mother died also; when they seized me for the Treasury and I found my way hither, where I became your comrade. This then, O my brothers, is my story and how I came to be docked of my cullions; and peace be on you.’ Then said the second eunuch, ‘Know, O my brothers, that

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

Story of the Eunuch Kafour.

From the time when I was eight years old, I was wont to tell the slave-merchants one lie every year, so that they fell out with one another, till at last my master lost patience with me and carrying me down to the market, delivered me to a broker and bade him cry me for sale, saying, “Who will buy this slave with his fault?” He did so, and it was asked him, “What is his fault?” Quoth he, “He tells one lie every year.” Then came up one of the merchants and said to the broker, “How much have they bidden for this slave, with his fault?” “Six hundred dirhems,” replied the broker. “And twenty dirhems for thyself,” said the merchant. So he brought him to the slave-dealer, who took the money, and the broker carried me to my master’s house and went away, after having received his brokerage. The merchant clothed me as befitted my condition, and I bode in his service the rest of the year, until the new year came in with good omen. It was a blessed season, rich in herbage and the fruits of the earth, and the merchants began to give entertainments every day, each bearing the cost in turn, till it came to my master’s turn to entertain them in a garden without the city. So he and the other merchants repaired to the garden, taking with them all that they required of food and so forth, and sat, eating and drinking and carousing, till noon, when my master, having need of something from the house, said to me, “O slave, mount the mule and go to the house and get such and such a thing from thy mistress and return quickly.” I did as he bade me and started for the house, but as I drew near, I began to cry out and weep copiously, whereupon all the people of the quarter collected, great and small; and my master’s wife and daughters, hearing the noise I was making, opened the door and asked me what was the matter. Quoth I, “My master and his friends were sitting beneath an old wall, and it fell on them: and when I saw what had befallen them, I mounted the mule and came hither, in haste, to tell you.” When my master’s wife and daughters heard this, they shrieked aloud and tore their clothes and buffeted their faces, whilst the neighbours came round them. Then my mistress overturned the furniture of the house, pell-mell, tore down the shelves, broke up the casements and the lattices and smeared the walls with mud and indigo. Presently she said to me, “Out on thee, O Kafour! Come and help me tear down these cupboards and break up these vessels and porcelain!” So I went to her and helped her break up all the shelves in the house, with everything on them, after which I went round about the roofs and every part of the house, demolishing all I could and leaving not a single piece of china or the like in the house unbroken, till I had laid waste the whole place, crying out the while, “Alas, my master!” Then my mistress sallied forth, with her face uncovered and only her kerchief on, accompanied by her sons and daughters, and said to me, “Go thou before us and show us the place where thy master lies dead under the wall, that we may take him out from the ruins and lay him on a bier and carry him to the house and give him a goodly funeral.” So I went on before them, crying out, “Alas, my master!” and they after me, bareheaded, crying out, “Alas! Alas for the man!” And there was not a man nor a woman nor a boy nor an old woman in the quarter but followed us, buffeting their faces and weeping sore. On this wise, I traversed the city with them, and the folk asked what was the matter, whereupon they told them what they had heard from me, and they exclaimed, “There is no power and no virtue but in God!” Then said one of them, “He was a man of consideration; so let us go to the chief of the police and tell him what has happened.” So they repaired to the magistrate and told him, whereupon he mounted and taking with him workmen with spades and baskets, set out for the scene of the accident, following my track, with all the people after him. I ran on before them, buffeting my face and throwing dust on my head and crying out, followed by my mistress and her children, shrieking aloud. But I outran them and reached the garden before them, and when my master saw me in this state and heard me crying out, “Alas, my mistress! Alas! Alas! Who is left to take pity on me, now that my mistress is dead? Would God I had died instead of her!” he was confounded and his colour paled. Then said he to me, “What ails thee, O Kafour? What is the matter?” “O my lord,” replied I, “When thou sentest me to the house, I found that the wall of the saloon had given way and the whole of it had fallen in upon my mistress and her children.” “And did not thy mistress escape?” “No, by Allah, O my master!” answered I. “Not one of them was saved, and the first to die was my mistress, thine elder daughter.” “Did not my younger daughter escape?” asked he. “No,” replied I; and he said, “What became of the mule I use to ride? Was she saved?” “No, by Allah,” answered I; “the walls of the house and of the stable fell in on all that were in the dwelling, even to the sheep and geese and fowls, so that they all became a heap of flesh and the dogs ate them: not one of them is saved.” “Not even thy master, my elder son?” asked he. “No, by Allah!” repeated I. “Not one of them was saved, and now there remains neither house nor inhabitants nor any trace of them: and as for the sheep and geese and fowls, the dogs and cats have eaten them.” When my master heard this, the light in his eyes became darkness and he lost command of his senses and his reason, so that he could not stand upon his feet, for he was as one taken with the rickets and his back was broken. Then he rent his clothes and plucked out his beard and casting his turban from his head, buffeted his face, till the blood streamed down, crying out, “Alas, my children! Alas, my wife! Alas, what a misfortune! To whom did there ever happen the like of what hath befallen me?” The other merchants, his companions, joined in his tears and lamentations and rent their clothes, being moved to pity of his case; and my master went out of the garden’ buffeting his face and staggering like a drunken man, for stress of what had befallen him and the much beating he had given his face. As he came forth of the garden-gate, followed by the other merchants, behold, they saw a great cloud of dust and heard a great noise of crying and lamentation. They looked, and behold, it was the chief of the police with his officers and the townspeople who had come out to look on, and my master’s family in front of them, weeping sore and shrieking and lamenting. The first to accost my master were his wife and children; and when he saw them, he was confounded and laughed and said to them, “How is it with you all and what befell you in the house?” When they saw him, they exclaimed, “Praised be God for thy safety!” and threw themselves upon him, and his children clung to him, crying, “Alas, our father! Praised be God for thy preservation, O our father!” Then said his wife, “Thou art well, praised be God who hath shown us thy face in safety!” And indeed she was confounded and her reason fled, when she saw him, and she said, “O my lord, how did you escape, thou and thy friends the merchants?” “And how fared it with thee in the house?” asked he. “We were all in good health and case,” answered they; “nor has aught befallen us in the house, save that thy slave Kafour came to us, bareheaded, with his clothes torn and crying out, ‘Alas, my master! Alas, my master!’ So we asked what was the matter, and he said, ‘The wall of the garden has fallen on my master and his friends, and they are all dead.’” “By Allah,” said my master, “he came to me but now, crying out, ‘Alas, my mistress! Alas, her children!’ and said, ‘My mistress and her children are all dead.’” Then he looked round and seeing me with my torn turban hanging down my neck, shrieking and weeping violently and strewing earth on my head, cried out at me. So I came to him and he said, “Woe to thee, O pestilent slave, O whore-son knave, O accurst of race! What mischiefs hast thou wrought! But I will strip thy skin from thy flesh and cut thy flesh off thy bones!” “By Allah,” replied I, “thou canst do nothing with me, for thou boughtest me with my fault, with witnesses to testify against thee that thou didst so and that thou knewest of my fault, which is that I tell one lie every year. This is but half a lie, but by the end of the year, I will tell the other half, and it will then be a whole lie.” “O dog, son of a dog,” exclaimed my master, “O most accursed of slaves, is this but a half lie? Indeed, it is a great calamity! Go out from me; thou art free before God!” “By Allah,” rejoined I, “if thou free me, I will not free thee, till I have completed my year and told the other half lie. When that is done, take me down to the market and sell me, as thou boughtest me, to whosoever will buy me with my fault: but free me not, for I have no handicraft to get my living by: and this my demand is according to the law, as laid down by the doctors in the chapter of Manumission.” Whilst we were talking, up came the people of the quarter and others, men and women, together with the chief of the police and his suite. So my master and the other merchants went up to him and told him the story and how this was but half a lie, at which the people wondered and deemed the lie an enormous one. And they cursed me and reviled me, whilst I stood laughing and saying, “How can my master kill me, when he bought me with this fault?” Then my master returned home and found his house in ruins, and it was I who had laid waste the most part of it, having destroyed things worth much money, as had also done his wife, who said to him, “It was Kafour who broke the vessels and the china.” Thereupon his rage redoubled and he beat hand upon hand, exclaiming, “By Allah, never in my life did I see such a son of shame as this slave; and he says this is only half a lie! How if he had told a whole one? He would have laid waste a city or two!” Then in his rage he went to the chief of the police, who made me eat stick till I fainted: and whilst I was yet senseless, they fetched a barber, who gelded me and cauterized the parts. When I revived, I found myself an eunuch, and my master said to me, “Even as thou hast made my heart bleed for the most precious things I had, so will I grieve thy heart for that of thy members by which thou settest most store.” Then he took me and sold me at a profit, for that I was become an eunuch, and I ceased not to make trouble, wherever I came, and was shifted from Amir to Amir and notable to notable, being bought and sold, till I entered the palace of the Commander of the Faithful, and now my spirit is broken and I have abjured my tricks, having lost my manhood.’

When the others heard his story, they laughed and said, ‘Verily, thou art dung, the son of dung! Thou liedst most abominably!’ Then said they to the third slave, ‘Tell us thy story.’ ‘O my cousins,’ replied he, ‘all that ye have said is idle: I will tell you how I came to lose my cullions, and indeed, I deserved more than this, for I swived my mistress and my master’s son: but my story is a long one and this is no time to tell it, for the dawn is near, and if the day surprise us with this chest yet unburied, we shall be blown upon and lose our lives. So let us fall to work at once, and when we get back to the palace, I will tell you my story and how I became an eunuch.’ So they set down the lantern and dug a hole between four tombs, the length and breadth of the chest, Kafour plying the spade and Sewab clearing away the earth by basketsful, till they had reached a depth of half a fathom, when they laid the chest in the hole and threw back the earth over it: then went out and shutting the door, disappeared from Ghanim’s sight. When he was sure that they were indeed gone and that he was alone in the place, his heart was concerned to know what was in the chest and he said to himself; ‘I wonder what was in the chest!’ However, he waited till break of day, when he came down from the palm-tree and scraped away the earth with his hands, till he laid bare the chest and lifted it out of the hole. Then he took a large stone and hammered at the lock, till he broke it and raising the cover, beheld a beautiful young lady, richly dressed and decked with jewels of gold and necklaces of precious stones, worth a kingdom, no money could pay their price. She was asleep and her breath rose and fell, as if she had been drugged. When Ghanim saw her, he knew that some one had plotted against her and drugged her; so he pulled her out of the chest and laid her on the ground on her back. As soon as she scented the breeze and the air entered her nostrils and lungs, she sneezed and choked and coughed, when there fell from her mouth a pastille of Cretan henbane, enough to make an elephant sleep from night to night, if he but smelt it. Then she opened her eyes and looking round, exclaimed in a sweet and melodious voice, 'Out on thee, O breeze! There is in thee neither drink for the thirsty nor solace for him whose thirst is quenched! Where is Zehr el Bustan?' But no one answered her; so she turned and cried out, 'Ho, Sebiheh, Shejeret ed Durr, Nour el Huda, Nejmet es Subh, Shehweh, Nuzheh, Hulweh, Zerifeh! Out on ye, speak!' But no one answered her; and she looked about her and said, 'Woe is me! they have buried me among the tombs! O Thou who knowest what is in the breasts and who wilt requite at the Day of Resurrection, who hath brought me out from among the screens and curtains of the harem and laid me between four tombs?' All this while Ghanim was standing by: then he said to her, 'O my lady, here are neither screens nor curtains nor palaces; only thy bond slave Ghanim ben Eyoub, whom He who knoweth the hidden things hath brought hither, that he night save thee from these perils and accomplish for thee all that thou desirest.' And he was silent. When she saw how the case stood, she exclaimed, 'I testify that there is no god but God and that Mohammed is the Apostle of God!' Then she put her hands to her face and turning to Ghanim, said in a sweet voice, 'O blessed youth, who brought me hither! See, I am now come to myself.' 'O my lady,' replied he, 'three black eunuchs came hither, bearing this chest;' and told her all that had happened and how his being belated had proved the means of her preservation from death by suffocation. Then he asked her who she was and what was her story. 'O youth,' said she, 'praised be God who hath thrown me into the hands of the like of thee! But now put me back into the chest and go out into the road and hire the first muleteer or horse-letter thou meetest, to carry it to thy house. When I am there, all will be well and I will tell thee my story and who am I, and good shall betide thee on my account.’ At this he rejoiced and went out into the road. It was now broad day and the folk began to go about the ways: so he hired a muleteer and bringing him to the tomb, lifted up the chest, in which he had already replaced the young lady, and set it on the mule. Then he fared homeward, rejoicing, for that she was a damsel worth ten thousand dinars and adorned with jewels and apparel of great value, and love for her had fallen on his heart. As soon as he came to the house, he carried in the chest and opening it, took out the young lady, who looked about her, and seeing that the place was handsome, spread with carpets and decked with gay colours, and noting the stuffs tied up and the bales of goods and what not, knew that he was a considerable merchant and a man of wealth. So she uncovered her face and looking at him, saw that he was a handsome young man and loved him. Then said she to him, ‘O my lord, bring us something to eat.’ ‘On my head and eyes,’ replied he, and going to the market, bought a roasted lamb, a dish of sweetmeats, dried fruits and wax candles, besides wine and drinking gear and perfumes. With these he returned to the house, and when the damsel saw him, she laughed and kissed and embraced him. Then she fell to caressing him, so that love for her redoubled on him and got the mastery of his heart. They ate and drank, each in love with the other, for indeed they were alike in age and beauty, till nightfall, when Ghanim rose and lit the lamps and candles, till the place blazed with light; after which he brought the wine-service and set on the banquet. Then they sat down again and began to fill and give each other to drink; and they toyed and laughed and recited verses, whilst joy grew on them and each was engrossed with love of the other, glory be to Him, who uniteth hearts! They ceased not to carouse thus till near upon daybreak, when drowsiness overcame them and they slept where they were till the morning. Then Ghanim arose and going to the market, bought all that they required in the way of meat and drink and vegetables and what not, with which he returned to the house; and they both sat down and ate till they were satisfied, when he set on wine. They drank and toyed with each other, till their cheeks flushed and their eyes sparkled and Ghanim's soul yearned to kiss the girl and lie with her. So he said to her, 'O my lady, grant me a kiss of thy mouth; maybe it will quench the fire of my heart.' 'O Ghanim,' replied she, 'wait till I am drunk: then steal a kiss from me, so that I may not know thou hast kissed me.' Then she rose and taking off her upper clothes, sat in a shift of fine linen and a silken kerchief. At this, desire stirred in Ghanim and he said to her, 'O my mistress, wilt thou not vouchsafe me what I asked of thee!' 'By Allah,' replied she, 'this may not be, for there is a stubborn saying written on the ribbon of my trousers.' Thereupon Ghanim's heart sank and passion grew on him the more that what he sought was hard to get; and he recited the following verses:

I sought of her who caused my pain A kiss to ease me of my woe.
"No, no!" she answered; "hope it not!" And I, "Yes, yes! It shall be so!"
Then said she, smiling, "Take it then, With my consent, before I know."
And I, "By force!" "Not so," said she: "I freely it on thee bestow."
So do not question what befell, But seek God's grace and ask no mo;
Think what thou wilt of us; for love Is with suspect made sweet, I trow.
Nor do I reck if, after this, Avowed or secret be the foe.

Then love increased on him, and the fires were loosed in his heart, while she defended herself from him, saying, 'I can never be thine.' They ceased not to make love and carouse, whilst Ghanim was drowned in the sea of passion and distraction and she redoubled in cruelty and coyness, till the night brought in the darkness and let fall on them the skirts of sleep, when Ghanim rose and lit the lamps and candles and renewed the banquet and the flowers; then took her feet and kissed them, and finding them like fresh cream, pressed his face on them and said to her, 'O my lady, have pity on the captive of thy love and the slain of thine eyes; for indeed I were whole of heart but for thee!' And he wept awhile. 'O my lord and light of my eyes,' replied she, ‘by Allah, I love thee and trust in thee, but I know that I cannot be thine.’ ‘And what is there to hinder?’ asked he. Quoth she, ‘Tonight, I will tell thee my story, that thou mayst accept my excuse.’ Then she threw herself upon him and twining her arms about his neck, kissed him and wheedled him, promising him her favours; and they continued to toy and laugh till love got complete possession of them. They abode thus for a whole month, sleeping nightly on one couch, but whenever he sought to enjoy her, she put him off, whilst mutual love increased upon them, till they could hardly abstain from one another. One night as they lay, side by side, both heated with wine, he put his hand to her breast and stroked it, then passed it down over her stomach to her navel. She awoke and sitting up, put her hand to her trousers and finding them fast, fell asleep again. Presently, he put out his hand a second time and stroked her and sliding down to the ribbon of her trousers, began to pull at it, whereupon she awoke and sat up. Ghanim also sat up beside her and she said to him, ‘What dost thou want?’ ‘I want to lie with thee,’ answered he, ‘and that we may deal frankly one with the other.’ Quoth she, ‘I must now expound my case to thee, that thou mayst know my condition and my secret and that my excuse may be manifest to thee.’ ‘It is well,’ replied he. Then she opened the skirt of her shift, and taking up the ribbon of her trousers, said to him, ‘O my lord, read what is on this ribbon.’ So he took it and saw, wrought in letters of gold, the following words, ‘I am thine, and thou art mine, O descendant of the Prophet’s Uncle!’ When he read this, he dropped his hand and said to her, ‘Tell me who thou art.’ ‘It is well,’ answered she; ‘know that I am one of the favourites of the Commander of the Faithful and my name is Cout el Culoub. I was reared in his palace, and when I grew up, he looked on me, and noting my qualities and the beauty and grace that God had bestowed on me, conceived a great love for me; so he took me and assigned me a separate lodging and gave me ten female slaves to wait on me and all this jewellery thou seest on me. One day he went on a journey to one of his provinces and the Lady Zubeideh came to one of my waiting-women and said to her, “I have somewhat to ask of thee.” “What is it, O my lady?” asked she. “When thy mistress Cout el Culoub is asleep,” said Zubeideh, “put this piece of henbane up her nostrils or in her drink, and thou shalt have of me as much money as will content thee." "With all my heart," replied the woman, and took the henbane, being glad because of the money and because she had aforetime been in Zubeideh's service. So she put the henbane in my drink, and when it was night, I drank, and the drug had no sooner reached my stomach than I fell to the ground, with my head touching my feet, and knew not but that I was in another world. When Zubeideh saw that her plot had succeeded, she put me in this chest and summoning the slaves, bribed them and the doorkeepers, and sent the former to do with me as thou sawest. So my delivery was at thy hands, and thou broughtest me hither and hast used me with the utmost kindness. This is my story, and I know not what is come of the Khalif in my absence. Know then my condition, and divulge not my affair.' When Ghanim heard her words and knew that she was the favourite of the Commander of the Faithful, he drew back, being smitten with fear of the Khalif, and sat apart from her in one of the corners of the place, blaming himself and brooding over his case and schooling his heart to patience, bewildered for love of one who might not be his. Then he wept, for excess of longing, and bemoaned the injustice and hostility of Fortune (Glory be to Him who occupies hearts with love!) reciting the following verses:

The heart of the lover's racked with weariness and care, For his
reason ravished is for one who is passing fair.
It was asked me, "What is the taste of love?" I answer made,
"Love is sweet water, wherein are torment and despair."

Thereupon Cout el Culoub arose and pressed him to her bosom and kissed him, for love of him mastered her heart, so that she discovered to him her secret and the passion that possessed her and throwing her arms about his neck, embraced him; but he held off from her, for fear of the Khalif. Then they talked awhile (and indeed they were both drowned in the sea of mutual love) till day, when Ghanim rose and going to the market as usual, took what was needful and returned home. He found her in tears; but when she saw him, she ceased weeping and smiled and said, 'Thou hast made me desolate, O beloved of my heart! By Allah, the hour that thou hast been absent from me has been to me as a year! I have let thee see how it is with me for the excess of my passion for thee; so come now, leave what has been and take thy will of me.' 'God forbid that this should be!' replied he. 'How shall the dog sit in the lion's place? Verily, that which is the master's is forbidden to the slave.' And he withdrew from her and sat down on a corner of the mat. Her passion increased with his refusal; so she sat down beside him and caroused and sported with him, till they were both warm with wine, and she was mad for dishonour with him. Then she sang the following verses:

The heart of the slave of passion is all but broken in twain: How
long shall this rigour last and this coldness of disdain?
O thou that turnest away from me, in default of sin, Rather to
turn towards than away should gazelles be fain!
Aversion and distance eternal and rigour and disdain; How can
youthful lover these hardships all sustain?

Thereupon Ghanim wept and she wept because he did, and they ceased not to drink till nightfall, when he rose and spread two beds, each in its place. 'For whom is the second bed?' asked she. 'One is for me and the other for thee,' answered he. 'Henceforth we must lie apart, for that which is the master's is forbidden to the slave.' 'O my lord,' exclaimed she, 'let us leave this, for all things happen according to fate and predestination.' But he refused, and the fire was loosed in her heart and she clung to him and said, 'By Allah, we will not sleep but together!' 'God forbid!' answered he, and he prevailed against her and lay apart till the morning, whilst love and longing and distraction redoubled on her. They abode thus three whole months, and whenever she made advances to him, he held aloof from her, saying, 'Whatever belongs to the master is forbidden to the slave.' Then, when this was prolonged upon her and affliction and anguish grew on her, for the weariness of her heart she recited the following verses:

O marvel of beauty, how long this disdain? And who hath provoked
thee to turn from my pain?

All manner of elegance in thee is found And all fashions of
fairness thy form doth contain.
The hearts of all mortals thou stir'st with desire And on
everyone's lids thou mak'st sleeplessness reign.
I know that the branch has been plucked before thee; So, O
capparis-branch, thou dost wrong, it is plain.
I used erst to capture myself the wild deer. How comes it the
chase doth the hunter enchain?
But the strangest of all that is told of thee is, I was snared,
and thou heard'st not the voice of my pain.
Yet grant not my prayer. If I'm jealous for thee Of thyself how
much more of myself? Nor again,
As long as life lasteth in me, will I say, "O marvel of beauty,
how long this disdain?"'

Meanwhile, the Lady Zubeideh, when, in the absence of the Khalif, she had done this thing with Cout el Culoub, abode perplexed and said to herself, 'What answer shall I make the Khalif, when he comes back and asks for her?' Then she called an old woman, who was with her, and discovered her secret to her, saying, 'What shall I do, seeing that Cout el Culoub is no more?' 'O my lady,' replied the old woman, 'the time of the Khalif's return is at hand; but do thou send for a carpenter and bid him make a figure of wood in the shape of a corpse. We will dig a grave for it and bury it in the middle of the palace: then do thou build an oratory over it and set therein lighted lamps and candles and command all in the palace to put on mourning. Moreover, do thou bid thy slave-girls and eunuchs, as soon as they know of the Khalif's approach, spread straw in the vestibules, and when the Khalif enters and asks what is the matter, let them say, "Cout el Culoub is dead, may God abundantly replace her to thee! and for the honour in which she was held of our mistress, she hath buried her in her own palace." When the Khalif hears this, it will be grievous to him and he will weep: then will he cause recitations of the Koran to be made over her and will watch by night over her tomb. If he should say to himself, "My cousin Zubeideh has compassed the death of Cout el Culoub out of jealousy," or if love-longing should master him and he order to take her forth of the tomb, fear thou not; for when they dig and come to the figure, he will see it as it were a human body, shrouded in costly grave-clothes; and if he desire to take off the swathings, do thou forbid him and say to him, “It is unlawful to look upon her nakedness.” The fear of the world to come will restrain him and he will believe that she is dead and will cause the image to be restored to its place and thank thee for what thou hast done: and so, if it please God, thou shalt be delivered from this strait.’ Her advice commended itself to Zubeideh, who bestowed on her a dress of honour and a sum of money, bidding her do as she had said. So she at once ordered a carpenter to make the aforesaid figure, and as soon as it was finished, she brought it to Zubeideh, who shrouded it and buried it and built a pavilion over it, in which she set lighted lamps and candles and spread carpets round the tomb. Moreover, she put on black and ordered her household to do the same, and the news was spread abroad in the palace that Cout el Culoub was dead. After awhile, the Khalif returned from his journey and entered the palace, thinking only of Cout el Culoub. He saw all the pages and damsels and eunuchs in mourning, at which his heart quaked; and when he went in to the Lady Zubeideh, he found her also clad in black. So he asked the cause of this and was told that Cout el Culoub was dead, whereupon he fell down in a swoon. As soon as he came to himself, he enquired of her tomb, and Zubeideh said to him, ‘Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that for the honour in which I held her, I have buried her in my own palace.’ Then he repaired to her tomb, in his travelling dress, and found the place spread with carpets and lit with lamps. When he saw this, he thanked Zubeldeh for what she had done and abode perplexed, halting between belief and distrust, till at last suspicion got the better of him and he ordered the grave to be opened and the body exhumed. When he saw the figure and would have taken off the swathings to look upon the body, the fear of God the Most High restrained him, and the old woman (taking advantage of his hesitation) said, ‘Restore her to her place.’ Then he sent at once for readers and doctors of the Law and caused recitations of the Koran to be made over her grave and sat by it, weeping, till he lost his senses. He continued to frequent the tomb for a whole month, at the end of which time, he chanced one day, after the Divan had broken up and his Amirs and

Viziers had gone away to their houses, to enter the harem, where he laid down and slept awhile, whilst one damsel sat at his head, fanning him, and another at his feet, rubbing them. Presently he awoke and opening his eyes, shut them again and heard the damsel at his head say to her at his feet, ‘Hist, Kheizuran!’ ‘Well, Kezib el Ban?’ answered the other. ‘Verily,’ said the first, ‘our lord knows not what has passed and watches over a tomb in which there is only a carved wooden figure, of the carpenter’s handiwork.’ ‘Then what is become of Cout el Culoub?’ enquired the other. ‘Know,’ replied Kezib el Ban. ‘that the Lady Zubeideh bribed one of her waiting-women to drug her with henbane and laying her in a chest, commanded Sewab and Kafour to take it and bury it among the tombs.’ Quoth Kheizuran, ‘And is not the lady Cout el Culoub dead?’ ‘No,’ replied the other; ‘God preserve her youth from death! but I have heard the Lady Zubeideh say that she is with a young merchant of Damascus, by name Ghanim ben Eyoub, and has been with him these four months, whilst this our lord is weeping and watching anights over an empty tomb.’ When the Khalif heard the girls’ talk and knew that the tomb was a trick and a fraud and that Cout el Culoub had been with Ghanim ben Eyoub for four months, he was sore enraged and rising up, summoned his officers of state, whereupon the Vizier Jaafer the Barmecide came up and kissed the earth before him, and the Khalif said to him, ‘O Jaafer, take a company of men with thee and fall upon the house of Ghanim ben Eyoub and bring him to me, with my slave-girl Cout el Culoub, for I will assuredly punish him!’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered Jaafer, and setting out with his guards and the chief of the police, repaired to Ghanim’s house. Now the latter had brought home a pot of meat and was about to put forth his hand to eat of it, he and Cout d Culoub, when the damsel, happening to look out, found the house beset on all sides by the Vizier and the chief of the police and their officers and attendants, with drawn swords in their hands, encompassing the place, as the white of the eye encompasses the black. At this sight, she knew that news of her had reached the Khalif, her master, and made sure of ruin, and her colour paled and her beauty changed. Then she turned to Ghanim and said to him, ‘O my love, fly for thy life!’ ‘What shall I do?’ said he; ‘and whither shall I go, seeing that my substance and fortune are in this house?' 'Delay not,' answered she, 'lest thou lose both life and goods.' 'O my beloved and light of my eyes,' rejoined he, 'how shall I do to get away, when they have surrounded the house?' 'Fear not,' said she: and taking off his clothes, made him put on old and ragged ones, after which she took the empty pot and put in it a piece of bread and a saucer of meat, and placing the whole in a basket, set it on his head and said, 'Go out in this guise and fear not for me, for I know how to deal with the Khalif.' So he went out amongst them, carrying the basket and its contents, and God covered him with His protection and he escaped the snares and perils that beset him, thanks to the purity of his intent. Meanwhile, Jaafer alighted and entering the house, saw Cout el Culoub, who had dressed and decked herself after the richest fashion and filled a chest with gold and jewellery and precious stones and rarities and what else was light of carriage and great of value. When she saw Jaafer, she rose and kissing the earth before him, said, 'O my lord, the pen hath written from of old that which God hath decreed.' 'By Allah, O my lady,' rejoined Jaafer, 'I am commanded to seize Ghanim ben Eyoub.' 'O my lord,' replied she, 'he made ready merchandise and set out therewith for Damascus and I know nothing more of him; but I desire thee to take charge of this chest and deliver it to me in the palace of the Commander of the Faithful.' 'I hear and obey,' said Jaafer, and bade his men carry the chest to the palace, together with Cout el Culoub, commanding them to use her with honour and consideration. And they did his bidding, after they had plundered Ghanim's house. Then Jaafer went in to the Khalif and told him what had happened, and he bade lodge Cout el Culoub in a dark chamber and appointed an old woman to serve her, thinking no otherwise than that Ghanim had certainly debauched her and lain with her. Then he wrote a letter to the Amir Mohammed ben Suleiman ez Zeini, the viceroy of Damascus, to the following purport, 'As soon as this letter reaches thee, lay hands on Ghanim ben Eyoub and send him to me.' When the letter came to the viceroy, he kissed it and laid it on his head, then caused proclamation to be made in the streets of Damascus, 'Whoso is minded to plunder, let him betake himself to the house of Ghanim ben Eyoub!' So they repaired to the house, where they found that Ghanim's mother and sister had made him a tomb midmost the house and sat by it, weeping for him, whereupon they seized them, without telling them the cause, and carried them before the Sultan, after having plundered the house. The viceroy questioned them of Ghanim, and they replied, ‘This year or more we have had no news of him.’ So they restored them to their place.

Meanwhile Ghanim, finding himself despoiled of his wealth and considering his case, wept till his heart was well-nigh broken. Then he fared on at random, till the end of the day, and hunger was sore on him and he was worn out with fatigue. Coming to a village, he entered a mosque, where he sat down on a mat, leaning his back against the wall, and presently sank to the ground, in extremity for hunger and weariness, and lay there till morning, his heart fluttering for want of food. By reason of his sweating, vermin coursed over his skin, his breath grew fetid and he became in sorry case. When the people of the town came to pray the morning-prayer, they found him lying there, sick and weak with hunger, yet showing signs of gentle breeding. As soon as they had done their devotions, they came up to him and finding him cold and starving, threw over him an old mantle with ragged sleeves and said to him, ‘O stranger, whence art thou and what ails thee?’ He opened his eyes and wept, but made them no answer; whereupon, one of them, seeing that he was starving, brought him a saucerful of honey and two cakes of bread. So he ate a little and they sat with him till sunrise, when they went about their occupations. He abode with them in this state for a month, whilst sickness and infirmity increased upon him, and they wept for him and pitying his condition, took counsel together of his case and agreed to send him to the hospital at Baghdad. Meanwhile, there came into the mosque two beggar women, who were none other than Ghanim’s mother and sister; and when he saw them, he gave them the bread that was at his head and they slept by his side that night, but he knew them not. Next day the villagers fetched a camel and said to the driver, ‘Put this sick man on thy camel and carry him to Baghdad and set him down at the door of the hospital, so haply he may be medicined and recover his health, and God will reward thee.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ said the camel-driver. So they brought Ghanim, who was asleep, out of the mosque and laid him, mat and all, on the back of the camel; and his mother and sister came out with the rest of the people to look on him, but knew him not. However, after considering him, they said, ‘Verily, he favours our Ghanim! Can this sick man be he?’ Presently, he awoke and finding himself bound with ropes on the back of a camel, began to weep and complain, and the people of the village saw his mother and sister weeping over him, though they knew him not. Then they set out for Baghdad, whither the camel-driver forewent them and setting Ghanim down at the door of the hospital, went away. He lay there till morning, and when the people began to go about the ways, they saw him and stood gazing on him, for indeed he was become as thin as a skewer, till the syndic of the market came up and drove them away, saying, ‘I will gain Paradise through this poor fellow; for if they take him into the hospital, they will kill him in one day.’ Then he made his servants carry him to his own house, where he spread him a new bed, with a new pillow, and said to his wife, ‘Tend him faithfully.’ ‘Good,’ answered she; ‘on my head be it!’ Then she tucked up her sleeves and heating some water, washed his hands and feet and body, after which she clothed him in a gown belonging to one of her slave-girls and gave him a cup of wine to drink and sprinkled rose-water over him. So he revived and moaned, as he thought of his beloved Cout el Culoub! and sorrows were sore upon him.

Meanwhile, Cout el Culoub abode in duresse fourscore days, at the end of which time, the Khalif chancing one day to pass the place in which she was, heard her repeating verses and saying, ‘O my beloved, O Ghanim, how great is thy goodness and how chaste is thy nature! Thou didst good to him who hath injured thee, thou guardedst his honour who hath violated thine, and didst protect the harem of him who hath despoiled thee and thine! But thou wilt surely stand, with the Commander of the Faithful, before the Just Judge and be justified of him on the day when the judge shall be the Lord of all (to whom belong might and majesty) and the witnesses the angels!’ When the Khalif heard her complaint, he knew that she had been wrongfully entreated and returning to his palace sent Mesrour the eunuch for her. She came before him, with bowed head, tearful-eyed and mournful-hearted, and he said to her, ‘O Cout el Culoub, I find thou taxest me with injustice and tyranny and avouchest that I have wronged him who did me good. Who is this that hath guarded my honour and whose honour I have violated, and who hath protected my harem, whilst I have enslaved his?' 'Ghanim ben Eyoub,' replied she; 'for by thy munificence, O Commander of the Faithful, he never approached me by way of lewdness nor with evil intent!' Then said the Khalif, 'There is no power and no virtue but in God! Ask what thou wilt of me, O Cout el Culoub, and it shall be granted to thee.' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' said she, 'I ask of thee my beloved Ghanim ben Eyoub.' The Khalif granted her prayer, and she said, 'O Commander of the Faithful, if I bring him to thee, wilt thou bestow me on him?' 'If he come,' replied the Khalif, 'I will bestow thee on him, the gift of a generous man who does not go back on his giving.' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' said she, 'suffer me to go in quest of him: it may be God will unite me with him.' 'Do what seemeth good to thee,' answered he. So she rejoiced and taking with her a thousand dinars, went out and visited the elders of the various religious orders and gave alms for Ghanim's sake. Next day she went to the merchants' bazaar and told the chief of the market what she sought and gave him money, saying, 'Bestow this in alms on strangers.' The following week she took other thousand dinars and going to the market of the goldsmiths and jewellers, called the syndic and gave him the money, saying, 'Bestow this in alms on strangers.' The syndic, who was none other than Ghanim's benefactor, looked at her and said, 'O my lady, wilt thou go to my house and look upon a strange youth I have there and see how goodly and elegant he is?' (Now this stranger was Ghanim, but the syndic had no knowledge of him and thought him to be some unfortunate debtor, who had been despoiled of his property, or a lover parted from his beloved.) When she heard his words, her heart fluttered and her bowels yearned, and she said to him, 'Send with me some one who shall bring me to thy house.' So he sent a little boy, who led her thither and she thanked him for this. When she reached the house, she went in and saluted the syndic's wife, who rose and kissed the ground before her, knowing her. Then said Cout el Culoub, 'Where is the sick man who is with thee?' 'O my lady,' replied she, weeping, 'here he is, lying on this bed. By Allah, he is a man of condition and bears traces of gentle breeding!' So Cout el Culoub turned and looked at him, but he was as if disguised in her eyes, being worn and wasted till he was become as thin as a skewer, so that his case was doubtful to her and she was not certain that it was he. Nevertheless, she was moved to compassion for him and wept, saying, ‘Verily, strangers are unhappy, though they be princes in their own land!’ And his case was grievous to her and her heart ached for him, though she knew him not to be Ghanim. Then she appointed him wine and medicines and sat by his head awhile, after which she mounted and returned to her palace and continued to make the round of the bazaars in search of Ghanim.

Meanwhile Ghanim’s mother and sister arrived at Baghdad and fell in with the charitable syndic, who carried them to Cout el Culoub and said to her, ‘O princess of benevolent ladies, there be come to our city this day a woman and her daughter, who are fair of face and the marks of gentle breeding and fortune are manifest upon them, though they are clad in hair garments and have each a wallet hanging to her neck; and they are tearful-eyed and sorrowful-hearted. So I have brought them to thee, that thou mayest shelter them and rescue them from beggary, for they are not fit to ask alms, and if God will, we shall enter Paradise through them.’ ‘O my lord,’ exclaimed she, ‘thou makest me long to see them! Where are they? Bring them to me.’ So he bade the eunuch bring them in; and when she looked on them and saw that they were both possessed of beauty, she wept for them and said, ‘By Allah, they are people of condition and show signs of former fortune.’ ‘O my lady,’ said the syndic’s wife, ‘we love the poor and destitute, because of the recompense that God hath promised to such as succour them: as for these, belike the oppressors have done them violence and robbed them of their fortune and laid waste their dwelling-place.’ Then Ghanim’s mother and sister wept sore, recalling their former prosperity and contrasting it with their present destitute and miserable condition and thinking of Ghanim, whilst Cout el Culoub wept because they did. And they exclaimed, ‘We beseech God to reunite us with him whom we desire, and he is none other than our son Ghanim ben Eyoub!’ When Cout el Culoub heard this, she knew them to be the mother and sister of her beloved and wept till she lost her senses. When she revived, she turned to them and said, ‘Have no care and grieve not, for this day is the first of your prosperity and the last of your adversity.’ Then she bade the syndic take them to his own house and let his wife carry them to the bath and clothe them handsomely. And she charged him to take care of them and treat them with all honour, and gave him a sum of money. Next day, she mounted and riding to his house, went in to his wife, who rose and kissed her hands and thanked her for her goodness. There she saw Ghanim's mother and sister, whom the syndic's wife had taken to the bath and clothed afresh, so that the traces of their former condition were now plainly apparent. She sat awhile, conversing with them, after which she enquired for the sick youth, and the syndic's wife replied, 'He is in the same state.' Then said Cout el Culoub, 'Come, let us go and visit him.' So they all went into the room where he lay and sat down by him. Presently, Ghanim heard them mention the name of Cout el Culoub, whereupon his life came back to him, wasted and shrunken as he was, and he raised his head from the pillow and cried out, 'O Cout el Culoub!' 'Yes, O friend!' answered she. 'Draw near to me,' said he. So she looked at him earnestly and knew him and said to him, 'Surely thou art Ghanim ben Eyoub?' 'I am indeed he,' replied he. At this, she fell down in a swoon, and when Ghanim's mother and sister heard their words, they both cried out, 'O joy!' and swooned away. When they recovered, Cout el Culoub exclaimed, 'Praised be God who hath brought us together again and hath reunited thee with thy mother and sister!' Then she told him all that had befallen her with the Khalif and said, 'I have made known the truth to the Commander of the Faithful, who believed me and approved of thee; and now he wishes to see thee.' Then she told him how the Khalif had bestowed her on him, at which he was beyond measure rejoiced, and she returned to the palace at once, charging them not to stir till she came back. There she opened the chest that she had brought from Ghanim's house, and taking out some of the money, carried it to the syndic and bade him buy them each four suits of the best stuffs and twenty handkerchiefs and what else they needed; after which she carried them all three to the bath and commanded to wash them and made ready for them broths and galingale and apple-water against their coming out. When they left the bath, they put on new clothes, and she abode with them three days, feeding them with fowls and broths and sherbet of sugar-candy, till their strength returned to them. After this, she carried them to the bath a second time, and when they came out and had changed their clothes, she took them back to the syndic's house and left them there, whilst she returned to the palace and craving an audience of the Khalif, told him the whole story and how her lord Ghanim and his mother and sister were now in Baghdad. When the Khalif heard this, he turned to his attendants and said, 'Bring hither to me Ghanim.' So Jaafer went to fetch him: but Cout el Culoub forewent him to the syndic's house and told Ghanim that the Khalif had sent for him and enjoined him to eloquence and self-possession and pleasant speech. Then she clad him in a rich habit and gave him much money, bidding him be lavish of largesse to the household of the Khalif, when he went in to him. Presently, Jaafer arrived, riding on his Nubian mule, and Ghanim met him and kissed the ground before him, wishing him long life. Now was the star of his good fortune risen and shone, and Jaafer took him and brought him to the Khalif. When he entered, he looked at the viziers and amirs and chamberlains and deputies and grandees and captains, Turks and Medes and Arabs and Persians, and then at the Khalif. Then he made sweet his speech and his eloquence and bowing his head, spoke the following verses:

Long life unto a King, the greatest of the great, Still following
    on good works and bounties without date!
Glowering with high resolves, a fountain of largesse, For ever
    full; 'tis said, of fire and flood and fate,
That they none else would have for monarch of the world, For
    sovran of the time and King in Kisra's gate.
Kings, salutation-wise, upon his threshold's earth, For his
    acceptance lay the jewels of their state;
And when their eyes behold the glory of his might, Upon the
    earth, in awe, themselves they do prostrate.
This humbleness it is that profits them with thee And wins them
    wealth and power and rank and high estate.
Upon old Saturn's heights pitch thy pavilion, Since for thy
    countless hosts the world is grown too strait,
And teach the stars to know thine own magnificence, In kindness
    to the prince who rules the starry state.

May God with His consent for ever favour thee! For steadfastness
of soul and sense upon thee wait:
Thy justice overspreads the surface of the earth, Till far and
near for it their difference abate.

The Khalif was charmed with his eloquence and the sweetness of his speech and said to him, ‘Draw near to me.’ So he drew near and the Khalif said, ‘Tell me thy story and expound to me thy case.’ So Ghanim sat down and related to him all that had befallen him, from beginning to end. The Khalif was assured that he spoke the truth; so he invested him with a dress of honour and took him into favour. Then he said to him, ‘Acquit me of the wrong I have done thee.’ And Ghanim did so, saying, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, the slave and all that is his belong to his lord.’ The Khalif was pleased with this and bade set apart a palace for Ghanim, on whom he bestowed great store of gifts and assigned him bountiful stipends and allowances, sending his mother and sister to live with him; after which, hearing that his sister Fitneh was indeed a seduction for beauty, he demanded her in marriage of Ghanim, who replied, ‘She is thy handmaid and I am thy servant.’ The Khalif thanked him and gave him a hundred thousand dinars; then summoned the Cadi and the witnesses, who drew up the contracts of marriage between the Khalif and Fitneh on the one hand and Ghanim and Cout el Culoub on the other; and the two marriages were consummated in one and the same night. On the morrow, the Khalif ordered the history of Ghanim to be recorded and laid up in the royal treasury, that those who came after him might read it and wonder at the dealings of destiny and put their trust in Him who created the night and the day.

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VOLUME II.

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THE HISTORY OF KING OMAR BEN ENNUMAN AND HIS SONS SHERKAN AND ZOULMEKAN.

There reigned once in the City of Peace, (Baghdad), before the Khalifate of Abdulmelik ben Merwan, a king called Omar ben Ennuman, who was of the mighty giants and had subdued the kings of Persia and the Emperors of the East, for none could warm himself at his fire nor cope with him in battle, and when he was angry, there came sparks out of his nostrils. He had gotten him the dominion over all countries, and God had subjected unto him all creatures; his commands were obeyed in all the great cities and his armies penetrated the most distant lands: the East and West came under his rule, with the regions between them, Hind and Sind and China and Hejaz and Yemen and the islands of India and China, Syria and Mesopotamia and the land of the blacks and the islands of the ocean and all the famous rivers of the earth, Jaxartes and Bactrus, Nile and Euphrates. He sent his ambassadors to the farthest parts of the earth, to fetch him true report, and they returned with tidings of justice and peace, bringing him assurance of loyalty and obedience and invocations of blessings on his head; for he was a right noble king and there came to him gifts and tribute from all parts of the world. He had a son called Sherkan, who was one of the prodigies of the age and the likest of all men to his father, who loved him with an exceeding love and had appointed him to be king after him. The prince grew up till he reached man’s estate and was twenty years old, and God subjected all men to him, for he was gifted with great might and prowess in battle, humbling the champions and destroying all who made head against him. So, before long, this Sherkan became famous in all quarters of the world and his father rejoiced in him: and his might waxed, till he passed all bounds and magnified himself, taking by storm the citadels and strong places.

Now King Omar had four lawful wives, but God had vouchsafed him no son by them, except Sherkan, whom he had gotten of one of them, and the rest were barren. Moreover he had three hundred and threescore concubines, after the number of the days of the Coptic year, who were of all nations, and he had lodged them all within his palace. For he had built twelve pavilions, after the number of the months of the year, in each thirty chambers, and appointed to each of his concubines a night, which he lay with her and came not to her again for a full year. As providence would have it, one of them conceived and her pregnancy was made known, whereupon the King rejoiced with an exceeding joy, saying, “Mayhap it will be a son, in which case all my offspring will be males.” Then he recorded the date of her conception and made much of her. But when the news came to Sherkan, he was troubled and it was grievous to him, for he said, “Verily, there cometh one who shall dispute the kingdom with me.” So he said to himself, “If this damsel bear a male child, I will kill it.” But he kept this his intent secret in his heart. Now the damsel in question was a Greek girl, by name Sufiyeh, whom the King of Roum, lord of Caesarea, had sent to King Omar as a present, together with great store of rarities. She was the fairest of face and most graceful of all his women and the most careful of his honour and was gifted with abounding wit and surpassing loveliness. She had served the King on the night of his lying with her, saying to him, “O King, I desire of the God of the heavens that He grant thee of me a male child, so I may rear him well and do my utmost endeavour to educate him and preserve him from harm.” And her words pleased the King. She passed the time of her pregnancy in devout exercises, praying fervently to God to grant her a goodly male child and make his birth easy to her, till her months were accomplished and she sat down on the stool of delivery. Now the King had given an eunuch charge to let him know if the child she should bring forth were male or female; and in like manner his son Sherkan had sent one to bring him news of this. In due time, Sufiyeh was delivered of a child, which the midwives took and found to be a girl with a face more radiant than the moon. So they announced this to the bystanders, whereupon the eunuch carried the news to the King and Sherkan’s messenger did the like with his master, who rejoiced with exceeding joy; but after these two had departed, Sufiyeh said to the midwives, “Wait with me awhile, for I feel there is yet somewhat in my entrails.” Then she moaned and the pains of labour took her again but God made it easy to her and she gave birth to a second child. The midwives looked at it and found it a boy like the full moon, with flower-white forehead and rose-red cheeks; whereupon the damsel and her eunuchs and attendants rejoiced and she was delivered of the afterbirth, whilst all who were in the palace set up cries of joy. The other damsels heard of this and envied her; and the news came to Omar, who was glad and rejoiced. Then he rose and went to her and kissed her head, after which he looked at the boy and bending down to it, kissed it, whilst the damsels smote the tabrets and played on instruments of music; and he commanded that the boy should be named Zoulmekan and the girl Nuzbet ez Zeman, which was done accordingly. Then he appointed nurses, wet and dry, and eunuchs and attendants to serve them and assigned them rations of sugar and liquors and oil and other necessaries, such as the tongue fails to set out. Moreover the people of Baghdad heard of the children that God had vouchsafed to the King; so they decorated the city and made proclamation of the good news. Then came the amirs and viziers and grandees and wished the King joy of his son and daughter, wherefore he thanked them and bestowed dresses of honour and favours and largesse on them and on all who were present, gentle and simple. Then he bade carry great store of jewellery and apparel and money to Sufiyeh and charged her to rear the children carefully and educate them well. After this wise, four years passed by, during which time the King sent every few days to seek news of Sufiyeh and her children; but all this while, his son Sherkan knew not that a male child had been born to his father, having news only of the birth of his daughter Nuzhet ez Zeman, and they hid the thing from him, until years and days had passed by, whilst he was busied in contending with the men of war and tilting against the cavaliers.

One day, as the King was sitting on his throne, there came in to him his chamberlains, who kissed the earth before him and said, "O King, there be come ambassadors from the King of the Greeks, lord of Constantinople the mighty, and they desire to be admitted to pay their respects to thee: so if the King give them leave to enter, we will admit them, and if not, there is no appeal from his decree." He bade admit them, and when they entered, he turned to them and asked them how they did and the reason of their coming. They kissed the earth before him and replied, "O illustrious King and lord of the long arm, know that King Afridoun, lord of the lands of the Greeks and of the Nazarene armies, holding the empire of Constantinople, hath sent us to make known to thee that he is now waging grievous war with a fierce rebel, the lord of Caesarea; and the cause of this war is as follows. One of the kings of the Arabs, awhile since, chanced, in one of his conquests, upon a treasure of the time of Alexander, from which he carried away countless riches and amongst other things, three round jewels, of the bigness of an ostrich's egg, from a mine of pure white jewels, never was seen the like. Upon each of these jewels were graven talismans in the Greek character, and they had many properties and virtues, amongst the rest that if one of them were hung round the neck of a new-born child, no ailment would hurt him nor would he moan or be fevered, so long as it was about his neck. When they came to the hands of the Arabian King and he knew their virtues, he sent the three jewels, together with other presents and rarities, as a gift to King Afridoun, and to that end fitted out two ships, one bearing the treasure and presents and the other men to guard them against whoso should offer them hindrance on the sea, being nevertheless assured that none would dare waylay them, for that he was King of the Arabs, more by token that their way lay through the sea in the dominions of the King of Constantinople and they were bound to him, nor were there on the shores of that sea any but subjects of the most mighty King Afridoun. The ships set out and sailed till they drew near our city, when there sallied out on them certain corsairs of the country and amongst them troops of the King of Caesarea, who took all the treasures and rarities in the ships, together with the three jewels, and slew the men. When the news came to our King, he sent an army against them, but they defeated it; then he sent another army, stronger than the first, but they put this also to the rout; whereupon the King was wroth and swore that he would go out against them in person at the head of his whole army and not turn back from them, till he had left Caesarea in ruins and laid waste all the lands and cities over which its King held sway. So he craves of the lord of the age and the time, the King of Baghdad and Khorassan, that he succour us with an army, to the end that glory may redound to him; and he has sent by us somewhat of various kinds of presents and begs the King to favour him by accepting them and accord us his aid." Then they kissed the earth before King Omar and brought out the presents, which were fifty slave-girls of the choicest of the land of the Greeks, and fifty white male slaves in tunics of brocade, rich girdles of gold and silver and in their ears pendants of gold and fine pearls, worth a thousand dinars each. The damsels were adorned after the same fashion and clad in stuffs worth much money. When the King saw them, he rejoiced in them and accepted them. Then he commanded that the ambassadors should be honourably entreated and summoning his viziers, took counsel with them of what he should do. Accordingly, one of them, an old man named Dendan, arose and kissing the earth before King Omar, said, "O King, thou wouldst do well to equip numerous army and set over it thy son Sherkan, with us as his lieutenants; and to my mind it behoves thee to do thus, for two reasons: first, that the King of the Greeks hath appealed to thee for aid and hath sent thee presents, and thou hast accepted them; and secondly, that no enemy dares attack our country, and that if thy host succour the King of the Greeks and his foe be put to the rout, the glory will fall to thee and the news of it will be noised abroad in all cities and countries; and especially, when the tidings reach the islands of the ocean and the people of Western Africa, they will send thee presents and tribute." When the King heard the Vizier's speech, it pleased him and he approved his counsel: so he bestowed on him dress of honour and said to him, "It is with such as thee that kings take counsel and it befits that thou command the van of the army and my son Sherkan the main battle." Then he sent for Sherkan and expounded the matter to him, telling him what the ambassadors and the Vizier had said, and enjoined him to take arms and prepare to set out, charging him not to cross the Vizier Dendan in aught that he should do. Then he bade him choose from among his troops ten thousand horsemen armed cap-a-pie and inured to war and hardship. Accordingly, Sherkan rose at once and chose out ten thousand horsemen, in obedience to his father's commandment, after which he entered his palace and mustered his troops and distributed money to them, saying, "Ye have three days to make ready." They kissed the earth before him and proceeded at once to make their preparations for the campaign; whilst Sherkan repaired to the armouries and provided himself with all the arms and armour that he needed, and thence to the stables, whence he took horses of choice breeds and others. When the three days were ended, the troops marched out of Baghdad, and King Omar came forth to take leave of his son, who kissed the earth before him, and he gave him seven thousand purses. Then he turned to the Vizier Dendan and commended to his care his son Sherkan's army and charged the latter to consult the Vizier in all things, to which they both promised obedience. After this, the King returned to Baghdad and Sherkan commanded the officers to draw out the troops in battle array. So they mustered them and the number of the army was ten thousand horsemen, besides footmen and followers. Then they loaded the beasts and beat the drums and blew the clarions and unfurled the banners and the standards, whilst Sherkan mounted, with the Vizier Dendan by his side and the standards waving over them, and the army set out and fared on, with the ambassadors in the van, till the day departed and the night came, when they halted and encamped for the night. On the morrow, as soon as God brought in the day, they took horse and continued their march, nor did they cease to press onward, guided by the ambassadors, for the space of twenty days. On the twenty-first day, at nightfall, they came to a wide and fertile valley, whose sides were thickly wooded and covered with grass, and there Sherkan called a three days' halt. So they dismounted and pitched their tents, dispersing right and left in the valley, whilst the Vizier Dendan and the ambassadors alighted in the midst. As for Sherkan, when he had seen the tents pitched and the troops dispersed on either side and had commanded his officers and attendants to camp beside the Vizier Dendan, he gave reins to his horse, being minded to explore the valley and himself mount guard over the army, having regard to his father's injunctions and to the fact that they had reached the frontier of the land of Roum and were now in the enemy's country. So he rode on alone along the valley, till a fourth part of the night was passed, when he grew weary and sleep overcame him, so that he could no longer spur his horse. Now he was used to sleep on horseback; so when drowsiness got the better of him, he fell asleep and the horse paced on with him half the night and entered a forest; but Sherkan awoke not, till the steed smote the earth with his hoof. Then he started from sleep and found himself among trees; and the moon arose and lighted up the two horizons. He was troubled at finding himself alone in this place and spoke the words, which whoso says shall never be confounded, that is to say, “There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!” But as he rode on, in fear of the wild beasts, behold, the trees thinned and the moon shone out upon a meadow as it were one of the meads of Paradise and he heard therein a noise of talk and pleasant laughter such as ravishes the wit of men. So King Sherkan dismounted and tying his horse to a tree, fared on a little way, till he espied a stream of running water and heard a woman talking and saying in Arabic, “By the virtue of the Messiah, this is not handsome of you! But whoso speaks a word, I will throw her down and bind her with her girdle.” He followed in the direction of the voice and saw gazelles frisking and wild cattle pasturing and birds in their various voices expressing joy and gladness: and the earth was embroidered with all manner of flowers and green herbs, even as says of it the poet in the following verses:

Earth has no fairer sight to show than this its blossom-time,
With all the gently running streams that wander o’er its face.
It is indeed the handiwork of God Omnipotent, The Lord of every noble gift and Giver of all grace!

Midmost the meadow stood a monastery, and within the enclosure was a citadel that rose high into the air in the light of the moon. The stream passed through the midst of the monastery and therenigh sat ten damsels like moons, high-bosomed maids, clad in dresses and ornaments that dazzled the eyes, as says of them the poet:

The meadow glitters with the troops Of lovely ones that wander there.
Its grace and beauty doubled are By these that are so passing fair.
Virgins that, with their swimming gait, The hearts of all that see ensnare;
Along whose necks, like trails of grapes, Stream down the tresses of their hair:

Proudly they walk, with eyes that dart The shafts and arrows of
despair,
And all the champions of the world Are slain by their seductive
air.

Sherkan looked at the ten girls and saw in their midst a lady like the moon at its full, with ringleted hair and shining forehead, great black eyes and curling brow-locks, perfect in person and attributes, as says the poet:

Her beauty beamed on me with glances wonder-bright: The slender
Syrian spears are not so straight and slight:
She laid her veil aside, and lo, her cheeks rose-red! All manner
lovelyness was in their sweetest sight.
The locks, that o’er her brow fell down, were like the night,
From out of which there shines a morning of delight.

Then Sherkan heard her say to the girls, “Come on, that I may wrestle with you, ere the moon set and the dawn come.” So they came up to her, one after another, and she overthrew them, one by one, and bound their hands behind them with their girdles. When she had thrown them all, there turned to her an old woman, who was before her, and said, as if she were wroth with her, “O wanton, dost thou glory in overthrowing these girls? Behold, I am an old woman, yet have I thrown them forty times! So what hast thou to boast of? But if thou have strength to wrestle with me, stand up that I may grip thee and put thy head between thy feet.” The young lady smiled at her words, although her heart was full of anger against her, and said, “O my lady Dhat ed Dewahi, wilt indeed wrestle with me, or dost thou jest with me?” “I mean to wrestle with thee in very deed,” replied she. “Stand up to me then,” said the damsel, “if thou have strength to do so.” When the old woman heard this, she was sore enraged and the hair of her body stood on end, like that of a hedgehog. Then she sprang up, whilst the damsel confronted her, and said, “By the virtue of the Messiah, I will not wrestle with thee, except I be naked.” “O baggage!” So she loosed her trousers and putting her hand under her clothes, tore them off her body; then, taking a handkerchief of silk, she bound it about her middle and became as she were a bald Afriteh or a pied snake. Then she turned to the young lady and said to her, “Do as I have done.” All this time, Sherkan was watching them and laughing at the loathly favour of the old woman. So the damsel took a sash of Yemen stuff and doubled it about her waist, then tucked up her trousers and showed legs of alabaster and above them a hummock of crystal, soft and swelling, and a belly that exhaled musk from its dimples, as it were a bed of blood-red anemones, and breasts like double pomegranates. Then the old woman bent to her and they took hold of one another, whilst Sherkan raised his eyes to heaven and prayed to God that the damsel might conquer the old hag. Presently, the former bored in under the latter, and gripping her by the breech with the left hand and by the gullet with the right, hoisted her off the ground; whereupon the old woman strove to free herself and in the struggle wriggled out of the girl’s hands and fell on her back. Up went her legs and showed her hairy tout in the moonlight, and she let fly two great cracks of wind, one of which smote the earth, whilst the other smoked up to the skies. At this Sherkan laughed, till he fell to the ground, and said, “He lied not who dubbed thee Lady of Calamities! Verily, thou sawest her prowess against the others.” Then he arose and looked right and left, but saw none save the old woman thrown down on her back. So he drew near to hear what should pass between them; and behold, the young lady came up to the old one and throwing over her a veil of fine silk, helped her to dress herself, making excuses to her and saying, “O my lady Dhat ed Dewahi, I did not mean to throw thee so roughly, but thou wriggledst out of my hands; so praised be God for safety!” She returned her no answer, but rose in her confusion and walked away out of sight, leaving the young lady standing alone, by the other girls thrown down and bound. Then said Sherkan to himself, “To every fortune there is a cause. Sleep fell not on me nor did the steed bear me hither but for my good fortune; for of a surety this damsel and what is with her shall be my prize.” So he turned back and mounted and drew his scimitar; then he gave his horse the spur and he started off with him, like an arrow from a bow, whilst he brandished his naked blade and cried out, “God is Most Great!” When the damsel saw him, she sprang to her feet and running to the bank of the river, which was there six cubits wide, made a spring and landed on the other side, where she turned and standing, cried out in a loud voice, “Who art thou, sirrah, that breakest in on our pastime, and that with thy whinger bared, as thou wert charging an army? Whence comest thou and whither art thou bound? Speak the truth, and it shall profit thee, and do not lie, for lying is of the loser’s fashion. Doubtless thou hast strayed this night from thy road, that thou hast happened on this place. So tell me what thou seekest: if thou wouldst have us set thee in the right road, we will do so, or if thou seek help, we will help thee.” When Sherkan heard her words, he replied, “I am a stranger of the Muslims, who am come out by myself in quest of booty, and I have found no fairer purchase this moonlit night than these ten damsels; so I will take them and rejoin my comrades with them.” Quoth she, “I would have thee to know that thou hast not yet come at the booty: and as for these ten damsels, by Allah, they are no purchase for thee! Indeed, the fairest purchase thou canst look for is to win free of this place; for thou art now in a mead, where, if we gave one cry, there would be with us anon four thousand knights. Did I not tell thee that lying is shameful?” And he said, “The fortunate man is he to whom God sufficeth and who hath no need of other than Him.” “By the virtue of the Messiah,” replied she, “did I not fear to have thy death at my hand, I would give a cry that would fill the meadow on thee with horse and foot; but I have pity on the stranger: so if thou seek booty, I require of thee that thou dismount from thy horse and swear to me, by thy faith, that thou wilt not approach me with aught of arms, and we will wrestle, I and thou. If thou throw me, lay me on thy horse and take all of us to thy booty; and if I throw thee, thou shalt be at my commandment. Swear this to me, for I fear thy perfidy, since experience has it that, as long as perfidy is in men’s natures, to trust in every one is weakness. But if thou wilt swear, I will come over to thee.” Quoth Sherkan (and indeed he lusted after her and said to himself, “She does not know that I am a champion of the champions.”), “Impose on me whatever oath thou deemest binding, and I will swear not to draw near thee till thou hast made thy preparations and sayest, ‘Come and wrestle with me.’ If thou throw me, I have wealth wherewith to ransom myself, and if I throw thee, I shall get fine purchase.” Then said she, “Swear to me by Him who hath lodged the soul in the body and given laws to mankind, that thou wilt not beset me with aught of violence, but by way of wrestling; else mayst thou die out of the pale of Islam." "By Allah," exclaimed Sherkan, "if a Cadi should swear me, though he were Cadi of the Cadis, he would not impose on me the like of this oath!" Then he took the oath she required and tied his horse to a tree, sunken in the sea of reverie and saying in himself, "Glory to Him who fashioned her of vile water!" Then he girt himself and made ready for wrestling and said to her, "Cross the stream to me." Quoth she, "It is not for me to come to thee: if thou wilt, do thou cross over to me." "I cannot do that," replied he, and she said, "O boy, I will come to thee." So she gathered her skirts and making a spring, landed on the other side of the river by him; whereupon he drew near to her, wondering at her beauty and grace, and saw a form that the hand of Omnipotence had tanned with the leaves of the Jinn and which had been fostered by Divine solicitude, a form on which the zephyrs of fair fortune had blown and over whose creation favourable planets had presided. Then she called out to him, saying, "O Muslim, come and wrestle before the day break!" and tucked up her sleeves, showing a fore-arm like fresh curd; the whole place was lighted up by its whiteness and Sherkan was dazzled by it. Then he bent forward and clapped his hands and she did the like, and they took hold and gripped each other. He laid his hands on her slender waist, so that the tips of his fingers sank into the folds of her belly, and his limbs relaxed and he stood in the stead of desire, for there was displayed to him a body, in which was languishment of hearts, and he fell a-trembling like the Persian reed in the hurricane. So she lifted him up and throwing him to the ground, sat down on his breast with buttocks like a hill of sand, for he was not master of his reason. Then she said to him, "O Muslim, it is lawful among you to kill Christians; what sayst thou to my killing thee?" "O my lady," replied he, "as for killing me, it is unlawful; for our Prophet (whom God bless and preserve!) hath forbidden the slaying of women and children and old men and monks." "Since this was revealed unto your prophet," rejoined she, "it behoves us to be even with him therein; so rise: I give thee thy life, for beneficence is not lost upon men." Then she got off his breast and he rose and brushed the earth from his head, and she said to him, “Be not abashed; but, indeed, one who enters the land of the Greeks in quest of booty and to succour kings against kings, how comes it that there is no strength in him to defend himself against a woman?” “It was not lack of strength in me,” replied he; “nor was it thy strength that overthrew me, but thy beauty: so if thou wilt grant me another bout, it will be of thy favour.” She laughed and said, “I grant thee this: but these damsels have been long bound and their arms and shoulders are weary, and it were fitting I should loose them, since this next bout may peradventure be a long one.” Then she went up to the girls and unbinding them, said to them in the Greek tongue, “Go and put yourselves in safety, till I have brought to nought this Muslim’s craving for you.” So they went away, whilst Sherkan looked at them and they gazed at him and the young lady. Then she and he drew near again and set breast against breast; but, when he felt her belly against his, his strength failed him, and she feeling this, lifted him in her hands, swiftlier than the blinding lightning, and threw him to the ground. He fell on his back, and she said to him, “Rise, I give thee thy life a second time. I spared thee before for the sake of thy prophet, for that he forbade the killing of women, and I do so this second time because of thy weakness and tender age and strangerhood; but I charge thee, if there be, in the army sent by King Omar ben Ennuman to the succour of the King of Constantinople, a stronger than thou, send him hither and tell him of me, for in wrestling there are divers kinds of strokes and tricks, such as feinting and the fore-tripe and the back-tripe and the leg-crick and the thigh-twist and the jostle and the cross-buttock.” “By Allah, O my lady,” replied Sherkan, (and indeed he was greatly incensed against her), “were I the chief Es Sefedi or Mohammed Caimal or Ibn es Seddi, I had not observed the fashion thou namest; for, by Allah, it was not by thy strength that thou overthrewest me, but by filling me with the desire of thy buttocks, because we people of Chaldaea love great thighs, so that nor wit nor foresight was left in me. But now if thou have a mind to try another fall with me, with my wits about me, I have a right to this one bout more, by the rules of the game, for my presence of mind has now returned to me.” “Hast thou not had enough of wrestling, O conquered one?” rejoined she. “However, come, if thou wilt; but know that this bout must be the last." Then they took hold of each other and he set to in earnest and warded himself against being thrown down: so they strained awhile, and the damsel found in him strength such as she had not before observed and said to him, "O Muslim, thou art on thy guard!" "Yes," replied he; "thou knowest that there remaineth but this bout, and after each of us will go his own way." She laughed and he laughed too: then she seized the opportunity to bore in upon him unawares, and gripping him by the thigh, threw him to the ground, so that he fell on his back. She laughed at him and said, "Thou art surely an eater of bran; for thou art like a Bedouin bonnet, that falls at a touch, or a child's toy, that a puff of air overturns. Out on thee, thou poor creature! Go back to the army of the Muslims and send us other than thyself, for thou lackest thews, and cry us among the Arabs and Persians and Turks and Medes, 'Whoso has might in him, let him come to us.'" Then she made a spring and landed on the other side of the stream and said to Sherkan, laughing, "It goes to my heart to part with thee; get thee to thy friends, O my lord, before the morning, lest the knights come upon thee and take thee on the points of their lances. Thou hast not strength enough to defend thee against women; so how couldst thou make head against men and cavaliers?" And she turned to go back to the monastery. Sherkan was confounded and called out to her, saying, "O my lady, wilt thou go away and leave the wretched stranger, the broken-hearted slave of love?" So she turned to him, laughing, and said, "What wouldst thou? I grant thy prayer." "Have I set foot in thy country and tasted the sweetness of thy favours," replied Sherkan, "and shall I return without eating of thy victual and tasting thy hospitality? Indeed I am become one of thy servitors." Quoth she, "None but the base refuses hospitality; on my head and eyes be it! Do me the favour to mount and ride along the bank of the stream, abreast of me, for thou art my guest." At this Sherkan rejoiced and hastening back to his horse, mounted and rode along the river-bank, keeping abreast of her, till he came to a drawbridge, that hung by pulleys and chains of steel, made fast with hooks and padlocks. Here stood the ten damsels awaiting the lady, who spoke to one of them in the Greek tongue and said to her, "Go to him and take his horse's rein and bring him over to the monastery."

So she went up to Sherkan and led him over the bridge to the other side and he followed her, amazed at what he saw and saying in himself, “Would the Vizier Dendan were with me, to look on these fair faces with his own eyes.” Then he turned to the young lady and said to her, “O wonder of beauty, now art thou doubly bound to me, firstly, by the bond of comradeship, and secondly for that thou carriest me to thy house and I accept of thy hospitality and am at thy disposal and under thy protection. So do me the favour to go with me to the land of Islam, where thou shalt look upon many a lion-hearted prince and know who I am.” His speech angered her and she said to him, “By the virtue of the Messiah, thou art keen of wit with me! But I see now what depravity is in thy heart and how thou allowest thyself to say a thing that proves thee a traitor. How should I do what thou sayest, when I know that, if I came to thy King Omar ben Ennuman, I should never win free of him? For he has not the like of me among his women nor in his palace, all lord of Baghdad and Khorassan as he is, with his twelve palaces, in number as the months of the year, and his concubines therein, in number as the days thereof; and if I come to him, he will not respect me, for that ye hold it lawful to take possession of the like of me, as it is said in your scripture, ‘That which your right hand possesses.’ So how canst thou speak thus to me? As for thy saying, ‘Thou shalt look upon the champions of the Muslims,’ by the Messiah, thou sayst that which is not true; for I saw your army, when it reached our country, these two days ago, and I did not see that your ordinance was that of kings, but beheld you only as a rabble of men collected together. And as for thy saying, ‘Thou shalt know who I am,’ I did not show thee courtesy of any intent to honour thee, but out of pride in myself; and the like of thee should not say this to the like of me, even though thou be Sherkan himself, King Omar ben Ennuman’s son, who is renowned in these days.” “And dost thou know Sherkan?” asked he. “Yes,” replied she; “and I know of his coming with an army of ten thousand horse, for that he was sent by his father with these troops to the succour of the King of Constantinople.” “O my lady,” rejoined Sherkan, “I conjure thee, as thou believest in thy religion, tell me the cause of all this, that I may know truth from falsehood and with whom the fault lies.” “By the virtue of thy faith,” replied she, “were it not that I fear lest the news of me be bruited abroad that I am of the daughters of the Greeks, I would adventure myself and sally forth against the ten thousand horse and kill their chief, the Vizier Dendan, and take their champion Sherkan. Nor would there be any reproach to me in this, for I have read books and know the Arabic language and have studied good breeding and polite letters. But I have no need to vaunt my own prowess to thee, for thou hast tasted of my quality and proved my strength and skill and pre-eminence in wrestling; nor if Sherkan himself had been in thy place to-night and it had been said to him, 'Leap this river,' could he have done so. And I could wish well that the Messiah would throw him into my hands here in this monastery, that I might go forth to him in the habit of a man and pull him from his saddle and take him prisoner and lay him in fetters." When Sherkan heard this, pride and heat and warlike jealousy overcame him and he was minded to discover himself and lay violent hands on her but her beauty held him back from her, and he repeated the following verse:

Their charms, whatever fault the fair commit, A thousand intercessors bring for it.

So she went up, and he after her; whilst he looked at her back and saw her buttocks smiting against each other, like the billows in the troubled sea; and he recited the following verses:

In her face an advocate harbours, who blots out her every fault
From the hearts of mankind, for he is mighty to intercede.
Whenas I look at her face, I cry in my wonder aloud, "The moon of
the skies in the night of her full is risen indeed!"
If the Afrit of Belkis himself should wrestle a fall with
her, Her charms would throw him forthright, for all his
strength and speed.

They went on till they reached a vaulted gate, arched over with marble. This she opened and entered with Sherkan into a long vestibule, vaulted with ten arches from each of which hung a lamp of crystal, shining like the rays of the sun. The damsels met her at the end of the vestibule, bearing perfumed flambeaux and having on their heads kerchiefs embroidered with all manner jewels and went on before her, till they came to the inward of the monastery, where Sherkan saw couches set up all around, facing one another and overhung with curtains spangled with gold. The floor was paved with all kinds of variegated marbles, and in the midst was a basin of water, with four-and-twenty spouts of gold around it, from which issued water like liquid silver; whilst at the upper end stood a throne covered with silks of royal purple. Then said the damsel, “O my lord, mount this throne.” So he seated himself on it, and she withdrew: and when she had been absent awhile, he asked the servants of her, and they said, “She hath gone to her sleeping-chamber; but we will serve thee as thou shalt order.” So they set before him rare meats and he ate till he was satisfied, when they brought him a basin of gold and an ewer of silver, and he washed his hands. Then his mind reverted to his troops, and he was troubled, knowing not what had befallen them in his absence and thinking how he had forgotten his father’s injunctions, so that he abode oppressed with anxiety and repenting of what he had done, till the dawn broke and the day appeared, when he lamented and sighed and became drowned in the sea of melancholy, repeating the following verses:

I lack not of prudence and yet in this case I’ve been fooled; so
what shift shall avail unto me?
If any could ease me of love and its stress, Of my might and my
virtue I’d set myself free.
But alas! my heart’s lost in the maze of desire, And no helper
save God in my strait can I see.

Hardly had he finished, when up came more than twenty damsels like moons, encompassing the young lady, who appeared amongst them as the full moon among stars. She was clad in royal brocade and girt with a woven girdle set with various kinds of jewels, that straitly clasped her waist and made her buttocks stand out as they were a hill of crystal upholding a wand of silver; and her breasts were like double pomegranates. On her head she wore a network of pearls, gemmed with various kinds of jewels, and she moved with a coquettish swimming gait, swaying wonder-gracefully, whilst the damsels held up her skirts. When Sherkan saw her beauty and grace, he was transported for joy and forgot his army and the Vizier Dendan end springing to his feet, cried out, “Beware, beware of that girdle rare!” and repeated the following verses:

Heavy of buttocks, languorous of gait, With limber shape and
    breasts right delicate,
She hides what passion in her bosom burns; Yet cannot I my heat
    dissimulate.
Her maidens, like strung pearls, behind her fare, Now all
    dispersed now knit in ordered state.

She fixed her eyes on him and considered him awhile, till she was assured of him, when she came up to him and said, “Indeed the place is honoured and illumined by thy presence, O Sherkan! How didst thou pass the night, O hero, after we went away and left thee? Verily lying is a defect and a reproach in kings, especially in great kings; and thou art Sherkan, son of King Omar ben Ennuman; so henceforth tell me nought but truth and strive not to keep the secret of thy condition, for falsehood engenders hatred and enmity. The arrow of destiny hath fallen on thee, and it behoves thee to show resignation and submission.” When Sherkan heard what she said, he saw nothing for it but to tell her the truth so he said, “I am indeed Sherkan, son of Omar ben Ennuman, whom fortune hath afflicted and cast into this place: so now do whatsoever thou wilt.” She bowed her head a long while, then turned to him and said, “Reassure thyself and be of good cheer; for thou art my guest, and bread and salt have passed between us; so art thou in my safeguard and under my protection. Have no fear; by the virtue of the Messiah, if all the people of the earth sought to harm thee, they should not come at thee till the breath had left my body for thy sake; for thou art under my protection and that of the Messiah.” Then she sat down by his side and began to sport with him, till his alarm subsided and he knew that, had she been minded to kill him, she would have done so on the past night. After awhile, she spoke in the Greek tongue to one of her serving-women, who went away and returned in a little with a goblet and a tray of food; but Sherkan abstained from eating, saying in himself, “Maybe she hath put somewhat in this meat.” She knew what was in his thought;

so she turned to him and said, “By the virtue of the Messiah, the case is not as thou deemest, nor is there aught in this food of what thou suspectest! Were I minded to kill thee, I had done so before now.” Then she came to the table and ate a mouthful of every dish, whereupon Sherkan came forward and fell to. She was pleased at this, and they both ate till they were satisfied, after which she let bring perfumes and sweet-smelling herbs and wines of all colours and kinds, in vessels of gold and silver and crystal. She filled a first cup and drank it off, before offering it to Sherkan, even as she had done with the food. Then she filled a second time and gave the cup to him. He drank and she said to him, “See, O Muslim, how thou art in the utmost delight and pleasure of life!” And she ceased not to drink and to ply him with drink, till he took leave of his wits, for the wine and the intoxication of love for her. Presently she said to the serving-maid, “O Merjaneh, bring us some instruments of music.” “I hear and obey,” replied Merjaneh, and going out, returned immediately with a lute, a Persian harp, a Tartar flute and an Egyptian dulcimer. The young lady took the lute and tuning it, sang to it in a dulcet voice, softer than the zephyr and sweeter than the waters of Tesnim, the following verses:

May Allah assoilzie thine eyes! How much is the blood they have
shed! How great is the tale of the shafts thy pitiless
glances have sped!
I honour the mistress, indeed, that harshly her suitor entreats;
’Tis sin in the loved to relent or pity a lover misled.
Fair fortune and grace to the eyes that watch the night,
sleepless, for thee, And hail to the heart of thy slave, by
day that is heavy as lead!
’Tis thine to condemn me to death, for thou art my king and my
lord. With my life I will ransom the judge, who heapeth
unright on my head.

Then each of the damsels rose and taking an instrument played and sang to it in the Greek language. The lady their mistress, sang also, to Sherkan’s delight. Then she said to him, “O Muslim, dost thou understand what I say?” “No,” replied he; “it was the beauty of thy finger-tips that threw me into ecstasies." She laughed and said, "If I sang to thee in Arabic, what wouldst thou do?" "I should lose the mastery of my reason," replied he. So she took an instrument and changing the measure, sang the following verses:

Parting must ever bitter be; How shall one bear it patiently?
Three things are heavy on my heart, Absence, estrangement,
    cruelty.
I love a fair to whom I'm thrall, And severance bitter is to me.

Then she looked at Sherkan and found he had lost his senses for delight: and he lay amongst them insensible awhile, after which he revived and recalling the singing inclined to mirth. Then they fell again to drinking and ceased not from sport and merriment till the day departed with the evening and the night let fall her wings. Thereupon she rose and retired to her chamber. Sherkan enquired after her and being told that she was gone to her bedchamber, said, "I commend her to the safe-keeping of God and to His protection!" As soon as it was day, a waiting-woman came to him and said, "My mistress bids thee to her." So he rose and followed her, and as he drew near her lodging, the damsels received him with smitten tabrets and songs of greeting and escorted him to a great door of ivory set with pearls and jewels. Here they entered and he found himself in a spacious saloon, at the upper end of which was a great estrade, carpeted with various kinds of silk, and round it open lattices giving upon trees and streams. About the place were figures, so fashioned that the air entered them and set in motion instruments of music within them, and it seemed to the beholder as if they spoke. Here sat the young lady, looking on the figures; but when she saw Sherkan, she sprang to her feet and taking him by the hand, made him sit down by her and asked him how he had passed the night. He blessed her and they sat talking awhile, till she said to him, "Knowest thou aught touching lovers and slaves of passion?" "Yes," replied he; "I know some verses on the subject." "Let me hear them," said she. So he repeated the following verses:

Pleasure and health, O Azzeh, and good digestion to thee! How

with our goods and our names and our honours thou makest
free!
By Allah, whene'er I blow hot, she of a sudden blows cold, And no
sooner do I draw near, than off at a tangent flies she!
Indeed, as I dote upon Azzeh, as soon as I've cleared me of all
That stands between us and our loves, she turns and abandons
me;
As a traveller that trusts in the shade of a cloud for his
noontide rest, But as soon as he halts, the shade flits and
the cloud in the distance cloth flee.

When she heard this, she said, "Verily Kutheiyir was a poet of renown and a master of chaste eloquence and attained rare perfection in praise of Azzeh, especially when he says:

'If Azzeh should before a judge the sun of morning cite, Needs
must the umpire doom to her the meed of beauty bright;
And women all, who come to me, at her to rail and flite, God make
your cheeks the sandal-soles whereon her feet alight!'

"And indeed it is reported," added she, "that Azzeh was endowed with the extreme of beauty and grace." Then she said to Sherkan, "O king's son, dost thou know aught of Jemil's verses to Butheineh?" "Yes," replied he; "none knows Jemil's verses better than I." And he repeated the following:

"Up and away to the holy war, Jemil!" they say; and I, "What have
I to do with waging war except among the fair?"
For deed and saying with them alike are full of ease and cheer,
And he's a martyr who tilts with them and falleth
fighting there.
If I say to Butheineh, "What is this love, that eateth my life
away?" She answers, "Tis rooted fast in thy heart and will
increase fore'er."
Or if I beg her to give me back some scantling of my wit,
Wherewith to deal with the folk and live, she answereth,
"Hope it ne'er!"

Thou willst my death, ah, woe is me! thou willst nought else but
that; Yet I, I can see no goal but thee, towards which my
wishes fare.

"Thou hast done well, O king's son," said she, "and Jemil also did excellently well. But what would Butheineh have done with him that he says, 'Thou wishest to kill me and nought else?'" "O my lady," replied he, "she sought to do with him what thou seekest to do with me, and even that will not content thee." She laughed at his answer, and they ceased not to carouse till the day departed and the night came with the darkness. Then she rose and went to her sleeping-chamber, and Sherkan slept in his place till the morning. As soon as he awoke, the damsels came to him with tambourines and other instruments of music, according to their wont, and kissing the earth before him, said to him, "In the name of God, deign to follow us; for our mistress bids thee to her." So he rose and accompanied the girls, who escorted him, smiting on tabrets and other instruments of music, to another saloon, bigger than the first and decorated with pictures and figures of birds and beasts, passing description. Sherkan wondered at the fashion of the place and repeated the following verses:

My rival plucks, of the fruits of the necklets branching wide,
Pearls of the breasts in gold enchased and beautified
With running fountains of liquid silver in streams And cheeks of
rose and beryl, side by side.
It seemeth, indeed, as if the violet's colour vied With the
sombre blue of the eyes, with antimony dyed.

When the lady saw Sherkan, she came to meet him, and taking him by the hand, said to him, "O son of King Omar ben Ennuman, hast thou any skill in the game of chess?" "Yes," replied he; "but do not thou be as says the poet." And he repeated the following verses:

I speak, and passion, the while, folds and unfolds me aye; But a
draught of the honey of love my spirits thirst could stay.
I sit at the chess with her I love, and she plays with me, With

white and with black; but this contenteth me no way.
Meseemeth as if the king were set in the place of the rook And
sought with the rival queens a bout of the game to play.
And if I looked in her eyes, to spy the drift of her moves, The
amorous grace of her glance would doom me to death
straightaway.

Then she brought the chess-board and played with him; but instead of looking at her moves, he looked at her face and set the knight in the place of the elephant and the elephant in the place of the knight. She laughed and said to him, “If this be thy play, thou knowest nothing of the game.” “This is only the first bout,” replied he; “take no count of it.” She beat him, and he replaced the pieces and played again with her; but she beat him a second time and a third and a fourth and a fifth. So she fumed to him and said, “Thou art beaten in everything.” “O my lady,” answered he, “how should one not be beaten, who plays with the like of thee?” Then she called for food, and they ate and washed their hands, after which the maids brought wine, and they drank. Presently, the lady took the dulcimer, for she was skilled to play thereon, and sang to it the following verses:

Fortune is still on the shift, now gladness and now woe; I liken
it to the tide, in its ceaseless ebb and flow.
So drink, if thou have the power, whilst it is yet serene, Lest
it at unawares depart, and thou not know.

They gave not over carousing till nightfall, and this day was pleasanter than the first. When the night came, the lady went to her sleeping-chamber, leaving Sherkan with the damsels. So he threw himself on the ground and slept till the morning, when the damsels came to him with tambourines and other musical instruments, according to their wont. When he saw them, he sat up; and they took him and carried him to their mistress, who came to meet him and taking him by the hand, made him sit down by her side. Then she asked him how he had passed the night, to which he replied by wishing her long life; and she took the lute and sang the following

verses:

Incline not to parting, I pray, For bitter its taste is alway. The sun at his setting grows pale, To think he must part from the day.

Hardly had she made an end of singing, when there arose of a sudden a great clamour, and a crowd of men and knights rushed into the place, with naked swords gleaming in their hands, crying out in the Greek tongue, "Thou hast fallen into our hands, O Sherkan! Be sure of death!" When he heard this, he said to himself, "By Allah, she hath laid a trap for me and held me in play, till her men should come! These are the knights with whom she threatened me: but it is I who have thrown myself into this peril." Then he turned to the lady to reproach her, but saw that she had changed colour; and she sprang to her feet and said to the new-comers, "Who are ye?" "O noble princess and unpeered pearl," replied the knight their chief, "dost thou know who is this man with thee?" "Not I," answered she. "Who is he?" Quoth the knight, "He is the despoiler of cities and prince of cavaliers, Sherkan, son of King Omar ben Ennuman. This is he who captures the citadels and masters the most impregnable strengths. The news of him reached King Herdoub, thy father, by the report of the old princess Dhat ed Dewahi; and thou hast done good service to the army of the Greeks by helping them to lay hands on this pestilent lion." When she heard this, she looked at the knight and said to him, "What is thy name?" And he answered, "My name is Masoureh son of thy slave Mousoureh ben Kasherdeh, chief of the nobles." Quoth she, "And how camest thou in to me without my leave?" "O our lady," replied he, "when I came to the gate, neither chamberlain nor porter offered me any hindrance; but all the gate-keepers rose and forewent me as of wont; though, when others come, they leave them standing at the gate, whilst they ask leave for them to enter. But this is no time for long talk, for the King awaits our return to him with this prince, who is the mainstay of the army of Islam, that he may kill him and that his troops may depart whence they came, without our having the toil of fighting them." "Thou sayest an ill thing," rejoined the princess. "Verily, the lady Dhat ed Dewahi lied; and she hath avouched a vain thing, of which she knows not the truth; for by the virtue of the Messiah, this man who is with me is not Sherkan, nor is he a captive, but a stranger, who came to us, seeking hospitality, and we received him as a guest. So, even were we assured that this was Sherkan and did we know that it was he beyond doubt, it would suit ill with my honour that I should deliver into your hands one who hath come under my safeguard. Betray me not, therefore, in the person of my guest, neither bring me into ill repute among men; but return to the King my father and kiss the earth before him and tell him that the case is not according to the report of the lady Dhat ed Dewahi." "O Abrizeh," replied the knight Masoureh, "I cannot go back to the King without his enemy." Quoth she (and indeed she was angry), "Out on thee! Return to him with the answer, and no blame shall fall on thee." But he said, "I will not return without him." At this her colour changed and she exclaimed, "A truce to talk and idle words; for of a verity this man would not have come in to us, except he were assured that he could of himself make head against a hundred horse; and if I said to him, 'Art thou Sherkan, son of King Omar ben Ennuman?' he would answer, 'Yes.' Nathless, it is not in your power to hinder him; for if ye beset him, he will not turn back from you, till he have slain all that are in the place. Behold, he is with me and I will bring him before you, with his sword and buckler in his hands." "If I be safe from thy wrath," replied Masoureh, "I am not safe from that of thy father, and when I see him, I shall sign to the knights to take him prisoner, and we will carry him, bound and abject, to the King." When she heard this, she said, "The thing shall not pass thus, for it would be a disgrace. This man is but one and ye are a hundred. So, an ye be minded to attack him, come out against him, one after one, that it may appear to the King which is the valiant amongst you." "By the Messiah," rejoined Masoureh, "thou sayest sooth, and none but I shall go out against him first!" Then she said, "Wait till I go to him and tell him and hear what he says. If he consent, it is well but if he refuse, ye shall not anywise come at him, for I and my damsels and all that are in the house will be his ransom." So she went to Sherkan and told him the case, whereat he smiled and knew that she had not betrayed him, but that the matter had been bruited abroad, till it came to the King, against her wish. So he laid all the blame on himself, saying, "How came I to venture myself in the country of the Greeks?" Then he said to her, "Indeed, to let them tilt against me, one by one, were to lay on them a burden more than they can bear. Will they not come out against me, ten by ten?" "That were knavery and oppression," replied she. "One man is a match for another." When he heard this, he sprang to his feet and made towards them, with his sword and battle-gear; and Masoureh also sprang up and rushed on him. Sherkan met him like a lion and smote him with his sword upon the shoulder, that the blade came out gleaming from his back and vitals. When the princess saw this, Sherkan's prowess was magnified in her eyes and she knew that she had not overthrown him by her strength, but by her beauty and grace. So she turned to the knights and said to them, "Avenge your chief!" Thereupon out came the slain man's brother, a fierce warrior, and rushed upon Sherkan, who delayed not, but smote him on the shoulders, and the sword came out, gleaming, from his vitals. Then cried the princess, "O servants of the Messiah, avenge your comrades!" So they ceased not to come out against him, one by one, and he plied them with the sword, till he had slain fifty knights, whilst the princess looked on. And God cast terror into the hearts of those who were left, so that they held back and dared not meet him in single combat, but rushed on him all at once; and he drove at them with a heart firmer than a rock and smote them as the thresher smiteth the corn, till he had driven sense and life forth of them. Then the princess cried out to her damsels, saying, "Who is left in the monastery?" "None but the porters," replied they; whereupon she went up to Sherkan and embraced him, and he returned with her to the saloon, after he had made an end of the mellay. Now there remained a few of the knights hidden in the cells of the convent, and when Abrizeh saw this, she rose and going away, returned, clad in a strait-ringed coat of mail and holding in her hand a scimitar of Indian steel. And she said, "By the virtue of the Messiah, I will not be grudging of myself for my guest nor will I abandon him, though for this I abide a reproach in the land of the Greeks!" Then she counted the dead and found that he had slain fourscore of the knights and other twenty had taken flight. When she saw how he had dealt with them, she said to him, "God bless thee, O Sherkan! The cavaliers may well glory in the like of thee!" Then he rose and wiping his sword of the blood of the slain, repeated the following verses:

How often in battle I've cleft the array And given the champions
to wild beasts a prey!
Ask all men what happened to me and to them, When I drove
through
the ranks on the sword-smiting day.
I left ail their lions of war overthrown: On the sun-scorched
sands of those countries they lay.

When he had finished, the princess came up to him and kissed his hand; then she put off her coat of mail, and he said to her, "O my lady, wherefore didst thou don that coat of mail and bare thy sabre?" "It was of my care for thee against yonder wretches," replied she. Then she called the porters and said to them, "How came you to let the king's men enter my house, without my leave!" "O princess," replied they, "we have not used to need to ask leave for the king's messengers, and especially for the chief of the knights." Quoth she, "I think you were minded to dishonour me and slay my guest." And she bade Sherkan strike off their heads. He did so and she said to the rest of her servants, "Indeed, they deserved more than that." Then turning to Sherkan, she said to him, "Now that there hath become manifest to thee what was hidden, I will tell thee my story. Know, then, that I am the daughter of Herdoub, King of Roum; my name is Abrizeh and the old woman called Dhat ed Dewahi is my grandmother, my father's mother. She it was who told my father of thee, and she will certainly cast about to ruin me, especially as thou hast slain my father's men and it is noised abroad that I have made common cause with the Muslims. Wherefore it were wiser that I should leave dwelling here, what while Dhat ed Dewahi is behind me; but I claim of thee the like kindness and courtesy I have shown thee, for my father and I are now become at odds on thine account. So do not thou omit to do aught that I shall say to thee, for indeed all this hath fallen out through thee." At this, Sherkan was transported for joy and his breast dilated, and he said, "By Allah, none shall come at thee, whilst my life lasts in my body! But canst thou endure the parting from thy father and thy folk?" "Yes," answered she. So Sherkan swore to her and they made a covenant of this. Then said she, "Now my heart is at ease; but there is one other condition I must exact of thee." "What is that?" asked Sherkan. "It is," replied she, "that thou return with thy troops to thine own country." "O my lady," said he, "my father, King Omar ben Ennuman, sent me to make war upon thy father, on account of the treasure he took from the King of Constantinople, and amongst the rest three great jewels, rich in happy properties." "Reassure thyself," answered she; "I will tell thee the truth of the matter and the cause of the feud between us and the King of Constantinople. Know that we have a festival called the Festival of the Monastery, for which each year the kings' daughters of various countries and the wives and daughters of the notables and merchants resort to a certain monastery and abide there seven days. I was wont to resort thither with the rest; but when there befell hostility between us, my father forbade me to be present at the festival for the space of seven years. One year, it chanced that amongst the young ladies who resorted to the Festival as of wont, there came the King's daughter of Constantinople, a handsome girl called Sufiyeh. They tarried at the monastery six days, and on the seventh, the folk went away; but Sufiyeh said, 'I will not return to Constantinople, but by sea.' So they fitted her out a ship, in which she embarked, she and her suite, and put out to sea; but as they sailed, a contrary wind caught them and drove the ship from her course, till, as fate and providence would have it, she fell in with a ship of the Christians from the Island of Camphor, with a crew of five hundred armed Franks, who had been cruising about for some time. When they sighted the sails of the ship in which were Sufiyeh and her maidens, they gave chase in all haste and coming up with her before long, threw grapnels on board and made fast to her. Then they made all sail for their own island and were but a little distant from it, when the wind veered and rent their sails and cast them on to a reef on our coast. Thereupon we sallied forth on them, and looking on them as booty driven to us by fate, slew the men and made prize of the ships, in which we found the treasures and rarities in question and forty damsels, amongst whom was Sufiyeh. We carried the damsels to my father, not knowing that the King's daughter of Constantinople was among them, and he chose out ten of them, including Sufiyeh, for himself, and divided the rest among his courtiers. Then he set apart Sufiyeh and four other girls and sent them to thy father, King Omar ben Ennuman, together with other presents, such as cloth and stuffs of wool and Grecian silks. Thy father accepted them and chose out from amongst the five girls the princess Sufiyeh, daughter of King Afridoun; nor did we hear aught more of the matter till the beginning of this year, when King Afridoun wrote to my father in terms which it befits not to repeat, reproaching and menacing him and saying to him, ‘Two years ago, there fell into thy hands a ship of ours, that had been seized by a company of Frankish corsairs and in which was my daughter Sufiyeh, attended by near threescore damsels. Yet thou sentest none to tell me of this and I could not make the case public, lest disgrace fall on my repute among the kings, by reason of my daughter’s dishonour. So I kept the affair secret till this year, when I communicated with certain of the Frankish pirates and sought news of my daughter from the kings of the islands. They replied, “By Allah, we carried her not forth of thy realm, but we have heard that King Herdoub took her from certain pirates.” And they told me all that had befallen her. So now, except thou wish to be at feud with me and design to disgrace me and dishonour my daughter, thou wilt forthright, as soon as this letter reaches thee, send my daughter back to me. But if thou pay no heed to my letter and disobey my commandment, I will assuredly requite thee thy foul dealing and the baseness of thine acts.’ When my father read this letter, it was grievous to him and he regretted not having known that Sufiyeh, King Afridoun’s daughter, was amongst the captured damsels, that he might have sent her back to her father; and he was perplexed about the affair, for that, after the lapse of so long a time, he could not send to King Omar ben Ennuman and demand her back from him, the more that he had lately heard that God had vouchsafed him children by this very Sufiyeh. So when we considered the matter, we knew that this letter was none other than a great calamity; and nothing would serve but that my father must write an answer to it, making his excuses to King Afridoun and swearing to him that he knew not that his daughter was among the girls in the ship and setting forth how he had sent her to King Omar ben Ennuman and God had vouchsafed him children by her. When my father’s reply reached King Afridoun, he rose and sat down and roared and foamed at the mouth, exclaiming, ‘What! shall he make prize of my daughter and she become a slave-girl and be passed from hand to hand and sent for a gift to kings, and they lie with her without a contract? By the virtue of the Messiah and the true faith, I will not desist till I have taken my revenge for this and wiped out my disgrace, and indeed I will do a deed that the chroniclers shall chronicle after me.’ So he took patience till he had devised a plot and laid great snares, when he sent an embassy to thy father King Omar, to tell him that which thou hast heard so that thy father equipped thee and an army with thee and sent thee to him, Afridoun’s object being to lay hold of thee and thine army with thee. As for the three jewels of which he told thy father, he spoke not the truth of them; for they were with Sufiyeh and my father took them from her, when she fell into his hands, she and her maidens, and gave them to me, and they are now with me. So go thou to thy troops and turn them back, ere they fare farther into the land of the Franks and the country of the Greeks; for as soon as you are come far enough into the inward of the country, they will stop the roads upon you, and there will be no escape for you from their hands till the day of rewards and punishments. I know that thy troops are still where thou leftest them, because thou didst order them to halt there three days; and they have missed thee all this time and know not what to do.” When Sherkan heard her words, he was absent awhile in thought then he kissed Abrizeh’s hand and said, “Praise be to God who hath bestowed thee on me and appointed thee to be the cause of my salvation and that of those who are with me! But it is grievous to me to part from thee and I know not what will become of thee after my departure.” Quoth she, “Go now to thy troops and lead them back, whilst ye are yet near your own country. If the ambassadors are still with them, lay hands on them, that the case may be made manifest to thee, and after three days I will rejoin thee and we will all enter Baghdad together; but forget thou not the compact between us.” Then she rose to bid him farewell and assuage the fire of longing; so she took leave of him and embraced him and wept sore; whereupon passion and desire were sore upon him and he also wept and repeated the following verses:

I bade her farewell, whilst my right hand was wiping my eyes, And

still with my left, the while, I held her in close embrace.
Then, "Fearest thou not disgrace?" quoth she; and I answered,
"No. Sure, on the parting-day, for lovers there's no
disgrace!"

Then Sherkan left her and went without the monastery, where they brought him his horse and he mounted and rode down the bank of the stream, till he came to the bridge, and crossing it, entered the forest. As soon as he was clear of the trees and came to the open country, he was aware of three horsemen pricking towards him. So he drew his sword and rode on cautiously: but as they drew near he recognized them and behold, it was the Vizier Dendan and two of his officers. When they saw him and knew him, they dismounted and saluting him, asked the reason of his absence, whereupon he told them all that had passed between him and the princess Abrizeh from first to last. The Vizier returned thanks to God the Most High for his safety and said, "Let us at once depart hence, for the ambassadors that were with us are gone to inform their king of our arrival, and belike he will hasten to fall on us and seize us." So they rode on in haste, till they came to the camp, when Sherkan commanded to depart forthright, and the army set out and journeyed by forced marches for five days, at the end of which time they alighted in a thickly wooded valley, where they rested awhile. Then they set out again and fared on till they came to the frontiers of their own country. Here they felt themselves in safety and halted to rest; and the country people came out to them with guest-gifts and victual and fodder for the cattle. They lay there and rested two days; after which Sherkan bade the Vizier Dendan fare forward to Baghdad with his troops, and he did so. But Sherkan himself abode behind with a hundred horse, till the rest of the army had been gone a day, when he mounted, he and his men, and fared on two parasangs' space, till they came to a narrow pass between two mountains and behold, there arose a great cloud of dust in their front. So they halted their horses awhile, till the dust lifted and discovered a hundred cavaliers, as they were fierce lions, cased in complete steel As soon as they came within earshot of Sherkan and his men, they cried out to them, saying, "By John and Mary, we have gotten what we hoped! We have been following you by forced marches, night and day, till we forewent you in this place. So alight and lay down your arms and yield yourselves, that we may grant you your lives." When Sherkan heard this, his eyes rolled and his cheeks flushed and he said, "O dogs of Nazarenes, how dare ye enter our country and set foot on our earth? And doth not this suffice you, but ye must adventure yourselves and give us such words as these? Do ye think to escape out of our hands and return to your country?" Then he cried out to his hundred horse, saying, "Up and at these dogs, for they are even as you in number!" So saying, he drew his sword and drove at them, without further parley, he and his hundred men. The Franks received them with hearts stouter than stone, and they met, man to man. Then fell champion upon champion and there befell a sore strife and great was the terror and the roar of the battle; nor did they leave jousting and foining and smiting with swords, till the day departed and the night came with the darkness; when they drew apart, and Sherkan mustered his men and found them all unhurt, save four who were slightly wounded. Then said he to them, "By Allah, all my life I have waded in the surging sea of war and battle, but never saw I any so firm and stout in sword-play and shock of men as these warriors!" "Know, O King," replied they, "that there is among them a Frank cavalier, who is their leader, and indeed he is a man of valour and his strokes are terrible: but, by Allah, he spares us, great and small; for whoso falls into his hands, he lets him go and forbears to slay him. By Allah, an he would, he could kill us all!" When Sherkan heard this, he was confounded and said, "To-morrow, we will draw out and defy them to single combat, for we are a hundred to their hundred; and we will seek help against them from the Lord of the heavens." Meanwhile, the Franks came to their leader and said to him, "Of a truth, we have not come by our desire of these this day." "To-morrow," quoth he, "we will draw out and joust against them, one by one." So they passed the night in this mind, and both camps kept watch till the morning. As soon as God the Most High brought on the day, King Sherkan mounted, with his hundred horse, and they betook themselves to the field, where they found the Franks ranged in battle array, and Sherkan said to his men, "Verily, our enemies are of the same mind as we; so up and at them briskly." Then came forth a herald of the Franks and cried out, saying, “Let there be no fighting betwixt us to-day, except by way of single combat, a champion of yours against one of ours!” Thereupon one of Sherkan’s men came out from the ranks and spurring between the two parties, cried out, “Who is for jousting? Who is for fighting? Let no laggard nor weakling come out against me to-day!” Hardly had he made an end of speaking, when there sallied forth to him a Frankish horseman, armed cap-a-pie and clad in cloth of gold, riding on a gray horse, and he had no hair on his cheeks. He drove his horse into the midst of the field and the two champions fell to cutting and thrusting, nor was it long before the Frank smote the Muslim with his lance and unhorsing him, took him prisoner and bore him off in triumph. At this, his comrades rejoiced and forbidding him to go out again, sent forth another to the field, to whom sallied out a second Muslim, the brother of the first. The two drove at each other and fought for a little, till the Frank ran at the Muslim and throwing him off his guard by a feint, smote him with the butt-end of his spear and unhorsed him and took him prisoner. After this fashion, the Muslims ceased not to come forth and the Franks to unhorse them and take them prisoner, till the day departed and the night came with the darkness. Now they had captured twenty cavaliers of the Muslims, and when Sherkan saw this, it was grievous to him, and he mustered his men and said to them, “What is this thing that hath befallen us? To-morrow morning, I myself will go out into the field and seek to joust with their chief and learn his reason for entering our country and warn him against fighting. If he persist, we will do battle with him, and if he proffer peace, we will make peace with him.” They passed the night thus, and when God brought on the day, both parties mounted and drew out in battle array. Then Sherkan was about to sally forth, when behold, more than half of the Franks dismounted and marched on foot, before one of them, who was mounted, to the midst of the field. Sherkan looked at this cavalier and behold, he was their chief. He was clad in a tunic of blue satin and a close-ringed shirt of mail; his face was as the full moon at its rising and he had no hair on his cheeks. In his hand he held a sword of Indian steel, and he was mounted on a black horse with a white star, like a dirhem, on his forehead. He spurred into the midst of the field and signing to the

Muslims, cried out with fluent speech in the Arabic tongue, saying, “Ho, Sherkan! Ho, son of Omar ben Ennuman, thou that stormest the citadels and layest waste the lands, up and out to joust and battle with him who halves the field with thee! Thou art prince of thy people and I am prince of mine; and whoso hath the upper hand, the other’s men shall come under his sway.” Hardly had he made an end of speaking, when out came Sherkan, with a heart full of wrath, and spurring his horse into the midst of the field, drove like an angry lion at the Frank, who awaited him with calm and steadfastness and met him as a champion should. Then they fell to cutting and thrusting, nor did they cease to wheel and turn and give and take, as they were two mountains clashing together or two seas breaking one against the other, till the day departed and the night brought on the darkness, when they drew apart and returned, each to his people. As soon as Sherkan reached his comrades, he said to them, “Never in my life saw I the like of this cavalier; and he has one fashion I never yet beheld in any. It is that, when he has a chance of dealing his adversary a deadly blow, he reverses his lance and smites him with the butt. Of a truth, I know not what will be the issue between him and me; but I would we had in our army his like and the like of his men.” Then he passed the night in sleep, and when it was morning, the Frank spurred out to the mid-field, where Sherkan met him, and they fell to fighting and circling one about the other, whilst all necks were stretched out to look at them; nor did they cease from battle and swordplay and thrusting with spears, till the day departed and the night came with the darkness, when they drew asunder and returned each to his own camp. Then each related to his comrades what had befallen him with his adversary, and the Frank said to his men, “To-morrow shall decide the matter.” So they both passed the night in sleep, and as soon as it was day, they mounted and drove at each other and ceased not to fight till the middle of the day. Then the Frank made a shift, first spurring his horse and then checking him with the bridle, so that he stumbled and threw him; whereupon Sherkan fell on him and was about to smite him with his sword and make an end of the long strife, when the Frank cried out, “O Sherkan, this is not the fashion of champions! It is only the beaten who deal thus with women.” When Sherkan heard this, he raised his eyes to the Frank's face and looking straitly at him, knew him for none other than the princess Abrizeh, whereupon he threw the sword from his hand and kissing the earth before her, said to her, "What moved thee to do this thing?" Quoth she, "I was minded to prove thee in the field and try thy stoutness in battle. These that are with me are all of them my women, and they are all maids; yet have they overcome thy horsemen in fair fight; and had not my horse stumbled with me, thou shouldst have seen my strength and prowess." Sherkan smiled at her speech and said, "Praised be God for safety and for my reunion with thee, O queen of the age!" Then she cried out to her damsels to loose the prisoners and dismount. They did as she bade and came and kissed the earth before her and Sherkan, who said to them, "It is the like of you that kings treasure up against the hour of need." Then he signed to his comrades to salute the princess; so they dismounted all and kissed the earth before her, for they knew the story. After this, the whole two hundred mounted and rode day and night for six days' space, till they drew near to Baghdad when they halted and Sherkan made Abrizeh and her companions put off their male attire and don the dress of the women of the Greeks. Then he despatched a company of his men to Baghdad to acquaint his father with his arrival in company with the princess Abrizeh, daughter of King Herdoub, to the intent that he might send some one to meet her. They passed the night in that place, and when God the Most High brought on the day, Sherkan and his company took horse and fared on towards the city. On the way, they met the Vizier Dendan, who had come out with a thousand horse, by commandment of King Omar, to do honour to the princess Abrizeh and to Sherkan. When they drew near, the Vizier and his company dismounted and kissed the earth before the prince and princess, then mounted again and escorted them, till they reached the city and came to the palace. Sherkan went in to his father, who rose and embraced him and questioned him of what had happened. So he told him all that had befallen him, including what the princess Abrizeh had told him and what had passed between them and how she had left her father and her kingdom and had chosen to depart and take up her abode with them. And he said to his father, "Indeed, the King of Constantinople had plotted to do us a mischief, because of his daughter Sufiyeh, for that the King of Caesarea had made known to him her history and the manner of her being made a gift to thee, he not knowing her to be King Afridoun's daughter; else would he have restored her to her father. And of a verity, we were only saved from these perils by the lady Abrizeh, and never saw I a more valiant than she!" And he went on to tell his father of the wrestling and the jousting from beginning to end. When King Omar heard his son's story, Abrizeh was exalted in his eyes, and he longed to see her and sent Sherkan to fetch her. So Sherkan went out to her and said, "The king calls for thee." She replied, "I hear and obey;" and he took her and brought her in to his father, who was seated on his throne, attended only by the eunuchs, having dismissed his courtiers and officers. The princess entered and kissing the ground before him, saluted him in choice terms. He was amazed at her fluent speech and thanked her for her dealing with his son Sherkan and bade her be seated. So she sat down and uncovered her face, which when the king saw, his reason fled and he made her draw near and showed her especial favour, appointing her a palace for herself and her damsels and assigning them due allowances. Then he asked her of the three jewels aforesaid, and she replied, "O King of the age, they are with me." So saying, she rose and going to her lodging, opened her baggage and brought out a box, from which she took a casket of gold. She opened the casket and taking out the three jewels, kissed them and gave them to the King and went away, taking his heart with her. Then the king sent for his son Sherkan and gave him one of the three jewels. Sherkan enquired of the other two, and the King replied, "O my son, I mean to give one to thy brother Zoulmekan and the other to thy sister Nuzhet ez Zeman." When Sherkan heard that he had a brother (for up to that time he had only known of his sister) he turned to his father and said to him, "O King, hast thou a son other than myself?" "Yes," answered Omar, "and he is now six years old." And he told him that his name was Zoulmekan and that he and Nuzhet ez Zeman were twins, born at a birth. This news was grievous to Sherkan, but he hid his chagrin and said, "The blessing of God the Most High be upon them!" And he threw the jewel from his hand and shook the dust off his clothes. Quoth his father, "What made thee change colour, when I told thee of this, seeing that the kingdom is assured to thee after me? For, verily, the troops have sworn to thee and the Amirs and grandees have taken the oath of succession to thee; and this one of the three jewels is thine." At this, Sherkan bowed his head and was ashamed to bandy words with his father: so he accepted the jewel and went away, knowing not what to do for excess of anger, and stayed not till he reached the princess Abrizeh's palace. When she saw him, she rose to meet him and thanked him for what he had done and called down blessings on him and his father. Then she sat down and made him sit by her side. After awhile, she saw anger in his face and questioned him, whereupon he told her that God had vouchsafed his father two children, a boy and a girl, by Sufiyeh, and that he had named the boy Zoulmekan and the girl Nuzhet ez Zeman. "He has given me one of the jewels," continued he, "and kept the other two for them. I knew not of Zoulmekan's birth till this day, and he is now six years old. So when I learnt this, wrath possessed me and I threw down the jewel: and I tell thee the reason of my anger and hide nothing from thee. But I fear lest the King take thee to wife, for he loves thee and I saw in him signs of desire for thee: so what wilt thou say, if he wish this?" "Know, O Sherkan," replied the princess, "that thy father has no dominion over me, nor can he take me without my consent; and if he take me by force, I will kill myself. As for the three jewels, it was not my intent that he should give them to either of his children and I had no thought but that he would lay them up with his things of price in his treasury; but now I desire of thy favour that thou make me a present of the jewel that he gave thee, if thou hast accepted it." "I hear and obey," replied Sherkan and gave her the jewel. Then said she, "Fear nothing," and talked with him awhile. Presently she said, "I fear lest my father hear that I am with you and sit not down with my loss, but do his endeavour to come at me; and to that end he may ally himself with King Afridoun and both come on thee with armies and so there befall a great turmoil." "O my lady," replied Sherkan, "if it please thee to sojourn with us, take no thought of them, though all that be in the earth and in the ocean gather themselves together against us!" "It is well," rejoined she; "if ye entreat me well, I will tarry with you, and if ye deal evilly by me, I will depart from you." Then she bade her maidens bring food; so they set the tables, and Sherkan ate a little and went away to his own house, anxious and troubled.

Meanwhile, King Omar betook himself to the lodging of the lady Sufiyeh, who rose to her feet, when she saw him, and stood till he was seated. Presently, his two children, Zoulmekan and Nuzbet ez Zeman, came to him, and he kissed them and hung a jewel round each one's neck, at which they rejoiced and kissed his hands. Then they went to their mother, who rejoiced in them and wished the King long life; and he said to her, "Why hast thou not told me, all this time, that thou art King Afridoun's daughter, that I might have advanced thee and enlarged thee in dignity and used thee with increase of honour and consideration?" "O King," replied Sufiyeh, "what could I desire greater or more exalted than this my standing with thee, overwhelmed as I am with thy favours and thy goodness? And God to boot hath blessed me by thee with two children, a son and a daughter." Her answer pleased the King and he set apart for her and her children a splendid palace. Moreover, he appointed for their service eunuchs and attendants and doctors and sages and astrologers and physicians and surgeons and in every way redoubled in favour and munificence towards them. Nevertheless, he was greatly occupied with love of the princess Abrizeh and burnt with desire of her night and day; and every night, he would go in to her, and talk with her and pay his court to her, but she gave him no answer, saying only, "O King of the age, I have no desire for men at this present." When he saw that she repelled him, his passion and longing increased till, at last, when he was weary of this, he called his Vizier Dendan and opening his heart to him, told him how love for the princess Abrizeh was killing him and how she refused to yield to his wishes and he could get nothing of her. Quoth the Vizier, "As soon as it is dark night, do thou take a piece of henbane, the bigness of a diner, and go in to her and drink wine with her. When the hour of leave-taking draws near, fill a last cup and dropping the henbane in it, give it to her to drink, and she will not reach her sleeping chamber, ere the drug take effect on her. Then do thou go in to her and take thy will of her." "Thy counsel is good," said the King, and going to his treasury, took thence a piece of concentrated henbane, which if an elephant smelt, he would sleep from year to year. He put it in his bosom and waited till some little of the night was past, when he betook himself to the palace of the princess, who rose to receive him; but he bade her sit down. So she sat down, and he by her, and he began to talk with her of drinking, whereupon she brought the table of wine and set it before him. Then she set on the drinking-vessels, and lighted the candles and called for fruits and confections and sweetmeats and all that pertains to drinking. So they fell to drinking and ceased not to carouse, till drunkenness crept into the princess's head. When the King saw this, he took out the piece of henbane and holding it between his fingers, filled a cup and drank it off; then filled another cup, into which he dropped the henbane, unseen of Abrizeh, and saying, "Thy health!" presented it to her. She took it and drank it off; then rose and went to her sleeping-chamber. He waited awhile, till he was assured that the drug had taken effect on her and gotten the mastery of her senses, when he went in to her and found her lying on her back, with a lighted candle at her head and another at her feet. She had put off her trousers, and the air raised the skirt of her shift and discovered what was between her thighs. When the King saw this, he took leave of his senses for desire and Satan tempted him and he could not master himself, but put off his trousers and fell upon her and did away her maidenhead. Then he went out and said to one of her women, by name Merjaneh, "Go in to thy mistress, for she calls for thee." So she went in to the princess and found her lying on her back, with the blood running down her thighs; whereupon she took a handkerchief and wiped away the blood and tended her mistress and lay by her that night. As soon as it was day, she washed the princess's hands and feet and bathed her face and mouth with rose-water, whereupon she sneezed and yawned and cast up the henbane. Then she revived and washed her hands and mouth and said to Merjaneh, "Tell me what has befallen me." So she told her what had passed and how she had found her, lying on her back, with the blood running down her thighs, wherefore she knew that the King had played the traitor with her and had undone her and taken his will of her. At this she was afflicted and shut herself up, saying to her damsels, "Let no one come in to me and say to all that I am ill, till I see what God will do with me." The news of her illness came to the King, and he sent her cordials and sherbet of sugar and confections. Some months passed thus, during which time the King's flame subsided and his desire for her cooled, so that he abstained from her. Now she had conceived by him, and in due time, her pregnancy appeared and her belly swelled, wherefore the world was straitened upon her and she said to her maid Merjaneh, “Know that it is not the folk who have wronged me, but I who sinned against myself in that I left my father and mother and country. Indeed, I abhor life, for my heart is broken and I have neither courage nor strength left. I used, when I mounted my horse, to have the mastery of him, but now I have no strength to ride. If I be brought to bed in this place, I shall be dishonoured among my women, and every one in the palace will know that he has taken my maidenhead in the way of shame; and if I return to my father, with what face shall I meet him or have recourse to him? How well says the poet:

Wherewith shall I be comforted, that am of all bereft, To whom nor folk nor home nor friend nor dwelling-place is left?”

Quoth Merjaneh, “It is for thee to command; I will obey.” And Abrizeh said, “I would fain leave this place privily, so that none shall know of me but thou, and return to my father and mother; for when flesh stinketh, there is nought for it but its own folk, and God shall do with me as He will.” “It is well, O princess,” replied Merjaneh. So she made ready in secret and waited awhile, till the King went out to hunt and Sherkan betook himself to certain of the fortresses to sojourn there awhile. Then she said to Merjaneh, “I wish to set out to-night, but how shall I do? For already I feel the pangs of labour, and if I abide other four or five days, I shall be brought to bed here, and how then can I go to my country? But this is what was written on my forehead.” Then she considered awhile and said, “Look us out a man who will go with us and serve us by the way, for I have no strength to bear arms.” “By Allah, O my lady,” replied Merjaneh, “I know none but a black slave called Ghezban, who is one of the slaves of King Omar ben Ennuman; he is a stout fellow and keeps guard at the gate of our palace. The King appointed him to attend us, and indeed we have overwhelmed him with favours. I will go out and speak with him of the matter and promise him money and tell him that, if he have a mind to tarry with us, we will marry him to whom he will. He told me before to-day that he had been a highwayman; so if he consent, we shall have our desire and come to our own country.” “Call him, that I may talk with him,” said the princess. So Merjaneh went out and said to the slave, “O Ghezban, God prosper thee, do thou fall in with what my lady says to thee.” Then she took him by the hand and brought him to Abrizeh. He kissed the princess’s hands and when she saw him, her heart took fright at him, but she said to herself, “Necessity is imperious,” and to him, “O Ghezban, wilt thou help us against the perfidies of fortune and keep my secret, if I discover it to thee?” When the slave saw her, his heart was taken by storm and he fell in love with her forthright, and could not choose but answer, “O my mistress, whatsoever thou biddest me do, I will not depart from it.” Quoth she, “I would have thee take me and this my maid and saddle us two camels and two of the king’s horses and set on each horse a saddle-bag of stuff and somewhat of victual, and go with us to our own country; where, if thou desire to abide with us, I will marry thee to her thou shalt choose of my damsels; or if thou prefer to return to thine own country, we will send thee thither, with as much money as will content thee.” When Ghezban heard this, he rejoiced greatly and replied, “O my lady, I will serve thee faithfully and will go at once and saddle the horses.” Then he went away, rejoicing and saying in himself, “I shall get my will of them; and if they will not yield to me, I will kill them and take their riches.” But this his intent he kept to himself and presently returned, mounted on one horse and leading other two and two camels. He brought the horses to the princess, who mounted one and made Merjaneh mount the other, albeit she was suffering from the pains of labour and could scarce possess herself for anguish. Then they set out and journeyed night and day through the passes of the mountains, till there remained but a day’s journey between them and their own country, when the pangs of travail came upon Abrizeh and she could no longer sit her horse. So she said to Ghezban, “Set me down, for the pains of labour are upon me,” and cried to Merjaneh, saying, “Do thou alight and sit down by me and deliver me.” They both drew rein and dismounting from their horses, helped the princess to alight, and she aswoon for stress of pain. When Ghezban saw her on the ground, Satan entered into him and he drew his sabre and brandishing it in her face, said, “O my lady, vouchsafe me thy favours.” With this, she turned to him and said, “It were a fine thing that I should yield to black slaves, after having I refused kings and princes!” And she was wroth with him and said, “What words are these? Out on thee! Do not talk thus in my presence and know that I will never consent to what thou sayst, though I drink the cup of death. Wait till I have cast my burden and am delivered of the after-birth, and after, if thou be able thereto, do with me as thou wilt; but, an thou leave not lewd talk at this time, I will slay myself and leave the world and be at peace from all this.” And she recited the following verses:

O Ghezban, unhand me and let me go freer Sure, fortune is heavy
 enough upon me.
My Lord hath forbidden me whoredom. “The fire Shall be the
 transgressor’s last dwelling,” quoth He:
So look not on me with the eye of desire, For surely to lewdness
 I may not agree;
And if thou respect not mine honour and God Nor put away filthy
 behaviour from thee,
I will call with my might on the men of my tribe And draw them
 ail hither from upland and lea.
Were I hewn, limb from limb, with the Yemani sword, Yet never a
 lecher my visage should see
Of the freeborn and mighty; so how then should I Let a whoreson
 black slave have possession of me?

When Ghezban heard this, he was exceeding angry; his eyes grew bloodshot and his face became of the colour of dust; his nostrils swelled, his lips protruded and the terrors of his aspect redoubled. And he repeated the following verses:

Abrizeh, have mercy nor leave me to sigh, Who am slain by the
 glance of thy Yemani eye!
My body is wasted, my patience at end, And my heart for thy
 cruelty racked like to die.
Thy glances with sorcery ravish all hearts; My reason is distant
 and passion is nigh.
Though thou drewst to thy succour the world full of troops, I’d

not stir till my purpose accomplished had I.

Thereupon Abrizeh wept sore and said to him, “Out on thee, O Ghezban! How darest thou demand this of me, O son of shame and nursling of lewdness? Dost thou think all folk are alike!” When the pestilent slave heard this, he was enraged and his eyes reddened: and he came up to her and smote her with the sword on her neck and killed her. Then he made off into the mountains, driving her horse before him with the treasure. In the agonies of death, she gave birth to a son, like the moon, and Merjaneh took him and laid him by her side, after doing him the necessary offices; and behold, the child fastened to its mother’s breast, and she dead. When Merjaneh saw this, she cried out grievously and rent her clothes and cast dust on her head and buffeted her cheeks, till the blood came, saying, “Alas, my mistress! Alas, the pity of it! Thou art dead by the hand of a worthless black slave, after all thy prowess!” As she sat weeping, there arose a great cloud of dust and darkened the plain; but, after awhile, it lifted and discovered a numerous army. Now this was the army of King Herdoub, the princess Abrizeh’s father, who, hearing that his daughter had fled to Baghdad, she and her maidens, and that they were with King Omar ben Ennuman, had come out with his troops to seek tidings of her from travellers who might have seen her with King Omar at Baghdad. When he had gone a day’s journey from his capital, he espied three horsemen afar off and made towards them, thinking to ask whence they came and seek news of his daughter. Now these three were his daughter and Merjaneh and Ghezban; and when the latter saw the troops drawing near, he feared for himself; so he killed Abrizeh and fled. When they came up and King Herdoub saw his daughter lying dead and Merjaneh weeping over her, he threw himself from his horse and fell down in a swoon. So all his company dismounted and pitching the tents, set up a great pavilion for the King, without which stood the grandees of the kingdom. At the sight of her lord the King, Merjaneh’s tears redoubled, and when he came to himself, he questioned her and she told him all that had passed, how he that had slain his daughter was a black slave, belonging to King Omar ben Ennuman, and how the latter had dealt with the princess. When King Herdoub heard this, the world grew black in his sight and he wept sore. Then he called for a litter and laying his dead daughter therein, returned to Caesarea and carried her into the palace. Then he went in to his mother Dhat ed Dewahi and said to her, “Shall the Muslims deal thus with my daughter? King Omar ben Ennuman despoiled her by force of her honour and after this, one of his black slaves slew her. By the Messiah, I will assuredly be revenged for her and clear away the stain from my honour! Else I shall kill myself with my own hand.” And he wept passing sore. Quoth his mother, “It was none other than Merjaneh killed her, for she hated her in secret. But do not thou fret for taking revenge for thy daughter, for, by the virtue of the Messiah, I will not turn back from King Omar ben Ennuman, till I have slain him and his sons; and I will assuredly do a deed, passing the power of wise men and champions, of which the chroniclers shall tell in all countries and places: but needs must thou obey me in all I shall direct, for he who is firmly set on aught shall surely compass his desire.” “By the virtue of the Messiah,” replied he, “I will not cross thee in aught that thou shalt say!” Then said she, “Bring me a number of damsels, high-bosomed maids, and summon the wise men of the time and let them teach them philosophy and the art of conversation and making verses and the rules of behaviour before kings, and let them talk with them of all manner of science and edifying knowledge. The sages must be Muslims, that they may teach the damsels the language and traditions of the Arabs, together with the history of the Khalifs and the pedigree of the Kings of Islam; and if we persevere in this for the space of four years, we shall attain our end. So possess thy soul in patience and wait; for, as one of the Arabs says, ‘It is a little thing to wait forty years for one’s revenge.’ When we have taught the girls these things, we shall be able to do our will with our enemy, for he is a doting lover of women and has three hundred and threescore concubines, to which are now added a hundred of the flower of thy damsels, that were with thy late daughter. So, as soon as we have made an end of their education, I will take them and set out with them.” When the King heard his mother’s words, he rejoiced and came up to her and kissed her head. Then he rose at once and despatched messengers and couriers to the ends of the earth, to fetch him Muslim sages. So they betook them to distant lands and brought him thence the sages and doctors whom he sought. When they were before him, he made much of them and bestowed on them dresses of honour, appointing them stipends and allowances and promising them much money, whenas they should have taught the damsels. Then he committed the latter to their charge, enjoining them to instruct them in all manner of knowledge, sacred and profane, and all polite accomplishments; and they set themselves to do his bidding.

As for King Omar ben Ennuman, when he returned from hunting, he sought the princess Abrizeh, but found her not nor could any give him news of her. This was grievous to him and he said, “How did she leave the palace, unknown of any? Had my kingdom been at stake in this, it were in a parlous case! Never again will I go a-hunting till I have sent to the gates those who shall keep good guard over them!” And he was sore vexed and heavy at heart for the loss of the princess Abrizeh. Presently, his son Sherkan returned from his journey; and he told him what had happened and how the princess had fled, whilst he was absent a-hunting, whereat he was greatly concerned. Then King Omar took to visiting his children every day and making much of them and brought them wise men and doctors, to teach them, appointing them stipends and allowances. When Sherkan saw this, he was exceeding wroth and jealous of his brother and sister, so that the signs of chagrin appeared in his face and he ceased not to languish by reason of this, till one day his father said to him, “What ails thee, that I see thee grown weak in body and pale of face?” “O my father,” replied Sherkan, “every time I see thee fondle my brother and sister and make much of them, jealousy seizes on me, and I fear lest it grow on me, till I slay them and thou slay me in return. This is the reason of my weakness of body and change of colour. But now I crave of thy favour that thou give me one of thine outlying fortresses, that I may abide there the rest of my life, for as the byword says, ‘It is better and fitter for me to be at a distance from my friend; for when the eye seeth not, the heart doth not grieve.’” And he bowed his head. When the King heard Sherkan’s words and knew the cause of his ailment, he soothed him and said to him, “O my son, I grant thee this. I have not in my realm a greater than the fortress of Damascus, and the government of it is thine from this time.” So saying, he called his secretaries of state and bade them make out Sherkan's patent of investiture to the viceroyalty of Damascus of Syria. Then he equipped Sherkan and formally invested him with the office and gave him his final instructions, enjoining him to policy and good government; and the prince took leave of his father and the grandees and officers of state and set out for his government, taking with him the Vizier Dendan. When he arrived at Damascus, the townspeople beat the drums and blew the trumpets and decorated the city and came out to meet him in great state, whilst all the notables and grandees walked in procession, each according to his rank.

Soon after Sherkan's departure, the governors of King Omar's children presented themselves before him and said to him, "O our lord, thy children's education is now complete and they are versed in all polite accomplishments and in the rules of manners and etiquette." At this the King rejoiced with an exceeding joy and conferred bountiful largesse upon the wise men, seeing Zoulmekan grown up and flourishing and skilled in horsemanship. The prince had now reached the age of fourteen and occupied himself with piety and devout exercises, loving the poor and wise men and the students of the Koran, so that all the people of Baghdad loved him, men and women. One day, the procession of the Mehmil of Irak passed round Baghdad, previously to the departure of the pilgrimage to the holy places and tomb of the Prophet. When Zoulmekan saw the procession, he was seized with longing to go on the pilgrimage; so he went in to his father and said to him, "I come to ask thy leave to make the pilgrimage."

But his father forbade him, saying, "Wait till next year, and I will go with thee." When Zoulmekan saw that the fulfilment of his desire was postponed, he betook himself to his sister Nuzhet ez Zeman, whom he found standing at prayer. As soon as she had made an end of her devotions, he said to her, "I am dying of desire to see the Holy House of God at Mecca and to visit the Prophet's tomb. I asked my father's leave, but he forbade me: so I mean to take somewhat of money and set out privily on the pilgrimage, without his knowledge." "I conjure thee by Allah," exclaimed she, "to take me with thee and that thou forbid me not to visit the tomb of the Prophet, whom God bless and preserve!" And he answered, "As soon as it is dark night, do thou leave this place, without telling any, and come to me." Accordingly, she waited till the middle of the night, when she donned a man's habit and went to the gate of the palace, where she found Zoulmekan with camels ready harnessed. So they mounted and riding after the caravan, mingled with the Irak pilgrims, and God decreed them a prosperous journey, so that they entered Mecca the Holy in safety, standing upon Arafat and performing the various rites of the pilgrimage. Then they paid a visit to the tomb of the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve) and thought to return with the pilgrims to their native land; but Zoulmekan said to his sister, "O my sister, it is in my mind to visit Jerusalem and the tomb of Abraham the friend of God (on whom be peace)." "I also desire to do this," replied she. So they agreed upon this, and he went out and took passage for himself and her and they made ready and set out with a company of pilgrims bound for Jerusalem. That very night she fell sick of an ague and was grievously ill, but presently recovered, after which her brother also sickened. She tended him during the journey, but the fever increased on him and he grew weaker and weaker, till they arrived at Jerusalem, where they alighted at a khan and hired a lodging there. Here they abode some time, whilst Zoulmekan's weakness increased on him, till he was wasted with sickness and became delirious. At this, his sister was greatly afflicted and exclaimed, "There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! It is He who hath decreed this." They sojourned there awhile, his sickness ever increasing and she tending him, till all their money was spent and she had not so much as a dirhem left. Then she sent a servant of the khan to the market, to sell some of her clothes, and spent the price upon her brother; and so she sold all she had, piece by piece, till she had nothing left but an old rug; whereupon she wept and exclaimed, "God is the Orderer of the past and the future!" Presently, her brother said to her, "O my sister, I feel recovery drawing near and I long for a little roast meat." "O my brother," replied she, "I am ashamed to beg; but tomorrow I will enter some rich man's house and serve him and earn somewhat for our living." Then she bethought herself awhile and said, "It is hard to me to leave thee and thou in this state, but I must perforce go." "God forbid!" rejoined he. "Thou wilt be put to shame; but there is no power and no virtue but in God!" And he wept and she wept too. Then she said, "O my brother, we are strangers and this whole year have we dwelt here; yet none hath knocked at our door. Shall we then die of hunger? I know no resource but that I go out and earn somewhat to keep us alive, till thou recover from thy sickness; when we will return to our native land." She sat weeping with him awhile, after which she rose and veiling her head with a camel-cloth, which the owner had forgotten with them, embraced her brother and went forth, weeping and knowing not whither she should go. Zoulmekan abode, awaiting her return, till the evening; but she came not, and the night passed and the morning came, but still she returned not; and so two days went by. At this he was greatly troubled and his heart fluttered for her, and hunger was sore upon him. At last he left the chamber and calling the servant of the inn, bade him carry him to the bazaar. So he carried him to the market and laid him down there; and the people of Jerusalem came round him and were moved to tears at his condition. He signed to them for somewhat to eat; so they took money from some of the merchants and bought food and fed him therewith; after which they carried him to a shop, where they laid him on a mat of palm-leaves and set a vessel of water at his head. At nightfall, they all went away, sore concerned for him, and in the middle of the night, he called to mind his sister, and his sickness redoubled on him, so that he abstained from eating and drinking and became insensible. When the people of the market saw him thus, they took thirty dirhems for him from the merchants and hiring a camel, said to the driver, "Carry this sick man to Damascus and leave him at the hospital; peradventure he may be cured and recover his health." "On my head be it!" replied he; but he said to himself, "How shall I take this sick man to Damascus, and he nigh upon death?" So he carried him away and hid with him till the night, when he threw him down on the fuel-heap in the stoke-hole of a bath and went his way. In the morning, the stoker of the bath came to his work and finding Zoulmekan cast on his back on the fuel-heap, exclaimed, "Could they find no other place in which to throw this dead man?" So saying, he gave him a push with his foot, and he moved, whereupon quoth the stoker, "This is some one who has eaten hashish and thrown himself down at hazard." Then he looked at him and saw that he had no hair on his face and was endowed with grace and comeliness; so he took pity on him and knew that he was sick and a stranger. “There is no power and no virtue but in God!” said he “I have sinned against this youth; for indeed the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve!) enjoins hospitality to strangers.” Then he lifted him up and carrying him to his own house, committed him to his wife and bade her tend him. So she spread him a bed and laid a cushion under his head, then heated water and washed his hands and feet and face. Meanwhile, the stoker went to the market and buying rose-water and sherbet of sugar, sprinkled Zoulmekan’s face with the one and gave him to drink of the other. Then he fetched a clean shirt and put it on him. With this, Zoulmekan scented the breeze of recovery and life returned to him; and he sat up and leant against the pillow. At this the stoker rejoiced and exclaimed, “O my God, I beseech Thee, by Thy hidden mysteries, make the salvation of this youth to be at my hands!” And he nursed him assiduously for three days, giving him to drink of sherbet of sugar and willow-flower water and rose-water and doing him all manner of service and kindness, till health began to return to his body and he opened his eyes and sat up. Presently the stoker came in and seeing him sitting up and showing signs of amendment, said to him, “How dost thou now, O my son?” “Thanks be to God,” replied Zoulmekan, “I am well and like to recover, if so He please.” The stoker praised the Lord of All for this and going to the market, bought ten chickens, which he carried to his wife and said to her, “Kill two of these for him every day, one in the morning and the other at nightfall.” So she rose and killed a fowl, then boiling it, brought it to him and fed him with the flesh and gave him the broth to drink. When he had done eating, she brought hot water and he washed his hands and lay back upon the pillow; whereupon she covered him up and he slept till the time of afternoon-prayer. Then she killed another fowl and boiled it; after which she cut it up and bringing it to Zoulmekan, said, “Eat, O my son!” Presently, her husband entered and seeing her feeding him, sat down at his head and said to him, “How is it with thee now, O my son?” “Thanks be to God for recovery!” replied he. “May He requite thee thy goodness to me!” At this the stoker rejoiced and going out, bought sherbet of violets and rose-water and made him drink it. Now his day's earnings at the bath were five dirhems, of which he spent every day two dirhems for Zoulmekan, one for sweet waters and sherbets and another for fowls; and he ceased not to entreat him thus kindly for a whole month, till the trace of illness ceased from him and he was quite recovered whereupon the stoker and his wife rejoiced and the former said to him, "O my son, wilt thou go with me to the bath?" "Willingly," replied he. So the stoker went to the market and fetched an ass, on which he mounted Zoulmekan and supported him in the saddle, till they came to the bath Then he made him alight and sit down, whilst he repaired to the market and bought lote-leaves and lupin-meal, with which he returned to the bath and said to Zoulmekan, "O my son, in the name of God, enter, and I will wash thy body." So they both entered the inner room of the bath, and the stoker fell to rubbing Zoulmekan's legs and was going on to wash his body with the lote-leaves and powder, when there came to them a bathman, whom the keeper of the bath had sent to Zoulmekan, and seeing the stoker rubbing and washing the latter, said to him, "This is trespassing on the keeper's rights." "By Allah," replied the stoker, "the master overwhelms us with his favours!" Then the bathman proceeded to shave Zoulmekan's head, after which he and the stoker washed and returned to the latter's house, where he clad Zoulmekan in a shirt of fine stuff and a tunic of his own and gave him a handsome turban and girdle and wound a silken kerchief about his neck. Meanwhile the stoker's wife had killed two chickens and cooked them for him; so, as soon as Zoulmekan entered and seated himself on the couch, the stoker arose and dissolving sugar in willow-flower water, made him drink it. Then he brought the tray of food and cutting up the chickens, fed him with the meat and broth, till he was satisfied, when he washed his hands and praised God for recovery, saying to the stoker, "It is to thee, under God the Most High, that I owe my life!" "Leave this talk," replied the stoker, "and tell us the manner of thy coming to this city and whence thou art; for I see signs of gentle breeding in thy face." "Tell me first how thou camest to fall in with me," said Zoulmekan; "and after I will tell thee my story." "As for that," rejoined the stoker, "I found thee lying on the rubbish-heap, by the door of the stoke-house, as I went to my work, near the morning, and knew not who had thrown thee down there. So I carried thee home with me; and this all I have to tell." Quoth Zoulmekan, "Glory to Him who quickens the bones, though they be rotten! Indeed, O my brother, thou hast not done good to one who is unworthy, and thou shalt reap the reward of this. But where am I now?" "In the city of Jerusalem," replied the stoker; whereupon Zoulmekan called to mind his strangerhood and his separation from his sister and wept. Then he discovered his secret to the stoker and told him his story, repeating the following verses:

They heaped up passion on my soul, beyond my strength to bear,
And for their sake my heart is racked with weariness and care.
Ah, be ye pitiful to me, O cruel that ye are, For e'en my foes do pity me, since you away did fare!
Grudge not to grant unto mine eyes a passing glimpse of you, To ease the longing of my soul and lighten my despair.
I begged my heart to arm itself with patience for your loss.
"Patience was never of my wont," it answered; "so forbear."

Then he redoubled his weeping, and the stoker said to him, "Weep not, but rather praise God for safety and recovery." Quoth Zoulmekan, "How far is it hence to Damascus?" "Six days' journey," answered the stoker "Wilt thou send me thither?" asked Zoulmekan. "O my lord," replied the stoker, "how can I let thee go alone, and thou a young lad and a stranger? If thou be minded to make the journey to Damascus, I will go with thee; and if my wife will listen to me and accompany me, I will take up my abode there; for it goes to my heart to part with thee." Then said he to his wife, "Wilt thou go with me to Damascus or wilt thou abide here, whilst I bring this my lord thither and return to thee? For he is bent upon, going to Damascus, and by Allah, it is hard to me to part with him, and I fear for him from the highway robbers." Quoth she, "I will go with you." And he said, "Praised be God for accord!" Then he rose and selling all his own and his wife's gear, bought a camel and hired an ass for Zoulmekan; and they set out and reached Damascus at nightfall after six days' journey. They alighted there, and the stoker went to the market and bought meat and drink. They had dwelt but five days in

Damascus, when his wife sickened and after a few days' illness, was translated to the mercy of God. The stoker mourned for her with an exceeding grief, and her death was no light matter to Zoulmekan, for she had tended him assiduously and he was grown used to her. Presently, he turned to the stoker and finding him mourning, said to him, "Do not grieve, for we must all go in at this gate." "God requite thee with good, O my son!" replied the stoker. "Surely He will compensate us with his bounties and cause our mourning to cease. What sayst thou, O my son? Shall we walk abroad to view Damascus and cheer our spirits?" "Thy will is mine," replied Zoulmekan. So the stoker took him by the hand, and they sallied forth and walked on, till they came to the stables of the Viceroy of Damascus, where they found camels laden with chests and carpets and brocaded stuffs and saddle-horses and Bactrian camels and slaves, white and black, and folk running to and fro and a great bustle. Quoth Zoulmekan, "I wonder to whom all these camels and stuffs and servants belong!" So he asked one of the slaves, and he replied, "These are presents that the Viceroy of Damascus is sending to King Omar ben Ennuman, with the tribute of Syria." When Zoulmekan heard his father's name, his eyes filled with tears and he repeated the following verses:

Ye that are far removed from my desireful sight, Ye that within
my heart are sojourners for aye,
Your comeliness is gone and life no more for me Is sweet, nor
will the pains of longing pass away.
If God one day decree reunion of our loves, How long a tale of
woes my tongue will have to say!

Then he wept and the stoker said to him, "O my son, thou art hardly yet recovered; so take heart and do not weep, for I fear a relapse for thee." And he applied himself to comfort him and cheer him, whilst Zoulmekan sighed and bemoaned his strangerhood and separation from his sister and his family and repeated the following verses, with tears streaming from his eyes:

Provide thee for the world to come, for needs must thou be gone;
Or soon or late, for every one the lot of death is drawn.

Thy fortune in this world is but delusion and regret; Thy life in
it but vanity and empty chaff and awn.
The world, indeed, is but as ‘twere a traveller’s halting-place,
Who makes his camels kneel at eve and fares on with the
dawn.

And he continued to weep and lament, whilst the stoker wept too for the loss of his wife, yet ceased not to comfort Zoulmekan till the morning. When the sun rose, he said to him, “Meseems thou yearnest for thy native land?” “Even so,” replied Zoulmekan, “and I may not tarry here; so I will commend thee to God’s care and set out with these people and journey with them, little by little, till I come to my country.” “And I with thee,” said the stoker; “for I cannot bear to part with thee. I have done thee service, and I mean to complete it by tending thee on the way.” At this, Zoulmekan rejoiced and said, “May God abundantly requite thee for me!” Then the stoker went out and selling the camel, bought another ass, which he brought to Zoulmekan, saying, “This is for thee to ride by the way; and when thou art weary of riding, thou canst dismount and walk.” “May God bless thee and help me to requite thee!” said Zoulmekan. “Indeed, thou hast dealt with me more lovingly than one with his brother.” Then the stoker provided himself with victual for the journey, and they waited till it was dark night, when they laid their provisions and baggage on the ass and set out on their journey.

To return to Nuzhet ez Zeman, when she left her brother in the khan and went out to seek service with some one, that she might earn wherewith to buy him the roast meat he longed for, she fared on, weeping and knowing not whither to go, whilst her mind was occupied with concern for her brother and with thoughts of her family and her native land. And she implored God the Most High to do away these afflictions from them and repeated the following verses:

The shadows darken and passion stirs up my sickness amain, And
longing rouses within me the old desireful pain.
The anguish of parting hath taken its sojourn in my breast, And
love and longing and sorrow have maddened heart and brain.

Passion hath made me restless and longing consumes my soul And
tears discover the secret that else concealed had lain.
I know of no way to ease me of sickness and care and woe, Nor can
my weak endeavour reknit love's severed skein.
The fire of my heart with yearnings and longing grief is fed And
for its heat, the lover to live in hell is fain.
O thou that thinkest to blame me for what betides me, enough; God
knows I suffer with patience whate'er He doth ordain.
I swear I shall ne'er find solace nor be consoled for love, The
oath of the children of passion, whose oaths are ne'er in
vain!
Bear tidings of me, I prithee, O night, to the bards of love And
that in thee I sleep not be witness yet again!

She walked on, weeping and turning right and left, as she went, till there espied her an old man who had come into the town from the desert with other five Bedouins. He took note of her and seeing that she was charming, but had nothing on her head but a piece of camel-cloth, marvelled at her beauty and said in himself, "This girl is pretty enough to dazzle the wit, but it is clear she is in poor case, and whether she be of the people of the city or a stranger, I must have her." So he followed her, little by little, till presently he came in front of her and stopping the way before her in a narrow lane, called out to her, saying, "Harkye, daughterling, art thou a freewoman or a slave?" When she heard this, she said to him, "By thy life, do not add to my troubles! "Quoth he, "God blessed me with six daughters, but five of them died and only one is left me, the youngest of them all; and I came to ask thee if thou wert of the people of this city or a stranger, that I might take thee and carry thee to her, to bear her company and divert her from mourning for her sisters, If thou hast no parents, I will use thee as one of them, and thou and she shall be as my two children." When she heard what he said, she bowed her head for bashfulness and said to herself, "Surely I may trust myself to this old man." Then she said to him, "O uncle, I am a girl of the Arabs (of Irak) and a stranger, and I have a sick brother; but I will go with thee to thy daughter on one condition; that is, that I may spend the day only with her and go to my brother at night. I am a stranger and was high in honour among my people, yet am I become cast down and abject. I came with my brother from the land of Hejaz and I fear lest he know not where I am." When the Bedouin heard this, he said to himself, "By Allah, I have gotten what I sought!" Then he turned to her and said, "There shall none be dearer to me than thou; I only wish thee to bear my daughter company by day, and thou shalt go to thy brother at nightfall. Or, if thou wilt, bring him to dwell with us." And he ceased not to give her fair words and coax her, till she trusted in him and agreed to serve him. Then he went on before her and she followed him, whilst he winked to his men to go on in advance and harness the camels and load them with food and water, ready for setting out as soon as he should come up. Now this Bedouin was a base-born wretch, a highway-robber and a brigand, a traitor to his friend and a past master in craft and roguery. He had no daughter and no son, and was but a wayfarer in Jerusalem, when, by the decree of God, he fell in with this unhappy girl. He held her in converse till they came without the city, where he joined his companions and found they had made ready the camels. So he mounted a camel, taking Nuzhet ez Zeman up behind him, and they rode on all night, making for the mountains, for fear any should see them. By this, she knew that the Bedouin's proposal was a snare and that he had tricked her; and she gave not over weeping and crying out the whole night long. A little before the dawn, they halted and the Bedouin came up to Nuzhet ez Zeman and said to her, "O wretch, what is this weeping! By Allah, an thou hold not thy peace, I will beat thee to death, city faggot that thou art!" When she heard this, she abhorred life and longed for death; so she turned to him and said, "O accursed old man, O greybeard of hell, did I trust in thee and hast thou played me false, and now thou wouldst torture me?" When he heard her words, he cried out, "O insolent wretch, dost thou dare to bandy words with me?" And he came up to her and beat her with a whip, saying, "An thou hold not thy peace, I will kill thee." So she was silent awhile, but she called to mind her brother and her former happy estate and wept in secret. Next day, she turned to the Bedouin and said to him, "How couldst thou deal thus perfidiously with me and lure me into these desert mountains, and what wilt thou do with me?" When he heard her words, he hardened his heart and said to her, "O pestilent baggage, wilt thou bandy words with me?” So saying, he took the whip and brought it down on her back, till she well-nigh fainted. Then she bowed down and kissed his feet; and he left beating her and began to revile her, saying, “By my bonnet, if I see or hear thee weeping, I will cut out thy tongue and thrust it up thy kaze, city strumpet that thou art!” So she was silent and made him no reply, for the beating irked her; but sat down, with her arms round her knees and bowing her head, fell a-musing on her case. Then she bethought her of her former ease and affluence and her present abasement, and called to mind her brother and his sickness and forlorn condition and how they were both strangers in a foreign land; whereat the tears coursed down her cheeks and she wept silently and repeated the following verses:

The tides of fate ‘twixt good and ill shift ever to and fro, And
no estate of life for men endureth evermo’.
All things that to the world belong have each their destined end
And to all men a term is set, which none may overgo.
How long must I oppression bear and peril and distress! Ah, how I
loathe this life of mine, that nought but these can show!
May God not prosper them, these days, wherein I am oppressed of
Fate, these cruel days that add abjection to my woe!
My purposes are brought to nought, my loves are reft in twain By
exile’s rigour, and my hopes are one and all laid low.
O ye, who pass the dwelling by, wherein my dear ones are, Bear
them the news of me and say, my tears for ever flow.

When she had finished, the Bedouin came up to her and taking compassion on her, bespoke her kindly and wiped away her tears. Then he gave her a cake of barley-bread and said to her, “I do not love to be answered, when I am angry: so henceforth give me no more of these insolent words, and I will sell thee to an honest fellow like myself, who will use thee well, even as I have done.” “It is well,” answered she; and when the night was long upon her and hunger gnawed her, she ate a little of the barley-cake. In the middle of the night, the Bedouin gave the signal for departure; so they loaded the camels and he mounted one of them, taking Nuzhet ez

Zeman up behind him. Then they set out and journeyed, without stopping, for three days, till they reached the city of Damascus, where they alighted at the Sultan's khan, hard by the Viceroy's Gate. Now she had lost her colour and her charms were changed by grief and the fatigue of the journey, and she ceased not to weep. So the Bedouin came up to her and said, "Hark ye, city wench! By my bonnet, an thou leave not this weeping, I will sell thee to a Jew!" Then he took her by the hand and carried her to a chamber, where he left her and went to the bazaar. Here he went round to the merchants who dealt in slave-girls and began to parley with them, saying, "I have with me a slave-girl, whose brother fell ill, and I sent him to my people at Jerusalem, that they might tend him till he was cured. The separation from him was grievous to her, and since then, she does nothing but weep. Now I purpose to sell her, and I would fain have whoso is minded to buy her of me speak softly to her and say to her, 'Thy brother is with me in Jerusalem, ill;' and I will be easy with him about her price." Quoth one of the merchants, "How old is she?" "She is a virgin, just come to the age of puberty," replied the Bedouin, "and is endowed with sense and breeding and wit and beauty and grace. But from the day I sent her brother to Jerusalem, she has done nothing but grieve for him, so that her beauty is fallen away and her value lessened." When the merchant heard this, he said, "O chief of the Arabs, I will go with thee and buy this girl of thee, if she be as thou sayest for wit and beauty and accomplishments; but it must be upon conditions, which if thou accept, I will pay thee her price, and if not, I will return her to thee." "If thou wilt," said the Bedouin, "take her up to Prince Sherkan, son of King Omar ben Ennuman, lord of Baghdad and of the land of Khorassan, and I will agree to whatever conditions thou mayst impose on me; for when he sees her, she will surely please him, and he will pay thee her price and a good profit to boot for thyself." "It happens," rejoined the merchant, "that I have just now occasion to go to him, that I may get him to sign me patent, exempting me from customs-dues, and I desire of him also a letter of recommendation to his father King Omar. So, if he take the girl, I will pay thee down her price at once." "I agree to this," answered the Bedouin. So they returned together to the khan, where the Bedouin stood at the door of the girl’s chamber and called out, saying, “Ho, Najiyeh!” which was the name he had given her. When she heard him, she wept and made no answer. Then he turned to the merchant and said to him, “There she sits. Do thou go up to her and look at her and speak kindly to her, as I enjoined thee.” So he went up to her courteously and saw that she was wonder-lovely and graceful especially as she was acquainted with the Arabic tongue; and he said to the Bedouin, “Verily she is even as thou saidst, and I shall get of the Sultan what I will for her.” Then he said to her, “Peace be on thee, O daughterling! How dost thou?” She turned to him and replied, “This was written in the book of Destiny.” Then she looked at him and seeing him to be a man of reverend appearance, with a handsome face, said to herself, “I believe this man comes to buy me. If I hold aloof from him, I shall abide with this tyrant, and he will beat me to death. In any case, this man is comely of face and makes me hope for better treatment from him than from this brute of a Bedouin. Mayhap he only comes to hear me talk; so I will give him a fair answer.” All this while, she had kept her eyes fixed on the ground; then she raised them to him and said in a sweet voice, “And upon thee be peace, O my lord, and the mercy of God and His blessing! This is what is commanded of the Prophet, whom God bless and preserve! As for thine enquiry how I do, if thou wouldst know my condition, it is such as thou wouldst not wish but to thine enemies.” And she was silent. When the merchant heard what she said, he was beside himself for delight in her and turning to the Bedouin, said to him, “What is her price, for indeed she is illustrious!” At this the Bedouin was angry and said, “Thou wilt turn me the girl’s head with this talk! Why dost thou say that she is illustrious, for all she is of the scum of slave-girls and of the refuse of the people? I will not sell her to thee.” When the merchant heard this, he knew he was dull-witted and said to him, “Calm thyself, for I will buy her of thee, notwithstanding the defects thou mentionest.” “And how much wilt thou give me for her?” asked the Bedouin “None should name the child but its father,” replied the merchant. “Name thy price for her.” “Not so,” rejoined the Bedouin; “do thou say what thou wilt give.” Quoth the merchant in himself, “This Bedouin is an addle-pated churl. By Allah, I cannot tell her price, for she has mastered my heart with her sweet speech and her beauty: and if she can read and write, it will be the finishing touch to her good fortune and that of her purchaser. But this Bedouin does not know her value." Then he turned to the latter and said to him, "O elder of the Arabs, I will give thee two hundred dinars for her, in cash, clear of the tax and the Sultan's dues." When the Bedouin heard this, he flew into a violent passion and cried out at the merchant, saying, "Begone about thy business! By Allah, wert thou to offer me two hundred dinars for the piece of camel-cloth on her head, I would not sell it to thee! I will not sell her, but will keep her by me, to pasture the camels and grind corn." And he cried out to her, saying, "Come, thou stinkard, I will not sell thee." Then he turned to the merchant and said to him, "I thought thee a man of judgment; but, by my bonnet, if thou begone not from me, I will let thee hear what will not please thee!" "Verily," said the merchant to himself, "this Bedouin is mad and knows not the girl's value, and I will say no more to him about her price for the present; for by Allah, were he a man of sense, he would not say, 'By my bonnet!' By Allah, she is worth the kingdom of the Chosroes and I will give him what he will, though it be all I have." Then he said to him, "O elder of the Arabs, calm thyself and take patience and tell me what clothes she has with thee." "Clothes!" cried the Bedouin; "what should the baggage want with clothes? The camel-cloth in which she is wrapped is ample for her." "With thy leave," said the merchant, "I will lift her veil and examine her as folk examine girls whom they think of buying." "Up and do what thou wilt," replied the other, "and God keep thy youth! Examine her, inside and out, and if thou wilt, take off her clothes and look at her naked." "God forbid!" said the merchant; "I will but look at her face." Then he went up to her, confounded at her beauty and grace, and seating himself by her side, said to her, "O my mistress, what is thy name?" "Dost thou ask what is my name now," said she, "or what it was formerly?" "Hast thou then two names?" asked the merchant. "Yes," replied she, "my whilom name was Nuzhet ez Zeman; but my name at this present is Ghusset ez Zeman." When the merchant heard this, his eyes filled with tears, and he said to her, "Hast thou not a sick brother?" "Indeed, my lord, I have," answered she; "but fortune hath parted us, and he lies sick in Jerusalem." The merchant's heart was confounded at the sweetness of her speech, and he said to himself, “Verily, the Bedouin spoke the truth of her.” Then she called to mind her brother and how he lay sick in a strange land, whilst she was parted from him and knew not what was become of him; and she thought of all that had befallen her with the Bedouin and of her severance from her father and mother and native land; and the tears ran down her cheeks and she repeated the following verses:

May God keep watch o’er thee, belov’d, where’er thou art, Thou
that, though far away, yet dwellest in my heart!
Where’er thy footsteps lead, may He be ever near, To guard thee
from time’s shifts and evil fortune’s dart!
Thou’rt absent, and my eyes long ever for thy sight, And at thy
thought the tears for aye unbidden start.
Would that I knew alas! what country holds thee now, In what
abode thou dwell’st, unfriended and apart!
If thou, in the green o the rose, still drink o’ the water of
life, My drink is nought but tears, since that thou didst
depart.
If sleep e’er visit thee, live coals of my unrest, Strewn betwixt
couch and side, for aye my slumbers thwart
All but thy loss to me were but a little thing, But that and that
alone is sore to me, sweetheart.

When the merchant heard her verses, he wept and put out his hand to wipe away her tears; but she let down her veil, saying, “God forbid, O my master!” The Bedouin, who was sitting at a little distance, watching them, saw her cover her face and concluded that she would have hindered him from handling her: so he rose and running to her, dealt her such a blow on the shoulders with a camel’s halter he had in his hand, that she fell to the ground on her face. Her eyebrow smote against a stone, which cut it open, and the blood streamed down her face; whereupon she gave a loud scream and fainted away. The merchant was moved to tears for her and said in himself, “I must and will buy this damsel, though I pay down her weight in gold, and deliver her from this tyrant.” And he began to reproach the Bedouin, whilst Nuzhet ez Zeman lay insensible. When she came to herself, she wiped away her tears and bound up her head: then, raising her eyes to heaven, she sought her Lord with a sorrowful heart and repeated the following verses:

Have ruth on one who once was rich and great, Whom villainy hath brought to low estate.
She weeps with never-ceasing tears and says, “There’s no recourse against the laws of Fate.”

Then she turned to the merchant and said to him, in a low voice, “By Allah, do not leave me with this tyrant, who knows not God the Most High! If I pass this night with him, I shall kill myself with my own hand: save me from him, and God will save thee from hell-fire.” So the merchant said to the Bedouin, “O chief of the Arabs, this girl is none of thine affair; so do thou sell her to me for what thou wilt.” “Take her,” said the Bedouin, “and pay me down her price, or I will carry her back to the camp and set her to feed the camels and gather their droppings.” Quoth the merchant, “I will give thee fifty thousand dinars for her.” “God will open,” replied the Bedouin. “Seventy thousand,” said the merchant. “God will open,” repeated the other; “she hath cost me more than that, for she hath eaten barley-bread with me to the value of ninety thousand dinars.” Quoth the merchant, “Thou and all thy people and thy whole tribe in all your lives have not eaten a thousand dinars’ worth of barley: but I will make thee one offer, which if thou accept not, I will set the Viceroy of Damascus on thee, and he will take her from thee by force.” “Say on,” rejoined the Bedouin. “A hundred thousand,” said the merchant. “I will sell her to thee at that price,” answered the Bedouin; “I shall be able to buy salt with that.” The merchant laughed and going to his house, returned with the money and gave it to the Bedouin, who took it and made off, saying, “I must go to Jerusalem: it may be I shall happen on her brother, and I will bring him here and sell him.” So he mounted and journeyed to Jerusalem, where he went to the khan and enquired for Zoulmekan, but could not find him.

Meanwhile, the merchant threw his gaberdine over Nuzhet ez Zeman and carried her to his house, where he dressed her in the richest clothes he could buy. Then he carried her to the bazaar, where he bought her what jewellery she chose and put it in a bag of satin, which he laid before her, saying, “This is all for thee, and I ask nothing of thee in return but that, when thou comest to the Viceroy of Damascus, thou tell him what I gave for thee and that it was little compared with thy value: and if he buy thee, tell him how I have dealt with thee and ask of him for me a royal patent, with a recommendation to his father King Omar Ben Ennuman, lord of Baghdad, to the intent that he may forbid the taking toll on my stuffs or other goods in which I traffic.” When she heard his words, she wept and sobbed, and the merchant said to her, “O my mistress, I note that, every time I mention Baghdad, thine eyes fill with tears: is there any one there whom thou lovest? If it be a merchant or the like, tell me; for I know all the merchants and so forth there; and an thou wouldst send him a message, I will carry it for thee.” “By Allah,” replied she, “I have no acquaintance among merchants and the like! I know none there but King Omar ben Ennuman.” When the merchant heard this, he laughed and was greatly rejoiced and said in himself, “By Allah, I have gotten my desire!” Then he said to her, “Hast thou then been shown to him?” “No,” answered she; “but I was brought up with his daughter and he holds me dear and I have much credit with him; so if thou wouldst have him grant thee a patent of exemption, give me ink-horn and paper, and I will write thee a letter, which, when thou reachest Baghdad, do thou deliver into the King’s own hand and say to him, ‘Thy handmaid Nuzhet ez Zeman salutes thee and would have thee to know that the changing chances of the nights and days have smitten her, so that she has been sold from place to place and is now with the Viceroy of Damascus.’” The merchant wondered at her eloquence and his affection for her increased and he said to her, “I cannot think but that men have abused thine understanding and sold thee for money. Tell me, dost thou know the Koran?” “I do,” answered she; “and I am also acquainted with philosophy and medicine and the Prolegomena and the commentaries of Galen the physician on the Canons of Hippocrates, and I have commented him, as well as the Simples of Ibn Beltar, and have studied the works of Avicenna, according to the canon of Mecca, as well as other treatises. I can solve enigmas and establish parallels and discourse upon geometry and am skilled in anatomy. I have read the books of the Shafiyi sect and the Traditions of the Prophet, I am well read in grammar and can argue with the learned and discourse of all manner of sciences. Moreover I am skilled in logic and rhetoric and mathematics and the making of talismans and calendars and the Cabala, and I understand all these branches of knowledge thoroughly. But bring me ink-horn and paper, and I will write thee a letter that will profit thee at Baghdad and enable thee to dispense with passports." When the merchant heard this, he cried out, "Excellent! Excellent! Happy he in whose palace thou shalt be!" Then he brought her ink-horn and paper and a pen of brass and kissed the earth before her, to do her honour. She took the pen and wrote the following verses:

"What ails me that sleep hath forsaken my eyes and gone astray?
    Have you then taught them to waken, after our parting day!
How comes it your memory maketh the fire in my heart to rage?
    Is't thus with each lover remembers a dear one far away?
How sweet was the cloud of the summer, that watered our days of
    yore! 'Tis flitted, before of its pleasance my longing I
    could stay.
I sue to the wind and beg it to favour the slave of love, The
    wind that unto the lover doth news of you convey.
A lover to you complaineth, whose every helper fails. Indeed, in
    parting are sorrows would rend the rock in sway.

"These words are from her whom melancholy destroys and whom watching hath wasted; in her darkness there are no lights found, and she knows not night from day. She tosses from side to side on the couch of separation and her eyes are blackened with the pencils of sleeplessness; she watches the stars and strains her sight into the darkness: verily, sadness and emaciation have consumed her and the setting forth of her case would be long. No helper hath she but tears and she reciteth the following verses:

"No turtle warbles on the branch, before the break of morn, But
    stirs in me a killing grief, a sadness all forlorn.
No lover, longing for his loves, complaineth of desire, But with

a doubled stress of woe my heart is overborne.
Of passion I complain to one who hath no ruth on me. How soul and
body by desire are, one from other, torn!"

Then her eyes brimmed over with tears, and she wrote these verses also:

"Love-longing, the day of our parting, my body with mourning
smote, And severance from my eyelids hath made sleep far
remote.
I am so wasted for yearning and worn for sickness and woe, That,
were it not for my speaking, thou'dst scarce my presence
note."

Then she wept and wrote at the foot of the scroll, "This is from her who is far from her people and her native land, the sorrowful-hearted Nuzhet ez Zeman." She folded the letter and gave it to the merchant, who took it and reading what was written in it, rejoiced and exclaimed, "Glory to Him who fashioned thee!" Then he redoubled in kindness and attention to her all that day; and at nightfall, he sallied out to the market and bought food, wherewith he fed her; after which he carried her to the bath and said to the tire-woman, "As soon as thou hast made an end of washing her head, clothe her and send and let me know.' Meanwhile he fetched food and fruit and wax candles and set them on the dais in the outer room of the bath; and when the tire-woman had done washing her, she sent to tell the merchant, and Nuzhet ez Zeman went out to the outer room, where she found the tray spread with food and fruit. So she ate, and the tire-woman with her, and gave what was left to the people and keeper of the bath. Then she slept till the morning, and the merchant lay the night in a place apart. When he awoke, he came to her and waking her, presented her with a shift of fine silk, a kerchief worth a thousand dinars, a suit of Turkish brocade and boots embroidered with red gold and set with pearls and jewels. Moreover, he hung in each of her ears a circlet of gold, with a fine pearl therein, worth a thousand dinars, and threw round her neck a collar of gold, with bosses of garnet and a chain of amber beads, that hung down between her breasts to her middle. Now this chain was garnished with ten balls and nine crescents and each crescent had in its midst a beazel of ruby and each ball a beazel of balass ruby. The worth of the chain was three thousand dinars and each of the balls was worth twenty thousand dirhems, so that her dress in all was worth a great sum of money. When she had put these on, the merchant bade her make her toilet, and she adorned herself to the utmost advantage. Then he bade her follow him and walked on before her through the streets, whilst the people wondered at her beauty and exclaimed, "Blessed be God, the most excellent Creator! O fortunate man to whom she shall belong!" till they reached the Sultan's palace; when he sought an audience of Sherkan and kissing the earth before him, said, "O august King, I have brought thee a rare gift, unmatched in this time and richly covered with beauty and good qualities." "Let me see it," said Sherkan. So the merchant went out and returning with Nuzhet ez Zeman, made her stand before Sherkan. When the latter beheld her, blood drew to blood, though he had never seen her, having only heard that he had a sister called Nuzhet ez Zeman and a brother called Zoulmekan and not having made acquaintance with them, in his jealousy of them, because of the succession. Then said the merchant, "O King, not only is she without peer in her time for perfection of beauty and grace, but she is versed to boot in all learning, sacred and profane, besides the art of government and the abstract sciences." Quoth Sherkan, "Take her price, according to what thou gavest for her, and go thy ways." "I hear and obey," replied the merchant; "but first I would have thee write me a patent, exempting me for ever from paying tithe on my merchandise." "I will do this," said Sherkan; "but first tell me what you paid for her." Quoth the merchant, "I bought her for a hundred thousand dinars, and her clothes cost me as much more." When the Sultan heard this, he said, "I will give thee more than this for her," and calling his treasurer, said to him, "Give this merchant three hundred and twenty thousand dinars; so will he have a hundred and twenty thousand dinars profit." Then he summoned the four Cadis and paid him the money in their presence; after which he said to them, "I call you to witness that I free this my slave-girl and purpose to marry her." So the Cadis drew up the act of enfranchisement, and the Sultan scattered much gold on the heads of those present, which was picked up by the pages and eunuchs. Then they drew up the contract of marriage between Sherkan and Nuzhet ez Zeman, after which he bade write the merchant a perpetual patent, exempting him from tax and tithe upon his merchandise and forbidding all and several to do him let or hindrance in all his government, and bestowed on him a splendid dress of honour. Then all who were present retired, and there remained but the Cadis and the merchant; whereupon quoth Sherkan to the former, "I wish you to hear such discourse from this damsel as may prove her knowledge and accomplishment in all that this merchant avouches of her, that we may be certified of the truth of his pretensions." "Good," answered they; and he commanded the curtains to be drawn before Nuzhet ez Zeman and her attendants, who began to wish her joy and kiss her hands and feet, for that she was become the Viceroy's wife. Then they came round her and easing her of the weight of her clothes and ornaments, began to look upon her beauty and grace. Presently the wives of the Amirs and Viziers heard that King Sherkan had bought a damsel unmatched for beauty and accomplishments and versed in all branches of knowledge, at the price of three hundred and twenty thousand dinars, and that he had set her free and married her and summoned the four Cadis to examine her. So they asked leave of their husbands and repaired to the palace. When they came in to her, she rose and received them with courtesy, welcoming them and promising them all good. Moreover, she smiled in their faces and made them sit down in their proper stations, as if she had been brought up with them, so that their hearts were taken with her and they all wondered at her good sense and fine manners, as well as at her beauty and grace, and said to each other, "This damsel is none other than a queen, the daughter of a king." Then they sat down, magnifying her, and said to her, "O our lady, our city is illumined by thy presence, and our country and kingdom are honoured by thee. The kingdom indeed is thine and the palace is thy palace, and we all are thy handmaids; so do not thou shut us out from thy favours and the sight of thy beauty." And she thanked them for this. All this while the curtains were drawn between Nuzhet ez Zeman and the women with her, on the one side, and King Sherkan and the Cadis and merchant seated by him, on the other. Presently, Sherkan called to her and said, “O queen, the glory of thine age, this merchant describes thee as being learned and accomplished and asserts that thou art skilled in all branches of knowledge, even to astrology: so let us hear something of all this and give us a taste of thy quality.”

“O King,” replied she, “I hear and obey. The first subject of which I will treat is the art of government and the duties of kings and what behoves governors of lawful commandments and what is incumbent on them in respect of pleasing manners. Know then, O King, that all men’s works tend either to religion or to worldly life, for none attains to religion save through this world, because it is indeed the road to the next world. Now the world is ordered by the doings of its people, and the doings of men are divided into four categories, government (or the exercise of authority), commerce, husbandry (or agriculture) and craftsmanship. To government are requisite perfect (knowledge of the science of) administration and just judgment; for government is the centre (or pivot) of the edifice of the world, which is the road to the future life since that God the Most High hath made the world to be to His servants even as victual to the traveller for the attainment of the goal: and it is needful that each man receive of it such measure as shall bring him to God, and that he follow not in this his own mind and desire. If the folk would take of the goods of the world with moderation and equity, there would be an end of contentions; but they take thereof with violence and iniquity and persist in following their own inclinations; and their licentiousness and evil behaviour in this give birth to strife and contention. So they have need of the Sultan, that he may do justice between them and order their affairs prudently, and if he restrain not the folk from one another, the strong will get the mastery over the weak. Ardeshir says that religion and the kingship are twin; religion is a treasure and the king its keeper; and the divine ordinances and men’s own judgment indicate that it behoves the folk to adopt a ruler to hold the oppressor back from the oppressed and do the weak justice against the strong and to restrain the violence of the proud and the unjust. For know, O King, that according to the measure of the ruler’s good morals, even so will be the time; as says the apostle of God (on whom be peace and salvation), ‘There are two classes, who if they be virtuous, the people will be virtuous, and if they be depraved, the people also will be depraved: even princes and men of learning.' And it is said by a certain sage, 'There are three kinds of kings, the king of the Faith, the king who watches over and protects those things that are entitled to respect and honour, and the king of his own inclinations. The king of the Faith constrains his subjects to follow the laws of their faith, and it behoves that he be the most pious of them all, for it is by him that they take pattern in the things of the Faith; and the folk shall do obedience to him in what he commands in accordance with the Divine ordinances; but he shall hold the discontented in the same esteem as the contented, because of submission to the Divine decrees. As for the king of the second order, he upholds the things of the Faith and of the world and compels the folk to follow the Law of God and to observe the precepts of humanity; and it behoves him to conjoin the sword and the pen; for whoso goeth astray from what the pen hath written, his feet slip, and the king shall rectify his error with the edge of the sword and pour forth his justice upon all men. As for the third kind of king, he hath no religion but the following his own lusts and fears not the wrath of his Lord, who set him on the throne; so his kingdom inclines to ruin, and the end of his arrogance is in the House of Perdition.' And another sage says, 'The king has need of many people, but the folk have need of but one king; wherefore it behoves that he be well acquainted with their natures, to the end that he may reduce their difference to concord, that he may encompass them one and all with his justice and overwhelm them with his bounties.' And know, O King, that Ardeshir, styled Jemr Shedid, third of the Kings of Persia, conquered the whole world and divided it into four parts and let make for himself four seal-rings, one for each division of his realm. The first seal was that of the sea and the police and of prohibition, and on it was written, 'Alternatives.' The second was the seal of revenue and of the receipt of monies, and on it was written, 'Culture.' The third was the seal of the commissariat, and on it was written, 'Plenty.' The fourth was the seal of (the Court of Enquiry into) abuses, and on it was written, 'Justice.' And these remained in use in Persia until the revelation of Islam. King Chosroes also, wrote to his son, who was with the army, 'Be not over-lavish to thy troops, or they will come to have no need of thee;

neither be niggardly with them, or they will murmur against thee. Do thy giving soberly and confer thy favours advisedly; be liberal to them in time of affluence and stint them not in time of stress.' It is said that an Arab of the desert came once to the Khalif Mensour and said to him, 'Starve thy dog and he will follow thee.' When the Khalif heard his words, he was enraged, but Aboulabbas et Tousi said to him, 'I fear that, if some other than thou should show him a cake of bread, the dog would follow him and leave thee.' Thereupon the Khalif's wrath subsided and he knew that the Bedouin had meant no offence and ordered him a present. And know, O King, that Abdulmelik ben Merwan wrote to his brother Abdulaziz, when he sent him to Egypt, as follows: 'Pay heed to thy secretaries and thy chamberlains, for the first will acquaint thee with necessary matters and the second with matters of etiquette and ceremonial observance, whilst the tribute that goes out from thee will make thy troops known to thee.' Omar ben el Khettab (whom God accept) was in the habit, when he engaged a servant, of laying four conditions on him, the first that he should not ride the baggage-beasts, the second that he should not wear fine clothes, the third that he should not eat of the spoil and the fourth that he should not delay to pray after the proper time. It is said that there is no wealth better than understanding and no understanding like common sense and prudence and no prudence like the fear of God; that there is no offering like good morals and no measure like good breeding and no profit like earning the Divine favour; that there is no piety like the observance of the limits of the Law and no science like that of meditation, no devotion like the performance of the Divine precepts, no safeguard like modesty, no calculation like humility and no nobility like knowledge. So guard the head and what it contains and the body and what it comprises and remember death and calamity. Says Ali, (whose face God honour!), 'Beware of the wickedness of women and be on thy guard against them. Consult them not in aught, but be not grudging of complaisance to them, lest they be tempted to have recourse to intrigue.' And also, 'He who leaves the path of moderation and sobriety, his wits become perplexed.' And Omar (whom God accept) says, 'There are three kinds of women, first, the true-believing, God-fearing woman, loving and fruitful, helping her husband against fate, not helping fate against her husband; secondly, she who loves and tenders her children, but no more; and thirdly, the woman who is as a shackle that God puts on the neck of whom He will. Men also are three: the first, who is wise, when he exercises his judgment; the second, wiser than he, who, when there falls on him somewhat of which he knows not the issue, seeks folk of good counsel and acts by their advice; and the third, who is addle-headed, knowing not the right way nor heeding those who would instruct him.' Justice is indispensable in all things; even slave-girls have need of justice; and highway robbers, who live by violence, bear witness of this, for did they not deal equitably among themselves and observe fairness in their divisions, their order would fall to pieces. For the rest, the chief of noble qualities is generosity and benevolence. How well says the poet:

'By largesse and mildness the youth chief of his tribe became,
And it were easy for thee to follow and do the same.'

And quoth another:

'In mildness stability lies and clemency wins us respect, And
safety in soothfastness is for him who is soothfast and
frank;
And he who would get himself praise and renown for his wealth
from the folk, In the racecourse of glory must be, for
munificence, first in the rank.'"

And Nuzhet ez Zeman discoursed upon the policy and behaviour of kings, till the bystanders said, "Never heard we one reason of the duties of kings like this damsel! Mayhap she will favour us with discourse upon some subject other than this." When she heard this, she said, "As for the chapter of good breeding, it is wide of scope, for it is a compend of perfections. There came in one day to the Khalif Muawiyeh one of his boon-companions, who spoke of the people of Irak and the goodness of their wit; and the Khalif's wife Meisoun, mother of Yezid, heard him. So, when he was gone, she said to the Khalif, 'O Commander of the Faithful, prithee let some of the people of Irak come in to thee and talk with them, that I may hear their discourse.' So the Khalif said to his attendants, 'Who is at the door?'

And they answered, ‘The Benou Temim.’ ‘Let them come in,’ said he. So they came in and with them Ahnaf ben Cais. Now Muawiyeh had drawn a curtain between himself and Meisoun, that she might hear what they said without being seen herself; and he said to Ahnaf, ‘O Abou Behr, pray, near and tell me what counsel thou hast for me.’ Quoth Ahnaf, ‘Part thy hair and trim thy moustache and clip thy nails and pluck out the hair of thine armpits and shave thy pubes and be constant in the use of the toothstick, for therein are two-and-seventy virtues, and make the Friday (complete) ablution as an expiation for what is between the two Fridays.’ ‘What is thy counsel to thyself?’ asked Muawiyeh. ‘To plant my feet firmly on the ground,’ replied Ahnaf, ‘to move them with deliberation and keep watch over them with my eyes.’ ‘How,’ asked the Khalif, ‘dost thou carry thyself, when thou goest in to the common folk of thy tribe?’ ‘I lower my eyes modestly,’ replied Ahnaf, ‘and salute them first, abstaining from what does not concern me and being sparing of words.’ ‘And how, when thou goest in to thine equals?’ asked Muawiyeh. ‘I give ear to them, when they speak,’ answered the other, ‘and do not assail them, when they err.’ ‘And how dost thou,’ said the Khalif, ‘when thou goest in to thy chiefs?’ ‘I salute without making any sign,’ answered Ahnaf, ‘and await the response: if they bid me draw near, I do so, and if they bid me stand aloof, I withdraw.’ ‘How dost thou with thy wife?’ asked the Khalif. ‘Excuse me from answering this, O Commander of the Faithful!’ replied he; but Muawiyeh said, ‘I conjure thee to answer.’ Then said Ahnaf, ‘I entreat her kindly and show her pleasant familiarity and am large in expenditure, for women were created of a crooked rib.’ ‘And how,’ asked the Khalif, ‘dost thou when thou hast a mind to lie with her?’ ‘I speak to her to perfume herself,’ answered the other, ‘and kiss her till she is moved to desire; then, if it be as thou knowest, I throw her on her back. If the seed abide in her womb, I say, “O my God, make it blessed and let it not be a castaway, but fashion it into a goodly shape!” Then I rise from her and betake myself to the ablution, first pouring water over my hands and then over my body and returning thanks to God for the delight He hath given me.’ ‘Thou hast answered excellently well,’ said Muawiyeh; ‘and now tell me what thou wouldst have.’ Quoth Ahnaf, ‘I would have thee rule thy subjects in the fear of God and do equal justice amongst them.’ So saying, he withdrew from the Khalif’s presence, and when he had gone, Meisoun said, ‘Were there but this man in Irak, he would suffice to it.’ This (continued Nuzhet ez Zeman) is a small fraction of the chapter of good breeding. Know O King, that Muyekib was intendant of the treasury during the Khalifate of Omar ben Khettab. ‘One day (quoth he) the Khalif’s son came to me and I gave him a dirhem from the treasury. Then I returned to my own house, and presently, as I was sitting, there came to me a messenger, bidding me to the Khalif. So I was afraid and went to him, and when I came into his presence, I saw in his hand the dirhem I had given his son. “Harkye, Muyekib,” said he, “I have found somewhat concerning thy soul.” “What is it, O Commander of the Faithful?” asked I; and he answered, “It is that thou wilt have to render an account of this dirhem to the people of Mohammed (on whom be peace and salvation) on the Day of Resurrection.”’ This same Omar wrote a letter to Abou Mousa el Ashari, to the following purport, ‘When these presents reach thee, give the people what is theirs and send the rest to me.’ And he did so. When Othman succeeded to the Khalifate, he wrote a like letter to Abou Mousa, who did his bidding and sent him the tribute accordingly, and with it came Ziad When the latter laid the tribute before Othman, the Khalif’s son came in and took a dirhem, whereupon Ziad fell a-weeping. ‘Why dost thou weep?’ asked Othman. Quoth Ziad, ‘I once brought Omar ben Khettab the like of this, and his son took a dirhem, whereupon Omar bade snatch it from his hand. Now thy son hath taken of the tribute, yet have I seen none rebuke him nor take the money from him.’ And Othman said, ‘Where wilt thou find the like of Omar?’ Again, Zeid ben Aslam relates of his father that he said, ‘I went out one night with Omar, and we walked on till we espied a blazing fire in the distance. Quoth Omar, “This must be travellers, who are suffering from the cold: let us join them.” So we made for the fire, and when we came to it, we found a woman who had lighted a fire under a cauldron, and by her side were two children, crying. “Peace on you, O folk of the light!” said Omar, for he misliked to say, “folk of the fire;” “what ails you?” Quoth she, “The cold and the night irk us.” “What ails these children that they weep?” asked he. “They are hungry,” replied she. “And what is in this cauldron?”

asked Omar. “It is what I quiet them with,” answered she, “and God will question Omar ben Khettab of them, on the Day of Resurrection.” “And what,” rejoined the Khalif, “should Omar know of their case?” “Why then,” said she, “should he undertake the governance of the people’s affairs and yet be unmindful of them?” Then Omar turned to me and said, “Come with me.” So we both set off running till we reached the treasury, where he took out a sack of flour and a pot of fat and said to me, “Put these on my back.” “O Commander of the Faithful,” said I, “I will carry them for thee.” “Wilt thou bear my burden for me on the Day of Resurrection?” replied he. So I put the things on his back, and we set off, running, till we came to the woman, when he threw down the sack. Then he took out some of the flour and put it in the cauldron and saying to the woman, “Leave it to me,” fell to blowing the fire; Now he had a great beard and I saw the smoke issuing from the interstices thereof, till the flour was cooked, when he threw in some of the fat and said to the woman, “Do thou feed the boys whilst I cool the food for them.” So they ate their fill and he left the rest with her. Then he turned to me and said, “O Aslam, I see it was indeed hunger made them weep; and I am glad I did not go away without finding out the reason of the light I saw.”’ It is said that Omar passed, one day, by a flock of sheep, kept by a slave, and asked the latter to sell him a sheep. ‘They are not mine,’ replied the shepherd. ‘Thou art the man I sought,’ said Omar and buying him of his master, set him free, whereupon the slave exclaimed, ‘O my God, thou hast bestowed on me the lesser emancipation; vouchsafe me now the greater!’ They say also, that Omar ben Khettab was wont to give his servants sweet milk and eat coarse fare himself and to clothe them softly and wear himself coarse garments. He gave all men their due and exceeded in his giving to them. He once gave a man four thousand dirhems and added thereto yet a thousand, wherefore it was said to him, ‘Why dost thou not favour thy son as thou favourest this man?’ He answered, ‘This man’s father stood firm in fight on the day of Uhud.’ El Hassan relates that Omar once came (back from an expedition) with much money and that Hefseh came to him and said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, be mindful of the due of kinship!’ ‘O Hefseh,’ replied he, ‘God hath indeed enjoined us to satisfy the dues of kinship, but of our own monies, not those of the true believers. Indeed, thou pleasest thy family, but angerest thy father.' And she went away, dragging her skirts. Says Omar's son, 'I implored God one year (after Omar's death) to show me my father, till at last I saw him wiping the sweat from his brow and said to him, "How is it with thee, O my father?" "But for God's mercy," answered he, "thy father had perished." Then said Nuzhet ez Zeman, "Hear, O august King, the second division of the first chapter of the instances of the followers of the Prophet and other pious men. Says El Hassan of Bassora, 'Not a soul of the sons of Adam goes forth of the world, without grieving for three things, failure to enjoy what he has amassed, failure to compass what he hoped and failure to provide himself with sufficient provision for that to which he goes.' It was said to Sufyan, 'Can a man be devout and yet possess wealth?' 'Yes,' replied he, 'so he be patient under affliction and return thanks, when God giveth to him.' When Abdallah ben Sheddad was on his death-bed, he sent for his son Mohammed and admonished him, saying, 'O my son, I see the messenger of death calling me and so I charge thee to cherish the fear of God, both in public and private. Praise God and be true in thy speech, for the praise of God brings increase of prosperity, and piety in itself is the best of provision, even as says one of the poets:

I see not that bliss lies in filling one's chest; The God-fearing
man can alone be called blest.
For piety aye winneth increase of God; So of all men's provision
'tis surely the best.

When Omar ben Abdulaziz succeeded to the Khalifate, he went to his own house and laying hands on all that his family and household possessed, put it into the public treasury. So the Ommiades betook themselves for aid to his father's sister, Fatimeh, daughter of Merwan, and she sent to Omar, saying, 'I must needs speak with thee.' So she came to him by night, and when he had made her alight from her beast and sit down, he said to her, 'O aunt, it is for thee to speak first, since it is at thine instance that we meet; tell me, therefore, what thou wouldst with me.' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' replied she, 'it is thine to speak first, for thy judgment perceives that which is hidden from the senses.' Then said the Khalif, 'Of a verity God sent Mohammed as a mercy to some and a punishment to others; and He chose out for him what was with him and withdrew him to Himself, leaving the people a river, whereof the thirsty of them might drink. After him he made Abou Bekr the Truth-teller Khalif and he left the river in its pristine state, doing what was pleasing to God. Then arose Omar and worked a work and furnished forth a strife, of which none might do the like When Othman came, he diverted a stream from the river, and Muawiyeh in his turn sundered several streams from it. In like manner, Yezid and the sons of Merwan, Abdulmelik and Welid and Suleiman, ceased not to take from the river and dry up the main stream, till the commandment devolved upon me, and now I am minded to restore the river to its normal condition.' When Fatimeh heard this, she said, 'I came, wishing only to speak and confer with thee, but if this be thy word, I have nothing to say to thee.' Then she returned to the Ommiades and said to them, 'See what you have brought on you by allying yourselves with Omar ben Khettab.' When Omar was on his deathbed, he gathered his children round him, and Meslemeh ben Abdulmelik said to him, 'O Commander of the Faithful, wilt thou leave thy children beggars and thou their protector? None can hinder thee from giving them in thy lifetime what will suffice them out of the treasury; and this indeed were better than leaving it to revert to him who shall come after thee.' Omar gave him a look of wrath and wonder and replied, 'O Meslemeh, I have defended them all the days of my life, and shall I make them miserable after my death? My sons are like other men, either obedient to God the Most High or disobedient: if the former, God will prosper them, and if the latter, I will not help them in their disobedience. Know, O Meslemeh, that I was present, even as thou, when such an one of the sons of Merwan was buried, and I fell asleep by him and saw him in a dream given over to one of the punishments of God, to whom belong might and majesty. This terrified me and made me tremble, and I vowed to God that, if ever I came to the throne, I would not do as the dead man had done. This vow I have striven to fulfil all the days of my life, and I hope to be received into the mercy of my Lord.' Quoth Meslemeh, 'A certain man died and I was present at his funeral. I fell asleep and meseemed I saw him, as in a dream, clad in white clothes and walking in a garden full of running waters. He came up to me and said, “O Meslemeh, it is for the like of this that governors (or men who bear rule) should work.”’ Many are the instances of this kind, and quoth one of the men of authority, ‘I used to milk the ewes in the Khalifate of Omar ben Abdulaziz, and one day, I met a shepherd, among whose sheep were wolves. I thought them to be dogs, for I had never before seen wolves; so I said to the shepherd, “What dost thou with these dogs?” “They are not dogs, but wolves,” replied he. Quoth I, “Can wolves be with sheep and not hurt them?” “When the head is whole,” replied he, “the body is whole also.”’ Omar ben Abdulaziz preached once from a mud pulpit, and after praising and glorifying God the Most High, said three words and spoke as follows, ‘O folk, make clean your hearts, that your outward lives may be clean to your brethren, and abstain from the things of the world. Know that from Adam to this present, there is no one man alive among the dead. Dead are Abdulmelik and those who forewent him, and Omar also will die, and those who come after him.’ Quoth Meslemeh (to this same Omar, when he was dying), ‘O Commander of the Faithful, shall we set a pillow behind thee, that thou mayest lean on it a little?’ But Omar answered, ‘I fear lest it be a fault about my neck on the Day of Resurrection.’ Then he gasped for breath and fell back in a swoon; whereupon Fatimeh cried out, saying, ‘Ho, Meryem! Ho, Muzahim! Ho, such an one! Look to this man!’ And she began to pour water on him, weeping, till he revived, and seeing her in tears, said to her, ‘O Fatimeh, why dost thou weep?’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied she, ‘I saw thee lying prostrate before us and thought of thy prostration before God the Most High in death and of thy departure from the world and separation from us. This is what made me weep.’ ‘Enough, O Fatimeh,’ answered he; ‘indeed thou exceedest.’ Then he would have risen, but fell down, and Fatimeh strained him to her, saying, ‘Thou art to me as my father and my mother, O Commander of the Faithful! We cannot speak to thee, all of us.’ Again (continued Nuzhet ez Zeman), Omar ben Abdulaziz wrote to the people of the festival at Mecca, as follows, ‘I call God to witness, in the Holy Month, in the Holy City and on the day of the Great Pilgrimage, that I am innocent of your oppression and of the wickedness of him that doth you wrong, in that I have neither commanded this nor purposed it, neither hath any report of aught thereof reached me (till now) nor have I had knowledge of it; and I trust therefore that God will pardon it to me. None hath authority from me to do oppression, for I shall assuredly be questioned (at the Last Day) concerning every one who hath been wrongfully entreated. So if any one of my officers swerve from the right and act without law or authority, ye owe him no obedience, till he return to the right way.' He said also (may God accept of him), 'I do not wish to be relieved from death, for that it is the supreme thing for which the true believer is rewarded.' Quoth one of authority, 'I went one day to the Commander of the Faithful, Omar ben Abdulaziz, who was then Khalif, and saw before him twelve dirhems, which he bade take to the treasury. So I said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, thou impoverishest thy children and reducest them to beggary, leaving nothing for them. Thou wouldst do well to appoint somewhat by will to them and to those who are poor of the people of thy house." "Draw near to me," answered he. So I drew near to him and he said, "As for thy saying, 'Thou beggarest thy children; provide for them and for the poor of thy household,' it is without reason, for God will replace me to my children and to those who are poor of the people of my house, and He will be their guardian. Verily, they are like other men; he who fears God, God will provide him a happy issue, and he that is addicted to sin, I will not uphold him in his disobedience." Then he called his sons before him, and they were twelve in number. When he beheld them, his eyes filled with tears and he said to them, "Your father is between two things; either ye will be rich and he will enter the fire, or ye will be poor and he enter Paradise; and your father's entry into Paradise is liefer to him than that ye should be rich. So go, God be your helper, for to Him I commit your affair."' Quoth Khalid ben Sefwan, 'Yusuf ben Omar accompanied me to Hisham ben Abdulmelik, and I met him as he came forth with his kinsmen and attendants. He alighted and a tent was pitched for him. When the people had taken their seats, I came up to the side of the carpet (on which the Khalif was reclining) and waiting till my eyes met his, bespoke him thus, "May God fulfil His bounty to thee, O Commander of the Faithful, and direct into the right way the affairs He hath committed to thy charge, and may no harm mingle with thy cheer! O Commander of the Faithful, I have an admonition for thee, which I have gleaned from the history of the kings of time past!" At this, he sat up and said to me, "O son of Sefwan, say what is in thy mind." "O Commander of the Faithful," quoth I, "one of the kings before thee went forth, in a time before thy time, to this very country and said to his companions, 'Saw ye ever any in the like of my state or to whom hath been given even as it hath been given unto me?' Now there was with him one of those who survive to bear testimony to the Faith and are upholders of the Truth and walkers in its highway, and he said, 'O King, thou askest of a grave matter. Wilt thou give me leave to answer?' 'Yes,' replied the King, and the other said, 'Dost thou judge thy present state to be temporary or enduring?' 'It is a temporary thing,' replied the King. 'Why then,' asked the man, 'do I see thee exult in that which thou wilt enjoy but a little while and whereof thou wilt be questioned at length and for the rendering an account whereof thou wilt be as a pledge?' 'Whither shall I flee,' asked the King, 'and where is that I must seek?' 'Abide in thy kingship,' replied the other, 'and apply thyself to obey the commandments of God the Most High; or else don thy worn-out clothes and devote thyself to the service of thy Lord, till thine appointed hour come to thee.' Then he left him, saying, 'I will come to thee again at daybreak.' So he knocked at his door at dawn and found that the King had put off his crown and resolved to become an anchorite, for the stress of his exhortation." When Hisham heard this, he wept till his beard was drenched and putting off his rich apparel, shut himself up in his palace. Then the grandees and courtiers came to me and said, "What is this thou hast done with the Commander of the Faithful? Thou hast marred his cheer and troubled his life!"' "But (continued Nuzhet ez Zeman, addressing herself to Sherkan) how many admonitory instances are there not that bear upon this branch of the subject! Indeed, it is beyond my power to report all that pertains to this head in one sitting; but, with length of days, O King of the age, all will be well."

Then said the Cadis, "O King, of a truth this damsel is the wonder of the time and the unique pearl of the age! Never in all our lives heard we the like." And they called down blessings on Sherkan and went away. Then said he to his attendants, "Prepare the wedding festivities and make ready food of all kinds." So they addressed themselves to do his bidding, and he bade the wives of the amirs and viziers and grandees depart not until the time of the wedding banquet and of the unveiling of the bride. Hardly was the time of afternoon-prayer come, when the tables were spread with roast meats and geese and fowls and all that the heart can desire or that can delight the eye; and all the people ate till they were satisfied. Moreover, the King had sent for all the singing-women of Damascus and they were present, together with all the slave-girls of the King and the notables who knew how to sing. When the evening came and it grew dark, they lighted flambeaux, right and left, from the gate of the citadel to that of the palace, and the amirs and viziers and grandees defiled before King Sherkan, whilst the singers and the tire-women took Nuzhet ez Zeman, to dress and adorn her, but found she needed no adorning. Meantime King Sherkan went to the bath and coming out, sat down on his bed of estate, whilst they unveiled the bride before him in seven different dresses; after which they eased her of the weight of her dresses and ornaments and gave such injunctions as are usually given to girls on their wedding-night. Then Sherkan went in to her and took her maidenhead; and she at once conceived by him, whereat he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and commanded the sages to record the date of her conception. On the morrow, he went forth and seated himself on his throne, and the grandees came in to him and gave him joy. Then he called his private secretary and bade him write to his father, King Omar ben Ennuman, a letter to the following effect: "Know that I have bought me a damsel, who excels in learning and accomplishment and is mistress of all kinds of knowledge. I have set her free and married her and she has conceived by me. And needs must I send her to Baghdad to visit my brother Zoulmekan and my sister Nuzhet ez Zeman." And he went on to praise her wit and salute his brother and sister, together with the Vizier Dendan and all the amirs. Then he sealed the letter and despatched it to his father by a courier, who was absent a whole month, after which time he returned with the old King's answer. Sherkan took it and read as follows, after the usual preamble, "In the name of God," etc., "This is from the afflicted and distraught, him who hath lost his children and is (as it were) an exile from his native land, King Omar ben Ennuman, to his son Sherkan. Know that, since thy departure from me, the place is become contracted upon me, so that I can no longer have patience nor keep my secret: and the reason of this is as follows. It chanced that Zoulmekan sought my leave to go on the pilgrimage, but I, fearing for him the shifts of fortune, forbade him therefrom until the next year or the year after. Soon after this, I went out to hunt and was absent a whole month. When I returned, I found that thy brother and sister had taken somewhat of money and set out by stealth with the caravan of pilgrims. When I knew this, the wide world became strait on me, O my son; but I awaited the return of the caravan, hoping that they would return with it. Accordingly, when the caravan came back, I questioned the pilgrims of them, but they could give me no news of them; so I put on mourning apparel for them, being heavy at heart and sleepless and drowned in the tears of my eyes." Then followed these verses:

Their image is never absent a breathing-while from my breast, I
    have made it within my bosom the place of the honoured
    guest,
But that I look for their coming, I would not live for an hour,
    And but that I see them in dreams, I ne'er should lie down
    to rest.

The letter went on (after the usual salutations to Sherkan and those of his court), "Do not thou therefore neglect to seek news of them, for indeed this is a dishonour to us." When Sherkan read the letter, he mourned for his father, but rejoiced in the loss of his brother and sister. Now Nuzhet ez Zeman knew not that he was her brother nor he that she was his sister, although he paid her frequent visits, both by day and by night, till the months of her pregnancy were accomplished and she sat down on the stool of delivery. God made the delivery easy to her and she gave birth to a daughter, whereupon she sent for Sherkan and said to him, "This is thy daughter: name her as thou wilt." Quoth he, "Folk use to name their children on the seventh day." Then he bent down to kiss the child and saw, hung about her neck, a jewel, which he knew at once for one of those that the princess Abrizeh had brought from the land of the Greeks. At this sight, his senses fled, his eyes rolled and wrath seized on him, and he looked at Nuzhet ez Zeman and said to her, "O damsel, whence hadst thou this jewel?" When she heard this, she replied, "I am thy lady and the lady of all in thy palace. Art thou not ashamed to say to me, 'O damsel'? Indeed, I am a queen, the daughter of a king; and now concealment shall cease and the truth be made known. I am Nuzhet ez Zeman, daughter of King Omar ben Ennuman." When Sherkan heard this, he was seized with trembling and bowed his head towards the earth, whilst his heart throbbed and his colour paled, for he knew that she was his sister by the same father. Then he lost his senses; and when he revived, he abode in amazement, but did not discover himself to her and said to her, "O my lady, art thou indeed the daughter of King Omar ben Ennuman?" "Yes," replied she; and he said, "Tell me how thou camest to leave thy father and be sold for a slave." So she told him all that had befallen her, from first to last, how she had left her brother sick in Jerusalem and how the Bedouin had lured her away and sold her to the merchant. When Sherkan heard this all was certified that she was indeed his sister, he said to himself, "How can I have my sister to wife? By Allah, I must marry her to one of my chamberlains; and if the thing get wind, I will avouch that I divorced her before consummation and married her to my chief chamberlain." Then he raised his head and said, "O Nuzhet ez Zeman, thou art my very sister; for I am Sherkan, son of King Omar ben Ennuman, and may God forgive us the sin into which we have fallen!" She looked at him and seeing that he spoke the truth, became as one bereft of reason and wept and buffeted her face, exclaiming, "There is no power and no virtue but in God! Verily we have fallen into grievous sin! What shall I do and what answer shall I make my father and my mother, when they say to me, 'Whence hadst thou thy daughter'?" Quoth Sherkan, "I purpose to marry thee to my chief chamberlain and let thee bring up my daughter in his house, that none may know thee to be my sister. This that hath befallen us was ordained of God for a purpose of His own, and there is no way to cover ourselves but by thy marriage with the chamberlain, ere any know." Then he fell to comforting her and kissing her head, and she said to him, “What wilt thou call the child?” “Call her Kuzia Fekan,” replied he. Then he gave her in marriage to the chief chamberlain, and they reared the child in his house, on the laps of the slave-girls, till, one day, there came to King Sherkan a courier from his father, with a letter to the following purport, “In the name of God, etc. Know, O puissant King, that I am sore afflicted for the loss of my children: sleep fails me and wakefulness is ever present with me. I send thee this letter that thou mayst make ready the tribute of Syria and send it to us, together with the damsel whom thou hast bought and taken to wife; for I long to see her and hear her discourse; because there has come to us from the land of the Greeks a devout old woman, with five damsels, high-bosomed maids, endowed with knowledge and accomplishments and all fashions of learning that befit mortals; and indeed the tongue fails to describe this old woman and her companions. As soon as I saw the damsels, I loved them and wished to have them in my palace and at my commandment, for none of the kings possesses the like of them; so I asked the old woman their price, and she replied, ‘I will not sell them but for the tribute of Damascus.’ And by Allah, this is but little for them, for each one of them is worth the whole price. So I agreed to this and took them into my palace, and they remain in my possession. Wherefore do thou expedite the tribute to us, that the old woman may return to her own country; and send us the damsel, that she may strive with them before the doctors; and if she overcome them, I will send her back to thee with the year’s revenue of Baghdad.” When Sherkan read this letter, he went in to his brother-in-law and said to him, “Call the damsel to whom I married thee.” So she came, and he showed her the letter and said to her, “O my sister, what answer wouldst thou have me make to this letter?” “It is for thee to judge,” replied she. Then she recalled her people and her native land and yearned after them; so she said to him, “Send me and my husband the Chamberlain to Baghdad, that I may tell my father how the Bedouin seized me and sold me to the merchant, and how thou boughtest me of him and gavest me in marriage to the Chamberlain, after setting me free.” “Be it so,” replied Sherkan. Then he made ready the tribute in haste and gave it to the Chamberlain, bidding him make ready for Baghdad, and furnished him with camels and mules and two travelling litters, one for himself and the other for the princess. Moreover, he wrote a letter to his father and committed it to the Chamberlain. Then he took leave of his sister, after he had taken the jewel from her and hung it round his daughter’s neck by a chain of fine gold; and she and her husband set out for Baghdad the same night. Now their caravan was the very one to which Zoulmekan and his friend the stoker had joined themselves, as before related, having waited till the Chamberlain passed them, riding on a dromedary, with his footmen around him. Then Zoulmekan mounted the stoker’s ass and said to the latter, “Do thou mount with me.” But he said, “Not so: I will be thy servant.” Quoth Zoulmekan, “Needs must thou ride awhile.” “It is well,” replied the stoker; “I will ride when I grow tired.” Then said Zoulmekan, “O my brother, thou shalt see how I will do with thee, when I come to my own people.” So they journeyed on till the sun rose, and when it was the hour of the noonday rest, the Chamberlain called a halt, and they alighted and rested and watered their camels. Then he gave the signal for departure and they journeyed for five days, till they came to the city of Hemah, where they made a three days’ halt; then set out again and fared on, till they reached the province of Diarbekir. Here there blew on them the breezes of Baghdad, and Zoulmekan bethought him of his father and mother and his native land and how he was returning to his father without his sister: so he wept and sighed and complained, and his regrets increased on him, and he repeated the following verses:

How long wilt thou delay from me, beloved one? I wait: And yet
there comes no messenger with tidings of thy fate.
Alack, the time of love-delight and peace was brief indeed! Ah,
that the days of parting thus would of their length abate!
Take thou my hand and put aside my mantle and thou’lt find My
body wasted sore; and yet I hide my sad estate.
And if thou bid me be consoled for thee, “By God,” I say, “I’ll
ne’er forget thee till the Day that calls up small and
great!”

“Leave this weeping and lamenting,” said the stoker, “for we are near the Chamberlain's tent." Quoth Zoulmekan, "Needs must I recite somewhat of verse, so haply it may allay the fire of my heart." "God on thee," cried the stoker, "leave this lamentation, till thou come to thine own country; then do what thou wilt, and I will be with thee, wherever thou art." "By Allah," replied Zoulmekan, "I cannot forbear from this!" Then he set his face towards Baghdad and began to repeat verses. Now the moon was shining brightly and shedding her light on the place, and Nuzhet ez Zeman could not sleep that night, but was wakeful and called to mind her brother and wept. Presently, she heard Zoulmekan weeping and repeating the following verses:

The southern lightning gleams in the air And rouses in me the old
  despair,
The grief for a dear one, loved and lost, Who filled me the cup
  of joy whilere.
It minds me of her who fled away And left me friendless and sick
  and bare.
O soft-shining lightnings, tell me true, Are the days of
  happiness past fore'er?
Chide not, O blamer of me, for God Hath cursed me with two things
  hard to bear,
A friend who left me to pine alone, And a fortune whose smile was
  but a snare.
The sweet of my life was gone for aye, When fortune against me
  did declare;
She brimmed me a cup of grief unmixed, And I must drink it and
  never spare.
Or ever our meeting 'tide, sweetheart, Methinks I shall die of
  sheer despair,
I prithee, fortune, bring back the days When we were a happy
  childish pair;
The days, when we from the shafts of fate, That since have
  pierced us, in safety were!
Ah, who shall succour the exiled wretch, Who passes the night in
  dread and care,
And the day in mourning for her whose name, Delight of the

Age, bespoke her fair?
The hands of the baseborn sons of shame Have doomed us the wede of woe to wear.

Then he cried out and fell down in a swoon, and when Nuzhet ez Zeman heard his voice in the night, her heart was solaced and she rose and called the chief eunuch, who said to her, “What is thy will?” Quoth she, “Go and fetch me him who recited verses but now.” “I did not hear him,” replied he; “the people are all asleep.” And she said, “Whomsoever thou findest awake, he is the man.” So he went out and sought, but found none awake but the stoker; for Zoulmekan was still insensible, and, Nuzhet ez Zeman, going up to the former, said to him, “Art thou he who recited verses but now, and my lady heard him?” The stoker concluded that the lady was wroth and was afraid and replied, “By Allah, ’twas not I!” “Who then was it?” rejoined the eunuch. “Point him out to me. Thou must know who it was, seeing that thou art awake.” The stoker feared for Zoulmekan and said in himself, “Maybe the eunuch will do him some hurt.” So he answered, “I know not who it was.” “By Allah,” said the eunuch, “thou liest, for there is none awake here but thou! So needs must thou know him.” “By Allah,” replied the stoker, “I tell thee the truth! It must have been some passer-by who recited the verses and disturbed me and aroused me, may God requite him!” Quoth the eunuch, “If thou happen upon him, point him out to me and I will lay hands on him and bring him to the door of my lady’s litter; or do thou take him with thine own hand.” “Go back,” said the stoker, “and I will bring him to thee.” So the eunuch went back to his mistress and said to her, “None knows who it was; it must have been some passer-by.” And she was silent. Meanwhile, Zoulmekan came to himself and saw that the moon had reached the zenith and felt the breath of the breeze that goes before the dawn; whereupon his heart was moved to longing and sadness, and he cleared his throat and was about to recite verses, when the stoker said to him, “What wilt thou do?” “I have a mind to repeat somewhat of verse,” answered Zoulmekan, “that I may allay therewith the fire of my heart.” Quoth the other, “Thou knowest not what befell me, whilst thou wert aswoon, and how I only escaped death by beguiling the eunuch.”

“Tell me what happened,” said Zoulrnekan. “Whilst thou wert aswoon,” replied the stoker, “there came up to me but now an eunuch, with a long staff of almond-tree wood in his hand, who looked in all the people’s faces, as they lay asleep, and finding none awake but myself, asked me who it was recited the verses. I told him it was some passer-by; so he went away and God delivered me from him; else had he killed me. But first he said to me, ‘If thou hear him again, bring him to us.’” When Zoulmekan heard this, he wept and said, “Who is it would forbid me to recite? I will surely do so, come what may; for I am near my own country and care for no one.” “Dost thou wish to destroy thyself?” asked the stoker; and Zoulmekan answered, “I cannot help reciting verses.” “Verily,” said the stoker, “I see this will bring about a parting between us here though I had promised myself not to leave thee, till I had brought thee to thy native city and re-united thee with thy mother and father. Thou hast now been with me a year and a half, and I have never baulked thee or harmed thee in aught. What ails thee then, that thou must needs recite, seeing that we are exceeding weary with travel and watching and all the folk are asleep, for they need sleep to rest them of their fatigue.” But Zoulmekan answered, “I will not be turned from my purpose.” Then grief moved him and he threw off disguise and began to repeat the following verses:

Halt by the camp and hail the ruined steads by the brake, And
call on her name aloud; mayhap she will answer make.
And if for her absence the night of sadness darken on thee, Light
in its gloom a fire with longings for her sake.
Though the snake of the sand-hills hiss, small matter is it to me
If it sting me, so I the fair with the lips of crimson take.
O Paradise, left perforce of the spirit, but that I hope For ease
in the mansions of bliss, my heart would surely break!

And these also:

Time was when fortune was to us even as a servant is, And in the
loveliest of lands our happy lives did kiss.
Ah, who shall give me back the abode of my belov’d, wherein The

Age's Joy and Place's Light erst dwelt in
peace and bliss?

Then he cried out three times and fell down senseless, and the stoker rose and covered him. When Nuzhet ez Zeman heard the first verses, she called to mind her mother and father and brother; and when she heard the second, mentioning the names of herself and her brother and their sometime home, she wept and calling the eunuch, said to him, "Out on thee! But now I heard him who recited the first time do so again, and that hard by. So, by Allah, an thou fetch him not to me, I will rouse the Chamberlain on thee, and he shall beat thee and turn thee away. But take these hundred dinars and give them to him and do him no hurt, but bring him to me gently. If he refuse, give him this purse of a thousand dinars and leave him and return to me and tell me, after thou hast informed thyself of his place and condition and what countryman he is. Return quickly and do not linger, and beware lest thou come back and say, 'I could not find him.'" So the eunuch went out and fell to examining the people and treading amongst them, but found none awake, for the folk were all asleep for weariness, till he came to the stoker and saw him sitting up, with his head uncovered. So he drew near him and seizing him by the hand, said to him, "It was thou didst recite the verses!" The stoker was affrighted and replied, "No, by Allah, O chief of the people, it was not I!" But the eunuch said, "I will not leave thee till thou show me who it was; for I fear to return to my lady without him." Thereupon the stoker feared for Zoulmekan and wept sore and said to the eunuch, "By Allah, it was not I, nor do I know who it was. I only heard some passer-by recite verses: so do not thou commit sin on me, for I am a stranger and come from Jerusalem, and Abraham the Friend of God be with thee!" "Come thou with me," rejoined the eunuch, "and tell my lady this with thine own mouth, for I see none awake but thee." Quoth the stoker, "Hast thou not seen me sitting here and dost thou not know my station? Thou knowest none can stir from his place, except the guards seize him. So go thou to thy mistress and if thou hear any one reciting again, whether it be near or far, it will be I or some one whom I shall know, and thou shalt not know of him but by me." Then he kissed the eunuch's head and spoke him fair, till he went away; but he made a circuit and returning secretly, came and hid himself behind the stoker, fearing to go back to his mistress empty-handed. As soon as he was gone, the stoker aroused Zoulmekan and said to him, “Awake and sit up, that I may tell thee what has happened.” So Zoulmekan sat up, and the stoker told him what had passed, and he answered, “Let me alone; I will take no heed of this and I care for none, for I am near my own country.” Quoth the stoker, “Why wilt thou obey thine own inclinations and the promptings of the devil? If thou fearest no one, I fear for thee and myself; so God on thee, recite no more verses, till thou come to thine own country! Indeed, I had not thought thee so self-willed. Dost thou not know that this lady is the wife of the Chamberlain and is minded to chide thee for disturbing her. Belike, she is ill or restless for fatigue, and this is the second time she hath sent the eunuch to look for thee.” However, Zoulmekan paid no heed to him, but cried out a third time and repeated the following verses:

The carping tribe I needs must flee; Their railing chafes my misery.
They blame and chide at me nor know They do but fan the flame in me.
“She is consoled,” they say. And I, “Can one consoled for country be?”
Quoth they, “How beautiful she is!” And I, “How dear-belov’d is she!”
“How high her rank!” say they; and I, “How base is my humility!”
Now God forfend I leave to love, Deep though I drink of agony!
Nor will I heed the railing race, Who carp at me for loving thee.

Hardly had he made an end of these verses when the eunuch, who had heard him from his hiding, came up to him; whereupon the stoker fled and stood afar off, to see what passed between them. Then said the eunuch to Zoulmekan, “Peace be on thee, O my lord!” “And on thee be peace,” replied Zoulmekan, “and the mercy of God and His blessing!” “O my lord,” continued the eunuch, “this is the third time I have sought thee this night, for my mistress bids thee to her.” Quoth Zoulmekan, “Whence comes this bitch that seeks for me? May

God curse her and her husband too!" And he began to revile the eunuch, who could make him no answer, because his mistress had charged him to do Zoulmekan no violence nor bring him, save of his free will, and if he would not come, to give him the thousand dinars. So he began to speak him fair and say to him, "O my lord, take this (purse) and go with me. We will do thee no unright nor wrong thee in aught; but we would have thee bend thy gracious steps with me to my mistress, to speak with her and return in peace and safety; and thou shalt have a handsome present." When Zoulmekan heard this, he arose and went with the eunuch, stepping over the sleeping folk, whilst the stoker followed them at a distance, saying to himself, "Alas, the pity of his youth! To-morrow they will hang him. How base it will be of him, if he say it was I who bade him recite the verses!" And he drew near to them and stood, watching them, without their knowledge, till they came to Nuzhet ez Zeman's tent, when the eunuch went in to her and said, "O my lady, I have brought thee him whom thou soughtest, and he is a youth, fair of face and bearing the marks of gentle breeding." When she heard this, her heart fluttered and she said, "Let him recite some verses, that I may hear him near at hand, and after ask him his name and extraction." So the eunuch went out to Zoulmekan and said to him, "Recite what verses thou knowest, for my lady is here hard by, listening to thee, and after I will ask thee of thy name and extraction and condition." "Willingly," replied he; "but as for my name, it is blotted out and my trace among men is passed away and my body wasted. I have a story, the beginning of which is not known nor can the end of it be described, and behold, I am even as one who hath exceeded in drinking wine, till he hath lost the mastery of himself and is afflicted with distempers and wanders from his right mind, being perplexed about his case and drowned in the sea of melancholy." When Nuzhet ez Zeman heard this, she broke out into loud weeping and sobbing and said to the eunuch, "Ask him if he have lost a beloved one, such as his father or mother." The eunuch did as she bade him, and Zoulmekan replied, "Yes, I have lost all whom I loved: but the dearest of all to me was my sister, from whom Fate hath parted me." When Nuzhet ez Zeman heard this, she exclaimed, "May God the Most High reunite him with those he loves!" Then said she to the eunuch, “Tell him to let me hear somewhat on the subject of his separation from his people and his country.” The eunuch did so, and Zoulmekan sighed heavily and repeated the following verses:

Ah, would that I knew they were ware Of the worth of the heart
they have won!
Would I knew through what passes they fare, From what quarter
they look on the sun! Are they living, I wonder, or dead?
Can it be that their life’s race is run?
Ah, the lover is ever distraught And his life for misgivings
undone!

And also these:

I vow, if e’er the place shall bless my longing sight, Wherein my
sister dwells, the age’s dear delight,
I’ll take my fill of life and all the sweets of peace, Midst
trees and flowing streams: and maidens fair and bright
The lute’s enchanting tones shall soothe me to repose, What while
I quaff full cups of wine like living light
And honeyed dews of love suck from the deep-red lips Of lovelings
sleepy-eyed, with tresses black as night.

When he had finished, Nuzhet ez Zeman lifted up a corner of the curtain of the litter and looked at him. As soon as her eyes fell on him, she knew him for certain and cried out, “O my brother! O Zoulmekan!” He looked at her and knew her and cried out, “O my sister! O Nuzhet ez Zeman!” Then she threw herself upon him, and he received her in his arms, and they both fell down in a swoon. When the eunuch saw this, he wondered and throwing over them somewhat to cover them, waited till they should recover. After awhile, they came to themselves, and Nuzhet ez Zeman rejoiced exceedingly. Grief and anxiety left her and joys flocked upon her and she repeated the following verses:

Fate swore ’twould never cease to plague my life and make me rue.
Thou hast not kept thine oath, O Fate; so look thou penance

do.
Gladness is come and my belov'd is here to succour me; So rise unto the summoner of joys, and quickly too.
I had no faith in Paradise of olden time, until I won the nectar of its streams from lips of damask hue.

When Zoulmekan heard this, he pressed his sister to his breast, whilst, for the excess of his joy, the tears streamed from his eyes and he repeated the following verses:

Long time have I bewailed the severance of our loves, With tears that from my lids streamed down like burning rain,
And vowed that, if the days should reunite us two, My lips should never speak of severance again.
Joy hath o'erwhelmed me so, that, for the very stress Of that which gladdens me, to weeping I am fain.
Tears are become to you a habit, O my eyes, So that ye weep alike for gladness and for pain.

They sat awhile at the door of the litter, conversing, till she said to him, "Come with me into the litter and tell me all that has befallen thee, and I will do the like." So they entered and Zoulmekan said, "Do thou begin." Accordingly, she told him all that had happened to her since their separation and said, "Praised be God who hath vouchsafed thee to me and ordained that, even as we left our father together, so we shall return to him together! Now tell me how it has fared with thee since I left thee." So he told her all that had befallen him and how God had sent the stoker to him, and how he had journeyed with him and spent his money on him and tended him night and day. She praised the stoker for this, and Zoulmekan added, "Indeed, O my sister, the man hath dealt with me in such benevolent wise as would not a lover with his mistress or a father with his son, for that he fasted and gave me to eat, and went afoot, whilst he made me ride; and I owe my life to him." "God willing," said she, "we will requite him for all this, according to our power." Then she called the eunuch, who came and kissed Zoulmekan's hand, and she said, "Take thy reward for glad tidings, O face of good omen! It was thy hand reunited me with my brother; so the purse I gave thee and its contents are thine. But now go to thy master and bring him quickly to me." The eunuch rejoiced and going to the Chamberlain, summoned him to his mistress. Accordingly, he came in to his wife and finding Zoulmekan with her, asked who he was. So she told him all that had befallen them, first and last, and added, "Know, O Chamberlain, that thou hast gotten no slave-girl to wife: but the daughter of King Omar ben Ennuman: for I am Nuzhet ez Zeman, and this is my brother Zoulmekan." When the Chamberlain heard her story, he knew it for the manifest truth and was certified that he was become King Omar ben Ennuman's son-in-law and said to himself, "I shall surely be made governor of some province." Then he went up to Zoulmekan and gave him joy of his safety and re-union with his sister, and bade his servants forthwith make him ready a tent and one of the best of his own horses to ride. Then said Nuzhet ez Zeman, "We are now near my country and I would fain be alone with my brother, that we may enjoy one another's company and take our fill of each other, before we reach Baghdad; for we have been long parted." "Be it as thou wilt," replied the Chamberlain and going forth, sent them wax candles and various kinds of sweetmeats, together with three costly suits of clothes for Zoulmekan. Then he returned to the litter, and Nuzhet ez Zeman said to him, "Bid the eunuch find the stoker and give him a horse to ride and provide him a tray of food morning and evening, and let him be forbidden to leave us." The Chamberlain called the eunuch and charged him accordingly; so he took his pages with him and went out in search of the stoker, whom he found at the tail of the caravan, saddling his ass and preparing for flight. The tears were running down his cheeks, out of fear for himself and grief for his separation from Zoulmekan, and he was saying to himself, "Indeed, I warned him for the love of God, but he would not listen to me. O that I knew what is become of him!" Before he had done speaking, the eunuch came up and stood behind him, whilst the pages surrounded him. The stoker turned and seeing the eunuch and the pages round him, changed colour and trembled in every nerve for affright, exclaiming, "Verily, he knows not the value of the good offices I have done him! I believe he has denounced me to the eunuch and made me an accomplice in his offence." Then the eunuch cried out at him, saying, “Who was it recited the verses? Liar that thou art, why didst thou tell me that thou knewest not who it was, when it was thy companion? But now I will not leave thee till we come to Baghdad, and what betides thy comrade shall betide thee.” Quoth the stoker, “Verily, what I feared has fallen on me.” And he repeated the following verse:

’Tis e’en as I feared it would be: We are God’s and to Him return we.

Then said the eunuch to the pages, “Take him off the ass.” So they took him off the ass and setting him on a horse, carried him along with the caravan, surrounded by the pages, to whom said the eunuch, “If a hair of him be missing, it shall be the worse for you.” But he bade them privily treat him with consideration and not humiliate him. When the stoker saw himself in this case, he gave himself up for lost and turning to the eunuch, said to him, “O chief, I am neither this youth’s brother nor anywise akin to him; but I was a stoker in a bath and found him lying asleep on the fuel-heap.” Then the caravan fared on and the stoker wept and imagined a thousand things in himself, whilst the eunuch walked by his side and told him nothing, but said to him, “You disturbed our mistress by reciting verses, thou and the lad: but have no fear for thyself.” This he said, laughing at him the while in himself. When the caravan halted, they brought them food, and he and the eunuch ate from one dish. Then the eunuch let bring a gugglet of sherbet of sugar and after drinking himself, gave it to the stoker, who drank; but all the while his tears ceased not flowing, out of fear for himself and grief for his separation from Zoulmekan and for what had befallen them in their strangerhood. So they travelled on with the caravan, whilst the Chamberlain now rode by the door of his wife’s litter, in attendance on Zoulmekan and the princess, and now gave an eye to the stoker, and Nuzhet ez Zeman and her brother occupied themselves with converse and mutual condolence; and so they did till they came within three days’ journey of Baghdad. Here they alighted at eventide and rested till the morning, when they woke and were about to load the beasts, when behold, there appeared afar off a great cloud of dust, that obscured the air, till it became as dark as night. Thereupon the Chamberlain cried out to them to stay their preparations for departure, and mounting with his officers rode forward in the direction of the dust-cloud. When they drew near it, they perceived under it a numerous army, like the full flowing sea, with drums and flags and standards and horsemen and footmen. The Chamberlain marvelled at this: and when the troops saw him, there came forth from amongst them a troop of five hundred horse, who fell upon him and his suite and surrounded them, five for one;

whereupon said he to them, “What is the matter and what are these troops, that ye use us thus?” “Who art thou?” asked they. “Whence comest thou and whither art thou bound?” And he answered, “I am the Chamberlain of the Viceroy of Damascus, King Sherkan, son of King Omar ben Ennuman, lord of Baghdad and of the land of Khorassan, and I bring tribute and presents from him to his father in Baghdad.” When the horsemen heard speak of King Omar, they let their kerchiefs fall over their faces and wept, saying, “Alas! King Omar is dead, and he died poisoned. But fare ye on, no harm shall befall you, and join his Grand Vizier Dendan.” When the Chamberlain heard this, he wept sore and exclaimed, “Alas, our disappointment in this our journey!” Then he and his suite rode on, weeping, till they reached the main body of the army and sought access to the Vizier Dendan, who called a halt and causing his pavilion to be pitched, sat down on a couch therein and commanded to admit the Chamberlain. Then he bade him be seated and questioned him; and he replied that he was the Viceroy’s Chamberlain of Damascus and was bound to King Omar with presents and the tribute of Syria. The Vizier wept at the mention of King Omar’s name and said, “King Omar is dead by poison, and the folk fell out amongst themselves as to whom they should make king after him, so that they were like to come to blows on this account; but the notables and grandees interposed and restored peace, and the people agreed to refer the matter to the decision of the four Cadis, who adjudged that we should go to Damascus and fetch thence the late king’s son Sherkan and make him king over his father’s realm. Some of them would have chosen his second son Zoulmekan, were it not that he and his sister Nuzhet ez Zeman set out five years ago for Mecca, and none knows what is become of them.” When the Chamberlain heard this, he knew that his wife had told him the truth and grieved sore for the death of King Omar, what while he was greatly rejoiced, especially at the arrival of Zoulmekan, for that he would now become King of Baghdad in his father’s room. So he turned to the Vizier and said to him, “Verily, your affair is a wonder of wonders! Know, O chief Vizier, that here, where you have encountered me, God giveth you rest from fatigue and bringeth you that you desire after the easiest of fashions, in that He restoreth to you Zoulmekan and his sister Nuzhet ez Zeman, whereby the matter is settled and made easy." When the Vizier heard this, he rejoiced greatly and said, "O Chamberlain, tell me their story and the reason of their having been so long absent." So he repeated to him the whole story and told him that Nuzhet ez Zeman was his wife. As soon as he had made an end of his tale, the Vizier sent for the amirs and viziers and grandees and acquainted them with the matter; whereat they rejoiced greatly and wondered at the happy chance. Then they went in to the Chamberlain and did their service to him, kissing the earth before him; and the Vizier Dendan also rose and stood before him, in token of respect. After this the Chamberlain held a great council, and he and the Vizier sat upon a throne, whilst all the amirs and officers of state took their places before them, according to their several ranks. Then they dissolved sugar in rose-water and drank, after which the amirs sat down to hold council and bade the rest mount and ride forward leisurely, till they should make an end of their deliberations and overtake them. So the officers kissed the earth before them and mounting, rode onward, preceded by the standards of war. When the amirs had finished their conference, they mounted and rejoined the troops; and the Chamberlain said to the Vizier Dendan, "I think it well to ride on before you, that I may notify Zoulmekan of your coming and choice of him as Sultan over the head of his brother Sherkan, and that I may make him ready a place befitting his dignity." "It is well thought," answered the Vizier. Then the Chamberlain rose and Dendan also rose, to do him honour, and brought him presents, which he conjured him to accept. On like wise did all the amirs and officers of state, calling down blessings on him and saying to him, "Mayhap thou will make mention of our case to King Zoulmekan and speak to him to continue us in our dignities." The Chamberlain promised what they asked and the Vizier Dendan sent with him tents and bade the tent-pitchers set them up at a days journey from the city. Then the Chamberlain mounted and rode forward, full of joy and saying in himself, "How blessed is this journey!" And indeed his wife was exalted in his eyes, she and her brother Zoulmekan. They made all haste, till they reached a place distant a day's journey from Baghdad, where he called a halt and bade his men alight and make ready a sitting place for the Sultan

Zoulmekan, whilst he rode forward with his pages and alighting at a distance from Nuzhet ez Zeman’s litter, commanded the eunuchs to ask the princess’s leave to admit him. They did so and she gave leave; whereupon he went in to her and her brother and told them of the death of their father, King Omar ben Ennuman, and how the heads of the people had made Zoulmekan king over them in his stead; and he gave them joy of the kingdom. When they heard this, they both wept for their father and asked the manner of his death. “The news rests with the Vizier Dendan,” replied the Chamberlain, “who will be here to-morrow with all the troops; and it only remains for thee, O prince, to do what they counsel, since they have chosen thee King; for if thou do not this, they will crown another, and thou canst not be sure of thyself with another king. Haply he will kill thee, or discord may befall between you and the kingdom pass out of your hands.” Zoulmekan bowed his head awhile, then raised it and said, “I accept;” for indeed he saw that the Chamberlain had counselled him rightly and that there was no refusing; “but, O uncle, how shall I do with my brother Sherkan?” “O my son,” replied the Chamberlain, “thy brother will be Sultan of Damascus, and thou Sultan of Baghdad; so gird up thy resolution and prepare to do what befits thy case.” Then he presented him with a suit of royal raiment and a dagger of state, that the Vizier Dendan had brought with him, and leaving him, returned to the tent-pitchers and bade them choose out a spot of rising ground and pitch thereon a spacious and splendid pavilion, wherein the Sultan might sit to receive the amirs and grandees. Then he ordered the cooks to make ready rich food and serve it up and the water-carriers to set up the water-troughs. They did as he bade them and presently there arose a cloud of dust and spread till it obscured the horizon. After awhile, the breeze dispersed it, and there appeared under it the army of Baghdad and Khorassan, led by the Vizier Dendan, all rejoicing in the accession of Zoulmekan. Now Zoulmekan had donned the royal robes and girt himself with the sword of state: so the Chamberlain brought him a steed and he mounted, surrounded by the rest of the company on foot, and rode between the tents, till he came to the royal pavilion, where he entered and sat down, with the royal dagger across his thighs, whilst the Chamberlain stood in attendance on him and his servants stationed themselves in the vestibule of the pavilion, with drawn swords in their hands. Presently, up came the troops and sought admission to the King's presence; so the Chamberlain went in to Zoulmekan and asked his leave, whereupon he bade admit them, ten by ten. Accordingly, the Chamberlain went out to them and acquainted them with the King's orders, to which they replied, "We hear and obey." Then he took ten of them and carried them, through the vestibule, into the presence of the Sultan, whom when they saw, they were awed; but he received them with the utmost kindness and promised them all good. So they gave him joy of his safe return and invoked God's blessing upon him, after which they took the oath of fealty to him, and kissing the earth before him, withdrew. Then other ten entered and he received them in the same manner; and they ceased not to enter, ten by ten, till none was left but the Vizier Dendan. So he went in and kissed the earth before Zoulmekan, who rose to meet him, saying, "Welcome, O noble Vizier and father! Verily, thine acts are those of a precious counsellor, and judgment and foresight are in the hands of the Subtle, the All Wise." Then he commanded the Chamberlain to go out and cause the tables to be spread at once and bid the troops thereto. So they came and ate and drank. Moreover, he bade Dendan call a ten days' halt of the army, that he might be private with him and learn from him the manner of his father's death. Accordingly, the Vizier went forth and transmitted the King's wishes to the troops, who received his commands with submission and wished him eternity of glory. Moreover, he gave them leave to divert themselves and ordered that none of the lords in waiting should go in to the King for his service for the space of three days. Then Zoulmekan waited till nightfall, when he went in to his sister Nuzhet ez Zeman and said to her, "Dost thou know the fashion of my father's death or not?" "I have no knowledge of it," replied she, and drew a silken curtain before herself, whilst Zoulmekan seated himself without the curtain and sending for the Vizier, bade him relate to him in detail the manner of King Omar's death. "Know then, O King," replied Dendan, "that King Omar ben Ennuman, when he returned to Baghdad from his hunting excursion, enquired for thee and thy sister, but could not find you and knew that you had gone on the pilgrimage, whereat he was greatly concerned and angered, and his breast was contracted. He abode thus a whole year, seeking news of you from all who came and went, but none could give him any tidings of you. At the end of this time, as we were one day in attendance upon him, there came to us an old woman, as she were a devotee, accompanied by five damsels, high-bosomed maids, like moons, endowed with such beauty and grace as the tongue fails to describe; and to crown their perfections, they knew the Koran by heart and were versed in various kinds of learning and in the histories of bygone peoples. The old woman sought an audience of the King, and he bade admit her; whereupon she entered and kissed the ground before him. Now I was then sitting by his side, and he, seeing in her the signs of devoutness and asceticism, made her draw near and sit down by him. So she sat down and said to him, 'Know, O King, that with me are five damsels, whose like no king possesses, for they are endowed with beauty and grace and wit. They know the Koran and the traditions and are skilled in all manner of learning and in the history of bygone peoples. They are here before thee, at thy disposal; for it is by proof that folk are prized or disdained.' Thy late father looked at the damsels and their favour pleased him; so he said to them, 'Let each of you tell me something of what she knows of the history of bygone folk and peoples of times past.' Thereupon one of them came forward and kissing the earth before him, spoke as follows, 'Know, O King, that it behoves the man of good breeding to eschew impertinence and adorn himself with excellencies, observing the Divine precepts and shunning mortal sins; and to this he should apply himself with the assiduity of one who, if he stray therefrom, is lost; for the foundation of good breeding is virtuous behaviour. Know that the chief reason of existence is the endeavour after life everlasting and the right way thereto is the service of God: so it behoves thee to deal righteously with the people; and swerve not from this rubrick, for the mightier folk are in dignity, the more need they have of prudence and foresight; and indeed kings need this more than common folk, for the general cast themselves into affairs, without taking thought to the issue of them. Be thou prodigal both of thyself and thy treasure in the way of God and know that, if an enemy dispute with thee, thou mayst litigate with him and refute him with proof and ward thyself against him; but as for thy friend, there is none can judge between thee and him but righteousness and fair-dealing. Wherefore, choose thy friend for thyself, after thou hast proved him. If he be a man of religion, let him be zealous in observing the external letter of the Law and versed in its inner meaning, as far as may be: and if he be a man of the world, let him be free-born, sincere, neither ignorant nor perverse, for the ignorant man is such that even his parents might well flee from him, and a liar cannot be a true friend, for the word "friend" is derived from "truth," that emanates from the bottom of the heart; and how can this be the case, when falsehood is manifest upon the tongue? Know, therefore, that the observance of the Law profits him who practices it: so love thy brother, if he be after this fashion, and do not cast him off, even if thou see in him that which thou mislikest; for a friend is not like a wife whom one can divorce and take again; but his heart is like glass; once broken, it cannot be mended. And God bless him who says:

Be careful not to hurt men's hearts nor work them aught of dole,
For hard it is to bring again a once estranged soul;
And hearts, indeed, whose loves in twain by discord have been rent Are like a broken glass, whose breach may never be made whole.

The wise say (continued she), "The best of friends is he who is the most assiduous in good counsel, the best of actions is that which is fairest in its result, and the best of praise is (not) that which is in the mouths of men." It is said also, "It behoves not the believer to neglect to thank God, especially for two favours, health and reason." Again, "He who honoureth himself, his lust is a light matter to him, and he who makes much of small troubles, God afflicts him with great ones: he who obeys his own inclination neglects his duties and he who listens to the slanderer loses the true friend. He who thinks well of thee, do thou fulfil his thought of thee. He who exceeds in contention sins, and he who does not beware of upright is not safe from the sword."

Now will I tell thee somewhat of the duties of judges. Know, O King, that no judgment serves the cause of justice except it be given after deliberation, and it behoves the judge to treat all people alike, to the intent that the rich and noble may not be encouraged to oppression nor the poor and weak despair of justice. He should extract proof from him who complains and impose an oath upon him who denies; and compromise is lawful between Muslims, except it be a compromise sanctioning an unlawful or forbidding a lawful thing. If he have done aught during the day, of which he is doubtful, the judge should reconsider it and apply his discernment to elucidating it, that (if he have erred) he may revert to the right, for to do justice is a religious obligation and to return to that which is right is better than perseverance in error. Then he should study the precedents and the law of the case and do equal justice between the suitors, fixing his eye upon the truth and committing his affair to God, to whom belong might and majesty. Let him require proof of the complainant, and if he adduce it, let him put the defendant to his oath; for this is the ordinance of God. He should receive the testimony of competent Muslim witnesses, one against another, for God the Most High hath commanded judges to judge by externals, He Himself taking charge of the secret things. It behoves the judge also to avoid giving judgment, whilst suffering from stress of pain or hunger, and that in his decisions between the folk he seek to please God, for he whose intent is pure and who is at peace with his conscience, God shall guarantee him against what is between him and the people. Quoth Ez Zuhri, “There are three things, which if they be found in a Cadi, he should be deposed; namely, if he honour the base, love praise and fear dismissal.” It is related that Omar ben Abdulaziz once deposed a Cadi, who asked him why he had done so. “It has come to my knowledge,” replied Omar, “that thy speech is greater than thy condition.” It is said also that Iskender said to his Cadi, “I have invested thee with this function and committed to thee in it my soul and my honour and manhood; so do thou guard it with thy soul and thine understanding.” To his cook he said, “Thou art the governor of my body; so look thou tender it.” To his secretary he said, “Thou art the controller of my wit: so do thou watch over me in what thou writest for me.”’

With this the first damsel retired and a second one came forward and kissing the earth seven times before the King thy father, spoke as follows: ‘The sage Lucman said to his son, “There are three men whom thou shalt not know, but in three several cases; thou shalt not know the merciful man but in time of anger, nor the brave man but in time of war nor thy friend but when thou hast need of him." It is said that the oppressor shall repent, though the people praise him, and that the oppressed is safe, though the people blame him. Quoth God the Most High, " Think not that those who rejoice in their deeds and love to be praised for that which they have not done, shall escape punishment; indeed there is reserved for them a grievous punishment." Quoth Mohammed (on whom be peace and salvation), "Works are according to intentions, and to each man is attributed that which he intends." He saith also, "There is a part of the human body, which being whole, all the rest is whole, and which being corrupt, the whole body is corrupt; it is the heart. And indeed the heart is the most marvellous part of man, since it is that which ordereth his whole affair; if covetise stir in it, desire destroys him, and if affliction master it, anguish slays him: if anger rage in it, danger is sore upon him, and if it be blest with contentment, he is safe from discontent; if fear overtake it, he is filled with mourning, and if calamity smite it, affliction betideth him. If a man gain wealth, his heart is peradventure diverted thereby from the remembrance of his Lord, and if poverty afflict him, his heart is distracted by care, or if disquietude waste his heart, weakness reduces him to impotence. So, in any case, there is nothing will profit him but that he be mindful of God and occupy himself with gaining his living and securing his place in Paradise." It was asked of a certain wise man, "Who is the most ill-conditioned of men?" "He," replied the sage, "whose lusts master his manhood and whose mind exceeds in the pursuit of objects of high emprise, so that his knowledge increases and his excuse diminishes; and how excellent is what the poet says:

The freest of all men from need of the arrogant meddler am I, The
fool who's unguided of God and judges the folk all awry;
For wealth and good gifts are a loan and each man at last shall
be clad As it were in a mantle, with that which hid in his
bosom doth lie.
If thou enter on aught by a door that is other than right, thou
wilt err; But the right door will dead thee aright, for

sure, if thou enter there by."

As for anecdotes of devotees (continued the maiden), quoth Hisham ben Besher, "I said to Omar ben Ubeid, 'What is true devoutness?' and he answered, 'The Prophet (whom God bless and preserve) hath expounded it, when he says, "The devout is he who takes thought to death and calamity and prefers that which is eternal to that which passes away, who counts not the morrow as of his days, but reckons himself among the dead."'" And it is related that Abou Dherr used to say, "Poverty is dearer to me than riches and sickness than health." Quoth one of the listeners, "May God have mercy on Abou Dherr! For my part, I say, 'He who puts his trust in the goodness of the election of God the Most High should be content with that condition of which the Almighty hath made choice for him.'" Quoth one of the Companions (of the Prophet), "Ibn Ali Aqfa prayed with us the morning-prayer one day. When he had done, he read the seventy-fourth chapter (of the Koran), beginning, 'O thou that coverest thyself!' till he came to where God says, 'When the trumpet is blown,' and fell down dead." It is said that Thabit el Benani wept till he well nigh lost his eyes. They brought him a man to tend him, who said to him, "I will cure thee, provided thou do my bidding." "In what respect?" asked Thabit. "In that thou leave weeping," replied the physician. "What is the use of my eyes," rejoined Thabit, "if they do not weep?" Said a man to Mohammed ibn Abdallah, "Exhort me." "I exhort thee," replied he, "to be an abstinent possessor in this world and a greedy slave in the next." "How so?" asked the other; and Mohammed said, "The abstinent man in this world possesses both this world and the world to come." Quoth Ghauth ben Abdallah, "There were two brothers among the people of Israel, one of whom said to the other, 'What is the worst thing thou hast done?' 'One day,' answered the other, 'I came upon a nest of young birds; so I took out one and threw it back into the nest; but the others drew apart from it. This is the worst thing I ever did; so now tell me what is the worst thing thou hast ever done.' 'When I betake myself to prayer,' rejoined the first, 'I am fearful to have done so only for the sake of the reward. This is the worst thing I have done.' Now their father heard what they said and exclaimed, 'O my

God, if they speak the truth, take them to Thyself!' Quoth one of the wise men, 'Verily these were of the most virtuous of children.'" Quoth Said ben Jubeir, "I was once in company with Fuzaleh ibn Ubeid and said to him, 'Give me some good counsel.' 'Bear in mind these two things,' replied he. 'Attribute no partner to God, and do no hurt to any of His creatures.' And he repeated the following verses:

Be as thou wilt and banish dread and care, For God is bountiful
  and debonair;
So of two things, the doing hurt to men And giving God a partner,
  thou beware."

And how well saith the poet:

If thou neglect with pious works for death to furnish thee And
  after meet with one equipped with store of piety,
Thou wilt, when all too late, repent that thou wert not like him
  And didst not for the other world make ready as did he.'

Then the second damsel withdrew and a third came forward and spoke as follows. 'Indeed, the chapter of piety is a very wide one; but I will mention what occurs to me thereof, concerning pious men of old time. Quoth a certain holy man, "I rejoice in death, though I am not assured of ease therein, save that I know death interposes between a man and his works; so I hope for multiplication of good works and cessation of evil ones." Itaa es Selemi, when he had made an end of an exhortation, was wont to tremble and weep sore. It was asked him why he did this and he replied, "I purpose (or am about) to enter upon a grave matter, and it is the standing up before God the Most High, to do in accordance with my exhortation." In like manner Zein el Aabidin was wont to tremble when he rose to pray. Being asked the reason of this, he replied, "Do ye not know before whom I stand and to whom I address myself?" It is said that there lived near Sufyan eth Thauri a blind man who, when the month of Ramazan came, went out with the folk to pray, but remained silent and hung back (in repeating the prayers). Said Sufyan, "On the Day of Resurrection, he shall come with the people of the Koran and they will be distinguished from their fellows by excess of honour.” Quoth Sufyan, “Were the soul stablished in the heart as it befits, it would fly away, for joy and longing for Paradise and grief and fear of hell-fire.” It is related also of Sufyan that he said, “To look upon the face of a tyrant is a sin.”’

Then the third damsel retired and a fourth came forward, who said, ‘I will treat of sundry traditions of pious men. It is related that Bishr el Hafi said, “I once heard Khalid say, ‘Beware of secret hypocrisy.’ Quoth I, ‘What is secret hypocrisy?’ He answered, ‘When one of you, in praying, prolongs his inclinations and prostrations till a cause of impurity come upon him.’” Quoth one of the sages, “The doing of good works expiates evil deeds.” Quoth Ibrahim ben Adhem, “I sought assiduously of Bishr el Hafi that he should acquaint me with some of the theological mysteries; but he said, ‘O my son, it behoves us not to teach this knowledge to every one; of every hundred, five, even as the poor-rate upon money.’ I thought his answer excellent, and when I went to pray, I saw Bishr praying: so I stood behind him, inclining myself in prayer, till the Muezzin made his call. Then rose a man of poor appearance and said, ‘O folk, beware of truth, when it is hurtful, for there is no harm in beneficial falsehood, and in compulsion is no choice: speech profits not in the absence of good qualities nor is there any hurt in silence, when they exist.’ Presently I saw Bishr drop a danic so I picked it up and exchanged it for a dirhem, which I gave him. ‘I will not take it,’ said he. Quoth I, ‘It is a fair exchange;’ but he answered, ‘I cannot barter the riches of the world to come for those of this world.’” It is reported also that Bishr’s sister once went to Ahmed ben Hembel and said to him, “O Imam of the Faith, we are a family that work for our living by day and spin thread by night; and oftentimes, the cressets of the watch of Baghdad pass by and we on the roof spinning by their light. Is this forbidden to us?” “Who art thou?” asked Ahmed. “I am the sister of Bishr el Hafi,” replied she. “O household of Bishr,” rejoined the Imam, “I shall never cease to quafl full draughts of piety and continence from your hearts.” Quoth one of the learned, “When God wills well to any man, he opens upon him the gate of action.” Malik ibn Dinar, when he passed through the bazaar and saw aught that he wished for, was wont to say, “O soul, take patience, for I will not accord to thee what thou desirest." He said also (may God accept of him), "The salvation of the soul lies in resistance to its desires and its ruin in submission to them." Quoth Mensour ben Ammar, "I set out one year on the pilgrimage and was making for Mecca by way of Cufa, when, one overcast night, I heard a voice crying out from the womb of the night and saying, 'O my God, by Thy power and Thy glory, I meant not by my disobedience to transgress against Thee, for indeed I am not ignorant of Thee; but my fault is one Thou didst foreordain to me from all eternity; so do Thou pardon me my sin, for indeed I disobeyed Thee of my ignorance!' When he had made an end of his prayer, he recited aloud the verse, 'O ye who believe, keep yourselves and your households from the fire whose fuel is men and stones!" Then I heard a fall, but knew not what it was and passed on. On the morrow, as we went our way, we fell in with a funeral train, followed by an old woman, whose strength had left her. I questioned her of the dead, and she replied, 'This is the funeral of a man who passed by us yesterday, whilst my son was standing at prayer. The latter recited a verse from the Book of God the Most High, when behold the man's gall-bladder burst and he fell dead.'"

Therewith the fourth damsel retired and the fifth, coming forward, spoke as follows: 'I also will repeat what occurs to me in the way of devotional anecdotes. Meslemeh ben Dinar used to say, "The making sound the secret thoughts covers sins, both great and small, and when the believer is resolved to leave sinning, help comes to him." Also, "Every piece of good fortune, that does not draw one nearer to God, is a calamity, for a little of this world distracts from a great deal of the world to come and a great deal of the first makes thee forget the whole of the latter." It was asked of Abou Hazim, "Who is the most fortunate of men?" "He who spends his life in the service of God," replied he. "And who is the most foolish of mankind?" asked the other. "He who sells his part in the world to come for the worldly goods of others," answered Abou Hazim. It is reported that Moses (on whom be peace), when he came to the waters of Midian, exclaimed, "O my Lord, indeed I am in need of that which Thou sendest down to me of good!" And he asked of his Lord and not of his folk. There came two damsels and he drew water for them and gave not precedence to the shepherds. When they returned to their father Jethro (on whom be peace!) they told him, and he said to one of them, “Haply, he is hungry: go back to him and bid him hither.” So she covered her face and returning to Moses, said to him, “My father bids thee to him, that he may reward thee for having drawn water for us.” Moses was averse to this and unwilling to follow her. Now she was a woman large in the buttocks, and the wind blowing upon her gown, discovered this; which when Moses saw, he lowered his eyes and said to her, “Do thou walk behind me.” So she followed him, till he came to Jethro’s house, where the evening meal was ready. “O Moses,” said Jethro, “I desire to reward thee for having drawn water for them.” But he answered, “I am of a people who sell nothing of the fashion of the next world for earthly gold and silver.” “O youth,” rejoined Jethro, “nevertheless thou art my guest, and it is my wont and that of my fathers to do honour to the guest by setting food before him.” So Moses sat down and ate. Then Jethro hired Moses for eight pilgrimages, that is to say, eight years, and appointed to him for hire the hand of his daughter, and Moses’ service to him was to stand for her dowry. As says the Holy Writ of him (quoth Jethro), “I am minded to marry thee to one of these my daughters, on condition that thou serve me eight years, and if thou serve out the ten, it will be of thine own will, for I do not wish to press hardly on thee.” A certain man once said to one of his friends, “Thou hast made me desolate, for that I have not seen thee this long while.” Quoth the other, “I have been distracted from thee by Ibn Shihab; dost thou know him?” “Yes,” replied the first; “he hath been my neighbour these thirty years, but I have never spoken to him.” “Indeed,” rejoined his friend, “thou forgettest God in forgetting thy neighbour! If thou lovedst God, thou wouldst love thy neighbour. Knowst thou not that a neighbour has a claim upon his neighbour, even as the right of kindred?” Quoth Hudheifeh, “We entered Mecca with Ibrahim ben Adhem, and whilst making the prescribed circuits about the Kaabeh, we met with Shekic the Balkhi. Quoth Ibrahim to Shekic, ‘What is your fashion in your country?’ ‘When we are vouchsafed [food],’ replied he, ‘we eat, and when we suffer hunger, we take patience.’ ‘This is the fashion of the dogs of Balkh,’ rejoined Ibrahim. ‘But we, when we are blest with plenty, we do honour to God, and when we suffer famine, we praise Him.' And Shekic seated himself before Ibrahim and said to him, 'Thou art my master.'" Quoth Mohammed ben Amran, "A man once asked of Hatim el Asemm, 'What maketh thee to trust in God?' 'Two things,' replied he, 'I know that what God has appointed for my daily bread shall be eaten by none but myself; so my heart is at rest as to that; and I know that I was not created without God's knowledge and am abashed before Him.'"

Then the fifth damsel retired and the old woman came forward and kissing the earth before thy father nine times, spoke as follows: 'Thou hast heard, O King, what these all have said on the subject of piety; and I will follow their example in relating what I have heard of the famous men of times past. It is said that the Imam es Shafi divided the night into three portions, the first for study, the second for sleep and the third for prayer. The Imam Abou Henifeh was wont also to pass half the night in prayer. One day a man pointed him out to another, as he passed, and said, "Yonder man watches the whole night." Quoth Abou Henifeh, "When I heard this, I was abashed before God, to hear myself praised for what was not in me; so, after this, I used to watch the whole night." Er Rebya relates that Es Shafi used to recite the whole Koran seventy times over during the month of Ramazan, and that in prayer. Quoth Es Shafi (may God accept of him!), "For ten years I never ate my fill of barley-bread, for satiety hardens the heart and deadens the wit and induces sleep and enfeebles one from standing up (to pray)." It is reported of Abdallah ben Mohammed es Sekra that he said, "I was once talking with Omar, and he said to me, 'Never saw I a more God-fearing or eloquent man than Mohammed ben Idris es Shafi. I went out one day with El Harith ben Lebib es Suffar, who was a disciple of El Muzeni and had a fine voice, and he read the saying or the Most High, 'On that day, they shall not speak nor shall it be permitted to them to excuse themselves.' I saw Es Shafi's colour change; his skin shuddered, and he was violently moved and fell down senseless. When he revived, he said, 'I seek refuge with God from the stead of the liars and the fate of the negligent! O my God, the hearts of the wise abase themselves before Thee. O my God, of Thy goodness, accord to me the remission of my sins, adorn me with Thy protection and pardon me my shortcomings, by the magnanimity of Thine essence!' Then I rose and went away." Quoth one of the pious, "When I entered Baghdad, Es Shafi was there. I sat down on the river-bank, to make the ablution before prayer; and as I was thus occupied, there came up one who said to me, 'O youth, make thine ablution well and God will make it well for thee in this world and the world to come.' I turned and saw a man, with a company of people after him. So I hastened to finish my ablutions and followed him. Presently, he turned and said to me, 'Dost thou want aught?' 'Yes,' answered I; 'I desire that thou teach me somewhat of that which God the Most High hath taught thee.' 'Know, then,' said he, 'that he who believes in God the Most High shall be saved and he who is jealous of his faith shall be delivered from destruction, and he who practices abstinence in this world, his eyes shall be solaced on the morrow (of death). Shall I tell thee any more?' 'Assuredly,' replied I. 'Abstain from the things of this world,' continued he, 'and be greedy of the good of the world to come. Be sincere and faithful in all thy dealings, and thou shalt be saved with the elect.' Then he went on and I asked about him and was told that he was the Imam es Shafi. Es Shafi was wont to say, "I would have the folk profit by this wisdom (of mine), on condition that none of it be attributed to me." Also, "I never disputed with any one, but I would that God the Most High should give him the knowledge of the Truth and aid him to expound it; nor did I ever dispute with any, but for the showing forth of the Truth, and I recked not whether God should manifest it by my lips or his." He said also (may God accept of him!), "If thou fear to grow conceited of thy learning, bethink thee Whose grace thou seekest and what good it is thou yearnest after and what punishment thou dreadest." It was told to Abou Henifeh that the Commander of the Faithful Abou Jaafer el Mensour had named him Cadi and ordered him a present of ten thousand dirhems; but he would not accept of this; and when the day came on which the money was to be paid, he prayed the morning-prayer, then covered his head with his cloak and spoke not. When the Khalif's messenger came with the money, he went in to the Imam and accosted him, but he would not speak to him. Quoth the messenger, "This money is lawfully thine." "I know that it is lawfully mine," replied the Imam; "but I abhor that the love of tyrants should take hold upon my heart." "Canst thou not go in to them and guard thyself from loving them?" asked the other. "Can I look to enter the sea, without wetting my clothes?" answered Abou Henifeh. Another of Es Shafi's sayings is as follows:

O soul, if thou be fain to do as I shall say, Thou shalt be free
from need and great of grace for aye.
Put far away from thee ambitions and desires, For lo, how oft a
wish to death hath led the way!

Among the sayings of Sufyan eth Thauri, with which he admonished Ali ben el Hassan es Selemi was the following, "Look that thou practice sincerity and beware of falsehood and treachery and hypocrisy and presumption for God annuls good works with either of these things. Borrow not but of Him who is merciful to His debtors and let thy comrade be one who will cause thee to abstain from the world. Let the thought of death be ever present with thee and be constant in asking pardon of God and beseeching of Him peace for what remains of thy life. Give loyal counsel to every true-believer, when he asks thee concerning the things of his faith, and beware of betraying a believer, for he who betrays a believer betrays God and His apostle. Avoid dissension and litigation and leave that which awakens doubt in thee, betaking;, thyself rather to those things that will not disquiet thee; so shalt thou be at peace. Enjoin that which is just and forbid that which is evil, so shalt thou be beloved of God. Make fair thine inner man, and God shall make fair thine outer man. Accept the excuse of him who excuses himself to thee and hate none of the true-believers. Draw near unto those that reject thee and forgive those that oppress thee; so shalt thou be the companion of the prophets. Commit thine affair to God, both in public and in private, and fear Him with the fear of one who knows that he must die and be raised again to stand before the Almighty, remembering that thou art destined for one of two dwellings, either Paradise the glorious or the flaming fire."' Having spoken thus, the old woman sat down beside the damsels.

When the late King thy father heard their discourse, he knew that they were the most accomplished of the people of their time and seeing their beauty and grace and the greatness of their learning, he showed them all favour. Moreover, he turned to the old woman and entreated her with honour, setting apart for her and her damsels the palace that had been the lodging of the princess Abrizeh, to which he let carry all that they needed of the best. Here they abode ten days, and whenever the King visited them, he found the old woman absorbed in prayer, watching by night and fasting by day; wherefore love of her took hold upon his heart and he said to me, ‘O Vizier, verily this old woman is a pious soul, and reverence for her is strong in my heart.’ On the eleventh day, the King visited her, that he might pay her the price of the five damsels; but she said to him, ‘O King, know that the price of these passes the competence of men, for I seek for them neither gold nor silver nor jewels, be it little or much.’ The King wondered at this and said, ‘O my lady, what is their price?’ ‘I will not sell them to thee,’ replied she, ‘save on condition that thou fast a whole month, watching by night and fasting by day for the love of God the Most High: but if thou wilt do this, they are thine, to use as thou pleasest.’ The King wondered at the perfectness of her piety and devotion and abnegation and she was magnified in his eyes, and he said, ‘May God make this pious old woman to profit us!’ So he agreed to her proposal, and she said to him, ‘I will help thee with my prayers.’ Then she called for a gugglet of water and muttered over it words in an unknown language and abode awhile, speaking over it things that we understood not. Then she covered it with a cloth and sealing it up, gave it to the King, saying, ‘When thou has fasted ten days, break thy fast on the eleventh night with what is in this cup, for it will root out the love of the world from thy heart and fill it with light and faith. As for me, I purpose to go out to-morrow to visit my brethren of the invisible world, for I yearn after them, and I will return to thee when the ten days are past.’ So the King took the gugglet and setting it apart in a closet of his palace, locked the door and put the key in his pocket. Next day, the old woman departed and the King entered upon his fast. When he had accomplished the first ten days thereof, he opened the gugglet and drank what was therein and found it cordial to his stomach. Within the next ten days, the old woman returned, bringing sweetmeats wrapped in a green leaf, like no leaf of a tree. She went in to the King and saluted him; and when he saw her he rose to meet her, saying, ‘Welcome, O pious lady!’ ‘O

King,’ said she, ‘the spirits salute thee, for I told them of thee, and they rejoiced in thee and have sent thee this cake, which is of the sweetmeats of the other world. Do thou break thy fast on it at the end of the day.’ The King rejoiced greatly at this and exclaimed, ‘Praised be God who hath given me brethren of the invisible world!’ And he thanked the old woman and kissed her hands and entreated her and the damsels with exceeding honour. Then he fasted till twenty days were past, at the end of which time the old woman came to him and said, ‘Know, O King, that I told the spirits of the love that is between thee and me and how I had left the damsels with thee, and they were glad that the damsels should belong to a King like thee; for they were wont, when they saw them, to be strenuous in offering up effectual prayer on their behalf. So I would fain carry them to the spirits, that they may benefit by their favours, and they shall surely not return to thee without some treasure of the treasures of the earth, that thou, after the completion of thy fast, mayst occupy thyself with their dress and help thyself to the fulfilment of thy wishes with that which they shall bring thee.’ The King thanked her and said, ‘But that I fear to cross thee, I would not accept the treasure or aught else: but when wilt thou set out with them?’ ‘On the seven-and-twentieth night,’ replied she; ‘and I will bring them back to thee at the end of the month, by which time thou wilt have accomplished thy fast and they will have had their courses and be free from impurity. Then they shall become thine and be at thy disposal. By Allah, each one of them is worth many times thy kingdom!’ ‘I know it, O pious lady,’ replied the King. Then said the old woman, ‘If there be any one in thy palace who is dear to thee, thou wouldst do well to send her with me, that she may find solace and seek a blessing of the spirits.’ Quoth the King, ‘I have a Greek slave called Sufiyeh, by whom God hath vouchsafed me two children, a son and a daughter: but they were lost years ago. Take her with thee, that she may get the spirits’ blessing: it may be they will pray God for her, that her children may be restored to her.’ ‘It is well,’ replied the old woman; for indeed this was what she most desired. The King gave not over fasting till the seven-and-twentieth night, when the old woman said to him, ‘O my son, I am about to go to the spirits; so bring me Sufiyeh.’ Accordingly, he sent for her and delivered her to the old woman, who placed her with the other damsels. Then she went in to her chamber and bringing out a sealed cup, presented it to the King, saying, ‘On the thirtieth day, do thou go to the bath and when thou comest out, enter one of the closets in thy palace and drink the liquor that is in this cup. Then sleep, and thou shalt attain what thou seekest, and peace be on thee!’ The King was glad and thanked her and kissed her hands. Quoth she, ‘I commend thee to God;’ and he said, ‘When shall I see thee again, O pious lady? Indeed I love not to part with thee.’ Then she called down blessings on him and departed with the five damsels and the Princess Sufiyeh; whilst the King fasted other three days, till the end of the month, when he went to the bath and coming out, shut himself up in a closet, commanding that none should go in to him. Then he drank what was in the cup and lay down to sleep. We sat awaiting him till the end of the day, but he did not come out and we said, ‘Belike he is tired with the bath and with watching by night and fasting by day, and sleepeth.’ So we waited till next day; but still he did not come out. Then we stood at the closet-door and cried aloud, so haply he might awake and ask what was the matter. But nothing came of this: so at last we lifted the door off its hinges and going in, found the King dead, with his flesh torn into strips and his bones broken in pieces. When we saw him in this case, it was grievous to us, and we took up the cup and found in its cover a piece of paper, on which was written the following, ‘He who does evil leaves no regrets behind him. This is the reward of him who plays the traitor with kings’ daughters and debauches them: and we make known to all who happen upon this scroll that Sherkan, when he came to our country, debauched our Princess Abrizeh; nor did this suffice him, but he must take her from us and bring her to you. Then he (Omar ben Ennuman) (debauched her and) sent her away, in company of a black slave, who slew her and we found her lying dead in the desert. This is none of kings’ fashion, and he who did this is requited with nought but his deserts. So do ye suspect none of having killed him, for none slew him but the cunning witch, whose name is Dhat ed Dewahi. And behold, I have taken the King’s wife Sufiyeh and have carried her to her father King Afridoun of Constantinople. Moreover, we will assuredly make war upon you and kill you and take your land from you, and ye shall be cut off even to the last man, nor shall there be left of you a living soul, no, nor a blower of the fire, except he serve the Cross and the Girdle.' When we read this, we knew that the old woman had cheated us and carried out her plot against us: so we cried out and buffeted our faces and wept sore. However, weeping availed us nothing and the troops fell out as to whom they should make Sultan. Some would have thee and others thy brother Sherkan; and we ceased not to wrangle about this for the space of a month, at the end of which time certain of us drew together and agreed to repair to thy brother Sherkan. So we set out and journeyed on till we fell in with thee: and this is the manner of the death of King Omar ben Ennuman.'

When the Vizier had made an end of his story, Zoulmekan and his sister wept, and the Chamberlain wept also. Then said the latter to Zoulmekan, "O King, weeping will profit thee nothing; nor will aught avail thee but that thou fortify thy heart and strengthen thy resolution and stablish thy power; for verily he is not dead who leaves the like of thee behind him." So Zoulmekan gave over weeping and causing his throne to be set up without the pavilion, commanded the army to pass in review before him. Then he sat down on the throne, with the Chamberlain by his side and all the arm-bearers behind him, whilst the Vizier Dendan and the rest of the amirs and grandees stood before him, each in his several room. Then said Zoulmekan to Dendan, "Acquaint me with the particulars of my father's treasures." Dendan answered, "I hear and obey," and gave him to know the amount and nature of the late King's treasure and what was in the treasury of money and jewels and other precious things. So Zoulmekan gave largesse to the army and bestowed a sumptuous dress of honour on the Vizier Dendan, saying, "I confirm thee in thine office." Whereupon Dendan kissed the earth before him and wished him long life. Then he bestowed dresses of honour on the amirs, after which he turned to the Chamberlain and said, "Bring out before us the tribute of Damascus, that is with thee." So he laid before him the chests of money and jewels and rarities, and he took them and divided them all amongst the troops, till there was nothing left. And the amirs kissed the ground before him and wished him long life, saying, "Never saw we a king, who gave the like of these gifts." Then they all went away to their own tents, and when it was morning, Zoulmekan gave orders for departure. So they set out and journeyed for three days, till on the fourth day they drew near to Baghdad. When they entered the city, they found it decorated, and King Zoulmekan went up to his father's palace and sat down on the throne, whilst the amirs of the army and the Vizier Dendan and the Chamberlain of Damascus stood before him. Then he bade his private secretary write a letter to his brother Sherkan, acquainting him with all that had passed and adding, "As soon as thou hast read this letter, make ready thine affair and join us with thine army, that we may make war upon the infidels and take vengeance on them for our father and wipe out the stain upon our honour." Then he folded the letter and sealed it and said to Dendan, "None shall carry this letter but thou; and I would have thee speak my brother fair and say to him, 'If thou have a mind to thy father's kingdom, it is thine, and thy brother shall be Viceroy for thee in Damascus; for to this effect am I instructed by him.'" So the Vizier went out from before him and proceeded to make ready for his journey. Then Zoulmekan set apart a magnificent house for the stoker and furnished it with sumptuous furniture and lodged him therein. One day, he went out a-hunting and as he was returning to Baghdad, one of the amirs presented him with horses of fine breeds and damsels whose beauty beggars description. One of the damsels pleased him: so he went in to her and lay with her, and she conceived by him forthright. After awhile, the Vizier Dendan returned from Damascus, bringing him news of his brother Sherkan and that he was then on his way to him, and said to him, "Thou wouldst do well to go out to meet him." Zoulmekan replied, "I hear and obey;" and riding forth with his grandees a day's journey from Baghdad, pitched his tents and halted to await the coming of his brother. Next morning, the army of Syria appeared, with King Sherkan in its midst, a bold cavalier, a fierce lion and a warrior against whom none might make head. As the squadrons drew nigh and the dust-clouds neared and the troops came up with banners flying, Zoulmekan and his attendants rode forward to meet Sherkan; and when the King saw his brother, he would have dismounted, but Sherkan conjured him not to do so and himself set foot to the ground and walked towards him. As soon as he reached Zoulmekan, the latter threw himself upon him, and they embraced and wept and condoled with one another. Then they mounted and rode onward, they and their troops, till they reached Baghdad, where they alighted and went up to the royal palace and passed the night there. Next morning, Zoulmekan went forth and bade proclaim a holy war and summon the troops from all parts. They abode a whole month, awaiting the coming of the levies, whilst the folk poured in from all parts of the kingdom, and every one who came they entreated with honour and munificence and promised him all manner of good. Then Sherkan said to Zoulmekan, "O my brother, tell me thy history." So he told him all that had befallen him, first and last, including the benevolent dealing of the stoker with him. "Hast thou requited him his kindness to thee?" asked Sherkan. "Not yet," replied Zoulmekan, "but, God willing, I will surely do so, as soon as I return from this expedition and am at leisure to attend to him." Therewith, Sherkan was certified that his sister Nuzhet ez Zeman had told him the truth; but he concealed what had passed between them and contented himself with sending his salutation to her by her husband the Chamberlain. She returned his greeting in the same fashion, calling down blessings on him and enquiring after her daughter Kuzia Fekan, to which he replied that the child was well and in all health and safety. Then he went to his brother to take counsel with him for departure; and Zoulmekan said, "O my brother, we will set out as soon as the army is complete and the Arabs have come in from all parts." So he bade make ready the wheat and other provisions and munitions of war and went in to his wife, who was now five months gone with child; and he put under her hand mathematicians and astrologers, to whom he appointed stipends and allowances. Then, three months after the arrival of the army of Syria, as soon as the troops were all assembled and the Arabs had come in, he set out, at the head of his troops, with his brother Sherkan on his right and his brother-in-law the Chamberlain on his left hand. The name of the general of the army of the Medes was Rustem and that of the general of the army of the Turks Behram. So the squadrons broke up and marched forward and the companies and battalions filed past in battle array, till the whole army was in motion. They ceased not to fare on for the space of a month; halting three days a week to rest, by reason of the greatness of the host, till they came to the country of the

Greeks; and as they drew near, the people of the villages and hamlets took fright at them and fled to Constantinople.

To return to Dhat ed Dewahi. As soon as she reached her own country and felt herself in safety, she said to her son, King Herdoub, "Be consoled; for I have avenged thy daughter Abrizeh and killed King Omar ben Ennuman and brought back the Princess Sufiyeh. So now let us go to the King of Constantinople and carry him back his daughter and tell him what has happened, that he may be on his guard and prepare his forces and that we may do the like; for I know that the Muslims will not delay to attack us." "Let us wait till they draw near our country," replied Herdoub, "that we may make us ready meantime and assemble our power." Accordingly they fell to levying their forces and preparing for war, so that by the time the news of the Muslims' advance reached them, they were ready for defence. Then King Herdoub and his mother set out for Constantinople, and King Afridoun, hearing of the arrival of the King of the Greeks, came forth to meet him and asked how it was with him and the cause of his visit. So Herdoub acquainted him with the doing; of his mother Dhat ed Dewahi, how she had slain the Muslim king and recovered the Princess Sufiyeh and that the Muslims had assembled their forces and were on their way to attack them, wherefore it behoved that they two should join powers and meet them. King Afridoun rejoiced in the recovery of his daughter and the death of King Omar and sent to all countries, to seek succour and acquaint the folk with the reason of the slaying of King Omar. So the Christian troops flocked to him from all quarters, and before three months were past, the army of the Greeks was complete, besides which there joined themselves to him the French and Germans and Ragusans and Genoese and Venetians and all the hosts of the Pale Faces and warriors from all the lands of the Franks, and the earth was straitened on them by reason of their multitude. Then Afridoun the Great King commanded to depart; so they set out from Constantinople and ceased not to defile through the city for the space of ten days. They fared on till they reached a spacious valley, hard by the salt sea, where they halted three days; and on the fourth day, they were about to set out again, when news came to them of the approach of the army of Islam and the defenders of the faith of the Best of

Men. So they halted other three days, and on the seventh day, they espied a great cloud of dust which spread till it covered the whole country; nor was an hour of the day past before the dust lifted and melted away into the air, and its darkness was pierced and dispersed by the starry sheen of lance-points and spear-heads and the flashing of sword-blades. Presently, there appeared the banners of Islam and the Mohammedan ensigns and the mailed horsemen surged forward, like the letting loose of the billows of the sea, clad in cuirasses as they were clouds girdled about moons. Thereupon the Christian horsemen rode forward and the two hosts met, like two seas clashing together, and eyes fell upon eyes. The first to spur into the fight was the Vizier Dendan, with the army of Syria, thirty thousand cavaliers, followed by Rustem, the general of the Medes, and Behram, the general of the Turks, with other twenty thousand horse, behind whom came the men of the sea-coast, sheathed in glittering mail as they were full moons passing through a night of clouds. Then the Christian host called upon Jesus and Mary and the defiled Cross, and fell upon the Vizier Dendan and the army of Syria. Now this was in pursuance of a stratagem devised by Dhat ed Dewahi; for, before his departure, King Afridoun had gone in to her and said, “It is thou hast brought this great stress on us; so do thou advise me how I shall do and what plan I shall follow.” “O great King and mighty priest,” replied she, “I will teach thee a shift, which would baffle Iblis himself, though he should call to his aid against it all his grisly hosts. It is that you send fifty thousand men in ships to the Mountain of Smoke and there let them land and stir not till the standards of Islam come upon you, when do you up and at them. Then let the troops from the seaward sally out upon the Muslims and take them in rear, whilst you confront them from the landward. So not one of them shall escape, and our stress shall cease and abiding peace enure to us.” Her counsel commended itself to King Afridoun and he replied, “It is well; thy counsel shall be followed, O princess of cunning old women and recourse of kings warring for their blood-revenge!” So when the army of Islam came upon them in that valley, of a sudden the flames began to run among the tents and the swords to play upon men’s bodies. Then came up the army of Baghdad and Khorassan, six score thousand horse, with Zoulmekan at their head. When the host of the infidels that lay by the sea saw them, they came out and followed in their steps, and Zoulmekan, seeing this, cried out to his men, saying, “Turn back to the infidels, O people of the Chosen Prophet, and fall upon those who deny and transgress the authority of the Compassionate, the Merciful!” So they turned and fought with the Christians, and Sherkan came up with another wing of the Muslim army, near six score thousand men, whilst the infidels numbered nigh upon sixteen hundred thousand. When the Muslims mingled in the mellay, their hearts were strengthened and they cried out, saying, “God hath promised to succour us and abandon the infidels!” And they clashed together with swords and spears. As for Sherkan, he made himself a passage through the ranks and raged among the masses of the foe, fighting so fierce a battle that it would have made children grow grey for fear; nor did he leave to tourney among the infidels and work havoc upon them with the keen-edged scimitar, shouting, “God is most great!” till he drove them back to the brink of the sea. Then the strength of the foe failed and God gave the victory to the faith of Submission, and they fought, drunken without wine, till they slew of the infidels forty and five thousand in that encounter, whilst of the Muslims but three thousand and five hundred fell. Moreover, the Lion of the Faith, King Sherkan, and his brother Zoulmekan slept not that night, but occupied themselves with looking to the wounded and heartening their men with assurance of victory and salvation and promise of a recompense in the world to come.

Meanwhile King Afridoun assembled the captains of his host and said to them, “Verily, we had accomplished our intent and had solaced our hearts, but for our over-confidence in our numbers: it was that which undid us.” But Dhat ed Dewahi said to them, “Assuredly nought shall profit you, except ye seek the favour of the Messiah and put your trust in the True Faith; for by the virtue of the Messiah, the whole strength of the Muslims lies in that devil, King Sherkan!” “To-morrow,” said Afridoun, “I will draw out in battle array and send out against them the famous cavalier, Luca ben Shemlout; for if King Sherkan come out to joust with him, he will slay him and the other champions of the Muslims, till not one is left; and I purpose this night to sacre you all by fumigation with the Holy

Incense." When the amirs heard this, they kissed the earth before him. Now the incense in question was the excrement of the Chief Patriarch, which was sought for with such instance and so highly valued, that the high priests of the Greeks used to mix it with musk and ambergris and send it to all the countries of the Christians in silken sachets; and kings would pay a thousand dinars for every drachm of it, for they sought it to perfume brides withal and the chief of them were wont to use a little of it in ointment for the eyes and as a remedy in sickness and colic. But the priests used to mix their own excrement with it, for that the excrement of the Chief Patriarch could not suffice for half a score countries. So, as soon as the day broke and the morning appeared with its lights and shone, the horsemen ran to arms, and King Afridoun summoned the chief of his knights and nobles and invested them with dresses of honour. Then he made the sign of the cross on their foreheads and incensed them with the incense aforesaid; after which he called for Luca ben Shemlout, surnamed the Sword of the Messiah, and after incensing him and rubbing his palate with the holy excrement, daubed and smeared his cheeks and anointed his moustaches with the remainder. Now there was no stouter champion in the land of the Greeks than this accursed Luca, nor any doughtier at bowshot or smiting with swords or thrusting with spears in the mellay; but he was foul of favour, for his face was as the face of a jackass, his shape that of an ape and his look as the look of a malignant serpent, and the being near unto him was more grievous than parting from the beloved. Moreover, he was black as night and his breath was fetid as that of the lion; he was crooked as a bow and grim-visaged as the pard, and he was branded with the mark of the infidels. He kissed Afridoun's feet and the King said to him, "It is my wish that thou go out against Sherkan, King of Damascus, and hasten to deliver us from this affliction." Quoth Luca, "I hear and obey." And the King made the sign of the cross on his forehead and felt assured of speedy help from heaven, whilst Luca went out and mounted a sorrel horse. Now he was clad in a red tunic and a hauberk of gold set with jewels and bore a three-barbed spear, as he were Iblis the accursed on the day of marshalling his hosts to battle. Then he rode forward, he and his troop of infidels, as they were driving to the Fire, preceded by a herald, crying aloud in the

Arabic tongue and saying, “Ho, followers of Mohammed, let none of you come out to-day but your champion Sherkan, the Sword of Islam, lord of Damascus of Syria!” Hardly had he made an end of speaking, when there arose a mighty tumult in the plain, all the people heard its voice, that called to mind the Day of Weeping. The cowards trembled and all necks turned towards the sound, and behold, it was King Sherkan. For, when Zoulmekan saw that accursed infidel spur out into the plain, he turned to Sherkan and said to him, “Of a surety they seek for thee.” “Should it be so,” replied Sherkan, “it were pleasing to me.” So when they heard the herald, they knew Luca to be the champion of the Greeks. Now he was one of the greatest of villains, one who made hearts to ache, and had sworn to clear the land of the Muslims; and indeed the Medes and Turks and Kurds feared his mischief. So Sherkan drove at him like an angry lion, mounted on a courser like a wild gazelle, and coming nigh to him, shook his javelin in his hand, as it were a darting viper, and recited the following verses:

I have a sorrel horse, right swift and eath to guide, Shall give
thee of its might what thou mayst ill abide.
Ay, and a limber spear I have, full keen of point, As ‘twere the
dam of deaths upon its shaft did ride;
And eke a trenchant sword of Ind, which when I draw, Thou’dst
deem that levins flashed and darted far and wide,

Luca understood not what he said nor did he apprehend the vehemence of the verse; but he smote his forehead with his hand, in honour of the cross drawn thereon, and kissed it, then ran at Sherkan with lance pointed at him. When he came within spear-shot, he threw the javelin into the air, till it was lost to sight, and catching it with the other hand, as do the jugglers, hurled it at Sherkan. It sped from his hand, like a shooting star, and the people clamoured and feared for Sherkan: but as it drew near him, he put out his hand and caught it in full flight, to the amazement of the beholders. Then he shook it, till it was well-nigh broken, and hurled it up into the air, till it disappeared from sight. As it descended, he caught it again, in less than the twinkling of an eye, and cried out from the bottom of his heart, saying, “By the virtue of Him who created the seven heavens, I will make this accursed fellow the byword of the world!” Then he hurled the javelin at Luca ben Shemlout, who thought to do as Sherkan had done and catch it in mid-flight; but Sherkan made haste and sped another dart at him, which smote him on the forehead amiddleward the sign of the cross, and God hurried his soul to the Fire and the Ill Stead. When the infidels saw Luca fall dead, they buffeted their faces, crying, “Alas!” and “Woe worth the day!” and called for aid upon the priests of the monasteries, saying, “Where are the crosses?” So the monks offered up prayers and the Christians all drew together against Sherkan and brandishing their swords and lances, rushed forward to the attack. Army met army and men’s breasts fell under the hoofs of the horses, whilst the sword and the spear ruled and arms and wrists grew weak and it was as if the horses had been made without legs; nor did the herald of war cease to call to battle, till all arms were weary and the day departed and the night came with the darkness. So the two hosts drew apart whilst every warrior staggered like a drunken man, for stress of war and much thrusting and smiting, and the ground was hidden with the slain; sore were the wounds and the hurt knew not by whom he died. Then Sherkan joined his brother and the Chamberlain and the Vizier Dendan and said to them, “Verily God hath opened a door for the destruction of the infidels, praised be the Lord of the Two Worlds!” “Let us never cease to praise God,” replied Zoulmekan, “for that He hath dispelled trouble from the Arabs and the Persians. Indeed the folk, generation after generation, shall tell of thy prowess against the accursed Luca, the falsifier of the Evangel, of thy catching the javelin in mid-flight and smiting the enemy of God among men; and thy report shall endure until the end of time.” Then said Sherkan, “Harkye, O grand Chamberlain and doughty captain!” “At thy service,” answered he. Quoth Sherkan, “Take the Vizier Dendan and twenty thousand men and lead them, by a forced march, seven parasangs towards the sea, till ye come near the shore, at two parasangs’ distance from the foe. Then hide in the hollows of the ground, till ye hear the tumult of the infidels disembarking from the ships; and when the swords have begun to play between us and them and ye see our troops falling back, as if defeated, and all the infidels following them, as well those in front as those from the sea-ward and the tents, do ye lie in wait for them: and as soon as ye see the standard with the words, 'There is no god but God, and Mohammed is His Apostle!' up with the green banner and fall on their rear, shouting, 'God is most great!' and do your endeavour, that they may not interpose between the retreating army and the sea." The Chamberlain agreed to this, and he and the Vizier Dendan took twenty thousand men and set out at once, even as Sherkan had commanded. As soon as it was morning the troops donned their armour and drawing their swords, set their spears in rest and sprang to horse. Then the Christians drew out in battle array upon the hills and plains and the priests cried out and all heads were uncovered. Moreover, those who were in the ships hoisted the cross at their mast-heads and making from all sides towards the shore, landed their horses and addressed them to the fray, whilst the swords glittered and the javelins glanced like levies against the cuirasses. So they all joined battle and the mill-wheels of death rushed round over footmen and horsemen: heads flew from bodies and tongues grew mute and eyes dim; gall-bladders burst and skulls were cloven in sunder and wrists shorn in twain; whilst the horses plashed in pools of blood and men gripped each other by the beards. The host of Islam called out, "Peace and blessing on the Prince of Mankind and glory and praise in the highest to the Compassionate One!" whilst the infidels shouted, "Glory to the Cross and the Girdle and the Vine-juice and the Presser and the Priests and the Monks and the Festival of Palms and the Metropolitan!" Presently, Zoulmekan and Sherkan held back and their troops gave way and feigned to retreat before the infidels, who pursued them, deeming them routed, and made ready to cut and thrust. Then the host of the Muslims began to chant the first verses of the Chapter of the Cow, whilst the slain were trampled under the hoofs of the horses and the heralds of the Greeks cried out, "Ho, servants of the Messiah! Ho, people of the True Faith! Ho, followers of the Pope! Verily the divine grace shines upon you, for see, the hosts of Islam incline to tree! So turn ye not your backs to them, but let your swords bite on their necks and hold not your hands from them, else are ye outcasts from the Messiah, son of Mary, who spoke even in the cradle!" Thereupon Afridoun thought that the infidels were victorious, knowing not that this was but a stratagem of the Muslims, and sent to King Herdoub, to give him the glad tidings of success, adding, "It was nought but the excrement of the Arch-Patriarch that availed us, in that the fragrance of it exhaled from the beards and moustaches of the servants of the Cross near and far; and I swear, by the Miracles of the Messiah and by the Waters of Baptism, that I will not leave upon the earth a single defender of Islam!" So the messenger betook himself to King Herdoub whilst the infidels called to each other saying, "Let us take our wreak for Luca!" and King Herdoub cried out, "Vengeance for Abrizeh!" With this, King Zoulmekan cried out to his men, saying, "Ho, servants of the Requiting King. up and smite the children of blasphemy and disobedience with the white of the sword and the brown of the spear!" So the Muslims turned upon the infidels and plied them with the keen-edged scimitar, whilst their herald cried aloud, "Up, ye lovers of the chosen prophet and at the enemies of the Faith! Now is the time for those, who hope for salvation on the Day of Fear, to win the favour of the Bountiful, the Forgiving One, for verily Paradise is under the shadow of swords!" So Sherkan and his men fell upon the infidels and cut off their retreat and tourneyed among the ranks, when lo, a cavalier of goodly presence opened a passage through the army of the Greeks and circled hither and thither amongst them, cutting and thrusting and covering the ground with heads and bodies, so that the infidels feared him and their necks bent under his blows. He was girt with two swords, that of his glances and a scimitar, and armed with two lances, one of cane and the other the straightness of his shape; over his shoulders flowed down his hair, whose beauty might have stood him in stead of many warriors, even as says the poet:

Flowing hair, as I deem, is not fair to the sight, Except it be spread, on the day of the fight,
O'er a youth with a spear that he giveth to drink Of the blood of full many a beard-bearing knight.

Or as says another:

I turned to him, what while he girt his faulchion on, and said, "Surely, the sabres of thy looks should stand thee in

sword's stead."
Quoth he, "The sabres of my looks I keep for those who love, My
sword for those who have no wit of passion's goodlihead."

When Sherkan. saw him, he said to him, "Ho, champion of the champions! I conjure thee, by the Koran and the attributes of the Compassionate One, tell me who thou art: for verily by thy deeds this day thou hast pleased the Requiting King, whom one thing distracts not from another, in that thou hast discomfited the children of impiety and disbelief." Quoth the horseman, "Thou art he who sworest brotherhood to me but yesterday: how quickly thou hast forgotten me!" Then he uncovered his face, so that what was hidden of his beauty was disclosed, and lo, it was none other than Zoulmekan! When Sherkan knew his brother, he rejoiced in him, except that he feared for him from the throng of adversaries and the onslaught of the champions; and this for two reasons, the first, his tender age and exposure to the evil eye, and the second, that his life was the mainstay of the empire. So he said to him, "O King, thou adventurest thy life, and indeed I am in fear for thee from the foe; so join thy horse to mine, and thou wouldst do well not to hazard thyself forth of these squadrons, that we may shoot at the enemy with thine unerring shaft." Quoth Zoulmekan, "I wish to equal thee in battle and I will not spare myself before thee in fight." Then the host of Islam rushed upon the infidels and encompassing them on all sides, waged a right holy war on them and broke the power of the children of impiety and pride and corruption. King Herdoub sighed when he saw the evil case that had fallen on the Greeks, and they turned their backs and addressed themselves to flight, making for the ships, when lo, there came out upon them from the sea shore a new army, led by the Vizier Dendan, him who was wont to make the champions bite the dust, and the Chamberlain of Syria, with twenty thousand doughty cavaliers, and fell upon their rear with sword and spear, whilst the army of Islam pressed them in front and flank. Then some of the Muslims turned against those that were in the ships and rained perditions on them, till they threw themselves into the sea, and they slew of them much people, more than a hundred thousand knights, nor did one of their champions escape, great or small. Moreover, they took their ships, with all the baggage and treasure therein, and the Muslims got that day booty, the like of which was never gotten of time past; nor did ever ear hear of such a battle. But twenty of the ships escaped, and amongst the booty were fifty thousand horses, besides treasure and spoil past count or reckoning, whereat the Muslims rejoiced with an exceeding joy and thanked God for the aid and protection He had vouchsafed them.

Meanwhile, the news reached Constantinople that King Afridoun had gotten the victory over the Muslims, and Dhat ed Dewahi said, “I know that my son King Herdoub is no runagate and that he has nought to fear from the hosts of Islam, but will bring the whole world to the Nazarene faith.” Then she commanded the city to be decorated, and the people held high festival and drank wines, knowing not what God had decreed to them. Whilst they were in the midst of their rejoicings, behold, the raven of affliction croaked against them and up came the twenty ships of fugitives, amongst them the King of Caesarea. King Afridoun met them on the sea-shore, and they told him all that had befallen them, weeping sore and lamenting, whereupon rejoicing was turned into dismay, and King Afridoun was filled with consternation and knew that there was no repairing their mischance. The women gathered together to make moan and lament: and the city was filled with mourning; all hearts failed, whilst the hired mourners cried aloud and weeping and wailing arose on all sides. When King Herdoub met King Afridoun, he told him the truth of the case and how the flight of the Muslims was but a stratagem and said to him, “Look not to see any of the troops, save those that have already reached thee.” When Afridoun heard this, he fell down in a swoon with his nose under his feet; and as soon as he revived he exclaimed, “Surely the Messiah was wroth with the army, that he delivered them thus into the hands of the Muslims!” Then came the Arch-Patriarch sadly to King Afridoun who said to him, “O our father, destruction hath overtaken our army and the Messiah hath punished us.” “Grieve not nor be concerned,” replied the Patriarch; “for it cannot be but that one of you has sinned against the Messiah, and all have been punished for his sin; but now we will read prayers for you in the churches, that the Mohammedan hosts may be repelled from you.” After this, Dhat ed Dewahi came to

Afridoun and said to him, “O King, verily the Muslims are many, and we shall never prevail against them, save by wile: wherefore I purpose to work upon them by stratagem and repair to the army of Islam; haply I may be able to carry out my intent against their leader and slay their champion, even as I slew his father. If I succeed, not one of them shall return to his native land, for all their strength lies in him; but I wish to have some Christians of Syria, such as go out from time to time to sell their goods, to help me in carrying out my plan.” “Be it so, whenas thou wilt,” replied the King. So she bade fetch a hundred men, natives of Nejran in Syria, and said to them, “Ye have heard what has befallen the Christians with the Muslims?” “Yes,” replied they; and the King said, “This woman has devoted herself to the Messiah and purposes to go forth with you, disguised as Mohammedans, to work out a device, which shall profit us and hinder the Muslim host from us: so if ye also are willing to devote yourselves to Christ, I will give you a quintal of gold. Those of you who escape shall have the money, and those of you who are slain Christ will reward.” “O King,” replied they, “we devote ourselves to the Messiah, and we will be thy sacrifice.” Then the old woman took drugs and simples and boiled them in water, till the black essence of them was extracted. She waited till it was cold, then dipped the end of a handkerchief therein and coloured her face therewith.. Moreover she put on, over her clothes, a long gaberdine with an embroidered border and taking in her hand a rosary, went in to King Afridoun, who knew her not nor did any of his companions know her, till she discovered herself to them, when they all praised her for her cunning and her son rejoiced and said, “May the Messiah never fail thee!” Then she took with her the Syrian Christians, and set out for the army of Baghdad. Now this accursed old woman was a witch of the witches, past mistress in sorcery and deception, knavish, crafty, debauched and perfidious, with foul breath, red eyelids, sallow cheeks, pale face, bleared eyes, mangy body, grizzled hair, humped back, withered complexion and running nostrils. She had studied the scriptures of Islam and made the pilgrimage to the Holy House of God, to come to the knowledge of the Mohammedan ordinances and the doctrines of the Koran; and she had professed Judaism in Jerusalem two years’ space, that she might perfect herself in the magical arts of men and Jinn; so that she was a plague of plagues and a calamity of calamities, utterly depraved and having no religion. Now the chief reason of her sojourn with her son, King Herdoub, was on account of the maidens at his court: for she was given to tribadism and could not exist without it: so if any damsel pleased her, she was wont to teach her the art and rub saffron on her, till she fainted away for excess of pleasure. Whoso obeyed her, she used to favour and spake interest for her with her son; and whoso repelled her, she would contrive to destroy. This was known to Merjaneh and Rihaneh and Utriyeh, the handmaids of Abrizeh, and the princess loathed the old woman and abhorred to lie with her because of the ill smell from her armpits and the stench of her wind, more fetid than carrion, and the roughness of her body, coarser than palm fibre. She was wont to bribe those who served her desires with jewels and instruction; but Abrizeh held aloof from her and sought refuge with the All-Wise, the Omniscient; for well does the poet say:

O thou that abasest thyself to those that are rich and great And
lordest it with disdain o’er those of low estate,
Thou that thinkest to gild thy baseness by gathering gold, The
scenting of aught that’s foul skills not its stench to
abate!

To continue. As soon as Dhat ed Dewahi had departed, her son went in to Afridoun and said to him, “O King, we have no need of the Chief Patriarch nor of his prayers, but will act according to my mother’s counsel and await what she will do of her craft without end with the Muslim host, for they are on the march hither with all their strength and will quickly be with us.” When King Afridoun heard this, terror took hold upon his heart and he wrote letters forthright to all the countries of the Christians, saying, “It behoves none of the followers of the Messiah or soldiers of the Cross to hold back, especially the folk of the citadels and strong places: but let them all come to us foot and horse and women and children, for the Muslim hosts already tread our soil. So hasten, hasten, ere what we fear come to pass.”

Now Dhat ed Dewahi had clad her companions in the habit of

Muslim merchants and had provided herself with a hundred mules laden with stuffs of Antioch, such as gold woven satin and royal brocade and so forth, and with a letter from King Afridoun to the following effect: “These are merchants from the land of Syria, who have been with us: so it behoves none to do them let or hindrance nor take tithe of them, till they reach their own country and the place of their security, for by merchants a country flourishes and grows rich, and these are no men of war nor evil-doers.” So, as soon as she came without the city, she said to them, “O folk, I wish to work out a plot for the destruction of the Muslims.” “O princess,” replied they, “command us what thou wilt; we are at thy disposal, and may the Messiah prosper thy dealing!” Then she donned a gown of fine white wool and rubbing her forehead, till she made a great mark (as of a scar), anointed it with an ointment of her own fashion, so that it shone greatly. Now she was lean-bodied and hollow-eyed, and she bound her legs tightly round with cords just above her feet, till she drew near the Muslim camp, when she unwound them, leaving the marks of the cords deeply embedded in the flesh. Then she anointed the weals with dragon’s blood and bade her companions beat her severely and lay her in a chest. “How can we beat thee,” replied they, “who art our sovereign lady and mother of the supreme King?” Quoth she, “We blame not nor reproach him who goeth to the jakes, and in time of necessity, forbidden things become lawful. When ye have laid me in the chest, set it on the back of one of the mules and pass on with it and the other goods through the Muslim camp, crying aloud the profession of the Faith of Unity. If any hinder you, give up the mules and their lading and betake yourself to their king Zoulmekan and cast yourselves on his protection, saying, ‘We were in the country of the infidels and they took nothing from us, but wrote us a passport, that none should hinder us: so why do ye seize upon our goods? See, here is the letter of the King of the Greeks, commanding that none shall do us let or hindrance.’ If he say to you, ‘What profit had ye of your commerce in the land of the Greeks?’ answer him, ‘We profited in that it was given us to accomplish the deliverance of a pious man, who had lain nigh fifteen years in a dungeon under the earth, crying out for help, yet none helped him. On the contrary, the infidels tortured him night and day. We knew not of this: but after we had sojourned awhile in Constantinople, having sold our goods and bought others in their stead, we made ready to set out and return to our native land. We spent the night before our departure, conversing about our journey, and when the day broke, we saw a figure painted upon the wall; and behold, as we drew nigh it, it moved and said, “O Muslims, is there amongst you one who is minded to gain the favour of the Lord of the two worlds?” “How so?” asked we. “Know,” replied the figure, “that God hath made me speak to you, to the intent that your belief may be fortified and that your faith may inspire you and that you may go forth of the country of the infidels and repair to the camp of the Muslims. where ye shall find the Sword of the Compassionate One, the Champion of the Age, King Sherkan, him by whom He shall conquer Constantinople and destroy the followers of the Christian heresy. On the third day of your journey, you will come to [a town, in which stands] a hermitage known as the hermitage of Metronhena. Make for it with a pure intent and do your utmost endeavour to come into the hermitage, for therein is a true believer from Jerusalem, by name Abdallah, one of the holiest of men, whom God hath blessed with supernatural powers, such as dispel doubts and obscurity. Him certain of the monks seized by fraud and shut in an underground dungeon, where he has lain many a year. So, if ye desire to gain the favour of the Lord of the Faithful, ye cannot accomplish a more acceptable work than the deliverance of this holy man.” When we heard what the figure said, we knew that this holy man was indeed of the chiefest of the devotees and heart-whole servants of God; so we set out and after three days’ journey, came in sight of the town, and making for it, passed the day in buying and selling, as is the wont of merchants. As soon as the day had departed and the night was come with the darkness, we repaired to the hermitage, wherein was the dungeon, and presently heard the holy man chant some verses of the Koran and repeat the following lines:

I strive with my heart, for anguish that’s well-nigh cleft in
twain, And there ebbs and flows in my bosom a flooding sea
of pain.
Indeed, there is no deliverance, and death is near at hand; Yet

death than long affliction were kinder and more fain.
O lightning, if thou visit my native land and folk, If for the
fair ones' lustre thine own red brilliance wane
Carry my salutation to those I love and say, I lie in a far Greek
dungeon and cry for help in vain.
How can I win to join them, since that the ways with wars Are
blocked and the gate of succour is barred with many a
chain?'

When once ye have brought me into the Muslim camp," added the old woman, "I know how I will make shift to beguile them and slay them all, even to the last man." When the Christians heard what she said, they kissed her hands and laid her in a chest, after they had beaten her grievously, in obedience to her commands, seeing it to be incumbent on them to do her bidding in this, then made for the Muslim camp.

Meanwhile, the Muslims sat down to converse with each other, after they had made an end of the battle and the pillage, and Zoulmekan said to his brother, "Verily, God hath given us the victory, because of our just dealing and concord amongst ourselves; wherefore, O Sherkan, do thou continue to obey my commandment, in submission to God (to whom belong might and majesty), for I mean to slay ten kings and fifty thousand of the Greeks, in revenge for my father, and enter Constantinople." "My life be thy ransom against death!" replied Sherkan. "Needs must I follow forth the Holy War, though I tarry many a year in the infidels' country. But, O my brother, I have in Damascus a daughter called Kuzia Fekan, who is one of the marvels of the time, and I love her heartily." "And I also," said Zoulmekan, "have left my wife with child and near her time, nor do I know what God will vouchsafe me by her. But, O my brother, promise me that, if she bring me a son, thou wilt grant me thy daughter for my son and pledge me thy faith thereon." "With all my heart," replied Sherkan and put out his hand to his brother, saying, "If thou be blessed with a son, I will give him my daughter Kuzia Fekan to wife." At this Zoulmekan rejoiced, and they fell to giving each other joy of the victory, whilst the Vizier Dendan also congratulated them and said to them "Know, O Kings, that God hath given us the victory, for that we have devoted ourselves to Him (to whom belong might and majesty) and have left our homes and families: and it is my counsel that we follow up the foe and press upon them and harass them; it may be God shall bring us to our desire and we shall destroy our enemies. If it please you, do ye embark in the ships and sail upon the sea, whilst we fare forward by land and bear the brunt of the battle." And he ceased not to urge them to action, repeating the following verses:

The goodliest of delights it is one's foes to slay And on the
backs of steeds the spoil to bear away.
Oft comes a messenger with promise of a friend, And the friend
comes himself without a trysting-day.

And these also:

As I live, I will make of war my mother and the spear My brother
and the sword my father, and for fere
I will take each shag-haired warrior that meets death with a
smile, As if to die in battle were e'en his wish most dear!

"Glory be to God," continued he, "Who hath vouchsafed us His almighty aid and hath given us spoil of silver and fine gold!" Then Zoulmekan commanded to depart; and the army set out and fared on, by forced marches, toward Constantinople, till they came to a wide and blooming champaign, full of all things fair, with wild cattle frisking and gazelles passing to and fro. Now they had traversed great deserts and had been six days cut off from water, when they drew near this meadow and saw therein waters welling and trees laden with ripe fruits and the land as it were Paradise; it had donned its adornments and decked itself. The branches of its trees swayed gently to and fro, drunken with the new wine of the dew, and therein were conjoined the fresh sweetness of the fountains of Paradise and the soft breathings of the zephyr. Mind and eye were confounded with its beauty, even as says the poet:

Look on the verdant smiling mead, with flowers and herbs beseen,

As ‘twere the Spring thereon had spread a mantle all of green.
If thou behold it with the eye of sense alone, thou’lt see Nought but as ‘twere a lake wherein the water waves, I ween:
But with thy mind’s eye look; thou’lt see a glory in the trees
And lo’ amidst the boughs above, the waving banners’ sheen!

Or as another says:

The river’s a cheek that the sun has rosy made; For ringlets it borrows the cassia’s creeping shade.
The water makes anklets of silver about the legs Of the boughs, and the flowers for crowns o’er all are laid.

When Zoulmekan saw this champaign, with its thick-leaved trees and its blooming flowers and warbling birds, he turned to his brother Sherkan and said to him, “O my brother, verily Damascus hath not in it the like of this place. We will abide here three days, that we may rest ourselves and that the troops may regain strength and their souls be fortified to encounter the accursed infidels.” So they halted and pitched their camp there. Presently, they heard a noise of voices afar, and Zoulmekan enquiring the cause thereof, was told that a caravan of Syrian merchants had halted there to rest and that the Muslim troops had come on them and had haply seized some of their goods, that they had brought from the country of the infidels. After awhile, up came the merchants, crying out and appealing to the King for redress. So Zoulmekan bade bring them before him, and they said to him, “O King, we have been in the country of the infidels and they spoiled us of nothing: why then do our brothers the Muslims despoil us of our goods, and that in their own country? When we saw your troops, we went up to them, thinking no evil, and they robbed us of what we had with us.” Then they brought out to him the letter of the King of Constantinople, and Sherkan took it and reading it, said to them, “We will restore you what has been taken from you; but it behoved you not to carry merchandise to the country of the infidels.” “O our lord,” replied they, “of a truth, God moved us to go thither, that we might win what never champion won the like of, no, not even thou in ail thy battles." "What was it that ye won?" asked Sherkan. "O King," replied they, "we will not tell thee, except in private; for if this thing be noised among the folk, it may come to the ears of the King of Constantinople, and this will be the cause of our ruin and of the ruin of all Muslims that resort to the land of the Greeks." (Now they had hidden the chest wherein was Dhat ed Dewahi.) So Zoulmekan and his brother brought them to a private place, where they repeated to him the story of the devotee, even as the old woman had lessoned them, and wept till they made the two kings weep. There withal Sherkan's heart yearned to the devotee and he was moved to pity for him and zeal for the service of God the Most High. So he said to the Syrians, "Did ye rescue the holy man or is he still in the hermitage?" Quoth they, "We delivered him and slew the hermit, fearing for ourselves; after which we made haste to fly, for fear of death; but a trusty man told us that in this hermitage are quintals of gold and silver and jewels." Then they fetched the chest and brought out the accursed old woman, as she were a cassia pod, for excess of blackness and leanness, and laden with fetters and shackles. When Zoulmekan and the bystanders saw her, they took her for a man of the dower of God's servants and the most excellent of devotees, more by token of the shining of her forehead for the ointment with which she had anointed it. So Zoulmekan and Sherkan wept sore and kissed her hands and feet, sobbing aloud: but she signed to them and said, "Give over weeping and hear my words." So they left weeping, in obedience to her, and she said, "Know that I was content to accept what my Lord did unto me, knowing that the affliction that befell me was a trial from Him (to whom belong might and majesty); since that for him who is not patient under trial and affliction there is no coming to the delights of Paradise. I had indeed besought Him that I might return to my native land, yet not for impatience of the sufferings decreed to me, but that I might die under the hoofs of the horses of the warriors of the Faith, who, being slain in battle, live again without suffering death,"; and she repeated the following couplets:

The fortress is Sinai's self and the fire of war burns
free, And thou art Moses and this the time appointed to

thee.
Throw down thy rod, for lo, it shall swallow up all they make!
And fear not; I trow the ropes of the folk no serpents
be.
Read thou the lines of the foe for chapters, the day of
the fight, And let thy sword mark on their necks the verses,
what while they flee.

Then her eyes ran over with tears and her forehead shone like gleaming light, and Sherkan rose and kissed her hand and caused food to be set before her: but she refused it, saying, "I have not broken my fast (till sunset) for fifteen years; and how should I do so now, whenas my Lord hath been bountiful to me in delivering me from the captivity of the infidels and doing away from me that which was more grievous than the fiery torment? I will wait till sun down." So at nightfall Sherkan and Zoulmekan came to her with food and said, "Eat, O pious man." But she said, "This is no time for eating; it is the hour for doing my service to the Requiting King." Then she took up her station in the prayer-niche and stood praying till the night was spent; and she ceased not to do thus for three days and nights, sitting not but at the time of salutation. When Zoulmekan saw this her behaviour, belief in her took firm hold upon his heart and he said to Sherkan, "Cause a tent of perfumed leather to be pitched for this holy man and appoint a servant to wait upon him." On the fourth day, she called for food; so they brought her all kinds of meats that could allure the sense or delight the eye; but of all this she ate but one cake of bread with salt. Then she turned again to her fast, and when the night came, she rose anew to pray: and Sherkan said to Zoulmekan, "Verily, this man carries renunciation of the world to the utmost extreme, and were it not for this holy war, I would join myself to him and worship God in his service, till I came before His presence. And now I would fain enter his tent and talk with him awhile." "And I also," said Zoulmekan. "To-morrow we sally forth against Constantinople, and we shall find no time like the present." "And I also," said the Vizier Dendan, "desire to see this holy man; haply he will pray for me that I may find my death in this holy war and come to the presence of my Lord, for I am weary of the world."

So as soon as night had darkened on them, they repaired to the tent of the witch Dhat et Dewahi and finding her standing praying, fell a-weeping, for pity of her: but she paid no heed to them till the night was half spent, when she ended her devotions by pronouncing the salutation (to the guardian angels). Then she turned to them and greeted them, saying, “Wherefore come ye?” “O holy man,” said they, “didst thou not hear us weeping round thee?” “To him who stands before God,” replied she, “there remains nor sight nor hearing for the things of this world.” Quoth they, “We would have thee tell us the manner of thy captivity and offer up prayer for us this night, for that will profit us more than the possession of Constantinople.” “By Allah,” answered she, “were ye not the leaders of the Muslims, I would not tell you aught of this; for I complain not but to God alone. However, to you I will relate the circumstance of my captivity. Know, then, that I was in Jerusalem with certain saints and ecstatics, and did not magnify myself among them, for that God had endowed me with humility and abnegation, till one night I chanced to go down to the lake and walked upon the water. There withal there entered into me pride, whence I know not, and I said to myself, ‘Who can walk upon the water, like unto me?’ And from that time my heart became hardened and God afflicted me with the love of travel. So I journeyed to the land of the Greeks and visited it in every part during a whole year, leaving no place but I worshipped God therein. When I came to the place (where the Syrians found me) I ascended the mountain and saw there a hermitage, inhabited by a monk called Metrouhena. When he saw me, he came out to me and kissed my hands and feet, saying, ‘Verily, I have seen thee, since thou camest into the land of the Greeks, and thou hast filled me with longing for the land of Islam.’ Then he took my hand and carrying me into the hermitage, brought me to a dark place, where he took me unawares and locking the door on me, left me there forty days, without meat or drink; for it was his intent to kill me by starvation. One day it chanced that a knight called Decianus came to the hermitage, accompanied by ten squires and his daughter Temathil, a girl of incomparable beauty. The monk told them of me, and Decianus said, ‘Bring him out, for surely there is not a bird’s meal of flesh left on him.’ So they opened the door of the dungeon and found me standing erect in the niche, praying and reciting the Koran and glorifying God and humbling myself to Him. When they saw this, the monk exclaimed, ‘This man is indeed a sorcerer of the sorcerers!’ Then they all came in on me, and Decianus and his company beat me grievously, till I desired death and reproached myself, saying, ‘This is the reward of him who glorifies himself and takes credit for that which God hath bestowed upon him, beyond his own competence! For, indeed, my soul, pride and arrogance have crept into thee. Dost thou not know that pride angers the Lord and hardens the heart and brings men to the fire?’ Then they laid me in fetters and returned me to my place, which was a dungeon under the earth. Every three days, they threw me down a cake of barley-bread and a draught of water; and every month or two, came Decianus to the hermitage, with his daughter Temathil, who is now grown up, for when I first saw her, she was nine years old, and I abode fifteen years in the dungeon, so that she must be now four-and twenty years of age. There is not in our land nor in the land of the Greeks a fairer than she, and her father feared lest the King (of Constantinople) should take her from him; for she had vowed herself to the service of the Messiah and rode with Decianus in the habit of a cavalier, so that none who saw her knew her for a woman. In this hermitage her father had laid up his treasures, for all who had aught of price were wont to deposit it there, and I saw there all manner of gold and silver and jewels and precious vessels and rarities, none may keep count of them save God the Most High. Ye are more worthy of these riches than the infidels; so do ye lay hands on that which is in the hermitage and divide it among the Muslims, and especially among those who wage the holy war. When these merchants came to Constantinople and sold their merchandise, the image on the wall spoke to them, by God’s special grace to me; so they made for the hermitage and tortured Metrouhena, after the most grievous fashion, and dragged him by the beard, till he showed them where I was, when they took me and fled for fear of death. To-morrow, Temathil will visit the hermitage as of wont, and her father and his squires will come after her, to protect her: so, an ye would be witness of these things, take me with you and I will deliver to you the treasure and the riches of the knight Decianus, that are stored up in that mountain; for I saw them bring out vessels of gold and silver to drink in and heard a damsel of their company sing to them in Arabic. Alas, that so sweet a voice should not be busied in reciting the Koran! So, an ye will, I will bring you to the hermitage and ye shall hide there, against the coming of Decianus and his daughter. Then take her, for she is only fit for the king of the age, Sherkan, or for King Zoulmekan." When they heard her words, they all rejoiced, with the exception of the Vizier Dendan, who put no faith in her story, for her words took no hold on his reason and he was confounded at her discourse and signs of doubt and disbelief appeared in his face; but he feared to speak with her, for awe of the King. Then she said, "I fear lest Decianus come and seeing the troops encamped here, be afraid to enter the hermitage." So Zoulmekan resolved to despatch the army towards Constantinople and said, "I mean to take a hundred horse and many mules and make for the mountain, where we will load the mules with the treasure." Then he sent for the Chamberlain and for the captains of the Turks and Medes and said to them, 'As soon as it is day, do ye strike camp and set out for Constantinople. Thou, O Chamberlain, shall fill my place in council and command, and thou, O Rustem, shalt be my brother's deputy in battle. Let none know that we are not with you, and after three days we will rejoin you." Then he chose out a hundred of the stoutest cavaliers, and he and Sherkan and Dendan set out for the hermitage, with mules and chests for the transport of the treasure. As soon as it was morning, the Chamberlain gave the signal for departure, and the troops set out, thinking that the two Kings and the Vizier were with them. Now the Syrians that were with Dhat ed Dewahi had taken their departure privily, after they had gone in to her and kissed her hands and feet and gotten her leave and taken her orders. Then she waited till it was dark night and going in to Zoulmekan and his companions, said to them, "Come, let us set out for the mountain, and take with you a few men." They obeyed her and left five horsemen at the foot of the mountain, whilst the rest rode on before Dhat ed Dewahi, to whom new strength seemed given for excess of joy, so that Zoulmekan said to his companions, "Glory be to God who sustains this holy man, whose like we never saw!" Now she had written a letter to the King of Constantinople and despatched it by a carrier-pigeon, acquainting him with what had passed and adding, “Do thou send me ten thousand horsemen of the stoutest of the Greeks and let them come stealthily along the foot of the mountains, lest the Muslim host get sight of them, to the hermitage and hide themselves there, till I come to them with the Muslim King and his brother, for I have inveigled them and will bring them thither, together with the Vizier Dendan and a hundred horse, no more, that I may deliver to them the crosses that are in the hermitage. I am resolved to slay the monk Metrouhena, since my scheme cannot be carried out but at the cost of his life. If my plot work well, not one of the Muslims shall return to his own country, no, not a living soul nor a blower of the fire; and Metrouhena shall be a sacrifice for the followers of the Christian faith and the servants of the Cross, and praise be to the Messiah, first and last!” When this letter reached Constantinople, the keeper of the pigeons carried it to King Afridoun, who read it and forthwith equipped ten thousand cavaliers with horses and dromedaries and mules and victual and bade them repair to the hermitage and hide there; and they did as he commanded them. Meanwhile. when Zoulmekan and his companions reached the hermitage, they entered and met the monk Metrouhena, who came out to see who they were; whereupon quoth Dhat ed Dewahi, “Slay this accursed fellow.’ So they fell on him with their swords and made him drink the cup of death. Then the accursed old woman carried them to the place of offerings and brought out to them treasures and precious things, more than she had promised them, which they laid in chests and loaded the mules therewith. As for Temathil and her father, they came not, for fear of the Muslims, and Zoulmekan tarried there, awaiting her, the whole of that day and two more, till Sherkan said to him, “By Allah, I am troubled at heart for the army of Islam, for I know not what is come of them.” “And I also am concerned for them,” replied Zoulmekan. “We have come by a great treasure and I do not believe that Temathil or any one else will come to the hermitage, after that which has befallen the host of the Christians. So we should do well to content ourselves with what God has given us and depart; and haply He will help us break open Constantinople.” So they came down from the mountain, for Dhat ed Dewahi dared not gainsay them, for fear of betraying herself, and rode on till they reached the head of a defile, in which the old woman had laid an ambush for them with the ten thousand horse. As soon as the latter saw them, they made at them from all sides, couching their lances and baring their sabres, whilst they shouted the watchword of their infidel faith and set the arrows of their mischief to the strings.

When Zoulmekan saw them, he was ware that they were a mighty host and said, “Who can have given these troops advice of us?” “O my brother,” replied Sherkan, “this is no time for talking, but for smiting with swords and shooting with arrows; so gird up your courage and strengthen your hearts, for this pass is like a street with two gates: though, by the virtue of the Lord of the Arabs and the Persians, were not the place so strait, I would bring them to nought, though they were a hundred thousand men!”

“Had we known this,” said Zoulmekan, “we would have brought with us five thousand horse.” “If we had ten thousand,” rejoined the Vizier, “they would avail ail us nothing in this narrow place: but God will succour us against them. I know this defile and its straitness, and there are many places of refuge in it; for I have been here on an expedition with King Omar ben Ennuman, what while we laid siege to Constantinople. We camped in this place, and there is here water colder than snow. So come, let us win? out of this pass ere the infidels increase on us and get the start of us to the mountain-top, that they may hurl down rocks upon us and we be powerless to come at them.” So they hurried on, to get out of the defile: but Dhat ed Dewahi looked at them and said, “What is it ye fear, ye who have vowed yourselves to God the Most High, to work His will? By Allah, I was imprisoned underground for fifteen years, yet never gainsaid I God in aught He did with me! Fight ye in the way of God; whoso of ye is killed, Paradise shall be his abode, and whoso kills, his endeavour shall be for his glory.” When they heard her words, their concern and anxiety ceased from them and they stood firm, awaiting the onset of the infidels, who fell on them from all sides, whilst the swords played upon their necks and the cup of death went round amongst them.

The Muslims fought right valiantly for the service of God and wrought upon His enemies with stroke of sword and push of pike; whilst Zoulmekan smote upon the men and made the champions bite the dust and their heads fly from their bodies, five by five and ten by ten, till he had done to death a number of them past count. Presently, he looked at the old woman and saw her waving her sword and heartening them, and all who feared fled to her for shelter; but (in secret) she was beckoning to the infidels to kill Sherkan. So troop after troop rushed on him to slay him: but each troop he charged and drove back, with the sword in their loins; and indeed he thought it was the holy man's blessing that gave him the victory over them and said in himself, "Verily God looks on this holy man with eyes of favour and strengthens my prowess against the infidels with the purity of his intent: for I see that they fear me and cannot stand against me, but every one who attacks me turns tail and flees." So they battled the rest of the day, and when the night fell, the Muslims took refuge in a cave, being hard pressed and weary with stress of battle; and five-and-forty of them were slain that day by rocks that the infidels rolled down on them. When they were gathered together, they sought the devotee, but could find no trace of him. This was grievous to them and they said, "Belike, he hath died a martyr." Quoth Sherkan "I saw him heartening the men with divine instances and sacring them with verses of the Koran." Whilst they were talking, behold, the accursed old woman stood before them, with the head of the captain of the ten thousand horse, a noble knight, a fierce champion and an obstinate devil, in her hand. Now one of the Turks had slain him with an arrow, and God hurried his soul to the fire: and when the infidels saw what the Muslim had done with their leader, they all fell on him and hewed him in pieces with their swords, and God hastened with his soul to Paradise. Then the old woman cut off the knight's head and carrying it to Sherkan and Zoulmekan and the Vizier, threw it at their feet; whereupon Sherkan exclaimed, "Praised be God that we see thee in safety, O holy man and devout champion of the Faith!" "O my son," replied she, "I have sought a martyr's death this day, throwing myself midmost the host of the infidels, but they feared me. When ye separated, a holy jealousy seized me for you; so I rushed on the knight their captain, though he was reckoned a match for a thousand horse, and smote him and severed his head from his body. Not one of the infidels could come near me, so I took his head and have brought it to you, that you may be heartened in the holy strife and work out the will of the Lord of the Faithful with your swords. And now I will leave you to strive against the infidels, whilst I go to your army, though they be at the gates of Constantinople, and return with twenty thousand horse to destroy these unbelievers." Quoth Sherkan, "How wilt thou win to them, O holy man, seeing that the valley is blocked up by the infidels on all sides?" "God will veil me from their eyes," replied she, "and they shall not see me; nor if any saw me, would he dare to attack me, for I shall be absorbed in God and He will fend off His enemies from me." "Thou sayst sooth, O holy man," rejoined Sherkan, "for indeed I have been witness of this; so, if thou canst set out at the first of the night, it will be the better for us." "I will set out forthright," replied she; "and, an thou wilt, thou shalt go with me, and none shall see thee. If thy brother also have a mind to go, we will take him, but none else; for the shadow of a saint can cover but two." "As for me," said Sherkan, "I will not leave my comrades; but, if my brother please, he will do well to go with thee and win free of this strait; for he is the stronghold of the Muslims and the sword of the Lord of the two worlds; and if it be his pleasure, let him take with him the Vizier Dendan, or whom else he may choose, and send us ten thousand horse to succour us against these villains." So they agreed to this and Dhat ed Dewahi said, "Wait till I go on before you and look if the infidels be asleep or awake." Quoth they, "We will go with thee and trust our affair to God." "If I do your bidding," replied she, "do not blame me, but blame yourselves; for it is my counsel that you wait till I have spied you out the state of the case." Then said Sherkan, "Go and return quickly, for we shall be awaiting thee." So she went out and Sherkan turned to his brother and said, "Were not this holy man a miracle-worker, he had never slain yonder doughty knight. This is a sufficient measure of his power, and indeed the strength of the infidels is broken by the slaying of their leader, for he was a fierce warrior and a stubborn devil." Whilst they were thus devising of the power of the devotee, behold, the cursed old woman returned and promised them victory over the unbelievers; whereupon they thanked her, and she said, "Where is the king of the age Zoulmekan?" "Here am I," replied he. "Take thy Vizier," said she, "and follow me, that we may win out to Constantinople." Now she had acquainted the infidels with the cheat she had put on the

Muslims, and they rejoiced mightily and said, “We shall not be content till we have slain their king in return for the death of our general; for we had no stouter cavalier than he; but when thou bringest him to us, we will carry him to King Afridoun.” Then she went out with Zoulmekan and Dendan and walked on before them, saying, “Fare on with the blessing of the Most High God!” They did as she bade them, for the arrow of fate and destiny had fallen on them, and she led them on, through the midst of the Christian camp, till they came to the narrow pass aforesaid. Whilst the enemy watched them, but did them no hindrance; for the old woman had enjoined this on them. When Zoulmekan and Dendan saw that the infidels did them no hindrance, the Vizier exclaimed, “By Allah, this is one of the holy man’s miracles! Without doubt he is of the elect.” “By Allah,” said Zoulmekan, “I think the infidels must be blind, for we see them, and they see us not.” Whilst they were thus praising the holy man and recounting his virtues, behold, the infidels fell upon them from all sides and seized them, saying, “Is there any one else with you, that we may seize upon him?” Quoth Dendan, “See ye not yon other man that is before us?” “By the Messiah and the Monks and the Primate and the Metropolitan,” replied they, “we see none but you!” And Zoulmekan said, “By Allah, this is a chastisement decreed to us by God!” Then the Christians laid shackles on their feet and set men to guard them during the night, whilst Dhat ed Dewahi fared on and disappeared from their sight. So they fell to lamenting and said, “Verily, the gainsaying of pious men leads to greater stress than this, and we are punished by the strait into which we have fallen.”

Meanwhile, Sherkan passed the night in the cavern with his companions, and when the day broke, he arose and prayed the morning-prayer. Then he and his men made ready to do battle with the infidels, and he encouraged them and promised them all good. Then they sallied out against the Christians, who cried out to them from afar as soon as they saw them, saying, “O Muslims, we have taken your Sultan and your Vizier that has the ordering of your affairs; and except ye leave fighting us, we will slay you to the last man, but if ye yield to us, we will take you to our king, who will make peace with you, on condition that you leave our country and return to your own land and do us no harm, and we will do you no harm. If you accept, it will be well for you; but if you refuse, you have nothing to hope for but death. So now we have told you, and this is our last word to you.” When Sherkan heard this and was certified of the captivity of his brother and the Vizier Dendan, he was greatly troubled and wept; his strength failed him and he made sure of death, saying inwardly, “I wonder what was the cause of their capture? Did they fail of respect to the holy man or disobey him, or what?” Then they rushed upon the unbelievers and slew great plenty of them. The valiant, that day, was known from the faint-hearted, and the swords and spears were dyed with blood; for the infidels flocked on them from all sides, as flies flock to wine; but Sherkan and his men ceased not to wage the fight of those who fear not death nor let it hinder them from the pursuit of victory, till the valley ran with blood and the earth was full of the slain. So fought they on till nightfall, when the two parties separated, each to his own place, and the Muslims returned to the grotto, where both victory and loss were manifest to them, and there was no dependence for them but on God and the sword. That day there had been slain of them five-and-thirty men of the chief amirs, and they had put to the sword thousands of the infidels, both horse and foot. When Sherkan saw this, the case was grievous to him, and he said to his comrades, “What shall we do?” “That which God wills,” replied they. On the morning of the second day, Sherkan said to the remnant of his troop, “If ye go forth to fight, not one of you will remain alive and we have but little food and water left; so meseems ye would do better to draw your swords and stand at the door of the cavern, to hinder any from entering. Peradventure the holy man may have traversed the Christian host, without being seen of the unbelievers, and may win to Constantinople and return with ten thousand horse, to succour us against the infidels.” “This is the better course,” replied they, “and there is no doubt of its expediency.” So they went out and held the opening of the grotto, standing in its sides; and every one of the infidels who sought to come in, they slew. Thus did they fend off the enemy from the door of the cavern and make head against all their assaults, till the day departed and the night came with the shadows, by which time King Sherkan had but five-and-twenty men left. Then said the Christians to each other, “When shall these battles have an end? We are weary of fighting the Muslims.” And one of them said, “Up and let us fall on them, for there be but five-and-twenty and of them left. If we cannot prevail on them to fight, let us light a fire upon them; and if they submit and yield themselves up, we will take them prisoners: else we will leave them to serve as fuel to the fire, so that they shall become a warning to men of understanding. May the Messiah not have mercy on their fathers and may the sojourn of the Christians be no abiding-place for them!” So they repaired to the cavern and heaping up faggots in the door-way, set fire to them. Thereupon, Sherkan and his companions made sure of death and yielded themselves up. The unbelievers thought to kill them, but the knight their captain said to those who counselled this, “It is for none but King Afridoun to kill them, that he may quench thereby his thirst for vengeance; wherefore it behoves us to keep them prisoners till the morrow, when we will journey with them to Constantinople and deliver them to King Afridoun, who shall deal with them as he pleases.” “This is the right course,” replied they; and he commanded to pinion the prisoners and set guards over them. Then, as soon as it was dark, the infidels gave themselves up to feasting and merry-making and called for wine and drank, till they all fell backward. Presently, Sherkan turned to his brother Zoulmekan and said to him “My brother, how shall we get free?” “By Allah,” replied Zoulmekan, “I know not; for we are here like birds in a cage.” At this Sherkan was angry and sighed for excess of wrath and stretched himself, till his bonds broke; whereupon he went up to the captain of the guard and taking from his bosom the keys of the fetters, freed Zoulmekan and Dendan and the rest of the prisoners. Then said he, “Let us slay three of these infidels and don their clothes, we three; so shall we be disguised as Greeks and pass through them without their knowing us, and win out to our army.” “This is no safe counsel,” replied Zoulmekan “for if we kill them, I fear some of their comrades may hear their groans and the enemy he roused upon us and kill us. It were better to make our way out of the pass.” So they agreed upon this and set out. When they had left the head of the defile a little way behind, they saw horses picketed and their riders sleeping by them: and Sherkan said to his brother, “Let us each take one of these steeds." So they took five-and-twenty horses, one for each man, and mounted and rode on till they were out of reach, whilst God sent sleep upon the infidels for a secret purpose of His own. Meanwhile, Sherkan gathered as many swords and spears as he could from the sleepers and faring on after his comrades, found them awaiting him, on coals of fire on his account, and said to them, "Have no fear, since God protects us. I have that to propose, which meseems will advantage us." "What is it?" asked they, and he said, "It is that we all climb to the mountain-top and cry out with one voice, 'God is most great! The army of Islam is upon you! God is most great!' If we do this, their company will surely be dissolved, for they are too drunken to find out the trick, but will think that the Muslim troops have encompassed them on all sides and have become mingled with them; so they will fall on one another with their swords, in the confusion of drunkenness and sleep, and we will cleave them asunder with their own brands and the sword will go round amongst them till the morning." "This plan is not good," replied Zoulmekan. "We should do better to make our way to our army and keep silence; for, if we cry out, 'God is most great!' they will wake and fall on us, and not one of us will escape." "By Allah," rejoined Sherkan, "though they be roused on us, I desire urgently that ye fall in with my plan, for nothing but good can come of it." So they agreed and ascending the mountain, shouted out, "God is most great!" And the hills and trees and stones cried out with them, "God is most great!" for the fear of the Almighty. When the unbelievers heard this, they started up from sleep and did on their armour, crying out to one another and saying, "By the Messiah, the enemy is upon us." Then they fell on each other and slew of their own men more than any knows save God the Most High. As soon as it was day, they sought for the captives, but found them not, and their captains said, "It was the prisoners who did this; so up and hasten after them, till ye overtake them, when we will make them quaff the cup of punishment; and let not trouble nor panic possess you." So they sprang to horse and rode after the fugitives, nor was it long before they overtook them and surrounded them. When Zoulmekan saw this, he was seized with terror and said to his brother, "What I feared is come upon us, and now it only remains for us to fight for the faith." But Sherkan held his peace. Then

Zoulmekan and his companions rushed down from the hill-top, crying out, “God is most great!” and addressed themselves to fight and sell their lives in the service of the Lord of the Faithful, when, behold, they heard many voices crying out, “There is no god but God! God is most great! Peace and salvation upon the Bringer of Glad Tidings, the Admonisher of Mankind!” So they turned towards the sound and saw a company of Muslims pricking towards them, whereupon their courage revived and Sherkan ran at the Christians, crying out, “There is no god but God! God is most great!” so that the earth shook as with an earthquake and the unbelievers broke asunder and fled into the mountains, whither the Muslims followed them with sword and spear and made their heads fly from their bodies, till the day departed and the night came with the darkness. Then the Muslims drew together and passed the night rejoicing; and when the day broke and the morning arose with its light and shone, they saw Behram, the captain of the Medes, and Rustem, the captain of the Turks, advancing to join them, with twenty thousand cavaliers, as they were fierce lions. As soon as they saw Zoulmekan, the chiefs dismounted and saluting him, kissed the earth before him; and he said to them, “Rejoice ye in the glad news of the victory of the Muslims and the discomfiture of the unbelievers!” Then they gave each other joy of their deliverance and of the greatness of the reward that awaited them in the world to come.

Now the manner of the coming of the succours was as follows. When Behram and Rustem and the Chamberlain came in sight of Constantinople, with the Muslim army, they saw that the Christians had manned the walls and towers and set all their strengths in order of defence, for that they knew of the approach of the host of Islam, through the craft and perfidy of the old woman Dhat ed Dewahi. So, when they heard the clash of arms and tramp of horse-hoofs and saw the Mohammedan standards and the ensigns of the Faith of the Unity of God emerging from the dust-clouds and heard the voices of the Muslims chanting the Koran aloud and glorifying the Compassionate One, and the army of Islam drew near, as it were the swollen sea, for the multitude of footmen and horsemen and women and children, they poured forth like a flight of locusts or the streaming of water from the rain-clouds; and the captain of the Turks said to the captain of the Medes, “O Amir, of a truth, we are in jeopardy from the multitude of the foe on the walls. Look at yonder forts and at the folk like the tempestuous sea with its clashing billows. Indeed the infidels out-number us a hundred times and we cannot be sure but that some spy may inform them that we are without a leader. Verily, we are in peril from these enemies, whose number may not be told and whose extent is limitless, especially in the absence of King Zoulmekan and his brother Sherkan and the illustrious Vizier Dendan. If they know of this, they will be emboldened to attack us in their absence and will cut off us to the last man; not one of us will escape alive. So it is my counsel that we each take ten thousand horse and repair to the hermitage of Metrouhena and the Meadow of Meloukhna in quest of our brothers and our chiefs. If thou follow my counsel, it may be we shall be the cause of their deliverance, in case they be hard pressed by the infidels; and if not, no blame will rest on me. But, if we go, it were well that we return quickly, for suspicion is part of prudence.” The other fell in with his counsel; so they chose twenty thousand horse and set out for the hermitage by cross roads.

To return to Dhat ed Dewahi. As soon as she had delivered Zoulmekan and his companions into the hands of the infidels, she mounted a swift horse, saying to the Christians, “I mean to rejoin the Muslim army before Constantinople and contrive for their destruction; for I will tell them that their chiefs are dead, and when they hear this, their alliance will be dissolved and their confederation broken up and their host dispersed. Then will I go to King Afridoun and my son King Herdoub, and they will sally forth on them with their troops and destroy them, nor leave one of them alive.” So she mounted and fared on across country all that night, and at daybreak, she sighted the army of Behram and Rustem advancing towards her. So she turned aside into a wayside copse and alighting there, hid her horse among the trees, saying to herself, “Belike they are returning, routed, from the assault of Constantinople.” However, as she drew near, she saw that their standards were not reversed and knew that they were not retreating because of defeat, but that they feared for their king and their chiefs. When she was assured of this, she hastened up to them, running at the top of her speed, like a stubborn Satan as she was, and cried out, “Hasten, O soldiers of the Merciful

One, hasten to the holy war against the hosts of Satan!" When Behram saw her, he dismounted and kissing the earth before her, said, "What is behind thee, O friend of God?" "Do not ask of evil case and sore disasters," answered she. "Know that, when our comrades had taken the treasure from the hermitage and were on their way back to Constantinople, there came out on them a great host and a fierce of unbelievers." And she repeated to them the story, in such wise as to fill them with trouble and terror, and added, "The most of them are dead, and there are but five-and-twenty left." "O holy man," said Behram, "when didst thou leave them?" "But last night," replied she. "Glory be to God," exclaimed he, "Who hath rolled up the distance for thee like a carpet, so that thou hast sped thus, walking upon thy feet and leant upon a palm-tree staff! But thou art one of the friends of God, that fly like birds, when possessed by the stress of His commandment!" Then he mounted his horse, perplexed and confounded for that which he had heard from the lying old beldam and saying, "There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High! Verily our labour is lost and our hearts are heavy within us, for our king is a prisoner and those who are with him!" Then they fared on in haste and stayed not the whole of that day and night, till at daybreak they reached the head of the pass and heard Zoulmekan and Sherkan shouting, "There is no god but God! God is most great!" Whereupon they drove at the unbelievers and overwhelmed them, as the torrent overwhelms the plains, shouting out their war-cries, till the stoutest champions were affrighted and the mountains were cloven by the noise. On the morrow, they foregathered with Zoulmekan, and each recognised the other as has been before set out. Then they kissed the earth before the King and his brother Sherkan, and the latter told them all that had befallen him and his men in the grotto, whereat they marvelled and said, "Hasten back with us to Constantinople, for we left our companions there, and our hearts are with them." So they made haste to depart, commending themselves to the Subtle, the All-wise; and Zoulmekan exhorted the Muslims to steadfastness, reciting the following verses:

To thee be the praise, O Thou that meritest thanks and praise!
    And mayest Thou never cease to succour me all my days!

I grew up in exile, but Thou, my God, wast ever my friend. 'Twas Thou didst decree me success and broughtest me forth of the maze.
Thou hast given me lordship and wealth and fortune and girded my midst With the falchion of valour and wreathed my forehead with victory's bays.
Thou hast shadowed me under Thy wings and made me to prosper amain And hast graced me with favours untold, of Thy bounties abounding always:
Thou hast saved me from all that I feared, by the counsel of him whom I trust, The Vizier and chief of the chiefs, the hero and pride of our days.
By Thy favour we fell on the Greeks and smote them with sword and with spear; But again to the fight they returned, in garments blood-red for affrays.
So I feigned to be routed and flee and give back from the fight; then I turned On the toe, as the fierce lion turns on the hunters, that find him at gaze.
I left them laid low on the plain, as 'twere they were drunken with wine, Not the wine that is pressed from the grape, but that of death's cup of amaze;
Whilst their ships all fell under our hand and ours was the empery grown: From the East to the West, sea and shore, we were lords of the lands and the ways.
Then there came to our camp the recluse, the saint, whose miraculous power Is blazoned in desert and town, wherever the sun sheds its rays.
He joined us, his vengeance to wreak on all that believe not in God. Indeed, it is known to the folk what came of our strife and our frays.
They slew of us some, but they woke on the morrow in Paradise, Each lodged in a palace on high, whereunder a river strays.

When Zoulmekan had made an end of reciting these verses, his brother Sherkan gave him joy of his safety and praise for that he had done; after which they set out by forced marches to rejoin their army.

Meanwhile, Dhat ed Dewahi, after she had spoken with Rustem and Behram, returned to the coppice, where she took her horse and mounting, sped on, till she drew near the host of the Muslims that lay leaguer before Constantinople, when she lighted down from her steed and led it to the Chamberlain's pavilion. When he saw her, he signed to her with his hand and said, "Welcome, O pious recluse!" Then he questioned her of what had befallen, and she repeated to him her disquieting and deluding report, saying, "Indeed I fear for the Amirs Rustem and Behram, for that I met them on the way and sent them and their following to the King and his companions. They are but twenty thousand horse, and the unbelievers are more in number than they; so I would now have thee send of the rest of thy troops in haste to their succour, lest they be slain to the last man." And she said to them "Hasten! Hasten!" When the Chamberlain and the Muslims heard these her words, their hearts sank within them and they wept; but she said to them, "Ask aid of God and be patient under this affliction, taking example by those that have been before you of the people of Islam, for God hath prepared Paradise, with its palaces, for those who die martyrs; and needs must all die, but death is most praiseworthy, when it comes in fighting for the Faith." When the Chamberlain heard this speech of the accursed old woman, he called for the Amir Behram's brother, a cavalier named Terkash, and choosing out for him ten thousand intrepid veterans, bade him set out at once. So he departed forthright and marched all that day and the next night, till he neared the Muslims. When the day dawned, Sherkan saw the dust of them and feared for his companions, saying, "If these troops that are nearing us be Muslims, our victory is assured; but if they be Christians, there is no gainsaying the decrees of Fate." Then he turned to his brother Zoulmekan and said to him, "Fear not, for I will ransom thee with my life from destruction. If these be Muslim troops then were it an increase of God's favours; but if they be our foes, there is nothing for it but to fight them. Yet do I long to see the holy man once again before I die, so he may pray for me that I may not die except a martyr." Whilst he was thus speaking, behold, there appeared the banners with the words, "There is no god but God and Mohammed is His Apostle" inscribed on them, and he cried out to the new-comers, saying, "How is it with the Muslims?" "They are in weal and safety," replied they; "and we come not hither but out of concern for you." Then the chief of the succours dismounted and kissing the earth before Sherkan, said, "O my lord, the Sultan and the Vizier Dendan and Rustem and my brother Behram, are they all in safety?" "They are all well," answered the prince; "but who brought thee tidings of us?" "It was the holy man," said Terkash. "He told us that he had met my brother Behram and Rustem and had sent them to you and also that the infidels had encompassed you and were more in number than you; yet meseems the case is the contrary of this and that you are victorious." "And how did the holy man reach you?" asked Sherkan. "Walking on his feet," replied the Amir; "and he had compassed, in the space of a single day and night, ten days' journey for a diligent horseman." "Verily, he is a friend of God," said Sherkan; "but where is he now?" Quoth Terkash, "We left him with our troops, the people of Faith, encouraging them to do battle with the infidels and rebels." Therewith Sherkan was glad and thanked God for their own deliverance and that of the holy man and commended the dead to the mercy of God saying, "This was written in the Book of Fate." Then they set out for Constantinople by forced marches, and whilst they were on the road thither, behold, a cloud of dust arose before them and spread till the prospect was hidden and the day darkened by it. Sherkan looked at it and said, "Verily, I fear lest this be the infidels who have routed the army of Islam, for that this dust covers the country and blots out the two horizons." Presently there appeared midmost the dust a pillar of darkness and came towards them, blacker than the blackness of (evil) fortune and more dreadful than the terrors of the Day of Judgment.

Horse and foot hastened up to look at it and know its meaning, when, behold, they saw it to be the recluse aforesaid; so they crowded round him to kiss his hands, and he cried out, "O people of the best of men, the lamp of the darkness, the infidels have overcome the Muslims by craft, for they fell upon them in their tents, whilst they deemed themselves in safety, and made a sore slaughter of them; so hasten to the aid of the believers in the unity of God and deliver them from those that deny Him!" When Sherkan heard this, his heart was sore troubled and he alighted from his horse, in amazement, and kissed the recluse's hands and feet. In like wise did his brother Zoulmekan and the rest of the troops, except the Vizier Dendan, who dismounted not, but said, “By Allah, my heart revolts from this devotee, for I never knew aught but evil come of these that make a show of devotion to religion. Leave him and hasten to rejoin your comrades for this fellow is of those that are outcast from the gate of mercy of the Lord of the Two Worlds! How often have I come out to war with King Omar ben Ennuman and trodden the earth of these lands!” “Put away from thee this foul thought,” said Sherkan. “Hast thou not seen this holy man excite the faithful to battle, recking nought of spears and swords? Wherefore, slander him not, for slander is blameworthy and the flesh of pious folk is poisoned. Look how he encourages us to battle, and did not God love him, He had not rolled up the distance for him (like a carpet), after He had aforetime cast him into grievous torment?” Then Sherkan let bring a Nubian mule for her riding and said to her, “Mount, pious man, God-fearing and holy!” But she refused, feigning self-denial, that she might attain her end: and they knew not that the pretended devotee was such an one as he of whom the poet says:

He prayeth and fasteth amain for an end that he hath in view.
When once he has gained his end, fasting and prayer, adieu!

So she walked among the horsemen and the footmen, like a crafty fox meditating an assault, and began to uplift her voice, chanting the Koran aloud and celebrating the praises of the Compassionate One. Then they pressed forward till they reached the Mohammedan camp, where Sherkan found the Muslims in a state of confusion and the Chamberlain upon the brink of retreat, whilst the sword wrought havoc among the faithful, good and bad. Now the cause of this weakness among the Muslims was that the accursed old woman Dhat ed Dewahi, when she saw that Behram and Rustem had set forward with their troops to join Sherkan and Zoulmekan, repaired to the camp or the Muslims before Constantinople and wrought upon the Chamberlain to despatch the Amir Terkash, as hath been before set out, to the further succour of the princes, purposing in this to divide the Muslim forces and weaken them. Then she left them and going to the walls of Constantinople, called with a loud voice on the knights of the Greeks, saying, "Throw me down a cord that I may tie thereto this letter, which do ye carry to King Afridoun and my son King Herdoub, that they may read it and do as is written therein." So they let down a string and she tied thereto a letter, to the following purport, "From the chiefest of calamities and the greatest of afflictions, Dhat ed Dewahi, to King Afridoun. Know that I have contrived a device for the destruction of the Muslims, so rest you quiet. I made their Sultan and the Vizier Dendan prisoners and returned to their camp and acquainted them therewith, whereupon their power was broken and their strength weakened. Moreover, I have wrought on them to send ten thousand men under the Amir Terkash to the succour of the captives, and there be now but few men left with the besiegers. Wherefore, it is my counsel that ye sally forth, with all your power, whilst it is yet day, and fall on them in their tents and slay them to the last man for the Messiah looks down upon you and the Virgin favours you; and I hope that the Messiah will not forget this that I have done." When this letter came to King Afridoun, he rejoiced greatly and sending at once for King Herdoub, read the letter to him, whereat he was exceeding glad and said, "See the craft of my mother; verily it dispenses with swords, and her aspect stands in stead of the terrors of the Day of Fear." "May the Messiah not bereave us of her," rejoined Afridoun, "nor deprive her of her craft and knavery." Then he gave orders for the sally, and the news was noised abroad in the city. So the Christian troops and soldiers of the Cross drew their keen sabres and sallied forth of the city, shouting out their impious war-cries and blaspheming the Lord of all creatures. When the Chamberlain saw them, he said, "Behold, the Christians are upon us, whilst the most part of our troops are gone to the succour of King Zoulmekan! They surely know of the absence of our Sultan and most like they will attack us." Therewith he waxed angry and cried out, "Ho, soldiers of Islam and defenders of the True Faith, if you flee, you are lost, and if you stand fast, you will conquer! Know that courage lies in endurance and that no case is so desperate but that God is able to bring about its relief. May He bless you and look upon you with eyes of compassion! "Then the Muslims cried out, "God is most great!" and the believers in the Divine Unity shouted the profession of the Faith and the two hosts joined battle. The mill-wheels of war whirled round, with cutting and thrusting; the swords and spears played and the plains and valleys were filled with blood. The priests and monks prayed aloud, girding on their girdles and uplifting the crosses, whilst the Muslims shouted out the praises of the Requiting King and chanted verses of the Koran. The hosts of the Compassionate God fought against the legions of Satan and heads flew from bodies, what while the good angels hovered above the people of the Chosen Prophet, nor did the sword cease to play, till the day departed and the night came with the shadows. Now the unbelievers had encompassed the Muslims and made sure of overcoming the host of the True Faith with the dawn, deeming not that they could escape destruction. As soon as it was light, the Chamberlain mounted, he and his men, trusting that God would help them, and the two armies came together and joined battle. The fight raged all along the line and heads flew from bodies, whilst the brave stood fast and the faint-hearted turned their backs and fled; and the Judge of death judged and gave sentence, so that the champions fell from their saddles and the meadows were heaped with the slain. Then the Muslims began to give back and the Greeks took possession of some of their tents; whereupon the Muslims were about to break and retreat, when behold, up came Sherkan, with the rest of their troops and the standards of the believers in the Unity of God, and fell upon the infidels, followed by Zoulmekan and the Vizier Dendan and the Amirs Behram and Rustem and Terkash. When the Christians saw this, they lost their senses and their reason fled, and the dust clouds rose till they covered the country, whilst the true believers joined their pious comrades. Then Sherkan accosted the Chamberlain and praised him for his steadfastness, and he in turn gave him joy of his timely succour. Therewith the Muslims rejoiced and their hearts were fortified; so they rushed upon the foe and devoted themselves to God, in the battle for the Faith. When the infidels saw the Mohammedan standards and read thereon the words proclaiming the Unity of God, they shrieked aloud and said, “Woe!” and “Ruin!” and besought succour of the priests and monks. Moreover they fell to calling upon Jesus and Mary and the abhorrent Cross and stayed their hands from the battle, whilst King Afridoun went up to King Herdoub (to consult with him), for the two kings stood one at the head of each wing. Now there was with them also a famous cavalier named Lawiya, who was in command of the centre, and the infidels drew out in battle-array; but indeed they were full of alarm and disquiet. Meanwhile, the Muslims arrayed their forces and Sherkan came to his brother Zoulmekan and said to him, “O king of the age, doubtless they mean to joust? and that is also what we desire; but it is my wish to set in our van-ward battle the stoutest-hearted of our men: for wise ordering is the half of life.” “As thou wilt, O man of good counsel,” replied the Sultan. “It is my wish,” added Sherkan, “to be myself in the centre of the line, with the Vizier Dendan on my left and thee on my right, whilst Behram and Rustem command the right and left wing; and thou, O mighty King, shalt be under the standards and the ensigns, for that thou art our stay and upon thee, after God, is our dependence, and we will all be thy ransom from aught that can harm thee.” Zoulmekan thanked him and the battle-cries arose and the sabres were drawn, when, behold, there came forth a cavalier from the Grecian ranks; and as he drew near, they saw that he was mounted on a slow-paced mule, fleeing with her master from the shock of swords. Her housings were of white silk, surmounted by a carpet of Cashmere stuff, and on her back sat a gray-bearded old man of comely and reverend aspect, clad in a gown of white wool. He spurred her on till he came to the Muslims, to whom said he, “I am an ambassador to you, and all an ambassador has to do is to deliver his message; so give me a safe conduct and the right of speech, that I may do my errand to you.” “Thou art in safety,” replied Sherkan; “fear neither stroke of sword nor thrust of lance.” Thereupon the old man dismounted and taking the cross from his neck, (laid it) before the Sultan and carried himself humbly to him, after the fashion of one who hopes for fair treatment. Then said the Muslims to him, “What is thy news?” He answered, “I am an ambassador from King Afridoun, whom I counselled to avert the destruction of all these manly bodies and images of the Compassionate; and it seemed good to him to stop the shedding of blood and limit the strife to the encounter of two horsemen in battle; so he agreed to this and says to you, ‘Verily, I will ransom my troops with my life; so let the Muslim king do likewise and ransom his army with his life. If he kill me, there will be no stability left in the army of the Greeks, and if I kill him, it will be the like with the Muslims.'" When Sherkan heard this, he said, "O monk, we agree to this, for it is just; and behold I will joust: with him, for I am champion of the Muslims, even as he of the Christians; and if he slay me, he will have gained the victory and there will remain for the Muslim army nothing but flight. So return to him, O monk, and tell him that the combat shall be for to-morrow, seeing that to-day we are weary with our journey; but after rest there shall be neither reproach nor blame." So the monk returned, rejoicing, to King Afridoun and King Herdoub and told them what Sherkan had said, whereat Afridoun was exceeding glad and lightened of anxiety and trouble and said in himself, "No doubt but this Sherkan is the hardest hitter of them with the sword and the dourest at push of pike; and when I have slain him, their hearts will fail them and their strength will be broken." Now Dhat ed Dewahi had written to King Afridoun of this and told him that Sherkan was a cavalier of cavaliers and a champion of champions and had warned him against him; but Afridoun was a stalwart cavalier, who fought in many a fashion; he could hurl stones and javelins and smite with the iron mace and feared not the doughtiest of prowess in the dint of war. So when he heard from the monk that Sherkan agreed to joust, he well-nigh lost his reason for stress of joy, for that he had confidence in himself and deemed that none could stand against him. Then the infidels passed the night in joy and merry-making and wine-drinking, and as soon as it was day, the two armies drew out in battle array, with their brown spears and white swords. Presently, they saw a cavalier prick out into the plain, mounted on a stout and swift charger equipped for war: he was of great stature and was clad in a cuirass of steel made for stress of battle. On his breast he wore a jewelled mirror and in his hand he bore a keen scimitar and a lance of khelenj wood of curious Frankish workmanship. He uncovered his face and cried out, saying, "Whoso knoweth me hath enough of me, and whoso knoweth me not shall see who I am. I am Afridoun he who is overborne by the blessing of Shewahi Dhat ed Dewahi." Before he had made an end of speaking, Sherkan, the champion of the Muslims, spurred out to meet him, mounted on a sorrel horse worth a thousand [dinars] of red gold, with housings embroidered in pearls and jewels, and girt with a sword of watered Indian steel, that shore through necks and made hard ventures easy. He drove his charger between the two armies, whilst the horsemen all gazed on him, and cried out to Afridoun, saying, "Out on thee, O accursed one, dost thou think me as one of the horsemen thou hast met, that cannot stand against thee in the mellay?" Then they rushed upon one another and came together like two mountains crashing or two seas breaking each against each. So they advanced and retreated and drew together and parted and ceased not to joust and battle with stroke of sword and thrust of spear, whilst the two armies looked on. Some said, "Afridoun will conquer," and other some, "Sherkan;" and they stayed not their hands from the battle, till the clamour of the bystanders subsided and the dust-clouds rose and the day waned and the sun began to grow pale. Then King Afridoun cried out to Sherkan, saying, "By the virtue of the Messiah and the True Faith, thou art a doughty horseman and a stalwart fighting man, but thou art guileful and thy nature is not that of the freeborn and meseemeth thy fashion is other than praiseworthy nor is thy fighting that of a prince; for see, thy people even thee with slaves and bring thee out a charger other than thine, that thou mayst (mount him and) return to the battle. But by the virtue of the Messiah, thy fighting fatigues me and I am weary of cutting and thrusting with thee; and if thou wert purposed to do battle with me tonight thou wouldst not change aught of thy harness nor thy horse till thou hadst shown the cavaliers thy valour and skill in fight." When Sherkan heard him say that his own folk evened him with slaves, he was angry and turned towards his men, meaning to sign to them and bid them not prepare him change of armour or horse, when, behold, Afridoun shook his javelin in the air and hurled it at Sherkan. Now, when the latter turned, he found none behind him and knew that this was a trick of the accursed infidel; so he wheeled round in haste and seeing the javelin coming at him, swerved from it, till his head was level with the pommel of his saddle. The javelin grazed his breast and pierced the skin, for Sherkan was high-bosomed: so he gave one cry and swooned away. Then the accursed Afridoun was glad, thinking that he had slain him, and called to the Christians to rejoice, whereat the infidels were encouraged and the true believers wept. When Zoulmekan saw his brother reeling from side to side in his saddle, so that he had well-nigh fallen, he sent cavaliers to his succour; whereupon the infidels drove at the Muslims and the two hosts joined battle, whilst the keen Yemen blades played among them. The first to reach Sherkan were Dendan and Rustem and Behram, who found him on the point of falling off his horse; so they stayed him in his saddle and carried him to Zoulmekan; then giving him in charge to his servants, returned to the battle. Then the strife redoubled and the weapons clashed, and there was nought to be heard but the roar of the battle nor to be seen but blood flowing and necks bending beneath the blows; nor did the swords cease to play on men's necks nor the strife to rage more and more, till the most part of the night was past and the two hosts were weary of battle. So they called a truce and each army returned to its tents, whilst all the infidels repaired to King Afridoun and kissed the earth before him, and the priests and monks wished him joy of his victory over Sherkan. Then he went up into Constantinople and sat down upon his throne; and King Herdoub came to him and said, "May the Messiah strengthen thine arm and cease never to be thy helper and hearken to the prayers of my pious mother on thy behalf! Know that the Muslims can make no stand, now they have lost Sherkan." "To-morrow," replied Afridoun, "shall end the war, for I will seek out Zoulmekan and slay him, and their army shall turn tail and take to flight."

Meanwhile, Zoulmekan returned to his tent thinking of nothing but his brother, and going in to the latter's pavilion, found him in evil plight; whereat he was sore troubled and sent for the Vizier Dendan and the Amirs Behram and Rustem, that he might take counsel with them. When they entered, they were all of accord to summon the physicians to treat Sherkan, and they wept and said, "The age will not lightly afford his like!" They watched by him all that night, and towards morning there came to them the pretended recluse, weeping. When Zoulmekan saw her, he rose to receive her; and she stroked Sherkan's wound with her hand, chanting somewhat of the Koran and repeating some of the signs of the Compassionate One. Then she kept watch over him till the day, when he came to himself and opening his eyes, moved his tongue in his mouth and spoke. At this Zoulmekan rejoiced, saying, "Verily the blessing of the holy man hath taken effect on him!" And Sherkan said, "Praised be God for recovery; indeed, I am well now. Yonder accursed one played me false, and but that I swerved aside quicklier than lightning, the javelin had pierced me through and through. So praised be God for my safety! How is it with the Muslims?" "They weep for thee," answered Zoulmekan. Quoth Sherkan, "I am well and in good case; but where is the holy man?" Now she was sitting by him and said, "At thy head." So he turned to her and kissed her hand; and she said, "O my son, it behoves thee to arm thyself with patience, and God shall make great thy reward; for the guerdon is measured by that which has been endured." Quoth Sherkan, "Pray for me," and she did so. As soon as it was morning and the day arose and shone, the Muslims sallied out into the field, and the Christians made ready to cut and thrust. Then the host of the Muslims advanced and offered battle; and Zoulmekan and Afridoun made ready to tilt at one another. But when Zoulmekan sallied out into the field, there came with him Dendan and Behram and the Chamberlain, saying, "We will be thy sacrifice." "By the Holy House and the Well Zemzem and the Stead of Abraham," exclaimed he, "I will not be hindered from going forth against these barbarians!" So he rode out into the field and played with sword and spear, till both armies wondered; then he rushed upon the right wing of the Greek army and slew two knights and in like manner dealt he with the left wing. Then he stayed his steed in the midst of the field and cried out, "Where is Afridoun, that I may make him drink the cup of humiliation?" But King Herdoub conjured Afridoun not to budge from the field, saying, "O King, it was thy turn yesterday: to-day it is mine. I reck not of his prowess." So he pricked out towards Zoulmekan, with a sabre in his hand and under him a jet black horse, swift as he were Abjer, he that was Antar's horse, even as says the poet:

He vies with the glance of the eye on a swift-footed steed, That
fares as it had a mind to outstrip Fate.
The hue of his hide is the blackest of all things black, Like
night, when the shadows shroud it in sable state.
The sound of his neighing troubles the hearts of men, As it were
thunder that echoes in heaven's gate.

If he run a race with the wind, he leads the way, Nor can the
lightning outstrip him, early or late.

Then each rushed upon the other, guarding himself from his blows and showing the rare qualities that were in him and the wonders of his prowess; and they fell to advancing and retreating and ceased not to flee and return to the attack and wheel hither and thither, till the breasts of the bystanders were straitened (for anxiety) and they were weary of waiting for the event. At last, Zoulmekan cried out and rushing upon Herdoub, King of Caesarea, dealt him such a blow that he shore his head from his body and made an end of him. When the infidels saw this, they all rushed at Zoulmekan, who met them in mid-field, and they fell to cutting and thrusting, till the blood ran in streams. Then the Muslims cried out, “God is most great;” and “There is no god but God;” and invoked blessings on the Giver of Good Tidings, the Admonisher of Mankind, and there befell a great battle. But God sent help to the faithful and confusion to the infidels. The Vizier Dendan shouted, “Avenge King Omar ben Ennuman and his son Sherkan!” and baring his head, cried out to the Turks. Now there were beside him more than twenty thousand horse, who all charged with him as one man, and the unbelievers found nothing for it but flight. So they turned their backs to flee, whilst the keen sabres wrought havoc amongst them and the Muslims slew of them that day more than fifty thousand cavaliers and took more than that: and much people also were slain at the going in of the gates by reason of the greatness of the crowd, whilst the Christians mounted the walls, fearing an assault. Then the Muslims returned to their tents, fortified and victorious, and King Zoulmekan went in to his brother, whom he found in the most joyous case. So he returned thanks to the Bountiful, the Exalted One and gave Sherkan joy of his deliverance. “Verily,” answered he, “we are all under the benediction of this holy and God-fearing man, nor would you have been victorious, but for his effectual prayers; for all day he hath never ceased to invoke victory on the Muslims. I found strength return to me, when I heard you cry, ‘God is most great!’ for then I knew you had gotten the better of your enemies. But now tell me, O my brother, what befell thee.” So he told him all that had passed, how he had slain the accursed Herdoub and he had gone to the malediction of God; and Sherkan praised his prowess. When Dhat ed Dewahi heard tell of her son's death, the blood fled from her face and her eyes ran over with streaming tears; however, she kept her counsel and feigned to the Muslims that she was glad and wept for excess of joy: but she said in herself, "By the virtue of the Messiah, there remains no profit of my life, if I make not his heart bleed for his brother Sherkan, even as he has made mine bleed for King Herdoub, the mainstay of the Christian faith and the hosts of the Cross!"

The Vizier Dendan and Zoulmekan and the Chamberlain abode with Sherkan, till they had dressed his wound and anointed it; after which they gave him medicines and he began to recover his strength; whereat they were exceeding glad and told the troops, who rejoiced greatly, saying, "To-morrow he will ride with us and take part in the siege." Then said Sherkan to them, "You have fought all day and are weary, and it behoves that you return to your tents and sleep and not watch." So they went away all to their tents and there remained none with Sherkan but Dhat ed Dewahi and a few servants. He talked with her awhile, then lay down to rest, he and his servants, and soon sleep overcame them all and they were as dead men. But the old woman abode awake and looking at Sherkan, saw that he was drowned in sleep. So she sprang to her feet, as she were a bald she-bear or a speckled snake, and drew from her girdle a poisoned knife, that would have melted a rock if laid thereon; then going up to Sherkan, she drew the knife across his throat and cut off his head. After this, she went up to the sleeping servants and cut off their heads also, lest they should awake. Then she left the tent and made for the Sultan's pavilion, but finding the guards awake, turned to that of the Vizier. He was reading the Koran and seeing her, said, "Welcome, O holy man!" When she heard this, her heart trembled and she said, "The reason of my coming hither at this time is that I heard the voice of a friend of God and am going to him." Then she went away, but the Vizier said to himself, "By Allah, I will follow the holy man to-night!" So he rose and went after her: but the accursed old woman heard his footsteps and knew that he was following her: wherefore she feared discovery and said in herself, "Except I put him off with some trick, he will discover me." So she turned and said to him from afar, “Harkye, Vizier, I am going after this saint, that I may know who he is; and after I will ask his leave for thee to join him. Then I will come back and tell thee; for I fear to let thee accompany me, without his leave, lest he take umbrage at seeing thee with me.” When the Vizier heard this, he was abashed and knew not what to answer; so he left her and returning to his tent, would have slept; but sleep was not favourable to him and the world was straitened upon him. So he rose and went out, saying in himself, “I will go talk with Sherkan till the morning.” But when he came to Sherkan’s tent, he found the blood running like a rivulet and saw the servants lying dead. At this he gave a cry that aroused all who were asleep, and they hastened to him and seeing the blood streaming, set up a clamour of weeping and lamentation. The noise awoke the Sultan, who enquired what was the matter, and they said to him, “Sherkan and his servants are murdered.” So he rose in haste and entering the tent, saw his brother’s headless trunk and the Vizier by it shrieking aloud. At this sight, he swooned away and all the troops stood round him, weeping and crying aloud, till he came to himself, when he looked at Sherkan and wept sore, whilst all who were present did the like. Then said Zoulmekan, “Know ye who did this, and how is it I see not the recluse, him who hath put away the things of the world?” Quoth the Vizier, “And who should have been the cause of this our affliction, save that devotee of Satan? By Allah, my heart shrank from him from the first, because I know that all who profess to be absorbed in the things of the faith are corrupt and treacherous!” And he told the King how he would have followed the devotee, but he forbade him; whereupon the folk broke out into weeping and lamentation and besought Him who is ever near at hand, Him who answereth prayer, to cause the false recluse, who denied His evidences, to fall into their hands. Then they laid Sherkan out and buried him in the mountain aforesaid, mourning over his renowned virtues, after which they looked for the opening of the city-gate; but it opened not and none appeared to them on the walls; whereat they wondered exceedingly, and King Zoulmekan said, “By Allah, I will not turn back from them, though I tarry here years and years, till I take my wreak of my brother Sherkan and lay Constantinople in ruins and slay the King of the Nazarenes, even if death overcome me and I be at rest from this sorry world!” Then he brought out the treasure he had taken from the hermitage of Metrouhena and mustering the troops, divided it amongst them, nor was there one of them but he gave him what contented him. Moreover, he called together three hundred horse of every division and said to them, “Do ye send succours to your family, for I am resolved to camp here, till I have taken my revenge for my brother Sherkan, even if I die in this place.” Then he summoned couriers and gave them letters and charged them to do the soldiers’ errands to their families and let them know that they were safe and in good heart, but that they were encamped before Constantinople, resolved either to destroy it or perish, and that, though they should abide there months and years, they would not depart thence till they had taken the city. Moreover, he bade Dendan write to his sister Nuzhet ez Zeman, acquainting her with what had befallen them and with their situation and commending his child to her care, since that, when he went out to war, his wife was near her delivery and must needs by that time have been brought to bed; and if she had given birth to a son, he charged the messengers to hasten their return and bring him the news. Then he gave them money and they set out at once, and all the people came out to take leave of them and entrust them with the money and the messages they wished to send to their families. After they had departed, Zoulmekan turned to the Vizier and commanded him to push forward with the army against the city walls. So the troops advanced, but found none on the walls, whereat they marvelled and Zoulmekan was troubled.

To return to Dhat ed Dewahi. As soon as she had slain Sherkan, she hastened to the walls of Constantinople and called out in the Greek tongue to the guards, to throw her down a rope. Quoth they, “Who art thou?” and she said, “I am the princess Dhat ed Dewahi.” They knew her and threw her down a rope, to which she tied herself, and they drew her up into the city. Then she went in to King Afridoun and said to him, “What is this I hear from the Muslims? They say that my son King Herdoub is slain.” He answered, “It is true;” and when she heard this, she shrieked out and wept so grievously, that she made Afridoun and all who were present weep also. Then she told the King how she had slain Sherkan and thirty of his servants, whereat he rejoiced and thanked her and kissed her hands and exhorted her to resignation for the loss of her son. “By the Messiah,” said she, “I will not rest content with killing one of the Muslim dogs in revenge for my son, a king of the kings of the age! But I will assuredly make shift to kill the Sultan Zoulmekan and the Vizier Dendan and the Chamberlain and Rustem and Behram and ten thousand cavaliers of the army of Islam to boot; for it shall never be that my son’s head be paid with the blood-wit of Sherkan’s head only.” Then said she to Afridoun, “It is my wish that mourning be made for my son Herdoub and that the girdle be cut and the crosses broken.” “Do what thou wilt,” replied Afridoun; “I will not gainsay thee in aught. And if thou prolong thy mourning, it were a little thing; for though the Muslims beleaguer us years and years, they will never compass their will of us nor get aught of us but trouble and weariness.” Then she took ink-horn and paper and wrote the following letter: “Shewaha Dhat ed Dewahi to the host of the Muslims. Know that I entered your country and duped your nobles and slew your king Omar ben Ennuman in the midst of his palace. Moreover, I slew, in the battle of the mountain pass and of the grotto, many of your men, and the last I killed were Sherkan and his servants. And if fortune favour me and Satan obey me, I will assuredly kill your Sultan and the Vizier Dendan, for I am she who came to you in the disguise of a recluse and ye were the dupes of my tricks and devices. Wherefore, if you be minded to be in safety, depart at once; and if you covet your own destruction, abide where you are; for though ye abide here years and years, ye shall not come by your desire of us; and so peace be on you.” Then she devoted three days to mourning for her son King Herdoub, and on the fourth day, she called a knight and bade him make the letter fast to an arrow and shoot it into the Muslim camp; after which she entered the church and gave herself up to weeping and lamentation for the loss of her son, saying to him who took the kingship after him, “Nothing will serve me but I must kill Zoulmekan and all the princes of Islam.”

Meanwhile, the Muslims passed three days in concern and anxiety, and on the fourth day, they saw a knight on the wall, holding a bow and about to shoot an arrow to which was fastened a letter. So they waited till he had shot, and the King bade the Vizier Dendan take the letter and read it. He did so, and when Zoulmekan heard its purport, his eyes filled with tears and he shrieked for anguish at the old woman's perfidy, and Dendan said, "By Allah, my heart shrank from her!" "How could this traitress impose upon us twice?" exclaimed Zoulmekan. "By Allah, I will not depart hence till I fill her kaze with molten lead and set her in a cage, as men do birds, then bind her with her hair and crucify her at the gate of Constantinople." Then he addressed himself again to the leaguer of the city, promising his men that, if it should be taken, he would divide its treasures equally among them. After this, he bethought him of his brother and wept sore; and his tears ceased not to flow, till his body was wasted with grief, as it were a bodkin. But the Vizier Dendan came in to him and said, "Take comfort and be consoled; thy brother died not but because his hour was come, and there is no profit in this mourning. How well says the poet:

That which is not to be shall by no means be brought To pass, and
that which is to be shall come, unsought,
Even at the time ordained: but he that knoweth not The truth is
still deceived and finds his hopes grown nought.

Wherefore do thou leave this weeping and lamentation and strengthen thy heart to bear arms." "O Vizier," replied Zoulmekan, "my heart is heavy for the death of my brother and father and our absence from our native land, and my mind is concerned for my subjects." Thereupon the Vizier and the bystanders wept; but they ceased not from the leaguer of Constantinople, till, after awhile, news arrived from Baghdad, by one of the Amirs, that the Sultan's wife had given birth to a son and that the princess Nuzhet ez Zeman had named him Kanmakan. Moreover, his sister wrote to him that the boy bid fair to be a prodigy and that she had commanded the priests and preachers to pray for them from the pulpits; also, that they were all well and had been blessed with abundant rains and that his comrade the stoker was in the enjoyment of all prosperity, with slaves and servants to attend upon him; but that he was still ignorant of what had befallen him. Zoulmekan rejoiced greatly at this news and said to the Vizier Dendan, "Now is my hope fulfilled and my back strengthened, in that I have been vouchsafed a son. Wherefore I am minded to leave mourning and let make recitations of the Koran over my brother's tomb and do almsdeeds on his account." Quoth the Vizier, "It is well." Then he caused tents to be pitched over his brother's tomb and they gathered together such of the troops as could repeat the Koran. Some fell to reciting the Koran, whilst others chanted the litanies of the praise of God, and thus they did till the morning, when Zoulmekan went up to the tomb of his brother Sherkan and shedding copious tears, repeated the following verses:

They bore him forth, whilst all who went behind him wept and
cried Such cries as Moses gave, when God broke down the
mountain side,
Till to a tomb they came, whose grave seemed dug in all men's
hearts By whom the unity of God is held and glorified.
I had not thought, or ere they bore thee forth upon the bier, To
see my joy upon the hands of men uplifted ride;
Nor, till they laid thee in the grave, could I have ever deemed
That stars could leave their place in heaven and in the dark
earth hide.
Is the indweller of the tomb the hostage of a pit, In which, for
that his face is there, splendour and light abide?
Lo, praise has ta'en upon itself to bring him back to life; Now
that his body's hid, his fame's shown forth and magnified.

When he had made an end of reciting these verses, he wept and all the troops wept with him; then he threw himself on the tomb, wild with grief, and the Vizier repeated the words of the poet:

That which fleets past thou hast left and won what endureth for
aye, And even as thou are the folk, that were and have
passed away;
And yet it was not of thy will that thou quittedst this house of
the world; For here hadst thou joy and delight of all that
befell in thy day.
How oft hast thou proven thyself a succour and shield from the
foe, When the arrows and javelins of war flew thick in the

midst of the fray!
I see that this world's but a cheat and a vanity after all, And
ever to seek out the Truth all creatures desire and essay!
The Lord of the Empyrean vouchsafe thee in heaven to dwell And
the Guide assign thee therein a goodly sojourn, I pray!
I bid thee adieu with a sigh and I see, for the loss of thee, The
East and the West o'ershadowed with mourning and dismay.

When the Vizier had finished, he wept sore, and the tears fell from his eyes, like a network of pearls. Then came forward one of Sherkan's boon-companions, weeping till his eyes resembled rivers, and recalled the dead man's noble qualities, reciting the following cinquains:

Where be thy giving, alas! and the hand of thy bounty fled? They
lie in the earth, and my body is wasted for drearihead.
O guide of the camel-litters, (may God still gladden thy
stead!) My tears on my cheeks have written, in characters of
red,
That which would both rejoice thee and fill thee with
pain and dread!
By Allah, 'twixt me and my heart, not a word of thee is said Nor
doth the thought of thy grace and thy glory pass through my
head,
But that mine eyes are wounded by dint of the tears I shed! Yea,
if to rest on another my glance be ever led,
May my lids be drawn in slumber by longing for the
dead!

Then Zoulmekan and Dendan wept sore and the whole army lamented aloud; after which they all withdrew to their tents, and Zoulmekan turned to Dendan and took counsel with him concerning the conduct of the war. On this wise they passed days and nights, what while Zoulmekan was weighed down with grief and concern, till at last he said to the Vizier, "I have a mind to hear stories of adventures and chronicles of kings and tales of folk oppressed of love, so haply God may make this to solace the heavy anxiety that is on my heart and do away from me weeping and lamentation." "O King," replied Dendan, "if nought but hearing pleasant tales of bygone kings and peoples and stories of folk oppressed of love and so forth can dispel thy trouble, the thing is easy, for I had no other business, in the lifetime of thy late father, than to tell him stories and repeat verses to him; so, this very night, I will tell thee a story of a lover and his beloved, which shall lighten thy heart." When Zoulmekan heard this, his heart yearned after that which the Vizier promised him and he did nothing but watch for the coming of the night, that he might hear what he had to tell. So, no sooner had the night closed in, than he bade light the lamps and the candles and bring all that was needful of meat and drink and perfumes and what not and sending for Dendan, Rustem, Behram, Terkash and the Grand Chamberlain, turned to the Vizier and said, "O Vizier, behold, the night is come and hath let down its veils over us, and we desire that thou tell us that which thou didst promise us." "With all my heart," replied the Vizier "Know, O august King, that I have heard tell a story of a lover and a loved one and of the discourse between them and of the rare and pleasant things that befell them, a story such as does away care from the heart and dispels sorrow like unto that of the patriarch Jacob: and it is as follows:

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

Story of Taj El Mulouk and the Princess Dunya.

There stood once, behind the mountains of Ispahan, a town called the Green City, in which dwelt a king named Suleiman Shah, a man of virtue and beneficence, just, generous and loyal, to whom travellers resorted from all parts, for his renown was noised abroad in all cities and countries; and he reigned over the country for many years, in all honour and prosperity, save that he had neither wife nor child. Now he had a vizier who was akin to him in goodness and generosity, and one day, he sent for him and said to him, 'O my Vizier, my heart is heavy and my patience at end and my strength fails me, for that I have neither wife nor child. This is not of the fashion of kings that rule over all, princes and beggars; for they rejoice in leaving behind them children, who shall succeed them and by whom both their number and strength are multiplied. Quoth the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve), "Marry and engender and multiply, that I may boast myself of you over the peoples on the Day of Resurrection." So what is thy counsel, O Vizier? Advise me what is fitting to be done.' When the Vizier heard this, the tears streamed from his eyes and he replied, 'God forbid, O king of the age, that I should speak on that which is of the pertinence of the Compassionate One! Wilt thou have me cast into the fire by the wrath of the All-powerful King? Buy a concubine.' 'Know, O Vizier,' rejoined the King, 'that when a prince buys a female slave, he knows neither her condition nor her lineage and thus cannot tell if she be of mean extraction, that he may abstain from her, or of gentle blood, that he may be intimate with her. So if he have commerce with her, belike she will conceive by him and her son be a hypocrite, a tyrant and a shedder of blood. Indeed such a woman may be likened to a salt soil, which, if one till it, yields only worthless crops; for it may be the son in question will be obnoxious to the wrath of his Lord, doing not that which He commandeth him neither abstaining from that which He forbiddeth him. Wherefore I will never risk being the cause of this, through the purchase of a concubine; and it is my will, therefore, that thou demand for me in marriage the daughter of some one of the kings, whose lineage is known and whose beauty is renowned. If thou canst direct me to some king's daughter of the Muslims, who is a woman of good birth and piety, I will seek her hand and marry her before witnesses, that the favour of the Lord of all creatures may accrue to me thereby.' 'O King,' said the Vizier, 'God hath fulfilled thy need and hath brought thee to thy desire; for it hath come to my knowledge that King Zehr Shah, Lord of the White Country, hath a daughter of surpassing beauty, whom report fails to describe; she hath not her equal in this age, being perfect in beauty and symmetry, with melting black eyes and long hair, slender-waisted and heavy-hipped. When she draws nigh, she seduces, and when she turns her back, she slays, ravishing heart and sight, even as says of her the poet:

A slender one, her shape confounds the branch of the cassia tree;
Nor sun nor moon can with her face for brightness evened be.
Meseems, the water of her mouth is honey blent with wine; Ay, and her teeth are finer pearls than any in the sea.
The purest white and deepest black meet in her glittering glance
And shapelier than the black-eyed maids of Paradise is she.
How many a man her eyes have slain, who perished in despair; The love of her's a way wherein are fear and misery.
If I would live, behold, she's death! I may not think of her,
Lest I should die; for, lacking her, life's nothing worth to me.

So it is my counsel, O King, that thou despatch to her father a sagacious and experienced ambassador, versed in the conduct of affairs, who shall with courteous and persuasive speech demand her in marriage for thee; for she hath not her equal in the world, far or near. So shalt thou enjoy her beauty in the way of right and the Lord of Glory be content with thee; for it is reported of the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve) that he said, "There is no monkery in Islam." At this the King was transported to the perfection of delight; his heart was lightened and his breast dilated and care and anxiety ceased from him; and he said to the Vizier, 'None shall go about this business but thou, by reason of thy consummate wit and good breeding; wherefore do thou make ready by the morrow and depart and demand me this girl in marriage, with whom thou hast made my heart to be engrossed; nor do thou return to me but with her.' 'I hear and obey,' replied the Vizier, and withdrawing to his own house, made ready a present such as befits kings, of jewels and other precious things, light of carriage but heavy of worth, besides Arabian horses and coats of mail, fine-wrought as those which David made, and chests of treasure, such as speech &fails to describe. These all he loaded upon camels and mules and set out, with flags and banners flying before him and attended by a hundred white slaves and the like number of black and a hundred slave-girls. The King charged him to return to him speedily; so he set out, leaving Suleiman Shah on coals of fire, engrossed night and day with desire for the princess, and fared on, without ceasing, night and day, across plains and deserts, till there remained but a day's journey between him and the city to which he was bound. Here he halted on the banks of a river, and calling one of his chief officers, bade him hasten forward to King Zehr Shah and announce his approach. Accordingly, the messenger rode on in haste to the city and was about to enter it, when the King, who chanced to be seated in one of his pleasaunces before the gate, espied him and knowing him for a stranger, bade bring him before him. So when the messenger came into his presence, he informed him of the approach of the Vizier of the mighty King Suleiman Shah, Lord of the Green Country and of the mountains of Ispahan; whereat King Zehr Shah rejoiced and bade him welcome. Then he carried him to his palace and said to him, 'Where didst thou leave the Vizier?' 'I left him,' replied the messenger, 'at the first of the day, on the banks of such a river, and he will be with thee to-morrow, may God continue His favours to thee and have mercy upon thy parents!' Whereupon the King commanded one of his Viziers to take the better part of his nobles and chamberlains and officers and grandees and go out to meet the ambassador, in honour of King Suleiman Shah, for that his dominion extended over the country.

Meanwhile, King Suleiman's Vizier abode in his stead, till the night was half spent, when he set out for the city; but hardly had the day appeared and the sun risen upon the hills and plains, when he saw King Zehr Shah's Vizier approaching with his retinue and the two parties joined company at some parasangs' distance from the city. At this the Vizier made sure of the success of his errand and saluted the new-comers, who escorted him to the King's palace and forewent him to the seventh vestibule, where none might enter on horseback, for it was near the presence chamber of the King. So the Vizier alighted and walked on till he came to a lofty hall, at the upper end whereof stood a couch of alabaster, set with pearls end jewels and having four elephants' tusks for feet. It was covered with a mattress of green satin, embroidered with red gold, and surmounted by a canopy adorned with pearls and jewels, and on it sat King Zehr Shah, whilst his officers of state stood in attendance on him. When the Vizier stood before him, he composed himself and loosing his tongue, displayed such skill of speech as befits viziers and saluted the King in eloquent and complimentary language, reciting the following verses in his honour:

He cometh, bending gracefully in his robes and shedding dew Of
bounty over the thirsting land and the folk to him that sue.
Indeed, he charmeth; nor amulets nor spells nor magic may Avail
to ward off the faithful glance of those his eyes from you.
Say to the censurers, "Blame me not: whilst life abide in me,
I'll never swerve from the love of him nor turn to love
anew."
Lo, slumber surely is tired of me and fallen in love with him,
And even my heart hath played me false and but to him is
true!
O heart, thou art not the only one that loves and tenders him, So
get thee gone and bide with him and leave me here to rue!
Except the praise of the King Zehr Shah it be that folk acclaim,
There's nought rejoices mine ears, in sooth, to hearken
thereunto.
A King, the sight of whose glorious face would well thy pains
repay; Though thou shouldst lavish thy heart's best blood,
so great a grace to woo.
If thou be minded to offer up a pious prayer for him, Thou'lt
find but true believer, and sharers the whole world through.
O folk of this realm, if any forswear his governance And look for
another, I hold him none of the faithful few

When the Vizier had made an end of his speech, the King bade him draw near and showed him the utmost honour then seating him by his own side, he smiled in his face and made him a gracious reply. They conversed till the time of the morning-meal, when the attendants brought in the tables of food and they all ate till they were satisfied, after which the tables were removed and all who were present withdrew, with the exception of the chief officers; which when the Vizier saw, he rose to his feet, and after complimenting the King a second time and kissing the earth before him, spoke as follows: ‘O mighty king and august prince, I have travelled hither and am come to thee upon an errand, wherein is profit and good and prosperity for thee; and it is that I come as ambassador to thee, seeking the hand of thy noble and illustrious daughter, from the most just, loyal and excellent King Suleiman Shah, Lord of the Green Country and of the mountains of Ispahan, who sends thee many and rare presents and gifts of price, ardently desiring thine alliance. Art thou, then, minded to him as he to thee?’ And he was silent, awaiting a reply. When the King heard his words he sprang to his feet and kissed the earth respectfully before the Vizier, to the amazement of the bystanders, whose minds were confounded at his condescension to the ambassador. Then he praised Him who is the Lord of glory and honour and replied, still standing, ‘O mighty Vizier and illustrious lord, hear what I say. Verily we are of the subjects of King Suleiman Shah and are ennobled by his alliance and aspire ardently thereto. My daughter is one of his handmaids, and it is my dearest wish that he may become my stay and my support in time of need.’ Then he summoned the Cadis and the witnesses, who took act that King Suleiman had deputed his Vizier his proxy to conclude the marriage, and King Zehr Shah joyfully consented on behalf of his daughter. So the Cadis drew up the marriage contract and offered up prayers for the happiness and prosperity of the contracting parties; after which the Vizier arose and fetching the gifts and rarities and precious things that he had brought with him, laid them all before the King, who betook himself to the equipment of his daughter, honourably entreating the Vizier and feasting great and small; and they held high festival for two months, omitting nought that could gladden heart and eye. When all was ready that was needful for the bride, the King caused the tents to be pitched without the city and they packed the bride's clothes and jewels in chests and loaded them on mules and camels. Now he had provided his daughter with Greek handmaids and Turkish slave-girls and great store of jewels and precious things, and had let make for her a litter of red gold inlaid with pearls and jewels, which within was as one of the chambers of a palace and without as one of the pavilions of Paradise, whilst its mistress seemed as she were of the lovely hours. Moreover, he furnished her also with twenty mules for the journey and brought her three parasangs forward on her road, after which he bade her and the Vizier farewell and returned to his own city in peace and gladness. Meanwhile, the Vizier and his company fared on by forced marches, traversing plains and deserts and staying not day or night, till they came within three days' journey of King Suleiman's capital, when the Vizier despatched a messenger to acquaint the King with their arrival. The messenger hastened forward till he reached the King's presence and announced to him the coming of the bride, whereat he rejoiced and bestowed on him a dress of honour. Then he bade his troops don their richest apparel and sally forth in grand procession, with banners flying, to meet the princess and her company and do them honour, and let cry throughout the city that neither cloistered damsel nor honoured lady nor infirm old woman should fail to go forth to meet the bride. So they all went out to meet her and the chiefest of them vied in doing her service, meaning to bring her to the King's palace by night. Moreover, the grandees agreed to decorate the road and stand on either side, whilst the bride should pass by, clad in the robes her father had given her and preceded by her eunuchs and serving-women. So at the appointed time, she made her appearance, surrounded by the troops, these on her right hand and those on her left, and the litter ceased not going with her, till they drew near the palace; nor was there any one but came forth to gaze upon the show. The drums beat and the lances were brandished, the trumpets blared and the banners fluttered and the horses pranced, whilst fragrant odours breathed around, till they reached the gate of the palace and the pages entered with the litter through the private gate. The place shone with its splendours and the walls glittered for the lustre of its ornaments. When the night came, the eunuchs threw open the doors of the bride-chamber and stood on either hand; whereupon the bride entered, among her damsels, like the moon among stars or a pearl of matchless beauty in a string of lesser pearls, and seated herself upon a couch of alabaster inlaid with pearls and jewels, that had been set for her there. Then came the King in to her and God filled his heart with love of her; so he did away her maidenhead, and his trouble and disquiet ceased from him. She conceived by him the first night, and he abode with her well-nigh a month, at the end of which time he went forth and seating himself on his throne of state, dispensed justice to his subjects, till the months of her pregnancy were accomplished. Towards daybreak on the last night of the ninth month, the queen was seized with the pangs of labour; so she sat down on the stool of delivery and God made the travail easy to her, so that she gave birth to a male child, on whom appeared the signs of happy fortune. When the King heard of this, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and rewarded the bearer of the good tidings with much treasure. Then, of his gladness, he went in to the child and kissed him between the eyes, wondering at his brilliant beauty; for in him was the saying of the poet made truth:

God hath a lion given in him unto the forts of fame And in the
heaven of high estate hath set another star.
Lo, at his birth, the spears shake all and all the wild deer
start And all the chieftains of the folk and all the men of
war!
So mount him not upon the breasts, for he shall surely deem That
horses' backs for such as he the softer sitting are;
And wean ye him from sucking milk, for he eftsoon shall find The
blood of foemen in the field the sweeter drink by far.

The midwives took the new-born child and cut the cord of his navel, after which they anointed his eyes with kohl and named him Taj el Mulouk Kharan. He was suckled at the breast of delight and reared in the lap of favouring fortune, and the days ran on and the years passed by, till he reached the age of seven. Then the King his father summoned the doctors and learned men and bade them teach his son writing and science and polite letters. This they did for some years, till he had learnt all that was needful, when the King took him out of the professors' hands and committed him to a master, who taught him horsemanship and the use of arms, till the boy attained the age of fourteen and became proficient in martial exercises. Moreover, he outshone all the people of his time for the excess of his beauty; so that, whenever he went abroad on any occasion, all who saw him were ravished with him and made verses in his honour, and even the virtuous were seduced by his brilliant loveliness. Quoth the poet of him:

A tender branch, that from the breeze hath ta'en its nourishment!
I clipped him and straightway became drunk with his sweetest scent;
Not drunken with the drunkenness of one who drinketh wine, But with the honey of his mouth fulfilled of languishment.
All loveliness comprised is within his perfect form, So that o'er all the hearts of men he reigns omnipotent.
By God, forgetfulness of him shall never cross my mind. What while I wear the chains of life, nor even when they're rent!
Lo, if I live, in love of him I'll live; and, if I die Of love-longing for him, I'll say, "O rare! O excellent!"

When he reached his eighteenth year, the tender down began to invade the table of his rosy cheeks, which were adorned by a black mole like a grain of ambergris, and he captivated the minds and eyes of all who looked on him, even as says of him the poet in the following verses:

He is become the Khalif of beauty in Joseph's place; The hearts of all lovers dread him, whenas they see his grace.
Pause thou with me and fasten thy gaze on him! thou'lt see The sign of the Khalifate set in sable on his face.

And as says another:

Thine eyes have never looked upon a fairer sight, Of all the things that are to see beneath the sky,

Than yonder mole of brown, that nestles on his face, Midmost the
rosy cheek, beneath the coal-black eye.

And a third:

I marvel at yon mole that serves the fire eternal, Upon his
cheek, yet is not burned, all Kafir though it be;
And eke I marvel that he's sent or God, with every glance To work
true miracles; and yet a sorcerer is he!
The many gall-bladders that burst for him it is that make The
shining fringes of his cheek so black and bright to see.

And yet a fourth:

I wonder to hear the folk ask of the water of life And question
in which of the lands its magical fountain flows
Whenas I see it well from the damask lips of a fawn, Under his
tender moustache and his cheek's perennial rose.
And eke 'tis a wonder of wonders that Moses, finding it
there Flowing, yet took no patience nor laid him down to
repose.

When he came to man's estate, his beauty increased and he had many comrades and friends; and every one who drew near to him hoped that he would become Sultan after his father's death and that he himself might be one of his officers. He had a passion for hunting and would hardly leave the chase a single hour. His father would have restrained him, fearing for him the perils of the desert: and the wild beasts; but he paid no heed to him. One day, he bade his attendants take ten days' provender and setting out for the chase, rode on into the desert four days long, at the end of which time he came to a verdant champaign, full of wild beasts pasturing and trees laden with ripe fruit and springs welling forth. Then he said to his followers, 'Set up the nets in a wide circle and let our general rendezvous be at the mouth of the ring, in such a spot.' So they staked out a wide circle with the nets; and there gathered together a multitude of all kinds of wild beasts and gazelles, which cried out for fear of them and threw themselves in terror right in the face of the horses. Then they loosed the dogs and sakers and hunting lynxes on them and smote them with arrows in the vitals; so, by the time they came to the closed end of the ring of nets, they took a great number of the wild beasts, and the rest fled. Then the prince sat down by the water-side and letting spread the game before himself, apportioned it among his men, after he had set apart the choicest thereof for his father King Suleiman and despatched it to him; and other part he divided among the officers of his court. He passed the night in that place, and when it was morning, there came up a caravan of merchants, with their slaves and servants, and halted by the water and the verdure. When Taj el Mulouk saw this, he said to one of his companions, ‘Go, bring me news of yonder folk and ask them why they have halted here.’ So the man went up to them and said, ‘Tell me who ye are, and answer quickly.’ ‘We are merchants,’ replied they, ‘and have halted here to rest, for that the next station is distant and we have confidence in King Suleiman Shah and his son Taj el Mulouk, knowing that all who alight in their dominions are in peace and safety; and we have with us precious stuffs, that we have brought for the prince.’ The messenger returned with this news to the prince, who said, I will not depart hence till I see what they have brought for me. Then he mounted and rode to the caravan, followed by his servants. The merchants rose to receive him and invoked on him the aid and favour of God, with continuance of glory and virtues; after which they pitched him a pavilion of red satin, emblazoned with pearls and jewels, in which they spread him a royal divan, upon a silken carpet embroidered at the upper end with emeralds. The prince seated himself on the divan, whilst his servants stood in attendance upon him, and bade the merchants bring out all that they had with them. Accordingly, they produced all their merchandise, and he viewed it and took of it what liked him, paying them the price. Then he remounted and was about to ride onward, when his eyes fell on a handsome young man, well dressed and elegantly made, with flower-white forehead and face brilliant as the moon, save that his beauty was wasted and that pallor had invaded his cheeks by reason of separation from those he loved: sighing and lamentation were grievous upon him and the tears streamed from his eyelids, as he repeated the following verses:

Absence is long and care and fear are heavy on my soul, Whilst
from mine eyes the tears, O friend, without cessation roll.
Alas, I left my heart behind upon the parting day, And now sans
heart, sans hope, abide all lonely in my dole.
Pause with me, O my friend, what while I take my leave of one By
whose sweet speech diseases all and sorrows are made whole.

Having said this, he wept awhile and fell down in a swoon, whilst Taj el Mulouk looked at him wonderingly then coming to himself, he stared fixedly before him, with distracted air, and repeated these other verses:

I rede thee beware of her glance, for, lo, ’tis a wizard, I ween!
None ‘scapeth unscathed of the shafts of her eyes, that has
gazed on their sheen.
For, trust me, black eyes, that are armed with the grace of a
languorous look, Are swifter and sharper to wound than
scimitars, tempered and keen.
And let not thy mind be beguiled by the sweet and the soft of her
words; For the fever that springs from her speech
o’ermasters the senses, demesne.
Soft-sided, were silk but to press on her skin, it would cause it
to bleed, So delicate-bodied she is and so nesh, as forsooth
thou hast seen.
Right chary she is of the charms ‘twixt her neck and her anklets
that lie, And what is the sweetest of scents to the
fragrance that breathes from my queen!

Then he gave a sob and swooned away a second time. When Taj el Mulouk saw him thus, he was perplexed about his case and went up to him. So when he came to himself and saw the prince standing by him, he sprang to his feet and kissed the earth before him; and Taj el Mulouk said to him, ‘Why didst thou not show us thy merchandise?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered the young merchant, ‘there is nought among my stock worthy of thine august highness.’ ‘It matters not,' said the prince, 'thou must show me what thou hast and acquaint me with thy case; for I see thee weeping-eyed and mournful-hearted. If thou hast been wronged, we will do away thine oppression, and if thou be in debt, we will discharge thy debt; for my heart aches for thee, since I first set eyes on thee.' Then he called for seats and they set him a chair of ebony and ivory, netted with gold and silk, and spread him a silken carpet. So he sat down on the chair and bidding the young merchant seat himself on the carpet, again commanded him to show him his merchandise. 'O my lord,' said he, 'do not name this to me; for I have nought worthy of thee.' 'I will have it so,' rejoined Taj el Mulouk and bade some of the servants fetch the goods. So they brought them in spite of the merchant; and when he saw this, the tears streamed from his eyes and he wept and sighed and lamented; sobs rose from his bosom and he repeated the following verses:

By the witching amorous sweetness and the blackness of thine
eyes, By the tender flexile softness in thy slender waist
that lies,
By the graces and the languor of thy body and thy shape, By the
fount of wine and honey from thy coral lips that rise,
O my hope, to see thine image in my dreams were sweeter far Than
were safety to the fearful, languishing in woful wise!

Then he opened his bales and displayed their contents to Taj el Mulouk, piece by piece, till he came to a mantle of satin brocaded with gold, worth two thousand dinars from which, when he opened it, there fell a piece of linen. As soon as he saw this, he caught up the piece of linen in haste and hid it under his thigh; and indeed he seemed as though he had lost his reason, and he repeated the following verses:

When shall my sad tormented heart be healed, alas, of thee? The
Pleiades were nearer far than is thy grace to me.
Distance estrangement, longing pain and fire of love laid waste,
Procrastination and delay, in these my life doth flee.
For no attainment bids me live nor exile slays me quite, Travel

no nigher doth me bring, nor wilt thou nearer be.
There is no justice to be had of thee nor any ruth In thee; no
winning to thy grace and yet no breaking free.
Alack, for love of thee, the ways are straitened all on me; So
that I know not where I go nor any issue see!

The prince wondered greatly at his behaviour, and said to him, ‘What is that piece of linen?’ ‘O my lord,’ replied the merchant, ‘thou hast no concern with it.’ ‘Show it me,’ said the prince; and the merchant answered, ‘O my lord, it was on account of this piece of linen that I refused to show thee my goods; for I cannot let thee look on it.’ But Taj el Mulouk rejoined, ‘I must and will see it;’ and insisted and became angry. So he drew it out from under his thigh, weeping and lamenting and redoubling his sighs and groans, and repeated the following verses:

Blame ye the lover not, for blame but irketh him to hear; Indeed,
I spoke him truth, but he to me would lend no ear.
God have her in His care, my moon that rises far away, Down in
the valley, midst the camp, from out the collars'
sphere!
I left her; would to God my love had left me peace of life! So
had I never parted been from her that held me dear.
O how she pleaded for my sake upon our parting day, What while
adown her cheeks and mine tear followed upon tear!
May God belie me not! The wede of my excuse from me Was all to
rent for loss of her; but I will mend my cheer.
No bed is easy to my side, nor is her resting-place Ayemore
reposeful unto her, now I'm no longer near.
For Fate with an ill-omened hand hath wrought upon our loves And
hindered me from my delight and her from hers, yfere.
Indeed, what time it filled the cup, whereof she drank what I
E'en made her drink, it poured us out grief, all unmixed and
sheer.

Quoth Taj el Mulouk, ‘Thy conduct perplexes me; tell me why thou weepest at the sight of this piece of linen.’ When the young merchant heard speak of the piece of linen, he sighed and answered, ‘O my lord, my story is a strange and eventful one, with regard to this piece of linen and her from whom I had it and her who wrought the figures and emblems that be thereon.’ So saying, he unfolded the piece of linen, and behold, thereon were the figures of two gazelles, facing one another, one wrought in silk and gold and the other in silver with a ring of red gold and three bugles of chrysolite about its neck. When Taj el Mulouk saw the figures and the beauty of their fashion, he exclaimed, ‘Glory be to God who teacheth man that which he knoweth not!’ And his heart was filled with longing to hear the merchant’s story; so he said to him, ‘Tell me thy story with her who gave thee these gazelles.’ ‘Know, O my lord,’ replied the young man, ‘that

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

Story of Aziz and Azizeh.

My father was one of the chief merchants (of my native town) and God had vouchsafed him no other child than myself; but I had a cousin, the daughter of my father's brother, who was brought up with me in our house; for her father was dead and before his death, he had agreed with my father that I should marry her. So when I reached man's estate and she became a woman, they did not separate us, and we ceased not to sleep on the same couch, knowing no evil, albeit she was more thoughtful, more intelligent and quicker-witted than I, till at last, my father spoke to my mother and said, "This very year we will draw up the contract of marriage between Aziz and Azizeh." So they agreed upon this, and he betook himself to preparing victual for the marriage festivities. When he had made an end of his preparations and there remained nought but to draw up the contract and consummate the marriage, he appointed the wedding for a certain Friday, after the congregational prayers, and going round to his friends among the merchants and others, acquainted them with this, whilst my mother invited her female friends and kindred. When the day came, they cleaned the guest-chamber and washed the marble floor, then spread carpets about the house and set out thereon what was needful, after they had hung the walls with cloth of gold. Now the folk had agreed to come to our house after the Friday-prayers; so my father went and let make cates and dishes of sweetmeats, and there remained nothing to do but to draw up the contract. Then my mother sent me to the bath and sent after me a suit of new clothes of the richest kind which I put on, when I came out. The clothes were perfumed, and as I went along, there exhaled from them a delicious fragrance, that scented the way. I was about to repair to the mosque, when I bethought me of one of my friends and was minded to go in quest of him that he might be present at the drawing up of the contract, saying in myself, "This will occupy me till near the time of prayer." So I turned back and came to a by-street, that I had never before entered. Now I was in a profuse perspiration, from the effects of the bath and the new clothes on my body, and the sweat streamed from me, whilst the perfume of my clothes was wafted abroad: so I sat down to rest on a stone bench at the upper end of the street, spreading under me an embroidered handkerchief I had with me. The heat redoubled on me, so that my forehead sweated and the drops ran down on to my cheeks; but I could not wipe my face with my handkerchief, because I lay upon it. So I was about to take the skirt of my gaberdine and wipe my cheeks with it, when suddenly there fell on me from above a white handkerchief, softer to the feel than the zephyr and pleasanter to the sight than recovery to the sick. I seized on it and looking up to see whence it came, my eyes met those of the lady who gave me these gazelles. She was looking out of a wicket in a lattice of brass and never saw my eyes a fairer than she; my tongue fails to picture her beauty. When she saw me looking at her, she put her forefinger to her mouth, then joined her middle and index fingers and laid them on her bosom, between her breasts; after which she drew in her head and shut the wicket. With this, fire broke out and raged in my heart; the glance I had of her cost me a thousand sighs and I abode perplexed, having heard no word from her and understanding not the meaning of her signs. I looked again at the window, but found it shut and waited till sundown but heard no sound and saw no one. When I despaired of seeing her again, I rose and taking up the handkerchief, opened it, whereupon there exhaled from it a scent of musk, which caused me such ease that meseemed I was in Paradise. Then I spread it out before me and there dropped from it a little scroll of paper. I opened the scroll, which was scented with a delicious perfume, and found written therein the following verses:

I sent my love a scroll, complaining of desire Writ in a fine,
small hand; for writings vary still.
“Why is thy writing thus,” my lover said to me, “Attenuate and
small, uneath to read and ill?”
Quoth I, “Because I too am wasted, ay, and thin. Thus should
their writing be, who weary at Love’s will.”

Then, casting my eyes on the beauty of the handkerchief, I saw embroidered on one of its borders the following verses:

The down of his whiskers writes (good luck to it for A scribe!)
Two lines, in the basil hand, on the table of his
face.
O the wilderment of the moon at him, when he appears! And O the
shame of the branch at sight of his flexile grace!

And on the opposite border were the following verses:

The whiskers write upon his cheeks, with ambergris on pearl, Two
lines, as ‘twere with jet upon an apple, line for line.
Death harbours in his languid eyes and slays with every glance;
And in his cheeks is drunkenness, and not in any wine.

When I read what was written on the handkerchief, the flames of love raged in my heart, and longing and trouble redoubled on me. So I took the handkerchief and the scroll and went home, knowing no means to compass my desire, for that I was inexperienced in love affairs and unskilled in the interpretation of the language of signs used therein. The night was far spent before I reached my house, and when I entered, I found my cousin sitting weeping. As soon as she saw me, she wiped away her tears and coming up to me, took off my (outer) clothes and asked me the reason of my absence, saying, “All the folk, amirs and notables and merchants and others, assembled here, and the Cadi and the witnesses came also at the appointed time. They ate and sat awhile, awaiting thy coming for the drawing up of the contract, till they despaired of thee, when they dispersed and went their ways. And indeed,” added she, “thy father was exceeding wroth, by reason of this, and swore that he would not celebrate our marriage till next year, for that he hath spent much money on this occasion. What hath befallen thee to make thee tarry till now?” “O my cousin,” replied I, “do not ask me what hath befallen me.” Then I told her all that had passed and showed her the handkerchief and the scroll. She took them and read what was written therein; whereupon the tears ran down her cheeks and she repeated the following verses:

Who says to thee, the first of love is free, Tell him, not so;
but, on the contrary,

'Tis all constraint, wherein no blame can be. History indeed
attests this verity;
It does not style the good coin falsified.
Say, if thou wilt, the taste of pain is sweet, Or to be spurned
by Fortune's flying feet;
Of need or vengeance, fortune or defeat, With joy or dole it
makes the heart to beat:
'Twixt phrase and counterphrase I'm stupefied.
But as for him whose happy days are light, Fair maids, whose lips
with smiles are ever bright,
Borne on the fragrant gales of their delight, Who hath his will,
unhindered of despite,
'Tis not with him A craven heart may bide.

Then she asked me what she said and what signs she made to me. "She spoke not," answered I; "but put her index finger to her mouth, then joining it to her middle finger, laid them both on her bosom and pointed in the ground, after which she drew in her head and shut the wicket and I saw her no more. She took my heart with her and I sat till sundown, expecting her to appear again at the window; but she came not: so, when I despaired of her, I rose and went home. This is my story, and I beg thee to help me in this my affliction." With this, she raised her face to me and said, "O my cousin, if thou soughtest my eye, I would tear it from its socket for thee, and I cannot choose but help thee to thy desire and her also to hers; for she is passionately enamoured of thee, even as thou of her." "And what is the meaning of her signs?" asked I. "As for the putting her finger to her mouth," replied Azizeh, "it meant that thou art to her as her soul to her body and that she would bite upon union with thee with her wisdom-teeth. The handkerchief is the token of greeting from lover to beloved and the scroll is a sign that her heart is bound up in thee. As for the laying her two fingers between her breasts, it is as if she said to thee, 'Return hither after two days, that the sight of thy countenance may dispel my anguish.' For know, O my cousin, that she loves thee and trusts in thee. This is my reading of her signs, and could I come and go at will, I would quickly bring you and her together and cover you both with my skirt." I thanked her and said to myself, "I will wait two days." So I abode two days in the house, without going out, and ate not nor drank, but lay with my head in my cousin's lap, whilst she comforted me and bade me take heart and be of good cheer. When the two days were past, she said to me, "Take courage and dress thyself and go to her, according to the tryst." Then she rose and changed my clothes and perfumed me with incense. So I took heart and went out and walked on till I came to the by-street, where I sat down on the bench. After awhile, the wicket opened and I looked up and seeing the lady, fell down in a swoon. When I revived, I took courage to look again at her and again became insensible. Then I came to myself and looking at her, saw that she had a mirror and a red handkerchief in her hand. When she saw me, she bared her forearms and smote her breast with her palm and five fingers; after which she raised her hands and holding the mirror forth of the wicket, took the red handkerchief and retired with it, but immediately returned and putting out her hand with the handkerchief, lowered it towards the ground and raised it again three several times. Then she wrung it out and folded it in her hands, bowing her head the while; after which she drew in her head and shutting the window, went away, without saying a word, leaving me confounded and knowing not what she meant. I sat there till the evening and did not return home till near midnight, when I found my cousin sitting, weeping bitterly and repeating the following verses:

Ah me, what ails the censurer, that he at thee should flite? How
shall I be consoled for thee, and thou a sapling slight?
O thou, the splendour of whose sight has ta'en my heart by storm,
Whose supple bending grace compels to passion's utmost
height,
Whose eyes, with Turkish languor caught, work havoc in the breast
And leave such wounds as ne'er were made by falchion in the
fight!
Thou layst on me a heavy load of passion and desire, On me that
am too weak to bear a shift upon me dight.
Ay, tears of blood I weep, for that my censors say to me, "A
sudden sword, from out his lids thou lovest, shall thee
smite."

Ah, would my heart were like to thine, even as my body is Like to
thy waist, all thin and frail and dwindled for despite!
Thou, that my prince in beauty art, a steward hast, whose
rule Aggrieves me and a chamberlain that doth me
foul upright.
He lies who says, “All loveliness in Joseph was comprised.” How
many Josephs are there not within thy beauty bright!
I force myself to turn from thee, for fear of spying eyes, Though
sore it irks me to forswear the solace of thy sight.

At this, trouble and grief redoubled on me and I fell down in a corner; whereupon she sprang up and coming to me, lifted me up and took off my outer clothes and wiped my face with her sleeve. Then she asked me how I had fared, and I told her all that had happened. “O my cousin,” said she, “as for her sign to thee with her palm and five fingers, it meant, ‘Return after five days;’ and her gestures with the mirror and the putting forth of her head and the lowering and raising of the red handkerchief meant, ‘Sit in the dyer’s shop, till my messenger come to thee.’” When I heard this, fire flamed up in my heart and I exclaimed, “O my cousin, by Allah, thou sayst sooth in this thine interpretation; for I saw the shop of a Jewish dyer in the street.” Then I wept, and she said, “O my cousin, summon up resolution and be steadfast of heart: others are occupied with love for years and are constant to endure the ardour of passion, whilst thou hast but a week to wait; so why art thou thus impatient?” Then she went on to cheer me with comfortable talk and brought me food: so I took a mouthful, but could not eat and abstained from meat and drink and knew not the solace of sleep, till my colour paled and I lost my good looks; for I had never before been in love nor tasted the ardour of passion. So I fell sick and my cousin also sickened on my account; but every night she would divert me with stories of love and lovers, till I fell asleep; and whenever I awoke, I used to find her wakeful for my sake, with the tears running down her cheeks. Thus we did till the five days were past, when she rose and heating water, bathed me with it. Then she dressed me and said to me, “Go to her and may God fulfil your wish and bring thee to thy desire of thy beloved!” So I went out and walked on, till I came to the by-street. I found the dyer's shop shut, for it was Saturday, and sat before it, till I heard the call to afternoon-prayer. Then the sun turned pale, the Muezzins chanted the call to the prayer of sunset and the night came; but I saw no sign nor heard aught of her. With this, I feared for myself, sitting there alone; so I rose and went home, staggering like a drunken man. When I reached the house, I found my cousin Azizeh standing, with one hand grasping a peg driven into the wall and the other on her breast; and she was sighing heavily and repeating the following verses:

The longing of a Bedouin maid, whose folk are far away, Who yearns after the willow of the Hejaz and the hay,
Whose tears, when she on travellers lights, might for their water serve And eke her passion, with its heat, their bivouac-fire purvey,
Is not more fierce nor ardent than my longing for my love, Who deems that I commit a crime in loving him alway.

When she had finished, she turned and seeing me, wiped away her tears and mine with her sleeve. Then she smiled in my face and said, "O my cousin, God grant thee joy of that which He hath given thee! Why didst thou not pass the night with thy beloved and why hast thou not fulfilled thy desire of her?" When I heard what she said, I gave her a kick in the breast and she fell over on to the edge of the estrade and struck her forehead against a peg there. I looked at her and saw that her forehead was cut open and the blood running; but she was silent and did not utter a syllable. She made some tinder of rags and staunching the wound with it, bound her forehead with a bandage; after which she wiped up the blood that had fallen on the carpet, and it was as if nothing had happened. Then she came up to me and smiling in my face, said, with gentle speech, "By Allah, O my cousin, I had it not in my thought to mock at thee or at her! I was troubled with a pain in my head and thought to be let blood, but now thou hast eased my head and brow; so tell me what has befallen thee to-day." So I told her what had passed and she wept and said, "O my cousin, rejoice in the near fulfilment of thy desire and the attainment of thy hopes. Verily, this is a sign of acceptance; she only stayed away, because she wished to try thee and know if thou wert patient and sincere in thy love for her or not. To-morrow, do thou go to her at the old place and note what signs she makes to thee; for indeed thy gladness is near and the end of thy grief is at hand." And she went on to comfort me; but my trouble and affliction ceased not to increase on me. Presently, she brought me food, but I kicked the dishes away, so that their contents were scattered in all directions, and said, "Every lover is a madman; he inclines not to food neither enjoys sleep." "By Allah, O my cousin," answered she, "these are indeed the signs of love!" And the tears streamed down her cheeks, whilst she gathered the fragments of the dishes and wiped up the food; then she sat down by me and talked to me, whilst I prayed God to hasten the coming of the day. When, at last, the morning arose with its light and shone, I went out and hastening to the by-street in question, sat down on the bench, when behold, the wicket opened and she put out her head, laughing. Then she went in and returned with a mirror, a bag, a pot of flowering plants and a lamp. First, she took the mirror and putting it into the bag, tied it up and threw it back into the room; after which she let down her hair over her face and set the lamp an instant on the pot of flowers; then took up all the things and shutting the window, went away, without saying a word. My heart was tortured by her obscure signs and mysterious gestures, and passion and distraction redoubled on me. So I retraced my steps, tearful-eyed and mournful-hearted, and returning home, found Azizeh sitting, with her face to the wall; for her heart was on fire for grief and anxiety and jealousy; albeit the love she bore me forbade her to acquaint me with what she suffered, by reason of what she saw of the excess of my passion and distraction (for another). I looked at her and saw that she had two bandages on her head, one on account of the wound on her forehead, and the other over her eye, which pained her for excess of weeping; and she was in very sorry plight, weeping and repeating the following verses:

I count the nights, night after night, the weary nights and slow;
    Yet would I, once upon a time, unreckoned let them go.
I have no knowledge, O my friend, of that which God ordains Of
    Leila or what He decrees to me, but this I know

He to another her adjudged and cursed me with her love: So hath
He not afflicted me with other than her woe.

When she had finished, she looked round and seeing me through her tears, wiped them away and came up to me, but could not speak for excess of emotion. So she was silent awhile, then said to me, "O my cousin, tell me what befell thee with her this time." So I told her all that had passed, and she said, "Be patient, for the time of thy delight is come, and thou hast won to the attainment of thy hopes. As for her sign with the mirror and the bag, it was as if she said to thee, 'When the sun is set;' and the letting down of her hair over her face signified, When the night is come and hath let fall the blackness of the dark and overmastered the daylight, come hither.' As for her gesture with the flower-pot and the lamp, it meant, 'When thou comest, enter the garden behind the street, and where as thou seest the lamp burning, go thither and seat thyself beneath it and wait for me; for the love of thee is killing me.'" When I heard this, I cried out for excess of passion and said, "How long wilt thou deceive me with promises and I go to her, but get not my will nor find any truth in thine interpreting?" At this, she laughed and replied, "Thou needest but have patience for the rest of the day, till the light depart and the night come with the darkness, and thou shalt enjoy fruition and accomplish thy hopes. And indeed this is true without leasing." And she repeated the following verses:

Let the days pass, as they list, and fare, And enter thou not the
house of despair.
Full oft when the quest of a thing is hard, The next hour brings
us the end of our care.

Then she came to me and began to comfort me with soothing words, but dared not offer me food, fearing my wrath and seeking to make me incline to her: so she only took off my upper garment and said to me, "Sit, O my cousin, that I may entertain thee with talk, till the end of the day; and God willing, thou shalt be with thy beloved as soon as it is night." But I paid no heed to her and gave not over looking for the coming of the night, saying, "O Lord, hasten the coming of the night!” till the hour of the evening-prayer, when she wept sore and giving me a grain of pure musk, said to me, “O my cousin, put this in thy mouth, and when thou foregatherest with thy beloved and hast taken thy will of her and she hath granted thee thy desire, repeat to her this verse:

Tell me, O lovers, for God’s sake, I do entreat of you, When love is sore upon a maid, alack! what shall she do?”

And she kissed me and made me swear not to repeat this to my mistress, till I should be about to leave her. Then I went out and walked on till I came to the garden. I found the door open; so I entered, and seeing a light in the distance, made towards it and came to a great pavilion, vaulted over with a dome of ivory and ebony, from the midst of which hung the lamp. The floor was spread with silken carpets, embroidered in gold and silver, and under the lamp stood a great candle, burning in a stand of gold. Midmost the pavilion was a fountain, adorned with all manner of figures; and by it stood a table of food, covered with a silken napkin, and a great porcelain vase full of wine, with a goblet of crystal, sprayed with gold. Near these was a great covered dish of silver, which I uncovered and found therein fruits of all kinds, figs and pomegranates and grapes and oranges and citrons and shaddocks, together with all manner sweet-scented flowers, such as roses and jasmine and myrtle and eglantine and narcissus and all kinds of sweet-smelling herbs; but I saw there not a living soul, no, not even a slave, male or female, to guard these things. I was transported with delight at what I saw, and my grief and anxiety ceased from me. So I sat down to await the coming of the beloved of my heart: but the first hour of the night passed by, and the second and the third, and still she came not. Then I grew sore an hungred, for that it was long since I had tasted food by reason of the violence of my passion: but when I found the garden even as my cousin had told me and saw the truth of her interpretation of my mistress’s signs, my mind was set at rest and I made sure of attaining my desire, so that nature resumed its sway and I felt the pangs of hunger. Moreover the odour of the viands on the table excited in me a longing to eat: so I went up to the table, and lifting the cover, found in the middle a porcelain dish, containing four fricasseed fowls, seasoned with spices, round which were four smaller dishes, one containing sweetmeats, another conserve of pomegranate-seeds, a third almond patties and a fourth honey fritters, and the contents of these dishes were part sweet and part acid. So I ate of the fritters and a piece of meat, then went on to the almond patties and ate what I would of them; after which I attacked the sweetmeats, of which I ate a spoonful or two or three or four, ending with part of a fowl and a mouthful of bread. With this my stomach became full and my limbs heavy and I grew drowsy; so I laid my head on a cushion, after having washed my hands, and sleep overcame me; and I knew not what happened to me after this nor did I awake till the sun's heat burnt me, for that I had not tasted sleep for days. When I awoke, I found myself lying on the naked marble, with a piece of salt and another of charcoal on my stomach; so I stood up and shook my clothes and turned right and left, but could see no one. At this I was perplexed and afflicted; the tears ran down my cheeks and I mourned grievously for myself. Then I returned home, and when I entered, I found my cousin beating her bosom and weeping like the rain-clouds, as she repeated the following verses:

From out my loved one's land a breeze blows cool and sweet: The
fragrance of its wafts stirs up the ancient heat.
Blow, zephyr of the East! Each lover hath his lot, His
heaven-appointed doom of fortune or defeat.
Lo, if we might, we would embrace thee for desire, Even as a
lover clips his mistress, when they meet.
Whenas my cousin's face is absent, God forbids All pleasance
[unto me] and all life has of sweet.
Ah, would I knew his heart was even as is mine, All wasted and
consumed by passion's flaming feet!

When she saw me, she rose in haste and wiping away her tears, accosted me with her soft speech, saying, "O my cousin, verily God hath been gracious to thee in thy love, in that she whom thou lovest loves thee, whilst I pass my time in weeping and lamenting my separation from thee that blamest and chidest me; but may God not reproach thee for my sake!" Then she smiled in my face, a sad smile, and caressed me; then taking off my outer clothes, she spread them out and said, “By Allah, this is not the scent of one who hath enjoyed his mistress! Tell me what has befallen thee, O my cousin.” So I told her all that had passed, and she smiled again, a sad smile, and said, “Verily, my heart is full of pain; but may he not live who would hurt thy heart! Indeed, this woman makes herself extravagantly difficult to thee, and by Allah, I fear for thee from her. Know that the meaning of the salt is that thou wert drowned in sleep and she likens thee to insipid food, at which the soul sickens; and it is as if she said to thee, ‘It behoves that thou be salted, lest nature reject thee. Thou professest to be of the true lovers, but sleep is forbidden to a lover; therefore, thy love is false.’ But it is her love for thee that is false; for she saw thee asleep, yet awoke thee not, and were her love for thee sincere, she had aroused thee. As for the charcoal, it means, ‘God blacken thy face, for that thou makest a lying presence of love, whereas thou art but a child and hast no concern but to eat and drink and sleep!’ This is the interpretation of her signs, and may God the Most High deliver thee from her!” When I heard my cousin’s words, I beat my breast with my hand and cried out, “By Allah, this is the truth, for I slept and lovers sleep not! Indeed, I have sinned against myself, for nought could have done me more hurt than eating and sleeping. What shall I do!” Then I wept sore and said to her, “Have compassion on me and tell me what to do, so may God have compassion on thee: else I shall die.” Now my cousin loved me very dearly; so she replied, “On my head and eyes. But, O my cousin, as I have told thee often, could I go in and out at will, I would very soon bring you together and cover you both with my skirt: nor would I do this but hoping to win thy favour. God willing, I will do my utmost endeavour to bring about your union; but hearken thou to me and do as I bid thee. Go to the garden at nightfall and sit down in the same place and look thou eat not, for eating induces sleep; and beware of sleeping, for she will not come to thee, till a fourth part of the night be passed. And may God save thee from her mischief!” When I heard this, I rejoiced and besought God to hasten the night. As soon as it was dark, I rose to go, and my cousin said to me, “If thou foregather with her, repeat to her the verse I taught thee, at the time of leave-taking.” “On my head and eyes,” replied I, and going out, repaired to the garden, where I found all as on the previous night, with meat and drink spread ready, and dessert and flowers and so forth. I went up into the pavilion and smelt the odour of the viands and my soul lusted after them; but I forbore awhile, till at last I could no longer restrain my appetite. So I went up to the table, and raising the cover, found a dish of fowls, surrounded by four smaller dishes, containing various meats. I ate a mouthful of each dish and a piece of meat and as much as I would of the sweetmeat: then I tasted a dish of rice dressed with honey and saffron and liking it, supped of it by the spoonful, till I was satisfied and my belly was full. With this, my eyelids became heavy; so I took a cushion and put it under my head, saying, "Surely I can recline upon it, without going to sleep." Then I closed my eyes and slept, nor did I wake till the sun had risen, when I found myself lying on the bare marble, with a die of bone, a play-stick, a green date-stone and a carob-bean on my stomach. There was no furniture nor aught else in the place, and it was as if there had been nothing there yesterday. So I rose and shaking all these things off me, went out in a rage, and going home, found my cousin sighing and repeating the following verses:

Wasted body and heart a-bleeding for despair And tears that down
my cheeks stream on and on for e'er,
And a beloved one persistent in disdain; Yet all a fair one does
must needs be right and fair.
O cousin mine, thou'st filled my heart with longing pain And
wounded are mine eyes with tears that never spare.

I chid her and reviled her, at which she wept; then wiping away her tears, she came up to me and kissed me and pressed me to her bosom, whilst I held back from her and blamed myself. Then she said to me, "O my cousin, meseems thou didst sleep again last night?" "Yes," replied I; "and when I awoke, I found on my stomach a die of bone, a play-stick, a green date-stone and a carob-bean, and I know not why she did this." Then I wept and said to her, "Expound to me her meaning in this and tell me what I shall do and help me in this my strait." "On my head and eyes," answered she. "Know then that, by the figure of the die and the play-stick, she says to thee, 'Thy body is present, but thy heart absent. Love is not thus: so do not reckon thyself among lovers.' As for the date-stone, it is as if she said to thee, 'If thou wert in love, thy heart would be on fire with passion and thou wouldst not taste the delight of sleep; for the sweet of love is like a green date and kindles a fire in the entrails.' As for the carob-bean, it signifies, 'The lover's heart is wearied; so be thou patient under our separation, even as Job was patient.'" When I heard this, fires raged in my entrails and grief redoubled upon my heart and I cried out, saying, "God ordained sleep to me, of my ill-fortune!" Then I said to her, "O my cousin, I conjure thee by my life, contrive me some device whereby I may win to her!" She wept and answered, "O Aziz, O my cousin, verily my heart is full of melancholy thought and I cannot speak: but go thou again to-night to the same place and look that thou sleep not, and thou shalt surely attain thy desire. This is my counsel and peace be on thee." "God willing," said I, "I will not sleep, but will do as thou biddest me." Then she rose and set food before me, saying, "Eat now what may suffice thee, that thy heart may be free." So I ate my fill, and when the night came, my cousin rose and bringing me a sumptuous suit of clothes, clad me therein. Then she made me promise to repeat the verse aforesaid to my mistress and bade me beware of sleeping. So I left her and repairing to the garden, went up into the pavilion, where I occupied myself with gazing on the garden, holding my eyes open with my fingers and wagging my head from side to side, as the night darkened on me. Presently I grew hungry with watching, and the smell of the meats, being wafted towards me, increased my hunger: so I went up to the table and taking off the cover, ate a piece of meat and a mouthful of every dish; after which I turned to the vessel of wine, saying in myself, "I will drink one cup." So I drank one cup and a second and a third, till I had drunk full half a score, when the air smote me and I fell to the earth like a dead man. I lay thus till day, when I awoke and found myself without the garden, with a large sharp knife and an iron dirhem on my stomach. I arose trembling and taking the knife and the dirhem, went home where I found my cousin saying, "Verily, I am in this house wretched and sorrowful, having no helper but weeping." When I entered, I fell down at full length and fainted, throwing the knife and the dirhem from my hand. As soon as I came to myself, I told her what had passed and said, "Indeed, I shall never enjoy my desire.” The sight of my tears and my passion redoubled her distress on my account, and she said, “Verily, I can no more. I warned thee against sleeping; but thou wouldst not listen to my counsel, and my words profited thee nothing.” “By Allah,” cried I, “I conjure thee to explain to me the meaning of the knife and the dirhem.” “By the dirhem,” replied she, “she alludes to her right eye, and it is as if she said to thee, ‘I swear, by the Lord of all creatures and by my right eye, that, if thou come here again and sleep, I will slay thee with this knife!’ And indeed, O my cousin, I fear for thee from her malice; my heart is full of anguish for thee and I cannot speak. Nevertheless, if thou canst be sure of thyself not to sleep, return to her and thou shalt attain thy desire; but if thou sleep, according to thy wont, she will surely slay thee.” “O my cousin,” said I, “what shall I do? I conjure thee, by Allah, to help me in this my affliction!” “On my head and eyes,” replied she. “If thou wilt hearken to me and do as I say, thou shalt have thy will.” Quoth I, “I will indeed hearken to thee and do thy bidding.” And she said, “When it is time for thee to go, I will tell thee.” Then she pressed me to her bosom and laying me on the bed, rubbed my feet, till drowsiness overcame me and I was drowned in sleep; when she took a fan and seating herself at my head, ceased not to fan my face till the end of the day. Then she awoke me, and I found her sitting at my head weeping, with the fan in her hand and her clothes wet with tears. When she saw that I was awake, she wiped away her tears and fetching food, set it before me. I refused it, but she said to me, “Didst thou not promise to do my bidding? Eat.” So I ate and did not cross her, and she proceeded to put the food into my mouth and I to eat, till I was full. Then she made me drink sherbet of jujube-fruit and sugar and washed my hands and dried them with a napkin; after which she sprinkled me with rose-water, and I sat with her awhile, restored to health and spirits. When the night had closed in, she dressed me and said to me, “O my cousin, watch all night and sleep not; for she will not come to thee this time till the last of the night, and God willing, thou shalt foregather with her this night: but do not forget my charge.” Then she wept, and my heart was sore for her by reason of her much weeping, and I said to her, “What is the charge thou gavest me?” “When thou art about to take leave of her,” replied she, “repeat to her the verse I taught thee.” So I left her, full of gladness, and repairing to the garden, entered the pavilion, where I sat down satiated with food, and watched till a fourth part of the night was past. The night was tedious to me as it were a year: but I remained awake, till it was three quarters spent and the cocks cried out and I became sore an hungred for long watching. So I went up to the table and ate my fill, whereupon my head grew heavy and I was on the point of falling asleep, when I espied a light making towards me from afar. So I sprang up and washed my hands and mouth and roused myself; and before long, up came the lady, accompanied by ten damsels, in whose midst she shone, like the full moon among the stars. She was clad in a dress of green satin, embroidered with red gold, and she was as says the poet:

She lords it over her lovers in garments all of green, With open
vest and collars and flowing hair beseen.
“What is thy name?” I asked her, and she replied, “I’m she Who
burns the hearts of lovers on coals of love and teen.”
I made my moan unto her of passion and desire; “Upon a rock,” she
answered, “thy plaints are wasted clean.”
“Even if thy heart,” I told her, “be rock in very deed, Yet hath
God made fair water well from the rock, I ween.”

When she saw me, she laughed and said, “How is it that thou art awake and that sleep hath not overcome thee. Now that thou hast passed the night without sleep, I know that thou art in love, for it is the mark of a lover to watch the night for stress of longing.” Then she signed to her women and they went away, whereupon she came up to me and strained me to her bosom and kissed me and sucked my upper lip, whilst I kissed her and sucked her lower lip. I put my hand to her waist and pressed it and we came to the ground at the same moment. Then she undid her trousers and they fell down to her anklets and we fell to clipping and toying and cricketing and speaking softly and biting and intertwining of legs and going round about the House and the corners thereof, till her senses failed her for delight and she swooned away. And indeed that night was heart-gladdening and eye-refreshing, even as says the poet:

The sweetest of all the nights that ever the world can show! The
cup in it stinted never from hand to hand to go.
Therein I did dissever mine eyes from sleep and made The
ear-drop and the anklet foregather evermo'.

We lay together till the morning, when I would have gone away, but she stopped me, saying, "Stay, till I tell thee somewhat and give thee a charge." So I waited, whilst she undid a handkerchief and taking out this piece of linen, spread it out before me. I saw worked on it these two figures of gazelles and admired it exceedingly; and she said to me, "Keep this carefully, for it is my sister's work." "What is thy sister's name?" asked I, and she answered, "Nour el Huda." Then I took the piece of linen and went away, joyful, after we had agreed that I should visit her every night in the garden; but in my joy I forgot to repeat to her the verse my cousin had taught me. When I reached home, I found Azizeh lying down; but, as soon as she saw me, she rose, with the tears running from her eyes, and coming up to me, kissed me on the breast and said, "Didst thou repeat the verse to her, as I enjoined thee?" "I forgot it," answered I; "and here is what made me forget it." And I threw the piece of linen down before her. She rose and sat down again, but was unable to contain herself and her eyes ran over with tears, whilst she repeated the following verses:

O thou that seekest severance, forbear; Let not the fair delude
thee with their sleight.
Softly, for fortune's nature is deceit And parting is the end of
love-delight.

Then she said, "O my cousin, give me this piece of linen." So I gave it to her, and she took it and unfolding it, saw what was therein. When the time came for my going to my mistress, she said to me, "Go and peace be with thee; and when thou art about to leave her, repeat to her the verse I taught thee and which thou forgottest." Quoth I, "Repeat it to me." So she repeated it. Then I went to the garden and entered the pavilion, where I found the lady awaiting me. When she saw me, she rose and kissed me and made me sit in her lap; and we ate and drank and did our desire as on the previous night.

In the morning, I repeated to her my cousin's verse:

Tell me, O lovers, for God's sake I do entreat of you, When love
is sore upon a maid, alack! what shall she do?

When she heard this, her eyes filled with tears and she answered with the following verse:

Against her passion she must strive and hide her case from view
And humble and submissive be, whatever may ensue.

This I committed to memory and returned home, rejoiced at having done my cousin's errand. When I entered the house, I found Azizeh lying on the bed and my mother at her head, weeping over her condition. When the latter saw me, she said to me, "Out on thee for a cousin! How couldst thou leave the daughter of thine uncle in ill case and not ask what ailed her?" Azizeh, seeing me, raised her head and sat up and said, "O Aziz, didst thou repeat the verse to her?" "Yes," replied I; "and she wept and recited, in answer, another verse, which I remember." "Tell it me," said Azizeh. I did so; and she wept and repeated the following verses:

How shall she temper her desire, It doth her fire undo, And still
with each recurring day her heart is cleft in two.
Indeed, she strives for patience fair, but findeth nought in her
Except a heart too weak to bear the love that makes her rue.

"When thou goest to thy mistress as of wont," added she, "repeat to her these verses also." "I hear and obey," answered I and betook myself, at the wonted time, to the garden, where there passed between my mistress and myself what the tongue fails to describe. As I was about to leave her, I repeated to her my cousin's verses; whereupon the tears streamed from her eyes and she replied:

If she her secret cannot hide and lack of patience due, I see no help for her but death, of all things old and new.

Then I returned home, where I found Azizeh fallen of a swoon and my mother sitting at her head. When she heard my voice, she opened her eyes and said, "O Aziz, didst thou repeat the verses to her?" "Yes," answered I; "and she replied with this verse." And I repeated it; whereupon my cousin swooned again, and when she came to herself, she recited the following verses:

"I hearken, I obey, I die; yet bear to one who slew My hopes of
union and delight, my greeting and adieu.
Fair fall the happy of their joy, alack! and fair befall The
wretched lover of the cup that's set her lips unto."

When it was night, I repaired, as of wont, to the garden, where I found my mistress awaiting me. We sat down and ate and drank, after which we did our need and slept till the morning; and as I was going away, I repeated to her Azizeh's verses. When she heard them, she gave a loud cry and was greatly moved and exclaimed, "Alas! Alas! She who said these words is dead!" Then she wept and said to me, "Out on thee! What kin is she, who spoke thus, to thee?" "She is the daughter of my father's brother," replied I. "Thou liest," rejoined she. "By Allah, were she thy cousin, thou wouldst have loved her even as she loved thee! It is thou who hast killed her, and may God in like manner kill thee! By Allah, hadst thou told me thou hadst a cousin, I would not have admitted thee to my favours!" Quoth I, "Indeed, she is my cousin, and it was she who interpreted to me thy signs and taught me how to come at thee and how I should deal with thee; and but for her, I had never won to thee." "Did she then know of us?" asked she. "Yes," answered I; and she exclaimed, "God give thee sorrow of thy youth, even as thou hast wasted hers!" Then she said to me, "Go and see after her." So I went away, troubled at heart, and when I reached our street, I heard a sound of wailing, and asking about it, was answered, "We found Azizeh dead behind the door." I entered the house, and when my mother saw me, she said to me, "Her death lies at thy door, and may God not acquit thee of her blood! Out on thee for a cousin!" Then came my father, and we laid her out and did her the last offices and buried her. Moreover, we let make recitations of the Koran over her tomb and abode there three days, after which we returned home, grieving for her. When I entered the house, my mother came to me and said, "I would fain know what thou didst to her, to break her heart, for, O my son, I questioned her many times of the cause of her malady, but she would tell me nothing. So, God on thee, tell me what thou didst to her, that she died." Quoth I, "I did nothing." "May God avenge her on thee!" rejoined my mother. "She told me nothing, but kept her secret till she died, of her affection for thee. But when she died, I was with her, and she opened her eyes and said to me, 'O wife of my uncle, may God hold thy son guiltless of my blood and punish him not for that he hath done with me! And now He transporteth me from this transitory house of the world to the other and eternal dwelling-place.' 'O my daughter,' said I, 'God preserve thee and preserve thy youth!' And I questioned her of the cause of her illness; but she made me no answer. Then she smiled and said, 'O wife of my uncle, when my cousin is about to repair to the place whither he goes every day, bid him repeat these two words at his going away: "Faith is fair and perfidy foul." For this is of my tenderness over him, that I am solicitous for him in my lifetime and after my death.' Then she gave me somewhat for thee and made me swear that I would not give it to thee, till I should see thee weeping for her and lamenting her death. The thing is with me, and when I see thee as I have said, I will give it to thee." "Show it me," quoth I: but she would not. Then I gave myself up to my pleasures and thought no more of my cousin's death; for I was light-witted and would fain have been with my beloved day and night. So hardly had the night fallen, when I betook myself to the garden, where I found the lady sitting on coals of fire, for much waiting. As soon as she saw me, she ran to me and throwing her arms about my neck, enquired of my cousin. "She is dead," replied I; "and we have caused litanies and recitations of the Koran to be performed for her; and it is now four nights since she died." When she heard this, she shrieked aloud and wept, saying, "Did I not tell thee that thou hadst slain her? Hadst thou let me know of her before her death, I would have requited her the kindness she did me, in that she served me and brought thee to me; for but for her, we had never come together; and I fear lest some calamity befall thee by reason of thy sin against her." Quoth I, "She acquitted me before she died." And I repeated to her what my mother had told me. "God on thee," rejoined she, "when thou returnest to thy mother, learn what it is she hath for thee." Quoth I, "My mother also said to me, ‘Before thy cousin died, she laid a charge upon me, saying, “When thy son is about to go whither of wont, teach him these two words, ‘Faith is fair and perfidy foul.’” When my mistress heard this, she exclaimed, “The mercy of God the Most High be upon her! Indeed, she hath delivered thee from me, for I had it in mind to do thee a mischief, but now I will not hurt thee nor trouble thee.” I wondered at this and said to her, “What then didst thou purpose to do with me, and we lovers?” Quoth she, “Thou art infatuated with me; for thou art young and witless; thy heart is free from guile and thou knowest not our perfidy and malice. Were she yet alive, she would protect thee, for she is the cause of thy preservation and hath delivered thee from destruction. And now I charge thee that thou speak not with neither accost any of our sex, young or old, for thou art young and simple and knowest not the wiles of women and their malice, and she who explained the signs to thee is dead. And indeed I fear for thee, lest thou fall into some calamity and find none to deliver thee from it, now that thy cousin is dead. Alas, the pity of her! Would God I had known her before her death, that I might have visited her and requited her the fair service she did me! The mercy of the Most High be upon her, for she kept her secret and revealed not what she suffered, and but for her, thou hadst never won to me! But there is one thing I desire of thee.” “What is it?” said I. “It is,” answered she, “that thou bring me to her grave, that I may visit her in the tomb wherein she is and write some verses thereon.” “To-morrow,” replied I, “if it be the will of God.” Then I lay with her that night, and she ceased not, from time to time, to say, “Would thou hadst told me of thy cousin, before her death!” And I said to her, “What is the meaning of the two words she taught me?” But she made me no answer. As soon as it was day, she rose and taking a purse of dinars, said to me, “Come, show me her tomb, that I may visit it and grave some verses thereon and build a dome over it and commend her to the mercy of God and bestow these dinars in alms for her soul.” “I hear and obey,” replied I and went on before her, whilst she followed me, giving alms by the way and saying to all to whom she gave, “This is an alms for the soul of Azizeh, who kept her counsel, till she drank the cup of death, and discovered not the secret of her passion.” And she stinted not thus to give alms and say, “For Azizeh’s soul,” till the purse was empty and we came to the burial-place. When she saw the tomb, she wept and threw herself upon it; then pulling out a graver of steel and a light mallet, she graved the following verses, in fine characters, upon the stone at the head of the tomb:

I passed by a ruined tomb, in the midst of a garden-way, Upon
whose letterless stone seven blood-red anemones lay.
"Who sleeps in this unmarked grave?" I said; and the earth, "Bend
low; For a lover lies here and waits for the Resurrection
Day."
"God help thee, O victim of love," I cried, "and bring thee to
dwell In the highest of all the heavens of Paradise, I pray!
How wretched are lovers all, even in the sepulchre, When their
very graves are covered with ruin and decay!
Lo, if I might, I would plant thee a garden round about And with
my streaming tears the thirst of its flowers allay!"

Then she returned to the garden, weeping, and I with her, and she said to me, "By Allah, thou shalt never leave me!" "I hear and obey," answered I. Then I devoted myself wholly to her and paid her frequent visits, and she was good and generous to me. As often as I passed the night with her, she would make much of me and ask me of the two words my cousin told my mother, and I would repeat them to her.

I abode thus a whole year, till, what with eating and drinking and dalliance and wearing change of rich raiment, I waxed stout and fat, so that I lost all thought of sorrow and anxiety and forgot my cousin Azizeh. At the end of this time, I went one day to the bath, where I refreshed myself and put on a rich suit of clothes, scented with various perfumes; then, coming out I drank a cup of wine and smelt the fragrance of my new clothes, whereupon my breast dilated, for I knew not the perfidy of fortune nor the calamities of events. When the hour of evening-prayer came, I thought to repair to my mistress; but being heated with wine, I knew not where I went, so that, on the way, my drunkenness turned me into a by-street called En Nekib, where, as I was going along, I met an old woman with a lighted flambeau in one hand and a folded letter in the other; and she was weeping and repeating the following verses:

O welcome, bearer of glad news, thrice welcome to my sight; How
sweet and solaceful to me thy tidings of delight!
Thou that the loved one's greeting bringst unto my longing soul,
God's peace, what while the zephyr blows, dwell with thee
day and night!

When she saw me, she said to me, "O my son, canst thou read?" And I, of my officiousness, answered, "Yes, O old aunt." "Then, take this letter," rejoined she, "and read it to me." So I took the letter, and unfolding it, read it to her. Now it contained the greetings of an absent man to his friends; and when she heard its purport, she rejoiced and was glad and called down blessings on me, saying, "May God dispel thine anxiety, as thou hast dispelled mine!" Then she took the letter and walked on. Meanwhile, I was seized with a pressing need and squatted down on my heels to make water. When I had finished, I stood up and cleansed myself with pebbles, then shaking down my clothes, was about to go my way, when the old woman came up to me again and bending down to kiss my hand, said, "O my lord, God give thee joy of thy youth! I entreat thee to go with me to yonder door, for I told them what thou readest to me of the letter, and they believe me not: so come with me two steps and read them the letter from behind the door and accept my devout prayers." "What is the history of this letter?" asked I; and she answered, "O my son, it is from my son, who hath been absent from us these ten years. He set out with merchandise and tarried long in foreign parts, till we lost hope of him, supposing him to be dead. Now comes this letter from him, and he has a sister, who weeps for him day and night; so I said to her, 'He is in good health and case.' But she will not believe and says, 'Thou must needs bring me one who will read the letter in my presence, that my heart may be set at rest and my mind eased.' Thou knowest, O my son, that those who love are prone to imagine evil: so do me the favour to go with me and read the letter, standing without the door, whilst I call his sister to listen behind the curtain, so shalt thou dispel our anxiety and fulfil our need. Quoth the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve), 'He who eases an afflicted one of one of the troubles of this world, God will ease him of a hundred troubles;' and according to another tradition, 'Whoso relieves his brother of one of the troubles of this world, God will relieve him of two-and-seventy troubles of the Day of Resurrection.' And I have betaken myself to thee; so do not disappoint me." "I hear and obey," replied I. "Do thou go before me." So she went on and I followed her a little way, till she came to the gate of a large handsome house, whose door was plated with copper. I stood without the door, whilst the old woman cried out in Persian, and before I could think, a damsel ran up, with a nimble and agile step. She had tucked up her trousers to her knees, so that I saw a pair of legs that confounded mind and eye, for they were like columns of alabaster, adorned with anklets of gold, set with jewels. As says the poet, describing her:

O thou who barest thy leg for lovers to look upon, That by the
  sight of the leg the rest they may infer,
Who passest the cup around midst thy gallants, brisk and free,
  Nought seduces the folk but the cup and the
  cup-bearer.

She had seemingly been engaged in work of some kind, for she had tucked the end of her shift within the ribbon of her trousers and thrown the skirt of her robe over her arm. Her sleeves were rolled up to the elbows, so that I could see her white wrists and forearms, on which were two pairs of bracelets, with clasps of great pearls and round her neck was a collar of precious stones. Her ears were adorned with pendants of pearls and on her head she wore a kerchief of brocade, embroidered with jewels of price. When I saw her I was confounded at her beauty, for she was like the shining sun. Then she said, with clear and dulcet speech, never heard I sweeter, "O my mother, is this he who cometh to read the letter?" "It is," replied the old woman; and she put out her hand to me with the letter. Now she was standing about half a rod within the door; so I stretched out my hand and put my head and shoulders within the door, thinking to draw near her and read the letter, when behold, before I knew what she would be at, the old woman thrust her head into my back and pushed me forward, with the letter in my hand, so that before I could think, I found myself in the vestibule. Then she entered, swiftlier than the blinding lightning, and had but to shut the door. When the damsel saw me in the vestibule, she came up to me and straining me to her bosom, threw me to the floor, then knelt upon my breast and kneaded my belly with her hands, till I lost my senses. Then she took me by the hand and led me unable to resist, for the violence of her pressure, through seven vestibules, whilst the old woman went before us with the lighted candle, till we came to a great saloon, with four daises, in which a horseman might play at ball. Here she released me, saying, "Open thine eyes." So I opened them, still giddy for the excess of her pressing and pummelling, and saw that the whole place was built of the finest alabaster and hung and carpeted with stuffs of silk and brocade, with cushions and divans of the same. Therein also were two benches of brass and a couch of red gold set with pearls and jewels, befitting none save kings like unto thee. Then said she, "O Aziz, which wouldst thou rather, life or death?" "Life," answered I; and she said, "If life be liefer to thee, thou must marry me." Quoth I, "It were odious to me to marry the like of thee." "If thou marry me," rejoined she, "thou wilt at least be safe from the daughter of Delileh the crafty." "And who is she?" asked I. She laughed and replied, "How comes it that thou knowest her not, seeing that to-day thou hast companied with her a year and four months, may God the Most High destroy her and afflict her with one worse than herself! By Allah, there lives not a more perfidious than she! How many hath she not slain before thee and what deeds hath she not done! Nor can I understand how thou hast been so long in her company, yet hath she not killed thee nor done thee any hurt." When I heard this, I marvelled exceedingly and said, "Who made thee to know of her, O my lady?" "I know of her," said she, "as the age knows of its calamities: but now I would fain have thee tell me all that has passed between you, that I may know the cause of thy deliverance from her." So I told her all that had happened, including the story of my cousin Azizeh. When she heard of the latter's death, her eyes ran over with tears and she smote hand upon hand and cried out, "God have mercy on her, for she lost her youth in His service, and may He replace her to thee! By Allah, O Aziz, it was she who was the cause of thy preservation from the daughter of Delileh and but for her, thou hadst been lost! Now she is dead and I fear for thee from the other's perfidy and mischief; but my heart is full and I cannot speak." "By Allah," quoth I, "all this happened, even as thou sayest!" And she shook her head and said, "There lives not this day the like of Azizeh." "And when she was dying," continued I, "she bade me repeat to my mistress these two words, 'Faith is fair and perfidy foul.'" When she heard this, she exclaimed, "By Allah, O Aziz, it was this that saved thee from dying by her hand: and now my heart is at ease for thee from her for she will never slay thee and thy cousin preserved thee, both in her lifetime and after her death. By Allah, I have desired thee this many a day, but could not get at thee till now and except by a trick, which succeeded with thee for thou art inexperienced and knowest not the malice of women nor the wiles of old women." "No, by Allah!" rejoined I. Then said she to me, "Be of good cheer and take comfort; the dead is in the mercy of God and the living shall be fairly entreated. Thou art a handsome youth, and I do not desire thee but according to the ordinance of God and of His prophet, on whom be peace and salvation! Whatever thou desirest of money and stuff, thou shalt have without stint, and I will not impose any toil on thee, for there is with me always bread baked and water in the pitcher. All I ask of thee is that thou do with me even as the cock does." "And what is it the cock does?" asked I. At this she laughed and clapped her hands and fell over on her back for excess of laughter: then she sat up and said, "O light of my eyes, dost thou not know what the cock's business is?" "No, by Allah!" replied I; and she said, "The cock's business is to eat and drink and tread." I was abashed at her words and said, "Is that the cock's business?" "Yes," answered she; "and all I ask of thee now is to gird thy loins and strengthen thy resolution and swive thy best." Then she clapped her hands and cried out, saying, "O my mother, bring hither those who are with thee." Whereupon in came the old woman, carrying a veil of silk and accompanied by four lawful witnesses, who saluted me and sat down. Then she lighted four candles, whilst the young lady covered herself with the veil and deputed one of the witnesses to execute the contract on her behalf. So they drew up the marriage contract and she acknowledged to have received the whole of her dowry, both precedent and contingent, and to be indebted to me in the sum of ten thousand dirhems. Then he gave the witnesses their fee and they withdrew whence they came; whereupon she put off her clothes and abode in a shift of fine silk, laced with gold, after which she took me by the hand and carried me up to the couch, saying, "There is no blame in what is lawful." She lay down on her back and drawing me on to her breast, heaved a sigh and followed it up with an amorous gesture. Then she pulled up the shift above her breasts, and when I saw her thus, I could not choose but thrust into her, after I had sucked her lips, whilst she moaned and made a show of bashfulness and wept without tears. And indeed the case reminded me of the saying of the poet:

When I drew up her shift and discovered the terrace-roof of her
  kaze, I found it as strait as my humour or eke my worldly
  ways.
So I drove it incontinent in, halfway; and she heaved a sigh.
  "For what dost thou sigh?" quoth I. "For the rest of it,
  sure," she says.

Then said she, "O my beloved, to it and do thy best, for I am thine handmaid. My life on thee, give it me, all of it, that I may take it in my hand and thrust it into my entrails!" And she ceased not to excite me with sobs and sighs and amorous gestures, in the intervals of kissing and clipping, till we attained the supreme felicity and the term of our desires. We lay together till the morning, when I would have gone out; but she came up to me, laughing, and said, "Thinkest thou that going out of the bath is the same as going in? Verily, I believe thou deemest me to be the like of the daughter of Delileh. Beware of such a thought, for thou art my husband by contract and according to law. If thou be drunken, return to thy right mind and know that this house is opened but one day in every year. Go down and look at the great door." So I went down and found the door locked and nailed up and returned and told her so. "Know, O Aziz," said she, "that we have in this house flour and grain and fruits and pomegranates and sugar and meat and sheep and fowls and so forth, enough to serve us for many years; and henceforth, the door will not be opened till after the lapse of a whole year, nor shalt thou find thyself without till then.” Quoth I, “There is no power and no virtue but in God!” “And what can this irk thee,” rejoined she, “seeing thou knowest the cock’s craft, of which I told thee?” Then she laughed and I laughed too, and I conformed to what she said and abode with her, plying the cock’s craft, eating and drinking and cricketing, twelve whole months, during which time she conceived by me and brought me a son. At the end of the year, I heard the door opened and men came in with manchets and flour and sugar. Thereupon, I would have gone out, but my wife said, “Wait till nightfall and go out as thou camest in.” So I waited till the hour of evening-prayer, and was about to go forth in fear and trembling, when she stopped me, saying, “By Allah, I will not let thee go, except thou swear to return this night before the closing of the door.” I agreed to this, and she made me take a solemn oath by sword and Koran and the oath of divorce to boot that I would return to her. Then I left her and going straight to the garden, found the door open as usual; whereat I was angry and said to myself, “I have been absent a whole year and come here at unawares and find the place open as of wont! I wonder, is the damsel still in her old case? Algates I must enter and see, before I go to my mother, more by token that it is now nightfall.” So I entered and making for the pavilion, found the daughter of Delileh sitting there with her head on her knee and her hand to her cheek. Her colour was changed and her eyes sunken; but when she saw me, she exclaimed, “Praised be God for thy safety!” and would have risen, but fell down for joy. I was abashed before her and hung my head; but presently went up to her, and kissing her, said, “How knewest thou that I should come to thee to-night?” “I knew it not,” replied she. “By Allah, this whole year past I have not tasted sleep, but have watched every night, expecting thee, from the day thou wentest out from me and I gave thee the new suit of clothes, and thou didst promise me to go to the bath and come back! So I abode awaiting thee that night and a second and a third; but thou camest not till now, and I ever expecting thy coming, for this is the way of lovers. And now I would have thee tell me what has been the cause of thine absence this year long.” So I told her all that had happened: and when she knew that I was married, her colour paled. “I have come to thee to-night,” added

I; "but I must leave thee before day." Quoth she, "Doth it not suffice her to have tricked thee into marrying her and kept thee prisoner with her a whole year, but she must make thee take the oath of divorce to return to her before morning and not allow thee to divert thyself with thy mother or me nor suffer thee to pass one night with either of us, away from her? How, then, must it be with one from whom thou hast been absent a whole year, and I knew thee before she did? But may God have compassion on thy cousin Azizeh, for there befell her what never befell any and she endured what never any endured else and died, oppressed and rejected of thee; yet was it she protected thee against me. Indeed, I thought thou didst love me, so let thee take thine own way; else had I not let thee go safe and sound, when I had it in my power to hold thee in duresse and destroy thee." Then she wept and waxed wroth and shuddered in my face and looked at me with angry eyes. When I saw this, I was terrified at her and trembled in every nerve, for she was like a dreadful ghoul and I like a bean over the fire. Then said she, "Thou art of no use to me, now thou art married and hast a child, nor art thou any longer fit for my company. I care only for bachelors and not for married men; for they profit us nothing. Thou hast sold me for yonder stinking nosegay; but by Allah, I will make the baggage's heart ache for thee, for thou shalt not live either for me or for her!" Then she gave a loud cry, and ere I could think, up came ten damsels and threw me on the ground; whereupon she rose and taking a knife, said, "I will slaughter thee like a he-goat; and that will be less than thy desert, for thy behaviour to me and to thy cousin before me." When I found myself at the mercy of her women, with my cheeks stained with dust, and saw her sharpen the knife, I made sure of death and cried out to her for mercy. But she only redoubled in inhumanity and ordered the maids to bind my hands behind me, which they did, and throwing me on my back, sat down on my stomach and held my head. Then two of them sat on my shins, whilst other two held my hands, and she bade a third pair beat me. So they beat me till I lost my senses and my voice failed. When I revived, I said to myself, "It were easier and better for me to have my throat cut than to be beaten thus!" And I remembered how my cousin used to say to me, "God keep thee from her mischief!" and cried out and wept, till my voice failed and I remained without breath or motion. Then she sharpened the knife and said to the girls, “Uncover him.” With this God inspired me to repeat to her the two words my cousin had bequeathed me, and I said, “O my lady, dost thou not know that faith is fair and perfidy foul?” When she heard this, she cried out and said, “God pity thee, Azizeh, and give thee Paradise in exchange for thy wasted youth! Verily, she served thee in her lifetime and after her death, and now she has saved thee alive out of my hands with these two words. Nevertheless, I cannot leave thee thus, but I must e’en set my mark on thee, to spite yonder shameless baggage, who has kept thee from me.” Then she called out to the damsels and bade them bind my feet with cords and sit on me. They did her bidding, whilst I lay insensible, and she fetched a pan of copper and setting it on a brazier, poured into it oil of sesame, in which she fried cheese. Then she came up to me and unfastening my trousers, tied a cord round my cullions and giving it to two of her women, bade them pull at it. They did so, and I swooned away and was for excess of pain in a world other than this. Then she came with a steel scalpel and cut off my yard, so that I remained like a woman: after which she seared the wound with the boiling oil and rubbed it with a powder, and I the while unconscious. When I came to myself, the blood had ceased to flow; so she bade the damsels unbind me and gave me a cup of wine to drink. Then said she to me, “Go now to her whom thou hast married and who grudged me a single night, and the mercy of God be on thy cousin Azizeh, who discovered not her secret! Indeed she was the cause of thy preservation, for hadst thou not repeated those words to me, I had surely slain thee. Rise and go to whom thou wilt, for thou hadst nothing of mine, save what I have cut off, and now I have no part in thee, nor have I any further care or occasion for thee: so begone about thy business and bless thy cousin’s memory!” With that, she gave me a push with her foot, and I rose, hardly able to walk, and went little by little, till I came to the door of my wife’s house I found it open, so I threw myself within it and fell down in a swoon; whereupon my wife came out and lifting me up, carried me into the saloon and found that I was like unto a woman. Then I fell into a deep sleep; but when I awoke, I found myself thrown down at the gate of the garden. I rose, groaning for pain and misery, and made my way to my mother's house, where I found her weeping for me and saying, "O my son, would I knew where thou art!" So I drew near and threw myself upon her, and when she saw me, she knew that I was ill, for my face was at once pale and livid. Then I called to mind my cousin and all the kind offices she had been wont to do me and knew that she had indeed loved me; so I wept for her and my mother wept also. Presently, she said to me, "O my son, thy father is dead." At this my anguish redoubled, and I wept till I lost my senses. When I came to myself, I looked at the place where Azizeh had been used to sit and wept anew, till I all but fainted for excess of grief; and I ceased not to weep and lament thus till midnight, when my mother said to me, "Thy father has been dead these ten days." "I shall never think of any one but my cousin Azizeh," answered I; "and indeed I deserve all that hath befallen me, in that I abandoned her who loved me so dear." "What hath befallen thee?" asked my mother. So I told her all that had happened, and she wept awhile, then rose and set meat and drink before me. I ate a little and drank, after which I repeated my story to her, and she exclaimed, "Praised be God that she did but this to thee and forbore to slay thee!" Then she tended me and medicined me till I regained my health: and when my recovery was complete, she said to me, "O my son, I will now bring out to thee that which thy cousin committed to me in trust for thee; for it is thine. She made me swear not to give it thee, till I should see thee recalling her to mind and weeping over her and thine affections severed from other than her; and now I see these conditions fulfilled in thee." So she arose and opening a chest, took out the piece of linen, with the figures of gazelles worked thereon, which I had given Azizeh; and I opened it and found written therein the following verses:

Who moved thee, fairest one, to use this rigour of disdain And
slay, with stress of love, the souls that sigh for thee in
vain?
If thou recall me not to mind beyond our parting-day, God knows
the thought of thee with me for ever shall remain!
Thou smitest me with cruel words, that yet are sweet to me: Wilt
thou one day, though but in dreams, to look upon me deign?

I had not thought the ways of Love were languishment and woe And
stress of soul until, alas! to love thee I was fain.
I knew not weariness till I the captive of thine eyes Became and
all my soul was bound in passion's fatal chain.
Even my foes have ruth on me and pity my distress: But thou, O
heart of steel, wilt ne'er have mercy on my pain.
By God, although I die, I'll ne'er forget thee, O my hope, Nor
comfort take, though life itself for love should waste and
wane!

When I read these verses, I wept sore and buffeted my face; then I unfolded the scroll, and there fell from it another. I opened it and found these words written therein: "Know, O my cousin, that I acquit thee of my blood and I beseech God to make accord between thee and her whom thou lovest: but if aught befall thee through the daughter of Delileh the crafty, return thou not to her neither resort to any other woman and bear thine affliction patiently, for were not the ordained term of thy life a long one, thou hadst perished long ago: but praised be God, who hath appointed my last day before thine! My peace be upon thee; preserve the cloth with the gazelles figured thereon and let it not leave thee, for it used to keep me company, whenas thou wert absent from me; but I conjure thee, by Allah, if thou chance to fall in with her who wrought these gazelles and it be in thy power to foregather with her, hold aloof from her and do not let her approach thee nor marry her; and if thou happen not on her and find no way to her, look thou company not with any other of her sex. Know that she who wrought these gazelles is the daughter of the King of the Camphor Islands and every year she works a like cloth and despatches it to far countries, that her report and the beauty of her broidery, which none in the world can match, may be bruited abroad, As for thy beloved, the daughter of Delileh, this cloth came to her hand, and she used to ensnare folk with it, showing it to them and saying, 'I have a sister who wrought this.' But she lied in this saying, may God bring her to shame! This, then, is my parting counsel to thee, and I have not charged thee thus, but because I know that, after my death, the world will be straitened on thee and belike, by reason of this, thou wilt leave thy native land and wander in foreign countries, and hearing of her who wrought these figures, be minded to foregather with her. Then wilt thou remember me and it shall not avail thee nor wilt thou know my value till after my death."

When I had read the scroll and understood what was written therein, I fell again to weeping, and my mother wept because I did; and I ceased not to gaze upon it and weep till nightfall. I abode thus a whole year, at the end of which time the merchants, with whom I am in this caravan, prepared to set out from my native town, and my mother counselled me to equip myself and journey with them, so haply I might find forgetfulness and my sorrow cease from me, saying, "Take comfort and put away from thee this mourning and travel for a year or two or three, till the caravan returns, when peradventure thy breast may be dilated and thy heart lightened." She ceased not to persuade me thus, till I provided myself with merchandise and set out with the caravan. But all the time of my journey, my tears have never ceased flowing; and at every station where we halt, I open this piece of linen and look on these gazelles and call to mind my cousin Azizeh and weep for her as thou hast seen, for indeed she loved me very dearly and died, oppressed and rejected of me; I did her nought but ill and she did me nought but good. When these merchants return from their journey, I shall return with them, by which time I shall have been a whole year absent; yet is my sorrow greater than ever and my grief and affliction were but increased by my visit to the Islands of Camphor and the Castle of Crystal. The islands in question are seven in number and are ruled by a king, Shehriman by name, who hath a daughter called Dunya; and I was told that it was she who wrought these gazelles and that this thou seest was of her broidery. When I knew this, yearning redoubled on me and I became a prey to consuming languor and drowned in the sea of melancholy thought; and I wept over myself, for that I was become even as a woman, without manly gear like other men, and that there was no recourse for me. From the day of my departure from the Camphor Islands, I have been tearful-eyed and sorrowful-hearted, and I know not whether it will be given me to return to my native land and die by my mother or not, for I am weary of the world.'

When the young merchant had made an end of telling his story, he wept and groaned and complained and gazed upon the figures wrought on the piece of linen, whilst the tears streamed down his cheeks and he repeated the following verses:

'Needs must thy sorrow have an end,' quoth many an one 'and cease
And I, Needs must your chiding end and let me be at peace.'
'After awhile,' say they; and I, 'Who will ensure me life, O
fools, until the hands of grief their grip of me release?'

And also these:

God knows that, since my severance from thee, full sore I've
wept, So sore that needs my eyes must run for very tears in
debt!
'Have patience,' quoth my censurers, 'and thou shalt win them
yet.' And I, 'O thou that blamest me, whence should I
patience get?'

Then said he, 'This, O prince, is my story: hast thou ever heard a stranger one?' Taj el Mulouk marvelled greatly at the young merchant's tale and said to him, 'By Allah, thou hast suffered that which never befell any but thyself, but thou hast life appointed to thee, which thou must needs fulfil; and now I would fain have thee tell me how thou sawest the lady who wrought these gazelles.' 'O my lord,' answered Aziz, 'I got me access to her by a stratagem, and it was this. When I entered her city with the caravan, I went forth and wandered about the gardens [till I came to one walled in and] abounding in trees, whose keeper was a venerable old man of advanced age. I asked him to whom the garden belonged, and he replied, "To the lady Dunya, the king's daughter. We are now beneath her palace," added he; "and when she is minded to divert herself, she opens the private door and walks in the garden and breathes the fragrance of the flowers." So I said to him, "Favour me by allowing me to sit in the garden till she comes; haply I may be fortunate enough to catch a sight of her as she passes." "There can be no harm in that," answered he. So I gave him money and said to him, "Buy us something to eat." He took the money joyfully and opening the door, admitted me into the garden and carried me to a pleasant spot, where he bade me sit down and await his return. Then he brought me fruit and leaving me, returned after awhile with a roasted lamb, of which we ate till we had enough, my heart yearning the while for a sight of the princess. Presently, as we sat, the postern opened and the keeper said to me, “Rise and hide thyself.” I did so; and behold a black eunuch put out his head through the wicket and said, “O elder, is there any one with thee?” “No,” answered he; and the eunuch said, “Shut the garden gate.” So the keeper shut the gate, and the lady Dunya came in by the private door. When I saw her, methought the moon had risen above the horizon and was shining; so I looked at her a long while and longed for her, as a man athirst longs for water. After a time she withdrew and shut the door; whereupon I left the garden and sought my lodging, knowing that I could not win to her and that I was no mate for her, more by token that I was become like unto a woman, having no manly gear, and she was a king’s daughter and I but a merchant; so how could I have access to the like of her or to any other woman? Accordingly, when my companions made ready for departure, I too made ready and set out with them, and we journeyed till we arrived at this place, where we met with thee. This then is my story, and peace be on thee!’

When Taj el Mulouk heard the young merchant’s account of the princess Dunya and her beauty, fires raged in his bosom and his heart and thought were occupied with love for her; passion and longing were sore upon him and he knew not what to do. Then he mounted his horse and taking Aziz with him, returned to his father’s capital, where he assigned the merchant a house and supplied him with all that he needed in the way of meat and drink and clothing. Then he left him and returned to his palace, with the tears running down his cheeks, for report [whiles] stands in stead of sight and very knowledge. He abode thus till his father came in to him and finding him pale-faced, lean of body and tearful eyed, knew that some chagrin had betided him and said to him, ‘O my son, acquaint me with thy case and tell me what hath befallen thee, that thy colour is changed and thy body wasted.’ So he told him all that had passed and how he had heard from Aziz of the princess Dunya and had fallen in love with her on hearsay, without having set eyes on her. ‘O my son,’ said the King, ‘she is the daughter of a king whose country is far distant from ours: so put away this thought from thee and go into thy mother’s palace. There are five hundred damsels like moons, and whichsoever of them pleaseth thee, take her; or else we will seek thee in marriage some one of the kings’ daughters, fairer than the lady Dunya.’ ‘O my father,’ answered Taj el Mulouk, ‘I desire none other, for she it is who wrought the gazelles that I saw, and I must have her; else I will flee into the deserts and waste places and slay myself for her sake.’ Then said his father, ‘O my son, have patience with me, till I send to her father and demand her hand in marriage, as I did with thy mother. It may be that God will bring thee to thy desire; and if her father will not consent, I will shake his kingdom under him with an army, whose van shall be upon him, whilst the rear is yet with me.’ Then he sent for Aziz and said to him, ‘O my son, dost thou know the way to the Camphor Islands?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he; and the King said, ‘It is my wish that thou accompany my Vizier thither.’ ‘I hear and obey, O King of the age,’ replied Aziz; whereupon the King summoned his Vizier and said to him, ‘Devise me some plan, whereby my son’s affair may be rightly managed, and go to the King of the Camphor Islands and demand his daughter in marriage for Tej el Mulouk.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered the Vizier. Then Taj el Mulouk returned to his dwelling place and his longing redoubled and impatience and unease were sore upon him; and when the night darkened upon him, he wept and sighed and complained and repeated the following verses:

The shadows darken and my tears flow aye without avail, Whilst in
my heart the fires of love rage on and never fail.
Question the nights of me, and they will testify to thee That I
in all their endless hours do nought but weep and wait.
Wakeful for love-longing and grief, I lie and watch the stars All
night, what while upon my cheeks the tears fall down like
hail.
Lowly and helpless I abide, for such as lovers be Have, as it
were, nor kith nor kin to help them in their bale.

Then he swooned away and did not recover his senses till the morning, when there came to him one of his father's servants and standing at his head, summoned him to the King's presence. So he went with him, and his father seeing that his pallor had increased, exhorted him to patience and promised him union with her he loved. Then he equipped Aziz and the Vizier for the journey and gave them presents for the princess's father; and they set out and fared on night and day, till they drew near the Camphor Islands, when the Vizier called a halt on the banks of a stream and despatched a messenger to acquaint the King of his arrival. The messenger had not long been gone, when they saw, advancing towards them, the King's chamberlains and amirs, who met them at a parasang's distance from the city and escorted them to the royal presence. They laid before the King the gifts with which they were charged and enjoyed his hospitality three days. On the fourth day the Vizier rose and going in to the King, stood before him and acquainted him with the object of his visit; whereat he was perplexed and knew not what answer to make him, for that his daughter was averse from men and did not desire to marry. So he bowed his head awhile, then raised it and calling one of his eunuchs, said to him, 'Go to thy mistress, the princess Dunya, and repeat to her what thou hast heard and tell her this Vizier's errand.' So the eunuch went out and returning after a while, said to the King, 'O King of the age, when I went to the lady Dunya and told her what I had heard, she was exceeding wroth and made at me with a staff, meaning to break my head; whereupon I fled from her, and she said to me, 'If my father force me to marry, him whom I wed I will kill.' Then said the King to the Vizier and Aziz, 'Salute the King your master and tell him what ye have heard and that my daughter is averse from men and hath no mind to marry.' So they returned, without having accomplished the object of their journey, and fared on till they rejoined the King and told him what had passed; whereupon he commanded the chief to summon the troops for war. But the Vizier said to him, 'O King, do not this, for the King is not at fault, seeing that, when his daughter learnt our business, she sent to say that, if her father forced her to marry, she would kill her husband and herself after him: so the refusal comes from her.' When the King heard this, he feared for Taj el Mulouk and said, 'If I make war on the King of the Camphor Islands and carry off his daughter, she will kill herself and it will profit me nothing.' So he told his son how the case stood, and he said, 'O my father, I cannot live without her; so I will go to her and cast about to get me access to her, though I die in the attempt.' 'How wilt thou go to her?' asked his father; and he answered, 'In the disguise of a merchant.' Then said the King, 'If thou must go and there is no help for it, take with thee Aziz and the Vizier.' He agreed to this, and the King took money from his treasuries and made ready for him merchandise, to the value of a hundred thousand dinars; and when the night came Taj el Mulouk went to Aziz's lodging and passed the night there, heart-smitten and taking no delight in food nor sleep; for melancholy was heavy upon him and he was agitated with longing for his beloved. So he besought the Creator to unite him with her and wept and groaned and complained, repeating the following verses:

Shall union after estrangement betide us, perchance, some day?
  Shall I ever make moan of my passion to thee, I wonder, and say,
'How oft have I called thee to mind, whilst the night in its
  trances slept! Thou hast made me waken, whilst all but I in oblivion lay.

Then he wept sore and Aziz wept with him, for that he remembered his cousin; and they both ceased not to do thus till the morning, when Taj el Mulouk rose and went in to his mother in his travelling dress. She asked him of his case, and he told her what was to do; so she gave him fifty thousand dinars and bade him farewell, offering up prayers for his safety and for his union with his beloved. Then he left her and betaking himself to his father, asked his leave to depart. The King granted him leave and presenting him with other fifty thousand dinars, let pitch a tent for him without the city, in which they abode two days, then set out on their journey. And Taj el Mulouk delighted in Aziz's company and said to him, 'O my brother, I can never bear to be parted from thee.' 'Nor I from thee,' replied Aziz; 'and fain would I die at thy feet: but, O my brother, my heart is concerned for my mother.' 'When we have attained our wish,' said the prince, 'all will be well.' As for the Vizier, he exhorted Taj el

Mulouk to patience, whilst Aziz entertained him with talk and recited verses to him and diverted him with stories and anecdotes; and so they fared on day and night for two whole months, till the way became tedious to the prince and the fires of passion redoubled on him. So he repeated the following verses:

Long is the road and restlessness and grief redouble aye, Whilst
in my breast the fires of love rage ever night and day
O thou, the goal of all my hopes, sole object of my wish, I swear
by Him, the Most High God, who moulded man from clay,
For love of thee I bear a load of longing and desire, Such as the
mountains of Es Shumm might ne'er withal away!
Indeed, O lady of my world, love slayeth me outright; No
breath of life in me is left, my fainting spright to stay
But for the hope of union with thee, that lures me on, My weary
body had no strength to furnish forth the way.

When he had finished, he wept and Aziz wept with him, from a lacerated heart, till the Vizier was moved to pity by their weeping and said to the prince, 'O my lord, take courage and be of good cheer; all will yet be well.' 'O Vizier,' said Taj el Mulouk, 'indeed I am weary of the length of the way. Tell me how far we are distant yet from the city.' 'But a little way,' replied Aziz. Then they continued their journey, traversing valleys and plains and hills and stony wastes, till one night, as Taj el Mulouk was asleep, he dreamt that his beloved was with him and that he embraced her and pressed her to his bosom; and he awoke, trembling and delirious with emotion, and repeated the following verses:

My heart is maddened for love and my tears for ever flow, And
longing is ever upon me and unrelenting woe.
My plaint is, for tears, as the mourning of women bereft of
young, And I moan, when the darkness gathers, as the
turtles, sad and low.
Yet, if the breezes flutter from the land where thou dost dwell,
Their wafts o'er the earth, sun-weaned, a grateful coolness
throw.

Peace be on thee, my beloved, as long as the cushat flies, As
long as the turtles warble, as long as the zephyrs blow!

When he had finished, the Vizier came to him and said, ‘Rejoice; this is a good sign: so comfort thyself and be of good cheer, for thou shalt surely compass thy desire.’ And Aziz also came to him and exhorted him to patience and applied himself to divert him, talking with him and telling him stories. So they pressed on, night and day, other two months, till, one day, at sunrise, there appeared to them some white thing in the distance and Taj el Mulouk said to Aziz, ‘What is yonder whiteness?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered he, ‘that is the Fortress of Crystal and the city that thou seekest.’ At this the prince rejoiced, and they fared forward till they drew near the city, to the exceeding joy of Taj el Mulouk, whose grief and anxiety ceased from him. They entered, in the guise of merchants, the King’s son being habited as a merchant of importance, and repaired to a great khan, known as the Merchants’ Lodging. Quoth Taj el Mulouk to Aziz, ‘Is this the resort of the merchants?’ ‘Yes,’ replied he; ‘it is the khan in which I lodged when I was here before.’ So they alighted there and making their beasts kneel down, unloaded them and laid up their goods in the warehouses. They abode four days, resting; at the end of which time, the Vizier proposed that they should hire a large house. To this they assented and hired a spacious house, fitted up for festivities, where they took up their abode, and the Vizier and Aziz studied to devise some plan of conduct for Taj el Mulouk, whilst the latter remained in a state of perplexity, knowing not what to do. The Vizier could think of nothing but that he should set up as a merchant in the stuff-market; so he turned to the prince and Aziz and said to them, ‘If we tarry thus, we shall not compass our desire nor attain our aim; but I have bethought me of somewhat, in which, if it please God, we shall find our advantage.’ ‘Do what seemeth good to thee,’ replied Taj el Mulouk; ‘indeed there is a blessing on the aged, more by token that thou art versed in the conduct of affairs: so tell me what is in thy mind.’ ‘It is my counsel,’ rejoined the Vizier, ‘that we hire thee a shop in the stuff-bazaar, where thou mayst sit to sell and buy. Every one, great and small, hath need of silken and other stuffs; so if thou be patient and abide in thy shop, thine affairs will prosper, if it please God, especially as thou art comely of aspect. Moreover, I would have thee make Aziz thy factor and set him within the shop, to hand thee the pieces of stuffs and silks.' When Taj el Mulouk heard this, he said, 'This is a good counsel.' So he took out a handsome suit of merchant's clothes, and putting it on, set out for the bazaar, followed by his servants, to one of whom he had given a thousand dinars, wherewith to fit up the shop. When they came to the stuff-market and the merchants saw Taj el Mulouk's beauty and grace, they were confounded and some said, 'Sure Rizwan hath opened the gates of Paradise and left them unguarded, so that this passing lovely youth hath come out.' And others, 'Belike this is one of the angels.' They asked for the shop of the overseer of the market, and the merchants directed them to it. So they repaired thither and saluted him, and he and those who were with him rose to them and seated them and made much of them because of the Vizier, whom they saw to be a man of age and reverend aspect; and seeing Aziz and Taj el Mulouk in his company, they said to one another, 'Doubtless this old man is the father of these two youths.' Then said the Vizier, 'Which of you is the overseer of the market?' 'This is he,' answered they; whereupon he came forward and the Vizier, observing him, saw him to be an old man of grave and dignified carriage, with slaves and servants, white and black. He greeted them in the friendliest manner and was lavish in his attentions to them: then he made them sit by his side and said to them, 'Have you any business which we may have the pleasure of transacting?' 'Yes,' answered the Vizier. 'I am an old man, stricken in years, and have with me these two youths, with whom I have travelled through many towns and countries, tarrying a whole year in every city (of importance) on our way, that they might take their pleasure in viewing it and come to know its people. Now I have chosen to make a stay in this your town; so I would fain have thee allot me a handsome shop in the best situation, wherein I may establish them, that they may traffic and learn to buy and sell and give and take, whilst they divert themselves with the sight of the place and acquire the uses of its people.' 'Good,' said the overseer, and looking at the two youths, rejoiced in them and conceived a great affection for them. Now he was a great lover of bewitching glances, preferring the commerce of boys to that of girls and inclining to their love. So he said in himself, ‘These be fine purchase; glory to Him who created and fashioned them out of vile water!’ and rising, stood before them like a servant, to do them honour. Then he went out and made ready for them a shop in the midst of the market, than which there was no larger nor better in the bazaar, for it was spacious and handsomely decorated and fitted with shelves of ebony and ivory; after which he delivered the keys to the Vizier, who was dressed as an old merchant, saying, ‘Take them, O my lord, and may God make it a blessed abiding-place to thy sons!’ The Vizier took the keys, and they returned to the khan and caused their servants to transport to the shop all their goods and stuffs and valuables, of which they had great plenty, worth treasures of money. Next morning, the Vizier carried the two young men to the bath, where they washed and put on rich clothes and perfumed themselves to the utmost therein. Now each of them was passing fair to look upon, and the bath enhanced their charms to the utmost, even as says the poet:

Good luck to him who in the bath doth serve him as his squire,
Handling a body ‘gotten sure ‘twixt water and the fire!
With skilful hands he showeth forth the marvels of his craft, In
that he gathers very musk from what is like
camphire.

When the overseer heard that they had gone to the bath, he sat down to await them, and presently they came up to him, like two gazelles, with red cheeks and black eyes and shining faces, as they were two lustrous moons or two fruit-laden saplings. When he saw them, he rose and said to them, ‘May your bath profit you ever!’ Whereupon Taj el Mulouk replied, with the sweetest of speech, ‘May God be bountiful to thee, O my father! Why didst thou not come with us and bathe in our company?’ Then they both bent over his hands and kissing them, walked before him to the shop, to do him honour and show their respect for him, for that he was chief of the merchants and the market, as well as their sense of his kindness in giving them the shop. When he saw their hips quivering, emotion and longing redoubled on him and he could not contain himself, but puffed and snorted and devoured them with his eyes, repeating the following

verses:

The heart in them studies the chapter of worship unshared sheer
No proofs of more gods to worship than one it readeth here.
No wonder it is they tremble by reason of their weight; How much
is there not of motion in that revolving sphere!

And also these:

Two fair ones walking on the earth mine eyes did late espy; Two that I needs must love although they walked upon mine eye.

When they heard this, they begged him to enter the bath with them a second time. He could hardly believe his ears and hastening thither, went in with them. The Vizier had not yet left the bath; so when he heard of the overseer's coming, he came out and meeting him in the outer room of the bath, invited him to enter. He refused, but Taj el Mulouk took him by one hand and Aziz by the other and carried him into a cabinet, the impure old man submitting to them, whilst his emotion increased on him. Then Taj el Mulouk swore that none but he should wash him and Aziz that none but he should pour water on him. He would have refused, albeit this was what he desired; but the Vizier said to him, 'They are thy sons; let them wash thee and bathe thee.' 'God preserve them to thee!' exclaimed the overseer. 'By Allah, thy coming and theirs hath brought blessing and fortune upon our city!' and he repeated the following verses:

Thou cam'st, and the mountains about us grew green And glittered,
with flowers for the bridegroom beseen;
Whilst earth and her creatures cried, 'Welcome to thee, Thrice
welcome, that comest in glory and sheen!'

They thanked him for this, and Taj el Mulouk proceeded to wash him, whilst Aziz poured water over him and he thought himself in Paradise. When they had made an end of his service, he called down blessings on them and sat talking with the Vizier, gazing the while on the youths. Presently, the servants brought them towels, and they dried themselves and donned their clothes. Then they went out, and the Vizier said to the overseer, 'O my lord, verily the bath is the

Paradise of this world.' 'May God vouchsafe it to thee,' replied the overseer, 'and health to thy sons and guard them from the evil eye! Do you remember aught that the poets have said in praise of the bath?' 'Yes,' said Taj el Mulouk and repeated the following verses:

The life of the bath is the pleasantest part of life, Except that
the time of our sojourn there is slight.
A heaven, wherein 'tis irksome to us to bide: A hell, into which
we enter with delight.

'And I also,' said Aziz, 'remember some verses in praise of the bath.' Quoth the overseer, 'Let us hear them.' So he repeated the following:

I know a house, wherein flowers from the sheer stone blow; Most
goodly, when the flames about it rage and glow.
Thou deem'st it hell, and yet, in truth, 'tis Paradise And most
that be therein are sun and moons, I trow.

His verses pleased the overseer and he wondered at their grace and eloquence and said, 'By Allah, ye possess both beauty and eloquence! But now listen to me.' And he chanted the following verses:

O pleasaunce of hell-fire and paradise of pain! Bodies and souls
therein indeed are born again.
I marvel at a house, whose pleasantness for aye Doth flourish,
though the flames beneath it rage amain.
A sojourn of delight to those who visit it It is; the pools on
them their tears in torrents rain.

Then he fed his eyes on the gardens of their beauty and repeated the following verses:

I went to the bath-keeper's house and entered his dwelling-place
And found no door-keeper there but met me with smiling face.
I sojourned awhile in his heaven and visited eke his
hell And thanked both Malik and

Rizwan for solace and kindly grace.

They were charmed with these verses, and the overseer invited them to his house; but they declined and resumed to their own lodging, to rest from the great heat of the bath. They took their ease there and ate and drank and passed the night in the greatest comfort and delight, till morning, when they arose from sleep and making their ablutions, prayed the morning-prayer and drank the morning-draught. As soon as the sun had risen and the markets and shops were open, they went out to the bazaar and opened their shop, which their servants had already furnished, after the handsomest fashion, with prayer-rugs and silken carpets and a pair of divans, each worth a hundred dinars. On each divan they had spread a rug, garded with gold and fit for a king, and in the midst of the shop stood a third seat of still greater elegance, even as the case required. Taj el Mulouk sat down on one couch and Aziz on another, whilst the Vizier seated himself on that in the centre, and the servants stood before them. The people of the city heard of them and crowded to them, so that they sold some of their goods and the report of Taj el Mulouk's beauty and grace spread throughout the place. Some days passed thus, and every day the people flocked to them more and more, till the Vizier, after exhorting the prince to keep his secret, commended him to Aziz's care and went home, that he might be alone and cast about for some device that might profit them.

Meanwhile, the two young men sat talking and the prince said to Aziz, 'It may be some one will come from the Princess Dunya.' So he abode in expectation of this days and nights, whilst his heart was troubled and he knew neither sleep nor rest: for desire had gotten the mastery of him and passion and longing were sore upon him, so that he forewent the solace of sleep and abstained from meat and drink; yet ceased he not to be like the full moon. One day, as he sat in the shop, there came up an old woman, followed by two slave-girls. She stopped before Taj el Mulouk and observing his grace and elegance and symmetry, marvelled at his beauty and sweated in her clothes, exclaiming, 'Glory to Him who created thee out of vile water and made thee a ravishment to all who look upon thee!' And she fixed her eyes on him and said, 'This is sure no mortal, but a noble angel.'

Then she drew near and saluted him, whereupon he returned her salute and (being prompted thereto by Aziz) rose to his feet to receive her and smiled in her face after which he made her sit down by his side and fanned her, till she was rested and refreshed, when she turned to him and said, ‘O my son, O thou that art perfect in graces and charms, art thou of this country?’ ‘By Allah, O my lady,’ answered he in the sweetest and pleasantest of voices, ‘I was never in this country in my life till now, nor do I sojourn here save for my diversion.’ ‘May all honour and prosperity attend thee!’ rejoined she. ‘What stuffs has thou brought with thee? Show me something handsome; for the fair should bring nothing but what is fair.’ When he heard her words, his heart fluttered and he knew not what she meant; but Aziz made a sign to him, and he replied, ‘I have everything thou canst desire, and amongst the rest goods that befit none but kings and kings’ daughters; so tell me for whom thou seekest the stuff, that I may show thee what will befit her.’ This he said, that he might learn the meaning of her words; and she rejoined, ‘I want a stuff fit for the Princess Dunya, daughter of King Shehriman.’ When the prince heard the name of his beloved, he rejoiced greatly and said to Aziz, ‘Give me such a bale.’ So Aziz brought it and opened it before Taj el Mulouk, who said to the old woman, ‘Choose what will suit her; for these are goods only to be found with me.’ So she chose goods worth a thousand dinars and said, ‘How much is this?’ And ceased not the while to talk with him and rub the inside of her thighs with the palm of her hand. ‘Shall I haggle with the like of thee about this paltry price?’ answered he. ‘Praised be God who hath brought me acquainted with thee!’ ‘The name of God be upon thee!’ exclaimed she. ‘I commend thy fair face to the protection of the Lord of the Daybreak! Fair face and pleasant speech! Happy the woman who lies in thy bosom and clasps thy waist in her arms and enjoys thy youth, especially if she be fair and graceful like unto thee!’ At this, Taj el Mulouk laughed till he fell backward and said (in himself), ‘O Thou who fulfillest desires by means of dissolute old women! They are indeed the accomplishers of desires!’ Then said she, ‘O my son, what is thy name?’ And he answered, ‘My name is Taj el Mulouk.’ ‘This is a name of kings and kings’ sons,’ rejoined she; ‘and thou art clad in a merchant’s habit.’

Quoth Aziz, ‘For the love his parents and family bore him and the value they set on him, they named him thus.’ ‘Thou sayst sooth,’ replied the old woman. ‘May God guard you both from the evil eye and the malice of the enemy and the envious, though hearts be broken by your charms!’ Then she took the stuff and went away, amazed at the prince’s beauty and grace and symmetry, and going in to the Princess Dunya, said to her, ‘O my lady, I have brought thee some handsome stuff.’ ‘Show it me,’ said the princess. ‘Here it is,’ answered the old woman; ‘turn it over, O my treasure, and examine it.’ So the princess looked at the stuff and was amazed at its beauty and said, ‘O my nurse, this is indeed handsome stuff! I have never seen its like in our city.’ ‘O my lady,’ replied the nurse, ‘he who sold it me is handsomer still. It would seem as if Rizwan had left the gates of Paradise open and this youth had come out. I would he might sleep this night with thee and lie between thy breasts! He hath come hither with these stuffs for amusement’s sake, and he is a ravishment to all who set eyes on him.’ The princess laughed at her words and said, ‘Allah afflict thee, O pernicious old woman! Thou dotest and there is no sense left in thee. Give me the stuff, that I may look at it anew.’ So she gave it her, and she examined it again and seeing that though small, it was of great value, was moved to admiration, for she had never in her life seen its like, and exclaimed, ‘By Allah, this is a handsome stuff.’ ‘O my lady,’ said the old woman, ‘if thou sawest him who sold it to me, thou wouldst know him for the handsomest of all that be upon the face of the earth.’ Quoth the princess, ‘Didst thou ask him if he had any need, that we might satisfy it?’ The nurse shook her head and answered, ‘God keep thy sagacity! Assuredly he has a want, may thy skill not fail thee. What man is free from wants?’ ‘Go back to him,’ rejoined the princess; ‘salute him for me, and say to him, “Our land and town are honoured by thy visit, and if thou hast any need, we will fulfil it to thee, on our head and eyes.”’ So the old woman returned to Taj el Mulouk, and when he saw her, his heart leapt for joy and he rose to his feet and taking her hand, seated her by his side. As soon as she was rested she told him what the princess had said, whereat he rejoiced exceedingly; his breast dilated and gladness entered his heart, and he said in himself, ‘Verily, I have gotten my desire.’ Then said he to the old woman, ‘Belike thou wilt take her a message from me and bring me her answer.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ replied she. So he said to Aziz, ‘Bring me inkhorn and paper and a pen of brass.’ Aziz brought him what he sought, and he took the pen and wrote the following verses: I send thee, O my hope, a letter, to complain Of all my soul endures for parting and its pain.

Six lines it hath; the first, ‘A fire is in my heart;’ The next
line setteth forth my passion all in vain;
The third, ‘My patience fails and eke my life doth waste;’ The
fourth, ‘All love with me for ever shall remain.’
The fifth, ‘When shall mine eyes behold thee? And the sixth,
‘When shall the day betide of meeting for us twain?

And by way of subscription he wrote these words, ‘This letter is from the captive of desire, prisoned in the hold of longing, from which there is no deliverance but in union and intercourse with her whom he loveth, after absence and separation: for he suffereth grievous torment by reason of his severance from his beloved.’ Then his tears rushed out and he wrote the following verses:

I write to thee, my love, and the tears run down as I write; For
the tears of my eyes, alack I cease never day or night.
Yet do I not despair; mayhap, of God His grace, The day shall
dawn for us of union and delight.

Then he folded the letter and sealed it and gave it to the old woman, saying, ‘Carry it to the lady Dunya.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered she; whereupon he gave her a thousand dinars and said to her, ‘O my mother, accept this, as a token of my affection.’ She took the letter and the money, calling down blessings on him, and returned to the princess. When the latter saw her, she said to her, ‘O my nurse, what is it he asks, that we may fulfil his wish to him?’ ‘O my lady,’ replied the old woman, ‘he sends thee this letter by me, and I know not what is in it.’ The princess took the letter and reading it, exclaimed, ‘Who and what is this merchant that he should dare to write to me thus?’ And she buffeted her face, saying, ‘What have we done that we should come in converse with shopkeepers? Alas! Alas! By Allah, but that I fear God the Most High, I would put him to death and crucify him before his shop!' 'What is in the letter,' asked the old woman, 'to trouble thy heart and move thine anger thus? Doth it contain a complaint of oppression or demand for the price of the stuff?' 'Out on thee!' answered the princess. 'There is none of this in it, nought but words of love and gallantry. This is all through thee: else how should this devil know me?' 'O my lady,' rejoined the old woman, 'thou sittest in thy high palace and none may win to thee, no, not even the birds of the air. God keep thee and keep thy youth from blame and reproach! Thou art a princess, the daughter of a king, and needest not reck of the barking of dogs. Blame me not that I brought thee this letter, knowing not what was in it; but it is my counsel that thou send him an answer, threatening him with death and forbidding him from this idle talk. Surely he will abstain and return not to the like of this.' 'I fear,' said the princess, 'that, if I write to him, he will conceive hopes of me.' Quoth the old woman, 'When he reads thy threats and menace of punishment, he will desist.' So the princess called for inkhorn and paper and pen of brass and wrote the following verses:

O thou who feignest thee the prey of love and wakefulness And
  plainst of that thou dost endure for passion and distress
Thinkst thou, deluded one, to win thy wishes of the moon? Did
  ever any of a moon get union and liesse?
I rede thee put away the thought of this thou seekst from thee,
  For that therein but peril is for thee and weariness.
If thou to this thy speech return, a grievous punishment Shall
  surely fall on thee from me and ruin past redress.
By Him, the Almighty God, I swear, who moulded man from clay, Him
  who gave fire unto the sun and lit the moon no less
If thou offend anew, for sure, upon a cross of tree I'll have
  thee crucified for all thy wealth and goodliness!

Then she folded the letter and giving it to the old woman, said, 'Carry this to him and bid him desist from this talk.' 'I hear and obey,' replied she, and taking the letter, returned, rejoicing, to her own house, where she passed the night and in the morning betook herself to the shop of Taj el Mulouk, whom she found expecting her. At sight of her, he well-nigh lost his reason for delight, and when she came up to him, he rose to his feet and seated her by his side. Then she brought out the letter and gave it to him, saying, 'Read this. When the princess read thy letter, she was angry; but I coaxed her and jested with her till I made her laugh, and she had pity on thee and has returned thee an answer.' He thanked her and bade Aziz give her a thousand dinars: then he read her letter and fell to weeping sore, so that the old woman's heart was moved to pity for him and his tears and complaints grieved her. So she said to him, 'O my son, what is there in this scroll, that makes thee weep?' 'She threatens me with death and crucifixion,' replied he, 'and forbids me to write to her: but if I write not, my death were better than my life. So take thou my answer to her letter and let her do what she will.' 'By the life of thy youth,' rejoined the old woman, 'needs must I venture my life for thee, that I may bring thee to thy desire and help thee to win that thou hast at heart!' And he said, 'Whatever thou dost, I will requite thee therefor, and do thou determine of it; for thou art versed in affairs and skilled in all fashions of intrigue: difficult matters are easy to thee: and God can do all things.' Then he took a scroll and wrote therein the following verses:

My love with slaughter threatens me, woe's me for my distress!
    But death is foreordained; to me, indeed, 'twere happiness;
Better death end a lover's woes than that a weary life He live,
    rejected and forlorn, forbidden from liesse.
Visit a lover, for God's sake, whose every helper fails, And with
    thy sight thy captive slave and bondman deign to bless!
Have ruth upon me, lady mine, for loving thee; for all, Who love
    the noble, stand excused for very passion's stress.

Then he sighed heavily and wept, till the old woman wept also and taking the letter, said to him, 'Take heart and be of good cheer, for it shall go hard but I bring thee to thy desire.' Then she rose and leaving him on coals of fire, returned to the princess, whom she found still pale with rage at Taj el Mulouk's first letter. The nurse gave her his second letter, whereupon her anger redoubled and she said, 'Did I not say he would conceive hopes of us?' 'What is this dog,' replied the old woman, 'that he should conceive hopes of thee?' Quoth the princess, 'Go back to him and tell him that, if he write to me again, I will have his head cut off.' 'Write this in a letter,' answered the nurse, 'and I will take it to him, that his fear may be the greater.' So she took a scroll and wrote thereon the following verses:

Harkye thou that letst the lessons of the past unheeded lie, Thou
that lookst aloft, yet lackest power to win thy goal on
high,
Thinkest thou to reach Es Suha, O deluded one, although
Even the moon's too far to come at, shining in the middle
sky?
How then dar'st thou hope my favours and aspire to twinned
delight And my spear-straight shape and slender in thine
arms to girdle sigh?
Leave this purpose, lest mine anger fall on thee some day of
wrath, Such as e'en the parting-places shall with white for
terror dye.

Then she folded the letter and gave it to the old woman, who took it and returned to Taj el Mulouk. When he saw her, he rose to his feet and exclaimed, 'May God not bereave me of the blessing of thy coming!' Quoth she, 'Take the answer to thy letter.' He took it and reading it, wept sore and said, 'Would some one would slay me now, for indeed death were easier to me than this my state!' Then he took pen and inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses:

O my hope, have done with rigour; lay disdain and anger by, Visit
one who, drowned in passion, doth for love and longing sigh.
Think not, under thine estrangement, that my life I will endure.
Lo, my soul, for very severance from thy sight, is like to
die.

Then he folded the letter and gave it to the old woman, saying, ‘Grudge it not to me, though I have wearied thee to no purpose.’ And he bade Aziz give her other thousand dinars, saying, ‘O my mother, needs must this letter result in perfect union or complete separation.’ ‘O my son,’ replied she, ‘by Allah, I desire nought but thy weal; and it is my wish that she be thine, for indeed thou art the resplendent moon and she the rising sun. If I do not bring you together, there is no profit in my life: these ninety years have I lived in the practice of wile and intrigue; so how should I fail to unite two lovers, though in defiance of law?’ Then she took leave of him, after comforting his heart, and returned to the palace. Now she had hidden the letter in her hair: so she sat down by the princess and rubbing her head, said, ‘O my lady, maybe thou wilt comb out my hair: for it is long since I went to the bath.’ The princess bared her arms to the elbow and letting down the old woman’s hair, began to comb it, when out dropped the letter and Dunya seeing it, asked what it was. Quoth the nurse, ‘This paper must have stuck to me, as I sat in the merchant’s shop: give it me, that I may return it to him; belike it contains some reckoning of which he hath need.’ But the princess opened it, and reading it, cried out, ‘This is one of thy tricks, and hadst thou not reared me, I would lay violent hands on thee forthright! Verily God hath afflicted me with this merchant: but all that hath befallen me with him is of thy contrivance. I know not whence this fellow can have come: none but he would venture to affront me thus, and I fear lest this my case get wind, the more that it concerns one who is neither of my rank nor of my peers.’ ‘None would dare speak of this,’ rejoined the old woman, ‘for fear of thine anger and awe of thy father; so there can be no harm in sending him an answer.’ ‘O my nurse,’ said the princess, ‘verily this fellow is a devil. How can he dare to use such language to me and not dread the Sultan’s wrath? Indeed, I am perplexed about his case: if I order him to be put to death, it were unjust; and if I leave him, his presumption will increase.’ ‘Write him a letter,’ rejoined the old woman; ‘it may be he will desist.’ So she called for pen and ink and paper and wrote the following verses:

Again and again I chide thee, yet folly ever again Lures thee:

how long, with my writing, in verse shall I bid thee
refrain,
Whilst thou but growest in boldness for all forbidding? But I No
grace save to keep thy secret, unto thy prayers may deign.
Conceal thy passion nor ever reveal it; for, an thou speak, I
will surely show thee no mercy nor yet my wrath contain.
If to thy foolish daring thou turn thee anew, for sure, The raven
of evil omen shall croak for thee death and bane;
And slaughter shall come upon thee ere long, and under the earth
To seek for a place of abiding, God wot, thou shalt be fain.
Thy people, O self-deluder, thou'lt leave in mourning for thee;
Ay, all their lives they shall sorrow for thee, fordone and
slain.

Then she folded the letter and committed it to the old woman, who took it and returning to Taj el Mulouk, gave it to him. When he read it, he knew that the princess was hard-hearted and that he should not win to her; so he complained to the Vizier and besought his advice. Quoth he, 'Nothing will profit thee save that thou write to her and invoke the wrath of God upon her.' And he said to Aziz, 'O my brother, do thou write to her in my name, according to thy knowledge.' So Aziz took a scroll and wrote the following verses:

O Lord, by the Five Elders, deliver me, I pray, And her, for whom
I suffer, in like affliction lay!
Thou knowest that I weary in raging flames of love; Whilst she I
love is cruel and saith me ever nay.
How long shall I be tender to her, despite my pain? How long
shall she ride roughshod o'er my weakness night and day?
In agonies I wander of never-ceasing death And find nor friend
nor helper, O Lord, to be my stay.
Full fain would I forget her; but how can I forget, When for
desire my patience is wasted all away?
Thou that forbidst my passion the sweets of happy love, Art thou
then safe from fortune, that shifts and changes aye?
Art thou not glad and easeful and blest with happy life, Whilst
I, for thee, an exile from folk and country stray?

Then he folded the letter and gave it to Taj el Mulouk, who read the verses and was pleased with them. So he handed the letter to the old woman, who took it and carried it to the princess. When she read it, she was greatly enraged and said, ‘All that has befallen me comes from this pernicious old woman!’ Then she cried out to the damsels and eunuchs, saying, ‘Seize this accursed old trickstress and beat her with your slippers!’ So they beat her till she swooned away; and when she revived, the princess said to her, ‘By Allah, O wicked old woman, did I not fear God the Most High, I would kill thee!’ Then she bade them beat her again, and they did so, till she fainted a second time, whereupon the princess ordered them to drag her forth and throw her without the palace. So they dragged her along on her face and threw her down before the gate. When she came to herself, she rose and made the best of her way home, walking and resting by turns. She passed the night in her own house and in the morning, she went to Taj el Mulouk and told him what had passed, at which he was distressed and said, ‘O my mother, this that has befallen thee is grievous to us; but all things are according to fate and destiny.’ ‘Take comfort and be of good cheer,’ replied she; ‘for I will not give over striving, till I have brought thee and her together and made thee to enjoy the vile baggage who hath tortured me with beating.’ Quoth the prince, ‘Tell me the reason of her aversion to men.’ ‘It arose from what she saw in a dream,’ answered the old woman. ‘And what was this dream?’ asked the prince. ‘One night,’ replied she, ‘as she lay asleep, she saw a fowler spread his net upon the ground and scatter grain round it. Then he sat down hard by, and all the birds in the neighbourhood flocked to the net. Amongst the rest she saw a pair of pigeons, male and female; and whilst she was watching the net, the male bird’s foot caught in it and he began to struggle, whereupon all the other birds took fright and flew away. But presently his mate came back and hovered over him, then alighted on the net, unobserved by the fowler, and fell to picking and pulling at the mesh in which the male bird’s foot was entangled with her beak, till she released him and they flew away together. Then the fowler came up and mended his net and seated himself afar off. After awhile, the birds came back and the female pigeon was caught in the net, whereupon all the other birds took fright and flew away; and the male pigeon flew away with the rest and did not return to his mate. Then came the fowler and took the female pigeon and killed her. So the princess awoke, troubled by her dream, and said, "All males are worthless, like this pigeon: and men in general are wanting in goodness to women."' When the old woman had made an end of her story, the prince said to her, 'O my mother, I desire to have one look at her, though it be my death; so do thou contrive me some means of seeing her.' 'Know then,' answered she, 'that she hath under her palace windows a pleasure-garden, to which she resorts once in every month by the private door. In ten days, the time of her thus going forth will arrive; so when she is about to visit the garden, I will come and tell thee, that thou mayst go thither and meet her. And look thou quit not the garden, for haply, if she sees thy beauty and grace, her heart will be taken with love of thee, and love is the most potent means of union.' 'I hear and obey,' replied Taj el Mulouk. Then he and Aziz left the shop, and taking the old woman with them, showed her where they lodged. Then said the prince to Aziz, 'I have no further need of the shop, having fulfilled my purpose of it; so I give it to thee with all that is in it; for that thou hast come abroad with me and hast left thy country for my sake.' Aziz accepted his gift and they sat conversing awhile, the prince questioning the young merchant of the strange passages of his life and the latter acquainting him with the particulars thereof. Presently, they went to the Vizier and acquainting him with Taj el Mulouk's purpose, asked him what they should do. 'Let us go to the garden,' answered he. So they donned their richest clothes and went forth, followed by three white slaves, to the garden, which they found thick with trees and abounding in rills. At the gate, they saw the keeper sitting; so they saluted him and he returned their salute. Then the Vizier gave him a hundred dinars, saying, 'Prithee, take this spending-money and fetch us something to eat; for we are strangers and I have with me these two lads, whom I wish to divert.' The gardener took the money and said to them, 'Enter and take your pleasure in the garden, for it is all yours; and sit down till I bring you what you require.' So he went to the market, and the Vizier and his companions entered the garden. In a little while, the gardener returned with a roasted lamb and bread as white as cotton, which he placed before them, and they ate and drank; after which he set on sweetmeats, and they ate of them, then washed their hands and sat talking. Presently the Vizier said to the gardener, ‘Tell me about this garden: is it thine or dost thou rent it?’ ‘It does not belong to me,’ replied he, ‘but to the Princess Dunya, the King’s daughter.’ ‘What is thy wage?’ asked the Vizier, and the gardener answered, ‘One dinar every month and no more.’ Then the Vizier looked round about the garden and seeing in its midst a pavilion, lofty but old and dilapidated, said to the keeper, ‘O elder, I am minded to do here a good work, by which thou shalt remember me.’ ‘O my lord,’ rejoined the other, ‘what is that?’ ‘Take these three hundred dinars,’ answered the Vizier. When the keeper heard speak of the dinars, he said, ‘O my lord, do what thou wilt.’ So the Vizier gave him the money, saying, ‘God willing, we will work a good work in this place.’ Then they left the garden and returned to their lodging, where they passed the night. Next day, the Vizier sent for a plasterer and a painter and a skilful goldsmith, and furnishing them with all the tools and materials that they required, carried them to the garden, where he bade them plaster the walls of the pavilion and decorate it with various kinds of paintings. Then he sent for gold and ultramarine and said to the painter, ‘Paint me on the wall, at the upper end of the saloon, a fowler, with his nets spread and birds lighted round them and a female pigeon fallen into the net and entangled therein by the bill. Let this fill one compartment of the wall, and on the other paint the fowler seizing the pigeon and setting the knife to her throat, whilst the third compartment of the picture must show a great hawk seizing the male pigeon, her mate, and digging his talons into him.’ The painter did as the Vizier bade him, and when he and the other workmen had finished, they took their hire and went away. Then the Vizier and his companions took leave of the gardener and returned to their lodging, where they sat down to converse. And Taj el Mulouk said to Aziz, ‘O my brother, recite me some verses: haply it may dilate my breast and dispel my sad thoughts and assuage the fire of my heart.’ So Aziz chanted the following verses:

All that they fable lovers feel of anguish and despite, I in
    myself comprise, and so my strength is crushed outright;

And if thou seekst a watering-place, see, from my streaming eyes,
Rivers of tears for those who thirst run ever day and night.
Or, if thou fain wouldst look upon the ruin passion's hands Can
wreak on lovers, let thy gaze upon my body light.

And his eyes ran over with tears and he repeated these verses also:

Who loves not the necks and the eyes of the fair and pretends,
forsooth, To know the delight of the world, God wot, he
speaks not the truth
For in love is a secret meaning that none may win to know Save he
who has loved indeed and known its wrath and ruth.
May God not lighten my heart of passion for her I love Nor ease
my eyelids, for love, of wakefulness in my youth!

Then he sang the following:

Avicenna pretends, in his writings renowned, That the lover's
best medicine is song and sweet sound
And dalliance with one of his sex like his love And drinking,
with waters and fruits all around.
I took me another, to heal me for thee, And fate was propitious
and grace did abound
Yet I knew love a mortal disease, against which Avicenna his
remedy idle I found.

Taj el Mulouk was pleased with his verses and wondered at his eloquence and the excellence of his recitation, saying, 'Indeed thou hast done away from me somewhat of my concern.' Then said the Vizier, 'Of a truth there occurred to those of times past what astounds those who hear it.' 'If thou canst recall any fine verse of this kind,' quoth the prince, 'I prithee let us hear it and keep the talk in vogue.' So the Vizier chanted the following verses:

Methought thy favours might be bought and thou to give consent To
union won by gifts of gold and grace and blandishment:
And eke, for ignorance, I deemed thy love an easy thing, Thy love
in which the noblest souls for languor are forspent;

Until I saw thee choose one out and gratify that one With sweet
and subtle favours. Then, to me ’twas evident
Thy graces never might be won by any artifice; So underneath my
wing my head I hid incontinent
And in the nest of passion made my heart’s abiding-place, Wherein
my morning and my night for evermore are pent.

Meanwhile the old woman remained shut up in her house till it befell that the princess was taken with a desire to divert herself in the garden. Now this she had been wont to do only in company with her nurse; so she sent for her and spoke her fair and made her peace with her, saying, ‘I wish to go forth to the garden, that I may divert myself with the sight of its trees and fruits and gladden my heart with its flowers.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ replied the old woman; ‘but let me first go to my house and change my dress, and I will be with thee anon.’ ‘Go,’ said the princess; ‘but be not long absent from me.’ So the old woman left her and repairing to Taj el Mulouk, said to him, ‘Don thy richest clothes and go to the gardener and salute him and make shift to hide thyself in the garden.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered he; and she agreed with him upon a signal to be made by her to him and returned to the princess. As soon as she was gone, the Vizier and Aziz rose and dressed Taj el Mulouk in a right costly suit of kings’ raiment, worth five thousand dinars, and girt his middle with a girdle of gold set with jewels. Then he repaired to the garden and found the keeper seated at the gate. As soon as the latter saw him, he sprang to his feet and received him with all respect and consideration and opening the gate, said, ‘Enter and take thy pleasure in the garden.’ Now the gardener knew not that the princess was to visit the garden that day: but Taj el Mulouk had been there but a little while, when he heard a noise and ere he could think, out came the eunuchs and damsels by the private door. When the gardener saw this, he came up to the prince and said to him, ‘O my lord, what is to be done? The Princess Dunya, the King’s daughter, is here.’ ‘Fear not,’ replied the prince; ‘no harm shall befall thee: for I will conceal myself somewhere about the garden.’ So the gardener exhorted him to the utmost prudence and went away. Presently, the princess entered the garden, attended by her damsels and the old woman, who said to herself, ‘If these eunuchs abide with us, we shall not attain our object.’ So she said to the princess, ‘O my lady, I have somewhat to say to thee that will be for thy heart’s ease.’ ‘Say on,’ replied the princess. ‘O my lady,’ said the old woman, ‘thou hast no present need of these eunuchs; send them away, for thou wilt not be able to divert thyself at thine ease, whilst they are with us.’ ‘Thou art right,’ rejoined the princess. So she dismissed the eunuchs and began to walk about, whilst Taj el Mulouk fed his eyes on her beauty and grace, without her knowledge, and fainted every time he looked at her, by reason of her surpassing loveliness. The old woman held her in converse and drew her on till they reached the pavilion, which the Vizier had caused to be decorated afresh, when the princess entered and looking round, perceived the picture of the fowler and the birds; whereupon she exclaimed, ‘Glory be to God! This is the very presentment of what I saw in my dream.’ She continued to gaze at the painting, full of admiration, and presently she said, ‘O my nurse, I have been wont to blame and dislike men, by reason of my having seen in my dream the female pigeon abandoned by her mate; but now see how the male pigeon was minded to return and set her free; but the hawk met him and tore him in pieces.’ The old woman, however, feigned ignorance and ceased not to hold her in converse, till they drew near the place where the prince lay hidden, whereupon she signed to him to come out and walk under the windows of the pavilion. He did so: and presently the princess, chancing to look out, saw him and noting his beauty and symmetry, said to the old woman, ‘O my nurse, whence comes yonder handsome youth?’ ‘I know nothing of him,’ replied the old woman, ‘except that I think he must be some great king’s son, for he attains the utmost extreme of beauty and grace.’ The princess fell passionately in love with him; the spells that bound her were dissolved and her reason was overcome by his beauty and elegance. So she said to the old woman, ‘O my nurse this is indeed a handsome youth.’ ‘Thou art in the right O my lady!’ replied the nurse and signed to Taj el Mulouk to go home. So he went away, not daring to cross her though desire flamed in him and he was distraught for love and longing, and taking leave of the gardener, returned to his lodging, where he told the Vizier and Aziz all that had passed. They exhorted him to patience, saying, ‘Did not the old woman know that there was an object to be gained by thy departure, she had not signed to thee to return home.’

Meanwhile, desire and passion redoubled upon the princess, and she was overcome with love-longing and said to the old woman, ‘I know not how I shall foregather with this youth, but through thee.’ ‘God be my refuge from Satan the Accursed!’ exclaimed the old woman. ‘Thou that art averse from men! How comes it that thou art thus afflicted with love of this young man? Though, by Allah, none is worthy of thy youth but he!’ ‘O my nurse,’ said the princess, ‘help me to foregather with him, and thou shalt have of me a thousand dinars and a dress worth as much more: but if thou aid me not to come at him, I shall assuredly die.’ ‘Go to thy palace,’ replied the nurse, ‘and leave me to devise means for bringing you together. I will risk my life to content you both.’ So the princess returned to her palace, and the old woman betook herself to Taj el Mulouk, who rose to receive her and entreated her with respect and honour, making her sit by his side. Then said she, ‘The device hath succeeded,’ and told him all that had passed between the princess and herself. ‘When is our meeting to be?’ asked he. ‘To-morrow,’ replied the old woman. So he gave her a thousand dinars and a dress of equal value, and she took them and returned to the princess, who said to her, as soon as she saw her, ‘O my nurse, what news of my beloved?’ ‘I have discovered where he lives,’ replied she, ‘and will bring him to thee to-morrow.’ At this the princess was glad and gave her a thousand dinars and a dress worth as much more, with which she returned to her own house, where she passed the night. Next morning, she went to Taj el Mulouk and dressing him in women’s clothes, said to him, ‘Follow me and sway from side to side, as thou goest, and do not hasten in thy walk nor take heed of any that speaks to thee.’ Then she went out and walked on, followed by the prince, whom she continued to lesson and hearten by the way, that he might not be afraid, till they came to the palace gate. She entered and the prince after her, and she led him through doors and vestibules, till they had passed six doors. As they approached the seventh door, she said to him, ‘Take courage and when I call out to thee and say, “Pass, O damsel!” do not hesitate, but hasten on. When thou art in the vestibule, thou wilt see on thy left a gallery, with doors along it:

count five doors and enter the sixth, for therein is thy desire.' 'And whither wilt thou go?' asked the prince. 'Nowhere,' answered she; 'except that I may drop behind thee and the chief eunuch may detain me, whilst I talk with him.' Then they went up to the door, where the chief eunuch was stationed, and he, seeing Taj el Mulouk with her, dressed as a slave-girl, said to the old woman, 'What girl is this with thee?' Quoth she, 'This is a slave-girl of whom the Princess Dunya has heard that she is skilled in different arts, and she hath a mind to buy her.' 'I know no slave-girl,' rejoined the eunuch, 'nor any one else; and none shall enter here without being searched by me, according to the King's orders.' At this the old woman feigned to be angry and said, 'I thought thee a man of sense and good breeding: but, if thou be changed, I will let the princess know of it and how thou hinderest her slave-girl.' Then she cried out to Taj el Mulouk, saying, 'Pass on, O damsel!' So he passed on into the vestibule, whilst the eunuch was silent and said nothing. Then the prince counted five doors and entered the sixth, where he found the Princess Dunya standing awaiting him. As soon as she saw him, she knew him and pressed him to her bosom, and he returned her embrace. Then the old woman came in to them, having made a pretext to dismiss the princess's attendants for fear of discovery, and the princess said to her, 'Do thou keep the door.' So she and Taj el Mulouk abode alone together and passed the night in kissing and embracing and twining leg with leg. When the day drew near, she left him and shutting the door upon him, passed in to another apartment, where she sat down according to her wont, whilst her women came in to her, and she attended to their affairs and conversed with them awhile. Then she said to them, 'Leave me now, for I wish to be alone.' So they withdrew and she betook herself to Taj el Mulouk, and the old woman brought them food, of which they ate and after fell again to amorous dalliance, till the dawn. Then the princess left him, and locked the door as before; and they ceased not to do thus for a whole month.

Meanwhile, the Vizier and Aziz, when they found that the prince did not return from the princess's palace all this while, gave him up for lost and Aziz said to the Vizier, 'O my father, what shall we do?' 'O my son,' answered he, 'this is a difficult matter, and except we return to his father and tell him, he will blame us.' So they made ready at once and setting out, journeyed night and day along the valleys, in the direction of the Green Country, till they reached King Suleiman's capital and presenting themselves before him, acquainted him with what had befallen his son and how they had heard no news of him, since he entered the princess's palace. At this the King was greatly troubled and regret was sore upon him, and he let call a holy war throughout his realm. Then he encamped without the town with his troops and took up his abode in his pavilion, whilst the levies came from all parts of the kingdom; for his subjects loved him by reason of his much justice and beneficence. As soon as his forces were assembled, he took horse, with an army covering the country as far as the eye could reach, and departed in quest of his son Taj el Mulouk. Meanwhile, the latter sojourned with the princess half a year's time, whilst every day they redoubled in mutual affection and distraction and passion and love-longing and desire so pressed upon Taj el Mulouk, that at last he opened his mind to the princess and said to her, 'Know, O beloved of my heart and entrails, that the longer I abide with thee, the more longing and passion and desire increase on me, for that I have not yet fulfilled the whole of my desire.' 'What then wouldst thou have, O light of my eyes and fruit of my entrails?' asked she. 'If thou desire aught beside kissing and embracing and entwining of legs, do what pleases thee; for, by Allah, none hath any part in us.' 'It is not that I desire,' rejoined he; 'but I would fain acquaint thee with my true history. I am no merchant, but a King, the son of a King, and my father is the supreme King Suleiman Shah, who sent his Vizier ambassador to thy father, to demand thy hand for me in marriage, but thou wouldst not consent.' Then he told her his story from first to last, nor is there any profit in repeating it, and added, 'And now I wish to return to my father, that he may send an ambassador to thy father, to demand thy hand for me, so we may be at ease.' When she heard this, she rejoiced greatly, because it fell in with her own wishes, and they passed the night on this understanding. But by the decree of Fate, it befell that sleep overcame them that night above all nights and they slept till the sun had risen. Now at this hour, King Shehriman was sitting on his chair of estate, with his amirs and grandees before him, when the chief of the goldsmiths presented himself before him carrying a large box, which he opened and brought out therefrom a small casket worth a hundred thousand dinars, for that which was therein of rubies and emeralds and other jewels, beyond the competence of any King. When the King saw this, he marveled at its beauty and turning to the chief eunuch (him with whom the old woman had had to do, as before related), said to him, ‘O Kafour, take this casket to the Princess Dunya.’ The eunuch took the casket and repairing to the princess’s apartment, found the door shut and the old woman lying asleep on the threshold; whereupon said he, ‘Asleep at this hour?’ His voice aroused the old woman, who was terrified and said to him, ‘Wait till I fetch the key.’ Then she went out and fled for her life; but the eunuch, having his suspicions of her, lifted the door off its hinges and entering, found the princess and Taj el Mulouk lying asleep in each other’s arms. At this sight he was confounded and was about to return to the King, when the princess awoke, and seeing him, was terrified and changed colour and said to him, ‘O Kafour, veil thou what God hath veiled.’ But he replied, ‘I cannot conceal aught from the King;’ and locking the door on them, returned to Shehriman, who said to him, ‘Hast thou given the casket to the princess?’ ‘Here is the casket,’ answered the eunuch. ‘Take it, for I cannot conceal aught from thee. Know that I found a handsome young man in the princess’s arms, and they asleep in one bed.’ The King commanded them to be fetched and said to them, ‘What manner of thing is this!’ and being violently enraged, seized a dagger and was about to strike Taj el Mulouk with it, when the princess threw herself upon him and said to her father, ‘Slay me before him.’ The King reviled her and commanded her to be taken back to her chamber: then he turned to Taj el Mulouk and said to him, ‘Woe to thee! Whence art thou? Who is thy father and what hath emboldened thee to debauch my daughter?’ ‘Know, O King,’ replied the prince, ‘that if thou put me to death, thou wilt repent it, for it will be thy ruin and that of all in thy dominions.’ ‘How so?’ asked the King. ‘Know,’ answered Taj el Mulouk, ‘that I am the son of King Suleiman Shah, and before thou knowest it, he will be upon thee with his horse and foot.’ When King Shehriman heard this, he would have forborne to kill Taj el Mulouk and put him in prison, till he should know the truth of his words; but his Vizier said to him, ‘O King of the age, it is my counsel that thou make haste to slay this gallows-bird, that dares debauch kings’ daughters.’ So the King said to the headsman, ‘Strike off his head; for he is a traitor.’ Accordingly, the headsman took him and binding him fast, raised his hand to the amirs, as if to consult them, a first and a second time, thinking to gain time; but the King said to him, ‘How long wilt thou consult the amirs? If thou do so again, I will strike off thine own head.’ So the headsman raised his hand, till the hair of his armpit appeared, and was about to smite off Taj el Mulouk’s head, when suddenly loud cries arose and the people closed their strops; whereupon the King said to him, ‘Wait awhile,’ and despatched one to learn the news. Presently, the messenger returned and said, ‘I see an army like the stormy sea with its clashing billows; the earth trembles with the tramp of their horses, and I know not the reason of their coming.’ When the King heard this, he was confounded and feared lest his realm should be torn from him; so he turned to his Vizier and said, ‘Have not any of our troops gone forth to meet this army?’ But before he had done speaking, his chamberlains entered with messengers from the approaching host, and amongst them the Vizier who had accompanied Taj el Mulouk. They saluted the King, who rose to receive them and bidding them draw near, enquired the reason of their coming; whereupon the Vizier came forward and said, ‘Know that he who hath invaded thy realm is no king like unto the Kings and Sultans of time past.’ ‘Who is he?’ asked Shehriman, and the Vizier replied, ‘He is the lord of justice and loyalty, the report of whose magnanimity the caravans have blazed abroad, the Sultan Suleiman Shah, lord of the Green Country and the Two Columns and the mountains of Ispahan, he who loves justice and equity and abhors iniquity and oppression. He saith to thee that his son, the darling of his heart and the fruit of his loins, is with thee and in this thy city; and if he find him in safety, his aim is won and thou shalt have praise and thanks; but if he have disappeared from thy dominions or if aught have befallen him, look thou for ruin and the laying waste of thy realm; for this thy city shall become a desert, in which the raven shall croak. Thus have I done my errand to thee and peace be on thee!’ When King Shehriman heard these words, his heart was troubled and he feared for his kingdom: so he cried out for his grandees and viziers and chamberlains and officers; and when they appeared, he said to them, ‘Out on you! Go down and search for the young man!’ Now the prince was still under the headsman’s hands, but he was changed by the fright he had undergone. Presently, the Vizier, chancing to look aside, saw the prince on the carpet of blood and knew him; so he threw himself upon him, as did the other envoys. Then they loosed his bonds and kissed his hands and feet, whereupon he opened his eyes and recognizing his father’s Vizier and his friend Aziz, fell down in a swoon, for excess of delight in them. When King Shehriman saw that the coming of the army was indeed on this youth’s account, he was confounded and feared greatly; so he went up to Taj el Mulouk and kissing his head, said to him, with streaming eyes, ‘O my son, bear me not malice neither blame the sinner for his evil-doing: but have compassion on my gray hairs and do not lay waste my kingdom.’ But Taj el Mulouk drew near unto him and kissing his hand, replied, ‘Fear not: no harm shall come to thee, for indeed thou art to me as my father; but look that nought befall my beloved, the lady Dunya.’ ‘O my lord,’ replied the King, ‘fear not for her; nought but joy shall betide her.’ And he went on to excuse himself to him and made his peace with King Suleiman’s Vizier, to whom he promised much money, if he would conceal from the King what he had seen. Then he bade his officers carry the prince to the bath and clothe him in one of the best of his own suits and bring him back speedily. So they carried him to the bath and brought him back to the presence-chamber, after having clad him in the suit that the King had set apart for him. When he entered, the King rose to receive him and made all his grandees stand in attendance on him. Then he sat down to converse with Aziz and the Vizier and acquainted them with what had befallen him; after which they told him how they had returned to his father and given him to know of his son’s perilous plight and added, ‘And indeed our coming hath brought thee relief and us gladness.’ Quoth he, ‘Good fortune hath attended your every action, first and last.’

Meanwhile, King Shehriman went in to his daughter, the Princess Dunya, and found her weeping and lamenting for Taj el Mulouk. Moreover, she had taken a sword and fixed the hilt in the earth, with the point to her heart between her breasts; and she bent over it, saying, ‘Needs must I kill myself and not live after my beloved.’ When her father entered and saw her in this case, he cried out, ‘O princess of kings’ daughters, hold thy hand and have compassion on thy father and the people of thy realm!’ Then he came up to her and said, ‘God forbid that an ill thing should befall thy father for thy sake!’ And he told her that her lover was the son of King Suleiman Shah and sought her to wife and that the marriage waited only for her consent; whereat she smiled and said, ‘Did I not tell thee that he was a king’s son? By Allah, I must let him crucify thee on a piece of wood worth two dirhems!’ ‘O my daughter,’ answered the King, ‘have mercy on me, so may God have mercy on thee!’ ‘Harkye,’ rejoined she, ‘make haste and bring him to me without delay.’ The King replied, ‘On my head and eyes be it,’ and returning in haste to Taj el Mulouk, repeated her words in his ear. So he arose and accompanied the King to the princess, who caught hold of him and embraced him in her father’s presence and kissed him, saying, ‘Thou hast made me a weary woman!’ Then she turned to her father and said to him, ‘Sawst thou ever any do hurt to the like of this fair creature, more by token that he is a king, the son of a king, and of the free-bon, guarded against abominations?’ Therewith Shehriman went out and shutting the door on them with his own hand, returned to the Vizier and the other envoys and bade them report to their King that his son was in health and gladness and enjoying all delight of life with his beloved. So they returned to King Suleiman and acquainted him with this, whereat he rejoiced and exclaimed, ‘Praised be God who hath brought my son to his desire!’

Meanwhile, King Shehriman despatched largesse of money and victual to King Suleiman’s troops, and choosing out a hundred coursers and a hundred dromedaries and a hundred white slaves and a hundred concubines and a hundred black slaves and a hundred female slaves, sent them all to the King as a present. Then he took horse, with his grandees and chief officers, and rode out of the city in the direction of King Suleiman’s camp. As soon as the latter knew of his approach, he rose and advancing some paces to meet him, took him in his arms and made him sit down beside himself on the royal couch, where they conversed awhile frankly and cheerfully. Then food was set before them, followed by sweetmeats and fruits, and they ate till they were satisfied. Presently, they were joined by Taj el Mulouk, richly dressed and adorned, and when his father saw him, he rose and embraced him and kissed him. Then the two kings seated him between them, whilst all who were present rose to do him honour; and they sat conversing awhile, after which quoth King Suleiman to King Shehriman, ‘I wish to have the contract between my son and thy daughter drawn up in the presence of witnesses, that the marriage may be made public, as of wont.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered King Shehriman and summoned the Cadi and the witnesses, who came and drew up the marriage contract between the prince and princess. Then they gave largesse of money and sweetmeats and burnt perfumes and sprinkled essences. And indeed it was a day of joy and festivity, and the grandees and soldiers rejoiced therein. Then King Shehriman proceeded to equip his daughter; and Taj el Mulouk said to his father, ‘Of a truth, this young man Aziz is a man of great worth and generosity and hath done me right noble service, having wearied for me and travelled with me till he brought me to my desire. Indeed, he ceased never to have patience with me and exhort me to patience, till I accomplished my intent; and he has now companied with us two whole years, cut off from his native land. So now I purpose to equip him with merchandise, that he may depart with a light heart; for his country is near at hand.’ ‘It is well seen,’ replied his father: so they made ready a hundred loads of the richest and most costly stuffs, which Taj el Mulouk presented to Aziz, saying, ‘O my brother and my true friend, take these loads and accept them from me, as a gift and token of affection, and go in peace to thine own country.’ Aziz accepted the presents and kissing the earth before the prince and his father, bade them farewell. Moreover, Taj el Mulouk mounted and brought him three miles on his homeward way, after which Aziz conjured him to turn back, saying, ‘By Allah, O my lord, were it not for my mother, I would never part from thee! But leave me not without news of thee.’ ‘So be it,’ replied Taj el Mulouk. Then the prince returned to the city, and Aziz journeyed on, till he came to his native town and repairing to his mother’s house, found that she had built him a monument in the midst of the courtyard and used to visit it continually. When he entered, he found her, with her hair dishevelled and spread over the tomb, weeping and repeating the following verses:

Indeed, I'm very patient 'gainst all that can betide; Yet do I
lack of patience thine absence to abide.
Who is there can have patience after his friend and who Bows not
the head to parting, that comes with rapid stride?

Then sobs burst up out of her breast, and she repeated these verses also:

What ails me? I pass by the graveyard, saluting the tomb of my
son, And yet no greeting he gives me and answer comes there
none.
"How shall I give thee an answer, who lie in the grip of the
grave, The hostage of earth and corruption," replies the
beloved one.
"The dust hath eaten my beauties and I have forgotten thee, Shut
in from kindred and lovers and stars and moon and sun."

Then Aziz came in to her, and when she saw him, she fell down in a swoon for joy. He sprinkled water on her, till she revived and rising, took him in her arms and strained him to her bosom, whilst he in like manner embraced her. Then they exchanged greetings, and she asked the reason of his long absence, whereupon he told her all that had befallen him from first to last and how Taj el Mulouk had given him a hundred loads of wealth and stuffs. At this she rejoiced, and Aziz abode with his mother in his native town, weeping for what had befallen him with the daughter of Delileh the Crafty, even her who had gelded him.

Meanwhile, Taj el Mulouk went in to his beloved, the Princess Dunya, and did away her maidenhead. Then King Shehriman proceeded to equip his daughter for her journey with her husband and father-in-law and let bring them victual and gifts and rarities. So they loaded their beasts and set forth, whilst Shehriman brought them three days' journey on their way, till King Suleiman begged him to return. So he took leave of them and turned back, and Taj el Mulouk and his wife and father journeyed on, night and day, with their troops, till they drew near the capital of the Green Country. As soon as the news of their coming became known, the folk decorated the city; so in they entered, and the King sitting down on his chair of estate, with his son by his side, gave alms and largesse and loosed those who were in bonds. Then he held a second bridal for his son, and the sound of the singing-women and players upon instruments of music ceased not for a whole month, during which time the tire-women stinted not to adorn the bride and display her in various dresses; and she tired not of the unveiling nor did they weary of gazing on her. Then Taj el Mulouk, after having companied awhile with his father and mother, took up his sojourn with his wife, and they abode in all delight of life and fair fortune, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights."

When the Vizier had made an end of the story of Taj el Mulouk and the Princess Dunya, Zoulmekan said to him, "Of a truth, it is the like of thee who lighten the mourning heart and are worthy to be the companions of kings and to guide their policy in the right way."

Meanwhile, they ceased not from the leaguer of Constantinople; and there they lay four whole years, till they yearned after their native land and the troops murmured, being weary of siege and vigil and stress of war by night and by day. Then King Zoulmekan summoned Rustem and Behram and Terkash and bespoke them thus, "Know that all these years we have lain here and have not come by our intent and have gotten us but increase of trouble and concern; for indeed we came, thinking to take our wreak for King Omar ben Ennuman and behold, my brother Sherkan was slain; so is our sorrow grown two sorrows and our affliction two afflictions. All this came of the old woman Dhat ed Dewahi, for it was she who slew the Sultan in his kingdom and carried off his wife, the Princess Sufiyeh; nor did this suffice her, but she must put another cheat on us and slay my brother Sherkan: and indeed I have bound myself and sworn by the most solemn oaths to avenge them of her. What say ye? Ponder my words and answer me." With this, they bowed their heads and answered, "It is for the Vizier Dendan to decide." So the Vizier came forward and said, "O King of the age, it avails us nothing to tarry here, and it is my counsel that we strike camp and return to our own country, there to abide awhile and after return and fall upon the worshippers of idols.” “This is a good counsel,” replied the King; “for indeed the folk weary for a sight of their families, and I also am troubled with yearning after my son Kanmakan and my brother’s daughter Kuzia Fekan, for she is in Damascus and I know not how it is with her.” So he bade the herald call the retreat after three days, whereupon the troops rejoiced and blessed the Vizier Dendan. Then they fell to preparing for the homeward march and on the fourth day, they beat the drums and unfurled the banners and the army set forth, the Vizier in the van and the King riding in the mid-battle, with the Great Chamberlain by his side, and journeyed night and day, till they reached Baghdad. The folk rejoiced in their return, and care and hardship ceased from them, whilst those who had stayed at home came forth to meet those who had been so long absent and each amir betook him to his own house. As for Zoulmekan, he went up to the palace and went into his son Kanmakan, who had now reached the age of seven and used to go down [into the tilting-ground] and ride. As soon as the King was rested of his journey, he entered the bath with his son, and returning, seated himself on his chair of estate, whilst the Vizier Dendan took up his station before him and the amirs and grandees of the realm entered and stood in attendance upon him. Then he called for his comrade the stoker, who had befriended him in his strangerhood; and when he came, the King rose to do him honour and made him sit by his own side. Now he had acquainted the Vizier with all the kindness and fair service that the stoker had done him; so the Vizier and all the amirs made much of him. The stoker had waxed fat and burly with rest and good living, so that his neck was like an elephant’s neck and his face like a porpoise’s belly. Moreover, he was grown dull of wit, for that he had never stirred from his place; so at the first he knew not the King by his aspect. But Zoulmekan came up to him smilingly and saluted him after the friendliest fashion, saying, “How hast thou made haste to forget me!” So the stoker roused himself and looking steadfastly on Zoulmekan knew him: whereupon he sprang to his feet and exclaimed. “O my friend, who hath made thee Sultan?” Zoulmekan laughed at him and the Vizier, coming up to him, expounded the whole story to him and said, “He was thy brother and thy friend; and now he is King of the land and needs must thou get great good of him. So I counsel thee, if he say to thee, ‘Ask a boon of me,’ ask not but for some great thing; for thou art very dear to him.” Quoth the stoker, “I fear lest, if I ask of him aught, he may not choose to grant it or may not be able thereto.” “Have no care,” answered the Vizier; “whatsoever thou asketh, he will give thee.” “By Allah,” rejoined the stoker, “I must ask of him a thing that is in my thought! Every night I dream of it and implore God to vouchsafe it to me.” “Take heart,” said the Vizier. “By Allah, if thou askedst of him the government of Damascus, in the room of his brother he would surely give it thee.” With this, the stoker rose to his feet and Zoulmekan signed to him to sit; but he refused, saying, “God forfend! The days are gone by of my sitting in thy presence.” “Not so,” answered the Sultan; “they endure even now. Thou wert the cause that I am now alive, and by Allah, what thing soever thou askest of me, I will give it to thee! But ask thou first of God, and then of me.” “O my lord,” said the stoker, “I fear…,” “Fear not,” quoth the Sultan. “I fear,” continued he, “to ask aught and that thou shouldst refuse it to me.” At this the King laughed and replied, “If thou askedst of me the half of my kingdom, I would share it with thee: so ask what thou wilt and leave talking.” “I fear…,” repeated the stoker. “Do not fear,” said the King. “I fear,” went on the stoker, “lest I ask a thing and thou be not able thereto.” With this, the Sultan waxed wroth and said, “Ask what thou wilt.” Then said the stoker, “I ask, first of God and then of thee, that thou write me a patent of mastership over all the stokers in Jerusalem.” The Sultan and all who were present laughed and Zoulmekan said, “Ask somewhat other than this.” “O my lord,” replied the stoker, “said I not I feared thou wouldst not choose to grant me what I should ask or be not able thereto?” Therewith the Vizier nudged him once and twice and thrice, and every time he began, “I ask of thee…” Quoth the Sultan, “Ask and be speedy.” So he said, “I beseech thee to make me captain of the scavengers in Jerusalem or Damascus.” Then all those who were present laughed, till they fell backward, and the Vizier beat him. So he turned to the Vizier and said to him, “What art thou that thou shouldst beat me? It is no fault of mine: didst thou not bid me ask some considerable thing? Let me go to my own country.” With this, the Sultan knew that he was jesting and took patience with him awhile; then turned to him and said, “O my brother, ask of me some considerable thing, befitting our dignity.” So the stoker said, “O King of the age, I ask first of God and then of thee, that thou make me Viceroy of Damascus in the room of thy brother.” “God granteth thee this,” answered the King. So the stoker kissed the ground before him, and he bade set him a chair in his rank and put on him a viceroy’s habit. Then he wrote him a patent of investiture and sealing it with his own seal, said to the Vizier, “None shall go with him but thou; and when thou returnest, do thou bring with thee my brother’s daughter, Kuzia Fekan.” “I hear and obey,” answered the Vizier and taking the stoker, went down with him and made ready for the journey. Then the King appointed the stoker servants and officers and gave him a new litter and princely equipage and said to the amirs, “Whoso loves me, let him honour this man and give him a handsome present.” So they brought him every one his gift, according to his competence; and the King named him Ziblcan, and conferred on him the surname of honour of El Mujahid. As soon as the new Viceroy’s gear was ready, he went up with the Vizier to the King, to take leave of him and ask his permission to depart. The King rose to him and embracing him, exhorted him to do justice among his subjects and deal fairly with them and bade him make ready for war against the infidels after two years Then they took leave of each other and King Ziblcan, surnamed El Mujahid, set out on his journey, after the amirs had brought him slaves and servants, even to five thousand in number, who rode after him. The Grand Chamberlain also took horse, as did Behram, captain of the Medes, and Rustem, captain of the Persians, and Terkash, captain of the Arabs, and rode with him three days’ journey, to do him honour and take their leaves of him. Then they returned to Baghdad and the Sultan Ziblcan and the Vizier Dendan fared on, with their company, till they drew near Damascus. Now news was come upon the wings of birds, to the notables of Damascus that King Zoulmekan had made Sultan over Damascus a Sultan called Ziblcan el Mujahid; so when he reached the city, he found it decorated in his honour, and all the folk came out to gaze on him. He entered Damascus in great state and went up to the citadel, where he sat down upon his chair of estate, whilst the Vizier Dendan stood in attendance on him, to acquaint him with the ranks and stations of the amirs. Then the grandees came in to him and kissed hands and called down blessings on him. He received them graciously and bestowed on them gifts and dresses of honour; after which he opened the treasuries and gave largesse to the troops, great and small. Then he governed and did justice and proceeded to equip the lady Kuzia Fekan, daughter of King Sherkan, appointing her a litter of silken stuff. Moreover, he furnished the Vizier Dendan also for the return journey and would have made him a gift of money, but he refused, saying, "Thou art near the time of the tryst with the King, and haply thou wilt have need of money, or we may send to seek of thee funds for the Holy War or what not." When the Vizier was ready, the Viceroy brought Kuzia Fekan to him and made her mount the litter, giving her ten damsels to do her service. Moreover, he mounted, to bid the Vizier farewell, and they set forward, whilst Ziblcan returned to Damascus and busied himself in ordering the affairs of his government and making ready his harness of war, against such time as King Zoulmekan should send to him there for. Meanwhile the Vizier and his company fared forward by easy stages, till they came, after a month's travel, to Ruhbeh and thence pushed on, till they drew near Baghdad. Then he despatched messengers, to inform King Zoulmekan of his arrival; and he, when he heard this, took horse and rode out to meet him. The Vizier would have dismounted to receive him, but the King conjured him not to do so and spurred his steed, till he came up to him. Then he questioned him of Ziblcan, whereto the Vizier replied that he was well and that he had brought with him his brother's daughter, Kuzia Fekan. At this the King rejoiced and said to Dendan, "Go thou and rest thee of the fatigue of the journey, and after three days come to me again." "With all my heart," replied the Vizier and betook himself to his own house, whilst the King went up to his palace and went in to his brother's daughter, who was then a girl of eight years old. When he saw her, he rejoiced in her and sorrowed sore for her father. Then he let make for her clothes and gave her splendid jewels and ornaments and bade lodge her with his son Kanmakan in one place. So they both grew up, the brightest and bravest of the people of their time; but Kuzia Fekan grew up possessed of good sense and understanding and knowledge of the issues of events, whilst Kanmakan grew up generous and freehanded, taking no thought to the issue of aught. Now Kuzia Fekan used to ride a-horseback and fare forth with her cousin into the open plain and range at large with him in the desert; and they both learnt to smite with swords and thrust with spears. So they grew up, till each of them attained the age of twelve, when King Zoulmekan, having completed his preparations and provisions for the Holy War, summoned the Vizier Dendan and said to him, “Know that I am minded to do a thing, which I will discover to thee, and do thou with speed return me an answer thereon.” “What is that, O King of the age?” asked the Vizier. “I am resolved,” said the King, “to make my son Kanmakan king and rejoice in him in my lifetime and do battle before him, till death overcome me. What deemest thou of this?” The Vizier kissed the earth before the King and replied, “O King and Sultan, lord of the age and the time, this that is in thy mind is indeed good, save that it is now no time to carry it out, for two reasons: the first, that thy son Kanmakan is yet of tender age; and the second, that it is of wont that he who makes his son king in his lifetime, lives but a little thereafterward.” “Know, O Vizier,” rejoined the King, “that we will make the Grand Chamberlain guardian over him, for he is art and part of us and he married my sister, so that he is to me as a brother.” Quoth the Vizier, “Do what seemeth good to thee: we will obey thine orders.” Then the King sent for the Grand Chamberlain and the grandees of the kingdom and said to them, “Ye know that this my son Kanmakan is the first cavalier of the age and that he hath no peer in jousting and martial exercises; and now I appoint him to be Sultan over you in my stead and I make his uncle, the Grand Chamberlain, guardian over him.” “O King of the age,” replied the Chamberlain, “I am but an offset of thy bounty.” And the King said, “O Chamberlain, verily this my son Kanmakan and my niece Kuzia Fekan are brothers’ children; so I marry them one to the other and I call those present to witness thereof.” Then he made over to his son such treasures as beggar description and going in to his sister Nuzhet ez Zeman told her what he had done, whereat she rejoiced greatly and said, “Verily, they are both my children. May God preserve thee to them many a year!” “O my sister,” replied he, “I have accomplished that which was in my heart of the world and I have no fear for my son: yet it were well that thou shouldst have a watchful eye to him and to his mother." And he went on to commend to the Chamberlain and Nuzhet ez Zeman his son and niece and wife. Thus did he nights and days till he [fell sick and] deeming surely that he should drink the cup of death, took to his bed and abode thus a whole year, whilst the Chamberlain took upon himself the ordering of the people and the realm. At the end of this time, the King summoned his son Kanmakan and the Vizier Dendan and said to the former, "O my son, this Vizier shall be thy father, when I am dead; for know that I am about to leave this transitory house of life for that which is eternal. And indeed I have fulfilled my lust of this world; yet there remaineth in my heart one regret, which may God dispel at thy hands!" "What regret is that, O my father?" asked his son. "O my son," answered Zoulmekan, "it is that I die without having avenged thy grandfather Omar ben Ennuman and thine uncle Sherkan on an old woman whom they call Dhat ed Dewahi; but, so God grant thee aid, do not thou fail to take thy wreak on her and to wipe out the disgrace we have suffered at the hands of the infidels. Beware of the old woman's craft and do as the Vizier shall counsel thee; for that he from of old time hath been the pillar of our realm." And his son assented to what he said. Then the King's eyes ran over with tears and his sickness redoubled on him, nor did it leave to press sore upon him four whole years, during which time his brother-in-law the Chamberlain held sway over the country, judging and commanding and forbidding, to the contentment of the people and the nobles, and all the land prayed for him what while Zoulmekan was occupied with his malady. As for Kanmakan, he had no thought but of riding and tilting with spears and shooting with arrows, and thus also did his cousin Kuzia Fekan; for they were wont to go forth at the first of the day and return at nightfall, when she would go in to her mother and he to his, to find her sitting weeping by his father's bed. Then he would tend his father till daybreak, when he would go forth again with his cousin, according to their wont. Now Zoulmekan's sufferings were long upon him and he wept and recited these verses:

My strength is past away, my tale of days is told And I, alas! am
left even as thou dost behold.
In honour's day, the first amongst my folk was I, And in the race

for fame the foremost and most bold.
Would that before my death I might but see my son The empery in
my stead over the people hold
And rush upon his foes and take on them his wreak, At push of
sword and pike, in fury uncontrolled.
Lo, I'm a man fordone, in this world and the next, Except my
spright of God be solaced and consoled!

When he had made an end of repeating these verses he laid his head on his pillow and his eyes closed and he slept. In his sleep he saw one who said to him, "Rejoice for thy son shall fill the lands with justice and have the mastery over them and men shall obey him." Then he awoke gladdened by this happy omen that he had seen, and after a few days, death smote him, whereat great grief fell on the people of Baghdad, and gentle and simple mourned for him. But time passed over him, as if he had never been, and Kanmakan's estate was changed; for the people of Baghdad set him aside and put him and his family in a place apart. When his mother saw this, she fell into the sorriest of plights and said, "Needs must I go to the Grand Chamberlain, and I hope for the favour of the Subtle, the All-Wise One!" Then she betook herself to the house of the Chamberlain, who was now become Sultan, and found him sitting upon his couch. So she went in to his wife Nuzhet ez Zeman and wept sore and said, "Verily, the dead have no friends. May God never bring you to need and may you cease not to rule justly over rich and poor many days and years! Thine ears have heard and thine eyes have seen all that was ours aforetime of kingship and honour and dignity and wealth and goodliness of life and condition; and now fortune hath turned upon us, and fate and the time have played us false and wrought hostilely with us; wherefore I come to thee, craving thy bounties, I that have been used to confer favours; for when a man dies, women and girls are brought low after him." And she repeated the following verses:

Let it suffice thee that Death is the worker of wonders and know
That the lives which are gone from our sight will never
return to us mo'.

The days of the life of mankind are nothing but journeys, I wot,
whose watering-places for aye are mixed with misfortune and woe.
Yet nothing afflicteth my heart like the loss of the good and the great, Whom the stresses of adverse events have compassed about and laid low.

When Nuzhet ez Zeman heard this, she remembered her brother Zoulmekan and his son Kanmakan and making her draw near to her, said to her, “By Allah, I am now rich and thou poor, and by Allah, we did not leave to seek thee out, but that we feared to wound thy heart, lest thou shouldst deem our gifts to thee an alms. Of a truth, all the good that we now enjoy is from thee and thy husband: so our house is thy house and our place thy place, and all that we have of wealth and goods is thine.” Then she clad her richly and appointed her a lodging in the palace, adjoining her own; and she and her son abode therein in all delight of life. Him also did Nuzhet ez Zeman clothe in kings’ raiment and gave them handmaids to do them service. After a little, she told her husband of her brother’s widow, whereat his eyes filled with tears and he said, “Wouldst thou see the world after thee, look upon the world after another than thyself. Entertain her honourably and enrich her poverty.”

Meanwhile, Kanmakan and Kuzia Fekan grew up and flourished, like unto two fruit-laden saplings or two shining moons, till they reached the age of fifteen. As for the girl, she was indeed the fairest of the cloistered maids, with lovely face and smooth cheeks, slender waist, heavy hips and arrowy shape, lips sweeter than old wine and spittle as it were the fountain Selsebil of Paradise, even as saith the poet, describing her:

From her mouth’s honeyed dew, meseems, the first-pressed wine is drawn And on her sweetest lips the grapes, from which it’s crushed, are grown;
And when thou makest her to bend, its vines sway in her shape.
Blessed be He who fashioned her and may not be made known!

For indeed God had united in her every attribute of beauty: her shape put to shame the willow-wand and the rose sought grace before her cheeks; the water of her mouth made mock of clear wine, and she gladdened heart and eyes, even as saith of her the poet:

Goodly and glorious she is, and perfect in every charm. Her
eyelashes put to shame kohl and the users of kohl.
Even as a sword in the hand of Ali, the Vicar of God, So is the
glance of her eye to a lover's heart and soul.

As for Kanmakan, he was no less accomplished in grace and excelling in perfection; there was none could match with him in beauty and qualities, and valour shone from between his liquid black eyes, testifying for him and not against him. The hardest hearts inclined to him; and when the tender down of his lips and cheeks began to sprout, many were the poems made in his honour: as for example quoth one:

Unshown was my excuse, till on his cheek the hair Grew and the
darkness crept, bewildered, here and there.
A fawn, when eyes of men are fixed upon his charms, His glances
straight on them a trenchant poniard bare.

And another:

His lovers' souls have woven upon his cheek, I ween, A net the
blood has painted with all its ruddy sheen.
Oh, how at them I marvel! They're martyrs; yet they dwell In
fire, and for their raiment, they're clad in sendal
green.

It chanced, one festival day, that Kuzia Fekan went out, surrounded by her handmaids, to visit certain kindred of the court; and indeed beauty encompassed her; the rose of her cheek vied with the mole thereon, her teeth flashed from her smiling lips, like the petals of the camomile flower, and she was as the resplendent moon. Her cousin Kanmakan began to turn about her and devour her with his eyes. Then he took courage and giving loose to his tongue, repeated the following verses:

When shall the mourning heart be healed of anger and disdain?
When, rigour ceasing, shall the lips of union smile again?
Would God I knew if I shall lie, some night, within the arms Of a
beloved, in whose heart is somewhat of my pain!

When she heard this, she was angry and putting on a haughty air, said to him, “Hast thou a mind to shame me among the folk, that thou speakest thus of me in thy verse? By Allah, except thou leave this talk, I will assuredly complain of thee to the Grand Chamberlain, Sultan of Baghdad and Khorassan and lord of justice and equity, whereby disgrace and punishment will fall on thee?” To this Kanmakan made no reply, but returned to Baghdad: and Kuzia Fekan also returned home and complained of her cousin to her mother, who said to her, “O my daughter, belike he meant thee no ill, and is he not an orphan? Indeed, he said nought that implied reproach to thee; so look thou tell none of this, lest it come to the Sultan’s ears and he cut short his life and blot out his name and make it even as yesterday, whose remembrance hath passed away.” How ever, Kanmakan’s case was not hidden from the people, and his love for Kuzia Fekan became known in Baghdad, so that the women talked of it. Moreover, his heart became contracted and his patience waned and he knew not what to do. Then longed he to give vent to the anguish he endured, by reason of the pangs of separation; but he feared her anger and her rebuke: so he recited the following verses:

What though I be fearful, anon, of her wrath, Whose humour serene
is grown troubled and dour,
I bear it with patience, as he who is sick Endureth a caut’ry in
hopes of a cure.

His verses came one day to the knowledge of King Sasan (for so had they named the Grand Chamberlain, on his assumption of the Sultanate), as he sat on his throne, and he was told of the love the prince bore to Kuzia Fekan; whereat he was sore vexed, and going in to his wife Nuzhet ez Zeman, said to her, “Verily, to bring together fire and dry grass is of the greatest of risks; and men may not be trusted with women, so long as eyes cast furtive glances and eyelids quiver. Now thy nephew Kanmakan is come to man's estate and it behoves us to forbid him access to the harem; nor is it less needful that thy daughter be kept from the company of men, for the like of her should be cloistered." "Thou sayest sooth, O wise King," answered she. Next day came Kanmakan, according to his wont, and going in to his aunt, saluted her. She returned his greeting and said to him, "O my son, I have somewhat to say to thee, that I would fain leave unsaid; yet must I tell it thee, in my own despite." "Speak," said he. "Know then," rejoined she, "that thine uncle the Chamberlain, the father of Kuzia Fekan, has heard of thy love for her and the verses thou madest of her and has ordered that she be kept from thee; wherefore, if thou have occasion for aught from us, I will send it to thee from behind the door, and thou shalt not look upon Kuzia Fekan nor return hither from day forth." When he heard this, he withdrew, without speaking a word, and betook himself to his mother, to whom he related what his aunt had said to him. Quoth she, "This all comes of thy much talk. Thou knowest that the news of thy passion for Kuzia Fekan is noised abroad everywhere and how thou eatest their victual and makest love to their daughter." "And who should have her but I?" replied the prince. "She is the daughter of my father's brother and I have the best of rights to her." "These are idle words," rejoined his mother. "Be silent, lest thy talk come to King Sasan's ears and it prove the cause of thy losing her and of thy ruin and increase of affliction. They have not sent us the evening meal to-night and we shall die of want; and were we in any land other than this, we were already dead of the pangs of hunger or the humiliation of begging our bread." When Kanmakan heard his mother's words, his anguish redoubled; his eyes ran over with tears and he sobbed and complained and repeated the following verses:

Give o'er this unrelenting blame, that never lets me be! My heart
  loves her to whom it's thrall and may not struggle free.
Look not to me for any jot of patience, for I swear By God His
  house, my patience all is clean divorced from me!
Blamers to prudence me exhort; I heed them not, for I In my
  avouchment am sincere of love and constancy.
They hinder me by very force from visiting my dear, Though, by

the Merciful, nor rogue am I nor debauchee!
Indeed, my bones, whenas they hear the mention of her name, Do
quake and tremble even as birds from sparrow-hawks that
flee.
O daughter of my uncle, say to him who chides at love, That I, by
Allah, am distraught with love-longing for thee.

And he said to his mother, "I can dwell no longer in my aunt's house nor among these people, but will go forth and abide in the corners of the city." So he and his mother left the palace and took up their abode in one of the quarters of the poorer sort: and she used to go from time to time to King Sasan's palace and take thence food for her own and her son's subsistence. One day, Kuzia Fekan took her aside and said to her, "Alas, my aunt, how is it with thy son?" "O my daughter," replied she, "sooth to say, he is tearful-eyed and mournful-hearted, being fallen into the snare of thy love." And she repeated to her the verses he had made; whereupon Kuzia Fekan wept and said, "By Allah, I rebuked not him for his words of ill-will or dislike to him, but because I feared the malice of enemies for him. Indeed, my passion for him is double that he feels for me; words fail to set out my yearning for him; and were it not for the extravagances of his tongue and the wanderings of his wit, my father had not cut off his favours from him nor decreed unto him exclusion and prohibition. However, man's fortune is nought but change, and patience in every case is most becoming; peradventure He who ordained our severance will vouchsafe us reunion!" And she repeated the following:

O son of mine uncle, the like of thine anguish I suffer, the like
of thy passion I feel;
Yet hide I from men what I suffer for longing, And shouldst thou
not also thy passion conceal?

When his mother heard this, she thanked her and blessed her: then she left her and returning to her son, told him what his mistress had said; whereupon his desire for her increased. But he took heart, being eased of his despair, and the turmoil of his spirits was quelled. And he said, “By Allah, I desire none but her!” And he repeated the following verses:

Give over thy chiding; I’ll hearken no whit to the flouts of my
foes: Indeed I’ve discovered my secret that nought should
have made me disclose;
And she, whose enjoyment I hoped for, alack! is far distant from
me; Mine eyes watch the hours of the dark, whilst she passes
the night in repose.

So the days and nights went by, whilst Kanmakan lay tossing upon coals of fire, till he reached the age of seventeen: and indeed his beauty was now come to perfection and his wit had ripened. One night, as he lay awake, he communed with himself and said, “Why should I keep silence, till I consume away, and see not my love? My only fault is poverty: so, by Allah, I will go out from this land and wander afar in the plains and valleys; for my condition in this city is one of misery and I have no friend nor lover in it to comfort me; wherefore I will distract myself by absence from my native land, till I die and am at peace from abasement and tribulation.” And he repeated the following verses:

Though my soul weary for distress and flutter fast for woe, Yet
of its nature was it ne’er to buckle to a foe.
Excuse me; for indeed my heart is like a book, whereof The
superscription’s nought but tears, that aye unceasing flow.
Behold my cousin, how she seems a maid of Paradise, A houri come,
by Rizwan’s grace, to visit us below!
Who seeks the glances of her eyes and dares the scathing stroke
Of their bright swords, shall hardly ‘scape their swift and
deadly blow.
Lo, I will wander o’er the world, to free my heart from bale And
compensation for its loss upon my soul bestow!
Yea, I will range the fields of war and tilt against the brave
And o’er the champions will I ride roughshod and lay them
low.
Then will I come back, glad at heart and rich in goods and store,

Driving the herds and flocks as spoil before me, as I go.

So he went out in the darkness of the night, barefoot, wearing a short-sleeved tunic and a skull-cap of felt seven years old and carrying a cake of dry bread, three days stale, and betook himself to the gate El Arij of Baghdad. Here he waited till the gate opened, when he was the first to go forth; and he went out at random and wandered in the deserts day and night. When the night came, his mother sought him, but found him not, whereupon the world, for all its wideness, was straitened upon her and she took no delight in aught of its good. She looked for him a first day and a second and a third, till ten days were past, but no news of him reached her. Then her breast became contracted and she shrieked and lamented, saying, “O my son, O my delight, thou hast revived my sorrows! Did not what I endured suffice, but thou must depart from the place of my abiding? After thee, I care not for food nor delight in sleep, and but tears and mourning are left me. O my son, from what land shall I call thee? What country hath given thee refuge?” And her sobs burst up, and she repeated the following verses:

We know that, since you went away, by grief and pain we’re tried.
    The bows of severance on us full many a shaft have plied.
They girt their saddles on and gainst the agonies of death Left
    me to strive alone, whilst they across the sand-wastes
    tried.
Deep in the darkness of the night a ring-dove called to me,
    Complaining of her case; but I, “Give o’er thy plaint,”
    replied.
For, by thy life, an if her heart were full of dole, like mine,
    She had not put a collar on nor yet her feet had dyed.
My cherished friend is gone and I for lack of him endure All
    manner sorrows which with me for ever will abide.

Then she abstained from food and drink and gave herself up to weeping and lamentation. Her grief became known and all the people of the town and country wept with her and said, “Where is thine eye, O Zoulmekan?” And they bewailed the rigour of fate, saying, “What can have befallen him, that he left his native town and fled from the place where his father used to fill the hungry and do justice and mercy?” And his mother redoubled her tears and lamentations, till the news of Kanmakan’s departure came to King Sasan through the chief amirs, who said to him, “Verily, he is the son of our (late) King and the grandson of King Omar ben Ennuman and we hear that he hath exiled himself from the country.” When King Sasan heard these words, he was wroth with them and ordered one of them to be hanged, whereat the fear of him fell upon the hearts of the rest and they dared not speak one word. Then he called to mind all the kindness that Zoulmekan had done him and how he had commended his son to his care; wherefore he grieved for Kanmakan and said “Needs must I have search made for him in all countries.” So he summoned Terkash and bade him choose a hundred horse and go in quest of the prince. Accordingly he went out and was absent ten days, after which he returned and said, “I can learn no tidings of him and have come on no trace of him, nor can any tell me aught of him.” With this, King Sasan repented him of that which he had done with Kanmakan; whilst his mother abode without peace or comfort, nor would patience come at her call: and thus twenty heavy days passed over her.

To return to Kanmakan. When he left Baghdad, he went forth, perplexed about his case and knowing not whither he should go: so he fared on alone into the desert for the space of three days and saw neither footman nor horseman. Sleep deserted him and his wakefulness redoubled, for he pined for his people and his country. So he wandered on, eating of the herbs of the earth and drinking of its waters and resting under its trees at the hour of the noontide heats, till he came to another road, into which he turned and following it other three days, came to a land of green fields and smiling valleys, abounding in the fruits of the earth. It had drunken of the beakers of the clouds, to the sound of the voices of the turtle and the ring-dove, till its hill-sides were enamelled with verdure and its fields were fragrant. At this sight, Kanmakan recalled his father’s city Baghdad, and for excess of emotion repeated the following verses:

I wander on, in hope I may return Some day, yet know not when

that day shall be.
What drove me forth was that I found no means To fend awe, the
ills that pressed on me.

Then he wept, but presently wiped away his tears and ate of the fruits of the earth. Then he made his ablutions and prayed the ordained prayers that he had neglected all this time; after which he sat in that place, resting, the whole day. When the night came, he lay down and slept till midnight, when he awoke and heard a man's voice repeating the following verses:

Life unto me is worthless, except I see the shine
Of the flashing teeth of my mistress and eke her face divine.
The bishops in the convents pray for her day and night
And in the mosques the imams fall prone before her shrine.
Death's easier than the rigours of a beloved one,
Whose image never cheers me, whenas I lie and pine.
O joy of boon-companions, when they together be
And lover and beloved in one embrace entwine!
Still more so in the season of Spring, with all its flowers,
What time the world is fragrant with blossoms sweet and fine.
Up, drinker of the vine-juice, and forth, for seest thou not
Earth gilt with blooms and waters all welling forth like wine?

When Kanmakan heard this, it revived his sorrows; his tears ran down his cheeks like rivers and flames of fire raged in his heart. He rose to see who it was that spoke, but saw none, for the thickness of the dark; whereupon passion increased on him and he was alarmed and restlessness possessed him. So he descended to the bottom of the valley and followed the banks of the stream, till he heard one sighing heavily, and the same voice recited the followed verses:

Though thou have used to dissemble the love in thy heart for
fear, Give on the day of parting, free course to sob and
tear.
'Twixt me and my beloved were vows of love and troth; So cease I
for her never to long and wish her near.

My heart is full of longing; the zephyr, when it blows, To many a
thought of passion stirs up my heavy cheer.
Doth she o’ the anklets hold me in mind, whilst far away, Though
between me and Saada were solemn vows and dear?
Shall the nights e’er unite us, the nights of dear delight, And
shall we tell our suff’rings, each in the other’s ear?
“Thou seduced by passion for us,” quoth she, and I, “God keep Thy
lovers all! How many have fallen to thy spear?”
If mine eyes taste the pleasance of sleep, while she’s afar, May
God deny their vision her beauties many a year!
O the wound in mine entrails! I see no cure for it Save
love-delight and kisses from crimson lips and clear.

When Kanmakan heard this, yet saw no one, he knew that the speaker was a lover like unto himself, debarred the company of her whom he loved; and he said to himself; “It were fitting that this man should lay his head to mine and become my comrade in this my strangerhood.” Then he hailed the speaker and cried out to him, saying “O thou that goest in the sombre night, draw near to me and tell me thy history. Haply thou shalt find in me one who will succour thee in shine affliction.” “O thou that answerest my complaint and wouldst know my history,” rejoined the other, “who art thou amongst the cavaliers? Art thou a man or a genie? Answer me speedily ere thy death draw near, for these twenty days have I wandered in this desert and have seen no one nor heard any voice but thine.” When Kanmakan heard this, he said to himself, “His case is like unto mine, for I also have wandered twenty days in the desert and have seen none nor heard any voice: but I will make him no answer till the day.” So he was silent and the other called out to him, saying, “O thou that callest, if thou be of the Jinn, go in peace, and if thou be a man, stay awhile, till the day break and the night flee with the dark.” So they abode each in his own place, reciting verses and weeping with abundant tears, till the light of day appeared and the night departed with the darkness. Then Kanmakan looked at the other and found him a youth of the Bedouin Arabs, clad in worn clothes and girt-with a rusty sword, and the signs of passion were apparent on him. So he went up to him and accosting him, saluted him. The

Bedouin returned the salute and greeted him courteously, but made little account of him, for what he saw of his tender years and his condition, which was that of a poor man. So he said to him, “O youth, of what tribe art thou and to whom art thou kin among the Arabs? What is thy history and wherefore goest thou by night, after the fashion of champions? Indeed, thou spokest to me in the night words such as are spoken of none but magnanimous cavaliers and lionhearted warriors; and now thy life is in my hand. But I have compassion on thee by reason of thy tender age; so I will make thee my companion, and thou shalt go with me, to do me service.” When Kanmakan heard him speak thus unseemly, after what he had shown him of skill in verse, he knew that he despised him and thought to presume with him; so he answered him with soft and dulcet speech, saying, “O chief of the Arabs, leave my tenderness of age and tell me thy story and why thou wanderest by night in the desert, reciting verses. Thou talkest of my serving thee; who then art thou and what moved thee to speak thus?” “Harkye, boy!” answered the Bedouin, “I am Subbah, son of Remmah ben Hummam. My people are of the Arabs of Syria, and I have a cousin called Nejmeh, who brings delight to all that look on her. My father died, and I was brought up in the house of my uncle, the father of Nejmeh; but when I grew up and my cousin became a woman, they excluded her from me and me from her, seeing that I was poor and of little estate. However, the chiefs of the Arabs and the heads of the tribes went in to her father and rebuked him, and he was abashed before them and consented to give me his daughter, but upon condition that I should bring him as her dower fifty head of horses and fifty dromedaries and fifty camels laden with wheat and a like number laden with barley, together with ten male and ten female slaves. The dowry he imposed upon me was beyond my competence; for he exacted more than the due marriage portion. So now I am travelling from Syria to Irak, having passed twenty days without seeing other than thyself, and I mean to go to Baghdad, that I may note what rich and considerable merchants start thence. Then I will go out in their track and seize their goods, for I will kill their men and drive off their camels with their loads. But what manner of man art thou?” “Thy case is like unto mine,” replied Kanmakan; “save that my complaint is more grievous than thine; for my cousin is a king's daughter, and the dowry of which thou hast spoken would not content her family, nor would they be satisfied with the like of that from me." "Surely," said Subbah, "thou art mad or light-headed for excess of passion! How can thy cousin be a king's daughter? Thou hast no sign of princely rank on thee, for thou art but a mendicant." "O chief of the Arabs," rejoined Kanmakan, "marvel not at my case, for it is due to the shifts of fortune; and if thou desire proof of me, behold, I am Kanmakan, son of King Zoulmekan, son of King Omar ben Ennuman, lord of Baghdad and Khorassan, and fortune hath played the tyrant with me; for my father died and (my uncle) King Sasan took the Sultanate. So I fled forth from Baghdad, secretly, lest any should see me, and have wandered twenty days, without seeing any but thyself. So now I have discovered to thee my case, and my history is as thy history and my need as thy need." When Subbah heard this, he cried out and said, "O joy! I have attained my desire! I will have no booty this day but thyself; for, since thou art of the lineage of kings and hast come out in the habit of a beggar, it cannot be but thy people will seek thee, and if they find thee in any one's hand, they will ransom thee with much treasure. So put thy hands behind thee, O my lad, and walk before me." "Softly, O brother of the Arabs," answered Kanmakan; "my people will not ransom me with silver nor with gold, no, not with a brass dirhem; and I am a poor man, having with me neither much nor little: so leave this behaviour with me and take me to comrade. Let us go forth of the land of Irak and wander over the world, so haply we may win dower and marriage-portion and enjoy our cousins' embraces." When Subbah heard this, he was angry; his arrogance and heat redoubled and he said, "Out on thee, O vilest of dogs! Dost thou bandy words with me? Turn thy back, or I will chastise thee." At this Kanmakan smiled and answered, "Why should I turn my back for thee? Is there no equity in thee? Dost thou not fear to bring reproach upon the Arabs by driving a man like myself captive, in dishonour and humiliation, before thou hast proved him in the field, to know if he be a warrior or a coward?" The Bedouin laughed and replied, "By Allah, I wonder at thee! Thou art a boy in years, but old in talk. These words should come from none but a doughty champion: what wantest thou of equity? "If thou wilt have me be thy captive, to serve thee," said Kanmakan, "throw down thine arms and put off thine upper clothes and wrestle with me; and whichever of us throws the other shall have his will of him and make him his servant." The other laughed and said, "I think thy much talk denotes the nearness of thy death." Then he threw down his sword and tucking up his skirt, drew near unto Kanmakan, and they gripped each other. But the Bedouin found that Kanmakan had the better of him and outweighed him, as the quintal outweighs the dinar; and he looked at his legs and saw that they were as firmly planted as two well-builded minarets or two tent-poles driven into the ground or two immovable mountains. So he knew that he himself was not able to cope with him and repented of having come to wrestle with him, saying in himself, "Would I had fallen on him with my weapons!" Then Kanmakan took hold of him and mastering him shook him, till he thought his guts would burst in his belly and roared out, "Hold thy hand, O boy!" He heeded him not, but shook him again, and lifting him from the ground, made with him towards the stream, that he might throw him therein: whereupon the Bedouin cried out, saying, "O valiant man, what wilt thou do with me?" Quoth Kanmakan, "I mean to throw thee into this stream: it will carry thee to the Tigris. The Tigris will bring thee to the river Isa and the Isa to the Euphrates, and the Euphrates will bear thee to thine own country; so thy people will see thee and know thy manlihead and the sincerity of thy passion." When Subbah heard this, he cried out and said, "O champion of the desert, do not with me the deed of the wicked, but let me go, by the life of thy cousin, the jewel of the fair!" With this, Kanmakan set him down; and when he found himself at liberty, he ran to his sword and buckler and taking them up, stood plotting in himself treachery and a sudden attack on Kanmakan. The latter read his intent in his eye and said to him, "I know what is in thy mind, now thou hast hold of thy sword and buckler. Thou hast neither strength nor skill for wrestling, but thou thinkest that, wert thou on horseback and couldst wheel about and ply me with thy sword, I had been slain long ago. But I will give thee thy will, so there may be no despite left in thy heart. Give me the buckler and fall on me with thy sword; either I shall kill thee or thou me." "Here it is," answered Subbah and throwing him the shield, drew his sword and rushed at him. Kanmakan took the buckler in his right hand and began to fend himself with it, whilst Subbah struck at him with the sword, saying at each stroke, “This is the finishing one!” But Kanmakan received all his blows on his buckler and they fell harmless, though he did not strike back again, having no weapon of offence; and Subbah ceased not to smite at him, till his arm was weary. When the prince saw this, he rushed at him and seizing him in his arms, shook him and threw him to the ground. Then he turned him over on his face and binding his arms behind him with the hangers of his sword, began to drag him by the feet towards the river: whereupon cried Subbah, “What wilt thou do with me, O youth and cavalier of the age and hero of the field?” “Did I not tell thee,” answered Kanmakan, “that it was my intent to send thee by the river to thy people and thy tribe, lest their hearts be troubled for thee and thou miss thy cousin’s bride-feast?” At this, Subbah shrieked aloud and wept and said, “Do not thus, O champion of the time! Let me go and make me one of thy servants.” And he wept and wailed and recited the following verses:

An outcast from my folk (how long my exile lasts!) am I. Would
God I knew if I in this my strangerhood shall die!
I perish, and my folk know not the place where I am slain; I fall
in exile, far away from her for whom I sigh.

Kanmakan had compassion on him and said to him, “Make a covenant with me and swear to be a true comrade to me and to bear me company whithersoever I may go.” “It is well,” replied Subbah and took the required oath. So Kanmakan loosed him, and he rose and would have kissed the prince’s hand; but he forbade him. Then the Bedouin opened his wallet and taking out three barley-cakes, laid them before Kanmakan, and they both sat down on the bank of the stream to eat. When they had done eating, they made the ablution and prayed, after which they sat talking of what had befallen each of them from his people and the shifts of fortune. Then said Kanmakan, “Whither dost thou now intend?” “I purpose,” replied Subbah, “to repair to Baghdad, thy native town, and abide there, till God vouchsafe me the marriage-portion.” “Up then,” rejoined the other, “and to the road! I abide here.” So the Bedouin took leave of him and set out for Baghdad, whilst Kanmakan remained behind, saying to himself, “O my soul, how shall I return poor and needy? By Allah, I will not go back empty-handed, and if God please, I will assuredly work my deliverance!” Then he went to the stream and made his ablutions and prayed to his Lord, laying his brow in the dust and saying, “O my God, Thou that makest the dew to fall and feedest the worm in the rock, vouchsafe me, I beseech Thee, my livelihood, of Thy power and the graciousness of Thy compassion!” Then he pronounced the salutation that closes prayer and sat, turning right and left and knowing not which way to take. Presently, he saw, making towards him, a horseman whose back was bowed and who let the reins droop. He sat still and after awhile the horseman came up to him, when, behold, he was at the last gasp and made sure of death, for he was grievously wounded. The tears streamed down his cheeks, like water from the mouths of skins, and he said to Kanmakan, “O chief of the Arabs, take me to friend, whilst I live, for thou wilt not find my like, and give me a little water, harmful though the drinking of water be to a wounded man, especially whilst the blood is flowing and the life with it. If I live, I will give thee what shall heal thy distress and thy poverty; and if I die, mayst thou be blessed for thy good intent!” Now this horseman had under him a stallion of the most generous breed, with legs like shafts of marble, the tongue fails to describe it; and when Kanmakan looked at it, he was seized with longing admiration and said in himself, “Verily, the like of this stallion is not to be found in our time.” Then he helped the rider to alight and entreated him friendly and gave him a little water to drink; after which he waited till he was rested and said to him, “Who has dealt thus with thee?” “I will tell thee the truth of the case,” answered the wounded man. “I am a horse-thief and all my life I have occupied myself with stealing and snatching horses, night and day, and my name is Ghessan, surnamed the plague of all stables and horses. I heard tell of this stallion, that he was with King Afridoun in the land of the Greeks, where they had named him El Catoul and surnamed him El Mejnoun. So I journeyed to Constantinople on his account, and whilst I was watching my opportunity to get at him, there came out an old woman, much considered among the Greeks and whose word is law with them, a past mistress in all manner of trickery, by name Shewahi Dhat ed Dewahi. She had with her this stallion and ten slaves, no more, to attend on her and it, and was bound for Baghdad, there to sue for peace and pardon from King Sasan. So I went out in their track, thinking to get the horse, and ceased not to follow them, but was unable to get at the stallion, by reason of the strict guard kept by the slaves, till they reached this country and I feared lest they should enter the city of Baghdad. As I was casting about to steal the horse, behold, a great cloud of dust arose and covered the prospect. Presently it opened and disclosed fifty horsemen, banded together to waylay merchants and led by a captain by name Kehrdash, like a raging lion, yea, in battle a lion that lays heroes flat even as a carpet. They bore down on the old woman and her company, shouting and surrounding them, nor was it long before they bound her and the ten slaves and made off with their captives and the horse, rejoicing. When I saw this, I said to myself, ‘My toil is wasted and I have not attained my desire.’ However, I waited to see how the affair would result, and when the old woman found herself a captive, she wept and said to Kehrdash, ‘O doughty champion and invincible warrior, what wilt thou do with an old woman and slaves, now thou hast thy will of the horse?’ And she beguiled him with soft words and promises that she would send him horses and cattle, till he released her and her slaves. Then he went his way, he and his comrades, and I followed them to this country, watching my opportunity, till at last I succeeded in stealing the horse, whereupon I mounted him and drawing a whip from my wallet, struck him with it. When the robbers heard this, they came out on me and surrounded me on all sides and shot arrows and cast spears at me, whilst I stuck fast on the horse’s back and he defended me with his hoofs, till at last he shot out with me from amongst them, like an arrow from the bow or a shooting star, after I had gotten a grievous wound in the press of the battle. Since that time, I have passed three days in the saddle, without tasting food or sleep, so that my strength is wasted and the world is become of no account to me. But thou hast dealt kindly with me and hast had pity on me: and I see thee naked of body and sorrowful of aspect; yet are the marks of gentle breeding manifest on thee. So tell me, what and whence art thou and whither art thou bound?” “My name is Kanmakan," answered the prince, "son of King Zoulmekan, son of King Omar ben Ennuman. My father died, and a base man seized the throne after his death and became king over great and small." Then he told him all his story from first to last; and the thief said to him, (and indeed he had compassion on him), "By Allah, thou art a man of great account and exceeding nobility and thou shalt surely win to high estate and become the first cavalier of thy time! If thou canst lift me into the saddle and mount behind me and bring me to my country, thou shalt have honour in this world and a reward on the Day of calling of men one to another; for I have no strength left to hold myself in the saddle; and if I die by the way, the steed is thine; for thou art worthier of it than any other." "By Allah," said Kanmakan, "if I could carry thee on my shoulders or share my life with thee, I would do so, without the horse! For I am of those that love to do good and succour the afflicted. So make ready to set out and put thy trust in the Subtle, the All-Wise." And he would have lifted him on to the horse and set forward, trusting in God the Succourable. But the robber said, "Wait for me a little." Then he closed his eyes and opening his hands, said, "I testify that there is no god but God and that Mohammed is the Apostle of God! O Glorious One, pardon me my mortal sin, for none can pardon mortal sins save Thou!" And he made ready for death and recited the following verses:

I've ranged through all countries, oppressing mankind, And in
drinking of wine I have wasted my days.
I've waded through torrents, the horses to steal And I've used
with my guile the high places to raze.
My case is right grievous and great is my guilt, And Catoul,
alas! is the end of my ways.
I hoped of this horse I should get my desire; But vain was my
journey and vain my essays.
All my life I have stolen the steeds, and my death Was decreed of
the Lord of all power and all praise.
So, in fine, for the good of the stranger, the poor, The orphan,
I've wearied in toils and affrays.

When he had finished, he closed his eyes and opened his mouth; then giving one sob, he departed this life. Kanmakan rose and dug a grave and laid him in the earth. Then he went up to the stallion and kissed it and wiped its face and rejoiced with an exceeding joy, saying, “None has the like of this horse, no, not even King Sasan.” So much for Kanmakan.

Meanwhile, news came to King Sasan that the Vizier Dendan and half the army had thrown off their allegiance to him and sworn that they would have no king but Kanmakan and the Vizier had bound the troops by a solemn covenant and had gone with them to the islands of India and Ethiopia, where he had gathered together a host like the swollen sea, none could tell its van from its rear. Moreover, he was resolved to make for Baghdad and possess himself of the kingdom and slay all who should let him, having sworn not to return the sword of war to its sheath, till he had set Kanmakan on the throne. When this news came to Sasan, he was drowned in the sea of melancholy, knowing that the whole state had furled against him, great and small, and trouble and anxiety were sore on him. So he opened his treasuries and distributed that which was therein among his officers and prayed for Kanmakan’s return, that he might draw his heart to him with fair usage and bounty and make him commander of those troops that remained faithful to him, hoping thus to prop his [falling] power. The news of this reached Kanmakan by the merchants; so he returned in haste to Baghdad, riding on the aforesaid stallion, and the news of his coming reached King Sasan, as he sat perplexed upon his throne; whereupon he despatched all the troops and head-men of Baghdad to meet him. So all who were in Baghdad went out to meet the Prince and escorted him to the palace and kissed the threshold, whilst the damsels and eunuchs went in to his mother and gave her the good tidings of his return. She came to him and kissed him between the eyes, but he said to her, “O my mother, let me go to my uncle King Sasan, who hath overwhelmed us with favours and benefits.” Then he repaired to the palace, whilst all the people marvelled at the beauty of the stallion and said, “No king is like unto this man.” So he went in to King Sasan, who rose to receive him; and Kanmakan saluted him and kissing his hands, offered him the horse as a present. The King bade him welcome, saying, “Welcome and fair welcome to my son Kanmakan! By Allah, the world hath been straitened on me by reason of thine absence, but praised be God for thy safety!" And Kanmakan called down blessings on him. Then the King looked at the stallion and knowing it for the very horse, Catoul by name, that he had seen in such and such a year, whilst at the leaguer of Constantinople with King Zoulmekan, said to Kanmakan, "I! thy father could have come by this horse, he would have bought him with a thousand chargers of price: but now let the honour return to thee who deservest it. We accept the steed and return it to thee as a gift, for thou hast more right to it than any man alive, being the prince of cavaliers." Then he bade bring forth for him dresses of honour and led horses and appointed him the chief lodging in the palace, giving him much money and showing him the utmost honour, for that he feared the issue of the Vizier Dendan's doings. At this Kanmakan rejoiced and despondency and humiliation ceased from him. Then he went to his house and said to his mother, "O my mother, how is it with my cousin?" "By Allah, O my son," answered she, "my concern for thine absence hath distracted me from any other, even to thy beloved; especially as she was the cause of thine exile and separation from me." Then he complained to her of his sufferings, saying, "O my mother, go to her and speak with her; haply she will favour me with a sight of her and dispel my anguish." "O my son," replied his mother, "idle desires abase the necks of men; so put away from thee this thought that will but lead to vexation; for I will not go to her nor carry her such a message." Thereupon he told her what he had heard from the horse-thief concerning Dhat ed Dewahi, how she was then in their land, on her way to Baghdad, and added, "It was she who slew my uncle and grandfather, and needs must I avenge them and wipe out our reproach." Then he left her and repaired to an old woman, by name Saadaneh, a cunning, perfidious and pernicious beldam, past mistress in all kinds of trickery and deceit To her he complained of what he suffered for love of his cousin Kuzia Fekan and begged her to go to her and implore her favour for him. "I hear and obey," answered the old woman and betaking herself to Kuzia Fekan's palace, interceded with her in his favour. Then she returned to him and said, "Thy cousin salutes thee and will visit thee this night at the middle hour." At this he rejoiced and sat down to await the fulfilment of his cousin’s promise. At the appointed hour she came to him, wrapped in a veil of black silk, and aroused him from sleep, saying, “How canst thou pretend to love me, when thou art sleeping, heart-free, after the goodliest fashion?” So he awoke and said, “O desire of my heart, by Allah, I slept not but hoping that thine image might visit me in dreams!” Then she chid him tenderly and repeated the following verses:

Wert thou indeed a lover true and leal, Thou hadst not suffered
slumber on thee creep.
O thou who feign'st to walk the ways of love, The watch of
passion and desire to keep,
Son of my uncle, sure the eyes of those Who're love-distraught
know not the taste of sleep.

When he heard his cousin's words, he was abashed before her and rose and excused himself. Then they embraced and complained to each other of the anguish of separation; and thus they did, till the dawn broke and the day flowered forth over the lands; when she rose to depart. At this, Kanmakan wept and sighed and repeated the following verses:

She came to me, after her pride had driven me to despair, She in
whose lips the teeth as the pearls of her necklace were.
I kissed her a thousand times and clipped her close in my arms
And lay all night with my cheek pressed close to the cheek
of the fair;
Till the day, that must sever our loves, as 'twere the blade of a
sword That flashes forth of its sheath, gleamed out on us
unaware.

Then she took leave of him and returned to her palace. Now she let certain of her damsels into her secret, and one of them told the King, who went in to Kuzia Fekan and drawing his sabre upon her, would have slain her: but her mother Nuzhet ez Zeman entered and said to him, 'By Allah, do her no hurt, lest it be noised among the folk and thou become a reproach among the kings of the age! Thou knowest that Kanmakan is no base-born wretch, but a man of honour and nobility, who would not do aught that could shame him, and she was reared with him. So take patience and be not hasty; for verily the report is spread abroad, among the people of the palace and all the folk of the city, how the Vizier Dendan hath levied troops from all countries and is on his way hither to make Kanmakan king." "By Allah," said the King, "needs must I cast him into a calamity, such that neither earth shall bear him nor sky shadow him! I did but speak him fair and entreat him with favour, because of my subjects and officers, lest they should turn to him; but thou shalt see what will betide." Then he left her and went out to order the affairs of the kingdom.

Next day, Kanmakan came in to his mother and said to her, "O my mother, I am resolved to go forth a-raiding in quest of booty. I will waylay caravans and seize horses and flocks and slaves black and white, and as soon as my store is waxed great and my case is bettered, I will demand my cousin Kuzia Fekan in marriage of my uncle." "O my son," replied she, "of a truth the goods of men are not as a wastril camel, ready to thy hand; but between thee and them are sword-strokes and lance-thrusts and men that eat wild beasts and lay waste countries and snare lions and trap lynxes." Quoth he, "God forbid that I should turn from my purpose, till I have attained my desire!" Then he despatched the old woman to Kuzia Fekan, to tell her that he was about to set out in quest of a dowry befitting her, saying, "Thou must without fail bring me an answer from her." "I hear and obey," repled the old woman and going forth, presently returned with Kuzia Fekan's answer, which was that she would come to him at midnight. So he abode awake till one half of the night was past, when disquietude got hold on him, and before he was aware, she came in to him, saying, "My life be thy ransom from wakefulness!" And he sprang up to receive her, exclaiming, "O desire of my heart, my life be thy ransom from all things evil!" Then he acquainted her with his intent, and she wept; but he said, "Weep not, O my cousin; for I beseech Him who decreed our separation to vouchsafe us reunion and felicity." Then Kanmakan went in to his mother and took leave of her, after which he girt on his sword and donned turban and chin-band and mounting his horse Catoul, rode through the streets of Baghdad, till he reached the gate of the city. Here he found his comrade Subbah ben Remmah going out, who, seeing him, ran to his stirrup and saluted him. He returned his greeting, and Subbah said to him, "O my brother, how camest thou by this steed and sword and clothes, whilst I up to now have gotten nothing but my sword and target?" Quoth Kanmakan, "The hunter returns not but with game after the measure of his intent. A little after thy departure, fortune came to me: so now wilt thou go with me and work thine intent in my company and journey with me in this desert?" "By the Lord of the Kaabeh," replied Subbah, "from this time forth I will call thee nought but 'My lord!'" Then he ran on before the horse with his sword hanging from his neck and his budget between his shoulder-blades, and they pushed on into the desert four days' space, eating of the gazelles they caught and drinking of the water of the springs. On the fifth day, they came in sight of a high hill, at whose foot was a Spring encampment and a running stream. The knolls and hollows were filled with camels and oxen and sheep and horses, and little children played about the cattle-folds. When Kanmakan saw this, he was right glad and his breast was filled with joy; so he addressed himself to battle, that he might take the camels and the cattle, and said to Subbah, "Come, let us fall upon this good, whose owners have left it unguarded, and do battle for it with near and far, so haply it may fall to our lot and we will share it between us." "O my lord," replied Subbah, "verily they to whom these herds belong are much people, and among them are doughty horsemen and footmen. If we cast ourselves into this great danger, neither of us will return to his people; but we shall both be cut off utterly and leave our cousins desolate." When Kanmakan heard this, he laughed and knew that he was a coward: so he left him and rode down the hill, intent on rapine, shouting and chanting aloud the following verses:

O the house of En Numan is mickle of might! We're the champions
with swords on the squadrons that smite!
When the fury of battle flames high in our hearts, We're aye to
be found in the front of the fight.
The poor man amongst us may slumber secure Nor see the foul
favour of want or upright.
I hope for the succour of Him in whose hand Is the Kingdom, the
Maker of body and spright.

Then he rushed upon the cattle, like a camel in heat, and drove them all, oxen and sheep and horses and camels, before him. Therewith the slaves ran at him with their bright swords and their long lances; and at their head was a Turkish horseman, a stout champion, doughty in battle and onset and skilled to wield the tawny spear and the white sabre. He drove at Kanmakan, saying, “Out on thee! Knewest thou to whom these cattle belong, thou hadst not done this thing! Know that they are the good of the Greek band, the champions of the sea and the Circassian troop, and they are a hundred cavaliers, all stern warriors, who have forsworn the commandment of all kings. There has been stolen from them a steed of great price, and they have vowed not to return hence, but with it.” When Kanmakan heard these words, he cried out, saying, “O losers, this that I bestride is the steed itself, after which ye seek and for whose sake ye would do battle with me! So come out against me, all of you at once, and do your dourest!” So saying, he cried out between Catoul’s ears and he ran at them, as he were a ghoul. Then Kanmakan drove at the Turk and smote him and overthrew him and let out his life; after which he turned upon a second and a third and a fourth and bereft them also of life. When the slaves saw this, they were afraid of him, and he cried out and said to them, “Ho, sons of whores, drive out the cattle and the horses, or I will dye my spear in your blood!” So they untethered the cattle and began to drive them out, and Subbah came down to Kanmakan, crying out with a loud voice and rejoicing greatly; when, behold, there arose a cloud of dust and grew till it covered the prospect, and there appeared under it a hundred cavaliers, like fierce lions. With this Subbah fled up on to the hill, that he might gaze upon the fight in safety, saying, “I am no warrior but in sport and jest.” Then the hundred cavaliers made towards Kanmakan from all sides, and one of them accosted him, saying, “Whither goest thou with this good?” “I have made prize of them,” replied he, “and am carrying them away; and I forbid you from them, for know that he who is before you is a terrible lion and an illustrious champion and a sword that cuts wherever it turns!” When the horseman heard this, he looked at Kanmakan and saw that he was a cavalier as he were a strong lion, whilst his face was as the full moon rising on its fourteenth night, and valour shone from between his eyes. Now this horseman was the chief of the hundred horse, and his name was Kehrdash; and what he saw in Kanmakan of the perfection of martial grace, together with surpassing beauty and comeliness, reminded him of a mistress of his, by name Fatin. Now this Fatin was one of the fairest of women in face, for God had given her beauty and grace and charms and noble qualities of all kinds, such as the tongue fails to describe. Moreover, the cavaliers of the tribe feared her prowess and the champions of the land stood in awe of her, and she had sworn that she would not marry nor give any possession of her, except he should conquer her, saying to her father, "None shall approach me, except he master me in the field and the stead of war." Kehrdash was one of her suitors, and when the news reached him of the vow she had taken, he thought scorn to fight with a girl, fearing reproach; and one of his friends said to him, "Thou art accomplished in beauty and manly qualities; so if thou contend with her, even though she be stronger than thou, thou must needs overcome her, for when she sees thy beauty and grace, she will be discomfited before thee, seeing that women by nature incline unto men, as is not unknown to thee." Nevertheless he refused and would not contend with her, albeit indeed she loved him, for what she had heard of his beauty and velour: and he ceased not to abstain from her thus, till he met with Kanmakan, as hath been set down. Now he took the prince for his beloved Fatin and was afraid; so he went up to him and said, "Out on thee, O Fatin! Thou comest to show me thy prowess; but now alight from thy steed, that I may talk with thee, for I have driven off these cattle and waylaid horsemen and champions, all for the sake of thy beauty and grace, which are without peer. So now thou shalt marry me, that kings' daughters may wait on thee, and thou shalt become queen of these countries." When Kanmakan heard this, the fires of wrath flamed up in him and he cried out, saying, "Out on thee, O dog of the barbarians! Leave thy raving of Fatin and come to cutting and thrusting, for eftsoon thou shalt lie in the dust." So saying, he began to wheel about him and offer battle. Then Kehrdash observed him more closely and saw that he was indeed a doughty knight and a stalwart champion; and the error of his thought was manifest to him, whenas he saw the tender down that adorned his cheeks, as it were myrtles springing from the heart of a red rose. And he feared his onslaught and said to those that were with him, "Out on you! Let one of you attack him and show him the keen sword and the quivering spear; for know that for a company to do battle with one man is foul shame, even though he be a doughty man of war and an invincible champion." With this, there ran at Kanmakan a lion-like horseman, mounted on a black horse with white feet and a star on his forehead, the bigness of a dirhem, astounding sight and wit, as he were Abjer, that was Antar's steed: even as saith of him the poet:

See, where the stallion yonder comes, that with a fierce delight
  Drives to the battle, mingling earth with heaven in his might.
Meseems, the morning smote his brow and to avenge himself
  Thereon, he plunges straight and deep into its heart of light.

He rushed upon Kanmakan, who met him in mid-career, and they wheeled about awhile in the dint of battle, exchanging blows such as confound the wit and dim the sight, till Kanmakan took the other at vantage and smote him a swashing blow, that shore through turban and iron skull-cap and reached his head, and he fell from his saddle, as a camel falls, when he rolls over. Then a second came out to him and a third and a fourth and a fifth, and he did with them all as he had done with the first. Thereupon the rest rushed upon him, all at once, for indeed they were wild with rage and concern; but it was not long before he had transfixed them all with the point of his lance. When Kehrdash saw his feats of arms, he knew that he was stout of heart and concluded that he was the phoenix of the champions and heroes of the age: so he feared death and said to Kanmakan, "I give thee thy life and pardon thee the blood of my comrades, for I have compassion on thee by reason of thy fair youth. So take what thou wilt of the cattle and go thy ways, for life is better for thee [than death]." "Thou lackest not of the generosity of the noble," replied Kanmakan; "but leave this talk and flee for thy life and reck not of blame nor think to get back the booty; but take the straight path for thine own safety." When Kehrdash heard this, he waxed exceeding wroth and his anger moved him to that which was the cause of his death; so he said to Kanmakan, "Out on thee! Knewest thou who I am, thou wouldst not talk thus in the open field. I am the doughty lion known as Kehrdash, he who despoils great kings and waylays all the travellers and seizes the merchants' goods. Yonder steed under thee is what I am seeking and I call upon thee to tell me how thou camest by it." "Know," replied Kanmakan, "that this steed was being carried to my uncle King Sasan in the company of a certain old woman, attended by ten slaves, when thou fellest upon her and tookest the horse from her; and I have a debt of blood against this old woman for the sake of my grandfather King Omar ben Ennuman and my uncle King Sherkan." "Out on thee!" said Kehrdash. "Who is thy father, O thou that hast no (known) mother?" "Know," answered the prince, "that I am Kanmakan, son of Zoulmekan, son of Omar ben Ennuman." Quoth Kehrdash, "Thy perfection cannot be denied, nor yet the union in thee of martial virtue and comeliness: but go in peace, for thy father showed us favour and bounty." "By Allah, O vile wretch," rejoined Kanmakan, "I will not so far honour thee as to overcome thee in the open field!" At this the Bedouin was wroth and they drove at one another, shouting aloud, whilst their horses pricked up their ears and raised their tails. They clashed together with such a dint, that it seemed to each as if the heavens were split in sunder, and strove like two butting rams, smiting one another with thick-coming spear-strokes. Presently, Kehrdash aimed a blow at Kanmakan; but he evaded it and turning upon the brigand, smote him in the breast, that the head of the spear issued from his back. Then he collected the horses and cattle and cried out to the slaves, saying, "Up and drive them off briskly!" With this down came Subbah and accosting Kanmakan, said to him, "Thou hast quitted thee right well, O hero of the age! I prayed God for thee and He heard my prayer." Then he cut off Kehrdash's head and Kanmakan laughed and said, "Out on thee, Subbah! I thought thee a man of valour." Quoth the Bedouin, "Forget not thy slave in the division of the spoil, so haply I may win therewith to marry my cousin Nejmeh." "Thou shalt surely have a share in it," answered Kanmakan, "but now keep watch over the booty and the slaves." Then they set out and journeyed night and day till they drew near Baghdad, and all the troops heard of Kanmakan and saw the booty and the brigand's head on the point of Subbah's spear. Moreover, the merchants knew Kehrdash's head and rejoiced, for he was a noted highwayman, saying, "Allah hath rid mankind of him!" And they marvelled at his death and called down blessings on his slayer. Then all the people of Baghdad came to Kanmakan, seeking to know what had befallen him, and he told them what had passed, whereupon they were taken with awe of him and all the champions and men of war feared him. After this, he drove his spoil to the palace and planting the spear, on which was Kehrdash's head, before the gate, gave largesse to the people of camels and horses so that they loved him and all hearts inclined to him. Then he took Subbah and lodged him in a spacious dwelling, giving him part of the booty; after which he went in to his mother and told her all that had befallen him. Meanwhile the news of him reached the King, who rose and shutting himself up with his chief officers, said to them, "I wish to reveal to you my secret and acquaint you with the truth of my case. Know that Kanmakan will be the cause of our expulsion from the kingdom; for he has slain Kehrdash, albeit he had with him the tribes of the Turks and the Kurds, and our affair with him will assuredly result in our destruction, seeing that the most part of our troops are his kinsmen and ye know what the Vizier Dendan hath done; how he refuses to recognize me, after all the favours I have done him, and is become a traitor to his faith. Indeed, it has come to my knowledge that he hath levied an army in the provinces and goeth about to make Kanmakan king, for that the kingdom was his father's and his grandfather's before him, and he will surely slay me without mercy." When they heard this, they replied, "O King, verily he is unequal to this, and did we not know him to have been reared by thee, not one of us would take thought to him. We are at thy commandment; if thou wilt have us slay him, we will do so, and if thou wilt have him kept at a distance, we will chase him away." When King Sasan heard this, he said, "Verily, it were wise to slay him: but needs must ye take an oath of it." So they all pledged themselves to kill him, to the intent that, when the Vizier Dendan came and heard of his death, his might should be weakened and fail of that which he designed to do. When they had made this compact with him, the King bestowed great gifts upon them and dismissing them, retired to his own apartments. Now the troops refused their service, awaiting what should befall, for they saw that the most part of the army was with the Vizier Dendan. Presently, the news of these things came to Kuzia Fekan and caused her much concern; so that she sent for the old woman, who was wont to carry messages between her and her cousin, and bade her go to him and warn him of the plot against his life. Accordingly, she repaired to Kanmakan and gave him the princess's message, to which he replied, "Bear my cousin my salutation and say to her, 'The earth is God's (to whom belong might and majesty), and He maketh whom He willeth of His servants to inherit it. How excellent is the saying of the poet:

The kingship is God's alone, and him who would fain fulfil His
  wishes He driveth away and maketh him rue for his ill.
Had I or another than I a handsbreadth of earth to my own, The
  Godship were sundered in twain and two were the Power and
  the Will.'"

The old woman returned to Kuzia Fekan with Kanmakan's reply and told her that he abode in the city. Meanwhile, King Sasan awaited his going forth from Baghdad, that he might send after him and kill him; till, one day, it befell that Kanmakan went out to hunt, accompanied by Subbah, who would not leave him day or night. He caught ten gazelles and among them one that had soft black eyes and turned right and left; so he let her go, and Subbah said to him, "Why didst thou let her go?" Kanmakan laughed and set the others free also, saying, "It behoves us, of humanity, to release gazelles that have young, and this one only turned from side to side, to look for her young ones: so I let her go and released the others in her honour." Quoth Subbah, "Do thou release me, that I may go to my people." At this Kanmakan laughed and smote him on the breast with the butt of his spear, and he fell to the ground, writhing like a serpent. Whilst they were thus occupied, they saw cloud of dust and heard the tramp of horse; and presently there appeared a troop of armed cavaliers. Now King Sasan had heard of Kanmakan's going out and sending for an Amir of the Medes, called Jami, and twenty men, had given them money and bidden them slay Kanmakan. So, when they drew near the prince, they rushed at him and he met them in mid-career and killed them all, to the last man. Meanwhile the King took horse and riding out to meet his men, found them all slain, whereat he wondered and turned back; but the people of the city laid hands on him and bound him straitly. As for Kanmakan, he left that place behind him and rode onward with Subbah. As he went, he saw a youth sitting at the door of a house in his road and saluted him. The youth returned his greeting and going into the house, brought out two platters, one full of milk and the other of brewis swimming in (clarified) butter, which he set before Kanmakan, saying, “Favour me by eating of my victual.” But he refused and the young man said to him, “What ails thee, O man, that thou wilt not eat?” “I have a vow upon me,” replied the prince. “What is the cause of thy vow?” asked the youth, and Kanmakan answered, “Know that King Sasan seized upon my kingdom wrongfully and oppressively, albeit it was my father’s and my grandfather’s before me; yet he laid hands upon the throne by force, after my father’s death, and took no count of me, for that I was of tender years. So I have bound myself by a vow to eat no man’s victual, till I have eased my heart of my enemy.” “Rejoice,” rejoined the youth, “for God hath fulfilled thy vow. Know that he is in prison and methinks he will soon die.” “In what house is he imprisoned?” asked Kanmakan. “In yonder high pavilion,” answered the other. The prince looked and saw the folk entering and buffeting Sasan, who was suffering the agonies of death. So he went up to the pavilion and noted what was therein; after which he returned to his place and sitting down to meat, ate what sufficed him and put the rest in his budget. Then he waited till it was dark night. And the youth, whose guest he was, slept; when he rose and repaired to the pavilion in which Sasan was confined. Now about it were dogs, guarding it, and one of them ran at him; so he took out of his wallet a piece of meat and threw it to him. He ceased not to do thus, till he came to the pavilion and making his way to the place where Sasan was, laid his hand upon his head; whereupon he said in a loud voice, “Who art thou?” “I am Kanmakan,” replied the prince, “whom thou wentest about to kill; but God made thee fall into the evil thyself hadst devised. Did it not suffice thee to take my kingdom and that of my father, but thou must go about to kill me?” And Sasan swore a vain oath that he had not plotted his death and that the report was untrue. So Kanmakan forgave him and said to him, “Follow me.” Quoth he, “I cannot walk a single step for weakness.” “If the case be thus,” replied Kanmakan, “we will get us two horses and ride forth and seek the open country.” So they took horse and rode till daybreak, when they prayed the morning-prayer and fared on till they came to a garden, where they sat down and talked awhile. Then Kanmakan rose and said to Sasan, “Is there aught of bitterness left in thy heart against me?” “No, by Allah!” replied Sasan. So they agreed to return to Baghdad and Subbah the Bedouin said, “I will go on before you, to give the folk notice of your coming.” Then he rode on in advance, acquainting men and women with the news; so all the people came out to meet Kanmakan with tabrets and flutes; and Kuzia Fekan also came out, like the full moon shining in all her splendour in the thick darkness of the night. Kanmakan met her, and their hearts yearned each to each and their bodies longed one for the other. There was no talk among the people of the time but of Kanmakan; for the cavaliers bore witness of him that he was the most valiant of the folk of the age and said, “It is not just that other than he should be King over us; but the throne of his grandfather shall revert to him as it was.” Meanwhile King Sasan went in to his wife Nuzhet ez Zeman, who said to him, “I hear that the folk talk of nothing but Kanmakan and attribute to him such qualities as beggar description.” “Hearing is not like seeing,” replied the King; “I have seen him, but have noted in him not one of the attributes of perfection. Not all that is heard is said; but the folk ape one another in extolling and cherishing him, and God makes his praise to run on the lips of men, so that there incline to him the hearts of the people of Baghdad and of the perfidious traitor the Vizier Dendan, who has levied troops from all countries and arrogates to himself the right of naming a king of the country and chooses that it shall be under the hand of a worthless orphan.” “What then dost thou purpose to do?” asked Nuzhet ez Zeman. “I mean to kill him,” replied the King, “that the Vizier may be baulked of his intent and return to his allegiance to me, seeing nothing for it but my service.” Quoth she, “Perfidy is a foul thing with strangers, and how much more with kinsfolk? Thou wouldst do better to marry him to thy daughter Kuzia Fekan and give heed to what was said of old time:

If Fate set over thee a man, though thou than he Be worthier and

this be grievous unto thee,
Yield him the honour due to his estate; thou'lt find He will
advantage thee, though near or far thou be.
Speak not thy thought of him; else wilt thou be of those Who of
their own accord the way of weal do flee.
Many in the harem oft are brighter than the bride; But time is on
her side, and opportunity."

When Sasan heard this, he rose in anger and said to her, "Were it not that to kill thee would bring disgrace and reproach on me, I would take off thy head with my sword and make an end of thee." Quoth she, "I did but jest with thee." And rose and kissed his head and hands, saying, "Thou art right, and we will cast about for some means to kill him." When he heard this, he was glad and said, "Make haste and contrive some device to relieve me of my affliction; for I am at my wit's end." Said she, "I will make shift to do away his life for thee." "How so?" asked he; and she answered, "By means of our female slave Bakoun." Now this Bakoun was past mistress in all kinds of knavery and was one of the most pernicious of old women, in whose religion it was not lawful to abstain from wickedness; she had brought up Kanmakan and Kuzia Fekan, and the former had her in so great affection, that he was wont to sleep at her feet. So when King Sasan heard his wife name her, he said, "This is a good counsel," and sending for the old woman, told her what had passed and bade go about to kill Kanmakan, promising her all good. "O my lord," replied she, "thy commandment shall be done: but I would have thee give me a dagger that has been tempered in water of dearth, that I may despatch him the quicklier for thee." "So be it," said Sasan and gave her a knife that would well-nigh forego destiny. Now this woman had heard stories and verses and committed to memory great store of witty traits and anecdotes: so she took the dagger and went out, considering how she should compass Kanmakan's destruction. Then she repaired to the prince, whom she found sitting awaiting [the coming of a messenger with] his cousin's tryst; so that night his thought was taken up with Kuzia Fekan and the fires of love for her raged in his heart. Bakoun went in to him, saying, "The time of union is at hand and the days of separation are over and gone.” When he heard this, he said, “How is it with Kuzia Fekan?” And she answered, “Know that she is distraught for love of thee.” At this he rose and taking off his [upper] clothes, put them on her and promised her all good. Then said she, “Know that I mean to pass this night with thee, that I may repeat to thee what talk I have heard and divert thee with tales of many a slave of love, whom passion hath made sick.” Quoth he, “Tell me a story, that will gladden my heart and dispel my cares.” “With all my heart,” answered she and sitting down beside him, with the dagger under her clothes, began thus, “The pleasantest thing I ever heard was as follows:

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

Bakoun’s Story of the Hashish-eater.

A certain man loved the fair and spent his substance on them, till he became a beggar and used to go about the streets and markets, seeking his bread. One day, as he went along, a splinter of iron pierced his finger and made it bleed; so he sat down and wiping away the blood, bound up his finger. Then he went on, crying out, till he came to a bath, and entering found it clean (and empty). So he took off his clothes and sitting down by the basin, fell to pouring water on his head, till he was tired, when he went out to the room in which was the tank of cold water. Finding none there, he shut himself up [in a cabinet] and taking out a piece of hashish, swallowed it. The fumes of the drug spread through his brain and he rolled over on to the marble floor. Then the hashish made it appear to him as if a great lord were kneading him and as if two slaves stood at his head, one bearing a bowl and the other washing gear and all the requisites of the bath. When he saw this, he said to himself, ‘Meseems these are mistaken in me; or else they are of the company of us hashish-eaters.’ Then he stretched out his legs and it seemed to him that the bathman said to him, ‘O my lord, the time of thy going forth draws near and it is to-day thy turn of service (at the palace).’ At this he laughed and said, ‘As God wills, O hashish!’ Then he sat and said nothing, whilst the bathman took him by the hand and raising him up, girt his middle with a waist-cloth of black silk, after which the two slaves followed him, with the bowls and implements, till they brought him into a cabinet, wherein they set perfumes burning. He found the place full of various kinds of fruits and sweet-scented flowers, and they cut him a melon and seated him on a stool of ebony, whilst the bathman stood to wash him and the slaves poured water on him; after which they rubbed him down well and said, ‘O our lord the Vizier, may the bath profit thee and mayst thou come to delight everlasting!’ Then they went out and shut the door on him; and he took up the waist-cloth and laughed till he well-nigh lost his senses. He gave not over laughing for some time and saying to himself, ‘What ails them to bespeak me as if I were a Vizier and style me “Master” and “our lord”? Surely they are dreaming now; but presently they will know me and say, “This fellow is a beggar,” and take their fill of cuffing me on the nape of the neck.’ Presently, he felt hot and opened the door, whereupon it seemed to him that a little white slave and an eunuch entered, carrying a parcel. The slave opened the parcel and brought out three kerchiefs of silk, one of which he threw over his head, a second over his shoulders, and a third he tied round his waist. Moreover, the eunuch gave him a pair of bath-clogs, and he put them on; after which in came eunuchs and slaves and supported him, laughing the while, to the outer hall, which he found hung and spread with magnificent furniture, such as beseems none but kings; and the pages hastened up to him and seated him on the divan. Then they fell to kneading him, till sleep overcame him and he dreamt that he had a girl in his arms. So he kissed her and set her between his thighs; then, clipping her as a man clips a woman, took his yard in his hand and was about to have at her, when he heard one saying to him, ‘Awake, thou good-for-nought! The hour of noon is come and thou art still asleep.’ He opened his eyes and found himself lying on the merge of the cold-water tank, with a crowd of people about him, laughing at him; for the napkin was fallen from his middle and discovered his yard in point. So he knew that all this was but an imbroglio of dreams and an illusion of hashish and was vexed and said to him who had aroused him, ‘Would thou hadst waited till I had put it in!’ Then said the folk, ‘Art thou not ashamed, O hashish-eater, and thou lying asleep and naked, with thy yard on end?’ And they cuffed him, till the nape of his neck was red. Now he was starving, yet had he tasted the savour of delight in sleep.”

When Kanmakan heard this story, he laughed till he fell backward and said to Bakoun, “O my nurse, this is indeed a rare story; I never heard its like. Hast thou any more?” “Yes,” answered she and went on to tell him diverting stories and laughable anecdotes, till sleep overcame him. Then she sat by him till the most part of the night was past, when she said to herself, “It is time to profit by the occasion.” So she unsheathed the dagger and drawing near to Kanmakan, was about to slaughter him, when, behold, in came his mother. When Bakoun saw her, she rose to meet her, and fear got hold on her and she fell a-trembling, as if she had the ague. The princess mother marvelled to see her thus and aroused her son, who awoke and found her sitting at his head. Now the reason of her coming was that Kuzia Fekan heard of the plot to kill Kanmakan and said to his mother, “O wife of my uncle, go to thy son, ere that wicked baggage Bakoun kill him.” And she told her what had passed, from beginning to end. So she rose at once and stayed not for aught, till she came to her son’s lodgings, just as Bakoun was about to slay him. When he awoke, he said to his mother, “O my mother, indeed thou comest at a good time, for my nurse Bakoun has been with me this night.” Then he turned to Bakoun and said to her, “My life on thee, knowest thou any story better than those thou hast told me?” “What I have told thee,” answered she, “is nothing to what I will tell thee; but that must be for another time.” Then she rose to go, hardly believing that she should escape with her life, for she perceived of her cunning that his mother knew what was toward; and he said, “Go in peace.” So she went her way, and his mother said to him, “O my son, blessed be this night, wherein God the Most High hath delivered thee from this accursed woman!” “How so?” asked he, and she told him the whole story. “O my mother,” said he, “whoso is fated to live finds no slayer; nor, though he be slain, will he die; but now it were wise that we depart from amongst these enemies and let God do what He will.” So, as soon as it was day, he left the city and joined the Vizier Dendan, and certain things befell between King Sasan and Nuzhet ez Zeman, which caused her also to leave the city and join herself to Kanmakan and Dendan, as did likewise such of the King’s officers as inclined to their party. Then they took counsel together what they should do and agreed to make an expedition into the land of the Greeks and take their revenge for the death of King Omar ben Ennuman and his son Sherkan. So they set out with this intent and after adventures which it were tedious to set out, but the drift of which will appear from what follows, they fell into the hands of Rumzan, King of the Greeks. Next morning, King Rumzan caused Dendan and Kanmakan and their company to be brought before him and seating them at his side, bade spread the tables of food. So they ate and drank and took heart of grace, after having made sure of death, for that, when they were summoned to the King’s presence, they said to one another, “He has not sent for us but to put us to death.” Then said the King, “I have had a dream, which I related to the monks and they said, ‘None can expound it to thee but the Vizier Dendan.’” “And what didst thou see in thy dream, O King of the age?” asked Dendan. “I dreamt,” answered the King, “that I was in a pit, as it were a black well, where meseemed folk were tormenting me; and I would have risen, but fell on my feet and could not get out of the pit. Then I turned and saw on the ground a girdle of gold and put out my hand to take it; but when I raised it from the ground, I saw it was two girdles. So I girt my middle with them, and behold, they became one girdle; and this, O Vizier, is my dream and what I saw in sleep.” “O our lord the Sultan,” said Dendan, “this thy dream denotes that thou hast a brother or a brother’s son or an uncle’s son or other near kinsman of thy flesh and blood [of whom thou knowest not].” When the King heard this, he looked at Kanmakan and Dendan and Nuzhet ez Zeman and Kuzia Fekan and the rest of the captives and said in himself, “If I cut off these people’s heads, their troops will lose heart for the loss of their chiefs and I shall be able to return speedily to my realm, lest the kingdom pass out of my hands.” So he called the headsman and bade him strike off Kanmakan’s head, when behold, up came Rumzan’s nurse and said to him, “O august King, what wilt thou do?” Quoth he, “I mean to put these captives to death and throw their heads among their troops; after which I will fall upon them, I and all my men, and kill all we may and put the rest to the rout; so will this be the end of the war and I shall return speedily to my kingdom, ere aught befall among my subjects.”

When the nurse heard this, she came up to him and said in the Frank tongue, “How canst thou slay thine own brother’s son and thy sister and thy sister’s daughter?” When he heard this, he was exceeding angry and said to her, “O accursed woman, didst thou not tell me that my mother was murdered and that my father died by poison? Didst thou not give me a jewel and say to me, ‘This jewel was thy father’s’? Why didst thou not tell me the truth?” “All that I told thee is true,” replied she: “but thy case and my own are wonderful and thine and my history extraordinary. My name is Merjaneh and thy mother’s name was Abrizeh. She was gifted with such beauty and grace and valour that proverbs were made of her, and her prowess was renowned among men of war. Thy father was

King Omar ben Ennuman, lord of Baghdad and Khorassan. He sent his son Sherkan on an expedition, in company with this very Vizier Dendan; and Sherkan thy brother separated himself from the troops and fell in with thy mother Queen Abrizeh, in a privy garden of her palace, whither we had resorted to wrestle, she and I and her other damsels. He came on us by chance and wrestled with thy mother, who overcame him by the splendour of her beauty and her valour. Then she entertained him five days in her palace, till the news of this came to her father, by the old woman Shewahi, surnamed Dhat ed Dewahi, whereupon she embraced Islam at Sherkan's hands and he carried her by stealth to Baghdad, and with her myself and Rihaneh and other twenty damsels. When we came to thy father's presence, he fell in love with thy mother and going in to her one night, foregathered with her, and she became with child by him of thee. Now thy mother had three jewels, which she gave to thy father, and he gave one of them to his daughter Nuzhet ez Zeman, another to thy brother Zoulmekan and the third to thy brother Sherkan. This last thy mother took from Sherkan, and I kept it for thee. When the time of the princess's delivery drew near, she yearned after her own people and discovered her secret to me; so I went privily to a black slave called Ghezban and telling him our case, bribed him to go with us. Accordingly, he took us and fled forth the city with us by stealth towards the land of the Greeks, till we came to a desert place on the borders of our own country. Here the pangs of labour came upon thy mother, and the slave, being moved by lust, sought of her a shameful thing; whereat she cried out loudly and was sore affrighted at him. In the excess of her alarm, she gave birth to thee at once, and at this moment there arose, in the direction of our country, a cloud of dust which spread till it covered the plain. At this sight, the slave feared for his life; so, in his rage, he smote Queen Abrizeh with his sword and slew her, then, mounting his horse, went his way. Presently, the dust lifted and discovered thy grandfather, King Herdoub, who, seeing thy mother his daughter dead on the ground, was sorely troubled and questioned me of the manner of her death and why she had left her father's kingdom. So I told him all that had happened, first and last; and this is the cause of the feud between the people of the land of the Greeks and the people of Baghdad. Then we took up thy dead mother and buried her; and I took thee and reared thee, and hung this jewel about thy neck. But, when thou camest to man's estate, I dared not acquaint thee with the truth of the matter, lest it should stir up a war of revenge between you. Moreover, thy grandfather had enjoined me to secrecy, and I could not gainsay the commandment of thy mother's father, Herdoub, King of the Greeks. This, then, is why I forbore to tell thee that thy father was King Omar ben Ennuman; but, when thou camest to the throne, I told thee [what thou knowest]; and the rest I could not reveal to thee till this moment. So now, O King of the age, I have discovered to thee my secret and have acquainted thee with all that I know of the matter; and thou knowest best what is in thy mind." When Nuzhet ez Zeman heard what the King's nurse said, she cried out, saying, "This King Rumzan is my brother by my father King Omar ben Ennuman, and his mother was the Princess Abrizeh, daughter of Herdoub, King of the Greeks; and I know this damsel Merjaneh right well." With this, trouble and perplexity got hold upon Rumzan and he caused Nuzhet ez Zeman to be brought up to him forthright. When he looked upon her, blood drew to blood and he questioned her of his history. So she told me all she knew, and her story tallied with that of his nurse; whereupon he was assured that he was indeed of the people of Irak and that King Omar ben Ennuman was his father. So he caused his sister to be unbound, and she came up to him and kissed his hands, whilst her eyes ran over with tears. He wept also to see her weeping, and brotherly love entered into him and his heart yearned to his brother's son Kanmakan. So he sprang to his feet and taking the sword from the headsman's hands, bade bring the captives up to him. At this, they made sure of death; but he cut their bonds with the sword and said to Merjaneh, "Explain the matter to them, even as thou hast explained it to me." "O King," replied she, "know that this old man is the Vizier Dendan and he is the best of witnesses to my story, seeing that he knows the truth of the case." Then she turned to the captives and repeated the whole story to them and to the princes of the Greeks and the Franks who were present with them, and they all confirmed her words. When she had finished, chancing to look at Kanmakan, she saw on his neck the fellow jewel to that which she had hung round King Rumzan's neck, whereupon she gave such a cry, that the whole palace rang again, and said to the King, "Know, O my son, that now my certainty is still more assured, for the jewel that is about the neck of yonder captive is the fellow to that I hung to thy neck, and this is indeed thy brother's son Kanmakan." Then she turned to Kanmakan and said to him, "O King of the age, let me see that jewel." So he took it from his neck and gave it to her. Then she asked Nuzhet ez Zeman of the third jewel and she gave it to her, whereupon she delivered the two to King Rumzan, and the truth of the matter was made manifest to him and he was assured that he was indeed Prince Kanmakan's uncle and that his father was King Omar ben Ennuman. So he rose at once and going up to the Vizier Dendan, embraced him; then he embraced Prince Kanmakan, and they cried aloud for very gladness. The joyful news was blazed abroad and they beat the drums and cymbals, whilst the flutes sounded and the people held high festival. The army of Irak and Syria heard the clamour of rejoicing among the Greeks; so they mounted, all of them, and King Ziblcan also took horse, saying in himself, "What can be the cause of this clamour and rejoicing in the army of the Franks?" Then the Muslim troops made ready for fight and advancing into the field, drew out in battle array. Presently, King Rumzan turned and seeing the army deployed in battalia, enquired the reason and was told the state of the case; so he bade Kuzia Fekan return at once to the Muslim troops and acquaint them with the accord that had betided and how it was come to light that he was Kanmakan's uncle. So she set out, putting away from her sorrows and troubles, and stayed not till she came to King Ziblcan, whom she found tearful-eyed, fearing for the captive chiefs and princes. She saluted him and told him all that had passed, whereat the Muslims' grief was turned to gladness. Then he and all his officers took horse and followed the princess to the pavilion of King Rumzan, whom they found sitting with his nephew, Prince Kanmakan. Now they had taken counsel with the Vizier Dendan concerning King Ziblcan and had agreed to commit to his charge the city of Damascus of Syria and leave him king over it as before, whilst themselves entered Irak. Accordingly, they confirmed him in the viceroyalty of Damascus and bade him set out at once for his government, so he departed with his troops and they rode with him a part of the way, to bid him farewell. Then they returned and gave orders for departure, whereupon the two armies united and King Rumzan and his nephew set out, surrounded by their nobles and grandees. And indeed Kanmakan rejoiced in his uncle King Rumzan and called down blessings on the nurse Merjaneh, who had made them known to each other; but the two Kings said to one another, “Our hearts will never be at rest nor our wrath appeased, till we have taken our wreak of the old woman Shewahi, surnamed Dhat ed Dewahi, and wiped out the blot upon our honour.” So they fared on till they drew near Baghdad, and Sasan, hearing of their approach, came out to meet them and kissed the hand of the King of the Greeks, who bestowed on him a dress of honour. Then King Rumzan sat down on the throne and seated his nephew at his side, who said to him, “O my uncle, this kingdom befits none but thee.” “God forbid,” replied Rumzan, “that I should supplant thee in thy kingdom!” So the Vizier Dendan counselled them to share the throne between them, ruling each one day in turn, and they agreed to this. Then they made feasts and offered sacrifices and held high festival, whilst King Kanmakan spent his nights with his cousin Kuzia Fekan; and they abode thus awhile.

One day, as the two Kings sat, rejoicing in the happy ending of their troubles, they saw a cloud of dust arise and up came a merchant, who ran to them, shrieking and crying out for succour. “O Kings of the age,” said he, “how comes it that I was in safety in the country of the infidels and am plundered in your realm, what though it be a land of peace and justice?” King Rumzan questioned him of his case, and he replied, “I am a merchant, who have been nigh a score of years absent from my native land, travelling in far countries; and I have a patent of exemption from Damascus, which the late Viceroy King Sherkan wrote me, for that I had made him gift of a slave-girl. Now I was returning to Irak, having with me a hundred loads of rarities of Ind; but, as I drew near Baghdad, the seat of your sovereignty and the abiding-place of your peace and your justice, there came out upon me Bedouins and Kurds banded together from all parts, who slew my men and robbed me of all my goods. This is what hath befallen me.” Then he wept and bemoaned himself before the two Kings, who took compassion on him and swore that they would sally out upon the thieves. So they set out with a hundred horse, each reckoned worth thousands of men, and the merchant went before them, to guide them in the right way. They fared on all that day and the following night till daybreak, when they came to a valley abounding in streams and trees. Here they found the bandits dispersed about the valley, having divided the treasure between them; but there was yet some of it left. So they fell upon them and surrounded them on all sides, nor was it long before they made prize of them all, to the number of near three hundred horsemen, banded together of the scourings of the Arabs. They bound them all, and taking what they could find of the merchant's goods, returned to Baghdad, where the two Kings sat down upon one throne and passing the prisoners in review before them, questioned them of their condition and their chiefs. So they pointed out to them three men and said, "These are our only chiefs, and it was they who gathered us together from all parts and countries." The Kings bade lay on these three and set the rest free, after taking from them all the goods in their possession and giving them to the merchant, who examined them and found that a fourth of his stock was missing. The two Kings engaged to make good his loss, whereupon he pulled out two letters, one in the handwriting of Sherkan and the other in that of Nuzhet ez Zeman; for this was the very merchant who had bought Nuzhet ez Zeman of the Bedouin, as hath been before set forth. Kanmakan examined the letters and recognized the handwriting of his uncle Sherkan and his aunt Nuzhet ez Zeman; then (for that he knew the latter's history) he went in to her with that which she had written and told her the merchant's story. She knew her own handwriting and recognizing the merchant, despatched to him guest-gifts (of victual and what not) and commended him to her brother and nephew, who ordered him gifts of money and slaves and servants to wait on him, besides which the princess sent him a hundred thousand dirhems in money and fifty loads of merchandise, together with other rich presents. Then she sent for him and made herself known to him, whereat he rejoiced greatly and kissed her hands, giving her joy of her safety and union with her brother and thanking her for her bounty: and he said to her, "By Allah, a good deed is not lost upon thee!" Then she withdrew to her own apartment and the merchant sojourned with them three days, after which he took leave of them and set out to return to Damascus.

After this, the two Kings sent for the three robber-chiefs and questioned them of their condition, whereupon one of them came forward and said, “Know that I am a Bedouin, who use to lie in wait, by the way, to steal children and virgin girls and sell them to merchants; and this I did for many a year until these latter days, when Satan incited me to join these two gallows-birds in gathering together all the riff-raff of the Arabs and other peoples, that we might waylay merchants and plunder caravans.” Said the two Kings, “Tell us the rarest of the adventures that have befallen thee in kidnapping children and girls.” “O Kings of the age,” replied he, “the strangest thing that ever happened to me was as follows. Two-and-twenty years ago, being at Jerusalem, I saw a girl come out of the khan, who was possessed of beauty and grace, albeit she was but a servant and was clad in worn clothes, with a piece of camel-cloth on her head; so I entrapped her by guile and setting her on a camel, made off with her into the desert, thinking to carry her to my own people and there set her to pasture the camels and collect their dung (for fuel); but she wept so sore, that after beating her soundly, I carried her to Damascus, where a merchant saw her and being astounded at her beauty and accomplishments, bid me more and more for her, till at last I sold her to him for a hundred thousand dinars. I heard after that he clothed her handsomely and presented her to the Viceroy of Damascus, who gave him for her her price thrice told; and this, by my life, was but little for such a damsel! This, O Kings of the age, is the strangest thing that ever befell me.” The two Kings wondered at his story; but, when Nuzhet ez Zeman heard it, the light in her face became darkness, and she cried out and said to her brother, “Sure, this is the very Bedouin who kidnapped me in Jerusalem!” And she told them all that she had endured from him in her strangerhood of hardship and blows and hunger and humiliation, adding, “And now it is lawful to me to slay him.” So saying, she seized a sword and made at him; but he cried out and said, “O Kings of the age, let her not kill me, till I have told you the rare adventures that have betided me.” And Kanmakan said to her, “O my aunt, let him tell his story, and after do with him as thou wilt.” So she held her hand and the Kings said to him, “Now let us hear thy story.” “O Kings of the age,” said he, “if I tell you a rare story, will you pardon me?” “Yes,” answered they. Then said the Bedouin, “know that

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

Hemmad the Bedouin's Story.

Awhile ago, I was sore wakeful one night and thought the dawn would never break: so, as soon as it was day, I rose and girding on my sword, mounted my steed and set my lance in rest. Then I rode out to hunt, and as I went along, a company of men accosted me and asked me whither I went. I told them, and they said, 'We will bear thee company.' So we all fared on together, and presently we saw an ostrich and gave chase; but it evaded us and spreading its wings, fled before us and drew us on after it, till it brought us to a desert, wherein there was neither grass nor water, nor was aught to be heard there save the hissing of serpents, the wailing of Jinn and the howling of ghouls. Here we lost sight of the ostrich, nor could we tell whether it had flown up into the sky or sunk into the ground. Then we turned our horses' heads and thought to go back; but found that our return would be toilsome and dangerous at that time of exceeding heat; for the heat was grievous to us, so that we were sore athirst and our horses stood still. So we made sure of death; but as we were in this case, we espied a spacious meadow afar off, wherein were gazelles frisking. There was a tent pitched and by the tent-side a horse tethered and a spear stuck in the earth, whose head glittered in the sun. When we saw this, our hearts revived, after we had despaired, and we turned our horses' heads towards the meadow and rode on, till we came to a spring, where we alighted and drank and watered our beasts. Then I was seized with a frenzy of curiosity and went up to the door of the tent, where I saw a young man like the new moon, without hair on his cheeks, and on his right hand a slender damsel, as she were a willow wand. No sooner did I set eyes on the girl, than love of her got hold upon my heart and I saluted the young man, who returned my greeting. Then said I to him, 'O brother of the Arabs, tell me who thou art and what is this damsel to thee?' With this, he bent down his head awhile, then raised it and replied, 'Tell me first who thou art and what are these horsemen with thee.' 'I am Hemmad, son of El Fezari,' answered I, 'the renowned cavalier, who is reckoned as five hundred horse among the Arabs. We went forth this morning to hunt and were overcome by thirst; so I came to the door of this tent, thinking to get of thee a draught of water.' When he heard this, he turned to the fair maiden and said to her, 'Bring this man water and what there is of food.' So she went in, trailing her skirts, whilst her feet stumbled in her long hair and the golden bangles tinkled on her ankles, and returned after a little, bearing in her right hand a silver vessel of cold water and in her left a bowl full of milk and dates and flesh of wild cattle. But, of the excess of my passion for her, I could take of her nor meat nor drink, and I recited to her the following verses, applying them to her:

The dye of the henna upon her hand doth show, As 'twere a raven
new lighted on fresh-fall'n snow;
And see the full moon and the sun beside her face, This dim and
the other fearful for shame and woe.

Then, after I had eaten and drunk, I said to the youth, 'O chief of the Arabs, I have told thee truly who and what I am, and now I would fain have thee do the like by me and tell me the truth of thy case.' 'As for this damsel,' replied he, 'she is my sister.' Quoth I, 'It is my desire that thou give her to me to wife of free will: else will I slay thee and take her by force.' With this, he bowed his head awhile, then raised his eyes to me and answered, 'Thou sayest sooth in avouching thyself a renowned cavalier and a famous champion and the lion of the desert; but if ye all attack me treacherously and slay me and take my sister by force, it will be a stain upon your honour. If ye be, as thou sayest, cavaliers that are counted among the champions and fear not the shock of battle, give me time to don my armour and gird on my sword and set my lance in rest and mount my horse. Then will we go forth into the field and fight; and if I conquer you, I will kill you, every man of you; and if you overcome me and slay me, this damsel my sister is thine.' 'This is but just,' answered I, 'and we oppose it not.' Then I turned my horse's head, mad for love of the damsel, and rode back to my companions, to whom I set forth her beauty and grace, as also the comeliness of the young man and his valour and strength of soul and how he avouched himself a match for a thousand horse. Moreover, I described to them the tent and all the riches and rarities it contained and said to them, 'Be sure that this youth would not have taken up his abode alone in this desert place, were he not a man of great prowess: so I propose that whoso slays him shall take his sister.' And they agreed to this. Then we armed ourselves and mounting, rode to the tent, where we found the young man armed and mounted; but his sister ran up to him, with her veil drenched with tears, and laying hold of his stirrup, cried out, saying, 'Alas!' and 'Woe worth the day!' in her fear for her brother, and recited the following verses:

To God above I make my moan of sorrow and affright. Mayhap, the
empyrean's Lord will smite them with dismay.
They fain would kill thee, brother mine, with malice
aforethought, Though never cause of anger was nor fault
forewent the fray.
Yet for a champion art thou known among the men of war, The
doughtiest knight that East or West goes camping by the way.
Thou wilt thy sister's honour guard, whose might is small, for
thou Her brother art and she for thee unto the Lord doth
pray
Let not the foe possess my soul nor seize on me perforce And work
their cruel will on me, without my yea or nay.
By God His truth, I'll never live in any land where thou Art not
albeit all the goods of plenty it display!
But I will slay myself for love and yearning for thy sake And in
the darksome tomb I'll make my bed upon the clay.

When he heard her words, he wept sore and turning his horse's head towards her, made answer with the following verses:

Stand by and see the wondrous deeds that I will do this day,
Whenas we meet and I on them rain blows in the mellay.
E'en though the lion of the war, the captain of the host, The
stoutest champion of them all, spur out into the fray,
I'll deal a Thaalebiyan blow at him and in his heart I'll
let my spear, even to the shaft, its thirst for blood allay.
If I defend thee not from all that seek thee, sister mine, May I
be slaughtered and my corse given to the birds of prey!

Ay, I will battle for thy sake, with all the might I may, And
books shall story after me the marvels of this day.

Then said he, ‘O my sister, give ear to what I shall enjoin on thee.’ And she answered, ‘I hear and obey.’ Quoth he, ‘If I fall, let none possess thee;’ and she buffeted her face and said, ‘God forbid, O my brother, that I should see thee laid low and yield myself to thine enemies!’ With this he put out his hand to her and drew aside her veil, whereupon her face shone forth, like the sun from out clouds. Then he kissed her between the eyes and bade her farewell; after which he turned to us and said, ‘Ho, cavaliers! Come ye as guests or are you minded to cut and thrust? If ye come as guests, rejoice in hospitality; and if ye covet the shining moon, come out against me, one by one, and fight.’ Then came out to him a sturdy horseman, and the young man said to him, ‘Tell me thy name and thy father’s name, for I have sworn to fight with none whose name and whose father’s name tally with mine and my father’s, and if it be thus with thee, I will give thee up the girl.’ ‘My name is Bilal,’ answered the other; and the young man repeated the following verses:

Thou liest when thou talkest of “benefits”; for lo, Thou comest
with mischief and malice and woe!
So, an thou be doughty, heed well what I say: I’m he who the
braver in the battle lays low
With a keen-cutting sword, like the horn of the moon; So look
(and beware) for a hill-shaking blow!

Then they ran at one another, and the youth smote his adversary in the breast, that the lance-head issued from his back. With this, another came out, and the youth repeated the following verses:

O dog, that art noisome of stench and of sight, What is there of
worth that to come by is light?
’Tis only the lion, of race and of might Right noble, recks
little of life in the fight.

Nor was it long before he left him also drowned in his blood and cried out, ‘Who will come out to me?’ So a third horseman pricked out, reciting the following verses:

I come to thee, with a fire in my breast that blazes free, And
call on my comrades all to the fight to follow me.
Though thou hast slain the chiefs of the Arabs, yet, perdie, Thou
shalt not ‘scape this day from those that follow thee!

When the youth heard this, he answered him, saying:

Thou com’st, like theright evil fiend that thou art, With a lie
on thy lips and a fraud at thy heart;
This day shalt thou taste of a death-dealing dart And a spear
that shall rid thee of life with its smart.

Then he smote him on the breast, that the spear-point issued from his back, and cried out, saying, ‘Will another come out?’ So a fourth came out and the youth asked him his name. He replied, ‘My name is Hilal.’ And the youth repeated these verses:

Thou err’st, that wouldst plunge in my sea of affray And thinkest
to daunt me with lies and dismay.
Lo, I, to whose chant thou hast hearkened this day, Thy soul, ere
thou know’st it, will ravish away!

Then they drove at one another and exchanged blows; but the youth’s stroke forewent that of his adversary and slew him: and thus he went on to kill all who sallied out against him. When I saw my comrades slain, I said in myself, ‘If I fight with him, I shall not be able to withstand him, and if I flee, I shall become a byword among the Arabs.’ However, the youth gave me no time to think, but ran at me and laying hold of me, dragged me from my saddle. I swooned away and he raised his sword to cut off my head; but I clung to his skirts and he lifted me in his hand, as I were a sparrow [in the clutches of a hawk]. When the maiden saw this, she rejoiced in her brother’s prowess and coming up to him, kissed him between the eyes. Then he delivered me to her, saying, ‘Take him and entreat him well, for he is come under our rule.’ So she took hold of the collars of my coat-of-arms and led me away by them as one would lead a dog. Then she did off her brother's armour and clad him in a robe, after which she brought him a stool of ivory, on which he sat down, and said to him, 'May God whiten thine honour and make thee to be as a provision against the shifts of fortune!' And he answered her with the following verses:

My sister said, (who saw my lustrous forehead blaze Midmost the
war, as shine the sun's meridian rays)
"God bless thee for a brave, to whom, when he falls on, The
desert lions bow in terror and amaze!"
"Question the men of war," I answered her, "of me, Whenas the
champions flee before my flashing gaze.
I am the world-renowned for fortune and for might, Whose prowess
I uplift to what a height of praise!
O Hemmad, thou hast roused a lion, who shall show Thee death that
comes as swift as vipers in the ways."

When I heard what he said, I was perplexed about my affair, and considering my condition and how I was become a captive, I was lessened in my own esteem. Then I looked at the damsel and said to myself, 'It is she who is the cause of all this trouble;' and I fell a-marvelling at her beauty and grace, till the tears streamed from my eyes and I recited the following verses:

Reproach me not, O friend, nor chide me for the past, For I will
pay no heed to chiding and dispraise.
Lo, I am clean distraught for one, whom when I saw, Fate in my
breast forthright the love of her did raise.
Her brother was my foe and rival in her love, A man of mickle
might and dreadful in affrays.

Then the maiden set food before her brother, and he bade me eat with him, whereat I rejoiced and felt assured of my life. When he had made an end of eating, she brought him a flagon of wine and he drank, till the fumes of the wine mounted to his head and his face flushed. Then he turned to me and said, 'Harkye, Hemmad, dost thou know me?’ ‘By thy life,’ answered I, ‘I am rich in nought but ignorance!’ Said he, ‘I am Ibad ben Temim ben Thaalebeh, and indeed God giveth thee thy liberty and spareth thee confusion.’ Then he drank to my health and gave me a cup of wine and I drank it off. Then he filled me a second and a third and a fourth, and I drank them all; and he made merry with me and took an oath of me that I would never betray him. So I swore to him a thousand oaths that I would never deal perfidiously with him, but would be a friend and a helper to him.

Then he bade his sister bring me ten dresses of silk; so she brought them and laid them on me, and this gown I have on my body is one of them. Moreover, he made her bring one of the best of the riding camels, laden with stuffs and victual, and a sorrel horse, and gave the whole to me. I abode with them three days, eating and drinking, and what he gave me is with me to this day. At the end of this time, he said to me, ‘O Hemmad, O my brother, I would fain sleep awhile and rest myself. I trust myself to thee; but if thou see horsemen making hither, fear not, for they are of the Beni Thaalebeh, seeking to wage war on me.’ Then he laid his sword under his head and slept; and when he was drowned in slumber, the devil prompted me to kill him; so I rose, and drawing the sword from under his head, dealt him a blow that severed his head from his body. His sister heard what I had done, and rushing out from within the tent, threw herself on his body, tearing her clothes and repeating the following verses:

Carry the tidings to the folk, the saddest news can be; But man
from God His ordinance no whither hath to flee.
Now art thou slaughtered, brother mine, laid prostrate on the
earth, Thou whose bright face was as the round of the full
moon to see.
Indeed, an evil day it was, the day thou mettest them, And after
many a fight, thy spear is shivered, woe is me!
No rider, now that thou art dead, in horses shall delight Nor
evermore shall woman bear a male to match with thee.
Hemmad this day hath played thee false and foully done to death;
Unto his oath and plighted faith a traitor base is he.

He deemeth thus to have his will and compass his desire; But
Satan lieth to his dupes in all he doth decree.

When she had ended, she turned to me and said, ‘O man of accursed lineage, wherefore didst thou play my brother false and slay him, whenas he purposed to send thee back to thy country with gifts and victual and it was his intent also to marry thee to me at the first of the month?’ Then she drew a sword she had with her, and planting it in the ground, with the point set to her breast, threw herself thereon and pressed upon it, till the blade issued from her back and she fell to the ground, dead. I mourned for her and wept and repented when repentance availed me nothing. Then I went in haste to the tent and taking whatever was light of carriage and great of worth, went my way: but in my haste and fear, I took no heed of my (dead) comrades, nor did I bury the maiden and the youth. This, then, is my story, and it is still more extraordinary than that of the serving-maid I kidnapped in Jerusalem.”

When Nuzet ez Zeman heard these words of the Bedouin, the light in her eyes was changed to darkness, and she rose and drawing the sword, smote him amiddleward the shoulder-blades, that the point issued from his throat. The bystanders said to her, “Why hast thou made haste to slay him?” And she answered, “Praised be God who hath granted me to avenge myself with my own hand!” And she bade the slaves drag the body out by the feet and cast it to the dogs. Then they turned to the second prisoner, who was a black slave, and said to him, “What is thy name? Tell us the truth of thy case.” “My name is Ghezban,” answered he and told them what had passed between himself and the princess Abrizeh and how he had slain her and fled. Hardly had he made an end of his story, when King Rumzan struck off his head with his sabre, saying, “Praised be God that gave me life! I have avenged my mother with my own hand.” Then he repeated to them what his nurse Merjaneh had told him of this same Ghezban; after which they turned to the third prisoner and said to him, “Tell us who thou art and speak the truth.” Now this was the very camel-driver, whom the people of Jerusalem hired to carry Zoulmekan to the hospital at Damascus; but he threw him down on the fuel-heap and went his way. So he told them how he had dealt with Zoulmekan, whereupon Kanmakan took his sword forthright and cut off his head, saying, “Praised be God who hath given me life, that I might requite this traitor what he did with my father, for I have heard this very story from King Zoulmekan himself!” Then they said to each other “It remains only for us to take our wreak of the old woman Shewahi, yclept Dhat ed Dewahi, for that she is the prime cause of all these troubles. Who will deliver her into our hands, that we may avenge ourselves upon her and wipe out our dishonour?” And King Rumzan said, “Needs must we bring her hither.” So he wrote a letter to his grandmother, the aforesaid old woman, giving her to know that he had subdued the kingdoms of Damascus and Mosul and Irak and had broken up the host of the Muslims and captured their princes and adding, “I desire thee of all urgency to come to me without delay, bringing with thee the princess Sufiyeh, daughter of King Afridoun, and whom thou wilt of the Nazarene chiefs, but no troops; for the country is quiet and under our hand.” And he despatched the letter to her, which when she read, she rejoiced greatly and forthwith equipping herself and Sufiyeh, set out with their attendants and journeyed, without stopping, till they drew near Baghdad. Then she sent a messenger to acquaint the King of her arrival, whereupon quoth Rumzan, “We should do well to don the habit of the Franks and go out to meet the old woman, to the intent that we may be assured against her craft and perfidy.” So they clad themselves in Frankish apparel, and when Kuzia Fekan saw them, she exclaimed, “By the Lord of Worship, did I not know you, I should take you to be indeed Franks!” Then they sallied forth, with a thousand horse, to meet the old woman, and King Rumzan rode on before them. As soon as his eyes met hers, he dismounted and walked towards her, and she, recognizing him, dismounted also and embraced him; but he pressed her ribs with his hands, till he well-nigh broke them. Quoth she, “What is this, O my son?” But before she had done speaking, up came Kanmakan and Dendan, and the horsemen with them cried out at the women and slaves and took them all prisoners. Then the two Kings returned to Baghdad, with their captives, and Rumzan bade decorate the city three days long, at the end of which time they brought out the old woman, with a tall red bonnet of palm-leaves on her head, diademed with asses’ dung, and preceded by a herald, proclaiming aloud, “This is the reward of those who presume to lay hands on kings and kings’ sons!” Then they crucified her on one of the gates of Baghdad; and her companions, seeing what befell her, all embraced the faith of Islam. As for Kanmakan and his uncle Rumzan and his aunt Nuzhet ez Zeman, they marvelled at the wonderful events that had betided them and bade the scribes set them down orderly in books, that those who came after might read. Then they all abode in the enjoyment of all the delights and comforts of life, till there overtook them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies; and this is all that hath come down to us of the dealings of fortune with King Omar ben Ennuman and his sons Sherkan and Zoulmekan and his son’s son Kanmakan and his daughter Nuzhet ez Zeman and her daughter Kuzia Fekan.

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VOLUME III.

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THE BOOK OF THE THOUSAND NIGHTS AND ONE NIGHT

When Shehrzad had made an end of the history of King Omar teen Ennuman and his sons, Shehriyar said to her, “I desire that thou tell me some story about birds;” and Dunyazad, hearing this, said to her sister, “All this while I have never seen the Sultan light at heart till this night; and this gives me hope that the issue may be a happy one for thee with him.” Then drowsiness overcame the Sultan; so he slept and Shehrzad, perceiving the approach of day, was silent.

When it was the hundred and forty-sixth night, Shehrzad began as follows: “I have heard tell, O august King, that

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STORY OF THE BIRDS AND BEASTS AND THE SON OF ADAM.

A peacock once abode with his mate on the sea-shore, in a place that abounded in trees and streams, but was infested with lions and all manner other wild beasts, and for fear of these latter, the two birds were wont to roost by night upon a tree, going forth by day in quest of food. They abode thus awhile, till, their fear increasing on them, they cast about for some other place wherein to dwell, and in the course of their search, they happened on an island abounding in trees and streams. So they alighted there and ate of its fruits and drank of its waters. Whilst they were thus engaged, up came a duck, in a state of great affright, and stayed not till she reached the tree on which the two peacocks were perched, when she seemed reassured. The peacock doubted not but that she had some rare story; so he asked her of her case and the cause of her alarm, to which she replied, ‘I am sick for sorrow and my fear of the son of Adam: beware, O beware of the sons of Adam!’ ‘Fear not,’ rejoined the peacock, ‘now that thou hast won to us.’ ‘Praised be God,’ cried the duck, ‘who hath done away my trouble and my concern with your neigbourhood! For indeed I come, desiring your friendship.’ Thereupon the peahen came down to her and said, ‘Welcome and fair welcome! No harm shall befall thee: how can the son of Adam come at us and we in this island midmost the sea? From the land he cannot win to us, neither can he come up to us out of the sea. So be of good cheer and tell us what hath betided thee from him. ‘Know then, O peahen,’ answered the duck, ‘that I have dwelt all my life in this island in peace and safety and have seen no disquieting thing, till one night, as I was asleep, I saw in a dream the semblance of a son of Adam, who talked with me and I with him. Then I heard one say to me, “O duck, beware of the son of Adam and be not beguiled by his words nor by that he may suggest to thee; for he aboundeth in wiles and deceit; so beware with all wariness of his perfidy, for he is crafty and guileful, even as saith of him the poet:

He giveth thee honeyed words with the tip of his tongue, galore.

But sure he will cozen thee, as the fox cloth, evermore.

For know that the son of Adam beguileth the fish and draweth them forth of the waters and shooteth the birds with a pellet of clay and entrappeth the elephant with his craft. None is safe from his mischief, and neither beast nor bird escapeth him. Thus have I told thee what I have heard concerning the son of Adam." I awoke, fearful and trembling (continued the duck), and from that time to this my heart hath not known gladness, for fear of the son of Adam, lest he take me unawares by his craft or trap me in his snares. By the time the end of the day overtook me, I was grown weak and my strength and courage failed me; so, desiring to eat and drink, I went forth, troubled in spirit and with a heart ill at ease. I walked on, till I reached yonder mountain, where I saw a tawny lion-whelp at the door of a cave. When he saw me, he rejoiced greatly in me, for my colour pleased him and my elegant shape: so he cried out to me, saying "Draw nigh unto me." So I went up to him and he said to me, "What is thy name and thy kind?" Quoth I, "My name is 'duck,' and I am of the bird-kind; but thou, why tarriest thou in this place till now?" "My father the lion," answered he, "has bidden me many a day beware of the son of Adam, and it befell this night that I saw in my sleep the semblance of a son of Adam." And he went on to tell me the like of that I have told you. When I heard this, I said to him, "O lion, I resort to thee, that thou mayst kill the son of Adam and steadfastly address thy thought to his slaughter; for I am greatly in fear for myself of him, and fear is added to my fear, for that thou also fearest the son of Adam, and thou the Sultan of the beasts. Then, O my sister, I ceased not to bid him beware of the son of Adam and urge him to slay him, till he rose of a sudden from his stead and went out, lashing his flanks with his tail. He fared on, and I after him, till we came to a place, where several roads met, and saw cloud of dust arise, which, presently clearing away, discovered a naked runaway ass, and now running and galloping and now rolling in the dust. When the lion saw the ass, he cried out to him, and he came up to him submissively. Then said the lion, "Harkye, crack-brain! What is thy kind and what brings thee hither?" "O, son of the Sultan," answered the ass, "I am by kind an ass, and the cause of my coming hither is that I am fleeing from the son of Adam." "Dost thou fear then that he will kill thee?" asked the lion-whelp. "Not so, O son of the Sultan," replied the ass; "but I fear lest he put a cheat on me; for he hath a thing called the pad, that he sets on my back, and a thing called the girth, that he binds about my belly, and a thing called the crupper, that he puts under my tail, and a thing called the bit, that he places in my mouth; and he fashions me a goad and goads me with it and makes me run more than my strength. If I stumble, he curses me, and if I bray, he reviles me; and when I grow old and can no longer run, he puts a wooden pannel on me and delivers me to the water-carriers, who load my back with water from the river, in skins and other vessels, such as jars, and I wear out my life in misery and abasement and fatigue till I die, when they cast me on the rubbish-heaps to the dogs. So what misery can surpass this, and what calamities can be greater than these?" When, O peahen, I heard the ass's words, my skin shuddered at the son of Adam and I said to the lion-whelp, "Of a verity, O my lord, the ass hath excuse, and his words add terror to my terror." Then said the lion to the ass, "Whither goest thou?" "Before the rising of the sun" answered he, "I espied the son of Adam afar off and fled from him, and now I am minded to flee forth and run without ceasing, for the greatness of my fear of him, so haply I may find a place to shelter me from the perfidious son of Adam." Whilst he was thus discoursing, seeking the while to take leave of us and go away, behold, another cloud of dust arose, at sight of which the ass brayed and cried out and let fly a great crack of wind. Presently, the dust lifted and discovered a handsome black horse of elegant shape, with white feet and fine legs and a brow-star like a dirhem, which made towards us, neighing, and stayed not till he stood before the whelp, the son of the lion, who, when he saw him, marvelled at his beauty and said to him, "What is thy kind, O noble wild beast, and wherefore fleest thou into this vast and wide desert?" "O lord of the beasts," answered he, "I am of the horse-kind, and I am fleeing from the son of Adam." The whelp wondered at the horse's words and said to him, "Say not thus; for it is shame for thee, seeing that thou art tall and stout. How comes it that thou fearest the son of Adam, thou, with thy bulk of body and thy swiftness of running, when I, for all my littleness of body, am resolved to find out the son of Adam, and rushing on him, eat his flesh, that I may allay the affright of this poor duck and make her to dwell in peace in her own place. But now thou hast wrung my heart with thy talk and turned me back from what I had resolved to do, in that, for all thy bulk, the son of Adam hath mastered thee and feared neither thy height nor thy breadth, though, wert thou to kick him with thy foot, thou wouldst kill him, nor could he prevail against thee, but thou wouldst make him drink the cup of death.” The horse laughed, when he heard the whelp’s words, and replied, “Far, far is it from my power to overcome him, O king’s son! Let not my length and my breadth nor yet my bulk delude thee, with respect to the son of Adam; for he, of the excess of his guile and his cunning, fashions for me a thing called a hobble and hobbles my four legs with ropes of palm-fibres, bound with felt, and makes me fast by the head to a high picket, so that I remain standing and can neither sit nor lie down, being tied up. When he hath a mind to ride me, he binds on his feet a thing of iron called a stirrup and lays on my back another thing called a saddle, which he fastens by two girths, passed under my armpits. Then he sets in my mouth a thing of iron he calls a bit, to which he ties a thing of leather called a rein; and when he mounts on the saddle on my back, he takes the rein in his hand and guides me with it, goading my flanks the while with the stirrups, till he makes them bleed: so do not ask, O king’s son, what I endure from the son of Adam. When I grow old and lean and can no longer run swiftly, he sells me to the miller, who makes me turn in the mill, and I cease not from turning night and day, till I grow decrepit. Then he in turn sells me to the knacker, who slaughters me and flays off my hide, after which he plucks out my tail, which he sells to the sieve-makers, and melts down my fat for tallow.” At this, the young lion’s anger and vexation redoubled, and he said to the horse, “When didst thou leave the son of Adam?” “At mid-day,” replied the horse; “and he is now on my track.” Whilst the whelp was thus conversing with the horse, there arose a cloud of dust and presently subsiding, discovered a furious camel, which made toward us, braying and pawing the earth with his feet. When the whelp saw how great and lusty he was, he took him to be the son of Adam and was about to spring at him, when I said to him, “O king’s son, this is not the son of Adam, but a camel, and me seems he is fleeing from the son of Adam." As I spoke, O my sister, the camel came up and saluted the lion-whelp, who returned his greeting and said to him, "What brings thee hither?" Quoth he, "I am fleeing from the son of Adam." "And thou," said the whelp, "with thy huge frame and length and breadth, how comes it that thou fearest the son of Adam, seeing that one kick of thy foot would kill him?" "O son of the Sultan," answered the camel, "know that the son of Adam has wiles, which none can withstand, nor can any but Death prevail against him; for he puts in my nostrils a twine of goat's-hair he calls a nose-ring and over my head a thing he calls a halter; then he delivers me to the least of his children, and the youngling draws me along by the nose-ring, for all my size and strength. Then they load me with the heaviest of burdens and go long journeys with me and put me to hard labours all hours of the day and night. When I grow old and feeble, my master keeps me not with him, but sells me to the knacker, who slaughters me and sells my hide to the tanners and my flesh to the cooks: so do not ask what I suffer from the son of Adam." "When didst thou leave the son of Adam?" asked the young lion. "At sundown," replied the camel; "and I doubt not but that, having missed me, he is now in search of me: wherefore, O son of the Sultan, let me go, that I may flee into the deserts and the wilds." "Wait awhile, O camel," said the whelp, "till thou see how I will rend him in pieces and give thee to eat of his flesh, whilst I crunch his bones and drink his blood." "O king's son," rejoined the camel, "I fear for thee from the son of Adam, for he is wily and perfidious." And he repeated the following verse:

Whenas on any land the oppressor cloth alight, There's nothing left for those, that dwell therein, but flight.

Whilst the camel was speaking, there arose a cloud of dust, which opened and showed a short thin old man, with a basket of carpenters' tools on his shoulder and a branch of a tree and eight planks on his head. He had little children in his hand, and came on at a brisk pace, till he drew near us. When I saw him, O my sister, I fell down for excess of affright; but the young lion rose and went to meet the carpenter, who smiled in his face and said to him, with a glib tongue, "O illustrious king and lord of the long arm, may God prosper shine evening and shine endeavour and increase thy velour and strengthen thee! Protect me from that which hath betided me and smitten me with its mischief, for I have found no helper save only thee." And he stood before him, weeping and groaning and lamenting. When the whelp heard his weeping and wailing, he said, "I will succour thee from that thou fearest. Who hath done thee wrong and what art thou, O wild beast, whose like I never saw in my life nor saw I ever one goodlier of form or more eloquent of tongue than thou? What is thy case?" "O lord of the beasts," answered the man, "I am a carpenter; he who hath wronged me is a son of Adam, and by break of dawn he will be with thee in this place." When the lion heard this, the light in his face was changed to darkness and he roared and snorted and his eyes cast forth sparks. Then he said, "By Allah, I will watch this night till the dawn, nor will I return to my father till I have compassed my intent. But thou," continued he, addressing the carpenter, "I see thou art short of step, and I would not wound thy feelings, for that I am generous of heart; yet do I deem thee unable to keep pace with the wild beasts: tell me then whither thou goest." "Know," answered the carpenter, "that I am on my way to thy father's Vizier, the Lynx; for when he heard that the son of Adam had set foot in this country, he feared greatly for himself and sent one of the beasts for me, to make him a house, wherein he should dwell, that it might shelter him and hold his enemy from him, so not one of the sons of Adam should come at him." When the young lion heard this, he envied the lynx and said to the carpenter, "By my life, thou must make me a house with these planks, ere thou make one for the lynx! When thou hast done my work, go to the lynx and make him what he wishes." "O lord of the beasts," answered the carpenter, "I cannot make thee aught, till I have made the lynx what he desires: then will I return to thy service and make thee a house, to ward thee from shine enemy." "By Allah," exclaimed the whelp, "I will not let thee go hence, till thou make me a house of these planks!" So saying, he sprang upon the carpenter, thinking to jest with him, and gave him a cuff with his paw. The blow knocked the basket off the man's shoulder and he fell down in a swoon, whereupon the young lion laughed at him and said, "Out on thee, O carpenter! Of a truth thou art weak and hast no strength; so it is excusable in thee to fear the son of Adam." Now the carpenter was exceeding wroth; but he dissembled his anger, for fear of the whelp, and sat up and smiled in his face, saying, “Well, I will make thee the house.” With this, he took the planks, and nailing them together, made a house in the form of a chest, after the measure of the young lion. In this he cut a large opening, to which he made a stout cover and bored many holes therein, leaving the door open. Then he took out some nails of wrought iron and a hammer and said to the young lion, “Enter this opening, that I may fit it to thy measure.” The whelp was glad and went up to the opening, but saw that it was strait; and the carpenter said to him, “Crouch down and so enter.” So the whelp crouched down and entered the chest, but his tail remained outside. Then he would have drawn back and come out; but the carpenter said to him, “Wait till I see if there be room for thy tail with thee.” So saying, he twisted up the young lion’s tail, and stuffing it into the chest, whipped the lid on to the opening and nailed it down; whereat the whelp cried out and said, “O carpenter, what is this narrow house thou hast made me? Let me out.” But the carpenter laughed and answered, “God forbid! Repentance avails nothing for what is passed, and indeed thou shalt not come out of this place. Verily thou art fallen into the trap and there is no escape for thee from duresse, O vilest of wild beasts!” “O my brother,” rejoined the whelp, “what manner of words are these?” “Know, O dog of the desert,” answered the man, “that thou hast fallen into that which thou fearedst; Fate hath overthrown thee, nor did thought-taking profit thee.” When the whelp heard these words, he knew that this was indeed the very son of Adam, against whom he had been warned by his father on wake and by the mysterious voice in sleep; and I also, O my sister, was certified that this was indeed he without doubt; wherefore there took me great fear of him for myself and I withdrew a little apart and waited to see what he would do with the young lion. Then I saw the son of Adam dig a pit hard by the chest and throwing the latter therein, heap brushwood upon it and burn the young lion with fire. At this sight, my fear of the son of Adam redoubled, and in my affright I have been these two days fleeing from him.’”

When the peahen heard the duck’s story, she wondered exceedingly and said to her, ‘O my sister, thou art safe here from the son of Adam, for we are in one of the islands of the sea, whither there is no way for him; so do thou take up shine abode with us, till God make easy shine and our affair.' Quoth the duck, 'I fear lest some calamity come upon me by night, for no runaway can rid him of fate.' 'Abide with us,' rejoined the peahen, 'and be even as we;' and ceased not to persuade her, till she yielded, saying, 'O my sister, thou knowest how little is my fortitude: had I not seen thee here, I had not remained.' 'That which is written on our foreheads,' said the peahen, 'we must indeed fulfil, and when our appointed day draws near, who shall deliver us? But not a soul passes away except it have accomplished its predestined term and fortune.' As they talked, a cloud of dust appeared, at sight of which the duck shrieked aloud and ran down into the sea, crying out, 'Beware, beware, albeit there is no fleeing from Fate and Fortune!' After awhile, the dust subsided and discovered an antelope; whereat the duck and the peahen were reassured and the latter said to her companion, 'O my sister, this thou seest and wouldst have me beware of is an antelope, and he is making for us. He will do us no hurt, for the antelope feeds upon the herbs of the earth, and even as thou art of the bird-kind, so is he of the beast-kind. So be of good cheer and leave care-taking; for care-taking wasteth the body.' Hardly had the peahen done speaking, when the antelope came up to them, thinking to shelter under the shade of the tree, and seeing the two birds, saluted them and said, 'I came to this island to-day, and I have seen none richer in herbage nor more pleasant of habitance.' Then he besought them of company and amity, and they, seeing his friendly behaviour to them, welcomed him and gladly accepted his offer. So they swore friendship one to another and abode in the island in peace and safety, eating and drinking and sleeping in common, till one day there came thither a ship, that had strayed from its course in the sea. It cast anchor near them, and the crew landing, dispersed about the island. They soon caught sight of the three animals and made for them, whereupon the peahen flew up into the tree and the antelope fled into the desert, but the duck abode paralysed (by fear). So they chased her, till they caught her and carried her with them to the ship, whilst she cried out and said, 'Caution availed me nothing against Fate and destiny!' When the peahen saw what had betided the duck, she came down from the tree, saying, 'I see that misfortunes lie in wait for all. But for yonder ship, parting had not befallen between me and this duck, for she was one of the best of friends. Then she flew off and rejoined the antelope, who saluted her and gave her joy of her safety and enquired for the duck, to which she replied, ‘The enemy hath taken her, and I loathe the sojourn of this island after her.’ Then she wept for the loss of the duck and repeated the following verses:

The day of severance broke my heart in tway. God do the like unto the severance-day!

And also these:

I pray that we may yet foregather once again. That I may tell her all that parting wrought of pain.

The antelope was greatly moved at hearing of their comrade’s fate, but dissuaded the peahen from her resolve to leave the island. So they abode there together, eating and drinking in peace and safety, save that they ceased not to mourn for the loss of the duck, and the antelope said to the peahen, ‘Thou seest, O my sister, how the folk who came forth of the ship were the means of our severance from the duck and of her destruction; so do thou beware of them and guard thyself from them and from the craft of the son of Adam and his perfidy.’ But the peahen replied, ‘I am assured that nought caused her death but her neglect to celebrate the praises of God, and indeed I said to her, “Verily I fear for thee, because thou art not careful to praise God; for all things that He hath made do glorify Him, and if any neglect to do so, it leadeth to their destruction.”’ When the antelope heard the peahen’s words, he exclaimed, ‘May God make fair thy face!’ and betook himself to the celebration of the praises of the Almighty, never after slackening therefrom. And it is said that his form of adoration was as follows: ‘Glory be to the Requiter of good and evil, the Lord of glory and dominion!’

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THE HERMITS.

There was once a hermit, who served God on a certain mountain, whither resorted a pair of pigeons; and he was wont to make two parts of his daily bread, eating one half himself and giving the other to the pigeons. He prayed also for them, that they might be blest with increase; so they increased and multiplied greatly. Now they resorted only to that mountain, and the reason of their foregathering with the holy man was their assiduity in celebrating the praises of God; for it is said that the pigeons' formula of praise is, 'Glory be to the Creator of all things, Who appointeth to every one his daily bread, Who builded the heavens and spread out the earth like a carpet!' They dwelt thus together, in the happiest of life, they and their brood, till the holy man died, when the company of the pigeons was broken up, and they all dispersed among the towns and villages and mountains.

Now in a certain other mountain there dwelt a shepherd, a man of piety and chastity and understanding; and he had flocks of sheep, which he tended, and made his living by their milk and wool. The mountain aforesaid abounded in trees and pasturage and wild beasts, but the latter had no power over the peasant nor over his flocks; so he continued to dwell therein, in security, taking no thought to the things of the world, by reason of his happiness and assiduity in prayer and devotion, till God ordained that he should fall exceeding sick. So he betook himself to a cavern in the mountain, and his sheep used to go out in the morning to the pasturage and take refuge at night in the cave. Now God was minded to try him and prove his obedience and constancy; so He sent him one of His angels, who came in to him in the semblance of a fair woman and sat down before him. When the shepherd saw the woman seated before him, his flesh shuddered with horror of her and he said to her, 'O woman, what brings thee hither? I have no need of thee, nor is there aught betwixt thee and me that calls for thy coming in to me.' 'O man,' answered she, 'dost thou not note my beauty and grace and the fragrance of my breath and knowest thou not the need women have of men and men of women? Behold, I have chosen to be near thee and desire to enjoy thy company; so who shall forbid thee from me?

Indeed, I come to thee willingly and do not withhold myself from thee: there is none with us whom we need fear; and I wish to abide with thee as long as thou sojournest in this mountain and be thy companion. I offer myself to thee, for thou needest the service of women; and if thou know me, thy sickness will leave thee and health return to thee and thou wilt repent thee of having forsworn the company of women during thy past life. Indeed, I give thee good advice: so give ear to my counsel and draw near unto me.' Quoth he, 'Go out from me, O deceitful and perfidious woman! I will not incline to thee nor approach thee. I want not thy company; he who coveteth thee renounceth the future life, and he who coveteth the future life renounceth thee, for thou seduces the first and the last. God the Most High lieth in wait for His servants and woe unto him who is afflicted with thy company!' 'O thou that errest from the truth and wanderest from the path of reason,' answered she, 'turn thy face to me and look upon my charms and profit by my nearness, as did the wise who have gone before thee. Indeed, they were richer than thou in experience and greater of wit; yet they rejected not the society of women, as thou dost, but took their pleasure of them and their company, and it did them no hurt, in body or in soul. Wherefore do thou turn from thy resolve and thou shalt praise the issue of shine affair.' 'All thou sayest I deny and abhor,' rejoined the shepherd, 'and reject all thou offerest; for thou art cunning and perfidious and there is no faith in thee, neither honour. How much foulness cost thou hide under thy beauty and how many a pious man hast thou seduced, whose end was repentance and perdition! Avaunt from me, O thou who devotes thyself to corrupt others!' So saying, he threw his goat's-hair cloak over his eyes, that he might not see her face, and betook himself to calling upon the name of his Lord. When the angel saw the excellence of his obedience (to God), he went out from him and ascended to heaven.

Now hard by the mountain was a village wherein dwelt a pious man, who knew not the other's stead, till one night he saw in a dream one who said to him, 'In such a place near to thee is a pious man: go to him and be at his command.' So when it was day, he set out afoot to go thither, and at the time when the heat was grievous upon him, he came to a tree, which grew beside a spring of running water. He sat down to rest in the shadow of the tree, and birds and beasts came to the spring to drink; but when they saw him, they took fright and fled. Then said he, ‘There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High! I am resting here, to the hurt of the beasts and fowls.’ So he rose and went on, blaming himself and saying, ‘My tarrying here hath wronged these beasts and birds, and what excuse have I towards my Creator and the Creator of these creatures, for that I was the cause of their flight from their watering-place and their pasture? Alas, my confusion before my Lord on the day when He shall avenge the sheep of the goats!’ And he wept and repeated the following verses:

By Allah, if men knew for what they are create, They would not go
    and sleep, unheeding of their fate!
Soon cometh death, then wake and resurrection come; Then judgment
    and reproof and terrors passing great.
Obey me or command, the most of us are like. The dwellers in the
    cave, asleep early and late.

Then he fared on, weeping for that he had driven the birds and beasts from the spring by sitting down under the tree, till he came to the shepherd’s dwelling and going in, saluted him. The shepherd returned his greeting and embraced him, weeping and saying, ‘What brings thee hither, where no man hath ever come in to me?’ Quoth the other, ‘I saw in my sleep one who described to me this thy stead and bade me repair to thee and salute thee: so I came, in obedience to the commandment.’ The shepherd welcomed him, rejoicing in his company, and they both abode in the cavern, doing fair service to their Lord and living upon the flesh and milk of their sheep, having put away from them wealth and children and other the goods of this world, till there came to them Death, the Certain, the Inevitable. And this is the end of their story.”

“O Shehrzad,” said King Shehriyar, “thou puttest me out of conceit with my kingdom and makest me repent of having slain so many women and maidens. Hast thou any stories of birds?” “Yes,” answered she, and began as follows:

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THE WATER-FOWL AND THE TORTOISE

“A water-fowl flew high up into the air and alighted on rock in the midst of a running water. As it sat, behold, the water floated up a carcase, that was swollen and rose high out of the water, and lodged it against the rock. The bird drew near and examining it, found that it was the dead body of a man and saw in it spear and sword wounds. So he said in himself, ‘Belike, this was some evil-doer, and a company of men joined themselves together against him and slew him and were at peace from him and his mischief.’ Whilst he was marvelling at this, vultures and eagles came down upon the carcase from all sides; which when the water-fowl saw, he was sore affrighted and said, ‘I cannot endure to abide here longer.’ So he flew away in quest of a place where he might harbour, till the carcase should come to an end and the birds of prey leave it, and stayed not in his flight, till he came to a river with a tree in its midst. He alighted on the tree, troubled and distraught and grieved for his separation from his native place, and said to himself, ‘Verily grief and vexation cease not to follow me: I was at my ease, when I saw the carcase, and rejoiced therein exceedingly, saying, “This is a gift of God to me;” but my joy became sorrow and my gladness mourning, for the lions of the birds took it and made prize of it and came between it and me. How can I trust in this world or hope to be secure from misfortune therein? Indeed, the proverb says, “The world is the dwelling of him who hath no dwelling: he who hath no understanding is deceived by it and trusteth in it with his wealth and his child and his family and his folk; nor doth he who is deluded by it leave to rely upon it, walking proudly upon the earth, till he is laid under it and the dust is cast over him by him who was dearest and nearest to him of all men; but nought is better for the noble than patience under its cares and miseries.” I have left my native place, and it is abhorrent to me to quit my brethren and friends and loved ones.’ Whilst he was thus devising with himself, behold, a tortoise descended into the water and approaching the bird, saluted him, saying, ‘O my lord, what hath exiled thee and driven thee afar from thy place?’ ‘The descent of enemies thereon,’ replied the water-fowl;

'for the understanding cannot brook the neighbourhood of his enemy; even as well says the poet:

Whenas on any land the oppressor doth alight, There's nothing left for those, that dwell therein, but flight.'

Quoth the tortoise, 'If the case be as thou sayest, I will not leave thee nor cease to be before thee, that I may do thy need and fulfil thy service; for it is said that there is no sorer desolation than that of him who is an exile, cut off from friends and country; and also that no calamity equals that of severance from virtuous folk; but the best solace for the understanding is to seek companionship in his strangerhood and be patient under adversity. Wherefore I hope that thou wilt find thine account in my company, for I will be to thee a servant and a helper.' 'Verily, thou art right in what thou sayest,' answered the water-fowl; 'for, by my life, I have found grief and pain in separation, what while I have been absent from my stead and sundered from my friends and brethren, seeing that in severance is an admonition to him who will be admonished and matter of thought for him who will take thought. If one find not a companion to console him, good is cut off from him for ever and evil stablished with him eternally; and there is nothing for the wise but to solace himself in every event with brethren and be instant in patience and constancy; for indeed these two are praiseworthy qualities, that uphold one under calamities and shifts of fortune and ward off affliction and consternation, come what will.' 'Beware of sorrow,' rejoined the tortoise, 'for it will corrupt thy life to thee and do away thy fortitude.' And they gave not over converse, till the bird said, 'Never shall I leave to fear the strokes of fortune and the vicissitudes of events.' When the tortoise heard this, he came up to him and kissing him between the eyes, said to him, 'Never may the company of the birds cease to be blest in thee and find good in thy counsel! How shalt thou be burdened with inquietude and harm?' And he went on to comfort the water-fowl and soothe his disquiet, till he became reassured. Then he flew to the place, where the carcase was, and found the birds of prey gone and nothing left of the body but bones; whereupon he returned to the tortoise and acquainted him with this, saying, 'I wish to return to my stead and enjoy the society of my friends; for the wise cannot endure separation from his native place.'

So they both went thither and found nought to affright them; whereupon the water-fowl repeated the following verses:

Full many a sorry chance doth light upon a man and fill His life
with trouble, yet with God the issue bideth still.
His case is sore on him, but when its meshes straitened are To
att'rest, they relax, although he deem they never will.

So they abode there in peace and gladness, till one day fate led thither a hungry hawk, which drove its talons into the bird's belly and killed him, nor did caution stand him in stead seeing that his hour was come. Now the cause of his death was that he neglected to praise God, and it is said that his form of adoration was as follows, 'Glory be to our Lord in that He ordereth and ordaineth, and glory be to our Lord in that He maketh rich and maketh poor!'"

"O Shehrzad," said the Sultan, "verily, thou overwhelmest me with admonitions and salutary instances! Hast thou any stories of beasts?" "Yes," answered she. "Know, O King, that

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THE WOLF AND THE FOX.

A fox and a wolf once dwelt in the same den, harbouring therein together day and night; but the wolf was cruel and oppressive to the fox. They abode thus awhile, till one day the fox exhorted the wolf to use gentle dealing and leave evil-doing, saying, ‘If thou persist in thine arrogance, belike God will give the son of Adam power over thee, for he is past master in guile and craft and knavery. By his devices he brings down the birds from the air and draws the fish forth of the waters and sunders mountains in twain and transports them from place to place. All this is of his craft and wiliness; wherefore do thou betake thyself to equity and fair dealing and leave evil and tyranny; and thou shalt fare the better for it.’ But the wolf rejected his counsel and answered him roughly, saying, ‘Thou hast no call to speak of matters of weight and stress.’ And he dealt the fox a buffet that laid him senseless; but, when he revived, he smiled in the wolf’s face and excused himself for his unseemly speech, repeating the following verses:

If I have sinned in aught that’s worthy of reproach Or if I’ve
    made default against the love of you,
Lo, I repent my fault; so let thy clemency The sinner comprehend,
    that doth for pardon sue.

The wolf accepted his excuse and held his hand from him, saying, ‘Speak not of that which concerns thee not, or thou shalt hear what will not please thee.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered the fox; ‘henceforth I will abstain from what pleaseth thee not; for the sage says, “Speak thou not of that whereof thou art not asked; answer not, when thou art not called upon; leave that which concerns thee not for that which does concern thee and lavish not good counsel on the wicked, for they will repay thee therefor with evil.”’ And he smiled in the wolf’s face, but in his heart he meditated treachery against him and said in himself, ‘Needs must I compass the destruction of this wolf.’ So he bore with his ill usage, saying in himself, ‘Verily arrogance and falsehood lead to perdition and cast into confusion, and it is said, “He who is arrogant suffers and he who is ignorant repents and he who fears is safe: fair dealing is a characteristic of the noble, and gentle manners are the noblest of gains.” It behoves me to dissemble with this tyrant, and needs must he be cast down.’ Then said he to the wolf, ‘Verily, the Lord pardons his erring servant and relents towards him, if he confess his sins; and I am a weak slave and have sinned in presuming to counsel thee. If thou knewest the pain that befell me by thy buffet, thou wouldst see that an elephant could not stand against it nor endure it: but I complain not of the pain of the blow, because of the contentment that hath betided me through it; for though it was exceeding grievous to me, yet its issue was gladness. As saith the sage, “The blow of the teacher is at first exceeding grievous, but the end of it is sweeter than clarified honey.”’ Quoth the wolf, ‘I pardon thine offence and pass over thy fault; but be thou ware of my strength and avow thyself my slave; for thou knowest how rigorously I deal with those that transgress against me.’ Thereupon the fox prostrated himself to the wolf, saying, ‘May God prolong thy life and mayst thou cease never to subdue thine enemies!’ And he abode in fear of the wolf and ceased not to wheedle him and dissemble with him.

One day, the fox came to a vineyard and saw a breach in its wall; but he mistrusted it and said in himself, ‘Verily, there must be some reason for this breach and the adage says, “He who sees a cleft in the earth and doth not shun it or be wary in going up to it, is self-deluded and exposes himself to destruction.” Indeed, it is well known that some folk make a semblant of a fox in their vineyards, even to setting before it grapes in dishes, that foxes may see it and come to it and fall into destruction. Meseems, this breach is a snare and the proverb says, “Prudence is the half of cleverness.” Now prudence requires that I examine this breach and see if there be ought therein that may lead to perdition; and covetise shall not make me cast myself into destruction.’ So he went up to the breach and examining it warily, discovered a deep pit, lightly covered (with boughs and earth), which the owner of the vineyard had dug, thinking to trap therein the wild beasts that laid waste his vines. Then he drew back from it, saying in himself, ‘I have found it as I expected. Praised be God that I was wary of it! I hope that my enemy the wolf, who makes my life miserable, will fall into it; so will the vineyard be left to me and I shall enjoy it alone and dwell therein in peace.' So saying, he shook his head and laughed aloud, repeating the following verses:

Would God I might see, even now, A wolf fallen into yon pit,
That this long time hath tortured my heart And made me quaff bitters, God wit!
God grant I may live and be spared And eke of the wolf be made quit!
So the vineyard of him shall be rid And I find my purchase in it.

Then he returned in haste to the wolf and said to him, 'God hath made plain the way for thee into the vineyard, without toil. This is of thy good luck; so mayst thou enjoy the easy booty and the plentiful provant that God hath opened up to thee without trouble!' 'What proof hast thou of what thou sayest?' asked the wolf; and the fox answered, 'I went up to the vineyard and found that the owner was dead, having been devoured by wolves: so I entered and saw the fruit shining on the trees.' The wolf misdoubted not of the fox's report and gluttony got hold on him; so he rose and repaired to the breach, blinded by greed; whilst the fox stopped short and lay as one dead, applying to the case the following verse:

Lustest after Leila's favours? Look thou rather bear in mind That 'tis covetise plays havoc with the necks of human kind.

Then said he to the wolf, 'Enter the vineyard: thou art spared the trouble of climbing, for the wall is broken down, and with God be the rest of the benefit.' So the wolf went on, thinking to enter the vineyard; but when he came to the middle of the covering (of the pit), he fell in; whereupon the fox shook for delight and gladness; his care and concern left him and he sang out for joy and recited the following verses:

Fortune hath taken ruth on my case; Yea, she hath pitied the length of my pain,
Doing away from me that which I feared And granting me that whereto I was fain.

So I will pardon her all the sins She sinned against me once and again;
Since for the wolf there is no escape From certain ruin and bitter bane,
And now the vineyard is all my own And no fool sharer in my domain.

Then he looked into the pit, and seeing the wolf weeping for sorrow and repentance over himself, wept with him; whereupon the wolf raised his head to him and said, 'Is it of pity for me thou weepest, O Aboulhussein?' 'Not so,' answered the fox, 'by Him who cast thee into the pit! I weep for the length of thy past life and for regret that thou didst not sooner fall into the pit; for hadst thou done so before I met with thee, I had been at peace: but thou wast spared till the fulfilment of thine allotted term.' The wolf thought he was jesting and said, 'O sinner, go to my mother and tell her what has befallen me, so haply she may make shift for my release.' 'Verily,' answered the fox, 'the excess of thy gluttony and thy much greed have brought thee to destruction, since thou art fallen into a pit whence thou wilt never escape. O witless wolf, knowest thou not the proverb, "He who taketh no thought to results, Fate is no friend to him, nor shall he be safe from perils?"' 'O Aboulhussein,' said the wolf, 'thou wast wont to show me affection and covet my friendship and fear the greatness of my strength. Bear me not malice for that I did with thee, for he who hath power and forgiveth, his reward is with God; even as saith the poet:

Sow benefits aye, though in other than fitting soil. A benefit's never lost, wherever it may be sown;
And though time tarry full long to bring it to harvest-tide, Yet no man reapeth its fruit, save he who sowed it alone.'

'O most witless of beasts of prey and stupidest of the wildings of the earth,' rejoined the fox, 'hast thou forgotten thine arrogance and pride and tyranny and how thou disregardedst the due of comradeship and wouldst not take counsel by what the poet says:

Do no oppression, whilst the power thereto is in thine hand, For
still in danger of revenge the sad oppressor goes.
Thine eyes will sleep anon, what while the opprest, on wake, call
down Curses upon thee, and God's eye shuts never in repose.'

'O Aboulhussein,' replied the wolf, 'reproach me not for past offences; for forgiveness is expected of the noble, and the practice of kindness is the best of treasures. How well says the poet:

Hasten to do good works, whenever thou hast the power, For thou art not able thereto at every season and hour.'

And he went on to humble himself to the fox and say to him, 'Haply, thou canst do somewhat to deliver me from destruction.' 'O witless, deluded, perfidious, crafty wolf,' answered the fox, 'hope not for deliverance, for this is but the just reward of thy foul dealing.' Then he laughed from ear to ear and repeated the following verses:

A truce to thy strife to beguile me! For nothing of me shalt thou gain. Thy prayers are but idle; thou sowedst Vexation; so reap it amain.

'O gentlest of beasts of prey,' said the wolf, 'I deem thee too faithful to leave me in this pit.' Then he wept and sighed and recited the following verses, whilst the tears streamed from his eyes:

O thou, whose kindnesses to me are more than one, I trow, Whose
bounties unto me vouchsafed are countless as the sand,
No shift of fortune in my time has ever fall'n on me, But I have
found thee ready still to take me by the hand.

'O stupid enemy,' said the fox, 'how art thou reduced to humility and obsequiousness and abjection and submission, after disdain and pride and tyranny and arrogance! Verily, I companied with thee and cajoled thee but for fear of thy violence and not in hope of fair treatment from thee: but now trembling is come upon thee and vengeance hath overtaken thee.' And he repeated the following verses:

O thou that for aye on beguiling art bent, Thou'rt fall'n in the
snare of thine evil intent.

So taste of the anguish that knows no relent And be with the rest of the wolven forspent!

‘O clement one,’ replied the wolf, ‘speak not with the tongue of despite nor look with its eyes; but fulfil the covenant of fellowship with me, ere the time for action pass away. Rise, make shift to get me a rope and tie one end of it to a tree; then let the other end down to me, that I may lay hold of it, so haply I may escape from this my strait, and I will give thee all my hand possesseth of treasures.’ Quoth the fox, ‘Thou persistest in talk of that wherein thy deliverance is not. Hope not for this, for thou shalt not get of me wherewithal to save thyself; but call to mind thy past ill deeds and the craft and perfidy thou didst imagine against me and bethink thee how near thou art to being stoned to death. For know that thy soul is about to leave the world and cease and depart from it; so shalt thou come to destruction and evil is the abiding-place to which thou goest!’ ‘O Aboulhussein,’ rejoined the wolf, ‘hasten to return to friendliness and persist not in this rancour. Know that he, who saves a soul from perdition, is as if he had restored it to life, and he, who saves a soul alive, is as if he had saved all mankind. Do not ensue wickedness, for the wise forbid it: and it were indeed the most manifest wickedness to leave me in this pit to drink the agony of death and look upon destruction, whenas it lies in thy power to deliver me from my strait. Wherefore go thou about to release me and deal benevolently with me.’ ‘O thou barbarous wretch,’ answered the fox, ‘I liken thee, because of the fairness of thy professions and the foulness of thine intent and thy practice, to the hawk with the partridge.’ ‘How so ?’ asked the wolf; and the fox said,

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The Hawk and the Partridge.

‘I entered a vineyard one day and saw a hawk stoop upon a partridge and seize it: but the partridge escaped from him and entering its nest, hid itself there. The hawk followed and called out to it, saying, “O wittol, I saw thee in the desert, hungry, and took pity on thee; so I gathered grain for thee and took hold of thee that thou mightest eat; but thou fledst, wherefore I know not, except it were to slight me. So come out and take the grain I have brought thee to eat, and much good may it do thee!” The partridge believed what he said and came out, whereupon the hawk stuck his talons into him and seized him. “Is this that which thou saidst thou hadst brought me from the desert,” cried the partridge, “and of which thou badest me eat, saying, ‘Much good may it do thee?’ Thou hast lied to me and may God make what thou eatest of my flesh to be a deadly poison in thy maw!” So when the hawk had eaten the partridge, his feathers fell off and his strength failed and he died on the spot. Know, then, O wolf, that he, who digs a pit for his brother, soon falls into it himself, and thou first dealtest perfidiously with me.’ ‘Spare me this talk and these moral instances,’ said the wolf, ‘and remind me not of my former ill deeds, for the sorry plight I am in suffices me, seeing that I am fallen into a place, in which even my enemy would pity me, to say nothing of my friend. So make thou some shift to deliver me and be thou thereby my saviour. If this cause thee aught of hardship, think that a true friend will endure the sorest travail for his friend’s sake and risk his life to deliver him from perdition; and indeed it hath been said, “A tender friend is better than an own brother.” So if thou bestir thyself and help me and deliver me, I will gather thee such store of gear, as shall be a provision for thee against the time of want, and teach thee rare tricks to gain access to fruitful vineyards and strip the fruit-laden trees.’ ‘How excellent,’ rejoined the fox, laughing, ‘is what the learned say of those who are past measure ignorant, like unto thee!’ ‘What do they say?’ asked the wolf; and the fox answered, ‘They say that the gross of body are gross of nature, far from understanding and nigh unto ignorance. As for thy saying, O perfidious, stupid self-deceiver, that a friend should suffer hardship to succour his friend, it is true, as thou sayest: but tell me, of thine ignorance and poverty of wit, how can I be a true friend to thee, considering thy treachery? Dost thou count me thy friend? Behold, I am thine enemy, that exulteth in thy misfortune; and couldst thou understand it, this word were sorer to thee than slaughter and arrow-shot. As for thy promise to provide me a store against the time of want and teach me tricks to enter vineyards and spoil fruit-trees, how comes it, O crafty traitor, that thou knowest not a trick to save thyself from destruction? How far art thou from profiting thyself and how far am I from lending ear to thy speech! If thou have any tricks, make shift for thyself to save thee from this peril, wherefrom I pray God to make thine escape distant! So look, O idiot, if there be any trick with thee and save thyself from death therewith, before thou lavish instruction on others. But thou art like a certain sick man, who went to another, suffering from the same disease, and said to him, "Shall I heal thee of thy disease?" "Why dost thou not begin by healing thyself?" answered the other; so he left him and went his way. And thou, O ignorant wolf, art like this; so stay where thou art and be patient under what hath befallen thee.' When the wolf heard what the fox said, he knew he had no hope from him; so he wept for himself, saying, 'Verily, I have been heedless of mine affair; but if God deliver me from this scrape, I will assuredly repent of my arrogance towards those who are weaker than I and will put on wool and go upon the mountains, celebrating the praises of God the Most High and fearing His wrath. Yea, I will sunder myself from all the other wild beasts and feed the poor and those who fight for the Faith.' Then he wept and lamented, till the heart of the fox was softened and he took pity on him, whenas he heard his humble words and his professions of repentance for his past arrogance and tyranny. So he sprang up joyfully and going to the brink of the pit, sat down on his hind quarters and let his tail fall therein; whereupon the wolf arose and putting out his paw, pulled the fox's tail, so that he fell down into the pit with him. Then said the wolf, 'O fox of little ruth, why didst thou exult over me, thou that wast my companion and under my dominion? Now thou art fallen into the pit with me and retribution hath soon overtaken thee. Verily, the wise have said, "If one of you reproach his brother with sucking the teats of a bitch, he also shall suck her,” and how well saith the poet:

When fortune’s blows on some fall hard and heavily, With others of our kind as friend encampeth she.
So say to those who joy in our distress, “Awake; For those who mock our woes shall suffer even as we.”

And death in company is the best of things; wherefore I will make haste to kill thee, ere thou see me killed.’ ‘Alas! Alas!’ said the fox in himself. ‘I am fallen in with this tyrant, and my case calls for the use of craft and cunning; for indeed it is said that a woman fashions her ornaments for the festival day, and quoth the proverb, “I have kept thee, O my tear, against the time of my distress!” Except I make shift to circumvent this overbearing beast, I am lost without recourse; and how well says the poet:

Provide thee by craft, for thou liv’st in a time Whose folk are as lions that lurk in a wood,
And set thou the mill-stream of knavery abroach, That the mill of subsistence may grind for thy food,
And pluck the fruits boldly; but if they escape From thy grasp, then content thee with hay to thy food.’

Then said he to the wolf, ‘Hasten not to slay me, for that is not my desert and thou wouldst repent it, O valiant beast, lord of might and exceeding prowess! If thou hold thy hand and consider what I shall tell thee, thou wilt know that which I purpose; but if thou hasten to kill me, it will profit thee nothing and we shall both die here.’ ‘O wily deceiver,’ answered the wolf, ‘how hopest thou to work my deliverance and thine own, that thou wouldst have me grant thee time? Speak and let me know thy purpose.’ ‘As for my purpose,’ replied the fox, ‘it was such as deserves that thou reward me handsomely for it; for when I heard thy promises and thy confession of thy past ill conduct and regrets for not having earlier repented and done good and thy vows, shouldst thou escape from this thy stress, to leave harming thy fellows and others and forswear eating grapes and other fruits and devote thyself to humility and cut thy claws and break thy teeth and don wool and offer thyself as a sacrifice to God the Most High, — when (I say), I heard thy repentance and vows of amendment, compassion took me for thee, though before I was anxious for thy destruction, and I felt bound to save thee from this thy present plight. So I let down my tail, that thou mightest grasp it and make thine escape. Yet wouldst thou not put off thy wonted violence and brutality nor soughtest to save thyself by fair means, but gavest me such a tug that I thought my soul would depart my body, so that thou and I are become involved in the same stead of ruin and death. There is but one thing can deliver us, to which if thou agree, we shall both escape; and after it behoves thee to keep the vows thou hast made, and I will be thy friend.' 'What is it thou hast to propose?' asked the wolf. 'It is,' answered the fox, 'that thou stand up, and I will climb up on to thy head and so bring myself nigh on a level with the surface of the earth. Then will I give a spring and as soon as I reach the ground, I will fetch thee what thou mayst lay hold of and make thine escape.' 'I have no faith in thy word,' rejoined the wolf, 'for the wise have said, "He who practices trust in the place of hate, errs," and "He who trusts in the faithless is a dupe; he who tries those that have been [already] tried (and found wanting) shall reap repentance and his days shall pass away without profit; and he who cannot distinguish between cases, giving each its due part, his good fortune will be small and his afflictions many." How well saith the poet:

Be thy thought ever ill and of all men beware; Suspicion of good
parts the helpfullest was e'er.
For nothing brings a man to peril and distress As doth the doing
good (to men) and thinking fair.

And another:

Be constant ever in suspect; 'twill save thee aye anew; For he
who lives a wakeful life, his troubles are but few.
Meet thou the foeman in thy way with open, smiling face; But in
thy heart set up a host shall battle with him do.

And yet another:

Thy worst of foes is thy nearest friend, in whom thou puttest
trust; So look thou be on thy guard with men and use them
warily aye.
’Tis weakness to augur well of fate; think rather ill of it. And
be in fear of its shifts and tricks, lest it should thee
bewray.’

‘Verily,’ said the fox, ‘distrust is not to be commended in every case; on the contrary, a confiding disposition is the characteristic of a noble nature and its issue is freedom from terrors. Now it behoves thee, O wolf, to put in practice some device for thy deliverance from this thou art in and the escape of us both will be better than our death: so leave thy distrust and rancour; for if thou trust in me, one of two things will happen; either I shall bring thee whereof to lay hold and escape, or I shall play thee false and save myself and leave thee; and this latter may not be, for I am not safe from falling into some such strait as this thou art in, which would be fitting punishment of perfidy. Indeed the adage saith, “Faith is fair and perfidy foul.” It behoves thee, therefore, to trust in me, for I am not ignorant of the vicissitudes of Fortune: so delay not to contrive some device for our deliverance, for the case is too urgent for further talk.’ ‘To tell thee the truth,’ replied the wolf, ‘for all my want of confidence in thy fidelity, I knew what was in thy mind and that thou wast minded to deliver me, whenas thou heardest my repentance, and I said in myself, “If what he asserts be true, he will have repaired the ill he did: and if false, it rests with God to requite him.” So, behold, I accept thy proposal, and if thou betray me, may thy perfidy be the cause of thy destruction!’ Then he stood upright in the pit and taking the fox upon his shoulders, raised him to the level of the ground, whereupon the latter gave a spring and lighted on the surface of the earth. When he found himself in safety, he fell down senseless, and the wolf said to him, ‘O my friend, neglect not my case and delay not to deliver me.’ The fox laughed derisively and replied, ‘O dupe, it was but my laughing at thee and making mock of thee that threw me into thy hands: for when I heard thee profess repentance, mirth and gladness seized me and I frisked about and danced and made merry, so that my tail fell down into the pit and thou caughtest hold of it and draggedst me down with thee. Why should I be other than a helper in thy destruction, seeing that thou art of the host of the devil! I dreamt yesterday that I danced at thy wedding and related my dream to an interpreter, who told me that I should fall into a great danger and escape from it. So now I know that my falling into thy hand and my escape are the fulfilment of my dream, and thou, O ignorant dupe, knowest me for thine enemy; so how canst thou, of thine ignorance and lack of wit, hope for deliverance at my hands, after all thou hast heard of harsh words from me, and wherefore should I endeavour for thy deliverance, whenas the wise have said, "In the death of the wicked is peace for mankind and purgation for the earth?" Yet, but that I fear to reap more affliction by keeping faith with thee than could follow perfidy, I would do my endeavour to save thee.' When the wolf heard this, he bit his paws for despite and was at his wit's end what to do. Then he gave the fox fair words, but this availed nought; so he said to him softly, 'Verily, you foxes are the most pleasant spoken of folk and the subtlest in jest, and this is but a jest of thine; but all times are not good for sport and jesting.' 'O dolt,' answered the fox, 'jesting hath a limit, that the jester overpasses not, and deem not that God will again give thee power over me, after having once delivered me from thee.' Quoth the wolf, 'It behoves thee to endeavour for my release, by reason of our brotherhood and fellowship, and if thou deliver me, I will assuredly make fair thy reward.' 'The wise say,' rejoined the fox,' "Fraternize not with the ignorant and wicked, for he will shame thee and not adorn thee, — nor with the liar, for if thou do good, he will hide it, and if evil, he will publish it;" and again, "There is help for everything but death: all may be mended, save natural depravity, and everything may be warded off, except Fate." As for the reward thou promisest me, I liken thee therein to the serpent that fled from the charmer. A man saw her affrighted and said to her, "What ails thee, O serpent?" Quoth she, "I am fleeing from the serpent-charmer, who is in chase of me, and if thou wilt save me and hide me with thee, I will make fair thy recompense and do thee all manner of kindness." So he took her, moved both by desire of the promised recompense and a wish to find favour with God, and hid her in his bosom. When the charmer had passed and gone his way and the serpent had no longer any reason to fear, he said to her, "Where is the recompense thou didst promise me? Behold, I have saved thee from that thou dreadest." "Tell me where I shall bite thee," replied she, "for thou knowest we overpass not that recompense." So saying, she gave him a bite, of which he died. And I liken thee, O dullard, to the serpent in her dealings with the man. Hast thou not heard what the poet says?

Trust not in one in whose heart thou hast made wrath to abide And
thinkest his anger at last is over and pacified.
Verily vipers, though smooth and soft to the feel and the eye And
graceful of movements they be, yet death-dealing venom they hide.'

'O glib-tongue, lord of the fair face,' said the wolf, 'thou art not ignorant of my case and of men's fear of me and knowest how I assault the strong places and root up the vines. Wherefore, do as I bid thee and bear thyself to me as a servant to his lord.' 'O stupid dullard,' answered the fox, 'that seekest a vain thing, I marvel at thy stupidity and effrontery, in that thou biddest me serve thee and order myself towards thee as I were a slave bought with thy money; but thou shalt see what is in store for thee, in the way of breaking thy head with stones and knocking out thy traitor's teeth.' So saying, he went up to a hill that gave upon the vineyard and standing there, called out to the people of the place, nor did he give over crying, till he woke them and they, seeing him, came up to him in haste. He held his ground till they drew near him and near the pit, when he turned and fled. So they looked into the pit and spying the wolf, fell to pelting him with heavy stones, nor did they leave smiting him with sticks and stones and piercing him with lances, till they killed him and went away; whereupon the fox returned to the pit and looking down, saw the wolf dead: so he wagged his head for excess of joy and chanted the following verses:

Fate took the soul o' the wolf and snatched it far away; Foul
fall it for a soul that's lost and perished aye!

How oft, O Gaffer Grim, my ruin hast thou sought! But unrelenting bale is fallen on thee this day.
Thou fellst into a pit, wherein there's none may fall Except the blasts of death blow on him for a prey.

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Then he abode alone in the vineyard, secure and fearing no hurt.

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THE MOUSE AND THE WEASEL.

A mouse and a weasel once dwelt in the house of a poor peasant, one of whose friends fell sick and the doctor prescribed him husked sesame. So he sought of one of his comrades sesame and gave the peasant a measure thereof to husk for him; and he carried it home to his wife and bade her dress it. So she steeped it and husked it and spread it out to dry. When the weasel saw the grain, he came up to it and fell to carrying it away to his hole, nor stinted all day, till he had borne off the most of it. Presently, in came the peasant's wife, and seeing great part of the sesame gone, stood awhile wondering; after which she sat down to watch and find out the cause. After awhile, out came the weasel to carry off more of the grain, but spying the woman seated there, knew that she was on the watch for him and said to himself, 'Verily, this affair is like to end ill. I fear me this woman is on the watch for me and Fortune is no friend to those who look not to the issues: so I must do a fair deed, whereby I may manifest my innocence and wash out all the ill I have done.' So saying, he began to take of the sesame in his hole and carry it out and lay it back upon the rest. The woman stood by and seeing the weasel do thus, said in herself, 'Verily, this is not the thief, for he brings it back from the hole of him that stole it and returns it to its place. Indeed, he hath done us a kindness in restoring us the sesame and the reward of those that do us good is that we do them the like. It is clear that this is not he who stole the grain. But I will not leave watching till I find out who is the thief.' The weasel guessed what was in her mind, so he went to the mouse and said to her, 'O my sister, there is no good in him who does not observe the claims of neighbourship and shows no constancy in friendship.' 'True, O my friend,' answered the mouse, 'and I delight in thee and in thy neighbourhood; but what is the motive of thy speech?' Quoth the weasel, 'The master of the house has brought home sesame and has eaten his fill of it, he and his family, and left much; every living soul has eaten of it, and if thou take of it in thy turn, thou art worthier thereof than any other.' This pleased the mouse and she chirped and danced and frisked her ears and tail, and greed for the grain deluded her; so she rose at once and issuing forth of her hole, saw the sesame peeled and dry, shining with whiteness, and the woman sitting watching, armed with a stick. The mouse could not contain herself, but taking no thought to the issue of the affair, ran up to the sesame and fell to messing it and eating of it; whereupon the woman smote her with the stick and cleft her head in twain: so her greed and heedlessness of the issue of her actions led to her destruction.”

“By Allah,” said the Sultan to Shehrzad, “this is a goodly story! Hast thou any story bearing upon the beauty of true friendship and the observance of its obligations in time of distress and rescuing from destruction?” “Yes, answered she; “it hath teached me that

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THE CAT AND THE CROW.

A crow and a cat once lived in brotherhood. One day, as they were together under a tree, they spied a leopard making towards them, of which they had not been ware, till he was close upon them. The crow at once flew up to the top of the tree; but the cat abode confounded and said to the crow, ‘O my friend, hast thou no device to save me? All my hope is in thee.’ ‘Indeed,’ answered the crow, ‘it behoveth brethren, in case of need, to cast about for a device, whenas any peril overtakes them, and right well saith the poet:

He is a right true friend who is with thee indeed And will
himself undo, to help thee in thy need,
Who, when love’s severance is by evil fate decreed, To join your
sundered lives will risk his own and bleed.’

Now hard by the tree were shepherds with their dogs; so the crow flew towards them and smote the face of the earth with his wings, cawing and crying out, to draw their attention. Then he went up to one of the dogs and flapped his wings in his eyes and flew up a little way, whilst the dog ran after him, thinking to catch him. Presently, one of the shepherds raised his head and saw the bird flying near the ground and lighting now and then; so he followed him, and the crow gave not over flying just out of the dogs’ reach and tempting them to pursue and snap at him: but as soon as they came near him, he would fly up a little; and so he brought them to the tree. When they saw the leopard, they rushed upon it, and it turned and fled. Now the leopard thought to eat the cat, but the latter was saved by the craft of its friend the crow. This story, O King, shows that the friendship of the virtuous saves and delivers from difficulties and dangers.

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THE FOX AND THE CROW.

A fox once dwelt in a cave of a certain mountain, and as often as a cub was born to him and grew stout, he would eat it, for, except he did so, he had died of hunger; and this was grievous to him. Now on the top of the same mountain a crow had made his nest, and the fox said to himself, ‘I have a mind to strike up a friendship with this crow and make a comrade of him, that he may help me to my day’s meat, for he can do what I cannot.’ So he made for the crow’s stead, and when he came within earshot, he saluted him, saying, ‘O my neighbour, verily a true-believer hath two claims upon his true-believing neighbour, that of neighbourliness and that of community of faith; and know, O my friend, that thou art my neighbour and hast a claim upon me, which it behoves me to observe, the more that I have been long thy neighbour. Moreover, God hath set in my breast a store of love to thee, that bids me speak thee fair and solicit thy friendship. What sayst thou?’ ‘Verily,’ answered the crow, ‘the best speech is that which is soothest, and most like thou speakest with thy tongue that which is not in thy heart. I fear lest thy friendship be but of the tongue, outward, and shine enmity of the heart, inward; for that thou art the Eater and I the Eaten, and to hold aloof one from the other were more apt to us than friendship and fellowship. What, then, maketh thee seek that thou mayst not come at and desire what may not be, seeing that thou art of the beast and I of the bird kind? Verily, this brotherhood [thou profferest] may not be, neither were it seemly.’ He who knoweth the abiding-place of excellent things,’ rejoined the fox, ‘betters choice in what he chooses therefrom, so haply he may win to advantage his brethren; and indeed I should love to be near thee and I have chosen thy companionship, to the end that we may help one another to our several desires; and success shall surely wait upon our loves. I have store of tales of the goodliness of friendship, which, an it like thee, I will relate to thee.’ ‘Thou hast my leave,’ answered the crow; ‘let me hear thy story and weigh it and judge of thine intent thereby.’ ‘Hear then, O my friend,’ rejoined the fox, ‘that which is told of a mouse and a flea and which bears out what I have said to thee.’ ‘How so?’ asked the crow. ‘It is said,’ answered the fox, ‘that

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The Mouse and the Flea.

A mouse once dwelt in the house of a rich and busy merchant. One night, a flea took shelter in the merchant's bed and finding his body soft and being athirst, drank of his blood. The smart of the bite awoke the merchant, who sat up and called to his serving men and maids. So they hastened to him and tucking up their sleeves, fell to searching for the flea. As soon as the latter was ware of the search, he turned to flee and happening on the mouse's hole, entered it. When the mouse saw him, she said to him, "What brings thee in to me, seeing that thou art not of my kind and canst not therefore be assured of safety from violence or ill-usage?" "Verily," answered the flea, "I took refuge in thy dwelling from slaughter and come to thee, seeking thy protection and not anywise coveting thy house, nor shall aught of mischief betide thee from me nor aught to make thee leave it. Nay, I hope to repay thy favours to me with all good, and thou shalt assuredly see and praise the issue of my words." "If the case be as thou sayest," answered the mouse, "be at thine ease here; for nought shall betide thee, save what may pleasure thee; there shall fall on thee rain of peace alone nor shall aught befall thee, but what befalls me. I will give thee my love without stint and do not thou regret thy loss of the merchant's blood nor lament for thy subsistence from him, but be content with what little of sufficient sustenance thou canst lightly come by; for indeed this is the safer for thee, and I have heard that one of the moral poets saith as follows:

I have trodden the road of content and retirement And lived out
my life with whatever betided;
With a morsel of bread and a draught of cold water, Coarse salt
and patched garments content I abided.
If God willed it, He made my life easy of living; Else, I was
contented with what He provided."

"O my sister," rejoined the flea, "I hearken to thine injunction and submit myself to yield thee obedience, nor have I power to gainsay thee, till life be fulfilled, in this fair intent." "Purity of intent suffices to sincere affection," replied the mouse. So love befell and was contracted between them and after this, the flea used (by night) to go to the merchant's bed and not exceed moderation (in sucking his blood) and harbour with the mouse by day in the latter's hole. One night, the merchant brought home great store of dinars and began to turn them over. When the mouse heard the chink of the coin, she put her head out of her hole and gazed at it, till the merchant laid it under his pillow and went to sleep, when she said to the flea, "Seest thou not the favourable opportunity and the great good fortune! Hast thou any device to bring us to our desire of yonder dinars?" "Verily," answered the flea, "it is not good for one to strive for aught, but if he be able to compass his desire; for if he lack of ableness thereto, he falls into that of which he should be ware and attains not his wish for weakness, though he use all possible cunning, like the sparrow that picks up grain and falls into the net and is caught by the fowler. Thou hast no strength to take the dinars and carry them into thy hole, nor can I do this; on the contrary, I could not lift a single dinar; so what hast thou to do with them?" Quoth the mouse, "I have made me these seventy openings, whence I may go out, and set apart a place for things of price, strong and safe; and if thou canst contrive to get the merchant out of the house, I doubt not of success, so Fate aid me." "I will engage to get him out of the house for thee," answered the flea and going to the merchant's bed, gave him a terrible bite, such as he had never before felt, then fled to a place of safety. The merchant awoke and sought for the flea, but finding it not, lay down again on his other side. Then came the flea and bit him again, more sharply than before. So he lost patience and leaving his bed, went out and lay down on the bench before the door and slept there and awoke not till the morning. Meanwhile the mouse came out and fell to carrying the dinars into her hole, till not one was left; and when it was day, the merchant began to accuse the folk and imagine all manner of things. And know, O wise, clear-sighted and experienced crow (continued the fox), that I only tell thee this to the intent that thou mayst reap the recompense of thy goodness to me, even as the mouse reaped the reward of her kindness to the flea; for see how he repaid her and requited her with the goodliest of requitals.' Quoth the crow, 'It lies with the benefactor to show benevolence or not; nor is it incumbent on us to behave kindly to whoso seeks an impossible connection. If I show thee favour, who art by nature my enemy, I am the cause of my own destruction, and thou, O fox, art full of craft and cunning. Now those, whose characteristics these are, are not to be trusted upon oath, and he who is not to be trusted upon oath, there is no good faith in him. I heard but late of thy perfidious dealing with thy comrade the wolf and how thou leddest him into destruction by thy perfidy and guile, and this though he was of thine own kind and thou hadst long companied with him; yet didst thou not spare him; and if thou didst thus with thy fellow, that was of thine own kind, how can I have confidence in thy fidelity and what would be thy dealing with thine enemy of other than thy kind? Nor can I liken thee and me but to the Falcon and the Birds.' 'How so?' asked the fox. 'They say,' answered the crow, 'that

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The Falcon and the Birds.

There was once a falcon who was a cruel tyrant in the days of his youth, so that the beasts of prey of the air and of the earth feared him and none was safe from his mischief; and many were the instances of his tyranny, for he did nothing but oppress and injure all the other birds. As the years passed over him, he grew weak and his strength failed, so that he was oppressed with hunger; but his cunning increased with the waning of his strength and he redoubled in his endeavour and determined to go to the general rendezvous of the birds, that he might eat their leavings, and in this manner he gained his living by cunning, whenas he could do so no longer by strength and violence. And thou, O fox, art like this: if thy strength fail thee, thy cunning fails not; and I doubt not that thy seeking my friendship is a device to get thy subsistence; but I am none of those who put themselves at thy mercy, for God hath given me strength in my wings and caution in my heart and sight in my eyes, and I know that he who apeth a stronger than he, wearieth himself and is often destroyed, wherefore I fear for thee lest, if thou ape a stronger than thou, there befall thee what befell the sparrow.' 'What befell the sparrow?' asked the fox. 'I conjure thee, by Allah, to tell me his story.' 'I have heard,' replied the crow, 'that

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The Sparrow and the Eagle.

A sparrow was once hovering over a sheep-fold, when he saw a great eagle swoop down upon a lamb and carry it off in his claws. Thereupon the sparrow clapped his wings and said, “I will do even as the eagle hath done;” and he conceited himself and aped a greater than he. So he flew down forthright and lighted on the back of a fat ram, with a thick fleece that was become matted, by his lying in his dung and stale, till it was like felt. As soon as the sparrow lighted on the sheep’s back, he clapped his wings and would have flown away, but his feet became tangled in the wool and he could not win free. All this while the shepherd was looking on, having seen as well what happened with the eagle as with the sparrow; so he came up to the latter in a rage and seized him. Then he plucked out his wing-feathers and tying his feet with a twine, carried him to his children and threw him to them. “What is this?” asked they and he answered, “This is one that aped a greater than himself and came to grief.” Now thou, O fox,’ continued the crow, ‘art like this and I would have thee beware of aping a greater than thou, lest thou perish. This is all I have to say to thee; so go from me in peace.’ When the fox despaired of the crow’s friendship, he turned away, groaning and gnashing his teeth for sorrow and disappointment, which when the crow heard, he said to him, ‘O fox, why dost thou gnash thy teeth?’ ‘Because I find thee wilier than myself,’ answered the fox and made off to his den.”

“O Shehrzad,” said the Sultan, “how excellent and delightful are these thy stories! Hast thou more of the like edifying tales?” “It is said,” answered she, “that

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THE HEDGEHOG AND THE PIGEONS.

A hedgehog once took up his abode under a palm-tree, on which roosted a pair of wood-pigeons, that had made their nest there and lived an easy life, and he said to himself, ‘These pigeons eat of the fruit of the palm-tree, and I have no means of getting at it; but needs must I go about with them.’ So he dug a hole at the foot of the palm-tree and took up his lodging there, he and his wife. Moreover, he made a place of prayer beside the hole, in which he shut himself and made a show of piety and abstinence and renunciation of the world. The male pigeon saw him praying and worshipping and inclined to him for his much devoutness and said to him, ‘How long hast thou been thus?’ ‘Thirty years,’ replied the hedgehog. ‘What is thy food?’ asked the bird and the other answered, ‘What falls from the palm-tree.’ ‘And what is thy clothing?’ asked the pigeon. ‘Prickles,’ replied the hedgehog; ‘I profit by their roughness.’ ‘And why,’ continued the bird, ‘hast thou chosen this place rather than another?’ ‘I chose it,’ answered the hedgehog, ‘that I might guide the erring into the right way and teach the ignorant.’ ‘I had thought thee otherguise than this,’ rejoined the pigeon; but now I feel a yearning for that which is with thee.’ Quoth the hedgehog, ‘I fear lest thy deed belie thy speech and thou be even as the husbandman, who neglected to sow in season, saying, “I fear lest the days bring me not to my desire, and I shall only waste my substance by making haste to sow.” When the time of harvest came and he saw the folk gathering in their crops, he repented him of what he had lost by his tardiness and died of chagrin and vexation.’ ‘What then shall I do,’ asked the pigeon, ‘that I may be freed from the bonds of the world and give myself up altogether to the service of my Lord?’ ‘Betake thee to preparing for the next world,’ answered the hedgehog, ‘and content thyself with a pittance of food.’ ‘How can I do this,’ said the pigeon, ‘I that am a bird and may not go beyond the palm-tree whereon is my food? Nor, could I do so, do I know another place, wherein I may abide.’ Quoth the hedgehog, ‘Thou canst shake down of the fruit of the palm what shall suffice thee and thy wife for a year’s victual; then do ye take up your abode in a nest under the tree, that ye may seek to be guided in the right way, and do ye turn to what ye have shaken down and store it up against the time of need; and when the fruits are spent and the time is long upon you, address yourselves to abstinence from food.' 'May God requite thee with good,' exclaimed the pigeon, 'for the fair intent with which thou hast reminded me of the world to come and hast directed me into the right way!' Then he and his wife busied themselves in knocking down the dates, till nothing was left on the palm-tree, whilst the hedgehog, finding whereof to eat, rejoiced and filled his den with the dates, storing them up for his subsistence and saying in himself, 'When the pigeon and his wife have need of their provant, they will seek it of me, trusting in my devoutness and abstinence; and from what they have heard of my pious counsels and admonitions, they will draw near unto me. Then will I seize them and eat them, after which I shall have the place and all that drops from the palm-tree, to suffice me.' Presently the pigeon and his wife came down and finding that the hedgehog had carried off all the dates, said to him, 'O pious and devout-spoken hedgehog of good counsel, we can find no sign of the dates and know not on what else we shall feed.' 'Belike,' replied the hedgehog, 'the winds have carried them away; but the turning from the provision to the Provider is of the essence of prosperity, and He who cut the corners of the mouth will not leave it without victual.' And he gave not over preaching to them thus and making a show of piety and cozening them with fine words, till they put faith in him and entered his den, without suspicion, where-upon he sprang to the door and gnashed his tusks, and the pigeon, seeing his perfidy manifested, said to him, 'What has to-night to do with yester-night? Knowest thou not that there is a Helper for the oppressed? Beware of treachery and craft, lest there befall thee what befell the sharpers who plotted against the merchant.' 'What was that?' asked the hedgehog. 'I have heard tell,' answered the pigeon, 'that

The Merchant and the Two Sharpers.

There was once in a city called Sendeh a very wealthy merchant, who made ready merchandise and set out with it for such a city, thinking to sell it there. There followed him two sharpers, who had made up into bales what goods they could get and giving out to him that they also were merchants, companied with him by the way. At the first halting-place, they agreed to play him false and take his goods; but, at the same time, each purposed inwardly foul play to the other, saying in himself, “If I can cheat my comrade, it will be well for me and I shall have all to myself.” So each took food and putting therein poison, brought it to his fellow; and they both ate of the poisoned mess and died. Now they had been sitting talking with the merchant; so when they left him and were long absent from him, he sought for them and found them both dead; whereby he knew that they were sharpers, who had plotted to play him foul, but their treachery had recoiled upon themselves; so the merchant was preserved and took what they had.’”

“O Shehrzad,” said the Sultan, “verily thou hast aroused me to all whereof I was negligent! Continue to edify me with these fables.” Quoth she, “It has come to my knowledge, O King, that

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THE THIEF AND HIS MONKEY.

A certain man had a monkey and was a thief, who never entered one of the markets of the city in which he dwelt, but he made off with great purchase. One day, he saw a man offering for sale worn clothes, and he went calling them in the market, but none bid for them, and all to whom he showed them refused to buy of him. Presently, the thief saw him put the clothes in a wrapper and sit down to rest for weariness; so he made the ape sport before him, and whilst he was busy gazing at it, stole the parcel from him. Then he took the ape and made off to a lonely place, where he opened the wrapper and taking out the old clothes, wrapped them in a piece of costly stuff. This he carried to another market and exposed it for sale with what was therein, making it a condition that it should not be opened and tempting the folk with the lowness of the price he set on it. A certain man saw the wrapper and it pleased him; so he bought the parcel on these terms and carried it home, doubting not but he had gotten a prize. When his wife saw it, she said, ‘What is this?’ And he answered, ‘It is precious stuff, that I have bought below its worth, meaning to sell it again and take the profit.’ ‘O dupe,’ rejoined she, ‘would this stuff be sold under its value, except it were stolen? Dost thou not know that he who buys a ware, without examining it, erreth? And indeed he is like unto the weaver.’ ‘What is the story of the weaver?’ asked he; and she said, ‘I have heard tell that

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The Foolish Weaver.

There was once in a certain village a weaver who could not earn his living save by excessive toil. One day, it chanced that a rich man of the neighbourhood made a feast and bade the folk thereto. The weaver was present and saw such as were richly clad served with delicate meats and made much of by the master of the house, for what he saw of their gallant array. So he said in himself, “If I change this my craft for another, easier and better considered and paid, I shall amass store of wealth and buy rich clothes, that so I may rise in rank and be exalted in men’s eyes and become like unto these.” Presently, one of the mountebanks there climbed up to the top of a steep and lofty wall and threw himself down, alighting on his feet; which when the weaver saw, he said to himself, “Needs must I do as this fellow hath done, for surely I shall not fail of it.” So he climbed up on to the wall and casting himself down to the ground, broke his neck and died forthright. I tell thee this (continued the woman) that thou mayst get thy living by that fashion thou knowest and throughly understandest, lest greed enter into thee and thou lust after what is not of thy competence.’ Quoth he, ‘Not every wise man is saved by his wisdom nor is every fool lost by his folly. I have seen a skilful charmer versed in the ways of serpents, bitten by a snake and killed, and I have known others prevail over serpents, who had no skill in them and no knowledge of their ways.’ And he hearkened not to his wife, but went on buying stolen goods below their value, till he fell under suspicion and perished.

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THE SPARROW AND THE PEACOCK.

There was once a sparrow, that used every day to visit a certain king of the birds and was the first to go in to him and the last to leave him. One day, a company of birds assembled on a high mountain, and one of them said to another, ‘Verily, we are waxed many and many are the differences between us, and needs must we have a king to order our affairs, so shall we be at one and our differences will cease.’ Thereupon up came the sparrow and counselled them to make the peacock, — that is, the prince he used to visit, — king over them. So they chose the peacock to their king and he bestowed largesse on them and made the sparrow his secretary and vizier. Now the sparrow was wont bytimes to leave his assiduity [in the personal service of the king] and look into affairs [in general]. One day, he came not at the usual time, whereat the peacock was sore troubled; but presently, he returned and the peacock said to him, ‘What hath delayed thee, that art the nearest to me of all my servants and the dearest?’ Quoth the sparrow, ‘I have seen a thing that is doubtful to me and at which I am affrighted.’ ‘What was it thou sawest?’ asked the king; and the sparrow answered, ‘I saw a man set up a net, hard by my nest, and drive its pegs fast into the ground. Then he strewed grain in its midst and withdrew afar off. As I sat watching what he would do, behold, fate and destiny drove thither a crane and his wife, which fell into the midst of the net and began to cry out; whereupon the fowler came up and took them. This troubled me, and this is the reason of my absence from thee, O king of the age; but never again will I abide in that nest, for fear of the net.’ ‘Depart not thy dwelling,’ rejoined the peacock; ‘for precaution will avail thee nothing against destiny.’ And the sparrow obeyed his commandment, saying, ‘I will take patience and not depart, in obedience to the king.’ So he continued to visit the king and carry him food and water, taking care for himself, till one day he saw two sparrows fighting on the ground and said in himself, ‘How can I, who am the king’s vizier, look on and see sparrows fighting in my neighbourhood? By Allah, I must make peace between them!’ So he flew down to them, to reconcile them; but the fowler cast the net over them and taking the sparrow in question, gave him to his fellow, saying, ‘Take care of him, for he is the fattest and finest I ever saw.’ But the sparrow said in himself, ‘I have fallen into that which I feared and it was none but the peacock that inspired me with a false security. It availed me nothing to beware of the stroke of fate, since for him who taketh precaution there is no fleeing from destiny; and how well says the poet:

That which is not to be shall by no means be brought To pass, and
that which is to be shall come, unsought,
Even at the time ordained; but he that knoweth not The truth is
still deceived and finds his hopes grown nought.’

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STORY OF ALI BEN BEKKAR AND SHEMSENNEHAR.

There lived once [at Baghdad] in the days of the Khalif Haroun er Reshid a merchant named Aboulhusn Ali ben Tahir, who was great of goods and grace, handsome and pleasant-mannered, beloved of all. He used to enter the royal palace without asking leave, for all the Khalif's concubines and slave-girls loved him, and he was wont to company with Er Reshid and recite verses to him and tell him witty stories. Withal he sold and bought in the merchants' bazaar, and there used to sit in his shop a youth named Ali ben Bekkar, a descendant of the ancient kings of Persia, who was fair of face and elegant of shape, with rosy cheeks and joined eyebrows, sweet of speech and laughing-lipped, a lover of mirth and gaiety. It chanced one day, as they sat laughing and talking, there came up ten damsels like moons, every one of them accomplished in beauty and symmetry, and amongst them a young lady riding on a mule with housings of brocade and golden stirrups. She was swathed in a veil of fine stuff, with a girdle of gold-embroidered silk, and was even as says the poet:

She hath a skin like very silk and a soft speech and sweet;
    Gracious to all, her words are nor too many nor too few.
Two eyes she hath, quoth God Most High, "Be," and forthright they
    were; They work as wine upon the hearts of those whom they
    ensue.
Add to my passion, love of her, each night; and, solacement Of
    loves, the Resurrection be thy day of rendezvous!

The lady alighted at Aboulhusn's shop and sitting down there, saluted him, and he returned her salute. When Ali ben Bekkar saw her, she ravished his understanding and he rose to go away; but she said to him, 'Sit in thy place. We came to thee and thou goest away: this is not fair.' 'O my lady,' answered he, 'by Allah, I flee from what I see; for the tongue of the case saith:

She's the sun and her dwelling's in heaven on high; Look, then,
to thine heart thou fair patience commend.
Thou mayst not climb up to her place in the sky, Nor may she to
thee from her heaven descend.'

When she heard this, she smiled and said to Aboulhusn, 'What is the name of this young man?' 'He is a stranger,' answered he. 'What countryman is he?' asked she, and the merchant replied, 'He is a descendant of the (ancient) kings of Persia; his name is Ali ben Bekkar, and indeed it behoves us to use strangers with honour.' 'When my damsel comes to thee,' rejoined she, 'come thou at once to us and bring him with thee, that we may entertain him in our abode, lest he blame us and say, "There is no hospitality in the people of Baghdad:" for niggardliness is the worst fault that a man can have. Thou hearest what I say to thee and if thou disobey me, thou wilt incur my displeasure and I will never again visit thee or salute thee.' 'On my head and eyes,' answered Aboulhusn; 'God preserve me from thy displeasure, fair lady!' Then she rose and went away, leaving Ali ben Bekkar in a state of bewilderment. Presently, the damsel came and said to the merchant, 'O my lord Aboulhusn, my lady Shemsennehar, the favourite of the Commander of the Faithful Haroun er Reshid, bids thee to her, thee and thy friend, my lord Ali ben Bekkar.' So he rose and taking Ali with him, followed the girl to the Khalif's palace, where she carried them into a chamber and made them sit down. They talked together awhile, till she set trays of food before them, and they ate and washed their hands. Then she brought them wine, and they drank and made merry; after which she bade them rise and carried them into another chamber, vaulted upon four columns and adorned and furnished after the goodliest fashion with various kinds of furniture and decorations, as it were one of the pavilions of Paradise. They were amazed at the rarities they saw and as they were gazing at these marvels, up came ten damsels, like moons, with a proud and graceful gait, dazzling the sight and confounding the wit, and ranged themselves in two ranks, as they were of the houris of Paradise. After awhile, in came ten other damsels, with lutes and other instruments of mirth and music in their hands, who saluted the two guests and sitting down, fell to tuning their instruments. Then they rose and standing before them, played and sang and recited verses: and indeed each one of them was a seduction to the faithful. Whilst they were thus occupied, there entered other ten damsels like unto them, high-bosomed and of an equal age, with black eyes and rosy cheeks, joined eyebrows and languorous looks, a seduction to the faithful and a delight to all who looked upon them, clad in various kinds of coloured silks, with ornaments that amazed the wit. They took up their station at the door, and there succeeded them yet other ten damsels, fairer than they, clad in gorgeous apparel, such as defies description; and they also stationed themselves by the door. Then in came a band of twenty damsels and amongst them the lady Shemsennehar, as she were the moon among the stars, scarved with the luxuriance of her hair and dressed in a blue robe and a veil of silk, embroidered with gold and jewels. About her middle she wore a girdle set with various kinds of precious stones, and she advanced with a graceful and coquettish gait, till she came to the couch that stood at the upper end of the chamber and seated herself thereon. When Ali ben Bekkar saw her, he repeated the following couplets:

Yes, this is she indeed, the source of all my ill, For whom with
  long desire I languish at Love's will.
Near her, I feel my soul on fire and bones worn waste For
  yearning after her that doth my heart fulfih

Then said he to Aboulhusn, 'Thou hadst dealt more kindly with me to have forewarned me of these things; that I might have prepared my mind and taken patience to support what hath befallen me ;' and he wept and groaned and complained. 'O my brother,' replied Aboulhusn, 'I meant thee nought but good; but I feared to tell thee of this, lest such transport should overcome thee as might hinder thee from foregathering with her and intervene between thee and her: but take courage and be of good heart, for she is well disposed to thee and inclineth to favour thee.' 'What is the lady's name?' asked Ali ben Bekkar. 'She is called Shemsennehar,' answered Aboulhusn 'she is one of the favourites of the Commander of the Faithful Haroun er Reshid and this is the palace of the Khalifate.' Then Shemsennehar sat gazing upon Ali ben Bekkar's charms and he upon hers, till each was engrossed with love of the other. Presently, she commanded the damsels to sit; so they sat down, each in her place, on a couch before one of the windows, and she bade them sing; whereupon one of them took a lute and sang the following verses:

Twice be the message to my love made known, And take the answer
from his lips alone.
To thee, O monarch of the fair, I come And stand, of this my case
to make my moan.
O thou my sovereign, dear my heart and life, That in my inmost
bosom hast thy throne,
Prithee, bestow a kiss upon thy slave; If not as gift, then even
as a loan.
I will repay it, (mayst thou never fail!) Even as I took it, not
a little gone.
Or, if thou wish for more than thou didst lend, Take and content
thee; it is all thine own.
May health's fair garment ever gladden thee, Thee that o'er me
the wede of woe hast thrown!

Her singing charmed Ali ben Bekkar, and he said to her, 'Sing me more of the like of these verses.' So she struck the strings and sang as follows:

By excess of estrangement, beloved mine, Thou hast taught long
weeping unto my eyne.
O joy of my sight and its desire, O goal of my hopes, my
worship's shrine,
Have pity on one, whose eyes are drowned In the sorrowful lover's
tears of brine!

When she had finished, Shemsennehar said to another damsel, 'Sing us somewhat, thou.' So she played a lively measure and sang the following verses:

His looks 'twas made me drunken, in sooth, and not his wine; And

the grace of his gait has banished sleep from these eyes of mine.
'Twas not the wine-cup dazed me, but e'en his glossy curls; His charms it was that raised me and not the juice o' the vine.
His winding browlocks have routed my patience, and my wit Is done away by the beauties his garments do enshrine.

When Shemsennehar heard this, she sighed heavily, and the song pleased her. Then she bade another damsel sing; so she took the lute and chanted the following:

A face that vies, indeed, with heaven's lamp, the sun; The welling of youth's springs upon him scarce begun.
His curling whiskers write letters wherein the sense Of love in the extreme is writ for every one.
Beauty proclaimed of him, whenas with him it met, "A stuff in God's best loom was fashioned forth and done!"

When she had finished, Ali Ben Bekkar. said to the damsel nearest him, 'Sing us somewhat, thou.' So she took the lute and sang these verses:

The time of union's all too slight For coquetry and prudish flight.
Not thus the noble are. How long This deadly distance and despite?
Ah, profit by the auspicious time, To sip the sweets of love-delight.

Ali ben Bekkar followed up her song with plentiful tears; and when Shemsennehar saw him weeping and groaning and lamenting, she burned with love-longing and desire and passion and transport consumed her. So she rose from the couch and came to the door of the alcove, where Ali met her and they embraced and fell down a-swoon in the doorway; whereupon the damsels came to them and carrying them into the alcove, sprinkled rose-water upon them. When they revived, they missed Aboulhusn, who had hidden himself behind a couch, and the young lady said, ‘Where is Aboulhusn?’ So he showed himself to her from beside the couch, and she saluted him, saying, ‘I pray God to give me the means of requiting thee thy kindness!’ Then she turned to Ali ben Bekkar and said to him, ‘O my lord, passion has not reached this pass with thee, without doing the like with me; but there is nothing for it but to bear patiently what hath befallen us.’ ‘By Allah, O my lady,’ rejoined he, ‘converse with thee may not content me nor gazing upon thee assuage the fire of my heart, nor will the love of thee, that hath mastered my soul, leave me, but with the passing away of my life.’ So saying, he wept and the tears ran down upon his cheeks, like unstrung pearls. When Shemsennehar saw him weep, she wept for his weeping; and Aboulhusn exclaimed, ‘By Allah, I wonder at your plight and am confounded at your behaviour; of a truth, your affair is amazing and your case marvellous. If ye weep thus, what while ye are yet together, how will it be when ye are parted? Indeed, this is no time for weeping and wailing, but for foregathering and gladness; rejoice, therefore, and make merry and weep no more.’ Then Shemsennehar signed to a damsel, who went out and returned with handmaids bearing a table, whereon were silver dishes, full of all manner rich meats. They set the table before them, and Shemsennehar began to eat and to feed Ali ben Bekkar, till they were satisfied, when the table was removed and they washed their hands. Presently the waiting-women brought censors and casting bottles and sprinkled them with rose-water and incensed them with aloes and ambergris and other perfumes; after which they set on dishes of graven gold, containing all manner of sherbets, besides fruits and confections, all that the heart can desire or the eye delight in, and one brought a flagon of carnelian, full of wine. Then Shemsennehar chose out ten handmaids and ten singing-women to attend on them and dismissing the rest to their apartments, bade some of those who remained smite the lute. They did as she bade them and one of them sang the following verses:

My soul be a ransom for him who returned my salute with a smile
And revived in my breast the longing for union after
despair!

The hands of passion have brought my secret thoughts to the light
And that which is in my bosom unto my censors laid bare.
The very tears of my eyes press betwixt me and him, As though
they, even as I, enamoured of him were.

When she had finished, Shemsennehar rose and filling a. cup, drank it off, then filled it again and gave it to Ali ben Bekkar; after which she bade another damsel sing; and she sang the following verses:

My tears, as they flow, are alike to my wine, as I brim it up!
For my eyes pour forth of their lids the like of what froths
in my cup.
By Allah, I know not, for sure, whether my eyelids it is Run over
with wine or else of my tears it is that I sup!

Then Ali ben Bekkar drank off his cup and returned it to Shemsennehar. She filled it again and gave it to Aboulhusn, who drank it off. Then she took the lute, saying, ‘None shall sing over my cup but myself.’ So she tuned the strings and sang these verses:

The hurrying tears upon his cheeks course down from either eye’
For very passion, and love’s fires within his heart flame
high.
He weeps whilst near to those he loves, for fear lest they
depart: So, whether near or far they be, his tears are never
dry.

And again:

Our lives for thee, O cupbearer, O thou whom beauty’s self From
the bright parting of thy hair doth to the feet army!
The full moon from thy collar-folds rises, the
Pleiades Shine from thy mouth and in thine hands there
beams the sun of day.
I trow, the goblets wherewithal thou mak’st us drunk are those
Thou pourest to us from thine eyes, that lead the wit
astray.

Is it no wonder that thou art a moon for ever full And that thy
lovers ’tis, not thou, that wane and waste away?
Art thou a god, that thou, indeed, by favouring whom thou wilt
And slighting others, canst at once bring back to life and
slay?
GCod moulded beauty from thy form and eke perfumed the breeze
With
the sheer sweetness of the scent that cleaves to thee alway.
None of the people of this world, an angel sure thou art, Whom
thy Creator hath sent down, to hearten our dismay.

When Ali and Aboulhusn and the bystanders heard Shemsennehar’s song, they were transported and laughed and sported; but while they were thus engaged, up came a damsel, trembling for fear, and said, ‘O my lady, Afif and Mesrour and Merjan and others of the Commander of the Faithful’s eunuchs, whom I know not, are at the door.’ When they heard this they were like to die of fright, but Shemsennehar laughed and said, ‘Have no fear.’ Then said she to the damsel, ‘Hold them in parley, whilst we remove hence.’ And she caused shut the doors of the alcove upon Ali and Aboulhusn and drew the curtains over them; after which she shut the door of the saloon and went out by the privy gate into the garden, where she seated herself on a couch she had there and bade one of the damsels rub her feet. Then she dismissed the rest of her women and bade the portress admit those who were at the door; whereupon Mesrour entered, he and his company, twenty men with drawn swords, and saluted her. Quoth she, ‘Wherefore come-ye?’ And they answered, ‘The Commander of the Faithful salutes thee. He wearies for thy sight and would have thee to know that this with him is a day of great joy and gladness and he is minded to seal his gladness with thy present company: wilt thou then go to him or shall he come to thee?’ At this she rose, and kissing the earth, said, ‘I hear and obey the commandment of the Commander of the Faithful.’ Then she summoned the chief (female) officers of her household and other damsels and made a show of complying with the Khalif’s orders and commanding them to make preparations for his reception, albeit all was in readiness; and she said to the eunuchs, ‘Go to the Commander of the Faithful and tell him that I await him after a little space, that I may make ready for him a place with carpets and so forth.’ So they returned in haste to the Khalif, whilst Shemsennehar, doffing her (outer) clothing, repaired to her beloved Ali ben Bekkar and strained him to her bosom and bade him farewell, whereat he wept sore and said, ‘O my lady, this leave-taking will lead to the ruin of my soul and the loss of my life; but I pray God to grant me patience to bear this my love, wherewith He hath smitten me!’ ‘By Allah, answered she, ‘none will suffer perdition but I; for thou wilt go out to the market and company with those that will divert thee, and thine honour will be in safety and thy passion concealed; whilst I shall fall into trouble and weariness nor find any to console me, more by token that I have given the Khalif a rendezvous, wherein haply great peril shall betide me, by reason of my love and longing passion for thee and my grief at being parted from thee. For with what voice shall I sing and with what heart shall I present me before the Khalif and with what speech shall I entertain the Commander of the Faithful and with what eyes shall I look upon a place where thou art not and take part in a banquet at which thou art not present and with what taste shall I drink wine of which thou partakest not?’ ‘Be not troubled,’ said Aboulhusn ‘but take patience and be not remiss in entertaining the Commander of the Faithful this night, neither show him any neglect, but be of good courage.’ At this juncture, up came a damsel, who said to Shemsennehar, ‘O my lady, the Khalif’s pages are come.’ So she rose to her feet and said to the maid, ‘Take Aboulhusn and his friend and carry them to the upper gallery giving upon the garden and there leave them, till it be dark; when do thou make shift to carry them forth.’ Accordingly, the girl carried them up to the gallery and locking the door upon them, went away. As they sat looking on the garden, the Khalif appeared, preceded by near a hundred eunuchs with drawn swords and compassed about with a score of damsels, as they were moons, holding each a lighted flambeau. They were clad in the richest of raiment and on each one’s head was a crown set with diamonds and rubies. The Khalif walked in their midst with a majestic gait, whilst Mesrour and Afif and Wesif went before him and Shemsennehar and all her damsels rose to receive him and meeting him at the garden door, kissed the earth before him; nor did they cease to go before him, till they brought him to the couch, whereon he sat down, whilst all the waiting-women and eunuchs stood before him and there came fair maids and slave-girls with lighted flambeaux and perfumes and essences and instruments of music. Then he bade the singers sit down, each in her room, and Shemsennehar came up and seating herself on a stool by the Khalif's side, began to converse with him, whilst Ali and the jeweller looked on and listened, unseen of the prince. The Khalif fell to jesting and toying with Shemsennehar and bade throw open the (garden) pavilion. So they opened the doors and windows and lighted the flambeaux till the place shone in the season of darkness even as the day. The eunuchs removed thither the wine-service and (quoth Aboulhusn), 'I saw drinking-vessels and rarities, whose like mine eyes never beheld, vases of gold and silver and all manner precious stones and jewels, such as beggar description, till indeed meseemed I was dreaming, for excess of amazement at what I saw!' But as for Ali ben Bekkar, from the moment Shemsennehar left him, he lay prostrate on the ground for excess of passion and desire and when he revived, he fell to gazing upon these things that had not their like, and saying to Aboulhusn, 'O my brother, I fear lest the Khalif see us or come to know of us; but the most of my fear is for thee. For myself, I know that I am surely lost past recourse, and the cause of my destruction is nought but excess of passion and love-longing and desire and separation from my beloved, after union with her; but I beseech God to deliver us from this predicament.' Then they continued to look on, till the banquet was spread before the Khalif, when he turned to one of the damsels and said to her, 'O Gheram, let us hear some of thine enchanting songs.' So she tool: the lute and tuning it, sang as follows:

The longing of a Bedouin maid, whose folk are far away, Who yearns after the willow of the Hejaz and the bay, —
Whose tears, when she on travellers lights, might for their water serve And eke her passion, with its heat, their bivouac-fire purvey, —
Is not more fierce nor ardent than my longing for my love, Who deem: that I commit a crime in loving him alway.

When Shemsennehar heard this, she slipped off the stool on which she sat and fell to the earth insensible; where upon the damsels came and lifted her up. When Ali ben Bekkar saw this from the gallery, he also fell down senseless, and Aboulhusn said, ‘Verily Fate hath apportioned passion equally between you!’ As he spoke, in came the damsel who had brought them thither and said to him, ‘O Aboulhusn, arise and come down, thou and thy friend, for of a truth the world is grown strait upon us and I fear lest our case be discovered or the Khalif become aware of you: so, except you descend at once, we are dead folk. ‘How shall this youth descend,’ replied he, ‘seeing that he hath not strength to rise?’ With this she fell to sprinkling rose-water on Ali ben Bekkar, till he came to himself, when Aboulhusn lifted him up and the damsel stayed him. So they went down from the gallery and walked on awhile, till they came to a little iron door, which the damsel opened, and they found themselves on the Tigris’ bank. Here they sat down on a stone bench, whilst the girl clapped her hands and there came up a man with a little boat, to whom said she, ‘Carry these two young men to the other bank.’ So they all three entered the boat and the man put off with them; and as they launched out into the stream, Ali ben Bekkar looked back towards the Khalif’s palace and the pavilion and the garden and bade them farewell with these verses:

I stretch forth a feeble hand to bid farewell to thee, With the
other upon my burning breast, beneath the heart of me.
But be not this the last of the love betwixt us twain And let not
this the last of my soul’s refreshment be.

The damsel said to the boatman, ‘Make haste with them.’ So he plied his oars swiftly till they reached the opposite bank, where they landed, and she took lease of them, saying, ‘It were my wish not to leave you, but I can go no farther than this.’ Then she turned back, whilst Ali ben Bekkar lay on the ground before Aboulhusn and could not rise, till the latter said to him, ‘This place is not sure and I am in fear of our lives, by reason of the thieves and highwaymen and men of lawlessness.’ With this Ali arose and essayed to walk a little, but could not. Now Aboulhusn had friends in that quarter, so he made for the house of one of them, in whom he trusted and who was of his intimates, and knocked at the door. The man came out quickly and seeing them, bade them welcome and brought them into his house, where he made them sit down and talked with them and asked them whence they came. Quoth Aboulhusn ‘We came out but now, being moved thereto by a man with whom I had dealings and who hath in his hands monies of mine. It was told me that he was minded to flee into foreign countries with my money; so I came out to-night in quest of him, taking with me this my friend Ali ben Bekkar for company but he hid from us and we could get no speech of him So we turned back, empty-handed, and knew not whither to go, for it were irksome to us to return home at this hour of the night; wherefore we came to thee, knowing thy wonted courtesy and kindness.’ ‘Ye are right welcome,’ answered the host, and studied to do them honour. They abode with him the rest of the night, and as soon as it was day, they left him and made their way back to the city. When they came to Aboulhusn’s house, the latter conjured his friend to enter; so they went in and lying down on the bed, slept awhile. When they awoke, Aboulhusn bade his servants spread the house with rich carpets saying in himself, ‘Needs must I divert this youth and distract him from thoughts of his affliction, for I know his case better than another.’ Then he called for water for Ali ben Bekkar, and the latter rose and making his ablutions, prayed the obligatory prayers that he had omitted for the past day and night; after which he sat down and began to solace himself with talk with his friend. When Aboulhusn saw this, he turned to him and said, ‘O my lord, it were better for thy case that thou abide with me this night, so thy heart may be lightened and the anguish of love-longing that is upon thee be dispelled and thou make merry with us and haply the fire of thy heart be allayed.’ ‘O my brother,’ answered Ali, ‘do what seemeth good to thee; for I may not anywise escape from what hath befallen me.’ Accordingly, Aboulhusn arose and bade his servants summon some of the choicest of his friends and sent for singers and musicians. Meanwhile he made ready meat and drink for them, and they came and sat eating and drinking and making merry till nightfall Then they lit the candles, and the cups of friendship and good fellowship went round amongst them, and the time passed pleasantly with them. Presently, a singing-woman took the lute and sang the following verses:

Fate launched at me a dart, the arrow of an eye; It pierced me
and cut off from those I love am I.
Fortune hath mauled me sore and patience fails me now; But long
have I forebode misfortune drawing nigh.

When Ali ben Bekkar heard this, he fell to the earth in a swoon and abode thus till daybreak, and Aboulhusn despaired of him. But, with the dawning, he came to himself and sought to go home; nor could Aboulhusn deny him, for fear of the issue of his affair. So he made his servants bring a mule and mounting Ali thereon, carried him to his lodging, he and one of his men. When he was safe at home, the merchant thanked God for his deliverance from that peril and sat awhile with him, comforting him; but Ali could not contain himself, for the violence of his passion and love-longing. Presently Aboulhusn rose to take leave of him and Ali said, 'O my brother, leave me not without news.' 'I hear and obey, answered Aboulhusn, and repairing to his shop, opened it and sat there all day, expecting news of Shemsennehar; but none came. He passed the night in his own house and when it was day, he went to Ali ben Bekkar's lodging and found him laid on his bed, with his friends about him and physicians feeling his pulse and prescribing this or that. When he saw Aboulhusn, he smiled, and the latter saluting him, enquired how he did and sat with him till the folk withdrew, when he said to him, 'What plight is this?' Quoth Ali, 'It was noised abroad that I was ill and I have no strength to rise and walk, so as to give the lie to the report of my sickness, but continue lying here as thou seest. So my friends heard of me and came to visit me. But, O my brother, hast thou seen the damsel or heard any news of her?' 'I have not seen her,' answered Aboulhusn, 'since we parted from her on the Tigris' bank; but, O my brother, beware of scandal and leave this weeping.' 'O my brother,' rejoined Ali, 'indeed, I have no control over myself ;' and he sighed and recited the following verses:

She giveth unto her hand that whereof mine doth fail, A dye on
the wrist, wherewith she doth my patience assail

She standeth in fear for her hand of the arrows she shoots from
her eyes; So, for protection, she's fain to clothe it in
armour of mail.
The doctor in ignorance felt my pulse, and I said to him, "Leave
thou my hand alone; my heart it is that doth ail."
Quoth she to the dream of the night, that visited me and fled,
"By Allah, describe him to me and bate me no jot of the
tale!"
It answered, "I put him away, though he perish of thirst, and
said, 'Stand off from the watering-place!' So he could not
to drink avail."
She poured forth the pearls of her tears from her eyes' narcissus
and gave The rose of her cheeks to drink and bit upon
jujubes with hail.

Then he said, 'O Aboulhusn, I am smitten with an affliction, from which I deemed myself in surety, and there is no greater ease for me than death.' 'Be patient,' answered his friend: 'peradventure God will heal thee.' Then he went out from him and repairing to his shop, opened it, nor had he sat long, when up came Shemsennehar's handmaid, who saluted him. He returned her salute and looking at her, saw that her heart was palpitating and that she was troubled and bore the traces of affliction: so he said to her, 'Thou art welcome. How is it with Shemsennehar?' 'I will tell thee,' answered she; 'but first tell me how doth Ali ben Bekkar.' So he told her all that had passed, whereat she was grieved and sighed and lamented and marvelled at his case. Then said she, 'My lady's case is still stranger than this; for when you went away, I turned back, troubled at heart for you and hardly crediting your escape, and found her lying prostrate in the pavilion, speaking not nor answering any, whilst the Commander of the Faithful sat by her head, unknowing what aided her and finding none who could give him news of her. She ceased not from her swoon till midnight, when she revived and the Khalif said to her, "What ails thee, O Shemsennehar, and what has behllen thee this night?" "May God make me thy ransom, O Commander of the Faithful!" answered she. "Verily, bile rose in me and lighted a fire in my body, so that I lost my senses for excess of pain, and I know no more." "What hast thou eaten to-day?" asked the Khalif. Quoth she, "I broke my fast on something I had never before eaten." Then she feigned to be recovered and calling for wine, drank it and begged the Khalif to resume his diversion. So he sat down again on his couch in the pavilion and made her sit as before. When she saw me, she asked me how you fared; so I told her what I had done with you and repeated to her the verses that Ali ben BeLkar had recited at parting, whereat she wept secretly, but presently stinted. After awhile, the Khalif ordered a damsel to sing, and she chanted the following verses:

Life, as I live, has not been sweet since I did part from thee;
Would God I knew but how it fared with thee too after me!
If thou be weeping tears of brine for sev'rance of our loves, Ah,
then, indeed, 'twere meet my tears of very blood should be.

When my lady heard this, she fell back on the sofa in a swoon, and I seized her hand and sprinkled rose-water on her face, till she revived, when I said to her, "O my lady, do not bring ruin on thyself and on all thy house-hold, but be patient, by the life of thy beloved!" "Can aught befall me worse than death?" answered she. "That, indeed, I long for, for, by Allah, my ease is therein." Whilst we were talking, another damsel sang the following words of the poet:

"Patience shall peradventure lead to solacement," quoth they; and
I, "Where's patience to be had, now he is gone away?"
He made a binding covenant with me to cut the cords Of patience,
when we two embraced upon the parting day.

When Shemsennehar heard this, she swooned away once more, which when the Khalif saw, he came to her in haste and commanded the wine-service to be removed and each damsel to return to her chamber. He abode with her the rest of the night, and when it was day, he sent for physicians and men of art and bade them medicine her, knowing not that her sickness arose from passion and love-longing. He tarried with her till he deemed her in a way of recovery, when he returned to his palace, sore concerned for her illness, and she bade me go to thee and bring her news of Ali ben Bekkar. So I came, leaving with her a number of her bodywomen; and this is what has delayed me from thee.' When Aboulhusn heard her story, he marvelled and said, 'By Allah, I have acquainted thee with his whole case; so now return to thy mistress; salute her for me and exhort her to patience and secrecy and tell her that I know it to be a hard matter and one that calls for prudent ordering.' She thanked him and taking leave of him, returned to her mistress, whilst he abode in his place till the end of the day, when he shut the shop and betaking himself to Ali ben Bekkar's house, knocked at the door. One of the servants came out and admitted him; and when Ali saw him, he smiled and rejoiced in his coming, saying, 'O Aboulhusn, thou hast made a weary man of me by thine absence from me this day; for indeed my soul is pledged to thee for the rest of my days.' 'Leave this talk,' answered the other. 'Were thy healing at the price of my hand, I would cut it off, ere thou couldst ask me; and could I ransom thee with my life, I had already laid it down for thee. This very day, Shemsennehar's handmaid has been with me and told me that what hindered her from coming before this was the Khalif's sojourn with her mistress;' and he went on to repeat to him all that the girl had told him of Shemsennehar; at which Ali lamented sore and wept and said to him, 'O my brother, I conjure thee by God to help me in this mine affliction and teach me how I shall do! Moreover, I beg thee of thy grace to abide with me this night, that I may have the solace of thy company.' Aboulhusn agreed to this; so they talked together till the night darkened, when Ali groaned aloud and lamented and wept copious tears, reciting the following verses:

My eye holds thine image ever; thy name in my mouth is aye And
still in my heart is thy sojourn; so how canst thou absent
be?
How sore is my lamentation for life that passes away Nor is
there, alas! in union a part for thee and me!

And also these:

She cleft with the sword of her glance the helm of my courage in

two And the mail of my patience she pierced with the spear
of her shape through and through.
She unveiled to us, under the musk of the mole that is set on her
cheek, camphor-white dawning a-break through a night of the
ambergris' hue.
Her spirit was stirred to chagrin and she bit on cornelian
with pearls, Whose unions unvalued abide in a lakelet
of sugary dew.
She sighed for impatience and smote with her palm on the snows of
her breast. Her hand left a scar; so I saw what never before
met my view;
Pens fashioned of coral (her nails), that, dinting the book of
her breast Five lines, scored in ambergris ink, on a table
of crystal drew,
O ye that go girded with steel, O swordsmen, I rede you beware Of
the stroke of her death-dealing eyes, that never looked yet
but they slew!
And guard yourselves, ye of the spears, and fence off her thrust
from your hearts, If she tilt with the quivering lance of
her shape straight and slender at you.

Then he gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon. Aboulhusn thought that his soul had departed his body and he ceased not from his swoon till daybreak, when he came to himself and talked with his friend, who sat with him till the forenoon. Then he left him and repaired to his shop. Hardly had he opened it, when the damsel came and stood before him. As soon as he saw her, she made a sign of salutation to him, which he returned; and she greeted him for her mistress, saying, 'How doth Ali ben BeLkar?' 'O good damsel,' replied he, 'ask me not how he doth nor what he suffers for excess of passion; for he sleeps not by night neither rests by day; wakefulness wasteth him and affliction hath gotten the mastery of him and his case is distressful to his friend.' Quoth she, 'My lady salutes thee and him, and indeed she is in worse case than he. She hath written him a letter and here it is. When she gave it me, she said to me, "Do not return save with the answer." So wilt thou go with me to him and get his reply?' 'I hear and obey,' answered Aboulhusn, and shutting his shop, carried her, by a different way to that by which he came, to Ali ben Bekkar's house, where he left her standing at the door and entered. When Ali saw him, he rejoiced, and Aboulhusn said to him, 'The reason of my coming is that such an one hath sent his handmaid to thee with a letter, containing his greeting to thee and excusing himself for that he hath tarried by reason of a certain matter that hath betided him. The girl stands even now at the door: shall she have leave to enter?' And he signed to him that it was Shemsennehar's slave-girl. Ali understood his sign and answered, 'Bring her in.' So she entered and when he saw her, he shook for joy and signed to her, as who should say, 'How doth thy lord, may God grant him health and recovery!' 'He is well,' answered she and pulling out the letter, gave it to him. He took it and kissing it, opened and read it; after which he handed it to Aboulhusn, who found written therein what follows:

The messenger of me will give thee news aright; So let his true
    report suffice thee for my sight.
A lover hast thou left, for love of thee distraught; Her eyes
    cease never-more from watching, day or night.
I brace myself to bear affliction, for to foil The buffets of
    ill-fate is given to no wight.
But be thou of good cheer; for never shall my heart Forget thee
    nor thy thought be absent from my spright.
Look on thy wasted frame and what is fallen thereon And thence
    infer of me and argue of my plight.

To proceed: I have written thee a letter without fingers and speak to thee without tongue; to tell thee my whole state, I have an eye from which sleeplessness is never absent and a heart whence sorrowful thought stirs not. It is with me as I had never known health nor let sadness, neither beheld a fair face nor spent an hour of pleasant life; but it is as I were made up of love-longing and of the pain of passion and chagrin. Sickness is unceasing upon me and my yearning redoubles ever; desire increases still and longing rages in my heart. I pray God to hasten our union and dispel the trouble of my mind: and I would fain have thee write me some words, that I may solace myself withal. Moreover, I would have thee put on a becoming patience, till God give relief; and peace be on thee.’ When Ali ben Bekkar had read this letter, he said, ‘With what hand shall I write and with what tongue shall I make moan and lament? Indeed she addeth sickness to my sickness and draweth death upon my death!’ Then he sat up and taking inkhorn and paper, wrote the following reply: ‘In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. O my lady, thy letter hath reached me and hath given ease to a mind worn out with passion and desire and brought healing to a wounded heart, cankered with languishment and sickness; for indeed I am become even as saith the poet:

Bosom contracted and grievous thought dilated, Eyes ever wakeful
    and body wearied aye;
Patience cut off and separation ever present, Reason disordered
    and heart all stolen away.

Know that complaining quenches not the fire of calamity; but it eases him whom love-longing consumes and separation destroys; and so I comfort myself with the mention of the word “union;” for how well saith the poet:

If love had not pain and pleasure, satisfaction and despite,
    Where of messengers and letters were for lovers the
    delight?’

When he had made an end of this letter, he gave it to Aboulhusn, saying, ‘Read it and give it to the damsel.’ So he took it and read it and its words stirred his soul and its meaning wounded his vitals. Then he gave it to the girl, and Ali said to her, ‘Salute thy lady for me and tell her of my passion and longing and how love is blent with my flesh and my bones; and say to her that I need one who shall deliver me from the sea of destruction and save me from this dilemma; for of a truth fortune oppresseth me with its vicissitudes; and is there any helper to free me from its defilements?’ So saying, he wept and the damsel wept for his weeping. Then she took leave of him and Aboulhusn went out with her and bade her farewell. So she went her way and he returned to his shop, which he opened, and sat down there, according to his wont; but as he sat, he found his bosom straitened and his heart oppressed and was troubled about his case. He ceased not from melancholy thought the rest of that day and night, and on the morrow he betook himself to Ali ben Bekkar, with whom he sat till the folk withdrew, when he asked him how he did. Ali began to complain of passion and descant upon the longing and distraction that possessed him, ending by repeating the following words of the poet:

Folk have made moan of passion before me of past years, And live
    and dead for absence have suffered pains and fears;
But what within my bosom I harbour, with mine eyes I've never
    seen the like of nor heard it with mine ears.

And also these:

I've suffered for thy love what Caïs, that madman hight,
    Did never undergo for love of Leila bright.
Yet chase I not the beasts o' the desert, as did he; For madness
    hath its kinds for this and th' other wight.

Quoth Aboulhusn, 'Never did I see or hear of one like unto thee in thy love! If thou sufferest all this transport and sickness and trouble, being enamoured of one who returns thy passion, how would it be with thee, if she whom thou lovest were contrary and perfidious? Meseems, thy case will be discovered, if thou abide thus.' His words pleased Ali ben Bekkar and he trusted in him and thanked him.

Now Aboulhusn had a friend, to whom he had discovered his affair and that of Ali ben Bekkar and who knew that they were close friends; but none other than he was acquainted with what was betwixt them. He was wont to come to him and enquire how Ali did and after a little, he began to ask about the damsel; but Aboulhusn put him off, saying, 'She invited him to her and there was between him and her what passeth words, and this is the end of their affair; but I have devised me a plan which I would fain submit to thy judgment.' 'And what is that?' asked his friend. 'O my brother,' answered Aboulhusn, ‘I am a man well known, having much dealing among the notables, both men and women, and I fear lest the affair of these twain get wind and this lead to my death and the seizure of my goods and the ruin of my repute and that of my family. Wherefore I purpose to get together my property and make ready forthright and repair to the city of Bassora and abide there, till I see what comes of their affair, that none may know of me, for passion hath mastered them and letters pass between them. Their go-between and confidant at this present is a slave-girl, who hath till now kept their counsel, but I fear lest haply she be vexed with them or anxiety get the better of her and she discover their case to some one and the matter be noised abroad and prove the cause of my ruin; for I have no excuse before God or man.’ ‘Thou acquaintest me with a perilous matter,’ rejoined his friend, ‘and one from the like of which the wise and understanding will shrink in affright. May God preserve thee and avert from thee the evil thou dreadest! Assuredly, thy resolve is a wise one.’ So Aboulhusn returned home and betook himself to setting his affairs in order and preparing for his journey; nor had three days elapsed ere he made an end of his business and departed for Bassora. Three days after, his friend came to visit him, but finding him not, asked the neighbours of him; and they answered, ‘He set out three days ago for Bassora, for he had dealings with merchants there and is gone thither to collect his debts; but he will soon return.’ The man was confounded at the news and knew not whither to go; and he said in himself, ‘Would I had not parted with Aboulhusn!’ Then he bethought him how he should gain access to Ali ben Bekkar and repairing to the latter’s lodging, said to one of his servants, ‘Ask leave for me of thy master that I may go in and salute him.’ So the servant went in and told his master and presently returning, invited the man to enter. So he went in and found Ali ben Bekkar lying back on the pillow and saluted him. Ali returned his greeting and bade him welcome; whereupon the other began to excuse himself for having held aloof from him all this while and added, ‘O my lord, there was a close friendship between Aboulhusn and myself, so that I used to trust him with my secrets and could not brook to be severed from him an hour. It chanced but now that I was absent three days’ space on certain business with a company of my friends, and when I came back, I found his shop shut; so I asked the neighbours of him and they replied, “He is gone to Bassora.” Now I know he had no surer friend than thou; so I conjure thee, by Allah, to tell me what thou knowest of him.’ When Ali heard this, his colour changed and he was troubled and answered, ‘I never heard of his departure till this day, and if it be as thou sayest, weariness is come upon me.’ And he repeated the following verses:

Whilom I wept for what was past of joy and pleasant cheer, Whilst
yet the objects of my love were unremoved and near;
But now my sad and sorry fate hath sundered me and them And I
to-day must weep for those that were to me most dear.

Then he bent his head awhile in thought and presently raising it, said to one of his servants, ‘Go to Aboulhusn’’ house and enquire whether he be at home or gone on a journey. If they say, “He is abroad;” ask whither.’ The servant went out and presently returning, said to his master, ‘When I asked after Aboulhusn, his people told me that he was gone on a journey to Bassora; but I saw a damsel standing at the door, who knew me, though I knew her not, and said to me, “Art thou not servant to Ali ben Bekkar?” “Yes,” answered I. And she said, “I have a message for him from one who is the dearest of all folk to him.” So she came with me and is now at the door.’ Quoth Ali, ‘Bring her in.’ So the servant went out and brought her in, and the man who was with Ali ben Bekkar looked at her and found her comely. She came up to Ali and saluting him, talked with him privily; and he from time to time exclaimed with an oath and swore that he had not done as she avouched. Then she took leave of him and went away. When she was gone, Aboulhusn’s friend, who was a jeweller, took occasion to speak and said to Ali ben Bekkar, ‘Doubtless, the women of the palace have some claim upon thee or thou hast dealings with the Khalif’s household?’ ‘Who told thee of this?’ asked Ali. ‘I know it by yonder damsel,’ replied the jeweller, ‘who is Shemsennehar’s slave-girl; for she came to me awhile since with a written order for a necklace of jewels; and I sent her a costly one.’ When Ali heard this, he was greatly troubled, so that the jeweller feared for his life, but after awhile he recovered himself and said, ‘O my brother, I conjure thee by Allah to tell me truly how thou knowest her.’ ‘Do not press me as to this,’ replied the other; and Ali said, ‘Indeed, I will not desist from thee till thou tell me the truth.’ ‘Then,’ said the jeweller, ‘I will tell thee all, that thou mayst not distrust me nor be alarmed at what I said, nor will I conceal aught from thee, but will discover to thee the truth of the matter, on condition that thou possess me with the true state of thy case and the cause of thy sickness.’ Then he told him all that had passed between Aboulhusn and himself, adding that he had acted thus only out of friendship for him and of his desire to serve him and assuring him that he would keep his secret and venture life and goods in his service. So Ali in turn told him his story and added, ‘By Allah, O my brother, nought moved me to keep my case secret from thee and others but my fear lest the folk should lift the veils of protection from certain persons.’ ‘And I,’ rejoined the jeweller, ‘desired not to foregather with thee but of the great affection I bear thee and my zeal for thee in every case and my compassion for the anguish thy heart endureth for severance. Haply, I may be a comforter to thee in the room of my friend Aboulhusn, during his absence. So take heart and be of good cheer.’ Ali thanked him and repeated the following verses:

If, ‘I am patient,’ I say, since forth from me he went, My tears
    give me the lie and the stress of my lament.
And how shall I hide the tears, that flow in streams adown The
    table of my cheek for his evanishment?

Then he was silent awhile, and presently said to the jeweller, ‘Knowest thou what the girl whispered to me?’ ‘Not I, by Allah, O my lord,’ answered he. Quoth Ali, ‘She would have it that I had counselled Aboulhusn to go to Bassora and that I had used this device to put a stop to our correspondence and intercourse. I swore to her that this was not so: but she would not credit me and went away to her mistress, persisting in her injurious suspicions; and indeed I know not what I shall do without Aboulhusn, for she inclined to him and gave ear to his word.’ ‘O my brother,’ answered the jeweller, ‘I guessed as much from her manner; but, if it please God the Most

High, I will help thee to thy desire.’ ‘Who can help me,’ rejoined Ali, ‘and how wilt thou do with her, when she takes umbrage like a wilding of the desert?’ ‘By Allah,’ exclaimed the jeweller, ‘needs must I do my utmost endeavour to help thee and contrive to make her acquaintance, without exposure or mischief!’ Then he asked leave to depart, and Ali said, ‘O my brother, see thou keep my counsel’ And he looked at him and wept. The jeweller bade him farewell and went away, knowing not what he should do to further his wishes; but as he went along pondering the matter, he spied a letter lying in the road, and taking it up, found that it bore the following superscription, ‘From the least worthy of lovers to the most excellent of beloved ones.’ He opened it and found these words written therein:

‘The messenger brought me a promise of union and delight; But yet
  that he had mistaken ’twas constant in my spright.
Wherefore I joyed not: but sorrow was added unto me, For that I
  knew my envoy had read thee not aright.

To proceed: Know, O my lord, that I am ignorant of the cause of the breaking off of the correspondence between thee and me: but if it arise from cruelty on thy part, I will meet it with fidelity, and if love have departed from thee, I will remain constant to my love in absence for I am with thee even as says the poet:

Be haughty and I will be patient; capricious, I’ll bear; turn away, I’ll draw near thee; be harsh, I’ll be abject; command, I’ll give ear and obey.

As he was reading, up came the slave-girl, looking right and left, and seeing the letter in the jeweller’s hand, said to him, ‘O my lord, this letter is one I let fall.’ He made her no answer, but walked on, and she followed him, till he came to his house, when he entered and she after him, saying, ‘O my lord, give me back the letter, for it fell from me.’ He turned to her and said, ‘O good slave-girl, fear not, neither grieve, for verily God the Protector loves to protect [His creatures]; but tell me the truth of thy case, for I am one who keepeth counsel. I conjure thee by an oath to hide from me nothing of thy lady’s affair; for haply God shall help me to further her wishes and make easy what is hard by my hand’ ‘O my lord,’ answered she, 'indeed a secret is not lost whereof thou art the keeper; nor shall any affair come to nought for which thou strivest. Know that my heart inclines to thee, and do thou give me the letter.' Then she told him the whole story, adding, 'God is witness to what I say.' 'Thou hast spoken truly,' said the jeweller, 'for I am acquainted with the root of the matter.' Then he told her how he had come by Ali ben Bekkar's secret and related to her all that had passed, whereat she rejoiced; and they agreed that she should carry the letter to Ali and return and tell the jeweller all that passed. Accordingly he gave her the letter and she took it and sealed it up as it was before, saying, 'My mistress Shemsennehar gave it to me sealed; and when he hath read it and given me the reply, I will bring it to thee.' Then she repaired to Ali ben Bekkar, whom she found waiting, and gave him the letter. He read it and writing an answer, gave it to the damsel. She carried it to the jeweller, who broke the seal and read what was written therein, as follows:

'Neglected are our messages, for lo, our go-between, That wont to
keep our counsel erst, is wroth with us, I ween.
So choose us out a messenger, a true and trusty wight, Yea, one
of whom fidelity, not falsehood, is well seen.

To proceed: Verily, I have not entered upon perfidy nor left fidelity; I have not used cruelty, neither have I put off loyalty nor broken faith. I have not ceased from affection nor severed myself from grief; neither have I found aught after separation but misery and ruin. I know nothing of that thou avouchest nor do I love aught but that which thou lovest. By Him who knoweth the secret of the hidden things, I have no desire but to be united with her whom I love and my one business is the concealment of my passion, though sickness consume me. This is the exposition of my case and peace be on thee.' When the jeweller read this letter, he wept sore and the girl said to him, 'Leave not this place, till I return to thee; for he suspects me of such and such things, in which he is excusable; so it is my desire to bring thee in company with my mistress Shemsennehar, howsoever I may contrive it. I left her prostrate, awaiting my return with the answer.' Then she went away and the jeweller passed the night in a state of agitation. On the morrow he prayed the morning prayer and sat awaiting the girl's coming. Presently she came in to him, rejoicing, and he said to her, 'What news, O damsel?' Quoth she, 'I gave my mistress Ali ben Bekkar's reply, and when she read it, she was troubled in her mind; but I said to her, "O my lady, have no fear of the hindrance of your affair by reason of Aboulhusn's absence, for I have found one to take his place, better than he and more of worth and apt to keep secrets." Then I told her what was between Aboulhusn and thyself and how thou camest by his confidence and that of Ali ben Bekkar and how I met with thee and showed her how matters stood betwixt thee and me. Now she is minded to have speech of thee, that she may be assured by thy words of the covenants between thee and him; so do thou make ready to go with me to her forthwith. When the jeweller heard the girl's words, he saw that what she proposed was a grave matter and a great peril, not lightly to be undertaken or entered upon, and said to her, 'O my stster, verily, I am of the common people and not like unto Aboulhusn; for he was of high rank and repute and was wont to frequent the Khalif's household, because of their need of his wares. As for me, he used to talk with me, and I trembled before him the while. So, if thy mistress would have speech of me, it must be in some place other than the Khalif's palace and far from the abode of the Commander of the Faithful; for my reason will not let me do what thou proposest.' Accordingly, he refused to go with her, and she went on to assure him of impunity, saying, 'Fear not,' and pressed him, till he consented to accompany her; but, when he would have risen, his legs bent under him and his hands trembled and he exclaimed, 'God forbid that I should go with thee! Indeed, I cannot do this.' 'Reassure thyself,' answered she; 'if it irk thee to go to the Khalif's palace and thou canst not muster up courage to accompany me, I will make her come to thee; so stir not from thy place till I return to thee with her.' Then she went away and returning after a little, said to the jeweller, 'Look that there be with thee neither slave-girl nor man-slave nor any other.' Quoth he, 'I have but an old negress-slave, who waits on me.' So she locked the door between the jeweller and his negress and sent his man-servants out of the house, after which she went out and presently returned, followed by a lady, who filled the house with the sweet scent of her perfumes. When the jeweller saw her, he sprang to his feet and set her a couch and a cushion, and she sat down. He seated himself before her and she abode awhile without speaking, till she was rested, when she unveiled her face and it seemed to the jeweller as if the sun had risen in his house. Then said she to her slave-girl, 'Is this the man of whom thou spakest to me?' 'Yes,' answered she; whereupon the lady turned to the jeweller and said to him, 'How is it with thee?' 'Well,' replied he. 'May God preserve thy life and that of the Commander of the Faithful!' Quoth she, 'Thou hast moved us to come to thee and possess thee with our secret.' Then she questioned him of his household and family; and he discovered to her all his circumstance and said to her, 'I have another house, which I have set apart for entertaining my friends and brethren, and there is none there save the old negress, of whom I spoke to thy handmaid.' She asked him how he came first to know of the matter and what had made Aboulhusn absent himself, so he told her all and she bewailed the loss of Aboulhusn and said to the jeweller, 'Know that the minds of men are at one in desires, and however they may differ in estate, men are still men and have need one of the other: an affair is not accomplished without speech nor is a wish fulfilled save by endeavour: ease comes not but after weariness nor is succour compassed save by the help of the generous. Now I have trusted my secret to thee and it is in thy power to expose or shield us; I say no more, because of thy generosity of nature. Thou knowest that this my hand-maid keeps my counsel and is therefore in high favour with me and I have chosen her to transact my affairs of importance. So let none be worthier in thy sight than she and acquaint her with thine affair. Be of good cheer, for thou art safe from what thou fearest on our account, and there is no shut place but she shall open it to thee. She shall bring thee messages from me to Ali ben Bekkar, and thou shalt be our go-between.' So saying, she rose, scarcely able to stand, and the jeweller forewent her to the door of the house, after which he returned and sat down again in his place, having seen of her beauty what dazzled him and heard of her speech what confounded his wit and witnessed of her grace and courtesy what bewitched him. He sat musing on her perfections till his trouble subsided, when he called for food and ate enough to stay his stomach. Then he changed his clothes and repairing to Ali ben Bekkar's house, knocked at the door. The servants hastened to admit him and brought him to their master, whom he found laid upon his bed. When he saw the jeweller, he said to him, 'Thou hast tarried long from me and hast added concern to my concern.' Then he dismissed his servants and bade shut the doors, after which he said to the jeweller, 'By Allah, O my brother, I have not closed my eyes since I saw thee last; for the slave-girl came to me yesterday with a sealed letter from her mistress Shemsennehar;' and went on to tell him all that had passed, adding, 'Indeed, I am perplexed concerning mine affair and my patience fails me: for Aboulhusn was of comfort to me, because he knew the girl.' When the jeweller heard this, he laughed and Ali said, 'Why dost thou laugh at my words, thou in whom I rejoiced and to whom I looked for succour against the shifts of fortune?' Then he sighed and wept and repeated the following verses:

Many an one laughs at my weeping, whenas he looks on my pain. Had
he but suffered as I have, he, also, to weep would be fain.
No one hath ruth on the smitten, for that he is doomed to endure
But he who alike is afflicted and long in affliction hath lain
My passion, my yearning, my sighing, my care and distraction end
woe Are all for a loved one, whose dwelling is in my heart's innermost fane.
He made his abode in my bosom and never will leave it again; And
yet with my love to foregather I weary and travail in vain.
I know of no friend I can choose me to stand in his stead unto
me, Nor ever, save him, a companion, to cherish and love have I ta'en.

When the jeweller heard this, he wept also and told him all that had passed betwixt himself and the slave-girl and her mistress, since he left him, whilst Ali gave ear to his speech, and at every fresh word his colour shifted 'twixt white and red and his body grew now stronger and now weaker, till he came to the end of his tale, when Ali wept and said to him, ‘O my brother, I am a lost man in any event. Would my end were near, that I might be at rest from ail this! But I beg thee, of thy favour, to be my helper and comforter in all my affairs, till God accomplish His will; and I will not gainsay thee in aught.’ Quoth the jeweller, ‘Nothing will quench the fire of thy passion save union with her whom thou lovest: and this must not be in this perilous place, but in a house of mine other than in which the girl and her mistress came to me. This place she chose for herself, to the intent that ye may there foregather and complain one to the other of what you have suffered from the pangs of love.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Ali ben Bekkar, ‘do as thou wilt and may God requite thee for me! What thou deemest fit will be right: but be not long about it, lest I die of this anguish.’ So I abode with him (quoth the jeweller) that night, entertaining him with converse, till daybreak, when I prayed the morning prayers and going out from him, returned to my house. Hardly had I done so, when the damsel came up and saluted me. I returned her greeting and told her what had passed between Ali ben Bekkar and myself; and she said, ‘Know that the Khalif has left us and there is none in our lodging, and it is safer for us and better.’ ‘True,’ replied I; ‘yet it is not like my house yonder, which is both surer and fitter for us.’ ‘Be it as thou wilt,’ rejoined she. ‘I will go to my lady and tell her what thou sayest.’ So she went away and presently returned and said to me, ‘It is to be as thou sayest: so make us ready the place and expect us.’ Then she took out a purse of diners and said to me, ‘My lady salutes thee and bids thee take this and provide therewith what the case calls for.’ But I swore that I would have nought of it; so she took the purse and returning to her mistress, said to her, ‘He would not take the money, but gave it back to me.’ ‘No matter,’ answered Shemsennehar. As soon as she was gone, I betook myself to my other house and transported thither all that was needful, by way of furniture and utensils and rich carpets and vessels of china and glass and gold and silver, and made ready meat and drink for the occasion. When the damsel came and saw what I had done, it pleased her and she bade me fetch Ali ben Bekkar; but I said, ‘None shall fetch him but thou.’ Accordingly she went to him and brought him back, dressed to perfection and looking his best. I met him and welcomed him and making him sit down on a couch befitting his condition, set before him sweet-scented flowers in vases of china and crystal of various colours. Then I set on a tray of vari-coloured meats, of such as rejoice the heart with their sight, and sat talking with him and diverting him, whi'st the girl went away and was absent till after sundown, when she returned with Shemsennehar, attended by two maids and no more. When Ali saw her, he rose and embraced her and they both fell down in a swoon. They lay awhile insensible, then, coming to themselves, began to complain to each other of the pains of separation. They sat awhile, conversing with eloquence and tenderness, after which they perfumed themselves and fell to thanking me for what I had done. Said I, 'Have ye a mind for food?' 'Yes,' answered they. So I set food before them, and they ate till they were satisfied and washed their hands, after which I carried them to another room and brought them wine. So they drank and grew merry with wine and inclined to one another, and Shemsennehar said to me, 'O my lord, complete thy kindness by bringing us a lute or other instrument of music that the measure of our joy may be filled.' 'On my head and eyes,' answered I and rising, brought her a lute. She took it and tuned it, then laying it in her lap, made masterly music, at once exciting to sorrowful thoughts and cheering the afflicted; after which she sang the following verses:

I wake and I watch till it seemeth as I were in love with unrest
　And I waste and I languish, as sickness, meseemeth, were
　born in my breast.
The tides of my tears, ever flowing, have burnt up my cheeks with
　their heat: Would I knew if our loves, after sev'rance, with
　union again will be blest!

She went on to sing song after song, choice words set to various airs, till our minds were bewitched and it seemed as if the very room would dance with excess of pleasure for the marvel of her sweet singing and there was nor thought nor reason left in us. When we had sat awhile and the cup had gone round amongst us, the damsel took the lute and sang the following verses to a lively measure:

My love a visit promised me and did fulfil his plight One night

that I shall reckon aye for many and many a night.
O night of raptures that the fates vouchsafed unto us twain;
Unheeded of the railing tribe and in the spies' despite!
My loved one lay the night with me and I of my content Clipped
him with my left hand, while he embraced me with his right.
I strained him to my breast and drank his lips' sweet wine, what
while I of the honey and of him who sells it had delight.

Whilst we were thus drowned in the sea of gladness, in came a little maid, trembling, and said, 'O my lady, look how you may go away, for the folk are upon us and have surrounded the house, and we know not the cause of this.' When I heard this, I arose in affright, and behold, in came a slave-girl, who said, 'Calamity hath overtaken you!' At the same moment, the door was burst open and there rushed in upon us half a score masked men, with poniards in their hands and swords by their sides, and as many more behind them. When I saw this, the world, for all its wideness, was straitened on me and I looked to the door, but saw no way out; so I sprang (from the roof) into the house of one of my neighbours and hid myself there. Thence I heard a great uproar in my house and concluded that the Khalif had gotten wind of us and sent the chief of the police to seize us and bring us before him. So I abode confounded and remained in my place, without daring to move, till midnight, when the master of the house became aware of me and being greatly affrighted, made at me with a drawn sword in his hand, saying, 'Who is this in my house?' Quoth I, 'I am thy neighbour, the jeweller;' and he knew me and held his hand. Then he fetched a light and coming up to me, said, 'O my brother, indeed that which hath befallen thee this night is grievous to me.' 'O my brother,' answered I, 'tell me who it was entered my house and broke in the door, for I fled to thee, not knowing what was the matter.' Quoth he, 'The robbers, who visited our neighbours yesterday and slew such an one and took his goods, saw thee yesterday bringing hither furniture and what not; so they broke in upon thee and stole thy goods and slew thy guests.' Then we arose, he and I, and repaired to my house, which I found empty and stripped of everything, whereat I was confounded and said to myself, 'I care not for the loss of the gear, though indeed I borrowed part thereof of my friends; yet is there no harm in that, for they know my excuse in the loss of my goods and the pillage of my house; but as for Ali ben Bekkar and the Khalif's favourite, I fear lest their case get wind and this cause the loss of my life.' So I turned to my neighbour and said to him, 'Thou art my brother and my neighbour and wilt cover my nakedness; what dost thou counsel me to do?' 'I counsel thee to wait,' answered he; 'for they who entered thy house and stole thy goods have murdered the better part of a company from the Khalif's palace, besides some of the police, and the Khalif's officers are now in quest of them on every side. Haply they will chance on them and so thy wish will come about without effort of thine.' Then I returned to my other house, that in which I dwelt, saying to myself, 'This that hath befallen me is what Aboulhusn feared and from which he fled to Bassora.' Presently the pillage of my pleasure-house was noised abroad among the folk, and they came to me from all sides, some rejoicing in my misfortune and others excusing me and condoling with me, whilst I bewailed myself to them and ate not neither drank for grief. As I sat, repenting me of what I had done, one of my servants came in to me and said, 'There is a man at the door, who asks for thee; and I know him not.' So I went out and found at the door a man whom I knew not. I saluted him, and he said to me, 'I have somewhat to say to thee privily.' So I brought him in and said to him, 'What hast thou to say to me?' Quoth he, 'Come with me to thine other house.' 'Doss thou then know my other house,' asked I. 'I know all about thee,' replied he, 'and I know that also wherewith God will dispel thy concern.' So I said to myself, 'I will go with him whither he will;' and we went out and walked on till we came to my other house, which when he saw, he said to me, 'It is without door or doorkeeper, and we cannot sit in it; so come thou with me to another house.' Accordingly, he went on from place to place and I with him, till the night overtook us. Yet I put no question to him and we ceased not to walk on, till we reached the open country. He kept saying, 'Follow me,' and quickened his pace, whilst I hurried after him, heartening myself to go on. Presently; we came to the river-bank, where he took boat with me, and the boatman rowed us over to the other side. Here my guide landed and I after him and he took my hand and led me to a street I had never before entered, nor do I know in what quarter it is. Presently he stopped at the door of a house, and opening, entered and made me enter with him; after which he bolted the door with a bolt of iron and carried me along the vestibule, till he brought me in presence of ten men, brothers, as they were one and the same man. We saluted them and they returned our greeting and bade us be seated; so we sat down. Now I was like to die for very weariness; so they brought rose-water and sprinkled it on my face, after which they gave me to drink and set food before me, of which some of them ate with me. Quoth I to myself, 'Were there aught of harm in the food, they would not eat with me.' So I ate, and when we had washed our hands, each of us returned to his place. Then said they to me, 'Dost thou know us?' 'I never in my life saw you nor this your abode,' answered I; 'nay, I know not even him who brought me hither.' Said they, 'Tell us thy case and lie not in aught.' 'Know then,' rejoined I, 'that my case is strange and my affair marvellous: but do you know aught of me?' 'Yes,' answered they; 'it was we took thy goods yesternight and carried off thy friend and her who was singing to him.' 'May God let down the veil of His protection over you!' said I. 'But where is my friend and she who was singing to him?' They pointed to two doors and replied, 'They are yonder, each in a room apart; but, by Allah, O our brother, the secret of their case is known to none but thee, for from the time we brought them hither, we have not seen them nor questioned them of their condition, seeing them to be persons of rank and dignity. This it was that hindered us from putting them to death: so tell us the truth of their case and be assured of their safety and thine own.' When I heard this, I was like to die of fright and said to them, 'O my brethren, if generosity were lost, it would not be found save with you and had I a secret, which I feared to divulge, your breasts alone should have the keeping of it.' And I went on to expatiate to them in this sense, till I saw that frankness would profit me more than concealment; so I told them the whole story. When they heard it, they said, 'And is this young man Ali ben Bekkar and this damsel Shemsennehar?' 'Yes,' answered I. This was grievous to them and they rose and made their excuses to the two lovers. Then they said to me, 'Part of what we took from thy house is spent, but here is what is left of it.' So saying, they gave me back the most part of my goods and engaged to return them to my house and restore me the rest. So my heart was set at ease, and some of them abode with me, whilst the rest fetched Ali ben Bekkar and Shemsennehar, who were well-nigh dead for excess of fear. Then they all sallied forth with us and I went up to the two lovers and saluting them, said to them, ‘What became of the damsel and the two maids?’ ‘We know nothing of them,’ answered they. Then we walked on till we came to the river-bank, where we all embarked in the boat that had brought me over before, and the boatman rowed us to the other side; but hardly had we landed and sat down on the bank to rest, when a troop of horse swooped down on us like eagles and surrounded us on all sides, whereupon the robbers with us sprang up in haste and the boatman, putting back for them, took them in and pushed off into mid-stream, leaving us on the bank, unable to move or abide still. The horseman said to us, ‘Whence come ye?’ And we were perplexed for an answer; but I said, ‘Those ye saw with us are rogues: we know them not. As for us, we are singers, whom they would have taken to sing to them, nor could we win free of them, save by subtlety and fair words, and they have but now left us.’ They looked at Ali and Shemsennehar and said to me, ‘Thou hast not spoken sooth; but if thy tale be true, tell us who you are and whence you come and in what quarter you dwell.’ I knew not what to answer, but Shemsennehar sprang up and approaching the captain of the troop, spoke with him privily, whereupon he dismounted and setting her on his steed, began to lead it along by the bridle. Two of his men did the like with Ali ben Bekkar and myself, and they fared on with us, till they reached a certain part of the river-bank, when the captain sang out in jargon and there came to us a number of men with two boats. The captain embarked with Shemsennehar in one boat and went his way, whilst the rest of his men put off in the other, with Ali ben Bekkar and myself, and rowed on with us, we the while enduring the agonies of death for excess of fear, till they came to a place whence there was a way to our quarter. Here we landed and walked on, escorted by some of the horsemen, till we came to Ali ben Bekkar’s house, where they took leave of us and went their way. We entered the house and abode there, unable to stir and knowing not night from day, till nightfall of the next day, when I came to myself and saw Ali ben Bekkar stretched out without sense or motion, and the men and women of his household weeping over him. When they saw that I had recovered my senses, some of them came to me and helping me sit up, said to me, ‘Tell us what hath befallen our son and how he came in this plight.’ ‘O folk,’ answered I, ‘hearken to me and importune me not; but be patient and he will come to himself and tell you his story for himself.’ And I was round with them and made them afraid of a scandal between us; but as we were thus, behold, Ali ben Bekkar moved in his bed, whereat his friends rejoiced and the [most part of the] folk withdrew from him; but his people forbade me to go away. Then they sprinkled rose-water on his face, and he presently revived and breathed the air, whereupon they questioned him of his case. He essayed to answer them, but could not speak forthright and signed to them to let me go home. So they let me go, and I returned to my own house, supported by two men and hardly crediting my escape. When my people saw me thus, they fell a-shrieking and buffeting their faces; but I signed to them to hold their peace, and they were silent. Then the two men went their way and I threw myself down on my bed, where I lay the rest of the night and awoke not till the forenoon, when I found my people collected round me and they said, ‘What hath befallen thee and what (evil) hath smitten thee with its mischief?’ Quoth I, ‘Bring me to drink.’ So they brought me wine, and I drank what I would and said to them, ‘Wine got the better of me and it was this caused the state in which ye saw me’ Then they went away, and I made my excuses to my friends and asked if any of the goods that had been stolen from my other house had been returned.’ ‘Yes,’ answered they. ‘Some of them have come back: and the manner of their coming was that a man came and threw them down in the doorway and we saw him not.’ So I comforted myself and abode two days, unable to rise, at the end of which time I began to regain strength and went to the bath, for I was worn out with fatigue and troubled at heart for Ali ben Bekkar and Shemsennehar, because I had no news of them all this time and could neither get to Ali’s house nor rest in my own, out of fear for myself. And I repented to God the Most High of what I had done and praised Him for my safety. Then I bethought me to go to such and such a place and see the folk and divert myself; so I went to the stuff-market and sat awhile with a friend of mine there.

When I rose to go, I saw a woman standing in my road; so I looked at her, and behold it was Shemsennehar's slave-girl. When I saw her, the world grew dark in my eyes and I hurried on. She followed me, but I was afraid and fled from her, trembling whenever I looked at her, whilst she pursued me, saying, 'Stop, that I may tell thee somewhat.' But I heeded her not and went on, till I reached a mosque in an unfrequented spot, and she said to me, 'Enter the mosque, that I may say a word to thee, and fear nothing.' And she conjured me: so I entered the mosque, and she after me. I prayed a two-bow prayer, after which I turned to her, sighing, and said, 'What dost thou want?' She asked me how I did, and I told her all that had befallen myself and Ali ben Bekkar and asked her for news of herself. 'Know,' answered she, 'that when I and the two maids saw the robbers break open thy door, we doubted not but they were the Khalif's officers and would seize us and our mistress and we perish forthright: so we fled over the roofs and casting ourselves down from a high place, took refuge with some people, who harboured us and brought us to the palace, where we arrived in the sorriest of plights. We concealed our case and abode on coals of fire till nightfall, when I opened the river-gate and calling the boatman who had carried us the night before, said to him, "I know not what is come of my mistress; so take me in thy boat, that we may seek her on the river: it may be I shall chance on some news of her." So he took me into the boat and rowed about with me till midnight, when I spied a boat making towards the water-gate, with one man rowing and another standing up and a woman lying prostrate between them. When they reached the shore and the woman landed, I looked at her, and behold, it was Shemsennehar. So I landed and joined her, dazed for joy, after having lost hope of her. When I came up to her, she bade me give the man who had brought her thither a thousand diners, and I and the two maids carried her in and laid her on her bed, and she at death's door. She abode thus all that day and the next day and I forbade the eunuchs and women to go in to her; but on the third day, she revived and I found her as she had come out of the grave. So I sprinkled rose-water upon her face and changed her clothes and washed her hands and feet, nor did I cease to persuade her, till I brought her to eat a little and drink some wine, though she had no mind to it. As soon as she had breathed the air and strength began to return to her, I fell to upbraiding her, saying, “Consider, O my lady, and have pity on thyself; thou seest what has betided us Surely, enough of evil hath befallen thee and thou hast been nigh upon death.” “By Allah, O good damsel,” replied she, “death were easier to me than what hath befallen me; for I had renounced all hope of deliverance and gave myself up for lost. When the robbers took us from the jeweller’s house, they asked me who I was; I replied, ‘I am a singing-girl,’ and they believed me. Then they said to Ali ben Bekkar, ‘And who art thou and what is thy condition?’ And he answered, ‘I am of the common people.’ So they carried us to their abode, and we hurried on with them for fear; but when they had us with them in the house, they looked at me and seeing the clothes I wore and my necklaces and jewellery, believed me not and said to me, ‘No singing-girl ever had such jewels as these; tell us the truth of thy case.’ I returned them no answer, saying in myself, ‘Now will they kill me for my clothes and ornaments;’ and I spoke not a word. Then they turned to Ali ben Bekkar and said to him, ‘And thou, who and whence art thou? For thy favour is not as that of the common folk.’ But he was silent and we ceased not to keep our counsel and weep, till God inclined the rogues’ hearts towards us and they said to us, ‘Who is the owner of the house in which you were?’ ‘Such an one, the jeweller,’ answered we; whereupon quoth one of them, ‘I know him well and where he lives, and I will engage to bring him to you forthright.’ Then they agreed to set me in a place by myself and Ali ben Bekkar in a place by himself, and said to us, ‘Be at rest and fear not lest your secret be divulged; ye are safe from us.’ Meanwhile their comrade went away and returned with the jeweller, who made known to them our case, and we joined company with him; after which one of the band fetched a boat, in which they embarked us all three and rowing us over the river, landed us on the opposite bank and went away; whereupon up came a horse-patrol and asked us who we were. So I spoke with the captain and said to him, ‘I am Shemsennehar, the Khalif’s favourite; I had drunken wine and went out to visit certain of my acquaintance of the wives of the Viziers, when yonder rogues laid hold of me and brought me hither; but when they saw you, they fled. I met these men with them; so do thou escort me and them to a place of safety and I will requite thee.' When the captain heard my speech, he knew me and alighting, mounted me on his horse; and in like manner did two of his men with Ali and the jeweller. And now my heart is on fire on their account, especially for Ali's friend the jeweller: so do thou go to him and salute him and ask him for news of Ali ben Bekkar." I spoke to her and blamed her and bade her beware, saying' "O my lady, have a care for thyself and give up this intrigue." But she was angered at my words and cried out at me. So I came forth in quest of thee, but found thee not and dared not go to Ali's house; so stood watching for thee, that I might ask thee of him and know how it is with him. And I beg thee, of thy favour, to take some money of me, for belike thou borrowedst of thy friends some of the goods, and as they are lost, it behoves thee to make them compensation.' 'I hear and obey,' answered I. 'Go on.' And I walked with her till we drew near my house, when she said to me, 'Wait till I return to thee.' So she went away and presently returned with a bag of money, which she handed to me, saying, 'O my lord, where shall we meet?' Quoth I, 'I will go to my house at once and suffer hardship for thy sake and contrive how thou mayst win to him, for access to him is difficult at this present.' 'Let me know where I shall come to thee,' said she, and I answered, 'In my other house; I will go thither forthright and have the doors repaired and the place made secure again, and henceforth we will meet there.' Then she took leave of me and went her way, whilst I carried the money home, and counting it, found it five thousand diners. I gave my people some of it and made good their loss to all who had lent me aught, after which I took my servants and repaired to my other house, with builders and carpenters, who restored it to its former state. Moreover, I placed my negress-slave there and forgot what had befallen me. Then I repaired to Ali ben Bekkar's house, where his servants accosted me, saying, 'Our lord calls for thee day and night and hath promised his freedom to whichever of us brings thee to him; so we have been in quest of thee everywhere, but knew not where to find thee. Our master is by way of recovery, but he has frequent relapses, and when he revives, he names thee and says, "Needs must ye bring him to me, though but for an instant," and sinks back into his torpor.' So I went in to Ali ben Bekkar and finding him unable to speak, sat down at his head, whereupon he opened his eyes and seeing me, wept and said, ‘Welcome and fair welcome!’ I raised him and making him sit up, strained him to my bosom, and he said, ‘Know, O my brother, that, since I took to my bed, I have not sat up till now: praised be God that I see thee again!’ Presently, little by little, I made him stand up and walk a few steps, after which I changed his clothes and he drank some wine. All this he did to please me. Then, seeing him to be somewhat restored, I told him what had befallen me with the slave-girl, none else hearing me, and said to him, ‘I know what thou sufferest; but take heart and be of good courage; for henceforth nought shall betide thee, but what shall rejoice thee and ease thine heart.’ He smiled and called for food, which being brought, he signed to his servants, and they withdrew. Then said he to me, ‘O my brother, thou seest what hath befallen me;’ and he made his excuses to me and enquired how I had fared all that while. I told him all that had befallen me, from first to last, at which he wondered and calling his servants, said, ‘Bring me such and such things.’ Accordingly, they brought in rich carpets and hangings and utensils of gold and silver, more than I had lost, and he gave them all to me; so I sent them to my house and abode with him that night. When the day began to break, he said to me, ‘To everything there is an end, and the end of love is death or enjoyment. I am nearer unto death, would I had died ere this befell! For, had not God favoured us, we had been discovered and put to shame. And now I know not what shall deliver me from this my strait, and were it not that I fear God, I would hasten my own death; for know, O my brother, that I am like the bird in the cage and that my life is of a surety perished, by reason of the distresses that have befallen me; yet hath it a fixed period and an appointed term.’ And he wept and groaned and repeated the following verses:

Indeed, it sufficeth the lover the time that his tears have run;
As for affliction, of patience it hath him all fordone.
He who concealeth the secrets conjoined us heretofore And now His hand hath severed that which Himself made one.

When he had finished, I said to him, ‘O my lord, I would fain return to my house; it may be the damsel will come back to me with news.' 'It is well,' answered he; 'go and return to me speedily with news, for thou seest my condition.' So I took leave of him and went home. Hardly had I sat down, when up came the damsel, choked with her tears. 'What is the matter?' asked I, and she said, 'O my lord, what we feared has fallen on us; for, when I returned yesterday to my lady, I found her enraged with one of the two maids who were with us the other night, and she ordered her to be beaten. The girl took fright and ran away; but one of the gate-keepers stopped her and would have sent her back to her mistress. However, she let fall some hints, which excited his curiosity; so he coaxed her and led her on to talk, and she acquainted him with our case. This came to the ears of the Khalif, who bade remove my mistress and all her gear to his own palace and set over her a guard of twenty eunuchs. Since then he has not visited her nor given her to know the cause of his action, but I suspect this to be the cause; wherefore I am in fear for myself and am perplexed, O my lord, knowing not what I shall do nor how I shall order my affair and hers, for she had none more trusted nor trustier than myself. So do thou go quickly to Ali ben Bekkar and acquaint him with this, that he may be on his guard; and if the affair be discovered, we will cast about for a means of saving ourselves.' At this, I was sore troubled and the world grew dark in my sight for the girl's words. Then she turned to go, and I said to her, 'What is to be done?' Quoth she, 'My counsel is that thou hasten to Ali ben Bekkar, if thou be indeed his friend and desire his escape; thine be it to carry him the news forthright, and be it mine to watch for further news.' Then she took her leave of me and went away. I followed her out and betaking myself to Ali ben Bekkar, found him flattering himself with hopes of speedy enjoyment and staying himself with vain expectations. When he saw me, he said, 'I see thou hast come back to me forthwith' 'Summon up all thy patience,' answered I, 'and put away thy vain doting and shake off thy preoccupation, for there hath befallen that which may bring about the loss of thy life and goods.' When he heard this, he was troubled and his colour changed and he said to me, 'O my brother, tell me what hath happened.' 'O my lord,' replied I, 'such and such things have happened and thou art lost without recourse, if thou abide in this thy house till the end of the day.’ At this he was confounded and his soul well-nigh departed his body, but he recovered himself and said to me, ‘What shall I do, O my brother, and what is thine advice?’ ‘My advice,’ answered I, ‘is that thou take what thou canst of thy property and whom of thy servants thou trustest and flee with me to a land other than this, ere the day come to an end.’ And he said, ‘I hear and obey.’ So he rose, giddy and dazed, now walking and now falling down and took what came under his hand. Then he made an excuse to his household and gave them his last injunctions, after which he loaded three camels and mounted his hackney. I did the like and we went forth privily in disguise and fared on all day and night, till nigh upon morning, when we unloaded and hobbling our camels, lay down to sleep; but, being worn with fatigue, we neglected to keep watch, so that there fell on us robbers, who stripped us of all we had and slew our servants, when they would have defended us, after which they made off with their booty, leaving us naked and in the sorriest of plights. As soon as they were gone, we arose and walked on till morning, when we came to a village and took refuge in its mosque. We sat in a corner of the mosque all that day and the next night, without meat or drink; and at daybreak, we prayed the morning prayer and sat down again. Presently, a man entered and saluting us, prayed a two-bow prayer, after which he turned to us and said, ‘O folk, are ye strangers?’ ‘Yes,’ answered we, ‘robbers waylaid us and stripped us, and we came to this town, but know none here with whom we may shelter.’ Quoth he, ‘What say you? Will you come home with me?’ And I said to Ali ben Bekkar, ‘Let us go with him, and we shall escape two evils; first, our fear lest some one who knows us enter the mosque and so we be discovered; and secondly, that we are strangers and have no place to lodge in.’ ‘As thou wilt,’ answered he. Then the man said to us again, ‘O poor folk, give ear unto me and come with me to my house.’ ‘We hear and obey,’ answered I; whereupon he pulled off a part of his own clothes and covered us therewith and made his excuses to us and spoke kindly to us. Then we accompanied him to his house and he knocked at the door, whereupon a little servant came out and opened to us. We entered after our host, who called for a parcel of clothes and muslin for turbans, and gave us each a suit of clothes and a piece of muslin; so we made us turbans and sat down. Presently, in came a damsel with a tray of food and set it before us, saying, ‘Eat.’ We ate a little and she took away the tray; after which we abode with our host till nightfall, when Ali ben Bekkar sighed and said to me, ‘Know, O my brother, that I am a dead man and I have a charge to give thee: it is that, when thou seest me dead, thou go to my mother and tell her and bid her come hither, that she may be present at the washing of my body and take order for my funeral; and do thou exhort her to bear my loss with patience.’ Then he fell down in a swoon and when he revived, he heard a damsel singing afar off and addressed himself to give ear to her and hearken to her voice; and now he was absent from the world and now came to himself, and anon he wept for grief and mourning at what had befallen him. Presently, he heard the damsel sing the following verses:

Parting hath wrought in haste our union to undo After the
straitest loves and concord ‘twixt us two.
The shifts of night and day have torn our lives apart. When shall
we meet again? Ah, would to God I knew!
After conjoined delight, how bitter sev’rance is! Would God it
had no power to baffle lovers true!
Death’s anguish hath its hour, then endeth; but the pain Of
sev’rance from the loved at heart is ever new.
Could we but find a way to come at parting’s self, We’d surely
make it taste of parting’s cup of rue.

When he heard this, he gave one sob and his soul quitted his body. As soon as I saw that he was dead, I committed his body to the care of the master of the house and said to him, ‘I go to Baghdad, to tell his mother and kinsfolk, that they may come hither and take order for his burial’ So I betook myself to Baghdad and going to my house, changed my clothes, after which I repaired to Ali ben Bekkar’s lodging. When his servants saw me, they came to me and questioned me of him, and I bade them ask leave for me to go in to his mother. She bade admit me; so I entered and saluting her, said, ‘Verily God orders the lives of all creatures by His commandment and when He decreeth aught, there is no escaping its fulfilment, nor can any soul depart but by His leave, according to the Writ which prescribeth the appointed terms.' She guessed by these words that her son was dead and wept sore, then she said to me, 'I conjure thee by Allah, tell me, is my son dead?' I could not answer her for tears and much grief, and when she saw me thus, she was choked with weeping and fell down in a swoon. As soon as she came to herself, she said to me, 'Tell me how my son died.' 'May God abundantly requite thee for him!' answered I and told her all that had befallen him, from first to last. 'Did he give thee any charge?' asked she. 'Yes,' answered I and told her what he had said, adding, 'Hasten to take order for his funeral.' When she heard this, she swooned away again; and when she recovered, she addressed herself to do as I bade her. Then I returned to my house; and as I went along, musing sadly upon his fair youth, a woman caught hold of my hand. I looked at her and behold, it was Shemsennehar's slave-girl, broken for grief. When we knew each other, we both wept and gave not over weeping till we reached my house, and I said to her, 'Knowest thou the news of Ali ben Bekkar?' 'No, by Allah,' replied she; so I told her the manner of his death and all that had passed, whilst we both wept; after which I said to her, 'And how is it with thy mistress?' Quoth she, 'The Khalif would not hear a word against her, but saw all her actions in a favourable light, of the great love he bore her, and said to her, "O Shemsennehar, thou art dear to me and I will bear with thee and cherish thee, despite thine enemies." Then he bade furnish her a saloon decorated with gold and a handsome sleeping-chamber, and she abode with him in all ease of life and high favour. One day, as he sat at wine, according to his wont, with his favourites before him, he bade them be seated in their places and made Shemsennehar sit by his side. (Now her patience was exhausted and her disorder redoubled upon her.) Then he bade one of the damsels sing: so she took a lute and tuning it, preluded and sang the following verses:

One sought me of lore and I yielded and gave him that which he
sought. And my tears write the tale of my transport in
furrows upon my cheek.
Meseemeth as if the teardrops were ware, indeed, of our case And
hide what I'd fain discover and tell what to hide I seek.

How can I hope to be secret and hide the love that I feel, Whenas
the stress of my longing my passion for thee doth speak?
Death, since the loss of my loved ones, is sweet to me: would I
knew What unto them is pleasant, now that they've lost me
eke!

When Shemsennehar heard these verses, she could not keep her seat, but fell down in a swoon, whereupon the Khalif threw the cup from his hand and drew her to him, crying out. The damsels clamoured and he turned her over and shook her, and behold, she was dead. The Khalif grieved sore for her death and bade break all the vessels and lutes and other instruments of mirth and music in the place; then carrying her body to his closet, he abode with her the rest of the night. When the day broke, he laid her out and commanded to wash her and shroud her and bury her. And he mourned very sore for her and questioned not of her case nor what ailed her. And I beg thee in God's name,' continued the damsel, 'to let me know the day of the coming of Ali ben Bekkar's funeral train, that I may be present at his burial.' Quoth I, 'For myself, thou canst find me where thou wilt; but thou, who can come at thee where thou art?' 'On the day of Shemsennehar's death,' answered she, 'the Commander of the Faithful freed all her women, myself among the rest; and we are now abiding at the tomb in such a place.' So I accompanied her to the burial-ground and visited Shemennehar's tomb; after which I went my way and awaited the coming of Ali ben Bekkar's funeral. When it arrived, the people of Baghdad went forth to meet it and I with them; and I saw the damsel among the women and she the loudest of them in lamentation, crying out and wailing with a voice that rent the vitals and made the heart ache. Never was seen in Baghdad a greater funeral than his and we ceased not to follow in crowds, till we reached the cemetery and buried him to the mercy of God the most High; nor from that time to this have I ceased to visit his tomb and that of Shemsennehar." This, then, is their story, and may God the Most High have mercy upon them!

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

KEMEREZZEMAN AND BUDOUR.

There was once, of old time, a king called Shehriman, who was lord of many troops and guards and officers and reigned over certain islands, known as the Khalidan Islands, on the borders of the land of the Persians; but he was grown old and decrepit, without having been blessed with a son, albeit he had four wives, daughters of kings, and threescore concubines, with each of whom he was wont to lie one night in turn. This preyed upon his mind and disquieted him, so that he complained thereof to one of his Viziers, saying, 'I fear lest my kingdom be lost, when I die, for that I have no son to take it after me.' 'O King,' answered the Vizier, 'peradventure God shall yet provide for this; do thou put thy trust in Him and be constant in supplication to Him.' So the King rose and making his ablutions, prayed a two-bow prayer with a believing heart; after which he called one of his wives to bed and lay with her forthright. By God's grace, she conceived by him and when her months were accomplished, she bore a male child, like the moon on the night of its full. The King named him Kemerezzeman and rejoiced in him with exceeding joy and bade decorate the city in his honour. So they decorated the city seven days, whilst the drums beat and the messengers bore the glad tidings abroad. Meanwhile nurses and attendants were provided for the boy and he was reared in splendour and delight, until he reached the age of fifteen. He grew up of surpassing beauty and symmetry, and his father loved him very dear, so that he could not brook to be parted from him day or night. One day, he complained to one of his Viziers of the excess of his love for his son, saying, 'O Vizier, of a truth I fear the shifts and accidents of fortune for my son Kemerezzeman and fain would I marry him in my lifetime.' 'O King,' answered the Vizier, 'marriage is one of the most honourable of actions, and thou wouldst indeed do well to marry thy son in thy lifetime, ere thou make him king.' Quoth the King, 'Fetch me my son;' so Kemerezzeman came and bowed his head before his father, out of modesty. 'O Kemerezzeman,' said the King, 'I desire to marry thee and rejoice in thee in my lifetime.' 'O my father,' answered the prince, 'know that I have no wish to marry, nor doth my soul incline to women; for that I have read many books and heard much talk concerning their craft and perfidy, even as saith the poet:

If ye would know of women and question of their case, Lo, I am
versed in their fashions and skilled all else above.
When a man's head grows grizzled or for the nonce his wealth
Falls from his hand, then, trust me, he hath no part in
their love.

And again:

Gainsay women; he obeyeth Allah best who saith them nay, And he
prospers not who giveth them his bridle-rein to sway;
For they'll hinder him from winning to perfection in his gifts,
Though a thousand years he study, seeking after wisdom's
way.

Wherefore (continued Kemerezzeman) marriage is a thing to which I will never consent; no, not though I drink the cup of death.' When the King heard this, the light in his sight became darkness and he was excessively chagrined at his son's lack of obedience to his wishes; yet, for the great love he bore him, he forbore to press him and was not wroth with him, but caressed him and spoke him fair and showed him all manner of kindness such as tends to cultivate affection. He took patience with him a whole year, during which time Kemerezzeman increased daily in beauty and elegance and amorous grace, till he became perfect in eloquence and loveliness. All men were ravished with his beauty and every breeze that blew carried the tidings of his charms; he was a seduction to lovers and a garden of delight to longing hearts, for he was sweet of speech and his face put the full moon to shame. Accomplished in symmetry as in elegance and engaging manners, his shape was slender and graceful as the willow-wand or the flowering cane and his cheeks might pass for roses or blood-red anemones. He was, in fine, charming in all respects, even as the poet hath said of him:

He comes and "Blest be God!" say all men, high and base. "Glory

to Him who shaped and fashioned forth his face!"
He's monarch of the fair, wherever they may be; For, lo, they're all become the liegemen of his grace.
The water of his mouth is liquid honey-dew And 'twixt his lips for teeth fine pearls do interlace.
Perfect in every trait of beauty and unique, His witching loveliness distracts the human race.
Beauty itself hath writ these words upon his cheek, "Except this youth there's none that's fair in any place."

When the year came to an end, the King called his son to him and said, 'O my son, wilt thou not hearken to me?' Whereupon Kemerezzeman fell down for respect and shame before his father and replied, 'O my father, how should I not hearken to thee, seeing that God commandeth me to obey thee and not gainsay thee?' 'O my son,' said King Shehriman, 'know that I desire to marry thee and rejoice in thee, whilst yet I live, and make thee king over my realm, before my death.' When the prince heard this, he bowed his head awhile, then raised it and said, 'O my father, this is a thing that I will never do, though I drink the cup of death. I know of a surety that God the Most High enjoins on me obedience to thee; but in His name I conjure thee, press me not in this matter of marriage, neither think that I will ever marry my life long; for that I have read the books both of the ancients and the moderns and have come to know all the troubles and calamities that have befallen them through women and the disasters that have sprung from their craft without end. How well says the poet:

He, whom the baggages entrap, Deliverance shall never know,
Although a thousand forts he build, Plated with lead;— 'gainst such a foe
It shall not profit him to build Nor citadels avail, I trow.
Women are traitresses to all, Both near and far and high and low.
With fingers dyed and flowing hair Plaited with tresses, sweet of show,
And eyelids beautified with kohl, They make one drink of bale and woe.

And no less excellently saith another:

Women, for all to chastity they're bidden, everywhere Are carrion
tossed about of all the vultures of the air.
To-night their converse, ay, and all their secret charms are
thine, But on the morn their leg and wrist fall to another's
share;
Like to an inn in which thou lodg'st, departing with the dawn,
And one thou know'st not, after thee, lights down and lodges
there.

When King Shehriman heard these his son's words, he made him no answer, of his great love for him, but redoubled in favour and kindness to him. As soon as the audience was over, he called his Vizier and taking him apart, said to him, 'O Vizier, tell me how I shall do with my son in this matter of his marriage. I took counsel with thee thereon and thou didst counsel me to marry him, before making him king. I have spoken with him once and again of marriage, and he still gainsaid me; so do thou now counsel me what to do.' 'O King,' answered the Vizier, 'wait another year, and if after that thou be minded to speak to him on the matter of marriage, do it not privily, but on a day of state, when all the Viziers and Amirs are present and all the troops standing before thee. Then send for thy son and broach to him the matter of marriage before the Viziers and grandees and officers of state and captains; for he will surely be daunted by their presence and will not dare to oppose thy will.' The King rejoiced exceedingly in his Vizier's advice, deeming it excellent, and bestowed on him a splendid robe of honour. Then he took patience with his son another year, whilst, with every day that passed over him, Kemerezzeman increased in grace and beauty and elegance and perfection, till he was nigh twenty years old. Indeed, God had clad him in the habit of beauty and crowned him with the crown of perfection: his eyes were more ensorcelling than Harout and Marout and the play of his glances more misleading than Taghout. His cheeks shone with redness and his eyelashes outvied the keen-edged sword: the whiteness of his forehead resembled the shining moon and the blackness of his hair was as the murky night.

His waist was more slender than the gossamer and his buttocks heavier than two hills of sand, troubling the heart with their softness; but his waist complained of their weight. In fine, his charms ravished all mankind, even as saith the poet:

By his cheeks' unfading damask and his smiling teeth I swear, By
  the arrows that he feathers with the witchery of his air,
By his sides so soft and tender and his glances bright and keen,
  By the whiteness of his forehead and the blackness of his
  hair,
By his arched imperious eyebrows, chasing slumber from mine eyes,
  With their yeas and noes that hold me 'twixt rejoicing and
  despair,
By the scorpious that he launches from his
  ringlet-clustered brows, Seeking ever in their meshes
  hapless lovers to ensnare,
By the myrtle of his whiskers and the roses of his cheeks, By his
  lips' incarnate rubies and his teeth's fine pearls and rare,
By his breath's delicious fragrance and the waters of his mouth,
  That defy old wine and choicest with their sweetness to
  compare,
By his heavy hips that tremble, both in motion and repose, And
  the slender waist above them, all too slight their weight to
  bear,
By his hand's perennial bounty and his true and trusty speech, By
  the stars that smile upon him, favouring and debonair,
Lo, the scent of musk none other than his very perfume is, And
  the ambergris's fragrance breathes about him everywhere.
Yea, the sun in all his splendour cannot with his brightness vie,
  And the crescent moon's a fragment that he from his nail
  doth pare.

The King, accordingly, waited till a day of state, when the audience hall was filled with his Amirs and Viziers and grandees and officers of state and captains. As soon as they were all assembled, he sent for his son Kemerezzeman, who came and kissing the earth three times, stood before him, with his hands clasped behind his back. Then said the King to him, ‘Know, O my son, that I have sent for thee and summoned thee to appear before this assembly and all these officers of state that I may lay a commandment on thee, wherein do thou not gainsay me. It is that thou marry, for I am minded to wed thee to a king’s daughter and rejoice in thee ere I die.’ When the prince heard these his father’s words, he bowed his head awhile, then raising it, replied, being moved thereto by youthful folly and boyish ignorance, ‘Never will I marry, no, not though I drink the cup of death! As for thee, thou art great in years and little of wit: hast thou not, twice before this, questioned me of the matter of marriage, and I refused thee? Indeed, thou dotest and art not fit to govern a flock of sheep!’ So saying, he unclasped his hands from behind his back and rolled up his sleeves, in his rage; moreover, he added many words to his father, knowing not what he said, in the trouble of his spirit. The King was confounded and ashamed, for that this befell in the presence of his grandees and officers assembled on an occasion of state; but presently the energy of kingship took him and he cried out upon his son and made him tremble. Then he called to his guards and bade them seize him and bind his hands behind his back. So they laid hands on Kemerezzeman and binding him, brought him before his father, full of shame and confusion, with his head bowed down for fear and inquietude and his brow and face beaded with sweat. The King loaded him with reproaches, saying, ‘Out on thee, thou whoreson and nursling of abomination! Dost thou dare to answer me thus before my captains and officers? But hitherto none hath corrected thee. Knowest thou not that this thou hast done were disgraceful in the meanest of my subjects?’ And he commanded his guards to loose his bonds and imprison him in one of the turrets of the citadel. So they carried the prince into an old tower, wherein there was a dilapidated saloon, after having first swept it and cleansed its floor and set him a couch in its midst, on which they laid a mattress, a leathern rug and a cushion. Then they brought him a great lantern and a candle, for the place was dark, even by day, and posting an eunuch at the door, left him to himself. Kemerezzeman threw himself on the couch, broken-spirited and mournful-hearted, blaming himself and repenting of his unseemly behaviour to his father, when repentance availed him nothing, and saying, ‘May God curse marriage and girls and women, the traitresses! Would I had hearkened to my father and married! It were better for me than this prison.'

Meanwhile, King Shehriman abode on his throne till sundown, when he took the Vizier apart and said to him, 'O Vizier, thine advice is the cause of all this that hath befallen between me and my son. What doth thou counsel me to do now?' 'O King,' answered he, 'leave thy son in prison for the space of fifteen days; then send for him and command him to marry, and he will not again gainsay thee.' The King accepted the Vizier's counsel and lay down to sleep, troubled at heart concerning Kemerezzeman, for he loved him very dearly, having no other child, and it was his wont not to sleep, save with his arm about his son's neck. So he passed the night in trouble and unease, tossing from side to side, as he were laid on coals of tamarisk-wood; for he was overcome with inquietude and sleep visited him not all that night; but his eyes ran over with tears and he repeated the following verses:

The night, whilst the slanderers sleep, is tedious unto me;
  Suffice thee a heart that aches for parting's agony!
I cry, whilst my night for care grows long and longer aye, "O
  light of the morning, say, is there no returning for thee?"

And these also:

When the Pleïads I saw leave to shine in their stead And over the
  pole-star a lethargy shed
And the maids of the Bier in black raiment unveiled, I
  knew that the lamp of the morning was dead.

To return to Kemerezzeman. When the night came on, the eunuch set the lantern before him and lighting a candle, placed it in the candlestick; then brought him food. The prince ate a little and reproached himself for his ill-behaviour to his father, saying to himself, 'O my soul, knowst thou not that a son of Adam is the hostage of his tongue and that a man's tongue is what casts him into perils?' Then his eyes ran over with tears and he bewailed that which he had done, from an anguished heart and an aching bosom, repenting him with an exceeding repentance of the wrong he had done his father repeating the following verses:

For the sheer stumble of his tongue the youth must death aby,
 Though for the stumble of his foot the grown man shall not die.
Thus doth the slipping of his mouth smite off his head, I ween,
 What while the slipping of his foot is healed, as time goes by.

When he had made an end of eating, he called the eunuch, who washed his hands. Then he made his ablutions and prayed the prayers of sundown and nightfall, after which he sat down on the couch, to read the Koran. He read the chapters called 'The Cow,' 'The family of Imran,' 'Ya-Sin,' 'The Compassionate,' 'Blessed be the King,' 'Unity' and 'The two Amulets,' and concluded with blessing and supplication, seeking refuge with God from Satan the accursed. Then he put off his trousers and the rest of his clothes and lay down, in a shirt of fine waxed cloth and a coif of blue stuff of Merv, upon a mattress of satin, embroidered on both sides with gold and quilted with Irak silk, having under his head a pillow stuffed with ostrich-down. In this guise, he was like the full moon, when it rises on its fourteenth night. Then, drawing over himself a coverlet of silk, he fell asleep with the lantern burning at his feet and the candle at his head, and woke not for a third part of the night, being ignorant of that which lurked for him in the secret purpose of God and what He who knoweth the hidden things had appointed unto him. Now, as chance and destiny would have it, the tower in question was old and had been many years deserted; and there was therein a Roman well, inhabited by an Afriteh of the lineage of Iblis the Accursed, by name Maimouneh, daughter of Ed Dimiryat, a renowned King of the Jinn. In the middle of the night, Maimouneh came up out of the well and made for heaven, thinking to listen by stealth to the discourse of the angels; but, when she reached the mouth of the well, she saw a light shining in the tower, contrary to wont; whereat she was mightily amazed, having dwelt there many years and never seen the like, and said to herself, 'Needs must there be some cause for this.' So she made for the light and found that it came from the saloon, at whose door she found the eunuch sleeping. She entered and saw a man lying asleep upon the couch, with the lantern burning at his feet and the candle at his head; at which she wondered and going softly up to him, folded her wings and drawing back the coverlid, discovered his face. The lustre of his visage outshone that of the candle, and the Afriteh abode awhile, astounded at his beauty and grace; for his face beamed with light, his cheeks were rose-red and his eyelids languorous; his brows were arched like bows and his whole person exhaled a scent of musk, even as saith of him the poet:

I kissed him and his cheeks forthwith grew red, and black and
bright The pupils grew that are my soul's seduction and
delight.
O heart, if slanderers avouch that there exists his like For
goodliness, say thou to them, "Produce him to my sight."

When Maimouneh saw him, she glorified God and said, 'Blessed be Allah, the best of Creators!' For she was of the true-believing Jinn. She stood awhile, gazing on his face, proclaiming the unity of God and envying the youth his beauty and grace. And she said in herself, 'By Allah, I will do him no hurt nor let any harm him, but will ransom him from all ill, for this fair face deserves not but that folk should look upon it and glorify God. But how could his family find it in their hearts to leave him in this desert place, where if one of our Marids came upon him at this hour, he would kill him?' Then she bent over him and kissing him between the eyes, folded back the coverlet over his face; after which she spread her wings and soaring into the air, flew upward till she drew near the lowest heaven, when she heard the noise of wings beating the air and making for the sound, found that it came from an Afrit called Dehnesh. So she swooped down on him like a sparrow-hawk; and when he was ware of her and knew her to be Maimouneh, daughter of the King of the Jinn, he feared her and his nerves trembled; and he implored her forbearance, saying, 'I conjure thee by the Most Great and August Name and by the most noble talisman graven upon the seal of

Solomon, entreat me kindly and harm me not!' When she heard this, her heart inclined to him and she said, 'Verily, thou conjurest me with a mighty conjuration, O accursed one! Nevertheless, I will not let thee go, till thou tell me whence thou comest at this hour.' 'O princess,' answered he, 'know that I come from the uttermost end of the land of Cathay and from among the islands, and I will tell thee of a wonderful thing I have seen this night. If thou find my words true, let me go my way and write me a patent under thy hand that I am thy freedman, so none of the Jinn, whether of the air or the earth, divers or flyers, may do me let or hindrance.' 'And what is it thou hast seen this night, O liar, O accursed one?' rejoined Maimouneh. 'Tell me without leasing and think not to escape from my hand with lies, for I swear to thee by the inscription on the beazel of the ring of Solomon son of David (on whom be peace,) except thy speech be true, I will pluck out thy feathers with mine own hand and strip off thy skin and break thy bones.' 'I accept this condition, O my lady,' answered Dehnesh, son of Shemhourish the Flyer. 'Know that I come to-night from the Islands of the Inland Sea in the parts of Cathay, which are the dominions of King Ghaïour, lord of the Islands and the Seas and the Seven Palaces. There I saw a daughter of his, than whom God hath made none fairer in her time, — I cannot picture her to thee, for my tongue would fail to describe her aright; but I will name to thee somewhat of her charms, by way of approximation. Her hair is like the nights of estrangement and separation and her face like the days of union; and the poet hath well described her when he says:

She took up three locks of her hair and spread them out one night
And straight four nights discovered at once unto my sight.
Then did she turn her visage up to the moon of the sky And showed
me two moons at one season, both burning clear and bright.

She hath a nose like the point of the burnished sword and cheeks like purple wine or blood-red anemones: her lips are like coral and cornelian and the water of her mouth is sweeter than old wine, its taste would allay the torments of Hell. Her tongue is moved by abounding wit and ready repartee: her breast is a temptation to all that see it, glory be to Him who created it and finished it: and joined thereto are two smooth round arms. As says of her the poet El Welhan:

She hath two wrists, which, were they not by bracelets held, I trow, Would flow out of their sleeves as brooks of liquid silver flow.

She has breasts like two globes of ivory, the moons borrow from their brightness, and a belly dimpled as it were a brocaded cloth of the finest Egyptian linen, with creases like folded scrolls, leading to a waist slender past conception, over buttocks like a hill of sand, that force her to sit, when she would fain stand, and awaken her, when she would sleep, even as saith of her the poet:

Her slender waist a pair of buttocks overlies, The which both
over her and me do tyrannize.
For they confound my wit, whenas I think on them, And eke enforce
her sit, whenas she fain would rise.

They are upborne by smooth round thighs and legs like columns of pearl, and all this rests upon two slender feet, pointed like spear-blades, the handiwork of God, the Protector and Requiter, I wonder how, of their littleness, they can sustain what is above them. But I cut short my description of her charms, lest I be tedious. The father of this young lady is a powerful king, a fierce cavalier, immersed night and day in wars and battles, fearless of death and dreading not ruin, for that he is a masterful tyrant and an irresistible conqueror, lord of troops and armies, continents and islands, cities and villages, and his name is King Ghaïour, lord of the Islands and the Seas and of the Seven Palaces. He loves his daughter, the young lady whom I have described to thee, very dearly, and for love of her, he gathered together the treasures of all the kings and built her therewith seven palaces, each of a different fashion; the first of crystal, the second of marble, the third of China steel, the fourth of precious stones, the fifth of porcelain and vari-coloured onyx, the sixth of silver and the seventh of gold. He filled the seven palaces with rich silken carpets and hangings and vessels of gold and silver and all manner of gear befitting kings and commanded his daughter, whose name is the Princess Budour, to abide in each by turns for a certain season of the year. When her beauty became known and her fame was noised abroad in the neighbouring countries, all the kings sent to her father, to demand her in marriage, and he consulted her on the matter, but she misliked it and said, “O my father, I have no mind to marry; for I am a sovereign lady and a princess ruling over men, and I have no desire for a man who shall rule over me.” The more she refused, the more the eagerness of her suitors increased and all the kings of the Islands of the Inland Sea sent gifts and offerings to her father, with letters asking her in marriage. So he pressed her again and again to make choice of a husband, despite her refusals, till at last she turned upon him angrily and said to him, “O my father, if thou name marriage to me again, I will go into my chamber and take a sword and fixing its hilt in the ground, set its point to my breast; then will I lean upon it, till it come forth from my back, and so kill myself.” When the King heard this, the light became darkness in his sight and his heart was torn with anxiety and perplexity concerning her affair; for he feared lest she should kill herself and knew not how to deal with the kings who sought her hand. So he said to her, “If thou be irrevocably determined not to marry, abstain from going in and out.” Then he shut her up in her chamber, appointing ten old body-women to guard her, and made as though he were wroth with her, forbidding her to go forth to the seven palaces; moreover, he sent letters to all the kings, giving them to know that she had been stricken with madness. It is now a year (continued Dehnesh) since she has been thus cloistered, and every night I go to her, whilst she is asleep, and take my fill of gazing on her face and kiss her between the eyes: yet, of my love to her, I do her no hurt neither swive her, for that her youth is fair and her loveliness surpassing; every one who sees is jealous for her of himself. I conjure thee, therefore, O my lady, to go back with me and look on her beauty and symmetry; and after, if thou wilt, chastise me or enslave me: for it is thine to command and to forbid.’ So saying, he bowed his head towards the earth and drooped his wings; but Maimouneh laughed at his words and spitting in his face, answered, ‘What is this girl of whom thou pratest but a potsherd to cleanse the privities withal? Faugh! Faugh! By Allah, O accursed one, I thought thou hadst some rare story to tell me or some marvel to make known to me! How would it be if thou sawest my beloved? Verily this night I have seen a young man whom if thou sawest though but in sleep, thou wouldst be palsied with admiration and thy mouth would water.' 'And who and what is this youth?' asked the Afrit. 'Know, O Dehnesh,' answered she, 'that there hath befallen him the like of what befell thy mistress; for his father pressed him again and again to marry, but he refused, till at length his father waxed wroth and imprisoned him in the tower where I dwell: and I came up to-night and saw him.' 'O my lady,' said Dehnesh, 'show me the youth, that I may see if he be indeed handsomer than my mistress, the Princess Budour, or not; for I cannot believe that there lives her equal.' 'Thou liest, O accursed one!' rejoined Maimouneh. 'O most ill-omened of Marids and vilest of Satans! Sure am I that there is not in this world the like of my beloved. Art thou mad to even thy beloved with mine?' 'I conjure thee by Allah, O my lady,' said Dehnesh, 'to go back with me and see my mistress, and after I will return with thee and look upon thy beloved.' 'It must needs be so, O accursed one!' answered she. 'Yet, for that thou art a knavish devil, I will not go with thee nor shalt thou come with me, save upon surety and condition of pledge. If thy beloved prove handsomer than mine, the pledge shall be thine against me; but if my beloved prove the fairer, the pledge shall be mine against thee.' 'O my lady,' said Dehnesh, 'I accept this thy condition; so come with me to the Islands.' 'Not so,' replied Maimouneh; 'for the abode of my beloved is nearer than that of thine: here it is under us; so come down with me and see my beloved, and after we will go look upon thy mistress.' 'I hear and obey,' said Dehnesh. So they descended and alighting on the tower, entered the saloon, where Maimouneh stationed Dehnesh beside the bed and putting out her hand, drew back the silken coverlet, whereupon Kemerezzeman's face shone out like the sun. She looked at him a moment, then turning to Dehnesh, said, ''Look, O accursed one, and be not the vilest of madmen; I am a maiden and am ravished with him.' So Dehnesh looked at the prince and gazed steadfastly on him awhile, then, shaking his head, said to Maimouneh, 'By Allah, O my lady, thou art excusable; but there is another thing to be considered, and that is that the female estate differs from the male. By the virtue of God, this thy beloved is the likest of all created things to my mistress in beauty and loveliness and grace and it is as though they were both cast alike in the mould of perfection!' When Maimouneh heard these words, the light in her sight became darkness and she dealt him so fierce a buffet on the head with her wing as well-nigh made an end of him. Then, 'I conjure thee,' said she, 'by the light of his glorious countenance, go at once, O accursed one, and bring hither thy mistress in haste that we may lay them together and look on them both, as they lie asleep side by side; so will it appear to us whether is the goodlier and more beautiful of the two. Except thou obey me forthright, I will dart my sparks at thee and consume thee with my fire; yea, I will rend thee in pieces and cast thee into the deserts, as an example to stay-at-home and wayfarer.' 'O my lady,' answered the Afrit, 'I will do thy bidding, for I know that my mistress is the fairer and sweeter.' So saying, he flew away and Maimouneh flew with him, to guard him. They were absent awhile and presently returned, bearing the young lady, who was clad in a shift of fine Venetian silk, laced with gold and wrought with the most exquisite broidery and having the following verses worked upon the ends of the sleeves:

Three things for ever hinder her to visit us, for fear Of the
  intriguing spy and eke the rancorous envier;
Her forehead's lustre and the sound of all her ornaments And the
  sweet scent her creases hold of ambergris and myrrh.
Grant with the border of her sleeve she hide her brows and doff
  Her ornaments, how shall she do her scent away from her?

They carried her into the saloon and laying her beside Kemerezzeman, uncovered both their faces, and behold, they were the likest of all folk, one to the other, as they were twins or an only brother and sister; and indeed they were a temptation to the pious, even as says of them the poet El Mubin:

Be not thy love, O heart, to one alone confined, Lest, for that
  one, amaze and doting thee enwind;
But love thou rather all the fair, and thou shalt find, If one
  contrarious prove, another will be kind.

And quoth another:

Two fair ones lying on the earth I did of late espy; Two that I
needs must love, although they lay upon mine eye.

Dehnesh and Maimouneh gazed on them awhile, and the former said, 'By Allah, O my lady, it is good! My mistress is assuredly the fairer.' 'Not so,' answered she, 'my beloved is the fairer. Out on thee, O Dehnesh! Thou art blind of eye and heart and distinguishest not between good and bad. Wilt thou hide the truth? Dost thou not see his beauty and grace and symmetry? Out on thee, hear what I purpose to say in praise of my beloved, and do thou the like for her thou lovest, an thou be a true lover.' Then she kissed Kemerezzeman again and again between the eyes and repeated the following ode:

Ah me, what ails the censurer that he at thee should flite? How
shall I be consoled for thee, and thou a sapling slight?
Thou of the black and languorous eye, that casteth far and wide
Charms, whose sheer witchery compels to passion's utmost
height,
Whose looks, with Turkish languor fraught, work havoc in the
breast, Leaving such wounds as ne'er were made of falchion
in the fight,
Thou layst on me a heavy load of passion and desire, On me that
am too weak to bear a shift upon me dight.
My love for thee, as well thou know'st, my very nature is, And
that for others which I feign dissembling but and sleight.
An if my heart were like to thine, I'd not refuse; alack! 'Tis
but my body's like thy waist, worn thin and wasted quite.
Out on him for a moon that's famed for beauty far and near, That
for th' exemplar of all grace men everywhere do cite!
The railers say, "Who's this for love of whom thou art
distressed?" And I reply, "An if ye can, describe the lovely
wight."
O learn to yield, hard heart of his, take pattern by his shape!
So haply yet he may relent and put away despite.
Thou, that my prince in beauty art, a steward hast, whose

rule Aggrieves me and a chamberlain that doth me foul
upright.
He lies who says, “All loveliness in Joseph was comprised.” How
many a Joseph is there not within thy beauty bright!
The Jinn do fear me, whenas I confront them face to face; But
when I meet with thee, my heart doth tremble for affright.
I feign aversion unto thee, for fear of slanderous tongues; The
more I feign, the more my love to madness I excite.
Black hair and smooth and glistening brows, eyes languorous and
soft, As of the maids of Paradise, and slender shape and
slight!

When Dehnesh heard this, he shook for delight and was filled with admiration and said, ‘Thou hast indeed done well in praise of him whom thou lovest! Needs must I do my endeavour, in my turn, to celebrate my mistress, to the best of my power, and recite somewhat in her honour.’ Then he went up to the lady Budour and kissing her between the eyes, looked at her and at Maimouneh and recited the following verses, for all he had no skill in poetry:

They chide my passion for my fair in harsh and cruel guise; But,
of their ignorance, forsooth, they’re neither just nor wise.
Vouchsafe thy favours to the slave of love, for, an he taste Of
thine estrangement and disdain, assuredly he dies.
Indeed, for very stress of love, I’m drenched with streaming
tears, That, like a rivulet of blood, run ever from mine
eyes.
No wonder ’tis what I for love endure; the wonder is That any,
since the loss of thee, my body recognize.
Forbidden be thy sight to me, if I’ve a thought of doubt Or if my
heart of passion tire or feign or use disguise!

And also the following:

I feed mine eyes on the places where we met long ago; Far distant
now is the valley and I’m forslain for woe.
I’m drunk with the wine of passion and the teardrops in mine eyes

Dance to the song of the leader of the camels, as we go.
I cease not from mine endeavour to win to fortune fair; Yet in
Budour, Suada, all fortune is, I know.
Three things I reckon, I know not of which to most complain; Give
ear whilst I recount them and be you judge, I trow.
Firstly, her eyes, the sworders; second, the spearman, her shape,
And thirdly, her ringlets that clothe her in armour,
row upon row.
Quoth she (and indeed I question, for tidings of her I love, All
whom I meet, or townsman or Bedouin, high or low)
Quoth she unto me, “My dwelling is in thy heart; look there And
thou shalt see me.” I answer, “And where is my heart?
Heigho!”

When Maimouneh heard this, she said, ‘Thou hast done well, O Dehnesh! But tell me, which of the two is the handsomer?’ And he answered, ‘My mistress Budour is certainly handsomer than thy beloved.’ ‘Thou liest, O accursed one!’ cried Maimouneh. ‘Nay, my beloved is more beautiful than thine!’ And they ceased not to gainsay each other, till Maimouneh cried out at Dehnesh and would have laid violent hands on him; but he humbled himself to her and softening his speech, said to her, ‘Let us leave talking, for we do but contradict each other, and rather seek one who shall judge fairly between us, whether of the two is fairer, and let us abide by his sentence.’ ‘I agree to this,’ answered she and smote the earth with her foot, whereupon there came up a one-eyed Afrit, hump-backed and scurvy, with eyes slit endlong in his face. On his head were seven horns and four locks of hair falling to his heels; his hands were like pitchforks, his legs like masts and he had claws like a lion and hoofs like those of the wild ass. When he saw Maimouneh, he kissed the earth before her and standing with his hands clasped behind him, said, ‘What is thy will, O king’s daughter?’ ‘O Keshkesh,’ answered she, ‘I would have thee judge between me and this accursed Dehnesh.’ And she made known to him the whole matter, whereupon he looked at the prince and princess and saw them lying asleep, embraced, each with an arm about the other’s neck, alike in beauty and grace and equal in goodliness. The Marid gazed long and fixedly upon them, marvelling at their beauty, and repeated the following verses:

Cleave fast to her thou lov'st and let the envious rail amain,
For calumny and envy ne'er to favour love were fain.
Lo, the Compassionate hath made no fairer thing to see Than when
one couch in its embrace enfoldeth lovers twain,
Each to the other's bosom clasped, clad in their own delight,
Whilst hand with hand and arm with arm about their necks
enchain.
If in thy time thou find but one to love thee and be true, I rede
thee cast the world away and with that one remain.
Lo, when two hearts are straitly knit in passion and desire, But
on cold iron smite the folk that chide at them in vain.
Thou that for loving censures the votaries of love, Canst thou
assain a heart diseased or heal a cankered brain?
O Lord, O Thou Compassionate, I prithee, ere we die, Though only
for a single day, unite us two again!

Then he turned to Maimouneh and Dehnesh and said to them, 'By Allah, if you will have the truth, they are equal in beauty and grace and perfection, nor is there any difference between them but that of sex. But I have another idea, and it is that we wake each of them in turn, without the other's knowledge, and whichever is more enamoured of the other shall be held the lesser in beauty and grace.' 'This is a good counsel,' answered Maimouneh, and Dehnesh said, 'I consent to this.' Then Dehnesh changed himself to a flea and bit Kemerezzeman on the neck, whereupon the prince awoke with a start and rubbed the place of the bite, because of the smart. Then turning sideways, he found lying by him something, whose breath was more fragrant than musk, and whose body was softer than cream. At this he marvelled greatly and sitting up, looked at this that lay beside him and saw it to be a young lady like the moon, as she were a splendid pearl, or a shining sun, five feet high, with a shape like the letter I, high-bosomed and rosy-checked; even as saith of her the poet:

Four things there are, which ne'er unite, except it be To shed my

heart's best blood and take my soul by storm.
And these are night-black locks and brow as bright as day, Cheeks
ruddy as the rose and straight and slender form.

And also quoth another:

She shineth forth, a moon, and bends, a willow-wand, And
breathes, pure ambergris, and gazes, a gazelle.
It seems as if grief loved my heart and when from her
Estrangement I endure, possession to it fell.

She was clad in a shift of Venetian silk, without drawers, and wore on her head a kerchief embroidered with gold and jewels; her ears were hung with earrings, that shone like stars, and round her neck was a collar of great pearls, past the competence of any king. When he saw this, his reason was confounded and natural heat began to stir in him; God awoke in him the desire of coition and he said, 'What God wills, shall be, and what He will not, shall not be!' So saying, he put out his hand and turning her over, loosed the collar of her shift, laying bare her bosom, with its breasts like globes of ivory; whereat his inclination for her redoubled and he desired her with an exceeding desire. Then he shook her and moved her, essaying to waken her and saying, 'O my beloved, awake and look on me; I am Kemerezzeman.' But she awoke not, neither moved her head, for Dehnesh made her sleep heavy. With this, he considered awhile and said to himself, 'If I guess aright, this is she to whom my father would have married me and I have refused these three years past; but, God willing, as soon as it is day, I will say to him, "Marry me to her that I may enjoy her," nor will I let half the day pass ere I possess her and take my fill of her beauty and grace.' Then he bent over Budour, to kiss her, whereat Maimouneh trembled and was confounded and Dehnesh was like to fly for joy. But, as Kemerezzeman was about to kiss her, he was ashamed before God and turned away his head, saying to his heart, 'Have patience.' Then he considered awhile and said, 'I will be patient, lest my father have brought this young lady and made her lie by my side, to try me with her, charging her not to be lightly awakened, whenas I would fain arouse her, and bidding her tell him all that I do to her. Belike, he is hidden somewhere whence he can see all I do with this young lady, himself unseen; and to-morrow he will flout me and say, "How comes it that thou feignest to have no mind to marry and yet didst kiss and clip yonder damsel?" So I will forbear her, lest I be shamed before my father; and it were well that I look not on her nor touch her at this present, except to take from her somewhat to serve as a sign of remembrance and a token between us.' Then he lifted her hand and took from her little finger a ring worth much money, for that its beazel was of precious jewels and around it were graven the following verses:

Think not that I have forgotten thy sometime promises, Though long
thou hast protracted thy cruelty, ywis.
Be generous, O my master, vouchsafe me of thy grace, So it to me
be given thy lips and cheeks to kiss.
Never, by Allah, never will I abandon thee, Though thou
transgress thy limits in love and go amiss!

Then he put the ring on his own little finger, and turning his back to her, went to sleep. When Maimouneh saw this, she was glad and said, 'Saw ye how my beloved Kemerezzeman forbore this young lady? Verily, this was of the perfection of his excellences; for see how he looked on her and noted her beauty and grace, yet clipped her not neither kissed her nor put his hand to her, but turned his back to her and slept.' 'It is well,' answered they; 'we saw how perfectly he bore himself.' Then Maimouneh changed herself into a flea and entering Budour's clothes, crept up her leg and bit her four finger-breadths below the navel; whereupon she opened her eyes and sitting up in bed, saw a youth lying beside her and breathing heavily in his sleep, the loveliest of God's creatures, with eyes that put to shame the fair maids of Paradise, mouth like Solomon's seal, whose water was sweeter to the taste and more efficacious than triacle, lips the colour of coral and cheeks like blood-red anemones, even as saith one, describing him:

From Zeyneb and Newar my mind is drawn away By the

rose of a cheek, whereo'er a whisker's myrtles stray.
I'm fallen in love with a fawn, a youngling tunic-clad, And joy
no more in love of bracelet-wearing may.
My mate in banquet-hall and closet's all unlike To her with whom
within my harem's close I play:
O thou that blames me, because I flee from Hind And
Zeyneb, my excuse is clear as break of day.
Would'st have me be a slave, the bondsman of a slave, One
cloistered and confined behind a wall alway?

When the princess saw him, a transport of passion and longing seized her and she said to herself, 'Alas my shame! This is a strange youth and I know him not. How comes he lying in one bed with me?' Then she looked at him again and noting his beauty and grace, said, 'By Allah, he is a comely youth and my heart is well-nigh torn in sunder with longing for him. But alas, how am I shamed by him! By Allah, had I known it was he who sought my hand of my father, I had not rejected him, but had married him and enjoyed his loveliness!' Then she gazed in his face and said, 'O my lord and light of mine eyes, awake from sleep and enjoy my beauty and grace.' And she moved him with her hand; but Maimouneh let down sleep upon him (as it were a curtain) and pressed on his head with her wings, so that he awoke not. The princess went on to shake him and say, 'My life on thee, give ear unto me! Awake and look on the narcissus and the tender green and enjoy my body and my secret charms and dally with me and touzle me from now till break of day! I conjure thee by Allah, O my lord, sit up and lean against the pillow and sleep not!' Still he made her no answer, but breathed heavily in his sleep. 'Alas! Alas!' continued she. 'Thou art proud in thy beauty and grace and lovely looks! But if thou art handsome, so am I; what then is this thou dost? Have they lessoned thee to flout me or has the wretched old man, my father, made thee swear not to speak to me to-night?' But he opened not his mouth neither awoke, whereat her passion redoubled and God inflamed her heart with love of him. She stole one glance at him that cost her a thousand sighs: her heart fluttered and her entrails yearned and she exclaimed, 'Speak to me, O my lord! O my friend, my beloved, answer me and tell me thy name, for indeed thou hast ravished my wit!’ Still he abode drowned in sleep and answered her not a word, and she sighed and said, ‘Alas! Alas! why art thou so self-satisfied?’ Then she shook him and turning his hand over, saw her ring on his little finger, whereat she cried out and said, with a sigh of passion, ‘Alack! Alack! By Allah, thou art my beloved and lovest me! Yet meseems thou turnest away from me out of coquetry, for all thou camest to me whilst I was asleep and knew not what thou didst, and tookest my ring. But I will not pull it off thy finger.’ So saying, she opened the bosom of his shirt and kissed him and put her hand to him, seeking somewhat that she might take as a token, but found nothing. Then she put her hand into his breast, and for the smoothness of his body, it slipped down to his navel and thence to his yard, whereupon her heart ached and her entrails quivered and desire was sore upon her, for that women’s lust is fiercer than that of men, and she was confounded. Then she took his ring from his finger and put it on her own and kissed his mouth and hands, nor did she leave any part of him unkissed; after which she took him to her breast and laying one of her hands under his neck and the other under his armpit, fell asleep by his side. Then said Maimouneh to Dehnesh, ‘O accursed one, sawst thou how prudishly and coquettishly my beloved bore himself and what ardour of passion thy mistress showed to him? There can be no doubt that my beloved is handsomer than thine; nevertheless I pardon thee.’ Then she wrote him a patent of manumission and said to Keshkesh, ‘Help Dehnesh to take up his mistress and carry her back to her own place, for the night wanes apace and there is but little left of it.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered Keshkesh. So the two Afrits lifted up the Princess Budour and flying away with her, carried her back to her own place and laid her on her bed, whilst Maimouneh abode alone with Kemerezzeman, gazing upon him as he slept, till the night was all but spent, when she went her way.

At break of day, the prince awoke from sleep and turned right and left, but found not the young lady by him and said in himself, ‘What is this? It would seem as if my father would fain incline me to marriage with the young lady, that was with me, and have now taken her away by stealth, to the intent that my desire for marriage may redouble.’ Then he called out to the eunuch who slept at the door, saying, ‘Out on thee, O accursed one, arise forthright!’ So the eunuch arose, dazed with sleep, and brought him basin and ewer, whereupon Kemerezzeman entered the draught-house and did his need; then, coming out, made his ablutions and prayed the morning-prayer, after which he sat telling his beads. Then he looked up, and seeing the eunuch standing waiting upon him, said to him, ‘Out on thee, O Sewab! Who was it came hither and took away the young lady from beside me, whilst I slept?’ ‘O my lord, what young lady?’ asked the eunuch. ‘She that lay with me last night,’ replied Kemerezzeman. The eunuch was troubled at his words and said to him, ‘By Allah, there has been with thee neither young lady nor other! How should she have come in to thee, when the door was locked and I asleep before it? By Allah, O my lord, neither man nor woman has come in to thee!’ ‘Thou liest, O pestilent slave!’ exclaimed the prince. ‘Dost thou also presume to hoodwink me and wilt thou not tell me what is come of the young lady who lay with me last night and who took her away?’ The eunuch was affrighted at him and answered, ‘By Allah, O my lord, I have seen neither girl nor boy!’ His words only angered Kemerezzeman and he said to him, ‘O accursed one, my father hath taught thee deceit! Come hither.’ So the eunuch came up to him, and the prince seized him by the collar and threw him to the ground. He let fly a crack of wind, and Kemerezzeman, kneeling upon him, kicked him and throttled him, till he fainted away. Then he tied him to the well-rope, and lowering him into the well, plunged him into the water, then drew him up and plunged him in again. Now it was hard winter weather, and Kemerezzeman ceased not to lower the eunuch into the water and pull him up again, whilst he screamed and called for help. Quoth the prince, ‘By Allah, O accursed one, I will not draw thee up out of the well, till thou tell me the story of the young lady and who it was took her away, whilst I slept.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered the eunuch, seeing death staring him in the face, ‘let me go and I will tell thee the truth.’ So Kemerezzeman pulled him up out of the well, all but dead for cold and wet and torture and beating and fear of drowning. His teeth chattered and he shook like the reed in the hurricane and his clothes were drenched and his body befouled and torn by the rough slimy sides of the well. When Kemerezzeman saw him in this sorry plight, he relented towards him; and as soon as the eunuch found himself on dry land, he said to him, ‘O my lord, let me go and put off my clothes and wring them out and spread them in the sun to dry and don others; after which I will return to thee forthwith and tell thee the truth of the matter.’ ‘O wretched slave,’ answered the prince, ‘hadst thou not seen death face to face, thou hadst never confessed; but go now and do thy will, and after return speedily and tell me the truth.’ So the eunuch went out, hardly crediting his escape, and gave not over running and stumbling, in his haste, till he came in to King Shehriman, whom he found sitting talking with his Vizier of Kemerezzeman’s case and saying, ‘I slept not last night, for anxiety concerning my son Kemerezzeman, and indeed I fear lest some harm befall him in that old tower. What good was there in imprisoning him?’ ‘Have no care for him,’ answered the Vizier. ‘By Allah, no hurt will befall him! Leave him in prison for a month, till his humour yield and his spirit be broken and he return to his senses.’ As he spoke, in came the eunuch, in the aforesaid plight, and said to the King, who was troubled at sight of him, ‘O our lord the Sultan, thy son’s wits are fled and he has gone mad; he has dealt with me thus and thus, so that I am become as thou seest, and says, “A young lady lay with me this night and stole away whilst I slept. Where is she?” And insists on my telling him where she is and who took her away. But I have seen neither girl nor boy; the door was locked all night, for I slept before it, with the key under my head, and opened to him in the morning with my own hand.’ When the King heard this, he cried out, saying, ‘Alas, my son!’ And he was sore enraged against the Vizier, who had been the cause of all this, and said to him, ‘Go, bring me news of my son and see what hath befallen his wit.’ So the Vizier rose and hastened with the slave to the tower, tumbling over his skirts, in his fear of the King’s anger. The sun had now risen and when he came in to Kemerezzeman, he found him sitting on the couch, reading the Koran; so he saluted him and sitting down by his side, said to him, ‘O my lord, this wretched slave brought us news that disquieted and alarmed us and incensed the King.’ ‘And what,’ asked Kemerezzeman, ‘hath he told you of me, to trouble my father? In good sooth, he hath troubled none but me.’ ‘He came to us in a sorry plight,’ answered the Vizier, ‘and told us of thee a thing which God forfend and a lie which it befits not to repeat, may God preserve thy youth and sound wit and eloquent tongue and forbid aught of foul to come from thee!' 'O Vizier,' said the prince, 'what did this pestilent slave say of me?' 'He told us,' replied the Vizier, 'thou hadst taken leave of thy wits and would have it that a young lady lay with thee last night and wast instant with him to tell thee whither she had gone and didst torture him to that end.' When Kemerezzeman heard this, he was sore enraged and said to the Vizier, 'It is manifest to me that you taught the eunuch to do as he did and forbade him to tell me what became of the young lady. But thou, O Vizier, art more reasonable than the eunuch; so do thou tell me forthright whither went the young lady that lay in my bosom last night; for it was you who sent her and bade her sleep in my arms, and we lay together till day; but when I awoke, I found her not. So where is she now?' 'O my lord Kemerezzeman,' said the Vizier, 'the name of God encompass thee! By Allah, we sent none to thee last night, but thou layest alone, with the door locked on thee and the eunuch sleeping before it, nor did there come to thee a young lady or any other. Stablish thy reason, O my lord, and return to thy senses and occupy thy mind no longer [with vain imaginations].' 'O Vizier,' rejoined Kemerezzeman, incensed at his words, 'the young lady in question is my beloved, the fair one with the black eyes and red cheeks, whom I held in my arms all last night.' The Vizier wondered at his words and said to him, 'Didst thou see this damsel with thine eyes and on wake, or in sleep?' 'O wretched old man,' answered Kemerezzeman, 'thinkest thou I saw her with my ears? Indeed, I saw her with my very eyes and on wake and touched her with my hand and watched by her half the night, gazing my fill on her beauty and grace and elegance and lovely looks. But thou hadst schooled her and charged her to speak no word to me; so she feigned sleep and I lay by her side till morning, when I awoke and found her gone.' 'O my lord Kemerezzeman,' rejoined the Vizier, 'surely thou sawest this in thy sleep; it must have been a delusion of dreams or a hallucination caused by eating various kinds of food or a suggestion of the accursed devils.' 'O pestilent old man,' cried the prince, 'wilt thou too make a mock of me and tell me this was an illusion of dreams, when this eunuch confessed to the young lady, saying, "I will return to thee forthwith and tell thee all about her?"' So saying, he sprang up and laying hold of the Vizier's long beard, twisted his hand in it and tugging him off the couch, threw him on the floor. It seemed to the Vizier as though his soul departed his body for the violent plucking at his beard, and Kemerezzeman fell to kicking him and pummelling his breast and sides and cuffing him on the nape, till he had well-nigh made an end of him. Then said the Vizier in himself, 'I must save myself from this madman by telling him a lie, even as did the eunuch; else he will kill me, for he is mad beyond a doubt.' So he said to Kemerezzeman, 'O my lord, bear me not malice, for indeed thy father charged me to conceal from thee this affair of the young lady; but now I am weak and weary and sore with beating; for I am an old man and lack strength to endure blows. So have a little patience with me and I will tell thee all.' When the prince heard this, he left beating him and said, 'Why couldst thou not tell me without blows and humiliation? Rise now, unlucky old man that thou art, and tell me her story.' Quoth the Vizier, 'Dost thou ask of the young lady with the fair face and perfect shape?' 'Yes,' answered Kemerezzeman. 'Tell me who it was laid her by my side and took her away by night, and let me know whither she is gone, that I may go to her. If my father did this to try me, with a view to our marriage, I consent to marry her and be quit of this trouble; for he only dealt thus with me, because I refused to marry. I say again, I consent to marry: so tell this to my father, O Vizier, and advise him to marry me to her, for I will have none other and my heart loveth her alone. Go now to my father and counsel him to hasten our marriage and bring me his answer forthright.' 'It is well,' rejoined the Vizier, and went out from him, hardly crediting his escape. Then he set off running and stumbling as he went, for excess of affright and agitation, till he came in to the King, who said to him, 'O Vizier, what has befallen thee and who has maltreated thee and how comes it that I see thee thus confounded and terrified?' 'O King,' answered the Vizier, 'I bring thee news.' 'What is it?' asked Shehriman, and the Vizier said, 'Know that thy son Kemerezzeman's wits are gone and that madness hath betided him.' When the King heard this, the light in his face became darkness and he said, 'Expound to me the nature of my son's madness.' 'O my lord,' answered the Vizier, 'I hear and obey.' Then he told him all that had passed and the King said to him, 'O most ill-omened of Viziers and filthiest of Amirs, know that the reward I will give thee in return for this thy news of my son's madness shall be the cutting off of thy bead and the forfeiture of thy goods; for thou hast caused my son's disorder by the wicked and sinister counsel thou hast given me first and last. By Allah, if aught of mischief or madness have befallen him, I will nail thee upon the dome [of the palace] and make thee taste the bitterness of death!' Then rising, he betook himself with the Vizier to the tower, and when Kemerezzeman saw him, he came down to him in haste from the couch on which he sat and kissing his hands, drew back and stood before him awhile, with his eyes cast down and his hands clasped behind him. Then he raised his head and repeated the following verses, whilst the tears streamed down his cheeks:

If I have borne myself blameworthily to you Or if I've made
default in that which is your due,
I do repent my fault; so let your clemency Th' offender
comprehend, who doth for pardon sue.

When the King heard this, he embraced his son and kissing him between the eyes, made him sit by his side on the couch; then turned to the Vizier and looking on him with angry eyes, said to him, 'O dog of a Vizier, why didst thou tell me that my son was mad and make my heart quake for him?' Then he turned to the prince and said to him, 'O my son, what is to-day called?' 'O my father,' answered he, 'to-day is Saturday and to-morrow Sunday: then come Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.' 'O my son, O Kemerezzeman,' exclaimed the King, 'praised be God for the preservation of thy reason! What is this present month called in Arabic?'

'Dhoulcaadeh,' answered Kemerezzeman, 'and it is followed by Dhoulhejjeh; then comes Muherrem, then Sefer, then Rebia the First and Rebia the Second, the two Jumadas, Rejeb, Shaaban, Ramazan and Shewwal.' At this the King rejoiced exceedingly and spat in the Vizier's face, saying, 'O wicked old man, how canst thou pretend that my son is mad? None is mad but thou.' The Vizier shook his head and would have spoken, but bethought himself to wait awhile and see what befell. Then the King said to Kemerezzeman, 'O my son, what is this thou sayest to the eunuch and the Vizier of a fair damsel that lay with thee last night? What damsel is this of whom thou speakest?' Kemerezzeman laughed at his father's words and replied, 'O my father, I can bear no more jesting; so mock me not with another word, for my humour is soured by that you have done with me. Let it suffice thee to know that I consent to marry, but on condition that thou give me to wife her with whom I lay yesternight; for I am assured that it was thou sentest her to me and madest me in love with her, then tookest her away from beside me before the dawn.' 'O my son,' rejoined the King, 'the name of God encompass thee and preserve thy wit from madness! What young lady is this of whom thou talkest? By Allah, O my son, I know nothing of the affair, and I conjure thee, tell me if it be a delusion of sleep or a hallucination caused by food? Doubtless, thou layest down to sleep last night, with thy mind occupied with marriage and troubled with the thought of it (may God curse marriage and the hour in which it occurred to me and him who counselled it!) and dreamtest that a handsome young lady embraced thee and didst fancy thou sawst her on wake; but all this, O my son, is but an illusion of dreams.' 'Leave this talk,' replied Kemerezzeman, 'and swear to me by God, the All-wise Creator, the Humbler of the mighty and the Destroyer of the Chosroës, that thou knowest nothing of the young lady nor of her abiding-place.' 'By the virtue of the Most High God,' said the King, 'the God of Moses and Abraham, I know nothing of all this and it is assuredly but an illusion of dreams that thou hast seen in sleep.' Quoth the prince, 'I will give thee a proof that it was not a dream. Come, let me put a case to thee: did it ever happen to any to dream that he was fighting a sore battle and after to awake and find in his hand a sword besmeared with blood?' 'No, by Allah, O my son,' answered the King, 'this hath never been.' 'I will tell thee what happened to me,' rejoined Kemerezzeman. 'Meseemed I awoke from sleep in the middle of the past night and found a young lady lying by my side, whose shape and favour were as mine. I embraced her and turned her about with my hand and took her ring, which I put on my finger, and she pulled off my ring and put it on her finger. Then I went to sleep by her side, but refrained from her and was ashamed to kiss her on the mouth, deeming that thou hadst sent her to me, with intent to tempt me with her and incline me to marriage, and misdoubting thee to be hidden somewhere whence thou couldst see what I did with her. At point of day, I awoke and found no trace of her, nor could I come at any news of her, and there befell me what thou knowest of with the eunuch and the Vizier. How then can this have been a dream and a delusion, seeing that the ring is a reality? I should indeed have deemed it a dream but for her ring on my finger. Here it is: look at it, O King, and see what is its worth.' So saying, he handed the ring to his father, who examined it and turned it over, then said to his son, 'Verily, there hangs some mighty mystery by this ring and some strange secret. What befell thee last night is indeed a mysterious affair and I know not how this intruder came in upon us. None is the cause of all this trouble save the Vizier; but I conjure thee, O my son, to take patience, so haply God may do away this affliction from thee and bring thee complete relief: as quoth one of the poets:

It may be Fate at last shall draw its bridle-rein And bring us
happy chance; for Fortune changes still;
And things shall happen yet, despite the things fordone, To
further forth my hopes and bring me to my will.

And now, O my son,' added he, 'I am certified that thou art not mad; but thy case is a strange one, none can unravel it for thee but God the Most High.' 'By Allah, O my father,' cried the prince, 'deal kindly with me and seek out this damsel and hasten her coming to me; else I shall die of grief.' And he repeated the following verses, in a voice that betrayed the ardour of his passion:

An if thy very promise of union prove untrue, Let but in sleep
thy favours the longing lover cheer.
"How can the phantom visit a lover's eyes," quoth they, "From
which the grace of slumber is banned and banished sheer?"

And he sighed and wept and groaned aloud from a wounded heart, whilst the tears streamed from his eyes. Then turning to his father, with submission and despondency, he said to him, ‘By Allah, O my father, I cannot endure to be parted from her even for an hour.’ The King smote hand upon hand and exclaimed, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God, the Most High, the Sublime! There is no device can profit us in this affair!’ Then he took his son by the hand and carried him to the palace, where Kemerezzeman lay down on the bed of languor and the King sat at his head, weeping and mourning over him and leaving him not night or day, till at last the Vizier came in to him and said, ‘O King of the age and the time, how long wilt thou remain shut up with thy son and deny thyself to thy troops? Verily, the order of thy realm is like to be deranged, by reason of thine absence from thy grandees and officers of state. It behoves the man of understanding, if he have various wounds in his body, to apply him (first) to heal the most dangerous; so it is my counsel to thee that thou transport the prince to the pavilion overlooking the sea and shut thyself up with him there, setting apart Monday and Thursday in every week for state receptions and the transaction of public business. On these days let thine Amirs and Viziers and Chamberlains and deputies and captains and grandees and the rest of the troops and subjects have access to thee and submit their affairs to thee, and do thou their needs and judge between them and give and take with them and command and forbid. The rest of the week thou shalt pass with thy son Kemerezzeman, and thus do till God vouchsafe you both relief. Think not, O King, that thou art exempt from the shifts of fortune and the strokes of calamity; for the wise man is still on his guard, as well saith the poet:

Thou madest fair thy thought of Fate, whenas the days were fair,
And fearedst not the unknown ills that they to thee might bring.
The nights were fair and calm to thee; thou wast deceived by them, For in the peace of night is born full many a troublous thing.
O all ye children of mankind, to whom the Fates are kind, Let caution ever have a part in all your reckoning.’

The King was struck with the Vizier’s words and deemed his counsel wise and timely, fearing lest the order of the state be deranged; so he rose at once and bade carry his son to the pavilion in question, which was built (upon a rock) midmost the water and was approached by a causeway, twenty cubits wide. It had windows on all sides, overlooking the sea; its floor was of variegated marble and its roof was painted in the richest colours and decorated with gold and lapis-lazuli. They furnished it for Kemerezzeman with embroidered rugs and carpets of the richest silk and hung the walls with choice brocades and curtains bespangled with jewels. In the midst they set him a couch of juniper-wood, inlaid with pearls and jewels, and he sat down thereon, like a man that had been sick twenty years; for the excess of his concern and passion for the young lady had wasted his charms and emaciated his body, and he could neither eat nor drink nor sleep. His father seated himself at his head, mourning sore for him, and every Monday and Thursday he gave his Viziers and Amirs and grandees and officers and the rest of his subjects leave to come in to him in the pavilion. So they entered and did their several service and abode with him till the end of the day, when they went their ways and he returned to his son, whom he left not night nor day; and on this wise did he many days and nights.

To return to the Princess Budour. When the two Afrits carried her back to her palace and laid her on her bed, she slept on till daybreak, when she awoke and sitting up, looked right and left, but saw not the youth who had lain in her bosom. At this, her heart was troubled, her reason fled and she gave a great cry, whereupon all her damsels and nurses and serving-women awoke and came in to her; and the chief of them said to her, ‘What ails thee, O my lady?’ ‘O wretched old woman,’ answered the princess, ‘where is my beloved, the handsome youth that lay last night in my bosom? Tell me where he is gone.’ When the old woman heard this, the light in her eyes became darkness and she was sore in fear of her mischief and said to her, ‘O my lady Budour, what unseemly words are these?’ ‘Out on thee, pestilent crone that thou art!’ cried the princess. ‘Where is my beloved, the goodly youth with the shining face and the slender shape, the black eyes and the joined eyebrows, who lay with me last night from dusk until near daybreak?’ ‘By Allah, O my lady,’ replied the old woman, ‘I have seen no young man nor any other; but I conjure thee, leave this unseemly jesting, lest we be all undone. Belike, it may come to thy father's ears and who shall deliver us from his hand?' 'I tell thee,' rejoined Budour, 'there lay a youth with me last night, one of the fairest-faced of men.' 'God preserve thy reason!' exclaimed the nurse. 'Indeed, no one lay with thee last night.' The princess looked at her hand and seeing her own ring gone and Kemerezzeman's ring on her finger in its stead, said to the nurse, 'Out on thee, thou accursed traitress, wilt thou lie to me and tell me that none lay with me last night and forswear thyself to me?' 'By Allah,' replied the nurse, 'I do not lie to thee nor have I sworn falsely!' Her words incensed the princess and drawing a sword she had by her, she smote the old woman with it and slew her; whereupon the eunuch and the waiting-women cried out at her and running to her father, acquainted him with her case. So he went to her forthright and said to her, 'O my daughter, what ails thee?' 'O my father,' answered she, 'where is the young man that lay with me last night?' Then her reason left her and she cast her eyes right and left and rent her dress even to the skirt. When the King saw this, he bade the women lay hands on her; so they seized and bound her, then putting a chain of iron about her neck, made her fast to the window and there left her. As for her father, the world was straitened upon him, when he saw what had befallen her, for that he loved her and her case was not a little thing to him. So he summoned the doctors and astrologers and magicians and said to them, 'Whoso cureth my daughter of her disorder, I will marry him to her and give him half my kingdom; but whoso cometh to her and cureth her not, I will strike off his head and hang it over her palace-gate.' Accordingly, all who went in to her, but failed to cure her, he beheaded and hung their heads over her palace-gate, till he had beheaded forty physicians and crucified as many astrologers on her account; wherefore all the folk held aloof from her, for all the physicians failed to cure her malady and her case was a puzzle to the men of science and the magicians. And as her longing and passion redoubled and love and distraction were sore upon her, she poured forth tears and repeated the following verses:

My longing after thee, my moon, my foeman is; The thought of thee

by night doth comrade with me dwell.
I pass the darksome hours, and in my bosom flames A fire, for
heat that's like the very fire of hell.
I'm smitten with excess of ardour and desire; By which my pain is
grown an anguish fierce and fell.

Then she sighed and repeated these also:

My peace on the belovéd ones, where'er they light them down! I
weary for the neighbourhood of those I love, full sore.
My salutation unto you, — not that of taking leave, But greetings
of abundant peace, increasing evermore!
For, of a truth, I love you dear and love your land no less; But
woe is me! I'm far away from that I weary for.

Then she wept till her eyes grew weak and her cheeks pale and withered: and thus she abode three years. Now she had a foster-brother, by name Merzewan, who was absent from her all this time, travelling in far countries. He loved her with an exceeding love, passing that of brothers; so when he came back, he went in to his mother and asked for his foster-sister the princess Budour. 'Alas, my son,' answered she, 'thy sister has been smitten with madness and has passed these three years, with an iron chain about her neck; and all the physicians and men of science have failed of curing her.' When he heard this, he said, 'I must needs go in to her; peradventure I may discover what ails her, and be able to cure her.' 'So be it,' replied his mother; 'but wait till to-morrow, that I may make shift for thee.' Then she went to the princess's palace and accosting the eunuch in charge of the door, made him a present and said to him, 'I have a married daughter, who was brought up with thy mistress and is sore concerned for what has befallen her, and I desire of thy favour that my daughter may go in to her and look on her awhile, then return whence she came, and none shall know it.' 'This may not be, except by night,' replied the eunuch, 'after the King has visited the princess and gone away; then come thou and thy daughter.' She kissed the eunuch's hand and returning home, waited till the morrow at nightfall, when she dressed her son in woman's apparel and taking him by the hand, carried him to the palace. When the eunuch saw her, he said, ‘Enter, but do not tarry long.’ So they went in and when Merzewan saw the princess in the aforesaid plight, he saluted her, after his mother had taken off his woman’s attire: then pulling out the books he had brought with him and lighting a candle, he began to recite certain conjurations. The princess looked at him and knowing him, said to him, ‘O my brother, thou hast been absent on thy travels and we have been cut off from news of thee.’ ‘True,’ answered he; ‘but God has brought me back in safety and I am now minded to set out again; nor has aught delayed me but the sad news I hear of thee; wherefore my heart ached for thee and I came to thee, so haply I may rid thee of thy malady.’ ‘O my brother,’ rejoined she, ‘thinkest thou it is madness ails me?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he, and she said, ‘Not so, by Allah! It is even as says the poet:

Quoth they, “Thou’rt surely mad for him thou lov’st;” and I
replied, “Indeed the sweets of life belong unto the raving
race.
Lo, those who love have not, for that, the upper hand of fate;
Only the madman ’tis, I trow, o’ercometh time and space.
Yes, I am mad; so bring me him for whom ye say I’m mad; And if he
heal my madness, spare to blame me for my case.”’

Then she told him that she was in love, and he said, ‘Tell me thy story and what befell thee: peradventure God may discover to me a means of deliverance for thee.’ ‘Know then,’ said she, ‘that one night I awoke from sleep, in the last watch of the night, and sitting up, saw by my side the handsomest of youths, as he were a willow-wand or an Indian cane, the tongue fails to describe him. Me-thought this was my father’s doing to try me, for that he had consulted me, when the kings sought me of him in marriage, and I had refused. It was this idea that withheld me from arousing him, for I thought that if I did aught or embraced him, he would most like tell my father. When I awoke in the morning, I found his ring on my finger in place of my own, which he had taken; and, O my brother, my heart was taken with him at first sight; and for the violence of my passion and longing, I have never since known the taste of sleep and have no occupation save weeping and repeating verses night and day. This, then, O my brother, is the story of the cause of my (pretended) madness.' Then she poured forth tears and repeated the following verses:

Love has banished afar my delight; they are fled With a fawn that
hath hearts for a pasturing-stead.
To him lovers' blood is a trifle, for whom My soul is a-wasting
for passion and dread.
I'm jealous for him of my sight and my thought; My heart is a spy
on my eyes and my head.
His eyelashes dart at us death-dealing shafts; The hearts that
they light on are ruined and dead.
Whilst yet there is left me a share in the world, Shall I see
him, I wonder, or ever I'm sped?
I fain would conceal what I suffer for him; 'Tis shown to the spy
by the tears that I shed.
When near, his enjoyment is distant from me: But his image is
near, when afar he doth tread.

'See then, O my brother,' added she, 'how thou mayest aid me in this my affliction.' Merzewan bowed his head awhile, marvelling and knowing not what to do, then raised it and said to her, 'I believe all thou hast said to be true, though the case of the young man passes my imagination: but I will go round about all countries and seek for what may heal thee; peradventure God shall appoint thy deliverance to be at my hand. Meanwhile, take patience and be not disquieted.' So saying, he took leave of her, after he had prayed that she might be vouchsafed constancy, and left her repeating the following verses:

Thine image in my thoughts fares as a pilgrim aye, For all thy
stead and mine are distant many a day.
The wishes of my heart do bring thee near to me For 'gainst the
speed of thought what is the levin's ray?
Depart thou not, that art the lustre of mine eyes; Yea, when
thou'rt far removed, all void of light are they.

He returned to his mother's house, where he passed the night, and on the morrow, after furnishing himself for his journey, he set out and travelled from city to city and from island to island for a whole month. Everywhere he heard talk of the princess Budour's madness, till he came to a city named Teyreb and seeking news of the townsfolk, so haply he might light on a cure for his foster-sister's malady, heard that Kemerezzeman, son of King Shehriman, was fallen sick and afflicted with melancholy madness. He enquired the name of this prince's capital and was told that it stood on the Islands of Khalidan and was distant thence a whole month's journey by sea and six by land. So he took passage in a ship that was bound thither, and they sailed with a favouring breeze for a whole month, till they came in sight of the city and there remained for them but to enter the harbour; when there came out on them a tempestuous wind which carried away the masts and rent the canvas, so that the sails fell into the sea and the ship foundered, with all on board. Each looked to himself, and as for Merzewan, the current carried him under the King's palace, wherein was Kemerezzeman. As fate would have it, it was the day on which the King gave audience to his grandees and officers, and he was sitting, with his son's head in his lap, whilst an eunuch whisked away the flies. The prince had not spoken, neither had he eaten nor drunk for two days, and he was grown thinner than a spindle. Now the Vizier was standing near the window giving on the sea and raising his eyes, saw Merzewan at the last gasp for struggling with the waves; whereupon his heart was moved to pity for him and he drew near to the King and said to him, 'O King, I crave thy leave to go down to the court of the pavilion and open the water-gate, that I may rescue a man who is at the point of drowning in the sea and bring him forth of peril into deliverance; peradventure, on this account, God may ease thy son of his affliction.' 'O Vizier,' replied Shehriman, enough is that which has befallen my son through thee and on thine account. Belike, if thou rescue this drowning man, he will look on my son and come to know our affairs and exult over me; but I swear by Allah, that, if he come hither and see my son and after go out and speak of our secrets to any, I will assuredly strike off thy head before his; for thou art the cause of all that hath befallen us, first and last. Now do as thou wilt.' The Vizier rose and opening the postern, descended to the causeway; then walked on twenty steps and came to the sea, where he saw Merzewan nigh unto death. So he put out his hand to him and catching him by the hair of his head, drew him ashore, in a state of unconsciousness, with belly full of water and eyes starting from his head. The Vizier waited till he came to himself, when he pulled off his wet clothes and clad him in a fresh suit, covering his head with one of his servants' turbans; after which he said to him, 'I have been the means of saving thee from drowning: do not thou requite me by causing my death and thine own.' 'How so?' asked Merzewan; and the Vizier answered, 'Thou art now about to go up and pass among Amirs and Viziers, all silent and speaking not, because of Kemerezzeman, the King's son.' When Merzewan heard the name of Kemerezzeman, he knew that this was he of whom he came in search, but he feigned ignorance and said to the Vizier, 'And who is Kemerezzeman?' Quoth the Vizier, 'He is the King's son and lies sick on his couch, restless, eating not nor drinking neither sleeping night nor day; indeed he is nigh upon death and we have lost hope of his recovery. Beware lest thou look too long on him or on any place other than that where thou settest thy feet: else thou art a lost man and I also.' 'O Vizier,' said Merzewan, 'I conjure thee by Allah, tell me of thy favour, the cause of this youth's malady.' 'I know none,' answered the Vizier, 'save that, three years ago, his father pressed him to marry, but he refused; whereat the King was wroth and imprisoned him. On the morrow, he would have it that he had had, for a bedfellow, the night before, a young lady of surpassing beauty, beggaring description, with whom he had exchanged rings; but we know not the meaning of all this. So by Allah, O my son, when thou comest up into the palace, look not on the prince, but go thy way; for the King's heart is full of anger against me.' 'By Allah,' said Merzewan in himself, 'this is he whom I sought!' Then he followed the Vizier up to the palace, where the latter seated himself at the prince's feet; but Merzewan must needs go up to Kemerezzeman and stand before him, gazing on him. At this, the Vizier was like to die of affright and signed to Merzewan to go his way; but he feigned not to see him and gave not over gazing upon Kemerezzeman, till he was assured that it was indeed he of whom he was in search. Then, 'Glory be to God,' cried he, 'who hath made his shape even as her shape and his complexion as her complexion and his cheek as her cheek!' At this Kemerezzeman opened his eyes and gave ear to his speech; and when Merzewan saw him listening, he repeated the following verses:

I see thee full of song and plaint and ecstasy amain, And to the
setting forth in words of charms I find thee fain.
Can it be love hath wounded thee or art thou shot with shafts?
For sure these fashions but belong unto a smitten swain.
Ho, pour me out full cups of wine and sing me eke, in praise Of
Tenam, Suleyma, Rebäb, a glad and lovesome strain!
Yea, let the grape-vine's sun go round, whose mansion is
its jar, Whose East the cupbearer and West my thirsty mouth
I feign.
I'm jealous of the very clothes she dights upon her side, For
that upon her body soft and delicate they've lain;
And eke I'm envious of the cups that touch her dainty lips, When
to the kissing-place she sets them ever and again.
Think not that I in anywise with sword am done to death; 'Tis by
the arrows of a glance, alack! that I am slain.
Whenas we met again, I found her fingers dyed with red, As 'twere
the juice of tragacanth had steeped them in its stain.
Said I to her, "Thou'st dyed thy palms, whilst I was far
away. This then is how the slave of love is 'quited for his
pain."
Quoth she (and cast into my heart the flaming fires of love,
Speaking as one who hath no care love's secret to contain),
"No, by thy life, this is no dye I've used! So haste thou not To
heap accusings on my head and slander me in vain.
For, when I saw thee get thee gone upon our parting day, My eyes,
for very dreariment, with tears of blood did rain.
I wiped them with my hand, and so my fingers with my blood Were
all to-reddened and do yet their ruddy tint retain."
Had I for very passion wept, or e'er my mistress did, I should,
before repentance came, have solaced heart and brain;
But she before my weeping wept; her tears drew mine and so Quoth
I, "Unto the precedent the merit doth pertain."

Chide not at me for loving her, for by Love's self I swear, My
heart with anguish for her sake is well-nigh cleft in twain.
I weep for one whose face is decked by Beauty's self; there's
none, Arab or foreigner, to match with her, in hill or
plain.
The lore of Locman hath my love and Mary's chastity, with
Joseph's loveliness to boot and David's songful vein;
Whilst Jacob's grief to me belongs and Jonah's dreariment, Ay,
and Job's torment and despite and Adam's plight of bane.
Slay ye her not, although I die for love of her, but ask, How
came it lawful unto her to shed my blood in vain.

When Kemerezzeman heard these verses, they brought refreshment and healing to his heart, and he sighed and turning his tongue in his mouth, said to the King, 'O my father, let this young man come and sit by my side.' The King, hearing these words from his son, rejoiced exceedingly, though at the first he had been wroth with Merzewan and thought in himself to have stricken off his head: but when he heard Kemerezzeman speak, his anger left him and he arose and drawing Merzewan to him, made him sit down by his son and said to him, 'Praised be God for thy safety!' 'May God bless thee,' answered Merzewan, 'and preserve thy son to thee!' Then said the King, 'From what country comest thou?' 'From the Islands of the Inland Sea,' replied he, 'the kingdom of King Ghaïour, lord of the Islands and the seas and the Seven Palaces.' Quoth the King, 'Maybe thy coming shall be blessed to my son and God vouchsafe to heal him of his malady.' 'God willing,' rejoined Merzewan, 'all shall yet be well.' Then turning to Kemerezzeman, he said to him in his ear, unheard of the King and his court, 'Be of good cheer, O my lord, and take heart and courage. As for her for whose sake thou art thus, ask not of her condition on thine account. Thou keptest thy secret and fellest sick, but she discovered hers and they said she was mad; and she is now in prison, with an iron chain about her neck, in most piteous case; but, God willing, the healing of both of you shall be at my hand.' When Kemerezzeman heard this, his life returned to him and he took heart and courage and signed to his father to help him sit up; at which the King was like to lose his reason for joy and lifting him up, set two pillows for him to lean upon. Then, of his fear for his son, he shook the handkerchief of dismissal and all the Amirs and Viziers withdrew; after which he bade perfume the palace with saffron and decorate the city, saying to Merzewan, ‘By Allah, O my son, thou hast a lucky and a blessed aspect!’ And he made much of him and called for food, which when they brought, Merzewan said to the prince, ‘Come, eat with me.’ So he obeyed him and ate with him, while the King called down blessings on Merzewan and said, ‘How auspicious is thy coming, O my son!’ When he saw Kemerezzeman eat, his joy redoubled and he went out and told the prince’s mother and the people of the palace. Then he let call abroad the good news of the prince’s recovery and proclaimed the decoration of the city: so the people rejoiced and decorated the city and it was a day of high festival. Merzewan passed the night with Kemerezzeman, and the King also slept with them, in the excess of his joy for his son’s recovery. Next morning, when the King had gone away and the two young men were left alone, Kemerezzeman told Merzewan his story from first to last and the latter said to him, ‘I know her with whom thou didst foregather; her name is the princess Budour and she is daughter to King Ghaïour.’ Then he told him all that had befallen the princess and acquainted him with the excessive love she bore him, saying, ‘All that befell thee with thy father hath befallen her with hers, and thou art without doubt her beloved, even as she is thine; so brace up thy resolution and take heart, for I will bring thee to her and unite you both anon and deal with you even as saith the poet:

Though to the lover adverse be the fair And drive him with her
    rigours to despair,
Yet will I soon unite them, even as I The pivot of a pair of
    scissors were.

And he went on to comfort and hearten Kemerezzeman and urged him to eat and drink, cheering him and diverting him with talk and song and stories, till he ate food and drank wine and life and strength returned to him. In good time he became free of his disorder and stood up and sought to go to the bath. So Merzewan took him by the hand and carried him to the bath, where they washed their bodies and made them clean. When his father heard of this, in his joy he freed the prisoners and gave alms to the poor; moreover he bestowed splendid dresses of honour upon his grandees and let decorate the city seven days. Then said Merzewan to Kemerezzeman, ‘Know, O my lord, that the sole object of my journey hither was to deliver the princess Budour from her present strait; and it remains but for us to devise how we may get to her, since thy father cannot brook the thought of parting with thee. So it is my counsel that tomorrow thou ask his leave to go a-hunting, saying, “I have a mind to divert myself with hunting in the desert and to see the open country and pass the night there.” Then do thou take with thee a pair of saddle-bags full of gold and mount a swift hackney and I will do the like; and we will take each a spare horse. Suffer not any servant to follow us, for as soon as we reach the open country, we will go our ways.’ Kemerezzeman rejoiced mightily in this plan and said, ‘It is good.’ Then he took heart and going in to his father, sought his leave to go out to hunt, saying as Merzewan had taught him. The King consented and said, ‘O my son, a thousandfold blessed be the day that restores thee to health! I will not gainsay thee in this; but pass not more than one night in the desert and return to me on the morrow; for thou knowest that life is not good to me without thee, and indeed I can hardly as yet credit thy recovery, because thou art to me as he of whom quoth the poet:

Though Solomon his carpet were mine both day and night, Though
the Choeroës’ empire, yea, and the world were mine,
All were to me in value less than a midge’s wing, Except mine
eyes still rested upon that face of thine.’

Then he equipped the prince and Merzewan for the excursion, bidding make them ready four horses, together with a dromedary to carry the money and a camel for the water and victuals; and Kemerezzeman forbade any of his attendants to follow him. His father bade him farewell and pressed him to his breast and kissed him, saying, ‘I conjure thee by Allah, be not absent from me more than one night, wherein sleep will be denied me, for I am even as saith the poet:

Thy presence with me is my heaven of delight And my hell of
affliction the loss of thy sight.
My soul be thy ransom! If love be my crime For thee, my offence,
of a truth, is not light.
Doth passion blaze up in thy heart like to mine? I suffer the
torments of hell day and night.'

'O my father,' answered Kemerezzeman, 'God willing, I will lie but one night abroad.' Then he took leave of him, and he and Merzewan mounted and taking with them the dromedary and camel, rode out into the open country. They drew not bridle from the first of the day till nightfall, when they halted and ate and drank and fed their beasts and rested awhile; after which they again took horse and fared on three days, till they came to a spacious wooded tract. Here they alighted and Merzewan, taking the camel and one of the horses, slaughtered them and cut the flesh off their bones. Then he took from Kemerezzeman his shirt and trousers and cassock and tearing them in shreds, smeared them with the horse's blood and cast them down in the fork of the road. Then they ate and drank and taking horse set forward again. 'O my brother,' said Kemerezzeman, 'what is this thou hast done and how will it profit us?' 'Know,' answered Merzewan, 'that thy father, when he finds that we have outstayed the night for which we had his leave, will mount and follow in our track till he comes hither; and when he sees the blood and thy clothes torn and bloodied, he will deem thee to have been slain of highway robbers or wild beasts; so he will give up hope of thee and return to his city, and by this devise we shall gain our end.' 'By Allah,' said Kemerezzeman, 'this is indeed a rare device! Thou hast done well.' Then they fared on days and nights and Kemerezzeman did nought but weep and complain, till they drew near their journey's end, when he rejoiced and repeated the following verses:

Wilt thou be harsh to a lover, who's never unmindful of thee, And
wilt thou now cast him away to whom thou wast fain
heretofore?
May I forfeit the favour of God, if I ever was false to thy love!
Abandonment punish my crime, if I've broken the vows that I

swore!
But no, I've committed no crime, that calleth for rigour from
thee; Or, if in good sooth I'm at fault, I bring thee
repentance therefor.
Of the marvels of Fortune it is that thou shouldst abandon me
thus; But Fortune to bring to the light fresh marvels will
never give o'er.

When he had made an end of these verses, Merzewan said to him, 'See, yonder are King Ghaïour's Islands.' Whereat Kemerezzeman rejoiced with an exceeding joy and thanked him for what he had done and strained him to his bosom and kissed him between the eyes. They entered the city and took up their lodging at a khan, where they rested three days from the fatigues of the journey; after which Merzewan carried Kemerezzeman to the bath and clothing him in a merchant's habit, provided him with a geomantic tablet of gold, a set of astrological instruments and an astrolabe of silver, plated with gold. Then he said to him, 'Go, O my lord, stand before the King's palace and cry out, "I am the mathematician, I am the scribe, I am he that knows the Sought and the Seeker, I am the skilled physician, I am the accomplished astrologer. Where then is he that seeketh?" When the King hears this, he will send after thee and carry thee in to his daughter the princess Budour, thy mistress: but do thou say to him, "Grant me three days' delay, and if she recover, give her to me to wife, and if not, deal with me as with those who came before me." If he agree to this, as soon as thou art alone with her, discover thyself to her; and when she knows thee, her madness will cease from her and she will be made whole in one night. Then do thou give her to eat and drink, and her father, rejoicing in her recovery, will marry thee to her and share his kingdom with thee, according to the condition he hath imposed on himself: and so peace be on thee.' 'May I never lack thine excellence!' replied Kemerezzeman, and taking the instruments aforesaid, sallied forth of the khan and took up his station before King Ghaïour's palace, where he began to cry out, saying, 'I am the scribe, I am the mathematician, he that knows the Sought and the Seeker, I am he who makes calculations for marriage contracts, who draws horoscopes, interprets dreams and traces the magical characters by which hidden treasures are discovered! Where then is the seeker?' When the people of the city heard this, they flocked to him, for it was long since they had seen a scribe or an astrologer, and stood round him, wondering at his beauty and grace and perfect symmetry. Presently one of them accosted him and said, 'God on thee, O fair youth with the eloquent tongue, cast not thyself into perdition, in thy desire to marry the princess Budour! Do but look on yonder heads hung up; they are all those of men who have lost their lives in this same venture.' He paid no heed to them, but cried out at the top of his voice, saying, 'I am the doctor, the scribe! I am the astrologer, the mathematician!' And all the townsfolk forbade him from this, but he heeded them not, saying in himself, 'None knoweth desire save he who suffereth it.' Then he began again to cry his loudest, saying, 'I am the scribe, I am the mathematician, I am the astrologer!' till all the townsfolk were wroth with him and said to him, 'Thou art but a silly self-willed boy! Have pity on thine own youth and tender years and beauty and grace.' But he cried all the more, 'I am the astrologer, I am the mathematician! Is there any one that seeketh?' As he was thus crying and the people remonstrating with him, King Ghaïour heard his voice and the clamour of the folk and said to his Vizier, 'Go down and bring me yon astrologer.' So the Vizier went down and taking Kemerezzeman from the midst of the crowd, carried him up to the King, before whom he kissed the earth, repeating the following verses:

Eight elements of high renown are all comprised in thee; By them
may Fortune never cease thy bounder slave to be!
Munificence and knowledge sure, glory and piety, Fair fluent
speech and eloquence and might and victory.

When the King saw him, he made him sit down by his side and said to him, 'By Allah, O my son, an thou be not an astrologer, venture not thy life nor submit thyself to my condition; for I have bound myself to strike off the head of whoso goeth in to my daughter and healeth her not of her disorder; but him who healeth her I will marry to her. So let not thy beauty and grace delude thee; for, by Allah, if thou cure her not, I will assuredly cut off thy head!' 'I knew of this condition before I came hither,' answered Kemerezzeman, 'and am ready to abide by it.' Then King Ghaïour took the Cadis to witness against him and delivered him to an eunuch, saying, 'Carry this fellow to the lady Budour.' So the eunuch took him by the hand and led him along the gallery; but Kemerezzeman out-went him and pushed on before, whilst the eunuch ran after him, saying, 'Out on thee! Hasten not to destroy thyself. By Allah, never yet saw I astrologer so eager for his own destruction: thou knowest not the calamities that await thee.' But Kemerezzeman turned away his face and repeated the following verses:

A learnéd man, I'm ignorant before thy beauties bright; Indeed, I
 know not what I say, confounded at thy sight.
If I compare thee to the sun, thou passest not away, Whilst the
 sun setteth from the sky and fails anon of light.
Perfect, indeed, thy beauties are; they stupefy the wise Nor ev'n
 the eloquent avail to praise thy charms aright.

The eunuch stationed Kemerezzeman behind the curtain of the princess's door and the prince said to him, 'Whether of the two wilt thou liefer have me do, cure thy lady from here or go in and cure her within the curtain?' The eunuch marvelled at his words and answered, 'It were more to thine honour to cure her from here.' So Kemerezzeman sat down behind the curtain and taking out pen and inkhorn and paper, wrote the following: 'This is the letter of one whom passion torments and whom desire consumes and sorrow and misery destroy; one who despairs of life and looks for nothing but death, whose mourning heart has neither comforter nor helper, whose sleepless eyes have none to succour them against affliction, whose day is passed in fire and his night in torment, whose body is wasted for much emaciation and there comes to him no messenger from his beloved:

I write with a heart devoted to thee and the thought of thee And
 an eyelid, wounded for weeping tears of the blood of me.
And a body that love and affliction and passion and long desire
 Have clad with the garment of leanness and wasted utterly.

I plain me to thee of passion, for sore hath it baffled me Nor is
there a corner left me where patience yet may be.
Wherefore, have mercy, I prithee, show favour unto me, For my
heart, my heart is breaking for love and agony.

The cure of hearts is union with the beloved and whom his love maltreateth, God is his physician. If either of us have broken faith, may the false one fail of his desire! There is nought goodlier than a lover who is faithful to a cruel beloved one.' Then, for a subscription, he wrote, 'From the distracted and despairing lover, him whom love and longing disquiet, from the captive of passion and transport, Kemerezzeman, son of Shehriman, to the peerless beauty, the pearl of the fair Houris, the Lady Budour, daughter of King Ghaïour. Know that by night I am wakeful and by day distraught, consumed with ever-increasing wasting and sickness and longing and love, abounding in sighs, rich in floods of tears, the prisoner of passion, the slain of desire, the debtor of longing, the boon-companion of sickness, he whose heart absence hath seared. I am the sleepless one, whose eyes close not, the slave of love, whose tears run never dry, for the fire of my heart is still unquenched and the flaming of my longing is never hidden.' Then in the margin he wrote this admired verse:

Peace from the stores of the grace of my Lord be rife On her in whose hand are my heart and soul and life!

And also these:

Vouchsafe thy converse unto me some little, so, perchance, Thou
mayst have ruth on me or else my heart be set at ease.
Yea, for the transport of my love and longing after thee, Of all
I've suffered I make light and all my miseries.
God guard a folk whose dwelling-place is far removed from mine,
The secret of whose love I've kept in many lands and seas!
But fate, at last, hath turned on me a favourable face And on my
loved one's threshold-earth hath cast me on my knees.
Budour beside me in the bed I saw and straight my moon, Lit by
her sun, shone bright and blithe upon my destinies.

Then by way of subscription, he wrote the following verses:

Ask of my letter what my pen hath written, and the scroll Will
tell the passion and the pain that harbour in my soul.
My hand, what while my tears rain down, writes and desire makes
moan Unto the paper by the pen of all my weary dole.
My tears roll ever down my cheeks and overflow the page; Nay, I'd
ensue them with my blood, if they should cease to roll.

And at the end he added this other verse:

I send thee back herewith the ring I took whilere of thee, Whenas we companied; so send me that thou hadst of me.

Then he folded up Budour's ring inside the letter and sealing it, gave it to the eunuch, who went in with it to the princess. She took it from him and opening it, found in it her own ring. Then she read the letter and when she understood its purport and knew that her beloved stood behind the curtain, her reason fled and her breast dilated for joy; and she repeated the following verses:

Long, long have I bewailed the sev'rance of our loves, With tears
that from my lids streamed down like burning rain,
And vowed that, if the days should reunite us two, My lips should
never speak of severance again.
Joy hath o'erwhelmed me so that, for the very stress Of that
which gladdens me, to weeping I am fain.
Tears are become to you a habit, O my eyes, So that ye weep as
well for gladness as for pain.

Then she rose and setting her feet to the wall, strained with all her might upon the iron collar, till she broke it from her neck and snapped the chains; then going forth, she threw herself on Kemerezzeman and kissed him on the mouth, like a pigeon billing. And she embraced him with all the stress of her love and longing and said to him, 'O my lord, do I wake or sleep and has God indeed vouchsafed us reunion after separation? Praised be He who hath reknit our loves, after despair!' When the eunuch saw this, he ran to King Ghaïour and kissing the earth before him, said, 'O my lord, know that this is indeed the prince and paragon of astrologers; for he hath cured thy daughter from behind the curtain, without going in to her.' 'Look to it well,' said the King; 'is this news true?' 'O my lord,' answered the eunuch, 'come and see for thyself how she hath found strength to break the iron chains and is come forth to the astrologer, kissing and embracing him.' So the King arose and went in to his daughter, who, when she saw him, rose and covered her face, reciting the following verses:

I love not the toothstick; 'tis hateful to me, For I, when I name
 it, say, "Other than thee."
But I love, notwithstanding, the capparis-tree, For, whenas I
 name it I say, "Thee I see."

The King was transported for joy at her recovery and kissed her between the eyes, for he loved her very dearly; then turning to Kemerezzeman, he asked him who he was and whence he came. The prince told him his name and rank and that he was the son of King Shehriman, and related to him the whole story from beginning to end; whereat Ghaïour marvelled and said, 'Verily, your story deserves to be recorded in books and read after you, generation after generation.' Then he summoned Cadis and witnesses forthright and married the two lovers; after which he bade decorate the city seven days long. So they decorated the city and held high festival, and all the troops donned their richest clothes, whilst the drums beat and the criers announced the glad tidings. Then they spread the tables with all manner meats and unveiled the princess before Kemerezzeman, and behold, each was like unto the other in beauty and elegance and amorous grace. So the King rejoiced in the issue of her affair and in her marriage and praised God for that He had made her to fall in love with a goodly youth of the sons of the kings. Then Kemerezzeman went in to her and lay with her that night and took his will of her, whilst she in like manner fufilled her desire of him and enjoyed his beauty and grace; and they clipped each other till the morning. On the morrow, the King made a banquet and spreading the tables with the richest meats, kept open house a whole month to all comers from the Islands of the Inner and the Outer Seas. Now, when

Kemerezzeman had thus attained his desire and had tarried awhile with the princess Budour, he bethought him of his father and saw him in a dream, saying, ‘O my son, is it thus thou dealest with me?’ and reciting the following verses:

The moon o’ the dark by his neglect my spirit doth appal And to
the watching of his stars hath made my eyelids thrall.
But soft, my heart! It may be yet he will return to thee; And
patience, soul, beneath the pain he’s smitten thee withal!

Kemerezzeman awoke in the morning, afflicted and troubled at what he had seen, whereupon the princess questioned him and he told her his dream. Then they both went in to King Ghaïour and telling him what had passed, besought his leave to depart. He gave the prince the leave he sought; but the princess said, ‘O my father, I cannot endure to be parted from him.’ Quoth Ghaïour, ‘Then go thou with him,’ and gave her leave to be absent a whole year, charging her to visit him once in every year thereafterward. So she kissed his hand and Kemerezzeman did the like; after which he proceeded to equip them for the journey, furnishing them with horses and dromedaries of choice and a litter for his daughter, besides mules and camels laden with victual and all manner of travelling gear. Moreover, he gave them slaves and eunuchs to serve them and bestowed on Kemerezzeman ten splendid suits of cloth of gold, embroidered with jewels, together with a treasury of money and ten riding horses and as many she-camels. When the day of departure arrived, the King accompanied them to the farthest limits of his islands, where, going in to his daughter Budour in the litter, he kissed her and strained her to his bosom, weeping and repeating the following verses:

O thou that seekest parting, stay thy feet, For sure embraces are
a lover’s right.
Softly, for fortune’s nature is deceit And parting is the end of
love-delight.

Then, leaving her, he kissed her husband and commended his daughter to his care; after which he bade him farewell and giving the signal for departure, returned to his capital with his troops. The prince and princess and their suite fared on without stopping a whole month, at the end of which time they came to a spacious champaign, abounding in pasturage, where they alighted and pitched their tents. They ate and drank and rested, and the princess Budour lay down to sleep. Presently, Kemerezzeman went in to her and found her lying asleep, in a shift of apricot-coloured silk, that showed all it should have covered, and a coif of cloth of gold embroidered with pearls and jewels. The breeze raised her shift and showed her breasts and navel and a belly whiter than snow, each one of whose dimples contained an ounce of benzoin ointment. At this sight, his love and passion for her redoubled, and he recited the following verses:

If, whilst within my entrails the fires of hell did stir And
  flames raged high about me, 'twere spoken in my ear,
"Which wilt thou have the rather, a draught of water cold Or
  sight of her thou lovest?" I'd say, "The sight of her."

Then he put his hand to the ribbon of her trousers and drew it and loosed it, for that his soul lusted after her, when he saw a jewel, red as dragon's blood, made fast to the band. He untied and examined it and seeing two lines of writing graven thereon, in a character not to be read, marvelled and said in himself, 'Except she set great store by this, she had not tied it to the ribbon of her trousers nor hidden it in the most private place about her person, that she might not be parted from it. I wonder what she doth with it and what is the secret that is in it.' So saying, he took it and went without the tent to look at it in the light; but as he was examining it, a bird swooped down on him and snatching it from his hand, flew off with it and lighted on the ground at a little distance. Fearing to lose the talisman, he ran after the bird; but it flew on before him, keeping just out of his reach, and drew him on from place to place and from hill to hill, till the night came on and the air grew dark, when it roosted on a high tree. Kemerezzeman stopped under the tree, confounded and faint for hunger and weariness, and giving himself up for lost, would have turned back, but knew not the way, for the darkness had overtaken him. So he exclaimed, 'There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!' and lying down under the tree, slept till the morning, when he awoke and saw the bird also awake and fly away. He arose and walked after it, and it flew on little by little before him, after the measure of his going; at which he smiled and said, 'By Allah, this is a strange thing! Yesterday, the bird flew before me as fast as I could run; and to-day, knowing that I am tired and cannot run, it flieth after the measure of my walking. By Allah, this is wonderful! But, whether it lead me to my death or to my life, I must needs follow it, wherever it goeth, for it will surely not abide save in some inhabited land. So he followed the bird, eating of the fruits of the earth and drinking of its waters, for ten days' space, and every night the bird roosted on a tree. At the end of this time, he came in sight of an inhabited city, whereupon the bird darted off like the glance of the eye and entering the town, was lost to view: and Kemerezzeman marvelled at this and exclaimed, 'Praised be God, who hath brought me hither in safety!' Then he sat down by a stream and washed his hands and feet and face and rested awhile: and recalling his late easy and pleasant life of union with his beloved and contrasting it with his present plight of trouble and weariness and hunger and strangerhood and severance, the tears streamed from his eyes and he repeated the following cinquains:

I strove to hide the load that love on me did lay; In vain, and
  sleep for me is changed to wake alway.
Whenas wanhope doth press my heart both night and day, I cry
  aloud, "O Fate, hold back thy hand, I pray.
    For all my soul is sick with dolour and dismay!"
If but the Lord of Love were just indeed to me, Sleep had not
  fled mine eyes by his unkind decree.
Have pity, sweet, on one that is for love of thee Worn out and
  wasted sore; once rich and great was he,
    Now beggared and cast down by love from his array.
The railers chide at thee full sore; I heed not, I, But stop my
  ears to them and give them back the lie.
"Thou lov'st a slender one," say they; and I reply, "I've chosen
  her and left all else beneath the sky."
    Enough; when fate descends, the eyes are blinded aye.

As soon as he was rested, he rose and walked on, little by little, till he came to the city-gate and entered, knowing not whither he should go. He traversed the city from end to end, without meeting any of the townsfolk, entering by the land-gate and faring on till he came out at the sea-gate, for the city stood on the sea-shore. Presently, he found himself among the orchards and gardens of the place and passed among the trees, till he came to a garden-gate and stopped before it, whereupon the keeper came out to him and saluted him. The prince returned his greeting and the other bade him welcome, saying, 'Praised be God that thou hast come off safe from the people of the city! Quick, come into the garden, ere any of the townsfolk see thee.' So Kemerezzeman entered the garden, amazed, and said to the keeper, 'Who and what then are the people of this city?' 'Know,' answered the other,' that the people of this city are all Magians: but, God on thee, tell me how and why thou camest hither.' Accordingly, Kemerezzeman told him all that had befallen him, at which the gardener marvelled greatly and said, 'Know, O my son, that from this place to the cities of Islam is four months' journey by sea and a whole year by land. We have a ship that sails yearly hence with merchandise to the Ebony Islands, which are the nearest Muslim country, and thence to the Khalidan Islands, the dominions of King Shehriman.' Kemerezzeman considered awhile and concluding that he could not do better than abide with the gardener and become his assistant, said to him, 'Wilt thou take me into thy service, to help thee in this garden?' 'Willingly,' answered the gardener and clothing him in a short blue gown, that reached to his knees, taught him to lead the water to the roots of the trees. So Kemerezzeman abode with him, watering the trees and hoeing up the weeds and weeping floods of tears; for he had no rest day or night, by reason of his strangerhood and separation from his beloved, and he ceased not to repeat verses upon her, amongst others the following:

Ye made us a promise of yore; will ye not to your promise be
true? Ye spoke us a word aforetime; as ye spoke to us, will
ye not do?
We waken, whilst ye are asleep, according to passion's decree; So
have ye the vantage of us, for watchers and sleepers are

two.
We vowed to each other, whilere, that we would keep secret our
loves; But the breedbate possessed you to speak, and you
spoke and revealed what none knew.
Belovéd in pleasure and pain, chagrin and contentment alike,
Whate’er may betide, ye alone are the goal that my wishes
ensue.
There’s one that still holdeth a heart, a heart sore tormented of
mine; Ah, would she’d have ruth on my plight and pity the
soul that she slew!
Not every one’s eye is as mine, worn wounded and cankered with
tears, And hearts that are, even as mine, the bondslaves of
passion, are few.
Ye acted the tyrant with me, saying, “Love is a tyrant, I trow.”
Indeed, ye were right, and the case has proved what ye said
to be true.
Alack! They’ve forgotten outright a passion-distraught one,
whose faith Time ‘minisheth not, though the fires in his
entrails rage ever anew.
If my foeman in love be my judge, to whom shall I make my
complaint? To whom of injustice complain, to whom for
redress shall I sue?
Were it not for my needing of love and the ardour that burns in
my breast, I had not a heart love-enslaved and a soul that
for passion must rue.

To return to the princess Budour. When she awoke, she sought her husband and found him not: then she saw the ribbon of her trousers undone and the talisman missing and said to herself, ‘By Allah, this is strange! Where is my husband? It would seem as if he had taken the talisman and gone away, knowing not the secret that is in it. Whither can he have gone? It must have been some extraordinary matter that drew him away, for he cannot brook to leave me an hour. May God curse the talisman and its hour!’ Then she considered awhile and said in herself, ‘If I go out and tell the servants that my husband is lost, they will covet me: I must use stratagem.’ So she rose and donned some of her husband’s clothes and boots and spurs and a turban like his, drawing the loose end across her face for a chin-band. Then setting a slave-girl in her litter, she went forth the tent and called to the servants, who brought her Kemerezzeman's horse; and she mounted and bade load the beasts and set forward. So they bound on the burdens and departed, none doubting but she was Kemerezzeman, for she resembled him in face and form; nor did they leave journeying, days and nights, till they came in sight of a city overlooking the sea, when they halted to rest and pitched their tents without the walls. The princess asked the name of the place and was told, 'It is called the City of Ebony: its king is named Armanous, and he hath a daughter called Heyat en Nufous.' Presently, the King sent to learn who it was that had encamped without his city; so the messenger, coming to the tents, enquired of Budour's servants and was told that she was a king's son, bound for the Khalidan Islands, who had strayed from his road; whereupon he returned and told the King, who straightway took horse and rode out, with his nobles, to meet the strange prince. As he drew near the tents, the princess came to meet him on foot, whereupon the King alighted and they saluted each other. Then he carried her into the city and bringing her to the palace, let spread a banquet and bade transport her company and baggage to the guest-house, where they abode three days; at the end of which time the King came in to Budour (Now she had that day gone to the bath and her face shone as the moon at its full, enchanting all beholders, and she was clad in robes of silk, embroidered with gold and jewels) and said to her, 'Know, O my son, that I am a very old man and am grown unable for the conduct of the state. Now God has blessed me with no child save one daughter, who resembles thee in beauty and grace; so, O my son, if this my country please thee and thou be willing to make thine abode here, I will marry thee to my daughter and give thee my kingdom and so be at rest.' When Budour heard this, she bowed her head and her forehead sweated for shame, and she said to herself, 'How shall I do, and I a woman? If I refuse and depart, I cannot be safe but that he may send after me troops to kill me; and if I consent, belike I shall be put to shame. I have lost my beloved Kemerezzeman and know not what is come of him; wherefore I see nothing for it but to hold my peace and consent and abide here, till God accomplish what is to be.'

So she raised her head and made submission to King Armanous, saying, ‘I hear and obey,’ whereat he rejoiced and bade make proclamation, throughout the Ebony Islands, to hold high festival and decorate the houses. Then he assembled his chamberlains and Amirs and Viziers and other officers of state and the Cadis of the city, and putting off the kingship, invested Budour therewith and clad her in the royal robes. Moreover, the Amirs and grandees went in to her and did her homage, nothing doubting but that she was a young man, and all who looked on her berayed their hose for the excess of her beauty and grace; then, after the lady Budour had been made Sultan and the drums had been beaten, in announcement of the joyful event, Armanous proceeded to equip his daughter for marriage, and in a few days, they brought Budour in to her, when they seemed as it were two moons risen at one time or two suns foregathering. So they entered the bridal-chamber and the doors were shut and the curtains let down upon them, after the attendants had lighted the candles and spread the bed for them. When Budour found herself alone with the princess Heyat en Nufous, she called to mind her beloved Kemerezzeman and grief was sore upon her. So she wept for his loss and absence and repeated the following verses:

O ye who went and left my heart to pine alone fore’er, No spark
of life remains in me, since ye away did fare!
I have an eye that doth complain of sleeplessness alway; Tears
have consumed it; would to God that sleeplessness would
spare!
When ye departed, after you the lover did abide; But question of
him what of pain in absence he doth bear.
But for the ceaseless flood of tears my eyes pour forth, the
world Would at my burning all catch fire, yea, seas and
lands and air.
To God Most High I make my moan of dear ones loved and lost,
That
on my passion have no ruth nor pity my despair.
I never did them wrong, except my love for them were such; But
into blest and curst in love men aye divided were.

When she had finished, she sat down beside the princess Heyat en Nufous and kissed her on the mouth. Then, rising abruptly, she made the ablution and betook herself to her devotions, nor did she leave praying till Heyat en Nufous was asleep, when she slipt into bed and lay with her back to her till morning; then rose and went out. Presently, the old king and queen came in to their daughter and asked her how she did, whereupon she told them what had passed and repeated to them the verses she had heard.

Meanwhile, Budour seated herself upon the throne and all the Amirs and captains and officers of state came in to her and wished her joy of the kingship, kissing the earth before her and calling down blessings upon her. She smiled on them and clad them in robes of honour, augmenting the fiefs of the Amirs and giving largesse to the troops; wherefore all the people loved her and offered up prayers for the continuance of her reign, doubting not but that she was a man. She sat all day in the hall of audience, ordering and forbidding and dispensing justice, releasing those who were in prison and remitting the customs dues, till nightfall, when she withdrew to the apartment prepared for her. Here she found Heyat en Nufous seated; so she sat down by her and clapping her on the back, caressed her and kissed her between the eyes, repeating the following verses:

The secret that I cherished my tears have public made; The
wasting of my body my passion hath bewrayed.
I hid my love and longing; but on the parting-day My plight,
alas! revealed it to spies; ’twas open laid.
O ye who have departed the camp, ye’ve left behind My body worn
with languor and spirit all decayed.
Within my heart’s recesses ye have your dwelling-place; My tears
are ever running and lids with blood berayed.
For ever will I ransom the absent with my soul; Indeed, for them
my yearnings are patent and displayed.
I have an eye, whose pupil, for love of them, rejects Sleep and
whose tears flow ever, unceasing and unstayed.
My foes would have me patient for him; but God forbid That ever
of my hearing should heed to them be paid!
I baulked their expectation. Of Kemerezzeman Sometime I did

accomplish the joys for which I prayed.
He doth, as none before him, perfections all unite; No king of
bygone ages was in the like arrayed.
His clemency and bounty Ben Zaïdeh's largesse And
Muawiyeh's mildness have cast into the shade.
But that it would be tedious and verse sufficeth not To picture
forth his beauties, I'd leave no rhyme unmade.

Then she wiped away her tears and making the ablution, stood up to pray; nor did she give over praying, till drowsiness overcame Heyat en Nufous and she slept, whereupon Budour came and lay beside her till the morning. At daybreak, she arose and prayed the morning-prayer; then, going forth, seated herself on the throne and passed the day in ordering and forbidding and administering justice. Meanwhile, King Armanous went in to his daughter and asked her how she did; so she told him all that had passed and repeated to him the verses that Budour had recited, adding, 'O my father, never saw I one more abounding in sense and modesty than my husband, save that he doth nothing but weep and sigh.' 'O my daughter,' answered her father, 'have patience with him yet this third night, and if he go not in to thee and do away thy maidenhead, we will take order with him and oust him from the throne and banish him the country.' When the night came, the princess Budour rose from the throne and betaking herself to the bride-chamber, found the candles lighted and the princess Heyat en Nufous sitting awaiting her; whereupon she bethought her of her husband and recalling the early severance of their loves, wept and sighed and groaned groan upon groan, repeating the following verses:

I swear the tidings of my woes fills all the country-side, Like
the sun shining on the hills of Nejed far and wide.
His gesture speaks, but hard to tell the meaning of it is, And
thus my yearning without end is ever magnified.
I hate fair patience since the hour I fell in love with thee.
Hast seen a lover hating love at any time or tide?
One, in whose glances sickness lies, hath smitten me to death,
For looks are deadliest of the things, wherein doth sickness

bide.
He shook his clustered ringlets down and laid his chin-band by,
And beauty thus in him, at once both black and white, I spied.
Sickness and cure are in his hands; for, to the sick of love, By
him alone who caused their dole can healing be applied.
The softness of his waist hath made his girdle mad for love And
of his hips, for jealousy, to rise he is denied.
His forehead, covered with his curls, is as a mirky night;
Unveiled, ’tis as a shining moon that thrusts the dark aside.

When she had finished, she would have risen to pray, but Heyat en Nufous caught her by the skirt, saying, ‘O my lord, art thou not ashamed to neglect me thus, after all the favour my father hath done thee?’ When Budour heard this, she sat down again and said, ‘O my beloved, what is this thou sayest?’ ‘What I say,’ answered Heyat en Nufous, ‘is that I never saw any so self-satisfied as thou. Is every fair one so disdainful? I say not this to incline thee to me, but only of my fear for thee from King Armanous; for he purposes, an thou go not in to me to-night and do away my maidenhead, to strip thee of the kingship on the morrow and banish thee the realm; and belike his much anger may lead him to kill thee. But I, O my lord, have compassion on thee and give thee fair warning; and it is thine to decide.’ At this, Budour bowed her head in perplexity and said in herself, ‘If I refuse, I am lost, and if I obey, I am shamed. I am now queen of all the Ebony Islands and they are under my rule and I shall never again foregather with Kemerezzeman except it be in this place; for there is no way for him to his native land but through the Ebony Islands. Verily, I know not what to do, for I am no man that I should arise and open this virgin girl; but I commit my case to God, who orders all for the best.’ Then she said to Heyat en Nufous, ‘O my beloved, it is in my own despite that I have neglected thee and abstained from thee.’ And she discovered herself to her and told her her whole story, saying, ‘I conjure thee by Allah to keep my counsel, till God reunite me with my beloved Kemerezzeman, and then let what will happen.’ Her story moved Heyat en Nufous to wonder and pity, and she prayed God to reunite her with her beloved, saying, ‘Fear nothing, O my sister, but have patience till God accomplish that which is to be.’ And she repeated the following verses:

None keepeth counsel saving those who’re trusty and discreet. A
secret’s ever safely placed with honest folk and leal;
And secrets trusted unto me are in a locked-up house, Whose keys
are lost and on whose door is set the Cadi’s seal.

‘O my sister,’ continued she, ‘the breasts of the noble are the graves of secrets, and I will not discover thine.’ Then they toyed and embraced and kissed and slept till near the call to morning-prayer, when Heyat en Nufous arose and slaughtering a young pigeon, besmeared herself and besprinkled her shift with its blood. Then she put off her trousers and cried out, whereupon her waiting-women hastened to her and raised cries of joy. Presently, her mother came in to her aad asked her how she did and tended her and abode with her till evening; whilst the lady Budour repaired to the bath and after washing herself, proceeded to the hall of audience, where she sat down on her throne and dispensed justice among the folk. When King Armanous heard the cries, he asked what was the matter and was informed of the consummation of his daughter’s marriage; whereat he rejoiced and his breast dilated and he made a great banquet.

To return to King Shehriman. When Kemerezzeman and Merzewan returned not at the appointed time, he passed the night without sleep, restless and consumed with anxiety. The night was long upon him and he thought the day would never dawn. He passed the forenoon of the ensuing day in expectation of his son’s coming, but he came not; whereat his heart forebode separation and he was distraught with fears for Kemerezzeman. He wept till his clothes were drenched, crying out, ‘Alas, my son!’ and repeating the following verses from an aching heart:

Unto the votaries of love I still was contrary, Till of its
bitter and its sweet myself perforce must taste.
I quaffed its cup of rigours out, yea, even to the dregs, And to

its freemen and its slaves myself therein abased.
Fortune aforetime made a vow to separate our loves; Now hath she
kept her vow, alack! and made my life a waste.

Then he wiped away his tears and bade his troops make ready for a long journey. So they all mounted and set forth, headed by the Sultan, whose heart burnt with grief and anxiety for his son. He divided the troops into six bodies, whom he despatched in as many directions, giving them rendezvous for the morrow at the cross-roads. Accordingly they scoured the country diligently all that day and night, till at noon of the ensuing day they joined company at the cross-roads. Here four roads met and they knew not which the prince had followed, till they came to the torn clothes and found shreds of flesh and blood scattered by the way on all sides. When the King saw this, he cried out from his inmost heart, saying, ‘Alas, my son!’ and buffeted his face and tore his beard and rent his clothes, doubting not but his son was dead. Then he gave himself up to weeping and wailing, and the troops also wept for his weeping, being assured that the prince had perished. They wept and lamented and threw dust on their heads till they were nigh upon death, and the night surprised them whilst they were thus engaged. Then the King repeated the following verses, with a heart on fire for the torment of his despair:

Blame not the mourner for the grief to which he is a prey, For
yearning sure sufficeth him, with all its drear dismay.
He weeps for dreariment and grief and stress of longing pain, And
eke his transport doth the fires, that rage in him, bewray.
Alas, his fortune who’s Love’s slave, whom languishment hath
bound Never to let his eyelids stint from weeping night and
day!
He mourns the loss of one was like a bright and brilliant moon,
That shone out over all his peers in glorious array.
But Death did proffer to his lips a brimming cup to drink, What
time he left his native land, and now he’s far away.
He left his home and went from us unto calamity; Nor to his
brethren was it given to him farewell to say.
Indeed, his loss hath stricken me with anguish and with woe; Yea,

for estrangement from his sight my wits are gone astray.
Whenas the Lord of all vouchsafed to him His Paradise, Upon his
journey forth he fared and passed from us for aye.

Then he returned with the troops to his capital, giving up his son for lost and deeming that wild beasts or highwaymen had set on him and torn him in pieces, and made proclamation that all in the Khalidan Islands should don black in mourning for him. Moreover, he built a pavilion in his memory, naming it House of Lamentations, and here he was wont to spend his days, (with the exception of Mondays and Thursdays, which he devoted to the business of the state), mourning for his son and bewailing him with verses, of which the following are some:

My day of bliss is that whereon thou drawest near to me, And
that, whereon thou turn'st away, my day of death and fear.
What though I tremble all the night and go in dread of death, Yet
thine embraces are to me than safety far more dear.

And again:

My soul redeem the absent, whose going cast a blight On hearts
and did afflict them with anguish and affright!
Let gladness then accomplish its purification-time, For,
by a triple divorcement, I've put away delight.

Meanwhile, the princess Budour abode in the Ebony Islands, whilst the folk would point to her and say, ‘Yonder is King Armanous's son-in-law;' and every night she lay with Heyat en Nufous, to whom she made moan of her longing for her husband Kemerezzeman, weeping and describing to her his beauty and grace and yearning to enjoy him, though but in a dream. And bytimes she would repeat these verses:

God knows that, since my severance from thee, full sore I've
wept, So sore that needs my eyes must run for very tears in
debt.
“Have patience,” quoth my censurer, “and thou shalt win them

yet," And I, "O thou that blamest me, whence should I
patience get?"

All this time, Kemerezzeman abode with the gardener, weeping and repeating verses night and day, bewailing the seasons of enjoyment and the nights of delight, whilst the gardener comforted him with the assurance that the ship would set sail for the land of the Muslims at the end of the year. One day, he saw the folk crowding together and wondered at this; but the gardener came in to him and said, 'O my son, give over work for to-day neither water the trees; for it is a festival day, on which the folk visit one another. So rest and only keep thine eye on the garden, whilst I go look after the ship for thee; for yet but a little while and I send thee to the land of the Muslims.' So saying, he went out, leaving Kemerezzeman alone in the garden, who fell to musing upon his condition, till his courage gave way and the tears streamed from his eyes. He wept till he swooned away, and when he recovered, he rose and walked about the garden pondering what fate had done with him and bewailing his long estrangement from those he loved. As he went thus, absorbed in melancholy thought, his foot stumbled and he fell on his face, striking his forehead against the stump of a tree. The blow cut it open and his blood ran down and blent with his tears. He rose and wiping away the blood, dried his tears and bound his forehead with a piece of rag; then continued his melancholy walk about the garden. Presently, he saw two birds quarrelling on a tree, and one of them smote the other on the neck with its beak and cut off its head, with which it flew away, whilst the slain bird's body fell to the ground before Kemerezzeman. As it lay, two great birds flew down and alighting, one at the head and the other at the tail of the dead bird, drooped their wings over it and bowing their heads towards it, wept; and when Kemerezzeman saw them thus bewail their mate, he called to mind his wife and father and wept also. Then he saw them dig a grave and bury the dead bird; after which they flew away, but presently returned with the murderer and alighting on the grave, stamped on him till they killed him. Then they rent his belly and tearing out his entrails, poured the blood on the grave. Moreover, they stripped off his skin and tearing his flesh in pieces, scattered it hither and thither. All this while Kemerezzeman was watching them and wondering; but presently, chancing to look at the dead bird's crop, he saw therein something gleaming. So he opened it and found the talisman that had been the cause of his separation from his wife. At this sight, he fell down in a swoon for joy; and when he revived, he said, 'Praised be God! This is a good omen and a presage of reunion with my beloved.' Then he examined the jewel and passed it over his eyes; after which he bound it to his arm, rejoicing in coming good, and walked about, awaiting the gardener's return, till nightfall; when, as he came not, he lay down and slept in his wonted place. At daybreak he rose and girding himself with a cord of palm-fibre, took hoe and basket and went out to his work in the garden. Presently, he came to a carob-tree and struck the hoe into its roots. The blow resounded [as if it had fallen on metal]; so he cleared away the earth and discovered a trap-door of brass. He raised the trap and found a winding stair, which he descended and came to an ancient vault of the time of Aad and Themoud, hewn out of the rock. Round the vault stood many brazen vessels of the bigness of a great oil-jar, into one of which he put his hand and found it full of red and shining gold; whereupon he said to himself, 'Verily, the days of weariness are past and joy and solace are come!' Then he returned to the garden and replacing the trap-door, busied himself in tending the trees till nightfall, when the gardener came back and said to him, 'O my son, rejoice in a speedy return to thy native land, for the merchants are ready for the voyage and in three days' time the ship will set sail for the City of Ebony, which is the first of the cities of the Muslims; and thence thou must travel by land six months' journey till thou come to the Islands of Khalidan, the dominions of King Shehriman.' At this Kemerezzeman rejoiced and repeated the following verses:

Forsake not a lover unused aversion from thee, Nor punish the
 guiltless with rigour and cruelty.
Another, when absence was long, had forgotten thee And changed
 from his faith and his case; not so with me.

Then he kissed the gardener's hand, saying, 'O my father, even as thou hast brought me glad tidings, so I also have great good news for thee,' and told him of his discovery in the garden; whereat the gardener rejoiced and said, 'O my son, fourscore years have I dwelt in this garden and have never chanced on aught; whilst thou, who hast not sojourned with me a year, hast discovered this thing; wherefore it is God's gift to thee, for the cesser of thine ill fortune, and will aid thee to rejoin thy folk and foregather with her thou lovest.' 'Not so,' answered Kemerezzeman, 'it must be shared between us.' Then he carried him to the underground chamber and showed him the gold, which was in twenty jars. So he took ten and the gardener ten, and the latter said to him, 'O my son, fill thyself jars with the olives that grow in the garden, for they are not found but in our land and are sought after; the merchants carry them to all parts and they are called Asafiri olives. Lay the gold in the jars and cover it with olives: then stop them and cover them and take them with thee in the ship.' So Kemerezzeman took fifty jars and laying in each somewhat of the gold, filled it up with olives. At the bottom of one of the jars he laid the talisman, then stopped and covered the jars and sat down to talk with the gardener, making sure of speedy reunion with his own people and saying in himself, 'When I come to the Ebony Islands, I will journey thence to my father's country and enquire for my beloved Budour. I wonder whether she turned back to her own land or journeyed on to my father's country or whether there befell her any accident by the way.' And he repeated the following verses:

Love in my breast they lit and passed away forthright: Far
distant is the land that holds my soul's delight.
Far, far from me the camp and those that dwell therein; No
visitation-place again shall us unite.
Patience and reason fled from me, when they fared forth; Sleep
failed me and despair o'ercame me, like a blight.
They left me, and with them departed all my joy; Tranquillity and
peace with them have taken flight.
They made mine eyes run down with tears of love laid waste; My
lids for lack of them brim over day and night.
Whenas my sad soul longs to see them once again And waiting and
desire are heavy on my spright,

Midmost my heart of hearts their images I trace, Love and
desireful pain and yearning for their sight.

Then he told the gardener what he had seen pass between the birds, whereat he wondered; and they both lay down and slept till the morning. The gardener awoke sick and abode thus two days; but on the third day, his sickness increased on him, till they despaired of his life and Kemerezzeman grieved sore for him. Meanwhile, the captain and sailors came and enquired for the gardener. Kemerezzeman told them that he was sick, and they said, ‘Where is the young man that is minded to go with us to the Ebony Islands?’ ‘He is your servant,’ answered the prince and bade them carry the jars of olives to the ship. So they transported them to the ship, saying, ‘Make haste, for the wind is fair;’ and he answered, ‘I hear and obey.’ Then he carried his victual on board and returning, to bid the gardener farewell, found him in the agonies of death. So he sat down at his head and closed his eyes, and his soul departed his body; whereupon he laid him out and committed him to the earth to the mercy of God the Most High. Then he went down to the port, to embark, but found that the ship had already weighed anchor and set sail; nor did she cease to cleave the waters, till she disappeared from his sight. So he returned to the garden, sorrowful and heavy-hearted, and sitting down, threw dust on his head and buffeted his face. Then he rented the garden of its owner and hired a man to help him tend the trees. Moreover, he went down to the underground chamber and bringing up the rest of the gold, stowed it in other fifty jars, which he filled up with olives. Then he enquired of the ship and was told that it sailed but once a year; at which his affliction redoubled and he mourned sore for that which had befallen him, above all for the loss of the princess Budour’s talisman, and spent his nights and days weeping and repeating verses.

Meanwhile, the ship sailed with a favouring wind, till it reached the Ebony Islands. As fate would have it, the princess Budour was sitting at a window overlooking the sea and saw the ship cast anchor in the port. At this sight, her heart throbbed and she mounted and riding down to the port, with her officers, halted by the ship, whilst the sailors broke out the cargo and transported the goods to the storehouses; after which she called the captain and asked what he had with him. 'O King,' answered he, 'I have with me drugs and cosmetics and powders and ointments and plasters and rich stuffs and Yemen rugs and other costly merchandise, not to be borne of mule or camel, and all manner essences and spices and perfumes, civet and ambergris and camphor and Sumatra aloes-wood, and tamarinds and Asafiri olives to boot, such as are rare to find in this country.' When she heard talk of Asafiri olives, her heart yearned for them and she said to the captain, 'How much olives hast thou?' 'Fifty jars full,' answered he. 'Their owner is not with us, but the King shall take what he will of them.' Quoth she, 'Bring them ashore, that I may see them.' So he called to the sailors, who brought her the fifty jars; and she opened one and looking at the olives, said to the captain, 'I will take the whole fifty and pay you their value, whatever it may be.' 'By Allah, O my lord,' answered he, 'they have no value in our country and the fifty jars may be worth some hundred dirhems; but their owner tarried behind us, and he is a poor man.' 'And what are they worth here?' asked she. 'A thousand dirhems,' replied he. 'I will take them at that price,' quoth she and bade carry the fifty jars to the palace. When it was night, she called for a jar of olives and opened it, there being none present but herself and the princess Heyat en Nufous. Then, taking a dish, she turned into it the contents of the jar, when behold there fell out into the dish with the olives a heap of red gold and she said to Heyat en Nufous, 'This is nought but gold!' So she sent for the rest of the jars and found each one full of gold and scarce enough olives in the whole fifty to fill one jar. Moreover, she sought among the gold and found the talisman, which she took and examined and knew for that which Kemerezzeman had taken from off the riband of her trousers; whereupon she cried out for joy and fell down in a swoon. When she revived, she said in herself, 'Verily, this talisman was the cause of my separation from my beloved Kemerezzeman; but now it is an omen of good.' Then she showed it to Heyat en Nufous and said to her, 'This was the cause of separation and now, please God, it shall be the cause of reunion.' As soon as it was day, she seated herself on her throne and sent for the captain, who came and kissed the ground before her. Quoth she, 'Where didst thou leave the owner of these olives?' 'O King of the age,' answered he, ‘we left him in the land of the Magians and he is a gardener there.’ ‘Except thou bring him to me,’ said she, ‘thou knowest not the harm that awaits thee and thy ship.’ Then she bade seal up the merchants’ storehouses and said to them, ‘The owner of these olives is my debtor; and an ye bring him not to me, I will without fail put you all to death and confiscate your goods.’ So they all went to the captain and promised him the hire of the ship, if he would go and return a second time, saying, ‘Deliver us from this masterful tyrant.’ Accordingly, the captain set sail and God decreed him a prosperous voyage, till he came to the city of the Magians, and landing by night, went up to the garden. Now the night was long upon Kemerezzeman, and he sat, bethinking him of his beloved and weeping over what had befallen him and repeating the following verses:

Full many a night I’ve passed, whose stars their course did stay,
    A night that seemed of those that will not pass away,
That was, as ‘twere, for length the Resurrection-morn, To him
    that watched therein and waited for the day!

At this moment, the captain knocked at the garden-gate, and Kemerezzeman opened and went out to him, whereupon the sailors seized him and carrying him on board the ship, weighed anchor forthright. They sailed on without ceasing days and nights, whilst Kemerezzeman knew not why they dealt thus with him; but when he questioned them, they replied, ‘Thou hast offended against the lord of the Ebony Islands, the son-in-law of King Armanous, and hast stolen his good, unhappy wretch that thou art!’ ‘By Allah,’ said he, ‘I know not the country nor was I ever there in all my life!’ However, they fared on with him, till they made the Ebony Islands and landing, carried him up to the princess Budour, who knew him at sight and said, ‘Leave him with the eunuchs, that they may take him to the bath.’ Then she relieved the merchant of the embargo and gave the captain a dress of honour and ten thousand dinars; after which, she went in that night to the princess Heyat en Nufous and told her what had passed, saying, ‘Keep thou my counsel, till I accomplish my purpose and do a thing that shall be recorded and told to kings and commoners after us.’ Meanwhile, they carried Kemerezzeman to the bath and clad him in a royal habit, so that, when he came forth, he resembled a willow-wand or a star whose aspect put to shame both sun and moon, and his life returned to him. Then he went in to the princess Budour, who, when she saw him, schooled her heart to patience, till she should have accomplished her purpose, and bestowed on him slaves and servants, black and white, and camels and mules. Moreover, she gave him a treasury of money and advanced him from dignity to dignity, till she made him treasurer and committed to his charge all the treasures of the state; nor did she leave day by day to increase his allowances and afford him fresh marks of her favour. As for Kemerezzeman, he was at a loss for the reason of all the honour and favour she showed him and gave gifts and largesse out of the abundance of the wealth he owed to her munificence, devoting himself in particular to the service of King Armanous, so that he and all the Amirs and people, great and small, loved him and were wont to swear by his life. Nevertheless, he ceased not to marvel at the favour shown him by Budour and said in himself, ‘By Allah, there must be a reason for this affection! Peradventure, this king favours me thus excessively with some ill purpose and needs must I therefore crave leave of him to depart his realm.’ So he went in to Budour and said to her, ‘O King, thou hast overwhelmed me with favours, but it will fulfil the measure of thy bounties if thou wilt take from me all thou hast given and let me depart.’ She smiled and said, ‘What makes thee seek to depart and plunge into new perils, whenas thou art in the enjoyment of the greatest favour and prosperity?’ ‘O King,’ answered Kemerezzeman, ‘this favour, if there be no reason for it, is indeed a wonder of wonders, more by token that thou hast advanced me to dignities such as befit graybeards, albeit I am but a child.’ ‘The reason is,’ answered she, ‘that I love thee for thine exceeding grace and thy surpassing beauty; and so thou wilt but grant me my desire of thee, I will advance thee yet further in honour and favour and largesse and make thee Vizier, for all thy tender age, even as the folk made me Sultan and I no older than thou; so that nowadays there is nothing strange in the headship of children, and gifted of God was he who said:

Our time is, meseems, of the lineage of Lot; It craves the advancement of younglings, God wot.’

When Kemerezzeman heard this, he was confounded and his cheeks flushed till they seemed on fire; and he said, 'I reck not of favours that involve the commission of sin; I will live poor in wealth but rich in virtue and honour.' Quoth she, 'I am not the dupe of thy scruples, arising from prudery and coquetry: and God bless him who says:

I mentioned to him the pact of fruition, and he, "How long with
    vexatious discourse wilt thou set upon me?"
I showed him a dinar and straightway he sang out and said, "O
    whither shall one from Fate irresistible flee!"

'O King,' replied Kemerezzeman, 'I have not the wont of these doings, nor have I strength, who am but of tender years, to bear these heavy burdens, for which elder than I have proved unable.' She smiled and rejoined, 'Indeed, it is wonderful how error springs from the disorder of the wit. Since thou art but a boy, why standest thou in fear of sin or the doing of forbidden things, seeing that thou art not yet come to years of discretion and the offences of a child incur neither punishment nor reproof? Verily, thou committest thyself to an argument advanced but for the sake of contention, and it behoves thee to bow to the ordinance of fruition, which has been given against thee. Wherefore, henceforward, give over denial and coyness, for the commandment of God is a foreordained decree: indeed, I have more reason than thou to fear falling into error; and well-inspired was he who said:

My pintle is big and the little one said unto me, "Tilt boldly
    therewith at my inwards and quit thee thy need."
Quoth I, "'Tis unlawful;" but he, "It is lawful with me;" So to
    it I fell, supporting myself by his rede.'

When Kemerezzeman heard these words, the light in his eyes became darkness and he said, 'O King, thou hast in thy palace women and female slaves, that have not their like in this age: may not these suffice thee without me? Do thy will with them and leave me.' 'Thou speakest truth,' answered she; 'but it is not with them that one who loves thee can heal himself of torment and fever; for when tastes and inclinations are corrupted, they hearken to other than good counsel. So leave arguing and hear what the poet says:

Seest not the fruits of the market, how of two kinds they be? Some are for figs, but more for the fruit of the sycamore-tree.

And what another says:

Full many an one, whose ankle-rings are dumb, her girdle sounds;
So this one is content and that a tale of need must tell.
Thou'dst have me, foolwise, in her charms forget thee. God forfend I, that a true believer am, should turn an infidel!
No, by a whisker that makes mock of all her curls, I swear, Nor maid nor strumpet from thy side shall me by guile compel!

And a third:

O pearl of loveliness, to love thee is my faith; Yea, and my choice of all the faiths that have been aye.
Women I have forsworn, indeed, for thy sweet sake, So that the folk avouch I'm grown a monk to-day

And a fourth:

Compare not a wench with a boy and to the spy, Who says to thee, "This is wrong," pay thou no heed.
'Twixt a woman whose feet one's lips kiss and a smooth-faced fawn, Who kisses the earth, the diff'rence is great indeed.

And a fifth:

My soul be thy ransom! Indeed, I've chosen thee out with intent, Because thou layest no eggs and dost not menstruate.
For, an I inclined to foregather with harlots, upon my faith, The wide, wide world for the brats I should get would prove too strait.

And a sixth:

Quoth she to me, — and sore enraged for wounded pride was she, For
she in sooth had bidden me to that which might not be, —
"An if thou swive me not forthright, as one should swive his
wife, If thou be made a cuckold straight, reproach it not to
me.
Meseems thy yard is made of wax, for very flaccidness; For, when
I rub it with my hand, it softens instantly."

And a seventh:

Quoth she (for I to lie with her would not consent), "O fool,
that followest on thy folly to the extent,
If thou reject my kaze for Kibleh to thy yard, We'll show
thee one wherewith thou shalt be sure content."

And an eighth:

She proffered me a tender kaze; But I, "I will not swive,"
replied.
She drew back, saying, "From the truth Needs must he turn who's
turned aside;
And swiving frontwise in our day Is all abandoned and decried;"
Then turned and showed me, as it were A lump of silver, her
backside.
"Well done, O mistress mine! No more Am I in pain for thee," I
cried,
"Whose poke of all God's openings Is sure the amplest and
most wide!"

And a ninth:

Men crave forgiveness with uplifted hands; But women pray with
lifted legs, I trow.
Out on it for a pious piece of work! God shall exalt it to the
deeps below.

When Kemerezzeman heard these verses and was certified that there was no escaping compliance with her will, he said, 'O King, if thou must needs have it so, swear to me that thou wilt use me thus but once, though it avail not to stay thy debauched appetite; and that thou wilt never again require me of this to the end of time; so it may be God will purge me of the sin.' 'I promise thee that,' replied she, 'hoping that God of His favour will relent towards us and blot out our mortal sins; for the compass of the Divine forgiveness is not indeed so strait, but it may altogether embrace us and absolve us of the excess of our transgressions and bring us to the light of righteousness out of the darkness of error. As most excellent well saith the poet:

The folk imagine of us twain an evil thing, I ween, And with
their hearts and souls, indeed, they do persist therein.
Come, let us justify their thought and free them thus from guilt,
This once, 'gainst us; and then will we repent us of our
sin.'

Then she swore to him a solemn oath, by Him whose existence is unconditioned, that this thing should befall betwixt them but once and never again for all time, and vowed to him that the desire of him was driving her to death and perdition. So he went with her, on this condition, to her privy closet, that she might quench the fire of her passion, saying, 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! This is the ordinance of the All-powerful, the All-wise!' And did off his trousers, in the utmost confusion, with the tears running from his eyes for stress of affright; whereat she smiled and carrying him on to a couch, said to him, 'After this night, thou shalt see nought that will displease thee.' Then she turned to him, kissing and clipping him and twining leg with leg, and said to him, 'Put thy hand, between my thighs, to that thou wottest of, so haply it may be won to stand up after prostration.' He wept and said, 'I am not good at aught of this.' But she said, 'As I live, an thou do as I bid thee, it shall profit thee!' So he put out his hand, with a heart on fire for confusion, and found her thighs fresher than cream and softer than silk. The touching of them pleasured him and he moved his hand hither and thither, till he came to a dome abounding in benedictions and movements and said in himself, ‘Belike this king is a hermaphrodite, nor male nor female.’ So he said to her, ‘O King, I cannot find that thou hast any manly gear, even as other men; what then moved thee to do thus?’ When the princess heard this, she laughed till she fell backward, and said, ‘O my beloved, how quickly thou hast forgotten the nights we have lain together!’ Then she made herself known to him and he knew her for his wife, the Lady Budour, daughter of King Ghaïour. So he embraced her and she embraced him and they kissed each other; then they lay down on the bed of delight, repeating the words of the poet:

Whenas the softness of a shape did bid him to my arms, That, as
it were a trailing vine with twinings did him ply
And on the hardness of his heart its very softness shed, He
yielded, though at first he feigned reluctance to comply,
And came, provided with a stock of caution safe and sure, Fearing
lest, when he did appear, the railers should him spy.
His waist of buttocks maketh moan, that lay upon his feet A very
camel’s load, what time he would a-walking hie.
Girt with his glances’ trenchant swords and cuirassed with the
mail Of his bright locks, as ‘twere the dusk new fallen from
the sky,
His fragrance brought me from afar the news of his approach, And
forth, as bird let out from cage, to meet my love fled I.
I laid my cheek within his way, beneath his sandal-soles, And lo,
their dust’s collyrium healed the ailment of mine eye!
With an embrace I hoisted up the flag of loves new linked And
loosed the knot of my delight, that made as ’twould deny.
Then let I call high festival, and gladness, all unmixed With any
thought of troublousness, came flocking in reply.
The full moon handselled with the stars the teeth, like grains of
pearl, That on the laughing face of wine now dance, now
stirless lie.
So in the niche of their delight I gave me up to joys, The
veriest sinner would repent if he their like might try.
The morning-glories of his face be pledge I’ll ne’er, in him,
Forget the writ that biddeth us One only glorify!

Then they told one another all that had befallen them since their separation, after which he began to upbraid her, saying, ‘What moved thee to deal with me as thou hast done this night?’ ‘Do not reproach me,’ replied she; ‘for I did this but by way of jest and for increase of pleasure and gladness.’ When it was morning and the day arose with its light and shone, she sent to King Armanous and acquainted him with the truth of the case and that she was wife to Kemerezzeman. Moreover, she told him their story and the manner of their separation and how his daughter Heyat en Nufous was yet a maid. He marvelled greatly at their story and bade record it in letters of gold. Then he turned to Kemerezzeman and said, ‘O king’s son, art thou minded to marry my daughter and become my son-in-law?’ ‘I must consult the princess Budour,’ answered he; ‘for I owe her favour without stint.’ So he took counsel with her and she said, ‘This is well seen; marry her and I will be her handmaid, for I am her debtor for kindness and favour and good offices, more by token that we are here in her place and that the king her father has loaded us with benefits.’ When he saw that she inclined to this and was not jealous of Heyat en Nufous, he agreed with her thereupon and told King Armanous what she had said, whereat he rejoiced greatly. Then he went out and seating himself in his chair of estate, assembled all the Viziers and Amirs and chamberlains and grandees, to whom he related the whole story and acquainted them with his desire to marry his daughter to Kemerezzeman and make him king in the stead of the princess Budour. Whereupon said they all, ‘Since he is the husband of the princess Budour, who hath been our Sultan till now, whilst we deemed her King Armanous’s son-in-law, we are all content to have him to Sultan over us and will be his servants, nor will we swerve from his allegiance.’ At this Armanous rejoiced and summoning Cadis and witnesses and the chief officers of state, let draw up the contract of marriage between Kemerezzeman and his daughter, the princess Heyat en Nufous. Then he held high festival, giving sumptuous banquets and bestowing costly dresses of honour upon the Amirs and captains; moreover, he gave alms to the poor and needy and freed the prisoners. All the folk rejoiced in the coming of Kemerezzeman to the throne, wishing him abiding glory and prosperity and happiness and renown, and as soon as he became king, he remitted the customs-dues and released all that remained in prison. Thus he abode a long while, ordering himself worthily towards his subjects, and lived with his wives in peace and happiness and content, lying the night with each of them in turn. And indeed all his troubles and afflictions were blotted out from him and he forgot his father King Shehriman and his former estate of honour and worship with him.

After awhile, God the Most High blessed him with two sons, as they were two shining moons, the elder, whose name was prince Amjed, by Queen Budour, and the younger, whose name was prince Asaad and who was comelier than his brother, by Queen Heyat en Nufous. They were reared in splendour and delight and were instructed in penmanship and science and the arts of government and horsemanship and other polite arts and accomplishments, till they attained the extreme of perfection and the utmost limit of beauty and grace, and both men and women were ravished by their charms. They grew up together, till they reached the age of seventeen, and loved one another so dear that they were never apart, eating and drinking together and sleeping in one bed; and all the people envied them their beauty and concord. When they came to man's estate and were endowed with every perfection, their father was wont, as often as he went on a journey, to make them sit in his stead by turns in the place of judgment, and each did justice among the folk one day at a time. Now, as unalterable fate and foreordained destiny would have it, Queen Budour fell in love with Asaad, son of Queen Heyat en Nufous, and the latter became enamoured of Amjed; and each of them used to sport and play with the other's son, kissing him and straining him to her bosom, whilst each thought that the other's behaviour arose but from motherly affection. On this wise, passion got the mastery of the two women's hearts and they became madly enamoured of the two youths, so that when the other's son came in to either of them, she would press him to her bosom and long for him never to be parted from her; till, at last, when waiting grew tedious to them and they found no way to enjoyment, they refused meat and drink and forewent the solace of sleep. Presently, the King went out to hunt, bidding his sons sit to do justice in his stead, each one day in turn, according to their wont. So prince Amjed sat on the throne the first day, ordering and forbidding, appointing and deposing, giving and denying; and Queen Heyat en Nufous took a scroll and wrote to him the following letter, suing for his favour and discovering to him her passion, in fine, altogether putting off the mask and giving him to know that she desired to enjoy him. 'From the wretched lover, the sorrowful severed one, whose youth is wasted in the love of thee and whose torment for thee is prolonged. Were I to recount to thee the extent of my affliction and what I suffer for sadness, the passion that is in my breast and all that I endure for weeping and groaning and the rending of my sorrowful heart, my unremitting cares and my ceaseless griefs and all my suffering for severance and sadness and the ardour of desire, no letter could contain it nor calculation compass it. Indeed, earth and heaven are straitened upon me, and I have no hope and no trust but in thee. I am come nigh upon death and suffer the horrors of dissolution; burning is sore upon me, and the pangs of separation and estrangement. Were I to set out the yearnings that possess me, no scrolls would suffice thereto: and of the excess of my affliction and wasting away, I have made the following verses:

Were I to set down all I feel of heart-consuming dole And all the
 transport and unease that harbour in my soul,
Nor ink nor pen in all the world thereafter would remain, Nor
 aught from east to west were left of paper or of scroll.'

Then she folded up the silken tresses of her hair, whose cost swallowed up treasures, in the letter, and wrapping it in a piece of rich silk, scented with musk and ambergris, laid it in a handkerchief; after which she gave it to an eunuch and bade him carry it to prince Amjed. The eunuch took it, knowing not what the future hid for him, (for He who knoweth the hidden things ordereth events according to His will,) and going in to the prince, kissed the earth before him and gave him the letter. He opened it and reading it, was ware that his father's wife was in intent an adulteress and a traitress to her husband; whereat he was exceeding wroth and railed at women and their works, saying, 'May God curse women, the traitresses, that lack reason and religion!' Then he drew his sword and said to the eunuch, ‘Out on thee, thou wicked slave! Dost thou carry adulterous messages for thy lord’s wife? By Allah, there is no good in thee, O black of hue and heart, O foul of face and nature!’ So saying, he smote him on the neck and severed his head from his body; then, folding the letter in the handkerchief, he thrust it into his pocket and went in to his own mother and told her what had passed, reviling and reproaching her and saying, ‘Each one of you is worse than the other; and by God the Great, did I not fear to transgress against the rights of my father and my brother Asaad, I would assuredly go in to her and cut off her head, even as I cut off that of her eunuch!’ Then he went out in a great rage; and when the news reached Queen Heyat en Nufous of what he had done with her messenger, she reviled him and cursed him and plotted perfidy against him. He passed the night, sick with anger and disgust and concern, nor was meat nor drink nor sleep sweet to him. Next morning, prince Asaad went out in his turn to rule the folk in his father’s stead and sat in the audience-chamber, judging and administering justice, appointing and deposing, ordering and forbidding, giving and bestowing, till near the time of afternoon-prayer, when Queen Budour sent for a crafty old woman and discovering to her what was in her heart, wrote a letter to prince Asaad, complaining of the excess of her love and longing for him, as follows: ‘From her who perisheth for passion and love-longing to the goodliest of mankind in form and nature, him who is conceited of his own loveliness and glories in his amorous grace, who turneth away from those that seek to enjoy him and refuseth to show favour unto the lowly and the self-abasing, him who is cruel and disdainful; from the despairing lover to prince Asaad, lord of surpassing beauty and excelling grace, of the moon-bright face and the flower-white brow and dazzling splendour. This is my letter to him whose love consumes my body and rends my skin and my bones. Know that my patience fails me and I am at a loss what to do: longing and wakefulness weary me and sleep and patience deny themselves to me; but mourning and watching stick fast to me and desire and passion torment me, and the extremes of languor and sickness. Yet may my life be thy ransom, though it be thy pleasure to slay her who loveth thee, and may God prolong thy life and preserve thee from every ill!’ After this, she wrote the following verses:

Fate hath so ordered it that I must needs thy lover be, O thou
whose charms shine as the moon, when at the full is she!
All beauty and all eloquence thou dost in thee contain And over
all the world of men thou'rt bright and brave to see.
That thou my torturer shouldst be, I am indeed content, So but
thou wilt one glance bestow, as almous-deed, on me.
Happy, thrice happy is her lot who dieth for thy love! No good is
there in any one that doth not cherish thee.

And these also:

To thee, O Asaad, of the pangs of passion I complain; Have pity
on a slave of love, that burns for longing pain.
How long, I wonder, shall the hands of passion sport with me And
love and dole and sleeplessness consume me, heart and brain?
Whiles do I plain me of a sea within my heart and whiles Of
flaming; surely, this is strange, O thou my wish and bane!
Give o'er thy railing, censor mine, and set thyself to flee From
love that maketh eyes for aye with burning tears to rain.
How oft, for absence and desire, I cry, "Alas, my grief!" But all
my crying and lament in this my case are vain.
Thou hast with rigours made me sick, that passed my power to
bear: Thou'rt the physician; do thou me with what befits
assain.
O thou my censurer, forbear to chide me for my case, Lest, of
Love's cruel malady, perdition thee attain.

Then she scented the letter with odoriferous musk and winding it in the tresses of her hair, which were of Irak silk, with tassels of oblong emeralds, set with pearls and jewels, delivered it to the old woman, bidding her carry it to prince Asaad. She undertook the errand, to pleasure her, and going in straightway to the prince, found him in his closet and delivered him the letter; after which she stood waiting for the answer. When Asaad had read the letter and knew its purport, he wrapped it up again in the tresses and put it in his pocket, cursing false women; then, for he was beyond measure wroth, he sprang up and drawing his sword, smote the old woman on the neck and cut off her head. Then he went in to his mother, Queen Heyat en Nufous, whom he found lying on her bed, sick for that which had betided her with prince Amjed, and railed at her and cursed her; after which he left her and betook himself to his brother, to whom he related what had befallen him with Queen Budour, adding, ‘By Allah, O my brother, but that I feared to grieve thee, I had gone in to her forthright and smitten her head off her shoulders!’ ‘By Allah, O my brother,’ replied Amjed, ‘the like of what hath befallen thee befell me also yesterday with thy mother Queen Heyat en Nufous.’ And he told him what had passed, adding, ‘By Allah, O my brother, nought but respect for thee withheld me from going in to her and dealing with her even as I dealt with the eunuch!’ They passed the rest of the night in trouble and affliction, conversing and cursing false women, and agreed to keep the matter secret, lest their father should hear of it and kill the two women.

On the morrow, the King returned with his suite from hunting and sat awhile in his chair of estate; after which he dismissed the Amirs and went up to his harem, where he found his two wives lying on the bed, exceeding sick. Now they had made a plot against the two princes and concerted to do away their lives, for that they had exposed themselves before them and feared to be at their mercy. When Kemerezzeman saw them on this wise, he said to them, ‘What ails you?’ Whereupon they rose and kissing his hands, answered, perverting the case and saying, ‘Know, O King, that thy sons, who have been reared in thy bounty, have played thee false and outraged thee in the persons of thy wives.’ When he heard this, the light in his eyes became darkness and his reason fled for the excess of his rage; then said he to them, ‘Expound this thing to me.’ ‘O King of the age,’ answered Budour, ‘know that these many days past thy son Asaad has been wont to send me letters and messages to solicit me to lewdness, and I still forbade him from this, but he would not be forbidden. When thou wentest forth to hunt, he rushed in on me, drunk and with a drawn sword in his hand, and smiting my eunuch, slew him. Then he mounted on my breast, still holding the sword, and I feared lest he should slay me even as he had slain my eunuch, if I gainsaid him; so he took his will of me by force; and now an thou do me not justice on him, O King, I will slay myself with my own hand, for I reck not of life in the world after this foul deed.' Queen Heyat en Nufous, choking with tears, told him a like story respecting prince Amjed, after which she fell a- weeping and wailing and said, 'Except thou avenge me on him, I will tell my father, King Armanous.' Then they both wept sore before King Kemerezzeman, who, when he saw their tears and heard their words, concluded that their story was true and waxing beyond measure wroth, went out, thinking to fall upon his two sons and put them to death. On his way he met his father-in-law King Armanous, who hearing of his return from the chase, had come to salute him and seeing him with the naked sword in his hand and the blood dripping from his nostrils, for excess of rage, enquired what ailed him. Kemerezzeman told him what his sons Amjed and Asaad had done and added, 'I am now going in to them, to slay them on the foulest wise and make of them the most shameful of examples.' 'O my son,' said King Armanous, (and indeed he too was wroth with them,) 'thou dost well, and may God not bless them nor any sons that offend thus against their father's honour! But, O my son, the proverb says, "Whoso looks not to the issues, Fortune is no friend to him." In any case, they are thy sons, and it befits not that thou put them to death with thine own hand, lest thou drink of their agony and after repent of having slain them, whenas repentance will avail thee nothing. Rather do thou send one of thine officers with them into the desert and let him kill them there, out of thy sight, for, as says the adage, "When the eye sees not, the heart grieves not."' Kemerezzeman saw his father-in-law's words to be just, so he sheathed his sword and turning back, sat down upon his throne and called his treasurer, a very old man, versed in affairs and in the shifts of fortune, to whom he said, 'Go in to my sons Amjed and Asaad; bind fast their hands behind them and lay them in two chests and set them on a mule. Then take horse and carry them into the mid-desert, where do thou put them to death and fill two vials with their blood and bring them to me in haste.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the treasurer and went out forthright to do his bidding. On his way, he met the princes coming out of the palace-vestibule, for they had donned their richest clothes and were on their way to salute their father and give him joy of his safe return from the chase. When he saw them, he laid hands on them, saying, 'O my sons, know that I am but a slave commanded and that your father hath laid a commandment on me: will ye obey his commandment?' 'Yes,' answered they; whereupon he bound their hands and laying them in the chests, set the latter on the back of a mule, with which he left the city and rode into the open country, till near midday, when he halted in a waste and desert spot and dismounting, set down the two chests. He opened them and took out Amjed and Asaad; whom when he saw, he wept sore for their beauty and grace; then drawing his sword, he said to them, 'O my lords, indeed it irks me to deal so foully by you; but I am to be excused in this, being but a slave commanded, for that your father King Kemerezzeman hath bidden me strike off your heads.' 'O Amir,' answered they, 'do the King's bidding, for we submit with patience to that which God (to whom be ascribed might and majesty) hath decreed to us; and thou art quit of our blood.' Then they embraced and bade each other farewell, and Asaad said to the treasurer, 'God on thee, O uncle, spare me the sight of my brother's agony and make me not drink of his anguish, but kill me first, that it may be the easier for me.' Amjed said the like and entreated the treasurer to kill him before Asaad, saying, 'My brother is younger than I; so make me not taste of his anguish.' And they both wept sore, whilst the treasurer wept for their weeping, and they said to each other, 'All this comes of the malice of those traitresses, our mothers; and this is the reward of our forbearance towards them. But there is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! Verily, we are His and unto Him we return.' And Asaad embraced his brother, sobbing and repeating the following verses:

O Thou to whom the sad complain, to whom the fearful flee, Thou
that art evermore prepared for all that is to be,
Lord, there is left me no resource but at Thy door to knock; Yea,
at whose portal shall I knock, if Thou be deaf to me?
O Thou, the treasures of whose grace are in the one word "Be," Be
favourable, I beseech, for all good is with Thee!

When Amjed heard his brother's weeping, he wept also and pressed him to his bosom, repeating the following verses:

O Thou, whose bounties unto me are more than one, I trow, Whose
favours lavished on my head are countless as the sand,
No blow of all the blows of fate has ever fall'n on me, But I
have found Thee ready still to take me by the hand.

Then said he to the treasurer, 'I conjure thee by the One God the Omnipotent King and Protector, kill me before my brother Asaad and allay the fire of my heart!' But Asaad wept and exclaimed, 'Not so: I will die first;' whereupon said Amjed, 'It were best that we embrace each other, so the sword may fall upon us and kill us both at one stroke.' So they embraced, face to face, and clipped each other straitly, whilst the treasurer bound them fast with cords, weeping the while. Then he drew his sword and said to them, 'By Allah, O my lords, it is indeed hard to me to kill you! But have ye no last wishes or injunctions that I may fulfil or message that I may carry?' 'We have no wish,' replied Amjed, 'and my only injunction to thee is that thou set my brother undermost, that the blow may fall on me first; and when thou hast slain us and returnest to the King and he asks thee, "What said they before their death?" do thou answer, "Thy sons salute thee and say to thee, 'Thou knewest not if we were innocent or guilty, yet hast thou put us to death and hast not certified thyself of our guilt nor looked into our case.'" Then do thou repeat to him these verses:

Women are very devils, made to work us dole and death; Refuge I
seek with God Most High from all their craft and scaith.
Prime source are they of all the ills that fall upon mankind,
Both in the fortunes of this world and matters of the faith.

'We desire of thee nought but this,' continued Amjed, 'except that thou have patience with us, whilst I repeat other two lines to my brother.' Then he wept sore and recited the following verses:

Examples many, thou and I, We have in kings of days gone by, How many, alack, have trod this road, Of great and small and low and high!

At this the treasurer wept, till his beard was wet, whilst Asaad's eyes filled with tears and he in turn repeated these verses:

Fate, when the thing itself is past, afflicteth with the trace,
And weeping is not, of a truth, for body or form or face.
What ails the nights? May God blot out our error from the nights And may the hand of change bewray and bring them to disgrace!
They wreaked their malice to the full on Ibn ez Zubeir erst, And on the House and Sacred Stone his safeguard did embrace.
Would God, since Kharijeh they took for Amrou's sacrifice,
They'd ransomed Ali with whome'er they would of all our race!

Then, with cheeks stained with thick-coming tears, he recited these also:

The days and nights are fashioned for treachery and despite; Yea, they are full of perfidy and knavish craft and sleight.
The mirage is their lustre of teeth, and to their eyes The horror of all darkness the kohl that keeps them bright.
My crime against them (hateful their nature is!) is but The sword's crime, when the sworder sets on into the fight.

Then he sobbed and said:

O thou that seeketh the worthless world, give ear to me and know
The very net of ruin it is and quarry of dole and woe;
A stead, whom it maketh laugh to-day, to-morrow it maketh weep:
Out on it then for a dwelling-place, since it is even so!
Its raids and its onsets are never done, nor can its bondsman win
To free himself from its iron clutch by dint of stress and throe.
How many an one in its vanities hath gloried and taken pride,
Till froward and arrogant thus he grew and did all bounds o'ergo!
Then did she turn him the buckler's back and give him to drink therein Full measure and set her to take her wreak of

the favours she did show.
For know that her blows fall sudden and swift and unawares,
though long The time of forbearance be and halt the coming
of fate and slow.
So look to thyself, lest life in the world pass idle and
profitless by, And see that thou fail not of taking thought
to the end of all below.
Cast loose from the chains of the love and the wish of the world
and thou shalt find Guidance and help unto righteousness and
peace of heart, I trow.

When he had made an end of these verses, he clipped his brother in his arms, till they seemed as it were one body, and the treasurer, raising his sword, was about to strike them, when, behold, his horse took fright at the wind of his upraised hand and breaking its tether, fled into the desert. Now the horse was worth a thousand dinars and on his back was a splendid saddle, worth much money: so the treasurer threw down his sword, in great concern, and ran after him, to catch him. The horse galloped on, snorting and neighing and pawing the earth in his fright, till he raised a cloud of dust, and presently coming to a wood, fled into the midst of it, whither the treasurer followed him. Now there was in this wood a terrible lion, foul of face, with eyes that cast forth sparks; his look was grim and his aspect struck terror into men's souls. He heard the noise made by the horse and came out to see what was to do. Presently the treasurer turned and saw the lion making towards him; but found no way of escape, nor had he his sword with him. So he said in himself, 'There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! This stress is come upon me because of Amjed and Asaad; and indeed this journey was unblest from the first!' Meanwhile Amjed and Asaad were grievously oppressed by the heat and grew sore athirst, so that their tongues hung out and they cried for succour; but none came to their relief and they said, 'Would God we were dead and at peace from this torment! But we know not whither the treasurer's horse hath fled, that he has gone and left us bound. If he would but come back and kill us, it were easier to us than to suffer this torture.' 'O my brother,' said Asaad, 'be patient and the relief of

God (blessed and exalted be He) will surely come to us; for the horse ran not away save of His favour towards us, and nought irks us but this thirst.' So saying, he stretched himself and strained right and left, till he burst his bonds; then he unbound his brother and taking up the Amir's sword, said, 'By Allah, we will not go hence, till we know what is come of him!' So they followed the track, till it led them to the wood and they said to one another, 'Of a surety, the horse and the treasurer have not overgone this wood.' Quoth Asaad, 'Stay thou here, whilst I enter the wood and search it.' 'I will not let thee go in alone,' answered Amjed. 'We will both go in; so if we escape, we shall escape together, and if we perish, we shall perish together.' So they entered both and found the lion standing over the treasurer, who lay like a sparrow in his grip, calling upon God for help and lifting his hands to heaven. When Amjed saw this, he took the sword and running to the lion, smote him between the eyes and laid him dead on the ground. The Amir arose, marvelling at this, and seeing Amjed and Asaad his lord's sons, standing there, cast himself at their feet and exclaimed, 'By Allah, O my lords, it were foul wrong in me to put you to death! May the man never be who would kill you! Indeed, I will ransom you with my life.' Then he rose and embracing them, enquired how they had loosed their bonds and come thither, whereupon they told him how the bonds of one of them had fallen loose and he had unbound the other, that they might quit their intent, and how they had followed his track till they came upon him. He thanked them for their deed and went with them forth of the wood, where they said to him, 'O uncle, do our father's bidding.' 'God forbid,' answered he, 'that I should draw near to you with hurt! I mean to take your clothes and clothe you with mine; then will I fill two vials with the lion's blood and go back to the King and tell him I have put you to death. But as for you, fare ye forth into the lands, for God's earth is wide; and know, O my lords, that it irks me to part from you.' At this, they all fell a-weeping; then the two youths put off their clothes and the treasurer covered them with his own. Moreover, he filled two vials with the lion's blood and making two parcels of the princes' clothes, set them before him on his horse's back. Then he took leave of them and making his way back to the city, went in to King Kemerezzeman and kissed the earth before him.

The King saw him pale and troubled and deeming this came of the slaughter of the two princes (though in truth it came of his adventure with the lion) rejoiced and said to him, 'Hast thou done the business?' 'Yes, O our lord,' answered the treasurer and gave him the two parcels of clothes and the two vials of blood. 'How bore they themselves,' asked the King, 'and did they give thee any charge?' 'I found them patient and resigned to their fate,' answered the treasurer; 'and they said to me, "Verily, our father is excusable; bear him our salutation and say to him, 'Thou art quit of our blood;' and repeat to him the following verses:

Women are very devils, made to work us dole and death; Refuge I
seek with God Most High from all their craft and scaith.
Prime source are they of all the ills that fall upon mankind,
Both in the fortunes of this world and matters of the
faith."'

When the King heard this, he bowed his head a long while and knew this to mean that they had wrongfully been put to death. Then he bethought himself of the perfidy of women and the calamities brought about by them, and opening the two parcels fell to turning over his sons' clothes and weeping. Presently, he found in the pocket of his son Asaad's clothes a letter in Queen Budour's hand, enclosing the tresses of her hair, and reading it, knew that the prince had been falsely accused. Then he searched Amjed's clothes and found in his pocket a letter in the handwriting of Queen Heyat en Nufous, enclosing the tresses of her hair; so he opened and read it and knew that Amjed also had been wronged; whereupon he beat hand upon hand and exclaimed, 'There is no power and no virtue but in God! I have slain my sons unjustly.' And he buffeted his face, crying out, 'Alas, my sons! Alas, my long grief!' Then he bade build two tombs in one house, which he styled 'House of Lamentations,' and let grave thereon his sons' names; and he threw himself on Amjed's tomb, weeping and groaning and lamenting, and repeated these verses:

O moon, that hast set beneath the earth for aye, For whose loss
weep the shining stars of the sky,

O wand, after whom no more shall the flexile grace Of the
willow-like bending shape enchant the eye,
My sight I've bereft of thee, of my jealousy, And ne'er shall I
see thee again, till I come to die.
I'm drowned in the sea of my tears, for sheer unrest; Indeed, for
sleepless sorrow in hell am I.

Then he threw himself on Asaad's tomb and recited the following verses, whilst the tears poured from his eyes:

Fain had I shared with thee, dear heart, in death and ill; But
God, that ordereth all, willed other than my will.
All that I see, my dole makes black, whilst from my eyes All
black I've blotted out with weeping all my fill.
I weep and never stint; mine eyes run never dry; My entrails
ulcered are and blood and tears distil.
Sore, sore it irketh me to see thee in a place Where
slaves and kings alike foregather, will or nill.

Then he forsook his friends and intimates, and denying himself to his women and his family, shut himself up in the House of Lamentations, where he passed his time in weeping for his sons.

Meanwhile, Amjed and Asaad fared on into the desert a whole month's journey, eating of the fruits of the earth and drinking of the rain-pools, till their travel brought them to a mountain of black stone, where the road divided in two, one skirting the foot of the mountain and the other leading to its summit. They took the former way, for fear of thirst, and followed it five days, but saw no end to it and were overcome with weariness, being unused to walking in mountains or elsewhere. At last, despairing of coming to the end of the road, they retraced their steps and taking the other, that led over the mountain, followed it all that day, till nightfall, when Asaad, weary with much travel, said to Amjed, 'O my brother, I can go no farther, for I am exceeding weak.' 'Courage,' replied Amjed; 'may be God will send us relief.' So they walked on part of the night, till the darkness closed in upon them, when Asaad became beyond measure weary and saying, 'O my brother, I am worn out and spent with walking,' threw himself on the ground and wept. Amjed took him in his arms and fared on with him, halting bytimes to rest, till break of day, when they came to the mountain-top and found there a stream of running water and by it a pomegranate-tree and a prayer-niche. They could hardly believe their eyes, but, sitting down by the spring, drank of its water and ate of the fruit of the tree; after which they lay down and slept till sunrise, when they washed in the spring and eating of the pomegranates, slept again till the time of afternoon-prayer. Then they thought to continue their journey, but Asaad could not walk, for his feet were swollen. So they abode there three days, till they were rested, after which they set out again and fared on over the mountain days and nights, well-nigh perished for thirst, till they came in sight of a city afar off, at which they rejoiced and made towards it. When they drew near it, they thanked God the Most High and Amjed said to Asaad, ‘O my brother, sit here, whilst I go to yonder city and see what and whose it is and where we are in God’s wide world, that we may know through what lands we have passed in crossing this mountain, whose skirts if we had followed, we had not reached this city in a whole year: so praised be God for safety!’ ‘By Allah,’ replied Asaad, ‘none shall go but myself, and may I be thy ransom! If thou leave me, I shall imagine a thousand things and suffer tortures of anxiety on thine account, for I cannot brook thine absence from me.’ ‘Go then,’ rejoined Amjed, ‘and do not tarry.’ So Asaad took money and leaving his brother awaiting him, descended the mountain and fared on, till he entered the city. As he passed through the streets, he met an old man, with a beard that flowed down upon his breast and was parted in twain; he bore a walking-staff in his hand and was richly clad, with a great red turban on his head. When Asaad saw him, he wondered at his mien and habit; nevertheless, he went up to him and saluting him, enquired the way to the market. The old man smiled in his face and said, ‘O my son, meseems thou art a stranger?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Asaad; ‘I am a stranger.’ ‘O my son,’ rejoined the other, ‘verily, thou gladdenest our country with thy presence and makest thine own land desolate by reason of thine absence. What wantest thou of the market?’ ‘O uncle,’ replied Asaad, ‘I have an elder brother, with whom I have journeyed these three months, for we come from a far country. When we sighted this city, I left my brother in the mountain and came hither, purposing to buy food and what else and return therewith to him, that we might feed thereon.' 'Rejoice in all good, O my son!' said the old man. 'Know that to-day I give a marriage-feast, to which I have bidden many guests, and I have made ready great plenty of the best and most delicious meats that the heart can desire. So, if thou wilt come home with me, I will give thee freely all thou lackest, without price. Moreover, I will teach thee the ways of the city; and praised be God, O my son, that thou hast fallen in with me and none other!' 'As thou wilt,' answered Asaad; 'but make haste, for my brother awaits me and his whole heart is with me.' So the old man took Asaad by the hand, smiling in his face and saying, 'Glory be to Him who hath delivered thee from the people of this city!' Then he carried him to a narrow lane and entering a spacious house, brought him into a saloon, wherein were forty old men, seated in a circle about a lighted fire, to which they were doing worship and prostrating themselves. When Asaad saw this he was confounded and his flesh quaked, though he knew not what they were; and the old man said to them, 'O elders of the fire, how blessed is this day!' Then he cried out, saying, 'Ho, Ghezban!' Whereupon there came out to him a tall black slave of forbidding aspect, grim-visaged and flat-nosed. The old man made a sign to him, and he bound Asaad straitly; after which the old man said to him, 'Bear him to the dungeon under the earth and bid my slave-girl Kewam torture him day and night and give him a cake of bread to eat morning and evening, against the time come of the voyage to the Blue Sea and the Mountain of Fire, when we will slaughter him on the mountain as a sacrifice.' So the black carried him out at another door and raising a flag in the floor, discovered a flight of twenty steps leading to a chamber under the earth, into which he descended with him and laying his feet in irons, committed him to the slave-girl and went away. Meanwhile, the old men said to one another, 'When the day of the Festival of the Fire comes, we will sacrifice him on the mountain, as a propitiatory offering to the Fire.' Presently the damsel went down to him and beat him grievously, till the blood streamed from his sides and he fainted away; after which she set at his head a cake of bread and a cruse of brackish water and went away and left him. In the middle of the night, he revived and found himself bound and sore with beating: so he wept bitterly and recalling his former estate of ease and honour and lordship and dominion, groaned and lamented and repeated the following verses:

Halt by the ruins of the house and question of our fate Nor think
we sojourn in the land, as in our first estate.
Fortune, the sunderer, hath wrought the severance of our loves;
Yet doth our enemies' despite against us nought abate.
A filthy cockatrice is set to torture me with whips, Whose breast
against me is fulfilled with rancour and with hate.
But haply God shall yet reknit our severed loves again And turn
our enemies from us with vengeance stern and strait.

Then he put out his hand and finding the bread and water at his head, ate enough to keep life in him and drank a little water, but could get no sleep for the swarms of bugs and lice. As soon as it was day, the slave-girl came down to him and changed his clothes, which were drenched with blood and stuck to him, so that his skin came off with the shirt; wherefore he shrieked aloud and cried, 'Alas!' and said, 'O my God, if this be Thy pleasure, increase it upon me! O Lord, verily Thou art not unmindful of him that oppresses me: do Thou then avenge me upon him!' And he groaned and repeated the following verses:

Lord, I submit myself to that Thou dost decree, Contented to
endure, if but it pleasure Thee;
To suffer at Thy will with patience nor complain, Though I be
cast to burn on coals of tamarisk-tree.
Mine enemies oppress and torture me; but Thou With benefits
belike shall 'quite and comfort me.
Far be 't from Thee to let th' oppressor go unscathed; Thou art
my hope and stay, O Lord of Destiny!

And what another says:

Avert thy face from thought-taking and care And trust to fate to
order thine affair;

For many a weary and a troublous thing Is, in its issue,
solaceful and fair.
That which was strait is oftentimes made wide And straitened
that, which easy was whilere.
God orders all, according to His will; Gainsay Him not in what He
doth prepare,
But trust in happy fortune near at hand, Wherein thou shalt
forget the woes that were.

Then the slave-girl beat him till he fainted away and throwing him a cake of bread and a cruse of brackish water, went away and left him sad and lonely, bound in chains of iron, with the blood streaming from his sides and far from those he loved. So he called to mind his brother and his former high estate and repeated the following verses, shedding floods of tears the while:

How long wilt thou wage war on me, O Fate, and bear away My
brethren from me? Hold thy hand and spare awhile, I pray!
Is it not time, O thou whose heart is as the rock, that thou My
long estrangement and my dole shouldst pity and allay?
Ill hast thou wrought to those I love and made my foes exult With
all that thou hast wreaked on me of ruin and dismay.
Yea, for the pains he sees me brook of exile and desire And
loneliness, my foeman's heart is solaceful and gay.
Thou'rt not content with what is fallen on me of bitter dole, Of
loss of friends and swollen eyes, affliction and affray.
But I must lie and rot, to boot, in prison strait and dour, Where
nought but gnawing of my hands I have for help and stay,
And tears that shower in torrents down, as from the rain-charged
clouds, And fire of yearning, never quenched, that rages
night and day,
And memory and longing pain and melancholy thought And sobs
and
sighs and groans and cries of "Woe!" and "Wellaway!"
Passion and soul-destroying grief I suffer, and unto Desire, that
knoweth not relent nor end, am fallen a prey.
No kindly soul is found to have compassion on my case And with

his visits and his grace my misery allay.
Lives there a true and tender friend, who doth compassionate My
sickness and my long unrest, that unto him I may
Make moan of all that I endure for dole and drearihead And of my
sleepless eyes, oppressed of wakefulness alway?
My night in torments is prolonged; I burn, without reprieve, In
flames of heart-consuming care that rage in me for aye.
The bug and flea do drink my blood, even as one drinks of wine,
Poured by the hand of damask-lipped and slender-waisted may.
The body of me, amongst the lice, is as an orphan's good, That in
an unjust Cadi's hands doth dwindle and decay.
My dwelling-place is in a tomb, three scanty cubits wide, Wherein
in shackles and in bonds I languish night and day.
My tears my wine are and my chains my music: my dessert
Woeworthy
thought and cares the bed whereon myself I lay.

Meanwhile his brother abode, awaiting him, till mid-day, but he returned not: whereupon Amjed's heart fluttered and the tears welled from his eyes. The pangs of severance were sore upon him and he wept sore, exclaiming, 'Alas, my brother! Alas, my companion! Alas, my grief! I fear me we are separated!' Then he descended the mountain, with the tears running down his cheeks, and entering the city, made for the market. He asked the folk the name of the city and of its people, and they said, 'This is called the City of the Magians, and its people serve the Fire, not the Omnipotent King.' Then he enquired of the City of Ebony and they answered, 'It is a year's journey thither by land and six months' by sea: it was governed erst by a King called Armanous, but he took to son-in-law a prince called Kemerezzeman, distinguished for justice and loyalty, munificence and benevolence, and made him king in his stead.' When Amjed heard tell of his father, he groaned and wept and lamented and knew not whither to go. However, he bought food and carried it with him, till he came to a retired spot, where he sat down, thinking to eat: but, recalling his brother, he fell a-weeping and ate but a morsel to stay his stomach, and that against his will. Then he rose and walked about the city, seeking news of his brother, till he saw a Muslim, a tailor, sitting in his shop; so he sat down by him and told him his story; whereupon quoth the tailor, ‘If he have fallen into the hands of any of the Magians, thou shalt hardly see him again: yet it may be God will reunite you. But thou, O my brother,’ added he, ‘wilt thou lodge with me?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Amjed, and the tailor rejoiced at this. So Amjed abode with him many days, what while the tailor comforted him and exhorted him to patience and taught him his craft, till he became expert. One day, he went forth to the sea-shore and washed his clothes; after which he entered the bath and put on clean raiment. Then he walked about the streets, to divert himself, and presently fell in with a woman of surpassing beauty and symmetry, unequalled for grace and loveliness. When she saw him, she raised her face-veil and winked to him and ogled him, reciting the following verses:

Afar, I saw thee coming and cast mine eyes down straight, As if,
loveling slender, thou wert the very sun.
Indeed, thou art the fairest of all beholden; yea, Even than
thyself thou’rt fairer, since yesterday was done.
Were beauty but allotted, to every one his due, One-fifth of it
were Joseph’s or but a part of one,
And all the rest were surely thine own and only thine; May all
men be thy ransom, yea, every mother’s son!

When he heard this, his heart inclined to her and the hands of love sported with him: so he winked to her in answer and repeated the following verses:

Over the rose of the cheek, the thorns of the eyelashes rise; So
who shall adventure himself to gather the flowery prize?
Lift not your hands to the rose, for long have the lashes waged
war And poured on us battle, because we lifted to it-ward
our eyes.
Tell her the tyrant who plays and yet is temptation itself,
(Though still more seductive she’d be, if she dealt but in
loyaller wise),
I see that, for beauty like thine, exposure’s the surest of
guards, For the veiling thy face but augments its seductions

and adds to our sighs;
Like the sun, on whose visage undimmed the eye still refuses to look, And yet we may gaze at our ease, when the thinnest of clouds o’er it lies.
The honey’s protected, forsooth, by the sting of the bees of the hive: So question the guards of the camp why they stay us in this our emprise.
If my slaughter be what they desire, let them put off their rancours and stand From between us and leave her to deal with me and my life at her guise;
For, I wot, not so deadly are they, when they set on a foe with their swords, As the eyes of the fair with the mole, when her glances upon us she plies.

At this she sighed deeply and signing to him again, repeated the following verses:

’Tis thou that hast trodden the road of aversion and coyness; not I Vouchsafe me the promised delight, for the time of fulfilment draws nigh.
O thou that mak’st morning to dawn with the lustre and light of thy brows And eke, with thy brow-locks unloosed, the night to sink down from the sky,
Thou hast, with an idol’s aspéct, seduced me and made me thy slave And hast stirred me up troubles galore in many a season past by.
And yet it is just that my heart with the ardour of passion should burn, For the fire is their due who adore aught other than God the Most High.
Thou sellest the like of myself for nothing, yea, free, without price; If needs thou must sell, and no help, take a price, then, of those that would buy.

When he heard this, he said to her, ‘Wilt thou come to my lodging or shall I go with thee to thine?’ At this, she hung her head bashfully and repeated the words of the Most High, ‘Men shall have precedence over women, for that God hath preferred these over those.’ By this, Amjed understood that she wished to go with him and felt himself bounden to find a place wherein to receive her, but was ashamed to carry her to the house of his host, the tailor. So he walked on and she followed him from street to street, till she was tired and said to him, ‘O my lord, where is thy house?’ ‘But a little way before us,’ answered he. Then he turned aside into a handsome street, followed by the young lady, and walked on, till he came to the end, when he found it had no issue and exclaimed, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ Then, raising his eyes, he saw, at the upper end of the street, a great door, with two stone benches; but it was locked. So he sat down on one of the benches and the lady on the other; and she said to him, ‘O my lord, wherefore waitest thou?’ He bowed his head awhile, then raised it and answered, ‘I am waiting for my servant, who has the key: for I bade him make me ready meat and drink and flowers for the wine-service against my return from the bath.’ But he said in himself, ‘Belike she will grow tired of waiting and go about her business, leaving me here, when I will go my own way.’ However, when she was weary of waiting, she said, ‘O my lord, thy servant tarries long; and here are we waiting in the street.’ And she took a stone and went up to the lock. ‘Be not in haste,’ said Amjed; ‘but have patience till the servant comes.’ However, she hearkened not to him, but smote the lock with the stone and broke it in half, whereupon the door opened. Quoth he, ‘What possessed thee to do this?’ ‘Pooh, pooh, my lord!’ answered she. ‘What matters it? Is not the house thine?’ ‘Yes,’ said he; ‘but there was no need to break the lock.’ Then she entered, leaving Amjed confounded and knowing not what to do for fear of the people of the house; but she said to him, ‘Why dost thou not enter, O light of mine eyes and darling of my heart?’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered he; ‘but my servant tarries long upon me and I know not if he have done aught of what I bade him or not.’ So saying, he entered, sore in fear of the people of the house, and found himself in a handsome saloon, full of buffets and niches and settles, furnished with stuffs of silk and brocade. It had four raised recesses, each facing other, and in the midst was a fountain of costly fashion, on whose margin stood a covered tray (of meats), with a leather table-cloth hanging up and dishes set with jewels, full of fruits and sweet-scented flowers. Hard by stood drinking vessels and a candlestick with a candle therein. The place was full of precious stuffs, and therein were chests and stools set, on each of which latter lay a parcel of clothes and a purse full of gold and silver. The floor was paved with marble and the house bore witness in every part to its owner's fortune. When Amjed saw all this, he was confounded and said in himself, 'I am a lost man! Verily, we are God's and to God we return!' As for the lady, she was transported at what she saw and said to him, 'By Allah, O my lord, thy servant has not failed of his duty; for see, he has swept the place and cooked the meat and set on the fruit; and indeed I come at the best of times.' But he paid no heed to her, his heart being taken up with fear of the people of the house; and she said, 'Fie, O my lord, O my heart! What ails thee to stand thus?' Then she sighed and giving him a kiss, that sounded like the cracking of a walnut, said, 'O my lord, and thou have bidden other than me, I will gird my middle and serve her and thee.' Amjed laughed from an angerful heart and sat down, panting and saying in himself, 'Alack, how I shall smart for it, when the owner of the house returns!' She seated herself by him and fell to jesting and laughing, whilst he sat careful and frowning, thinking a thousand thoughts and saying in himself, 'The master of the house will surely come and what shall I say to him? He will assuredly kill me without mercy.' Presently, she rose and tucking up her sleeves, took a table, on which she laid the cloth and the tray of food; then set it before Amjed and began to eat, saying, 'Eat, O my lord.' So he came forward and ate; but the food was not pleasant to him and he ceased not to look towards the door, till the lady had eaten her fill, when she took away the meats and setting on the dessert, fell to eating of the dried fruits. Then she brought the wine-service and opening the jar, filled a cup and gave it to Amjed, who took it, saying in himself, 'Alas! what will become of me, when the master of the house comes and sees me!' Presently, as he sat, with the cup in his hand and his eyes fixed on the vestibule, in came the master of the house, who was one of the chief men of the city, being Master of the Horse to the King. He had fitted up this house for his privy pleasures, that he might make merry therein and be private with whom he would, and had that day bidden one whom he loved and had made this entertainment for him. When, therefore, this man (whose name was Behadir and who was a kindly, liberal and open- handed man) came thither and found the door open and the lock broken, he entered softly and putting in his head at the door of the saloon, saw Amjed and the lady sitting, with the dish of fruit and the wine-jar before them. Amjed at that moment had the cup in his hand and his face turned to the door; and when his eyes met Behadir's, he turned pale and trembled in every nerve. Behadir, seeing his trouble, signed to him, with his finger on his lips, as who should say, 'Be silent and come hither to me.' So he set down the cup and rose, whereupon quoth the lady, 'Whither away?' He shook his head and signing to her that he wished to make water, went out into the corridor, barefoot. When he saw Behadir, he knew him for the master of the house; so he hastened to him and kissing his hands, said to him, 'God on thee, O my lord, before thou do me any hurt, hear what I have to say.' Then he told him who he was and what caused him leave his native land and royal state, and how he had not entered his house of his free will, but that it was the lady who had broken the lock and done all this. When Behadir heard his story and knew that he was a king's son, he inclined to him and taking compassion on him, said to him, 'O Amjed, hearken to me and do what I bid thee, and I will ensure thee safety from that thou fearest; but, if thou cross me, I will kill thee.' 'Command me as thou wilt,' answered Amjed. 'I will not gainsay thee in aught, for I am the freedman of thy bounty.' 'Then go back forthright into the saloon,' rejoined Behadir, 'and sit down in thy place and take thine ease. I will presently come in to thee, and when thou seest me (now my name is Behadir) do thou revile me and rail at me, saying, "Why hast thou tarried till now?" And accept no excuse from me, but rise and beat me; and if thou spare me, I will do away thy life. Enter now and make merry and whatsoever thou seekest of me, I will bring thee forthwith. So pass the night as thou wilt and on the morrow go thy way. This in honour of thy strangerhood, for I love strangers and hold myself bounden to do them honour.’ So Amjed kissed his hand and returning to the saloon, with his face clad in its native white and red, said to the lady, ‘O my mistress, the place is gladdened by thy presence, and this is indeed a blessed night.’ ‘Verily,’ said she, ‘this is a wonderful change in thee, that thou now welcomest me so cordially!’ ‘By Allah, O my lady,’ answered he, ‘methought my servant Behadir had robbed me of some necklaces of jewels, worth ten thousand dinars each; however, when I went out but now, in concern for this, I sought for them and found them in their place. I know not why the knave tarries thus, and needs must I punish him for it.’ She was satisfied with his answer, and they drank and sported and made merry, till near upon sundown, when Behadir came in to them, having changed his clothes and girt his middle and put on shoes, such as are worn of servants. He saluted and kissed the earth, then clasped his hands behind him and stood, with his head hanging down, as one who confesses to a fault. Amjed looked at him with angry eyes and said, ‘Why hast thou tarried till now, O most pestilent of slaves?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Behadir, ‘I was busy washing my clothes and knew not of thy being here; for thou hadst appointed me for nightfall and not for the daytime.’ But Amjed cried out at him, saying, ‘Thou liest, O vilest of slaves! By Allah, I must beat thee!’ So he rose and laying Behadir on the ground, took a stick and beat him gingerly: but the lady sprang up and snatching the stick from his hand, laid on to Behadir so lustily, that the tears ran from his eyes and he ground his teeth together and called out for succour; whilst Amjed cried out to the lady to hold her hand and she answered, ‘Let me stay my anger on him;’ till at last he snatched the stick from her hand and pushed her away. Behadir arose and wiping away his tears, waited upon them awhile; after which he swept the hall and lighted the lamps; but, as often as he went in and out, the lady railed at him and cursed him, till Amjed was wroth with her and said, ‘For God’s sake, leave my servant; he is not used to this.’ Then they sat eating and drinking, whilst Behadir waited upon them, till midnight, when the latter, weary with service and beating, fell asleep in the midst of the hall and snored and snorted; whereupon the lady, who was heated with wine, said to Amjed, ‘Arise, take the sword that hangs yonder and cut off this slave’s head, or I will be the death of thee.’ ‘What possesses thee to kill my slave?' asked Amjed; and she answered, 'Our delight will not be fulfilled but by his death. If thou wilt not kill him, I will do it myself.' 'For God's sake,' cried Amjed, 'do not this thing!' 'It must be,' replied she and taking down the sword, drew it and made at Behadir to kill him; but Amjed said in himself, 'This man hath entreated us courteously and sheltered us and done us kindness and made himself my servant: and shall we requite him by killing him? This shall never be. Then he said to the lady, 'If my slave must be killed, better I should do it than thou.' So saying, he took the sword from her and raising his hand, smote her on the neck and made her head fly from her body. It fell upon Behadir, who awoke and sitting up, saw Amjed standing by him, with the bloodstained sword in his hand, and the damsel lying dead. He enquired what had passed, and Amjed told him what she had said, adding, 'Nothing would serve her but she must kill thee; and this is her reward.' Behadir rose and kissing the prince's hand, said to him, 'Would God thou hadst spared her! But now there is nothing for it but to rid us of her forthright, before the day break.' So saying, he wrapped the body in a mantle and laying it in a basket, said to Amjed, 'Thou art a stranger here and knowest no one: so sit thou here and await my return. If I come back, I will assuredly do thee great good service and use my endeavour to have news of thy brother; but if I return not by sunrise, know that all is over with me; in which case the house and all it contains are thine, and peace be on thee.' Then he shouldered the basket and going forth, made for the sea, thinking to throw it therein: but as he drew near the shore, he turned and found himself surrounded by the chief of the police and his officers. They knew him and wondered and opened the basket, in which they found the slain woman. So they seized him and laid him in irons till the morning, when they carried him and the basket to the King and acquainted the latter with the case. The King was sore enraged and said to Behadir, 'Out on thee! This is not the first time thou hast slain folk and cast them into the sea and taken their goods. How many murders hast thou done ere this?' Behadir hung his head, and the King cried out at him, saying, 'Woe to thee! Who killed this young lady?' 'O my lord,' answered Behadir, 'I killed her, and there is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!'

At this the King's anger redoubled and he commanded to hang him. So the hangman and the chief of the police went down with him, by the King's commandment, and paraded him through the streets and markets of the town, whilst a crier forewent them, bidding all the folk to the execution of Behadir, the King's Master of the Horse.

Meanwhile, Amjed awaited his host's return till the day broke and the sun rose, and when he saw that he came not, he exclaimed, 'There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! I wonder what is come of him?' As he sat musing, he heard the crier proclaiming aloud Behadir's sentence and bidding the people to his hanging at midday; whereat he wept and exclaimed, 'Verily, we are God's and to Him we return! He means to sacrifice himself unjustly for my sake, when it was I killed her. By Allah, this shall never be!' Then he went out and shutting the door after him, hurried through the streets, till he overtook Behadir, when he accosted the chief of the police and said to him, 'O my lord, put not Behadir to death, for he is innocent. By Allah, none killed her but I.' When the Master of the Police heard this, he took them both and carrying them before the King, told him what Amjed had said; whereupon he looked at the prince and said to him, 'Didst thou kill the young lady?' 'Yes,' answered he, and the King said, 'Tell me why thou killedst her, and speak the truth.' 'O King,' replied Amjed, 'indeed, it is a rare event and a strange matter that hath befallen me: were it graven with needles on the corners of the eye, it would serve as a lesson to whoso can profit by admonition.' Then he told him his whole story and all that had befallen him and his brother, first and last; whereat the King wondered greatly and said to him, 'O youth, I know thee now to be excusable. Wilt thou be my Vizier?' 'I hear and obey,' answered Amjed; whereupon the King bestowed magnificent dresses of honour on him and Behadir and gave him a handsome house, with servants and officers and all things needful, appointing him stipends and allowances and bidding him make search for his brother Asaad. So Amjed sat down in the seat of office and governed and did justice and invested and deposed and gave and took. Moreover, he sent out a crier to cry his brother throughout the city, and he made proclamation in the streets and markets many days, but heard no news of Asaad nor happened on any trace of him.

Meanwhile, the Magians ceased not to torture Asaad, night and day, for a whole year's space, till the day of their festival drew near, when the old man (whose name was Behram) made ready for the voyage and fitted out a ship for himself. When all was ready, he laid Asaad in a chest and locking it, transported it to the ship. As fate would have it, Amjed was at that very time standing looking upon the sea; and when he saw the men carrying the chest and other gear on board the ship, his heart throbbed and he called to his servants to bring him his horse. Then, mounting with a company of his officers, he rode down to the port and halted before the Magian's ship, which he commanded his men to search. So they boarded the vessel and searched it in every part, but found nothing and returned and told Amjed, who mounted again and rode back to his palace, with a troubled mind. As he entered, he cast his eyes on the wall and saw written thereon the following verses, which when he read, he called to mind his brother and wept:

Belovéd ones, for all you're absent from my sight, Yet in my
 heart and thought you have your sojourn still.
You leave me here to pine and languish for desire; You rob mine
 eyes of sleep and sleep yourselves your fill.

Meanwhile, Behram embarked and shouted to his crew to make sail in all haste. So they loosed the sails and departing, fared on without ceasing many days and nights; and every other day, Behram took out Asaad and gave him a little bread and water, till they drew near the Mountain of Fire, when there came out on them a contrary wind and the sea rose against them, so that they were driven out of their course into strange waters and came in sight of a city builded upon the shore, with a citadel whose windows overlooked the sea. Now the ruler of this city was a queen called Merjaneh, and the captain said to Behram, 'O my lord, we have strayed from our course and come to the island of Queen Merjaneh, who is a devout Muslim; and if she know that we are Magians, she will take our ship and slay us to the last man. Yet needs must we put in here to rest [and refit].' Quoth Behram, 'Let us clothe this Muslim we have with us in a slave's habit and carry him ashore with us, so that, when the queen sees him, she will think and say, “This is a slave.” As for me, I will tell her that I am a dealer in white slaves and that I had with me many, but have sold all but this one, whom I have retained to keep my accounts, for he can read and write.’ And the captain said, ‘This device should serve well.’ Presently they reached the city and slackening sail, cast anchor; when, behold, Queen Merjaneh came down to them, attended by her guards, and halting before the ship, called out to the captain, who landed and kissed the earth before her. Quoth she, ‘What is the lading of thy ship and whom hast thou with thee?’ ‘O queen of the age,’ answered he, ‘I have with me a merchant who deals in slaves.’ And she said, ‘Bring him to me;’ whereupon Behram came ashore to her, followed by Asaad in a slave’s habit, and kissed the earth before her. ‘What is thy condition?’ asked the queen; and Behram answered, ‘I am a slave-dealer.’ Then she looked at Asaad and taking him for a slave, said to him, ‘What is thy name?’ Quoth he, ‘Dost thou ask my present or my former name?’ ‘Hast thou then two names?’ asked she, and he answered (and indeed his voice was choked with tears), ‘Yes; my name aforetime was Asaad, but now it is Muterr.’ Her heart inclined to him and she said, ‘Canst thou write?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he; and she gave him inkhorn and pen and paper and said to him, ‘Write somewhat, that I may see it.’ So he wrote the following verses:

Harkye, O thou that judgest, what can a mortal do, When fate, in
 all conditions, doth him to death ensue?
It casts him in the ocean, bound hand and foot, and says, “Beware
 lest with the water you wet yourself, look you!”

When she read this, she had compassion upon him and said to Behram, ‘Sell me this slave.’ ‘O my lady,’ answered he, ‘I cannot sell him, for he is the only slave I have left.’ Quoth she, ‘I must have him of thee, either by purchase or as a gift.’ But Behram said, ‘I will neither sell him nor give him.’ Whereat she was wroth and taking Asaad by the hand, carried him up to the palace and sent to Behram, saying, ‘Except thou set sail and depart our city this very night, I will seize all thy goods and break up thy ship.’ When the message reached the Magian, he was sore troubled and said, ‘Verily, this voyage is every way unfortunate.’ Then he made ready and took all he needed and awaited the coming of the night, to resume his voyage, saying to the sailors, ‘Provide yourselves and fill the waterskins, that we may set sail at the last of the night.’ So the sailors did their occasions and awaited the coming of the night.

To return to Queen Merjaneh. When she had brought Asaad into the palace, she opened the windows overlooking the sea and bade her handmaids bring food. Accordingly, they set food before Asaad and herself, and they ate, after which the queen called for wine and fell to drinking with him. Now God (may He be exalted and glorified!) filled her heart with love for Asaad and she plied him with wine, till his reason fled and presently he rose and left the hall, to do an occasion. Seeing a door open, he went out and walked on, till he came to a vast garden full of all manner fruits and flowers and sitting down under a tree, did his occasion. Then he went up to a fountain in the garden and made the ablution and washed his hands and face, after which he would have risen to go away; but the air smote him and he fell back, with his clothes undone, and slept, and night overcame him thus.

Meanwhile, Behram, the night being come, cried out to the sailors to spread sail and depart. ‘We hear and obey,’ answered they; ‘but give us time to fill our water-skins.’ Then they landed with their water-skins and coasting the palace, found nothing but walls: so they climbed over into the garden and followed the track of feet, that led them to the fountain, where they found Asaad lying on his back, asleep. They knew him and taking him up, climbed the wall again with him, after they had filled their skins, and carried him back in haste to Behram, to whom said they, ‘Beat thy drums and sound thy pipes; for we have found thy prisoner, whom Queen Merjaneh took from thee by force, and have brought him back to thee.’ And they threw Asaad down before him. When Behram saw him, his heart leapt for joy and his breast dilated with gladness. Then he bestowed largesse on the sailors and bade them weigh anchor in haste. So they set sail forthright, intending for the Mountain of Fire, and stayed not their course till the morning.

As for Queen Merjaneh, she abode awhile, awaiting Asaad’s return; and when she saw that he came not, she rose and sought him, but found no trace of him. Then she bade her women light flambeaux and search for him, whilst she herself went forth and seeing the garden-door open, knew that he had gone thither. So she went out and finding his slippers lying by the fountain, searched the garden in every part, but found no sign of him. Nevertheless, she gave not over the search till morning, when she enquired for the Magian's ship and was told that it had set sail in the first watch of the night; wherefore she knew that they had taken Asaad with them and this was grievous to her and she was angry. So she bade equip ten great ships forthwith and arming herself, embarked in one of them, with her guards and women and troops, richly accoutred and armed for war. They spread the sails and she said to the captain, 'If you overtake the Magian's ship, ye shall have of me dresses of honour and largesse; but if ye let it escape, I will kill you all.' Whereat fear and great hope fell upon the seamen, and they sailed three days and nights, till, on the fourth day, they sighted Behram's ship. Ere ended day, they came up with it and surrounded it on all sides, even as Behram had taken Asaad forth of the chest and was beating and torturing him, whilst the prince cried out for succour and relief, but found neither helper nor deliverer; and indeed he was sorely tormented with much beating. Presently Behram chanced to look up and seeing himself encompassed by the queen's ships, as the white of the eye encompasses the black, gave himself up for lost and groaned and said to Asaad, 'Out on thee, O Asaad! This is all thy doing; but, by Allah, I will kill thee ere I die myself.' Then he bade the sailors throw him overboard; so they took him by the hands and feet and cast him into the sea and he sank. But God (may He be exalted and glorified!) willed that his life should be saved and that his last day should be deferred; so He caused him to rise again and he struck out with his hands and feet, till the Almighty gave him ease and relief and the waves bore him far from the Magian's ship and threw him ashore. He landed, scarce crediting his escape, and putting off his clothes, wrung them and spread them out to dry, whilst he sat, naked and weeping over his misfortunes and desolate and forlorn condition and repeating the following verses:

My fortitude fails me for travail and pain; My patience is spent,

my endeavour in vain;
My sinews are sundered; O Lord of all lords, To whom but his Lord
shall the wretched complain?

Then, rising, he donned his clothes and set out at a venture, knowing not whither he went. He fared on day and night, eating of the herbs of the earth and the fruits of the trees and drinking of the streams, till he came in sight of a city; whereupon he rejoiced and hurried on; but before he reached it, the night overtook him and the gates were shut. Now, as chance would have it, this was the very city in which he had been a prisoner and to whose king his brother Amjed was vizier. When he saw the gate was shut, he turned back and made for the burial-ground, where finding a tomb without a door, he entered and lay down and fell asleep, with his face in his sleeve.

Meanwhile, Queen Merjaneh, coming up with Behram's ship, questioned him of Asaad; but he swore to her that he was not with him and that he knew nothing of him. She searched the ship, but found no trace of Asaad, so took Behram and carrying him back to her castle, would have put him to death; but he ransomed himself from her with all his good and his ship and she released him and his men. They went forth from her, hardly believing in their escape, and fared on ten days' journey, till they came to their own city and found the gate shut, it being eventide. So they made for the burial-ground, thinking to lie the night there, and going round about the tombs, as fate would have it, saw that, in which Asaad lay, open; whereat Behram marvelled and said,' I must look into this tomb.' Then he entered and found Asaad lying asleep, with his head on his sleeve; so he raised his head and looking in his face, knew him for him on whose account he had lost his goods and his ship, and said, 'Art thou yet alive?' Then he bound him and gagged him, without further parley, and carried him to his house, where he clapped heavy shackles on his feet and lowered him into the underground dungeon aforesaid, affected to the tormenting of Muslims, bidding a daughter of his, by name Bustan, torture him night and day, till the next year, when they would again visit the Mountain of Fire and offer him up as a sacrifice there. Then he beat him grievously and locking the dungeon door upon him, gave the keys to his daughter. By and by, she opened the door and went down to beat him, but finding him a comely sweet-faced youth, with arched brows and melting black eyes, fell in love with him and said to him, ‘What is thy name?’ ‘My name is Assad,’ answered he. ‘Mayst thou indeed be happy,’ exclaimed she, ‘and happy be thy days! Thou deservest not torture and blows, and I see thou hast been unjustly entreated.’ And she comforted him with kind words and loosed his bonds. Then she questioned him of the faith of Islam, and he told her that it was the true and orthodox faith and that our lord Mohammed had approved himself by surpassing miracles and manifest signs and that the [worship of] fire was not profitable, but harmful; and he went on to expound to her the tenets of Islam, till she was persuaded and the love of the True Faith entered her heart. Then (for God the Most High had filled her with love of Asaad), she made profession of the faith and became of the people of felicity. After this, she brought him meat and drink and talked with him and they prayed together: moreover, she made him chicken-broths and fed him therewith, till he regained strength and his sickness left him and he was restored to health. One day, as she stood at the door of the house, she heard the crier proclaiming aloud and saying, ‘Whoso hath with him a handsome young man, whose favour is thus and thus, and bringeth him forth, shall have all he seeketh of wealth; but if any have him and discover it not, he shall be hanged over his own door and his goods shall be confiscated and his blood go for nought.’ Now Asaad had acquainted her with his whole history: so, when she heard the crier, she knew that it was he who was sought for and going down to him, told him the news. Then she went forth with him to the palace of the Vizier, whom when Asaad saw, he exclaimed, ‘By Allah, this is my brother Amjed!’ And threw himself upon him; whereupon Amjed also knew him and they embraced each other and lay awhile insensible, whilst the Vizier’s officers stood round them. When they came to themselves, Amjed took his brother and carried him to the Sultan, to whom he related the whole story, and the Sultan charged him to plunder Behram’s house and take himself. So Amjed despatched thither a company of men, who sacked the house and took Behram and brought his daughter to the Vizier, who received her with all honour, for Asaad had told his brother all the torments he had suffered and the kindness that she had done him. Moreover, Amjed, in his turn, related to Asaad all that had passed between the lady and himself and how he had escaped hanging and become Vizier; and they made moan, each to the other, of the anguish they had suffered for separation. Then the Sultan sent for Behram and bade strike off his head; but he said, 'O most mighty King, art thou indeed resolved to put me to death?' 'Yes,' replied the King, 'except thou save thyself by becoming a Muslim.' And Behram said, 'O King, have patience with me a little.' Then he bowed his head awhile and presently raising it again, made profession of the faith and avowed himself a Muslim at the hands of the Sultan. They all rejoiced at his conversion and Amjed and Asaad told him all that had befallen them, whereat he wondered and said, 'O my lords, make ready for the journey and I will depart with you and carry you back to your father's court in a ship.' At this they rejoiced and wept sore; but he said, 'O my lords, weep not for your departure, for ye shall be re-united [with those you love], even as were Nimeh and Num.' 'And what befell Nimeh and Num?' asked they. 'It is told,' replied Behram, '(but God alone is all-knowing), that

Story of Nimeh Ben Er Rebya and Num His Slave-girl

There lived once in the city of Cufa a man called Er Rebya ben Hatim, who was one of the chief men of the town, rich in goods and prosperous, and God had vouchsafed him a son, whom he named Nimet Allah. One day, being in the slave-dealers' mart, he saw a female slave exposed for sale, with a little girl of wonderful beauty and grace in her hand. So he beckoned to the broker and said to him, "What is the price of this woman and her child?" "Fifty dinars," answered he. "Write the contract of sale," said Er Rebya, "and take the money and give it to her owner." Then he gave the broker the price and his brokerage and taking the woman and her child, carried them to his house. When his wife saw the slave, she said to her husband (who was the son of her father's brother), "O my cousin, what is this damsel?" Quoth he, "I bought her for the sake of the little one on her arm, for know that, when she grows up, there will not be her like for beauty, either in the land of the Arabs or elsewhere." "It was well seen of thee," answered his wife. Then said she to the woman, "What is thy name?" "O my lady," replied she, "my name is Taufic." "And what is thy daughter's name?" asked she. "Saad," answered the slave. "Thou sayst sooth," rejoined her mistress. "Thou art indeed happy, and happy is he who hath bought thee." Then said she to her husband, "O my cousin, what wilt thou call her?" "What thou choosest," answered he. "Then let us call her Num," quoth she, and he said, "Good." The little Num was reared with Er Rebya's son Nimeh in one cradle and each grew up handsomer than the other. They were wont to call each other brother and sister, till they came to the age of ten, when Er Rebya said to Nimeh, "O my son, Num is not thy sister, but thy slave. I bought her in thy name, whilst thou wast yet in the cradle; so call her no more 'sister' from this day forth." "If that be so," quoth Nimeh, "I will take her to wife." Then he went to his mother and told her of this, and she said to him, "O my son, she is thy handmaid." So he went in to Num and loved her and two years passed over them, whilst Num grew up, nor was there in all Cufa a fairer or sweeter or more graceful girl than she. She learnt the Koran and all manner of knowledge and excelled in music and singing and playing upon all kinds of instruments, so that she surpassed all the folk of her time. One day, as she sat with her husband in the wine-chamber, she took the lute and tuning it, sang the following verses:

Since thou'rt my lord, by whose good grace I live in fair estate,
A sword wherewith I smite in twain the neck of adverse fate,
No need is mine to have recourse to Amr or to Zeid,
Nor any but thyself, an if the ways on me grow strait.

Nimeh was charmed with these verses and said to her, "I conjure thee, by my life, O Num, sing to us with the tambourine and other instruments!" So she sang the following verses to a lively air:

By him whose hand possesses the reins of my affair, On passion's score, I swear it, my enviers I'll dare.
Yea, I will vex my censors and thee alone obey And sleep and ease and solace, for thy sweet sake, forswear
And dig midmost my entrails, to hold the love of thee, A grave, of which not even my heart shall be aware.

And Nimeh exclaimed, “Gifted of God art thou, O Num!”

But whilst they led thus the most delightsome life, El Hejjaj, [the governor of Cufa, heard of Num and] said in himself, “Needs must I make shift to take this girl Num and send her to the Commander of the Faithful Abdulmelik ben Merwan, for he hath not in his palace her like for beauty and sweet singing.” Then, calling an old woman, one of his body-servants, he said to her, “Go to Er Rebya’s house and foregather with the girl Num and cast about to steal her away, for her like is not to be found on the face of the earth.” She promised to do his bidding; so next morning she donned clothes of wool and threw round her neck a rosary of thousands of beads; then, taking in her hand a staff and water-bottle of Yemen make, went forth, exclaiming, “Glory be to God! Praised be God! There is no god but God! God is most great! There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!” Nor did she leave making devout ejaculations, whilst her heart was full of craft and fraud, till she came to Nimeh’s house, at the hour of noonday-prayer, and knocked at the door. The doorkeeper opened and said to her, “What dost thou want?” Quoth she, “I am a poor pious woman, whom the time of noonday-prayer hath overtaken, and I would fain pray in this blessed place.” “O old woman,” answered the porter, “this is no mosque nor oratory, but the house of Nimeh ben er Rebya.” “I know there is neither mosque nor oratory like the house of Nimeh ben er Rebya,” rejoined she. “I am a chamberwoman of the palace of the Commander of the Faithful and am come out upon a pilgrimage of devotion.” But the porter replied, “Thou canst not enter;” and many words passed between them, till at last she caught hold of him, saying, “Shall the like of me, who have free access to the houses of Amirs and grandees, be denied admission to the house of Nimeh ben er Rebya?” Presently, out came Nimeh and hearing their dispute, laughed and bade the old woman enter. So she followed him into the presence of Num, whom she saluted after the goodliest fashion; and when she looked on her, she was confounded at her exceeding beauty and said to her, “O my lady, I commend thee to the safeguard of God, who made thee and thy lord to accord in beauty and grace!” Then she stood up in the prayer-niche and betook herself to inclination and prostration and prayer, till the day departed and the night came with the darkness, when Num said to her, “O my mother, rest thy feet awhile.” “O my lady,” answered the old woman, “whoso seeketh the world to come must weary himself in this world, and whoso wearieth not himself in this world shall not attain the dwellings of the just in the world to come.” Then Num brought her food and said to her, “O my mother, eat of my victual and pray that God may relent towards me and have mercy on me.” But she replied, “O my lady, I am fasting. As for thee, thou art but a girl and it befits thee to eat and drink and make merry. May God be indulgent to thee! Quoth the Most High, ‘(None shall be saved) except those that repent and believe and work the works of righteousness.’” Num sat awhile, conversing with the old woman, and presently said to Nimeh, “O my lord, conjure this old woman to sojourn with us awhile, for piety is imprinted on her face.” Quoth he, “Set apart for her a chamber, where she may do her devotions, and let none go in to her: peradventure God (glorified and exalted be He!) shall prosper us by the blessing of her presence and part us not.” The old woman passed the night in prayer and recitation, till daybreak, when she went in to Nimeh and Num and giving them good morning, said to them, “I pray God to have you in His holy keeping!” “Whither away, O my mother?” said Num. “My lord hath bidden me set apart for thee a chamber, where thou mayst retire for thy devotions.” “God give him long life,” replied the old woman, “and continue His favour to you both! I would have you charge the doorkeeper not to stay my coming in to you, and (God willing) I will go the round of the Holy Places and pray for you at the end of my devotions every day and night.” Then she went out (whilst Num wept for parting with her, knowing not the purpose of her coming) and returned to El Hejjaj, who said to her, “What news?” She answered, “I have seen the girl, and indeed never bore woman of her day a lovelier than she.” And El Hejjaj said to her, “So thou do my bidding, thou shalt have of me abundant good.” Quoth she, “I ask of thee a month’s time.” And he replied, “It is well.” Then she fell to paying frequent visits to Nimeh and Num, who redoubled in honour and kindness to her, and she used to go in to them morning and evening, and all in the house welcomed her, till, one day, being alone with Num, she said to her, “By Allah, O my lady, when I go to the Holy Places, I will pray for thee; but I should love thee to go thither with me, that thou mightest look on the Elders of the Faith that resort thither, and they should pray for thee, according to thy desire." "O my mother," said Num, "I conjure thee by Allah, take me with thee!" "Ask leave of thy mother-in-law," replied the old woman, "and I will take thee." So Num said to her mother-in-law, "O my lady, ask my master to let us go, thee and me, one day, with this my old mother, to pray and worship with the fakirs in the Holy Places." Presently, Nimeh came in and sat down, whereupon the old woman went up to him and would have kissed his hand, but he forbade her; so she called down blessings on him and left the house. Next day, she came again, in the absence of Nimeh, and said to Num, "We prayed for thee yesterday; but arise now and divert thyself and return ere thy lord come home." So Num said to her mother-in-law, "I beseech thee, for God's sake, let me go with this pious woman, that I may look upon the friends of God in the Holy Places and return speedily, ere my lord come." Quoth Nimeh's mother, "I fear lest thy lord know." "By Allah," said the old woman, "I will not let her sit down; but she shall look, standing on her feet, and not tarry." So on this wise she took the damsel by guile and carrying her to El Hejjaj's palace, bestowed her in a privy chamber and told him of her coming; whereupon he went in to her and looking upon her, saw her to be the loveliest of the people of the day, never had he beheld her like. When Num saw him, she veiled her face from him; but he left her not till he had called his chamberlain, whom he commanded to take fifty horsemen and mounting the damsel on a swift dromedary, carry her to Damascus and there deliver her to the Commander of the Faithful, Abdulmelik ben Merwan. Moreover, he gave him a letter for the Khalif, saying, "Bear him this letter and bring me his answer in all haste." So the chamberlain took the damsel, all tearful for separation from her lord, and setting out with her for Syria, gave not over journeying till he reached Damascus and sought an audience of the Commander of the Faithful, to whom he delivered the damsel and the letter. The Khalif appointed her a separate apartment and going into his harem, said to his wife, "El Hejjaj has bought me a female slave of the daughters (descendants) of the (ancient) Kings of Cufa, for ten thousand dinars, and has sent her to me with this letter." "May God increase thee of his favour!" answered she. Then the Khalif's sister went into Num and when she saw her, she said, “By Allah, happy the man who hath thee in his house, were thy cost a hundred thousand dinars!” “O fair-faced one,” said Num, “what King’s palace is this?” “This is the city of Damascus,” answered the princess, “and the palace of my brother, the Commander of the Faithful, Abdulmelik ben Merwan. Didst thou not know this?” “By Allah, O my lady,” said Num, “I had no knowledge of this!” “And he who sold thee and took thy price,” asked the princess, “did he not tell thee that the Khalif had bought thee?” When Num heard this, she wept and said in herself, “I have been cozened; but, if I speak, none will credit me; so I will hold my peace and take patience, knowing that the relief of God is near.” Then she bent her head for shame, and indeed her cheeks were tanned with the journey and the sun. So the Khalif’s sister left her that day and returned to her on the morrow with clothes and necklaces of jewels and dressed her; after which the Khalif came in to her and sat down by her side, and his sister said to him, “Look on this damsel, in whom God hath united every perfection of beauty and grace.” So he said to Num, “Draw back the veil from thy face;” but she would not unveil, and he beheld not her face. However, he saw her wrists and love of her entered his heart; and he said to his sister, “I will not go in to her for three days, till she be cheered by thy converse.” Then he left her, but Num ceased not to brood over her case and sigh for her separation from Nimeh, till, at eventide, she fell sick of a fever and ate not nor drank; and her face grew pale and her charms faded. They told the Khalif of this, and it grieved him; so he visited her with physicians and men of skill, but none could come at a cure for her.

As for Nimeh, when he returned home, he sat down on his bed and cried, “Ho, Num!” But she answered not; so he rose in haste and called out, but none came to him, for all the women in the house had hidden themselves, for fear of him. Then he went in to his mother, whom he found sitting with her cheek on her hand, and said to her, “O my mother, where is Num?” “O my son,” answered she, “she is with one who is worthier than I to be trusted with her, namely, the devout old woman; she went forth with her to visit the fakirs and return.” “Since when has this been her wont,” asked Nimeh, “and at what hour went she forth?” Quoth his mother, “She went out early in the morning." "And how camest thou to give her leave for this?" said he, and she replied, "O my son, it was she persuaded me." "There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!" exclaimed Nimeh and going forth, in a state of distraction, repaired to the chief of the police, to whom said he, "Dost thou practice on me and steal my slave-girl away from me? I will assuredly complain of thee to the Commander of the Faithful." "Who has taken her?" asked the chief of the police, and Nimeh answered, "An old woman of such and such a favour, clad in woollen raiment and carrying a rosary of thousands of beads." "Find me the old woman," rejoined the other, "and I will get thee back thy slave-girl." "Who knows the old woman?" said Nimeh. "And who knows the hidden things save God, may He be glorified and exalted?" replied the official, who knew her for El Hejjaj's agent. Quoth Nimeh, "I look to thee for my slave-girl, and El Hejjaj shall judge between thee and me." And the master of police answered, "Go to whom thou wilt." Now Nimeh's father was one of the chief men of Cufa; so he went to the palace of the governor, whose chamberlain went in to him and told him what was to do. El Hejjaj bade admit him and enquired his business. Quoth Nimeh, "Such and such things have befallen me." And the governor said, "Bring me the chief of the police, and we will bid him seek for the old woman." Now he knew that the chief of the police knew her; so, when he came, he said to him, "I wish thee to make search for the slave-girl of Nimeh ben er Rebya." And he answered, "None knoweth the hidden things save God the Most High." "Thou must send out horsemen," rejoined El Hejjaj, "and look for the damsel in all the roads and towns." Then he turned to Nimeh and said to him, "An thy slave-girl return not, I will give thee ten slave-girls from my house and ten from that of the chief of the police." And he said to the latter, "Go and seek for the girl." So he went out and Nimeh returned home, full of trouble and despairing of life. He had now reached the age of fourteen and there was yet no hair on his cheeks. He shut himself up from his household and ceased not to weep and lament, he and his mother, till the morning, when his father came in to him and said, "O my son, El Hejjaj hath put a cheat on the damsel and stolen her away; but from hour to hour God giveth relief." But grief redoubled on Nimeh, so that he knew not what he said nor who came in to him, and indeed his charms were changed and he was in sorry case. In this plight he abode three months, till his father despaired of him, and the physicians visited him and said, “There is no cure for him but the damsel.” One day, Er Rebya heard tell of a skilful Persian physician, whom the folk gave out for accomplished in medicine and astrology and geomancy. So he sent for him and seating him by his side, entreated him with honour and said to him, “Look into my son’s case.” So he said to Nimeh, “Give me thy hand.” Accordingly, the young man gave him his hand and he felt his pulse and his joints and looked in his face; then he laughed and turning to Er Rebya, said, “Thy son’s only ailment is in his heart.” “Thou sayst sooth, O sage,” answered Er Rebya; “but apply thy skill to the consideration of his state and case and acquaint me with the whole thereof and hide nought from me.” Quoth the Persian, “He is enamoured of a girl, who is either in Bassora or Damascus; and there is no cure for him but reunion with her.” “An thou bring them together,” said Er Rebya, “thou shalt have of me what will rejoice thee and shalt live all thy life in wealth and delight.” “This is an easy matter,” answered the Persian, “and soon brought about;” and he turned to Nimeh and said to him, “Fear not; no hurt shall befall thee; so take heart and be of good cheer.” Then said he to Er Rebya, “Give me four thousand dinars of your money.” So he gave them to him, and he said, “I wish to carry thy son with me to Damascus, and God willing, we will not return thence but with the damsel.” Then said he to the youth, “What is thy name?” And he answered, “Nimeh.” “O Nimeh,” said the Persian, “sit up and be of good heart, for God will reunite thee with the damsel. So put thy trust in Him and eat and drink and be cheerful and fortify thyself for travel, for we set out for Damascus this very day.” So he sat up whilst the Persian made his preparations and took of Er Rebya, in all, the sum of ten thousand dinars, together with horses and camels and beasts of burden such as he needed for the journey. Then Nimeh took leave of his father and mother and journeyed with the physician to Aleppo. They could get no news of Num there, so fared on to Damascus, where they abode three days, after which the Persian took a shop and adorned its shelves with gilding and stuffs of price and stocked them with vessels of costly porcelain, with covers of silver. Moreover, he set before himself vases and flagons of glass full of all manner ointments and syrups, surrounded by cups of crystal, and donning a physician's habit, took his seat in the shop, with his astrolabe and geomantic tablet before him. Then he clad Nimeh in a shirt and gown of silk and girding his middle with a silken kerchief embroidered with gold, made him sit before himself, saying to him, "O Nimeh, henceforth thou art my son; so call me nought but father and I will call thee son." And he replied, "I hear and obey." The people of Damascus flocked to gaze on the youth's goodliness and the beauty of the shop and its contents, whilst the physician spoke to Nimeh in Persian and he answered him in the same tongue, for he knew the language, after the wont of the sons of the notables. The Persian soon became known among the townsfolk and they began to resort to him and acquaint him with their ailments, for which he prescribed. Moreover, they brought him the water of the sick in phials, and he would examine it and say, "He, whose water this is, is suffering from such and such a disease." And the patient would say, "Verily, this physician says sooth." So he continued to do the occasions of the folk and they to flock to him, till his fame spread throughout the city and into the houses of the great. One day, as he sat in his shop, there came up an old woman riding on an ass with housings of brocade, embroidered with jewels, and drawing bridle before his shop, beckoned to him, saying, "Take my hand." So he took her hand, and she alighted and said to him, "Art thou the Persian physician from Irak?" "Yes," answered he, and she said, "Know that I have a sick daughter." Then she brought out to him a phial and he looked at it and said to her, "Tell me thy daughter's name, that I may calculate her horoscope and learn the hour in which it will befit her to take medicine." "O brother of the Persians," answered she, "her name is Num." When he heard this, he fell to calculating and writing on his hand and presently said to her, "O my lady, I cannot prescribe for the girl, till I know what countrywoman she is, because of the difference of climate: so tell me where she was brought up and what is her age." "She is fourteen years old," replied the old woman, "and was brought up in Cufa of Irak." "And how long," asked he, "has she sojourned in this country?" "But a few months," answered she. When Nimeh heard the old woman's words and the name of his slave-girl, his heart fluttered and he was like to swoon. Then said the Persian to the old woman, “Such and such medicines will suit her case;” and she rejoined, “Then make them up and give them to me, with the blessing of God the Most High!” So saying, she threw him ten dinars, and he bade Nimeh prepare the necessary drugs; whereupon she looked at the youth and exclaimed, “God have thee in His holy keeping, O my son! Verily, she is like thee in age and favour.” Then said she to the physician, “O brother of the Persians, is this thy slave or thy son?” “He is my son,” answered he. So Nimeh made up the medicine and laying it in a little box, took a piece of paper and wrote thereon the following verses:

So Num but vouchsafe me a glance, to gladden my heart and my
mind, Let Suada unfavouring prove and Juml, an’t please her,
unkind.
“Forget her,” quoth they unto me, “And thou shalt have twenty
like her.” I will not forget her, I swear, for never her
like should I find.

He put the paper in the box and sealing it up, wrote on the cover the following words in the Cufic character, “I am Nimeh ben er Rebya of Cufa.” Then he gave it to the old woman, who bade them farewell and returning to the Khalif’s palace, went in to Num, to whom she delivered the box, saying, “O my lady, know that there is lately come to our town a Persian physician, than whom I never saw a more skilful nor a better versed in matters of sickness. I showed him the phial and told him thy name, and he knew thine ailment and prescribed a remedy. Then, by his order, his son made thee up this medicine; and there is not in Damascus a comelier or more elegant youth than this son of his nor hath any the like of his shop.” Num took the box and seeing the names of her lord and his father written thereon, changed colour and said to herself, “Doubtless, the owner of this shop is come in search of me.” So she said to the old woman, “Describe this youth to me.” “His name is Nimeh,” answered the old woman; “he is richly clad and perfectly handsome and has a mole on his right eyebrow.” “Give me the medicine,” cried Num, “and may the blessing and help of God the Most High attend it!” So she drank off the potion and said, laughing, “Indeed, it is a blessed medicine.” Then she sought in the box and finding the paper, read it and knew that this was indeed her lord, whereat her heart was solaced and she rejoiced. When the old woman saw her laughing, she exclaimed, “This is indeed a blessed day!” And Num said, “O nurse, I have a mind to eat and drink.” So the old woman said to the serving-women, “Bring a tray of dainty viands for your mistress;” whereupon they set food before her and she sat down to eat. Presently, in came the Khalif and seeing her sitting eating, rejoiced; and the old woman said to him, “O Commander of the Faithful, I give thee joy of thy slave’s recovery! Know that there is lately come to our city a physician, than whom I never saw a better versed in diseases and their cure. I fetched her medicine from him and she has taken of it but once and is restored to health.” Quoth he, “Take a thousand dinars and provide for her treatment, till she be completely recovered.” And he went away, rejoicing in the damsel’s recovery, whilst the old woman betook herself to the physician, to whom she delivered the thousand dinars and a letter that Num had written, giving him to know that she was become the Khalif’s slave. He gave the letter to Nimeh, who knew her hand and fell down in a swoon. When he came to himself, he opened the letter and found these words written therein: “From the slave despoiled of her delight, her whose reason hath been beguiled and who is separated from the beloved of her heart. Thy letter hath reached me and hath dilated my bosom and rejoiced my heart, even as saith the poet:

The letter reached me, never may the fingers fail thee aught,
 That traced its characters, until with sweetest scent
 they’re fraught!
’Twas as unto his mother’s arms when Moses was restored Or as to
 blind old Jacob’s hands when Joseph’s coat was
 brought.”

When he read these verses, his eyes ran over with tears and the old woman said to him, “What ails thee to weep, O my son? May God never make thine eye to shed tears!” “O my lady,” answered the Persian, “how should my son not weep, seeing that this is his slave-girl and he her lord Nimeh ben er Rebya of Cufa? Indeed, her recovery depends on her seeing him, for nought ails her but the love of him. So, O my lady, take these thousand dinars to thyself (and thou shalt have of me yet more than this) and look on us with eyes of compassion; for we know not how to bring this affair to a happy issue but through thee." Then she said to Nimeh, "Art thou indeed her lord?" "Yes," answered he, and she, "Thou sayst truly; for she ceases not to name thee." Then he told her all that had passed from first to last, and she said, "O youth, thou shalt owe thy reunion with her to none but me." So she mounted at once and returning to Num, looked in her face and smiled, saying, "O my daughter, it is just that thou weep and fall sick for thy separation from thy master Nimeh ben er Rebya of Cufa." Quoth Num, "Verily, the veil has been withdrawn for thee and the truth revealed to thee." "Be of good cheer," rejoined the old woman, "and take heart, for I will surely bring you together, though it cost me my life." Then she returned to Nimeh and said to him, "I have seen thy slave-girl and find that she longs for thee yet more than thou for her; for the Commander of the Faithful is minded to foregather with her, but she refuses herself to him. But if thou be stout of heart and firm of courage, I will bring you together and venture myself for you and make shift to bring thee to her in the Khalif's palace; for she cannot come forth." And Nimeh answered, "God requite thee with good!" Then she went back to Num and said to her, "Thy lord is indeed dying of love for thee and would fain see thee and foregather with thee. What sayst thou?" "And I also," answered Num, "am dying for his sight." So the old woman took a parcel of women's clothes and ornaments and repairing to Nimeh, said to him, "Come apart with me into a privy place." So he brought her into the room behind the shop, where she painted him and decked his wrists and plaited his hair, after which she clad him in a slave-girl's habit and adorned him after the fairest fashion of woman's adornment, till he was as one of the houris of Paradise; and when she saw him thus, she exclaimed, "Blessed be God, the most excellent Creator! By Allah, thou art handsomer than the damsel! Now, walk with thy left shoulder forward and swing thy buttocks." So he walked before her, as she bade him; and when she saw he had caught the trick of women's gait, she said to him, "Expect me to-morrow night, when, God willing, I will come and carry thee to the palace. When thou seest the chamberlains and the eunuchs, fear not, but bow thy head and speak not with any, for I will ward thee from their speech; and with God is success." Accordingly, on the morrow she returned at the appointed hour and carrying him to the palace, entered and he after her. The chamberlain would have stayed him, but the old woman said to him, "O most ill-omened of slaves, this is the handmaid of Num, the Khalif's favourite. How darest thou stay her?" Then said she, "Enter, O damsel!" And they went on, till they drew near the door leading to the inner court of the palace, when the old woman said to him, "O Nimeh, take courage and enter and turn to the left. Count five doors and enter the sixth, for it is that of the place prepared for thee. Fear nothing, and if any speak to thee, answer not neither stop." Then she went up with him to the door, and the chamberlain on guard hailed her, saying, "What damsel is that?" Quoth the old woman, "Our lady hath a mind to buy her." And he said, "None may enter save by leave of the Commander of the Faithful; so go thou back with her. I cannot let her pass, for thus am I commanded." "O chief chamberlain," replied the old woman, "use thy reason. Thou knowest that Num, the Khalif's slave-girl, of whom he is enamoured, is but now restored to health and the Commander of the Faithful hardly yet credits her recovery. Now she is minded to buy this girl; so oppose thou not her entrance, lest it come to Num's knowledge and she be wroth with thee and suffer a relapse and this bring thy head to be cut off." Then said she to Nimeh, "Enter, O damsel; pay no heed to what he says and tell not the princess that he opposed thine entrance." So Nimeh bowed his head and entered, but mistook and turned to his right, instead of his left, and meaning to count five doors and enter the sixth, counted six and entering the seventh, found himself in a place carpeted with brocade and hung with curtains of gold-embroidered silk. Here and there stood censers of aloes-wood and ambergris and sweet-scented musk, and at the upper end was a couch covered with brocade, on which he seated himself, marvelling at the exceeding magnificence of the place and knowing not what was appointed to him in the secret purpose of God. As he sat musing on his case, the Khalif's sister entered, followed by her handmaid, and seeing him seated there took him for a slave-girl and said to him, “What art thou, O damsel, and who brought thee hither?” He made no reply and she continued, “If thou be one of my brother’s favourites and he be wroth with thee, I will intercede with him for thee.” But he answered her not a word; so she said to her maid, “Stand at the door and let none enter.” Then she went up to Nimeh and looking at him, was amazed at his beauty and said to him, “O lady, tell me who thou art and how thou camest here; for I have never seen thee in the palace.” Still he answered not, whereat she was angered and putting her hand to his bosom, found no breasts and would have unveiled him, that she might know who he was; but he said to her, “O my lady, I am thy slave and cast myself on thy protection; do thou protect me.” “No harm shall come to thee,” said she; “but tell me who thou art and who brought thee into this my lodging.” “O princess,” answered he, “I am known as Nimeh ben er Rebya of Cufa, and I have ventured my life for my slave-girl Num, whom El Hejjaj took by sleight and sent hither.” “Fear not,” rejoined the princess; “no harm shall befall thee.” Then, calling her maid, she said to her, “Go to Num’s chamber and bid her to me.”

Meanwhile, the old woman went to Num’s bed-chamber and said to her, “Has thy lord come to thee?” “No, by Allah!” answered Num, and the other said, “Belike he hath gone astray and entered some chamber other than thine.” “There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!” exclaimed Num. “Our last hour is come and we are all lost.” As they sat, pondering, in came the princess’s maid and saluting Num, said to her, “My lady bids thee to her entertainment.” “I hear and obey,” answered the damsel, and the old woman said, “Belike thy lord is with the Khalif’s sister and the veil has been done away.” So Num rose and betook herself to the princess, who said to her, “Here is thy lord sitting with me; it seems he has gone astray; but, please God, neither thou nor he has any cause for fear.” When Num heard this, she took heart and went up to Nimeh, who rose to meet her, and they embraced and fell down in a swoon. As soon as they came to themselves, the princess said to them, “Sit down and let us take counsel for your deliverance from this your strait.” And they answered, “O our lady, we hear and obey: it is thine to command.” “By Allah,” quoth she, “no harm shall befall you from us!" Then she called for meat and drink, and they sat down and ate till they had enough, after which they sat drinking. The cup went round amongst them and their cares ceased from them; but Nimeh said, "Would I knew how this will end!" "O Nimeh," quoth the princess, "dost thou love thy slave Num?" "O my lady," answered he, "it is my passion for her that has brought me thus in peril of my life." Then she said to the damsel, "O Num, dost thou love thy lord Nimeh?" And she replied, "O my lady, it is the love of him that has wasted my body and brought me to evil case." "By Allah," rejoined the princess, "since ye love each other thus, may he not live who would sunder you! Take heart and be of good cheer." At this they both rejoiced, and Num, calling for a lute, tuned it and preluded enchantingly, then sang the following verses:

Whenas, content with nothing less, the spies our sev'rance
sought, Allbe no debt of blood they had 'gainst me or thee
in aught,
Whenas they poured upon our ears the hurtling din of war, Whilst
helpers and protectors failed and succour came there nought,
I fought the railers with my tears, my spirit and thine eyes;
Yea, with the torrent, fire and sword, to fend them off I
wrought.

Then she gave the lute to Nimeh, saying, "Sing thou to us." So he took it and playing a lively measure, sang these verses:

The moon were like thee at its full, were it of freckles free,
And did it never brook eclipse, the sun would favour thee.
Indeed, I marvel, (but in love how many a marvel is! Therein are
passion and desire and cares and ecstasy,)
Short seems the distance, when I fare towards my love's abode;
But when I journey from her sight, the way is long to me.

When he had made an end of his song, Num filled the cup and gave it to him, and he drank it off; then she filled again and gave the cup to the princess, who took it and emptied it; after which she in her turn took the lute and sang as follows:

Mourning and grief possess my heart and in my breast The ardour
of desire abideth as a guest.
The wasting of my frame, alas! is manifest And all my soul is
sick with passion and unrest.

Then she filled the cup and gave it to Num, who drank it off and taking the lute, sang the following verses:

O thou, upon whom I bestowed my soul and thou rack'dst it to
death And I would have ta'en it again, but could not release
it i' faith,
Relent to a lover forlorn; vouchsafe him, I pray, ere he die,
What may from perdition redeem, for this is the last of his
breath.

They ceased not to sing and make merry and drink to the sweet sound of the strings, full of mirth and joyance and good cheer, till, behold, in came the Commander of the Faithful. When they saw him, they rose and kissed the ground before him; and he, seeing Num with the lute in her hand, said to her, "O Num, praised be God who hath done away from thee pain and affliction!" Then he looked at Nimeh (who was still disguised as a woman) and said to the princess, "O my sister, what damsel is this by Num's side?" "O Commander of the Faithful," answered she, "she is one of thy slave-girls and the bosom friend of Num, who will neither eat nor drink without her." And she repeated the words of the poet:

Two opposites, dissevered still in charms and straitly knit, And each one's beauty brightlier shows against its opposite.

"By the Great God," said the Khalif, "she is as handsome as Num, and to-morrow, I will appoint her a separate chamber beside that of Num and send her furniture and linen and all that befits her, in honour of Num." Then, the princess called for food and set it before her brother, who ate and filling a cup, signed to Num to sing. So she took the lute, after drinking two cups, and sang the following verses:

Whenas my cup-companion hath poured me out of wine Three
foaming

cups, brimmed over with nectar from the vine,
I trail my skirts in glory all night, as if o'er thee, Commander
of the Faithful, the empery were mine.

The Khalif was delighted and filling another cup, gave it to Num and bade her sing again. So she drank off the cup, and sweeping the strings of the lute, sang as follows:

O thou, the noblest man of men that live in this our day, Whose
equal none may boast himself in power and mightiness,
O all unpeered in pride of place, to whom munificence Is as a
birthright, Lord and King, whom all in all confess,
Thou, that dost lord it, sovran-wise, o'er all the kings of earth
And without grudging or reproach, giv'st bountiful largesse,
God have thee ever in His guard, despite thine every foe, And be
thy fortune ever bright with victory and success!

When the Khalif heard this, he exclaimed, "By Allah, it is good! By Allah, it is excellent! Verily, God hath been good to thee, O Num! How sweet is thy voice and how clear thy speech!" They passed the time thus in mirth and good cheer, till midnight, when the Khalif's sister said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, give ear to a tale I have read in books of a certain man of rank." "And what is this tale?" asked he. "Know," said she, "that there lived once in the city of Cufa, a youth called Nimeh ben er Rebya, and he had a slave-girl whom he loved and who loved him. They had been reared in one bed; but when they grew up and mutual love took possession of them, fate smote them with its calamities and decreed separation unto them. For designing folk enticed her by sleight forth of his house and stealing her away from him, sold her to one of the Kings for ten thousand dinars. Now the girl loved her lord even as he loved her; so he left house and home and fortune and setting out in quest of her, made shift, at the peril of his life, to gain access to her; but they had not been long in company, when in came the King, who had bought her of her ravisher, and hastily bade put them to death, without waiting to enquire into the matter, as was just. What sayest thou, O Commander of the Faithful, of this King's conduct?" "This was indeed a strange thing," answered the Khalif; "it behoved the King to use his power with clemency, and he should have considered three things in their favour; first, that they loved one another; secondly, that they were in his house and under his hand; and thirdly, that it behoves a King to be deliberate in judging between the folk, and how much more so when he himself is concerned! Wherefore the King in this did unkingly." Then said his sister, "O my brother by the Lord of heaven and earth, I conjure thee, bid Num sing and give ear to that she shall sing!" And he said, "O Num, sing to me." So she played a lively measure and sang the following verses:

Fortune hath played the traitor; indeed, 'twas ever so,
Transpiercing hearts and bosoms and kindling care and woe
And parting friends in sunder, that were in union knit, So down
their cheeks thou seest the tears in torrents flow.
They were, and I was with them, in all delight of life, And
fortune did unite us full straitly whiles ago.
So gouts of blood, commingled with tears, both night and day I'll
weep, my sore affliction for loss of thee to show.

When he heard this, he was moved to great delight, and his sister said to him, "O my brother, he who decideth in aught against himself, it behoveth him to abide by it and do according to his word; and thou hast by this judgment decided against thyself." Then said she, "O Nimeh, stand up, and do thou likewise, O Num!" So they stood up and she continued, "O Commander of the Faithful, she who stands before thee is Num, whom El Hejjaj ben Yousuf eth Thekefi stole and sent to thee, falsely pretending in his letter to thee that he had bought her for ten thousand dinars. This other is her lord, Nimeh ben er Rebya; and I beseech thee, by the honour of thy pious forefathers and by Hemzeh and Akil and Abbes, to pardon them and bestow them one on the other, that thou mayst earn the recompense in the next world of thy just dealing with them; for they are under thy hand and have eaten of thy meat and drunken of thy drink; and behold, I make intercession for them and beg of thee the boon of their lives." "Thou sayst sooth," replied the Khalif, "I did indeed give judgment as thou sayst, and I use not to go back on my word." Then said he, “O Num, is this thy lord?” And she answered, “Yes, O Commander of the Faithful.” “No harm shall befall you,” said he; “I give you to one another.” Then he said to the young man, “O Nimeh, who told thee where she was and taught thee how to get at her?” “O Commander of the Faithful,” replied he, “give ear to my story; for by the virtue of thy pious forefathers, I will hide nothing from thee!” And he told him all that had passed between himself and the Persian physician and the old woman and how she had brought him into the palace and he had mistaken one door for another; whereat the Khalif wondered exceedingly and said, “Fetch me the Persian.” So they fetched him and he made him one of his chief officers. Moreover, he bestowed on him robes of honour and ordered him a handsome present, saying, “Him, who has shown such good sense and skill in his ordinance, it behoves us to make one of our chief officers.” He also loaded Nimeh and Num with gifts and honours and rewarded the old woman; and they abode with him in joy and content and all delight of life seven days; at the end of which time Nimeh craved leave to return to Cufa with his slave-girl. The Khalif gave leave and they departed accordingly and arrived in due course at Cufa, where Nimeh foregathered with his father and mother, and they abode in the enjoyment of all the delights and comforts of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies.’

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The princes wondered mightily at Behram’s story and said, ‘By Allah, this is indeed a rare story!’ They passed the night thus, and next morning, Amjed and Asaad mounted and riding to the palace, sought an audience of the King, who received them with honour. As they sat talking, of a sudden they heard the townsfolk crying aloud and shouting to one another and calling for help, and the chamberlain came in to the King and said to him, ‘Some King hath encamped before the city, he and his army, with arms displayed, and we know not who they are nor what they seek.’ The King took counsel with his Vizier and Asaad, and Amjed said, ‘I will go out to him and learn the cause of his coming.’ So he took horse and riding forth the city, repaired to the stranger’s camp, where he found the King and with him many soldiers and mounted officers. When the guards saw him, they knew him for an ambassador from the King of the city; so they took him and brought him to their King. Amjed kissed the ground before him; but lo, the King was a queen, who wore a chin-band over her face, and she said to Amjed, ‘Know that I have no design on your city and am only come hither in quest of a beardless slave of mine, whom if I find with you, I will do you no hurt; but if I find him not, then shall there befall sore battle between you and me.’ ‘O Queen,’ asked Amjed, ‘what is thy slave’s name and what like is he?’ Said she, ‘His name is Asaad and he is of such and such a favour. My name is Merjaneh, and this slave came to my town in company of Behram, a Magian, who refused to sell him to me; so I took him by force, but the Magian fell upon him by night and took him away by stealth.’ When Amjed heard this he knew that it was his brother Asaad whom she sought and said to her, ‘O Queen of the age, praised be God who hath brought us relief! Know that he whom thou seekest is my brother.’ Then he told her their story and all that had befallen them in the land of exile, and acquainted her with the cause of their departure from the Islands of Ebony, whereat she marvelled and rejoiced to have found Asaad. So she bestowed a dress of honour upon Amjed, and he returned to the King and told him what had passed, at which they all rejoiced and the King and the two princes went forth to meet Queen Merjaneh. They were admitted to her presence and sat down to converse with her, but as they were thus engaged, behold, a cloud of dust arose and grew, till it covered the landscape. Presently, it lifted and discovered an army, in numbers like the swollen sea, armed cap-a-pie, who, making for the city with naked swords, encompassed it as the ring encompasses the little finger. When Amjed and Asaad saw this, they exclaimed, ‘We are God’s and to Him we return. What is this great army? Doubtless, these are enemies; and except we agree with this Queen Merjaneh to resist them, they will take the town from us and slay us. There is nothing for us but to go out to them and see who they are.’ So Amjed mounted and passing through Queen Merjaneh’s camp, came to the approaching army and was admitted to the presence of their King, to whom he delivered his message, after kissing the earth before him. Quoth the King, ‘I am called King Ghaïour, lord of the Islands and the Seas and the Seven Castles, and am come out in quest of my daughter Budour, of whom fortune hath bereft me; for she left me and returned not to me, nor have I heard any news of her or her husband Kemerezzeman. Have ye any tidings of them?' When Amjed heard this, he knew that this King was none other than his grandfather, his mother's father, and kissing the earth before him, told him that he was the son of his daughter Budour; whereupon Ghaïour threw himself upon him and they both fell a-weeping. Then said Ghaïour, 'Praised be God, O my son, for safety, since I have foregathered with thee!' And Amjed told him that his daughter Budour and her husband Kemerezzeman were well and abode in a city called the City of Ebony. Moreover, he related to him how his father, being wroth with him and his brother, had commanded his treasurer to put them to death, but that the latter had taken pity on them and let them go with their lives. Quoth King Ghaïour, 'I will go back with thee and thy brother to your father and make your peace with him.' Amjed kissed the ground before him and the King bestowed a dress of honour upon him, after which he returned, smiling, to the King of the city of the Magians and told him what he had learnt, at which he wondered exceedingly. Then he despatched guest-gifts of sheep and horses and camels and provender and so forth to King Ghaïour and the like to Queen Merjaneh and told her what had chanced, whereupon quoth she, 'I too will accompany you with my troops and will do my endeavour to make peace [between the princes and their father.]' At this moment, there arose another cloud of dust and spread, till it covered the prospect and darkened the day; and under it, they heard shouts and cries and neighing of horses and saw the sheen of swords and the glint of lance-points. When this new host drew near the city and saw the two other armies, they beat their drums and the King of the Magians exclaimed, 'This is indeed a blessed day! Praised be God who hath made us of accord with these two armies! If it be His will, He will give us peace with yon other also.' Then said he to Amjed and Asaad, 'Go forth and bring us news of them, for they are a mighty host, never saw I a mightier.' So they opened the city gates, which the King had shut for fear of the surrounding troops, and Amjed and Asaad went forth and coming to the new host, found that it was the army of the King of the Ebony

Islands, led by their father, King Kemerezzeman in person. When they came before him, they kissed the earth and wept; but, when he saw them, he threw himself upon them, weeping sore, and strained them long to his breast. Then he excused himself to them and told them how sore desolation he had suffered for their loss; and they acquainted him with King Ghaïour's arrival, whereupon he mounted with his chief officers and proceeded to the King of China's camp, he and his sons. As they drew near, one of the princes rode forward and informed King Ghaïour of Kemerezzeman's coming, whereupon he came out to meet him and they joined company, marvelling at these things and how Fortune had ordered their encounter in that place. Then the townsfolk made them banquets of all manner of meats and confections and brought them sheep and horses and camels and fodder and other guest-gifts and all that the troops needed. Presently, behold, yet another cloud of dust arose and spread till it covered the landscape, whilst the earth shook with the tramp of horse and the drums sounded like the storm-winds. After awhile, the dust lifted and discovered an army clad in black and armed cap-a-pie, and in their midst rode a very old man clad also in black, whose beard flowed down over his breast. When the King of the city saw this great host, he said to the other Kings, 'Praised be God the Most High, by whose leave ye are met here, all in one day, and proved all known one to the other! But what vast army is this that covers the country?' 'Have no fear of them,' answered they; 'we are here three Kings, each with a great army, and if they be enemies, we will join thee in doing battle with them, were three times their number added to them.' As they were talking, up came an envoy from the approaching host, making for the city. They brought him before the four Kings and he kissed the earth and said, 'The King my master comes from the land of the Persians; many years ago he lost his son and is seeking him in all countries. If he find him with you, well and good; but if he find him not, there will be war between him and you, and he will lay waste your city.' 'That shall he not,' rejoined Kemerezzeman; 'but how is thy master called in the land of the Persians?' 'He is called King Shehriman, lord of the Khalidan Islands,' answered the envoy; 'and he hath levied these troops in the lands traversed by him, whilst seeking his son.' When Kemerezzeman heard his father's name, he gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon; then, presently coming to himself, he wept sore and said to Amjed and Asaad, ‘Go, O my sons, with the messenger: salute your grandfather, King Shehriman, and give him glad tidings of me, for he mourns my loss and even now wears black for my sake.’ Then he told the other Kings all that had befallen him in his youth, at which they all wondered and mounting with him, repaired to his father, whom he saluted, and they embraced and fell down in a swoon, for excess of joy. When they revived, Kemerezzeman acquainted his father with all his adventures, and the other Kings saluted Shehriman. Then they married Merjaneh to Asaad and sent her back to her kingdom, charging her not to leave them without news of her. Moreover, Amjed took Bustan, Behram’s daughter, to wife, and they all set out for the City of Ebony. When they arrived there, Kemerezzeman went in to his father-in-law, King Armanous, and told him all that had befallen him and how he had found his sons; whereat Armanous rejoiced and gave him joy of his safe return. Then King Ghaïour went in to his daughter, Queen Budour, and satisfied his longing for her company, and they all abode a month’s space in the City of Ebony; after which the King of China and his daughter returned to their own country with their company, taking prince Amjed with them, whom, as soon as Ghaïour was settled again in his kingdom, he made king in his stead. Moreover, Kemerezzeman made Asaad king in his room over the Ebony Islands, with the consent of his grandfather, King Armanous, and set out himself, with his father, King Shehriman, for the Islands of Khalidan. The people of the capital decorated the city in their honour and they ceased not to beat the drums for glad tidings a whole month; nor did Kemerezzeman leave to govern in his father’s room, till there overtook them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies.”

“O Shehrzad,” said King Shehriyar, “this is indeed a right wonderful story!” “O King,” answered she, “it is not more wonderful than that of Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat.” “What is that?” asked he, and she said, “I have heard tell, O august King, that

ALAEDDIN ABOU ESH SHAMAT.

There lived once in Cairo, of old time, a merchant named Shemseddin, who was of the best and truest-spoken of the traders of the city and had great store of money and goods and slaves and servants, white and black and male and female. Moreover, he was Provost of the Merchants of Cairo and had a wife, whom he loved and who loved him; but he had lived with her forty years, yet had not been blessed with son or daughter by her. One Friday, as he sat in his shop, he noted that each of the merchants had a son or two or more, sitting in shops like their fathers. Presently, he entered the bath and made the Friday ablution; after which he came out and took the barber's glass, saying, 'I testify that there is no god but God and that Mohammed is His Apostle!' Then he looked at his beard and seeing that the white hairs in it outnumbered the black, bethought himself that hoariness is the harbinger of death. Now his wife knew the time of his coming and had washed and made ready for him; so when he came in to her, she said, 'Good even;' but he replied, 'I see no good.' Then she called for the evening meal and said to her husband, 'Eat, O my lord.' Quoth he, 'I will eat nothing,' and pushing the table away with his foot, turned his back to her. 'Why dost thou thus?' said she. 'What has vexed thee?' And he answered, 'Thou art the cause of my vexation.' 'How so?' asked she. 'This morning,' replied he, 'when I opened my shop, I saw that each of the other merchants had a son or two or more, and I said to myself, "He who took thy father will not spare thee." Now the night I wedded thee, thou madest me swear that I would never take a second wife nor a concubine, Abyssinian or Greek or other, nor would lie a night from thee: and behold, thou art barren, and swiving thee is like boring into the rock.' 'God is my witness,' rejoined she, 'that the fault lies with thee, for that thy seed is thin.' 'And how is it with him whose seed is thin?' asked he, and she, 'He cannot get women with child nor beget children.' 'What thickens seed?' asked he. 'Tell me and I will try it: haply, it will thicken mine.' Quoth she, 'Enquire for it of the druggists.' They slept that night and arose on the morrow, repenting each of having spoken angrily to the other. Then he went to the market and accosting a druggist, said to him, ‘Hast thou wherewithal to thicken the seed?’ ‘I had it, but am spent of it,’ answered the druggist; ‘ask my neighbour.’ So Shemseddin made the round of the bazaar, till he had asked every one; but they all laughed at him and he returned to his shop and sat down, troubled. Now there was in the market a man called Sheikh Mohammed Semsem, who was syndic of the brokers and was given to the use of opium and bang and hashish. He was poor and used to wish Shemseddin good morrow every day; so he came to him according to his wont and saluted him. The merchant returned his salute, and the other, seeing him vexed, said to him, ‘O my lord, what hath crossed thee?’ Quoth Shemseddin, ‘These forty years have I been married to my wife, yet hath she borne me neither son nor daughter; and I am told that the cause of my failure to get her with child is the thinness of my seed; so I have been seeking wherewithal to thicken it, but found it not.’ ‘I have a thickener,’ said Sheikh Mohammed; ‘but what wilt thou say to him who makes thy wife conceive by thee, after forty years’ barrenness? ‘An thou do this,’ answered the merchant, ‘I will largely reward thee.’ ‘Then give me a dinar,’ rejoined the broker, and Shemseddin said, ‘Take these two dinars.’ He took them and said, ‘Give me also yonder bowl of porcelain.’ So he gave it him, and the broker betook himself to a hashish-seller, of whom he bought two ounces of concentrated Turkish opium and equal parts of Chinese cubebs, cinnamon, cloves, cardamoms, white pepper, ginger and mountain lizard and pounding them all together, boiled them in sweet oil; after which he added three ounces of frankincense and a cupful or coriander-seed and macerating the whole, made it into a paste with Greek honey. Then he put the electuary in the bowl and carried it to the merchant, to whom he delivered it, saying, ‘This is the seed-thickener, and the manner of using it is this. Make the evening-meal of mutton and house-pigeon, plentifully seasoned and spiced; then take of this electuary with a spoon and wash it down with a draught of boiled date-wine.’ So the merchant bought mutton and pigeons and sent them to his wife, bidding her dress them well and lay up the electuary till he should call for it. She did as he bade her and he ate the evening-meal, after which he called for the bowl and ate of the electuary. It liked him well, so he ate the rest and lay with his wife.

That very night she conceived by him and after three months, her courses ceased and she knew that she was with child. When the days of her pregnancy were accomplished, the pangs of labour took her and they raised cries of joy. The midwife delivered her with difficulty [of a son], then, taking the new- born child, she pronounced over him the names of Mohammed and Ali and said, ‘God is Most Great!’ Moreover, she called in his ear the call to prayer; then swathed him and gave him to his mother, who took him and put him to her breast; and he sucked his full and slept. The midwife abode with them three days, till they had made the mothering-cakes and sweetmeats; and they distributed them on the seventh day. Then they sprinkled salt and the merchant, going in to his wife, gave her joy of her safe delivery and said, ‘Where is the gift of God?’ So they brought him a babe of surpassing beauty, the handiwork of the Ever-present Orderer of all things, whoever saw him would have deemed him a yearling child, though he was but seven days old. Shemseddin looked on his face and seeing it like a shining full moon, with moles on both cheeks, said to his wife, ‘What hast thou named him?’ ‘If it were a girl,’ answered she, ‘I had named her; but it is a boy, so none shall name him but thou.’ Now the people of that time used to name their children by omens; and whilst the merchant and his wife were taking counsel of the name, they heard one say to his friend, ‘Harkye, my lord Alaeddin!’ So the merchant said, ‘We will call him Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat.’ Then he committed the child to the nurses, and he drank milk two years, after which they weaned him and he grew up and throve and walked upon the earth. When he came to seven years old, they put him in a chamber under the earth, for fear of the evil eye, and his father said, ‘He shall not come out, till his beard grows.’ And he gave him in charge to a slave-girl and a black slave; the former dressed him his meals and the latter carried them to him. Then his father circumcised him and made him a great feast; after which he brought him a doctor of the law, who taught him to write and repeat the Koran and other parts of knowledge, till he became an accomplished scholar. One day, the slave, after bringing him the tray of food, went away and forgot to shut the trap-door after him: so Alaeddin came forth and went in to his mother, with whom was a company of women of rank. As they sat talking, in came he upon them, as he were a drunken white slave, for the excess of his beauty; and when they saw him, they veiled their faces and said to his mother, ‘God requite thee, O such an one! How canst thou let this strange slave in upon us? Knowest thou not that modesty is a point of the Faith?’ ‘Pronounce the name of God,’ answered she. ‘This is my son, the darling of my heart and the son of the Provost Shemseddin.’ Quoth they, ‘We never knew that thou hadst a son:’ and she, ‘His father feared the evil eye for him and shut him up in a chamber under the earth, nor did we mean that he should come out, before his beard was grown; but it would seem as if the slave had unawares left the door open, and he hath come out.’ The women gave her joy of him, and he went out from them into the courtyard, where he seated himself in the verandah. Presently, in came the slaves with his father’s mule, and he said to them, ‘Whence comes this mule?’ Quoth they, ‘Thy father rode her to the shop, and we have brought her back.’ ‘And what is my father’s trade?’ asked he. And they replied, ‘He is Provost of the merchants of Cairo and Sultan of the Sons of the Arabs.’ Then he went in to his mother and said to her, ‘O my mother, what is my father’s trade?’ Said she, ‘He is a merchant and Provost of the merchants of Cairo and Sultan of the Sons of the Arabs. His slaves consult him not in selling aught whose price is less than a thousand dinars, but sell it at their own discretion; nor doth any merchandise, little or much, enter or leave Cairo, without passing through his hands; for, O my son, God the Most Great hath given thy father wealth past count.’ ‘Praised be God,’ exclaimed he, ‘that I am son of the Sultan of the Sons of the Arabs and that my father is Provost of the merchants! But why, O my mother, did you put me in the underground chamber and leave me prisoner there?’ ‘O my son,’ answered she, ‘we did this for fear of (men’s) eyes, for it is true that the evil eye hath power to harm and the most part of the sojourners in the tombs are of its victims.’ ‘O my mother,’ rejoined he, ‘where is a place of refuge against destiny? Verily, taking care estoppeth not fate nor is there any escape from that which is written. He who took my grandfather will not spare myself nor my father; for, though he live to-day, he shall not live to-morrow. And when my father dies and I come forth and say, “I am Alaeddin, son of Shemseddin the merchant,” none of the people will believe me, but the aged will say, “Never in our lives saw we a son or a daughter of Shemseddin.” Then the Treasury will come down and take my father’s estate; and may Allah have mercy on him who saith, “The noble dies and his wealth passes away and the meanest of men take his women.” So do thou, O my mother, speak to my father, that he take me with him to the market and set me up in a shop with merchandise and teach me to buy and sell and give and take.’ ‘O my son,’ answered his mother, ‘when thy father returns, I will tell him this.’ So when the merchant came home, he found his son sitting with his mother and said to her, ‘Why hast thou brought him forth of the underground chamber?’ ‘O my cousin,’ answered she, ‘it was not I that brought him out; but the servants forgot to shut the door and left it open; so he came forth and came in to me, as I sat with a company of women of rank.’ And she went on to repeat to him what the boy had said; and Shemseddin said to the latter, ‘O my son, to-morrow, God willing, I will take thee with me to the market; but I would have thee know that the commerce of the markets and the shops demands good manners and an accomplished carriage in all conditions.’ So Alaeddin passed the night, rejoicing in his father’s promise; and on the morrow the merchant carried him to the bath and clad him in a suit worth much money. As soon as they had broken their fast and drunken sherbets, Shemseddin mounted his mule and rode to the market, followed by his son; but when the market-folk saw their Provost making towards them, followed by a youth as he were a piece of the moon on its fourteenth night, they said, one to another, ‘See yonder boy behind the Provost of the merchants. Verily, we thought well of him; but he is like the leek, grayheaded and green at the heart.’ And Sheikh Mohammed Semsem before mentioned, the Deputy of the market, said, ‘O merchants, never will we accept the like of him for our chief.’ Now it was the custom, when the Provost came from his house and sat down in his shop of a morning, for the Deputy of the market and the rest of the merchants to go in a body to his ship and recite to him the opening chapter of the Koran, after which they wished him good morrow and went away, each to his shop. Shemseddin seated himself in his shop as usual, but the merchants come not to him as of wont; so he called the Deputy and said to him, ‘Why come not the merchants together as usual?’ ‘I know not how to tell thee,’ answered Mohammed Semsem; ‘for they have agreed to depose thee from the headship of the market and to recite the first chapter to thee no more.’ ‘And why so?’ asked Shemseddin. ‘What boy is this that sits beside thee,’ asked the Deputy, ‘and thou a man of years and chief of the merchants? Is he a slave or akin to thy wife? Verily, I think thou lovest him and inclinest [unlawfully] to the boy.’ With this, the Provost cried out at him, saying, ‘God confound thee, hold thy peace! This is my son.’ ‘Never knew we that thou hadst a son,’ rejoined the Deputy; and Shemseddin answered, ‘When thou gavest me the seed-thickener, my wife conceived and bore this youth, whom I reared in a chamber under the earth, for fear of the evil eye, nor was it my purpose that he should come forth, till he could take his beard in his hand. However, his mother would not agree to this, and he would have me bring him to the market and stock him a shop and teach him to sell and buy.’ So the Deputy returned to the other merchants and acquainted them with the truth of the case, whereupon they all arose and going in a body to Shemseddin’s shop, stood before him and recited the first chapter of the Koran to him; after which they gave him joy of his son and said to him, ‘God prosper root and branch! But even the poorest of us, when son or daughter is born to him, needs must he make a pot of custard and bid his friends and acquaintances; yet thou hast not done this.’ Quoth he, ‘This is your due from me; be our rendezvous in the garden.’ So next morning, he sent the carpet- layer to the pavilion in the garden and bade him furnish it. Moreover, he sent thither all that was needful for cooking, such as sheep and butter and so forth, and spread two tables, one in the saloon and another in the upper chamber. Then he and his son girded themselves, and he said to the latter, ‘O my son, when a graybeard enters, I will meet him and carry him into the upper chamber and seat him at the table; and do thou, in like manner, receive the beardless youths and seat them at the table in the saloon.’ ‘O my father,’ asked Alaeddin, ‘why dost thou spread two tables, one for men and another for youths?’ ‘O my son,’ answered Shemseddin, ‘the beardless boy is ashamed to eat with men.’ And his son was content with this answer. So when the merchants arrived, Shemseddin received the men and seated them in the upper chamber, whilst Alaeddin received the youths and seated them in the saloon. Then the servants set on food and the guests ate and drank and made merry, whilst the attendants served them with sherbets and perfumed them with the fragrant smoke of scented woods; and the elders fell to conversing of matters of science and tradition. Now there was amongst them a merchant called Mehmoud of Balkh, a Muslim by profession but at heart a Magian, a man of lewd life, who had a passion for boys. He used to buy stuffs and merchandise of Alaeddin's father; and when he saw the boy, one look at his face cost him a thousand sighs and Satan dangled the jewel before his eyes, so that he was taken with desire and mad passion for him and his heart was filled with love of him. So he arose and made for the youths, who rose to receive him. At this moment, Alaeddin, being taken with an urgent occasion, withdrew to make water; whereupon Mehmoud turned to the other youths and said to them, 'If ye will incline Alaeddin's mind to journeying with me, I will give each of you a dress worth much money.' Then he returned to the men's party; and when Alaeddin came back, the youths rose to receive him and seated him in the place of honour. Presently, one of them said to his neighbour, 'O my lord Hassan, tell me how thou camest by the capital on which thou tradest.' 'When I came to man's estate,' answered Hassan, 'I said to my father, "O my father, give me merchandise." "O my son," answered he, "I have none by me: but go thou to some merchant and take of him money and traffic with it and learn to buy and sell and give and take." So I went to one of the merchants and borrowed of him a thousand dinars, with which I bought stuffs and carrying them to Damascus, sold them there at a profit of two for one. Then I bought Syrian stuffs and carrying them to Aleppo, disposed of them there at a like profit; after which I bought stuffs of Aleppo and repaired with them to Baghdad, where I sold them with the same result; nor did I cease to buy and sell, till I was worth nigh ten thousand dinars.' Each of the others told a like tale, till it came to Alaeddin's turn, when they said to him, 'And thou, O my lord Alaeddin?' Quoth he, 'I was brought up in a chamber underground and came forth from it but this week and I do but go to the shop and return home.' 'Thou art used to abide at home,' rejoined they, 'and knowest not the delight of travel, for travel is for men only.’ ‘I reck not of travel,’ answered he, ‘and value ease above all things.’ Whereupon quoth one to the other, ‘This youth is like the fish: when he leaves the water he dies.’ Then they said to him, ‘O Alaeddin, the glory of the sons of the merchants is not but in travel for the sake of gain.’ Their talk angered him and he left them, weeping-eyed and mourning-hearted, and mounting his mule, returned home. When his mother saw him thus, she said to him, ‘What ails thee to weep, O my son?’ And he answered, ‘All the sons of the merchants made mock of me and said to me, “There is no glory for a merchant’s son save in travel for gain.”’ ‘O my son,’ rejoined she, ‘hast thou a mind for travel?’ ‘Yes,’ said he. ‘And whither wilt thou go?’ asked she. ‘To the city of Baghdad,’ answered he; ‘for there folk make a profit of two to one on their goods.’ ‘O my son,’ said she, ‘thy father is a very rich man, and if he provide thee not with merchandise, I will do so of my own monies.’ Quoth he, ‘The best of favours is that which is quickly bestowed; if it is to be, now is the time for it.’ So she called the servants and sent them for packers; then opening a store-house, brought out ten loads of stuffs, which the packers made up into bales for him. Meanwhile Shemseddin missed his son and enquiring after him, was told that he had mounted and gone home; so he too mounted and followed him. When he entered the house, he saw the bales packed ready and asked what they were; whereupon his wife told him what had passed between Alaeddin and the young merchants and he said, ‘O my son, may God curse foreign travel! Verily, the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve) hath said, “It is of a man’s good fortune that he have his livelihood in his own land;” and it was said of the ancients, “Leave travel, though but for a mile.”’ Then he said to his son, ‘Art thou indeed resolved to travel and wilt thou not turn back from it?’ ‘Needs must I journey to Baghdad with merchandise,’ answered Alaeddin, ‘else will I put off my clothes and don a dervish’s habit and go a-wandering over the world.’ Quoth Shemseddin, ‘I am no lackgood, but have great plenty of wealth and with me are stuffs and merchandise befitting every country in the world.’ Then he showed him his goods and amongst the rest, forth bales ready packed, with the price, a thousand dinars, written on each, and said to him, ‘Take these forty loads, together with those thy mother gave thee, and set out under the safeguard of God the Most High. But, O my son, I fear for thee a certain wood in thy way, called the Lion's Copse, and a valley called the Valley of Dogs, for there lives are lost without mercy.' 'How so?' asked Alaeddin. 'Because of a Bedouin highwayman, hight Ajlan,' answered his father, 'who harbours there.' Quoth Alaeddin, 'Fortune is with God; if any part in it be mine, no harm will befall me.' Then they rode to the cattle market, where a muleteer alighted from his mule and kissing the Provost's hand, said to him, 'O my lord, by Allah, it is long since thou hast employed me to carry merchandise for thee!' 'Every time hath its fortune and its men,' answered Shemseddin; 'and may God have mercy on him who said:

An old man went walking the ways of the world, So bowed and so
  bent that his beard swept his knee.
"What makes thee go doubled this fashion?" quoth I. He answered
  (and spread out his hands unto me),
"My youth hath escaped me; 'tis lost in the dust, And I bend me
  to seek it, where'er it may be."

O captain,' added he, 'it is not I, but this my son that is minded to travel.' 'God preserve his to thee!' said the muleteer. Then Shemseddin made a contract between Alaeddin and the muleteer, appointing that the former should be to the latter as a son, and gave him into his charge, saying, 'Take these hundred dinars for thy men.' Moreover, he bought his son threescore mules and a lamp and covering of honour for the tomb of Sheikh Abdulcadir el Jilani and said to him, 'O my son, I am leaving thee, and this is thy father in my stead: whatsoever he biddeth thee, do thou obey him.' So saying, he returned home with the mules and servants and they made recitations of the Koran and held a festival that night in honour of the Sheikh Abdulcadir. On the morrow, Shemseddin gave his son ten thousand dinars, saying, 'O my son, when thou comest to Baghdad, if thou find stuffs brisk of sale, sell them; but if they be dull, spend of these dinars.' Then they loaded the mules and taking leave of their friends, set out on their journey.

Now Mehmoud of Balkh had made ready his own venture for

Baghdad and set up his tents without the city, saying in himself, 'I shall not enjoy this youth but in the desert, where there is neither spy not spoil-sport to trouble me.' It chanced that he had in hand a thousand dinars of Shemseddin's monies, the balance of a dealing between them; so he went to the Provost and bade him farewell; and he said to him, 'Give the thousand dinars to my son Alaeddin,' and commended the latter to his care, saying, 'He is as it were thy son.' Accordingly, Alaeddin joined company with Mehmoud, who charged the youth's cook to dress nothing for him, but himself provided him and his company with meat and drink. Now he had four houses, one at Cairo, another at Damascus, a third at Aleppo and a fourth at Baghdad. So they set out and journeyed over deserts and plains, till they drew near Damascus, when Mehmoud sent his servant to Alaeddin, whom he found reading. He went up to him and kissed his hands, and Alaeddin asked him what he sought. 'My master salutes thee,' answered the slave, 'and craves thy company to a banquet in his house.' Quoth the youth, 'I must consult my father Kemaleddin, the captain of the caravan.' So he consulted the muleteer, who said, 'Do not go.' Then they left Damascus and journeyed on till they came to Aleppo, where Mehmoud made a second entertainment and sent to bid Alaeddin; but the muleteer again forbade him. Then they departed Aleppo and fared on, till they came within a day's journey of Baghdad. Here Mehmoud repeated his invitation a third time and Kemaleddin once more forbade Alaeddin to accept it; but the latter said, 'I must needs go.' So he rose and girding on a sword under his clothes, repaired to the tent of Mehmoud of Balkh, who came to meet him and saluted him. Then he set a sumptuous repast before him, and they ate and drank and washed their hands. Presently, Mehmoud bent towards Alaeddin, to kiss him, but the youth received the kiss on his hand and said to him, 'What wilt thou do?' Quoth Mehmoud, 'I brought thee hither that I might do delight with thee in this jousting-ground, and we will comment the words of him who saith:

Can't be thou wilt with us a momentling alight, Like to an
　ewekin's milk or what not else of white,
And cat what liketh thee of dainty wastel-bread And take what

thou mayst get of silver small and bright
And bear off what thou wilt, sans grudging or constraint,
Spanling or full-told span or fistling filled outright?'

Then he would have laid hands on Alaeddin; but he rose and drawing his sword, said to him, 'Shame on thy gray hairs! Hast thou no fear of God, and He of exceeding great might? May He have mercy on him who saith:

Look thou thy hoariness preserve from aught that may it stain,
For whiteness still to take attaint is passing quick and
fain.

This merchandise,' added he, 'is a trust from God and may not be sold. If I sold it to other than thee for gold, I would sell it thee for silver: but, by Allah, O filthy one, I will never again company with thee!' Then he returned to Kemaleddin and said to him, 'Yonder man is a lewd fellow and I will no longer consort with him nor suffer his company by the way.' 'O my son,' replied the muleteer, 'did I not forbid thee to go with him? But if we part company with him, I fear destruction for ourselves; so let us still make one caravan.' But Alaeddin said, 'It may not be: I will never again travel with him.' So he loaded his beasts and journeyed onward, he and his company, till they came to a valley, where Alaeddin would have halted, but the muleteer said to him, 'Do not halt here; rather let us fare forward and quicken our pace, so haply we may reach Baghdad before the gates are closed, for they open and shut them with the sun, for fear the schismatics should take the city and throw the books of learning into the Tigris.' 'O my father,' replied Alaeddin, 'I came not to Baghdad with this merchandise, for the sake of traffic, but to divert myself with the sight of foreign lands.' And Kemaleddin rejoined, 'O my son, we fear for thee and for thy goods from the wild Arabs.' But he answered, 'Harkye, sirrah, art thou master or servant? I will not enter Baghdad till the morning, that the townsfolk may see my merchandise and know me.' 'Do as thou wilt,' said the muleteer; 'I have given thee good counsel, and thou must judge for thyself.' Then Alaeddin bade them unload the mules and pitch the tent; so they did his bidding and abode there till the middle of the night, when the youth went out to do an occasion and seeing something gleaming afar off, said to Kemaleddin, ‘O captain, what is yonder glittering?’ The muleteer sat up and considering it straitly, knew it for the glint of spear-heads and Bedouin swords and harness. Now this was a troop of Bedouins under a chief called Ajlan Abou Naib, Sheikh of the Arabs, and when the neared the camp and saw the baggage, they said, one to another, ‘O night of booty!’ Quoth Kemaleddin, ‘Avaunt, O meanest of Arabs!’ But Abou Naib smote him with his javelin in the breast, that the point came out gleaming from his back, and he fell down dead at the tent-door. Then cried the water-carrier, ‘Avaunt, O foulest of Arabs!’ and one of them smote him with a sword upon the shoulder, that it issued shining from the tendons of the throat and he also fell slain. Then the Bedouins fell upon the caravan from all sides and slew the whole company except Alaeddin, after which they loaded the mules with the spoil and made off. Quoth Alaeddin to himself, ‘Thy dress and mule will be the death of thee.’ So he put off his cassock and threw it over the back of a mule, remaining in his shirt and drawers alone; after which he went to the door of the tent and finding there a pool of blood from the slain, rolled himself in it, till he was as a slain man, drowned in his blood. Meanwhile Ajlan said to his men, ‘O Arabs, was this caravan bound from Egypt for Baghdad or from Baghdad for Egypt?’ ‘It was bound from Egypt for Baghdad,’ answered they. ‘Then,’ said he, ‘return to the slain, for methinks the owner of the caravan is not dead.’ So they turned back and fell to larding the slain with lance and sword-thrusts, [lest any life were left in them,] till they came to Alaeddin, who had laid himself among the dead bodies. Quoth they, ‘Thou dost but feign thyself dead, but we will make an end of thee.’ So one of the Bedouins drew his javelin and should have plunged it into his breast. But he cried out, ‘Save me, O my lord Abdulcadir!’ and behold, he saw a hand turn the lance away from his breast to that of the muleteer, so that it pierced the latter and spared himself. Then the Bedouins made off; and when Alaeddin saw that the birds were flown with their purchase, he rose and set off running; but Abou Naib looked back and said, ‘O Arabs, I see somewhat moving.’ So one of the Bedouins turned back and spying Alaeddin running, called out to him, saying, ‘Flight shall not avail thee, and we after thee;’ and he smote his mare with his fist and pricked after him. Then Alaeddin, seeing before him a watering tank and a cistern beside it, climbed up into a niche in the cistern and stretching himself along, feigned sleep and said, ‘O gracious Protector, cover me with the veil of Thy protection, that may not be torn away!’ Presently, the Bedouin came up to the cistern and standing in his stirrups put out one hand to lay hold of Alaeddin; but he said ‘Save me, O my lady Nefiseh! Now is thy time!’ And behold, a scorpion stung the Bedouin in the palm and he cried out, saying, ‘Help, O Arabs! I am stung;’ and fell off his mare. His comrades came up to him and set him on horseback again, saying, ‘What hath befallen thee?’ Quoth he, ‘A scorpion stung me.’ And they departed, leaving Alaeddin in the niche.

Meanwhile, Mehmoud of Balkh loaded his beasts and fared on till he came to the Valley of Dogs, where he found Alaeddin’s men lying slain. At this he rejoiced and went on till he reached the reservoir. Now his mule was athirst and turned aside to drink, but took fright at Alaeddin’s shadow in the water and started; whereupon Mehmoud raised his eyes and seeing Alaeddin lying in the niche, stripped to his shirt and trousers, said to him, ‘Who hath dealt thus with thee and left thee in this ill plight?’ ‘The Bedouins,’ answered Alaeddin, and Mehmoud said, ‘O my son, the mules and the baggage were thy ransom; so do thou comfort thyself with the saying of the poet:

So but a man may win to save his soul alive from death, But as the paring of his nail his wealth he reckoneth.

But now, O my son,’ continued he, ‘come down and fear no hurt.’ So he came down from the niche and Mehmoud mounted him on a mule and fared on with him, till they reached Baghdad, where he brought him to his own house and bade his servants carry him to the bath, saying to him, ‘O my son, the goods and money were the ransom of thy life; but, if thou wilt harken to me, I will give thee the worth of that thou hast lost, twice told.’ When he came out of the bath, Mehmoud carried him into a saloon with four estrades, decorated with gold, and let bring a tray of all manner meats. So they ate and drank and Mehmoud turned to Alaeddin and would have taken a kiss of him; but he received it upon his hand and said, ‘Dost thou persist in thy evil designs upon me? Did I not tell thee that, were I wont to sell this merchandise to other than thee for gold, I would sell it thee for silver?' Quoth Mehmoud, 'I will give thee neither mule nor clothes nor merchandise save at this price; for I am mad for love of thee, and God bless him who said:

Abou Bilal his saw of an object of love, Which from one of his
elders himself did derive
"The lover's not healed of the pangs of desire By clips nor by
kisses, excepting he swive."

'This may never be,' replied Alaeddin. 'Take back thy dress and thy mule and open the door, that I may go out.' So he opened the door, and Alaeddin went forth and walked on, with the dogs yelping at his heels, till he saw the door of a mosque open and going in, took shelter in the vestibule. Presently, he espied a light approaching and examining it, saw that it came from a pair of lanterns borne by two slaves before two merchants, an old man of comely aspect and a youth. He heard the latter say to the other, 'O my uncle, I conjure thee by Allah, give me back my wife!' The old man replied, 'Did I not warn thee, many a time, when the oath of divorce was always in thy mouth, as it were thy Koran?' Then he turned and seeing Alaeddin, as he were a piece of the moon, said to him, 'Who art thou, O my son?' Quoth he, 'I am Alaeddin, son of Shemseddin, Provost of the merchants at Cairo. I besought my father for merchandise; so he packed me fifty loads of goods and gave me ten thousand dinars, wherewith I set out for Baghdad; but when I came to the Lion's Copse, the Bedouins fell upon me and took all I had. So I entered this city, knowing not where to pass the night, and seeing this place, I took shelter here.' 'O my son,' said the old man, 'what sayst thou to a thousand dinars and a suit of clothes and a mule worth other two thousand?' 'To what end wilt thou give me this?' asked Alaeddin, and the other answered, 'This young man, whom thou seest, is the only son of my brother and I have an only daughter called Zubeideh the Lutanist, who is endowed with beauty and grace. I married her to him and he loves her, but she hates him. Now he took an oath of triple divorcement and broke it. As soon as she heard of this, she left him, and he egged on all the folk to intercede with me to restore her to him; but I told him that this could not lawfully be done but by an intermediate marriage, and we have agreed to make some stranger the intermediary, so none may taunt him with this affair. So, as thou art a stranger, come with us and we will marry thee to her; thou shalt lie with her to-night and on the morrow divorce her, and we will give thee what I said.' 'By Allah,' quoth Alaeddin to himself, 'it were better to pass the night with a bride on a bed in a house, than in the streets and vestibules!' So he went with them to the Cadi, who, as soon as he saw Alaeddin, was moved to love of him and said to the old man, 'What is your will?' Quoth he, 'We wish to marry this young man to my daughter, as an intermediary, and the contract is to be for ten thousand dinars, dowry precedent, for which he shall give us a bond. If he divorce her in the morning, we will give him a thousand dinars and a mule and dress worth other two thousand; but if he divorce her not, he shall pay down the ten thousand dinars, according to the bond.' The Cadi drew up the marriage contract to this effect and the lady's father took a bond for the dowry. Then he took Alaeddin and clothing him anew, carried him to his daughter's house, where he left him at the door, whilst he himself went in to the young lady and gave her the bond, saying, 'Take the bond of thy dowry, for I have married thee to a handsome youth by name Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat; so do thou use him with all consideration.' Then he left her and went to his own lodging. Now the lady's cousin had an old waiting- woman, to whom he had done many a kindness and who used to visit Zubeideh; so he said to her, 'O my mother, if my cousin Zubeideh see this handsome young man, she will never after accept of me; so I would fain have thee contrive to keep them apart.' 'By thy youth,' answered she, 'I will not suffer him to approach her!' Then she went to Alaeddin and said to him, 'O my son, I have a warning to give thee, for the love of God the Most High, and do thou follow my advice, for I fear for thee from this damsel: let her lie alone and handle her not nor draw near to her.' 'Why so?' asked he, and she answered, 'Because her body is full of elephantiasis and I fear lest she infect thy fair youth.' Quoth he, 'I have no need of her.' Moreover, she went to the lady and said the like to her of Alaeddin; and she replied, 'I have no need of him, but will let him lie alone, and on the morrow he shall go his way.' Then she called a slave-girl and said to her, ‘Take him the tray of food, that he may sup.’ So the maid carried him the tray of food and set it before him, and he ate his fill; after which he sat down and fell to reciting the chapter called Ya-sin in a sweet voice. The lady listened to him and found his voice as melodious as the psalms of David, which when she heard, she exclaimed, ‘Beshrew the old hag that told me that he was affected with leprosy! Surely, that is a lie against him, for this is not the voice of one who hath such a disease.’ Then she took a lute of Indian workmanship and tuning it, sang the following verses, in a voice, whose music would stay the birds in mid-heaven:

I am enamoured of a fawn with black and languorous eyes; The
willow-branches, as he goes, are jealous of him still.
Me he rejects and others ‘joy his favours in my stead. This is
indeed the grace of God He gives to whom He will.

As soon as he had finished his recitation, he sang the following verse in reply:

My salutation to the shape that through the wede doth show And to
the roses in the cheeks’ full-flowering meads that blow!

When she heard this, her inclination for him redoubled and she rose and lifted the curtain; and Alaeddin, seeing her, repeated these verses:

She shineth forth, a moon, and bends, a willow-wand, And breathes
out ambergris and gazes, a gazelle.
Meseems as if grief loved my heart and when from her Estrangement
I abide, possession to it fell.

Thereupon she came forward, swinging her hips and swaying gracefully from side to side with a shape the handiwork of Him whose bounties are hidden, and each of them stole a glance at the other, that cost them a thousand regrets. Then, for that the arrows of her glances overcame his heart, he repeated the following verses:

The moon of the heavens she spied and called to my thought The

nights of our loves in the meadows under her shine.
Yea, each of us saw a moon, but, sooth to say, It was her
eyes that I saw and she saw mine.

Then she drew near him, and when there remained but two paces between them, he repeated these verses:

She took up three locks of her hair and spread them out one night
And straight three nights discovered at once unto my sight.
Then did she turn her visage up to the moon of the sky And showed
me two moons at one season, both burning clear and bright.

Then said he to her, 'Keep off from me, lest thou infect me.' Whereupon she uncovered her wrist to him, and he saw that it was cleft [like a peach] and its whiteness was as the whiteness of silver. Then said she, 'Hold off from me, thou, for thou art stricken with leprosy, and belike thou wilt infect me.' 'Who told thee I was a leper?' asked he, and she said, 'The old woman.' Quoth he, 'It was she told me that thou wast afflicted with elephantiasis.' So saying, he bared his arms and showed her that his skin was like virgin silver, whereupon she pressed him to her bosom and they clipped one another. Then she took him and lying down on her back, did off her trousers, whereupon that which his father had left him rose up [in rebellion] against him and he said, 'To it, O elder of yards, O father of nerves!' And putting his hands to her flanks, set the nerve of sweetness to the mouth of the cleft and thrust on to the wicket-gate. His passage was by the gate of victories [or openings] and after this he entered the Monday market and those of Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday and finding the carpet after the measure of the estrade, he plied [or turned] the box within its sheath [or cover] till he came to [the end of] it. When it was morning, he exclaimed, 'Alas for delight that is not fulfilled! The raven takes it and flies away!' 'What means this saying?' asked she, and he answered, 'O my lady, I have but this hour to abide with thee.' Quoth she, 'Who saith so?' and he, 'Thy father made me give him a bond to pay ten thousand dinars to thy dowry; and except I pay it this very day, they will lay me in prison therefor in the Cadi's house; and now my hand lacketh one para of the sum.’ ‘O my lord,’ said she, ‘is the marriage bond in thy hand or in theirs?’ ‘In mine,’ answered he, ‘but I have nothing.’ Quoth she, ‘The matter is easy; fear nothing. Take these hundred dinars; if I had more, I would give thee what thou lackest; but my father, for his love of my cousin, hath transported all his good, even to my trinkets, from my lodging to his. But when they send thee a serjeant of the court and the Cadi and my father bid thee divorce, answer thou, “By what code is it right that I should marry at nightfall and divorce in the morning?” Then kiss the Cadi’s hand and give him a present, and in like manner kiss the Assessors’ hands and give each of them half a score dinars. So they will all speak with thee and if they say to thee, “Why dost thou not divorce her and take the thousand dinars and the mule and suit of clothes, according to contract?” do thou answer, “Every hair of her head is worth a thousand dinars to me and I will never put her away, neither will I take a suit of clothes nor aught else.” If the Cadi say to thee, “Then pay down the dowry,” do thou reply, “I am straitened at this present;” whereupon he and the Assessors will deal friendly with thee and allow thee time to pay.’ Whilst they were talking, the Cadi’s officer knocked at the door; so Alaeddin went down and the man said to him, ‘The Cadi cites thee to answer thy father-in-law’s summons.’ Alaeddin gave him five dinars and said to him, ‘O serjeant, by what code am I bound to marry at night and divorce next morning?’ ‘By none of ours,’ answered the serjeant; ‘and if thou be ignorant of the law, I will act as thine advocate.’ Then they went to the court and the Cadi said to Alaeddin, ‘Why dost thou not divorce the woman and take what falls to thee by the contract?’ With this he went up to the Cadi and kissing his hand, put in it fifty dinars and said, ‘O our lord the Cadi, by what code is it right that I should marry at night and divorce in the morning in my own despite?’ ‘Divorce on compulsion,’ replied the Cadi, ‘is sanctioned by no school of the Muslims.’ Then said the lady’s father, ‘If thou wilt not divorce, pay me the ten thousand dinars, her dowry.’ Quoth Alaeddin, ‘Give me three days’ time.’ But the Cadi said, ‘Three days is not enough; he shall give thee ten.’ So they agreed to this and bound him to pay the dowry or divorce after ten days. Then he left them and taking meat and rice and butter and what else of food he needed, returned to his wife and told her what had passed; whereupon she said, ‘Between night and day, wonders may happen: and God bless him who saith:

Be mild what time thou’rt ta’en with anger and despite And
patient, if there fall misfortune on thy head.
Indeed, the nights are quick and great with child by time And of
all wond’rous things are hourly brought to bed.

Then she rose and made ready food and brought the tray, and they ate and drank and made merry awhile. Presently, Alaeddin besought her to let him hear some music; so she took the lute and played a measure, that would have made the very rock dance for delight, and the strings cried out, in ecstasy, ‘O Loving One!’ after which she passed into a livelier measure. As they were thus passing the time in mirth and delight, there came a knocking at the door and Zubeideh said to Alaeddin, ‘Go and see who is at the door.’ So he went down and finding four dervishes standing without, said to them, ‘What do you want?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered they, ‘we are foreign dervishes, the food of whose souls is music and dainty verse, and we would fain take our pleasure with thee this night. On the morrow we will go our way, and with God the Most High be thy reward; for we adore music and there is not one of us but hath store of odes and songs and ballads.’ ‘I must consult [my wife],’ answered he and returned and told Zubeideh, who said, ‘Open the door to them.’ So he went down again and bringing them up, made them sit down and welcomed them. Then he brought them food, but they would not eat and said, ‘O my lord, our victual is to magnify God with out hearts and hear music with our ears: and God bless him who saith:

We come for your company only, and not for your feasts; For eating for eating’s sake is nought but a fashion of beasts.

Just now,’ added they, ‘we heard pleasant music here; but when we knocked, it ceased; and we would fain know whether the player was a slave-girl, white of black, or a lady.’ ‘It was this my wife,’ answered he and told them all that had befallen him, adding, ‘My father-in-law hath bound me to pay a dowry of ten thousand dinars for her and they have given me ten days’ time.’ ‘Have no care and think nought but good,’ said one of the dervishes; ‘for I am head of the convent and have forty dervishes under my hand. I will gather thee from them the ten thousand dinars and thou shalt pay thy father-in-law the dowry. But now bid thy wife make us music, that we may be heartened and solaced, for to some music is food, to others medicine and to others refreshment.' Now these four dervishes were none other than the Khalif Haroun er Reshid and his Vizier Jaafer the Barmecide and Abou Nuwas ben Hani and Mesrour the headsman; and the reason of their coming thither was that the Khalif, being heavy at heart, had called his Vizier and signified to him his wish to go forth and walk about the city, to divert himself. So they all four donned dervish habits and went out and walked about, till they came to Zubeideh's house and hearing music, were minded to know the cause. They spent the night in mirth and harmony and discourse, till the morning, when the Khalif laid a hundred dinars under the prayer-carpet and taking leave of Alaeddin, went his way, he and his companions. Presently, Zubeideh lifted the carpet and finding the hundred dinars, gave them to her husband, saying, 'Take these hundred dinars that I have found under the prayer-carpet; the dervishes must have laid them there, without our knowledge.' So he took the money and repairing to the market, bought meat and rice and butter and so forth. When it was night, he lighted the candled and said to Zubeideh, 'The dervishes have not brought the ten thousand dinars that they promised me: but indeed they are poor men.' As they were talking, the dervishes knocked at the door and she said, 'Go down and open to them.' So he went down and bringing them up, said to them, 'Have you brought me the ten thousand dinars?' 'We have not been able to get aught thereof as yet,' answered they, 'but fear nothing: to-morrow, God willing, we will make an alchymic operation for thee. But now bid thy wife play her best to us and gladden our hearts, for we love music.' So she made them music, that would have caused the very rocks to dance; and they passed the night in mirth and converse and good cheer, till the morning appeared with its light and shone, when they took leave of Alaeddin and went their way, after laying other hundred dinars under the carpet. They continued to visit him thus every night for nine nights, and each morning the Khalif put a hundred dinars under the prayer-carpet, till the tenth night, when they came not. Now the reason for their failure to come was that the Khalif had sent to a great merchant, saying to him, ‘Bring me fifty loads of stuffs, such as come from Cairo, each worth a thousand dinars, and write on each bale its price; and bring me also a male Abyssinian slave.’ The merchant did the bidding of the Khalif, who write a letter to Alaeddin, as from his father Shemseddin, and committed it to the slave, together with the fifty loads and a basin and ewer of gold and other presents, saying to him, ‘Take these bales and what else and go to such and such a quarter and enquire for Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat, at the house of the Provost of the merchants.’ So the slave took the letter and the goods and went out on his errand.

Meanwhile the lady’s first husband went to her father and said to him, ‘Come, let us go to Alaeddin and make him divorce my cousin.’ So they set out, and when they came to the street in which Zubeideh’s house stood, they found fifty mules, laden with stuffs, and a black slave riding on a she-mule. So they said to him, ‘Whose goods are these?’ ‘They belong to my lord Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat,’ answered he. ‘His father equipped him with merchandise and sent him on a journey to Baghdad; but the Bedouins fell on him and took all he had. So when the news of his despoilment reached his father, he despatched me to him with these fifty loads, in place of those he had lost, besides a mule laden with fifth thousand dinars and a parcel of clothes worth much money and a cloak of sables and a basin and ewer of gold.’ When the old merchant heard this, he said, ‘He whom thou seekest is my son-in-law and I will show thee his house.’ Now Alaeddin was sitting in great concern, when one knocked at the door, and he said, ‘O Zubeideh, God is all-knowing! Thy father hath surely sent me an officer from the Cadi or the Chief of the Police.’ ‘Go down,’ said she, ‘and see what it is.’ So he went down and opening the door, found his father-in-law, with an Abyssinian slave, dusky-hued and pleasant of favour, riding on a mule. When the slave saw him, he alighted and kissed his hands: and Alaeddin said, ‘What dost thou want?’ Quoth he, ‘I am the slave of my load Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat, son of Shemseddin, Provost of the merchants of Cairo, who has sent me to him with this charge.’ Then he gave him the letter and Alaeddin, opening it, read what follows:

Harkye, my letter, when my beloved sees thee, Kiss thou the earth
before him and his shoes.
Look thou go softly and hasten not nor hurry, For in his hands
are my life and my repose.

Then after the usual salutations from Shemseddin to his son, the letter proceeded thus: ‘Know, O my son, that news hath reached me of the slaughter of thy men and the plunder of thy baggage; so I send thee herewith fifty loads of Egyptian stuffs, together with a suit of clothes and a cloak of sables and an ewer and basin of gold. Fear no evil and be not anywise troubled, for, O my son, the goods thou hast lost were the ransom of thy life. Thy mother and the people of the house are well and in good case and send thee many greetings. Moreover, O my son, I hear that they have married thee, by way of intermediation, to the lady Zubeideh the Lutanist and have imposed on thee a dowry of ten thousand dinars; wherefore I send thee also fifty thousand dinars by thy slave Selim, the bearer of these presents, whereout thou mayest pay the dowry and provide thyself with the rest.’ When Alaeddin had made an end of reading the letter, he took possession of the goods and turning to the old merchant, said to him, ‘O my father-in-law, take the ten thousand dinars, thy daughter’s dowry, and take also the loads of goods and dispose of them, and thine be the profit; only return me the cost-price.’ ‘Nay, by Allah,’ answered he, ‘I will take nothing; and as for thy wife’s dowry, do thou settle it with her.’ Then they went in to Zubeideh, after the goods had been brought in, and she said to her father, ‘O my father, whose goods are these?’ ‘They belong to thy husband Alaeddin,’ answered he; ‘his father hath sent them to him in place of those of which the Bedouins spoiled him. Moreover, he hath sent him fifty thousand dinars and a parcel of clothes and a cloak of sables and a riding mule and an ewer and basin of gold. As for the dower, that is thine affair.’ Thereupon Alaeddin rose and opening the chest [of money] gave her her dowry. Then said the lady’s cousin, ‘O my uncle, let him divorce to me my wife;’ but the old man replied, ‘This may never be now, for the marriage-tie is in his hand.’ With this the young man went out, sore afflicted, and returning home, fell sick, for he had received his death-blow; so he took to his bed and presently died. But as for Alaeddin, he went to the market and buying what victual he needed, made a banquet as usual against the night, saying to Zubeideh, 'See these lying dervishes; they promised us and broke their promise.' Quoth she, 'Thou art the son of a Provost of the merchants yet did thy hand lack of a para; how then should it be with poor dervishes?' 'God the Most High hath enabled us to do without them,' answered Alaeddin; 'but never again will I open the door to them.' 'Why so,' asked she, 'seeing that their coming brought us good luck, and moreover, they put a hundred dinars under the prayer-carpet for us every night? So needs must thou open to them, if they come.' So when the day departed with its light and the night came, they lighted the candles and he said to her, 'Come, Zubeideh, make us music.' At this moment some one knocked at the door, and she said, 'Go and see who is at the door.' So he went down and opened it and seeing the dervishes, said, 'Welcome to the liars! Come up.' Accordingly, they went up with him, and he made them sit down and brought them the tray of food. So they ate and drank and made merry and presently said to him, 'O my lord, our hearts have been troubled for thee: what hath passed between thee and thy father-in-law?' 'God hath compensated us beyond our desire,' answered he. 'By Allah,' rejoined they, 'we were in fear for thee and nought kept us from thee but our lack of money.' Quoth he, 'My Lord hath vouchsafed me speedy relief; for my father hath sent me fifty thousand dinars and fifty loads of stuffs, each worth a thousand dinars, besides an Abyssinian slave and a riding mule and a suit of clothes and a basin and an ewer of gold. Moreover, I have made my peace with my father-in- law and my wife is confirmed to me; so praised be God for this!' Presently the Khalif rose to do an occasion; whereupon Jaafer turned to Alaeddin and said to him, 'Look to thy manners, for thou art in the presence of the Commander of the Faithful.' 'How have I failed in good breeding before the Commander of the Faithful,' asked he, 'and which of you is he?' Quoth Jaafer, 'He who went out but now is the Commander of the Faithful and I am the Vizier Jaafer: this is Mesrour the headsman, and this other is Abou Nuwas ben Hani. And now, O Alaeddin, use thy reason and bethink thee how many days' journey it is from Cairo hither.' 'Five-and-forty days' journey,' answered he, and Jaafer rejoined, 'Thy baggage was stolen but ten days ago; so how could the news have reached thy father, and how could he pack thee up other goods and send them to thee five-and-forty days' journey in ten days' time?' 'O my lord,' said Alaeddin, 'and whence then came they?' 'From the Commander of the Faithful,' replied Jaafer, 'of his much affection for thee.' As he spoke, the Khalif entered and Alaeddin, rising, kissed the ground before him and said, 'God keep thee, O Commander of the Faithful, and give thee long life, so the folk may not lack thy bounty and beneficence!' 'O Alaeddin,' replied the Khalif, 'let Zubeideh play us an air, by way of thank-offering for thy deliverance.' So she played him the rarest of measures on the lute, till the very stones shook for delight and the strings cried out for ecstasy, 'O Loving One!' They spent the night after the merriest fashion, and in the morning, the Khalif said to Alaeddin, 'Come to the Divan to-morrow.' 'I hear and obey, O Commander of the Faithful,' answered he, 'so it please God and thou be well and in good case.' So on the morrow he took ten trays and putting a costly present on each, went up with them to the palace. As the Khalif was sitting on the throne, Alaeddin appeared at the door of the Divan, repeating the following verses:

Good fortune and glory still wait on thy days And rubbed in the
  dust be thine envier's nose!
May the days never stint to be white unto thee And black with
  despite be the days of thy foes!

'Welcome, O Alaeddin!' sad the Khalif, and he replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful, the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve) accepted presents; and these ten trays, with what is on them, are my present to thee.' The Khalif accepted his gift and ordering him a robe of honour, made him Provost of the merchants and gave him a seat in the Divan. Presently, his father-in-law came in, and seeing Alaeddin seated in his place and clad in a robe of honour, said to the Khalif, 'O King of the age, why is this man sitting in my place and wearing this robe of honour?' Quoth the Khalif, 'I have made him Provost of the merchants, and thou art deposed; for offices are by investiture and not in perpetuity.' 'Thou hast done well, O Commander of the Faithful,' answered the merchant; 'for he is art and part of us. May God make the best of us the orderers of our affairs! How many a little one hath become great!’ Then the Khalif wrote Alaeddin a patent [of investiture] and gave it to the Master of Police, who gave it to the crier and the latter made proclamation in the Divan, saying, ‘None is Provost of the merchants but Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat, and it behoves all to give heed to his words and pay him respect and honour and consideration!’ Moreover, when the Divan broke up, the Master of the Police took Alaeddin and carried him through the thoroughfares of Baghdad, whilst the crier went before him, making proclamation of his dignity. Next day, Alaeddin opened a shop for his slave Selim and set him therein, to buy and sell, whilst he himself rode to the palace and took his place in the Khalif’s Divan.

One day, as he sat in his place, one said to the Khalif, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, may thy head survive such an one the boon-companion! He is gone to the mercy of God the Most High, but may thy life be prolonged!’ Quoth the Khalif, ‘Where is Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat?’ So he went up to the Commander of the Faithful, who clad him in a splendid dress of honour and made him his boon-companion in the dead man’s room, appointing him a monthly wage of a thousand dinars. He continued to fill his new office till, one day, as he sat in the Divan, according to his wont, an Amir came up with a sword and shield in his hand and said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, mayst thou outlive the Chief of the Sixty, for he is this day dead;’ whereupon the Khalif ordered Alaeddin a dress of honour and made him Chief of the Sixty, in place of the dead man, who had neither wife nor child. So Alaeddin laid hands on his estate, and the Khalif said to him, ‘Bury him in the earth and take all he hath left of wealth and slaves, male and female.’ Then he shook the handkerchief and dismissed the Divan, whereupon Alaeddin went forth, attended by Ahmed ed Denef, captain of the right hand, and Hassan Shouman, captain of the left hand troop of the Khalif’s guard, riding at his either stirrup, each with his forty men. Presently, he turned to Hassan Shouman and his men and said to them, ‘Plead ye for me with Captain Ahmed ed Denef, that he accept me as his son before God.’ And Ahmed ed Denef assented, saying, ‘I and my forty men will go before thee to the Divan every day.’

After this, Alaeddin abode in the Khalif's service many days; till one day it chanced that he left the Divan and returning home, dismissed Ahmed ed Denef and his men and sat down with his wife, who lighted the candles and went out of the room upon an occasion. Presently, he heard a great cry and running in haste to see what was the matter, found that it was his wife who had cried out. She was lying prone on the groudn and when he put his hand to her breast, he found her dead. Now her father's house faced that of Alaeddin, and he, hearing her cry out, came in and said, 'What is the matter, O my lord Alaeddin?' 'O my father,' answered he, 'may thy head outlive thy daughter Zubeideh! But the honour we owe the dead is to bury them.' So, on the morrow, they buried her in the earth and her husband and father condoled with each other. Moreover, Alaeddin put on mourning apparel and absented himself from the Divan, abiding tearful-eyed and sorrowful- hearted. After awhile, the Khalif said to Jaafer, 'O Vizier, what is the cause of Alaeddin's absence from the Divan?' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' answered Jaafer, 'he is in mourning for his wife Zubeideh;' and the Khalif said, 'It behoves us to pay him a visit of condolence.' 'I hear and obey,' replied Jaafer. So they took horse and riding to Alaeddin's house, came in upon him with their attendants, as he sat at home; whereupon he rose to receive them and kissed the earth before the Khalif, who said to him, 'May God abundantly make good thy loss to thee!' 'May He preserve thee to us, O Commander of the Faithful!' answered Alaeddin. Then said the Khalif, 'O Alaeddin, why hast thou absented thyself from the Divan?' And he replied, 'Because of my mourning for my wife Zubeideh, O Commander of the Faithful.' 'Put away grief from thee,' rejoined the prince. 'She is dead and gone to the mercy of God the Most High, and mourning will avail thee nothing.' But Alaeddin said, 'O Commander of the Faithful, I shall never leave mourning for her till I die and they bury me by her side.' Quoth Haroun, 'With God is compensation for every loss, and neither wealth nor device can deliver from death. God bless him who said:

Every son of woman, how long soe'er his life be, Must one day be
carried upon the bulging bier.

How shall he have pleasure in life or hold it goodly, He unto
whose cheeks the dust must soon adhere?’

Then, when he had made an end of condoling with him, he charged him not to absent himself from the Divan and returned to his palace. On the morrow, Alaeddin mounted and riding to the court, kissed the ground before the Khalif, who rose from the throne, to greet and welcome him, and bade him take his appointed place in the Divan saying, ‘O Alaeddin, thou art my guest to-night.’ So presently he carried him into his seraglio and calling a slave- girl named Cout el Culoub, said to her, ‘Alaeddin had a wife called Zubeideh, who used to sing to him and solace him of care and trouble; but she is gone to the mercy of God the Most High, and now I desire that thou play him an air of thy rarest fashion on the lute, that he may be diverted from his grief and mourning.’ So she rose and made rare music; and the Khalif said to Alaeddin, ‘What sayst thou of this damsel’s voice?’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful’, answered he, ‘Zubeideh’s voice was the finer; but she is rarely skilled in touching the lute, and her playing would make a rock dance.’ ‘Doth she please thee?’ asked the Khalif. ‘Yes, O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Alaeddin, and Haroun said, ‘By the life of my head and the tombs of my forefathers, she is a gift from me to thee, she and her waiting-women!’ Alaeddin thought that the Khalif was jesting with him; but, on the morrow, he went in to Cout el Culoub and said to her, ‘I have given thee to Alaeddin;’ whereat she rejoiced, for she had seen and loved him. Then the Khalif returned to the Divan and calling porters, said to them, ‘Set Cout el Culoub and her waiting-women in a litter and carry them, together with her goods, to Alaeddin’s house.’ So they did as he bade them and left her in the upper chamber of Alaeddin’s house, whilst the Khalif sat in the hall of audience till the close of the day, when the Divan broke up and he retired to his harem.

Meanwhile, Cout el Culoub, having taken up her lodging in Alaeddin’s house, with her women, forty in all, besides eunuchs, called two of the latter and said to them, ‘Sit ye on stools, one on the right and another on the left hand of the door; and when Alaeddin comes home, kiss his hands and say to him, “Our mistress Cout el

Culoub bids thee to her in the upper chamber, for the Khalif hath given her to thee, her and her women.”’ ‘We hear and obey,’ answered they and did as she bade them. So, when Alaeddin returned, he found two of the Khalif’s eunuchs sitting at the door and was amazed and said to himself, ‘Surely, this is not my own house; or else what can have happened?’ When the eunuchs saw him, they rose and kissing his hands, said to him, ‘We are of the Khalif’s household and servants to Cout el Culoub, who salutes thee, giving thee to know that the Khalif hath bestowed her on thee, her and her women, and craves thy company.’ Quoth Alaeddin, ‘Say ye to her, “Thou art welcome; but so long as thou abidest with me, I will not enter thy lodging, for it befits not that what was the master’s should become the servant’s;” and ask her also what was the sum of her day’s expense in the Khalif’s palace.’ So they went in to her and did his errand to her, and she replied, ‘A hundred dinars a day;’ whereupon quoth he in himself, ‘There was no need for the Khalif to give me Cout el Culoub, that I should be put to such an expense for her; but there is no help for it.’ So she abode with him awhile and he assigned her daily a hundred dinars for her maintenance, till, one day, he absented himself from the Divan and the Khalif said to Jaafer, ‘O Vizier, I gave Cout el Culoub unto Alaeddin, that she might console him for his wife; but why doth he still hold aloof from us?’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Jaafer, ‘he spoke sooth who said, “Whoso findeth his beloved, forgetteth his friends.”’ ‘Belike he hath excuse for his absence,’ rejoined the Khalif; ‘but we will pay him a visit.’ (Now some days before this, Alaeddin had said to Jaafer, ‘I complained to the Khalif of my grief for the loss of my wife Zubeideh, and he gave me Cout el Culoub.’ And Jaafer replied, ‘Except he loved thee, he had not given her to thee.’ Hast thou gone in to her?’ ‘No, by Allah! answered Alaeddin. ‘I know not her length from her breadth.’ ‘And why?’ asked Jaafer. ‘O Vizier,’ replied Alaeddin, ‘what befits the master befits not the servant.’) Then the Khalif and Jaafer disguised themselves and went privily to visit Alaeddin; but he knew them and rising to them, kissed the hands of the Khalif, who looked at him and read trouble in his face. So he said to him, ‘O Alaeddin, whence cometh this trouble in which I see thee? Hast thou gone in to Cout el Culoub?’ ‘O Commander of the

Faithful,' answered he, 'what befits the master befits not the servant. No, I have not gone in to her nor do I know her length from her breadth; so do thou quit me of her.' Quoth the Khalif, 'I would fain see her and question her of her case.' And Alaeddin replied, 'I hear and obey, O Commander of the Faithful.' So the Khalif went in to Cout el Culoub, who rose and kissed the ground before him, and said to her, 'Hath Alaeddin gone in to thee?' 'No, O Commander of the Faithful,' answered she; 'I sent to bid him to me, but he would not come.' So he bade carry her back to the harem and saying to Alaeddin, 'Do not absent thyself from us,' returned to his palace. Accordingly, next morning, Alaeddin mounted and rode to the Divan, where he took his seat as Chief of the Sixty. Presently the Khalif bade his treasurer give the Vizier Jaafer ten thousand dinars and said to the latter, 'I charge thee to go down to the slave-market and buy Alaeddin a slave-girl with this sum.' So Jaafer took Alaeddin and went down with him to the bazaar. As change would have it, that very day, the Amir Khalid, Chief of the Baghdad Police, had gone down to the market to buy a slave-girl for his son Hebezlem Bezazeh. Now this son he had by his wife Khatoun, and he was foul of favour and had reached the age of twenty, without learning to ride, albeit his father was a valiant cavalier and a doughty champion and delighted in battle and adventure. One night, he had a dream of dalliance in sleep and told his mother, who rejoiced and told his father, saying, 'Fain would I find him a wife, for he is now apt for marriage.' Quoth Khalid, 'He is so foul of favour and withal so evil of odour, so sordid and churlish, that no woman would accept of him.' And she answered, 'We will buy him a slave- girl.' So it befell, for the accomplishment of that which God the Most High had decreed, that the Amir and his son went down, on the same day as Jaafer and Alaeddin, to the market, where they saw a beautiful girl, full of grace and symmetry, in the hands of a broker, and the Vizier said to the latter, 'O broker, ask her owner if he will take a thousand dinars for her.' The broker passed by the Amir and his son with the slave and Hebezlem took one look of her, that cost him a thousand sighs; and he fell passionately in love with her and said, 'O my father, buy me yonder slave-girl.' So the Amir called the broker, who brought the girl to him, and asked her her name. 'My name is

Jessamine,’ replied she; and he said to Hebezlem, ‘O my son, an she please thee, bid for her.’ Then he asked the broker what had been bidden for her and he replied, ‘A thousand dinars.’ ‘She is mine for a thousand and one,’ said Hebezlem, and the broker passed on to Alaeddin, who bid two thousand dinars for her; and as often as Hebezlem bid another dinar, Alaeddin bid a thousand. The Amir’s son was vexed at this and said to the broker, ‘Who is it that bids against me for the slave-girl?’ ‘It is the Vizier Jaafer,’ answered the broker, ‘who is minded to buy her for Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat.’ Alaeddin continued to bid for her till he brought her price up to ten thousand dinars, and her owner sold her to him for that sum. So he took the girl and said to her, ‘I give thee thy freedom for the love of God the Most High.’ Then he married her and carried her to his house. When the broker returned, after having delivered the girl and received his brokerage, Hebezlem called him and said to him, ‘Where is the girl?’ Quoth he, ‘She was bought for ten thousand dinars by Alaeddin, who hath set her free and married her.’ At this the young man was greatly cast down and heaving many a sigh, returned home, sick for love of the damsel. He threw himself on his bed and refused food, and passion and love-longing were sore upon him. When his mother saw him in this plight, she said to him, ‘God keep thee, O my son! What ails thee?’ And he answered, ‘Buy me Jessamine, O my mother.’ ‘When the flower-seller passes,’ said she, ‘I will buy thee a basketful of jessamine.’ Quoth he, ‘It is not the jessamine one smells I want, but a slave girl named Jessamine, whom my father would not buy for me.’ So she said to her husband, ‘Why didst thou not buy him the girl?’ And he replied, ‘What is fit for the master is not fit for the servant, and I have no power to take her; for no less a man bought her than Alaeddin, Chief of the Sixty.’ Then the youth’s weakness redoubled upon him, till he could neither sleep nor eat, and his mother bound her head with the fillets of mourning. Presently, as she sat at home, lamenting over her son, there came in to her an old woman, known as the mother of Ahmed Kemakim the arch-thief, a knave who would bore through the stoutest wall and scale the highest and steal the very kohl from the eye. From his earliest years he had been given to these foul practices, till they made him captain of the watch, when he committed a robbery and the Chief of the Police, taking him in the act, carried him to the Khalif, who bade put him to death. But he sought protection of the Vizier, whose intercession the Khalif never rejected; so he pleaded for him with the Commander of the Faithful, who said, ‘How canst thou intercede for a wretch who is the pest of the human race?’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied Jaafer, ‘do thou imprison him; he who built the [first] prison was a sage, seeing that a prison is the sepulchre of the live and a cause for their enemies to exult.’ So the Khalif bade lay him in chains and write thereon, ‘Appointed to remain until death and not to be loosed but on the bench of the washer of the dead.’ And they fettered him and cast him into prison. Now his mother was a frequent visitor to the house of the Master of the Police and used to go in to her son in prison and say to him, ‘Did I not warn thee to turn from thy wicked ways?’ ‘God decreed this to me,’ would he answer; ‘but, O my mother, when thou visitest the Amir’s wife, make her intercede for me with her husband.’ So when the old woman came in to the Lady Khatoun, she found her bound with the fillets of mourning and said to her, ‘Wherefore dost thou mourn?’ ‘For my son Hebezlem Bezazeh,’ answered she, and the old woman exclaimed, ‘God keep thy son! What hath befallen him?’ So Khatoun told her the whole story, and she said, ‘What wouldst thou say of him who should find means to save thy son?’ ‘And what wilt thou do?’ asked the lady. Quoth the old woman, ‘I have a son called Ahmed Kemakim the arch-thief, who lies chained in prison, and on his fetters is written, “Appointed to remain till death.” So do thou don thy richest clothes and trinkets and present thyself to thy husband with an open and smiling favour; and when he seeks of thee what men use to seek of women, put him off and say, “By Allah, it is a strange thing! When a man desires aught of his wife, he importunes her till she satisfies him; but if a wife desire aught of her husband, he will not grant it to her.” Then he will say, “What dost thou want?” And do thou answer, “First swear to grant my request.” If he swear to thee by his head or by Allah, say to him, “Swear to me the oath of divorce,” and so not yield to him, except he do this. Then, if he swear to thee the oath of divorce, say to him, “Thou hast in prison a man called Ahmed Kemakim, and he has a poor mother, who is instant with me to urge thee to intercede for him with the Khalif, that he may relent towards him and thou earn a reward from God."' 'I hear and obey,' answered Khatoun. So when her husband came in to her, she did as the old woman had taught her and extorted the required oath from him, before she would yield to his wishes. He lay with her that night and on the morrow, after he had made his ablutions and prayed the morning prayers, he repaired to the prison and said to Ahmed Kemakim, 'Harkye, O arch-thief, dost thou repent of thy ill deeds?' 'I do indeed repent and turn to God,' answered he, 'and say with heart and tongue, "I ask pardon of Allah."' So he carried him, still chained, to the Divan and kissed the earth before the Khalif, who said to him, 'O Amir Khalid, what seekest thou?' Then he brought forward Ahmed Kemakim, shuffling in his fetters, and the Khalif said to him, 'O Kemakim, art thou yet alive?' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' answered he, 'the wretched are long-lived.' Then said the Khalif to the Amir, 'Why have thou brought him hither?' And he replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful, he hath a poor, desolate mother, who hath none but him, and she hath had recourse to thy slave, imploring him to intercede with thee to set him free and make him Captain of the Watch as before; for he repenteth of his evil courses.' Quoth the Khalif to Ahmed, 'Dost thou repent of thy sins?' 'I do indeed repent to God, O Commander of the Faithful,' answered he; whereupon the Khalif called for the blacksmith and made him strike off his irons on the bench of the washer of the dead. Moreover, he restored him to his former office and charged him to walk in the way of good and righteousness. So he kissed the Khalif's hands and donning the captain's habit, went forth, whilst they made proclamation of his appointment.

He abode awhile in the exercise of his office, till, one day, his mother went in to the wife of the Chief of the Police, who said to her, 'Praised be God who hath delivered thy son from prison and restored him to health and safety! But why dost thou not bid him cast about to get the girl Jessamine for my son Hebezlem Bezazeh?' 'That will I,' answered she and going out from her, repaired to her son. She found him drunken and said to him, 'O my son, none was the cause of thy release from prison but the wife of the Master of Police, and she would have thee go about to kill Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat and get his slave-girl Jessamine for her son Hebezlem Bezazeh.' 'That will be the easiest of things,' answered he, 'and I will set about it this very night.' Now this was the first night of the new month, and it was the Khalif's wont to pass that night with the Princess Zubeideh, for the setting free of a male or female slave or what not else of the like. On this occasion, he used to doff his royal habit and lay it upon a chair in the sitting-chamber, together with his rosary and dagger and royal signet and a golden lantern, adorned with three jewels strung on a wire of gold, by which he set great store, committing all these things to the charge of the eunuchs, whilst he sent into the Lady Zubeideh's apartment. So Ahmed Kemakim waited till midnight, when Canopus shone and all creatures slept, whilst the Creator covered them with the curtain [of the dark]. Then he took his naked sword in one hand and his grappling iron in the other, and repairing to the Khalif's pavilion, cast his grapnel on to the roof. It caught there and he fixed his rope-ladder and climbed up to the roof; then, raising the trap-door, let himself down into the saloon, where he found the eunuchs asleep. So he drugged them with henbane and taking the Khalif's dress and dagger and rosary and handkerchief and signet-ring and lantern, returned whence he came and betook himself to the house of Alaeddin, who had that night celebrated his wedding festivities with Jessamine and had gone in to her and gotten her with child. Ahmed climbed over into his saloon and raising one of the marble slabs of the floor, dug a hole under it and laid the stolen things therein, all save the lantern, which he kept, saying in himself, 'I will set it before me, when I sit at wine, and drink by its light.' Then he plastered down the marble slab, as it was, and returning whence he came, went back to his own house. As soon as it was day, the Khalif went out into the sitting-chamber, and finding the eunuchs drugged with henbane, aroused them. Then he put his hand to the chair and found neither dress nor signet nor rosary nor dagger nor lantern; whereat he was exceeding wroth and donning the habit of anger, which was red, sat down in the Divan. So the Vizier Jaafer came forward and kissing the earth before him, said, 'May God avert the wrath of the Commander of the Faithful!' 'O Vizier,' answered the Khalif, 'I am exceeding wroth!' 'What has happened?' asked Jaafer; so he told him what had happened and when the Chief of the Police appeared, with Ahmed Kemakim at his stirrup, he said to him, ‘O Amir Khalid, how goes Baghdad?’ And he answered, ‘It is safe and quiet.’ ‘Thou liest!’ rejoined the Khalif. ‘How so, O Commander of the Faithful?’ asked the Amir. So he told him the case and added, ‘I charge thee to bring me back all the stolen things.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful’, replied the Amir, ‘the vinegar-worm is of and in the vinegar, and no stranger can get at this place.’ But the Khalif said, ‘Except thou bring me these things, I will put thee to death.’ Quoth Khalid, ‘Ere thou slay me, slay Ahmed Kemakim, for none should know the robber and the traitor but the captain of the watch.’ Then came forward Ahmed Kemakim and said to the Khalif, ‘Accept my intercession for the Master of Police, and I will be responsible to thee for the thief and will follow his track till I find him; but give me two Cadis and two Assessors, for he who did this thing feareth thee not, nor doth he fear the Chief of the Police nor any other.’ ‘Thou shalt have what thou seekest,’ answered the Khalif; ‘but let search be made first in my palace and then in those of the Vizier and the Chief of the Sixty.’ ‘Thou sayst well, O Commander of the Faithful,’ rejoined Ahmed; ‘most like the thief is one who had been reared in thy household or that of one of thy chief officers.’ ‘As my head liveth,’ said Haroun, ‘whosoever shall appear to have done the deed, I will put him to death, be it my very own son!’ Then Ahmed Kemakim received a written warrant to enter and search the houses and taking in his hand a [divining] rod made of equal parts of bronze, copper, iron and steel, went forth, attended by the Cadis and Assessors and the Chief of the Police. He first searched the palace of the Khalif, then that of the Vizier Jaafer; after which he went the round of the houses of the chamberlains and officers, till he came to that of Alaeddin. When the latter heard the clamour before his house, he left his wife and opening the door, found the Master of Police without, with a crowd of people. So he said, ‘What is the matter, O Amir Khalid?’ The Chief of the Police told him the case and Alaeddin said, ‘Enter my house and search it.’ ‘Pardon, O my lord,’ replied the Amir; ‘thou art a man in authority, and God forbid that such should be guilty of treason!’ Quoth Alaeddin, ‘Needs must my house be searched. So they entered, and Ahmed Kemakim went straight to the saloon and let the rod fall upon the slab, under which he had buried the stolen goods, with such force that the marble broke in sunder and discovered something that glistened underneath. Then said he, ‘In the name of God! what He willeth! Thanks to our coming, we have lit upon a treasure. Let us go down into this hiding-place and see what is therein.’ So the Cadis and Assessors looked down into the hole and finding there the stolen goods, drew up a statement of how they had discovered them in Alaeddin’s house, to which they set their seals. Then they bade seize upon Alaeddin and took his turban from his head, and making an inventory of all his property and effects, [sealed them up]. Meanwhile, Ahmed Kemakim laid hands on Jessamine, who was with child by Alaeddin, and committed her to his mother, saying, ‘Deliver her to the Lady Khatoun.’ So the old woman took her and carried her to the wife of the Master of Police. As soon as Hebezlem saw her, health and strength returned to him and he arose forthright, rejoicing greatly, and would have drawn near her: but she pulled a dagger from her girdle and said, ‘Keep off from me, or I will kill thee and myself after.’ ‘O strumpet,’ exclaimed his mother, ‘let my son have his will of thee!’ But Jessamine answered, ‘O bitch, by what code is it lawful for a woman to marry two husbands, and how shall the dog take the lion’s place?’ With this Hebezlem’s passion redoubled and he sickened for unfulfilled desire and refusing food, took to his bed again. Then said his mother to her, ‘O harlot, how canst thou make me thus to sorrow for my son? Needs must I punish thee, and as for Alaeddin, he will assuredly be hanged.’ ‘And I will die for love of him,’ answered Jessamine. Then Khatoun stripped her of her jewels and silken raiment and clothing her in sackcloth drawers and a shift of hair-cloth, sent her down into the kitchen and made her a scullery-wench, saying, ‘Thy punishment shall be to split wood and peel onions and set fire under the cooking pots.’ Quoth she, ‘I am willing to brook all manner of hardship and servitude, but not thy son’s sight.’ But God inclined the hearts of the slave-girls to her and they used to do her service in the kitchen.

Meanwhile, they carried Alaeddin to the Divan and brought him, together with the stolen goods, before the Khalif, who said, ‘Where did ye find them?’ ‘Amiddleward Alaeddin’s house,’ answered they; whereat the Khalif was filled with wrath and took the things, but found not the lantern among them, and said to Alaeddin, ‘Where is the lantern?' 'I know nought of it,' answered he; 'it was not I that stole it.' 'O traitor,' said the Khalif, 'how comes it that I brought thee near unto me and thou hast cast me out, and I trusted in thee and thou hast betrayed me?' And he commanded to hang him. So the Chief of the Police took him and went down with him into the city, whilst the crier forewent them, proclaiming aloud and saying, 'This is the reward and the least of the reward of him who doth treason against the orthodox Khalifs!' And the folk flocked to the gallows.

Meanwhile, Ahmed ed Denef, Alaeddin's adopted father, was sitting, making merry with his followers in a garden, when in came one of the water-carriers of the Divan and kissing Ahmed's hand, said to him, 'O Captain, thou sittest at thine ease, with water running at thy feet, and knowest not what has happened.' 'What is to do?' asked Ahmed, and the other answered, 'They have gone down with thine adopted son, Alaeddin, to the gallows.' 'O Hassan Shouman,' said Ahmed, 'What sayst thou of this?' 'Assuredly, Alaeddin is innocent' replied his lieutenant; 'and this is some enemy's practice against him.' Quoth Ahmed, 'What counsellest thou?' And Hassan said, 'God willing, we must rescue him.' Then he went to the prison and said to the gaoler, 'Give us some one deserving of death.' So he gave him one that was likest to Alaeddin and they covered his head and carried him to the place of execution between Ahmed ed Denef and Ali ez Zibec of Cairo. Now they had brought Alaeddin to the gibbet, to hang him, but Ahmed ed Denef came forward and set his foot on that of the hangman, who said, 'Give me room to do my office.' 'O accursed one,' replied Ahmed, 'take this man and hang him in Alaeddin's stead; for he is innocent and we will ransom him with this fellow, even as Abraham ransomed Ishmael with the ram.' So the hangman took the man and hanged him in Alaeddin's room. Then Ahmed and Ali took Alaeddin and carried him to the house of the former, to whom said he, 'O my father, may God abundantly requite thee!' 'O Alaeddin,' said Ahmed, 'what is this thou hast done? God's mercy on him who said, "Whoso trusteth in thee, betray him not, though thou be a traitor." Now the Khalif set thee in high place about him and styled thee "Trusty" and "Faithful;" how then couldst thou deal thus with him and steal his goods?' 'By the Most Great Name, O my father,' replied Alaeddin, 'I had no hand in this, nor do I know who did it.’ Quoth Ahmed, ‘Of a surety none did this but a manifest enemy and whoso doth aught shall be requited for his deed; but, O Alaeddin, thou canst tarry no longer in Baghdad, for kings, O my son, may not be bought off and longsome is his travail whom they pursue.’ ‘Whither shall I go, O my father?’ asked Alaeddin. ‘O my son,’ answered Ahmed, ‘I will bring thee to Alexandria, for it is a blessed place; its environs are green and its sojourn pleasant.’ And Alaeddin said, ‘I hear and obey, O my father.’ So Ahmed said to Hassan Shouman, ‘Be mindful and when the Khalif asks for me, say I am gone on a circuit of the provinces.’ Then, taking Alaeddin, he went forth of Baghdad and stayed not till they came to the vineyards and gardens, where they met two Jews of the Khalif’s tax-gatherers, riding on mules, and Ahmed said to them, ‘Give me the guard-money.’ ‘Why should we give thee guard-money?’ asked they. ‘Because,’ answered he, ‘I am the patrol of this valley.’ So they gave him each a hundred dinars, after which he slew them and took their mules, one of which he mounted, whilst Alaeddin bestrode the other. Then they rode on, till they came to the city of Ayas and put up for the night at an inn. Next morning, Alaeddin sold his own mule and committed that of Ahmed to the charge of the doorkeeper of the inn, after which they took ship from the port of Ayas and sailed to Alexandria. Here they landed and proceeded to the Bazaar, where they found a broker crying a shop and a chamber behind it for sale. The last bidding for the premises (which belonged to the Treasury) was nine hundred and fifty dirhems; so Alaeddin bid a thousand and his offer being accepted, took the keys and opened the shop and room, which latter he found furnished with carpets and cushions. Moreover, he found there a storehouse full of sails and masts and ropes and chests and bags of beads and shells and stirrups and axes and maces and knives and scissors and what not else, for the last owner of the shop had been a dealer in second-hand goods. So he took his seat in the shop and Ahmed ed Denef said to him, ‘O my son, the shop and room and that which is therein are become thine; so abide thou here and buy and sell and grudge not, neither repine; for God the Most High blesseth trade.’ After this he abode with him three days and on the fourth he took leave of him, saying, ‘O my son, abide here till I bring thee the

Khalif's pardon and learn who hath played thee this trick.' Then he took ship for Ayas, where he took the mule from the inn and returning to Baghdad, foregathered with Hassan Shouman, to whom said he, 'Has the Khalif asked for me?' 'No,' answered Hassan, 'nor hath thou come to his thought.' So he resumed his service about the Khalif's person and set himself to seek news of Alaeddin's case, till one day he heard the Khalif say to the Vizier, 'See, O Jaafer, how Alaeddin dealt with me!' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' replied Jaafer, 'thou hast requited him with hanging, and it was what he deserved.' Quoth Haroun, 'I have a mind to go down and see him hanging.' And the Vizier answered, 'As thou wilt, O Commander of the Faithful.' So the Khalif and Jaafer went down to the place of execution, and the former, raising his eyes, saw the hanged man to be other than Alaeddin and said to the Vizier, 'This is not Alaeddin.' 'How knowest thou that it is not he?' asked the Vizier, and the Khalif answered, 'Alaeddin was short and this fellow is tall.' Quoth Jaafer, 'Hanging stretches a man.' 'But,' rejoined the Khalif, 'Alaeddin was fair and this man's face is black.' 'Knowest thou not, O Commander of the Faithful,' replied Jaafer, 'that death (by hanging) causes blackness?' Then the Khalif bade take down the body and they found the names of he first two Khalifs, Abou Bekr and Omar, written on his heels; whereupon quoth the Khalif, 'O Vizier, Alaeddin was a Sunnite, and this fellow is a Shiyaite.' 'Glory be to God who knowest the hidden things!' answered Jaafer. 'We know not whether this was he or another.' Then the Khalif bade bury the body and Alaeddin became altogether forgotten.

As for Hebezlem Bezazeh, the Amir Khalid's son, he ceased not to languish for passion and desire, till he died and they buried him; whilst Jessamine accomplished the months of her pregnancy and being taken with the pains of labour, gave birth to a male child like the moon. The serving-women said to her, 'What wilt thou name him?' And she answered, 'Were his father alive, he had named him; but now I will name him Aslan.' She gave him suck two years, then weaned him, and he crawled and walked. One day, whilst his mother was busied with the service of the kitchen, the child went out and seeing the stairs, mounted to the guest- chamber, where the Amir Khalid was sitting. When the latter saw him, he took him in his lap and glorified his Lord for that which He had created and fashioned forth; then eyeing him straitly, he saw that he was the likest of all creatures to Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat; and God informed his heart with love of the boy. Presently, his mother Jessamine sought for him and finding him not, mounted to the guest-chamber, where she saw the Amir seated, with the child playing in his lap. The latter, spying his mother, would have thrown himself upon her: but the Amir held him back and said to Jessamine, ‘Come hither, O damsel.’ So she came to him, and he said to her, ‘Whose son is this?’ Quoth she, ‘He is my son and the darling of my heart.’ ‘Who is his father?’ asked the Amir; and she answered, ‘His father was Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat, but now he is become thy son.’ Quoth Khalid, ‘Alaeddin was a traitor.’ ‘God deliver him from treason!’ replied she. ‘God forbid that the Faithful should be a traitor!’ Then said he, ‘When the boy grows up and says to thee, “Who is my father?” say thou to him, “Thou art the son of the Amir Khalid, Chief of the Police.”’ And she answered, ‘I hear and obey.’ Then he circumcised the boy and reared him after the goodliest fashion, bringing him a tutor, who taught him to read and write; so he read (and commented) the Koran twice and learnt it by heart and grew up, calling the Amir father. Moreover, the latter used to go down with him to the tilting-ground and assemble horsemen and teach the lad warlike exercises and the use of arms, so that, by the time he was fourteen years old, he became a valiant and accomplished cavalier and gained the rank of Amir.

It chanced one day that he fell in with Ahmed Kemakim and clapping up an acquaintance with him, accompanied him to the tavern, where Ahmed took out the lantern he had stolen from the Khalif and fell to plying the wine-cup by its light, till he became drunken. Presently Aslan said to him, ‘O Captain, give me yonder lantern;’ but he replied, ‘I cannot give it thee.’ ‘Why not?’ asked Aslan. ‘Because,’ answered Ahmed, ‘lives have been lost for it.’ ‘Whose life?’ asked Aslan; and Ahmed said, ‘There came hither a man named Alaeddin Abou est Shamat, who was made Captain of the Sixty and lost his life through this lantern.’ Quoth Aslan, ‘And how was that?’ ‘Know,’ replied Ahmed Kemakim, ‘that thou hadst an elder brother by name Hebezlem Bezazeh, for whom, when he became apt for marriage, thy father would have bought a slave-girl named Jessamine.’ And he went on to tell him the whole story of Hebezlem’s illness and what befell Alaeddin, undeserved. When Aslan heard this, he said in himself, ‘Most like this slave-girl was my mother Jessamine and my father was no other than Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat.’ So he went out from him, sorrowful, and met Ahmed ed Denef, who exclaimed at sight of him, ‘Glory be to Him to whom none is like!’ ‘At what dost thou marvel, O my chief?’ asked Hassan Shouman. ‘At the make of yonder boy Aslan,’ replied Ed Denef; ‘for he is the likest of all creatures to Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat.’ Then he called Aslan and said to him, ‘What is thy mother’s name?’ ‘She is called the damsel Jessamine,’ answered Aslan; and Ed Denef said, ‘Harkye, Aslan, take heart and be of good cheer, for thy father was none other than Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat: but, O my son, go thou in to thy mother and question her of thy father.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered he, and going in to his mother, said to her, ‘Who is my father?’ Quoth she, ‘The Amir Khalid is thy father.’ ‘Not so,’ rejoined he, ‘my father was none other than Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat.’ At this, she wept and said, ‘Who told thee this?’ ‘Ahmed ed Denef, the Captain of the Guard,’ answered he; so she told him the whole story, saying, ‘O my son, the truth can no longer be hidden: know that Alaeddin was indeed thy father, but it was the Amir Khalid who reared thee and adopted thee as his son. And now, O my son, when thou seest Ahmed ed Denef, so thou say to him, “I conjure thee, by Allah, O my chief, avenge me on the murderer of my father Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat!”’ So he went out from her and betaking himself to Ahmed ed Denef, kissed his hand. Quoth Ed Denef, ‘What ails thee, O Aslan?’ And he answered, ‘I know now for certain that I am the son of Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat and I would have thee avenge me of my father’s murderer.’ ‘And who was thy father’s murderer?’ asked Ed Denef. ‘Ahmed Kemakim the arch- thief,’ replied Aslan. ‘Who told thee this?’ said Ed Denef, and Aslan answered, ‘I saw in his hand the lantern hung with jewels, that was lost with the rest of the Khalif’s gear, and asked him to give it me; but he refused, saying, “Lives have been lost on account of this,” and told me how it was he who had broken into the palace and stolen the goods and hidden them in my father’s house.’ Then said Ed Denef, ‘When thou seest the Amir Khalid don his harness of war, beg him to equip thee like himself and take thee with him. Then do thou some feat of prowess before the Khalif and he will say to thee, “Ask a boon of me, O Aslan.” And do thou answer, “I ask of thee that thou avenge me of my father’s murderer.” If he say, “Thy father is alive and is the Amir Khalid, the Chief of the Police,” answer thou, “My father was Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat, and the Amir Khalid is only my father by right of fosterage and adoption.” Then tell him all that passed between thee and Ahmed Kemakim and say, “O Commander of the Faithful, order him to be searched and I will bring the lantern forth of his bosom.”’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered Aslan and returning to the Amir Khalid, found him making ready to repair to the Divan and said to him, ‘I would fain have thee arm and harness me like thyself and carry me to the Divan.’ So he equipped him and carried him to the Divan, with Ahmed Kemakim at his stirrup. Then the Khalif sallied forth of Baghdad with his retinue and let pitch tents and pavilions without the city; whereupon the troops divided into two parties and fell to playing at ball and striking it with the mall from one to the other. Now there was among the troops a spy, who had been hired to kill the Khalif; so he took the ball and smiting it with the mall, drove it straight at the Khalif’s face; but Aslan interposed and catching it in mid-volley, drove it back at him who smote it, so that it struck him between the shoulders and he fell to the ground. The Khalif exclaimed, ‘God bless thee, O Aslan!’ and they all dismounted and sat on chairs. Then the Khalif bade bring the smiter of the ball before him and said to him, ‘Who moved thee to do this thing and art thou friend or foe?’ Quoth he, ‘I am a foe and it was my purpose to kill thee.’ ‘And wherefore?’ asked the Khalif. ‘Art thou not an (orthodox) Muslim?’ ‘No,’ replied the spy; ‘I am a Shiyaite.’ So the Khalif bade put him to death and said to Aslan, ‘Ask a boon of me.’ Quoth he, ‘I ask of thee that thou avenge me of my father’s murderer.’ ‘Thy father is alive,’ answered the Khalif; ‘and there he stands.’ ‘And who is he?’ asked Aslan. The Khalif replied, ‘He is the Amir Khalid, Chief of the Police.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ rejoined Aslan, ‘he is no father of mine, save by right of fosterage; my father was none other than Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat.’ ‘Then thy father was a traitor,’ said the Khalif. ‘God forbid, O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied Aslan, ‘that the Faithful should be a traitor! But how did he wrong thee?' Quoth the Khalif, 'He stole my royal habit and what was therewith.' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' rejoined Aslan, 'God forfend that my father should be a traitor! But, O my lord, didst thou ever recover the lantern that was stolen from thee?' 'No,' answered the Khalif, 'we never got it back.' And Aslan said, 'I saw it in the hands of Ahmed Kemakim and begged it of him; but he refused to give it me, saying, "Lives have been lost on account of this." Then he told me of the sickness of Hebezlem Bezazeh, son of the Amir Khalid, by reason of his passion for the damsel Jessamine, and how he himself was released from prison and that it was he who stole the lamp and robe and so forth. Do thou then, O Commander of the Faithful, avenge me of my father on him who murdered him.' So the Khalif caused Ahmed Kemakim to be brought before him and sending for Ahmed ed Denef, bade him search him; whereupon he put his hand into the thief's bosom and pulled out the lamp. 'Harkye, traitor,' said the Khalif, 'whence hadst thou this lantern?' And Kemakim replied, 'I bought it, O Commander of the Faithful!' 'Where didst thou buy it?' said the Khalif, 'and who could come by its like to sell it to thee?' Then they beat him, till he confessed that he had stolen the lantern and the rest, and the Khalif said, 'O traitor, what moved thee to do this thing and ruin Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat, the Trusty and Well-beloved?' Then he bade lay hands on him and on the Chief of the Police, but the latter said, 'O Commander of the Faithful, indeed I am unjustly entreated; thou badest me hang him, and I had no knowledge of this plot, for the thing was contrived between Ahmed Kemakim and his mother and my wife. I crave thine intercession, O Aslan.' So Aslan interceded for him with the Khalif, who said, 'What hath God done with this lad's mother?' 'She is with me,' answered Khalid, and the Khalif said, 'I command thee to bid thy wife dress her in her own clothes and ornaments and restore her to her former rank; and do thou remove the seals from Alaeddin's house and give his son possession of his estate.' 'I hear and obey,' answered Khalid, and going forth, carried the Khalif's order to his wife, who clad Jessamine in her own apparel; whilst he himself removed the seals from Alaeddin's house and gave Aslan the keys. Then said the Khalif to Aslan, 'Ask a boon of me;' and he replied, 'I beseech thee to unite me with my father.’ Whereat the Khalif wept and said, ‘Most like it was thy father that was hanged and is dead; but by the life of my forefathers, whoso bringeth me the glad news that he is yet in the bonds of life, I will give him all he seeketh!’ Then came forward Ahmed ed Denef and kissing the earth before the Khalif, said, ‘Grant me indemnity, O Commander of the Faithful!’ ‘Thou hast it,’ answered the Khalif; and Ed Denef said, ‘I give thee the good news that Alaeddin is alive and well.’ Quo the Khalif, ‘What is this thou sayest?’ ‘As thy head liveth,’ answered Ed Denef, ‘I speak sooth; for I ransomed him with another, of those who deserved death, and carried him to Alexandria, where I set him up as a dealer in second-hand goods.’ Then said Er Reshid, ‘I charge thee fetch him to me;’ and Ed Denef replied, ‘I hear and obey;’ whereupon the Khalif bade give him ten thousand dinars and he set out for Alexandria.

Meanwhile Alaeddin sold all that was in his shop, till he had but a few things let and amongst the rest a bag. So he shook the bag and there fell out a jewel, big enough to fill the palm of the hand, hanging to a chain of gold and having five faces, whereon were names and talismanic characters, as they were ant-tracks. ‘God is All-knowing!’ quoth he. ‘Belike this is a talisman.’ So he rubbed each face; but nothing came of it and he said to himself, ‘Doubtless it is a piece of [naturally] variegated onyx,’ and hung it up in the shop. Presently, a Frank passed along the street and seeing the jewel hanging up, seated himself before the shop and said to Alaeddin, ‘O my lord, is yonder jewel for sale?’ ‘All I have is for sale,’ answered Alaeddin; and the Frank said, ‘Wilt thou sell it me for fourscore thousand dinars?’ ‘May God open!’ replied Alaeddin. ‘Wilt thou sell it for a hundred thousand dinars?’ asked the Frank, and he answered, ‘I sell it to thee for a hundred thousand dinars; pay me down the money.’ Quoth the Frank, ‘I cannot carry such a sum about me, for there are thieves and sharpers in Alexandria; but come with me to my ship and I will pay thee the money and give thee to boot a bale of Angora wool, a bale of satin, a bale of velvet and a bale of broadcloth.’ So Alaeddin rose and giving the jewel to the Frank, locked up his shop and committed the keys to his neighbour, saying, ‘Keep these keys for me, whilst I go with this Frank to his ship and take the price of my jewel. If I be long absent and there come to thee Captain Ahmed ed Denef, — he who set me up in this shop, — give him the keys and tell him where I am.' Then he went with the Frank to his ship, where the latter set him a stool and making him sit down, said [to his men], 'Bring the money.' So [they brought it and] he paid him the price of the jewel and gave him the four bales he had promised him; after which he said to him, 'O my lord, honour me by taking a morsel or a draught of water.' And Alaeddin answered, 'If thou have any water, give me to drink.' So the Frank called for drink, and they brought sherbets, drugged with henbane, of which no sooner had Alaeddin drunk, than he fell over on his back; whereupon they weighed anchor and shoving off, shipped the poles and made sail. The wind blew fair and they sailed till they lost sight of land, when the Frank bade bring Alaeddin up out of the hold and made him smell to the counter-drug, whereupon he opened his eyes and said, 'Where am I?' 'Thou art bound and in my power,' answered the Frank; 'and if thou hadst refused to take a hundred thousand dinars for the jewel, I would have bidden thee more.' 'What art thou?' asked Alaeddin, and the other replied, 'I am a sea- captain and mean to carry thee to my mistress.' As they were talking, a ship hove in sight, with forty Muslim merchants on board; so the Frank captain gave chase and coming up with the vessel, made fast to it with grappling-irons. Then he boarded it with his men and took it and plundered it; after which he sailed on with his prize, till he reached the city of Genoa, where he repaired to the gate of a palace, that gave upon the sea, and there came forth to him a veiled damsel, who said, 'Hast thou brought the jewel and its owner?' 'I have brought them both,' answered he; and she said, 'Then give me the jewel.' So he gave it to her and returning to the port, fired guns to announce his safe return; whereupon the King of the city, being notified of his arrival, came down to receive him and said to him, 'What manner of voyage hast thou had?' 'A right prosperous one,' answered the captain, 'and I have made prize of a ship with one- and-forty Muslim merchants.' Being them ashore,' said the King. So he landed the merchants in irons, and Alaeddin among the rest; and the King and the captain mounted and made the captives walk before them, till they reached the palace, where the King sat down in the audience-chamber and making the prisoners pass before him, one by one, said to the first, 'O Muslim, whence comest thou?’ ‘From Alexandria,’ answered he; whereupon the King said, ‘O headsman, put him to death.’ So the headsman smote him with the sword and cut off his head: and thus it fared with the second and the third, till forty were dead and there remained but Alaeddin, who drank the cup of his comrades’ anguish and said to himself, ‘God have mercy on thee, O Alaeddin! Thou art a dead man.’ Then said the King to him, ‘And thou, what countryman art thou?’ ‘I am of Alexandria,’ answered Alaeddin, and the King said, ‘O headsman, strike off his head.’ So the headsman raised his arm and was about to strike, when an old woman of venerable aspect presented herself before the King, who rose to do her honour, and said to him, ‘O King, did I not bid thee remember, when the captain came back with captives, to keep one or two for the convent, to serve in the church?’ ‘O my mother, answered the King, ‘would thou hadst come a while earlier! But take this one that is left.’ So she turned to Alaeddin and said to him, ‘Wilt thou serve in the church, or shall I let the King kill thee?’ Quoth he, ‘I will serve in the church.’ So she took him and carried him forth of the palace to the church, where he said to her, ‘What service must I do?’ And she answered, ‘Thou must arise in the morning and take five mules and go with them into the forest and there cut dry firewood and split it and bring it to the convent-kitchen. Then must thou take up the carpets and sweep and wipe the stone and marble pavements and lay the carpets down again, as they were; after which thou must take two bushels and a half of wheat and sift it and grind it and knead it and make it into cracknels for the convent; and thou must take also a bushel of lentils and sift and crush and cook them. Then must thou fetch water in barrels and fill the four fountains; after which thou must take three hundred and threescore and six wooden platters and crumble the cracknels therein and pour of the lentil pottage over each and carry every monk and patriarch his platter.’ ‘Take me back to the King and let him kill me,’ said Alaeddin; ‘it were easier to me than this service.’ ‘If thou do the service that is due from thee,’ replied the old woman, ‘thou shalt escape death; but, if thou do it not, I will let the King kill thee.’ Then she went away, leaving Alaeddin heavy at heart. Now there were in the church ten blind cripples, and one of them said to him, ‘Bring me a pot.’ So he brought it him and he did his occasion therein and said, ‘Throw away the ordure.’ He did do, and the blind man said, ‘The Messiah’s blessing be upon thee, O servant of the church!’ Presently, the old woman came in and said to him, ‘Why hast thou not done thy service?’ ‘How many hands have I,’ answered he, ‘that I should suffice for all this work?’ ‘Thou fool!’ rejoined she.’ ‘I brought thee not hither but to work. But,’ added she, giving him a wand of brass with a cross at the top, ‘take this rod and go forth into the highway, and whomsoever thou meetest, were he governor of the ciy, say to him, “I summon thee to the service of the church, in the name of the Messiah.” And he will not refuse thee. Then make him sift the wheat and grind it and bolt it and knead it and bake it into cracknels; and if any gainsay thee, beat him and fear none.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered he and did as she said, pressing great and small into his service; nor did he leave to do thus for the space of seventeen years, till, one day, the old woman came to him, as he sat in the church, and said to him, ‘Go forth of the convent.’ ‘Whither shall I go?’ asked he, and she said, ‘Thou canst pass the night in a tavern or with one of thy friends.’ Quoth he, ‘Why dost thou send me forth of the church?’ and she replied, ‘The princess Husn Meryem, daughter of Youhenna, King of the city, purposes this night to pay a visit to the church, and it befits not that any abide in her way.’ So he rose and made a show of obeying her and of leaving the church; but he said in himself, ‘I wonder whether the princess is like our women or fairer than they! Algates, I will not go till I have had a sight of her.’ So he hid himself in a closet with a window looking into the church, and as he watched, in came the King’s daughter. He cast one glance at her, that cost him a thousand sighs, for she was like the full moon, when it emerges from the clouds; and with her was a damsel, to whom he heard her say, ‘O Zubeideh, thy company is grateful to me.’ So he looked straitly at the damsel and found her to be none other than his wife, Zubeideh the Lutanist, whom he thought dead. Then the princess said to Zubeideh, ‘Play us an air on the lute.’ But she answered, ‘I will make no music for thee, till thou grant my wish and fulfil thy promise to me.’ ‘And what did I promise thee?’ asked the princess. ‘That thou wouldst reunite me with my husband Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat,’ said Zubeideh. ‘O Zubeideh,’ rejoined the princess, ‘be of good cheer and play us an air, as a thank-offering for reunion with thy husband.’ ‘Where is he?’ asked Zubeideh, and Meryem replied, ‘He is in yonder closet, listening to us.’ So Zubeideh played a measure on the lute, that would have made a rock dance; which when Alaeddin heard, his entrails were troubled and he came forth and throwing himself upon his wife, strained her to his bosom. She also knew him and they embraced and fell down in a swoon. Then came the princess and sprinkled rose-water on them, till they revived, when she said to them, ‘God hath reunited you.’ ‘By thy kind offices, O my lady,’ replied Alaeddin and turning to his wife, said to her, ‘O Zubeideh, thou didst surely die and we buried thee: how then camest thou to life and to this place?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered she, ‘I did not die; but a Marid of the Jinn snatched me up and flew with me hither. She whom thou buriedst was a Jinniyeh, who took my shape and feigned herself dead, but presently broke open the tomb and returned to the service of this her mistress, the princess Husn Meryem. As for me, I was in a trance, and when I opened my eyes, I found myself with the princess; so I said to her, “Why hast thou bought me hither?” “O Zubeideh,” answered she, “know that I am predestined to marry thy husband Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat: wilt thou then accept of me to fellow-wife, a night for me and a night for thee?” “I hear and obey, O my lady,” rejoined I; “but where is my husband?” Quoth she, “Upon his forehead is written what God hath decreed to him; as soon as what is there written is fulfilled to him he must needs come hither, and we will beguile the time of our separation from him with songs and smiting upon instruments of music, till it please God to unite us with him.” So I abode with her till God brought us together in this church.’ Then the princess turned to him and said, ‘O my lord Alaeddin, wilt thou accept of me to wife?’ ‘O my lady,’ replied he, ‘I am a Muslim and thou art a Nazarene; so how can I marry thee?’ ‘God forbid,’ rejoined she, ‘that I should be an infidel! Nay, I am a Muslim; these eighteen years have I held fast the Faith of Submission and I am pure of any faith other than that of Islam.’ Then said he, ‘O my lady, I would fain return to my native land.’ And she answered, ‘Know that I see written on thy forehead things that thou must needs fulfil and thou shalt come to thy desire. Moreover, I give thee the glad tidings, O Alaeddin, that there hath been born to thee a son named Aslan, who is now eighteen years old and sitteth in thy place with the Khalif. Know also that God hath shown forth the truth and done away the false by withdrawing the curtain of secrecy from him who stole the Khalif's goods, that is, Ahmed Kemakim the arch-thief and traitor; and he now lies bound and in prison. It was I who caused the jewel to be put in the bag where thou foundest it and who sent the captain to thee; for thou must know that he is enamoured of me and seeketh my favours, but I refused to yield to his wishes, till he should being me the jewel and its owner. So I gave him a hundred purses and despatched him to thee, in the habit of a merchant; and it was I also who sent the old woman to save thee from being put to death with the other captives.' 'May God requite thee for us with all good!' said he. 'Indeed, thou hast done well.' Then she renewed her profession of the Mohammedan faith at his hands, and when he was assured of the truth of her speech, he said to her, 'O my lady, tell me what are the virtues of the jewel and whence cometh it?' 'It came from an enchanted treasure,' answered she, 'and has five virtues, that will profit us in time of need. The princess my grandmother, my father's mother, was an enchantress and skilled in solving mysteries and winning at hidden treasures, and from one of the latter came the jewel into her hands. When I grew up and reached the age of fourteen, I read the Evangel and other books and found the name of Mohammed (whom God bless and preserve) in four books, the Evangel, the Pentateuch, the Psalms and the Koran; so I believed in Mohammed and became a Muslim, being assured that none is worship-worth save God the Most High and that to the Lord of all creatures no faith is acceptable save that of Submission. When my grandmother fell sick, she gave me the jewel and taught me its virtues. Moreover, before she died, my father said to her, 'Draw me a geomantic figure and see the issue of my affair and what will befall me.' And she foretold him that he should die by the hand of a captive from Alexandria. So he swore to kill every captive from that place and told the captain of this, saying, "Do thou fall on the ships of the Muslims and seize them and whomsoever thou findest of Alexandria, kill him or bring him to me." The captain did his bidding and he slew as many in number as the hairs of his head. Then my grandmother died and I took a geomantic tablet, being minded to now who I should marry, and drawing a figure, found that none should be my husband save one called Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat, the Trusty and Well-beloved. At this I marvelled and waited till the times were accomplished and I foregathered with thee.' So Alaeddin took her to wife and said to her, 'I desire to return to my own country.' 'If it be so,' replied she, 'come with me.' Then she carried him into the palace and hiding him in a closet there, went in to her father, who said to her, 'O my daughter, my heart is exceeding heavy to-day; let us sit down and make merry with wine, thou and I.' So he called for a table of wine, and she sat down with him and plied him with wine, till he lost his wits, when she drugged a cup with henbane, and he drank it off and fell backward. Then she brought Alaeddin out of the closet and said to him, 'Come; thine enemy is laid prostrate, for I made him drunk and drugged him; so do thou with him as thou wilt.' Accordingly Alaeddin went to the King and finding him lying drugged and helpless, bound him fast, hand and foot. Then he gave him the counter-drug and he came to himself and finding his daughter and Alaeddin sitting on his breast, said to her, 'O my daughter, dost thou deal thus with me?' 'If I be indeed thy daughter,' answered she, 'become a Muslim, even as I have done; for the truth was shown to me, and I embraced it, and the false, and I renounced it. I have submitted myself unto God, the Lord of all creatures, and am pure of all faiths contrary to that of Islam in this world and the next. Wherefore, if thou wilt become a Muslim, well and good; if not, thy death were better than thy life.' Alaeddin also exhorted him to embrace the true faith; but he refused and was obstinate: so Alaeddin took a dagger and cut his throat from ear to ear. Then he wrote a scroll, setting forth what had happened and laid it on the dead man's forehead, after which they took what was light of weight and heavy of worth and returned to the church. Here the princess took out the jewel and rubbed the face whereon was figured a couch, whereupon a couch appeared before her and she mounted upon it with Alaeddin and Zubeideh, saying, 'O couch, I conjure thee by the virtue of the names and talismans and characters of art engraven on this jewel, rise up with us!' And it rose with them into the air and flew, till I came to a desert valley, when the princess turned the face on which the couch was figured towards the earth, and it sank with them to the ground. Then she turned up the face whereon was figured a pavilion and tapping it, said, ‘Let a pavilion be pitched in this valley.’ And immediately there appeared a pavilion, in which they seated themselves. Now this valley was a desert waste, without grass or water; so she turned a third face of the jewel towards the sky and said, ‘By the virtue of the names of God, let trees spring up here and a river run beside them!’ And immediately trees sprang up and a river ran rippling and splashing beside them. They made their ablutions and prayed and drank of the stream; after which the princess turned up a fourth face of the jewel, on which was figured a table of food, and said, ‘By the virtue of the names of God, let the table be spread!’ And immediately there appeared before them a table, spread with all manner rich meats, and they ate and drank and made merry.

Meanwhile, the King’s son went in to waken his father, but found him slain and seeing the scroll, took it and read. Then he sought his sister and finding her not, betook himself to the old woman in the church, of whom he enquired of her, but she said, ‘I have not seen her since yesterday.’ So he returned to the troops and cried out, saying, ‘To horse, cavaliers!’ Then he told them what had happened, and they mounted and rode after the fugitives, till they drew near the pavilion. Presently, Husn Meryem looked up and saw a cloud of dust, which spread till it covered the prospect, then lifted and discovered her brother and his troops, crying aloud and saying, ‘Whither will ye fly, and we on your track!’ Then said she to Alaeddin, ‘Art thou steadfast in battle?’ ‘Even as the stake in bran,’ answered he; ‘I know not war nor battle, neither swords nor spears.’ So she pulled out the jewel and rubbed the fifth face, that on which were depictured a horse and his rider, and straightway a horseman appear out of the desert and driving at the pursuing host, ceased not to do battle with them and smite them with the sword, till he routed them and put them to flight. Then said the princess to Alaeddin, ‘Wilt thou go to Cairo or to Alexandria?’ And he answered, ‘To Alexandria.’ So they mounted the couch and she pronounced over it the conjuration, whereupon it set off with them and brought them to Alexandria in the twinkling of an eye. They alighted without the city and Alaeddin hid the women in a cavern, whilst he went into

Alexandria and fetched them veils and outer clothing, wherewith he covered them. Then he carried them to his ship and leaving them in the room behind it, went forth to fetch them the morning meal, when he met Ahmed ed Denef coming from Baghdad. He saw him in the street and received him with open arms, embracing him and welcoming him. Ed Denef gave him the good news of his son Aslan and how he was now come to the age of twenty; and Alaeddin, in his turn, told the captain of the guard all that had befallen him, whereat he marvelled exceedingly. Then he brought him to his lodging, where they passed the night; and next day he sold his shop and laid its price with his other monies. Now Ed Denef had told him that the Khalif sought him; but he said, ‘I am bound first for Cairo, to salute my father and mother and the people of my house.’ So they all mounted the couch and it carried them to Cairo the Happy, where they alighted in the street called Yellow, where stood Shemseddin’s house. Alaeddin knocked at the door, and his mother said, ‘Who is at the door, now that we have lost our beloved?’ ‘It is I, Alaeddin,’ replied he; whereupon they came down and embraced him. Then he sent his wives and baggage into the house and entering himself with Ahmed ed Denef, rested there three days, after which he was minded to set out for Baghdad and his father said, ‘O my son, abide with me.’ But he answered, ‘I cannot brook to be parted from my son Aslan.’ So he took his father and mother and set out for Baghdad. When they came thither, Ahmed ed Denef went in to the Khalif and gave him the glad tidings of Alaeddin’s arrival and told him his story; whereupon the Prince went forth to meet him, accompanied by his son Aslan, and they met and embraced each other. Then the Khalif sent for Ahmed Kemakim and said to Alaeddin, ‘Up and avenge thee of thine enemy!’ So he drew his sword and smote off Ahmed’s head. Then the Khalif held festival for Alaeddin and summoning the Cadis and the witnesses, married him to the princess Husn Meryem; and he went in to her and found her an unpierced pearl. Moreover, the Khalif made Aslan Chief of the Sixty and bestowed upon him and his father sumptuous dresses of honour; and they abode in the enjoyment of all the comforts and pleasures of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies.

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HATIM ET TAÏ: HIS GENEROSITY AFTER DEATH.

It is told of Hatim et Taï, that when he died, they buried him on the top of a mountain and set over his grave two boughs hewn out of two rocks and stone figures of women with dishevelled hair. At the foot of the hill was a stream of running water, and when wayfarers camped there, they heard loud crying in the night, from dark till daybreak; but when they arose in the morning, they found nothing but the girls carved in stone. Now when Dhoulkeraa, King of Himyer, going forth of his tribe, came to the valley, he halted to pass the night there and drawing near the mountain, heard the crying and said, 'What lamenting is that on yonder hill?' They answered him, saying, 'This is the tomb of Hatim et Taï, over which are two troughs of stone and stone figures of girls with dishevelled hair; and all who camp in this place by night hear this crying and lamenting.' So he said jestingly, 'O Hatim et Taï, we are thy guests this night, and we are lank with hunger.' Then sleep overcame him, but presently he awoke in affright and cried out, saying, 'Help, O Arabs! Look at my beast!' So they came to him and finding his she-camel struggling in the death-agony, slaughtered it and roasted its flesh and ate. Then they asked him what had happened and he said, 'When I closed my eyes, I saw in my sleep Hatim et Taï, who came to me with a sword in his hand and said to me, "Thou comest to us and we have nothing by us." Then he smote my she-camel with his sword, and she would have died, though ye had not come to her and cut her throat.' Next morning the prince mounted the beast of one of his companions and taking the latter up behind him, set out and fared on till midday, when they saw a man coming towards them, mounted on a camel and leading another, and said to him, 'Who art thou?' 'I am Adi, son of Hatim et Taï,' answered he. 'Where is Dhoulkeraa, prince of Himyer?' 'This is he,' replied they, and he said to the prince, 'Take this camel in place of thine own, which my father slaughtered for thee.' 'Who told thee of this?' asked Dhoulkeraa, and Adi answered, 'My father appeared to me in a dream last night and said to me, "Harkye, Adi; Dhoulkeraa, King of Himyer, sought hospitality of me and I, having nought to give him, slaughtered him his she-camel, that he might eat: so do thou carry him a she-camel to ride, for I have nothing.”’ And Dhoulkeraa took her, marvelling at the generosity of Hatim et Taï, alive and dead.

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MAAN BEN ZAÏDEH AND THE THREE GIRLS.

It is told of Maan ben Zaïdeh that, being out one day a-hunting, he became athirst and would have drunk, but his men had no water with them. Presently, he met three damsels, bearing three skins of water; so he begged drink of them, and they gave him to drink. Then he sought of his men somewhat to give the damsels; but they had no money; so he gave each girl ten golden-headed arrows from his quiver. Whereupon quoth one of them to her mates, 'Harkye! These fashions pertain to none but Maan ben Zaïdeh; so let each of us recite somewhat of verse in his praise.' Then said the first:

He heads his shafts with gold and shooting at his foes, Dispenses
thus largesse and bounties far and wide,
Giving the wounded man wherewith to get him cure And
grave-clothes unto him must in the tombs abide.

And the second:

A warrior, for the great excess of his magnificence, both friends
and foes enjoy the goods his liberal hands dispense.
His arrowheads are forged of gold, that so his very wars May not
estop his generous soul from its munificence.

And the third:

With arrows he shoots at his foes, of his generosity, Whose heads
are fashioned and forged of virgin gold, in steel's room;
That those whom he wounds may spend the price of the gold for
their cure And those that are slain of his shafts may buy
them the wede of the tomb.

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MAAN BEN ZAÏDEH AND THE BEDOUIN.

It is told also of Maan ben Zaïdeh that he went forth one day to the chase with his company, and they came upon a herd of gazelles. So they separated in pursuit of them and Maan was left alone in chase of one of the gazelles. When he had made prize of it, he alighted and slaughtered it; and as he was thus engaged, he espied a man coming towards him on an ass. So he remounted and riding up to the new-comer, saluted him and asked him whence he came. Quoth he, 'I come from the land of Cuzaäh, where we have had a two years' dearth; but this year it was a season of plenty and I sowed cucumbers. They came up before their time, so I gathered the best of them and set out to carry them to the Amir Maan ben Zaïdeh, because of his well-known generosity and notorious munificence.' 'How much cost thou hope to get of him?' asked Maan, and the Bedouin answered, 'A thousand diners.' 'What if he say, "This is too much"?' quoth Maan. 'Then I will ask five hundred diners,' said the Bedouin. 'And if he say, "Too much"?' said Maan. 'Then three hundred,' replied the other. 'And if he say yet, "Too much"?' 'Then two hundred.' 'And yet, "Too much"?' 'Then one hundred.' 'And yet, "Too much"?' 'Then fifty.' 'And yet, "Too much"?' 'Then thirty.' 'And if he still say, "Too much"?' said Maan ben Zaïdeh. 'Then,' answered the Bedouin, 'I will make my ass set his feet in his sanctuary and return to my people, disappointed and empty-handed.' Maan laughed at him and spurring his horse, rode on till he came up with his suite and returned home, when he said to his chamberlain, 'If there come a man with cucumbers, riding on an ass, admit him.' Presently up came the Bedouin and was admitted to Maan's presence, but knew him not for the man he had met in the desert, by reason of the gravity and majesty of his aspect and the multitude of his servants and attendants, for he was seated on his chair of estate, with his officers about him. So he saluted him and Maan said to him, 'O brother of the Arabs, what brings thee?' 'I hoped in the Amir,' answered the Bedouin, 'and have brought him cucumbers out of season.' 'And how much cost thou expect of us?' asked Maan. 'A thousand diners,' answered the Bedouin. 'Too much,' said Maan.

Quoth the Bedouin, ‘Five hundred;’ but Maan repeated, ‘Too much.’ ‘Then three hundred,’ said the Bedouin. ‘Too much,’ said Maan. ‘Two hundred.’ ‘Too much’ ‘One hundred.’ ‘Too much’ ‘Fifty.’ ‘Too much.’ At last the Bedouin came down to thirty diners; but Maan still replied, ‘Too much.’ ‘By Allah,’ cried the Bedouin, ‘the man I met in the desert brought me ill luck! But I will not go lower than thirty diners.’ The Amir laughed and said nothing; whereupon the Bedouin knew that it was he whom he had met and said, ‘O my lord, except thou bring the thirty diners, there is the ass tied ready at the door and here sits Maan.’ At this, Maan laughed, till he fell backward, and calling his steward, said to him, ‘Give him a thousand diners and five hundred and three hundred and two hundred and one hundred and fifty and thirty and leave the ass where he is.’ So the Bedouin, to his amazement, received two thousand and nine score diners, and may God have mercy on them both!

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THE CITY OF LEBTAIT.

There was once a city in the land of the Franks, called the City of Lebtait. It was a royal city and in it stood a tower which was always shut. Whenever a King died and another King of the Franks took the Kingship after him, he set a new and strong lock on the tower, till there were four-and-twenty locks upon the gate. After this time, there came to the throne a man who was not of the old royal house, and he had a mind to open the locks, that he might see what was within the tower. The grandees of his kingdom forbade him from this and were instant with him to desist, offering him all that their hands possessed of riches and things of price, if he would but forego his desire; but he would not be baulked and said, ‘Needs must I open this tower.’ So he did off the locks and entering, found within figures of Arabs on their horses and camels, covered with turbans with hanging ends, girt with swords and bearing long lances in their hands. He found there also a scroll, with these words written therein: ‘Whenas this door is opened, a people of the Arabs, after the likeness of the figures here depictured, will conquer this country; wherefore beware, beware of opening it.’ Now this city was in Spain, and that very year Tarik ibn Ziyad conquered it, in the Khalifate of Welid ben Abdulmelik of the sons of Umeyyeh, slaying this King after the sorriest fashion and sacking the city and making prisoners of the women and boys therein. Moreover, he found there immense treasures; amongst the rest more than a hundred and seventy crowns of pearls and rubies and other gems, and a saloon, in which horsemen might tilt with spears, full of vessels of gold and silver, such as no description can comprise. Moreover, he found there also the table of food of the prophet of God, Solomon son of David (on whom be peace), which is extant even now in a city of the Greeks; it is told that it was of green emerald, with vessels of gold and platters of chrysolite; likewise, the Psalms written in the [ancient] Greek character, on leaves of gold set with jewels, together with a book setting forth the properties of stones and herbs and minerals, as well as the use of charms and talismans and the canons of the art of alchemy, and another that treated of the art of cutting and setting rubies and other [precious] stones and of the preparation of poisons and antidotes. There found he also a representation of the configuration of the earth and the seas and the different towns and countries and villages of the world and a great hall full of hermetic powder, one drachm of which would turn a thousand drachms of silver into fine gold; likewise a marvellous great round mirror of mixed metals, made for Solomon son of David (on whom be peace), wherein whoso looked might see the very image and presentment of the seven divisions of the world, and a chamber full of carbuncles, such as no words can suffice to set forth, many camel-loads. So he despatched all these things to Welid ben Abdulmelik, and the Arabs spread all over the cities of Spain, which is one of the finest of lands. This is the end of the story of the City of Lebtait.

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THE KHALIF HISHAM AND THE ARAB YOUTH.

The Khalif Hisham ben Abdulmelik ben Merwan was hunting one day, when he sighted an antelope and pursued it with his dogs. As he was following the chase, he saw an Arab youth pasturing sheep and said to him, ‘Ho, boy, up and stop yonder antelope, for it escapeth me!’ The youth raised his head and replied, ‘O ignorant of the worth of the worthy, thou lookest on me with disdain and speakest to me with contempt; thy speech is that of a tyrant and thy conduct that of an ass.’ ‘Out on thee,’ cried Hisham. ‘Dost thou not know me?’ ‘Verily,’ rejoined the youth, ‘thine unmannerliness hath made thee known to me, in that thou spokest to me, without beginning by the salutation.” ‘Out on thee!’ repeated the Khalif. ‘I am Hisham ben Abdulmelik.’ ‘May God not favour thy dwellings,’ replied the Arab, ‘nor guard thine abiding-place! How many are thy words and how few thy generosities!’ Hardly had he spoken, when up came the troops from all sides and surrounded him, saying, ‘Peace be on thee, O Commander of the Faithful!’ Quoth Hisham, ‘Leave this talk and seize me yonder boy.’ So they laid hands on him; and when he saw the multitude of chamberlains and viziers and officers of state, he was in nowise concerned and questioned not of them, but let his chin fall on his breast and looked where his feet fell, till they brought him to the Khalif, when he stood before him, with head bowed down, and saluted him not neither spoke. So one of the attendants said to him, ‘O dog of the Arabs, what ails thee that thou salutest not the Commander of the Faithful?’ The youth turned to him angrily and replied, ‘O packsaddle of an ass, the length of the way it was that hindered me from this and the steepness of the steps and sweat.’ Then said Hisham (and indeed he was exceeding wroth), ‘O boy, thou art come to thy last hour; thy hope is gone from thee and thy life is past.’ ‘By Allah, O Hisham,’ answered the Arab, ‘if the time be prolonged and its cutting short be not ordained of destiny, thy words irk me not, be they much or little.’ Then said the (chief) chamberlain to him, ‘O vilest of the Arabs, what art thou to bandy words with the Commander of the Faithful?’ He answered promptly, ‘Mayest thou meet with adversity and may woe and mourning never depart from thee! Hast thou not heard the saying of God the Most High? “One day, every soul shall come to give an account of itself.”’ “At this, Hisham rose, in great wrath, and said, ‘O headsman, bring me his head; for indeed he multiplies talk, such as passes conception, and fears not reproach.’ So the headsman took him and making him kneel on the carpet of blood, drew his sword and said to the Khalif, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, shall I smite off the head of this thy misguided slave, who is on the way to his grave, and be quit of his blood?’ ‘Yes,’ replied Hisham. He repeated his question and the Khalif again replied in the affirmative. Then he asked leave a third time, and the youth, knowing that, if the Khalif assented yet once more, it would be the signal of his death, laughed till his wang-teeth appeared; at which Hisham’s wrath redoubled and he said to him, ‘O boy, meseems thou art mad; seest thou not that thou art about to depart the world? Why then dost thou laugh in mockery of thyself?’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered the young Arab, ‘if my life is to be prolonged, none can hurt me, great or small; but I have bethought me of some verses, which do thou hear, for my death cannot escape thee.’ ‘Say on and be brief,’ replied Hisham; so the Arab repeated the following verses: A hawk once seized a sparrow, so have I heard men say, A sparrow of the desert, that fate to him did throw; And as the hawk was flying to nestward with his prize, The sparrow in his clutches did thus bespeak his foe: “There’s nought in me the stomach of such as thou to stay; Indeed, I’m all too paltry to fill thy maw, I trow.” The hawk was pleased and flattered with pride and self conceit; He smiled for self-contentment and let the sparrow go. At this Hisham smiled and said, ‘By my kinship to the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve), had he spoken thus at first, I had given him all he asked, except the Khalifate!’ Then he bade his servants stuff his mouth with jewels and entreat him courteously; so they did as he bade them and the Arab went his way.

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IBRAHIM BEN EL MEHDI AND THE BARBER-SURGEON.

When the Khalifate fell to El Mamoun the son of Haroun er Reshid, the latter's brother Ibrahim, son of El Mehdi, refused to acknowledge his nephew and betook himself to Er Rei, where he proclaimed himself Khalif and abode thus a year and eleven months and twelve days. Meanwhile Mamoun remained awaiting his return to allegiance, till, at last, despairing of this, he mounted with his horsemen and footmen and repaired to Er Rei in quest of him. When the news came to Ibrahim, he found nothing for it but to flee to Baghdad and hide there, fearing for his life; and Mamoun set a price of a hundred thousand dinars upon his head.

(Quoth Ibrahim) 'Now when I heard of this price being set upon my head, I feared for myself and knew not what to do: so I disguised myself and went forth of my house at midday, knowing not whither I should go. Presently, I entered a street that had no issue and said in myself, "Verily, we are God's and to Him we return! I have exposed myself to destruction. If I retrace my steps, I shall arouse suspicion." Then I espied, at the upper end of the street, a negro standing at his door; so I went up to him and said to him, "Hast thou a place where I may abide awhile of the day?" "Yes," answered he, and opening the door, admitted me into a decent house, furnished with carpets and mats and cushions of leather. Then he shut the door on me and went away; and I misdoubted me he had heard of the reward offered for me and said in myself, "He has gone to inform against me." But, as I sat pondering my case and boiling like the pot over the fire, my host came back, followed by a porter loaded with meat and bread and new cooking-pots and goblets and a new jar and other needful gear. He took them from the porter and dismissing him, said to me, "I make myself thy ransom! I am a barber-surgeon, and I know it would mislike thee to eat with me, because of the way in which I get my living; so do thou shift for thyself with these things whereon no hand hath fallen." Now I was anhungred; so I cooked me a pot of meat, whose like I mind me not ever to have eaten; and when I had done my desire, he said to me, "O my lord, God make me thy ransom! Art thou for wine? Indeed, it gladdens the soul and does away care." "I have no objection," replied I, being desirous of his company; so he brought me new flagons of glass, that no hand had touched, and a jar of excellent wine, and said to me, "Mix for thyself, to thy liking." So I cleared the wine and mixed myself a most pleasant draught. Then he brought me a new cup and fruits and flowers in new vessels of earthenware; after which he said to me, "Wilt thou give me leave to sit apart and drink of wine of my own by myself, of my joy in thee and for thee?" "Do so." answered I. So we drank, he and I, till the wine began to take effect upon us, when he rose and going to a closet, took out a lute of polished wood and said to me, "O my lord, it is not for the like of me to ask thee to sing, but it behoves thine exceeding generosity to render my respect its due; so, an thou see fit to honour thy slave, thine is the august decision." Quoth I (and indeed I thought not that he knew me), "How knowest thou that I excel in song?" "Glory be to God!" answered he. "Our lord is too well renowned for that! Thou art my lord Ibrahim, son of El Mehdi, our Khalif of yesterday, he on whose head Mamoun hath set a price of a hundred thousand dinars: but thou art in safety with me." When I heard him say this, he was magnified in my eyes and his loyalty was certified to me; so I complied with his wish and took the lute and tuned it. Then I bethought me of my severance from my children and my family and sang the following verses:

It may be that He, who restored his folk to Joseph of old And
raised him to high estate from the prison where in bonds he
lay,
Will hear our prayer and unite us; for Allah, the Lord of the
worlds, All-powerful is, and His puissance knows neither let
nor stay.

When the barber heard this, exceeding delight took possession of him and he was of great good cheer; (for it is said that when Ibrahim's neighbours heard him [but] say, "Ho, boy, saddle the mule!" they were filled with delight). Then, being overborne by mirth, he said to me (continues Ibrahim), "O my lord, wilt thou give me leave to say what is come to my mind, for all I am not of the folk of the craft?" "Do so," answered I; "this is of thy great courtesy and kindness." So he took the lute and sang the following verses:

Unto our loved ones we made our moan of our nights so long and
drear; And lo, "How short is the night with us!" quoth they
we hold so dear.
This is because quick-coming sleep closes their happy eyes, But
slumber comes not to close our lids, that burn with many a
tear.
When the night approaches, the night so dread and drear to those
that love, We are oppressed with grief; but they rejoice,
when the night draws near.
Had they but drunken our bitter cup and suffered of our dole,
Then were their nights as ours, as long and full of heavy
cheer.

"Thou hast acquitted thee rarely, O my friend," said I, "and hast done away from me the pangs of sorrow. Let me hear more trifles of thy fashion." So he sang these verses:

So a man's honour be unstained and free of all impair, Lo, every
garment that he dights on him is fit and fair.
She taunted me, because, forsooth, our numbers were but few; But
I "The noble," answer made, "are ever few and rare."
It irks us nought that we are few and eke our neighbour great,
For all the neighbours of most folk are scant and mean
elsewhere;
For we're a folk, that deem not death an evil nor reproach,
Albeit Aamir and Seloul so deem, of their despair.
The love of death that is in us brings near our ends to us, But
theirs, who loathe and rail at it, are long and far to fare.
We, an it like us, give the lie to others of their speech; But,
when we speak, no man on earth to gainsay us doth dare.

When I heard this, I was filled with delight and marvelled exceedingly. Then I slept and awoke not till past nightfall, when I washed my face, with a mind full of the high worth of this barber-surgeon; after which I aroused him and taking out a purse I had with me, containing a considerable sum of money, threw it to him, saying, “I commend thee to God, for I am about to go forth from thee, and beg thee to spend what is in this purse on thine occasions; and thou shalt have an abounding reward of me, when I am quit of my fear.” But he returned it to me, saying, “O my lord, poor wretches like myself are of no value in thine eyes; but how, for mine own dignity’s sake, can I take a price for the boon which fortune hath vouchsafed me of thy favour and company? By Allah, if thou repeat thy words and throw the purse to me again, I will kill myself.” So I put the purse in my sleeve (and indeed its weight was irksome to me) and would have gone away; but when I came to the door of the house, he said to me, “O my lord, this is a safer hiding-place for thee than another, and thy keep is no burden to me; so do thou abide with me, till God grant thee relief.” So I turned back, saying, “On condition that thou spend of the money in this purse.” He let me believe that he consented to this, and I abode with him some days in the utmost comfort; but, perceiving that he spent none of the contents of the purse, I revolted at the idea of abiding at his charge and thought shame to be a burden on him; so I disguised myself in women’s apparel, donning walking-boots and veil, and left his house.

When I found myself in the street, I was seized with excessive fear, and going to pass the bridge, came to a place sprinkled with water, where a trooper, who had been in my service, saw me and knowing me, cried out, saying, “This is he whom Mamoun seeks!” Then he laid hold of me, but the love of life lent me strength and I gave him a push, which threw him and his horse down in that slippery place, so that he became an example to those who will take warning and the folk hastened to him. Meanwhile, I hurried on over the bridge and entered a street, where I saw the door of a house open and a woman standing in the vestibule. So I said to her, “O my lady, have pity on me and save my life; for I am a man in fear.” Quoth she, “Enter and welcome;” and carried me into an upper chamber, where she spread me a bed and brought me food, saying, “Calm thy fear, for not a soul shall know of thee.” As she spoke, there came a loud knocking at the door; so she went and opened, and lo, it was my friend whom I had thrown down on the bridge, with his head bound up, the blood running down upon his clothes and without his horse. "O so and so," said she, "what hath befallen thee?" Quoth he, "I made prize of the man [whom the Khalif seeks] and he escaped from me." And told her the whole story. So she brought out tinder and applying it to his head, bound it up with a piece of rag; after which she spread him a bed and he lay sick. Then she came up to me and said, "Methinks thou art the man in question?" "I am," answered I, and she said, "Fear not: no harm shall befall thee," and redoubled in kindness to me.

I abode with her three days, at the end of which time she said to me, "I am in fear for thee, lest yonder man happen upon thee and betray thee to what thou dreadest; so save thyself by flight." I besought her to let me tarry till nightfall, and she said, "There is no harm in that." So, when the night came, I put on my woman's attire and taking leave of her, betook me to the house of a freed woman, who had once been mine. When she saw me, she wept and made a show of affliction and praised God the Most High for my safety. Then she went forth, as if she would go to the market, in the interests of hospitality, and I thought no harm; but, ere long, I espied Ibrahim el Mausili making for the house, with his servants and troopers, led by a woman whom I knew for the mistress of the house. She brought them to my hiding-place and delivered me into their hands, and I saw death face to face. They carried me, in my woman's attire, to Mamoun, who called a general council and let bring me before him. When I entered I saluted him by the title of Khalif, saying, "Peace be on thee, O Commander of the Faithful!" and he replied, "May God neither give thee peace nor bless thee!" "At thy leisure, O Commander of the Faithful!" rejoined I. "It is for him in whose hand is revenge to decree retaliation or forgiveness; but forgiveness is nigher to the fear of God, and God hath set thy forgiveness above all other, even as He hath made my sin to excel all other sin. So, if thou punish, it is of thy right, and if thou pardon, it is of thy bounty." And I repeated the following verses:

Great is my sin, in sooth, 'gainst thee, But thou art greater
still, perdie.
So take thy due of me, or else Remit it of thy clemency.

If of the noble I've not been Indeed, yet do thou of them be.

At this he raised his head to me and I hastened to add these verses:

Indeed, I've offended full sore, But thou art disposed to
forgive.
'Twere justice to punish my crime And grace to allow me to live.

Then he bowed his head and repeated the following verses:

Whenas a friend against me doth grievously offend And maketh me
with anger to choke, yet in the end,
I pardon his offending and take him back again Into my favour,
fearing to live without a friend.

When I heard this, I scented the odour of mercy, knowing his disposition to clemency. Then he turned to his son El Abbas and his brother Abou Ishac and other his chief officers there present and said to them, "What deem ye of his case!" They all counselled him to slay me, but differed as to the manner of my death. Then said he to Ahmed ibn Ali Khalid, "And what sayst thou, O Ahmed?" "O Commander of the Faithful," answered he, "if thou put him to death, we find thy like who hath slain the like of him; but, if thou pardon him, we find not the like of thee that hath pardoned the like of him." At this Mamoun bowed his head and repeated the following verse:

The people of my tribe, they have my brother slain; But, an I shoot, my shaft reverts to me again.

And also these:

Use not thy brother with despite, Although he mingle wrong with
right,
And still be kind to him, all be With thanklessness he thee
requite;
And if he go astray and err One day, revile thou not the wight.
Seest not that loved and loathed at once In every way of life
unite?
That by the annoy of hoary hairs Embittered is long life's

delight,
And that the bristling thorns beset The branch with pleasant
fruits bedight?
Who is it doth good deeds alone And who hath never wrought
unright?
Prove but the age's sons, thou'lt find The most have fallen from
the light.

When I heard this, I uncovered my head and cried out, saying, "God is most great! By Allah, the Commander of the Faithful pardons me!" Quoth he, "No harm shall come to thee, O uncle." And I, "O Commander of the Faithful, my offence is too great for me to attempt to extenuate it and thy pardon is too great for me to speak a word of thanks for it." And I chanted the following verses:

Sure, He, who made the virtues all, stored them in Adam's loins
For His high-priest, the seventh prince of Abbas' royal
seed!
The hearts of all the folk are filled with reverence for thee,
And thou, with meek and humble heart, dost keep them all and
lead.
Error-deluded as I was, against thee I rebelled, Intent on
covetise alone and base ambitious greed;
Yet hast thou pardon giv'n to one, the like of whom before Was
never pardoned, though for him no one with thee did plead,
And on a mother's bleeding heart hadst ruth and little ones, Like
to the desert-grouse's young, didst pity in their need.

Quoth Mamoun, "I say, like our lord Joseph (on whom and on our Prophet be peace and blessing), 'There shall be no reproach on thee this day. God will forgive thee, for He is the Most Merciful of the Merciful ones.' Indeed, I pardon thee, O uncle, and restore thee thy goods and lands, and no harm shall befall thee." So I offered up devout prayers for him and repeated the following verses:

My wealth thou hast given me again and hast not begrudged it to
me; Yea, and to boot, before this, my life and my blood thou

didst spare.
So if, thine approval to win, I lavish my blood and my wealth And
e'en to the shoe off my foot, in thy service, I strip myself
bare,
'Twere but the restoring to thee of the loans that I owe to thy
grace Which none might reproach thee nor blame, I trow,
hadst thou chos'n to forbear.
Ungrateful henceforth if I prove for the favours vouchsafed me by
thee, Still worthier of blame than thyself of honour and
reverence I were.

Then Mamoun showed me honour and favour and said to me, "O uncle, Abou Ishac and Abbas counselled me to put thee to death." "And they counselled thee right loyally, O Commander of the Faithful," answered I; "but thou hast done after thine own nature and hast put away what I feared with what I hoped." "O uncle," rejoined he, "thou didst extinguish my rancour with the humbleness of thine excuse, and I pardon thee without making thee drink the bitterness of obligation to intercessors." Then he prostrated himself in prayer a long while, after which he raised his head and said to me, "O uncle, knowest thou why I prostrated myself?" "Haply," answered I, "thou didst this in thanksgiving to God, for that He hath given thee the mastery over thine enemy." "Not so," rejoined he, "but to thank Him for having inspired me to pardon thee and purified my mind towards thee. Now tell me thy story." So I told him all that had befallen me and he sent for the freed-woman, who was in her house, expecting the reward. When she came, he said to her, "What moved thee to deal thus with thy lord?" And she answered, "Lust of money." "Hast thou a child or a husband?" asked the Khalif; and she said, "No." So he bade give her a hundred blows with a whip and imprisoned her for life. Then he sent for the soldier and his wife and the barber-surgeon and asked the former what had moved him to do thus. "Lust of money," answered he; whereupon quoth the Khalif, "It befits that thou be a barber-surgeon," and committed him to one whom he charged to place him in a barber's shop, where he might learn the craft. But his wife he entreated with honour and lodged in his palace, saying, "This is a woman of sense and apt for matters of moment."

Then said he to the barber-surgeon, “Verily, what has come to light of thy worth and generosity calls for extraordinary honour.” So he commanded the trooper’s house and all that was therein to be given him and bestowed on him a dress of honour and fifteen thousand dinars.’

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THE CITY OF IREM.

It is related that Abdallah ben Abou Kilabeh went forth in quest of a camel that had strayed from him; and as he was wandering in the deserts of Yemen and Sebaa, he came upon a great city in whose midst was a vast citadel compassed about with pavilions, that rose high into the air. He made for the place, thinking to find there inhabitants, of whom he might enquire concerning his camel; but, when he reached it, he found it deserted, without a living soul in it. So (quoth Abdallah), 'I alighted and hobbling my she-camel, took courage and entered the city. When I came to the citadel, I found it had two vast gates, never in the world was seen their like for size and loftiness, inlaid with all manner jewels and jacinths, white and red and yellow and green. At this I marvelled greatly and entering the citadel, trembling and dazed with wonder and affright, found it long and wide, as it were a city for bigness; and therein were lofty storied pavilions, builded of gold and silver and inlaid with many- coloured jewels and jacinths and chrysolites and pearls. The leaves of their doors were even as those of the citadel for beauty and their floors strewn with great pearls and balls, as they were hazel-nuts, of musk and ambergris and saffron. When I came within the city and saw no human being therein, I had nigh- well swooned and died for fear. Moreover, I looked down from the summit of the towers and balconies and saw rivers running under them; in the streets were fruit-laden trees and tall palms, and the manner of the building of the city was one brick of gold and one of silver. So I said to myself, "Doubtless this is the Paradise promised for the world to come." Then I took of the jewels of its gravel and the musk of its dust as much as I could bear and returned to my own country, where I told the folk what I had seen.

After awhile, the news reached Muawiyeh ben Abou Sufyan, who was then Khalif in the Hejaz; so he wrote to his lieutenant in Senaa of Yemen to send for the teller of the story and question him of the truth of the case. Accordingly the lieutenant sent for me and questioned me, and I told him what I had seen; whereupon he despatched me to Muawiyeh, to whom I repeated my story; but he would not credit it. So I brought out to him some of the pearls and balls of musk and ambergris and saffron, in which latter there was still some sweet smell; but the pearls were grown yellow and discoloured. The Khalif wondered at this and sending for Kaab el Ahbar,, said to him, "O Kaab el Ahbar, I have sent for thee to learn the truth of a certain matter and hope that thou wilt be able to certify me thereanent." "What is it, O Commander of the Faithful?" asked Kaab, and Muawiyeh said, "Wottest thou of a city builded of gold and silver, the pillars whereof are of rubies and chrysolites and its gravel pearls and balls of musk and ambergris and saffron?" "Yes, O Commander of the Faithful," answered Kaab. "It is Irem of the Columns, the like of which was never made in the lands,' and it was Sheddad son of Aad the Great that built it." Quoth the Khalif, "Tell us of its history," and Kaab said, "Aad the Great had two sons, Shedid and Sheddad. When their father died, they ruled in his stead, and there was no king of the kings of the earth but was subject to them. After awhile Shedid died and his brother Sheddad reigned over the earth alone. Now he was fond of reading in old books, and happening upon the description of the world to come and of Paradise, with its pavilions and galleries and trees and fruits and so forth, his soul moved him to build the like thereof in this world, after the fashion aforesaid. Now under his hand were a hundred thousand kings, each ruling over a hundred thousand captains, commanding each a hundred thousand warriors; so he called these all before him and said to them, 'I find in old books and histories a description of Paradise, as it is to be in the next world, and I desire to build its like in this world. Go ye forth therefore to the goodliest and most spacious tract in the world and build me there a city of gold and silver, whose gravel shall be rubies and chrysolites and pearls and the columns of its vaults beryl. Fill it with palaces, whereon ye shall set galleries and balconies, and plant its lanes and thoroughfares with all manner of trees bearing ripe fruits and make rivers to run through it in channels of gold and silver.' 'How can we avail to do this thing,' answered they, 'and whence shall we get the chrysolites and rubies and pearls whereof thou speakest?' Quoth he, 'Know ye not that all the kings of the word are under my hand and that none that is therein dare gainsay my commandment?' 'Yes,' answered they; 'we know that.’ ‘Get ye then,’ rejoined he, ‘to the mines of chrysolites and rubies and gold and silver and to the pearl-fisheries and gather together all that is in the world of jewels and metals of price and leave nought; and take also for me such of these things as be in men’s hands and let nothing escape you: be diligent and beware of disobedience.’

Then he wrote letters to all the [chief] kings of the world (now the number of kings then reigning [in chief] over the earth was three hundred and threescore kings) and bade them gather together all of these things that were in their subjects’ hands and get them to the mines of precious stones and metals and bring forth all that was therein, even from the abysses of the seas. This they accomplished in the space of twenty years, and Sheddad then assembled from all lands and countries builders and men of art and labourers and handicraftsmen, who dispersed over the world and explored all the wastes and deserts thereof, till they came to a vast and fair open plain, clear of hills and mountains, with springs welling and rivers running, and said, ‘This is even such a place as the King commanded us to find.’ So they busied themselves in building the city even as Sheddad, King of the whole earth in its length and breadth, had commanded them, laying the foundations and leading the rivers therethrough in channels after the prescribed fashion. Moreover, all the Kings of the earth sent thither jewels and precious stones and pearls large and small and cornelian and gold and silver upon camels by land and in great ships over the waters, and there came to the builders’ hands of all these things so great a quantity as may neither be told or imagined. They laboured at the work three hundred years; and when they had wrought it to end, they went to King Sheddad and acquainted him therewith. Then said he, ‘Depart and make thereto an impregnable citadel, rising high into the air, and round it a thousand pavilions, each builded on a thousand columns of chrysolite and ruby and vaulted with gold, that in each pavilion may dwell a Vizier.’ So they returned and did this in other twenty years; after which they again presented themselves before the King and informed him of the accomplishment of his will. Then he commanded his Viziers, who were a thousand in number, and his chief officers and such of his troops and others as he put trust in, to prepare for departure and removal to Many-Columned Irem, at the stirrup of Sheddad son of Aad, king of the world; and he bade also such as he would of his women and of his female slaves and eunuchs make them ready for the journey. They spent twenty years preparing for departure, at the end of which time Sheddad set out with his host, rejoicing in the attainment of his wish, and fared forward till there remained but one day's journey between him and Item. Then God sent down on him and on the stubborn unbelievers with him a thunderblast from the heavens of His power, which destroyed them all with a mighty clamour, and neither he nor any of his company set eyes on the city. Moreover, God blotted out the road that led to the city, and it stands unchanged, in its stead, until the Resurrection Day."

Muawiyeh wondered greatly ad Kaab's story and said to him, "Hath any mortal ever made his way to the city?" "Yes," answered Kaab; "one of the companions of Mohammed (on whom be peace and salvation) reached it, doubtless after the same fashion as this man who sits here." And (quoth Es Shaabi) it is related, on the authority of learned men of Himyer of Yemen, that Sheddad was succeeded in his kingship by his son Sheddad the Less, whom he left his viceregent in Hezremout and Sebaa, when he set out for Irem. When he heard of his father's death on the road, he caused his body to be brought back to Hezremout and let hew him out a sepulchre in a cavern, where he laid the body on a throne of gold and threw over it threescore and ten robes of cloth of gold, embroidered with precious stones; and at his head he set up a tablet of gold, on which were graven the following verses:

Take warning, thou that by long life Art duped and thinkst to live alway.
I'm Sheddad son of Aad, a high And mighty monarch in my day;
Lord of the columned citadel, Great was my prowess in the fray.
All the world's peoples feared my might And did my ordinance obey;
Yes, and I held the East and West And ruled them with an iron sway.
One came to us with God's command And summoned us to the right way

“Is there no ‘scaping from this thing?” Quoth we and did his word gainsay.
Then on us fell a thunderblast From out the heaven far away,
And like the sheaves in reaping-time Midmost a field, o’erthrown we lay.
And now beneath the storied plains Of earth we wait the appointed Day.

(Quoth Eth Thaalibi also) It chanced that two men once entered this cavern and found at its upper end a stair; so they descended and came to an underground chamber, a hundred cubits long by forth wide and a hundred high. In the midst stood a throne of gold, whereon lay a man of gigantic stature, filling the whole length and breadth of the throne. He was covered with jewelry and raiment gold and silver wrought, and at his head was a tablet of gold, bearing an inscription. So they took the tablet and bore it off, together with as many bars of gold and silver and so forth as they could away with.

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ISAAC OF MOSUL’S STORY OF THE LADY KHEDIJEH AND THE KHALIF MAMOUN

(Quoth Isaac of Mosul) ‘I went out one night from Mamoun’s presence, on my way to my house, and being taken with a need to make water, I turned aside into a by-street and stood up against a wall, fearing lest something might hurt me, if I squatted down. Presently, I espied something hanging down from one of the houses and feeling it, found that it was a great four- handled basket, covered with brocade. “There must be some reason for this,” said I to myself and knew not what to think, then drunkenness led me to seat myself in the basket, whereupon the people of the house pulled me up, supposing me to be he whom they expected. When I came to the top of the wall, I found four damsels, who said to me, “Descend and welcome!” Then one of them went before me with a flambeau and brought me down into a mansion, wherein were furnished sitting-chambers, whose like I had never seen, save in the Khalif’s palace. So I sat down and after awhile, the curtains were drawn from one side of the room and in came damsels bearing lighted flambeaux and censers full of Sumatran aloes-wood, and amongst them a young lady as she were the rising full moon. I rose and she said, “Welcome to thee for a visitor!” Then she made me sit down again and asked how I came thither. Quoth I, “I was returning home from a friend’s house and went astray in the dark; then, being taken with an urgent occasion, I turned aside into this street, where I found a basket let down. The wine which I had drunk led me to seat myself in it and it was drawn up with me into this house.” “No harm shall befall thee,” rejoined she, “and I hope thou wilt have cause to praise the issue of thine adventure. But what is thy condition?” “I am a merchant in the Baghdad bazaar,” replied I, and she, “Canst thou repeat any verses?” “Some small matter,” answered I. “Then,” said she, “let us hear some of them.” But I said, “A visitor is [naturally] bashful; do thou begin.” “True,” answered she and recited some of the choicest verses of the poets, past and present, so that I knew not whether more to marvel at her beauty and grace or at the charm of her diction. Then said she, “Is thy bashfulness gone?” “Yes, by Allah!” answered I. “Then, if thou wilt," rejoined she, "recite us somewhat." So I repeated to her a number of poems by old writers, and she applauded, saying, "By Allah I did not look to find such culture among the trader folk!"

Then she called for food and fell to taking of it and setting it before me; and the place was full of all manner sweet-scented flowers and rare fruits, such as are found only in kings' houses. Presently, she called for wine and drank a cup, after which she filled another and gave it to me, saying, "Now is the time for converse and story-telling." So I bethought myself and related to her a number of pleasing stories and anecdotes, with which she was delighted and said, "It is wonderful that a merchant should have such store of tales like unto these, for they are fit for kings." Quoth I, "I have a neighbour who uses to consort with kings and bear them company at table; so, when he is at leisure, I visit his house and he often tells me what he has heard." "By my life," exclaimed she, "thou hast a good memory!"

We continued to converse thus, and as often as I was silent, she would begin, till the most part of the night was spent, whilst the burning aloes-wood diffused its fragrance and I was in such case as, if the Khalif had suspected it, would have made him wild with longing for it. Then said she to me, "Verily, thou art one of the most pleasant and accomplished of men and passing well- bred; but there lacks one thing." "What is that?" asked I, and she said, "If but thou knewest how to sing verses to the lute!" I answered, "I was once passionately fond of this art, but finding I had no gift for it, I abandoned it, thou reluctantly. Indeed, I should love to sing somewhat well at this present and fulfil my night's enjoyment." "Meseemeth thou hintest a wish for the lute to be brought?" said she, and I, "It is thine to decide, if thou wilt so far favour me, and to thee be the thanks." So she called for a lute and sang a song, in a manner whose like I never heard, both for sweetness of voice and perfection of style and skill in playing, in short, for general excellence. Then said she, "Knowest thou who made the air and words of this song?" "No," answered I; and she said, "The words are so and so's and the air is Isaac's." "And hath Isaac then (may I be thy ransom!) such a talent?" asked I. "Glory be to Isaac!" replied she. "Indeed he excels in this art." "Glory be to Allah," exclaimed I, "who hath given this man what He hath vouchsafed unto none other!" And she said, "How would it be, if thou heardest this song from himself?" Thus did we till break of day, when there came to her an old woman, as she were her nurse, and said to her, "The time is come." So she rose and said to me, "Keep what hath passed between us to thyself; for meetings of this kind are in confidence." "May I be thy ransom!" answered I. "I needed no enjoinder of this." Then I took leave of her and she sent a damsel to open the door to me; so I went forth and retuned to my own house, where I prayed the morning prayer and slept.

Presently, there came to me a messenger from the Khalif; so I went to him and passed the day in his company. When the night came, I called to mind my yesternight's pleasure, a thing from which none but a fool could be content to abstain, and betook myself to the street, where I found the basket, and seating myself therein, was drawn up to the place in which I had passed the previous night. When the lady saw me, she said, "Indeed, thou art assiduous," And I answered, "Meseems rather that I am neglectful." Then we fell to conversing and passed the night as before in talking and reciting verses and telling rare stories, each in turn, till daybreak, when I returned home. I prayed the morning prayer and slept, and there came to me a messenger from Mamoun. So I went to him and spent the day with him till nightfall, when he said to me, "I conjure thee to sit here, whilst I go on an occasion and come back." As soon as he was gone, my thoughts turned to the lady and calling to mind my late delight, I recked little what might befall me from the Commander of the Faithful. So I sprang up and going out, ran to the street aforesaid, where I sat down in the basket and was drawn up as before. When the lady saw me, she said, "Verily, thou art a sincere friend to us." "Yea, by Allah!" answered I; and she said, "Hath thou made our house thine abiding-place?" "May I be thy ransom!" replied I. "A guest hath a right to three days' entertainment, and if I return after this, ye are free to shed my blood." Then we passed the night as before; and when the time of departure drew near, I bethought me that Mamoun would certainly question me nor be content save with a full explanation: so I said to her, "I see thee to be of those who delight in singing. Now I have a cousin who is handsomer than I and higher of station and more accomplished; and he is the most intimate of all God's creatures with Isaac." "Art thou a spunger?" asked she. "Verily, thou art importunate." Quoth I, "It is for thee to decide;" and she, "If thy cousin be as thou sayst, it would not displease me to make his acquaintance."

Then I left her and returned to my house, but hardly had I reached it, when the Khalif's messengers came down on me and carried me before him by main force. I found him seated on a chair, wroth with me, and he said to me, "O Isaac, art thou a traitor to thine allegiance?" "No, by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful!" answered I. "What hast thou then to say?" asked he. "Tell me the truth." And I replied, "I will well; but in private." So he signed to his attendants, who withdrew to a distance, and I told him the case, adding, "I promised to bring thee to visit her." And he said, "Thou didst well." Then we spent the day in our usual pleasures, but Mamoun's heart was taken with the lady, and hardly was the appointed time come, when we set out. As we went along, I cautioned him, "Look that thou call me not by my name before her; but do thou sing and I will accompany thee." He assented to this, and we fared on till we came to the house, where we found two baskets hanging ready. So we sat down in them and were drawn up to the usual place, where the damsel came forward and saluted us. When Mamoun saw her, he was amazed at her beauty and grace; and she began to entertain him with stories and verses. Presently, she called for wine and we fell to drinking, she paying him especial attention and delighting in him and he repaying her in kind. Then he took the lute and sang an air, after which she said to me, "And is thy cousin also a merchant?" "Yes," answered I, and she said, "Indeed, ye resemble one another nearly." But when Mamoun had drunk three pints, he grew merry with wine and called out saying, "Ho, Isaac!" "At thy service, O Commander of the Faithful," answered I. Quoth he, "Sing me such an air."

As soon as the lady knew that he was the Khalif, she withdrew to another place, and when I had made an end of my song, Mamoun said to me, "See who is the master of this house;" whereupon an old woman hastened to make answer, saying, "It belongs to Hassan ben Sehl." "Fetch him to me," said the Khalif. So she went away and after awhile in came Hassan, to whom said Mamoun, "Hath thou a daughter?" "Yes," answered he; "her name is Khedijeh." "Is she married?" asked the Khalif. "No, by Allah!" replied Hassan. "Then," said Mamoun, "I ask her of thee in marriage." "O Commander of the Faithful," replied Hassan, "she is thy handmaiden and at thy commandment." Quoth Mamoun, "I take her to wife at a present dower of thirty thousand dinars, which thou shalt receive this very morning; and do thou being her to us this next night." And Hassan answered, "I hear and obey."

'Then he went out, and the Khalif said to me, "O Isaac, tell this story to no one." So I kept it secret till Mamoun's death. Surely never was man's life to fulfilled with delights as was mine these four days' time, whenan I companied with Mamoun by day and with Khedijeh by night; and by Allah, never saw I among men the like of Mamoun, neither among women have I ever set eyes on the like of Khedijeh, no, nor on any that came near her in wit and understanding and pleasant speech!'

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THE SCAVENGER AND THE NOBLE LADY OF BAGHDAD.

At Mecca, one day, in the season of pilgrimage, whilst the people were making the enjoined circuits about the Holy House and the place of compassing was crowded, a man laid hold of the covering of the Kaabeh and cried out, from the bottom of his heart, saying, ‘I beseech Thee, O God, that she may once again be wroth with her husband and that I may lie with her!’ A company of the pilgrims heard him and falling on him, loaded him with blows and carried him to the governor of the pilgrims, to whom said they, ‘O Amir, we found this man in the Holy Places, saying thus and thus.’ The governor commanded to hang him; but he said, ‘O Amir, I conjure thee, by the virtue of the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve), hear my story and after do with me as thou wilt.’ ‘Say on,’ quoth the Amir. ‘Know then, O Amir,’ said the man, ‘that I am a scavenger, who works in the sheep-slaughterhouses and carries off the blood and the offal to the rubbish-heaps. One day, as I went along with my ass loaded, I saw the people running away and one of them said to me, “Enter this alley, lest they kill thee.” Quoth I, “What ails the folk to run away?” And he answered, “It is the eunuchs in attendance on the wife of one of the notables, who drive the people out of her way and beat them all, without distinction.” So I turned aside with the ass and stood, awaiting the dispersal of the crowd. Presently up came a number of eunuchs with staves in their hands, followed by nigh thirty women, and amongst them a lady as she were a willow-wand or a thirsty gazelle, perfect in beauty and elegance and amorous grace. When she came to the mouth of the passage where I stood, she turned right and left and calling one of the eunuchs, whispered in his ear; whereupon he came up to me and laying hold of me, bound me with a rope and haled me along after him, whilst another eunuch took my ass and made off with it. I knew not what was to do and the people followed us, crying out, “This is not allowed of God! What has this poor scavenger done that he should be bound with ropes?” and saying to the eunuchs, “Have pity on him and let him go, so God have pity on you!” And I the while said in myself, “Doubtless the eunuch seized me, because his mistress smelt the offal and it sickened her. Belike she is with child or ailing; but there is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!" So I walked on behind them, till they stopped at the door of a great house and entering, brought me into a great hall, I know not how I shall describe its goodliness, furnished with magnificent furniture. The women withdrew to the harem, leaving me bound with the eunuch and saying in myself, "Doubtless they will torture me here till I die, and none know of my death." However, after a while, they carried me into an elegant bathroom, adjoining the hall; and as I sat there, in came three damsels, who seated themselves round me and said to me, "Strip off thy rags." So I pulled off my threadbare clothes, and one of them fell a-rubbing my feet, whilst another washed my head and the third scrubbed my body. When they had made an end of washing me, they brought me a parcel of clothes and said to me, "Put these on." "By Allah," answered I, "I know not how!" So they came up to me and dressed me, laughing at me the while; after which they brought casting- bottles, full of rose-water, and sprinkled me therewith. Then I went out with them into another saloon, by Allah, I know not how to set out its goodliness, for the much paintings and furniture therein; and here I found the lady seated on a couch of Indian cane with ivory feet and before her a number of damsels. When she saw me, she rose and called to me; so I went up to her and she made me sit by her side. Then she called for food, and the damsels brought all manner rich meats, such as I never saw in all my life; I do not even know the names of the dishes. So I ate my fill and when the dishes had been taken away and we had washed our hands, she called for fruits and bade me eat of them; after which she bade one of the waiting-women bring the wine-service. So they set on flagons of divers kinds of wine and burned perfumes in all the censers, what while a damsel like the moon rose and served us with wine, to the sound of the smitten strings. We sat and drank, the lady and I, till we were warm with wine, whilst I doubted not but that all this was an illusion of sleep. Presently, she signed to one of the damsels to spread us a bed in such a place, which being done, she took me by the hand and led me thither. So I lay with her till the morning, and as often as I pressed her in my arms, I smelt the delicious fragrance of musk and other perfumes that exhaled from her and could think no otherwise but that I was in Paradise or in the mazes of a dream. When it was day, she asked me where I lodged and I told her, “In such a place;” whereupon she gave me a handkerchief gold and silver wrought, with somewhat tied in it, and bade me depart, saying, “Go to the bath with this.” So I rejoiced and said to myself, “If there be but five farthings here, it will buy me the morning meal.” Then I left her, as I were leaving Paradise, and returned to my lodging, where I opened the handkerchief and found in it fifty dinars of gold. I buried them in the ground and buying two farthings’ worth of bread and meat, sat down at the door and breakfasted; after which I sat pondering my case till the time of afternoon-prayer, when a slave-girl accosted me, saying, “My mistress calls for thee.” So I followed her to the house aforesaid and she carried me in to the lady, before whom I kissed the earth, and she bade me sit and called for meat and wine as on the previous day; after which I again lay with her all night. On the morrow, she gave me a second handkerchief, with other fifty dinars therein, and I took it and going home, buried this also.

Thus did I eight days running, going in to her at the hour of afternoon-prayer and leaving her at daybreak; but, on the eighth night, as I lay with her, one of her maids came running in and said to me, “Arise, go up into yonder closet.” So I rose and went into the closet, which was over the gate and had a window giving upon the street in front of the house. Presently, I heard a great clamour and tramp of horse, and looking out of the window, saw a young man, as he were the rising moon on the night of her full, come riding up, attended by a number of servants and soldiers. He alighted at the door and entering, found the lady seated on the couch in the saloon. So he kissed the earth before her, then came up to her and kissed her hands; but she would not speak to him. However, he ceased not to soothe her and speak her fair, till he made his peace with her, and they lay together that night. Next morning, the soldiers came for him and he mounted and rode away; whereupon she came in to me and said, “Sawst thou yonder man?” “Yes,” answered I; and she said, “He is my husband, and I will tell thee what befell me with him.

“It chanced one day that we were sitting, he and I, in the garden within the house, when he rose from my side and was absent a long while, till I grew tired of waiting and said to myself, ‘Most like, he is in the wardrobe.’ So I went thither, but not finding him there, went down to the kitchen, where I saw a slave-girl, of whom I enquired for him, and she showed him to me lying with one of the cook-maids. When I saw this, I swore a great oath that I would do adultery with the foulest and filthiest man in Baghdad; and the day the eunuch laid hands on thee, I had been four days going round about the town in quest of one who should answer this description, but found none fouler nor more filthy than thee. So I took thee and there passed between us that which God fore- ordained to us; and now I am quit of my oath. But,” added she, “if my husband return yet again to the cook-maid and lie with her, I will restore thee to thy late place in my favours.”

When (continued the scavenger) I heard these words from her lips, what while she transfixed my heart with the arrows of her glances, my tears streamed forth, till my eyelids were sore with weeping, and I repeated the saying of the poet:

Vouchsafe me the kiss of thy left hand, I prithee, And know that
 it’s worthier far than thy right;
For ’tis but a little while since it was washing Sir reverence
 away from the stead of delight.

Then she gave me other fifty dinars (making in all four hundred dinars I had of her) and bade me depart. So I went out from her and came hither, that I might pray God (blessed and exalted be He!) to make her husband return to the cook-maid, so haply I might be again admitted to her favours.’ When the governor of the pilgrims heard the man’s story, he set him free and said to the bystanders, ‘God on you, pray for him, for indeed he is excusable.’

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THE MOCK KHALIF.

It is related that the Khalif Haroun er Reshid, being one night troubled with a persistent restlessness, summoned his Vizier Jaafer the Barmecide and said to him, ‘My heart is straitened and I have a mind to divert myself tonight by walking about the streets of Baghdad and looking into the affairs of the folk; but we will disguise ourselves as merchants, that none may know us.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered Jaafer. So they rose at once and putting off the rich clothes they wore, donned merchants’ habits and sallied forth, the Khalif and Jaafer and Mesrour the headsman. They walked from place to place, till they came to the Tigris and saw an old man sitting in a boat; so they went up to him and saluting him, said, ‘O old man, we desire thee of thy favour to carry us a-pleasuring down the river, in this thy boat, and take this dinar to thy hire.’ ‘Who may go a-pleasuring on the Tigris?’ replied the boatman. ‘Seeing that the Khalif every night comes down the stream in his barge, and with him one crying aloud, “Ho, all ye people, great and small, gentle and simple, men and boys, whoso is found in a boat on the Tigris [by night], I will strike off his head or hang him to the mast of his boat!” And ye had well-nigh met him; for here comes his barge.’ But the Khalif and Jaafer said, ‘O old man, take these two dinars, and when thou seest the Khalif’s barge approaching, run us under one of the arches, that we may hide there till he have passed. ‘Hand over the money,’ replied the boatman; ‘and on God the Most High be our dependence!’ So they gave him the two dinars and embarked in the boat; and he put off and rowed about with them awhile, till they saw the barge coming down the river in mid-stream, with lighted flambeaux and cressets therein. Quoth the boatman, ‘Did I not tell you that the Khalif passed every night? O Protector, remove not the veils of Thy protection!’ So saying, he ran the boat under an arch and threw a piece of black cloth over the Khalif and his companions, who looked out from under the covering and saw, in the bows of the barge, a man holding a cresset of red gold and clad in a tunic of red satin, with a muslin turban on his head. Over one of his shoulders hung a cloak of yellow brocade, and on the other was a green silk bag full of Sumatran aloes-wood, with which he fed the cresset by way of firewood. In the stern stood another man, clad like the first and bearing a like cresset, and in the barge were two hundred white slaves, standing right and left about a throne of red gold, on which sat a handsome young man, like the moon, clad in a dress of black, embroidered with yellow gold. Before him they saw a man, as he were the Vizier Jaafer, and at his head stood an eunuch, as he were Mesrour, with a drawn sword in his hand, besides a score of boon-companions. When the Khalif saw this, he turned to Jaafer and said to him, 'Belike this is one of my sons, El Amin or El Mamoun.' Then he examined the young man that sat on the throne, and finding him accomplished in beauty and grace and symmetry, said to Jaafer, 'Verily, this young man abates no jot of the state of the Khalifate! See, there stands before him one as he were thyself, O Jaafer; yonder eunuch is as he were Mesrour and those boon-companions as they were my own. By Allah, O Jaafer, my reason is confounded and I am filled with amazement at this thing!' 'And I also, by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful,' replied Jaafer. Then the barge passed on and disappeared from sight; whereupon the boatman pushed out again into the stream, saying, 'Praised be God for safety, since none hath fallen in with us!' 'O old man,' said Er Reshid, 'doth the Khalif come down the river every night?' 'Yes, O my lord,' answered the boatman; 'he hath done so every night this year past.' 'O old man,' rejoined Er Reshid, 'we wish thee of thy favour to await us here to-morrow night, and we will give thee five dinars, for we are strangers, lodging at El Khendek, and we have a mind to divert ourselves.' 'With all my heart,' replied the boatman. Then the Khalif and Jaafer and Mesrour returned to the palace, where they put off their merchants' habits and donning their apparel of state, sat down each in his several room. Then came the amirs and viziers and chamberlains and officers, and the Divan assembled as of wont.

When the night came and all the folk had dispersed and gone each his own way, the Khalif said to his Vizier, 'Come, O Jaafer, let us go and amuse ourselves by looking on the other Khalif.' At this, Jaafer and Mesrour laughed, and the three, donning merchants' habits, went out at the privy gate and made their way through the city, in great glee, till they came to the Tigris, where they found the boatman sitting, waiting for them. They embarked with him in the boat and had not sat long, before up came the mock Khalif's barge, with the cresset-bearers crying aloud as of wont, and in it two hundred white slaves other than those of the previous night. 'O Vizier,' exclaimed the Khalif, 'had I heard tell of this, I had not believed it; but I have seen it with my own eyes.' Then said he to the boatman, 'Take these ten dinars and row us along abreast of them, for they are in the light and we in the shade, and we can see them and divert ourselves by looking on them, but they cannot see us.' So he took the money and pushing off, followed in the shadow of the barge, till they came among the gardens and the barge cast anchor before a postern door, where they saw servants standing with a mule saddled and bridled. Here the mock Khalif landed and mounting the mule, rode away with his boon-companions, attended by his suite and preceded by the cresset-bearers crying aloud. Then Haroun and Jaafer and Mesrour landed also and making their way through the press of servants, walked on before them. Presently, the cresset- bearers espied them and seeing three strangers in merchants' habits, misdoubted of them; so they pointed them out and caused bring them before the mock Khalif, who looked at them and said, 'How come ye here at this hour?' 'O our lord,' answered they, 'we are foreign merchants, who arrived here this day and were out a- walking to-night, when ye came up and these men laid hands on us and brought us before thee.' Quoth the mock Khalif, 'Since you are strangers, no harm shall befall you; but had ye been of Baghdad, I had struck off your heads.' Then he turned to his Vizier and said to him, 'Take these men with thee; for they are our guests this night.' 'I hear and obey, O our lord,' answered he; and they followed him, till they came to a lofty and splendid palace of curious ordinance, such as no king possesses, rising from the dust and laying hold upon the marges of the clouds. Its door was of teak, inlaid with glittering gold, and by it one passed into a saloon, amiddleward which was a basin of water, with an artificial fountain rising from its midst. It was furnished with carpets and cushions and divans of brocade and tables and other gear such as amazed the wit and defied description. There, also, was a curtain drawn, and upon the door were written these two verses:

A palace, upon it be blessing and greeting and grace! Fair
fortune hath put off her beauty to brighten the place.
Therein are all manner of marvels and rarities found; The penmen
are puzzled in story its charms to retrace.

The mock Khalif entered with his company and sat down on a throne of gold, set with jewels and covered with a prayer-carpet of yellow silk; whilst the boon-companions took their seats and the sword-bearer stood before him. Then the servants laid the tables and they ate and washed their hands, after which the dishes were removed and the wine-service set on, with cups and flagons in due order. The cup went round till it came to Er Reshid, who refused it, and the mock Khalif said to Jaafer, 'What ails thy friend that he drinks not?' 'O our lord,' replied the Vizier, 'this long while he hath drunk no wine.' Quoth the mock Khalif, 'I have drink other than this, a kind of apple-wine, that will suit him.' So he let bring apple-sherbet and said to Haroun, 'Drink thou of this, as often as it comes to thy turn.' Then they continued to drink and make merry, till the wine rose to their heads and mastered their wits; and Haroun said to Jaafer, 'O Jaafer, by Allah, we have no such vessels as these. Would God I knew what manner of man this is!' Presently, the young man glanced at them and seeing them talking privily, said, 'It is unmannerly to whisper.' 'No rudeness was meant,' answered Jaafer. 'My friend did but say to me, "Verily, I have travelled in most countries and have caroused and companied with the greatest of kings and captains; yet never saw I a goodlier ordinance than this nor passed a more delightful night; save that the people of Baghdad say, 'Drink without music often leaves headache.'"' When the mock Khalif heard this, he smiled merrily and struck a gong with a rod he had in his hand; whereupon a door opened and out came an eunuch, bearing a stool of ivory, inlaid with glittering gold, and followed by a damsel of surpassing beauty and symmetry. He set down the stool and the damsel seated herself on it, as she were the sun shining in the cloudless sky. In her hand she had a lute of Indian make, which she laid in her lap and bending over it as a mother bends over her child, preluded in four-and-twenty modes, amazing all wits. Then she returned to the first mode and sang the following verses to a lively measure:

The tongue of passion in my heart bespeaketh thee of me And
giveth thee to know that I enamoured am of thee.
The burning of an anguished heart is witness to my pain And
ulcerated eyes and tears that flow incessantly.
I had no knowledge what Love was, before the love of thee; But
God's forewritten ordinance o'ertaketh all that be.

When the mock Khalif heard this, he gave a great cry and rent his robe to the skirt, whereupon they let down a curtain over him and brought him a fresh robe, handsomer than the first. He put it on and sat as before, till the cup came round to him, when he struck the gong a second time and behold, a door opened and out came an eunuch with a chair of gold, followed by a damsel handsomer than the first, bearing a lute, such as mortified the heart of the envious. She sat down on the chair and sang to the lute these verses:

Ah, how can I be patient, when longing in my soul Flames high and
from mine eyelids the tears in torrents roll?
Life hath no sweet, by Allah, wherein I may rejoice. How shall a
heart be joyous, that's all fulfilled of dole?

No sooner did the youth hear this than he gave a great cry and rent his clothes to the skirt; whereupon they let down the curtain over him and brought him another dress. He put it on and sitting up as before, fell again to cheerful talk, till the cup came round to him, when he smote once more upon the gong and out came an eunuch with a chair, followed by a damsel fairer than she who had foregone her. So she sat down on the chair, with a lute in her hand, and sang thereto the following verses:

Have done with your disdain and leave to make me rue; For, by
your life, my heart to you was ever true!
Have ruth on one distraught, the bondslave of your love, Sorry
and sick and full of longings ever new.
Sickness, for passion's stress, hath wasted him to nought, And

still for your consent to Allah he doth sue.
O ye full moons, whose place of sojourn is my heart, Amongst the
human race whom can I choose but you?

At this the young man gave a great cry and rent his clothes, whereupon they let fall the curtain over him and brought him other clothes. Then he returned to his former case with his boon-companions and the cup went round as before, till it came to him, when he struck the gong a fourth time and the door opening, out came a boy, bearing a chair and followed by a damsel. He set the chair for her and she sat down upon it and taking the lute, tuned it and sang to it these verses:

When, when will separation and hatred pass away And what is past
of joyance come back to make me gay?
But yesterday, in gladness, one dwelling held us both; We saw the
enviers napping, all heedless of their prey.
But fortune played the traitor with us and sundered us, And left
our dwelling-places even as the desert grey.
Wilt have me, O my censor, be solaced for my loves? Alas, my
heart the censor, I see, will not obey!
So make an end of chiding and leave me to my love; For of my
loved one's converse my heart is full alway.
Fair lords, though you've been fickle and broken faith and troth,
Deem not my heart for absence forgets you night or day.

When the mock Khalif heard the girl's song, he gave a great cry and tearing his clothes as before, fell down in a swoon; whereupon they would have let down the curtain over him, as of wont; but the cords stuck fast and Er Reshid, chancing to look at him, saw on his body the marks of beating with palm-rods and said to Jaafer, 'By Allah, he is a handsome youth, but a foul thief!' 'Whence knowest thou that, O Commander of the Faithful?' asked Jaafer, and the Khalif answered, 'Sawst thou not the marks of whips on his sides?' Then they let fall the curtain over him and brought him a fresh dress, which he put on and sat up as before with his courtiers. Presently, he saw the Khalif and Jaafer whispering together and said to them, ‘What is the matter, gentlemen?’ ‘Nothing, my lord,’ replied Jaafer, ‘save that my friend here, who (as is not unknown to thee) is of the merchants and hath visited all the great cities and countries of the world and foregathered with kings and men of worth, saith to me, “Verily, that which our lord the Khalif hath done this night is beyond measure extravagant, never saw I any do the like of his fashion in any country; for he hath rent four dresses, each worth a thousand dinars, and this is surely excessive extravagance.”’ ‘O man,’ replied the youth, ‘the money is my money and the stuff my stuff and this is by way of largesse to my servants and followers; for each suit that is rent belongeth to one of my boon-companions here present and I appoint him, in exchange therefor, [if it so like him,] the sum of five hundred dinars.’ ‘Well is that thou dost, O our lord!’ answered Jaafer and recited the following verses:

The virtues sure have built themselves a dwelling in thy palm;
    Thou hast thy wealth to all mankind made common property.
An if the virtues’ doors were shut on us one luckless day, Thy
    hand unto their locks, indeed, were even as a key.

When the young man heard these verses, he ordered Jaafer a thousand dinars and a dress of honour. Then the cup went round among them and the wine was pleasant to them; but, after awhile, the Khalif said to Jaafer, ‘Ask him of the marks on his ribs, that we may see what he will say.’ ‘Softly, O my lord,’ replied Jaafer; ‘be not hasty, for patience is more becoming.’ ‘By the life of my head and by the tomb of El Abbas,’ rejoined the Khalif, ‘except thou ask him, I will assuredly make an end of thee!’ With this the young man turned towards Jaafer and said to him, ‘What ails thee and thy friend to be whispering together? Tell me what is to do with you.’ ‘It is nothing,’ replied Jaafer; but the mock Khalif rejoined, ‘I conjure thee, by Allah, tell me what ails you and hide from me nothing of your case.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered the Vizier, ‘my companion here saw on thy sides the marks of beating with whips and rods and marvelled thereat exceedingly, saying, “How came the Khalif to be beaten?” And he would fain know the cause of this.’ When the youth heard this, he smiled and said, ‘Know that my story is wonderful and my case extraordinary; were it graven with needles on the corners of the eye, it would serve as an admonition to him who can profit by admonition.’ And he sighed and repeated the following verses:

Strange is my story and outdoes all marvels that can be. By Love
itself I swear, my ways are straitened upon me!
An ye would know my case, give ear and hearken to my tale And all
be dumb, on every side, in this our company.
Take heed unto my speech, for lo! therein a warning is; Ay, and
my words no leasing are, but naked verity.
I am a man of passion slain, the victim of desire, And she who
slew me fairer is than all the stars to see.
A bright black eye she hath, whose glance is as an Indian sword,
And from her eyebrows’ bended bows full many a shaft shoots
she.
My heart forebodes me that ‘mongst you the Khalif of the age, Our
Imam is, of high descent and noble pedigree,
And that the second of you he, that’s known as Jaafer, is, His
vizier and a vizier’s son, a lord of high degree.
Yea, and the third of you Mesrour the eunuch is, I ween, The
swordsman of his vengeance. So, if true my saying be,
I have of this my case attained to all for which I hoped And
hearts’ content from every side is come, indeed, to me.

When they heard this, Jaafer swore to him a dissembling oath that they were not those he named; whereupon he laughed and said, ‘Know, O my lords, that I am not the Commander of the Faithful and that I do but style myself thus, to get my will of the people of the city. My real name is Mohammed Ali son of Ali the Jeweller and my father was one of the chief men [of the city]. When he died, he left me great store of gold and silver and pearls and coral and rubies and chrysolites and other jewels, besides houses and lands and baths and gardens and orchards and shops and brickfields and slaves, male and female. One day, as I sat in my shop, surrounded by my slaves and servants, there came up a young lady, riding on a mule and attended by three damsels like moons. She alighted at my shop and seating herself by me, said to me, “Art thou Mohammed the jeweller?”

“Yes,” answered I, “I am he, at thy service.” “Hast thou a necklace of jewels fit for me?” asked she, and I replied, “O my lady, I will show thee what I have; and if any please thee, it will be of thy slave’s good luck; if not, of his ill-fortune.” I had by me a hundred necklaces and showed them all to her; but none of them pleased her and she said, “I want a better than those I have seen.” Now I had a small necklace, that my father had bought for a hundred thousand dinars and the like whereof was not to be found with any of the great kings; so I said to her, “O my lady, I have yet one necklace of fine stones, whose like none possesseth, great or small.” “Show it me,” said she. So I showed it her and she said, “This is what I sought and what I have wished for all my life. What is its price?” Quoth I, “It cost my father a hundred thousand dinars;” and she said, “I will give thee five thousand dinars to thy profit.” “O my lady,” answered I, “the necklace and its owner are at thy service and I cannot gainsay thee [in aught].” “Not so,” rejoined she; “needs must thou have the profit, and I am still much beholden to thee.” Then she rose and mounting the mule in haste, said to me, “O my lord, in God’s name, favour us with thy company, to receive the money; for this thy day is a milk-white day with us.” So I shut the shop and accompanied her, in all security, till we came to a house, on which were manifest the signs of fortune. Its door was wrought with gold and silver and lapis lazuli, and thereon were written these verses:

Nay mourning never enter thee, I pray, O house, nor fortune e’er
thy lord bewray!
A goodly sojourn art thou to the guest, When strait on him is
every place and way.

She dismounted and entered the house, bidding me sit down on the stone bench at the door, till the money-changer should come. So I sat awhile, till presently a damsel came out to me and said, “Q my lord, enter the vestibule; for it is not seemly that thou shouldst sit at the door.” Accordingly, I entered the vestibule and sat down on the settle there. As I sat, another damsel came out and said to me, “O my lord, my mistress bids thee enter and sit down at the door of the saloon, to receive thy money.” So I entered and sat down, nor had I sat a moment, before a curtain of silk was drawn aside and I saw the lady seated on a throne of gold, with the necklace about her neck, unveiled and showing a face as it were the round of the moon. At this sight, my wit was troubled and my mind confounded, by reason of her exceeding beauty and grace; but, when she saw me, she rose and coming up to me, said, “O light of mine eyes, is every handsome one like thee pitiless to his mistress?” “O my lady,” answered I, “beauty, all of it, is in thee and is one of thine attributes.” “O jeweller,” rejoined she, “know that I love thee and can hardly credit that I have brought thee hither.” Then she bent to me and I kissed her, and she kissed me, and drawing me towards her, pressed me to her bosom. She knew by my case that I had a mind to enjoy her; so she said to me, “O my lord, dost thou think to foregather with me unlawfully? By Allah, may he not live who would do the like of this sin and who takes pleasure in foul talk! I am a clean virgin, whom no man hath approached, nor am I unknown in the city. Knowest thou who I am?” “No, by Allah, O my lady!” replied I. Quoth she, “I am the lady Dunya, daughter of Yehya ben Khalid the Barmecide and sister of Jaafer, the Khalif’s Vizier.” When I heard this, I drew back from her, saying, “O my lady, it is no fault of mine if I have been over-bold with thee; it was thou didst encourage me to aspire to thy love, by giving me access to thee.” “No harm shall befall thee,” answered she; “and needs must thou attain thy desire in the way that is pleasing to God. I am my own mistress and the Cadi shall act as my guardian, in consenting to the marriage-contract; for it is my will that I be thy wife and thou my husband.” Then she sent for the Cadi and the witnesses and busied herself with the necessary preparations. When they came, she said to them, “Mohammed Ali ben Ali the jeweller seeks me in marriage and hath given me the necklace to my dowry; and I accept and consent.” So they drew up the contract of marriage between us; after which the servants brought the wine-service and the cups passed round, after the goodliest ordinance: and when the wine mounted to our heads, she ordered a damsel, a lute-player, to sing. So she took the lute and sang thereto the following verses:

He comes and shows me, all in one, fawn, moon and sapling slight:
    Foul fall the heart for thought of him that watches not the

night!
A fair one, Allah had a mind t' extinguish from his cheek One
ravishment, and straight, instead, another sprang to light.
Whenas my censors speak of him, I cavil at their word, Feigning
as if I did mislike the mention of the wight;
Yea, and I hearken, when they speak of other than of him, Though
for the thought of him, nathelesse, I am consumed outright.
Prophet of beauty, all in him 's a very miracle Of grace, and
greatest of them all his face's splendid sight.
The sable mole upon his cheek hath taken up its stead, Against
the troubles of this life to ward his forehead bright.
The censors, of their ignorance, bid me forget; but I From true-
believer cannot turn an infidel forthright.

We were ravished by the sweet music she made and the beauty of the verses she sang and the other damsels went on to sing, one after another, till ten had done so; when the lady Dunya took the lute and playing a lively measure, sang these verses:

By the softness of thy graceful-gaited shape I swear, For
estrangement from thy presence the pangs of hell I bear.
Have pity on a heart that burns i' the hell-fire of thy love, O
full moon in the darkness of the night that shinest fair!
Vouchsafe to me thy favours, and by the wine-cup's light To
blazon forth thy beauties, henceforth, I'll never spare.
A rose hath ta'en me captive, whose colours varied are, Whose
charms outvie the myrtle and make its thorns despair.

When she had finished, I took the lute and playing a quaint prelude, sang the following verses:

Glory to Him who gave thee all beauty in earth and skies So I'm
become of thy bondsmen for ever and thy prize.
Thou that art gifted with glances that make mankind thy slaves,
Pray we may come off scathless from the sorcery of thine
eyes.
Two opposites, fire, incarnate in shining splendour of flame, And

water, thy cheek uniteth, conjoined in wondrous wise.
How dulcet and yet how bitter thou art to my heart, alack! To
which thou at once and ever art Hell and Paradise!

When she heard this, she rejoiced with an exceeding joy; then, dismissing her women, she brought me to a most goodly place, where they had spread us a bed of various colours. She did off her clothes and I had a lover's privacy of her and found her an unpierced pearl and a filly no man had ridden. So I rejoiced in her and repeated the following verses:

Stay with us, Night, I prithee! I want no morning white; The face
of my beloved sufficeth me for light.
I gave my love, for chin-band, my palm spread open wide And eke
for ringdove's collar, my arms about him dight.
This is indeed th' attainment of fortune's topmost height! We
clip and clip and care not to stir from our delight.

Never in my life knew I a more delightful night than this, and I abode with her a whole month, forsaking shop and home and family, till one day she said to me, "O light of my eyes, O my lord Mohammed, I have a mind to go to the bath to-day; so sit thou on this couch and budge not from thy place, till I return to thee." "I hear and obey," answered I, and she made me swear to this; after which she took her women and went off to the bath. But, by Allah, O my brothers, she had not reached the end of the street, when the door opened and in came an old woman, who said to me, "O my lord Mohammed, the lady Zubeideh bids thee to her, for she hath heard of thine elegance and accomplishments and skill in singing." "By Allah," answered I, "I will not rise from my place, till the lady Dunya come back." "O my lord," rejoined the old woman, "do not anger the lady Zubeideh with thee and make an enemy of her. Come, speak with her and return to thy place." So I rose and followed her into the presence of the princess, who said to me, "O light of the eye, art thou the lady Dunya's beloved?" "At thy service," answered I. Quoth she, "He spoke sooth who reported thee possessed of grace and beauty and good breeding and all good qualities; indeed, thou surpassest report; but now sing to me, that I may hear thee." "I hear and obey," answered I. So she brought me a lute, and I sang the following verses:

The heart of the lover is weary with loving and striving in vain,
And even as a spoil is his body in the hands of sickness and pain.
Who should there be, 'mongst the riders on camels with haltered head, Save a lover whose dear-beloved the camel-litters contain!
A moon, in your tents that rises, to Allah I commend, One my heart loves and tenders, shut in from the sight of her swain.
Anon she is kind, anon angry: how goodly her coquetry is! For all that is done of a loved one must needs to her lover be fain.

When I had finished, she said to me, "God assain thy body and sweeten thy voice! Verily, thou art perfect in beauty and good breeding and singing. But now rise and return to thy place, ere the lady Dunya come back, lest she find thee not and be wroth with thee." So I kissed the earth before her and the old woman forewent me to the door whence I came. I entered and going up to the couch, found that my wife had come back and was lying asleep there. So I sat down at her feet and rubbed them; whereupon she opened her eyes and seeing me, drew up her feet and gave me a kick that threw me off the couch, saying, "O traitor, thou hast been false to thine oath and hast perjured thyself. Thou sworest to me that thou wouldst not stir from thy place; yet didst thou break thy promise and go to the lady Zubeideh. By Allah, but that I fear scandal, I would pull down the palace over her head!" Then said she to her black slave, "Harkye, Sewab, arise and strike off this lying traitor's head, for we have no further need of him." So the slave came up to me and tearing a strip from his skirt, bound my eyes with it and would have cut off my head; but all her women, great and small, came up to her and said to her, "O our lady, this is not the first who hath erred: indeed, he knew not thy humour and hath done nothing deserving of death." "By Allah," replied she, "I must needs set my mark on him." And she bade beat me; so they beat me on my sides, and the marks ye saw are the scars of that beating. Then she bade them put me out, and they carried me to a distance from the house and cast me down. I rose and dragged myself little by little to my own house, where I sent for a surgeon, who dressed my wounds and comforted me. As soon as I was recovered and my pains and sickness had left me, I went to the bath and thence betaking myself to my shop, sold all that was therein. With the proceeds, I bought four hundred white slaves, such as no king ever got together, and caused two hundred of them ride out with me every day. Then I made me yonder barge, on which I spent five thousand dinars, and styled myself Khalif and appointed each of my servants to the charge and clad him in the habit of some one of the Khalif's officers. Moreover, I let cry abroad, "Whoso goeth a-pleasuring on the Tigris [by night], I will strike off his head without mercy;" and on this wise have I done this whole year past, during which time I have heard no news of the lady neither happened upon any trace of her.' And he wept copiously and repeated the following verses:

By Allah, I will never all my life long forget her, my dear; And
those only will I tender, who shall bring her to me to draw
near.
Now glory to her Maker and Creator be given evermore! As the full
moon in the heavens, in her aspect and her gait she doth
appear.
She, indeed, hath made me weariful and wakeful, full of sorrow,
sick for love; Yea, my heart is all confounded at her
beauty, dazed for trouble and for fear.

When Er Reshid heard the young man's story and knew the passion and transport and love-longing that afflicted him, he was moved to compassion and wonder and said, 'Glory be to God who hath appointed to every thing a cause!' Than they craved the young man's leave to depart; which being granted, they took leave of him, the Khalif purposing to do him justice and entreat him with the utmost munificence, and returned to the palace of the Khalifate, where they changed their clothes for others befitting their station and sat down, whilst Mesrour stood before them. After awhile, the Khalif said to Jaafer, ‘O Vizier, bring me the young man with whom we were last night.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered Jaafer, and going to the youth, saluted him, saying, ‘The Commander of the Faithful calls for thee.’ So he returned with him to the palace, in great concern by reason of the summons, and going in to the Khalif, kissed the earth before him. Then said he, ‘Peace be on thee, O Commander of the Faithful and Protector of the people of the Faith!’ And offered up a prayer for the endurance of his glory and prosperity, for the accomplishment of his desires and the continuance of his bounty and the cessation of evil and punishment, ordering his speech as best he might and ending by repeating the following verses:

Still may thy threshold as a place of adoration Be sought
    and on men’s brows its dust bespeak prostration,
That so in every land be made this proclamation, “Thou, thou art
    Abraham and this his very station.”

The Khalif smiled in his face and returned his salute, looking on him with the eye of favour. Then he bade him draw near and sit down before him and said to him, ‘O Mohammed Ali, I wish thee to tell me what befell thee last night, for it was rare and passing strange.’ ‘Pardon, O Commander of the Faithful!’ replied the youth. ‘Give me the handkerchief of immunity, that my trouble may be appeased and my heart set at rest.’ Quoth the Khalif, ‘Thou art safe from fear and trouble.’ So the young man told him his story from first to last, whereby the Khalif knew him to be a lover and severed from his beloved and said to him, ‘Wilt thou that I restore her to thee?’ ‘This were of the bounty of the Commander of the Faithful,’ answered the youth and repeated the following verses:

Kiss thou his finger-tips, for no mere fingers they, But keys to
    all the goods by God to men assigned;
And praise his deeds no less, for no mere deeds are they, But
    jewels to adorn the necks of humankind.

Thereupon the Khalif turned to Jaafer and said to him, ‘Bring me thy sister the lady Dunya.' 'I hear and obey,' answered he and fetched her forthright. When she stood before the Khalif, he said to her, 'Dost thou know who this is?' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' answered she, 'how should women have knowledge of men?' The Khalif smiled and said, 'O Dunya, this is thy beloved, Mohammed ben Ali the jeweller. We are acquainted with his case, for we have heard the whole story, from beginning to end, and apprehended its inward and its outward; and it is no more hidden, for all it was kept secret.' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' rejoined she, 'this was written in the book of destiny. I crave the forgiveness of the Most High God for that which I have done and beseech thee to pardon me of thy favour.' At this the Khalif laughed and summoning the Cadi and the witnesses, renewed the marriage-contract between Dunya and her husband, whereby there betided them the utmost of felicity and those who envied them were mortified. Moreover, he made Mohammed Ali one of his boon- companions, and they abode in joy and cheer and gladness, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies.

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ALI THE PERSIAN'S STORY OF THE KURD SHARPER

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid, being more than commonly restless one night, sent for his Vizier and said to him, 'O Jaafer, I am sore wakeful and heavy at heart to-night, and I desire of thee what may cheer my spirit and ease me of my oppression.' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' answered Jaafer, 'I have a friend, by name Ali the Persian, who hath store of tales and pleasant stories, such as lighten the heart and do away care.' 'Fetch him to me,' said the Khalif. 'I hear and obey,' replied Jaafer and going out from before him, sent for Ali the Persian and said to him, 'The Commander of the Faithful calls for thee.' 'I hear and obey,' answered Ali and followed the Vizier into the presence of the Khalif, who bade him be seated and said to him, 'O Ali, my heart is heavy within me this night and I hear that thou hast great store of tales and anecdotes; so I desire of thee that thou let me hear what will relieve my oppression and gladden my melancholy.' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' said he, 'shall I tell thee what I have seen with my eyes or what I have heard with my ears?' 'An thou have seen aught [worth telling],' replied the Khalif, 'let me hear that.' 'Know then, O Commander of the Faithful,' said Ali, 'that some years ago I left this my native city of Baghdad on a journey, having with me a boy who carried a light wallet. Presently, we came to a certain city, where, as I was buying and selling, a rascally thief of a Kurd fell on me and seized my wallet, saying, "This is my bag, and all that is in it is my property." Thereupon, "Ho, Muslims all," cried I, "deliver me from the hand of the vilest of oppressors!" But they all said, "Come, both of you, to the Cadi and submit yourselves to his judgement." I agreed to this and we both presented ourselves before the Cadi, who said, "What brings you hither and what is your case?" Quoth I, "We are men at difference, who appeal to thee and submit ourselves to thy judgement." "Which of you is the complainant?" asked the Cadi. So the Kurd came forward and said, "God preserve our lord the Cadi! Verily, this bag is my bag and all that is in it is my property. It was lost from me and I found it with this man." "When didst thou lose it?" asked the Cadi.

"But yesterday," replied the Kurd; "and I passed a sleepless night by reason of its loss." "If it be thy bag," said the Cadi, "tell me what is in it." Quoth the Kurd, "There were in my bag two silver styles and eye-powders and a handkerchief, and I had laid therein two gilt cups and two candlesticks. Moreover it contained two tents and two platters and two hooks and a cushion and two leather rugs and two ewers and a brass tray and two basins and a cooking-pot and two water-jars and a ladle and a sacking-needle and a she-cat and two bitches and a wooden trencher and two sacks and two saddles and a gown and two fur pelisses and a cow and two calves and a she-goat and two sheep and an ewe and two lambs and two green pavilions and a camel and two she-camels and a she-buffalo and two bulls and a lioness and two lions and a she-bear and two foxes and a mattress and two couches and an upper chamber and two saloons and a portico and two ante-rooms and a kitchen with two doors and a company of Kurds who will testify that the bag is mine." Then said the Cadi to me, "And thou, what sayst thou?" So I came forward, O Commander of the Faithful (and indeed the Kurd's speech had bewildered me) and said, "God advance our lord the Cadi! There was nothing in this my wallet, save a little ruined house and another without a door and a dog-kennel and a boys' school and youths playing dice and tents and tent-poles and the cities of Bassora and Baghdad and the palace of Sheddad ben Aad and a smith's forge and a fishing net and cudgels and pickets and girls and boys and a thousand pimps, who will testify that the bag is my bag." When the Kurd heard my words, he wept and wailed and said, "O my lord the Cadi, my bag is known and what is in it is renowned; therein are castles and citadels and cranes and beasts of prey and men playing chess and draughts. Moreover, in this my bag is a brood-mare and two colts and a stallion and two blood-horses and two long lances and a lion and two hares and a city and two villages and a courtezan and two sharking pimps and a catamite and two gallows-birds and a blind man and two dogs and a cripple and two lameters and a priest and two deacons and a patriarch and two monks and a Cadi and two assessors, who will testify that the bag is my bag." Quoth the Cadi to me, "And what sayst thou, O Ali?" So, O Commander of the Faithful, being filled with rage, I came forward and said, "God keep our lord the Cadi! I had in this my wallet a coat of mail and a broadsword and armouries and a thousand fighting rams and a sheepfold and a thousand barking dogs and gardens and vines and flowers and sweet herbs and figs and apples and pictures and statues and flagons and goblets and fair-faced slave-girls and singing-women and marriage-feasts and tumult and clamour and great tracts of land and brothers of success and a company of daybreak-riders, with swords and spears and bows and arrows, and true friends and dear ones and intimates and comrades and men imprisoned for punishment and cup-companions and a drum and flutes and flags and banners and boys and girls and brides, in all their wedding bravery, and singing-girls and five Abyssinian women and three Hindi and four women of Medina and a score of Greek girls and half a hundred Turkish and threescore and ten Persian girls and fourscore Kurd and fourscore and ten Georgian women and Tigris and Euphrates and a fowling net and a flint and steel and Many- Columned Irem and a thousand rogues and pimps and horse- courses and stables and mosques and baths and a builder and a carpenter and a plank and a nail and a black slave, with a pair of recorders, and a captain and a caravan-leader and towns and cities and a hundred thousand dinars and Cufa and Ambar and twenty chests full of stuffs and twenty store-houses for victual and Gaza and Askalon and from Damietta to Essouan and the palace of Kisra Anoushirwan and the kingdom of Solomon and from Wadi Numan to the land of Khorassan and Balkh and Ispahan and from India to the Soudan. Therein also (may God prolong the life of our lord the Cadi!) are doublets and cloths and a thousand sharp razors to shave the Cadi's chin, except he fear my resentment and adjudge the bag to be mine."

When the Cadi heard what I and the Kurd avouched, he was confounded and said, "I see ye are none other than two pestilent atheistical fellows, who make sport of Cadis and magistrates and stand not in fear of reproach. Never did any tell or hear tell of aught more extraordinary than that which ye pretend. By Allah, from China to Shejreh umm Ghailan nor from Fars to the Soudan, nor from Wadi Numan to Khorassan, ever was heard or credited the like of what ye avouch! Is this bag a bottomless sea or the Day of Resurrection, that shall gather together the just and unjust?" Then he bade open the bag; so I opened it and behold, there was in it bread and a lemon and cheese and olives. So I threw it down before the Kurd and went away.'

When the Khalif heard Ali's story, he laughed till he fell backward and made him a handsome present.

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HOW THE IMAM ABOU YOUSUF EXTRICATED THE KHALIF HAROUN ER RESHID AND HIS VIZIER JAAFER FROM A DILEMMA.

It is said that Jaafer the Barmecide was one night carousing with Er Reshid, when the latter said to him, ‘O Jaafer, I hear that thou hast bought such and such a slave-girl. Now I have long sought her and my heart is taken up with love of her, for she is passing fair; so do thou sell her to me.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied Jaafer, ‘I will not sell her.’ ‘Then give her to me,’ rejoined the Khalif. ‘Nor will I give her,’ answered Jaafer. ‘Be Zubeideh triply divorced,’ exclaimed Haroun, ‘if thou shalt not either sell or give her to me!’ Quoth Jaafer, ‘Be my wife triply divorced, if I either sell or give her to thee!’ After awhile they recovered from their intoxication and were ware that they had fallen into a grave dilemma, but knew not how to extricate themselves. Then said Er Reshid, ‘None can help us in this strait but Abou Yousuf.’ So they sent for him, and this was in the middle of the night. When the messenger reached the Imam, he arose in alarm, saying in himself, ‘I should not be sent for at this hour, save by reason of some crisis in Islam.’ So he went out in haste and mounted his mule, saying to his servant, ‘Take the mule’s nose-bag with thee; it may be she has not finished her feed; and when we come to the Khalif’s palace, put the bag on her, that she may eat what is left of her fodder, whilst I am with the Khalif.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ replied the man.

So the Imam rode to the palace and was admitted to the presence of Er Reshid, who made him sit down on the couch beside himself, whereas he was used to seat none but him, and said to him, ‘We have sent for thee at this hour to advise us upon a grave matter, with which we know not how to deal’ And he expounded to him the case. ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied Abou Yousuf, ‘this is the easiest of things.’ Then he turned to Jaafer and said to him, ‘O Jaafer, sell half of her to the Commander of the Faithful and give him the other half; so shall ye both be quit of your oaths.’ The Khalif was delighted with this and they did as he prescribed. Then said Er

Reshid, ‘Bring me the girl at once, for I long for her exceedingly.’ So they brought her and the Khalif said to Abou Yousuf, ‘I have a mind to lie with her forthright; for I cannot endure to abstain from her during the prescribed period of purification; how is this to be done?’ ‘Bring me one of thine unenfranchised male slaves,’ answered the Imam, ‘and give me leave to marry her to him; then let him divorce her before consummation. So shall it be lawful for thee to lie with her before purification.’ This expedient pleased the Khalif yet more than the first and he sent for the slave. When he came, Er Reshid said to the Imam, ‘I authorize thee to marry her to him.’ So the Imam proposed the marriage to the slave, who accepted it, and performed the due ceremony; after which he said to the slave, ‘Divorce her, and thou shalt have a hundred diners.’ But he refused to do this and the Imam went on to increase his offer, till he bid him a thousand diners. Then said the slave to him, ‘Doth it rest with me to divorce her, or with thee or the Commander of the Faithful?’ ‘With thee,’ answered the Imam. ‘Then, by Allah,’ quoth the slave, ‘I will never do it!’

At this the Khalif was exceeding wroth and said to the Imam, ‘What is to be done, O Abou Yousuf?’ ‘Be not concerned, O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied the Imam; ‘the thing is easy. Make this slave the damsel’s property.’ Quoth Er Reshid, ‘I give him to her;’ and the Imam said to the girl, ‘Say, “I accept.”’ So she said, ‘I accept:’ whereupon quoth Abou Yousuf, ‘I pronounce divorce between them, for that he hath become her property, and so the marriage is annulled.’ With this, Er Reshid sprang to his feet and exclaimed, ‘It is the like of thee that shall be Cadi in my time.’ Then he called for sundry trays of gold and emptied them before Abou Yousuf, to whom he said, ‘Hast thou wherein to put this ?’ The Imam bethought him of the mule’s nose-bag; so he sent for it and filling it with gold, took it and went home; and on the morrow, he said to his friends, ‘There is no easier or shorter road to the goods of this world and the next, than that of learning; for, see, I have received all this money for answering two or three questions.’ Consider, then, O polite [reader], the pleasantness of this anecdote, for it comprises divers goodly features, amongst which are the complaisance of Jaafer to Er Reshid and the wisdom of the Khalif and the exceeding wisdom of Abou Yousuf, may God the Most High have mercy on all their souls!

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THE LOVER WHO FEIGNED HIMSELF A THIEF TO SAVE HIS MISTRESS'S HONOUR.

There came one day to Khalid ibn Abdallah el Kesri, governor of Bassora, a company of men dragging a youth of exceeding beauty and lofty bearing, whose aspect expressed good breeding and dignity and abundant wit They brought him before the governor, who asked what was to do with him, and they replied, 'This fellow is a thief, whom we caught last night in our dwelling.' Khalid looked at him and was struck with wonder at his well-favouredness and elegance; so he said to the others, 'Loose him,' and going up to the young man, asked what he had to say for himself. 'The folk have spoken truly,' answered he; 'and the case is as they have said.' 'And what moved thee to this,' asked Khalid, 'and thou so noble and comely of aspect?' 'The lust after worldly good,' replied the other, 'and the ordinance of God, glorified and exalted be He!' 'May thy mother be bereaved of thee!' rejoined Khalid. 'Hadst thou not, in thy fair face and sound sense and good breeding, what should restrain thee from thieving?' 'O Amir,' answered the young man, 'leave this talk and proceed to what God the Most High hath ordained; this is what my hands have earned, and God is no oppressor of His creatures.' Khalid was silent awhile, considering the matter; then he said to the young man, 'Verily, thy confession before witnesses perplexes me, for I cannot believe thee to be a thief. Surely thou hast some story that is other than one of theft. Tell it me'. 'O Amir,' replied the youth, 'deem thou nought save what I have confessed; for I have no story other than that I entered these folk's house and stole what I could lay hands on, and they caught me and took the stuff from me and carried me before thee.' Then Khalid bade clap him in prison and commanded a crier to make proclamation throughout Bassora, saying, 'Ho, whoso is minded to look upon the punishment of such an one, the thief, and the cutting off of his hand, let him be present tomorrow morning at such a place!'

When the youth found himself in prison, with irons on his feet, he sighed heavily and repeated the following verses, whilst the tears streamed from his eyes:

Khalid doth threaten me with cutting off my hand, Except I do
reveal to him my mistress' case.
But, "God forbid," quoth I, "that I should e'er reveal That which
of love for her my bosom doth embrace!"
The cutting-off my hand, for that I have confessed Unto, less
grievous were to me than her disgrace.

The warders heard him and went and told Khalid, who sent for the youth after nightfall and conversed with him. He found him well-bred and intelligent and of a pleasant and vivacious wit; so he ordered him food and he ate. Then said Khalid, 'I know thou hast a story to tell that is no thief's; so, when the Cadi comes to-morrow morning and questions thee before the folk, do thou deny the charge of theft and avouch what may avert the cutting-off of thy hand; for the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve) saith, "In cases of doubt, eschew [or defer] punishment."' Then he sent him back to the prison, where he passed the night.

On the morrow, the folk assembled to see his hand cut off, nor was there man or woman in Bassora but came forth to look upon his punishment. Then Khalid mounted in company of the notables of the city and others and summoning the Cadi, sent for the young man, who came, hobbling in his shackles. There none saw him but wept for him, and the women lifted up their voices in lamentation. The Cadi bade silence the women and said to the prisoner, 'These folk avouch that thou didst enter their dwelling and steal their goods: belike thou stolest less than a quarter dinar?' 'Nay,' replied he, 'I stole more than that.' 'Peradventure,' rejoined the Cadi, 'thou art partner with them in some of the goods?' 'Not so,' replied the young man; 'it was all theirs. I had no right in it.' At this Khalid was wroth and rose and smote him on the face with his whip, applying this verse to his own case:

Man wisheth and seeketh his wish to fulfil, But Allah denieth save that which He will.

Then he called for the executioner, who came and taking the prisoner's hand, set the knife to it and was about to cut it off, when, behold, a damsel, clad in tattered clothes, pressed through the crowd of women and cried out and threw herself on the young man. Then she unveiled and showed a face like the moon; whereupon the people raised a mighty clamour and there was like to have been a riot amongst them. But she cried out her loudest, saying, ‘I conjure thee, by Allah, O Amir, hasten not to cut off this man’s hand, till thou have read what is in this scroll!’ So saying, she gave him a scroll, and he took it and read therein the following verses:

O Khalid, this man is love-maddened, a cave of desire, Transfixed
by the glances that sped from the bows of my eye.
The shafts of my looks ’twas that pierced him and slew him; indeed, He a bondsman of love, sick for passion and like for to die.
Yea, rather a crime, that he wrought not, he choose to confess
Than suffer on her whom he cherished dishonour to lie.
Have ruth on a sorrowful lover; indeed he’s no thief, But the
noblest and truest of mortals for passion that sigh.

When he had read this, he called the girl apart and questioned her; and she told him that the young man was her lover and she his mistress. He came to the dwelling of her people, thinking to visit her, and threw a stone into the house, to warn her of his coming. Her father and brothers heard the noise of the stone and sallied out on him; but he, hearing them coming, caught up all the household stuff and made as if he would have stolen it, to cover his mistress’s honour. ‘So they seized him,’ continued she, ‘saying, “A thief!” and brought him before thee, whereupon he confessed to the robbery and persisted in his confession, that he might spare me dishonour; and this he did, making himself a thief, of the exceeding nobility and generosity of his nature.’

‘He is indeed worthy to have his desire,’ replied Khalid and calling the young man to him, kissed him between the eyes. Then he sent for the girl’s father and bespoke him, saying, ‘O elder, we thought to punish this young man by cutting off his hand; but God (to whom belong might and majesty) hath preserved us from this! and I now adjudge him the sum of ten thousand dirhems, for that he would have sacrificed his hand for the preservation of thine honour and that of thy daughter and the sparing you both reproach. Moreover, I adjudge other ten thousand dirhems to thy daughter, for that she made known to me the truth of the case; and I ask thy leave to marry him to her.' 'O Amir,' rejoined the old man, 'thou hast my consent.' So Khalid praised God and thanked Him and offered up a goodly exhortation and prayer; after which he said to the young man, 'I give thee this damsel to wife, with her own and her father's consent; and her dowry shall be this money, to wit, ten thousand dirhems. 'I accept this marriage at thy hands,' replied the youth and Khalid let carry the money on trays in procession to the young man's house, whilst the people dispersed, full of gladness. And surely [quoth he who tells the tale] never saw I a rarer day than this, for that its beginning was weeping and affliction and its end joy and gladness.

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JAAFER THE BARMECIDE AND THE BEANSELLER.

When Haroun er Reshid put Jaafer the Barmecide to death, he commanded that all who wept or made moan for him should be crucified; so the folk abstained from this. Now there was a Bedouin from a distant desert, who used every year to make and bring to Jaafer an ode in his honour, for which he rewarded him with a thousand diners; and the Bedouin took them and returning to his own country, lived upon them, he and his family, for the rest of the year. Accordingly, he came with his ode at the wonted time and finding Jaafer done to death, betook himself to the place where his body was hanging, and there made his camel kneel down and wept sore and mourned grievously. Then he recited his ode and fell asleep. In his sleep Jaafer the Barmecide appeared to him and said, 'Thou hast wearied thyself to come to us and findest us as thou seest; but go to Bassora and ask for such a man there of the merchants of the town and say to him, "Jaafer the Barmecide salutes thee and bids thee give me a thousand diners, by the token of the bean."'

When the Bedouin awoke, he repaired to Bassora, where he sought out the merchant and repeated to him what Jaafer had said in the dream; whereupon he wept sore, till he was like to depart the world. Then he welcomed the Bedouin and entertained him three days as an honoured guest; and when he was minded to depart, he gave him a thousand and five hundred diners, saying, 'The thousand are what is commanded to thee, and the five hundred are a gift from me to thee; and every year thou shalt have of me a thousand diners.' When the Bedouin was about to take leave, he said to the merchant, 'I conjure thee, by Allah, tell me the story of the bean, that I may know the origin of all this.' 'In the early part of my life,' replied the merchant, 'I was miserably poor and hawked hot boiled beans about the streets of Baghdad for a living.

I went out one cold, rainy day, without clothes enough on my body to protect me from the weather, now shivering for excess of cold and now stumbling into the pools of rain-water, and altogether in so piteous a plight as would make one shudder to look upon. Now it chanced that Jaafer was seated that day, with his officers and favourites, in an upper chamber overlooking the street, and his eye fell on me; so he took pity on my case and sending one of his servants to fetch me to him, said to me, “Sell thy beans to my people.” So I began to mete out the beans with a measure I had with me, and each who took a measure of beans filled the vessel with gold pieces, till the basket was empty. Then I gathered together the money I had gotten, and Jaafer said to me, “Hast thou any beans left?” “I know not,” answered I and sought in the basket, but found only one bean. This Jaafer took and splitting it in twain, kept one half himself and gave the other to one of his favourites, saying, “For how much wilt thou buy this half-bean?” “For the tale of all this money twice-told,” replied she; whereat I was confounded and said in myself, “This is impossible.” But, as I stood wondering, she gave an order to one of her handmaids and the girl brought me the amount twice-told. Then said Jaafer, “And I will buy my half for twice the sum of the whole. Take the price of thy bean.” And he gave an order to one of his servants, who gathered together the whole of the money and laid it in my basket; and I took it and departed. Then I betook myself to Bassora, where I traded with the money and God prospered me, to Him be the praise and the thanks! So, if I give thee a thousand diners a year of the bounty of Jaafer, it will in no wise irk me.’ Consider then the munificence of Jaafer’s nature and how he was praised both alive and dead, the mercy of God the Most High be upon him!

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ABOU MOHAMMED THE LAZY.

It is told that Haroun er Reshid was sitting one day on the throne of the Khalifate, when there came in to him a youth of his eunuchs, bearing a crown of red gold, set with pearls and rubies and all manner other jewels, such as money might not buy, and kissing the ground before him, said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, the lady Zubeideh kisses the earth before thee and saith to thee, thou knowest she hath let make this crown, which lacks a great jewel for its top; and she hath made search among her treasures, but cannot find a jewel to her mind.’ Quoth the Khalif to his chamberlains and officers, ‘Make search for a great jewel, such as Zubeideh desires.’ So they sought, but found nothing befitting her and told the Khalif, who was vexed thereat and exclaimed, ‘Am I Khalif and king of the kings of the earth and lack of a jewel? Out on ye! Enquire of the merchants.’ So they enquired of the merchants, who replied, ‘Our lord the Khalif will not find a jewel such as he requires save with a man of Bassora, by name Abou Mohammed the Lazy.’ They acquainted the Khalif with this and he bade his Vizier Jaafer send a letter to the Amir Mohammed ez Zubeidi, governor of Bassora, commanding him to equip Abou Mohammed the Lazy and bring him to Baghdad.

Jaafer accordingly wrote a letter to that effect and despatched it by Mesrour, who set out forthright for Bassora and went in to the governor, who rejoiced in him and entreated him with the utmost honour. Then Mesrour read him the Khalif’s mandate, to which he replied, ‘I hear and obey,’ and forthwith despatched him, with a company of his followers, to Abou Mohammed’s house. When they reached it, they knocked at the door, whereupon a servant came out and Mesrour said to him, ‘Tell thy master that the Commander of the Faithful calls for him.’ The servant went in and told his master, who came out and found Mesrour, the Khalif’s chamberlain, and a company of the governor’s men at the door. So he kissed the earth before Mesrour and said, ‘I hear and obey the summons of the Commander of the Faithful; but enter ye my house.’ ‘We cannot do that,’ replied Mesrour, ‘save in haste; for the Commander of the Faithful awaits thy coming.’ But he said, ‘Have patience with me a little, till I set my affairs in order.’ So, after much pressure and persuasion, they entered and found the corridor hung with curtains of blue brocade, figured with gold, and Abou Mohammed bade one of his servants carry Mesrour to the bath. Now this bath was in the house and Mesrour found its walls and floor of rare and precious marbles, wrought with gold and silver, and its waters mingled with rose-water. The servants served Mesrour and his company on the most perfect wise and clad them, on their going forth of the bath, in robes of honour of brocade, interwoven with gold.

Then they went in to Abou Mohammed and found him seated in his upper chamber upon a couch inlaid with jewels. Over his head hung curtains of gold brocade, wrought with pearls and jewels, and the place was spread with cushions, embroidered in red gold. When he saw Mesrour, he rose to receive him and bidding him welcome, seated him by his side. Then he called for food: so they brought the table of food, which when Mesrour saw, he exclaimed, ‘By Allah, never saw I the like of this in the palace of the Commander of the Faithful!’ For indeed it comprised all manner of meats, served in dishes of gilded porcelain. So they ate and drank and made merry till the end of the day, when Abou Mohammed gave Mesrour and each of his company five thousand diners; and on the morrow he clad them in dresses of honour of green and gold and entreated them with the utmost honour. Then said Mesrour to him, ‘We can abide no longer, for fear of the Khalif’s displeasure.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Abou Mohammed, ‘have patience with us till to-morrow, that we may equip ourselves, and we will then depart with you.’ So they tarried that day and night with him; and next morning, Abou Mohammed’s servants saddled him a mule with housings and trappings of gold, set with all manner pearls and jewels; whereupon quoth Mesrour in himself, ‘I wonder if, when he presents himself in this equipage before the Commander of the Faithful, he will ask him how he came by all this wealth.’

Then they took leave of Ez Zubeidi and setting out from Bassora, fared on, without stopping, till they reached Baghdad and presented themselves before the Khalif who bade Abou Mohammed be seated. So he sat down and addressing the Khalif in courtly wise, said to him, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, I have brought with me a present by way of homage: have I thy leave to produce it?' 'There is no harm in that,' replied the Khalif; whereupon Abou Mohammed caused bring in a chest, from which he took a number of rarities and amongst the rest, trees of gold, with leaves of emerald and fruits of rubies and topazes and pearls. Then he fetched another chest and brought out of it a pavilion of brocade, adorned with pearls and rubies and emeralds and chrysolites and other precious stones; its poles were of the finest Indian aloes-wood, and its skirts were set with emeralds. Thereon were depicted all manner beasts and birds and other created things, spangled with rubies and emeralds and chrysolites and balass rubies and other precious stones.

When Er Reshid saw these things, he rejoiced exceedingly, and Abou Mohammed said to him, 'O Commander of the Faithful, deem not that I have brought these to thee, fearing aught or coveting aught; but I knew myself to be but a man of the people and that these things befitted none save the Commander of the Faithful. And now, with thy leave, I will show thee, for thy diversion, something of what I can do.' 'Do what thou wilt,' answered Er Reshid, 'that we may see.' 'I hear and obey,' said Abou Mohammed and moving his lips, beckoned to the battlements of the palace, whereupon they inclined to him; then he made another sign to them, and they returned to their place. Then he made a sign with his eye, and there appeared before him cabinets with closed doors, to which he spoke, and lo, the voices of birds answered him [from within]. The Khalif marvelled exceedingly at this and said to him, 'How camest thou by all this, seeing that thou art only known as Abou Mohammed the Lazy, and they tell me that thy father was a barber-surgeon, serving in a public bath, and left thee nothing?' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' answered he, 'listen to my story, for it is an extraordinary one and its particulars are wonderful; were it graven with needles upon the corners of the eye, it would serve as a lesson to him who can profit by admonition.' 'Let us hear it,' said the Khalif.

'Know then, O Commander of the Faithful,' replied Abou Mohammed, '(may God prolong to thee glory and dominion,) that the report of the folk, that I am known as the Lazy and that my father left me nothing, is true; for he was, as thou hast said, but a barber-surgeon in a bath. In my youth I was the laziest wight on the face of the earth; indeed, so great was my sluggishness that, if I lay asleep in the sultry season and the sun came round upon me, I was too lazy to rise and remove from the sun to the shade; and thus I abode till I reached my fifteenth year, when my father was admitted to the mercy of God the Most High and left me nothing. However, my mother used to go out to service and feed me and give me to drink, whilst I lay on my side.

One day, she came in to me, with five silver dirhems, and said to me, "O my son, I hear that the Sheikh Aboul Muzeffer is about to go a voyage to China." (Now this Sheikh was a good and charitable man and loved the poor.) "So come, let us carry him these five dirhems and beg him to buy thee therewith somewhat from the land of China, so haply thou mayst make a profit of it, by the bounty of God the Most High!" I was too lazy to move; but she swore by Allah that, except I rose and went with her, she would neither bring me meat nor drink nor come in to me, but would leave me to die of hunger and thirst. When I heard this, O Commander of the Faithful, I knew she would do as she said; so I said to her, "Help me to sit up." She did so, and I wept the while and said to her, "Bring me my shoes." Accordingly, she brought them and I said, "Put them on my feet." She put them on my feet and I said, "Lift me up." So she lifted me up and I said, "Support me, that I may walk." So she supported me and I went along thus, still stumbling in my skirts, till we came to the river-bank, where we saluted the Sheikh and I said to him, "O uncle, art thou Aboul Muzeffer?" "At thy service," answered he, and I said, "Take these dirhems and buy me somewhat from the land of China: haply, God may vouchsafe me a profit of it." Quoth the Sheikh to his companions, "Do ye know this youth?" "Yes," replied they; "he is known as Abou Mohammed the Lazy, and we never saw him stir from his house till now." Then said he to me, "O my son, give me the dirhems and the blessing of God the Most High go with them!" So he took the money, saying, "In the name of God!" and I returned home with my mother.

Meanwhile the Sheikh set sail, with a company of merchants, and stayed not till they reached the land of China, where they bought and sold, and having done their intent, set out on their homeward voyage. When they had been three days at sea, the Sheikh said to his company, “Stay the ship!” And they asked him what was to do with him. “Know,” replied he, “that I have forgotten the commission with which Abou Mohammed the Lazy charged me; so let us turn back, that we may buy him somewhat whereby he may profit.” “We conjure thee, by God the Most High,” exclaimed they, “turn not back with us; for we have traversed an exceeding great distance and endured sore hardship and many perils.” Quoth he, “There is no help for it;” and they said “Take from us double the profit of the five dirhems and turn not back with us.” So he agreed to this and they collected for him a great sum of money.

Then they sailed on, till they came to an island, wherein was much people; so they moored thereto and the merchants went ashore, to buy thence precious metals and pearls and jewels and so forth. Presently, Aboul Muzeffer saw a man seated, with many apes before him, and amongst them one whose hair had been plucked off. As often as the man’s attention was diverted from them, the other apes fell upon the plucked one and beat him and threw him on their master; whereupon the latter rose and beat them and bound them and punished them for this; and all the apes were wroth with the plucked ape therefor and beat him the more. When Aboul Muzeffer saw this, he took compassion upon the plucked ape and said to his master, “Wilt thou sell me yonder ape?” “Buy,” replied the man, and Aboul Muzeffer rejoined, “I have with me five dirhems, belonging to an orphan lad. Wilt thou sell me the ape for that sum?” “He is thine,” answered the ape-merchant. “May God give thee a blessing of him!” So the Sheikh paid the money and his slaves took the ape and tied him up in the ship.

Then they loosed sail and made for another island, where they cast anchor; and there came down divers, who dived for pearls and corals and other jewels. So the merchants hired them for money and they dived. When the ape saw this, he did himself loose from his bonds and leaping off the ship’s side, dived with them; whereupon quoth Aboul Muzeffer, “There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! The ape is lost to us, by the [ill] fortune of the poor fellow for whom we bought him.” And they despaired of him; but, after awhile, the company of divers rose to the surface, and with them the ape, with his hands full of jewels of price, which he threw down before Aboul Muzeffer, who marvelled at this and said, “There hangs some great mystery by this ape!”

Then they cast off and sailed till they came to a third island, called the Island of the Zunonj, who are a people of the blacks, that eat human flesh. When the blacks saw them, they boarded them in canoes and taking all in the ship, pinioned them and carried them to their king who bade slaughter certain of the merchants. So they slaughtered them and ate their flesh; and the rest passed the night in prison and sore concern. But, when it was [mid]night, the ape arose and going up to Aboul Muzeffer, did off his bonds. When the others saw him free, they said, “God grant that our deliverance may be at thy hands, O Aboul Muzeffer!” But he replied, “Know that he who at delivered me, by God’s leave, was none other than this ape; and I buy my release of him at a thousand dinars.” “And we likewise,” rejoined the merchants, “will pay him a thousand diners each, if he release us.” With this, the ape went up to them and loosed their bonds, one by one, till he had freed them all, when they made for the ship and boarding her, found all safe and nothing missing. So they cast off and set sail; and presently Aboul Muzeffer said to them, “O merchants, fulfil your promise to the ape.” “We hear and obey,” answered they and paid him a thousand diners each, whilst Aboul Muzeffer brought out to him the like sum of his own monies, so that there was a great sum of money collected for the ape.

Then they fared on till they reached the city of Bassora, where their friends came out to meet them; and when they had landed, the Sheikh said, “Where is Abou Mohammed the Lazy?” The news reached my mother, who came to me, as I lay asleep, and said to me, “O my son, the Sheikh Aboul Muzeffer has come back and is now in the city; so go thou to him and salute him and enquire what he hath brought thee; it may be God hath blessed thee with somewhat.” “Lift me from the ground,” quoth I, “and prop me up, whilst I walk to the river-bank.” So she lifted me up and I went out and walked on, stumbling in my skirts, till I met the Sheikh, who exclaimed, at sight of me, “Welcome to him whose money has been the means of my delivery and that of these merchants, by the will of God the Most High! Take this ape that I bought for thee and carry him home and wait till I come to thee.” So I took the ape, saying in myself, “By

Allah, this is indeed rare merchandise!" and drove it home, where I said to my mother, "Whenever I lie down to sleep, thou biddest me rise and trade; see now this merchandise with thine own eyes."

Then I sat down, and presently up came Aboul Muzeffer's slaves and said to me, "Art thou Abou Mohammed the Lazy?" "Yes," answered I; and behold, Aboul Muzeffer appeared behind them. So I went up to him and kissed his hands; and he said to me, "Come with me to my house." "I hear and obey," answered I and followed him to his house, where he bade his servants bring me the money [and what not else the ape had earned me]. So they brought it and he said to me, "O my son, God hath blessed thee with this wealth, by way of profit on thy five dirhems." Then the slaves laid the treasure in chests, which they set on their heads, and Aboul Muzeffer gave me the keys of the chests, saying, "Go before the slaves to thy house; for all this wealth is thine." So I returned to my mother, who rejoiced in this and said to me, "O my son, God hath blessed thee with this much wealth; so put off thy laziness and go down to the bazaar and sell and buy." So I shook off my sloth, and opened a shop in the bazaar, where the ape used to sit on the same divan with me, eating with me when I ate and drinking when I drank. But, every day, he was absent from daybreak till noon-day, when he came back, bringing with him a purse of a thousand diners, which he laid by my side, and sat down. Thus did he a great while, till I amassed much wealth, wherewith I bought houses and lands and planted gardens and got me slaves, black and white and male and female.

One day, as I sat in my shop, with the ape at my side, he began to turn right and left, and I said in myself, "What ails the beast?" Then God made the ape speak with a glib tongue, and he said to me, "O Abou Mohammed!" When I heard him speak, I was sore afraid; but he said to me, "Fear not; I will tell thee my case. Know that I am a Marid of the Jinn and came to thee, because of thy poor estate; but to-day thou knowest not the tale of thy wealth; and now I have a need of thee, wherein it thou do my will, it shall be well for thee." "What is it?" asked I, and he said, "I have a mind to marry thee to a girl like the full moon." "How so?" quoth I. "To. morrow," replied he, "don thou thy richest clothes and mount thy mule, with the saddle of gold, and ride to the forage-market. There enquire for the shop of the Sherif and sit down beside him and say to him, ‘I come to thee a suitor for thy daughter’s hand.’ If he say to thee, ‘Thou hast neither money nor condition nor family,’ pull out a thousand diners and give them to him; and if he ask more, give him more and tempt him with money.” “I hear and obey,” answered I; “to-morrow, if it please God, I will do thy bidding.”

So on the morrow I donned my richest clothes and mounting my mule with trappings of gold, rode, attended by half a score slaves, black and white, to the forage-market, where I found the Sherif sitting in his shop. I alighted and saluting him, seated myself beside him. Quoth he, “Haply, thou hast some business with us, which we may have the pleasure of transacting?” “Yes,” answered I; “I have business with thee.” “And what is it?” asked he. Quoth I, “I come to thee as a suitor for thy daughter’s hand.” And he said, “Thou hast neither money nor condition nor family;” whereupon I pulled out a thousand diners of red gold and said to him, “This is my rank and family; and he whom God bless and keep hath said, ‘The best of ranks is wealth.’ And how well saith the poet:

Whoso hath money, though it be but dirhems twain, his lips Have
learnt all manner speech and he can speak and fear no
slight.
His brethren and his mates draw near and hearken to his word And
‘mongst the folk thou seest him walk, a glad and prideful
wight.
But for the money, in the which he glorieth on this wise,
Thou’dst find him, midst his fellow-men, in passing sorry
plight.
Yea, whensoe’er the rich man speaks, though in his speech he err,
‘Thou hast not spoken a vain thing,’ they say; ‘indeed,
thou’rt right.’
But, for the poor man, an he speak, albeit he say sooth, They
say, ‘Thou liest,’ and make void his speech and hold it
light
For money, verily, in all the lands beneath the sun, With
goodliness and dignity cloth its possessors dight.
A very tongue it is for him who would be eloquent And eke a

weapon to his hand who hath a mind to fight."

When he heard this, he bowed his head awhile, then, raising it, said, "If it must be so, I will have of thee other three thousand diners." "I hear and obey," answered I and sent one of my servants to my house for the money. When he came back with it, I handed it to the Sherif, who rose and bidding his servants shut his shop, invited his brother-merchants to the wedding; after which he carried me to his house and drew up the contract of marriage between his daughter and myself, saying to me, "After ten days, I will bring thee in to her." So I went home rejoicing and shutting myself up with the ape, told him what had passed; and he said, "Thou hast done well."

When the time appointed by the Sherif drew near, the ape said to me, "There is a thing I would fain have thee do for me; and after, thou shalt have of me what thou wilt." "What is that?" asked I. Quoth he, "At the upper end of the bridechamber stands a cabinet, on whose door is a padlock of brass and the keys under it. Take the keys and open the cabinet, in which thou wilt find a coffer of iron, with four talismanic flags at its angles. In its midst is a brass basin full of money, wherein is tied a white cock with a cleft comb; and on one side of the coffer are eleven serpents and on the other a knife. Take the knife and kill the cock; cut away the flags and overturn the chest; then go back to the bride and do away her maidenhead. This is what I have to ask of thee." "I hear and obey," answered I and betook myself to the Sherif's house.

As soon as I entered the bridechamber, I looked for the cabinet and found it even as the ape had described it. Then I went in to the bride and marvelled at her beauty and grace and symmetry, for indeed they were such as no tongue can set forth. So I rejoiced in her with an exceeding joy; and in the middle of the night, when she slept, I rose and taking the keys, opened the cabinet. Then I took the knife and killed the cock and threw down the flags and overturned the coffer, whereupon the girl awoke and seeing the closet open and the cock slain, exclaimed, "There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! The Marid hath gotten me!" Hardly had she made an end of speaking, when the Marid came down upon the house and seizing the bride, flew away with her; whereupon there arose a great clamour and in came the Sherif, buffeting his face. “O Abou Mohammed,” said he, “what is this thou hast done? Is it thus thou requitest us? I made the talisman in the cabinet in my fear for my daughter from this accursed one; for these six years hath he sought to steal away the girl, but could not. But now there is no more abiding for thee with us; so go thy ways.”

So I went out and returned to my own house, where I made search for the ape, but could find no trace of him; whereby I knew that he was the Marid, who had taken my wife and had tricked me into destroying the talisman that hindered him from taking her, and repented, rending my clothes and buffeting my face; and there was no land but was straitened upon me. So I made for the desert, knowing not whither I should go, and wandered on, absorbed in melancholy thought, till night overtook me. Presently, I saw two serpents fighting, a white one and a tawny. So I took up a stone and throwing it at the tawny serpent, which was the aggressor, killed it; whereupon the white serpent made off, but returned after awhile accompanied by ten others of the same colour, which went up to the dead serpent and tore it in pieces, till but the head was left. Then they went their ways and I fell prostrate for weariness on the ground where I stood; but, as I lay, pondering my case, I heard a voice repeat the following verses, though I saw no one:

Let destiny with slackened rein its course appointed fare And lie
thou down by night to sleep with heart devoid of care.
For, twixt the closing of the eyes and th’ opening thereof, God
hath it in His power to change a case from foul to fair.

When I heard this, great concern got hold of me and I was beyond measure troubled; and I heard a voice from behind me repeat these verses also:

Muslim, whose guide’s the Koran and his due, Rejoice, for succour
cometh thee unto.
Let not the wiles of Satan make thee rue, For we’re a folk whose
creed’s the One, the True.

Then said I, “I conjure thee by Him whom thou worshippest, let me know who thou art!” Thereupon the unseen speaker appeared to me, in the likeness of a man, and said, “Fear not; for the report of thy good deed hath reached us, and we are a people of the true-believing Jinn. So, if thou lack aught, let us know it, that we may have the pleasure of fulfilling thy need.” “Indeed,” answered I, “I am in sore need, for there hath befallen me a grievous calamity, whose like never yet befell man.” Quoth he, “Surely, thou art Abou Mohammed the Lazy?” And I answered, “Yes.” “O Abou Mohammed,” rejoined the genie, “I am the brother of the white serpent, whose enemy thou slewest. We are four brothers, by one father and mother, and we are all indebted to thee for thy kindness. Know that he who played this trick on thee, in the likeness of an ape, is a Marid of the Marids of the Jinn; and had he not used this artifice, he had never been able to take the girl; for he hath loved her and had a mind to take her this long while, but could not win at her, being hindered of the talisman; and had it remained as it was, he could never have done so. However, fret not thyself for that; we will bring thee to her and kill the Marid; for thy kindness is not lost upon us.”

Then he cried out with a terrible voice, and behold, there appeared a company of Jinn, of whom he enquired concerning the ape; and one of them said, “I know his abiding-place; it is in the City of Brass, upon which the sun riseth not.” Then said the first genie to me, “O Abou Mohammed, take one of these our slaves, and he will carry thee on his back and teach thee how thou shalt get back the girl: but know that he is a Marid and beware lest thou utter the name of God, whilst he is carrying thee; or he will flee from thee, and thou wilt fall and be destroyed.” “I hear and obey,” answered I and chose out one of the slaves, who bent down and said to me, “Mount.” So I mounted on his back, and he flew up with me into the air, till I lost sight of the earth and saw the stars as they were fixed mountains and heard the angels glorifying God in heaven, what while the Marid held me in converse, diverting me and hindering me from pronouncing the name of God. But, as we flew, behold, one clad in green raiment, with streaming tresses and radiant face, holding in his hand a javelin whence issued sparks of fire, accosted me, saying, “O Abou Mohammed, say, ‘There is no god but God and Mohammed is His apostle;' or I will smite thee with this javelin."

Now I was already sick at heart of my [forced] abstention from calling on the name of God; so I said, "There is no god but God and Mohammed is His apostle." Whereupon the shining one smote the Marid with his javelin and he melted away and became ashes; whilst I was precipitated from his back and fell headlong toward the earth, till I dropped into the midst of a surging sea, swollen with clashing billows. Hard by where I fell was a ship and five sailors therein, who, seeing me, made for me and took me up into the boat. They began to speak to me in some tongue I knew not; but I signed to them that I understood not their speech. So they fared on till ended day, when they cast out a net and caught a great fish and roasting it, gave me to eat; after which they sailed on, till they reached their city and carried me in to their king, who understand Arabic. So I kissed the ground before him, and he bestowed on me a dress of honour and made me one of his officers. I asked him the name of the city, and he replied, "It is called Henad and is in the land of China." Then he committed me to his Vizier, bidding him show me the city, which was formerly peopled by infidels, till God the Most High turned them into stones; and there I abode a month's space, diverting myself with viewing the place, nor saw I ever greater plenty of trees and fruits than there.

One day, as I sat on the bank of a river, there accosted me a horseman, who said to me, "Art thou not Abou Mohammed the Lazy?" "Yes," answered I; whereupon, "Fear not," said he; "for the report of thy good deed hath reached us." Quoth I, "Who art thou?" And he answered, "I am a brother of the white serpent, and thou art hard by the place where is the damsel whom thou seekest." So saying, he took off his [outer] clothes and clad me therein, saying, "Fear not; for he, that perished under thee, was one of our slaves." Then he took me up behind him and rode on with me, till we came to a desert place, when he said to me, "Alight now and walk on between yonder mountains till thou seest the City of Brass; then halt afar off and enter it not, till I return to thee and teach thee how thou shalt do." "I hear and obey," replied I and alighting, walked on till I came to the city, the walls whereof I found of brass. I went round about it, looking for a gate, but found none; and presently, the serpent's brother rejoined me and gave me a charmed sword that should hinder any from seeing me, then went his way.

He had been gone but a little while, when I heard a noise of cries and found myself in the midst of a multitude of folk whose eyes were in their breasts. Quoth they, “Who art thou and what brings thee hither?” So I told them my story, and they said, “The girl thou seekest is in the city with the Marid; but we know not what he hath done with her. As for us, we are brethren of the white serpent. But go to yonder spring and note where the water enters, and enter thou with it; for it will bring thee into the city.” I did as they bade me and followed the water-course, till it brought me to a grotto under the earth, from which I ascended and found myself in the midst of the city. Here I saw the damsel seated upon a throne of gold, under a canopy of brocade, midmost a garden full of trees of gold, whose fruits were jewels of price, such as rubies and chrysolites and pearls and coral.

When she saw me, she knew me and accosted me with the [obligatory] salutation, saying, “O my lord, who brought thee hither?” So I told her all that had passed and she said, “Know that the accursed Marid, of the greatness of his love for me, hath told me what doth him hurt and what profit and that there is here a talisman by means whereof he could, an he would, destroy this city and all that are therein. It is in the likeness of an eagle, with I know not what written on it, and whoso possesses it, the Afrits will do his commandment in everything. It stands upon a column in such a place; so go thou thither and take it. Then set it before thee and taking a chafing-dish, throw into it a little musk, whereupon there will arise a smoke, that will draw all the Afrits to thee, and they will all present themselves before thee, nor shall one be absent; and whatsoever thou biddest them, that will they do. Arise therefore and do this thing, with the blessing of God the Most High.”

“I hear and obey,” answered I and going to the column, did what she bade me, whereupon the Afrits presented themselves, saying, “Here are we, O our lord! Whatsoever thou biddest us, that will we do.” Quoth I, “Bind the Marid that brought the damsel hither.” “We hear and obey,” answered they and disappearing, returned after awhile and informed me that they had done my bidding. Then I dismissed them and returning to my wife, told her what had happened and said to her, “Wilt thou go with me?” “Yes,” answered she. So I carried her forth of the city, by the underground channel, and we fared on, till we fell in with the folk who had shown me the way into the city. I besought them to teach me how I should return to my native land; so they brought us to the seashore and set us aboard a ship, which sailed on with us with a fair wind, till we reached the city of Bassora. Here we landed, and I carried my wife to her father’s house; and when her people saw her, they rejoiced with an exceeding joy. Then I fumigated the eagle with musk and the Afrits flocked to me from all sides, saying, “At thy service; what wilt thou have us do?” I bade them transport all that was in the City of Brass of gold and silver and jewels and precious things to my house in Bassora, which they did; and I then ordered them to fetch the ape. So they brought him before me, abject and humiliated, and I said to him, “O accursed one, why hast thou dealt thus perfidiously with me?” Then I commanded the Afrits to shut him in a brazen vessel: so they put him in a strait vessel of brass and sealed it with lead. But I abode with my wife in joy and delight; and now, O Commander of the Faithful, I have under my hand such stores of precious things and rare jewels and other treasure as neither reckoning may comprise nor measure suffice unto. All this is of the bounty of God the Most High, and if thou desire aught of money or what not, I will bid the Jinn bring it to thee forthright.’

The Khalif wondered greatly at his story and bestowed on him royal gifts, in exchange for his presents, and entreated him with the favour he deserved.

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE GENEROUS DEALING OF YEHYA BEN KHALID THE BARMECIDE WITH MENSOUR.

It is told that Haroun er Reshid, in the days before he became jealous of the Barmecides, sent once for one of his guards, Salih by name, and said to him, ‘O Salih, go to Mensour and say to him, “Thou owest us a thousand thousand dirhems and we require of thee immediate payment of the amount.” And I charge thee, O Salih, an he pay it not before sundown, sever his head from his body and bring it to me.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered Salih and going to Mensour, acquainted him with what the Khalif had said, whereupon quoth he, ‘By Allah, I am a lost man; for all my estate and all my hand owns, if sold for their utmost value, would not fetch more than a hundred thousand dirhems. Whence then, O Salih, shall I get the other nine hundred thousand?’ ‘Contrive how thou mayst speedily acquit thyself,’ answered Salih; ‘else art thou a dead man; for I cannot grant thee a moment’s delay after the time appointed me by the Khalif, nor can I fail of aught that he hath enjoined on me. Hasten, therefore, to devise some means of saving thyself ere the time expire.’ ‘O Salih,’ quoth Mensour, ‘I beg thee of thy favour to bring me to my house, that I may take leave of my children and family and give my kinsfolk my last injunctions.’

So he carried him to his house, where he fell to bidding his family farewell, and the house was filled with a clamour of weeping and lamentation and calling on God for help. Then Salih said to him, ‘I have bethought me that God may peradventure vouchsafe thee relief at the hands of the Barmecides. Come, let us go to the house of Yehya ben Khalid.’ So they went to Yehya’s house, and Mensour told him his case, whereat he was sore concerned and bowed his head awhile; then raising it, he called his treasurer and said to him, ‘How much money have we in our treasury?’ ‘Five thousand dirhems,’ answered the treasurer, and Yehya bade him bring them and sent a message to his son Fezl, saying, ‘I am offered for sale estates of great price, that may never be laid waste; so send me somewhat of money.’ Fezl sent him a thousand thousand dirhems, and he despatched a like message to his son Jaafer, who also sent him a thousand thousand dirhems; nor did he leave sending to his kinsmen of the Barmecides, till he had collected from them a great sum of mosey for Mensour. But the latter and Salih knew not of this; and Mensour said to Yehya, 'O my lord, I have laid hold upon thy skirt for I know not whither to look for the money but to thee; so discharge thou the rest of my debt for me, in accordance with thy wonted generosity, and make me thy freed slave.' Thereupon Yehya bowed his head and wept; then he said to a page, 'Harkye, boy, the Commander of the Faithful gave our slave-girl Denanir a jewel of great price: go thou to her and bid her send it us.' The page went out and presently returned with the jewel, whereupon quoth Yehya, 'O Mensour, I bought this jewel of the merchants for the Commander of the Faithful, for two hundred thousand diners, and he gave it to our slave-girl Denanir the lutanist. When he sees it with thee, he will know it and spare thy life and do thee honour for our sake; and now thy money is complete.'

So Salih took the money and the jewel and carried them to the Khalif, together with Mensour; but on the way? he heard the latter repeat this verse, applying it to his own case:

It was not love, indeed, my feet to them that led; Nay, but because the stroke of th' arrows I did dread.

When Salih heard this, he marvelled at the baseness and ingratitude of Mensour's nature, and turning upon him, said, 'There is none on the face of the earth better than the Barmecides, nor any baser nor more depraved than thou; for they bought thee off from death and saved thee from destruction, giving thee what should deliver thee; yet thou thankest them not nor praisest them, neither acquittest thee after the manner of the noble; nay, thou requitest their benevolence with this speech.' Then he went to Er Reshid and acquainted him with all that had passed; and he marvelled at the generosity and benevolence of Yehya ben Khalid and the baseness and ingratitude of Mensour and bade restore the jewel to Yehya, saying, 'That which we have given, it befits not that we take again.'

So Salih returned to Yehya, and acquainted him with Mensour's ill conduct; whereupon, 'O Salih,' replied he, 'when a man is in distress, sick at heart and distracted with melancholy thought. he is not to be blamed for aught that falls from him; for it comes not from the heart.' And he fell to seeking excuse for Mensour. But Salih wept [in telling the tale] and exclaimed, ‘Never shall the revolving sphere bring forth into being the like of thee, O Yehya! Alas, that one of such noble nature and generosity should be buried beneath the earth! ‘And he repeated the following verses:

Hasten to do the kindnesses thou hast a mind unto; For bounty is
not possible at every tide and hour.
How many a man denies his soul to do the generous deed, To which
it’s fain, till lack of means deprive him of the power!

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THE GENEROUS DEALING OF YEHYA BEN KHALID WITH A MAN WHO FORGED A LETTER IN HIS NAME.

There was between Yehya ben Khalid and Abdallah ben Malik el Khuzai a secret enmity, the reason whereof was that Haroun er Reshid loved the latter with an exceeding love, so that Yehya and his sons were wont to say that he had bewitched the Khalif; and thus they abode a long while, with rancour in their hearts, till it fell out that the Khalif invested Abdallah with the government of Armenia and sent him thither. Soon after he had established himself in his seat of government, there came to him one of the people of Irak, a man of excellent parts and good breeding, who had lost his wealth and wasted his substance, and his estate was come to nought; so he forged a letter to Abdallah in Yehya's name and set out therewith for Armenia. When he came to the governor's gate, he gave the letter to one of the chamberlains, who carried it to his master. Abdallah read it and considering it attentively, knew it to be forged; so he sent for the man, who presented himself before him and called down blessings upon him and praised him and those of his court. Quoth Abdallah to him, 'What moved thee to weary thyself thus and bring me a forged letter? But be of good heart; for we will not disappoint thy travail.' 'God prolong the life of our lord the Vizier!' replied the other. 'If my coming irk thee, cast not about for a pretext to repel me, for God's earth is wide and the Divine Provider liveth. Indeed, the letter I bring thee from Yehya ben Khalid is true and no forgery.' Quoth Abdallah, 'I will write a letter to my agent at Baghdad and bid him enquire concerning the letter. If it be true, as thou sayest, I will bestow on thee the government of one of my cities; or, if thou prefer a present, I will give thee two hundred thousand dirhems, besides horses and camels of price and a robe of honour. But, if the letter prove a forgery, I will have thee beaten with two hundred blows of a stick and thy beard shaven.'

Accordingly, he bade confine him in a privy chamber and furnish him therein with all he needed, till his case should be made manifest.

Then he despatched a letter to his agent at Baghdad, to the following purport: ‘There is come to me a man with a letter purporting to be from Yehya ben Khalid. Now I have my doubts of this letter: so delay thou not, but go thyself and learn the truth of the case and let me have an answer in all speed.’ When the letter reached the agent, he mounted at once and betook himself to the house of Yehya ben Khalid, whom he found sitting with his officers and boon-companions. So he gave him the letter and he read it and said to the agent, ‘Come back to me to-morrow, against I write thee an answer.’

When the agent had gone away, Yehya turned to his companions and said, ‘What doth he deserve who forgeth a letter in my name and carrieth it to my enemy?’ They all answered, saying this and that, each proposing some kind of punishment; but Yehya said, ‘Ye err in that ye say and this your counsel is of the meanness and baseness of your spirits. Ye all know the close favour of Abdallah with the Khalif and what is between him and us of despite and enmity; and now God the Most High hath made this man an intermediary, to effect a reconciliation between us, and hath appointed him to quench the fire of hate in our hearts, which hath been growing this score years; and by his means our differences shall be accorded. Wherefore it behoves me to requite him by confirming his expectation and amending his estate; so I will write him a letter to Abdallah, to the intent that he may use him with increase of honour and liberality.’

When his companions heard what he said, they called down blessings on him and marvelled at his generosity and the greatness of his magnanimity. Then he called for paper and ink and wrote Abdallah a letter in his own hand, to the following effect: ‘In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful! Thy letter hath reached me (may God give thee long life!) and I have read it and rejoice in thy health and well-being. It was thy thought that yonder worthy man had forged a letter in my name and that he was not the bearer of any message from me; but the case is not so, for the letter I myself wrote, and it was no forgery; and I hope, of thy courtesy and benevolence and the nobility of thy nature, that thou wilt fulfil this generous and excellent man of his hope and wish and use him with the honour he deserves and bring him to his desire and make him the special object of thy favour and munificence. Whatever thou dost with him, it is to me that thou dost it, and I am beholden to thee accordingly.' Then he superscribed the letter and sealing it, delivered it to the agent, who despatched it to Abdallah.

When the latter read it, he was charmed with its contents and sending for the man, said to him, 'Now will I give thee which thou wilt of the two things I promised thee.' 'The gift were more acceptable to me than aught else,' replied the man; whereupon Abdallah ordered him two hundred thousand dirhems and ten Arab horses, five with housings of silk and other five with richly ornamented saddles of state, besides twenty chests of clothes and ten mounted white slaves and a proportionate quantity of jewels of price. Moreover, he bestowed on him a dress of honour and sent him to Baghdad in great state. When he came thither, he repaired to Yehya's house, before he went to his own folk, and sought an audience of him. So the chamberlain went in to Yehya and said to him, 'O my lord, there is one at our door who craves speech of thee; and he is a man of apparent wealth and consideration, comely of aspect and attended by many servants.' Yehya bade admit him; so he entered and kissed the ground before him. 'Who art thou?' asked Yehya; and he answered, 'O my lord, I am one who was dead from the tyranny of fortune; but thou didst raise me again from the grave of calamities and preferredst me to the paradise of [my] desires. I am he who forged a letter in thy name and carried it to Abdallah ben Malek el Khuzai.' 'How hath he dealt with thee,' asked Yehya, 'and what did he give thee?' Quoth the man, 'He hath made me rich and overwhelmed me with presents and favours, thanks to thee and thy great generosity and magnanimity and to thine exceeding goodness and abounding munificence and thine all-embracing liberality. And now, behold, I have brought all that he gave me, and it is at thy door; for it is thine to command, and the decision is in thy hand.' 'Thou hast done me better service than I thee,' rejoined Yehya; 'and I owe thee thanks without stint and abundant largesse, for that thou hast changed the enmity that was between me and yonder man of worship into love and friendship. Wherefore I will give thee the like of what Abdallah gave thee.' Then he ordered him money and horses and apparel, such as Abdallah had given him; and thus that man's fortune was restored to him by the munificence of these two generous men.

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THE KHALIF EL MAMOUN AND THE STRANGE DOCTOR

It is said that there was none, among the Khalifs of the house of Abbas, more accomplished in all branches of knowledge than El Mamoun. On two days in each week, he was wont to preside at conferences of the learned, when the doctors and theologians met and sitting, each in his several rank and room, disputed in his presence. One day, as he sat thus, there came into the assembly a stranger, clad in worn white clothes, and sat down in an obscure place, behind the doctors of the law. Then the assembled scholars began to speak and expound difficult questions, it being the custom that the various propositions should be submitted to each in turn and that whoso bethought him of some subtle addition or rare trait, should make mention of it. So the question went round till it came to the stranger, who spoke in his turn and made a goodlier answer than that of any of the doctors; and the Khalif approved his speech and bade advance him to a higher room. When the second question came round to him, he made a still more admirable answer, and the Khalif ordered him to be preferred to a yet higher place. When the third question reached him, he made answer more justly and appropriately than on the two previous occasions, and El Mamoun bade him come up and sit near himself. When the conference broke up, water was brought and they washed their hands; after which food was set on and they ate. Then the doctors arose and withdrew; but El Mamoun forbade the stranger to depart with them and calling him to himself, entreated him with especial favour and promised him honour and benefits.

Presently, they made ready the banquet of wine; the fair-faced boon-companions came and the cup went round amongst them till it came to the stranger, who rose to his feet and said, ‘If the Commander of the Faithful permit me, I will say one word.’ ‘Say what thou wilt,’ answered the Khalif. Quoth the stranger, ‘Verily, the Exalted Intelligence (whose eminence God increase!) knoweth that his slave was this day, in the august assembly, one of the unknown folk and of the meanest of the company, and the Commander of the Faithful distinguished him and brought him near to himself, little as was the wit he showed, preferring him above the rest and advancing him to a rank whereto his thought aspired not: and now he is minded to deprive him of that small portion of wit that raised him from obscurity and augmented him, after his littleness. God forfend that the Commander of the Faithful should envy his slave what little he hath of understanding and worth and renown! But, if his slave should drink wine, his reason would depart from him and ignorance draw near to him and steal away his good breeding; so would he revert to that low degree, whence he sprang, and become contemptible and ridiculous in the eyes of the folk. I hope, therefore, that the August Intelligence, of his power and bounty and royal generosity and magnanimity, will not despoil his slave of this jewel.'

When the Khalif heard his speech, he praised him and thanked him and making him sit down again in his place, showed him high honour and ordered him a present of a hundred thousand diners. Moreover he mounted him upon a horse and gave him rich apparel; and in every assembly he exalted him and showed him favour over all the other doctors, till he became the highest of them all in rank.

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ALI SHAR AND ZUMURRUD.

There lived once, of old days, in the land of Khorassan, a merchant called Mejdeddin, who had great wealth and many slaves and servants, black and white; but he was childless until he reached the age of threescore, when God the Most High vouchsafed him a son, whom he named Ali Shar. The boy grew up like the moon on the night of its full, and when he came to man's estate and was endowed with all kinds of perfection, his father fell sick of a mortal malady and calling his son to him, said to him, 'O my son, the hour of my death is at hand, and I desire to give thee my last injunctions.' 'And what are they, O my father?' asked Ali. 'O my son,' answered Mejdeddin, 'I charge thee, be not [too] familiar with any and eschew what leads to evil and mischief. Beware lest thou company with the wicked; for he is like the blacksmith; if his fire burn thee not, his smoke irks thee: and how excellent is the saying of the poet:

There is no man in all the world whose love thou shouldst desire,
No friend who, if fate play thee false, will true and
constant be.
Wherefore I'd have thee live apart and lean for help on none. In
this I give thee good advice; so let it profit thee.

And what another saith:

Men are a latent malady; Count not on them, I counsel thee. An if thou look into their case, They're full of guile and perfidy.

And yet a third:

The company of men will profit thee in nought, Except to pass
away the time in idle prate;
So spare thou to converse with them, except it be For gain of
lore and wit or mending of estate.

And a fourth

If a quickwitted man have made proof of mankind, I have eaten of
them, where but tasted hath he,

And have seen their affection but practice and nought But
hypocrisy found their religion to be.'

'O my father,' said Ali, 'I hear and obey: what more shall I do?' 'Do good when thou art able thereto,' answered his father; 'be ever courteous and succourable to men and profit by all occasions of doing a kindness; for a design is not always easy of accomplishment; and how well saith the poet:

'Tis not at every time and season that to do Kind offices,
indeed, is easy unto you;
So, when the occasion serves, make haste to profit by't, Lest by
and by the power should fail thee thereunto.'

'I hear and obey,' answered Ali; 'what more?' 'Be mindful of God,' continued Mejdeddin, 'and He will be mindful of thee. Husband thy wealth and squander it not; for, if thou do, thou wilt come to have need of the least of mankind. Know that the measure of a man's worth is according to what his right hand possesses: and how well saith the poet:

If wealth should fail, there is no friend will bear me company,
But whilst my substance yet abounds, all men are friends to
me.
How many a foe for money's sake hath companied with me! How
many
a friend for loss thereof hath turned mine enemy!'

'What more?' asked Ali. 'O my son,' said Mejdeddin, 'take counsel of those who are older than thou and hasten not to do thy heart's desire. Have compassion on those that are below thee, so shall those that are above thee have compassion on thee; and oppress none, lest God set over thee one who shall oppress thee. How well saith the poet:

Add others' wit to thine and counsel still ensue; For that the
course of right is not concealed from two.
One mirror shows a man his face, but, if thereto Another one he

add, his nape thus can he view.

And as saith another:

Be slow to move and hasten not to match thy heart's desire: Be
merciful to all, as thou on mercy reckonest;
For no hand is there but the hand of God is over it, And no
oppressor but shall be with worse than he opprest.

And yet another:

Do no oppression, whilst the power thereto is in thine hand; For
still in peril of revenge the sad oppressor goes.
Thine eyes will sleep anon, what while the opprest, on wake, call
down Curses upon thee, and God's eye shuts never in repose.

Beware of drinking wine, for it is the root of all evil: it does away the reason and brings him who uses it into contempt; and how well saith the poet:

By Allah, wine shall never invade me, whilst my soul Endureth in
my body and my thoughts my words control!
Not a day long will I turn me to the zephyr-freshened bowl, And
for friend I'll choose him only who of wine-bibbing is
whole.

This, then,' added Mejdeddin, 'is my charge to thee; keep it before thine eyes, and may God stand to thee in my stead.' Then he swooned away and kept silence awhile. When he came to himself, he besought pardon of God and making the profession of the Faith, was admitted to the mercy of the Most High. His son wept and lamented for him and made due preparation for his burial. Great and small attended him to the grave and the readers recited the Koran about his bier; nor did Ali Shar omit aught of what was due to the dead. Then they prayed over him and committed him to the earth, graving these words upon his tomb:

Created of the dust thou wast and cam'st to life And eloquence

didst learn and spokest many a word;
Then to the dust again returnedst and wast dead, As ‘twere from
out the dust, indeed, thou’dst never stirred.

His son Ali Shar grieved for him and mourned him after the wont of men of condition; nor did he cease therefrom till his mother died also, not long afterward, when he did with her as he had done with his father. Then he sat in the shop, selling and buying and consorting with none of God’s creatures, in accordance with his father’s injunction.

On this wise he abode for a year, at the end of which time there came in to him certain whoreson fellows by craft and companied with him, till he turned with them to lewdness and swerved from the right way, drinking wine in goblets and frequenting the fair night and day; for he said in himself, ‘My father amassed this wealth for me, and if I spend it not, to whom shall I leave it? By Allah, I will not do save as saith the poet:

If all the days of thy life thou get And heap up treasure, to
swell thy hoard,
When wilt thou use it and so enjoy That thou hast gathered and
gained and stored?’

Then he ceased not to squander his wealth all tides of the day and watches of the night, till he had made away with it all and abode in evil case and troubled at heart. So he sold his shop and lands and so forth, and after this he sold the clothes off his body, leaving himself but one suit. Then drunkenness left him and thought came to him, and he fell into melancholy.

One day, when he had sat from day-break to mid-afternoon without breaking his fast, he said in himself, ‘I will go round to those on whom I spent my wealth: it may be one of them will feed me this day.’ So he went the round of them all; but, as often as he knocked at any one’s door, the man denied himself and hid from him, till he was consumed with hunger. Then he betook himself to the bazaar, where he found a crowd of people, assembled in a ring round somewhat, and said in himself, ‘I wonder what ails the folk to crowd together thus? By Allah, I will not remove hence, till I see what is within yonder ring!’ So he made his way into the ring and found that the crowd was caused by a damsel exposed for sale. She was five feet high, slender of shape, rosy-cheeked and high- bosomed and surpassed all the people of her time in beauty and grace and elegance and perfection; even as saith one, describing her:

As she wished, she was created, after such a wise that lo! She in
beauty’s mould was fashioned, perfect, neither less no mo’.
Loveliness itself enamoured of her lovely aspect is; Coyness
decks her and upon her, pride and pudour sweetly show.
In her face the full moon glitters and the branch is as her
shape; Musk her breath is, nor midst mortals is her equal,
high or low.
’Tis as if she had been moulded out of water of pure pearls; In
each member of her beauty is a very moon, I trow.

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And her name was Zumurrud.

When Ali Shar saw her, he marvelled at her beauty and grace and said, ‘By Allah, I will not stir hence till I see what price this girl fetches and know who buys her!’ So he stood with the rest of the merchants, and they thought he had a mind to buy her, knowing the wealth he had inherited from his parents. Then the broker stood at the damsel’s head and said, ‘Ho, merchants! Ho, men of wealth! Who will open the biddings for this damsel, the mistress of moons, the splendid pearl, Zumurrud the Curtain-maker, the aim of the seeker and the delight of the desirous? Open the biddings, and on the opener be nor blame nor reproach.’

So one merchant said, ‘I bid five hundred dinars for her.’ ‘And ten,’ said another. ‘Six hundred,’ cried an old man named Reshideddin, blue-eyed and foul of face. ‘And ten,’ quoth another. ‘I bid a thousand,’ rejoined Reshideddin; whereupon the other merchants were silent and the broker took counsel with the girl’s owner, who said, ‘I have sworn not to sell her save to whom she shall choose; consult her.’ So the broker went up to Zumurrud and said to her, ‘O mistress of moons, yonder merchant hath a mind to buy thee.’ She looked as Reshideddin and finding him as we have said, replied, ‘I will not be sold to a grey- beard, whom decrepitude hath brought to evil plight.’ ‘Bravo,’ quoth I, ‘for one who saith:

I asked her for a kiss one day, but she my hoary head Saw, though
of wealth and worldly good I had great plentihead;
So, with a proud and flouting air, her back she turned on me And,
“No, by Him who fashioned men from nothingness!” she said.
“Now, by God’s truth, I never had a mind to hoary hairs, And
shall my mouth be stuffed, forsooth, with cotton, ere I’m
dead?”

‘By Allah,’ quoth the broker, ‘thou art excusable, and thy value is ten thousand dinars!’ So he told her owner that she would not accept of Reshideddin, and he said, ‘Ask her of another.’ Thereupon another man came forward and said, ‘I will take her at the same price.’ She looked at him and seeing that his beard was dyed, said, ‘What is this lewd and shameful fashion and blackening of the face of hoariness?’ And she made a great show of amazement and repeated the following verses:

A sight, and what a sight, did such a one present To me! A neck,
to beat with shoes, by Allah, meant!
And eke a beard for lie a coursing-ground that was And brows for
binding on of ropes all crook’d and bent.
Thou that my cheeks and shape have ravished, with a lie Thou dost
disguise thyself and reck’st not, impudent;
Dyeing thy hoary hairs disgracefully with black And hiding
what appears, with fraudulent intent;
As of the puppet-men thou wert, with one beard go’st And with
another com’st again, incontinent.

And how well saith another:

Quoth she to me, “I see thou dy’st thy hoariness;” and I, “I do
but hide it from thy sight, O thou my ear and eye!”
She laughed out mockingly and said, “A wonder ’tis indeed! Thou
so aboundest in deceit that even thy hair’s a lie.”

‘By Allah,’ quoth the broker, ‘thou hast spoken truly!’ The merchant asked what she said: so the broker repeated the verses to him, and he knew that she was in the right and desisted from buying her. Then another came forward and would have bought her at the same price; but she looked at him and seeing that he had but one eye, said, ‘This man is one-eyed; and it is of such as he that the poet saith:

Consort not with him that is one-eyed a day, And be on thy guard
‘gainst his mischief and lies:
For God, if in him aught of good had been found, Had not curst
him with blindness in one of his eyes.’

Then the broker brought her another bidder and said to her, ‘Wilt thou be sold to this man?’ She looked at him and seeing that he was short of stature and had a beard that reached to his navel, said, ‘This is he of whom the poet speaks, when he says:

I have a friend, who has a beard, that God Caused flourish
without profit, till, behold.
’Tis, as it were, to look upon, a night Of middle winter, long
and dark and cold.’

‘O my lady,’ said the broker, ‘look who pleases thee of these that are present, and point him out, that I may sell thee to him.’ So she looked round the ring of merchants, examining them one by one, till her eyes rested on Ali Shar. His sight cost her a thousand sighs and her heart was taken with him: for that he was passing fair of favour and more pleasant than the northern zephyr; and she said, ‘O broker, I will be sold to none but my lord there, he of the handsome face and slender shape, whom the poet describes in the following verses:

They showed thy lovely face and railed At her whom ravishment
assailed.
Had they desired to keep me chaste, Thy face so fair they should
have veiled.

None shall possess me but he,’ added she; ‘for his cheek is smooth and the water of his mouth sweet as Selsebil; his sight is a cure for the sick and his charms confound poet and proser, even as saith one of him:

The water of his mouth is wine, and very musk The fragrance of
his breath; his teeth are camphor white.
Rizwan hath put him our from paradise, for fear The black-eyed
girls of heaven be tempted with the wight.
Men blame him for his pride; but the full moon’s excuse, How
proud so’er it be, finds favour in our sight.

Him of the curling locks and rose-red cheeks and enchanting glances, of whom saith the poet:

A slender loveling promised me his favours fair and free; So my
heart’s restless and my eye looks still his sight to see.

His eyelids warranted me the keeping of his troth; But how shall
they, that bankrupt are, fulfil their warranty?

And as saith another:

"The script of whiskers on his cheek," quoth they, "is plain to
see: How canst thou then enamoured be of him, and whiskered
he?"
Quoth I, "Have done with blame and leave your censuring, I pray.
As if it be a very script, it is a forgery.
Lo, in the gathering of his cheeks the meads of Eden be, And more
by token that his lips are Kauther,, verily."

When the broker heard the verses she repeated on the charms of Ali Shar, he marvelled at her eloquence, no less than at the brightness of her beauty; but her owner said to him, 'Marvel not at her beauty, that shames the sun of day, nor that her mind is stored with the choicest verses of the poets; for, besides this, she can repeat the glorious Koran, according to the seven readings, and the august Traditions, after the authentic text; and she writes the seven hands and is versed in more branches of knowledge than the most learned doctor. Moreover, her hands are better than gold and silver; for she makes curtains of silk and sells them for fifty dinars each; and it takes her eight days to make a curtain.' 'Happy the man,' exclaimed the broker, 'who hath her in his house and maketh her of his privy treasures!' And her owner said, 'Sell her to whom she will.' So the broker went up to Ali Shar and kissing his hands, said to him, 'O my lord, buy thou this damsel, for she hath made choice of thee.' Then he set forth to him all her charms and accomplishments, and added: 'I give thee joy, if thou buy her, for she is a gift from Him who is no niggard of His giving.'

Ali bowed his head awhile, laughing to himself and saying inwardly, 'Up to now I have not broken my fast; yet I am ashamed to own before the merchants that I have no money wherewith to buy her.' The damsel, seeing him hang down his head, said to the broker, 'Take my hand and lead me to him, that I may show myself to him and tempt him to buy me; for I will not be sold to any but him.' So the broker took her hand and stationed her before Ali Shar, saying, ‘What is thy pleasure, O my lord?’ But he made him no answer, and the girl said to him, ‘O my lord and darling of my heart, what ails thee that thou wilt not bid for me? Buy me for what thou wilt, and I will bring thee good fortune.’ Ali raised his eyes to her and said, ‘Must I buy thee perforce? Thou art dear at one thousand dinars.’ ‘Then buy me for nine hundred,’ answered she. ‘Nay,’ rejoined he; and she said, ‘Then for eight hundred;’ and ceased not to abate the price, till she came to a hundred dinars. Quoth he, ‘I have not quite a hundred dinars.’ ‘How much dost thou lack of a hundred?’ asked she, laughing. ‘By Allah,’ replied he, ‘I have neither a hundred dinars, nor any other sum; for I own neither white money nor red, neither dinar nor dirhem. So look out for another customer.’ When she knew that he had nothing, she said to him, ‘Take me by the hand and carry me aside into a passage, as if thou wouldst examine me privily.’ He did so and she took from her bosom a purse containing a thousand dinars, which she gave him saying, ‘Pay down nine hundred to my price and keep the rest to provide us withal.’

He did as she bade him and buying her for nine hundred dinars, paid down the price from the purse and carried her to his house, which when she entered, she found nothing but bare floors, without carpets or vessels. So she gave him other thousand dinars, saying, ‘Go to the bazaar and buy three hundred dinars’ worth of furniture and vessels for the house and three dinars’ worth of meat and drink, also a piece of silk, the size of a curtain, and gold and silver thread and [sewing] silk of seven colours.’ He did her bidding, and she furnished the house and they sat down to eat and drink; after which they went to bed and took their pleasure, one of the other. And they lay the night embraced and were even as saith the poet:

Cleave fast to her thou lov’st and let the envious rail amain;
For calumny and envy ne’er to favour love were fain.
Lo, whilst I slept, in dreams I saw thee lying by my side And from thy lips the sweetest, sure, of limpid springs did drain.
Yea, true and certain all I saw is, as I will avouch, And ‘spite the envier, thereto I surely will attain.

There is no goodlier sight, indeed, for eyes to look upon, Than
when one couch in its embrace enfoldeth lovers twain,
Each to the other's bosom clasped, clad in their twinned delight,
Whilst hand with hand and arm with arm about their necks
enchain.
Lo, when two hearts are straitly knit in passion and desire, But
on cold iron smite the folk who chide at them in vain.
Thou, that for loving censurest the votaries of love, Canst thou
assain a heart diseased or heal a cankered brain?
If in thy time thou find but one to love thee and be true, I rede
thee cast the world away and with that one remain.

They lay together till the morning and love for the other was stablished in the heart of each of them. On the morrow, Zumurrud took the curtain and embroidered it with coloured silks and gold and silver thread, depicting thereon all manner birds and beasts; nor is there in the world a beast but she wrought on the curtain the semblant thereof. Moreover, she made thereto a band, with figures of birds, and wrought at it eight days, till she had made an end of it, when she trimmed it and ironed it and gave it to Ali, saying, 'Carry it to the bazaar and sell it to one of the merchants for fifty dinars; but beware lest thou sell it to a passer-by, for this would bring about a separation between us, because we have enemies who are not unmindful of us.' 'I hear and obey,' answered he and repairing to the bazaar, sold the curtain to a merchant, as she bade him; after which he bought stuff for another curtain and silk and gold and silver thread as before and what they needed of food, and brought all this to her, together with the rest of the money.

They abode thus a whole year, and every eight days she made a curtain, which he sold for fifty dinars. At the end of the year, he went to the bazaar, as usual, with a curtain, which he gave to the broker; and there came up to him a Christian, who bid him threescore dinars for the curtain; but he refused, and the Christian went on to bid higher and higher, till he came to a hundred dinars and bribed the broker with ten gold pieces. So the latter returned to Ali and told him of this and urged him to accept the offer, saying, 'O my lord, be not afraid of this Christian, for he can do thee no hurt.' The merchants also were instant with him to accept the offer; so he sold the curtain to the Christian, though his heart misgave him, and taking the price, set off to return home.

Presently, he found the Christian walking behind him; so he said to him, ‘O Nazarene, why dost thou follow me?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered the other, ‘I have a need at the end of the street, may God never bring thee to need!’ Ali went on, but, as he came to the door of his house, the Christian overtook him; so he said to him, ‘O accursed one, what ails thee to follow me wherever I go?’ ‘O my lord,’ replied the other, ‘give me a draught of water, for I am athirst; and with God the Most High be thy reward!’ Quoth Ali in himself, ‘Verily, this man is a tributary [of the Khalifate] and seeks a draught of water of me; by Allah, I will not disappoint him!’ So he entered the house and took a mug of water; but Zumurrud saw him and said to him, ‘O my love, hast thou sold the curtain?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he. ‘To a merchant or a passer-by?’ asked she. ‘For my heart forethinketh me of separation.’ ‘To a merchant, of course,’ replied he. But she rejoined, ‘Tell me the truth of the case, that I may order my affair; and what wantest thou with the mug of water?’ ‘To give the broker a drink,’ answered he; whereupon she exclaimed, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ And repeated the following verses:

O thou that seekest parting, stay thy feet: Let clips and kisses
not delude thy spright.
Softly, for fortune’s nature is deceit And parting is the end of
love-delight.

Then he took the mug and going out, found the Christian within the vestibule and said to him, ‘O dog, how darest thou enter my house without my leave?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered he, ‘there is no difference between the door and the vestibule and I will not budge hence, save to go out; and I am beholden to thee for thy kindness.’ Then he took the mug and emptying it, returned it to Ali, who took it and waited for him to go; but he did not move. So Ali said to him, ‘Why dost thou not rise and go thy way?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered the Christian, ‘be not of those that do a kindness and after make a reproach of it, nor one of whom saith the poet:

Gone, gone are they who, if thou stoodst before their door of
old, Had, at thy seeking, handselled thee with benefits
untold!
And if thou stoodest at their door who follow after them, These
latter would begrudge to thee a draught of water cold.

O my lord,' continued he, 'I have drunk, and now I would have thee give me to eat of whatever is in the house, though it be but a crust of bread or a biscuit and an onion.' 'Begone, without more talk,' replied Ali; 'There is nothing in the house.' 'O my lord,' insisted the Christian, 'if there be nothing in the house, take these hundred dinars and fetch us somewhat from the market, if but a cake of bread, that bread and salt may pass between us.' With this, quoth Ali to himself, 'This Christian is surely mad; I will take the hundred dinars and bring somewhat worth a couple of dirhems and laugh at him.' 'O my lord,' added the Christian, 'I want but somewhat to stay my hunger, were it but a cake of dry bread and an onion; for the best food is that which does away hunger, not rich meats; and how well saith the poet:

A cake of dry stale bread will hunger out to flight: Why then are
grief and care so heavy on my spright?
Death is, indeed, most just, since, with an equal hand, Khalif
and beggar-wretch, impartial, it doth smite.'

Then said Ali, 'Wait here, whilst I lock the saloon and fetch thee somewhat from the market.' 'I hear and obey,' said the Christian. So Ali shut up the saloon and locking the door with a padlock, put the key in his pocket: after which he repaired to the market and bought fried cheese and virgin honey and bananas and bread, with which he returned to the Christian. When the latter saw this, he said, 'O my lord, this is [too] much; thou hast brought enough for half a score men and I am alone; but belike thou wilt eat with me.' 'Eat by thyself,' replied Ali; 'I am full.' 'O my lord,' rejoined the Christian, 'the wise say, "He who eats not with his guest is a base-born churl."'

When Ali heard this, he sat down and ate a little with him, after which he would have held his hand: but [whilst he was not looking] the Christian took a banana and peeled it, then, splitting it in twain, put into one half concentrated henbane, mixed with opium, a drachm whereof would overthrow an elephant. This half he dipped in the honey and gave to Ali Shar, saying, ‘O my lord, I swear by thy religion that thou shalt take this.’ Ali was ashamed to make him forsworn; so he took the half banana and swallowed it; but hardly had it reached his stomach, when his head fell down in front of his feet and he was as though he had been a year asleep.

When the Nazarene saw this, he rose, as he had been a bald wolf or a baited cat, and taking the saloon key, made off at a run, leaving Ali Shar prostrate. Now this Christian was the brother of the decrepit old man who thought to buy Zumurrud for a thousand dinars, but she would have none of him and flouted him in verse. He was an infidel at heart, though a Muslim in outward show, and called himself Reshideddin; and when Zumurrud mocked him and would not accept of him to her lord, he complained to his brother, the aforesaid Christian, Bersoum by name, who said to him, ‘Fret not thyself about this affair; for I will make shift to get her for thee, without paying a penny.’

Now he was a skilful sorcerer crafty and wicked; so he watched his time and played Ali Shar the trick aforesaid; then, taking the key, he went to his brother and told him what had passed, whereupon Reshideddin mounted his mule and repaired with his servants to Ali Shar’s house, taking with him a purse of a thousand dinars, wherewith to bribe the master of police, should he meet him. He unlocked the saloon door, and the men who were with him rushed in upon Zumurrud and seized her, threatening her with death if she spoke; but they left the house as it was and took nothing therefrom. Moreover, they laid the key by Ali’s side and leaving him lying in the vestibule, shut the door on him and went away. The Christian carried the girl to his own house and setting her amongst his women and concubines, said to her, ‘O strumpet, I am the old man, whom thou did reject and lampoon; but now I have thee, without paying a penny.’ ‘God requite thee, O wicked old man,’ replied she, with her eyes full of tears, ‘for sundering my lord and me!’ ‘Wanton doxy that thou art,' rejoined he,' thou shalt see how I will punish thee! By the virtue of the Messiah and the Virgin, except thou obey me and embrace my faith, I will torture thee with all manner of torture!' 'By Allah,' answered she, 'though thou cut me in pieces, I will not forswear the faith of Islam! It may be God the Most High will bring me speedy relief, for He is all-powerful, and the wise say, "Better hurt in body than in religion."'

Thereupon the old man called out to his eunuchs and women, saying, 'Throw her down!' So they threw her down and he beat her grievously, whilst she cried in vain for help, but presently stinted and fell to saying, 'God is my sufficiency, and He is indeed sufficient!' till her breath failed her and she swooned away. When he had taken his fill of beating her, he said to the eunuchs, 'Drag her forth by the feet and cast her down in the kitchen, and give her nothing to eat.' They did his bidding, and on the morrow the accursed old man sent for her and beat her again, after which he bade return her to her place. When the pain of the blows had subsided, she said, 'There is no god but God and Mohammed is His Apostle! God is my sufficiency and excellent is He in whom I put my trust!' And she called upon our lord Mohammed (whom God bless and preserve) for succour.

Meanwhile, Ali Shar slept on till next day, when the fumes of the henbane quitted his brain and he awoke and cried out, 'O Zumurrud!' But none answered him. So he entered the saloon and found 'the air empty and the place of visitation distant;' whereby he knew that it was the Nazarene, who had played him this trick. And he wept and groaned and lamented and repeated the following verses:

O Fate, thou sparest not nor dost desist from me: Lo, for my soul
is racked with dolour and despite!
Have pity, O my lords, upon a slave laid low, Upon the rich made
poor by love and its unright.
What boots the archer's skill, if, when the foe draw near, His
bowstring snap and leave him helpless in the fight?
And when afflictions press and multiply on man, Ah, whither then
shall he from destiny take flight?
How straitly did I guard 'gainst severance of our loves! But,

when as Fate descends, it blinds the keenest sight.

Then he sobbed and repeated these verses also:

Her traces on the encampment's sands a robe of grace bestow: The
mourner yearneth to the place where she dwelt whiles ago.
Towards her native land she turns; a camp in her doth raise
Longing, whose very ruins now are scattered to and fro.
She stops and questions of the place; but with the case's tongue
It answers her, "There is no way to union, I trow.
'Tis as the lost a Levin were, that glittered on the camp Awhile,
then vanished and to thee appeareth nevermo'."

And he repented, whenas repentance availed him not, and wept and tore his clothes. Then he took two stones and went round the city, beating his breast with the stones and crying out, 'O Zumurrud!' whilst the children flocked round him, calling out, 'A madman! A madman!' and all who knew him wept for him, saying, 'Yonder is such an one: what hath befallen him?' This he did all that day, and when night darkened on him, he lay down in one of the by-streets and slept till morning. On the morrow, he went round about the city with the stones till eventide, when he returned to his house, to pass the night. One of his neighbours, a worthy old woman, saw him and said to him, 'God keep thee, O my son! How long hast thou been mad?' And he answered her with the following verse:

Quoth they, "Thou'rt surely mad for her thou lov'st;" and I
replied, "Indeed the sweets of life belong unto the raving
race.
My madness leave and bring me her for whom ye say I'm mad; And
if
she heal my madness, spare to blame me for my case."

Therewith she knew him for a lover who had lost his mistress and said, 'There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! O my son, I would have thee acquaint me with the particulars of thine affliction. Peradventure God may enable me to help thee against it, if it so please Him.' So he told her all that had happened and she said, 'O my son, indeed thou hast excuse.' And her eyes ran over with tears and she repeated the following verses:

Torment, indeed, in this our world, true lovers do aby; Hell
shall not torture them, by God, whenas they come to die!
Of love they died and to the past their passions chastely hid; So
are they martyrs, as, indeed, traditions testify.

Then she said, 'O my son, go now and buy me a basket, such as the jewel-hawkers carry, and stock it with rings and bracelets and ear-rings and other women's gear, and spare not money. Bring all this to me and I will set it on my head and go round about, in the guise of a huckstress, and make search for her in all the houses, till I light on news of her, if it be the will of God the Most High.' Ali rejoiced in her words and kissed her hands, then, going out, speedily returned with all she required; whereupon she rose and donning a patched gown and a yellow veil, took a staff in her hand and set out, with the basket on her head.

She ceased not to go from quarter to quarter and street to street and house to house, till God the Most High led her to the house of the accursed Reshideddin the Nazarene. She heard groans within and knocked at the door, whereupon a slave-girl came down and opening the door to her, saluted her. Quoth the old woman, 'I have these trifles for sale: is there any one with you who will buy aught of them?' 'Yes,' answered the girl and carrying her indoors, made her sit down; whereupon all the women came round her and each bought something of her. She spoke to them fair and was easy with them as to price, so that they rejoiced in her, because of her pleasant speech and easiness. Meanwhile, she looked about to see who it was she had heard groaning, till her eyes fell on Zumurrud, when she knew her and saw that she was laid prostrate. So she wept and said to the girls, 'O my children, how comes yonder damsel in this plight?' And they told her what had passed, adding, 'Indeed, the thing is not of our choice; but our master commanded us to do this, and he is now absent on a journey.' 'O my children,' said the old woman, 'I have a request to make of you, and it is that you loose this unhappy woman of her bonds, till you know of your lord's return, when do ye bind her again as she was; and you shall earn a reward from the Lord of all creatures.' 'We hear and obey,' answered they and loosing Zumurrud, gave her to eat and drink.

Then said the old woman, 'Would my leg had been broken, ere I entered your house!' And she went up to Zumurrud and said to her, 'O my daughter, take heart; God will surely bring thee relief.' Then she told her [privily] that she came from her lord Ali Shar and appointed her to be on the watch that night, saying, 'Thy lord will come to the bench under the gallery and whistle to thee; and when thou hearest him, do thou whistle back to him and let thyself down to him by a rope from the window, and he will take thee and go away.' Zumurrud thanked the old woman, and the latter returned to Ali Shar and told him what she had done, saying, 'Go to-night, at midnight, to such a quarter, — for the accursed fellow's house is there and its fashion is thus and thus. Stand under the window of the upper chamber and whistle; whereupon she will let herself down to thee; then do thou take her and carry her whither thou wilt.' He thanked her for her good offices and repeated the following verses, with the tears running down his cheeks:

Let censors cease to rail and chide and leave their idle prate:
My body's wasted and my heart weary and desolate;
And from desertion and distress my tears, by many a chain Of true traditions handed down, do trace their lineage straight.
Thou that art whole of heart and free from that which I endure Of grief and care, cut short thy strife nor question of my state.
A sweet-lipped maiden, soft of sides and moulded well of shape, With her soft speech my heart hath ta'en, ay, and her graceful gait.
My heart, since thou art gone, no rest knows nor my eyes do sleep, Nor can the hunger of my hopes itself with patience sate.
Yea, thou hast left me sorrowful, the hostage of desire, 'Twixt enviers and haters dazed and all disconsolate.
As for forgetting, 'tis a thing I know not nor will know; For

none but thou into my thought shalt enter, soon or late.

Then he sighed and shed tears and repeated these also:

May God be good to him who brought me news that ye were come! For
never more delightful news unto my ears was borne.
If he would take a worn-out wede for boon, I'd proffer him A
heart that at the parting hour was all in pieces torn.

He waited until the appointed time, then went to the street, where was the Christian's house, and recognizing it from the old woman's description, sat down on the bench under the gallery. Presently, drowsiness overcame him, for it was long since he had slept, for the violence of his passion, and he became as one drunken with sleep. Glory be to Him who sleepeth not!

Meanwhile, chance led thither a certain thief, who had come out that night to steal somewhat and prowled about the skirts of the city, till he happened on Reshideddin's house. He went round about it, but found no way of climbing up into it and presently came to the bench, where he found Ali Shar asleep and took his turban. At that moment, Zumurrud looked out and seeing the thief standing in the darkness, took him for her lord; so she whistled to him and he whistled back to her; whereupon she let herself down to him, with a pair of saddle-bags full of gold. When the robber saw this, he said to himself, 'This is a strange thing, and there must needs be some extraordinary cause to it.' Then, snatching up the saddle-bags, he took Zumurrud on his shoulders and made off with both like the blinding lightning.

Quoth she, 'The old woman told me that thou wast weak with illness on my account; and behold, thou art stronger than a horse.' He made her no reply; so she put her hand to his face and felt a beard like a bath-broom, as he were a hog that had swallowed feathers and they had come out at his gullet; whereat she took fright and said to him, 'What art thou?' 'O strumpet,' answered he, 'I am the sharper Jewan the Kurd, of the band of Ahmed ed Denef; we are forty sharpers, who will all tilt at thy tail this night, from dusk to dawn.' When she heard his words, she wept and buffeted her face, knowing that Fate had gotten the better of her and that there was nothing for it but to put her trust in God the Most High. So she took patience and submitted herself to the ordinance of God, saying, ‘There is no god but God! As often as we escape from one trouble, we fall into a worse.’

Now the manner of Jewan’s coming thither was thus: he had said to Ahmed ed Denef, ‘O captain, I have been here before and know a cavern without the town, that will hold forty souls; so I will go before you thither and set my mother therein. Then will I enter the city and steal somewhat on your account and keep it till you come; so shall you be my guests this day.’ ‘Do what thou wilt,’ replied Ahmed. So Jewan forewent them to the cavern and left his mother there; but, as he came out, he found a trooper lying asleep, with his horse tethered beside him; so he slew him and taking his clothes and arms, hid them with his mother in the cave, where also he tied up the horse. Then he betook himself to the city and prowled about, till he happened on the Christian’s house and did with Ali Shar and Zumurrud as we have said. He ceased not to run, with Zumurrud on his back, till he came to the cavern, where he gave her in charge of his mother, saying, ‘Keep watch over her till I come back to thee at point of day,’ and went away.

Meanwhile Zumurrud said to herself, ‘Now is the time to cast about for a means of escape. If I wait till these forty men come, they will take their turns at me, till they make me like a water- logged ship.’ Then she turned to the old woman and said to her, ‘O my aunt, wilt thou not come without the cave, that I may louse thee in the sun?’ ‘Ay, by Allah, O my daughter!’ replied the old woman. ‘This long time have I been out of reach of the bath; for these hogs cease not to hale me from place to place.’ So they went without the cavern, and Zumurrud combed out the old woman’s hair and killed the vermin in her head, till this soothed her and she fell asleep; whereupon Zumurrud arose and donning the clothes of the murdered trooper, girt herself with his sword and covered her head with his turban, so that she became as she were a man. Then she took the saddle-bags full of gold and mounted the horse, saying in herself, ‘O kind Protector, I adjure thee by the glory of Mohammed, (whom God bless and preserve,) protect me! If I enter the city, belike one of the trooper's folk will see me, and no good will befall me.' So she turned her back on the city and rode forth into the desert.

She fared on ten days, eating of the fruits of the earth and drinking of its waters, she and her horse; and on the eleventh day, she came in sight of a pleasant and safe city, stablished in good; the season of winter had departed from it with its cold and the spring-tide came to it with its roses and orange-blossoms; its flowers blew bright, its streams welled forth and its birds warbled. As she drew near, she saw the troops and Amirs and notables of the place drawn up before the gate, at which she marvelled and said to herself, 'The people of the city are all collected at the gate: there must needs be a reason for this.' Then she made towards them; but, as she drew near, the troops hastened forward to meet her and dismounting, kissed the ground before her and said, 'God aid thee, O our lord the Sultan!'

Then the grandees ranked themselves before her, whilst the troops ranged the people in order, saying, 'God aid thee and make thy coming a blessing to the Muslims, O Sultan of all men! God stablish thee, O king of the age and pearl of the day and the time!' 'What ails you, O people of the city?' asked Zumurrud; and the chamberlain answered, 'Verily, He who is no niggard in giving hath been bountiful to thee and hath made thee Sultan of this city and ruler over the necks of all that are therein; for know that it is the custom of the citizens, when their king dies, leaving no son, that the troops should sally forth of the pace and abide there three days; and whoever cometh from the quarter whence thou hast come, they make him king over them. So praised be God who hath sent us a well-favoured man of the sons of the Turks; for had a lesser than thou presented himself, he had been Sultan.'

Now Zumurrud was well-advised in all she did; so she said, 'Think not that I am of the common folk of the Turks; nay, I am a man of condition; but I was wroth with my family, so I went forth and left them. See these saddle-bags full of gold I brought with me, that I might give alms thereof to the poor and needy by the way.' So they called down blessings upon her and rejoiced in her with an exceeding joy and she also rejoiced in them and said in herself, 'Now that I have attained to this estate, it may be God will reunite me with my lord in this place, for He can do what He will.' Then the troops escorted her to the city and dismounting, walked before her to the palace. Here she alighted and the Amirs and grandees, taking her under the armpits, carried her into the palace and seated her on the throne; after which they all kissed the ground before her. Then she bade open the treasuries and gave largesse to the troops, who offered up prayers for the continuance of her reign, and all the townsfolk and the people of the kingdom accepted her rule.

She abode thus awhile, ordering and forbidding, and remitted taxes and released prisoners and redressed grievances, so that all the people came to hold her in exceeding reverence and to love her, by reason of her generosity and continence; but, as often as she bethought her of her lord, she wept and besought God to reunite them; and one night, as she was thinking of him and calling to mind the days she had passed with him, her eyes ran over with tears and she repeated the following verses:

My longing, ‘spite of time, for thee is ever new; My weeping
wounds my lids and tears on tears ensue.
Whenas I weep, I weep for anguish of desire; For grievous
severance is a lover’s heart unto.

Then she wiped away her tears and rising, betook herself to the harem, where she appointed to the slave-girls and concubines separate lodgings and assigned them pensions and allowances, giving out that she was minded to live apart and devote herself to works of piety. So she betook herself to fasting and praying, till the Amirs said, ‘Verily, this Sultan is exceeding devout.’ Nor would she suffer any attendants about her, save two little eunuchs, to serve her.

She held the throne thus a whole year, during which time she heard no news of Ali Shar, and this was exceeding grievous to her; so, when her distress became excessive, she summoned her Viziers and chamberlains and bid them fetch architects and builders and make her a tilting ground, a parasang long and the like broad, in front of the palace. They hastened to do her bidding, and when the place was competed to her liking, she went down into it and they pitched her there a great pavilion, wherein the chairs of the Amirs were set in their order. Then she bade spread in the tilting-ground tables with all manner rich meats and ordered the grandees to eat. So they ate and she said to them, ‘It is my will that, on the first day of each month, ye do on this wise and proclaim in the city that none shall open his shop, but that all the people shall come and eat of the king’s banquet, and that whoso disobeyeth shall be hanged over his own door.’

They did as she bade them, and when came the first day of the next month, Zumurrud went down into the tilting-ground and the crier proclaimed aloud, saying, ‘Ho, all ye people, great and small, whoso openeth shop or house or magazine shall straightway be hanged over his own door; for it behoves you all to come and eat of the king’s banquet.’ Then they laid the tables and the people came in troops; so she bade them sit down at the tables and eat their fill of all the dishes. So they sat down and she sat on her chair of estate, watching them, whilst each thought she was looking at none but him. Then they fell to eating and the Amirs said to them, ‘Eat and be not ashamed; for this is pleasing to the King.’ So they ate their fill and went away, blessing the King and saying, one to the other, ‘Never saw we a Sultan that loved the poor as doth this Sultan.’ And they wished her length of life, whilst Zumurrud returned to the palace, rejoicing in her device and saying in herself, ‘If it please God the Most High, I shall surely by this means happen on news of my lord Ali Shar.’

When the first day of the second month came round, she made the banquet as before and the folk came and sat down at the tables, company by company and one by one. As she sat on her throne, at the head of the tables, watching the people eat, her eye fell on Bersoum, the Nazarene who had bought the curtain of Ali Shar; and she knew him and said in herself, ‘This is the first of my solace and of the accomplishment of my desire.’ Bersoum came up to the table and sitting down with the rest to eat, espied a dish of sweet rice, sprinkled with sugar; but it was far from him. So he pushed up to it and putting out his hand to it, took it and set it before himself. His next neighbour said to him, ‘Why dost thou not eat of what is before thee? Art thou not ashamed to reach over for a dish that is distant from thee?’ Quoth Bersoum, ‘I will eat of none but this dish.’ ‘Eat then,’ rejoined the other, ‘and small good may it do thee!’ But another man, a hashish- eater, said, ‘Let him eat of it, that I may eat with him.’ ‘O unluckiest of hashish-eaters,’ replied the first speaker, ‘this is no meat for thee; it is eating for Amirs. Let it be, that it may return to those for whom it is meant and they eat it.’

But Bersoum heeded him not and putting his hand to the rice, took a mouthful and put it in his mouth. He was about to take a second mouthful, when Zumurrud, who was watching him, cried out to certain of her guards, saying, ‘Bring me yonder man with the dish of sweet rice before him and let him not eat the mouthful he hath ready, but throw it from his hand.’ So four of the guards went up to Bersoum and throwing the mouthful of rice from his hand, haled him forthright before Zumurrud, whilst all the people left eating and said to one another, ‘By Allah, he did wrong in not eating of the food meant for the like of him.’ ‘For me,’ quoth one, ‘I was content with this frumenty that is before me.’ And the hashish- eater said, ‘Praised be God who hindered me from eating of the dish of sweet rice, for I looked for it to stand before him and was only waiting for him to have stayed his hunger of it, to eat with him, when there befell him what we see.’ And they said, one to another, ‘Wait till we see what befalls him.’

Then said Zumurrud to Bersoum, ‘Out on thee, O blue eyes! What is thy name and why comest thou hither?’ But the accursed fellow miscalled himself, having a white turban, and answered, ‘O King, my name is Ali; I am a weaver and came hither to trade.’ ‘Bring me a table of sand and a pen of brass,’ quoth Zumurrud, and they brought her what she sought. She levelled the sand and taking the pen, drew a geomantic figure, in the likeness of an ape; then, raising her head, she considered Bersoum straitly and said to him, ‘O dog, how darest thou lie to kings? Art thou not a Nazarene, Bersoum by name, and comest thou not hither in quest of somewhat? Speak the truth, or, by the splendour of the Deity, I will strike off thy head?’ At this, Bersoum was confounded and the Amirs and bystanders said, ‘Verily, the King understands geomancy: blessed be He who hath gifted him!’ Then Zumurrud cried out upon Bersoum and said, ‘Tell me the truth, or I will make an end of thee!’ ‘Pardon, O King of the age,’ replied Bersoum; ‘the table hath told thee aright; thy slave is indeed a Nazarene.’ Whereupon all present wondered at the King’s skill in geomancy, saying, ‘Verily, the King is a diviner, whose like there is not in the world.'

Then Zumurrud bade flay the Christian and stuff his skin with straw and hang it over the gate of the tilting-ground. Moreover, she commanded to dig a pit without the city and burn his flesh and bones therein and throw over his ashes offal and rubbish. 'We hear and obey,' answered they and did with him as she bade. When the people saw what had befallen the Christian, they said, 'He hath his deserts; but what an unlucky mouthful was that for him!' And another said, 'Be my wife triply divorced if ever I eat of sweet rice as long as I live!' 'Praised be God,' quoth the hashish-eater, 'who saved me from this fellow's fate by hindering me from eating of the rice!' Then they all went out, minded thenceforth to leave sitting in the Christian's place, over against the dish of sweet rice.

When the first day of the third month came, they laid the tables as of wont, and Queen Zumurrud came down and sat on her throne, with her guards in attendance on her, fearing her danger. Then the townsfolk entered, as usual, and went round about the tables, looking for the place of the dish of sweet rice, and quoth one to another, 'Hark ye, Hajji Khelef!' 'At thy service, O Hajji Khalid,' answered the other. 'Avoid the dish of sweet rice,' said Khalid, 'and look thou eat not thereof; for if thou do, thou wilt be hanged.' Then they sat down to meat; and as they were eating, Zumurrud chanced to look at the gate of the tilting-ground and saw a man come running in. So she considered him and knew him for Jewan the Kurd.

Now the manner of his coming was on this wise. When he left his mother, he went to his comrades and said to them, 'I had fine purchase yesterday; for I slew a trooper and took his horse. Moreover there fell to me last night a pair of saddle-bags, full of gold, and a girl worth more than the money; and I have left them all with my mother in the cave.' At this they rejoiced and repaired to the cavern at nightfall, whilst they forewent them, that he might fetch them the booty. But he found the place empty and questioned his mother, who told him what had befallen; whereupon he bit his hands for despite and exclaimed, 'By Allah, I will make search for yonder harlot and take her, wherever she is, though it be in the shell of a pistachio-nut, and quench my malice on her!' So he went forth in quest of her and journeyed from place to place, till he came to Queen Zumurrud's city. He found the town deserted and enquiring of some women whom he saw looking from the windows, learnt that it was the Sultan's custom to make a banquet for all the people on the first of each month and was directed to the tilting-ground, where the feast was spread.

So he came running in and finding no place empty, save that before the dish of sweet rice, took his seat there and put out his hand to the dish; whereupon the folk cried out to him, saying, 'O brother, what wilt thou do?' Quoth he, 'I mean to eat my fill of this dish.' 'If thou eat of it,' rejoined one of the people, 'thou wilt assuredly be hanged.' But Jewan said, 'Hold thy peace and talk not thus.' Then he stretched out his hand to the dish aforesaid and drew it to him.

Now the hashish-eater, of whom we have before spoken, was sitting by him; but when he saw him do this, the fumes of the hashish left his head and he fled from his place and sat down afar off, saying, 'I will have nothing to do with yonder dish.' Then Jewan put out his hand, as it were a crow's foot, and dipping it in the dish, scooped up therewith half the dishful and drew it out, as it were a camel's hoof, and the bottom of the dish appeared. He rolled the rice in his hand, till it was like a great orange, and threw it ravenously into his mouth; and it rolled down his gullet, with a noise like thunder. 'Praised by God,' quoth his neighbour, 'who hath not made me meat before thee; for thou hast emptied the dish at one mouthful.' 'Let him eat,' said the hashish-eater; 'methinks he hath a gallows-face.' Then, turning to Jewan, 'Eat,' added he, 'and small good may it do thee!'

Jewan put out his hand again and taking another mouthful, was rolling it in his hands like the first, when Zumurrud cried out to the guards, saying, 'Bring me yonder man in haste and let him not eat the mouthful in his hand.' So they ran and seizing him, as he bent over the dish, brought him to her, whilst the people exulted over him and said, one to the other, 'He hath his deserts, for we warned him, but he would not take warning. Verily, this place is fated to be the death of whoso sits therein, and yonder rice is fatal to all who eat of it.'

Then said Zumurrud to Jewan, 'What is thy name and condition and why comest thou hither?' 'O our lord the Sultan,' answered he, 'my name is Othman; I am a gardener and am come hither in quest of somewhat I have lost.’ ‘Bring me a table of sand,’ said Zumurrud. So they brought it, and she took the pen and drawing a geomantic figure, considered it awhile, then raising her head, exclaimed, ‘Out on thee, thou sorry knave! How darest thou lie to kings? This sand tells me that thy name is Jewan the Kurd and that thou art by trade a robber, taking men’s goods in the way of unright and slaying those whom God hath forbidden to slay, save for just cause.’ And she cried out upon him, saying, ‘O hog, tell me the truth of thy case or I will cut off thy head!’

When he heard this, he turned pale and his teeth chattered; then, deeming that he might save himself by telling the truth, he replied, ‘O King, thou sayest sooth; but I repent at thy hands henceforth and turn to God the Most High!’ Quoth she, ‘I may not leave a pest in the way of the true-believers.’ And she said to her guards, ‘Take him and flay him and do with him as ye did by his like last month.’ And they did her commandment. When the hashish-eater saw this, he turned his back upon the dish of rice, saying, ‘It is unlawful to present my face to thee.’ Then, when they had made an end of eating, they dispersed and Zumurrud returned to her palace and dismissed her attendants.

When the fourth month came round, they made the banquet, as of wont, and the folk sat awaiting leave to begin. Presently Zumurrud entered and sitting down on her throne, looked at the tables and saw that room for four people was left void before the dish of rice, at which she wondered. As she sat, looking around, she saw a man come running in at the gate, who stayed not till he reached the tables and finding no room, save before the dish of rice, took his seat there. She looked at him and knowing him for the accursed Christian, who called himself Reshideddin, said in herself, ‘How blessed is this device of the food, into whose toils this infidel hath fallen!’

Now the manner of his coming was extraordinary, and it was on this wise. When he returned from his journey, the people of the house told him that Zumurrud was missing and with her a pair of saddle-bags full of gold; whereupon he rent his clothes and buffeted his face and plucked out his beard. Then he despatched his brother Bersoum in quest of her, and when he was weary of awaiting news of him, he went forth himself, to seek for him and for Zumurrud, and fate led him to the latter’s city. He entered it on the first day of the month and finding the streets deserted and the shops shut, enquired of the women at the windows, who told him that the King made a banquet on the first of each month for the people, all of whom were bound to attend it, nor might any abide in his house or shop that day; and they directed him to the tilting-ground.

So he betook himself thither and sitting down before the rice, put out his hand to eat thereof, whereupon Zumurrud cried out to her guards, saying, ‘Bring me him who sits before the dish of rice.’ So they laid hands on him and brought him before Queen Zumurrud, who said to him, ‘Out on thee! What is thy name and occupation, and what brings thee hither?’ ‘O King of the age,’ answered he, ‘my name is Rustem and I have no occupation, for I am a poor dervish.’ Then said she to her attendants, ‘Bring me a table of sand and pen of brass.’ So they brought her what she sought, as usual; and she took the pen and drawing a geomantic figure, considered it awhile, then raising her head to Reshideddin, said, ‘O dog, how darest thou lie to kings? Thy name is Reshideddin the Nazarene; thou art outwardly a Muslim, but a Christian at heart, and thine occupation is to lay snares for the slave-girls of the Muslims and take them. Speak the truth, or I will smite off thy head.’ He hesitated and stammered, then replied, ‘Thou sayest sooth, O King of the age!’ Whereupon she commanded to throw him down and give him a hundred blows on each sole and a thousand on his body; after which she bade flay him and stuff his skin with hards of flax and dig a pit without the city, wherein they should burn his body and cast dirt and rubbish on his ashes. They did as she bade them and she gave the people leave to eat.

So they ate their fill and went their ways, whilst Zumurrud returned to her palace, thanking God for that He had solaced her heart of those who had wronged her. Then she praised the Creator of heaven and earth and repeated the following verses:

Lo, these erst had power and used it with oppression and unright!
In a little, their dominion was as it ne’er had been.
Had they used their power with justice, they had been repaid the
like; But they wrought unright and Fortune guerdoned them
with dole and teen.

So they perished and the moral of the case bespeaks them thus,
“This is what your crimes have earnt you: Fate is not to blame, I ween.”

Then she called to mind her lord Ali Shar and wept, but presently recovered herself and said, ‘Surely God, who hath given mine enemies into my hand, will vouchsafe me speedy reunion with my beloved; for He can do what He will and is generous to His servants and mindful of their case!’ Then she praised God (to whom belong might and majesty) and besought forgiveness of Him, submitting herself to the course of destiny, assured that to each beginning there is an end, and repeating the saying of the poet:

Be at thine ease, for all things’ destiny Is in His hands who fashioned earth and sea.
Nothing of Him forbidden shall befall Nor aught of Him appointed fail to thee.

And what another saith:

Let the days pass, as they list, and fare, And enter thou not the house of despair.
Full oft, when the quest of a thing is hard, The next hour brings us the end of our care.

And a third:

Be mild what time thou’rt ta’en with anger and despite And patient, if there fall misfortune on thy head.
Indeed, the nights are quick and great with child by Time And of all wondrous things are hourly brought to bed.

And a fourth:

Take patience, for therein is good; an thou be learn’d in it,
Thou shalt be calm of soul nor drink of anguish any whit.
And know that if, with a good grace, thou do not thee submit, Yet must thou suffer, will or nill, that which the Pen hath

writ.

She abode thus another whole month's space, judging the folk and commanding and forbidding by day, and by night weeping and bewailing her separation from her lord Ali Shar. On the first day of the fifth month, she bade spread the banquet as usual and sat down at the head of the tables, whilst the people awaited the signal to fall to, leaving the space before the dish of rice vacant. She sat with eyes fixed upon the gate of the tilting- ground, noting all who entered and saying, 'O Thou that restoredst Joseph to Jacob and didst away the affliction of Job, vouchsafe of Thy power and greatness to restore me my lord Ali Shar; for Thou canst all things! O Lord of all creatures, O Guide of the erring, O Hearer of those that cry, O Answerer of prayer, answer Thou my prayer, O Lord of all creatures!'

Hardly had she made an end of her prayer, when she saw entering the gate a young man, in shape like the willow wand, the comeliest and most accomplished of youths, save that his face was sallow and his form wasted. He came up to the tables and finding no seat vacant save before the dish of rice, sat down there; whereupon Zumurrud's heart fluttered and observing him narrowly, she knew him for her lord Ali Shar and was like to have cried out for joy, but restrained herself, fearing disgrace before the folk. Her bowels were troubled and her heart throbbed; but she concealed that which she suffered.

Now the manner of his coming thither was on this wise. When he awoke and found himself lying on the bench outside the Christian's house, with his head bare, he knew that some one had come upon him and robbed him of his turban, whilst he slept. So he spoke the word, which whoso saith shall never be confounded, that is to say, 'Verily, we are God's and to Him we return!' and going back to the old woman's house, knocked at the door. She came out and he wept before her, till he swooned away. When he came to himself, he told her all that had passed, and she blamed him and chid him for his heedlessness, saying, 'Thou hast but thyself to thank for thine affliction and calamity.' And she gave not over reproaching him, till the blood streamed from his nostrils and he again fainted away. When he revived, he saw her weeping over him; so he bewailed himself and repeated the following verses:

How bitter is parting to friends, and how sweet Reunion to
lovers, for sev'rance that sigh!
May God all unite them and watch over me, For I'm of their number
and like for to die.

The old woman mourned over him and said to him, 'Sit here, whilst I go in quest of news and return to thee in haste.' 'I hear and obey,' answered he. So she left him and was absent till midday, when she returned and said to him, 'O Ali, I fear me thou must die in thy grief; thou wilt never see thy beloved again save on Es Sirat; for the people of the Christian's house, when they arose in the morning, found the window giving on the garden broken in and Zumurrud missing, and with her a pair of saddle- bags, full of the Christian's money. When I came thither, I found the Master of Police and his officers standing at the door, and there is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!'

When he heard this, the light in his eyes was changed to darkness and he despaired of life and made sure of death; nor did he leave weeping, till he lost his senses. When he recovered, love and longing were sore upon him; there befell him a grievous sickness and he kept his house a whole year; during which time the old woman ceased not to bring him doctors and ply him with diet- drinks and make him broths, till his life returned to him. Then he recalled what had passed and repeated the following verses:

Union is parted; in its stead, of grief I am possessed: My tears
flow still, my heart's on fire for yearning and unrest.
Longing redoubles on a wight who hath no peace, so sore Of love
and wakefulness and pain he's wasted and oppressed.
Lord, I beseech Thee, if there be relief for me in aught,
Vouchsafe it, whilst a spark of life abideth in my breast.

When the second year began, the old woman said to him, 'O my son, all this thy sadness and sorrowing will not bring thee back thy mistress. Rise, therefore, take heart and seek for her in the lands: haply thou shalt light on some news of her.' And she ceased not to exhort and encourage him, till he took heart and she carried him to the bath. Then she made him drink wine and eat fowls, and thus she did with him for a whole month, till he regained strength and setting out, journeyed without ceasing till he arrived at Zumurrud's city, when he went to the tilting-ground and sitting down before the dish of sweet rice, put out his hand to eat of it.

When the folk saw this, they were concerned for him and said to him, 'O young man, eat not of that dish, for whoso eats thereof, misfortune befalls him.' 'Leave me to eat of it,' answered he, 'and let them do with me as they list, so haply I may be at rest from this weary life.' Then he ate a first mouthful, and Zumurrud was minded to have him brought to her; but bethought her that belike he was anhungred and said in herself, 'It were well to let him eat his fill.' So he went on eating, whilst the people looked on in astonishment, waiting to see what would befall him; and when he had done, Zumurrud said to certain of her eunuchs, 'Go to yonder youth that eateth of the rice and bring him to me on courteous wise, saying, 'The King would have speech of thee on some slight matter.' 'We hear and obey,' answered they and going up to Ali Shar, said to him, 'O my lord, the King desires the favour of a word with thee, and let thy heart be easy.' 'I hear and obey,' replied he and followed the eunuchs, who carried him before Zumurrud, whilst the people said to one another, 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! I wonder what the King will do with him!' And others said, 'He will do him nought but good; for, were he minded to harm him, he had not suffered him to eat his fill.'

When he came before Zumurrud, he saluted and kissed the earth before her, whilst she returned his greeting and received him with honour. Then said she to him, 'What is thy name and condition and what brought thee hither?' 'O King,' answered he, 'my name is Ali Shar; I am of the sons of the merchants of Khorassan and the object of my coming hither is to seek for a slave-girl whom I have lost; for she was dearer to me than my sight and my hearing, and indeed my soul cleaves to her, since I lost her.' And he wept, till he swooned away. She caused sprinkle rose-water on his face, till he came to himself, when she said, 'Bring me the table of sand and the pen.' So they brought them and she took the pen and drew a geomantic figure, which she considered awhile; then, 'Thou hast spoken sooth,' quoth she. ‘God will grant thee speedy reunion with her; so be not troubled.’ Then she bade her chamberlain carry him to the bath and after clothe him in a handsome suit of royal apparel, and mount him an one of the best of the King’s horses and bring him to the palace at end of day. So the chamberlain took him away, whilst the folk said to one another, ‘What makes the King deal thus courteously with yonder youth?’ And one said, ‘Did I not tell you that he would do him no hurt? For he is fair of aspect; and this I knew, when the King suffered him to eat his fill.’ And each said his say; after which they all dispersed and went their ways.

As for Zumurrud, she thought the night would never come, that she might be alone with the beloved of her heart. As soon as it was dusk, she withdrew to her sleeping-chamber and made as she were overcome with sleep; and it was her wont to suffer none to pass the night with her, save the two little eunuchs that waited upon her. After a little, she sent for Ali Shar and sat down upon the bed, with candles burning at her head and feet and the place lighted with hanging lamps of gold that shone like the sun. When the people heard of her sending for Ali Shar, they marvelled and said, ‘Algates, the King is enamoured of this young man, and to- morrow he will make him commander of the troops.’ And each thought his thought and said his say. When they brought him in to her, he kissed the earth before her and called down blessings on her, and she said in herself, ‘Needs must I jest with him awhile, ere I make myself known to him.’ Then said she to him, ‘O Ali, hast thou been to the bath?’ ‘Yes, O my lord,’ answered he. ‘Come, eat of this fowl and meat and drink of this wine and sherbet of sugar,’ said she; ‘for thou art weary; and after come hither.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ replied he and did as she bade him.

When he had made an end of eating and drinking, she said to him, ‘Come up with me on the couch and rub my feet.’ So he fell to rubbing her feet and legs and found them softer than silk. Then said she, ‘Go higher with the rubbing;’ and he, ‘Pardon me, O my lord, I will go no higher than the knee.’ Whereupon, ‘Wilt thou gainsay me?’ quoth she. ‘It shall be an ill-omened night for thee! Nay, but it behoves thee to do my bidding and I will make thee my minion and appoint thee one of my Amirs.’ ‘And in what must I do thy bidding, O King of the age?' asked Ali. 'Put off thy trousers,' answered she, 'and lie down on thy face.' Quoth he, 'That is a thing I never in my life did; and if thou force me thereto, I will accuse thee thereof before God on the Day of Resurrection. Take all thou hast given me and let me go to my own city.' And he wept and lamented. But she said, 'Put off thy trousers and lie down on thy face, or I will strike off thy head.' So he did as she bade him and she mounted upon his back. And he felt what was softer than silk and fresher than cream and said in himself, 'Of a truth, this King is better than all the women!'

She abode a while on his back, then turned over on to the ground, and he said [in himself], 'Praised be God! It seems his yard is not in point.' Then said she, 'O Ali, it is of the wont of my yard that it standeth not on end, except it be rubbed with the hand; so, some, rub it with thy hand, till it be in point, else will I kill thee.' So saying, she lay down on her back and taking his hand, set it to her kaze, and he found it a kaze softer than silk, white, plump and great, resembling for heat the hot room of the bath or the heart of a lover, whom passion hath wasted. Quoth Ali in himself, 'Verily, this King hath a kaze. This is a wonder of wonders!' And desire got hold on him and his yard stood on end to the utmost; which when Zumurrud saw, she burst out laughing and said to him, 'O my lord, all this betideth and yet thou knowest me not!' 'And who art thou, O King?' asked he; and she said, 'I am thy slave-girl Zumurrud.'

When he knew this and was certified that she was indeed his very slave-girl Zumurrud, he threw himself upon her, as the lion upon the sheep, and kissed her and embraced her. Then he thrust his yard into her poke and stinted not to play the porter at her door and the Imam at her prayer-niche, whilst she with him ceased not from inclination and prostration and rising up and sitting down, accompanying her canticles of praise with motitations and other amorous gestures, till the [two little] eunuchs [aforesaid] heard [the noise]. So they came and peeping out from behind the curtains, saw the King lying [on his back] and Ali Shar upon him, thrusting and thronging amain, whilst she puffed and blew and wriggled. Quoth they, 'This is no man's wriggle; belike this King is a woman.' But they concealed their affair and discovered it to none.

On the morrow, Zumurrud summoned all the troops and the grandees of the realm and said to them, ‘I am minded to journey to this man’s country; so choose a deputy, who shall rule over you, till I return to you.’ And they answered, ‘We hear and obey.’ Then she applied herself to making ready for the journey and furnished herself with victual and treasure and camels and mules and so forth; after which she set out with Ali Shar, and they fared on, till they arrived at his native place, where he entered his house and gave alms and largesse. God vouchsafed him children by her, and they both lived the happiest of lives, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies. Glory be to God, the Eternal without cease, and praised be He in every case!

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE LOVES OF JUBEIR BEN UMEIR AND THE LADY BUDOUR

It is related the Khalif Haroun er Reshid was restless one night and could not sleep; so that he ceased not to toss from side to side for very restlessness, till, growing weary of this, he called Mesrour and said to him, ‘O Mesrour, look what may solace me of this my restlessness.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Mesrour, ‘wilt thou walk in the garden of the palace and divert thyself with the sight of its flowers and gaze upon the stars and note the beauty of their ordinance and the moon among them, shining on the water?’ ‘O Mesrour,’ replied the Khalif, ‘my heart inclines not to aught of this.’ ‘O my lord,’ continued Mesrour, ‘there are in thy palace three hundred concubines, each of whom hath her separate lodging. Do thou bid retire each into her own apartment and then go thou about and divert thyself with gazing on them, without their knowledge.’ ‘O Mesrour,’ answered Haroun, ‘the palace is mine and the girls are my property: moreover, my soul inclineth not to aught of this.’ ‘O my lord,’ said Mesrour, ‘summon the doctors and sages and poets and bid them contend before thee in argument and recite verses and tell thee tales and anecdotes.’ ‘My soul inclines not to aught of this,’ answered the Khalif; and Mesrour said, ‘O my lord, bid the minions and wits and boon-companions attend thee and divert thee with witty sallies.’ ‘O Mesrour,’ replied the Khalif, ‘indeed my soul inclineth not to aught of this.’ ‘Then, O my lord,’ rejoined Mesrour, ‘strike off my head; maybe, that will dispel thine unease and do away the restlessness that is upon thee.’

At this the Khalif laughed and said, ‘See which of the boon-companions is at the door.’ So Mesrour went out and returning, said, ‘O my lord, he who sits without is Ali ben Mensour of Damascus, the Wag.’ ‘Bring him to me,’ quoth Haroun; and Mesrour went out and returned with Ibn Mensour, who said, on entering, ‘Peace be on thee, O Commander of the Faithful!’ The Khalif returned his salutation and said to him, ‘O Ibn Mensour, tell us one of thy stories.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ said the other, ‘shall I tell thee what I have seen with my eyes or what I have only heard tell?’

‘If thou have seen aught worth telling,’ replied the Khalif, ‘let us hear it; for report is not like eye- witness.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ said Ibn Mensour, ‘lend me thine ear and thy heart.’ ‘O Ibn Mensour,’ answered the Khalif, ‘behold, I am listening to thee with mine ears and looking at thee with mine eyes and attending to thee with my heart.’

‘Know then, O Commander of the Faithful,’ began Ibn Mensour, ‘that I receive a yearly allowance from Mohammed ben Suleiman el Hashimi, Sultan of Bassora; so I went to him, once upon a time, as usual, and found him about to ride out a-hunting. I saluted him, and he returned my salute and would have me mount and go a-hunting with him; but I said, “O my lord, I cannot ride; so do thou stablish me in the guest-house and give thy chamberlains and officers charge over me.” And he did so and departed for the chase. His officers entreated me with the utmost honour and hospitality; but I said in myself, “By Allah, it is a strange thing that I should have used so long to come from Baghdad to Bassora, yet know no more of the town than from the palace to the garden and back again! When shall I find an occasion like this to view the different parts of Bassora? I will rise at once and walk forth alone and divert myself and digest what I have eaten.”

So I donned my richest clothes and went out a-walking in Bassora. Now it is known to thee, O Commander of the Faithful, that it hath seventy streets, each seventy parasangs long of Irak measure; and I lost myself in its by-streets and thirst overcame me. Presently, as I went along, I came to a great door, on which were two rings of brass, with curtains of red brocade drawn before it. Over the door was a trellis, covered with a creeping vine, that hung down and shaded the doorway; and on either side the porch was a stone bench. I stood still, to gaze upon the place, and presently heard a sorrowful voice, proceeding from a mourning heart, warbling melodiously and chanting the following verses:

My body is become th’ abode of sickness and dismay, By reason of
a fawn, whose land and stead are far away.
O zephyr of the waste, that roused my pain in me, I pray, By God
your Lord, to him, with whom my heart dwells, take your way

And prithee chide him, so reproach may soften him, maybe.
And if to you he do incline and hearken, then make fair Your speech and tidings unto him of lovers, ‘twixt you, bear.
Yea, and vouchsafe to favour me with service debonair And unto him I love make known my case and my despair,
Saying, “What ails thy bounden slave that, for estrangement, she
Should die without offence of her committed or despite Or disobedience or breach of plighted faith or slight
Or fraud or turning of her heart to other or unright?” And if he smile, with dulcet speech bespeak ye thus the wight:
“An thou thy company wouldst grant to her, ‘twere well of thee;
For she for love of thee’s distraught, as needs must be the case; Her eyes are ever void of sleep; she weeps and wails apace.”
If he show favour and incline to grant the wished-for grace, ’Tis well and good; but, if ye still read anger in his face,
Dissemble then with him and say, “We know her not, not we.”

Quoth I to myself, “Verily, if the owner of this voice be fair, she unites beauty of person and eloquence and sweetness of voice.” Then I drew near the door, and raising the curtain little by little, beheld a damsel, white as the moon, when it rises on its fourteenth night, with joined eyebrows and languorous eyelids, breasts like twin pomegranates and dainty lips like twin corn-marigolds, mouth as it were Solomon’s seal and teeth that sported with the reason of rhymester and proser, even as saith the poet:

O mouth of the beloved, who set thy pearls arow And eke with wine fulfilled thee and camomiles like show,
And lent the morning-glory unto thy smile, and who Hath with a padlock sealed thee of rubies sweet of show?
Whoso but looks upon thee is mad for joy and pride. How should it fare with him, who kisseth thee, heigho!

And as saith another:

O pearls of the teeth of my love, Have ruth on cornelian and spare To vie with it! Shall it not find You peerless and passing compare?

In fine, she comprised all manner of loveliness and was a ravishment to men and women, nor could the beholder satisfy himself with the sight of her beauty; for she was as the poet hath said of her:

If, face to face, she do appear, unveiled, she slays; and if
She turn her back, she makes all men her lovers far and
near.
Like the full moon and eke the sun she is, but cruelty And
inhumanity belong not to her nature dear.
The garden-gates of Paradise are opened with her shift And the
full moon revolveth still upon her neck-rings' sphere.

As I looked at her through the opening of the curtains, she turned and seeing me standing at the door, said to her maid, "See who stands at the door." So the maid came up to me and said, "O old man, hast thou no shame, or do gray hairs and impudence go together?" "O my mistress," answered I, "I confess to the gray hairs, but as for unmannerliness, I think not to be guilty of it." "And what can be more unmannerly," rejoined her mistress, "than to intrude thyself upon a house other than thy house and gaze on a harem other than thy harem?" "O my lady," said I, "I have an excuse." "And what is thine excuse?" asked she. Quoth I, "I am a stranger and well-nigh dead of thirst." "We accept thine excuse," answered she and calling one of her maids, said to her, "O Lutf, give him to drink in the golden tankard."

So she brought me a tankard of red gold, set with pearls and jewels, full of water mingled with odoriferous musk and covered with a napkin of green silk; and I addressed myself to drink and was long about it, casting stolen glances at her the while, till I could prolong it no longer. Then I returned the tankard to the maid, but did not offer to go; and she said to me, "O old man, go thy way." "O my lady," replied I, "I am troubled in mind." "For what?" asked she; and I answered, "For the uncertainty of fortune and the vicissitudes of events.” “Well mayst thou be troubled thereanent,” replied she, “for Time is the mother of wonders. But what hast thou seen of them that thou shouldst muse upon?” Quoth I, “I was thinking of the former owner of this house, for he was my good friend in his lifetime.” “What was his name?” asked she. “Mohammed ben Ali the Jeweller,” answered I; “and he was a man of great wealth. Did he leave any children?” “Yes,” said she; “he left a daughter, Budour by name, who inherited all his wealth.” Quoth I, “Meseems thou art his daughter?” “Yes,” answered she, laughing; then added, “O old man, thou hast talked long enough; go thy ways.” “Needs must I go,” replied I; “but I see thou art out of health. Tell me thy case; it may be God will give thee solace at my hands.” “O old man,” rejoined she, “if thou be a man of discretion, I will discover to thee my secret; but first tell me who thou art, that I may know whether thou art worthy of confidence or not; for the poet saith:

None keepeth secrets but the man who’s trusty and discreet: A
secret’s ever safely placed with honest fold and leal;
For me, my secrets I preserve within a locked-up house, Whose
key is lost and on whose door is set the Cadi’s seal.”

“O my lady,” answered I, “an thou wouldst know who I am, I am Ali ben Mensour of Damascus, the Wag, boon-companion to the Khalif Haroun er Reshid.” When she heard my name she came down from her seat and saluting me, said, “Welcome, O Ibn Mensour! Now will I tell thee my case and entrust thee with my secret. Know that I am a lover separated from her beloved.” “O my lady,” rejoined I, “thou art fair and shouldst love none but the fair. Whom then dost thou love?” Quoth she, “I love Jubeir ben Umeir es Sheibani, Prince of the Benou Sheiban;” and she described to me a young man than whom there was none handsomer in Bassora. “O my lady,” asked I, “have letters or interviews passed between you?” “Yes,” answered she; “but his love for me was of the tongue, not of the heart; for he kept not his covenant nor was faithful to his troth.” “And what was the cause of your separation?” asked I.

“I was sitting one day,” replied she, “whilst my maid here combed my hair. When she had made an end of combing it, she plaited my tresses, and my beauty and grace pleased her; so she bent down to me and kissed my cheek. At that moment, he came in, unawares, and seeing her kiss my cheek, turned away in anger, vowing eternal separation and repeating the following verses:

If any share with me in her I love, incontinent, I'll cast her
off from me and be to live alone content.
A mistress, sure, is nothing worth, if, in the way of love, She
wish for aught but that to which the lover doth consent.

And from that time to this, O Ibn Mensour," continued she, "he hath neither written to me nor answered my letters." "And what thinkest thou to do?" asked I. Quoth she, "I have a mind to send him a letter by thee. If thou bring me back an answer, thou shalt have of me five hundred dinars; and if not, then a hundred for thy pains." "Do what seemeth good to thee," answered I. So she called for inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses:

Whence this estrangement and despite, beloved of my soul?
Whither have kindliness and love between us taken flight?
What makes thee with aversion turn from me? Indeed, thy face Is
not the face I used to know, when we our troth did plight.
Belike, the slanderers have made a false report of me, And thou
inclin'dst to them, and they redoubled in despite.
If thou believedst their report, far, far it should have been
From thee, that art too whole of wit at such a bait to
bite!
Yea, I conjure thee by thy life, tell me what thou hast heard:
For lo! thou knowest what was said and wilt not do
unright.
If aught I've said that angered thee, a speech of change
admits; Ay, and interpreting, I trow, may change its
meaning quite,
Were it a word sent down from God; for even the Pentateuch Hath
falsified and garbled been of this and th' other
wight.
Whilst, as for lies, how many were of folk before us told!

Joseph to Jacob was traduced and blackened in his sight.
Yea, for the slanderer and myself and thee, an awful day Of
standing up shall come, when God to judgment all shall
cite.

Then she sealed the letter and gave it to me. I took it and carried it to the house of Jubeir ben Umeir, whom I found absent hunting. So I sat down, to wait for him, and presently he returned; and when I saw him come riding up, my wit was confounded by his beauty ands grace. As soon as he saw me sitting at the door, he dismounted and coming up to me, saluted and embraced me; and meseemed I embraced the world and all that therein is. Then he carried me into his house and seating me on his own couch, called for food. So they brought a table of khelenj wood of Khorassan, with feet of gold, whereon were all manner of meats, fried and roasted and the like. So I seated myself at the table and examining it, found the following verses engraved upon it:

Weep for the cranes that erst within the porringers did lie And
for the stews and partridges evanished heave a sigh!
Mourn for the younglings of the grouse; lament unceasingly, As,
for the omelettes and the fowls browned in the pan, do I.
How my heart yearneth for the fish that, in its different
kinds, Upon a paste of wheaten flour, lay hidden in the
pie!
Praised be God for the roast meat, as in the dish it lay, With
pot-herbs, soaked in vinegar, in porringers hard by,
And eke the rice with buffaloes’ milk dressed and made savoury,
Wherein the hands were plunged and arms were buried
bracelet high!
O soul, I rede thee patient be, for God is bountiful: What
though thy fortunes straitened be, His succour’s ever
nigh.

Then said Jubeir, “Put thy hand to our food and ease our heart by eating of our victual.” “By Allah,” answered I, “I will not eat a mouthful, till thou grant me my desire.” “What is thy desire?” asked he. So I brought out the letter and gave it to him; but, when he had read it, he tore it into pieces and throwing it on the floor, said to me, "O Ibn Mensour, I will grant thee whatever thou askest, save this that concerns the writer of this letter, for I have no answer to make to her." At this, I rose in anger; but he caught hold of my skirts, saying, "O Ibn Mensour, I will tell thee what she said to thee, for all I was not present with you." "And what did she say to me?" asked I. "Did she not say to thee," rejoined he, "'If thou bring me back an answer, thou shalt have of me five hundred dinars; and if not, a hundred for thy pains?'" "Yes," answered I; and he said, "Abide with me this day and eat and drink and make merry, and thou shalt have five hundred dinars."

So I sat with him and ate and drank and made merry and entertained him with converse; after which I said to him, "O my master, is there no music in thy house?" "Indeed," answered he, "we have drunk this long while without music." Then he called out, saying, "Ho, Shejeret ed Durr!" Whereupon a slave-girl answered him from her chamber and came in to us, with a lute of Indian make, wrapped in a silken bag. She sat down and laying the lute in her lap, preluded in one-and-twenty modes, then, returning to the first, sang the following verses to a lively measure:

Who hath not tasted the sweet and the bitter of passion, I
trow, The presence of her whom he loves from her absence
he hardly shall know.
So he, from the pathway of love who hath wandered and fallen
astray, The smooth knoweth not from the rough of the
roadway, wherein he doth go.
I ceased not the votaries of love and of passion to cross and
gainsay, Till I too must taste of its sweet and its
bitter, its gladness and woe.
Then I drank a full draught of the cup of its bitters, and
humbled was I, and thus to the bondman of Love and its
freedman therein was brought low.
How many a night have I passed with the loved one, carousing
with him, Whilst I drank from his lips what was sweeter
than nectar and colder than snow!

How short was the life of the nights of our pleasance! It
seemed to us still, No sooner was night fallen down than
the daybreak to eastward did glow.
But Fortune had vowed she would sever our union and sunder our
loves; And now, in good sooth, she her vow hath
accomplished. Fate ordered it so;
Fate ordered it thus, and against its ordaining, appeal there
is none; For who shall gainsay a supreme one's
commandments or causes him forego?

Hardly had she made an end of these verses, when Jubeir gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon; whereupon, "May God not punish thee, O old man!" exclaimed the damsel. "This long time have we drunk without music, for fear the like of this should befall our master. But go now to yon chamber and sleep there." So I went to the chamber in question and slept till the morning, when a page brought me a purse of five hundred dinars and said to me, "This is what my master promised thee; but return thou not to her who sent thee and let it be as if neither thou nor we had heard of this affair." "I hear and obey," answered I and taking the purse, went my way.

However, I said in myself, "The lady will have expected me since yesterday; and by Allah, I must needs return to her and tell her what passed between me and him; or she will curse me and all who come from my country." So I went to her and found her standing behind the door; and when she saw me, she said, "O Ibn Mensour, thou hast gotten me nought." "Who told thee of this?" asked I; and she answered, "O Ibn Mensour, yet another thing hath been revealed to me; and it is that, when thou gavest hum the letter, he tore it in pieces and throwing it on the floor, said to thee, 'O Ibn Mensour, ask me anything but what relates to the writer of this letter; for I have no reply to make to her.' Then didst thou rise from beside him in anger; but he laid hold of thy skirts, saying, 'Abide with me to-day, for thou art my guest, and eat and drink and make merry; and thou shalt have five hundred dinars.' So thou didst sit with him, eating and drinking and making merry, and entertainedst him with converse; and a slave-girl sand such an air and such verses, whereupon he fell down in a swoon." Quoth I, "Wast thou then with us?" "O Ibn Mensour," replied she, “hast thou not heard the saying of the poet:

The heart of the lover hath eyes, well I wot, That see what the eyes of beholders see not.

But,” added she, “day and night alternate not upon aught, but they change it.” Then she raised her eyes to heaven and said, “O my God and my Master and my Lord, like as Thou hast afflicted me with love of Jubeir ben Umeir, even so do Thou afflict him with love of me and transfer the passion from my heart to his!” Then she gave me a hundred dinars for my pains and I took it and returned to the palace, when I found the Sultan come back from hunting; so I took my pension of him and made my way back to Baghdad.

Next year, I repaired to Bassora, as usual, to seek my pension, and the Sultan paid it to me; but as I was about to return to Baghdad, I bethought me of the lady Budour and said to myself, “By Allah, I must needs go and see what hath befallen between her and her lover!” So I went to her house and finding the porch swept and sprinkled and slaves and servants and pages standing before the door, said to myself, “Most like grief hath broken the lady’s heart and she is dead, and some Amir or other hath taken up his abode in her house.” So I went on to Jubeir’s house, where I found the benches of the porch broken down and no pages at the door, as of wont, and said to myself, “Belike he too is dead.” Then I took up my station before the door of his house and with my eyes running over with tears, bemoaned it in the following verses:

Lords, that are gone, but whom my heart doth evermore ensue,
Return; so shall my festal says return to me with you.
I stand before your sometime stead, bewailing your abodes, With
quivering lids, from which the tears rain down, like
summer dew.
Weeping, I question of the house and ruins, “Where is he Who
was the source of benefits and bounties ever new?”
[They answer] “Go thy ways, for those thou lov’st from the
abode Departed are and neath the dust are buried; so
adieu!”
May God not stint us of the sight [in dreams] of all their
charms Nor be their noble memories aye absent from men’s

view!

As I was thus bewailing the folk of the house, there came a black slave thereout and said to me, "Hold thy peace, O old man! May thy mother be bereft of thee! What ails thee to bemoan the house thus?" Quoth I, "I knew it of yore, when it belonged to a good friend of mine." "What was his name?" asked the slave. And I answered, "Jubeir ben Umeir the Sheibani." "And what hath befallen him?" rejoined he. "Praised be God, he is yet in the enjoyment of wealth and rank and prosperity, except that God hath stricken him with love of a damsel called the lady Budour; and he is overcome with love of her, that, for the violence of his passion and torment, he is like a great rock overthrown. If he hunger, he saith not, 'Feed me;' nor, if he thirst, doth he say, 'Give me to drink.'" Quoth I, "Ask leave me to go in to him." "O my lord," said the slave, "Wilt thou go in to him who understands or to him who understands not?" "I must needs see him, whatever be his case," answered I.

Se he went in and presently returned with permission for me to enter, whereupon I went in to Jubeir and found him like a rock overthrown, understanding neither sign nor speech. I spoke to him, but he answered me not; and one of his servants said to me, "O my lord, if thou know aught of verse, repeat it, and raise thy voice; and he will be aroused by this and speak with thee." So I recited the following verses:

Budour's love hast thou forgotten or art deaf still to her
sighs? Wak'st anights, or do thine eyelids close upon thy
sleeping eyes?
If thy tears flow fast and freely, night and day long, torrent-
wise, Know thou, then, that thou shalt sojourn evermore in
Paradise.

When he heard this, he opened his eyes and said, "Welcome, O Ibn Mensour! Verily, the jest is become earnest." "O my lord," said I, "is there aught thou wouldst have me do for thee?" "Yes," answered he; "I would fain write her a letter and send it to her by thee. If thou bring me back an answer, thou shalt have of me a thousand dinars; and if not, two hundred for thy pains." "Do what seemeth good to thee," said I. So he called to one of his slave-girls for inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses:

By Allah, O my lady, have ruth on me, I pray! For all my wit by
passion is ravished quite away.
Yea, love for thee and longing have mastered me and clad With
sickness and bequeathed me abjection and dismay.
Aforetime, O my lady, by love I set small store And deemed it
light and easy to bear, until to-day;
But now that Love hath shown me the billows of its sea, Those I
excuse, repenting, who languish neath its sway.
Vouchsafe thy grace to grant me; or, if thou wilt me slay, At
least, then, for thy victim forget thou not to pray.

Then he sealed the letter and gave it to me. I took it and repairing to Budour's house, raised the curtain of the door, little by little, as of wont, and looking in, saw ten damsels, high-bosomed maids, like moons, and the lady Budour sitting in their midst, as she were the full moon among stars or the sun, when it is clear of clouds; nor was there on her any trace of pain or care. As I looked and marvelled at her case, she turned and seeing me standing at the gate, said to me, "Welcome and fair welcome to thee, O Ibn Mensour! Come in." So I entered and saluting her, gave her the letter. She read it and laughing, said to me, "O Ibn Mensour, the poet lied not when he said:

The love of thee I will endure with patient constancy, Till such time as a messenger shall come to me from thee.

O Ibn Mensour," added she, "I will write thee an answer that he may give thee what he promised thee." "May God requite thee with good!" answered I. So she called for inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses:

How comes it my vows I fulfilled and thou, thou wast false to
thy plight? Thou sawst me do justice and truth, and yet
thou thyself didst unright.
'Twas thou that begannest on me with rupture and rigour, I
trow; 'Twas thou that play'dst foul, and with thee began

the untruth and the slight.
Yea, still I was true to my troth and cherished but thee among
men And ceased not thine honour to guard and keep it
unsullied and bright,
Till tidings of fashions full foul I heard, as reported of
thee, And saw with mine eyes what thou didst, to harm me
and work me despite.
Shall I then abase my estate, that thine may exalted become? By
God, hadst thou generous been, the like should thy conduct
requite!
So now unto solace I'll turn my heart, with forgetting, from
thee And washing my hands of thy thought, blot despair for
thee out of my spright.

"By Allah, O my lady," said I, "there needs but the reading of this letter, to kill him!" So I tore it in pieces and said to her, "Write him other than this." "I hear and obey," answered she and wrote the following:

Indeed, I am consoled and sleep is pleasant to mine eyes; For I
have heard what came of prate of slanderers and spies.
My heart my summons hath obeyed, thee to forget; and eke My
lids to stint from wake for thee have seen it good and
wise.
He lies who says that severance is bitterness; for me I find
its taste none otherwise than sweet; indeed he lies.
I've grown to turn away from those who bring me news of thee
And look upon it as a thing at which my gorge doth rise.
Behold, I have forgotten thee with every part of me. Let then
the spy and who will else this know and recognise.

"By Allah, O my lady," said I, "when he reads these verses, his soul will depart his body!" "O Ibn Mensour," quoth she, "is passion indeed come to such a pass with him as thou sayst?" "Had I said more than this," replied I, "it were but the truth: but clemency is of the nature of the noble." When she heard this, her eyes filled with tears and she wrote him a letter, O Commander of the Faithful, there is none in thy court could avail to write the like of it; and therein were these verses:

How long shall this despite continue and this pride? My enviers'
spite on me thou sure hast satisfied.
Mayhap, I did amiss and knew it not; so tell Me what thou heardst
of me, that did our loves divide.
Even as I welcome sleep unto mine eyes and lids, So would I
welcome thee, beloved, to my side.
I've quaffed the cup of love for thee, unmixed and pure; So, if
thou see me drunk, reproach me not nor chide.

Then she sealed it and gave it to me; and I said, "O my lady, this thy letter will heal the sick and ease the thirsting soul." Then I took it and was going away, when she called me back and said to me, "Tell me that I will be his guest this night." At this I rejoiced greatly and carried the letter to Jubeir, whom I found with his eyes fixed on the door, expecting the reply. I gave him the letter and he opened and read it, then gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon. When he came to himself, he said to me, "O Ibn Mensour, did she indeed write this letter with her hand and touch it with her fingers?" "O my lord," answered I, "do folk write with their feet?" And by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, I had not done speaking, when we heard the chink of her anklets in the vestibule and she entered.

When he saw her, he sprang to his feet, as thou there ailed him nought, and embraced her as the letter Lam embraces Alif, and the malady, that would not depart, ceased from him. Then he sat down, but she abode standing and I said to her, "O my lady, why dost thou not sit?" Quoth she, "I will not sit, O Ibn Mensour, save on a condition that is between us." "And what is that?" asked I. "None may know lovers' secrets," answered she and putting her mouth to Jubeir's ear, whispered to him; whereupon, "I hear and obey," replied he and rising, said somewhat privily to one of his slaves, who went out and returned, in a little, with a Cadi and two witnesses. Then Jubeir rose and taking a bag containing a hundred thousand dinars, said, "O Cadi, marry me to this young lady and write this sum to her dowry." Quoth the Cadi to her, "Say, 'I consent to this.'" "I consent to this," said she, whereupon he drew up the contract of marriage, and she opened the bag and taking out a handful of gold, gave it to the Cadi and the witnesses and handed the rest to Jubeir.

Then the Cadi and the witnesses withdrew, and I sat with them, in mirth and delight, till the most part of the night was past, when I said in myself, "These are lovers and have been this long while separated. I will go now and sleep in some place afar from them and leave them to be private, one with the other." So I rose, but she laid hold of my skirts, saying, "What thinkest thou to do?" "So and so," answered I. But she rejoined, "Sit still, when we would be rid of thee, we will send thee away." So I sat with them till near daybreak, when she said to me, "O Ibn Mensour, go to yonder chamber; for we have furnished it for thee, and it is thy sleeping-place." So I went thither and slept till morning, when a page brought me basin and ewer, and I made the ablution and prayed the morning-prayer. Then I sat down and presently, Jubeir and his mistress came out of the bath in the house, wringing their locks.

I wished them good morning and gave them joy of their safety and reunion, saying to Jubeir, "That which began with constraint hath ended in contentment." "Thou sayst well," replied he; "and indeed thou deservest largesse." And he called his treasurer and bade him fetch three thousand dinars. So he brought a purse containing that sum, and Jubeir gave it to me, saying, "Favour us by accepting this." "I will not take it," answered I, "till thou tell me the manner of the transfer of love from her to thee, after so great an aversion." "I hear and obey," said he. "Know that we have a festival, called the festival of the New Year, when all the people use to take boat and go a-pleasuring on the river. So I went out, with my comrades, and saw a boat, wherein were half a score damsels like moons, and amongst them, the lady Budour, with her lute in her hand. She preluded in eleven modes, then returning to the first, sang the following verses:

Fire is not so fierce and so hot as the fires in my heart that
glow, And granite itself is less hard than the heart of my
lord, I trow.
Indeed, when I think on his make and his fashion, I marvel to see
A heart that is harder than rock in a body that's softer

than snow.

Quoth I to her, ‘Repeat the verses and the air.’ But she would not; so I bade the boatmen pelt her with oranges, and they pelted her till we feared her boat would sink. Then she went her way, and this is how the love was transferred from her breast to mine.” So I gave them joy of their reunion and taking the purse, with its contents, returned to Baghdad.

When the Khalif heard Ibn Mensour’s story, his heart was lightened and the restlessness and oppression from which he suffered forsook him.

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE MAN OF YEMEN AND HIS SIX SLAVE-GIRLS

The Khalif El-Mamoun was sitting one day in his palace, surrounded by his grandees and officers of state, and there were present also before him all his poets and minions, amongst the rest one named Mohammed of Bassora. Presently, the Khalif turned to the latter and said to him, ‘O Mohammed, I wish thee to tell me something that I have never before heard.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Mohammed, ‘shall I tell thee a thing that I have heard with my ears of a thing that I have seen with my eyes?’ ‘Tell me whichever is the rarer,’ said El Mamoun.

‘Know then, O Commander of the Faithful,’ began Mohammed, ‘that there lived once a wealthy man, who was a native of Yemen; but he left his native land and came to this city of Baghdad, whose sojourn so pleased him that he transported hither his family and possessions. Now he had six slave-girls, the first fair, the second dark, the third fat, the fourth thin, the fifth yellow and the sixth black, all fair of face and perfectly accomplished and skilled in the arts of singing and playing upon instruments of music. One day he sent for them all and called for meat and drink; and they ate and drank and made merry. Then he filled the cup and taking it in his hand, said to the blonde, “O new-moon- face, let us hear somewhat pleasing.” So she took the lute and tuning it, made music thereon with such melodious trills and modulations that the place danced to the rhythm; after which she played a lively measure and sang the following verses:

I have a friend, whose form is mirrored in mine eye, And deep
within my breast, his name doth buried lie.
Whenas I call him back to mind, I am all heart, And when on him I
gaze, all eyes indeed am I.
“Forswear the love of him,” my censor says; and I, “That which is
not to be, how shall it be?” reply.
“Go forth from me,” quoth I, “and leave me, censor mine: Feign
not that eath and light, that’s grievous to aby.”

At this their master was moved to mirth and drinking off his cup, gave the damsels to drink, after which he said to the brunette, "O light of the brasier and delight of souls, let us hear thy lovely voice, wherewith all that hearken are ravished." So she took the lute and trilled upon it, till the place was moved to mirth; then, taking all hearts with her graceful bendings, she sang the following verses:

As thy face liveth, none but thee I'll love nor cherish e'er,
Till death, nor ever to thy love will I be false, I swear.
O full moon, shrouded, as it were a veil, with loveliness, All
lovely ones on earth that be beneath thy banners fare.
Thou, that in pleasantness and grace excellest all the fair, May
God, the Lord of heaven and earth, be with thee everywhere!

The man was pleased and drank off his cup; after which he filled again and taking the goblet in his hand, beckoned to the plump girl and bade her sing and play. So she took the lute and striking a grief-dispelling measure, sang as follows:

If but thy consent be assured, O thou who art all my desire, Be
all the folk angered 'gainst me; I set not a whit by their
ire.
And if thou but show me thy face, thy brilliant and beautiful
face, I reck not if all the kings of the earth from my
vision retire.
Thy favour, O thou unto whom all beauty must needs be referred,
Of the goods and the sweets of the world is all that I seek
and require.

The man was charmed and emptying his cup, gave the girls to drink. Then he beckoned to the slender girl and said to her, "O houri of Paradise, feed thou our ears with sweet sounds." So she took the lute and tuning it, preluded and sang the following verses:

Is it not martyrdom that I for thine estrangement dree, Seeing,
indeed, I cannot live, if thou depart from me?
Is there no judge, in Love its law, to judge betwixt us twain, to

do me justice on thy head and take my wreak of thee?

Their lord rejoiced and emptying the cup, gave the girls to drink. Then he signed to the yellow girl and said to her, “O sun of the day, let us hear some pleasant verses.” So she took the lute and preluding after the goodliest fashion, sang as follows:

I have a lover, whenas I draw him nigh, He bares upon me a sword
from either eye.
May God avenge me some whit of him! For lo, He doth oppress me,
whose heart in ‘s hand doth lie.
Oft though, “Renounce him, my heart,” I say, yet it Will to none
other than him itself apply.
He’s all I ask for, of all created things; Yet jealous Fortune
doth him to me deny.

The man rejoiced and drank and gave the girls to drink; then he filled the cup and taking it in his hand, signed to the black girl, saying, “O apple of the eye, let us have a taste of thy fashion, though it be but two words.” So she took the lute and preluded in various modes, then returned to the first and sang the following verses to a lively air:

O eyes, be large with tears and pour them forth amain, For, lo,
for very love my senses fail and wane.
All manner of desire I suffer for his sake I cherish, and my foes
make merry at my pain.
My enviers me forbid the roses of a cheek; And yet I have a heart
that is to roses fain.
Ay, once the cups went round with joyance and delight And to the
smitten lutes, the goblets did we drain,
What time my love kept troth and I was mad for him And in faith’s
heaven, the star of happiness did reign.
But lo, he turned away from me, sans fault of mine! Is there a
bitterer thing than distance and disdain?
Upon his cheeks there bloom a pair of roses red, Blown ready to
be plucked; ah God, those roses twain!

Were't lawful to prostrate oneself to any else Than God, I'd sure
prostrate myself upon the swain.

Then rose the six girls and kissing the ground before their lord, said to him, "Judge thou between us, O our lord!" He looked at their beauty and grace and the difference of their colours and praised God the Most High and glorified Him: then said he, "There is none of you but has read the Koran and learnt to sing and is versed in the chronicles of the ancients and the doings of past peoples; so it is my desire that each of you rise and pointing to her opposite, praise herself and dispraise her rival; that is to say, let the blonde point to the black, the plump to the slender and the yellow to the brunette; and after, the latter shall, each in turn, do the like with the former; and be this illustrated with citations from the Holy Koran and somewhat of anecdotes and verse, so as to show forth your culture and elegance of discourse." Quoth they, "We hear and obey."

So the blonde rose first and pointing at the black, said to her, "Out on thee, blackamoor! It is told that whiteness saith, 'I am the shining light, I am the rising full moon.' My colour is patent and my forehead is resplendent, and of my beauty quoth the poet:

A blonde with smooth and polished cheeks, right delicate and
fair, As if a pearl in beauty hid, as in a shell, she were.
Her shape a splendid Alif is, her smile a medial
Mim And over it her eyebrows make inverted
Nouns, a pair.
Yes, and the glances of her eyes are arrows, and her brows A bow
that therewithal is horned with death and with despair.
If to her cheeks and shape thou pass, her cheeks are roses red,
Sweet basil, ay, and eglantine and myrtles rich and rare.
'Tis of the saplings' wont, to be implanted in the meads But, in
the saplings of thy shape, how many meads are there!

My colour is like the wholesome day and the newly-gathered orange-blossom and the sparkling star; and indeed quoth God the Most High, in His precious book, to His prophet Moses (on whom be peace), 'Put thy hand into thy bosom and it shall come forth white without hurt.' And again He saith, 'As for those whose faces are made white, they are in the mercy of God and dwell for ever therein.' My colour is a miracle and my grace an extreme and my beauty a term. It is in the like of me that clothes show fair and to the like of me that hearts incline. Moreover, in whiteness are many excellences; for instance, the snow falls white from heaven, and it is traditional that white is the most beautiful of colours. The Muslims also glory in white turbans; but I should be tedious, were I to repeat all that may be said in praise of white; little and enough is better than too much. So now I will begin with thy dispraise, O black, O colour of ink and blacksmith's dust, thou whose face is like the crow that brings about lovers' parting! Verily, the poet saith in praise of white and dispraise of black:

Seest not that for their milky hue white pearls in price excel
    And charcoal for a groat a load the folk do buy and sell?
And eke white faces, 'tis well known, do enter Paradise, Whilst
    faces black appointed are to fill the halls of Hell.

And indeed it is told in certain histories, related on the authority of devout men, that Noah (on whom be peace) was sleeping one day, with his sons Ham and Shem seated at his head, when a wind sprang up and lifting his clothes, uncovered his nakedness; whereat Ham laughed and did not cover him; but Shem rose and covered him. Presently, Noah awoke and learning what had passed, blessed Shem and cursed Ham. So Shem's face was whitened and from him sprang the prophets and the orthodox Khalifs and Kings; whilst Ham's face was blackened and he fled forth to the land of Ethiopia, and of his lineage came the blacks. All people are of a mind in affirming the lack of understanding of the blacks, even as saith the adage, 'How shall one find a black having understanding?'"

Quoth her master, "It sufficeth; sit down, thou hast been prodigal." And he signed to the negress, who rose, and pointing at the blonde, said, "Doth thou not know that, in the Koran sent down to His prophet and apostle, is transmitted the saying of God the Most High, 'By the night, when it veileth [the world with darkness], and by the day, when it appeareth in all its glory!' If the night were not more illustrious than the day, why should God swear by it and give it precedence of the day? And indeed those of sense and understanding accept this. Knowst now that black [hair] is the ornament of youth and that, when whiteness descends upon the head, delights pass away and the hour of death draws nigh? Were not black the most illustrious of things, God had not set it in the kernel of the heart and the apple of the eye; and how excellent is the saying of the poet:

An if I cherish the dusky maids, this is the reason why; They
have the hue of the core of the heart and the apple of the eye
And youth; nor in error I eschew the whiteness of the blondes;
For 'tis the colour of hoary hair and shrouds in them shun I.

And that of another:

The brown, not the white, are first in my love And worthiest
eke to be loved of me,
For the colour of damask lips have they, Whilst the white have
the hue of leprosy.

And of a third:

Black women, white of deeds, are like indeed to eyne That, though
jet-black they be, with peerless splendours shine.
If I go mad for her, be not amazed; for black The source of
madness is, when in the feminine.
'Tis as my colour were the middle dark of night; For all no moon
it be, yet brings it light, in fine.

Moreover, is the companying together of lovers good but in the night? Let this quality and excellence suffice thee. What protects lovers from spies and censors like the blackness of the shadows? And nought gives them cause to fear discovery like the whiteness of the dawn. So, how many claims to honour are there not in blackness and how excellent is the saying of the poet:

I visit them, and the mirk of night doth help me to my will And seconds me, but the white of dawn is hostile to me still.

And that of another:

How many a night in joy I've passed with the beloved one, What
while the darkness curtained us about with tresses dun!
Whenas the light of morn appeared, it struck me with affright,
And I to him, 'The Magians lie, who worship fire and sun.'

And saith a third:

He came forth to visit me, shrouding himself in the cloak of the
night, And hastened his steps, as he wended, for caution and
fear and affright.
Then rose I and laid in his pathway my cheek, as a carpet it
were, For abjection, and trailed o'er my traces my skirts,
to efface them from sight.
But lo, the new moon rose and shone, like a nail-paring cleft
from the nail, And all but discovered our loves with the
gleam of her meddlesome light.
And then there betided between us what I'll not discover, i'
faith: So question no more of the matter and deem not of ill
or unright.

And a fourth:

Foregather with thy lover, whilst night your loves may screen;
For that the sun's a telltale, the moon a go-between.

And a fifth:

I love not white women, with fat blown out and overlaid; The girl
of all girls for me is the slender dusky maid.
Let others the elephant mount, if it like them; as for me, I'll
ride but the fine-trained colt on the day of the cavalcade.

And a sixth:

My loved one came to me by night And we did clip and interlace

And lay together through the dark; But, lo, the morning broke
apace.
To God, my Lord, I pray that He Will reunite us of His grace
And make night last to me, what while I hold my love in my
embrace.

Were I to set forth all the praise of blackness, I should be tedious; but little and enough is better than great plenty and too much. As for thee, O blonde, thy colour is that of leprosy and thine embrace is suffocation; and it is of report that frost and intense cold are in Hell for the torment of the wicked. Again, of black things is ink, wherewith is written the word of God; and were is not for black ambergris and black musk, there would be no perfumes to carry to kings. How many glories are there not in blackness and how well saith the poet:

Dost thou not see that musk, indeed, is worth its weight in gold,
Whilst for a dirhem and no more a load of lime is sold?
Black eyes cast arrows at men’s hearts; but whiteness of the
eyes, In man, is judged of all to be unsightly to behold.”

“It sufficeth,” said her master. “Sit down.” So she sat down and he signed to the fat girl, who rose and pointing at the slim girl, uncovered her arms and legs and bared her stomach, showing its creases and the roundness of her navel. Then she donned a shift of fine stuff, that showed her whole body, and said, “Praised be God who created me, for that He beautified my face and made me fat and fair and likened me to branches laden with fruit and bestowed upon me abounding beauty and brightness; and praised be He no less, for that He hath given me the precedence and honoured me, when He speaks of me in His holy book! Quoth the Most High, ‘And he brought a fat calf.’ And indeed He hath made me like unto an orchard, full of peaches and pomegranates. Verily, the townsfolk long for fat birds and eat of them and love not lean birds; so do the sons of Adam desire fat meat and eat of it. How many precious attributes are there not in fatness, and how well saith the poet:

Take leave of thy love, for the caravan, indeed, is on the
start. O man, canst thou bear to say farewell and thus
from her to part?
’Tis as her going were, I trow, but to her neighbour’s house,
The faultless gait of a fat fair maid, that never tires
the heart.

Sawst thou ever one stop at a butcher’s stall, but sought fat meat of him? The wise say, ‘Pleasure is in three things, eating flesh and riding on flesh and the thrusting of flesh into flesh.’ As for thee, O thin one, thy legs are like sparrow’s legs or pokers, and thou art like a cruciform plank or a piece of poor meat; there is nought in thee to gladden the heart; even as saith of thee the poet:

Now God forfend that aught enforce me take for bedfellow A
woman like a foot-rasp, wrapt in palm-fibres and tow!
In every limb she has a horn, that butts me in my sleep, So
that at day-break, bruised and sore, I rise from her and
go.”

“It is enough,” quoth her master. “Sit down.” So she sat down and he signed to the slender girl, who rose, as she were a willow-wand or a bamboo-shoot or a plant of sweet basil, and said, “Praised be God who created me and beautified me and made my embraces the end of all desire and likened me to the branch, to which all hearts incline. If I rise, I rise lightly; if I sit, I sit with grace; I am nimble-witted at a jest and sweeter-souled than cheerfulness [itself]. Never heard I one describe his mistress, saying, ‘My beloved is the bigness of an elephant or like a long wide mountain;’ but rather, ‘My lady hath a slender waist and a slim shape.’

A little food contents me and a little water stays my thirst; my sport is nimble and my habit elegant; for I am sprightlier than the sparrow and lighter-footed than the starling. My favours are the desire of the longing and the delight of the seeker; for I am goodly of shape, sweet of smile and graceful as the willow-wand or the bamboo-cane of the basil-plant; nor is there any can compare with me in grace, even as saith one of me:

Thy shape unto the sapling liken I And set my hope to win thee or to die.
Distraught, I follow thee, and sore afraid, Lest any look on thee with evil eye.

It is for the like of me that lovers run mad and that the longing are distracted. If my lover be minded to draw me to him, I am drawn to him, and if he would have me incline to him, I incline to him and not against him. But as for thee, O fat of body, thine eating is as that of an elephant, and neither much not little contents thee. When thou liest with a man, he hath no ease of thee, nor can he find a way to take his pleasure of thee; for the bigness of thy belly holds him off from clipping thee and the grossness of thy thighs hinders him from coming at thy kaze. What comeliness is there in thy grossness and what pleasantness or courtesy in thy coarse nature? Fat meat is fit for nought but slaughter, nor is there aught therein that calls for praise. If one joke with thee, thou art angry; if one sport with thee, thou art sulky; if thou sleep, thou snorest; if thou walk, thou pantest; if thou eat, thou art never satisfied. Thou art heavier than mountains and fouler than corruption and sin. Thou hast in thee nor movement nor blessing nor thinkest of aught but to eat and sleep. If thou make water, thou scatterest; if thou void, thou gruntest like a bursten wine-skin or a surly elephant. If thou go to the draught-house, thou needest one to wash out thy privy parts and pluck out the hairs; and this is the extreme of laziness and the sign of stupidity. In fine, there is no good thing in thee, and indeed the poet saith of thee:

Heavy and swollen with fat, like a blown-out water-skin, With thighs like the pillars of stone that buttress a mountain's head,
Lo, if she walk in the West, so cumbrous her corpulence is The Eastern hemisphere hears the sound of her heavy tread."

Quoth her master, "It is enough: sit down." So she sat down and he signed to the yellow girl, who rose to her feet and praised God and magnified His name, calling down peace and blessing on the best of His creatures; after which she pointed at the brunette and said to her, "I am praised in the Koran, and the Compassionate One hath described my colour and its excellence over all others in His manifest Book, where He saith, 'A yellow [heifer], pure yellow, whose colour rejoices the beholders.' Wherefore my colour is a portent and my grace an extreme and my beauty a term; for that my colour is the colour of a dinar and of the planets and moons and of apples. My fashion is the fashion of the fair, and the colour of saffron outvies all other colours; so my fashion is rare and my colour wonderful. I am soft of body, and of great price, comprising all attributes of beauty. My colour, in that which exists, is precious as virgin gold, and how many glorious qualities are there not in me! Of the like of me quoth the poet:

Yellow she is, as is the sun that shineth in the sky, And like to
golden dinars, eke, to see, her beauties are.
Nor with her brightness, anywise, can saffron hold compare, And
even the very moon herself her charms outvie by far.

And now I will begin in thy dispraise, O brown of favour! Thy colour is that of the buffalo, and all souls shudder at thy sight. If thy colour be in aught, it is blamed; if it be in food, it is poisoned; for thy colour is that of flies and is a mark of ugliness in dogs. It is, among colours, one which strikes with amazement and is of the signs of mourning. Never heard I of brown gold or brown pearls or brown jewels. If thou enter the wardrobe, thy colour changes, and when thou comest out, thou addest a new ugliness to thine ugliness. Thou art neither black, that thou mayst be known, nor white, that thou mayst be described; and there is no good quality in thee, even as saith of thee the poet:

As a complexion unto her, the hue of soot doth serve; Her mirky
colour is as dust on couriers' feet upcast.
No sooner fall mine eyes on her, thou but a moment's space, Than
troubles and misgivings straight beset me thick and fast."

"Enough," said her master. "Sit down." So she sat down and he signed to the brunette. Now she was endowed with grace and beauty and symmetry and perfection, delicate of body, with coal-back hair, slender shape, rosy, oval cheeks, liquid black eyes, fair face, eloquent tongue, slim waist and heavy buttocks. So she rose and said, "Praised be God who hath created me neither blameably fat nor lankily slender, neither white like leprosy nor yellow like colic nor black like coal, but hath made my colour to be beloved of men of wit; for all the poets praise brunettes in every tongue and exalt their colour over all others. Brown of hue, praiseworthy of qualities; and God bless him who saith:

In the brunettes a meaning is, couldst read its writ aright,
Thine eyes would never again look on others, red or white.
Free-flowing speech and amorous looks would teach Harout
himself The arts of sorcery and spells of magic and of
might.

And saith another:

Give me brunettes; the Syrian spears, so limber and so
straight, Tell of the slender dusky maids, so lithe and
proud of gait.
Languid of eyelids, with a down like silk upon her cheek,
Within her wasting lover's heart she queens it still in
state.

And yet another:

Yea, by my life, such virtues in goodly brownness lie, One spot
thereof makes whiteness the shining moons outvie;
But if the like of whiteness is borrowed, then, for sure, Its
beauty were transmuted unto reproach thereby.
Not with her wine I'm drunken, but with her
tresses bright That make all creatures drunken that
dwell beneath the sky.
Each of her charms doth envy the others; yea, and each To be
the down so silky upon her cheek doth sigh.

And again:

Why should I not incline me unto the silken down On the cheeks
of a dusky maiden, like the cane straight and brown,
Seeing the spot of beauty in waterlilies' cups Is of the poets
fabled to be all beauty's crown?
Yea, and I see all lovers the swarthy-coloured mole, Under the
ebon pupil, do honour and renown.
Why, then, do censors blame me for loving one who's all A mole?
May Allah rid me of every railing clown!

My form is beautiful and my shape slender; kings desire my colour and all love it, rich and poor. I am pleasant, nimble, handsome, elegant, soft of body and great of price. I am perfect in beauty and breeding and eloquence; my aspect is comely and my tongue fluent, my habit light and my sport graceful. As for thee, [O yellow girl,] thou art like unto a mallow of Bab el Louc, yellow and made all of sulphur. Perdition to thee, O pennyworth of sorrel, O rust of copper, O owl's face and food of the damned! Thy bedfellow, for oppression of spirit, is buried in the tombs, and there is no good thing in thee, even as saith the poet of the like of thee:

Paleness is sore on her, for all no illness doth her
fret; My breast is straitened by its sight; ay, and my
head aches yet.
If thou repent thee not, my soul, to punish thee, I vow, I'll
humble thee with a kiss of her face, my teeth on edge
shall set."

"Enough," said her master; "sit down." Then he made peace between them and clad them all in sumptuous dresses of honour and handselled them with precious jewels of land and sea. And never, O Commander of the Faithful, in any place or time have I seen fairer than these six fair damsels.'

When the Khalif El Mamoun heard this story from Mohammed of Bassora, he said to him, 'O Mohammed, knowest thou the abiding-place of these damsels and their master, and canst thou make shift to buy them of him for us?' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' answered he, 'I have heard that their master is wrapped up in them and cannot endure to be parted from them.’ ‘Take threescore thousand dinars, — that is, ten thousand for each girl,—’ rejoined the Khalif, ‘and go to his house and buy them of him.’ So Mohammed took the money and betaking himself to the man of Yemen, acquainted him with the Khalif’s wish. He consented to sell them at that price, to pleasure him, and despatched them to El Mamoun, who assigned them an elegant lodging and used to sit with them therein, marvelling at their beauty and grace, no less than at their varied colours and the excellence of their speech.

After awhile, when their former owner could no longer endure separation from them, he sent a letter to the Khalif, complaining of his ardent love for them and containing, amongst the rest, the following verses:

Six damsels fair and bright have captivated me; My blessing and my peace the six fair maidens greet!
My life, indeed, are they, my hearing and my sight, Yea, and my very drink, my pleasance and my meat.
No other love can bring me solace for their charms, And slumber, after them, no more to me is sweet.
Alas, my long regret, my weeping for their loss! Would I have ne’er been born, to know this sore defeat!
For eyes, bedecked and fair with brows like bended bows, Have smitten me to death with arrows keen and fleet.

When the letter came to El Mamoun’s hands, he clad the six damsels in rich apparel and giving them threescore thousand dinars, sent them back to their master, who rejoiced in them with an exceeding joy, — more by token of the money they brought him, — and abode with them in all delight and pleasance of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies.

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HAROUN ER RASHID AND THE DAMSEL AND ABOU NUWAS.

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid, being one night exceeding restless and oppressed with melancholy thought, went out and walked about his palace, till he came to a chamber, over whose doorway hung a curtain. He raised the curtain and saw, at the upper end of the room, a bed, on which lay something black, as it were a man asleep, with a candle on his right hand and another on his left and by his side a flagon of old wine, over against which stood the cup. The Khalif wondered at this, saying, 'How came yonder black by this wine-service?' Then, drawing near the bed, he found that it was a girl asleep there, veiled with her hair, and uncovering her face, saw that it was like the moon on the night of her full. So he filled a cup of wine and drank it to the roses of her cheeks; then bent over her and kissed a mole on her face, whereupon she awoke and cried out, saying, 'O Trusty One of God,, what is to do?' 'A guest who knocks at thy dwelling by night,' replied the Khalif, '[hoping] that thou wilt give him hospitality till the dawn.' 'It is well,' answered she; 'I will grace the guest with my hearing and my sight.'

So she brought the wine and they drank it together; after which she took the lute and tuning it, preluded in one-and-twenty modes, then returning to the first, struck a lively measure and sang the following verses:

The tongue of passion in my heart bespeaks thee for my soul,
Telling I love thee with a love that nothing can control.
I have an eye, that testifies unto my sore disease, And eke a
heart with parting wrung, a-throb for love and dole.
Indeed, I cannot hide the love that frets my life away; Longing
increases still on me, my tears for ever roll.
Ah me, before the love of thee, I knew not what love was; But
God's decree must have its course on every living soul.

Then said she, 'O Commander of the Faithful, I am a wronged woman.' 'How so?' quoth he, 'and who hath wronged thee?' She answered, ‘Thy son bought me awhile ago, for ten thousand dirhems, meaning to give me to thee; but the daughter of thine uncle sent him the price aforesaid and bade him shut me up from thee in this chamber.’ Whereupon, ‘Ask a boon of me,’ said the Khalif; and she, ‘I ask thee to lie to-morrow night with me.’ ‘If it be the will of God,’ replied the Khalif, and leaving her, went away.

Next morning, he repaired to his sitting-room and called for Abou Nuwas, but found him not and sent his chamberlain to seek for him. The chamberlain found him in pawn, in a tavern, for a score of a thousand dirhems, that he had spent on a certain boy, and questioned him. So he told him what had befallen him with the boy and how he had spent a thousand dirhems upon him; whereupon quoth the chamberlain, ‘Show him to me; and if he be worth this, thou art excused.’ ‘Wait awhile,’ replied the poet, ‘and thou shalt see him presently.’ As they were talking, up came the boy, clad in a white tunic, under which was another of red and yet another of black. When Abou Nuwas saw him, he sighed and repeated the following verses:

To me he appeared in a garment of white, His eyes and his
eyelids with languor bedight.
Quoth I, “Dost thou pass and salutest me not? Though God knows
thy greeting were sweet to my spright.
Be He blessed who mantled with roses thy cheeks, Who creates,
without let, what He will, of His might!”
“Leave prating,” he answered; “for surely my Lord Is wondrous
of working, sans flaw or dissight.
Yea, truly, my garment is even as my face And my fortune, each
white upon white upon white.”

When the boy heard this, he put off the white tunic and appeared in the red one; whereupon Abou Nuwas redoubled in expressions of admiration and repeated the following verses:

Appeared in a garment, the colour of flame, A foeman of mine,
“The beloved,” by name.
“Thou’rt a full moon,” I said in my wonder, “And com’st In a

garment that putteth the roses to shame.
Hath the red of thy cheek clad that vest upon thee Or in
heart’s blood of lovers hast tinctured the same?”
Quoth he, “’Twas the sun lately gave me the wede; From the
rubicund hue of his setting it came.
So my garment and wine and the colour so clear Of my cheek are
as flame upon flame upon flame.”

Then the boy doffed the red tunic and abode in the black; whereupon Abou Nuwas redoubled in attention to him and repeated the following verses:

He came in a tunic all sable of hue And shone out, thus veiled
in the dark, to men’s view.
“Thou passest,” quoth I, “without greeting, and thus Givest
cause to exult to the rancorous crew.
Thy garment resembles thy locks and my lot, Yea, blackness and
blackness and blackness thereto.”

Then the chamberlain returned to Haroun er Reshid and acquainted him with the poet’s predicament, whereupon he bade him take a thousand dirhems and go and take him out of pawn. So he returned to Abou Nuwas and paying his score, carried him to the Khalif, who said, ‘Make me some verses containing the words, “O Trusty One of God, what is to do?”’ ‘I hear and obey, O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered he and improvised the following verses:

My night was long for sleeplessness and care. Weary I was and
many my thoughts were.
I rose and walked awhile in my own place, Then midst the
harem’s cloistered courts did fare,
Until I chanced on somewhat black and found It was a damsel
shrouded in her hair.
God bless her for a shining moon! Her shape A willow-wand, and
pudour veiled the fair.
I quaffed a cup to her; then, drawing near, I kissed the mole
upon her cheek so rare.

She woke and swayed about in her amaze, Even as the branch
sways in the rain-fraught air;
Then rose and said, "O Trusty One of God, What is to do, and
thou, what dost thou there?"
"A guest", quoth I, "that sues to thee, by night, For shelter
till the hour of morning-prayer."
"Gladly," she said; "with hearing and with sight To grace the
guest, my lord, I will not spare."

'Confound thee!' cried the Khalif. 'It is as if thou hadst been present with us.' Then he took him by the hand and carried him to the damsel, who was clad in a dress and veil of blue. When Abou Nuwas saw her, he was profuse in expressions of admiration and recited the following verses:

Say to the lovely maid, i' the veil of azure dight, "By Allah,
O my life, have pity on my plight!
For when the fair entreats her lover cruelly, Sighs of all
longing rend his bosom day and night.
So, by thy charms and by the whiteness of thy cheek, Have ruth
upon a heart for love consumed outright.
Incline to him and be his stay 'gainst stress of love, Nor let
what fools may say find favour in thy sight."

Then the damsel set wine before the Khalif and taking the lute, played a lively measure and sang the following verses:

Wilt thou be just in thy love to others and deal with me
Unjustly and put me away, while others have joy in thee?
Were there for lovers a judge, to whom I might complain Of
thee, he would do me justice and judge with equity.
If thou forbid me to pass thy door, yet from afar To greet thee
and to bless, at least, I shall be free.

The Khalif bade her ply Abou Nuwas with wine, till he lost his wits; when he gave him a full cup, and he drank a draught of it and held the cup in his hand. Er Reshid bade the girl take the cup from him and conceal it; so she took it and hid it between her thighs. Then he drew his sword and standing at the poet's head, pricked him with the point; whereupon he awoke and saw the Khalif standing over him, with a drawn sword. At this sight the fumes of the wine fled from his head and the Khalif said to him, 'Make me some verses and tell me therein what is come of thy cup; or I will cut off thy head.' So he improvised the following verses:

My tale, indeed is hard to tell: The thief was none but yon gazelle.
She stole my cup of wine, whereof My lips had drunken but one spell,
And hid it in a place, for which My heart's desire's unspeakable.
I name it not, for awe of him, In whom the right thereof doth dwell.

'Confound thee!' quoth the Khalif. 'How knewst thou that? But we accept what thou sayst.' Then he ordered him a dress of honour and a thousand dinars, and he went away, rejoicing.

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THE MAN WHO STOLE THE DISH OF GOLD IN WHICH THE DOG ATE.

There was once a man, who was overborne with debt, and his case was straitened upon him, so that he left his people and family and went forth in distraction. He wandered on at random till he came to a high-walled and splendidly built city and entered it in a state of wretchedness and despair, gnawed with hunger and worn with the toil of his journey. As he passed through one of the streets, he saw a company of notables going along; so he followed them, till they entered a house like to a royal palace. He entered with them, and they stayed not till they came in presence of a man of the most dignified and majestic aspect, seated at the upper end of a saloon and surrounded by pages and servants, as he were of the sons of the Viziers. When he saw the visitors, he rose and received them with honour; but the poor man was confounded at the goodliness of the place and the crowd of servants and attendants and drawing back, in fear and perplexity, sat down apart in a place afar off, where none should see him.

After awhile, in came a man with four hunting-dogs, clad in various kinds of silk and brocade and having on their necks collars of gold with chains of silver, and tied up each dog in a place set apart for him; after which he went out and presently returned with four dishes of gold, full of rich meats, one of which he set before each dog. Then he went away and left them, whilst the poor man began to eye the food, for stress of hunger, and would fain have gone up to one of the dogs and eaten with him; but fear of them withheld him. Presently, one of the dogs looked at him and God the Most High inspired him with a knowledge of his case; so he drew back from the platter and beckoned to the man, who came and ate, till he was satisfied. Then he would have withdrawn, but the dog pushed the dish towards him with his paw, signing to him to take it and what was left in it for himself. So the man took the dish and leaving the house, went his way, and none followed him. Then he journeyed to another city, where he sold the dish and buying goods with the price, returned to his own town. There he sold his stock and paid his debts;

and he prospered and became rich and at his ease.

After some years had passed, he said to himself, 'Needs must I repair to the city of the owner of the dish, which the dog bestowed on me, and carry him its price, together with a fit and handsome present.' So he took the price of the dish and a suitable present and setting out, journeyed night and day, till he came to the city and entering, went straight to the place where the man's house had been; but lo, he found there nothing but mouldering ruins and dwelling-places laid waste, over which the raven croaked; for the place was desert and the environs changed out of knowledge. At this, his heart and soul were troubled and he repeated the words of him who saith:

The privy chambers are void of all their hidden store, As
hearts of the fear of God and the virtues all of yore.
Changed is the vale and strange to me are its gazelles, And
those I knew of old its sandhills are no more.

And those of another:

The phantom of Saada came to me by night, near the break of
day, And roused me, whenas my comrades all in the desert
sleeping lay.
But, when I awoke to the dream of the night, that came to visit
me, I found the air void and the wonted place of our
rendezvous far away.

When he saw what the hand of time had manifestly done with the place, leaving but traces of the things that had been aforetime, the testimony of his eyes made it needless for him to enquire of the case; so he turned away and seeing a wretched man, in a plight that made the skin quake and would have moved the very rock to pity, said to him, 'Harkye, sirrah! What have time and fortune done with the master of this place? Where are his shining full moons and splendid stars; and what is the cause of the ruin that is come upon his abode, so that but the walls thereof remain?' Quoth the other, 'He is the miserable wretch thou seest bewailing that which hath befallen him. Knowest thou not the words of the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve), wherein is a lesson to him who will profit by it and an admonition to whoso will be guided thereby in the right way? “Verily it is the way of God the Most High to raise up nothing of this world, except He cast it down again.” If thou enquire of the cause of this thing, indeed, it is no wonder, considering the vicissitudes of fortune. I was the master of this place and its builder and founder and owner and lord of its shining full moons and radiant damsels and of all its splendid circumstance an magnificent garniture; but Fortune turned and did away from me wealth and servants, overwhelming me unawares with disasters unforeseen and bringing me to this sorry plight. But there must needs be some reason for this thy question: tell it me and leave wondering.’

So the other told him the whole story, sore concerned at what he heard and saw, and added, ‘I have brought thee a present such as souls desire, and the price of thy dish of gold, that I took; for it was the cause of my becoming rich, after poverty, and of the reinstating of my dwelling-place, after desolation, and of the doing away of my trouble and straitness from me.’ But the poor man shook his head, groaning and weeping and lamenting, and answered, ‘O man, methinks thou art mad; for this is not the fashion of a man of understanding. How should a dog of mine make gift to thee of a dish of gold and I receive back its price? This were indeed a strange thing! By Allah, were I in the straitest misery and unease, I would not accept of thee aught, no, not the worth of a nail-paring! So return whence thou camest, in health and safety.’

The merchant kissed his feet and taking leave of him, returned whence he came, praising him and reciting the following verse:

The men and eke the dogs are gone and vanished all. Peace be
upon the men and dogs, whate’er befall!

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THE SHARPER OF ALEXANDRIA AND THE MASTER OF POLICE.

There was once, in the coast-fortress of Alexandria, a Master of Police, Husameddin by name, who was one night sitting in his seat of office, when there came in to him a trooper, who said to him, ‘Know, O my lord, that I entered the city this night and alighted at such a khan and slept there, till a third part of the night was past, when I awoke and found my saddle-bags cut open and a purse of a thousand dinars stolen from them.’ No sooner had he done speaking than the magistrate called his officers and bade them lay hands on all in the khan and clap them in prison till the morning; and on the morrow, he caused bring the instruments of torment and sending for the prisoners, was about to torture them, [to make them confess], in the presence of the owner of the stolen money, when, behold, a man pressed through the crowd and coming up to the chief of the police, said, ‘O Amir, let these folk go, for they are wrongly accused. It was I who robbed the trooper, and here is the purse I stole from his saddle-bags.’ So saying, he pulled out the purse from his sleeve and laid it before Husameddin, who said to the soldier, ‘Take thy money; thou hast no ground of complaint now against the people of the khan.’ Thereupon the latter and all who were present fell to blessing the thief and praising him; but he said, ‘O Amir, the skill is not in that I came to thee and brought thee the purse, but in taking it a second time from the trooper.’ ‘And how didst thou take it, O sharper?’ asked Husameddin.

‘O Amir,’ replied the thief, ‘I was standing in the money-changers’ bazaar at Cairo, when I saw yonder man receive the gold and put it in his purse; so I followed him from street to street, but found no occasion of stealing it from him. Then he left Cairo and I followed him from place to place, casting about by the way to rob him, but without avail, till he entered this city and I followed him to the khan. I took up my lodging beside him and watched him till he fell asleep and I heard him snoring, when I went softly up to him and cutting open his saddlebags with this knife, took the purse thus—’

So saying, he put out his hand and took the purse from before the chief of the police, whilst the latter and the trooper and the folk drew back, watching him and thinking he would show them how he took the purse from the saddle-bags; but, of a sudden, he broke into a run and threw himself into a reservoir hard by. The chief of the police called to his officers to pursue him, but before they could put off their clothes and descend the steps, he had made off; and they sought for him, but found him not; for the streets of Alexandria all communicate one with another. So they came back, empty-handed, and the chief of the police said to the trooper, ‘Thou hast no recourse against the folk; for thou foundest him who robbed thee and receivedst back thy money, but didst not keep it.’ So the trooper went away, having lost his money, whilst the folk were delivered from his hands and those of the chief of the police; and all this was of the favour of God the Most High.

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EL MELIK EN NASIR AND THE THREE MASTERS OF POLICE.

El Melik en Nasir once sent for the chiefs of the police of New Cairo, Boulac and Old Cairo and said to them, ‘I wish each of you to tell me the most remarkable thing that hath befallen him during his term of office.’ ‘We hear and obey,’ answered they. Then said the chief of the police of New Cairo, ‘O our lord the Sultan, the most remarkable thing that befell me, during my term of office, was on this wise:

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Story of the Chief of the Police of New Cairo.

There were once, in this city, two men apt to bear witness in matters of blood and wounds; but they were both given to wine and women and debauchery; nor, do what I would, could I succeed in bringing them to account. So I charged the vintners and confectioners and fruiterers and chandlers and bagnio-keepers to acquaint me of these two, when ever they should anywhere be engaged in drinking or debauchery, whether together or apart, and that, if they or either of them bought of them aught for the purpose of carousal, they should not conceal it from me. And they replied, “We hear and obey.”

One night, a man came to me and said, “O my lord, know that the two witnesses are in such a house in such a street, engaged in sore wickedness.” So I disguised myself and went out, accompanied by none but my page, to the street in question. When I came to the house, I knocked at the door, whereupon a slave-girl came out and opened to me, saying, “Who art thou?” I made her no answer, but entered and saw the two witnesses and the master of the house sitting, and lewd women with them, and great plenty of wine before them. When they saw me, they rose to receive me, without showing the least alarm, and made much of me, seating me in the place of honour and saying to me, “Welcome for an illustrious guest and a pleasant cup-companion!”

Presently, the master of the house went out and returning after awhile with three hundred dinars, said to me, without the least fear, “O my lord, it is, we know, in thy power both to disgrace and punish us; but this will bring thee nothing but weariness. So thou wouldst do better to take this money and protect us; for God the Most High is named the Protector and loveth those of His servants who protect each other; and thou shalt have thy reward in the world to come.” The money tempted me and I said in myself, “I will take the money and protect them this once; but, if ever again I have them in my power, I will take my wreak of them.”

So I took the money and went away; but, next day, one of the Cadi’s serjeants came to me and cited me before the court. I accompanied him thither, knowing not the meaning of the summons;

and when I came into the Cadi's presence, I saw the two witnesses and the master of the house sitting by him. The latter rose and sued me for three hundred dinars, nor was it in my power to deny the debt; for he produced a written obligation and the two others testified against me that I owed the amount.

Their evidence satisfied the Cadi and he ordered me to pay the money; nor did I leave the Court till they had of me the three hundred dinars. So I went away, in the utmost wrath and confusion, vowing vengeance against them and repenting that I had not punished them.'

Then rose the chief of the Boulac police and said, 'As for me, O our lord the Sultan, the most remarkable thing that befell me, during my term of office, was as follows:

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Story of the Chief of the Boulac Police.

I was once in debt to the amount of three hundred thousand dinars, and being distressed thereby, I sold what was behind me and what was before me and all I could lay my hands on, but could raise no more than a hundred thousand dinars and abode in great perplexity. One night, as I sat at home, in this state of mind, there came a knocking at the gate; so I said to one of my servants, "See who is at the door." He went out and returned, pale and trembling in every nerve; so I said to him, "What ails thee?" "There is a man at the door, seeking thee," answered he. "He is half naked, clad in skins, with a sword and a knife in his girdle, and with him are a company of the same fashion." So I took my sword and going out to see who these were, found them as the boy had reported and said to them, "What is your business?" "We are thieves," answered they, "and have made great purchase to-night and appointed it to thy use, that thou mayst pay therewith the debts that oppress thee and free thyself from thy distress." "Where is it?" asked I; and they brought me a great chest, full of vessels of gold and silver; which when I saw, I rejoiced and said in myself, "It were ungenerous to let them go away empty-handed."

So I took the hundred thousand dinars I had by me and gave it to them, thanking them; and they took it and went their way, under cover of the night. But, on the morrow, when I examined the contents of the chest, I found them gilded brass and pewter, worth five hundred dirhems at the most; and this was grievous to me, for I had lost what money I had, and trouble was added to my trouble.'

Then rose the chief of the police of Old Cairo and said, 'O our lord the Sultan, the most remarkable thing that befell me, during my term of office, was on this wise:

Story of the Chief of the Old Cairo Police

I once had ten thieves hanged, each on his own gibbet, and set guards to watch them and hinder the folk from taking them down. Next morning, when I came to look at them, I found two bodies hanging from one gibbet and said to the guards, "Who did this, and where is the tenth gibbet?" But they denied all knowledge of it, and I was about to beat them, when they said, “Know, O Amir, that we fell asleep last night, and when we awoke, we found one of the bodies gone, gibbet and all, whereat we were alarmed, fearing thy wrath. But, presently, up came a peasant, jogging along on his ass; so we laid hands on him and killing him, hung his body upon this gibbet, in the stead of the missing thief.”

When I heard this, I marvelled and said to them, “Had he aught with him?” “He had a pair of saddle-bags on the ass,” answered they. “What was in them?” asked I and they said, “We know not.” Quoth I, “Bring them hither.” So they brought them to me and I bade open them, when, behold, therein was the body of a murdered man, cut in pieces. When I saw this, I marvelled and said in myself, “Glory be to God! The cause of the hanging of this peasant was no other but his crime against this murdered man; and the Lord is no unjust dealer with [His] servants.’”

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THE THIEF AND THE MONEY-CHANGER

A money-changer, bearing a bag of money, once passed by a company of thieves, and one of the latter said to the others, ‘I know how to steal yonder bag of money.’ ‘How wilt thou do it?’ asked they. ‘Look,’ answered he and followed the money- changer, till he entered his house, when he threw the bag on a shelf and went into the draught-house, to do an occasion, calling to the slave-girl to bring him an ewer of water. So she took the jug and followed him to the draught-house, leaving the door open, whereupon the thief entered and taking the bag of money, made off with it to his companions, to whom he related what had passed. ‘By Allah,’ said they, ‘this was a clever trick! It is not every one could do it: but, presently, the money-changer will come out of the draught-house and missing the bag of money, will beat the slave-girl and torture her grievously. Meseems thou hast at present done nothing worthy of praise; but, if thou be indeed a sharper, thou wilt return and save the girl from being beaten.’ ‘If it be the will of God,’ answered the thief, ‘I will save both the girl and the purse.’

Then he went back to the money-changer’s house and found him beating the girl, because of the bag of money; so he knocked at the door and the man said, ‘Who is there? Quoth the thief, ‘I am the servant of thy neighbour in the bazaar.’ So he came out to him and said, ‘What is thy business?’ ‘My master salutes thee,’ replied the thief, ‘and says to thee, “Surely, thou art mad to cast the like of this bag of money down at the door of thy shop and go away and leave it! Had a stranger chanced on it, he had made off with it.” And except my master had seen it and taken care of it, it had been lost to thee.’ So saying, he pulled out the purse and showed it to the money-changer, who said, ‘That is indeed my purse,’ and put out his hand to take it; but the thief said, ‘By Allah, I will not give it thee, till thou write me a receipt; for I fear my master will not believe that thou hast duly received the purse, except I bring him a writing to that effect, under thy hand and seal.’ So the money-changer went in to write the receipt; but, in the meantime, the thief made off with the bag of money, having [thus] saved the slave-girl her beating.

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THE CHIEF OF THE COUS POLICE AND THE SHARPER

It is related that Alaeddin, chief of the police of Cous, was sitting one night in his house, when a man of comely aspect and dignified port, followed by a servant bearing a chest upon his head, came to the door and said to one of the young men, ‘Go in and tell the Amir that I would speak with him privily.’ So the servant went in and told his master, who bade admit the visitor. When he entered the Amir saw him to be a man of good appearance and carriage; so he received him with honour, seating him beside himself, and said to him, ‘What is thy business?’ ‘I am a highwayman,’ replied the stranger, ‘and am minded to repent at thy hands and turn to God the Most High but I would have thee help me to this, for that I am in thy district and under thine eye. I have here a chest, wherein is that which is worth nigh forty thousand dinars; and none hath so good a right to it as thou; so do thou take it and give me in exchange a thousand dinars of thy money, lawfully gotten, that I may have a little capital, to aid me in my repentance, and not be forced to resort to sin for subsistence; and with God the Most High be thy reward!’ So saying he opened the chest and showed the Amir that it was full of trinkets and jewels and bullion and pearls, whereat he was amazed and rejoiced greatly. Then he cried out to his treasurer, to bring him a purse of a thousand dinars, and gave it to the highwayman, who thanked him and went his way, under cover of the night.

On the morrow, the Amir sent for the chief of the goldsmiths and showed him the chest and what was therein; but the goldsmith found it nothing but pewter and brass and the jewels and pearls all of glass; at which Alaeddin was sore chagrined and sent in quest of the highwayman; but none could come at him.

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IBRAHIM BEN EL MEHDI AND THE MERCHANT'S SISTER.

The Khalif El Mamoun once said to [his uncle] Ibrahim ben el Mehdi, 'Tell us the most remarkable thing that thou hast ever seen.' 'I hear and obey, O Commander of the Faithful,' answered he. 'Know that I went out one day, a-pleasuring, and my course brought me to a place where I smelt the odour of food. My soul longed for it and I halted, perplexed and unable either to go on or enter. Presently, I raised my eyes and saw a lattice window and behind it a hand and wrist, the like of which for beauty I never saw. The sight turned my brain and I forgot the smell of the food and began to cast about how I should get access to the house. After awhile, I espied a tailor hard by and going up to him, saluted him. He returned my greeting and I said to him, "Whose house is that?" "It belongs to a merchant called such an one," answered he, "who consorteth with none but merchants."

As we were talking, up came two men of comely and intelligent aspect, riding on horseback; and the tailor told me their names and that they were the merchant's most intimate friends. So I spurred my horse towards them and said to them, "May I be your ransom! Abou such an one waits for you!" And I rode with them to the gate, where I entered and they also. When the master of the house saw me, he doubted not but I was their friend; so he welcomed me and made me sit down in the highest room. Then they brought the table of food and I said, "God hath granted me my desire of the food; and now there remain the hand and wrist." After awhile, we removed, for carousal, to another room, which I found full of all manner of rarities; and the host paid me particular attention, addressing his conversation to me, for that he deemed me a guest of his guests; whilst the latter, in like manner, made much of me, taking me for a friend of the master of the house.

When we had drunk several cups of wine, there came in to us a damsel of the utmost beauty and elegance, as she were a willow-wand, who took a lute and playing a lively measure, sang the following verses:

Is it not passing strange, indeed, one house should hold us
tway And still thou drawst not near to me nor yet a word
dost say,
Except the secrets of the souls and hearts that broken be And
entrails blazing in the fires of love, the eye bewray
With meaning looks and knitted brows and eyelids languishing
And hands that salutation sign and greeting thus convey?

When I heard this, my entrails were stirred and I was moved to delight, for the excess of her grace and the beauty of the verses she sang; and I envied her her skill and said, "There lacketh somewhat to thee, O damsel!" Whereupon she threw the lute from her hand, in anger, and cried, "Since when do you use to bring ill-mannered fools into your assemblies?" Then I repented of what I had done, seeing that the others were vexed with me, and said in myself, "My hopes are at an end;" and I saw no way of quitting myself of reproach but to call for a lute, saying, "I will show you what escaped her in the air she sang." So they brought me a lute and I tuned it and sang the following verses:

This is thy lover distraught, absorbed in his passion and pain;
Thy lover, the tears of whose eyes run down on his body
like rain.
One hand to his heart ever pressed, whilst the other the
Merciful One Imploreth, so He of His grace may grant him
his hope to attain.
O thou, that beholdest a youth for passion that's perished,
thine eye And thy hand are the cause of his death and yet
might restore him again.

When the damsel heard this, she sprang up and throwing herself at my feet, kissed them and said, "It is thine to excuse, O my lord! By Allah, I knew not thy quality nor heard I ever the like of this fashion!" And they all extolled me and made much of me, being beyond measure delighted, and besought me to sing again. So I sang a lively air, whereupon they all became as drunken men, and their wits left them. Then the guests departed to their homes and I abode alone with the host and the girl. The former drank some cups with me, then said to me, “O my lord, my life hath been wasted, in that I have not known the like of thee till now. By Allah, then, tell me who thou art, that I may know who is the boon-companion whom God hath bestowed on me this night.”

I would not at first tell him my name and returned him evasive answers; but he conjured me, till I told him who I was; whereupon he sprang to his feet and said, “Indeed, I wondered that such excellence should belong to any but the like of thee; and Fortune hath done me a service for which I cannot avail to thank her. But, belike, this is a dream; for how could I hope that the family of the Khalifate should visit me in my own house and carouse with me this night?” I conjured him to be seated; so he sat down and began to question me, in the most courteous terms, as to the cause of my visit. So I told him the whole matter, concealing nothing, and said to him, “Verily, I have had my desire of the food, but not of the hand and wrist.” Quoth he, “Thou shalt have thy desire of them also, so God will.” Then said he to the slave-girl, “Bid such an one come down.” And he called his slave-girls down, one by one and showed them to me; but I saw not my mistress among them, and he said, “O my lord, there is none left save my mother and sister; but, by Allah, I must needs have them also down and show them to thee.”

I marvelled at his courtesy and large-heartedness and said, “May I be thy ransom! Begin with thy sister.” “Willingly,” replied he. So she came down and behold, it was she whose hand and wrist I had seen. “May God make me thy ransom!” said I. “This is the damsel whose hand and wrist I saw at the lattice.” Then he sent at once for witnesses and bringing out two myriads of dinars, said to the witnesses, “This our lord Ibrahim ben el Mehdi, uncle of the Commander of the Faithful, seeks the hand of my sister such an one, and I call you to witness that I marry her to him and that he has endowed her with a dowry of ten thousand dinars.” And he said to me, “I give thee my sister in marriage, at the dowry aforesaid.” “I consent,” answered I. Whereupon he gave one of the bags to her and the other to the witnesses, and said to me, “O my lord, I desire to array a chamber for thee; where thou mayst lie with thy wife.” But I was abashed at his generosity and was ashamed to foregather with her in his house; so I said, “Equip her and send her to my house.” And by thy life, O Commander of the Faithful, he sent me such an equipage with her, that my house was too strait to hold it, for all its greatness! And I begot on her this boy that stands before thee.’

The Khalif marvelled at the merchant’s generosity and said, ‘Gifted of God is he! Never heard I of his like.’ And he bade Ibrahim bring him to court, that he might see him. So he brought him and the Khalif conversed with him; and his wit and good breeding so pleased him, that he made him one of his chief officers.

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THE WOMAN WHOSE HANDS WERE CUT OFF FOR THAT SHE GAVE ALMS TO THE POOR.

A certain King once made proclamation to the people of his realm, saying, ‘If any of you give alms of aught, I will assuredly cut off his hand;’ wherefore all the people abstained from alms-giving, and none could give to any.

One day a beggar accosted a certain woman (and indeed hunger was sore upon him) and said to her, ‘Give me an alms.’ ‘How can I give thee aught,’ answered she, ‘when the King cutteth off the hands of all who give alms?’ But he said, ‘I conjure thee by God the Most High, give me an alms.’ So, when he adjured her by God, she had compassion on him and gave him two cakes of bread. The King heard of this; so he called her before him and cut off her hands, after which she returned to her house.

A while after, the King said to his mother, ‘I have a mind to take a wife; so do thou marry me to a fair woman.’ Quoth she, ‘There is among our female slaves one who is unsurpassed in beauty; but she hath a grievous blemish.’ ‘What is that?’ asked the King; and his mother answered, ‘She hath had both her hands cut off.’ Said he, ‘Let me see her.’ So she brought her to him, and he was ravished by her and married her and went in to her; and she brought him a son.

Now this was the woman, who had her hands cut off for alms-giving; and when she became queen, her fellow-wives envied her and wrote to the King [who was then absent] that she was unchaste; so he wrote to his mother, bidding her carry the woman into the desert and leave her there. The old queen obeyed his commandment and abandoned the woman and her son in the desert; whereupon she fell to weeping and wailing exceeding sore for that which had befallen her. As she went along, with the child at her neck, she came to a river and knelt down to drink, being overcome with excess of thirst, for fatigue and grief; but, as she bent her head, the child fell into the water.

Then she sat weeping sore for her child, and as she wept, there came up two men, who said to her, ‘What makes thee weep?’ Quoth she, ‘I had a child at my neck, and he hath fallen into the water.’

‘Wilt thou that we bring him out to thee?’ asked they, and she answered, ‘Yes.’ So they prayed to God the Most High, and the child came forth of the water to her, safe and sound. Quoth they, ‘Wilt thou that God restore thee thy hands as they were?’ ‘Yes,’ replied she: whereupon they prayed to God, blessed and exalted be He! and her hands were restored to her, goodlier than before. Then said they, ‘Knowst thou who we are?’ ‘God [only] is all-knowing,’ answered she; and they said, ‘We are thy two cakes of bread, that thou gavest in alms to the beggar and which were the cause of the cutting off of thy hands. So praise thou God the Most High, for that He hath restored thee thy hands and thy child.’ So she praised God the Most High and glorified Him.

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THE DEVOUT ISRAELITE.

There was once a devout man of the children of Israel, whose family span cotton; and he used every day to sell the yarn they span and buy fresh cotton, and with the profit he bought the day's victual for his household. One day, he went out and sold the day's yarn as usual, when there met him one of his brethren, who complained to him of want; so he gave him the price of the yarn and returned, empty-handed, to his family, who said to him, 'Where is the cotton and the food?' Quoth he, 'Such an one met me and complained to me of want; so I gave him the price of the yarn.' And they said, 'How shall we do? We have nothing to sell.' Now they had a broken platter and a jar; so he took them to the market; but none would buy them of him.

Presently, as he stood in the market, there came up a man with a stinking, swollen fish, which no one would buy of him, and he said to the Jew, 'Wilt thou sell me thine unsaleable ware for mine?' 'Yes,' answered the Jew and giving him the jar and platter, took the fish and carried it home to his family, who said, 'What shall we do with this fish?' Quoth he, 'We will broil it and eat of it, till it please God to provide for us.' So they took it and ripping open its belly, found therein a great pearl and told the Jew, who said, 'See if it be pierced. If so, it belongs to some one of the folk; if not, it is a provision of God for us.' So they examined it and found it unpierced.

On the morrow, the Jew carried it to one of his brethren, who was skilled in jewels, and he said, 'Whence hadst thou this pearl?' 'It was a gift of God the Most High to us,' replied the Jew, and the other said, 'It is worth a thousand dirhems, and I will give thee that sum; but take it to such an one, for he hath more money and skill than I.' So the Jew took it to the jeweller, who said, 'It is worth threescore and ten thousand dirhems and no more. Then he paid him that sum and the Jew hired two porters to carry the money to his house. As he came to his door, a beggar accosted him, saying, 'Give me of that which God the Most High hath given thee.' Quoth the Jew, 'But yesterday, we were even as thou; take half the money.' So he made two parts of it, and each took his half. Then said the beggar, 'Take back thy money and God prosper thee in it; I am a messenger, whom thy Lord hath sent to try thee.’ Quoth the Jew, ‘To God be the praise and the thanks!’ and abode with his family in all delight of life, till death.

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ABOU HASSAN EZ ZIYADI AND THE MAN FROM KHORASSAN.

Quoth Abou Hassan ez Ziyadi, ‘I was once in very needy case, and the baker and grocer and other purveyors importuned me, so that I was in sore straits and knew of no resource nor what to do. Things being thus, there came in to me one day one of my servants and said to me, “There is a man, a pilgrim, at the door, who seeks admission to thee.” Quoth I, “Admit him.” So he came in and behold, he was a native of Khorassan. We exchanged salutations and he said to me, “Art thou Abou Hassan ez Ziyadi?” “Yes,” answered I. “What is thy business?” Quoth he, “I am a stranger and am minded to make the pilgrimage; but I have with me a great sum of money, which is burdensome to me. So I wish to deposit with thee these ten thousand dirhems, whilst I make the pilgrimage and return. If the caravan return and thou see me not, know that I am dead, in which case the money is a gift from me to thee; but if I come back, it shall be mine.” “Be it as thou wilt,” answered I, “so it please God the Most High.” So he brought out a leather bag and I said to the servant, “Fetch the scales.” He brought them and the man weighed out the money and handed it to me, after which he went his way. Then I called the tradesmen and paid them what I owed and spent freely, saying in myself, “By the time he returns, God will have succoured me with one or another of His bounties.” However, next day, the servant came in to me and said, “Thy friend the man from Khorassan is at the door.”

“Admit him,” answered I. So he came in and said to me, “I had thought to make the pilgrimage; but news hath reached me of the death of my father, and I have resolved to return; so give me the money I deposited with thee yesterday.” When I heard this, I was troubled and perplexed beyond measure and knew not what reply to make him; for, if I denied it, he would put me to my oath, and I should be shamed in the world to come; whilst, if I told him that I had spent the money, he would make an outcry and disgrace me. So I said to him, “God give thee health! This my house is no stronghold nor place of safe custody for this money. When I received thy leather bag, I sent it to one with whom it now is; so do thou return to us to-morrow and take thy money, if it be the will of God."

So he went away, and I passed the night in sore concern, because of his return to me. Sleep visited me not nor could I close my eyes: so I rose and bade the boy saddle me the mule. "O my lord," answered he, "it is yet but the first watch of the night." So I returned to bed, but sleep was forbidden to me and I ceased not to awaken the boy and he to put me off, till break of day, when he saddled me the mule, and I mounted and rode out, not knowing whither to go. I threw the reins on the mule's shoulders and gave myself up to anxiety and melancholy thought, whilst she fared on with me to the eastward of Baghdad. Presently, as I went along, I saw a number of people in front and turned aside into another path to avoid them; but they, seeing that I wore a professor's hood, followed me and hastening up to me, said, "Knowest thou the lodging of Abou Hassan ez Ziyadi?" "I am he," answered I; and they rejoined, "The Commander of the Faithful calls for thee." Then they carried me before El Mamoun, who said to me, "Who art thou?" Quoth I, "I am a professor of the law and traditions, and one of the associates of the Cadi Abou Yousuf." "How art thou called?" asked the Khalif. "Abou Hassan ez Ziyadi," answered I, and he said, "Expound to me thy case."

So I told him how it was with me and he wept sore and said to me, "Out on thee! The Apostle of God (whom may He bless and preserve) would not let me sleep this night, because of thee; for he appeared to me in my first sleep and said to me, 'Succour Abou Hassan ez Ziyadi.' Whereupon I awoke and knowing thee not, went to sleep again; but he came to me a second time and said to me, 'Woe to thee! Succour Abou Hassan ez Ziyadi.' I awoke a second time, but knew thee not, so went to sleep again; and he came to me a third time and still I knew thee not and went to sleep again. Then he came to me once more and said, 'Out on thee! Succour Abou Hassan ez Ziyadi!' After that I dared not go to sleep again, but watched the rest of the night and aroused my people and sent them in all directions in quest of thee." Then he gave me ten thousand dirhems, saying, "This is for the Khorassani," and other ten thousand, saying, "Spend freely of this and amend thy case therewith, and set thine affairs in order.” Moreover, he gave me yet thirty thousand dirhems, saying, “Furnish thyself with this, and when the day of estate comes round, come thou to me, that I may invest thee with an office.”

So I took the money and returned home, where I prayed the morning-prayer. Presently came the Khorassani, so I carried him into the house and brought out to him ten thousand dirhems, saying, “Here is thy money.” “It is not my very money,” answered he. “How cometh this?” So I told him the whole story, and he wept and said, “By Allah, hadst thou told me the truth at first, I had not pressed thee! And now, by Allah, I will not accept aught of the money; and thou art quit of it.” So saying, he went away and I set my affairs in order and repaired on the appointed day to the Divan, where I found the Khalif seated. When he saw me, he called me to him and bringing forth to me a paper from under his prayer-carpet, said to me, “This is a patent, conferring on thee the office of Cadi of the western division of the Holy City from the Bab es Selam to the end of the town; and I appoint thee such and such monthly allowances. So fear God (to whom belong might and majesty) and be mindful of the solicitude of His Apostle (whom may He bless and preserve) on thine account.” The folk marvelled at the Khalif’s words and questioned me of their meaning; so I told them the whole story and it spread abroad amongst the people.’

And [quoth he who tells the tale] Abou Hassan ez Ziyadi ceased not to be Cadi of the Holy City, till he died in the days of El Mamoun, the mercy of God be on him!

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THE POOR MAN AND HIS GENEROUS FRIEND.

There was once a rich man, who lost all he had and became poor, whereupon his wife counselled him to seek aid of one of his friends. So he betook himself to a certain friend of his and acquainted him with his strait; and he lent him five hundred dinars to trade withal. Now he had aforetime been a jeweller; so he took the money and went to the jewel-bazaar, where he opened a shop to buy and sell. Presently, three men accosted him, as he sat in his shop, and asked for his father. He told them that he was dead, and they said, ‘Did he leave any offspring?’ Quoth the jeweller, ‘He left a son, your servant.’ ‘And who knoweth thee for his son?’ asked they. ‘The people of the bazaar,’ replied he; and they said, ‘Call them together, that they may testify to us that thou art his son.’ So he called them and they bore witness of this; whereupon the three men delivered to him a pair of saddle-bags, containing thirty thousand dinars, besides jewels and bullion, saying, ‘This was deposited with us in trust by thy father.’ Then they went away; and presently there came to him a woman, who sought of him certain of the jewels, worth five hundred dinars, and paid him three thousand for them.

So he took five hundred dinars and carrying them to his friend, who had lent him the money, said to him, ‘Take the five hundred dinars I borrowed of thee; for God hath aided and prospered me.’ ‘Not so,’ quoth the other. ‘I gave them to thee outright, for the love of God; so do thou keep them. And take this paper, but read it not, till thou be at home, and do according to that which is therein.’ So he took the paper and returned home, where he opened it and read therein the following verses:

The men who came to thee at first my kinsmen were, my sire, His
brother and my dam’s, Salih ben Ali is his name.
Moreover, she to whom thou soldst the goods my mother was, And
eke the jewels and the gold, from me, to boot, they came;
Nor, in thus ordering myself to thee, aught did I seek Save of
the taking it from me to spare thee from the shame.

THE RUINED MAN WHO BECAME RICH AGAIN THROUGH A DREAM.

There lived once in Baghdad a very wealthy man, who lost all his substance and became so poor, that he could only earn his living by excessive labour. One night, he lay down to sleep, dejected and sick at heart, and saw in a dream one who said to him, ‘Thy fortune is at Cairo; go thither and seek it.’ So he set out for Cairo; but, when he arrived there, night overtook him and he lay down to sleep in a mosque. Presently, as fate would have it, a company of thieves entered the mosque and made their way thence into an adjoining house; but the people of the house, being aroused by the noise, awoke and cried out; whereupon the chief of the police came to their aid with his officers. The robbers made off; but the police entered the mosque and finding the man from Baghdad asleep there, laid hold of him and beat him with palm rods, till he was well-nigh dead. Then they cast him into prison, where he abode three days, after which the chief of the police sent for him and said to him, ‘Whence art thou?’ ‘From Baghdad,’ answered he. ‘And what brought thee to Cairo?’ asked the magistrate. Quoth the Baghdadi, ‘I saw in a dream one who said to me, “Thy fortune is at Cairo; go thither to it.” But when I came hither, the fortune that he promised me proved to be the beating I had of thee.’

The chief of the police laughed, till he showed his jaw-teeth, and said, ‘O man of little wit, thrice have I seen in a dream one who said to me, “There is in Baghdad a house of such a fashion and situate so-and-so, in the garden whereof is a fountain and thereunder a great sum of money buried. Go thither and take it.” Yet I went not; but thou, of thy little wit, hast journeyed from place to place, on the faith of a dream, which was but an illusion of sleep.’ Then he gave him money, saying, ‘This is to help thee back to thy native land.’ Now the house he had described was the man’s own house in Baghdad; so the latter returned thither, and digging underneath the fountain in his garden, discovered a great treasure; and [thus] God gave him abundant fortune.

THE KHALIF EL MUTAWEKKIL AND HIS FAVOURITE MEHBOUBEH.

There were in the palace of the Khalif El Mutawekkil ala Allah four thousand concubines, whereof two thousand were Greeks [and other foreigners] and other two thousand native Arabians and Abyssinians; and Obeid ibn Tahir had given him two hundred white girls and a like number of Abyssinian and native girls. Among these latter was a girl of Bassora, Mehboubeh by name, who was of surpassing beauty and elegance and voluptuous grace. Moreover, she played upon the lute and was skilled in singing and making verses and wrote excellent well; so that El Mutawekkil fell passionately in love with her and could not endure from her a single hour. When she saw this, she presumed upon his favour to use him haughtily and capriciously, so that he waxed exceeding wroth with her and forsook her, forbidding the people of the palace to speak with her.

On this wise she abode some days, but the Khalif still inclined to her; and he arose one morning and said to his courtiers, 'I dreamt, last night, that I was reconciled to Mehboubeh.' 'Would God this might be on wake!' answered they. As they were talking, in came one of the Khalif's maidservants and whispered him that they had heard a noise of singing and luting in Mehboubeh's chamber and knew not what this meant. So he rose and entering the harem, went straight to Mehboubeh's apartment, where he heard her playing wonder-sweetly upon the lute and singing the following verses:

I wander through the halls, but not a soul I see, To whom I may
complain or who will speak with me.
It is as though I'd wrought so grievous an offence, No
penitence avails myself therefrom to free.
Will no one plead my cause with a king, who came to me In sleep
and took me back to favour and to gree;
But with the break of day to rigour did revert And cast me off
from him and far away did flee?

When the Khalif heard these verses, he marvelled at the strange coincidence of their dreams and entered the chamber. As soon as she was ware of him, she hastened to throw herself at his feet, and kissing them, said, ‘By Allah, O my lord, this is what I dreamt last night; and when I awoke, I made the verses thou hast heard.’ ‘‘By Allah,’ replied El Mutawekkil, ‘I also dreamt the like!’ Then they embraced and made friends and he abode with her seven days and nights.

Now she had written upon her cheek, in musk, the Khalif’s name, which was Jaafer: and when he saw this, he made the following verses:

One wrote on her cheek, with musk, a name, yea, Jaafer to wit:
My soul be her ransom who wrote on her cheek what I see on it!
If her fingers, indeed, have traced a single line on her cheek,
I trow, in my heart of hearts full many a line she hath writ
O thou, whom Jaafer alone of men possesses, may God Grant
Jaafer to drink his fill of the wine of thy beauty and wit!

When El Mutawekkil died, all his women forgot him save Mehboubeh, who ceased not to mourn for him, till she died and was buried by his side, the mercy of God be on them both!

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WERDAN THE BUTCHER HIS ADVENTURE WITH THE LADY AND THE BEAR.

There lived once in Cairo, in the days of the Khalif El Hakim bi Amrillah, a butcher named Werdan, who dealt in sheep's flesh; and there came to him every forenoon a lady and gave him a diner, whose weight was nigh two and a half Egyptian diners, saying, 'Give me a lamb.' So he took the money and gave her the lamb, which she delivered to a porter she had with her; and he put it in his basket and she went away with him to her own place. This went on for some time, the butcher profiting a dinar by her every day, till at last he began to be curious about her and said to himself, 'This woman buys a diner's worth of meat of me every day, paying ready money, and never misses a day. Verily, this is a strange thing!' So he took an occasion of questioning the porter, in her absence, and said to him, 'Whither goest thou every day with yonder woman?' 'I know not what to make of her,' answered the porter; 'for, every day, after she hath taken the lamb of thee, she buys fresh and dried fruits and wax candles and other necessaries of the table, a dinar's worth, and takes of a certain Nazarene two flagons of wine, for which she pays him another diner. Then she loads me with the whole and I go with her to the Vizier's Gardens, where she blindfolds me, so that I cannot see where I set my feet, and taking me by the hand, leads me I know not whither. Presently, she says, "Set down here;" and when I have done so, she gives me an empty basket she has ready and taking my hand, leads me back to the place, where she bound my eyes, and there does off the bandage and gives me ten dirhems.' 'God be her helper!' quoth Werdan; but he redoubled in curiosity about her case; disquietude increased upon him and he passed the night in exceeding restlessness.

Next morning, [quoth Werdan,] she came to me as of wont and taking the lamb, delivered it to the porter and went away. So I gave my shop in charge to a boy and followed her, unseen of her; nor did I cease to keep her in sight, hiding behind her, till she left Cairo and came to the Vizier's Gardens. Then I hid, whilst she bound the porter's eyes, and followed her again from place to place, till she came to the mountain and stopped at a place where there was a great stone. Here she made the porter set down his crate, and I waited, whilst she carried him back to the Vizier's Gardens, after which she returned and taking out the contents of the basket, disappeared behind the stone. Then I went up to the stone and pulling it away, discovered behind it an open trap-door of brass and a flight of steps leading downward. So I descended, little by little, into a long corridor, brilliantly lighted, and followed it, till I came to a [closed] door, as it were the door of a room. I looked about till I discovered a recess, with steps therein; then climbed up and found a little niche with an opening therein giving upon a saloon.

So I looked in and saw the lady cut off the choicest parts of the lamb and laying them in a saucepan, throw the rest to a huge great bear, who ate it all to the last bit. When she had made an end of cooking, she ate her fill, after which she set on wine and fruits and confections and fell to drinking, using a cup herself and giving the bear to drink in a basin of gold, till she was heated with wine, when she put off her trousers and lay down. Thereupon the bear came up to her and served her, whilst she gave him the best of what belongeth to mankind, till he had made an end, when he sat down and rested. Presently, he sprang to her and served her again; and thus he did, till he had furnished half a score courses, and they both fell down in a swoon and abode without motion.

Then said I to myself, "Now is my opportunity," and taking a knife I had with me, that would cut bones before flesh, went down to them and found them motionless, not a muscle of them moving for their much swink. So I put my knife to the bear's gullet and bore upon it, till I severed his head from his body, and he gave a great snort like thunder, whereat she started up in alarm and seeing the bear slain and me standing with the knife in my hand, gave such a shriek that I thought the soul had left her body. Then said she, "O Werdan, is this how thou requitest me my favours?" "O enemy of thine own soul," replied I, "dost thou lack of men that thou must do this shameful thing?" She made me no answer, but bent down to the bear, and finding his head divided from his body, said to me, "O Werdan, which were the liefer to thee, to hearken to what I shall say to thee and be the means of thine own safety and enrichment to the end of thy days, or gainsay me and so bring about thine own destruction?” “I choose rather to hearken unto thee,” answered I. “Say what thou wilt.” “Then,” said she, “kill me, as thou hast killed this bear, and take thy need of this treasure and go thy way.” Quoth I, “I am better than this bear. Return to God the Most High and repent, and I will marry thee, and we will live on this treasure the rest of our lives.” “O Werdan,” rejoined she, “far be it from me! How shall I live after him? An thou kill me not, by Allah, I will assuredly do away thy life! So leave bandying words with me, or thou art a lost man. This is all I have to say to thee and peace be on thee.” Then said I, “I will slay thee, and thou shalt go to the malediction of God.” So saying, I caught her by the hair and cut her throat; and she went to the malediction of God and of the angels and of all mankind.

Then I examined the place and found there gold and pearls and jewels, such as no king could bring together. So I filled the porter’s crate with as much as I could carry and covered it with the clothes I had on me. Then I shouldered it and going up out of the underground place, set out homeward and fared on, till I came to the gate of Cairo, where I fell in with ten of the Khalif’s body-guard, followed by El Hakim himself, who said to me. “Ho, Werdan!” “At thy service, O King,” replied I. “Hast thou killed the woman and the bear?” asked he and I answered, “Yes.” Quoth he, “Set down the basket and fear naught, for all the treasure thou hast with thee is thine, and none shall dispute it with thee.” So I set down the basket, and he uncovered it and looked at it; then said to me, “Tell me their case, though I know it, as if I had been present with you.” So I told him all that had passed and he said, “Thou hast spoken the truth, O Werdan. Come now with me to the treasure.”

So I returned with him to the cavern, where he found the trap-door closed and said to me, “O Werdan, lift it; none but thou can open the treasure, for it is enchanted in thy name and favour.” “By Allah,” answered I, “I cannot open it;” but he said, “Go up to it, trusting in the blessing of God.” So I called upon the name of God the Most High and going up to the trap-door, put my hand to it; whereupon it came up, as it had been the lightest of things. Then said the Khalif, “Go down and bring up what is there; for none but one of thy name and favour and quality hath gone down there since the place was made, and the slaying of the bear and the woman was appointed to be at thy hand. This was recorded with me and I was awaiting its fulfilment." Accordingly, I went down and brought up all the treasure, whereupon the Khalif sent for beasts of burden and carried it away, after giving me the porter's crate, with what was therein. So I carried it home and opened me a shop in the market. And [quoth he who tells the tale] this market is still extant and is known as Werdan's Market.

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THE KING'S DAUGHTER AND THE APE.

There was once a King's daughter, whose heart was taken with love of a black slave: he did away her maidenhead, and she became passionately addicted to amorous dalliance, so that she could not endure from it a single hour and made moan of her case to one of her body women, who told her that no thing doth the deed of kind more abundantly than the ape. Now it chanced, one day, that an ape-leader passed under her lattice, with a great ape; so she unveiled her face and looking upon the ape, signed to him with her eyes, whereupon he broke his bonds and shackles and climbed up to the princess, who hid him in a place with her, and he abode, eating and drinking and cricketing, night and day. Her father heard of this and would have killed her; but she took the alarm and disguising herself in a [male] slave's habit, loaded a mule with gold and jewels and precious stuffs past count; then, taking horse with the ape, fled to Cairo, where she took up her abode in one of the houses without the city.

Now, every day, she used to buy meat of a young man, a butcher, but came not to him till after noonday, pale and disordered in face; so that he said in himself, 'There hangs some mystery by this slave.' For she used to visit him in her slave's habit. [Quoth the butcher,] So, one day, when she came to me as usual, I went out after her, unseen, and ceased not to follow her from place to place, so as she saw me not, till she came to her lodging, without the city, and I looked in upon her, through a cranny, and saw her light a fire and cook the meat, of which she ate her fill and gave the rest to an ape she had with her. Then she put off her slave's habit and donned the richest of women's apparel; and so I knew that she was a woman. After this she set on wine and drank and gave the ape to drink; and he served her nigh half a score times, till she swooned away, when he threw a silken coverlet over her and returned to his place.

Thereupon I went down into the midst of the place and the ape, becoming aware of me, would have torn me in pieces; but I made haste to pull out my knife and slit his paunch. The noise aroused the young lady, who awoke, terrified and trembling; and when she saw the ape in this plight, she gave such a shriek, that her soul well-nigh departed her body. Then she fell down in a swoon, and when she came to herself, she said to me, “What moved thee to do thus? By Allah, I conjure thee to send me after him!” But I spoke her fair and engaged to her that I would stand in the ape’s stead, in the matter of much clicketing, till her trouble subsided and I took her to wife.

However, I fell short in this and could not endure to it; so I complained of her case to a certain old woman, who engaged to manage the affair and said to me, “Thou must bring me a cooking-pot full of virgin vinegar and a pound of pyrethrum.” So I brought her what she sought, and she laid the pyrethrum in the pot with the vinegar and set it on the fire, till it boiled briskly. Then she bade me serve the girl, and I served her, till she fainted away, when the old woman took her up, and she unknowing, and set her kaze to the mouth of the cooking-pot. The steam of the pot entered her poke and there fell from it somewhat, which I examined and behold, it was two worms, one black and the other yellow. Quoth the old woman, “The black was bred of the embraces of the negro and the yellow of those of the ape.”

When my wife recovered from her swoon, she abode with me, in all delight and solace of life, and sought not copulation, as before, for God the Most High had done away from her this appetite; whereat I marvelled and acquainted her with the case. Moreover, [quoth he who tells the tale,] she took the old woman to be to her in the stead of her mother, and she and Werdan and his wife abode in joy and cheer, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies; and glory be to the Living One, who dieth not and in whose hand is the empire of the Seen and the Unseen!

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THE ENCHANTED HORSE.

There was once, of old time, a great and puissant King, of the Kings of the Persians, Sabour by name, who was the richest of all the Kings in store of wealth and dominion and surpassed them all in wit and wisdom. Generous, open-handed and beneficent, he gave to those who sought and repelled not those who resorted to him, comforted the broken-hearted and honourably entreated those who fled to him for refuge. Moreover, he loved the poor and was hospitable to strangers and did the oppressed justice upon those who oppressed them. He had three daughters, like shining full moons or flowered gardens, and a son as he were the moon; and it was his wont to keep two festivals in the year, those of the New Year and the Autumnal Equinox, on which occasions he threw open his palaces and gave gifts and made proclamation of safety and security and advanced his chamberlains and officers; and the people of his realm came in to him and saluted him and gave him joy of the festival, bringing him gifts and servants.

Now he loved science and geometry, and one day, as he sat on his throne of kingship, during one of these festivals, there came in to him three sages, cunning artificers and past masters in all manner of crafts and inventions, skilled in making rarities, such as confound the wit, and versed in the knowledge of [occult] truths and subtleties; and they were of three different tongues and countries, the first an Indian, the second a Greek and the third a Persian. The Indian came forward and prostrating himself before the King, gave him joy of the festival and laid before him a present befitting [his dignity]; that is to say, a figure of gold, set with precious stones and jewels of price and holding in its hand a golden trumpet. When Sabour saw this, he said, ‘O sage, what is the virtue of this figure?’ And the Indian answered, ‘O my lord; if this figure be set at the gate of thy city, it will be a guardian over it; for, if an enemy enter the place, it will blow this trumpet against him, and so he will be known and laid hands on.’ The King marvelled at this and said, ‘By Allah, O sage, an this thy word be true, I will grant thee thy wish and thy desire.’

Then came forward the Greek and prostrating himself before the

King, presented him with a basin of silver, in whose midst was a peacock of gold, surrounded by four-and-twenty young ones of the same metal. Sabour looked at them and turning to the Greek, said to him, ‘O sage, what is the virtue of this peacock?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered he, ‘as often as an hour of the day or night passes, it pecks one of its young [and cries out and flaps its wings,] till the four-and-twenty hours are accomplished; and when the month comes to an end, it will open its mouth and thou shalt see the new moon therein.’ And the King said, ‘An thou speak sooth, I will bring thee to thy wish and thy desire.’

Then came forward the Persian sage and prostrating himself before the King, presented him with a horse of ebony wood, inlaid with gold and jewels, ready harnessed with saddle and bridle and stirrups such as befit kings; which when Sabour saw, he marvelled exceedingly and was confounded at the perfection of its form and the ingenuity of its fashion. So he said, ‘What is the use of this horse of wood, and what is its virtue and the secret of its movement?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered the Persian, ‘the virtue of this horse is that, if one mount him, it will carry him whither he will and fare with its rider through the air for the space of a year and a day.’ The King marvelled and was amazed at these three wonders, following thus hard upon each other in one day, and turning to the sage, said to him, ‘By the Great God and the Bountiful Lord, who created all creatures and feedeth them with water and victual, an thy speech be true and the virtue of thy handiwork appear, I will give thee whatsoever thou seekest and will bring thee to thy wish and thy desire!’

Then he entertained the three sages three days, that he might make trial of their gifts, after which they brought them before him and each took the creature he had wrought and showed him the secret of its movement. The trumpeter blew the trumpet, the peacock pecked its young and the Persian sage mounted the horse of ebony, whereupon it soared with him into the air and descended again. When the King saw all this, he was amazed and perplexed and was like to fly for joy and said to the three sages, ‘Now am I certified of the truth of your words and it behoves me to quit me of my promise. Seek ye, therefore, what ye will, and I will give it you.’ Now the report of the [beauty of the] King’s daughters had reached the sages, so they answered, ‘If the King be content with us and accept of our gifts and give us leave to ask a boon of him, we ask of him that he give us his three daughters in marriage, that we may be his sons-in-law; for that the stability of kings may not be gainsaid.’ Quoth the King, ‘I grant you that which you desire,’ and bade summon the Cadi forthright, that he might marry each of the sages to one of his daughters.

Now these latter were behind a curtain, looking on; and when they heard this, the youngest considered [him that was to be] her husband and saw him to be an old man, a hundred years of age, with frosted hair, drooping forehead, mangy eyebrows, slitten ears, clipped beard and moustaches, red, protruding eyes, bleached, hollow, flabby cheeks, nose like an egg-plant and face like a cobbler’s apron, teeth overlapping one another, lips like camel’s kidneys, loose and pendulous; brief, a monstrous favour; for he was the frightfullest of the folk of his time; his grinders had been knocked out and his teeth were like the tusks of the Jinn that fright the fowls in the hen-house. Now the princess was the fairest and most graceful woman of her time, more elegant than the tender gazelle, blander than the gentle zephyr and brighter than the moon at her full, confounding the branch and outdoing the gazelle in the flexile grace of her shape and movements; and she was fairer and sweeter than her sisters. So, when she saw her suitor, she went to her chamber and strewed dust on her head and tore her clothes and fell to buffeting her face and lamenting and weeping.

Now the prince her brother, who loved her with an exceeding love, more than her sisters, was then newly returned from a journey and hearing her weeping and crying, came in to her and said, ‘What ails thee? Tell me and conceal nought from me.’ ‘O my brother and my dear one,’ answered she, ‘if the palace be straitened upon thy father, I will go out; and if he be resolved upon a foul thing, I will separate myself from him, though he consent not to provide for me.’ Quoth he, ‘Tell me what means this talk and what has straitened thy breast and troubled thy humour.’ ‘O my brother and my dear one,’ answered the princess, ‘know that my father hath given me in marriage to a sorcerer, who brought him, as a gift, a horse of black wood, and hath stricken him with his craft and his sorcery; but, as for me, I will none of him, and would, because of him, I had never come into this world!’ Her brother soothed her and comforted her, then betook himself to his father and said to him, ‘What is this sorcerer to whom thou hast given my youngest sister in marriage, and what is this present that he hath brought thee, so that thou hast caused my sister to [almost] die of chagrin? It is not right that this should be.’

Now the Persian was standing by and when he heard the prince’s words, he was mortified thereby and filled with rage, and the King said, ‘O my son, an thou sawest this horse, thy wit would be confounded and thou wouldst be filled with amazement.’ Then he bade the slaves bring the horse before him and they did so; and when the prince, who was an accomplished cavalier, saw it, it pleased him. So he mounted it forthright and struck its belly with the stirrup-irons; but it stirred not and the King said to the sage, ‘Go and show him its movement, that he also may help thee to thy wish.’ Now the Persian bore the prince malice for that he willed not he should have his sister; so he showed him the peg of ascent on the right side [of the horse’s neck] and saying to him, ‘Turn this pin,’ left him. So the prince turned the pin and forthwith the horse soared with him into the air, as it were a bird, and gave not over flying with him, till it disappeared from sight, whereat the King was troubled and perplexed about his affair and said to the Persian, ‘O sage, look how thou mayst make him descend.’ But he answered, ‘O my lord, I can do nothing, and thou wilt never see him again till the Day of Resurrection, for that he, of his ignorance and conceit, asked me not of the peg of descent and I forgot to acquaint him therewith.’ When the King heard this, he was sore enraged and bade beat the sorcerer and clap him in prison, whilst he himself cast the crown from his head and buffeted his face and beat upon his breast. Moreover, he shut the doors of his palaces and gave himself up to weeping and lamentation, he and his wife and daughters and all the folk of the city; and [thus] their joy was turned to mourning and their gladness changed into chagrin and sore affliction.

Meanwhile, the horse gave not over soaring with the prince, till he drew near the sun, whereat he gave himself up for lost and was confounded at his case, repenting him of having mounted the horse and saying in himself, ‘Verily, this was a plot of the sage to destroy me; but there is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! I am lost without recourse; but, I wonder, did not he who made the peg of ascent make a peg of descent also?' Now he was a man of wit and intelligence; so he fell to examining all the parts of the horse, but saw nothing save a peg, like a cock's head, on its right shoulder and the like on the left, and turned the right-hand peg, whereupon the horse flew upward with increased speed. So he left it and turned the left-hand peg, and immediately the steed's upward motion ceased and he began to descend, little by little, towards the earth. When the prince saw this and knew the uses of the horse, he was filled with joy and gladness and thanked God the Most High for that He had vouchsafed to deliver him from destruction. Then he began to turn the horse's head whither he would, making him rise and fall at pleasure, till he had gotten complete command of his movement.

He ceased not to descend the whole of that day, for that the steed's upward flight had borne him afar from the earth; and as he descended, he diverted himself with viewing the various towns and countries over which he passed and which he knew not, having never seen them in his life. Amongst the rest, he saw a city of the goodliest ordinance, in the midst of a green and smiling country, abounding in trees and streams; whereat he fell a-musing and said in himself, 'Would I knew the name of yonder city and in what country it is!' And he began to circle about it and observe it right and left. By this time, the day began to wane and the sun drew near to its setting; and he said, 'I see no goodlier place to pass the night in than this city; so I will lodge here this night and on the morrow I will return to my people and my kingdom and tell my father and family what has passed and what I have seen with my eyes.' Then he addressed himself to look for a place, where he might safely bestow himself and his horse and where none should see him, and presently espied a palace, surrounded by a great wall with lofty battlements, rising high into the air from the midst of the city and guarded by forty black slaves, clad in complete mail and armed with spears and swords and bows and arrows. Quoth he, 'This is a goodly place,' and turned the peg of descent, whereupon the horse sank down with him and alighted gently on the roof of the palace. So the prince dismounted and began to go round about the horse and examine it, saying, 'By

Allah, he who fashioned thee was a cunning craftsman, and if God extend the term of my life and restore me to my country and family in safety and reunite me with my father, I will assuredly bestow upon him all manner of bounties and entreat him with the utmost favour.'

By this time the night had overtaken him and he sat on the roof, till he was assured that all in the palace slept; and indeed hunger and thirst were sore upon him, for that he had not tasted food since he parted from his father. So he said in himself, 'Surely, the like of this palace will not lack of victual,' and leaving the horse there, went in quest of somewhat to eat. Presently, he came to a stair and descending it, found himself in a court paved with white marble and alabaster, that shone in the light of the moon. He marvelled at the place and the goodliness of its fashion, but heard no sound and saw no living soul and stood in perplexity, looking right and left and knowing not whither he should go. Then said he to himself, 'I cannot do better than return to where I left my horse and pass the night by it; and as soon as it is day, I will mount and depart.' However, as he stood talking to himself, he espied a light within the palace, and making towards it, found that it came from a candle that stood before a door of the palace, at the head of an eunuch, as he were one of the Afrits of Solomon or a tribesman of the Jinn, longer than a plank and wider than a bench. He lay asleep before the door, with the pommel of his sword gleaming in the flame of the candle, and at his head was a budget of leather hanging from a column of granite.

When the prince saw this, he was affrighted and said, 'I crave help from God the Supreme! O my God, even as Thou hast [already] delivered me from destruction, vouchsafe me strength to quit myself of the adventure of this palace!' So saying, he put out his hand to the budget and taking it, carried it to a place apart and opened it and found in it food of the best. So he ate his fill and refreshed himself and drank water, after which he hung the budget up in its place and drawing the eunuch's sword from its sheath, took it, whilst the latter slept on, knowing not whence destiny should come to him. Then the prince fared on into the palace, till he came to another door, with a curtain drawn before it; so he raised the curtain and entering, saw a couch of ivory, inlaid with pearls and jacinths and jewels, and four slave-girls sleeping about it. He went up to the couch, to see what was therein, and found a young lady lying asleep, veiled with her hair, as she were the full moon at its rising, with flower-white forehead and shining parting and cheeks like blood-red anemones and dainty moles thereon.

When he saw this, he was amazed at her beauty and grace and symmetry and recked no more of death. So he went up to her, trembling in every nerve, and kissed her on the right cheek; whereupon she awoke forthright and seeing the prince standing at her head, said to him, 'Who art thou and whence comest thou?' Quoth he, 'I am thy slave and thy lover.' 'And who brought thee hither?' asked she. 'My Lord and my fortune,' answered he; and she said, 'Belike thou art he who demanded me yesterday of my father in marriage and he rejected thee, pretending that thou wast foul of favour. By Allah he lied, when he spoke this thing, for thou art not other than handsome.'

Now the son of the King of Hind had sought her in marriage, but her father had rejected him, for that he was ill- favoured, and she thought the prince was he. So, when she saw his beauty and grace, for indeed he was like the radiant moon, her heart was taken in the snare of his love, as it were a flaming fire, and they fell to talk and converse. Presently, her waiting-women awoke from their sleep and seeing the prince sitting with their mistress, said to her, 'O my lady, who is this with thee?' Quoth she, 'I know not; I found him sitting by me, when I awoke. Belike it is he who seeks me in marriage of my father.' 'O my lady,' answered they, 'by the Most Great God, this is not he who seeks thee in marriage, for he is foul and this man is fair and of high condition. Indeed, the other is not fit to be his servant.'

Then they went out to the eunuch and finding him asleep, awoke him, and he started up in alarm. Quoth they, 'How comes it that thou art guardian of the palace and yet men come in to us, whilst we are asleep?' When the eunuch heard this, he sprang in haste to his sword, but found it not, and fear took him and trembling. Then he went in, confounded, to his mistress and seeing the prince sitting talking with her, said to the former, 'O my lord, art thou a man or a genie?' 'O it on thee, O unluckiest of slaves!' replied the prince. 'How darest thou even a prince of the sons of the Chosroës with one of the unbelieving Satans?' Then he took the sword in his hand and said, 'I am the

King’s son-in-law, and he hath married me to his daughter and bidden me go in to her.’ ‘O my lord,’ replied the eunuch, ‘if thou be indeed a man, as thou avouchest, she is fit for none but thee, and thou art worthier of her than any other.’

Then he ran to the King, shrieking out and rending his clothes and casting dust upon his head; and when the King heard his outcry, he said to him, ‘What has befallen thee? Speak quickly and be brief; for thou troublest my heart.’ ‘O King,’ answered the eunuch, ‘come to thy daughter’s succour; for a devil of the Jinn, in the likeness of a king’s son, hath gotten possession of her; so up and at him!’ When the King heard this, he thought to kill him and said, ‘How camest thou to be careless of my daughter and let this demon come at her?’ Then he betook himself to the princess’s palace, where he found her women standing, [awaiting him] and said to them, ‘What is come to my daughter?’ ‘O King,’ answered they, ‘sleep overcame us and when we awoke, we found a young man sitting talking with her, as he were the full moon, never saw we a fairer of favour than he. So we questioned him of his case and he avouched that thou hadst given him thy daughter in marriage. More than this we know not, nor do we know if he be a man or a genie; but he is modest and well bred, and doth nothing unseemly.’

When the King heard this, his wrath cooled and he raised the curtain stealthily and looking in, saw a prince of the goodliest fashion, with a face like the shining full moon, sitting talking with his daughter. At this sight he could not contain himself, of his jealousy for his daughter, and putting the curtain aside, rushed in upon them, like a Ghoul, with his drawn sword in his hand. When the prince saw him, he said to the princess, ‘Is this thy father?’ ‘Yes,’ answered she; whereupon he sprang to his feet and taking his sword in his hand, cried out at the King with such a terrible cry, that he was confounded. Then he would have fallen on him with the sword; but the King, seeing that the prince was doughtier than he, sheathed his blade and stood till the latter came up to him, when he accosted him courteously and said to him, ‘O youth, art thou a man or a genie?’ Quoth the prince, ‘Did I not respect thy right and thy daughter’s honour, I would spill thy blood! How darest thou even me with devils, me that am a prince of the sons of the Chosroës, who, had they a mind to take thy kingdom, could shake thee from thy power and thy dominion and despoil thee of all thy possessions?’ When the King heard his words, he was smitten with awe and fear of him and rejoined, ‘If thou indeed be of the sons of the kings, as thou pretendest, how comes it that thou enterest my palace, without my leave, and soilest my honour, making thy way to my daughter and feigning that thou art her husband and that I have given her to thee to wife, I that have slain kings and kings’ sons, who sought her of me in marriage? And now who shall save thee from my mischief, when, if I cried out to my slaves and servants and bade them put thee to death, they would slay thee forthright? Who then shall deliver thee out of my hand?’

When the prince heard this speech of the King, he answered, ‘Verily, I wonder at thee and at the poverty of thy wit! Canst thou covet for thy daughter a goodlier mate than myself and hast ever seen a stouter of heart or a more sufficient or a more glorious in rank and dominion than I?’ ‘Nay, by Allah,’ rejoined the King. ‘But, O youth, I would have had thee make suit to me for her hand before witnesses, that I might marry her to thee publicly; and now, were I to marry her to thee privily, yet hast thou dishonoured me in her person.’ ‘Thou sayst well, O King,’ replied the prince; ‘but, if thy servants and soldiers should fall upon me and slay me, as thou pretendest, thou wouldst but publish thine own dishonour, and the folk would be divided between belief and disbelief with regard to thee. Wherefore, meseems thou wilt do well to turn from this thought to that which I shall counsel thee.’ Quoth the King, ‘Let me hear what thou hast to propose.’ And the prince said, ‘What I have to propose to thee is this: either do thou meet me in single combat and he who slays the other shall be held the worthier and having a better title to the kingdom; or else, let me be this night and on the morrow draw out against me thy horsemen and footmen and servants; but [first] tell me their number.’ Quoth the King, ‘They are forty thousand horse, besides my own slaves and their followers, who are the like of them in number.’ ‘When the day breaks, then,’ continued the prince, ‘do thou array them against me and say to them, “This fellow is a suitor to me for my daughter’s hand, on condition that he shall do battle single-handed against you all; for he pretends that he will overcome you and put you to the rout and that ye cannot prevail against him." Then leave me to do battle with them. If they kill me, then is thy secret the safelier hidden and thine honour the better guarded; and if I overcome them, then is the like of me one whose alliance a King should covet.'

The King approved of his counsel and accepted his proposition, despite his awe and amaze at the exorbitant pretension of the prince to do battle against his whole army, such as he had described it to him, being at heart assured that he would perish in the mellay and so he be quit of him and freed from the fear of dishonour. So he called the eunuch and bade him go forthright to his Vizier and bid him assemble the whole of the troops and cause them don their arms and mount their horses. The eunuch carried the King's order to the Vizier, who straightway summoned the captains of the army and the grandees of the realm and bade them don their harness of war and mount their horses and sally forth in battle array.

Meanwhile, the King sat conversing with the prince, being pleased with his wit and good breeding, till daybreak, when he returned to his palace and seating himself on his throne, commanded the troops to mount and bade saddle one of the best of the royal horses with handsome housings and trappings and bring it to the prince. But the latter said, 'O King, I will not mount, till I come in sight of the troops and see them.' 'Be it as thou wilt,' answered the King. Then they repaired to the tilting ground, where the troops were drawn up, and the prince looked upon them and noted their great number; after which the King cried out to them, saying, 'Ho, all ye men, there is come to me a youth who seeks my daughter in marriage, — never have I seen a goodlier than he, no, nor a stouter of heart nor a doughtier, for he pretends that he can overcome you, single-handed, and put you to the rout and that, were ye a hundred thousand in number, yet would ye be for him but little. But, when he charges upon you, do ye receive him upon the points of your lances and the edges of your sabres; for, indeed, he hath undertaken a grave matter.'

Then said he to the prince, 'Up, O my son, and do thy will on them.' 'O King,' answered he, 'thou dealest not fairly with me. How shall I go forth against them, seeing that I am afoot and they are mounted?' 'I bade thee mount, and thou refusedst,' rejoined the King; 'but take which of my horses thou wilt.' But he said, 'None of thy horses pleases me, and I will ride none but that on which I came.' 'And where is thy horse?' asked the King. 'Atop of thy palace,' answered the prince, and the King said, 'In what part of my palace?' 'On the roof,' replied the prince. 'Out on thee!' quoth the King. 'This is the first sign thou hast given of madness. How can the horse be on the roof? But we shall soon see if thou speak truth or falsehood.' Then he turned to one of his chief officers and said to him, 'Go to my palace and bring me what thou findest on the roof.' And all the people marvelled at the prince's words, saying, 'How can a horse come down the steps from the roof? Verily this is a thing whose like we never heard.'

Meanwhile, the King's messenger repaired to the palace, accompanied by other of the royal officers, and mounting to the roof, found the horse standing there, — never had they looked on a handsomer; but when they drew near and examined it, they saw that it was made of ebony and ivory; whereat they laughed to each other, saying, 'Was it of the like of this horse that the youth spoke? Surely, he must be mad; but we shall soon see the truth of his case. Belike, there hangs some great mystery by him.' Then they lifted up the horse and carrying it to the King, set it down before him, and all the people flocked round it, staring at it and marvelling at the beauty of its fashion and the richness of its saddle and bridle. The King also admired it and wondered at it extremely; and he said to the prince, 'O youth, is this thy horse?' 'Yes, O King,' answered the prince; 'this is my horse, and thou shalt soon see wonders of it.' 'Then take and mount it,' rejoined the King, and the prince said, 'I will not mount till the troops withdraw afar from it.' So the King bade them withdraw a bowshot from the horse; whereupon quoth the prince, 'O King, I am about to mount my horse and charge upon thy troops and scatter them right and left and cleave their hearts in sunder.' 'Do as thou wilt,' answered the King; 'and spare them not, for they will not spare thee.' Then the prince mounted, whilst the troops ranged themselves in ranks before him, and one said to another, 'When the youth comes between the ranks, we will take him on the points of our pikes and the edges of our swords.' 'By Allah,' quoth another, 'it were pity to kill so handsome and well-shaped a youth!' 'By Allah,' rejoined a third, 'ye will have hard work to get the better of him; for he had not done this, but for what he knew of his own prowess and valiantise.'

Meanwhile, the prince, having settled himself in his saddle, whilst all eyes were strained to see what he would do, turned the peg of ascent; whereupon the horse began to sway to and fro and make the strangest of movements, after the manner of horses, till its belly was filled with air and it took flight with him and soared into the sky. When the King saw this, he cried out to his men, saying, 'Out on you! Take him, ere he escape you!' But his Viziers and officers said to him, 'O King, how shall we overtake the flying bird? This is surely none but some mighty enchanter, and God hath saved thee from him. So praise thou the Most High for thy deliverance from his hand.' Then the King returned to his palace and going in to his daughter, acquainted her with what had befallen. He found her sore afflicted for the prince and bewailing her separation from him; wherefore she fell grievously sick and took to her pillow. When her father saw her thus, he pressed her to his bosom and kissing her between the eyes, said to her, 'O my daughter, praise God and thank Him for that He hath delivered thee from this crafty enchanter!' And he repeated to her the story of the prince's disappearance; but she paid no heed to his word and did but redouble in her tears and lamentations, saying to herself, 'By Allah, I will neither eat nor drink, till God reunite me with him!' Her father was greatly concerned for her plight and mourned sore over her; but, for all he could do to comfort her, passion and love-longing still grew on her for the prince.

Meanwhile, the King's son, whenas he had risen into the air, turned his horse's head towards his native land, musing upon the beauty and grace of the princess. Now he had enquired of the King's people the name of the princess and of the King her father and of the city, which was the city of Senaa of Yemen. So he journeyed homeward with all speed, till he drew near his father's capital and making a circuit about the city, alighted on the roof of the King's palace, where he left his horse, whilst he descended into the palace and finding its threshold strewn with ashes, bethought him that one of his family was dead. Then he entered, as of wont, and found his father and mother and sisters clad in mourning raiment of black, pale-faced and lean of body. When his father saw him and was assured that it was indeed his son, he gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon, but presently coming to himself, threw himself upon him and embraced him, straining him to his bosom and rejoicing in him exceedingly. His mother and sisters heard this; so they came in and seeing the prince, fell upon him, kissing him and weeping and rejoicing with an exceeding joy. Then they questioned him of his case; so he told them all that had befallen him from first to last and his father said to him, 'Praised be God for thy safety, O solace of my eyes and life-blood of my heart!'

Then the King bade hold high festival, and the glad news flew through the city. So they beat the drums and the cymbals and putting off the raiment of mourning, donned that of joy and decorated the streets and markets; whilst the folk vied with one another who should be the first to give the King joy, and the latter proclaimed a general pardon and opening the prisons, released those who were therein. Moreover, he made banquets to the people seven days and nights and all creatures were glad; and he took horse with his son and rode out with him, that the folk might see him and rejoice. After awhile the prince enquired for the maker of the horse, saying, 'O my father, what hath fortune done with him?' 'May God not bless him,' answered the King, 'nor the hour in which I set eyes on him! For he was the cause of thy separation from us, O my son, and he hath lain in prison since the day of thy disappearance.' Then he bade release him from prison and sending for him, invested him in a dress of honour and entreated him with the utmost favour and munificence, save that he would not give him his daughter to wife; whereat he was sore enraged and repented of that which he had done, knowing that the prince had learnt the secret of the horse and the manner of its motion. Moreover, the King said to his son, 'Methinks thou wilt do well not to mount the horse neither go near it henceforth; for thou knowest not its properties, and it is perilous for thee to meddle with it.' Now the prince had told his father of his adventure with the King's daughter of Senaa, and he said, 'If the King had been minded to kill thee, he had done so; but thine hour was not yet come.'

When the rejoicings were at an end, the people returned to their houses and the King and his son to the palace, where they sat down and fell to eating and drinking and making merry. Now the King had a handsome slave-girl, who was skilled in playing upon the lute; so she took it and began to play upon it and sing thereto of separation of lovers before the King and his son, and she chanted the following verses:

Think not that absence ever shall win me to forget: For what
should I remember, if I'd forgotten you?
Time passes, but my passion for you shall never end: In love of
you, I swear it, I'll die and rise anew.

When the prince heard this, the fires of longing flamed up in his heart and passion redoubled upon him. Grief and regret were sore upon him and his entrails yearned in him for love of the King's daughter of Senaa; so he rose forthright and eluding his father's notice, went forth the palace to the horse and mounting it, turned the peg of ascent, whereupon it flew up into the air with him and soared towards the confines of the sky. Presently, his father missed him and going up to the summit of the palace, in great concern, saw the prince rising into the air; whereat he was sore afflicted and repented exceedingly that he had not taken the horse and hidden it: and he said in himself, 'By Allah, if but my son return to me, I will destroy the horse, that my heart may be at rest concerning my son.' And he fell again to weeping and bewailing himself for his son.

Meanwhile, the prince flew on through the air till he came to the city of Senaa and alighted on the roof as before. Then he went down stealthily and finding the eunuch asleep, as of wont, raised the curtain and went on, little by little, till he came to the door of the princess's chamber and stopped to listen; when, behold, he heard her weeping plenteous tears and reciting verses, whilst her women slept round her. Presently, they heard her weeping and wailing and said, 'O our mistress, why wilt thou mourn for one who mourns not for thee?' 'O little of wit,' answered she, 'is he for whom I mourn of those who are forgotten?' And she fell again to weeping and wailing, till sleep overcame her.

Now the prince’s heart ached for her, so he entered and seeing her lying asleep, without covering, touched her with his hand; whereupon she opened her eyes and saw him standing by her. Quoth he, ‘Why this weeping and mourning?’ And when she knew him, she threw herself upon him and embraced him and kissed him and answered, ‘For thy sake and because of my separation from thee.’ ‘O my lady,’ said he, ‘I have wearied for thee all this time!’ But she answered, ‘It is I who have wearied for thee, and hadst thou tarried longer, I had surely died!’ ‘O my lady,’ rejoined he, ‘what thinkest thou of my case with thy father and how he dealt with me? Were it not for my love of thee, O ravishment of all creatures, I had surely slain him and made him a warning to all beholders; but, even as I love thee, so I love him for thy sake.’ Quoth she, ‘How couldst thou leave me? Can life be sweet to me after thee?’ Quoth he, ‘Let what has happened suffice now: I am hungry and thirsty.’ So she bade her maidens make ready meat and drink, [and they sat eating and drinking and conversing] till nigh upon daybreak, when he rose to take leave of her and depart, ere the eunuch should awake, and she said, ‘Whither goest thou?’ ‘To my father’s house,’ answered he; ‘and I plight thee my troth that I will come to thee once in every week.’ But she wept and said, ‘I conjure thee, by God the Supreme, take me with thee whither thou goest and make me not taste anew the bitterness of separation from thee.’ Quoth he, ‘Wilt thou indeed go with me?’ and she answered, ‘Yes.’ ‘Then,’ said he, ‘arise, that we may depart.’ So she rose forthright and going to a chest, arrayed herself in what was richest and dearest to her of her trinkets of gold and jewels of price. Then he carried her up to the roof of the palace and mounting the horse, took her up behind him and bound her fast to himself; after which he turned the peg of ascent, and the horse rose with him into the air. When her women saw this, they shrieked aloud and told her father and mother, who rushed up to the roof of the palace and looking up, saw the ebony horse flying away with the prince and princess. At this the King was sore troubled and cried out, saying, ‘O King’s son, I conjure thee, by Allah, have compassion on me and my wife and bereave us not of our daughter!’ The prince made him no reply, but, thinking that the princess repented of leaving her father and mother, said to her, ‘O ravishment of the age, wilt thou that I restore thee to thy father and mother?' 'By Allah, O my lord, that is not my desire,' answered she; 'my only wish is to be with thee wherever thou art; for I am distracted by the love of thee from all else, even to my father and mother.' At this the prince rejoiced greatly and made the horse fare softly with them, so as not to disquiet the princess; nor did they stay their flight till they came in sight of a green meadow, in which was a spring of running water. Here they alighted and ate and drank; after which they took horse again and fared on, till they came in sight of his father's capital. At this, the prince was filled with joy and bethought himself to show her the seat of his dominion and his father's power and dignity and give her to know that it was greater than that of her father. So he set her down in one of his father's pleasance-gardens [without the city] and carrying her into a pavilion there, prepared for the King, left the horse at the door and charged her keep watch over it, saying, 'Sit here, till my messenger come to thee; for I go now to my father, to make ready a palace for thee and show thee my royal estate.' 'Do as thou wilt,' answered she, for she was glad that she should not enter but with due honour and observance, as became her rank.

Then he left her and betook himself to the palace of the King his father, who rejoiced in his return and welcomed him; and the prince said to him, 'Know that I have brought with me the princess of whom I told thee and have left her without the city in such a garden and come to tell thee, that thou mayest make ready and go forth to meet her in state and show her thy royal dignity and troops and guards.' 'With all my heart,' answered the King and straightway bade decorate the city after the goodliest fashion. Then he took horse and rode out in all state and splendour, he and his troops and household and grandees; whilst the prince made ready for her a litter of green and red and yellow brocade, in which he set Indian and Greek and Abyssinian slave-girls. Moreover, he took forth of his treasuries jewellery and apparel and what else of the things that kings treasure up and made a rare display of wealth and magnificence. Then he left the litter and those who were therein and rode forward to the pavilion, where he had left the princess; but found both her and the horse gone. When he saw this, he buffeted his face and rent his clothes and went round about the garden, as he had lost his wits; after which he came to his senses and said to himself, ‘How could she have come at the secret of the horse, seeing I told her nothing of it? Maybe the Persian sage who made the horse has chanced upon her and stolen her away, in revenge for my father’s treatment of him.’ Then he sought the keepers of the garden and asked them if they had seen any enter the garden.

Quoth they, ‘We have seen none enter but the Persian sage, who came to gather simples.’ So the prince was certified that it was indeed he that had taken away the princess and abode confounded and perplexed concerning his case. And he was abashed before the folk and returning to his father, [told him what had happened and] said to him, ‘Take the troops and return to the city. As for me, I will never return till I have cleared up this affair.’ When the King heard this, he wept and beat his breast and said to him, ‘O my son, calm thyself and master thy chagrin and return with us and look what King’s daughter thou wouldst fain have, that I may marry thee to her.’ But the prince paid no heed to his words and bidding him farewell, departed, whilst the King returned to the city and their joy was changed into mourning.

Now, as Fate would have it, when the prince left the princess in the pavilion and betook himself to his father’s palace, for the ordering of his affair, the Persian entered the garden to pluck simples and scenting the fragrance of musk and essences, that exhaled from the princess’s person and perfumed the whole place, followed it till he came to the pavilion and saw the horse, that he had made with his own hands, standing at the door. At this sight, his heart was filled with joy and gladness, for he had mourned sore for it, since it had gone out of his hand. So he went up to it and examining its every part, found it safe and sound; whereupon he was about to mount and ride away, when he bethought himself and said, ‘Needs must I first look what the prince hath brought and left here with the horse.’ So he entered the pavilion and seeing the princess sitting there, as she were the sun shining in the cloudless sky, knew her to be some high-born lady and doubted not but the prince had brought her thither on the horse and left her in the pavilion, whilst he went to the city, to make ready for her entry in state.

Then he went up to her and kissed the earth before her, whereupon she raised her eyes to him and finding him exceeding foul of face and favour, said, ‘Who art thou?’ ‘O my lady,’ answered he, ‘I am sent by the prince, who hath bidden me bring thee to another garden, nearer the city; for that my lady the queen cannot go so far a journey and is unwilling, of her joy in thee, that another should forestall her with thee.’ ‘Where is the prince?’ asked she; and the Persian replied, ‘He is in the city, with his father, and will presently come for thee in great state.’ ‘O fellow,’ said she, ‘could he find none to send to me but thee?’ At this he laughed and answered, ‘O my lady, let not the ugliness of my face and the foulness of my favour deceive thee. Hadst thou profited of me as hath the prince, thou wouldst praise my affair. Indeed, he chose me as his messenger to thee, because of my uncomeliness and forbidding aspect, in his jealousy and love of thee: else hath he slaves and pages and servants, white and black, out of number, each goodlier than the other.’ When she heard this, it commended itself to her reason and she believed him; so she rose and putting her hand in his, said, ‘O my father, what hast thou brought me to ride?’ ‘O my lady,’ answered he, ‘thou shalt ride the horse thou camest on.’ Quoth she, ‘I cannot ride it by myself.’ Whereupon he smiled and knew that she was in his power and said, ‘I myself will ride with thee.’ So he mounted and taking her up behind him, bound her fast to himself, for she knew not what he would with her. Then he turned the peg of ascent, whereupon the belly of the horse became full of wind and it swayed to and fro and rose with them into the air nor slackened in its flight, till it was out of sight of the city.

When the princess saw this, she said to him, ‘O fellow, what didst thou tell me of the prince, that he sent thee to me?’ ‘Foul befall the prince!’ answered the Persian. ‘He is a scurril knave.’ And she said, ‘Out on thee! How darest thou disobey thy lord’s commandment!’ ‘He is no lord of mine,’ rejoined the Persian. ‘Knowst thou who I am?’ ‘I know nothing of thee,’ replied the princess, ‘save what thou toldest me.’ Quoth he, ‘What I told thee was a trick of mine against thee and the prince. I am he who made this horse under us, and I have long regretted its loss; for the prince made himself master of it. But now I have gotten possession of it and of thee too, and I will rack his heart, even as he hath racked mine; nor shall he ever have the horse again. So take comfort and be of good cheer, for I can be of more service to thee than he.' When she heard this, she buffeted her face and cried out, saying, 'Ah, woe is me! I have neither gotten my beloved nor kept my father and mother!' And she wept sore over what had befallen her, whilst the Persian fared on with her, without ceasing, till he came to the land of the Greeks and alighted in a verdant meadow, abounding in trees and streams.

Now this meadow was near a city, in which was a king of great puissance, and it befell that he went forth that day to hunt and divert himself. As he passed by the meadow, he saw the Persian standing there, with the princess and the horse by his side, and before he was aware, the King's followers fell upon him and carried him, the lady and the horse to their master, who noting the foulness of his favour and the beauty and grace of the princess, said to the latter, 'O my lady, what kin is this old fellow to thee?' The Persian made haste to reply, 'She is my wife and the daughter of my father's brother.' But she gave him the lie and said, 'O King, by Allah, I know him not, nor is he my husband, but hath stolen me away by force and fraud.' Thereupon the King bade beat the Persian, and they beat him, till he was well-nigh dead; after which the King commanded to carry him to the city and cast him into prison, and taking the princess and the horse from him, set the former in his harem and laid up the latter in his treasury, though he knew not its properties nor the secret of its motion.

Meanwhile, the prince donned a travelling-habit and taking what he needed of money, set out, in very sorry plight, in quest of the princess, and journeyed from country to country and city to city, enquiring after the ebony horse, whilst all who heard him marvelled at him and deemed his talk extravagant. Thus did he a long while; but, for all his enquiry and research, he could win at no news of her. At last, he came to the city of Senaa and there enquired for her, but could get no tidings of her and found her father mourning her loss. So he turned back and made for the land of the Greeks, pursuing his enquiries as he went, till, as chance would have it, he alighted at a certain khan and saw a company of merchants sitting talking. He sat down near them and heard one say to the others, 'O my friends, I happened lately upon a wonder of wonders.' 'What was that?' asked they, and he answered, ‘I was late in such a city,’ naming the city wherein was the princess, ‘and heard its people speak of a strange thing that had lately befallen. It was that their King went out one day a-hunting, with a company of his courtiers and the grandees of his realm, and coming to a green meadow, espied there a man standing, with a horse of ebony, and a lady sitting hard by. The man was ugly and foul of favour, but the lady was a marvel of beauty and grace and symmetry; and as for the ebony horse, it was a wonder, never saw eyes aught goodlier than it nor more perfect than its fashion.’ ‘And what did the King with them?’ asked the others. ‘As for the man,’ said the merchant, ‘he questioned him of the lady and he pretended that she was his wife and the daughter of his father’s brother; but she gave him the lie. So the King took her from him and bade beat him and cast him into prison. As for the horse, I know not what became of it.’ When the prince heard this, he drew near unto the speaker and questioned him discreetly and courteously, till he told him the name of the city and of its king; which when he knew, he passed the night, full of joy.

On the morrow, he set out and travelled till he reached the city; but, when he would have entered, the gatekeepers laid hands on him, that they might bring him before the King; for that it was his wont to question all strangers respecting their conditions and the crafts in which they were skilled and the reason of their coming thither. Now it was eventide, when he entered the city, and it was then too late to go in to the King or take counsel with him respecting him. So they carried him to the prison, thinking to lay him therein for the night; but, when the warders saw his beauty and grace, they could not find it in their hearts to imprison him, but made him sit with them, without the prison; and when food came to them, he ate his fill with them. When they had made an end of eating, they turned to him and said, ‘What countryman art thou?’ ‘I come from Persia,’ answered he, ‘the land of the Chosroës.’ When they heard this, they laughed and one of them said, ‘O Chosroän, I have heard the talk of men and their histories and looked upon their conditions; but never saw or heard I a greater liar than the Chosroän that is with us in the prison.’ ‘Nor,’ quoth another, ‘did I ever see fouler than his favour or more repulsive than his aspect.’ ‘What have ye seen of his lying?’ asked the prince, and they answered, ‘He pretends that he is a sage. Now the King came upon him, as he went a-hunting, and found with him a most beautiful lady and a horse of ebony, never saw I a handsomer. As for the lady, she is with the King, who is enamoured of her and would fain marry her; but she is mad, and were this man a physician, as he pretends, he would have cured her, for the King doth his utmost endeavour to find a remedy for her disease, and this whole year past hath he spent treasures upon physicians and astrologers, on her account; but none can avail to cure her. As for the horse, it is in the royal treasury, and the man is here with us in the prison; and all night long he weeps and bemoans himself and will not let us sleep.’

When the prince heard this, he bethought himself of a device by which he might compass his desire; and presently the warders, being minded to sleep, clapped him into the prison and locked the door. He heard the Persian weeping and bemoaning himself, in his own tongue, and saying, ‘Woe is me for my sin, that I sinned against myself and against the King’s son, in that which I did with the damsel; for I neither left her nor got my desire of her! All this comes of my want of sense, in that I sought for myself that which I deserved not and which befitted not the like of me; for he, who seeks what befits him not, falleth into the like of my predicament.’ When the prince heard this, he accosted him in Persian, saying, ‘How long wilt thou keep up this weeping and wailing? Thinkst thou that there hath befallen thee what never befell other than thou?’ When the Persian heard this, he made friends with him and began to complain to him of his case and misfortunes.

As soon as it was day, the warders took the prince and carried him before the King, informing him that he had entered the city on the previous night, at a time when no audience could be had of him. Quoth the King to the prince, ‘Whence comest thou and what is thy name and craft and why comest thou hither?’ And he answered, ‘I am called, in Persian, Herjeh. I come from the land of Fars and I am of the men of art and especially of the art of medicine and cure the sick and the mad. For this, I go round about all countries and cities, adding knowledge to my knowledge, and whenever I see a sick person, I heal him; and this is my craft.’ When the King heard this, he rejoiced exceedingly and said, ‘O excellent sage, thou hast come to us at a time when we have need of thee.’ Then he acquainted him with the case of the princess, adding, ‘If thou win to cure her and recover her of her madness, thou shalt have of me whatever thou seekest.’ ‘May God advance the King!’ rejoined the prince. ‘Describe to me all thou hast seen of her madness and tell me how long it is since it attacked her; also how thou camest by her.’ So the King told him the whole story, from first to last, adding, ‘The sage is in prison.’ ‘O august King,’ said the prince, ‘and what hast thou done with the horse?’ ‘It is with me yet, laid up in one of my treasure-chambers,’ replied the King; whereupon quoth the prince in himself, ‘The first thing to do is to see the horse and assure myself of its condition. If it be whole and unhurt, all will be well; but, if its works be destroyed, I must find some other way of delivering my beloved.’

So he turned to the King and said to him, ‘O King, I must see the horse in question: haply I may find in it somewhat that will serve me for the recovery of the damsel.’ ‘With all my heart,’ replied the King and taking him by the hand, led him to the place where the horse was. The prince went round about it, examining its condition, and found it whole and unhurt, whereat he rejoiced greatly and said to the King, ‘May God exalt the King! I would fain go in to the damsel, that I may see how it is with her; for I hope, by God’s grace, to cure her by means of the horse.’ Then he bade take care of the horse and the King carried him to the princess’s apartment, where he found her writhing and beating herself against the ground, as was her wont; but there was no madness in her, and she did this but that none might approach her. When the prince saw her thus, he said to her, ‘No harm shall betide thee, O ravishment of all creatures;’ and went on to soothe her and speak her fair, till he won to make himself known to her; whereupon she gave a loud cry and fell down in a swoon for excess of joy; but the King thought this came of her fear of him.

Then the prince put his mouth to her ear and said to her, ‘O seduction of the universe, have a care for thy life and mine and be patient and constant; for we have need of patience and skilful ordinance to make shift for our delivery from this tyrannical King. To begin with, I will now go out to him and tell him that thou art possessed of a genie, and hence thy madness; but, that if he will loose thee from thy bonds, I will engage to heal thee and drive away the evil spirit. So, when he comes in to thee, do thou give him fair words, that he may think I have cured thee, and all will be accomplished as we desire.’ Quoth she, ‘I hear and obey;’ and he went out to the King, full of joy and happiness, and said to him, ‘O august King, by thy good fortune I have discovered her disease and its remedy and have cured her for thee. So now do thou go in to her and speak softly to her and entreat her kindly, and promise her what may please her; so shall all thou desirest of her be accomplished to thee.’ So he went in to her and when she saw him, she rose and kissing the ground, bade him welcome; whereat he was greatly rejoiced and bade the eunuchs and waiting-women attend her and carry her to the bath and make ready for her dresses and ornaments.

So they went in to her and saluted her, and she returned their greeting, after the goodliest and pleasantest fashion; after which they clad her in royal apparel and clasping a collar of jewels about her neck, carried her to the bath and served her there. Then they brought her forth, as she were the full moon; and when she came into the King’s presence, she saluted him and kissed the ground before him, whereupon he rejoiced in her with an exceeding joy and said to the prince, ‘All this is of thy blessing, may God increase us of thy good offices!’ Quoth the prince, ‘O King, it behoves, for the completion of her cure, that thou carry her forth, together with the ebony horse, and attend her with all thy troops to the place where thou foundest her, that there I may expel from her the evil spirit, by whom she is possessed, and bind him and kill him, so he may never more return to her.’ ‘With all my heart,’ answered the King. Then he caused carry out the horse to the meadow in question and mounting, rode thither with all his troops and the princess, knowing not the prince’s purpose.

When they came to the appointed place, the prince bade set the horse and the princess as far as the eye could reach from the King and his troops and said to the former, ‘With thy leave, I will now proceed to the needful fumigations and conjurations and imprison the genie here, that he may nevermore return to her. After this, I shall mount the horse and take the damsel up behind me; whereupon it will sway to and fro and fare forward, till it come to thee, when the affair will be at an end; and after this thou mayst do with her as thou wilt.’ And when the King heard his words, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy. So the prince mounted the horse and taking the princess up behind him, bound her fast to him, whilst the King and his troops watched him. Then he turned the peg of ascent and the horse took flight and soared with them into the air, till he disappeared from sight.

The King abode half the day, expecting their return; but they returned not. So, when he despaired of them, he returned to the city with his troops, repenting him greatly of that which he had done and grieving sore for the loss of the damsel. He shut himself up in his palace, mourning and afflicted; but his Viziers came in to him and applied themselves to comfort him, saying, ‘Verily, he who took the damsel is an enchanter, and praised be God who hath delivered thee from his craft and sorcery!’ And they ceased not from him, till he was comforted for her loss.

Meanwhile, the prince bent his course, in joy and cheer, towards his father’s capital and stayed not, till he alighted on his own palace, where he set the princess in safety; after which he went in to his father and mother and acquainted them with her coming, whereat they rejoiced exceedingly. Then he made great banquets to the townsfolk and they held high festival a whole month, at the end of which time he went in to the princess and they rejoiced in one another with an exceeding joy. But his father broke the horse in pieces and destroyed its works. Moreover, the prince wrote a letter to the princess’s father, advising him of all that had befallen her and how she was now married to him and in all health and happiness, and sent it by a messenger, together with costly presents and rarities. The messenger, in due course, arrived at the city of Senaa and delivered the letter and the presents to the King, who, when he read the former, rejoiced greatly and accepted the presents, rewarding the bearer handsomely. Moreover, he sent rich presents to his son-in-law by the same messenger, who returned to his master and acquainted him with what had passed, whereat he was much cheered. And after this the prince wrote a letter every year to his father-in-law and sent him a present, till, in course of time, his father King Sabour died and he reigned in his stead, ruling justly over his subjects and ordering himself well and righteously towards them, so that they submitted themselves to him and did him loyal service; and he and his wife abode in the enjoyment of all delight and solace of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies, He that layeth waste the palaces and peopleth the tombs; and glory be to the Living One who dieth not and in whose hand is the dominion of the Seen and the Unseen!

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

UNS EL WUJOUD AND THE VIZIER'S DAUGHTER ROSE-IN-BUD.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, a King of great power and glory and dominion, who had a Vizier named Ibrahim, and this Vizier had a daughter of extraordinary beauty and grace, gifted with surpassing brilliancy and all perfection, possessed of abundant wit and perfectly accomplished. She loved wine and good cheer and fair faces and choice verses and rare stories; and the delicacy of her charms invited all hearts to love, even as Saith the poet, describing her:

She shines out like the moon at full, that midst the stars doth
    fare, And for a wrapping-veil she hath the ringlets of her
    hair.
The Eastern zephyr gives her boughs to drink of all its sweets
    And like a jointed cane, she sways to every breath of air.
She smiles in passing by. O thou that dost alike accord With
    red and yellow and arrayed in each, alike art fair,
Thou sportest with my wit in love, so that indeed meseems As if
    a sparrow in the clutch of playful urchin 'twere.

Her name was Rose-in-bud and she was so named for the exceeding delicacy and perfection of her beauty; and the King loved to carouse with her, because of her wit and good breeding.

Now it was the King's custom yearly to gather together all the nobles of his realm and play with the ball. So, when the day came round, on which the folk assembled for ball-play, the Vizier's daughter seated herself at her lattice, to divert herself by looking on at the game; and as they were at play, her eyes fell upon a youth among them, never was seen a handsomer than he or a goodlier of favour, for he was bright of face, laughing-teethed, tall and broad-shouldered. She looked at him again and again and could not take her fill of gazing on him. Then she said to her nurse, 'What is the name of yonder handsome young man among the troops?' 'O my daughter,' replied the nurse, 'they are all handsome. Which of them dost thou mean?' 'Wait till he passes,' said Rose-in-bud, 'and I will point him out to thee.' So she took an apple and waited till he came under her window, when she dropped it on him, whereupon he raised his head, to see who did this, and saw the Vizier's daughter at the window, as she were the full moon in the darkness of the night; nor did he withdraw his eyes, till he had fallen passionately in love with her; and he recited the following verses:

Was it an archer shot me or did thine eyes undo The lover's
    heart that saw thee, what time thou metst his view?
Did the notched arrow reach me from midst a host, indeed, Or
    was it from a lattice that launched at me it flew?

When the game was at an end, he went away with the King, [whose servant and favourite he was,] with heart occupied with love of her; and she said to her nurse, 'What is the name of that youth I showed thee?' 'His name is Uns el Wujoud,' answered she; whereat Rose-in-bud shook her head and lay down on her couch, with a heart on fire for love. Then, sighing deeply, she improvised the following verses:

He erred not who dubbed thee, "All creatures' delight,"
    That pleasance and bounty at once dust unite.
Full-moonlike of aspect, O thou whose fair face O'er all the
    creation sheds glory and light,
Thou'rt peerless midst mortals, the sovran of grace, And many a
    witness to this I can cite.
Thy brows are a Noun and shine eyes are a Sad,
    That the hand of the loving Creator did write;
Thy shape is the soft, tender sapling, that gives Of its
    bounties to all that its favours invite.
Yea, indeed, thou excellest the world's cavaliers In pleasance
    and beauty and bounty and might.

When she had finished, she wrote the verses on a sheet of paper, which she folded in a piece of gold-embroidered silk and laid under her pillow. Now one of her nurses saw her; so she came up to her and held her in talk, till she slept, when she stole the scroll from under her pillow and reading it, knew that she had fallen in love with Uns el Wujoud. Then she returned the scroll to its place and when her mistress awoke, she said to her, ‘O my lady, indeed, I am to thee a faithful counsellor and am tenderly solicitous for thee. Know that passion is grievous and the hiding it melteth iron and causeth sickness and unease; nor is there reproach for whoso confesses it.’ ‘O my nurse,’ rejoined Rose-in-bud,’and what is the remedy of passion?’ ‘The remedy of passion is enjoyment,’ answered the nurse. ‘And how may one come by enjoyment?’ asked Rose-in-bud. ‘By letters and messages,’ replied the nurse, ‘and many a tender word and greeting; this brings lovers together and makes hard matters easy. So, if thou have aught at heart, mistress mine, I will engage to keep thy secret and do thy need and carry thy letters.’

When the girl heard this, her reason fled for joy; but she restrained herself from speech, till she should see the issue of the matter, saying in herself, ‘None knoweth this thing of me, nor will I trust this woman with my secret, till I have proved her.’ Then said the nurse, ‘O my lady, I saw in my sleep as though one came to me and said, “Thy mistress and Uns el Wujoud love one another; so do thou serve their loves by carrying their messages and doing their need and keeping their secrets; and much good shall befall thee.” So now I have told thee my dream, and it is thine to decide.’ ‘O my nurse,’ quoth Rose-in-bud, ‘canst thou keep secrets?’ ‘And how should I not keep secrets,’ answered the nurse, ‘I that am of the flower of the free-born?’ Then Rose-in-bud pulled out the scroll, on which she had written the verses afore said, and said to her,’ Carry this my letter to Uns el Wujoud and bring me his answer.’

So the nurse took the letter and repairing to Uns el Wujoud, kissed his hands and saluted him right courteously, then gave him the letter; and he read it and wrote on the back the following verses:

I temper my heart in passion and hide my case as I may; But my
case interprets for me and doth my love bewray.
And whenas my lids brim over with tears, — lest the spy should
see And come to fathom my secret,— “My eye is sore,” I
say.

Of old I was empty-hearted and knew not what love was; But now
I am passion's bondman, my heart to love's a prey.
To thee I prefer my petition, complaining of passion and pain,
So haply thou mayst be softened and pity my dismay.
With the tears of my eye I have traced it, that so unto thee it
may The tidings of what I suffer for thee to thee convey.
God watch o'er a visage, that veileth itself with beauty, a
face That the full moon serves as a bondman and the stars
as slaves obey!
Yea' Allah protect her beauty, whose like I ne'er beheld! The
boughs from her graceful carriage, indeed, might learn to
sway.
I beg thee to grant me a visit; algates, if it irk thee nought.
An thou knewst how dearly I'd prize it, thou wouldst not
say me nay.
I give thee my life, so haply thou mayst accept it: to me Thy
presence is life eternal and hell thy turning away.

Then he folded the letter and kissing it, gave it to the nurse and said to her, 'O nurse, incline thy lady's heart to me.' 'I hear and obey,' answered she and carried the letter to her mistress, who kissed it and laid it on her head, then wrote at the foot of it these verses:

Harkye, thou whose heart is taken with my grace and loveliness,
Have but patience, and right surely thou my favours shalt
possess.
When we were assured the passion thou avouchedst was sincere
And that that which us betided had betided thee no less,
Gladly had we then vouchsafed thee what thou sighedst for, and
more; But our guardians estopped us to each other from
access.
When night darkens on the dwellings, fires are lighted in our
heart And our entrails burn within us, for desire and
love's excess.
Yea, for love and longing, slumber is a stranger to our couch
And the burning pangs of fever do our body sore distress.
'Twas a law of passion ever, love and longing to conceal; Lift

not thou the curtain from us nor our secret aye
transgress.
Ah, my heart is overflowing with the love of yon gazelle; Would
it had not left our dwellings for the distant wilderness.

Then she folded the letter and gave it to the nurse, who took it and went out to go to the young man; but as she went forth the door, her master met her and said to her, ‘Whither away?’ ‘To the bath,’ answered she; but, in her trouble, she dropped the letter, without knowing it, and one of the servants, seeing it lying in the way, picked it up. When she came without the door, she sought for it, but found it not, so turned back to her mistress and told her of this and what had befallen her with the Vizier.

Meanwhile, the latter came out of the harem and seated himself on his couch. Presently, the servant, who had picked up the letter, came in to him, with it in his hand, and said, ‘O my lord, I found this paper lying on the floor and picked it up.’ So the Vizier took it from his hand, folded as it was, and opening it, read the verses above set down. Then he examined the writing and knew it for his daughter’s hand; whereupon he went in to her mother, weeping so sore that his beard was drenched. ‘What makes thee weep, O my lord?’ asked she; and he answered, ‘Take this letter and see what is therein.’ So she took it and saw it to be a love-letter from her daughter Rose-in-bud to Uns el Wujoud; whereupon the tears sprang to her eyes; but she mastered herself and swallowing her tears, said to her husband, ‘O my lord, there is no profit in weeping: the right course is to cast about for a means of preserving thine honour and concealing thy daughter’s affair.’ And she went on to comfort him and lighten his trouble. Quoth he, ‘I am fearful of what may ensue this passion of my daughter, and that for two reasons. The first concerns myself; it is, that she is my daughter; the second, that Uns el Wujoud is a favourite with the Sultan, who loves him with an exceeding love, and maybe great troubles shall come of this affair. What deemest thou of the matter?’ ‘Wait,’ answered she, ‘whilst I pray to God for direction.’ So she prayed a two-bow prayer, according to the prophetic ordinance of the prayer for divine guidance; after which she said to her husband, ‘Amiddleward the Sea of Treasures stands a mountain called the Mount of the Bereaved Mother,' (the cause of which being so named shall follow in its place, if it be the will of God,) 'and thither can none come, save with difficulty; do thou make her an abiding-place there.'

So the Vizier and his wife agreed to build, on the mountain in question, a strong castle and lodge his daughter therein with a year's victual, to be annually renewed, and attendants to serve and keep her company. Accordingly, he collected builders and carpenters and architects and despatched them to the mountain, where they builded her an impregnable castle, never saw eyes its like. Then he made ready victual and carriage for the journey and going in to his daughter by night, bade her make ready to set out on a pleasure-excursion. She refused to set out by night, but he was instant with her, till she went forth; and when she saw the preparations for the journey, her heart misgave her of separation from her beloved and she wept sore and wrote upon the door the following verses, to acquaint him with what had passed and with the transports of passion and grief that were upon her, transports such as would make the flesh quake, that would cause the hearts of stones to melt and eyes to overflow with tears:

By Allah, O house, if the loved one pass in the morning-glow
And greet with the greeting of lovers, as they pass to and fro,
Give him our salutation, a pure and fragrant one, For that we have departed, and whither he may not know.
Why on this wise they hurry me off by stealth, anights And lightly equipped, I know not, nor whither with me they go.
Neath cover of night and darkness, they carry me forth, alack I Whilst the birds in the brake bewail us and make their moan for our woe;
And the tongue of the case interprets their language and cries, "Alas, Alas for the pain of parting from those that we love, heigho!"
When I saw that the cups of sev'rance were filled and that Fate, indeed, Would give us to drink of its bitter, unmingled, would we or no,

I blended the draught with patience becoming, as best I might;
But patience avails not to solace my heart for your loss,
I trow.

Then she mounted, and they set forward with her and fared on over desert and plain and hill, till they came to the shore of the Sea of Treasures, where they pitched their tents and built a great ship, in which they embarked her and her suite and carried them over to the mountain. Here they left them in the castle and making their way back to the shore, broke up the vessel, in obedience to the Vizier's commandment, and returned home, weeping over what had befallen.

Meanwhile, Uns el Wujoud arose from sleep and prayed the morning prayer, after which he mounted and rode forth to wait upon the Sultan. On his way, he passed by the Vizier's house, thinking to see some of his followers, as of wont, but saw no one and drawing near the door, read the verses aforesaid written thereon. At this sight, his senses failed him; fire was kindled in his vitals and he returned to his lodging, where he passed the rest of the day in ceaseless trouble and anxiety, without finding ease or patience, till night darkened upon him, when his transport redoubled. So he put off his clothes and disguising himself in a fakir's habit, set out, at a venture, under cover of the night, distraught and knowing not whither he went.

He wandered on all that night and next day, till the heat of the sun grew fierce and the mountains flamed like fire and thirst was grievous upon him. Presently, he espied a tree, by whose side was a spring of running water; so he made towards it and sitting down in the shade, on the bank of the rivulet, essayed to drink, but found that the water had no taste in his mouth. Then, [looking in the stream,] he saw that his body was wasted, his colour changed and his face grown pale and his, feet, to boot, swollen with walking and weariness. So he shed copious tears and repeated the following verses:

The lover is drunken with love of his fair; In longing and heat
he redoubles fore'er.
Love-maddened, confounded, distracted, perplexed, No dwelling
is pleasant to him and no fare.
For how, to a lover cut off from his love, Can life be

delightsome? ‘Twere strange an it were.
I melt with the fire of my passion for her And the tears down
my cheek roll and never forbear.
Shall I ever behold her or one from her stead, With whom I may
solace my heart in despair?

And he wept till he wet the ground; after which he rose and fared on again over deserts and wilds, till there came out upon him a lion, with a neck buried in hair, a head the bigness of a dome, a mouth wider than the door [thereof] and teeth like elephants’ tusks. When Uns el Wujoud saw him, he gave himself up for lost and turning towards Mecca, pronounced the professions of the faith and prepared for death.

Now he had read in books that whoso will flatter the lion, beguileth him, for that he is lightly duped by fair words and glorieth in praise; so he began and said, ‘O lion of the forest and the waste! O unconquerable warrior! O father of heroes and Sultan of wild beasts! Behold, I am a desireful lover, whom passion and severance have undone. Since I parted from my beloved, I have lost my reason; wherefore, do thou hearken to my speech and have ruth on my passion and love-longing.’ When the lion heard this, he drew back from him and sitting down on his hind-quarters, raised his head to him and began to frisk his tail and paws to him; which when Uns el Wujoud saw, he recited these verses:

Wilt slay me, O lord of the desert, before My enslaver I meet
with, e’en her I adore?
No fat on me is; I’m no booty for thee; For the loss of my
loved one hath wasted me sore.
Yea, my love’s separation hath worn out my soul, And I’m grown
like a shape, with a shroud covered o’er.
Give the railers not cause to exult in my woe, O prince of the
spoilers, O lion of war!
A lover, all sleepless for loss of my dear, I’m drowned in the
tears from mine eyelids that pour;
And my pining for her in the darkness of night Hath robbed me,
for passion, of reason and lore.

When he had finished, the lion rose and coming softly up to him, with his eyes full of tears, licked him with his tongue, then walked on before him, signing to him, as who should say, ‘Follow me.’ So he followed him, and he led him on till he brought him, over a mountain, to the farther side, where he came upon the track of a caravan and knew it to be that of Rose-in-bud and her company. When the lion saw that he knew the track and set himself to follow it, he turned back and went his way; whilst Uns el Wujoud followed the foot-marks, till they brought him to a surging sea, swollen with clashing billows. The trail led down to the water’s edge and there broke off; whereby he knew that they had taken ship there and had continued their journey by sea. So he lost hope of finding his beloved and repeated the following verses, weeping sore:

Far’s the place of visitation and my patience faileth me For my
love; but how to reach her o’er the abysses of the sea?
When, for love of her, my vitals are consumed and I’ve forsworn
Slumber, sleep for wake exchanging, ah, how can I patient
be?
Since the day she left the homesteads and departed, hath my
heart Burnt with never-ceasing anguish, all a-fire with
agony.
Oxus and Jaxartes, running like Euphrates, are my tears; More
than rain and flood abounding, run like rivers to the sea.
Ulcerated are my eyelids with the running of the tears, And my
heart on fires of passion’s burnt and wasted utterly.
Yea, the armies of my longing and my transport on me pressed,
And the hosts of my endurance did before them break and
flee.
Lavishly my life I’ve ventured for the love of her; for life Is
the lightest to a lover of all ventures, verily.
Be an eye of God unpunished that beheld the beauteous one, Than
the moon how much more splendid, in the harem’s sanctuary!
Struck was I and smitten prostrate by wide-opened eyes, whose
shafts, From a bow all stringless loosened, pierced the
hapless heart of me.
By the soft and flexile motions of her shape she captived me,

Swaying as the limber branches sway upon the cassia-tree.
Union with her I covet, that therewith I may apply Solace to
the pains of passion, love and care and misery.
For the love of her, afflicted, as I am, I have become; All
that's fallen on me betided from the evil eye, perdie.

Then he wept, till he swooned away, and abode in his swoon a long while. When he came to himself, he looked right and left and seeing none in the desert, was fearful of the wild beasts; so he climbed to the top of a high mountain, where he heard a man's voice speaking within a cavern. He listened and found it to be that of a devotee, who had forsworn the world and given himself up to pious exercises. So he knocked thrice at the cavern door; but the hermit made him no answer, neither came forth to him; wherefore he sighed heavily and recited the following verses:

What way is open unto me, to my desire to get And put off
weariness and toil and trouble and regret?
All pains and terrors have combined on me, to make me hoar And
old of head and heart, whilst I a very child am yet.
I find no friend to solace me of longing and unease' Nor one
'gainst passion and its stress to aid me and abet.
Alas, the torments I endure for waste and wistful love!
Fortune, meseems, 'gainst me is turned and altogether set.
Ah, woe's me for the lover's pain, unresting, passion-burnt,
Him who in parting's bitter cup his lips perforce hath
wet!
His wit is ravished clean away by separation's woe, Fire in his
heart and all consumed his entrails by its fret.
Ah, what a dreadful day it was, when to her stead I came And
that, which on the door was writ, my eyes confounded met!
I wept, until I gave the earth to drink of my despair; But
still from friend and foe I hid the woes that me beset.
Then strayed I forth till, in the waste, a lion sprang on me
And would have slain me straight; but him with flattering
words I met
And soothed him. So he spared my life and succoured me, as

'twere He too had known love's taste and been entangled in
its net.
Yet, for all this, could I but win to come to my desire, All,
that I've suffered and endured, straightway I should
forget.
O thou, that harbour'st in thy cave, distracted from the world,
Meseems thou'st tasted love and been its slave, O
anchoret!

Hardly had he made an end of these verses when, behold, the door of the cavern opened and he heard one say' 'Alas, the pity of it I' So he entered and saluted the hermit, who returned his greeting and said to him, 'What is thy name?' 'Uns el Wujoud,' answered the young man. 'And what brings thee hither?' asked the hermit. So he told him his whole story, whereat he wept and said' 'O Uns el Wujoud, these twenty years have I dwelt in this place, but never beheld I any here, till the other day, when I heard a noise of cries and weeping, and looking forth in the direction of the sound, saw much people and tents pitched on the sea-shore. They built a ship, in which they embarked and sailed away. Then some of them returned with the ship and breaking it up, went their way; and methinks those, who embarked in the ship and returned not, are they whom thou seekest. In that case, thy trouble must needs be grievous and thou art excusable; though never yet was lover but suffered sorrows.' Then he recited the following verses:

Uns el Wujoud, thou deem'st me free of heart, but, wel-a-way!
Longing and transport and desire fold and unfold me aye.
Yea, love and passion have I known even from my earliest years,
Since at my mother's nursing breast a suckling babe I lay.
I struggled sore and long with Love, till I his power
confessed. If thou enquire at him of me, he will me not
unsay.
I quaffed the cup of passion out, with languor and disease, And
as a phantom I became for pining and decay.
Strong was I, but my strength is gone and neath the swords of
eyes, The armies of my patience broke and vanished clean

away.
Hope not to win delight of love, without chagrin and woe; For
contrary with contrary conjoined is alway.
But fear not change from lover true; do thou but constant be
Unto thy wish, and thou shalt sure be happy yet some day:
For unto lovers passion hath ordained that to forget Is heresy,
forbidden all its mandates that obey.

Then he rose and coming to the youth, embraced him, and they wept together, till the hills rang with their crying and they fell down in a swoon. When they revived, they swore brotherhood in God the Most High, and the hermit said to Uns el Wujoud, ‘This night will I pray to God and seek of Him direction what thou shouldst do to attain thy desire.’

To return to Rose-in-bud. When they brought her into the castle and she beheld its ordinance, she wept and exclaimed, ‘By Allah, thou art a goodly place, save that thou lackest the presence of the beloved in thee!’ Then, seeing [many] birds in the island, she bade her people set snares for them and hang up all they caught in cages within the castle; and they did so. But she sat at a window of the castle and bethought her of what had passed, and passion and transport and love-longing redoubled upon her, till she burst into tears and repeated the following verses:

To whom, of my desire complaining, shall I cry, To whom, for
loss of loves and parting’s sorrow, sigh?
Flames rage within my breast, but I reveal them not, For fear
lest they my case discover to the spy.
I’m grown as thin as e’er a bodkin’s wood, so worn With absence
and lament and agony am I.
Where is the loved one’s eye, to see how I’m become Even as a
blasted tree, stripped bare and like to die?
They wronged me, when they shut me prisoner in a place, Wherein
my love, alas I may never come me nigh.
Greetings a thousandfold I beg the sun to bear, What time he
riseth up and setteth from the sky,
To a beloved one, who puts the moon to shame, For loveliness,

and doth the Indian cane outvie.
If the rose ape his cheek, “Now God forfend,” I say, “That of
my portion aught to pilfer thou shouldst try.”
Lo, in his mouth are springs of limpid water sweet, Refreshment
that would bring to those in flames who lie.
How shall I one forget who is my heart and soul, My malady and
he that healing can apply?

Then, as the shadows darkened upon her, her longing increased and she called to mind the past and recited these verses also:

The shadows darken and passion stirs up my sickness amain And
longing rouses within me the old desireful pain.
The anguish of parting hath taken its sojourn in my breast And
love and longing and sorrow have maddened heart and brain.
Passion hath made me restless and yearning consumes my soul And
tears discover my secret, that else concealed had lain.
I know of no way to ease me of sickness and care and woe; Nor
can my weak endeavour reknit Love’s severed skein.
My heart is a raging furnace, because of the heat whereof My
entrails are racked with anguish, that nothing can assain.
O thou, that thinkest to blame me for what is fallen on me,
Enough, I suffer with patience whatever the Fates ordain.
I swear I shall ne’er find comfort nor be consoled for them,
The oath of the children of passion, whose oaths are never
in vain!
Bear tidings, O night, to my dear ones and greet them and
witness bear That thou knowest in thee I sleep not, but
ever to wake am fain.

Meanwhile, the hermit said to Uns el Wujoud, ‘Go down into the valley and fetch me palm-fibre.’ So he went and returned with the palm-fibre, which the hermit took and twisting into ropes, made therewith a net, such as is used for carrying straw; after which he said to the youth, ‘O Uns el Wujoud, in the heart of the valley grows a gourd, which springs up and dries upon its roots. Go thither and fill this net therewith; then tie it together and casting it into the water, embark thereon and make for the midst of the sea, so haply thou shalt come to thy desire; for he, who adventureth not himself, shall not attain that he seeketh.' 'I hear and obey,' answered Uns el Wujoud and bidding the hermit farewell after he had prayed for him, betook himself to the hollow of the valley, where he did as he had counselled him and launched out upon the water, supported by the net.

Then there arose a wind, which drove him out to sea, till he was lost to the hermit's view; and he ceased not to fare on over the abysses of the ocean, one billow tossing him up on the crest of the wave and another bearing him down into the trough of the sea, and he beholding the while the terrors and wonders of the deep, for the space of three days, at the end of which time Fate cast him upon the Mount of the Bereft Mother, where he landed, weak and giddy as a fledgling bird, for hunger and thirst; but, finding there streams running and birds warbling on the branches and fruit-laden trees, growing in clusters and singly, he ate of the fruits and drank of the streams. Then he walked on till he saw some white thing alar off, and making for it, found that it was a strongly-fortified castle. So he went up to the gate and finding it locked, sat down by it.

He sat thus three days and on the fourth, the gate opened and an eunuch came out, who seeing Uns el Wujoud seated there, said to him, 'Whence comest thou and who brought thee hither?' Quoth he, 'I come from Ispahan and was travelling by sea with merchandise, when my ship was wrecked and the waves cast me upon this island.' When the eunuch heard this, he wept and embraced him, saying, 'God preserve thee, O [thou that bringest me the] fragrance of the beloved! Ispahan is my own country and I have there a cousin, the daughter of my father's brother, whom I loved and cherished from a child; but a people stronger than we fell upon us and taking me among other booty, docked me and sold me for an eunuch, whilst I was yet a lad; and this is how I come to be what I am.' Then he carried him into the courtyard of the castle, where he saw a great basin of water, surrounded by trees, on whose branches hung cages of silver, with doors of gold, and therein birds warbling and singing the praises of the Requiting King. In the first cage he came to was a turtle dove which, seeing him, raised her voice and cried out, saying, ‘O Bountiful One!’ Whereat he fell down in a swoon, but, presently coming to himself, sighed heavily and recited the following verses:

O turtle, art thou mad for love, as is my case? Then sing, ‘O
Bountiful!’ and seek the Lord His grace!
Tell me, doth thy descant in joyance tale its rise Or in
desireful pain, that in thy heart hath place?
If for desire thou moan’st of bygone loves or pin’st For dear
ones that have gone and left thee but their trace,
Or if thou’st lost thy love, like me, ah, then, indeed,
Severance long-felt desire discovereth apace.
God guard a lover true! Though my bones rot, nor time Nor
absence from my heart her image shall efface.

Then he fainted again and presently coming to his senses, went on to the second cage, wherein he found a ring-dove. When it saw him, it sang out, ‘O Eternal, I praise thee!’ and he sighed and recited these verses:

I heard a ring-dove say in her plaintive note, “Despite of my
woes, O Eternal, I praise Thee still!”
And God, of His grace, reunion of our loves, in this my travel,
may yet to us fulfil.
She visits me oft, with her dusk-red honeyed lips, And
lends to the passion within me an added thrill.
And I cry, whilst the fires in my tortured heart flame high And
my soul for ardour consumes and my eyes distil
Tears that resemble blood and withouten cease Pour down on my
wasted cheeks in many a rill,
There’s none created without affliction, and I Must bear with
patience my tribulations, until
The hour of solace with her I love one day Unite me. Ah, then,
by God His power and will,
In succouring lovers, I vow, I’ll spend my good, For they’re of
my tribe and category still;
And eke from prison I’ll loose the birds, to boot, And leave,
for joyance, the thought of every ill!

Then he went on to the third cage, in which was a mocking-bird. When it saw him, it set up a song, and he recited the following verses:

The mocking-bird delighteth me with his harmonious strain, As
 ‘twere a lover’s voice that pines and wastes for love in
 vain.
Woe’s me for those that lovers be! How many a weary night, For
 love and anguish and desire, to waken they are fain!
’Twould seem as if they had no part in morning or in sleep, For
 all the stress of love and woe that holds their heart and
 brain.
When I became distraught for her I love and wistfulness Bound
 me in fetters strait, the tears from out mine eyes did
 rain
So thick and fast, they were as chains, and I to her did say,
 “My tears have fallen so thick, that now they’ve bound me
 with a chain.”
The treasures of my patience fail, absence is long on me And
 yearning sore; and passion’s stress consumeth me amain.
If God’s protection cover me and Fortune be but just And Fate
 with her whom I adore unite me once again,
I’ll doff my clothes, that she may see how worn my body is, For
 languishment and severance and solitary pain.

Then he went on to the fourth cage, where he found a nightingale, which, at sight of him, began to tune its plaintive note. When he heard its descant, he burst into tears and repeated the following verses:

The nightingale’s note, when the dawning is near, Distracts
 from the lute-strings the true lover’s ear.
Complaineth, for love-longing, Uns el Wujoud, Of a passion that
 blotteth his being out sheer.
How many sweet notes, that would soften, for mirth, The
 hardness of iron and stone, do I hear!
The zephyr of morning brings tidings to me Of meadows,

full-flower'd for the blossoming year.
The scents on the breeze and the music of birds, In the
dawning, transport me with joyance and cheer.
But I think of a loved one, that's absent from me, And mine
eyes rain in torrents, with tear upon tear;
And the ardour of longing flames high in my breast, As a fire
in the heart of a brasier burns clear.
May Allah vouchsafe to a lover distraught To see and foregather
once more with his dear!
Yea, for lovers, heart-sickness and longing and woe And wake
are excuses that plainly appear.

Then he went on a little and came to a handsome cage, than which there was no goodlier there, and in it a culver, that is to Say, a wood-pigeon, the bird renowned among the birds as the singer of love-longing, with a collar of jewels about its neck, wonder-goodly of ordinance. He considered it awhile and seeing it mazed and brooding in its cage, shed tears and repeated these verses:

O culver of the copse, may peace upon thee light, O friend of
all who love and every wistful wight!
I love a young gazelle, a slender one, whose glance Than
sharpest sabre's point is keener and more bright.
For love of her, my heart and entrails are a-fire And
sicknesses consume my body and my spright.
The sweet of pleasant food's forbidden unto me, And eke I am
denied the taste of sleep's delight.
Solace and fortitude have taken flight from me, And love and
longing lodge with me, both day and night.
How shall my life be sweet to me, while she's afar, That is my
life, my wish, the apple of my sight?

When the pigeon heard these verses, it awoke from its brooding and cooed and warbled and trilled, till it all but spoke; and the tongue of the case interpreted for it and recited the following verses:

O lover, thy wailings recall to my mind The time when my youth

from me wasted and dwined,
And A mistress, whose charms and whose grace I adored,
Seductive and fair over all of her kind;
Whose voice, from the twigs of the sandhill upraised, Left the
strains of the flute, to my thought, far behind.
A snare set the fowler and caught me, who cried, "Would he d
leave me to range at my will on the wind!"
I had hoped he was clement or seeing that I Was a lover, would
pity my lot and be kind;
But no, (may God smite him!) he tore me away From my dear and
apart from her harshly confined.
Since then, my desire for her grows without cease, And my heart
with the fires of disjunction is mined.
God guard a true lover, who striveth with love And hath
suffered the torments in which I have pined!
When he seeth me languish for love in my cage, He will loose
me, in mercy, my loved one to find

Then Uns el Wujoud turned to his friend, the Ispahani and said to him, 'What palace is this? Who built it and who abideth in it?' Quoth the eunuch, 'The Vizier of King Shamikh built it for his daughter, fearing for her the assaults of fate and the vicissitudes of fortune, and lodged her therein, with her attendants; nor do we open it save once in every year, when our victual comes to us.' And Uns el Wujoud said in himself, 'I have gained my end' though after long travail.'

Meanwhile, Rose-in-bud took no delight in eating nor drinking, sitting nor sleeping; but her transport and passion and love-longing redoubled on her, and she went wandering about the castle, but could find no issue; wherefore she shed plenteous tears and recited the following verses:

They have prisoned me straitly from him I adore And given me to
eat of mine anguish galore.
My heart with the flames of love-longing they fired, When me
from the sight of my loved one they bore.
They have cloistered me close in a palace built high On a mount
in the midst of a sea without shore.

If they'd have me forget, their endeavour is vain, For my love
but redoubles upon me the more.
How can I forget him, when all I endure Arose from the sight of
his face heretofore?
My days are consumed in lament, and my nights Pass in thinking
of him, as I knew him of yore.
His memory my solace in solitude is, Since the lack of his
presence I needs must deplore.
I wonder, will Fate grant my heart its desire And my love,
after all, to my wishes restore!

Then she donned her richest clothes and trinkets and threw a necklace of jewels around her neck; after which she ascended to the roof of the castle and tying some strips of Baalbek stuff together, [to serve for a rope], made them fast to the battlements and let herself down thereby to the ground. Then she fared on over wastes and wilds, till she came to the sea-shore, where she saw a fishing-boat, and therein a fisherman, whom the wind had driven on to the island, as he went, fishing here and there, on the sea. When he saw her, he was affrighted, [taking her for a Jinniyeh] and put out again to sea; but she cried out and made pressing signs to him to return, reciting the following verses:

Harkye, O fisherman, fear thou no injury; I'm but an earthly
maid, a mortal like to thee.
I do implore thee, stay, give ear unto my prayer And hearken to
my true and woeful history.
Pity, (so God thee spare,) the ardour [of my love,] And say if
thou hast seen a loved one, fled from me.
I love a fair-faced youth and goodly; brighter far Of aspect
than the face of sun or moon is he.
The antelope, that sees his glances, cries, "His slave Am I,"
and doth confess inferiority.
Yea, beauty on his brow these pregnant words hath writ In very
dust of musk, significant to see,
"Who sees the light of love is in the way of right, And he who
strays commits foul sin and heresy."

An thou have ruth on me and bring me to his sight, O rare!
Whate'er thou wilt thy recompense shall be;
Rubies and precious stones and freshly gathered pearls And
every kind of gem that is in earth and sea.
Surely, O friend, thou wilt with my desire comply; For all my
heart's on fire with love and agony.

When the fisherman heard this, he wept and sighed and lamented; then, recalling what had betided himself in the days of his youth, when love had the mastery over him and transport and love-longing and distraction were sore upon him and the fires of passion consumed him, replied with these verses:

Indeed, the lover's excuse is manifest, Wasting of body and
streaming tears, unrest,
Eyes, in the darkness that waken still, and heart, As 'twere a
fire-box, bespeak him love-oppress.
Passion, indeed, afflicted me in youth, And I good money from
bad learnt then to test.
My soul I bartered, a distant love to win; To gain her favours,
I wandered East and West;
And eke I ventured my life against her grace And deemed the
venture would bring me interest.
For law of lovers it is that whoso buys His love's possession
with life, he profits best.

Then he moored his boat to the shore and bade her embark, saying, 'I will carry thee whither thou wilt.' So she embarked and he put off with her; but they had not gone far, before there came out a stern-wind upon the boat and drove it swiftly out of sight of land. The fisherman knew not whither he went, and the wind blew without ceasing three days, at the end of which time it fell, by leave of God the Most High, and they sailed on, till they came in sight of a city builded upon the seashore, and the fisherman set about making fast to the land.

Now the King of the city, a very powerful prince called Dirbas, was at that moment sitting, with his son, at a window in the palace giving upon the sea, and chancing to look out to sea-ward, they saw the fishing-boat enter the harbour. They observed it narrowly and espied therein a young lady, as she were the full moon in the mid-heaven, with pendants in her ears of fine balass rubies and a collar of precious stones about her neck. So the King knew that this must be the daughter of some king or great noble, and going forth of the sea-gate of the palace, went down to the boat, where he found the lady asleep and the fisherman busied in making fast to the shore. He went up to her and aroused her, whereupon she awoke, weeping; and he said to her, 'Whence comest thou and whose daughter art thou and what brings thee hither?' 'I am the daughter of Ibrahim, Vizier to King Shamikh,' answered she; 'and the manner of my coming hither is strange and the cause thereof extraordinary.' And she told him her whole story, hiding nought from him; then she sighed deeply and recited the following verses:

Tears have mine eyelids wounded sore, and wonder-fast they flow
 Adown my cheek for parting's pain and memory and woe,
For a beloved's sake, who dwells for ever in my heart, Though
 to foregather with himself I cannot win, heigho!
Fair, bright and brilliant is his face, in loveliness and
 grace, Turk, Arab and barbarian he cloth indeed o'ercrow.
The full moon and the sun contend in deference to him, And when
 he rises into sight, they, lover-like, bend low.
His eyes with wondrous witchery are decked, as 'twere with
 kohl; Even as a bow, that's bent to shoot its shafts, to
 thee they show.
O thou, to whom I have perforce revealed my case, have ruth On
 one with whom the shifts of love have sported long eno'.
Lo, broken-hearted, Love hath cast me up upon thy coast,
 Wherefore I trust that thou on me fair favour wilt bestow.
The noble who, when folk of worth alight within their bounds,
 Do honour and protect them, win increase of glory so.
Cover thou then, my lord, my hope, two lovers' follies up And
 let them to thy succouring hand their loves' reunion owe.

Then she shed plenteous tears and recited these verses also:

I lived, a marvel till I saw in love, then lived no mo'; Each
month to thee as Rejeb be, as free from fear of
foe!
Is it not strange that, on the morn they went away, I lit Fire
in my vitals with the tears that from mine eyes did flow?
Indeed, mine eyelids ran with blood, and on the wasted plain Of
my sad cheek, that therewithal was watered, gold did grow.
Yea, for the safflower hue, that thence o'erspread my cheeks,
they seem The shirt of Joseph, steeped in blood, to make a
lying show.

When the King heard this, he was certified of her passion and love-longing and was moved to compassion for her; so he said to her, 'Fear nothing and be not troubled; thou hast attained the term of thy wishes; for needs must I bring thee to thy desire.' And he recited the following verses:

Daughter if nobles, thou hast reached thy wishes' goal, I trow:
In happy presage then rejoice and fear not any woe.
Treasures this very day, will I collect and neath escort Of
horsemen and of champions, to Shamikh they shall go.
Brocade and bladders full of musk I will to him despatch And
eke white silver and red gold I'll send to him also.
Yea, and a letter neath my hand my wish for ties of kin And for
alliance with himself shall give him eke to know;
And all endeavour will I use, forthwith, that he thou lov'st
Once more with thee may be conjoined, to part from thee no
mo.
I, too, have battened upon love and know the taste thereof And
can excuse the folk who've quaffed the self-same cup of
woe.

Then, returning to his palace, he summoned his Vizier and causing pack him up countless treasure, bade him carry it to King Shamikh and say to him, 'The King is minded to ally himself with thee by marrying Uns el Wujoud, shine officer, to his daughter. So needs must thou send him with me, that the marriage may be solemnized in her father's kingdom.' And he wrote a letter to King Shamikh, to this effect, and gave it to the Vizier, charging him without fail bring back Uns el Wujoud, on pain of deposition from his office. 'I hear and obey,' answered the Vizier and setting out forthright, in due course arrived at the court of King Shamikh, to whom he delivered the letter and presents, saluting him in the name of King Dirbas. When Shamikh read the letter and saw the name of Uns el Wujoud, he burst into tears and said to the Vizier, 'And where is Uns el Wujoud? He went away, and we know not his place of abiding. Bring him to me, and I will give thee the sum of the presents thou hast brought me, twice told.' And he wept and sighed and groaned, reciting the following verses:

Him whom I loved to me restore; By gold and gifts I set no
 store.
Nor do I crave largesse, indeed, Of pearls and gems and
 precious ore.
As 'twere a moon at full, for us, In beauty's heaven he did
 soar.
Passing in wit and grace, gazelles With him comparison gave
 o'er.
His shape was as a willow-wand, For fruits that sweet
 seductions bore;
But in the willow, to enslave The hearts of men, there is no
 lore.
I reared him from a child upon The bed of fondness evermore;
And now I am at heart distraught For him and sorrow passing
 sore.

Then said he to the Vizier, 'Go back to thy master and tell him that Uns el Wujoud has been missing this year past, and his lord knoweth not whither he is gone nor hath any news of him.' 'O my lord,' answered King Dirbas's Vizier, 'my master said to me, "An thou come back without him, thou shalt be ousted from the Vizierate and shall not enter my city." How then can I return without him?' So King Shamikh said to his Vizier Ibrahim, 'Take a company and go with him and make search for Uns el Wujoud everywhere.' 'I hear and obey,' answered Ibrahim, and taking a company of his own retainers, set out in quest of Uns el Wujoud, accompanied by King Dirbas's Vizier; and as often as they fell in with Bedouins or others, they enquired at them of Uns el Wujoud, saying, 'Have ye seen a man, whose name is so and so and his favour thus and thus?' But they answered, 'We know him not.'

So they fared on, enquiring in city and hamlet and seeking in hill and plain and desert and wold, till they came to the sea-shore, where they took ship and sailed, till they came to the Mountain of the Bereaved Mother; and King Dirbas's Vizier said to Ibrahim, 'Why is this mountain thus called?' 'There was once of old time,' answered the other Vizier, 'a Jinniych, of the Jinn of China, who fell passionately in love with a man and being in fear of her own people, searched all the earth for a place, where she might hide him from them, till she happened on this mountain and finding it inaccessible both to men and Jinn, carried off her beloved and lodged him therein. There she used to visit him privily, till she had borne him a number of children, and the merchants, sailing by the mountain, in their voyages over the sea, heard the weeping of the children, as it were the wailing of a woman who had lost her young, and said, "Is there here a mother bereaved of her children?" For which reason the place was named the Mountain of the Bereaved Mother.' And King Dirbas's Vizier marvelled at this.

Then they landed and making for the castle, knocked at the gate, which was opened to them by an eunuch, who knew the Vizier Ibrahim and kissed his hands. Ibrahim entered and finding in the courtyard, among the serving men, a man in the habit of a fakir, said. 'Whence comes yonder fellow?' Quoth they, 'He is a merchant, who hath lost his goods by shipwreck, but saved himself on a plank; and he is an ecstatic.' Now this was none other than Uns el Wujoud, [but the Vizier knew him not]; so he left him and went on into the castle. He found there no trace of his daughter and questioned her women, who answered, 'She abode with us but a little while and went away, how and whither we know not.' Whereupon he wept sore and repeated the following verses:

O house, whose birds warbled for joyance whilere And whose

sills were resplendent with glory and pride,
Till the lover came to thee, bemooning himself For his passion,
and found thy doors open and wide,
Would I knew where my soul is, my soul that was late In a
house, where its masters no longer abide!
Therein were all things that are costly and rich And with suits
of brocade it was decked, like a bride.
Yea, happy and honoured its doorkeeper were. Would God I knew
whither its mistress hath tried!

Then he wept and sighed and bemoaned himself, exclaiming, ‘There is no resource against the ordinance of God neither is there any escape from that which He hath decreed!’ Then he went up to the roof and finding the strips of Baalbek stuff tied to the battlements and hanging down to the ground, knew that she had descended thence and had fled forth, as one distracted and mad with passion. Presently, he turned and seeing there two birds, an owl and a raven, deemed this an ill omen; so he groaned and recited these verses:

Unto the loved ones’ stead I came, as hoping, by their sight,
To quench the fire that burnt in me of love-longing and
woe;
But no beloved found I there, nor aught, indeed, I found, Save
two ill-omened ones, an owl And eke a corby-crow.
And quoth the tongue o’ the case to me, “Thou hast been
tyrannous And hast two longing lovers torn, the one the
other fro!
Taste of the anguish, then, of love what thou hast made them
taste And live, ‘twixt agony and tears, in sorrow evermo.”

Then he descended, weeping, and bade the servants go forth and search the island for their mistress; so they sought for her, but found her not. As for Uns el Wujoud, when he was certified that Rose-in-bud was indeed gone, he gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon, nor came to himself for a long time, whilst the folk deemed that a ravishment from the Merciful One had taken him and that he was absorbed in contemplation of the splendour of the majesty of the

Requiter of good and evil. Then, despairing of finding Uns el Wujoud and seeing that Ibrahim was distracted for the loss of his daughter, King Dirbas's Vizier addressed himself to return to his own country, for all he had not attained the object of his journey, and said to Ibrahim? 'I have a mind to take yonder fakir with me; it may be God, for his sake, will incline the King's heart to me, for that he is a holy man; and after, I will send him to Ispahan, which is near our country.' 'Do &as thou wilt,' answered Ibrahim.

So they took leave of one another and departed, each for his own country, King Dirbas's Vizier carrying with him Uns el Wujoud, who was still insensible. They bore him with them on muleback, unknowing if he were carried or not, for three days, at the end of which time he came to himself and said, 'Where am I?' 'Thou art in company with King Dirbas's Vizier,' answered they and went and told the latter, who sent him rose-water and sherbet of sugar, of which they gave him to drink and restored him. Then they fared on till they drew near King Dirbas's capital and the King, being advised of his Vizier's coming, wrote to him, saying, 'An Uns el Wujoud be not with thee, come not to me ever.'

When the Vizier read the royal mandate, it was grievous to him, for he knew not that Rose-in-bud was with the King nor why he had sent him in quest of Uns el Wujoud, neither knew he that the fakir he had with him was Uns el Wujoud himself; and the latter in like manner knew not whither they were bound nor that the Vizier had been despatched in quest of himself. So, when he saw him thus chagrined, he said to him, 'What ails thee?' And he answered, 'I was sent by the King on an errand, which I have not been able to accomplish. So, when he heard of my return, he wrote to me? saying, "Enter not my city, except thou have fulfilled my need."' 'And what is the King's need?' asked Uns el Wujoud. So the Vizier told him the case, and he said, 'Fear nothing, but go boldly to the King and take me with thee; and I will be surety to thee for the coming of Uns el Wujoud.' At this the Vizier rejoiced and said, 'Is this true that thou sayest?' 'Yes,' answered he; whereupon the Vizier mounted and carried him to King Dirbas, who said to him, 'Where is Uns el Wujoud?' 'O King,' answered the young man, 'I know where he is.' So the King called him to him and said, 'Where?' 'Near at hand, replied Uns d Wujoud. 'Tell me what thou wouldst with him, and I will fetch him to thee.' 'With all my heart,' answered the King; 'but the case calls for privacy.'

So he bade the folk withdraw and, carrying Uns el Wujoud into his closet, told him the whole story; whereupon quoth the youth, 'Clothe me in rice apparel, and I will eftsoons bring Uns el Wujoud to thee.' So they brought him a sumptuous dress, and he donned it and said, 'I am the Delight of the World and the Mortification of the Envious.' So saying, he transfixed ail hearts with his glances and recited the following verses:

My loved one's memory cheers me still in this my solitude And
 doth wanhope from me away, as I in absence brood.
I have no helper but my tears; yet, when from out mine eyes
 They flow, they lighten my despair and ease my drearihood.
Sore is my longing; yea, it hath no like and my affair In love
 and passion's marvellous, beyond all likelihood.
I lie the night long, wakeiul-eyed, — no sleep is there for
 me, — And pass, for love, from heaven to hell, according to
 my mood.
Yea, patience fair some time I had, but have it now no more;
 And longing and chagrin increase upon me, like a flood.
Indeed, my body's worn to nought, for severance from her;
 Yearnings my aspect and my form to change have all
 subdued.
Mine eyelids ulcerated are with weeping, nor can I Avail to
 stay the constant tears, wherewith they're still bedewed.
Indeed, I can no more; my strength, my very vitals fail. How
 many sorrows have I borne, on sorrows still renewed!
My heart and head are grizzled grown, for loss of a princess In
 beauty, sure, the fairest maid that ever lover wooed.
In her despite, our parting was, for no desire hath she Save to
 be joined with me and feed once more on lovers' food.
I wonder, will my fate to me union vouchsafe with her I
 cherish, after absence long and stress of lonelihood,
And shut the book of severance up, that now is open wide, And
 blot out troubles from my thought with love's supremest

good?
Shall my beloved, in my land, my cup-companion be And sorrow
and affliction be by pure delight ensued?

'By Allah,' exclaimed the King, 'ye are, indeed, a pair of true lovers and in the heaven of beauty two shining stars! Your story is marvellous and your case extraordinary.' Then he told him all that had befallen Rose-in-bud; and Uns el Wujoud said, 'Where is she, O King of the age?' 'She is with me now,' answered Dirbas and sending for the Cadi and the witnesses, drew up the contract of marriage between her and him. Then he loaded Uns el Wujoud with favours and bounties and sent to King Shamikh, advising him of what had befallen, whereat the latter rejoiced with an exceeding joy and wrote back to him, saying, 'Since the marriage contract hath been drawn up at thy court! it behoves that the wedding and consummation be at mine.' And he made ready camels and horses and men and sent them in quest of the lovers.

When the embassy reached King Dirbas, he gave the pair great store of treasure and despatched them to King Shamikh's court with an escort of his own troops. The day of their arrival was a notable day, never was seen a greater; for the King assembled all the singers and players on instruments of music and made banquets and held high festival seven days; and on each day he gave largesse to the folk and bestowed on them sumptuous dresses of honour. Then Uns el Wujoud went in to Rose-in-bud, and they embraced and sat weeping for excess of joy and gladness, whilst she recited the following verses:

Gladness is come, dispelling grief and putting care aside; We
are united now and have our enviers mortified.
The fragrant breeze of union blows fresh and sweet for us,
Whereby our bodies, vitals, hearts are all revivified.
The splendour of fulfilled delight in all its glory shines, And
for glad tidings beat the drums about us far and wide.
Think not we weep for stress Of grief or for affliction; nay,
It is for joy our tears flow down and will not be denied.
How many terrors have we seen, that now are past away! Yet we

each agonizing strait did patiently abide.
In one hour of delight have we forgotten all the woes, Whose
stresses made us twain, whilom, grey-haired and
hollow-eyed.

Then they clipped each other and ceased not from their embrace, till they fell down in a swoon, for the ecstasy of reunion; and when they came to themselves, Uns d Wujoud recited these verses:

Ah, how peerlessly sweet are the nights of delight, When the
loved one to me keeps the troth she did plight,
When enjoyment enjoyment ensues and the bonds Of estrangement
between us are sundered outright,
And fortune is come to us, favouring and fair, After turning
away with aversion and spite!
Fair fortune hath set up her standards for us And we drink from
her hand a cup pure of affright.
United, our woes each to each we recount And the nights when in
torments we watched for the light.
But now, O my lady, forgotten have we Our griefs, and God
pardon the past its upright!
How pleasant, how lovesome, how joyous is life! Enjoyment my
passion doth only excite.

Then they gave themselves up anew to the pleasures of the nuptial bed and passed seven whole days thus, carousing and conversing and reciting verses and telling pleasant tales and anecdotes, in the intervals of amorous dalliance; for so drowned were they in the sea of passion, that they knew not night from day and it was to them, for very stress of joy and gladness and pleasure and delight, as if the seven days were but one day, and that without a morrow. Nor did they know the seventh day, but by the coming of the singers and players on instruments of music; whereat Rose-in-bud was beyond measure wondered and improvised the following verses:

Despite the enviers' rage and malice of the spy, I've won of
him I love my wish to satisfy;

Yea, we have crowned our loves with many a close embrace, On
cushions of brocade and silken stuffs piled high
Upon a couch full soft, of perfumed leather made And stuffed
with down of birds of rarest kind that fly.
Thanks to the honeyed dews of my beloved’s lips, Illustrious
past compare, no need of wine have I.
Yea, for the sweet excess of our fulfilled delight, The present
from the past we know, nor far from nigh.
A miracle indeed! Seven nights o’er us have passed, Without our
taking note of how they flitted by;
Till, on the seventh day, they wished us joy and said, “Your
union God prolong to all eternity!”

When she had finished, Uns el Wujoud kissed her, more than a hundred times, and recited the following verses:

O day of pure delight and mutual happiness! The loved one came
and set me free from loneliness.
She blest me with the sweets of all her glorious charms, What
while her converse filled my spirit with liesse.
She plied me with the wine of amorous delight, Till all my
senses failed, for very drunkenness.
Yea, merry each with each we made, together lay, Then fell to
wine and did, in song, our cheer express;
Nor knew we, of the days that fleeted over us, The present from
the past, for very joy’s excess.
Fair fall all those that love of ease and twinned delight, And
joy to them fulfil its promise none the less!
Ne’er may they know the taste of parting’s bitter cup! God
succour them as me He succoured in my stress!

Then they went forth and distributed to the folk alms and largesse of money and raiment and so forth; after which Rose-in-bud bade empty the bath for her and turning to Uns el Wujoud, said to him’ ‘O solace of my eyes, I have a mind to see thee in the bath; and we will be alone together therein.’ He gladly consented to this, and she bade perfume the bath for them with all manner of scented woods and essences and light the candles. Then, of the excess of her contentment, she recited the following Verses:

O thou aforetime of my heart that mad’st prize (And the present
for us on the past still relies),
Thou, the only companion I crave, for to me None other the want
of thy presence supplies,
To the bath, — that in midst of hell-fire we may see Even
Paradise shining, — come, light of mine eyes!
We will scent it with ambergris, aloes and musk, Till the
fragrance in clouds from all quarters arise.
Yea, Fortune we’ll pardon her sins and give thanks, For His
grace, to the Merciful One, the All-Wise;
And I’ll say, when I see thee therein, “O my love, All delights
be thy lot in the earth and the skies!”

So they went to the bath and took their pleasure there in; after which they returned to their palace and there abode in the fulness of delight, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies; and glory be to Him who changeth not neither ceaseth and in whom all things have their term!

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ABOU NUWAS WITH THE THREE BOYS AND THE KHALIF HAROUN ER RESHID.

Abou Nuwas one day shut himself up and making ready a richly-furnished saloon, set out therein a banquet of meats of all kinds and colours that lips and tongue can desire. Then he went forth, to seek a minion who should befit the entertainment, saying, ‘O my God and my Master and my Lord, I beseech Thee to send me one worthy of this banquet and apt to carouse with me this day!’ Hardly had he made an end of speaking, when he espied three handsome beardless youths, as they were of the children of Paradise, differing in complexion but equal in perfection of beauty; and all hearts yearned with desire to the graceful bending of their shapes, even to what saith the poet:

Two beardless youths I happened on one day And said “I love
you.” “Hast thou pelf?” asked they.
“Yes,” answered I, “and liberality.” “Then is the matter easy,”
did they say.

Now Abou Nuwas was on this wise given and loved to sport and make merry with the fair and cull the rose from every fresh- flowered cheek, even as saith the poet:

Full many a graybeard is amorous and loves Fair faces and music
and dalliance and glee:
From Mosul, the country of pureness, he comes, Yet
nought but Aleppo remembereth he.

So he accosted them with the salutation, and they returned his greeting with all honour and civility and would have gone their way; but he stayed them, repeating these verses:

To none but me your footsteps steer; For I have store of all
good cheer;
Wine that the heart of convent monk Would glad, so bright it is

and clear;
And flesh of sheep, to boot, have I And birds of land and sea
and mere.
Eat ye of these and drink old wine, That doth away chagrin and
fear.

The boys were beguiled by his verses and consented to his wishes, saying, ‘We hear and obey.’ So he carried them to his lodging, where they found all ready that he had set forth in his verses. They sat down and ate and drank and made merry awhile, after which they appealed to Abou Nuwas to decide which was the handsomest and most shapely of them. So he pointed to one of them, after having kissed him twice, and recited the following verses:

With my life I will ransom the mole, on the cheek of the
loveling that is; For how should I ransom it else with
treasure or aught but my soul?
And blessed for ever be He who fashioned his cheek without hair
And made, of His power and His might, all beauty to dwell
in yon mole!

Then he pointed to another and kissing his lips, repeated these verses:

There’s a loveling hath a mole upon his cheek, As ‘twere musk
on virgin camphor, so to speak.
My eyes marvel when they see it. Quoth the mole, “Heaven’s
blessing on the Prophet look ye seek!”

Then he pointed to the third and repeated the following verses, after kissing him half a score times:

All in a silver cup he melted gold full fine, A youth whose
hands were dyed in ruby-coloured wine,
And with the skinkers went and handed round one cup Of wine,
whilst other two were proffered by his eyne.
Fairer than all the Turks, an antelope, whose waist Together
would attract the mountains of Hunain.

An if I were content with crooked womankind, Betwixt
attractions twain would be this heart of mine.
One love towards Diyarbeker drawing it, and one That
draws it, otherguise, to the land of Jamiain.

Now each of the youths had drunk two cups, and when it came to Abou Nuwas's turn, he took the goblet and repeated these verses:

Drink not of wine except it be at the hands of a loveling slim,
Who in brightness of soul resembles it and it resembles
him.
The drinker of wine, in very truth, hath no delight thereof,
Except the cheek of the fair be pure, who doth the goblet
brim.

Then he drank off his cup, and when it came round to Him again, joyance got the mastery of him and he repeated The following verses:

Make thou thy boon-fellow of cups, brimmed up as full as this,
And eke to follow cup with cup, I rede thee, do not miss,
Poured by a damask-lipped one's hand, a wonder-lovely fair,
Whose mouth's sweet water, after sleep, as musk on apple
is.
Drink not of wine, except it be from the hand of a gazelle,
Whose cheek is goodlier than itself and sweeter still his
kiss.

Presently, the wine crept to his head, drunkenness mastered him and he knew not hand from head, so that he swayed about for mirth, inclining anon to this one, to kiss him, and anon to another. Then he fell to glorying in himself and his case and the goodliness of his entertainment and his companions, and recited these verses:

None knoweth perfection of pleasure but he Who drinketh, with
fair ones to hearten him still.
This sings to him, t'other, when cheer him would be, Revives
him forthright with the cups he doth fill;

And whenever from one he hath need of a kiss, Long draughts
from his lips, at his case, he doth swill.
God bless them! Right sweet has my day with them been, And
wonder delightsome and void of all ill!
We drank of the wine cup, both mingled and pure, And agreed
whoso slept, we should touzle at will.

At this moment, there came a knocking at the door; so they bade him who knocked enter, and behold, it was the Khalif Haroun er Reshid. When they saw him, they all rose to him and kissed the ground before him; and the fumes of the wine forsook Abou Nuwas's head for awe of the Khalif, who said to him, 'Hallo, Abou Nuwas!' 'At thy service, O Commander of the Faithful,' answered he, 'may God preserve thee!' 'What state is this I find thee in?' asked the Khalif; and the poet replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful, methinks my state dispenses with question.' Quoth the Khalif, 'O Abou Nuwas, I have sought direction of God the Most High and appoint thee Cadi of whoremasters.' 'Dost thou indeed invest me with that office, O Commander of the Faithful?' asked Abou Nuwas. 'I do,' replied the Khalif. 'Then, O Commander of the Faithful,' rejoined Abou Nuwas, 'hast thou any suit to prefer to me?' At this the Khalif was wroth and turned away and left them, full of rage, and passed the night, sore angered against Abou Nuwas, whilst the latter spent the merriest and most easeful of nights, till the day dawned and the morning-star appeared and shone, when he broke up the sitting and dismissing the boys, donned his court- dress and set out for the Khalif's palace.

Now it was the latter's custom, when the Divan broke up, to withdraw to his sitting-chamber and summon thither his poets and minions and musicians, each having his own place, which he might not overpass. So, that day, he retired to his saloon, and the minions came and seated themselves, each in his place. Presently, in came Abou Nuwas and was about to take his usual seat, when the Khalif cried out to Mesrour the headsman and bade him strip the poet of his clothes and clap an ass's pannel on his back. Moreover, he charged him bind a halter about his head and a crupper under his rear and carry him round to all the lodgings of the slave-girls and the chambers of the harem, that the women might make mock of him; then cut off his head and bring it to him. ‘I hear and obey,’ replied Mesrour and accoutring Abou Nuwas, as the Khalif had bidden him, carried him round to all the lodgings of the harem, in number as the days of the year; but he made all the girls laugh with his buffooneries and each gave him something, so that he returned with a pocketful of money.

Just then, Jaafer the Barmecide, who had been absent on an important business for the Khalif, entered and seeing the poet in this plight, said to him, ‘Hallo, Abou Nuwas!’ ‘At thy service, O our lord,’ answered he. ‘What offence hast thou committed,’ asked Jaafer, ‘to bring this punishment on thee?’ ‘None whatever,’ answered the other, ‘except that I made our lord the Khalif a present of the best of my verses, and he presented me, in return, with the best of his clothes.’ When the Khalif heard this, he laughed, from a heart full of wrath, and [not only] pardoned Abou Nuwas, but gave him a myriad of money.

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

ABDALLAH BEN MAAMER WITH THE MAN OF BASSORA AND HIS SLAVE-GIRL.

A certain man of Bassora once bought a slave-girl and reared and educated her excellent well. Moreover, he loved her very dearly and spent all his substance in pleasuring and making merry with her, till he had nothing left and want was very sore upon him. So she said to him, ‘O my master, sell me; for thou needest my price and it makes my heart ache to see the sorry plight to which want hath brought thee. It thou sell me and make use of my price, it will be better for thee than keeping me, and haply God the Most High will prosper thee and mend thy fortune.’ He agreed to this, of the straitness of his case, and carried her to the bazaar, where the broker offered her for sale to the Governor of Bassora, by name Abballah ben Maamer et Teimi, and she pleased him. So he bought her, for five hundred dinars, of her master, who took the money and was about to go away, when the girl burst into tears and repeated the following verses:

May Allah prosper unto thee the money thou hast got! For me,
nought’s left me but lament and memory and woe.
I say to my afflicted soul, “Mourn little or mourn much; It
skills not, for the loved one’s gone and will return no
mo.”

When he heard this, he sighed heavily and replied thus:

Though there be no recourse for thee in this thy case and thou
Find nought but death to solace thee, excuse me yet and
know,
Evening and morn the thought of thee will company with me,
Wherewith a heart I will console, that’s all fulfilled of
woe.
Peace be on thee! Henceforth for us no meeting shall there be
Nor any union more, except Ben Maamer will it so.

When Abdallah heard these verses and saw their affliction, he exclaimed, ‘By Allah, I will have no hand in separating you; for it is manifest to me that ye indeed love one another. So take the money and the damsel, O man, and may God bless thee in them! For parting is grievous to true lovers.’ So they kissed his hand and going away, ceased not to dwell together, till death parted them; and glory be to Him whom death overtaketh not!

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE LOVERS OF THE BENOU UDHREH.

There was once, among the Benou Udhreh, a handsome and accomplished man, who was never a day out of love, and it chanced that he became enamoured of a beautiful woman of his own tribe and sent her many messages; but she ceased not to use him with cruelty and disdain, till, for stress of passion and longing and distraction, he fell exceeding sick and took to his bed and forswore sleep. His sickness grew on him and his anguish redoubled upon him, till he was all but dead; and his case became known and his passion noised abroad among the folk. His family and hers were instant with her to visit him, but she refused, till he was at the point of death, when, being told of this, she relented towards him and vouchsafed him a visit. When he saw her, his eyes ran over with tears and he repeated the following verses, from a broken heart:

If, by thy life, there pass thee by my funeral train, to wit, A
  bier borne on the necks of four, wilt grudge to follow it?
Wilt thou not follow in its track, that so thou mayst salute
  The sepulchre of one who's dead, committed to the pit?

When she heard this, she wept sore and said to him, 'By Allah, I thought not that passion had come to such a pass with thee, as to cast thee into the arms of death! Had I known this, I had been favourable to thee, and thou shouldst have enjoyed thy desire.' At this, his tears streamed down, like the cloud- showers, and he repeated the following verse:

She draweth near to me, when death hath come betwixt us two
And proffereth union, when it no profit can me do.

Then he gave one sigh and died, and she fell on him, kissing him and weeping, till she swooned away. When she came to herself she charged her people bury her in his grave and recited the following verses, with streaming eyes:

We lived upon the earth a life of comfort and delight: Country
  and tribe and dwelling-place alike of us were proud;

But Fortune and the shifts of time did rend our loves apart,
And now the grave uniteth us within a single shroud.

Then she fell again to weeping and ceased not from tears and lament, till she swooned away. She lay three days, senseless; then died and was buried in his grave. This is one of the strange chances of love.

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

THE VIZIER OF YEMEN AND HIS YOUNG BROTHER

Bedreddin, Vizier of Yemen, had a young brother of singular beauty and kept strait watch over him. So he applied himself to seek a governor for him and coming upon an elder of dignified and reverend aspect, chaste and pious, lodged him in a house next his own, whence he used to come daily to the Vizier's dwelling, to teach the latter's brother. After awhile, the old man's heart was taken with love for his pupil and longing grew upon him and his entrails were troubled, till, one day, he made moan of his case to the boy, who said, 'What can I do, seeing that I may not leave my brother day or night? Thou seest how careful he is over me.' Quoth the governor, 'My lodging adjoins thine; so, when thy brother sleeps, do thou rise and entering the wardrobe, feign thyself asleep. Then come to the parapet of the roof and I will receive thee on the other side of the wall; so shalt thou sit with me awhile and return without thy brother's knowledge.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the boy. So, when awhile of the night was past, he entered the closet and waited till his brother lay down on his bed and was drowned in sleep, when he rose and going to the parapet of the roof, found the governor awaiting him, who gave him his hand and carried him to the sitting-chamber, where he had made ready various dainties for his entertainment, and they sat down to carouse.

Now it was the night of the full moon, and as they sat, passing the wine-cup to one another, her rays shone upon them, and the governor fell to singing. But, whilst they were thus in mirth and joyance and good cheer, such as confounds the wit and the sight and defies description, the Vizier awoke and missing his brother, arose in affright and found the door open. So he went up to the roof and hearing a noise of talk, peeped over the parapet and saw a light shining in the governor's lodging. He looked in and espied his brother and his governor sitting carousing: but the latter became aware of him and sang the following verses, cup in hand, to a lively measure:

He gave me wine to drink, of his mouth’s nectar rare, Toasting
with down of cheeks and what adjoineth there;
Then passed with me the night, embracing, cheek to cheek, A
loveling midst mankind unpeered and past compare.
The full moon gazed on us all night; pray then to her, So to
his brother she to tell of us forbear.

Now the Vizier was a merry man; so, when he heard this, he said, ‘By Allah, I will not betray you!’ And he went away and left them to their diversion.

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE LOVES OF THE BOY AND GIRL AT SCHOOL.

A boy and a girl once learnt together in a school, and the boy fell passionately in love with the girl. So, one day, when the other boys were heedless, he took her tablet and wrote on it the following verses:

Tell me, what sayst thou unto him, whom sickness for thy love
Hath worn and wasted, till he's grown distraught and
stupefied?
Him who of passion maketh moan; for love and longing pain, That
which is in his heart, indeed, no longer can he hide.

When the girl took her tablet, she read the verses and wept for pity of him; then wrote thereunder these others:

An if we see one languishing for very love of us, Our favours,
surely, unto him shall nowise be denied.
Yea, and of us he shall obtain that which he doth desire Of
love-delight, whate'er to us in consequence betide.

Now it chanced that the teacher came in on them And taking the tablet, unnoticed, read what was written thereon. So he was moved to pity of their case and wrote on the tablet the following verses, in reply to those of the girl:

Favour thy lover, for he's grown distracted for desire, And
reck thou not of punishment nor fear lest any chide.
As for the master, have no dread of his authority, For he with
passion an its pains aforetime hath been tried.

Presently, the girl's master entered the school and finding the tablet, read the above verses and wrote under them the following:

May Allah never separate your loves, whilst time abide, And may
your slanderer be put to shame and mortified!
But, for the master of the school, by Allah, all my life, A

busier go-between than he I never yet espied.

Then he sent for the Cadi and the witnesses and married them on the spot. Moreover, he made them a marriage-feast and entreated them with exceeding munificence; and they abode together in joy and contentment, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies.

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

EL MUTELEMMIS AND HIS WIFE UMEIMEH.

It is related that El Mutelemmis once fled from En Numan ben Mundhir and was absent so long that the folk deemed him dead. Now he had a handsome wife, Umeimeh by name, and her family pressed her to marry again; but she refused, for that she loved her husband El Mutelemmis very dearly. However, they were instant with her, because of the multitude of her suitors, and importuned her till she at last reluctantly consented and they married her to a man of her own tribe.

On the night of the wedding, El Mutelemmis came back and hearing in the camp a noise of pipes and tabrets and seeing signs of festival, asked some of the children what was toward, to which they replied, ‘They have married Umeimeh, widow of El Mutelemmis, to such an one, and he goes in to her this night.’ When he heard this, he made shift to enter the house with the women and saw there the bride seated on her throne. By and by, the bridegroom came up to her, whereupon she sighed heavily and weeping, recited the following verses:

Ah would, (but many are the shifts of good and evil fate), I
knew in what far land thou art, O Mutelemmis mine!

Now El Mutelemmis was a renowned poet: so he answered her with the following verse:

Right near at hand, Umeimeh! Know, whene’er the caravan Halted,
I never ceased for thee with longing heart to pine.

When the bridegroom heard this, he guessed how the case stood and went forth from among them in haste, repeating the following verse:

I was in luck, but now I’m fall’n into the contrary. A hospitable house and room your reknit loves enshrine!

So El Mutelemmis took his wife again and abode with her in all delight and solace of life, till death parted them. And glory be to Him at whose command the earth and the heavens shall arise!

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THE KHALIF HAROUN ER RESHID AND THE PRINCESS ZUBEIDEH IN THE BATH.

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid loved the Princess Zubeideh with an exceeding love and laid out for her a pleasaunce, in which he made a great pool and led thither water from all sides. Moreover, he set thereabout a screen of trees, which so grew and interlaced over the pool, that one could go in and wash, without being seen of any, for the thickness of the leafage. It chanced, one day, that Zubeideh entered the garden and coming to the basin, gazed upon its goodliness, and the limpidity of the water and the interlacing of the trees over it pleased her. Now it was a day of exceeding heat; so she put off her clothes and entering the pool, which was not deep enough to cover her, fell to pouring the water over herself from an ewer of silver.

The Khalif heard she was in the pool; so he left his palace and came down to spy upon her, through the screen of the leaves. He stood behind the trees and saw her naked, with all her secret charms displayed. Presently, she became aware of him and turning, saw him behind the trees and was ashamed that he should see her naked. So she laid her hands on her kaze, but it escaped from between them, by reason of its much greatness and plumpness; and the Khalif turned and went away, wondering and reciting the following verse:

I looked on her whom I adore And longing rose in me full sore.

But he knew not what to say next; so he sent for Abou Nuwas and bade him make a piece of verse commencing with the above line. 'I hear and obey,' replied the poet and in a twinkling extemporized the following lines:

I looked on her whom I adore, And longing rose in me full sore
For a gazelle that ravished me, By double lote-trees shaded o'er.
The water on her dainty part With silver ewer did she pour
And would have hidden it, seeing me, But all too small her hands therefor.
Would I were on it, wel-a-way, An hour or liefer two or more!

The Khalif smiled and made him a handsome present, and he went away rejoicing.

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

HAROUN ER RESHID AND THE THREE POETS.

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid was exceeding restless one night; so he rose and walked about his palace, till he happened on a damsel overcome with wine. Now he was greatly enamoured of this damsel; so he toyed with her and pulled her to him, whereupon her girdle fell down and her trousers were unloosed and he besought her of amorous dalliance. But she said to him, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, wait till to-morrow night, for I am unprepared for thee, knowing not of thy coming.’ So he left her and went away.

On the morrow, he sent a page to her to announce his visit to her apartment; but she sent back to him, saying, ‘The day obliterates the promise of the night.’ So he said to his minions, ‘Make me somewhat of verse, introducing these words, “The day obliterates the promise of the night.”’ ‘We hear and obey,’ answered they; and Er Recashi came forward and recited the following:

By Allah, an thou feltst my longing and my pain, Repose had
turned away from thee and taken flight.
A maid hath made me love-distraught, nor visiting Nor being
visited, a sad and love-lorn wight.
She promised me her grace, then turned away and said, “The day
obliterates the promise of the night.”

Then Abou Musab came forward and recited these verses:

When wilt thou put away this dotage from thy spright? Thy heart
is dazed and rest to thee forbidden quite.
Is’t not enough for thee to have a weeping eye And vitals still
on fire for memory and despite?
For self-conceit, indeed, he laugheth, when he saith, “The day
obliterates the promise of the night.”

Last came Abou Nuwas and recited the following:

Love was prolonged and far was union out of sight, Nor skilled
it aught to feign aversion and despite.

One day, she came into the palace, drunk with wine, But even
her drunkenness with pudour was bedight.
Her upper garments dropped and left her shoulders bare And
loosened trousers showed the dwelling of delight;
Yea, and the breeze shook hips, full heavy, and a shape, As
‘twere a branch, whereon pomegranates twain unite.
“Give me a tryst,” quoth I; and she replied, “The place Of
visiting will be to-morrow clean and right.”
Next day, I came and said, “Thy promise;” but quoth she, “The
day obliterates the promise of the night.”

The Khalif bestowed a myriad each on Er Recashi and Abou Musab, but bade strike off Abou Nuwas’s head, saying, ‘Thou west with us yesternight in the palace.’ ‘By Allah,’ answered the poet, ‘I slept not but in my own house! I was directed to what I said by thine own words as to the subject of the poem; and indeed quoth God the Most High (and He is the truest of all speakers), “As for poets (devils ensue them!) dost thou not see how they run wild in each valley and say that they do not?”’ So the Khalif forgave him and bestowed on him two myriads of gold.

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MUSAB BEN EZ ZUBEIR AND AAISHEH DAUGHTER OF TELHEH.

It is told of Musab ben ez Zubeir that he met Izzeh, who was one of the shrewdest of women, in Medina and said to her, ‘I have a mind to marry Aaisheh, daughter of Telheh, and I would have thee go to her and spy out for me how she is made.’ So she went and returning to Musab, said, ‘I have seen her, and her face is more beautiful than health; she hath large and well-opened eyes, an aquiline nose and smooth, oval cheeks and a mouth like a cleft pomegranate, a neck like an ewer of silver and a bosom with two breasts like twin pomegranates, a slim waist and a slender belly, with a navel therein as it were a casket of ivory, and backside like a hummock of sand. Moreover, she hath plump thighs and legs like columns of alabaster; but I saw her feet to be large, and thou wilt fall short with her in time of amorous dalliance.’ Upon this report, he married her and Izzeh invited Aaisheh and the women of the tribe of Kureish to her house, when Aaisheh sang the following, with Musab standing by:

The mouths of girls, with their odoriferous, Sweet breath and
their witching smiles, are sweet to buss;
Yet ne’er have I tasted them, but in thought of him; And by
thought, indeed, the Ruler rules over us.

The night of his going in to her, he departed not from her, till after seven courses; and on the morrow, a freed-woman of his met him and said to him, ‘May I be thy ransom! Thou art perfect, even in this.’

Quoth a certain woman, ‘I was with Aaisheh, when her husband came in to her, and she lusted to him; so he fell upon her and she puffed and snorted and made use of all manner of rare motions and strange inventions, and I the while within hearing. So when he came out from her, I said to her, “How canst thou, with thy rank and nobility and condition, do thus, and I in thy house?” Quoth she, “A woman should bring her husband all of which she is mistress, by way of excitations and rare motions. What mislikest thou of this?” And I answered, “I would have this anights.” “Thus is it by day,” rejoined she, “and by night I do more than this; for, when he sees me, desire stirs in him and he falls on heat; so he puts out his hand to me and I obey him, and it is as thou seest.”’

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ABOUL ASWED AND HIS SQUINTING SLAVE-GIRL.

Aboul Aswed bought a native-born slave-girl, who was squint- eyed, and she pleased him; but his people decried her to him; whereat he wondered and spreading out his hands, recited the following verses:

They run her down to me, and yet no fault in her find I, Except
perhaps it be a speck she hath in either eye.
To compensate this fault, if fault it be, o' the upper parts
She's slim and heavy of the parts beneath the waist that
lie.

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

HAROUN ER RESHID AND THE TWO SLAVE-GIRLS.

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid lay one night between two slave-girls, one from Medina and the other from Cufa, and the latter rubbed his hands, whilst the former rubbed his feet and made his yard to stand up. Quoth the Cufan girl, ‘I see thou wouldst keep the whole of the stock-in-trade to thyself; give me my share of it.’ And the other answered, ‘I have been told by Malik, on the authority of Hisham ibn Orweh, who had it of his [grand]father, that the Prophet said, “Whoso bringeth the dead to life, it is his.”’ But the Cufan took her unawares and pushing her away, took it all in her own hand and said, ‘El Aamesh tells us, on the authority of Kheithemeh, who had it of Abdallah ben Mesoud, that the Prophet said, “Game belongeth to him who taketh it, not to him who raiseth it.”’

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE KHALIF HAROUN ER RESHID AND THE THREE SLAVE-GIRLS.

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid lay once with three slave-girls, a Meccan, a Medinan and an Irakite. The Medina girl put her hand to his yard and handled it, whereupon it rose and the Meccan sprang up and drew it to herself. Quoth the other, ‘What is this unjust aggression? I have heard of Malik, on the authority of Ez Zuhri, who had it of Abdallah ibn Salim, on the report of Said ben Zeid, that the Apostle (whom God bless and preserve) said, “Whoso revivifies a dead land, it is his.”’ And the Meccan answered, ‘Sufyan tells us, on the authority of Abou Zenad, who had it of El Aarej, on the report of Abou Hureireh, that the Apostle of God said, “The game is his who catches it, not his who starts it.”’ But the Irak girl pushed them both away and taking it to herself, said, ‘This is mine, till your contention be decided.’

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE MILLER AND HIS WIFE.

There was a miller, who had an ass to turn his mill; and he was married to a wicked wife, whom he loved; but she hated him and loved a neighbour of hers, who liked her not and held aloof from her. One night, the miller saw, in his sleep, one who said to him, ‘Dig in such a spot of the ass’s circuit in the mill, and thou shalt find a treasure.’ When he awoke, he told his wife the dream and charged her keep it secret; but she told her neighbour, thinking to win his favour, and he appointed with her to come to her by night. So he came and they dug in the mill and found the treasure and took it forth. Then said he to her, ‘How shall we do with this?’ ‘We will share it equally between us,’ answered she; ‘and do thou leave thy wife and I will cast about to rid me of my husband. Then shalt thou marry me, and when we are united, we will add the two halves of the treasure, one to the other, and it will be [all] in our hands.’ Quoth he, ‘I fear lest Satan seduce thee and thou take some man other than myself; for gold in the house is like the sun in the world. Meseems, therefore, it were better that the money be all in my hands, so thou mayst study to win free of thy husband and come to me.’ ‘I fear the like of thee,’ rejoined she, ‘and I will not yield up my part to thee; for it was I directed thee to it.’ When he heard this, covetise prompted him to kill her; so he killed her and threw her body into the empty hole; but the day overtook him and hindered him from covering it up; so he took the treasure and went away.

Presently, the miller awoke and missing his wife, went into the mill, where he fastened the ass to the beam and shouted to it. It went on a little, then stopped; whereupon he beat it grievously; but the more he beat it, the more it drew back; for it was affrighted at the dead woman and could not go on. So he took out a knife and goaded it again and again, but still it would not budge. Then he was wroth with it, knowing not the cause of its obstinacy, and drove the knife into its flanks, and it fell down dead. When the sun rose, he saw his wife lying dead, in the place of the treasure, and great was his rage and sore his chagrin for the loss of the treasure and the death of his wife and his ass. All this came of his letting his wife into his secret and not keeping it to himself.

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE SIMPLETON AND THE SHARPER.

A certain simple fellow was once going along, haling his ass after him by the halter, when a couple of sharpers saw him and one said to his fellow, ‘I will take that ass from yonder man.’ ‘How wilt thou do that?’ asked the other. ‘Follow me and I will show thee,’ replied the first. So he went up to the ass and loosing it from the halter, gave the beast to his fellow; then clapped the halter on his own head and followed the simpleton, till he knew that the other had got clean off with the ass, when he stood still. The man pulled at the halter, but the thief stirred not; so he turned and seeing the halter on a man’s neck, said to him, ‘Who art thou?’ Quoth the sharper, ‘I am thine ass and my story is a strange one. Know that I have a pious old mother and came in to her one day, drunk; and she said to me, “O my son, repent to God the Most High of these thy transgressions.” But I took the cudgel and beat her, whereupon she cursed me and God the Most High changed me into an ass and caused me fall into thy hands, where I have remained till now. However, to-day, my mother called me to mind and her heart relented towards me; so she prayed for me, and God restored me to my former shape of a man.’ ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ cried the simpleton. ‘O my brother, I conjure thee by Allah, acquit me of what I have done with thee, in the way of riding and so forth.’

Then he let the sharper go and returned home, drunken with chagrin and concern. His wife asked him, ‘What ails thee and where is the ass?’ And he answered, ‘Thou knowest not what was this ass; but I will tell thee.’ So he told her the story, and she exclaimed, ‘Woe worth us for God the Most High! How could we have used a man as a beast of burden, all this while?’ And she gave alms and asked pardon of God. Then the man abode awhile at home, idle, till she said to him, ‘How long wilt thou sit at home, idle? Go to the market and buy us an ass and do thy business with it.’ Accordingly, he went to the market and stopping by the ass-stand, saw his own ass for sale. So he went up to it and clapping his mouth to its ear, said to it, ‘Out on thee, thou good-for-nought! Doubtless thou hast been getting drunk again and beating thy mother! But, by Allah, I will never buy thee more!' And he left it and went away.

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THE IMAM ABOU YOUSUF WITH HAROUN ER RESHID AND ZUBEIDEH.

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid went up one noon-tide to his couch, to lie down, and mounting, found thereon fresh semen; whereat he was startled and sore perturbed and troubled. So he called the princess Zubeideh and said to her, ‘What is that spilt on the bed?’ She looked at it and replied, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, it is semen.’ ‘Tell me truly what this means,’ said he; ‘or I will lay violent hands on thee forthright.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered she, ‘indeed, I know not how it came there and I am guiltless of that whereof thou suspectest me.’ So he sent for the Imam Abou Yousuf and told him the case. The Imam raised his eyes to the roof and seeing a crack therein, said to the Khalif, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, the bat hath semen like that of a man, and this is bats’ semen.’ Then he called for a lance and thrust it into the crack, whereupon down fell the bat. In this manner the Khalif’s suspicions were dispelled and Zubeideh’s innocence was made manifest; whereat she gave vent to her joy and promised Abou Yousuf a liberal reward.

Now there were with her magnificent fruits, out of their season, and she knew of others in the garden; so she said to Abou Yousuf, ‘O Imam of the Faith, which wouldst thou rather of the two kinds of fruits, those that are here or those that are not here?’ ‘Our code forbids us to pronounce judgment on the absent,’ answered he. ‘When they are present, we will give judgment.’ So she caused bring the two kinds of fruits before him, and he ate of both. Quoth she, ‘What is the difference between them?’ And he answered, ‘As often as I think to praise one kind, the other puts in its claim.’ The Khalif laughed at his answer and made him a present. Zubeideh also gave him what she had promised him, and he went away, rejoicing. See, then, the blessed qualities of this Imam and how at his hands were made manifest the truth and the innocence of the lady Zubeideh.

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THE KHALIF EL HAKIM AND THE MERCHANT.

The Khalif El Hakim bi Amrillah was riding out in state one day, when he came to a garden, in which he saw a man, surrounded by slaves and servants. He asked him for a draught of water, and the man gave him to drink, saying, ‘Peradventure, the Commander of the Faithful will honour me by alighting in this my garden.’ So the Khalif dismounted and entered the garden with his suite; whereupon the man brought out to them a hundred carpets and a hundred leather mats and a hundred cushions and set before them a hundred dishes of fruits, a hundred saucers of sweetmeats and a hundred bowls full of sherbets of sugar; whereat the Khalif marvelled and said to his host, ‘O man, this thy case is a strange one. Didst thou know of our coming and make this preparation for us?’ ‘No, by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered the other, ‘I knew not of thy coming and am but a merchant of the rest of thy subjects. But I have a hundred concubines; so, when the Commander of the Faithful honoured me by alighting with me, I sent to each of them, bidding her send me the morning-meal here. So they sent me each of her furniture and of the excess of her meat and drink: and every day each sends me a dish of meat and another of marinades, also a plate of fruits and a saucer of sweetmeats and a bowl of sherbet. This is my every- day noon-meal, nor have I added aught thereto for thee.’

The Khalif prostrated himself in thanksgiving to God the Most High and said, ‘Praised be God, who hath been so bountiful to one of our subjects, that he entertaineth the Khalif and his suite, without making ready for them, but of the surplus of his day’s victual!’ Then he sent for all the dirhems in the treasury, that had been struck that year, — and they were in number three thousand and seven hundred thousand; — nor did he mount, till the money came, when he gave it to the merchant, saying, ‘Use this for the maintenance of thy state; and thy desert is more than this.’ Then he mounted and rode away.

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KING KISRA ANOUSHIRWAN AND THE VILLAGE DAMSEL.

The just King, Kisra Anoushirwan, was hunting one day and became separated from his suite, in pursuit of an antelope. Presently, he caught sight of a hamlet, near at hand, and being sore athirst, made for the door of a house, that stood by the wayside, and asked for a draught of water. A damsel came out and looked at him; then, going back into the house, pressed the juice from a sugar-cane into a tankard and mixed it with water; after which she strewed on the top somewhat of perfume, as it were dust, and carried it to the King. He took it and seeing in it what resembled dust, drank it, little by little, till he came to the end. Then said he to her, ‘O damsel, the drink is good and sweet, but for this dust in it, that troubles it.’ ‘O guest,’ answered she, ‘I put that in, of intent.’ ‘And why didst thou thus?’ asked he; and she replied, ‘I saw that thou wast exceeding thirsty and feared that thou wouldst swallow the whole at one draught and that this would do thee a mischief; and so hadst thou done, but for this dust that troubled the drink.’ The King wondered at her wit and good sense and said to her, ‘How many sugar-canes didst thou press for this draught?’ ‘One,’ answered she; whereat the King marvelled and calling for the roll of the taxes of the village, saw that its assessment was but little and bethought him to increase it, on his return to his palace, saying in himself, ‘Why is a village so lightly taxed, where they get this much juice out of one sugar-cane?’

Then he left the village and pursued his chase. As he came back at the end of the day, he passed alone by the same door and called again for drink; whereupon the same damsel came out and knowing him, went in to fetch him drink. It was some time before she returned and the King wondered at this and said to her, ‘Why hast thou tarried?’ Quoth she, ‘Because one sugar- cane yielded not enough for thy need. So I pressed three; but they yielded not so much as did one aforetime.’ ‘What is the cause of that?’ asked the King; and she answered, ‘The cause of it is that the King’s mind is changed.’ Quoth he, ‘How knewst thou that?’ ‘We hear from the wise,’ replied she, ‘that, when the King’s mind is changed against a folk, their prosperity ceaseth and their good waxeth less.’ Anoushirwan laughed and put away from his mind that which he had purposed against the people of the village. Moreover, he took the damsel to wife then and there, being pleased with her much wit and acuteness and the excellence of her speech.

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THE WATER-CARRIER AND THE GOLDSMITH'S WIFE.

There was once, in the city of Bokhara, a water-carrier, who used to carry water to the house of a goldsmith and had done thus thirty years. Now the goldsmith had a wife of exceeding beauty and elegance and withal renowned for modesty, chastity and piety. One day, the water-carrier came, as of wont, and poured the water into the cisterns. Now the woman was standing in the midst of the court; so he went up to her and taking her hand, stroked it and pressed it, then went away and left her. When her husband came home from the bazaar, she said to him, 'I would have thee tell me what thou hast done in the bazaar, today, to anger God the Most High.' Quoth he, 'I have done nothing.' 'Nay,' rejoined she, 'but, by Allah, thou hast indeed done something to anger God; and except thou tell me the truth, I will not abide in thy house, and thou shalt not see me, nor will I see thee.' 'I will tell thee the truth,' answered he. 'As I was sitting in my shop this day, a woman came up to me and bade me make her a bracelet. Then she went away and I wrought her a bracelet of gold and laid it aside. Presently, she returned and I brought her out the bracelet. She put out her hand and I clasped the bracelet on her wrist; and I wondered at the whiteness of her hand and the beauty of her wrist and recalled what the poet says:

Bracelets, upon her wrists, of glittering virgin gold She hath,
    like fire ablaze on running water cold.
It is as if the wrists and bracelets thereabout Were water girt
    with fire, right wondrous to behold.

So I took her hand and pressed it and squeezed it.' 'God is Most Great!' exclaimed the woman. 'Why didst thou this ill thing? Know that the water-carrier, who has come to our house these thirty years, nor sawst thou ever any treason in him, took my hand to day and pressed and squeezed it.' Quoth her husband, 'O woman, let us crave pardon of God! Verily, I repent of what I did, and do thou ask forgiveness of God for me.' 'God pardon me and thee,' said she, 'and vouchsafe to make good the issue of our affair!'

Next day, the water-carrier came in to the jeweller's wife and throwing himself at her feet, grovelled in the dust and besought pardon of her, saying, 'O my lady, acquit me of that which Satan deluded me to do; for it was he that seduced me and led me astray.' 'Go thy ways,' answered she; 'the fault was not in thee, but in my husband, for that he did what he did in his shop, and God hath retaliated upon him in this world.' And it is related that the goldsmith, when his wife told him how the water-carrier had used her, said, 'Tit for tat! If I had done more, the water-carrier had done more.' And this became a current byword among the folk.

So it behoveth a wife to be both outward and inward with her husband, contenting herself with little from him, if he cannot give her much, and taking pattern by Aaisheh the Truthful and Fatimeh the Clean Maid, (may God the Most High accept of them), that she may be of the company of the righteous.

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KHUSRAU AND SHIRIN WITH THE FISHERMAN.

King Khusrau of Persia loved fish; and one day, as he sat in his saloon, he and Shirin his wife, there came a fisherman, with a great fish, and presented it to the King, who was pleased and ordered the man four thousand dirhems. When he was gone, Shirin said to the King, ‘Thou hast done ill.’ ‘Wherefore?’ asked he; and she answered, ‘Because if, after this, thou give one of thy courtiers a like sum, he will disdain it and say, “He hath but given me the like of what he gave the fisherman.” And if thou give him less, he will say, “He makes light of me and gives me less than he gave the fisherman.”’ ‘Thou art right,’ rejoined Khusrau; ‘but the thing is done and it ill becomes a king to go back on his gift.’ Quoth Shirin, ‘An thou wilt, I will contrive thee a means to get it back from him.’ ‘How so?’ asked he; and she said, ‘Call back the fisherman and ask him if the fish be male or female. If he say, “Male,” say thou, “We want a female,” and if he say, “Female,” say, “We want a male.”’

So he sent for the fisherman, who was a man of wit and discernment, and said to him, ‘Is this fish male or female?’ The fisherman kissed the ground and answered, ‘It is of the neuter gender, neither male nor female.’ The King laughed and ordered him other four thousand dirhems. So the fisherman went to the treasurer and taking his eight thousand dirhems, put them in a bag he had with him. Then, throwing the bag over his shoulder, he was going away, when he dropped a dirhem; so he laid the bag off his back and stooped down to pick it up. Now the King and Shirin were looking on, and the latter said, ‘O King, didst thou note the meanness and greediness of yon man, in that he must needs stoop down, to pick up the one dirhem, and could not bring himself to leave it for one of the King’s servants?’ When the King heard this, he was wroth with the fisherman and said, ‘Thou art right, O Shirin!’ So he called the man back and said to him, ‘Thou low-minded fellow! Thou art no man! How couldst thou put the bag off thy shoulder and stoop to pick up the one dirhem and grudge to leave it where it fell?’ The fisherman kissed the earth before him and answered, ‘May God prolong the King’s life! Indeed, I did not pick up the dirhem, because of its value in my eyes; but because on one of its faces is the likeness of the King and on the other his name; and I feared lest any should unwittingly set his foot upon it, thus dishonouring the name and presentment of the King, and I be blamed for the offence.’ The King wondered at his wit and shrewdness and ordered him yet other four thousand dirhems. Moreover, he let cry abroad in his kingdom, saying, ‘It behoveth none to order himself by women’s counsel; for whoso followeth their advice, loseth, with his one dirhem, other two.’

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YEHYA BEN KHALID THE BARMECIDE AND THE POOR MAN.

Yehya ben Khalid the Barmecide was returning home, one day, from the Khalif's palace, when he saw a man at the gate of his house, who rose at his approach and saluted him, saying, 'O Yehya, I am in need of that which is in thy hand, and I make God my intermediary with thee.' So Yehya caused set apart a place for him in his house and bade his treasurer carry him a thousand dirhems every day and that his food should be of the choicest of his own meat. The man abode thus a whole month, at the end of which time, having received in all thirty thousand dirhems, he departed by stealth, fearing lest Yehya should take the money from him, because of the greatness of the sum; and when they told Yehya of this, he said, 'By Allah, though he had tarried with me to the end of his days, yet had I not scanted him of my largesse nor cut off from him the bounties of my hospitality!' For, indeed, the excellences of the Barmecides were past count nor can their virtues be told; especially those of Yehya teen Khalid, for he abounded in noble qualities, even as saith the poet of him:

I asked munificence, "Art free?" It answered, "No, perdie!
    Yehya ben Khalid's slave am I; my lord and master he."
"A boughten slave?" asked I; but, "Nay, so heaven forfend!"
    quoth it. "From ancestor to ancestor he did inherit me."

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MOHAMMED EL AMIN AND JAAFER BEN EL HADI.

Jaafer ben Mousa el Hadi once had a slave-girl, a lute player, called El Bedr el Kebir, than whom there was not in her time a fairer of face nor a better-shaped nor a more elegant of manners nor a more accomplished in singing and smiting the strings; she was indeed perfect in beauty and charm. Mohammed el Amin, son of Zubeideh, heard of her and was instant with Jaafer to sell her to him; but he replied, 'Thou knowest it beseems not one of my rank to sell slave-girls nor traffic in concubines; but, were it not that she was reared in my house, I would send her to thee, as a gift, nor grudge her to thee.'

Some days after this, El Amin went to Jaafer's house, to make merry; and the latter set before him that which it behoves to set before friends and bade El Bedr sing to him and gladden him. So she tuned the lute and sang right ravishingly, whilst El Amin fell to drinking and making merry and bade the cupbearers ply Jaafer with wine, till he became drunken, when he took the damsel and carried her to his own house, but laid not a finger on her. On the morrow, he sent to invite Jaafer; and when he came, he set wine before him and bade the girl sing to him, from behind the curtain. Jaafer knew her voice and was angered at this, but, of the nobleness of his nature and the greatness of his mind, he dissembled his vexation and let no change appear in his demeanour.

When the carousel was at an end, El Amin commanded one of his servants to fill the boat, in which Jaafer had come, with dirhems and dinars and all manner jewels and jacinths and rich clothes and other treasures of price. So he laid therein a thousand myriads of money and a thousand fine pearls, each worth twenty thousand dirhems; nor did he give over loading the barge with all manner of precious things, till the boatmen cried out for quarter, saying, 'The boat cannot hold any more;' whereupon he bade them carry all this to Jaafer's palace. Such are the fashions of the magnanimous, may God have mercy on them!

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THE SONS OF YEHYA BEN KHALID AND SAID BEN SALIM EL BAHILI.

(Quoth Said ben Salim el Bahili), I was once, in the days of Haroun er Reshid, in very narrow case and greatly oppressed with debts, that had accumulated upon me and that I had no means of discharging. My doors were blocked up with creditors and I was without cease importuned for payment by claimants, who dunned me in crowds, till I was at my wits' end what to do. At last, being sore perplexed and troubled, I betook myself to Abdallah ben Malik el Khuzai and besought him to aid me with his judgment and of his good counsel direct me to the door of relief; and he said, "None can quit thee of this thy strait but the Barmecides." Quoth I, "Who can brook their pride and put up with their arrogance?" And he answered, "Thou must put up with it, for the sake of amending thy case." So I left him and went straight to El Fezl and Jaafer, sons of Yehya ben Khalid, to whom I related my case. "God give thee His aid," answered they, "and enable thee by His bounties to dispense with the aid of His creatures and vouchsafe thee abundant good and bestow on thee what shall suffice thee, without the need of any but Himself; for He can what He will and is gracious and provident with His servants."

I went out from them and returned to Abdallah, disappointed and perplexed and heavy at heart, and told him what they had said. Quoth he, "Thou wouldst do well to abide with us this day, that we may see what God the Most High will decree." So I sat with him awhile, and lo, up came my servant, who said to me, "O my lord, there are at our door many laden mules, and with them a man, who says he is the agent of Fezl and Jaafer ben Yehya." Quoth Abdallah, "I trust that relief is come to thee: go and see what is to do." So I left him and running to my house, found at the door a man, who gave me a letter, wherein was written the following: "Know that, after thou hadst been with us and acquainted us with thy case, we betook ourselves to the Khalif and informed him that the case had reduced thee to the humiliation of begging; whereupon he ordered thee a million dirhems from the Treasury. We represented to him that thou wouldst spend this money in paying thy creditors and said, ‘Whence shall he provide for his subsistence?’ So he ordered thee other three hundred thousand, and we have sent thee, of our own money, a million dirhems each, so that thou hast now three millions and three hundred thousand dirhems, wherewithal to order thine affair and amend thine estate.”

See, then, the munificence of these generous men; may God the Most High have mercy on them!

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THE WOMAN’S TRICK AGAINST HER HUSBAND.

A man brought his wife a fish one Friday and bidding her cook it against the end of the congregational prayers, went out to his business. Meanwhile, there came in her friend, who bade her to a wedding at his house; so she agreed and laying the fish in a jar of water, went off with him and was absent a whole week, whilst her husband sought her from house to house and enquired after her; but none could give him any news of her.

On the following Friday, she came home, [and he fell to chiding and reproaching her;] but she brought out to him the fish alive from the jar and assembled the folk against him. He told them his case; but they credited him not and said, ‘It cannot be that the fish should have remained alive all this while.’ So they caused adjudge him mad and imprisoned him and laughed at him, whereupon he wept sore and recited the following verses:

A hag, that holds high rank, indeed, in lewdness! In her face
Are witnesses that testify to filth and wantonness.
When she’s unclean, she bawds; and when she’s clean, she plays
the whore: So, all her time, she’s either bawd or else
adulteress.

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THE DEVOUT WOMAN AND THE TWO WICKED ELDERS.

There was once, of old time, a virtuous woman among the children of Israel, who was pious and devout and used every day to go out to the place of prayer, first entering a garden, which adjoined thereto, and there making the ablution. Now there were in this garden two old men, its keepers, who fell in love with her and sought her favours; but she refused, whereupon said they, ‘Except thou yield thyself to us, we will bear witness against thee of fornication.’ Quoth she, ‘God will preserve me from your wickedness!’ Then they opened the garden-gate and cried out, and the folk came to them from all sides, saying, ‘What ails you?’ Quoth they, ‘We found this damsel in company with a youth, who was doing lewdness with her; but he escaped from our hands.’

Now it was the use of the people of those days to expose an adulteress to public ignominy for three days and after stone her. So they pilloried her three days, whilst the two old men came up to her daily and laying their hands on her head, said, ‘Praised be God who hath sent down His vengeance on thee!’

On the fourth day, they carried her away, to stone her; but a lad of twelve years old, by name Daniel, followed them to the place of execution and said to them, ‘Hasten not to stone her, till I judge between them.’ So they set him a chair and he sat down and caused bring the old men before him separately. (Now he was the first that separated witnesses.) Then said he to the first, ‘What sawest thou?’ So he repeated to him his story, and Daniel said, ‘In what part of the garden did this befall?’ ‘On the eastern side,’ replied the elder, ‘under a pear-tree.’ Then he called the other old man and asked him the same question; and he replied, ‘On the western side of the garden, under an apple-tree.’ Meanwhile the damsel stood by, with her hands and eyes uplift to heaven, imploring God for deliverance. Then God the Most High sent down His vengeful thunder upon the two old men and consumed them and made manifest the innocence of the damsel.

This was the first of the miracles of the Prophet Daniel, on whom and on the Prophet be blessing and peace!

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JAAFER THE BARMECIDE AND THE OLD BEDOUIN.

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid went out one day, with Abou Yousuf the minion and Jaafer the Barmecide and Abou Nuwas, into the desert, where they fell in with an old man, leant upon his ass. The Khalif bade Jaafer ask him whence he came; so he said to him, ‘Whence comest thou?’ ‘From Bassora,’ answered the Bedouin. ‘And whither goest thou?’ asked Jaafer. ‘To Baghdad,’ said the other. ‘And what wilt thou do there?’ asked Jaafer. ‘I go to seek medicine for my eye,’ replied the old man. Quoth the Khalif, ‘O Jaafer, make us sport with him.’ ‘If I jest with him,’ answered Jaafer, ‘I shall hear what I shall not like.’ But Er Reshid rejoined, ‘I charge thee, on my authority, jest with him.’

So Jaafer said to the Bedouin, ‘If I prescribe thee a remedy that shall profit thee, what wilt thou give me in return?’ Quoth the other, ‘God the Most High will requite thee for me with better than I can give thee.’ ‘Harkye, then,’ said Jaafer, ‘and I will give thee a prescription, which I have given to none but thee.’ ‘What is that?’ asked the Bedouin; and Jaafer answered, ‘Take three ounces of wind-wafts and the like of sunbeams and moonshine and lamp-light; mix them together and let them lie in the wind three months. Then bray them three months in a mortar without a bottom and laying them in a cleft platter, set it in the wind other three months; after which use three drachms every night in thy sleep, and (God willing) thou shalt be cured.’

When the Bedouin heard this, he stretched himself out on the ass’s back and letting fly a terrible great crack of wind, said to Jaafer, ‘Take this, in payment of thy prescription. When I have followed it, if God grant me recovery, I will give thee a slave-girl, who shall serve thee in thy lifetime a service, wherewith God shall cut short thy term; and when thou diest and God hurries thy soul to the fire, she shall blacken thy face with her ordure, of her mourning for thee, and lament and buffet her face, saying, “O frosty-beard, what a ninny thou wast!”’ The Khalif laughed till he fell backward, and ordered the Bedouin three thousand dirhems.

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THE KHALIF OMAR BEN KHETTAB AND THE YOUNG BEDOUIN.

The sheriff Hussein ben Reyyan relates that the Khalif Omar ben Khettab was sitting one day, attended by his chief counsellors, judging the folk and doing justice between his subjects, when there came up to him two handsome young men, haling by the collar a third youth, perfectly handsome and well dressed, whom they set before him. Omar looked at him and bade them loose him; then, calling him near to himself, said to them, ‘What is your case with him?’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered they, ‘we are two brothers by one mother and known as followers of the truth. We had a father, a very old man of good counsel, held in honour of the tribes, pure of basenesses and renowned for virtues, who reared us tenderly, whilst we were little, and loaded us with favours, when we grew up; in fine, a man abounding in noble and illustrious qualities, worthy of the poet’s words:

“Is Abou es Sekr of Sheiban?” they questioned of me;
and “No,” I answered, “my life upon it! But Sheiban’s of him, I trow.
How many a father hath ris’n in repute by a noble son, As
Adnan, by God’s Apostle, to fame and glory did grow!”

He went forth this day to his garden, to take his pleasure amongst its trees and pluck the ripe fruits, when this young man slew him and swerved from the road of righteousness; wherefore we demand of thee the retribution of his crime and call upon thee to pass judgment upon him, according to the commandment of God.’

The Khalif cast a terrible look at the accused youth and said to him, ‘Thou hearest the complaint of these young men; what hast thou to say in reply?’ Now he was stout of heart and ready of speech, having doffed the wede of faint-heartedness and put off the apparel of affright; so he smiled and after paying the usual ceremonial compliment to the Khalif, in the most eloquent and elegant words, said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, I have given ear to their complaint, and they have said sooth in that which they avouch, so far as they have set out what befell; and the commandment of God is a decreed decree. But I will state my case before thee, and thine be it to decide thereon.

Know then, O Commander of the Faithful, that I am a very Arab of the Arabs, the noblest of those that are beneath the skies. I grew up in the dwellings of the desert, till evil and hostile times fell upon my tribe, when I came to the utterward of this town, with my children and good and household. As I went along one of the paths between the gardens, with my she-camels, high in esteem with me and precious to me, and midst them a stallion of noble race and goodly shape, a plenteous getter, by whom the females bore abundantly and who walked among them, as he were a crowned king, — behold, one of the she-camels broke away and running to the garden of these young men’s father, began to crop the branches that showed above the wall. I ran to her, to drive her away, when there appeared, at a breach of the wall, an old man, whose eyes sparkled with anger, holding a stone in his right hand and swaying to and fro, like a lion preparing for a spring. He cast the stone at my stallion, and it struck him in a vital part and killed him. When I saw the stallion drop dead beside me, live coals of anger were kindled in my heart; so I took up the stone and throwing it at the old man, it was the cause of his end: thus his own wrongful act returned against him and the man was slain of that wherewith he slew. When the stone struck him, he cried out with a terrible great cry, and I hastened from the spot; but these young men hurried after me and laying hands on me, carried me before thee.’

Quoth Omar, (may God the Most High accept of him), ‘Thou hast confessed thy crime and acquittal is impossible; for [the law of] retaliation is imperative and there is no time of escape.’ ‘I hear and obey the judgment of the Imam,’ answered the Bedouin, ‘and am content to submit me to the requirement of the law of Islam; but I have a young brother, whose old father, before his death, appointed to him great store of wealth and much gold and committed his affair to me, saying, “I give this into thy hand for thy brother; keep it for him with thy might.” So I took the money and buried it; nor doth any know of it but I. Now, if thou adjudge me to die forthright, the money will be lost and thou wilt be the cause of its loss; wherefore the little one will sue thee for his due on the day when God shall judge His creatures. But, if thou wilt grant me three days' delay, I will appoint one to undertake the boy's affair, in my stead, and return to answer my debt; and I have one who will be my surety for this my word.'

The Khalif bowed his head awhile, then raised it and looking round upon those present, said, 'Who will be surety to me for his return?' The Bedouin looked at the faces of those who were in company and pointing to Abou Dherr, said, 'This man will answer for me and be my surety.' 'O Abou Dherr,' said Omar, 'dost thou hear what this youth says and wilt thou be surety to me for his return?' 'Yes, O Commander of the Faithful,' answered Abou Dherr, 'I will be surety for him three days.' So the Khalif accepted his guarantee and let the young man go.

Now, at the appointed time, when the days of grace were nearly or quite at end and still the Bedouin came not, the Khalif sat in his council, with the Companions surrounding him, like the stars about the moon, Abou Dherr and the plaintiffs being also present; and the latter said, 'O Abou Dherr, where is the defendant and how shall he return, having once escaped? But we will not stir hence, till thou bring him to us, that we may take our wreak of him.' 'As the All-Wise King liveth,' replied Abou Dherr, 'if the days of grace expire and the young man return not, I will fulfil my warranty and surrender myself to the Imam.' 'By Allah,' rejoined Omar, 'if the young man tarry, I will assuredly execute on Abou Dherr that which is prescribed by the law of Islam!' Thereupon the eyes of the bystanders ran over with tears; those who looked on raised groans, and great was the clamour. Then the chiefs of the Companions were instant with the plaintiffs to accept the bloodwit and win the thanks of the folk, but they refused and would nothing but the talion. However, as the folk were swaying to and fro and clamorously bemoaning Abou Dherr, up came the young Bedouin, with face beaded with sweat and shining like the new moon, and standing before the Imam, saluted him right fairly and said to him, 'I have given the boy in charge to his mother's brothers and have made them acquainted with all that pertains to his affairs and let them into the secret of his good; after which I braved the heats of midday and am come to redeem the promise of a free-born man.'

The folk marvelled at his good faith and loyalty and his intrepid offering himself to death; and one said to him, 'How noble a youth art thou and how loyal to thy promise and thy duty!' 'Are ye not certified,' rejoined he, 'that when death presenteth itself none can escape from it? And indeed I have kept faith, that it be not said, "Loyalty is gone from among men."' 'By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful,' said Abou Dherr, 'I became warrant for this young man, without knowing to what tribe he belonged, nor had I seen him before that day; but when he turned away from all else who were present and singled me out, saying, "This man will answer for me and be my surety," I thought ill to refuse him, and humanity forbade to baulk his expectation, there being no harm in compliance with his desire, that it be not said, "Benevolence is gone from among men."' Then said the two young men, 'O Commander of the Faithful, we forgive this youth our father's blood, — seeing that [by his noble behaviour] he hath changed desolation into cheer, — that it be not said, "Humanity is gone from among men."'

The Khalif rejoiced in the acquittance of the young Bedouin and his truth and good faith; moreover, he extolled the humanity of Abou Dherr, over all his companions, and approved the benevolent resolve of the two young men, giving them grateful praise and applying to their case the saying of the poet:

He who doth good among the folk shall be repaid again; For works of Good are never lost betwixten God and men.

Then he offered to pay them, from the Treasury, the bloodwit for their father; but they refused, saying, 'We forgave him but of our desire unto God the Bountiful, the Exalted; and he who is thus minded followeth not his benefits with reproach neither mischief.'

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THE KHALIF EL MAMOUN AND THE PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT.

It is told that the Khalif El Mamoun, son of Haroun er Reshid, when he entered the [God-]guarded city of Cairo, was minded to pull down the Pyramids, that he might take what was therein; but, when he went about to do this, he could not avail thereto, for all his endeavour. He expended great sums of money in the attempt, but only succeeded in opening up a small gallery in one of them, wherein he found treasure, to the exact amount of the money he had spent in the works, neither more nor less; at which he marvelled and taking what he found there, desisted from his intent.

Now the Pyramids are three in number, and they are one of the wonders of the world; nor is there on the face of the earth their like for height and fashion and skilful ordinance; for they are builded of immense rocks, and they who built them proceeded by piercing one block of stone and setting therein upright rods of iron; after which they pierced a second block of stone and lowered it upon the first. Then they poured melted lead upon the joints and set the blocks in geometrical order, till the building was complete. The height of each pyramid was a hundred cubits, of the measure of the time, and it was four- square, each side three hundred cubits long, at the bottom, and sloping upward thence to a point. The ancients say that, in the western Pyramid, are thirty chambers of vari-coloured granite, full of precious stones and treasures galore and rare images and utensils and costly arms, which latter are anointed with magical unguents, so that they may not rust till the day of Resurrection. Therein, also, are vessels of glass, that will bend and not break, containing various kinds of compound drugs and medicinal waters. In the second Pyramid are the records of the priests, written on tablets of granite, — to each priest his tablet, on which are set out the wonders of his craft and his achievements; and on the walls are figures like idols, working with their hands at all manner crafts and seated on thrones. To each pyramid there is a guardian, that keeps watch over it and guards it, to all eternity, against the ravages of time and the vicissitudes of events; and indeed the marvels of these pyramids astound all who have eyes and wit. Many are the poems that describe them, thou shalt profit no great matter thereby, and among the rest, quoth one of them:

The high resolves of kings, if they would have them to abide In memory, after them, are in the tongues of monuments.
Dost thou not see the Pyramids? They, of a truth, endure And change not for the shifts of time or chances of events.

And again:

Consider but the Pyramids and lend an ear to all They tell of bygone times and that which did of yore befall.
Could they but speak, assuredly they would to us relate What time and fate have done with first and last and great and small.

And again:

I prithee, tell me, friend of mine, stands there beneath the sky A building with the Pyramids of Egypt that can vie
In skilful ordinance? Behold, Time's self's afraid of them, Though of all else upon the earth 'tis dreaded, low and high.
My sight no longer rests upon their wondrous ordinance, Yet are they present evermore unto my spirit's eye.

And again:

Where's he the Pyramids who built? What was his tribe, His time and what the place where he was stricken dead?
The monuments survive their lords awhile; then death O'ertaketh them and they fall prostrate in their stead.

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THE THIEF TURNED MERCHANT AND THE OTHER THIEF.

There was once a thief who repented to God the Most High and making good his repentance, opened himself a shop for the sale of stuffs, where he continued to trade awhile. One day, he locked his shop and went home; and in the night there came to the bazaar a cunning thief, disguised in the habit of the merchant, and pulling out keys from his sleeve, said to the watchman of the market, 'Light me this candle.' So the watchman took the candle and went to get a light, whilst the thief opened the shop and lit another candle he had with him. When the watchman came back, he found him seated in the shop, looking over the account-books and reckoning with his fingers; nor did he leave to do thus till point of day, when he said to the man, 'Fetch me a camel-driver and his camel, to carry some goods for me.' So the man fetched him a camel, and the thief took four bales of stuffs and gave them to the camel-driver, who loaded them on his beast. Then he gave the watchman two dirhems and went away after the camel-driver, the watchman the while believing him to be the owner of the shop.

Next morning, the merchant came and the watchman greeted him with blessings, because of the two dirhems, much to the surprise of the former, who knew not what he meant. When he opened his shop, he saw the droppings of the wax and the account-book lying on the floor, and looking round, found four bales of stuffs missing. So he asked the watchman what had happened and he told him what had passed in the night, whereupon the merchant bade him fetch the camel-driver and said to the latter, 'Whither didst thou carry the stuffs?' 'To such a wharf,' answered the driver; 'and I stowed them on board such a vessel.' 'Come with me thither,' said the merchant. So the camel-driver carried him to the wharf and showed him the barque and her owner. Quoth the merchant to the latter, 'Whither didst thou carry the merchant and the stuff?' 'To such a place,' answered the master, 'where he fetched a camel-driver and setting the bales on the camel, went I know not whither.' 'Fetch me the camel-driver,' said the merchant; so he fetched him and the merchant said to him, ‘Whither didst thou carry the bales of stuffs from the ship?’ ‘To such a khan,’ answered he. ‘Come thither with me and show it to me,’ said the merchant.

So the camel-driver went with him to a khan at a distance from the shore, where he had set down the stuffs, and showed him the mock merchant’s magazine, which he opened and found therein his four bales untouched and unopened. The thief had laid his mantle over them; so the merchant took the bales and the cloak and delivered them to the camel-driver, who laid them on his camel; after which the merchant locked the magazine and went away with the camel-driver. On the way, he met the thief, who followed him, till he had shipped the bales, when he said to him, ‘O my brother (God have thee in His keeping!), thou hast recovered thy goods, and nought of them is lost; so give me back my cloak.’ The merchant laughed and giving him back his cloak, let him go unhindered.

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MESROUR THE EUNUCH AND IBN EL CARIBI

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid was very restless one night; so he said to his Vizier Jaafer, ‘I am sleepless tonight and my heart is oppressed and I know not what to do.’ Now his henchman Mesrour was standing before him, and he laughed. Quoth the Khalif, ‘Dost thou laugh in derision of me or art thou mad?’ ‘Neither, by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Mesrour, ‘by thy kinship to the Prince of Apostles, I did it not of my free-will; but I went out yesterday to walk and coming to the bank of the Tigris, saw there the folk collected about a man named Ibn el Caribi, who was making them laugh; and but now I recalled what he said, and laughter got the better of me; and I crave pardon of thee, O Commander of the Faithful!’ ‘Bring him to me forthright,’ said the Khalif. So Mesrour repaired in all haste to Ibn el Caribi and said to him, ‘The Commander of the Faithful calls for thee.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered the droll. ‘But on condition,’ added Mesrour, ‘that, if he give thee aught, thou shalt have a fourth and the rest shall be mine.’ ‘Nay,’ replied the other, ‘thou shalt have half and I half.’ ‘Not so,’ insisted Mesrour; ‘I will have three- quarters.’ ‘Thou shalt have two-thirds, then,’ rejoined Ibn el Caribi; ‘and I the other third.’ To this Mesrour agreed, after much haggling, and they returned to the palace together.

When Ibn el Caribi came into the Khalif’s presence, he saluted him, as became his rank, and stood before him; whereupon said Er Reshid to him, ‘If thou do not make me laugh, I will give thee three blows with this bag.’ Quoth Ibn el Caribi in himself, ‘Three strokes with that bag were a small matter, seeing that beating with whips irketh me not;’ for he thought the bag was empty. Then he clapped into a discourse, such as would make a stone laugh, and gave vent to all manner of drolleries; but the Khalif laughed not neither smiled, whereat Ibn el Caribi marvelled and was chagrined and affrighted. Then said the Khalif, ‘Now hast thou earned the beating,’ and gave him a blow with the bag, in which were four pebbles, each two pounds in weight. The blow fell on his neck and he gave a great cry, then calling to mind his compact with Mesrour, said, ‘Pardon, O

Commander of the Faithful! Hear two words from me.’ ‘Say on,’ replied the Khalif. Quoth Ibn el Caribi, ‘Mesrour made it a condition with me that, whatsoever might come to me of the bounties of the Commander of the Faithful, one-third thereof should be mine and the rest his; nor did he agree to leave me so much as one-third save after much haggling. Now thou hast bestowed on me nothing but beating; I have had my share and here stands he, ready to receive his; so give him the two other blows.’

When the Khalif heard this, he laughed till he fell backward; then calling Mesrour, he gave him a blow, whereat he cried out and said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, one-third sufficeth me: give him the two-thirds.’ The Khalif laughed at them and ordered them a thousand diners each, and they went away, rejoicing.

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THE DEVOUT PRINCE.

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid had a son, who, from the time he attained the age of sixteen, renounced the world and walked in the way of ascetics and devotees. He was wont to go out to the tombs and say, ‘Behold, ye that lie here once possessed the world, but that was no deliverer for you [from death], and now are ye come to your graves! Would God I knew what ye say and what is said to you!’ And he wept, as one weeps that is troubled and fearful, and repeated the words of the poet:

Whene’er the funerals pass, my heart with fear is torn, And the wailing of the mourners maketh me to mourn.

One day, as he sat among the tombs, according to his wont, his father passed by, in all his state, surrounded by his viziers and grandees and the officers of his household, who saw the Khalif’s son, with a gown of woollen stuff on his body and a cowl of the same on his head, and said to one another, ‘This youth dishonours the Commander of the Faithful among Kings: but, if he reproved him, he would leave his present way of life.’ The Khalif heard what they said; so he bespoke his son of this, saying, ‘O my son, thou puttest me to shame by thy present way of life.’ The young man looked at him and made no reply: then he beckoned to a bird, that was perched on the battlements of the palace, and said to it, ‘O bird, I conjure thee, by Him who created thee, alight upon my hand.’ And straightway it flew down and perched on his hand. Quoth he, ‘Return to thy place;’ and it did so. Then he said, ‘Alight on the hand of the Commander of the Faithful;’ but it refused, and he said to his father, ‘It is thou that puttest me to shame, amongst the friends of God, by thy love of the world; and now I am resolved to depart from thee, never to return to thee, save in the world to come.’ Then he went down to Bassora, where he fell to working with those that wrought in mud, taking, as his day’s hire, but a dirhem and a danic. With the danic he fed himself and gave alms of the dirhem.

(Quoth Abou Aamir of Bassora), There fell down a wall in my house: so I went out to the station of the artisans, to find one who should set it up for me, and my eyes fell on a handsome youth of a radiant countenance. So I accosted him and said to him, “O my friend, dost thou seek work?” “Yes,” answered he; and I said, “Come with me and build a wall.” “On two conditions,” replied he. Quoth I, “What are they, O my friend?” “First,” said he, “that my hire be a dirhem and a danic, and secondly, that, when the Muezzin calls to prayer, thou shalt let me go pray with the congregation.” “It is well,” answered I and carried him to my house, where he fell to work, such work as I never saw the like of. Presently, I named to him the morning meal; but he said, “No;” and I knew that he was fasting. When he heard the call to prayer, he said to me, “Thou knowest the condition?” “Yes,” answered I. So he loosed his girdle and applying himself to the ablution, made it after a fashion than which I never saw a goodlier; then went to the mosque and prayed with the congregation and returned to his work. He did the like upon the call to afternoon-prayer, and when I saw him fall to work again thereafterward, I said to him, “O my friend, the hours of labour are over for to-day; a workman’s day is but till the time of afternoon-prayer.” “Glory be to God,” answered he, “my service is till the night.” And he ceased not to work till nightfall, when I gave him two dirhems. Quoth he, “What is this?” “By Allah,” answered I, “this is [but] part of thy wage, because of thy diligence in my service.” But he threw me back the two pieces, saying, “I will have no more than was agreed upon between us.” I pressed him to take them, but could not prevail upon him; so I gave him the dirhem and the danic, and he went away.

Next morning early, I went to the station, but found him not; so I enquired for him and was told that he came thither only on Saturdays. So, when Saturday came, I betook me to the market and finding him there, said to him, “In the name of God, do me the favour to come and work for me.” [“Willingly,”] said he, “upon the conditions thou wottest of.” “It is well,” answered I and carrying him to my house, stood watching him, unseen of him, and saw him take a handful of mud and lay it on the wall, when, behold, the stones ranged themselves one upon another; and I said, “On this wise are the friends of God.” He worked out his day and did even more than before; and when it was night, I gave him his hire, and he took it and went away.

When the third Saturday came round, I went to the standing, but found him not; so I enquired for him and was told that he lay sick in the hut of such a woman. Now this was an old woman, renowned for piety, who had a hut of reeds in the burial- ground. So I went thither and found him lying on the naked earth, with a brick for a pillow and his face beaming with light. I saluted him and he returned my salute; and I sat down at his head, weeping over his tenderness of years and strangerhood and submission to the will of his Lord. Then said I to him, "Hast thou any need?" "Yes," answered he; and I said, "What is it?" He replied, "Come hither tomorrow in the forenoon and thou wilt find me dead. Wash me and dig my grave and tell none thereof: but shroud me in this my gown, after thou hast unsewn it and taken out what thou shalt find in the bosom, which keep with thee. Then, when thou hast prayed over me and laid me in the dust, go to Baghdad and watch for the Khalif Haroun er Reshid, till he come forth, when do thou bear him my salutation and give him what thou shalt find in the breast of my gown." Then he made the profession of the Faith and glorified his Lord in the most eloquent of words, reciting the following verses:

Carry the trust of him on whom the wished-for death hath come
To Er Reshid, and thy reward with thy Creator stand!
"An exile greets thee," say, "who longed full sorely for thy
sight; With long desire he yearned for thee, far in a
foreign strand.
Nor hate nor weariness from thee estranged him, for, indeed, To
God Most High he was brought near by kissing thy right
hand.
But, O my father, 'twas his heart, shunning the vain delights
Of this thy world, that drove him forth to seek a distant
land!"

Then he betook himself to prayer, asking pardon of God and blessing the Lord of the Just and repeating verses of the Koran; after which he recited the following:

Let not prosperity delude thee, father mine; For fortune wastes

and life itself must pass away.
Whenas thou com'st to know of folk in evil plight, Think thou
must answer it upon the Judgment Day;
And when thou bearest forth the dead unto the tombs, Think that
thou, too, must pass upon the self-same way!

Then I left him and went home. On the morrow, I returned, at the appointed hour, and found him indeed dead, the mercy of God be on him! So I washed him and unsewing his gown, found in the bosom a ruby worth thousands of diners and said to myself, "By Allah, this youth was indeed abstracted from the things of this world!" After I had buried him, I made my way to Baghdad and going to the Khalif's palace, waited till he came forth, when I accosted him in one of the streets and gave him the ruby, which when he saw, he knew and fell down in a swoon. His attendants laid hands on me, but he revived and bade them unhand me and bring me courteously to the palace. They did his bidding, and when he returned, he sent for me and carrying me into his closet, said to me, "How doth the owner of this ruby?" Quoth I, "He is dead;" and told him what had passed; whereupon he fell a-weeping and said, "The son hath profited, but the father is disappointed." Then he called out, saying, "Ho, such an one!" And behold, a woman came out to him. When she saw me, she would have withdrawn; but he said to her, "Come; and heed him not." So she entered and saluted, and he threw her the ruby, which when she knew, she gave a great shriek and fell down in a swoon. As soon as she came to herself, she said, "O Commander of the Faithful, what hath God done with my son?" And he said to me, "Do thou tell her;" for he could not speak for weeping. So I repeated the story to her, and she began to weep and say in a failing voice, "How I have longed for thy sight, O consolation of my eyes! Would I might have given thee to drink, when thou hadst none to tend thee! Would I might have companied with thee, whenas thou foundest none to cheer thee!" And she poured forth tears and recited the following verses:

I weep for one to whom death came, an exile and in pain: Alone
he died, without a friend to whom he might complain.

Puissant and honoured and conjoined with those that loved him
dear, To live alone and seeing none, unfriended, he was
fain.
That which the days conceal shall yet be manifest to us: Not
one of us by death, indeed, unsmitten may remain.
O absent one, the Lord of all decreed thy strangerhood, And
thou left'st far behind the love that was betwixt us
twain!
Though death, my son, forbid me hope to see thee in this life,
Tomorrow, on the Reckoning-Day, we two shall meet again.

Quoth I, "O Commander of the Faithful, was he indeed thy son?" "Yes," answered he; "and indeed, before I succeeded to this office, he was wont to visit the learned and company with the devout; but, when I became Khalif, he grew estranged from me and withdrew himself apart. Then said I to his mother, 'This thy son is absorbed in God the Most High, and it may be that tribulations shall befall him and he be smitten with stress of evil chance; wherefore, do thou give him this ruby, that it may be to him a resource in the hour of need.' So she gave it him, conjuring him to take it, and he obeyed her. Then he left the things of our world to us and removed himself from us; nor did he cease to be absent from us, till he went to the presence of God (to whom belong might and majesty) with a holy and pure mind." Then said he, "Come, show me his grave." So we repaired to Bassora and I showed him his son's grave. When he saw it, he wept and lamented, till he fell down in a swoon; after which he came to himself and asked pardon of God, saying, "We are God's, and to Him we return!" and invoked blessings on the dead. Then he besought me of companionship; but I said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, verily, in thy son's case is for me the gravest of admonitions!" And I recited the following verses:

'Tis I am the stranger! None harbours the wight, Though he lie
in his native city by night.
'Tis I am the exile! Nor children nor wife Nor comrades have I,
to take ruth on my plight.
The mosques are my refuge; I haunt them indeed: My heart from

their shelter shall never take flight.
To the Lord of all creatures, to God be the praise, Whilst yet
in the body abideth the spright!

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THE SCHOOLMASTER WHO FELL IN LOVE BY REPORT.

(Quoth one of the erudite), I passed once by a [school, in which a] schoolmaster, comely of aspect and well dressed, was teaching children; so I entered, and he rose and made me sit with him. Then I examined him in the Koran and in syntax and poetry and lexicography, and found him perfect in all that was required of him and said to him, “God strengthen thy purpose! Thou art indeed versed in all that is sought of thee.” So I frequented him awhile, discovering daily some new excellence in him, and said to myself, “This is indeed a wonder in a schoolmaster; for the understanding are agreed upon the lack of wit of those that teach children.” Then I separated myself from him and sought him out and visited him [only] every few days, till, one day, coming to see him as of wont, I found the school shut and made enquiry of the neighbours, who said, “Some one is dead in his house.” So I said to myself, “It behoves me to pay him a visit of condolence,” and going to his house, knocked at the door. A slave-girl came out to me and said, “What dost thou want?” “I want thy master,” answered I. Quoth she, “He is sitting alone, mourning.” “Tell him,” rejoined I, “that his friend so and so seeks to condole with him.” She went in and told him; and he said, “Admit him.” So she brought me in to him, and I found him seated alone and his head bound [with the fillets of mourning]. “May God amply requite thee!” said I. “This is a road all must perforce travel, and it behoves thee to take patience. But who is dead unto thee?” “One who was dearest and best beloved of the folk to me,” answered he. Quoth I, “Perhaps thy father?” He replied, “No;” and I said, “Thy mother?” “No,” answered he. “Thy brother?” “No.” “One of thy kindred?” “No.” “Then,” asked I, “what relation was the dead to thee?” “My mistress,” answered he. Quoth I to myself, “This is the first sign of his lack of wit.” Then I said to him, “There are others than she and fairer;” and he answered, “I never saw her, that I might judge whether or no there be others fairer than she.” Quoth I to myself, “This is another sign” Then I said to him, “And how couldst thou fall in love with one thou hast never seen?” Quoth he, “I was sitting one day at the window, when there passed by a man, singing the following verse:

Umm Amri, God requite thee thy generosity! Give back my heart, prithee, wherever it may be!

When I heard this, I said to myself, ‘Except this Umm Amri were without equal in the world, the poets had not celebrated her in amorous verse.’ So I fell in love with her; but, two days after, the same man passed, singing the following verse:

The jackass with Umm Amri departed; but, alas, Umm Amri! She returned not again, nor did the ass.

Thereupon I knew that she was dead and mourned for her. This was three days ago, and I have been mourning ever since.” So I left him and went away, having assured myself of the feebleness of his wit.

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THE FOOLISH SCHOOLMASTER

A man of elegant culture once entered a school and sitting down by the master, entered into discourse with him and found him an accomplished theologian, poet, grammarian and lexicographer, intelligent, well bred and pleasant; whereat he wondered, saying in himself, ‘It cannot be that a man, who teaches children in a school, should have a perfect wit.’ When he was about to go away, the schoolmaster said to him, ‘Thou art my guest to-night;’ and he consented and accompanied him to his house, where he made much of him and set food before him. They ate and drank and sat talking, till a third part of the night was past, when the host spread his guest a bed and went up to his harem. The other lay down and addressed himself to sleep, when, behold, there arose a great clamour in the harem. He asked what was to do, and they said, ‘A terrible thing hath befallen the sheikh, and he is at the last gasp.’ ‘Take me up to him,’ said he. So they carried him to the schoolmaster, whom he found lying insensible, with his blood streaming down. He sprinkled water on his face and when he revived, he said to him, ‘What has betided thee? When thou leftest me, thou west in all good cheer and sound of body.’ ‘O my brother,’ answered the schoolmaster, ‘after I left thee, I sat meditating on the works of God the Most High and said to myself, “In every thing God hath created for man there is an use; for He (to whom be glory) created the hands to seize, the feet to walk, the eyes to see, the ears to hear and the yard to do the deed of kind; and so on with all the members of the body, except these two cullions; there is no use in them.” So I took a razor I had by me and cut them off; and there befell me what thou seest.’ So the guest left him and went away, saving, ‘He was in the right who said, “No schoolmaster who teaches children can have a perfect wit, though he know all sciences.”

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THE IGNORANT MAN WHO SET UP FOR A SCHOOLMASTER.

There was once, among the hangers-on of the collegiate mosque, a man who knew not how to read and write and got his bread by gulling the folk. One day, he bethought him to open a school and teach children; so he got him tablets and written scrolls and hung them up in a [conspicuous] place. Then he enlarged his turban and sat down at the door of the school. The people, who passed by and saw his turban and the tablets and scrolls, thought he must be a very learned doctor; so they brought him their children; and he would say to this, 'Write,' and to that, 'Read;' and thus they taught one another.

One day, as he sat, as of wont, at the door of the school, he saw a woman coming up, with a letter in her hand, and said to himself, 'This woman doubtless seeks me, that I may read her the letter she has in her hand. How shall I do with her seeing I cannot read writing?' And he would fain have gone down and fled from her; but, before he could do this, she overtook him and said to him, 'Whither away?' Quoth he, 'I purpose to pray the noontide-prayer and return.' 'Noon is yet distant,' said she; 'so read me this letter.' He took the letter and turning it upside down, fell to looking at it, now shaking his head and anon knitting his eyebrows and showing concern. Now the letter came from the woman's husband, who was absent; and when she saw the schoolmaster do thus, she said, 'Doubtless my husband is dead, and this learned man is ashamed to tell me so.' So she said to him, 'O my lord, if he be dead, tell me.' But he shook his head and held his peace. Then said she, 'Shall I tear my clothes?' 'Tear,' answered he. 'Shall I buffet my face?' asked she; and he said, 'Buffet.' So she took the letter from his hand and returning home, fell a-weeping, she and her children.

One of her neighbours heard her weeping and asking what ailed her, was answered, 'She hath gotten a letter, telling her that her husband is dead.' Quoth the man, 'This is a lying saying; for I had a letter from him but yesterday, advising me that he is in good health and case and will be with her after ten days.' So he rose forthright and going in to her, said, 'Where is the letter thou hast received?'

She brought it to him, and he took it and read it; and it ran as follows, after the usual salutations, ‘I am well and in good health and case and will be with thee after ten days. Meanwhile, I send thee a quilt and an extinguisher.’ So she took the letter and returning with it to the schoolmaster, said to him, ‘What moved thee to deal thus with me?’ And she repeated to him what her neighbour had told her of her husband’s well-being and of his having sent her a quilt and an extinguisher. ‘Thou art in the right,’ answered he. ‘But excuse me, good woman; for I was, at the time, troubled and absent-minded and seeing the extinguisher wrapped in the quilt, thought that he was dead and they had shrouded him.’ The woman, not smoking the cheat, said, ‘Thou art excused.’ and taking the letter, went away.

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THE KING AND THE VIRTUOUS WIFE

A certain King once went forth in disguise, to look into the affairs of his subjects. Presently, he came to a great village and being athirst, stopped at the door of a house and asked for water. There came out to him a fair woman, with a pitcher of water, which she gave him, and he drank. When he looked at her, he was ravished with her and required her of love. Now she knew him; so she brought him into the house and making him sit down, brought out a book and said to him, ‘Look in this book, whilst I order my affair and return to thee.’ So he looked into the book, and behold, it treated of the Divine prohibition against adultery and of the punishments that God hath prepared for those that do it. When he read this, his flesh quaked and he repented to God the Most High: then he called the woman and giving her the book, went away. Now her husband was absent and when he returned, she told him what had passed, whereat he was confounded and said in himself, ‘I fear lest the King’s desire have fallen upon her.’ And he dared not have to do with her after this.

After awhile, the wife told her kinsfolk of her husband’s conduct, and they complained of him to the King, saying, ‘May God advance the King! This man hired of us a piece of land, for tillage, and tilled it awhile; then left it fallow and tilled it not, neither forsook it, that we might let it to one who would till it. Indeed, harm is come to the field, and we fear its corruption, for that land, if it be not tilled’ spoileth.’ Quoth the King to the man, ‘What hinders thee from tilling thy land?’ ‘May God advance the King!’ answered he. ‘It came to my knowledge that a lion entered the field, wherefore I stood in awe of him and dared not approach it, seeing that I know I cannot cope with the lion, and I stand in fear of him.’ The King understood the parable and rejoined, saying, ‘O fellow, the lion trampled not thy land, and it is good for tillage; so do thou till it and God prosper thee in it, for the lion hath done it no hurt.’ Then he bade give the man and his wife a handsome present and sent them away.

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ABDURREHMAN THE MOOR'S STORY OF THE ROC.

There was once a man of the people of Morocco, called Abdurrehman the Moor, and he was known, to boot, as the Chinaman, for his long sojourn in Cathay. He had journeyed far and wide and traversed many seas and deserts and was wont to relate wondrous tales of his travels. He was once cast upon an island, where he abode a long while and returning thence to his native country, brought with him the quill of the wing-feather of a young roe, whilst yet unhatched and in the egg; and this quill was big enough to hold a skinful of water, for it is said that the length of the young roe's wing, when it comes forth of the egg, is a thousand fathoms. The folk marvelled at this quill, when they saw it, and Abdurrehman related to them the following adventure.

He was on a voyage in the China seas, with a company of merchants, when they sighted a great island so they steered for it and casting anchor before it, saw that it was large and spacious. The ship's people went ashore to get wood and water, taking with them skins and ropes and axes, and presently espied a great white gleaming dome, a hundred cubits high. So they made towards it and drawing near, found that it was a roe's egg and fell on it with axes and stones and sticks, till they uncovered the young bird and found it as it were a firm-set mountain. They went about to pluck out one of its wing-feathers, but could not win to do so, save by helping one another, for all the feathers were not full grown; after which they took what they could carry of the young bird's flesh and cutting the quill away from the feather-part, returned to the ship. Then they spread the canvas and putting out to sea, sailed with a fair wind all that night, till the sun rose, when they saw the old roc come flying after them, as he were a vast cloud, with a rock in his talons, like a great mountain, bigger than the ship. As soon as he came over the vessel, he let fall the rock upon it; but the ship, having great way on her, forewent the rock, which fell into the sea with a terrible crash. So God decreed them safety and delivered them from destruction; and they cooked the young bird's flesh and ate it. Now there were amongst them old grey bearded men; and when they awoke on the morrow, they found that their beards had turned black, nor did any who had eaten of the young roc ever grow grey. Some held the cause of the return of youth to them and the ceasing of hoariness from them to be that they had heated the pot with arrow-wood, whilst others would have it that it came of eating the young roe's flesh; and this is indeed a wonder of wonders.

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ADI BEN ZEID AND THE PRINCESS HIND.

En Numan ben el Mundhir, King of the Arabs [of Irak], had a daughter named Hind, who was eleven years old and was the loveliest woman of her age and time. She went out one Easter, which is a feast-day of the Nazarenes, to the White Church, to take the sacrament. Now that day came to El Hireh a young man called Adi ben Zeid, with presents from Chosroës, to En Numan, and he also went into the White Church, to communicate. He was tall and well-favoured, with handsome eyes and smooth cheeks, and had with him a company of his people. Now there was with Hind a slave-girl named Mariyeh, who was enamoured of Adi, but had not been able to win to him. So, when she saw him in the church, she said to Hind, 'Look at yonder youth. By Allah, he is handsomer than all thou seest!' 'And who is he?' asked Hind. 'Adi ben Zeid,' answered Mariyeh Quoth the princess, 'I fear lest he know me, if I draw near, to look on him closelier.' 'How should he know thee,' said Mariyeh, 'when he has never seen thee?' So she drew near him and found him jesting with his companions; and indeed he surpassed them all, not only in his beauty, but in the excellence of his speech and the eloquence of his tongue and the richness of his apparel. When the princess saw him, she was ravished with him, her reason was confounded and her colour changed; and Mariyeh, seeing her inclination to him, said to her, 'Speak to him.' So she spoke to him and went away.

When he saw her and heard her speech, he was captivated by her and his wit was dazed; his colour changed and his heart fluttered, so that his companions misdoubted of him, and he whispered one of them to follow her and find out who she was. The man followed her and returning to his master, informed him that she was the princess Hind, daughter of En Numan. So Adi left the church, knowing not whither he went, for stress of love, and reciting the following verses:

Companions mine, yet one more favour I entreat: Address ye to
the ways once more your travelling feet.
Turn me towards the lands, the lands where Hinda dwells; Then

go and her I love with tidings of me greet.

Then he went to his lodging and lay that night, restless nor tasting sleep. On the morrow, Mariyeh accosted him, and he received her kindly, though before he would not hearken to her, and said to her, ‘What is thy will?’ Quoth she, ‘I have a suit to thee.’ ‘Name it,’ answered he; ‘for, by Allah, thou shalt not ask me aught, but I will give it thee!’ So she told him that she was in love with him, and her suit to him was that he would grant her a lover’s privacy; and he agreed to do her will, on condition that she would serve him with Hind and make shift to bring them together. Then he took her into a vintner’s shop, in one of the by-streets of Hireh, and lay with her; after which she returned to Hind and said to her, ‘Dost thou not long to see Adi?’ ‘How can this be?’ replied the princess. ‘Indeed my longing for him makes me restless, and no repose is left me since yesterday, on his account.’ Quoth Mariyeh, ‘I will appoint him to be in such a place, where thou canst look on him from the palace.’ ‘Do what thou wilt,’ replied Hind and agreed with her upon the place.

So Adi came, and the princess looked out upon him; and when she saw him, she was like to fall down from the top of the palace and said to Mariyeh, ‘Except thou bring him in to me this night, I shall die.’ So saying, she fell down in a swoon, and her serving-women lifted her up and bore her into the palace; whilst Mariyeh hastened to En Numan and discovered the whole matter to him, saying, ‘Verily, she is mad for love of Adi; and except thou marry her to him, she will be put to shame and die of love for him.’ The King bowed his head awhile in thought and exclaimed again and again, ‘Verily, we are God’s and to Him we return!’ Then said he, ‘Out on thee! How shall the marriage be brought about, seeing it misliketh me to open the matter to him?’ ‘He is yet more ardently in love and yet more desireful of her than she of him,’ answered Mariyeh; ‘and I will so order the matter that he shall be unaware that his case is known to thee; but do not betray thyself, O King.’

Them she went to Adi and said to him, ‘Make a feast and bid the King thereto; and when wine hath gotten the better of him, ask of him the hand of his daughter, for he will not refuse thee.’ Quoth Adi, ‘I fear lest this enrage him against me and be the cause of enmity between us.’

But she answered, ‘I came not to thee, till I had settled the whole matter with him.’ Then she returned to En Numan and said to him, ‘Seek of Adi that he entertain thee in his house.’ ‘There is no harm in that,’ replied the King and after three days, besought Adi to give him and his lords the morning-meal in his house. The young man consented, and the King went to him; and when the wine had taken effect on En Numan, Adi rose and sought of him his daughter in marriage. He consented and married them and brought her to him after three days; and they abode at En Numan’s court, in all delight and solace of life, three years, at the end of which time the King was wroth with Adi and slew him. Hind mourned for him with an exceeding grief and built her a convent without the city, whither she retired and devoted herself to religious exercises, weeping and bemoaning her husband, till she died. And her convent is extant to this day without El Hireh.

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DIBIL EL KHUZAÏ WITH THE LADY AND MUSLIM BEN EL WELID.

(Quoth Dibil el Khuzaï), I was sitting one day at the gate of El Kerkh, when a lady came up to me, never saw I a handsomer or better shaped than she, walking with a swaying gait and ravishing, with her flexile grace, all who beheld her. When my eyes fell on her, I was captivated by her and my entrails trembled and meseemed my heart fled forth of my breast; so I accosted her with the following verse:

Unsealed are the springs of tears for mine eyes, heigho! And
sealed are the springs of sleep to my lids, for woe.

She turned her head and looking at me, made answer forthright with the following:

And surely, an ailing eye to have, for him Whom her looks
invite, is a little thing, I trow.

I was astounded at the readiness of her reply and the sweetness of her speech and rejoined with this verse:

And doth then the heart of my fair indeed incline To favour him
whose tears as a river flow?

She answered me, without hesitation, thus:

If thou desire us of love, betwixt us love Is a loan to be returned, I'd have thee know.

Never entered my ears sweeter than her speech nor ever saw I brighter than her face: so I changed the rhyme and measure, to try her, in my wonder at her speech, and repeated the following verse:

Will destiny e'er gladden us with union and delight And one desireful one at last with other one unite?

She smiled at this, (never saw I fairer than her mouth nor sweeter than her lips,) and answered me, without hesitation, as follows:

I prithee, what hath destiny to do betwixt us twain? Thou'rt destiny: rejoice us, then, with union and delight.

At this, I sprang up and kissing her hands, said, “I had not thought that Fortune would vouchsafe me such an opportunity. Do thou follow me, not of command or against thy will, but of thy grace and favour to me.” Then I went on and she after me.

Now I had not, at that time, a lodging I deemed fit for the like of her; Muslim ben El Welid was my fast friend, and he had a handsome house. So I made for his abode and knocked at the door, whereupon he came out, and I saluted him, saying, “It is for a time like this that friends are treasured up.” “With all my heart,” answered he; “enter.” So we entered, I and the lady, but found money scarce with him. However, he gave me a handkerchief, saying, “Carry it to the market and sell it and buy meat and what else thou needest.” So I took the handkerchief and hastening to the market, sold it and bought meat and what else we required; but, when I returned, I found that Muslim had retired, with the lady, to an underground chamber. When he heard me, he came out and said to me, “God requite thee the kindness thou hast done me, O Abou Ali, and reckon it of thy good deeds on the Day of Resurrection!” So saying, he took from me the meat and wine and shut the door in my face His words enraged me and I knew not what to do; but he stood behind the door, shaking for mirth; and when he saw me thus, he said to me, “I conjure thee on my life, O Abou Ali, tell me who it was composed this verse?

I lay in the arms of the fair one all night, Whilst my friend
slept, clean-limbed, but polluted of spright.”

At this, my rage redoubled, and I replied, “He who wrote this other verse:

One, I wish him in’s girdle a thousand of horns, Exceeding the idol Menaf in their height!”

Then I began to revile him and reproach him with the foulness of his conduct and his lack of honour; and he was silent. But, when I had finished, he smiled and said, “Out on thee, O fool! Thou hast entered my house and sold my handkerchief and spent my money: so, with whom art thou wroth, O pimp?” Then he left me and went away to her, whilst I said, “By Allah, thou art right to call me a fool and a pimp!" Then I left his door and went away in sore concern, whereof I feel the trace in my heart to this day; and I never had my desire of her nor ever heard of her more.

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ISAAC OF MOSUL AND THE MERCHANT.

(Quoth Ishac ben Ibrahim el Mausili), One day, being weary of assiduous attendance upon the Khalif, I mounted my horse and went forth, at break of day, having a mind to ride out and take my pleasure in the open country, and I said to my servant, “If there come a messenger from the Khalif or another, say that I set out at daybreak, upon a pressing business, and that thou knowest not whither I am gone.” So I rode forth alone and went round about the city, till the sun grew hot, when I halted in a street, known as El Herem, and stood my horse under the spacious jutting porch of one of the houses there, to shelter me from the glare of the sun.

I had not stood long, before there came up a black slave, leading an ass with jewelled housings, on which sat a damsel, clad in the richest of clothes, richness can go no farther; and I saw that she was elegantly made, with languorous looks and graceful carriage. I asked one of the passers-by who she was, and he said, “She is a singer.” And I fell in love with her at sight, so that I could scarce keep my seat on my horse’s back. She entered the house at whose gate I stood; and as I cast about for a device to gain access to her, there came up two comely young men, who sought admission, and the master of the house gave them leave to enter. So they alighted and entered, and I with them, they supposing that the master of the house had invited me; and we sat awhile, till food was brought and we ate. Then they set wine before us, and the damsel came out, with a lute in her hand. She sang and we drank, till I rose to do an occasion. During my absence, the host questioned the two others of me, and they replied that they knew me not; whereupon quoth he, “This fellow is a spunger, but he is well-bred and pleasant; so entreat him fairly.” Then I came back and sat down in my place, whilst the damsel sang the following verses to a pleasing air:

Say thou unto the she-gazelle, who yet is no gazelle, And the
wild heifer, languorous-eyed, who yet no heifer is,
“One, who in dalliance affects the male, no female is, And he
who is effeminate of step’s no male, ywis.”

She sang it excellent well, and the company drank and her song pleased them. Then she sang various songs to rare tunes, and amongst the rest one of mine, to the following words:

The pleasant girls have gone and left The homesteads empty and bereft
Of their sweet converse, after cheer, All void and ruined by Time’s theft.

She sang this even better than the first; then she sang other rare songs, old and new, and amongst them, another of mine, with the following words:

To the loved one, who turneth in anger away And vrithdraweth himself far apart from thee, say,
“The mischief thou wroughtest, thou wroughtest indeed, For all, per-adventure, thou west but in play.”

I asked her to repeat the song, that I might correct it for her; whereupon one of the men turned to me and said, “Never saw I a more brazen-faced parasite than thou. Art thou not content with spunging, but thou must meddle, to boot? Verily, in thee is the saying made true, ‘A parasite and a meddler.’” I hung down my head for shame and made him no answer, whilst his companion would have restrained him from me; but he would not be restrained. Presently, they rose to pray, but I hung behind a little and taking the lute, tuned it after a particular fashion and stood up to pray with the rest. When we had made an end of prayer, the same man fell again to flouting and reviling me and persisted in his churlishness, whilst I held my peace. Then the damsel took the lute and touching it, knew that it was other than as she had left it and said, “Who hath touched my lute?” Quoth they, “None of us hath touched it.” “Nay, by Allah,” rejoined she, “some one hath touched it, and he a past master in the craft; for he hath ordered the strings and tuned them after the fashion of one who is right skilled in the art.” Quoth I, “It was I tuned it.” “Then, God on thee,” answered she, “take it and play on it!” So I took it and playing a rare and difficult measure, that came nigh to deaden the live and raise the dead, sang thereto the following verses:

I had a heart, wherewith of yore I lived: ’Twas seared with
fire and all consumed indeed.
Her love, alack I was not vouchsafed to me; Unto the slave
’twas not of Heaven decreed.
If what I taste be passion’s very food, Then all who love upon
its like must feed.

When I had finished, there was not one of the company but sprang from his place and sat down before me, saying “God on thee, O our lord, sing us another song.” “With all my heart,” said I and playing another measure in masterly fashion, sang thereto the following:

O thou whose heart, for fortune’s blows, is all consumed and
sped, Sorrows with whom from every side have taken up
their stead,
Unlawful unto her, my heart who pierces with her shafts, Is
that my blood which, breast-bones ‘twixt and
vitals, she hath shed.
’Twas plain, upon the parting day, that her resolve, our loves
To sunder, unto false suspect must be attributed.
She pours forth blood she had not shed, if passion had not
been. Will none my murderess ensue and wreak me on her
head?

When I had made an end of this song, there was not one of them but rose to his feet and threw himself to the ground, for excess of delight. Then I cast the lute from my hand; but they said, “Allah on thee, let us hear another song, so God increase thee of His bounty!” “O folk,” replied I, “I will sing you another song and another and another and will tell you who I am. Know that I am Ishac ben Ibrahim el Mausili, and by Allah, I bear myself haughtily to the Khalif, when he seeks me. Ye have today made me hear [abuse from] an unmannerly fellow such as I loathe; and by Allah, I will not speak a word nor sit with you, till ye put yonder quarrelsome churl out from among you!” Quoth the latter’s companion to him, “This is what I feared and warned thee against.” So they took him by the hand and put him out; and I took the lute and sang over again the songs of my fashion that the damsel had sung. Then I whispered the host that she had taken my heart and that I had no patience to endure from her. Quoth he, “Thou shalt have her and all that pertains to her of clothes and jewels, on one condition.” “What is that?” asked I. “It is,” answered he, “that thou abide with me a month.” “It is well,” rejoined I; “I will do this.” So I abode with him a whole month, whilst none knew where I was and the Khalif sought me everywhere, but could come by no news of me; and at the end of this time, the merchant delivered to me the damsel, together with all that pertained to her of things of price and an eunuch to attend her.

I brought her to my lodging, feeling as I were lord of the whole world, for stress of delight in her; then rode forthright to El Mamoun. When he saw me, he said, “Out on thee, O Isaac, where hast thou been all this while?” I acquainted him with the story and he said, “Bring me the man at once.” So I told him where he dwelt, and he sent and fetched him and questioned him of the case; whereupon he repeated the story and the Khalif said to him, “Thou art a man of a generous mind, and it is just that thou be upheld in thy generosity.” Then he ordered him a hundred thousand dirhems and said to me, “O Isaac, bring me the damsel.” So I brought her to him, and she sang and delighted him. He was greatly gladdened by her and ordered her fifty thousand dirhems, saying to me, “I appoint her of service every Thursday, when she must come and sing to me from behind the curtain.” So, by Allah, this ride of mine was a source of profit both to me and to others.

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THE THREE UNFORTUNATE LOVERS.

(Quoth El Utbi), I was sitting one day with a company of men of culture, telling stories of the folk, when the talk turned upon anecdotes of lovers and each of us said his say thereon. Now there was in our company an old man, who remained silent, till we had all spoken and had no more to say, when he said, “Shall I tell you a thing, the like of which you never heard?” “Yes,” answered we; and he said, “Know, then, that I had a daughter, who loved a youth, but we knew it not. The youth in question loved a singing-girl, who, in her turn, was enamoured of my daughter. One day, I was present at an assembly, where were also the young man and the girl; when the latter sang the following verses:

Tears are the token by which, for love, Abjection in lovers
still is shown,
And more by token in one who finds No friend, to whom he may
make his moan.

‘By Allah, thou hast said well, O my lady!’ exclaimed the youth. ‘Doss thou bid me die?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the girl from behind the curtain, ‘if thou be in love.’ So he laid his head on a cushion and closed his eyes; and when the cup came round to him, we shook him and found that he was dead. Therewith we all flocked to him, and our joy was troubled and we grieved and broke up forthright. When I came home, my people taxed me with returning before the appointed time, and I told them what had befallen the youth, thinking to surprise them. My daughter heard my words and rising, went into another chamber, whither I followed her and found her lying, with her head on a cushion, as I had told of the young man. I shook her and behold, she was dead. So we laid her out and set forth next morning with her funeral, whilst the friends of the young man carried him out, likewise, to bury him. As we were on the way to the burial-place, we met a third funeral and enquiring whose it was, were told that it was that of the singing-girl, who, hearing of my daughter’s death, had done even as she and was dead. So we buried them all three on one day, and this is the rarest story that ever was heard of lovers.”

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THE LOVERS OF THE BENOU TAI.

Quoth a man of the Benou Temim (cited by Casim ben Adi), I went out one day in search of a stray beast and coming to the waters of the Benou Tai, saw two companies of people, near one another, and those of each company were disputing among themselves. So I watched them and observed, in one of the companies, a young man, wasted with sickness, as he were a worn-out water-skin. As I looked on him, he repeated the following verses:

What ails the fair that she returneth not to me? Is't
 grudgingness in her or inhumanity?
I sickened, and my folk to visit me came all. Why 'mongst the
 visitors wast thou then not to see?
Hadst thou been sick, I would have hastened to thy side; Nor
 menaces nor threats had hindered me from thee.
I miss thee midst the rest, and desolate am I: Thy loss, my
 heart's abode, is grievous unto me.

A damsel in the other company heard his words and hastened towards him. Her people followed her, but she repelled them with blows. Then the youth caught sight of her and ran towards her, whilst his people ran after him and laid hold of him. However, he struggled, till he freed himself from them, and she in like manner loosed herself; and they ran to each other and meeting between the two parties, embraced and fell down dead.

Thereupon there came out an old man from one of the tents and stood over them, weeping sore and exclaiming, “Verily, we are God's and to Him we return!” Then, “May God the Most High have mercy on you both!” said he. “By Allah, though you were not united in your lives, I will at least unite you after death.” And he bade lay them out. So they washed them and shrouded them in one shroud and buried them in one grave, after they had prayed over them; nor were there men nor women in the two parties but I saw weeping over them and buffeting their faces. Then I questioned the old man of them, and he said, “She was my daughter and he my brother's son; and love brought them to this pass." "May God amend thee!" exclaimed I. "But why didst thou not marry them to one another?" Quoth he, "I feared reproach and dishonour; and now I am fallen upon both."

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THE MAD LOVER.

(Quoth Aboulabbas el Muberred), I set out one day with a company to El Berid on an occasion, and coming to the monastery of Heraclius, we alighted in its shade. Presently a man came out to us and said, "There are madmen in the monastery, and amongst them one who speaketh wisdom; if ye saw him, ye would marvel at his speech." So we arose all and went into the monastery, where we saw a man seated on a leather mat in one of the cells, with bare head and eyes fixed upon the wall. We saluted him, and he returned our greeting, without looking at us; and one said to us, "Repeat some verses to him; for, when he hears verses, he speaks." So I repeated the following verses:

O best of all the race whom Eve gave birth unto, Except for
thee the world were neither sweet nor bright:
Thou'rt he, whose face if God unveil to any man, Eternity is
his; his head shall ne'er grow white.

When he heard this, he turned towards us and repeated these lines:

God indeed knows that I am sore afflicted: I suffer so, I
cannot tell the whole.
I have two souls; one in this place is dwelling; Another
country holds my second soul.
Meseems the absent one is like the present And wearies under
the same weight of dole.

Quoth he, "Have I said well or ill?" "Thou hast said well and excellent well," replied we. Then he put out his hand and took a stone, that was by him; whereupon we fled from him, thinking he would throw it at us; but he fell to beating his breast therewith violently and said to us, "Fear not, but draw near and hear somewhat from me and receive it from me." So we came back, and he repeated the following verses:

When they made their beasts of burden kneel as day drew nigh

and nigher, Then they mounted and the camels bore away my heart's desire, —
When my eyes perceived my loved one through the crannied prison-wall, Then I cried, with streaming eyelids and a heart for love a-fire,
"Turn thou leader of the camels, let me bid my love farewell!" For her absence and estrangement, life and hope in me expire.
Still I kept my troth and failed not from her love; ah, would I knew What she did with that our troth-plight, if she kept her faith entire!

Then he looked at me and said, "Dost thou know what she did?" "Yes," answered I, "she is dead; may God the Most High have mercy on her!" At this his face changed and he sprang to his feet and cried out, "How knowest thou she is dead?" "Were she alive," answered I, "she had not left thee thus." "By Allah, thou art right," said he, "and I care not to live after her." Then his nerves quivered and he fell on his face; and we ran up to him and shook him and found him dead, the mercy of God be on him! At this we marvelled and mourned sore for him and laid him out and buried him. When I returned to Baghdad and went in to the Khalif El Mutawekkil, he saw the trace of tears on my face and said to me, "What is this?" So I told him what had passed, and it was grievous to him and he said, "What moved thee to deal thus with him? By Allah, if I thought thou didst this with intent, I would punish thee therefor!" And he mourned for him the rest of the day.

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THE APPLES OF PARADISE.

(Quoth Abou Bekr Mohammed ibn el Ambari), I once left Ambar, on a journey to Ammouriyeh, in the land of the Greeks, , and alighted midway at the monastery of El Anwar, , in a village near Ammouriyeh, where there came out to me the prior of the monastery and superior of the monks, Abdulmesih by name, and brought me into the monastery. There I found forty monks, who entertained me that night with the most liberal hospitality, and I saw among them such abounding piety and diligence in devotion as I never beheld the like of in any others. On the morrow, I took leave of them and went on to Ammouriyeh, where I did my business and returned to Ambar [without again visiting the monastery].

Next year it befell that I made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and as I was compassing the Holy House, behold, I saw Abdulmesih the monk also making the circuit of the Kaabeh, and with him five of his fellows, the monks. When I was certified that it was indeed he, I accosted him, saying, “Art thou not Abdulmesih er Rahib?” “Nay,” answered he; “I am Abdallah er Raghib.” Therewith I fell to kissing his hoary hairs and weeping; then, taking him by the hand, I led him aside into a corner of the sanctuary and said to him, “Tell me the manner of thy conversion to Islam.” “It was a wonder of wonders,” answered he; “and befell thus. Know that, not long after thy visit to us, a company of Muslim devotees came to the village, in which is our monastery, and sent a youth to buy them food. He saw, in the market, a Christian damsel selling bread, who was of the fairest of women, and became then and there so passionately enamoured of her, that his senses failed him and he fell on his face in a swoon. When he revived, he returned to his companions and told them what had happened, saying, ‘Go ye about your business; I may not go with you.’ They blamed him and exhorted him, but he paid no heed to them; so they left him and went on, whilst he entered the village and seated himself at the door of the woman’s shop. She asked him what he wanted, and he told her that he was in love with her, whereupon she turned from him; but he abode in his place three days, without tasting food, with his eyes fixed on her face.

When she saw that he departed not from her, she went to her people and acquainted them with her case, and they set the boys of the village on him, who pelted him with stones and bruised his ribs and broke his head; but, for all this, he would not budge. Then the people of the village took counsel together to kill him; but one of them came to me and told me of his condition, and I went out to him and found him lying prostrate on the ground. So I wiped the blood from his face and carried him to the convent, where I dressed his wounds, and he abode with me fourteen days. But, as soon as he could walk, he left the convent and returned to the door of the woman's shop, where he sat gazing on her as before. When she saw him, she came out to him and said, 'By Allah, thou movest me to pity! If thou wilt enter my faith, I will marry thee.' 'God forbid,' answered he, 'that I should put off the faith of the Unity and enter that of Plurality!' Quoth she, 'Come in with me to my house and take thy will of me and go thy ways in peace.' 'Not so,' answered he, 'I will not barter the pious service of twelve years for the lust of a moment.' 'Then depart from me forthright,' said she; and he rejoined, 'My heart will not suffer me to do that;' whereupon she turned her face from him. Presently the boys found him out and began to throw stones at him; and he fell on his face, saying, 'Verily, God is my keeper, who sent down the Book and who protecteth the righteous!' At this juncture, I sallied forth and driving away the boys, lifted his head from the ground and heard him say, 'O my God, unite me with her in Paradise!' Then I took him in my arms, to carry him to the monastery; but he died, before I could reach it, and I dug him a grave without the village and buried him there.

In the middle of that night, the people of the village heard the damsel give a great cry, and she in her bed; so they flocked to her and questioned her of her case. Quoth she, 'As I slept, the Muslim [who ye wot of] came in to me and taking me by the hand, carried me to the gate of Paradise; but the keeper denied me entrance, saying, "It is forbidden to unbelievers." So I embraced Islam at his hands and entering with him, beheld therein palaces and trees, such as I cannot describe to you. Moreover, he brought me to a pavilion of jewels and said to me, "This is my pavilion and thine, nor will I enter it except with thee; but, after five nights, thou shalt be with me therein, if it be the will of God the Most High.” Then, putting his hand to a tree that grew at the door of the pavilion, he plucked therefrom two apples and gave them to me, saying, “Eat this and keep the other, that the monks may see it.” So I ate one of them and never tasted I aught sweeter than it. Then he took my hand and carried me back to my house; and when I awoke, I found the taste of the apple in my mouth and the other in my hand.’ So saying, she brought out the apple, and it shone in the darkness of the night, as it were a sparkling star. So they carried her to the monastery, where she repeated to us her vision and showed us the apple; never saw we its like among all the fruits of the world. Then I took a knife and cut the apple into as many pieces as we were folk in the company; and never knew we aught more delicious than its taste nor sweeter than its scent; but we said, ‘Haply this was a devil that appeared to her, to seduce her from her faith.’ Then her people took her and went away; but she abstained from eating and drinking till the fifth night, when she rose from her bed and going forth the village to the grave of the young Muslim, threw herself upon it and died.

Her people knew not what was come of her; but, on the morrow, there came to the village two Muslim elders, clad in hair- cloth, and with them two women in like garb, and said, ‘O people of the village, with you is a woman of the friends of God, who died a Muslim, and we will take charge of her, instead of you.’ So the damsel’s family sought her and found her dead on the young Muslim’s grave; and they said, ‘This our sister died in our faith, and we will take charge of her.’ ‘Not so,’ rejoined the two old men; ‘she died a Muslim and we claim her.’ And the dispute waxed hot between them, till one of the Muslims said, ‘Be this the test of her faith. Let the forty monks of the monastery come all and [essay to] lift her from the grave. If they succeed, then she died a Nazarene; if not, one of us shall come and lift her up, and if she yield to him, she died a Muslim.’ The villagers agreed to this and fetched the forty monks, who heartened each other and came to her, to lift her, but could not. Then we tied a great rope about her middle and tugged at it with our might; but the rope broke in sunder, and she stirred nor; and the villagers came and joined their endeavour to ours, but could not move her from her place. At last, when all our devices failed, we said to one of the two old Muslims, ‘Come thou and lift her.’ So he went up to the grave and covering her with his mantle, said, ‘In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful, and of the Faith of the Apostle of God, on whom be peace and salvation!’ Then he lifted her and taking her in his bosom, betook himself with her to a cave hard by, where they laid her, and the two women came and washed her and shrouded her. Then the two elders bore her to the young Muslim’s grave and prayed over her and buried her by his side and went their way.

Now we were witness of all this; and when we were alone with one another, we said, ‘Of a verity, the Truth is most worthy to be followed; and indeed it hath been publicly manifested to us, nor is it possible to have a clearer proof of the truth of Islam than that we have seen this day with our eyes.’ So I and all the monks embraced Islam and on like wise did the people of the village; and we sent to the people of Mesopotamia for a doctor of the law, to instruct us in the ordinances of Islam and the canons of the Faith. They sent us a pious man, who taught us the rites of devotion and the tenets of the faith and the service of God; and we are now in great good case. To God be the praise and the thanks!”

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THE LOVES OF ABOU ISA AND CURRET EL AIN.

(Quoth Amr ben Mesaadeh), Abou Isa, son or Er Reshid and brother to El Mamoun, was enamoured of a girl called Curret el Ain, belonging to Ali ben Hisham, and she also loved him; but he concealed his passion, complaining of it to none neither discovering his secret to any, of his pride and magnanimity; and he had used his utmost endeavour to buy her of her lord, but in vain. At last, when his patience failed him and his passion was sore on him and he was at his wits' end concerning her affair, he went in, one day of state, to El Mamoun, after the folk had retired, and said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, if thou wilt this day make trial of thy governors, by visiting them unawares, thou wilt the men of worth from those that lack of it and note each one's [due] place, after the measure of his faculties." (But he purposed, in saying this, to win to sit with Curret el Ain in her lord's house.) El Mamoun approved his proposal and bade make ready a barge, called the Flyer, in which he embarked, with his brother and a party of his chief officers. The first house he visited was that of Hemid et Tawil of Tous, whom he found seated on a mat and before him singers and players, with lutes and hautboys and other instruments of music in their hands. El Mamoun sat with him awhile, and presently he set before him dishes of nothing but flesh-meat, with no birds among them. The Khalif would not taste thereof and Abou Isa said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, we have taken the owner of this place unawares, and he knew not of thy coming; but now let us go to another place, that is prepared and fitted for thee."

So the Khalif arose and betook himself, with his brother and his suite, to the abode of Ali ben Hisham, who, on hearing of their approach, came out and received them after the goodliest fashion, and kissed the earth before El Mamoun. Then he brought them into his palace and opened to them a saloon, than which never saw eyes a goodlier. Its floors and walls and columns were of vari-coloured marble, adorned with Greek paintings: it was spread with Indian matting, on which were carpets and divans of Bassora make, fitted to the length and breadth of the room. The Khalif sat awhile, examining the house and its roof and walls, then said, “Give us to eat.” So they brought him forthwith nigh upon a hundred dishes of fowls, besides other birds and brewises and fricassees and marinades. When he had eaten, he said, “Give us to drink, O Ali;” and the latter set before him raisin-wine, boiled with fruits and spices, in vessels of gold and silver and crystal, served by boys like moons, clad in garments of Alexandrian cloth of gold and bearing on their breasts flagons of crystal, full of rose-water mingled with musk. El Mamoun marvelled exceedingly at all this and said, “Harkye, Aboulhusn!” Whereupon Ali sprang to the carpet [on which the Khalif was seated] and kissing it, said, “At thy service, O Commander of the Faithful!” and stood before him. Quoth El Mamoun, “Let us hear some pleasant songs.” “I hear and obey, O Commander of the Faithful,” replied Ali and said to one of his servants, “Fetch the singing-women.”

So he went out and returned in a moment, followed by ten eunuchs, bearing ten golden stools, which they set down; and these in their turn were followed by ten damsels, as they were shining full moons or flowerful gardens, clad in black brocade, with crowns of gold on their heads. They sat down on the stools and sang various songs. Then El Mamoun looked at one of them and captivated by her elegance and the beauty of her aspect, said to her, “What is thy name, O damsel?” “My name is Sejahi, O Commander of the Faithful,” answered she; and he said, “Sing to us, O Sejahi!” So she took the lute and playing a lively measure, sang the following verses:

Right stealthily, for fearfulness, I fare, the weakling’s gait,
Who sees unto the watering-place two lion-whelps draw near,
With cloak, instead of sword, begirt and bosom love-distraught
And heart for eyes of enemies and spies fulfilled of fear,
Till in to one at last I come, a loveling delicate, Like to a desert antelope, that’s lost its younglings dear.

“Well done, O damsel!” said the Khalif. “Whose is this song?” “The words are by Amr ben Madi Kerib er Zubeidi,” answered she, “and the air is Mabid’s.” Then the Khalif and Ali and Abou Isa drank and the damsels went away and were succeeded by other ten, clad in flowered silk of Yemen, brocaded with gold, who sat down on the chairs and sang various songs. The Khalif looked at one of them, who was like a wild cow of the desert, and said to her, "What is thy name, O damsel?" "My name is Zebiyeh, O Commander of the Faithful," answered she. "Sing to us, O Zebiyeh," said he; so she warbled some roulades and sang the following verses:

Houris, noble ladies, that reck not of disquiet, Like antelopes
of Mecca, forbidden to be slain;
Of their soft speech, they're taken for courtezans; but Islam
Still makes them from unseemliness and lewdness to
refrain.

When she had finished, "Bravo!" cried the Khalif. "Whose is this song?" "The words are by Jerir," answered she, "and the air by Suraij." Then the Khalif and his company drank, whilst the girls went away and there came yet another ten, as they were rubies, bareheaded and clad in red brocade, gold inwoven and broidered with pearls and jewels, who sat down on the stools and sang various airs. The Khalif looked at one of them, who was like the sun of the day, and said to her, "What is thy name?" "O Commander of the Faithful," answered she, "my name is Fatin." "Sing to us, O Fatin," quoth he. So she played a lively measure and sang the following verses:

Vouchsafe me of thy grace; 'tis time to yield consent: Enough
have I endured of absence and lament.
Thou'rt he whose face unites all charms, on whose account My
patience have I lost, for very languishment.
I've spent my life for love of thee; ah, would to God I might
receive return for that which I have spent!

"Bravo, O Fatin!" exclaimed the Khalif, when she had finished. "Whose song is that?" "The words are by Adi ben Zeid," answered she, "and the tune is an old one." Then they drank, whilst the damsels retired and were succeeded by other ten, as they were sparkling stars, clad in flowered silk, embroidered with gold, and girt with jewelled zones. They sat down and sang various airs; and the Khalif said to one of them, who was like a willow-wand, "What is thy name, O damsel!" "My name is Reshaa, O Commander of the Faithful," answered she. "Sing to us, O Reshaa," said he. So she played a lively measure and sang the following verses:

There's a houri healing passion [with her kiss], Like a sapling
  or a wild gazelle at gaze.
Wine I quaff unto the vision of her cheeks And dispute
  the goblet with her, till she sways.
Then she lies and sleeps the night long in my arms, And I say,
  "This is the wish of all my days."

"Well done, O damsel!" said the Khalif. "More." So she rose and kissing the ground before him, sang the following verse:

She came out to gaze on the bridal at leisure, In a tunic with
  ambergris smeared, worth a treasure.

The Khalif was much pleased with this verse, which when Reshaa saw, she repeated it several times. Then said El Mamoun, "Bring up the barge," being minded to embark and depart: but Ali said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, I have a slave-girl, whom I bought for ten thousand dinars; she hath taken my whole heart, and I would fain show her to the Commander of the Faithful. If she please him and he will accept of her, she is his: and if not, let him hear something from her." "Bring her to me," said the Khalif; and there came forth a damsel, as she were a willow-wand, with heart-seducing eyes and eyebrows like a double bow. On her head she wore a crown of red gold, set with pearls and jewels, under which was a fillet, wrought in letters of chrysolite with the following words:

Behold, a Jinniyeh this is; and Jinn hath she also, I trow, Who teach her men's hearts to transfix, by means of a stringless bow.

She walked, with a gait like that of a fleeing gazelle, till she came to a chair, on which she seated herself. The Khalif marvelled at her beauty and grace; but when Abou Isa saw her, his colour changed and he was in ill case. "O Abou Isa," said the Khalif, "what ails thee, to change colour thus?" "O Commander of the Faithful," answered he, "it is because of pain that seizes me bytimes." "Hast thou known yonder damsel before to-day?" asked El Mamoun. "Yes, O Commander of the Faithful," answered he. "Can the moon be hidden?" Then said El Mamoun to her, "What is thy name, O damsel?" "My name is Curret el Ain, O Commander of the Faithful," replied she; and he said, "Sing to us, O Curret el Ain." So she sang the following verses:

The loved ones passed from thee in middle midnight's shade And
fared forth in the dawn, with the pilgrims' cavalcade.
The tents of pride they pitched round their pavilions And
veiled themselves about with hangings of brocade.

Quoth the Khalif, "Bravo, O Curret el Ain! Whose song is that?" "The words are by Dibil el Khuzai," answered she, "and the air by Zourzour es Seghir." Abou Isa looked at her and his tears choked him; so that the company marvelled at him. Then she turned to El Mamoun and said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, wilt thou give me leave to change the words?" "Sing what thou wilt," answered the Khalif. So she played a lively measure and sang the following verses:

If thou please me and he please thee in public, look thou hide
And keep in secret straiter watch o'er love, lest ill
betide.
And disregard and put away the tales of slanderers; For seldom
seeks the sland'rer aught but lovers to divide.
They say that when a lover's near, he wearies of his love And
that by absence passion's cured. 'Tis false; for I have
tried
Both remedies, but am not cured of that which is with me,
Withal that nearness easier is than distance to abide.
Yet nearness of abode, forsooth, may nowise profit thee, An If
the grace of him thou lov'st be unto thee denied.

When she finished, Abou Isa said, "O Commander of the Faithful, we will be at peace, though we be dishonoured. Dost thou give me leave to reply to her?" "Yes," answered the Khalif. "Say what thou wilt to her." So he swallowed his tears and sang these verses:

I held my peace nor said, "I am in love;" and eke The passion
that I felt even from my heart hid I:
And natheless, if my eyes do manifest my love, It is because
they are the shining moon anigh.

Then Curret el Ain took the lute and rejoined with the following:

If what thou dost pretend were very truth, Thou woulst not with
mere wishing rest content,
Nor couldst endure to live without a girl, In charms and beauty
wonder excellent.
But there is nought in that thou dost avouch, Save only idle
talk and compliment.

When Abou Isa heard this, he fell a-weeping and lamenting and discovered the trouble and anguish of his soul. Then he raised his eyes to her and sighing, repeated the following:

Under my wede there is a wasted body And in my soul an all-
absorbing thought.
I have a heart, whose suffering is eternal, and eyes with tears
like torrents ever fraught.
When a wise man meets me, he rebukes me, Chiding the love that
thou in me hath wrought.
Lord, I've no strength all this my dole to suffer; Prithee,
come Death or quick relief be brought!

When he had ended, Ali ben Hisham sprang up and kissing his feet, said, "O my lord, God hath heard thy prayer and answered thy supplication, and consenteth to thy taking her with all her gear, so the Commander of the Faithful have no mind to her." "Had we a mind to her," answered the Khalif, "we would prefer Abou Isa before ourselves and help him to his desire." So saying, he rose and embarking, went away, whilst Abou Isa tarried for Curret al Ain, whom he took and carried to his own house, with a breast dilated for gladness. See then the generosity of Ali ben Hisham.

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EL AMIN BEN ER RESHID AND HIS UNCLE IBRAHIM BEN EL MEHDI.

El Amin, son of Er Reshid, once entered the house of his uncle Ibrahim ben el Mehdi and saw there a slave-girl playing upon the lute. She was one of the fairest of women, and his heart inclined to her. Ibrahim, seeing how it was with him, sent the girl to him, with rich apparel and precious jewels. When he saw her, he thought that his uncle had lain with her; so he was loath to have to do with her, because of this, and sent her back to Ibrahim, accepting the present that came with her. Ibrahim learnt the reason of this from one of El Amin's servants; so he took a shift of flowered silk and let work upon his skirt, in letters of gold, the following lines:

By Him to whom all fronts do bow, of that which is Beneath her
skirt, I swear, I'm ignorant outright;
Nor have I had in aught to meddle with her mouth, Except it
were by way of hearing and of sight.

Then he clad her in the shift and giving her a lute sent her once more to his nephew. When she came into the latter's presence, she kissed the earth before him and tuning the lute, sang thereto the following verses:

By returning the gift, thou showest what's hid in thy breast,
And thine aversion to me is made manifest.
As thou bear malice for aught that hath been, — forgive The
past, for the Khalifate's sake, and let it rest.

When she had made an end of her song, El Amin looked at her and reading that which was wrought upon her skirt, could not control himself, but drew near unto her and kissed her and appointed her a separate lodging in his palace. Moreover, he thanked his uncle for this and bestowed on him the government of Er Reï.

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EL FETH BEN KHACAN AND THE KHALIF EL MUTAWEKKIL.

The Khalid El Mutawekkil was once again taking medicine, and folk sent him all manner of presents and rarities. Amongst others, El Feth ben Khacan sent him a virgin slave, high-bosomed, of the fairest of women of her time, and with her a vase of crystal, containing red wine, and a goblet of red gold, whereon were graven in black the following verses:

When th' Imam's made an end of taking medicine And health and
strength ensue to him thereon, in fine,
There's no medicament befits him but to drink, From out this
cup, a draught of this decocted wine.
And break the seal reserved to him, for this, indeed,
Right salutary is, hard after medicine.

Now the physician Youhenna was with the Khalif, when the damsel entered; and when he read the above verses, he smiled and said, 'By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, Feth is better versed than I in the art of medicine: so let not the Commander of the Faithful gainsay his prescription.' Accordingly, the Khalif followed El Feth's prescription and was made whole by the blessing of God.

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THE MAN'S DISPUTE WITH THE LEARNED WOMAN OF THE RELATIVE EXCELLENCE OF THE MALE AND THE FEMALE.

(Quoth a certain man of learning) I never saw a woman sharper-witted, more intelligent, better furnished in learning, more excellent of faculties or more pleasant of ingredients than a female preacher of the people of Baghdad, by name Sitt el Meshayikh. It chanced that she came to the city of Hemah in the year [of the Hegira] 561 and there delivered salutary exhortations to the folk from the pulpits. Now there used to visit her house a number of students of divinity and [other] persons of learning and culture, who would argue with her upon questions of theology and discuss controversial points with her. I went to her one day, with a friend of mine, a man of education; and when we had taken our seats, she set before us a dish of fruit and seated herself behind a curtain. Now she had a [young] brother, a handsome youth, who stood by us, to serve us.

When we had eaten, we fell to disputing upon points of divinity, and I propounded to her a theological question, bearing upon a difference between the Imams. She proceeded to speak in answer, whilst I listened; but my friend fell the while to looking upon her brother's face and considering his charms, without paying any heed to what she said. Now she was watching him from behind the curtain; so, when she had made an end of her exposition, she turned to him and said, "Meseems thou art of those that give men the preference over women!" "Assuredly," answered he. "And why so?" asked she. "Because," replied he, "God hath preferred the male over the female; and I love that which excels and mislike that which is excelled." She laughed and said, "Wilt thou deal fairly with me in argument, if I argue the matter with thee?" "I will," answered he. Then said she, "What is the evidence of the superiority of the male to the female?" "It is of two kinds," answered he, "that which is founded on authority and that which is founded on reason. The authoritative part derives from the Koran and the Sunneh [Traditions of the Prophet]. As for the former, quoth God the Most High, 'Men stand above women, in that God hath given these the preference over those;' and again, 'If there be not two men, then [call] one man and two women;' and again, when treating of the law of inheritance, '[If there be brothers and sisters,] let each male have the like of the portion of two females.' Thus God, blessed and exalted be He, hath in these places preferred the male over the female and teaches that a woman is as the half of a man, for that he is worthier than she. As for the Sunneh, is it not reported of the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve) that he appointed the blood-wit for a woman to be half that of a man? As for the evidence of reason, the male is the agent and the female the patient."

"Thou hast said well, O my lord," rejoined she; "but, by Allah, thou hast proved my contention with thine own lips and hast advanced arguments that tell against thee, and not for thee. Thus: God (blessed and exalted be He) preferred the male above the female, solely because of the quality of masculinity; and in this, there is no difference between us. Now this quality [of masculinity] is common to the child, the boy, the youth, the adult and the graybeard; nor is there any distinction between them in this. Since, then, the superior excellence of man enures to him solely by virtue of the quality of masculinity, it behoves that thy heart incline to the graybeard and thy soul delight in him, equally with the boy, seeing that there is no distinction between them, in point of masculinity. But the difference between thee and me turns upon the qualities that are sought as constituting excellence of intercourse and delight of usance; and thou hast adduced no proof of the superiority of the male over the female in this."

"O my lady," answered he, "knowest thou not that which is proper to the boy of symmetry of shape and rosy cheeks and pleasant smile and sweetness of speech? Boys are, in these respects, superior to women; and the proof of this is what is reported of the Prophet, that he said, 'Stay not thy gaze upon the beardless boys, for in them is the similitude of the black-eyed girls of Paradise.' Nor indeed is the superiority of the boy over the girl hidden to any, and how well saith Abou Nuwas:

The least of his virtues it is that thou'rt free From uncleanness with him nor with child can he be.

And what another poet says:

Quoth th’ Iman Abou Nuwas, past-master sure was he In every
canon of debauch and jolly knavery,
“O ye that love the downy cheeks of younglings, take your fill
Of a delight, in Paradise that will not founden be.”

So if one enlarge in praise of a girl and wish to enhance her value by the mention of her charms, he likens her to a boy, because of the illustrious qualities that belong to the latter, even as saith the poet:

Boylike of buttocks, to and fro, in amorous dalliance, She sways as sway the nodding canes that in the north wind dance.

If boys, then, were not superior to girls, why should the latter be likened to them? And know also, may God the Most High preserve thee, that a boy is easy to be led, adapting himself to the wish, pleasant of commerce and manners, inclining to assent rather than difference, especially when the down on his face creeps lightly and the hair darkens on his lips and the vermilion of early youth runs in his cheeks, so that he is like the full moon; and how goodly is the saying of Abou Temmam:

“The whiskers on his cheek appear;” the slanderers said to me;
Quoth I, “That’s none of his defect; so give me no more prate.”
What time he came of age to bear buttocks that here and there
Pulled him and over beads of pearl his lips’ hair darkened late
And eke the rose a solemn oath, full fast and binding, swore
Its ruddy marvels from his cheek should never separate,
I with my eyelids spoke to him, without the need of speech, And
for reply thereto was what his eyebrows answered straight.
His goodliness still goodlier is than that thou knewst of yore,
And the hair guardeth him from those his charms would violate.
Brighter and sweeter are his charms, now on his cheek the down
Shows and the hair upon his lips grows dark and delicate;
And those who chide me for the love of him, when they take up

Their parable of him and me, say evermore, “His mate.”

And quoth El Heriri and saith well:

My censors say, “What is this love and doting upon him? Seest
not the hair upon his cheeks that sprouts? Where is thy
wit?”
Quoth I, “By Allah, an ye chide at me, I rede you note The
exposition of the truth that in his eyes is writ.
But for the blackness of the down, that veils his chin and
cheeks, Upon the brightness of his face no mortal gaze
might sit.
A man who sojourns in a land, wherein no herbage is, Whenas the
very Spring arrives, shall he depart from it?”

And quoth another:

“He is consoled,” say the censors of me; but, by heaven, they
lie! For solace and comfort come hardly to those for
longing that sigh.
When the rose of his cheek stood blooming alone, I was not
consoled; So how should I now find solace, that basil has
sprung thereby?

And again:

A slender one, whose glances and the down upon his cheeks Each
other, in the slaying of folk, abet and aid.
A sabre of narcissus withal, he sheddeth blood, The
hangers of its scabbard of very myrtle made.

And again:

Not with his wine I’m drunken, but with his tresses bright,
That make all creatures drunken, yea, all beneath the sky.
Each of his charms doth envy the others; ay, and each To be the
down so silky upon his cheek doth sigh.

These are the excellences of the boy, that women do not possess, and these suffice and more to give boys the preference in grace and glory over women."

"God give thee health!" cried she. "Verily, thou hast imposed the discussion upon thyself; and thou hast spoken and hast not stinted and hast adduced these arguments, in support of thy contention. But now is the truth made manifest; so swerve thou not from the path thereof; and if thou be not content with a summary of proof, I will set it out to thee in detail. God on thee, where is the boy beside the girl and who shall liken the kid to the wild cow? The girl is soft of speech, fair of shape, like a stalk of sweet basil, with teeth like chamomile-petals and hair like halters. Her cheeks are like blood-red anemones and her face like an apple; she hath lips like wine and breasts like double pomegranates and a shape flexile as a willow-wand. Her body is rounded and well-formed: she hath a nose like the point of a shining sword and a forehead brilliant with whiteness and joined eyebrows and black and melting eyes. If she speak, fresh pearls are scattered from her mouth and all hearts are ravished by the daintiness of her charms; when she smiles, thou wouldst think the moon shone out from between her lips and when she gazes, swords flash from her eyes. In her all beauties have their term, and she is the centre of attraction of traveller and stay-at-home. She hath two red lips softer than cream and sweeter of taste than honey, and a bosom, as it were a way between two hills, wherein are a pair of breasts like globes of ivory; likewise, a smooth belly, soft of flanks as palm-flowers and creased with folds and dimples that overlap one another, and luxuriant thighs, like columns of pearl, and buttocks, that beat together like seas of crystal or mountains of light, and two slender feet and hands like ingot of virgin gold. So, O wretched fellow, where are mortal men besides the Jinn? Knowest thou not that mighty kings and captains and noble princes still submit themselves humbly to women and depend on them for delight? Verily, they [women] say, 'We rule over [all] necks and captivate [all] hearts.' How many a rich man have they not made poor, how many a powerful one have they not humbled and how many a noble have they not reduced to servitude! Indeed, they seduce the learned and bring the pious to shame and make poor the rich and plunge the favoured of fortune into misery. Yet, for all this, the wise but redouble in love and honour of them, nor do they count this oppression or dishonour. How many a man for them hath transgressed against his Lord and called down on himself the wrath of his father and mother! And all this because of the preponderance of the love of them over hearts. Knowest thou not, O wretched fellow, that for them are palaces built and slave-girls bought, and over them curtains are let down, that for them do tears flow and for them armies levied and pleasure- houses raised up and riches gathered and heads smitten off? And indeed he spoke sooth who said, 'The world is a commentary upon women.'

As for thy citation from the Holy Traditions, it is an argument against thee and not for thee; for the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve) compares boys to the houris of Paradise. Now, without doubt, the subject of comparison is more worthy than the object compared with it; so, except women be the worthier and the goodlier, wherefore should other than they be likened to them? As for thy saying that girls are likened to boys, it is not so, but the contrary: boys are likened to girls; for folk say, 'Yonder boy is like a girl.' As for that thou quotest from the poets, the verses in question were the product of an unnatural complexion in this respect; and as for the confirmed sodomists and debauchees, that sin against religion, whom God hath condemned in His Holy Book, wherein He denounceth their filthy practices, saying, 'Do ye betake you to males from the four corners of the world and forsake that which your Lord hath created for you of your wives? Nay, but ye are a froward folk.' These it is that liken girls to boys, of their exceeding profligacy and frowardness and inclination to follow the devil and their own lusts, so that they say, 'She is apt for two men;' and these are all wanderers from the path of right. Quoth their chief Abou Nuwas:

A slender one, boyish of waist and of wit, For wencher as well as for sodomite fit.

As for what thou sayest of a boy's whiskers and moustaches and how they add to his beauty and grace, by Allah, thou wanderest from the right path and sayest that which is other than the truth; for whiskers change the charms of the comely into ugliness; even as saith the poet:

The whiskers, that sprout on the cheek of the wight, His lovers
avenge, if he ‘ve done them unright.
I see not on ‘s face what is like unto smoke, Except that his
curls are as coals to the sight.
If the most of his paper thus blackened be, where Is
there room, deemest thou, for the pen to indite?
If any prefer him another above, ’Tis ignorance makes them thus
turn from the light.

Glory be to God”, continued she, “how is it hidden from thee that the perfection of delight is in women and that abiding pleasure is not to be found but with them? Seeing that God (blessed and exalted be He) hath promised His prophets and saints black-eyed damsels in Paradise and hath appointed them for a recompense of their pious works: and had God the Most High known that the supreme delight was in the possession of other than women, He had rewarded them therewith and promised it to them. And quoth he whom God bless and preserve, ‘The things in which I most delight of [the things of] your world are three: women and perfume and the solace of my eyes in prayer.’ Verily, God hath appointed boys to serve His prophets and saints in Paradise, because Paradise is the abode of delight and pleasance, which could not be complete without the service of boys; but, as to the use of them for aught but service, it is sin and corruption. How well saith the poet:

Men’s turning unto boys is very frowardness; Who noble women loves is noble none the less. What difference ‘twixt the lewd and him whose bedfellow A houri is, for looks a very sorceress. He rises from her couch and she hath given him scent; He perfumes all the house therewith and each recess. No boy, indeed, is worth to be compared with her: Shall aloes evened be with what not filthiness?”

Then said she, “O folk, ye have made me overpass the bounds of modesty and the province of free-born women and indulge in idle talk and freedoms of speech, that beseem not people of learning. But the breasts of the noble are the tombs of secrets, and conversations of this kind are in confidence. Moreover, actions are according to intents, and I ask pardon of God for myself and you and all Muslims, seeing that He is forgiving and merciful.”

With this she held her peace and thereafter would answer us of nought; so we went our way, rejoicing in that we had profited by her discourses and sorrowing to part from her.

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ABOU SUWEID AND THE HANDSOME OLD WOMAN.

(Quoth Abou Suweid), I entered a garden one day, I and a company of my friends, to buy somewhat of fruit; and we saw, in a corner of the place, an old woman, who was bright of face, but her hair was white, and she was combing it with a comb of ivory. We stopped before her, but she paid no heed to us neither veiled her face So I said to her' "O old woman, wert thou to dye thy hair black, thou wouldst be handsomer than a girl. What hinders thee from this?" She raised her head and looking at me with great eyes, recited the following verses:

That which the years had dyed, I dyed erewhen but, sooth to
  tell, My dye endureth not, whilst that of Time's
  perdurable
Clad in the raiment of my youth and beauty, of old days,
  Proudly I walked, and back and front, men had with me to
  mell

"By Allah," cried I, "bravo to thee for an old woman! How sincere art thou in thy yearning remembrance of sin and how false in thy presence of repentance from for bidden things!"

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THE AMIR ALI BEN TAHIR AND THE GIRL MOUNIS.

There was once shown to the Amir Ali ben Mohammed ben Abdallah ben Tahir a slave-girl, who was excellently handsome and well-bred and an accomplished poetess; and he asked her of her name. ‘May God advance the Amir,’ replied she, ‘my name is Mounis.’ Now he knew this before; so he bowed his head awhile, then raising his eyes to her, recited the following verse:

What dost thou say of one, on whom sickness and pain have wrought, For love and longing after thee, till he is grown distraught?

‘God exalt the Amir!’ answered she and recited this verse in reply:

An if we saw a lover true, on whom the pangs of love Were sore,
we would to him vouchsafe the favours that he sought.

Her reply pleased him; so he bought her for threescore and ten thousand dirhems and begat on her Obeidallah teen Mohammed, after police-magistrate [at Baghdad].

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THE WOMAN WHO HAD A BOY AND THE OTHER WHO HAD A MAN TO LOVER.

(Quoth Abou el Ainaä), There were in our street two women, one of whom had to lover a man and the other a beardless boy, and they foregathered one night on the roof of a house, not knowing that I was within hearing. Quoth one to the other, “O my sister, how canst thou brook the harshness of thy lover’s beard, as it falls on thy breast, when he kisses thee, and his moustaches rub thy cheek and lips?” “Silly wench that thou art,” replied the other, “what adorns the tree but its leaves and the cucumber but its bloom? Didst ever see aught uglier than a scald-head, with his beard plucked out? Knowest thou not that the beard is to men as the side-locks to women; and what is the difference between the chin and the cheek? Knowest thou not that God (blessed and exalted be He) hath created an angel in heaven, who saith, ‘Glory be to Him who adorneth men with beards and women with tresses?’ So, were not the beard even as the tresses in comeliness, it had not been coupled with them, O silly woman! How shall I underlie a boy, who will be hasty with me in emission and forestall me in flaccescence, and leave a man, who, when he takes breath, clips close and when he enters, goes leisurely, and when he has done, repeats, and when he pushes, pushes hard, and as often as he withdraws, returns?” The other was edified by her speech and said, “I forswear my lover by the Lord of the Kaabeh!”

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE HAUNTED HOUSE IN BAGHDAD.

There lived once, in the city of Cairo, a merchant by name Hassan the Jeweller of Baghdad, who had great store of wealth in money and jewels and lands and houses beyond count. God had blessed him with a son of perfect beauty and elegance, rosy-cheeked, fair of face and well-shaped, whom he named Ali of Cairo and taught the Koran and science and elocution and the other branches of polite letters, till he became proficient in all manner of knowledge and was under his father's hand in trade. After awhile, Hassan fell sick and his sickness increased upon him, till he made sure of death and calling his son to him, said, 'O my son, verily this world passeth away; but the next endureth for ever. Every soul must taste of death; and now, O my son, my last hour is at hand and I desire to lay on thee an injunction, which if thou observe, thou shalt abide in peace and prosperity, till thou meet God the Most High; but if thou follow it not, there shall befall thee weariness galore and thou wilt repent of having transgressed my admonitions.' 'O my father,' replied Ali, 'how shall I do other than hearken to thee and do after thine enjoinder, seeing that I am bounden by the law of God to obey thee and give ear to thy word?' 'O my son,' rejoined his father, 'I leave thee lands and houses and goods and wealth past count; wert thou each day to spend thereof five hundred dinars, thou wouldst miss nought of it. But, O my son, look that thou live in the fear of God and follow His Chosen One (whom may He bless and preserve) in what he is reported to have enjoined and forbidden in his traditions. Be thou assiduous in good works and the practice of beneficence and in consorting with men of worth and piety and learning; and look that thou have a care for the poor and needy and shun avarice and meanness and the converse of the wicked or those of doubtful character. Look kindly upon thy servants and family, and also upon thy wife, for she is of the daughters of the notables and is with child by thee; belike God will vouchsafe thee virtuous offspring by her.' And he went on to exhort him thus, weeping and saying, 'O my son, I beseech God the Bountiful, the Lord of the Empyrean, to deliver thee from all straits that may betide thee and grant thee His speedy relief!'

His son wept sore and said, ‘O my father, I am consumed by thy words, for they are as the words of one that saith farewell.’ ‘Yes, O my son,’ replied the merchant, ‘I am ware of my condition: forget thou not my enjoinder.’ Then he fell to repeating the professions of the Faith and reciting [verses of the Koran], until the appointed hour arrived, when he said, ‘Draw near unto me, O my son.’ So Ali drew near and he kissed him; then he sighed and his soul departed his body and he went to the mercy of God the Most High. Therewith great grief fell upon Ali; the noise of lamentation arose in his house and his father’s friends flocked to him. Then he betook himself to preparing him for burial and made him a splendid funeral. They bore him to the place of prayer and prayed over him, then to the cemetery, where they buried him and recited over him what was fitting of the Koran; after which they returned to the house and condoled with the dead man’s son and went each his own way. Moreover, Ali prayed the Friday prayers for his father and let make recitations of the whole Koran for the [accustomed] space of forty days, during which time he abode in the house and went not forth, save to the place of prayer; and every Friday he visited his father’s tomb.

He ceased not from his prayers and devotions, till, at last, his fellows of the sons of the merchants came in to him one day and saluting him, said, ‘How long wilt thou keep up this thy mourning and neglect thy business and the company of thy friends? Verily, this is a fashion that will bring thee weariness, and thy body will suffer greatly for it.’ Now, when they came in to him, Iblis the accursed was with them, prompting them, and they went on to press him to accompany them to the bazaar, whilst Iblis incited him to consent to them, till he yielded and went forth the house with them, that the will of God (blessed and exalted be He) might be fulfilled. ‘Mount thy mule,’ quoth they, ‘and ride with us to such a garden, that we may divert us there and that thy grief and melancholy may depart from thee.’ So he mounted and taking his slave, went with them to the garden in question, where they entered, and one of them went and making ready the morning- meal, brought it to them there. So they ate and made merry and sat, talking, till the end of the day, when they mounted and returned each to his own lodging, where they passed the night. On the morrow, they said to Ali, ‘Come with us.’

‘Whither?’ asked he, and they answered, ‘To such a garden; for it is finer than the first and more pleasant.’ So he went with them to the garden, and one of them, going away, made ready the morning-meal and brought it to them, together with strong wine; and Ali said, ‘What is this?’ Quoth they, ‘This is what dispels grief and unveils gladness.’ And they went on to commend it to him, till they prevailed upon him and he drank with them. Then they sat, drinking and talking, till the end of the day, when each returned home.

As for Ali, he was giddy with wine and went in, in this plight, to his wife, who said to him, ‘What ails thee?’ Quoth he, ‘We were making merry to-day, when one of my companions brought us liquor; so my friends drank and I with them, and this giddiness came upon me.’ ‘O my lord,’ said she, ‘hast thou forgotten thy fathers injunction and done that from which he forbade thee, in consorting with lewd folk?’ ‘These are of the sons of the merchants,’ answered he; ‘they are no lewd folk, only lovers of mirth and good cheer.’ And he continued to lead this life with his friends, day after day, going from place to place and feasting and drinking with them, till they said to him, ‘Our turns are ended, and now it is thy turn.’ ‘Welcome and fair welcome!’ answered he; so, on the morrow, he made ready all that the case called for of meat and drink, double what they had provided, and taking cooks and tent-pitchers and coffee- makers, repaired with the others to Er Rauzeh and the Nilometer, where they abode a whole month, eating and drinking and hearing music and making merry. At the end of the month, Ali found that he had spent a great sum of money; but Satan the Accursed deluded him and said to him, ‘Though thou shouldst spend every day a like sum, yet would not thy wealth fail.’ So he took no account of expense and continued this way of life three years, whilst his wife remonstrated with him and reminded him of his father’s injunctions; but he hearkened not to her, till he had spent all his ready money, when he fell to selling his jewels and spending their price, till they were all gone. Then he sold his houses and lands and farms and gardens, one after another, till they were all gone and he had nothing left but the house in which he lived. So he tore out the marble and wood-work and sold it and spent of its price, till he had made an end of this also, when he bethought himself and finding that he had nothing left to spend, sold the house itself and spent the purchase-money.

Presently, the man who had bought the house came to him and said, ‘Look thyself out a lodging, for I have need of my house.’ So he bethought himself and considering that he had nothing requiring a house, except his wife, who had borne him a son and daughter, — for he had not a servant left, — hired a room in one of the mean lodging houses and there took up his abode, after having lived in honour and luxury, with many servants and much wealth, and came to lack of one day’s bread. Quoth his wife, ‘I warned thee of this and exhorted thee to obey thy father’s injunction, and thou wouldst not hearken to me; but there is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! Whence shall the little ones eat? Arise, go round to thy friends, the sons of the merchants: it may be they will give thee somewhat on which we may live this day.’ So he went the round of his friends, one by one; but they all hid their faces from him and gave him nothing but injurious and revolting words; and he returned to his wife and said to her, ‘They have given me nothing.’ Thereupon she went out to beg of her neighbours wherewithal to sustain themselves and came to a woman, whom she had known in former days. When she came in to her and she saw her plight, she rose and receiving her kindly, wept and said, ‘What hath befallen thee?’ So she told her of her husband’s conduct, and the other said, ‘Welcome and fair welcome! Whatever thou needest, seek it of me, without price.’ ‘May God abundantly requite thee!’ answered she. Then her friend gave her as much victual as would suffice herself and her family a whole month, and she took it and returned to her lodging. When her husband saw her, he wept and said, ‘Whence hadst thou that?’ ‘I got it of such a woman,’ answered she; ‘for, when I told her what had befallen us, she failed me not in aught, but said, “Seek of me all thou needest.”’ ‘Since thou hast this,’ rejoined her husband, ‘I will betake myself to a place I have in my mind; peradventure God the Most High will bring us relief.’

So saying, he took leave of her and kissing the children, went out, not knowing whither he should go, and walked on till he came to Boulac, where he saw a ship about to sail for Damietta. Here he met a man, between whom and his father there had been friendship; and he saluted him and said to him, ‘Whither away?’ ‘To Damietta,’ replied Ali; ‘I have friends there, whom I would fain enquire after and visit and return.’ The man took him home and entreated him hospitably, then, furnishing him with victual [for the voyage] and giving him somewhat of money, embarked him on board the vessel bound for Damietta. When they reached that place, Ali landed, not knowing where to go, but, as he was walking along, a merchant saw him and had pity on him. So he carried him to his house, where he abode awhile, till he said in himself, ‘How long shall this sojourning in other folks’ houses last?’ Then he left the merchant’s house and went down to the quay, where he saw a ship ready to sail for Syria. His host provided him with victual and embarked him in the ship; and it set sail and arrived, in due course, at the coast of Syria, where he landed and journeyed till he entered Damascus. As he walked about the town, a benevolent man saw him and took him to his house, where he abode awhile, till, one day, going abroad, he saw a caravan about to start for Baghdad and bethought himself to journey thither with it. So he returned to his host and taking leave of him, set out with the caravan.

Now God (blessed and exalted be He) inclined to him the heart of one of the merchants, so that he took him with him, and Ali ate and drank with him, till they came within one day’s journey of Baghdad, where a company of highwaymen fell upon the caravan and took all they had. But few of the merchants escaped and these made each for a [separate] place of refuge. As for Ali, he made for Baghdad, where he arrived at sundown, as the gatekeepers were about to shut the gates, and said to them ‘Let me in with you.’ So they admitted him and asked him whence he came and whither he was bound. ‘I am a man from the city of Cairo,’ replied he, ‘and have with me mules laden with merchandise and slaves and servants. I forewent them, to look me out a place wherein to deposit my goods; but as I rode along on my mule, there fell upon me a company of highway robbers, who took my mule and gear; nor did I escape from them but at the last gasp.’ The warders entreated him hospitably and bade him welcome, saying, ‘Abide with us this night, and in the morning we will look thee out a place befitting thee.’ Then he sought in his pocket and finding a dinar remaining of those he had gotten of the merchant at Boulac, gave it to one of the gatekeepers, saying, ‘Take this and change it and bring us something to eat.’ The man took it and went to the market, where he changed it and brought Ali bread and cooked meat. So he ate, he and the gatekeepers, and he lay the night with them.

On the morrow, one of the warders carried him to a merchant of the town, to whom he told the same story, and he believed him, deeming that he was a merchant and had with him loads of merchandise. So he took him up into his shop and entreated him with honour. Moreover, he sent to his house for a splendid suit of his own apparel for him and carried him to the bath. So, [quoth Ali], I went with him to the bath, and when we came out, he brought me to his house, where he caused set the morning-meal before us, and we ate and made merry.

Then said he to one of his slaves, “Harkye, Mesoud, take this thy lord and show him the two houses in such a place. Whichever pleases him of them, give him the key of it and come back.” So I went with the slave, till we came to a place where stood three houses, side by side, new and shut up. He opened the first and the second, and I looked at them; after which he said to me, “Of which of them shall I give thee the key?” “To whom does yon large house belong?” asked I. “To us,” answered he; and I said, “Open it, that I may view it.” Quoth he, “Thou hast no call to it.” “Wherefore?” asked I; and he, “Because it is haunted, and none lodges there but in the morning he is a dead man; nor do we use to open the door, to take out the corpse, but mount the roof of one of the other two houses and take it up thence. For this reason, my master has abandoned the house and says, ‘I will never again give it to any one.’” Quoth I, “Open it, that I may view it;” and I said in myself, “This is what I seek. I will pass the night there and in the morning be a dead man and be at peace from this miserable plight of mine.” So he opened it and I entered and found it a splendid house, without its like; and I said to the slave, “I will have none other than this house; give me the key.” But he answered, “I will not give thee this key till I consult my master,” and going to the latter, said to him, “The Egyptian merchant saith, ‘I will lodge in none but the great house.’”

When the merchant heard this, he rose and coming to Ali, said to him, ‘O my lord, thou hast no need of this house.’ But he replied, ‘I will lodge in none other than this; for I care nothing for this saying.' 'Then,' said the other, 'write me an acknowledgment that, if aught happen to thee, I am not responsible.' 'So be it,' answered Ali; whereupon the merchant fetched an assessor from the Cadi's court and taking of him the prescribed acknowledgment, delivered him the key, which he took and entered the house. The merchant sent him bedding by a slave, who spread it for him on the bench behind the door and went away. Presently Ali went into the inner court and seeing there a well with a bucket, let down the latter and drew water, with which he made the ablution and prayed the obligatory prayers. Then he sat awhile, till the merchant's slave brought him the evening meal from his master's house, together with a lamp, a candle and candlestick, a basin and ewer and a gugglet; after which he left him and returned home. Ali lighted the candle and supped at his ease and prayed the evening prayer; after which he said to himself, 'Let us take the bed and go upstairs and sleep there, rather than here.' So he took the bed and carried it upstairs, where he found a splendid saloon, with gilded ceiling and walls and floor of variegated marble. He spread his bed there and sitting down, began to recite somewhat of the sublime Koran, when suddenly he heard one calling to him and saying, 'O Ali, O son of Hassan, shall I send thee down the gold?' And he answered, 'Send away.'

Hardly had he spoken, when pieces of gold began to rain down on him, like [pebbles from] a mangonel, nor stinted till the saloon was full. Then said the voice, 'Set me free, that I may go my way; for I have made an end of my service and have delivered unto thee that which was committed to me for thee.' Quoth Ali, 'I adjure thee by the Most High God to tell me the history of this gold.' 'This is a treasure that was enchanted to thee of old time,' replied the voice; 'and to every one, who entered the house, we used to come and say to him, "O Ali, O son of Hassan, shall we send down the gold?" Whereat he would be affrighted and cry out, and we would come down to him and break his neck and go away. But, when thou camest and we accosted thee by thy name and that of thy father, saying, "Shall we send thee down the gold?" and thou madest answer, saying, "Send away," we knew thee for the owner of it and sent it down. Moreover, there is yet another treasure for thee in the land of

Yemen, whither thou wouldst do well to journey and fetch it. And now I would have thee set me free, that I may go my way.' 'By Allah,' said Ali, 'I will not set thee free, till thou bring me hither the treasure from Yemen!' Quoth the voice, 'If I bring it thee, wilt thou release me and the servant of the other treasure also?' 'Yes,' replied Ali; and the genie said, 'Swear to me.' So he swore to him, and he was about to go away, when Ali said to him, 'I have one other service to ask of thee.' 'What is that?' asked the genie. Quoth Ali, 'I have a wife and children at Cairo, in such a place; thou must fetch them to me, at their ease and without hurt.' 'I will bring them to thee in state,' answered the genie, 'in a litter, with a train of slaves and servants, together with the treasure from Yemen, if it be the will of God the Most High.' Then he took of him leave of absence for three days, at the end of which time all this should be with him, and departed.

When it was morning, Ali went round about the saloon, seeking a place wherein to lay the gold, and saw in the wall of the dais a marble panel, with a knob in it. So he pressed the knob and the panel slid back and discovered a door, which he opened and entering, found a great closet, full of linen bags. So he took out the bags and fell to filling them with gold and replacing them in the closet, till he had transported thither the whole treasure, whereupon he shut the door and pressing the knob, the panel returned to its place. Then he went down and seated himself on the bench behind the door. Presently, there came a knock at the door; so he opened it and found the merchant's slave, who, seeing him, returned in haste to his master with the good tidings, saying, 'O my lord, the merchant, who is lodged in the haunted house, is alive and well and sits on the bench behind the door.' When the merchant heard this, he rose joyfully and went to the house, taking breakfast with him; and when he saw Ali, he embraced him and kissed him between the eyes, saying, 'How hath God dealt with thee?' 'Right well,' answered Ali. 'I slept upstairs in the marble saloon.' Quoth the merchant, 'Did aught come to thee or didst thou see aught?' 'No,' replied Ali; 'I recited some little of the Koran and slept till morning, when I arose and after making the ablution and praying, came down and seated myself on the bench behind the door.' 'Praised be God for safety!' exclaimed the merchant, then left him and presently sent him slaves and servants, black and white and male and female, with furniture. They swept the house from top to bottom and furnished it magnificently, after which three black slaves and the like number of white and four slave-girls abode with him, to serve him, and the rest returned to their master's house. When the merchants heard of him, they sent him presents of all manner of things of price, even to meat and drink and clothes, and took him with them in the market, saying, 'When will thy baggage arrive?' And he answered, 'After three days it will come.'

Accordingly, when the three days had elapsed, the servant of the first treasure came to him and said, 'Go forth and meet thy harem, together with the treasure I have brought thee from Yemen, part of which is by way of costly merchandise; but the slaves, black and white, and the horses and camels and mules are all of the Jinn. (Now the genie, when he betook himself to Cairo, found Ali's wife and children in sore straits for nakedness and hunger; so he carried them forth of the town in a travelling-litter and clad them in sumptuous raiment of that which was in the treasure of Yemen.) When Ali heard this, he rose and repairing to the merchants, said to them, 'Come, go forth the city with me, to meet the caravan, with my merchandise, and honour me with the presence of your harems, to meet my harem.' 'We hear and obey,' answered they and sending for their harems, went forth all together and alighted in one of the gardens without the city. As they sat talking, behold, a cloud of dust arose out of the heart of the desert, and they came out to see what it was. Presently, it lifted and discovered mules and muleteers and tent-pitchers and linkmen, who came on, singing and dancing, till they reached the garden, when the chief of the muleteers came up to Ali and kissing his hand, said to him, 'O my lord, we have been long on the way, for we thought to enter some days ago; but we were in fear of the highway-robbers, so abode in our station four days, till God the Most High rid us of them.'

Then the merchants mounted their mules and rode forward with the caravan, wondering at the [number of] mules laden with chests, whilst their harems followed them, with Ali's harem, marvelling at the richness of the apparel of his wife and children and saying to each other, ‘Verily, the King of Baghdad hath no such raiment, no, nor any other of the kings or merchants or notables.’ So they entered Baghdad in great state and rode on till they came to Ali’s house, where they alighted and brought the mules and their burdens into the midst of the courtyard. Then they unloaded them and laid up the goods in the storehouses, whilst the merchants’ wives went up with Ali’s family to the saloon, which they found as it were a luxuriant garden, spread with magnificent furniture. They sat in mirth and good cheer till noon, when they brought them up the noon meal, of all manner meats and sweetmeats of the best; and they ate and drank costly sherbets and perfumed themselves thereafter with rose-water and scented woods. Then they took leave and departed, men and women. When the merchants returned home, they all sent presents to Ali, according to their conditions; and their wives likewise sent presents to his wife, so that there came to them great plenty of slaves, black and white and male and female, and store of all manner goods, such as grain and sugar and so forth, beyond count. As for the landlord of the house, he abode with Ali and quitted him not, but said to him, ‘Let the slaves and servants take the mules and the other cattle into one of my other houses, to rest.’ Quoth Ali, ‘They set out again to-night for such a place.’ Then he gave them leave to go forth the city, that they might set out on their journey at nightfall; whereupon they took leave of him forthright and departing the city, flew off through the air to their several abodes.

Ali and the merchant sat together till a third of the night was past, when the latter returned to his own house and Ali went up to his wife and children and greeted them, saying, ‘What hath befallen you all this time?’ So she told him what they had suffered of hunger and nakedness and toil, and he said, ‘Praised be God for safety! How did ye come?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered she, ‘I was asleep, with my children, yesternight, when suddenly one raised us from the ground and carried us through the air, without doing us any hurt, nor did he give over flying with us, till he set us down in a place as it were a Bedouin camping-place, where we saw laden mules and a litter borne upon two great mules, and round them servants, boys and men. So I said to them, “Who are ye and what are these loads and where are we?” And they answered, “We are the servants of the merchant Ali ibn Hassan of Cairo, who has sent us to fetch you to him at Baghdad.” Quoth I, “Is it far or near, hence to Baghdad?” “Near,” answered they; “there lies but the darkness of the night between us and the city.” Then they mounted us in the litter, and on the morrow, we found ourselves with thee, without having suffered any hurt. ‘Who gave you these clothes?’ asked he, and she said, ‘The chief of the caravan opened one of the chests on the mules and taking out the clothes, clad me and the children each in a suit; after which he locked the chest and gave me the key, saying, “Take care of it, till thou give it to thy husband.” And here it is, safe.’ So saying, she gave him the key, and he said, ‘Dost thou know the chest?’ ‘Yes,’ answered she. So he took her down to the magazine and she pointed it out, whereupon he put the key in the lock and opened the chest, in which he found much raiment and the keys of all the other chests. So he took them out and fell to opening the other chests, one after another, and feasting his eyes upon the jewels and precious metals they contained, whose like was not found with any of the kings; after which he locked them again and took the keys, saying to his wife, ‘This is of the bounty of God the Most High.’

Then he returned with her to the saloon and bringing her to the secret panel, pressed the knob and opened the door of the closet into which he entered with her and showed her the gold he had laid up there. Quoth she, ‘Whence hadst thou all this?’ ‘It came to me by the grace of my Lord,’ answered he and told her all that had befallen him, from first to last. ‘O my lord,’ said she, ‘all this comes of the blessing of thy father’s prayers, whenas he prayed for thee, before his death, saying, “I beseech God to cast thee into no strait, except He bring thee speedy deliverance [therefrom]!” So praised be God the Most High for that He hath brought thee relief and hath requited thee with more than thou didst lose! But God on thee, O my lord, return not to thy sometime fashion and companying with folk of lewd life; but look thou fear God the Most High, both in public and private!’ And she went on to admonish him. Quoth he, ‘I accept thine admonition and beg God the Most High to remove the wicked from us and stablish us in His obedience and in the observance of the law of His Prophet, on whom be peace and salvation!’

Ali and his wife and children were now in all delight of life and gladness; and he opened him a shop in the merchants' bazaar and stocking it with jewels and precious metals, sat therein with his children and servants. He soon became the most considerable of the merchants of Baghdad, and his report reached the King of that city, who sent a messenger to command his attendance. So he took four trays of red gold and filling them with jewels and precious metals, such as no king possessed, went up to the palace and presenting himself before the prince, kissed the earth before him and wished him continuance of glory and prosperity, in the best words he could command. 'O merchant,' said the King, 'thou honourest our city with thy presence;' and Ali rejoined, saying, 'O King of the age, thy slave hath brought thee a present and hopes for acceptance thereof from thy favour.' So saying, he laid the four trays before the King, who uncovered them and seeing that they contained jewels, whose like he possessed not and whose worth equalled treasuries of money, said, 'O merchant, thy present is accepted, and so God please, we will requite thee with its like.' And Ali kissed his hands and went away. Then the King called his grandees and said to them, 'How many kings have sought my daughter in marriage?' 'Many,' answered they. 'Hath any of them given me the like of this gift?' asked he. 'Not one,' replied they; 'for that none of them hath its like;' and he said, 'I have consulted God the Most High, as to marrying my daughter to this merchant. What say ye?' 'Be it as thou deemest,' answered they. Then he bade the eunuch carry the four trays into his harem and going in to his wife, laid them before her. She uncovered them and seeing therein that whose like she possessed not, — no, nor a fraction thereof, — said to him, 'Of which of the kings hadst thou these? Peradventure of one of those that seek our daughter in marriage?' 'Not so,' answered he, 'I had them of an Egyptian merchant, who is lately come to our city. I heard tell of him and sent to command him to us, thinking to make his acquaintance, so haply we might find with him somewhat of jewels and buy them of him for our daughter's equipment. He obeyed the summons and brought us these four trays, as a present, and I saw him to be a handsome and elegant young man of dignified aspect and accomplished wit, well-nigh as he were of the sons of the kings. Wherefore my heart inclined to him and I rejoiced in him and thought to marry my daughter to him.' Then he told her what had passed between himself and his grandees on the subject and added, ‘But what sayst thou?’ ‘O King of the age,’ answered she, ‘the affair is in God’s hand, and thine, and what God willeth shall come to pass.’ ‘If it be His will,’ rejoined the King, ‘I will marry her to none other than this young man.’

So, on the morrow, he went out to his Divan and sending for Ali and the rest of the merchants of Baghdad, bade them be seated. Then he summoned the Cadi of the Divan and said to him, ‘O Cadi, draw up the contract of marriage between my daughter and the merchant Ali of Cairo.’ But the latter said, ‘Thy pardon, O our lord the Sultan! It befits not that a merchant, such as I, be the King’s son-in-law.’ Quoth the King, ‘It is my will to bestow this favour upon thee, as well as the Vizierate.’ And he invested him forthwith in the Vizier’s habit. Then Ali sat down in the seat of the Vizierate and said, ‘O King of the age, thou hast bestowed on me this; and indeed I am honoured by thy bounties; but hear one word from me.’ ‘Say on,’ answered the King, ‘and fear not.’ Quoth Ali, ‘Since it is thine august will to marry thy daughter, thou wouldst do better to marry her to my son.’ ‘Hast thou then a son?’ asked the King; and Ali replied, ‘Yes.’ ‘Send for him forthright,’ said the King; whereupon, ‘I hear and obey,’ answered Ali and sent a servant to fetch his son, who came and kissing the ground before the King, stood in an attitude of respect. The King looked at him and seeing him to be yet comelier than his daughter and goodlier than she in symmetry and brightness and perfection, said to him, ‘O my son, what is thy name?’ ‘O our lord the Sultan,’ replied the young man, who was then fourteen years old, ‘my name is Hassan.’ Then the Sultan said to the Cadi, ‘Write the contract of marriage between my daughter Husn el Wujoud and Hassan, son of the merchant Ali of Cairo.’ So he wrote the contract of marriage between them, and the affair was ended on the goodliest wise; after which all in the Divan went their ways and the merchants escorted the Vizier Ali to his house, where they gave him joy of his advancement and departed. Then he went in to his wife, who, seeing him clad in the Vizier’s habit, exclaimed, ‘What is this?’ So he told her all that had passed, and she rejoiced therein with an exceeding joy.

On the morrow, he went up to the Divan, where the King received him with especial favour and seating him beside himself, said to him, ‘O Vizier, we purpose to celebrate the wedding festivities and bring thy son in to our daughter.’ ‘O our lord the Sultan,’ replied Ali, ‘that thou deemest good is good.’ So the Sultan gave orders for the festivities, and they decorated the city and held high festival thirty days, in all cheer and gladness; at the end of which time, the Vizier Ali’s son Hassan went in to the princess and enjoyed her beauty and grace. When the queen saw her daughter’s husband, she conceived a warm affection for him, and in like manner she rejoiced greatly in his mother. Then the King bade build his son-in-law a palace beside his own; so they built him with all speed a splendid palace, in which he took up his abode; and his mother used to abide with her son some days and then return to her own house. After awhile, the queen said to her husband, ‘O King of the age, Hassan’s mother cannot take up her abode with her son and leave the Vizier; neither can she abide with her husband and leave her son.’ ‘Thou sayst sooth,’ replied the King and bade build a third palace beside the two others, which being done in a few days, he caused remove thither the Vizier’s goods, and the latter and his wife took up their abode there. Now the three palaces communicated with one another, so that, when the King had a mind to speak with the Vizier by night, he would go to him or send to fetch him; and so with Hassan and his father and mother.

They dwelt thus in the greatest happiness and contentment awhile, till the King fell ill and his sickness increased on him. So he summoned the grandees of his realm and said to them, ‘There is come upon me a sore sickness, peradventure a mortal one, and I have therefore summoned you to consult you respecting a certain matter, on which I would have you counsel me as you deem well.’ ‘What is the matter of which thou wouldst take counsel with us, O King?’ asked they; and he answered, ‘I am old and sickly and I fear for the realm, after me, from the enemies; so I would have you all agree upon some one, that I may proclaim him king in my lifetime and so ye may be at ease.’ Whereupon quoth they all, ‘We all approve of thy son-in-law Hassan, son of the Vizier Ali; for we have seen the perfectness of his wit and understanding, and he knows the rank of all, great and small.

‘Are ye indeed agreed upon this?’ asked the King, and they answered, ‘Yes.’ ‘Peradventure,’ quoth he, ‘ye say this to my face, of respect for me; but, behind my back, ye will say otherwise.’ But they all answered, saying, ‘By Allah, our word, in public and in private, is one, varying not; and we accept him frankly and with all our hearts.’ ‘Since the case is thus,’ said the King, ‘bring the Cadi of the Holy Law and all the chamberlains and captains and officers of state before me to-morrow, and we will settle the affair on the goodliest wise.’ ‘We hear and obey,’ answered they and withdrawing, notified all the doctors of the law and the chief Amirs.

So, on the morrow, they came up to the Divan and saluted the King, who said to them, ‘O Amirs of Baghdad, whom will ye have to be king over you after me, that I may invest him in my lifetime, in the presence of you all?’ Quoth they all, ‘We are agreed upon thy daughter’s husband, Hassan, son of the Vizier Ali.’ ‘If it be so,’ said the King, ‘go all of you and bring him before me.’ So they all arose and repairing to Hassan’s palace, said to him, ‘Come with us to the King.’ ‘Wherefore?’ asked he, and they answered, ‘For a thing that will advantage both us and thee.’ So he went in with them to the King and kissed the ground before the latter, who bade him be seated and said to him, ‘O Hassan, all the Amirs have approved of thee and agreed to make thee king over them after me; and it is my purpose to proclaim thee, whilst I yet live, and so make an end of the business.’ But Hassan arose and kissing the earth once more before the King, said to him, ‘O our lord the King, among the Amirs there be [many] who are older than I and greater of worth; hold me quit therefore of this thing.’ Quoth all the Amirs, ‘We consent not but that thou be king over us.’ Then said Hassan, ‘My father is older than I, and he and I are one thing; and it befits not to advance me over him.’ But Ali said, ‘I will consent to nothing but what is pleasing to my brethren; and they have all chosen and agreed upon thee. Wherefore gainsay thou not the King’s commandment and that of thy brethren.’ And Hassan hung his head in abashment before the King and his father. Then said the King to the Amirs, ‘Do ye all accept of him?’ ‘We do,’ answered they and recited thereupon seven Fatihehs.’ So the King said to the Cadi, ‘Draw up a legal act testifying of these Amirs that they are agreed to make my daughter’s husband Hassan king over them.’ So the Cadi wrote the act and made it executory, after they had all taken the oath of fealty to Hassan. Then the King invested him with the insignia of royalty and bade him take his seat on the throne; whereupon they all arose and kissed King Hassan's hands and did homage to him.

The new king dispensed justice among the people that day, in right royal fashion, and invested the grandees of the realm in splendid robes of honour. When the Divan broke up, he went in to his father-and-law and kissed his hands; and the old King said to him, 'O my son, look thou govern the people in the fear of God.' 'O my father,' replied Hassan, 'through thy prayers for me, the grace of God will come to me.' Then he entered his own palace and was met by his wife and her mother and their attendants, who kissed his hands and gave him joy of his advancement, saying, 'This is a blessed day.' Then he went in to his father and mother, who rejoiced with an exceeding joy in that which God had vouchsafed him of his advancement to the kingship, and his father exhorted him to the fear of God and to affectionate solicitude in his dealings with his subjects. He passed the night in joy and gladness, and on the morrow, having prayed the appointed prayers, concluding with the customary recitation of part of the Koran, he repaired to the Divan, whither came all his officers and dignitaries. He passed the day in dispensing justice among his subjects, enjoining to beneficence and forbidding from iniquity and appointing and displacing, till nightfall, when the Divan broke up, after the goodliest fashion, and all present withdrew and went each his own way. Then he arose and went in to the palace, where he found his father-in-law's sickness grown heavy upon him and said to him, 'May no hurt befall thee!' At this the old King opened his eyes and said, 'O Hassan!' 'At thy service, O my lord,' replied the young man. Quoth the old King, 'My last hour is at hand: be careful of thy wife and her mother and look thou fear God and honour thy parents, being still in awe of the majesty of the Requiting King and remembering that He commandeth to justice and beneficence.' And Hassan replied, 'I hear and obey.'

The old King lingered three days after this and was then received into the mercy of God the Most High. They paid him the last offices and buried him and held over him readings and recitations of the Koran, to the end of the [customary] forty days. And King Hassan, son of the Vizier, reigned in his stead, and his subjects rejoiced in him and all his days were gladness. Moreover, his father ceased not to be his chief Vizier on his right hand, and he took to himself another Vizier, to be at his left hand. His reign was a prosperous one and he abode long King in Baghdad. God blessed him, by the old King's daughter, with three sons, who inherited the kingdom after him; and they abode in the enjoyment of all delight and solace of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies. And glory be to Him who is eternal and in whose hand are annulment and confirmation!

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THE PILGRIM AND THE OLD WOMAN WHO DWELT IN THE DESERT.

A man of the pilgrims once slept a long sleep and awaking, found no trace of the caravan. So he arose and walked on, but lost his way and presently came to a tent, at whose door he saw an old woman and a dog by her, asleep. He went up to the tent and saluting the old woman, sought of her food. ‘Go to yonder valley,’ said she, ‘and catch thy sufficiency of serpents, that I may broil of them for thee and give thee to eat.’ ‘I dare not catch serpents,’ answered the pilgrim; ‘nor did I ever eat them.’ Quoth the old woman, ‘I will go with thee and catch them; fear not.’ So she went with him, followed by the dog, to the valley, and catching a sufficient number of serpents, proceeded to broil them. He saw nothing for it but to eat, for fear of hunger and exhaustion; so he ate of the serpents.

Then he was athirst and asked for water to drink. ‘Go to the spring and drink,’ answered she. So he went to the spring and found the water thereof bitter; yet needs must he drink of it, for all its bitterness, because of the violence of his thirst. Then he returned to the old woman and said to her, ‘O old woman, I marvel at thy choosing to abide in this place and putting up with such meat and drink!’ ‘And how is it then in thy country?’ asked she. ‘In my country,’ answered he, ‘are wide and spacious houses and ripe and delicious fruits and sweet and abundant waters and goodly viands and fat meats and plentiful flocks and all things pleasant and all the goods of life, the like whereof are not, save in the Paradise that God the Most High hath promised to His pious servants.’ ‘All this,’ replied she, ‘have I heard: but tell me, have you a Sultan who ruleth over you and is tyrannical in his rule and under whose hand you are, who, if one of you commit a fault, taketh his goods and undoth him and who, when he will, turneth you out of your houses and uprooteth you, stock and branch?’ ‘Indeed, that may be,’ answered the man. ‘Then, by Allah,’ rejoined she, ‘these your delicious viands and dainty life and pleasant estate, with tyranny and oppression, are but a corroding poison, in comparison wherewith, our food and fashion, with freedom and safety, are a healthful medicine. Hast thou not heard that the best of all boons, after the true Faith, are health and security?'

Now these [quoth he who tells the tale] may be by the just rule of the Sultan, the Vicar of God in His earth, and the goodness of his policy. The Sultan of times past needed but little awfulness, for that, when the people saw him, they feared him; but the Sultan of these days hath need of the most accomplished policy and the utmost majesty, for that men are not as men of time past and this our age is one of folk depraved and greatly calamitous, noted for folly and hardness of heart and inclined to hatred and enmity. If, therefore, the Sultan that is set over them be (which God the Most High forfend) weak or lack of policy and majesty, without doubt, this will be the cause of the ruin of the land. Quoth the proverb, 'A hundred years of the Sultan's tyranny, rather than one of the tyranny of the people, one over another.' When the people oppress one another, God setteth over them a tyrannical Sultan and a despotic King. Thus it is told in history that there was, one day, presented to El Hejjaj ben Yousuf a docket, in which was written, 'Fear God and oppress not His servants with all manner of oppression.' When he read this, he mounted the pulpit, (for he was ready of speech,) and said, 'O folk' God the Most High hath set me over you, by reason of your [evil] deeds; and though I die, yet will ye not be delivered from oppression, with your evil deeds; for God the Most High hath created many like unto me. If it be not I, it will be a more fertile than I in mischief and a mightier in oppression and a more strenuous in violence, even as saith the poet:

For no hand is there but the hand of God is over it And no
oppressor but shall be with worse than he oppress.

Tyranny is feared: but justice is the best of all things. We beg God to better our case.'

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ABOULHUSN AND HIS SLAVE-GIRL TAWEDDUD.

There was once in Baghdad a man of rank and rich in money and houses and lands, who was one of the chiefs of the merchants, and God had largely endowed him with worldly goods, but had not vouchsafed him what he longed for of offspring; and there passed over him a long space of time, without his being blessed with children, male or female. His years waxed great, his bones became wasted and his back bent, and weakness and trouble increased on him, and he feared the loss of his wealth and possessions, seeing he had no child, whom he might make his heir and by whom he should be remembered. So he betook himself with supplication to God the Most High, fasting by day and rising by night [to pray]. Moreover, he made vows to God the Living, the Eternal, and visited the pious and was instant in supplication to the Most Migh, till He gave ear to him and accepted his prayer and took pity on his striving and complaining; so that, before many days were past, he lay with one of his women and she became with child by him the same night. She accomplished the months of her pregnancy and casting her burden, bore a male child as he were a piece of the moon; whereupon the merchant, in his gratitude to God, (to whom belong might and majesty,) fulfilled his vows and gave alms and clothed the widow and the orphan.

On the seventh night after the boy's birth, he named him Aboulhusn, and the wet-nurses suckled him and the dry-nurses dandled him and the slaves and servants carried him, till he grew up and throve and learnt the sublime Koran and the ordinances of Islam and the things of the True Faith. Moreover, he learned writing and poetry and mathematics and archery and became the pearl of his age and the goodliest of the folk of his time and his day, fair of face and fluent of tongue, bearing himself with a proud and graceful port and glorying in his symmetry and amorous grace. His cheeks were red and his forehead white and brilliant and the tender down of the whiskers darkened upon his face, even as saith one, describing him:

The Spring of the down on his cheeks to the eye shows clear;

And how shall the rose endure, after Spring is here?
Dost thou not see that the growth on his cheek, forsooth, A
violet is, that forth of its leaves doth peer?

He abode awhile with his father, in the best of case, and the latter rejoiced and delighted in him, till he came to man’s estate, when the merchant one day made him sit down before him and said to him, ‘O my son, the appointed term draws near; my last hour is at hand and it remains but to meet God (to whom belong might and majesty). I leave thee what shall suffice thee, even to thy son’s son, of money and farms and houses and gardens; wherefore, O my son, fear thou God the Most High in [dealing with] that which I leave thee and follow none but those who will help thee [in this].’ Not long after, he sickened and died; so his son ordered his funeral, after the goodliest fashion, and burying him, returned to his house and sat mourning for him [many] days and nights, till certain of his friends came in to him and said to him, ‘Whoso leaveth the like of thee after him is not dead; indeed, what is past is past and mourning beseemeth none but girls and cloistered women.’ And they ceased not from him, till they wrought on him to enter the bath and break off his mourning. Then he forgot his father’s injunctions, and his head was turned by his riches; he thought fortune would still abide with him, as it was, and that wealth would never come to an end. So he ate and drank and made merry and took his pleasure and gave gifts of money and raiment and was profuse with gold and gave himself up to eating fowls and breaking the seals of wine-flasks and listening to songs and to the laugh of the wine, as it gurgled from the flagon; nor did he give over this way of life, till his wealth was wasted and the case became straitened [upon him] and he bit his hands [for repentance] and gone was all he had.

In good sooth, he had nothing left, after that which he had squandered, but a slave-girl that his father had bequeathed to him with the rest of his estate: her name was Taweddud and she had no equal in beauty and grace and brightness and symmetry and all perfection. She was past mistress in all manner of arts and accomplishments and endowed with [many] excellences, surpassing all the folk of her age and time. She was grown more notorious than a way-mark, for the versatility of her genius, and outdid the fair both in theory and practice and elegant and flexile grace, more by token that she was five feet high and in conjunction with fair fortune, with strait arched brows, as they were the crescent moon of Shaaban, and eyes like those of gazelles, nose like the point of the sabre and cheeks like blood-red anemones, mouth like Solomon's seal and teeth like necklaces of pearls, navel holding an ounce of benzoin ointment and waist more slender than his body whom love hath wasted and whom concealment [of his passion] hath made sick, and buttocks heavier than two hills of sand; brief, in all she answered to the saying of him who says:

Her fair shape ravisheth, if face to face she did appear, And
  if she turn, for severance from her she slayeth sheer.
Sun-like, full-moon-like, sapling-like, unto her character
  Estrangement nowise appertains nor cruelty austere.
Under the bosom of her shift the garths of Eden are, and the
  full-moon revolveth still upon her neck-rings' sphere.

She seemed [at once] a rising full moon and a browsing gazelle, a girl of nine and five, putting to shame the moon and the sun, even as saith of her the eloquent and ingenious poet:

The likeness of the full-moon, faring o'er The heavens, five
  and five and after four;
'Tis not my fault, if she have made of me Its likeness, when it
  first in heaven doth soar.

White of skin, odoriferous of breath, it seemed as if she were [at once] fashioned of fire and moulded of crystal; rose-red was the cheek of her and perfect her shape and figure; even as saith of her one, describing her:

Scented with sandal and musk, right proudly doth she go, With
  gold and silver and rose and saffron-colour aglow.
A flower in a garden she is, a pearl in an ouch of gold Or an
  image in chapel set for worship of high and low.

Slender and shapely she is; vivacity bids her arise, But the
weight of her hips says, “Sit, or softly and slowly go.”
Whenas her favours I seek and sue for my heart’s desire, “Be
gracious,” her beauty says; but her coquetry answers,
“No.”
Glory to Him who made beauty her portion, and that Of her lover
to be the prate of the censurers, heigho!

Indeed, she captivated all who saw her, with the excellence of her beauty and the sweetness of her smile, and transpierced them with the arrows she launched from her eyes; and withal she was eloquent of speech and excellently skilled in poetry.

When Aboulhusn had squandered all his wealth and there remained to him nought but this slave-girl, when [I say] the wretchedness of his plight became manifest to him, he abode three days without tasting food or taking rest in sleep, and Taweddud said to him, ‘O my lord, carry me to the Khalif Haroun er Reshid, fifth of the sons of Abbas, and seek of him ten thousand dinars to my price. If he deem me dear at this price, say to him, “O Commander of the Faithful, my slave is worth more than this: do but prove her, and her value will be magnified in thine eyes, for she hath not her equal, and it were unfit that any but thou should possess her.” And beware, O my lord, of selling me for less than the sum I have named, for it is but little for the like of me.’ (Now Aboulhusn knew not her worth nor that she had no equal in her day.) So he carried her to the Khalif, to whom he repeated what she had bidden him say, and the Khalif said to her, ‘What is thy name?’ ‘Taweddud,’ answered she. ‘O Taweddud,’ asked he, ‘in what branches of knowledge dost thou excel?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered she, ‘I am versed in syntax and poetry and jurisprudence and exegesis and lexicography and music and the knowledge of the Divine ordinances and in arithmetic and geodesy and the fables of the ancients. I know the sublime Koran [by heart] and have read it according to the seven and the ten and the fourteen [modes]. I know the number of its chapters and verses and sections and words and letters and its halves and fourths and eighths and tenths, the number of acts of adoration, that occur in it, and what there is in it of cancelling and cancelled; also what parts of it were revealed at Medina and what at Mecca and the manner of the different revelations. I know the Holy Traditions, their history and variants and the manner of their recitation and interpretation, together with those of them whose chain of descent is unbroken and those for which it is broken; and I have studied the exact sciences, geometry and philosophy and medicine and logic and rhetoric and composition; and I know many things and am passionately fond of poetry. I can play the lute and know its gamut and notation and so forth. If I sing and dance, I ravish, and if I adorn and perfume myself, I slay. In fine, I have reached a pitch of perfection such as can only be estimated by those who are stablished in knowledge.'

When the Khalif heard her words, he wondered at them and at the eloquence of her speech, seeing the tenderness of her age, and turning to Aboulhusn, said to him, 'I will summon those who shall examine her in all she lays claim to; if she answer [correctly,] I will give thee the price thou askest for her and more; and if not, thou art fitter to [possess] her [than I].' 'With all my heart, O Commander of the Faithful,' replied Aboulhusn. So the Khalif wrote to the Viceroy of Bassora, to send him Ibrahim ben Siyyar the poet, who was the first man of his day in argument and eloquence and poetry and logic, and bade him bring with him readers of the Koran and doctors of the law and physicians and astrologers and sages and geometricians and philosophers; and Ibrahim was more learned than all. In a little while they all arrived at the Khalif's palace, knowing not what was to do, and the latter sent for them to his sitting-chamber and bade them be seated. So they sat down and he bade fetch the damsel Taweddud, who came and unveiling, showed herself, as she were a sparkling star. The Khalif caused set her a stool of gold; and she saluted and speaking with an eloquent tongue, said, 'O Commander of the Faithful, bid the learned men present contend with me in argument.' So he said to them, 'I desire of you that ye dispute with this damsel on the things of her faith and make void her argument, in all she avoucheth;' and they answered, saying, 'We hear and obey God and thee, O Commander of the Faithful.'

Thereupon Taweddud bowed her head and said, 'Which of you is the doctor of the law, the scholar, versed in the interpretation of the Koran and in the Traditions?' Quoth one of them, 'I am the man thou seekest.' 'Then,' said she, 'ask me of what thou wilt.' Quoth the doctor, 'Hast thou read the precious book of God and dost thou know its abrogating and abrogated parts and hast thou meditated its verses and expressions?' 'Yes,' answered she. 'Then,' said he, 'I will proceed to question thee of the obligatory ordinances and the immutable institutions: so tell me of these, O damsel, and who is thy Lord, who thy prophet, and who thy brethren. Also, what is thy [point of] fronting [in prayer], what thine exemplar, what thy path and what thy highway?' 'Allah is my Lord,' replied she, 'and Mohammed (whom God bless and preserve) my prophet and the true-believers are my brethren. The Koran is my exemplar and the Kaabeh my [point of] fronting; the practice of good is my path and the Sunneh my highway.' (Q.) 'With what do we know God the Most High?' (A.) 'With the understanding.' (Q.) 'And what is the understanding?' (A.) 'It is of two kinds, natural and acquired. The first is that which God (to whom belong might and majesty) bestoweth on whom He will of His servants; and the other is that which men acquire by dint of study and fair knowledge.' (Q.) 'Thou hast answered well. Where is the seat of the understanding?' (A.) 'God casteth it in the heart, whence its lustre ascendeth to the brain and there becometh fixed.' (Q.) 'How knowest thou the Prophet of God?' (A.) 'By the reading of God's Holy Book and by signs and proofs and portents and miracles.' (Q.) 'What are the obligatory ordinances and the immutable institutions?' (A.) 'The obligatory ordinances are five in number. (1) Testification that there is no god but God alone, that He hath no partner in divinity and that Mohammed is His servant and His apostle. (2) The scrupulous performance of the enjoined prayers. (3) The payment of the poor-rate. (4) Fasting Ramazan. (5) The performance of the Pilgrimage to God's Holy House [at Mecca] for all to whom it is possible. The immutable institutions are four in number; to wit, night and day and sun and moon, the which build up life and hope, neither knoweth any son of Adam if they will be destroyed on the Day of Judgment.' (Q.) 'What are the obligatory rites of the Faith?' (A.) 'Prayer, almsgiving, fasting, pilgrimage, fighting for the Faith and abstinence from what is forbidden.' (Q.) 'Why dost thou stand up to pray?' (A.) 'To express the devout intent of the slave submitting himself to [or acknowledging] the Divinity.' (Q.) 'What are the conditions precedent of standing up to pray?' (A.) 'Purification, covering the privy parts, the avoidance of soiled clothes, standing on a clean place, fronting [the Kaabeh,] a standing posture, the intent and the magnification of prohibition.' (Q.) 'With what shouldest thou go forth thy house to pray? (A.) 'With an intent of worship.' (Q.) 'With what intent shouldest thou enter the mosque?' (A.) 'With an intent of service.' (Q.) 'Why do we front the Kaabeh?' (A.) 'In obedience to three Divine and one Traditional ordinance.' (Q.) 'What is the commencement, the consecration and the dissolution [end] of prayer?' (A.) 'Purification, the magnification of prohibition and the salutation of the angels [concluding prayer].' (Q.) 'What of him who neglecteth prayer?' (A.) 'It is reported, among the authentic (Traditions of the Prophet, that he said), "He, who neglecteth prayer wilfully and without excuse, hath no part in Islam."' (Q.) 'What is prayer?' (A.) 'Prayer is communion between the slave and his Lord, and in it are ten virtues, to wit, (1) it illumines the heart (2) makes the face shine (3) pleases the Merciful One (4) angers Satan (5) conjures calamity (6) wards off the mischief of enemies (7) multiplies mercy (8) forfends vengeance [or punishment] (9) brings the slave nigh unto [or in favour with] his Lord and (10) restrains from lewdness and iniquity. It is one of the written obligatory ordinances and the pillar of the Faith.' (Q.) 'What is the key of prayer?' (A.) 'Ablution.' (Q.) 'What is the key of ablution?' (A.) 'Nomination.' (Q.) 'That of naming God?' (A.) 'Faith.' (Q.) 'That of Faith?' (A.) 'Trust in God.' (Q.) 'That of trust in God?' (A.) 'Hope.' (Q.) 'That of Hope?' (A.) 'Obedience.' (Q.) 'That of obedience?' (A.) 'The confession of the unity and the acknowledgment of the divinity of God.' (Q.) 'What are the Divine ordinances of ablution?' (A.) 'They are six in number, according to the canon of the Imam Es Shafi Mohammed ben Idris (of whom God accept) to wit, (1) intent to wash the face (2) washing the face (3) washing the hands and elbows (4) wiping part of the head (5) washing the feet and heels and (6) observing the prescribed order of ablution, whose statutes are ten in number, to wit, (1) nomination (2) washing the hands before putting them into the vase (3) rinsing the mouth (4) drawing up water through the nostrils (5) wiping the whole head (6) washing the ears within and without with fresh water (7) separating a thick beard (8) separating the fingers and toes (9) washing the right foot before the left and (10) doing each of these thrice and all in unbroken succession. When the ablution is ended, the devotee should (quoth Es Shafi) say, "I testify that there is no god but God alone, who hath no partner, and that Mohammed is His servant and apostle. O my God, make me of those who repent and are made clean! Glory to Thee, O my God, and in Thy praise I testify that there is no god but Thou! I crave pardon of Thee and repent to Thee!" For it is reported, in the Holy Traditions, that the Prophet (whom God bless and keep) said of this prayer, "Whoso ensueth every ablution with this prayer, the eight gates of Paradise are open to him; he shall enter at which he pleases."' (Q.) 'When a man purposes to make the ablution, what betides him from the angels and the devils?' (A.) 'When a man prepares for ablution, the angels come and stand on his right and the devils on his left hand. If he name God, at the beginning of the ablution, the devils flee from him and the angels hover over him with a pavilion of light, having four ropes, to each an angel glorifying God and craving pardon for him, so long as he remains silent or calls upon the name of God. But if he omit to begin with naming God (to whom belong might and majesty) neither remain silent, the angels depart from him and the devils settle upon him and whisper evil thoughts unto him, till he falls into doubt and comes short in his ablution. For (quoth he on whom be blessing and salvation) "A perfect ablution driveth away the devils and assureth against the tyranny of the Sultan; and he who neglecteth the ablution, if calamity befall him, let him blame none but himself."' (Q.) 'What should a man do, when he awakes from sleep?' (A.) 'He should wash his hands thrice, before putting them into the vessel.' (Q.) 'What are the ordinances, Koranic and Traditional, of complete ablution?' (A.) 'The Koranic ordinances are intent and covering the whole body with water, so that it shall come at every part of the hair and skin. The Traditional, previous partial ablution [as before prayer,] rubbing the body, separating the hair and deferring in words the washing of the feet till the end of the ablution.' (Q.) 'What are the reasons [or occasions] for making the ablution with other than water, and what are the ordinances thereof, Koranic and Traditional?' (A.) 'The reasons are seven in number, to wit, lack of water, fear, need thereto, going astray on a journey, sickness, having the bones [broken and] in splints and wounds. As for its ordinances, the Koranic are four in number, to wit, intent, dust, applying it to the face and to the hands, and the Traditional two, to wit, nomination and preferring the right before the left hand.' (Q.) 'What are the conditions, the essentials [or fundamentals] and the Traditional statutes of prayer?' (A.) 'The conditions are five in number, to wit, (1) purification of the members (2) covering the privy parts (3) observing the proper hours, either of certainty or to the best of one's belief, (4) fronting the Kaabeh and (5) standing on a clean place. The essentials are twelve in number, to wit, (1) intent (2) the magnification of prohibition (3) standing at the proper distance one from another (4) repeating the first chapter of the Koran and also (according to the Shafiyites) saying, "In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate!" a verse thereof (5) bowing the body and tranquillity [or gravity] therein (6) keeping the feet and legs still and in the same position, [whilst the rest of the body moves], and tranquillity therein (7) prostration and tranquillity therein (8) sitting between two prostrations and tranquillity therein (9) repeating the latter profession of the Faith and sitting up therefor (10) invoking benediction on the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve) (11) the first Salutation and (12) the intent of making an end of prayer, [expressed] in words. The Traditional statutes are the call to prayer, the repetition of the words of the latter, raising the hands to either side of the face, whilst pronouncing the magnification of prohibition, pronouncing the magnification before reciting the Fatiheh [First chapter of the Koran], seeking refuge with God, saying "Amen," repeating the (obligatory) chapter [of the Koran] after the Fatiheh, repeating the magnifications during change of posture, saying, "May God hear him who praiseth Him!" and "O our Lord, to Thee be the praise!" uttering aloud the prayers in their places and in like manner, under the breath, those so prescribed, the first testification and sitting up thereto, blessing the Prophet therein, blessing his family in the latter profession [or testification] and the second Salutation.' (Q.) 'On what is the poor-rate taxable?' (A.) 'On gold and silver and camels and oxen and sheep and wheat and barley and millet and beans and pulse and rice and raisins and dates.' (Q.)

‘What is the poor-rate on gold ?’ (A.) ‘Below twenty dinars, nothing; but, on that amount and over, half a dinar for every score.’ (Q.) ‘On silver?’ (A.) ‘Under two hundred dirhems, nothing; then, five dirhems on every two hundred.’ (Q.) ‘On camels?’ (A.) ‘For every five, an ewe, or for every twenty-five a pregnant camel.’ (Q.) ‘On sheep?’ (A.) ‘On forty and over, an ewe for every forty head.’ (Q.) ‘What are the ordinances of the Fast [of Ramazan]?’ (A.) ‘The Koranic are intent, abstinence from eating, drinking and copulation and stoppage of vomiting. It is incumbent on all who submit to the Law, save women in their courses and forty days after child-birth; and it becomes obligatory on sight of the new moon or on news of its appearance, brought by a trustworthy person and commending itself as truth to the hearer’s heart; and among its requisites is that it be commenced by night. The Traditional ordinances of fasting are, hastening to break the fast, deferring the fore-dawn meal and abstaining from speech, save for good works and for calling on the name of God and reciting the Koran.’ (Q.) ‘What things vitiate not the fast?’ (A.) ‘The use of unguents and eye-powders and the dust of the road and the swallowing of one’s spittle and the emission of seed in dreams of dalliance or at the sight of a strange woman and cupping and letting blood; none of these things vitiates the fast.’ (Q.) ‘What are the prayers of the two great [annual] Festivals?’ (A.) ‘Two one-bow prayers, after the traditional ordinance, without call to prayer or the repetition thereof by the devotee, who shall say, “Prayer is a collector of all folk!” and pronounce the magnification seven times in the first prayer, besides the magnification of prohibition, and in the second, five times, besides that of rising up, (according to the canon of the Imam Es Shafi, on whom God have mercy) and make the profession of the Faith.’ (Q.) ‘What are the prayers prescribed on the occasion of an eclipse of the sun or moon?’ (A.) ‘Two one-bow prayers, without call to prayer or repetition thereof by the devotee, who shall make in each two standings up and two inclinations and two prostrations, then sit up and testify and salute.’ (Q.) ‘What is the ritual of prayer for rain?’ (A.) ‘Two one-bow prayers, without call to prayer or repetition; then shall the devotee make the profession and salute. Moreover [the Imam] shall deliver an exhortation and (in place of the magnification, as in the two exhortations of the two great

Festivals) ask pardon of God and reverse his mantle and pray and supplicate.' (Q.) 'What are the additional or occasional prayers?' (A.) 'The least is a one-bow prayer and the most eleven.' (Q.) 'What is the forenoon prayer?' (A.) 'At least, two one-bow prayers and at most, twelve.' (Q.) 'What is the service of seclusion?' (A.) 'It is a matter of Traditional ordinance.' (Q.) 'What are its conditions?' (A.) '(1) Expression of intent (2) not leaving the mosque save of necessity (3) not having to do with a woman (4) fasting and (5) abstaining from speech.' (Q.) 'Under what conditions is pilgrimage obligatory?' (A.) 'So a man be of full age and understanding and a true-believer and it be possible to him; and it is obligatory [on all], once before death.' (Q.) 'What are the Koranic statutes of the pilgrimage?'' (A.) '(1) Assumption of the pilgrim's habit (2) station at Arafat (3) compassing [the Kaabeh] (4) running [between Sefa and Merweh] and (5) [previous] shaving or clipping the hair.' (Q.) 'What are the Koranic statutes of the lesser pilgrimage?' (A.) 'Reassuming the pilgrim's habit and compassing and running [as before].' (Q.) 'What are the Koranic ordinances of the assumption of the pilgrim's habit?' (A.) 'Putting off sewn garments, forswearing perfume and ceasing to shave the head or cut the nails and avoiding the killing of game and copulation.' (Q.) 'What are the Traditional statutes of the pilgrimage?' (A.) '(1) The crying out, "Here I am, O our Lord!" (2) the circuitings [about the Kaabeh] of arrival [at] and departure [from Mecca] (3) the passing the night at Muzdelifeh and Mina and (4) the stone-throwing.' (Q.) 'What is the war in defence of the Faith and its essentials?' (A.) 'Its essentials are (1) the descent of the infidels upon us (2) the existence of the Imam (3) a state of [armed] preparation and (4) firmness in meeting the foe. Its ordinance is incital to battle, in that the Most High hath said, "O my Prophet, incite the faithful to battle!"' (Q.) 'What are the ordinances of buying and selling?' (A.) 'The Koranic are (1) offer and acceptance and (2) if the thing sold be a (white) slave, by whom one profiteth, to do one's endeavour to convert him to Islam and (3) to abstain from usury; the Traditional, resiliation and option before separating, after the saying of the Prophet, "The parties to a sale shall have the option [of cancelling or altering the terms of a bargain,] whilst they are yet unseparated."' (Q.) 'What is it forbidden to sell [or exchange] for what?' (A.) 'On this point I mind me of an authentic tradition, reported by Nafi of the Apostle of God, that he forbade the sale of dried dates for fresh and fresh figs for dry and jerked for fresh meat and cream for butter; in fine, of all eatables of one and the same kind, it is unlawful to sell some for other some.' When the professor heard her words and knew that she was keen of wit, ingenious and learned in jurisprudence and the Traditions and the interpretation of the Koran and what not else, he said in himself, 'Needs must I go about with her, that I may overcome her in the assembly of the Commander of the Faithful.' So he said to her, 'O damsel, what is the lexicographical meaning of the word wuzou?' And she answered, 'Cleanliness and freedom from impurities.' (Q.) 'And of prayer?' (A.) 'An invocation of good.' (Q.) 'And of ghusl?' (A.) 'Purification.' (Q.) 'And of fasting?' (A.) 'Abstention.' (Q.) 'And of zekat?' (A.) 'Increase.' (Q.) 'And of pilgrimage?' (A.) 'Visitation [or quest].' (Q.) 'And of jehad?' (A.) '[Endeavour in] repelling.' With this the doctor's arguments were exhausted, so he rose to his feet and said, 'Bear witness against me, O Commander of the Faithful, that this damsel is more learned than I am in the Law. Quoth she, 'I will ask thee somewhat, which do thou answer me speedily, an thou be indeed a learned man.' 'Say on,' quoth he; and she said, 'What are the arrows of the Faith?' 'They are ten in number,' answered he; 'to wit, (1) Testification, that is, religion (2) Prayer, that is, the Covenant (3) Alms, that is, purification (4) Fasting, that is, defensive armour (5) Pilgrimage, that is, the Law (6) Fighting for the Faith, that is, a general duty (7) Enjoining to beneficence and (8) Forbidding from iniquity, both of which are jealousy [for good] (9) The communion of the faithful, that is, sociableness, and (10) Seeking knowledge, that is, the praiseworthy way.' (Q.) 'What are the roots of Islam?' (A.) 'They are four in number, to wit, sincerity of belief, truth of purpose, observance of the limit [prescribed by the Law] and keeping the Covenant.' Then said she, 'I have one more question to ask thee, which if thou answer, [it is well]; else, I will take thy clothes.' Quoth he, 'Speak, O damsel;' and she said, 'What are the branches of Islam?' But he was silent and made no reply; and she said, 'Put off thy clothes, and I will expound them to thee.' Quoth the Khalif, 'Expound them, and I will make him put off his clothes for thee.'

‘They are two-and-twenty in number,’ answered she, ‘to wit, (1) holding fast to the Book of God the Most High (2) taking example by His Apostle (whom God bless and preserve) (3) abstaining from doing evil (4) eating what is lawful and (5) avoiding what is unlawful (6) restoring things wrongfully taken to their owners (7) repentance (8) knowledge of the Law (9) love of [Abraham] the Friend [of God] (10) and of the followers of the Revelation (11) belief in the Apostles (12) fear of apostacy (13) preparation for departure (14) strength of conviction (15) clemency in time of power (16) strength in time of weakness (17) patience under affliction (18) knowledge of God the Most High and (19) of what His Prophet hath made known to us (20) gainsaying Iblis the accursed (21) striving earnestly against the lusts of the soul and gainsaying them and (22) guiltlessness of believing in any other god but God.’

When the Commander of the Faithful heard her words, he bade the doctor put off his clothes and hood; and he did so and went forth, beaten and confounded, from the Khalif’s presence. Thereupon arose another man and said to her, ‘O damsel, hear a few questions from me.’ ‘Say on,’ quoth she; and he said, ‘What are the conditions of valid [purchase by] payment in advance?’ ‘That the amount [of the thing bought], the kind and the period [of delivery to the purchaser], be [fixed or] known,’ replied she. (Q.) ‘What are the Koranic canons of eating?’ (A.) ‘The confession [by the eater] that God the Most High provideth him and giveth him to eat and drink and thanksgiving to Him therefor.’ (Q.) ‘What is thanksgiving?’ (A.) ‘The use by the creature of that which God vouchsafeth to him in the manner and to the ends for which He hath created it.’ (Q.) ‘What are the Traditional canons of eating?’ (A.) ‘The [preliminary] naming [of God] and washing the hands, sitting on the left buttock, eating with three fingers and eating of that which is chewed.’ (Q.) ‘What are the civilities of eating?’ (A.) ‘Taking small mouthfuls and looking little at one’s table-companion.’ (Q.) ‘What are the heart’s stays [or articles of faith] and their correlatives?’ (A.) ‘They are three in number, to wit, (1) holding fast to the Faith, the correlative whereof is the shunning of infidelity, (2) holding fast to the Traditional Law and its correlative, the shunning of innovation [or heresy] and (3) holding fast to obedience and its correlative, the shunning of disobedience.’ (Q.) ‘What are the conditions of ablution?’ (A.) ‘(1) Submission to the will of God (2) possession of discernment of good and evil [or having attained the age of discretion] (3) purity of the water and (4) absence of legal or material impediments.’ (Q.) ‘What is belief?’ (A.) ‘It is divided into nine parts, to wit, (1) belief in the One worshipped (2) belief in the condition of slavery [of the worshipper] (3) belief in one God, to the exclusion of all others (4) belief in the Two Handfuls (5) belief in Providence (6) belief in the Abrogating and (7) in the Abrogated (8) belief in God, His angels and apostles and (9) in fore-ordained Fate, general and particular, its good and ill, sweet and bitter.’ (Q.) ‘What three things do away other three?’ (A.) ‘It is told of Sufyan eth Thauri that he said, “Three things do away other three. Making light of the pious doth away the future life, making light of kings doth away [this] life and making light of expenditure doth away wealth.”’ (Q.) ‘What are the keys of the heavens, and how many gates have they?’ (A.) ‘Quoth God the Most High, “And heaven shall be opened, and it shall be [all] doors,” and quoth he whom God bless and keep, “None knoweth the number of the gates of heaven, save He who created it, and there is no son of Adam but hath two gates allotted to him in the skies, one whereby his subsistence cometh down and another where-through his works [good and evil] ascend. The former is not closed, save when his term of life comes to an end, nor the latter, till his soul ascends [for judgment].”’ (Q.) ‘Tell me of a thing and a half thing and a no-thing.’ (A.) ‘The thing is the believer, the half thing the hypocrite and the no-thing the infidel.’ (Q.) ‘Tell me of various kinds of hearts.’ (A.) ‘There is the whole [or perfect] heart, which is that of [Abraham] the Friend [of God], the sick heart, that of the infidel, the contrite heart, that of the pious, fearful ones, the heart consecrated to God, that of our Lord Mohammed (whom God bless and preserve) and the enlightened [or enlightening] heart, that of those who follow him. The hearts of the learned are of three kinds, to wit, those that are in love with this world, with the next and with their Lord; and it is said that hearts are three, the suspended, that of the infidel, the non-existent [or lost], that of the hypocrite, and the constant [or firm], that of the true-believer. Moreover, it is said that the latter is of three kinds, namely, the heart dilated with light and faith, that wounded with fear of estrangement and that which feareth to be forsaken of God.'

Quoth the second doctor, 'Thou hast said well;' whereupon said she to the Khalif, 'O Commander of the Faithful, he has questioned me, till he is weary, and now I will ask him two questions. If he answer them, it is well, and if not, I will take his clothes and he shall depart in peace.' Quoth the doctor, 'Ask me what thou wilt,' and she said, 'What is religion?' 'Religion,' answered he, 'is confession with the tongue and belief with the heart and doing with the members. Quoth the Prophet, "The believer is not perfect in belief, except five qualities be accomplished in him, namely, trust in God, committal of his affair to Him, submission to His commandment, acquiescence in His decrees and that he do all for His sake; so is he of those who are acceptable to God and who give and withhold for His sake, and he is perfect in belief."' Then said she, 'What is the Koranic ordinance of ordinances and the ordinance which is the preliminary of all ordinances and that of which all others stand in need and that which comprehendeth all others, and what is the Traditional ordinance that entereth into the Koranic, and that whereby the latter is completed?' But he was silent and made no reply; whereupon the Khalif bade her expound and ordered him to doff his clothes and give them to her. 'O doctor,' said she, 'the Koranic ordinance of ordinances is the knowledge of God the Most High; that, which is the preliminary of all others, is the testifying that there is no god but God and that Mohammed is His apostle; that, of which all others have need, is ablution; that, which compriseth all others, is that of [total] ablution from [ceremonial] defilement; the Traditional ordinance, that enters into the Koranic, is the separation of the fingers and the thick beard; and that, wherewith all Koranic ordinances are completed, is circumcision.' Therewith was manifest the insufficiency of the doctor, who rose to his feet and said, 'I call God to witness, O Commander of the Faithful, that this damsel is more learned than I in the Law and what pertains thereto.' So saying, he put off his clothes and went away, defeated.

Then turned she to the rest of the learned men present and said, 'O masters, which of you is the reader, versed in the seven readings and in syntax and lexicography?' Thereupon the professor arose and seating himself before her, said, ‘Hast thou read the Book of God the Most High and made thyself throughly acquainted with its verses and its various parts, abrogating and abrogated, equivocal and unequivocal, Meccan and Medinan? Dost thou understand its interpretation and hast thou studied it, according to the various versions and readings?’ ‘Yes,’ answered she; and he said, ‘What, then, is the number of its chapters, how many are Meccan and how many Medinan? How many verses and decades does it contain, how many words and how many letters and how many acts of prostration and how many prophets and birds are mentioned in it?’ ‘It contains a hundred and fourteen chapters,’ replied she, ‘whereof threescore and ten were revealed at Mecca and forty and four at Medina, six thousand three hundred and thirty-six verses, six hundred and twenty-one decades, seventy-nine thousand four hundred and thirty-nine words and three hundred and twenty- three thousand and six hundred and seventy letters; and to the reader thereof, for every letter, accrue ten benefits. The acts of prostration it contains are fourteen in number, and five-and-twenty prophets are named therein, to wit, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Elisha, Jonah, Lot, Salih, Houd, Shuaib, David, Solomon, Dhoulkifl, Idris, Elias, Yehya, Zacharias, Job, Moses, Aaron, Jesus and Mohammed, the peace of God and His blessing be on them all! Moreover, nine birds [or flying things] are mentioned in the Koran, namely, the gnat, the bee, the fly, the ant, the hoopoe, the crow, the locust, the bustard and the bird of Jesus (on whom be peace), to wit, the bat.’ (Q.) ‘Which is the most excellent chapter of the Koran?’ (A.) ‘That of the Cow.’ (Q.) ‘Which is the most magnificent verse?’ (A.) ‘That of the Throne; it has fifty words, in each fifty blessings.’ (Q.) ‘What verse hath in it nine signs [or wonders]?’ (A.) ‘That in which quoth God the Most High, “Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day and the ship that runneth in the sea with what profiteth mankind and in what God sendeth down from heaven of water and quickeneth therewith the earth, after its dearth, and spreadeth abroad therein all manner cattle, and the shifting of the winds and the clouds, pressed into service betwixt heaven and earth, are signs for folk who understand.”’ (Q.) ‘Which is the most just?’ (A.) ‘That in which God saith, “Verily, God commandeth to justice and beneficence and giving to those that are near unto us and forbiddeth from profligacy and iniquity and oppression."' (Q.) 'Which is the most yearnful?' (A.) 'That in which quoth God, "Shall every man of them yearn to enter a garden of delight?"' (Q.) 'Which is the most hopeful?' (A.) 'That in which quoth God the Most High, "Say, 'O ye my servants, that have transgressed against your own souls, despair not of the mercy of God! Indeed, God forgiveth sins, all of them, for He is the Forgiving, the Compassionate.'"' (Q.) 'By what version dost thou read?' (A.) 'By that of the people of Paradise, to wit, the version of Nafi.' (Q.) 'In which verse doth God make prophets lie?' (A.) 'In that wherein He saith, "They [the brothers of Joseph] brought lying blood upon his shirt."' (Q.) 'In which doth He make infidels speak the truth?' (A.) 'In that wherein He saith, "The Jews say, 'The Nazarenes are [grounded] on nought,' and the Nazarenes say, 'The Jews are [grounded] on nought;' and [yet] they [both] read the Scripture." And [in this] both speak the truth.' (Q.) 'In which doth God speak in His own person [in the singular]?' (A.) 'In that in which He saith, "Neither have I created Jinn and men, but that they should worship."' (Q.) 'In which do the angels speak?' (A.) 'In that which saith, "We celebrate Thy praises and hallow Thee."' (Q.) 'What sayst thou of the formula, "I seek refuge with God from Satan the Stoned"?' (A.) 'It is obligatory, by commandment of God, on all who read the Koran, as appears by His saying, "When thou readest the Koran, seek refuge with God from Satan the Stoned."' (Q.) 'What are the words and variants of the formula?' (A.) 'Some say, "I take refuge with God the All-hearing and knowing, etc.," and others, "With God the Strong;" but the best is that of which the noble Koran and the Traditions speak. The Prophet was used, whenas he was about to open the Koran, to say, "I take refuge with God from Satan the Stoned." And quoth a Tradition, reported by Nafi on the authority of his [adopted] father, "The apostle of God used, when he rose in the night to pray, to say aloud, 'God is Most Great, with [all] greatness! Praise be to God abundantly! Glory to God morning and evening!' Then would he say, 'I seek refuge with God from Satan the Stoned and from the instigations of the Devils and their evil suggestions.'" And it is told of Ibn Abbas (of whom God accept) that he said, "The first time Gabriel came down to the Prophet [with a portion of the Koran,] he taught him [the formula of] seeking refuge, saying, ‘O Mohammed, say, “I seek refuge with God the All-hearing and knowing;” then say, “In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful!” And read, in the name of thy Lord who created men from clotted blood.’”’ (Q.) ‘What sayst thou of the verse, “In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful”? Is it one of the verses of the Koran?’ (A.) ‘Yes; it is a verse of “The ant” and occurs also [at the head of the first and] between every two [following] chapters; and there is much difference of opinion, respecting this, among the learned.’ (Q.) ‘Why is not the formula written at the head of the chapter of Immunity?’ (A.) ‘When this chapter was revealed for the dissolution of the alliance between the Prophet and the idolaters, the former sent Ali ibn Abi Talib (whose face God honour) therewith [from Medina to Mecca] at the season of the greater pilgrimage; and he read the chapter to them, but did not read “In the name, etc.”’ (Q.) ‘What of the excellence of the formula and the blessing that attaches to it?’ (A.) ‘It is told of the Prophet that he said, “Never is ‘In the name, etc.’ pronounced over aught, but there is a blessing in it;” and it is reported, on his authority, that the Lord of Glory swore by His glory that never should the formula be pronounced over a sick person, but he should be healed of his sickness. Moreover, it is said that, when God created the empyreal heaven, it was agitated with an exceeding agitation; but He wrote on it, “In the name, etc.,” and its agitation subsided. When the formula was first revealed to the Prophet, he said, “I am safe from three things, earthquake and metamorphosis and drowning;” and indeed its virtues are great and its blessings too many to enumerate. It is told of the Prophet that he said, “There will be brought before God, on the judgment day, a man with whom He shall reckon and finding no good deed to his account, shall order him to the fire; but the man will say, ‘O my God, Thou hast not dealt justly by me!’ Then shall God (to whom belong might and majesty) say, ‘How so?’ and the man will answer, saying, ‘O Lord, for that Thou callest Thyself the Compassionate, the Merciful, yet wilt Thou punish me with the fire!’ And God (extolled be His majesty) shall say, ‘I did indeed name myself the Compassionate, the Merciful. Carry My servant to Paradise, of My mercy, for I am the most Merciful of those that have mercy.’”’ (Q.) ‘What was the origin of the use of the formula?' (A.) 'When God revealed the Koran, they wrote, "In Thy name, O my God!"; when He revealed the words, "Say, pray ye to God or pray ye to the Compassionate, what days ye pray, for to Him [belong] the most fair names," they wrote, "In the name of God, the Compassionate;" and when He revealed the words, "Your God is one God, there is no god but He, the Compassionate, the Merciful," they wrote, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful!"' (Q.) 'Did God reveal the Koran all at once or at intervals?' (A.) 'Gabriel the Faithful [Spirit] (on whom be peace) descended with it from the Lord of the Worlds upon His Prophet Mohammed, Prince of the Apostles and seal of the Prophets, by detached verses, containing commandment and prohibition, promise and menace, anecdotes and similitudes, as the occasion called for it, in the course of twenty years.' (Q.) 'Which chapter was first revealed?' (A.) 'According to Ibn Abbas, that of the Clot of Blood, and according to Jabir ben Abdallah, that of the Covered [with a cloak].' (Q.) 'Which verse was the last revealed?' (A.) 'That of Usury, and it is said [also], the verse, "When there cometh God's succour and victory."' (Q.) 'Tell me the names of the Companions who collected the Koran, in the lifetime of the Apostle of God.' (A.) 'They were four in number, to wit, Ubaï ibn Kaab, Zeid ibn Thabit, Abou Ubeideh Aamir ben Jerrah and Othman ben Affan, may God accept of them all!' (Q.) 'Who are the readers, from whom the [accepted] reading of the Koran is taken?' (A.) 'They are four in number, namely, Abdallah ben Mesoud, Ubaï ben Kaab, Maadh ben Jebel and Salim ben Abdallah.' (Q.) 'What sayst thou of the words of the Most High, "That which is sacrificed to stones"?' (A.) 'The stones are idols, which are set up and worshipped, instead of God the Most High, and [from this] we seek refuge with Him.' (Q.) 'What sayst thou of the words of the Most High, "[Quoth Jesus] Thou knowest what is in my soul, and I know not what is in Thy soul"?' (A.) 'They mean "Thou [God] knowest the truth of me and what is in me and I [Jesus] know not what is in Thee;" and the proof of this are his words, "Thou [God] art He that knoweth the hidden things;" and it is said, also, "Thou [God] knowest my essence, but I [man] know not Thine essence."' (Q.) 'What sayst thou of the words of the Most High, "O ye that believe, deny not yourselves the good things that

God hath made lawful to you!”?’ (A.) ‘My master (on whom God have mercy) told me that Ez Zuhak said, “There was a people of the true-believers who said, ‘We will dock our yards and don sackcloth;’ whereupon this verse was revealed.” But El Cutadeh says that it was revealed on account of sundry Companions of the Apostle of God, Ali ibn Abi Talib and Othman ben Musaab and others, who said, “We will dock ourselves and don hair [cloth] and make us monks.”’ (Q.) ‘What sayst thou of the words of the Most High, “And God took Abraham to friend”?’ (A.) ‘The friend [of God] is the needy, the poor, and (according to another saying) he is the lover, he who is absorbed in the love of God the Most High and in whose exclusive devotion there is no falling away.’

When the professor saw her pass on in speech with the passing of the clouds and that she stayed not in answering, he rose to his feet and said, ‘I take God to witness, O Commander of the Faithful, that this damsel is more learned than I in Koranic exegesis and what pertains thereto.’ Then said she, ‘I will ask thee one question, which if thou answer, it is well: but if thou answer not, I will strip off thy clothes.’ ‘Ask on,’ quoth the Khalif; and she said, ‘Which verse of the Koran has in it three-and-twenty Kafs, which sixteen Mims, which a hundred and forty Ains, and which section lacks the formula, “To whom [God] belong might and majesty”?’ He could not answer, and she said to him, ‘Put off thy clothes.’ So he doffed them, and she said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, the verse of the sixteen Mims is in the chapter Houd and is the saying of the Most High, “It was said, ‘O Noah, go down in peace from us, and blessing upon thee!’”; that of the three-and-twenty Kafs is the verse called of the Faith, in the chapter of the Cow; that of the hundred and forty Ains is in the chapter of El Aaraf, “And Moses chose seventy men of his tribe to [attend] our appointed time; to each man a pair of eyes.” And the set portion which lacks the formula, “To whom [God] belong might and majesty,” is that which comprises the chapters “The Hour draweth nigh and the Moon is cloven in twain,” “The Compassionate” and “The Event.”’ And the professor departed in confusion.

Then came forward the skilled physician and said to her, ‘We have done with theology and come now to physiology. Tell me, therefore, how is man made, how many veins, bones and vertebræ are there in his body, which is the chief vein and why Adam was named Adam?' 'Adam was called Adam,' answered she, 'because of the udmeh, to wit, the tawny colour of his complexion and also (it is said) because he was created of the adim of the earth, that is to say, of the soil of its surface. His breast was made of the earth of the Kaabeh, his head of earth from the East and his legs of earth from the West. There were created for him seven doors [or openings] in his head, to wit, the eyes, the ears, the nostrils and the mouth, and two passages, the urethra and the anus. The eyes were made the seat of the sense of sight, the ears of that of hearing, the nostrils of that of smell, the mouth of that of taste and the tongue to speak forth what is in the innermost heart of man. Adam was originally created of four elements combined, water, earth, fire and air. The yellow bile is the humour of fire, being hot and dry, the black bile that of earth, being cold and dry, the phlegm that of water, being cold and moist, and the blood that of air, being hot and moist. There are in man three hundred and threescore veins, two hundred and forty bones and three souls [or natures], the animal, the rational and the essential or [natural], to each of which is allotted a separate function. Moreover, God made him a heart and spleen and lungs and six guts and a liver and two kidneys and marrow [or brain] and buttocks and bones and skin and five senses, hearing, seeing, smell, taste and touch. The heart He set on the left side of the breast and made the stomach the exemplar [or governor] thereof. He appointed the lungs for a ventilator to the heart and set the liver on the right side, opposite thereto. Moreover, He made, besides this, the midriff and the intestines and set up the bones of the breast and ribbed them with the ribs.' (Q.) 'How many ventricles are there in a man's head?' (A.) 'Three, which contain five faculties, styled the intrinsic senses, i.e. common sense, fancy, thought, apperception and memory.' (Q.) 'Describe to me the scheme of the bones.' (A.) 'It consists of two hundred and forty bones, which are divided into three parts, the head, the trunk and the extremities. The head is divided into skull and face. The skull is constructed of eight bones, and to it are attached the teeth, two-and- thirty in number, and the hyoïd bone, one. The trunk is divided into spinal column, breast and basin. The spinal column is made up of four-and-twenty bones, called vertebræ, the breast of the breastbone and the ribs, which are four-and-twenty in number, twelve on each side, and the basin of the hips, the sacrum and the coccyx. The extremities are divided into arms and legs. The arms are again divided into shoulder, comprising shoulder-blades and collar-bone, the upper- arm, one bone, the fore-arm, composed of two bones, the radius and the ulna, and the hand, consisting of the wrist, the metacarpus and the fingers. The wrist is composed of eight bones, ranked in two rows, each comprising four bones; the metacarpus of five and the fingers, which are five in number, of three bones each, called the phalanges, except the thumb, which has but two. The lower extremities are divided into thigh, one bone, leg, composed of three bones, the tibia, the fibula and the kneepan, and the foot, divided like the hand, with the exception of the wrist, which is composed of seven bones, ranged in two rows, two in one and five in the other.' (Q.) 'Which is the root of the veins?' (A.) 'The aorta from which they ramify, and they are many, none knoweth the tale of them save He who created them; but, as I have before observed, it is said that they are three hundred and threescore in number. Moreover, God hath appointed the tongue to interpret [for the thought], the eyes to serve as lanterns, the nostrils to smell with, and the hands for prehensors. The liver is the seat of pity, the spleen of laughter and the kidneys of craft; the lungs are the ventilators, the stomach the storehouse and the heart the pillar [or mainstay] of the body. When the heart is sound, the whole body is sound, and when the heart is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt.' (Q.) 'What are the outward signs and symptoms of disease in the members of the body, both internal and external?' (A.) 'A physician, who is a man of understanding, looks into the state of the body and is guided by the feel of the hands, according as they are firm [or flabby], hot or cool, moist or dry. Internal disorders are also indicated by external symptoms, such as yellowness of the [whites of the] eyes, which denotes jaundice, and bending of the back, which denotes disease of the lungs.' (Q.) 'What are the internal symptoms of disease?' (A.) 'The science of the diagnosis of disease by internal symptoms is founded upon six canons, to wit, (1) the actions [of the patient] (2) what is evacuated from his body (3) the nature and (4) site of the pain he feels (5) swelling and (6) the effluvia given off by his body.' (Q.) 'How cometh hurt to the head?' (A.) 'By the introduction of food upon food, before the first be digested, and by satiety upon satiety; this it is that wasteth peoples. He who will live long, let him be early with the morning-meal and not late with the evening-meal; let him be sparing of commerce with women and chary of cupping and blood-letting and make of his belly three parts, one for food, one for drink and the third for air; for that a man's intestines are eighteen spans in length and it befits that he appoint six for food, six for drink, and six for air. If he walk, let him go gently; it will be wholesomer for him and better for his body and more in accordance with the saying of God the Most High, "Walk not boisterously [or proudly] upon the earth."' (Q.) 'What are the symptoms of yellow bile and what is to be feared there-from?' (A.) 'The symptoms are, sallow complexion and dryness and bitter taste in the mouth, failure of the appetite, and rapid pulse; and the patient has to fear high fever and delirium and prickly heat and jaundice and tumour and ulceration of the bowels and excessive thirst.' (Q.) 'What are the symptoms of black bile and what has the patient to fear from it, if it get the mastery of the body?' (A.) 'The symptoms are deceptive appetite and great mental disquiet and care and anxiety; and it behoves that it be evacuated, else it will generate melancholy and leprosy and cancer and disease of the spleen and ulceration of the bowels.' (Q.) 'Into how many branches is the art of medicine divided?' (A.) 'Into two: the art of diagnosing diseases and that of restoring the diseased body to health.' (Q.) 'When is the drinking of medicine more efficacious than otherwhen?' (A.) 'When the sap runs in the wood and the grape thickens in the cluster and the auspicious planets are in the ascendant, then comes in the season of the efficacy of drinking medicine and the doing away of disease.' (Q.) 'What time is it, when, if a man drink from a new vessel, the drink is wholesomer and more digestible to him than at another time, and there ascends to him a pleasant and penetrating fragrance?' (A.) 'When he waits awhile after eating, as quoth the poet:

I rede thee drink not after food in haste, but tarry still;
  Else with a halter wilt thou lead thy body into ill.
Yea, wait a little after thou hast eaten, brother mine; Then

drink, and peradventure thus shalt thou attain unto thy will.'

(Q.) 'What food is it that giveth not rise to ailments?' (A.) 'That which is not eaten but after hunger, and when it is eaten, the ribs are not filled with it, even as saith Galen the physician, "Whoso will take in food, let him go slowly and he shall not go wrong." To end with the saying of the Prophet, (whom God bless and preserve,) "The stomach is the home of disease, and abstinence is the beginning of cure, for the origin of every disease is indigestion, that is to say, corruption of the meat in the stomach."' (Q.) 'What sayst thou of the bath?' (A.) 'Let not the full man enter it. Quoth the Prophet, "The bath is the delight of the house, for that it cleanseth the body and calleth to mind the fire [of hell]."' (Q.) 'What waters are best for bathing?' (A.) 'Those whose waters are sweet and plains wide and whose air is pleasant and wholesome, its climate [or seasons] being fair, autumn and summer and winter and spring.' (Q.) 'What kind of food is the most excellent?' (A.) 'That which women make and which has not cost overmuch trouble and which is readily digested. The most excellent of food is brewis, according to the saying of the Prophet, "Brewis excels other food, even as Aaïsheh excels other women."' (Q.) 'What kind of seasoning is most excellent?' (A.) 'Flesh meat (quoth the Prophet) is the most excellent of seasonings; for that it is the delight of this world and the next.' (Q.) 'What kind of meat is the most excellent?' (A.) 'Mutton; but jerked meat is to be avoided, for there is no profit in it.' (Q.) 'What of fruits?' (A.) 'Eat them in their prime and leave them when their season is past.' (Q.) 'What sayst thou of drinking water?' (A.) 'Drink it not in large quantities nor by gulps, or it will give thee the headache and cause divers kinds of harm; neither drink it immediately after the bath nor after copulation or eating (except it be after the lapse of fifteen minutes for a young and forty for an old man) or waking from sleep.' (Q.) 'What of drinking wine?' (A.) 'Doth not the prohibition suffice thee in the Book of God the Most High, where He saith, "Verily, wine and casting lots and idols and divining arrows are an abomination of the fashion of the Devil: shun them, so surely shall ye thrive." And again, "If they ask thee of wine and casting lots, say, ‘In them are great sin and advantages to mankind, but the sin of them is greater than the advantage.’” Quoth the poet:

O wine-bibber, art not ashamed and afraid To drink of a thing
that thy Maker forbade?
Come, put the cup from thee and mell with it not, For wine and
its drinker God still doth upbraid.

And quoth another:

I drank the sweet sin till my wit went astray: ’Tis ill drinking of that which doth reason away.

As for the useful qualities that are therein, it disperses gravel from the kidneys and strengthens the bowels, banishes care, moves to generosity and preserves health and digestion. It assains the body, expels disease from the joints, purifies the frame of corrupt humours, engenders cheerfulness and gladdens and keeps up the natural heat. It contracts the bladder, strengthens the liver and removes obstructions, reddens the face, clears away cobwebs from the brain and defers gray hairs. In short, had not God (to whom belong might and majesty) forbidden it, there were not on the face of the earth aught fit to stand in its place. As for drawing lots, it is a game of hazard.’ (Q.) ‘What wine is the best?’ (A.) ‘That which is pressed from white grapes and ferments fourscore days or more: it resembleth not water and indeed there is nothing on the surface of the earth like unto it.’ (Q.) ‘What of cupping?’ (A.) ‘It is for him who is [over] full of blood and has no defect therein. Whoso will be cupped, let it be at the wane of the moon, on a day without cloud or wind or rain and the seventeenth of the month. If it fall on a Tuesday, it will be the more efficacious, and nothing is more salutary for the brain and eyes and for clearing the memory than cupping.’ (Q.) ‘What is the best time for cupping?’ (A.) ‘One should be cupped fasting, for this fortifies the wit and the memory. It is reported of the Prophet that, when any one complained to him of a pain in the head or legs, he would bid him be cupped and not eat salt [meat] fasting, for it engendered scurvy, neither eat sour milk immediately after [cupping].’ (Q.) ‘When is cupping to be avoided?’ (A.) ‘On Wednesdays and Saturdays, and let him who is cupped on these days blame none but himself. Moreover, one should not be cupped in very hot nor in very cold weather; and the best season for cupping is Spring.' (Q.) 'Tell me of copulation.'

At this Taweddud hung her head, for shame and confusion before the Khalif; then said, 'By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, it is not that I am at fault, but that I am ashamed, though, indeed, the answer is on the tip of my tongue.' 'Speak, O damsel,' said the Khalif; whereupon quoth she, 'Copulation hath in it many and exceeding virtues and praiseworthy qualities, amongst which are, that it lightens a body full of black bile and calms the heat of love and engenders affection and dilates the heart and dispels sadness; and the excess of it is more harmful in summer and autumn than in spring and winter.' (Q.) 'What are its good effects?' (A.) 'It doth away trouble and disquiet, calms love and chagrin and is good for ulcers in a cold and dry humour; but excess of it weakens the sight and engenders pains in the legs and head and back: and beware, beware of having to do with old women, for they are deadly. Quoth the Imam Ali, (whose face God honour), "Four things kill and ruin the body: bathing on a full stomach, eating salt meat, copulation on a plethora [of blood] and lying with an ailing woman; for she will weaken thy strength and infect thy body with sickness; and an old woman is deadly poison." And quoth one of them, "Beware of taking an old woman to wife, though she be richer in goods than Caroun."' (Q.) 'What is the best copulation?' (A.) 'If the woman be young, well-shaped, fair of face, swelling-breasted and of honourable extraction, she will add to thee strength and health of body; and let her be even as saith the poet, describing her:

Even by thy looks, I trow, she knows what thou desir'st, By
instinct, without sign or setting forth of sense;
And when thou dost behold her all-surpassing grace, Her charms
enable thee with gardens to dispense.'

(Q.) 'At what time is copulation good?' (A.) 'If by day, after the morning-meal, and if by night, after food digested.' (Q.) 'What are the most excellent fruits?' (A.) 'The pomegranate and the citron.' (Q.) 'Which is the most excellent of vegetables?' (A.) 'The endive.' (Q.) 'Which of sweet-scented flowers?' (A.) 'The rose and the violet.’ (Q.) ‘How is sperma hominis secreted?’ (A.) ‘There is in man a vein that feeds all the other veins. Water [or blood] is collected from the three hundred and threescore veins and enters, in the form of red blood, the left testicle, where it is decocted, by the heat of man’s temperament, into a thick, white liquid, whose odour is as that of the palm-spathe.’ (Q.) ‘What bird [or flying thing] is it that emits seed and menstruates?’ (A.) ‘The bat, that is, the rere-mouse.’ (Q.) ‘What is that which, when it is shut out [from the air], lives, and when it smells the air, dies?’ (A.) ‘The fish.’ (Q.) ‘What serpent lays eggs?’ (A.) ‘The dragon.’

With this the physician was silent, being weary with much questioning, and Taweddud said to the Khalif, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, he hath questioned me till he is weary, and now I will ask him one question, which if he answer not, I will take his clothes as lawful prize.’ ‘Ask on,’ quoth the Khalif. So she said to the physician, ‘What is that which resembles the earth in [plane] roundness, whose resting-place and spine are hidden, little of value and estimation, narrow-chested, its throat shackled, though it be no thief nor runaway slave, thrust through and through, though not in fight, and wounded, though not in battle; time eats its vigour and water wastes it away; now it is beaten without a fault and now made to serve without stint; united after separation, submissive, but not to him who caresses it, pregnant without a child in its belly, drooping, yet not leaning on its side, becoming dirty yet purifying itself, cleaving to [its mate], yet changing, copulating without a yard, wrestling without arms, resting and taking its ease, bitten, yet not crying out, [now] more complaisant than a boon-companion and [anon] more troublesome than summer-heat, leaving its wife by night and clipping her by day and having its abode in the corners of the mansions of the noble?’ The physician was silent and his colour changed and he bowed his head awhile in perplexity and made no reply; whereupon she said to him, ‘O physician, speak or put off thy clothes.’ At this, he rose and said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, bear witness against me that this damsel is more learned than I in medicine and what else and that I cannot cope with her.’ And he put off his clothes and fled forth. Quoth the Khalif to Taweddud, ‘Expound to us thy riddle,’ and she replied, ‘O Commander of the

Faithful, it is the button and the button loop.'

Then said she, 'Let him of you who is an astronomer come forward.' So the astronomer came forward and sat down before her. When she saw him, she laughed and said, 'Art thou the astronomer, the mathematician, the scribe?' 'Yes,' answered he. 'Ask of what thou wilt,' quoth she; 'success rests with God.' So he said, 'Tell me of the sun and its rising and setting?' And she replied, 'The sun rises in the Eastern hemisphere and sets in the Western, and each hemisphere comprises ninescore degrees. Quoth God the Most High, "Verily, I swear by the Lord of the places of the sunrise and of the sunsetting." And again, "He it is who appointed the sun for a splendour and the moon for a light and ordained to her mansions, that ye might know the number of the years and the reckoning." The moon is Sultan of the night and the sun Sultan of the day, and they vie with one another in their courses and follow each other in uninterrupted succession. Quoth God the Most High, "It befits not that the sun overtake the moon nor that the night prevent the day, but each glides in [its own] sphere."' (Q.) 'When the day cometh, what becomes of the night, and what of the day, when the night cometh?' (A.) 'He maketh the night to enter into the day and the day into the night.' (Q.) 'Enumerate to me the mansions of the moon.' (A.) 'They are eight-and-twenty in number, to wit, Sheretan, Butain, Thureya, Deberan, Hecaäh, Henaäh, Dhiraa, Nethreh, Terf, Jebheh, Zubreh, Serfeh, Awwaa, Simak and Ghefr, Zubaniya, Iklil, Kelb, Shauleh, Naaïm, Beldeh, Saad edh Dhabih, Saad el Bulaa, Saad el Akhbiyeh, Saad es Suwoud, Fergh the Former and Fergh the Latter and Rishaa. They are disposed in the order of the letters of the alphabet, according to their numerical power, and there are in them secret virtues which none knoweth save God (glorified and exalted be He) and those who are firmly stablished in science. They are divided among the twelve signs of the Zodiac, in the ratio of two mansions and a third of a mansion to each sign. Thus Sheretan, Butain and one-third of Thureya belong to Aries, the other two- thirds of Thureya, Deberan and two thirds of Hecaäh to Taurus, the other third of Hecaäh, Henaäh and Dhiraa to Gemini, Nethreh, Terf, and a third of Jebheh to Cancer, the other two-thirds of Jebheh, Zubreh and two-thirds of Serfeh to Leo, the other third of Serfeh, Awwaa and Simak to Virgo, Ghefr, Zubaniya and one-third of Iklil to Libra, the other two-thirds of Iklil, Kelb and two- thirds of Shauleh to Scorpio, the other third of Shauleh, Naaïm and Beldeh to Sagittarius, Saad edh Dhabih, Saad el Bulaa and one-third of Saad es Suwoud to Capricorn, the other two-thirds of Saad es Suwoud, Saad el Akbiyeh and two-thirds of Fergh the Former to Aquarius, the other third of Fergh the Former, Fergh the Latter and Rishaa to Pisces.' (Q.) 'Tell me of the planets and their natures, also of their sojourn in the signs of the Zodiac, their aspects, favourable and sinister, their houses, ascendants and descendants.' (A.) 'The sitting is narrow [for so comprehensive a matter], but they are seven in number, to wit, the sun, the moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. The sun is hot and dry, sinister in conjunction, favourable in opposition, and abides thirty days in each sign. The moon is cold and moist, favourable of aspect, and abides two days in each sign and a third of another day. Mercury is of a mixed nature, favourable [in conjunction] with the favourable and sinister [in conjunction] with the sinister [asterisms], and abides in each sign seventeen and a half days. Venus is temperate, favourable and abides in each sign five-and-twenty days. Mars is sinister and abides in each sign ten months. Jupiter is favourable and abides in each sign a year. Saturn is cold and dry and sinister and abides in each sign thirty months. The house of the sun is Leo, its ascendant is Aries and its descendant Aquarius. The moon's house is Cancer, its ascendant Taurus, its descendant Scorpio and its sinister aspect Capricorn. Saturn's house is Capricorn and Aquarius, its ascendant Libra, its descendant Aries and its sinister aspects Cancer and Leo. Jupiter's house is Pisces and Sagittarius, its ascendant Cancer, its descendant Capricorn and its sinister aspects Gemini and Leo. Venus's house is Taurus, its ascendant Pisces, its descendant Libra and its sinister aspects Aries and Scorpio. Mercury's house is Gemini and Virgo, its ascendant Virgo, its descendant Pisces and its sinister aspect Taurus. Mars's house is Aries and Scorpio, its ascendant Capricorn, its descendant Cancer and its sinister aspect Libra.'

When the astronomer saw her acuteness and skill and heard her fair answers, he bethought him for a device to confound her before the Commander of the Faithful and said to her, 'O damsel, will rain fall this month?' At this she bowed her head and pondered so long, that the Khalif thought her at a loss for an answer and the astronomer said to her, 'Why dost thou not speak?' Quoth she, 'I will not speak except the Commander of the Faithful give me leave.' The Khalif laughed and said, 'How so?' Said she, 'I would have thee give me a sword, that I may strike off his head, for he is an infidel.' At this the Khalif and those about him laughed, and she said, 'O astronomer, there are five things that none knoweth save God the Most High;' and she repeated the following verse: 'Verily, with God is the knowledge of the hour; He sendeth down the rain and knoweth what is in the wombs. None knoweth what the morrow shall bring forth for him nor in what land he shall die. Verily, God is the All-wise, the All-knowing.'

Quoth the astronomer, 'Thou hast said well, and by Allah, I thought but to try thee.' 'Know,' rejoined she, 'that the almanack-makers have certain signs and tokens, referring to the planets, relative to the coming in of the year, and in which are tribulations for the folk.' (Q.) 'What are they?' (A.) 'Each day hath a planet that rules it. So, if the first day of the year fall on a Sunday, that day is the sun's and this portends (though God alone is All-knowing) oppression of kings and sultans and governors and much miasma and lack of rain and that the folk will be in great disorder and the grain-crop will be good, except lentils, which will perish, and the vines will rot and flax will be dear and wheat cheap from the beginning of Toubeh to the end of Beremhat. Moreover, in this year there will be much fighting among kings, and there shall be great plenty of good in this year.' (Q.) 'What if the first day fall on Monday?' (A.) 'That day belongs to the moon and portends righteousness in administrators and deputies and that it will be a year of much rain and grain-crops will be good, but linseed will decay and wheat will be cheap in the month Keyehk; also that plagues will be rife and that half the sheep and goats will die, that grapes will be plentiful and honey scarce and cotton cheap.' (Q.) 'What if it fall on Tuesday?' (A.) 'That is Mars's day and portends death of great men and much destruction and outpouring of blood and dearness of grain, lack of rain and scarcity of fish, which will anon be in excess and anon fail [altogether]. In this year, lentils and honey will be cheap and linseed dear and only barley will thrive, to the exception of all other grain: great will be the fighting among kings and death will be in the blood and there will be much mortality among asses.' (Q.) 'What if it fall on Wednesday?' (A.) 'That is Mercury's day and portends great anarchy among the folk and much enmity and rotting of some of the green crops and moderate rains; also that there will be great mortality among cattle and infants and much fighting by sea, that wheat will be dear from Burmoudeh to Misra and other grains cheap: thunder and lightning will abound and honey will be dear, palm-trees will thrive and bear apace and flax and cotton will be plentiful, but radishes and onions will be dear.' (Q.) 'What if it fall on Thursday?' (A.) 'That is Jupiter's day and portends equity in viziers and righteousness in Cadis and fakirs and the ministers of religion and that good will be plentiful: rain and fruits and trees and grain and fish will abound and flax, cotton, honey and grapes be cheap.' (Q.) 'What if it fall on Friday?' (A.) 'That day belongs to Venus and portends oppression in the chiefs of the Jinn and talk of forgery and calumny; there will be much dew, the autumn crops will be good in the land and there will be cheapness in one town and not in another: lewdness will be rife by land and sea, linseed will be dear, also wheat, in Hatour, but cheap in Amshir: honey will be dear and grapes and melons will rot.' (Q.) 'What if it fall on Saturday?' (A.) 'That is Saturn's day and portends the preferment of slaves and Greeks and those in whom there is no good, neither in their neighbourhood; there will be great drought and scarcity; clouds will abound and death will be rife among mankind and woe to the people of Egypt and Syria from the oppression of the Sultan and failure of blessing upon the green crops and rotting of grain.'

With this, the astronomer hung his head, [being at an end of his questions], and she said to him, 'O astronomer, I will ask thee one question, which if thou answer not, I will take thy clothes.' 'Ask on,' replied he. Quoth she, 'Where is Saturn's dwelling place?' And he answered, 'In the seventh heaven.' (Q.) 'And that of Jupiter?' (A.) 'In the sixth heaven.' (Q.) 'And that of Mars?' (A.) 'In the fifth heaven.' (Q.) 'And that of the sun?' (A.) 'In the fourth heaven.' (Q.) 'And that of Venus?' (A.) 'In the third heaven.' (Q.) 'And that of Mercury?' (A.) 'In the second heaven.' (Q.) 'And that of the moon?'

(A.) ‘In the first heaven.’ Quoth she, ‘Well answered; but I have one more question to ask thee. Into how many parts are the stars divided?’ But he was silent and answered nothing; and she said to him, ‘Put off thy clothes.’ So he put them off and she took them; after which the Khalif said to her, ‘Tell us the answer to thy question.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered she, ‘the stars are divided into three parts, one whereof is hung in the sky of the earth, as it were lamps, to give light to the earth, another suspended in the air, to give light to the seas and that which is therein, and the third is used to transfix the demons withal, when they draw near by stealth to [listen to the talk of the angels in] heaven. Quoth God the Most High, “Verily, we have decked the sky of the earth with lamps and have appointed them for projectiles against the demons.”’ Quoth the astronomer, ‘I have one more question to ask, which if she answer, I will avow myself beaten.’ ‘Say on,’ answered she. Then said he, ‘What four incompatible things are based upon other four incompatibles?’ ‘The four elements,’ replied she; ‘for of heat God created fire, which is by nature hot and dry; of dryness, earth, which is cold and dry; of cold, water, which is cold and moist; of moisture, air, which is hot and moist. Moreover, He created twelve signs of the Zodiac, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces and appointed them of four [several] humours, three, Aries, Leo and Sagittarius, fiery, Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn, earthy, Gemini, Libra and Aquarius, airy, and Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces, watery.’ With this, the astronomer rose, and saying, ‘Bear witness against me that she is more learned than I,’ went away beaten.

Then said the Khalif, ‘Where is the philosopher?’ whereupon one came forward and said to Taweddud, ‘What is Time?’ ‘Time,’ answered she, ‘is a name applied to the [lapse of the] hours of the day and night, which are but the measures of the courses of the sun and moon in their several orbits, even as God the Most High telleth us, when he saith, “And a sign to them [is] the night, from which we strip off the day, and behold, they are in darkness, and the sun runneth to a fixed abode, [appointed] to it; this is the ordinance of the Sublime, the All-knowing.”’ (Q.) ‘How comes unbelief to the son of Adam?’ (A.) ‘It is reported of the Prophet that he said, “Unbelief runs in a man, as the blood runs in the veins, when he reviles the world and Time and night and the hour." And again, "Let none of you revile Time, for Time is God; neither the world, for it saith, 'May God not help him that reviles me!' neither the hour, for 'Verily, the hour cometh, without doubt;' neither the earth, for it is a portent, according to the saying of the Most High, 'From it we created you, to it we will return you and from it we will bring you forth yet again.''" (Q.) 'What are the five that ate and drank, yet came not out of loins nor belly?' (A.) 'Adam and Simeon and Salih's she-camel and Ishmael's ram and the bird that Abou Bekr the Truth-teller saw in the cave.' (Q.) 'Tell me of five that are in Paradise and are neither mortals, Jinn nor angels?' (A.) 'Jacob's wolf and the Seven Sleepers' dog and Esdras's ass and Salih's camel and the Prophet's mule.' (Q.) 'What man prayed a prayer neither on earth nor in heaven?' (A.) 'Solomon [son of David], when he prayed on his carpet, borne by the wind.' (Q.) 'A man once looked at a handmaid in the morning, and she was unlawful to him; but, at noonday, she became lawful to him. By mid-afternoon, she was again unlawful, but at sundown, she was lawful to him. At evensong, she was a third time unlawful, but by daybreak, she became once more lawful to him.' (A.) 'This was a man who looked at another's handmaid in the morning, and she was then unlawful to him, but at midday he bought her, and she became lawful to him. At mid-afternoon he enfranchised her, and she became unlawful to him, but at sundown he married her and she was again lawful to him. At evensong, he divorced her and she was then a third time unlawful to him, but, next morning, at daybreak, he took her back, and she became once more lawful to him.' (Q.) 'Tell me what tomb fared on with him that lay buried therein?' (A.) 'The whale, when it had swallowed Jonah.' (Q.) 'What spot of ground is it, upon which the sun shone once, but will never again shine till the Day of Judgment?' (A.) 'The bottom of the Red Sea, when Moses smote it with his staff, and the sea clove asunder in twelve places, according to the number of the tribes; then the sun shone on the bottom and will do so never again till the Day of Judgment.' (Q.) 'What was the first skirt that trailed upon the surface of the earth?' (A.) 'That of Hagar, out of shame before Sarah, and it became a custom among the Arabs.' (Q.) 'What is that which breathes without life?' (A.) 'Quoth God the Most High, "By the morning, when it breathes!"' (Q.) 'A number of pigeons came to a high tree and lighted, some on the tree and others under it. Said those on the tree to those on the ground, "If one of you come up to us, ye will be a third part of us [all] in number; and if one of us descend to you, we shall be like unto you in number." How many pigeons were there in all?' (A.) 'Twelve: seven alighted on the tree and five beneath.'

With this the philosopher put off his clothes and fled forth: whereupon she turned to those present and said, 'Which of you is the rhetorician that can discourse of all kinds of knowledge?' There came forward Ibrahim ben Siyyar and said to her, 'Think me not like the rest.' Quoth she, 'It is the more sure to me that thou wilt be beaten, for that thou art a boaster, and God will help me against thee, that I may strip thee of thy clothes. So, if thou sentest one to fetch thee wherewithal to clothe thyself, it would be well for thee.' 'By Allah,' cried he, 'I will assuredly conquer thee and make thee a byword among the folk, generation after generation!' 'Do penance [in advance] for thy [void] oath,' rejoined she. Then said he, 'What five things did God create, before He made man?' And she replied, 'Water and earth and light and darkness and the fruits [of the earth].' (Q.) 'What did God create with the hand of omnipotence?' (A.) 'The empyreal heaven and the tree Touba and Adam and the garden of Eden; these God created with the hand of His omnipotence; but to all other created things He said, "Be," — and they were.' (Q.) 'Who is thy father in Islam?' (A.) 'Mohammed, whom God bless and preserve!' (Q.) 'Who was the father [in Islam] of Mohammed?' (A.) 'Abraham the Friend of God.' (Q.) 'What is the Faith of Islam?' (A.) 'The professing that there is no god but God and that Mohammed is the apostle of God.' (Q.) 'What is thy first and thy last?' (A.) 'My first is troubled water and my last filthy carrion. The first of me is dust and the last dust. Quoth the poet:

Created wast thou of the dust and didst a man become, Ready in
    question and reply and fluent in debate.
Then to the dust return'dst anon and didst become of it, For
    that, in very deed, of dust at first thou wast create.'

(Q.) ‘What thing was it, whose first [state] was wood and its last life?’ (A.) ‘Moses’ rod, when he cast it on the ground and it became, by permission of God, a writhing serpent.’ (Q.) ‘What is the meaning of the verse in the Koran, “And I have other need [or occasion] for it”?’ (A.) ‘He [Moses] was wont to plant his staff in the ground, and it would flower and fruit and shade him from the heat and the cold. Moreover, it would carry him, when he was weary, and guard his sheep from the wild beasts, whilst he slept.’ (Q.) ‘What woman was born of a man alone and what man of a woman alone?’ (A.) ‘Eve of Adam and Jesus of Mary.’ (Q.) ‘What fire eats and drinks, what fire eats but drinks not, what fire drinks but eats not and what other neither eats nor drinks?’ (A.) ‘Hellfire eats and drinks, the fire of the world eats but drinks not, the fire of the sun drinks but eats not, and that of the moon neither eats nor drinks.’ (Q.) ‘Which is the open [door] and which the shut [door]?’ (A.) ‘The Traditional Ordinances are the open, the Koranic the shut [door].’ (Q.) ‘Of what does the poet speak, when he says:

A dweller in the sepulchre, at ‘s head his victual lies; Whenas
he tastes thereof, he speaks and questions and replies.
He rises up and walks and talks, yet silent is the while, And
turns anon unto the tomb wherefrom he did arise.
No living one is he, that hath a title to respect, Nor dead,
that folk should say of him, “God’s mercy him comprise!”?’

(A.) ‘The pen.’ (Q.) ‘What does the poet refer to in these verses:

Two breasts in one it hath; its blood is eath and quick of
flow, Wide-mouthed, though all the rest be black, its ears
are white as snow.
It hath an idol like a cock, that doth its belly peck, And half
a dirhem is its worth, if thou its price wouldst know?’

(A.) ‘The inkhorn.’ (Q.) ‘And in these:

Say to men of wit and learning and to doctors everywhere,
Skilled to find the hidden meanings riddles and enigmas

bear,
Come expound to me what is it that ye see a bird produce,
'Mongst the Arabs and barbarians and wherever else ye fare;
Neither flesh nor blood, I warrant, hath the thing whereof I speak; Neither down nor feathers, birdwise, for a garment doth it wear.
Boiled it is and likewise roasted, eaten hot and eaten cold;
Yea, to boot, and when 'tis buried in the glowing embers' flare,
Colours twain in it are noted, one as silver clear and white,
And the other lucent yellow, gold therewith may not compare.
Living can it not be reckoned, neither may we count it dead:
Tell me, then, what is this wonder, rarity of all things rare?'

(A.) 'Thou makest long the questioning of an egg worth a doit.' (Q.) 'How many words [or times] did God speak to Moses?' (A.) 'It is related of the Prophet that he said, "God spoke to Moses fifteen hundred and fifteen words [or times]."' (Q.) 'Tell me of fourteen things that speak to the Lord of the Worlds?' (A.) 'The seven heavens and the seven earths, when they say, "We come, obedient."' (Q.) 'How was Adam created?' (A.) 'God created Adam of clay: the clay He made of foam and the foam of the sea, the sea of darkness, darkness of light, light of a fish, the fish of a rock, the rock of a ruby, the ruby of water, and the water He created by the exertion of His omnipotent will, according to His saying (exalted be His name!), "His commandment is only when He willeth aught, that He say, 'Be,' — and it is."' (Q.) 'What is meant by the poet in the following verses:

A things sans mouth or maw that eats in wondrous wise; On trees and beasts it feeds and all beneath the skies.
Give it to eat, it thrives and flourishes amain; But give it not to drink of water, or it dies?'

(A.) ‘Fire.’ (Q.) ‘And in these:

Two lovers, that are still estopped from all delight:
Embracing, each with each, they pass the livelong night.
They guarantee the folk from all calamity, And with the risen
sun they’re torn apart forthright?’

(A.) ‘The leaves of a gate.’ (Q.) ‘Tell me of the gates of Hell?’ (A.) ‘They are seven in number and their names are comprised in the following verses:

Jehennem first, then Leza comes and eke Hetim as well; Then
must thou count Saïr, and fifth comes Seker, sooth to
tell:
Sixth comes Jehim and last of all, Hawiyeh; thus thou hast, In
compass brief of doggrel rhyme, the seven rooms of Hell.’

(Q.) ‘To what does the poet refer in these verses:

A pair of ringlets long she hath, that trail for aye Behind
her, as she comes and goes upon her way,
And eye that never knows the taste of sleep nor sheds A tear,
for none it hath for shedding, sooth to say;
Nor wears it aught of clothes, from year to ended year; Yet in
all manner wede it doth the folk array?’

(A.) ‘A needle.’ (Q.) ‘What is the length and breadth of the bridge Es Sirat?’ (A.) ‘Its length is three thousand years’ journey, a thousand in descent, a thousand level and a thousand in ascent: it is sharper than a sword and finer than a hair.’ (Q.) ‘How many intercessions [with God] hath the Prophet [for each soul]?’ (A.) ‘Three.’ (Q.) ‘Was Abou Bekr the first that embraced Islam?’ (A.) ‘Yes.’ (Q.) ‘Yet Ali became a Muslim before him?’ (A.) ‘All came to the Prophet, when he was a boy of seven years old, for God vouchsafed him the knowledge of the truth in his tender youth, so that he never prostrated himself to idols.’ (Q.) ‘Which is the more excellent, Ali or Abbas?’

Now she knew that, in propounding this question, Ibrahim was laying a trap for her; for, if she said, ‘Ali is the more excellent,’ she would fall in disgrace with the Khalif; so she bowed her head awhile, now reddening, now paling, then said, ‘Thou askest me of two excellent men, each having [his own especial] excellence. Let us return to what we were about.’ When the Khalif heard her reply, he rose to his feet and said, ‘By the Lord of the Kaabeh, thou hast said well, O Taweddud!’ Then said Ibrahim, ‘What means the poet, when he says:

Slender of skirts and slim of shape and sweet of taste it is,
    Most like unto the spear, except it lacks of the spontoon.
In all the countries of the world the folk make use of it, And
    eaten ’tis in Ramazan, after mid-afternoon?’

She answered, ‘The sugar-cane;’ and he said, ‘Tell me of many things.’ ‘What are they?’ asked she; and he said, ‘What is sweeter than honey, what is sharper than the sword, what is swifter than poison, what is the delight of a moment and what the contentment of three days, what is the pleasantest of days, what is the joy of a week, what is the debt that the worst payer denieth not, what is the prison of the tomb, what is the joy of the heart, what is the snare of the soul, what is death in life, what is the malady that may not be healed, what is the reproach that may not be done away, what is the beast that harbours not in cultivated fields, but lodges in waste places and hates mankind and hath in it somewhat of the make of seven strong beasts?’ Quoth she, ‘Hear what I shall say in answer; then put off thy clothes, that I may expound to thee.’ Then the Khalif said, ‘Expound, and he shall put off his clothes.’ So she said, ‘That, which is sweeter than honey, is the love of pious children to their parents; that, which is sharper than the sword, is the tongue; that, which is swifter than poison, is the evil eye; the delight of a moment is coition and the contentment of three days is the depilatory for women; the pleasantest of days is that of profit on merchandise; the joy of a week is the bride; the debt, which the worst payer denieth not, is death; the prison of the tomb is an ill son; the joy of the heart is a woman obedient to her husband, (and it is said also that, when fleshmeat descends upon the heart, it rejoiceth therein); the snare [or vexation] of the soul is a disobedient slave; death in life is poverty; the malady, that may not be healed, is an ill nature and the reproach, that may not be done away, is an ill daughter; lastly, the beast that harbours not in cultivated fields, but lodges in waste places and hates mankind and hath in it somewhat of the make of seven strong beasts, is the locust, whose head is as the head of the horse, its neck as the neck of the bull, its wings as the wings of the vulture, its feet as the feet of the camel, its tail as the tail of the serpent, its body as the body of the scorpion and its horns as the horns of the gazelle.'

The Khalif was astounded at her quickness and understanding and said to Ibrahim, 'Put off thy clothes.' So he rose and said, 'I call all who are present in this assembly to witness that she is more learned than I and all the learned men.' And he put off his clothes and gave them to her, saying, 'Take them and may God not bless them to thee!' The Khalif ordered him fresh clothes and said to Taweddud, 'There is one thing left of that for which thou didst engage, namely, chess.' And he sent for professors of chess and draughts and backgammon. The chess-player sat down before her, and they set the pieces, and he moved and she moved; but, every move he made she speedily countered, till she beat him and he found himself check-mated. Quoth he, 'I did but lead thee on, that thou mightest think thyself skilful; but set up again, and I will show thee.' So they placed the pieces a second time, and he said to himself, 'Open thine eyes, or she will beat thee.' And he fell to moving no piece, save after calculation, and ceased not to play, till she said, 'Check-mate.' When he saw this, he was confounded at her quickness and skill; but she laughed and said, 'O master, I will make a wager with thee on this third game. I will give thee the queen and the right-hand rook and the left-hand knight; if thou beat me, take my clothes, and if I beat thee, I will take thine.' 'I agree to this,' replied he, and they replaced the pieces, she giving him the queen, rook and knight. Then said she, 'Move, O master.' So he moved, saying in himself, 'I cannot but win, with such an advantage,' and made a combination; but she moved on, little by little, till she made one of her pawns a queen and pushing up to him pawns and other pieces, to take off his attention, set one in his way and tempted him with it. Accordingly, he took it and she said to him, 'The measure is meted out and the equilibrium established. Eat, O man, till thou pass repletion; nought shall be thy ruin but greediness. Knowest thou not that I did but tempt thee, that I might beguile thee? See: this is check-mate: put off thy clothes.' 'Leave me my trousers,' quoth he, 'so God requite thee;' and he swore by Allah that he would contend with none, so long as Taweddud abode at the Court of Baghdad. Then he took off his clothes and gave them to her and went away.

Then came the backgammon-player, and she said to him, 'If I beat thee, what wilt thou give me?' Quoth he, 'I will give thee ten suits of brocade of Constantinople, figured with gold, and ten suits of velvet and a thousand dinars, and if I beat thee, I ask nothing but that thou write me an acknowledgment thereof.' 'To it, then,' replied she, 'and do thy best.' So they played, and he lost and went away, jabbering in the Frank jargon and saying, 'By the bounty of the Commander of the Faithful, there is not her like in all the world!' Then the Khalif summoned players on instruments of music and said to her, 'Dost thou know aught of music?' 'Yes,' answered she. So he bade bring a peeled and polished lute, whose owner [or maker] was ground down by exile [or estrangement from the beloved] and of which quoth one, describing it:

God watered a land and straight a tree sprang up on its root:
It cast forth branches and throve and flourished with many a shoot.
The birds, when the wood was green, sang o'er it, and when it was dry, Fair women sang to it in turn, for lo, 'twas a minstrel's lute!

So they brought a bag of red satin, with tassels of saffron-coloured silk: and she opened the bag, and took out a lute, on which were graven the following verses:

Full many a tender branch a lute for singing-girl has grown,
Wherewith at banquets to her mates she makes melodious moan.
She sings; it follows on her song, as 'twere to teach her how
Heart's troubles in clear perfect speech of music to make

known.

She laid her lute in her lap and letting her breasts hang over it, bent to it as bends a mother, suckling her child; then preluded in twelve different modes, till the whole assembly was agitated with delight, and sang the following verses:

Leave your estrangement, I pray, and bid your cruelty hold,
For, by your life, my heart will never for you be
consoled.
Have pity on one who weeps, afflicted and ever sad, A slave of
passion, who burns for thee with longings untold.

The Khalif was ravished and exclaimed, ‘May God bless thee and receive him who taught thee into His mercy!’ Whereupon she rose and kissed the earth before him. Then he sent for money and paid her master Aboulhusn a hundred thousand dinars to her price; after which he said to her, ‘O Taweddud, ask a boon of me.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied she, ‘I ask of thee that thou restore me to my lord who sold me to thee.’ ‘It is well,’ answered the Khalif and restored her to her master and gave her five thousand dinars for herself. Moreover, he appointed Aboulhusn one of his boon-companions and assigned him a monthly stipend of a thousand dinars so long as he should live, and he abode with the damsel Taweddud in all delight of life.

Marvel then, O King, at the eloquence of this damsel and the greatness of her learning and understanding and her perfect excellence in all branches of knowledge, and consider the generosity of the Khalif Haroun er Reshid, in that he gave her master this money and said to her, ‘Ask a boon of me;’ and she besought him to restore her to her lord. So he restored her to him and gave her five thousand dinars for herself and made him one of his boon-companions. Where is such generosity to be found after the Abbaside Khalifs, may God the Most High have mercy upon them all!

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THE ANGEL OF DEATH WITH THE PROUD KING AND THE DEVOUT MAN.

A certain king of the ancients was once minded to ride out in state with the officers of his court and the grandees of his realm and show forth to the folk the wonders of his magnificence. So he bade his lords and Amirs and grandees equip them to this end and commanded his keeper of the wardrobe to bring him of the richest of raiment, such as befitted the King in his state and [his master of the horse] to bring his steeds of the finest breeds and most renowned pedigrees, which being done, he chose out of the raiment what liked him and of the horses that which he deemed good and donning the clothes, together with a collar set with pearls and rubies and all manner jewels, mounted and set forth in state, making his horse prance and curvet among his troops and glorying in his pride and magnificence. And Satan came to him and laying his hand upon his nose, blew into his nostrils the breath of pride and conceit, so that he magnified himself and said in his heart, ‘Who among men is like unto me?’ And he became so puffed up with arrogance and conceit and so taken up with the thought of his own glory and magnificence, that he would not vouchsafe a glance to any. Presently, there came up a man clad in tattered clothes and saluted him, but he returned not his greeting, whereupon the stranger laid hold of his horse’s bridle. ‘Lift thy hand,’ said the King, ‘thou knowest not whose bridle-rein it is whereof thou takest hold.’ Quoth the other, ‘I have an occasion to thee.’ ‘Wait till I alight,’ replied the King, ‘and then name it.’ ‘Nay,’ rejoined the stranger, ‘it is a secret and I will not tell it but in thine ear.’ So the King bowed his head to him and he said, ‘I am the Angel of Death and I purpose to take thy soul.’ ‘Have patience with me a little,’ said the King, ‘whilst I return to my house and take leave of my people and children and neighbours and wife.’ ‘Not so,’ answered the angel; ‘thou shalt never return nor look on them again, for the term of thy life is past.’ So saying, he took the soul of the King, — who fell off his horse’s back, dead, — and departed thence.

Presently, he met a devout man, of whom God the Most High had accepted, and saluted him. He returned his salute, and the Angel of

Death said to him, ‘O pious man, I have a privy occasion to thee.’ ‘Tell it in my ear,’ said the devotee. Quoth the other, ‘I am the Angel of Death.’ ‘Welcome to thee!’ replied the man. ‘Praised be God for thy coming! I am weary of awaiting thee; for indeed long hath been thine absence from him who longeth for thee.’ Quoth the angel, ‘If thou have any business, make an end of it.’ But the other answered, saying, ‘There is nothing urgent to me as the meeting with my Lord, to whom belong might and majesty!’ And the angel said, ‘How wouldst thou liefer have me take thy soul? I am bidden to take it as thou willest and choosest.’ ‘Wait till I make the ablution and pray,’ replied the devotee; ‘and when I prostrate myself, then take my soul in the act.’ Quoth the angel, ‘Verily, my Lord commanded me not to take thy soul but with thy consent and as thou shouldst wish; so I will do thy will.’ Then the devout man rose and made the ablution and prayed: and the Angel of Death took his soul in the act of adoration, and God transported it to the place of mercy and acceptance and forgiveness.

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THE ANGEL OF DEATH AND THE RICH KING.

A certain king had heaped up treasure beyond count and gathered store of all [precious] things, that God the Most High hath created, that he might take his pleasure thereof, against such time as he should have leisure to enjoy all this abounding wealth that he had collected. Moreover, he builded him a wide and lofty palace, such as beseemeth kings, and set thereto strong doors of cunning fashion and appointed for its service and guard servants and soldiers and doorkeepers. One day, he bade the cooks dress him somewhat of the goodliest of food and assembled his household and retainers and lords and servants to eat with him and partake of his bounty. Then he sat down upon the throne of his kingship and the chair of his state and leaning back upon his cushion, bespoke himself, saying, ‘O soul, behold, thou hast gathered together all the riches of the world; so now take thy leisure therein and eat of this good at thine ease, in long life and abounding prosperity!’

Hardly had he made an end of speaking, when there came so terrible a knock at the gate that the whole palace shook and the king’s throne trembled. The servants were affrighted and ran to the door, where they saw a man clad in tattered raiment, with a cadger’s wallet hanging at his neck, as he were one who came to beg food. When they saw him, they cried out at him, saying, ‘Out on thee! What unmannerly fashion is this? Wait till the king eateth and [after] we will give thee of what is left.’ Quoth he, ‘Tell your lord to come out and speak with me, for I have a pressing errand to him and a weighty matter.’ ‘Away, fool!’ replied they. ‘Who art thou that we should bid our lord come out to thee?’ But he said, ‘Tell him of this.’ So they went in and told the king, who said, ‘Did ye not rebuke him and draw upon him and chide him!’ But, as he spoke, behold, there came another knock at the gate, louder than the first, whereupon the servants ran at the stranger with staves and weapons, to fall upon him; but he cried out at them, saying, ‘Abide in your places, for I am the Angel of Death.’ When they heard this, their hearts quaked and their wits forsook them; their understandings were dazed and their nerves trembled for fear and their limbs lost the power of motion.

Then said the King to them, ‘Bid him take a substitute in my stead.’ But the Angel answered, saying, ‘I will take no substitute, and I come not but on thine account, to make severance between thee and the good thou hast gathered together and the riches thou hast heaped up and treasured.’ When the king heard this, he wept and groaned, saying, ‘May God curse the treasure that has deluded and undone me and diverted me from the service of my Lord! I deemed it would profit me, but to-day it is a regret for me and an affliction unto me, and behold, I [must] go forth, empty-handed of it, and leave it to mine enemies.’

Therewith God caused the treasure to speak and it said, ‘Why dost thou curse me? Curse thyself, for God created both me and thee of the dust and appointed me to be in thine hand, that thou mightest provide thee with me for the next world and give alms with me to the poor and sick and needy and endow mosques and hospices and build bridges and aqueducts, so might I be a succour unto thee in the life to come. But thou didst garner me and hoard me up and bestowedst me on thine own lusts, neither gavest thanks for me, as was due, but wast ungrateful; and now thou must leave me to thine enemies and abidest in thy regret and thy repentance. But what is my fault, that thou shouldest revile me?’ Then the Angel of Death took the soul of the King, before he ate of the food, and he fell from his throne, dead. Quoth God the Most High, ‘Even while they rejoiced in what had been given to them, we took them unawares and behold, they were stricken with despair.”

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THE ANGEL OF DEATH AND THE KING OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.

There was once a proud and puissant king of the children of Israel, who sat one day upon the throne of his kingship, when he saw come in to him, by the gate of the hall, a man of terrible and forbidding aspect. The King was affrighted at his sudden intrusion upon him and his look terrified him; so he sprang up and said to him, ‘Who art thou, O man? Who gave thee leave to come in to me and who sent thee to my house?’ Quoth the stranger, ‘The Lord of the house sent me to thee and I need no leave to come in to kings, nor can any door-keeper exclude me, for I reck not of a Sultan’s majesty neither of the multitude of guards. I am he from whom no tyrant is at rest, nor for any is there escape from my grasp: I am the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies.’

When the King heard this, trembling crept over his body and he fell on his face in a swoon; but, presently coming to himself, he said, ‘Art thou then the Angel of Death?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the stranger. ‘I conjure thee by Allah,’ quoth the King, ‘grant me one day’s respite, that I may ask pardon of my sins and seek absolution of my Lord and restore to their rightful owners the treasures that are in my storehouses, so I may not be burdened with the woe of a reckoning nor suffer the misery of punishment therefor.’ ‘Away! away!’ replied the Angel. ‘This may nowise be. How can I grant thee a respite, whenas the days of thy life are counted and thy breaths numbered and thy moments fixed and written?’ ‘Grant me an hour,’ said the King; but the Angel answered, saying, ‘The hour was in the account and hath passed, and thou unheeding, and hath expired, and thou taking no thought: and now thy moments are accomplished, and there remains to thee but one breath.’ ‘Who will be with me, when I am transported to my grave?’ asked the King. Quoth the Angel, ‘Nought will be with thee but thy work.’ ‘I have no work,’ said the King; and the Angel, ‘Doubtless, thine abiding place will be in the fire and thy departure to the wrath of the Almighty.’ Then he took the soul of the King, and he fell off his throne and dropped on the earth [dead]. And there arose a mighty weeping and wailing and clamour of lamentation for him among the people of his court, and had they known that to which he went of the wrath of his Lord, their weeping for him had been [yet] sorer and their lamentation louder and more abounding.

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ISKENDER DHOULKERNEIN AND A CERTAIN TRIBE OF POOR FOLK.

It is related that Iskender Dhoulkernein came once, in his travels, upon a tribe of poor folk, who owned nought of the goods of the world and who dug their graves over against the doors of their houses and were wont at all times to frequent them and sweep the earth from them and keep them clean and visit them and worship God the Most High in them; and they had no food save herbs and the fruits of the earth. Iskender sent a man to them, to bid their king to him, but he refused to come, saying, 'I have no occasion to him.' So Iskender went to him and said to him, 'How is it with you and what manner of folk are you? For I see with you nothing of gold or silver nor aught of the good things of the world.' 'None hath his fill of the goods of the world,' answered the king. 'Why do you dig your graves before the doors of your houses?' asked Iskender. 'That they may be the cynosure of our eyes,' replied the king, 'so we may look on them and still take thought unto death neither forget the world to come. Thus is the love of the world banished from our hearts and we are not distracted thereby from the service of our Lord, exalted be His name!' Quoth Iskender, 'Why do ye eat herbs?' And the other answered, 'Because it misliketh us to make our bellies the tombs of beasts and because the pleasure of eating overpasseth not the gullet.'

Then he brought out a human skull and laying it before Iskender, said to him, 'O Dhoulkernein, knowest thou whose was this skull?' 'Nay,' answered Iskender; and the other rejoined, 'He whose skull this is was a king of the kings of the world, who dealt tyrannously with his subjects, oppressing the weak and passing his days in heaping up the perishable goods of the world, till God took his soul and made the fire his abiding-place; and this is his head.'

Then he produced another skull and laying it before Iskender, said to him, 'Knowest thou this?' 'No,' answered the prince; and the other rejoined, 'This is the skull of another king, who dealt justly by his subjects and was tenderly solicitous for the people of his realm and his dominions, till God took his soul and lodged him in His Paradise and made high his degree [among His blessed].' Then he laid his hands on Iskender's head and said, 'Whether of these twain art thou?' Whereupon Iskender wept sore and straining the king to his bosom, said, 'An thou be minded to consort with me, I will commit to thee the government of my affairs and share with thee in my kingdom.' 'Away! away!' replied the other. 'I have no mind to this.' 'Why so?' asked Iskender, and the King answered, 'Because all men are thine enemies by reason of the wealth and possessions thou hast gotten, and all men are my friends in verity, because of my contentment and poverty, for that I possess nothing, neither covet aught of the goods of the world; I have no desire unto them nor wish for them, neither reck I of aught save contentment.' So Iskender pressed him to his bosom and kissed him between the eyes and went his way.

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THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF KING ANOUSHIRWAN.

It is told of the just King Anoushirwan that he once feigned himself sick and bade his stewards and intendants go round about the provinces of his empire and the quarters of his realm and seek him out a rotten brick from some ruined village, that he might use it as medicine, avouching that the physicians had prescribed this to him. So they went the round of the provinces of his realm and of all the lands under his dominion and returned and said to him, ‘In all the realm we have found no ruined place nor old rotten brick.’ At this he rejoiced and returned thanks to God, saying, ‘I was but minded to prove my kingdom and try my empire, that I might know if there were therein any ruined [or deserted] place, so I might rebuild [or repeople] it; but, since there is no place in it but is inhabited, the affairs of the realm are well ordered and accomplished and [its] prosperity hath reached the pitch of perfection.’

‘And know, O king,’ [added Shehrzad] ‘that these kings of time past were not solicitous for the peopling of their kingdoms, but because they knew that the more populous a country is, the more abundant is that which is desired therein, and for that they knew the saying of the wise and the learned to be without doubt true, namely, ‘Religion depends on the King, the King on the troops, the troops on the treasury, the treasury on the populousness [or prosperity] of the country and the latter on the justice of the government.’ Wherefore they upheld no one in tyranny or oppression neither suffered their dependents to do injustice, knowing that kingdoms are not stablished upon tyranny, but that cities and places fall into ruin, when oppressors get the mastery over them, and their inhabitants disperse and flee to other governments, wherefore ruin falls upon the realm, the imports fail, the treasuries become empty and the lives of the subjects are troubled; for that they love not a tyrant and cease not to offer up prayers against him, so that the King hath no ease of his dominion and the shifts of fortune speedily bring about his destruction.’

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THE JEWISH CADI AND HIS PIOUS WIFE.

A certain Cadi of the children of Israel had a wife of surpassing beauty, who was withal exceeding virtuous, chaste and patient, and being minded to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, appointed his brother Cadi in his stead, during his absence, and commended his wife to his charge. Now this brother had heard of her beauty and grace and had fallen in love with her. So, his brother being gone, he went in to her and sought her favours; but she denied him and clave fast unto her chastity. The more she repelled him, the more urgently he pressed his suit upon her, till, despairing of her and fearing lest she should acquaint his brother with his conduct, when he returned, he suborned false witnesses to testify against her of adultery and cited her before the King of the day, who adjudged her to be stoned. So they dug a pit and making her sit therein, stoned her, till she was covered with stones, and [the wicked brother] said, ‘Be the pit her grave.’

But, when it was dark night, a passer-by, making for a neighbouring hamlet, heard her groaning and pulling her out of the pit, carried her home to his wife, who dressed her wounds and tended her till she recovered. The peasant’s wife had a child, which she gave to the woman to nurse, and the latter used to lodge with the child in another house by night. Now a certain thief saw her and lusted after her. So he sent to her, to require her of love, but she denied herself to him; wherefore he resolved to kill her and making his way into her chamber by night, whilst she slept, thought to strike at her with a knife; but it smote the child and killed it; which when he knew, fear overtook him and he went forth the house and God preserved her from him.

When she awoke in the morning, she found the child by her side slain; and presently his mother came and seeing the boy dead, said to her, ‘It was thou didst murder him.’ Therewith she beat her grievously and would have killed her; but her husband interposed and delivered the woman, who fled forth for her life, knowing not whither she should go. Presently, she came to a village, where she saw a crowd of people collected about the trunk of a tree, on which was a man crucified, but still in the chains of life. She asked what he had done and they said, ‘He hath committed a crime, which nothing can expiate but death or the payment of such a fine by way of alms.’ Now she had with her somewhat of money, so she said to them, ‘Take the money and let him go.’ Accordingly, they set him free and he repented at her hands and vowed to serve her, for the love of God the Most High, till death should release him. Then he built her a hermitage and lodged her therein; moreover, he betook himself to woodcutting and brought her her daily bread. As for her, she was instant in the service of God, so that there came no sick man or demoniac to her, but she prayed for him and he was straightway made whole.

Now it befell, by the ordinance of God the Most High, that He sent down upon her husband’s brother a cancer in the face and smote the villager’s wife with leprosy and afflicted the murderer of the boy with paralysis. When the Cadi returned home from his pilgrimage, he asked his brother of his wife, and he told him that she was dead, whereat he mourned sore and accounted her with God. After awhile, the folk heard of the pious recluse and flocked to her cell from all parts of the length and breadth of the earth. And the Cadi said to his brother, ‘O my brother, wilt thou not seek out yonder pious woman? It may be God shall appoint thee healing at her hands.’ ‘O my brother,’ replied he, ‘carry me to her.’ Moreover, the husband of the leprous woman heard of the pious woman and carried his wife to her, as did also the paralytic’s family; and they all met at the door of her cell, where they waited, till her servant came, and begged him to ask leave of her to admit them; and he did so.

Now she had a place wherefrom she could look out upon those who came to her, without their seeing her, and thence she saw them all and recognized them. So, when her servant came in to her, she veiled herself and went out and stood in the door, looking at them; but they knew her not. Then said she to them, ‘O folk, ye shall not be rid of what is with you, till ye confess your sins; for, when the creature confesses his sins, God relenteth towards him and granteth him that for which he resorteth to Him.’ Quoth the Cadi to his brother, ‘O my brother, repent to God and persist not in thy frowardness, for it will be the more helpful to thy relief.’ And the tongue of the case spoke as follows:

Behold, oppressor and oppressed assembled are to-day, And God the secret hath unveiled, till now that hidden lay.
This is a case in which, indeed, the sinners are brought low And God exalteth those that be assiduous in His way.
Yea, and our Master and our Lord discovereth the truth, Whether the sinner froward be or bow him to obey.
Woe unto those who strive with God and answer Him, as ‘twere They knew not what He doth prepare for those that Him gainsay!
O thou that power and glory seek’st, know, only in the fear Of God true glory lies; so cleave thou fast to Allah aye.

Then said the brother, ‘Now will I tell the truth. I did thus and thus with thy wife;’ and he confessed the whole matter, adding, ‘And this is my sin.’ Quoth the leprous woman, ‘As for me, I had a woman with me and imputed to her [a crime,] of which I knew [her] not [to be guilty], and beat her grievously; and this is my offence.’ And the paralytic said, ‘And I went in to a woman to kill her, after I had solicited her to commit adultery and she had refused; and I slew [instead] a boy that lay beside her; and this is my offence.’ Then said the pious woman, ‘O my God, even as Thou hast made them to feel the misery of disobedience, so show Thou them [now] the excellence of obedience, for Thou canst all things!’ And God (to whom belong might and majesty) made them whole. Then the Cadi fell a-looking on the pious woman and considering her straitly, till she asked him why he did thus and he said, ‘I had a wife, were she not dead, I had said that thou wast she.’ With this, she made herself known to him and they both betook themselves to rendering thanks to God (to whom belong might and majesty) for that which He had vouchsafed them of the reunion of their loves; but the brother and the thief and the villager’s wife began to implore her forgiveness. So she forgave them, and they all worshipped God in that place, and were assiduous in her service, till Death sundered them.

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THE SHIPWRECKED WOMAN AND HER CHILD.

(Quoth one of the Seyyids) I was going round about the Kaabeh one dark night, when I heard a plaintive voice, speaking from a contrite heart and saying, ‘O Bountiful One, Thy past favours! Indeed, my heart is constant to the covenant.’ When I heard this, my heart fluttered, so that I was nigh upon death, but I followed the voice and found that it came from a woman, to whom I said, ‘Peace be on thee, O handmaid of God!’ ‘And on thee be peace,’ answered she, ‘and the mercy of God and His blessings!’ Quoth I, ‘I conjure thee, by the Most Great God, tell me what is the covenant to which thy heart is constant.’ ‘But that thou adjurest me by the Almighty,’ replied she, ‘I would not tell thee my secret. See what is before me.’ So I looked and saw a child lying asleep before her and breathing heavily in his slumber. ‘Know,’ said she, ‘that I set forth, being big with this child, to make the pilgrimage to this [Holy] House and took passage in a ship; but the waves rose against us and the winds were contrary and the ship broke up under us. I saved myself on a plank, and in this situation, I gave birth to the child.

‘As I sat on the plank, with the boy on my lap and the waves beating upon me, there swam up to me one of the sailors, who climbed on to the plank and said to me, ‘By Allah, I desired thee, whilst thou was yet in the ship, and now I have come at thee. So yield thyself to me, or I will throw thee into the sea.’ ‘Out on thee!’ cried I. ‘Hast thou no thought of that which thou hast seen, and is it no warning to thee?’ Quoth he, ‘I have seen the like of this many a time and come off safe and reck not.’ ‘O fellow,’ rejoined I, ‘we are now in a strait whence we hope to be delivered by obedience and not by disobedience [of God’s commandments].’ But he was instant with me, and I feared him and thought to put him off; so I said to him, ‘Wait till the child sleeps.’ And he took the child off my lap and threw him into the sea. When I saw this, my heart throbbed and anguish was sore upon me; but I raised my eyes to heaven and said, ‘O Thou that intervenest between a man and his heart, intervene between me and this wild beast!’ And by Allah, hardly had I spoken when a beast rose out of the sea and snatched him off the plank.

When I found myself alone, my affliction redoubled and my grief and longing for my child, and I recited the following verses:

The solace of my eyes, my child, my dear, Is lost, and I am racked with pain and fear;
I see my body wrecked, and all my heart On coals of love and dole is wasting sheer.
No help is there for me in this my need, Save at Thy hands on whom my hope I rear.
Thou, O my Lord, hast seen my sore distress, For loss of him, my child, my suckling dear.
Take ruth on us and give him back to me! Thou art my stay: incline to me Thine ear.

In this condition I abode a day and a night, and on the morrow I caught sight of the sails of a ship shining afar off, nor did the winds cease to drive me and the waves to bear me on, till I reached the vessel whose sails I had seen. The sailors took me up into the ship, and I looked and behold, my child amongst them. So I threw myself upon him and said, 'O folk, this is my child: how came ye by him?' 'As we were sailing along [yesterday],' quoth they, 'the ship suddenly stood still in the sea and behold, [that which stayed us was] a [sea] beast, as it were a great city, and this child on its back, sucking his thumbs; so we took him up into the ship.' When I heard this, I told them all that had befallen me and returned thanks to my Lord and vowed to Him that I would never stir from His House nor swerve from His service [whilst I lived]; and since then, I have never required of Him aught but He hath given it me.'

When she had made an end of her story (adds the Seyyid), I put my hand to my alms-pouch and would have given to her, but she exclaimed, 'Away, idle man! Have I not told thee of His bounties and the graciousness of His dealings [with me] and shall I take an alms from other than His hand?' And I could not prevail with her to take aught of me; so I left her and went away, reciting the following verses:

How many secret favours are there not in God! His mysteries

elude the most enlightened sight.
How often by His grace doth ease come after stress, How oft the broken heart is solaced by His might!
How often in the morn is one oppressed by care, Yet gladness follows on the coming of the night!
If things go hard with thee, trust in the Most High God, The ever-living One that is in Heaven's height.
Claim thou the Prophet's voice to intercede for thee: Through him each faithful soul shall have his heart's delight.

And she ceased not from the service of her Lord, cleaving unto His [Holy] House, till death came to her.

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THE PIOUS BLACK SLAVE.

(Quoth Malik ben Dinar, on whom God have mercy), We were once afflicted with drought at Bassora and went forth repeatedly to pray for rain, but saw no sign of our prayers being answered. So I went, I and Itaa es Selemi and Thabit el Benani and Neja el Bekkaa and Mohammed ben Wasi and Eyoub es Sukhtiyani and Hebib el Farsi and Hassan ben Abou Sinan and Otbeh el Ghulam and Salih el Muzeni, till we reached the place of prayer, when the boys came out of the schools and we offered up prayers for rain, but could see no sign of acceptance. So about mid-day the people went away and I and Thabit el Benani abode till nightfall, when we saw a black of comely visage, slender-shanked and big-bellied, come up, clad in a pair of woollen drawers; if all he wore had been priced, it would not have fetched a couple of dirhems. He fetched water and made the ablution, then, going up to the prayer-niche, prayed two inclinations deftly, his standing and bowing and prostration being [well-nigh] simultaneous. Then he raised his eyes to heaven and said, ‘O my God and my Master and my Lord, how long wilt thou reject the prayers of Thy servants in that which offereth no hurt to Thy sovereignty? Is that which is with Thee expended or are the treasuries of Thy kingdom exhausted? I conjure Thee, by Thy love to me, to pour out upon us Thy rain-clouds forthwith!’

Hardly had he made an end of speaking, when the sky clouded over and there came a rain, as of the emptying of waterskins. When we left the oratory, we were up to our knees in water, and we were lost in wonder at the black. So I accosted him and said to him, ‘Out on thee, O black, art thou not ashamed of what thou saidst?’ ‘How so?’ asked he. ‘Didst thou not adjure God by His love for thee?’ said I. ‘What giveth thee to know that He loveth thee?’ ‘Away from me,’ replied he, ‘O thou that art distracted [by the love of the world] from [the care of] thine own soul! Where was I, when He gave me strength to identify myself with Him and of His special favour vouchsafed unto me the knowledge of Him? How deemest thou that He aided me thus except of His love to me? Verily, His love to me is after the measure of my love to Him.’ Quoth I, ‘Tarry awhile with me, may

God have mercy on thee!' But he said, 'I am a slave and the Book of God enjoins me to obey my lesser master.' So he went away and we followed him afar off, till we saw him enter a slave-dealer's house.

Now the first half of the night was passed and the last half was long upon us, so we went away; but next morning, we repaired to the slave-dealer and said to him, 'Hast thou a boy to sell us for service?' 'Yes,' answered he, 'I have nigh upon a hundred boys, and they are all for sale.' Then he showed us slave after slave, till he had shown us threescore and ten; but my friend was not amongst them, and the dealer said, 'These are all I have.' But, as we were going away, we espied a ruinous hut behind his house and going in, saw the black standing there. 'It is he, by the Lord of the Kaabeh!' cried I and turning back to the dealer, said to him, 'Sell me yonder slave.' 'O Abou Yehya,' replied he, 'this is a plaguy, morose, unprofitable fellow, who hath no concern by night but weeping and by day but repentance.' 'It is for that I want him,' said I. So the dealer called him, and he came out, feigning drowsiness. Quoth his master, 'Take him at thine own price, so thou hold me quit of all his faults.' So I bought him for twenty dinars and said, 'What is his name?' 'Maimoun,' answered the dealer; and I took him by the hand and went out with him, intending for my house; but he turned to me and said, 'O my lesser lord, why didst thou buy me? By Allah, I am not fit for the service of the creature!' 'On my head be it,' replied I; 'I bought thee that I might serve thee myself.' 'Why so?' asked he, and I said, 'Wast thou not in company with us yesterday in the place of prayer?' 'And didst thou hear me?' quoth he; and I answered, 'It was I accosted thee yesterday and spoke with thee.'

Then we went on till we came to a mosque, where he entered and prayed a two-bow prayer; after which he said, 'O my God and my Master and my Lord, the secret that was between Thee and me Thou hast discovered unto men and hast betrayed me therein among Thy creatures. How then shall life be sweet to me, now that others than Thou have happened upon that which is between Thee and me? I conjure Thee to take my soul to Thee forthright.' So saying, he prostrated himself, and I waited awhile till, seeing that he did not raise his head, I went up to him and moved him and found that he was indeed dead, the mercy of God the Most High be upon him! I laid him out and looked at him, and behold, he was smiling. Moreover, whiteness had gotten the better of blackness in his face, and it was radiant with light.

As we wondered at his affair, the door opened and a young man came in to us and said, ‘Peace be on you! May God make great our reward and yours for our brother Maimoun! Here is his shroud: wrap him in it.’ So saying, he gave us two robes, never had we seen their like, and we shrouded him therein. And now his tomb is a place whither the folk resort to pray for rain and ask favours of God; and how excellently well saith the poet on this subject:

The pleasaunce of the just is in a garden of the skies, About whose gates God’s doorkeepers hold ever watch and ward.
Behold, there drink they of old wine, and mingled therewithal Tesnim, that is, the wine of close communion with the Lord.
The secret of their hearts is safe from other than God’s sight; For that their sprights with His are blent in one supreme accord.

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THE DEVOUT PLATTER-MAKER AND HIS WIFE.

There was once among the children of Israel a worthy man, who was strenuous in the service of his Lord and abstained from the things of this world and had put them away from his heart. He had a wife who helped him in his endeavour and was still obedient to him. They earned their living by making platters and fans, at which they wrought all day, and at nightfall the man went out into the streets and highways, to sell what they had made. They were wont to fast continually, and one morning, they arose, fasting, and wrought at their trade till the end of the day, when the man went forth, according to custom, to seek purchasers for his wares, and fared on, till he came to the door of the house of a certain man of wealth and condition.

Now the platter-maker was fair of face and comely of aspect, and the wife of the master of the house, who was then absent, saw him and fell in love with him and her heart inclined to him with an exceeding inclination; so she called her handmaid and said to her, ‘Make shift to bring yonder man to me.’ Accordingly the maid went out to him and said, ‘Come in; my lady hath a mind to buy some of thy wares, after she hath tried them and looked at them.’ The man thought she spoke truly and seeing no harm in this, entered and sat down, as she bade him. The maid shut the door upon him, whereupon her mistress, came out and taking him by the gown, drew him into her chamber and said to him, ‘How long shall I seek of thee [a lover’s] privacy? Verily, my patience is at an end on thine account. See now, the place is perfumed and food ready and the master of the house is absent this night, and I give myself to thee, I whose favours kings and captains and men of fortune have sought this long while, but I have hearkened to none of them.’ And she went on talking thus to him, whilst he raised not his eyes from the ground, for shame before God and fear of the pains of His punishment, even as saith the poet:

’Twas shamefastness, I trow, and nothing else, that came ‘Twixt me and dalliance with many a noble dame.
The antidote it was to them, and should it pass, I’m lost; for

antidote was none but very shame.

He strove to free himself from her, but could not; so he said to her, 'I want one thing of thee.' 'What is that?' asked she, and he answered, 'I wish for pure water and that I may carry it to the highest place of thy house and do an occasion therewith and cleanse myself of a defilement, which I may not discover to thee.' Quoth she, 'The house is spacious and hath closets and privy places and lavatories at command.' But he replied, 'I want nothing but to be at a height.' So she said to her handmaid, 'Carry him up up to the belvedere at the top of the house.' Accordingly the maid took him up thither and giving him a vessel of water, went away and left him.

He made the ablution and prayed a two-bow prayer; after which he looked at the ground, thinking to throw himself down, but, seeing it afar off, feared to be torn to pieces in the fall. Then he bethought him of the consequence of his disobedience to God, and it became a light matter to him to offer up his life and shed his blood, [rather than sin]; so he said, 'O my God and my Lord, Thou seest that which is fallen on me; neither is my case hidden from Thee. Thou indeed canst all things, and the tongue of my case reciteth and saith as follows:

My heart doth sign to Thee and eke my vitals too; The soul within my soul is open to Thy view.
Lo, if I speak with Thee, I cry indeed aloud, Or, if I'm mute, my signs my speech to Thee renew.
O Thou to whom indeed no second is conjoined, A wretched lovesick soul and sad to Thee doth sue.
I have a heart that pants for woe, as well Thou knowst; But yet a hope have I, my thoughts confirm it true.
The sacrifice of life, for all its worth be small, Is yet the hardest thing of all that can ensue;
So, an it be Thy will to save me, of Thy grace, Thou, surely, O my hope, art able thereunto!'

Then he cast himself down from the belvedere; but God sent an angel, who bore him up on his wings and brought him to the earth, whole and unhurt. When he found himself safe on the ground, he returned thanks to God (to whom belong might and majesty) for His merciful protection and went straight to his wife, empty-handed. When she saw him, she asked him why he had tarried so long and what was come of that he had taken with him and why he returned empty-handed; whereupon he told her all that had befallen him, and she said, ‘Praised be God, who delivered thee from seduction and intervened between thee and calamity!’ Then she added, ‘O man, the neighbours use to see us light our brasier every night; and if they see us to-night without fire, they will know that we are destitute. Now it behoves us, in gratitude to God, to hide our destitution and join the fast of this night to that of yesterday and continue it for the sake of God the Most High.’ So she rose and filling the brasier with wood, lighted it, to give the neighbours the change, reciting the following verses:

I will conceal what is with me of trouble and distress And light
my fire, that so my strait the neighbours may not guess.
What God decreeth I accept, so haply He may see My
humbleness to Him and so accept of me no less.

Then they made the ablution and stood up to pray. Presently, one of the neighbours’ wives came in and asked leave to take a light from the fire. ‘At thy service,’ answered they: but, when she came to the fire, she cried out, saying, ‘Ho, such an one, (to the platter-maker’s wife,) take up thy bread before it burns!’ Quoth the wife to her husband, ‘Hearest thou what she says?’ ‘Go and look,’ answered he. So she went up to the oven, and behold, it was full of fine white bread. She took up the loaves, thanking God (to whom belong might and majesty) for the abounding good and great bounty He had bestowed on them, and carried them to her husband; and they ate of the bread and drank water and praised God the Most High. Then said the woman to her husband, ‘Come, let us pray to God the Most High, so haply He may vouchsafe us what will quit us of necessity and enable us to dispense with the weariness of toil for daily bread and devote ourselves [wholly] to worshipping Him and keeping His commandments.’ So the man rose and prayed, whilst his wife said

‘Amen’ to his prayer, when, behold, the roof clove in sunder and down fell a ruby, which lit the whole house with its lustre. At this, they rejoiced greatly and redoubled in praise and thanksgiving to God, praying what the Most High willed.

Then, the night being far spent, they lay down to sleep and the woman dreamt that she entered Paradise and saw therein many chairs and stools ranged in rows. She asked what these were and it was answered her, ‘These are the chairs of the prophets and the stools of the just and the pious.’ ‘Which is the stool of such an one, my husband?’ asked she; and it was said to her, ‘Yonder one.’ So she looked and seeing a hole in its side, asked what it was. Quoth they, ‘It is the place of the ruby that came down to you from the roof of your house.’ Thereupon she awoke, weeping and bemoaning the defect in her husband’s stool among the seats of the just; so she told him the dream and said to him, ‘Let us pray God to restore the ruby to its place, for to suffer hunger and poverty during the few days [of our life here] were easier than a default in thy seat among the just in Paradise.’ Accordingly, he prayed to his Lord, and behold, the ruby flew up to the roof [and disappeared,] whilst they looked at it. And they ceased not from their poverty and piety, till they went to the presence of God, to whom belong might and majesty.

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EL HEJJAJ AND THE PIOUS MAN.

It is told that El Hejjaj ben Yousuf eth Thekefi had been long in pursuit of a certain man of the notables, and when he [was at last taken and] came before him, he said to him, ‘O enemy of God, He hath given thee into my hand.’ Then he bade his men hale him to prison and said to them, ‘Lay him in strait and heavy fetters and build a cage over him, that he may not come forth of it nor any go in to him.’ So they bore him to prison and summoned the blacksmith, who came and laid him in irons. Every time the smith gave a stroke with his hammer, the prisoner raised his eyes to heaven and said, ‘Verily, to Him belong creation and commandment!’ Then they built the cage over him and left him therein, deserted and lonely, whereupon longing and consternation entered into him and the tongue of his case recited the following verses:

Wish of the wistful, unto Thee my wishes tend; My trust is in Thy grace, that all doth comprehend.
My case from Thee unhidden is; a look from Thee Is all the goal of my desires, my wishes’ end.
They’ve prisoned me and tried me sore with many a woe: Woe’s me, my strangerhood forlorn, without a friend!
Lone as I am, the thought of Thee my solace is And cheer, though slumber from mine eyes my woes forfend.
Ay, an Thou but accept of me, I reck not, I; What in my heart Thou seest of Thee right well is kenned.

At nightfall, the gaoler left his men to watch him and went to his house. On the morrow, when he repaired to the prison, he found the prisoner gone and the fetters lying on the ground; whereat he was affrighted and made sure of death. So he returned to his house and bade his family farewell, after which he took his shroud and the perfumes for his corpse, in his sleeve, and went in to El Hejjaj. The latter smelt the perfumes and said, ‘What is that?’ ‘O my lord,’ replied the gaoler, ‘it is I who have brought it.’ ‘And what moved thee to that?’ asked the governor; whereupon he told him his case, and El Hejjaj said, ‘Out on thee! Didst thou hear him say aught?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the gaoler. ‘Whilst the blacksmith was riveting his irons, he ceased not to look up to heaven and say, “Verily to Him belong creation and commandment.”’ ‘Woe to thee!’ rejoined El Hejjaj. ‘Dost thou not know that He, on whom he called in thy presence, delivered him in thine absence?’ And the tongue of the case recited the following verses on the subject:

O Lord, how many a trouble Thou away from me hast done! Yea, but for Thee I should nor sit nor stand beneath the sun.
Ay, from how many a parlous case, that I might not endure, Hast Thou, indeed, delivered me, how many and many an one!

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THE BLACKSMITH WHO COULD HANDLE FIRE WITHOUT HURT.

A certain pious man once heard that there abode in such a town a blacksmith who could put his hand into the fire and pull out the red-hot iron, without its doing him any hurt. So he set out for the town in question and enquiring for the blacksmith, watched him at work and saw him do as had been reported to him. He waited till he had made an end of his day's work, then, going up to him, saluted him and said to him, 'I would fain be thy guest this night.' 'With all my heart,' replied the smith, and carried him to his house, where they supped together and lay down to sleep. The guest watched his host, but found no sign of [special] devoutness in him and said to himself, 'Belike, he concealeth himself from me.' So he lodged with him a second and a third night, but found that he did no more than observe the ordinary letter of the law and rose but little in the night [to pray]. At last he said to him, 'O my brother, I have heard of the gift with which God hath favoured thee and have seen the truth of it with mine eyes. Moreover, I have taken note of thine assiduity in religious exercises], but find in thee no special fervour of piety, such as distinguisheth those in whom such miraculous gifts are manifest. Whence, then, cometh this to thee?' 'I will tell thee,' answered the smith.

'Know that I was once passionately enamoured of a certain damsel and required her many a time of love, but could not prevail upon her, for that she still crave fast unto chastity. Presently there came a year of drought and hunger and hardship; food failed and there befell a sore famine in the land. I was sitting one day in my house, when one knocked at the door: so I went out and found her standing there; and she said to me, "O my brother, I am stricken with excessive hunger, and I lift mine eyes to thee, beseeching thee to feed me for God's sake!" Quoth I, "Dost thou not know how I love thee and what I have suffered for thy sake! I will give thee no whit of food, except thou yield thyself to me." But she said, "Better death than disobedience to God." Then she went away and returned after two days with the same petition for food. I made her a like answer, and she entered and sat down, being nigh upon death. I set food before her, whereupon her eyes ran over with tears, and she said, “Give me to eat for the love of God, to whom belong might and majesty!” “Not so, by Allah,” answered I, “except thou yield thyself to me.” Quoth she, “Better is death to me than the wrath of God the Most High.” And she left the food untouched and went away, repeating the following verses:

O Thou the Only God, whose grace embraceth all that be, Thine ears have heard my moan, Thine eyes have seen my misery;
Indeed, privation and distress are heavy on my head; I cannot tell of all the woes that do beleaguer me.
I’m like a man athirst, that looks upon a running stream, Yet may not drink a single draught of all that he doth see.
My flesh would have me buy its will: alack, its pleasures flee! The sin that pays their price abides to all eternity.

I saw no more of her for two days, when she came a third time and knocked at the door. I went out to her, and lo, hunger had taken away her voice; but, [after a little,] she said, “O my brother, I am worn out with want and know not what to do, for I cannot show my face to any but thee. Wilt thou feed me for the love of God the Most High?” “Not so,” answered I, “except thou yield to me.” And she entered and sat down. Now I had no food ready, [so I went out to prepare some]; but, when the meat was dressed and I had laid it in a platter, behold, the grace of God the Most High entered into me and I said to myself, “Out on thee! This woman, weak of wit and faith, hath forborne food, till she can endure from it no longer, for stress of hunger; and lo, she refuseth time after time, and thou still persistest in disobedience to God the Most High!” And I said, “O my God, I repent to Thee of that which I purposed!” Then I took the food and carrying it in to her, said, “Eat and [fear not:] no harm shall betide thee. It is for the love of God, to whom belong might and majesty.” When she heard this, she raised her eyes to heaven and said, “O my God, if this man be sincere, I pray Thee forbid fire to do him hurt in this world and the next, for Thou art He that answereth prayer and art powerful to do whatsoever thou wilt!”

Then I left her and went to put out the fire in the brasier. Now the time was the winter-cold, and a hot coal fell on my body; but, by the ordinance of God, (to whom belong might and majesty), I felt no pain and it was borne in upon me that her prayer had been answered. So I took the coal in my hand, (and it burnt me not,) and going in to her, said, “Rejoice, for God hath granted thy prayer!” And she dropped the morsel from her hand and said, “O my God, now that Thou hast shown me my desire of him and hast granted me my prayer for him, take Thou my soul, for Thou art Almighty!” And straightway He took her soul to Him, the mercy of God be upon her! And the tongue of the case recited and spoke the following verses on the subject:

She prayed and God answered the voice of her prayer And the sinner, who wooed her to lewdness, did spare.
He showed her her wishes accomplished on him And gave her the death that she sought then and there.
She came to his door, hoping succour to get, And sought of him solace to ease her despair.
But he clave to his error and followed his lusts And thought to enjoy her perforce, unaware
Of that which God willed to him. Sudden there came Repentance on him, though he purposed it ne’er.
Fast fated, O God, are men’s fortunes; To man If his destiny fare not, to it he must fare.

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THE DEVOTEE TO WHOM GOD GAVE A CLOUD TO SERVE HIM AND THE DEVOUT KING.

There was once among the children of Israel a man of the devout, renowned for piety and continence and asceticism. He was a wanderer in the mountains and was used to pass the night in prayer; and God answered his prayers and gave him all he asked. Moreover, He had subjected to him a cloud, that journeyed with him, wherever he went, and poured water on him copiously, that he might make his ablutions and drink. After a time, his fervour abated, whereupon God took the cloud away from him and ceased to answer his prayers. Great was his grief because of this, and he ceased not to regret the time of grace and divine favour and to lament and bemoan himself, till, one night, he saw in a dream one who said to him, 'An thou wouldst have God restore thee thy cloud, seek out such a king, in such a town, and beg him to pray for thee: so will God give thee back thy cloud, by virtue of his pious prayers.' And he repeated the following verses:

I rede thee to the pious prince repair, Who's powerful to order thine affair.
An he pray God for thee, the thing thou seekst Of rain galore shall reach thee at his prayer.
Among the Kings in worth he doth excel And is illustrious beyond compare.
Yea, thou with him shalt surely light on that Shall gladden thee and do away thy care;
Fare, then, o'er plains and deserts to his stead And leave not journeying till thou find him there.

When the hermit awoke, he set out for the town, to which he had been directed by the dream, and coming thither, enquired for the King's palace. At the gate he found an officer sitting on a great chair and clad in splendid apparel; so he saluted him and he returned his salutation and said to him, 'What is thy business?' 'I am a wronged man,' answered the devotee, 'and come to prefer my complaint to the

King.’ Quoth the officer, ‘Thou mayst not win to him to-day; for he hath appointed unto petitioners such a day in every seven, on which they may go in to him; so go thy ways soberly till then.’ The hermit was vexed with the King for thus sequestering himself from the folk and said in himself, ‘How shall this man be of the friends of God (to whom belong might and majesty) and be on this wise?’ Then he went away and awaited the day of audience.

When it came, he repaired to the palace, where he found a number of folk at the gate, awaiting admission, and stood with them, till there came out a Vizier, clad in rich raiment and attended by guards and servants, who said, ‘Let those, who have petitions to present, enter.’ So the hermit entered with the rest and found the King seated in the midst of his officers and grandees. The Vizier took up his post before him and brought forward the petitioners, one by one, till it came to the hermit’s turn, when the King looked on him and said, ‘Welcome to the lord of the cloud! Sit down, till I be at leisure for thee.’

The hermit was confounded at his words and confessed his dignity and excellence; and when the King had made an end with the petitioners, he rose and dismissed his Viziers and grandees; then, taking the stranger by the hand, he carried him to the door of the [inner] palace, where they found a black slave, splendidly arrayed, with a helmet on his head and on his right hand and his left bows and coats of mail. He rose and hastening to obey the King’s commandment, opened the door, and they went in, hand in hand, till they came to a low door, which the King opened himself and brought the hermit into a ruinous and neglected building and a chamber, wherein was nought but a prayer-carpet, an ewer for ablution and some mats of palm-leaves. Here the King put off his royal habit and donned a gown of coarse white wool and a tall cap of felt. Then he sat down and making the hermit sit, called out to his wife, who answered from within, saying, ‘Here am I.’ Quoth he, ‘Knowst thou who is our guest to-day?’ ‘Yes,’ replied she; ‘it is the lord of the cloud.’ And the King said, ‘Come in: it matters not for him.’ So there entered a woman, as she were a vision, with a face that glittered like the new moon; and she was clad in a gown and veil of coarse wool. Then said the King, ‘O my brother, dost thou desire to hear our story or that we should pray for thee and let thee go?’ ‘Nay,’ answered the hermit; 'I wish to hear your story, for I long to know it.'

'Know then,' said the King, 'that my forefathers handed down the throne, one to the other, and it descended from great one to great one, in unbroken succession, till it came to me. Now God had made this hateful to me, for I would fain have gone a-wandering, a pilgrim, over the earth and left the folk to govern themselves; but I feared lest they should fall into temptation and anarchy and swerve from the law of God, and the union of the Faith be broken up. Wherefore I took upon me the kingship and appointed to every head of them a set stipend and donned the royal robes and posted officers at the doors, as a terror to evil doers and for the defence of honest folk and the maintenance of law and order. When I had made an end of this, I entered this place and putting off my royal habit, donned these clothes thou seest; and this my uncle's daughter is agreed with me to renounce the world and helps me to serve God. So we use to weave these palm-leaves [into mats or baskets] and earn, in the course of the day, wherewithal to break our fast at night- fall; and thus have we lived nigh upon forty years. Abide thou with us, so God have mercy on thee, till we sell our mats; so shalt thou sup and sleep with us this night and on the morrow go thy ways with that thou desirest, so it please God the Most High.'

So he abode with them till the end of the day, when there came a boy five [feet] high, who took the mats they had made and carrying them to the market, sold them for a carat. With this he bought bread and beans and returned with them to the King. The hermit supped and lay down to sleep with them; but, in the middle of the night, they both arose and fell to praying and weeping. When daybreak was near, the King said, 'O my God, this Thy servant beseeches Thee to return him his cloud; and Thou art able to this; so, O my God, answer Thou his prayer and restore him his cloud.' The Queen said 'Amen' to his prayer and behold, the cloud appeared in the sky; whereupon the King gave the hermit joy and the latter took leave of them and went away, the cloud following him as of old. Moreover, whatsoever he required of God after this, in the names of the pious King and Queen, He granted it to him; and he made thereon the following verses:

God ‘mongst His servants hath elect, whose pious souls, I ween,
Range in the gardens of His love, untroubled and serene.
Their bodies’ lusts at peace are grown and trouble them no more,
For that which harbours in their breasts of hearts made pure and clean.
One sees them silent, bearing them right humbly to their Lord,
For they His mysteries behold, unseen as well as seen.*John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents*

THE MUSLIM CHAMPION AND THE CHRISTIAN DAMSEL.

The Khalif Omar ben el Khettab (whom God accept) once levied an army of Muslims, to encounter the enemy before Damascus, and they laid strait siege to one of the Christians' strengths. Now there were among the Muslims two men, brothers, whom God had gifted with valour and daring against the foe, so that the commander of the besieged fortress said to his captains and champions, 'Were but yonder two taken or slain, I would warrant you against the rest of the Muslims.' Wherefore they set for them all manner of snares and ambushes and ceased not to lie in wait for them, till, at last, they took one of them prisoner and slew the other, who died a martyr. They carried the prisoner to their general, who looked at him and said, 'To kill this man were pity; but his return to the Muslims would be a calamity. Would he might be brought to embrace the Christian Faith and be to us an aid and a support!' 'O Amir,' answered one of his knights, 'I will bring him to abjure his faith, and on this wise. We know that the Arabs are passionately fond of women, and I have a daughter of surpassing beauty and grace, whom when he sees, he will be ravished by her.' Quoth the general, 'I give him into thy charge: take him.'

So he carried him to his house and set food before him. Moreover, he clad his daughter in raiment, such as added to her beauty and grace, and made her stand before the Muslim, as she were a handmaid obedient to her lord and awaiting his commandment, that she might fulfil it. When the prisoner saw the snare that was set for him, he commended himself to God the Most High for protection and closing his eyes, applied himself to prayer and reciting the Koran. Now he had a mellow voice and a penetrating wit; and the young lady fell passionately in love with him and said in herself, 'Would God he would consent to admit me into the Faith of Islam! And the tongue of her case recited the following verses:

Wilt turn away, from me whose soul is thrall to thee, thy face,
From me whose life thy ransom is, whose heart thy dwelling-place?

Indeed, my people I will well to leave and leave a faith Other than that of the sharp sword; yea, Islam I embrace

And testify that there's no Lord save God and God alone; For constant is the proof thereof and doubt can find no place.

Union, mayhap, will He decree with one that is averse And ease a heart distressed for love and longing, of His grace.

For oft-times doors are open thrown, that erst were shut, and he Is granted his desires, whom woe hath brought to sorry case.

She abode thus seven days, till her patience failed her and her breast was straitened and she threw herself at his feet, saying, 'I conjure thee by thy faith, give ear unto my words!' 'What are they?' asked he; and she said, 'Expound unto me Islam.' So he expounded to her the tenets of the Faith, and she became a Muslim, after which she purified herself and he taught her to pray. Then said she to him, 'Know, O my brother, that I did but embrace Islam for thy sake and to win thy favour.' Quoth he, 'The law of Islam forbids sexual commerce between man and woman, save after a marriage before two legal witnesses, and a dowry and next friend [for the woman] are also requisite. Now I know not where to find witnesses or next friend or dowry; but, if thou canst make shift to bring us out of this place, I hope to win to the land of Islam, and I vow to thee that none other in Islam shall be wife to me than thou.' 'I will contrive this,' answered she and calling her father and mother, said to them, 'This Muslim's heart is softened and he inclineth to enter our faith, so I will grant him that which he desireth of me; but he says, "It were not fitting for me to do this in a town where my brother was slain. Could I but come without it, my heart would be diverted [from the thought of him] and I would do that which is required of me.'' Now there is no harm in letting me go forth with him to another place, and I will be warrant to you and to the Amir for that which ye require of him.'

So her father went to their chief and told him of this, whereat he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and bade carry them forth the town to a village that she named. So they went out to the village, where they abode the rest of that day, and at nightfall, they made ready to set out and fare upon their way, even as saith the poet:

“The time of departure,” quoth they, “draweth nigh:” And “How oft will ye threat me with parting?” I cry.
No business have I but to traverse the earth, Mile by mile and o’er deserts forever to hie.
If the loved ones prick forth tow’rds a land, for their sake, Once again of the sons of the road become I.
On my longing, to guide me to them, I rely, And it shows me the way nor directs me awry.

The young Muslim mounted a swift horse and took the girl up behind him, and they set out and fared on all that night till morning, when he turned aside with her from the highway and alighting, they made the ablution and prayed the morning prayer. As they were thus engaged, they heard the clank of arms and ring of bridles and men’s voices and tramp of horse; whereupon he said to her, ‘O such an one, the Christians are upon us! What shall we do? For the horse is jaded, so that he cannot go another step.’ ‘Out on thee!’ exclaimed she. ‘Art thou then afraid?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he; and she said, ‘What didst thou tell me of the power of thy Lord and His readiness to succour those who cry to Him? Come, let us make supplication to Him and beseech Him: surely, He will vouchsafe us His succour and visit us with His grace, glorified and exalted be He!’ ‘By Allah,’ rejoined he, ‘thou sayst well!’ So they betook themselves to prayer and supplication to God the Most High, and he recited these verses:

Indeed, I stand in need of Thee all seasons, foul or fair, What though with diadem and crown my brows encompassed were.
Thou art the chiefest of my wants, and could my hand but win This its desire, no other want were left to me whate’er.
Nought that Thou hast withholdest Thou; the outflow of Thy grace Is as a torrent or a shower, that’s lavished everywhere.
By my transgression am I shut therefrom, yet is the light Of Thy compassion, Clement One, resplendent past compare.
O Care-Dispeller, that, wherewith I stricken am, dispel; For there is none save Thou alone can do away this care.

Whilst he was praying and she saying, ‘Amen,’ and the tramp of horse nearing them the while, behold, he heard the voice of his dead brother, the martyr, speaking and saying, ‘O my brother, fear not, but be of good cheer; for these thou hearest are the host of God and His angels, whom He hath sent to serve as witnesses to your marriage. Verily, the angels of God the Most High are emulous of you, and He bestoweth on you the recompense of the blessed and the martyrs and hath rolled up the earth for you [as it were a carpet], so that, by morning, you will be in the mountains of Medina. And thou [O man], whenas thou foregatherest with Omar ben el Khettab, (of whom God accept,) give him my salutation and say to him, “May God abundantly requite thee for Islam, for thou hast dealt faithfully and striven diligently.”’ Thereupon the angels lifted up their voices in salutation to him and his wife, saying, ‘Verily, God the Most High appointed her in marriage to thee two thousand years before your father Adam (on whom be peace) was created.’ Then joy and gladness and peace and cheer overcame the twain; assurance was confirmed and stablished was the vocation of the God-fearing pair. So they prayed the fore-dawn prayer and fared forward; and when the day broke and the light appeared to them, they saw [in the distance] the standards of Medina and the Khalif and a company of Muslims issuing forth to meet them.

Now it was Omar’s wont to rise for morning-prayer in the darkness before dawn, and bytimes he would proceed to the mosque, followed by two men, and standing in the prayer-niche, begin by reciting the chapter of the Cattle or that of Women; whereupon the sleeper awoke and he who was in act to make the ablution accomplished it and he who was afar came to prayer; nor had he made an end of [the prayers of] the first inclination, before the mosque was full of people; then would he pray his second inclination, repeating a short chapter in haste. But, on the morning in question, he hurried over his devotions, both first and second inclinations, repeating in each a short chapter; then, turning to his companions, said to them, ‘Come, let us go out to meet the bride and bridegroom;’ at which they wondered, understanding not his words; but he went out and they followed him, till they came to the gate of the city, where they met the young Muslim and his bride coming towards them and saluted them. Omar carried the bride and bridegroom into Medina and bade make a marriage-feast; and the Muslims came and ate. Then the young Muslim went in to his bride, and God the Most High vouchsafed him children by her, who fought in His way and preserved their genealogies, for they gloried therein. And how excellent is what is said on the subject:

I saw thee weeping at the gates and moaning passing sore, Whilst all, except the curious, to answer thee forbore.
Hath evil eye ensorcelled thee or hath misfortune fall'n On thee and doth a barrier keep thee from the loved one's door?
Awake, O wretch, devote thyself this day to God His praise; Repent and turn thee to the Lord, as men have turned of yore.
The rains of the Forgiving One, belike, shall wash away The past and on the sinner's head the grace of God shall pour;
Ay, and the captive, shackled though he be, shall yet escape, And in the prison of God's wrath the slave shall pine no more.

And they ceased not to be in all delight and solace of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies.

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IBRAHIM BEN EL KHAWWAS AND THE CHRISTIAN KING'S DAUGHTER.

(Quoth Sidi Ibrahim ben el Khawwas, on whom be the mercy of God), My soul was instant with me, once upon a time, to go forth into the country of the infidels; and I strove with it and essayed to put away this thought from me, but it persisted and would not be denied. So I went forth and journeyed about the land of the unbelievers and traversed it in all its parts, for the grace of God enveloped me and His protection encompassed me, so that I met not a Christian, but he turned away his eyes and held aloof from me, till I came to a great city at whose gate I found a company of black slaves, clad in armour and bearing iron maces in their hands. When they saw me, they rose to their feet and said to me, 'Art thou a physician?' I said, 'Yes.' Quoth they, 'By order of the King,' and carried me before their monarch, who was a handsome man of majestic aspect. When I came into his presence, he looked at me and said, 'Art thou a physician?' 'Yes,' answered I; and he said to his officers, 'Carry him to her and acquaint him with the condition, ere he enter.' So they took me out and said to me, 'Know that the King hath a daughter, who is stricken with a sore distemper, which no physician hath availed to cure: and none goeth in to her and treateth her, without curing her, but the King putteth him to death. So bethink thee what thou wilt do?' Quoth I, 'The King sent me to her; so carry me to her.' Accordingly, they brought me to her door and knocked; and I heard her cry out from within, saying, 'Admit the physician, lord of the wondrous secret!' And she recited the following verses:

Open the door, for the physician's here; And see, I have a secret wonder-dear.
How many near in spirit distant are! How many spirit-distant yet are near!
I was an exile midst you, but the Truth Willed that my solace should eftsoon appear.
Religious kinship bound us and we met, As lover and belov'd, in joy and cheer.

He summoned me to meeting; but the spy And censor ‘twixt our loves did interfere.
Out on ye! Leave your chiding and your prate; For unto you I may not lend an ear.
With that which passes by I’ve no concern; Upon the eternal things my hopes I rear.

And behold, an old man opened the door in haste and said to me, ‘Enter.’ So I entered and found myself in a saloon strewn with sweet-scented herbs and with a curtain drawn across one corner, from behind which came a sound of groaning, weak as from an emaciated body. I sat down before the curtain and was about to pronounce the salutation, when I bethought me of the words of him whom God bless and preserve, ‘Accost not a Jew nor a Christian with the salutation, and when ye meet them in the way, constrain them to the straitest part thereof.’ So I held my peace, but she cried out from behind the curtain, saying, ‘Where is the salutation, that is due from one true believer in the Unity of God and His indivisibility to another, O Khawwas?’ I was astonished at her speech and said, ‘How knowest thou me?’ ‘When the heart and thoughts are pure,’ answered she, ‘the tongue speaks clearly from the secret places of the soul. I besought Him yesterday to send me one of His saints, at whose hands I might have deliverance, and behold, it was cried to me from the recesses of my house, “Grieve not; for we will send thee Ibrahim el Khawwas.”’ Then said I to her, ‘What ails thee?’ ‘It is now four years,’ answered she, ‘since there appeared to me the manifest Truth, and He [or it] is the story-teller, the comrade, the ally; whereupon my folk looked upon me with evil eyes and taxed me with madness, and there came not in to me physician or visitor from them, but terrified and confounded me.’ ‘And who led thee to the knowledge of the true faith?’ asked I. ‘God’s manifest signs and His visible portents,’ replied she; ‘and when the road is patent to thee, thou seest with thine own eyes both proof and prover.’

Whilst we were talking, in came the old man affected to her guard and said to her, ‘What doth thy physician?’ Quoth she, ‘He knoweth the disease and hath hit upon the remedy.’ When he heard this, he manifested joy and gladness and accosted me with a cheerful favour, then went and told the King, who bade him entreat me with all consideration. So I visited her daily for seven days, at the end of which time she said to me, ‘O Abou Ishac, when shall be our flight to the land of Islam?’ ‘How canst thou go forth,’ replied I, ‘and who would dare to attempt thine escape?’ ‘He,’ rejoined she, ‘who sent thee to me.’ ‘Thou sayst well,’ answered I. So on the morrow, we went out by the gate of the city and [men’s] eyes were veiled from us, by His commandment, [who] when He desireth aught, saith to it, ‘Be,’ and it is; so that I journeyed with her in safety to Mecca, where she abode by the House of God seven years, till the days of her life came to an end. The earth of Mecca was her tomb, and never saw I any more steadfast in prayer and fasting than she, may God send down His mercies upon her and have compassion on him who saith:

When they brought me the physician (and indeed upon my face
Sickness and constant floods of tears had left full many a trace,)
He drew the veil away and saw nought neath it but a soul Sans
life or body or aught else to fill the empty place.
“Indeed,” said he to them, “a thing uneath is this to cure; Love
hath a secret not to win by sheer conjecture’s grace.”
Quoth they, “An one know not what is therein and if there be No
way its nature to define and symptoms to embrace,
How then shall medicine thereon have anywise effect?” Leave
me; indeed, I will not judge, by guess-work, of the case.

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THE JUSTICE OF PROVIDENCE.

A certain prophet once worshipped on a high mountain, at whose foot was a spring of running water, and he was wont to sit by day on the mountain-top, where none could see him, calling upon the name of God the Most High and watching those who came to the spring. One day, as he sat looking on the spring, there came up a horseman, who dismounted thereby and taking a bag from his neck, laid it down beside him, after which he drank of the water and rested awhile, then mounted and rode away, leaving the bag behind him. Presently up came another man, to drink of the spring, who saw the bag and finding it full of gold, took it up and made off with it in safety, after he had drunken. A little after, came a woodcutter, with a heavy faggot on his back, and sat down by the spring to drink, when, behold, back came the horseman, in great concern, and said to him, 'Where is the bag [with the thousand dinars] that was here?' 'I know nothing of it,' replied the woodcutter, whereupon the other drew his sword and smote him and killed him. Then he searched his clothes, but found nothing; so he left him and went away.

When the prophet saw this, he said, 'O Lord, this man hath been slain unjustly, for another had the thousand dinars.' But God answered him, saying, 'Busy thyself with thy service, for the ordering of the affairs of the universe is none of thine affair. Know that the horseman's father had despoiled the second man's father of a thousand dinars; so I gave the son possession of his father's money. As for the woodcutter, he had slain the horseman's father, wherefore I enabled the son to avenge himself.' Then said the prophet, 'Verily, there is none other god than Thou! Glory to Thee! Thou [alone] knowest the hidden things.' Moreover, one of the poets hath made the following verses on the matter:

The prophet saw what to the eyes of men was evident And fell a-questioning of that which mortal sight outwent.
When what they apprehended not his eyes beheld, "O Lord, What is this thing?" quoth he. "Yon man that's slain was innocent.
One, without travail or fatigue, to riches did attain, Although in

poor and needy guise himself he did present;

And, O Creator of mankind, this other one was slain, For all he had committed nought that called for punishment."

"Know," answered God, "his father's good it was thou sawst him take; It came to him by heritage, by right of free descent.

The woodcutter the horseman's sire had slain; so, when his son The occasion found, he took his wreak of him, incontinent.

Put off this thought from thee, for We have, in created things, A secret that of human sight transcendeth the extent.

Submit thee to Our laws and bow unto Our might, for know, Our ordinance for profit works and eke for detriment."

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THE FERRYMAN OF THE NILE AND THE HERMIT.

(Quoth a certain pious man), I was once a ferryman on the Nile and used to ply between the eastern and the western banks. One day, as I sat in my boat, waiting for custom, there came up to me an old man of a bright countenance, clad in a patched gown and bearing in his hand a gourd- bottle and a staff. He saluted me and I returned his greeting; and he said to me, 'Wilt thou ferry me over and give me to eat for the love of God the Most High?' 'With all my heart,' answered I. So he entered the boat and I rowed him over to the eastern side. When he was about to land, he said to me, 'I desire to lay a trust on thee.' Quoth I, 'What is it?' 'Know,' rejoined he, 'that God hath revealed to me that [my end is at hand and that] thou wilt come to me to-morrow, after the hour of noon, and wilt find me dead under yonder tree. Wash me and wrap me in the shroud thou wilt find under my head and bury me in the sand, after thou hast prayed over me and taken my gown and bottle and staff, which do thou deliver to one who will come and require them of thee.' And I marvelled at his word.

Next day, I forgot what he had said till near the hour of afternoon-prayer, when I remembered and hastening to the appointed place, found him under the tree, dead, with a new shroud by his head, exhaling a fragrance of musk. So I washed him and shrouded him and prayed over him, then dug a hole in the sand and buried him, after I had taken his gown and bottle and staff, with which I rowed back to the western side and passed the night there.

On the morrow, as soon as the city gate was opened, there came to me a young man, whom I had known as a lewd fellow, clad in fine clothes and his hands stained with henna, and said to me, 'Art thou not such an one [the ferryman]?' 'Yes,' answered I; and he said, 'Give me what thou hast in trust for me.' Quoth I, 'What is that?' 'The gown, the bottle and the staff,' replied he. 'Who told thee of them?' asked I; and he answered, 'I know nothing save that I was yesterday at the wedding of one of my friends and spent the night singing [and making merry,] till hard upon day, when I lay down to sleep and take rest; and behold, there stood by me one who said to me, ‘God the Most High hath taken such an one the hermit to Himself and hath appointed thee to fill his place; so go to so and so, the ferryman, and take of him the dead man’s gown and bottle and staff, that he left with him for thee.’ So I brought them out and gave them to him, whereupon he put off his clothes and donned the gown, then taking the gourd and staff, went his way and left me.

I fell a-weeping for wonder and pity; but, that night, whilst I slept, the Lord of Glory (blessed and exalted be He) appeared to me in a dream and said to me, ‘O My servant, is it grievous to thee that I have granted to one of My servants to return to Me? Indeed, this is of My bounty, that I vouchsafe to whom I will, for I am able to do all things.’ And I repeated the following verses:

The lover with the Loved of will’s bereaved quite; All choice to thee’s forbid, an but thou know aright.
Whether to thee He grant favour and grace or hold Aloof from thee nowise may blame upon Him light.
His very rigours, e’en, except thou glory in, Away! Thou hast no call to stand with the contrite.
Knowst not His presence from His absence? Then art thou In real and that thou seek’st in front and out of sight.
If I be haled away to slaughter for Thy sake Or yearning yield Thee up the last spark of my spright,
’Tis in Thy hand; hold off, grant or deny, ’tis one; At that which Thou ordainst ’tis vain to rail or flite.
No aim in this my love have I but Thine approof; So, an thou choose to hold aloof, ’tis good and right.

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THE KING OF THE ISLAND.

There was once a rich and notable man of the children of Israel, who had a pious and blessed son. When the former's last hour drew nigh, his son sat down at his head and said to him, 'O my lord, give me an injunction.' 'Dear my son,' replied his father, 'I charge thee, swear not by God, whether truly or falsely.' Then he died and certain lewd fellows of the children of Israel heard of the injunction he had laid on his son and fell to coming to the latter and saying, 'Thy father had such and such monies of mine, and thou knowest it; so give me what is due to me or else make oath [to the contrary].' The man would not disobey his father's injunction, so gave them all they claimed; and they ceased not to deal thus with him, till his wealth was exhausted and he fell into sore distress.

Now he had a pious and blessed wife, who had borne him two little sons; so he said to her, 'The folk have multiplied claims on me and what while I had wherewithal to quit myself of them, I stinted not to give it up; but now there is nothing left us, and if others make claim upon me, we shall be distressed and tormented, I and thou; so it were better for us to flee to some place, where none knows us, and earn our bread among the uttermost of the folk.' Accordingly, he took ship with her and his two children, knowing not whither he should go; but God decreeth; there is no reverser of His decrees; and quoth the tongue of the case:

O thou, that thy dwelling departest for fear of the foe And ease in thy flight overtakes thee and freedom from woe,
Grudge not at estrangement, for often the exile, by length Of distance from homestead and country, right puissant doth grow.
If the pearls in the prison abided for aye of their shells, Kings' crowns to them never were given for dwelling, I trow.

The ship was wrecked, but the man and his wife and children saved themselves, each on a plank. The waves separated them and the wife was cast up in one country and the elder son in another. The second son was picked up by a ship, and the waves threw the father on a desert island, where he landed and made the ablution. Then he pronounced the call to prayer and fell to his devotions, when, behold, there came up out of the sea creatures of various colours and prayed with him. When he had finished, he went up to a tree and stayed his hunger with its fruits; after which he found a spring of water and drank thereof and praised God, to whom belong might and majesty. He abode thus three days and whenever he stood up to pray, the sea-creatures came out and prayed like as he prayed.

On the fourth day, he heard one crying aloud and saying, ‘O just man, that didst so piously honour thy father and so reverest the decrees of thy Lord, grieve not, for God requiteth thee that which thou hast lost. In this island are treasures and things of price, which God willeth thou shalt inherit, and they are in such a place; so bring thou them to light. Moreover, we will send ships unto thee; and do thou bestow largesse on the folk and bid them to thee, and we will incline their hearts unto thee.’ So he sought out the appointed place, and God (to whom belong might and majesty) discovered to him the treasures in question. Then ships resorted to him, and he gave abundant largesse to the crews, saying to them, ‘Direct the folk unto me and I will give them such and such things and appoint to them this and that.’ Accordingly, there came folk from all parts and countries, nor had ten years passed over him, before the island was peopled and he became its king. None repaired to him, but he entreated him with munificence, and his report was noised abroad throughout the length and breadth of the earth.

Now his elder son had fallen into the hands of a man, who reared him and instructed him in all manner of polite accomplishments; and in like manner, the younger was adopted by one who gave him a good education and brought him up for a merchant. As for their mother, she happened upon a merchant, who gave her charge over his property and made a covenant with her that he would not deal traitorously by her, but would aid her to obey God (to whom belong might and majesty); and he used to carry her with him in his travels by sea and land. Now the elder son heard the report of the King, without knowing who he was; so he made for the island and was well received by the King, who made him his private secretary. After awhile, the other son also sought out the King, attracted by the fame of his piety and justice, and was made by him his steward.

They abode awhile in his service, neither knowing other, till it chanced that the merchant aforesaid, hearing of the King's beneficence and generous dealing with the folk, freighted a ship with rich stuffs and other of the best of the produce of the country, and taking the woman with him, set sail for the island. He arrived there in due course and landing, presented himself before the King with his gift. The latter rejoiced therein with an exceeding joy and ordered him a splendid recompense. Now there were, among the gifts, certain drugs, of which he would have the merchant acquaint him with the names and uses; so he said to him, 'Abide with us this night.' Quoth he, 'I have in the ship a pious woman whom God hath committed to my ward, and I have promised her to entrust the care of her to none but myself; for indeed I build upon her prayers and have felt the blessing of her counsels.' 'I will send her two trusty men,' rejoined the King, 'who shall pass the night in the ship and guard her and all that is with her.' The merchant agreed to this and abode with the King, who called his secretary and steward and said to them, 'Go and pass the night in this man's ship and keep it safe, if it please God the Most High.'

So they went up into the ship and seating themselves, one in the bows and the other on the poop, passed a part of the night in repeating the praises of God (to whom belong might and majesty). Then said one to the other, 'Harkye, such an one! The King bade us keep watch and I fear lest sleep overtake us; so, come, let us discourse of stories of fortune and of the good and evil chances we have seen.' 'O my brother,' replied the other, 'as for my tribulations, fate parted me from my mother and a brother of mine, whose name was even as thine; and it befell thus. My father took ship with us from such a place, and the winds and waves rose against us and were contrary, so that the ship was wrecked and God sundered our union.' 'What was the name of thy mother, O my brother?' asked the first. 'So and so,' answered the other. 'And of thy father?' 'So and so.' When the first one heard this, he threw himself upon the other's neck, saying, 'By Allah, thou art my very brother!' And each fell to telling the other what had befallen him in his youth, whilst their mother heard all they said, but held her peace and constrained her soul to patience.

When it was morning, one brother said to the other, ‘Come, brother, let us go to my lodging and talk there.’ ‘It is well,’ replied the other. So they went away and presently, the merchant came back and finding the woman in great concern, said to her, ‘What hath befallen thee?’ Quoth she, ‘Thou sentest to me yesternight men who purposed ill to me, and I have been sore troubled with them.’ At this, he was wroth and going in to the King, made his complaint to him. Now the King loved the two brothers, for that which he had noted in them of virtue and trustworthiness; so he summoned them forth- with and sending for the woman, that he might hear from her own lips what she had to say against them, said to her, ‘O woman, what complaint hast thou against these two men?’ ‘O King,’ replied she, ‘I conjure thee, by the Great God, the Bountiful One, the Lord of the Ninth heaven, bid them repeat the words they spoke yesternight.’ So he said to them, ‘Repeat what ye said and conceal nought thereof.’ Accordingly, they repeated their conversation, and behold, the King gave a great cry and rising from his throne, threw himself upon them, saying, ‘By Allah, ye are my very sons!’ Therewith the woman discovered her face and said, ‘And I am their mother.’ So they were all united and abode in all delight and solace of life, until death separated them. So glory be to Him who delivereth His servant, whenas he resorteth to Him, and disappointeth not his hope and his trust in Him! And how well saith the poet on the subject:

Each thing hath its appointed time, to its predestinate: With God, my brother, to confirm it lies or abrogate.
Repine thou not at any thing wherewith thou stricken art; For troubles oft in prosperous times do lie for us in wait.
How many an one lies down to sleep, afflicted with what seems A strait, but is at heart a cause of joy and fortunate!
How many a wretch, on whom men’s eyes look hatred and contempt, Is by God’s wonder-working grace redeemed from low estate!
Lo, this is one who did endure affliction aforetime; Hurt and distress were sore on him and unrelenting fate.

Time severed him from those he held most dear, and each from each, After long union of their loves, was forced to separate.

But his Lord gave him fortune fair and brought him those he loved. In all God doth are monishments for men to meditate.

Glory to Him whose providence embraces all that be, Whose presence ever near to us, clear proofs do intimate.

He is the Near One, whom no wit conceiveth nor indeed Days' journeys nearer bring to us nor of His distance bate!*John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents*

ABOULHUSN ED DURRAJ AND ABOU JAAFER THE LEPER.

(Quoth Aboulhusn ed Durraj), I had been many times to Mecca (which God increase in honour) and the folk used to follow me by reason of my knowledge of the road and the watering-places. It chanced one year that I was minded to make the pilgrimage to the Holy House of God and visit the tomb of His prophet (on whom be peace and blessing), and I said to myself, 'I know the road and will go alone.' So I set out and journeyed till I came to El Cadesiyeh and entering the mosque there, saw a leper seated in the prayer-niche. When he saw me, he said to me, 'O Aboulhusn, I crave thy company to Mecca. Quoth I to myself, 'I wished to avoid companions, and how shall I company with lepers?' So I said to him, 'I will bear no one company.' And he was silent.

Next day I continued my journey alone, till I came to Acabeh, where I entered the mosque and was amazed to find the leper seated in the prayer-niche. 'Glory be to God!' said I in myself. 'How hath this fellow foregone me hither?' But he raised his eyes to me and said, smiling, 'O Aboulhusn, He doth for the weak that which the strong wonder at!' I passed that night in perplexity, confounded at what I had seen, and in the morning set out again by myself; but when I came to Arafat and entered the mosque, behold, there was the leper seated in the niche! So I threw myself upon him and kissing his feet, said, 'O my lord, I crave thy company.' But he said, 'This may nowise be.' Whereupon I fell a-weeping and lamenting, and he said, 'Peace: weeping will avail thee nothing.' And he recited the following verses:

For my estrangement dost thou weep, — whenas it came from
thee, — And restoration dost implore, when none, alas! may be?
Thou sawst my weakness and disease, as it appeared, and saidst,
"He goes nor comes, or night or day, for this his malady."
Seest not that God (exalted be His glory) to His slave
Vouchsafeth all he can conceive of favours fair and free!
If I, to outward vision, be as it appears and eke In body, for

despite of Fate, e'en that which thou dost see,
And eke no victual though I have, unto the holy place Where crowds unto my Lord resort, indeed, to carry me,
I have a Maker, hidden are His bounties unto me; Yea, there's no parting me from Him, and without peer is He.
Depart from me in peace and leave me and my strangerhood; For with the lonely exile still the One shall company.

So I left him and continued my journey; and every stage I came to, I found him before me, till I came to Medina, where I lost sight of him and could hear no news of him. Here I met Abou Yezid el Bustani and Abou Bekr es Shibli and a number of other doctors, to whom I told my case and they said, 'God forbid that thou shouldst gain his company after this! This was Abou Jaafer the leper, in whose name, at all tides, the folk pray for rain and by whose blessing prayers are answered.' When I heard this, my longing for his company redoubled and I implored God to reunite me with him. Whilst I was standing on Arafat, one plucked me from behind, so I turned and behold it was Abou Jaafer. At this sight, I gave a loud cry and fell down in a swoon; but, when I came to myself, he was gone.

This increased my yearning for him and the ways were straitened upon me and I prayed God to give me sight of him; nor was it but a few days after, when one pulled me from behind, and I turned and behold, it was he again. Quoth he, 'I conjure thee, ask thy desire of me.' So I begged him to pray three prayers to God for me; first, that He would make me love poverty; secondly, that I might never lie down to sleep upon known provision; and thirdly, that He the Bountiful One would vouchsafe me to look upon His face. So he prayed for me, as I wished, and departed from me. And indeed God hath granted me the first two prayers; for He hath made me in love with poverty, so that, by Allah, there is nought in the world dearer to me than it, and since such a year, I have never lain down upon assured provision; yet hath He never let me lack of aught. As for the third prayer, I trust that He will vouchsafe me that also, even as He hath granted the two others, for He is bountiful and excellently beneficent. And may God have mercy on him who saith:

Renouncement, lowliness, the fakir’s garments be; In patched and tattered clothes still fares the devotee.

Pallor adorneth him, as, on their latest nights, The moons with pallor still embellished thou mayst see.

Long rising up by night to pray hath wasted him, And from his lids the tears stream down, as ‘twere a sea.

The thought of God to him his very housemate is; For bosom-friend, by night, th’ Omnipotent hath he.

God the Protector helps the fakir in his need, And birds and beasts no less to succour him agree.

On his account, the wrath of God on men descends, And by his grace, the rains fall down on wood and lea.

And if he pray one day to do away a plague, The oppressor’s slain and men from tyrants are made free;

For all the folk are sick, afflicted and diseased, And he’s the pitying leach withouten stint or fee.

His forehead shines; an thou but look upon his face, Thy heart is calmed, the lights of heaven appear to thee.

O thou that shunnest these, their virtues knowing not, Woe’s thee! Thou’rt shut from them by thine iniquity.

Thou think’st them to o’ertake, for all thou’rt fettered fast; Thy sins from thy desire do hinder thee, perdie.

Thou wouldst to them consent and rivers from thine eyes Would run for them, if thou their excellence couldst see.

Uneath to him to smell, who’s troubled with a rheum, Are flowers; the broker knows what worth the garments be.

So supplicate thy Lord right humbly for His grace, And Providence, belike, shall help thy constancy;

And thou shalt win thy will and from estrangement’s stress And eke rejection’s pains shall be at rest and free.

The asylum of His grace is wide enough for all That seek: The One True God, the Conqueror is He!*John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents*

THE QUEEN OF SERPENTS

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, a Grecian sage called Daniel, who had scholars and disciples, and the wise men of Greece were obedient to his commandment and relied upon his learning; but God had denied him a son. One night, as he lay musing and weeping over the lack of a son, to whom he might bequeath his learning, he bethought himself that God (blessed and exalted be He) gives ear unto the prayer of those who resort to him and that there is no doorkeeper at the gate of His bounties and that He favours whom He will without stint and sends none empty away. So he besought the Most High, the Bountiful, to vouchsafe him a son, to succeed him, and to endow him abundantly with His favours. Then he returned and lay with his wife, who conceived by him the same night.

A few days after this he took ship for a certain place, but the ship was wrecked and he saved himself on a plank, with the loss of all his books, save only five leaves thereof. When he returned home, he laid the five leaves in a chest and locking it, gave the key to his wife, who was then big with child, and said to her, ‘Know that my last hour is at hand and that the time of my translation from this temporary abiding-place [of the world] to that which is eternal draws nigh. Now thou art with child and wilt haply bear a son after my death. If this be so, name him Hasib Kerimeddin and rear him well. When the boy grows up and says to thee, “What inheritance did my father leave me?” give him these five leaves, which when he has read and digested, he will be the most learned man of his time’ Then he bade her farewell and heaving one sigh, departed the world and all that is therein, the mercy of the Most High God be upon him! His family and friends wept over him and washed him and bore him forth in great state and buried him.

After awhile, his widow bore a handsome boy and named him Hasib Kerimeddin, as her husband had charged her; then she summoned the astrologers, who took the altitude of the planets and drawing the boy’s horoscope, said to her, ‘Know that this boy will live many years; but a great peril will befall him in the early part of his life, from which if he escape, he will be given the knowledge of wisdom.’ She suckled him two years, then weaned him, and when he was five years old, she sent him to school, but he would learn nothing. So she took him from school and set him to learn a trade; but he would not learn and there came no work from his hands. She wept over this and the folk said to her, ‘Marry him: peradventure he will take thought for his wife and learn a trade.’ So she sought out a girl and married him to her; but marriage wrought no change in him and he still remained idle as before.

One day, some neighbours of hers, who were woodcutters, came to her and said, ‘Buy thy son an ass and cords and a hatchet, and let him go with us to the mountain and cut wood. The price of the wood shall be his and ours, and with his share he shall provide thee and his wife.’ When she heard this, she rejoiced greatly and bought Hasib an ass and hatchet and cords; then, carrying him to the woodcutters, delivered him into their hands and commended him to their care. ‘Have no concern for the boy,’ answered they; ‘he is the son of our Sheikh [Daniel,] and our Lord will provide him.’ So they carried him to the mountain, where they cut firewood and loaded their asses therewith; then returned to the city and selling what they had cut, spent the price on their families. This they did every day for some time, till one day, as they were cutting wood on the mountain as usual, a violent storm of rain broke over them, and they took refuge in a great cave, till the storm should be past. It chanced that Hasib went apart from the rest into a corner of the cavern and sitting down, fell to smiting the earth [idly] with his axe. Presently, he noted that the ground gave out a hollow sound under the axe; so he dug there awhile and came to a round flagstone, with a ring in it. When he saw this, he was glad and called his comrades the woodcutters, who came to him and speedily clearing away the earth from the stone, pulled it up and found under it a trap door, which, being opened, discovered a cistern full of bees’ honey. Then said they to each other, ‘We must return to the city and fetch vessels, in which to carry away the honey, and sell it and divide the price, whilst one of us stays by the cistern, to guard it from other than ourselves.’ Quoth Hasib, ‘I will stay and keep watch over it.’ So they left him there and repairing to the city, fetched vessels, which they filled with honey and loading their asses therewith, carried them to the city and sold the contents.

Thus they did several days in succession, sleeping in the city by night, whilst Hasib abode on guard by the cistern, [till but little remained,] when they said to one another, ‘It was Hasib found the honey, and to-morrow he will come down to the city and claim the price of it, saying, “It was I found it;” nor is there any means of quitting ourselves of this but that we let him down into the cistern, to get the rest of the honey, and leave him there; so will he perish miserably, and none will know of him.’ They all fell in with this and returning to the cavern, said to Hasib, “Go down into the well and get us the rest of the honey.’ So he went down and passed up to them the rest of the honey, after which he said to them, ‘Draw me up, for there is nothing left.’ They made him no answer, but, loading their asses, went away and left him alone in the cistern. When they reached the city, they repaired to Hasib’s mother, weeping, and said to her, ‘May thy head outlive thy son Hasib!’ ‘How did he die?’ asked she. Quoth they, ‘We were cutting wood in the mountain, when there fell on us a great storm of rain and we took shelter from it in a cavern. Presently, thy son’s ass broke loose and fled into the valley, and he ran after it, to turn it back, when there came out upon them a great wolf, who tore thy son in pieces and ate the ass.’ When she heard this, she buffeted her face and strewed dust on her head and fell a-mourning for her son, whilst the woodcutters sold the honey, with the proceeds of which they opened shops and became merchants and passed their lives in eating and drinking and making merry; but, every day, they brought Hasib’s mother meat and drink.

Meanwhile, when Hasib found himself alone, he began to weep and call for help and say, ‘There is no god but God, the Most High, the Supreme! I shall surely perish miserably!’ As he was thus bemoaning himself, a great scorpion fell upon him; so he rose and killed it. Then he bethought him and said, ‘The cistern was full of honey; how came this scorpion here?’ Therewith he rose and examined the well right and left, till he found the crevice from which the scorpion had fallen and saw light shining through it. So he took out his knife and enlarged the opening, till it was big enough to allow him to pass, when he crept through it and found himself in a passage in the rock. Following this passage, he came to a vast gallery, which led him to a great iron door, made fast with a padlock of silver, in which was a golden key. He looked through the chink of the door and saw a great light shining within; so he took the key and opening the door [found himself in an open space and] walked on till he came to a great pond, full of something that glistened like water. Hard by he saw a high mound of green jasper and on the top of the mound a throne of gold, inlaid with all manner jewels, round which were set many stools, some of gold, some of silver and others of emerald. He climbed the mound and counting the stools, found them twelve thousand in number. Then he mounted the throne and seating himself thereon, sat marvelling at the pond and the stools, till drowsiness overcame him and he fell asleep.

Presently, he was aroused by a great snorting and hissing and rustling, and opening his eyes, saw seated on each stool a great serpent, a hundred cubits in length, with eyes that blazed like live coals. At this sight, great fear got hold on him; his spittle dried up, for the excess of his affright, and he despaired of life. Then he turned towards the pond and saw [that what he had taken for water was none other than a multitude of] small serpents, none knoweth their number save God the Most High. After awhile, there came a serpent as big as a mule, bearing on its back a charger of gold, wherein lay another serpent, that shone like crystal and whose face was as that of a woman. Thereupon, one of the serpents seated there came up and lifting her off the dish, set her on one of the stools. Then she cried out to the other serpents in their language, whereupon they all fell down from their stools and did her homage. But she signed to them to sit, and they did so.

Then she saluted Hasib in human speech and he returned her salutation; and she said to him with fluent speech, ‘Have no fear of us, O youth. I am the Queen of the Serpents and their Sultaness.’ When he heard this, he took heart and she bade the serpents bring him food. So they brought apples and grapes and pomegranates and pistachio-nuts and filberts and walnuts and almonds and bananas and set them before him, and the Queen said, ‘Welcome, O youth! What is thy name?’ ‘My name is Hasib Kerimeddin,’ answered he; and she rejoined, ‘O Hasib, eat of these fruits, for we have no other meat, and fear nothing from us.’ So he ate his fill and praised God the Most High. Then they took away the tray from before him, and the Queen said to him, ‘O Hasib, tell me whence thou art and how camest thou hither.’ So he told her his story from first to last, adding, ‘God [only] knows what will betide me after this!’ Quoth the Queen, ‘Nothing but good shall betide thee: but, O Hasib, I would have thee abide with me awhile, that I may tell thee my history and acquaint thee with the rare adventures that have come to my knowledge.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered he; and she said, ‘Know then, O Hasib, that

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

The Adventures of Beloukiya

There was once in the city of Cairo a wise and pious king of the children of Israel, who was devoted to the study of books of learning, and he had a son named Beloukiya. When he grew old and weak and was nigh upon death, his grandees and officers of state came in to him, to salute him, and he said to them, “O folk, know that the hour is at hand of my departure from this world to the next, and I have no charge to lay on you, save to commend my son to your care.” Then said he, “I testify that there is no god save God,” and heaving one sigh, departed the world, the mercy of God be on him! They laid him out and washed him and buried him in great state. Then they made his son Beloukiya king in his stead; and he ruled the kingdom justly and the people had peace in his time.

It befell one day that he entered his father’s treasures, to look about him, and coming upon a hidden door, opened it and found himself in a little closet, wherein stood a column of white marble. On the top of the column was a coffer of ebony, which he opened and saw therein a casket of gold, containing a book. He read the book and found therein a description of our lord Mohammed (whom God bless and preserve) and how he should be sent in the latter days and be the lord of the first and the last: and his heart was taken with love of him. So he assembled all the notables of the scribes and diviners and priests of the children of Israel and read the book to them, adding, “O folk, needs must I bring my father out of his grave and burn him.” “Why wilt thou burn him?” asked they, and he answered, “Because he hid this book from me and imparted it not to me. (Now the old king had compiled it from the Pentateuch and the Book of Abraham and had hidden it in his treasury and imparted it to none.) “O King,” rejoined they, “thy father is dead; his body is in the dust and his affair is in the hands of his Lord; thou shalt not take him forth of his tomb.” So he knew that they would not suffer him to do this thing and leaving them, repaired to his mother, to whom said he, “O my mother, I have found, in one of my father’s treasuries, a book containing a description of Mohammed (whom God bless and keep), a prophet who shall be sent in the latter days, and my heart is taken with his love; wherefore I am resolved to wander over the earth, till I foregather with him; else I shall die of longing for the love of him." Then he doffed his clothes and donned a pilgrim's gown of striped goat's hair cloth and sandals, saying to his mother, "Forget me not in thy prayers." She wept and said, "O my son, what will become of us after thee?" But he answered, saying, "I can endure no longer, and I commit my affair and shine to God the Most High."

Then he set out in the direction of Syria, without the knowledge of any of his people, and coming to the seashore, took passage in a ship, which he found there. They sailed till they came to an island, where they cast anchor and Beloukiya landed with the crew, but, becoming separated from the rest, sat down under a tree and fell asleep. When he awoke, he found that the ship had set sail without him, and in that island he saw serpents as big as camels and palm-trees, who sang he praises of Allah and blessed Mohammed, proclaiming the unity of God and glorifying the Most High; whereat he wondered greatly. When they saw him, they flocked to him and one of them said to him, "Who and whence art thou and whither goest thou?" Quoth he, "My name is Beloukiya; I am of the children of Israel, and am come out in quest of Mohammed (whom God bless and preserve), being distracted for love of him. But who are ye, O noble creatures?" "We are of the dwellers in Hell," answered they; "and God the Most High created us for the punishment of unbelievers." "And how came ye hither?" asked he, and they answered, "Know that Hell, of the greatness of its boiling, breathes twice a year, exhaling in the summer and inhaling in the winter, and hence the summer heat and the winter cold. When it exhales, it casts us forth of its maw, and we are drawn in again with the inhaled breath." Quoth Beloukiya, "Are there greater serpents than you in Hell?" And they said, "We are cast out with the expired breath but by reason of our smallness; for in Hell every serpent is so great, that, were the biggest of us to pass over its nose, it would not be ware of us." "Ye sing the praises of God," said Beloukiya, "and invoke blessings on Mohammed, whom God bless and preserve! Whence know ye of Mohammed?" O Beloukiya," answered they, "the name of Mohammed is written on the gates of Paradise; and but for him, God had not created Paradise nor heaven nor hell nor earth for He made all things that be, solely on his account, and hath coupled his name with His own in every place: wherefore we love Mohammed, whom God bless and preserve!"

The serpent's converse did but inflame Beloukiya's love for Mohammed and yearning for his sight; so he took leave of them and making his way to the sea-shore, found there a ship lying at anchor, in which he embarked and sailed till he came to another island. Here he landed and walking about, found there serpents, great and small, none knoweth their number save God the Most High and amongst them a white serpent, more brilliant than crystal, seated in a golden charger borne on the back of another serpent as big as an elephant. Now this was none other than myself; so, when I saw Beloukiya, I saluted him and he returned my salutation, and I said to him, "Who and what art thou and whither goest thou?" I am of the children of Israel," answered he "My name is Beloukiya, and I am a wanderer for the love of Mohammed, whose description I have read in the revealed scriptures and of whom I go in quest. But what art thou and what are these serpents about thee?" Quoth I, "I am the Queen of the Serpents; and when thou foregatherest with Mohammed (whom God bless and preserve),bear him my salutation." Then he took leave of me and journeyed till he came to Jerusalem.

Now there was in that City a man by name Uffan, who was deeply versed in all sciences, more especially in geometry and astronomy and mathematics, as well as in white magic and the Cabala; and he had studied the Pentateuch and the Evangel and the Psalms and the Book of Abraham and had read in certain books that whoso should wear the ring of our lord Solomon, men and Jinn and birds and beasts and all created things would be subject to him. Moreover, he had discovered that Solomon lay buried in a cavern beyond the Seven Seas, with the ring on his finger, which none, man nor genie, could take therefrom, and that none could sail upon the Seven Seas in ships; and he had found out by study that there was a certain herb, whose juice if one expressed and anointed therewith the soles of his feet, he should walk dryshod upon the surface of any sea that God the Most High had created; but none could come at this herb, except he had with him the Queen of the Serpents.

When Beloukiya arrived at Jerusalem, he [entered the temple and] sat down to do his devotions. Presently, Uffan came up and seeing him reading the Pentateuch and worshipping God the Most High, accosted him and asked him who and whence he was and whither bound? “My name is Beloukiya,” answered the prince. “I am from the city of Cairo and am come forth, wandering, in quest of Mohammed, whom God bless and preserve!” Quoth Uffan, “Come with me to my house, that I may entertain thee.” “I hear and obey,” cried Beloukiya. So the sage took him by the hand and carried him to his house, where he entreated him with the utmost honour and said to him, “O my brother, tell me thy history and how thou camest by the knowledge of Mohammed (whom God bless and preserve) and who directed thee in this road.” So he related to him his story, from first to last, at which Uffan well-nigh lost his wits for wonder and said to him, “O my brother, bring me to the Queen of the Serpents and I will bring thee in company with Mohammed, albeit the time of his coming is yet far distant. For thou must know that I have found in my books that there is a certain herb whose juice if one express and anoint therewith the soles of his feet, he shall go dryshod upon whatsoever sea God the Most High hath made; and if one have with him the Queen of the Serpents and traverse the mountains where the herbs grow, each herb by which he passes will speak and proclaim its virtues, by the ordinance of God the Most High. So, if we can take the Queen of the Serpents, we will put her in a cage and carry her to the mountains aforesaid; and when we have found the magical herb, we will let her go her way. Then will we anoint our feet with the juice of the herb and fare over the Seven Seas, till we come to the burial-place of our lord Solomon, when we will take the ring off his finger and rule even as he ruled and come to our desire; for, with the aid of the ring, we will enter the Ocean of Darknesses and drink of the Water of Life, and so God will let us tarry till the latter days and we shall foregather with Mohammed, whom God bless and preserve!”

Beloukiya consented to lead him to my abiding-place so Uffan made him a cage of iron and providing himself with two bowls, one full of milk and the other of wine, took ship with Beloukiya and sailed till they came to the island, where they landed and walked on inland. Then Uffan set up the cage, in which he laid a snare, and placing in it the two bowls, withdrew, he and Beloukiya, and concealed themselves afar off. Presently, up came the Queen of the Serpents (that is, myself) and examined the cage. When I smelt the milk, I slid off the back of my bearer and entering the cage, [drank up the milk. Then I] went to the bowl of wine and drank of it, whereupon my head became giddy and I slept. When Uffan saw this, he ran up and locking the cage upon me, set it on his head and made for the ship, he and Beloukiya. After awhile I awoke and finding myself in a cage of iron on a man's head and seeing Beloukiya walking beside the bearer, said to him, "This is the reward of those who do no hurt to men." "O Queen," answered he, "have no fear of us, for we will do thee no hurt. We would but have thee guide us to the herb whose juice, rubbed upon the soles of the feet, confers the power of walking dry-shod upon what sea soever God the Most High hath created; which when we have found, we will return thee to thy place and let thee go thy way."

Then they fared on till they came to the hills where grew the herbs, and as they went, each herb they passed began to speak and avouch its virtues by permission of God the Most High. As they were going along and the herbs speaking right and left, one of the latter spoke out and said, "I am the herb, which if one gather and press and anoint his feet with my juice, he shall fare dry-shod over what sea soever God the Most High hath created." When Uffan heard this, he set down the cage and gathering what might suffice them of the herb, bruised it and filled two vials with the juice; and with what was left they anointed their feet. Then they took up the cage and journeyed days and nights, till they reached the island, where they opened the cage and let me out. When I found myself at liberty, I asked them what use they thought to make of the juice of the herb; and they answered, saying, "We purpose to traverse the Seven Seas to the burial-place of our lord Solomon and take the ring from his finger " Quoth I, "Far is it from your power to possess yourselves of the ring!" "Wherefore?" asked they, and I replied. "Because God the Most High vouchsafed unto our lord Solomon the gift of this ring and peculiarly favoured him therewith, for that he said to Him, 'O my Lord, bestow upon me a dominion, that shall beseem none after me; for Thou art the Giver of gifts.' So the ring is not for you. Had ye taken the herb, whereof whoso eateth shall not die until the first blast [of the last trumpet], it had better availed you than this ye have gotten; for ye shall nowise come at your desire of it.”

When they heard this, they repented them exceedingly and went their ways, whilst I went in quest of my subjects and found them fallen in piteous plight, the weaker of them having died in my absence and the stronger grown weak. When they saw me, they rejoiced and flocking about me, enquired what had befallen me. So I told them what had passed, after which I gathered them together and repaired with them to the mountain Caf, where I use to winter, spending the summer in the place where thou now seest me, O Hasib. This, then, is my story and what befell me [with Beloukiya and Uffan].’

Hasib marvelled at her words and said to her, ‘I beseech thee, of thy favour, bid one of thy subjects bring me out to the surface of the earth, that I may go to my people.’ ‘O Hasib,’ replied she, ‘thou shalt not depart from us till winter come, and needs must thou go with us to the mountain Caf and divert thyself with the sight of hills and sands and trees and birds magnifying the One God, the Victorious, besides Marids and Afrits and Jinn, whose number none knoweth save God the Most High.’ When Hasib heard this, he was sore chagrined and concerned; then he said to her, ‘Tell me of Uffan and Beloukiya; when they departed from thee and went their way, did they win to the burial-place of our lord Solomon or not; and if they won thither, did they avail to take the ring or not? ‘Know,’answered she, ‘that, when they left me, they anointed their feet with the juice of the magical herb, and walking over the water, fared on from sea to sea, beholding the wonders of the deep, till they had traversed the Seven Seas and came in sight of a mighty mountain, soaring high into the air, whereat they rejoiced and said to one another, “Verily we have attained our desire.” So they landed and found that the stones of the mountain were of emerald and its dust of musk, and in it was a stream of running water. They entered the passes of the mountain and walked on, till they saw a cavern afar off, surmounted by a great dome, and light shining therefrom. So they made for the dome and entering the cavern, beheld therein a throne of gold set with all manner jewels, and about it stools innumerable, none knoweth their number save God the Most High. On the throne they saw our lord Solomon lying, clad in robes of green silk, gold inwoven and broidered with all manner jewels and precious stones: his right hand was folded upon his breast and on the middle finger was the seal-ring, whose lustre outshone that of all the other jewels in the place.

Then Uffan taught Beloukiya charms and conjurations and said to him, “Repeat these conjurations and stint not therefrom till I take the ring.” Then he went up to the throne; but, as he drew near unto it, a mighty serpent issued from beneath it and cried out at him with so terrible a cry that the whole place trembled and sparks flew from its mouth, saying, “Begone, or thou art a dead man!” But Uffan paid no heed to it and busied himself with his incantations. Then the serpent blew such a fiery blast at him, that the place was like to be set on fire, and said to him, “Woe to thee! Except thou turn back, I will consume thee!” Yet was he not troubled at this, but put out his hand to the ring and touched it and strove to draw it off Solomon’s finger; whereupon the serpent blew on him [once more] and he became a heap of ashes.

When Beloukiya saw this, he fell down in a swoon. and the Lord (exalted be His majesty) bade Gabriel descend [and save him], before the serpent should blow on him. So Gabriel descended to the earth and finding Uffan reduced to ashes and Beloukiya fallen of a swoon, aroused the latter and saluting him, enquired how he had come thither. Beloukiya related to him his history, telling him how he had not come thither but for the love of Mohammed, and besought him to tell him where the latter was to be found. “O Beloukiya,” replied the angel, “go thy ways, for the time of Mohammed’s coming is yet far distant.” Then he ascended to heaven, and Beloukiya wept sore and repented of that which he had done, calling to mind my words, whenas I said to them, “Far is it from your power to possess yourselves of the ring.” Then he returned to the sea-shore and passed the night there, marvelling at the mountains and seas and islands, that encompassed him, and weeping over his case.

When it was day, he anointed his feet with the magical juice and descending to the water, set out and fared on over the surface of the sea nights and days, marvelling at the terrors and wonders of the deep, till he came to an island as it were Paradise. So he landed and found himself in a great and pleasant island, spacious and goodly, abounding in good things. Its dust was saffron and its gravel cornelian and precious stones; its hedges were of jessamine, its brushwood Comorin and Sumatra aloes-wood and its reeds sugar-cane. Its vegetation was of the goodliest of trees and of the brightest and sweetest of odoriferous flowers, of all kinds and colours: round about it were roses and narcissus and amaranths and gilly-flowers and camomiles and lilies and violets, and therein gazelles frisking and wild cattle coming and going. Its trees were tall and the singing of its birds, as they warbled on the branches and solaced the afflicted lover, was sweeter than the voices of those that chant the Koran. Its streams were flowing and its springs welling with sweet water; brief, it comprised all beauty and charms.

Beloukiya marvelled at the goodliness of the place, but knew that he had wandered from the road he had come, on his way over the Seven Seas in Uffan's company. He spent the day in exploring the island and at nightfall he climbed into a tree, to sleep; but, as he sat there, pondering the beauty of the place, the sea became troubled and there rose to the surface a great beast, which gave such a terrible cry that the isle trembled to its foundations. As Beloukiya gazed upon him and marvelled at the vastness of his bulk, he came ashore, followed by a multitude of other sea-beasts, each holding in his paw a jewel that shone like a lamp, so that the whole island became as light as day for the lustre thereof. After awhile, there appeared from the inward of the island lions and panthers and lynxes and other beasts of the land, none knoweth their number save God the Most High, who flocked down to the shore and foregathering with the beasts of the sea, conversed with them till daybreak, when they separated and went each his own way.

As soon as it was day, Beloukiya, terrified by what he had seen during the night, came down from the tree and anointing his feet with the magical juice, set out once more upon the surface of the water and fared on days and nights over the second sea, till he came to a great mountain, through whose midst ran a valley without end, the stones whereof were loadstone and its beasts lions and hares and panthers. He landed and wandered from place to place till nightfall, when he sat down on a rock by the seaside, to eat of the dried fish thrown up by the sea. Presently, he turned and saw a huge panther making for him, to devour him; so he anointed his feet in haste with the juice and descending to the surface of the water, fled over the third sea, in the darkness, for it was black night and there was a high wind, nor did he stay his course till he reached another island, on which he landed and found there trees, [bearing fruits] both soft and hard of skin. So he took of these fruits and ate and praised God the Most High; after which he walked about the island till nightfall, when he lay down to sleep.

He spent ten days in exploring the place, after which he again anointed his feet and setting out over the fourth sea, travelled nights and days, till he came to a third island of fine white sand, without trees or grass. He landed and balked about the island awhile, but, finding its only inhabitants sakers, that nested in the sand, he again anointed his feet and sped on over the fifth sea, till he came to a little island, whose soil and hills were of crystal. Therein were the veins wherefrom gold is wrought and marvellous trees with flowers in hue like gold, never had he seen their like in his wanderings. He landed and walked about, till it became dark, when the flowers began to shine like stars. When he saw this, he marvelled and said, "Assuredly, the flowers of this island are of those which wither from the sun and fall to the earth, where the wind smites them and they gather under the rocks and become hermetic powder which the folk collect and make gold thereof."

He lay there that night and at sunrise he again anointed his feet and descending to the shore, fared on over the sixth sea days and nights, till he came to a fifth island. Here he landed and found mountains covered with trees, whose fruits were as human heads hanging by the hair, and others whose fruits were green birds hanging by the feet; also a third kind, which burnt like fire and whose fruits were like prickly pears, — if a drop [of the juice] thereof fell on a man, he was consumed, — and others, whose fruits wept and laughed, besides many other marvels which he saw there. Then he returned to the sea-shore and finding there a great tree, sat down beneath it till dusk, when he climbed up into the branches to sleep. As he sat pondering the wonderful works of God, the sea became troubled, and there rose therefrom the daughters of the ocean, each holding in her hand a jewel that shone like the morning. They came ashore and sitting down under the tree, danced and sported and made merry, whilst Beloukiya watched them and marvelled at their gambols, till the morning, when they returned to the sea and disappeared. Then he came down and anointing his feet, set out on the surface of the seventh sea, over which he journeyed two whole months, without getting sight of land, what while he suffered exceeding hunger, so that he was fain to snatch up fish from the surface of the sea and devour them raw, for stress of want.

At the end of this time, he came to a sixth island abounding in trees and streams, where he landed, it being the forenoon. He walked about, looking right and left, till he came to an apple-tree and put out his hand to pluck of the fruit, when, behold, one cried out to him from the tree, saying, "An thou draw near to this tree, I will cut thee in twain." So he looked and saw a giant forty cubits high, after the measure of the people of that day, whereat he was sore affrighted and drew back from the tree. Then he said to the giant, "Why dost thou forbid me to eat of this tree?" "Because," replied the other, "thou art a son of Adam and thy father Adam forgot the covenant of God and disobeyed Him and ate of the tree." Quoth Beloukiya, "Who art thou and to whom doth this island, with its trees, belong?" "My name is Sherahiya," replied the giant, "and I am of the guards of King Sekher, to whom the island belongs and who hath given me charge over it. But who art thou and how comest thou hither?" Beloukiya told him his story and Sherahiya bade him be of good cheer and brought him to eat. So he ate his fill and taking leave of the giant, set out again and fared on over mountains and sandy deserts for ten days, at the end of which time he saw, in the distance, a cloud of dust hanging like a canopy in the air and making towards it, came presently to a great valley, two months' journey in length, where he heard a mighty clamour of cries and clash of arms and tramp of horse. As he drew near, he saw a multitude of horsemen engaged in sore battle and the blood running from them like a river. Their voices were like thunder and they were armed with bows and javelins and swords and spears and maces of iron and fought with the utmost fury.

At this sight, he was sore affrighted and knew not what to do; but, as he hesitated, they caught sight of him and held their hands from one another and left fighting. Then a troop of them came up to him, wondering at his make, and said to him, “What art thou and how camest thou hither?” Quoth he, “I am of the sons of Adam and am come out, distraught for the love of Mohammed, whom God bless and preserve; but I have wandered from my road.” They marvelled at his speech and said, “Never saw we a son of Adam till now, nor did any ever come to this land.” “But what are ye, O creatures?” asked Beloukiya. “We are of the Jinn,” answered they; and he said, “What is the cause of the fighting amongst you and where is your abiding-place and what is the name of this valley and this land?” “Our abiding-place is the White Country,” replied they. “This place is called the land of Sheddad, son of Aad, and every year God the Most High commandeth us to come hither and wage war upon the unbelieving Jinn.” “And where is the White Country?” asked Beloukiya. “It is distant five-and-seventy years’ journey behind the mountain Caf,” answered they, “and we have no other business, when we are not doing battle with the unbelieving Jinn, than to magnify God and hallow Him. Moreover, we have a king called Sekher, and needs must thou go with us to him, that he may divert himself with thy sight.”

Then they took him and fared on with him, till they came to their abiding-place, where he saw a multitude of tents of green silk, none knoweth their number save God the Most High, and in their midst a pavilion of red satin, a thousand cubits in compass, with cords of blue silk and pickets of gold and silver. This was the royal pavilion; so they made their way thither and carried Beloukiya into the presence of King Sekher, whom he found seated upon a throne of red gold, set with pearls and jewels, with the kings and princes of the Jinn on his right hand and on his left his councillors and Amirs and officers of state. So he went up to him and kissing the earth before him, saluted him. The King returned his salute and commending a chair to be set for him beside himself, bade him sit down and asked him who he was and how he came thither; whereupon Beloukiya related to him all that had befallen him in his wanderings and he marvelled thereat. Then he called for food and the servants spread the tables and set on fifteen hundred platters of gold and silver and brass, some containing twenty and some fifty boiled camels, and other some fifty head of sheep; at which Beloukiya marvelled exceedingly. Then they ate and he ate with them, till he was satisfied, and returned thanks to God the Most High; after which they cleared the tables and set on fruits, and they ate thereof, glorifying God and invoking blessings on His prophet Mohammed.

When Beloukiya heard them make mention of Mohammed, he wondered and said to King Sekher, “I have a mind to ask thee some questions.” “Ask what thou wilt,” rejoined the King, and Beloukiya said, “O King, what are ye and what is your origin and how come ye to know and love Mohammed, whom God bless and preserve?” “Know,” answered the King, “that God created the fire in seven stages, one above the other, at a distance of a thousand years’ journey between each two stages. The first stage he named Jehennem and appointed for the punishment of the transgressors of the true-believers, who die unrepentant, and the second he named Lezza and appointed for unbelievers. The name of the third is Jehim and is appointed for Gog and Magog. The fourth is called Saair and is appointed for the host of Iblis. The fifth is called Seker and is prepared for those who neglect prayer. The sixth is called Hutemeh and is appointed for Jews and Christians. The seventh is named Hawiyeh and is prepared for hypocrites. The most endurable of them all is Jehennem, being the topmost; yet in it are a thousand mountains of fire, in each mountain seventy thousand valleys of fire, in each valley seventy thousand cities of fire, in each city seventy thousand citadels of fire, in each citadel seventy thousand houses of fire, in each house seventy thousand couches of fire and in each couch seventy thousand kinds of torment. As for the other hells, none knoweth the number of kinds of torment that be therein save God the Most High.”

When Beloukiya heard this, he fell down in a swoon and when he came to himself, he wept and said, “O King, what will our case be?” “Fear not,” answered Sekher; “whoso loveth Mohammed and believeth in his religion, the fire shall not burn him, for he is made free therefrom for his sake, whom God bless and preserve! As for us, God created us of the fire; for the first that he made in Jehennem were two creatures, whom He called Melit and Khelit. Now Melit was made in the likeness of a pied wolf, with a tail after the likeness of a woman, and Khelit in that of a lion, with a tail like a tortoise, twenty years' journey in length. God commanded their tails to couple and do the deed of kind, and of them were born serpents and scorpions, whose dwelling is in the fire, that therewith God may torment those whom He casteth therein; and these increased and multiplied. Then God commanded the tails of Khelit and Melit to couple a second time, and Melit's tail conceived by that of Khelit and bore fourteen children, seven male and seven female, who grew up and intermarried, one with the other. They all were obedient to their father, except one of then, Iblis to wit, who disobeyed him and was changed into a worm. Now Iblis was one of the Cherubim, for he had served God till he was raised to the heavens and taken into the especial favour of the Merciful One, who made, him chief of the Cherubim. When God created Adam, He commanded Iblis to prostrate himself to him, but he refused; so God expelled him [from heaven] and cursed him. Of his lineage are the devils; and as for the other six males, they are the ancestors of the true-believing Jinn, and we are their descendants."

Beloukiya marvelled at the King's words and besought him to bid one of his officers carry him back to his native land. "That may we not do," answered Sekher, "save by commandment of God the Most High; but, an thou desire to return to thine own country, I will set thee on one of my mares and bid her carry thee to the farthest limit of my dominions, where thou wilt meet with the troops of another king, Berakhiya by name, who will recognize the mare and take thee off her back and send her back to me; and this is all we can do for thee." When Beloukiya heard this, he wept and said, "Do what thou wilt, O King." So Sekher caused bring the mare and setting Beloukiya on her back, said to him, "Beware lest thou alight or strike the mare or cry out in her face; else she will kill thee; but abide quiet on her back till she stop with thee; then dismount and go thy way." Then Beloukiya took leave of the King and setting out, rode on a long while between the rows of tents, till he came to the royal kitchens, where he stopped and gazed in wonderment or the great cauldrons, each holding fifty camels, hung up over the fire that blazed fiercely under them. King Sekher saw him from afar gazing on the cauldrons, and thinking him to be anhungred, commanded some of his officers to bear him two roasted camels. So they carried them to him and bound them behind him on the mare's back.

Then he took leave of them and fared on, till he came to the limit of King Sekher's dominions, where the mare stood still and Beloukiya dismounted and began to shake the dust of the journey from his clothes. As he was thus engaged, there accosted him a party of men, who recognizing the mare, carried her and Beloukiya before their King, whom he found seated in a splendid pavilion, in the midst of his troops and champions and vassal princes, in like state to that of King Sekher. So he saluted him, and the King returned his greeting and seated him beside himself; after which he called for food and they ate their fill and returned thanks to God. Then they set on fruits, and when they had eaten thereof, King Berakhiya said to his guest, "When didst thou leave King Sekher?" "Two days ago," replied Beloukiya. "Dost thou know," asked Berakhiya, "how many days' journey thou hast come in these two days?" "No," answered he, and the King rejoined, "Thou hast come threescore and ten months' journey; and when thou mountedst the mare, she was affrighted at thee, knowing thee for a son of Adam, and would have cast thee off; so they bound on her back these two camels, to steady her." When Beloukiya heard this, he marvelled and thanked God for safety. Then said the King, "Tell me thy story and what brought thee hither." So he told him his story from first to last, and the King marvelled at his words.'

Here the Queen of the Serpents broke off, and Hasib, after he had marvelled at her story, again besought her to let one of her subjects conduct him to the surface of the earth, that he might go to his family; but she answered, 'O Hasib, I know that the first thing thou wilt do, after greeting thy family, will be to go to the bath and wash thyself; and as surely as thou dost this, it will be the cause of my death.' Quoth Hasib, 'I swear that I will never again enter the bath, so long as I live, but will wash at home, when washing is incumbent on me.' 'I would not trust thee,' rejoined the Queen, 'though thou shouldst swear to me a hundred oaths; for I know thou art a son of Adam and that to thee no oath is sacred. Thy father Adam made a covenant with God the Most High, who kneaded the clay whereof He fashioned him forty days and made His angels prostrate themselves to him; yet did he perjure himself and forgot his promise and disobeyed the commandment of his Lord.' When Hasib heard this, he held his peace and burst into tears nor did he leave weeping for the space of ten days, at the end of which time he begged the Queen to acquaint him with the rest of Beloukiya's adventures. Accordingly, she began again as follows:

"Beloukiya tarried two months with King Berakhiya, then took leave of him and fared on over wastes and deserts nights and days, till he came to a high mountain, on whose summit he beheld a great angel seated, celebrating the praises of God and invoking blessings on Mohammed. Before him lay a tablet covered with black characters and white, on which his eyes were fixed, and his wings were outspread, one to the western and the other to the eastern horizon. Beloukiya ascended the hill and saluted the angel, who returned his salute and enquired who he was and what brought him thither. Accordingly, he repeated to him his history, from beginning to end, and besought him, in turn, to acquaint him with his own name and occupation and the meaning of the tablet that lay before him. "My name is Michael," replied the angel, "and I am charged with the alternation of night and day; and this is my occupation till the Day of Judgment."

The prince wondered at his words and at his aspect and the greatness of his size and taking leave of him, fared onward till he came to a vast meadow, full of trees, through which ran seven rivers. In one part of the meadow, he saw a great tree and under it four angels, the first in the likeness of a man, the second in the likeness of a wild beast, the third in the likeness of a bull and the fourth in the likeness of a bird, engaged in magnifying God the Most High and saying, "O my God and my Master and my Lord, I conjure Thee, by Thy splendour and by the glory of Thy prophet Mohammed (on whom be blessing and peace) to vouchsafe Thy mercy and forgiveness to all things created in my likeness; for Thou canst do all things!"

Beloukiya continued his journey, till he came to another mountain and ascending it, found a great angel seated on the summit, glorifying God and hallowing Him and invoking blessings on Mohammed; and he was continually opening and shutting his hands and closing and extending his fingers. The prince accosted him and saluted him; whereupon the angel returned his greeting and enquired who he was and how he came thither. So Beloukiya acquainted him with his adventures and besought him to tell him, in turn, who he was and what was his function and what mountain was that. Quoth the angel, "This is the mountain Caf, that encompasseth the world, and in my grasp are all countries that God hath made. When He is minded to afflict any country with earthquake or famine or slaughter or to bless it with plenty and prosperity, He bids me execute His commandment, and this I do without stirring from my place; for my hands lay hold upon the roots of the earth." "Hath God created other worlds than this within the mountain Caf?" asked Beloukiya. "Yes," answered the angel; "He hath made a world white as silver, whose vastness none knoweth but Himself, and hath peopled it with angels, whose meat and drink are the praise and magnification of God and the continual invocation of blessings upon His prophet Mohammed. Every Friday night they assemble on this mountain and worship God until the morning, and the recompense of their devotions they give to the sinners of the faith of Mohammed (whom God bless and keep) and to all who make the [complete] ablution of Friday; and this is their function until the Day of Resurrection." "And hath God created other mountains behind the mountain Caf?" asked Beloukiya. "Yes," replied the angel. "Behind this mountain is a range of mountains of snow and ice, five hundred years' journey in extent, and this it is that wards off the heat of Jehennem from the world, which would else be consumed thereby. Moreover, behind the mountain Caf are forty worlds, each the bigness of this world forty times told, some of gold, some of silver and other some of cornelian. Each of these worlds hath its own colour, and God hath peopled them with angels, that know not Adam nor Eve nor night nor day and have no other business than to celebrate His praises and hallow and magnify Him and make proclamation of His unity and supplicate Him on behalf of the followers of Mohammed (whom God bless and keep).

Thou must know also," continued the angel, " that God hath made the worlds in seven stages, one upon another, and hath created one of His angels, whose size and attributes none knoweth but Himself and who beareth the seven stages upon his shoulders. Under this angel

God the Most High hath created a rock and under the rock, a bull, and under the bull, a great fish, and under the fish, a mighty ocean. God once told Jesus (on whom be peace) of this fish, and he said, ‘O Lord, show me the fish, that I may look upon it.’ So God commanded an angel to take Jesus and show him the fish. Accordingly, he carried the prophet to the sea, wherein the fish dwelt, and bade him look upon it. He looked, but [at first] saw nothing, when, suddenly, the monster darted past like lightning. At this sight, Jesus swooned away, and when he came to himself, God spoke to him, saying, ‘O Jesus, hast thou seen the fish and noted its length and breadth?” ‘By Thy splendour and majesty, O Lord,’ replied Jesus, ‘I saw no fish; but there passed me by a great bull, whose length was three days’ journey, and I know not what manner of thing this is.’ ‘O Jesus,’ rejoined the Almighty, ‘this that thou sawest and which was three days in passing by thee, was [but] the head of the fish; and know that every day I create forty fish like unto this.’ And Jesus marvelled at the power of God the Most High.”

Quoth Beloukiya, “What hath God made beneath this nether sea?” “Under the sea,” replied the angel, “God created a vast [abyss of] air, under the air the fire and under the fire a mighty serpent, by name Felec; and were it not for the fear of God the Most High, this serpent would swallow up all that is above it, without feeling it. When God created this serpent, He said to it, ‘Open thy mouth and I will give thee somewhat to keep for me.’ So it opened its mouth and God put Hell into its maw, saying, ‘Keep it until the Day of Resurrection.’ When that day comes, God will send His angels to bring Hell and chain it up until the Day of Judgment, when, at His commandment, it will open its gates and there will issue therefrom sparks bigger than mountains.”

When Beloukiya heard these things, he wept sore and taking leave of the angel, fared on westward, till he came In sight of a great shut gate, before which sat two creatures. When he drew near, he saw that one of the gate-keepers had a lion’s favour and the other that of a bull; So he saluted them and they returned his greeting and enquired who and whence he was and whither he was bound. Quoth he, “I am of the sons of Adam, a wanderer for the love of Mohammed, whom God bless and preserve; and I have strayed from my road.” Then he asked them what they were and what was the gate before which they sat. “We are the guardians of this gate,” answered they, “and we have no other business than the praise and glorification of God and the invocation of blessings on Mohammed (whom may He bless and keep).” “What is within the gate?” asked Beloukiya; and they answered, “We know not.” Then said he, “I conjure you, by the virtue of your glorious Lord, open to me the gate, that I may see that which is therein.” “None may open this gate, of all created beings,” replied they, “save Gabriel, the Faithful One, on whom be peace.” Then Beloukiya lifted up his voice in supplication to God and besought Him to send down His messenger Gabriel, to open for him the gate; and God gave ear unto his prayer and commanded the angel to descend and open to him the gate of the confluence of the Two Seas. So Gabriel descended and saluting the prince, opened the gate to him, saying, “Enter, for God commandeth me to open to thee.” So he entered and Gabriel locked the gate behind him and flew back to heaven.

When Beloukiya found himself within the gate, he looked and beheld a vast ocean, whose water was half salt and half fresh, bounded on either side by ranges of mountains of red cornelian, whereon he saw angels singing the praises of God and hallowing Him. So he went up to these latter and exchanging salutations with them, questioned them of the sea and the mountains. “This place is situate under the empyreal heaven,” replied they, “and all the waters of the world fall into this ocean, whence we are appointed to distribute them to the various parts of the earth, the salt to the seas and the fresh to the lakes and rivers; and this is our employ until the Day of Ressurrection. But thou, whence comest thou and whiter art thou bound?” So he told them his story and asked them of the road. They bade him traverse the ocean, that lay before him; so he anointed his feet with the juice of the magical herb and taking leave of the angels, set out upon the surface of the sea and sped on over the water nights and days, till he met a handsome youth journeying along like himself, whereupon he saluted him and he returned his greeting. After this, he espied four great angels faring over the surface of the sea, and their going was like the blinding lightning; so he stationed himself in their road, and when they came up to him, he saluted them and conjured them by the Almighty, the Glorious One, to tell him their names and whither they were bound. “My name is Gabriel,” replied the first angel, “and these my companions are called Israfil and Michael and Azrael. Know that there has appeared in the East a mighty dragon, which has laid waste a thousand cities and devoured their inhabitants; wherefore God the Most High hath commanded us to go to him and seize him and cast him into Jehennem.”

Beloukiya marvelled at the vastness of their stature and fared on, as before, days and nights, till he came to an island, where he landed and walked about, till he saw a comely young man of shining visage, sitting weeping and lamenting between two stately tombs. So he saluted him, and he returned his salutation, and Beloukiya said to him, “Who art thou and what are these two tombs, and why sittest thou here between them, weeping?” The stranger looked at him and wept sore, till he wet his clothes with his tears; them said, “O my brother, mine is a strange and wonderful story; but thou first tell me who thou art and what brought thee hither, and after I will, in turn, relate to thee my history.” So Beloukiya sat down by him and related to him all that had befallen him from his father’s death, adding, “This is my whole history, and God [alone] knoweth what will betide me after this.” When the other heard his story, he sighed and said, “Alas, unhappy one! What things thou hast seen in thy life! [But my experiences are yet more surprising,] for know that I have looked upon lord Solomon, in his life, and have seen what is past count or reckoning. Indeed, may story is marvellous and my cas extraordinary, and I would have thee tarry with me, till I tell thee my history and how I come to be sitting here.”’

Here Hasib interrupted the Queen of Serpents and said to her, ‘I conjure thee by God, O Queen, release me and bid one of thy servants carry me forth to the surface of the earth, and I will swear an oath to thee that I will never enter the bath as long as I live.’ But she said, ‘This is a thing that may not be, nor will I credit thee upon thine oath.’ When he heard this, he wept and all the serpents wept on his account and fell to interceding for him with their Queen and saying, ‘We beseech thee, bid one of us carry him forth to the surface of the earth, and he will swear an oath to thee never to enter the bath his life long.’ Thereupon the Queen (whose name was Yumeleika) turned to

Hasib and made him swear to her, ‘I would fain have thee tell me the history of the young man, whom Baloukiya found sitting between the two tombs.’ So she said, ‘Know, O Hasib, that the young man said to Beloukiya, “Know, O my brother, that

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

The Story of Janshah

My father was a king called Teigmous, who reigned over the land of Kabul and the Benou Shehlan, the thousand warlike chieftains, ruling each over a hundred walled cities and a hundred citadels; and he was suzerain also over seven vassal princes, and tribute came to him from the East and from the West. He was just and equitable in his rule and God the Most High had given him all this and had bestowed on him this mighty empire, yet had He not vouchsafed him a son, to inherit the kingdom after him, though this was his dearest wish. So one day he summoned the astrologers and men of learning and art and mathematicians and bade them draw his horoscope and look if he should be vouchsafed a son to succeed him. Accordingly, they consulted their books and calculated his nativity and made an observation of the stars on his account; after which they informed him that he would be blessed with a son, but by none other than the daughter of the King of Khorassan. At this news he rejoiced greatly and bestowing the astrologers treasure beyond count or reckoning, dismissed them. Then he summoned his chief Vizier, a renowned warrior, by name Ain Zar, who was held equal to a thousand cavaliers in battle, and repeating to him what the astrologers had said, bade him make ready to set out for Khorassan and demand the hand of King Behrwan's daughter for him.

The Vizier at once proceeded to equip himself for the journey and encamped without the town with his retinue, whilst King Teigmous made ready the most costly presents for the King of Khorassan, amongst the rest fifteen hundred bales of silk and pearls and rubies and other precious stones, besides gold and silver and a prodigious quantity of all that goes to the equipment of a bride, and loading them upon camels and mules, delivered them to Ain Zar, with a letter to the following purport. 'King Teigmous to King Behrwan, greeting. Know, O King, that we have taken counsel with the astrologers and sages and mathematicians, and they tell us that we shall have a son, and that by none other than thy daughter. Wherefore I have despatched unto thee my Vizier Ain Zar, with great plenty of bridal gear, to demand her of thee in marriage, and I appoint him to stand in my stead and to enter into the marriage contract in my name. Yea, and I desire that thou wilt grant him his request without delay or equivocation, for it is my own, and all the favour thou showest him, I take for myself; but beware of crossing me in this, for God hath bestowed upon me the kingdom of Kabul and vouchsafed me a mighty empire; and if I marry thy daughter, we will be as one thing in the kingship, thou and I, and I will send thee every year as much treasure as will suffice thee. And this is my desire of thee.'

So the Vizier departed with a great company and journeyed till he drew near the capital of Khorassan. When King Behrwan heard of this approach, he despatched his principal officers to meet him, with a convoy of provisions and fodder. The two parties foregathered and alighting without the city, exchanged salutations and abode there, eating and drinking, ten days, at the end of which time they mounted and rode on into the town, where they were met by King Behrwan, who came out to receive King Teigmous's Vizier and alighting, embraced him and carried him to his palace. Then Ain Zar brought out the presents and laid them before King Behrwan, together with King Teigmous's letter, which when the King read, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and bade the Vizier welcome, saying, 'Rejoice in the accomplishment of thine errand, for if King Teigmous sought of me my life, I would not deny it to him.' Then he went in forthright to his daughter and her mother and his kinsfolk and acquainting them with the King of Kaul's demand, sought council of them, and they said, 'Do what seemeth good to thee.' So he returned straightway to Ain Zar and notified him his concent; and the Vizier abode with him two months, at the end of which time he said to him, 'We beseech thee to bestow upon us that for which we came and that we may depart to our own country.' 'I her and I obey,' answered the Kingand assembled his Viziers and officers and the grandees of his realm and the monks and priests. The latter performed the ceremony of marriage between his daughter and the King Teigmous [by proxy] and King Behrwan bade decorate the city after the goodliest fashion and spread the streets with carpets [in honour of the occasion]. Then he equipped his daughter for the journey and gave her all manner of presents and rarities and precious metals, and Ain Zar departed with the princess to his own country.

When the news of their approach reached King Teigmous, he bade celebrate the wedding festivities and decorate the city; after which he went in to the princess and did away her maidenhead; nor was it long before she conceived by him and accomplishing her months, bore a male child like the moon at its full. When King Teigmous knew that his wife had given birth to a goodly son, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and calling the sages and astrologers and mathematicians, bade them draw the horoscope of the new-born child and tell him what would befall him in his lifetime. So they made their calculations and found that he would, in his fifteenth year, be exposed to great perils and hardships, which if he survived, he would be happy and fortunate during the rest of his life and become a greater and more powerful king than his father. The king rejoiced greatly in this prediction and named the boy Janshah. Then he delivered him to the nurses, who reared him on goodly wise, till he reached his fifth year, when his father taught him to read the Evangel and instructed him in horsemanship and the use of arms, so that, to King Teigmous's exceeding delight, he became, in less than seven years, a doughty cavalier, proficient in all martial exercises, and was wont to ride a-hunting.

It chanced one day that King Teigmous and his son rode out, a-hunting, into the plains and deserts and hunted till mid-afternoon of the third day, when the prince started a gazelle of a rare colour, which fled before him. So he gave chase to it, followed by seven of King Teigmous's men, all mounted on swift horses, and rode after the gazelle, which fled before them till she brought them to sea-shore. They all run at her, to take her; but she escaped from them and plunging into the waves, swam out to a fishing bark, that was moored near the shore, and leapt on board. Janshah and his followers dismounted and boarding the boat, made prize of the gazelle and were about to return to shore with her, when the prince espied a great island in the offing and said to his men, 'I have a mind to visit yonder island.' 'We hear and obey,' answered they and launching out, sailed till they came to the island, where they landed and explored the place. Then they again embarked and set out to return homeward, but the night overtook them and they lost their way on the sea. Moreover, a contrary wind arose and drove the boat into the mid-ocean, so that, when they awoke in the morning, they found themselves out of sight of land.

Meanwhile, King Teigmous missed his son and commanded his troops to make search for him. So they dispersed on all sides and a company of them, coming to sea-shore, found there one of the prince’s attendants, whom he had left in charge of the horses. They asked him what was come of his master and the other six servants, and he told them what had passed; whereupon they returned with him to the King and told him what they had learnt. When Teigmous heard their report, he wept sore and cast the crown from his head, biting his hands for vexation. Then he rose forthright and wrote letters and despatched them to all the islands of the sea. Moreover, he fitted out a hundred ships and filling them with troops, sent them in quest of Janshah. They cruised about for ten days, but finding no trace of the prince, returned and told the King, who withdrew with his troops to his capital city, where he abode in sore concern. As for Janshah’s mother, when she heard of his loss, she buffeted her face and fell a-mourning for her son [as if he were dead].

Meanwhile Janshah and his companions drove before the wind till they came to a second island, where they landed and walked about. Presently they came upon a spring of running water in the midst of the island and saw a man sitting thereby. So they went up to him and saluted him, and he returned their greeting in a voice like the pipe of birds. Whilst they were marvelling at the man’s speech, he suddenly split himself in twain, and each half went a different way. Then there came down from the hills a multitude of men of all kinds, who no sooner reached the spring, than they divided into two halves and rushed on Janshah and his companions, to eat them. When the latter saw this, they turned and fled seaward; but the cannibals pursued them and caught and ate three of the huntsmen. Janshah and the other three reached the boat in safety and putting out to sea, sailed days and nights, without knowing whither they went. Being pressed by hunger, they killed the gazelle and lived on her flesh, till the winds drove them to a third island, as it were Paradise, full of trees and waters and orchards laden with all manner fruits and streams running under the trees.

The place pleased the prince and he sent his three companions ashore to explore it, whilst he himself remained by the boat. So they landed and searched the island, East and West, but found none; then they fared on inland, till they came to a castle of pure crystal, compassed about with ramparts of white marble, within which was a garden, full of all manner sweet-scented flowers and fruits beyond description, both hard and soft of skin, and trees and birds singing upon the branches. Midmost the garden was a vast basin of water, and beside it a great estrade, on which stood a throne of red gold, set with all kinds of jewels and surrounded by a number of stools. They entered and explored the place in all directions, but found none there, so returned to Janshah and told him what they had seen. When he heard their report, he landed and accompanied them to the palace, which he entered and explored in every part, marvelling at the goodliness of the place. They walked about the gardens and ate of the fruits, till it grew dark, when they returned to the estrade and sat down, Janshah on the throne and the three others on the stools around him. Then the prince called to mind his separation from his father's throne and country and friends and kinsfolk and fell a-weeping and lamenting over their loss, whilst his men wept round him.

Presently, they heard a mighty clamour, that came from seaward, and looking in the direction of the sound, were ware of a multitude of apes, as they were a swarm of locusts. Now the palace and island belonged to these apes, who, finding the boat moored to the strand, had scuttled it and after repaired to the palace, where they found Janshah and his servants. The latter were sore affrighted at the sudden appearance of the apes, but a company of them came up to the throne and kissing the earth before the prince, stood before him, with their paws upon their breasts [in token of homage]. Then they brought gazelles, which they slaughtered and skinned; then, roasting pieces of the flesh, they laid them on platters of gold and silver and spreading the table, made signs to Janshah and his men to eat. So the prince and his followers came down and ate, and the apes with them, till they were satisfied, when he apes took away the meat and set on fruits, of which they ate and praised God the Most High. Then Janshah questioned the apes by signs what they were and to whom the place belonged, and they signed to him in reply, as who should say, ‘This island belonged aforetime to our lord Solomon son of David (on whom be peace) and he used to come hither once a year for his pleasance. And know, O King, that thou art become our Sultan and we are thy servants; so eat and drink, and whatsoever thou biddest us, that will we do.’ So saying, they kissed the earth before Janshah and went their ways.

The prince lay the night on the throne and his men on the stools about him, and on the morrow, at daybreak, the four Viziers [or chiefs of the apes] presented themselves before him, attended by their followers, who ranged themselves about him, rank upon rank, until the place was full. Then the Viziers exhorted him by signs to do justice amongst them and rule them with equity; after which the apes cried out to each other and went away, all but a few who remained to serve him. After awhile, there came up a company of apes with huge dogs, bridled and saddled like horses, and signed to Janshah and his followers to mount and go with them. So they mounted, marvelling at the greatness of the dogs, and rode forth, attended by the four Viziers and a swarm of apes like locusts, some on foot and others riding [on dogs,] till they came to the sea-shore. Janshah looked for the boat and finding it not, turned to the Viziers and enquired what was come of it, to which they answered, ‘Know, O King, that, when thou camest to our island, we knew that thou wouldst be Sultan over us and we feared lest thou shouldst embark in the boat and flee from us, in our absence; so we sank it.’

When Janshah heard this, he turned to his men and said to them, ‘There is nothing for it but to submit patiently to what God the Most High hath ordained; for we have no means of escaping from these apes.’ Then they fared on inland, till they came to the banks of a river, on the other side of which was a high mountain, whereon Janshah saw a multitude of ghouls, riding on horses, and marvelled at the vastness of their bulk and the strangeness of their favour; for some of them had heads like oxen and others like camels. So he turned to the apes and said to them, ‘What are these ghouls?’ And they answered, saying, ‘Know, O King, that these ghouls are our mortal enemies and we come hither to do battle with them.’ As soon as the ghouls espied the army of the apes, they rushed down to the river-bank and standing there, fell to pelting them with stones as big as maces, and there befell a sore battle between them. Presently, Janshah, seeing that the ghouls were getting the better of the apes, cried out to his men, saying, 'Take your bows and arrows and shoot at them and keep them off from us.' So they shot at the ghouls and slew of them much people, whereupon there befell them sore dismay and defeat and they turned to flee, which when the apes saw, they forded the river and chased the ghouls, killing many of them in the pursuit, to the top of the hill, where they disappeared.

Here Janshah found a tablet of alabaster, whereon were written these words, 'O thou that enterest this land, know that thou wilt become Sultan over these apes and that, so long as thou abidest with them, they will be victorious over the ghouls; nor is there any escape for thee from them, except by the passes that run east and west through the mountains. If thou take the eastern pass, it will lead thee through a country swarming with ghouls and wild beasts and Marids and Afrits, and thou wilt come, after three months' journeying, to the ocean that encompasses the earth; but, if thou follow the western pass, it will bring thee, after four months' journeying, to the Valley of Ants. When thou comest thither, beware of the ants and fare on, till thou come to a high mountain that burns like fire. After thou hast followed the road, that leads through this mountain, ten days, thou wilt come to a great river, whose current is so swift that it dazzles the eyes. Now this river dries up every Saturday, and on the [opposite] bank is a city inhabited by Jews, who reject the faith of Mohammed; there is not a Muslim amongst them nor is there other than this city in the country. And know also that he who wrote this tablet was the lord Solomon, son of David, on whom be peace!' When Janshah read these words, he wept sore, and repeated them to his men. Then they mounted again and returned with the apes, in triumph, to the castle, where Janshah abode, Sultan over them, for a year and a half.

At the end of this time, he one day commanded the apes to mount and go forth a-hunting with him, and they rode out into the wastes and wilds and fared on from place to place, till they drew near the Valley of Ants, which Janshah knew by the description of it in the tablet of Solomon. Here he called a halt and they all abode there, eating and drinking, ten days, after which Janshah took his men apart by night and said to them, 'I purpose to flee through the Valley of

Ants and make for the town of the Jews; it may be God will deliver us from these apes and we will go our ways.’ And they replied, ‘We hear and obey.’ So they waited till some little of the night was spent, then, donning their armour and girding themselves with swords and daggers and so forth, they set out and fared on westward till morning.

When the apes awoke and missed Janshah and his men, they knew that they had fled. So they mounted and pursued them, some taking the eastern road and others that which led to the Valley of Ants, nor was it long before the latter came in sight of the fugitives, as they were about to enter the valley, and hastened after them. When Janshah and his men saw them, they fled into the Valley of Ants; but their pursuers soon overtook them and would have slain them, when, behold, a multitude of ants, like swarming locusts, as big as dogs, rose out of the earth and rushed upon the apes. They devoured many apes and the latter killed many of the ants; but help came to the latter and there ensued a sore battle between them till the evening. Now an ant would go up to an ape and smite him and cut him in twain, whilst it was all that half a score apes could do to master one ant and tear him in sunder.

As soon as it became dark, Janshah and his men took to flight and fled along the heart of the valley till the morning. With the break of day, the apes were upon them, which when the prince saw, he cried out to his men, saying, ‘Smite with your swords.’ So they drew their swords and laid about them right and left, till there ran at one of them an ape, with tusks like an elephant, and smote him and cut him in sunder. Then the apes redoubled upon Janshah and he fled with his followers into the lower part of the valley, where he saw a vast river and by its side, a great host of ants. When the latter espied Janshah, they surrounded him, and one of the huntsmen fell to smiting them with his sword and cutting them in twain; whereupon they all set upon him and killed him. At this pass, up came the apes from over the mountain and fell upon Janshah; but he tore off his clothes and plunging into the river, with his remaining servant, struck out for the middle of the stream. Presently, he caught sight of a tree on the other bank of the river; so he swam up to it and laying hold of one of its branches, swung himself ashore, where he fell to wringing his clothes and spreading them in the sun to dry. As for the huntsman, the current carried him away and dashed him in pieces against the rocks, what while there befell a sore battle between the ants and the apes, until the latter gave up the pursuit and returned to their own land.

Janshah abode alone on the river-bank, weeping, till nightfall, when he took refuge in a cavern and passed the night there, in great fear and grief for the loss of his companions. At daybreak, he set out again and fared on days and nights, eating of the herbs of the earth, till he came to the mountain that burnt like fire, and thence to the river that dried up every Saturday. Now it was a mighty river and on the opposite bank stood a great city, which was the city of the Jews mentioned in the tablet of Solomon. Here he abode till the next Saturday, when the river dried up and he walked over to the other side [dry-shod] and entered the city, but saw none in the streets. However, after awhile, he came to the door of a house, so he opened it and entering, saw within the people of the house [sitting] in silence and speaking not. Quoth he, ‘I am a stranger and hungry;’ and they signed to him, as who should say, ‘Eat and drink, but speak not.’ So he ate and drank and slept till the morning, when the master of the house bade him welcome and asked him whence he came and whither he was bound. Janshah wept sore and told him all that had befallen him and how his father was King of Kabul; whereat the Jew marvelled and said, ‘Never heard we of that city, but we have heard from the merchants of the caravans that in that direction lies a country called Yemen.’ ‘How far is that country from this place?’ asked Janshah, and the Jew said, ‘The merchants pretend that it is seven-and-twenty months’ journey from their land hither.’ ‘And when does the caravan come?’ asked Janshah. ‘Next year it will come,’ replied his host; whereat the prince wept and fell a-sorrowing for himself and his followers and lamenting his separation from his father and mother and all that had befallen him in his wanderings. Then said the Jew, ‘O young man, do not weep, but abide with us till the caravan comes, when we will send thee with it to thine own country.’ So he abode with the Jew two whole months and every day he went out a-walking in the streets of the city for his diversion.

One day, as he walked about the streets, as of wont, he heard a man crying aloud and saying, ‘Who will earn a thousand dinars and a slave-girl of surpassing beauty and grace, at the price of half a day's labour?' But none answered him and Janshah said in himself, 'Were not the work perilous and difficult, he would not offer such a price for half a day's labour.' Then he accosted the crier and said to him, 'I will do the work.' So the man took him by the hand and carried him to a lofty and splendid house, where they found a Jew merchant seated on a chair of ebony, to whom said the crier, 'O merchant, I have cried [for thee] every day these three months, and none hath answered, save this young man.' The Jew bade Janshah welcome and taking him by the hand, carried him into a magnificent saloon and called for food. So the servants spread the table and set on all manner meats, of which the merchant and Janshah ate and washed their hands. Then wine was set on and they drank; after which the Jew rose and bringing Janshah a purse of a thousand dinars and a slave-girl of ravishing beauty, said to him, 'Take the girl and money to thy hire. The work thou shalt do to-morrow.' So saying, he withdrew and Janshah lay with the damsel that night.

On the morrow, the merchant bade his slaves carry him to the bath and clothe him in a costly suit of silk, whenas he came out. So they did as he bade them and brought him back to the house, whereupon the merchant called for wine and harp and lute, and they drank and played and made merry till the half of the night was past, when the Jew retired to his harem and Janshah lay with the fair slave till the morning. Then he went to the bath and on his return, the merchant came to him and said, 'Now must thou do the work for me.' 'I hear and obey,' replied Janshah. So the merchant let bring two mules and setting Janshah on one, mounted the other himself. Then they [rode forth the city and] fared on from morn till noon, when they came to a lofty mountain, to whose height there was no limit. Here the Jew halted and alighting, bade Janshah do the same. The latter obeyed and the merchant gave him a knife and a cord, saying, 'I desire that thou slaughter this [thy] mule.' So Janshah tucked up his sleeves and skirts and going up to the mule, bound her legs with the cord, then threw her down and cut her throat; after which he skinned her and lopped off her head and legs and she became a [shapeless] heap of flesh. Then said the Jew, 'Slit open the mule's belly and enter it and I will sew it up on thee. There must thou abide awhile and whatsoever thou seest in her belly, acquaint me therewith.’ So Janshah slit the mule’s belly and crept into it, whereupon the merchant sewed it up on him and withdrawing to a distance, hid himself in the skirts of the mountain.

Presently a huge bird swooped down on the dead mule and snatching it up, flew up with it to the top of the mountain, where it set it down and would have eaten it; but Janshah, being ware of this, slit the mule’s belly and came forth. When the bird saw him, it took fright at him and flew away; whereupon he stood up and looking right and left, saw nothing but the carcases of dead men, dried in the sun, and exclaimed, ‘There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ Then he looked down and saw the merchant standing at the mountain-foot, looking for him. As soon as the Jew caught sight of him, he called out to him, saying, ‘Throw me down of the stones that are about thee, that I may direct thee to a way by which thou mayst descend.’ So Janshah threw him down nigh upon two hundred of the stones, with which the summit was strewn and which were all rubies and chrysolites and other precious stones; after which he called out to him, saying, ‘Show me the way down and I will throw thee some more.’ The Jew made him no answer, but gathered up the stones and binding them on the back of his mule, went his way, leaving Janshah alone on the mountain-top.

When the latter found himself deserted, he began to weep and implore help, and thus he abode three days, after which he rose and fared on over the mountain two months’ space, feeding upon herbs, till he came to its skirts and espied afar off a valley, full of trees and streams and birds singing the praises of God, the One, the Victorious. At this sight he rejoiced greatly and stayed not his steps till he came to a cleft in the rocks, through which [in the season of the rains] a torrent fell down into the valley. He made his way down [the dry bed of the water-course] into the valley and walked on therein, gazing right and left, until he came in sight of a great castle, rising high into the air. As he drew near, he saw an old man of comely aspect and face shining with light standing at the gate, with a staff of cornelian in his hand, and going up to him, saluted him. The old man returned his greeting and bade him welcome, saying, ‘Sit down, O my son.’ So he sat down at the door of the castle and the other said to him, ‘How camest thou to this land, that no son of Adam hath trodden before thee, and whither art thou bound?’ When Janshah heard his words, he wept sore at the memory of all he had suffered and his tears choked his speech. ‘O my son,’ said the old man, ‘leave weeping; for indeed thou makest my heart ache.’ So saying, he rose and set food before him and bade him eat. He ate and praised God the Most High, after which the old man besought him to tell him his history.

So Janshah related to him all that had befallen him, from first to last, at which he marvelled exceedingly. Then said the prince, ‘I prithee, tell me who is the lord of this valley and to whom doth this great castle belong?’ ‘O my son,’ answered the old man, ‘this valley and castle and all that is therein belong to the lord Solomon, son of David, on whom be peace! As for me, my name is Sheikh Nesr, king of the birds; for thou must know that the lord Solomon committed this castle to my charge and taught me the language of birds and made me king over all the birds that be in the world; wherefore they all come hither once in every year, and I pass them in review. Then they depart; and this is why I dwell here.’ When Janshah heard this, he wept sore and said to the Sheikh, ‘O my father, how shall I do to win to my native land?’ ‘Know, o my son,’ replied Sheikh Nesr, ‘that thou art near the Mountain Caf; and there is no departing for thee from this place; but tarry with me here and eat and drink and divert thyself with viewing the apartments of this castle, till the birds come, when I will give thee in charge to one of them, and he will bring thee to thy native country.’

So Janshah abode with Sheikh Nesr in all delight of life, taking his pleasance in the valley and eating of its fruits and laughing and making merry with the old man, till the day appointed for the coming of the birds, when the Sheikh gave him the keys of the castle, bidding him amuse himself with exploring all its apartments and viewing what was therein, but charging him straitly not to open such a door, else he would never again know fair fortune. Then he went forth to meet the birds, which came up, kind by kind, and kissed his hands; and he said to them, ‘With me is a youth, whom destiny hath brought hither from a far land, and I desire of you that you take him up and carry him to his own country.’ And they answered, ‘We hear and obey.'

Meanwhile, Janshah went round about the castle, opening the various doors and viewing the apartments into which they led, till he came to the door which Sheikh Nesr had warned him not to enter. Its fashion pleased him, for it had on it a lock of gold, and he said in himself, 'This door is goodlier than all the others; I wonder what is behind it, that Sheikh Nesr should forbid me to open it. Come what may, needs must I enter and see what is in this apartment; for that which is decreed unto the creature, he must perforce fulfil.' So he unlocked the door and entering, found himself in a vast garden, full of streams and trees, laden with fruits, both hard and soft of skin, whose branches swayed gracefully, whenas the zephyr blew upon them. Midmost the garden was a great lake, the gravel of whose bed was gems and jewels and precious stones; and hard by the lake stood a little pavilion, builded all of gold and silver and crystal, with lattice-windows of jacinth. The floor of this pavilion was paved with green beryl and balass rubies and emeralds and other jewels, set mosaic-fashion, and in its midst was a golden basin, full of water and compassed about with figures of birds and beasts, wroughten of gold and silver and casting water from their mouths. When the zephyr blew on them, it entered their ears [and passed through pipes hidden in their bodies,] and therewith the figures sang out, each in its own tongue. Beside the fountain was a great estrade, and thereon stood a vast throne of cornelian, inlaid with pearls and jewels, over which was a tent of green silk set up, fifty cubits in compass and embroidered with jewels and precious metals. Within this tent was a closet containing the [magical] carpet of the lord Solomon (on whom be peace), and the pavilion was compassed about with beds of roses and basil and eglantine and all manner sweet-smelling herbs and flowers.

Janshah explored the marvels of the place, till he was weary of wonder, when he returned to the pavilion and mounting the throne, fell asleep under the tent set up thereon. He slept there awhile and presently awaking, went forth and sat down on a stool before the door. As he sat, marvelling at the goodliness of the place, there flew up three birds like doves [but as big as vultures] and lighted on the brink of the lake, where they sported awhile. Then they put off their feathers and became three maidens, as they were moons, that had not their like in the world. They plunged into the lake and swam about and toyed and laughed, while Janshah marvelled at their beauty and grace and the justness of their shapes.

Presently, they came up out of the water and fell to walking about and taking their pleasure in the garden; whereat Janshah's reason was like to depart from him and he rose and followed them. When he overtook them, he saluted them and they returned his salute; after which quoth he, 'Who are ye, O illustrious ladies, and whence come ye?' 'We are from the invisible world of God the Most High,' replied the youngest damsel, 'and come hither to divert ourselves. And he marvelled at their beauty and said to the youngest, 'Have compassion on me and incline unto me and take pity on my case and on all that has befallen me in my life.' 'Leave this talk,' rejoined she, 'and go thy ways;' whereat the tears streamed from his eyes, and he sighed heavily and repeated the following verses.

She shone out in the garden in garments all of green, With open vest and collars and flowing hair beseen.
"What is thy name?" I asked her, and she replied, "I'm she Who roasts the hearts of lovers on coals of love and teen."
Of passion and its anguish to her I made my moan; "Upon a rock," she answered, "thy plaints are wasted clean."
"Even if thy heart," I told her, "be rock in very deed, Yet hath God made fair water well from the rock, I ween."

When the maidens heard his verses, they laughed and played and sang and made merry. Then he brought them somewhat of fruit, and they ate and drank and lay with him till the morning, when they donned their feather-vests and becoming doves once more, flew away and disappeared from his sight. His reason well-nigh fled with them, and he gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon, in which he lay all that day.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Nesr returned from the assembly of the birds and sought for Janshah, that he might send him with the latter to his native land, but found him not and knew that he had entered the forbidden door. So he went thither and seeing it open, entered and found the prince lying aswoon under a tree. He fetched scented waters and sprinkled them on his face, whereupon he revived and turned right and left, but seeing none by him, save the old man, sighed heavily and repeated the following verses:

Like the full moon she shines, upon a night of fortune fair,
Slender of shape and charming all with her seductive air.
She hath an eye, whose sorcery enchanteth every wit, A mouth,
as agates, set a-row midst roses red, it were.
The night-black torrent of her locks falls down unto her hips;
Beware the serpents of her curls, I counsel thee beware!
Indeed, her glance, her sides are soft, but harder is her heart Than
rock to him who loveth her; there is no softness there.
The arrows of her looks she darts from out her eyebrows' bow;
They hit and never miss the mark, though from afar they fare.
Alas, her beauty! it outdoes all other loveliness; No maid of
mortal mould there is that can with her compare.

When the Sheikh heard this, he said, 'O my son, did I not warn thee not to open the door? But now tell me what hath befallen thee.' So Janshah told him all that had passed between him and the three maidens, and Sheikh Nesr said, 'Know, O my son, that these three maidens are of the daughters of the Jinn and come hither every year [for a day], to divert themselves and make merry until mid-afternoon, when they return to their own country.' 'And where is their country?' asked Janshah. 'By Allah, O my son,' answered the old man, 'I know not: but now take heart and put away this love from thee and come with me, that I may send thee to thine own land with the birds.' When Janshah heard this, he gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon; and presently, coming to himself, said, 'O my father, I care not to return to my native land. I conjure thee by Allah, let me abide with thee, that I may again foregather with the maidens and look upon the face of her I love, though it be but once a year. And know, O my father, that I will never again name my people, though I die before thee.' And he sighed and repeated the following verses:

Would that the phantom never came to mock the lover's pain

Anights, and would this love were not created for men's bane!

Except my heart were all afire with memories of thee, The tears adown my wasted cheeks would not in torrents rain.

My soul to patience I exhort forever, day and night, Whilst still my body is consumed with fires of love in vain.

So saying, he fell at Sheikh Nesr's feet and kissed them and wept sore. 'Have compassion on me,' exclaimed he, 'so God take pity on thee!' 'By Allah, O my son,' replied the old man, 'I know nothing of the maidens nor of their country; but, if thy heart be indeed set on one of them, abide with me till this time next year, and when the day of their coming arrives, hide thyself under a tree in the garden. As soon as they have alighted and laid aside their feather-garments and plunged into the lake and are swimming about at a distance from their clothes, run up and seize the vest of her to whom thou hast a mind. When they see thee, they will come ashore and she, whose vest thou hast taken, will accost thee and say to thee with the sweetest of speech and the most bewitching smiles, "Give me my clothes, O my brother, that I may don them and cover my nakedness withal." But be not thou persuaded; for, if thou yield to her wishes and give her back the vest, she will don it and fly away and thou wilt never see her again; but, when thou hast gotten the vest, put it under thine armpit and hold it fast, till I return from the assembly of the birds, when I will make accord between you and send thee back to thy native land, and the maiden with thee. And this, O my son, is all I can do for thee.' When Janshah heard this, his heart was solaced and he abode with Sheikh Nesr yet another year, counting the hours until the day of the coming of the birds.

At last the appointed time arrived and the old man said to him, 'Do as I enjoined thee with the maidens, for I go to meet the birds.' So saying, he departed, whilst Janshah repaired to the garden and hid himself under a tree, where none could see him. Here he abode a first day and a second and a third, but the maidens came not; whereat he was sore troubled and wept and groaned without ceasing, till he swooned away. When he came to himself, he sat, looking now at the lake and now at the sky, and anon at the earth and anon at the open country, whilst his heart fluttered for stress of love and longing. As he was in this case, behold, the three doves appeared in the distance and flew till they reached the garden and lighted down beside the lake. They turned right and left, but saw no one; so they put off their feathers and became three naked maidens, as they were ingots of virgin silver. Then they plunged into the lake and swam about, laughing and frolicking. Quoth the eldest, ‘O my sister, I fear lest there be some one lying in wait for us in the pavilion.’ ‘O sister, answered the second, ‘since the days of King Solomon, none hath entered the pavilion, be he man or genie. ‘By Allah, O my sisters,’ added the youngest, laughing, ‘if there be any hidden there, he will assuredly take none but me.’

Then they swam out to the middle of the lake, and when Janshah, who was watching them, with a heart fluttering for stress of passion, saw them at a distance from their clothes, he sprang to his feet and running like the darting lightning [to the brink of the lake,] snatched up the feather-vest of the youngest damsel, her on whom his heart was set and whose name was Snemseh. At this, the girls turned and seeing him, were affrighted and veiled themselves from him with the water. Then they swam towards the shore and looking on him, saw that he was bright of face as the moon at her full and said to him, ‘Who art thou and how comest thou hither and why hast thou taken the clothes of the lady Shemseh?’ ‘Come hither to me,’ replied he, ‘and I will tell you my story.’ Quoth Shemseh, ‘Why hast thou taken my clothes, rather than those of my sisters?’ ‘O light of mine eyes,’ answered he. ‘come forth of the water, and I will tell thee my case and why I chose thee out.’ ‘O my lord and solace of my eyes and fruit of my heart,’ rejoined she, ‘give me my clothes, that I may put them on and cover my nakedness withal; then will I come forth to thee.’ But he replied, saying, ‘O princess of fair ones, how can I give thee back thy clothes and slay myself for love-longing? Verily, I will not give them to thee, till Sheikh Nesr, the king of the birds, returns.’ ‘If thou wilt not give me my clothes,’ quoth she, ‘withdraw a little apart from us, that my sisters may come forth and dress themselves and give me somewhat wherewith to cover myself.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered he and retired into the pavilion, whereupon the two eldest princesses came out and donning their clothes, gave Shemseh somewhat thereof, not enough to fly withal, and she put it on and came forth of the water, as she were the moon at her full or a browsing gazelle.

Then they entered the pavilion, where they found Janshah sitting on the throne; so Shemseh saluted him and sitting down near him, said to him, ‘O fair of face, thou hast undone thyself and me; but tell us thy history, that we may know how it is with thee.’ At these words, he wept till he wet his clothes with his tears; and when she saw that he was distracted for love of her, she rose and taking him by the hand, made him sit by her side and wiped away his tears with her sleeve. Then said she to him, ‘O fair of face, leave this weeping and tell us thy story.’ So he related to her all that had befallen him, whereupon she sighed and said, ‘O my lord, since thou lovest me so dear, give me my clothes, that I may fly to my people and tell them what has passed between thee and me, and after I will come back to thee and carry thee to thine own country.’ When he heard this, he wept and replied, ‘Is it lawful to thee before God to slay me wrongfully?’ ‘O my lord,’ said she, ‘and how shall I do that?’ ‘If I give thee thy clothes,’ rejoined he, ‘thou wilt fly away from me, and I shall die forthright.’

At this she and her sisters laughed and she said to him, ‘Take comfort and be of good cheer, for I must needs marry thee.’ So saying, she bent down to him and embraced him and kissed him between the eyes and on his cheeks. They clipped each other awhile, after which they drew apart and sat down on the throne. Then the eldest princess went out into the garden and gathering fruits and flowers, brought them into the pavilion, and they ate and drank and sported and made merry. Now Janshah was accomplished in beauty and grace and slender and elegant of shape, and the princess Shemseh said to him, ‘By Allah, O my beloved, I love thee with an exceeding love and will never leave thee!’ When he heard her words, his heart dilated and he laughed for joy; and they abode thus awhile in mirth and gladness.

Whilst they were laughing and taking their pleasure in the pavilion, Sheikh Nesr returned from the assembly of the birds and came in to them; whereupon they all rose to him and saluted him and kissed his hands. He gave them welcome and bade them be seated. So they sat down and he said to Shemseh, ‘Verily, this youth loves thee with an exceeding love; so, God on thee, deal kindly with him, for he is of the great ones of mankind and of the sons of the kings, and his father rules over the land of Kabul and is possessed of a mighty empire.' 'I hear and obey,' answered she and kissing the Sheikh's hands, stood before him [in token of respect and obedience]. 'If thou speak truly,' said he, 'swear to me by Allah that thou wilt never betray him, what while thou abidest in the chains of life.' So she swore a great oath that she would never betray Janshah, but would assuredly marry him, and added, 'I will never forsake him.' The Sheikh believed in her oath and said to Janshah, 'Thanks be to God, who hath made you at one!' At this the prince rejoiced with an exceeding great joy, and he and Shemseh abode three months with Sheikh Nesr, feasting and making merry.

At the end of that time, the princess said to Janshah, 'I wish to go with thee to thy native land, that we may marry and abide there.' 'I hear and obey,' answered he and took counsel with Sheikh Nesr, who bade him go and commended the princess to his care. Then said she, 'O Sheikh Nesr, bid him give me my feather-vest.' So the Sheikh bade Janshah give it to her, and he did so; where upon she donned it and said to the prince, 'Mount my back and keep fast hold of my feathers, lest thou fall off; and do thou shut thine eyes and stop thine ears, so thou mayst not hear the roar of the revolving sphere, as we pass through the air.' He did as she bade him and Sheikih Nesr described to her the land of Kabul, that she might not miss her way, and bade them farewell, commending the prince to her care. She took leave of her sisters and bade them return to her people and tell them what had befallen her with Janshah; then, rising into the air, she flew off, like the wafts of the wind or the dazzling lightning, and stayed not her course from the forenoon till the hour of afternoon prayer, when she espied afar off a valley abounding in trees and streams and alighted there to rest. Janshah dismounted and kissing her between the eyes, sat with her awhile on the bank of a river there; then they rose and explored the valley, taking their pleasure therein and eating of the fruits of the trees, till nightfall, when they lay down under a tree and slept till the morning.

As soon as it was day, the princess arose and taking Janshah on her back, flew on with him till mid-day, when she perceived, by the appearance of the landmarks that Sheikh Nesr had described to her, that they were nearing the city of Kabul and alighted in a wide and blooming champaign, wherein were gazelles feeding and springs welling and rivers flowing and trees laden with ripe fruits. So Janshah dismounted and kissed her between the eyes; and she said to him, ‘O my beloved and solace of mine eyes, knowst thou how many days’ journey we have come [since yesterday]?’ ‘No,’ answered he, and she said. ‘We have come thirty months’ journey.’ Quoth he, ‘Praised be God for safety!’ Then they sat down side by side and ate and drank and toyed and laughed.

Presently, there came up to them two of the King’s servants, of those who had been of the prince’s company in the chase, and one of them was he whom he had left by the horses, when he embarked in the fishing-boat. As soon as they saw Janshah, they knew him and saluted him; then said they, ‘With thy leave, we will go to thy father and bear him the glad tidings of thy coming.’ ‘Go,’ replied the prince, ‘and fetch us tents, for we will abide here seven days to rest ourselves, till he make ready and come forth to meet us, that we may enter in due state.’ So the officers hastened back to King Teigmous and said to him, ‘Good news, O King of the age!’ ‘What is it?’ asked he. ‘Is my son Janshah come back?’ ‘Yes,’ answered they; ‘he has returned from his absence and is now near at hand in the Kerani meadow.’

When the King heard this, he rejoiced greatly and fell down in a swoon for excess of joy; then, coming to himself, he bade his Vizier give each of the men a splendid dress of honour and a sum of money and said to them, ‘Take this, in reward for your good tidings, whether ye lie or speak sooth.’ ‘Indeed, we lie not,’ replied the slaves, ‘for but now we sat with him and saluted him and kissed his hands, and he bade us go and fetch him tents for that he would abide in the meadow seven days, till such time as the Viziers and Amirs and grandees should come out to meet him.’ Quoth the King, ‘How is it with my son?’ And they answered, ‘He hath with him a houri, as he had brought her out of Paradise.’ At this, the King bade beat the drums and sound the trumpets for gladness and despatched messengers to announce the good news to Janshah’s mother and to the wives of the Amirs and notables. So the criers spread themselves about the city and acquainted the people with the glad tidings of the prince's coming.

Then the King made ready and setting out, with his officers and troops, for the meadow, came upon Janshah and Shemseh sitting there. When the prince saw them, he rose and went to meet them; and the troops knew him and dismounted, to salute him and kiss his hands; after which they escorted him to his father, who, at sight of his son, threw himself from his horse's back and clipped him in his arms and wept sore. Then they took horse again and rode till they came to the banks of a river, when the troops alighted and pitched the tents and pavilions and standards, to the sound of trumpets and cymbals and drums and flutes. Moreover, the King caused set up a pavilion of red silk for the princess Shemseh, who put off her feather raiment and entering the pavilion, sat down there.

Presently, the King and his son came in to her, and when she saw Teigmous, she rose and kissed the earth before him. The King sat down and seating Janshah on his right hand and Shemseh on his left, bade her welcome and said to his son, 'Tell me all that hath befallen thee in thine absence.' So Janshah related to him all his adventures, whereat he marvelled greatly and turning to the princess, said, 'Praised be God for that He hath put it into thy heart to reunite me with my son! Verily this is of [His] exceeding bounty! And now I would have thee ask of me what thou wilt, that I may do it in thine honour.' Quoth she, 'I ask of thee that thou build me a palace in the midst of a garden, with water running under it.' And the King answered, 'I hear and obey.'

As they sat talking, up came Janshah's mother, attended by all the wives of the Viziers and Amirs and notables of the city. When the prince caught sight of her, he rose and leaving the tent, went to meet her and they embraced a long while, whilst the queen wept for excess of joy and repeated the following verses:

Joy hath o'ercome me so, that, for the very stress Of that which gladdens me, to weeping I am fain.
Tears are become, as 'twere, your nature, O my eyes, So that ye weep as well for gladness as for pain.

Then the King departed to his pavilion and Janshah carried his mother to his own tent, where they sat talking and complaining, one to the other, of all they had suffered for separation, till there came up some of Shemseh's attendants, to announce the coming of the princess. When the queen heard this, she rose and going to meet Shemseh, saluted her and seated her by her side. They sat awhile and presently the queen and her attendants returned with Shemseh to the latter's tent and sat there.

Meanwhile King Teigmous gave great largesse to his troops and subjects and rejoiced in his son with an exceeding joy, and they abode there ten days, feasting and making merry. At the end of this time, the King commanded to depart, and they all mounted and returned in state to the city, which was decorated after the goodliest fashion, for the folk had adorned the houses with precious stuffs and jewellery and spread costly brocades under the horses' feet. The drums beat for glad tidings and the notables of the kingdom rejoiced and brought rich gifts, and the lookers on were filled with amazement. Moreover, they fed the poor and needy and held high festival for the space of ten days; and the lady Shemseh rejoiced with an exceeding joy, whenas she saw this.

Then King Teigmous summoned architects and builders and men of art and bade them build a magnificent palace in such a garden. So they straightway proceeded to do his bidding, and when Janshah knew of this, he bade the workmen fetch a block of white marble and hollow it out in the likeness of a chest; which being done, he took the feather-vest of the princess Shemseh and laid it therein; then, closing the opening with melted lead, he commanded them to bury the marble chest in the foundations and build over it the arches on which the palace was to rest. They did as he bade them, nor was it long before the palace was finished on the goodliest wise. Then they furnished it and it was a magnificent palace, standing in the midst of the garden, with streams running from under it. As soon as it was ready, the King caused Janshah's wedding to be celebrated with the greatest magnificence and they brought the bride to the castle in state and went their ways.

When Shemseh entered, she smelt the scent of the feather-vest and knew where it was and had a mind to take it. However, she waited till midnight, when Janshah was drowned in sleep; then rose and going straight to the place where the marble coffer was buried, dug till she came upon it and took it up. She did away the leaden stopper and taking out the feather-vest, put it on. Then she flew up into the air and perching on the summit of the palace, cried out to those who were therein, saying, 'Fetch me Janshah, that I may bid him farewell.' So they told him and he came out and seeing her on the roof of the palace, clad in her feather raiment, said to her, 'Why hast thou done this thing?' 'O my beloved and solace of mine eyes and fruit of my heart,' replied she, 'by Allah, I love thee passing dear and I rejoice with an exceeding joy in that I have brought thee to thy friends and country and seen thy father and mother. And now, if thou love me as I love thee, come to me at the Castle of Jewels.'

So saying, she flew away and Janshah fell down in a swoon, being well-nigh dead for despair. His people carried the news to King Teigmous, who mounted at once and riding to the palace, found his son lying on the ground, senseless, whereat he wept and sprinkled rose-water on his face. When the prince came to himself and found his father at his head, he wept passing sore, and the King asked what had befallen him. So he told him what had happened, and the King said, 'O my son, be not concerned, for I will assemble all the merchants and pilgrims in the land and enquire at them of the Castle of Jewels. If we can find out where it is, we will journey thither and demand the Princess Shemseh of her people, and I hope in God the Most High, that He will give her back to thee.'

Then he went out and calling his four Viziers, bade them assemble all the merchants and travellers in the town and question them of the Castle of Jewels, adding, 'Whoso knows it and can direct us thither, I will give him fifty thousand dinars.' The Viziers accordingly went forth and did as the King bade them, but none could give them news of the Castle of Jewels; so they returned and told the King, who bade bring beautiful slave-girls and concubines and singers and players upon instruments of music, whose like are not found but with kings, and lent them to Janshah, so haply they might divert him from the love of the lady Shemseh. Moreover, he despatched couriers and spies to all the [neighbouring] lands and islands and climes, to enquire for the Castle of Jewels, and they made quest for it two months long, but none could give them news of it. So they returned and told the King, whereupon he wept sore and going in to his son, found him sitting in the midst of the concubines and singers and players on harp and psaltery and so forth, none of whom could avail to console him for the lady Shemseh. 'O my son,' said Teigmous, 'I can find none who knows the Castle of Jewels; but I will bring thee a fairer than she.' When Janshah heard this, his eyes ran over with tears and he recited the following verses;

Patience bath fled, but passion abideth and desire, And all my body's wasted with love and longing dire.
When will the days unite me with Sheinseh? Lo, my bones Are all consumed and rotted for separation's fire.

Now there was a King of Hind, by name Kefid, who reigned over a thousand cities, in each of which were as many citadels; he had four Viziers and under him were kings and princes and Amirs. Moreover, he had great plenty of troops and warriors and champions and under his hand were a thousand chieftains, each ruling over a thousand tribes, that could muster each four thousand cavaliers; and indeed he was a king of great might and prowess and his armies filled the whole earth. Between him and King Teigmous there was a fierce feud, for that the latter had made war upon him and ravaged his kingdom and slain his men and carried off his treasures. So, when it came to King Kefid's knowledge that King Teigmous was occupied with the love of his son and with concern and care for his sake, so that he neglected the affairs of the state and his troops were grown few and weak, he summoned his viziers and officers and said to them, 'Ye all know that King Teigmous invaded our dominions and plundered our goods and slew my father and brothers, nor indeed is there one of you, but he hath ravaged his lands and carried off his goods and made prize of his women and slain some kinsman of his. Now to-day I have heard that he is taken up with the love of his son Janshah and that his troops are grown few and weak; and this is the time to take our wreak on him. So don ye your harness of battle forthright and make ready for war without delay, and we will go to him and fall upon him and slay him and his son and possess ourselves of his kingdom.' They all answered with one voice, saying, 'We hear and obey,' and proceeded at once to equip themselves and levy troops.

The preparations occupied three months, at the end of which time the King set out at the head of his army, with drums beating and trumpets sounding and banners flying, and fared on till they reached the frontiers of the land of Kabul and entered the dominions of King Teigmous, where they began to ravage the country and do havoc among the folk, slaying the old and taking the young prisoners.

When the news reached King Teigmous, he was exceeding wroth and assembling his grandees and officers of state, said to them, 'Know that Kefid hath come to our country with troops and champions and warriors, whose number none knoweth save God the Most High, and is minded to do battle against us; what deem ye?' 'O King of the age,' replied they, 'let us go out to him and give him battle and drive him forth of our country.' So he commanded them to prepare for battle and brought forth to them hauberks and cuirasses and helmets and swords and all manner warlike gear, such as slay warriors and do to death the champions of mankind. So the troops and warriors and champions flocked to the standards and King Teigmous marched out at the head of his army, with drums and cymbals beating and flutes and clarions sounding and banners flying, to meet the army of Hind.

When he drew near the foe, he called a halt and encamping with his host in the Valley of Zehran, hard by the frontier, despatched to King Kefid the following letter:'Know that what thou hast done is of the fashion of the lewd rabble and wert thou indeed a king, the son of a king, thou hadst not thus invaded my kingdom and slain my subjects and done unright upon them. Knowest thou not that all this is the fashion of a tyrant? Verily, had I known that thou wouldst dare to invade my dominions, I had come to thee and prevented thee therefrom this long while since. Yet, even now, if thou wilt retire and leave mischief between us and thee, well and good; but if not, come out to me in the listed field and measure thyself with me in fair fight.' This letter he committed to an officer of his army and sent with him spies to spy him out news.

When the messenger drew near the enemy's camp, he saw a multitude of tents of silk and satin, with pennons of blue silk, and amongst them a great pavilion of red satin, surrounded by guards. He made for this tent and found that it was that of King Kefid and saw therein the latter seated on a chair set with jewels, in the midst of his Viziers and captains and grandees. So he displayed the letter and straightway there came up to him a company of guards, who took it from him and carried it to the King. Kefid read it and wrote the following reply; 'King Kefid to King Teigmous. Know that I mean to take my wreak of thee and wash out the stain on my honour by laying waste thy lands and dishonouring thy women and slaying the old and carrying the young into slavery; and tomorrow, come thou out to combat in the open field, and I will show thee war and battle.' Then he sealed the letter and delivered it to the messenger, who carried it to King Teigmous and informed the latter that he had seen in the enemy's camp warriors and horsemen and footmen beyond count, there was no bound to them. When Teigmous read the answer, he was beyond measure enraged and bade his Vizier Ain Zar take a thousand horse and fall upon the army of Kefid in the middle watch of the night.

Meanwhile, King Kefid commanded one of his Viziers, Ghetrefan by name, to take five thousand horse and attack King Teigmous's camp in like manner. So the two parties set out and meeting halfway, man cried out against man and there befell a sore battle between them till daybreak, when Ghetrefan's men were routed and fled back to their camp in confusion. When Khefid saw this, he was exceeding wroth and said to the fugitives, 'What hath befallen you, that ye have lost your captains?' 'O King of the age,' answered they, 'there met us halfway the Vizier Ain Zar, with champions and cavaliers, so that, before we were ware, we found ourselves in the enemy's midst, face to face with them, and fought a sore battle with them from midnight till morning. Then the Vizier and his men fell to smiting the elephants on the face and shouting out at them, till they took fright and turning tail to flee, trampled down the horsemen, whilst none could see other for the clouds of dust. The blood ran like a torrent and much folk were slain, and indeed, had we not fled, we had all been cut off to the last man.' When Kefid heard this, he exclaimed, 'May the sun not bless you and may his wrath be sore upon you!'

Meanwhile, Ain Zar returned to King Teigmous and told him what had happened. The King gave him joy of his safety and rejoiced greatly and bade beat the drums and sound the trumpets, in honour of the victory; after which he called the roll of his troops and found that two hundred of his stoutest champions had fallen. Then King Kefid marched his army into the field and drew them out in order of battle in fifteen lines of ten thousand horse each, under the commandment of three hundred captains and princes, mounted on elephants and chosen from amongst the doughtiest of his warriors. So he set up his standards and banners and blew the trumpets and beat the drums, whilst the champions sallied forth, offering battle. As for King Teigmous, he drew out his troops in ten lines of ten thousand horse each, and with him were a hundred champions, riding on his right hand and on his left. Then rode forward to the fight each renowned cavalier, with drums. and cymbals beating and pipes and hautboys sounding and trumpets blaring, and the two hosts clashed together, whilst the earth for all its wideness was straitened for the multitude of the cavaliers and ears were deafened for the tramp of the horses and the shouting of the men. The dust volleyed up in clouds and hung vaulted over them, and they fought a sore battle from the first of the day till the coming of the darkness, when they separated and each army drew off to its own camp. Then the two kings mustered their troops and found that they had lost, Kefid five thousand men and Teigmous three thousand of the flower of his braves, whereat they were sore concerned. On the morrow, the two hosts again drew out in battle array, and Kefid cried out to his men, saying, ‘Which of you will sally forth into the field and open us the chapter of war and battle?’ Thereupon came out from the ranks a warrior named Berkaik, a mighty man of war, riding on an elephant. When he reached the King, he alighted and kissing the earth before him, sought of him leave to challenge the foe to single combat. Then he mounted his elephant and pricking into the middle of the field, cried out, ‘Who is for jousting, who is for foining, who is for fighting?’ When King Teigmous heard this, he said to his troops, ‘Which of you will do battle with this champion?’ Whereupon a cavalier came out from the ranks, mounted on a charger, mighty of make, and dismounting, kissed the earth before the King and craved his permission to engage Berkaik. Then he mounted again and drove at Berkaik, who said to him, ‘Who art thou, that thou makest mock of me by coming out against me, alone?’ ‘My name is Ghezenfer ben Kemkhil,’ replied the Kabul champion; and the other, ‘I have heard tell of thee in my own country; so up and do battle between the ranks of the champions.’

Then Ghezenfer drew a mace of iron from under his thigh and Berkaik took his sword in his hand, and they fought a sore battle, till Berkaik smote Ghezenfer on the head with his sword, but the helmet turned the blow and no hurt betided him therefrom; whereupon Ghezenfer, in his turn, dealt Berkaik so terrible a buffet on the head with his mace, that he beat him down on to his elephant’s back [and killed him]. With this out sallied another horseman and saying to Ghezenfer, ‘Who art thou that thou shouldst slay my brother?’ hurled a javelin at him with such force that it pierced his thigh and nailed his greaves to his flesh. The Kabul champion, feeling himself wounded, took his sword in his hand and smote at Berkaik’s brother and cut him in sunder, and he fell to the earth, wallowing in his blood, whilst Ghezenfer rode back to King Teigmous.

When Kefid saw the death of his champions, he cried out to his troops to set on, as also did the King of Kabul; and the two armies drove at each other. Horse neighed against horse and man cried out upon man and the swords flashed from the scabbards, whilst the drums beat and the trumpets sounded. Then horseman charged upon horseman and every renowned champion pricked forward, whilst the faintheart fled from the push of pike and men heard nought but the clang of arms and the roar of the battle. Slain were the warriors that were slain and they stinted not from the fight till the going down of the sun in the pavilion of the heavens, when the two hosts drew asunder and returned each to its own camp. Then King Teigmous numbered his men and found that he had lost five thousand men and four standards, whereat he was sore concerned; whilst King Kefid in like manner counted his troops and found that he had lost six hundred of the flower of his horsemen and nine standards.

The two armies rested on their arms three days’ space, after which Kefid wrote a letter to a king called Facoun el Kelb (to whom he claimed kinship by his mother) and the latter forthwith assembled his troops and marched to the succour of the King of Hind. So, as King Teigmous was sitting at his pleasance, there came one in to him and said, ‘I see a cloud of dust rising into the air in the distance.’So he despatched a company, to learn the meaning of this, who presently returned and said to him, ‘O King, when we drew near the cloud of dust, the wind smote it and it lifted and discovered seven standards and under each standard three thousand horse, making for King Kefid’s camp.’ Then King Facoun joined himself to the King of Hind and saluting him, enquired how it was with him and what was this war in which he was engaged. ‘Knowest thou not,’ answered Kefid, ‘that King Teigmous is my enemy and the murderer of my father and brothers? Wherefore I am come forth to do battle with him and take my wreak on him.’ Quoth Facoun, ‘The blessing of the sun be upon thee!’ And the King of Hind carried King Facoun to his tent and rejoiced in him with an exceeding great joy.

To return to Janshah. He abode shut up in his palace, without seeing his father or allowing one of the damsels or singing-women in his service to come in to him, for two months’ space, at the end of which time he grew troubled and restless at not seeing the King and said to his attendants, ‘What ails my father that he cometh not to visit me?’ They told him that he had gone forth to do battle with the King of Hind, whereupon quoth Janshah, ‘Bring me my horse, that I may go to my father.’ But he said in himself, ‘I am taken up with the thought of my beloved, and I deem well to journey to the city of the Jews, where haply God shall grant me to meet the merchant, and maybe he will hire me once more and deal with me as before, for none knoweth wherein is good.’ So he took with him a thousand horse and set out, the folk. deeming that he purposed to join his father in the field, and they fared on till dusk, when they halted for the night in a vast meadow. As soon as he knew that all his men were asleep, the prince rose and girding his middle, mounted his horse and rode out, intending for Baghdad, for that he had heard from the Jews that a caravan came thence their city once in every two years and thought to journey thither therewith.

When his men awoke and missed the prince and his horse, they mounted and sought him right and left, but finding no trace of him, rejoined his father and told him what his son had done; whereat he was beyond measure concerned and cast the crown from his head, whilst the sparks were like to fly from his mouth, and he said, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God! I have lost my son, and the enemy is before me.’ But his Viziers and vassals said to him, ‘Patience, O King of the age! Nought but good ensueth patience.’ Then he collected his forces and abandoning his camp, retired to his capital, where he armed the inhabitants and fortified the place, setting up mangonels and other engines upon the walls. King Kefid followed him and sat down before the town, offering battle seven nights and eight days, after which he withdrew to his tents, to tend his wounded. On this wise he did every month, and they ceased not to beleaguer the place thus seven years.

Meanwhile, Janshah arrived at Baghdad, where he heard from a merchant that the city of the Jews was situate in the extreme Orient and that a caravan would start that very month for the city of Mizrecan in Hind, ‘whither do thou accompany us,’ said the merchant, ‘and we will fare on to Khorassan and thence to the city of Shimaoun and Khouarezm, from which latter place the city of the Jews is distant a year and three months’ journey.’ So Janshah waited till the time of the departure of the caravan, when he joined himself thereto and journeyed, till he reached the city of Mizrecan, whence he again set out and after enduring great hardships and perils and the extreme of hunger and thirst, arrived at the town of Shimaoun. Nor did he fail in every city to which he came to enquire after the Castle of Jewels, but none could give him news of it and all said, ‘Never heard we this name.’ At Shimaoun he made enquiry for the city of the Jews, and they directed him the road thither. So he set out and journeyed nights and days till he came to the place, where he had given the apes the slip, and continued his journey thence to the river, on the opposite bank of which stood the city of the Jews. He sat down on the shore and waited till Saturday came round and the river dried up, when he crossed over to the opposite bank and entering the city, betook himself to the house of his former host. The Jew and his family rejoiced in his return and set meat and drink before him, saying, ‘Where hast thou been during thine absence?’ ‘In the kingdom of God the Most High,’ answered he and lay with them that night.

On the morrow he went out to walk about the city and presently heard a crier crying aloud and saying, ‘O folk, who will earn a thousand dinars and a handsome slave-girl and do half a day’s work for us?’ So Janshah went up to him and said, ‘I am your man.’ Quoth the crier, ‘Follow me,’ and carrying him to the house of the Jew merchant, where he had been aforetime, said to the latter, ‘This young man will do thy work.’ The merchant gave him welcome [not recognizing him] and carried him into the harem, where he set meat and drink before him, and he ate and drank. Then he brought him the dinars and the fair slave, with whom he lay that night.

On the morrow, he took the money and the damsel and committing them to his host, returned to the merchant, who mounted and rode out with him, till they came to the foot of the mountain, where they halted and the merchant, bringing out a knife and cords, bade Janshah throw down the mare on which he rode and bind her legs with the cords. So he threw her down and bound her and slaughtered her and cut off her legs and slit her belly, as the Jew ordered him; whereupon quoth the latter, ‘Enter her belly, till I sew it up on thee; and whatsoever thou seest therein, tell me of it, for this is the work the hire whereof thou hast taken.’ So Janshah entered the mare’s belly and the merchant sewed it up on him, then, withdrawing to a distance, hid himself.

Presently, a great bird swooped down on the carcase and flying up with it to the mountain-top, would have eaten it, which when Janshah felt, he took out his knife and slitting the mare’s belly, came forth. The bird was scared at his sight and flew away, and Janshah went up to the edge of the crest and looking down, espied the merchant standing at the foot of the mountain, as he were a sparrow. So he cried out to him, ‘What is thy will, O merchant?’ ‘Throw me down of the stones that lie about thee,’ replied the Jew, ‘that I may direct thee in the way down.’ Quoth Janshah, ‘I am he with whom thou didst thus and thus five years agone, and through thee I suffered hunger and thirst and sore toil and much hardship; and now thou hast brought me hither once more and thinkest to destroy me. By Allah, I will not throw thee aught!’ So saying, he turned his back on him and set out for the castle of the lord Solomon.

He fared on many days and nights, tearful-eyed and heavy at heart, eating, when he hungered, of the fruits of the earth and drinking, when he thirsted, of its streams, till he came in sight of the castle and saw Sheikh Nesr sitting at the gate. So he hastened up to him and kissed his hands; and the Sheikh bade him welcome and said to him, ‘O my son, what ails thee that thou returnest to this place, after I sent thee home with the Princess Shemseh, comforted and glad at heart?’ Janshah wept and told him all that had befallen him and how she had flown away from him, saying, ‘An thou love me, come to me at the Castle of Jewels;’ at which the old man marvelled and said, ‘By Allah, O my son, I know not the Castle of Jewels, nor, by the virtue of our lord Solomon, have I ever in my life heard its name!’ ‘What shall I do?’ said Janshah. ‘I am dying of love and longing.’ Quoth Sheikh Nesr, ‘Take patience until the coming of the birds, when I will enquire at them of the Castle of Jewels.’

So Janshah’s heart was comforted and he abode with Sheikh Nesr, until the appointed day arrived, when the Sheikh said to him, ‘O my son, learn these names and come with me to meet the birds.’ Presently, the birds came flying up and saluted Sheikh Nesr, kind after kind, and he asked them of the Castle of Jewels, but they all made answer that they had never heard of such a place. When Janshah heard this, he wept and lamented, till he swooned away, whereupon Sheikh Nesr called a huge bird and said to him, ‘Carry this youth to the land of Kabul,’ and described to him the land and the way thither. Then he set Janshah on the bird’s back, bidding him sit straight and beware of inclining to either side, or he would fall and be torn to pieces in the air, and to stop his ears from the wind, lest he be dazed by the noise of the revolving sphere and the roaring of the seas.

So the bird took flight and flew with him a day and a night, till he set him down by the King of the Beasts, whose name was Shah Bedra, and said to him, ‘We have gone astray.’ And he would have taken him up again and flown on with him; but Janshah said, ‘Go thy ways and leave me here, till I die or find the Castle of Jewels. I will not return to my country.’ So the bird left him with Shah Bedra and flew away. The King bade him welcome and said to him, O my son, who art thou and whence comest thou with yonder great bird?’ So Janshah told him his story, whereat Shah Bedra marvelled and said, ‘By the virtue of the lord Solomon, I know not of this castle; but [when the beasts come to pay their respects to me, we will ask them thereof, and] if any know it, we will reward him bountifully and send thee thither by him.’

So Janshah took patience and abode with Shah Bedra, [who gave him certain tablets, inscribed with magical formulas,] saying ‘O my son, commit to memory that which is in these tablets; [so wilt thou be gifted to understand the language of beasts;] and when the beasts come, question them of the Castle of Jewels.’ He did as the King bade him, and before long, up came the beasts, kind after kind, and saluted Shah Bedra, who questioned them of the Castle of Jewels; but they all replied, ‘We know not this castle, nor ever heard we of it.’ At this Janshah wept sore and lamented for that he had not gone with the bird that brought him from Sheikh Nesr’s castle; but Shah Bedra said to him, ‘Grieve not, O my son, for I have a brother who is older than I; his name is King Shimakh and he rules over all the Jinn in the country. He was once a prisoner to King Solomon, for that he rebelled against him; nor is there among the Jinn an elder than he and Sheikh Nesr. Belike he knows of this castle.’ So saying, he set Janshah on the back of a beast and gave him a letter to his brother, commending him to his care.

So the beast set off with the prince and fared on days and nights, till it came to King Shimakh’s abiding-place and stood still afar off; whereupon Janshah alighted and walked on, till he found himself in the presence of the King, to whom he presented his brother’s letter, after having kissed his hands. The King read the letter and welcomed the prince, saying, ‘By Allah, O my son, in all my life I never saw nor heard of this castle! But tell me thy story and who and whence thou art and whither thou art bound.’ So Janshah related to him his history from beginning to end, at which the King marvelled and said, ‘O my son, I do not believe that our lord Solomon even ever saw or heard of this castle; but I know a hermit in the mountains, who is exceeding old and whom all birds and beasts and Jinn obey; for he ceased not to conjure against the kings of the Jinn, till they submitted themselves to him in their own despite, by reason of the might of his spells and his enchantments. I myself once rebelled against King Solomon and he sent this hermit against me, who overcame me with his craft and his enchantments and imprisoned me, and since then I have been his vassal. His name is Yegmous and he dwells in a retreat in the mountains called the Hermitage of Diamonds. He is a cunning artificer in all manner strange works and a crafty warlock and necromancer, full of guile and versed in every kind of magic and sorcery and enchantment, and all birds and beasts and mountains obey him and come at his beck, for the stress of his conjurations. Moreover, he hath made him a staff in three pieces, and this he plants in the earth and conjures over it; whereupon flesh and blood issue from the first piece, sweet milk from the second and wheat and barley from the third. He hath travelled in all countries and quarters and knoweth all ways and regions and places and castles and cities, nor do I think there is any place hidden from his ken. So needs must I send thee to him; haply he may direct thee to the Castle of Jewels; and if he cannot do this, none can, for all things obey him, by reason of his skill in magic.'

So saying, Shimakh called a great bird, that had feet like those of an elephant and four wings, each thirty cubits long, and set Janshah on its back, bidding it carry him to the hermit. Now this bird flew but twice a year, and there was with King Shimakh an officer, by name Timshoun, who used every day to carry off two Bactrian camels from the land of Irak and cut them up for it, that it might eat them. So it rose into the air and flew on days and nights, till it came to the mountain of the Citadels and the hermitage of Diamonds where Janshah alithted and going up to the hermitage, found Yegmous at his devotions. So he entered the chapel and kissing the earth before the hermit, stood [in an attitude of respect]. When Yegmous saw him, he said to him, 'Welcome, O my son, O pilgrim from a far country and stranger in the lands! Tell me the cause of thy coming hither.' So Janshah wept and acquainted him with all that had befallen him and that he was in quest of the Castle of Jewels. Yegmous marvelled greatly at his story and said, 'By Allah, O my son, never in my life heard I of this Castle, nor saw I ever one who had heard of or seen it, for all I was alive in the days of Noah, prophet of God (on whom be peace), and have ruled the birds and beasts and Jinn ever since his time; nor do I believe that Solomon himself knew of it. But wait till the birds and beasts and chiefs of the

Jinn come to do their homage to me and I will question them of it; peradventure, some one of them may be able to give us news of it and God the Most High shall make it easy to thee [to win thither].'

So Janshah abode with the hermit, until the day of the assembly, when Yegmous questioned all the birds and beasts and Jinn of the Castle of Jewels, but they all replied, 'We never saw or heard of such a place.' At this, Janshah fell a-weeping and lamenting and prostrated himself in supplication to God the Most High, but, as he was thus engaged, there flew down from the heights of the air a great black bird, which had tarried behind the rest, and kissed the hermit's hands. The latter asked it of the Castle of Jewels, and it replied, saying, 'O hermit, when I and my brothers were fledglings, we dwelt behind the mountain Caf on a hill of crystal, in the midst of a great desert, and our father and mother used to go and come with our food every day. They went out one day, [in quest of food,] and were absent from us seven days and hunger was sore upon us; but on the eighth day they returned, weeping, and we asked them the reason of their absence. Quoth they, "A Marid swooped down on us and carried us off to the Castle of Jewels and brought us before King Shehlan, who would have slain us; but we told him that we had left a young brood behind us; so he spared our lives [and let us go]." And were my parents yet in the bonds of life,' added the bird, 'they would give thee news of the castle.'

When Janshah heard this, he wept and besought the hermit to bid the bird carry him to the nest he spoke of on the crystal hill, behind the mountain Caf. So the hermit said to the bird, 'I desire thee to obey this youth in whatsoever he may command thee.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the bird and taking Janshah on its back, flew with him days and nights, till it set him down on the hill of crystal and said, 'This is where our nest was.' Janshah begged it to carry him farther on to where the old birds used to forage for food. So it took him up again and flew on with him seven nights and eight days, till it set him down on the top of a high hill, named Kermous, and left him there, saying, 'I know of no land behind this hill.' Then it flew away and Janshah sat down on the hill-top and fell asleep. When he awoke, he saw somewhat gleaming afar off [as it were lightning] and filling the air with its radiance, and wondered what this could be. So he descended the mountain and made towards the light.

Now this light came from the Castle of Jewels, which was distant two months' journey from Mount Kermous, and its walls were fashioned of red rubies and the buildings within them of yellow gold. Moreover, it had a thousand turrets builded of precious stones and metals, brought from the Sea of Darknesses, and on this account it was named the Castle of Jewels. It was a vast great castle and the name of its king was King Shehlan, the father of Shemseh and her sisters. Now, when the princess Shemseh left Janshah, she returned to the Castle of Jewels and told her father and mother all that had passed between the prince and herself. Quoth they, 'Thou hast not dealt righteously with him:' and she, 'Be sure that he will follow me hither, for he loves me passionately.' So King Shehlan repeated the story to his guards and officers of the Marids of the Jinn and bade them bring him every mortal they should see.

Now, as chance would have it, Shemseh had that very day despatched a Marid on an occasion in the direction of Mount Kermous, and on his way thither he caught sight of Janshah; so he hastened up to him and saluted him. The prince was terrified at his sight, but returned his greeting, and the Marid said to him, 'What is thy name?' 'My name is Janshah,' answered he, and bursting into tears, related to the genie his adventures and how he was come thither in quest of the princess Shemseh and the Castle of Jewels. The Marid was moved to pity by his story and said to him, 'Weep not, for thou art come to thy desire. Know that [yonder stands the Castle of Jewels, where dwells she whom thou seekest]. She loves thee dear and has told her parents of thy love for her, and all in the castle love thee for her sake; so take comfort and be of good cheer.' Then he took him on his shoulders and made off with him to the Castle of Jewels.

When the news of Janshah's coming reached Shemseh and her father and mother, they all rejoiced with an exceeding joy, and King Shehlan took horse and rode out, with all his guards and Afrits and Marids, to meet the prince. As soon as he came up with him, he dismounted and embraced him, and Janshah kissed his hand. Then Shehlan put on him a robe of honour of vari-coloured silk, laced with gold and set with jewels, and a coronet such as never saw mortal king, and mounting him on a splendid mare of the horses of the kings of the Jinn, brought him in great state to the castle. Janshah was dazzled by the splendour of this castle, with its walls of rubies and other jewels and its pavement of crystal and chrysolite and emerald, and fell a-weeping for very wonderment; but the King wiped away his tears and said, ‘Leave weeping and be of good cheer, for thou hast come to thy desire.’ Then he carried him into the inner court of the castle, where he was received by a multitude of beautiful damsels and pages and slaves, who seated him in the place of honour and stood to do him service, whilst he was lost in amazement at the goodliness of the place and its walls, that were all builded of precious metals and jewels.

Meanwhile, King Shehlan repaired to his hall of audience, where he sat down on his throne and bidding his attendants bring in the prince, rose to receive him and seated him by his own side on the throne. Then he called for food and they ate and drank and washed their hands; after which in came the Queen, Shemseh’s mother, and saluting Janshah, bade him welcome. ‘Thou hast come to thy desire after weariness,’ quoth she, ‘and thine eyes sleep alter watching; so praised be God for thy safety!’ So saying, she went away and forthwith returned with the princess Shemseh, who saluted Janshah and kissed his hands, hanging her head in confusion; after which her sisters came up to him and greeted him in like manner.

Then said the Queen to him, ‘O my son, our daughter Shemseh hath indeed sinned against thee, but do thou pardon her for our sakes.’ When Janshah heard this, he cried out and fell down in a swoon, and they sprinkled on his face rose-water mingled with musk and civet, till he came to himself and looking at Shemseh, said, ‘Praised be God who hath brought me to my desire and quenched the fire of my heart!’ ‘May He preserve thee from the Fire!’ replied she. ‘But now tell me what hath befallen thee since our parting and how thou madest thy way to this place; seeing that few even of the Jinn ever heard of the Castle of Jewels and we are beyond the dominion of any king nor knoweth any the road hither.’

So he related to her all the adventures and perils and hardships he had suffered for her sake and how he had left his father at war with the King of Hind. Quoth the Queen, ‘Now hast thou thy heart’s desire, for the princess Shemseh is thy handmaid, we give her to thee; and next month, if it be the will of God the Most High, we will celebrate the marriage festival and send you both back to thy native land, with an escort of a thousand Marids, the least of whom, if thou shouldst bid him slay King Kefid and his people, would destroy them to the last man in the twinkling of an eye.'

Then King Shehlan sat down on his throne and summoning his grandees and officers of state, bade them make ready for the marriage festivities and decorate the city seven days and nights. 'We hear and obey,' answered they and busied themselves two months in the preparations, after which they celebrated the marriage of the prince and princess and held a mighty festival, never was seen its like. Then they brought Janshah in to his bride and he abode with her in all delight and solace of life two years, at the end of which time, he said to her, 'Thy father promised to send us to my native land, that we might pass one year there and the next here.' 'I hear and obey,' answered she and going in to King Shehlan at nightfall, told him what the prince had said. Quoth he, 'Have patience with me till the first of the month, that I may make ready for your departure.'

Accordingly, they waited till the appointed time, when the King brought out to them a great litter of red gold, set with pearls and jewels and covered with a canopy of green silk, painted in the liveliest colours and embroidered with precious stones, dazzling the eyes with its goodliness. Moreover, he gave his daughter three hundred beautiful damsels to wait upon her and bestowed on Janshah the like number of white slaves of the sons of the Jinn. Then he mounted the litter, with Janshah and Shemseh and their suite, after the prince and princess had taken leave of the latter's mother and family, and chose out four of his officers to carry the litter.

So the four Marids took it up, each by one corner, and rising with it into the air, flew onward till mid-day, when the King bade them set down the litter and they all alighted. Then they took leave of one another and King Shehlan commended Shemsheh to the prince's care, and giving them in charge to the Marids, returned to the Castle of Jewels, whilst the prince and princess remounted the litter, and the Marids, taking it up, flew on for ten whole days, in each of which they accomplished thirty months' journey, till they came in sight of

King Teigmous's capital. Now one of them knew the land of Kabul; so, when he saw the city, he bade the others set down the litter there.

Meanwhile, King Teigmous had been routed and fled into the city, where King Kefid laid close siege to him and he was in sore straits. He sought to make peace with the King of Hind, but the latter would give him no quarter; so, seeing himself without resource or hope of relief, he determined to strangle himself and be at rest from this trouble and misery. Accordingly, he bade his Viziers and officers farewell and entered his house, to take leave of his harem; and the whole place was full of weeping and wailing and lamentation. In the midst of the general desolation, the Marids came down with the litter upon the palace, that was in the citadel, and Janshah bade them set it down in the midst of the Divan. They did his bidding and he descended with his company and seeing all the folk of the city in grief and desolation and sore distress, said to the princess, 'O beloved of my heart and solace of mine eyes, see in what a piteous plight is my father!' Thereupon she bade the Marids fall upon the besieging host and slay them all, even to the last man; and Janshah commanded one of them, by name Keratesh, who was exceeding strong and valiant, to bring King Kefid to him in chains. So they waited till midnight, when they repaired to the enemy's camp, and Keratesh made straight for Kefid's tent, where he found him lying on a couch. So he took him up, shrieking for fear, and flew with him to Janshah, who bade the four Marids bind him on the litter and suspend him in the air over his camp, that he might witness the slaughter of his men. They did as the prince bade them and leaving Kefid, who had swooned for fear, hanging in the air, fell upon the enemy's camp.

As for King Teigmous, when he saw his son, he well-nigh died for excess of joy and giving a loud cry, fell down in a swoon. They sprinkled rose-water on his face, till he came to himself, when he and his son embraced and wept sore. Then the princess Shemseh accosted the King and kissing his hand, invited him to go up with her to the roof of the palace and witness the slaughter of his enemies by her father's Marids. So he went up to the roof and sitting down there with his son and daughter-in-law, watched the Marids do havoc among the besiegers and marvelled at their manner of waging war.

For one of them smote upon the elephants and their riders with maces of iron and pounded men and beast into one shapeless heap of flesh, whilst another blew in the faces of those who fled, so that they fell down dead, and the third caught up a score of horsemen, beasts and all, and flying up with them into the air, cast them down from on high, so that they were torn in pieces or crushed to atoms in the fall.

When King Kefld came to himself, he found himself hanging between heaven and earth and marvelled at this. Then he saw the slaughter of his troops and wept sore and buffeted his face; nor did the carnage cease among the army of Hind for two whole days, till they were cut off even to the last man, when Janshah commanded a Marid, by name Shimwal, to clap King Kefid in irons and lay him in prison in a place called the Black Tower. Then King Teigmous bade beat the drums and despatched messengers to announce the glad news to Janshah's mother, who mounted forthright and rode to the palace, where she no sooner espied her son than she clasped him in her arms and swooned away for stress of joy. They sprinkled rose-water on her face, till she came to herself, when she embraced him again and wept for excess of gladness. When the lady Shemseh knew of her coming, she came to her and saluted her, and they embraced each other and sat down to converse.

Meanwhile, King Teigmous threw open the gates of the town and despatched couriers to all parts of the kingdom, to announce his happy deliverance, whereupon all his vassals and officers and the notables of the realm flocked to give him joy of his victory and of the safe return of his son and brought him great plenty of rich gifts and presents. Then he made a second bride-feast for the princess Shemseh, and they decorated the city and held high festival; after which they unveiled the bride before Janshah with the utmost magnificence, and the latter presented her with a hundred beautiful slave-girls to wait upon her.

Some days after this, the princess went in to the King and interceded with him for Kefid, saying, 'Let him return to his own land, and if henceforward he be minded to do thee any hurt, I will bid one of the Marids snatch him up and bring him to thee.' 'I hear and obey,' replied Teigmous and bade Shimwal bring him the prisoner, who came and kissed the earth before him. Then he commanded to strike off his chains and mounting him on a lame mare, said to him, ‘The princess Shemseh hath interceded for thee so begone to thy kingdom, but if thou fall again to thine old tricks, she will send one of the Marids to seize thee and bring thee hither.’

So Kefid set off homeward, in the sorriest of plights, whilst Janshah and his wife abode in all delight and solace of life, passing every second year with Shemseh’s father and mother at the Castle of Jewels, whither they betook not themselves but in the litter aforesaid, borne by the Marids and flying between heaven and earth; and the length of their journey thither from the land of Kabul was ten days, in each of which they accomplished thirty months’ travel.

They abode on this wise a long while, till, one year, they set out for the Castle of Jewels, as of their wont, and on their way thither alighted in this island to rest and take their pleasure therein. They sat down on the river-bank and ate and drank; after which the princess, having a mind to bathe, put off her clothes and plunged into the water. Her women followed her example and they swam about awhile, whilst Janshah walked on along the bank of the stream. Presently, as they were swimming about and playing with one another, a huge shark seized the princess by the leg, and she cried out and died forthright, whilst the damsels fled out of the river to the pavilion, to escape from the shark; but, after awhile, they returned and taking her up, carried her to the litter.

When Janshah saw his wife dead, he fell down in a swoon and they sprinkled water on his face, till he recovered and wept over her. Then he despatched the Marids, to bear the sad news to her parents and family, who presently came thither and washed her and shrouded her; after which they buried her by the river-side and made mourning for her. They would have carried Janshah with them to the Castle of Jewels; but he said to King Shehlan, ‘I beseech thee to dig me a grave beside her tomb, that, when I die, I may be buried by her side.’ Accordingly, the King commanded one of his Marids to do as Janshah wished, after which they departed and left me here to weep and mourn for her till I die; for I,” said the young man, “am Janshah and this is my story and the reason of my sojourn between these two tombs.” And he repeated the following verses:

Home is no longer home to me, now ye are gone away, Nor is the pleasant neighbour now a neighbour, sooth to say.
The comrade, whom withal therein I companied, no more A comrade is, and eke the lights [of heaven] no lights are they.

When Beloukiya heard Janshah's story, he marvelled and exclaimed, "By Allah, O my brother, methought I had indeed wandered over the world and compassed it about; but thy story maketh me to forget all I have seen. And now," added he, "I beg thee, of thy favour and courtesy, to direct me in the way of safety." So Janshah directed him into the right road, and Beloukiya took leave of him and fared on nights and days, till he came to a great sea; so he anointed his feet with the juice of the magical herb and setting out over the water, sped onward till he came to an island abounding in trees and springs and fruits, as it were Paradise. He landed and walked about, till he saw an immense tree, with leaves as big as the sails of a ship. So he went up to the tree and found under it a table spread with all manner rich meats, whilst on the branches sat a great bird, whose body was of pearls and emeralds, its feet of silver, its beak of red cornelian and its feathers of precious metals, and it was engaged in singing the praises of God the Most High and blessing Mohammed, on whom be benediction and peace!

When Beloukiya saw the bird, he said, "What manner of creature art thou and what dost thou here?" Quoth the bird, "I am one of the birds of Eden [and followed Adam,] when God the Most High cast him out thence. Now Adam took with him four leaves of the trees of the garden, to cover his nakedness withal, and they fell to the ground after awhile. One of them was eaten by a worm, and of it came silk: the gazelles ate the second and thence came musk; the third was eaten by bees and gave rise to honey, whilst the fourth fell in the land of Hind and from it sprang all manner spices. As for me, I wandered over the earth, till God gave me this island for a dwelling-place, and I took up my abode here. This table thou seest is spread by God the Most High for the entertainment of all the saints and holy men of the world, who come hither every Friday and visit the place and eat of this food; and after they have eaten, the table is taken up again to heaven; nor doth the food ever waste or corrupt." So Beloukiya ate his fill of the meats and praised God the Most High.

Presently, there came up El Khizr (on whom be peace), at sight of whom Beloukiya rose and saluting him, was about to withdraw, when the bird said to him, “Sit, O Beloukiya, in the presence of El Khizr, on whom be peace!” So he sat down again, and El Khizr asked him who he was and how he came there. Beloukiya related to him all his adventures and enquired how far it was thence to Cairo. “Five-and-ninety years’ journey,” replied the prophet; whereupon Beloukiya burst into tears, then, falling at El Khizr’s feet, kissed them and said to him, “O my lord, I beseech thee to deliver me from this strangerhood; for that I am nigh upon death and know not what to do, and thy reward be with God.” Quoth El Khizr, “Pray to God the Most High to allow me to carry thee to Cairo, ere thou perish.”

So Beloukiya wept and offered up supplication to God, who granted his prayer and bade El Khizr carry him to his people. Then said the prophet, “Lift thy head, for God hath heard thy prayer; so take fast hold of me with both thy hands and shut thine eyes.” The prince did as he was bidden and El Khizr took a step forward, then said to him, “Open thine eyes.” So Beloukiya opened his eyes and found himself at the door of his palace at Cairo. He turned, to take leave of El Khizr, but found no trace of him and entered the palace. When his mother saw him, she gave a loud cry and swooned away for excess of joy, and they sprinkled water upon her face. After a while she came to herself and embraced her son and wept sore, whilst Beloukiya wept and laughed by turns. Then all his friends and kindred came and gave him joy of his safe return, and the good news was noised abroad in the land and there came to him presents from all parts. Moreover, they beat the drums and blew the flutes and rejoiced mightily. Then Beloukiya related to them his adventures, at which they marvelled exceedingly and wept, till all were weary of weeping.

All this the Queen of the Serpents related to Hasib Kerimeddin, and he said to her, ‘But how knowest thou of these things?’ ‘O Hasib,’ answered she, ‘it was on this wise. Thou must know that I once had occasion, some five-and-twenty years ago, to send one of my serpents to Egypt and gave her a letter for Beloukiya, saluting him. So she carried the letter to him and he read it and said to the messenger, “I have a mind to go with thee to the Queen of the Serpents, for I have an occasion to her.” Quoth she, “Close thine eyes.” So he closed them and opening them again, found himself on the mountain where I now am. Then his guide carried him to a great serpent, and he saluted the latter and asked for me. “She hath gone to the Mountain Caf,” answered the serpent, “as is her wont in the winter; but next summer she will come hither again. As often as she goeth thither, she appointeth me to reign in her room, during her absence; and if thou have any occasion to her, I will accomplish it for thee.” Quoth he, “I beg thee to bring me the herb, which whoso crusheth and drinketh the juice thereof sickeneth not neither groweth grey nor dieth.” “Tell me first,” said the serpent, “what befell thee since thou leftest the Queen of the Serpents, to go with Uffan in quest of King Solomon’s tomb.” So he related to her all his travels and adventures, including the history of Janshah, and besought her to grant him his request, that he might go to his own country.” “By the virtue of the lord Solomon,” replied she, “I know not where the herb of which thou speakest is to be found.” Then she bade the serpent, which had brought him thither, carry him back to Egypt: so the latter said to him, “Shut thine eyes.” He did so and opening them again, found himself on the mountain Mukettem. When I returned from the mountain Caf,’ added the Queen, ‘the serpent my deputy informed me of Beloukiya’s visit and repeated to me his story: and this, O Hasib, is how I came to know the adventures of Beloukiya and the history of Prince Janshah of Kabul.’

Hasib marvelled at the Queen’s story and wept many tears over it; then he again besought her to let him return to his family; but she said, ‘I fear me that, when thou gettest back to earth, thou wilt fail of thy promise and prove traitor to thine oath and enter the bath.’ But he swore to her another solemn oath that he would never again enter the bath as long as he lived; whereupon she called a serpent and bade her carry him up to the surface of the earth. So the serpent took him and led him from place to place, till she brought him out on the platform of an abandoned cistern [and there left him].

He walked to the city and coming to his house by the last of the day, at the season of the yellowing of the sun, knocked at the door. His mother opened it and seeing her son, screamed out and threw herself upon him and wept for excess of joy. His wife heard her mother-in-law weeping; so she came out to her and seeing her husband, saluted him and kissed his hands; and each rejoiced in other with an exceeding joy. Then they entered the house and sat down to converse; and presently Hasib asked his mother of the woodcutters, who had left him to perish in the cistern. Quoth she, ‘They came and told me that a wolf had eaten thee in the valley. As for them, they are become merchants and own houses and shops, and the world is grown wide for them. But every day they bring me meat and drink, and thus have they done since I lost thee.’ ‘To-morrow,’ said Hasib, ‘do thou go to them and say, “My son Hasib hath returned from his travels; so come ye and salute him.’”

Accordingly, on the morrow, she repaired to the wood-cutters’ houses and delivered to them her son’s message, which when they heard, they changed colour and gave her each a suit of silk, embroidered with gold, saying, ‘Give this to thy son and tell him that we will be with him to-morrow.’ So she returned to Hasib and gave him their presents and message. Meanwhile, the woodcutters called together a number of merchants and acquainting them with all that had passed between themselves and Hasib, took counsel with them what they should do. Quoth the merchants, ‘It behoves each one of you to give him half his goods and slaves;’ and they agreed to do this.

So, next day, each of them took half his wealth and going in to Hasib, saluted him and kissed his hands. Then they laid before him what they had brought, saying, ‘This of thy bounties, and we are in thy hands.’ He accepted their peace-offering and said to them, ‘What is past is past: that which befell us was decreed of God and destiny avoideth precaution.’ Quoth they, ‘Come, let us walk about and take our pleasure in the city and visit the bath.’ ‘Not so,’ answered he. ‘I have taken an oath never again to enter the bath, so long as I live.’ ‘At least,’ rejoined they, ‘come to our houses, that we may entertain thee.’ He agreed to this, and each of them entertained him for a night and a day; nor did they cease to do thus for a whole week [for they were seven in number]

Hasib was now master of lands and houses and shops, and all the merchants of the city foregathered with him and he told them all that had befallen him. He became one of the chief of them and abode thus awhile, till, one day, as he was walking in the town, he chanced to pass the door of a bath, whose keeper was one of his friends. When the bathman saw him, he ran up to him and saluted him and embraced him, saying, ‘Favour me by entering the bath and washing, that I may show thee hospitality.’ Hasib refused, alleging that he had taken a solemn oath never again to enter the bath; but the bathman was instant with him, saying, ‘Be my three wives triply divorced, an thou enter not and be washed!’ When Hasib heard him thus conjure him by the triple oath of divorcement, he was confounded and replied, ‘O my brother, hast thou a mind to ruin me and make my children orphans and lay a load of sin upon my neck?’ But the man threw himself at his feet and kissed them, saying, ‘I conjure thee to enter, and be the sin on my neck!’ Then all the people of the bath set upon Hasib and dragging him in, pulled off his clothes.

So, seeing no help for it, he sat down against the wall and began to pour water on his head; but hardly had he done so, when a score of men accosted him, saying, ‘Come with us to the Sultan, for thou art his debtor.’ Then they despatched a messenger to the Sultan’s Vizier, who straightway took horse and rode, attended by three-score men, to the bath, where he alighted and going in to Hasib, saluted him and said, ‘Welcome to thee!’ Then he gave the bathman a hundred dinars and mounting Hasib on a charger he had brought with him, returned with him to the Sultan’s palace, where he set food before him and clad him in two dresses of honour, each worth five thousand dinars. When they had eaten and drunken and washed their hands, the Vizier said to Hasib, ‘Know that God hath been merciful to us, for the Sultan is nigh upon death for leprosy, and the books tell us that his life is in thy hands.’ Then he took him and carried him through the seven vestibules of the palace, till they came to the King’s chamber.

Now the name of this King was Kerezdan, King of Persia and of the Seven Countries, and under his sway were a hundred sovereign princes, sitting on chairs of red gold, and ten thousand captains, under each one’s hand a hundred deputies and as many sword-bearers and axe-men. They found the King lying on a bed, with his head wrapped in a napkin, and groaning for excess of pain. When Hasib saw this ordinance, his wit was dazed for awe of the King; so he kissed the earth before him and invoked blessings on him. Then the Grand Vizier, whose name was Shemhour, rose (whilst all present rose also to do him honour) and welcoming Hasib, seated him on a high chair at the King's right hand; after which he called for food and the tables were laid.

When they had eaten and drunken and washed their hands, Shemhour turned to Hasib and said to him, 'We are all thy servants and will give thee whatsoever thou seekest, even to the half of the kingdom, so thou wilt but cure the King.' So saying, he led him to the royal couch, and Hasib, uncovering the King's face, saw that he was at the last extremity: so he said to the Vizier, ' It is true that I am the son of the prophet Daniel, but I know nothing of his art: for they put me thirty days in the school of medicine and I learnt nothing of the craft. I would well I knew somewhat thereof and might heal the King.' When the Grand Vizier heard this, he bent over Hasib's hand and kissed it, saying, 'Do not multiply words upon us; for, though we should gather together to us physicians from the East and from the West, none could heal the King but thou.' 'How can I heal him,'rejoined Hasib, 'seeing I know neither his disease nor its remedy?' 'His cure is in thy hands,' replied Shemhour; and Hasib said, 'If I knew the remedy of his sickness, I would heal him.' Quoth the Vizier, 'Thou knowest it right well; the remedy of his sickness is the Queen of the Serpents, and thou knowest her abiding-place and hast been with her.'

When Hasib heard this, he knew that all this came of his entering the bath and repented, whenas repentance availed nothing; then said he, 'What is the Queen of the Serpents? I know her not nor ever in my life heard I of this name.' 'Deny not the knowledge of her,' rejoined the Vizier; 'for I have proof that thou knowest her and hast passed two years with her.' 'I never saw nor heard of her till this moment,' repeated Hasib ; whereupon Shemhour opened a book and after making sundry calculations, raised his head and spoke [or read] as follows; 'The Queen of the Serpents shall foregather with a man and he shall abide with her two years; then shall he return from her and come forth to the surface of the earth, and when he enters the bath, his belly will become black.' Then said he, 'Look at thy belly.' So Hasib looked at his own belly and behold, it was black: but he [still denied and] said, ‘My belly was black from the day my mother bore me.’ Quoth the Vizier, ‘I had posted three men at the door of every bath, bidding them note all who entered and let me know when they found one whose belly was black: so, when thou enteredst, they looked at thy belly and finding it black, sent and told me, after we had all but despaired of coming across thee. All we want of thee is to show us the place whence thou earnest out and after go thy ways; for we have those with us who will take the Queen of the Serpents and fetch her to us.’ Then all the other Viziers and officers and grandees flocked about Hasib and conjured him, till they were weary, to show them the abode of the Queen; but he persisted in his denial, saying, ‘I never saw nor heard of such a creature.’

When the Grand Vizier saw that entreaties availed nothing, he called the hangman and bade him strip Hasib and beat him soundly. So he beat him, till he saw death face to face, for excess of pain, and the Vizier said to him, ‘Why wilt thou persist in denial, whenas we have proof that thou knowest the abiding-place of the Queen of the Serpents? Show us the place whence thou camest out and go from us; we have with us one who will take her, and no harm shall befall thee.’ Then he raised him and giving him a dress of honour of cloth of gold, embroidered with jewels, spoke him fair, till he yielded and consented to show them the place.

At this, the Vizier rejoiced greatly and they all took horse and rode, guided by Hasib, till they came to the cavern where he had found the cistern full of honey. He entered, sighing and weeping, and showed them the well whence he had issued; whereupon the Vizier sat down thereby and sprinkling perfumes upon a chafing-dish, began to mutter charms and conjurations, for he was a crafty magician and diviner and skilled in cabalistic arts. He repeated three several formulas of conjuration and threw fresh incense upon the brasier, crying out and saying, ‘Come forth, O Queen of the Serpents!’ When, behold, the water of the well sank down and disappeared and a great door opened in the side, from which came a great noise of crying like unto thunder, so terrible that they thought the well would fall in and all present fell down in a swoon; nay, some even died [for fright].

Presently, there issued from the well a serpent as big as an elephant, casting out sparks, like red hot coals, from its mouth and eyes and bearing on its back a charger of red gold, set with pearls and jewels, in the midst whereof lay a serpent with a human face, from whose body issued such a splendour that the place was illumined thereby. She turned right and left, till her eyes fell upon Hasib, to whom said she, ‘Where is the covenant thou madest with me and the oath thou sworest to me, that thou wouldst never again enter the bath? But there is no recourse against destiny nor can any flee from that which is written on his forehead. God hath appointed the end of my life to be at thy hand, and it is His will that I be slain and King Kerezdan healed of his malady.’ So saying, she wept sore and Hasib wept with her. As for the Vizier Shemhour, he put out his hand to lay hold of her; but she said to him, ‘Hold thy hand, O accursed one, or I will blow upon thee and reduce thee to a heap of black ashes.’ Then she cried out to Hasib, saying, ‘ Put out thine hand and take me and lay me in the brass dish that is with you: then set me on thy head, for my death was fore-ordained, from the beginning of the world, to be at thy hand, and thou hast no power to avert it.’ So he took her and laid her in the dish, and the well returned to its natural state.

Then they set out on their return to the city, Hasib carrying the dish on his head, and as they went along, the Queen of the Serpents said to him privily, ‘Hearken to me, and I will give thee a friendly counsel, for all thou hast broken faith with me and been false to thine oath; but this was fore-ordained from all eternity. It is this: when thou comest to the Vizier’s house, he will bid thee kill me and cut me in three; but do thou refuse, saying, “I know not how to slaughter,” and leave him to do it himself. When he has killed me, he will lay the three pieces in a brass pot and set it on the fire. Then there will come a messenger, to bid him to the King, and he will say to thee, “Keep up the fire under the pot, till the scum rises; then skim it off and pour it into a phial to cool. As soon as it is cool, drink it and neither ache nor pain will be left in all thy body. When the second scum rises, skim it off and pour it into a phial against my return, that I may drink it for an ailment I have in my loins.” Then will he go to the King, and when he is gone, do thou wait till the first scum rises and set it aside in a phial; but beware of drinking it, or no good will befall thee. When the second scum rises, skim it off and put it in a phial, which keep for thyself. When the Vizier returns and asks for the second phial, give him the first and note what will happen to him. Then drink the contents of the second phial and thy heart will become the abode of wisdom. After this, take up the flesh and laying it in a brazen platter, carry it to the King and give him to eat thereof. When he has eaten it and it has settled in his stomach, cover his face with a handkerchief and wait by him till noonday, when he will have digested the meat. Then give him somewhat of wine to drink and by the decree of God the Most High he will be healed of his disease and be made whole as he was. This, then, is my charge to thee; give ear unto it and keep it in thy memory.'

Presently, they came to the Vizier's house, and he said to Hasib, 'Come in with me.' So he entered and set down the platter, whilst the troops dispersed and went each his own way, and the Vizier bade him kill the Queen of the Serpents; but he said, 'I am no butcher and never in my life killed I aught. An thou wilt have her slaughtered, kill her with thine own hand.' So Shemhour took the Queen from the platter and slew her, whereat Hasib wept sore and the Vizier laughed at him, saying, 'O wittol, how canst thou weep for the killing of a serpent?' Then he cut her in three and laying the pieces in a brass pot, set it on the fire and sat down to await the cooking of the flesh.

Presently, there came a messenger from the King, who said to him, 'The King calls for thee forthright;' and he answered, 'I hear and obey.' So he gave Hasib two phials and bade him drink the first scum and keep the second against his return, even as the Queen of the Serpents had foretold; after which he went away and Hasib tended the fire under the pot, till the first scum rose, when he skimmed it off and set it aside in one of the phials. After a while, the second scum rose; so he skimmed it off and putting it in the other phial, kept it for himself.

When the meat was done, he took the cauldron off the fire and sat waiting, till the Vizier came back and said to him, 'Hast thou done as I told thee?' 'Yes,' answered Hasib. Quoth the Vizier, 'What hast thou done with the first scum?' 'I drank it but now,' replied Hasib, and Shemhour said, 'Feelst thou no change in thy body?' 'Yes,' answered Hasib; 'I feel as I were on fire from head to foot.' The crafty Vizier made no reply, but said, 'Give me the second phial, that

I may drink what is therein, so haply I may be made whole of this ailment in my loins.’ So Hasib brought him the first phial and he drank it off, thinking it contained the second scum. Hardly had he done this, when the phial fell from his hand and he swelled out and dropped down dead; and thus was exemplified in him the saying, ‘He, who diggeth a pit for his brother, falleth into it himself.’

When Hasib saw this, he wondered and feared to drink of the second phial; but he remembered the Queen’s injunction and bethought him that the Vizier would not have reserved the second scum for himself, had there been aught of hurt therein. So he said, ‘I put my trust in God,’ and drank off the contents of the phial. No sooner had he done so than God the Most High made the fountains of wisdom to well up in his heart and opened to him the sources of knowledge, and joy and gladness overcame him. Then he laid the serpent’s flesh on a platter of brass and went forth to carry it to the palace.

On his way thither, he raised his eyes and saw the seven heavens and all that therein is, even to the lote-tree, beyond which there is no passing and the manner of the revolution of the spheres. Moreover, God discovered to him the ordinance of the planets and the scheme of their movements and the fixed stars, and he saw the conformation of the sea and land and understood the causes and consequences of eclipses of the sun and moon, whereby be became informed with the knowledge of the arts of geometry and cosmography, as well as those of astrology and astronomy and mathematics and all that hangs thereby. Then he looked at the earth and saw all minerals and vegetables that are therein and knew their virtues and properties, so that he became in an instant versed in medicine and chemistry and natural magic and the art of making gold and silver.

When he came to the palace, he went in to the King and kissing the earth before him, said, ‘Thou hast outlived thy Vizier Shemhour.’ The King was sore troubled at the news of the Grand Vizier’s death and wept sore for him, whilst his grandees and officers wept also. Then said Kerezdan, ‘He was with me but now, in all health, and went away to fetch me the flesh of the Queen of the Serpents, if it should be cooked; what befell him, that he is now dead, and what calamity hath betided him?’ So Hasib told him how he had drunk the contents of the phial and had forthwith swelled out and died. The King mourned sore for his loss and said, ‘What shall I do without him?’ ‘Grieve not, O King of the age,’ rejoined Hasib; ‘for I will cure thee in three days and leave no whit of disease in thy body.’ At this the King’s breast dilated and he said, ‘I will well to be made whole of this affliction, though after years.’

So Hasib set the platter before the King and made him eat a piece of the flesh of the Queen of the Serpents. Then he covered him up and spreading a napkin over his face, bade him sleep. He slept from noon till sundown, when, his stomach having digested the piece of flesh, he awoke. Hasib gave him to drink and bade him sleep again. So he slept till the morning, and on the morrow, Hasib made him eat another piece of the flesh; and thus he did with him three days following, till he had eaten the whole, when his skin began to shrivel up and peel off in scales and he sweated, so that the sweat ran down from his head to his feet. Therewith he became whole and there abode in him no whit of disease, which when Hasib saw, he carried him to the bath and washed his body; and when he came forth, it was like a wand of silver and he was restored to perfect health, nay, sounder than he had ever been.

So he donned his richest robes and seating himself on his throne, made Hasib sit beside him. Then he called for food, and they ate and drank and washed their hands; after which all his Viziers and Amirs and captains and the grandees of his realm and the chiefs of the people came in to him and gave him joy of his recovery; and they beat the drums and decorated the city in token of rejoicing. Then said the King to the assembly, ‘O Viziers and Amirs and grandees, this is Hasib Kerimeddin, who hath healed me of my sickness, and I make him my chief Vizier in the room of the Vizier Shemhour. He who loves him loves me and he who honours him honours me and he who obeys him obeys me.’ ‘We hear and obey;’ answered they and flocked to kiss Hasib’s hand and give him joy of the Vizierate.

Then the King bestowed on him a splendid dress of honour of cloth of gold, set with pearls and jewels, the least of which was worth five thousand dinars. Moreover, he gave him three hundred male white slaves and the like number of concubines, as they were moons, and three hundred Abyssinian slave-girls, beside five hundred mules laden with treasure and sheep and oxen and buffaloes and other cattle, beyond count, and commanded all his Viziers and Amirs and grandees and notables and the officers of his household and his subjects in general to bring him gifts.

Then Hasib took horse and rode, followed by the Viziers and Amirs and grandees and all the troops, to the house which the King had set apart for him, where he sat down on a chair and the Viziers and Amirs came up to him and kissed his hand and gave him joy of the Vizierate, vying with each other in paying court to him. When his mother and household knew what had happened, they rejoiced greatly and congratulated him on his good fortune, and the woodcutters also came and gave him joy. Then he mounted again and riding to the house of the late Vizier, laid hands on all that was therein and transported it to his own abode.

Thus did Hasib, from a know-nothing, unskilled to read writing, become, by the decree of God the Most High, proficient in all sciences and versed in all manner of knowledge, so that the fame of his learning was blazed abroad in all the land and he became renowned for profound skill in medicine and astronomy and geometry and astrology and alchemy and natural magic and the Cabala and all other arts and sciences.

One day, he said to his mother, ‘My father Daniel was exceeding wise and learned; tell me what he left by way of books or what not.’ So his mother brought him the chest and taking out the five leaves aforesaid, gave them to him, saying, ‘These five scrolls are all thy father left thee.’ So he read them and said to her, ‘O my mother, these leaves are part of a book. Where is the rest?’ Quoth she, ‘Thy father was shipwrecked a while before thy birth and lost all his books, save these five scrolls.’Then she told him how Daniel had committed them to her care, enjoining her, if she bore a male child, to give them to him, when he grew up and asked what his father had left him. And Hasib abode in all delight and solace of life, till there came to him the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies.

SINDBAD THE SAILOR AND SINDBAD THE PORTER.

There lived in the city of Baghdad, in the reign of the Khalif Haroun er Reshid, a porter named Sindbad, a poor man who carried [burdens] on his head for hire. One day of great heat he was carrying a heavy load and what with the heat and the burden, he became exceeding weary and sweated amain. Presently he came to the gate of a merchant's house, before which the ground was swept and watered, and there the air was temperate. There was a wide bench beside the door; so he set his load thereon, to rest and take breath, and there came out upon him from the porch a pleasant breeze and a delicious fragrance. He sat down on the edge of the bench, to enjoy this, and heard from within the melodious sound of lutes and other stringed instruments and heart-delighting voices singing and reciting all manner verses with clear and goodly speech, together with the song of birds warbling and glorifying God the Most High in various voices and tongues, turtles and mocking-birds and merles and nightingales and cushats and curlews, whereat he marvelled in himself and was moved to great delight.

Then he went up to the gate and saw within a great garden, wherein were slaves and pages and such a train of servants and attendants and so forth as is only found with kings and sultans, and there was wafted to him the fragrance of all manner rich and delicate meats and generous wines. So he raised his eyes to heaven and said, 'Glory to Thee, O Lord, O Creator and Provider, who providest whom Thou wilt without stint! O my God, I cry Thee pardon for all sins and repent to Thee of all offences! O Lord, there is no gainsaying Thee in Thine ordinance and Thy dominion, neither wilt Thou be questioned of that Thou dost, for Thou indeed art Almighty, extolled be Thy perfection! Whom Thou wilt Thou makest rich and whom Thou wilt Thou makest poor! Whom Thou wilt Thou exaltest and whom Thou wilt Thou abasest and there is no god but Thou! How great is Thy majesty and how mighty Thy dominion and how excellent Thy governance! Verily, Thou favourest whom Thou wilt of Thy servants, whereby the owner of this place abideth in all delight of life and taketh his ease of pleasant scents and delicious meats and generous wines of all kinds. For indeed Thou appointest unto Thy servants that which Thou wilt and that which Thou hast foreordained unto them; wherefore are some weary and some easeful and some enjoy fair fortune and delight, whilst other some suffer the extreme of travail and misery, even as do I.' And he recited the following verses:

How many by my toil, unresting and unstayed, Do joy in pleasant food and cool, delightful shade!
Indeed, I pass my days in weariness galore; Strange is my case and sore the load upon me laid;
Whilst others, who ne'er knew a burden like to mine, Delight in fortune fair, untroubled nor dismayed.
They take their ease of life and eat and drink at Will, With affluence and power by favouring Fate purveyed;
Yet am I like to these and they are like to me, And of a drop of sperm each living soul is made.
Natheless. 'twixt them and me a difference there is, As 'twere 'twixt vinegar and wine, when all is said.
Yet, nowise, O my God, I think to rail at Thee; Thou'rt wise and just Thy sway and none may Thee upbraid.

When he had made an end of his verses, he took up his burden and was about to fare on, when there came forth the gate to him a little fair-faced page, well-shaped and richly clad, who caught him by the hand, saying, 'Come in and speak with my lord, for he calls for thee.' The porter would have excused himself, but the page would take no refusal; so he left his load with the doorkeeper in the vestibule and followed the boy into the house, which he found goodly of ordinance and full of majesty and cheer, till he brought him to a vast and splendid saloon, wherein he saw a company of nobles and great lords, seated, each according to his rank, at tables heaped with all manner flowers and sweet-scented herbs, besides great plenty of rich meats and fruits and confections and wines of the choicest vintages. There also were fair maids, singing and playing upon instruments of music, and in the highest room sat a man of reverend and majestic aspect, whose cheeks hoariness had smitten, and he was well-made and fair of favour, stately of aspect and full of gravity and venerance and dignity.

The porter was confounded at that which he beheld and said in himself, ‘By Allah, this must be either one of the pavilions of Paradise or some king’s palace!’ Then he saluted the company respectfully, wishing them all kinds of prosperity, and kissing the earth before them, stood in a humble attitude, with his head bowed down. The master of the house bade him draw near and be seated and bespoke him kindly, bidding him welcome. Then he set before him various kinds of rich and delicate meats, and the porter called upon the name of God and ate his fill, after which he exclaimed, ‘Praised be God, come what may!’ and washing his hands, returned thanks to the company for his entertainment. Quoth the host, ‘Thou art welcome and thy day is a blessed one. But what is thy name and condition?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered the other, ‘my name is Sindbad the porter, and I carry folk’s goods on my head for hire.’ The host smiled and rejoined, ‘Know, O porter, that my name is even as thine, for I am Sindbad the Sailor; and now I would have thee repeat to me the verses thou didst recite at the gate but now.’ The porter was abashed and replied, ‘God on thee! Excuse me, for toil and misery and lack of good teach a man ill manners and indiscretion.’ ‘Be not ashamed,’ said the host; ‘thou art become my brother; but repeat to me the verses, for they pleased me, when I heard thee recite them at the gate.’ So the porter repeated the verses and they pleased the merchant, who said to him, ‘Know, O porter, that my story is a wonderful one, and thou shalt hear all that befell me and all I underwent before I won to this state of prosperity and became stablished whereas thou seest me; for I came not to this high estate but after sore travail and great weariness and perils galore, and how much toil and trouble have I not suffered aforetime! Indeed, I have made seven voyages, by each of which hangs a marvellous history, such as confounds the reason, and all this came to pass by the decree of fortune and fore-ordained fate; for there is neither flight nor refuge from that which is written. Know, then, O my lords,’ continued he, turning to his guests, ‘that

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The First Voyage Of’ Sindbad the Sailor.

My father was one of the richest and most considerable merchants of my native place and died, whilst I was yet a child, leaving me much wealth in money and lands and houses. When I grew up, I laid hands on the whole and ate and drank freely and wore rich clothes and lived lavishly with my friends and companions of my own age, thinking this way of life would last for ever. Thus did I a great while, till, at last, when I returned to my senses and awoke from my heedlessness, I found my wealth wasted and my case changed, and gone was all I had. At this I was stricken with dismay and confusion and bethought me of a saying of our lord Solomon, son of David (on whom be peace), which I had heard aforetime from my father, “Three things are better than other three; the day of death is better than the day of birth, a live dog than a dead lion and the grave than poverty.” Then I sold the remains of my property and got together three thousand dirhems, with which I resolved to travel to foreign countries, remembering the saying of the poet:

By sheer endeavour, one winneth to fortune’s height, And he who craveth advancement must watch anight.
In midmost ocean the seeker of pearls must plunge And so attaineth to wealth and lordship and might;
And he sans travail who seeketh eminence His life in the quest of vanity wasteth quite.

So I bought me merchandise and what not else was needed for a seavoyage and embarked, with a company of merchants, on board a ship bound for Bassora. There we took ship again and putting out to sea, sailed days and nights and passed from island to island and ocean to ocean and place to place, buying and selling and bartering every-where, till we came to an island as it were one of the pleasaunces of Paradise. Here the captain cast anchor and making fast to the shore, put out the landing-stage. So all on board landed and made furnaces and lighting fires therein, busied themselves in various ways, some cooking and some washing, whilst other some walked about the island for their pleasure and the rest fell to eating and drinking and making merry. I was one of those who explored the place, but, as we were thus variously engaged, behold, the captain cried out to us from the deck at the top of his voice, saying, “Ho, passengers, flee for your lives and leave your gear and hasten back to the ship and save yourselves from destruction, God preserve you! For this is no island, but a great fish stationary in the midst of the sea, on which the sand has settled and trees have sprung up of old time, so that it is become like unto an island; but, when we lighted fires on it, it felt the heat and moved; and presently it will sink with you into the sea and ye will all be drowned. So leave your gear and save yourselves ere ye perish!”

When we heard the captain’s warning, we left our gear and fled back to the ship for our lives and some reached it; but, before the rest, of whom I was one, could do so, the island shook and sank into the abysses of the deep, with all that were thereon, and the surging sea closed over it with its clashing billows. I sank with the others, but God the Most High preserved me from drowning and threw in my way a great wooden tub of those that had served the ship’s company for washing. I gripped it for dear life and bestriding it, paddled with my feet, whilst the waves sported with me right and left. Meanwhile the captain made sail and departed with those who had reached the ship, regardless of the drowning men, and I followed the vessel with my eyes, till she disappeared from sight and I looked for nothing but death.

In this plight, the darkness closed in upon me and the winds and waves bore me on all that night and the next day, till the tub brought to with me under the lee of a lofty island, with trees overhanging the water. I caught hold of a branch and made shift to clamber up on to the land, after coming nigh upon death. When I reached the shore, I found my feet cramped and bearing traces of the nibbling of fish upon their soles, the which I felt not for excess of fatigue and misery. I threw myself down on the ground, like a dead man, and swooned away, nor did I return to my senses till next morning, when the sun revived me. I tried to walk, but found my feet swollen, so made shift to crawl on my hands and knees towards the interior of the island where I found abundance of fruits and springs of sweet water. I ate of the fruits and drank of the springs; and thus I abode days and nights, till my strength and spirits began to revive and I was able to move about. So I bethought me and cutting myself a staff to lean upon, fell to exploring the island and diverting myself with gazing upon the things that God the Most High had created there.

One day, as I walked along the sea-shore, I caught sight of some live thing in the distance and thought it a wild beast or one of the creatures of the sea; but, as I drew near it, I saw that it was a magnificent mare, tethered on the beach. So I went up to her, but she cried out against me with a great cry, so that I trembled for fear and turned to go away, when there came forth a man from under the earth and followed me, crying out and saying, “Who and whence art thou and how camest thou hither?” “O my lord,” answered I, “I am a shipwrecked man, a stranger, to whom God vouchsafed a wooden tub; so I saved myself thereon and it floated with me, till the waves cast me up on this island.” When he heard this, he said, “Come with me,” and taking me by the hand, carried me into a great underground chamber and made me sit down at the upper end. Then he brought me food and I ate, being anhungred, till I was satisfied and refreshed; after which he questioned me of myself, and I told him all that had befallen me, adding, “For God’s sake, O my lord, excuse me; I have told thee the truth of my case; and now I desire that thou tell me who thou art and why thou abidest here under the earth and why thou hast tethered yonder mare on the brink of the sea. “Know,” answered he, “that I am one of several who are stationed in different parts of the island, and we are of the grooms of King Mihrjan and under our hand are all his horses. Every month, at the new moon, we bring hither the best of the King’s mares, that have never been covered, and tether them on the sea-shore and hide ourselves in this place under the ground, so that none may see us. Presently, the stallions of the sea scent the mares and come up out of the water and seeing no one, leap the mares and cover them. When they have done their will of them, they try to drag them away with them, but cannot, by reason of the tether; so they cry out at them and set on them with hoofs and teeth, which we hearing, know that the stallions have dismounted; so we run out and shout at them, whereupon they are affrighted and return to the sea. Then the mares conceive by them and bear colts and fillies worth a treasury of money, whose like is not to be found on the face of the earth. This is the time of the coming forth of the sea-horses; and so it please God the Most High, I will carry thee to King Mihrjan and show thee our country. Well is it for thee that thou hast happened on us, else hadst thou perished miserably and none known of thee, for there cometh none hither save ourselves: but I will be the means of the saving of thy life and of thy return to thine own land."

I called down blessings on him and thanked him for his kindness and courtesy. While we were talking, the stallion came up out of the sea and giving a great cry, sprang upon the mare and covered her. When he had done his will of her, he dismounted and would have carried her away with him, but could not by reason of the tether. She kicked and cried out at him, whereupon the groom took a sword and buckler and ran out, smiting the buckler with the sword and calling to his companions. With this up came a company of men, shouting and brandishing spears, and the stallion took fright at them and plunging into the sea; like a buffalo, disappeared under the waves. After this, we sat a while, till the rest of the grooms came up, each leading a mare, and seeing me with their fellow, questioned me, and I repeated my story to them. Thereupon they drew near me and spreading the table, ate and invited me to eat; so I ate with them, after which they took horse and mounting me on one of the mares, set out with me and fared on without ceasing, till they came to the capital city of King Mihrjan, and going in to him, acquainted him with my case. Then he sent for me and gave me a cordial welcome and bade me repeat my story to him. So I related to him all that had befallen me from first to last, whereat he marvelled exceedingly and said to me, "By Allah, O my son, thou hast indeed been miraculously preserved! Were not the term of thy life a long one, thou hadst not escaped from these straits; but praised be God for safety!" Then he spoke comfortably to me and entreated me with kindness and consideration. Moreover, he made me his agent for the port and registrar of all ships that entered the harbour and clad me in sumptuous apparel. In this capacity, I attended him regularly, to receive his commandments, and he favoured me and did me all manner of kindness. Indeed, I was high in credit with him, as an intercessor for the folk and an intermediary between them and him, whenas they would aught of him.

I abode thus a great while and as often as I went down to the port, I questioned the merchants and travellers and sailors of the city of Baghdad, so haply I might hear of an occasion to return to my native land, but could find none who knew it or knew any who resorted thither. At this I was chagrined, for I was weary of long strangerhood; but, one day, going in to King Mihrjan, I found with him a company of Indians and saluted them. They returned my salutation and asked me of my country; after which I questioned them of theirs and they told me that they were of various castes, some being called Shatriyas, who are the noblest of their castes and neither oppress nor offer violence to any, and others Brahmins, a folk who abstain from wine, but live in delight and solace and merriment and own camels and horses and cattle. Moreover, they told me that the people of India are divided into two-and-seventy castes, and I marvelled at this exceedingly.

Amongst other things that I saw in King Mihrjan's dominions was an island called Kasil, wherein all night is heard the beating of drums and tabrets, but we were told by the neighbouring islanders and by travellers that the inhabitants are people of diligence and judgment. In this sea I saw also a fish two hundred cubits long and another half that length, with a head like that of an owl, besides many other wonders and rarities, which it would be tedious to recount to you. I occupied myself thus in exploring the islands till, one day, as I stood in the port, with a staff in my hand, according to my wont, I saw a great ship, wherein were many merchants, making for the harbour. When it reached the anchorage, the master furled his sails and making fast to the shore, put out the landing-stage, whereupon the crew fell to unlading the cargo, whilst I stood by, taking note of them. They were long in bringing the goods ashore and I said to the master, "Is there aught left in thy ship?" "Yes, O my lord," answered he; "there are divers bales of merchandise in the hold, whose owner was drowned at one of the islands in our way; so his goods abode in our charge and we purpose to sell them and note their price, that we may carry it to his people in the city of Baghdad, the Abode of Peace." "What was the merchant's name?' asked I, and he answered, "Sindbad;" whereupon I straitly considered him and knowing him, cried out to him with a great cry, saying, “O master, I am that Sindbad of whom thou speakest and these are my goods; for, when the fish sank under us and we were plunged into the sea, God threw in my way a great tub of wood, of those the crew had used to wash withal, and the winds and waves carried me to this island, where, by God’s grace, I fell in with King Mihrjan’s grooms and they brought me hither to their master. When the latter heard my story, he entreated me with favour and made me his harbour-master, and I have prospered in his service and found acceptance with him.”

When the master heard what I said, he exclaimed, “There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! Verily, there is neither conscience nor good faith left among men I” “O captain,” said I, “what mean these words, seeing that I have told thee my case?” And he answered, saying, “Because thou heardest me say that I had with me goods whose owner was drowned, thou thinkest to take them without right; but this is forbidden to thee, for we saw him drown before our eyes, together with many others, nor was one of them saved. So how canst thou pretend that thou art the owner of the goods?” “O captain,” said I, “listen to my story and give heed to my words, and my soothfastness will be manifest to thee; for falsehood is of the fashion of the hypocrites.” Then I recounted to him all that had befallen me since I left Baghdad with him up to the time when we came to the fish, which we took for an island, and reminded him of certain things that had passed between him and me; whereupon both he and the merchants were certified of the truth of my story and recognized me and gave me joy of my deliverance, saying, “By Allah, we thought not that thou hadst escaped drowning! But God hath granted thee new life.” Then they delivered my bales to me, and I found my name written thereon, nor was aught thereof lacking. So I opened them and making up a present for King Mihrjan of the richest and most costly of the contents, caused the sailors carry it to the palace,vhere I presented it to the King, acquainting him with what had happened, at which he wondered exceedingly and the truth of all that I had told him was made manifest to him. Wherefore his affection for me redoubled and he showed me exceeding honour and bestowed on me a great present in return for mine. Then I sold my bales and what else I possessed, making a great profit on them, and bought me other goods and gear of the growth and fashion of the island. When the ship was about to start on her homeward voyage, I embarked in her all that I possessed and going in to the King, thanked him for all his favours and craved his leave to return to my country and friends. He gave me leave and bestowed on me great plenty of the stuffs and produce of the country; and I took my leave of him and embarked. Then we set sail and fared on nights and days, by the permission of God the Most High, and Fortune served us and Fate was favourable to us, so that we arrived in safety at Bassora, where I landed, rejoiced at my safe return to my native land. Thence, after a short stay, I set out again for Baghdad and in due time reached that city, with store of goods and commodities of great price. I went straight to my house and all my friends and kinsfolk came to greet me. Then I bought me slaves and servants, black and white and male and female, in great plenty, and houses and lands and gardens, till I was richer and in better case than before, and gave myself up to feasting and banqueting and making merry with my friends and companions more assiduously than ever, forgetting all I had suffered of fatigue and hardship and strangerhood and all the perils of travel. This, then, is the story of my first voyage, and to-morrow, God willing, I will tell you that of the second of my seven voyages.'

Then Sindbad the Sailor made the porter sup with him and gave him an hundred dinars, saying, 'Thou hast cheered us with thy company this day.' The porter thanked him and went his way, pondering that which he had heard and marvelling at the things that betide mankind. He passed the night in his own house and on the morrow repaired to the abode of Sindbad the Sailor, who received him with honour and seated him by himself. Then, as soon as the rest of the company were assembled, he set meat and drink before them and when they had well eaten and drunken and were merry and in cheerful case, he took up his discourse and bespoke them, saying, 'Know, O my brethren, that

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The Second Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor.

I abode a while, as I told you yesterday, in the enjoyment of all the comforts and pleasures of life, until one day the longing seized me to travel again and see foreign countries and traffic and make profit by trade. So I took a great sum of money and buying goods and gear fit for travel, packed them into bales. Then I went down to the river-bank, where I found a handsome new ship about to sail, well manned and provided and equipped with sails of fine cloth. I took passage in her, with a number of other merchants, and we weighed anchor the same day. Fair weather attended us, and we sailed from place to place, buying and selling and bartering, till chance brought us to a lovely island, abounding in trees laden with ripe fruits and fragrant flowers and limpid streams and musical with the song of birds; but there was no dweller there, no, not a blower of the fire. The captain made fast with us to this island, and the merchants and sailors landed and walked about, enjoying the shade of the trees and the song of the birds, that chanted the praises of the One, the Victorious, and marvelling at the works of the Omnipotent King. I landed with the rest and sitting down by a spring of sweet water, that welled up among the trees, took out some victual I had with me and ate of that which God the Most High had allotted me. I sat thus, enjoying the pleasant freshness of the breeze and the fragrance of the flowers, till presently I grew drowsy for very pleasance and lying down, soon fell asleep. When I awoke, I found myself alone, for the ship had sailed with all who were therein, and left me behind, nor had one of the merchants or sailors bethought himself of me. I searched the island right and left, but found neither man nor genie, whereat I was beyond measure troubled and my gall was like to burst for excess of chagrin and anguish and concern, for that I was left quite alone, without aught of meat or drink or worldly gear, weary and heart-broken. So I gave myself up for lost and said, “Not always does the pitcher come off unbroken. I escaped the first time and happened on one who brought me to an inhabited place, but this time there is no hope of falling in with such a deliverer.” Then I fell a-weeping and wailing and gave myself up to despair, blaming myself for having again adventured upon the perils and hardships of travel, whenas I was at my ease in my own house in my native city, taking my leisure with pleasant food and rich raiment, and lacking nothing, neither money nor goods, and this the more after all the toils and dangers I had undergone in my first voyage, wherein I had so narrowly escaped destruction. And I repented me of having left Baghdad and exclaimed, "Verily we are God's and to Him we return!" For indeed I was even as one mad, and I rose and walked about the island, unable for trouble to abide in any one place. Then I climbed a tall tree and looked in every direction, but saw nothing but sky and sea and trees and birds and islands and sands. However, after a while, I caught sight of some great white thing, afar off in the interior of the island; so I came down from the tree and making for that which I had seen, found it a huge white dome of vast height and compass. I walked all round it, but found no door thereto, nor could I muster strength or nimbleness to climb it, by reason of its exceeding smoothness and slipperiness. So I marked the spot where I stood and went round about the dome to measure its compass, which I found fifty good paces.

As I stood, casting about how to gain an entrance, the sun was suddenly hidden from me and the air became dark. Methought a cloud had come over the sun, but it was the season of summer and the day drew near to sun-down; so I marvelled at this and lifting my head, looked steadfastly at the sun, when I saw that what I had taken for a cloud was none other than an enormous bird, whose outspread wings, as it flew through the air, obscured the sun and veiled it from the island. At this sight my wonder redoubled and I bethought me of a story that I had heard aforetime of pilgrims and travellers, how in certain islands dwells a huge bird, called the roc, which feeds its young on elephants, and was assured that the dome aforesaid was none other than one of its eggs. As I looked and wondered at the marvellous works of God the Most High, the bird alighted on the egg and brooded over it with its wings covering it and its legs spread out behind it on the ground, and in this posture it fell asleep, glory be to Him who sleepeth not I When I saw this, I arose and unwinding the linen of my turban, twisted it into a rope, with which I girt my middle and bound myself fast to the roc's feet, saying in myself, "Peradventure, this bird may carry me to a land of cities and inhabitants, and that will be better than abiding in this island."

I passed the night on wake, fearing to sleep, lest the bird should fly away with me at unawares; and as soon as the dawn broke and day appeared, the roc gave a great cry and spreading its wings, flew up with me into the air. It ceased not to soar, till I thought it had reached the limit of the skies, after which it descended, little by little, till it lighted on the top of a high hill. As soon as I found myself on the earth, I made haste to unbind myself; quaking for fear of the bird, though it took no heed of me nor was ware of me, and loosing the linen of my turban from its feet, made off. Presently, I saw it catch up something from the ground and rise into the air with it, and observing this narrowly, saw it to be a huge great serpent, with which it flew away out of sight. I marvelled at this and faring on, found myself on a crest overlooking a great valley, exceeding wide and deep and bounded by vast mountains, that soared high into the air: none could see their summits, for the excess of their height, nor could any avail to climb up thereto. When I saw this, I blamed myself for that which I had done and said, "Would God I had remained in the island! It was better than this desert place; for there I had at least fruits to eat and water to drink, and here are neither trees nor fruits nor streams. But there is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! Verily, as often as I am quit of one peril, I fall into a worse and a more grievous."

However, I took courage and walking along the valley, found that its soil was of diamond, the stone wherewith they pierce jewels and precious stones and porcelain and onyx, for that it is a hard dense stone, whereon neither iron nor steel hath effect, neither can we cut off aught therefrom nor break it, save by means of the leadstone. Moreover, the valley swarmed with huge snakes and vipers, as big as palm-trees, that would have made but one gulp of an elephant; and they came out by night, hiding during the day, lest the rocs and eagles should pounce on them and tear them in pieces, as was their wont, why I know not. And I repented of what I had done and said, "By Allah, I have made haste to bring destruction upon myself!" As I went along, forgetttng my hunger and thirst in my concern for my life, the day began to wane and I looked about for a place where I might pass the night, being in fear of the serpents. Presently, I caught sight of a cave near at hand, with a narrow doorway; so I entered and rolled a great stone that I found within to the mouth of the cave and stopped it up, saying in myself; “I am safe here for the night; and as soon as it is day, I will go forth and see what destiny will do.” Then I looked within the cave and saw at the further end a great serpent brooding on her eggs, at which my hair stood on end but I raised my eyes to heaven and committing my case to fate and destiny, abode all that night without sleep till daybreak, when I rolled back the stone from the mouth of the cave and went forth, staggering like a drunken man for stress of watching and fear and hunger.

As I walked along the valley, there fell down before me a great piece of meat; but I saw none, at which I marvelled greatly and presently bethought me of a story I had heard aforetime of merchants and pilgrims and travellers, how the mountains where are the diamonds are fenced about with great perils and terrors, nor can any win thither; but the merchants who traffic in diamonds have a device by which they get them, that is to say, they take a sheep and kill and skin it and cut it in quarters and cast them down from the mountain-tops into the valley, where, the meat being sticky with the fresh blood, some of the jewels cling to it. There they leave it till midday, when the eagles and vultures swoop down upon it and carry it up to the mountain-tops, whereupon the merchants come and shout at them and scare them from the meat. Then they come and taking the diamonds, go their ways with them and leave the meat to the birds and beasts; nor can any come at the diamonds, but on this wise. So, when I saw the carcase fall and bethought me of the story aforesaid, I filled my pockets and girdle and turban and the folds of my clothes with great plenty of the best of the diamonds; and as I was thus engaged, down fell another great quarter of meat before me. Then I unrolled the linen of my turban and setting the meat on my breast, bound myself thereto and lay down on my back, so that I was hidden by the meat, which was thus raised above the ground. Hardly had I done this, when an eagle swooped down upon the meat and driving its talons into it, flew up with it and me clinging thereto and alighted on the top of one of the mountains, where it fell to rending the carcase; but there arose a great noise of shouting and clattering of wood, at which the bird took fright and flew away.

Then I loosed myself from the meat, with clothes daubed with blood therefrom, and stood up; whereupon up came the merchant, who had cried out at the eagle, and seeing me standing there, bespoke me not, but was affrighted at me and shook with fear. However, he went up to the carcase and turning it over, found no diamonds sticking to it, whereat he gave a great cry and exclaimed, “Alas, my disappointment! There is no power and no virtue but in God, with whom we seek refuge from Satan the accursed!” And he bemoaned himself and beat hand upon hand, saying, “Alas, the pity of it! How cometh this?” Then I went up to him and he said to me, “Who art thou and how camest thou hither?” “Fear not,” answered I. “I am a man and a good one and a merchant. My story is a rare one and the manner of my coming hither is a marvel. So be of good cheer; thou shalt have of me what will gladden thy heart, for I have with me great plenty of diamonds, each better than aught thou couldst get otherwise, and I will give thee thereof what shall suffice thee; so fear nothing.” So saying, I gave him abundance of diamonds and he rejoiced therein and thanked and blessed me. Then we talked together till the other merchants, each of whom had thrown down his piece of meat, hearing me in discourse with their fellow, came up and saluted me. I told them my story and how I came thither, and they gave me joy of my safety, saying, “By Allah, a new life hath been decreed to thee, for none ever won to yonder valley and came off thence alive before thee; but praised be God for thy safety!”

I passed the night in their company in a safe and pleasant place, beyond measure rejoiced at my deliverance from the Valley of Serpents and my arrival in an inhabited land; and on the morrow we set out and journeyed along the crest of the mountains, seeing many serpents in the valley, till we came to a wide and fair island, wherein was a grove of great camphor-trees, under each of which a hundred men might shelter. When the folk have a mind to get camphor, they pierce the upper part of the Stem with a long gimlet, whereupon the liquid camphor, which is the sap of the tree, runs out, as it were milk, and they catch it in vessels, where it hardens like gum; but, after this, the tree withers and becomes dry firewood. Moreover, there is in this island a kind of wild beast, called a rhinoceros, that feeds upon grass and leaves of trees, as do oxen and buffaloes with us; but it is a huge beast, bigger of body than the camel, and has a great and thick horn, half a score cubits long, amiddleward its head, wherein, when cleft in twain, is the likeness of a man. Travellers say that this beast will carry off a great elephant on its horn and graze about the island and the sea-coast therewith and take no heed of it, till the elephant dies and its fat melting in the sun, runs down into the rhinoceros's eyes and blinds him, so that he lies down on the shore. Then comes the roc and carries off both elephant and rhinoceros, to feed its young withal. Moreover, I saw in this island many kinds of oxen and buffaloes, whose like are not found in our country.

Here I sold some of my diamonds for gold and silver money and bartered others for the produce of the country, and loading them upon beasts of burden, fared on with the merchants from valley to valley and town to town, buying and selling and viewing foreign countries and the works and creatures of God, till we came to Bassora, where we abode a few days, after which I continued my journey to Baghdad and arrived at home with great store of diamonds and money and goods. I foregathered with my friends and relations and gave alms and largesse and made presents to all my friends and companions. Then I betook myself to eating and drinking and making merry with my fellows, and forgot all my sufferings. And all who heard of my return came and questioned me of my adventures and of foreign countries, and I related to them all that had befallen me, whereat they wondered exceedingly and gave me joy of my safe return. This, then, is the end of the story of my second voyage; and to-morrow, God willing, I will tell you what befell me in my third voyage.'

The company marvelled at his story and ate the evening meal with him; after which he ordered an hundred dinars to be given to the porter, who thanked him and blessed him and went his way, wondering at what he had heard. Next morning, as soon as it was day, he rose and praying the morning-prayer, repaired to the house of Sindbad the Sailor, even as he had bidden him, and gave him good-morrow. The merchant welcomed him and made him sit with him, till the rest of the company arrived; and when they had well eaten and drunken and were merry and in good case, their host began as follows, saying, ‘Hearken, O my brothers, to the story of my third voyage, which is more wonderful than those you have already heard. Know that

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The Third Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor.

As I told you yesterday, I returned from my second voyage with great increase of wealth, God having requited me all that I had lost, and I abode awhile at Baghdad in the enjoyment of the utmost ease and prosperity, till I was once more seized with longing for travel and adventure and yearned after traffic and gain, for that the heart is naturally prone to evil. So I laid in great plenty of suitable goods and repairing to Bassora, found there a great ship ready to sail, with a numerous company of merchants and others, men of worth and piety and consideration. I took passage with them and we set sail, commending ourselves to the blessing of God the Most High and trusting in Him to bring our voyage to a safe and prosperous issue. We fared on from sea to sea and from island to island and city to city, in all delight and contentment, buying and selling and taking our pleasure, till, one day, as we sailed, midmost the surging sea, swollen with clashing billows, the master, who stood in the ship's side, examining the sea in all directions, cried out with a great cry and bade furl the sail and cast out the anchors. Then he buffeted his face and plucked out his beard and rent his clothes, saying, "Alas!" and " Woe worth the day! O merchants, we are all lost!" So we said to him, "O master, what is to do?" and he replied, "Know, o my brethren, (may God preserve you,) that the wind has gotten the better of us and driven us out of our course into mid-ocean, and fate, for our ill fortune, hath brought us to the Mountain of the Zughb, who are a folk like apes, never fell any among them and came off alive, and my heart misgives me that we are all dead men."

Hardly had he made an end of his speech when the ship was boarded by an innumerable multitude of the islanders, who are the most frightful of wild creatures like apes, foul of favour and little of stature, being but four spans high, yellow-eyed and black-a-viced and covered with black hair like felt; none knoweth their language nor what they are, and they shun the company of men. They swarmed like locusts about the vessel and the shore, and we feared to strike them or drive them away, because of their vast multitude, lest, if we slew one, the rest should fall on us and kill us, for numbers prevail over courage; so we let them do their will, albeit we feared they would plunder our goods and gear. They swarmed up the cables and gnawed them in sunder, and on like wise they did with all the ropes of the ship, so that it fell off from the wind and stranded upon the mountain. Then they laid hands on all the merchants and crew, and landing us on the island, made off with the ship and its cargo we knew not whither.

We abode on the island, eating of its herbs and fruits and drinking of its streams, till, one day, we espied in its midst what seemed an inhabited house. So we made for it and found it a strong castle, compassed about with lofty walls and having a gate of ebony, with two leaves, both of which stood open. We entered and found within a spacious courtyard, with many high doors opening upon it, and at the farther end a great stone bench and brasiers, with cooking gear hanging thereby and great plenty of bones thereabout; but we saw no one and marvelled thereat exceedingly. Then we sat down in the courtyard and presently falling asleep, slept from the forenoon till sundown, when we were awakened by a rumbling noise in the air. The earth shook under us and behold, there came down upon us from the top of the castle a huge creature, in the likeness of a man, black of colour and tall of stature, as he were a great palm tree, with eyes like coals of fire and tusks like boar's tusks and a vast big mouth like the mouth of a well. Moreover, he had lips like camel's lips, hanging down upon his breast, and ears like two djerms, falling over his shoulders, and the nails of his hands were like lion's claws.

When we saw this frightful monster, we fell down and became as dead men for excess of fear and terror. He sat awhile on the bench, then, coming to us, took me up in his hand and turned me over and felt me, as a butcher feels a sheep, and I but a little morsel in his hands ; but finding me lean and in poor case, for stress of toil and trouble and weariness, let me go and took up another, whom in like manner he turned over and felt and let go; nor did he cease to feel the rest of us, one after another, till he came to the master of the ship. Now he was a stout broad-shouldered fellow, fat and in good case; so he pleased the monster, who seized him, as a butcher seizes a beast, and throwing him down, set his foot on his neck and broke it; after which he fetched a long spit and thrusting it into his fundament, brought it forth of the crown of his head. Then, lighting a great fire, he set over it the spit with the dead man thereon, and turned it over the coals, till the flesh was roasted, when he took the spit off the fire and set it [upright in the ground] before him. Then he tore the body, limb from limb, as one joints a fowl, and rending the flesh with his nails, fell to eating of it and gnawing the bones, till there was nothing left but some bones, which he threw on one side. This done, he lay down on the bench and stretching himself out, fell asleep and snored like the death-rattle of a lamb or a cow, with its throat cut; nor did he wake till morning, when he rose and went out.

As soon as we were certified that he was gone, we began to talk with one another, bemoaning ourselves and saying, "Would God we had been drowned in the sea or that the apes had eaten us! That were better than to be roasted over the coals; by Allah, this is a foul death! But what God wills cometh to pass and there is no power and no virtue save in Him, the Most High, the Supreme! We shall assuredly perish miserably and none will know of us; for there is no escape for us from this place." Then we arose and roamed about the island, so haply we might find a means of flight or a place to hide us in, for indeed death was a light matter to us, so we were not roasted and eaten. However, we could find no hiding-place and the evening overtook us; so, of the excess of our terror, we returned to the Castle and sat down.

Presently, the earth shook under us and the black came up to us and turning us over, felt us, one after another, till be found one to his liking, whom he took and served as he had done the captain, killing and roasting and eating him; after which he laid down on the bench and slept and snored all night, like a beast with its throat cut, till daybreak, when he arose and went out as before. Then we drew together and said to one another, "By Allah, we were better cast ourselves into the sea and be drowned than be roasted and eaten, for this is a vile death!" "Rather let us cast about to kill him," quoth one of us, "and be at peace from him and rid the Muslims of his barbarity and tyranny." Then said I, "O my brothers, if there is nothing for it but to kill him, let us carry some of this wood and planks down to the sea-shore and make a boat, so, if we succeed in killing him, we may either embark in it and let the waters carry us whither God will, or else abide here till some ship pass, when we will take passage therein. If we win not to kill him, we will embark in the boat and put out to sea; and if we be drowned, we shall at least escape being slaughtered and roasted; whilst if we escape, we escape, and if we be drowned, we die martyrs." "By Allah," said they all, "this is a good counsel;" and we agreed upon this, and set about carrying it out. So we haled the pieces of wood [that lay about] down to the beach and making a boat, moored it to the strand, after which we stowed therein somewhat of victual and returned to the castle.

No sooner was it dark than the earth shook under us and in came the black upon us, as he were a raging dog. He came up to us and feeling us, one by one, took one of us and killed and roasted and ate him, after which he lay down on the bench and snored like thunder. As soon as we were assured that he slept, we arose and taking two iron spits of those set up there, heated them in the fiercest of the fire, till they were red-hot, when we gripped fast hold of them and going up to the giant, as he lay snoring on the bench, thrust them into his eyes and pressed upon them, all of us, with our might, so that his eyes were put out and he became blind. Thereupon he gave a great cry, that our hearts trembled thereat, and springing up from the bench, fell a-groping after us, blind-fold. We fled from him right and left and he saw us not, for he was altogether blind; but we were in deadly fear of him and gave ourselves up for lost, despairing of escape. Then he made for the door, feeling for it with his hands, and went out, roaring aloud, so that the earth shook under us, for the noise of his roaring, and we quaked for fear.

We followed him out of the castle and betook ourselves to the place where we had moored our boat, saying to one another, "If this accursed wretch abide absent till the going down of the sun and come not to the castle, we shall know that he is dead; and if he come back, we will embark in the boat and paddle till we escape, committing our affair to God." But, as we spoke, up came the black, with other two as they were ghouls, fouler and more frightful than he, with eyes like red-hot coals; which when we saw, we embarked in haste in the boat and casting off the moorings, pushed out to sea. As soon as the giants caught sight of us, they cried out at us and running down to the sea-shore, fell a-pelting us with rocks, whereof some reached us, and other some fell into the sea. We paddled with all our might till we were beyond their reach, but the most part of us were slain by the stone-throwing, and the winds and waves sported with us and carried us into the midst of the surging sea, swollen with clashing billows. We knew not whither we we went and my fellows died one after another, till there remained but myself and two others on board the boat; for, as often as one died, we threw him into the sea. We were sore exhausted for stress of hunger, but we heartened one another and paddled with our might, till the winds cast us upon an island, as we were dead men for fear and hunger and weariness.

We landed and walked about the island, which abounded in trees and streams and birds, eating of the fruits and rejoicing in our escape from the black and our deliverance from the perils of the sea; and thus we did till nightfall, when we lay down and fell asleep for excess of weariness. After a while we were aroused by a hissing noise, like the wind, and awaking, saw an enormous serpent making for us, which seized one of my companions and swallowed him at one gulp, down to his shoulders; then it gave another gulp and swallowed the rest of him, and we heard his ribs crack in its belly. Then it went its way, and we abode in sore amazement and grief for our comrade and mortal terror for ourselves, saying, “By Allah, this is a marvellous thing! Each kind of death [that besets us] is more terrible than the last. We were rejoicing in our escape from the black and our deliverance from the perils of the sea; but now we have fallen into that which is worse. There is no power and no virtue but in God! By Allah, we have escaped from the black and from drowning; but how shall we escape from this il-omened serpent?”

Then we walked about the island, eating of its fruits and drinking of its streams, till dusk, when we climbed up into a high tree and went to sleep there, I being on the topmost branch. As soon as it was dark night, up came the serpent, looking right and left, and making for the tree on which we were, climbed up to my comrade and swallowed him down to his shoulders. Then it coiled about the tree with him, whilst I heard his bones crack in its belly, and it swallowed him whole, after which it slid down from the tree. When the day broke, I came down, as I were a dead man for excess of fear and anguish, and thought to cast myself into the sea and be at peace from the world; but could not bring myself to this, for life is dear. So I took five broad and long pieces of wood and bound one crosswise to the soles of my feet and another over my head and the others in like fashion on my right and left sides and over my breast and made them fast with ropes, which I twisted of the grass of the island. Then I lay down on the ground on my back, so that I was completely fenced in by the pieces of wood which enclosed me like a bier.

As soon as it was dark, up came the serpent, as usual, and made towards me, but could not get at me to swallow me, for the wood that fenced me in. So it crawled round me on every side, whilst I looked on, like one dead for excess of terror; and every now and then it would go away and come back; but as often as it tried to come at me, it was hindered by the pieces of wood with which I had bound myself on every side. It ceased not to beset me thus from sundown till sunrise, when it made off, in the utmost rage and disappointment. Then I unbound myself, well-nigh dead for fear and sleeplessness, and went down to the sea-shore, whence I saw a ship afar off in the midst of the waves. So I tore off a great branch of a tree and made signs with it, shouting out the while; which when the ship's company saw, they said to each other, "We must stand in and see what this is; belike it is a man." So they steered for the island and presently heard my cries, whereupon they put out a boat and taking me on board, questioned me of my case. I told them all my adventures, at which they marvelled exceedingly and covered my nakedness with some of their clothes. Moreover, they set before me food and cold fresh water, and I ate and drank my fill and was mightily refreshed, and God gave me new life after I had looked for nothing but death. So I praised the Most High and thanked Him for His exceeding mercies, and my heart revived in me, till meseemed as if all I had suffered were but a dream.

We sailed on with a favouring wind till we came to an island called Es Selahiteh, when the captain cast anchor mid the merchants and sailors landed with their goods, to sell and buy. Then the captain turned to me and said, "Hark ye, thou art a stranger and poor and tellest us that thou hast undergone great hardships; wherefore I have a mind to advantage thee with somewhat that may further thee in thy native land, so thou wilt still pray for me." "So be it," answered I;

“thou shalt have my prayers.” Quoth he, “Know then that there was with us a man, a traveller whom we lost, and we know not if he be alive or dead, for we have had no news of him; so I purpose to commit his goods to thy charge, that thou mayest sell them in the island. A part of the proceeds we will give thee for thy pains, and the rest we will keep till we return to Baghdad, where we will enquire for his family and deliver it to them. Dost thou agree to this?” I thanked him for his kindness and accepted his offer with gratitude, whereupon he bade the sailors and porters carry the bales in question ashore and deliver them to me. Quoth the ship’s clerk to him, “O master, what bales are these and what merchant’s name shall I write upon them?” “Write on them the name of Sindbad,” answered the captain, “him who was with us in the ship and whom we lost at such an island; for we mean this stranger to sell them, and we will give him a part of the price for his pains and keep the rest, till we return to Baghdad, where, if we find him we will pay it to him, and if not, we will make it over to his family.” And the clerk said, “It is well and justly thought.”

When I heard my name, I bethought me that these must be my goods; so I waited till all the merchants had landed and were gathered together, talking and chaffering; then, taking courage, I went up to the captain and said to him, “O my lord, knowest thou what manner of man was this Sindbad, whose goods thou hast committed to me to sell?” “I know nothing of him,” answered the captain, “save that he was a man from the city of Baghdad, Sindbad by name, and that we missed him after touching at such an island and have heard nothing of him since then.” At this I gave a great cry and said, “O captain, whom God keep, know that I am that Sindbad and that I was not drowned, but that, landing with the rest of the merchants on the island in question, I sat down in a pleasant place by myself and ate somewhat of food I had with me and enjoyed the freshness of the air, till I became drowsy and fell fast asleep; and when I awoke, I found the ship had sailed without me. These, then, are my goods, and all the merchants that fetch jewels from the Valley of Diamonds know me and will bear me witness of the truth of my story; for I related to them how you forgot me and left me behind and told them all that had befallen me.”

When the merchants and crew heard my words, they gathered about me and some of them believed me and others disbelieved; but presently one of the merchants, hearing me mention the Valley of Diamonds, came up and said to them, “Hark ye, good people! When I related to you the most wonderful thing of all that befell me in my travels and told you how, being with other merchants, trying for diamonds in the Valley of Serpents and casting down each our quarter of meat, as of wont, there came up a man hanging to mine, — ye believed me not and gave me the lie. Now this is the very man, by token that he gave me diamonds of great value, whose like are not to be found, requiting me more than would have come up sticking to my quarter of meat; and I carried him with me to Bassora, where he took leave of us and went on to his native city, whilst we returned to our own land. This is he, and God hath sent him hither that the truth of my story may be made manifest to you. Moreover these are his goods, for, when he first foregathered with us, he told us of them, and that his name was Sindbad and how he came to be left on the island; and the truth of his words is manifest.” With this the captain came up to me and considered me straitiy awhile, after which he said to me “What was the mark on thy bales?” “Thus and thus,” answered I and reminded him of somewhat that had passed between him and me, when I shipped with him from Bassora. Thereupon he was convinced that I was indeed Sindbad and embraced me and gave me joy of my safety, saying, “By Allah, my lord, thy case is indeed wonderful and thy story extraordinary, but praised be God who hath brought thee and me together again, and hath restored thee thy goods and thy gear!” Then I disposed of my goods to the best of my skill, and profited largely on them, whereat I rejoiced exceedingly and congratulated myself on my safety and the recovery of my goods.

After this we continued our voyage from island to island, trading everywhere till we came to the land of Hind, where we bought cloves and ginger and all manner of spices; and thence we fared on to the land of Sind, where also we bought and sold. In the course of this voyage in the Indian seas, I saw wonders without number, amongst others a fish like a cow and others like asses; and I saw also a bird that comes out of a sea-shell and lays eggs and hatches them on the surface of the water, never coming up from the sea to the land. Then we set sail again with a fair wind and after a prosperous voyage, arrived in safety, by the blessing of God the Most High, at Bassora, where I abode a few days and after returned to Baghdad, having gained in this voyage what was beyond count and reckoning. I gave alms and largesse and clad the widow and the orphan, by way of thanksgiving for my happy return, and fell to feasting and making merry with my companions and friends and forgot all that had befallen me and all the perils and hardships I had suffered. This, then is the history of my third voyage, and to-morrow, if it be the will of God, you shall hear that of my fourth voyage, which is still more wonderful than those you have already heard.'

Then he bade give the porter an hundred dinars as of wont and called for food. So they spread the tables and the company supped and went their ways, marvelling at what they had heard. The porter passed the night in his own house and as soon as the day broke and the morning appeared with its light and shone, he rose and praying the morning prayer, betook himself to Sindbad the Sailor, who received him with an open and cheerful favour and made him sit with him till the rest of his friends arrived, when he caused set on food and they ate and drank and made merry. Then Sindbad the Sailor bespoke them and related to them the story of his fourth voyage, saying, 'Know, O my brethren, that

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The Fourth Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor.

I had not long been in the enjoyment of ease and repose, after my return from my third voyage, when a company of merchants entered Baghdad and foregathering with me, talked with me of foreign travel and traffic, till my soul yearned to go with them and divert itself with the sight of strange countries, and I longed for the society of the various races of mankind and for traffic and gain. So I resolved to travel with them and providing myself with great store of costly goods, more than ever before, transported them to Bassora, where I took ship with the merchants in question, who were of the chief of the town.

We set out, trusting in the blessing of God the Most High, and sailed, with a favouring breeze, from island to island and sea to sea, till, one day, there arose against us a contrary wind and the captain cast out his anchors and brought the ship to a standstill, fearing lest she should founder in mid-ocean. Then we all fell to prayer and humbling ourselves before God the Most High; but, as we were thus engaged, there smote us a furious squall, which tore the sails to rags; the cable parted and [the ship, capsizing,] cast us all into the sea. I kept myself afloat half the day, till, when I had given myself up for lost, God threw in my way one of the planks of the ship, on which I and some others of the merchants clambered and paddled with our feet in the sea. We abode thus a day and a night, the wind and waves helping us on, till, on the forenoon of the second day, the breeze freshened and the waves rose and cast us upon an island, well-nigh dead for cold and weariness and fear and hunger and thirst and lack of sleep. We walked about the shore and found abundance of herbs and roots, of which we ate and stayed our failing spirits, then lay down and slept till morning.

As soon as it was light, we arose and walked about the island, till we came in sight of [what seemed] an inhabited house afar off. So we made towards it, but no sooner had we reached the door thereof; than a number of naked men issued from it and without word said, laid hold of us and carried us to their king, who signed to us to sit. So we sat down and they set food before us, whose like we had never seen in all our lives. My companions ate of it, for stress of hunger, but my stomach revolted from it and I would not eat; and my refraining from it was, by God's favour, the cause of my being alive till now: for no sooner had my comrades tasted of it than their reason fled and their condition changed and they began to eat like madmen. Then the savages gave them to drink of cocoa-nut oil and anointed them therewith; and no sooner had they drunken thereof, than their eyes turned in their heads and they fell to eating greedily against their wont. When I saw this, I was confounded and grieved for them, nor was I less concerned for myself, for fear of the savages. So I watched them narrowly, nor was it long before I discovered them to be a tribe of cannibals. All who fell in their way they brought to their king and fed them upon this food and anointed them with cocoa-nut oil, whereupon their bellies expanded that they might eat amain, whilst their reason fled and they lost the power of thought and became idiots. Then they stuffed them with cocoa-nut oil and the aforesaid food, till they grew fat and stout, when they slaughtered them and roasted them for their king's eating: but, as for the savages themselves, they ate human flesh raw.

When I was aware of this, I was sore dismayed for mysel and my comrades, who were now become so brutalized that they knew not what was done with them and the savages committed them to one, who used every day to lead them out and pasture them on the island like cattle. As for me, I wasted away and became sickly for fear and hunger and my flesh shrivelled on my bones; which when the savages saw, they left me alone and took no thought of me, so that one day I gave them the slip and made for the beach, where I espied a man seated on a high place. I looked at him and knew him for the herdsman, who had charge of my fellows, and with him were great plenty of others like unto them. As soon as he saw me, he knew me to be in possession of my reason and signed to me from afar, as who should say, "Turn back and take the right-hand road, for that will lead thee into the king's highway." So I turned back, as he bade me, and followed the right hand road, now running for fear and now slackening pace, to rest me, till I was out of his sight. By this time, the sun had gone down and the darkness set in; so I sat down to rest and would have slept, but sleep came not to me that night, for stress of fear and hunger and weariness. When the night was half spent I rose and walked on, till the day broke and the sun rose over hill and plain. Now I was weary and hungry and thirsty; so I ate my fill of the herbs and roots that grew in the island and stayed my stomach, after which I set out again.

I fared on thus, night and day, seven days and nights, staying my hunger with roots and herbs, till, on the morning of the eighth day, I caught sight of something moving in the distance. So I made for it, though my heart quaked for all I had suffered first and last, and found that it was a company of men gathering pepper. As soon as they saw me, they hastened up to me and surrounding me on all sides, asked me who I was and whence I came. I acquainted them with my case and all the hardships and perils I had suffered and how I had escaped from the savages, whereat they marvelled and gave me joy of my safety, saying, “By Allah, it is wonderful that thou shouldst have escaped from these blacks, who swarm in the island and devour all who fall in with them, nor is any safe from them.”

They made me sit by them, till they had made an end of their work, and brought me good food, of which I ate, for I was hungry, and rested awhile; after which they took ship with me and carrying me to the island where they abode, brought me before their king, who received me kindly and questioned me of my case; whereupon I told him all that had befallen me, from the day of my leaving Baghdad. He wondered greatly at my adventures, he and his courtiers, and made me sit by him; then he called for food and I ate with him and washed my hands and returned thanks to God the most High for all His mercies. Then I left the King and walked about the city, which I found rich and populous, abounding in markets well stocked with food and merchandise and full of buyers and sellers. So I gave myself joy of having reached so pleasant a place and took my ease there after my fatigues; and I made friends with the townsfolk, nor was it long before I became better considered and more in favour with them and their King than any of the chief men of the realm.

Now I saw that all the people, great and small, rode handsome thorough-bred horses barebacked and without saddles, at which I wondered and said to the King, “O my lord, why dost thou not ride with a saddle? Therein is ease for the rider and increase of power.”

"What manner of thing is a saddle?" asked he. "I never saw nor used one in all my life." "With thy permission," rejoined I, "I will make thee a saddle, that thou mayst ride on it and see the comfort thereof." And he said, "Do so." So I asked him for wood, which being brought me, I sought out a skilful carpenter and showed him how to make the saddle-tree, portraying him the fashion thereof in ink on the wood. Then I took wool and carded it and made felt of it and covering the saddle-tree with leather, stuffed it and burnished it and bound on the girth and stirrup-leathers; after which I fetched a blacksmith and described to him the fashion of the stirrups and bridle-bit. So he forged a fine pair of stirrups and a bit, and I filed them smooth and tinned them. Moreover, I made fast to them fringes of silk and fitted bridle-leathers to the bit. Then I fetched one of the best of the royal horses and saddling and bridling him, hung the stirrups to the saddle and led him to the King. The thing took his fancy and he thanked me; then he mounted and rejoiced greatly in the saddle and rewarded me handsomely. When the King's Vizier saw the saddle, he sought of me the like and I made it for him. Moreover, all the grandees and officers of state sought saddles of me; so I fell to making saddles, with the help of the carpenter and blacksmith, whom I had taught the craft, and selling them to all who sought, till I amassed great wealth and became in high honour and favour with the King and his household and officers.

I abode thus till, one day, as I was sitting with the King, in all honour and contentment, he said to me, "Hark ye, such an one! Thou art become one of us and we hold thee in such honour and affection that we cannot part with thee now nor suffer thee to leave our city; wherefore I have somewhat to require of thee, in which I will not have thee gainsay me. "O King," answered I, "what is it thou desirest of me? Far be it from me to gainsay thee in aught, for I am indebted to thee for many favours and bounties and much kindness, and (praised be God!) I am become as one of thy servants." Quoth he, "I have a mind to marry thee to a rich, handsome and agreeable wife, so thou mayst be domiciled with us and I will lodge thee with me in my palace; wherefore gainsay me not neither cross me in this." When I heard this, I was abashed and held my peace nor could make him any answer, by reason of my much bashfulness before him. Quoth he, "Why dost thou not answer me, O my son?" And I answered, saying, "O King of the age, it is thine to command." So he summoned the Cadi and the witnesses and married me straightway to a noble lady of surpassing beauty, high descent and great wealth. Then he gave me a great and goodly house, together with slaves and officers, and assigned me stipends and allowances. So I became in all delight and ease and contentment and forgot all that had befallen me of weariness and trouble and hardship; for I loved my wife dearly and she loved me no less, and we were at one and abode in the utmost comfort and happiness. And I said in myself, "When I return to my native land, I will carry her with me." But whatever is decreed to a man, needs must it be, and none knoweth what shall befall him.

We lived thus a great while, till God the Most High bereft a neighbour of mine of his wife. Now he was a friend of mine; so I went in to condole with him on his loss and found him in very ill plight, full of trouble and weary of heart and mind. I condoled with him and comforted him, saying, "Mourn not for thy wife; God will surely give thee a better in her stead, and thy life shall be long, so it please the Most High." But he wept sore and replied, "O my friend, how can I marry another wife and how shall God replace her to me with a better than she, seeing that I have but one day left to live?" "O my brother," said I, return to thy senses and forebode not thine own death, for thou art well and in good health and case." "By thy life, O my friend," rejoined he, "to-morrow thou wilt lose me and wilt never see me again till the Day of Resurrection." "How so?" asked I, and he said, "This very day they bury my wife, and me with her in one tomb; for it is the custom with us, if the wife die first, to bury the husband alive with her, and in like manner the wife, if the husband die first; so that neither may enjoy life after the other." "By Allah," cried I, "this is a most vile custom and not to be endured of any!"

Meanwhile, the most part of the townsfolk came in and fell to condoling with my friend for his wife and himself. Presently, they laid the dead woman out and setting her on a bier, carried her and her husband without the city, till they came to a place in the side of a mountain by the sea, where they raised a great stone and discovered the mouth of a stone-lined pit or well, leading down into a vast underground cavern that ran beneath the mountain.Into this pit they threw the coffin, then tying a rope of palm-fibres under the husband's armpits, they let him down into the cavern, and with him a great pitcher of fresh water and seven cakes of bread. When he came to the bottom, he did himself loose from the rope and they drew it up; then stopping the mouth of the pit with the stone, they returned to the city, leaving my friend in the cavern with his dead wife. When I saw this, I said in myself, "By Allah, this kind of death is more horrible than the first." And I went in to the King and said to him, "O my lord, why do ye bury the live with the dead?" Quoth he, "It has been our custom, from time immemorial, if the husband die first, to bury his wife with him, and the like with the wife, if her husband die first, so we may not sever them, alive or dead." "O King of the age," asked I, "if the wife of a foreigner like myself die among you, deal ye with him as with yonder man?" "Assuredly," answered he; "we do with him even as thou hast seen." When I heard this, my gall-bladder was like to burst, for the violence of my dismay and concern for myself; my wit became dazed and I went in fear lest my wife should die before me and they bury me alive with her. However, after a while, I comforted myself, saying, "Haply I shall die before her, for none knoweth which shall go first and which follow."

Then I applied myself to diverting my mind from this thought with various occupations; but it was not long before my wife sickened and died, after a few days' illness, and the King and the rest of the folk came to condole with me and her family for her loss. Then they washed her and arraying her in her richest clothes and ornaments, laid her on the bier and carded her to the mountain aforesaid, where they lifted the cover of the pit and cast her in; after which all my friends and acquaintances came round me, to bid me farewell in my lifetime and condole with me for myself whilst I cried out amongst them, saying, "I am a foreigner and not subject to your custom!" They paid no heed to my words, but laying hold of me, bound me by force and let me down into the cavern, with a pitcher of fair water and seven cakes of bread, as of wont. When I came to the bottom, they called out to me to cast myself loose from the cords, but I refused to do so; so they threw them down on me and closing the mouth of the pit with the stone aforesaid, went their ways.

I found myself in a vast cavern under the mountain, full of dead bodies, that exhaled a fetid and loathsome smell, and fell to blaming myself for what I had done, saying, "By Allah, I deserve all that hath befallen me! What possessed me to take a wife in this city? There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! As often as I say, 'I have escaped from one calamity,' I fall into a worse. By Allah, this is a fearful death to die! Would I had been drowned at sea or perished in the mountains! It were better than to die this miserable death!" Then I threw myself down on the bones of the dead and lay there, imploring Gods help and in the violence of my despair, invoking death, which came not to me, till hunger well-nigh gnawed me in sunder and thirst consumed me, when I sat up and feeling for the bread, ate a morsel and drank a mouthful of water. After this, I arose and exploring the cavern, found that it extended a long way right and left, with hollow places in its sides; and its floor was strewn with dead bodies and rotten bones, that had lain there from of old time. So I made myself a place in the sides of the cavern, afar from the freshly buried dead, and there slept.

I abode thus a long while, knowing not night from day, eating not till I was well-nigh torn in pieces with hunger, neither drinking till driven thereto by excess of thirst, for fear my victual should fail me before my death; and my bread and water diminished, till I had but a little left, albeit I ate but a morsel every day or two and drank but a mouthful. One day, as I sat thus, pondering my case and bethinking me how I should do, when my store was exhausted, the stone that covered the opening was suddenly raised, and the light streamed down upon me. Quoth I, "I wonder what is to do!" Then I espied folk standing about the mouth of the pit, who presently let down a dead man and a live woman, weeping and bemoaning herself; and with her the usual pittance of bread and water. I saw her, but she saw me not; and they closed up the opening and went away. Then I took the thighbone of a dead man and going up to the woman, smote her on the crown of the head, and she fell down in a swoon. I smote her a second and a third time, till she was dead, when I laid hands on her bread and water and found on her great plenty of jewels and ornaments and rich apparel. I carried the victual to my niche in the side of the cavern and ate and drank of it sparingly, no more than sufficed to keep the life in me, lest it come speedily to an end and I perish of hunger and thirst.

I abode thus a great while, killing all the live folk they let down into the cavern and taking their provision of meat and drink, till, one day, as I slept, I was awakened by something routing among the bodies in a corner of the cave, and said, “What can this be?” So I sprang up and seizing the thighbone aforesaid, made for the noise. As soon as the thing was ware of me, it fled from me into the inward of the cavern, and behold, it was a wild beast. However, I followed it to the further end, till I saw afar off a tiny point of light, like a star, now appearing and now disappearing. So I made for it, and as I drew near, it grew larger and brighter, till I was certified that it was a crevice in the rock, leading to the open country; and I said in myself, “There must be some reason for this opening; either it is the mouth of a second pit, such as that by which they let me down, or else it is a [natural] fissure in the rock.” So I bethought me awhile and nearing the light, found that it came from a breach in the sea-wall of the mountain, which the wild beasts had made, that they might enter and feed upon the dead bodies. When I saw this, my spirits revived and hope came back to me and I made sure of life, after having looked for nothing but death. So I went on, as in a dream, and making shift to scramble through the breach, found myself on the slope of a high mountain, overlooking the salt sea and cutting off all access thereto from the island, so that none could come at that part of the beach from the city.

I praised God and thanked Him, rejoicing greatly in the prospect of deliverance; then I returned to the cavern and brought out all the food and water I had saved up and donned some of the dead folk’s clothes over my own; after which I gathered together all the collars and necklaces of pearls and jewels and trinkets of gold and silver set with precious stones and other ornaments and valuables I could find upon the corpses, and making them into bales with the grave-clothes and raiment of the dead, carried them out to the sea-shore, where I established myself, purposing to wait there till it should please God the Most High to send me deliverance by means of some passing ship. I visited the cavern daily and as often as I found folk buried alive there, I killed them and took their victual and valuables.

Thus I abode awhile till, one day, as I sat on the beach, pondering my case, I caught sight of a ship passing in the midst of the surging sea, swollen with clashing billows. So I took a piece of a shroud I had with me and tying it to a staff, ran along the sea-shore, making signals therewith to the people in the ship, till they espied me and hearing my shouts, sent a boat to fetch me off. When it drew near, the crew called out to me, saying, "Who art thou and how camest thou in this place, where never saw we any in our lives?" I answered that I was a merchant, who had been wrecked and saved myself on one of the planks of the ship, with some of my goods, and that, by the blessing of God and my own strength and skill, I had succeeded after severe toil in landing with my gear in that place, where I waited for some one to pass and take me off. So they took me and the bales I had made of the jewels and valuables from the cavern, tied up in clothes and shrouds, and rowed back with me to the ship, where the captain said to me, "How camest thou to yonder place?" All my life I have sailed these seas and passed to and fro by this mountain; yet never saw I here any living thing save wild beasts and birds." I repeated to him the story I had told the sailors, but acquainted him with nothing of that whicn had befallen me in the city and the cavern, lest there should be any of the islanders in the ship. Then I took out some of the best of the jewels and ornaments and offered them to the captain, saying, "O my lord, thou hast been the means of my delivery; so take this from me in requital of thy good offices." But he refused to accept it, saying, "When we find a shipwrecked man on the sea-shore or on an island, we take him up and feed him, and if he be naked, we clothe him; nor take we aught from him, nay, when we reach a port of safety, we set him ashore with a present of our own money and entreat him kindly and charitably, for the love of God the Most High." So I prayed that his life might be long and rejoiced in my escape, trusting to be delivered from my stress.

Then we pursued our voyage and sailed from island to island and sea to sea, till, by God's grace, we arrived in safety at Bassora, where I tarried a few days, then went on to Baghdad and foregathered with my friends and family, who rejoiced in my happy return and gave me joy of my safety. I laid up in my storehouses all the goods I had brought with me, and gave alms and largesse and clothed the widow and the orphan. Then I gave myself up to pleasure and enjoyment, returning to my old merry way of life; but, whenever I call to mind my sojourn in the cavern among the dead, I am like to lose my reason. This, then, is the story of my fourth voyage, and to-morrow I will tell you that which befell me in my fifth voyage, which was yet rarer and more wonderful than those which forewent it.’

When Sindbad the Sailor had made an end of his story, he called for supper; so they spread the table and the guests ate the evening meal; after which he gave the porter an hundred dinars as usual, and he and the rest of the company went their ways, glad at heart and marvelling at what they had heard, for that each story was more extraordinary than that which forewent it. The porter passed the night in his own house, in all joy and cheer and wonderment, and next morning, as soon as it was day, he prayed the morning prayer and repaired to the house of Sindbad the Sailor, who welcomed him and made him sit with him till the rest of the company arrived, when they ate and drank and made merry and the talk went round amongst them. Presently, their host began the story of the fifth voyage and bespoke them, saying, ‘Know, O my brethren, that

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

The Fifth Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor.

When I had been awhile on shore and had forgotten all my perils and sufferings, I was again seized with a longing to travel and see foreign countries. So I bought costly merchandise and making it up into bales, repaired to Bassora, where I found in the port a fine tall ship, newly built and fitted ready for sea. She pleased me, so I bought her and embarking my goods in her, hired a master and crew, over whom I set certain of my slaves and servants as inspectors. A number of merchants took passage with me and paid me freight; and we set sail in all joy and cheer, promising ourselves a prosperous voyage and much profit. We sailed from place to place, selling and buying and viewing the countries by which we passed, till one day we came to a great uninhabited island, waste and desolate, whereon was a vast white dome. The merchants landed to examine this dome, leaving me in the ship; and when they drew near, behold, it was a huge roc's egg. They fell a-beating it with stones, knowing not what it was, and presently broke it open, whereupon much water ran out of it and the young roc appeared within. So they pulled it forth of the shell and killed it and took of it great store of meat.

Now I was in the ship and knew not what they did, but presently one of them came up to me and said, "O my lord, come and look at the egg that we thought to be a dome." So I looked and seeing the merchants beating it with stones, called out to them to desist, for that the roc would come and break up our ship and destroy us. But they paid no heed to me and gave not over smiting upon the egg, till presently the day grew dark and the sun was hidden from us, as if some great cloud had passed between us and it. So we raised our eyes and saw that what we took for a cloud was the roc flying between us and the sun, and it was its wings that darkened the day. When it saw its egg broken, it gave a loud cry, whereupon its mate came flying up and they both began circling about the ship, crying out at us with voices louder than thunder. I called out to the master and the crew to put out to sea and seek safety in flight, before we were all destroyed. So the merchants came on board and we cast off and made haste to gain the open sea. When the rocs saw this, they flew off and we crowded sail on the ship, thinking to get beyond their reach; but presently they reappeared and flew after us, each with a huge rock in its claws, that it had brought from the mountains. As soon as the male bird came up with us, he let fall upon us the rock he held in his talons; but the master steered the ship aside, so that the rock missed her by some small matter and plunged into the sea with such violence, that the ship surged up and sank into the trough of the sea and the bottom of the ocean appeared to us. Then the she-bird let fall her rock, which was smaller than that of her mate, and as fore-ordained fate would have it, it fell on the poop of the ship and crushed it, breaking the rudder into twenty pieces; whereupon the vessel foundered and all on board were cast into the sea.

As for me, I struggled for dear life, till God threw in my way one of the planks of the ship, to which I clung and bestriding it, fell a-paddling with my hands and feet. Now the ship had gone down hard by an island and the winds and waves bore me on, till, by permission of God the Most High, they cast me up on the shore of the island, at the last gasp for toil and distress and hunger and thirst. So I landed more dead than alive, and throwing myself down on the beach, lay there awhile, till I began to recover myself, when I walked about the island and found it as it were one of the pleasaunces of Paradise, abounding in trees, laden with ripe fruits, and flowers of all kinds and running streams and birds warbling the praises of Him to whom belong power and eternity. So I ate my fill of the fruits and slaked my thirst with the water of the streams and returned thanks to God the Most High and glorified Him; after which I sat till nightfall, hearing no voice and seeing none.

Then I lay down, well-nigh dead for travail and affright, and slept without ceasing till morning, when I arose and walked among the trees, till I came to a spring of running water, by which sat an old man of venerable aspect, girt about with a waistcloth made of the leaves of trees. Quoth I to myself, “Belike this old man is of those who were wrecked in the ship and hath made his way to this island.” So I went up to him and saluted him, and he returned my greeting by signs, but spoke not; and I said to him, “O old man, what ails thee to sit here?” He shook his head and moaned and signed to me, as who should say, “Take me on thy back and carry me to the other side of the stream.” And I said to myself, “I will deal kindly with him and do what he desires; it may be God will reward me.” So I took him on my shoulders and carrying him to the place to which he pointed, said to him, “Dismount at thy leisure.” But he would not get off my back and wound his legs about my neck. I looked at them and seeing that they were like a buffalo’s hide for blackness and roughness, was affrighted and would have cast him off; but he clung to me and gripped my neck with his legs, till I was well-nigh choked; the world grew black in my sight and I fell to the ground senseless. But he [still kept his seat and] beat me with his feet on the back and shoulders, till he enforced me rise, for excess of pain. Then he signed to me with his head to carry him hither and thither among the trees, to the best of the fruits; and if I refused to do his bidding or loitered, he beat me with his feet more grievously than if I had been beaten with whips. So I carried him about the island, like a captive slave, and he used to do his occasions on my back, dismounting not day nor night; but, when he wished to sleep, he wound his legs about my neck and lay down and slept awhile, then arose and beat me, where-upon I sprang up in haste, unable to gainsay him, because of the pain he inflicted on me. And indeed I repented me of having taken compassion on him and said in myself, “I did him a kindness and it hath turned to my hurt; by Allah, never more will I do any a service so long as I live!”

I abode thus a long while in the utmost wretchedness, hourly beseeching God the Most High that I might die, for stress of weariness and misery, till one day I came to a place wherein was abundance of gourds, many of them dry. So I took a great dry gourd and cutting open the neck, scooped out the inside and cleaned it; after which I gathered grapes from a vine that grew hard by and squeezed them into the gourd till it was full of the juice. Then I stopped up the mouth and set it in the sun, where I left it for some days till it became strong wine; and every day I used to drink of it, to comfort and sustain me under my fatigues with that froward devil, and as often as I drank, I forgot my troubles and took new heart.

One day, he saw me drinking and signed to me as who should say, “What is that?” Quoth I, “It is an excellent cordial, that cheers the heart and revives the spirits.” ‘Then, being heated with wine, I ran and danced with him among the trees, clapping my hands and singing and making merry. When he saw this, he signed to me to give him the gourd, that he might drink, and I feared him and gave it him. So he took it and draining it, cast it on the ground, whereupon he grew merry and began to jig to and fro on my shoulders; but presently the fumes of the wine rising to his head, he became helplessly drunk and his every limb relaxed and he swayed to and fro on my back. When I saw that he had lost his senses for drunkenness, I put my hand to his legs and loosing them from my neck, stooped down and threw him to the ground, hardly crediting my deliverance from him and fearing lest he should shake off his drunkenness and do me a mischief.So I took up a great stone from among the trees and smote him therewith on the head with all my might and crushed in his skull and killed him, may God have no mercy on him!

Then I returned, with a heart at ease, to my former station on the sea-shore and abode in the island many days, eating of its fruits and drinking of its waters and keeping a look out for passing ships; till, one day, as I sat on the beach, recalling all that had befallen me and saying, “I wonder if God will save me alive and restore me to my country and my friends!” I suddenly caught sight of a ship making for the island. Presently, it cast anchor and the passengers landed. So I made for them, and when they saw me, they hastened up to me and questioned me of my case and how I came thither. I told them all that had befallen me, whereat they marvelled exceedingly and said, “He who rode on thy shoulders is called the Old Man of the Sea, and none ever fell into his clutches and came off alive but thou; so praised he God for thy safety!” Then they set set food before me, of which I ate my fill, and gave me somewhat of clothes wherewith I clad myself and covered my nakedness; after which they took me up into the ship, and we sailed days and nights, till fate brought us to a place called the City of Apes, builded with lofty houses, all of which gave upon the sea. Now every night, as soon as it is dusk, the dwellers in this city use to come forth of the seaward doors of their houses and putting out to sea in boats and ships, pass the night thus in their fear lest the apes should come down on them from the mountains.

I landed to visit the city, but meanwhile the ship set sail without me and I repented of having gone ashore, and calling to mind my companions and what had befallen me with the apes, first and last, sat down and fell a-weeping and lamenting. Presently one of the townsfolk accosted me and said to me, “O my lord, meseems thou art a stranger to these parts?” “Yes,” answered I, “I am indeed an unfortunate stranger, who came hither in a ship that cast anchor here, and I landed to visit the town; but when I would have gone on board again, I found they had sailed without me.” “Come,” said he, “and embark with us, for, if thou lie the night in the city, the apes will destroy thee.” “I hear and obey,” replied I and rising, straight-way embarked with him in one of the boats, whereupon they put out to sea and anchoring a mile from the land, passed the night there. At daybreak, they rowed back to the city and landing, went each about his business. Thus they did every night, for if any tarried in the town by night the apes came down on him and killed him. As soon as it was day, the apes left the place and ate of the fruits of the gardens, then went back to the mountains and slept there till nightfall, when they again came down upon the city.

Now this place was in the farthest part of the country of the blacks, and one of the strangest things that befell me during my sojourn there was on this wise. One of those, in whose company I passed the night in the boat, said to me, “O my lord, thou art a stranger in these parts; hast thou any craft at which thou canst work?” “By Allah, O my brother,” replied I, “I have no trade nor know I any handicraft, for I was a merchant and a man of substance and had a ship of my own, laden with great store of goods and merchandise; but it foundered at sea and all were drowned but I, who saved myself on a piece of plank, that God vouchsafed me of His favour.” With this, he fetched me a cotton bag and giving it to me, said, “Take this bag and fill it with pebbles from the beach and go forth with a company of the townsfolk, to whom I will commend thee. Do as they do and haply thou shalt gain what may further thy return to thy native land.” Then he carried me to the beach, where I filled my bag with small pebbles, and presently we saw a company of folk issue from the town, each bearing a bag like mine, filled with pebbles. To these he committed me, commending me to their care and saying, “Take this man with you, for he is a stranger, and teach him how to gather, that he may get his living, and God will reward you." "We hear and obey," answered they and bidding me welcome, fared on with me till we came to a spacious valley, full of lofty trees, that none might climb.

Now in this valley were many apes, which fled at sight of us and climbed up into the trees; whereupon my companions began to pelt them with the stones they had in their bags, and the apes fell to plucking of the fruit of the trees and casting them at the folk. I looked at the fruits they cast at us and found them to be cocoa-nuts; so I chose out a great tree, full of apes, and going up to it, began to pelt them with stones, and they in return pelted me with nuts, which I collected, as did the rest: so that by the time I had made an end of my bagful of pebbles, I had gotten great plenty of nuts; and as soon as my companions had in like manner gotten as many nuts as they could carry, we returned to the city, where we arrived before the end of the day. Then I went in to the man who had brought me in company with the nut-gatherers and gave him all I had gotten, thanking him for his kindness; but he would not accept them and gave me the key of a closet in his house, saying, "Choose out the worst of the nuts and sell them and provide thyself with the price and lay up the rest here. And go thou forth every day and gather nuts, as thou hast done to-day, and lay up the rest here, so haply thou mayest collect enough to serve thee for thy return home." "God requite thee!" answered I and did as he counselled me, going out daily with the cocoa-nut gatherers, who commended me to each other and showed me the best-stocked trees.

Thus did I for some time, till I had laid up great store of excellent nuts, besides a large sum of money, the price of those I had sold. I became thus at my ease and bought all I saw and had a mind to and passed my time pleasantly, till one day, as I stood on the beach, a great ship cast anchor before the city and landed a company of merchants, who proceeded to sell and buy and trade for cocoa-nuts and other commodities. Then I went to my friend and told him of the coming of the ship and how I had a mind to return to my own country; and he said, "It is thine to decide." So I thanked him for his bounties and took leave of him; then, going to the captain of the ship, I agreed with him for my passage and embarked my cocoa-nuts and what else I possessed. We weighed anchor the same day and sailed from place to place; and wherever we stopped, I sold and traded with my cocoa-nuts, and God requited me more than I had lost. Amongst other places, we came to an island abounding in cloves and cinnamon and pepper, and the country people told me that by the side of each pepper-pod grows a great leaf that shades it [from the sun] and casts the water off it in the rainy season; but, when the rain ceases, the leaf turns over and falls down by the side of the pod. Here I took in great store of pepper and cloves and cinnamon, in exchange for cocoa-nuts, and we passed thence to the island of El Usrat, whence comes the Comorin aloes, and thence to another island, five days journey in length, where grows the Chinese aloes, which is better than the Comorin; but the people of the latter island are fouler of case and religion than those of the former, for that they love lewdness and wine-bibbing and know not prayer nor the call to prayer. Thence we came to the island of the pearl-fisheries, and I gave the divers some of my Cocoa-nuts and bade them dive on my account and for my luck. They did so and brought up great plenty of large and fine pearls; and they said to me, By Allah, O my master, thy luck is happy!" Then we sailed on, with the blessing of God the Most High, and arrived safely at Bassora. There I abode a little and then went on to Baghdad, where I foregathered with my friends and family, who gave me joy of my safe return, and laid up all my goods in my storehouses. Then I gave alms and largesse and clothed the widow and the orphan and made presents to my friends and relations; after which I returned to my old merry way of life and forgot all I had suffered in the great profit and gain I had made, for God had requited me fourfold that I had lost. This, then, is the history of my fifth voyage, and now to supper; and to- morrow, come and I will tell you what befell me in my sixth voyage; for it was still more wonderful than this.'

Then he called for food; and the servants spread the table, and they ate the evening-meal, after which he gave the porter an hundred dinars and he returned home, marvelling at all he had heard. Next morning, as soon as it was light, he prayed the morning prayer, and betaking himself to the house of Sindbad the Sailor, bade him good-morrow. The merchant bade him sit and talked with him, till the rest of the guests arrived. Then the servants spread the table and when they had well eaten and drunken and were merry, Sindbad the Sailor began the story of his sixth voyage as follows, saying, ‘Know, O my brethren, that

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The Sixth Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor.

I abode some time, after my return from my fifth voyage, in great joy and comfort, and forgot what I had suffered, till, one day, as I sat making merry and enjoying myself with my friends, there came in to me a company of merchants, bearing signs of travel, and talked with me of travel and adventure and greatness of gain and profit. Their sight recalled to my mind the days of my return from travel, and my joy at once more seeing my native land and foregathering with my friends and relations; and my soul yearned for travel and traffic. So I resolved to undertake another voyage, and buying me rich merchandise, made it up into bales, with which I journeyed from Baghdad to Bassora. Here I found a great ship ready for sea and full of merchants and notables, who had with them goods of price; so I joined myself to them and took passage in the vessel with my goods.

We left Bassora with a fair wind and sailed from place to place, in all delight and solace of life, buying and selling and profiting and diverting ourselves with the sight of foreign countries, till one day, as we went along, the captain suddenly gave a great cry and cast his turban on the deck. Then he buffetted his face and plucked out his beard and fell down in the waist of the ship, for stress of grief and chagrin. So all the merchants and sailors came about him and asked him what was to do, and he answered, saying, “Know, O folk, that we have wandered from our course and come into a sea whose ways I know not. Yonder is a great mountain, upon which we are drifting, and unless God vouchsafe us a means of escape, we are all dead men; wherefore pray ye to the Most High, that he deliver us from this strait.”

Then he climbed the mast and would have loosed the sails; but the wind redoubled upon the ship and drove her backward; whereupon her rudder broke and she turned round three times and fell off towards the mountain. With this the captain came down from the mast, saying, “There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme, nor can we avert that which is decreed! By Allah, we are fallen on sure destruction, and there is no way of escape for us!”

Then we all gave ourselves up for lost and fell a-weeping over ourselves and bidding each other farewell. Presently the ship struck upon the mountain and broke up, and all on board her were plunged into the sea. Some were drowned and others made shift to get upon the mountain. I was amongst these latter, and when we got ashore, we found a great island, compassed about with a ring of mountains, whose base was strewn with wrecked ships and goods and gear in countless profusion, cast up by the sea. So we climbed the cliffs into the inward of the island, and my companions, dispersing hither and thither therein, were confounded at what they saw and became as madmen at sight of the countless riches with which its shores were strewn. As for me, I walked on inland, till I came to a stream of sweet water, that welled up at the foot of the mountains and disappeared in the earth under the range of hills on the opposite side. I looked into the bed of this stream and saw therein great plenty of rubies and great royal pearls and all kinds of jewels and precious stones, so that all the channel glittered by reason of their multitude, and they were as gravel in the bed of the rivulets that ran through the fields.

Moreover we found in the island abundance of the finest aloes-wood, both Chinese and Comorin; and there also is a spring of crude ambergris, which exudes over the sides, as it were gum, for the great heat of the sun, and runs down to the sea-shore, where the monsters of the deep come up and swallowing it, return into the sea. But it burns in their bellies; so they cast it up again and it rises to the top of the water, where it congeals and its colour and qualities are changed. By-and-by, the waves cast it ashore and the ambergris-gatherers collect and sell it. The rest of the ambergris congeals on the banks of the stream and when the sun shines on it, it melts and scents the whole valley with a musk-like fragrance: then, when the sun ceases from it, it congeals again. But none can get to this place where is the crude ambergris, because of the mountains aforesaid, which enclose the island on all sides and on which all ships that approach it are wrecked.

We continued thus to explore the island, marvelling at the riches we found there and the wonderful works of God, but sore troubled and dismayed for our own case. Now we had picked up on the beach some small matter of victual from the wreck and husbanded it carefully, eating but once every day or two, in our fear lest it should fail us and we perish miserably of hunger and thirst. Moreover, we were weak for sea-sickness and my companions died one after another, till there were but a few of us left. Each that died we washed and shrouded in some of the clothes and linen cast ashore by the waves; and after a little, the rest of my fellows died, one by one, till I had buried the last of the party and abode alone on the island, with but a little victual left. And I wept over myself, saying, "Would God I had died before my companions and they had washed me and buried me! It had been better than that I should die and none wash me and shroud me and bury me. But there is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!" After awhile I arose and dug me a deep grave on the sea-shore, saying in myself, "When I grow weak and know that death cometh to me, I will lay me down in this grave and die there, so the wind may drift the sand over me and cover me and I be buried therein." Then I fell to reproaching myself for my little wit in leaving my native land and betaking me again to foreign travel, after all I had suffered during my first five voyages, each marked by greater perils and more terrible hardships than its forerunner, especially as I had no need of money, seeing that I had enough and more than enough and could not spend what I had, no, nor half of it, in all my life; and I repented me of my folly, having no hope of escape from my present stress, and bemoaned myself.

However, after a while, I bethought me and said to myself, "By Allah, this stream must have an issue somewhere, and belike its course leads to some inhabited place; so methinks I cannot do better than make me a little boat, big enough to sit in, and carry it down and launching it on the river, embark in it and commit myself to the current. If I escape, I escape, by God's leave; and if I perish, better die in the river than here." So I gathered a number of pieces of aloes-wood and bound them together with ropes from the wreckage; then I chose out from the broken-up ships straight planks of even size and fixed them firmly upon the aloes-wood. On this wise I made me a boat [or raft] a little narrower than the channel of the stream, and tying a piece of wood on its either side, to serve as an oar, launched it on the river. Then I loaded it with the best of the crude ambergris and pearls and jewels and of the wrecked goods and what was left me of victual, and embarking, did according to the saying of the poet:

Depart from a place, if therein be oppression, And leave the house tell of its builder's fate
Country for country thou'lt find, if thou seek it, Life for life never, early or late.
And fret not thy soul for the buffets of fortune: Each stress hath its term and its fore-ordained date.
He whose death in one land is decreed, in none other His life shall have end than in that fixed by Fate.

I drifted with the stream, pondering the issue of my affair, till I came to the place where it disappeared beneath the mountains, and the current carried the raft with it into the underground channel. Here I found myself in utter darkness and the stream bore me on through a narrow tunnel, which grew straiter and straiter, till the raft touched either side and my head rubbed against the roof. Then I blamed myself for having undertaken this adventure and said, "If this tunnel grow any straiter, the raft will not pass, and I cannot turn back; so I shall inevitably perish miserably in this place." And I threw myself down on my face on the raft, by reason of the straitness of the channel, whilst the stream ceased not to carry me along the tunnel, which now grew wider and now straiter. I fared on thus, knowing not night from day, for the excess of the darkness that encompassed me and my fear and concern for myself lest I should perish, till, being sore aweary for the intensity of the gloom and worn with hunger and watching, I fell asleep, as I lay on the raft on my face. How long I slept I know not, but, when I awoke, I found myself in the open air and the raft moored to an island in the midst of a number of Indians and blacks.

As soon as the folk saw that I was awake, they came up to me and bespoke me in their language; but I understood not what they said and thought I must be still asleep and that this was a dream that had betided me for stress of trouble and weariness. When they saw I understood them not and made them no answer, one of them came forward and said to me in Arabic, "Peace be on thee, O my brother!

Who art thou and what brings thee hither? How camest thou into this river and what manner of land is beyond yonder mountains, for never knew we any make his way thence to us?" Quoth I, "Who are ye and what is this place?" "O my brother," answered he, "we are husbandmen and gardeners, who came out to water our fields and gardens and finding thee asleep on this raft, laid hold of it and made it fast by us, against thou shouldst awake at thy leisure. So tell us how thou camest hither?" "For God's sake, O my lord," rejoined I, "give me to eat, for I am starving; and after ask me what thou wilt." So he hastened to fetch me food and I ate my fill, till I was refreshed and my life returned to me. Then I returned thanks to God the Most High, rejoicing in the happy issue of my toils, and told them all my adventures from first to last.

When I had made an end of my story, they consulted among themselves and said to each other, "We must carry him with us and present him to our King, that he may acquaint him with his adventures." So they took me, together with the raft and its lading, and brought me to their King, telling him what had happened; whereupon he saluted me and bade me welcome. Then he questioned me of my condition and adventures, and I repeated to him my story, at which he marvelled exceedingly and gave me joy of my deliverance; after which I fetched from the raft great store of jewels and precious stones and ambergris and aloes-wood and presented them to the King, who accepted them and entreated me with the utmost honour, appointing me a lodging in his own palace. So I consorted with the chief of the islanders, and they paid me the utmost respect. Moreover, all the travellers and merchants who came to the place questioned me of the affairs of my native land and of the Khalif Haroun er Reshid and his rule there and I told them of him and of that for which he was renowned, and they praised him for this; whilst I in turn questioned them of the manners and customs of their own countries. One day, the King himself questioned me of the manners and way of government of my country, and I acquainted him with the fashion of the Khalif's sway in the city of Baghdad and the justice of his rule. The King marvelled at my account of his ordinances and said, "By Allah, the Khalif's ordinances are indeed wise and his fashions praiseworthy and thou hast made me love him by what thou tellest me; wherefore I have a mind to send him a present by thee." "I hear and obey, O my lord," answered I; "I will carry thy present to him and inform him that thou art his sincere lover."

Then I abode with the King in great honour and ease and consideration, till, one day, as I sat in his palace, I heard tell of a company of merchants, that were fitting out a ship for Bassora, and said in myself; "I cannot do better than make the voyage with these." So I rose at once and going in to the King, kissed his hand and acquainted him with my wish to set out with the merchants, for that I longed after my people and family and native land. Quoth he, "Thou art thine own master; yet, if it be thy will to abide with us, on our head and eyes be it, for thou gladdenest us with thy company.' "O my lord," answered I, "thou hast indeed overwhelmed me with thy favours; but I weary for a sight of my friends and family and native land." When he heard this, he summoned the merchants in question and commended me to their care, paying my freight and passage-money. Moreover, he bestowed on me great riches from his treasuries and committed to my charge a magnificent present for the Khalif Haroun er Reshid.

Then I took leave of him and of all my intimates and acquaintances in the island and embarked with the merchants aforesaid. We set sail with a fair wind, committing ourselves to the care of God (may He be exalted and glorified!), and by His permission in due time arrived, after a prosperous voyage, at Bassora, where I passed a few days, equipping myself and packing up my goods. Then I went on to Baghdad, where I sought an audience of the Khalif and laid the King's presents before him. He asked me whence they came and I said to him, "By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, I know not the name of the city nor the way thither!" And I related to him all that had befallen me in my last voyage; at which he wondered exceedingly and bade his scribes record my story and lay it up in his treasuries, for the edification of all who saw it. Then he conferred on me exceeding great favours, and I repaired to my house, where I stored up all my goods and possessions. Presently, my friends came to me and I distributed presents among my family and gave alms and largesse; after which I gave myself up to pleasure and merry-making and forgot all that I had suffered. This, then, O my brothers, is what befell me in my sixth voyage, and to-morrow, if it please God the Most High, I will tell you the story of my seventh and last voyage, which is still more wonderful and extraordinary than that of the first six.

Then he bade lay the table, and the comnany ate the evening meal with him; after which he gave the porter an hundred dinars, as of wont, and they all went their ways, marvelling beyond measure at that which they had heard. Next morning, as soon as he had done his devotions, the porter and the rest of the guests betook themselves to the house of Sindbad the Sailor, and when they were all assembled, the host began the story of his seventh voyage, saying, ‘Know, O company, that

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The Seventh Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor.

After my return from my sixth voyage, in which I made abundant profit, I abode some time in all possible ease and delight, feasting and making merry day and night, till I began once more to long to sail the seas and see foreign countries and company with merchants and hear new things. So I packed up a quantity of precious stuffs into bales and repaired with them to Bassora, where I found a ship ready for sea, and in her a company of considerable merchants. I shipped with them and we set forth on our venture, in health and safety, and sailed with a fair wind, till we came to a city called Medinet-es-Sin; but, [awhile after we had left this place,] as we fared on in all cheer and confidence, devising of traffic and travel, there sprang up a violent head wind and a tempest of rain fell on us and drenched us and our goods. So we covered the bales with drugget and canvas, lest they should be spoiled by the rain, and betook ourselves to prayer and supplication to God the Most High, for deliverance from the peril that was upon us. But the captain arose and girding his middle, tucked up his skirts and climbed to the mast-head, whence he looked out right and left and fell a-buffeting his face and plucking out his beard. So we asked him what was to do, and he replied, saying, "Seek ye deliverance of God the Most High from this our strait and bemoan yourselves and take leave of each other; for know that the wind hath gotten the mastery of us and hath driven us into the uttermost of the seas of the world." Then he came down from the mast-head and opening his chest pulled out a bag of cotton, from which he took a powder like ashes. This he wetted with water and after waiting awhile, smelt it; then he took out of the chest a little book, in which he read awhile and said to us, "Know that in this book is a marvellous saying, denoting that whoso cometh hither shall surely perish, without hope of escape; for that this part of the world is called the Clime of Kings, in which is the sepulchre of our lord Solomon, son of David, (on whom be peace!) and therein are serpents of vast bulk and fearsome aspect: and what ship soever cometh to these parts, there riseth to her a great fish out of the sea and swalloweth her up with all on board."

Great was our wonder at the captain's speech, but hardly had he made an end of speaking, when the ship was suddenly lifted out of the water and let fall again and we heard a terrible great cry like the hurtling thunder, whereat we were smitten with terror and became as dead men, giving ourselves up for lost. Then there came up to us a huge fish, as big as a great mountain, at whose sight we became wild for terror and made ready for death, marvelling at its vast size and gruesome aspect; when lo, a second fish made its appearance, bigger than the first. So we bemoaned ourselves and bade each other farewell ; but, at that moment, up came a third fish bigger than the two first, whereupon we lost the power of thought and reason and were stupefied for the excess of our fear. Then the three fish began circling about the ship and the biggest opened its mouth to swallow it, and we looked into its mouth and behold, it was wider than the gate of a city. So we besought God the Most High and called for succour upon His Apostle (on whom be blessing and peace!) when, suddenly, a violent squall of wind arose and smote the ship, which rose out of the water and settled upon a great reef, where it broke up and fell asunder and all on board were plunged into the sea. As for me, I tore off all my clothes but my shirt and swam, till I fell in with a plank, to which I clung and bestrode it, in the most piteous plight for fear and distress and hunger and thirst, whilst the winds and the waters sported with me, and the waves carried me up and down.

Then I reproached myself for my folly in quitting my hardly earned repose to follow new ventures and said to myself, "O Sindbad, every time [thou undertakest a voyage,] thou sufferest hardships and weariness; yet wilt thou not renounce sea-travel; or, an thou say, 'I renounce,' thou liest in thy renouncement. Endure then [with patience] that which thou sufferest, for indeed thou deservest all that betideth thee. Verily, all this is decreed to me of God the Most High, to turn me from my covetousness, whence arises all that I endure, for I have wealth galore." Then I returned to my senses and said, "Verily, this time I repent to God the Most High, with a sincere repentance, of my lust for gain and venture and will never again name travel with my tongue nor in my thought." And I ceased not to humble myself to God the Most High and weep and bewail myself, recalling my former state of happiness and cheer, and thus I abode two days, at the end of which time I came to a great island, abounding in trees and streams.

I landed and ate of the fruits of the island and drank of its waters, till I was refreshed and restored and my strength returned to me. Then I walked about till I came to a great river of sweet water, running with a strong current; whereupon I called to mind the raft I had made aforetime and said to myself, "Needs must I make me another raft [and commit myself to the current;] haply I may win out of this strait. If I escape I have my desire and I vow to God the Most High to foreswear travel; and if I perish, I shall be at peace from toil and misery."

So I gathered together great store of pieces of wood from the trees, (which were all of the finest sandal-wood, though I knew it not,) and made shift to twist grasses and creepers into a kind of rope, with which I bound the wood together and so contrived a raft. Then I embarked thereon and committed myself to the current, saying, "If I be saved, it is of God's grace;" and it bore me on three days, whilst I lay on the raft, eating not and drinking, when I was athirst, of the water of the stream, till I was giddy and weak as a new-fledged bird, for stress of fear and hunger and fatigue.

At the end of this time, I came to a high mountain, under which ran the river; which when I saw, I was afraid, by reason of the straitness I had suffered in my former underground journey, and I would fain have stayed the raft and landed in that place; but the current over-powered me and drew it into the subterranean passage; whereupon I gave myself up for lost and said, "There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!" However, after a little, the raft shot out of the tunnel into the open air and I saw beneath me a wide valley, into which the river fell with a noise like thunder and a swiftness as of the wind. The torrent bore me along the valley, holding on to the raft, for fear of falling, whilst the waves tossed me right and left, nor could I avail to stop the raft nor turn it to the shore, till I came to a great and goodly city, wherein was much people.

When the townsfolk saw me on the raft, falling down with the current, they threw out a net and ropes upon the raft and grappling to it, drew it ashore with me, whereupon I fell down amidst them, as I were a dead man for stress of fear and hunger and lack of sleep. After a while, there came up to me an old man of reverend aspect, well stricken in years, who welcomed me and threw over me abundance of handsome clothes, wherewith I covered my nakedness. Then he carried me to the bath and brought me cordial drinks and delicious perfumes. When I came out, he bore me to his house, where his people made much of me, and stablishing me in a pleasant place, set rich food before me, of which I ate my fill and returned thanks to God the Most High for my deliverance. Then his pages brought me hot water, and I washed my hands, and his handmaids brought me silken napkins, with which I dried them and wiped my mouth. Moreover, he assigned me an apartment in his house and charged his pages and women to wait upon me and do my will. So they were assiduous in my service, and I abode with him in the guest-chamber three days, taking my ease of good eating and drinking and sweet scents, till I recovered from my fatigues and life and strength returned to me.

On the fourth day, my host came in to me and said, “Thou cheerest us with thy company, O my son, and praised be God for thy safety! But wilt thou now come down with me to the bazaar and sell thy goods? Belike with their price thou mayst buy thee wherewithal to traffic.” When I heard this, I was silent awhile for amazement and said in myself, “What mean these words and what goods have I?” Then said he, “O my son, be not troubled nor careful, but come with me, and if any offer thee what contenteth thee for thy goods, take it; but, if not, I will lay them up for thee in my storehouses, against a fitting occasion.” So I bethought me and said to myself, “Let us do his bidding and see what are these goods of which he speaks.” And I said to him, “O my old uncle, I hear and obey; I may not gainsay thee in aught, for God’s blessing is on that which thou dost.”

So he carried me to the market, where I found that he had taken the raft in pieces and delivered the sandal-wood of which it was made to the broker, to cry for sale. Then the merchants came and bid for the wood, till its price reached a thousand dinars, when they left bidding and my host said to me, “O my son, this is the current price of thy goods: wilt thou sell them for this or shall I lay them up for thee in my storehouses, till the price rise?” “O my lord,” answered I, "I leave it to thee: do as thou wilt." Then said he, "Wilt thou sell the wood to me for a hundred dinars over and above what the merchants have bidden for it?" And I replied, "I will well." So he bade his servants transport it to his store-houses and carrying me back to his house, counted out to me the purchase money; after which he laid it in bags and setting them in a privy place, locked them up with an iron padlock and gave me the key.

Some days after this, my host said to me, "O my son, I have somewhat to propose to thee, wherein I trust thou wilt do my bidding." Quoth I, "What is it?" And he said, "I am a very old man and have no child but one daughter, who is young and comely and endowed with abounding wealth and beauty. Now I have a mind to marry her to thee, that thou mayst abide with her in this our country, and I will make thee master of all that I possess, for I am an old man and thou shalt stand in my stead." I was silent and made him no answer, whereupon, "O my son," continued he, "do my desire in this, for I wish but thy good; and if thou wilt but do as I say, thou shalt be as my son and all that is under my hand shall be thine. If thou have a mind to traffic and travel to thy native land, none shall hinder thee; so do as thou wilt." "By Allah, O my uncle," replied I, "thou art become to me even as my father, and I am a stranger and have undergone many hardships; nor, for stress of that which I have suffered, is aught of judgment or knowledge left to me. It is for thee, therefore, to decide." With this, he sent for the Cadi and the witnesses and married me to his daughter in great state. When I went in to her, I found her a perfect beauty, well shapen and graceful, clad in rich raiment and covered with a profusion of trinkets and necklaces and other ornaments of gold and silver and precious stones, worth millions of money. She pleased me and we loved one another; and I abode with her in all delight and solace of life, till her father was taken to the mercy of God the Most High. So we washed him and buried him, and I laid hands on all his property. Moreover, the merchants instated me in his office, for he was their chief and none of them bought aught but with his knowledge and by his leave.

When I became acquainted with the townsfolk, I found that at the beginning of each month they underwent a transformation, in that their faces changed and they became like unto birds and put forth wings, wherewith they flew away out of sight and none abode in the city save the women and children; and I said in myself; "When the first day of the month comes, I will ask one of them to carry me with them, whither they go." So, when the time came, I went in to one of the townsfolk and begged him to carry me with him, that I might divert myself with the rest and return with them. "This may not be," answered he; but I importuned him, till he consented. Then I went out with him, without telling any of my family or servants or friends, and he took me on his back and flew up with me so high into the air, that I heard the angels glorying God in the pavilion of the heavens, whereat I wondered and exclaimed, "Praised be God! Extolled be His perfection!"

Hardly had I made an end of speaking, when there came out a fire from heaven and all but consumed the company; whereupon they all fled from it and descended and casting me down on a high mountain, went away, exceeding wroth with me, and left me there alone. When I found myself in this plight, I repented of what I had done and reproached myself for having undertaken that for which I was unable, saying, "There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! No sooner am I delivered from one affliction than I fall into a worse." Presently, as I sat, knowing not whither I should go, there came up two young men, as they were moons, each staying his steps with a rod of red gold. So I went up to them and saluted them. They returned my greeting and I conjured them by Allah to tell me who and what they were. Quoth they, "We are devout servants of the Most High God, abiding in this mountain," and giving me a rod of gold after the likeness of those they had with them, went their ways and left me.

I walked on along the mountain-top, leaning on the staff and pondering the case of the two youths, till I saw a serpent come forth from under the mountain, with a man in her jaws, whom she had swallowed even to the navel, and he was crying out and saying, "Whoso delivereth me from this serpent, God will deliver him from every strait!" So I went up to the serpent and smote her on the head with the staff, whereupon she cast the man forth of her mouth. Then I smote her a second time, and she turned and fled; whereupon he came up to me and said, "Since my deliverance from yonder serpent hath been at thy hands, I will never leave thee, and thou shalt be my comrade on this mountain." "With all my heart," answered I, and we fared on along the mountain, till we fell in with a company of folk, and I looked and saw amongst them the very man who had cast me down there. So I went up to him and spoke him fair, excusing myself to him and saying, "O my friend, it is not thus that brethren should deal with brethren." Quoth he, "It was thou who [well-nigh] destroyed us by glorifying God on my hack." "Excuse me," answered I; "for I had no knowledge of this; but if thou wilt take me with thee, I swear not to say a word." So he relented and consented to carry me with him, on condition that, so long I abode on his back, I should abstain from pronouncing the name of God or glorifying Him. Then I gave the wand of gold to him whom I had delivered from the serpent and bade him farewell, and my friend took me on his back and flew with me as before, till he brought me to the city and set me down in my own house.

My wife came to meet me and gave me joy of my safety, saying, "Henceforth beware of going forth with yonder folk, neither consort with them, for they are brethren of the devils, and know not the name of God the Most High, neither worship Him." " And how did thy father with them?" asked I. "My father," answered she, "was not of them, neither did he as they; and now he is dead, methinks thou wouldst do well to sell all we have and with the price buy merchandise and return to thine own country and people, and I with thee; for I care not to tarry here, since my father and mother are dead." So I sold all my late father-in-law's property, piecemeal, and looked for one who should be journeying thence [to Bassora,] that I might join myself to him.

Presently, I heard of a company of the townsfolk who had a mind to make the voyage, but could not find a ship; so they bought wood and built them a great ship, in which I took passage with them and paid them the hire. Then we embarked, my wife and I, with all our moveables, leaving our lands and houses and so forth, and set sail, with a favouring wind, for Bassora, where we arrived in due course, after a prosperous voyage. I made no stay there, but freighted another vessel and set out forthright for Baghdad, where I arrived in safety and repairing to my house, foregathered with my kinsfolk and household and laid up my goods in my storehouses. When my friends and family heard of my return, they came to welcome me and give me joy of my safety; and I related to them all that had befallen me, whereat they marvelled exceedingly, having given up hope of me, for that I had been absent from them seven-and-twenty years in this my seventh voyage.

Then I foreswore travel and vowed to God the Most High to venture no more by land or sea, for that this last voyage had surfeited me of travel and adventure; and I thanked God and praised and glorified Him for having restored me to my country and home and friends. Consider, therefore, O Sindbad, O landsman,' continued the host, addressing himself to the porter, 'what sufferings I have undergone and what perils and hardships I have endured [before coming to my present state of prosperity].' 'For God's sake, O my lord,' answered the porter, 'pardon me the wrong I did thee.' And they ceased not from friendship and loving fellowship, [abiding] in all cheer and delight and solace of life, till there came to them that which destroyeth delights and sundereth companies, that which layeth waste the palaces and peopleth the tombs, to wit, the Cup of Death, and glory be to the Living One who dieth not!

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THE CITY OF BRASS

It is related that the Commander of the Faithful Abdulmelik ben Merwan was seated one day in his palace at Damascus, conversing with his grandees and officers of state of the histories of people of old time, when the talk turned upon the traditions of our lord Solomon, son of David, (on whom be peace,) and of that which God the Most High had bestowed on him of lordship and dominion over men and Jinn and birds and beasts and reptiles and other created things, and quoth one of those who were present, ‘Of a truth we hear from those who forewent us that God (blessed and exalted be He!) vouchsafed unto none the like of that which He vouchsafed unto our lord Solomon and that he attained unto that whereto never attained other than he, in that he was wont to imprison Jinn and Marids and Satans in vessels of copper and stop them with molten lead and seal them with his signet.’

Then said Talib ben Sehl, (who was a seeker after treasures and had books that discovered to him hoards and treasures hidden under the earth,) ‘O Commander of the Faithful, (God make thy dominion to endure and exalt thy dignity in the lands!) my father told me of my grandfather, that the latter once took ship with a company, intending for the island of Sicily, and sailed till there arose against them a contrary wind, which drove them from their course and brought them to a great mountain in one of the lands of God the Most High. Quoth my grandfather, “This was in the darkness of the night and as soon as it was day, there came forth to us, from the caves of the mountain, folk black of colour and naked of body, as they were wild beasts, understanding not what was said to them; nor was there any one of them who knew Arabic, except their King, who was of their own kind. When the latter saw the ship, he came down to it with a company of his followers and saluting us, bade us welcome and questioned us of our case. So we told him how we had been driven from our course by a contrary wind, and he said, ‘No son of Adam hath ever come to our land before you: but fear not, no harm shall befall you, and rejoice in the assurance of safety and return to your own country.’ Then he entertained us three days, feeding on the flesh of birds and wild beasts and fish, than which they had no other meat, and on the fourth day he carried us down to the beach, that we might divert ourselves by looking upon the fishermen. There we saw a fisherman, casting his nets to catch fish, and presently he pulled them up, and behold, in them was a casting-bottle of copper, stopped with lead and sealed with the signet of Solomon, son of David, on whom be peace. He brought the vessel to land and broke it open, when there came forth a blue smoke, which rose to the zenith, and we heard a terrible voice, saying, 'I repent! I repent! Pardon, O prophet of God! I will never return to that which I did aforetime.' Then the smoke became a terrible great giant, frightful to look upon, whose head was level with the mountain tops, and he vanished from our sights, whilst our hearts were like to burst for terror; but the blacks thought nothing of it. Then we returned to the King and questioned him of the matter; whereupon quoth he, 'Know that this was one of the Jinn whom Solomon, son of David, being wroth with them, shut up in these vessels and cast into the sea, after stopping the mouths with melted lead. Our fishermen ofttimes, in casting their nets, bring up the vessels, which being broken open, there come forth of them genies, who, deeming that Solomon is still alive and pardoneth them, make their submission to him and say, "I repent, O prophet of God!"'

The Khalif marvelled at Talib's story and said, 'Glory be to God! Verily, Solomon was given a mighty dominion.' Now En Nabigheh edh Dhubyani was present, and he said, 'Talib hath spoken sooth, as is proven by the saying of the All-wise, the Primæval One:

And Solomon, when God the Lord of old to him did say, "Take thou the Khalifate and rule with firm and strenuous sway.
Whoso obeyeth thee reward for his obedience, And who gainsayeth thy command, imprison him for aye."

Wherefore he used to put them in vessels of copper and cast them into the sea.'

The poet's words seemed good to the Khalif, and he said, 'By Allah, I long to look upon some of these vessels.' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' replied Talib, 'it is in thy power to do so, without stirring abroad. Send to thy brother Abdulaziz ben Merwan, so he may write to Mousa ben Nuseir, governor of Morocco, bidding him take horse thence to the mountains whereof I spoke and which adjoin the confines of his government, and fetch thee therefrom as many of the vessels in question as thou hast a mind to.' The Khalif approved his counsel and said, 'Thou hast spoken truly, O Talib, and I desire that thou be my messenger to Mousa ben Nuseir, touching this matter; wherefore thou shalt have the white ensign and all thou hast a mind to of wealth and honour and so forth, and I will care for thy family during thine absence.' 'With all my heart, O Commander of the Faithful,' answered Talib. 'Go, with the aid and blessing of God,' said the Khalif and bade write a letter to his brother Abdulaziz, his viceroy in Egypt, and another to Mousa ben Nuseir, his viceroy in Northern Africa, bidding him, ceasing all excuse, take guides and go himself in quest of the vessels of Solomon, leaving his son to govern in his room. Moreover, he charged him to be not remiss in the matter and to spare neither men nor money. Then he sealed the letters and committed them to Talib, bidding him advance the [royal] ensigns before him and make his utmost speed; and he gave him treasure and horsemen and footmen, to further him on his way, and made provision for the wants of his household during his absence.

So Talib set out and arrived in due course at Cairo, where the governor came out to meet him and entertained him and his company whilst they tarried with him. Then he gave them a guide, to bring them to Upper Egypt, where the Amir Mousa had his abiding-place; and when the latter heard of Talib's coming, he went forth to meet him and rejoiced in him. Talib gave him the Khalif's letter, and he read it and laying it on his head, said, 'I hear and obey the Commander of the Faithful.' Then he assembled his chief officers and acquainting them with the Khalif's commandment, sought counsel of them how he should accomplish it. 'O Amir,' answered they, 'if thou seek one who shall guide thee to the place in question, send for the Sheikh Abdussemed son of Abdulcuddous es Semoudi, for he is a man of experience, who has travelled much and knoweth all the seas and wastes and deserts and countries of the world and the inhabitants and wonders thereof; wherefore send thou for him and he will surely guide thee to thy desire.'

So Mousa sent for him, and behold, he was a very old man, broken down with lapse of years and days. The Amir saluted him and said, ‘O Sheikh Abdussemed, our lord the Commander of the Faithful, Abdulmelik ben Merwan, hath commanded me thus and thus. Now I have small knowledge of the land wherein is that which the Khalif desires; but it is told me that thou knowest it well and the way thither. Wilt thou, therefore, go thither with me and help me to accomplish the Khalif’s need? So it please God the Most High, thy pains and travail shall not be wasted.’ ‘I hear and obey the bidding of the Commander of the Faithful,’ replied the Sheikh; ‘but know, O our lord, that the road thither is long and difficult and the ways few.’ ‘How far is it?’ asked Mousa, and the Sheikh answered, ‘It is a journey of two years and some months thither and the like back, and the way is full of perils and terrors and toils and wonders. Now thou art a champion of the Faith and our country is hard by that of the enemy, and peradventure the Nazarenes may come out upon us in thine absence; wherefore it behoves thee to leave one to rule thy government in thy stead.’ ‘It is well,’ answered the Amir and appointed his son Haroun governor during his absence, requiring the troops to take the oath of fealty to him and bidding them obey him in all he should command, which they promised to do.

Now this Haroun was a man of great prowess and a renowned warrior, and the Sheikh Abdussemed feigned to him that the place they sought was distant [but] four months’ journey along the shore of the sea, with camping- places all the way, adjoining one another, and grass and springs, adding, ‘God will assuredly make the matter easy to us for thy sake, O lieutenant of the Commander of the Faithful.’ Quoth the Amir Mousa, ‘Knowest thou if any of the kings have trodden this land before us?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the Sheikh; ‘it belonged aforetime to Darius the Greek, King of Alexandria.’ But he said to Mousa [privily], ‘O Amir, take with thee a thousand camels laden with victual and store of gugglets.’ ‘And what shall we do with these [latter]?’ asked the Amir. Quoth the Sheikh, ‘In our way is the desert of Cyrene, the which is a vast desert, four days’ journey long, and lacketh water, nor therein is voice to be heard or soul to be seen. Moreover there bloweth the Simoum and [other hot] winds called El Jewajib, that dry up the waterskins; but, if the water be in gugglets, no harm can come to it.’ ‘True,’ answered Mousa and sending to

Alexandria, let bring thence great plenty of gugglets. Then he took with him his Vizier and two thousand horse, clad in complete steel, and set out, whilst Abdussemed forewent them, riding on his hackney, to guide them.

They fared on diligently, now passing through inhabited countries and now ruins and anon traversing frightful deserts and thirsty wastes and anon mountains that rose high into the air; nor did they leave journeying a whole year's space, till, one morning, when the day broke, after they had travelled all night, the Sheikh found himself in a land he knew not and said, 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!' Quoth the Amir, 'What is to do, O Sheikh?' And he answered, saying, 'By the Lord of the Kaabeh, we have wandered from our road!' 'How cometh that?' asked Mousa, and Abdussemed replied, 'The stars were obscured and I could not guide myself by them.' 'Where are we now?' said the Amir, and the Sheikh, 'I know not; for I never set eyes on this land till now.' Quoth Mousa, 'Guide us back to the place where we went astray;' but the other said, 'I know it no more.' Then said Mousa, 'Let us push on; it may be God will guide us to it or direct us aright of His power.' So they fared on till the hour of noonday prayer when they came to a fair and wide champaign, level as it were the sea in a calm, and anon there appeared to them in the distance, some great thing, high and black, in whose midst was as it were smoke rising to the confines of the sky. They made for this and stayed not in their course, till they drew near thereto, when, behold, it was a high castle, firm of fashion and great and gruesome as it were a lofty mountain, builded all of black stone, with frowning battlements and a door of gleaming China steel, that dazzled the eyes and dazed the wit. Round about it were a thousand steps and in its midst was a dome of lead, a thousand cubits high, which appeared afar off as it were smoke.

When the Amir saw this, he marvelled thereat exceedingly and how this place was void of inhabitants; and the Sheikh, after he had certified himself thereof said, 'There is no god but God and Mohammed is the Apostle of God!' Quoth Mousa, 'I hear thee praise God and hallow him and [meseems] thou rejoicest.' 'O Amir,' answered Abdussemed, 'rejoice, for God (blessed and exalted be He!) hath delivered us from the frightful deserts and thirsty wastes.'

‘How knowest thou that?’ asked Mousa, and the other, ‘I know it for that my father told me of my grandfather that he said, ‘We were once journeying in this land and straying from the road, came to this palace and thence to the City of Brass;” between which and the place thou seekest is two months’ travel; but thou must take to the sea-shore and leave it not, for there be wells and watering and camping places, established by King Iskender Dhoulkernein; for, when he went in quest of Morocco, he found by the way thirsty deserts and wastes and wilds and dug therein wells and built cisterns.’ Quoth Mousa, ‘May God rejoice thee with good news!’ and Abdussemed said, ‘Come, let us go look upon yonder palace and its marvels, for it is an admonition to whoso will be admonished.’

So the Amir went up to the palace, with the Sheikh and his chief officers, and coming to the gate, found it open. Now this gate was builded with lofty columns and porticoes whose walls were inlaid with gold and silver and precious stones, and there led up to it flights of steps, among which were two wide stairs of coloured marble, never was seen their like; and over the doorway was a tablet, whereon were graven letters of gold in the ancient Greek character. ‘O Amir,’ said the Sheikh, ‘shall I read?’ ‘Read and may God bless thee!’ replied Mousa. ‘For all that betideth us in this journey dependeth upon thy blessing.’ So the Sheikh, who was a very learned man and versed in all tongues and characters, went up to the tablet and read the following verses:

Their vestiges, after that they once did do, Forewarn us that we in their footsteps must ensue.
O thou who haltst by the dwellings for news of folk Who have doffed their state and bidden their power adieu,
Enter this palace, for there is the last-left news Of lords in the dust who gathered, a puissant crew.
Death smote them and rent them asunder, and in the dust They lost what they erst did gather with such ado.
’Tis as they had set their burdens down to rest In haste, then mounted and fared on their way anew.

When the Amir heard this, he wept till he lost his senses and said, ‘There is no god but God, the Living, the Eternal, who ceaseth not!’ Then he entered the palace and was confounded at its beauty and the goodliness of its ordinance. He diverted himself awhile by viewing the figures and images therein, till he came to another door, over which also were written verses, and said to the Sheikh, ‘Come, read me these.’ So he came forward and read as follows:

How many in their halls have halted for a day Of old, then taken leave and fared upon their way!
They saw what from the shifts of fortune did befall Others than they, therein who lighted down to stay.
That which they stored they shared among themselves and left To others to enjoy its sweets and passed away.
With what delight arrayed were they, what dainties ate And drank! But eaten now within the dust are they.

At this the Amir wept sore; the world grew pale before his eyes and he said, ‘Verily, we were created for a mighty matter!’ Then they proceeded to explore the palace and found it desert and void of living thing, its chambers and dwelling-places laid waste and desolate. In the midst stood a lofty pavilion, with a dome rising high into the air, and about it were four hundred tombs, builded of yellow marble. The Amir drew near unto these and behold, amongst them was a great tomb, wide and long, and at its head a tablet of white marble, whereon were graven the following verses:

How often have I stood, how oft set on in fight! How many a thing, indeed, hath passed before my sight!
How much have I consumed of meat and drink, and songs How many have I heard of singing wench and wight!
How much did I command and eke how much forbid! How many a rampired hold, thou’dst deem beyond man’s might
To take, I’ve stormed and sacked and all the cloistered maids, That hid within its walls, discovered to the light!
But, of my ignorance, I sinned that I might win Hopes that must pass away, undurable and slight.
Bethink thee, then, O man, before thou drink the cup Of death,

and reckon up thy reckoning forthright.
Yet but a little while and on thy head the dust Shall sure be strewn and life shall fail unto thy spright.

The Amir and his companions wept; then, drawing near unto the pavilion, they saw that it had eight doors of sandal-wood, studded with nails of gold and stars of silver and inlaid with all manner precious stones. On the first door were written these verses:

That which I left, I left it not of generous purpose; nay, But fate and fortune fore-ordained still o'er mankind bear sway.
What while content and prosperous I was, my hoarding-place, Even was a raging lion fierce, I did defend alway.
Ne'er was I still and of my good so niggard, not a grain Of mustard-seed, though I were cast on fire, I gave away,
Till, of the fore-ordained decree of God, the Lord of Might, The Maker and the Fashioner, I stricken was one day.
Death, sudden, irrevocable, in haste upon me came: I could not ward it with my store, nor eke the vast array
Of troops I gathered neath my hand availed me any jot; Nor friend nor neighbour aided me the feet of fate to stay.
All my life's days, or if it were in solace or in stress, Still in my journey to the grave I toiled and wearied aye.
I fared the road that all must fare, till, when the money-bags Are full, though dinar, without cease, to dinar thou shouldst lay,
Before the morrow all hath passed to other than thyself And unto thee a bier-bearer and grave-digger bring they,
And all alone, with but thy load of sins and crimes to bear Thee company, thou meetest God upon thy judgment-day.
See with thy neighbours and thy folk how deals the world nor let Its vanities delude thy wit nor lead thy feet astray.

When Mousa heard these verses, he wept till he swooned away; then, coming to himself, he entered the pavilion and saw therein a long tomb, dreadful to look upon, whereon was a tablet of China steel, bearing the following inscription: 'In the name of the Eternal God, the One, the Everlasting; in His name who begetteth not nor is begotten and to whom there is no like; in the name of God the Lord of Majesty and Might, the Living One who dieth not! O thou who comest to this place, take warning by that which thou seest of the doings of time and the vicissitudes of fortune and be not deluded by the world and its pomps and lies and fallacies and vain allurements, for that it is deceitful and flattering and treacherous, and the things thereof are but a loan, which it will take again from the borrower. It is like unto the dreams of the dreamer and the vain visions of the sleeper or as the mirage of the desert, which the thirsty take for water; and Satan maketh it fair for men even unto death. These are the ways of the world; wherefore put not thou thy trust therein neither incline unto it, for it bewrayeth him who leaneth upon it and committeth himself thereunto in his affairs. Fall not thou into its toils neither take hold upon its skirts, [but be warned by my example]. I possessed four thousand bay horses and a palace, and I had to wife a thousand daughters of kings, high-bosomed maids, as they were moons. Moreover, I was blessed with a thousand sons, as they were fierce lions, and I abode a thousand years, glad of heart and mind, and amassed treasures beyond the competence of all the kings of the regions of the earth, deeming that delight would still endure to me; but there fell on me unawares the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies, he who desolates the abodes of men and lays waste the inhabited places, the slayer of great and small, babes and children and mothers, he who hath no compassion on the poor man, by reason of his poverty, neither feareth he kings, because of their commandment and forbiddance. Yea, we abode in security in this palace, till there descended upon us the judgment of the Lord of the Worlds, the Lord of the heavens and the earths; the vengeance of the Manifest Truth overtook us and there died of us every day two, till a great company of us had perished. When I saw that destruction had entered our dwellings and taken up its abode with us and drowned us in the sea of deaths, I summoned a writer and bade him write these verses and admonitions, the which I let grave, with rule and compass, on these doors and tablets and tombs. Now I had an army of a thousand thousand horsemen, hardy, strong-armed warriors, armed with spears and coats of mail and sharp swords; so I bade them don their long hauberks and gird on their keen swords and mount their high-mettled chargers and couch their dreadful spears; and whenas there fell on us the doom of the Lord of heaven and earth, I said to them, “Ho, all ye soldiers and troopers, can ye avail to ward off that which is fallen on me from the Omnipotent King?” But they availed not unto this and said, “How shall we war with Him to whom no chamberlain bars access, the Lord of the gate that hath no doorkeeper?” Then quoth I to them, “Bring me my treasures.” Now I had in my treasuries a thousand cisterns, in each of which were a thousand quintals of red gold and the like of white silver, besides pearls and jewels of all kinds and other things of price, beyond the competence of the kings of the earth. So they did as I bade them and when they had laid all the treasure before me, I said to them, “Can ye ransom me with all this treasure or buy me therewith one day of life?” But they could not; so I resigned myself to fore-ordained fate and submitted to the judgment of God, enduring patiently that which He decreed unto me of affliction, till he took my soul and made me to dwell in my grave. And if thou ask of my name, I am Koush, the son of Sheddad, son of Aad the Greater.’

An thou wouldst know my name, who lived so long ago, After the shifts of time and fortune’s changes, know
I’m Sheddard’s son, who held dominion o’er mankind And over all the earth was monarch, high and low.
The stubborn peoples all abased themselves to me And all the North was mine from Adnan to Cairo.
In glory still I reigned; the nations of the earth My mischief feared and I their kings did overthrow.
Yea, armies I beheld and tribes beneath my hand; The world and all therein did dread me, friend and foe.
When I took horse, I saw the number of my troops A million cavaliers on neighing steeds arow;
And treasures, too, were mine, past reckoning or count, The which I garnered up ‘gainst fortune’s sudden blow.
Fain had I bought my life with all my wealth, although For but a moment’s space to lengthen it; but no,
God would have nought but that He willed should come to pass; So I abode alone, cut off my brethren fro’,

And death came to me, death that sunders all mankind, And from my state I passed unto the stead of woe.

There found I all I'd wrought of old, for which in pledge I now abide; and I a sinner was, I trow.

Bethink thee, on a brink that standest, and beware The chances of events and fortune's overthrow.

The Amir Mousa wept till he swooned away, for what he saw of the slaughtering-places of the folk; then, as they went about the palace, viewing its sitting-chambers and pleasaunces, they came upon a table of yellow onyx, upborne on four feet of juniper-wood, and thereon these words graven: 'A thousand kings blind of the right eye and a thousand blind of the left and yet other thousand sound of both eyes have eaten at this table, all of whom have departed the world and taken up their sojourn in the tombs and the burial-places.'

All this the Amir wrote down and left the palace, taking with him nothing but the table aforesaid. Then he fared on with his retinue three days' space, under the guidance of the Sheikh Abdussemed, till they came to a high hill, whereon stood a horseman of brass. In his hand he held a lance with a broad head of blinding brightness, whereon were graven the following words: 'O thou that comest hither, if thou know not the way to the Brazen City, rub the hand of this horseman and he will turn round and presently stop. Then take the direction in which he faces and fare on boldly, for it will bring thee, without hardship, to the City of Brass.'

The Amir accordingly rubbed the horseman's hand and he revolved, like the dazzling lightning, and stopped, facing in a direction other than that wherein they were journeying. So they took the road to which he pointed and finding it a beaten track, fared on days and nights till they came to a pillar of brass, wherein was one sunken up to his armpits. He had two great wings and four arms, two like men's arms and other two as they were lions' paws, with claws of iron, and he was black and tall, with hair like horses' tails and eyes like blazing coals, slit endlong in his face. Moreover, he had a third eye, as it were that of a lynx, amiddleward his forehead, from which flew sparks of fire, and he cried out, saying, 'Glory to my Lord, who hath adjudged unto me this grievous punishment and sore affliction until the Day of Resurrection!' When the folk saw him, they lost their reason for affright and turned to flee; and the Amir Mousa said to the Sheikh Abdussemed, 'What is this?' 'I know not,' answered he, whereupon quoth Mousa, 'Draw near and question him; haply he will discover to thee his case.' 'God assain the Amir!' replied the Sheikh. 'Indeed, I am afraid of him;' but the Amir rejoined, saying, 'Fear not; he is hindered from thee or any other by that wherein he is.'

So Abdussemed drew near to the pillar and said to him who was therein, 'O creature, what is thy name and what art thou and how camest thou here on this wise?' 'I am an Afrit of the Jinn,' replied he, 'by name Dahish, son of El Aamesh, and am confined here by way of punishment, by the judgment of the Almighty, till it please Him, to whom belong might and majesty, to release me.' Then said Mousa, 'Ask him why he is prisoned in this column.' So the Sheikh asked him of this, and he replied, saying, 'My story is strange and my case extraordinary, and it is on this wise. One of the sons of Iblis had an idol of red cornelian, whereof I was guardian, and there served it a king of the kings of the sea, a prince of great power and prowess, ruling over a thousand thousand warriors of the Jinn, who smote with swords before him and answered to his call in time of need. All these were under my commandment and did my bidding, being all rebels against Solomon, son of David, on whom be peace! And I used to enter the [hollow] belly of the idol and command and forbid them thence. Now this King's daughter loved the idol and was frequent in prostration to it and assiduous in its service; and she was the fairest woman of her day, accomplished in beauty and grace and elegance. She was described unto Solomon and he sent to her father, saying, "Give me thy daughter to wife and break thine idol of cornelian and testify that there is no god but God and that I am His prophet. If thou do this, that which is ours shall be thine and thy debt shall be our debt; but, if thou refuse, make ready to answer the summons [of God] and don thy grave-clothes, for I will come upon thee with an irresistible host, that shall fill the waste places of the earth and make thee even as yesterday that is passed away and hath no returning."

When this message reached the King, his pride revolted from obeying Solomon's bidding and he said to his Viziers, “Know that Solomon, son of David, hath sent, requiring me to give him my daughter to wife and break my idol of cornelian and enter his faith: what say ye of this?” “O mighty King,” answered they, “how shall Solomon do thus with thee? Even could he come at thee in the midst of this vast ocean, he could not prevail against thee, for the Marids of the Jinn will fight on thy side and thou wilt seek succour of thine idol whom thou servest, and he will help thee and give thee the victory over him. So thou wouldst do well to consult thy Lord,” meaning the idol aforesaid, “and hear what he says. If he say, ‘Fight him,’ fight him, and if not, not.” So the King went in forthright to his idol and offered up sacrifices and slaughtered victims; after which he fell down before him, prostrate and weeping, and repeated the following verses:

Lord, I know thy puissance and thy power confess: Solomon would have me break thee. In my stress,
Lord, to thee for succour I myself address. Order; thy commandment I obey no less.

Then I, of my ignorance and lack of wit and recklessness of the commandment of Solomon and want of knowledge of his power, entered the belly of the idol and made answer as follows:

Solomon I fear not, dread him not to foe, For that, of my wisdom, everything I know.
An he would be waging war upon me, lo! I will creep and snatch his life from him, I trow.

When the King heard this, he hardened his heart and resolved to do battle with the prophet; wherefore he beat the messenger grievously and returned a flouting answer to Solomon, threatening him and saying, “Thy soul hath suggested to thee a vain thing: dost thou threaten me with lying words? But gird thyself for battle; for, an thou come not to me, I will assuredly come to thee.”

The messenger returned to Solomon and told him all that had passed, which when the prophet heard, he was exceeding wroth and levied an army of men and Jinn and birds and beasts and reptiles. He commanded his Vizier Ed Dimiryat, King of the Jinn, to assemble the Marids of the Jinn from all parts, and he gathered together unto him six hundred millions of devils. Moreover, by his order, his Vizier Asef ben Berkhiya levied him an army of men, to the number of a thousand thousand or more. These all he equipped with arms and armour and mounting, with his host, upon his magic carpet, flew through the air, whilst the beasts fared under him and the birds flew overhead, till he lighted down on the island of the refractory King and encompassed it about, filling the earth with his hosts. Then he sent to our King, saying, "Behold, I am come: defend thyself against that which is fallen upon thee, or else make thy submission to me and confess my apostleship and give me thy daughter to wife and break thine idol and worship the one God, the alone Worship-Worth, and testify, thou and thine, that there is no god but God and that I am His prophet. This if thou do, thou shalt have peace and pardon; but, if not, it will avail thee nothing to fortify thyself in this island, for God, blessed and exalted be He, hath commanded the wind to obey me; so I will bid it bear me to thee on my carpet and make thee an example to deter others." But the King made answer to his messenger, saying, "It may not in any wise be as he demandeth; so tell him I come forth to him." Then he gathered together all the Jinn that were under his hand, to the number of a thousand thousand, and added to them other than they of Marids and Satans from the islands of the sea and the mountain-tops and opened his armouries and distributed to them arms and armour.

Meanwhile the prophet Solomon drew out his host in battle array, dividing the beasts into two bodies, one on the right wing and the other on the left, and bidding them tear the enemies' horses in sunder. Moreover, he commanded the birds to hover over their heads and whenas the assault should be made, that they should [swoop down upon their battle and] tear out their eyes with their beaks and buffet their faces with their wings; and they answered, saying, "We hear and obey God and thee, O prophet of God!" Then Solomon seated himself [on his carpet] on a throne of alabaster, inlaid with jewels and plated with red gold, and commanding the wind to bear him aloft, arrayed the beasts and vipers and serpents before him, setting his Vizier Asef ben Berkhiya and the kings of mankind on his right and his Vizier Ed Dimiryat and the kings of the Jinn on his left. Then they all set on us together, and we gave them battle two days over a vast plain; but, on the third day, disaster befell us and the judgment of God the Most High was executed upon us.

The first to charge upon them were I and my troops, and I said to my companions, “Abide in your places, whilst I sally forth to them and provoke Ed Dimiryat to single combat.” And behold, he came forth as he were a vast mountain, casting out fire and smoke, and shot at me a flame of fire; but I swerved from it and it missed me. Then I cast at him, in my turn, a flame of fire, and it smote him; but his poison overcame my fire and he cried out at me so terrible a cry that meseemed the skies were fallen on me, and the mountains shook at his voice. Then he commanded his hosts to charge; so they rushed on us and we on them, each crying out upon other whilst the air was filled with flames and smoke and hearts were like to cleave in sunder. The birds and the flying Jinn fought in the air and the beasts and men and the Jinn of the earth in the dust, and the battle raged and I fought with Ed Dimiryat, till I was aweary. At last, I grew weak and turned to flee from him, whereupon my companions and tribesmen likewise took to flight and my hosts were put to the rout, and Solomon cried out, saying, “Take yonder proud tyrant, accursed and infamous!” Then man fell upon man and genie upon genie and the armies of the prophet charged down upon us, with the beasts on their right hand and on their left, rending our horses and devouring our men, whilst the birds hovered above them in the air, pecking out our eyes with their claws and beaks and buffeting our faces with their wings, till the most of us lay prone upon the face of the earth, like palm tree trunks, and defeat befell our king and we became a spoil unto Solomon.

As for me, I fled from before Ed Dimiryat; but he followed me three months’ journey, till I fell down for weariness and he overtook me and pouncing upon me, made me prisoner. Quoth I, “By the virtue of Him who hath advanced thee and abased me, spare me and bring me before Solomon, on whom be peace!” So he carried me before Solomon, who received me after the foulest fashion and let bring this pillar and hollow it out. Then he set me therein and chained me and sealed me with his signet, and Ed Dimiryat bore me to this place. Moreover, he charged a great angel to guard me, and this pillar is my prison until the Day of Judgment.'

The folk marvelled at his story and at the frightfulness of his favour, and the Amir Mousa said, 'There is no god but God! Of a truth Solomon was gifted with a mighty dominion.' Then said the Sheikh Abdussemed to the genie, 'Harkye, I would fain ask thee of a thing, whereof do thou inform us.' 'Ask what thou wilt,' answered Dahish and the Sheikh said, 'Are there hereabouts any of the Afrits imprisoned in vessels of brass in the time of Solomon, on whom be peace?' 'Yes,' replied the genie; 'there be such in the sea of El Kerker, on the shores whereof dwell a people of the lineage of Noah, on whom be peace; for their country was not reached by the Deluge and they are cut off there from the [other] sons of Adam.' 'And which,' asked Abdussemed, 'is the way to the City of Brass and the place wherein are the vessels of Solomon, and what distance is there between us and it?' Quoth the Afrit, 'It is near at hand,' and directed them in the way thither.

So they left him and fared on till there appeared to them, afar off, a great blackness and therein two fires facing one another, and the Amir Mousa said to the Sheikh, 'What is yonder vast blackness and its twin fires?' 'Rejoice, O Amir,' answered the guide; 'for this is the City of Brass, as it is described in the Book of Hidden Treasures. Its walls are of black stone and it hath two towers of Andalusian brass, which appear to the beholder in the distance as they were twin fires, and hence is it named the City of Brass.'

Then they fared on without ceasing till they drew near the city and saw it as it were a piece of a mountain or a mass of iron cast in a mould. So they lighted down and sought for a gate, but saw none neither found any trace of opening in the walls, albeit there were five-and-twenty gates to the city, but none of them was visible from without. Then said the Amir, 'O Sheikh, I see no sign of any gate to this city;' and he answered, saying, 'O Amir, thus is it described in my Book of Hidden Treasures; it hath five-and-twenty gates, but none thereof may be opened save from within the city.' 'And how,' asked Mousa, 'shall we do to enter the city and view its wonders!' 'May God assain the Amir!' said Talib. 'Let us rest here two or three days, and God willing, we will make shift to come into the city.'

Then Mousa bade one of his men mount a camel and ride round about the city, so haply he should light upon a gate or breach by which they might enter. So he mounted and rode round the city two days and two nights, without drawing rein to rest, but found the wall thereof as it were one block, without breach or way of ingress; and on the third day, he came again in sight of his companions, amazed at what he had seen of the extent and loftiness of the place, and said, ‘O Amir, the easiest place of access is this where you are encamped.’ Then Mousa took Talib and Abdussemed and ascended a high hill that overlooked the town. When they reached the top, they turned and beheld beneath them a city, never saw eyes a greater or goodlier, full of lofty palaces and glittering domes and fair-builded mansions and running streams and orchards laden with fruit and flowered pleasaunces, a gated city and an inexpugnable; but it was silent and deserted, without sound or movement or sign of life, except the hooting of the owl in its market-places and the wheel of the birds over its gardens and the croak of ravens in its streets and thoroughfares, bewailing those that had been therein.

The Amir stood awhile, sorrowing for the desolation of the city and saying, ‘Glory to Him whom nor ages nor times change, Him who created all things of His might!’ Presently, he chanced to look aside and caught sight of seven tablets of white marble afar off. So he drew near them and finding inscriptions graven thereon, called the Sheikh and bade him read these. Accordingly, he came forward and examining the inscriptions, found that they contained matter of admonition and warning and restraint to those of understanding. On the first tablet was inscribed, in the ancient Greek character, the following: ‘O son of Adam, how heedless art thou of that which is before thee! Verily, thy years and months and days have diverted thee therefrom. Knowest thou not that the cup of death is filled for thee and that ere long thou must drain it to the dregs? Look to thyself before thou enter thy grave. Where be they who held the dominion over the lands and abased God’s servants and led armies? By Allah, the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies and the Devastator of inhabited houses came down upon them and transported them from their spacious palaces to the narrow room of the grave.’

And at the foot of the tablet were written the following verses:

Where be the kings and where be they the earth who peopled?
Where? That which they built thereon they left and to the grave did
fare.
There, after death had razed them out, corruption they became,
Pledged to the tomb to answer that they did and wrought whilere.
Where be the armies that they raised, the wealth they garnered
up? Nothing they served to ward off death or bribe him to forbear.
The Lord of the Ninth Heaven's decree fell down on them in
haste: Strongholds and treasures thereagainst all unavailing were.

When the Amir heard this, he cried out and the tears ran down his cheeks and he exclaimed, 'By Allah, it is surest and most fitting to abstain from the world!' And he called for inkhorn and paper and wrote down what was graven on the tablet.

Then he drew near the second tablet and found these words graven thereon: 'O son of Adam, what hath seduced thee [from the service of] the Ancient of Days and made thee forget that thou must one day pay the debt of death? Knowest thou not, thou that takest thought unto the world and cleavest fast thereto, that it is a perishing dwelling, wherein there is abiding for none? Where be the kings who peopled Irak and possessed the four quarters of the world? Where be they who peopled Ispahan and the land of Khorassan? The voice of the summoner of death called them and they answered him, and the herald of destruction hailed them and they replied, saying, "Here are we." Verily, that which they builded and fortified profited them not, neither did what they had gathered and provided [against a time of stress] avail for their defence.'

And at the foot of the tablet were graven the following verses:

Where be they these halls who builded and their galleries reared
on high, Galleries whose stately fashion nought resembles neath the
sky
Armies levied they and warriors, in their fear of him delights
Who undoth; but they availed not, when th' appointed day drew
nigh.

Where be the Chosroës, sovereigns of the strengths that none might storm? As they'd never been, the countries have they left and fleeted by.

The Amir wept and exclaimed, 'By Allah, we are indeed created for a grave matter!' Then he copied the above inscription and passed on to the third tablet, whereon was written what follows: 'O son of Adam, thou busiest thee with the love of the world and neglectest the commandment of thy Lord. All the days of thy life pass by and thou art content to live thus. Make ready thy provision against the appointed day and prepare to answer the Lord of all creatures.'

And at the foot were written these verses:

Where's he who peopled all the lands, both Hind and Sind, of yore? He who transgressed and sinned and played the tyrant heretofore?
Ethiops and Abyssinians all unto his beck did bow, What while himself he magnified and arrogantly bore.
Look not for news of that which is within his tomb, for thou One who can tidings give of this shalt meet with nevermore.
The stroke of imminent death on him fell and from its assault Not all the halls he built could save nor all his hoarded store.

At this Mousa wept sore, then, going on to the fourth tablet, he read the following inscription thereon: 'O son of Adam, how long shall thy Lord bear with thee and thou every day sunken in the sea of thy delight? Hath it then been revealed unto thee that thou shalt not die? O son of Adam, let not the deceitful delights of thy days and nights and hours delude thee, but remember that death lieth in wait for thee, ready to spring on thy shoulders, nor doth a day pass but he riseth with thee in the morning and lieth down with thee by night. Beware, then, of his onset and make provision thereagainst. As it was with me, so is it with thee; thou wastest thy whole life and squanderest the delight of thy days. Hearken, therefore, to my rede and put thy trust in the Lord of Lords; for there is no stability in the world; it is but as a spider's web.'

And at the foot of the tablet were written the following verses:

Where's he who traced the house and builded it forthright And fortified its walls and reared it to the height?
Where be the castles' lords? They who abode therein Departed have the strengths they governed, every wight.
All lie within the tombs, in pledge against the day Whereon the secret things shall all be brought to light.
None but the Most High God endureth without cease, The ever Worship-worth, Lord of all power and might.

When the Amir read this, he swooned away and [presently coming to himself] marvelled exceedingly and wrote it down. Then he drew near the fifth tablet and behold, thereon was graven what follows: 'O son of Adam, what is it distracts thee from the obedience of thy Creator and the Author of thy being, Him who reared thee, whenas thou wast little, and fed thee, whenas thou grewest up? Thou art ungrateful for His bounty, albeit He watcheth over thee with His favours, letting down the curtain of His protection over thee. Needs must there be for thee a time more bitter than aloes and hotter than live coals. Provide thee, therefore, against it; for who shall sweeten its bitterness or quench its flaming fires? Bethink thee who forewent thee of peoples and heroes and take warning by them, ere thou perish.'

And at the foot of the tablet were graven the following verses:

Where be the kings of the kings of the earth? Indeed, they are sped, And here, with that which they gathered, they lie in the graveyard's bed.
Once, when they mounted, thou'dst see, in the train of their glory, troops That filled the lands, when they mounted, and over the countries spread.
How many a monarch they humbled, how many an army destroyed! How much in their day they conquered, and how much blood did they shed!
Upon them, in haste, the commandment o' the Lord of the heavens came And after a life all untroubled, o'erthrown were they sudden and dead.

The Amir marvelled at this and wrote it down; after which he passed on to the sixth tablet and found thereon the following inscription: ‘O son of Adam, think not that immunity will endure [for ever,] seeing that death is irrevocably decreed unto thy head. Where be thy fathers and thy brethren, where thy friends and dear ones? They have all gone to the dust of the tombs and presented themselves before the Glorious, the Forgiving One, as if they had never eaten nor drunken, and they are a pledge for that which they have earned. So look to thyself, ere thy tomb come upon thee.’

And at the foot of the tablet were graven these verses:

Where be the kings of the kings of the Franks and where Is he who, I trow, abode in Tenjeh whilere?
Their works in a book are written, which to the One, The Almighty, one day shall witness against them bear.

At this Mousa marvelled and wrote it down, saying, ‘There is no god but God! Indeed, how goodly were these folk!’ Then he went up to the seventh tablet and behold, thereon was written what follows: ‘Glory to Him who fore-ordaineth death to all He createth, the Living One, who dieth not! O son of Adam, let not thy days and their delights delude thee, neither thine hours and the sweet of their tides, and know that death cometh to thee and sitteth upon thy shoulders. Beware, then, of his assault and make ready for his onset. As it was with me, so is it with thee; thou wasteth the sweet of thy life and the delight of thine hours. Give ear, then, to my rede and put thy trust in the Lord of Lords and know that there is no stability in the world, but it is as it were a spider’s web and all that is therein shall cease and die. Where is he who laid the foundations of Amid and builded it and builded Farikin and exalted it? Where be the peoples of the strong places? Whenas they had inhabited them [awhile], they descended, after their might, into the tombs. They have been carried off [by death] and we shall be [in like manner] afflicted. None abideth save God the Most High, God the Forgiving One.’

The Amir Mousa wept and copied all this, and indeed the world was belittled in his eyes. Then he descended the hill and rejoined his troops, with whom he passed the rest of the day, casting about for a means of access to the city. And he said to his Vizier [and] Talib ben Sehl and his chief officers, ‘How shall we do to enter this city and view its marvels? It may be we shall find therein wherewithal to propitiate the favour of the Commander of the Faithful.’ ‘God prolong the Amir’s fortune!’ replied Talib. ‘Let us make a ladder and mount the wall therewith, so haply we may come at the gate from within.’ Quoth the Amir, ‘This is what came to my thought also, and it is good counsel.’ And he called for carpenters and blacksmiths and bade them cut wood and make a ladder clamped and banded with iron. So they made a strong ladder and wrought at it a whole month. Then all the company laid hold of it and set it up against the wall, and it reached the top as truly as if it had been made for it aforetime. The Amir marvelled at the excellence of their work and said, ‘The blessing of God be upon you! It seemeth as though ye had taken the measure of the wall.’ Then said he to his men, ‘Which of you will mount the ladder and walk along the wall and cast about for a way of descending into the city, so to see how the case stands and let us know how we may open the gate?’ Quoth one of them, ‘I will go up, O Amir, and descend and open to you.’ And Mousa answered, saying, ‘Go and the blessing of God go with thee!’

So he mounted the ladder; but, when he came to the top of the wall, he stood up and gazed fixedly down into the city, then clapped his hands and crying out, at the top of his voice, ‘By Allah, thou art fair!’ cast himself down into the place and was dashed to pieces. Quoth Mousa, ‘By Allah, the man is destroyed!’ But another came up to him and said, ‘O Amir, this was a madman and doubtless his madness got the better of him and undid him. I will go up and open the gate to you, if it be the will of God the Most High.’ ‘Go,’ replied Mousa, ‘and may God bless thee! But beware lest thou lose thy head, even as did he.’ Then the man mounted the ladder, but no sooner had he reached the top of the wall than he laughed aloud and saying, ‘Well done! Well done!’ cast himself down into the city and died forthright.

When the Amir saw this, he said, ‘If this be the fashion of a reasonable man, what is that of the madman? If all our men do thus, we shall have none left and shall fail of our errand and that of the Commander of the Faithful. Let us depart hence, for we have no concern with this city.’ But another of the company said, ‘Peradventure another may be steadier than they.’ So a third mounted the wall and a fourth and a fifth and all cried out and cast themselves down, even as did the first; nor did they leave to do thus, till a dozen had perished.

Then said the Sheikh Abdussemed, ‘This adventure is reserved for none other than myself, for the man of experience is not like the inexperienced.’ Quoth the Amir, ‘Indeed, I will not have thee go up, for thou art our guide and if thou perish, we shall all be cut off to the last man.’ But he answered, saying, ‘Peradventure, that which we seek may be accomplished at my hands, by the grace of God the Most High.’ So they all agreed to let him go up, and he arose and heartening himself, said, ‘In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful!’ and mounted the ladder, calling on the name of God and reciting the Verses of Safety. When he reached the top of the wall, he clapped his hands and gazed fixedly down into the city; whereupon the folk below cried out to him with one accord, saying, ‘O Sheikh Abdussemed, for God’s sake cast not thyself down!’ And they said, ‘Verily, we are God’s and to Him we return! If the Sheikh fall, we are all dead men.’

Then he laughed long and loud and sat a great while, reciting the names of God and repeating the Verses of Safety; then he rose and cried out at the top of his voice saying, ‘O Amir, have no fear: no hurt shall betide you, for God (to whom belong might and majesty) hath averted from me the wiles and malice of Satan, by the blessing of the words, “In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful!”’ ‘O Sheikh,’ quoth Mousa, ‘what didst thou see?’ ‘When I came to the top of the wall,’ answered Abdussemed, ‘I saw ten maidens, as they were moons, calling and beckoning to me with their hands, as who should say, “Come hither to us;” and meseemed there was below me a lake of water. Therewith I thought to throw myself down, when behold, I espied my twelve companions lying dead, so I restrained myself and recited somewhat of the book of God the Most High, whereupon He dispelled from me the damsels’ wiles and sorceries and they disappeared. And doubtless this was an enchantment devised by the people of the city, to repel those who should seek to enter the place.’

Then he walked on along the wall, till he came to the two towers of brass [from which the city took its name,] and saw therein two gates of gold, without locks or visible means of opening; whereat he marvelled and gazed about him awhile, till he espied, amiddleward one of the gates, a horseman of brass with hand outstretched, as if pointing, and thereon somewhat written. So he went up to it and read these words: ‘Turn the pin in my navel twelve times, and the gate will open.’ Accordingly, he examined the horseman’s body and finding in his navel a pin of gold, firm-set and curiously wrought, turned it twelve times, whereupon the horseman revolved like the blinding lightning and the gate swung open with a noise like thunder. He entered and found himself in a long passage, which brought him down some steps into a guardroom, furnished with goodly benches, whereon sat men dead, with richly wrought targets and keen swords and bended bows and arrows on the string hanging at their heads.

Passing on, he came to the outer gate and finding it secured with curiously wrought locks and bars and bolts and other fastenings of wood and iron, said in himself, ‘Belike the keys are with yonder dead folk.’ So he turned back to the guardroom and seeing, amongst the dead soldiers, an old man seated upon a high bench, who seemed the chiefest of them, said in himself, ‘Who knows but they are with this old man? Doubtless he was the seneschal of the city, and these others were under his hand.’ So he went up to him and lifting his gown, saw the keys hanging to his girdle, whereat he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and was like to fly for gladness. Then he took them and going up to the gate, undid the locks and drew back the bolts and bars, whereupon the great gate swung open with a noise like the pealing thunder. At this he cried out, saying, ‘God is most great!’ And the folk without answered him with the same words, rejoicing and thanking him for his deed.

The Amir Mousa also rejoiced with an exceeding joy in the Sheikh’s safety and the opening of the city-gate, and they all pressed forward to enter; but Mousa cried out to them, saying, ‘O folk, it is not safe that we all enter at once, lest some ill chance betide us. Let half enter and other half tarry without.’ So he entered with half his men, bearing their weapons of war, and saw the doorkeepers and guards and chamberlains and officers lying dead on couches of silk.

Then they passed through the inner gate and coming upon their comrades lying dead, buried them; after which they fared on till they came to a great market-place, full of lofty buildings, none of which overpassed other, and saw all the shops open, with the scales hung out and the brazen vessels ranged in order and the magazines full of all manner goods and the merchants sitting in their places, dead, with shrivelled skin and rotted bones, a warning to those who can take warning; and here they saw four separate markets.

Then they went on till they came to the silk-market, where they found silks and brocades, woven with red gold and white silver upon all manner of colours, and the owners lying dead upon mats of scented goats' leather, as if they would speak; after which they traversed the market of pearls and rubies and other jewels and came to that of the money-changers, whom they saw sitting dead upon silken carpets, in shops full of gold and silver. Thence they passed to the drug-market, where they saw the shops filled with drugs of all kinds and bladders of musk and ambergris and aloes and camphor and other perfumes in vessels of ivory and ebony and khelenj-wood and Spanish brass, the which is equal in value to gold, and various kinds of Indian cane; but the shopkeepers were all dead, nor was there with them aught of food.

Hard by this last market they came upon a palace, magnificently built and decorated; so they entered and found therein banners displayed and drawn swords and bended bows and bucklers hanging by chains of gold and silver and helmets gilded with red gold. In the vestibules stood benches of ivory, plated with glittering gold and covered with silken stuffs, whereon lay men, whose skin had dried up on their bones; the unknowing had deemed them sleeping, but, for lack of food, they had perished and tasted the cup of death.

When the Amir Mousa saw this, he stood still, glorifying God the Most High and hallowing Him and contemplating the beauty of the palace and the fair perfection of its ordinance, for it was builded after the goodliest and stablest fashion and the most part of its adornment was of green lapis-lazuli; and on the inner door, which stood open, were written, in characters of gold and ultramarine, the following verses:

Consider what thou seest here, O mortal, and beware And to thine end take thought before thou hence away must fare.

Needs must each dweller in a house depart therefrom; so look Provision of good works, which thee shall profit, thou prepare.

See here a folk, who did adorn their dwellings and are now Become the pledges of the dust for that they wrought whilere.

They builded, but their buildings served them nought; they hoarded wealth, That might not save them, when their days of life accomplished were.

How much they hoped for, over that which was to them ordained! Then to the grave they passed and hope availed them nothing there.

Yea, they descended from their height of glory to the strait Abjection of the tomb, and ill was this their last repair.

Whenas as they buried were, came one that cried to them and said, “Where be the thrones, the diadems, the raiment ye did wear?

Where be the faces that were veiled and curtained round about, Whereon, of yore, were bywords made, so bright they were and fair?”

And the tomb answer for them made to him that questioned them, Saying, “The roses of the cheeks are faded out fore’er.

Long time they ate and drank their fill; now, after pleasant food, Themselves are eaten in their turn; the worms upon them fare.”

When the Amir read this, he wept, till he was like to swoon away, and bade write down the verses, after which he passed on into the inner palace and came to a vast hall, at each of whose four corners stood a lofty and spacious pavilion, enamelled with gold and silver and painted in various colours. Midmost the hall was a great fountain of alabaster, surmounted by a canopy of brocade, and in each of the pavilions was a richly-wrought fountain and cistern paved with marble and streams flowing in channels along the floor and meeting in a great cistern of many-coloured marble.

Quoth the Amir to the Sheikh Abdussemed, ‘Come, let us visit yonder pavilions.’ So they entered the first and found it full of gold and silver and pearls and rubies and other precious stones and metals, besides chests filled with brocades, red and white and yellow. Then they repaired to the second pavilion and opening a closet there, found it full of arms and armour, such as gilded helmets and Davidean hauberks and Indian swords and Arabian spears and Chorasmian maces and other warlike gear. Thence they passed to the third pavilion, wherein they saw closets locked and covered with curtains wrought with all manner broidery. They opened one of these and found it full of weapons curiously wrought and inlaid with gold and silver and jewels. Then they entered the fourth pavilion and opening one of the closets there, beheld in it great store of eating and drinking vessels of gold and silver, with platters of crystal and cups set with fine pearls and goblets of cornelian and so forth. So they all fell to taking that to which they had a mind, and each of the soldiers carried off what he could.

When they left the pavilions, they saw in the midst of the palace a door of teak-wood, inlaid with ivory and ebony and plated with glittering gold, over which hung a silken curtain, wrought with all manner broideries, and on this door were locks of white silver, that opened by artifice without a key. The Sheikh Abdussemed went boldly up thereto and by the aid of his knowledge and skill, succeeded in opening the locks, whereupon the door swung back and admitted them into a corridor paved with marble and hung with tapestries broidered with figures of all manner beasts and birds, whose bodies were wroughten of red gold and white silver and their eyes of pearls and rubies, amazing all who saw them. Passing along the corridor, they came to a saloon builded all of polished marble, inlaid with jewels, so wonder-clear and smooth that it seemed to the beholder as there were water running over its floor and whoso walked thereon slipped. The Amir bade the Sheikh strew thereon somewhat, that they might walk over it; which being done, they made shift to pass on till they came to a great pavilion of stone, plated with red gold and crowned with a dome of alabaster, about which were set lattice-windows, painted and jewelled with wands of emerald, beyond the competence of any king; nor had they seen aught goodlier in all the place.

Under this dome was a canopy of brocade, reared upon columns of red gold and wrought with figures of birds with feet of emerald, and beneath each bird was a network of fine pearls. The canopy was spread above a fountain of ivory and cornelian, plated with glittering gold and set with pearls and rubies and other jewels, and thereby stood a couch and a pillar of red gold. On the top of the pillar was perched a bird fashioned of red rubies and holding in its bill a pearl, that shone like a star; and on the couch lay a damsel, as she were the shining sun, never saw eyes a fairer. She was clad in a robe of fine pearls, with a crown of red gold on her head, filleted with gems, and on her brow were two great jewels, whose light was as the light of the sun. On her breast she wore a jewelled amulet, filled with musk and ambergris and worth the empire of the Cæsars, and round her neck hung a collar of rubies and great pearls, [hollow and] full of odoriferous musk. Whoso looked on her would deem her alive and not dead, for it seemed as if she gazed on them with eyes as they were gazelles' eyes, that followed them from side to side.

The Amir Mousa marvelled at her beauty and was confounded at the blackness of her hair and the redness of her cheeks and said to her, 'Peace be on thee, O damsel!' But she returned not his salutation and the Sheikh said to him, 'O Amir, verily this damsel is dead and there is no life in her; so how shall she return thy greeting? Indeed, she is but a corpse embalmed with exceeding art; her eyes were taken out after her death and quicksilver set under them, after which they were restored to their sockets. Wherefore they glisten and when the air moves the lashes, she seems to wink and it appears to the beholder as though she looked at him, for all she is dead.' At this the Amir marvelled beyond measure and said, 'Glory be to God, who subjecteth His creatures unto death!'

Now the couch, on which the damsel lay, had steps, and thereon stood two slaves, one white and the other black. The first held a mace of iron and the second a sword of watered steel, whose radiance dazzled the eye; and between them, on one of the steps of the couch, lay a golden tablet, whereon were written, in characters of white silver, the following words: 'In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful! Praise be to God, the Creator of mankind, the Lord of Lords, the Causer of Causes! In the name of the Eternal God, the Everlasting, the Ordainer of Fate and Fortune! O son of Adam, how unknowing art thou in thine unending hope and how heedless of the inevitable end! Knowst thou not that death calleth for thee and hasteneth to seize upon thy soul? Be ready, therefore, for the last journey and provide thee [for thy departure] from the world; for, assuredly, ere long thou shalt leave it. Where is Noah and his progeny? Where be the kings of the Chosroës and the Cæsars? Where the kings of India and Chaldæa and the monarchs of the four quarters of the earth? Where be the sons of Amalek and the giants of old time? Indeed, the dwelling-places are void of them and they have departed lands and kindred. Where be the kings of the Arabs and the princes of the barbarians? They are dead, all of them, and are become corruption. Where be the lords of high degree? They are all dead. Where are Korah and Haman? Where is Sheddad son of Aad? Where be Canaan and the Lord of the Stakes ? By Allah, the Reaper of lives hath cut them off and made void the lands of them. Did they provide them against the appointed day or make ready to answer the Lord of all creatures?

O man, if thou know me not, I will acquaint thee with my name: I am Tedmureh, daughter of the kings of the Amalekites, of those who held dominion over the lands and brought low the necks of mankind. I possessed that which never king possessed and was righteous in my rule and did justice among my subjects; yea, I gave gifts and largesse and freed slaves, male and female. Thus lived I many years in all ease and delight of life, till death knocked at my gates and calamities took up their abode with me and with my folk; and it was on this wise. There betided us seven successive years of drought, wherein no drop of rain fell on us from heaven and no green thing sprouted for us on the face of the earth. So we ate what was with us of victual and [when we had made an end thereof] we fell upon the cattle and ate them, till there was nothing left. Then I let bring my treasures and meted them with a measure and sent out trusty men to buy food. They visited all the lands in quest thereof and left not a single city unsought, but found no victual and returned to us with the treasure, after a long absence, disappointed, and gave us to know that they could not avail to barter fine pearls for wheat, bushel for bushel neither weight for weight. So, when we despaired of succour, we displayed all our riches and things of price and shutting the gates of the city, resigned ourselves to the judgment of our Lord and committed our affair to our Master. Then we all died, as thou seest us, and left what we had builded and what we had treasured up. This, then, is our story, and after the substance abideth the trace.'

Then they looked at the foot of the tablet and read these verses:

O son of Adam, let not hope make mock of thee, I pray. From all thy hands have treasured up thou shalt be snatched away.
I see thou covetest the world and all its fleeting show, And young and old have done the like before thee many a day.
Wealth, by fair means and foul, they got; but all their hoarded store, When once their term accomplished was, could buy them no delay.
Armies they led and gathered gold galore, then left their wealth And what they'd built and to the tombs departed straight and lay
Down in a narrow lodging in the dust, and there asleep, In pledge for that they wrought of yore, they do abide alway;
As 'twere a caravan, whose folk had halted for the night And set their burdens in a house, wherein there was no stay.
And quoth its lord to them, 'O folk, there is no sojourn here For you;' and so they girt their beasts and fared upon their way,
Misliking, after lighting down to rest them, to depart Forthright again, filled full of care and trouble and dismay.
So look thou furnish thee with store of good shall gladden thee To-morrow, and the fear of God thy practice govern aye.

And under this was written: 'By Allah, the fear of God is the best of all things, the keystone of certainty and the [only] sure stay. Verily, death is the manifest truth and the sure promise, and therein, O man, is the goal and place of returning. Take warning, therefore, by those who have foregone thee to the dust and hastened in the way of the predestined end. Seest thou not that hoariness calls thee to the grave and that the whiteness of thy locks maketh moan for thee of thy life? Wherefore be thou on the watch, ready for thy departure and account. O son of Adam, what hath seduced thee from the service of thy Lord? Where be the peoples of old time? [They are become] a warning to whoso will take warning. Where be the kings of China and the lords of power and prowess? Where is Sheddad ben Aad and where the cities he built and stablished? Where is the proud tyrant

Nimrod and Pharaoh who rebelled against God and denied Him? Death followed hard upon them and laid them low, sparing neither great nor small, male nor female; yea, and the Reaper of Mankind cut them off, by Him who maketh the night to return upon the day!

Know, O thou who comest to this place, that she whom thou seest here was not deluded by the world and its frail delights, for it is deceitful, perfidious, a house of perdition and vanity, and salutary to the creature is the remembrance of his sins; wherefore she feared her Lord and made fair her dealings and provided herself against the appointed day. Whoso cometh to our city and God vouchsafeth him to enter it, let him take of the treasure what he may, but touch not aught that is on my body, for it is the covering of my nakedness and my furniture for the last journey; wherefore let him fear God and despoil nought thereof; else will he destroy himself. This have I set for a warning from me to him and a trust; wherewith, peace be on you and I pray God to keep you from sickness and calamity.'

When the Amir Mousa read this, he wept till he swooned away and presently coming to himself, wrote down all he had seen and heard and was admonished thereby. Then he bade his men fetch the camels and load them with these treasures and vases and jewels. 'O Amir,' quoth Talib, 'shall we leave yonder damsel with what is upon her? Behold, they are things that have not their equal and whose like is not to be found and more perfect than aught else thou takest; nor couldst thou find a goodlier gift wherewithal to propitiate the favour of the Commander of the Faithful.' 'O man,' replied Mousa, 'heardst thou not what the lady says on the tablet? More by token that she gives it in trust to us, and we are no traitors [that we should betray a trust].' 'And shall we,' rejoined Talib, 'because of these words, leave yonder jewels and riches, seeing that she is dead? What should she do with these that are the adornments of the world and the ornament of the live? We have more right to them than she, seeing that one garment of cotton would suffice for her covering.' So saying, he mounted the steps of the couch, but when he came within reach of the two slaves, the mace-bearer smote him on the back and the other struck him with the sword he held in his hand and cut off his head, and he fell down dead. Quoth the Amir, 'May God have no mercy on thy soul! Indeed, there was enough in these treasures, and covetise assuredly dishonoureth a man.’ Then he bade admit the troops; so they entered and loaded the camels with the treasures; after which they went forth the city and the Amir let shut the gate as before.

They fared on along the sea-shore a whole month, till they came in sight of a high mountain, overlooking the sea and full of caves, wherein dwelt a tribe of blacks, speaking an unknown tongue and clad in skins, with hooded cloaks of the same on their heads. When they saw the troops, they took fright and fled into the caverns, whilst their women and children stood at the doors, looking on the strangers. ‘O Sheikh,’ said the Amir, ‘what are these folk?’ ‘They are those whom we seek,’ answered Abdussemed. So they halted and setting down their loads, pitched their tents; whereupon down came the King of the blacks from the mountain and drew near the camp.

Now he understood the Arabic tongue; so, when he came to the Amir, he saluted him and Mousa returned his greeting and entreated him with honour. Then said he to the Amir, ‘Are ye men or Jinn?’ ‘We are men,’ answered Mousa; ‘but doubtless ye are Jinn, of the vastness of your stature and your dwelling apart in this mountain, that is cut off from mankind.’ ‘Nay,’ rejoined the black; ‘we also are children of Adam, of the lineage of Ham, son of Noah, on whom be peace; and this sea is known as El Kerker.’ Quoth Mousa, ‘O king, what is your religion and what worship ye?’ And he answered, saying, ‘We worship the God of the heavens and our religion is that of Mohammed, whom God bless and keep!’ ‘And how came ye by the knowledge of this,’ asked the Amir, ‘seeing that no prophet inspired of God hath visited this country?’ ‘Know, O Amir,’ replied the King, ‘that there appeared to us [aforetime] from out the sea a man, from whom issued a light that illumined the whole horizon, and he cried out, in a voice that was heard of far and near, saying, ‘O children of Ham, bow down to Him who seeth and is not seen and say, “There is no god but God and Mohammed is His apostle!” And he added, “I am Aboulabbas el Khizr.” Before this, we used to worship one another, but he called us to the service of the Lord of all creatures. Moreover, he taught us to repeat these words, “There is no god save God alone, who hath no partner, and His are the kingdom and the praise. He giveth life and death and He can do all things.” Nor do we draw near unto God (to whom belong might and majesty) but with these words, for we know none other; but every Friday eve we see a light upon the face of the earth and hear a voice saying, “Holy and glorious, Lord of the Spirit and the Angels! What He willeth, is, and what He willeth not, is not. Every blessing is of the grace of God and there is neither power nor virtue save in Him the Most High, the Supreme!”

‘But ye,’ said the black king, ‘who and what are ye and what brings you to this land?’ Quoth Mousa, ‘We are officers of the sovereign of Islam, the Commander of the Faithful Abdulmelik ben Merwan, who hath heard tell of the lord Solomon, son of David (on whom be peace), and of that which God the Most High bestowed upon him of supreme dominion, how he held sway over Jinn and beasts and birds and was wont, whenas he was wroth with one of the Marids, to shut him in a vessel of brass and stopping its mouth on him with lead, whereon he impressed his seal, to cast him into the sea of Kerker. Now we have heard tell that this sea is in your country; so the Commander of the Faithful hath sent us hither, to fetch him some of these vessels, that he may look thereon and divert himself with their sight. This, then, is our case and what we seek of thee, O King, and we desire that thou further us in the accomplishment of our errand for the Commander of the Faithful.’ ‘With all my heart,’ replied the black king and carrying them to the guest-house, entreated them with the utmost honour and furnished them with all they needed, feeding them upon fish.

They abode thus three days, at the end of which time he bade his divers fetch some of the vessels of Solomon from out the sea. So they dived and brought up twelve vessels, whereat the Amir and his company rejoiced in the accomplishment of the Khalif’s need. Then Mousa gave the King of the blacks many and great gifts, and he in turn made him a present of wonders of the deep, being fish in human form, saying, ‘Your entertainment these three days has been of these fish.’ Quoth the Amir, ‘Needs must we carry some of these to the Khalif, for they will please him more than the vessels of Solomon.’

Then they took leave of the black king and setting out on their homeward journey, travelled till they came to Damascus, when Mousa went in to the Commander of the Faithful and told him all that they had seen and heard, together with the manner of the death of Talib ben Sehl; and the Khalif said, ‘Would I had been with you, that I might have seen what you saw!’ Then he took the brazen vessels and opened them, one after another, whereupon the devils came forth of them, saying, ‘We repent, O prophet of God! Never again will we return to the like of this thing.’ And the Khalif marvelled at this, saying, ‘Never gave God unto any man the like of that which He bestowed upon Solomon, son of David!’ As for the mermaids, they made them tanks of wood, full of water, and laid them therein; but they died of the great heat.

Then the Khalif divided the spoils of the Brazen City among the faithful, and the Amir Mousa sought leave of him to appoint his son governor of Africa in his stead, that he might betake himself to the holy city of Jerusalem, there to worship God. So the Commander of the Faithful invested Haroun with the government and Mousa repaired to Jerusalem, where he died. This, then, is all that hath come down to us of the story of the City of Brass, and God [alone] is All-knowing!

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THE MALICE OF WOMEN.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, a rich and powerful king, who ruled over many men of war and vassals, and he had grown old without being blessed with a son. At last, when he began to despair of male issue, he sought the intercession of the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve!) with the Most High and implored Him, by the glory of His saints and prophets and martyrs and others of the Faithful that were dear to Him, to grant him a son, to be the solace of his eyes and inherit the kingdom after him. Then he rose forthright and withdrawing to his sitting-chamber, sent for the daughter of his uncle and lay with her. By God's grace, she conceived by him, and when the months of her pregnancy were accomplished, she bore a male child, whose face was as the round of the moon on its fourteenth night. When the boy reached the age of five, he was committed to the charge of a sage of the sages, a very learned man, by name Es Sindibad, who taught him science and polite letters, till, by the time he was ten years old, there was none of his time could vie with him in knowledge and good breeding and understanding. Then his father delivered him to a company of Arabian cavaliers, who instructed him in horsemanship and martial exercises, till he became proficient therein and came and went in the listed field and excelled all his peers and all the folk of his day.

One day, his governor, being engaged in observing the stars, drew the youth's horoscope and discovered that, if he spoke one word during the seven following days, he would be a dead man. So he went in straightway to the old King and informed him of this, and he said, 'What shall we do, O sage?' 'O King,' answered the other, 'it is my counsel that he be kept in a place of pleasance, where he may divert himself with hearing music, until the seven days be past.' So the King sent for the fairest of his favourites and committed the prince to her, saying, 'Take thy lord into the palace with thee and let him not leave thee till after seven days.' The damsel accordingly took the prince by the hand and carried him to the palace in question, which was compassed about by a running stream, whose banks were planted with all manner fruit-trees and sweet-scented flowers.

Moreover, in this palace were forty apartments and in every apartment ten slave-girls, each skilled in some instrument of music, so that, when she played, the palace danced to her melodious strains; and here the prince passed one night.

Now he was handsome and graceful beyond description, and when the King's favourite looked at him, love gat hold upon her heart and she was ravished with him. So she went up to him and offered herself to him, but he made her no answer; whereupon, being confounded by his beauty, she cried out to him and required him of himself and importuned him. Moreover, she threw herself upon him and strained him to her bosom, kissing him and saying, 'O king's son, grant me thy favours and I will set thee in thy father's stead; yea, I will give him to drink of poison, so he may die and thou enjoy his wealth and kingship.' When the prince heard this, he was sore enraged against her and said to her [by signs], 'O accursed one, so it please God the Most High, I will assuredly requite thee this thy deed, whenas I can speak; for I will go out to my father and tell him, and he will kill thee.' So saying, he arose, in a rage, and went out from her; whereat she feared for herself. So she buffeted her face and rent her clothes and tore her hair and uncovered her head, then went in to the King and threw herself at his feet, weeping and lamenting. When he saw her in this plight, he was sore concerned and said to her, 'What ails thee, O damsel? How is it with thy lord [my son]? Is he not well?' 'O King,' answered she, 'this thy son, whom thy counsellors avouch to be dumb, required me of myself and I repelled him, whereupon he did with me as thou seest and would have slain me; so I fled from him, nor will I ever again return to him nor to the palace.'

When the King heard this, he was beyond measure wroth and calling his Viziers, bade them put the prince to death. However, they said to each other, 'If we do the King's commandment, he will surely repent of having ordered his son's death, for he is passing dear to him and came to him after he had despaired of an heir; and he will turn on us and blame us, saying, "Why did ye not dissuade me from slaying my son?"' So they took counsel together, to turn him from his purpose, and the chief Vizier said, 'I will warrant you from his mischief this day.' Then he went in to the King and prostrating himself before him, craved leave to speak. The King gave him leave, and he said, ‘O King, though thou hadst a thousand sons, yet were it no light matter to thee to put one of them to death, on the report of a woman, speak she truth or falsehood; and belike this is a lie and a trick of her against thy son; for indeed, O King, I have heard tell great plenty of stories of the craft and perfidy of women.’ Quoth the King, ‘Tell me somewhat of that which hath come to thy knowledge thereof.’ And the Vizier answered, saying, ‘It hath reached me, O King, that

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The King and His Vizier's Wife.

There was once a king, who was given to the love of women, and one day, being alone in his palace, he espied a beautiful woman on the roof of her house and could not contain himself from falling in love with her. He asked [his servants] to whom the house belonged and they said, "To thy vizier such an one." So he called the vizier in question and despatched him on an errand to a distant part of the kingdom; then, as soon as he was gone, he made an excuse to gain access to his house. When the vizier's wife saw him, she knew him and springing up, kissed his hands and feet and welcomed him. Then she stood afar off busying herself in his service, and said to him "O our lord, what is the cause of thy gracious visit? Such an honour is not for the like of me." Quoth he, "Love of thee and desire to thee hath moved me to this." Whereupon she kissed the earth before him a second time and said, "O our lord, indeed I am not worthy to be the handmaid of one of the king's servants; whence then have I the great good fortune to be in such favour with thee?" Then the king put out his hand to her, but she said. "This thing shall not escape us; but take patience, O king, and abide with me all this day, that I may make ready for thee somewhat of victual." So the king sat down on his vizier's couch and the lady brought him a book wherein he might read, whilst she made ready the food. He took the book and beginning to read, found therein moral instances and exhortations, such as restrained him from adultery and broke his intent to commit sin.

After awhile, she returned and set before him a collation of ninety dishes of different kinds and colours, and he ate a spoonful of each and found that the taste of them was one. At this, he marvelled exceedingly and said to the lady, "O damsel, I see these meats to be many [and various of hue], but the taste of them is one." "God prosper the king!" replied she. "This is a parable I have set for thee, that thou mayst be admonished thereby." "And what is its meaning?" asked he. "May God amend the case of our lord the king!" answered she. "In thy palace are ninety concubines of various colours, but their taste is one." When the king heard this, he was ashamed and rising hastily, went out and returned to his palace, without offering her any affront; but, in his haste and confusion, he forgot his signet-ring and left it under the cushion where he had been sitting.

Presently the vizier returned and presenting himself before the king, kissed the earth and made his report to him of the state of the province in question. Then he repaired to his own house and sat down on his couch, and chancing to put his hand under the cushion, found the king's seal-ring. So he looked at it and knew it and taking the matter to heart, held aloof from his wife nor spoke with her for a whole year, while she knew not the reason of his anger. At last, being weary of estrangement, she sent for her father and told him the case, whereupon quoth he, "I will complain of him to the king, some day when he is in presence."

So, one day, he went in to the king and finding the vizier and the cadi of the army before him, made his complaint in the following words. "May God the Most High amend the king's case! I had a fair garden, which I planted with my own hand and spent my substance thereon, till it bore fruit and its fruit was ripe, when I gave it to this thy vizier, who ate of it what seemed good to him, then forsook it and watered it not, so that its flowers withered and its beauty departed and it became waste." Then said the vizier, "O king, what this man says is true. I did indeed care for the garden and ate thereof, till, one day, going thither, I saw the track of the lion there, wherefore I feared him and withdrew from the garden." The king understood the parable and knew that, by the track of the lion, he meant his own seal-ring, which he had forgotten in his house; so he said, "Return to thy garden, O vizier, and fear nothing, for the lion came not near it. It hath been told me that he went thither, but by the honour of my fathers and forefathers, he offered it no hurt." "I hear and obey," answered the vizier, and returning home, made his peace with his wife and thenceforth put faith in her chastity.

And I have heard also, O King,' continued the Vizier, 'that

The Merchant's Wife and the Parrot.

There was once a merchant who travelled much, and had a fair wife, whom he loved, and was jealous over her, by reason of the greatness of his love. So he bought her for a hundred dinars a green parrot, which talked like a man and used to tell him all that passed in his absence. Whilst he was abroad on one of his voyages, his wife fell in love with a young Turk, who used to visit her, and she entertained him and lay with him whilst her husband was away. When the latter returned, the parrot told him what had happened, whereat he was sore enraged and offered to kill his wife; but she said, "O man, fear God and return to thy wits. How can a bird have sense or understanding? If thou wilt that I make this manifest to thee, so thou mayst know its truth from its leasing, go this night and lie with one of thy friends, and in the morning come back and question the parrot [of what passed during the night,] and thou wilt see if it speak truth or not."

The husband accordingly went forth and passed the night with one of his friends, whilst, as soon as it was dark, the wife covered the parrot's cage with a piece of leather and fell to sprinkling water on it from above. Moreover, she fanned it sharply with a fan and flashed light on it from the lantern, as it were the glancing lightning, grinding the while at the hand-mill. Thus she did, without ceasing, till daybreak; and the parrot thought that the sprinkling of the water on its cage was rain and the fanning a stormy wind and the flashing of the lantern lightning and the noise of the hand-mill thunder. When her husband returned, she bade him question the parrot; so he went up to the cage and began to talk with the bird and question it of the past night. Quoth it, "O my lord, who could see or hear aught last night?" "And why so?" asked he. "Because," replied it, "of the much rain and wind and thunder and lightning." "Thou liest," said the merchant. "There was nothing of all this last night." Quoth the bird, "I tell thee but what I saw and heard." Then was he certified that the parrot had lied in all it had told him of his wife and would have made his peace with the latter; but she said, "By Allah, I will not be friends with thee, till thou kill this parrot that lied to thee of me." So he rose and killed the parrot; but, a few days after, he saw the young Turk come forth of his house and knew that the parrot had spoken the truth and repented of having slain it. Then he went in at once to his wife and cut her throat and casting her into the river, vowed never to take another wife. This,' said the Vizier, 'I tell thee, O King, that thou mayst know how great is the craft of women and that haste begetteth repentance.'

So the King turned from putting his son to death, but, next day, the favourite came in to him and kissing the ground before him, said, 'O King, why dost thou delay to do me justice? Indeed, the kings have heard that thou commandest a thing and thy Vizier countermandeth it. Now the obedience of kings is in the fulfilment of their commandments, and every one knows thy justice and equity: so do thou me justice on thy son. I have heard tell that

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The Fuller and His Son.

There was once a fuller, who used every day to go forth to the bank of the Tigris, to clean clothes; and his son was wont to go with him and swim about in the river, whilst his father was fulling, nor did the latter forbid him from this. One day, as the boy was swimming, he was taken with cramp in the arms and sank, whereupon the fuller plunged into the water and caught hold of him; but the boy clung about him and pulled him down and so father and son were both drowned. Thus is it with thee, O King. Except thou prevent thy son and do me justice on him, I fear lest both of you sink together, thou and he. Moreover,' continued she, 'for an instance of the malice of men, I have heard tell that

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The Lover’s Trick Against the Chaste Wife.

A certain man loved a beautiful and graceful woman, married to a man whom she loved and who loved her. Moreover, she was chaste and virtuous, like unto me, and her lover found no way to her; so, when his patience was at an end, he bethought him of a device to get his will. Now the husband had a young man, whom he had brought up in his house and who was in high trust with him. So the lover addressed himself to the youth and insinuated himself into his favour by presents and fair words, till he became more obedient to him than the hand to the mouth and did whatever he bade him. One day, he said to him, “Harkye, such an one; wilt thou not bring me into thy dwelling some time when thy lady is gone out?” “Yes,” answered the steward; so, when his master was at the shop and his mistress gone forth to the bath, he took his friend and bringing him into the house, showed him all that was therein.

Now the lover was minded to play a trick upon the lady; so he took white of egg, that he had brought with him in a vessel, and sprinkled it on the merchant’s bed, unseen of the young man, after which he left the house and went his way. Presently, the merchant came home and going to the bed, to rest himself, found thereon something wet. So he took it up in his hand and looked at it and deemed it human sperm; whereat he looked at the young man with angry eyes and said to him, “Where is thy mistress?” “She is gone forth to the bath and will return forthright,” replied he. When the man heard this, his suspicion was confirmed and he said, “Go and bring her back at once.” The steward accordingly fetched her and when she came before her husband, the latter sprang upon her and beat her grievously, then, binding her hands behind her, offered to kill her; but she cried out to the neighbours, who came to her, and she said to them, “My husband has beaten me without cause and is minded to kill me, though I know not what I have done.” So they said to him, “Why hast thou dealt thus by her?” And he answered, saying, “She is divorced.” Said they, “Thou hast no right to maltreat her; either divorce her or use her kindly, for we know her chastity. Indeed, she hath been our neighbour this long time and we know no evil of her.” Quoth he, “When I came home, I found on my bed human sperm, and I know not the meaning of this.” Upon this, one of those present came forward and said, “Show it to me.” When he saw it, he smelt it and calling for fire and a frying-pan, fried the white of egg. Then he made the husband and the others taste of it, and they were certified that it was white of egg. So the husband was convinced of his wife’s innocence and the neighbours made peace between them; and so the lover’s wicked trick came to nought. And know, O King, that this is an instance of the malice of men and their perfidy.’

When the King heard this, he bade put his son to death; but the second vizier came forward and kissing the earth before him, said, ‘O King, hasten not to slay thy son, tor he was not vouchsafed to his mother but after she had despaired, and we trust that he will live to become a treasure to thy realm and a guardian of thy good. Wherefore, have patience, O King; belike he will speak and excuse himself; and if thou make haste to slay him, thou wilt surely repent, even as the merchant repented.’ Quoth the King, ‘And how was it with the merchant, O vizier?’ ‘O King,’ answered the vizier, ‘I have heard that

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The Niggard and the Loaves of Bread.

There was once a merchant, who was niggardly in his eating and drinking. One day, he went on a journey to a certain town and as lie walked in the market streets, he came upon an old woman with two cakes of bread. He asked her if they were for sale, and she said, “Yes.” So he chaffered with her and bought them at a low price and took them home to his lodging, where he ate them that day. On the morrow, he returned to the same place and finding the old woman there with other two cakes, bought these also; and thus he did twenty days’ space, at the end of which time the old woman disappeared. He made enquiry for her, but could hear nothing of her, till, one day, as he was walking about the streets, he chanced upon her; so he accosted her and asked why she had ceased to attend the market and bring him the two cakes of bread. At first, she evaded giving him a reply; but he conjured her to tell him; so she said, “Know, O my lord, that I was attending upon a certain man, who had an ulcer on his spine, and his doctor used to knead flour with butter into a plaster and lay it on the place of the pain, where it abode all night. In the morning, I used to take the flour and make it into two cakes, which I sold to thee or another; but presently the man died and I was cut off from making the cakes.” When the merchant heard this, he repented, whenas repentance availed nothing, saying, “Verily, we are God’s and to Him we return! There is no power and no virtue but in Him, the Most High, the Supreme!” And he repeated the saying of the Most High, “Whatsoever betideth thee of good, it is from God, and whatsoever betideth thee of ill, it is from thyself,” and vomited till he fell sick.

Moreover, O King,’ continued the second vizier, ‘I have heard tell, of the malice of women, that

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The Lady and Her Two Lovers.

There was once a man, who was swordbearer to one of the kings, and he loved a certain woman of the common people. One day, he sent his page to her with a message, as of wont between them, and the latter sat down with her and toyed with her. She inclined to him and pressed him to her bosom, whereupon he sought to lie with her and she consented unto him; but, as they were thus, the sword bearer knocked at the door. So she clapped the young man into an underground chamber there and opened the door to his master, who came in, sword in hand, and sat down on her bed. Then she came to him and sported and toyed with him, kissing him and pressing him to her bosom, and he took her and lay with her.

Presently her husband knocked at the door and he said to her, "Who is that?" "My husband," replied she. Quoth he, "How shall I do?" And she, "Draw thy sword and stand in the vestibule and rail at me and revile me; and when my husband comes in to thee, do thou go forth and go thy ways." He did as she bade him, and when the husband entered, he saw the king's swordbearer standing with his drawn sword in his hand, reviling and threatening his wife; but, when the other saw him, he was ashamed and sheathing his sword, went forth the house. Quoth the man to his wife, "What means this?" And she answered, saying, "O man, how blessed is the hour of thy coming! Thou hast saved a true believer from death; and it was on this wise. I was on the housetop, spinning, when there came up to me a youth, panting and distracted for fear of death, fleeing from yonder man, who followed hard upon him with his drawn sword. The young man fell down before me, and kissed my hands and feet, saying, 'O my lady, save me from him who would kill me without just cause!' So I hid him in the underground chamber there and presently in came yonder man to me with his naked sword in his hand, demanding the youth. But I denied him to him, whereupon he fell to reviling and threatening me as thou sawest. And praised be God who sent thee to me, for I was at my wits' end and had none to deliver me!"

"Well hast thou done, O woman!" answered the husband. "Thy reward is with God and may He abundantly requite thee!" Then he went to the trapdoor and called to the page, saying, “Come forth and fear not; no harm shall befall thee.” So he came out, trembling for fear, and the husband condoled with him on what had befallen him, saying, “Be of good cheer: none shall hurt thee;” whilst the page called down blessings on his head. Then they both went forth, nor was either aware of that which the woman had contrived. This, then, O King,’ said the vizier, ‘is one of the tricks of women; so beware lest thou put faith in their speech.’

The King was persuaded and turned from putting his son to death, but, next day, the favourite came in to him and kissing the earth before him, said, ‘O King, do me justice on thy son and be not turned from thy purpose by thy Vizier’s prate, for there is no good in wicked viziers, and be not as the king, who relied on the word of a certain wicked vizier of his.’ ‘And how was that? asked the King. Quoth she, ‘It hath been told me, O august and well-advised King, that

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The King’s Son and the Ogress.

A certain king had a son, whom he loved and favoured over all his other children; and this son said to him one day, “O my father, I have a mind to go a-hunting.” So the king bade furnish him and commanded one of his viziers to bear him company and do all he needed during his absence. The vizier accordingly took all that was necessary for the journey and they set out with a retinue of slaves and servants and officers, and fared on till they came to a green and well-watered champaign abounding in pasture and game. Here the prince called a halt and they loosed the hawks and lynxes and dogs and caught great plenty of game, whereat they rejoiced and abode there some days, in all pleasance and delight of life. Then the prince gave the signal for departure, but, as they went along, a beautiful gazelle, as if the sun shone from her forehead, that had strayed from the herd, sprang up before the prince, whereupon his soul longed to make prize of her and he coveted her. So he said to the vizier, “I have a mind to follow yonder gazelle.” “Do what seemeth good to thee,” said the vizier. So the prince rode after the gazelle, till he lost sight of his companions, and chased her all that day till dusk, when she took refuge in the mountains and the darkness closed in upon him. Then he would have turned back, but knew not the way; whereat he was sore concerned and said, “There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!”

He rode on all night, in quest of relief, but found none, and when the day appeared, he fared on at hazard, fearful and exhausted with hunger and thirst and the heat of the sun, until midday, when he came in sight of a great city, with massive walls and lofty turrets; but it was ruined and desolate, nor was there any live thing therein save the owl and the raven. As he stood among the ruins, marvelling at their ordinance, his eyes fell on a young and beautiful damsel sitting weeping, under one of the city walls. So he went up to her and said, “Who art thou and who brought thee hither?” “I am called Bint et Temimeh, daughter of Et Tiyakh, King of the Gray Country,” answered she. “I went out one day on an occasion, when an Afrit of the Jinn snatched me up and soared with me between heaven and earth; but as he flew, there fell on him a flame of fire and consumed him, and I dropped here, where I have hungered and thirsted these three days; but, when I saw thee, I coveted life."

The prince was smitten with compassion for her and took her up behind him, saying, "Take heart and be of good cheer; for, if God (blessed and exalted be He!)restore me to my people and family, I will send thee back to thine own people." Then he rode on, praying to God for deliverance, and presently she said to him, "O King's son, put me down, that I may do an occasion under yonder wall." So he drew bridle and she alighted and hid herself behind the wall. He waited for her a long while and she came back, with the foulest of favours; which when he saw, he quaked for fear of her and his hair stood on end and he turned pale. Then she sprang up behind him, wearing the most hideous of aspects, and presently she said to him, "O King's son, what ails thee that I see thee troubled and thy favour changed?" Quoth he, "I have bethought me of somewhat that troubles me." And she, ‘‘ Seek aid against it of thy father's troops and warriors." "He whom I fear," answered the prince, "cares nothing for troops, neither can warriors affright him." "Then," rejoined she, "aid thyself against him with thy father's wealth and treasures." Quoth he, "He whom I fear will not be satisfied with wealth and treasures." And she, "Ye pretend that ye have in heaven a God who sees and is not seen and who can do all things." "Yes," answered he; "we have none but Him." "Then," said she, "pray thou to Him; haply He will deliver thee from thine enemy." So he raised his eyes to heaven and began to pray with his whole heart, saying, "O my God, I implore Thee to succour me against that which troubles me." Then he pointed to her with his hand, and she fell to the ground, burnt and black as a coal. Therewith he thanked God and praised Him and fared onward. And God (blessed and exalted be He!) of His grace made the way easy to him and guided him into the right road, so that he reached his father's capital, after he had despaired of life. Now all this befell by the contrivance of the vizier, who travelled with him to the end that he might cause him to perish by the way; but God the Most High succoured him. 'And this,' said the damsel, 'have I told thee, O King, that thou mayst know that wicked viziers deal not honestly by their kings neither counsel them with sincere intent, wherefore be thou ware of them in this matter.'

The King gave ear to her speech and commanded to put his son to death; but the third vizier said [to his brother viziers,] 'I will warrant you from the King's mischief this day;' and going in to him, kissed the earth before him and said, 'O King, I am thy loyal counsellor and affectionately solicitous for thee arid thine estate, and indeed, I give thee a true counsel; it is that thou hasten not to slay thy son, the solace of thine eyes and the fruit of thine entrails. Belike his offence is but a slight matter, which this damsel hath made great to thee; and indeed I have heard tell that the people of two villages once destroyed each other, because of a drop of honey.' 'How was that?' asked the King, and the Vizier answered, saying, 'Know, O King, that

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The Drop of Honey.

A certain man used to hunt the wild beasts in the desert, and one day he came upon a grotto in the mountains, where he found a hollow full of bees' honey. So he took somewhat thereof in a water-skin he had with him and throwing it over his shoulder, carried it to the city, followed by a hunting dog which was dear to him. He stopped at the shop of an oilman and offered him the honey for sale and he bought it. Then he emptied it out of the skin that he might see it, and in the act a drop fell to the ground, whereupon the flies flocked to it and a bird swooped down upon the flies. Now the oilman had a cat, which pounced upon the bird, and the huntsman's dog, seeing the cat, sprang upon it and killed it; whereupon the oilman ran at the dog and killed it and the huntsman in turn leapt upon the oilman and killed him. Now the oilman was of one village and the huntsman of another; and when the people of the two places heard what had passed, they took up arms and rose on one another in anger, and there befell a sore battle; nor did the sword leave to play amongst them, till there died of them much people, none knoweth their number save God the Most High. And amongst other stories of the malice of women,' continued the Vizier, 'I have heard tell, O King, that

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The Woman Who Made Her Husband Sift Dust.

A man once gave his wife a dirhem to buy rice; so she went to the rice-seller, who gave her the rice and began to jest with her and ogle her, for she was fair and graceful, saying, “Rice is not good but with sugar, which if thou wilt have, come in with me awhile.” So she went in with him into his shop and he did his will of her and said to his slave, “Weigh her out a dirhem’s worth of sugar.” But he made the slave a privy sign, and the latter, taking the napkin, in which was the rice, emptied it out and put in its place earth, and for the sugar stones, after which he knotted the napkin up again and left it by her. Now the man’s object, in doing this, was that she should come to him a second time; so, when she went forth of the shop, he gave her the napkin and she took it, thinking to have in it rice and sugar, and went her way; but when she returned home and set it before her husband, he found in it earth and stones. So, when she came back with the cooking-pot, he said to her, “Did I tell thee that I had aught to build, that thou bringest me earth and stones? When she saw this, she knew that the rice-seller’s slave had tricked her; so she said to her husband, “O man, in my trouble of mind for what hath befallen me, I went to fetch the sieve and brought the cooking-pot.” “What hath troubled thee?” asked he; and she said, “I dropped the dirhem thou gayest me in the market and was ashamed to search for it before the folk; yet I grudged to lose the money, so I gathered up the earth from the place where it fell and brought it away, thinking to sift it [when I came home]. Wherefore I went to fetch the sieve, but brought the cooking-pot instead.” Then she fetched the sieve and gave it to her husband, saying, “Do thou sift it; for thine eyes are better than mine.” So he sat, sifting the earth, till his face and beard were covered with dust; and he discovered not her trick, neither knew what had befallen her. This then, O King, ‘said the Vizier, ‘is an instance of the malice of women, and consider the saying of God the Most High, “Verily, the malice of you [women] is great!” And again, “Indeed, the malice of Satan is weak [in comparison with that of women].”’

The King gave ear to his Vizier’s speech and was persuaded thereby and by what he cited to him of the sayings of God and the lights of good counsel arose and shone in the firmament of his understanding and he turned from his purpose of putting his son to death. But, on the fourth day, the favourite came in to him and kissing the earth before him, said, ‘O august King and lord of good counsel, I have made plainly manifest to thee my grievance and thou bast dealt unjustly by me and hast forborne to avenge me on him who hath wronged me, for that he is thy son and the darling of thy heart; but God (blessed and exalted be He!) will succour me against him, even as he succoured the king’s son against his father’s vizier.’ ‘And how was that?’ asked the King. ‘I have heard tell., O King,’ replied she, ‘that

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The Enchanted Springs.

There was once a king who had an only son; and when the latter grew up to man's estate, he contracted him in marriage to another king's daughter. Now she was beautiful and graceful and her cousin had sought her in marriage of her father, but she would none of him. So, when he knew that she was to be married to another, despite and jealousy gat hold on him and he bethought himself and sent a rich present to the vizier of the bride-groom's father, desiring him to use craft to make an end of the prince or go about with him, to bring him to leave his intent of marrying the princess and adding that he was the lady's cousin and that it was jealousy of her that moved him to this. The vizier accepted the present and sent an answer, saying, "Be of good cheer, for I will do all that thou wishest."

Presently, the bride's father wrote to the prince, bidding him to his capital, that he might go in to his daughter, whereupon the king his father despatched him thither, sending with him the vizier aforesaid and a thousand horse, besides presents and litters and tents and pavilions. The vizier set out with the prince, plotting the while in his heart to do him a mischief; and when they came into the desert, he called to mind a certain spring of running water in the mountains there, called Ez Zehra, whereof what man soever drank became a woman. So he called a halt near the place and presently mounting again, said to the prince, "Hast thou a mind to go with me and look upon a spring of water nigh at hand?" The prince assented, knowing not what should befall him in the future, and they rode on, unattended, till they came to the spring. The prince alighted and washed his hands and drank, whereupon he straightway became a woman. When he knew what had befallen him, he cried out and wept till he swooned away, and the vizier came up to him and said, "What ails thee?" So he told him what had happened, and the vizier feigned to condole with him and weep for his affliction, saying, "God the Most High succour thee in thine affliction! How came this grievous calamity upon thee, and we carrying thee, rejoicing, that thou mightest go in to the king's daughter? Verily, now I know not whether we shall go to her or not; but it is thine to decide. What dost thou hid me do?” Quoth the prince, “Go back to my father and tell him what hath befallen me, for I will not stir hence till this affliction be removed from me or I die in my grief.” So he wrote a letter to his father, telling him what had happened, and the vizier took it and set out to return, leaving the troops with the prince and glad at heart for the success of his plot. As soon as he reached the king’s capital, he went in to him and telling him what had passed, delivered to him the prince’s letter. The king mourned sore for his son and sent for the wise men and masters of hidden arts, that they might discover to him this thing that had happened to the prince, but none could give him an answer. As for the vizier, he sent to the lady’s cousin, giving him the glad news of the prince’s misfortune, which when he heard, he rejoiced greatly and thought to marry the princess and wrote to the vizier, thanking him exceedingly and sending him rich presents and great store of treasure.

Meanwhile, the prince abode by the stream three days and nights, eating not nor drinking and committing himself, in his strait, unto God (blessed and exalted be He!) who disappointeth not whoso putteth his trust in Him. On the fourth night, there came to him a cavalier with a crown on his head, as he were of the Sons of the kings, and said to him, “O youth, who brought thee hither?” The prince told him his story, in a voice broken with tears, and the horseman pitied his case and said to him, “It was thy father’s vizier who brought this thing upon thee, for he is the only man alive that knows of this spring: but mount thou behind me and come with me to my dwelling, for thou art my guest this night.” “Tell me first who thou art,” said the prince; and the other answered, saying, “I am a king’s son of the Jinn, as thou a king’s son of mankind; so take heart and be of good courage, for I will surely do away thy grief and trouble; and this is an easy thing unto me.”

So the prince mounted behind the stranger, and they rode on, leaving the troops, from the first of the day till midnight, when the King’s son of the Jinn said to the prince, “Knowest thou how many days’ travel we have accomplished in this time?” “Not I,” answered the prince, and the other, “We have a come a full year’s journey for a swift horseman.” The prince marvelled at this and said, “How shall I do to return to my people?” “That is not thine affair, but mine,” replied the genie. “As soon as thou art quit of thy trouble, thou shalt be with thy people in less than the twinkling of an eye; for that is an easy matter to me.” When the prince heard this, he well-nigh lost his wits for excess of joy; it seemed to him as he were in the mazes of a dream, and he exclaimed, “Glory be to Him who can restore the wretched to happiness!” They fared on all that night, and on the morrow they found themselves in a green and smiling country, full of towering trees and warbling birds and excellent fair gardens and splendid palaces and running waters and odoriferous flowers. Here the King’s son of the Jinn alighted and bidding the prince do the like, took him by the hand and carried him into one of the palaces, where he found a great and puissant king and abode with him all that day, eating and drinking.

As soon as it was night, the King’s son of the Jinn mounted his courser and taking the prince up behind him, fared on swiftly till morning, when they found themselves in a black and desert country, full of black rocks and stones, as it were a piece of hell; and the prince said to the genie, “What is the name of this land?” “It is called the Black Country,” answered the other, “and belongs to one of the Kings of the Jinn, by name Dhoul Jenahain, against whom none of the other kings may prevail, neither may any enter his dominions without his leave; so abide thou here, whilst I go ask it. So saying, he went away and returning after awhile, they fared on again, till they came to a spring of water welling forth of a black rock, and the King’s son of the Jinn bade the prince alight and drink. So he lighted down and drank of the spring, and no sooner had he done so than, by God’s grace, he became a man as before. At this he was beyond measure rejoiced and said to the genie, “O my brother, how is this spring called?”Quoth the other, “It is called the Women’s Spring, for that no woman drinks thereof but she becomes a man: wherefore do thou praise God the Most High and thank Him for thy restoration and mount.” So the prince prostrated himself in gratitude to God the Most High, after which he mounted again and they fared on diligently all that day, till they came to the genie’s palace, where the prince passed the night in all delight and solace of life.

They spent the next day in eating and drinking till nightfall, when the genie said to the prince, “Hast thou a mind to return to thy people?” “Yes,” replied he; “for indeed I long for them.” Then the king’s son of the Jinn called one of his father’s slaves, Rajiz by name, and said to him, “Take this young man on thy shoulders and let not the day dawn ere he be with his wife and father-in-law.” “I hear and obey,” answered the slave, and withdrawing awhile, reappeared in the form of an Afrit. When the prince saw this, he lost his senses for affright, but the genie said to him, “Fear not; no harm shall befall thee. Mount thy horse and leap him on to the Afrit’s shoulders.” “ Nay,” answered he ; “ I will leave my horse with thee and bestride his shoulders myself.” So he bestrode the Afrit’s shoulders and shut his eyes, as the genie bade him; whereupon the Afrit rose with him into the air and ceased not to fly between earth and heaven, whilst the prince was unconscious, nor was the last third of the night come before he lighted down with him on the roof of his father-in-law’s palace. Then said the Afrit, “Alight and open thine eyes; for this is the palace of thy father-in-law and his daughter.” So he alighted and the Afrit flew away and left him on the roof of the palace.

When the day broke and the prince recovered from his trouble, he went down into the palace and his father-in-law, espying him, came to meet him and marvelled to see him descend from the roof of the palace, saying, “We see folk enter by the doors; but thou comest from the skies.” Quoth the prince, “What God (may He be hallowed and glorified!) wills, cometh to pass.” And he told him all that had befallen him, from first to last, whereat the king marvelled and rejoiced in his safety and bade his vizier make ready splendid bride-feasts. So did he and they held the marriage festival, after which the prince went in to his bride and abode with her two months, then departed with her for his father’s capital: but, as for the lady’s cousin, he died of jealousy and despite. When the prince and his bride drew near his father’s city, the king came out to meet them with his troops and viziers, and so God (blessed and exalted be He!) aided the prince against his bride’s cousin and his father’s vizier. And I pray God the Most High,’ added the damsel, ‘to aid thee against thy viziers, O King, and I beseech thee to do me justice on thy son!’

When the King heard this (it being the fourth day), he bade put his son to death; but the fourth vizier entered and kissing the ground before him, said, ‘May God stablish and protect the King! O King, be deliberate in doing this thou art resolved upon, for the wise man doth nothing till he have considered the issue thereof, and the proverb says, “He who looks not to the issue of his actions, fortune is no friend to him ;” and whoso acteth without consideration, there befalleth him what befell the bath-keeper with his wife.’ ‘And what was that?’ asked the King. ‘I have heard tell, O King,’ answered the vizier, ‘that

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The Vizier's Son and the Bathkeeper's Wife.

There was once a bathkeeper, to whom resorted the notables and chiefs of the folk, and one day there came in to him a handsome young man of the sons of the viziers, who was fat and stout of body. So he stood to serve him and when the young man put off his clothes, he saw not his yard, for that it was hidden between his thighs, by reason of the excess of his fat, and there appeared thereof but what was like unto a filbert. At this, the bathkeeper fell a-lamenting and smiting hand upon hand, which when the youth saw, he said to him, "O bathkeeper, what ails thee to lament thus?" And he answered, saying, "O my lord, my lamentation is for thee, because thou art in sore straits, for all thy fair fortune and goodliness and exceeding grace, seeing thou hast nought wherewithal to do delight, like unto other men." Quoth the young man, "Thou sayst sooth, but thou mindest me of somewhat I had forgotten." "What is that?" asked the bathkeeper, and the youth said, "Take this dinar and fetch me a handsome woman, that I may prove myself on her." So he took the money and betaking himself to his wife, said to her, "O woman, there is come in to me in the bath a young man of the sons of the viziers, as he were the moon on the night of her full; but he hath no yard like other men, for that which he hath is but some small matter like unto a filbert. I lamented over his youth and he gave me this dinar and begged me to fetch him a woman, on whom he might approve himself. Now thou art worthier of the money than another, and no harm shall betide us from this, for I will protect thee. So do thou sit with him awhile and laugh at him and take this dinar from him." So she took the dinar and rising, adorned herself and donned the richest of her clothes. (Now she was the fairest woman of her time.) Then she went out with her husband, and he carried her in to the young man in a privy place. When she came in to him, she looked at him and finding him a handsome youth, fair of favour, as he were the moon at its full, was confounded at his beauty and grace; and on like wise his heart and wit were amazed at sight of her. So he rose forthright and locking the door, took the damsel in his arms and pressed her to his bosom and they embraced, whereupon the young man’s yard rose on end, as it were that of an ass, and he mounted her breast and swived her, whilst she sobbed and sighed and writhed and wriggled under him. Now the bathkeeper was standing behind the door, awaiting what should betide between them, and he began to call her, saying, “O Umm Abdal-lah, enough! Come out, for the day is long upon thy sucking child.” Quoth the youth, “Go forth to thy child and come back;” but she said, “If I go forth from thee, my soul will depart my body; so I must either leave the child to die of weeping or let him be reared an orphan, without a mother.” So she ceased not to abide with him, till he had done his desire of her half a score times, what while her husband stood at the door, calling her and crying out and weeping and imploring succour. But none came to him and he ceased not to do thus, saying, “I will kill myself!” till at last, finding no way of access to his wife and being distraught with rage and jealousy he went up to the top of the bath and casting himself down therefrom, died.

Moreover, O King,’ continued the Vizier, ‘there hath reached me another story of the malice of women.’ ‘What is that?’ asked the King, and the Vizier said, ‘Know, O King, that

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The Wife’s Device to Cheat Her Husband.

There was once a woman, who had no equal in her day for beauty and grace and perfection; and a certain lewd fellow, setting eyes on her, fell passionately in love with her, but she was chaste and inclined not to adultery. It chanced one day that her husband went on a journey to a certain town, whereupon the young man fell to sending to her many times a day; but she made him no reply. At last, he resorted to an old woman, who dwelt hard by, and complained to her of his suffering for love of the woman and his longing to enjoy her. Quoth she, “I will warrant thee this; no harm shall befall thee, for I will surely bring thee to thy desire, if it please God the Most High.” So he gave her a dinar and went his way. Next day she went in to the woman and clapping up an acquaintance with her, fell to visiting her daily, eating the morning with her and the evening meal and carrying away food for her children. Moreover, she used to sport and jest with her, till the wife became corrupted and could not endure an hour without her company.

Now she was wont, when she left the lady’s house, to feed a bitch, that was in that quarter, with the fragments that remained over, and thus she did day by day, till the bitch became fond of her and followed her wherever she went. One day she took a cake of dough and putting therein much pepper and butter, gave it to the bitch to eat, whereupon the animal’s eyes began to water, for the heat of the pepper, and she followed the old woman, weeping. When the lady saw this, she was amazed and said to the old woman, “O my mother, what ails this bitch to weep?” “O my daughter,” answered she, “hers is a strange story. Know that she was once a most lovely and accomplished young lady and a close friend of mine. A young man of the quarter fell in love with her and his passion increased on him, till he took to his pillow, and he sent to her many times, begging her to have compassion on him, but she refused, albeit I gave her good counsel, saying, ‘O my daughter, have pity on him and consent to that which he wishes.’ She gave no heed to my advice, until, at last, the young man’s patience failing him, he complained to one of his friends, who cast an enchantment on her and changed her into a bitch. When she saw what had befallen her and that there was none to pity her save myself, she came to my house and began to fawn on me and lick my hands and feet and whine and shed tears, till I recognized her and said to her, ‘How often did I not warn thee? But my advice profited thee nothing.’ However, I had compassion on her case and kept her by me; and as often as she bethinks herself of her former estate, she weeps thus.”

When the lady heard this, she was taken with great fear and said, “By Allah, O my mother, thou affrightest me with this thy story.” “Why so?” asked the old woman. “Because,” answered the lady, “a certain handsome young man fell in love with me and hath sent many times to me, but hitherto I have repelled him; and now I fear lest there befall me the like of what befell this bitch.” “O my daughter,” rejoined the old woman, “look thou to what I counsel thee and beware of crossing me, for I am in great fear for thee. If thou know not his abiding-place, describe him to me, that I may fetch him to thee, and let not any one’s heart be angered against thee.” So the lady described him to her, and she feigned not to know him and said, “When I go out, I will ask after him.” But when she left the lady, she went straight to the young man and said to him, “Be of good cheer, for I have played with the girl’s wits, [so that she hath consented;] so come thou to-morrow at noonday and wait at the end of the street, till I come and carry thee to her house, where thou shalt take thine ease with her the rest of the day and all night long.” At this the young man rejoiced greatly and gave her half a score dinars, saying, “When I have gotten my desire [of her,] I will give thee other ten dinars.”

Then she returned to the lady and said to her, “I have seen him and spoken with him on the matter. I found him exceeding wroth with thee and minded to do thee hurt, but I plied him with fair words till he agreed to come to-morrow at the time of the call to midday prayer. When the lady heard this, she rejoiced exceedingly and said, “O my mother, if he keep his promise, I will give thee ten dinars.” Quoth the old woman, “Look to none but me to bring him to thee.” When the next day came, she said to the lady, “Make ready the morning meal and adorn thyself and don thy richest clothes and ornaments, whilst I go and fetch him to thee.” Accordingly, she clad herself in her richest apparel and made ready food, whilst the old woman went out to look for the young man. The latter came not and she went round looking for him, but could come by no news of him; so she said to herself, "What is to be done? Shall the food she has made ready be wasted and I lose the reward she promised me? Indeed, I will not lose my pains thus, but will look her out another man and carry him to her." So she walked about the streets till her eye fell on a handsome and elegant young man, who bore on his face the traces of travel.

Now this was the lady's husband; but she knew it not; so she went up to him and saluted him, saying, "Hast thou a mind to meat and drink and a girl adorned and ready?" "Where is this to be had?" asked he. "At home, in my house," answered she and carrying him to his own house, knocked at the door. The lady opened to them and hastened in again, to make an end of her dressing and perfuming; whilst the old woman brought the husband into the saloon and made him sit down. Presently, in came the lady, who no sooner set eyes on her husband than she knew him and guessed how the case stood; nevertheless, she was not taken aback and forthwith bethought her of a device to hoodwink him. "Is this how thou keepest our contract?" cried she. "Hou canst thou betray me and deal thus with me? Know that, when I heard of thy coming, I sent this old woman to try thee and she hath made thee fall into that against which I warned thee: so now I am certified of thine affair and that thou hast broken faith with me. I thought thee chaste till now, till I saw thee, with my own eyes, in this old woman's company and knew that thou didst frequent loose women."

So saying, she pulled off her slipper and fell to beating him about the head, whilst he excused himself and swore to her by God the Most High that he had never in his life been untrue to her nor had done aught of that whereof she suspected him. But she stinted not to weep and scream and beat him, crying out and saying, "Come to my help, O Muslims!" till he laid hold of her mouth with his hand and she bit it. Moreover, he humbled himself to her and kissed her hands and feet, whilst she continued to cuff him and would not be appeased. At last, she made a privy sign to the old woman to come and hold her hand from him. So she came up to her and kissed her hands and feet, till she made peace between them and they sat down together; whereupon the husband began to kiss her hands, saying, “God requite thee with all good, for that thou hast delivered me from her!” And the old woman marvelled at the wife’s cunning and ready wit. This, then, O King,’ said the vizier, ‘is one of many instances of the craft and malice and perfidy of women.’

When the King heard this story, he was persuaded by it and turned from his purpose to kill his son; but, on the fifth day, the damsel came in to him with a cup of poison in her hand, calling aloud for help and buffeting her cheeks and face, and said to him, ‘O King, either thou shalt do me justice and avenge me on thy son, or I will drink this cup of poison and die, and my blood will be on thy head at the Day of Resurrection. Thy viziers accuse me of malice and perfidy, but there be none in the world more perfidious than men. Hast thou not heard the story of the goldsmith and the Cashmere singing-girl?’ ‘What befell them, O damsel?’ asked the King; and she answered, saying, ‘It hath come to my knowledge, O august King, that

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The Goldsmith and the Cashmere Singing-girl

There lived once, in a city of Persia, a goldsmith who delighted in women and in drinking wine. One day, being in the house of one of his friends, he saw painted on the wall the figure of a beautiful damsel, never beheld eyes a fairer or a more pleasant. He looked at the picture again and again, marvelling at its beauty, and fell so desperately in love with it, that lie sickened for passion and came near to die. It chanced that one of his friends came to visit him and sitting down by him, enquired how he did and what ailed him. “O my brother,” replied the goldsmith, “that which ails me is love, and it befell on this wise. I saw the figure of a woman painted on the wall of my brother such an one’s house and became enamoured of it.” Quoth the other, “This was of thy lack of wit; how couldst thou fall in love with a painted figure on a wall, a thing that can neither harm nor profit, that seeth not neither heareth, that neither taketh nor withholdeth.” “Surely,” said the sick man, “he who painted yonder picture must have limned it after the likeness of some beautiful woman.” “Belike,” rejoined his friend, “he painted it from imagination.” “In any case,” replied the goldsmith, “I am dying for love of the picture, and if there live the original thereof in the world, I pray God to keep me in life, till I see her.”

When those who were present went out, they enquired for the painter of the picture and finding that he had departed to another town, wrote him a letter, complaining of their friend’s case and asking whether he had drawn the figure of his own invention or copied it from a living model; to which he replied that he had painted it after a certain singing girl belonging to one of the viziers in the city of Cashmere in the land of Hind. When the goldsmith heard this, he set out for Cashmere, where he arrived, after much travail, and tarried awhile. There he clapped up an acquaintance with a certain druggist, a fellow of a keen and sprightly wit, and being one day in company with him, questioned him of their king and his polity; to which the other answered, saying, “Our king is just and righteous in his governance, equitable and beneficent to his subjects, and misliketh nothing in the world save sorcerers; but, whenever a sorcerer or sorceress falls into his hands, he casts them into a pit without the city and there leaves them to die of hunger." Then he questioned him of the king's viziers, and the druggist told him of each vizier, his fashion and condition, till the talk came round to the singing-girl and he told him that she belonged to such a vizier.

The goldsmith took note of the latter's abiding-place and waited some days, till he had devised a scheme to his mind; and one night of rain and thunder and stormy winds, he provided himself with thieves' tackle and repaired to the house of the vizier in question, where he grappled a rope ladder with grappling irons to the battlements and climbed up to the roof of the palace. Thence he descended to the inner court and making his way into the harem, found all the slave-girls lying asleep, each on her own couch and amongst them a damsel, as she were the moon on its fourteenth night, lying on a couch of alabaster and covered with a coverlet of cloth of gold. At her head stood a candle of ambergris, and at her feet another, each in a candlestick of glittering gold, and under her pillow lay a casket of silver, in which were her jewels. He raised the coverlet and drawing near her, considered her straitly, and behold, it was she whom he desired and of whom he was come in quest. So he took out a knife and wounded her in the hinder parts, a manifest [but superficial] wound, whereupon she awoke in terror; but, when she saw him, she was afraid to cry out, thinking he came to steal her jewels; so she said to him, "Take the box and what is therein, but slay me not, for it will profit thee nothing." So he took the box and went away.

On the morrow, he donned clothes after the fashion of men of learning and doctors of the law and taking the casket, went in therewith to the king of the city, before whom he kissed the earth and said to him, "O king, I am a loyal well-wisher to thee and come hither, a pilgrim to thy court from the land of Khorassan, attracted by the report of thy just governance and righteous dealing with thy subjects and minded to be under thy standard. I reached this city yestereve and finding the gate shut, lay down to sleep without: but, as I lay betwixt sleep and wake, I saw four women come up, one riding on a broom, another on a wine-jar, a third on an oven-peel and a fourth on a black bitch, and knew that they were witches making for the city. One of them came up to me and kicked me with her foot and beat me grievously with a fox's tail she had in her hand, whereat I was wroth and smote her with a knife I had with me, wounding her in the hinder parts, as she turned to flee from me. When she felt the wound, she fled before me and in her flight let drop this casket, which I picked up and opening, found therein these costly jewels. Wherefore do thou take it, for I have no need of it, being a wanderer in the mountains, who have put away the world from my heart and renounced it and all that is in it, seeking [only] the favour of God the Most High." Then he set the casket before the king and went away. The king opened the box and emptying out all the trinkets it contained, fell to turning them over, till he chanced upon a necklace of which he had made gift to the vizier to whom the girl belonged. So he called the vizier in question and said to him, "This is the necklace I gave thee?" He knew it and answered, "It is; and I gave it to a singing-girl of mine." Quoth the king, "Fetch her to me forthwith." So he fetched her to him, and he said, "Uncover her hinder parts and see if there be a wound therein or no." The vizier accordingly bared her backside and finding a knife wound there, said, "Yes, O my lord, there is a wound." Then said the king, "Doubtless, this is the witch of whom the devotee told me," and bade cast her into the witches' well. So they carried her thither forthwith.

As soon as it was night and the goldsmith knew that his plot had succeeded, he repaired to the pit, taking with him a purse of a thousand dinars, and entering into converse with the warder, sat talking with him till a third part of the night was past, when he broached the matter to him, saying, "Know, O my brother, that this girl is innocent of that they lay to her charge and that it was I brought this calamity upon her." Then he told him the whole story, adding, "Take this purse of a thousand dinars and give me the damsel, that I may carry her to my own land, for the money will profit thee more than keeping her in prison; moreover God will requite thee for us, and we will both offer up prayers for thy safety and prosperity." When the warder heard this story, he marvelled exceedingly at this device and taking the money, delivered the girl to the goldsmith, on condition that he should not abide one hour with her in the city. So the goldsmith took the girl and fared on with her, without ceasing, till he reached his own country, and so he attained his desire. See then, O King,' said the damsel, 'the malice of men and their wiles. Now thy viziers hinder thee from doing me justice [on thy son], but to-morrow both thou and I will stand before the Just Judge, and He shall do me justice on thee, O King.'

When the King heard this, he commanded to put his son to death, but the fifth vizier came in to him and kissing the earth before him, said, 'O mighty King, delay and hasten not to slay thy son, for oftentimes haste engendereth repentance; and I fear for thee lest thou repent, even as did the man who never laughed again.' 'And how was that, O Vizier?' asked the King. 'I have heard tell, O King,' answered the Vizier, 'that

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The Man Who Never Laughed Again.

There was once a man who was rich in lands and houses and goods and slaves, and he died and went to the mercy of God the Most High, leaving a young son, who, when he grew up, gave himself to feasting and hearing music and singing and wasted his substance in gifts and prodigality, till he had squandered all the money his father left him. Then he betook himself to selling his slaves and lands and houses and spent the proceeds on like wise, till he was reduced to beggary and must needs labour for his living. He abode thus a year's space, at the end of which time he was sitting one day under a wall, awaiting who should hire him, when there came up to him a man of comely aspect and apparel and saluted him. "O uncle," said the young man, "hast thou known me aforetime?" "Not so, O my son," replied the other, "I know thee not at all; but I see the trace of gentle breeding on thee, despite thy present case." "O uncle," rejoined the poor man, "needs must Fate and fore-ordained fortune be accomplished; but, O uncle, bright of face, hast thou any occasion wherein thou wouldst employ me?" "Yes," said the other, "I wish to employ thee in an easy matter." "What is it?" asked the young man, and the stranger, "I have with me ten old men in one house, but we have none to serve us; so, if thou wilt take service with us, thou shalt have food and clothing to thy heart's content, besides what cometh to thee of money and other goods, and haply God will restore thee thy fortune by our means." "With all my heart," replied the youth. " But," said the other, "I have a condition to impose on thee." Quoth he, "What is that?" And the old man said, "O my son, it is that thou keep our secret in what thou seest us do, and if thou see us weep, that thou question us not of the cause of our weeping." "It is well, O uncle," replied the young man; whereupon the other bade him, "Come with me, O my son, with the blessing of God the Most High!"

So he followed him to the bath, where he caused cleanse his body of the crusted dirt, after which he sent for a handsome garment of linen and clad him therein. Then he carried him to a lofty and spacious house, wherein were sitting-chambers facing one another and saloons, in each a fountain of water, with the birds warbling over it, and windows on every side, giving upon a fair garden within the house. The old man brought him into one of the sitting-chambers, which was paved and lined with vari coloured marble and spread with silken carpets, and the roof thereof decorated with ultramarine and glittering gold; and here he found ten old men in mourning apparel, seated opposite one another, weeping and wailing. He marvelled at their case and was about to ask the reason, when he remembered the condition and held his peace. Then he who had brought him delivered to him a chest containing thirty thousand dinars and said to him, "O my son, spend from this chest what is fitting for our entertainment and thine own; and be thou faithful and remember that wherewith I charged thee as to secrecy." "I hear and obey," answered he and served them days and nights, till one of them died, whereupon his fellows washed him and shrouded him and buried him in a garden behind the house; nor did death cease to take them, one after another, till there remained but he who had hired the youth.

Then the two dwelt together alone for years and years, nor was there with them a third save God the Most High, till the old man fell sick; and when the other despaired of his life, he went up to him and condoling with him, said, "O uncle, I have served you twelve years and have not failed of your service a single hour, but have been loyal and faithful to you and served you with my might." "Yes, O my son," answered the old man, "thou hast served us [well; but now] my comrades are gone to the mercy of God (to whom belong might and majesty) and needs must I die also." "O my lord," said the other, "thou art in danger of death and I would fain have thee acquaint me with the cause of your weeping and wailing and of your unceasing mourning and lamentation." "O my son," answered the old man, "it concerns thee not to know this, so importune me not of what I may not do: for I have vowed to God the Most High that I would acquaint none of His creatures with this, lest he be afflicted with what befell me and my comrades. If, then, thou desire to be delivered from that into which we fell, look thou open not yonder door," and pointed to a certain part of the house; "but, if thou have a mind to suffer what we have suffered, then open it and thou shalt learn the cause of that which thou hast seen us do; and whenas thou knowest it, thou wilt repent, what time repentance will avail thee not." Then his sickness increased on him and he accomplished his term [of life] and departed to the presence of his Lord; and the young man washed him with his own hands and shrouded him and buried him with his comrades; after which he abode alone in the house and took possession of all that was therein.

Yet he was uneasy and troubled concerning the case of the old man, till, one day, as he sat pondering the words of his dead master and his injunction not to open the door, he suddenly bethought himself to go and look for it. So he repaired to the part whither the dead man had pointed and sought till, in a dark and unfrequented corner, he found a little door, over which the spider had spun its webs and which was fastened with four locks of steel. Then he recalled the old man's warning and restrained himself and went away; and he held aloof from it seven days, whilst all the time his heart would have him open it. On the eighth day his curiosity got the better of him and he said, "Come what will, I must open the door and see what will happen to me. Nothing can avert what is decreed and fore-ordained of God the Most High nor doth aught befall but by His will." So saying, he rose and broke the locks and opening the door, found himself in a narrow passage, which he followed for three hours, at the end of which time he came out on the shore of a vast ocean and fared on along the beach, marvelling at this sea, [of which he had no knowledge] and turning right and left, till, presently, a great eagle swooped down upon him and seizing him in its talons, flew away with him betwixt heaven and earth, till it came to an island in the midst of the sea, where it cast him down and flew away, leaving him dazed and knowing not whither he should go.

After awhile, as he sat pondering his case, he caught sight of the sails of a ship in the midst of the sea, as it were a star in the mid-heaven; and his heart clave to it, so haply his deliverance might be therein. He continued gazing at the ship, till it drew near, when he saw that it was a galley builded all of ivory and ebony, inlaid with glittering gold, with oars of sandal and aloes-wood. In it were ten damsels, high-bosomed maids, as they were moons, who, when they saw him, came ashore to him and kissed his hands, saying, "Thou art the king, the bride-groom!" Then there came to him a young lady, as she were the sun shining in the cloudless sky, bearing a silken napkin, wherein were a royal robe and a crown of gold set with all manner rubies and pearls. She threw the robe over him and set the crown on his head, after which the damsels bore him in their arms to the galley, where he found all kinds of silken carpets and hangings of various colours. Then they spread the sails and stretched out into mid-ocean.

[Quoth the young man] Indeed, when they put to sea with me, meseemed it was a dream and I knew not whither they went with me. Presently, we drew near to land, and I saw the shore full of troops magnificently arrayed and clad in complete steel, none knoweth their number save God (blessed and exalted be He!) As soon as the galley had made fast to the land, they brought me five horses of noble breeds, housed and saddled with gold, inlaid with all manner pearls and precious stones. I chose out one of them and mounted it, whilst they led the four others before me. Then they raised the banners and the standards over my head, whilst the troops ranged themselves right and left, and we set out, with drums beating and cymbals clashing, and rode on, — whilst I debated in myself whether I were on sleep or on wake, believing not in that my estate, but taking all this for the pageant of a dream, — till we drew near to a green champaign, full of palaces and gardens and trees and streams and flowers and birds chanting the praises of God, the One, the Victorious. At our approach, an army poured out from amid the palaces and gardens, as it were the torrent, when it pours down [from the mountains,] and overflowed the plain. The troops halted at a little distance from me and there rode forth from amongst them a king, preceded by some of his chief officers on foot.

He came up to the young man and dismounted, whereupon the latter dismounted also, and they saluted each other after the goodliest fashion. Then said the King, “Come with us, for thou art my guest.” So they took horse again and rode on in great state, conversing as they went, till they came to the royal palace, where they alighted and the king taking the young man by the hand, led him into the palace, followed by his suite, and making him sit down on a throne of gold, seated himself beside him. Then he unbound the chinband from his face; and behold, the king was a young lady, like the sun shining in the cloudless sky, accomplished in beauty and elegance and amorous grace and all perfection. Quoth she to the young man, who was lost in wonder at her beauty and grace and at the splendour and affluence he saw about him, "Know, O King, that I am the queen of this country and that all the troops thou hast seen, whether horse or foot, are women, there is no man amongst them; for in this our state the men delve and sow and reap and occupy themselves with the tillage of the earth and other mechanical crafts and arts, whilst the women govern and fill the great offices of state and bear arms."

At this he marvelled past measure and as they were in discourse, in came a tall gray-haired old woman of venerable and majestic aspect, and it was told him that this was the vizieress. Quoth the queen to her, "Bring me the Cadi and the witnesses." So she went out to do this, and the queen, turning to him, conversed with him in friendly fashion and enforced herself to reassure him and do away his shamefastness with speech blander than the zephyr, saying, "Art thou content to take me to wife? Thereupon he arose and would have kissed the earth before her; but she forbade him and he replied, saying, " O my lady, I am the least of thy servants." "Seest thou all these servants and soldiers and riches and treasures?" asked she; and he answered, "Yes." Quoth she, "All these are at thy commandment; dispose of them and give and bestow as seemeth good to thee." Then she pointed to a closed door and said, "All these things are at thy disposal, save yonder door; that shalt thou not open, else wilt thou repent, when repentance will avail thee not." Hardly had she made an end of speaking when the vizieress entered, followed by the Cadi and the witnesses, all old women of reverend and majestic aspect, with their hair streaming over their shoulders; and the queen bade them draw up the contract of marriage between herself and the young man. So they performed the marriage-ceremony and the queen made a great bride-feast, to which she bade all the troops; and after they had eaten and drunken, he went in to his bride and found her a clean maid.

So he did away her maidenhead and abode with her seven years in all delight and solace of life, till, one day, he bethought himself of the forbidden door and said in himself; "Except there were therein treasures greater and finer than any I have seen, she had not forbidden me therefrom.” So he rose and opened the door, when, lo, behind it was the very bird that had brought him to the island, and it said to him, “An ill welcome to a face that shall never prosper!,’ When he saw it and heard what it said, he fled from it; but it followed him and seizing him in its talons, flew with him an hour’s journey betwixt heaven and earth, till it set him down in the place whence it had first carried him off and flew away. When he came to his senses, he called to mind his late great and glorious estate and all the honour and fair fortune he had lost and fell to weeping and wailing.

He abode two months on the sea-shore, where the bird had set him down, hoping yet to return to his wife, till, as he sat one night wakeful, mourning and musing, he heard one speaking and saying, “How great were the delights! Far, far from thee is the return of that which is past!” When he heard this, he redoubled in his regrets and despaired of recovering his wife and his late fair estate; so he returned, weary and broken-hearted, to the house where he had dwelt with the old men and knew that they had fared even as he and that this was the cause of their weeping and mourning; wherefore he held them excused. Then, being overcome with chagrin and regret, he took to his chamber and gave himself up to mourning and lamentation; and he ceased not to weep and lament and left eating and drinking and pleasant scents and laughter, till he died and they buried him beside the old men. See, then, O King,’ continued the Vizier, ‘what cometh of haste; verily, it is unpraiseworthy and begetteth repentance; and in this I give thee true and loyal counsel.’

When the King heard the Vizier’s story, he turned from slaying his son; but, on the sixth day, the favourite came in to him with a naked knife in her hand and said to him,’Know, O my lord, that, except thou hearken to my complaint and protect thy right and thine honour against these thy viziers, who are banded together against me, to do me wrong, I will kill myself with this knife, [and my blood will testify against thee on the Day of Judgment]. Indeed, they pretend that women are full of tricks and malice and perfidy and design by this to defeat me of my right and hinder the King from doing me justice; but, behold, I will prove to thee that men are more perfidious than women by the story of a king of the kings and how he gained access to the wife of a certain merchant.’ ‘And what passed between them?' asked the King. 'I have heard tell, O august King,' replied she, 'that

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The King’s Son and the Merchant’s Wife.

A certain jealous merchant had a beautiful wife; and of the excess of his fearfulness and jealousy of her, he would not abide with her in any town, but built her a pavilion without the city, apart from all other buildings, and fortified it with high walls and strong doors, secured with curious locks; and when he had occasion to go into the city, he locked the doors and hung the keys about his neck. One day, when the merchant was abroad, the king’s son of the city came forth, to take his pleasure in the open country without the walls, and coming to the solitary pavilion, stood still to examine it. Presently, he caught sight of a lovely lady looking out of one of the windows and being smitten with amazement at her grace and beauty, cast about for a means of getting to her, but could find none. So he called to one of his attendants, who brought him pen and paper anti inkhorn, and wrote her a letter, setting forth his case for love of her. Then he set it on the point of an arrow and shot it at the pavilion, and it fell in the garden, where the lady was then walking with her maidens. She bade one of the latter hasten and bring her the letter, for she could read writing; and when she had read it and saw what he said in it of his love and passion and longing, she wrote him a reply, to the effect that she was smitten with a yet fiercer passion for him and threw the letter down to him from one of the windows of the pavilion. When he saw her, he picked up the reply and after reading it, came under the window and said to her, “Let me down a string, that I may send thee this key, which do thou take and keep by thee.” So she let down a string and he tied the key to it.

Then he went away and repairing to one of his father’s viziers, complained to him of his passion for the lady and that he could not live without her; and the vizier said, “And how dost thou bid me contrive?” Quoth the prince, “I would have thee lay me in a chest and commit it to the merchant, feigning to him that it is thine and desiring him to keep it for thee in his country-house some days, that I may have my will of her; then do thou demand it back from him.” The vizier answered, “With all my heart.” So the prince returned to his palace and fixing the padlock, the key whereof he had given the lady, on a chest he had by him, entered the latter, whereupon the vizier locked it upon him and setting it on a mule, carried it to the pavilion of the merchant. The latter, seeing the vizier, came forth to him and kissed his hands, saying, “Belike our lord the vizier hath some need or business which we may have the pleasure of accomplishing for him?” “Yes,” answered the vizier; “I would have thee set this chest in the priviest place in thy house and keep it till I seek it of thee.” So the merchant made the porter carry it in and set it down in one of his store-houses, after which he went out upon some occasion of his. As soon as he was gone, his wife went up to the chest and unlocked it with the key the prince had given her, whereupon there came forth a youth like the moon. When she saw him, she donned her richest apparel and carried him to her sitting-chamber, where they abode seven days, eating and drinking and making merry; and as often as her husband came home, she put the prince back into the chest and locked it upon him.

One day, the king asked for his son and the vizier hurried off to the merchant’s [town] house and sought of him the chest. The merchant accordingly repaired in haste to his pavilion, at a time other than of his wont, and knocked at the door. When his wife was ware of him, she hurried the prince back into the chest, but, in her confusion, forgot to lock it. The merchant bade the porters take it up and carry it to his house in the town. So they took up the box by the lid, whereupon it flew open and discovered the prince lying within. When the merchant saw him and knew him for the king’s son, he went out to the vizier and said to him, “Go in, thou, and take the King’s son; for none of us may lay hands on him.” So the vizier went in and taking the prince, went away with him. As soon as they were gone, the merchant put away his wife and swore that he would never marry again. And I have heard tell also, O King,’ continued the damsel, ‘that

The Page Who Feigned to Know the Speech of Birds.

A certain man of condition once entered the slave-market and saw a page put up for sale; so he bought him and carrying him home, gave him in charge to his wife, with whom he abode awhile. One day the man said to his wife, “Go forth to-morrow to the garden and take thy pleasure therein.” And she replied, “With all my heart.” When the page heard this, he made ready in secret meat and drink and fruits and dessert and sallied forth with them privily that night to the garden, where he laid the meat under one tree, the drink under another and the fruits and conserves under a third, in the way his mistress should pass. Next morning, the husband bade him accompany the lady to the garden; so she took horse and riding thither with him, dismounted and entered.

Presently, as they were walking about, a crow croaked, and the page said, “Thou sayst truly,” whereupon his mistress said to him, “Dost thou know what the crow said?” “Yes, O my lady,” answered he; “he said, ‘Under yonder tree is meat; go and eat it.’” So she went up to the tree and finding a dish of meat ready dressed, was assured that the youth understood the speech of birds and marvelled exceedingly. They ate of the meat and walked about awhile, taking their pleasure in the garden, till the crow croaked a second time, and the page again replied, “Thou sayst well.” “What said he?” asked the lady, and the page, “O my lady, he says that under such a tree is a pitcher of old wine and a gugglet of water flavoured with musk.” So she went up to the tree and finding the wine and water there, redoubled in wonderment and the page was magnified in her eyes. They sat down and drank, then arose and walked in another part of the garden. Presently, the crow croaked again and the page said, “ Right.” Quoth the lady, “What says he now?” and the page, “He says that under yonder tree are fruits and confections.” So they went thither and found all as he said and sat down and ate. Then they walked about again till the crow croaked a fourth time, whereupon the page took up a stone and cast it at him. Quoth she, “What said he, that thou shouldst stone him?” ‘ O my lady,” answered he, “he said what I cannot tell thee." "Say on," rejoined she, "and be not abashed, for there is nought between me and thee." But he ceased not to say, "No," and she to press him to speak, till at last she conjured him to tell her, and he answered, "The crow said to me, 'Do with thy mistress even as doth her husband.'"

When she heard this, she laughed till she fell backward and said, "This is a light matter, and I may not cross thee therein." So saying, she went up to a tree and spreading the carpet under it, [lay down and] called to him to come and do her need, when, behold, her husband, who had followed them unawares and saw this, called out to the page, saying, "Harkye, boy! What ails thy mistress to lie there, weeping?" "O my lord," answered the page, "she fell off the tree and was [all but] killed; and none but God (may He be exalted and glorified!) restored her to thee. Wherefore she lay down awhile to recover herself" When the lady saw her husband standing by her, she rose and made a show of weakness and pain, saying, "O my back! O my sides! Come to my help, O my friends! I shall never survive this." So her husband was deceived and sending the page for the horse, set her thereon and carried her home, the boy holding one stirrup and the man the other and saying, "God vouchsafe thee ease and recovery!"

These then, O King,' said the damsel, 'are some instances of the craft and perfidy of men; wherefore let not thy viziers turn thee from succouring me and doing me justice. Then she wept, and when the King saw her weeping, (for she was the dearest to him of all his slave-girls,) he once more commanded to put his son to death; but the sixth vizier entered and kissing the earth before him, said, 'May God the Most High advance the King! Verily I am a loyal counsellor to thee, in that I counsel thee to deal deliberately in the matter of thy son; for falsehood is as smoke and truth is a strongly stablished [fortress]; yea, and the light thereof dispels the darkness of falsehood. Know that the perfidy of women is great, even as saith God the Most High in His Holy Book, "Verily, the malice of you [women] is great." And indeed I have heard tell of a certain woman who befooled the chiefs of the state on such wise as never did any before her.' 'And how was that?' asked the King. 'I have heard tell, O King,' answered the vizier, 'that

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The Lady and Her Five Suitors.

A certain woman of the daughters of the merchants was married to a man who was a great traveller. It chanced once that he set out for a far country and was absent so long that his wife, for pure weariness, fell in love with a handsome young man of the sons of the merchants, who returned her passion, and they loved each other with an exceeding love. One day, the youth fell out with another man, who lodged a complaint against him with the chief of the police, and he cast him into prison. When the news came to his mistress, she well-nigh lost her wits and rising, donned her richest clothes and repaired to the house of the chief of the police, whom she saluted and presented with a petition to the effect that the prisoner was her brother, who had been unjustly accused and condemned on false witness, and that she had none other to come in to her nor to provide for her support and beseeching him of his grace to release him. When the magistrate had read the petition, he cast his eyes on her and fell in love with her; so he said to her, “Go into the house, till I bring him before me; then will I send for thee and thou shalt take him.” “O my lord,” answered she, “I have none save God the Most High. Indeed, I am a stranger and may not enter any one’s house.” Quoth the chief of the police, “I will not let him go, except thou enter my house and I take my will of thee.” “If it must be so,” rejoined she, “thou must come to my house and sit and sleep and rest the whole day there.” “And where is thy house?” asked he. “In such a place,” answered she and appointed him for such a time.

Then she went out from him, leaving his heart taken with love of her, and repaired to the Cadi of the city, to whom said she, “O my lord the Cadi, look into my case, and thy reward be with God the Most High!” Quoth he, “Who hath wronged thee?” and she answered, saying, “O my lord, I have a brother and I have none but him, and it is on his account that I come to thee; for that the chief of the police hath imprisoned him for a wrong-doer, on the evidence of false witnesses. [Indeed, he is wronged] and I beseech thee to intercede for him with the chief of the police.” When the Cadi looked on her, he fell in love with her and said to her, “Enter the house and rest awhile with my women, whilst I send to the chief of the police to release thy brother. If I knew the forfeit that is upon him, I would pay it out of my own monies, so I may have my desire of thee, for thou pleasest me with thy sweet speech." Quoth she, "If thou, O my lord, do thus, we must not blame others." But the Cadi answered, saying, "An thou wilt not come in, go thy ways." Then said she, "If thou wilt have it so, O my lord, it will be safer and better in my house than in thine, for here are slave-girls and servants and goers-in and corners-out, and indeed I am a woman who knows nought of this fashion; but necessity compels." "And where is thy house?" asked the Cadi. "In such a place," answered she and appointed him for the same time as the chief of the police.

Then she went to the Vizier, to whom she preferred her petition for the release of her [pretended] brother from prison: but he also required her of herself, saying, " Suffer me to have my desire of thee and I will set thy brother free." Quoth she, "If thou wilt have it so, be it in my House, for there it will be safer both for me and for thee. It is not far distant and thou knowest that which behoveth us [women] of cleanliness and elegance." "Where is thy house?" asked he. "In such a place," answered she and appointed him for the same time as the two others.

Then she went out from him to the King of the city and told him her story and sought of him her brother's release. "Who imprisoned him?" asked he; and she replied, "The chief of the police." When the King heard her speech, it transfixed his heart with the arrows of love and he bade her enter the palace with him, that he might send to the Cadi and release her brother. "O King," answered she, "this thing is easy to thee, whether I will or not; and if the King will indeed have this of me, it is of my good fortune; but, if he will come to my house, he will do me the more honour, even as saith the poet:

Friends, have ye seen or heard o' the visit of a wight Whose virtues are indeed illustrious in my sight?"

Quoth the King, "We will not cross thee in this." So she told him where her house was and appointed him for the same time as the three others.

Then she left him and betaking herself to a carpenter, said to him, "I would have thee make me a cabinet with four compartments, one above another, each with its door to lock up. Let me know thy hire and I will give it thee." "My hire will be four dinars," replied the man; "but, O noble lady, if thou wilt vouchsafe me thy favours, I will ask nothing else of thee." "If thou wilt have it so," rejoined she, "then make the cabinet with five compartments, each to lock up." "It is well," said he; "sit down, O my lady, and I will make it for thee forthright, and after I will come to thee at my leisure." So she sat down, whilst he fell to work on the cabinet, and when he had made an end of it, she carried it home and set it up in the sitting-chamber. Then she took four gowns and carried them to the dyer, who dyed them each of a different colour; after which she busied herself in making ready meat and drink and fruits and flowers and perfumes.

When it was the appointed time, she donned her costliest apparel and scented and adorned herself, then spread the room with various kinds of rich carpets and sat down to await who should come. The Cadi was the first to appear, and when she saw him, she rose and kissed the earth before him, then made him sit down by her on the couch and fell to jesting and toying with him. By and by, he would have her do his desire, but she said, "O my lord, put off thy clothes and turban and don this yellow cassock and this kerchief, whilst I bring thee meat and drink; and after thou shalt do thy desire." So saying, she took his clothes and turban and clad him in the yellow cassock and the kerchief; but hardly had she done this, when there came a knocking at the door. Quoth he, "Who is that at the door?" And she answered, "My husband." "What to be done?" said the Cadi; "and where shall I go?" "Fear nothing," replied she; "I will hide thee in this cabinet." Quoth he,"Do as seemeth good to thee." So she took him by the hand and pushing him into the lowest compartment, locked the door on him.

Then she went to the door, where she found the chief of the police; so she kissed the earth before him and brought him into the saloon, where she made him sit down and said to him, "O my lord, this is thy house and I am thy handmaid, and thou shalt pass all this day with me; wherefore do thou doff thy clothes and don this red gown, for it is a sleeping gown." So she took away his clothes and made him don the red gown and set on his head an old patched rag she had by her; after which she sat down by him on the couch and they sported awhile, till he put out his hand to her; but she said to him, “O my lord, this day is thine, all of it, and none shall share it with thee; but first, of thy favour and grace, write me an order for my brother’s release, that my heart may be at ease.” “I hear and obey,” answered he; “on my head and eyes be it;” and wrote a letter to his treasurer, to the following effect: “As soon as this letter reaches thee, do thou, without delay and without fail, set such an one free, neither answer the bearer a word.” Then he sealed it and she took it from him, after which she began again to toy with him on the couch, when, behold, some one knocked at the door. Quoth he, “Who is that?” “My husband,” answered she. “What shall I do?” asked he, and she said, “Enter this cabinet. till I send him away and return to thee.” So she clapped him into the second compartment and locked the door on him; and all this time the Cadi heard what they said and did.

Then she went to the door and opened it, whereupon the Vizier entered. She kissed the earth before him and received him with all worship, saying, “O my lord, thou honourest us by thy coming to our house; may God never deprive us of the light of thy countenance!” Then she seated him on the couch and said to him, “O my lord, these thy clothes and turban are the apparel of the vizierate; so leave them to their own time and don this light gown, which is better fitted for carousing and making merry and sleep.” So he put off his clothes and turban and she dressed him in a blue cassock and a tall red cap, after which she began to toy with him and he with her, and he would have done his desire of her; but she put him off saying, “O my lord, this shall not escape us.” Presently there came a knocking at the door, and the Vizier said to her, “Who is that?” “My husband,” answered she. Quoth he, “What is to be done?” “Fear nothing,” said she; “but enter this cabinet, till I get rid of him and come back to thee.” So she put him in the third compartment and locked the door on him, after which she went out and opened the door and in came the King.

When she saw him, she kissed the earth before him, and taking him by the hand, led him into the saloon and seated him on the couch at the upper end. Then said she to him, “Verily, O King, thou dost us honour, and if we brought thee the whole world and all that therein is as a gift, it would not equal a single one of thy steps towards us: but give me leave to speak one word." "Say what thou wilt," answered he, and she said, "O my lord, take thine ease and put off thy clothes and turban." So he put off his clothes, which were worth a thousand dinars, and she clad him in a patched gown, not worth ten dirhems, and fell to talking and jesting with him, whilst the folk in the cabinet heard all that passed, but dared not say a word. Presently, the King put his hand to her neck and sought to do his desire of her; but she said, "This thing shall not escape us; but, first, I had promised myself to entertain thee in this sitting-chamber, and I have that which shall content thee." At that moment, some one knocked at the door and he said to her, "Who is that?" "My husband," answered she, and he, "Make him go away of his own accord, or I will go forth to him and send him away perforce." "Nay, O my lord," replied she; "have patience till I send him away by my skilful contrivance "And how shall I do?" asked the King; whereupon she took him by the hand and making him enter the fourth compartment of the cabinet, locked it upon him.

Then she went out and opened the door, when the carpenter entered and saluted her. Quoth she, "What manner of thing is this cabinet thou hast made me?" "What ails it, O my lady?" asked he, and she said, "The [top] compartment is too strait." "Not so," answered he; and she, "Go in thyself and see; it is not wide enough for thee." Quoth he, "It is wide enough for four," and entered the fifth compartment, whereupon she locked the door on him. Then she took the letter of the chief of the police and carried it to the treasurer, who kissed it and delivered her lover to her. She told him all that had passed and he said, "And how shall we do now?" Quoth she, "We will remove hence to another city, for there is no tarrying for us here after this." So they packed up their goods and loading them on camels, set out forthright for another city.

Meanwhile, the five abode in the cabinet three whole days, without eating or drinking, until at last the carpenter could retain his water no longer; so he made water on the King's head, and the King made water on the Vizier's head, and the Vizier on the Chief of the Police, who did the like with the Cadi; whereupon the latter cried out and said, "What filth is this? Doth not this strait that we are in suffice us, but you must make water upon us?" The Chief of the Police recognized the Cadi's voice and answered, saying, "God increase thy reward, O Cadi!" And when the Cadi heard him, he knew him for the Chief of the Police. Then the latter lifted up his voice and said, "What means this nastiness?" and the Vizier answered, saying, "God increase thy reward, O Chief of the Police!" whereupon he knew him to be the Vizier. Then the Vizier lifted up his voice and said, "What means this nastiness?" But when the King heard his Vizier's voice, he held his peace and concealed his affair. Then said the Vizier, "May God curse the woman for her dealing with us! She hath brought hither all the chiefs of the state, except the King." Quoth the King, "Hold thy peace, for I was the first to fall into the toils of this lewd baggage." "And I," cried the carpenter, "what have I done? I made her a cabinet for four dinars, and when I came to seek my hire, she tricked me into entering this compartment and locked the door on me." And they fell to talking with one another, to divert the King and do away his chagrin.

Presently the neighbours came up to the house and seeing it deserted, said to one another, "But yesterday our neighbour the wife of such an one was in it; but now there is no sound to be heard therein nor soul to be seen. Let us break open the doors and see how the case stands, lest it come to the ears of the King or the Chief of the Police and we be cast into prison and regret that we did not this thing before." So they broke open the doors and entered the saloon, where they saw the cabinet and heard the men within groaning for hunger and thirst. Then said one of them, "Is there a genie in the cabinet?" "Let us heap faggots about it," quoth another, "and burn it with fire." When the Cadi heard this, he cried out at them, saying, "Do it not!" And they said to one another, "Verily, the Jinn make believe to be mortals and speak with men's voices." Thereupon the Cadi repeated some verses of the sublime Koran and said to the neighbours, "Draw near to the cabinet." So they drew near, and he said, "I am so and so the Cadi, and ye are such an one and such an one, and we are here a company." Quoth the neighbours, "And how came ye here?" And he told them the whole case from beginning to end.

Then they fetched a carpenter, who opened the five doors and let out the Cadi and the Vizier and the Chief of the Police and the King and the Carpenter; and when they saw how they were accoutred, each fell a-laughing at the others. Now she had taken away all their clothes; so each of them sent to his people for fresh clothes and put them on and went out, covering himself therewith from the sight of the folk. See, therefore, O our lord the King,’ said the vizier, ‘what a trick this woman played off upon the folk! And I have heard tell also that

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The Man Who Saw the Night of Power.

A certain man had longed all his life to look upon the Night of Power, and it befell that, one night, he looked up at the sky and saw the angels and Heaven's gates opened and beheld all things in the act of prostration before their Lord, each in its several room. So he said to his wife, "Harkye, such an one, God hath shown me the Night of Power, and it hath been proclaimed to me, from the invisible world, that three prayers will be granted unto me; so do thou counsel me what I shall ask." Quoth she, "O man, the perfection of man and his delight is in his yard; so do thou pray God to greaten thy yard and magnify it." So he lifted up his hands to heaven and said, "O my God, greaten my yard and magnify it." Hardly had he spoken when his yard became as big as a calabash and he could neither sit nor stand nor move; and when he would have lain with his wife, she fled before him from place to place. So he said to her, "O accursed woman, what is to be done? This is thy wish, by reason of thy lust." "Nay, by Allah," answered she; "I did not ask for this huge bulk, for which the gate of a street were too strait. Pray God to make it less." So he raised his eyes to heaven and said, "O my God, rid me of this thing and deliver me therefrom." And immediately his yard disappeared altogether and he became smooth [like a woman]. When his wife saw this, she said, 'I have no occasion for thee, now thou art become yardless;" and he answered her, saying, "All this comes of thine own ill-omened counsel and the infirmity of thy judgment. I had three prayers accepted of God, wherewith I might have gotten me my good, both in this world and the next, and now two are gone in pure waste, by thy lewd wish, and there remaineth but one." Quoth she, "Pray God the Most High to restore thee thy yard as it was." So he prayed to his Lord and his yard was restored to its first case. Thus the man lost his three wishes by the ill counsel and lack of sense of the woman; and this, O King,' said the vizier, 'have I told thee, that thou mightest be certified of the thoughtlessness of women and their little wit and silliness and see what comes of hearkening to their counsel. Wherefore be not persuaded by them to slay thy son, the darling of thy heart, and thus blot out thy remembrance after thee.'

The King gave ear to his vizier’s words and forbore to put his son to death; but, on the seventh day, the damsel came in, shrieking, and lighting a great fire in the King’s presence, made as she would cast herself therein; whereupon they laid hands on her and brought her before him. Quoth he, ‘Why hast thou done this?’ And she answered, saying, ‘Except thou do me justice on thy son, I will cast myself into the fire and accuse thee of this on the Day of Resurrection, for I am weary of life and before coming hither, I wrote my last dispositions and gave alms of my goods and resolved upon death. And thou wilt repent with all repentance, even as did the King of having punished the pious woman.’ ‘How was that?’ asked the King. ‘I have heard tell, O King,’ replied she, ‘that

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The Stolen Necklace.

There was once a devout woman, who had renounced the world and devoted herself to the service of God. Now she used to resort to a certain king's palace, the dwellers wherein looked for a blessing by reason of her presence, and she was held of them in high honour. One day, she entered the palace, according to her wont, and sat down beside the queen. Presently the latter gave her a necklace, worth a thousand dinars, saying, "Keep this for me, whilst I go to the bath." So she entered the bath, which was in the palace, and the pious woman laid the necklace on the prayer-carpet and stood up to pray. As she was thus engaged, there came a magpie, which snatched up the necklace, [unseen of her,] and carrying it off, hid it in a crevice in one of the palace-walls. When the queen came out of the bath, she sought the necklace of the recluse, and the latter searched for it, but found it not nor could light on any trace of it; so she said to the queen, "By Allah, O my daughter, none has been with me. When thou gavest me the necklace, I laid it on the prayer-carpet, and I know not if one of the servants saw it and took it without my heed, whilst I was engaged in prayer. God only knows what is come of it!" When the King heard what had happened, he bade his consort put the woman to the question by fire and beating; so they tortured her with all manner tortures, but could not bring her to confess or to accuse any. Then he commanded to lay her in irons and cast her into prison, and they did as he bade.

One day, after this, as the King sat in the inner court of his palace, with the queen by his side aud water flowing around him, he saw the magpie fly into a crevice of the wall and pull out the lost necklace, whereupon he cried out to a damsel who was with him, and she caught the bird and took the necklace from it. By this the King knew that the pious woman had been wronged and repented of that he had done with her. So he sent for her and fell to kissing her head and sought pardon of her-weeping. Moreover, he commanded great treasure to be given to her, but she would none of it. However, she forgave him and went away, vowing never again to enter any one's house. So she betook herself to wandering in the mountains and valleys and worshipped God the Most High till she died. And for an instance of the malice of the male sex,' continued the damsel, 'I have heard tell that

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The Two Pigeons

A pair of pigeons once stored up wheat and barley in their nests in the winter, and when the summer came, the grain shrivelled and became less; so the male pigeon said to his mate, “Thou hast eaten of this grain.” “No, by Allah,” replied she; “I have not touched it!” But he believed her not and beat her with his wings and pecked her with his bill, till he killed her. When the cold season returned, the corn swelled out and became as before, whereupon he knew that he had slain his mate unjustly and wickedly and repented, when repentance availed him not. Then he lay down by her side, mourning over her and weeping for grief, and left eating and drinking, till he fell sick and died.

But,’ added the damsel, ‘I know a story of the malice of men more extraordinary than either of these.’ ‘Let us hear it,’ said the King; and she said, ‘I have heard tell, O King, that

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Story of Prince Behram of Persia and the Princess Ed Detma.

There was once a king's daughter, by name Ed Detma, who had no equal in her time for beauty and elegance and symmetry and amorous grace and the art of ravishing men's wits, nor was there one more accomplished than she in horsemanship and martial exercises and all that behoveth a cavalier, and all the king's sons sought her in marriage; but she would none of them, saying, "None shall marry me except he overcome me at push of pike and stroke of sword in the open field. If any can do this, I will willingly wed him; but, if I overcome him, I will take his horse and clothes and arms and write with fire upon his forehead, 'This is the freedman of Ed Detma.'" So the eons of the kings flocked to her from far and near, and she overcame them and put them to shame, stripping them of their arms and branding them with fire.

At last, the son of a king of the kings of the Persians, by name Behram, heard of her and journeyed from afar to her father's court, bringing with him men and horses and great store of wealth and royal treasures. When he drew near the city, he sent her father a rich present and the king came out to meet him and received him with the utmost honour. Then the prince sent a message to him by his vizier, demanding his daughter's hand in marriage; but the king answered, saying, "O my son, I have no power over my daughter Ed Detma, for she hath sworn by her soul to marry none except he overcome her in the listed field." Quoth the prince, "It was to this intent that I journeyed hither from my father's court." And the king said, "Thou shalt meet her to-morrow." Accordingly, on the morrow, he sent to bid his daughter, who donned her harness of war, and the folk, hearing of the coming encounter, flocked from all sides to the field. Presently the princess rode into the lists, armed cap-a-pie and vizor down, and the prince pricked out to meet her, equipped at all points after the goodliest fashion. Then they drove at each other and fought a great while, wheeling and feinting and advancing and retreating, till the princess, finding in him such valour and horsemanship as she had seen in none else, began to fear lest he should put her to shame before the bystanders and knew that he would assuredly overcome her, unless she could contrive to trick him. So she raised her vizor and discovered her face, more brilliant than the full moon, which when he saw, he was confounded by her beauty and his strength failed and his heart faltered. When she knew this, she fell upon him at unawares and tore him from his saddle, and he became in her hands as he were a sparrow in the clutches of an eagle, knowing not what was done with him for amazement and confusion. So she took his horse and clothes and armour and branding him with fire, let him go.

When he recovered from his stupor, he abode several days without eating or drinking, for despite and love of the princess that had taken hold upon his heart. Then he sent a letter by certain of his slaves to his father, advising him that he could not return home, till he had gotten his will of the princess or died for lack of her. When his father read the letter, he was sore concerned for his son and would have succoured him with troops and soldiers; but his viziers dissuaded him from this and exhorted him to patience; so he committed his affair to God the Most High.

Meanwhile, the prince cast about for a means of coming to his desire and disguising himself as a decrepit old man, repaired to a garden, in which the princess used to walk most of her days. Here he sought out the gardener and said to him, “I am a stranger from a far country and from my youth upward I have been a gardener, and none is more skilled than I in the care of trees and the culture of fruits and flowers and so forth.” When the gardener heard this, he rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy and carried him into the garden, where he commended him to his underlings, and the prince betook himself to the service of the garden and the tending of the trees and the bettering of their fruits.

One day, as he was thus employed, he saw some slaves enter the garden, leading mules laden with carpets and vessels, and asked them the meaning of this, to which they replied that the princess was minded to take her pleasure. When he heard this, he hastened to his lodging and fetching some of the jewels and raiment he had brought with him from Persia, sat down in the garden and spread them out before him, shaking and trembling, as if for decrepitude, and making a show of extreme old age. Presently a company of damsels and eunuchs entered, with the princess in their midst, as she were the moon among stars, and dispersed about the garden, plucking the fruits and diverting themselves. By and by they espied the prince sitting under one of the trees and making towards him, found him, [as it seemed,] a very old man, whose hands and feet trembled for decrepitude, and before him store of precious jewels and splendid ornaments. So they marvelled at his case and asked him what he did there with the jewels. Quoth he, “I would fain buy me one of you to wife therewith.” They laughed at him and said, “If one of us marry thee, what wilt thou do with her?” “I will give her one kiss,” answered he, “and let her go.” Then said the princess, “I give thee this damsel to wife.” So he rose and coming up to her, trembling and staggering and leaning on a staff; kissed her and gave her the jewels and ornaments; whereat she rejoiced and they went away, laughing at him. Next day, they came again to the garden and finding him seated in the same place, with more jewels and ornaments than before, said to him, “O old man, what wilt thou do with these jewels?” And he answered, saying, “I wish to take one of you to wife with them, even as yesterday.” So the princess said, “I marry thee to this damsel ;” and he came up to her and kissed her and gave her the jewels, and they went away.

But the princess said in herself; “I have more right to all these fine things than my waiting-women, and no harm can betide me.” So, on the morrow, she went down privily into the garden, in the habit of one of her damsels, and presenting herself before the prince, said to him, “O old man, the king’s daughter hath sent me to thee, that thou mayst marry me.” He looked at her and knew her; so he answered, “With all my heart,” and gave her jewels and ornaments of the costliest. Then he rose to kiss her, and she off her guard and fearing nothing; but, when he came up to her, he suddenly laid hold of her with a strong hand and throwing her down, did away her maidenhead. Then he pulled the beard from his face and said to her, “Dost thou not know me?” “Who art thou?” asked she, and he answered, “I am Behram, the king’s son of Persia, who have changed my favour and am become a stranger to my people and estate for thy sake and have lavished my treasures for thy love.”

So she rose from under him in silence and spoke not a word of reply to him, being dazed for what had befallen her and seeing nothing for it but to be silent, for fear of disgrace; and she bethought herself and said “If I kill him, it will profit me nothing, and nought will serve me but that I flee with him to his own country.” Then she gathered together her wealth and treasures and sent to him, acquainting him with her resolve, to the intent that he also might equip himself; and they agreed upon a night on which to depart. So, at the appointed time, they mounted swift horses and set out under cover of the night, nor did day break till they had traversed a great distance; and they fared on till they drew near his father’s capital in the land of the Persians. When the king heard of his son s coming, he came out to meet him with his troops and rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy. Then, after a few days, he sent the princess’s father a splendid present, with a letter to the effect that his daughter was with him and demanding her wedding equipage. Ed Detma’s father received the messengers with exceeding joy, (for that he had deemed his daughter lost and had grieved sore for her loss,) and invested them with robes of honour; after which he made bride-feasts and summoning the Cadi and the witnesses, let draw up the marriage contract between his daughter and the prince of Persia. Then he made ready her equipage and despatched it to her, and Prince Behram abode with her till death sundered them.

See, therefore, O King,’ continued the favourite, ‘the malice of men in their dealing with women. As for me, I will not go back from my due till I die.’ So the King once more commanded to put his son to death; but the seventh vizier came in to him and kissing the earth before him, said, ‘O King, have patience with me whilst I speak words of good counsel to thee; for he who is patient and acteth deliberately attaineth unto his hope aud enjoyeth his desire, but whoso acteth hastily, repentance overtaketh him. Now I have seen how this damsel hath profligately striven to abuse the King and incite him to unnatural cruelties; but I his slave, whom he hath overwhelmed with his favours and bounties, do proffer him true and loyal counsel; for that I, O King, know of the malice of women that which none knoweth but myself; and [in particular] there hath come to my knowledge, on this subject, the story of the old woman and the son of the merchant.’ ‘And what fell out between them, O vizier?’ asked the King. ‘I have heard tell, O King,’ answered the seventh vizier, ‘that

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The House with the Belvedere.

There was once a wealthy merchant, who had a son who was very dear to him, and the latter said to him one day, “O my father, I have a boon to ask of thee.” Quoth the merchant, “O my son, what is it, that I may give it thee and bring thee to thy desire, though it were the light of mine eyes.” “Give me money,” rejoined the youth, “that I may journey with the merchants to the city of Baghdad and see its sights and look upon the palace of the Khalifs; for the sons of the merchants have described these things to me and I long to see them for myself.” “O my child, O my little son,” answered his father, “how can I endure to part from thee?” But the youth said, “I have said my say and needs must I journey to Baghdad with or without thy consent; for such a longing for its sight hath fallen upon me as can only be assuaged by the going thither.”

When the merchant saw that there was no help for it, he provided his son with goods to the value of thirty thousand dinars and gave him in charge to certain merchants in whom he trusted. Then he took leave of the youth, who journeyed with his friends the merchants till they reached Baghdad, the Abode of Peace, where he entered the market and wishing to hire a house, was shown one so handsome and spacious and elegant that he well-nigh lost his wits for admiration; for therein were gardens and fountains and running waters and pavilions facing one another, with floors of coloured marbles and ceilings inlaid with gold and lapis lazuli, and its gardens were full of warbling birds. So he asked the porter what was its rent, and he replied, “Ten dinars a month.” Quoth the young man, “Speakest thou truly or dost thou jest with me?” “By Allah,” answered the porter, “I speak nought but the truth, for none who taketh up his abode in this house lodgeth in it more than a week or two.” “And how is that?” asked the other. “O my son,” replied the porter, “whoso taketh this house cometh not forth of it, except sick or dead, wherefore it is known among the folk of Baghdad, so that none offereth to take it, and thus cometh it that its rent is fallen so low.” At this the young merchant marvelled exceedingly, saying, “Needs must there be some reason for this.” However, after considering awhile and seeking refuge with God from Satan the Stoned, he rented the house and took up his abode there. Then he put away apprehension from his thought and busied himself with selling and buying; and some time passed over him without any ill case befalling him.

One day, as he sat at the door, there came up a grizzled old woman, as she were a speckled snake, calling aloud on the name of God and magnifying Him at a great rate and at the same time putting away the stones and other obstacles from the path. Seeing the youth sitting there, she looked at him and marvelled at his case; whereupon quoth he to her, "O old woman, dost thou know me or am I like any thou knowest?" When she heard him speak, she hastened up to him and saluting him, said, "How long hast thou dwelt in this house?" "Two months, O my mother," answered he. And she said, "O my son, it was at this that I marvelled; for I know thee not, neither dost thou know me, nor yet are thou like unto any one I know; but I marvelled for that none other than thou hath taken up his abode in this house but hath gone forth from it, dead or sick, saving thee alone. Doubtless thou hast not gone up to the upper story neither looked out from the belvedere there." So saying, she went her way and he fell a-pondering her words and said, "I have not gone up to the top of the house; nor did I know that there was a belvedere there."

Then he arose forthright and going in, searched the house, till he espied, in a corner among the trees, a narrow door, over which the spider had spun its webs, and said in himself "Belike the spider hath not spread its web over the door, but because death is within." However, he heartened himself with the saying of God the Most High, "Say, nought shall befall us save what God hath prescribed unto us;" and opening the door, ascended a narrow flight of stairs, till he came to the top, where he found a belvedere, in which he sat down to rest and enjoy the view. Presently, he caught sight of an elegant house hard by, surmounted by a lofty belvedere, overlooking the whole of Baghdad, in which sat a damsel fair as a houri. No sooner had he set eyes on her, than her beauty took possession of his whole heart and made away with his reason, afflicting him with the pains of Job and the grief of Jacob. Fire was lighted in his entrails and he said, "They say that whoever takes up his abode in this house dies or falls sick. If this be so, this damsel is assuredly the cause. Would I knew how I shall win free of this affair, for my senses are gone!"

Then he descended from the turret, pondering his case, and sat down in the house, but could not rest. So, after awhile, he went out and sat at the door, absorbed in melancholy thought, and presently up came the old woman, praising and magnifying God [aloud], as she went. When he saw her, he rose and accosting her courteously, said to her, "O my mother, I was in health and well-being, till thou madest mention to me of the belvedere; so I found the door and ascending to the top of the house, saw thence what took away my senses; and now methinks I am a lost man, and I know no physician for me but thyself." When she heard this, she laughed and said, "No harm shall befall thee, so God please." Whereupon he went into the house and coming back with a hundred dinars in his sleeve, said to her, "Take this, O my mother, and deal with me as lords with slaves and succour me quickly; for, if I die, my blood will be laid to thy charge at the Day of Resurrection." "With all my heart," answered she; "but, O my son, thou must lend me thine aid in some small matter, whereby hangs the accomplishment of thy desire." Quoth he, "What would thou have me do, O my mother?" "Go to the silk-market," said she, "and enquire for the shop of Aboul Feth ben Caidam. Sit down by him and salute him and say to him, 'Give me the face-veil thou hast by thee, figured with gold:' for he hath none handsomer in his shop. Then buy it of him at his own price and keep it till I come to thee to-morrow, God willing." So saying, she went away and he passed the night [as] upon coals of tamarisk wood.

Next morning, he took a thousand dinars in his pocket and repairing to the silk-market, sought cut the shop of Aboul Feth, whom he found a man of dignified aspect, surrounded by servants and attendants; for he was a merchant of great wealth and consideration, and of the goods that God the Most High had bestowed upon him was the damsel who had ravished the young man's heart. She was his wife and had not her match for beauty, nor was her like to be found with any of the sons of the kings. So he saluted him and Aboul Feth returned his salute and bade him be seated. Accordingly, he sat down by him and said to him, "O merchant, I wish to look at such a face-veil." So he bade his servants bring him a parcel of silk from the inner shop and opening it, brought out a number of veils, whose beauty amazed the youth. Among them was the veil he sought; so he bought it for fifty dinars and bore it home, well pleased.

Hardly had he reached his house when up came the old woman, to whom he gave the veil. She bade him bring a live coal, with which she burnt one of the corners of the veil, then folded it up as before and repairing to Aboul Feth's house, knocked at the door. Quoth the damsel, "Who is there?" And she answered, "I, such an one." Now the damsel knew her for a friend of her mother, so, when she heard her voice, she came out and opening the door to her, said, "What dost thou want, O my mother? My mother has left me and gone to her own house." "O my daughter," answered the old woman, "I know thy mother is not with thee, for I have been with her in her house, and I come not to thee, but because I fear to miss the hour of prayer; wherefore I desire to make my ablutions with thee, for I know thou art clean and thy house pure." The damsel admitted her and she saluted her and called down blessings upon her. Then she took the ewer and went into the lavatory, where she made her ablutions and prayed in a place there. Presently, she came out again and said to the damsel, "O my daughter, I doubt thy servants have been in yonder place and defiled it; so do thou show me another place where I may pray, for the prayer I have prayed I account void." Thereupon the damsel took her by the hand and said to he; " O my mother, come and pray on my carpet, where my husband sits." So she stood there and prayed and worshipped and bowed and prostrated herself; and presently, she took the damsel unawares and made shift to slip the veil under the cushion, unseen of her. Then she prayed for her and went away.

At nightfall, Aboul Feth came home and sat down upon the carpet, whilst his wife brought him food and he ate what sufficed him and washed his hands; after which he leant back upon the cushion. Presently, he caught sight of a corner of the veil protruding from under the cushion; so he pulled it out and knowing it for that he had sold to the young man, at once suspected his wife of unchastity. So he called her and said, "Whence hadst thou this veil?" And she swore an oath to him [that she knew not whence it came,] saying, “None hath come to me but thou.” Then he was silent for fear of scandal, and said in himself; “If I open up this chapter, I shall be put to shame before all Baghdad;” for he was one of the intimates of the Khalif and had nothing for it but to hold his peace. So he asked no questions, but said to his wife, whose name was Muhziyeh, “I hear that thy mother lies ill of heart-ache and all the women are with her, weeping over her; so do thou go to her.” Accordingly, she repaired to her mother’s house and found her well, ailing nothing; and the latter said to her, “What brings thee here at this hour?” So she told her what her husband had said and sat with her awhile; but, presently, up came porters, who brought all her clothes and paraphernalia and what not else belonged to her of goods and vessels from her husband’s house and deposited them in that of her mother. When the latter saw this, she said to her daughter, “Tell me what hath passed between thee and thy husband, to bring about this.” But she swore to her that she knew not the cause thereof and that there had befallen nothing between them, to call for this conduct. Quoth her mother, “Needs must there be a cause for this.” And she answered, saying, “I know of none, and after this, with God the Most High be it to make provision!”, Whereupon her mother fell a-weeping and lamented her daughter’s separation from the like of this man, by reason of his sufficiency and fortune and the greatness of his rank and estate.

On this wise, things abode some days, after which the old woman paid a visit to Muhziyeh in her mother’s house and saluted her affectionately, saying, “What ails thee, O my daughter, O my beloved one? Indeed, thou hast troubled my mind.” Then she went in to her mother and said to her, “O my sister, what is this about thy daughter and her husband? I hear he has put her away. What hath she done to call for this?” Quoth the mother, “Peradventure her husband will return to her by the virtue of thy prayers; so do thou pray for her, for thou art a constant faster and a stander up by night to pray.” Then the three women fell to talking and the old woman said to the damsel, “O my daughter, have no care, for, God willing, I will make peace between thee and thy husband before many days.” Then she left them and going to the young merchant, said to him, “Make ready a handsome entertainment for us, for I will bring her to thee this very night.” So he rose and provided all that was fitting of meat and drink and so forth and sat down to await them; whilst the old woman returned to the girl’s mother and said to her, “O my sister, we make a splendid bride-feast to-night; so let thy daughter go with me, that she may divert herself and make merry with us and forget her troubles; and I will bring her back to thee even as I took her away.” So the mother dressed her daughter in her finest clothes and jewels and accompanied her to the door, where she commended her to the old woman’s care, saying, “Look thou let none of the creatures of God the Most High see her, for thou knowest her husband’s rank with the Khalif; and do not tarry, but bring her back to me as soon as possible.”

The old woman carried the girl to the young man’s house, and she entered, thinking it the place where the wedding was to be held: but, when she came into the saloon, the youth sprang up to her and embraced her and kissed her hands and feet. She was confounded at his beauty, as well as at the elegance of the place and the profusion of meat and drink and flowers and perfumes that she saw therein, and deemed all this but a dream. When the old woman saw her amazement, she said to her, “The name of God be upon thee, O my daughter! Fear not; I am here with thee and will not leave thee for a moment. Thou art worthy of him and he of thee.” So the damsel sat down, in great confusion; but the young man jested and toyed with her and entertained her with stories and verses, till her breast dilated and she became at her ease. Then she ate and drank and growing warm with wine, took the lute and sang and inclined to the youth’s beauty. When he saw this, he was drunken without wine and his life was a light matter to him [compared with her love].

Presently the old woman went out and left them alone together till the next morning, when she went in to them and gave them good morrow and said to the damsel, “How hast thou passed the night, O my lady?” “Well,” answered the girl, “thanks to thine adroitness and the excellence of thine intermediation.” Then said the old woman, “Come, let us go back to thy mother.” But the young man pulled out a hundred dinars and gave them to her, saying, “Take this and leave her with me to-night.” So she left them and repaired to the girl’s mother, to whom quoth she, “Thy daughter salutes thee, and the bride’s mother is instant with her to abide with her this night.” “O my sister,” replied the mother, “bear her my greeting, and if it please the girl, there is no harm in her staying the night; so let her do this and divert herself and come back to me at her leisure, for all I fear for her is chagrin on account of her husband.”

The old woman ceased not to make excuse after excuse and to put off cheat upon cheat upon the girl’s mother, till Muhziyeh had tarried seven days with the young man, of whom she took a hundred dinars each day for herself; but at the end of this time, the girl’s mother said to her, “Bring my daughter back to me forthright; for I am uneasy about her, because she has been so long absent, and I misdoubt me of this.” So the old woman went out, angered at her words, and going to the young man’s house, took the girl by the hand and carried her away, leaving him lying asleep on his bed, for he was heavy with wine. Her mother received her with joy and gladness and rejoiced in her with an exceeding joy, saying, “O my daughter, my heart was troubled about thee, and in my uneasiness I offended against this my sister with an injurious speech, that wounded her.” “Rise and kiss her hands and feet,” replied Muhziyeh; “else art thou no mother of mine; for she hath been to me as a servant in doing all I needed.” So the mother went up to the old woman and made her peace with her.

Meanwhile, the young man recovered from his drunkenness and missed the damsel, but was content to have enjoyed his desire. Presently, the old woman came in to him and saluted him, saying, “What thinkest thou of my fashion?” Quoth he, “It was excellently well contrived of thee.” Then said she, “Come, let us mend what we have marred and restore the girl to her husband, for we have been the cause of their separation.” “How shall I do?” asked he, and she answered, “Go to Aboul Feth’s shop and salute him and sit down by him, till thou seest me pass by, when do thou rise in haste and catch hold of my dress and revile me and rail at me, demanding of me the veil. And do thou say to the merchant, ‘O my lord, thou knowest the face-veil I bought of thee for fifty dinars? I gave it to a slave-girl of mine, who burnt a corner of it by accident; so she gave it to this old woman, who took it, promising to get it darned and return it, and went away, nor have I seen her from that day to this.’” “With all my heart,” replied the young man and rising forthrtght, repaired to the shop of the silk merchant, with whom he sat till he saw the old woman pass, telling her beads on a rosary she held in her hand; whereupon he sprang up and laying hold of her clothes, began to revile and rail at her, whilst she answered him with fair words, saying, “Indeed, my son, thou art excusable.”

The people of the bazaar flocked round them, saying, “What is to do?” and he replied, “Know, O folk, that I bought a veil of this merchant for fifty dinars and gave it to my slave-girl, who wore it awhile, then sat down to fumigate it. Presently, a spark flew out of the chafing dish and lighting on the edge of the veil, burnt a hole in it. So we committed it to this pestilent old woman, that she might give it to who should darn it and return it to us, and we have never set eyes on her again till this day.” “This young man speaks the truth,” answered the old woman. “I did indeed have the veil of him, but I took it with me into one of the houses where I used to visit and forgot it there, nor do I know where I left it; and being a poor woman, I feared its owner and dared not face him.”

Now the girl’s husband was listening to all they said and when he heard the tale that the crafty old woman had contrived with the young man, he rose to his feet and said, “God is Most Great! I crave pardon of the Almighty for my offences and what my heart suspected!” And he praised God who had discovered to him the truth. Then he accosted the old woman and said to her, “Dost thou use to visit us?” “O my son,” replied she, “I visit you and other than you, for the sake of alms; but from that day to this, none hath given me any news of the veil.” Quoth the merchant, “Hast thou asked at my house?” “O my lord,” answered she, “I did indeed go to thy house and ask; but they told me that the lady of the house had been divorced by her husband; so I asked no farther.” With this, the merchant turned to the young man and said, “Let the old woman go her way; for the veil is with me.” So saying, he brought it out from the shop and gave it to the darner before all the folk. Then he betook himself to the damsel and giving her some money, took her again to wife, after making abundance of excuses to her and asking pardon of God, because he knew not what the old woman had done. This then, O King,’ said the Vizier, ‘is an instance of the malice of women, and for another to the same purport, I have heard tell that

The King’s Son and the Afrits Mistress.

A certain king’s son was once walking alone for his pleasure, when he came to a green meadow, abounding in trees laden with fruit and birds singing on the branches, and a river running through it. The place pleased him; so he sat down there and taking out some conserves he had brought with him, began to eat. Presently, he espied a great smoke rising up to heaven and taking fright, climbed up into a tree and hid himself among the branches. Thence he saw an Afrit rise out of the midst of the stream, with a chest of marble, secured by a padlock, on his head. He set down the chest on the sward and opened it, and there came forth a damsel like the sun shining in the cloudless sky. He gazed on her awhile, then laid his head in her lap and fell asleep, whereupon she lifted up his head and laying it on the chest, rose and walked about.

Presently, she chanced to raise her eyes to the tree in which was the prince, and seeing him, signed to him to come down. He refused, but she swore to him that, except he came down and did as she bade him, she would wake the Afrit and point him out to him, when he would straightway kill him. The prince, fearing she would do as she said, came down, whereupon she kissed his hands and feet and conjured him to do her occasion, to which he consented; and when he had satisfied her desires, she said to him, “Give me the seal-ring on thy finger.” So he gave it to her and she laid it in a silken handkerchief she had with her, wherein were more than fourscore others. When the prince saw this, he asked her what she did with all these rings and she answered, saying, “Know that this Afrit carried me off from my father’s palace and shut me in this box, which he carries about on his head wherever he goes; and he hardly leaves me a moment, of the excess of his jealousy over me, and hinders me from what I desire. When I saw this, I swore that I would deny my favours to no one, and these rings thou seest are after the tale of the men who have had to do with me; for I took from each a ring and laid it in this handkerchief. And now go thy ways, that I may look for another than thee, for the Afrit will not awake yet awhile.”

So the prince returned to his father’s palace, hardly crediting what he had heard, and when the King heard that his son had lost his ring, he bade put him to death, knowing not how the damsel had beguiled him. (Now she feared this not, neither took any account thereof.) Then he rose and entered his palace; but his Viziers came in to him and prevailed with him to abandon his purpose. The same night, the King sent for them and thanked them for having dissuaded him from slaying his son; and the latter also thanked them, saying, “It was well done of you to counsel my father to let me live, and God willing, I will abundantly requite you.” Then he related to them how he had lost the ring, and they offered up prayers for his long life and advancement and withdrew. See then, O King,’ said the Vizier, ‘the malice of women and what they do unto men.’

The King hearkened to the Vizier’s counsel and again countermanded his order to slay his son. Next morning, it being the eighth day, as the King sat in his audience-chamber in the midst of his grandees and amirs and officers and men of learning, the prince entered, with his hand in that of his governor, Es Sindibad, and praised his father and his Viziers and grandees in the most eloquent words and thanked them; so that all who were present wondered at his eloquence and fluency and the excellence of his speech. His father rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy and calling him to him, kissed him between the eyes. Then he called Es Sindibad and asked him why his son had kept silence these seven days, to which he replied, ‘O my lord, it was I who enjoined him to this, in my fear for him of death; for, when I took his nativity, I found it written in the stars that, if he should speak during this period, he would surely die; but now the danger is over, by the King’s fortune.’

At this the King rejoiced and said to his Viziers, ‘If I had killed my son would the fault have fallen on me or the damsel or Es Sindibad?’ But they refrained from answering and Es Sindibad said to the prince, ‘Answer thou, O my son.’ Quoth he, ‘I have heard tell that certain guests once alighted at a merchant’s house, and he sent his slave-girl to the market, to buy a jar of milk. So she bought it and set out on her return; but, on her way home, there passed over her a kite, holding a serpent in its claws, and a drop of the serpent’s venom fell into the jar of milk, unknown of the girl. So, when she came back, the merchant took the milk from her and drank of it, he and his guests; but hardly had it settled in their stomachs when they all died. Now tell me, O King, whose was the fault in this case?’ Some said, ‘It was the fault of the company, who drank the milk, without examining it.’ And other some, ‘That of the girl, who left the jar uncovered.’ But Es Sindibad said to the prince, ‘What sayest thou, O my son?’ ‘I say,’ answered the prince, ‘that the folk err; it was neither the fault of the damsel nor of the company, for their appointed hour was come, with the exhaustion of their divinely-decreed provision, and God had fore-ordained them to die thus.’

When the courtiers heard this, they marvelled greatly and lifted up their voices, calling down blessings on the prince and saying, ‘O our lord, thou hast made a peerless answer, and thou art the wisest man of thy time.’ ‘Indeed, I am no sage,’ answered the prince; ‘the blind sheikh and the three-year-old child and the five-year-old were wiser than I.’ ‘O youth,’ said the bystanders, ‘tell us the stories of these three who were wiser than thou.’ ‘With all my heart,’ answered he, ‘I have heard tell that

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The Sandal-wood Merchant and the Sharpers.

There was once a rich merchant, who was a great traveller. One day, being minded to journey to a certain city, he asked those who came thence what kind of goods brought most profit there, "Sandal-wood," answered they; "for it sells at a high price." So he laid out all his money in sandal-wood and set out for the city in question. When he arrived there, it was the close of the day, and he met an old woman driving her sheep. Quoth she to him, "Who art thou, O man?" and he answered, saying, "I am a stranger, a merchant." "Beware of the townsfolk," said she, "for they are cheats and robbers, who impose on strangers that they may get the better of them and devour their substance. Indeed, I give thee good counsel."

Then she left him and on the morrow there met him a man, who saluted him and said to him, "O my lord, whence comest thou?" "From such a place," answered the merchant. "And what merchandise hast thou brought with thee?" asked the other. "Sandal-wood," replied he; "for I hear it is high of price with you." Quoth the townsman, "He erred who told thee that; for we burn nothing but sandal-wood under our cooking-pots, and its value with us is but that of firewood." When the merchant heard this, he sighed and repented and knew not whether to believe him or not. Then he alighted at one of the khans of the city and when it was night, he saw a merchant make a fire of sandal-wood under his cooking-pot. Now this was the man who had spoken with him and this was a trick of his. When the townsman saw the merchant [looking at him,] he said to him, "Wilt thou sell me thy sandal-wood for a measure of whatever thy soul shall desire?" "I sell it to thee," answered the merchant, purposing to take gold, and the buyer transported all the wood to his own house and stored it up there.

Next morning, the merchant, who was a blue-eyed man, went out to walk in the city; but, as he went along, one of the townsfolk, who was also blue-eyed and had but one eye, caught hold of him, saying, "Thou art he who stole my eye and I will never let thee go [till thou restore it to me]." The merchant denied this, saying, "I never stole [thine eye]: the thing is impossible." Whereupon the folk collected round them and besought the one-eyed man to grant him till the morrow, that he might give him the price of his eye. So the merchant procured one to be surety for him, and they let him go. Now his shoe had been rent in the struggle with the one-eyed man; so he stopped at a cobbler's stall and bade him mend it, and he should have of him what would content him. Then be went on, till he came to some people sitting playing at forfeits and sat down with them, to divert his grief and anxiety. They invited him to play with them and he did so; but they practised on him and overcoming him, offered him his choice, either to drink up the sea or disburse all be had. "Have patience with me till to-morrow," said he, and they granted him the delay he sought; whereupon he went away, sore concerned for what had betided him and knowing not how he should do, and sat down in a place [apart], heavy at heart and full of melancholy thought.

Presently, the old woman passed by and seeing him thus, said to him, "Meseems the townsfolk have gotten the better of thee, for I see thee troubled and heavy of heart. Tell me what ails thee." So he told her all that had passed and she said. "As for him who cheated thee in the matter of the sandal-wood, thou must know that with us it is worth ten dinars a pound. But I will give thee a counsel, whereby I trust thou shalt deliver thyself; and it is this. By such and such a gate lives a blind sheikh, a cripple, who is knowing, wise and experienced, and all resort to him and ask him what they will, and he counsels them what will be for their advantage; for he is versed in craft and magic and trickery. Now he is a sharper and the sharpers resort to him by night [and recount to him the tricks they have played during the day], and he [passes judgment upon them and] tells them which got the better and which was bettered. So go thou to his lodging and hide thyself from thine adversaries, so thou mayst hear what they say, unseen of them; and haply thou shalt learn from the sheikh some subterfuge that may avail to deliver thee from them."

So he went to the place in question and hid himself near the blind man. Before long, up came the latter's company who were wont to take him as their judge, and amongst them the merchant's four adversaries. They saluted the sheikh and each other and sat down round him, whereupon he set food before them and they ate. Then each began to tell what had befallen him that day, and amongst the rest came forward he of the sandal-wood and told how he had bought of one sandal-wood, below its price, and had agreed to pay for it a measure of whatever the seller should desire. Quoth the old man, “Thine opponent hath the better of thee.” “ How can that be,” asked the other, “seeing that, if he say, ‘I will take the measure full of gold or silver,’ I will give it him and still be the gainer?” And the sheikh answered, “And if he say, ‘I will take the measure full of fleas, half male and half female,’ what wilt thou do?” So the sharper knew that he was beaten.

Then came forward the one-eyed man and said, “O Sheikh, I met a blue-eyed man to-day, a stranger to the town; so I picked a quarrel with him and caught hold of him, saying, ‘It was thou robbedst me of my eye;’ nor did I let him go, till some became surety for him that he should return to me to-morrow and satisfy me for my eye.” Quoth the sheikh, “If he will, he may have the better of thee.” “How so?” asked the sharper; and the sheikh said, “He may say to thee, ‘Pluck out thine eye, and I will pluck out one of mine; then will we weigh them both, and if thine eye be of the same weight as mine, thou speakest truth in what thou avouchest.’ So wilt thou owe him the price of his eye and be stone blind, whilst he will still see with his other eye.” So the sharper knew that the merchant might baffle him with this subterfuge.

Then came the cobbler and said, “O Sheikh, a man brought me his shoe to-day, saying, ‘Mend this shoe and thou shalt have of me what will content thee.’ Now nothing will content me but all he hath.” Quoth the sheikh, “If he will, he may take his shoe from thee and give thee nothing.” “How so?” asked the cobbler, and the sheikh, “He has but to say to thee, ‘The sultan’s enemies are put to the rout; his foes are become weak and his children and helpers are multiplied. Art thou content or no?’” “If thou say, ‘I am content,’ he will take his shoe and go away; and if thou say, ‘I am not content,’ he will take his shoe and beat thee therewith over the face and neck.” So the cobbler owned himself beaten.

Then came forward the gamester and said, “O Sheikh, I played at forfeits with a man to-day and beat him and adjudged him to drink up the sea or give up to me all his wealth.” “If he will,” replied the sheikh, “he may baffle thee.” “How so?” asked the sharper, and the sheikh, “He has but to say, ‘Take the mouth of the sea in thine hand and give it me and I will drink it.’ But thou wilt not be able to do this; so he will baffle thee with this subterfuge.” When the merchant heard this, he knew how it behoved him to deal with his adversaries. Then the sharpers went their way and the merchant returned to his lodging.

On the morrow, the gamester came to him and summoned him to redeem his forfeit; so he said to him, “Give me the mouth of the sea and I will drink it up.” Whereupon he confessed himself beaten and redeemed his forfeit by paying a hundred dinars. Then came the cobbler and sought of him what should content him. Quoth the merchant, “Our lord the Sultan hath overcome his foes and put his enemies to nought and his children are multiplied. Art thou content or no?” “I am content,” replied the cobbler aud giving up the shoe without payment, went away. Next came the one-eyed man and demanded the price of his eye. “Pluck out thine eye,” said the merchant, “and I will pluck out one of mine. Then will we weigh them, and if they are equal in weight, I will acknowledge the truth of thine avouchment and pay thee the price ot thine eye; but, if they differ, thou liest and I will sue thee for the price of my eye.” Quoth the one-eyed man, “Grant me time;” but the merchant answered, saying, “I am a stranger and grant time to none, nor will I part from thee, [till thou satisfy me].” So the sharper ransomed his eye by paying him a hundred dinars and went away. Last of all came the buyer of the sandal-wood and said, “Take the price of thy ware.” “What wilt thou give me?” asked the merchant, and the other, “We agreed for a measure of whatever thou shouldst desire; so, if thou wilt, take it full of gold and silver.” “Not I,” answered the merchant. “Nothing will serve me but I must have it full of fleas, half male and half female.” “This is a thing none may avail unto,” said the sharper, and confessing himself beaten, returned him his sandal-wood and redeemed himself from him with a hundred dinars, to be off his bargain. Then the merchant sold the sandal-wood at his own price and returned to his own country.

As for the three-year-old child,’ continued the prince, ‘I have heard tell that

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The Debauchee and the Three-year-old Child.

A certain profligate man, who was addicted to women, once heard of a beautiful and graceful woman who dwelt in a town other than his own. So he journeyed thither, taking with him a gift, and wrote her a letter, seeking access to her and setting out all that he suffered for longing and desire for her and how the love of her had driven him to forsake his native land and come to her. She gave him leave to visit her and received him with all honour and worship, kissing his hands and entertaining him with the best of meat and drink. Now she had a little three-year-old son, whom she left and busied herself in cooking rice. Presently the man said to her, “Come, let us go to bed;” and she, “My son is sitting looking at us.” Quoth the man, “He is a little child, understanding not neither knowing how to speak.” “Thou wouldst not say thus,” answered the woman, “if thou knewest his intelligence.” When the boy saw that the rice was done, he fell to weeping bitterly, and his mother said to him, “What ails thee to weep, O my son?” “Give me some rice,” answered he, “and put butter in it.” So she ladled him out somewhat of rice and put butter therein; and he ate a little, then began to weep again. Quoth she, “What ails thee now?” and he answered, saying, “O my mother, I want same sugar with my rice.” At this the man was angered and said to him, “Thou art none other than a curst child.” “It is thou who art curst,” answered the boy, “seeing thou weariest thyself and journeyest from city to city, in quest of lewdness. As for me, I wept because I had somewhat in my eye, and my weeping brought it out; and now I have eaten rice with butter and sugar and am content; so which is the curst of us twain?” The man was confounded at this rebuke from a little child and grace entered him and he repented. Wherefore he laid not a finger on the woman, but went out from her forthright and returned to his own country, where he lived a contrite life till he died.

As for the story of the five-year-old child,’ continued the prince, ‘I have heard tell, O King, that

The Stolen Purse.

Four merchants once owned a thousand dinars is common; so they laid them in one purse and set out to buy goods therewith. On their way, they happened on a beautiful garden; so they left the purse with a woman who kept the garden and entered. After they had walked about awhile and eaten and drunken and made merry, one of them said to the others, "I have with me scented fuller's earth; come, let us wash our heads therewith in this running water." Quoth another, "We lack a comb;" and a third, "Let us ask the keeper; belike she hath a comb." Thereupon one of them arose and accosting the keeper, whereas his comrades could see him, but not hear what he said, maid to her, "Give me the purse." Quoth she, "I will not give it up, except ye be all present or thy fellows bid me give it thee." Then he called to his companions, saying, "She will not give it me." And they said to her, "Give it him," thinking he meant the comb. So she gave him the purse and he took it and made off.

When the three others were weary of waiting, they went to the keeper and said to her, "Why wilt thou not give him the comb?" "He asked me for nought but the purse," answered she, "and I gave it not but with your consent, and he went his way with it." When they heard this, they buffeted their faces and said to her, "We authorized thee only to give him the comb." And she, "He named not a comb to me." Then they laid hands on her and haled her before the Cadi, to whom they made their complaint, and he condemned her to make good the purse and bound a number of her debtors surety for her. So she went forth, confounded and knowing not what she should do.

Presently, she met a five-year-old boy, who, seeing her troubled, said to her, "What ails thee, O my mother?" But she gave him no answer, making no account of him, because of his tender age, and he repeated his question a second and a third time, till, at last, she told him all that had passed. "Give me a dirhem, to buy sweetmeats withal," said the boy; "and I will tell thee how thou mayst acquit thyself." So she gave him a dirhem and said to him, "What hast thou to say?" "Return to the Cadi," quoth he, "and say to him, 'It was agreed between myself and them that I should not give them, back the purse, except all four of them were present. Let them all four come and I will give them the purse, as was agreed."' So she went back to the Cadi and said to him as the boy had counselled; and he said to the merchants, "Was it thus agreed between you?" "Yes," answered they. "Then bring me your fellow," said the Cadi, "and take the purse." So they went in quest of their fellow, whilst the keeper came off scot free and went her way without hindrance.'

When the King's viziers and those who were present in the assembly heard the prince's words, they said to his father, 'O our Lord the King, of a truth thy son is the most accomplished man of his time,' and they called down blessings upon the King and the prince. Then the King strained his son to his bosom and kissed him between the eyes and questioned him of what had passed between the favourite and himself; and the prince swore to him, by God the Supreme and by His Holy Prophet, that it was she who had required him of love and he refused. 'Moreover,' said he, 'she promised me that she would give thee poison to drink and kill thee, so should the kingship be mine; whereupon I waxed wroth and said to her, [by signs] "O accursed one, when I can speak, I will requite thee." So, in her fear of me, she did as thou hast seen.' The King believed his words and sending for the damsel, said to those present, 'How shall we put this damsel to death?' Some counselled to cut out her tongue and other some to burn it with fire; but, when she came before the King, she said to him, 'My case with thee is like unto the story of the fox and the folk.' 'How so?' asked he; and she said, 'I have heard tell, O King, that

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Story of the Fox and the Folk.

A fox once made his way into a city by the wall and entering a currier’s storehouse, played havoc with what was therein and spoiled the skins for the owner. One day, the currier set a trap for him and taking him, beat him with the hides, till he fell down senseless, whereupon the man, deeming him to be dead, cast him out into the road by the city-gate. Presently, an old woman came up and seeing the fox, said, “A fox’s eye, hung about a child’s neck, is salutary against weeping.” So she pulled out his right eye and went away. Then came a boy, who said, “What does this tail on this fox?” and cut off his brush. After awhile, up came a man and saying, “A fox’s gall clears away dimness from the eyes, if they be anointed therewith,” [took out his knife and made to slit the fox’s paunch]; but the latter said in himself; “We bore with the pulling out of the eye and the cutting off of the tail; but, as for the slitting of the paunch, there is no putting up with that.” So saying, he sprang up and made off through the gate of the city.’

Quoth the King, ‘I excuse her, and in my son’s hands be her doom. If he will, let him torture her, and if he will, let him put her to death.’ Quoth the prince, ‘Forgiveness is better than vengeance and it is of the fashion of the noble;’ and the King repeated, ‘It is for thee to decide, O my son.’ So the prince set her free, saying, ‘Depart from our neighbourhood and may God pardon what is past!’

Therewith the King rose from his couch of estate and seating his son thereon, crowned him with his crown and bade the grandees of his realm swear fealty and do homage to him. And he said, ‘O folk, indeed, I am stricken in years and desire to withdraw apart and give myself up to the service of my Lord, and I call you to witness that divest myself of the royal dignity, even as I have divested myself of my crown, and set it on my son’s head.’ So the troops and officers swore fealty to the prince, and his father gave himself up to the worship of his Lord nor stinted from this, whilst his son abode in his kingship, doing justice and righteousness; and his power was magnified and his dominion strengthened and he abode in all delight and solace of life, till there came to him the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies.

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JOUDER AND HIS BROTHERS.

There was once a merchant named Omar and he had three sons, the eldest of whom was called Salim, the second Selim and the third Jouder. He reared them all till they came to man’s estate, but the youngest he loved more than his brothers, who, seeing this, waxed jealous of Jouder and hated him. Now their father was a man stricken in years, and when he saw that his two eldest sons hated their brother, he feared lest trouble should befall him from them after his death. So he assembled a company of his kinsfolk, together with divers men of learning and assessors of the Cadi’s court, and letting bring all his money and stuff, said to them, ‘O folk, divide ye this money and stuff into four parts, according to the law.’ They did so, and he gave one part to each of his sons and kept the fourth himself, saying, “This was my good and I have divided it among them; and now they have no farther claim upon me nor upon each other; so, when I die, no difference shall arise between them, seeing that I have parted the inheritance among them in my lifetime; and this that I have kept shall be for my wife, their mother, wherewithal to provide for her subsistence [after my death].’

A little while after this he died, and neither of the two elder brothers was content with his share, but sought more of Jouder, saying, ‘Our father’s good is in thy hands.’ So he appealed to the judges and those who had been present at the partition came and bore witness of that which they knew, wherefore the judge forbade them from each other; but Jouder and his brothers spent much money in bribes to him. After this, they left him awhile, but presently they began again to torment him and he again appealed to the magistrate, [who again gave judgment in his favour;] but all three once more lost much money in bribes. Nevertheless Salim and Selim forbore not to seek his hurt [and to carry the case] from court to court, losing, he and they, till they had given all their good for food to the oppressors and they became poor, all three. Then the two elder brothers went to their mother and took her money and beat her and laughed at her and drove her away. So she betook herself to her son Jouder and told him how his brothers had dealt with her and fell to cursing them. ‘O my mother,' said he, 'do not curse them, for God will requite each of them his deed. See, I am become poor, and so are my brethren, for contention begetteth loss of good, and we have contended amain, I and they, before the judges, and it hath profited us nothing: nay, we have wasted all our father left us and are disgraced among the folk by reason of our testimony, [one against the other]. Shall I then contend with them anew on thine account and shall we appeal to the judges? This may not be; rather do thou take up thine abode with me, and the cake of bread I eat I will share with thee. Do thou pray for me and God will give me the means of thy support. Leave them to receive of Him the recompense of their deed, and console thyself with the saying of the poet:

If a lewd fellow should transgress against thee, let him be, And wait till God shall punish him who doth iniquity;
Neither oppress, for if a mount another should oppress, The evil-doer would be crushed therefore, assuredly.

And he comforted her till she consented and took up her dwelling with him. Then he got him a net and went a-fishing every day in the river or the lakes or some other place in which there was water; and one day he would earn ten paras, another twenty and another thirty, which he spent upon his mother and himself, and they ate and drank well. But, as for his brothers, they plied no craft and sold not neither bought; misery and ruin and overwhelming calamity overtook them and they wasted that which they had taken from their mother and became wretched naked beggars. Bytimes they would come to their mother, humbling themselves to her exceedingly and complaining of hunger; and she, a mother's heart being pitiful, would give them some mouldy bread; or, if there were any cooked meat of the day before, she would say to them, 'Eat it quickly and go, before your brother comes; for it would be grievous to him and he would harden his heart against me, and ye would disgrace me with him.' So they would eat in haste and go.

One day they came in to their mother, and she set cooked meat and bread before them. As they were eating, in came their brother Jouder, at whose sight their mother hung her head in shame and confusion, fearing lest he should be wroth with her. But he smiled in their faces, saying, ‘Welcome, O my brothers! This is indeed a blessed day. How comes it that ye visit me this blessed day?’ Then he embraced them and entreated them lovingly, saying to them, ‘I thought not that ye would have deserted me nor that ye would have forborne to visit me and your mother.’ ‘By Allah, O my brother,’ said they, ‘we longed sore for thee and nought withheld us but shamefastness because of what befell between us and thee; but indeed we have repented amain. It was Satan’s doing, the curse of God the Most High be upon him! And now we have no blessing but thee and our mother.’ ‘And I,’ rejoined Jouder, ‘I have no blessing but you twain.’ And his mother exclaimed, ‘God whiten thy face, O my son, and increase thy prosperity, for thou art the best of us all!’ Then he said to his brothers, ‘Welcome to you both! Abide with me; for God is bountiful and good aboundeth with me.’ So he made peace with them and they ate the evening meal and passed the night with him.

Next morning, after they had broken their fast, Jouder shouldered his net and went out, trusting in [God] the Opener [of the gates of sustenance,] whilst the two others also went forth and were absent till noon, when they returned and their mother set the midday meal before them. At nightfall, Jouder came home, bearing meat and vegetables, and they abode thus a month’s space, Jouder catching fish and spending their price on his mother and his brothers, and the latter eating and amusing themselves, till, one day, he went down to the river-bank and casting his net, brought it up empty. He cast it a second time, but again it came up empty and he said to himself, ‘There are no fish in this place.’ So he removed to another place and cast the net there, but with no better success. And he ceased not to remove from place to place till nightfall, but caught not a single gudgeon and said to himself, ‘Strange! Is the river drained of fish or what?’ Then he shouldered the net and made for home, chagrined and concerned for his mother and brothers and knowing not how he should feed them that night.

Presently he came to a baker’s oven and saw the folk crowding for bread, with money in their hands, whilst the baker took no note of them. So he stood there, sighing, and the baker said to him, ‘Welcome, O Jouder! Dost thou want bread?’ But he was silent and the baker continued, ‘If thou hast no money, take thy sufficiency and thou shalt have credit.’ So Jouder said, ‘Give me ten paras’ worth of bread and take this net in pledge.’ ‘Nay, good fellow,’ rejoined the baker, ‘the net is thy means of earning thy livelihood, and if I take it of thee, I shall close up against thee the door of thy subsistence. Take ten paras’ worth of bread and take these other ten paras, and to-morrow bring me fish for the twenty.’ ‘On my head and eyes be it,’ answered Jouder and took the bread and money, saying, ‘To-morrow God will provide me the means of acquittance.’ Then he bought meat and vegetables and carried them home to his mother, who cooked them, and they supped and went to bed.

Next morning he arose at daybreak and took the net, and his mother said to him, ‘Sit down and break thy fast.’ But he said, ‘Do thou and my brothers breakfast,’ and went down to the river, where he ceased not to cast and shift about all day, without aught falling to him, till the hour of afternoon-prayer, when he shouldered his net and went away, sore dejected. His way led him perforce by the shop of the baker, who, when he saw him, counted out to him the loaves and the money, saying, ‘Come, take it and go; if it be not for to-day, it will be for to-morrow.’ Jouder would have excused himself, but the baker said to him, ‘There needs no excuse; if thou hadst caught aught, it would be with thee; so, when I saw thee empty-handed, I knew thou hadst gotten nought; and if to-morrow thou have no better luck, come and take bread and be not ashamed, for I will give thee credit.’ So Jouder took the bread and money and went home. Next day he sallied forth and fished from lake to lake until the time of afternoon-prayer, but caught nothing; so he went to the baker and took the bread and silver as usual.

Thus he did seven days running, till he became disheartened and said in himself, ‘To-day I will go to Lake Caroun.’ So he went thither and was about to cast his net, when there came up to him unawares a Moor clad in a splendid habit and riding a mule with trappings embroidered with gold and on her back a pair of saddle-bags of the same stuff. The Moor alighted and said to him, ‘Peace be upon thee, O Jouder, son of Omar!’ ‘And on thee, O my lord the pilgrim!’ replied the fisherman. Quoth the Moor, ‘O Jouder, I have need of thee and if thou obey me, thou shalt get great good and shalt be my companion and do my occasions for me.' 'O my lord,' replied Jouder, 'Tell me what is in thy mind and I will obey thee, without demur.' Quoth the Moor, 'Repeat the First Chapter of the Koran.' So he recited it with him and the Moor, bringing out a silken cord, said to Jouder, 'Bind my hands fast behind me with this cord and cast me into the lake; then wait awhile and if thou see my hands appear above the water, cast thy net over me and draw me out in haste; but if I come up, feet foremost, then know that I am dead; in which case do thou leave me and take the mule and saddle-bags and carry them to the merchants' bazaar, where thou wilt find a Jew, by name Shemaiah. Deliver him the mule and he will give thee a hundred dinars, which do thou take and go thy ways and keep the matter secret.' So Jouder bound his hands behind his back and he kept saying, 'Tighter.' Then said he, 'Push me into the lake.' So he pushed him in and he sank.

Jouder stood waiting some time, till, at last, the Moor's feet appeared above the water, whereupon he knew that he was dead. So he left him and drove the mule to the bazaar, where he found the Jew seated on a stool at the door of his storehouse. When the latter saw the mule, he said, 'The man hath perished and nought undid him but covetise.' Then he took the mule from Jouder and gave him a hundred dinars, charging him keep the matter secret. So Jouder went to the baker and giving him a dinar, took what bread he needed. The baker reckoned up what was due to him and said, 'I still owe thee two days' bread.' 'Good,' answered Jouder and went on to the butcher, to whom he gave a dinar and took meat, saying, 'Keep the rest of the dinar on account.' Then he bought vegetables and going home, found his brothers importuning their mother for food, whilst she said, 'Have patience till your brother comes home, for I have nothing.' So he went in to them and said, 'Take and eat;' and they fell on the victual like ghouls. Then he gave his mother the rest of the dinars, bidding her, if his brothers came to her, give them wherewithal to buy food and eat in his absence.

Next morning he took his net and going down to Lake Caroun, was about to cast his net, when there came up to him a second Moor, riding on a mule, more handsomely accoutred than he of the day before and having with him a pair of saddle-bags, in each pocket of which was a casket. ‘Peace be on thee, O Jouder!’ said the Moor. ‘And on thee be peace, O my lord the pilgrim!’ replied Jouder. Quoth the Moor, ‘Did there come to thee yesterday a Moor riding on a mule like this of mine?’ At this Jouder was alarmed and replied, ‘I saw none,’ fearing lest the other should say, ‘Whither went he?’ and if he answered, ‘He was drowned in the lake,’ that he should charge him with having drowned him; wherefore he could not but deny. ‘Harkye, good fellow,’ rejoined the Moor, ‘this was my brother, who is gone before me.’ Quoth Jouder, ‘I know nothing of him.’ Then said the Moor, ‘Didst thou not bind his hands behind him and throw him into the lake, and did he not say to thee, “If my hands appear above the water first, cast thy net over me and pull me out in haste; but, if my feet appear first, know that I am dead and carry the mule to the Jew Shemaiah, who will give thee a hundred dinars?” And did not his feet appear first and didst thou not carry the mule to the Jew and take of him the hundred dinars?’ ‘Since thou knowest all this,’ replied Jouder, ‘why dost thou question me?’ Quoth the Moor, ‘I would have thee do with me as thou didst with my brother.’ Then he gave him a silken cord, saying, ‘Bind my hands behind me and throw me in, and if I fare as did my brother, take the mule to the Jew and he will give thee other hundred dinars.’ Quoth Jouder, ‘Come.’ So he came and he bound him and pushed him into the lake, where he sank.

After awhile, his feet appeared above the water and Jouder said, ‘He is dead and damned! So God will, may Moors come to me every day, and I will bind them and push them in and they shall die; and I will be content with a hundred dinars for each dead man.’ Then he took the mule to the Jew, who exclaimed, on seeing him, ‘The other is dead?’ ‘May thy head live!’ answered Jouder, and the Jew said, ‘This is the reward of the covetous.’ Then he took the mule and gave Jouder a hundred dinars, with which he returned to his mother. ‘O my son,’ said she, ‘whence hast thou this money?’ So he told her and she said, ‘Go not again to Lake Caroun, for I fear for thee from the Moors.’ ‘O my mother,’ answered he, ‘I do but cast them in by their own wish, and what am I to do? This craft brings me in a hundred dinars a day and I return speedily; wherefore, by Allah, I will not leave going to Lake Caroun, till the trace of the Moors is cut off and not one of them is left.’

So, on the morrow, he went down to the lake and stood there, till there came up a third Moor, riding on a mule and still more richly accoutred than the first two, who said to him, ‘Peace be on thee, O Jouder, O son of Omar!’ And the fisherman returned his salute, saying in himself, ‘How comes it that they all know me?’ Quoth the Moor, ‘Have any Moors passed by here?’ ‘Two,’ answered Jouder. ‘Whither went they?’ asked the Moor, and Jouder said, ‘I bound their hands behind them and cast them into the lake, where they were drowned, and the same fate is in store for thee.’ The Moor laughed and rejoined, saying, ‘O good fellow, every living soul hath its appointed term.’ Then he alighted and gave the fisherman the silken cord, saying, ‘Do with me as thou didst with them.’ ‘Put thy hands behind thy back,’ said Jouder, ‘that I may pinion thee, for I am in haste, and time flies.’ So he put his hands behind him and Jouder bound him and cast him in. Then he waited awhile, till presently the Moor thrust his hands forth of the water and called out to him, saying, ‘Ho, good fellow! Cast out thy net!’ So Jouder cast the net over him and drew him ashore, and behold, in each hand he held a fish as red as coral. Quoth the Moor, ‘Bring me the two caskets [that are in the saddle-bags].’ So Jouder brought them and opened them to him, and he laid in each casket a fish and shut them up.

Then he pressed Jouder to his bosom and kissed him on the right cheek and the left, saying, ‘God save thee from all stress! By Allah, hadst thou not cast the net over me and pulled me out, I should have kept my grip of the two fish till I sank and was drowned, for I could not get ashore [of myself].’ ‘O my lord the pilgrim,’ quoth Jouder, ‘I conjure thee by Allah, tell me the true history of the two drowned men and the fishes and the Jew.’ ‘Know, O Jouder,’ replied the Moor, ‘that these that were drowned were my two brothers, by name Abdusselam and Abdulahed. My own name is Abdussemed, and the Jew also is our brother: his name is Abdurrehim and he is no Jew, but a true believer of the Maliki school. Our father, whose name was Abdulwedoud, taught us magic and the art of solving mysteries and bringing to light hidden treasures, and we applied ourselves thereto, till we compelled the Afrits and Marids of the Jinn to do us service. By-and-by, our father died and left us much wealth, and we divided amongst us his treasures and talismans, till we came to the books, when we fell out over a book called "The Fables of the Ancients," whose like is not in the world, nor can its price be paid of any nor its value made good with gold and jewels; for in it are particulars of all the hidden treasures of the earth and the solution of all mysteries. Our father was wont to make use of this book, of which we had some small matter by heart, and each of us desired to possess it, that he might come at what was therein.

Now there was in our company an old man, by name the Diviner El Abten, who had reared our father and taught him divination and magic, and he said to us, "Bring me the book." So we gave it him and he said, "Ye are my son's sons, and it may not be that I should wrong any of you. So whoso is minded to have the book, let him address himself to achieve the treasure of Es Shemerdel and bring me the celestial planisphere and the kohl-pot and the seal-ring and the sword. For the ring hath a Marid that serves it called Er Raad el Casif. And whoso hath possession thereof, neither King nor Sultan may prevail against him; and if he will, he may therewith make himself master of the earth, in all its length and breadth. As for the sword, if its bearer draw it and brandish it against an army, the army will be put to the rout, and if he say the while, 'Slay yonder host,' there will come forth of the sword lightning and fire, that will slay the whole host. As for the planisphere, its possessor has only to turn its face toward any country with whose sight he hath a mind to divert himself, and therein he will see that country and its people, as they were before him, and he sitting in his place; and if he be wroth with a city and have a mind to burn it, he has but to turn the face of the planisphere towards the sun's disc, saying, 'Let such a city be burnt,' and that city will be consumed with fire. As for the kohl-pot, whoso anointeth his eyes therefrom, he shall see all the treasures of the earth. And I make this condition with you that none but he who achieves the treasure and brings me the four precious things that be therein shall have any claim to this book."

We all agreed to this, and he continued, saying, "O my sons, know that the treasure of Es Shemerdel is under the governance of the sons of the Red King, and your father told me that he had himself essayed to open the treasure, but could not achieve it; for the sons of the Red King fled from him into the land of Egypt and took refuge in a lake there, called Lake Caroun, whither he pursued them, but could not prevail over them, by reason of their stealing into that lake, which was guarded by a spell. So he returned, empty-handed, and complained to me of his ill-success, whereupon I made him an astrological calculation and found that the treasure could only be achieved by means of a young fisherman of Cairo, by name Jouder ben Omar, the place of foregathering with whom was at Lake Caroun, for that he should be the means of the taking the sons of the Red King and that the charm should not be dissolved, save if he should bind the hands of the seeker of the treasure behind him and cast him into the lake, there to do battle with the sons of the Red King. An he were he to whom the adventure was reserved, he should lay hands upon them; but, if it were not destined to him, he should perish and his feet appear above the water. As for him who was successful, his hands would appear first above the water, whereupon it behoved that Jouder should cast the net over him and draw him ashore."

Quoth my brothers Abdusselam and Abdulahed, "We will essay the adventure, though we perish;" and I said, "And I also will go;" but my brother Abdurrehim (he whom thou hast seen in the habit of a Jew) said, "I have no mind [to this]." So we agreed with him that he should repair to Cairo in the disguise of a Jewish merchant, so that, if one of us perished in the lake, he might take his mule and saddle-bags and give the bearer a hundred dinars. The first that came to thee the sons of the Red King slew, and so did they with the second; but against me they could not prevail and I laid hands on them.' Quoth Jouder, 'And where are they?' 'Didst thou not see me shut them in the caskets?' asked the Moor. 'Those were fish,' said Jouder. 'Nay,' answered the Moor, 'they are Afrits in the guise of fish. But, O Jouder,' continued he, 'thou must know that the treasure can only be achieved by thy means: so wilt thou do my bidding and go with me to the towns of Fez and Mequinez and open the treasure? And after I will give thee what thou wilt and thou shalt ever be my brother in the bond of God and return to thy family with a joyful heart.' 'O my lord the pilgrim,' said Jouder, 'I have on my hands a mother and two brothers, whose provider I am; and if I go with thee, who shall give them bread to eat?’ ‘This is an idle excuse,’ replied the Moor; ‘if it be but a matter of spending-money, I will give thee a thousand dinars for thy mother, wherewith she may provide herself till thou come back; and indeed thou shalt return before four months.’

When Jouder heard mention of the thousand dinars, he consented and the Moor, pulling out the money, gave it to him, whereupon he carried it to his mother and told her what had passed, saying, ‘Take these thousand dinars and provide thyself and my brothers withal, whilst I journey to Morocco with the Moor, for I shall be absent four months, and great good will betide me; so pray for me, O my mother!’ ‘O my son,’ answered she, ‘thou desolatest me and I fear for thee.’ ‘O my mother,’ rejoined he, ‘no harm can befall him who is in God’s keeping, and the Moor is a man of worth.’ And he went on to praise his fashion to her. ‘May God incline his heart to thee!’ said she. ‘Go with him, O my son: peradventure, he will give thee somewhat.’ So he took leave of her and rejoined the Moor Abdussemed, who said to him, ‘Hast thou consulted thy mother?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Jouder; ‘and she blessed me.’ ‘Then mount behind me,’ said the Moor.

So Jouder mounted behind him on the mule, and they rode on from noon till the time of afternoon-prayer, when the fisherman was anhungred, but seeing no victual with the Moor, said to him, ‘O my lord the pilgrim, belike thou hast forgotten to bring aught to eat by the way?’ ‘Art thou hungry?’ asked the Moor. ‘Yes,’ answered Jouder. So Abdussemed alighted and made Jouder alight and take down the saddle-bags; then he said to him, ‘O my brother, what wilt thou have?’ ‘Anything,’ replied Jouder. ‘God on thee,’ rejoined the Moor, ‘tell me what thou hast a mind to.’ ‘Bread and cheese,’ said Jouder; and the other, ‘O good fellow, bread and cheese befit thee not; wish for something good.’ ‘Just now,’ replied Jouder, ‘everything is good to me.’ Quoth the Moor, ‘Dost thou like fricasseed fowl?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Jouder. ‘Dost thou like rice and honey?’ asked he, and Jouder said, ‘Yes.’ And the Moor went on to ask him if he liked this dish and that, till he had named four-and-twenty kinds of meats; and Jouder thought to himself, ‘He must be mad. Where are all these dishes to come from, seeing he hath neither cook nor kitchen?’ And he said to him, ‘Enough: thou makest me long for all these meats, and I see nothing.' Quoth the Moor, 'Thou art welcome, O Jouder!' and putting his hand into the saddle-bags, pulled out a dish of gold, containing two hot fricasseed fowls. Then he put in his hand a second time and pulled out a golden dish, full of kabobs; nor did he give over taking out dishes from the saddle-bags, till he had brought forth the whole of the four-and-twenty he had named, whilst Jouder looked on in amazement.

Then said the Moor, 'Eat, good fellow.' And Jouder said to him, 'O my lord, meseems thou carriest in yonder saddle-bags a kitchen and cooking-folk!' The Moor laughed and replied, 'These are enchanted saddle-bags and have a servant, who would bring us a thousand dishes an hour, if we called for them.' Quoth Jouder, 'By Allah, this is indeed a fine pair of saddle-bags!' Then they ate their fill and threw away what was left; after which the Moor replaced the empty dishes in the saddle-bags and putting in his hand, drew out an ewer. They drank and making the ablutions, prayed the afternoon-prayer; after which Abdussemed replaced the ewer and the two caskets in the saddle-bags and throwing them over the mule's back, mounted and took Jouder up behind him. Then said he, 'O Jouder, knowest thou how far we have come, since we left Cairo?' 'Not I, by Allah,' replied he, and Abdussemed, 'We have come a whole month's journey.' 'And how is that?' asked Jouder. 'Know, O Jouder,' replied the Moor, 'that this mule under us is a Marid of the Jinn, that every day performs a year's journey; but, for thy sake, she hath gone at her leisure.'

Then they set out again and fared on westward till nightfall, when they halted and the Moor brought out the evening meal from the saddle-bags, and in like manner, in the morning, he took forth wherewithal to break their fast. So they rode on four days, alighting at midnight and sleeping till the morning, when they fared on again; and all that Jouder had a mind to, he sought of the Moor, who brought it out of the saddle-bags. On the fifth day, they arrived at Fez and Mequinez and entered the city, where all who met the Moor saluted him and kissed his hands; and he rode through the streets, till he came to a certain door, at which he knocked, whereupon it opened and out came a girl like the moon, to whom said he, 'O Rehmeh, O my daughter, open us the upper chamber.' 'On my head and eyes, O my father!' replied she and went in, swaying to and fro with a graceful and voluptuous gait, that ravished Jouder's reason, and he said, 'This is none other than a King's daughter.' So she opened the upper chamber and the Moor, taking the saddle-bags from the mule's back, said, 'Go, and God bless thee!' When behold, the earth opened and swallowing the mule, closed up again as before. And Jouder said, 'O Protector! praised be God who hath kept us in safety on her back!' 'Marvel not, O Jouder,' quoth the Moor; 'I told thee that the mule was an Afrit; but come with us into the upper chamber.'

So they went up into the upper chamber, and Jouder was amazed at the profusion of rich furniture and pendants of gold and silver and jewels and other rare and precious things that he saw there. As soon as they were seated, the Moor bade Rehmeh bring him a certain bale and opening it, took out a dress worth a thousand dinars, which he gave to Jouder, saying, 'Don this dress, O Jouder! and welcome to thee!' So Jouder put it on and became as he were one of the Kings of the West. Then the Moor laid the saddle-bags before him, and putting in his hand, pulled out dish after dish, till they had before them a tray of forty kinds of meat, when he said to Jouder, 'Come, O my lord, eat and excuse us, for that we know not what meats thou wouldest have; but tell us what thou hast a mind to, and we will set it before thee without delay.' 'By Allah, O my lord the pilgrim,' replied Jouder, 'I love all kinds of meat and mislike none; so ask me not of aught, but bring all that cometh to thy thought, for I have nought to do but to eat.'

He abode twenty days with the Moor, who clad him in a new dress every day, and all this time they ate from the saddle-bags; for the Moor bought neither meat nor bread nor aught else nor cooked, but brought everything out of the bags, even to various kinds of fruit. On the twenty- first day, he said to Jouder, 'Come, this is the day appointed for opening the treasure of Shemerdel.' So he rose and they went afoot without the city, where they found two slaves, each holding a mule. The Moor mounted one mule and Jouder the other, and they rode on till noon, when they came to a stream of running water, on whose banks they alighted and Abdussemed signed with his hand to the slaves and said, 'To it!' So they took the mules and going each his own way, were absent awhile, after which they returned, bearing, one a tent, which he pitched, and the other carpets, which he spread in the tent and laid cushions thereabout. Then they brought the saddle-bags and the caskets containing the two fish; whereupon the Moor arose and said, 'Come, O Jouder!' So Jouder followed him into the tent and sat down beside him; and he brought out dishes of meat from the saddle-bags and they ate the morning meal.

Then the Moor took the two caskets and conjured over them, whereupon there came from within voices that said, 'Here are we, at thy service, O diviner of the world! Have mercy on us!' But he ceased not to repeat conjurations and they to call for help, till the two caskets flew in sunder and there came forth two men, with their hands bound behind them, saying, 'Pardon, O diviner of the world! What wilt thou with us?' Quoth he, 'I will burn you with fire, except ye make a covenant with me, to open to me the treasure of Es Shemerdel.'* 'We promise this to thee,' answered they, 'and we will open the treasure to thee, so thou produce to us Jouder ben Omar, the fisherman, for it may not be opened but by his means, nor can any enter therein but he.' 'He of whom ye speak,' answered the Moor, 'I have brought, and he is here, listening to you and looking at you.' Thereupon they covenanted with him to open the treasure to him, and he released them.

Then he brought out a hollow wand and tablets of red cornelian and laid the latter on the former; after which he took a chafing-dish and laying charcoal thereon, blew one breath into it and it kindled forthwith. Then said he to Jouder, 'O Jouder, I am now about to begin the necessary conjurations and fumigations, and when I have once begun, I may not speak, or the conjuration will be naught; so I will tell thee first what thou must do.' 'Say on,' replied Jouder. 'Know then,' said the Moor, 'that, when I have recited the charm and thrown on the perfumes, the water will dry up from the river's bed and discover to thee a door of gold, the bigness of the city- gate, with two rings of metal thereon; whereupon do thou go down to the door and knock lightly and wait awhile; then knock a second time more loudly than the first and wait another while; after which give three knocks, one after another, and thou wilt hear a voice say, "Who knocks at the door of the treasure, unknowing how to solve the mysteries?” Do thou answer, “I am Jouder ben Omar, the fisherman;” and the door will open and there will come forth one with a sword in his hand and say to thee, “If thou be that man, stretch forth thy neck, that I may strike off thy head.” Then do thou stretch forth thy neck and fear not; for, when he lifts his hand and smites thee, he will fall down before thee, and in a little thou wilt see him a body without a soul; and the blow shall not irk thee nor shall any harm befall thee; but, if thou gainsay him, he will slay thee. When thou hast undone his enchantment by obedience, enter and go on till thou seest another door, at which do thou knock, and there will come forth to thee a horseman with a lance on his shoulder and say to thee, “What brings thee hither, where neither man nor genie may enter?” And he will shake his spear at thee. Bare thy breast to him and he will smite thee and fall down forthright and thou shalt see him a body without a soul; but if thou cross him, he will slay thee.

Then go on to the third door, whence there will come forth to thee a man with a bow and arrows in his hand and take aim at thee. Bare thy breast to him and he will shoot at thee and fall down before thee, a body without a soul; but if thou cross him, he will kill thee. Then go on to the fourth door and knock, and there will come forth to thee a huge lion, which will rush upon thee, opening his mouth as if he had a mind to devour thee. Have no fear of him, neither flee from him; but, when he cometh to thee, give him thy hand and he will bite at it and fall down straightway, nor shall aught [of hurt] betide thee. Then enter the fifth door, where thou shalt find a black slave, who will say to thee, “Who art thou?” Say, “I am Jouder,” and he will answer, “If thou be that man, open the sixth door.” Then do thou go up to the door and say, “O Jesus, tell Moses to open the door;” whereupon the door will fly open and thou wilt see two dragons, one on the left hand and another on the right, which will open their mouths and fly at thee, both at once. Do thou put forth to them thy hands and they will bite each a hand [and fall down dead;] but if thou resist them, they will kill thee. Then go on to the seventh door and knock, whereupon there will come forth to thee thy mother and say, “Welcome, O my son! Come, that I may greet thee!” But do thou say to her, “Hold off from me and put off thy clothes.” And she will make answer, “O my son, I am thy mother that suckled thee and brought thee up: how then wouldst thou strip me naked?” Then do thou say, “Except thou put off thy clothes, I will kill thee!” and look to thy right, where thou wilt see a sword hanging up. Take it and draw it upon her, saying, “Strip!” whereupon she will wheedle thee and humble herself to thee; but have thou no pity on her nor be beguiled, and as often as she puts off aught, say to her, “Off with the rest!” nor do thou cease to threaten her with death, till she put off all that is upon her and fall down, when the enchantment will be dissolved and the charms undone, and thou wilt be safe.

Then enter the hall of the treasure, where thou wilt see the gold lying in heaps; but pay no heed to aught thereof and go on to the upper end of the hall, where thou wilt find a niche, with a curtain drawn before it. Draw back the curtain and thou wilt see the enchanter Es Shemerdel lying upon a couch of gold, with something at his head, round and shining like the moon, which is the celestial planisphere. He is girt with the sword; on his finger is the ring and about his neck is a chain, to which hangs the kohl-pot. Bring me the four talismans, and look thou forget not aught of that which I have told thee, or thou wilt repent and be put to fear.’ And he repeated his directions to Jouder a second and a third and a fourth time, till he said, ‘I have them by heart: but who may face all these enchantments that thou namest and endure against these mighty terrors?’ ‘O Jouder,’ replied the Moor, ‘fear not, for they are semblances without life;’ and he went on to hearten him, till he said, ‘I put my trust in God.’

Then Abdussemed threw perfumes on the chafing-dish, and addressed himself to reciting conjurations. Presently the water disappeared and discovered the bed of the river and the door of the treasure, whereupon Jouder went down to the door and knocked. Therewith he heard a voice saying, ‘Who knocks at the door of the treasure, unknowing how to solve the mysteries?’ Quoth he, ‘I am Jouder, son of Omar;’ whereupon the door opened and there came forth one with a drawn sword, who said to him, ‘Stretch forth thy neck.’ So he stretched forth his neck and the figure smote him and fell down, lifeless. Then he went on to the second door and did the like, nor did he cease to do thus, till he had undone the enchantments of the first six doors and came to the seventh door, from which there issued forth to him his mother, saying, ‘Greeting, O my son!’ ‘What art thou?’ said he; and she answered saying, ‘O my son, I am thy mother who bore thee nine months [in my womb] and gave thee suck and reared thee.’ Quoth he, ‘Put off thy clothes.’ ‘Thou art my son,’ said she, ‘how wouldst thou strip me naked?’ But he said, ‘Strip, or I will strike off thy head with this sword;’ and he put out his hand to it and drew it upon her, saying, ‘Except thou strip, I will slay thee.’ Then the strife became long between them and as often as he redoubled on her his menaces, she put off somewhat of her clothes and he said to her, ‘Put off the rest,’ whilst she kept saying, ‘O my son, thou hast disappointed my fosterage of thee,’ till she had nothing left but her trousers. Then said she, ‘O my son, is thy heart stone? Wilt thou dishonour me by discovering my nakedness. Indeed, this is unlawful, O my son!’ And he answered, ‘Thou sayst sooth; it behoves not that thou put off thy trousers.’

No sooner had he uttered these words, than she cried out and said, ‘He hath made default: beat him!’ Whereupon there fell upon him blows like rain and the servants of the treasure flocked to him and dealt him a beating that he forgot not in all his life; after which they thrust him forth and cast him down without the treasure and the doors shut of themselves as before, whilst the waters of the river returned to their bed. When the Moor saw this, he took Jouder up in haste and repeated conjurations over him, till he came to his senses, when he said to him, ‘What hast thou done, O dolt?’ ‘O my brother,’ answered Jouder, ‘I undid all the enchantments, till I came to my mother and there befell between her and myself a long contention. But I made her put off her clothes, till but her trousers remained upon her and she said to me, “Do not dishonour me; for to discover one’s nakedness is forbidden.” So I left her her trousers out of pity, and behold, she cried out and said, “He hath made default: beat him!” Whereupon there came out upon me folk, whence I know not, and beating me till I was nigh upon death, thrust me out; nor do I know what befell me after this.’ Quoth the Moor, ‘Did I not warn thee not to swerve from my directions? Verily, thou hast done ill by me and by thyself: for if thou hadst made her take off her trousers, we had attained our desire; but now thou must abide with me till this day next year.'

Then he cried out to the two slaves, who struck the tent forthright and loaded it [on muleback;] then they were absent awhile and presently returned with the two mules; and they mounted and rode back to the city of Fez, where Jouder abode with the Moor, eating and drinking well and donning a rich dress every day, till the appointed day arrived, when the Moor said to him, 'Come with me, for this is the appointed day.' And Jouder said, 'It is well.' So the Moor carried him without the city, where they found the two slaves with the mules, and mounting, rode on till they came to the river. Here the slaves pitched the tent and furnished it and the Moor brought forth the tray of food and they ate the morning meal; after which Abdussemed brought out the wand and the tablets as before and kindling the fire in the chafing-dish, made ready the perfumes. Then said he to Jouder, 'O Jouder, I wish to renew my injunctions to thee.' 'O my lord the pilgrim,' answered he, 'if I have forgotten the beating, I have forgotten the injunctions.' 'Dost thou indeed remember them,' asked the Moor, and he said, 'Yes.' Quoth the Moor, 'Keep thy wits, and think not that the woman is thy very mother; nay, she is but an enchantment in her semblance, whose purpose is to catch thee tripping. Thou camest off alive the first time, but, if thou make default this time, they will kill thee.' 'If I slip this time,' replied Jouder, 'I deserve to be burnt of them.'

Then Abdussemed cast in the perfumes and recited the conjurations, till the river dried up; whereupon Jouder descended and knocked at the door. It opened and he entered and undid the several enchantments, till he came to the seventh door and the semblance of his mother appeared before him, saying, 'Welcome, O my son!' But he said to her, 'How am I thy son, O accursed one? Strip!' And she began to wheedle him and put off garment after garment, till but her trousers remained; and he said to her, 'Strip, O accursed one!' So she put off her trousers and became a body without a soul. Then he entered the hall of the treasure, where he saw gold lying in heaps, but paid no heed to it and passed on to the niche at the upper end, where he saw the enchanter Es Shemerdel lying on a couch of gold, girt with the sword, with the ring on his finger, the kohl-pot on his breast and the celestial planisphere over his head. So he unbuckled the sword and taking the ring, the kohl-pot and the planisphere, went forth, when, behold, music sounded for him and the servants of the treasure cried out, saying, ‘Mayst thou enjoy that which thou hast gained, O Jouder!’ Nor did the music leave sounding, till he came forth of the treasure to the Moor, who gave over his conjurations and rising, embraced him and saluted him. Then Jouder gave him the four talismans, and he took them and cried out to the slaves, who carried away the tent and brought the mules.

So they mounted and returned to the city of Fez, where the Moor fetched the saddle-bags and brought forth dish after dish of meat, till the tray was full, and said to Jouder, ‘Eat, O Jouder, O my brother!’ So he ate till he was satisfied, when the Moor emptied what remained of the meats into other dishes and returned the empty platters to the saddle-bags. Then he said to Jouder, ‘O Jouder, thou hast left thy native land on our account and hast accomplished our need; wherefore thou hast a right to a reward of us. Seek, therefore, what thou wilt; it is God the Most High that giveth unto thee by our means. Ask thy will and be not ashamed, for thou art deserving.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Jouder, ‘I ask first of God the Most High and then of thee, that thou give me yonder saddle-bags.’ So the Moor called for them and gave them to him, saying, ‘Take them, for they are thy due, and if thou hadst asked of me aught else, I had given it thee. Eat from them, thou and thy family, and know that the manner of their usance is on this wise; put thy hand therein and say, “O servant of these saddle-bags, I conjure thee by the virtue of the mighty names that have power over thee, bring me such a dish!” And he will bring thee whatsoever thou askest, though thou shouldst call for a thousand different dishes a day. But, O good fellow, these will not profit thee, save by way of victual, and thou hast wearied thyself with us and we promised thee to send thee home, rejoicing; so we will join to these other saddle-bags, full of gold and jewels, and bring thee back to thy native land, where thou shalt become a merchant and clothe thyself and thy family; nor shalt thou want for spending-money.’

So saying, he filled him a pair of saddle-bags, half with gold and half with jewels and precious stones, and sending for a slave and a mule, said to him, ‘Mount this mule, and the slave shall go before thee and guide thee in the way, till thou come to the door of thy house, where do thou take the two pairs of saddle-bags and give him the mule, that he may bring it back. But let none into thy secret; and so we commend thee to God.' 'May God increase thy good!' replied Jouder and laying the two pairs of saddle-bags on the mule's back, mounted and set forth. The slave went on before him and the mule followed him all that day and night, and on the morrow he entered Cairo by the Gate of Victory, where he saw his mother seated, saying, 'Charity, for the love of God!' At this sight he well-nigh lost his wits and alighting, threw himself upon her: and when she saw him, she wept. Then he mounted her on the mule and walked by her stirrup, till they came to the house, where he set her down and taking the saddle-bags, left the mule to the slave, who took her and resumed with her to his master, for that both slave and mule were Afrits.

As for Jouder, it was grievous to him that his mother should beg; so, when they were in the house, he said to her, 'O my mother, are my brothers well?' And she replied, 'They are both well.' Quoth he, 'Why dost thou beg by the wayside?' 'Because I am hungry, O my son,' answered she; and he, 'Before I went away I gave thee a hundred dinars one day, the like the next and a thousand on the day of my departure.' 'O my son,' replied she, 'they cheated me and took the money from me, saying, "We will buy goods with it." Then they drove me away, and I fell to begging by the wayside, for stress of hunger.' 'O my mother,' said Jouder, 'no harm shall befall thee, now I am come; so have no concern, for these saddle-bags are full of gold and jewels and good aboundeth [with me].' Quoth she, 'Verily, thou art blessed, O my son! May God accept of thee and increase thee of His bounties! Go, O my son, fetch us some victual, for I slept not last night for stress of hunger, having gone to bed supperless.'

He laughed and said, 'Welcome to thee, O my mother! Call for what thou wilt to eat, and I will set it before thee forthright; for I have no occasion to buy from the market, nor need I any to cook.' 'O my son,' replied she, 'I see nought with thee.' And he said, 'I have with me in these saddle-bags all manner of meats.' 'O my son,' rejoined she, 'whatever is ready will serve to stay hunger.' 'True,' answered he, 'when there is no choice, men are content with the least thing; but where there is plenty, they like to eat what is good: and I have plenty; so call for what thou hast a mind to.' 'O my son,' said she, 'give me some hot bread and a piece of cheese:' but he answered, saying, 'O my mother, this befits not thy condition.' 'Then give me to eat of that which befits my condition,' quoth she; 'for thou knowest it.' 'O my mother,' rejoined he, 'what befits thy condition is rissoled meat and fricasseed fowls and savoury rice and sausages and stuffed cucumbers and stuffed lamb and stuffed ribs [of mutton] and vermicelli with pounded almonds and nuts and honey and sugar and fritters and almond patties.' But she thought he was laughing at her and making mock of her; so she said to him, 'Alas! Alas! what is come to thee? Dost thou dream or art thou mad?' 'Why deemest thou that I am mad?' asked he, and she replied, 'Because thou namest to me all manner rich meats; who can avail unto their price, and who knows how to dress them?' Quoth he, 'As I live, thou shalt eat of all that I have named to thee, and that forthright.' And she said, 'I see nothing.' Then said he, 'Bring me the saddle-bags.'

So she fetched them and feeling them, found them empty. However, she laid them before him and he thrust in his hand and pulled out dish after dish, till he had set before her all he had named. Whereupon, 'O my son,' said she, 'the saddle-bags are small and moreover they were empty; yet hast thou taken thereout all these dishes. Where then were they all?' 'O my mother,' answered he, 'know that these are enchanted saddle-bags, which the Moor gave me, and they have a servant, whom, if one desire aught, he has but to adjure by the names [which have power over him,] saying, "O servant of the saddle-bags, bring me such a dish!" and he will bring it.' Quoth his mother, 'And may I put out my hand and ask of him?' 'Do so,' replied he. So she put out her hand and said, 'O servant of the saddle-bags, [I conjure thee,] by the virtue of the names that have power over thee, bring me stuffed ribs [of mutton].' Then she thrust in her hand and found a dish containing delicate stuffed ribs of lamb. So she took it out, and called for bread and what else she had a mind to; after which Jouder said to her, 'O my mother, when thou hast made an end of eating, empty what is left of the food into platters other than these and restore the empty dishes to the saddle-bags, for the charm is upon this condition, and keep the saddle-bags carefully.' So she arose and laid them up in a safe place. 'And look that thou keep this secret,' added he; 'and whenever thou hast a mind to aught, take it forth of the saddle-bags and give alms and feed my brothers, whether I be absent or present.'

Then he fell to eating with her, and while they were thus engaged, in came his two brothers, whom a man of the quarter had apprised of his return, saying, 'Your brother is come back, riding on a mule, with a slave before him, and wearing a dress that hath not its like.' So they said to each other, 'Would we had not ill-treated our mother! She will surely tell him how we did by her, and then how sore will be our disgrace with him!' But one of them said, 'Our mother is tender-hearted, and if she tell him, our brother is yet tenderer over us than she; and if we excuse ourselves to him, he will accept our excuse.' So they went in to him and he rose to them and saluting them after the friendliest manner, bade them sit and eat. So they ate till they were satisfied, for they were weak with hunger; after which Jouder said to them, 'O my brothers, take what is left and distribute it to the poor.' 'O brother,' replied they, 'let us keep it to sup withal.' But he said, 'When supper-time comes, ye shall have more than this.' So they took the rest of the victual and going out, gave of it to every poor man who passed by them, saying, 'Take and eat,' till there was nothing left. Then they brought back the dishes and Jouder said to his mother, 'Put them in the saddle-bags.'

When it was night, he entered the saloon and took forth of the saddle-bags a table of forty dishes; after which he went up [to the upper chamber] and sitting down between his brothers, said to his mother, 'Bring the supper.' So she went down to the saloon and finding there the dishes ready, laid the tray and brought up the forty dishes, one after another. Then they ate the evening meal, and when they had done, Jouder said to his brothers, 'Take and feed the poor and needy.' So they took what was left and gave alms thereof, and presently he brought forth to them sweetmeats, whereof they ate, and what was left he bade them give to the neighbours. On the morrow, they broke their fast after the same fashion, and thus they fared ten days, at the end of which time quoth Salim to Selim, 'How comes it that our brother sets before us a banquet in the morning and another at noon and a third at sundown, besides sweetmeats at night, and all that is left he gives to the poor? Verily, this is the fashion of Sultans.

Yet we never see him buy aught, and he hath neither cook nor kitchen, nor doth he light a fire. Whence hath he this great plenty? Hast thou not a mind to enquire the cause of all this?' 'By Allah, I know not,' replied Selim. 'But knowest thou any who will tell us the truth of the case?' And Salim said, 'None will tell us but our mother.'

So they laid a plot and going in to their mother one day, in Jouder's absence, said to her, 'O our mother, we are hungry.' 'Rejoice,' answered she; '[for ye shall presently be satisfied;]' and going into the saloon, sought of the servant of the saddle-bags hot meats, which she took out and set before her sons. 'O our mother,' said they, 'this meat is hot; yet hast thou not cooked, neither kindled a fire.' Quoth she, 'It comes from the saddle-bags;' and they, 'What manner of thing are these saddle-bags?' 'They are enchanted,' replied she and told them their virtue, enjoining them to secrecy. Quoth they, 'O our mother, the secret shall be kept; but teach us the manner of this.' So she taught them the fashion thereof and they fell to putting their hands into the saddle-bags and taking forth whatever they had a mind to.

Then quoth Salim [privily] to Selim, 'O my brother, how long shall we abide with Jouder servant-wise and eat of his charity? Shall we not cast about to get the saddle-bags from him and make off with them?' 'And how shall we make shift to do this?' asked Selim. 'We will sell him to the galleys,' replied Salim; and Selim said, 'How shall we do that?' Quoth Salim, 'We will go to the Captain [of the galleys] of the Sea of Suez and bid him to an entertainment, with two of his company. What I say to Jouder do thou confirm, and at the end of the night I will show thee what I will do.'

So they agreed upon this and going to the captain's lodging, said to him, 'O captain, we have come to thee on an errand that will content thee.' 'Good,' answered he; and they, 'We two are brethren, and we have a third brother, a lewd, good-for-nothing fellow. When our father died, he left us some money, which we shared amongst us, and he took his part and wasted it in lewdness and debauchery, till he was reduced to beggary, when he came upon us and cited us before the magistrates, avouching that we had taken his good and that of his father, and we disputed the matter before the judges and lost the money. Then he waited awhile and attacked us a second time, till he brought us to poverty; nor will he desist from us, and we have no peace for him; wherefore we would have thee buy him of us.' Quoth the captain, 'Can ye go about with him and make shift to bring him to me here? If so, I will pack him off to sea forthright.' 'We cannot avail to bring him here,' answered they; 'but be thou our guest [this night] and bring with thee two of thy men, no more; and when he is asleep, we will fall upon him, we five, and gag him. Then shalt thou carry him forth the house, under cover of the night, and do with him as thou wilt.' 'So be it,' rejoined the captain. 'Will ye sell him for forty dinars?' 'Yes,' said they. 'Come to such a street, by such a mosque, after nightfall, and thou shalt find one of us awaiting thee.'

Then they repaired to Jouder and waited awhile, after which Salim went up to him and kissed his hand. Quoth Jouder, 'What ails thee, O my brother?' And he made answer, saying, 'Know that I have a friend, who hath many a time bidden me to his house in thine absence and hath ever hospitably entreated me, and I owe him a thousand kindnesses, as my brother here knoweth. I met him to-day and he invited me to his house, but I said to him, "I cannot leave my brother [Jouder]." Quoth he, "Bring him with thee;" and I answered, saying, "He will not consent to that; but if ye will be my guests, thou and thy brothers . . . . . . ;" for his brothers were sitting with him, and I invited them, thinking that they would refuse. But he accepted my invitation, saying, "Look for me at the gate of the Mosque, and I will come to thee, I and my brothers." And now I fear they will come and am ashamed before thee. So wilt thou set my heart at rest and entertain them this night, for thy good is abundant, O my brother? Or if thou consent not, give me leave to take them into the neighbours' house.' 'Why shouldst thou carry them into the neighbours' house?' replied Jouder. 'Is our house then so strait or have we not wherewithal to give them to sup? Shame on thee to consult me! Thou hast but to call for what thou needest and have rich meats and sweetmeats and to spare. Whenever thou bringest home folk in my absence, ask thy mother, and she will set before thee victual more than enough. Go and fetch them; blessings have descended upon us.'

So Salim kissed his hand and going forth, sat at the gate of the mosque till after sundown, when the Captain and his men came up to him, and he carried them to the house. When Jouder saw them, he bade them welcome and made them sit and entreated them friendly, knowing not what he was to suffer at their hands. Then he called to his mother for supper, and she fell to taking dishes out of the saddle-bags, whilst he said, ‘Bring such and such meats,’ till she had set forty different dishes before them. So they ate till they were satisfied and the tray was taken away, the sailors thinking the while that this liberal entertainment came from Salim. When a third part of the night was past, Jouder set sweetmeats before them and Salim served them; whilst his two brothers sat with the guests, till they sought to sleep. So Jouder laid down and the others with him, who waited till he was asleep, when they fell upon him and gagging and binding him, before he was awake, carried him forth of the house, under cover of the night. Then they packed him off to Suez, where they shackled him and set him to work as a [galley] slave; and he ceased not to serve thus in silence a whole year.

As for his brothers, they went in next morning to his mother and said to her, ‘O mother, our brother Jouder is not awake.’ Quoth she, ‘Do ye wake him.’ ‘Where lieth he?’ asked they, and she replied, ‘With the guests.’ ‘Peradventure,’ rejoined they, ‘he went away with them whilst we slept. It would seem that he had tasted of foreign travel and yearned to find hidden treasures; for we heard him talk with the Moors, and they said to him, “We will take thee with us and open the treasure to thee.”’ ‘Hath he then been in company with Moors?’ asked she, and they answered, saying, ‘Were they not our guests yesternight?’ ‘Most like he hath gone with them,’ said she; ‘but God will direct him aright; for there is a blessing upon him and he will surely come back with great good.’ And she wept, for it was grievous to her to be parted from her son.

Then said they to her, ‘O accursed woman, dost thou love Jouder with all this love, whilst as for us, whether we be absent or present, thou neither joyest in us nor sorrowest for us? Are we not thy sons, even as Jouder is thy son?’ ‘Ye are indeed my sons,’ answered she; ‘but ye are reprobates who deserve no favour of me, for I have never had any satisfaction of you since your father’s death; whilst, as for Jouder, I have had abundant good of him and he has comforted my heart and entreated me with honour; wherefore it behoves me to weep for him, because of his goodness to me and to you.'

When they heard this, they reviled her and beat her; after which they sought for the saddle-bags, till they found the two pairs and took the enchanted one and all the gold and jewels from the other, saying, 'This was our father's good.' 'Not so, by Allah!' said their mother. 'It belongs to your brother Jouder, who brought it from the land of the Moors.' 'Thou liest,' answered they; 'it was our father's property; and we will dispose of it.'

Then they divided the gold and jewels between them; but a dispute arose between them concerning the enchanted saddle-bags, each saying, 'I will have them;' and they came to high words over this. Then said she, 'O my sons, ye have divided the gold and the jewels, but this may not be divided, nor can its value be made up in money; and if it be cut in twain, its virtue will be annulled; so leave it with me and I will give you to eat from it at all times and be content to take a morsel with you. If ye give me aught to clothe me, it will be of your favour, and each of you shall traffic with the folk for himself. Ye are my sons and I am your mother; wherefore let us abide as we are, lest your brother come back and we be disgraced.' But they hearkened not to her words and passed the night, wrangling with one another.

Now it chanced that a sergeant of the King's guards was a guest in the adjoining house and heard them through the open window. So he looked out and listening, heard all that passed between them. Next morning, he presented himself before the King of Egypt, whose name was Shems ed Dauleh, and told him all he had heard, whereupon he sent for Jouder's brothers and put them to the torture, till they confessed; and he took the two pairs of saddle-bags from them and clapped them in prison, appointing a sufficient daily allowance to their mother.

Meanwhile, Jouder abode a whole year in service at Suez, till, one day, being in a ship bound on a voyage over the sea, a wind arose against them and cast the vessel upon a rock, where she broke up and all on board were drowned, save Jouder. He got ashore in safety and fared on inland, till he reached an encampment of Bedouins, who questioned him of his case, and he told them what had befallen him. Now there was amongst them a merchant, a native of Jiddah, who took pity on him and said to him, ‘O Egyptian, wilt thou take service with me and I will clothe thee and carry thee with me to Jiddah?’ So Jouder took service with him and followed him to Jiddah, where he showed him much favour. After awhile, the merchant set out on a pilgrimage to Mecca, taking Jouder with him, and when they reached the city, the latter repaired to the temple, to make the round of the Kaabeh. As he was making the prescribed circuits, he saw his friend Abdussemed the Moor doing the like; and when the latter caught sight of him, he saluted him and asked him how he did; whereupon Jouder wept and told him all that had befallen him.

The Moor carried him to his lodging and entreated him with honour, clothing him in a dress of unmatched richness and saying to him, ‘Thou hast seen the end of thine ills, O Jouder.’ Then he levelled a tablet of sand and drew a geomantic figure, by which he discovered what had befallen Salim and Selim and said to Jouder, ‘Such and such things have befallen thy brothers and they are now in the King of Egypt’s prison; but do thou abide with me and accomplish thy religious duties at thine ease, and all shall be well.’ ‘O my lord,’ replied Jouder, ‘let me go and take leave of the merchant with whom I am and after I will come back to thee.’ ‘Dost thou owe money?’ asked the Moor, and he answered, ‘No.’ ‘Go,’ said Abdussemed, ‘and take leave of him and come back forthright, for men of honour owe a duty to those whose bread they have eaten.’

So Jouder returned to the merchant and took leave of him, saying, ‘I have fallen in with my brother.’ ‘Bring him here,’ said the merchant, ‘and we will make him an entertainment.’ But Jouder answered, saying, ‘He has no need of that; for he is a man of wealth and hath many servants.’ Then the merchant gave Jouder twenty dinars, saying, ‘Acquit me of responsibility;’ and he bade him farewell and went forth from him. As he went along, he saw a poor man, so he gave him the twenty dinars and returned to the Moor, with whom he abode till they had accomplished the rites of the pilgrimage, when Abdussemed gave him the ring, that he had taken from the treasure of Es Shemerdel, saying, ‘This ring will bring thee to thy desire, for it is enchanted and hath a servant, by name Er Raad el Casif; so whatever thou hast a mind to of the things of this world, rub this ring and its servant will appear and do all thou biddest him.’

Then he rubbed the ring before him, whereupon the genie appeared, saying, ‘Here I am, O my lord! Ask what thou wilt and it shall be given thee. Hast thou a mind to people a ruined city or lay waste a flourishing one or slay a king or put an army to the rout?’ ‘O Raad,’ said Abdussemed, ‘this is become thy lord; do thou serve him faithfully.’ Then he dismissed him and said to Jouder, ‘Rub the ring and the genie will appear; and do thou command him to do whatever thou desirest, for he will not gainsay thee. Now go to thine own country and take care of the ring, for it will enable thee to baffle thine enemies.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Jouder, ‘with thy leave, I will set out homeward.’ Quoth the Moor, ‘Summon the genie and mount upon his back; and if thou say to him, “Bring me to my native city this very day,” he will not gainsay thy commandment.’

So he took leave of the Moor and rubbed the ring, whereupon Er Raad presented himself, saying, ‘Here am I; ask and it shall be given to thee.’ ‘Carry me to Cairo this day,’ said Jouder. ‘Thy commandment shall be done,’ answered the genie and taking him on his back, flew with him from noon till midnight, when he set him down in the courtyard of his mother’s house and disappeared. Jouder went in to his mother, who rose at sight of him and greeted him, weeping. Then she told him how the king had beaten his brothers and cast them into prison and taken the two pairs of saddle-bags; which when he heard, it was grievous to him and he said to her, ‘Grieve not for this; I will show thee what I can do and bring my brothers hither forthright.’ So he rubbed the ring, whereupon the genie appeared, saying, ‘At thy service! Ask and thou shalt have.’ Quoth Jouder, ‘Bring me my two brothers from the prison.’

So the genie sank into the earth and came not up but in the midst of the gaol where Salim and Selim lay in piteous plight and sore affliction, for the misery of prison, so that they wished for death and one of them said to the other, ‘By Allah, O my brother, affliction is long upon us! How long shall we abide in this prison? Death would be relief.’ As he spoke, the earth clove in sunder and out came Er Raad, who took them up and plunged with them into the earth. They swooned away for excess of fear, and when they recovered, they found themselves in their mother’s house and saw her seated, with Jouder by her side. Quoth he, ‘I salute you, O my brothers! I rejoice to see you.’ And they bowed their heads and fell a-weeping. Then said he, ‘Weep not, for it was the devil and covetise that led you to do thus. How could you sell me? But I comfort myself with the thought of Joseph, whose brothers did with him worse than ye with me, when they cast him into the pit. Repent unto God and crave pardon of Him, and He will forgive you, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Merciful. As for me, I pardon you and bid you welcome: no harm shall befall you.’ Then he comforted them and set their hearts at ease and related to them all he had suffered, till he fell in with Abdussemed, and told them also of the ring that the latter had given him. ‘O our brother,’ said they, ‘forgive us this time; and if we return to our old ways, do with us as thou wilt.’ Quoth he, ‘No harm shall befall you; but tell me what the king did with you.’ ‘He beat us and threatened us,’ answered they, ‘and took the two pairs of saddle-bags from us.’ ‘He shall answer for this,’ said Jouder and rubbed the ring, whereupon Er Raad appeared.

When his brothers saw the genie, they were affrighted and thought Jouder would bid him slay them; so they fled to their mother, saying, ‘O our mother, we throw ourselves on thy mercy: do thou intercede for us!’ And she said to them, ‘Fear nothing, O my sons!’ Then said Jouder to the genie, ‘I command thee to bring me all that is in the king’s treasury, together with the two pairs of saddle-bags he took from my brothers, and look thou leave nothing.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ replied Er Raad and disappearing, straightway returned with the two pairs of saddle-bags and all else that was in the treasury and laid them before Jouder, saying, ‘O my lord, I have left nothing in the treasury.’ Jouder gave the treasure to his mother to keep and laying the enchanted saddle-bags before him, said to the genie, ‘I command thee to build me this night a lofty palace and overlay it with liquid gold and furnish it magnificently: and let not the day dawn, ere thou be quit of the whole work.’ ‘Thy commands shall be obeyed,’ replied the genie and sank into the earth. Then Jouder brought forth food and they ate and took their ease and lay down to sleep.

Meanwhile, Er Raad summoned his attendant Jinn and commanded them to build the palace. So some of them fell to hewing stones and some to building, whilst others plastered and painted and furnished; nor did the day dawn before the ordinance of the palace was complete; whereupon Er Raad came to Jouder and said to him, ‘O my lord, the palace is ready, if it please thee to come and look on it.’ So Jouder went forth with his mother and brothers and saw a palace, whose like there was not in the whole world. It stood upon the merge of the highway and confounded all minds with the goodliness of its ordinance; and withal it had cost him nothing. Then he said to his mother, ‘Wilt thou take up thine abode in this palace?’ ‘I will well, O my son,’ answered she and called down blessings upon him.

Then he rubbed the ring and bade the genie fetch him forty handsome white slave-girls and forty male white slaves, besides the like number of black slaves, male and female. ‘Thy will shall be done,’ answered Er Raad and betaking himself, with forty of his attendant Jinn, to Hind and Sind and Persia, carried off every handsome girl and boy they saw, till they had made up the required number. Moreover, he sent other fourscore, who fetched handsome black slaves, male and female, forty of either sex, and carried them all to Jouder’s house, which they filled. Then he showed them to Jouder, who was pleased with them and bade him bring a suit of the richest raiment for each of them and dresses to boot for himself and his mother and brothers. So the genie brought all that was needed and clad the female slaves, saying to them, ‘This is your mistress: kiss her hands and cross her not, but serve her, white and black.’ The male slaves also clad themselves and kissed Jouder’s hands; and he and his brothers arrayed themselves in the robes the genie had brought them and became, Jouder as he were a king and his brothers as viziers. Now his house was spacious; so he lodged Salim and his slave-girls in one part thereof and Selim and his slave-girls in another, whilst he and his mother took up their abode in the new palace; and each in his own place was like the Sultan.

Meanwhile, the king’s treasurer, thinking to take something from the treasury, went in and found it altogether empty, even as saith the poet:

Once was it as a beehive stocked and full of bees galore; But when they left it, it became devoid of all its store.

And he gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon. When he came to himself, he left the door open and going in to the king, said to him, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, I have to tell thee that the treasury hath become empty during the night.’ Quoth the king, ‘What hast thou done with my treasures that were therein?’ ‘By Allah,’ replied the treasurer, ‘I have not done aught with them nor know I what is come of them! I visited the place yesterday and saw it full; but, when I went in to day, I found it altogether empty, albeit the doors were locked and [the walls] unpierced and the locks unbroken, nor hath a thief entered it.’ ‘Are the two pairs of saddle-bags gone?’ asked the king. ‘Yes,’ replied the treasurer; whereupon the king’s reason fled from his head and he rose to his feet, saying, ‘Go thou before me.’ So the treasurer forewent him to the treasury and he found nothing there, whereat he was sore enraged and said, ‘Who hath dared to violate my treasury, fearing not my wrath?’

Then he went forth and held a Divan, to which he summoned all his chief officers, who came, thinking each that the king was wroth with him; and he said to them, ‘Know that my treasury hath been plundered during the night, and I know not who has done this thing and dared thus to outrage me, without fear of my wrath.’ ‘How so?’ asked they. Quoth he, ‘Ask the treasurer.’ So they asked him, and he replied, saying, ‘I visited the treasury yesterday and it was full, but when I entered it this morning, I found it empty, though the doors were unpierced and the locks unbroken.’ They all marvelled at this and could make the king no answer, when in came the sergeant, who had denounced Salim and Selim, and said to Shems ed Dauleh, ‘O King of the age, all this night I have not slept for that which I saw.’ And the king said, ‘And what didst thou see?’ ‘Know, O King of the age,’ answered the sergeant, ‘that all night long I have been amusing myself with watching builders at work, and when it was day, I saw a palace ready built, whose like is not in the world. So I asked about it and was told that Jouder had come back with great wealth and slaves and servants and that he had freed his brothers from prison and built this palace, wherein he is as a Sultan. Quoth the king, ‘Go, look in the prison.’ So they went thither and finding Salim and Selim gone, returned and told the king, who said, ‘It is plain now who is the robber; he who took Salim and Selim out of prison it is who hath stolen my treasures.’ ‘O my lord,’ said the Vizier, ‘and who is he?’ ‘Their brother Jouder,’ replied the king, ‘and he hath taken the two pairs of saddle-bags; but, O Vizier, do thou send him an Amir with fifty men to seal up his goods and lay hands on him and his brothers and bring them to me, that I may hang them.' And he was sore enraged and said, 'Quick, fetch them to me, that I may put them to death.'

But the Vizier said to him, 'Be thou clement, for God is clement and hasteth not to punish His servants, when they transgress against Him. Moreover, he who can build a palace in one night, as these say, none in the world can vie with him; and I fear lest the Amir catch a mischief of Jouder. Have patience, therefore, whilst I devise for thee some means of getting at the truth of the case, and so shalt thou come to thy desire, O King of the age.' Quoth the king, 'Counsel me how I shall do, O Vizier.' And the Vizier said, 'Send him an Amir, to bid him to an entertainment, and I will make much of him for thee and make a show of affection for him and ask him of his estate; after which we will see. If we find him stout of heart, we will use craft with him, and if weak, then do thou seize him and do with him thy will.' The King agreed to this and despatched one of his Amirs, by name Othman, to invite Jouder and say to him, 'The King bids thee to an entertainment;' and the King said to him, 'Return not but with him.'

Now this Othman was a proud conceited fool; so he went forth upon his errand, and when he came to Jouder's palace, he saw at the door an eunuch seated upon a chair of gold, who rose not at his approach, but sat as if none were near, though there were with the Amir fifty men. Now this eunuch was none other than Er Raad el Casif, the servant of the ring, whom Jouder had commanded to put on the guise of an eunuch and sit at the gate of the palace. So the Amir rode up to him and said to him, 'O slave, where is thy lord?' 'In the palace,' answered he, without stirring from his leaning posture; whereupon Othman waxed wroth and said to him, 'O pestilent slave, art thou not ashamed, when I speak to thee, to answer me, sprawling at thy length like a good-for-nought?' 'Begone,' answered the eunuch, 'and do not multiply words.' When Othman heard this, he was filled with rage and drawing his mace, would have smitten the eunuch, knowing not that he was a devil; but the latter leapt upon him and taking the mace from him, dealt him four blows with it. When the fifty men saw their lord beaten, it was grievous to them; so they drew their swords and ran at the slave, thinking to kill him; but he said, ‘Do ye draw swords on us, O dogs?’ And fell upon them with the mace, and every one whom he smote, he broke his bones and drowned him in his blood. So they gave back before him and fled in confusion, whilst he followed them, beating them, till he had driven them far from the palace; after which he returned and sat down on his chair at the gate, caring for no one.

Meanwhile the Amir and his company returned, beaten and discomfited, to Shems ed Dauleh, and Othman said, ‘O King of the age, when I came to the palace gate, I saw an eunuch seated there in a chair of gold and he was passing arrogant; for, when he saw me coming, he lay back in his chair and entreated me contemptuously, neither offered to rise to me. So I began to speak to him and he answered me without stirring, at which passion got the better of me and I drew the mace upon him, thinking to smite him. But he snatched it from me and beat me and my men therewith and overthrew us. So we fled from him and could not prevail against him.’ At this, the King was wroth and said, ‘Let a hundred men go down to him.’ So the hundred men went down to him, but he fell upon them with the mace and smote upon them till he put them to the rout; whereupon they returned to the King and told him what had passed, saying, ‘O King of the age, he beat us and we fled for fear of him.’ Then the King sent two hundred men against him, but these also he put to the rout, and Shems ed Dauleh said to his Vizier, ‘O Vizier, I charge thee take five hundred men and bring this eunuch in haste, and with him his master Jouder and his brothers.’ ‘O King of the age,’ replied the Vizier, ‘I need no soldiers, but will go down to him alone and unarmed.’ ‘Go,’ said the King, ‘and do as thou seest fit.’

So the Vizier laid down his arms and donning a white habit, took a rosary in his hand and set out alone and afoot. When he came to the palace gate, he saw the eunuch sitting there; so he went up to him and seating himself courteously by his side, said to him, ‘Peace be on thee!’ ‘And on thee be peace, O mortal!’ answered the slave. ‘What wilt thou?’ When the Vizier heard him say ‘O mortal,’ he knew him to be of the Jinn and quaked for fear; then he said to him, ‘O my lord, is thy master Jouder here?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the eunuch, ‘he is in the palace.’ ‘O my lord,’ said the Vizier, ‘go thou to him and say to him, “King Shems ed Dauleh salutes thee and bids thee honour his dwelling [with thy presence] and eat of a banquet he hath made for thee.”’ And the eunuch said, ‘Abide here, whilst I consult him.’

So the Vizier stood in a respectful attitude, whilst the Marid went up into the palace and said to Jouder, ‘Know, O my lord, that the King sent to thee an Amir and fifty men, and I beat them and drove them away. Then he sent a hundred men and I beat them also; then two hundred, and these also I put to the rout. And now he hath sent thee the Vizier, unarmed, bidding thee to visit him and eat of his banquet. What sayst thou?’ ‘Go,’ answered Jouder; ‘bring the Vizier hither.’ So the Marid went down and said to him, ‘O Vizier, come speak with my lord.’ ‘On my head be it,’ replied he and going in to Jouder, found him seated, in greater state than the King, upon a carpet, the like of which the King could not spread, and was amazed at the goodliness of the palace and the magnificence of its furniture and decoration, which made him seem as he were but a beggar in comparison.

So he kissed the earth before Jouder and called down blessings on him; and Jouder said to him, ‘What is thy business, O Vizier?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered he, ‘thy friend King Shems ed Dauleh salutes thee and longs to look upon thy face; wherefore he hath made thee an entertainment. So wilt thou heal his heart [and eat of his banquet]?’ Quoth Jouder, ‘If he be indeed my friend, salute him and bid him come to me.’ ‘On my head be it,’ replied the Vizier. Then Jouder rubbed the ring and bade the genie bring him a dress of the best, which he gave to the Vizier, saying, ‘Don this dress and go tell the King what I say,’ So the Vizier donned the dress, the like of which he had never worn, and returning to the King, told him what had passed and praised the palace and that which was therein, saying, ‘Jouder bids thee to him.’ So the King called for his charger and mounting with all his guards, set out for Jouder’s palace.

Meanwhile Jouder summoned the Marid and said to him, ‘It is my will that thou bring me some of the Afrits at thy command in the guise of guards and station them before the palace, that the King may see them and be awed by them; so shall his heart tremble and he shall know that my power is greater than his.' So Er Raad brought him two hundred Afrits of great stature and strength, in the guise of guards, magnificently armed and equipped, and when the King came and saw these tall and stout troops, his heart feared them. Then he entered the palace, and found Jouder sitting in such state as neither King nor Sultan could match. So he saluted him and made his obeisance to him; yet Jouder rose not to him nor did him honour neither bade him be seated, but left him standing, so that fear entered into him and he could neither sit nor go away and said in himself, 'If he feared me, he would not leave me thus unheeded; belike he will do me a mischief, because of that which I did with his brothers.' Then said Jouder, 'O King of the age, it beseems not the like of thee to wrong the folk and take away their goods.' 'O my lord,' replied the King, 'be not wroth with me, for covetise impelled me to this and the fulfilment of fore-ordained fate; and were there no offence, there would be no forgiving.' And he went on to excuse himself and sue to him for pardon and indulgence, reciting amongst other things the following verses:

O thou of noble sires and nature frank and free, Reproach me not for what I've done to anger thee.
An thou have wrought upright, God pardon thee, quoth I; And if I've sinned, do thou on like wise pardon me!

And he ceased not to humble himself before him, till he said, 'God pardon thee!' and bade him sit. So he sat down and Jouder invested him with the garments of pardon and bade his brothers spread the table. When they had eaten, he clad the King's company in robes of honour and gave them largesse; after which he bade the King depart. So he went forth and thereafter came every day to visit Jouder and held not his Divan save in his house: wherefore friendship and usance waxed great between them, and they abode thus awhile, till one day the King, being alone with his Vizier, said to him, 'O Vizier, I fear lest Jouder kill me and take the kingdom from me.' 'O King of the age,' replied the Vizier, 'as for his taking the kingdom from thee, have no fear of that, for his present estate is greater than that of the King, and to take the kingdom would be a lowering of his rank; but, if thou fear that he kill thee, thou hast a daughter: give her to him to wife and thou and he will be of one condition.'

'O Vizier,' said the King, 'be thou intermediary between us and him.' And the Vizier said, 'Do thou bid him to an entertainment and pass the night with him in one of thy saloons. Then command thy daughter to don her richest clothes and ornaments and pass by the door of the saloon. When he sees her, he will fall in love with her, and when we know this, I will turn to him and tell him that she is thy daughter and engage him in converse and lead him on, so that thou shalt [seem to] know nothing of the matter, till he asks her of thee in marriage. When thou hast married him to the girl, thou and he will be as one thing and thou wilt be safe from him; and if he die, thou wilt inherit all he hath, both great and small.' 'Thou sayst sooth, O my Vizier,' replied the King and made a banquet and invited Jouder thereto. So he came to the King's palace and they sat in the saloon in great good cheer till the end of the day. Now the King had commanded his wife to array the girl in her richest clothes and ornaments and carry her by the door of the saloon. She did as he bade her, and when Jouder saw the princess, who had not her match for beauty and grace, he looked fixedly at her and said, 'Alas!' And his joints were loosened for love and passion and desire were sore upon him; transport and love-liking gat hold upon him and he turned pale. Quoth the Vizier, 'May no hurt betide thee, O my lord! Why do I see thee pale and undone?' 'O Vizier,' asked Jouder, 'whose daughter is yonder damsel? Verily, she hath captived me and ravished my reason.' 'She is the daughter of thy friend the King,' replied the Vizier; 'and since she pleases thee, I will speak to him that he marry thee to her.' 'Do so, O Vizier,' quoth Jouder, 'and as I live, I will bestow on thee what thou wilt and will give the King whatsoever he shall ask to her dowry; and we will become friends and kinsfolk.' And the Vizier said, 'It shall go hard but thy desire be accomplished.' Then he turned to the King and said to him, 'O King of the age, thy friend Jouder seeks alliance with thee and will have me ask of thee for him the hand of thy daughter, the princess Asiyeh; so disappoint me not, but accept my intercession, and what dowry soever thou askest he will give thee.' Quoth the King, 'The dowry I have already received, and as for the girl, she is his handmaid; I give her to him to wife and he doth me favour in accepting her.'

They spent the rest of the night together and on the morrow the King held a court, to which he summoned great and small, together with the Sheikh el Islam. Then Jouder demanded the princess in marriage and the King said, 'The dowry I have received.' So they drew up the contract of marriage and Jouder sent for the saddle-bags containing the jewels and gave them to the King as his daughter's dowry. Then the drums beat and the pipes sounded and they held high festival, whilst Jouder went in to the girl. Thenceforward he and the King were as one and they abode thus awhile, till Shems ed Dauleh died; whereupon the troops proclaimed Jouder Sultan, and he refused; but they importuned him, till he consented and became King in his father-in-law's stead. Then he bade build a congregational mosque over the latter's tomb in the Bundecaniyeh quarter and endowed it. Now the quarter in which he dwelt was called the Yemaniyeh quarter; but when he became Sultan, he built therein a congregational mosque and other buildings, wherefore the quarter was named after him and was called the Jouderiyeh quarter.

Moreover, he made his brother Salim his Vizier of the right and his brother Selim his Vizier of the left hand; and thus they abode a year and no more; for, at the end of that time, Salim said to Selim, 'O my brother, how long is this to last? Shall we pass our whole lives in service to our brother Jouder? We shall never enjoy lordship or fortune whilst he lives: so how shall we do to kill him and take the ring and the saddle-bags?' 'Thou art craftier than I,' answered Selim; 'do thou contrive us a device, whereby we may kill him.' 'If I do this,' said Salim, 'wilt thou agree that I be Sultan and have the ring and that thou be my right-hand Vizier and have the saddle-bags?' 'I consent to this,' replied Selim, and they agreed to kill their brother for love of the world and of dominion.

So they laid a snare for Jouder and said to him, 'O our brother, we have a mind to glory in thee and would fain have thee enter our houses and eat of our victual and solace our hearts.' 'So be it,' replied Jouder. 'In whose house shall the banquet be?' 'In mine,' said Salim, 'and after thou hast eaten of my victual, thou shalt be the guest of my brother.' 'It is well,' answered Jouder and went with him to his house, where he set before him poisoned food, of which when he had eaten, his flesh rotted from his bones [and he fell down dead]. Then Salim came up to him and would have drawn the ring from his finger, but it resisted him; so he cut off the finger with a knife. Then he rubbed the ring and the Marid presented himself, saying, 'At thy service. Ask what thou wilt.' Quoth Salim, 'Put my brother Selim to death and take the two bodies, the poisoned man and the slaughtered, and cast them down before the troops.' So the Marid took Selim and slew him; then, carrying the two bodies forth, he cast them down before the chief officers of the army, who were sitting at meat in the verandah of the house. When they saw Jouder and Selim slain, they held their hands from the food and fear gat hold of them and they said to the Marid, 'Who hath dealt thus with the Sultan and the Vizier?' 'Their brother Salim,' answered the Marid. And behold Salim came in to them and said, 'O soldiers, eat and make merry, for Jouder is dead and I have taken to me the seal-ring, of which the Marid before you is the servant; and I bade him kill my brother Selim, lest he dispute the kingdom with me, for he was a traitor and I feared lest he should deal traitorously with me. So now I am become Sultan over you; will ye accept of me? If not, I will rub the ring and bid the Marid slay you all, great and small.' Quoth they, 'We accept thee to King and Sultan.'

Then he summoned the Divan and bade bury his brothers; and some of the folk followed the funeral, whilst others went before him in state procession to the palace, where he sat down upon the throne and they proclaimed him king; after which he said, 'It is my will to marry my brother Jouder's wife.' Quoth they, 'Wait till the days of widowhood are accomplished.' But he answered, saying, 'I know not days of widowhood nor aught else. As my head liveth, I will go in to her this very night.' So they drew up the marriage contract and sent to tell the princess Asiyeh, who replied, 'Bid him enter.' Accordingly, he went in to her and she received him with a show of joy and welcome; but by and by she gave him poison in water and made an end of him. Then she took the ring and broke it, that none might possess it thenceforward, and rent the saddle-bags; after which she sent to the Sheikh el Islam and other the great officers of state, telling them what had passed and saying to them, 'Choose you out a king to rule over you.’ And this is all that hath come down to us of the story of Jouder and his brothers.

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE HISTORY OF GHERIB AND HIS BROTHER AGIB.

There was once of old time a mighty king called Kundemir, who had been a brave and doughty man of war in his day, but was grown very old and decrepit. It pleased God to vouchsafe him, in his extreme old age, a son, whom he named Agib, because of his beauty and grace, and committed to the midwives and nurses and handmaids and serving-women, and they reared him till he was seven years old, when his father gave him in charge to a priest of his own people and faith. The priest taught the boy the laws and tenets of their infidel faith and instructed him in philosophy and all manner of other knowledge, and it needed but three full-told years before he was proficient therein and his resolve waxed strong and his judgment sound; yea, and he became learned, eloquent and accomplished, consorting with the wise and disputing with the doctors of the law. When his father saw this of him, it pleased him and he taught him to ride and thrust with spears and smite with swords, till by the end of his twentieth year he was an accomplished cavalier, versed in all martial exercises and surpassing in all things all the folk of his day. But he grew up a stubborn tyrant and an arrogant devil, using to ride forth to the chase with a thousand horse and make raids upon the neighbouring lands, waylaying caravans and carrying off the daughters of kings and nobles; wherefore many were the complaints against him to his father, who cried out to five of his servants, saying, ‘Seize me yonder dog and beat him!’ So they seized the prince and binding his hands behind him, beat him till he lost his senses; after which the king imprisoned him in a chamber, where one might not know heaven from earth or length from breadth; and there he abode two days and a night. Then the Amirs went in to the King and kissing the earth before him, interceded with him for the prince, and he released him.

Agib dissembled with his father for ten days, at the end of which time he went in to him by night and smote off his head, as he slept. When the day rose, he mounted the throne and bade his men arm themselves in complete steel and stand before him and on his either hand with drawn swords. By and by, the Amirs and captains entered and finding their king slain and his son Agib seated on the throne, were confounded and knew not what to do. But Agib said to them, ‘O folk, ye see what hath befallen your king. Whoso obeyeth me, I will entreat him with munificence, and whoso gainsayeth me, I will do with him even as I did with my father.’ When they heard this, they feared lest he should do them a mischief; so they replied, ‘Thou art our king and the son of our king;’ and kissed the earth before him; whereupon he thanked them and rejoiced in them. Then he let bring money and apparel and clad them in sumptuous dresses of honour and showered largesse upon them, wherefore they loved him and obeyed him. In like manner he dealt with the governors of the provinces and the Sheikhs of the Bedouins, both tributary and independent, so that all the kingdom submitted to him and the folk obeyed him and he reigned and commanded and forbade.

He abode thus five months, till, one night, he had a vision in sleep and awoke trembling, nor did sleep visit him again till the morning. As soon as it was day, he mounted his throne and his officers stood before him, right and left. Then he called the astrologers and expounders of dreams and said to them, ‘As I slept last night, my father appeared to me, with his yard uncovered, and there came forth of it a thing the bigness of a bee, which grew till it became as a mighty lion, with claws like daggers. As I lay, wondering and alarmed at this, behold, it ran upon me and smiting me with its claws, rent my bells’ in sunder; whereupon I awoke, affrighted and trembling. Expound to me the meaning of this dream.’ The interpreters looked at one another and answered, after consideration, ‘O mighty King, this dream points to a child born of thy father, between whom and thee shall be strife, and he shall get the better of thee: so be thou ware of him, by reason of this thy dream.’ When Agib heard their words, he said, ‘I have no brother whom I should fear; so this your speech is a lying one.’ ‘We tell thee but what we know,’ answered they; but he was wroth with them and beat them.

Then he rose and going in to his father’s palace, examined his concubines and found one of them seven months gone with child; whereupon he bade two of his slaves carry her to the sea-shore and drown her. So they took her forth to the sea-shore and were about to drown her, when they looked at her and seeing her to be of surpassing beauty and grace, said to each other, ‘Why should we drown this damsel? Let us rather carry her to the forest and live with her there in rare dalliance.’ So they took her and fared on with her nights and days, till they brought her to a distant forest, abounding in fruit trees and streams, where they thought to take their will of her; but each said, ‘I will lie with her first’ And they fell out one with the other concerning this. As they were thus engaged, a company of blacks fell upon them, and they drew their swords and defended themselves; but the blacks slew them both in less than the twinkling of an eye. So the damsel abode alone and wandered about the forest, eating of its fruits and drinking of its waters, till in due time she gave birth to a boy, brown but clean-limbed and comely, whom she named Gherib, by reason of her strangerhood. Then she cut his navel and wrapping him in some of her own clothes, gave him suck, mournful at heart and sorrowing for the fair estate she had lost and full of fear for her loneliness.

One day, there came horsemen and footmen into the forest, with hounds and hawks and horses laden with storks and cranes and herons and young ostriches and divers and other waterfowl and hares and gazelles and wild oxen and lynxes and wolves and lions. Presently, they came upon the damsel, sitting suckling her child, and said to her, ‘Art thou a mortal or a genie?’ ‘I am a mortal, O chief of the Arabs,’ answered she. So they told their chief, whose name was Merdas, prince of the Benou Kehtan, and who had come forth to hunt that day with five hundred of his kinsmen and the nobles of his tribe. and he bade them bring her before him. They did so and she related to him her story, at which he marvelled. Then they took her and returned, hunting by the way, to their encampment, where the Amir appointed her a separate dwelling-place and five damsels to serve her; and he loved her with an exceeding love and went in to her and lay with her. She straightway conceived by him, and when her months were accomplished, she bore a male child and named him Sehim el Leil. He grew up with his brother Gherib among the nurses and throve and waxed upon the lap of the Amir Merdas; and the latter in due time committed the two boys to a doctor of the law, who instructed them in the things of their faith; after which he gave them in charge to a valiant cavalier of the Arabs, who taught them to smite with swords and thrust with spears and shoot with bows, till, by the time they reached the age of fifteen, they knew all that they needed and surpassed all the warriors of their tribe; for each of them would undertake a thousand horse.

Now Merdas had many enemies, and the men of big tribe were the bravest of all the Arabs, being all doughty cavaliers, none might warm himself at their fire. Amongst his neighbours was an Amir, by name Hissan ben Thabit, who was his friend; and he took to wife a noble lady of his tribe and bade all his friends to the wedding, amongst them Merdas, prince of the Benou Kehtan, who accepted his invitation and came with three hundred horsemen of his tribe, leaving other four hundred to guard the women. Hissan received him with honour and seated him in the highest room. Then came all the cavaliers to the bridal and he made them bride feasts and held high festival by reason of the marriage, after which the guests departed to their dwelling-places. When Merdas came in sight of his camp, he saw dead men lying and birds hovering over them right and left and his heart sank within him at the sight. Then he entered the camp and was met by Gherib, clad in complete mail, who gave him joy of his safe return. Quoth Merdas, ‘What meanest this, O Gherib?’ And Gherib answered, ‘El Hemel ben Majid attacked us with five hundred horse.’

Now the reason of this was that the Amir Merdas had a daughter called Mehdiyeh, never saw eyes a fairer than she, and El Hemel, prince of the Benou Nebhan, heard of her charms; whereupon he took horse with five hundred of his men and rode to Merdas to demand her hand; but he refused and sent him away disappointed. So he abode his time, till Merdas was absent on his visit to Hissan, when he fell upon the camp of the Benou Kehtan with his braves and slew a number of their warriors, and the rest fled to the mountains. Now Gherib and his brother had ridden forth a-hunting with a hundred horse and returned not till midday, when they found that El Hemel had sacked the camp and carried off the women and children captives, and Mehdiyeh among them. When Gherib saw this, he lost his wits for rage and cried out to Sehim, saying, ‘They have plundered our camp and carried off our women and children! Up and at the enemy, that we may deliver the captives!' So Gherib and Sehim and their hundred horse rushed upon the foe, and Gherib's wrath redoubled, and he reaped a harvest of heads, giving the warriors to drink of the cup of death, till he won to El Hemel and saw Mehdiyeh among the captives. Then he drove at the prince of the Benou Nebhan and transfixing him with his lance, hurled him from the saddle; nor was the time of the afternoon-prayer come before he had slain the most part of the foe and put the rest to the rout and rescued the captives; whereupon he returned to the camp in triumph, bearing El Hemel's head on the point of his lance and reciting the following verses:

I'm he whose might is known upon the battle-day: Earth's Jinn do quake to see my shadow in the way.
I have a sword, which when my right hand shakes on high, Death hastens from my left to plunge into the fray;
And eke a spear I have, whereon if any look, Like to the crescent moon they see its steel point ray.
Gherib I'm called, that am the champion of my tribe: What if my men be few! My heart knows not dismay.

Hardly had he made an end of this when up came Merdas, to whom he related all that had passed in his absence. So Merdas alighted and entered his pavilion, and the men stood about him. Then all the people of the tribe fell to praising Gherib and saying, 'But for Gherib, O our lord, not one of the tribe had been saved!' So Merdas thanked him and said, 'Thou hast well requited our pains in rearing thee, O Gherib!'

Now, when Gherib delivered Mehdiyeh from El Hemel, she smote him with the arrows of her glances and he fell into the toils of her love, wherefore his heart could not forget her and he became drowned in passion and love-longing. Sleep forsook him and he had no delight of meat or drink, but would spur his horse up to the mountain-tops, where he would spend the day in reciting verses and return at nightfall; and indeed the signs of love-liking and distraction were manifest upon him. He discovered his secret to one of his companions and it became noised abroad in the camp, till it reached the ears of Merdas, who thundered and lightened and rose and sat down and puffed and snorted and reviled the sun and the moon, saying, ‘This is the reward of him who rears bastards! Except I kill Gherib, I shall be put to shame.’

Then he opened out his mind to one of the elders of his tribe and took counsel with him of killing Gherib. ‘O Amir,’ replied he, ‘it was but yesterday that he freed thy daughter from captivity. If thou must needs kill him, let it be by the hand of another than thyself, so the folk may not misdoubt of thee.’ Quoth Merdas, ‘Advise me how I may compass his death, for I look to none but thee for this.’ ‘O Amir,’ answered the other. ‘wait till he goes forth to hunt, when do thou take a hundred horse and lie in wait for him in the caves, till he passes; then take him off his guard and fall upon him and cut him in pieces, so shalt thou be quit of his reproach.’ ‘This should serve,’ said Merdas and chose out a hundred and fifty of his stoutest horsemen, whom he lessoned to his will. Then he watched Gherib till, one day. he went forth to hunt and rode far away amongst the hills and valleys; whereupon Merdas followed him with his men and lay in wait for him by the way against he should return from the chase; but, as they lay in ambush among the trees, there fell upon them five hundred Amalekites, who slew of them three-score and made fourscore and ten prisoners and pinioned Merdas.

Now the reason of this was that when Gherib put El Hemel and his men to the sword, the rest fled to their lord’s brother and told him what had happened, whereat his gorge rose and he gathered together his Amalekites and choosing out five hundred cavaliers, each fifty cubits high, set out with them in quest of revenge for his brother. By the way he fell in with Merdas and his company and there happened between them what happened; after which he bade his men alight and rest, saying, ‘O folk, the idols have given us an easy revenge; so guard ye Merdas and his men, till I carry them away and put them to death on the foulest wise.’ When Merdas found himself a prisoner, he repented of what he had done and said, ‘This is the reward of tyranny.’ Then they lay down to sleep, and the enemy passed the night, rejoicing in their victory, whilst Merdas and his men despaired of life and made sure of death.

Meanwhile, Sehim el Leil, who had been wounded in the fight with El Hemel, went in to his sister Mehdiyeh and she rose to him and kissed his hands, saying, ‘May thy hand never wither nor thine enemies have occasion to rejoice! But for thee and Gherib, we had not escaped captivity. But know, O my brother,’ continued she, ‘that thy father hath ridden forth with a hundred and fifty horse, purposing to kill Gherib; and thou knowest it would be foul wrong to kill him, for that it was he who saved your honour and rescued your goods.’ When Sehim heard this, the light in his eyes became darkness and he donned his battle-harness and mounting, rode in quest of Gherib. He presently came up with him and found that he had taken great plenty of game; so he saluted him and said to him, ‘O my brother, why didst thou go forth, without telling me?’ ‘By Allah,’ replied Gberib, ‘it was but that I saw thee wounded and thought to give thee rest.’ Then said Sehim, ‘O my brother, beware of my father!’ and told him how Merdas was abroad with a hundred and fifty men, seeking to kill him. Quoth Gherib, ‘Allah will make his treason to return on his own head.’

Then they set out, to return to the camp, but the night overtook them by the way and they rode on in the darkness, till they drew near the valley where the enemy lay and heard the neighing of horses; whereupon said Sehim, ‘O my brother, my father and his men are ambushed in yonder valley; let us flee from it.’ But Gherib dismounted and throwing his bridle to his brother, said to him, ‘Stay here till I come back to thee.’ Then he went on till he came in sight of the folk, when he saw that they were not of his tribe and heard them name Merdas and say, ‘We will not kill him save in his own land.’ Wherefore he knew that Merdas was their prisoner and said, ‘As Mehdiyeh liveth, I will not depart hence till I have delivered her father, that she may not be troubled!’ Then he sought till he came upon Merdas and found him bound with cords; so he sat down by his side and said to him, ‘God deliver thee, O uncle, from these bonds and humiliation!’ When Merdas saw Gherib, his reason fled and he said to him, ‘O my son, I am at thy mercy: deliver me in right of my fosterage of thee!’ Quoth Gherib, ‘If I deliver thee, wilt thou give me Mehdiyeh?’ ‘O my son,’ answered the Amir, ‘by all that is sacred to me, she is thine to all time!’ So he loosed him, saying, ‘Make for the horses, for thy son Sehim is there:’ and Merdas crept along till he came to his son, who rejoiced in him and gave him joy of his escape.

Meanwhile, Gherib unbound one after another of the prisoners, till he had freed the whole ninety and they were all far from the enemy. Then he sent them their arms and horses, saying to them, ‘Scatter yourselves round about the enemy and cry out, “O sons of Kehtan!” And when they awake, do ye remove from them and encircle them.’ So he waited till the last watch of the night, when he cried out, ‘O sons of Kehtan!’ and his men answered, saying, ‘O sons of Kehtan!’ as with one voice; and the mountains echoed their crying, so that it seemed to the enemy as though the whole tribe [of the Benou Kehtan] were upon them; wherefore they all snatched up their arms and fell upon one another with slaughter. Gherib and his men held aloof, and they fought with one another till daybreak, when Merdas and Gherib and their ninety warriors fell in upon them and killed some of them and put the rest to flight. Then they took the arms and horses of the dead and the fugitives and returned to the camp, whilst Merdas could hardly credit his deliverance.

When they reached the encampment, the folk all came to meet them and rejoiced in their safe return. Then they alighted and betook them to their tents; and all the youths of the tribe flocked to Gherib’s tent and great and small saluted him and did him honour. When Merdas saw this, he was more jealous of Gherib than before and said to his kinsfolk, ‘Verily, hatred of Gherib grows on my heart, and why but because I see these flocking about him! And to-morrow he will demand Mehdiyeh of me.’ Quoth his confidant, ‘O Amir, ask of him somewhat he cannot avail unto.’ This pleased Merdas, and on the morrow, as he sat on his divan, with the Arabs about him, Gherib entered, followed by his men and surrounded by the youth of the tribe, and kissed the earth before Merdas, who rose to do him honour, making a show of joy in him and seating him beside himself.

Then said Gherib, ‘O uncle, thou madest me a promise; do thou fulfil it.’ ‘O my son,’ answered the Amir, ‘she is thine to all time; but thou lackest good.’ ‘O uncle,’ said Gherib, ‘ask of me what thou wilt, and I will fall upon the Amirs of the Arabs in their dwellings and on the kings in their cities and bring thee wealth enough to cover the land from East to West.’ ‘O my son,’ rejoined Merdas, ‘I have sworn by all the idols that I would give Mehdiyeh to none but him who should take my wreak [of mine enemy] and do away my reproach.' 'O uncle,' said Gherib, 'tell me with which of the kings thou hast a feud, that I may go to him and break his throne over his head.' 'O my son,' replied Merdas, 'know that I once had a son, a champion of the champions, and he went forth one day to hunt with a hundred horse. They fared on from valley to valley, till they had wandered far away into the mountains and came to the Valley of Flowers and the Castle of Ham ben Shith ben Sheddad ben Kheled.

Now in this place dwells a black giant, seventy cubits high, who uses to pluck up trees by the roots and fight with them; and he came out upon my son and his men and slew them all, save three, who escaped and bore me the news. So I assembled my braves and went forth to fight the giant, but could not avail against him; wherefore I was baulked of my revenge and swore that I would not give my daughter in marriage but to him who should avenge me of my son.' 'O uncle,' said Gherib, 'I will go to the giant and avenge thy son on him with the help of God the Most High.' And Merdas answered, saying, 'O Gherib, if thou get the victory over him, thou wilt gain of him such booty of wealth and treasures as fires may not devour.' Quoth Gherib, 'Swear to me [before witnesses] that thou wilt give me Mehdiyeh to wife, that I may go to seek my fortune with a heart at ease.' So Merdas swore this to him and took the elders of the tribe to witness; whereupon Gherib went away, rejoicing in the [anticipated] fulfilment of his hopes, and went in to his mother, to whom he related what had passed. 'O my son,' said she, 'know that Merdas hates thee and doth but send thee to this mountain, to bereave me of thee; so take me with thee and let us depart the tents of this tyrant.' But he answered, saying, 'O my mother, I will not depart hence till I have compassed my desire and overcome my enemy.'

Then he slept, till the morning arose with its light and shone, and hardly had he mounted his charger when his friends, the young men, came up to him, two hundred stout cavaliers, and cried out to him, saying, 'Take us with thee; we will help thee and keep thee company by the way.' And he rejoiced in them and said, 'God requite you for us with good! Come, my friends, let us go.' So they set out and fared on for two days, till the evening of the second day, when they halted at the foot of a high scarped bill and unbridled their horses. As for

Gherib, he left the rest and fared on into the mountain, till he came to a cave, whence issued a light. So he entered and found, at the upper end of the cave, an old man, three hundred and forty years old, whose eyebrows hung down over his eyes and whose moustaches hid his mouth. His aspect filled Gherib with awe and veneration, and the hermit said to him, ‘O my son, methinks thou art of the idolaters that worship stones in the stead of the All-powerful King, the Creator of Night and Day and the revolving sphere.’ When Gherib heard his words, his nerves quivered and he said, ‘O elder, where is this lord of whom thou speakest, that I may worship him and take my fill of his sight?’ ‘O my son,’ replied the old man, ‘this is the Supreme Lord, none in the world may look upon Him; He seeth and is not seen. He is the Most High of aspect and is present everywhere in His works. He it is who maketh all things to be and ordereth the march of time; He is the Creator of men and Jinn and sendeth the prophets to guide His creatures into the right way. Whoso obeyeth Him, He bringeth into Paradise, and whoso disobeyeth Him, He casteth into the fire.’

‘And how, O uncle,’ asked Gherib, ‘doth he say who worships this mighty Lord who hath power over all?’ ‘O my son,’ answered the old man, ‘I am of the tribe of Aad, which were transgressors in the land and believed not in God. So He sent unto them a prophet named Houd, but they believed not in him and he destroyed them by means of a deadly wind; but I believed, I and some of my tribe, and we were saved from destruction. Moreover, I was present with the tribe of Themoud and saw what befell them with their prophet Salih. After Salih, God the Most High sent a prophet called Abraham the Friend to Nimrod son of Canaan, and there befell what befell between them. Then my companions died and I continued in this cave to serve God the Most High, Who provideth me without my taking thought.’ ‘O uncle,’ quoth Gherib, ‘what shall I say, that I may become of the servants of this mighty Lord? ‘Say,’ replied the old man, ‘“There is no god but God and Abraham is the Friend of God.”’

So Gherib embraced the faith of submission’ with heart and tongue and the old man said to him, ‘May the sweetness of submission and belief be stablished in thy heart!’ Then he taught him somewhat of the ordinances and scriptures of Islam and said to him, ‘What is thy name?’ And he answered, ‘My name is Gherib.’ ‘O Gherib,’ said the old man, ‘whither art thou bound?’ So he told him all his history, till he came to the mention of the Ghoul of the Mountain, whereupon quoth the other, ‘O Gherib, art thou mad that thou goest forth against the Ghoul of the Mountain alone?’ ‘O my lord,’ replied Gherib, ‘I have with me two hundred horse.’ ‘O Gherib,’ rejoined the hermit, ‘hadst thou ten thousand, yet shouldest thou not prevail against him, for his name is *The-Ghoul-who-eats-men-we-pray-God-for-safety*, and he is of the children of Ham. His father’s name was Hindi, who peopled Hind and named it, and he left this son after him, whom he called Saadan the Ghoul. Now, even in his father’s lifetime he was a cruel tyrant and an arrogant devil and had no other food than men’s flesh. His father forbade him from this, but he would not be forbidden and redoubled in his frowardness, till Hindi banished him and drove him forth of Hind, after battle and sore travail. Then he came to this country and fortified himself therein, making his dwelling in this place, whence he uses to sally forth and waylay all that come and go. Moreover, he bath begotten five stout and warlike sons, each one of whom will do battle with a thousand braves, and be hath filled the valley with his booty of horses and camels and oxen and sheep, besides other treasure and goods. Wherefore I fear for thee from him; so do thou implore God the Most High to succour thee against him by the word of Unity , and when thou drivest at the infidels, say, “God is Most Great!” for this saying confoundeth those who misbelieve.’

Then he gave him a mace of steel, a hundred pounds in weight, with ten rings, which clashed like thunder, when the wielder brandished it, and a sword forged of a thunder-bolt, three cubits long and three spans broad, wherewith if one smote a rock, it would cleave it in sunder. Moreover, he gave him a hauberk and target and a book [of the law] and said to him, ‘Return to thy people and expound Islam to them.’ So Gherib left him, rejoicing in his newly-gained faith, and returned to his companions, who saluted him, saying, ‘What made thee tarry thus?’ Whereupon be told them all that had befallen him and expounded to them Islam, and they all embraced the faith of submission.

Next morning, Gherib mounted and rode to the hermit to bid him farewell, after which he set out to return to his camp. On his way, there met him a horseman armed cap-a-pie, so that only his eyes appeared, who made at him, saying, ‘Put off what is on thee, O dog of the Arabs; or I will slay thee!’ Therewith Gherib drove at him and there befell between them a battle such as would make a new-born child turn gray and melt the flinty rock with its terror; but presently the stranger did off his face-veil, and behold, it was Gherib’s half-brother Sehim el Leil.

Now the manner of his coming thither was on this wise. When Gherib set out in quest of the Ghoul of the Mountain, Sehim was absent and on his return, not seeing his brother, he went in to his mother, whom he found weeping. So he asked the reason and she told him what had happened, whereupon, without allowing himself aught of rest, he donned his harness of war and mounting, pricked after Gherib, till he overtook him and there befell between them what befell. When, therefore, he discovered his face, Gherib knew him and saluted him, saying, ‘What moved thee to do this?’ Quoth Sehim, ‘I had a mind to measure myself with thee in the field and make trial of my force in cutting and thrusting.’ Then they rode on, till they drew near the valley, and on the way Gherib expounded Islam to Sehim, who embraced the faith.

Meanwhile, the Ghoul espied the dust of their horses’ feet and said to his sons, ‘O my sons, mount and fetch me yonder booty.’ So the five took horse and made for the party. When Gherib saw the five giants approaching, he spurred towards them and cried out, saying, ‘Who and what are ye and what do ye want?’ Whereupon Felhoun, the eldest of the five, came out and said, ‘Dismount and bind one another and we will drive you to our father, that he may roast some of you and boil other, for it is long since he hath tasted human flesh.’ When Gherib heard this, he drove at Felhoun, shaking his mace, so that the rings resounded like the pealing thunder and the giant was confounded. Then he smote him a light blow with the mace between the shoulders, and he fell to the ground like a great palm-tree; whereupon Sehirn and some of his men fell upon him and bound him; then, putting a rope about his neck, they haled him along like a cow.

When his brothers saw him a prisoner, they rushed upon Gherib, who took three of them captive and the fifth fled back to his father, who said to him, ‘What is behind thee and where are thy brothers?’ Quoth he, ‘A beardless youth, forty cubits high, hath taken them prisoner.’ ‘May the sun pour no blessing on you!’ replied Saadan and going down from his hold, tore up a huge tree, with which he went in quest of Gherib and his folk on foot, for that no horse might carry him, because of the bigness of his body. His son followed him and they went on till they came up with Gherib and his company, when the Ghoul fell upon them, without word said, and killed five men with his club. Then he made at Sehim and struck at him with his club, but Sehim avoided the blow and it fell harmless; whereat Saadan was wroth and throwing down the weapon, sprang upon Sehim and caught him up as the merlin catches up the sparrow.

When Gherib saw his brother in the Ghoul’s clutches, he cried out, saying, ‘God is most Great! By the favour of Abraham the Friend, whom God bless and preserve!’ And spurred his charger at Saadan, shaking his mace, till the rings resounded. Then he cried out again, ‘God is most Great!’ and smote the Ghoul full on the ribs with his mace, whereupon he fell to the ground, insensible, and loosed his hold of Sehim; nor did he come to himself before he was bound and shackled. When his son saw this, lie turned and fled; but Gherib drove after him and smiting him with his mace between the shoulders, unhorsed him. So they bound him with his father and brothers and haltering them with ropes, haled them all six along like camels, till they reached the Ghoul’s castle, which they found full of goods and treasures and things of price; and there they found also twelve hundred Persians, bound and shackled.

Gherib sat down on Saadan’s chair, which had aforetime belonged to Sasa ben Shith ben Sheddad ben Aad, with Sehim on his right and his companions standing on his either hand, and sending for the Ghoul of the Mountain, said to him, ‘How findest thou thyself, O accursed one?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Saadan, ‘in the sorriest of plights for abasement and mortification; my sons and I, we are bound with ropes like camels.’ Quoth Gherib, ‘It is my will that you enter my faith, that is, the faith of Islam, and acknowledge the Unity of the All-knowing King, Creator of light and darkness and of all things, - there is no God but He, the Requiting King, - and confess the prophethood of Abraham the Friend, on whom be peace I' So the Ghoul and his sons made profession of Islam after the goodliest fashion, and Gherib bade loose their bonds, whereupon Saadan wept and would have kissed his feet, he and his sons: but Gherib forbade them and they stood with the rest.

Then said Gherib, 'Harkye, Saadan!' 'At thy service, o my lord!' answered he. Quoth Gherib, 'What are these captives?' 'O my lord,' replied the Ghoul, 'these are my booty from the land of the Persians and are not the only ones.' 'And who is with them?' asked Gherib. 'O my lord,' answered Saadan, 'there is with them the princess Fekhr Taj, daughter of King Sabour of Persia, and a hundred damsels like moons.' When Gherib heard this, he marvelled and said, 'How came ye by these?' 'O Amir,' replied Saadan, 'I went forth one day with my Sons and five of my slaves in quest of booty, but finding no spoil in our way, we dispersed over deserts and plains and fared on, so haply we might happen on somewhat of prey and not return empty-handed, till we found ourselves in the land of the Persians. Presently, we espied a cloud of dust in the distance and sent one of our slaves to reconnoitre, who returned after awhile and said, "O my lord, this is the princess Fekhr Taj, daughter of Sabour, King of the Persians and Medes and Turcomans, who is on a journey, attended by two thousand horse." Quoth I, "Mayst thou be gladdened with good news! We could have no finer purchase than this." Then I and my sons fell upon the Persians and slew of them three hundred men and took the princess and twelve hundred cavaliers prisoners, together with all that was with her of treasure and riches, and brought them hither.'

Quoth Gherib, 'Hast thou offered any violence to the princess Fekhr Taj?' 'Not I,' replied Saadan, 'as thy head liveth, and by the virtue of the faith I have [but now] embraced!, 'It was well done of thee, O Saadan,' said Gherib; 'for her father is king of the world and he will surely despatch troops in quest of her and lay waste the dwellings of those who took her. And whoso looks not to the issue of events, Fate is no friend to him. But where is the damsel?' And Saadan, 'I have set apart a pavilion for her and her damsels.' Quoth Gherib, 'Show me her lodging,' and Saadan answered, 'I hear and obey.' So he carried him to the pavilion, where he found the princess mournful and cast down, weeping for her former estate of honour and delight. When Gherib saw her, he thought the moon was near him and magnified God the All-hearing and seeing. The princess also looked at him and saw him a princely cavalier, with valour shining from between his eyes and testifying for him and not against him; so she rose and kissed his hands, then threw herself at his feet, saying, 'O hero of the age, I cast myself on thy mercy; protect me from this Ghoul, for I fear lest he do away my maidenhead and after devour me. So take me to serve thine handmaids.' Quoth Gherib, 'Thou shalt be restored in safety to thy father and the seat of thy worship.' Whereupon she prayed that he might live long and have advancement in rank.

Then he caused unbind the Persians and turning to the princess, said to her, 'What brought thee forth of thy palace to the deserts and wastes, so that the highway-robbers made prize of thee?' 'O my lord,' answered she, 'my father and all the people of his realm are Magians, who worship the fire, and not the All-powerful King. Now in our country is a monastery called the Monastery of the Fire, whither every year the daughters of the Magians and worshippers of the Fire resort at the time of their festival, after which they return to their houses. So I and my damsels set out, as of wont, attended by two thousand horse, whom my father sent with me to guard me; but by the way this Ghoul fell upon us and killed some of us and taking the rest captive, imprisoned us in this hold. This, then, is what befell me, O valiant champion, whom God guard against the shifts of fortune!' And Gherib said, 'Fear not; for I will bring thee to thy palace and the seat of thy worship.' Wherefore she blessed him and kissed his hands and feet.

Then he went out from her, after having commanded to treat her with honour, and slept till morning, when he made the ablution and prayed a two-bow prayer, after the rite of our father Abraham the Friend (on whom be peace), whilst the Ghoul and his sons and Gherib's company did the like after him. Then he turned to the Ghoul and said to him, 'O Saadan, wilt thou not show me the Valley of Flowers?'I will well, O my lord,' answered he. So Gherib and his company and Fekhr Taj all rose and went forth, whilst Saadan commanded his slaves and slave-girls, (of whom he had a hundred and fifty female and a thousand male slaves, to pasture his sheep and oxen and camels) to slaughter and cook and make ready the morning-meal and bring it to them among the trees.

When they came to the valley, they found it beautiful passing measure, full of trees growing singly and in clusters and birds warbling on the branches. There sang the mocking-bird, trilling out her melodious notes, and the cushat filling with her warble the mansions of God's creation, and the nightingale, with her voice like that of a man, and the merle, that the tongue fails to describe, and the turtle, whose plaining maddens men for love, and the ringdove and the popinjay answering her with fluent tongue. There also were trees laden with all manner of fruits, of each two kinds, the pomegranate, sweet and sour, the almond-apricot, the camphor-apricot and the almond of Khorassan and the plum, with whose branches entwine the boughs of the myrobalan, and the orange, as it were a flaming cresset, and the shaddock, weighing down its branches, and the lemon, that cures lack of appetite, and the citron, sovereign against the jaundice, and the date, red and yellow, the [especial] handiwork of God the Most High. Of the like of this place saith the poet El Welhan:

When its birds sing in the dawn o'er its limpid lake, El Welhan yearns for its sight ere morning break.
For as it were Paradise 'tis with its fragrant gales And its fruits and its streams that run through its shady brake.

Gherib marvelled at the beauty of the place and bade them set up there the pavilion of Fekhr Taj, daughter of the Chosroës; so they pitched it among the trees and spread it with rich carpets. Then he sat down and the slaves brought food and they ate till they were satisfied; after which quoth Gherib, 'Harkye, Saadan!' 'At thy service, O my lord,' answered the Ghoul. 'Hast thou any wine?' asked Gherib, and Saadan replied, 'Yes, I have a cistern full of old wine.' 'Then,' said Gherib, 'bring us some of it.' So Saadan sent ten slaves, who returned with great plenty of wine, and they ate and drank and made merry. And Gherib bethought him of Mehdiyeh and recited the following verses:

I mind me of the happy days of union and delight, And all my heart’s on fire with love and longing for thy sight.
By God, I did not leave thy side of my unfettered will, But by the strange and evil chance of Fate in my despite!
Peace be upon thee, O my love, a thousand times be peace! Whilst I, afar from thee, remain a sad and weary wight.

They abode there three days, eating and drinking and taking their pleasure in the valley, at the end of which time they returned to the castle. Then Gherib called Sehim and said to him, ‘Take a hundred horse and go to thy father and mother and thy people, the Benou Kehtan, and bring them all to this place, here to pass the rest of their days, whilst I carry the Princess of Persia back to her father. As for thee, O Saadan,’ continued Gherib, addressing the Ghoul, ‘abide thou here with thy sons, till I return to thee.’ ‘And why,’ asked Saadan, ‘wilt thou not carry me with thee to the land of the Persians?’ ‘Because,’ answered Gherib, ‘thou stolest away King Sabour’s daughter and if his eye fall on thee he will eat thy flesh and drink tny blood.’ When the Ghoul heard this, he laughed a great laugh, as it were the pealing thunder, and said, ‘O my lord, if the Persians and the Medes united against me, I would make them quaff the cup of death.’ ‘Doubtless it is as thou sayest,’ rejoined Gherib; ‘but abide thou here till I return to thee.’ And the Ghoul answered, ‘I hear and obey.’ Then Sehim departed with his comrades of the Benou Kehtan for the dwelling-places of their tribe, and Gherib set out with Fekhr Taj and her company, intending for the cities of Sabour, King of the Persians.

Meanwhile, King Sabour abode awaiting his daughter’s return from the Monastery of the Fire, and when the appointed time passed by and she came not, fires raged in his heart. Now he had forty viziers, whereof the wisest and chiefest was called Daidan: so he said to him, ‘O vizier, the day of my daughter’s return is past and I have no news of her; so do thou send a courier to the Monastery of the Fire to learn what is come of her.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ replied Daidan, and summoning the chief of the couriers, despatched him forthright to the Monastery. When he reached it, he asked the monks of the princess, and they said, ‘We have not seen her this year.’ So the

Courier returned to the city of Ishanir and told the vizier, who went in to the king and told him. When Sabour heard this, he was sore concerned and casting his crown on the ground, tore his beard and tell down in a swoon. They sprinkled water upon him, and presently he came to himself, weeping-eyed and mournful-hearted and repeated the words of the poet:

When in thine absence to mine aid patience and tears I call, Tears come obedient to my word, but patience not at all.
What if the days have parted us? Indeed, 'tis of their wont; For unto Fortune perfidy, alas! is natural.

Then he called ten of his captains and bade them take each a thousand horse and ride in different directions, in quest of his daughter. So they mounted forthright and departed; whilst the princess's mother clad herself and her women in black and strewed ashes and sat weeping and lamenting.

Meanwhile Gherib and the princess journeyed on ten days, and on the eleventh day, a cloud of dust appeared in the distance and rose to the confines of the sky; whereupon Gherib called the Amir of the Persians and bade him go and learn the cause thereof. 'I hear and obey,' replied he and pricked his charger, till he came within the cloud of dust, where he saw folk and enquired of them. Quoth they, 'We are of the Benou Hettal and are questing for plunder; our Amir is Semsam ben Jirah and we are five thousand horse.' The Persian returned in haste and told Gherib, who cried out to his men and to the Persians, saying, 'Don your arms!' They did as he bade them and presently up came the Arabs, shouting, 'Booty! Booty!' Quoth Gherib, 'God confound you, O dogs of Arabs!' Then he set spurs to his horse and drove at them in valiant wise, shouting, 'God is most great! Ho for the faith of Abraham the Friend, on whom be peace!' And there befell between them a sore battle and great was the clash of arms and the din of the mellay; nor did they leave fighting, till the day fled and the darkness came, when they drew off from one another.

Then Gherib numbered his men and found that five of the Benou Kehtan had fallen and three-and-seventy of the Persians; but of the

Benou Hettal they had slain more than five hundred horse. As for Semsam, he alighted and sought neither food nor sleep, but said, ‘In all my life I never met such a fighter as this youth! Anon he fights with the sword and anon with the mace: but to-morrow I will go forth and defy him to single combat and cut off these Arabs.’ Now, when Gherib returned to his camp, the princess met him, weeping and affrighted for the terror of that which had befallen, and kissed his foot in the stirrup, saying, ‘May thy hands never wither nor thine enemies rejoice, O champion of the age! Praised be God Who hath saved thee alive this day! Verily, I am in fear for thee from yonder Arabs.’ When Gherib heard this, he smiled in her face and comforted her, saying, ‘Fear not, O princess! Were this desert full of the enemy, yet would I scatter them, by the might of God the Most High.’ She thanked him and prayed that he might be given the victory over his enemies; after which she returned to her women and Gherib went to his tent, where he cleansed himself of the blood of the infidels, and they lay on their arms that night.

Next morning, the two hosts mounted and sought the field. The first to prick into the plain was Gherib, who spurred his charger till he was near the infidels and cried out, ‘Who is for jousting? Let no sluggard or weakling come out to me!’ Whereupon there came out a buirdly giant of the lineage of the tribe of Aad, armed with an iron mace, twenty pounds in weight, and drove at Gherib, saying, ‘O scum of the Arabs, take what cometh to thee and know that thy last hour is at hand!’ So saying, he aimed a blow at Gherib, but he avoided it and the mace sank a cubit into the ground. Now the Bedouin was bent in twain with the blow; so Gherib smote him with his mace and clove his forehead in sunder; and he fell down dead and God hurried his soul to the fire. Then Gherib made his horse wheel and curvet before the foe and offered battle. So there came out to him a second and a third and a fourth and so on, till ten had come forth to him and he slew them all.

When the infidels saw his swashing blows and the slaughter he made, they hung back and forbore to go forth to him, whereupon Semsam looked at them and said, ‘May God not bless you! I will go forth to him.’ So he donned his battle-harness and spurring his charger into the midst of the field, cried out to Gherib, saying, ‘Out on thee, O dog of the Arabs! what art thou that thou shouldst defy me in the open field and slay my men?' And Ghetib answered, 'Up and take thy wreak for the slaughter of thy braves!' So Semsam ran at Gherib, who awaited him with a dilated breast and a heart well pleased, and they hewed at one another with maces, till the two hosts marvelled and every eye was fixed on them. Then they wheeled about [and fetching a compass] in the field, [met] and struck at each other; but Gherib avoided Semsam's stroke and dealt him a buffet that beat in his breast and cast him to the ground, dead; whereupon all his host set upon Gherib as one man, and he ran at them, crying out, 'God is most Great! He giveth help and victory [to His servants] and forsaketh those who reject the faith of Abraham the Friend, on whom be peace!'

When the infidels heard the name of the All-powerful King, the One, the Victorious, whom the sights comprehend not, but He comprehendeth all sights, they looked at one another and said, 'What is this saying that makes us tremble in every nerve and weakens our resolution and causes the life to fail in us? Never in our lives heard we aught goodlier than this saying! Let us leave fighting, that we may ask its meaning.' So they held their hands from the battle and dismounted; and their chiefs assembled and held counsel together, seeking to go to Gherib and saying, 'Let ten of us go to him!' So they chose out ten of their best, who set out for Gherib's camp. Now he and his people had alighted and returned to their tents, marvelling at the withdrawal of the infidels from the fight. Presently, the ten elders came up and seeking speech of Gherib, kissed the earth before him and wished him glory and long life. Quoth he to them, 'What made you leave fighting?' 'O my lord,' answered they, 'thou didst affright us with the words thou shoutedst out at us.' Then said Gherib, 'What calamity do ye worship?' 'We worship Wedd and Souwaa and Yeghouth,' answered they, 'lords of the tribe of Noah;' and Gherib, 'We serve none but God the Most High, Maker of all things and Provider of every living creature. He it is who created the heavens and the earth and stablished the mountains, who maketh water to well from the rocks and the trees to grow and feedeth the wild beasts in the deserts; for He is God, the One, the All-powerful.'

When they heard this, their bosoms expanded to the words of the faith of Unity and they said, ‘ Verily, this God is a great lord, compassionate and merciful. What shall we say, to become of those that submit themselves to Him ?’ Quoth Gherib, ‘Say,” There is no god but God and Abraham is the Friend of God.”’ So the ten made sincere profession of the true faith and Gherib said to them, ‘ If the sweetness of Islam be indeed stablished in your hearts, go to your people and expound the faith to them; and if they profess, they shall be saved, but if they refuse, we will burn them with fire.’ So they returned and expounded Islam to their people and set forth to them the way of truth and righteousness, and they embraced the faith of submission with heart and tongue.

Then they repaired on foot to Gherib’s tent and kissing the earth before him, wished him power and advancement, saying, ‘O our lord, we are become thy slaves; command us what thou wilt, for we hearken to thee and obey thee and will never leave thee, for God hath guided us into the right way at thy hands.’ ‘May God abundantly requite you!’ answered he. ‘Return to your dwellings and take your goods and your children and forego me to the Valley of Flowers and the castle of Sasa ben Shith, whilst I carry the princess Fekhr Taj, daughter of Sabour, King of the Persians, back to her father and return to you.’ ‘We hear and obey,’ said they and straightway returned to their encampment, rejoicing in Islam, and expounding the faith to their wives and children, who became true believers. Then they dismantled their dwellings and set forth, with their goods and cattle, for the Valley of Flowers. Now Gherib had charged them, saying, ‘If the Ghoul of the Mountain come out to you and offer to attack you, do ye call upon the name of God, the Creator of all things, and he will leave his hostile intent and receive you hospitably.’ So, when they came in sight of the castle of Shith, Saadan and his Sons sallied forth to them and would have fallen upon them; but they called aloud upon the name of God the Most High, and straightway he received them kindly and asked them of their case. They told him all that had passed between Gherib and themselves, whereupon he rejoiced in them and lodged them with him and loaded them with kindnesses.

Meanwhile, Gherib and his company fared on five days’ journey towards the city of Isbanir, and on the sixth day, they saw in the distance a cloud of dust. So Gherib sent one of the Persians to learn the meaning of this and he went and returned, swiftlier than a bird in its flight, saying, 'O my lord, these be a thousand horse of our comrades, whom the King hath sent in quest of his daughter.' When Gherib heard this, he commanded his men to halt and pitch the tents. So they halted and waited till the new comers reached them, when they went to meet them and told Touman, their captain, that the princess was with them; whereupon he went in to Gherib and kissing the earth before him, enquired for her. Gherib sent him to her tent, and he entered and kissed her hands and feet and acquainted her with what had befallen her father and mother. She told him in return all that had befallen her and how Gherib had delivered her from the Ghoul of the Mountain, who would else have eaten her, adding, 'And indeed, it behoves my father to give him the half of his kingdom.' Then Touman returned to Gherib and kissed his hands and feet and thanked him for his good dealing, saying, 'With thy leave, O my lord, I will return to Isbanir and acquaint the King with the good news of his daughter's approach.' 'Go,' answered Gherib, 'and take of him the gift for glad tidings.'

So Touman returned with all diligence to Isbanir and entering the palace, kissed the earth before the King, who said to him, 'What is the news, O bringer of glad tidings?' Quoth Touman, 'I will not speak, till thou give me the reward for good news.' 'Tell me thy good news,' answered the King, 'and I will content thee.' So Touman said, 'O King, I bring thee the glad tidings of the return of the princess Fekhr Taj.' When Sabour heard his daughter's name, he fell down in a swoon and they sprinkled rose-water on him, till he recovered and said to Touman, 'Draw near to me and tell me all.' So he came forward and acquainted him with all that had befallen the princess; and Sabour beat hand upon hand, saying, 'Alas, unhappy Fekhr Taj!' And he bade give Touman ten thousand dinars and conferred on him the government of the city of Ispahan. Then he cried out to his Amirs, saying, 'Mount, all of you, and go forth to meet the princess Fekhr Taj!' Whilst the chief eunuch went in to the queen-mother and told her and all the harem the good news, whereat she rejoiced and gave him a dress of honour and a thousand dinars. Moreover, the people of the city heard of this and decorated the streets and houses.

Then the King and Touman took horse and rode till they fell in with Gherib, when Sabour dismounted and made some steps towards Gherib, who also dismounted and advanced to meet him; and they embraced and saluted each other, and Sabour bent over Gherib's hand and kissed it and thanked him for his favours. They pitched their tents in face of one another and Sabour went in to his daughter, who rose and embracing him, told him all that had befallen her and how Gherib had rescued her from the clutches of the Ghoul of the Mountain. 'By thy life, O princess of fair ones,' said the King, 'I will overwhelm him with gifts!' 'O my father,' rejoined she, 'make him thy son-in-law, that he may be to thee a help against thine enemies, for he is passing valiant.' This she said because her heart was enamoured of Gherib. 'O my daughter,' answered her father, 'knowst thou not that King Khired Shah seeks thee in marriage and that he hath cast the brocade and given a hundred thousand dinars [to dowry], and he is King of Shiraz and its dependencies and is lord of empire and horsemen and footmen?' 'O my father,' said the princess, 'I desire not that whereof thou speakest, and if thou constrain me to that I have no mind to, I will kill myself.' So Sabour left her and went in to Gherib, with whom he sat awhile and could not take his fill of looking upon him; and he said in himself, 'By Allah, my daughter is excusable if she love this Bedouin!' Then he called for food and they ate and passed the night together.

On the morrow, they took horse and rode till they arrived at the city of Isbanir and entered, stirrup to stirrup, and it was a great day for them. Fekhr Taj repaired to her palace and the abiding-place of her rank, where her mother and her women received her with cries of joy. As for King Sabour, he sat down on his throne and seated Gherib on his right hand, whilst the princes and viceroys and chamberlains and viziers and officers stood on either hand and gave him joy of the recovery of his daughter. Quoth Sabour, 'Whoso loveth me let him bestow a robe of honour on Gherib,' and there fell dresses of honour on him like rain. Then Gherib abode the King's guest ten days, at the end of which time he would have departed, but Sabour clad him in a dress of honour and swore by his faith that he should not depart for a month. Quoth Gherib, 'O King, I am plighted to one of the girls of the Arabs and I desire to go in to her.' 'Whether is the fairer,' asked the King, 'thy betrothed or Fekhr Taj?' 'O King of the age,' replied Gherib, 'what is the slave beside the lord?' And Sabour said, 'Fekhr Taj is become thy handmaid, for that thou didst rescue her from the clutches of the Ghoul, and she shall have none other husband than thee.'

Thereupon Gherib rose and kissed the earth, saying, "O, King of the age, thou art a king and I am but a poor man, and belike thou wilt ask a heavy dowry.' 'O my son,' replied the King, 'know that Khired Shah, lord of Shiraz, seeks her in marriage and hath appointed a hundred thousand dinars to her dower; but I have chosen thee before all men, that I may make thee the shield of my kingship and the sword of my vengeance.' Then he turned to his chief officers and said to them, 'Bear witness against me that I give my daughter Fekhr Taj in marriage to my son Gherib.' With that he joined hands with him and she became his wife. Then said Gherib, 'Appoint me a dower and I will bring it to thee, for I have in the Castle of Sasa wealth and treasures beyond count.' 'O my son,' answered Sabour, 'I want of thee neither gold nor treasure and I will take nothing for her dower save the head of Jemrcan, King of Desht and the city of Ahwaz.' 'O King of the age,' rejoined Gherib, 'I will fetch my people and go to thine enemy and lay waste his realm.' Quoth Sabour, 'May God requite thee with good!' and dismissed the assembly, thinking that, if Gherib went forth against Jemrcan, be would never return.

Next morning, the King mounted with Gherib and all his troops and rode forth to the tilting-ground, where he said to his men, 'Do ye tilt with spears and gladden my heart.' So the Persian cavaliers tilted, one against the other, and Gherib said, 'O King of the age, I have a mind to tilt with the horsemen of the Persians, but on one condition.' 'What is that?' asked the King. 'It is,' answered Gherib, 'that I shall don a light tunic and take a headless spear, with a pennon dipped in saffron, whilst the Persians tilt against me with sharp spears. If any conquer me, I will give myself to him; but, if I conquer him, I will mark him on the breast and he shall leave the lists.' Then the King cried to the commander of the troops to bring forward the champions of the Persians; so he chose out twelve hundred of his stoutest champions, and the King said to them, in the Persian tongue, ‘Whoso slayeth this Bedouin may ask of me what he will.’ So they strove with each other for the precedence and advanced upon Gherib and truth was distinguished from falsehood and jest from earnest. Quoth Gherib, ‘I put my trust in God, the God of Abraham the Friend, Who hath power over all and from whom nothing is hidden, the One, the Almighty, whom the sight comprehendeth not!’

Then a giant of the Persian champions pricked out to him, but Gherib let him not stand long before him ere he marked him and filled his breast with saffron, and as he turned away, he smote him on the nape with [the butt of] his spear, and he fell to the ground and his pages carried him forth of the lists. Then a second champion came forth against him and he overcame him and marked him on the breast; and thus did he with champion after champion, till he had overcome them all and marked them on the breast; for God the Most High gave him the victory over them and they went forth of the lists. Then the servants set food before them and they ate and drank till Gherib’s wits were dazed. By and by, he went out upon an occasion and would have returned, but lost his way and entered the palace of Fekhr Taj. When she saw him, her reason fled and she cried out to her women, saying, ‘Go to your own places!’ So they withdrew and she rose and kissed Gherib’s hand, saying, ‘Welcome to my lord, who delivered me from the Ghoul! Indeed I am thine handmaid for ever.’ Then she drew him to her bed and embraced him, whereupon desire was hot upon him and he broke her seal and lay with her till the morning. Now the King thought that he had departed; but on the morrow he went in to him and Sabour rose to him and made him sit by his side.

Then entered the [tributary] kings and kissing the earth, stood on either hand and fell to talking of Gherib’s valour and saying, ‘Extolled be He who gave him such prowess, and he so young in years!’ As they were thus engaged, the King espied from the palace-windows the dust of horse approaching and cried out to his scouts, saying, ‘Out on you! Go and bring me news of yonder dust!’ So one of them took horse and riding off, returned after awhile and said, ‘O King, this is the dust of a hundred horse, and the name of their chief is Sehim el Leil.’ Quoth Gherib, ‘O my lord, this is my brother, whom I had sent on an errand, and I will go forth to meet him.' So saying, he mounted, with his hundred men of the Benou Kehtan and a thousand Persians, and rode forth to meet his brother in great state, [that is to say if greatness may be attributed to the creature] for [real] greatness belongeth to God alone. When they came up with each other, they dismounted and embraced, and Gherib said to Sehim, 'O my brother, hast thou brought our tribe to the Castle of the Ghoul of the Mountain and the Valley of Flowers?' 'O my brother,' answered Sehim, 'when the perfidious dog Merdas heard that thou hadst mastered the Ghoul of the Mountain and his stronghold, he was sore chagrined and said, "Except I depart hence, Gherib will come and take my daughter Mehdiyeh without dower." So he took his daughter and his goods and set out with his tribe for Irak, where he entered the city of Cufa and put himself under the protection of King Agib, seeking to give him his daughter to wife.' When Gherib heard his brother's story, he well-nigh gave up the ghost for rage and said, 'By the virtue of the faith of submission, the faith of Abraham the Friend, and by the Supreme Lord, I will assuredly go to the land of Irak and make fierce war upon it.'

Then they returned to the city and going in to the King, kissed the earth before him. He rose to Gherib and saluted Sehim; after which the former told him what had happened and he put ten captains at his command, under each one's hand ten thousand horse of the stoutest of the Persians and the Arabs, who equipped themselves and were ready to depart at the end of three days. Then Gherib set out and journeyed till he reached the Castle of Sasa, where the Ghoul and his sons came forth to meet him and dismounting, kissed his feet in the stirrups. He told them all that had passed and the Ghoul said, 'O my lord, do thou abide in this castle, whilst I repair to Irak with my sons and servants and lay waste town and hamlet and bring thee all its defenders bound hand and foot.' But Gherib thanked him and said, 'O Saadan, we will all go.' So they all made ready and set out for Irak, leaving a thousand horse to guard the castle.

Meanwhile, Merdas arrived at the city of Cufa and going in to Agib, kissed the earth before him and wished him what is usually wished to kings. Then he made him a handsome present, saying, 'O my lord, I come to throw myself on thy protection.' 'Tell me who hath wronged thee,' answered Agib, 'that I may protect thee against him, though it were Sabour, King of the Persians and Turco mans and Medes.' 'O King,' replied Merdas, 'he who bath wronged me is none other than a youth whom I reared in my bosom. I found him in his mother's lap in a certain valley and took her to wife. She brought me a son, whom I named Sehim el Leil, and her own son, whose name was Gherib, grew up on my knees and became a consuming lightning and a great calamity, for he slew El Hemel, prince of the Benou Nebhan, and routed footmen and overcame horsemen. Now I have a daughter, who befits thee alone, and he sought her of me; so I required of him the head of the Ghoul of the Mountain [to her dowry;] wherefore he went to him and engaging him in single combat, made him prisoner and took the castle of Sasa ben Shith ben Sheddad ben Aad, wherein are the treasures of the ancients and the moderns, and the Ghoul is become one of his liegemen. Moreover, I hear that he is become a Muslim and goeth about, summoning the folk to his faith. He is now gone to carry the princess of Persia, whom he delivered from the Ghoul, back to her father, King Sabour, and will not return but with the treasures of the Persians.'

When Agib heard Merdas's story, he changed colour and was in ill case and made sure of destruction; then he said to Merdas, 'Is his mother with thee or with him?' 'She is with me,' answered Merdas; 'in my tents.' Quoth Agib, 'What is her name?' and Merdas said, 'Her name is Nusreh.' 'It is indeed she,' rejoined Agib and sent for her. When she came before him, he looked on her and knew her and said to her, 'O accursed woman, where are the two slaves I sent with thee?' 'They slew each other on my account,' replied she; whereupon he drew his sword and smote her and cut her in twain. Then they took her up and cast her out; but trouble entered into Agib's heart and he said to Merdas, 'Give me thy daughter to wife.' 'She is one of thine handmaids,' answered he; 'I give her to thee to wife, and I am thy slave.' Quoth Agib, 'I desire to look upon this whoreson, Gherib, that I may make an end of him and cause him taste all manner of torments.' Then he bade give Merdas, to his daughter's dowry, thirty thousand dinars and a hundred pieces of silk fringed and brocaded with gold and a hundred pieces of bordered stuffs and handkerchiefs and collars of gold. So he went forth with this splendid dowry and set himself to equip Mehdiyeh with all diligence.

Meanwhile, Gherib fared on till he came to El Jezireh, which is the first town of Irak and is a walled and fortified city, and here he called a halt. When the people of the city saw his army encamp before it, they shut the gates and manned the walls, then went to the king of the city, who was called Damigh for that he used to brain the champions in the open field, and told him. So he looked forth from the battlements of the palace and seeing an immense army of Persians encamped before the city, said to the citizens, ‘O folk, what do yonder Persians want?’ ‘We know not,’ answered they.

Now Damigh had among his officers a man called Sebul-kifar, keen of wit and subtle as he were a flame of fire; so he called him and bade him go to the stranger host and find out who they were and what they wanted and return quickly. Accordingly, he sped like the wind to the Persian camp, where a company of Arabs met him and said to him, ‘Who art thou and what dost thou want?’ Quoth he, ‘I am a messenger and an ambassador from the lord of the city to your chief.’ So they took him and carried him through the lines of tents and standards, till they came to Gherib’s pavilion and told him of the envoy. He bade them bring him in and they did so, whereupon he kissed the earth before Gherib and wished him length of days and honour. Quoth Gherib, ‘What is thine errand?’ and Sebulkifar answered, saying, ‘I am an envoy from the lord of the city of Jezireh, Damigh, brother of King Kundemir, lord of the city of Cufa and the land of Irak.’ When Gherib heard his father’s name, the tears ran from his eyes and he looked at the messenger and said, ‘What is thy name?’ ‘My name is Sebulkifar,’ answered he. ‘O Sebulkifar,’ said Gherib, ‘return to thy master and tell him that the commander of this host is called Gherib, son of Kundemir, King of Cufa, whom his son Agib slew, and he is come to avenge his father on the perfidious dog Agib.’

So Sebulkifar returned to the city, rejoicing, and told Damigh all he had heard. The latter thought himself in a dream and said to the messenger, ‘O Sebulkifar, is this thou tellest me true?’ ‘ As thy head liveth,’ replied Sebulkifar, ‘it is true.’ Then Damigh took horse forthright with his chief officers and rode out to the camp, where Gherib met him and they embraced and saluted one another; after which Gherib carried him to his pavilion and they sat down on beds of estate. And Damigh rejoiced in Gherib, his brother's son, and turning to him, said, 'I also have yearned to avenge thy father, but could not avail against the dog thy brother; for that his troops are many and mine few.' 'O uncle,' replied Gherib, 'I am come to avenge my father and blot out our reproach and rid the realm of Agib.' Quoth Damigh, 'O son of my brother, thou hast two wreaks to take, that of thy father and that of thy mother.' 'And what ails my mother?' asked Gherib. 'Thy brother Agib hath slain her,' replied Damigh and told him what had befallen, whereupon Gherib's reason fled and he swooned away and came nigh upon death. No sooner did he come to himself than he cried out to the troops, saying, 'To horse!' But Damign said to him, 'O son of my brother, wait till I make ready mine estate and mount with my men and fare with thee and at thy stirrup.' 'O uncle,' replied Gherib, 'I have no patience to wait; do thou equip thy troops and join me at Cufa.'

So Gherib mounted with his troops and rode, till he came to the town of Babel, whose folk took fright at him. Now there was in this town a king called Jemek, under whose hand were twenty thousand horsemen, and there gathered themselves together to him from the villages [round about] other fifty thousand horse, who pitched their tents under the walls of the city. Then Gherib wrote a letter and sent it to King Jemek by a messenger, who came up to the city-gate and cried out, saying, 'I am a messenger;' whereupon the keeper of the gate went in and told Jemek, who said, 'Bring him to me.' So the messenger entered and kissing the earth before the King, gave him the letter. Jemek opened it and read as follows: 'Praise be to God, the Lord of the Worlds and of all things, Who provideth all creatures and hath power over all! These from Gherib, son of Kundemir, lord of Irak and Cufa, to Jemek. As soon as this letter reaches thee, let not thy reply be other than to break thine idols and confess the unity of the All-knowing King, Creator of light and darkness and of all things, the All-powerful; and except thou do as I bid thee, I will make this day the blackest of thy days. Peace be on those who follow in the way of righteousness, fearing the issues of frowardness, and obey the Most High King, Lord of this world and the next, Him who saith to a thing, "Be;" and it is'

When Jemek read this letter, his eyes rolled and his colour changed and he cried out to the messenger, saying, ‘Go to thy lord and say to him, “To-morrow, at daybreak there shall be battle and conflict and it shall appear who is the master.”’ So he returned and told Gherib, who bade his men make ready for battle, whilst Jemek pitched his tents in face of Gherib’s camp and his troops poured forth like the swollen sea and passed the night in expectation of battle. As soon as it was day, the two hosts mounted and drew up in battle array and beat their drums and spurred their swift horses, filling the plains; and the champions came out.

The first who sallied forth to the field was the Ghoul of the Mountain, bearing on his shoulder a terrible big tree, and he cried out between the two hosts, saying, ‘I am Saadan the Ghoul: who is for fighting, who is for jousting? Let no sluggard or weakling come forth to me.’ And he called out to his slaves, saying, ‘Out on you! Bring me firewood and fire, for I am hungry.’ So the slaves brought firewood and kindled a fire midmost the lists. Then there came out to him a man of the infidels, an Amalekite of the unbelieving Amalekites, bearing on his shoulder a mace as it were the mast of a ship, and drove at the Ghoul, saying, ‘Woe to thee, O Saadan!’ When the Ghoul heard this, be was angered and raising his club, aimed at the infidel a blow, that whistled through the air. The other met the stroke with his mace, but it beat down his guard and descending with its own weight and that of the mace upon his head, beat in his brain-pan, and he fell like a great palm-tree; whereupon Saadan cried to his slaves, saying, ‘Take this fat calf and roast him quickly.’ So they hastened to skin the infidel and roasted him and brought him to the Ghoul, who ate his flesh and crunched his bones.

When the infidels saw how Saadan did with their fellow, their skins quaked and their colour changed and their hearts died within them and they said to one another, ‘Whoso goeth out against this Ghoul, he eats him and cracks his bones and maketh him to lack the wind of the world.’ Wherefore they quailed for fear of the Ghoul and his sons and turned to fly, making for the town; but Gherib cried out to his troops, saying, ‘Up and after them!’ So the Persians and the Arabs drove after the King of Babel and his host and smote them with the sword, till they slew of them twenty thousand or more.

Moreover, the fugitives crowded together in the gate of the city and there they slew of them much people; and they could not win to shut the gate. So the Persians and the Arabs entered with them, fighting, and Saadan, taking a mace from one of the slain, fought his way through the foe and broke into the King's palace, where be met with Jemek and smote him with the mace, that he fell senseless to the ground. Then he fell upon those who were in the palace and pounded them into fragments, till those who were left cried out for quarter and Saadan said to them, 'Bind your king.' So they bound Jemek and took him up, and Saadan drove them before him like sheep and brought them before Gherib, after the most part of the people of the city had perished by the swords of the latter's host.

When Jemek came to himself, he found himself bound and heard Saadan say, 'I will sup to-night off this king Jemek;' whereupon he turned to Gherib and said to him, 'I throw myself on thy mercy.' 'Become a Muslim,' replied Gherib, 'and thou shalt be safe from the Ghoul and from the vengeance of the Living [God] who ceaseth not.' So Jemek professed Islam with heart and tongue and Gherib commanded his bonds to be loosed. Then he expounded the faith to his people and they all became Muslims; after which Jemek returned to the city and despatched thence meat and drink to the camp before Babel, where they passed the night. On the morrow, Gherib gave the signal for departure and they fared on till they came to Meyya Farikin, which they found empty, for its people had heard what had befallen Babel and had fled to Cufa and told Agib. When the latter heard the news, his gorge rose and he assembled his fighting men and bade them make ready to do battle with his brother's host; after which he numbered them and found them thirty thousand horse and ten thousand foot. So he levied other fifty thousand horse and foot and taking horse with a mighty host, rode forward five days, till he came upon his brother's army encamped before Mosul and pitched his tent in face of theirs.

Then Gherib wrote a letter and said to his officers, 'Which of you will carry this letter to Agib?' Whereupon up sprang Sehim and said, 'O King of the age, I will carry thy letter and bring thee back an answer.' So Gherib gave him the letter and he repaired to the pavilion of Agib, who bade admit him and said to him, 'Whence comest thou?' 'From the King of the Arabs and the Persians,' answered Sehim, 'son-in-law of Chosroës, King of the world, who sendeth thee a letter; so do thou return him an answer.' 'Give me the letter,' said Agib. So Sehim gave him the letter and he tore it open and read as follows: 'In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful! Peace be on Abraham the Friend! As soon as this letter comes to thy hands, do thou confess the unity of the Bountiful King, Causer of causes and Mover of the clouds, and leave worshipping idols. If thou do this thing, thou art my brother and ruler over us and I will pardon thee the deaths of my father and mother, nor will I reproach thee with what thou hast done. But if thou obey not my commandment, behold, I will hasten to thee and cut off thy head and lay waste thy dominions. Verily, I give thee good counsel, and peace be on those who follow in the way of righteousness and obey the Most High King!'

When Agib read these words and knew the threat they contained, his eyes sank into his head and he gnashed his teeth for rage. Then he tore the letter in pieces and threw it away, which vexed Sehim and he cried out upon Agib, saying, 'God wither thy hand for that thou hast done!' With this Agib cried out to his men, saying,'Seize yonder dog and cut him in pieces with your swords' So they ran at Sehim; but he drew his sword and fell upon them and killed more than fifty of them; after which he cut his way out and won back, covered with blood, to Gherib, who said, 'What is this, O Sehim?' And he told him what had passed, whereat he grew livid for rage and crying, 'God is most great!' bade the drums beat to battle. So the fighting-men donned their hauberks and coats of strait-woven mail and girt themselves with their swords; the footmen drew out in battle-array, whilst the horsemen mounted and set their long lances in the rest and the champions pricked into the field. Agib and his men also took horse and the two hosts charged down upon each other. Then ruled the Judge of Battle, in whose ordinance is no unright, for a seal is on his lips and he speaketh not, and the blood ran down in streams and laced the earth with curious broidery; heads grew gray [for terror] and the battle raged ever hotter and fiercer. Feet slipped and the valiant stood firm and pushed forward, whilst the faint-heart turned and fled, nor did they leave fighting till the day waned and the night came with the darkness. Then the drums beat the retreat and the two hosts drew apart and returned to their tents, where they passed the night.

Next morning, as soon as it was day, the drums beat to battle, and the warriors donned their harness of war and girt on their fair swords and mounting their stout horses, couched their brown lances and cried out, saying, 'Let there be no budging to-day!' And the two hosts drew out in battle-array, like the swollen sea. The first to open the chapter of war was Sehim, who spurred his charger between the two hosts and played with swords and spears and plied all manner of martial exercises, till the choicest wits were confounded. Then he cried out, saying, 'Who is for fighting? Who is for jousting? Let no sluggard or weakling come out!' Whereupon there pricked out to him a horseman of the infidels, as he were a flame of fire; but it was not long before Sehim pierced him with his lance and overthrew him. Then a second came forth and he slew him also, and a third and he rent him in sunder, and a fourth, and he did him to death; nor did they leave to come out to him and he to slay them, till he had done to death two hundred fighting-men. Then Agib cried to his men to charge, and the two hosts met with a mighty shock and great was the clash of arms and the roar of the battle. The shining swords rang out and the blood ran in streams and men's skulls were as shoes to the horses' feet, nor did they cease from sore smiting till the day waned and the night came with the darkness, when they drew apart and returning to their tents, passed the night there.

As soon as it was day, the two hosts mounted and sought the field; and the Muslims looked for Gherib to mount and ride behind the standards as was his wont, but he came not. So Sehim sent a servant to his brother's pavilion, who, finding him not, questioned the tent-keepers, but they answered, 'We know nothing of him.' Whereat he was greatly concerned and went forth and told the troops, who refused to give battle, saying, 'If Gherib be absent from us, his enemy will destroy us.' Now there was for Gherib's absence a cause that we will set out in due order, and it was thus. When Agib returned to his camp on the preceding night, he called one of his officers by name Siyyar and said to him, 'O Siyyar, I have kept thee in reserve for a day like this; and now I bid thee go to Gherib's camp and show thy skill by bringing Gherib himself to me.' And Siyyar said, 'I hear and obey.' So he repaired to the enemy's camp and stealing into Gherib's pavilion, in the darkness of the night, when all the men had gone to rest, passed himself off for a servant and stood to serve Gherib, who presently, being athirst, called to him for water. So he brought him a flagon of water, drugged with henbane, whereof no sooner had Gherib drunk, than he fell down head fore-most; whereupon Siyyar wrapped him in his cloak and carrying him to Agib's tent, threw him down at his feet. Quoth Agib, 'O Siyyar, what is this?' 'This is thy brother Gherib,' answered he; whereat Agib rejoiced and said, 'The blessing of the idols light upon thee! Loose him and wake him.'

So they made him smell to vinegar and he came to himself and opened his eyes; then, finding himself bound and in a tent other than his own, said, 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!' Then Agib cried out at him, saying, 'O dog, dost thou draw on me and seek to slay me and take on me thy wreak of thy father and mother? This very day I will send thee to them and rid the world of thee.' 'O dog of the infidels, replied Gherib, 'thou shalt see against whom the wheels of fate shall revolve and who shall be overthrown of the Almighty King, Who knoweth what is in the hearts and Who shall leave thee in hell, tormented and confounded! Have pity on thyself and say with me, "There is no god but God and Abraham is the Friend of God!.' When Agib heard Gherib's words, he puffed and snorted and railed at his god of stone and called for the headsman and the carpet of blood; but his vizier, who was at heart a Muslim, though outwardly an infidel, rose and kissing the earth before him, said, 'O King, deal not hastily, but wait till we know the conquered from the conqueror. If we prove the victors, we shall be free to kill him, and if we be beaten, his being alive in our hands will be a strength to us.' And the Amirs said, 'The vizier says sooth.' So Agib bade lay Gherib in irons and chain him up in his own tent and appointed a thousand stout warriors to guard him.

Meanwhile Gherib's host, when they awoke and found not their chief, were as sheep without a shepherd; but Saadan the Ghoul cried out to them, saying, 'O folk, don your harness and trust to your Lord to defend you!' So the Arabs and the Persians donned their hauberks of iron and their strait-knit shirts of mail and mounting their horses, sallied forth to the field, with the chiefs and the ensigns in the van. Then pricked out the Ghoul of the Mountain, with a mace on his shoulder, two hundred pounds in weight, and advanced and retreated, saying, ‘Ho, worshippers of idols, come ye out to-day, for it is a day of battle! Whoso knoweth me hath enough of my mischief and whoso knoweth me not, I will make myself known to him. I am Saadan, servant of King Gherib. Who is for jousting? Who is for fighting? Let no faint-heart or weakling come forth to me to-day.’ And there came forth to him a champion of the infidels, as he were a flame of fire, and drove at him, but Saadan met him and dealt him a blow with his mace, which beat in his ribs and cast him lifeless to the earth. Then he called out to his sons and slaves, saying, ‘Light the fire, and whoso falls of the infidels, do ye roast him well with fire and bring him to me, that I may make the morning meal of him.’ So they kindled a fire amiddleward the field and laid the slain man therein, till he was cooked, when they brought him to Saadan, who gnawed his flesh and crunched his bones.

When the infidels saw this, they were sore affrighted, but Agib cried out to his men, saying, ‘Out on you! Fall upon him and cut him in pieces with your swords!’ So twenty thousand men ran at Saadan, whilst the footmen circled round him and rained darts and arrows upon him, so that he was wounded in four-and-twenty places and his blood ran down upon the earth, and he was alone. Then the host of the Muslims drove at the idolaters, calling for help upon the Lord of the World; and they ceased not from the battle till the day came to an end, when they drew apart. But the infidels had made Saadan prisoner, as he were a drunken man for loss of blood; and they bound him fast and set him by Gherib. When the latter saw the Ghoul a prisoner, he said, ‘There is no force and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! O Saadan, what is this?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Saadan, ‘it is God (exalted and glorified be He!) Who ordaineth misfortune and deliverance, and needs must this and that betide.’ And Gherib said, ‘Thou sayst sooth, O Saadan!’ But Agib and his host passed the night in joy, and he said to his men, ‘To-morrow, we will fall upon the Muslims and leave not one of them alive.’

Meanwhile, the Muslims passed the night, dejected and weeping for their King and for Saadan; but Sehim said to them, ‘O folk, be not concerned, for the relief of God the Most High is near.’ Then he waited till midnight, when he disguised himself in the habit of a tent-keeper and repairing to Agib’s camp, made his way between the tents, till he came to the King’s pavilion, where he saw him seated on his throne, in the midst of his princes. So he entered and going up to the candles that burnt in the tent, snuffed them and sprinkled powdered henbane on the wicks; after which he withdrew and waited without the tent, till the smoke of the burning henbane reached Agib and his princes and they fell to the earth like dead men. Then he left them and went to the prison-tent, where he found Gherib and Saadan, guarded by a thousand men, who were drowsed with sleep. So he cried out at the guards, saying, ‘Out on you! Sleep not; but watch your prisoners and light the cressets.’

Then he filled a cresset with firewood, on which he strewed henbane, and lighting it, went round about the tent with it, till the smoke of the henbane entered the nostrils of the guards, and they all fell asleep; when he entered the tent and finding Ghetib and Saadan insensible for the smoke of the henbane, which had been wafted in upon them, aroused them by making them smell to a sponge full of vinegar he had with him. Then he loosed their bonds, and when they saw him, they blessed him and rejoiced in him. Then they went forth and took all the guards’ arms, and Sehim bade them go to their own camp; after which he re-entered Agib’s camp, and wrapping him in his cloak, lifted him up and made for the Muslim camp. And the Merciful Lord protected him, so that he reached Gherib’s tent in safety and unrolled the mantle before him. Gherib looked and seeing Agib bound, cried out, ‘God is Most Great! He giveth aid and victory!’ And he blessed Sehim and bade him arouse Agib. So he made him smell to vinegar, mixed with frankincense, and he opened his eyes and finding himself bound and shackled, hung down his head. ‘O accursed one,’ quoth Sehim, ‘lift thy head!’ So he raised his eyes and found himself amongst Arabs and Persians and saw his brother seated on the throne of his state and the place of his power, wherefore he was silent and spake not. Then Gherib cried out and said, ‘Strip me this dog!’ So they stripped him and beat him with whips, till his body was weakened and his pride subdued, after which Gherib set over him a guard of a hundred cavaliers.

Presently, they beard shouts of ‘There is no god but God!’ and ‘God is Most Great!’ from the infidel camp. Now the reason of this was that King Damigh, Gherib’s uncle, had set out from El Jezireh, with twenty thousand horse, ten days after his nephew, and on nearing the field of battle, had despatched one of his riders to get news. The scout was absent a whole day, after which he returned and told Damigh all that had passed. So he waited till the night, when he fell upon the infidels, crying out, ‘God is Most Great!’ and put them to the edge of the sword. When Gherib heard the crying aforesaid, he said to Sehim, ‘Go and find out the cause of these shouts.’ So Sehim repaired to the field of battle and questioned the camp followers, who told him that King Damigh had come up with twenty thousand men and fallen upon the idolaters by night, saying, ‘By the virtue of Abraham the friend, I will not forsake my brother’s son, but will do a brave man’s part and beat back the infidels and please the Omnipotent King!’

So Sehim returned and told Gherib, who cried out to his men, saying, ‘Don your arms and mount your horses and let us succour my uncle!’ So they mounted and fell upon the infidels with the sharp sword. By the morning, they had killed nigh fifty thousand of them and made other thirty thousand prisoners, and the rest of Agib’s army dispersed over the length and breadth of the land. Then the Muslims returned in triumph and Gherib rode out to meet his uncle, whom he saluted and thanked for his help. Quoth Damigh, ‘I wonder if that dog Agib fell in this day’s battle.’ ‘O uncle,’ replied Gherib, ‘have no care for him; know that he is with me in chains.’ When Damigh heard this, he rejoiced mightily and the two kings dismounted and entered the pavilion, but found no Agib there; whereupon Gherib exclaimed, ‘O glory of Abraham the Friend! What an evil end is this to a glorious day!’ and he cried out to the tent-keepers, saying, ‘Out on you! Where is my enemy?’ Quoth they, ‘When thou mountedst and we went with thee, thou didst not bid us guard him;’ and Gherib exclaimed, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ But Damigh said to him, ‘Hasten not nor be concerned, for where can he go, and we in pursuit of him?’

Now the manner of Agib's escape was on this wise. His man Siyyar, being in the camp in disguise, saw Gherib mount and ride forth, leaving Agib unguarded, and could hardly credit his eyes; so he waited awhile and presently crept to the tent and taking Agib, who was senseless for the pain of the beating, on his back, made off with him into the open country and fared on at the top of his speed all that night and next day, till he came to a spring of water, under an apple-tree. There he set Agib down and washed his face, whereupon he opened his eyes and seeing Siyyar, said to him, 'O Siyyar, carry me to Cufa, that I may recover there and levy horsemen and soldiers, wherewith to overcome mine enemy: and know, O Siyyar, that I am anhungred.' So Siyyar went out to the desert and caught an ostrich-poult and brought it to his lord. Then he gathered firewood and striking a light, kindled a fire, by which he roasted the bird and fed Agib with its flesh and gave him to drink of the water of the spring, till his strength returned to him; after which he went to one of the Bedouin encampments, and stealing a horse thence, mounted Agib upon it and journeyed on with him till they drew near the city of Cufa. The governor of the city came out to meet and salute the King, whom he found weak with the beating his brother had inflicted on him; and Agib entered the city and calling his physicians, bade them heal him in less than than ten days' time. 'We hear and obey,' answered they and tended him till he became whole of the sickness that was upon him and of the beating. Then he commanded his viziers to write letters to all his vassals, and he wrote one-and-twenty letters and despatched them to the different governors, who assembled their troops and set out for Cufa by forced marches.

Meanwhile, Gherib, being troubled for Agib's escape, despatched a thousand horse in quest of him, who dispersed on all sides and sought him a day and a night, but found no trace of him; so they returned and told Gherib, wno called for his brother Sehim, but found him not; whereat he was sore concerned, fearing for him from the vicissitudes of fortune. However, presently, Sehim entered and kissed the earth before Gherib, who rose, when he saw him, and said, 'Where hast thou been, O Sehim?' 'O King,' answered he, 'I have been to Cufa and find that the dog Agib hath made his way thither and is cured of his wounds. Moreover, he hath written letters to his vassals, who have brought him troops.’ When Gherib heard this, he gave command to depart; so they struck the tents and marched for Cufa. When they came in sight of the city, they found it compassed about with a host like the swollen ocean, having neither beginning nor end. So Gherib encamped with his troops in face of the infidels and set up his standards, and the dark fell down upon the two hosts, whereupon they lighted fires and kept watch till daybreak. Then Gherib rose and making the ablution, prayed two inclinations, according to the rite of our father Abraham; after which he commanded the drums to sound the point of war. Accordingly, the drums beat to battle and the standards waved, whilst the fighting-men armed and mounted and sought the lists.

The first to open the chapter of war was King Damigh, who spurred his charger between the two armies and displayed himself and played with swords and spears, till both hosts were confounded and marvelled at him; after which he cried out, saying, ‘Who is for jousting? Let no sluggard or weakling come out to me; for I am King Damigh, brother of King Kundemir.’ Then there came forth a horseman of the infidels, as he were a flame of fire, and drove at Damigh, without word said; but the King received him with a lance-thrust in the breast, that the point issued from between his shoulders and God hurried his soul to the fire, and ill was the abiding-place [to which he went]. Then came forth a second and he slew him also, and a third, and they ceased not to come out to him and he to slay them, till he had made an end of six-and-seventy fighting-men.

Therewith the infidels hung back and would not encounter him; but Agib cried out to his men and said, ‘Out on you, O folk! If ye all go forth against him, one after another, he will not leave one of you, sitting or standing. Charge on them, all at once, and sweep the earth clean of them and make their heads a pavement for your horses’ hoofs!’ So they waved the awe-striking standard and host fell upon host; the blood rained in streams upon the earth and the Judge of battle ruled, in whose ordinance is no unright. The valiant stood firm on his feet in the stead of war, whilst the faint-heart gave back and fled, thinking the day would never come to an end nor the night draw the curtains of the dusk; and they ceased not to battle and smite with swords, till the day waned and the night darkened with the shadows.

Then the drums of the infidels beat the retreat, but Gherib, refusing to stay his arms, drove at the idolaters, and the believers in the unity of God followed him. How many heads and hands they sundered, how many necks and sinews they shore, how many knees and spines they crushed and how many grown men and youths they did to death! With the first peep of dawn the infidels broke and fled, and the Muslims followed them till noon and took over twenty thousand of them, whom they brought back bound.

Then Gherib sat down before the gate of Cufa and commanded a herald to proclaim pardon and safety to all who should leave the worship of idols and acknowledge the One All-knowing God, the Creator of mankind and of light and darkness. So proclamation was made as he bade in the streets of Cufa, and all that were therein embraced the true faith, great and small. Moreover, they all issued forth and made good their submission before King Gherib, who rejoiced in them with an exceeding joy and his breast expanded and he was glad. Then he enquired of Merdas and his daughter Mehdiyeh, and being told that be had taken up his abode behind the Red Mountain, called Sehim and said to him, ‘Find out for me what is come of thy father.’ Sehim tarried not, but mounting, set his brown spear in the rest and fared on till he reached the Red Mountain, where he sought for his father, but found no trace of him nor of his tribe; but in their stead he saw an elder of the Arabs, a very old man, broken with excess of years, and asked him of the folk and whither they were gone. ‘O my son,’ replied he, ‘when Merdas heard of Gherib’s descent upon Cufa, he was smitten with great fear and taking his daughter, set out with his slaves, male and female, and all his tribe, into the deserts, and I know not whither he is gone.’ So Sehim returned to Gherib and told him what he had learnt, whereat he was greatly concerned. Then he sat down on his father’s throne and opening his treasuries, distributed largesse to his braves. And he took up his abode in Cufa and sent out spies, to get news of Agib. Moreover, he summoned the grandees of the realm, who came and did him homage; as also did the townsfolk, and he bestowed on them sumptuous dresses of honour and commended the people to their care.

One day, he went out to hunt, with a hundred horse, and fared on till he came to a valley, abounding in trees and fruits and streams and birds. It was a pasturing-place for antelopes and gazelles, delightsome to the spirit, and the fragrance of its flowers brought repose from the languor of strife. It was a brilliant day; so they encamped in the valley and passed the night there. On the morrow, Gherib made the ablution and prayed the morning prayers, offering up praise and thanks to God the Most High; when, behold, there arose a great clamour and tumult in the meadows, and he bade Sehim go and see what was the matter. So Sehim mounted and rode till he saw horsemen carrying off women and children, captive and crying out, and plundered goods and haltered horses; whereupon he questioned the shepherds and they said, 'This is the harem of Merdas, Chief of the Benou Kehtan, and his goods and those of his tribe; for yesterday Jemrcan slew Merdas and made prize of his women and children and household stuff and those of his tribe. It is his wont to go a-raiding and waylay travellers, and he is a mighty man of war; neither Arabs nor kings can avail against him and he is the scourge of the land.'

When Sehim heard this, he returned to Gherib and told him the case, wherefore fire was added to his fire and his blood boiled to avenge himself and wipe Out his reproach. So he rode after the robbers, till he overtook them and fell upon them, crying out and saying, 'God is Most Great! Down with the covetous oppressors, who deny Him!' And he slew in one onset one-and-twenty fighting men. Then he halted in mid-field, with no coward's heart, and cried out, saying, 'Where is Jemrcan? Let him come out to me, that I may make him quaff the cup of humiliation and rid the earth of him!' Hardly had he made an end of speaking, when out came Jemrcan, - a huge tall Amalekite, as he were a calamity of calamities or a piece of a mountain, cased in steel, and bearing a passing heavy club of China steel, wherewith if he smote a mountain, he crashed it, - and drove at Gherib like a fierce tyrant, without speech or salutation. Gherib met him like a hungry lion, and the brigand aimed a blow at his head with his club; but he evaded it and the club smote the earth and sank therein half a cubit deep. Then Gherib took his mace and smiting Jemrcan on the wrist, crushed his fingers and the club dropped from his grasp; whereupon Gherib bent down from his saddle and snatching it up, swiftlier than the blinding lightning, smote him therewith full on the ribs, and he fell to the earth like a huge palm tree. So Sehim took him and binding him, haled him off with a rope, and Gherib's men fell on those of Jemrcan and slew fifty of them and put the rest to flight; nor did they draw bridle till they reached their camp and raised their voices in clamour; whereupon all who were in the stronghold came out to meet them and they told them what had passed, and when they heard that their chief was a prisoner, they set out for the valley, vying with each other in their haste to deliver him.

Meanwhile King Gherib dismounted and called for Jemrcan, who humbled himself before him, saying, 'I throw myself on thy mercy, O champion of the age!' 'O dog of the Arabs,' replied Gherib, 'dost thou waylay the servants of God the Most High and fearest not the Lord of the Worlds?' 'O my lord,' said Jemrcan, 'and who is the Lord of the Worlds?' 'O dog,' rejoined Gherib, 'and what calamity dost thou worship?' 'O my lord,' answered the brigand, 'I worship a god made of dates kneaded with butter and honey, and whiles I eat him and make me another.' When Gherib heard this, he laughed, till he fell backward, and said, 'O unhappy wretch, there is none worship-worth save God the Most High, who created thee and all things and provideth all creatures, from whom nothing is hidden and who hath power over all.' Quoth Jemrcan, 'And where is this mighty god, that I may worship him?' 'O fellow,' answered Gherib, 'know that this god's name is Allah, and it is He who created the heavens and the earth and maketh the trees to grow and the waters to run. He created beasts and birds and Paradise and Hell-fire and secludeth Himself from all eyes, seeing and being seen of none. Extolled be His perfection! There is no god but He!' When Jemrcan heard these words, the ears of his heart were opened and his skin shuddered and he said, 'O my lord, what shall I say that I may become one of you and that this mighty Lord may accept of me?' 'Say,' replied Gherib, "'There is no god but God and Abraham the Friend is the Apostle of God!"' So he repeated the profession of the faith and was written of the people of felicity. Then said Gherib, 'Hast thou tasted the sweetness of Islam?''Yes, answered the other; and Gherib said, 'Loose his bonds.' So they unbound him and he kissed the earth before Gherib and his feet.

At this moment they espied a great cloud of dust, that spread tilled it walled the world, and Gherib bade Sehim go and see what it was. So he went off, like a bird in full flight, and presently returning, said, 'O King of the age, it is the Benou Aamir, the comrades of Jemrcan.' Whereupon quoth Gherib to the latter, 'Ride out to thy people and expound to them Islam, and if they profess, they shall be saved; but, if they refuse, we will put them to the sword.' So Jemrcan mounted and Spurring towards his tribesmen, cried out to them; and they knew him and dismounting, came up to him on foot and said, 'We rejoice in thy safety, O our lord!' 'O folk,' said he, 'whoso obeyeth me shall be saved; but whoso gainsayeth me, I will cut him in twain with this sabre.' And they made answer, saying,' Command us what thou wilt, for we will not gainsay thy commandment' Quoth he, 'Then say with me, "There is no god but God and Abraham is the Friend of God!"' 'O our lord,' asked they, 'whence hast thou these words?' And he told them what had befallen him, adding, 'O folk, know ye not that I am your chief and foremost among you in the field and stead of war, and yet a single man took me prisoner and made me quaff the cup of humiliation?'

When they heard his speech, they spoke the word of Unity, and Jemrcan led them to Gherib, at whose hands they affirmed their profession and wished him glory and victory, after they had kissed the earth before him. Gherib rejoiced in them and bade them return to their people and expound Islam to them; but they said, 'O our lord, we will never leave thee, whilst we live; but we will go and fetch our families and return to thee.' And Gherib said, 'Go, and join me at the city of Cufa.' So Jemrcan and his comrades returned to their camp and expounded Islam to their women and children, who all to a soul embraced the true faith, after which they dismantled their houses and struck their tents and set out for Cufa, driving before them their horses and sheep and camels.

Meanwhile Gherib returned to Cufa, where the horsemen met him and carried him into the city in state. He entered his palace and sat down on his throne, with his officers standing on either hand. Then the spies entered and informed him that his brother Agib had made his escape and taken refuge with Julned ben Kerker, the lord of the city of Oman and land of Yemen; whereupon Gherib bade his troops make ready to set out in three days' time. Then he expounded Islam to the thirty thousand men he had taken in the first battle and exhorted them to profess and take service with him. Twenty thousand embraced the faith, but the rest refused and he slew them. Then came Jemrcan and his tribe and kissed the earth before Gherib, who bestowed on him a splendid dress of honour and made him captain of his vanguard, saying, 'O Jemrcan, mount with the chiefs of thy kinsmen and twenty thousand horse and fare on before us to the land of Julned ben Kerker.' 'I hear and obey,' answered Jemrcan and set forward with his men, leaving the women and children of the tribe in Cufa.

Then Gherib passed in review the harem of Merdas and his eye lit upon Mehdiyeh, who was among the women, whereupon he fell down in a swoon. They sprinkled rose-water on his face, till he came to himself, when he embraced Mehdiyeh and carried her into a privy chamber, where he sat with her; and they lay together that night without lewdness. Next morning, he went out and sitting down on the throne of his kingship, invested his uncle Damigh with a dress of honour and appointed him his viceroy over all Irak, commending Mehdiyeh to his care, till he should return from his expedition against Agib; after which he set out for the land of Yemen with twenty thousand horse and ten thousand foot.

Now, when Agib and his defeated army came in sight of Oman, King Julned saw the dust of their approach and sent scouts to find out its meaning, who returned and told him that this was the dust of Agib, lord of Irak. And Julned wondered at his coming and said to his officers, 'Go forth and meet him.' So they went forth and met him and pitched tents for him at the gate of the city; and Agib sent in to Julned, weeping and mournful-hearted. Now Julned's wife was the daughter of Agib's father's brother, and he had children by her. So, when he saw his kinsman in this plight, he asked what ailed him and Agib told him all that had befallen him, saying, 'O King, Gherib commandeth the folk to worship the Lord of the Heavens and forbiddeth them from the service of idols and other gods.' When Julned heard this, he was mightily enraged and said, 'By the virtue of the light-giving sun, I will not leave one of thy brother's folk on life! But where didst thou leave them and how many men are they?' 'I left them in Cufa,' answered Agib; 'and they are fifty thousand horse.' Whereupon Julned called his Vizier Jawamerd, saying, 'Take seventy thousand horse and go to Cufa and bring me the Muslims alive, that I may torture them with all manner of tortures.'

So Jawamerd departed with his host and fared on seven days' journey towards Cufa, till he came to a valley abounding in trees and streams and fruits, where he called a halt and they rested till the middle of the night, when the Vizier gave the signal for departure and mounting, rode on before them till hard upon daybreak. A little before the dawn, he descended into a well-wooded valley, whose flowers were fragrant and whose birds warbled on the branches, as they swayed gracefully to and fro, and Satan blew into his sides [and puffed him up with pride] and he recited the following verses:

I put my battle-harness on and don my dreadful arms, And here and there on every side I drive through the mellay;
I and my troops, we plunge into the seething sea of war And of my prowess and my might the captives lead away.
The doughtiest horsemen of the world do know me for a fear, A scourge and terror to my foes, my kinsmen's help and stay.
Lo, upon Gherib will I seize and drag him forth in chains! Then, with a joyful heart and proud, I'll homeward wend my way.

Hardly had he made an end of his verses when there came out upon him from among the trees a horseman of noble presence, clad in complete steel, who cried out to him, saying, 'Stand, O brigand of the Arabs! Put off thy clothes and lay down thine arms and dismount and begone!' When Jawamerd heard this, the light in his eyes became darkness and he drew his sabre and drove at Jemrcan, [for he it was,] saying, 'O thief of the Arabs, wilt thou play the highwayman with me, who am captain of the host of Julned ben Kerker and am come to bring Gherib and his men bound?' When Jemrcan heard these words, he said, 'How grateful is this to my heart!' And made at Jawamerd, reciting the following verses:

I am the cavalier renowned for valour in the field: The foemen everywhere do dread my sabre and my spear.

I’m Jemrcan, whose whole delight is in the press of war, And all the champions of the world my lance-thrust know and fear.

Gherib my lord and sultan is, the high-priest of my faith, That is the lion of the fight, when hosts to strife draw near!

Devout and full of pious dread, a doughty chief is he; Midmost the tented field he slays his enemies like deer.

Despite the gods of unbelief, verses he chants and bids The folk to Abraham his faith, with clarion voice and clear.

Now Jemrcan had fared on with his men ten days’ journey from Cufa and called a halt on the eleventh day till midnight, when he bade depart and rode on in advance, till he came to the valley aforesaid and heard Jawamerd reciting his braggart verses. So he drove at him, as he were a ravening lion, and smiting him with his sword, clove him in twain and waited till his captains came up, when he told them what had passed and said to them, ‘Let each of you take five thousand men and disperse round about the valley, whilst I and the Benou Aamir fall upon the enemy’s van, crying out and saying, “God is Most Great!” When ye hear our shouts, do ye charge them with the same cry and smite them with the sword.’ ‘We hear and obey,’ answered they and turning back to their men, spread themselves about the sides of the valley in the fore-dawn twilight.

Presently up came the army of Yemen, like a flock of sheep, filling mountain and plain, and Jemrcan and the Benou Aamir fell upon them, shouting, ‘God is Most Great!’ Whereupon the Muslims in ambush in the valley cried out in answer and the hills and mountains echoed the cry and all things, green and dry, answered, saying, ‘God is Most Great! He giveth aid and victory and forsaketh those who deny Him!’ And the infidels were confounded and smote one another with the keen sabre, whilst the true believers fell upon them like flames of fire and nothing was seen but heads flying and blood spouting and faint-hearts giving back in dismay. By the time they could see each other’s faces, two-thirds of the infidels had perished and God hastened their souls to the fire and ill was the abiding-place [to which they went]. The rest took to flight and dispersed about the deserts, whilst the Muslims pursued them, slaying and taking captive till midday, when they returned in triumph with seven thousand prisoners; and but six-and-twenty thousand of the infidels escaped and the most of them wounded.

Then the Muslims collected the arms and horses and tents and baggage of the enemy and despatched them to Cufa with an escort of a thousand horse; whilst Jemrcan and the rest of his force dismounted and expounded Islam to the prisoners, who made profession of the faith with heart and tongue; whereupon they released them and embraced them and rejoiced in them. Then Jemrcan made his troops rest a day and a night and set out with the dawn, intending for the city of Oman; whilst the thousand horse fared back to Cufa with the booty. When they reached the city, they went in to Gherib and told him what had passed, whereat he rejoiced and said to the Ghoul of the Mountain, 'Take horse and follow Jemrcan with twenty thousand men.' So Saadan and his sons mounted and set out for Oman with twenty thousand horse.

Meanwhile, the remains of the defeated army reached Oman and went in to Julned, weeping and crying, 'Woe!' and 'Ruin!' whereat he was amazed and said to them, 'What hath befallen you?' So they told him what had happened and he said, 'Out on you! How many men were they?' 'O King,' answered they, 'there were twenty standards, under each a thousand men.' When Julned heard this, he said, 'May the sun pour no blessing on you! Out on you! Shall twenty thousand overcome you, and you seventy thousand horse and Jawamerd equal to three thousand in the open field!' Then, in the excess of his rage and mortification, he drew his sword and cried out to those who were present, saying, 'Fall on them!' So the courtiers drew their swords upon the fugitives and slew them to the last man and cast them to the dogs. Then Julned cried out to his son (whose name was Courejan and than whom there was no doughtier cavalier in the army of his father, for he was wont to undertake three thousand horse, single-handed), saying, 'Take a hundred thousand horse and go to Irak and lay it waste altogether.' So Courejan and his host made haste to equip themselves and set out in battle array, with the prince at their head, glorying in himself and reciting the following verses:

I'm El Courejan, the first-born of renown! I vanquish the dwellers in desert and town.

How many a champion I've slain with my sword! Like an ox, to the earth I have stricken him down.

How many a host have I scattered abroad And their heads made like balls roll o'er desert and down!

Now for Irak I'm bound, for the enemies' land, Where my foes in the sea of their blood I will drown.

I will lead away Gherib in chains with his chiefs, So their fate to the wise for a warning be known!

They fared on twelve days' journey, till a great cloud of dust arose before them and covered the horizon and the country, and Courejan sent out scouts to reconnoitre, who returned and said to him, 'O King, this is the dust of the Muslims.' Whereat he was glad and said, 'Did ye count them?' And they answered, saying, 'We counted the standards, and they were twenty in number.' 'By my faith,' quoth the prince, 'I will not send one man-at-arms against them, but will go forth to them alone and strew their heads under the hoofs of the horses!'

Now this was the army of Jemrcan, who, espying the host of the infidels and seeing them as the swollen sea, called a halt; so his troops pitched the tents and set up the standards, calling upon the name of the All-wise Creator of light and darkness, Lord of all creatures, who seeth and is not seen, blessed and exalted be He! There is no god but He! The infidels also halted and pitched their tents, and Courejan said to them, 'Sleep upon your arms, for in the last watch of the night we will mount and trample yonder handful under our feet!' Now one of Jemrcan's spies was standing by and heard what Courejan purposed; so he returned and told his chief who said to his men, 'Arm yourselves and as soon it is dark, bring me all the camels and mules and hang all the bells and bangles and rattles ye have about their necks.' And they had with them more than twenty thousand camels and mules.

So they waited till the infidels were asleep, when Jemrcan commanded them to mount, and they took horse, committing themselves to God and seeking aid of the Lord of the Worlds. Then said Jemrcan, 'Goad the mules and camels with the points of your spears and drive them to the infidels' camp.' They did as he bade and the beasts rushed upon the enemy's camp, whilst the bells and bangles and rattles jangled and the Muslims followed at their heels, shouting, 'God is Most Great!' till all the hills and mountains resounded with the name of the Most High God, to whom belong glory and majesty! The cattle, hearing this terrible din, took fright and rushed upon the tents and trampled the folk, as they lay asleep; whereupon the idolaters started up in confusion and snatching up their arms, fell upon one another with smiting, till the most part of them were slain.

When the day broke, they looked at each other and found no Muslims slain, but saw them all on horseback, armed; wherefore they knew that this was a trick that had been played them, and Courejan cried out to the remnant of his folk, saying, 'O sons of whores, what we had a mind to do with them, that have they done with us and their craft hath gotten the better of ours.' And they were about to charge, when, behold, a cloud of dust appeared and the wind smote it, so that it rose and hung vaulted in the air and there, appeared beneath it the glint of helmets and gleam of hauberks and splendid warriors, armed with tempered swords and supple spears. When the infidels saw this, they held back from the battle and each army sent out scouts, to know the meaning of this dust, who returned with the news that it was an army of Muslims.

Now this was the host of the Ghoul of the Mountain, whom Gherib had despatched to Jemrcan's aid, and Saadan himself rode in their van. So the two hosts of the true believers joined company and rushing upon the infidels, like a flame of fire, plied them with the keen sword and the straight and quivering spear, whilst the day was darkened and eyes blinded for the much dust. The valiant stood fast and the coward fled and sought the deserts, whilst the blood flowed like a tide over the earth; nor did they cease from the battle till the day departed and the night came with the darkness. Then the Muslims drew apart from the infidels and returned to their tents, where they ate and slept, till the darkness fled and gave place to the smiling morn; when they prayed the morning-prayer and mounted to battle.

Now, when Courejan found the most part of his men wounded, for indeed two-thirds of their number had perished by sword and spear, he said to them, 'To-morrow, I will go forth into the open field and play the champion in the stead of war.' So, as soon as the day broke and the morning appeared with its light and shone, the two hosts mounted and unsheathed their swords and couched their brown lances and cried out lustily and drew out in order of battle. The first to open the chapter of war was Courejan, who cried out, saying, 'Let no weakling come out to me to-day!' Whereupon there ran at him a captain of the Benou Aamir and the two drove at each other awhile, like two rains butting. Presently Courejan seized the Muslim by his coat of arms and tearing him from his saddle, threw him to the ground; where the infidels laid hands on him and bound him and bore him off to their tents; whilst Courejan wheeled about and curvetted and offered battle, till another captain came out, whom also he took prisoner; nor did he leave to do thus till he had made prize of seven captains before midday. Then Jemrcan gave such a cry, that the whole field resounded thereto and both armies heard it, and ran at Courejan with a heart on fire with anger, reciting the following verses:

Harkye, I'm Jemrcan, the champion stout and wight; The terror of my stroke is feared of every knight.
I take the strengths by storm and leave the fortress-walls To mourn the loss of those that held them in their might.
Wherefore, O Courejan, quit thou the erring path; Turn from the froward ways and tread the road of right;
Confess to the one true God, who spread the heavens above, Who made the streams to flow and hills to stand upright;
For, if the slave embrace the true, the only faith, Hell's anguish shall he 'scape and win to heaven's delight.

When Courejan heard these words, he puffed and snorted and railed at the sun and the moon and drove at Jemrcan, repeating these verses:

I'm Courejan, the chief and champion of the age! Es Shera's lions flee my shadow in affright!

I take the forts by storm and snare the beasts of prey, And all the horsemen fear to meet me in the fight.

Wherefore, O Jemrcan, if thou believe me not, Up to the middle field and try with me thy might!

Jemrcan met him with a stout heart and they hewed at each other with swords and thrust with spears, till the two hosts lamented for them and great was the clamour between them: nor did they leave fighting till the time of afternoon-prayer was passed and the day began to wane. Then Jemrcan drove at Courejan and smiting him on the breast with his mace, cast him to the ground, as he were the trunk of a palm-tree; and the Muslims bound him and haled him away with ropes like a camel.

When the idolaters saw their prince captive, a blind fury seized on them and they bore down upon the Muslims, thinking to rescue him; but the Muslim champions met them and left [many of] them prostrate on the earth, whilst the rest turned and sought safety in flight, with the sword clanking at their backs. The Muslims pursued them till they had scattered them over mountain and desert, when they returned to the spoil, good luck to it for a spoil! great store was there of horses and tents and so forth. Then Jemrcan went in to Courejan and expounded Islam to him, threatening him with death, except be embraced the faith; but he refused; so they cut off his head and sticking it on a spear, fared on towards Oman.

Meanwhile, the survivors of the routed host returned to Julned and made known to him the death of his son and the destruction of his army, whereupon he cast his crown to the earth and buffeting his face, till the blood spouted from his nostrils, fell down in a swoon. They sprinkled rose-water on his face, till he came to himself and cried to his Vizier, saying, ‘Write letters to all my governors and bid them leave not a smiter with the sword nor a thruster with the spear nor a bender of the bow, but bring them all to me.’ So he wrote letters and despatched them by runners to the governors, who levied their power and joined the King with an immense army, whose number was ninescore thousand men. Then they made ready tents and camels and swift horses and were about to depart, when up came Jemrcan and Saadan the Ghoul, with seventy thousand horse, as they were fierce lions, all clad in complete steel; which when Julned saw, he rejoiced and said, ‘By the virtue of the light-giving Sun, I will not leave one of mine enemies alive, no, not one to carry the news, and I will lay waste the land of Irak, that I may take my wreak for my son, the havoc-making champion; nor shall my fire be quenched!’

Then he turned to Agib and said to him, ‘O dog of Irak, it was thou that broughtest this calamity on us! But by the virtue of that which I worship, except I avenge me of mine enemy, I will put thee to death after the toulest fashion!’ When Agib heard this, he was sore troubled and blamed himself; but he waited till nightfall, when he took those who were left to him of his suite apart from the camp and said to them, ‘O my kinsmen, know that Julned and I are sore dismayed at the coming of the Muslims, and I know that he will not avail to protect me from my brother nor from any other; so meseems we should do well to make our escape, whilst all men sleep, and flee to King Yaarub ben Kehtan, for that he hath more soldiers and is stronger of kingship.’ they fell in with his proposal and he bade them kindle fires at the doors of their tents and set out under cover of the night. So they did his bidding and departing, by day-break were far away.

As soon as it was morning, the drums beat a point of war, and Julned mounted with two hundred and sixty thousand fighting-men, clad cap-a-pie in hauberks and cuirasses and strait-knit coats of mail, and drew out in order of battle. Then Jemrcan and Saadan rode out with forty thousand cavaliers, doughty champions, foremost in the fight. The two hosts drew out in battalia and bared their swords and couched their limber lances, for the drinking of the cup of death. The first to open the chapter of battle was Saadan, as he were a mountain of flint or a Marid of the Jinn. Then pricked out to him a champion of the infidels, and he slew him and casting him to the earth, cried out to his sons and servants, saying, ‘Light the fire and roast me this dead man.’ They did as he bade and brought him the roast, and he ate it and crunched the bones, whilst the infidels stood looking on from afar; and they cried out, saying, ‘O light-giving Sun!’ and were affrighted at Saadan.

Then Julned cried out to his men, saying, ‘Slay me yonder foul beast!’ Whereupon another captain of his host drove at the Ghoul;

but he slew him, and he ceased not to slay horseman after horseman, till he had made an end of thirty men. with this the vile infidels held back and feared to face him, saying, ‘Who shall cope with Jinn and Ghouls?’ But Julned cried out, saying, ‘Let a hundred horse charge him and bring him to me, alive or dead.’ So a hundred horse ran at Saadan with swords and spears, and he met them with a heart firmer than fling, proclaiming the unity of the Requiting King, whom no one thing diverteth from another. Then he set on them, crying, ‘God is Most Great!’ and smote them with his sword and made their heads fly. In one onset he slew of them four-and-seventy and put the rest to flight.

Then Julned cried out to ten of his captains, having each a thousand men under his hand, and said to them, ‘Shoot his horse with arrows, till it fall under him, and then lay hands on him.’ So ten thousand horse drove at Saadan, who met them with a stout heart; and Jemrcan, seeing this, bore down upon the infidels with his Muslims, crying out, ‘God is Most Great!’ Before they could win to the Ghoul, the enemy had slain his horse and taken him prisoner; but they ceased not to charge the infidels, though they were amongst them as a white patch on a black bull, till the day grew dark [for dust] and eyes were blinded, and the sharp sword clanged, whilst the valiant stood firm and destruction overtook the faint-heart; nor did they stint from the mellay till the dark fell down, when they drew apart, after there had been slain of the infidels men without number.

Then Jemrcan and his men returned to their tents, in great grief for Saadan, so that neither meat nor sleep was sweet to them, and they counted their host and found that less than a thousand of them had fallen. And Jemrcan said, ‘O folk, to-morrow I will go forth into the lists and slay their champions and make prize of them and their families and ransom Saadan therewith, if it please the Requiting King, whom no one thing distracteth from another!’ Wherefore their hearts were comforted and they separated to their tents, rejoicing.

Meanwhile, Julned entered his pavilion and sitting down on his bed of estate, with his grandees about him, called for Saadan and said to him, ‘O raging dog and least of the Arabs and carrier of firewood, who was it slew my son Courejan, the champion of the age, slayer of heroes and caster down of warriors?’ Quoth the Ghoul, ‘Jemrcan slew him, captain of the host of King Gherib, prince of cavaliers, and I roasted and ate him, for I was anhungred.’ When Julned heard this, his eyes started from his head for rage and he bade his swordbearer strike off Saadan’s head. So he came forward in that intent, but Saadan stretched himself mightily and bursting his bonds, snatched the sword from the headsman and cut off his head. Then he made at Julned; but he cast himself down from the throne and fled; whilst Saadan fell on the bystanders and slew twenty of the King’s chief officers, and the rest fled. Therewith great was the crying in the camp of the infidels and the Ghoul sallied forth of the pavilion and falling upon the troops, smote them with the sword, till they opened and left a lane for him to pass; nor did he cease to press forward, cutting at them right and left, till he won free of the tents and made for the Muslim camp. As soon as he was gone, the infidels and their King returned to their tents and Julned said to them, ‘O folk, by the virtue of the light-giving sun and by the darkness of the night and the light of the day and the wandering stars, I thought not to have escaped death this day; for, had I fallen into yonder fellow’s hands, he had eaten me, as I were a grain of wheat or a barley-corn.’ ‘O King,’ answered they, ‘never saw we any do the like of this Ghoul.’ And he said, ‘To-morrow do ye all don your arms and mount and trample them under your horses’ feet.’

Meanwhile the Muslims heard the shouts of the infidels and said to each other, ‘Haply, some succour hath reached them; but, as they stood wondering, up came Saadan. So they all rejoiced in him and gave him joy of his escape, and the gladdest of them all was Jemrcan, who said to them, ‘To-morrow, I will show you my fashion and what behoveth the like of me, for, by the virtue of Abraham the Friend I will slay them on the foulest wise and smite them with the edge of the sword, till all who have understanding are confounded at them. But I mean to attack [both] the right and left wings; so, when ye see me drive at the King under the standards, do ye charge resolutely behind me, and with God is it to decree what shall betide!’

So the two hosts lay upon their arms till the day broke and the sun appeared to sight, when they mounted swiftlier than the twinkling of the eye. The raven of ill-omen croaked and the two hosts drew out in battalia and looked at each other with the evil eye. The first to open the chapter of war was Jemrcan, who wheeled and curvetted and offered battle; and Julned and his men were about to charge, when, behold a cloud of dust arose and spread till it covered the plains and obscured the day. Then the four winds smote it and it dispersed and there appeared beneath it cavaliers, black and white, and princely champions, with keen swords and piercing lances, and footmen who knew not fear, as they were lions. At this sight both armies left fighting and sent out scouts, who disappeared within the cloud of dust and returned after awhile with the news that the approaching host was one of Muslims, under the command of King Gherib. When the Muslims heard of the coming of their King, they rejoiced and spurring out to meet him, dismounted and kissed the earth before him and saluted him, whilst he welcomed them and rejoiced in their safety. Then they escorted him to their camp and pitched pavilions for him and set up standards; and Gherib sat down on his couch of estate, with his grandees about him, and they related to him all that had befallen.

Meanwhile, the infidels sought for Agib and finding him not among them nor in their tents, told Julned of this, whereat his gorge rose and he bit his fingers, saying, ‘By the light-giving sun, he is a perfidious dog and hath fled into the deserts with his crew of rascals! But nought save hard fighting will serve us to repel these enemies; so fortify your resolves and harden your hearts and beware of the Muslims.’ And Gherib also said to the Muslims, Fortify your hearts and strengthen your courage and seek aid of your Lord, beseeching Him to vouchsafe you the victory over your enemies.’ ‘O King,’ answered they, ‘thou shalt see what we will do in the field and the stead of war.’

So the two hosts slept till the day arose with its light and the sun shone out upon hill and plain, when Gherib prayed two inclinations, after the rite of Abraham the Friend (on whom be peace) and wrote a letter, which he despatched by his brother Sehim to the King of the infidels. When Sehim reached the enemies’ camp, the guards asked him what he wanted and he replied, ‘I want your ruler.’ Quoth they, ‘Wait till we consult him;’ and he waited, whilst they went in to their King and told him of the coming of a messenger, and he said, ‘Bring him to me.’ So they brought Sehim before Julned, who said to him, ‘Who hath sent thee?’ Quoth he, ‘King Gherib sends me, whom God hath made ruler over the Arabs and Persians; take his letter and return an answer thereto.’ So Julned took the letter and opening it, read as follows: ‘In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful, the Immemorial Lord, the Supreme, the One, the All-knowing, the Lord of Noah and Salih and Hood and Abraham and of all things! Peace be on him who followeth in the way of righteousness and feareth the issues of frowardness, who obeyeth the Almighty King and preferreth the next world to the present! O Julned, none is worthy of worship save God alone, the One, the Victorious, Creator of night and day and the re-volving sphere, who sendeth the holy prophets and maketh the streams to flow and the trees to grow, who vaulted the heavens and spread out the earth like a carpet and feedeth the birds in their nests and the wild beasts in the deserts; for He is the All-powerful God, the Forgiving, the Long-suffering, the Protector, whom no eye comprehendeth and who maketh the night to return upon the day, He who sent down the apostles and the Scripture. Know, O Juined, that there is no faith but the faith of Abraham the Friend; so do thou embrace the faith of submission and send me the dog Agib, that I may take my wreak of my father and mother. So shalt thou be saved from the sharp sword in this world and from the fiery torment in the world to come. But, if thou refuse, look for destruction and the wasting of thy realm and the cutting off of thy traces.’

When Julned had read this letter, he said to Sehini, ‘Tell thy Lord that Agib hath fled, he and his people, and I know not whither he is gone; but, as for Julned, he will not forswear his faith, and to-morrow, there shall be battle between us and the Sun shall give us the victory.’ So Sehim returned to his brother with this answer and on the morrow the Muslims donned their arms and bestrode their stout horses, calling aloud on the name of the All-conquering King, Creator of bodies and souls, and magnifying Him. The drums beat to battle, till the earth trembled, and all the lordly warriors and doughty champions sought the field.

The first to open the chapter of battle was Jemrcan, who spurred his charger into the mid-field and played with sword and javelin, till the understanding were amazed; after which he cried out, saying, ‘Who is for jousting, who is for fighting? Let no sluggard nor weakling come out to me to-day! I am he who slew Courejan ben Julned; who will come forth to avenge him?’ When Julned heard the name of his son, he cried out to his men, saying, ‘O sons of whores, bring me yonder horseman who slew my son, that I may eat his flesh and drink his blood.’ So a hundred fighting men ran at Jemrcan; but he slew the most part of them and put their chief to flight; which when Julned saw, he cried out to his men, saying, ‘Charge upon him, all at once.’ So the two hosts drove at one another and met in the mid-field, like two seas clashing together. The Yemen sword and spear wrought havoc and breasts and bellies were cloven, whilst the two armies saw the angel of death face to face and the dust of the battle rose up to the confines of the sky. Ears were deaf and tongues mute and death came on from every side, whilst the valiant stood fast and the faint-heart turned to flee; and they ceased not from the battle till ended day, when the drums beat the retreat and the two hosts drew apart and returned, each to its tent.

Then Gherib sat down on the throne of his kingship and the place of his dominion, whilst his chief officers ranged themselves about him, and said, ‘I am sore troubled for the flight of the dog Agib and I know not whither he is gone. Except I overtake him and take my wreak of him, I shall die of despite.’ Whereupon Sehim came forward and kissing the earth before him, said, ‘O King, I will go to the army of the infidels and find out what is come of the perfidious dog Agib.’ ‘Go,’ answered Gherib, ‘and learn the truth regarding the hog.’ So Sehim disguised himself in the habit of the infidels and became as he were of them; then, making for the enemy’s camp, he found them all asleep, drunken with war and battle, and only the guards awake. Presently he came to the King’s pavilion, where he found Julned asleep and unattended; so he made him smell to powdered henbane, and he became as one dead. Then Sehim went out and took a mule and wrapping the King in the coverlet of his bed, laid him on her back; after which he threw a mat over him and led the mule to the Muslim camp.

When he came to Gherib’s pavilion and would have entered, the guards knew him not and forbade him entrance, saying, ‘Who art thou?’ He laughed and uncovered his face, and they knew him and admitted him. When Gherib saw him, he said, ‘What hast thou there, O Sehim?’ ‘O King,’ answered he, ‘this is Julned ben Kerker.’ Then he uncovered him, and Gherib knew him and said, ‘Arouse him, O Sehim.’ So he made him smell to vinegar and frankincense; and he cast the henbane from his nostrils and opening his eyes, found himself among the Muslims; whereupon, ‘What is this foul dream ?’ quoth he and closing his eyes again, would have slept; but Sehim dealt him a buffet, saying, ‘Open thine eyes, O accursed one!’ So he opened them and said, ‘Where am I?’ Quoth Sehim, ‘Thou art in the presence of Gherib ben Kundemir, King of Irak.’ When Julned heard this, he said, ‘O King, I am at thy mercy. Know that I am not at fault, but that he who made us come forth to fight thee was thy brother, who embroiled us with thee and fled.’ ‘Knowest thou whither he is gone?’ asked Gherib. ‘No, by the light-giving sun,’ replied Juined, ‘I know not.’

Then Gherib bade lay him in bonds and set guards over him, whilst each captain returned to his own tent, and amongst the rest Jemrcan, who said to his men, ‘O sons of my uncle, I purpose this night to do a deed wherewith I may whiten my face with King Gherib.’ ‘Do what pleases thee,’ answered they; ‘we hearken and obey thy commandment.’ Quoth he, ‘Arm yourselves and disperse about the infidels’ camp, muffling your steps, so that the very ants shall not be ware of you; and when you hear me magnfy God, do ye the like and cry out, saying, “God is Most Great!” and hold back and make for the gate of the city; and we seek aid from God the Most High.’ So the folk armed themselves cap-a-pie and waited till midnight, when they dispersed about the enemy’s camp and waited till Jemrcan smote his target with his sword and shouted, ‘God is Most Great!’ Whereupon they all cried out the like, till valley and mountain and hill and sands and ruins rang again with the noise. The infidels awoke in dismay and tell upon one another, and the sword went round amongst them; but the Muslims held aloof and made for the gate of the city, where they slew the warders and entering, made themselves masters of the town, with all that was therein of treasure and women and children.

Meanwhile, Gherib, hearing the noise and clamour of ‘God is Most Great!’ mounted with all his troops and sent Sehim on in advance. When the latter came near the field of battle, he saw that Jemrcan had fallen upon the infidels with the Benou Aamir by night and made them drink the cup of death. So he returned and told his brother, who called down blessings on Jemrcan. And the infidels ceased not to smite each other mightily with the sharp sword, till the day rose and lighted up the land, when Gherib cried out to his men, saying, ‘Charge, O ye noble, and win the favour of the All-knowing King!’ So the true believers fell upon the idolaters and plied them with the keen sword and the quivering spear, till they sought to take refuge in the city; but Jemrcan came forth Upon them with his tribesmen. So they hemmed them in, as between two mountain-ranges, and slew an innumerable host of them, and the rest fled into the deserts; nor did the Muslims give over pursuing them with the sword, till they had scattered them abroad in the plains and stony wastes. Then they returned to the city of Oman and Gherih entered the palace of the King and sitting down on the throne of his kingship, with his lords and officers on his either hand, sent for Julned. They brought him in haste and Gherib expounded to him Islam; but he refused to embrace the faith; wherefore Gherib let crucify him on the gate of the city, and they shot at him with arrows, till he was like unto a hedgehog. Then Gherib bestowed a dress of honour upon Jemrcan and said to him, ‘Thou shalt be lord and ruler over this city, and thine be it to loose and to bind therein, for it was thou didst conquer it with thy sword and thy men.’ And Jernrcan kissed the King’s feet and wished him abiding victory and glory and fair fortune. Moreover, Gherih opened Julned’s treasuries and saw what was therein and gave largesse to his captains and standard-bearers and fighting-men, yea, even to the women and children; and thus did he ten days long.

After this, one night he dreamt an ill dream and awoke, troubled and affrighted. So he aroused his brother Sehim and said to him, ‘I dreamt that we were in a wide valley, when there swooped down on us two birds of prey, with legs like lances, never in my life saw I greater than they, and we were in fear of them.’ ‘O King,’ answered Sehim, ‘this portends some great enemy; be on thy guard, therefore, against him.’ Gherib slept not the rest of the night and when the day broke, he called for his courser and mounted. Quoth Sehim, ‘Whither goest thou, my brother?' and Gherib answered, saying, 'I am heavy at heart this morning; so I mean to ride abroad ten days and lighten my breast.' Said Sehim, 'Take with thee a thousand men;' but Gherib replied, 'I will not go forth but with thee alone.' So the two brothers mounted and seeking the open country, fared on from valley to valley and from meadow to meadow, till they came to a valley abounding in sweet-smelling flowers and streams and trees laden with all manner eatable fruits, two of each kind. On the branches were birds warbling their various songs; the mocking-bird trilled out her sweet notes and the turtle filled the place with her voice. There sang the nightingale, whose chant arouses the sleeper, and the merle with its note like the human voice and the cushat and the ring-dove, whilst the popinjay answered them with its fluent tongue.

The valley pleased them and they ate of its fruits and drank of its waters, after which they sat under the shadow of the trees, till drowsiness overcame them and they slept, glory be to Him who sleepeth not! As they lay asleep, two fierce Marids swooped down on them and taking each one on his shoulders, flew up with them into the air, till they were above the clouds. Presently, Gherib and Sehim awoke and found themselves betwixt heaven and earth; so they looked at those who bore them and saw that they were two Marids, each as big as a great palm-tree, with hair like horses' tails and claws like lions' claws; the head of the one was as that of a dog and that of the other as that of an ape. When they saw this, they exclaimed, 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!'

Now the reason of this was that a certain king of the kings of the Jinn, Muraash by name, had a son called Saaic, who loved a damsel of the Jinn, named Nejmeh; and the twain used to foregather in the valley, in the guise of birds. Gherib and Sehim saw them thus and deeming them birds, shot at them with arrows and wounded Saaic, whose blood flowed. Nejmeh mourned over him, then, fearing lest the like should befall herself, caught up her lover and flew with him to his father's palace, where she cast him down at the gate. The warders bore him in and laid him before the King, who, sucing the arrow sticking in his side, exclaimed, 'Alas, son! Who hath done with thee this thing, that I may lay waste his abiding-place and hasten his destruction, though he were the greatest of the kings of the Jinn?' Thereupon Saaic opened his eyes and said, 'O my father, it was a mortal that slew me in the Valley of Springs.' Hardly had he made an end of these words, when his soul departed; whereupon his father buffeted his face, till the blood streamed from his mouth, and cried out to two Marids, saying: 'Go to the Valley of Springs and bring me all who are therein.' So they betook themselves to the valley in question, where they found Gherib and Sehim asleep and snatching them up, carried thme to their King, whom they saw seated on the throne of his kingship, as he were a huge mountain, with four heads on his body, the first that of a lion, the second that of an elephant, the third that of a panther and the fourth that of a lynx. The Marids set them down before Muraash and said to him, 'These are they whom we found in the Valley of Springs.'

Muraash looked at them with wrathful eyes and puffed and snorted and blew sparks from his nostrils, so that all who stood by feared him. Then said he, 'O dogs of mankind, ye have slain my son and kindled fire in my heart.' 'Who is thy son,' asked Gherib, 'and who hath seen him?' Quoth Muraash, 'Were ye not in the Valley of Springs and did ye not see my son there, in the guise of a bird, and did ye not shoot at him with arrows, that he died?' 'I know not who slew him,' replied Garib; 'and by the virtue of the Great God, the One, the Immemorial, who knoweth all things, and of Abraham the Friend, we saw no bird, neither slew we bird nor beast!'

Now Muraash worshipped the Fire, not the All-powerful King; so, when he heard Gherib swear by God and His greatness and by Abraham the Friend, he knew that he was a Muslim and cried out to his people, saying, 'Bring me my mistress.' Accordingly they brought a brasier of gold and setting it before him, kindled therein fire and cast on drugs, whereupon there arose therefrom green and blue and yellow flames and the King and all who were present prostrated themselves before the brasier, whilst Gherib and Sehim ceased not to magnify God and attest His greatness and omnipotence. Presently, Muraash raised his head and seeing the two princes standing, said to them, 'O dogs, why do ye not prostrate yourselves?' 'Out on thee, O accursed one!' replied Gherib. 'Prostration befits not, save to the Worshipful King, who bringeth forth all creatures into being from nothingness and maketh water to well from the barren rock, Him who inclineth the heart of the father unto his new-born child and who may not be described as sitting or standing, the God of Noah and Salih and Houd and Abraham the Friend, who created Paradise and Hell-fire and trees and fruit, for He is God, the One, the All-powerful.'

When Muraash heard this, his eyes started from his head and he cried out to his guards, saying, 'Bind these two dogs and sacrifice them to my mistress.' So they bound them and were about to cast them into the fire, when, behold, one of the merlons of the parapet fell down upon the brasier and broke it and did out the fire, which became ashes flying in the air. Then said Gherib, 'God is Most Great! He giveth aid and victory and forsaketh those who deny Him and worship the Fire, not the Almighty King!' Quoth Muraash, 'Thou art a sorcerer and hast bewitched my mistress, so that this thing hath befallen her.' 'O madman,' answered Gherib, 'if the fire had soul or movement, it would ward off from itself that which doth it hurt.' When Muraash heard this, he roared and bellowed and reviled the Fire, saying, 'By my faith, I will not kill you save by the fire!'

Then he cast them into prison and calling a hundred Marids, bade them bring much firewood and set fire thereto. So they brought great plenty of wood and made a huge fire, which flamed up mightily till the morning, when Muraash mounted an elephant, bearing on its back a throne of gold set with jewels, and the tribes of the Jinn gathered about him, in their various kinds. Then they brought in Gherib and Sehim, who, seeing the flaming of the fire, sought help of the One God, the All-conquering Creator of night and day, Him who is mickle of might, whom no sight comprehendeth, but who comprehendeth all sights, for He is the Subtle, the All-knowing; and they ceased not to solicit Him, till, behold, a cloud arose from West to East and pouring down showers of rain, like the swollen sea, quenched the fire.

When the King saw this, he was affrighted, he and his troops, and entered the palace, where he turned to his Vizier and grandees and said to them, 'How say ye of these two men?' 'O King,' answered they, 'were they not in the right, this thing had not befallen the fire;

wherefore we say that they speak sooth.' 'Indeed,' rejoined Muraash, 'the truth hath been shown forth to me, ay, and the manifest way, and I am certified that the worship of the fire is false; for, were it [god and] mistress, it had warded off from itself the rain that quenched it and the stone that broke its brasier and beat it into ashes. Wherefore I believe in Him Who created the fire and the light and the shade and the heat. And ye, what say ye?' 'O King,' answered they, 'we also hear and follow and obey.'

So the King called for Gherib and Sehim and embraced them and kissed them between the eyes; whereupon the bystanders all crowded to kiss their hands and heads. Then Muraash sat down on the throne of his kingship and seating Gherib on his right and Sehim on his left hand, said to them, 'O mortals, what shall we say, that we may become Muslims?' 'Say,' answered Gherib, "' There is no god but God, and Abraham is the Friend of God!'" So the King and his folk professed Islam with heart and tongue, and Gherib abode with them awhile, teaching them the ritual of prayer. But presently he called to mind his people and sighed, whereupon quoth Muraash, 'Verily, trouble is past and gone and joy and gladness are come.' 'O King,' said Gherib, 'I have many enemies and I fear for my people from them.' Then he related to him his history from first to last, and Muraash said, 'O King of men, I will send one who shall bring thee news of thy people, for I will not let thee go till I have had my fill of gazing on thy face.' Then he called two stout Marids, by name Kailjan and Courjan, and bade them repair to Yemen and bring him news of Gherib's army. They replied, 'We hear and obey,' and departed.

Meanwhile, when the captains of the Muslims arose in the morning and rode to Gherib's palace, to do their service to him, the servants told them that the King had ridden forth with his brother at point of day. So they made for the valleys and mountains and followed the track of the princes, till they came to the Valley of Springs, where they found their arms cast down and their horses grazing and said, 'By the glory of Abraham the Friend, the King is missing from this place!' Then they dispersed and sought in the valley and the mountains three days, but found no trace of them; whereupon they raised lamentations and despatched couriers to all the cities and strengths and fortresses, to seek news of their King. Accordingly, the couriers dispersed hither and thither and sought everywhere for Gherib, but found no trace of him.

Now, when the news came to Agib by his spies that his brother was missing, he rejoiced and going in to King Yaarub ben Kehtan, sought aid of him. He granted him the help he sought and gave him two hundred thousand Amalekites, with whom he set out for Yemen and sat down before the city of Oman. Jemrcan and Saadan sallied forth and gave him battle, and there were slain of the Muslims much people, wherefore the true believers retired into the city and shut the gates and manned the walls. At this juncture the two Marids arrived and seeing the Muslims beleaguered, waited till the night, when they fell upon the infidels and plied them with sharp swords of the swords of the Jinn, each twelve cubits long, if a man smote therewith a rock, he would cleave it in sunder. They attacked the idolaters, shouting, ‘God is Most Great! He giveth aid and victory and forsaketh those who deny the faith of Abraham the Friend!’ whilst fire issued from their mouths and nostrils, and they made great slaughter amongst them. Thereupon the infidels ran out of their tents and seeing these strange things, were confounded and their flesh shuddered and their reason fled. So they snatched up their arms and fell on each other, whilst the Marids shore off their heads, as a reaper cuts grain, crying, ‘God is Most Great! We are the henchmen of King Gherib, the friend of Muraash, King of the Jinn!’ The sword ceased not to go round amongst them till the night was half spent, when the misbelievers, imagining that the mountains were all Afrits, loaded their tents and treasure and baggage upon camels and made off; and the first to fly was Agib. The Marids ceased not from the pursuit, till they had driven them far away into the hills and deserts; and but fifty thousand infidels of two hundred thousand escaped with their lives and made for their own land, wounded and discomfited.

Meanwhile, the Muslims gathered together, marvelling at this that had betided the infidels and fearing the tribes-men of the Jinn; but presently the latter returned and said to them, ‘O host of the Muslims, your lord King Gherib and his brother Sehim salute you; they are the guests of Muraash, King of the Jinn, and will be with you anon.’ When Gherib’s men knew that he was safe and well, they rejoiced greatly and said to the Marids, ‘May God rejoice you with good news, O noble spirits!’ So Courjan and Kailjan returned to Muraash and Gherib and acquainted them with that which had happened, whereat Gherib’s heart was set at ease and he said, ‘May God abundantly requite you!’

Then said King Muraash, ‘O my brother, I have a mind to show thee our country and the city of Japhet son of Noah, on whom be peace!’ ‘O King,’ replied Gherib, ‘do what seemeth good to thee.’ So he called for horses and mounting, he and Gherib and Sehim, set out with a thousand Marids, as they were a piece of a mountain cut endlong. They fared on, diverting themselves with the sight of valleys and mountains, till they came to the city of Japhet son of Noah (on whom be peace), where the townsfolk all, great and small, came forth to meet King Muraash and brought them into the city in great state. Then Muraash went up to the palace of Japhct son of Noah and sat down on the throne of his kingship, which was of alabaster, ten stages high, hung with all manner coloured silks and trellised with wands of gold. The people of the city stood before him and he said to them, ‘O descendants of Japhet, what did your fathers and grandfathers worship?’ Quoth they, ‘We found them worshipping the fire and followed their example, as thou well knowest.’ ‘O folk,’ rejoined Muraash, ‘it hath been manifested to us that the fire is but one of the creatures of God the Most High, Creator of all things; and when we knew this, we submitted ourselves to God, the One, the All-powerful Maker of night and day and the revolving sphere, whom no sight comprehendeth, but who comprehendeth all sights, for He is the Subtle, the All-wise, So do ye likewise, and ye shall be saved from the wrath of the Almighty and from the fiery torment in the world to come.’ And they embraced Islam with heart and tongue.

Then Muraash took Gherib by the hand and showed him the palace and its ordinance and all the marvels it contained, till they came to the armoury, wherein were the arms of Japhet son of Noah. Here Gherib saw a sword hanging to a peg of gold and said, ‘O King, whose sword is that?’ Quoth Muraash, ‘It is the sword of Japhet son of Noah, wherewith he was wont to do battle against men and Jinn. The sage Jerdoun forged it and graved on its back names of might. It is named El Mahic, for that it never descends upon a man, but it annihilates him, nor upon a genie, but it crushes him; and it one smote therewith a mountain, it would over-throw it.’ When Gherib heard tell of the virtues of the sword, he said, ‘I desire to look on this sword;’ and Muraash said, ‘As thou wilt.’ So Gherib put out his hand and taking the sword, drew it from its sheath; whereupon it flashed and death crept and glittered on its edge ; and it was twelve spans long and three broad. Now Gherib wished to take it, and Muraash said, ‘If thou canst wield it, take it.’ ‘ It is well,’ answered Gherib, and took it up, and it was in his hand as a staff; wherefore all who were present, men and Jinn, marvelled and said, ‘Well done, O prince of cavaliers!’ Then said Muraash, ‘Lay thy hand on this treasure, that the Kings of the earth sigh for in vain, and mount, that I may show thee the city.’

Then they took horse and rode forth the palace, with Jinn and men attending them on foot, and passed through the streets and thoroughfares of the town, threading their way through ranks of palaces and deserted mansions and gilded doorways, till they issued from the gates and entered gardens full of fruit-laden trees and running waters and birds speaking and celebrating the praises of Him to whom belong power and eternity; nor did they cease to take their pleasance in the land till nightfall, when they returned to the palace of Japhet son of Noah and they brought them the table of food. So they ate and Gherib turned to the King of the Jinn and said to him, ‘O King, I would fain return to my people and my troops; for I know not their plight after me.’ ‘By Allah, O my brother,’ answered Muraash, ‘I will not part with thee for a full month, till I have had my fill of thy sight.’

Gherib could not say him nay, so he abode with him in the city of Japhet, eating and drinking and making merry, till the month was up, when Muraash clad him and Sehim in dresses of honour of gold-inwoven silk and set on Gherib’s head a crown jewelled with pearls and diamonds of inestimable value. Moreover, he gave him great store of presents of emeralds and balass rubies and diamonds and other jewels and ingots of gold and silver and ambergris and musk and brocaded silks and other rarities and things of price. All these he made up into loads for him and calling five hundred Marids, said to them, ‘Make ready to set out on the morrow, that we may bring King Gherib and Sehim back to their own country.’ And they answered, saying, ‘We hear and obey.’ So they passed the night in the city, purposing to depart on the morrow, but, next morning, as they were about to set forth, they espied a great host advancing upon the city, with horses neighing and drums beating and trumpets sounding, to the number of threescore and ten thousand Marids, flying and diving, under a king called Bercan, and the earth was filled with them.

Now this Bercan was lord of the City of Cornelian and the Castle of Gold and under his rule were five strongholds, in each five hundred thousand Marids; and he and his people worshipped the fire, not the Omnipotent King. He was the son of Muraash’s father’s brother and the cause of his coming was on this wise. It chanced that there was among the subjects of King Muraash a misbelieving Marid, who professed Islam hypocritically, and he stole away from his people and made for the Valley of Cornelian, where he went in to King Bercan and kissing the earth before him, wished him abiding glory and fair fortune. Then he told him of Muraash’s conversion to Islam, and Bercan said, ‘How came he to forsake his faith?’ So the rebel told him what had passed and Bercan snorted and puffed and railed at the sun and the moon and the sparkling fire, saying, ‘By the virtue of my faith, I will surely slay my cousin and his people and this mortal, nor will I leave one of them on life !’ Then he cried out to the tribes of the Jinn and choosing of them seventy thousand Marids, set out and fared on till he came to the city of Japhet and encamped before its gates. When Muraash saw this, he despatched a Marid to learn what the stranger host wanted, bidding him return in haste. So the messenger repaired to Bercan’s camp, where the Marids hastened to meet him and said to him, ‘Who art thou?’ Quoth he, ‘I bear a message from King Muraash;’ whereupon they carried him in to Bercan, before whom he prostrated himself saying, ‘O my lord, my master hath sent me to thee, to know what brings thee hither.’ ‘Return to thy lord,’ replied Bercan, ‘and say to him, “This is thy cousin Bercan, who is come to salute thee.”’ So the messenger returned and told Muraash, who said to Gherib, ‘Abide here whilst I go and salute my cousin and return to thee.’ Then he mounted and rode to Bercan’s camp.

Now this was a trick of Bercan, to bring Muraash out and seize upon him, and he said to his Marids, who were about him, ‘When ye see me embrace my cousin, lay hold of him and bind his hands behind him. And they answered, saying, ‘We hear and obey.’ So, when Muraash came up and entered Bercan’s pavilion, the latter rose to him and embraced him, whereupon the Jinn fell upon Muraash and seized him and bound him. He looked at Bercan and said, ‘What manner of thing is this?’ Quoth Bercan, ‘O dog of the Jinn, wilt thou leave the faith of thy fathers and grandfathers and enter a faith thou knowest not?’ ‘O son of my uncle,’ rejoined Muraash, ‘indeed I have found the faith of Abraham the Friend to be the true faith and all other than it vain.’ ‘And who told thee of this?’ asked Bercan. ‘Gherib, King of Irak,’ answered Muraash, ‘whom I hold in the highest honour.’ ‘By the fire and the light and the shade and the heat,’ cried Bercan, ‘I will slay both thee and him!’ And he cast him into prison.

Now, when Muraash’s henchman saw what had befallen his lord, he fled back to the city and told the King’s men, who cried out and mounted. Quoth Gherib, ‘What is to do?’ And they told him what had passed, whereupon he cried out to Sehim, saying, ‘Saddle me one of the chargers that King Muraash gave me.’ ‘O my brother,’ said Sehim, ‘wilt thou do battle with the Jinn?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Gherib; ‘I will fight them with the sword of Japhet son of Noah, seeking help of the God of Abraham the Friend, (on whom be peace,) for He is Lord and Creator of all things. So Sehim saddled him a sorrel horse of the horses of the Jinn, as he were a castle, and he armed and mounting, rode out with the tribes of the Jinn, aimed cap-a-pie. Then Bercan and his host mounted also and the two hosts drew cut in battalia in face of one another. The first to open the chapter of war was Gherib, who spurred his charger into the mid-field and drew the enchanted sword, whence issued a glittering light, that dazzled the eyes of all the Jinn and struck terror to their heart. Then he played with the sword, till their wits were amazed, and cried out, saying, ‘God is Most Great! I am Gherib, King of Irak. There is no faith save the faith of Abraham the Friend!’

When Bercan heard Gherib’s words, he said, ‘This is he who seduced my cousin from his faith; so, by the virtue of my faith, I will not sit down on my throne till I have cut off the head of this Gherih and made an end of his life and forced my cousin and his people back to their faith: and whoso baulketh me, I will destroy him.' Then he mounted a paper-white elephant, as he were a tower plastered with gypsum, and goaded him with a pike of steel, whereupon the elephant trumpeted and made for the middle of the field. When Bercan drew near Gherih, he cried out to him, saying, 'O dog of mankind, what made thee come into our land, to debauch my cousin and his people and pervert them from one faith to another? Know that this day is the last of thy worldly days.' And Gherib answered, saying, 'Avaunt, O vilest of the jinn!' Therewith Berean drew a javelin and poising it in his hand, cast it at Gherib; but it missed him. So he threw a second javelin at him; but Gherib caught it in mid-air and hurled it at the elephant. It smote him on the flank and came out on the other side, whereupon the beast fell down dead and Bercan was cast to the ground, like a great palm-tree. Before he could stir, Gherib smote him with the sword of Japhet flatlings on the nape of the neck, and he fell down in a swoon; whereupon the Marids swooped down on him and bound him.

When Bercan's people saw their king a prisoner, they drove at the others, seeking to rescue him, but Gherib and the true-believing Jinn fell upon them and bravo for Gherib! indeed that day he pleased God who answereth prayer and slaked his vengeance with the enchanted sword! Whomsoever he smote, he clove him in sunder and before his soul could depart, he became a heap of asshes in the fire; whilst the two hosts of the Jinn cast flames of fire at one another, till the battle-field was wrapped in smoke. And Gherib tourneyed right and left among the infidels and they gave way before him, till be came to King Bercan's pavilion, with Kailjan and Courjan on his either hand, and cried out to them, saying, 'Loose your lord!' So they unbound Muraash and broke his fetters and he said to them, 'Bring me my arms and my winged horse.'

Now he had two flying horses, one of which he gave to Gherib and the other he mounted himself, after he had donned his battle-harness. Then he and Gherib fell upon the enemy, flying through the air on their winged horses, and the true-believing Jinn followed them, shouting, 'God is Most Great!' till the earth and hills and valleys and mountains answered them. The infidels fled before them and they returned, after having slain more than thirty thousand Marids and Satans, to the city of Japhet, where the two kings sat down on their beds of estate and sought for Bercan, but found him not; for, whilst they were diverted from him by stress of battle, an Afrit of his servants made his way to him and loosing him, carried him to his folk, of whom he found part slain and the rest in full flight. So he flew up with the King into the air and set him down in the City of Cornelian and Castle of Gold, where Bercan seated himself on the throne of his king-ship. Presently, those of his people who had escaped from the battle came in to him and gave him joy of his safety; and he said, 'O folk, where is safety? My army is slain and they took me prisoner and have rent in pieces my repute among the tribes of the Jinn.' 'O King,' answered they, 'it is ever thus that kings still smite and are smitten.' Quoth he, 'Needs must I take my revenge and wipe out my reproach, else shall I be for ever dishonoured among the tribes of the Jinn.' Then he wrote letters to the governors of his fortresses, who came to him with three hundred and twenty thousand fierce Marids and Satans; and he bade them make ready to set out in three days' time.

Meanwhile, when Muraash discovered Bercan's escape, it was grievous to him and he said, 'Had we set a hundred Marids to guard him, he had not fled; but whither shall he go from us?' Then said he to Gherib, 'Know, O my brother, that Bercan is perfidious and will never rest from avenging himself on us, but will assuredly assemble his clans and return upon us; wherefore I am minded to forestall him and fall on him, on the heels of his defeat, whilst he is yet weak by reason thereof.' 'This is well see;' replied Gherib; and Muraash said, 'O my brother, let the Marids bear thee back to thine own country and leave me to fight the battles of the Faith against the infidels, that I may be lightened of the burden of my sins.' 'By the virtue of the Clement, the Bountiful, the Protector,' answered Gherib, 'I will not go hence till I do to death all the mis-believing Jinn and God hasten their souls to the fire and evil shall be the abiding-place [to which they go;] and none shall be saved but those who worship God the One, the Victorious! But do thou send Sehim back to the city of Oman, so haply he may be healed of his sickness.' For Sehim was sick. So Muraash bade the Marids take up Sehim and the treasures and bear them to the city of Oman; and they took them and made for the land of men.

Then Muraash wrote letters to all his governors and captains of fortresses and they came to him with eight-score thousand men. So they made them ready and departed for the City of Cornelian. In one day, they marched a year's journey and halted in a valley, where they encamped and passed the night. Next morning, as they were about to set forth, the vanguard of Bercan's army appeared, whereupon the Jinn cried out and the two hosts met and fell upon each other in that valley, that the earth trembled with the shock. Then there befell a sore strife and the battle swayed to and fro with a might clamour. Jest gave place to earnest and there was an end of parley, whilst long lives were cut short and trouble and confusion befell the unbelievers; for Gherib charged them, proclaiming the Unity of God, the Worshipful, the Exalted, and shore through necks and made heads roll in the dust; nor did the dark betide before nigh seventy thousand of the infidels were slain, and of the true believers over ten thousand Marids had fallen. Then the drums beat the retreat, and the two hosts drew apart. So Gherib and Muraash returned to their tents, after they had wiped their arms, and the evening meal being set before them, they ate and gave each other joy of their safety. As for Bercan, he returned to his tent, grieving for the slaughter of his champions, and said to his officers, 'If we abide here and do battle thus with them, we shall be cut off to the last man in three days' time.' Quoth they, 'And how shall we do, O King?' 'We will fall upon them under cover of the night,' said Bercan, 'whilst they sleep, and not one of them shall be left to tell the tale. So take your arms and when I give the word of command, fall on your enemies as one man.'

Now there was amongst them a Marid named Jendel whose heart inclined to Islam; so, when he heard the Infideis' plot, he stole away from them and going in to King Muraash and King Gherib, told them what Bercan had devised; whereupon Muraash turned to Gherib and said to him, 'O my brother, what shall we do?' Quoth Gherib, 'To-night we will fall upon the infidels and chase them into the mountains and deserts, if it be the will of the Omnipotent King.' Then he summoned the captains of the Jinn and said to them, 'Arm yourselves, you and your men, and as soon as it is dark, steal out of your tents on foot and hide among the mountains; and when ye see the enemy engaged among the tents, do ye fall upon them from all quarters. Strengthen your hearts and put your faith in your Lord, and ye shall conquer; and behold, I am with you!' So, as soon as it was dark, the infidels attacked the camp, invoking the aid of the light and the fire; but, when they came among the tents, the Muslims fell upon them, calling for help on the Lord of the Worlds and saying, 'O Most Merciful of those that show mercy, O Creator of all created things!' till they left them like mown grass, cut down and dead. By the morning the most part of the unbelievers were bodies without souls and the rest made for the marshes and deserts, whilst Gherib and Muraash returned in triumph and making prize of the enemy's baggage, rested till the morrow, when they set out for the City of Cornelian.

As for Bercan, when he saw that the battle had turned against him and that the most part of his men were slain, he fled with the remnant of his folk to his capital city, where he entered his palace and assembling his tribes, said to them, 'O folk, whoso hath aught of price, let him take it and follow me to the Mountain Caf, to the Blue King, lord of the Parti-coloured Palace; for he it is who shall avenge us.' So they took their women and children and goods and made for the Mountain Caf. Presently Muraash and Gherib arrived at the City of Cornelian and found the gates open and none left to give them news; whereupon they entered and Muraash took Gherib, that he might show him the city, whose walls were builded of emeralds and its gates of red cornelian, with nails of silver, and the roofs of its houses and mansions ceiled with aloes and sandal-wood. So they took their pleasance in its streets and alleys, till they came to the palace of gold and entering, passed through seven vestibules, till they came to a building, whose walls were of royal balass rubies and its pavement of emerald and jacinth. The two kings were astounded at the goodliness of the place and fared on from vestibule to vestibule, till they came to the inner court of the palace, wherein they saw four estrades, each different from the others, and in the midst a fountain of red gold, compassed about with golden lions, from whose mouths issued water. The estrade at the upper end was hung and carpeted with brocaded silks of various colours and thereon stood two thrones of red gold, inlaid with pearls and jewels. So Muraash and Gherib sat down on the thrones and held high state in the palace of gold. Then said Gherib to Muraash, ‘What thinkest thou to do?’ And Muraash answered, saying, ‘O King of men, I have despatched a hundred horse to learn where Bercan is, that we may pursue him.’

Then they abode three days in the palace, till the scouts returned with the news that Bercan had fled to the Mountain Caf and thrown himself on the protection of the Blue King; whereupon quoth Muraash to Gherib, ‘What sayst thou, O my brother?’ And Gherib answered, saying, ‘Except we attack them, they will attack us.’ So they made ready for departure and after three days, they were about to set out with their troops, when the Marids, who had carried Sehim back to Oman, returned and kissed the earth before Gherib. He questioned them of his people and they answered, saying, ‘After the last battle, thy brother Agib fled to the King of Hind and sought his protection. The King granted his prayer and writing letters to all his governors, levied an army as it were the swollen sea, having neither beginning nor end, with which he purposes to invade Irak and lay it waste.’ When Gherib heard this, he said, ‘Perish the unbelievers! Verily, God the Most High shall give the victory to Islam and I will show them cutting and thrusting.’ ‘O King of men,’ said Muraash, ‘by the virtue of the Mighty Name, I must needs go with thee to thy kingdom and destroy thine enemies and bring thee to thy desire.’ Ghenib thanked him and they rested till the morrow, when they set out, intending for the City of Alabaster and the Patti-coloured Palace.

Now this city was builded of alabaster and [precious] stones by Baric ben Fakia, father of the Jinn, and he built also the Patti-coloured Palace, which was so named for that the ordinance of its building was one brick of gold and one of silver, nor was there its like in all the world. When they came within half a day’s journey of the city, they halted to rest, and Muraash sent out a scout to reconnoitre, who returned and said, ‘O King, in the City of Alabaster are tribesmen of the Jinn in number as the leaves of the trees or as the drops of rain.’ So Muraash said to Gherib, ‘How shall we do, O King of men?’ ‘O King,’ answered he, ‘divide your men into four bodies and encompass the camp of the infidels with them ; then, in the middle of the night, let them cry out, saying, “God is Most Great!” and hold aloof and watch what happens among the tribes of the Jinn.’ So Muraash did as Gherib counselled and the troops waited till midnight, when they cried out, saying, ‘God is Most Great! Ho for the Faith of Abraham the Friend, on whom be peace!’ The unbelievers awoke in affright and snatching up their arms, fell upon each other till the morning, when the most part of them were dead men and but few remained. Then Gherib cried out to the true believers, saying, ‘Up and at the remnant of the infidels! Behold, I am with you, and God is your helper!’ So the Muslims drove at the enemy and Gherib drew his sword El Mahic and fell upon the foe, cutting off noses and sending heads flying. Presently be came up with Bercan and smote him and bereft him of life and he fell down, drenched in his blood. On like wise he did with the Blue King, and by the forenoon not one of the infidels was left alive to tell the tale.

Then Gherib and Muraash entered the Patti-coloured Palace and found its walls builded of alternate courses of gold and silver, with sills of crystal and keystones of emerald. In its midst was a fountain adorned with bells and pendants and figures of birds and beasts vomiting forth water, and thereby an estrade furnished with gold-brocaded silks, with borders of gold embroidered with jewels and they found the treasures of the palace past count or description. Then they entered the inner court, where they found a magnificent seraglio and Gherib saw, among the Blue King’s women, a girl clad in a dress worth a thousand dinars, never had he beheld a goodlier. About her were a hundred slave-girls, holding up her skirts with hooks of gold, and she was in their midst as the moon among stars. When he saw her, his reason was confounded and he said to one of the waiting-women, ‘Who is yonder damsel?’ Quoth they, ‘This is the Blue King’s daughter, Morning Star.’ Then Gherib turned to Muraash and said to him, ‘O King of the Jinn, I have a mind to take yonder damsel to wife.’ Quoth Muraash, ‘The palace and all that therein is are the prize of thy right hand; for, hadst thou not devised a stratagem to destroy the Blue King and Bercan, they had cut us off to the last man wherefore the treasure is thy treasure and the people thy slaves.’ Gherb thanked him for his fair speech and going up to the girl, gazed steadfastly upon her and loved her with an exceeding love, forgetting

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Now her mother was the King's daughter of China, whom the Blue King had carried off from her palace and deflowered, and she conceived by him and bore this girl, whom he named Morning Star, by reason of her beauty and grace for she was the princess of the fair. Her mother died when she was a babe of forty days, and the nurses and eunuchs reared her, till she reached the age of seventeen; but she hated her father and rejoiced in his death. So Gherib put his hand in hers and went in to her that night and found her a virgin. Then he pulled down the Parti-coloured Palace and divided the spoil with the true-believing Jinn, and there fell to his share one and-twenty thousand bricks of gold and silver and money and treasure beyond count. Then Muraash took Gherib and showed him the Mountain Caf and all its marvels; after which they returned to Bercan's fortress and dismantled it and shared the spoil thereof.

Then they returned to Muraash's capital, where they abode five days, at the end of which time Gherib sought to go to his own country and Muraash said, 'O King of men, I will ride at thy stirrup and bring thee to thine own land 'Nay, by the virtue of Abraham the Friend,' answered Gherib; 'I will not suffer thee to weary thyself thus nor will I take any of the Jinn save Kailjan and Courjan.' Quoth the King, 'Take with thee ten thousand horsemen of the Jinn, to serve thee;' but Gherib said, 'I will take only as I said to thee.' So Muraash bade a thousand Marids take him up and carry him to his native land, with his share of the spoil; and he commanded Kailjan and Courjan to follow him and obey him; and they answered, 'We hear and obey.' Then said Gherib to the Marids, 'Do ye carry the treasure and Morning Star;' for he himself thought to ride his flying charger. But Muraash said to him, 'O my brother, this horse will live only in our clime, and if it come upon the earth, it will die but I have in my stables a sea horse, whose like is not found in Irak, no, nor in all the world' So he caused bring forth the horse, and when Gherib saw it, it interposed between him and his reason. Then they bound it and Kailjan took it on his shoulders and Courjan took what he could carry. And Muraash embraced Gherib and wept for parting from him, saying, 'O my brother, if aught befall thee, to which thou art unable, send for me and I will come to thine aid with an army that may avail to lay waste the whole earth and all that is thereon.' Gherib thanked him for his courtesy and kindness and his zeal for the True Faith and took leave of him; whereupon the Marids set out with Gherib and his goods and after traversing fifty years' journey in two days and a night, alighted near the city of Oman and halted to rest.

Then Gherib sent out Kailjan, to learn news of his people, and he returned and said, 'O King, thy city is beleaguered by a host of infidels, as they were the swollen sea, and thy people are fighting them. The drums beat to battle and Jemrcan goeth forth to them in the field.' When Gherib heard this, he cried out, saying, 'God is Most Great!' and said to Kailjan, 'Saddle me the horse and bring me my arms; for to-day the valiant shall be known from the coward in the stead of war and battle. So Kailjan brought him all he sought and Gherib armed and girding on El Mahic, mounted the sea-horse and made toward the armies. Quoth Kailjan and Courjan to him, 'Set thy heart at ease and let us go to the infidels and scatter them abroad in the wastes and deserts till, by the help of God the Most High, the All-powerful, we leave not a soul of them on life, no, not a blower of the fire.' But Gherib said, 'By the virtue of Abraham the Friend, I will not let you fight them without me!'

Now the manner of the coming of that great host was on this wise. When Agib fled from the field, after Yaarub's army had been put to the rout by Kailjan and Courjan, be said to his people, 'If we return to Yaarub ben Kehtan, he will say to us, "But for you, my son and my people had not been slain;" and he will put us to death, even to the last man. Wherefore, methinks we were better go to Terkenan, King of Hind, and beseech him to avenge us.' 'Come, let us go thither,' answered they; 'and the blessing of the Fire attend thee!' So they fared on days and nights till they reached King Terkenan's capital city and Agib went in to him and kissed the earth before him. Then he wished him what men use to wish to kings and said to him, 'O King, do thou protect me, so may the sparkling fire and the night with its thick darkness protect and defend thee!' Terkenan looked at Agib and said, 'Who art thou and what dost thou want?' 'I am Agib, King of Irak,' replied he; 'my brother hath usurped my throne and gotten the mastery of the land and the people have submitted themselves to him. Moreover, he has embraced the faith of Islam and ceases not to chase me from country to country; and behold, I am come to seek protection of thee and thy power.' When Terkenan heard Agib's words, he rose and sat down and said, 'By the virtue of the Fire, I will assuredly avenge thee and will let none serve other than my mistress the Fire!' And he cried out to his son, saying, 'O my son, make ready to go to Irak and lay it waste and bind all who serve aught but the Fire and punish them and make an example of them; yet slay them not, but bring them to me, that I may ply them with various tortures and make them taste the bitterness of humiliation and leave them a warning to all who will take warning in this time.' Then he chose out to accompany him fourscore thousand fighting-men on horse-back and the like number on giraffes, beside ten thousand elephants, bearing on their backs turrets of sandal-wood, trellised with network of gold and railed and plated with gold and silver and guarded with shields of gold and emerald, and store of war-chariots, in each eight men fighting with all kinds of weapons.

Now the prince's name was Raadshah and he was the champion of his time, having no peer for prowess. So he and his army equipped them in ten days' time, then set out, as they were a bank of clouds, and fared on two months' journey, till they came to Oman and encompased it, to the joy of Agib, who thought himself assured of victory. So Jemrcan and Saadan and all their fighting-men sallied forth into the field, whilst the drums beat to battle and the horses neighed. At this moment up came King Gherib, who spurred his charger and entered among the infidels, waiting to see who should come forth and open the chapter of war. Then came out Saadan the Ghoul and offered battle, whereupon there issued forth to him one of the champions of Hind; but Saadan scarce let him take his stand in front of him ere he smote him to the earth with his mace and crushed his bones; and so did he with a second and a third, till he had slain thirty fighting-men. Then there pricked out to him an Indian cavalier, by name Bettash el Acran, uncle to King Terkenan and the doughtiest champion of his time, reckoned worth five thousand horse in battle, and cried out to Saadan, saying, 'O thief of the Arabs, what art thou that thou shouldst slay the Kings of Hind and their champions and capture their horsemen? But to-day is the last of thy worldly days.' When Saadan heard this, his eyes waxed bloodshot and he drove at Bettash and aimed a stroke at him with his club; but he evaded it and the force of the blow bore Saadan to the earth; and before he could recover himself, the Indians bound him and haled him off to their tents.

When Jemrcan saw his comrade a prisoner, he cried out, saying, Ho for the faith of Abraham the Friend!' and clapping spurs to his horse, ran at Bettash. They wheeled and feinted awhile, till Bettash drove at Jemrcan and catching him by his coat of arms, tore him from his saddle and threw him to the ground; whereupon the Indians bound him and dragged him away to their tents. And Bettash ceased not to overcome all who came out to him, till he had made prisoners of four-and-twenty captains of the Muslims, whereat the latter were sore dismayed. When Gherib saw what had befallen his men, he drew from beneath his knee a mace of gold, six-score nounds in weight, which had belonged to King Bercan, and set spurs to his sea-horse, which bore him like the wind into the middle of the field. Then he drove at Bettash, crying out, 'God is Most Great! he giveth aid and victory and forsaketh those who reject the faith of Abraham the Friend!' and smote him with the mace, whereupon he fell to the ground and Gherib, turning to the Muslims, saw his brother Sehim and said to him, 'Bind this dog.' When Sehim heard his brother's words, he ran to Bettash and bound him fast and bore him off, whilst the Muslims wondered who this cavalier could be and the Indians said to one another, 'Who is this horseman that came out from amongst us and hath taken our chief prisoner?'

Meanwhile Gherib continued to offer battle and there came out to him a captain of the Indians, whom he felled to the earth with his mace, and Kailjan and Courjan bound him and delivered him to Sehim; nor did Gherib leave to do thus, till he had taken prisoner two-and-fifty of the doughtiest captains of the army of Hind. Then the day came to an end and the drums beat the retreat; whereupon Gherib left the field and rode towards the Muslim camp. The first to meet him was his brother Sehimn, who kissed his feet in the stirrups and said, 'May thy hand never wither, O champion of the age! Tell us who thou art among the braves.' So Gherib raised his vizor and Sehim knew him and cried out, saying, 'This is your king and your lord Gherib, who is come back from the land of the Jinn!' When the

Muslims heard Gherib's name, they threw themselves off their horses' backs and crowding about him, kissed his feet in the stirrups and saluted him, rejoicing in his safe return. Then they carried him into the city of Oman, where he entered his palace and sat down on the throne of his kingship, whilst his officers stood around him, in the utmost joy. Food was set on and they ate, after which Gherib related to them all that had befallen him with the Jinn in the Mountain Caf, and they marvelled thereat exceedingly and praised God for his safety. Then be dismissed them to their sleeping-places; so they withdrew to their several lodgings, and when none abode with him but Kailjan and Courjan, who never left him, he said to them, 'Can ye carry me to Cufa, that I may take my pleasure in my harem, and bring me back before the end of the night?' 'O our lord,' answered they, 'this thou askest is easy.'

Now the distance between Cufa and Oman is threescore days' journey for a diligent horseman, and Kailjan said to Courjan, 'I will carry him going and thou coming back.' So he took up Gherib and flew off with him, in company with Courjan; nor was an hour past before they set him down at the gate of his palace in Cufa. He went in to his uncle Damigh, who rose to him and saluted him; after which quoth Gherib, 'How is it with my wives Morning Star and Mehdiyeh?' And Damigh answered, saying, 'They are both well and in good case.' Then the eunuch went in and acquainted the women of the harem with Gherib's coming, whereat they rejoiced and raised cries of joy and gave him the reward for good news. Presently in came Gherib, and they rose and saluting him, conversed with him, till Damigh entered, when Gherib related to them all that had befallen him in the land of the Jinn, whereat they all marvelled. Then he lay with Morning Star till near daybreak, when he took leave of his uncle and wives and mounted Courjan's back, nor was the darkness dispelled before the two Marids set him down in the city of Oman. Then he and his men armed and he bade open the gates, when, behold, up came a horseman from the host of the Indians, with Jemrcan and Saadan and the rest of the captives, whom he had delivered, and committed them to Gherib. The Muslims rejoiced in their safety and the drums beat a point of war, whilst the two hosts drew out in battle array.

The first to open the chapter of war was Gherib, who drove his charger between the two ranks and drawing his sword El Mahic, cried out, saying, ‘Whoso knoweth me hath enough of my prowess and whoso knoweth me not, I will make myself known to him. I am Gherib, King of Irak and Yemen, brother of Agib.’ When Raadshah beard this, he cried out to his guards, saying, ‘Bring me Agib.’ So they brought him and Raadshah said to him, ‘Thou knowest that this quarrel is thy quarrel and thou art the cause of all this slaughter. Now yonder stands thy brother Gherib amiddleward the field; go thou out to him and bring him to me prisoner, that I may set him on a camel, face to tail, and make a show of him and carry him to the land of Hind.’ ‘O King,’ answered Agib, ‘send out to him other than I, for I am in ill case this morning.’ But Raadshah puffed and snorted and said, ‘By the virtue of the sparkling fire and the light and shade and heat, except thou go out to thy brother and bring him to me in haste, I will cut off thy head and make an end of thee.’ So Agib took courage and spurring his horse up to his brother in mid-field, said to him, ‘O dog of the Arabs and vilest of all who smite upon tent-pegs, wilt thou contend with kings? Take what cometh to thee and receive the tidings of thy death.’ When Gherib heard this, he said to him, ‘Who art thou among the kings?’ And Agib answered, saying, ‘I am thy brother, and to-day is the last of thy worldly days.’

When Gherib was assured that he was indeed his brother Agib, be cried out and said, ‘Ho, to avenge my father and mother!’ Then giving his sword to Kailjan, he drove at Agib and smote him with his mace a swashing blow, that all but beat in his ribs, and seizing him by the neckrings, tore him from the saddle and cast him to the ground; whereupcn the Marids fell on him and binding him fast, dragged him off, abject and humiliated; whilst Gherib rejoiced in the capture of his enemy and repeated the following verses of the poet:

I have won to my wish and the end of affrays: Unto Thee, O my
Lord, be the thanks and the praise!
I grew up, uncared for and abject and poor; But God hath
vouchsafed me the aim of my ways.
I have conquered the lands, I have mastered the folk: But for
Thee, I were nothing, O Ancient of Days!

When Raadshah saw how Agib fared with his brother, he called for his charger and donning his harness and coat of arms, mounted and pricked out into the field. As soon us he drew near Gherib, he cried out to him, saying, ‘O vilest of Bedouin faggot-bearers, who art thou, that thou shouldst capture kings and warriors? Dismount and put thy hands behind thy back and kiss my feet and set my warriors free and go with me in chains to my kingdom, that I may pardon thee and make thee an elder in our country, so mayst thou eat a morsel of bread there.’ When Gherib heard this, he laughed till he fell backward and answered, saving, ‘O raging dog and scurvy wolf, thou shalt soon see against whom the shifts of Fate will turn!’ Then he cried out to Sehim to bring him the prisoners; so he brought them, and Gherib smote off their heads; whereupon Raadshah drove at him, with the onslaught of a lordly champion and a fierce warrior, and they wheeled and feinted and hewed at each other till nightfall, when the drums beat the retreat and the two Kings returned, each to his own place, where his people gave him joy of his safety. And the Muslims said to Gherib, ‘O King, it is not of thy wont to prolong a fight.’ ‘O folk,’ answered he, ‘I have done battle with many kings and champions; but never saw I a sturdier swordsman than this one. Had I chosen to draw El Mahic upon him, I had crushed his bones and made an end of his days: but I went about with him, thinking to take him prisoner and give him part in Islam.’

Meanwhile, Raadshah returned to his pavilion, where his chiefs came in to him and asked him of his adversary, and he said, ‘By the sparkling fire, never in my life saw I the like of yonder warrior! But to-morrow I will take him prisoner and lead him away, abject and humbled.’ Then they slept till daybreak, when the drums beat to battle and the fighting-men girt on their scimitars and mounting their stout horses, raised their war-cries and drew out into the field, filling all the hills and plains and wide places. The first to open the chapter of battle was the prince of cavaliers and the lion of war, King Gherib, who drove his steed between the two hosts and spurred to and fro, crying, ‘Who is for jousting, who is for fighting? Let no sluggard nor weakling come out to me to-day!’ Before he had made an end of speaking, out came Raadshah, riding on an elephant, as he were a vast tower, in a howdah girthed with silken bands; and between the elephant's ears sat the driver, bearing in his hand a hook, wherewith he goaded the beast and directed him right and left. When the elephant drew near Gherib's horse, the latter, seeing a creature it had never before set eyes on, took fright; wherefore Gherib dismounted and gave the horse to Kailjan. Then he drew El Mahic and advanced to meet Raadshah on foot.

Now it was Raadshah's wont, when he found himself overmatched, to mount an elephant, taking with him an engine called the noose, which was in the shape of a net, narrow at top and wide at bottom, with a running cord of silk passed through rings along its edges. With this he would attack horsemen and casting the net over them, draw the running noose and pull the rider off his horse and make him prisoner; and thus had he conquered many cavaliers. So, when Gherib came up to him, he raised his hand and casting the net over him, pulled him on to the back of the elephant and cried out to the latter to return to the Indian camp. But Kailjan and Courjan, who had not left Gherib, laid hold of the elephant and falling upon Raadshah, bound him wlth a rope of palm-fibres, whilst Gherib strove with the net, till he rent it in sunder. Thereupon the two armies drove at each other and met with a shock like two seas crashing or two mountains smiting together, whilst the dust rose to the confines of the sky and all eyes were blinded. The battle waxed fierce and the blood ran in streams, nor did they cease to wage war lustily with push of pike and stroke of sword, till the day departed and the night brought on the darkness, when the drums beat the retreat and the two hosts drew asunder.

Now the Muslims were hard pushed that day by reason of the riders on elephants and giraffes, and many of them were slain and most of the rest wounded. This was grievous to Gherib, who commanded the wounded to be cared for and turning to his chief officers, asked them what they counselled. 'O King,' answered they, 'it is but the elephants and giraffes that irk us; were we but quit of them, we should overcome the enemy.' Quoth Kailjan and Courjan, 'We two will draw our swords and fall on them and slay the most part of them.' But there came forward a man of Oman, who had been privy counsellor to Julned, and said, 'O King, I will be surety for the army, if thou wilt but hearken to me and follow my counsel.' And

Gherib turned to his captains and said to them, ‘Obey this wise man in whatsoever he shall say to you.’ And they answered, saying, ‘We hear and obey.’ So he chose out ten captains and said to them, ‘How many men have ye under your hands?’ And they replied, ‘Ten thousand fighting-men.’ Then he carried them into the armoury and armed [five thousand of them with arquebuses and other] five thousand with cross-bows and taught them to shoot therewith.

As soon as it was day, the Indians came out to the field, armed cap-a-pie, with the elephants and giraffes in their van; whereupon Gherib and his men mounted and the drums beat and both hosts drew out in battle array. Then the counsellor cried out to the archers and arquebusiers to shoot, and they plied the elephants and giraffes with shafts and bullets. The arrows and the lead entered the beasts’ flanks, and they roared out and turning upon their own ranks, trampled them with their feet. Then the Muslims charged the misbelievers and set on them right and left, whilst the elephants and giraffes trampled them and drove them into the hills and deserts. Moreover, the Muslims followed hard upon them with the keen-edged sword and but few of the giraffes and elephants escaped.

Then Gherib and his folk returned, rejoicing in their victory; and on the morrow they divided the spoil and rested five days; after which King Gherib sat down on his throne and sending for his brother Agib, said to him, ‘O dog, how hast thou assembled the kings against us! But He who hath power over all things hath given us the victory over thee. Wherefore do thou embrace Islam and thou shalt be saved, and I will forbear to avenge my father and mother on thee. Moreover, I will make thee King again as thou wast and will myself be under thy hand.’ But Agib said, ‘I will not leave my faith.’ So Gherib bade lay him in irons and appointed a hundred stalwart slaves to guard him; after which he turned to Raadshah and said to him. ‘How sayst thou of the faith of Islam?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Raadshah, ‘I will enter thy faith, for, were it not a true faith and a goodly, thou hadst not carried it over us. So put forth thy hand and I will testify that there is no god but God and that Abraham the Friend is His apostle.’ At this Gherib rejoiced and said to him ‘Is thy heart indeed stablished in the sweetness of the Faith?’ And he answered, saying, ‘Yes, O my lord!’ Then said Gherib, ‘O Raadshah, wilt thou go to thy country and thy kingdom?' 'O my lord,' replied he, 'my father will put me to death, for that I have left his faith.' Quoth Gherib, 'I will go with thee and make thee King of the country and constrain the folk to obey thee, by the help of God the Bountiful, the Beneficent.' And Raadshah kissed his hands and feet. Then Gherib rewarded the counsellor, who had been the cause of the rout of the infidels, and gave him great riches; after which be turned to Kailjan and Courjan and said to them, 'O chiefs of the Jinn, it is my will that ye carry me, together with Raadshah and Jemrcan and Saadan, to the land of Hind.' 'We hear and obey,' answered they. So Courjan took up Jemrcan and Saadan, whilst Kailjan took Gherib and Raadshah, and flew on with them from sundown till the end of the night, when they set them down on the terrace of King Terkenan's palace at Cashmere.

Now news was come to Terkenan of the rout of his army and that his son [was a prisoner], whereat he was sore troubled and slept not neither took delight in aught. As he sat in his harem, pondering his case, behold, Gherib and his company descended the stairways of the palace and came in to him; and when he saw his son and those who were with him, he was confounded and fear took him of the Marids. Then Raadshah turned to him and said, 'How long wilt thou persist in thy frowardness, O traitor and worshipper of the Fire? Woe to thee! Leave worshipping the fire and serve the Magnanimous King, Creator of night and day, whom no sight attaineth.' When Terkenan heard his son's speech, he cast at him an iron mace he had by him; but he avoided it and it fell upon a buttress of the palace and smote out three stones. Then said the King, 'O dog, thou hast destroyed my troops and forsaken thy faith and comest now to make me do likewise!' With this Gherib stepped up to him and dealt him a buffet on the neck, that knocked him down; whereupon the Marids bound him fast and all the women fled.

Then Gherib sat down on the throne and said to Raadshah, 'Do thou justice upon thy father.' So Raadshah turned to him and said, 'O perverse old man, become a Muslim and thou shalt be saved from the fire and the wrath of the Almighty.' And Terkenan said, 'I will die in my own faith.' Whereupon Gherib drew El Mahic and smote him therewith, and he fell to the earth in two piece; and God hurried his soul to the fire and ill was the abiding-place [to which he went]. Then Gherib bade hang his body over the gate of the palace and they hung one-half on the right hand and the other on the left and waited tilt day, when Gherib caused Raadshah don the royal habit and sit down on his father's throne, with himself on his right hand and Jemrcan and Saadan and the Marids standing right and left; and he said to Kailjan and Courjan,'Whoso entereth of the princes and officers, seize him and bind him, and let not a single captain escape you.' And they answered, saying, 'We hear and obey.'

Presently, the officers made for the palace, to do their service to the King, and the first to appear was the chief captain, who, seeing Terkenan's dead body cut in half and banging on either side the gate, was seized with horror and amazement. Then Kailjan laid hold of him by the collar and dragged him into the palace and bound him; and before sunrise they had bound three hundred and fifty captains and set them before Gherib, who said to them, 'Have you seen your King hanging at the palace-gate?' Quoth they, 'Who hath done this thing?' And he answered, 'I did it, by the help of God the Most High; and whoso gainsayeth me, I will do with him likewise.' Then said they, 'What is thy will with us?' 'I am Gherib, King of Irak,' answered he, 'he who slew your warriors; and now Raadshah has embraced the faith of submission and is become a mighty king and ruler over you. So do ye become true believers and all shall be well with you; but, If you refuse, you shall repent it.' So they pronounced the profession of the faith and were numbered of the people of felicity. Then said Gherib, 'Are your hearts indeed stablished in the sweetness of the Faith?' And they answered, 'Yes;' whereupon he bade release them and clad them in robes of honour, saying, 'Go to your people and expound Islam to them. Whosoever accepts the faith, spare him; but, if he refuse, slay him.' So they went out and assembling the men under their command, expounded Islam to them, and they all professed, except a few, whom they put to death; after which they returned and told Gherib, who praised God the Most High and glorified Him, saying, 'Praised be God who hath made this thing easy to us without strife!'

Then he abode in Cashmere forty days, till he had ordered the affairs of the country and cast down the shrines and temples of the

Fire and built mosques and places of worship in their stead, whilst Raadshah made ready for him gifts and treasures beyond count and despatched them to Irak in ships. Then Gherib mounted on Kailjan's back and Jemrcan and Saadan on that of Courjan, after they had taken leave of Raadshah, and before daybreak they were in Oman, where their troops met them and saluted them and rejoiced in them. Then they set out for Cufa, where Gherib called for his brother Agib and commanded to crucify him on the city-gate and shoot at him with arrows. So Sehim brought hooks of iron and driving them into the tendons of Agib's heels, hung him over the gate; and they riddled him with arrows, till be was like a porcupine.

Then Gherib entered his palace and sitting down on the throne of his kingship, passed the day in ordering the affairs of the state. At nightfall he went in to his harem, where Morning Star came to meet him and embraced him and gave him joy, she and her women, of his safety. He lay the night with her and on the morrow, after he had washed and prayed the morning prayer, he sat down on his throne and commanded preparation to be made for his marriage with Mehdiyeh. So they slaughtered three thousand head of sheep and two thousand oxen and a thousand goats and five hundred camels and the like number of horses, beside four thousand fowls and great store of geese; never was such a wedding in Islam to that day. Then he went in to Mehdiyeh and did away her maidenhead and abode with her ten days; after which he committed the kingdom to his uncle Damigh, charging him to rule the people justly, and journeyed with his women and warriors, till he came to the ships laden with presents, which Raadshah had sent him, and divided the treasure among his troops. Then they fared on till they reached the city of Babel, where he bestowed on Sehim a dress of honour and appointed him Sultan of the city. He abode with him ten days, at the end of which time he set out again and journeyed till he reached the castle of Saadan the Ghoul, where they rested five days.

Then said Gherib to Kailjan and Courjan, 'Go ye to Isbanir el Medain, to the palace of Chosroës, and find what is come of Fekhr Taj and bring me one of the King's kinsmen, who shall acquaint me with what has passed.' 'We hear and obey,' answered they and set out forthright for Isbanir. As they flew between heaven and earth, they caught sight of a mighty army, as it were the swollen sea, and Kailjan said to Courjan, ‘Let us descend and see what is this army.’ So they alighted and walking among the troops, found them Persians and questioned the soldiers whose men they were and whither they were bound; to which they made answer, saying, ‘We are bound for Irak, to kill Gherib and all who are with him.’ When the Marids heard this, they repaired to the pavilion of the Persian general, whose name was Rustem, and waited till the soldiers slept, when they took up Rustem, bed and all, and made for Gherib’s camp. They arrived there by mid night and going to the door of the King’s pavilion, said, ‘Permission;’ which when the latter heard, he sat up and said, ‘Enter.’ So they entered and set down the couch with Rustem asleep thereon. Quoth Gherib, ‘Who is this?’ and they answered, ‘This is a Persian prince, whom we met coming with a great host, thinking to slay thee and thine; and we have brought him to thee, that he may tell thee what thou hast a mind to know.’ ‘Fetch me a hundred men,’ said Gherib, and they fetched them; whereupon he made them draw their swords and stand at Rustem’s head.

Then they awoke him and he opened his eyes and finding a vault of steel over his head, shut them again, saying, ‘What is this foul dream?’ But Kailjan pricked him with his sword-point and he sat up and said ‘Where am I?’ Quoth Sehim, ‘Thou art in the presence of King Gherib, son-in-law of the King of the Persians. What is thy name and whither goest thou?’ When Rustem heard Gherib’s name, he bethought himself and said, ‘Am I asleep or on wake?’ Whereupon Sehim dealt him a buffet, saving, ‘Why dost thou not answer?’ And he raised his head and said, ‘Who brought me from my tent out of the midst of my men?’ Quoth Gherib, ‘These two Marids brought thee.’ So he looked at them and voided in his hose [for affright]. Then the Marids fell upon him, baring their tusks and brandishing their swords, and said to him, ‘Wilt thou not rise and kiss the earth before King Gherib?’ and he trembled at them and was assured that he was not asleep; so he stood up and kissed the earth before Gherib, saying, ‘The blessing of the Fire be on thee, O King, and long be thy life!’ ‘O dog of the Persians,’ answered Gherib, ‘fire is not worshipful, for that it is harmful and profiteth not save for [cooking] food.’ ‘Who then is worshipful?’ asked Rustem; and

Gherib replied, saying, ‘God alone is worshipworth, who made thee and formed thee and created the heavens and the earth.’ Quoth the Persian, ‘What shall I say, that I may become of the party of this Lord and enter thy faith?’ ‘Say,’ rejoined Gherib, ‘“There is no god but God, and Abraham is the friend of God.”’ So Rustem pronounced the profession of the faith and was written of the people of felicity.

Then said he to Gherib, ‘Know, O my lord, that thy father-in-law, King Sabour, seeks to kill thee and hath sent me with a hundred thousand men, charging me to spare none of you.’ Quoth Gherib, ‘Is this my reward for having delivered his daughter from death and dishonour? God will requite him his evil intent. But what is thy name?’ And the Persian answered, saying, ‘My name is Rustem, general of Sabour.’ Quoth Gherib, ‘Thou shalt have the like rank in my army. But tell me, O Rustem, how is it with the princess Fekhr Taj?’ ‘May thy head live, O King of the age!’ answered Rustem. ‘What was the cause of her death?’ asked Gherib; and Rustem said, ‘O my lord, no sooner badst thou left us, than one of the princess’s women went in to King Sabour and said to him, “O my lord, didst thou give Gherib leave to lie with the princess my mistress?” “ No, by the virtue of the fire!” answered he, and drawing his sword, went in to his daughter and said to her, “O filthy baggage, why didst thou suffer yonder Bedouin to lie with thee, without wedding or dower?” “O my father,” answered she, “thou gavest him leave to lie with me.” “Did he have to do with thee?” asked he. But she was silent and hung down her head. Then he cried out to the midwives and slave-girls, saying, “Bind this harlot’s hands behind her and look at her privy parts!” So they did as he bade and said to him, “O King, she hath lost her maidenhead.” Whereupon he ran at her and would have slain her, but her mother threw herself between them, saying, “O King, slay her not, lest thou be for ever dishonoured; but shut her in a cell till she die.” So he cast her into prison till nightfall, when he called two of his officers and said to them, “Carry her afar off and cast her into the river Jihon and tell none.” They did his commandment, and indeed her memory is forgotten and her time is past.’

When Gherib heard this, he said, ‘By the virtue of Abraham the Friend, I will assuredly go to yonder dog and destroy him and lay waste his kingdom!' Then he sent letters to Jemrcan and to the governors of Mosul and Meyya Farikin and turning to Rustem, said to him, 'How many men hadst thou in thine army?' 'A hundred thousand Persian horse,' answered he. And Gherib said, 'Take ten thousand horse and go to thy people and occupy them with war.' So Rustem took ten thousand Arab horse and departed, saying in himself, 'I will do a thing that shall whiten my face with King Gherib.' So he fared on seven days, till there remained but half a day's journey between him and the Persian camp; when he divided his men into four troops and bade them attack the Persians from different sides and fall on them with the sword. So they rode on from even-tide till midnight, when they came to the camp of the Persians, who were asleep in security, and fell upon them, shouting, 'God is Most Great!' Whereupon the Persians started up from sleep and their feet slipped and the sabre went round amongst them; for the All-knowing King was wroth with them, and Rustem wrought amongst them as fire in dry firewood, till, by the end of the night, the whole of the Persian host was slain or wounded or fled, and the Muslims made prize of their tents and baggage and horses and camels and treasure-chests. Then they alighted and rested in the tents of the beaten army, till Gherib came up and seeing what Rustem had done, invested him with a dress of honour and said to him, 'O Rustem, it was thou didst put the Persians to the rout; wherefore all the spoil is thine.' So he kissed Gherib's hand and thanked him, and they rested till the end of the day, when they set out for King Sabour's capitaL

Meanwhile, the survivors of the defeated army reached Isbanir and went in to Sabour, crying out and saying, 'Alas!' and 'Ruin!' and 'Woe worth the day!' Quoth he, 'What hath befallen you and who hath smitten you with his mischief?' So they told him all that had passed and how his general Rustem had embraced Islam and fallen upon them in the darkness of the night and routed them. When the King heard this, he cast his crown to the ground and said, 'There is no worth left to us!' Then he turned to his son Werd Shah and said to him, 'O my son, there is none for this affair but thou.' 'By thy life, O my father,' answered Werd Shah, 'I will assuredly bring Gherib and his chiefs of the people in chains and slay all who are with him.' Then he numbered his army and found it eleven score thousand men.

So they slept, intending to set forth on the morrow; but, next morning, as they were about to depart, a cloud of dust arose and spread till it covered the lands and baffled the sharpest sight.

Now Sabour had mounted to take leave of his son, and when he saw this great dust, he despatched a runner to discover the cause thereof, who went and returned, saying, ‘O my lord, Gherib and his men are upon you;’ where-upon they unloaded their beasts and drew out in order of battle. When Gherib came up and saw the Persians drawn out in battalia, he cried out to his men, saying, ‘Charge, and the blessing of God be upon you!’ So they waved the standards and the Arabs and the Persians drove at each other and people fell upon people. The blood ran in streams and all souls saw death face to face; the brave advanced and pressed forward and the coward turned and fled and they ceased not from the battle till ended day, when the drums beat the retreat and the two hosts drew apart. Then Sabour commanded to pitch his camp before the city-gate, and Gherib set up his tents in front of theirs and every one went to his tent until the morning. As soon as it was day, the two hosts mounted their strong horses and couched their lances and donned their harness of war; then they raised their war-cries and drew out in battle-array, whilst all the lordly champions and the lions of war came forth.

The first to open the chapter of battle was Rustem, who spurred his charger into the mid-field and cried out, saying, ‘God is Most Great! I am Rustem, chief of the champions of the Arabs and the Persians. Who is for jousting, who is for fighting? Let no sluggard or weakling come out to me to-day!’ Then there came forth to him a champion of the Persians and there befell between them a sore battle, till Rustem smote his adversary with a mace he had with him, seventy pounds in weight, and beat his head down upon his breast, and he fell to the earth, dead and drowned in his blood. This was grievous to Sabour and he commanded his men to charge; so they drove at the Muslims, invoking the aid of the light-giving Sun, whilst the Muslims called for help upon the Magnanimous King. But the infidels outnumbered the true believers and made them drink the cup of death; which when Gherib saw, he drew his sword El Maliic and crying out [his war-cry], fell upon the Persian; with Kailjan and Courjan at his either stirrup; nor did he leave tourneying amongst them with the sword till he hewed his way to the standard-bearer and smote him on the head with the flat of his sword, whereupon he fell down in a swoon and the two Marids carried him off to their camp. When the Persians saw the standard fallen, they turned and fled towards the gates of the city; but the Muslims followed them with the sword and they crowded together to enter the city, so that they could not shut the gates and there died of them much people. Then Rustem and Saadan and Jemrcan and Sehim and Kailjan and Courjan and all the Muslim braves and the champions of the Faith of Unity fell upon the misbelieving Persians in the gates and the blood of the infidels ran in the streets like a tide, till they threw down their arms and harness and called out for quarter; whereupon the Muslims stayed their hands from the slaughter and drove them to their tents, as one drives a flock of sheep.

Meanwhile, Gherib returned to his pavilion, where he did off his harness and washed himself of the blood of the infidels; after which he donned his royal robes and sat down on his chair of estate. Then he called for the King of the Persians and said to him, ‘O dog of the Persian; what moved thee to deal thus with thy daughter? How seest thou me unworthy to be her husband?’ And Sabour answered, saying, ‘O King, be not wroth with me for that which I did; for I repent me and came out to thee in battle but in my fear of thee.’ When Gherib heard this, he bade throw him down and beat him. So they beat him, till he could no longer groan, and cast him among the prisoners. Then Gherib expounded Islam to the Persians and six-score thousand of them embraced he faith, and the rest he put to the sword. Moreover, all the townsfolk professed Islam and Gherib mounted and entered the city in great state.

Then he went into the King’s palace and sitting down on his throne, gave gifts and largesse and distributed the booty and treasure among the Arabs and Persians, wherefore they loved him and wished him power and victory and length of days. But Fekhr Taj’s mother remembered her daughter and raised the voice of mourning for her, and the palace was filled with crying and lamentation. Gherib heard this and entering the harem, asked the women what ailed them, whereupon the princess’s mother came forward and said, ‘O my lord, thy presence put me in mind of my daughter and how she would have joyed in thy coming, had she been alive.’ Gherib wept for her and sitting down on his throne, called for Sabour, and they brought him, stumbling in his shackles. Quoth Gherib to him, ‘O dog of the Persians, what didst thou with thy daughter?’ ‘I gave her to such an one and such an one,’ answered the King, ‘saying, “Drown her in the river Jihon.”’ So Gherib sent for the two men and said to them, ‘Is what he saith true?’ ‘Yes, O King,’ answered they; ‘yet did we not drown her, but took pity on her and left her on the banks of the Jihon, saying, “Save thyself and do not return to the city, lest the King put thee to death and us with thee.” This is all we know of her.’ When Gherib heard this, he summoned the astrologers and said to them, ‘Draw me a geomantic figure and find out what is come of Fekhr Taj and whether she is still in the chains of life or dead.’ So they levelled a table of sand and drawing a geomantic figure, said, ‘O King, the princess is alive and hath borne a male child; but she is with a tribe of the Jinn and will be absent from thee twenty years; look, therefore, how many years thou hast been absent.’ So he reckoned up the years of his absence and found them eight years and said, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ Then he sent for all Sabour’s governors of towns and strongholds and they came and did him homage.

One day after this, as he sat in his palace, a cloud of dust appeared in the distance and spread till it covered the whole country and darkened the horizon. So he despatcbed the two Marids to reconnoitre, and they went forth and snatching up a horseman of the advancing army, returned and set him down before Gherib, saying, ‘Ask this fellow, for he is of the army.’ Quoth Gherib, ‘Whose army is this?’ And the man answered, ‘O King, it is the army of Khired Shah, King of Shiraz, who is come to do battle with thee.’ Now the manner of Khired Shah’s coming was on this wise. When Gherib defeated Sabour’s army, as hath been related, and took the King himself, the latter’s son fled, with a handful of his father’s men, to Shiraz, where he went in to King Khired Shah and kissed the earth before him, whilst the tears ran down his cheeks. When the King saw him in this case, he said to him, ‘Lift thy head, O youth, and tell me what makes thee weep.’ ‘O King,’ answered the prince, ‘a King of the Arabs, by name Gherib, hath fallen on us and taken the King my father prisoner and slain the Persians and made them drink the cup of death.’ And he told him all that had befallen. Quoth Khired Shah, ‘Is my wife well?’ And the prince answered, saying, ‘Gherib hath taken her.’ ‘As my head liveth,’ cried the King, ‘I will not leave a Bedouin or a Muslim on the face of the earth!’ So he wrote letters to his governors, who levied their troops and joined him with an army of fourscore and five thousand men. Then he opened his armouries and distributed arms and armour to the troops, after which he set out with them and journeyed till he came to Isbanir and encamped before the city-gate.

With this Kailjan and Courjan came in to Gherib and kissing his knee, said to him, ‘O King, heal our hearts and give us this army to our share!’ And he said, ‘Up and at them!’ So they flew up into the air and lighting down in the pavilion of the King of Shiraz, found him seated on his chair of estate, with the Prince of Persia sitting on his right hand, and about him his captains, with whom he was taking counsel for the slaughter of the Muslims. Kailjan caught up the Prince and Courjan the King and flew back with them to Gherib, who caused beat them, till they fainted. Then the Marids returned to the Shirazi camp and drawing their swords, which no mortal man might wield, fell upon the infidels, and God hurried their souls to the fire and evil was the abiding-place [to which they went], whilst they saw nothing but two swords flashing and reaping men, as a husbandman reaps corn. So they forsook their tents and mounting their horses bare-backed, fled for their lives. The Marids pursued them two days and slew of them much people, after which they returned and kissed Gherib's hand. He thanked them for that which they had done and said to them, 'The spoil of the infidels is yours alone: none shall share with you therein.' So they called down blessings on him and going forth gathered the booty together and abode in their own place.

Meanwhile, the remains of the beaten army drew not bridle, till they reached the city of Shiraz and there lifted up the voice of weeping for those that had been slain of them. Now King Khired Shah had a brother by name Siran the Sorcerer, than whom there was no greater wizard in his day, and he lived apart from his brother in a certain stronghold, called the Castle of Fruits, in a place abounding in trees and streams and birds and flowers, half a day's journey from Shiraz. So the fugitives betook them thither and went in to Siran, weeping and crying out. Quoth he, 'O folk, what ails you to weep?' And they told him all that had happened, whereupon the light in his eyes became darkness and he said, 'By the virtue of my faith, I will slay Gherib and all his men and leave not one alive to tell the tale!' Then he pronounced certain magical words and summoned the Red King, who appeared and Siran said to him, 'Go to Isbanir and fall on Gherib, as he sits upon his throne.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the genie, and gathering his troops, repaired to Isbanir and set upon Gherib. When the latter saw him, he drew his sword El Mahic and he and Kailjan and Courjan fell upon the army of the Red King and slew of them five hundred and thirty and wounded the King himself grievously; whereupon he and his people fled and stayed not in their flight, till they reached the Castle of Fruits and went in to Siran, crying out and saying, 'Woe!' and 'Ruin!' And the Red King said to Siran, 'O sage, Gherib hath with him the enchanted sword of Japhet son of Noah, whomsoever he smites withal, he cuts him in sunder, and with him also are two Marids from the Mountain Caf, given him by King Muraash. He it is who slew the Blue King and Bercan, lord of the Cornelian City, and did to death much people of the Jinn.'

When Siran heard this, he dismissed the Red King and conjuring up a Marid, by name Zuazia, gave him a drachm of powdered henbane and said to him, 'Take the form of a sparrow and go to King Gherib's palace at Isbanir. Wait till he is asleep and there is none with him; then put the henbane up his nostrils and bring him to me.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the Marid and changing himself into a sparrow, flew to Isbanir, where he perched on a window of the palace and waited till all Gherib's attendants retired and the King himself slept. Then he flew down and going up to Gherib, blew the powdered henbane into his nostrils, till he lost his senses, whereupon he wrapped him in the coverlet of the bed and flew off with him, like the storm-wind, to the Castle of Fruits; where he arrived at midnight and laid his prize before Siran. The enchanter thanked him and would have put Gherib to death, as he lay senseless; but a man of his people withheld him, saying, 'O sage, if thou slay him, his friend King Muraash will fall on us with all his Jinn and lay waste our realm.' 'How then shall we do with him? asked Siran. 'Cast him into the Jihon,' answered the other, 'and he will ho drowned and none will know who threw him in.' And Siran bade the Marid take Gherib and cast him into the Jihon. So he carried him down to the river-bank, but it was grievous to him to drown him, wherefore he made a raft of wood and binding it with cords, pushed it and Gherib thereon out into the current, which carried it away.

Meanwhile, when Gherib's people awoke in the morning and went in to do their service to their King, they found him not and seeing his rosary on the throne, awaited him awhile, but he came not. So they sought out the chamberlain and said to him, 'Go into the harem and look for the King; for it is not his wont to tarry till this time.' Accordingly, the chamberlain entered the harem and enquired for the King, but the women said, 'We have not seen him mince yesterday.' So he returned and told the officers, who were confounded and said, 'Let us see if he have gone to take his pleasure in the gardens.' Then they went out and questioned the gardeners if they had seen the King, and they answered, 'No;' whereat they were sore concerned and searched all the gardens till the end of the day, when they returned, weeping. Moreover, the Marids sought for him all round the town, but returned after three days, without having come on any tidings of him. So the people donned black and made their complaint to the Lord of all Creatures, who doth what pleaseth Him.

Meanwhile, the current bore the raft along for five days, till it brought it to the salt sea, where the waves played with Gherib and his stomach, being troubled, threw up the henbane. Then he opened his eyes and finding himself in the midst of the sea, tossed about by the waves, said, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most Uigh, the Supreme! I wonder who hath done this thing with me!’ Presently, as he lay, knowing not what to make of his case, he caught sight of a ship and signalled with his sleeve to the sailors, who came to him and took him up, saying, ‘Who art thou and whence comest thou?’ Quoth he, ‘Do ye feed me and give me to drink, till I recover myself, and after I will tell you who I am.’ So they brought him water and victual, and he ate and drank and God restored his reason to him. Then said he to them, ‘O folk, what countrymen are ye and what is your faith? ‘We are from Kerej,’ answered they, ‘and worship an idol called Mincash.’ ‘Perdition to you and your idol!’ cried Gherib. ‘O dogs, none is worthy of worship save God who created all things, who saith to a thing “Be!” and it is.’ When they heard this, they fell upon him in great wrath and would have seized him. Now he was unarmed, but whomsoever he struck, he smote down and deprived of life, till he had felled forty men, after which they overcame him by force of numbers and bound him fast, saying. ‘We will not put him to death save in our own country, that we may [first] show him to our King.’

Then they sailed on till they came to the city of Kerej, the builder whereof was a fierce Amalekite and set up at each gate of the city a magical figure of brass, which, whenever a stranger entered, blew a blast on a trumpet, that all in the city heard it and fell upon the stranger and slew him, except he embraced their faith. When Gherib entered the city, the brazen figure stationed at the gate blew such a terrible blast that the King was affrighted and going in to his idol, found fire and smoke issuing from its eyes and mouth and nostrils. Now a devil had entered the belly of the idol and speaking as with its tongue, said to the King of the city, ‘O King, there is come to thy city one Gherib, King of Irak, who uses to bid the folk quit their faith and worship his Lord; wherefore, when they bring him before thee, look thou spare him not' So the King went out and sat down on his throne; and presently, the sailors brought in Gherib, saying, 'O King, we found this youth shipwrecked in the midst of the sea, and he believeth not in our gods.' Then they told him all that had passed and the King said, 'Carry him to the house of the great idol and cut his throat before him, so haply he may look favourably upon us.' But the Vizier said, 'O King, it befits not to slaughter him thus, for he would die forthright; rather let us burn him with fire.'

So the King commanded to cast Gherib into prison and caused wood to be brought; and they made a great pyre and set fire to it, and it burnt till the morning. Then the King and the people of the city came forth and the King sent to fetch Gherib; but his men found him not; so they returned and told the King, who said, 'How made he his escape?' Quoth they, 'We found the doors locked and the chains and shackles cast down.' Whereat the King marvelled and said, 'Hath this fellow flown up to heaven or sunk into the earth?' And they said, 'We know not.' Then said the King, 'I will go and ask my god, and he will tell me whither he is gone.' So he rose and went in, to prostrate himself to his idol, but found it not and began to rub his eyes and say, 'Am I asleep or awake?' Then he turned to his Vizier and said to him, 'Where is my god and where is the prisoner? By my faith, O dog of Vmziers, hadst thou not counselled me to burn him, I had slaughtered him; for it is he who hath stolen my god and fled; and needs must I be avenged of him I' Then he drew his sword and cut off the Vizier's head.

Now there was a strange cause for Gherib's escape, and it was on this wise. When they had shut him up in a cell adjoining the temple of the idol, he rose to pray, calling upon the name of God the Most High and seeking deliverance of Him, may He be exalted and glorified! The Marid who had charge of the idol and spoke in its name, heard him and fear gat hold upon his heart and he said, 'Confusion! Who is this that seeth me and whom I see not?' So he went in to Gherib and throwing himself at his feet, said to him, 'O my lord, what must I say that I may become of thy company and enter thy religion?' 'Say,' answered Gherib, "'There is no god but God, and Abraham is the Friend of God."' So the Marid pronounced the profession of the faith and was written of the people of felicity. Now his name was Zelzal, son of El Muzelzel, one of the chief of the Kings of the Jinn. Then he unbound Gherib and taking him and the idol, made for the upper air.

When the King's soldiers saw what had befallen, they renounced the worship of the idol and drawing their swords, slew the King; after which they fell on one another, and the sword went round amongst them three days, till there abode alive but two men, one of whom overcame the other and killed him. Then the boys attacked the survivor and slew him and fell to fighting amongst themselves, till they were all killed; and the women and girls fled to the hamlets and villages; wherefore the city became desert and none dwelt therein but the owl.

Meanwhile, the Marid Zelzal flew with Gherib towards his own country, the Islands of Camphor and the Castle of Crystal and the land of the Enchanted Calf, so called because its King, Muzelzel, had a pied calf which he clad in housings of gold brocade and worshipped as a god. One day, the King and his people went in to the calf and found him trembling; so the King said, 'O my god, what hath troubled thee?' Whereupon the Satan in the calf's belly cried out and said, 'O Muzelzel, thy son hath deserted to the faith of Abraham the Friend, at the hands of Gherib, King of Irak.' When the King heard this, he was confounded and going forth, sat down upon his throne. Then he summoned his grandees and told them what be had heard from the idol, whereat they marvelled and said, 'What shall we do, O King?' Quoth he, 'When my son comes and ye see me embrance him, do ye lay hold of him.' And they said, 'We hear and obey.'

After two days came Zelzal and Gherib, with the King's idol of Kerej, but no sooner had they entered the palace gate than the Jinn seized on them and carried them before Muzelzel, who looked at his son with angry eyes and said to him, 'O dog of a genie, hast thou left thy faith and that of thy fathers and grandfathers?' Quoth Zelzal, 'I have embraced the true faith, and thou, do thou likewise and thou shalt be saved from the wrath of the Almighty King, Creator of Night and Day.' Therewith his father waxed wroth and said, 'O whoreson, dost thou affront me with these words?' Then he bade clap him in prison and turning to Gherib, said to him, ‘O wretch of a mortal, how hast thou abused my son’s wit and seduced him from his faith?’ Quoth Gherib, ‘Indeed, I have brought him out of error into the way of righteousness, out of Hell into Paradise and out of idolatry to the true faith.’ Whereupon the King cried out to a Marid called Siyyar, saying, ‘Take this dog and cast him into the Valley of Fire, that he may perish.’

Now this valley was situate in the desert quarter of the world and was so named by reason of the excess of its heat and the flaming of its fire, which was so fierce that none who fell therein could live an hour, but was destroyed; and it was compassed about by high and slippery mountains, wherein was no opening. So Siyyar took up Gherib and flew with him towards the Valley of Fire, till he came within an hour’s journey thereof, when, being aweary, he alighted in a valley full of trees and streams and fruits, and setting down Gherib, chained as he was, fell asleep for weariness. When Gherib saw that he slept and heard him snore, be strove with his bonds till he burst them; then, taking up a heavy stone, he cast it down on the Marid’s head and crushed his bones, so that he died forthright. Then he fared on into the valley and found himself in a great island in mid-ocean, full of all fruits, that lips and tongue could desire. So he abode alone on the island, drinking of its waters and eating of its fruits and of fish that he caught, and days and years passed over him, till he had sojourned there seven years.

One day, as he sat, there came down on him from the air two Marids, each carrying a man; and they said to him, ‘Who art thou, O fellow, and of which of the tribes art thou?’ Now they took him for a genie, because his hair was grown long; and he replied, saying, ‘I am no genie,’ and told them all that had befallen him; whereupon they grieved for him and said, ‘Abide here till we carry these two lambs to our king, that he may make the morning meal of the one and sup on the other, and after we will come back and carry thee to thine own country.’ He thanked them and said, ‘Where are the lambs?’ Quoth they, ‘These two mortals are the lambs.’ And Gherib said, ‘I crave the protection of the God of Abraham the Friend, the Lord of all creatures, who hath power over everything!’ Then the Marids flew away and Gherib abode awaiting them two days, when one of them returned, bringing with him a suit of clothes, in which he clad him. Then he took him up and flew with him out of sight of earth, till Gherib heard the angels glorifying God in heaven, and a flaming arrow issued from amongst them and made for the Marid, who fled from it towards the earth. The arrow pursued him, till he came within a spear's cast of the earth, when Gherib leapt from his back, and the fiery shaft overtook the Marid, who became a heap of ashes.

As for Gherib, he fell into the sea and sank two fathoms deep, after which he came to the surface and swam for two days and two nights, till his strength failed him and he despaired of life. But, on the third day, he caught sight of a steep and mountainous island; so he made for it and landing, walked on inland, where he rested a day and a night, feeding on the fruits of the earth. Then he climbed to the mountain-top and descending the opposite slope, fared on two days till he came in sight of a wailed and fortified city, abounding in trees and streams. So he made for it, but, when he reached the gate, the warders seized on him and carried him to their queen, whose name was Janshah. Now she was five hundred years old, and every man who entered the city, they brought to her and she lay with him; then, when he had done his work, she put him to death, and so had she slain many men. When she saw Gherib, he pleased her and she said to him, 'What is thy name and faith and whence comest thou?' Quoth he, 'My name is Gherib, King of Irak, and I am a Muslim.' 'Leave this faith,' said she, 'and enter mine and I will marry thee and make thee king.' But he looked at her with angry eyes and said, 'Thy faith perish with thee!' Quoth she, 'Dost thou blaspheme my idol, the which is of red cornelian, set with pearls and jewels?' And she cried out to her men, saying, 'Imprison him in the house of the idol; peradventure it will soften his heart.' So they shut him up in the temple and locking the doors upon him, went their way. As soon as they were gone, Gherib went up to the idol, which was of red cornelian, with collars of pearls and precious stones about its neck, and lifting it up, dashed it on the ground and broke it in pieces; after which he lay down and slept till daybreak.

Next morning, the Queen sat down on her bed of estate and said to her men, 'Bring me the prisoner.' So they opened the temple doors and entering, found the idol broken in pieces, whereupon they buffeted their faces, till the blood ran from the corners of their eyes. Then they made at Gherib, to seize him; but he smote one of them with his fist and killed him, and so did he with another and another, till he had slain five-and-twenty of them and the rest fled to Queen Janshah, crying out. Quoth she, ‘What is the matter?’ And they said, ‘The prisoner hath broken thine idol and slain thy men,’ and told her all that had passed. When she heard this, she cast her crown to the ground and said, ‘There is no worth left in idols!’ Then she mounted with a thousand fighting-men and rode to the temple, where she found Gherib had gotten him a sword and come forth and was slaying men and over-throwing warriors. When she saw his prowess, her heart was drowned in the love of him and she said in herself, ‘I have no need of the idol and care for nought but this Gherib, that he may lie in my bosom the rest of my life.’ Then she bade her men hold aloof from Gherib, and going up to him, muttered certain magical words, whereupon his arm became benumbed and the sword dropped from his grasp. So they seized him and bound him, as he stood confounded and stupefied.

Then the Queen returned to her palace and seating herself on her throne, bade her people withdraw and leave Gherib with her. When they were alone, she said to him, ‘O dog of the Arabs, wilt thou break my idol and slay my men?’ ‘O accursed woman,’ answered he, ‘had he been a god, he had defended himself!’ Quoth she, ‘Lie with me and I will forgive thee that which thou hast done.’ But he replied, saying, ‘I will do nought of this.’ And she said, ‘By the virtue of my faith, I will punish thee grievously!’ So she took water and conjuring over it, sprinkled it upon him and he became an ape. And she used to feed and keep him in a closet, appointing one to care for him; and in this plight he abode two years. Then she called him to her one day and said to him, ‘Wilt thou hearken to me?’ And he signed to her with his head, as who should say, ‘Yes.’ So she rejoiced and freed him from the enchantment. Then she brought him food and he ate and toyed with her and kissed her, so that she trusted in him. When it was night, she lay down and said to him, ‘Come, do thy business.’ ‘It is well,’ answered he and mounting on her breast, seized her by the neck and broke it, nor did he arise from her till life had left her. Then, seeing an open cabinet, he went in and found there a sword of watered steel and a buckler of Chinese iron; so he armed himself cap-a-pie and waited till the day.

As soon as it was morning, he went forth and stood at the gate of the palace. When the Amirs came and would have gone in to do their service to the Queen, they found Gherib standing at the gate, clad in complete steel; and he said to them, ‘O folk, leave the service of idols and worship the All-wise King, Creator of Night and Day, who giveth life to dry bones, for He made all things and hath dominion over all.’ When they heard this, they ran at him, but he fell on them like a ravening lion and slew of them much people; but, when the night came, they overcame him by dint of numbers and would have taken him, when behold, there descended upon the infidels a thousand Marids, under the command of Zelzal, who plied them with the keen sabre and made them drink the cup of perdition, whilst God hurried their souls to the fire, till but few were left of the people of Janshah and the rest cried out for quarter and believed in the Requiting King, whom no one thing diverteth from another, the Destroyer of tyrants and Exterminator of the Chosroës, Lord of this world and the next.

Then Zelzal saluted Gherib and gave him joy of his safety; and Gherib said to him, ‘How knewest thou of my plight?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Zelzal, ‘my father kept me in prison two years, after which he released me, and I abode with him another year, till I was restored to favour with him, when I slew him and his subjects submitted to me. I ruled them for a year’s space, till, one night, I lay down to sleep, having thee in my mind, and saw thee, in a dream, fighting against Janshah’s people; wherefore I took these thousand Marids and came to thee.’ And Gherib marvelled at this happy chance. Then he took Janshah’s treasures and those of the slain and appointed a ruler over the city, after which the Marids took up Gherib and the treasure and he lay the same night in the palace of Crystal. He abode Zelzal’s guest six months, at the end of which time he desired to depart; so Zelzal gave him rich presents and despatched three thousand Marids, who brought the spoils of the city of Kerej and added them to those of Janshah. Then Zelzal loaded forty thousand Marids with the treasure and himself taking up Gherib, flew with his host towards the city of Isbanir, where they arrived at midnight.

Gherib looked and seeing the city invested on all sides by a vast army, as it were the swollen sea, said to Zelzal, 'O my brother, how cometh the city thus beleaguered and what is this army?' Then he alighted on the roof of his palace and cried out, saying, 'Ho, Morning Star! Ho, Mehdiyeh!' Whereupon they started up from sleep in amazement and said, 'Who calleth us at this hour?'' Quoth he, 'It is I, your lord, Gherib of the wondrous deeds.' When the princesses heard their lord's voice, they rejoiced and so did the eunuchs and women. Then Gherib went down to them and they threw themselves upon him and raised cries of joy, that all the palace rang again and the captains of the army awoke and said, 'What is to do?' So they made for the palace and said to the eunuchs, 'Hath one of the King's women given birth to a child?' 'No,' answered they; 'but rejoice, for King Gherib hath returned to you.' So they rejoiced, and Gherib came forth to his comrades, who threw themselves upon him and kissed his hands and feet, returning thanks to God the Most High. Then he sat down on his throne, with his officers about him, and questioned them of the beleaguering army. 'O King,' answered they, 'they sat down before the city three days ago, and we know not what they want; for we have had with them neither battle nor speech.'

Now the name of the commander of the besieging army was Murad Shah and he had with him a hundred thousand horse and three thousand foot, besides two hundred tribesmen of the Jinn; and the manner of his coming was on this wise. When the two men, whom Sabour had charged to drown his daughter Fekhr Taj, let her go, bidding her flee for her life, she went forth distracted, knowing not whither to go and saying, 'Where is thine eye, O Gherib, that thou mayst see my case?' and wandered on from place to place and country to country, till she came to a valley abounding in trees and streams, in whose midst stood a lofty and strong-builded castle, as it were one of the pavilions of Paradise. So she betook herself thither and entering the castle, found it hung and carpeted with stuffs of silk, and therein were a hundred beautiful damsels and great plenty of gold and silver vessels. When the damsels saw her, they came up to her and saluted her, deeming her of the damsels of the Jinn, and asked her of her case. Quoth she, 'I am the King's daughter of the Persians,' and told them all that had befallen her; which when they heard, they wept over her and condoled with her, saying, ‘Take comfort and be of good cheer, for here shalt thou have meat and drink and raiment, and we all are thy hand-maids.’ She called down blessings on them and they brought her food, of which she ate till she was satisfied. Then said she to them, ‘Who is the owner of this palace and lord over you?’ Quoth they, ‘King Selsal, son of Dal, is our master; he passes a night here once in every month and departs in the morning to rule over the tribes of the Jinn.’

So Fekhr Taj took up her abode with them and after five days she gave birth to a male child, as he were the moon. They cut the cord of his navel and anointing his eyes with kohl, named him Murad Shah, and he grew up in his mother’s lap. After awhile came Selsal, riding on a paper-white elephant, as he were a tower plastered with gypsum, and attended by the troops of the Jinn. He entered the palace, where the hundred damsels met him and kissed the earth before him, and amongst them Fekhr Taj. When he saw her, he looked at her and said to the others, ‘Who is yonder damsel?’ And they answered, saying, ‘She is the daughter of Sabour, King of the Persians and Turcomans and Medes.’ Quoth he, ‘Who brought her hither?’ And they repeated to him her story; whereat he was moved to pity for her and said to her, ‘Grieve not, but take patience till thy son be grown a man, when I will go to the land of the Persians and strike thy father’s head from his shoulders and seat thy son on the throne in his stead.’ So she rose and kissed his hands and blessed him.

Then she abode in the castle and her son grew up and was reared with the children of the King. They used to ride forth together a-hunting, and he became skilled in the chase of the wild beasts and of the ravening lions and ate of their flesh, till his heart became harder than the rock. When he reached the age of fifteen, his spirit waxed big in him and he said to Fekhr Taj, ‘O my mother, who is my father?’ ‘O my son,’ answered she, ‘Gherib, King of Irak, is thy father and I am the King’s daughter of the Persians,’ and she told him her story. Quoth he, ‘Did my grandfather indeed give orders to slay thee and my father Gherib ? And she answered, ‘Yes.’ Whereupon, ‘By the claim thou hast on me for that thou rearedst me,’ cried he, ‘I will assuredly go to thy father’s city and cut off his head and bring it to thee!’ And she rejoiced in his speech.

Then he used to go a-riding with two hundred Marids till he grew to man's estate, when he fell to making raids and excursions in quest of plunder, till, one day, he attacked the city of Shiraz and took it and cut off the King's head, as he sat on his throne, and slew many of his troop; whereupon the rest, to the number of ten thousand horse, cried out for quarter and kissed his stirrups. He led them to Balkh, where he slew the King of the city and put his men to the rout and made himself master of the riches of the place. Thence he passed to Nourain, at the head of an army of thirty thousand horse, and the King of the city came out to him, with presents and tribute, and did him homage. Then he went on to Samarcand of the Persians and took the city, and after that to Akhlat and took that town also; nor was there any city he came to but he took it. On this wise he became at the head of a great army, and all the booty he made he divided among his soldiers, who loved him for his valour and munificence. At last he came to Isbanir el Medain and sat down before it, saying, 'Let us wait till the rest of my army come up, when I will seize on my grandfather and solace my mother's heart by striking off his head in her presence.' So he sent for her, and by reason of this, there was no battle for three days, at the end of which time Gherib and Zelzal arrived with the forty thousand Marids, laden with treasure. Presently came Fekhr Taj, and her son Murad Shah embraced her, saying, 'Abide in thy tent till I bring thy father to thee.' And she sought succour for him of the Lord of the Worlds, the Lord of the heavens and the earths.

Next morning, as soon as it was day, Murad Shah mounted and rode forth, with the two hundred Marids on his right hand and the kings of men on his left, whilst the drums beat a point of war. When Gherib heard this, he also took horse and calling his people to battle, rode out, with the Jinn on his right hand and the men on his left. Then came forth Murad Shah, armed cap-a-pie, and spurred his charger right and left, saying, 'O folk, let none come forth to me but your King. If he conquer me, he shall be lord of both armies, and if I conquer him, I will slay him, as I have slain others.' When Gherib heard his speech, he said, 'Avaunt, O dog of the Arabs!' And they drove at each other and thrust with spears, till they broke, then hewed at each other with swords, till the blades were notched; nor did they cease to advance and retreat and wheel and feint, till the day was half spent and their horses fell down under them, when they dismounted and gripped each other. Then Murad Shah lifted Gherib up and strove to dash him to the ground; but Gherib seized him by the ears and pulled them with his might, till it seemed to him as if the heavens were falling on the earth and he cried out, with his heart in his mouth, saying, ‘I yield myself to thy mercy, O champion of the age!’ So Gherib bound him, and the Marids his comrades would have charged and rescued him, but Gherib fell on them with a thousand Marids and was about to smite them down, when they cried out for quarter and threw down their arms.

Then Gherib returned to his pavilion, which was of green silk, embroidered with red gold and set with pearls and jewels, and seating himself on his throne, called for Murad Shah. So they brought him, shuffling in his fetters, and Gherib said to him, ‘O dog of the Arabs, who art thou that thou shouidst ride forth and measure thyself against kings?’ ‘O my lord,’ replied Murad Shah, ‘reproach me not, for indeed I have excuse.’ Quoth Gherib, ‘What is thine excuse?’ And he answered, saying, ‘Know, O my lord, that I came out to avenge my mother and my father on Sabaur, King of the Persians; for he would have slain them; but my mother escaped and I know not whether he killed my father or not.’ ‘By Allah! rejoined Gherib, ‘thou art indeed excusable! But who were thy father and mother and what are their names?’ Quoth Murad Shah, ‘My father was Gherib, King of Irak, and my mother Fekhr Taj, daughter of King Sabour of Persia.’ When Gherib heard this, he gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon. They sprinkled rose-water on him, till he came to himself, when he said to Murad Shah, ‘Art thou indeed Gherib’s son by Fekhr Taj?’ And he answered, ‘Yes.’ Quoth Gherib, ‘Thou art a champion, the son of a champion. Loose my son.’ And Sehim and Kailjan went up to Murad Shah and loosed him.

Then Gherib embraced him and seating him beside himself, said to him, ‘Where is thy mother?’ ‘She is with me in my tent,’ answered Murad Shah; and Gherib said, ‘Bring her to me.’ So Murad Shah mounted and repaired to his camp, where his men met him, rejoicing in his safety, and asked him of his case; but he answered, saying, ‘This is no time for questions.’ Then he went in to his mother and told her what had passed; whereat she rejoiced with an exceeding joy. So he carried her to Gherib, and they embraced and rejoiced in each other. Then Fekhr Taj and Murad Shah embraced Islam and expounded the faith to their troops, who all made profession with heart and tongue. After this, Gherib sent for Sabour and his son Wird Shah and upbraided them for their evil dealing and expounded Islam to them; but they refused to profess. So he crucified them on the gate of the city and the people decorated the town and held high festival. Then Gherib crowned Murad Shah with the crown of the Chosroës and made him King of the Persians and Turcomans and Medes. Moreover, he made his uncle, King Damigh, King over Irak, and all peoples and lands submitted themselves to Gherib. Then he abode in his kingship, doing justice among his subjects, wherefore all the people loved him, and he and his wives and comrades ceased not from all delight and solace of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies, and extolled be the perfection of Him whose glory endureth for ever and whose benefits embrace all His creatures! This is all that hath come down to us of the history of Gherib and Agib.

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OTBEH AND REYYA.

(Quoth Abdallah ben Maamer el Caisi), I went one year on the pilgrimage to the Holy House of God, and when I had accomplished my pilgrimage, I turned back to visit the tomb of the Prophet, whom God bless and preserve! One night, as I sat in the Garden, between the tomb and the pulpit, I heard a low moaning in a soft voice; so I listened and heard one repeat the following verses:

Is it the lamentation of the doves of the lotus-tree That stirs the springs of sadness up in the heart of thee?
Or doth remembrance irk thee of maiden fair and sweet, That hath thy soul afflicted with care and misery?
O night, thou lingerest sadly on one who's sick for love! Of love and lack of patience full sore complaineth he.
Thou makest him still wakeful, who's all with passion's heat Consumed, as on live embers he burns unquenchably.
The full moon is my witness that I am passion's slave, Love-maddened for a maiden who's like the moon to see.
I deemed not I should ever enamoured be, until This wise I was afflicted and knew it not, ah me!

Then the voice ceased and I abode perplexed, not knowing whence it came to me; but presently it again took up its lament and recited the following verses:

Was it the ghost of Reyya that racked thy heart, when she, By night black-tressed and sombre, in dreams did visit thee?
Doth longing to thine eyelids cleave with its wakefulness, And doth the nightly phantom still rob thy soul of glee?
Unto my night, whilst darkness even as an ocean was, Wherein waves clashed and billowed, sea surging against sea,
I cried, "O night, thou weariest a lover unto whom, Except the morn, nor helper nor succour may there be."
But, "Rail not at my slowness; for love's the present cause Of sadness and affliction," it answered unto me.

Now, at the first of the verses, I sprang up and made for the quarter whence the sound came, nor had the voice made an end of repeating them, ere I was with the speaker and saw a youth of the utmost beauty, the hair of whose face had not sprouted and in whose cheeks tears had worn two furrows. Quoth I to him, 'Fair befall thee for a youth!' And he, 'And thee also. Who art thou?' 'Abdallah ben Maamer el Caisi,' answered I, and he said, 'Dost thou want aught?' Quoth I, 'I was sitting in the Garden and nought hath troubled me this night but thy voice. With my life would I ransom thee! What aileth thee?' And he replied, 'Sit down.' So I sat down and he said, 'I am Otbeh ben el Hubab ben el Mundhir ben El Jemouh the Ansari. I went out in the morning to the Mosque of El Ahzab and occupied myself there awhile with inclinations and prostrations, after which I withdrew apart, to worship [privily]. Presently, up came women, as they were moons, walking with a swaying gait, and midmost them a damsel of surpassing loveliness, accomplished in beauty and grace, who stopped before me and said, 'O Otbeh, what sayst thou of union with one who seeks union with thee?' So saying, she left me and went away; and since then I have had no tidings of her nor come upon any trace of her; and behold, I am distracted and do nought but remove from place to place.' Then he cried out and fell down in a swoon. When he came to himself, it was as if the damask of his cheeks were dyed with turmeric, and he recited the following verses:

I see you with my heart from lands that yet far distant are; I wonder eke if with your hearts ye see me from afar.
My heart and eyes alike for you do sorrow; yea, with you My soul abideth and the thoughts of you with me still are.
I cannot take delight in life, till I upon you look; Your lack the very pleasantness of Paradise would mar.

'O Otbeh, O son of my uncle,' said I, 'repent to thy Lord and seek pardon for thine offence; for before thee is the terror of the standing up [to judgment].' 'Away!' answered he. 'I shall never leave to love till the two mimosa-gatherers return.'

I abode with him till daybreak, when I said to him, 'Come, let us go to the Mosque [of El Ahzab].' So we went thither and sat there, till we had prayed the midday prayers, when up came the women; but the damsel was not among them. Quoth they to him, 'O Otbeh, what deemest thou of her who seeketh union with thee?' 'And what of her?' asked he. 'Her father hath taken her,' answered they, 'and departed to Es Semaweh.' I asked them the name of the damsel and they said, 'She is called Reyya, daughter of El Ghitrif es Suleimi.' Whereupon Otbeh raised his head and recited these verses:

Reyya hath mounted, O my friends, and fared away at dawn; Unto Semaweh's distant land her caravan is gone.
Friends, I have wept till I can weep no more: hath any tears, That I may borrow them and weep my love from me withdrawn?

Then said I to him, 'O Otbeh, I have brought with me great store of wealth, wherewith I desire to succour men of merit; and by Allah, I will lavish it before thee, so thou mayst come to thy desire and more than thy desire! Come with me to the assembly of the Ansaris.' So we arose and went, till we came to their assembly, when I saluted them and they returned my greeting on goodly wise. Then said I to them, 'O assembly, what say ye of Otbeh and his father?' And they answered, saying, 'They are of the chiefs of the Arabs.' Quoth I, 'Know that he is smitten with the calamity of love and I desire your furtherance to Es Semaweh.' And they said, 'We hear and obey.' So they mounted with us and we rode till we drew near the place of the Benou Suleim.

When Ghitrif heard of our coming, he hastened forth to meet us, saying, 'Long life to you, O nobles!' 'And to thee also!' answered we. 'Behold we are thy guests.' Quoth he, 'Ye have lighted down at a most hospitable and well-furnished abode.' So saying, he alighted and cried out, 'Ho, all ye serving folk, come down!' So the slaves came down and spread rugs and cushions and slaughtered sheep and cattle; but we said, 'We will not taste of thy victual, till thou have accomplished our need.' 'And what is your need?' asked he. Quoth we, 'We demand thy noble daughter in marriage for the illustrious and well-born Otbeh ben Hubab ben Mundhir.' 'O my brethren,' said he, 'she whom you demand is her own mistress, and I will go in to her and tell her?' So he arose in anger and went in to Reyya, who said to him, ‘O my father, why do I see anger apparent on thee?’ And he answered, saying, ‘Certain of the Ansaris have come to demand thy hand of me in marriage.’ Quoth she, ‘They are noble chiefs; the Prophet, on whom be the most excellent of blessings and peace, intercedeth for them [with God]. For whom among them do they ask me in marriage?’ ‘For a youth known as Otbeh ben el Hubab,’ answered he; and she said, ‘I have heard of this Otbeh that he performs what he promises and attains what he seeks.’ Quoth Ghitrif, ‘I swear that I will never marry thee to him, for there hath been reported to me somewhat of thy converse with him.’ ‘What was that?’ said she. ‘But in any case, I swear that the Ansaris shall not be uncivilly rejected; wherefore do thou make them a fair answer.’ ‘How so?’ asked he; and she, ‘Make the dowry heavy to them and they will desist.’ Quoth he, ‘Thou sayst well,’ and going out in haste, said to the Ansaris, ‘The girl consents; but she requires a dowry worthy herself; who, then, engageth for this?’ ‘I,’ answered I. Then said he, ‘I require for her a thousand bracelets of red gold and five thousand dirhems of the coinage of Hejer and a hundred pieces of woollen stuffs and striped stuffs of Yemen and five bladders of ambergris.’ ‘Thou shalt have this,’ answered I; ‘dost thou consent?’ And he said, ‘I do consent.’ So I despatched to Medina the Luminous a company of the Ansaris, who brought all for which I had engaged; whereupon they slaughtered sheep and cattle and the folk assembled to eat of the food.

We abode thus forty days, at the end of which time Ghitrif said to us, ‘Take your bride.’ So we set her in a litter and her father equipped her with thirty camel-loads of things of price; after which we took leave of him and journeyed till we came within a day’s journey of Medina, when there fell upon us horsemen, with intent to plunder, and methinks they were of the Benou Suleim. Otbeh drove at them and slew of them much people, but presently fell back, wounded by a spear-thrust, and dropped to the earth. Then there came to us a succour of the country people, who drove away the highwaymen; but Otbeh’s days were ended. So we said, ‘Alas for Otbeh!’ Which when the damsel heard, she cast herself down from the camel and throwing herself upon him, cried out grievously and recited the following verses:

Patience I feign, yet natheless am not patient, verily: I soothe my soul but with the thought that I shall follow thee.
Had my soul dealt but righteously by me, it would indeed Have gone to death before thyself, forestalling all that be.
None, whenas thou and I are gone away, unto a friend Will just and righteous be, I trow, nor soul with soul agree.

Then she sobbed once and gave up the ghost. We dug one grave for them and laid them in the earth, and I returned to the dwellings of my people, where I abode seven years. Then I betook me again to the Hejaz and entering Medina the Luminous, to visit [the tomb of the Prophet], said in myself, ‘By Allah, I will go again to Otbeh’s tomb!’ So I repaired thither, and behold, over the grave was a tall tree, on which hung fillets of red and green and yellow stuffs. So I said to the people of the place, ‘How is this tree called?’ And they answered, ‘The tree of the Bride and the Bridegroom.’ I abode by the tomb a day and a night, then went my way; and this is all I know of Otbeh, may God the Most High have mercy upon him!

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HIND DAUGHTER OF EN NUMAN AND EL HEJJAJ.

It is related that Hind daughter of En Numan was the fairest woman of her day, and her beauty and grace were reported to El Hejjaj, who sought in marriage and lavished much treasure on her. So he took her to wife, engaging to give her a dowry of two hundred thousand dirhems in case of divorce, and when he went in to her, he abode with her a great while. One day after this, he went in to her and found her looking at her face in the mirror and saying:

Hind is an Arab filly born and bred of purest stock And blood, that by a mongrel mule, alack! hath covered been;
So, if she bear a stallion-colt, God-gifted sure is she; But if a mule she bear, the mule must bear the blame, I ween.

When he heard this, he turned back and went his way unseen of Hind; then, being minded to put her away, he sent Abdallah ben Tahir to her, to divorce her. So Abdallah went in to her and said to her, 'El Hejjaj Abou Mohammed saith to thee, "Here be the two hundred thousand dirhems of thy contingent dowry;" and he hath deputed me to divorce thee.' 'O Ibn Tahir,' replied she, 'I consent gladly; for know that I never for one day took pleasure in him; so, if we separate, by Allah, I shall never regret him, and the two hundred thousand dirhems I give to thee as a reward for the glad tidings thou bringest me of my release from yonder dog of a Thekifi.'

After this, the Commander of the Faithful Abdulmelik ben Merwan heard of her beauty and symmetry and the amorous grace of her glances and sent to her, to demand her in marriage; and she wrote him in reply a letter, in which, after the customary glorification of God and benediction of His Prophet, she said, 'Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that the dog hath lapped in the vase.' When the Khalif read her answer, he laughed and wrote to her, citing the prophet's saying, 'If a dog lap in the vessel of one of you, let him wash it seven times, once thereof with earth,' and adding, 'Wash the affront from the place of usance.' With this, she could not gainsay him; so she replied to him, saying, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, I will not consent save on condition that El Hejjaj lead my camel to thine abiding-place, barefoot and clad as he is.’

When the Khalif read her letter, he laughed long and loudly and wrote to El Hejjaj, bidding him do as she wished. The latter dared not disobey, so he submitted to the Khalif’s commandment and sent to Hind, bidding her make ready for the journey. So she made ready and mounted her litter, whilst her damsels and eunuchs rode about her. Then came El Hejjaj with his suite and dismounting at Hind’s door, took the halter of her camel and led it along, barefooted, whilst she and her damsels and tirewomen laughed and jeered at him and made mock of him. Then she said to her tirewoman, ‘Draw back the curtain of the litter;’ and she drew back the curtain, till Hind was face to face with El Hejjaj, whereupon she laughed at him and he recited the following verse:

O Hind, for all thy jeering, how many and many a night, Of yore I’ve left thee wakeful, lamenting for despite!

And she answered him with these:

We reck not, we, so that our life be safe and free our soul, Of what we lose of goods and gear; it worketh us no dole.
For wealth anew may gotten be and rank and power regained, If but man of malady and trouble be made whole.

And she ceased not to laugh at him and make sport of him, till they drew near the city of the Khalif, when she threw down a dinar and said to El Hejjaj, ‘O camel-driver, I have dropped a dirhem; look for it and give it me.’ So he looked and seeing nought but the dinar, said, ‘This is a dinar.’ ‘Nay,’ answered she, ‘it is a dirhem.’ But he said, ‘It is a dinar.’ Then said she, ‘Praised be God who hath given us a dinar in exchange for a paltry dirhem! Give it us.’ And he was abashed at this. Then he carried her to the palace of the Commander of the Faithful, and she went in to him and became his favourite.

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KHUZEIMEH BEN BISHR AND IKRIMEH EL FEYYAZ.

There lived once, in the days of the Khalif Suleiman ben Abdulmelik, a man of the Benou Ased, by name Khuzeimeh ben Bishr, who was notorious for benevolence and excellence and abounding generosity and righteous dealing with his brethren. After awhile, times grew strait with him and he became in need of the aid of those on whom he had lavished favour and kindness. So they succoured him awhile and then grew weary of him, which when he saw, he went in to his wife, who was the daughter of his father's brother, and said to her, 'O my cousin, I find that my brethren are changed to me; wherefore I am resolved to keep my house till death come to me.' So he shut his doors and abode in his house, living on that which he had by him, till it was spent and he knew not what to do. Now Ikrimeh er Rebaï [surnamed] el Feyyaz, governor of Mesopotamia, had known him, and one day, as he sat in his audience-chamber, mention was made of Khuzeimeh, whereupon quoth Ikrimeh, 'How is it with him?' And they answered, saying, 'He is in a plight past telling, and hath shut his door and keeps the house.' Quoth Ikrimeh, 'This comes but of his excessive generosity: but how is it that Khuzeimeh ben Bishr finds none to succour him or requite him his benefits?' And they replied, 'He hath found nought of this.'

When it was night, Ikrimeh took four thousand dinars and laid them in one purse; then, bidding saddle his beast, he mounted and rode privily to Khuzeimeh's house, attended only by one of his servants, carrying the money. When he came to the door, he alighted and taking the purse from the servant, made him withdraw afar off; after which he went up to the door and knocked. Khuzeimeh came out to him, and he gave him the purse, saying, 'Better thy condition with this.' He took it and finding it heavy, put it from his hand and laying hold of the bridle of Ikrimeh's horse, said, 'Who art thou? My soul be thy ransom!' 'O man,' answered Ikrimeh, 'I come not to thee at the like of this time desiring that thou shouldst know me.' Khuzeimeh rejoined, saying, 'I will not let thee go till thou make thyself known to me.' And Ikrimeh said, 'I am Jabir Athrat el Kiram.' Quoth Khuzeimeh, 'Tell me more.' But Ikrimeh answered, 'No,' and went away, whilst Khuzeimeh went in to his wife and said to her, 'Rejoice, for God hath sent us speedy relief; if these be but dirhems, yet are they many. Arise and light the lamp.' But she said, 'I have not wherewithal to do this.' So he spent the night handling the coins and felt by their roughness that they were dinars, but could not credit it.

Meanwhile, Ikrimeh returned to his own house and found that his wife had missed him and enquiring for him, had been told of his riding forth, wherefore she misdoubted of him and said to him, 'The governor of Mesopotamia rideth not abroad, unattended and secretly, after such an hour of the night, save to a wife or a concubine.' 'God knows,' answered he, 'that I went not forth to either of these.' 'Tell me then,' said she, 'wherefore thou wentest forth?' and he, 'I went not forth at this hour save that none should know it.' But she rejoined, saying, 'I must needs be told.' Quoth he, 'Wilt thou keep the matter secret, if I tell thee?' and she said, 'Yes.' So he told her the state of the case, adding, 'Wilt thou have me swear to thee?' 'No, no,' answered she; 'my heart is set at ease and trusteth in that which thou hast told me.'

As for Khuzeimeh, as soon as it was day, he made his peace with his creditors and set his affairs in order; after which he made ready and set out for the Court of the Khalif, who was then sojourning in Palestine. When he came to the royal palace, he sought admission of the chamberlain, who went in and told the Khalif of his presence. Now he was renowned for his beneficence and Suleiman knew of him; so he bade admit him. When he entered, he saluted the Khalif after the usual fashion, and the latter said to him, 'O Khuzeimeh, what hath kept thee so long from us?' 'Evil case,' answered he. Quoth the Khalif, 'What hindered thee from having recourse to us?' And he said, 'My infirmity, O Commander of the Faithful!' 'And why,' asked Suleiman, 'comest thou to us now?' 'Know, O Commander of the Faithful,' replied Khuzeimeh, 'that I was sitting one night late in my house, when one knocked at the door;' and he went on to tell him of all that had passed between Ikrimeh and himself. 'Knowest thou the man?' asked Suleiman. 'No, O

Commander of the Faithful,' answered Khuzeimeh, 'he was disguised and would say nought but "I am Jabir Athrat el Kiram."' When Suleiman heard this, his heart burned within him to know the man, and he said, 'If we knew him, we would requite him his generosity.' Then he tied Khuzeimeh an ensign and made him governor of Mesopotamia, in the stead of Ikrimeh; and he set out for El Jezireh.

When he drew near the city, Ikrimeh and the people of the place came forth to meet him and they saluted each other and went on into the town, where Khuzeimeh took up his lodging in the government house and bade take security for Ikrimeh and that he should be called to account. So an account was taken against him and he was found to be in default for much money, whereupon Khuzeimeh required him of payment; but he said, 'I have no means of paying aught.' Quoth Khuzeimeh, 'It must be paid;' and Ikrimeh answered, saying, 'I have it not; do what thou hast to do.' So Khuzeimeh ordered him to prison and sent to him again, to demand payment of the money; but he replied, 'I am not of those who preserve their wealth at the expense of their honour; do what thou wilt.' Then Khuzeimeh bade load him with irons and kept him in prison a month or more, till imprisonment began to tell upon him and he became wasted.

After this, news of his plight came to his wife, who was sore troubled thereat and sending for a freedwoman of hers, a woman of great wit and judgment, said to her, 'Go forthwith to the Amir Khuzeimeh's gate and say, "I have a counsel for the Amir." If they ask what it is, say, "I will not tell it save to himself;" and when thou winnest to him, ask to see him in private and say to him, "What is this thou hast done? Hath Jabir Athrat el Kiram deserved of thee no better requital than to be cast into strait prison and laden with irons?"' The woman did as she was bidden, and when Khuzeimeh heard her words, he cried out at the top of his voice, saying, 'Alas, the shame of it! Was it indeed he?' And she answered, 'Yes.' Then he bade saddle his beast forthright and summoning the chief men of the city, repaired with them to the prison and opening the door, went in with them to Ikrimeh, whom they found sitting in evil case, worn out and wasted with blows and misery. When he saw Khuzeimeh, he was abashed and hung his head; but the other bent down to him and kissed his face; whereupon he raised his head and said, ‘What maketh thee do this?’ ‘The generosity of thy dealing,’ replied Khuzeimeh, ‘and the scurviness of my requital.’ And Ikrimeh said, ‘God pardon us and thee!’

Then Khuzeimeh bade the jailor strike off Ikrimeh’s shackles and clap them on his own feet; but Ikrimeh said, ‘What is this thou wilt do?’ Quoth the other, ‘I have mind to suffer what thou hast suffered.’ ‘I conjure thee by Allah,’ cried Ikrimeh, ‘do not so!’ Then they both went out and returned to Khuzeimeh’s house, where Ikrimeh would have taken leave of him and gone his way; but he forbade him and Ikrimeh said, ‘What is thy will of me?’ Quoth Khuzeimeh, ‘I wish to change thy case, for my shame before the daughter of thine uncle is yet greater than my shame before thee.’ So he caused clear the bath and entering with Ikrimeh, served him, himself, after which he bestowed on him a splendid dress of honour and mounted him and gave him much money. Then he carried him to his house and asked his leave to make his excuses to his wife and did so.

After this, he besought him to accompany him to the Khalif, who was then abiding at Remleh and he agreed. So they journeyed thither and when they reached the palace, the chamberlain went in and acquainted the Khalif with Khuzeimeh’s coming, whereat he was troubled and said, ‘Is the governor of Mesopotamia come without our order? This can only be on some grave occasion.’ Then he bade admit him and said to him, before he could salute him, ‘What is behind thee, O Khuzeimeh?’ ‘Good, O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered he. ‘What bringeth thee?’ asked Suleiman; and he answered, saying, ‘I have discovered Jabir el Athrat el Kiram and thought to gladden thee with him, knowing thine excessive desire for his acquaintance and thy longing to see him.’ ‘Who is he?’ asked the Khalif and Khuzeimeh said, ‘He is Ikrimeh el Feyyaz. So Suleiman called for Ikrimeh, who approached and saluted him as Khalif; and the prince bade him welcome and making him draw near to his sitting place, said to him, ‘O Ikrimeh, thy good deed to him hath brought thee nought but trouble. But now write in a scroll all thy needs and that which thou desirest.’ He did so and the Khalif commanded to do all that he asked and that forthright. Moreover, he gave him ten thousand dinars and twenty chests of clothes over and above that he sought, and calling for a spear, tied him an ensign [and made him governor] over Armenia and Azerbijan and Mesopotamia, saying, ‘Khuzeimeh’s case is in thy hands; if thou wilt, continue him in his office, and if thou wilt, depose him.’ And Ikrimeh said, ‘Nay, but I restore him to his office, O Commander of the Faithful.’ Then they went out from him and ceased not to be governors under Suleiman ben Abdulmelik all the days of his Khalifate.

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YOUNUS THE SCRIBE AND THE KHALIF WELID BEN SEHL.

There lived in the reign of the Khalif Hisham a noted [man of letters] called Younus the Scribe, and he set out one day on a journey to Damascus, having with him a slave girl of surpassing beauty and grace, whom he had taught all that was needful to her and whose price was a hundred thousand dirhems. When they drew near Damascus, the caravan halted by the side of a lake and Younus went aside with his damsel and took out some victual he had with him and a leather bottle of wine. As he sat at meat, there came up a young man of goodly presence and dignified aspect, mounted on a sorrel horse and followed by two servants, and said to him, 'Wilt thou accept me to guest?' 'Yes,' answered Younus. So the stranger alighted and said, 'Give me to drink of thy wine.' Younus gave him to drink and he said, 'If it please thee, sing us a song.' So Younus sang this verse:

Charms, never in one mortal yet combined compriseth she,
And tears and wakefulness are sweet, for love of her, to me.

At which the stranger rejoiced exceedingly and Younus gave him to drink again and again, till drunkenness got the better of him and he said, 'Bid thy slave-girl sing.' So she sang this verse:

A houri, by whose charms my heart confounded is, ah me! Nor wand nor sun nor moon, indeed, may evened with her be.

The stranger was much pleased with this and they sat drinking till nightfall, when they prayed the evening-prayer and the youth said to Younus, 'What brings thee hither?' He answered, '[I come in quest of] wherewithal to discharge my debts and better my case.' Quoth the stranger, 'Wilt thou sell me this thy slave-girl for thirty thousand dirhems?' 'I must have more than that,' answered Younus. 'Will forty thousand content thee?' asked the other; but Younus said, 'That would only pay my debts, and I should remain empty-handed.' Quoth the stranger, 'I will take her of thee at fifty thousand dirhems and give thee a suit of clothes to boot and the expenses of thy journey and make thee a sharer in my estate, as long as thou livest.' 'I sell her to thee on these terms,' answered Younus. Then said the young man, 'Wilt thou let me take her with me and trust me to bring thee the money to-morrow, or shall she abide with thee till I bring thee her price?' And the fumes of the wine and shamefastness and awe of the stranger led Younus to reply, 'I will trust thee; take her and may God bless thee in her!' Whereupon the stranger bade one of his servants take her up before him on his beast, and mounting his own horse, took leave of Younus and rode away.

Hardly had he left him, when Younus bethought himself and knew that he had erred in selling her and said in himself, 'What have I done? I have delivered my slave-girl to a man with whom I am unacquainted, neither know I who he is; and grant that I did know him, how am I to get at him?' So he abode absorbed in anxious thought, till the morning, when he prayed the appointed prayers and his companions entered Damascus, whilst he sat, perplexed and knowing not what to do, till the sun scorched him and he misliked to abide there and thought to enter the city, but said in himself, 'If I enter Damascus, I cannot be sure but that the messenger will come and find me not, in which case I shall have sinned against myself a second time.' So he sat down in the shade of a wall that was there, and towards end of day, up came one of the servants whom he had seen with the young man, at sight of whom great joy possessed Younus and he said in himself, 'I know not that aught hath ever given me more delight than the sight of this servant.' When the man reached him, he said to him, 'O my lord, we have kept thee long waiting;' but Younus said nothing to him of the anxiety he had suffered. Then said the servant, 'Knowest thou the man who bought the girl of thee?' 'No,' answered Younus, and the servant said, 'It was Welid ben Sehl the Heir Apparent.' And Younus was silent.

Then the other made him mount a horse he had with him and they rode till they came to a house, where they dismounted and entered. Here Younus found the damsel, who sprang up at his sight and saluted him. He asked her how she had fared with him who had bought her and she said, 'He lodged me in this apartment and ordered me all I wanted.' Then he sat with her awhile, till one of the servants of the master of the house came in and bade him rise and follow him. So he followed the servant into the presence of his yesternight's guest, whom he found seated on his couch and who said to him, ‘Who art thou?’ ‘I am Younus the Scribe,’ answered the other. ‘Welcome to thee, O Younus!’ rejoined the prince. ‘By Allah, I have long wished to look on thee; for I have heard of thy report. How didst thou pass the night?’ ‘Well,’ answered Younus; ‘may God the Most High advance thee!’ ‘Peradventure,’ said the prince, ‘thou repentedst thee of that thou didst yesterday and saidst in thyself, “I have delivered my slave-girl to a man whom I know not, neither know I his name nor whence he cometh?”’ ‘God forbid, O Amir,’ replied Younus, ‘that I should repent over her! Had I made gift of her to the prince, she were the least of the gifts that are given unto him, for indeed she is not worthy of his rank.’ ‘By Allah,’ rejoined Welid, ‘but I repented me of having taken her from thee and said in myself, “This man is a stranger and knows me not, and I have taken him by surprise and acted inconsiderately by him, in my haste to take the damsel!” Dost thou recall what passed between us?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Younus. Quoth Welid, ‘Dost thou sell her to me for fifty thousand dirhems?’ And Younus said, ‘I do.’

Then the prince called to one of his servants, to bring him fifty thousand dirhems and a thousand and five hundred dinars to boot, and gave them all to Younus, saying, ‘The thousand dinars are for thy fair thought of us and the five hundred for the expenses of thy journey and what thou shalt buy for thy people. Art thou content?’ ‘I am content,’ answered Younus and kissed his hands, saying, ‘By Allah, thou hast filled my eyes and my hands and my heart!’ Quoth Welid, ‘By Allah, I have as yet had no privacy of her nor have I taken my fill of her singing. Bring her to me.’ So she came and he bade her sit, then said to her, ‘Sing.’ And she sang these verses:

Thou that comprisest all charms of every kind, O sweet of nature and great of amorous grace,
In Turks and Arabs are beauties all; but none Like thee, my loveling, doth all in all embrace.
O bless thy lover, my fair, with thy promised sight, Though but in visions of dreams, that flit apace!
Sweet are the sleepless nights, for thy sake, to me And goodly even abasement and disgrace.
I’m not the first one distraught for thee; ere me, How many a

mortal thou'st slain with that fair face!
Thou, as my portion o' th' world, wouldst me content; To me thou'rt dearer than life and goods and place.

When he heard this, he was greatly delighted and praised Younus's excellent teaching of her and the fair education he had given her. Then he bade his servants bring him a hackney, with its trappings and furniture, for his riding, and a mule to carry his gear, and said to him, 'O Younus, when thou hearest that the Khalifate has fallen to me, come thou to me, and by Allah, I will fill thy hands with good and advance thee to honour and make thee rich as long as thou livest!' So Younus took his goods and departed; and when he heard that Welid had succeeded to the Khalifate, he repaired to him; and by Allah, he kept his promise to him and entreated him with exceeding munificence. Then Younus abode with him in all content and honour and his affairs prospered and his wealth increased and goods and farms became his, such as sufficed him and his heirs after him; nor did he cease to abide with Welid, till he was slain, the mercy of God the Most High be on him!

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THE KHALIF HAROUN ER RESHID AND THE ARAB GIRL

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid was walking one day with Jaafer the Barmecide, when he espied a company of girls drawing water and went up to them, having a mind to drink. As he drew near, one of them turned to her fellows and recited the following verses:

Bid thou thy spright from my couch, I pray, At the season of slumber turn away,
So I may rest me and eke the fire In my bones that rages may have allay.
For me, the love-lorn, whom passion's hands Turn on the carpet of sickness aye,
Thou knowest well how it is with me: Doth thy favour last for a single day?

The Khalif marvelled at her beauty and eloquence and said to her, 'O daughter of nobles, are these verses thine own or a quotation?' 'They are my own,' answered she. 'If thou say sooth,' rejoined the Khalif, 'keep the sense and change the rhyme.' So she said:

Bid thou thy phantom forswear my stead At the season of sleep and drowsihead,
So I may rest me and eke the fire Be quenched in my body that rages red.
For me, a sick one, whom passion's hands Turn on affliction's unrestful bed,
Thou knowest well how it is with me: Can aught of thy favours stand in stead?

Quoth the Khalif, 'This also is stolen.' 'Nay,' replied she, 'it is my own.' 'If it be indeed thine own,' said Er Reshid, 'change the rhyme again and keep the sense.' So she recited the following:

Bid thine image hold off from my place of repose, What time in

slumber men's eyes do close,
So I may rest me and eke the fire Be quenched in mine entrails that ever glows.
For me, a sick one, whom passion's hands Turn on the carpet of wake and woes,
Thou knowest well how it is with me: Are thy favours bought with a price, who knows?

Quoth Er Reshid, 'This too is stolen.' 'Not so,' said she; 'it is mine.' 'If it be so,' rejoined he, 'change the rhyme once more.' And she recited as follows:

Bid thou thine image no more molest My couch at the season of sleep and rest,
So I may ease me and eke the fire Be quenched that flames in my tortured breast.
For me, a sick one, whom passion's hands On the couch of weeping turn East and West,
My plight thou know'st; will thy favour ne'er Come back, relenting, to make me blest?

Then said the Khalif, 'Of what [part] of this encampment [art thou]?' And she answered, 'Of its midmost in dwelling and of its highest in tent-pole.' Wherefore he knew that she was the chief's daughter of the tribe. 'And thou,' asked she, 'of what [art thou among] the guardians of the horses?' Quoth he, 'Of the highest in tree and of the ripest in fruit.' 'God protect thee, O Commander of the Faithful!' said she and called down blessings on him. Then she went away with the maidens of the Arabs, and the Khalif said to Jaafer, 'Needs must I take her to wife.' So Jaafer repaired to her father and said to him, 'The Commander of the Faithful hath a mind to thy daughter.' 'With all my heart,' replied he; 'she is a gift as a handmaid to His Highness our lord the Commander of the Faithful.' So he equipped her and carried her to the Khalif, who took her to wife and went in to her, and she became of the dearest of his women to him.

Moreover, he bestowed on her father largesse such as succoured him among the Arabs, till he was transported to the mercy of God the Most High. The Khalif, hearing of his death, went in to her, troubled; and when she saw him thus, she entered her chamber and putting off all that was upon her of rich apparel, donned mourning raiment and raised lament for her father. It was said to her, ‘What is the reason of this?’ And she answered, saying, ‘My father is dead.’ So they went in to the Khalif and told him and he rose and going in to her, asked her who had given her to know of her father’s death; and she answered, ‘It was thy face, O Commander of the Faithful!’ ‘How so?’ asked he; and she said, ‘Since I have been with thee, I never saw thee thus till now, and there was none for whom I feared save my father, by reason of his great age; but may thy head live, O Commander of the Faithful!’ When the Khalif heard this, his eyes filled with tears and he condoled with her; but she ceased not to mourn for her father, till she followed him [to the grave,] may God have mercy on them both!

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EL ASMAÏ AND THE THREE GIRLS OF BASSORA.

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid was exceeding restless one night and rising from his bed, fared from chamber to chamber, but could not compose himself to sleep. As soon as it was day, he said, ‘Fetch me El Asmaï. So the eunuch went out and told the doorkeepers, who sent for the poet and when he came, informed the Khalif. The latter bade admit him and said to him, ‘O Asmaï, I wish thee to tell me the best thou hast heard of stories of women and their verses.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered El Asmaï. ‘I have heard great store of women’s verses; but none pleased me save three lines I once heard from three girls.’ ‘Tell me of them,’ said the Khalif. ‘Know then, O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied the poet, ‘that I once abode a year in Bassora, and one day, as I was walking about, the heat was sore upon me and I sought for a place where I might take the noonday rest, but found none. Presently, however, I came upon a porch swept and watered, at the upper end whereof was an open lattice-window, whence exhaled a scent of musk and thereunder a wooden bench. I entered the porch, and lying down on the bench, would have slept, when, behold, I heard from within a girl’s sweet voice talking and saying, “O my sisters, we are sat here to spend this day in each other’s company; so come, let us each put down a hundred dinars and recite a line of verse; and whoso recites the goodliest and sweetest line, the three hundred dinars shall be hers.” “With all our hearts,” said the others; and the eldest recited the following verse:

By Allah, I should delight in him, if in dreams to my couch came he! But, an he visited me on wake, ’twould yet more marvellous be.

Quoth the second:

Only his image, in very deed, in slumber visited me; And ‘Welcome!’ straightway I said to him, ‘a welcome fair and free!’

Then said the youngest:

With my soul and my folk I will ransom him, whom my bedfellow still I see Each night and whose scent is pleasanter than the scent of musk to me!”

Quoth I, “If [the speaker] have beauty after the measure [of the goodliness] of this [her speech] the thing is every way complete." Then I rose and was about to go away, when the door opened and out came a slave-girl, who said to me, "Sit, O elder." So I sat down again, and she gave me a scroll, wherein was written, in characters of the utmost beauty, with straight Alifs, big-bellied Has and rounded Waws, the following: "We would have the Sheikh (whose days God prolong) to know that we are three maidens, sisters, sitting in friendly converse, who have laid down each a hundred dinars, on condition that whoso recites the best and most agreeable line of verse shall have the whole three hundred dinars; and we appoint thee judge between us: so decide as thou seest best, and peace be on thee!" Quoth I to the girl, "Bring me inkhorn and paper." So she went in and returning after a little, brought me a silvered inkhorn and gilded pens, with which I wrote the following verses:

I've heard of young beauties once that sat in converse frank and free And talked the talk of a man who's seen and proved all things that be;
Three like the dawnings of new-born day, they ravished every heart; Yea, tormentful to the yearner's soul were they, these maidens three.
They'd cloistered them, where no vision lewd their modesty might affront; The eyes of the spy were shut in sleep and none was there to see.
So they discovered the secret thoughts in their breasts that hidden lay And then to making of verse they fell, for pastime, in their glee.
Quoth one of them thus, — a loveling rare, fulfilled of amorous grace, Her teeth for the sweet of her speech did smile at every word spake she, —
"By Allah, I should delight in him, if in dreams to my couch came he! But, an he visited me on wake, 'twould yet more marvellous be."
And when she had ended that which she gilt with smiles, the second sighed And warbled these words with a trilling note, like a bird upon a tree:
"Only his image, in very deed, in slumber visited me, And, "Welcome," straightway quoth I to him, "a welcome fair and free!"

But the third did better than th' other twain, for, answering, thus said she, With a word of her own that was sweeter still and goodlier, perdie,

"With my soul and my folk I will ransom him, whom my bedfellow still I see Each night and whose scent is pleasanter than the scent of musk to me!"

So, when I considered that which they said and sentence passed thereon, I judged not so as to give the wits a cause for mockery;

Nay, judgment I gave for the youngest maid and deemed her verse the best, For that I judged the words she spake e'en nearest the truth to be.

Then I gave the scroll to the girl, who went in with it, and presently I heard a noise of dancing and clapping of hands and tumult. Quoth I to myself, "It is time for me to go." So I rose from the bench and was about to go away, when the damsel cried out to me, saying, "Sit down, O Asmaï!" "Who gave thee to know that I was El Asmaï?" asked I, and she, "If thy name be unknown to us, thy poetry is not." So I sat down again and behold, the door opened and out came the first damsel, with a dish of fruits and another of sweetmeats. I ate of both and praised their fashion and would have gone away; but she cried out, saying, "Sit down, O Asmaï!" Wherewith I raised my eyes to her and saw a rosy palm in a saffron sleeve, meseemed it was the full moon breaking out from under the clouds. Then she threw me a purse containing three hundred dinars and said to me, "This is mine and I give it to thee in requital of thy judgment."

Quoth the Khalif, 'Why didst thou decide for the youngest?' 'O Commander of the Faithful, whose life God prolong,' answered El Asmaï, 'the eldest said, "I should delight in him, if he visited my couch in sleep." Now this is restricted and dependent upon a condition, that may befall or may not befall; whilst, for the second, an image of dreams came to her in sleep, and she saluted it; but the youngest said that she actually lay with her lover and smelt his breath sweeter than musk and she engaged her soul and her folk for him, which she had not done, were he not dearer to her than her soul.' 'Thou didst well, O Asmaï,' said the Khalif and gave him other three hundred dinars, in payment of his story.

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IBRAHIM OF MOSUL AND THE DEVIL.

(Quoth Abou Ishac Ibrahim el Mausili), I asked Er Reshid once to give me a day's leave that I might be private with the people of my household and my friends, and he gave me leave for Saturday. So I went home and betook myself to making ready meat and drink and other necessaries and bade the doorkeepers shut the doors and let none come in to me. However, presently, as I sat in my sitting-chamber, with my women about me, I was ware of an old man of comely and reverend aspect, clad in white clothes and a shirt of fine stuff, with a doctor's hood on his head and a silver-handled staff in his hand, and the house and porch were full of the sweet smell of the essences with which he was scented. I was greatly vexed at his coming in to me and thought to turn away the doorkeepers; but he saluted me after the goodliest fashion and I returned his greeting and bade him be seated. So he sat down and entertained me with stories of the Arabs and their verses, till my anger left me and methought my servants had sought to pleasure me by admitting a man of such good breeding and elegant culture.

Then said I to him, 'Art thou for meat?' 'I have no need of it,' answered he. 'And for drink?' asked I. 'That is as thou wilt,' said he. So I drank off a pint of wine and poured him out the like. Then said he, 'O Abou Ishac, wilt thou sing us somewhat, so we may hear of thy fashion that wherein thou excellest high and low?' His words vexed me; but I dissembled my annoyance and taking the lute, played and sang. 'Well done, O Abou Ishac!' said he; whereat my anger redoubled and I said to myself, 'Is it not enough that he should come in to me, without my leave, and importune me thus, but he must call me by my name, as though he knew not the right way to address me?' Quoth he, 'If thou wilt sing again, we will requite thee.' I swallowed my annoyance and took the lute and sang again, taking pains with what I sang and rising thereto altogether, because of his saying, 'We will requite thee.' He was delighted and said, 'Well done, O my lord!' Then said he, 'Dost thou give me leave to sing?' 'As thou wilt,' answered I, deeming him weak of wit, in that he should think to sing before me, after that which he had heard from me. So he took the lute and swept the strings, and by Allah, meseemed they spoke in the Arabic tongue, with a sweet and liquid and murmurous voice; then he began and sang the following verses:

A heart that is cankered with grief I have: who will sell me therefor A heart that of cankers is whole, unwounded of ulcer or sore?
But no, not a soul will consent to barter a heart against mine; For whoso should buy were condemned to sickness and woe evermore.
He'd groan with the groaning of him who's wounded and choking with wine, For the longing that lives in my heart and gnaws at its innermost core.

And by Allah, meseemed the doors and the walls and all that was in the house answered and sang with him, for the beauty of his voice, so that methought my very limbs and clothes answered him, and I abode amazed and unable to speak or move, for the trouble of my heart. Then he sang these verses:

Hark ye, O doves of Liwa, come back unto your nest: With longing for your voices my bosom is opprest.
Back to the copse they winged it and me well-nigh did slay; Well-nigh to them my secrets I had made manifest.
They call on one departed, with cooing, as it were They'd drunken wine and madness did sojourn in their breast.
Ne'er saw mine eyes, I swear it, the like of them for doves! They weep: yet not a tear-drop is from their eyes exprest.

And also these:

O wind of Nejed, when thou blowst from Nejed far and wide, Thy wafts add longing unto that for which long time I've sighed!
Lo, in the freshness of the morn, from out the trellised boughs Of laurel and of cassia, to me a turtle cried.
She moaned, as moans the youth for love, and eke discovered thus The secret of my yearning pain, that yet I fain would hide.
They say that, when a lover's near, he wearies of his love, And

that by absence passion's cured; 'tis false, for I have tried
Both remedies, but am not cured of that which is with me, Withal that nearness easier is than distance to abide.
Yet nearness of abode, forsooth, may nowise profit thee, An if the grace of her thou lov'st be unto thee denied.

Then said he, 'O Ibrahim, sing this song after me and do after the fashion thereof in thy singing and teach it to thy slave-girls.' Quoth I, 'Repeat it to me.' But he answered, 'There needs no repetition; thou hast it by heart,' and vanished from my sight. At this I was amazed and running to my sword, drew it and made for the door of the harem, but found it closed and said to the women, 'What have ye heard?' Quoth they, 'We have heard the sweetest and goodliest of singing.' Then I went forth, in amazement, to the door of the house and finding it locked, questioned the doorkeepers of the old man. 'What old man?' said they. 'By Allah, no one hath gone in to thee this day!' So I returned, pondering the matter, when, behold, he cried out from one of the corners of the house, [though I saw none,] saying, 'Fear not, O Abou Ishac; no harm shall befall thee. It is I, Abou Murreh, who have been thy boon-companion this day.' Then I mounted and rode to Er Reshid, to whom I told what had passed, and he said, 'Repeat to me the airs thou heardest from him.' So I took the lute and played and sang them to him; for, behold, they were rooted in my heart. The Khalif was charmed with them and drank thereto, albeit he was no great wine-bibber, saying, 'Would he would some day pleasure us with his company, as he hath pleasured thee!' Then he ordered me a present and I took it and went away.

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THE LOVERS OF THE BENOU UDHREH.

(Quoth Mesrour the Eunuch), The Khalif Haroun er Reshid was very wakeful one night and said to me, ‘See which of the poets is at the door to-night.’ So I went out and finding Jemil ben Maamer el Udhri in the ante-chamber, said to him, ‘The Commander of the Faithful calls for thee.’ Quoth he, ‘I hear and obey,’ and going in with me, saluted the Khalif, who returned his greeting and bade him sit down. Then he said to him, ‘O Jemil, hast thou any new stories to tell us?’ ‘Yes, O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered he. ‘Whether wouldst thou liefer hear, that which I have seen with mine eyes or that which I have [but] heard tell?’ ‘Tell me something thou hast actually seen,’ said the Khalif. Quoth Jemil, ‘It is well, O Commander of the Faithful; incline thy heart to me and lend me thine ears.’ The Khalif took a cushion of red brocade, embroidered with gold and stuffed with ostrich-feathers, and laying it under his thighs, propped up his elbows thereon; then he said to Jemil, ‘Now for thy tale, O Jemil!’

‘Know, O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered he, ‘that I was once desperately enamoured of a certain girl and used to pay her frequent visits, for that she was my desire and delight of all the things of this world. After awhile, her people removed with her, by reason of scarcity of pasture, and I abode some time without seeing her, till I grew restless for desire and longed for her sight and my soul urged me to journey to her. One night, I could hold out no longer; so I rose and saddling my she-camel, bound on my turban and donned my oldest clothes. Then I girt myself with my sword and slinging my spear behind me, mounted and rode forth in quest of her. I fared on diligently till, one night, it was pitch dark and exceeding black and I heard on all sides the roaring of lions and howling of wolves and the cries of the wild beasts; whereat my reason was troubled and my heart sank within me; but for all that I ceased not to press on, descending into valleys and climbing mountains, whilst my tongue ceased not to call on the name of God the Most High.

As I went along thus, sleep overtook me and the camel carried me aside out of my road, till, presently, something smote me on the head, and I woke, startled and alarmed, and found myself in a meadow, full of interlacing trees and streams and birds on the branches, warbling their various notes. So I alighted and taking my camel's halter in my hand, fared on softly with her, till I won clear of the trees and came out into the open country, where I adjusted her saddle and mounted again, knowing not where to go nor whither the fates should lead me; but, presently, peering into the desert, I espied a fire afar off. So I smote my camel and made toward the fire. When I drew near, I saw a tent pitched and thereby a spear stuck in the ground, with a pennon flying and horses tethered and camels feeding, and said in myself, "Doubtless there hangs some grave matter by this tent, for I see none other than it in the desert." So I went up to it and said, "Peace be upon you, O people of the tent, and the mercy of God and His blessings!" Whereupon there came forth to me a young man, nineteen years old, who was as the shining full moon, with valour written between his eyes, and answered, saying, "And on thee be peace, O brother of the Arabs, and God's mercy and blessing! Methinks thou hast lost thy way?" "Even so," replied I. "Direct me aright, God have mercy on thee!" "O brother of the Arabs," rejoined he, "of a truth this our land is infested with lions and the night is exceeding dark and cold and dreary, and I fear lest the wild beasts tear thee in pieces; wherefore do thou alight and abide with me this night in ease and comfort, and to-morrow I will put thee in the right way."

Accordingly, I alighted and hobbled my camel with the end of her halter; then I put off my heavy upper clothes and sat down. Presently the young man took a sheep and slaughtered it and kindled a brisk fire; after which he went into the tent and bringing out fine salt and powdered spices, fell to cutting off pieces of the flesh of the sheep and roasting them over the fire and feeding me therewith, weeping one while and sighing another. Then he groaned heavily and wept sore and recited the following verses:

Nothing is left him but a fluttering spright, Ay, and an eye bereavéd of its light;
Nor in his members is a single joint But sickness there is constant day and night.

His tears flow ever and his heart burns aye; Yet for all this still silent is the wight.
His foes weep, pitying him; alas for those Who pity in th' exultant foe excite!

By this I knew that the youth was a distracted lover, — for none knoweth passion save he who hath tasted the savour thereof, — and said to myself, "Shall I ask him?" But I bethought me and said, "How shall I intrude on him with questioning, and I in his abode?" So I restrained myself and ate my sufficiency of the meat. When we had made an end of eating, the young man arose and entering the tent, brought out an elegant basin and ewer and a silken napkin, fringed with broidery of red gold, and a casting-bottle full of rose-water, mingled with musk. I marvelled at his elegance and the daintiness of his fashion and said in myself, "Never knew I of elegance in the desert." Then we washed our hands and talked awhile, after which he went into the tent and making a partition between himself and me with a piece of red brocade, said to me, "Enter, O chief of the Arabs, and take thy rest; for thou hast suffered toil and travel galore this night and in this thy journey." So I entered and finding a bed of green brocade, pulled off my clothes and passed a night such as I had never passed in my life.

I lay, pondering the young man's case, till it was dark night and all eyes slept, when I was aroused by the sound of a low voice, never heard I a softer or sweeter. I raised the curtain and saw, by the young man's side, a damsel, never beheld I a fairer of face, and they were both weeping and complaining, one to the other, of the pangs of passion and desire and of the excess of their longing for each other's sight. "By Allah," quoth I, "I wonder who this can be! When I entered this tent, there was none therein but this young man. Doubtless this damsel is of the daughters of the Jinn and is enamoured of this youth; so they have secluded themselves with one another in this place." Then I considered her attentively and behold, she was a mortal and an Arab girl, whose face, when she unveiled it, put to shame the shining sun, and the tent was illumined by the light of her countenance. When I was assured that she was his mistress, I bethought me of a lover's jealousy; so I let fall the curtain and covering my face, fell asleep. As soon as it was day, I arose and donning my clothes, made the ablution and prayed such prayers as were due from me. Then I said to my host, “O brother of the Arabs, wilt thou add to thy favours by directing me into the right road?” “At thy leisure, O chief of the Arabs,” answered he. “The time of a guest’s stay is three days, and I am not one to let thee go before that time.”

So I abode with him three days, and on the fourth day, as we sat talking, I asked him of his name and lineage. Quoth he, “As for my lineage, I am of the Benou Udhreh; my name is such an one, son of such an one and my father’s brother is called such an one.” And behold, O Commander of the Faithful, he was the son of my father’s brother and of the noblest house of the Benou Udhreh. “O my cousin,” said I, “what moved thee to leave thy fair estate and that of thy fathers and thy slaves and handmaids and seclude thyself alone in this desert?” When he heard my words, his eyes filled with tears and he replied, saying, “Know, O my cousin, that I was passionately enamoured of the daughter of my father’s brother and distracted for love of her; so I sought her in marriage of her father, but he refused and married her to a man of the Benou Udhreh, who went in to her and carried her to his abiding-place this last year. When she became thus removed from me and I was prevented from looking on her, the pangs of passion and excess of love-longing and desire drove me to forsake my people and friends and fortune and take up my abode in this desert, where I have grown used to my solitude.” “Where are their dwellings?” asked I. And he said, “They are hard by, on the top of yonder hill; and every night, at the dead time when all eyes sleep, she steals secretly out of the camp, unseen of any, and I satisfy my desire of her converse and she of mine.” So I abide thus, comforting [or solacing] myself with her [company] a part of the night, till God accomplish that which is to be; either I shall compass my desire, in spite of the envious, or God will determine for me, and He is the best of those that determine.”

When I knew his case, O Commander of the Faithful, I was concerned for him and perplexed by reason of [my] jealousy [for his welfare]; so I said to him, “O my cousin, wilt thou that I counsel thee a plan, wherein, if it please God, thou shalt find a source of amendment and the way of advisement and success and whereby God shall do away from thee that thou dreadest?" "Say on, O my cousin," answered he. Quoth I, "When it is night and the girl cometh, set her on my camel; for she is swift of going, and mount thou thy courser, whilst I mount one of these she-camels. So will we fare on with her all night and by the morrow, we shall have traversed deserts and plains, and thou wilt have attained thy desire and won the beloved of thy heart. God's earth is wide, and by Allah, I will succour thee with heart and wealth and sword, as long as I live!" "O cousin," answered he, "wait till I take counsel with her, for she is prudent and quick-witted and hath insight into affairs."

When the night darkened and the hour of her coming arrived, and he awaiting her at the appointed season, she delayed beyond her usual time, and I saw him go forth the door of the tent and opening his mouth, inhale the wafts of air that came from her quarter, as if to snuff her odour, and he repeated the following verses:

Wind of the East, thou waftest a gentle air to me, From out the loved one's country, the place where sojourns she.
O wind, thou bear'st a token from her I hold so dear: Canst thou not give me tidings when will her coming be?

Then he entered the tent and sat awhile, weeping; after which he said to me, "O my cousin, some mischance must have betided the daughter of my uncle, to hinder her from coming to me this night. But abide where thou art, till I bring thee news." And he took his sword and buckler and was absent awhile of the night, after which he returned, carrying something, and called to me. So I hastened to him and he said, "O my cousin, knowst thou what hath happened?" "No, by Allah!" answered I. Quoth he, "Verily, I am smitten with mourning for my cousin this night; for she was coming to me, as of wont, when a lion met her in the way and rent her, and there remaineth of her but what thou seest." So saying, he threw down what he had in his hand, and behold, it was the damsel's turban and what was left of her bones. Then he wept sore and casting down his shield, took a bag and went forth again, saying, "Stir not hence, till I return to thee, if it please God the Most High."

He was absent awhile and presently returned, bearing in his hand a lion's head, which he threw on the ground and called for water. So I brought him water, with which he washed the lion's mouth and fell to kissing it and weeping: and he mourned for her passing sore and recited the following verses:

O lion, that thyself indeed didst on perdition throw, Perished hast thou and for her loss hast filled my heart with woe.
Thou hast bereaved me of my love and eke the cold earth's womb Hast made her dwelling till the day that calls up high and low.
To Fate, that with the loss of her afflicteth me, quoth I, "Now God forbid that one to take her place to me thou show!"

Then said he to me, "O cousin, I conjure thee by Allah and the rights of kindred and sympathy betwixt us, keep my charge. Thou wilt presently see me dead before thee, whereupon do thou wash me and shroud me and these that remain of my cousin's bones in this mantle and bury us both in one grave and write thereon these verses:

Upon the earth a fire we lived of solace and delight; In land and house foregathered we full many a day and night.
But fortune and the shifts of time did rend our loves apart And now within its bosom strait the shroud doth us unite.

Then he wept sore and entering the tent, was absent awhile, after which he came forth, groaning and crying out. Then he gave one sob and departed this world. When I saw that he was indeed dead, it was grievous to me and so sore was my sorrow for him that I had well nigh followed him for excess of lamentation over him. Then I laid him out and did as he had enjoined me, shrouding the damsel's remains with him in one garment and burying them in one grave. I abode by their grave three days, after which I departed and continued to pay frequent visits to the place for two years. This then is their story, O Commander of the Faithful.'

The Khalif was pleased with Jemil's story and rewarded him with a dress of honour and a handsome present.

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THE BEDOUIN AND HIS WIFE.

The Khalif Muawiyeh was sitting one day in his palace at Damascus, in a room the windows whereof were open on all four sides, that the breeze might enter from all quarters. Now it was a day of excessive heat, with no air stirring, and in the middle of the day, when the heat was at its sultriest, the Khalif, chancing to look forth, saw a man coming along, scorched by the heat of the ground and limping, as he fared on barefoot. Muawiyeh considered him awhile and said to his courtiers, 'Hath God [may He be blessed and glorified!] created any more wretched than he who needs must stir abroad at such an hour and in such weather as this?' Quoth one of them, 'Peradventure, he seeketh the Commander of the Faithful.' 'By Allah,' exclaimed the Khalif, 'if he seek me, I will assuredly give to him, and if he be wronged, I will succour him. Ho, boy I Stand at the door, and if yonder Arab seek to come in to me, forbid him not therefrom.'

So the page went out and presently the Arab came up to him and he said, 'What dost thou want?' 'I want the Commander of the Faithful,' answered the other, and the page said, 'Enter.' So he entered and saluted the Khalif, who said to him, 'Who art thou?' 'I am a man of the Benou Temim,' answered the Arab. 'And what brings thee here at this season?' asked Muawiyeh. Quoth the Arab, 'I come to thee, complaining to thee and imploring thy protection.' 'Against whom?' asked the Khalif 'Against Merwan ben el Hekem, thy deputy,' answered the man and recited the following verses:

Muawiyeh, pitiful, munificent and kind, Thou in whom righteousness and grace and wisdom are combined,
I come to thee for that my way on earth is strait on me: O help! nor cut thou off my hope, but justice let me find.
Vouchsafe thou me redress 'gainst him, the tyrant who hath wrought Me such unright as death itself were lighter to my mind.
Unjustly hath he dealt by me and tyrant-wise bereft Me of my wife, of Suad, dear to me o'er all her kind.
Yea, he in truth hath gone about to slay me, ere my tale Of days be told or come the term to me of God assigned.

When Muawiyeh heard him recite these verses, with the fire flashing from his mouth, he said to him, ‘Thou art welcome, O brother of the Arabs! Tell me thy tale and expound to me thy case.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied the Arab, ‘I had a wife, whom I loved passing dear and who was the solace of my eyes and the delight of my heart; and I had a herd of camels, with whose produce I made shift to maintain my condition; but there came upon us a year [of calamity], which killed off hoof and horn and bereft me of all I had. When what was in my hand failed me and I fell into evil case, I became abject and burdensome to those who had used to wish to visit me; which when my wife’s father knew, he took her from me and abjured me and drove me forth without pity.

So I repaired to thy deputy, Merwan ben el Hekem, and sought succour of him. He summoned my father-in-law and questioned him, and he denied any knowledge of me. “May God amend the Amir!” said I. “If it please him to send for the woman and question her of her father’s saying, the truth will appear.” So he sent for her; but no sooner had he set eyes on her than he fell passionately in love with her and becoming my rival, denied me succour and was wroth with me. Moreover, he sent me to prison, and I became as I had fallen from heaven and the wind had cast me down in a far country. Then said Merwan to my father-in-law, “Wilt thou give her to me to wife, at a [present] dowry of a thousand diners and [a contingent one of] ten thousand dirhems, and I will engage to quit her of yonder Arab?” Her father was seduced by the bribe and agreed to the bargain; whereupon Merwan sent for me and looking at me like an angry lion, said to me, “O Arab, put away Suad.” “I will not put her away,” answered I; but he set on me a company of his servants, who tortured me with all manner tortures, till I found no help for it but to do as he bade. So I divorced her and he sent me back to prison, where I abode till the days of her purification were accomplished, when he married her and set me free. So now I come to thee, hoping in thee, and imploring thy succour and throwing myself on thy protection.’ And he recited the following verses:

A fire is in the heart of me, That flameth still unquenchably.
My body’s sick and leaches all Are baffled by my malady.

Yea, and live coals, that cast forth sparks, For ever in mine entrails be:
Mine eyes rain tears without relent That down my cheeks in torrents flee
Nor have I hope of help except In God my Lord and eke in thee.

Then he was convulsed, and his teeth chattered and he fell down in a fit, writhing like a slain snake. When Muawiyeh heard his story, he said, ‘Verily, Merwan ben el Hekem hath transgressed against the laws of the Faith and hath done oppression and violated the harem of a true believer! O Arab, thou comest to me with a story, the like whereof I never heard!’ Then he called for inkhorn and paper and wrote to Merwan as follows: ‘It hath reached me that thou transgressest the laws of the Faith with regard to thy subjects. Now it behoves him who is a governor to keep his eyes from their lusts and restrain his soul from its delights.’ And after he wrote many words, which [quoth he who tells the tale] I omit, for brevity’s sake, and amongst them these verses:

Thou wast invested with a rule whereto thou art unapt: Ask pardon [out on thee!] of God for thine adulterous deed.
Lo, the unhappy man to us complaining came of thee; Of severance he made his moan and for redress did plead.
Hark ye, I’ve ta’en an oath to God, I’ll not be false unto, Nay, I will quit me of what’s due unto my faith and creed;
An if thou cross me in this thing I write to thee, I swear, Vultures and eagles presently upon thy flesh shall feed.
Divorce Suad and by Kumeit and Nesr ben Dhiban Unto my presence all equipped, despatch her with all speed.

Then he folded the letter and sealing it with his seal, delivered it to El Kumeit and Nesr ben Dhiban [whom it was his wont to employ on matters of weight, because of their trustiness] who took the letter and carried it to Medina, where they went in to Merwan and saluting him, delivered to him the letter and told him how the case stood. He read the letter and fell a-weeping; but it was not in his power to refuse obedience to the Khalif; so he went in to Suad and acquainting her with the case, divorced her in the presence of Kumeit and Nesr; after which he equipped her and delivered her to them, together with a letter to the Khalif, under his own hand and seal, to the following purport:

Prince of the Faithful, hasten not: with a good grace thy vow I will accomplish, nor constraint to force me dost thou need
Why styl'st thou me adulterer and traitor? If she pleased My fancy, 'twas in me no sin, as eke thou wilt concede;
For lo, there comes to thee a sun; amongst all folk that be, Mortals or Jinn, there's none may match with her in very deed.

So the messengers returned with Suad to Damascus and delivered to Muawiyeh the letter, which when he had read, he said, 'Verily, he hath obeyed handsomely, but he is extravagant in his praise of the woman.' Then he called for her and found her such a beauty as he had never seen, for grace and elegance and symmetry; moreover, he talked with her and found her fluent of speech and happy in diction and expression. Quoth he, 'Bring me the Arab.' So they fetched the man, who came, sore disordered for the evil dealing of fortune, and Muawiyeh said to him, 'O Arab, if thou wilt give her up to me, I will give thee in her stead three slave-girls, high-bosomed maids like moons, and a thousand dinars with each. Moreover, I will assign thee on the treasury such an annual sum as shall content and enrich thee.' When the Arab heard this, he gave a groan [and swooned away], so that Muawiyeh thought he was dead. When he revived, the Khalif said to him, 'What ails thee?' And the Arab answered, 'With heavy heart and in sore need, I appeal to thee from the injustice of Merwan ben el Hekem; but to whom shall I appeal from thine injustice?' And he recited the following verses:

God save the Khalif! Make me not, as one, I prithee, who For succour from the burning sands unto the fire doth sue.
Suad restore to one distraught, afflicted, morn and eve In memory who passeth still and anguish ever new.
Loose thou my bonds and give her back, nor grudge her unto me. Thou'lt find me no ungrateful one, if thus with me thou do.

Then said he, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, wert thou to give me all the riches of the Khalifate, yet would I not take them without Suad.’ And he recited this verse:

My heart to love other than Suad to me Denies, for my drink and my victual is she.

Quoth the Khalif, ‘Thou confessest to having divorced her and Merwan hath done the like; so now we will give her her choice. If she choose other than thee, we will marry her to him, and if she choose thee, we will restore her to thee.’ ‘Be it so,’ replied the Arab. So Muawiyeh said to her, ‘What sayst thou, O Suad? Which dost thou choose? The Commander of the Faithful, with his power and glory and dominion and palaces and treasures and all else thou seest at his command, or Merwan ben el Hekem, with his violence and tyranny, or this Arab, with his hunger and poverty?’ So she recited the following verses:

This man, for all he be in hunger and distress, Dearer to me than folk and neighbour is, nathelesse;
Yea, he is more to me than he who wears the crown, Merwan his governor and all who wealth possess.

Then said she, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, I will not forsake him by reason of the shifts of fortune or the perfidies of Fate, for there is between us old companionship, that may not be forgotten, and love beyond proof; and indeed it is but just that I should have patience with him in his stress, even as I shared fair fortune with him in better days.’ The Khalif marvelled at her wit and love and constancy and ordering her ten thousand dirhems, delivered her to the Arab, who took his wife and went away.

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THE LOVERS OF BASSORA.

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid was sleepless one night; so he sent for El Asmai and Hussein el Khelia and said to them, ‘Tell me a story and do thou begin, O Hussein.’ It is well, O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Hussein. ‘Some years ago, I went down to Bassora, to present to Mohammed ben Suleiman er Rebiy an ode I had composed in his honour; and he accepted it and bade me abide [at his court]. One day, I went out to El Mirbed, by way of El Muhalliyeh, and being oppressed by the great heat, went up to a great door, to ask for drink, when I was aware of a damsel, as she were a swaying willow-wand, with languishing eyes, eyebrows arched and finely pencilled and smooth and polished cheeks. She was clad in a shift the colour of a pomegranate-flower, and a vest of Senaa work; but the whiteness of her body overcame the redness of her shift, through which glittered two breasts like twin pomegranates and a belly, as it were a roll of fine Egyptian linen, with creases like scrolls of pure white paper, filled with musk. Round her neck she wore a [chain and] amulet of red gold, that fell down between her breasts, and on the table of her forehead were browlocks like jet. Her eyebrows joined one another and her eyes were like lakes; she had an aquiline nose and thereunder teeth like pearls. In fine, pleasantness prevailed in every part of her; but she seemed dejected and distracted and came and went in the vestibule, walking upon the hearts of her lovers, whilst her legs made mute the voices of their ankle-rings; and indeed she was as saith the poet:

Each member of her charms so sweet and good Hath given rise to its similitude.

I was smitten with awe of her, O Commander of the Faithful, and drew near to salute her, and behold, the house and vestibule and street were fragrant with music.

So I saluted her and she returned my greeting with a dejected voice and a grieving heart, consumed with the ardour of passion. Then said I to her, “O my lady, I am an old man and a stranger, and sore opprest of thirst. Wilt thou order me a draught of water, and God will requite thee?” “Away, O old man!” answered she. “I am distracted from [all thoughts of] meat and drink." " By what ailment, O my lady?" asked I. Quoth she, "I love one who dealeth not justly by me and desire one who will none of me. Wherefore I am afflicted with the wakefulness of those who watch the stars." "O my lady," said I, "is there on the face of the earth one to whom thou hast mind and who hath no mind to thee?" " Yes," answered she; "and this by reason of the perfection of beauty and amorous grace with which he is endowed." "And why standest thou in this porch? "asked I. " This is his road," answered she, "and the hour of his passing by." "O my lady," said I, "have ye ever foregathered and had such commerce as might cause this passion?" At this she heaved a deep sigh; the tears rained down upon her cheeks, as they were dew falling upon roses, and she recited these verses?

Even as two cassia boughs entwined above a mead we were; We drank the fragrance of delights in all life has of fair.
But this branch rent itself away from that, and now thou seest
One lo" and yearning unto that which was its mate whilere.

Quoth I, "And what betideth thee of thy love for this youth?" She answered, "I see the sun upon the walls of his people and I think that it is he; or haply I catch sight of him unexpectedly and am confounded and the blood and the life flee from my body and I abide without reason for weeks." "Excuse me," said I; "for I also have suffered for love-longing, that which is upon thee of distraction of soul and wasting of body and loss of strength; and I see in thee pallor and emaciation, such as testify of the fever-fits of passion. But how shouldst thou be unsmitten of passion, and thou a sojourner in the land of Bassora?" " By Allah," said she, "before I became enamoured of this youth, I was endowed with the uttermost of amorous grace and was resplendent with beauty and perfection and ravished all the princes of Bassora, till he fell in love with me!" "And who parted you?" asked I. "The vicissitudes of fortune," answered she; "but the manner of our separation was a strange one; and it was on this wise.

One New Year's day I had invited the damsels of Bassora and amongst them a girl belonging to Siran, who had bought her out of

Oman for fourscore thousand dirhems. She was madly in love with me and when she entered, she threw herself upon me and well-nigh tore me in pieces with bites and pinches. Then we withdrew apart, to drink wine at our ease, till our meat was ready and our delight was complete, and she toyed with me and I with her, and now I was upon her and now she upon me. Presently, the fumes of the wine moved her to strike her hand on the ribbon of my trousers, whereby it became loosed, unknown of either of us, and my trousers fell down in our play. At this moment, he came in, unobserved, and seeing me thus, was wroth and made off, as doth the Arab filly, when she hears the tinkle of her bridle. This, O elder, was three years ago, and since that time I have never ceased to excuse myself to him and entreat him with soft words and implore his indulgence, but he will neither cast a look at me nor write me a word nor speak to me by a messenger nor hear aught from me." Quoth I, "Is he an Arab or a foreigner?" And she, "Out on thee! He is of the princes of Bassora." "Is he old or young?" asked I. She looked at me laughingly and said, "Thou art certainly a fool! He is like the moon at its full, smooth-cheeked and beardless, nor is there any defect in him except his aversion to me." "What is his name?" asked I, and she, "What wilt thou do with him?" "I will do my endeavour to come at him," answered I, "that I may bring about reunion between you." Quoth she, "I will tell thee, on condition that thou carry him a letter." And I said, "I have no objection to that." Then said she, "His name is Zemreh ben el Mughaireh, hight Aboussekhaa, and his palace is at El Mirbed."

Therewith she called to those within for inkhorn and paper and tucking up her sleeves, showed two wrists like bracelets of silver. She headed her letter with "In the name of God etc.;" then wrote as follows, "O my lord, the forbearance of an invocation at the head of this my letter proclaimeth my insufficiency, and know that if my prayer had been answered, thou wouldst not have left me; for how often have I prayed that thou shouldest not leave me, and yet thou didst leave me! Were it not that distress with me transcends the bounds of restraint, that which thy servant hath forced herself to do in writing this letter were succourable to her, for all her despair of thee, of her knowledge of thee that thou wilt forbear to answer. Do thou fulfil her desire, O my lord, of a sight of thee from the porch, as thou passest in the street, wherewith thou wilt revive the dead soul in her. Or better still, do thou write her a letter with thine own hand (which God endow with all excellence!) and appoint it in requital of the privities that were between us in the nights of time past, whereof thou knowest. O my lord, was I not to thee a lover wasted with passion? If thou answer my prayer, I will give thee thanks and to God praise; and so peace be on thee!"

Then she gave me the letter and I went away. Next morning I repaired to the Viceroy's door, where I found an assembly of the notables of Bassora, and amongst them a youth who adorned the place and surpassed in grace and majesty all who were there; and indeed the Amir Mohammed set him above himself. I asked who he was and behold, it was Zemreh himself: so I said to myself, "Verily, there hath betided yonder unhappy one that which hath betided her!" Then I betook myself to El Mirbed and waited at the door of his house, till he came riding up in state, when I accosted him and invoking lavish blessings on him, gave him the letter. When he read it, he said to me, "O old man, we have taken another in her stead. Wilt thou see the substitute?" And I answered, "Yes." Whereupon he called out a woman's name, and there came forth a damsel who put to shame the sun and moon, swelling-breasted, walking the gait of one who hastens without fear, to whom he gave the letter, saying, "Do thou answer it." When she read it, she turned pale and said to me, "O old man, ask pardon of God for this that thou hast brought." So I went out, dragging my feet, and returned to her. When she saw me, she said, "What is behind thee?" I answered, "Evil and despair." And she said, "Have thou no concern of him. Where are God and Providence?" Then she ordered me five hundred dinars and I took them and went away.

Some days after I passed by the place and saw there horsemen and footmen. So I went in and lo, these were the companions of Zemreh, who were begging her to return to him; but she said, "No, by Allah, I will not look him in the face!" And she prostrated herself in gratitude to God and exultation over Zemreh. Then I drew near her, and she pulled out to me a letter, wherein was written, after the invocation of the Deity, the following: "O my lady, but for my forbearance towards thee, [may God prolong thy life!] I would relate somewhat of what betided from thee and set out my excuse, in that thou transgressedst against me, whenas thou wast manifestly a sinner against thyself and me in breach of vows and lack of faith and preference of another to me; for, by Allah, on whom we call for help against that which was of thy free-will, thou didst transgress against the love of me; and so peace be on thee!" Then she showed me the presents and things of price he had sent her, which were of the value of thirty thousand diners. I saw her again after this, and Zemreh had married her.'

Quoth Er Reshid, 'Had not Zemreh been beforehand with us, I had certainly had to do with her myself'

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ISAAC OF MOSUL AND HIS MISTRESS AND THE DEVIL

[Quoth Isaac ben Ibrahim el Mausili], I was in my house one night in the winter-time, when the clouds spread themselves [over the sky] and the rains poured down in torrents, as from the mouths of water-skins, and the folk forbore to come and go about the ways by reason of that which was therein of rain and mire. Now I was heavy at heart for that none of my brethren came to me nor could I go to them, for the mud and mire: so I said to my servant, 'Bring me wherewithal I may divert myself.' So he brought me meat and drink, but I had no heart to eat, without some one to bear me company, and I ceased not to look out of window and watch the ways till nightfall, when I bethought myself of a damsel belonging to one of the sons of El Mehdi, of whom I was enamoured and who was skilled in singing and playing upon instruments of music, and said to myself, 'Were she here with us tonight, my joy would be complete and my night would be abridged of the melancholy and restlessness that are upon me.'

At this moment one knocked at the door, saying, 'Shall a beloved enter, who standeth at the door?' Quoth I, 'Meseems the plant of my desire hath fruited.' So I went to the door and found my mistress, with a long green skirt wrapped about her and a kerchief of brocade on her head, to fend her from the rain. She was covered with mud to her knees and all that was upon her was drenched with water from the gutters; in short, she was in a rare pickle. So I said to her, 'O my lady, what brings thee hither through all this mud?' Quoth she, 'Thy messenger came to me and set forth to me that which was with thee of love and longing, so that I could not choose but yield and hasten to thee.' I marvelled at this, but was ashamed to tell her that I had sent no messenger; so I said, 'Praised be God that He hath brought us together, after all I have suffered for the pangs of patience! Verily, hadst thou delayed an hour longer, I must have run to thee, because of my much love and longing for thee.'

Then I called to my boy for water, that I might better her plight, and he brought a kettle full of hot water. I bade them pour it over her feet, whilst I set to work to wash them myself; after which I made her doff what she had on and calling for one of my richest dresses, clad her therein. Then I would have called for food, but she refused and I said to her, ‘Art thou for wine?’ ‘Yes,’ answered she. So I fetched cups and she said to me, ‘Who shall sing?’ ‘I, O my lady, answered I. But she said, ‘I care not for that.’ ‘One of my damsels?’ suggested I. ‘I have no mind to that either” said she. ‘Then,’ quoth I, ‘do thou sing thyself;’ ‘Not I,’ replied she. ‘Who then shall sing for thee ?’ asked I. Quoth she, ‘Go out and seek some one to sing for me.’ So I went out, in obedience to her, though I despaired of finding any one at such a time, and fared on till I came to the main street, where I saw a blind man striking the earth with his staff and saying, ‘May God not requite with good those with whom I was! When I sang, they hearkened not, and when I was silent, they despised me.’ So I said to him, ‘Art thou a singer?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he. Quoth I, ‘Wilt thou finish thy night with us and cheer us with thy company?’ ‘If it be thy will,’ replied he, ‘take my hand.’

So I took his hand and leading him to my house, said to the damsel, ‘O my mistress, I have brought a blind singer, with whom we may take our pleasure and he will not see us.’ ‘Bring him to me,’ said she. So I brought him in and invited him to eat. He ate a little and washed his hands, after which I brought him wine and he drank three cupsful. Then he said to me, ‘Who art thou?’ And I answered, ‘I am Isaac ben Ibrahim el Mausili.’ Quoth he, ‘I have heard of thee and now I rejoice in thy company.’ And I said, ‘O my lord, I am glad in thy gladness.’ ‘O Isaac,’ said he, ‘sing to me.’ So I took the lute, by way of jest, and said, ‘I hear and obey.’ When I had made an end of my song, he said to me, ‘O Isaac, verily thou comest nigh to be a singer!’ His words belittled me in mine own eyes and I threw the lute from my hand; whereupon he said, ‘Hast thou not with thee some one who is skilled in singing?’ ‘I have a damsel with me,’ answered I; and he said, ‘Bid her sing.’ Quoth I, ‘Wilt thou sing, when thou hast had enough of her singing?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he. So she sang and he said, ‘Nay, thou hast achieved nought.’ Whereupon she threw the lute from her hand in anger and said, ‘We have done our best: if thou have aught, favour us with it.’ Quoth he, ‘Bring me a lute which no hand has touched.’ So I bade the servant bring him a new lute and he tuned it and preluding in a mode I knew not, sang the following verses:

Across the middle dusk of night a maid fares swift and straight,
Who knows the visitation-tides, to where her love doth wait.
’Twas but her greeting startled us and eke her voice that said, “
Shall a beloved enter in who standeth at the gate?”

When she heard this, she looked at me askance and said, ‘Could not thy breast hold the secret that was between us an hour, but thou must discover it to this man?’ But I swore to her [that I had not told him] and excused myself to her and fell to kissing her hands and tickling her breasts and biting her cheeks, till she laughed and turning to the blind man, said to him, ‘Sing, O my lord!’ So he took the lute and sang as follows:

How often have I visited the fair and side by side, With soft
caressing hands have stroked the fingers henna-dyed!
How often have I handled eke the breasts’ pomegranates ripe
And the plump apples of the cheeks with bites and kisses plied!

So I said to her, ‘O my lady, who can have told him what we were about.’ ‘True,’ answered she, and we removed to a distance from him. Presently quoth he, ‘I have a need to make water.’ And I said, ‘O boy, take the candle and go before him.’ Then he went out and tarried a long while. So we went in search of him, but could not find him; and behold, the doors were locked and the keys in the closet, and we knew not whether he had flown up to heaven or sunk into the earth. Wherefore I knew that he was Iblis and that he had done me a pander’s office and returned, recalling to myself the words of Abou Nuwas in the following verses:

I marvel at Iblis no less for his pride Than the lewdness and
meanness that mark his intent.
To Adam himself he refused to prostrate, Yet his lineage to serve
as a pimp is content.

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THE LOVERS OF MEDINA.

[Quoth Ibrahim Abou Ishac], I was once in my house, when one knocked at the door; so my servant went out and returned, saying, ‘A comely youth is at the door, seeking admission.’ I bade admit him and there came in to me a young man, on whom were traces of sickness, and he said, ‘I have long wished to meet thee, for I have an occasion to thee.’ ‘What is it?’ asked I. Whereupon he pulled out three hundred diners and laying them before me, said, ‘I beseech thee to accept these and compose me an air to two lines of verse I have made.’ ‘Repeat them to me,’ said I. And he recited the following lines:

By Allah, O mine eyes that sinned against my heart of yore,
Quench with your tears the fire of woe that burneth ever sore.
Fate is of those that chide at me for her, my heart’s abode,
Whom, though in grave-clothes I be lapped, I never shall see more

So I set the verses to a plaintive air and sang it to him; whereupon he swooned away and I thought that he was dead. However, after awhile, he came to himself and said to me, ‘Repeat the air.’ But I conjured him by Allah to excuse me, saying, ‘I fear lest thou die.’ ‘Would it might be so!’ replied he and ceased not to importune me, till I had pity on him and repeated it; whereupon he cried out grievously and fell into a worse [swoon] than before and I doubted not but that he was dead; but, after I had sprinkled rose-water on him awhile, he revived and sat up. I praised God for his recovery and laying the dinars before him, said to him, ‘Take thy money and depart from me.’ Quoth he, ‘I have no need of the money and thou shalt have the like of it, if thou wilt repeat the air.’ My heart rejoiced in the money and I said, ‘I will repeat it, but on three conditions: the first, that thou abide with me and eat of my victual, till thou regain strength; the second, that thou drink wine enough to cheer thy heart; and the third, that thou tell me thy story.’

He agreed to this and ate and drank; after which he said, ‘I am of the people of Medina and I went forth one day a-pleasuring with my friends and following the road to El Akic, saw a company of girls and amongst them a damsel as she were a branch pearled with dew, with eyes whose glances stole away his soul who looked on them. They rested in the shade till the end of the day, when they went away, leaving in my heart wounds slow to heal. I returned [next day], to seek news of her, but found none who could tell me of her; so I sought her in the streets and markets, but could come on no trace of her; wherefore I fell ill of grief and told my case to one of my kinsmen, who said to me, "No harm shall befall thee: the days of spring are not yet past and by and by it will rain, whereupon she will go forth, and I will go out with thee, and do thou thy will." His words comforted my heart and I waited till El Akic ran [with water], when I went forth with my friends and kinsmen and sat in the same place as before. We had not sat long before up came the women, like horses running for a wager; and I said to a girl of my kindred, "Say to yonder damsel, 'Quoth yonder man to thee, "He did well who said:

She shot a shaft at me that pierced my bosom through and through Then turned away and by that act did wound and scars renew." '"

So she went to her and repeated my words, to which she replied, saying, "Tell him that he said well who answered thus:

'There is with us the like of that whereof thou dost complain: Patience belike, to heal our hearts relief shall soon ensue.'"

I refrained from further speech for fear of scandal and rose to go away. She rose at my rising, and I followed and she looked back at me, till she saw I had noted her abode. Then she began to come to me and I to go to her, so that we foregathered and met often, till the thing was noised abroad and grew notorious and her father came to know it. However, I ceased not to do my endeavour to meet her and complained of my case to my father, who assembled our kindred and repaired to her father, to ask her in marriage for me. But her father said, "Had this been proposed to me before he dishonoured her, I would have consented; but now the thing is notorious and I am loath to verify the saying of the folk.'"

Then (continues Ibrahim) I repeated the air to him and he went away, after having acquainted me with his abode, and we became friends. Now I was devoted to the Barmecides; so next time Jaafer ben Yehya sat [to receive visits], I attended, as of my wont, and sang to him the young man's verses. They pleased him and he drank some cups of wine and said, 'Out on thee! Whose song is that?' So I told him the young man's story and he bade me ride to him and give him assurance of the attainment of his desire. Accordingly I fetched him to Jaafer, who asked him to repeat his story. He did so and Jaafer said, 'Trust me, I will marry thee to her.' So his heart was comforted and he abode with us.

On the morrow, Jaafer mounted and went in to Er Reshid, to whom he related the story. The Khalif was pleased with it and sending for the young man and myself, commanded me to repeat the air and drank thereto. Then he wrote to the governor of the Hejaz, bidding him send the girl's father and his household to his court in honourable fashion and spare no expense for their outfit. So, in a little while, they came and the Khalif, sending for the man, commanded him to marry his daughter to her lover; after which he gave him a hundred thousand dinars, and the man returned to his people. As for the young man, he abode one of Jaafer's boon-companions, till there happened what happened; whereupon he returned with his household to Medina, may God the Most High have mercy upon all their souls!

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EL MELIK EN NASIR AND HIS VIZIER

There was given to Abou Aamir ben Merwan, Vizier [to El Melik en Nasir of Egypt], a boy of the Christians, than whom never fell eyes on a handsomer. En Nasir saw him and said to the Vizier, 'Whence comes this boy?' 'From God,' answered Abou Aamir; whereupon, 'Wilt thou fright us with stars,' quoth the King, 'and captive us with moons?' Abou Aamir excused himself to him and making up a present, sent it to him with the boy, to whom he said, 'Be thou part of the present: were it not of necessity, my soul had not consented to give thee away.' And he wrote with him these verses:

Behold the full moon, O my lord, that cometh to thy sky; For none, that heaven than earth of moons is worthier, may deny.
My soul, to pleasure thee, I give, nor ever yet of one, His soul to pleasure one who gave, before myself, heard I.

The thing pleased En Nasir and he requited him with much treasure and the Vizier became high in favour with him. After this, a slave-girl, one of the loveliest women in the world, was presented to the Vizier, and he feared lest this should come to the King's ears and he desire her, and the like should happen as with the boy. So he made up a present still costlier than the first and sent it with her to the King, together with these verses:

My lord, the very sun is this; the moon thou hadst before: So now these planets twain shall meet and glitter side by side;
A combination presaging fair fortune to my life. Do thou with them in all delight of Paradise abide;
For they, by Allah, have no third in beauty nor hast thou A second dominion in all the world so wide.

Wherefore his credit redoubled with En Nasir; but after awhile, one of his enemies maligned him to the King, alleging that there still lurked in him desire for the boy and that he ceased not to lust after him, whenever the North wind moved him, and to gnash his teeth for that he had given him away. Quoth the King, ‘Wag not thou thy tongue at him, or I will cut off thy head.’ However, he wrote Abou Aamir a letter, as from the boy, to the following effect: ‘O my lord, thou knowest that thou wast all and one to me and that I never ceased from delight with thee. Albeit I am with the Sultan, yet would I choose rather solitude with thee, but that I fear the King’s mischief: wherefore contrive thou to demand me of him.’ This letter he sent to Abou Aamir by a little page, whom he enjoined to say, ‘This is from such an one: the King never speaks to him.’ When the Vizier read the letter and heard the cheating message, he smelt a rat and wrote on the back of the scroll the following lines:

After experience’s laws, doth it become a man Of sense unto the lion’s lair his steps foolwise to bend?
I’m none of those whose reason love and passion overcrow; Nor am I ignorant of that the envious do pretend.
Wert thou my soul, I gave thee up obediently, and now Shall soul, from body sundered, back again thereunto wend ?

When En Nasir knew of this answer, he marvelled at the Vizier’s quickness of wit and would never again lend ear to any insinuation against him. Then said he to him, ‘How didst thou escape falling into the snare?’ And he answered, saying, ‘Because my reason is unentangled in the toils of passion.’

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THE ROGUERIES OF DELILEH THE CRAFTY AND HER DAUGHTER ZEYNEB THE TRICKSTRESS.

There lived in the Khalifate of Haroun er Reshid two men named Ahmed ed Denef and Hassan Shouman, past masters in trick and cunning, who had done rare things in their time; wherefore the Khalif invested them with dresses of honour and made them captains of the watch for Baghdad, Ahmed of the right hand and Hassan of the left hand. Moreover, to Ahmed he committed the ward of [the district] without [the city walls] and appointed each of them a stipend of a thousand dinars a month and forty men to be at their commandment. So Ahmed and Hassan went forth in company of the Amir Khalid, the Master of Police, attended each by his forty followers on horseback and preceded by the crier, proclaiming aloud and saying, ‘By order of the Khalif, none is captain of the watch of the right hand but Ahmed ed Denef and none is captain of the watch of the left hand but Hassan Shouman, and it behoveth all to give ear to their word and pay them respect.’

Now there was in the city an old woman called Delileh the Crafty, who had a daughter by name Zeyneb the Trickstress. They heard the proclamation aforesaid and Zeyneb said to her mother, ‘O my mother, see yonder fellow, Ahmed ed Denef. He came hither from Cairo, a fugitive, and played the double-dealer in Baghdad till he foisted himself into the Khalif’s favour and is now become captain of the watch of the right hand, whilst that mangy knave Hassan Shouman is captain of the left hand, and each has a monthly wage of a thousand dinars and a table spread morning and evening, whilst we abide unemployed and neglected in this house, without estate and without honour, and have none to ask of us.’

Now Delileh was a past mistress in all manner of craft and trickery and double-dealing; she could wile the very serpents out of their holes and Iblis himself might have learnt deceit of her. Her father had been governor of the carrier-pigeons to the Khalif and used to rear them to carry letters and messages, wherefore each bird in time of need was dearer to the Khalif than one of his sons; and in this capacity he had a stipend of a thousand dinars a month.

Moreover, her husband had been town captain of Baghdad and had a monthly wage from the Khalif of a thousand dinars; but he died, leaving two daughters, one of whom was married and had a son, by name Ahmed el Lekit, and the other, Zeyneb, unmarried. So Zeyneb said to her mother, ‘Up and play off some trick that may make us notorious in Baghdad, so haply we may get our father’s stipends for ourselves.’ ‘As thy head liveth, O my daughter,’ answered the old woman, ‘I will play off such rogueries in Baghdad as never did Ahmed ed Denef nor Hassan Shouman!’

So saying, she rose and bound her face with the chinveil and donned clothes such as the Soufi Fakirs wear, trousers of white wool falling over her heels, and a gown of the like stuff and a broad girdle. Moreover, she took an ewer and filled it to the neck with water; after which she set three dinars in the mouth and stopped it up with palm fibre. Then she threw round her neck a rosary as big as a load of firewood and taking in her hand a flag, made of parti-coloured rags, red and yellow and green, went out, saying, ‘Allah! Allah!’ with tongue celebrating the praises of God, whilst her heart galloped in the race-course of abominations, seeking how she might play some sharping trick in the town. She fared on from street to street, till she came to an alley swept and watered and paved with marble, where she saw a vaulted gateway, with a threshold of alabaster, and a Moorish porter standing at the door, which was of sandal-wood, plated with brass and furnished with a ring of silver.

Now this house belonged to the Chief of the Khalif’s Ushers, a man of great wealth in lands and houses and stipends, and he was called the Amir Hassan Sherr et Teric for that his blow forewent his word. He was married to a handsome girl, whom he loved and who had made him swear, on the night of his going in to her, that he would take none other to wife nor lie abroad from her a night. One day, he went to the Divan and saw that each Amir had with him a son or two. Then he entered the bath and looking at his face in the mirror, saw that the white hairs in his beard outnumbered the black and said in himself, ‘Will not He who took thy father vouchsafe thee a son?’ So he went in to his wife, in an angry mood, and she said to him, ‘Good-even to thee.’ ‘Away from my sight!’ answered he. ‘From the day I saw thee I have seen nothing of good.’ ‘How so?’ asked she.

Quoth he, ‘On the night of my going in to thee, thou madest me swear to take no other wife than thee, and to-day I have seen each Amir with a son and some with two. So I bethought me of death and called to mind that I had been blessed with neither son nor daughter and that he who leaves no male child is not remembered. This, then, is the reason of my anger, for thou art barren and conceivest not by me.’ ‘The name of God be upon thee!’ answered she. ‘Indeed, I have worn out the mortars with beating wool and pounding drugs, and I am not to blame; the fault of my barrenness is with thee, for that thou art a snub-nosed mule and thy sperm is thin and impregnateth not neither getteth children.’ Quoth he, ‘When I return from my journey, I will take another wife.’ And she said, ‘My portion is with God!’ Then he went out from her and each of them repented of the sharp words spoken to the other.

As the Amir’s wife looked forth of her lattice, as she were a bride of the treasures, for the jewellery upon her, Delileh espied her and seeing her clad in costly clothes and ornaments, said to herself, ‘O Delileh, it would be a rare trick to entice yonder young lady from her husband’s house and strip her of all her clothes and jewels and make off with them!’ So she took up her stand under the windows of the Amir’s house, and fell to calling aloud upon the name of God and saying, ‘Be present, O ye friends of God!’ Whereupon all the women of the street looked from their lattices and seeing the old woman clad, after the Soufi manner, in clothes of white wool, as she were a pavilion of light, said, ‘God vouchsafe us a blessing by the intermission of this pious old woman, from whose face issueth light!’ And Khatoun, the wife of the Amir Hassan, wept and said to her maid, ‘Go down and kiss the hand of Sheikh Abou Ali, the porter, and say to him, “ Let yonder pious old woman enter, so haply we may get a blessing of her.”’ So she went down to the porter and kissing his hand, said to him, ‘Quoth my mistress to thee, “Let yonder pious old woman come in to her, so she may get a blessing of her;” and belike her benediction may extend to us likewise.’ Accordingly, he went up to Delileh and kissed her hand, but she forbade him, saying, ‘Away from me, lest my ablution be avoided! Thou, also, O Abou Ali, art absorbed [in the contemplation of the Deity,] one of the elect of God and under His especial guardianship.

Verily, He shall deliver thee from this servitude.'

Now the Amir owed the porter three months' wage and he was straitened for want thereof, but knew not how to recover it from him; so he said to the old woman, 'O my mother, give me to drink from thy pitcher, so I may have a blessing through thee.' So she took the pitcher from her shoulder and waved it in the air, so that the stopper flew out and the three diners fell to the ground. The porter saw them and picked them up, saying in himself, 'Glory to God! This old woman is one of the saints that have hidden treasures at their commandment! It hath been revealed to her that I am in want of money; so she hath conjured me these three diners out of the air.' Then said he to her, 'O my aunt, take these three diners that fell from thy pitcher.' 'Away with them from me!' answered she. 'I am of the folk that occupy not themselves with the things of the world. Take them and use them for thine own benefit, in lieu of those the Amir owes thee.' Quoth he, 'Glory to Allah for succour! This is of the chapter of revelation!'

Then the maid accosted her and kissing her hands; carried her up to her mistress, whom she found as she were a treasure, whose guardian spells had been done away; and Khatoun bade her welcome and kissed her hand. 'O my daughter,' said Delileh, 'I come not to thee but by God's [especial] advertisement.' Then Khatoun set food before her; but she said, 'O my daughter, I eat but of the food of Paradise and fast continually, breaking my fast but five days in the year. But I see thee troubled and desire that thou tell me the cause of thy trouble.' 'O my mother,' answered Khatoun, 'I made my husband swear, on my wedding-night, that he would take none other than me to wife, and he saw others with children and longed for them and said to me, " Thou art barren." And I answered, " Thou art a mule that begetteth not." Whereupon he left me in anger, saying, "When I come back from my journey, I will take another wife." So, O my mother, I fear lest he put me away and take another wife, for he hath houses and lands and stipends galore, and if he have children by another, they will possess the property from me.' 'O my daughter,' said Delileh, 'knowest thou not of my master, the Sheikh Abouihemlat, whom if a debtor visit, God quiteth him his debt, and if a barren woman, she conceiveth?' 'O my mother,' answered

Khatoun, ‘since the day of my wedding, I have not gone forth the house, no, not even to pay visits of congratulation or condolence.’ Quoth the old woman, ‘I will carry thee to him and do thou cast thy burden on him and make a vow to him; so peradventure, when thy husband returns from his journey, he will lie with thee and thou shalt conceive by him and bear a girl or a boy: but, be it male or female, it shall be a dervish of the Sheikh Aboulhemlat.’

So Khatoun rose and arraying herself in her richest clothes, donned all her jewellery and said to her maid, ‘Keep thou an eye on the house.’ And she said, ‘I hear and obey, O my lady.’ Then she went down and the porter met her and said to her, ‘Whither away, O my lady?’ ‘I go to visit the Sheikh Aboulhemlat,’ answered she; and he said, ‘Be a year’s fast incumbent on me! Verily yon old woman is of the saints of God and full of holiness! Moreover, O my lady, she hath hidden treasure at her commandment, for she gave me three diners of red gold and divined my case, without my asking her, and knew that I was needy.’ Then the old woman went out with Khatoun, saying to her, ‘God willing, O my daughter, when thou hast visited the Sheikh Aboulhemlat, there shall betide thee solace of soul and by God’s leave thou shalt conceive, and thy husband shall love thee by the blessing of the Sheikh and shall never again say a despiteful word to thee.’ Quoth Khatoun, ‘I will go with thee to him, O my mother!’ But Delileh said in herself, ‘Where shall I strip her and take her clothes and jewellery, with the folk coming and going?’ Then she said to her, ‘O my daughter, walk thou behind me, within sight of me, for thy mother is a woman sorely burthened; every one who hath a burden casteth it on me and all who have pious offerings to make give them to me and kiss my hand.’

So the lady followed her at a distance, whilst her anklets tinkled and the coins and ornaments plaited in the tresses of her hair clinked as she went, till they reached the bazaar of the merchants. Presently, they came to the shop of a young merchant, by name Sidi Hassan, who had no hair on his face and was very handsome. He saw the lady coming and fell to casting stolen glances at her, which when the old woman saw, she beckoned to her and said, ‘Sit down in this shop, till I return to thee.’ So Khatoun sat down before the shop of the young merchant, who cast one glance at her, that cost him a thousand sighs.

Then the old woman accosted him and saluted him, saying, ‘Is not thy name Sidi Hassan,son of the merchant Muhsin?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he; ‘who told thee my name?’ Quoth she, ‘Folk of repute directed me to thee. Know that this young lady is my daughter and her father was a merchant, who died and left her much good. She is come of marriageable age and the wise say, “ Offer thy daughter in marriage and not thy son; “ and all her life she hath not come forth the house till this day. Now I have had a divine advertisement and it hath been commanded me in secret to marry her to thee; so, if thou art poor, I will give thee capital and will open thee two shops, instead of one.’

When the young merchant heard this, he said in himself, ‘I asked God for a bride, and He hath given me three things, coin and caze and clothing.’ Then he said to the old woman, ‘O my mother, that which thou proposest to me is well; but this long while my mother saith to me, “ I wish to marry thee,” and I reply, “ I will not marry, except on the sight of mine own eyes.”’ ‘Rise and follow me,’ answered Delileh, ‘and I will show her to thee, naked.’ So he rose and shut his shop and took a purse of a thousand diners, saying in himself, ‘Belike we may need to buy somewhat or pay the fees for drawing up the [marriage] contract.’ The old woman bade him walk behind rhe young lady, so as to keep her in sight, and said to herself, ‘Where shall I carry the young merchant and the lady, that I may strip them?’

Then she walked on and Khatoun after her, followed by the young merchant, till she came to a dyery, kept by a master-dyer, by name Hajj Mohammed, a man of ill repute, cutting male and female, like the colocasia seller’s knife, and loving to eat both figs and pomegranates.’ He heard the tinkle of the ankle-rings and raising his head, saw the lady and the young man. Presently the old woman came up to him and said, ‘Art thou not Hajj Mohammed?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he. ‘What dost thou want?’ Quoth she, ‘Folk of repute have directed me to thee. Look at yonder handsome girl, who is my daughter, and that comely beardless youth, who is my son. I brought them both up and spent much money on them. Now I have an old ruinous house, which I have shored up with wood, and the builder says to me, “Go and live in some other place, till this be repaired, lest perchance it fall upon thee.” So I went forth to seek me a lodging, and people of worth directed me to thee, and I wish to lodge my son and daughter with thee.'Quoth the dyer in himself, 'Verily, here is fresh butter upon muffins come to me.' But he said to the old woman, 'True is it I have a house and saloon and upper chamber; but I cannot spare any part thereof, for I want it all for guests and for the indigo-growers [who come to me from time to time].' 'O my son,' answered she, 'it will but be for a month or two at the most, till our house be repaired, and we are strangers. Let the guest-chamber be shared between us and thee, and if thou desire that thy guests be ours, we will welcome them and eat and sleep with them.' So he gave her the keys, one big and one small and one crooked, and said to her, 'The big key is that of the house, the crooked one that of the saloon and the little one that of the upper chamber.'

Delileh took the keys and fared on, followed by the lady and the young merchant, till she came to the street in which was the house. She opened the door and entered, followed by the lady, to whom said she, 'O my daughter, this,' pointing to the saloon, 'is the lodging of the Sheikh Aboulhemlat; but go thou into the upper chamber and loose thy veil and wait till I come to thee.' So she went up and sat down. Presently up came the young merchant, whom Delileh carried into the saloon, saying, 'Sit down, whilst I fetch my daughter and show her to thee.' So he sat down and the old woman went up to Khatoun, who said to her, 'I wish to visit the Sheikh, before the folk come.' 'O my daughter,' said the old woman, 'we fear for thee.' 'Why so?' asked Khatoun. 'Because,' answered Delileh, 'here is a son of mine, a natural who knows not summer from winter, but goes ever naked. He is the Sheikh's deputy, and if he saw a girl like thee come to visit him, he would snatch her earrings and wound her ears and tear her silken clothes . So do thou doff thy jewellery and clothes and I will keep them for thee, till thou hast made thy visit.' So she did off her [upper] clothes and jewels and gave them to the old woman, who said, 'I will lay them for thee on the Sheikh's curtain, that a blessing may betide thee.'

Then she went out, leaving the lady in her shift and trousers, and hid the clothes and jewels in a place on the stairs; after which she betook herself to the young merchant, whom she found awaiting the girl, and he said, 'Where is thy daughter, that I may see her?' But she smote upon her breast and he said, ‘What ails thee?’ ‘Would there were no such thing as ill and envious neighbours!’ answered she. ‘My neighbours saw thee enter the house with me and asked me of thee; and I said, “This is a bridegroom I have found for my daughter.” They envied me on shine account and said to my daughter, “Is thy mother tired of maintaining thee, that she marries thee to a leper?” So I swore to her that she should see thee naked.’ Quoth he, ‘I take refuge with God from the envious!’ and bearing his fore-arm, showed her that it was like silver. ‘Have no fear,’ said she; ‘thou shalt see her naked, even as she shall see thee.’ And he said, ‘Let her come and see me.’ Then he put off his sable pelisse and girdle and dagger and the rest of his clothes, except his shirt and trousers, and laid the purse of a thousand dinars with them. Quoth Delileh, ‘Give them to me, that I may take care of them.’ So she took them and fetching the girl’s clothes and jewellery, went out with the whole and locked the door upon them.

She deposited her purchase with a druggist of her acquaintance and returned to the dyer, whom she found sitting, awaiting her. Quoth he, ‘God willing, the house pleaseth thee?’ ‘There is a blessing in it,’ answered she,’and I go now to fetch porters to carry our goods and bedding thither. But my children would have me bring them meat-patties; so do thou take this dinar and buy the patties and go and eat the morning meal with them.’ ‘Who shall guard the dyery meanwhile and the people’s goods that are therein?’ asked the dyer. ‘Thy boy,’ answered the old woman. ‘So be it,’ rejoined he and taking a covered dish, went out to do her bidding. As soon as he was gone, she fetched the clothes and jewels she had left with the druggist and going back to the dyery, said to the boy, ‘Run after thy master, and I will not stir hence till you both return.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered he and went away.

Presently, there came up an ass-driver, a scavenger, who had been out of work for a week, and she called to him, saying, ‘Hither, O ass-driver!’ So he came to her and she said, ‘Knowest thou my son the dyer?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he; ‘I know him.’ And she said, ‘The poor fellow is insolvent and loaded with debts, and as often as he is put in prison, I set him free. Now they are about to declare him bankrupt and I am going to return the goods to their owners; so do thou lend me thine ass for that purpose and take this dinar to his hire. When I am gone, take the handsaw and empty out the vats and jars and break them, that, if there come an officer from the Cadi's court, he may find nothing in the dyery.' Quoth he, 'I owe the Hajj a kindness and will do somewhat for the love of God.'

So she laid the things on the ass and made for her own house; and [God] the Protector protected her, so that she arrived there in safety and went in to her daughter Zeyneb, who said to her, 'O my mother, my heart has been with thee! What hast thou done by way of roguery?' 'I have played off four tricks on four people,' answered Delileh; the wife of the Chief Usher, a young merchant, a dyer and an ass-driver, and have brought thee all their spoil on the latter's ass.' 'O my mother,' said Zeyneb, 'thou wilt nevermore be able to go about the town, for fear of the Chief Usher, whose wife's clothes and jewellery thou hast taken, and the merchant whom thou hast stripped, and the dyer whose customer's goods thou hast stolen and the owner of the ass.' 'Pshaw, my daughter!' rejoined the old woman, 'I reck not of them, save the ass-driver, who knows me.'

Meanwhile, the dyer bought the meat-patties and set out for the house, followed by his servant, bearing the food on his head. On his way thither, he passed his shop, where he found the ass-man breaking the vats and jars and saw that there was neither stuff nor liquor left in them and that the shop was in ruins. So he said to him, 'Hold thy hand, O ass-driver!' Whereupon the latter desisted and said, 'Praised be God for thy safety, O Hajj! Indeed, my heart was with thee.' 'Why so?' asked the dyer. 'Thou art become bankrupt and they have filed a docket of thine insolvency.' 'Who told thee this?' asked the dyer. 'Thy mother told me,' answered the other, 'and bade me break the jars and empty the vats, that the apparitors might find nothing in the shop, if they should come.' 'God confound thee!' cried the dyer. 'My mother died long ago.' And he beat his breast, saying, 'Alas for the loss of my goods and those of the folk!' The ass-man also wept and said, 'Alas, for the loss of my ass!' And he said to the dyer, 'Give me back my ass, that thy mother stole from me.' The dyer laid hold of him by the throat and fell to pummelling him, saying, 'Bring me the old woman;' whilst the other pummelled him back, saying, 'Give me back my ass.' So they beat and cursed each other, till the folk collected round them and one of them said, ‘What is the matter, O Hajj Mohammed?’ Quoth the ass-driver, ‘I will tell thee the case,’ and related to them his story, saying, ‘I thought I was doing the dyer a good turn; but, when he saw me, he said, “ My mother is dead,” and beat his breast. And now I require my ass of him, for that it is he who hath put this trick on me, that he might make me lose my beast.’

Then said the folk to the dyer, ‘O Hajj Mohammed, cost thou know this old woman, that thou didst trust her with the dyery and what was therein?’ And he answered, saying, ‘I know her not; but she took lodgings with me to-day, she and her son and daughter.’ Quoth one, ‘In my judgment, the dyer is bound to indemnify the ass-driver.’ ‘Why so?’ asked another. ‘Because, replied the first, ‘he trusted not the old woman nor gave her his ass, but because he saw that the dyer had entrusted her with the dyery and its contents.’ And a third said, ‘O Hajj, since thou hast lodged her with thee, it behoves thee to get the man back his ass.’ Then they made for the house, and the tale will come round to them again.

Meanwhile, the young merchant abode awaiting the old woman’s coming with her daughter, but she came not; whilst the lady in like manner sat expecting her return with leave from her son, the possessed, the Sheikh’s deputy, to go in to him. When she was weary of waiting, she rose to visit the Sheikh by herself and went down into the saloon, where she found the young merchant, who said to her, ‘Come: where is thy mother, who brought me hither to marry thee?’ ‘My mother is dead,’ answered she; ‘art thou the old woman’s son the ecstatic, the deputy of the Sheikh Aboulhemlat?’ Quoth he, ‘The swindling old beldam is no mother of mine; she hath cheated me and taken my clothes and a thousand dinars.’ ‘And me also hath she swindled,’ said Khatoun; ‘for she brought me to see the Sheikh Aboulhemlat and stripped me.’ Quoth he, ‘I look to thee for my clothes and my thousand dinars.’ ‘And I,’ answered she, ‘look to thee to make good my clothes and jewellery.’

At this moment in came the dyer and seeing them both stripped of their clothes, said to them, ‘Tell me where your mother is.’ So they told him their several cases and he exclaimed, ‘Alas, for the loss of my goods and those of the folk!’ And the ass-driver said, ‘Alas for my ass! Give me my ass, O dyer!’ Then said the dyer, ‘This old woman is a sharper. Come forth, that I may lock the door.’ Quoth the young merchant, ‘It were a disgrace to thee that we should enter thy house, clothed, and leave it, naked.’ So the dyer clad him and the damsel and sent her back to her house. Then he shut the dyery and said to the young merchant, ‘Come, let us go and search for the old woman and hand her over to the chief of the police.’ So they and the ass-man repaired to the house of the master of police and made their complaint to him. Quoth he, ‘How many old women are there not in the town! Go and seek for her and lay hands on her and bring her to me, and I will torture her for you and make her confess.’ So they went out and sought for her all round the town; and so we will leave them for the present.

Presently, Delileh said to her daughter, ‘I have a mind to play off another trick.’ ‘O my mother,’ answered Zeyneb, ‘I fear for thee;’ but the old woman said, ‘I am like bean-husks, proof against fire and water.’ So she rose and donning a handmaid’s habit, of such as serve people of condition, went out to look for some one to swindle. Presently she came to a by-street, spread with carpets and lighted with hanging lamps, and heard a noise of singing-women and beating of tambourines. Here she saw a slave-girl, bearing on her shoulder a boy, clad in trousers embroidered with silver and velvet jacket, with a pearl-embroidered cap on his head and a collar of gold set with jewels about his neck. Now the house belonged to the Provost of the Merchants of Baghdad, and the boy was his son. Moreover, he had a virgin daughter, to boot, who was promised in marriage, and it was her betrothal they were celebrating that day. There was with her mother a company of ladies and singing-women, and whenever she went up or down, the boy clung to her. So she called the slave-girl and said to her, ‘Take thy young master and play with him, till the company break up.’

Said Delileh to the maid, ‘What festivities are these in your mistress’s house?’ ‘She celebrates her daughter’s betrothal to-day,’ answered the girl, ‘and she hath singing-women with her.’ Quoth the old woman to herself, ‘O Delileh, the thing to do is to spirit away the boy from the maid.’ And she cried out, saying, ‘O disgrace! O ill luck!’ Then, pulling out a brass token, resembling a dinar, she said to the maid, who was a simpleton, ‘Take this diner and go in to thy mistress and say to her, “ Umm el Khair rejoices with thee and is beholden to thee for thy favours, and she and her daughters will visit thee on the day of the assembly and handsel the tiring-women.”’ ‘O my mother,’ said the girl, ‘my young master here catches hold of his mother, whenever he sees her.’ ‘Give him to me,’ answered the old woman, ‘whilst thou goest in and comest back.’

So she gave her the child and taking the token, went in; whereupon Delileh made off with the boy to a by-lane, where she stripped him of his clothes and jewels, saying to herself, ‘O Delileh, it would indeed be a fine trick, even as thou hast cheated the maid and taken the boy from her, so now to pawn him for a thousand dinars’ worth.’ So she repaired to the jewel-bazaar, where she saw a Jew goldsmith seated, with a tray full of jewellery before him, and said to herself, ‘It would be a rare trick to get a thousand dinars’ worth of jewellery from this Jew and leave the boy in pledge with him for it.’ Presently the Jew looked at them and seeing the boy, knew him for the son of the Provost of the Merchants.

Now he was a man of great wealth, but would envy his neighbour, if he sold and he himself did not; so, when he saw Delileh, he said to her, ‘What seekest thou, O my mistress?’ ‘Art thou Master Azariah the Jew?’ asked she, having first enquired his name; and he answered, ‘Yes.’ Quoth she, ‘This boy’s sister, the Provost’s daughter of the Merchants, is a promised bride, and to-day they celebrate her betrothal; and she hath need of jewellery. So give me two pairs of gold ankle-rings and a pair of gold bracelets and a girdle and pearl ear-drops and a poignard and seal-ring.’ Accordingly, he brought out to her what she sought and she took of him a thousand dinars’ worth of jewellery, saying, ‘I will take these on approval; and what pleases them, they will keep and I will bring thee the price and leave the boy with thee till then.’ ‘Be it as thou wilt,’ answered he. So she took the jewellery and made off to her own house, where her daughter asked her how she had sped. She told her all she had done and Zeyneb said, ‘Thou wilt never be able to walk abroad again in the town.’

Meanwhile, the maid went in to her mistress and said to her, ‘O my lady, Umm el Khair salutes thee and rejoices with thee, and will come, she and her daughters, on the day of the assembly and give the customary presents.' Quoth her mistress, 'Where is thy young master?' 'I left him with her,' answered the maid, 'lest he should cling to thee, and she gave me this, as largesse for the singing-women.' So the lady said to the chief of the singers, 'Take thy money ;' and she took it and found it a brass token; whereupon quoth the lady to the maid, 'O baggage, go down and look to thy young master.' Accordingly, she went down and finding neither boy nor old woman, shrieked aloud and fell on her face, and their joy was changed into mourning.

When the Provost came in, his wife told him what had befallen and he went out in quest of the child, whilst the other merchants also went forth and sought, each his own road. Presently, the Provost espied the boy seated, naked, in the Jew's shop and said to the latter, 'This is my son.' 'It is well,' answered the Jew. So he took him up, without asking for his clothes, of the excess of his joy at finding him; but the Jew laid hold of him, saying, 'God succour the Khalif against thee!' Quoth the Provost,'What ails thee, O Jew?' And he answered, saying, 'The old woman took of me a thousand dinars' worth of jewellery for thy daughter, and left the boy in pledge for the price; and I had not trusted her, but that I knew the child for thy son.' 'My daughter needs no jewellery,' said the Provost; 'give me the boy's clothes.'

The Jew cried out, saying, 'Come to my aid, O Muslims!' but at that moment up came the dyer and the ass-man and the young merchant, who were going about, seeking the old woman, and enquired the cause of their quarrel. So they told them the case and they said, 'This old woman is a cheat, who has cheated us before you.' Then they told them how she had dealt with them, and the Provost said, 'Since I have found my son, be his clothes his ransom! If I come upon the old woman, I will require them of her.' And he carried the child home to his mother, who rejoiced in his safety. Then said the Jew to the three others, 'Whither go ye?' And they answered, saying, 'We go to look for her.' Quoth the Jew, 'Take me with you. Is there any one of you knows her?' 'I know her,' answered the ass-driver; and the Jew said, 'If we go all together, we shall never catch her; for she will flee from us. Let us each take a different road, and be our rendezvous at the shop of Hajj Mesaoud, the Moorish barber.' They agreed to this and set off, each in a different direction.

Presently, Delileh sallied forth again in quest of prey, and the ass-driver met her and knew her. So he caught hold of her and said to her, 'Out on thee! Hast thou been long at this trade?' 'What ails thee?' asked she; and he answered, 'Give me back my ass.' 'O my son,' said she, 'cover what God covers! Dost thou seek thine ass and the people's things?' Quoth he, 'I want my ass; that's all.' And she said, 'I saw that thou wast poor; so I deposited thine ass for thee with the Moorish barber. Stand off, whilst I speak him fair, that he may give thee the beast.' So she went up to the barber and kissed his hand and wept. He asked her what ailed her and she said, 'O my son, look at my son who stands yonder. He was ill and exposed himself to the air, which corrupted his wit. He used to buy asses and now, whether he sit or stand or walk, he saith nothing but "My ass!" Now I have been told by a certain physician that his mind is disordered and that nothing will cure him but drawing two of his grinders and cauterizing him twice on the temples. So do thou take this dinar and call him to thee, saying," Thine ass is with me."' 'May I fast for a year,' said the barber, 'if I do not give him his ass in his fist! 'Now he had with him two journeymen; so he said to one of them, 'Heat the irons.'

Then the old woman went her way and the barber called to the ass-driver, saying, 'Harkye, good fellow! Thine ass is with me; come and take him, and as thou livest, I will give him into thy hand.' So he came to him and the barber carried him into a dark room, where he knocked him down and the journeymen bound him hand and foot. Then he pulled out two of his grinders and cauterized him on both temples; after which he let him go, and he rose and said, 'O Moor, why hast thou used me thus?' Quoth the barber, 'Thy mother told me that thou hadst taken cold, whilst ill, and lost thy reason, so that, whether sitting or standing or walking, thou wouldst say nothing but "My ass!" So here is thine ass in thy fist.' 'God requite thee,' said the other, 'for pulling out my teeth!' Then the barber told him all that the old woman had said and he exclaimed, 'May God torment her!' And the two went out, disputing, and left the shop. When the barber returned, he found his shop empty, for, whilst he was absent, the old woman had taken all that was therein and made off with it to her daughter, to whom she told all that had befallen. The barber, seeing this, caught hold of the ass-driver and said to him, 'Bring me thy mother.' But he answered, saying, 'She is not my mother, but a sharper, who has swindled much people and stolen my ass.'

At this moment up came the dyer and the Jew and the young merchant, who, seeing the barber holding on to the ass-driver and the latter cauterized on both temples, said to him, 'What hath befallen thee, O ass driver?' So he told them what had happened to him and the barber did the like; and the others in turn related to the Moor the tricks the old woman had served them. Then he shut up his shop and went with them to the Master of police, to whom they said, 'We look to thee for compensation.' Quoth he, 'How many old women are there not in Baghdad! Doth any of you know her?' 'I do,' answered the ass-man; 'give me ten of thine officers.' So he gave them half a score men and they all five went out, followed by the sergeants, and patrolled the city, till they met the old woman, when they laid hands on her and carrying her to the house of the Master of police, stood waiting without, till he should come forth.

Presently the officers fell asleep, for excess of watching with their chief, and Delileh feigned to follow their example, till the ass-man and his fellows slept also, when she stole away from them and going in to the harem of the Master of police, kissed the hand of the mistress of the house and said to her, 'Where is the Chief of the police?' 'He is asleep,' answered the lady; 'what wouldst thou with him?' Quoth Delileh, 'My husband is a slave-merchant and gave me five slaves to sell, whilst he went on a journey. The Master of police met me and bought them of me for a thousand dinars and two hundred for myself, saying, " Bring them to my house." So I have brought them.'

Now the Master of police had given his wife a thousand dinars, saying, 'Keep them by thee, that we may buy male slaves with them.' So she believed the old woman's story and said to her, 'Where are the slaves?' 'They are asleep under the window,' replied Delileh; whereupon the lady looked out and seeing the barber clad in a Levantine habit and the young merchant as he were a drunken white slave and the Jew and the dyer and the ass-driver as they were shaven white slaves, said in herself, ‘Each of these is worth more than a thousand dinars.’ So she opened a chest and gave the old woman the thousand dinars, saying, ‘Come back anon and when my husband wakes, I will get thee the other two hundred from him.’ ‘O my lady,’ answered the old woman, ‘a hundred of them are thine, under the sherbet-gugglet whereof thou drinkest, and the other hundred do thou keep for me till I come back. Now let me out by the private door.’ So she let her out, and [God] the Protector protected her and she made her way home to her daughter, to whom she related all that had passed, saying, ‘The one that troubles me most is the ass-driver, for he knows me.’ ‘O my mother,’ said Zeyneb, ‘abide quiet [awhile] and let what thou hast done suffice thee, for not always comes the pitcher off unbroken.’

When the Chief of the police awoke, his wife said to him, ‘I give thee joy of the five slaves thou hast bought of the old woman.’ ‘What slaves?’ asked he. ‘Why dost thou mock me?’ answered she. ‘God willing, they shall become people of condition like unto thee.’ ‘As my head liveth,’ rejoined he, ‘I have bought no slaves! Who saith this?’ ‘The old woman, the brokeress,’ replied she,’from whom thou boughtest them; and thou didst promise her a thousand dinars for them and two hundred for herself.’ Quoth he, ‘Didst thou give her the money?’ ‘Yes,’ answered she; ‘for I saw the slaves with my own eyes, and on each is a suit of clothes worth a thousand dinars; so I sent out to bid the sergeants have an eye to them.’

So he went out and said to the officers, ‘Where are the five slaves we bought for a thousand dinars of the old woman?’ ‘There are no slaves here,’ answered they; ‘only these five men, who found the old woman and brought her hither. We fell asleep, whilst waiting for thee, and she stole away and entered the harem. Presently out came a maid and said to us, ‘Are the five with you with whom the old woman came?’ And we answered, ‘Yes.’ ‘By Allah,’ cried the Master of police, ‘this is a rare great swindle!’ And the five men said, ‘We look to thee for our goods.’ Quoth the Master of police, ‘The old woman, your mistress, sold you to me for a thousand dinars.’ ‘That were not allowed of God,’ answered they: ‘we are free-born men and may not be sold, and we appeal from thee to the Khalif.’ ‘None showed her the way to the house save you,' rejoined the Master of police, 'and I will sell you to the galleys for two hundred dinars apiece.'

Just then, up came the Amir Hassan Sherr et Teric, who, on his return from his journey, had found his wife stripped of her clothes and jewellery and heard from her all that had passed; whereupon quoth he, 'The Master of police shall answer me this;' and repairing to him, said, 'Dost thou suffer old women to go round about the town and cozen folk of their goods? This is thy business and I look to thee for my wife's property.' Then said he to the five men, 'What is to do with you?' So they told him their stories and he said, 'Ye are oppressed,' and turning to the Master of police, said to him, 'Why dost thou detain them?' 'It was they who brought her to my house,' answered he, 'so that she took a thousand dinars of my money and sold them to my women.' 'O Amir Hassan,' cried the five men, 'be thou our advocate in this affair.'

Then said the Master of police to the Amir, 'Thy wife's goods are at my charge and I will be surety for the old woman. But which of you knows her?' 'We all know her,' answered they. 'Send ten men with us, and we will take her.' So he gave them ten men, and the ass-driver said to them, 'Follow me, for I should know her with blue eyes." Then they went out and presently they met the old woman coming out of a by-street: so they laid hands on her and brought her to the master of the police, who said to her, 'Where are the people's goods?' And she answered, saying, 'I have neither taken them nor seen them.' Then said he to the gaoler, 'Take her and clap her into prison till the morning' But he said, 'I will not take her, lest she play a trick on me and I be answerable for her.' So the Master of police took horse and rode out with Delileh and the rest to the bank of the Tigris, where he bade the executioner crucify her by her hair. So he bound her on the cross and drew her up by the pulley; after which the Master of police set ten men to guard her and went home. Presently, the night fell down and sleep overcame the watchmen.

Now a certain Bedouin heard one man say to another, 'Praised be God for thy safe return! Where hast thou been?' 'In Baghdad,' answered the other, 'where I breakfasted on honey-fritters.' Quoth the Bedouin to himself, 'Needs must I go to Baghdad and eat honey-fritters;' for in all his life he had never entered Baghdad nor seen fritters of the sort. So he mounted his horse and rode on towards Baghdad, saying in himself, 'It is a fine thing to eat honey-fritters! On the honour of an Arab, I will not break my fast on nothing else!' till he came to the place where Delileh was crucified and she heard him saying this. So he went up to her and said to her, 'What art thou?' Quoth she, 'O Sheik of the Arabs, I throw myself on thy protection!' 'May God indeed protect thee!' answered he. 'But what is the cause of thy crucifixion?' Said she, 'I have an enemy, an oilman, who fries fritters, and I stopped to buy of him, when I chanced to spit and the spittle fell on the fritters. So he made his complaint to the judge, who commanded to crucify me, saying, "I adjudge that ye take ten pounds of honey-fritters and feed her therewith. If she eat them, let her go, but if not, leave her hanging." And my stomach will not brook sweet things.' 'By the honour of the Arabs,' cried the Bedouin, 'I departed not the camp but that I might eat honey-fritters! I will eat them for thee.' Quoth she, 'None may eat them, except he be hung up in my place.' He fell into the trap and unbound her; whereupon she bound him in her room, after she had stripped him of his clothes and turban and put them on; then, mounting his horse, she rode to her house, where Zeyneb said to her, 'What meaneth this plight?' And she answered, saying, 'They crucified me :' and told her all that had befallen her.

To return to the watchmen; the first who woke roused his companions and they saw that the day had risen. So one of them raised his eyes and said, 'Delileh!' 'By Allah!' answered the Bedouin, 'I have not eaten all night. Have ye brought the honey-fritters?' And they said, 'This is a man and a Bedouin.' Then said one of them to him, 'O Bedouin, where is Delileh and who loosed her?' 'It was I,' answered he; 'she shall not eat the honey-fritters against her will; for her soul abhorreth them.' So they knew that he was a man ignorant of her case, whom she had cozened, and said to one another, 'Shall we flee or abide the accomplishment of that which God hath decreed to us?'

As they were talking, up came the chief of the police, with all the folk whom the old woman had cheated, and said to the guards, 'Arise, loose Delileh.' Quoth the Bedouin, 'We have not eaten to-night. Hast thou brought the honey-fritters?' Whereupon the Master of police raised his eyes and seeing the Bedouin strung up in place of the old woman, said to the watchmen, 'What is this?' 'Pardon, O our lord!' cried they; and he said, 'Tell me what has happened' 'We were weary with watching with thee on guard,' answered they, 'and said, " Delileh is crucified." So we fell asleep, and when we awoke, we found the Bedouin strung up in her stead; and we are at thy mercy.' 'God's pardon be upon you!' answered the master of police. 'She is indeed a clever cheat!' Then they unbound the Bedouin, who laid hold of the master of police, saying, 'God succour the Khalif against thee! I look to none but thee for my horse and clothes! So the chief of the police questioned him and he told him what had passed between Delileh and himself. 'Why didst thou release her?' asked the magistrate, and the Bedouin said, 'I knew not that she was a swindler.' Then said the others, 'O chief of the police, we look to thee for our goods; for we delivered the old woman into thy hands and she was in thy guard; and we cite thee before the Divan of the Khalif.'

Now the Amir Hassan had gone up to the Divan, when in came the master of police with the Bedouin and the five others, saying, 'We are wronged men!' 'Who hath wronged you?' asked the Khalif. So each came forward in turn and told his story, after which said the master of police, 'O Commander of the Faithful, the old woman cheated me also and sold me these five men as slaves for a thousand dinars, albeit they are free-born.' Quoth Er Reshid, 'I take upon myself all that you have lost.' Then he said to the master of police, 'I charge thee with the old woman.' But he shook his collar, saying, 'O Commander of the Faithful, I will not answer for her; for, after I had strung her up on the cross, she tricked this Bedouin and tied him up in her room and made off with his clothes and horse.' Quoth the Khalif, 'Whom but thee shall I charge with her?' Charge Ahmed ed Denef,' answered the Master of police; 'for he has a thousand dinars a month and one-and-forty followers, at a monthly wage of a hundred dinars each.' So the Khalif said, 'Harkye, Captain Ahmed!' 'At thy service, O Commander of the Faithful,' answered he; and the Khalif said, 'I charge thee to bring the old woman before me.' 'I will answer for her,' replied Ahmed.

Then the Khalif kept the Bedouin and the five complainants with him, whilst Ahmed and his men went down to their hall, saying to one another, ‘How shall we lay hands on her, seeing that there are many old women in the town?’ [And Ahrned said to Hassan Shouman, ‘What counsellest thou?’] Whereupon quoth one of them, by name Ali Kitf el Jemel, to Ed Denef, ‘Of what dost thou take counsel with Hassan Shouman? Is he any great matter?’ ‘O Ali,’ said Hassan, ‘why dost thou disparage me? By the Mighty Name, I will not company with thee at this time!’ And he rose and went out in anger. Then said Ahmed, ‘O lads, let each sergeant take ten men and search for Delileh, each in his own quarter.’ And they agreed to rendezvous in such a place.

It was noised abroad in the city that Ahmed ed Denef had undertaken to lay hands on Delileh the Crafty, and Zeyneb said to her mother, ‘O my mother, if thou be indeed a trickstress, do thou befool Ahmed ed Denef and his company.’ ‘I fear none but Hassan Shouman,’ answered Delileh; and Zeyneb said, ‘By my browlock, I will get thee the clothes of all the one-and-forty.’ Then she dressed and veiled herself and going to a druggist, who had a saloon with two doors, gave him a dinar and said to him, ‘Let me thy saloon till the end of the day and take this dinar to its hire.’ So he gave her the keys and she fetched carpets and so forth on the stolen ass and furnishing the place, set in each estrade a table of meat and wine. Then she went out and stood at the door, with her face uncovered.

Presently, up came Ali Kitf and his men, and she kissed his hand. He fell in love with her, seeing her to be a handsome girl, and said to her, ‘What dost thou want?’ Quoth she, ‘Art thou Captain Ahmed ed Denef?’ ‘No, answered he; ‘but I am of his company and my name is Ali Kitf el Jemel.’ ‘Whither go you?’ asked she, and he said, ‘We go in quest of a sharkish old woman, who has stolen the people’s goods, and we mean to lay hands on her. But who art thou and what is thy business?’ Quoth she, ‘My father was a vintner at Mosul and he died and left me much money. So I came hither, for fear of the judges, and asked the people who would protect me, to which they replied, “ None but Ahmed et Denef”’ ‘From this day forth,’ said the men, ‘thou art under his protection;’ and she said, ‘Favour me by eating a morsel and drinking a draught.’ They consented and entering, ate and drank till they were drunken, when she drugged them with henbane and stripped them of their clothes and arms; and on like wise she did with the three other companies.

Presently, Ahmed ed Denef went out to look for Delileh' but found her not, neither set eyes on any of his followers, and went on till he came to the door where Zeyneb was standing. She kissed his hand and he looked on her and fell in love with her. Quoth she, 'Art thou Captain Ahmed ed Denef?' 'Yes,' answered he. 'Who art thou?' And she said, 'I am a stranger. My father was a vintner at Mosul and he died and left me much wealth, with which I came to this city, for fear of the judges, and opened this wine-shop. The Master of police hath imposed a tax on me, but it is my desire to put myself under thy protection and pay thee what the police would take of me, for thou hast the better right to it.' Quoth he, 'Thou shalt have my protection and welcome: do not pay him aught.' Then said she, 'Heal my heart and eat of my victual.' So he entered and ate and drank, till he could not sit upright, when she drugged him and took his clothes and arms. Then she loaded her purchase on the ass and the Bedouin's horse and made off with it, after she had aroused Ali Kitf. The latter awoke and found himself naked and saw Ahmed and his men drugged and stripped. So he revived them with the counter-drug and they awoke and saw themselves naked. Quoth Ahmed, 'O lads, what is this? We were going about to catch her, and lo, this strumpet hath caught us! How Hassan Shouman will crow over us! But we will wait till it is dark and then go away.'

Meanwhile Hassan Shouman said to the hall-keeper, 'Where are the men?' As he spoke, up they came, naked; and he recited the following verses:

Men in their purpose are alike and what they hope and fear: 'Tis
in the issues, 'twixt the folk, that difference doth appear.
Some men for ignorant are known and other some for wise, Even
as in heaven some stars are dull and others bright and clear.

Then he said to them, 'Who hath played you this trick?' and they answered, saying, 'We were in quest of an old woman, and a handsome girl stripped us.' 'She hath done well,' said Hassan. 'Dost thou know her?' asked they. 'Yes,' answered Hassan; 'I know her and the old woman too.' Quoth they, 'What shall we say to the Khalif?' And he said, 'O Denef, do thou shake thy collar before him, and if he ask why thou hast not caught her, say thou, " We know her not; but charge Hassan Shouman with her." And if he give her into my charge, I will lay hands on her.'

So they slept that night and on the morrow they repaired to the Khalif's Divan and kissed the earth before him. Quoth he, 'Where is the old woman, O Captain Ahmed?' But he shook his collar. The Khalif asked him why he did so, and he answered, 'I know her not; but charge Hassan Shouman to lay hands on her, for he knows her and her daughter also.' Then Hassan interceded for her with the Khalif, saying, 'Indeed, she hath played off these tricks, not because she coveted the folk's goods, but to show her address and that of her daughter, to the intent that thou shouldst continue to her her husband's stipend and that of her father to her daughter. So, if thou wilt spare her life, I will fetch her to thee.' 'By the life of my ancestors,' said Er Reshid, 'if she restore the people's goods, I will pardon her, on thine intercession!' And he gave him the handkerchief of pardon.

So Hassan repaired to Delileh's house and called to her. Her daughter Zeyneb answered him and he said to her, 'Where is thy mother?' 'Upstairs,' answered she; and he said, 'Bid her take the people's goods and come with me to the Khalif; for I have brought her the handkerchief of pardon, and if she will not come with a good grace, let her blame none but herself.' So Delileh tied the kerchief [of truce] about her neck and coming down, gave him the people's goods on the ass and the Bedouin's horse. Quoth he, 'There remain the clothes of my chief and his men.' 'By the Most Great Name,' replied she, 'it was not I who stripped them!' 'Thou sayst sooth,' rejoined Hassan; 'it was thy daughter Zeyneb's doing, and this was a good turn she did thee.' Then he carried her to the Divan and laid the people's goods before the Khalif, who, as soon as he saw the old woman, commanded to throw her down on the carpet of blood. Quoth she, 'I cast myself on thy protection, O Shouman!' So he rose and kissing the Khalif's hands, said, 'Pardon, O Commander of the Faithful! Indeed, thou gavest me the handkerchief of pardon.' 'I pardon her for thy sake,’ said Er Reshid. ‘Come hither, O old woman; what is thy name?’ ‘My name is Delileh,’ answered she, and the Khalif said, ‘Thou art indeed crafty and full of artifice. Whence she was dubbed Delileh the Crafty.

Then said he, ‘Why hast thou played all these tricks on the folk and wearied our hearts?’ Quoth she, ‘I did it not of desire for their goods, but because I had heard of the tricks which Ahmed ed Denef and Hassan Shouman played in Baghdad and said in myself, “ I will do the like.” And behold, I have returned the folk their goods.’ But the ass-driver rose and said, ‘I invoke the law of God between her and me; for it sufficed her not to take my ass, but she must needs egg on the barber to pull out my teeth and cauterize me on both temples.’ The Khalif bade give him a hundred dinars and ordered the dyer the like, saying, ‘Go; set up thy dyery again.’ So they called down blessings on his head and went away. The Bedouin also took his clothes and horse and departed, saying, ‘It is forbidden to me to enter Baghdad and eat honey-fritters.’ And the others took their goods and went away.

Then said the Khalif, ‘Ask a boon of me, O Delileh!’ And she said, ‘My father was governor of the carrier-pigeons to thee and I know how to rear them, and my husband was town-captain of Baghdad. Now I wish to have the reversion of my husband and my daughter wishes to have that of her father.’ The Khalif granted their requests and she said, ‘I ask of thee that I may be portress of thy khan.’ Now he had built a khan of three stories, for the merchants to lodge in, and had assigned to its service forty slaves, which latter he had brought from the King of Suleimaniyeh, when he deposed him, and let make collars for them; and there was in the khan a cook-slave, who cooked for the slaves and fed the dogs. ‘O Delileh,’ said the Khalif, ‘I will write thee a patent of guardianship of the khan, and if aught be lost therefrom, thou shalt be answerable for it.’ ‘It is well,’ replied she; ‘but do thou lodge my daughter in the pavilion at the door of the khan, for it hath terraced roofs, and carrier-pigeons may not be reared to advantage save in an open space.’

The Khalif granted her this also and she and her daughter removed to the pavilion in question, where Zeyneb hung up the one-and-forty dresses of Ahmed ed Denef and his company. Moreover, they delivered to Delileh the forty pigeons that carried the royal messages, and the Khalif appointed her mistress over the forty slaves and charged them to obey her. She made the place of her session behind the door of the khan, and every day she used to go up to the Khalif's Divan, lest he should need to send a message by pigeon-post, whilst the forty slaves abode on guard at the khan; nor did she return till ended day, when they loosed the forty dogs, that they might keep watch over the place by night.

THE ADVENTURES OF QUICKSILVER ALI OF CAIRO: BEING A SEQUEL TO THE ROGUERIES OF DELILEH THE CRAFTY.

There lived once at Cairo, in the days of Selah the Egyptian, who was chief of the Cairo police and had forty men under him, a sharper named Ali, for whom the Master of Police used to set snares and think that he had fallen therein; but, when they sought for him, they found that he had fled like quicksilver, wherefore they dubbed him Quicksilver Ali. One day, as he sat with his men in his hall, his heart became heavy within him and his breast was straitened. The hall-keeper saw him sitting frowning-faced and said to him, 'What ails thee, O my thief? If thy breast be straitened, go out and take a turn in the streets of Cairo, for assuredly walking in its markets will do away thine oppression.' So he went out and walked the streets awhile, but only redoubled in dejection and heaviness of heart. Presently, he came to a wine-shop and said to himself, 'I will go in and drink wine.' So he went in and seeing seven rows of people in the shop, said to the tavern-keeper, 'Harkye, taverner! I will not sit but by myself.' Accordingly, the vintner seated him in a chamber by himself and set wine before him, of which he drank till he lost his senses. Then he sallied forth again and walked till he came to the street called Red, whilst the people left the road clear before him, out of fear of him.

Presently, he turned and saw a water-carrier going along, with his skin and mug, crying out and saying, 'O exchange! There is no drink but from raisins, there is no love-delight but of the beloved and none sitteth in the place of honour save the man of sense!" So he said to him, ‘Here, give me to drink!’ The water-carrier looked at him and gave him the mug. He took it and looking into it, shook it up and poured it out on the ground. ‘Why dost thou not drink?’ asked the water-carrier; and he answered, saying, ‘Give me to drink.’ So the man filled the cup a second time and he took it and shook it and emptied it on the ground; and thus he did a third time. Quoth the water-carrier, ‘If thou wilt not drink, begone.’ And Ali said, ‘Give me to drink.’ So he filled the cup a fourth time and gave it him; and he drank and gave the man a dinar. The water-carrier looked at him with disdain and said, ‘Good luck to thee! Good luck to thee! Little folk are one thing and great folk another!, When Ali heard this, he caught hold of the man’s gown and drawing on him a poignard of price, such an one as that whereof the poet speaks when he says,

A whittle of watered steel, perfect of temper and bright, With vipers poison it plies the folk whom it meets in fight;
If it fall, it sundereth limbs and sheddeth the blood forthright And picks up a jewel, to boot, from marble hard and white.

said to him, ‘O old man, speak reasonably to me! Thy water-skin is at the utmost worth three dirhems, and the cups I emptied on the ground held a pint or so of water.’ ‘It is well,’ replied the water-carrier; and Ali said, ‘I gave thee a dinar: why, then, dost thou belittle me? Hast thou ever seen any more valiant than I or more generous?’ ‘Ay,’ answered the water-carrier; ‘I have seen one more valiant than thou and eke more generous; for, never, since women have borne children, was there on the face of the earth a man of valour who was not generous.’ ‘And who is he whom thou deemest braver and more generous than I?’ asked Ali.

‘Know,’ replied the other, ‘that I had a strange adventure of late. My father was Sheikh of the water-carriers in Cairo, and when he died, he left me five camels and a mule and shop and house: but the poor man is never content; or, if he be content, he dieth. So I said to myself, “I will go to the Hejaz,” and taking a file of camels, bought [goods] on credit, till I had run in debt for five hundred dinars, all of which I lost in the pilgrimage. Then I said in myself, “If I return to Cairo, the folk will put me in prison for their goods.” So I returned with the Syrian pilgrims to Aleppo, and thence I went on to Baghdad, where I sought out the Sheikh of the water-carriers of the city and repeated the first chapter of the Koran to him. He questioned me of my case and I told him what had befallen me, whereupon he assigned me a shop and gave me a water-skin and gear. So I sallied forth, trusting in God to provide, and went round about the city. I offered the cup to one, that he might drink; but he said, “I have eaten nought whereon to drink; for a niggardly fellow invited me to-day and set two gugglets before me; so I said to him, ‘O son of the sordid, hast thou given me aught to eat, that I should drink after it?’ So go thy ways, O water-carrier, till I have eaten somewhat. Then come and give me to drink.” Then I accosted another and he said, “God provide thee!” And so I went on till noon, without taking aught, and I said to myself, “Would I had never come to Baghdad I”

Presently, I saw the folk running; so I followed them and saw a long file of cavaliers, riding two and two and clad in steel, with double neck-rings and felt bonnets and burnouses and swords and bucklers. I asked one of the folk whose suite this was, and he answered, “That of Captain Ahmed ed Denef.” Quoth I, “And what is he?” “He is town-captain of Baghdad,” answered the other, “and to him is committed the care of the suburbs. He gets a thousand dinars a month from the Khalif and Hassan Shouman has the like. Moreover, each of his men gets a hundred dinars a month; and they are now returning to their barrack from the Divan.” Ahmed saw me and cried out to me to give him to drink. So I filled the cup and gave it him, and he shook it and emptied it out, like unto thee; and thus he did a second time. Then I filled the cup a third time and he took a draught; after which he said to me, “O water-carrier, whence comest thou?” “From Cairo,” answered I, and he, “May God keep Cairo and her people! What brings thee hither?” So I told him my story and gave him to know that I was a debtor fleeing from debt and distress. Quoth he, “Thou art welcome to Baghdad.” Then he gave me five dinars and said to his men, “Be generous to him, for the love of God.” So each of them gave me a dinar and Ahmed said to me, “What while thou abidest in Baghdad, thou shalt have of us the like every time thou givest us to drink.”

Accordingly, I paid them frequent visits and good ceased not to come to me from the folk, till, one day, reckoning up the profit I had made of them, I found it a thousand dinars and said in myself, “The best thing I can do is to return to Egypt.” So I went to Ahmed’s house and kissed his hand, and he said, “What seekest thou?” Quoth I, “I have a mind to depart;” and I repeated the following verses:

The stranger’s sojourning in any land of lands Even as the building is of mansions on the wind.
The waftings of the breeze cast down what he hath built, And now to fare away the stranger hath a mind.

“The caravan is about to start for Cairo,” added I, “and I wish to return to my people.” So he gave me a mule and a hundred dinars and said to me, “I desire to send somewhat by thee. Dost thou know the people of Cairo?” “Yes,” answered I; and he said, “Take this letter and carry it to Quicksilver Ali of Cairo and say to him, ‘Thy captain salutes thee and he is now with the Khalif.’” So I took the letter and jouneyed back to Cairo, where I paid my debts and plied my trade of a water-carrier; but I have not delivered the letter, because I know not the abode of Quicksilver Ali.’ Quoth Ali, ‘o elder, be of good cheer: I am that Ali, the first of the lads of Captain Ahmed: give me the letter.’ So he gave him the letter and he opened it and read as follows:

‘I’ve written unto thee, adornment of the fair, A letter that indeed the passing winds shall bear.
Could I but fly, I’d flown for longing after thee; But how shall he who’s clipped of pinions wing the air?

From Captain Ahmed ed Denef to the eldest of his sons, Quicksilver Ali of Cairo, greeting. Thou knowest that I tormented Selaheddin the Cairene and befooled him till I buried him alive and reduced his lads to obey me, and amongst them Ali Kitf el Jemel; and I am now become town-captain of Baghdad and overseer of the suburbs. If thou be still mindful of our love, come to me; haply thou shalt play some trick in Baghdad that may advance thee to the Khalif’s service, so he may appoint thee stipends and allowances and assign thee a lodging, which is what thou desirest, and so peace be on thee.’

When Ali read this letter, he kissed it and laying it on his head, gave the water-carrier ten dinars; after which he returned to his lodging and told his comrades and commended them to one another. Then he changed his clothes and donning a tarboosh and a travelling cloak, took a case, containing a bamboo spear, four-and-twenty cubits long, made in several pieces, to fit into each other. Quoth his lieutenant, ‘Wilt thou go a journey, whenas the treasury is empty?’ ‘When I reach Damascus,’ answered Ali, ‘I will send you what shall suffice you.’ Then he set out and fared on, till he overtook a caravan about to start, whereof were the Provost of the Merchants and forty other merchants. They had all loaded their beasts, except the Provost, whose loads lay upon the ground, and Ali heard his caravan-leader, who was a Syrian, say to the muleteers, ‘Help me, one of you!’ But they mocked him and reviled him. Quoth Ali in himself, ‘None will suit me so well to travel withal as this leader.’

Now Ali was beardless and well-favoured; so he went up to the leader and saluted him. The latter welcomed him and said, ‘What seekest thou?’ ‘O my uncle,’ replied Ali, ‘I see thee alone with forty mule-loads of goods; but why hast thou not brought men to help thee?’ ‘O my son,’ rejoined the other, ‘I hired two lads and clothed them and put in each one’s pocket two hundred dinars; and they helped me till we came to the Dervishes’ Convent, ‘ when they ran away.’ Quoth All, ‘Whither are you bound?’ ‘To Aleppo,’ answered the Syrian, and Ali said, ‘I will help thee.’ So they loaded the beasts and the Provost mounted his mule and they set out. The leader rejoiced in Ali and loved him and made much of him and they fared on till nightfall, when they halted and ate and drank. Then came the time of sleep and Ali lay down and made as if he slept; whereupon the Syrian laid himself near him and Ali rose and sat down at the door of the merchant’s pavilion. Presently, the Syrian turned over and would have taken Ali in his arms, but found him not and said in himself, ‘It would seem as though he had promised another and he hath taken him; but I have the first right and another night I will keep him.’

Ali sat at the door of the tent till nigh upon daybreak, when he returned and lay down near the Syrian, who found him by his side, when he awoke, and said in himself, 'If I ask him where he has been, he will leave me and go away.' So he dissembled with him and they went on till they came to a forest, in which was a cave, where dwelt a ferocious lion. Now, whenever a caravan passed, they would draw lots among themselves and throw him on whom the lot fell to the lion. So they drew lots and the lot fell upon the Provost of the Merchants. Now the lion stopped the way, awaiting his prey, wherefore the Provost was sore distressed and said to the leader, 'God disappoint thy enterprise and bring thy journey to nought! I charge thee, after my death, give my loads to my children.' Quoth Ali, 'What meaneth all this?' So they told him the case and he said, 'Why do ye run from the cat of the desert? I warrant you I will kill him.'

So the Syrian went to the Provost and told him of this and he said, 'If he kill him, I will give him a thousand dinars.' 'And we,' said the other merchants, 'will reward him likewise.' With this Ali put off his mantle and there appeared upon him armour of steel; then he took a whinyard of steel and [opening it] turned the ring; after which he went forth alone and standing in the road before the lion, cried out at him. The lion ran at him, but Ali smote him between the eyes with his cutlass and cut him in sunder, whilst the caravan-leader and the merchants looked on. Then said he to the leader, 'Have no fear, o my uncle!' and the Syrian answered, saying, 'O my son, I am thy servant for all time.' Then the Provost embraced him and kissed him between the eyes and gave him the thousand dinars, and each of the other merchants gave him twenty dinars.

He deposited all the money with the Provost and they slept that night till the morning, when they set out again, intending for Baghdad, and fared on till they came to the Lion's Wood and the Valley of Dogs, where lay a Bedouin brigand and his tribe, who sallied forth on them. The folk fled from the highwaymen and the Provost said, 'My goods are lost!' When, behold, up came Ali in a coat of leather, full of bells, and bringing out his long lance, fitted it together. Then he seized one of the Arab's horses and mounting it, shook his bells and cried out to the Bedouin chief; saying, 'Come out to me with spears!' The Bedouin's mare took fright at the noise of the bells and Ali struck the chief’s spear and broke it. Then he smote him on the neck and cut off his head. When the Bedouins saw their chief fall, they all ran at Ali, but he cried out, saying, ‘God is Most Great!’ and falling on them, put them to flight. Then he raised the chiefs head on the point of his spear and returned to the merchants, who rewarded him liberally and continued heir journey.

When they reached Baghdad, Au took his money from the Provost and committed it to the Syrian, saying, ‘When thou returnest to Cairo, enquire for my lodging and give the money to my deputy.’ Then he slept that night and on the morrow he entered the city and enquired for Ahmed ed Denefs lodging; but none would direct him thereto. So he walked on, till he came to a square called En Nefz, where he saw children at play, and amongst them a lad called Ahmed el Lekit, and said to himself, ‘Thou shalt not get news of them but of their little ones.’ Then be turned and seeing a sweetmeat-seller, bought cakes of him and called to the children; but Ahmed el Lekit drove the rest away and coming up to him, said, ‘What seekest thou?’ Quoth Ali, ‘I had a son and he died and I saw him in a dream asking for sweetmeats: wherefore I have bought sweetmeats and wish to give each child some.’ So saying, he gave Ahmed a cake, and he looked at it and seeing a dinar sticking to it, said, ‘Begone! I am no catamite: seek another than I.’ ‘O my son,’ answered Ali, ‘it is a sharp fellow who takes the hire, even as is he who gives it. I have sought all day tor Ahmed ed Denef’s barrack, but none would direct me thereto; so the dinar is thine, if thou wilt guide me thither.’ Quoth the lad, ‘I will run before thee, till I come to the place, when I will catch up a stone with my foot and kick it against the door; and so shalt thou know it.’

So he ran on and Ali after him, till they came to the place, when the boy caught up a pebble and kicked it against the door. Ali laid hold of him and would have taken the dinar from him, but could not; so he said to him, ‘Go: thou deservest liberality, for thou art a sharp fellow, whole of wit and stout. God willing, if I become captain to the Khalif, I will make thee one of my lads.’ Then the boy made off and Ali went up to the door and knocked; whereupon quoth Ahmed ed Denef to the doorkeeper, ‘Open the door; that is the knock of Quicksilver Ali.’ So he opened the door and Ali entered and saluted

Ahmed, who embraced him, and the forty saluted him. And Ahmed gave him a suit of clothes, saying, ‘When the Khalif made me captain, he clothed my lads and I kept this suit for thee.’ Then they seated him in the place of honour and setting on meat and drink, ate and drank and made merry till the morning, when Ahmed said to Ali, ‘Look thou walk not about Baghdad, but abide here.’ ‘Why so?’ asked All. ‘I came not hither to be shut up, but to look about me and divert myself’ ‘O my son,’ rejoined Ahmed, ‘think not that Baghdad is like Cairo. Baghdad is the seat of the Khalifate: sharpers abound in it and rogueries spring in it as plants spring in the earth.’ So Ali abode in the barrack three days, at the end of which time Ahmed said to him, ‘I wish to present thee to the Khalif; that he may assign thee an allowance.’ But he answered, saying, ‘When the time comes.’ So he let him go his own way.

One day, as Ali sat in the barrack, his breast became straitened and his soul troubled and he said to himself, ‘Come, let us walk awhile in Baghdad and lighten my heart.’ So he went out and walked from street to street, till he came to the bazaar, where he entered a cookshop and ate the morning-meal; after which he went out to wash his hands. Presently, he saw forty slaves, with bonnets of felt and cutlasses of steel, come walking, two by two; and last of all came Delileh the Crafty, riding on a mule and clad in a coat of mail, with a gilded helmet on her head. Now she was returning from the Divan to the khan of which she was portress; and when she espied Ali, she looked at him fixedly and saw that he resembled Ahmed ed Denef in height and breadth. Moreover, he was clad in a striped cloak and a burnouse, with a steel cutlass by his side, and valour shone from his eyes, testifying for him and not against him. So she returned to the khan and going in to her daughter, fetched a table of sand, which she levelled and drew a geomantic figure, by which she discovered that the stranger’s name was Ali of Cairo and that his fortune overrode her own and that of her daughter. ‘O my mother,’ said Zeyneb, ‘what has befallen thee, that thou hast recourse to the table of sand?’ ‘O my daughter,’ answered Delileh, ‘I have seen this day a young man who resembles Ahmed ed Denef, and I fear lest he come to hear how thou didst strip Ahmed and his men and enter the khan and play us a trick, in revenge for what we did with his chief and the forty; for methinks he hath taken up his lodging with Ed Denef.' 'What is this?' rejoined Zeyneb. 'Methinks thou bast taken his measure.'

Then she donned her finest clothes and went out into the town. When the people saw her, they all made love to her and she promised and retracted and listened and coquetted and passed from market to market, till she saw Ali coming, when she went up to him and rubbed her shoulder against him. Then she turned and said, 'God preserve folk of discrimination!' Quoth he, 'How goodly is thy fashion! To whom dost thou belong?' 'To the gallant like thee,' answered she; and he said, 'Art thou married or single?' 'Married,' replied she. 'Shall it be in my lodging or thine?' asked Ali, and she said, 'I am a merchant's daughter and a merchant's wife and in all my life I have never been out of doors till to-day, when I made ready food and thought to eat, but found I had no mind thereto [without company]. When I saw thee, love of thee entered my heart: so wilt thou solace my soul and eat a mouthful with me?' Quoth he, 'Whoso is invited, let him accept.' So she went on and he followed her from street to street: but presently he bethought himself and said, 'What wilt thou do and thou a stranger? Verily it is said, "Whoso doth whoredom in his strangerhood, God will send him back disappointed." But I will put her off with fair words.' So he said to her, 'Take this dinar and appoint me a day other than this.' 'By the Mighty Name,' answered she, 'it may not be but thou shalt go home with me this very day and I will take thee to friend.'

So he followed her till she came to a house with a lofty porch and a padlock on the door and said to him, 'Open this lock.' 'Where is the key?' asked he. And she answered, 'It is lost.' Quoth he, 'He who opens a lock without a key is a knave, whom it behoves the judge to punish, and I know not how to open doors without keys.' With this she raised her veil and showed him her face, at which he took one look that cost him a thousand sighs. Then she let fall her veil on the lock and repeating over it the names of the mother of Moses, opened it without a key and entered. He followed her and saw swords and armour of steel hanging up; and she put off her veil and sat down with him. Quoth he to himself, '[Needs must thou] accomplish what God hath decreed to thee,' and bent to her, to take a kiss of her cheek; but she covered it with her hand, saying, 'This beseemeth not but by night.’ Then she brought a tray of food and wine, and they ate and drank; after which she rose and drawing water from the well, poured from the ewer over his bands, whilst he washed them.

Presently, she cried out and beat upon her breast, saying, ‘My husband had a signet ring of ruby, which was pledged to him for five hundred dinars, and I put it on ; but it was too large for me, so I straitened it with wax, and when I let down the bucket into the water, the ring [must have] dropped into the well. So turn thy face to the door, whilst I put off my clothes and go down into the well and fetch it.’ Quoth Ali, ‘It were shame on me that thou shouldst go down into the well, whilst I am present; none shall do it but I.’ So saying, he put off his clothes and tied the rope about himself and she let him down into the well. Now there was much water therein and she said to him, ‘The rope is too short; loose thyself and drop down.’ So he did himself loose from the rope and dropped into the water, in which he sank fathoms deep, without touching the bottom of the well; wlilst she veiled herself and taking his clothes, returned to her mother, to whom said she, ‘I have stripped Ali the Egyptian and cast him into the Amir Hassan’s well, from which there is no chance of his escaping.’

Presently, the Amir Hassan, the master of the house, who had been absent at the Divan, came home and finding the door open, said to his groom, ‘Why didst thou not lock the door?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered the groom, ‘indeed I locked it with my own hand.’ Quoth the Amir, ‘As my head liveth, some thief hath entered my house!’ Then he went in and searched right and left, but found none and said to the groom, ‘Fill the ewer, that I may make the ablution.’ So the man lowered the bucket into the well; but, when he drew it up, he found it heavy and looking down, saw one sitting therein; whereupon he let it fall into the water and cried out, saying, ‘O my lord, an Afrit came up to me out of the well!’ Quoth the Amir, ‘Go and fetch four doctors of the law, that they may read the Koran over him, till he go away.’ So he fetched the doctors and the Amir said to them, ‘Sit round the well and exorcise me this Afrit.’ They did as he bade them; after which the groom and another servant lowered the bucket again and Ali clung to it and hid himself under it, till he came near the top, when he sprang out and landed among the doctors, who fell a-cuffing each other and crying out, ‘Afrit! Afrit!’

The Amir looked at Ali and seeing him a young man, said to him, ‘Art thou a thief?’ ‘No,’ answered Ali. ‘Then what dost thou in the well?’ asked the Amir; and Ali said, ‘I was asleep and dreamt a dream of dalliance; so I went down to the Tigris to wash myself and dived, whereupon the current carried me under the earth and I came up in this well.’ ‘Tell the truth,’ said the Amir. So Ali told him all that had befallen him, and the Amir gave him an old gown and let him go. He returned to Ahmed ed Denef’s lodging and told him all that had passed. Quoth Ahmed, ‘Did I not tell thee that Baghdad is full of women who play tricks upon men?’ And Ali Kitf el Jemel said, ‘I conjure thee by the Mighty Name, tell me how it is that thou art the chief of the lads of Cairo and yet hast been stripped by a girl?’ This was grievous to Ali and he repented him of not having followed Ahmed’s advice.

Then Ed Denef gave him another suit of clothes and Hassan Shouman said to him, ‘Dost thou know the girl?’ ‘No,’ answered Ali; and Hassan said, ‘It was Zeyneb, the daughter of Delileh the Crafty, the portress of the Khalif’s khan and hast thou fallen into her toils, O Ali?’ ‘Yes,’ replied he; and Hassan said, ‘O Ali, it was she who took thy chief’s clothes and those of all his men.’ Quoth Ali, ‘This is a disgrace to you all.’ Then said Hassan, ‘And what thinkest thou to do?’ And he answered, ‘I purpose to marry her.’ ‘Put away that thought from thee,’ rejoined the other, ‘and console thy heart of her.’ Quoth Ali, ‘O Hassan, do thou counsel me how I shall do to marry her.’ ‘With all my heart,’ replied his comrade. ‘If thou wilt drink from my hand and march under my banner, I will bring thee to thy will of her.’ And Ali answered, saying, ‘I will well.’

So Hassan made him put off his clothes and taking a saucepan, heated therein somewhat as it were pitch, with which he anointed him, and he became like unto a black slave. Moreover, he anointed his lips and smeared his eyes with red kohL Then he clad him in a slave’s habit and giving him a tray of kabobs and wine, said to him, ‘There is a black cook in the khan, and thou art now become his like; so go thou to him and accost him in friendly fashion and speak to him in the blacks’ lingo, saying, “It is long since we foregathered in the beer-shop.” He will answer thee, “I have been too busy for this;

for I have on my hands forty slaves, for whom I cook the morning and the evening meals, besides making ready a tray for Delileh and the like for her daughter Zeyneb and the dogs' food." And do thou say to him, "Come, let us eat kabobs and drink wine." Then go in with him into the saloon and make him drunk and question him of his service, how many and what dishes he has to cook, and ask him of the dogs' food and the keys of the kitchen and the larder; and he will tell thee, for a man, when he is drunk, tells all that he would conceal, were he sober. [When thou hast learned all this of him,] drug him and don his clothes and sticking the two knives in thy girdle, take the vegetable-basket and go to the market and buy meat and greens, with which do thou return to the khan and enter the kitchen and the larder and cook the food. Dish it up and put henbane in it, so as to drug the dogs and the slaves and Delileh and Zeyneb. Then serve up and when they are all asleep, go up into the upper chamber and bring away all the clothes thou wilt find hanging there. And if thou have a mind to marry Zeyneb, bring also the forty carrier-pigeons.'

So Ali went to the khan and going in to the cook, saluted him and said, 'It is long since I have foregathered with thee in the beer-shop.' Quoth the cook, 'I have been busy cooking for the slaves and the dogs.' Then he took him and making him drunk, questioned him of his duties. Said the cook, 'Every day I cook five dishes for the morning and the like for the evening meal; and yesterday they sought of me a sixth dish, rice dressed with honey and saffron, and a seventh, a mass of cooked pomegranate-seed.' 'And what is the order of thy service?' asked Ali. 'First,' answered the cook, 'I serve up Zeyneb's tray, then that of Delileh; then I serve the slaves and give the dogs their sufficiency of meat, and the least that satisfies them is a pound each.' But, as fate would have it, he forgot to ask him of the keys. Then he drugged him and donned his clothes; after which he took the basket and went to the market. There he bought meat and greens and returning to the khan, with the two knives stuck in his girdle, saw Delileh seated at the gate, watching those that went in and out, and the forty slaves with her, armed.

He took courage and entered; but Delileh knew him and said to him,'Back, O captain of thieves! Wilt thou play a trick on me in the khan?’ When he heard this, he turned and said to her, ‘What sayst thou, O portress?’ ‘What hast thou done with the cook?’ asked she. ‘What cook?’ answered he. ‘Is there here another cook than I?’ ‘Thou liest,’ rejoined she; ‘thou art Quicksilver Ali the Cairene.’ And he said to her, in slaves’ lingo, ‘O portress, are Cairenes black or white? I have always been a servant.’ Then said the slaves to him, ‘What is the matter, cousin?’ Quoth Delileh, ‘This is none of your cousin, but Quicksilver Ali the Egyptian; and meseems he hath either killed your cousin or drugged him.’ But they said, ‘Indeed this is our cousin, Saadullah the cook.’ ‘Not so,’ answered she; ‘it is Quicksilver Ali, and he hath dyed his skin.’ Quoth the sharper, ‘And who is Ali? I am Saadullah.’ Then she fetched ointment of proof, with which she anointed Ali’s forearm and rubbed it; but the black did not come off; whereupon quoth the slaves, ‘Let him go and dress us the morning meal.’ ‘If he be indeed your cousin,’ said Delileh, ‘he knows what you sought of him yesternight and how many dishes he cooks every day.’ So they asked him of this and he said, ‘Every day I cook you five dishes for the morning and the like for the evening meal, lentils and rice and broth and fricassee and sherbet of roses, and [yesternight ye sought of me] a sixth dish and a seventh, to wit, rice dressed with honey and saffron and cooked pomegranate-seed.’ And the slaves said, ‘Right.’ Then said Delileh, ‘Take him in, and if he knows the kitchen and the larder, he is indeed your cousin; but, if not, kill him.’

Now the cook had a cat, which he had brought up, and whenever he entered, it would stand at the door of the kitchen and spring on his shoulders, as soon as he went in. So, when Ali entered, the cat saw him and jumped on his shoulders; but he threw it off and it ran before him to the door of the kitchen and stopped there. He guessed that this was the kitchen-door; so he took the keys and seeing one with traces of feathers thereon, knew it for the key of the kitchen and opened the door therewith. Then he entered and setting down the greens, went out again, guided by the cat, which ran before him and stopped at another door. He guessed that this was the larder and seeing one of the keys with marks of grease thereon, knew it for the key and opened the door therewith; whereupon quoth the slaves, ‘O Delileh, were he a stranger, he had not known the kitchen and the larder, nor had he been able to distinguish the keys thereof from the rest; verily, he is our cousin Saadullah.' Quoth she, 'He knew the places by the cat and distinguished the keys, one from the other, by their appearance: but this imposeth not upon me.' Then he returned to the kitchen, where he cooked the morning-meal and carrying Zeyneb's tray up to her apartment, saw all the stolen clothes hanging up; after which he went down and carried Delileh her tray and gave the slaves and the dogs their ration. The like he did at sundown and drugged Delileh's food and that of Zeyneb and the slaves.

Now the doors of the khan were opened and shut with the sun: so he went forth and cried out, saying, 'O dwellers in the khan, the watch is set and we have loosed the dogs; so whoso stirs out after this hath but himself to blame.' Now he had delayed the dogs' supper and put poison therein; so, when he set it before them, they ate of it and died. Then he went up and took all the clothes and the carrier-pigeons and opening the gate, made off to the barrack of the Forty, where he found Hassan Shouman, who asked him how he had fared. So he told him what had passed and he praised him. Then he caused him put off his clothes and made a decoction of herbs, with which he washed him, and his skin became white as before; after which he donned his own clothes and going back to the khan, clad the cook in the clothes he had taken from him and made him smell to the counter-drug: whereupon he awoke and going forth to the greengrocer's, bought vegetables and returned to the khan.

When the day broke, one of the lodgers in the khan came out of his chamber and seeing the gate open and the slaves drugged and the dogs dead, went in to Delileh, whom he found lying drugged, with a scroll on her neck and at her head a sponge steeped in the counter-drug. He set the sponge to her nostrils and she awoke and said, 'Where am I?' Quoth he, 'When I came down from my chamber, I saw the gate of the khan open and the dogs dead and found the slaves and thee drugged.' So she took up the scroll and read therein these words, 'None did this thing save Ali the Egyptian.' Then she awoke the slaves and Zeyneb by making them smell to the counter-drug and said to them, 'Did I not tell you that this was Ali of Cairo? But do ye conceal the matter.' Then she said to her daughter, 'How often have I told thee that Ali would not forego his revenge? He hath done this in requital of that which thou didst with him and he bad it in his power to do with thee other than this; but he refrained therefrom out of courtesy and a desire that there should be friendship between us.' So saying, she put off her man's clothes and donned woman's attire and tying the kerchief [of truce] about her neck, repaired to Ahmed ed Denef's lodging.

Now when Ali entered with the clothes and the carrier-pigeons, Hassan Shouman gave the hall-keeper the price of forty pigeons and he bought them and cooked them before the men. Presently there came a knock at the door and Ahmed ed Denef said to the hall-keeper, 'That is Delileh's knock: rise and open to her.' So he admitted her and Hassan said to her, 'What brings thee hither, O ill-omened old woman? Verily, thou and thy brother Zureic the fish-monger are of a piece!' 'O captain,' answered she, 'I am in the wrong and my neck is at your mercy; but tell me which of you it was that played me this trick?' Quoth Ahmed, 'It was the first of my lads.' 'For God's sake,' rejoined Delileh, 'intercede with him to give me back the carrier-pigeons and what not, and thou wilt lay me under great obligation.' When Hassan heard this, he said to Ali, 'God requite thee, O Ali! Why didst thou cook the pigeons?' And Ali answered, 'I knew not that they were carrier-pigeons.' Then said Ahmed to the hall-keeper, 'Bring us the cooked pigeons.' So he brought them and Delileh took a piece and tasting it, said, 'This is none of the carrier-pigeons' flesh, for I fed them on grains of musk and their flesh is become even as musk.' Quoth Hassan, 'An thou wilt have the carrier-pigeons, comply with Ali's desire.' 'What is that?' asked she, and Hassan answered, saying, 'He would have thee marry him to thy daughter Zeyneb.' 'I have no power over her except of affection,' said she; and Hassan said to Ali, 'Give her the pigeons.' So he gave them to her, and she took them and rejoiced in them.

Then said Hassan to her, 'Needs must thou give us a sufficient answer.' 'If it be indeed his wish to marry her,' replied Delileh, 'it availed nothing to play this trick upon us: it behoveth him rather to demand her in marriage of her uncle Captain Zureic, him who cries out, saying, "A pound of fish for two farthings!" and hangs up in his shop a nurse containing two thousand dinars; for he is her guardian.' When the forty heard this, they all rose and cried out, saying, 'What manner of talk is this, O strumpet? Dost thou wish to bereave us of our brother Ali of Cairo?' Then she returned to the khan and said to her daughter, 'Ali the Egyptian seeks thee in marriage.' Whereat Zeyneb rejoiced, for she loved him because of his forbearance towards her, and asked her mother what had passed. So she told her, adding, 'I made it a condition that he should demand thy hand of thine uncle, so I might make him fall into destruction.'

Meanwhile Ali turned to his fellows and said to them, 'What manner of man is this Zureic?' 'He was chief of the sharpers of the land of Irak,' answered they, 'and could all but pierce mountains and lay hold upon the stars. He would steal the very kohl from the eye and in brief, be had not his match for roguery; but he hath repented and forsworn his old way of life and opened him a fish shop. Moreover, he has amassed two thousand dinars by the sale of fish and laid them in a purse with strings of silk, to which he has tied bells and rings and rattles of brass. Every time he opens his shop, he hangs up the purse on a peg within the door and cries out, saying, "Where are ye, o sharpers of Egypt, O cutters of Irak, O tricksters of the land of the Persians? Behold, Zureic the fishmonger hath hung up a purse in front of his shop, and whoso pretendeth to sleight and cunning and can take it by craft, it is his." So the light-fingered gentry come and try to take the purse, but cannot; for he lays at his feet cakes of lead, whilst he fries his fish and tends the fire; and whenever a thief thinks to take him unawares and makes a snatch at the purse, he casts a disc of lead at him and kills him or does him a mischief. So, O Ali, wert thou to tackle him, thou wouldst be as one who jostles a funeral, unknowing who is dead; for thou art no match for him, and we fear his mischief for thee. Indeed, thou hast no call to marry Zeyneb, and he who leaves a thing alone lives without it.' 'This were shame, O comrades,' answered Ali. 'Needs must I take the purse: but bring me a woman's habit.'

So they brought him women's clothes and he clad himself therein and stained his hands with henna. Then he took a lamb and killing it, took out the guts and filled them with the blood and bound them between his thighs; after which he donned women's trousers and walking boots. Moreover, he made himself a pair of false breasts with pelican's pouches and filled them with milk and tied round his hips a piece of linen, which he stuffed with cotton, [to represent a big belly and buttocks], girding himself over all with a silk handkerchief well starched. Then he veiled himself and went out, whilst all who saw him exclaimed, 'What a fine pair of buttocks!' Presently he saw an ass-driver coming, so he gave him a dinar and mounting, rode till he came to Zureic's shop, where he saw the purse hung up and the gold glittering through the meshes. Now Zureic was frying fish, and Ali said to the ass-man, 'O driver, what is that smell?' 'It is the smell of Zureic's fish,' answered he. Quoth Ali, 'I am with child and the smell irketh me; go, fetch me a piece of the fish.' So the man said to Zureic, 'What ails thee to fry fish so early and annoy pregnant women with the smell? I have here the wife of the Amir Hassan Sherr et Teric, and she is with child; so give her a piece of fish, for the child stirs in her belly. O Protector, O my God, avert from us this day's mischief!' So Zureic took a piece of fish and would have fried it, but the fire had gone out and he went in, to rekindle it.

Meanwhile Ali dismounted and sitting down, pressed upon the lamb's gut till it burst and the blood ran out from between his legs. Then he cried out, saying, 'O my back! o my side!' Whereupon the driver turned and seeing the blood running, said, 'What ails thee, O my lady?' 'I have miscarried,' answered Ali, whereupon Zureic looked out and seeing the blood, was affrighted and fled into the [inner] shop. Quoth the driver, 'God torment thee, O Zureic! The lady has miscarried and thou art no match for her husband. Why must thou make a stench so early in the morning? I bade thee bring her a piece, but thou wouldst not.' So saying, he took his ass and went his way, whilst Ali put out his hand to the purse; but no sooner had he touched it than the bells and rings began to jingle and the gold to chink. Quoth Zureic, 'Thy perfidy is discovered, O gallows-bird! Wilt thou put a cheat on me and thou in a woman's habit? Take what cometh to thee!' And he threw a cake of lead at him, but it went askew and lighted on another; whereupon the people rose against Zureic and said to him, 'Art thou a tradesman or a swashbuckler? If thou be a tradesman, take down thy purse and spare the folk thy mischief.' 'In the name of God! On my head be it,' answered he.

As for Ali, he made off to the barrack and told Hassan Shouman what had happened, after which he put off his woman's clothes and donning a groom's habit, took a dish and five dirhems. Then he returned to Zureic's shop and the fishmonger said to him, 'What dost thou want, my master?' He showed him the five dirhems and Zureic would have given him of the fish in the tray, but he said, 'I must have hot fish.' So he put fish in the pan and finding the fire dead, went in to relight it; whereupon Ali put out his hand to the purse and caught hold of the end of it. The bells and rings and rattles jingled and Zureic said, 'Thy trick hath not deceived me. I knew thee by the grip of thy hand on the dish and the dirhems, for all thou art disguised as a groom.' So saying, he threw the lead at him, but he avoided it and it fell into the pan full of hot fish and broke it and overturned it, fat and all, upon the shoulders of the Cadi, who was passing. The fat ran down inside his clothes to his privy parts and he cried out, saying, 'O my privities! What a pickle you are in! Alas, unhappy that I am! Who hath played me this trick?' 'O my lord,' answered the people, 'it was some boy that threw a stone into the pan: but for God's protection, it had been worse.' Then they turned and seeing the piece of lead and that it was Zureic who had thrown it, said to him, 'O Zureic, this is not allowed of God! Take down the purse, or it will be the worse for thee.' 'If it please God,' answered he, 'I will take it down.'

Meanwhile, Ali returned to the barrack and told his comrades what had passed and they said, 'Thou hast exhausted two-thirds of his sharpness.' Then he changed his groom's dress for that of a merchant and going out, met a snake-charmer, with a bag of serpents and another of gear, to whom said he, 'O charmer, come and amuse my lads, and thou shalt have largesse.' So he accompanied him to the barrack, where he fed him and drugging him, took his clothes and put them on. Then he took the bagi and repairing to Zureic's shop, began to play the flute. Quoth Zureic, 'God provide thee!' But Ali took out the serpents and cast them down before him; whereat the fish-seller, who was afraid of snakes, fled from them into the [inner] shop. Then Ali picked up the snakes and thrusting them back into the bag, put out his hard and caught hold of the end of the purse. The bells rang and the rings and rattles jangled, and Zureic said, 'Wilt thou never cease to play me tricks? Now thou feignest thyself a serpent-charmer.' So saying, he took up a piece of lead and hurled it at Ali;

[but he avoided it,] and it fell on the head of a groom, who was passing by, in attendance upon his master, a trooper, and knocked him down. Quoth the soldier, ‘Who did that?’ And the folk said, ‘It was a stone fell from the roof.’ So the soldier passed on and the people, seeing the piece of lead, went up to Zureic and said to him, Take down the purse;’ and he said, ‘God willing, I will take it down this very night.’

Ali ceased not to play tricks upon Zureic, till he had made seven different attempts for the purse, but without success. Then he returned the snake-charmer his clothes and gear and gave him a present; after which he went back to Zureic’s shop and heard him say, ‘If I leave the purse here to-night, he will break in and take it; I will carrry it home with me.’ So he shut his shop and putting the purse in his sleeve, set out home, and Ali followed hin. till he came near his house, when he saw a wedding toward in a neighbour’s house and said in himself, ‘I will go home and give my wife the purse and change my clothes and return to the wedding.’ Now he was married to a black girl, one of the freed women of the Vizier Jaafer, and she had borne him a son, whom he named Abdallah, and he had promised her to spend the money in the purse on the occasion of the boy’s circumcision and marriage. So he went into his house and Ali, following him by stealth, stepped into a closet, whence he could hear and see all that passed. When Zureic entered, his wife saw that his face was overcast and asked him what had vexed him. Quoth he, ‘God hath afflicted me this day with a sharking fellow, who hath made seven attempts to get the purse, but without avail’ And she said, ‘Give it to me, that I may lay it up against the boy’s festival-day.’ So he gave her the purse and changed his clothes, saying, ‘Keep the purse safely, O Umm Abdallah, for I am going to the wedding.’ But she said, ‘Sleep awhile.’ So he lay down and fell asleep. Presently, Ali rose and going on tiptoe to the purse, took it and went to the house of the wedding and stood there, looking on.

Meanwhile, Zureic dreamt that he saw a bird fly away with the purse and awaking in affright, said to his wife, ‘Rise; look for the purse.’ So she looked and finding it gone, buffeted her face and said, ‘Alas, the blackness of thy fortune, O Umm Abdallah! A thief bath taken the purse.’ ‘By Allah,’ quoth Zureic, ‘it can be none othei than the rascal [who has plagued me all day!] He has followed me home and taken the purse; and needs must I go and get it back.’ ‘Except thou bring it,’ answered his wife, ‘I will lock the door on thee and leave thee to pass the night in the street.’ So he went up to the house of the wedding, and seeing Ali looking on, said to himself, ‘This is he who took the purse; but he lodges with Ahmed ed Denef.’ So he ran on before him to the barrack and climbing up at the back, made his way into the saloon, where he found every one asleep. Presently there came a knock at the door and Zureic said, ‘Who is there?’ ‘Ali of Cairo,’ answered the knocker; and Zureic said, ‘Hast thou brought the purse?’ Ali thought it was Hassan Shouman and answered, ‘Yes; open the door.’ Quoth Zureic, ‘I cannot open to thee till I see the purse; for the chief and I have laid a wager about it.’ ‘Put out thy hand,’ said Ali. So he put out his hand through the hole of the door and Ali laid the purse in it; whereupon Zureic took it and going forth, as he had come in, returned to the wedding.

Ali stood awhile at the door, but none opened to him; and at last he gave a thundering knock that awoke all the men and they said, ‘That was Ali of Cairo’s knock.’ So the hail-keeper opened to him and Hassan Shouman said to him, ‘Hast thou brought the purse?’ ‘Enough of jesting, O Shouman,’ replied All. ‘Didst thou not swear that thou wouldst not open to me till I showed thee the purse, and did I not give it thee through the hole of the door?’ ‘By Allah,’ said Hassan, ‘it was not I who took it, but Zureic!’ Quoth All, ‘Needs must I get it again,’ and repaired to the house of the wedding, where he heard the buffoon say, ‘Largesse, O Abou Abdallah I Good luck to thee with thy son!’ Quoth Ali, ‘My luck is in the ascendant,’ and going to the fishmonger’s house, climbed over the back wall and found his wife asleep. So he drugged her and clad himself in her clothes. Then he took the child in his arms and went round, searching, till he found a basket containing gimblet-cakes, which Zureic, of his niggardliness, had kept from the Feast of the New Moon. Presently, the fishmonger returned and knocked at the door, whereupon Ali imitated his wife’s voice and said, ‘Who is at the door?’ ‘Abou Abdallah,’ answered Zureic, and Ali said, ‘I swore that I would not open the door to thee, except thou broughtest back the purse.’ Quoth the fishmonger, ‘I have brought it.’ ‘Then give it into my band,' said Ali, 'before I open the door;' and Zureic answered, saying, 'Let down the basket and take it therein.' So Ali let down the basket and the other put the purse therein, whereupon Ali took it and drugged the child. Then he aroused the woman and making off by the back way as he had entered, returned with the child and the purse and the basket of cakes to the barrack and showed them all to the forty, who praised his dexterity. Then he gave them the cakes, which they ate, and delivered the boy to Hassan Shouman, saying, 'This is Zureic's child; hide it.' So he hid it and fetching a lamb, gave it to the hail-keeper, who cooked it whole, wrapped in a cloth, and laid it out, with a shroud over it, as it were a dead body.

Meanwhile Zureic stood awhile, waiting at the door then gave a thundering knock, and his wife said to him, 'Hast thou brought the purse?' 'Didst thou not take it up in the basket but now?' answered he, and she said, 'I let no basket down to thee, nor have I set eyes on the purse.' 'By Allah,' quoth he, 'the sharper hath been beforehand with me and hath taken the purse again!' Then he searched the house and found the basket of cakes gone and the child missing and cried out, saying, 'Alas, my child!' Whereupon the woman beat her breast and said, 'I will complain of thee to the Vizier, for none has killed my child but this sharper, and all because of thee.' Quoth Zureic, 'I will answer for him.' So he tied the kerchief [of truce] about his neck and going to Ahmed ed Denef's lodging, knocked at the door. The hall-keeper admitted him and Hassan Shouman said to him, 'What brings thee here?' Quoth he, 'Do ye intercede with Ali the Cairene to restore me my child and I will give him the purse.' 'God requite thee, O Ali!' said Hassan. 'Why didst thou not tell me it was his child?' 'What has befallen him?' asked Zureic, and Hassan answered, saying, 'We gave him raisins to eat, and he choked and died; and here he is.' Quoth Zureic, 'Alas, my child! What shall I say to his mother?' Then he rose and opening the shroud, saw it was a lamb cooked whole and said, 'Thou makest sport of me, O Ali!' Then they gave him the child, and Ahmed ed Denef said to him, 'Thou didst hang up the purse, proclaiming that it should be the property of any sharper who should avail to take it, and Ali has taken it; so it is his.' Quoth Zureic, 'I make him a present of it.' But Ali said to him, 'Do thou accept it on account of thy niece Zeyneb.' And Zureic replied, 'I accept it.'

Then said the forty, 'We demand of thee Zeyneb in marriage for Ali of Cairo.' But he answered, saying, 'I have no control over her but of courtesy.' Quoth Hassan, 'Dost thou grant our suit?' 'Yes,' replied he; 'I will grant her in marriage to him who can avail to her dowry.' 'And what is her dowry?' asked Hassan. Quoth Zureic, 'She hath sworn that none shall mount her breast except he bring her the robe of Kemer, daughter of Azariah the Jew, and her crown and girdle and pantable of gold.' 'If I do not bring her the robe this very night,' said Ali, 'I renounce my claim to her.' 'O Ali,' rejoined Zureic, 'if thou play any tricks on Kemer, thou art a dead man.' 'Why so?' asked Ali, and the other said, 'Her father Azariah is a skilful magician, wily and perfidious, and has the Jinn at his service. He has without the city a palace, the walls whereof are one brick of gold and one of silver and which is only visible to the folk whilst he is therein: but, when he goes forth, it disappears. He brought his daughter this robe I speak of from an enchanted treasure, and every day he lays it in a dish of gold and opening the windows of the palace, cries out, saying, "Where are the sharpers of Cairo, the cutters of Irak, the master-thieves of the land of the Persians? Whoso availeth to take this robe, it is his." So all the light-fingered gentry essayed the adventure, but availed not to take it, and he turned them into apes and asses.' But Ali said, 'I will assuredly take it and Zeyneb shall be displayed therein.'

So he went to the shop of the Jew and found him a man of stern and forbidding aspect, seated with scales and weights and gold and silver and nests of drawers and so forth before him, and a mule tethered hard by. Presently he rose and shutting his shop, laid the gold and silver in*two purses, which he placed in a pair of saddle-bags and set on the mule's back. Then he mounted and rode, followed, without his knowledge, by Ali, till he came some way without the city, when he took out a little dust from a purse he carried in his pocket and muttering over it certain magical words, sprinkled it in the air. No sooner had he done this than there appeared a palace, which had not its like, and the Jew mounted the steps without alighting; after which he dismounted and taking the saddle-bags off the mule's back, dismissed the latter, which was a genie he had pressed into his service, and it vanished. Then he entered the palace and sat down, whilst Ali watched him from behind the door. Presently he arose and opening the lattices, took a wand of gold, [which he set up in the open window,] and hanging thereto a golden tray by chains of the same metal, laid in it the robe and cried out, saying, ‘Where are the sharpers of Cairo? Where are the cutpurses of Irak, the master-thieves of the land of the Persians? Whoso can take this robe by practice, it is his!’ Then he pronounced certain conjurations and behold, a tray of food spread itself before him. He ate and conjured a second time, whereupon the tray disappeared and a table of wine appeared in its stead, and he drank. Quoth Ali, ‘I know not how I am to take the robe, except if he be drunken.’

Then he stole up behind the Jew, with his drawn sword in his hand; but the other turned and conjured, saying to his hand, ‘Hold with the sword;’ whereupon Ali’s right arm was arrested and abode half-way in the air, holding the sword. He put out his left hand to the weapon, but it also abode fixed in the air, and so with his right foot, leaving him standing on one foot. Then the Jew dispelled the charm from him and Ali became as before. Then Azariah levelled a table of sand and drew a geomantic figure, by which he found that the intruder’s name was Quicksilver Ali of Cairo; so he turned to him and said, ‘Who art thou and what dost thou here?’ ‘I am Ali of Cairo,’ answered the sharper, ‘of the band of Ahmed ed Denef. I sought the hand of Zeyneb, daughter of Delileh the Crafty, and she demanded thy daughter’s robe to her dowry; give it to me and become a Muslim, if thou wouldst save thy life.’ ‘After thy death,’ answered the Jew. ‘Many have gone about to steal the robe, but could not avail thereto; so, if thou wilt take good advice, thou wilt begone and save thyself; for they only seek the robe of thee, that thou mayst fall into destruction; and indeed, had I not found by geomancy that thy fortune overritdeth my own, I had cut off thy head.’

Ali rejoiced to hear that his luck overrode that of the Jew and said to him, ‘There is no help for it but I must have the robe and thou must become a true believer.’ ‘Is this thy last word?’ asked the Jew, and Ali answered, ‘Yes.’ So the Jew took a cup and filling it with water, conjured over it and said to Ali, ‘Quit this shape of a man for that of an ass.’ Then he sprinkled him with the water and straightway he became an ass, with hoofs and long ears, and fell to braying after the manner of asses. The Jew drew a circle round him, which became a wall against him, and drank on till the morning, when he said to Ali, 'I will ride thee to-day and give the mule a rest.' So he locked up the robe and tray and rod in a cupboard and conjured over Ali, who followed him. Then he laid the saddle-bags on his back and mounting, rode forth of the palace, whereupon it disappeared and he rode into Baghdad, till he came to his shop, where he alighted and emptied the bags of gold and silver into the trays before him. As for Ali, he tied him up by the shop-door, where he stood, hearing and understanding all that passed, without being able to speak.

Presently, up came a young merchant with whom fortune had played the tyrant and who could find no easier way of earning his livelihood than water-carrying. So he brought his wife's bracelets to the Jew and said to him, 'Give me the worth of these bracelets, that I may buy me an ass.' 'What wilt thou do with him?' asked the Jew, and the other answered, 'I mean to fetch water from the river on his back, and earn my living thereby.' Quoth the Jew, 'Take this ass of mine.' So he sold him the bracelets and received Ali of Cairo in part payment, in the shape of an ass, and carried him home. Quoth Ali in himself, 'If the ass-man clap the pannel on me and load me with water-skins and go half a score journeys a day with me, he will ruin my health and I shall die.' So, when the water-carrier's wife came to bring him his fodder, he butted her with his head and she fell on her back; whereupon he sprang on her and smiting her head with his mouth, put out that which his father left him. She cried out and the neighbours came to her assistance and beat him and drove him off her breast. When her husband came home, she said to him, 'Either divorce me or return the ass to [his former] owner.' 'What has happened?' asked he; and she answered, saying, 'This is a devil in the guise of an ass. He sprang upon me, and had not the neighbours beaten him off me, he had done a foul thing with me.'

So he carried the ass back to the Jew, who said to him, 'Why hast thou brought him back?' and he replied, 'He did a foul thing with my wife.' So the Jew gave him his money again and he went away; and Azariah said to Ali, 'Unlucky wretch that thou art, hast thou recourse to knavery to cause him return thee to me? But since it pleases thee to be an ass, I will make thee a laughing-stock to great and small.' Then he mounted him and rode till he came without the city, when he brought out the powder and conjuring over it, cast it abroad in the air, and immediately the palace appeared. He entered and taking the saddle-bags off the ass, set up the rod and dish and hung out the robe, proclaiming aloud as of his wont. Then he conjured, and meat and wine appeared before him and he ate and drank; after which he took a cup of water and pronouncing certain words thereover, sprinkled it on Ali, saying, 'Quit this shape and return to thy former one.' Ali straightway became a man again and Azariah said to him, 'O Ali, take good advice and be content with [what thou hast felt of] my mischief. Thou hast no call to marry Zeyneb nor to take my daughter's robe, for it is no easy matter for thee; so leave covetise and it will be better for thee. Else will I turn thee into a bear or an ape or set an Afrit on thee, who will cast thee behind the Mountain Caf.' 'O Azariah,' answered Ali, 'I have engaged to take the robe and needs must I have it and thou must become a Muslim; else I will kill thee.' 'O Ali,' rejoined the Jew, 'thou art like a walnut; unless it be broken, it cannot be eaten.'

Then he took a cup of water and conjuring over it, sprinkled Ali with it, saying, 'Take the shape of a bear;' whereupon he instantly became a bear and the Jew muzzled him and putting a collar about his neck, chained him to a picket of iron. Then he sat down and ate and drank, now and then throwing him a morsel and emptying the dregs of the cup over him, till the morning, when he rose and lay by the tray and the robe and conjured over the bear, which followed him to the shop. There he tied him up by the chain and he abode, hearing and seeing and understanding, but unable to speak, whilst the Jew sat down and emptied the gold and silver into the trays before him. Presently up came a merchant, who accosted the Jew and said to him, 'Wilt thou sell me yonder bear? I have a wife who is my cousin [and is sick;] and it hath been prescribed to her to eat bears' flesh and anoint herself with the grease.' At this the Jew rejoiced and said in himself, 'I will sell him to this merchant, so he may slaughter him and we be at peace from him,' And Ali thought in himself, 'By Allah, this fellow means to slaughter me; but deliverance is with God.' Then said the Jew, 'He is a present from me to thee.' So the merchant took him and carried him to the butcher, to whom he said, ‘Take thy tools and follow me.’ So the butcher took his knives and followed the merchant to his house, where he bound the beast and fell to sharpening his knife; but when he went up to him to kill him, the bear escaped from his hands and rising into the air, disappeared from sight.

Now the reason of this was on this wise. When the Jew returned to his palace, his daughter questioned him of Ali and he told her what had happened; whereupon, ‘Call a genie,’ said she, ‘and ask him of the youth, whether he be indeed Quicksilver Ali or another who seeketh to put a cheat on thee.’ So Azariah called a genie and questioned him of Ali. And he answered, saying, ‘It is Ali of Cairo himself. The butcher has bound him and whetted his knife to kill him.’ Quoth the Jew, ‘Go, snatch him up and bring him hither, ere the butcher slaughter him.’ So the genie flew off and snatching Ali out of the butcher’s hands, carried him to the palace and set him down before the Jew, who took a cup of water and conjuring over it, sprinkled him therewith, saying, ‘Return to thine own shape.’ And he straightway became a man again as before. The Jew’s daughter Kemer, seeing him to be a handsome young man, fell in love with him and he with her; and she said to him, ‘O unlucky one, why dost thou go about to take my robe and enforce my father deal thus with thee?’ Quoth he, ‘I have engaged to get it for Zeyneb the Trickstress, that I may wed her therewith.’ And she said, ‘Others than thou have gone about with my father to get the robe, but could not compass it: so put away this thought from thee.’ But he answered, saying, ‘Needs must I have it, and thy father must become a Muslim; or I will kill him.’

Then said the Jew, ‘See, O my daughter, how this unlucky fellow seeks his own destruction. But I will turn him into a dog.’ So he took a cup graven with characters and full of water and conjuring over it, sprinkled Ali therefrom, saying, ‘Take the form of a dog.’ Whereupon he straightway became a dog, and the Jew and his daughter drank together till the morning, when the former laid up the robe and tray and mounted his mule. Then he conjured over the dog, which followed him, as he rode towards the town, and all the dogs barked at Ali, as he passed, till he came to the shop of a broker, who rose and drove away the dogs, and Ali lay down before him. The Jew turned and looked for him, but finding him not, [rode on].

Presently, the broker shut up his shop and went home, followed by the dog. When his daughter saw the dog enter the house, she veiled her face and said, ‘O my father, why dost thou bring a strange man in to me?’ ‘O my daughter,’ answered the broker, ‘this is a dog.’ ‘Not so,’ quoth she, ‘it is Ali of Cairo, whom the Jew Azariah hath enchanted.’ And she turned to the dog and said to him, ‘Art thou not Ali of Cairo?’ And he signed to her with his head, as who should say, ‘Yes.’ Then said her father to her, ‘Why did the Jew enchant him?’ And she answered, ‘Because of his daughter Kemer’s robe; but I can release him.’ ‘If thou canst indeed do him this good office,’ said the broker, ‘now is the time.’ Quoth she, ‘If he will marry me, I will release him.’ And he signed to her with his head, as who should say, ‘Yes.’ So she took a cup of water, graven with certain signs and characters, and conjuring over it, [was about to sprinkle Ali therewith,] when she heard a great cry and the cup fell from her hand. She turned and lo, it was her father’s maid, who had cried out; and she said to her, ‘O my mistress, is it thus thou keepest thy covenant between me and thee? None taught thee this fashion but I, and thou didst covenant with me that thou wouldst do nought without consulting me and that he who took thee to wife should marry me also, and that one night should be mine and one thine.’ And the broker’s daughter said, ‘It is well.’

When the broker heard the maid’s words, he said to his daughter, ‘Who taught the maid?’ And she answered, ‘herself.’ So he asked her and she said, ‘Know, O my lord, that, when I was with Azariah the Jew, I used to spy upon him and listen to him, when he performed his magical operations; and when he went forth to his shop in Baghdad, I opened his books and read in them, till I became skilled in the Cabala. One day, he was warm with wine and would have me lie with him, but I refused, saying, “I may not grant thee this except thou become a Muslim.” He refused and I required him to carry me to the Sultan’s market and sell me there. So he sold me to thee and I taught my young mistress, making it a condition with her that she should do nought, without taking counsel with me, and that whoso married her should marry me also, one night for her and one for me.’ Then she took a cup of water and conjuring over it, sprinkled the dog therewith; saying, ‘Return to the form of a man.’ And he was straightway restored to his former shape; whereupon the broker saluted him and asked him the manner of his enchantment. So Ali told him all that had passed and the broker said to him, ‘Will [not] my daughter and the maid suffice thee?’ But he answered, saying, ‘Needs must I have Zeyneb [also].’

At this moment there came a knock at the door and the maid said, ‘Who is at the door?’ ‘Kemer, daughter of Azariah the Jew,’ answered the new comer. ‘Is Ali of Cairo with you?’ ‘O Jew’s daughter,’ answered the young lady, ‘if he be with us, what wilt thou with him? Go down, O maid, and open to her.’ So the maid let her in, and when Ali saw her, he said to her, ‘What brings thee hither, O dog’s daughter?’ Quoth she, ‘I testify that there is no god but God and that Mohammed is the Apostle of God. Do men in the faith of Islam give marriage-portions to women or women to men?’ ‘Men endow women,’ answered Ali. ‘Then,’ said she, ‘I come and dower myself for thee, bringing thee, as my marriage-portion, my robe, together with the rod and tray and chains and the head of my father, thine enemy and the enemy of God.’ And she threw down the Jew’s head before him. Now the manner of her killing her father was as follows. On the night of his turning Ali into a dog, she saw, in a dream, one who said to her, ‘Become a Muslim.’ And she did so. Next morning, as soon as she awoke, she expounded Islam to her father, but he refused to embrace the faith; so she drugged him and killed him. As for Ali, he took the gear and giving the broker rendezvous for the morrow at the Divan of the Khalif, that he might take his daughter and the maid to wife, set out, rejoicing, to return to the barrack of the Forty.

On his way, he met a sweetmeat-seller, who was beating hand upon hand and saying, ‘There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! Folk’s labour is become sin and men are active but in fraud!, Then said he to Ali, ‘I conjure thee, by Allah, taste of this marchpane!’ So Ali took a piece and ate it and fell down senseless, for there was henbane therein; whereupon the sweetmeat-seller took the robe and the tray and the rest of the gear and thrusting them into the box in which he kept his sweetmeats, made off.

Presently he met a cadi, who called to him, saying, ‘Come hither, O sweetmeat-seller?’ So he went up to him and setting down his sack, laid the tray of sweetmeats thereon and said, ‘What dost thou want?’ ‘Marchpane and sugar-almonds,’ answered the cadi and taking some in his hand, said, ‘These are adulterated.’ Then he brought out sweetmeats from his sleeve and gave them to the sweetmeat-seller, saying, ‘Look at this ware; how excellent it is! Eat it and make the like.’ So he ate and fell down senseless, for the sweet-meats were drugged, whereupon the sham cadi, who was none other than Hassan Shouman, bundled him into the sack and made off with him, tray and chest and all, to the barrack of the Forty. Now the reason of this was as follows. When Ali had been gone some days in quest of the robe and they heard no news of him, Ahmed ed Denef said to his men, ‘O lads, go and seek for your brother Ali.’ So they sallied forth in quest of him and among the rest Hassan Shouman, disguised in a cadi’s habit. He came across the sweetmeat-seller and knowing him for Ahmed el Lekit [Delileh’s grandson,] suspected him of having played some trick upon Ali; so be drugged him and did as we have seen.

Meanwhile, the other forty went about, making search in different directions, and amongst them Ali Kitf el Jemel, who, seeing a crowd of people, made towards them and found Quicksilver Ali lying drugged and senseless in their midst. So he revived him and he came to himself and said, ‘Where am I?’ ‘We found thee lying here drugged,’ answered El Jemel, ‘but know not who drugged thee.’ Quoth Ali, ‘It was a certain sweetmeat-seller who drugged me and took the gear from me: but where is he gone?’ ‘We have seen nothing of him,’ replied his comrades; ‘but come, rise and go home with us.’ So they returned to the barrack, where they found Ahmed ed Denef, who greeted Ali and enquired if he had brought the robe. Quoth he, ‘I was coming hither with it and the Jew’s head and what not else, when a sweetmeat-seller met me and drugged me and took them ftom me; but, if I come across him again, I will requite him.’

Presently Hassan Shouman came out of a closet and said to him, ‘O Ali, hast thou gotten the gear?’ So he told him what had befallen him and added, ‘If I knew where to find the knave, I would pay him out.’ ‘Knowest thou whither he went?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Hassan; ‘I know where he is,’ and opening the door of the closet, showed him the sweetmeat-seller within, drugged and senseless. Then he aroused him and he opened his eyes and finding himself in presence of Quicksilver Ali and Ahmed ed Denef and the Forty, started up and said, ‘Where am I and who has laid hands on me?’ ‘It was I laid hands on thee,’ answered Hassan; and Ali said, ‘O perfidious wretch, wilt thou play thy tricks on me?’ And he would have slain him: but Hassan said to him, ‘Hold thy hand, for this fellow is become thy kinsman.’ ‘How so?’ asked Ali; and Hassan said, ‘This is Ahmed el Lekit, Zeyneb’s sister’s son.’

Then said Ali to the prisoner, ‘Why didst thou thus, O Lekit?’ and he answered, saying, ‘My grandmother, Delileh the Crafty, bade me do it; because Zureic the fishmonger foregathered with her and said, “Quicksilver Ali is a sharper and a past master in craft and knavery, and he will certainly kill the Jew and bring back the robe.” So she sent for me and said to me, “O Ahmed, dost thou know Ali of Cairo?” “Yes,” answered I; “it was I who directed him to Ahmed ed Denef’s lodging, when he first came to Baghdad.” Quoth she, “Go and set thy snares for him, and if he have brought back the gear, put a cheat on him and take it from him.” So I went round about the city, till I met a sweetmeat-seller and buying his clothes and stock-in-trade and gear for ten dinars, did with thee as thou knowest.’ Quoth All, ‘Go back to thy grandmother and Zureic and tell them that I have brought the gear and the Jew’s head and bid them meet me to-morrow at the Khalif’s Divan, to receive Zeyneb’s dowry.’ And Ahmed ed Denef rejoiced in this and said to Ali, ‘Thou hast not disappointed our pains in rearing thee, O Ali!’

Next morning, Ali took the robe and tray and the rod and chains of gold, together with the Jew’s head on a pike, and went up, accompanied by Ahmed ed Denef and the Forty, to the Divan, where they kissed the ground before the Khalif, who turned and seeing a youth of the most valiant aspect, enquired of Ahmed ed Denef concerning him. ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Ahmed, ‘this is Quicksilver Ali the Egyptian, captain of the brave boys of Cairo, and he is the first of my lads.’ And the Khalif loved him for the valour that shone from between his eyes, testifying for him and not against him. Then Ali rose and cast the Jew’s head down before him, saying, ‘May all thine enemies be like this one, O Commander of the Faithful!’ Quoth Er Reshid, ‘Whose head is this?’ And Ali answered, ‘It is the head of Azariah the Jew.’ ‘Who slew him?’ asked the Khalif. So Ali related to him all that had passed, from first to last, and the Khalif said, ‘I had not thought thou wouldst kill him, for that he was a sorcerer.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ rejoined Ali, ‘my Lord made me able to his slaughter.’ Then the Khalif sent the chief of the police to the Jew’s palace, where he found him lying headless; so he laid the body on a bier, and carried it to Er Reshid, who commanded to burn it.

At this moment up came Kemer and kissing the earth before the Khalif, informed him that she was the Jew’s daughter and that she had become a Muslim. Then she renewed her profession before the Commander of the Faithful and said to him, ‘Be thou my intercessor with Quicksilver Ali that he take me to wife.’ [So Er Reshid interceded with Ali] and she appointed him her guardian to consent to her marriage with the sharper, to whom he gave the Jew’s palace and all its contents, saying, ‘Ask a boon of me.’ Quoth Ali, ‘I beg of thee to let me stand on thy carpet and eat of thy table.’ And the Khalif said, ‘O Ali, hast thou any lads?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he, ‘I have forty lads; but they are in Cairo.’ ‘Send to Cairo,’ said the Khalif’ and fetch them hither. But hast thou a lodging for them?’ ‘No,’ replied Ali; and Hassan Shouman said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, I make him a present of my barrack, with all that is therein.’ But the Khalif answered, saying, ‘O Hassan, thy lodging is thine own.’ And bade his treasurer give the court architect ten thousand dinars, that he might build Ali a hall with four estrades and forty sleeping-closets for his lads. Then said he, ‘O Ali, hast thou any further wish, that we may order its fulfilment?’ ‘O King of the age,’ answered Ali, ‘be thou my intercessor with Delileh the Crafty that she give me her daughter Zeyneb to wife and take the Jew’s robe and gear in lieu of dower.’ Delileh accepted the Khalif’s intercession and took the robe and dish and what not, and they drew up the marriage contracts between Ali and Zeyneb and Kemer, the Jew’s daughter and the broker’s daughter and the maid. Moreover, the Khalif assigned him stipends and gratuities and a table morning and evening, together with allowances for fodder and what not.

Then Ali fell to making ready for the wedding festivities and after thirty days, he wrote a letter to his comrades in Cairo, wherein he gave them to know of the favours that the Khalif had bestowed upon him and said, ‘I have married four girls and needs must ye come to the wedding.’ So, after awhile, the forty lads arrived and they held high festival. Moreover, he lodged them in his barrack and entreated them with the utmost honour and presented them to the Khalif, who bestowed on them dresses of honour and largesse. Then the tiring-women displayed Zeyneb before Ali in the robe of the Jew’s daughter, and he went in to her and found her an unpierced pearl and a filly that none but he had ridden. Then he went in to the three other girls and found them accomplished in beauty and grace.

After this, it befell that Ali was one night on guard by the Khalif and the latter said to him, ‘O Ali, I wish thee to tell me all that has befallen thee from first to last.’ So Ali related to him all his adventures and the Khalif bade record them and lay them up in the royal treasuries. So they wrote down all that had befallen him and laid it up with other histories for the people of the Best of Men. And Ali and his wives and comrades abode in all delight and solace of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies; and blessed and exalted be Allah, for He [alone] is All-knowing!

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

ARDESHIR AND HEYAT EN NUFOUS.

There was once in the city of Shiraz a mighty king called Seif el Aazem Shah, who had grown old, without being blessed with a son. So he summoned the doctors and sages and said to them, ‘I am grown old and ye know my case and the state and ordinance of the kingdom, and I fear for my subjects after me, for that up to now God hath not vouchsafed me a son.’ ‘We will compound thee drugs,’ answered they, ‘wherein, if it please God the Most High, there shall be efficacy.’ So they mixed him drugs, which he used and lay with his wife, and she conceived by leave of God the Most High, who saith to a thing, ‘Be,’ and it is. When her months were accomplished, she gave birth to a son like the moon, whom his father named Ardeshir, and he grew up and throve and applied himself to the study of science and polite letters, till he attained the age of fifteen.

Now there was in Irak a king called Abdulcadir, who had a daughter, by name Heyat en Nufous, and she was like the rising full moon; but she had an aversion to men and the folk scarce dared name them in her presence. The kings of the Chosroes had sought her in marriage of her father; but, when he spoke with her thereof, she said, ‘Never will I do this thing; and if thou force me, I will slay myself.’ Ardeshir heard of her and fell in love with her and told his father, who, seeing his case, took pity on him and promised him that he should marry her. So he despatched his Vizier to demand her in marriage of King Abdulcadir; but he refused, and when the Vizier returned to King Seif el Aazem and acquainted him with the failure of his mission, he was exceeding wroth and said, ‘Shall the like of me send to one of the kings on an occasion and he accomplish it not?’ Then he let make proclamation to his troops, bidding them get out the tents and equip them for war with all diligence, though they should borrow money for the necessary expenses; and he said, ‘I will not turn back, till I have laid waste King Abdulcadir’s dominions and slain his men and plundered his treasures and blotted out his traces!’

When the report of this reached Ardeshir, he rose from his bed and going in to his father, kissed the earth before him and said, ‘O mighty King, burden not thyself with this thing and levy not thy troops neither spend thy money. Thou art stronger than King Abdulcadir, and if thou loose upon him this thy host, thou wilt lay waste his dominions and spoil his good and slay his men and himself; but, when his daughter comes to know what hath befallen her father and his people on her account, she will kill herself, and I shall die for love of her; for I can never live after her.' 'And what then thinkest thou to do, O my son?' asked the King. 'I will don a merchant's habit and cast about how I may win to the princess and compass my desire of her.' Quoth Seif al Aazem, 'Art thou determined upon this?' And the prince said, 'Yes, O my father;' whereupon the King called his Vizier and said to him, 'Do thou journey with my son, the darling of my heart, and help him to his desire and watch over him and guide him with thy sound judgment and stand to him in my stead.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the Vizier; and the King gave his son three hundred thousand dinars in gold and great store of jewels and precious stones and goldsmiths' ware and stuffs and other things of price. Then Ardeshir went in to his mother and kissed her hands and asked her blessing. She blessed him and opening her treasuries, brought out to him necklaces and trinkets and apparel and all manner of other precious things laid up from the time of the bygone kings, whose price might not be evened with money. Moreover, he took with him of his servants and slaves and cattle all that he needed for the road and clad himself and the Vizier and their company in merchants' habits.

Then he bade his parents and kinsfolk and friends farewell and setting out, fared on over deserts and wastes all tides of the day and watches of the night; and whenas the way was long with him, he recited the following verses:

Passion and longing and unease are heavy on my spright, Nor is there one to succour me 'gainst destiny's unright.
Arcturus and the Pleiades I watch, as 'twere for love A servant of the stars I'd grown; yea, all the tides of night
Still for the morning-star I look, till, when at last it comes, I'm yearning, maddened and my pain redouble for its sight.
From the religion of thy love I have not strayed, I swear; Nay, wakeful-lidded aye am I, a love distracted wight.

Though that I hope be hard to win and languor waste me sore
And patience after thee to live and helpers fail me quite,
Yet will I constantly await till God our loves unite And mortify
the foe and bring to nought the enviers' spite.

Then he swooned away and the Vizier sprinkled rose- water on him, till he came to himself, when he said to him, 'O king's son, possess thy soul in patience; for the issue of patience is solace, and behold, thou art on the way to that thou desirest.' And he ceased not to speak him fair and comfort him, till his trouble subsided and they continued their journey with all diligence. Presently, the prince again became impatient of the length of the way and bethought him of his beloved and recited these verses:

Absence is long and restlessness and care upon me weigh; Yea,
and my heart in flames of fire consumeth night and day.
Mine eyes stream still with floods of tears and for the burning
stress Of longing that afflicteth me, my very head's grown gray.
O thou my hope, my wishes' term, I swear by Him who made
Both branch and leaf and every thing and moulded man of clay,
A load of passion for thy sake, O my desire, I bear; None else
amongst the folk of love to bear it might essay.
Question the night of me and it will tell thee if therein, Through
all the watches of the dark, my lids in sleep close aye.

Then he wept sore and complained of that which he suffered for stress of passion and love-longing; but the Vizier comforted him and spoke him fair, promising him the attainment of his desire; after which they fared on again, till, in a few days, they came in sight of the White City, [the capital of King Abdulcadir,] soon after sunrise. Then said the Vizier to the prince, 'Rejoice, O king's son, in all good; for see, yonder is the White City, that which thou seekest.' Whereat the prince rejoiced with an exceeding joy and recited the following verses:

Friends, I am longing-hearted, distraught with love and dole:
Desire abides and yearning cleaves fast unto my soul.

Even as a mourning mother, who wakes for woe, I moan, When night falls down. None pities nor doth with me condole.
Yet, when from out thy country the winds breathe fresh and sweet, Meseems as if refreshment upon my spirit stole.
My lids, like clouds rain-laden, pour ever, and my heart Swims in their tears' salt ocean, that never leaves to roll.

Then they entered the White City and took up their lodging at the Khan of the Merchants, where they hired three magazines and laid up therein all their goods and gear. They abode in the khan till they were rested, when the Vizier applied himself to devise a plan of conduct for the prince, and said to him, 'I have bethought me of somewhat, wherein methinks will be advantage for thee, so it please God the Most High.' 'O Vizier of good counsel,' replied Ardeshir, 'do what cometh to thy mind, and may God direct thy wit aright!' Quoth the Vizier, 'I purpose to hire thee a shop in the bazaar of the stuff- sellers and set thee therein; for all that, great and small, have occasion to the bazaar, and methinks, when the folk see thee sitting in the shop, their hearts will incline to thee and thou wilt thus be able to attain that thou seekest, for thou art fair of favour and souls incline to thee and eyes rejoice in thee.' 'Do what seemeth good to thee,' answered Ardeshir.

So the Vizier clad the prince and himself in their richest raiment and putting a purse of a thousand dinars in his pocket, went forth and walked about the city, whilst all who saw them marvelled at the prince's beauty, saying, 'Glory be to Him who created this youth of vile water! Blessed be God, the most excellent of Creators!' Great was the talk of him and some said, 'This is no mortal, but a noble angel;' and others, 'Hath Rizwan, the door- keeper of Paradise, left the gate unguarded, that this youth hath come forth?' The people followed them to the stuff-market, where they entered and stood, till there came up to them an old man of venerable appearance, who saluted them, and they returned his salute. Then said he to them, 'O my lords, have ye any need, that we may have the honour of accomplishing?' Quoth the Vizier, 'Who art thou, O elder?' And he answered, 'I am the overseer of the market.' 'Know then, O elder,' said the Vizier, 'that this youth is my son and I wish to take him a shop in the bazaar, that he may sit therein and learn to buy and sell and give and take and come to know the ways and habits of merchants.' 'I hear and obey,' replied the overseer and straightway brought them the key of a shop, which he caused the brokers sweep and clean. Then the Vizier sent for a high divan, stuffed with ostrich-down, and set it up in the shop, together with a small prayer-carpet, fringed with broidery of red gold, and a cushion: and he transported thither so much of the goods and stuff that he had brought with him as filled the shop.

Next morning, the prince came and opening the shop, seated himself on the divan, and stationed two white slaves, clad in the richest of raiment, before him and two black slaves of the goodliest of the Abyssinians without the shop. The Vizier enjoined him to keep his secret from the folk, so thereby he might find assistance in the accomplishment of his wishes; then, charging him to acquaint him with what befell him in the shop, day by day, he left him and returned to the khan. The prince sat in the shop all day, as he were the moon at its full, whilst the folk, hearing tell of his beauty, flocked to the place, without errand, to gaze on his beauty and grace and symmetry and glorify God who created and shaped him, till none could pass through the bazaar for the crowding of the folk about him. Ardeshir turned right and left, abashed at the throng of people that stared at him, hoping to make acquaintance with some one about the court, of whom he might get news of the princess, but found no way to this, wherefore his breast was straitened.

On this wise the case abode some time, whilst the Vizier daily promised him the attainment of his desire, till, one day, as he sat in the shop, there came up an old woman of venerable and respectable appearance, clad in raiment of [white wool, such as is worn of] devotees and followed by two slave-girls like moons. She stopped before the shop and considered the prince awhile, after which, 'Glory be to God,' said she, 'who fashioned that face and wrought that handiwork to perfection!' Then she saluted him and he returned her greeting and seated her by his side. Quoth she, 'Whence comest thou, O fair of face?' 'From the parts of Hind, O my mother,' answered he; 'and I have come to his city to see the world and look about me.' 'Honour to thee for a visitor!' rejoined she. 'What goods and stuffs hast thou? Show me something handsome, fit for kings.' Quoth he, 'If thou wish for handsome stuffs, I will show them to thee; for I have wares that beseem persons of every condition.' 'O my son,' answered he, 'I want somewhat costly and fair of fashion; brief, the best thou hast.' Said he, 'Thou must needs tell me for whom thou seekest it, that I may show thee goods according to the rank of the person in question.' 'Thou sayst sooth, O my son,' replied she. 'I want somewhat for my mistress Heyat en Nufous, daughter of Abdulcadir, lord of this land and king of this country.'

When Ardeshir heard his mistress's name, his reason fled for joy and his heart fluttered and he gave no order to slave or servant, but, putting his hand behind him, pulled out a purse of a hundred dinars and gave it to the old woman, saying, 'This is for the washing of thy clothes.' Then he brought out of a wrapper a dress worth ten thousand dinars or more and said to her, 'This is of that which I have brought hither.' When the old woman saw it, it pleased her and she said, 'What is the price of this dress, O perfect in beauty?' 'I will take no price for it,' answered he; whereupon she thanked him and repeated her question; but he said, 'By Allah, I will take no price for it! If the princess will not accept it, I make thee a present of it and it is a guess-gift from me to thee. Praised be God who hath brought us together, so that, if one day I have a want, I shall find thee a helper to me in its accomplishment!' She marvelled at the goodliness of his speech and the excess of his generosity and courtesy, and said to him, 'What is thy name, O my lord?' 'My name is Ardeshir,' answered he; and she said, 'By Allah, this is a rare name! Therewith are kings' sons named, and thou art in the guise of the sons of the merchants.' Quoth he, 'Of the love my father bore me, he gave me this name, but a name signifies nothing.' And she wondered at him and said, 'O my son, take the price of thy goods.' But he swore that he would take nothing.

Then said she to him, 'O my son, truth is the greatest of all things and thou hadst not dealt thus generously by me but for a special reason: so tell me thy case and thy secret thought; belike thou hast some need to the accomplishment of which I may help thee.' Thereupon he laid his hand in hers and swearing her to secrecy, told her the whole story of his passion for the princess and his sufferings by reason thereof. The old woman shook her head and said, ‘True, O my son; but the wise say, in the current adage, “If thou wouldst be obeyed, abstain from ordering that which may not be;” and thou, my son, thy name is “Merchant,” and though thou hadst the keys of the hidden treasures, yet wouldst thou be called nought but “Merchant.” If thou have a find to advance thyself in rank according to thy station, seek the hand of a Cadi’s daughter or an emir’s; but why, O my son, aspirest thou to none but the daughter of the King of the age and the time, and she a clean maid, who knows nought of the things of the world and has never in her life seen aught but her palace in which she dwells? Yet, for all her tender age, she is intelligent, shrewd, vivacious and quick-witted, well-advised and prudent in action. Her father hath no other child than her and she is dearer to him than his life. Every morning he comes to her and gives her good-morrow, and all who dwell in the palace stand in awe of her. Think not, O my son, that any dare bespeak her with aught of these words; as for me, there is no way for me thereto. By Allah, O my son, my heart and bowels love thee and were it in my power to give thee access to her, I would assuredly do it; but I will tell thee somewhat, wherein Allah may haply appoint the healing of thy heart, and will venture my life and my goods for thee, till I accomplish thy desire for thee.’ ‘And what is that, O my mother?’ asked he. ‘Seek of me the daughter of a Vizier or an Amir,’ answered she, ‘and I will grant thy request; but it may not be that one should mount from earth to heaven at one bound.’

When the prince heard this, he replied to her with courtesy and reasonableness, saying, ‘O my mother, thou art a woman of sense and knowest how things go. Doth a man, when his head irketh him, bind up his hand?’ ‘No, by Allah, O my son,’ said she. ‘Even so,’ rejoined he, ‘my heart seeketh none but her and nought slayeth me but the love of her. By Allah, I am a lost man, an I find not one to counsel me aright and succour me! God on thee, O my mother, have pity on my strangerhood and the streaming of my tears!’ ‘By Allah, O my son,’ answered the old woman, ‘thy words rend my heart, but I know not how to help thee.’ Quoth he, ‘I beseech thee of thy favour, carry her a letter and kiss her hands for me.’ So she took compassion on him and said, ‘Write what thou wilt and I will carry it to her.’ When he heard this, he was transported for joy and calling for pen and ink and paper, wrote the following verses:

O Heyat en Nufous, be gracious and incline Unto a lover who for severance doth pine.
I was in all delight and ease of life, but now Distraction and despair consume this heart of mine.
I company the night with sorrows in discourse And wakefulness cleaves fast all tides unto mine eyne.
Pity a lover sad, afflicted with desire, Whose lids are ulcered aye with yearning's tears of brine;
And when the morning comes at last, the tardy morn, He's drunken and distraught with passion's heady wine.

Then he folded the letter and kissing it, gave it to the old woman; after which he put his hand to a chest and took out a second purse of a hundred dinars, which he gave her, saying, 'Divide this among the slave-girls.' She refused it and said, 'By Allah, O my son, I am not with thee for aught of this!' But he thanked her and said, 'Thou must indeed take it.' So she took it and kissing his hands, returned to the princess, to whom said she, 'O my lady, I have brought thee somewhat the like whereof is not with the people of our city, and it comes from a handsome young man, than whom there is not a goodlier on the surface of the earth.' 'O my nurse,' answered the princess, 'and whence cometh he?' 'From the parts of Hind,' replied the old woman; 'and he hath given me this dress of gold brocade, embroidered with pearls and jewels and worth the kingdom of Chosroes and Caesar.' So saying, she opened the dress and spread it out before her, whereupon the whole palace was illumined by its brightness, by reason of the beauty of its fashion and the wealth of pearls and jewels with which it was broidered, and all who were present marvelled at it. The princess examined it and judging it to be worth no less than a whole year's revenue of her father's kingdom, said to the old woman, 'O my nurse, comes this dress from him or another?' 'From him,' answered she; and Heyat en Nufous said, 'Is he of our town or a stranger?' 'He is a stranger,' replied the old woman, 'newly come hither; and he hath slaves and servants and is fair of face, symmetrical of shape, well-mannered, open-handed and open-hearted, never saw I a goodlier than he, except thyself.'

'O my nurse,' rejoined the princess, 'this is an extraordinary thing, that a dress like this, which money cannot buy, should be in the hands of a merchant! What price did he set on it?' 'He would set no price on it,' answered the old woman, 'but gave me back the money thou sentest by me and swore that he would take nought thereof, saying, 'It is a gift from me to the King's daughter; for it beseemeth none but her; and if she will not accept it, I make thee a present of it.' 'By Allah,' said the princess, 'this is indeed rare liberality and wonderful munificence! But I fear the issue of his affair, lest he be brought to necessity. Why didst thou not ask him, O my nurse, if he had any desire, that we might fulfil it for him?' 'O my lady,' answered the nurse, 'I did ask him, and he said to me, "I have indeed a desire," but would not tell me what it was. However, he gave me this letter and said, "Carry it to the princess."' So Heyat en Nufous took the letter and opened and read it; whereupon she was sore chafed and changing colour for anger, cried out to the old woman, saying, 'Out on thee, O nurse! What is the name of this dog who dares to write thus to a king's daughter? What affinity is there between him and me, that this dog should address me thus? By the great God, Lord of the well Zemzem and of the Kaabeh, but that I fear God the Most High, I would send and bind the dog's hands behind him and slit his nostrils and cut off his nose and ears and crucify him on the gate of the bazaar wherein is his shop!'

When the old woman heard this, she turned pale and trembled in every nerve and her tongue clave to her mouth; but she took courage and said, 'Softly, O my lady! What is there in his letter to trouble thee thus? Is it aught but a memorial, wherein he taketh his complaint to thee of poverty or oppression, from which he hopes to be relieved by thy favour?' 'By Allah, O my nurse,' replied the princess, 'it is nought of this; but verses and shameful words! Needs must the dog be in one of three cases: either he is mad and hath no wit or he seeks his own slaughter, or else he is assisted to his wish of me by some one of exceeding puissance and a mighty Sultan. Or hath he heard that I am one of the light o' loves of the city, who lie a night or two with whosoever seeketh them, that he writeth me shameful verses to debauch my reason withal?' 'By Allah, O my lady,' rejoined the old woman, 'thou sayst sooth! But reck not thou of yonder ignorant dog, for thou art seated in thy high-builded and unapproachable palace, to which the very birds cannot soar neither the wind pass over it, and he is distracted. Wherefore do thou write him a letter and chide him roundly and spare him no kind of reproof, but threaten him exceedingly and menace him with death and say to him, "Whence hast thou knowledge of me, that thou darest to write to me, O dog of a merchant, that trudgest far and wide all thy days in deserts and wastes for the sake of gaining a dirhem or a dinar? By Allah, except thou awake from thy sleep and put off thine intoxication, I will crucify thee on the gate of the bazaar wherein is thy shop!"' Quoth the princess, 'I fear lest he [be encouraged to] presume, if I write to him.' 'And what is he,' rejoined the nurse, 'that he should presume to us? Indeed, we write to him but to the intent that his presumption may be cut off and his fear magnified.' And she ceased not to persuade her, till she called for inkhorn and paper and wrote him the following verses:

O thou that feignest thee the prey of love and wakefulness, Thou that for passion spendst the nights in transport and distress,
O self-deluder, dost thou seek enjoyment of a moon? Did ever any of the moon win grace and love-liesse?
I rede thee hearken to my word; I give thee counsel fair; Desist, for danger, ay, and death do hard upon thee press.
If thou to this request return, a grievous punishment Shall surely fall on thee from us and ruin past redress.
Be reasonable, then: behold, I give thee good advice: Return unto thy wit and stint from this thy frowardness.
By Him who did all things that be from nothingness create, Who with the golden glittering stars the face of heaven did dress,
I'll surely have thee crucified upon a cross of tree, If in the like of this thy speech thou do again transgress!

Then she folded the letter and gave it to the old woman, who repaired to Ardeshir's shop and delivered it to him, saying, 'Here is thine answer, and thou must know that, when she read thy verses, she was exceeding wroth; but I soothed her and spoke her fair, till she consented to write thee an answer.' He took the letter joyfully, but, when he had read it and apprehended its purport, he wept sore, whereat the old woman's heart ached and she said, 'O my son, may God spare thine eyes to weep and thy heart to mourn! What can be more gracious than that she should answer thy letter, under the circumstances?' 'O my mother,' answered he, 'how shall I do for a subtler device? Behold, she writes to me, threatening me with death and crucifixion and forbidding me from writing to her, and by Allah, I see my death to be better than my life; but I beg thee of thy favour to carry her another letter from me.' 'Write,' said she, 'and I warrant I'll bring thee an answer. By Allah, I will venture my life to bring thee to thy desire, though I die to pleasure thee!'

He thanked her and kissing her hands, wrote the following verses:

Dost thou with slaughter threaten me, for that I love thee dear?
Death is decreed and slaughter eke to me were easefulness.
Better death end a lover's woes than that a weary life He live,
rejected and reviled, forbidden from liesse.
Visit a lover, for God's sake, whose every helper fails; For
praiseworthy it is in men to strive to soothe distress.
An thou on aught determined be, up, then, and do thy will; I am
thy worshipper and eke thy bondslave none the less.
What shall I do? I cannot live without thee: otherguise How
should it be, since lovers' hearts constraint doth still oppress?
Have ruth, O lady mine, on one who's sick for love of thee; For
all who love the noble stand excused of wantonness.

He folded the letter and gave it to the old woman, together with two purses, containing two hundred dinars, which she would have refused, but he conjured her to take them. So she took them and said, 'Needs must I bring thee to thy desire, despite thine enemies!' Then she returned to the palace and gave the letter to Heyat en Nufous, who said, 'What is this, O my nurse? Here are we in correspondence [with a man] and thou coming and going! Indeed, I fear lest the matter get wind and we be disgraced.' 'How so, O my lady?' rejoined the old woman. 'Who dare speak such a word?' So she took the letter and read it and smote hand on hand, saying, 'Verily, this is a calamity that is fallen upon us, and I know not whence this young man came to us!' 'O my lady,' said the old woman, 'God on thee, write him another letter; but be round with him this time and say to him, "If thou write me another word after this, I will have thy head struck off."' 'O my nurse,' answered the princess, 'I am assured that the thing will not end after this fashion; it were better to leave it unanswered, and except the dog take warning by my previous threats, I will strike off his head.' Quoth the old woman, 'Then write him a letter and give him to know this.' So Heyat en Nufous called for inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses:

Thou that, heedless, letst the lessons of experience pass by, Thou whose amorous heart and doating doth for my possession sigh,
Hopest thou, O self-deluder, to the heavens to attain? Dost thou think the moon to come at, shining in the distant sky?
With a fire whose flames are quenchless I will surely burn thee up, And one day with swords destroying slain and slaughtered shalt thou lie!
Yea, before thee the extremest of affliction hidden lies, Such as e'en the parting-places shall with white for terror dye.
Wherefore take a friendly warning and from love-liking abstain, Nor to that which is not seemly evermore thyself apply.

Then she folded the letter and gave it to the old woman, who carried it to Ardeshir, leaving the princess sore incensed by reason of this affair. The prince read the letter and bowed his head to the earth, making as if he wrote with his fingers and speaking not. Quoth the old woman, 'O my son, what ails thee that thou sayst nought?' 'O my mother,' answered he, 'what shall I say, seeing that she doth but threaten me and redoubleth in hard-heartedness and aversion?' 'Write her a letter of what thou wilt,' rejoined the nurse. 'I will protect thee, and let not thy heart be cast down, for needs must I bring you together.' He thanked her for her kindness and kissing her hand, wrote the following verses:

A heart that unto him who loves no prayers may mollify Yea, and a lover for his love's possession who doth sigh

And lids that ever ulcered are with burning tears, what time The shrouding blackness of the dark falls on them from the sky!

Be charitable, then; have ruth on one with passion worn, A lover parted from his love, that may not come her nigh.

Drowned in the sea of tears and burnt with longing, knowing not Slumber nor peace, the whole night long unresting doth he lie.

Cut thou not off my heart's desire; for 'tis afflicted sore, Wasted and palpitating aye, for passion like to die.

Then he folded the letter and gave it to the old woman, together with three hundred dinars, saying, 'This is for the washing of thy hands.' She thanked him and kissed his hands, after which she returned to the palace and gave the letter to the princess who read it and throwing it from her hand, sprang to her feet, whilst the vein of anger started out between her eyes. Then she walked, shod as she was with pattens of gold, set with pearls and jewels, till she came to her father's palace, and none dared ask her how it was with her. When she reached the palace, she asked for the King, and the slave-girls said to her, 'O my lady, he is gone forth a-hunting.' So she returned, as she were a raging lioness, and spoke to none for the space of three hours, at the end of which time her wrath subsided and her brow cleared.

When the old woman saw that her anger was past, she went up to her and kissing the earth before her, said to her, 'O my lady, whither went those noble steps?' 'To the palace of the King my father,' answered Heyat en Nufous. 'And could no one do thine errand?' asked the nurse. 'No,' replied the princess; 'for I went to acquaint him with that which hath befallen me with yonder dog of a merchant, that he might lay hands on him and on all the merchants of the bazaar and crucify them over their shops and suffer no foreign merchant to abide in our town.' Quoth the old woman, 'And was this thine only reason for going to thy father?' 'Yes,' answered Heyat en Nufous; 'but I found him absent a-hunting and await his return.' 'I take refuge with God the All-hearing and knowing!' exclaimed the old woman, 'Praised be He! O my lady, thou art the most sensible of women and how couldst thou think of telling the King these wild words, which it behoveth none to publish?' 'And why so?' asked the princess.

'Suppose,' said the nurse, 'thou hadst found the King in his palace and told him all this and he had sent after the merchants and commanded to hang them over their shops, the folk would have seen them hanging and asked the reason and it would have been answered them, "They sought to debauch the King's daughter.' Then would they have spread divers reports concerning thee, some saying, 'She abode with them half a score days, away from her palace, till they had taken their fill of her;" and other some otherguise; for honour, O my lady, is like milk, the least dust spoils it; or like glass, which, if it be cracked, may not be mended. So beware of telling thy father or any other of this matter, lest thy honour be ruined, for it will never profit thee to tell folk aught. Weigh what I say with thy keen wit, and if thou find it not just, do as thou wilt.'

The princess pondered her words and seeing them to be altogether just, said, 'Thou art right, O my nurse: indeed, anger had blinded my judgment.' Quoth the old woman, 'Thy resolve to tell no one is pleasing to God the Most High; but that is not all: we must not let the insolence of yonder vile dog of a merchant pass without rebuke. Write him a letter and say to him, "O vilest of merchants, but that I found my father absent, I had straightway commanded to hang thee and all thy neighbours. But thou shalt gain nothing by this; for I swear to thee by God the Most High that, if thou return to the like of this talk, I will blot out the trace of thee from the face of the earth!" And deal thou roundly with him in words, so shalt thou discourage him and arouse him from his heedlessness.' 'And wilt these words cause him to abstain from his offending?' asked the princess. 'How should he not abstain?' replied the old woman. 'Besides, I will talk with him and tell him what has passed.' So the princess called for inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses:

Thy hopes unto the winning our favours still cleave fast, And still of us thou meekest thy wishes to attain.
It is his self-delusion alone that slays the man And that which he requireth of us shall be his bane.
No man art thou of prowess thou hast no hosts at call; Thou'rt neither king nor viceroy, nor kingdom nor domain
Hast; and were this the fashion of one who is our peer, Hoary for

war and terrors he had returned again.
Yet that wherein thou sinnest once more I'll pardon thee, So thou from this time forward repent thee and refrain.

Then she gave the letter to the old woman, saying, 'O my nurse, do thou admonish the dog, lest we [be forced to] cut of his head and commit sin on his account.' 'By Allah, O my lady,' replied the old woman, 'I will not leave him a side to turn on!' Then she returned to Ardeshir and gave him the letter. He read it and shook his head, saying, 'Verily, we are God's and to Him we return! O my mother, what shall I do? My fortitude fails me and my patience is exhausted.' 'O my son,' answered she, 'take patience: peradventure, after this God shall bring somewhat to pass. Write that which is in thy mind and I will fetch thee an answer, and be of good cheer; for needs must I bring about union between her and thee, so God please.' He blessed her and wrote the following verses:

Since there is none to succour me in love and to assain, Me who of passion's tyranny am all forgone and slain,
Since flames of fire within my heart by day I do endure And through the weary night I seek a resting-place in vain,
How should I leave to hope in thee, O term of all desire, Or rest content with what I dree of passion and its pain?
I beg the Empyrean's Lord to grant me His approof, Since I with longing for the fair am perished, heart and brain,
Yea, and enjoyment speedily to give me. Oh, consent! For with the terrors of desire I'm smitten and o'erta'en.

Then he folded the letter and gave it to the old woman, together with a purse of four hundred dinars. She took the whole and returning to the palace, gave the letter to the princess; but she refused to take it and said, 'What is this?' 'O my lady,' replied the old woman, 'this is the answer to the letter thou wrotest to that dog of a merchant.'' Quoth Heyat en Nufous, 'Didst thou forbid him, as I told thee?' 'Yes,' answered she; 'and this is his answer.' So the princess took the letter and read it; then turned to the old woman and said to her, 'Where is the result thou didst promise me?' 'O my lady,' replied she, 'saith he not in his letter that he repenteth and will not again offend, excusing himself for the past?' 'Not so, by Allah!' replied the princess. 'On the contrary, he increases [his offending].' 'O my lady,' rejoined the nurse, 'write him a letter and thou shalt see what I will do with him.' Quoth Heyat en Nufous, 'There needs no letter nor answer'. 'I must have a letter,' answered the nurse, 'that I may rebuke him roundly and cut off his hopes.' 'Thou canst do that without a letter,' rejoined the princess: but the old woman said, 'I cannot do it without the letter.' So Heyat en Nufous called for inkhorn and paper and wrote these verses:

Again and again I chide thee; but chiding hinders thee ne'er: How many a time with my writing in verse have I bid thee forbear!
Conceal thy passion, I rede thee, nor ever reveal it to men; For, if thou gainsay me, no mercy I'll show thee henceforward nor spare;
Yea, if, in despite of my warning, to this that thou sayst thou return, The herald of death shall go calling for thee and thy death shall declare;
Ere long, on thy body the breezes shall blow, as the hurricane blows, And eke on thy flesh in the desert shall batten the fowls of the air.
Return to fair fashion and comely; 'twill profit thee, trust me; but, if Thou purpose ill-dealing and lewdness, for sure I'll destroy thee, I swear.

When she had made an end of writing this, she cast the scroll angrily from her hand, and the old woman picked it up and carried it to Ardeshir. When he read it, he knew that she relented not to him, but only redoubled in anger against him, and that he would never win to her, and bethought himself to write her an answer, invoking [God's help] against her. So he called for pen and ink and wrote the following verses:

O Lord, by the Five Elders, deliver me, I pray, From her whose love hath wrought me affliction and dismay.
Thou knowest what I suffer for passion's flames and all My sickness for a maiden who saith me ever nay.

She hath on that no pity wherewith I smitten am: How long o’er this my weakness shall she the tyrant play?
I am for her distracted with agonies of death And find nor friend nor helper, O Lord, to be my stay.
How long, when night its pinions o’er all hath spread, shall I On wake, alas! bemoan me with heart and tongue till day?
Full fain would I forget her, but bow can I forget, When for desire my patience is wasted clean away?
Tell me, O bird of parting, is she then fenced and free From fortune’s tribulations, that shifts and changes aye?

Then he folded the letter and gave it, together with a purse of five hundred dinars, to the old woman, and she took it and carried it to the princess, who read it and casting it from her hand, said to her, ‘O wicked old woman, tell me the cause of all that hath befallen me from thee and from thy cunning and thy favouring of him, so that thou hast made me write letter after letter and ceasest not to go and come between him and me and carry messages, till thou hast brought about correspondence and connection between us. Thou sayest still, “I will ensure thee against his mischief and cut off from thee his speech;” but thou speakest thus only to the intent that I may continue to write thee letters and thou to fetch and carry between us, till thou ruin my repute. Out on thee! Ho, eunuchs, seize her!’ So they laid hands on the nurse and Heyat en Nufous commanded them to beat her, and they did so till her whole body streamed with blood and she fainted away, whereupon the princess caused her waiting-women drag her forth by the feet and cast her without the palace and bade one of them stand by her, till she recovered, and say to her, ‘The princess hath taken an oath that thou shalt never re-enter the palace and hath commanded to slay thee without mercy, if thou return hither.’

So, when she came to herself the damsel told her what the princess said and she answered, saying, ‘I hear and obey.’ Then the slave-girls fetched a basket and a porter and caused carry her to her own house and sent after her a physician, bidding him tend her assiduously till she recovered. He did as he was commanded and as soon as she was whole of her wounds, she mounted and rode to the shop of Ardeshir, who was sore troubled with concern for her absence from him and longing for news of her. As soon as he saw her, he sprang up and coming to meet her, saluted her. Then he noticed that she was weak and ailing; so he asked her how she did and she told him all that had passed. When he heard this, he was sore concerned and smote hand upon hand, saying, 'By Allah, O my mother, this that hath befallen thee is grievous to me! But what is the reason of the princess's aversion to men?' 'Thou must know, O my son,' answered the old woman, 'that she has a beautiful garden, than which there is not a goodlier on the face of the earth and it chanced that she lay there one night. In the delight of sleep, she dreamt that she went down into the garden, where she saw a fowler set up his net and strew corn thereabout, after which he withdrew and sat down afar of to await what game should fall into it. Before long, the birds flocked to pick up the corn and a male pigeon fell into the net and struggled in it, whereat the others took fright and fled from him. His mate flew away with the rest, but presently returned and coming up to the net, sought out the mesh in which his foot was entangled and ceased not to peck at it with her bill, till she severed it and released her mate, with whom she flew away. All this while, the fowler sat dozing, and when he awoke, he looked at the net and found it broken. So he mended it and strewed fresh corn, then withdrew to a distance and sat down again to watch it. The birds soon returned and began to pick up the corny and amongst the rest the pair of pigeons. Presently, the female pigeon fell into the net and struggled to win free; whereupon the other birds all flew away, and her mate fled with the rest and did not return to her. Meantime, slumber had again overcome the fowler and he slept a great while; and when he awoke, he saw the she-pigeon caught in the net; so he went up to her and freeing her feet from the meshes, killed her. The princess awoke, troubled, and said, "Thus do men with women; for women have pity on men and venture their lives for them, when they are in trouble; but if the Lord decree against a woman and she fall into calamity, her mate deserts her and rescues her not, and wasted is that which she did with him of kindness. May God curse her who putteth her trust in men, for they ill requite the kind offices that women do them!" And from that day she conceived an aversion to men.'

‘O my mother,’ said the prince, ‘doth she never go out into the street?’ ‘No,’ answered the old woman; ‘but, O my son, I will tell thee somewhat, wherein, God willing, there shall be profit for thee. It is that every year, at the time of the ripening of the fruits, the princess goes forth into her garden, which is of the goodliest of the pleasaunces of the time, and takes her pleasure therein one day, nor lies the night but in her palace. She enters the garden by the private door of the palace which leads thereto, and it wants now but a month to the time of her going forth. So take my advice and go this very day to the keeper of the garden and clap up an acquaintance with him and insinuate thyself into his good graces, for he lets not a soul enter the garden, because of its communication with the princess’s palace. I will let thee know two days beforehand of the day fixed for her coming forth, when do thou repair to the garden, as of thy wont, and make shift to pass the night there. When the princess comes, be thou hidden somewhere and presently show thyself to her. When she sees thee, she will infallibly fall in love with thee; for thou art fair to look upon and love covers all things. So take comfort and be of good cheer, O my son, for needs must I bring about union between her and thee.’

The prince kissed her hand and thanked her and gave her three pieces of Alexandrian silk and three of satin of various colours, and with each piece, linen for shifts and stuff for trouser and a kerchief for the turban and fine white cotton cloth of Baalbek for the linings, so as to make her six complete suits, each handsomer than its fellow. Moreover, he gave her a purse containing six hundred dinars and said to her, ‘This is for the fashion.’ She took the whole and said to him, ‘O my son, wilt thou not acquaint me with thine abiding-place and I also will show thee the way to my lodging?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he and sent a servant with her to note her lodging and show her his own.

Then he rose and bidding his slaves shut the shop, went back to the Vizier, to whom he related all that had passed between him and the old woman. ‘O my son,’ said the Vizier, ‘what wilt thou do, should the princess come out and look upon thee and thou find no favour with her?’ Quoth Ardeshir, ‘There will be nothing left but to pass from words to deeds and venture my life with her; for I will snatch her up from amongst her attendants and set her behind me on a swift horse and make for the uttermost of the desert. If I escape, I shall have gained my desire and if I perish, I shall be at rest from this loathed life.' 'O my son,' rejoined the Vizier, 'dost thou think to do this thing and live? How shall we make our escape, seeing that our country is far distant, and how wilt thou deal thus with a king of the kings of the time, who has under his hand a hundred thousand horse, nor can we be sure but that he will despatch some of his troops to waylay us? Verily, there is no good in this project and no man of sense would attempt it.' 'And how then shall we do, O Vizier of good counsel?' asked Ardeshir. 'For, [except I get her,] I am a dead man without recourse.' 'Wait till to-morrow,' answered the Vizier, 'till we behold this garden and note its ordinance and see what betides us with the keeper.'

So, on the morrow, they took a thousand dinars and repairing to the garden, found it compassed about with high and strong walls, abounding in trees and streams and well furnished with goodly fruits. And indeed its flowers breathed perfume and its birds warbled, as it were a garden of the gardens of Paradise. Within the door sat an old man on a bench of stone, and they saluted him. When he saw them and noted the goodliness of their favour, he rose to his feet and returned their salute, saying, 'O my lords, peradventure you have a wish, which we may have the honour of satisfying?' 'Know, O elder,' replied the Vizier, 'that we are strangers and the heat hath overcome us. Now our lodging is afar off at the other end of the town; wherefore we desire of thy courtesy that thou take these two dinars and buy us somewhat of victual and open us meanwhile the door of this garden and seat us in some shaded place, where there is cold water, that we may cool ourselves there, against thou return with the victual, when we will eat, and thou with us, and go our ways, rested and refreshed.' So saying, he pulled out a couple of dinars and put them into the keeper's hand.

Now the keeper was a man of seventy years of age and had never in all his life possessed so much money. So, when he saw the two dinars in his hand, he was transported for joy and forthwith opening the garden gate to the prince and the Vizier, made them enter and sit down under the shade of a wide-spreading tree, laden with fruit, saying, 'Sit here and go no further into the garden, for it hath a privy door communicating with the palace of the princess Heyat en Nufous.' 'We will not budge hence,' answered they. Then he went out to buy what they had ordered and returned, after awhile, with a porter bearing on his head a roasted lamb and bread. They ate and drank together and talked awhile, till, presently, the Vizier, looking about him right and left, caught sight of a lofty pavilion in the midst of the garden; but it was old and the plaster was peeled from its walls and its coigns were broken down. So he said to the gardener, 'O elder, is this garden thine own or dost thou hire it?' 'O my lord,' answered the old man, 'I am neither owner nor tenant of the garden, only its keeper.' 'And what is thy wage?' asked the Vizier. 'A dinar a month,' replied the old man, and the Vizier said, 'Verily, they wrong thee, especially if thou hast a family.' 'By Allah, O my lord,' answered the gardener, 'I have eight children.' 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!' exclaimed the Vizier. 'Thou makest my heart bleed for thee, my poor fellow! What wouldst thou say of him who should do thee a good turn, on account of this family of thine?' 'O my lord,' answered the old man, 'whatsoever good thou dost shall be treasured up for thee with God the Most High!'

Then said the Vizier, 'O old man, this garden of thine is a goodly place; but the pavilion yonder is old and ruinous. Now I mean to repair it and plaster it anew and paint it handsomely, so that it will be the finest thing in the garden; and when the owner of the garden comes and finds the pavilion reinstated, he will not fail to question thee concerning it. Then do thou say, "O my lord, I set it in repair, for that I saw it in ruins and none could make use of it nor sit in it." If he says, 'Whence hadst thou the money for this?" say, "I spent of my own money upon it, thinking to whiten my face with thee and hoping for thy bounties.' And he will assuredly recompense thee handsomely. To-morrow, I will bring builders and painters and plasterers to repair the pavilion and will give thee what I promised thee.' Then he pulled out a purse of five hundred dinars and gave it to the gardener, saying, 'Provide thy family with this and let them pray for me and my son here.' When the gardener saw the money, he was transported and fell down at the Vizier's feet, kissing them and calling down blessings on him and his son; and when they went away, he said to them, ‘I shall expect you to-morrow: for, by Allah, there must be no parting between us, day or night!’ As they went home, the prince said to the Vizier, ‘What is the meaning of all this?’ and he answered, ‘Thou shalt presently see the issue thereof.’

Next day, the Vizier sent for the syndic of the builders and carried him and his men to the garden, where the gardener rejoiced in their sight. He gave them the price of victual and what was needful to the workmen for the amendment of the pavilion, and they repaired it and plastered it and decorated it. Then said the Vizier to the painters, ‘Harkye, my masters, give ear unto my words and apprehend my wish and my intent. Know that I have a garden like unto this, where I was sleeping one night and saw in a dream a fowler spread his nets and sprinkle corn thereabout. The birds flocked to pick up the grain, and a he-bird fell into the net, whereupon the others took fright and flew away, and amongst the rest his mate: but, after awhile, she returned alone and pecked at the mesh that held his feet, till she set him free and they flew away together. Now the fowler had fallen asleep and when he awoke and found the net empty, he mended it and strewing fresh corn, sat down at a distance, waiting for game to fall into the snare. Presently the birds assembled again to pick up the corn, and amongst the rest the two pigeons. By and by, the female fell into the net and the other birds took fright at her and flew away, and her mate flew with them and did not return; whereupon the fowler came up and taking the she-bird, killed her. Now, when her mate flew away with the others, a hawk seized him and slew him and ate his flesh and drank his blood, and I would have you pourtray me in lively colours the presentment of this my dream, even as I have related it to you, laying the scene in this garden, with its walls and trees and streams. If ye do this that I have set forth to you and it please me, I will give you what shall gladden your hearts, over and above your wage.’

So the painters applied themselves with all diligence to do what he required of them and wrought it out in masterly wise. When they had made an end of the work, they showed it to the Vizier, who, seeing his [pretended] dream set forth in lively fashion, was pleased and thanked them and rewarded them munificently. Presently, the prince came in, after his wont, and entered the pavilion, knowing not what the Vizier had done. So, when he saw the portraiture of the fowler and the birds and so forth and saw the male pigeon limned in the clutches of the hawk, which had slain him and was eating his flesh and drinking his blood, his understanding was confounded and he returned to the Vizier and said to him, 'O Vizier of good counsel, I have seen this day a wonder, which, were it graven with needles on the corners of the eyes, would serve as an admonition to whoso will be admonished?' 'And what is that, O my lord?' asked the Vizier. 'Did I not tell thee,' said the prince, 'of the dream the princess had and how it was the cause of her aversion to men?' 'Yes,' answered the Vizier; and Ardeshir rejoined, saying, 'O Vizier, by Allah, I have seen the whole dream pourtrayed in painting, as I had beheld it with mine eyes; but with a circumstance that was hidden from the princess, so that she saw it not, and it is upon this that I rely for the attainment of my desire.' 'And what is that, O my son?' said the Vizier. Quoth the prince, 'I saw that, when the male bird flew away and left his mate entangled in the net, a hawk pounced on him and slaying him, ate his flesh and drank his blood; and this was the cause of his failure to return and liberate her. Would that the princess had seen the whole of the dream and beheld, to the end, the story thereof!' 'By Allah, O august King,' replied the Vizier, 'this is indeed a rare and wonderful thing!' And the prince ceased not to marvel at the picture and lament that the princess had not seen the whole of the dream, saying in himself, 'Would she had seen it to the end or might see the whole over again, though but in the illusions of sleep!'

Then said the Vizier to him, 'Thou saidst to me, "Why wilt thou repair the pavilion?" And I answered, "Thou shalt presently see the issue thereof." And behold, now thou seest the issue thereof; for it was I did this thing and caused the painters pourtray the princess's dream thus and paint the male bird in the hawk's clutches, so that, when she comes to the pavilion, she will behold her dream depicted and see how the male pigeon was slain and excuse him and turn from her aversion to men.' When the prince heard the Vizier's words, he kissed his hands and thanked him, saying, 'Verily, the like of thee is fit to be Vizier to the most mighty king, and by Allah, if I accomplish my desire and return to my father, rejoicing, I will acquaint him with this, that he may redouble in honouring thee and advance thee in dignity and hearken to thy word.’ The Vizier kissed his hand and they both went to the gardener, to whom said the Vizier, ‘Look at yonder pavilion and see how fine it is!’ And he answered, ‘This is all of thy bounty.’ Then said they, ‘O elder, when the owners of the place question thee concerning the reinstatement of the pavilion, say thou, “It was I did it of my own monies,” to the intent that there may betide thee favour and good fortune.’ Quoth he, ‘I hear and obey.’ And the prince continued to pay him frequent visits.

Meanwhile, when Heyat en Nufous ceased to receive the prince’s letters and messages and the old woman was absent from her, she rejoiced beyond measure and concluded that the young man had returned to his own country. One day, there came to her a covered tray from her father; so she uncovered it and finding therein fine fruits, said to her waiting-women, ‘Is the season of these fruits come?’ ‘Yes,’ answered they, and she said, ‘Would we might make ready to take our pleasure in the garden!’ ‘O my lady,’ answered they, ‘thou sayst well, and by Allah, we also long for the garden!’ And she said, ‘How shall we do, seeing that every year it is my nurse who taketh us to walk in the garden and pointeth out to us the various trees and plants and I have beaten her and forbidden her from me? Indeed, I repent me of the affront I offered her, for that, in any case, she is my nurse and hath over me the right of fosterage. But there is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ When her women heard this, they all rose and kissing the earth before her, said, ‘God on thee, O my lady, do thou pardon her and command her to be brought!’ ‘By Allah,’ answered the princess, ‘I am resolved upon this; but which of you will go to her, for I have prepared her a splendid dress of honour?

With this two damsels came forwards by name Bulbul and Sewad el Ain, who were comely and graceful and the chief of the princess’s women, and said to her, ‘We will go to her, O princess!’ And she said, ‘Do what seemeth good to you.’ So they repaired to the house of the nurse, who received them with open arms and welcomed them. When they had sat awhile with her, they said to her, ‘O nurse, the princess pardons thee and desires to take thee back into favour.’ ‘This may never be,’ answered she, ‘though I drink the cup of perdition! Hast thou forgotten how she put me to shame before those who love me and those who hate me, when my clothes were dyed with my blood and I well-nigh died for excess of beating, and after this they dragged me forth by the feet like a dead dog and cast me without the door? By Allah, I will never return to her nor fill my eyes with her sight!' Quoth they, 'Disappoint not our pains in coming to thee neither send us away, unsuccessful. Where is thy courtesy to us? Think but who it is that cometh to thee: canst thou wish for any higher of standing than we with the princess?' 'God forbid!' answered she. 'I know well that my station is less than yours, were it not that the princess's favour exalted me above all her women, so that, were I wroth with the greatest of them, she had died of fright.' 'All is as it was,' rejoined they, 'and is in nowise changed. Indeed, it is better than before, for the princess humbles herself to thee and seeks a reconciliation without intermediary.' 'By Allah,' said the old woman, 'were it not for your presence [and intercession] with me, I had never returned to her, no, not though she had commanded to put me to death!' They thanked her for this and she rose and dressing herself, accompanied them to the palace.

When the princess saw her, she rose to her feet and the old woman said, 'Allah! Allah! O King's daughter, whose was the fault, thine or mine?' 'The fault was mine,' answered Heyat en Nufous, 'and it is thine to pardon and forgive. By Allah, O my nurse, thy rank is high with me and thou hast over me the right of fosterage; but thou knowest that God (blessed be He!) hath allotted to His creatures four things, disposition and life and fortune and death, nor is it in man's power to avert that which is decreed. Verily, I was beside myself and could not govern my anger; but I repent, O my nurse, of what I did.' With this, the nurse's anger ceased from her and she rose and kissed the ground before the princess, who called for a splendid dress of honour and threw it over her, whereat she rejoiced with an exceeding joy. Things being thus happily accorded, in the presence of the princess's slaves and women, Heyat en Nufous said to the old woman, 'O my nurse, how go the fruits of our garden?' 'O my lady,' replied she, 'I see excellent fruits in the town; but I will enquire of the matter and return thee an answer this very day.'

Then she withdrew, attended with all honour and consideration, and betook herself to Ardeshir, who received her with open arms and rejoiced in her coming, for that he had long expected her. She told him all that had passed between herself and the princess and how the latter was minded to go down into the garden on such a day and said to him, ‘Hast thou done as I bade thee with the keeper of the garden and made him taste of thy bounties?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the prince; ‘and he is become my good friend: my way is his way and he would well I had need of him.’ Then he told her all that had happened and of the paintings that the Vizier had caused to be done in the pavilion: whereat she rejoiced greatly and said, ‘God upon thee, do thou set thy Vizier midmost thy heart, for this that he hath done points to the keenness of his wit and he hath helped thee to the attaining thy desire. So rise forthright, O my son, and take a bath and don thy richest clothes; then go to the gardener and make shift to pass the night in the garden, for none may win to enter it, [whilst the princess is there], though he should give the earth full of gold. When thou hast entered, hide thyself where none may see thee and stir not till thou hear me say, ‘O Thou whose bounties are hidden, vouchsafe us assurance from that we fear!’ Then come forth and walk among the trees and show thy beauty and grace, which put the moons to shame, to the intent that Heyat en Nufous may see thee and that her heart and soul may be filled with love of thee; so shalt thou attain to thy desire and thy grief be done away.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered the prince and gave her a purse of a thousand dinars, which she took and went away.

As for Ardeshir, he went straight to the bath and washed; after which he arrayed himself in the richest of clothes of the apparel of the kings of the Chosroes and girt his middle with a sash wherein were assembled all manner precious stones and donned a turban laced with red gold and embroidered with pearls and jewels. His cheeks shone rosy-red and his lips were scarlet; his eyelids wantoned, gazelle-wise, and he swayed in his gait like a drunken man; beauty and grace covered him, as with a garment, and his flexile shape shamed the swaying branches. Then he put in his pocket a purse containing a thousand dinars and repairing to the garden, knocked at the door. The gardener opened to him and received him with joy and honour; then, observing that his face was overcast, he asked him how he did. ‘Know, O elder,’ answered Ardeshir, ‘that I am dear to my father and he never laid his hand on me till this day, when words arose between us and he reviled me and smote me on the face and beat me with the staff and drove me away. Now I have no friend to turn to and I fear the perfidy of fortune, for thou knowest that a father’s anger is no light thing. Wherefore I come to thee, O uncle, seeing that thou art known to my father, and desire of thy favour that thou suffer me abide, till the end of the day, in the garden or pass the night there, till God make accord between my father and myself.’

When the old man heard this, he was sore concerned and said, ‘O my lord, give me leave to go to thy father and be the means of reconciliation between him and thee.’ ‘O uncle,’ replied Ardeshir, ‘thou must know that my father is of a very impatient nature, and if thou proffer him reconciliation in his heat, he will make thee no answer; but when a day or two have passed, his humour will soften. Then go thou in to him and thereupon he will relent.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ said the gardener. ‘But, O my lord, do thou go with me to my house, where thou shalt pass the night with my children and family and none shall reproach this to us.’ ‘O uncle,’ replied Ardeshir, ‘I must be alone, when I am angry.’ Quoth the old man, ‘It were grievous to me that thou shouldst lie alone in the garden, when I have a house.’ But Ardeshir said, ‘O uncle, I have a purpose in this, that the trouble of my mind may be dispelled from me and I know that in this lies the means of regaining his favour and softening his heart to me.’ ‘If it must be so,’ rejoined the gardener, ‘I will fetch thee a carpet to sleep on and a coverlet to cover thyself withal.’ And the prince said, ‘There is no harm in that, O uncle.’ So the keeper opened the garden to him and brought him the carpet and coverlet, knowing not that the princess was minded to visit the garden.

Meanwhile, the nurse returned to the princess and told her that the fruits were ripe on the trees of the garden; whereupon she said, ‘O my nurse, go down with me to- morrow into the garden, that we may walk about in it and take our pleasure, so God please; and send meanwhile to the gardener, to let him know our purpose.’ So she sent to the gardener to tell him that the princess would visit the garden on the morrow, bidding him leave neither tree- tenders nor water-carriers therein nor let one of all the creatures of God enter the place. So when word came to him, he set his trenches and channels in order and going to Ardeshir, said to him, ‘O my lord, the place is thy place and I live only in thy favours, besides that my tongue is under thy feet. But do thou excuse me: I must tell thee that the princess Heyat en Nufous, the mistress of this garden, hath a mind to visit it to-morrow at the first of the day and hath bidden me leave none therein to see her. So I would have thee of thy favour go forth of the garden this day, for the princess will only abide in it till the time of afternoon prayer and after it shall be at thy service for months and years.’ ‘O elder,’ said Ardeshir, ‘belike we have caused thee some inconvenience?’ And the other answered, saying, ‘By Allah, O my lord, there hath betided me from thee nothing but honour!’ ‘If it be so,’ rejoined the prince, ‘nothing but all good shall befall thee through me; for I will hide in the garden and none shall see me, till the princess has gone back to her palace.’ ‘O my lord,’ said the gardener, ‘if she espy the shadow of a human being in the garden, she will strike off my head.’ ‘Have no fear,’ replied the prince; ‘I will let none see me. But doubtless to-day thou lackest of spending money for thy family.’ Then he put his hand to his purse and pulled out five hundred dinars, which he gave to him, saying, ‘Take this gold and spend it on thy family, that thy heart may be at ease concerning them.’ When the gardener saw the gold, his life seemed a light matter to him and he suffered the prince to abide where he was, charging him straitly not to show himself in the garden.

Meanwhile, when the eunuchs went in to the princess at break of day, she bade open the private door leading into the garden and donned a royal robe, embroidered with pearls and jewels, over a shift of fine silk, embroidered with rubies. Under the whole was that which the tongue refuses to describe, whereat the mind was confounded and for love whereof the coward would become brave. On her head she set a crown of red gold, inlaid with pearls and diamonds, and put her feet in slippers of cloth of gold, embroidered with fine pearls and adorned with all manner precious stones. Then she put her hand on the old woman’s shoulder and commanded to go forth by the privy door; but the nurse looked out and seeing the garden full of eunuchs and girls, walking about, eating the fruits and troubling the streams and taking their ease of sport and pleasance therein, said to the princess, ‘O my lady, is this a garden or a madhouse?’ Quoth the princess, ‘What meaneth thy speech, O nurse?’ And the old woman answered, saying, ‘Verily, the garden is full of slave-girls and eunuchs, near five hundred girls and the like number of eunuchs, eating of the fruits and troubling the streams and scaring the birds and hindering [us] from taking [our] ease and sporting and laughing and what not else; and thou hast no need of them. Wert thou going forth of thy palace into the highway, this would be fitting, as an honour and protection to thee; but thou goest forth of the privy door into the garden, where none of the creatures of God the Most High may look on thee.’ ‘By Allah, O nurse,’ rejoined the princess, ‘thou sayst sooth! But how shall we do?’ And the old woman said, ‘Send them all away and keep only two of the slave-girls, that we may make merry with them.’ So she dismissed them all, with the exception of two of her women, who were most in favour with her.

Then, when the old woman saw that her heart was light and that the season was pleasant to her, she said to her, ‘Now we can enjoy ourselves aright: come, let us take our pleasance in the garden.’ So the princess put her hand on her shoulder and went out by the private door. The two waiting-women walked in front and she followed them, laughing at them and swaying gracefully to and fro in her robes; whilst the nurse forewent her, showing her the trees and feeding her with fruits; and so they fared on from place to place, till they came to the pavilion, which when the princess beheld and saw that it had been newly repaired, she said to the old woman, ‘O my nurse, seest thou yonder pavilion? It has been repaired and its walls newly plastered.’ ‘By Allah, O my lady,’ answered she, ‘I heard say that the keeper of the garden had taken stuffs of a company of merchants and sold them and bought bricks and lime and stones and plaster and so forth with the price; so I asked him what he had done with all this, and he said, “I have put the ruined pavilion in repair, and when the merchants sought their due of me, I said to them, ‘Wait till the princess visits the garden and sees the repairs and they please her: then will I take of her what she is pleased to bestow on me, and pay you your due.’” Quoth I, “What moved thee to do this thing?”

And he said, “I saw the pavilion in ruins, the coigns thrown down and the plaster stripped from the walls, and none had the grace to repair it; so I borrowed the money on my own account and reinstated the place; and I trust in the princess to deal with me as befits her dignity.” Quoth I, “The princess is all goodness and generosity and will no doubt requite thee.” And he did all this but in hopes of thy bounty.’ ‘By Allah,’ replied the princess, ‘he hath dealt nobly in rebuilding it and hath done the deed of a man of worth! Call me my purse-keeper.’ The old woman accordingly fetched the purse-keeper, and the princess bade the latter give the gardener two thousand dinars; whereupon the nurse sent a messenger to him, bidding him to the princess’s presence.

When the gardener received the summons, he trembled in every limb and said in himself ‘Doubtless, the princess has seen the young man, and this day will be the most unlucky of days for me.’ So he went home and told his wife and children what had happened and gave them his last injunctions, and they wept for him. Then he took leave of them and returning to the garden, presented himself before the princess, with a face the colour of turmeric and scarce able to stand upright. The old woman remarked his plight and hastened to forestall him, saying, ‘O old man, kiss the earth in gratitude to God the Most High and be instant in prayer to Him for the princess; for I told her what thou didst in the matter of repairing the ruined pavilion, and she rejoiceth in this and bestoweth on thee two thousand dinars in requital of thy pains; so take them from the purse-keeper and kiss the earth before the princess and bless her and go thy way.’ So he took the money and kissed the earth before Heyat en Nufous, calling down blessings on her. Then he returned to his house, and his family rejoiced in him and blessed him who had been the [prime] cause of all this.

As soon as he was gone, the old woman said to the princess, ‘O my lady, this is indeed become a fine place! Never saw I a purer white than its plastering nor goodlier than its painting! I wonder if he have repaired the inside also: else hath he made the outside white and [left] the inside black. Come, let us enter and see.’ So they entered and found the interior painted and gilded in the goodliest fashion. The princess looked right and left, till she came to the upper end of the estrade, when she fixed her eyes upon the wall and gazed attentively thereat; whereupon the old woman knew that she had lighted on the presentment of her dream and took the two waiting-women with her, that they might not divert her attention. When the princess had made an end of examining the painting, she turned to the old woman, wondering and beating hand on hand, and said to her, ‘O my nurse, come and see a wonderful thing. Were it graven with needles on the corners of the eyes, it would serve as an admonition to him who will be admonished.’ ‘And what is that, O my lady?’ asked she. ‘Go, look at the upper end of the estrade,’ replied the princess, ‘and tell me what thou seest there.’

So she went up and came down, wondering, and said, ‘By Allah, O my lady, here is depicted the garden and the fowler and his net and the birds and all thou sawest in thy dream; and verily, nothing but urgent necessity withheld the male pigeon from returning to free his mate; for I see him in the talons of a hawk, which has slaughtered him and is drinking his blood and rending his flesh and eating it; and this, O my lady, accounts for his tarrying to return and rescue her from the net. But the wonder is how thy dream came to be thus depicted, for, wert thou minded to set it forth in portraiture, thou hadst not availed thereto. By Allah, this is a wonder that should be recorded in history! Surely, O my lady, the angels, to whom are committed the care of the sons of Adam, knew that the male pigeon was wronged of us, whenas we blamed him for deserting his mate; so they embraced his cause and made manifest his excuse.’ ‘O my nurse,’ said the princess, ‘verily, fate and fore-ordained fortune had course against this bird, and we wronged him.’ ‘O my lady,’ rejoined the nurse, ‘adversaries shall meet before God the Most High: but, O my lady, verily, the truth hath been made manifest and the male pigeon’s excuse certified to us; for, except the hawk had seized him and killed him, he had not held aloof from his mate, but had returned to her and set her free; but against death there is no recourse, nor, O my lady, is there aught in the world more tenderly solicitous than the male for the female, among all creatures that God the Most High hath created, and especially is it thus with man; for he starves himself to feed his wife, strips himself to clothe her, angers his family to please her and disobeys and denies his parents to give to her. She knoweth his secrets and concealeth them and cannot endure from him an hour. If he be absent from her one night, her eyes sleep not nor is there a dearer to her than he. She tenders him more than her parents and they lie down to sleep in each other's arms, with his hand under her neck and her hand under his neck, even as saith the poet in the following verses:

I made my wrist her pillow, yea, and lay with her the night,
Saying to it, "Be long," what while the full moon glittered white.
Ah me, that night! God never did the like thereof create; Its first
was sweetness and its last was bitter to my spright.

Then he kisses her and she kisses him; and I have heard that a certain king, when his wife fell sick and died, buried himself alive with her, submitting of his own accord to death, for the love of her and the strait companionship that was between them. Moreover, a certain king sickened and died, and when they were about to bury him, his wife said to her people, "Let me bury myself alive with him: else will I slay myself and my blood will be on your heads." So, when they saw she would not be turned from this thing, they left her, and she cast herself into the grave with her dead husband, of the greatness of her love and tenderness over him.' And she ceased not to ply the princess with anecdotes of [mutual fidelity] between men and women, till there ceased that which was in her heart of aversion to the male sex; and when she saw that she had succeeded in renewing in her [the natural] inclination [of women] to men, she said to her, 'It is time to go and walk in the garden.' So they went out and walked among the trees.

Presently the prince chanced to turn and his eyes fell on Heyat en Nufous; and when he saw the justness of her shape and her rosy cheeks and the blackness of her eyes and her exceeding grace and loveliness and her excelling beauty and elegance and her abounding perfection, his reason was confounded and he could not take his eyes off her. His judgement failed him for passion and love overpassed all limits in him; his entrails were occupied with her service and his heart was aflame with the fire of love- longing, so that he swooned away and fell to the ground senseless. When he came to himself, she had passed from his sight and was hidden from him among the trees; so he sighed from his inmost heart and repeated the following verses:

Whenas mine eyes her charms beheld, do wonder-excellent, With passion and with love-longing my heart in twain was rent
And I became forthright o'erthrown, cast down upon the ground, Nor knows the princess that which is with me of languishment.
She turned and ravished in the act the slave of passion's heart: By God, have pity on my pain; have pity and relent!
O Lord, make access near to me, vouchsafe me her I love, Ere to the graveyard I descend and all my life is spent.
I'll kiss her half a score of times and ten, and other ten Be on his wasted cheek who's pined for longing and lament!

The old woman ceased not to carry the princess about the garden, till she brought her to the place where the prince lay in wait, when she said, 'O thou whose bounties are hidden, vouchsafe us assurance from that we fear!' The prince, hearing the signal, left his hiding-place and walked among the trees, swaying to and fro with a proud and graceful gait and a shape that shamed the branches. His brow was pearled with sweat and his cheeks red as the afterglow, extolled be the perfection of God the Supreme in that He hath created! When the princess caught sight of him, she gazed a long while on him and saw his beauty and grace and symmetry and his eyes that wantoned, gazelle- wise, and his shape that outvied the branches of the myrobalan; wherefore her reason was confounded and her soul captivated and her heart transfixed with the arrows of his glances. Then she said to the old woman, 'O my nurse, whence came yonder handsome youth?' 'Where is he, O my lady?' enquired the nurse. 'There he is,' answered Heyat en Nufous; 'close at hand, among the trees.' The old woman turned right and left, as if she knew not of his presence, and said, 'Who can have taught this youth the way into the garden?' Quoth Heyat en Nufous, 'Who shall give us news of him? Glory be to Him who created men! Dost thou know him, O my nurse?' 'O my lady,' answered the old woman, 'he is the young merchant who wrote to thee by me.' Quoth the princess (and indeed she was drowned in the sea of her desire and the fire of her passion and love-longing), ‘O my nurse, how goodly is this youth! Indeed he is fair of favour. Methinks, there is not on the face of the earth a goodlier than he!’

When the old woman was assured that the love of him had gotten possession of the princess, she said to her, ‘O my lady, did I not tell thee that he was a comely youth of a bright visage?’ ‘O my nurse,’ replied Heyat en Nufous, ‘kings’ daughters know not the ways of the world nor the manners of those that be therein, for that they company with none, neither give nor take. But how shall I do to present myself to him, and what shall I say to him and what will he say to me?’ ‘What device is left me?’ said the old woman. ‘Indeed, we were confounded in this matter by thy behaviour.’ And the princess said, ‘Know, O my nurse, that if any ever died of passion, I shall do so, and behold, I look for nothing but instant death, by reason of the fire of my love-longing.’ When the old woman heard her words and saw the transport of her passion for him, she answered, saying, ‘O my lady, as for his coming to thee, there is no way thereto; and indeed thou art excused from going to him, because of thy tender age; but follow me and I will accost him. So shalt thou not be put to shame, and in the twinkling of an eye there shall betide familiarity between you.’ ‘Go before me,’ said the princess; ‘for the decree of God may not be averted.’

So they went up to the place where Ardeshir sat, as he were the moon at its full, and the old woman said to him, ‘See, O youth, who is present before thee! It is the King’s daughter of the age, Heyat en Nufous: bethink thee of her rank and the honour she doth thee in coming to thee and rise and stand before her, out of respect for her.’ The prince sprang to his feet forthright and his eyes met hers, whereupon they both became as they were drunken without wine. Then the love of him and desire redoubled upon the princess and she opened her arms and he his, and they embraced; but love-longing and passion overcame them and they swooned away and lay a great while without sense. The old woman, fearing scandal, carried them b0th into the pavilion and sitting down at the door, said to the two waiting-women, ‘Seize the occasion to take your pleasure in the gardens for the princess sleeps.’ So they returned to their diversion.

Presently, the lovers recovered from their swoon and found themselves in the pavilion, whereupon quoth the prince, ‘God on thee, O princess of fair ones, is this a dream or an illusion of sleep?’ Then they embraced and intoxicated themselves without wine, complaining each to each of the anguish of passion; and the prince recited the following verses:

The sun of the day shines out from her forehead’s lambent snow
And eke from her cheeks flames forth the red of the afterglow;
And whenas athwart the veil her charms to the sight appear, The star of the skyline sets for shame and away doth go.
If lightnings flash from her teeth, in the break of her smiling lips, The veils of the dark are drawn and day through the dusk doth show
And when with her graceful shape she sways in her swimming gait, The cassia-boughs in the leaf are jealous of her, I trow.
Her sight is enough for me; I care for no other bliss; To God I commend her, the Lord of the heavens and the earth below!
The full moon borrows a part of her beauties, and eke the sun To imitate her were fain, but needs must the strife forego.
For whence should it get her shape and the flexile grace of her gait, And whence should the moon the charms of her mind and her body know?
So shall reproach it to me, if I’m all in her love absorbed, ‘Twixt discord in her and accord divided, ‘twixt gladness and woe?
’Tis she who hath captived my heart with the amorous grace of her port; And what shall the true lover’s heart protect from so charming a foe?

When he had made an end of these verses, the princess strained him to her bosom and kissed him on the mouth and between the eyes; whereupon life returned to him and he fell to complaining to her of that which he suffered for stress of love and tyranny of passion and excess of transport and distraction and all he had endured for the hardness of her heart. She kissed his hands and feet and unveiled her head, whereupon the darkness gathered and the full moons arose and shone therein. Then said she to him, ‘O my beloved and the term of my wishes, would the day of estrangement had never been and God grant it may never return between us!’ And they embraced and wept together, whilst she recited the following verses:

Thou that the full moon sham'st and eke the sun of day, Thou hast unto thy face committed me to slay;
So with a glance's sword, that shore the heart, on me It fell; and where shall one from glances flee away?
Thine eyebrows are a bow, whence at my heart a hunched Arrows of flaming fire and passion and dismay.
The gathering of thy cheeks is paradise to me: How shall my heart endure from gathering them, I pray?
Thy graceful-swaying shape is as a flowered branch, From which are gathered fruits, the burden of the spray.
In love of thee, indeed, I've put away restraint: Thou drawest me perforce and mak'st me waken aye.
God aid thee with the light of splendour and contract The distance and make near the visitation-day!
Have pity on a heart that's seared for love of thee And entrails that appeal to thee to be their stay!

Then passion overcame her and she was distraught for love and wept copious tears, streaming down like rain. This inflamed the prince's heart and he in turn became troubled and distracted for love of her. So he kissed her hands and wept sore, and they ceased not from tender reproaches and converse and reciting verses, nor was there aught between them other than this, until the call to afternoon prayer, when they bethought them of parting and she said to him, 'O light of mine eyes and kernel of my heart, the time of parting is come: when shall we meet again?' 'By Allah,' replied he (and indeed her words pierced him as with arrows), 'I love not the mention of parting!' Then she went forth of the pavilion, and he turned and saw her sighing sighs that would melt the rock and weeping tears like rain; whereupon he for love was sunken in the sea of desolations and recited the following verses:

Distraction, O wish of the heart, are anew For love of thee irketh me: how shall I do?
By thy face, like the dawn when it breaks through the dark, And

thy locks, that resemble the night in their hue,
And thy shape like the branch, when it bends in the breeze And the North wind shakes from it the pearls of the dew,
And the glance of thine eyes like the antelope's gaze, That the eyes of the noble and generous ensue,
And thy waist worn to nought by the weight of thy hips, These so heavy, so slender the other to view;
By the wine of thy spittle, the sweetest of drink, Pure musk and fresh water, to thee do I sue;
O gazelle of the tribe, let thine image in sleep Ease my soul of the grief that enforceth it rue!

When she heard his verses in praise of her, she turned back and embracing him, with a heart on fire for the anguish of parting, fire which nought might assuage save kisses and embraces, said, 'Quoth the byword, Patience behoves a lover and not the lack of it. And I will surely contrive a means for our reunion.' Then she bade him adieu and went away, knowing not where she set her feet, for stress of love; nor did she stay her steps till she found herself in her own chamber. When she was gone, passion and love-longing redoubled upon the prince and the delight of sleep was forbidden to him, whilst she in her turn tasted not food and her patience failed and her heart sickened for desire.

As soon as it was day, she sent for her nurse, who came and found her in sorry plight. Quoth the princess, 'Question me not of my case; for all I suffer is due to thee. Where is the beloved of my heart?' 'O my lady,' answered the old woman, 'when did he leave thee? Hath he been absent from thee more than this night?' 'Can I endure from him an hour?' rejoined Heyat en Nufous. 'Come, find some means to bring us together speedily, for my soul is like to depart [my body].' 'O my lady,' said the old woman, 'have patience till I contrive thee some subtle device, whereof none shall be ware.' 'By the Great God,' cried the princess, 'except thou bring him to me this very day, I will tell the King that thou hast corrupted me, and he will cut of thy head!' Quoth the nurse, 'I conjure thee, by Allah, have patience with me, for this is a dangerous matter!' And she humbled herself to her, till she granted her three days' delay, saying, 'O my nurse, the three days will be as three years to me; and if the fourth day pass and thou bring him not, I will go about to slay thee.'

The old woman left her and returned to her lodging, where she abode till the morning of the fourth day, when she summoned the tirewomen of the town and sought of them fine paint and dyes for the painting and adorning of a virgin girl, and they brought her cosmetics of the best. Then she sent for the prince and bringing forth of her chest a suit of woman's apparel, worth five thousand dinars, and a kerchief fringed with all manner jewels, said to him 'O my son, hast thou a mind to foregather with Heyat en Nufous?' 'Yes,' answered he. So she took a pair of tweezers and pulled out the hairs of his face and anointed his eyes with kohl. Then she stripped him and painted him with henna from his nails to his shoulders and from his insteps to his thighs and tattooed him about the body, till he was like red roses on tables of alabaster. After a little, she washed him and dried him and bringing out a shift and a pair of trousers, made him put them on. Then she clad him in the dress aforesaid and binding the kerchief about his head, veiled him and taught him how to walk, saying, 'Advance thy left and draw back thy right.' He did as she bade him and walked before her, as he were a houri escaped from Paradise. Then said she to him, 'Fortify thy heart, for we are going to the King's palace, where there will without fail be guards and eunuchs at the gate; and if thou take fright at them and show hesitation or fear, they will suspect thee and examine thee, and we shall both lose our lives: wherefore an thou feel thyself unable to do this, tell me.' 'This thing hath no terrors for me,' answered he; 'so take courage and be of good cheer.'

Then she went out and he followed her, till they came to the gate of the palace which was full of eunuchs. She turned and looked at him, to see if he were troubled or no, and finding him unchanged, went on. The chief eunuch looked at the nurse and knew her, but seeing a damsel following her, whose charms confounded the reason, he said in himself, 'As for the old woman, she is the nurse; but who is the girl with her? There is none in our land resembleth her in favour or approacheth her in beauty save the princess Heyat en Nufous, who is cloistered and never goeth out. Would I knew how she came into the street and whether or no it was by leave of the

King!' Then he rose to discover the matter and nigh thirty eunuchs followed him; which when the old woman saw, her reason fled for fear and she said, 'There is no power and no virtue, save in God! Verily, we are God's and to Him we return! Without doubt we are dead folk this time.' When the chief eunuch heard her say this, fear gat hold upon him, by reason of that which he knew of the princess's violence and that her father was ruled by her, and he said in himself, 'Belike the King hath commanded the nurse to carry his daughter forth upon some occasion of hers, whereof she would have none know; and if I stop her, she will be wroth with me and will say, "This fellow stopped me, that he might pry into my affairs.' So she will go about to kill me, and I have no call to meddle in this matter.'

So saying, he turned back, and the thirty eunuchs with him, and drove the people from the door of the palace; whereupon the nurse entered and saluted the eunuchs with her head, whilst they stood to do her honour and returned her salutation. The prince followed her from door to door, and [God] the Protector protected them, so that they passed all the guards, till they came to the seventh door, which was that of the great pavilion, wherein was the King's throne, and communicated with the apartments of his women and the saloons of the harem, as well as with his daughter's palace. Here the old woman halted and said, 'Glory be to God, O my son, who hath brought us thus far in safety! We cannot foregather with the princess except by night; for night covers the fearful.' 'True,' answered he; 'but what is to be done?' Quoth she, 'Behind the door is a dark and deep cistern, with a cover thereto, wherein thou must hide thyself till nightfall.' So he entered the cistern, and she went away and left him there till ended day, when she returned and carried him into the palace, till they came to the door of Heyat en Nufous's apartment. The old woman knocked at the door and a little maid came out and said, 'Who is there?' 'It is I,' answered the nurse; whereupon the maid returned and told the princess, who said, 'Let her enter, with her companion.'

So they entered and found that the princess had made ready the sitting-chamber and ranged the lamps and lighted candles of wax in chandeliers of gold and silver and spread the divans and estrades with carpets and cushions. Moreover, she had set on food and fruits and confections and perfumed the place with musk and aloes-wood and ambergris. She was seated among the candles and the lamps, and the light of her face outshone the lustre of them all. When she saw the old woman, she said to her, ‘O nurse, where is the beloved of my heart?’ ‘O my lady,’ answered she, ‘I cannot find him ; but I have brought thee his own sister; and here she is.’ ‘Art thou mad?’ exclaimed the princess. ‘What need have I of his sister? If a man’s head irk him, doth he bind up his hand?’ ‘No, by Allah, O my lady!’ replied the old woman. ‘But look on her, and if she please thee, let her be with thee.’ So saying, she uncovered the prince’s face, whereupon Heyat en Nufous knew him and running to him) pressed him to her bosom, and he pressed her to his. Then they both fell down in a swoon and lay without sense a long while. The old woman sprinkled rose-water upon them, till they came to themselves, when she kissed him on the mouth more than a thousand times and recited these verses:

My heart’s belov’d in the darkness visited me; I rose in honour of him, till down sat he.
“O thou my only desire,” quoth I, “by night Thou dost me visit nor fearest the guards should see!”
“I feared,” he answered, “but love hath captive ta’en My soul and spirit and will not set me free.”
We clipped with kisses and clung together awhile; For here was safety; nor guards nor spies feared we;
Then rose, undoubting, and shook out skirts, wherein Nowise uncleanness nor aught impure might be.

Quoth she, ‘Is it indeed true that I see thee in my abode and that thou art my house-mate and my cup- companion?’ Then passion redoubled on her and love was heavy upon her, so that her reason well-nigh fled for joy and she recited the following verses:

With all my soul I’ll ransom him who came to me by night In darkness, whilst I waited for the tryst between us plight;
And nought aroused me but his voice lamenting soft and low;
And I, “Fair welcome, O my love, to joyance and delight!”

A thousand times his cheek I kissed and yet a thousand times I clipped him close in my embrace, where he was veiled from sight.

Quoth I, “At last have I attained to that I wearied for; So to praise God for this His grace is only due and right.”

And then the goodliest of nights we passed, even as we would, Until the curtains of the dark were drawn by morning light.

When it was day, she made him enter a place of concealment in her apartment and he abode there till night- fall, when she brought him out and they sat carousing. Presently, he said to her, “I wish to return to my own country and tell my father what has passed between us, that he may send his Vizier to demand thee in marriage of thy father.’ ‘O my love,’ answered she, ‘I fear, if thou return to thy country and kingdom, thou wilt be distracted from me and forget the love of me or that thy father will not fall in with thy wishes, and I shall die. Meseems the better counsel were that thou abide with me and in my
hand, I looking on thy face and thou on mine, till I devise some plan, whereby we may escape together some night and flee to thy country; for my hopes are cut off from my people and I despair of them.’ ‘I hear and obey’ replied he, and they fell again to their carousal.

He abode with her thus for some time, till, one night, the wine was pleasant to them and they lay not down to sleep till break of day. Now it chanced that one of the Kings sent her father a present, and amongst other things, a necklace of unique jewels, nine-and-twenty in number, to whose price a king’s treasures might not suffice. Quoth Abdulcadir, ‘This beseemeth none but my daughter Heyat en Nufous,’ and calling an eunuch whose jaw-teeth the princess had knocked out, bade him carry the necklace to her and say to her, ‘One of the kings hath sent thy father this as a presents and its price may not be paid with money; put it on thy neck.’ The slave took the necklace, saying in himself, ‘God make it the last thing she shall put on in this world, for that she deprived me of the use of my teeth!’ and repairing to the princess’s apartment found the door locked and the old woman asleep before it. He shook her, and she awoke in affright and said, ‘What dost thou want?’ Quoth he, ‘The King hath sent me on an errand to his daughter.’ ‘The key is not here,’ answered the old woman. ‘Go away, whilst I fetch it.’ But he said, ‘I cannot go back to the King, without having done his commandment.’ So she went away, as if to fetch the key; but fear overtook her and she sought safety in flight.

The eunuch awaited her awhile; then, finding she did not return, he feared that the King would be angry at his delay; so he shook the door, whereupon the bolt gave way and the door opened. He entered and passed on, till he came to the seventh door, [which was that of the princess’s chamber], and going in, found the place splendidly furnished and saw candles and flagons there. At this he marvelled and going up to the bed, which was enclosed with a curtain of silk, embroidered with a network of jewels, drew back the curtain and saw the princess asleep in the arms of a young man handsomer than herself; whereat he magnified God the Most High, who had created him of vile water, and said, ‘This is a goodly fashion for one who hath an aversion to men! How came she by this fellow? Methinks it was on his account that she knocked out my teeth!’ Then he dropped the curtain and made for the door; but the princess awoke in affright and seeing the eunuch, whose name was Kafour, called to him. He made her no answer: so she came down from the bed and catching hold of his skirt, laid it on her head and kissed his feet, saying, ‘Cover what God covers!’ Quoth he, ‘May Allah not cover thee nor him who would cover thee! Thou didst knock out my teeth and saidst to me, “Let none make mention to me of men and their ways!”’ So saying, he disengaged himself from her grasp and running out, locked the door on them and set another eunuch to guard it.

Then he went in to the King, who said to him, ‘Hast thou given the necklace to Heyat en Nufous?’ ‘By Allah,’ replied the eunuch, ‘she deserves more than that!’ And the King said, ‘What hath happened? Tell me quickly.’ ‘I will not tell thee, save in private,’ answered Kafour; but the King rejoined, saying, ‘Tell me at once and in public.’ ‘Then grant me immunity,’ said the eunuch. So the King threw him the handkerchief of immunity and he said, ‘O King, I went in to the princess Heyat en Nufous and found her asleep in a carpeted chamber, in the arms of a young man. So I locked the door on them and came back to thee.’ When the King heard this, he started up and taking a sword in his hand, cried out to the chief of the eunuchs, saying, ‘Take thy lads and go the princess’s chamber and bring me her and him who if with her, as they lie on the bed, coverings and all.’ So the chief eunuch and his men repaired to the princess’s apartment, where he found her and the prince standing up, dissolved in tears, and said to them, ‘Lie down on the bed, as you were.’ The princess feared for her lover and said to him, ‘This is no time for resistance.’ So they both lay down and the eunuchs covered them up and carried them into the King’s presence.

Abdulcadir pulled off the coverings and the princess sprang to her feet; whereupon he looked at her and would have struck off her head; but the prince threw himself between them, saying, ‘The fault was mine, not hers: kill me before her.’ The King made at him, to kill him, but Heyat en Nufous threw herself on her father and said, ‘Kill me and not him; for he is the son of a great King, lord of all the land in its length and breadth.’ When the King heard this, he turned to his chief Vizier, who was a compend of all that is evil, and said to him, ‘What sayst thou of this matter, O Vizier?’ Quoth the Vizier, ‘What I say is that all who find themselves in such case as this have need of lying, and there is nothing for it but to cut off both their heads, after torturing them with all manner of tortures.’ With this the King called the swordsman of his vengeance, who came with his lads, and said to him, ‘Take this gallows-bird and strike off his head and after do the like with this harlot and burn their bodies, and consult me not again about them.’ So the headsman put his hand to her back, to take her; but the King cried out at him and cast at him somewhat he had in his hand, which had well-nigh killed him, saying, ‘O dog, wilt thou show clemency to those with whom I am wroth? Put thy hand to her hair and drag her along by it, so that she may fall on her face.’ So he haled the two lovers by their hair to the place of blood, where he tore off a piece of his skirt and bound the prince’s eyes therewith, putting the princess last, in the hope that some one would intercede for her. Then he swung his sword three times, whilst all the troops wept and prayed God to send them deliverance and raised his hand to cut off Ardeshir’s head, when, behold, there arose a cloud of dust, that spread till it covered the landscape.

When King Abdulcadir saw this, he said, ‘O folk, what is the meaning of yonder dust that obscures the sight?’ The Grand Vizier went out to reconnoitre and found behind the cloud men like locusts, beyond count or limit, tilling the hills and plains and valleys. So he returned and told the King, who said to him, ‘Go down and learn who they are and who is their commander and salute him for me and ask him the reason of his coming. If he come in quest of aught we will aid him to his desire, and if he have a feud with one of the kings, we will ride with him; or, if he desire a gift, we will handsel him; for this is indeed a mighty host and a vast power and we fear for our land from its mischief.’ Accordingly, the Vizier went forth and walked among the tents and guards and troopers and fared on from the first of the day till near sundown, when he came to tents studded with stars and guards with gilded swords. Passing these, he made his way, through Amirs and Viziers and captains and chamberlains, to the pavilion of the Sultan and found him a mighty King. When the King’s officers saw him, they cried out to him, saying, ‘Kiss the earth! Kiss the earth!’ He did so and would have risen, but they cried out at him a second and a third time. So he kissed the earth again and again and raised his head and would have stood up but fell down for excess of awe. When at last he stood before the King, he said to him, ‘O august King, may God prolong thy days and increase thy sovranty and exalt thy rank! King Abdulcadir salutes thee and kisses the earth before thee and asks on what weighty business thou art come. If thou seek to avenge thee on any king, he will take horse in thy service; or, if thou come in quest of aught wherein it is in his power to help thee, he is at thy service on account thereof.’ Now this was Ardeshir’s father, who, hearing no news of his son, had levied a mighty army and himself set out in quest of him. So he replied to the Vizier, saying, ‘O messenger, return to thy lord and tell him that the most mighty King [Seif el Aazem Shah, King of Shiraz] had a son, who has been long absent from him and news of him have been cut off from him, nor knoweth he what is become of him. If he be in this city, he will take him and depart from you; but, if any mischief have befallen him among you, his father will lay waste your land and slay your men and make spoil of your goods and your women. Return, therefore, in haste, to thy lord and tell him this, ere evil befall him.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered the Vizier and turned to go away, when the chamberlain cried out to him, saying, ‘Kiss the earth! Kiss the earth!’ So he kissed the earth a score of times and rose not till his heart was in his mouth.

Then he returned to the city, full of anxious thought concerning the affair of this King and the multitude of his troops, and going in to King Abdulcadir, pale with fear and trembling in every limb, acquainted him with that which he had seen and heard; whereat disquietude and fear for his people laid hold upon him and he said to the Vizier, ‘O Vizier, and who is this King’s son?’ ‘It is even he whom thou badest put to death,’ answered the Vizier; ‘but praised be God who hastened not his slaughter! Else had his father laid waste our lands and spoiled our goods.’ ‘See now,’ quoth the King, ‘thy corrupt judgment, in that thou didst counsel us to kill him! Where is the young man, the son of yonder magnanimous king?’ ‘O mighty King,’ answered the Vizier, ‘thou didst command him to be put to death.’ When the King heard this, he was distracted and cried out in a terrible voice, saying, ‘Out on you! Fetch me the headsman forthright, lest death fall on him!’ So they fetched the headsman and he said, ‘O King of the age, I have smitten off his head even as thou badest me.’ ‘O dog,’ cried Abdulcadir, ‘if this be true, I will assuredly send thee after him.’ Quoth the headsman, ‘O King, thou didst command me to slay him without again consulting thee.’ ‘I was in my anger,’ replied the King; ‘but speak the truth, ere thou lose thy life.’ And he said, ‘O King, he is yet in the chains of life.’

At this Abdulcadir rejoiced and his heart was set at ease; then he called for Ardeshir, and when he came, he stood up to receive him and kissed his mouth, saying, ‘O my son, I ask pardon of God for the wrong I have done thee, and say thou not aught that may lower my credit with thy father, the Supreme King.’ ‘O King of the age,’ said the prince, ‘and where is my father?’ ‘He is come hither on thine account,’ replied Abdulcadir; and Ardeshir said, ‘By thy worship, I will not stir from before thee till I have cleared my honour and that of thy daughter from that which thou laidst to our charge; for she is a clean maid. Send for the midwives and let them examine her before thee. If they find her maidenhead gone, I give thee leave to shed my blood; and if they find her a pure virgin, her innocence and mine will be made manifest.’ So he summoned the midwives, who examined the princess and found her a clean maid and told the King, seeking largesse of him. He gave them what they sought, putting off his royal robes to bestow on them, and in like manner he made presents to all who were in the harem. And they brought forth the casting-bottles and perfumed all the officers of state and grandees; and they all rejoiced with an exceeding joy.

Then the King embraced Ardeshir and entreated him with all honour and consideration, bidding his chief eunuchs carry him to the bath. When he came out, he cast over his shoulders a costly robe and set on his head a diadem of jewels. Moreover, he girt him with a sash of silk embroidered with red gold and set with pearls and jewels, and mounted him on one of his finest horses, with trappings of gold inlaid with pearls and jewels. Then he bade his grandees and captains mount and escort him to his father's presence and charged him tell the latter that King Abdulcadir was at his disposal, hearkening to his word and obeying him in whatsoever he should command or forbid. 'I will not fail of this,' answered Ardeshir and repaired to his father, who was transported for joy at sight of him and springing up, advanced to meet him and embraced him, whilst joy and gladness spread among his troops. Then came the viziers and chamberlains and captains and kissed the earth before the prince and rejoiced in his coming: and it was a great day with them for joy. Moreover, the prince gave leave to those of King Abdulcadir's officers who had accompanied him and others of the townsfolk, to view the ordinance of his father's host, without let or hindrance, so they might know the multitude of the Great King's troops and the might of his empire. And all who had seen him selling stuffs in the bazaar marvelled how his soul could have consented thereto, considering the nobility of his rank and the loftiness of his dignity; but it was his love and inclination to the princess that constrained him to this.

Meanwhile, news of the multitude of his troops came to Heyat en Nufous, who was still a prisoner under commandment, till they knew what her father should order respecting her, whether pardon and release or death and burning; and she looked down from the top of the palace and turning towards the mountains, saw the whole plain filled with armed men. When she beheld all these troops and knew that they were the army of Ardeshir's father, she feared lest he should be diverted from her by his father and forget her and depart from her, whereupon her father would put her to death. So she called a maid that was with her in her apartment, by way of service, and said to her, 'Go to Ardeshir, son of the Great King, and fear not. When thou comest into his presence, kiss the earth before him and tell him who thou art and say to him, "My lady salutes thee and would have thee to know that she is a prisoner in her father's palace, awaiting his sentence, whether he be minded to pardon her or kill her, and she beseecheth thee not to forget her or forsake her; for to-day thou art all-powerful; and whatsoever thou commandest none dare cross thee therein. Wherefore, if it seem good to thee to rescue her from her father and take her with thee, it were of thy bounty, for indeed she suffereth all these tribulations on thine account. But if this seem not good to thee, for that thy desire of her is at an end, speak to thy father, so haply he may intercede for her with her father and depart not, till he have made him set her at liberty and taken surety from him that he will not go about to put her to death nor do her any hurt. This is her last word to thee, may God not bereave [her] of thee, and peace be on thee!"'

The maid made her way to Ardeshir and delivered him her mistress's message, which when he heard, he wept sore and said to her, 'Know that Heyat en Nufous is my mistress and that I am her slave and the captive of her love. I have not forgotten what was between us nor the bitterness of the day of separation; so do thou say to her, after thou hast kissed her feet, that I will speak with my father of her, and he will send his Vizier, who sought her aforetime in marriage for me, to demand her hand once more of her father, for he dare not refuse. So, if he send to her to consult her, let her make no opposition; for I will not return to my country without her.' So the maid returned to Heyat en Nufous and kissing her hands, delivered to her the prince's message, which when she heard, she wept for very joy and returned thanks to God the Most High.

Meanwhile, Ardeshir being alone with his father by night, the latter questioned him of his case and he told him all that had befallen him, first and last; whereupon quoth the King, 'What wilt thou have me do for thee, O my son? If thou desire Abdulcadir's ruin, I will lay waste his lands and spoil his treasures and dishonour his family.' 'O my father,' replied Ardeshir, 'I do not desire that, for he hath done nothing deserving thereof; but I wish for union with the princess; wherefore I beseech thee of thy favour to make ready a present for her father, (but let it be a magnificent one,) and send it to him by thy Vizier, the man of just judgment.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the King and sending for the treasures he had laid up from time past, chose out all manner of precious things and showed them to his son, who was pleased with them. Then he called his Vizier and bade him carry the present to King Abdulcadir and demand his daughter in marriage for Ardeshir, saying, 'Accept the present and return him an answer.'

Now from the time of Ardeshir's departure, King Abdulcadir had been troubled and heavy at heart, fearing the laying waste of his kingdom and the spoiling of his realm; so, when the Vizier came in to him and saluting him, kissed the earth before him, he rose to his feet and received him with honour; but the Vizier made haste to fall at his feet and kiss them, saying, 'Pardon, O King of the age! The like of thee should not rise to the like of me, for I am the least of slaves' servants. Know, O King, that Prince Ardeshir hath acquainted his father with some of the favours and kindnesses thou hast done him, wherefore he thanks thee and sends thee, by thy servant who stands before thee, a present, saluting thee and wishing thee all manner of prosperities.' Abdulcadir, of the excess of his fear, could not believe what he heard, till the Vizier laid the present before him, when he saw it to be such as no money could purchase nor could one of the kings of the earth avail to the like thereof; wherefore he was belittled in his own eyes and springing to his feet, praised God the Most High and glorified Him and thanked the prince.

Then said the Vizier to him, 'O noble King, hearken to me and know that the Great King sendeth to thee, desiring thine alliance, and I come to thee, seeking and craving the hand of thy daughter, the chaste lady and treasured jewel Heyat en Nufous, in marriage for his son Ardeshir: wherefore, if thou consent to this, accepting of him, do thou agree with me for her marriage-portion.' 'I hear and obey,' answered Abdulcadir. 'For my part, I make no objection, and nothing can be more agreeable to me; but the girl is of full age and reason and her affair is in her own hand. So I will refer it to her and she shall choose for herself.’ Then he turned to the chief eunuch and bade him go and acquaint the princess with this. So he repaired to the harem and kissing the princess’s hands, acquainted her with the Great King’s proposal, saying, ‘What sayst thou in answer?’ ‘I hear and obey,’ replied she. So the eunuch returned to the King and gave him her answer, whereat he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and calling for a sumptuous robe of honour, threw it over the Vizier’s shoulders. Moreover, he ordered him ten thousand dinars and bade him carry the answer to the Great King and crave leave for him to pay him a visit. ‘I hear and obey,’ answered the Vizier, and returning to his master, delivered him the reply and Abdulcadir’s message, whereat he rejoiced greatly and Ardeshir was transported for joy and his breast expanded and he was glad.

Moreover, King Seif el Aazem gave King Abdulcadir leave to come forth to visit him; so, on the morrow, he took horse and rode to the camp of the Great King, who came to meet him and saluting him, seated him in the place of honour, and they two sat, whilst Ardeshir stood before them. Then arose an orator of the Great King’s court and pronounced an eloquent discourse giving Ardeshir joy of the attainment of his desire and of his marriage with the princess, queen of kings’ daughters. When he sat down, King Seif el Aazem caused bring a chest full of pearls and jewels, together with fifty thousand dinars, and said to King Abdulcadir, ‘I am my son’s deputy in all that concerns this matter.’ So Abdulcadir acknowledged to have received the marriage-portion and amongst the rest, fifty-thousand dinars for the expenses of the nuptial festivities; after which they fetched the Cadis and the witnesses, who drew up the contact of marriage between the prince and princess, and it was a notable day, wherein all lovers rejoiced and all haters and enviers were mortified. They made the marriage feasts and banquet and Ardeshir went in to the princess and found her an unpierced and unique pearl, a treasured jewel and a filly that none but he had ridden and notified this to her father. Then said King Seif el Aazem to his son, ‘Hast thou any wish thou wouldst have fulfilled ere we depart?’ ‘Yes, O King,’ answered he; ‘I would fain take my wreak of the Vizier who entreated us evil and the eunuch who forged a lie against us.’ So the King sent forthright to Abdulcadir, demanding of him the vizier and the eunuch, whereupon he despatched them to him and he commanded to hang them over the gate of the city.

After this, they abode a little while and then sought of Abdulcadir leave for his daughter to make ready for departure. So he equipped her and mounted her in a travelling- litter of red gold, inlaid with pearls and diamonds and drawn by thoroughbred horses. She carried with her all her waiting-women and eunuchs, as well as the nurse, who had returned, after her flight, and resumed her office. Then King Seif el Aazem and his son mounted and Abdulcadir mounted also with all the officers of his realm, to take leave of his daughter and his son-in-law; and it was a day to be reckoned of the goodliest of days. After they had gone some distance, Seif el Aazem conjured King Abdulcadir to turn back; so he took leave of him [and his son], after he had strained him to his breast and kissed him between the eyes and thanked him for his favours and commended his daughter to his care. Then he went in to the princess and embraced her; and she kissed his hands and they wept in the stead of parting. Then he returned to his capital and Ardeshir and his company fared on, till they reached Shiraz, where they celebrated the marriage festivities anew. And they abode in all delight and solace and comfort of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies, He who layeth waste the palaces and peopleth the tombs.

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JULNAR OF THE SEA AND HER SON KING BEDR BASIM OF PERSIA.

There was once of old days and in bygone ages and times, in the land of the Persians, a king called Shehriman, whose abiding-place was Khorassan. He had a hundred concubines, but by none of them had he been vouchsafed a child, male or female, all the days of his life. One day, he bethought him of this and fell a-lamenting for that the most part of his life was past and he had not been blessed with a son, to inherit the kingdom after him, even as he had inherited it from his fathers and forefathers; by reason whereof there betided him sore chagrin and the extreme of care and despite. As he sat thus [absorbed in melancholy thought], one of his officers came in to him and said, 'O my lord, at the door is a merchant, with a slave-girl, than whom a fairer was never seen' 'Bring them to me,' answered the king, and the merchant and the damsel came in to him.

When Shehriman beheld the latter, he saw that she was like a Rudeini lance, and she was wrapped in a veil of gold-embroidered silk. The merchant uncovered her face, whereupon the place was illumined by her beauty and her hair hung down to her anklets, in seven tresses, like horse's tails. She had liquid black eyes, heavy buttocks and slender waist; [the sight of her] healed the sickness of the ailing and quenched the fire of the thirsting, for she was even as saith the poet:

I dote on her ; for, lo, in beauty she's complete , Yea, staidness crowns her charms and gravity sedate.
Nor tall nor short is she, but of the hinder parts So big, her trousers still therefor are all too strait.
Nor tallness to be blamed nor shortness is in her ; Her shape's the golden mean betwixten small and great.
Her tresses overfall her anklets, [black as night,] But still her face is day no darkness may abate.

The king marvelled at her beauty and grace and symmetry and said to the merchant, 'O elder, what is the price of this damsel?' 'O my lord,' answered the merchant, 'I bought her for two thousand diners of the merchant who owned her before myself, since when I have travelled with her three years and she hath cost me, up to the time of my coming hither, [other] three thousand diners: but she is a gift from me to thee.' The king bestowed on him a splendid dress of honour and ordered him ten thousand diners, whereupon he kissed his hands, thanking him for his bounty and beneficence, and departed. Then the king committed the damsel to the tire-women, saying, 'Amend ye the case of this damsel and adorn her and furnish her an apartment and set her therein.' And he bade his chamberlains carry her all that she needed and shut all the doors upon her.

Now his capital city, wherein he dwelt, was called the White City and was seated on the sea-shore. So they lodged her in an apartment, whose windows overlooked the sea, and Shehriman went in to her; but she rose not to him neither took any note of him. Quoth he, 'It would seem she hath been with folk who have not taught her manners.' Then he looked at her and saw her surpassing in grace and beauty and symmetry, with a face like the round of the moon at its full or the sun shining in the cloudless sky. So he marvelled at her beauty and symmetry and extolled the perfection of God the Creator (magnified be His power!), after which he pressed her to his bosom and seating her on his knees, sucked the dew of her lips, which he found sweeter than honey. Then he called for trays of all kinds of the richest meats and ate and fed her by mouthfuls, till she had enough; but she spoke not one word. The king began to talk to her and asked her of her name; but she abode still silent and spoke not a word nor made him any answer, neither ceased to hang down her head towards the ground; and it was but the excess of her beauty and loveliness and the amorous grace that distinguished her that saved her from his wrath. Quoth he, 'Glory be to God, the Creator of this damsel! How charming she is, save that she speaks not! But perfection belongs [only] to God the Most High.' And he asked the slave-girls whether she had spoken, and they said, 'From the time of her coming till now, we have not heard her say a word.'

Then he summoned some of his women and bade them sing to her and make merry with her, so haply she might speak. So they played before her all manner of instruments of music and sports and what not and sang, till all who were present were moved to mirth, except the damsel who looked at them in silence, but neither laughed nor spoke, and the king's breast was straitened. Then he dismissed the women and abode alone with the damsel: after which he put off his clothes and disrobing her with his own hand,looked upon her body and saw it as it were an ingot of silver. So he loved her with an exceeding love and falling upon her, took her maidenhead and found her a clean maid; whereat he rejoiced exceedingly and said, 'By Allah, it is a wonder that the merchants should have suffered a girl so fair of form and face to abide a maid!'

Then he devoted himself altogether to her, heeding none other and forsaking all his [other] concubines and favourites, and abode with her a whole year, as it were one day. Still she spoke not, till, one day, he said to her [and indeed the love of her and passion waxed upon him], 'O desire of souls, verily the love of thee is great with me, and for thy sake I have forsaken all my slave girls and concubines and women and favourites and have made thee my portion of the world and had patience with thee a whole year; and now I beseech God the Most High, of His favour, to soften thy heart to me, so thou mayst speak to me. Or, if thou be dumb, tell me by a sign, that I may give up hope of thy speech. I pray God (extolled be His perfection!) to vouchsafe me by thee a male child, who shall inherit the kingdom after me; for I am old and lonely and have none to be my heir. Wherefore, I conjure thee, by Allah, if thou love me, return me an answer.'

She bowed her head awhile, [as if] in thought, and presently raising it, smiled in his face; whereat it seemed to him as if lightning filled the room. Then she said, 'O magnanimous king and valorous lion, God hath answered thy prayer, for I am with child by thee and the time of my delivery is at hand, though I know not if the child be male or female. But, had I not conceived by thee, I had not spoken one word to thee.' When the ring heard her speech, his face shone with joy and happiness and he kissed her head and hands for excess of gladness, saying, 'Praised be God who hath vouchsafed me the things I desire! First, thy speech, and secondly, thy tidings that thou art with child by me.'

Then he went forth from her and seating himself on the throne of his kingship, in an ecstacy of happiness, bade his vizier distribute to the poor and needy and widows and others a hundred thousand diners, by way of alms on his account and thank-offering to God the Most High. The vizier did as the king bade him, and the latter, returning to the damsel, sat with her and pressed her to his bosom, saying, ‘O my lady, O thou whose slave I am, thou hast been with me a whole year, night and day, waking and sleeping, yet hast not spoken to me till this day. What was the cause of this thy silence?’ ‘Hearken, O king of the age,’ answered she, ‘and know that I am a wretched exile, broken-hearted and parted from my mother and my family and my brother.’ When the king heard her words, he knew her desire and said, ‘As for thy saying that thou art wretched, there is no ground for such a speech, for my kingdom and all that I possess are at thy service and I also am become thy bondman; but, as for thy saying, “I am parted from my mother and brother and family,” tell me where they are and I will send and fetch them to thee.’

‘Know then, O august king,’ answered she, ‘that I am called Julnar of the Sea and that my father was of the kings of the sea. He died and left us his kingdom, but one of the other kings arose against us and took it from our hands. My mother also is a woman of the sea and I have a brother called Salih, with whom I fell out and swore that I would throw myself into the hands of a man of the folk of the land. So I came forth of the sea and eat down on the shore of an island in the moon, where a passer-by found me and carrying me to his house, besought me of love; but I smote him on the head, that he all but died; whereupon he carried me forth and sold me to the merchant from whom thou hadst me, and he was a good and virtuous man, pious and loyal and generous. Were it not that thy heart loved me and that thou preferredst me over all thy concubines, I had not remained with thee an hour, but had cast myself from the window into the sea and gone to my mother and kindred; but I was ashamed to go to them, being with child by thee; for they would have deemed ill of me and would not have credited me, though I swore to them, if I told them that a king had bought me with his monies and made me his portion of the world and preferred me over all his wives and all that his right hand possessed. This then is my story and peace be on thee.’

The king thanked her and kissed her between the eyes, saying, ‘By Allah, O my lady and light of mine eyes, I cannot endure to be parted from thee one hour; and if thou leave me, I shall die forthright. What then is to be done?’ ‘O my lord,’ replied she, ‘the time of my delivery is at hand and my family must be present, that they may tend me; for the daughters of the land know not the fashion of child-bearing of the daughters of the sea, nor do the daughters of the sea know the fashion of the daughters of the land; and when my people come, I shall be reconciled to them and they to me and I will tell them that thou boughtest me with thy money and hast used me with kindness and beneficence. And it behoves that thou confirm my speech to them and that they see shine estate with their own eyes and know that thou art a king, the son of a king.’

‘O my lady,’ rejoined the king, ‘do what seemeth good to thee and that which liketh thee, for I consent to thee in all thou wouldst do. But how do the people of the sea walk therein, without being wetted?’ ‘O king of the age,’ answered Julnar, ‘we walk in the sea with our eyes open, as do ye on the land, by the blessing of the names engraved upon the seal of Solomon son of David (on whom be peace) and see what is therein and behold the sun and moon and stars and sky, as it were on the face of the earth; and this irketh us nought. Know, also, that in the sea are many peoples and various forms and creatures of all the kinds that be in the land, and that all that is on the land is but a very small matter, compared with that which is in the sea.’ And the king marvelled at her words.

Then she pulled out from her bosom two pieces of Comorin aloes-wood and kindling fire in a chafing dish, threw in somewhat thereof, then gave a loud whistle and spoke words which none understood; whereupon there arose a great smoke and she said to the king, who was looking on, ‘O my lord, arise and hide thyself in a closet, that I may show thee my mother and brother and family, whilst they see thee not; for I design to bring them hither, and thou shalt presently see a wonderful thing and marvel at the various creatures and strange shapes that God the Most High hath created.’ So he arose straightway and entering a closet, fell a-watching what she should do. She continued her fumigations and conjurations till the sea foamed and became troubled and there rose from it a handsome young man of a bright countenance, as he were the moon at its full, with flower white forehead, red cheeks and teeth like pearls and jewels. He was the likest of all creatures to his sister [the damsel Julnar], and the tongue of the case spoke these verses in his praise:

The full moon groweth perfect once monthly; but thy face Each day anew's perfected in loveliness and grace.
Yea, and the full moon's dwelling is but in one sign's heart: To thee all hearts, O fair one, are as a dwelling-place.

After him there came forth of the sea a gray-haired old woman and five damsels, as they were moons, bearing a likeness to the damsel Julnar. They all walked upon the surface of the water, till they drew near the window and saw Julnar, whereupon they knew her and went in to her. She rose to them and received them with joy and gladness, and they embraced her and wept sore. Then said they to her, 'O Julnar, how couldst thou leave us four years, and we unknowing of thine abiding-place? By AIlah, the world has been straitened upon us, for stress of severance from thee, and we have had no delight of food or drink, no, not for one day, but have wept day and night for the excess of our longing after thee!' Then she fell to kissing the hands of her brother and mother and cousins, and they sat with her awhile, questioning her of her case, and of what had befallen her, as well as of her present estate. 'Know,' replied she, 'that, when I left you, I issued from the sea and sat down on the shore of an island, where a man found me and sold me to a merchant, who brought me to this city and sold me to the king of the country for ten thousand dinars. The latter entreated me with honour and left all his concubines and women and favourites on my account and was distracted by me from all he had and all that was in his city.' 'Praised be God,' said her brother, 'who hath reunited us with thee! But now, O my sister, it is my purpose that thou arise and go with us to our country and people.'

When the king heard this, he was transported for fear lest she should accept her brother's words and he himself avail not to stay her, passionately as he loved her, and he became distracted with fear of losing her. But Julnar answered her brother, saying, 'By Allah, O my brother, he who bought me is lord of this city and he is a mighty king and a wise, good and generous in the extreme. Moreover, he is a man of great worth and wealth and hath neither son nor daughter. He hath entreated me with honour and done me all manner of favour and kindness; nor, from the day of his buying me, have I heard from him an ill word, to grieve my heart; but he hath never ceased to use me courteously, doing nothing without my counsel, and I am in the best of case with him and the perfection of fair fortune. Were I to leave him, he would perish; for he cannot endure to be parted from me an hour; and I, also, if I left him, I should die, for the excess of the love I bear him, by reason of his great goodness to me during the time of my sojourn with him; for, were my father alive, my estate with him would not be like that I enjoy with this great and glorious and puissant king. Moreover, ye see me with child by him and I pray God the Most High to vouchsafe me a son who may inherit of this mighty king that which He hath bestowed upon him of lands and palaces and possessions. Verily, God hath not cut me off, but hath abundantly compensated me [that which I lost], and praised be He for that He hath made me daughter of a king of the sea and my husband the greatest of the kings of the land!'

When her brother and cousins heard this her speech, their eyes were solaced thereby and they said, 'O Julnar, thou knowest thy value in our eyes and the affection we bear thee and art certified that thou art to us the dearest of all creatures and that we seek but ease for thee, without travail or weariness. Wherefore, if thou be in unease, arise and go with us to our land and people; but, if thou be at shine ease here, in honour and happiness, this is our wish and our aim; for we desire only thy happiness in any case.' Quoth she, 'By Allah, I am here in the utmost ease and comfort and honour and have all that I desire!' When the king heard what she said, his heart was set at rest and he rejoiced and thanked her [inwardly] for this [her speech]. Moreover, the love of her redoubled on him and entered his inmost heart, and he knew that she loved him as he loved her and desired to abide with him, that she might see his child by her.

Then Julnar called for food and the waiting women laid the tables and set on all kinds of viands, which had been dressed in the kitchen under her own eyes, and fruits and sweetmeats, of which she ate, she and her kinsfolk. But, presently, they said to her, 'O Julnar, thy lord is a stranger to us, and we have entered his house, without his leave or knowledge. Thou hast extolled to us his excellence and hast set before us of his victual and we have eaten; yet have we not companied with him nor seen him, neither hath he seen us nor come to our presence and eaten with us, so bread and salt might be between us.' And they all left eating and were wroth with her, and fire issued from their mouths, as from cressets; which when the king saw, he was transported for excess of fear of them. But Julnar soothed them and going to the closet where was the king her lord, said to him, 'O my lord, hast thou seen and heard how I praised thee and extolled thee to my people and what they said to me of their desire to carry me away with them?' 'I both heard and saw,' answered he. 'May God abundantly requite thee for me! By Allah, I knew not the measure of shine affection for me until this blessed hour and I doubted not of thy love of me!'

'O my lord,' rejoined she, 'is the reward of kindness aught but kindness? Verily, thou hast dealt generously with me and hast entreated me with worship and done me all manner of honour and kindness and preferred me above all thou lovest and desires, and I have seen that thou lovest me with the utmost love. So how should my heart be content to leave thee and depart from thee, after all thy goodness to me? But now I desire of thy courtesy that thou come and salute my family, so thou mayst see them and they thee and love and friendship may be between you; for know, O king of the age, that my mother and brother and cousins love thee with an exceeding love, by reason of my praises of thee to them, and say, "By Allah, we will not depart from thee nor go to our country till we have foregathered with the king and saluted him." For they desire to see thee and make acquaintance with thee.' 'I hear and obey,' said the king; 'for this is my own wish.' So saying, he rose and went in to them and saluted them after the goodliest fashion; and they sprang up to him and received him with the utmost honour, after which he sat down and ate with them; and he entertained them thus for the space of thirty days. Then they took leave of the king and queen and departed to their own land, after he had done them all possible honour.

Awhile after this, Julnar accomplished the days of her pregnancy and the time of her delivery being come, she bore a boy, as he were the moon at its full, whereat the utmost joy betided the king, for that he had never in his life [till then] been vouchsafed son or daughter. So they held high festival and decorated the city seven days, in the extreme of joy and happiness; and on the seventh day came Julnar's mother and brother and cousins, whenas they knew of her delivery. The king received them with l joy and said to them, 'I said that I would not give my son a name till you should come and name him of your knowledge.' So they named him Bedr Basim, and all agreed upon this name. Then they showed the child to his uncle Salih, who took him in his arms and began to walk about the chamber with him. Presently he carried him forth of the palace and going down to the salt sea, fared on with him, till he was hidden from the king's sight.

When Shehriman saw him take his son and disappear with him in the abysses of the sea, he gave the child up for lost and fell to weeping and wailing; but Julnar said to him, 'O king of the age, fear not neither grieve for thy son, for I love my child more than thou and he is with my brother; so reck thou not of the sea neither fear drowning for him. Except my brother knew that no harm would betide the little one, he had not done this; and he will presently bring thee thy son safe, if it please God the Most High.' Nor was an hour past before the sea became

troubled and King Salih came forth, with the little one safe in his arms, quiet and with a face like the moon on the night of her full, and [rising into the air] flew till he reached the palace and came in to them. Then said he to the king, 'Belike thou fearedst harm for thy son, whenas I plunged into the sea with him?' 'Yes, O my lord,' replied the king; 'I did indeed fear for him and thought he would never be saved therefrom.' 'O king of the land,' rejoined Salih, 'we pencilled his eyes with an eye-powder we know of and recited over him the names engraver upon the seal of Solomon son of David (on whom be peace!), for this is what we use to do with children born among us; and now thou needst not fear for him drowning or suffocation in all the waters of the world, if he should go down into them; for, even as ye walk on the land, so walk we in the sea.'

Then he pulled out of his pocket a casket, graven and sealed, and breaking open the seals, emptied it; whereupon there fell from it strings of all manner jacinths and other jewels, besides three hundred bugles of emerald and other three hundred hollow jewels, as big as ostrich eggs, whose light outshone that of sun and moon. Quoth Salih, ‘O king of the age, these jewels and jacinths are a present from me to thee. We never yet brought thee a present, for that we knew not Julnar’s abiding-place neither had we any tidings of her; but now that we see thee to be united with her and we are all become as one thing, we have brought thee this present; and every little while, God willing, we will bring thee the like thereof for that these jewels and jacinths are more plentiful with us than pebbles on the earth and we know the good and bad of them and their whereabouts and the way to them and they are easy to us.’

When the king saw the jewels, his reason was confounded and his mind bewildered and he said, ‘By Allah, one of these jewels is worth my kingdom!’ Then he thanked Salih for his bounty and said to Julnar, ‘I am abashed before thy brother, for that he hath dealt munificently by me and bestowed on me this splendid present, whereto the folk of the land may not avail.’ So she thanked her brother for his deed and he said, ‘O king of the age, thou hast the prior claim on us and it behoves us to thank thee, for thou hast entreated our sister with kindness and we have entered thy dwelling and eaten of thy victual; and the poet says:

Had I, or ever Suada did, to weep for love been fain, I should,
before repentance came, have solaced heart and brain.
But she before my weeping wept; her tears drew mine, and so
Quoth I, “Unto the precedent the merit doth pertain.”

And if we stood in thy service, O king of the age, a thousand years, yet might we not avail to requite thee, and this were but a scantling of thy due.’

The king thanked him with effusion and they all abode with him forty days’ space, at the end of which time Salih arose and kissed the earth before his brother-in-law. Quoth the latter, ‘What wantest thou, O Salih?’ And he answered, saying, ‘O king of the age, indeed thou hast done us [many] favours, and we crave of thy bounties that thou deal charitably with us and give us leave [to depart]; or we yearn after our people and country and kinsfolk and our homes; so will we never forsake thy service nor that of my sister and her son; and by Allah, O king of the age, it is not pleasant to my heart to part from thee; but how shall we do, seeing that we have been reared in the sea and that [the sojourn of] the land liketh us not?' When the king heard this, he rose to his feet and took leave of Salih of the sea and his mother and cousins, and they all wept, because of parting, and said to him, 'We will be with thee again anon, nor will we forsake thee, but will visit thee every few days.' Then they flew off and descending into the sea, disappeared from sight.

After this, King Shehriman redoubled in honour and kindness to Julnar, and the little one grew up and flourished, whilst his uncle and grandmother and cousins visited the king every few days and abode with him a month or two months [at a time]. The boy ceased not to increase in beauty and grace, with increase of years, till he attained the age of fifteen and was unique in his perfection and symmetry. He learnt reading and writing and history and syntax and lexicography and archery and spearplay and horsemanship and what not else behoveth the sons of kings; nor was there one of the children of the folk of the city, men or women, but would talk of the youth's charms, for he was of surpassing beauty and perfection, even such an one as as described in the saying of the poet:

The whiskers write upon his cheek, with ambergris on pearl, Two lines, as 'twere with jet upon an apple, line for line.
Death harbours in his languid eye and slays with every glance;
And in his cheeks is drunkenness, and not in any wine.

And in that of another:

Upon the table of his cheek, a fringe of jet, I wis, The whiskers grow, and sore threat my soul's amazement is;
As if his visage were a lamp that burns all night, hung up,
Beneath the darkness of his hair, with chains of ambergris.

And indeed the king loved him with an exceeding great love and summoning his vizier and emirs and the chief officers of state and grandees of his reahn, required of them a binding oath that they would make Bedr Basim king over them after himself; and they took the oath gladly, for the king was beneficent to the people, pleasant in speech and saying nought but that wherein was advantage for them, brief, a very compend of goodness.

On the morrow Shehriman mounted, with all his troops and emirs and grandees, and went forth into the city and returned. When they drew near the palace, the king dismounted, to wait upon his son, whilst the latter abode on horseback, and he and all the emirs and grandees bore the saddle-cloth of honour before him, each in his turn till they came to the vestibule of the palace, where the prince alighted and his father and the emirs embraced him and seated him on the throne of kingship, whilst they all stood before him. Then Bedr judged the people deposing the unjust and appointing the just, till near upon midday, when he descended from the throne and went in to his mother, Julnar of the Sea, with the crown on his head, as he were the moon. When she saw him with the king before him, she rose and kissing him, gave him joy of the sultanate and wished him and his father length of life and victory over their enemies. He sat with her and rested till the hour of afternoon-prayer, when he took horse and repaired, with the emirs before him, to the tilting-ground, where he played at arms with his father and his grandees, till nightfall, when he returned to the palace, preceded by all the folk.

He rode forth thus every day to the tilting-ground, returning to sit and judge the people and do justice between amir and poor man; and thus he did a whole year, at the end of which time he began to ride out a-hunting and to go round about in the cities and countries under his rule, proclaiming peace and security and doing after the fashion of kings; and he was unique among the people of his day for glory and velour and just dealing among the folk.

One day, the old king fell sick and his heart forebode him of translation to the mansion of eternity. His sickness increased on him till he was nigh upon death, when he called his son and commended his mother and subjects to his care and caused all the emirs and grandees once more swear allegiance to the prince and assured himself of them by oaths; after which he lingered a few days and was admitted to the mercy of God the Most High. His son and widow and all the grandees and emirs and viziers mourned over him, and they built him a tomb and buried him therein.

They ceased not to mourn for him a whole month, till Salih and his mother and cousins arrived and condoled with them for the king and said, ‘O Julnar, though the king is dead, yet hath he left this noble and peerless youth, the fierce lion and the shining moon; and whoso leaveth the like of him is not dead.’ Moreover, the grandees and notables of the empire went in to Bedr

and said to him, ‘O king, there is no harm in mourning for the king: but [continuance of] mourning beseemeth none save women; wherefore occupy thou not thy heart and ours with mourning for thy father; for he hath left thee behind him, and whoso leaveth the like of thee is not dead.’ Then they comforted him and diverted him and carried him to the bath. When he came out thence, he donned a rich robe, wroughten with gold and embroidered with jewels and jacinths, and setting the royal crown on his head, sat down on his throne of kingship and ordered the affairs of the folk, doing equal justice between the weak and the strong and exacting from the amir the poor man’s due; wherefore the people loved him with an exceeding love. Thus he abode a great while, whilst, every now and then, his kinsfolk of the sea visited him, and his life was pleasant and his eye unheated [by tears].

It chanced that his uncle Salih went in one night to Julnar and saluted her; whereupon she rose and embracing him, made him sit by her side and asked him how he did, he and his mother and cousins. ‘O my sister,’ answered he, ‘they are well and in great good case, lacking nought save the sight of thy face.’ Then she set food before him and he ate, after which talk ensued between them and they spoke of Bedr Basim and his beauty and grace and symmetry and skill in horsemanship and his wit and good breeding. Now Bedr was reclining [upon a day-bed within ear-shot], and hearing his mother and uncle speak of him, he feigned sleep and listened to their talk. Presently Salih said to his sister, ‘Thy son is now seventeen years old and is unmarried, and I fear lest aught befall him and he have no son; wherefore it is my wish to marry him to a princess of the princesses of the sea, who shall be a match for him in beauty and grace.’ Quoth Julnar, ‘Name them to me, for I know them all.’

So Salih proceeded to name them to her, one by one, but to each she said, ‘This one liketh me not for my son; I will not marry him but to one who is his like in beauty and grace and wit and piety and good breeding and worth and dominion and rank and lineage.’ Quoth Salih, ‘I know none other of the daughters of the kings of the Gear for I have enumerated to thee more than an hundred girls and none of them pleaseth thee: but see, O my sister, whether thy son be asleep or no,’ So she felt Bedr and finding on him the signs of sleep, said to Salih, ‘He is asleep; what hast thou to say and what is shine object in [assuring thyself of] his sleeping?’ ‘O my sister,’ replied Salih, ‘know that I have bethought me of a girl of the girls of the sea who befitteth thy son; but I fear to name her, lest he be awake and his heart be taken with her love and maybe we shall not avail to win to her; so should he and we and the grandees of the realm be wearied [in vain] and trouble betide us through this; for, as saith the poet:

Love, at the first, is as a drip of water, verily; But, when the mastery it gains, ’tis as a spreading sea.

‘Tell me the name and condition of this girl,’ rejoined Julnar; ‘for I know all the damsels of the sea, kings’ daughters and others; and if I judge her worthy of him, I will demand her in marriage for him of her father, though I spend on her all that my hand possesseth. So tell me who and what she is and fear nought, for my son is asleep.’ Quoth Salih, ‘I fear lest he be awake; and the poet says:

I fell in love with him, what time his charms described heard I; For while it chances that the ear doth love before the eye.’

But Julnar said, ‘Speak and be brief and fear nothing, O my brother.’ So he said, ‘O my sister, none is worthy of thy son save the princess Jauhereh, daughter of King Es Semendel, for that she is like unto him in beauty and grace and brightness and perfection; nor is there, in the sea or on the land, a sweeter or pleasanter of parts than she; for she is fair and graceful and shapely, with red cheeks and flower-white brows, teeth like jewels and great black eyes, heavy buttocks and slender waist and a lovely face. When she turns, she shames the wild cattle and the gazelles, and when she walks, the willow branch is jealous of her. When she unveils, her face outshines the sun and the moon and she enslaves all that look on her; and she is sweet-lipped and soft-sided.’

When Julnar heard what Salih said, she answered, ‘Thou sayst sooth, O my brother! By Allah, I have seen her many a time and she was my companion, when we were little; but now I have not set eyes on her for eighteen years and we have no knowledge of each other, for constraint of distance. By Allah, none but she is worthy of my son!' Now Bedr heard all they said and fell in love with the princess on report, wherefore fire was kindled in his heart on her account and he was drowned in a sea without shore or bottom. Then said Salih, 'By Allah, O my sister, there is no greater fool among the kings of the sea than her father nor one more violent of temper! So name not thou the girl to thy son, till we demand her in marriage of her father. If he favour us with his assent we will praise God the Most High; and if he refuse to give her to thy son to wife, we will say no more about it and seek another in marriage.' 'It is well judged of thee,' answered Julnar, and they said no more; but Bedr passed the night with a heart on fire with passion for the princess Jauhereh. However, he concealed his case and spoke not of her to his mother or his uncle, albeit he was on coals of fire for love of her.

Next morning, the king and his uncle went to the bath and washed, after which they came forth and drank wine and the servants set food before them, of which they and Julnar ate, till they were satisfied, and washed their hands Then Salih rose and said to his nephew and sister, 'With your leave, I would fain go to my mother [and kindred], for I have been with you some days and they await me and their hearts are troubled concerning me.' But Bedr said to him, 'Abide with us this day;' and he consented. Then said the king, 'Come, O my uncle, let us go forth to the garden.' So they sallied forth to the garden and walked about and took their pleasure awhile, after which Bedr lay down under a shady tree, thinking to rest and sleep; but he called to mind his uncle's description of the princess and her beauty and grace and shed copious tears, reciting the following verses:

If, whilst within mine entrails the fires of hell did stir And flames raged high about me, 'twere spoken in mine ear,
"Which wilt thou have the rather, a draught of water cold Or sight of her thou lovest?" I'd say, "The sight of her."

Then he sighed and wept and lamented, reciting these verses also:

Ah, who shall be my helper in love of a gazelle, Even as the sun in visage, but fairer, sooth to tell?
My heart was free and careless; but now 'tis all on fire With passion for the daughter of King Es Semendel.

When Salih heard what his nephew said, he smote hand upon hand and said, 'There is no god but God! Mohammed is the apostle of God and there is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! O my son, didst thou hear what passed between thy mother and myself respecting the princess Jauhereh?' 'Yes, O my uncle,' answered Bedr. 'And I fell in love with her by report, through what I heard you say. Indeed, my heart cleaves to her and I cannot live without her.' 'O king,' rejoined his uncle, let us return to thy mother and tell her how the case stands and ask her leave that I may take thee with me and seek the princess in marriage of her father; for I fear to take thee without her leave, lest she be wroth with me; and indeed the right would be on her side, for I should be the cause of her separation from thee, even as I was that of her separation from us. Moreover, the [people of the] city would be left without a king and there would be none to govern them and look to their affairs; so should the realm be disordered against thee and the kingship depart from thy hands.' But Bedr said, 'O my uncle, if I return to my mother and consult her, she will not suffer me to do this; wherefore I will not return to her nor consult her, but will go with thee and tell her not and after return.' And he wept before him.

When Salih heard what his nephew said, he was bewildered concerning his case and said, 'I crave help of God the most High in any event.' Then, seeing that Bedr was resolved to go with him, without consulting his mother, he drew from his finger a seal-ring, whereon were graven certain of the names of God the Most High, and gave it to him, saying, 'Put this on thy finger, and thou wilt be safe from drowning and other [the perils of the sea] and from the mischief of its beasts and its great fishes.' So Bedr took the ring and put it on his finger. Then they plunged into the sea and fared on till they came to Salih's palace, where they found Bedr's grandmother, the mother of his mother, seated with her kinsfolk, and going in to them, kissed their hands. When the old queen saw Bedr, she rose to him and embracing him, kissed him between the eyes and said to him, ‘A blessed coming, O my son! How didst thou leave thy mother Julnar?’ ‘She is well in health and fortune,’ answered he, ‘and salutes thee and her cousins.’

Then Salih told his mother how Bedr had fallen in love with the princess Jauhereh by report and was come, purposing to demand her in marriage of her father; which when the old queen heard, she was exceeding wroth with her son and sore troubled and concerned and said to Salih, ‘O my son, of a truth thou didst wrong to name the princess Jauhereh before thy nephew, knowing, as thou dost, that her father is stupid and arrogant, little of wit and exceeding violent of temper, grudging his daughter to these who demand her in marriage; for all the kings of the sea have sought her hand, but he would none of them and rejected them all, saying, “Ye are no match for her in beauty nor grace nor aught else.” Wherefore we fear to demand her in marriage of him, lest he reject us, even as he hath rejected others; and we are people of spirit and should return broken-hearted.’

‘O my mother,’ answered Salih, ‘What is to do? For King Bedr says, “Needs must I seek her in marriage of her father, though it cost me my whole kingdom,” and avouches that he will die of love and longing for her, if he have her not to wife. Moreover, he is handsomer and goodlier than she; his father was king of all the Persians, whose king he now is, and none but he is worthy of Jauhereh. Wherefore I purpose to carry her father a present of jacinths and jewels, befitting his dignity, and demand her of him in marriage. If he object that he is a king, behold, Bedr also is a king and the son of a king; or, if he object her beauty, behold, Bedr is handsomer than she; or, again, if he object the extent of his dominion, behold, Bedr’s dominion is vaster than hers and her father’s and he hath greater plenty of troops and guards, for that his kingdom is greater than that of Es Semendel. Needs must I do my endeavour to further the desire of my sister’s son, though it cost me my life; because I was the cause of what has happened; and even as I plunged him into the ocean of her love, so will I go about to marry him to her, and may God the Most High help me thereto!’ ‘Do as thou wilt,' rejoined his mother; 'but beware of giving her father rough words, whenas thou speakest with him; for thou knowest his folly and violence and I fear lest he do thee a mischief, for he knoweth not respect for any.' And Salih answered, 'I hear and obey.'

Then he took two bags full of emeralds and rubies and other jewels and giving them to his servants to carry, set out with Bedr for the palace of Es Semendel. When they came thither, he sought an audience of the king and being admitted to his presence, kissed the earth before him and saluted him after the goodliest fashion. The king rose to him and receiving him witn the utmost honour, bade him be seated. So he sat down and presently the king said to him, 'A blessed coming, O Salih! Indeed, thou hast desolated us [by shine absence]. But what brings thee to us? Tell me thine errand, that we may fulfil it to thee.' Whereupon Salih arose and kissing the earth a second time, said, 'O king of the age, my errand is to God and the magnanimous king and the valiant lion, the report of whose good qualities the caravans have spread far and near and whose renown for goodness and beneficence and clemency and graciousness and liberality is bruited abroad in all climes and countries.'

Then he opened the two bags and displaying their contents before the king, said to him, 'O king of the age, belike thou wilt show favour to me and heal my heart by accepting my present.' Quoth the king, 'With what intent dost thou make me this gift? Tell me thy case and acquaint me with thy need. If it be in my power, I will straightway accomplish it to thee and spare thee toil and trouble; and if I be unable "hereunto, God imposeth not upon a soul aught but that whereto it may avail.' So Salih rose and kissing the earth three times, said, 'O king of the age, thou art indeed able to that which I desire; it is in thy power and thou art master thereof; and I impose not on the king a dilemma, nor am I mad, that I should ask of the king a thing whereto he availeth not; for the sage saith, "If thou wouldst be obeyed, ask that which is possible." Wherefore, that of which I am come in quest, the king (whom God preserve!) is able to grant.' 'Ask what thou wouldst have,' replied the king, 'and expound thy case and seek thy desire.' Then said Salih, 'O king of the age, know that I come as a suitor, seeking the unique pearl and the treasured jewel, the princess Jauhereh, daughter of our lord the king; wherefore, O king”, disappoint thou not thy suitor.’

When the king heard this, he laughed till he fell backward, in derision of him, and said, ‘O Salih, I had thought thee a man of worth and sense, seeking nought but what was reasonable and speaking not but advisedly. What then hath befallen thy reason and urged thee to this monstrous matter and mighty hazard, that thou seekest in marriage the daughters of kings, lords of cities and countries? Art thou of a rank to aspire to this great eminence and hath thy wit failed thee to this pass that thou affrontest me with this demand?’

‘God amend the king!’ replied Salih. ‘I seek her not for myself (albeit, an I did, I am her match and more than her match, for thou knowest that my father was king of the kings of the sea, for all thou art now our king), but for King Bedr Basim, lord of the lands of the Persians and son of King Shehriman, whose puissance thou knowest. If thou object that thou art a great king, King Bedr is a greater; and if thou object thy daughter’s beauty, he is handsomer than she and fairer of form and more excellent of rank and lineage; and he is the champion of the people of his day. Wherefore, O king of the age, if thou grant my request, thou wilt have set the thing in its place; but, if thou deal arrogantly with us, thou wilt not use us justly nor travel the right road with us Moreover, O king, thou knowest that the princess Jauhereh, the daughter of our lord the king, must needs be married, for the sage saith, “Needs must for a girl marriage or the grave.” So, if thou mean to marry her, my sister’s son is worthier of her than any other man.’

When King Es Semendel heard Salih’s words, he was exceeding wroth; his reason fled and his soul was like to depart his body for rage, and he said, ‘O dog, shall the like of thee dare to bespeak me thus and name my daughter in the assemblies, saying that the son of thy sister Julnar is a match for her? Who art thou and who are thy sister and her son and who was his father, that thou shouldst dare to say these things to me? What are ye all, in comparison with my daughter, but dogs?’ And he cried out to his servants, saying, ‘Take yonder good-for-nought’s head!’ So they drew their swords and fell upon Salih, but he fled and made for the palace gate, where he found more than a thousand horse of his cousins and kinsfolk and servants, armed cap-a-pie in iron and strait-knit coats of mail, with spears and naked swords in their hands, whom his mother had despatched to his succour.

When they saw Salih come running out of the palace, they questioned him and he told them what was to do; whereupon they knew that the king was a violent-tempered fool. So they alighted and drawing their swords, went in to King Es Semendel, whom they found seated upon the throne of his kingship, unaware of their coming and violently enraged against Salih; and they saw his guards and servants and officers unprepared. When the king saw them enter, sword in hand, he cried out to his people, saying, ‘Out on you! Take me these dogs’ heads!’ But, before long, Es Semendel’s party were put to the rout and addressed themselves to flight, and Salih and his kinsfolk seized upon the king and bound his hands behind him. When Jauhereh awoke and knew that her father was a captive and his guards slain, she fled forth the palace to a certain island and climbing up into a high tree, hid herself therein.

Now, when the two parties came to blows, some of King Es Semendel’s servants fled and Bedr, meeting them, questioned them and they told him what had happened, adding that the king was a prisoner, whereupon Bedr feared for himself and said in his heart, ‘Verily, all this turmoil is on my account and none is sought for but I.’ So he sought safety in flight, knowing not whither he went; but fate fore-ordained from all eternity drove him to the island where the princess had taken refuge, and he came to the very tree on which she sat and cast himself down, like a dead man, thinking to lie and rest and knowing not that there is no rest for the pursued, for none knoweth what destiny hides for him in the future. As he lay down, he raised his eyes to the tree and they met those of the princess. So he looked at her and seeing her to be like the shining moon, said, ‘Glory to Him who created yonder perfect form, Him who is the Creator of all things and Almighty! Glory to the Great God, the Creator, the Shaper and Fashioner! By Allah, except my presentiments deceive me, this is Jauhereh, daughter of King Es Semendel! Methinks that, when she heard of our coming to blows with her father, she fled to this island and hid herself in this tree; but, if this be not the princess herself, it is one yet goodlier than she.’

Then he bethought himself and said, ‘I will arise and lay hands on her and question her of her case; and if she be indeed Jauhereh, I will demand her in marriage of herself and so accomplish my desire.’ So he stood up and said to her, ‘O end of all desire, who art thou and who brought thee hither?’ She looked at him and seeing him to be as the full moon, when it breaks from under the black clouds, slender of shape and sweet of smile, answered, saying, ‘O fair of fashion, I am the princess Jauhereh, daughter of King Es Semendel, and I took refuge in this place, becanse Salih and his men made war on my father and slew his troops and took him prisoner, with some of his men; wherefore I fled, fearing for m’ life, and know not what fortune hath done with my father.’

When Bedr heard this, he marvelled exceedingly at the strange chance and said in himself, ‘Doubtless I have come to my desire by the taking of her father.’ Then he looked at Jauhereh and said to her, ‘Come down, O my lady; for I am one slain for love of thee and thine eyes have captived me. Know that all these broils and troubles are on thine account and mine; for I am Bedr Basim, King of the Persians, and Salih is my uncle, and he it is who came to thy father to demand thee in marriage. As for me, I have left my kingdom for thy sake, and our meeting here is a rare coincidence. So come down to me and let us go to thy father’s palace, that I may beseech my uncle Salih to release him and take thee to wife according to the law.’ When Jauhereh heard his words, she said in herself, ‘It was on this vile wretch’s account, then, that all this hath befallen and that my father hath been made a prisoner and his guards and chamberlains slain and I constrained to flee far away from my palace and seek refuge in this island, a miserable exile. But, an I go not about with him, to defend myself against him, he will possess himself of me and take his will of me; for he is in love and a lover is not blamed for aught that he cloth.’

Then she beguiled him with [fair] words and soft speeches, whilst he knew not the perfidy she purposed against him, and said to him, ‘O my lord and light of my eyes, art thou indeed King Bedr Basim, son of Queen Julnar?’ And he answered, ‘Yes, O my lady.’ ‘May God cut off my father,’ rejoined she, ‘and make his kingdom to cease from him and heal not his heart neither avert from him strangerhood, if he could desire a comelier than thou or aught goodlier than these fair fashions of shine! By Allah, he is little of wit and judgment! But, O king of the age, be thou not wroth with him for that which he hath done; for, if thou love me a span, verily I love thee a cubit. Indeed, I have fallen into the snare of thy love and am become of the number of those thou hast slain. The love that was with thee hath transferred itself to me and there is left thereof with thee but a tithe of that which is with me.'

So saying, she came down from the tree and strained him to her bosom and fell to kissing him; whereat passion and desire for her waxed on him and he doubted not but she loved him and trusted in her. So he returned her caresses and said to her, 'By Allah, O princess, my uncle Salih set forth to me not a fortieth part of thy charms, no, nor a quarter of a carat thereof!' Jauhereh pressed him to her bosom and pronounced some unintelligible words then spat in his face, saying, 'Quit this shape of a man and take that of a bird, the handsomest of birds, white of plumage, with red bill and feet' Hardly had she spoken, when Bedr found himself transformed into a bird, the handsomest of birds, which shook itself and stood, looking at her.

Now Jauhereh had with her one of her slave-girls, by name Mersineh; so she called her and said to her, 'By Allah, but that I fear for my father, who is his uncle's prisoner, I would kill him! May God not requite him with good! How unlucky was his coming to us; for all this trouble is due to him! But do thou carry him to the Thirsty Island and leave him there to die of thirst.' So Mersineh carried him to the island in question and would have returned and left him there; but she said in herself, 'By Allah, one of such beauty and grace deserveth not to die of thirst!' So she brought him to another island, abounding in trees and fruits and streams, and leaving him there, returned to her mistress and told her that she had set him on the Thirsty Island.

Meanwhile, King Salih sought for Jauhereh, but, finding her not, returned to his palace and said to his mother 'Where is my sister's son, King Bedr?' 'By Allah, O my son,' replied she, 'I know nothing of him! For, when he heard that you and King Es Semendel had come to blows and that strife and slaughter had betided between you, he took fright and fled.' When Salih heard this, he grieved for his nephew and said, ‘By Allah, O my mother, we have dealt negligently by King Bedr and I fear lest he perish or lest one of King Es Semendel’s soldiers or his daughter Jauhereh fall in with him. So should we come to shame with his mother and no good betide us from her, for that I took him without her leave.’ Then he despatched guards and scouts throughout the sea and elsewhere to seek for Bedr; but they could learn nothing of him: so they returned and told King Salih, wherefore grief and concern redoubled on him and his breast was straitened for King Bedr.

Meanwhile, Julnar abode many days in expectation of her son’s return; but he came not and she heard no news of him. So, when she was weary of waiting, she arose and going down into the sea, repaired to her mother, who rose to her and embraced her and kissed her, as did her cousins. Then she questioned her mother of King Bedr and she answered, saying, ‘O my daughter, he came hither with his uncle, who took jacinths and jewels and carrying them to King Es Semendel, demanded his daughter in marriage for thy son; but he consented not and offended against thy brother in words. Now I had sent Salih nigh upon a thousand horse and there befell strife between him and King Es Semendel; but God aided thy brother against him, and he slew his troops and took himself prisoner. Meanwhile, tidings of this reached thy son, and it would seem as if he feared for himself; wherefore he fled forth from us, without our will, and returned not, nor have we heard any news of him.’ Then Julnar enquired for King Salih and his mother said, ‘He is seated on the throne of kingship, in the stead of King Es Semendel, and hath sent in all directions to seek thy son and the princess Jauhereh.’

When Julnar heard this, she mourned sore for her son and was sore incensed against her brother Salih for that he had taken him and gone down with him into the sea, without her leave; and she said, ‘O my mother, I fear to tarry with thee, lest the state fall into disorder and the kingdom pass from our hands; for I came to thee without letting any know. Wherefore I deem well to return and govern the realm, till it please God to order our son’s affair for us. But look ye forget him not neither neglect his case; for, should he come to any harm, it would infallibly be the death of me, since I see the world only in him and delight but in his life.’ ‘With all my heart, O my daughter,' replied the old queen. 'Ask not what we suffer by reason of his loss and absence.' Then she sent to seek for Bedr, whilst Julnar returned to her kingdom, weeping-eyed and mournful-hearted, and indeed the world was straitened upon her and she was in evil case.

To return to King Bedr. He abode days and nights in the semblance of a bird, in the island where Mersineh had left him, eating of its fruits and drinking of its waters and knowing not whither to go nor how to fly; till, one day, there came a fowler to the island to catch somewhat wherewithal to get his living. He espied King Bedr in his form of a white bird, with red bill and feet, captivating the sight and bewildering the thought [with his beauty], and said in himself, 'Verily, yonder is a handsome bird: never saw I its like in make or beauty.' So he cast his net over Bedr and taking him, carried him to the town to sell him. On his way, one of the townsfolk accosted him and asked the price of the bird. Quoth the fowler 'What wilt thou do with him?' 'I will kill him and eat him, answered the other; whereupon said the fowler 'Who could have the heart to kill this bird and eat him? I mean to present him to the king, who will give me more than thou and will not kill him, but will divert himself by gazing on his beauty and grace, for in all my life, since I have been a fowler, I never saw his like among land or water fowl. The utmost thou wouldst give me for him would be a dirhem, and by the Great God, I will not sell him!'

Then he carried the bird up to the king's palace, and when the latter saw it, its beauty pleased him and the red colour of its feet and beak. So he sent an eunuch to buy it, who accosted the fowler and said to him, 'Wilt thou sell this bird?' 'No,' answered he; 'it is a gift from me to the king.' So the eunuch carried the bird to the king and told him what the man had said, and he took it and gave the fowler ten dinars, whereupon he kissed the earth and went away. Then the eunuch carried the bird to the king's palace and placing him ih a handsome cage, set meat and drink by him and hung him up.

When the king came down [from the throne], he said to the eunuch, 'Where is the bird? Bring it to me, that I may look upon it, for, by Allah, it is handsome!' So the eunuch brought the cage and set it before the king, who looked and seeing the food untouched, said, 'By Allah, I know not what it will eat, that I may feed it!' Then he called for food and they laid the tables and the king ate. When the bird saw the meat and froits and sweetmeats and what not, he ate of all that was before the king, whereat the latter and all the bystanders marvelled and the king said to his attendants, ‘In all my life I never saw a bird eat as doth this!’ Then he sent an eunuch to fetch his wife, that she might look upon the bird, and he went in to her and said, ‘O my lady, the king desireth thy presence, that thou mayst divert thyself with the sight of a bird he hath bought. It is goodly of aspect and is a wonder of the wonders of the age; for, when we set on the food, it flew down from its cage and perching on the table, ate of all that was thereon.’

So she came in haste; but, when she saw the bird, she veiled her face and turned to go away. The king followed her and said to her, ‘Why cost thou veil thy face, when there is none in presence save the eunuchs and women that wait on thee and thy husband?’ ‘O king,’ answered she, ‘this is no bird, but a man like thyself.’ ‘Thou liest,’ rejoined he. ‘This is too much of a jest. How should he be other than a bird?’ ‘By Allah,’ replied she, ‘I do not jest with thee nor do I tell thee aught but the truth; for this bird is King Bedr Basim, son of King Shehriman,

lord of the land of the Persians, and his mother is Julnar of the Sea.’ And how came he in this shape?’ asked the king; and she said, ‘The princess Jauhereh, daughter of King Es Semendel, hath enchanted him:’ and told him all that had befallen King Bedr from first to last; for this queen was the greatest enchantress of her day.

The king marvelled exceedingly at his wife’s words and conjured her, on his life, to free Bedr from his enchantment and not leave him in torment, saying, ‘May God the Most High cut off Jauhereh’s hand, for a foul witch as she is! How little is her piety and how great her craft and perfidy!’ Quoth the queen, ‘Do thou say to him, “O Bedr Basim, enter yonder closet!”’ So the king bade him enter the closet and he did so.

Then the queen veiled her face and taking in her hand a bowl of water, entered the closet, where she pronounced over the water certain words, that might not be uunderstood, and sprinkling the bird therewith, said to him, ‘By the virtue of these mighty names and holy verses and of the Most High God, Creator of heaven and earth, the

Quickener of the dead and Appointer of the means of livelihood and the terms of existence, quit this thy present form and return to that in which God created thee!' Hardly had she made an end of these words, when the bird trembled and became a man; and the king saw before him a handsome youth, than whom there was none goodlier on the face of the earth.

When Bedr found himself thus restored to his own shape, he said, 'There is no god but God and Mohammed is the apostle of God! Glory be to the Creator and Provider of all creatures and the Ordainer of their terms of life!' Then he kissed the king's hand and wished him long life, and the king kissed his hand and said to him, 'O Bedr, tell me thy history from beginning to end.' So he told him his whole story, concealing nought: and the king marvelled thereat and said to him, 'O Bedr, God hath delivered thee from the enchantment: but what hath thy judgment decided and what thinkest thou to do?' 'O king of the age,' answered Bedr, 'I desire of thy bounty that thou equip me a ship with a company of thy servants and all that is needful; for I have been long absent and fear lest the kingdom depart from me. And I misdoubt me my mother is dead of grief for my loss; for she knows not what is come of me nor whether I am alive or dead. Wherefore, I beseech thee, O king, to crown thy favours to me by granting me what I seek.'

The king was moved by Bedr's beauty and sweet speech and said, 'I hear and obey.' So he fitted him out a ship, which he furnished with all that was needful and mamled with a company of his servants; and Bedr set sail in it, after having taken leave of the king". They sailed ten days with a favouring wind; but, on the eleventh day, the sea became exceeding troubled, the ship rose and fell and the sailors availed not to govern her. So they drifted at the mercy of the waves, till the ship drove upon a rock and broke up and all on board were drowned, except Bedr, who got astride one of the planks of the vessel, after having been nigh upon death. The sea and the wind carried the plank along for three days, whilst he knew not whither he went and had no means of directing its motion; till, on the fourth day, the plank grounded with him on the sea-shore in sight of a white city, as it were a passing white dove, goodly of ordinance, with high towers and lofty walls, builded upon a tongue of land that jutted out into the sea and the waves beating against its walls.

When Bedr saw this, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy, for he was well-nigh dead with hunger and thirst, and dismounting from the plank, would have gone up the beach to the city; but there came down to him mules and asses and horses, in number as the sands [of the sea] and fell a-striking at him and hindering him from landing. So he swam round to the back of the city, where he landed and entering the place, found none therein and marvelled at this, saying, ‘I wonder to whom does this city belong, wherein is no king nor any inhabitant, and whence came the mules and asses and horses that hindered me from landing?’

Then he fared on at hazard, musing on his case, till he espied an old man, a grocer, [sitting at the door of his shop]. So he saluted him and the other returned his greeting and seeing him to be a handsome young man, said to him, ‘O youth, whence comest thou and what brings thee to this city?’ Bedr told him his story; at which the old man marvelled and said, ‘O my son, didst thou see any in thy way?’ ‘Indeed, O my father,’ answered Bedr, ‘I wondered to see the city void of people’ Quoth the grocer, ‘O my son, come up into the shop, lest thou perish.’ So Bedr went up into the shop and sat down; whereupon the old man set food before him, saying, ‘O my son, come within the shop; glory be to Him who hath preserved thee from yonder she-devil!’

Bedr was sore affrighted at the grocer’s words; but he ate his fill and washed his hands; then turned to his host and said to him, ‘O my lord, what is the meaning of thy words? Verily, thou hast made me fearful of this city and its people.’ ‘Know, O my son,’ replied the old man, ‘that this is the City of the Magicians and its queen is a sorceress and a mighty enchantress, as she were a she-devil, crafty and perfidious exceedingly. All the horses and mules and asses thou sawest were once men and strangers, like unto thee; for whoever enters the city, being a young man like thyself, this misbelieving witch takes him and abides with him forty days, after which she enchants him, and he becomes a horse or a mule or an ass, of those thou sawest on the sea-shore. So, when they saw thee about to land, they feared lest she should enchant thee, even as she had enchanted them, and signed to thee, as who should say, “Do not land,—” of their solicitude for thee, lest she should do with thee like as she had done with them. She possessed herself of this city [and took it] from its people by sorcery and her name is Queen Lab, which, being interpreted, meaneth in Arabic, “The Sun.”’

When Bedr heard what the old man said, he was sore affrighted and trembled like a wind-shaken reed, saying in himself, ‘Hardly am I delivered from the affliction wherein I was by reason of sorcery, when fate casts me into yet sorrier case!’ And he fell a-musing over his case and that which had betided him. When the grocer saw the violence of his fear, he said to him, ‘O my son, come, sit at the threshold of the shop and look upon yonder creatures and upon their dress and favour and that wherein they are by reason of enchantment, and fear not; for the queen and all in the city love and tender me and will not [do aught to] vex my heart or trouble my mind.’ So Bedr came out and sat at the shop-door, looking out upon the folk; and there passed by him creatures without number.

When the people saw him, they accosted the grocer and said to him, ‘O elder, is this thy captive and thy prey that [thou hast gotten] in these [latter] days?’ ‘He is my brother’s son,’ answered the old man. ‘I heard that his father was dead; so I sent for him, that I might quench with him the fire of my longing.’ Quoth they, ‘Indeed he is a comely youth; but we fear for him from Queen Lab, lest she turn on thee with treachery and take him from thee, for she loves handsome young men.’ ‘The queen will not gainsay my commandment,’ answered the grocer, ‘for she loves and tenders me; and when she knows that he is my brother’s son, she will not molest him nor afflict me in him, neither trouble my heart on his account.’ Then Bedr abode some months with the grocer, eating and drinking, and the old man loved him with an exceeding love.

One day, as he sat in the shop, as of his wont, there came up a thousand eunuchs, with drawn swords, mounted upon Arabian horses and clad in various kinds of raiment and girt with jewelled girdles and Indian swords. They saluted the grocer, as they passed, and were followed by a thousand damsels like moons, clad in various raiment of silks and satin, laced with gold and embroidered with jewels, and armed with spears. In their midst rode a young lady, mounted on an Arabian mare, saddled with a saddle of gold, set with various kinds of jewels and jacinths. The damsels saluted the grocer and passed OD, till up came Queen Lab, in great state, and seeing Bedr sitting in the shop, as he were the moon at its full, was amazed at his beauty and grace and became passionately enamoured of him.

So she alighted and sitting down by King Bedr, said to the old man, ‘Whence hadst thou this fair one?’ ‘He is my brother’s son,’ answered the grocer, ‘and is [but] lately come to me.’ Quoth Lab, ‘Let him be with me this night, that I may talk with him.’ And the old man said, ‘Wilt thou take him from me and not enchant him?’ ‘Yes,’ answered she, and he said, ‘Swear to me.’ So she swore to him that she would not enchant Bedr nor do him any hurt, and bidding bring him a handsome horse, saddled and bridled with a bridle of gold and decked with trappings all of gold, set with jewels, gave the old man a thousand dinars, saying, ‘Use this for shine occasions.’ Then she took Bedr and carried him off, as he were the full moon on its fourteenth night, whilst all the folk, seeing his beauty, were grieved for him and said, ‘By Allah, this youth deserves better than to be bewitched by yonder accursed sorceress!’

Bedr heard all they said, but was silent, committing his case to God the Most High, till they came to the gate of Queen Lab’s palace, where the emirs and eunuchs and notables of the realm dismounted and she bade the chamberlains dismiss her officers and grandees, who kissed the earth and went away, while she entered the palace with Bedr and her eunuchs and women. Here he found a palace, whose like he had never seen, for in its midst was a great basin full of water, amiddleward a vast garden. He looked at the garden and saw it full of birds of various kinds and colours, warbling in all manner tongues and voices, joyous and plaintive. Brief, [everywhere] he beheld great state and dominion and said, ‘Glory be to God, who of His bounty and clemency provided those who worship other than Himself!’

The queen sat down at a lattice-window overlooking the garden, on a couch of ivory, whereon was a high bed, and Bedr seated himself by her side. She kissed him and pressing him to her bosom, bade her women bring a table of food. So they brought a table of red gold, inlaid with pearls and jewels and spread with all manner meats, and the queen and Bedr ate, till they were satisfied, and washed their hands; after which the waiting-women set on flagons of gold and silver and crystal, together with all kinds of cowers and dishes of fruits and confections. Then the queen called for the singing-women, and there came ten damsels, as they were moons, with all manner of musical instruments in their hands. The queen filled a cup and drinking it off, filled another and gave it to Bedr, who took it and drank; and they ceased not to drink till they had enough. Then she bade the damsels sing, and they sang all manner airs, till it seemed to Bedr as if the palace danced with him for delight. His sense was ravished [with the music] and his breast expanded, and he forgot his strangerhood and said in himself, 'Verily, this queen is a handsome young woman, and I will never leave her; for her kingdom is vaster than mine and she is fairer than the princess Jauhereh.'

He ceased not to drink with her till nightfall, when they lighted the lamps and candles and diffused perfumes |from the censers]; nor did they leave drinking, till they were both drunken, and the singing-women sang the while. Then the queen lay down on a bed and dismissing her women, called to Bedr to come and lie with her. So he lay with her, in all delight of life, till the morning, when they entered the bath, that was in the palace, and washed; after which she clad him in the finest of raiment and called for wine. So the waiting-women brought the drinking-vessels and they drank. Presently, the queen arose and taking Bedr by the hand, sat down with him on chairs and commanded to bring food, of which they ate and washed their hands. Then the damsels brought the drinking-vessels and fruits and flowers and confections, and they ceased not to eat and drink, whilst the singing-girls sang various airs, till the evening.

They gave not over eating and drinking and merry-making forty days, at the end of which time the queen said to him, 'O Bedr, whether is the pleasanter, this place or the shop of shine uncle the grocer?' 'By Allah, O queen,' answered he, 'this is the pleasanter, for my uncle is but a poor man, who sells pot-herbs.' She laughed at his words, and they lay together in the pleasantest of case till the morning, when Bedr awoke and not finding Queen Lab by his side, was troubled at her absence and perplexed and said, 'Where can she have gone?' And indeed she was absent from him a great while and did not return; so he donned his clothes and went in search of her, but found her not and said in himself, ‘Haply, she is gone to the garden.’

So he went out into the garden and came to a running stream, beside which he saw a white she-bird and on the bank a tree full of birds of various colours, and stood and watched the birds, without their seeing him. Presently, a black bird flew down upon the white bird and fell to billing her, after the manner of doves; then he leapt on her and trod her three times, after which she changed and became a woman. Bedr looked at her and behold, it was Queen Lab. So he knew that the black bird was a man enchanted and that she was enamoured of him and had transformed herself into a bird, that he might lie with her; wherefore jealousy got hold upon him and he was wroth with the queen because of the black bird.

Then he returned to his place and lay down on the bed, and presently she came back and fell to kissing him and jesting with him; but he answered her not a word, being sore incensed against her. She saw what was to do with him and was assured that he had seen what befell between her and the black bird; yet she discovered to him nothing, but concealed that which ailed her. When he had done her occasion, he said to her, ‘O queen, give me leave to go to my uncle’s shop, for I long after him and have not seen him these forty days.’ ‘Go,’ answered she, ‘but do not tarry from me, for I cannot brook to be parted from thee, nor can I endure without thee an hour.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ said he and mounting, rode to the shop of the grocer, who received him with open arms and said to him, ‘How hast thou fared with yonder idolatress?’ ‘I was well, in health and prosperity,’ answered Bedr, ‘till this last night,’ — and told him what had passed in the garden.

When the old man heard this, he said, ‘Beware of her, for know that the birds upon the tree were all young men and strangers, whom she loved and enchanted and turned into birds. The black bird thou sawest was one of her officers, whom she loved with an exceeding love, till he cast his eyes upon one of her women, wherefore she changed him into a black bird; and whenas she longs after him, she transforms herself into a she-bird, that he may swive her, for she still loves him passionately. When she found that thou knewest of her case, she plotted evil against thee, for she loves thee not truly. But no harm shall betide thee from her, whilst I protect thee; so fear nothing; for I am a Muslim, by name Abdallah, and there is none in my day better skilled in magic than I; yet do I not make use of the art except upon constraint. Many a time have I put to nought the sorceries of yonder accursed witch and delivered folk from her, and I care not for her, for she can do me no hurt: nay, she fears me with an exceeding fear, as do all in the city who, like her, are magicians and serve the fire, not the Omnipotent King. So, to-morrow, come thou to me and tell me what she doth with thee; for this very night she will cast about to destroy thee, and l will tell thee how thou shalt do with her, that thou mayst save thyself from her malice.'

Then Bedr took leave of the old man and resumed to the palace, where he found the queen seated, awaiting him. When she saw him, she rose to welcome him and making him sit down, brought him meat and drink, and they ate till they had enough and washed their hands. after which she called for wine and they drank till the night was half spent, when she plied him with wine, till he was drunken and lost sense and wit. When she saw him thus, she said to him, 'I conjure thee by Allah and by that thou worshippest, if I ask thee a question, wilt thou answer me truly?' And he, being drunken, answered, 'Yes, O my lady.' 'O my lord and light of mine eyes,' said she, 'when thou awokest last night and foundest me not, thou soughtest me, till thou foundest me in the garden, in the guise of a white she-bird, and sawest a black bird leap on me and tread me. Now I will tell the truth of this matter. That black bird was one of my servants and I loved him with an exceeding love; but one day he cast his eyes on one of my women, wherefore jealousy get hold upon me and I transformed him by my spells into a black bird and the woman I put to death. Now I cannot endure without him an hour; so, whenever I lust after him, I change myself into a bird and go to him, that he may leap me and possess me, even as thou hast seen. Art thou not therefore incensed against me, because of this, albeit, by the virtue of the fire and the light and the shade and the heat, I love thee more than ever and have made thee my portion of the world?' He answered, being drunken, 'Thy conjecture of the cause of my anger is correct, and it had no cause other than this.'

With this, she embraced him and kissed him and made a show of love to him; then she lay down to sleep and he by her side. Presently she rose from the bed, and Bedr was awake; but he feigned sleep and watched stealthily, to see what she would do. She took out of a red bag somewhat red, which she planted in the midst of the chamber, and it became a stream, running like the sea; after which she took a handful of barley and strewing it on the ground, watered it with water from the stream, whereupon it became corn in the ear, and she gathered it and ground it into meal. Then she laid it by and returning to bed, lay down by Bedr till morning, when he arose and washed his face and asked her leave to visit his uncle. She gave him leave and he repaired to Abdallah and told him what had passed. The old man laughed and said, ‘By Allah, the misbelieving witch plotteth mischief against thee; but reck thou never of her.’

Then he gave him a pound of parched barley and said to him, ‘Take this with thee and know that, when she sees it, she will say to thee, “What is this and what wilt thou do with it?” Do thou answer, “Abundance of good things is good;” and eat of it. Then will she bring forth to thee parched grain of her own and bid thee eat of it; and do thou feign to her that thou eatest thereof, but eat of this instead and have a care lest thou eat of hers; for, if thou eat so much as a grain thereof, her spells will have power over thee and she will enchant thee and say to thee, “Leave this form of a man.” Whereupon thou wilt quit shine own shape for what shape she will. But, if thou eat not thereof, her enchantments will be avoided and no harm will betide thee therefrom; whereat she will be abashed to the utmost and say to thee, “I did but jest with thee.” Then will she make a show of love and affection to thee; but this will all be but hypocrisy and craft in her. And do thou also make a show of love to her and say to her, “O my lady and light of mine eyes, eat of this parched barley and see how delicious it is.” And if she eat thereof, though it be but a grain, take water in thy hand and cast it in her face, saying, “Quit this human form for—” what form soever thou wilt have her take. Then leave her and come to me and I will counsel thee what to do.’

Bedr took leave of him and returning to the palace, went in to the queen, who said to him, ‘Welcome and fair welcome to thee!’ And she rose and kissed him, saying, ‘Thou hast tarried long from me, O my lord.’ ‘I have been with my uncle,’ answered he, ‘and he gave me to eat of this parched barley.’ Quoth she, ‘We have better than that.’ Then she laid his parched grain in one dish and hers in another and said to him, ‘Eat of this, for it is better than thine.’ So he feigned to eat of it, and when she thought he had done so, she took water in her hand and sprinkled him therewith, saying, ‘Quit this form, vile wretch that thou art, and take that of a one-eyed mule, foul of favour!’ But he changed not; which when she saw, she went up to him and kissed him between the eyes, saying, ‘O my beloved, I did but jest with thee; bear me no malice because of this.’

‘O my lady,’ answered he, ‘I bear thee no whit of malice; nay, I am assured that thou lovest me: but eat of this my parched barley.’ So she took a mouthful of Abdallah’s barley and ate it; but no sooner had she swallowed it than she was convulsed; and Bedr took water in his hand and cast it in her face, saying, ‘Quit this human form and take that of a dapple mule.’ No sooner had he spoken than she found herself changed into a mule, whereupon the tears rolled down her cheeks and she fell to rubbing her muzzle against his feet. Then he would have bridled her, but she would not take the bit; so he left her and going to the grocer, told him what had passed. Abdallah gave him a bridle and bade him bridle her therewith. So he returned to the palace, and when she saw him, she came up to him and he set the bit in her mouth and mounting her, rode to the grocer’s shop.

When the old man saw her, he rose and said to her, ‘God the Most High confound thee, O accursed woman!’ Then said he to Bedr, ‘O my son, there is no more abiding for thee in this city; so ride her and fare with her whither thou wilt and beware lest thou commit the bridle to any.’ Bedr thanked him and taking leave of him, fared on three days, without ceasing, till he drew near another city and there met him an old man, gray-headed and comely, who said to him, ‘Whence comest thou, O my son?’ ‘From the city of yonder enchantress,’ answered Bedr; and the old man said, ‘Thou art my guest this night.’

Bedr consented and went with him; but by the way they met an old woman, who wept, when she saw the mule, and said, ‘There is no god but God! Verily, this mule resembles my son’s mule, which is dead, and my heart aches for her; so, God upon thee, O my lord, do thou sell her to me!’ ‘By Allah, O my mother,’ answered he, ‘I cannot sell her.' But she said, 'God on thee, do not refuse me, for my son will surely die, except I buy him this mule.' And she importuned him, till he said, 'I will not sell her save for a thousand dinars,' saying in himself, 'Whence should this old woman get a thousand diners?' Thereupon she brought out from her girdle a purse, containing a thousand diners, which when Bedr saw, he said, 'O my mother, I did but jest with thee; I cannot sell her.' But the old man looked at him hard said, 'O my son, none may lie in this city, for whoso lieth they put to death'

So Bedr lighted down from the mute and delivered her to the old woman, who drew the bit from her mouth and taking water in her hand, sprinkled the mule therewith, saying, 'O my daughter, quit this form and return to that wherein thou wast aforetime!' Whereupon she was straightway restored to her original shape and the two women embraced and kissed each other. So Bedr knew that the old woman was Queen Lab's mother and that he had been tricked and would have fled; but the old woman gave a loud whistle and there appeared before her an Afrit, as he were a great mountain, whereat Bedr was affrighted and stood still. Then the old woman mounted on the Afrit's back, taking her daughter behind her and Bedr before her, and the Afrit flew off with them; nor was it long before they were in the palace of Queen Lab, who sat down on the throne of kingship and said to Bedr, 'Knave that thou art, now am I come hither and have attained to that I desired, and I will show thee how I will do with thee and with yonder old man the grocer! How many favours have I done him! Yet he cloth me ill; for thou hadst not attained thine end but by his intervention.' Then she took water and sprinkled him therewith, saying, 'Quit the form wherein thou art for that of a foul-favoured bird, the foulest of all birds!' And immediately he became a foul-favoured bird; and she set him in a cage and cut off from him meat and drink; but one of her women took compassion on him and gave him to eat and drink, without her knowledge.

One day, the damsel took her mistress at unawares and going forth the palace, repaired to the old grocer, to whom she told the whole case, saying, 'The queen is purposed to make an end of thy brother's son.' He thanked her and said, 'Needs must I take the city from her and make thee queen thereof in her stead.' Then he gave a loud whistle and there came forth to him an Afrit with four wings, to whom said he, Carry this damsel to the city of Julnar of the Sea and her mother Ferasheh, for they two are the most powerful magicians on the face of the earth.’ And he said to the damsel, ‘When thou comest thither, tell them that King Bedr Basim is Queen Lab’s captive.’

Then the Afrit took her up and flying off with her, set her down, in a little while, upon the roof of Queen Julnar’s palace. So she descended and going in to the queen, kissed the earth and told her what had befallen her son, whereupon Julnar rose to her and thanked her and entreated her with honour Then she let beat the drums in the city and acquainted her people and the grandees of her realm with the good news that King Bedr was found; after which she and her mother Ferasheh and her brother Salih assembled the tribes of the Jinn and the warriors of the sea; for the kings of the Jinn obeyed them, since the taking of King Es Semendel. Then they all flew up into the air and lighting down on the city of the sorceress, sacked the town and the palace and slew all the misbelievers therein in the twinkling of an eye.

Then said Julnar to the damsel, ‘Where is my son?’ And the girl brought her the cage and showing her the bird within, said, ‘This is thy son.’ So Julnar took him forth of the cage and sprinkled him with water, saying, ‘Quit this form for that wherein thou west aforetime.’ Nor had she made an end of her speech ere he shook and became a man as before; whereupon his mother embraced him and he wept sore. On like wise did his uncle Salih and his grandmother and the daughters of his uncle and fell to kissing his hands and feet. Then Julnar sent for Abdallah and thanking him for his kind dealing with her son, married him to the damsel, whom he had despatched to her with news of him, and made him king of the city. Moreover, she summoned those

who survived of the inhabitants of the city, (and they were Muslims), and made them swear fealty to him; after which she and her company took leave of him and returned to their own city. The townsfolk came out to meet them with drums beating, and decorated the city three days and held high festival, of the greatness of their joy for the return of their king.

After this Bedr said to his mother, ‘O my mother, there remains but that I marry and we be all united.’ ‘Thou sayst well, O my son,’ answered she; ‘but wait till we enquire who befitteth thee among the daughters of the kings.’ And his grandmother and the daughters of his uncle all said, ‘O Bedr, we will help thee to thy wish forthright.’ Then each of them arose and went forth a-questing in the lands, whilst Julnar sent out her waiting-women on the backs of Afrits, bidding them leave not a city nor a king’s palace, without noting all the handsome girls that were therein. But, when Bedr saw their endeavour in the matter, he said to Juloar, ‘O my mother leave this thing, for none will content me but Jauhereh daughter of King Es Semendel; for that she is indeed a jewel, according to her name.’ ‘I know that which thou seekest,’ replied Julnar and sent forthright to fetch King Es Semendel. As soon as he was present, she sent for Bedr and acquainted him with the king’s coming, whereupon he went in to him.

When Es Semenael was aware of his presence, he rose to him and saluted him and bade him welcome; and Bedr demanded of him his daughter in marriage. She is shine handmaid and at thy service and disposition,’ replied the king and despatched some of his officers to fetch her. So they flew up into the air and returned, after awhile, with the princess, who, as soon as she saw her father, went up to him and embraced him. Then said he to her, ‘Know, O my daughter, that I have given thee in marriage to this magnanimous king and valiant lion, Bedr Basim, son of Queen Julnar, for that he is the goodliest and most power-ful of the folk of his day and the most exalted of them in degree and the noblest in rank; he befitteth none but thee and thou none but him.’ ‘O my father,’ answered she, ‘I may not gainsay thee; do as thou wilt, for indeed chagrin and despite are at an end and I am one of his handmaids.’

So they summoned the Cadis and the witnesses, who drew up the marriage contract between King Bedr and the princess Jauhereh, and the townsfolk decorated the city and beat the drums in token of rejoicing. Moreover, they released all who were in the prisons, whilst the king clothed the widows and the orphans and bestowed dresses of honour upon the grandees and emirs and notables; and they made bride-feasts and held high festival night and morn ten days, at the end of which time they unveiled the bride, in nine different dresses, before Bedr, who bestowed a dress of honour upon King Es Semendel and sent him back to his country and people and kinsfolk. And they ceased not from the most delightsome of life and the most solaceful of days till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies; and this is the end of their story, may God have mercy on them all!

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

KING MOHAMMED BEN SEBAÏK AND THE MERCHANT HASSAN.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, a king of the kings of the Persians, by name Mohammed ben Sebaïk, who ruled over the land of Khorassan and used every year to go a-raiding into the countries of the unbelievers in Hind and Sind and China and the lands beyond the river [Oxus] and other the lands of the barbarians and others. He was a just, valiant and generous king and loved table-talk and recitals and verses and anecdotes and tales and entertaining stories and traditions of the ancients. Whoso knew a rare story and related it to him, he would bestow on him a sumptuous dress of honour and clothe him from head to foot and mount him on a horse saddled and bridled and give him a thousand dinars, besides other great gifts; and the man would take all this and go his way.

One day there came an old man before him and related to him a rare story, which pleased the king and he ordered him a magnificent present, amongst other things a thousand dinars of Khorassan and a horse with all its trappings. After this, the report of the king's munificence was blazed abroad in all countries and there heard of him a man by name Hassan the Merchant, who was generous, open-handed and learned and an accomplished poet and scholar. Now the king had an envious vizier, a compend of ill, loving none, rich nor poor, and whoso came before the king and he gave him aught, he envied him and said, 'This fashion wasteth wealth and ruineth the country; and this is the king's wont.' But this was nought but envy and despite in this vizier.

Presently, the king heard of Hassan and sending for him, said to him, 'O Hassan, this vizier of mine vexeth and thwarteth me concerning the money I give to poets and story-tellers and glee-men, and I would have thee tell me a goodly history and a rare story, such as I have never heard. If it please me, I will give thee lands galore, with their strong places, in free tenure, in addition to thy fiefs; besides which I will make thee my chief vizier and put my whole kingdom in thy hands; so shalt thou sit on my right hand and rule my people. But, if thou bring me not that which I desire, I will take all that is in thy hand and banish thee my kingdom.’ ‘Hearkening and obedience [are due] to our lord the king,’ replied Hassan. ‘But thy slave beseecheth thee to have patience with him a year; then will he tell thee a story, such as thou hast never in thy life heard, neither hath other than thou heard its like nor a better than it.’ Quoth the king, ‘I grant thee a whole year’s delay.’ And he called for a splendid dress of honour, in which he clad Hassan, saying, ‘Keep thy house and mount not to horse, neither go nor come for a year’s time, till thou bring me that I seek of thee. If thou bring it, thou shalt have especial favour and mayst count on that which I have promised thee; but, an thou bring it not, thou art not of us nor we of thee.’ And Hassan kissed the ground before the king and went out from the presence.

Then he chose out five of the best of his servants, who could all write and read and were learned, intelligent and accomplished, and gave each of them five thousand dinars, saying, ‘I reared you but against the like of this day: so do ye help me to accomplish the king’s desire and deliver me from his hand.’ ‘What wilt thou [have us] do?’ said they. ‘Our lives be thy ransom!’ Quoth he, ‘I wish you to go each to a different country and seek out diligently the learned and erudite and accomplished and the tellers of rare stories and marvellous histories and do your endeavour to procure me the story of Seif el Mulouk. If ye find it with any one, pay him what price soever he asks for it, though he seek a thousand dinars: give him what ye may and promise him the rest and bring me the story; for whoso happens on it and brings it to me, I will bestow on him a sumptuous dress of honour and largesse galore, and there shall be to me none dearer than he.’

Then said he to one of them, ‘Go thou to Hind and Sind and all their provinces and dependencies.’ To another, ‘Go thou to the land of the Persians and to China.’ To the third, ‘Go thou to the land of Khorassan.’ To the fourth, ‘Go thou to Northern Africa and all its coasts and districts.’ And to the fifth, ‘Go thou to Egypt and Syria.’ Moreover, he chose them out an auspicious day and said to them, ‘Set forth this day and be diligent in the accomplishment of my errand and be not slothful, though the quest cost you your lives.’ So they took leave of him and departed, each taking the direction prescribed to him. At the end of four months, four of them returned and told their master that they had searched towns and cities and countries for the thing he sought, but had found nought thereof, wherefore his breast was straitened.

Meanwhile, the fifth servant journeyed till he came to the land of Syria and entered Damascus, which he found a pleasant and safe city, abounding in trees and streams and fruits and birds chanting the praises of God the One, the All-powerful, Creator of Night and Day. Here he abode some days, enquiring for his master's desire, but none answered him and he was on the point of departing thence to another place, when he met a young man running and stumbling in his skirts. So he said to him, 'Whither runnest thou in such haste?' And he answered, saying, 'There is an elder here, a man of learning, who every day at this time takes his seat on a stool and relates tales and anecdotes and entertaining stories, whereof never heard any the like; and I am running to get a place near him and fear I shall find no room, because of the much people.' Quoth the stranger, 'Take me with thee.' And the young man said, 'Make haste.'

So he shut his door and hastened with him to the place of recitation, where he saw an old man of a bright countenance seated on a stool, holding forth to the people. He sat down near him and addressed himself to listen to his story, till the going down of the sun, when the old man made an end of his tale and the people dispersed from about him; whereupon the messenger accosted him and saluted him, and he returned his salutation and greeted him with the utmost honour and courtesy. Then said the messenger to him, 'O my lord sheikh, thou art a comely and reverend man, and thy discourse is goodly; but I would fain ask thee of somewhat.' 'Ask of what thou wilt,' replied the old man. Then said the other, 'Hast thou the story of Seif el Mulouk and Bediya el Jemal?' 'And who told thee of this story?' asked the old man. 'None told me of it,' answered the messenger; 'but I am come from a far country, in quest of this story, and if thou have it and wilt, of thy bounty and charity, impart it to me and make it an alms to me, of the generosity of thy nature, I will pay thee whatever thou askest for its price; for, had I my life in my hand and sacrificed it to thee for this thing, yet were it pleasing to my heart.' 'Be of good cheer,' replied the old man; 'thou shalt have it; but this is no story that one telleth in the beaten way, nor do I give it to every one.’ ‘By Allah, O my lord,’ cried the other, ‘do not grudge it me, but ask of me what price thou wilt.’ ‘If thou wish for the story,’ replied the old man, ‘give me a hundred dinars and thou shalt have it; but upon five conditions.’

When the messenger knew that the old man had the story and was willing to sell it to him, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and said, ‘I will give thee the hundred dinars and ten to boot and take it on the conditions of which thou speakest.’ ‘Then go and fetch the money,’ said the old man, ‘and take that thou seekest.’ So the messenger kissed his hands and returned, joyful and happy, to his lodging, where he laid a hundred and ten dinars in a purse he had by him. As soon as it was morning, he put on his clothes and taking the dinars, repaired to the story-teller, whom he found seated at the door of his house. So he saluted him and the other returned his salute. Then he gave him the money and the old man took it and carrying the messenger into his house, made him sit down. Then he set before him inkhorn and pen and paper and giving him a book, said to him, ‘Write out what thou seekest of the story of Seif el Mulouk from this book.’ So the man fell to work and wrote till he had made an end of his copy, when he read it to the old man, and he corrected it and said to him, ‘Know, O my son, that my conditions are that thou tell not this story in the beaten road nor before women and girls nor to black slaves nor feather-heads nor boys; but read it only before kings and amirs and viziers and men of learning, such as expounders [of the Koran] and others.’ The messenger accepted the conditions and kissing the old man’s hand, took leave of him.

Then he set out the same day, glad and joyful, and fared on diligently, of the excess of his contentment, for that he had gotten the story of Seif el Mulouk, till he came to his own country, when he despatched his servant to carry the good news to his master and say to him, ‘Thy servant is come back in safety and hath attained his desire and his aim.’ (Now there wanted but ten days of the term appointed between Hassan and the king.) Then he himself went in to him and told him all that had befallen him and gave him the book containing the story of Seif el Mulouk and Bediya el Jemal, whereat Hassan rejoiced with an exceeding joy and bestowed on him all the clothes he had on and gave him ten thoroughbred horses and the like number of camels and mules and three black and ten white slaves.

Then the messenger rested in his privy chamber, whilst Hassan took the book and copied out the story plainly in his own hand; after which he presented himself before the king and said to him, ‘O king, I have brought thee a story and a rare and pleasant relation, whose like none ever heard.’ When the king heard this, he sent forthright for all the amirs, who were men of understanding, and all the learned doctors and folk of erudition and culture and poets and wits, and Hassan sat down and read the story before the king, who marvelled thereat and approved it, as did all who were present, and they showered gold and silver and jewels upon Hassan. Moreover, the king bestowed on him a sumptuous dress of honour of the richest of his raiment and gave him a great city with its castles and suburbs; and he appointed him one of his chief viziers and seated him on his right hand. Then he caused the scribes write the story in letters of gold and lay it up in his privy treasuries; and whenever, thereafterward, his breast was straitened, he would summon Hassan and he would read him the story, which was as follows:

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

Story of Prince Seif el Mulouk and the Princess Bediya el Jemal.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, a king in Egypt called Aasim ben Sefwan, a liberal and beneficent prince, venerable and majestic. He owned many cities and strengths and fortresses and troops and warriors and had a vizier named Faris ben Salih, and he and all his subjects worshipped the sun and the fire, instead of the All-powerful King, the Glorious, the Victorious. Now this king was become a very old man, wasted with age and sickness and decrepitude; for he had lived a hundred and fourscore years and had no child, male or female, by reason whereof he was ever in care and concern night and day.

One day, he was sitting on the throne of his kingship with his amirs and viziers and captains and grandees in attendance on him, according to their wont, in their several stations, and whenever there came in an amir, who had with him a son or two sons, the king envied him and said in himself, ‘Every one of these is happy and rejoiceth in his children, whilst I, I have no child, and to-morrow I shall die and leave my kingdom and throne and lands and treasures, and strangers will take them and none will bear me in memory nor will there abide any remembrance of me in the world.’ Then he became drowned in the sea of melancholy thought and for the much thronging of sorrows and anxieties upon his heart, he shed tears and descending from his throne, sat down upon the ground, weeping and humbling himself [in supplication to God].

When the vizier saw him do thus, he cried out to the notables of the realm and others who were present in the assembly, saying, ‘Go to your houses and rest till the king recover from that which aileth him.’ So they went away, leaving none in the presence save the vizier, who, as soon as the king came to himself, kissed the earth before him and said, ‘O king of the age, what meaneth this weeping? Tell me who hath transgressed against thee or thwarted thee of the kings or castellans or amirs or grandees, that we may all fall on him and tear his soul from his body.’ But he spoke not neither raised his head; whereupon the vizier kissed the earth before him a second time and said to him, ‘O king of the age, I am even as thy son and thy slave, and indeed I have reared thee on my shoulders; yet know I not the cause of thy grief and chagrin and distress and of this thy case; and who should know but I or who should stand in my stead before thee? Tell me therefore the cause of this thy weeping and affliction.’ Nevertheless, the king spoke not neither opened his mouth nor raised his head, but ceased not to weep and cry aloud and lament with an exceeding lamentation and say, ‘Alas!’

The vizier took patience with him awhile, after which he said to him, ‘Except thou tell me the cause of this thine affliction, I will slay myself before thine eyes, rather than see thee thus distressed.’ Then King Aasim raised his head and wiping away his tears, said, ‘O vizier of good counsel, leave me to my grief and my affliction, for that which is in my heart of sorrow sufficeth me.’ But Faris said, ‘O king, tell me the cause of thy weeping. It may be God will appoint thee relief at thy hands.’ ‘O vizier,’ replied the king, ‘I weep not for treasure nor horses nor aught else, but that I am become an old man, nigh upon a hundred and fourscore years of age, and have not been blessed with a child, male or female: so, when I die, they will bury me and my trace will be blotted out and my name cut off and strangers will take my throne and kingship and none will have me in remembrance.’

‘O king of the age,’ rejoined the vizier, ‘I am older than thou by a hundred years, yet have I never been blest with a child and cease not day and night from care and concern; so how shall we do, I and thou?’ And Aasim said, ‘O vizier, hast thou no device or shift in this matter?’ Quoth the vizier, ‘Know, O king, that I have heard of a king in the land of Seba by name Solomon son of David, who pretendeth to prophetship and [avoucheth that he] hath a mighty Lord who can do all things and whose kingdom is in the heavens and [who hath dominion] over all mankind and birds and beasts and over the wind and the Jinn. Moreover, he knoweth the language of all birds and of all [other] created things; and withal, he calleth all creatures to the worship of his Lord and discourseth to them of their service. So let us send him a messenger in the king’s name and seek of him our desire, beseeching him to make petition to his Lord, that He vouchsafe each of us a child. If his faith be true and his Lord avail to do all things, He will assuredly bless each of us with a child, male or female, and if the thing betide thus, we will enter his faith and worship his Lord; else will we take patience and devise us another shift.'

Quoth the king, 'This is well seen, and my heart is lightened by this thy speech; but where shall we find a messenger befitting this grave matter, for that this Solomon is no little king and the approaching him is no light matter? Indeed, I will send him none, on the like of this affair, but thyself, for thou art old and versed in all manner of affairs and the like of thee is the like of myself; wherefore I desire that thou weary thyself and journey to him and occupy thyself diligently with [the accomplishment of] this matter, so haply solace may be at thy hand.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the vizier; 'but rise thou forthright and seat thyself upon the throne, so the amirs and grandees of the realm and officers and [other] the folk may enter [and apply themselves] to thy service, as of their wont; for they all went forth from thee, troubled at heart on thine account. Then will I go out and set forth on the king's errand.'

So the king arose forthright and sat down on the throne of his kingship, whilst the vizier went forth and said to the chief chamberlain, 'Bid the folk proceed to their service, as of their wont.' So the troops and captains and notables of the kingdom entered, after they had spread the tables, and ate and drank and withdrew, according to their wont, after which the vizier went out from King Aasim and repairing to his own house, equipped himself for travel and returned to the king, who opened to him the treasuries and provided him with rarities and things of price and rich stuffs and gear without a match, such as nor amir nor vizier could avail to possess. Moreover, he charged him to accost Solomon with reverence, foregoing him with the salutation; 'then,' continued he, 'do thou ask of him thy need, and if he assent, return to us in haste, for I shall be awaiting thee.' Accordingly, the vizier took the presents and setting out, fared on night and day, till he came within fifteen days' journey of Seba.

Meanwhile God (blessed and exalted be He!) spoke unto Solomon and said to him, 'O Solomon, the King of Egypt sendeth unto thee his chief vizier, with a present of such and such rarities and things of price; so do thou despatch thy vizier Asef ben Berkhiya to him, to receive him with honour and meet him at the halting-places with victual; and when he cometh to thy presence, say to him, "The king [thy master] hath sent thee in quest of this and that and thy business is thus and thus." Then do thou propound to him the faith.' Whereupon Solomon bade his vizier take a company of his retainers [and go forth] to meet the Vizier of Egypt with honour and sumptuous provision at the halting-places. So Asef made ready all that was needed for their entertainment and setting out, fared on till he fell in with Faris and saluted him, entreating him and his company with exceeding honour. Moreover, he brought them victual and provender at the halting-places and said to them, 'Welcome and fair welcome to the coming guests! Rejoice in the certain accomplishment of your desire! Be your souls glad and your eyes solaced and your breasts expanded!'

Quoth Faris in himself, 'Who acquainted him with this?' And he said to Asef, 'O my lord, and who gave thee to know of us and our errand?' 'It was Solomon, son of David (on whom be peace!), told us of this,' answered Asef. 'And who,' asked Faris, 'told our lord Solomon?' 'The Lord of the heaven and the earth told him, the God of all creatures,' replied Asef. Quoth Faris, 'This is none other than a mighty God;' and Asef said, 'And do ye not worship Him?' 'We worship the sun,' answered Faris, 'and prostrate ourselves thereto.' 'O Vizier Faris,' said Asef, 'the sun is but a star of the stars created by God (blessed and exalted be He!). And God forbid that it should be a Lord! For that whiles it appeareth and whiles is absent, but our Lord is [ever] present and never absent and He can do all things.'

Then they journeyed on awhile till they came to the land of Seba and drew near the throne of Solomon son of David, who commanded his hosts of men and Jinn and beasts to rank themselves in their road. So the beasts of the sea and the elephants and leopards and lynxes [and other beasts of the land] ranged themselves on either side of the way, after their several kinds, whilst the Jinn drew out in two ranks in like manner, appearing all to [mortal] sight, without concealment, in divers gruesome forms. So they lined the road on either hand, and the birds spread out their wings over them, to shade them, warbling one to the other in all manner voices and notes.

When the people of Egypt came to this terrible array, they were adread of them and dared not proceed; but Asef said to them, ‘Pass on amidst them and fear them not: for they are subjects of Solomon son of David, and none of them will harm you.’ So saying, he entered between the ranks, followed by all the folk and amongst them the Vizier of Egypt and his company, fearful: and they ceased not to fare on till they reached the city, where they lodged the embassy in the guest-house and entertained them sumptuously, entreating them with the utmost honour, for the space of three days.

Then they carried them before Solomon, prophet of God (on whom be peace!), and they would have kissed the earth before him; but he forbade them, saying, ‘It befits not that a man prostrate himself save to God (to whom belong might and majesty!), Creator of heaven and earth and all other things; wherefore, whosoever of you hath a mind to stand, let him stand, but let none stand to do me worship.’ So they obeyed him and the Vizier Faris and some of his servants sat down, whilst certain of the lesser sort stood to wait on him. When they had sat awhile, the servants spread the tables and they all, men and beasts, ate till they had enough.

Then Solomon bade Faris expound his errand, that it might be accomplished, saying, ‘Speak and conceal nothing of that on account whereof thou art come; for I know wherefore ye come and what is your errand. It is thus and thus.’ And he told him that which had passed between himself and his master, King Aasim; after which he said to him, ‘Is this that I have told thee the truth, O vizier?’ ‘O prophet of God,’ replied Faris, ‘this thou hast said is indeed truth and verity; but none was with the king and myself, when we discoursed of this matter nor was any ware of our case; who then told thee of all these things?’ ‘My Lord told me,’ answered Solomon, ‘He who knoweth the perfidy of the eye and what is hidden in the breasts.’ Quoth Faris, ‘O prophet of God, verily this is none other than a noble and mighty Lord, able unto all things.’ And he and his company embraced the faith of Islam.

Then said Solomon to him, ‘Thou hast with thee such and such presents and rarities.’ And Faris answered. ‘Yes.’ Quoth the prophet, ‘I accept them all and give them unto thee. So do ye rest thou and thy company, in the place where you have been lodging, so the fatigue of the journey may cease from you; and to-morrow, thine errand shall be accomplished to the uttermost, if it be the will of God the Most High, Lord of heaven and earth and Creator of all creatures.'

So Faris returned to his lodging and on the morrow presented himself before the lord Solomon, who said to him, 'When thou returnest to King Aasim, do ye both go forth to such a place, where ye will find a tree. Mount upon it and sit silent until the mid-hour between the prayer of noon and that of the afternoon, when the mid-day heat hath subsided; then descend and look at the foot of the tree, whence ye will see two serpents issue, one with an ape's head and the other with a head like that of an Afrit. Shoot them with arrows and kill them; then cut off a span's length from their heads and the like from their tails and throw it away. The rest of the flesh cook and cook well and give it to your wives to eat: then lie with them that night and by God's leave, they will conceive and bear male children.' Moreover, he gave him a ring and a signet and a sword and a wrapper containing a tunic embroidered with gold and jewels, saying, 'O Vizier Faris, when your sons grow up to man's estate, give them each two of these things.' Then said he, 'In the name of God! May the Most High accomplish your desire! And now nothing remaineth for you but to depart, [relying] on the blessing of God the Most High, for the king looketh for thy return night and day and his eye is ever on the road.'

So Faris took leave of the prophet and kissing his hands, set forth at once on his homeward journey, rejoicing in the accomplishment of his errand. He travelled on with all diligence till he drew near to Cairo, when he despatched one of his servants to acquaint King Aasim with his return and the successful issue of his journey; which when the king heard, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy, he and his grandees and officers, especially in the vizier's safe return. When they met, the vizier dismounted and kissing the earth before the king, gave him the glad news of the complete achievement of his wish; after which he expounded the true faith to him, and the king and all his people embraced Islam.

Then said Aasim to his vizier, 'Go home and rest this night and a week to boot; then go to the bath and come to me, that I may take counsel with thee of what we shall do.' So Faris kissed the earth and withdrew, with his servants and attendants, to his house, where he rested eight days; after which he repaired to the king and related to him all that had passed between Solomon and himself, adding, ‘Do thou rise and go forth with me alone.’ So the king and the vizier took two bows and two arrows and repairing to the tree indicated by Solomon, climbed up into it and sat there, without speaking, till near upon the hour of afternoon prayer, when they descended and looking upon the roots of the tree saw two serpents issue thence. The king looked at them and admired them, marvelling to see them ringed with collars of gold about their necks, and said to Faris, ‘O vizier, these snakes have golden collars! By Allah, this is a rare thing! Let us take them and set them in a cage and keep them to look upon.’ But the vizier said, ‘These hath God created for their use; so do thou shoot one and I will shoot the other.’

Accordingly, they shot at them with arrows and killed them; after which they cut off a span’s length of their heads and tails and threw it away. Then they carried the rest to the king’s palace, where they called the cook and said to him, ‘Dress this meat daintily, with onion-sauce and spices, and ladle it out into two platters and bring them hither at such an hour, without fail.’ So the cook took the meat and went with it to the kitchen, where he cooked it and dressed it in skilful fashion with fine onion-sauce; after which he ladled it out into two platters and set them before the king and the vizier, who took each a dish and gave their wives to eat of the meat. Then they lay that night with them, and by the good pleasure of God (blessed and exalted be He!) and His will and ordinance, they both conceived forth right.

The king abode three months, troubled in mind and saying in himself, ‘I wonder whether this thing will prove true or not;’ till one day, as the queen was sitting, the child stirred in her belly and she felt a pain and her colour changed. So she knew that she was with child and calling the chief of her eunuchs, bade him ‘Go to the king, wherever he may be, and say to him, “O king of the age, I bring thee the glad tidings that our lady’s pregnancy is become manifest, for the child stirs in her belly.”’ So the eunuch went out in haste, rejoicing, and finding the king alone, with his head on his hand, pondering this thing, kissed the earth before him and acquainted him with his wife’s pregnancy. When the king heard this, he sprang to his feet and in the excess of his joy, he kissed the eunuch's head and hands and pulling off the clothes he had on, gave them to him. Moreover, he said to those who were present in his assembly, 'Whoso loveth me, let him bestow largesse upon this man.' And they gave him of money and jewels and jacinths and horses and mules and gardens what was beyond count or reckoning.

At that moment, in came the Vizier Faris and said to Aasim, 'O king of the age, I was sitting at home alone but now, absorbed in thought, pondering the matter of the pregnancy and saying in myself, "I wonder if this thing be true and whether Khatoun have conceived or not!" when, behold, an eunuch came in to me and brought me the glad news that my wife was indeed pregnant, for that her colour was changed and the child stirred in her belly: whereupon, in my joy, I pulled off all my clothes and gave them to him, together with a thousand dinars, and made him chief of the eunuchs.' 'O vizier,' rejoined the king, 'God (blessed and exalted be He!) hath, of His grace and bounty and goodness, made gift to us of the true faith and brought us out of darkness into light and hath been bountiful to us, of His favour and beneficence; wherefore I am minded to solace the folk and cause them to rejoice.' Quoth Faris, 'Do what thou wilt.'

Then said the king, 'O vizier, go down forthright and set free all who are in the prisons, both debtors and criminals, and whoso transgresseth after this, we will requite according to his desert. Moreover, we forgive the people three years' taxes, and do thou set up kitchens all round about the city walls and bid the cooks hang over the fire all kinds of cooking pots and cook all manner meats nor leave cooking night or day, and let all comers, both of the people of the city and of the neighbouring countries, far and near, eat and drink and carry to their houses. And do thou command the people to hold holiday and decorate the city seven days and shut not the taverns night nor day.'

The vizier did as the king bade him and the folk donned their richest apparel and decorated the city and citadel and fortifications, after the goodliest fashion, and passed their time in feasting and sporting and making merry, till the days of the queen's pregnancy were accomplished and she was taken, one night, with the pains of labour hard before dawn. Then the king bade summon all the astrologers and mathematicians and men of learning in the town, and they assembled and sat awaiting the throwing of a bead in at the window, which was to be a signal to them, as well as to the nurses and attendants, that the child was born. Presently, the queen gave birth to a boy like a piece of the full moon, and the astrologers took his altitude and made their calculations and drew his horoscope.

Then they rose and kissing the earth before the king, gave him the joyful tidings that the new-born child was of happy augury and born under a fortunate aspect, 'but,' added they, 'in the first of his life there will befall him a thing that we fear to name to the king.' Quoth Aasim, 'Speak and fear not;' so they said, 'O king, this boy will leave this [his native] land and journey in strange countries and suffer shipwreck and hardship and captivity and distress, and indeed he hath before him many perils and stresses; but, in the end, he shall win free of them and attain to his desire and live the happiest of lives the rest of his days, ruling over subjects and countries and having dominion in the land, in despite of enemies and enviers.'

When the king heard the astrologers' words, he said, 'The matter is obscure; but all that God the Most High decreeth unto the creature of good and bad cometh to pass and needs must a thousand solaces betide him from this day to that.' So he paid no heed to their words, but bestowed on them dresses of honour, as well upon all who were present, and dismissed them; when, behold, in came the vizier, rejoicing, and kissed the earth before the king, saying, 'Good tidings, O king! My wife hath but now given birth to a son, as he were a piece of the moon.' 'O vizier,' replied Aasim, 'go, bring thy wife and child hither, that she may abide with my wife, and they shall bring up the two boys together in my palace.' So Faris fetched his wife and son and they committed the two children to the nurses.

After seven days had passed over them, they brought them before the king and said to him, 'What wilt thou name them?' Quoth he, 'Do ye name them.' But they replied, 'None nameth a boy but his father.' So he said, 'Name my son Seif el Mulouk, after my grandfather, and the vizier's son Saïd.' Then he bestowed dresses of honour on the nurses and said to them, 'Be ye tender over them and rear them after the goodliest fashion.' So they reared the two boys diligently till they reached the age of five, when the king committed them to a schoolmaster, who taught them to read the Koran and write. When they were ten years old, King Aasim gave them in charge to masters, who taught them horsemanship and archery and spear and ball play and the like, till, by the time they were fifteen years old, they were proficient in all manner of martial exercises, nor was there one to vie with them in horsemanship, for each of them would do battle with a thousand men and make head against them alone.

So, when they came to years of discretion, whenever King Aasim looked on them, he rejoiced in them with an exceeding joy; and when they had attained their twentieth year, he took his vizier apart one day and said to him, ‘O vizier, I wish to take counsel with thee concerning a thing I have a mind to do.’ ‘Whatever thou hast a mind to do,’ replied Faris, ‘do it; for thy judgment is blessed.’ So the king said, ‘O vizier, I am become a very old and decrepit man, sore stricken in years, and I am minded to take up my abode in an oratory, that I may worship God the Most High, and give my kingdom and sultanate to my son Seif el Mulouk, for that he is grown a goodly youth, accomplished in martial exercises and polite letters and the art of government and full of wit and dignity. What sayst thou of this project?’

‘It is well seen of thee,’ answered the vizier. ‘The idea is a blessed and fortunate one, and if thou do this, I will do the like and my son Saïd shall be the prince’s vizier, for he is a comely young man and full of knowledge and judgment. Thus will the two be together, and we will order their affair and neglect not their case, but guide them in the way of righteousness.’ Quoth the king ‘Write letters and send them by runners to all the cities and provinces and strengths and fortresses, that be under our hands, bidding their chiefs be present on such a day at the Horse-course of the Elephant.’ So the vizier went out forthright and despatched letters to this purport to all the deputies and governors of fortresses and others [in authority] under King Aasim; and he commanded also that all in the city should be present, great and small.

When the appointed time drew near, King Aasim let pitch pavilions in the midst of the Horse-course and decorate them after the most sumptuous fashion and set up [therein] the great throne whereon he sat not but on festivals. Then he and all his deputies and chamberlains and amirs sallied forth, and he commanded proclamation to be made to the people, saying, ‘In the name of God, come forth to the Horse-course!’ So all the amirs and viziers and governors of provinces and feudatories came forth to the place of assembly and entering the royal pavilion, addressed themselves to the service of the king, according to their wont, and abode in their several stations, some standing and others sitting, till all the people were gathered together, when the king commanded to spread the tables and they ate and drank and prayed for him.

Then he commanded the chamberlains to proclaim to the people that they should not depart: so they made proclamation to them, saying, ‘Let none of you depart hence till he have heard the king’s words!’ So they drew the curtains [of the royal pavilion] and the king said, ‘Whoso loveth me, let him remain till he have heard my words!’ Whereupon the folk all sat down, reassured, after they had been fearful. Then the king rose to his feet and conjuring them all to remain seated, said to them, ‘O amirs and viziers and grandees, great and small, and all ye who are present of the people, know ye not that this kingdom was an inheritance to me from my fathers and forefathers?’ ‘Yes, O king,’ answered they, ‘we all know that.’ And he continued, saying, ‘I and you, we all worshipped the sun and moon, till God (blessed and exalted be He!) vouchsafed us the knowledge of the true faith and brought us out of darkness into light, guiding us to the religion of Islam. Know that I am become a very old man, decrepit and feeble, and I desire to take up my abode in an oratory, there to worship God the Most High and crave His pardon for past offences and make this my son Seif el Mulouk ruler. Ye know that he is a goodly youth, eloquent, just and intelligent, learned and versed in affairs; wherefore I am minded presently to resign my kingdom to him and to make him king and sultan over you in my stead, whilst I give myself to the worship of God in an oratory. What say ye then, all of you?’

Thereupon they all rose and kissing the ground before him, made answer with ‘Hearing and obedience,’ saying, ‘O our king and our protector, if thou shouldst set over us one of thy slaves, we would hearken to thy word and obey him: how much more then with thy son Seif el Mulouk? Indeed, we accept of him and approve him, on our heads and eyes!’ So the king came down from his seat and seating his son on the great throne, took the crown from his own head and set it on that of Seif el Mulouk and girt his middle with the royal girdle. Then he sat down beside him on the throne of his kingship, whilst the amirs and viziers and notables and all the rest of the folk rose and kissed the earth before him, saying, ‘Indeed, he is worthy of the kingship and hath better right to it than another.’ Then the ushers made proclamation of safety and offered up prayers for his victory and prosperity. And Seif el Mulouk scattered gold and silver on the heads of the people and conferred dresses of honour and gave gifts and largesse.

Then, after a moment, the Vizier Faris arose and kissing the earth, said, ‘O amirs and grandees, ye know that I am vizier and that my vizierate dated from of old, before the accession of King Aasim ben Sefwan, who hath now divested himself of the sovereignty and made his son king in his stead?’ ‘Yes,’ answered they, ‘we know that thy vizierate is from father after grandfather.’ ‘And now,’ continued he, ‘I put off my office, in favour of this my son Saïd, for he is intelligent, quick-witted and sagacious. What say ye all?’ And they answered, saying, ‘None is worthy to be vizier to King Seif el Mulouk but thy son Saïd, and they befit one another.’ With this Faris arose and taking off his vizier’s turban, set it on his son’s head and laid his inkhorn of office before him, whilst the amirs and chamberlains said, ‘Indeed, he is deserving of the viziership.’ After this, King Aasim and Faris the vizier arose and opening the royal treasuries, conferred magnificent dresses of honour on all the viceroys and amirs and viziers and grandees and other the folk and wrote them new mandates and patents of office in the name of King Seif el Mulouk and his Vizier Saïd. Moreover, he made distribution of money [to the troops] and gave guerdons, and they abode in the city a week and departed each to his own country and place.

Then King Aasim carried his son and his Vizier Saïd back to the palace and commanded the treasurer to bring the ring and signet and sword and wrapper; which being done, he said to the two young men, ‘O my sons, let each of you choose two of these things and take them.' The first to make choice was Seif el Mulouk, who put out his hand and took the ring and the wrapper, whilst Saïd took the sword and the signet; after which they both kissed the king's hands and went away to their lodging. Seif opened not the wrapper, but threw it on the couch where he and Saïd slept by night, for it was their wont to lie together.

Presently they spread them the bed and the two lay down, with candles burning over them, and slept till midnight, when Seif awoke and seeing the wrapper at his head, said in himself, 'I wonder what thing of price is in this wrapper that my father gave me!' So he rose and leaving Saïd sleeping, took a candle and carried the wrapper into a closet, where he opened it and found within a tunic of the fashion of the Jinn. He spread it open and saw, wroughten in gold on the lining of the back, the portraiture of a girl of marvellous loveliness, whereon no sooner had he set eyes than his reason fled from his head and he became mad for love thereof, so that he fell down in a swoon and [presently coming to himself], began to weep and lament, beating his face and breast and kissing the portrait. And he recited the following verses:

Love, at the first, a dribble is of water, that the Fates Bring and impel 'gainst him on whom it falleth to his share;
Till, when the youth into the sea of passion plungeth full, Come great and grievous things, indeed, impossible to bear.

And also these:

Had I but known how love men's heart doth take and rack, I'd been upon my guard against its first attack;
But I myself undid, of purpose, knowing not The things of love nor what its issues are, alack!

And he ceased not to weep and lament and buffet his face and breast, till Saïd awoke and missing him from the bed and seeing [but] one candle, said in himself, 'Where is Seif el Mulouk gone?' Then he took the candle and went round about the palace, till he came upon the closet in question, where he saw the prince lying, weeping and lamenting passing sore. So he said to him, ‘O my brother, what ails thee to weep? Speak to me and tell me what hath befallen thee.’ But Seif spoke not neither raised his head and continued to weep and smite upon his breast. Quoth Saïd, ‘I am thy vizier and thy brother, and we were reared together, thou and I; so to whom wilt thou unburden thy breast and discover thy secret, if not to me?’ And he went on to humble himself and kiss the earth before him a great while, whilst Seif el Mulouk paid no heed to him nor answered him a word, but gave not over weeping.

At last, being affrighted at his case and weary of striving with him, he went out and fetched a sword, with which he returned to the closet, and setting the point to his own breast, said to the prince, ‘Awake, O my brother! An thou tell me not what ails thee, I will slay myself and see thee no longer in this plight.’ Whereupon Seif raised his head and answered him, saying, ‘O my brother, I am ashamed to tell thee what ails me;’ but Saïd said, ‘I conjure thee by Allah, the Lord of Lords, the Liberator of those that are in bondage, the Causer of causes, the One, the Clement, the Bountiful, the Giver of gifts, that thou tell me what ails thee and be not abashed at me, for I am thy slave and thy vizier and counsellor in all things!’ Quoth Seif, ‘Come and look at this portrait.’ So Saïd looked at it awhile and considering it straitly, saw written, at its head, in letters of pearl, these words, ‘This is the presentment of Bediya el Jemal, daughter of Shehyal ben Sharoukh, a king of the kings of the true-believing Jinn who have taken up their abode in the city of Babel and sojourn in the garden of Irem.’

So he said to the king, ‘O my brother, knowest thou of what woman this is the portraiture, that we may seek for her?’ ‘Not I, by Allah, O my brother,’ answered Seif: and Saïd said, ‘Come and read this writing.’ So Seif read it and cried out from his inmost heart, saying, ‘Alas! Alas! Alas!’ Quoth Saïd, ‘O my brother, if the original of the portrait exist and her name be Bediya el Jemal and she be in the world, I will make haste to seek her, that thou mayst without delay attain thy desire. But, God on thee, O my brother, leave this weeping, that the officers of the state may come in, to do their service to thee, and in the forenoon, do thou summon the merchants and fakirs and travellers and pilgrims and enquire of them concerning this city and the garden of Irem; it may be, by the help and blessing of God (extolled and exalted be He!), some one of them will direct us thither.’

So, when it was day, Seif el Mulouk went forth and mounted the throne, hugging the tunic in his arms, for he could neither stand nor sit without it, nor would sleep visit him, except it were with him; and the amirs and viziers and grandees and officers came in to him. When they were all assembled in their places and the Divan was complete, he said to his vizier, ‘Go to them and tell them that the king is sick and hath passed the night in ill case.’ So Saïd went forth and told the folk what he said; which when the old king heard, he was concerned for his son and summoning the physicians and astrologers, carried them in to Seif el Mulouk.

They looked at him and prescribed him draughts and simples and medicinal waters and wrote him charms and incensed him with aloes-wood and ambergris three days’ space; but his malady persisted three months, till King Aasim was wroth with the physicians and said to them, ‘Out on you, O dogs! Can none of you cure my son? Except ye heal him forthright, I will put you all to death.’ ‘O king of the age,’ replied the chief physician, ‘we know that this is thy son and thou knowest that we fail not of diligence in tending a stranger; so how much more with thy son? But thy son is afflicted with a grievous malady, which if thou desire to know, we will discover it to thee.’ Quoth Aasim, ‘What find ye then to be my son’s malady?’ ‘O king of the age,’ answered the physician, ‘thy son is in love and with one to whose enjoyment he hath no way of access.’ At this the king was wroth and said, ‘How know ye that my son is in love and how came love to him?’ ‘Ask his vizier and brother Saïd,’ answered they; ‘for he knoweth his case.’

So the king called Saïd into his privy closet and said to him, ‘Tell me the truth of my son’s malady.’ But Saïd replied, ‘I know it not.’ Then King Aasim said to the headsman, ‘Take Saïd and bind his eyes and strike off his head.’ Whereupon Saïd feared for himself and said, ‘O king of the age, grant me immunity.’ ‘Speak,’ answered the king; ‘and thou shalt have it.’ Then said Saïd, ‘Thy son is in love.’ ‘With whom is he in love?’ asked the old king: and Saïd replied, ‘With a king’s daughter of the Jinn, whose portait he saw wroughten on the tunic that was in the wrapper given thee by Solomon, prophet of God.'

When the king heard this, he rose, and going in to his son, said to him, 'O my son, what is this portrait whereof thou art enamoured and why didst thou not tell me?' 'O my father,' answered Seif el Mulouk, 'I was ashamed to name this to thee and could not bring myself to discover aught thereof to any; but now thou knowest my case, look how thou mayest do to cure me.' 'What is to be done?' rejoined his father. 'Were she of the daughters of men, we might find a means of coming at her; but she is a king's daughter of the Jinn and who can avail to her, except it be Solomon son of David, and hardly he? Wherefore, O my son, do thou arise forthright and take heart and mount and ride out a-hunting or to the games in the tilting-ground. Divert thyself with eating and drinking and put away grief and concern from thy heart, and I will bring thee a hundred kings' daughters; for thou hast no call to the daughters of the Jinn, over whom we have no power and who are not of our kind.' But Seif said, 'I cannot renounce her nor will I seek another than her.' 'How then shall we do, O my son?' asked King Aasim; and Seif said, 'Bring us all the merchants and travellers and pilgrims in the city, that we may question them of the city of Babel and the garden of Irem. Peradventure, God will guide us thereto.'

So King Aasim summoned all the merchants and strangers and sea-captains in the city and enquired of them for the city of Babel and its peninsula and the garden of Irem; but none of them knew these places nor could any give him tidings thereof. However, when the session broke up, one of them said to the king, 'O king of the age, if thou hast a mind to know this thing, get thee to the land of China; for it is a vast and safe country, wherein are store of rarities and things of price and folk of all kinds [and nations] and thou shalt not come to the knowledge of this city and garden but from its people; it may be one of them will direct thee to that thou seekest.' Whereupon quoth Seif el Mulouk, 'O my father, equip me a ship, that I may journey to the land of China.'

'O my son,' replied the old king, 'abide thou on the throne of thy kingship and rule thy subjects, and I myself will make the voyage to China and enquire for thee of the city of Babel and the garden of

Irem.’ But Seif rejoined, saying, ‘O my father, this affair concerneth me and none can prosecute the search after it like myself: so, come what will, if thou give me leave to make the voyage, I will depart and travel in foreign countries awhile. If I find tidings of her, my desire will be attained, and if not, belike the voyage will dilate my breast and recruit my spirits; and peradventure by foreign travel my case will be made easy to me, and if I live, I shall return to thee whole and sound.’

The old king looked at his son and saw nothing for it but to do what he wished; so he fitted him out forty ships, manned with twenty thousand men, besides servants, and gave him great plenty of treasures and necessaries and warlike gear, as much as he required. When the ships were laden with water and victual and arms and troops, Seif’s father and mother bade him farewell and the former said, ‘Depart, O my son, and travel in health and weal and safety. I commend thee to Him who disappointeth not those that put their trust in Him.’ So the prince embarked, with his brother Saïd, and they weighed anchor and sailed till they came to the City of China.

When the people heard of the coming of forty ships, full of armed men and stores, they doubted not but they were enemies come to make war on them and beleaguer them; so they shut the gates of the town and made ready the mangonels. But Seif, hearing of this, despatched two of his chief officers to the King of China, bidding them say to him, ‘This is Seif el Mulouk, son of King Aasim of Egypt, who is come to thy city as a guest, to divert himself by viewing thy country awhile, and not for battle or contention; so, an thou wilt receive him, he will come ashore to thee: else he will return and will not disquiet thee nor the people of thy city.’ So they presented themselves at the gates of the city and said, ‘We bear a message from King Seif el Mulouk.’ Whereupon the townsfolk opened the gates and carried them to their king, whose name was Feghfour Shah and between whom and King Aasim there had been acquaintance erewhen. So, when he heard that the new-comer was the son of King Aasim, he bestowed dresses of honour on the messengers and bidding open the gates, made ready guest-gifts and went forth, with the chief officers of his realm, to meet Seif el Mulouk.

The two kings embraced and Feghfour said to Seif, ‘Welcome and fair welcome to him who cometh to us! I am thy servant and thy father’s servant: my city is at thy disposal and whatsoever thou seekest shall be brought to thee.’ Then he presented him with the guest-gifts and victual, and they took horse, with the Vizier Saïd and the chiefs of their officers and the rest of their troops, and rode from the sea-shore to the city, which they entered with drums beating and cymbals clashing, in token of rejoicing. There they abode forty days, in the enjoyment of fair hospitality, at the end of which time the King of China said to Seif el Mulouk, ‘O son of my brother, how is it with thee? Doth my country please thee?’ Quoth Seif, ‘May God the Most High long honour it with thee, O King!’ And Feghfour said, ‘Nought hath brought thee hither save some need that hath betided thee; [so tell me] what thou desirest of my country, and I will accomplish it to thee.’ ‘O king,’ answered Seif, ‘my case is a rare one,’ and told him how he had fallen in love with the portrait of Bediya el Jemal.

When the King of China heard his story, he wept for pity and solicitude for him and said, ‘And what wouldst thou have now, O Seif el Mulouk?’ Quoth Seif, ‘I would have thee bring me all the pilgrims and travellers and seafarers in the country, that I may question them of the original of this portrait; belike one of them may give me tidings of her.’ So Feghfour Shah sent out his lieutenants and officers and chamberlains, to fetch all the pilgrims and travellers in the land, and they brought them before the two kings, and they were a numerous company. Then Seif el Mulouk questioned them of the City of Babel and the Garden of Irem, but none of them returned him an answer, wherefore he was confounded and knew not what to do; but one of the sea-captains said to him, ‘O king, if thou wouldst know of this city and garden, get thee to the Islands of the Indian Sea.’

So Seif bade repair the ships; which being done, they launched them on the sea and freighted them with victual and water and all that they needed, and Seif el Mulouk and his Vizier Saïd re-embarked, with all their men, after they had taken leave of King Feghfour Shah. They sailed the seas with a fair wind, in safety and security, four months, till, one day, there came out upon them a wind and the waves smote on them from all sides. The rain and hail descended on them and the sea was troubled for the violence of the wind; by reason whereof the ships drove one against another and broke up, as did the boats, and all on board were drowned, except Seif el Mulouk and some of his servants, who saved themselves in a little boat. Then, by the decree of God the Most High, the wind fell and the sun shone out; whereupon Seif opened his eyes and seeing no sign of the ships nor aught but sky and water, said to those who were with him in the boat, 'Where are the ships and boats and where is my brother Saïd?' 'O king of the age,' answered they, 'there remain nor ships nor boats nor those who were therein; for they are all drowned and become food for fishes.'

When he heard this, he cried aloud and repeated the words which whoso saith shall not be confounded, and they are, 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!' Then he fell to buffeting his face and would have cast himself into the sea, but his men withheld him, saying, 'O king, what will this profit thee? Thou hast brought all this on thyself; for, hadst thou hearkened to thy father's words, nought thereof had befallen thee. But this was foreordained from all eternity by the will of the Creator of Souls, that the creature might accomplish that which God hath decreed unto him. And indeed, at the time of thy birth, the astrologers predicted to thy father that all manner of troubles should befall thee. So there is nothing for it but patience till God the Most High deliver us from this our strait.' 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!' replied the prince. 'Neither is there refuge nor fleeing from that which He decreeth!' And he sighed and recited the following verses:

By the Compassionate, I'm dazed about my case, for lo! Troubles and grief beset me sore; I know not whence they grow.
I will be patient, so the folk, that I against a thing, Bitt'rer than very aloes' self, enduréd have, may know.
Less bitter than my patience is the taste of aloes-juice; I've borne with patience what's more hot than coals with fire aglow.
In this my trouble what resource have I, save to commit My case to Him who orders all that is, for weal or woe?

Then he became drowned in the sea of melancholy thought and his tears ran down upon his cheeks, like a great rain. He slept awhile of the day, after which he awoke and sought food. So they set food before him and he ate till he had enough whilst the boat drove on with them they knew not whither. It drifted with them night and day, at the winds' and waves' will, a great while, till their victual was spent and they knew not what to do and were reduced to the last extremity for hunger and thirst and weariness. At last they sighted an island afar off and the breezes drove them on, till they came thither and making the boat fast to the shore, landed. They left one in the boat, to guard it, and fared on into the island, where they found abundance of fruits of all kinds and ate of them, till they were satisfied.

Presently, they saw a man sitting among the trees, and he was of strange aspect, long-faced and white of beard and body. He called to one of the servants by his name, saying, 'Eat not of those fruits, for they are not ripe; but come hither to me, that I may give thee to eat of these that are ripe.' The man looked at him and thought that he was one of the shipwrecked folk, who had made his way to the island; so he rejoiced greatly at sight of him and went up to him, knowing not what was decreed to him in the secret purpose of God nor what was written on his forehead. But, when he drew near the stranger, he leapt upon his shoulders and twisting one of his legs about his neck, let the other hang down upon his back, saying, 'Go on; for there is no escape for thee from me and thou art become my ass.' Thereupon the man fell a-weeping and cried out to his fellows, saying, 'Alas, my lord! Flee forth of this wood and save yourselves, for one of the dwellers therein hath mounted on my shoulders, and the rest seek you, that they may ride you likewise.'

When they heard this, they all fled down to the boat and pushed off to sea; whilst the islanders followed them into the water, saying, 'Whither go ye? Come, bide with us and we will ride on your backs and give you meat and drink, and you shall be our asses.' With this, they redoubled their efforts, till they left them in the distance and fared on, trusting in God the Most High; nor did they leave going a whole month, till they came to another island and landed. Here they found fruits of various kinds and busied themselves with eating of them. Presently, they saw, afar off, somewhat lying in the road, as it were a column of silver. So they went up to it and one of the men gave it a push with his foot, when, lo, it was a creature of hideous aspect, long-eyed, cleft-headed and hidden under one of his ears, for he was used, whenas he lay down to sleep, to spread one ear under his head and cover himself with the other. He snatched up the man who had kicked him and carried him off into the inward of the island, and behold, it was all full of ghouls who eat men. So the man cried out to his fellows, saying, 'Flee and save yourselves, for this is the island of the man-eating ghouls, and they mean to tear me in pieces and eat me.'

When they heard this, they fled back to the boat, without gathering any store of the fruits, and putting out to sea, fared on some days till they came to another island, where they found a high mountain. So they climbed to the top and found there a thick wood. Now they were anhungred; so they fell to eating of the fruits; but, before they aware, there came upon them from among the trees black men of terrible aspect, each fifty cubits high, with teeth like elephants' tusks protruding from their mouths, and laying hands on Seif el Mulouk and his company, carried them to their king, whom they found seated on a piece of black felt laid on a rock, and about him a great company of blacks, standing in his service. Quoth the blacks to him, 'We found these birds among the trees;' and he was anhungred; so he took two of the servants and killed them and ate them; which when Seif saw, he feared for himself and wept and repeated these verses:

Troubles familiar with my heart are grown and I with them, Erst shunning; for the generous are sociable still.
Not one mere kind of woe alone doth lieger with me lie; Praised be God! there are with me thousands of kinds of ill.

Then he sighed and repeated these also:

Fate with afflictions still hath so beshotten me, With shafts, as with a sheath, my entrails are o'erlaid;
And thus in such a case am I become that, when An arrow

striketh me, blade breaketh upon blade.

When the king heard his weeping and wailing, he said, ‘Verily, these birds have sweet voices and their song pleaseth me: put them in cages.’ So they set them each in a cage and hung them up at the king’s head, that he might hear their song. On this wise Seif and his men abode a great while, and the blacks gave them to eat and drink: and now they wept and now laughed, now spoke and now were silent, whilst the king of the blacks delighted in the sound of their voices.

Now this king had a daughter married in another island, who, hearing that her father had birds with sweet voices, sent to him to seek of him some of them. So he sent her, by her messenger, Seif el Mulouk and three of his men in four cages; and when she saw them, they pleased her and she commanded to hang them up in a place over her head. Then Seif fell to marvelling at that which had befallen him and calling to mind his former high estate and weeping for himself; and the three servants wept for themselves, whilst the king’s daughter deemed that they sang. Now it was her wont, whenever any one from the land of Egypt or elsewhere fell into her hands and he pleased her, to advance him to high estate with her; and by the ordinance of God the Most High, it befell that, when she saw Seif el Mulouk, his beauty and grace and symmetry pleased her, and she commanded to loose him and his companions from their cages and bade entreat them with honour.

One day she took Seif apart and would have him lie with her; but he refused, saying, ‘O my lady, I am an exile and distraught with passion for a beloved one, nor will I consent to love-delight with other than her.’ Then she coaxed him and importuned him, but he held aloof from her, and she could not anywise approach him nor get her desire of him. At last, when she was weary of courting him in vain, she waxed wroth with him and his men and commanded that they should serve her and fetch her wood and water.

They abode thus four years, till Seif el Mulouk became weary of this life and sent to intercede with the princess, so haply she might release them and let them go their ways and be at rest from that their travail. So she sent for him and said to him, ‘If thou wilt fall in with my desire, I will set thee free from this thy duresse and thou shalt go to thy country, safe and sound.' And she went on to humble herself to him and wheedle him, but he would not consent to do her will; whereupon she turned from him, in anger, and he and his companions abode in the same plight. The people of the island knew them for the princess's birds and dared not do them any hurt; and she herself was at ease concerning them, being assured that they could not escape from the island. So they used to absent themselves from her two and three days [at a time] and go round about the island in all directions, gathering firewood, which they brought to the princess's kitchen; and thus they abode five years.

One day, it chanced that the prince and his men were sitting on the sea-shore, devising of what had befallen, and Seif bethought him of his father and mother and his brother Saïd and calling to mind his former high estate, fell a-weeping and lamenting passing sore, whilst his servants wept likewise. Then said they to him, 'O king of the age, how long shall we weep? Weeping availeth not; for this thing was written on our foreheads by the ordinance of God, to whom belong might and majesty. Indeed, the pen runneth with that which He decreeth and nought will serve us but patience. Peradventure God (blessed and exalted be He!), who hath afflicted us with this calamity, will deliver us therefrom.' 'O my brothers,' said Seif, 'how shall we win free from this accursed woman? I see no way of escape for us, except God of His favour deliver us from her; but methinks we may flee and be at rest from this travail.'

'O king of the age,' answered they, 'whither shall we flee? For the whole island is full of man-eating ghouls and whithersoever we go, they will find us there and either eat us or carry us back to the king's daughter, who will be wroth with us.' Quoth Seif, 'I will contrive you somewhat, whereby it may be God the Most High will help us to escape from this island.' 'And how wilt thou do?' asked they. 'Let us cut some of these long pieces of wood,' answered he, 'and twist ropes of their bark and bind them one with another, and make of them a raft which we will cast into the sea and load with these fruits. Then will we fashion us oars and embark on the raft; peradventure God the Most High will make it the means of our deliverance from this accursed woman and vouchsafe us a fair wind to bring us to the land of Hind, for He can do all things.’ ‘This is well seen,’ said they and were mightily rejoiced thereat.

So they arose and fell to work forthright to cut wood for the raft and twist ropes to bind the logs together, and at this they wrought a whole month. Every evening, they gathered somewhat of firewood and carried it to the princess’s kitchen, and the rest of the day they busied themselves with working at the raft. When they had made an end of it, they cast it into the sea and loading it with the fruits of the island, embarked at close of day, having told none of their intent. They put out to sea and fared on four months, knowing not whither the raft carried them, till their victual failed them and they were reduced to the utmost extreme of hunger and thirst.

[One day, as they drifted along,] the sea became troubled and foamed and rose in great waves, and there came forth upon them a frightful crocodile, which put out its claw and snatching up one of the servants, swallowed him. At this sight Seif el Mulouk wept sore and he and the two men that remained to him pushed off from the place where they had seen the monster, sore affrighted. After this, they drifted on till one day they espied a terrible great mountain, rising high into the air, whereat they rejoiced and made towards it with all their might, glad in the prospect of reaching land; but hardly had they sighted the island [on which was the mountain], when the sea boiled and rose in huge waves and a second crocodile raised its head and putting out its claw, took the two remaining servants and swallowed them.

So Seif abode alone and making his way to the island, laboured till he reached the mountain-top, where he found a wood and walking among the trees, fell to eating of the fruits. Presently, he saw among the branches more than twenty great apes, each bigger than a mule, whereat he was seized with exceeding fear. The apes came down and surrounded him; then they went on before him, signing to him to follow them, and he did so, till he came to a lofty and strong-builded castle, the ordinance whereof was one brick of gold and one of silver. The apes entered and he after them, and he saw in the castle all manner of jewels and precious metals and things of price, such as the tongue fails to describe. Here also he found a young man, exceeding tall of stature, with no hair on his cheeks, and there was no human being but he in the castle.

The two young men greeted each other with delight, and the stranger marvelled exceedingly at sight of Seif el Mulouk and said to him, ‘What is thy name and what countryman art thou and how camest thou hither? Tell me thy story and conceal from me nought thereof.’ ‘By Allah,’ answered the prince, ‘I came not hither of my own intent nor is this place that which I seek; but I cannot but go from place to place till I compass my desire.’ ‘And what is it thou seekest?’ asked the youth. ‘I am of the land of Egypt,’ replied Seif, ‘and my name is Seif el Mulouk, son of King Aasim ben Sefwan;’ and told him all that had befallen him, from first to last, [up to his coming to the land of China]. Whereupon the youth arose and stood in his service, saying, ‘O king of the age, I was in Egypt [awhile since] and heard that thou hadst gone to the land of China; but it is a far cry from China hither. Verily, this is a strange thing and a rare case!’

‘True,’ answered the prince; ‘but, when I left China, I set out, intending for the land of Hind;’ and he told him all that had befallen him till he came thither; whereupon quoth the other, ‘O king’s son, thou hast had enough of strangerhood and its hardships; praised be God who hath brought thee hither! So now do thou abide with me, that I may enjoy thy company till I die, when thou shalt become king over this island, to which no bound is known, and these apes thou seest, which are skilled in all manner crafts; and all thou seekest thou wilt find here.’ ‘O my brother,’ replied Seif el Mulouk, ‘I may not abide in any place till my quest be accomplished, though I compass the whole world in pursuit thereof, so haply God may bring me to my desire or my course lead me to the place, wherein is the appointed term of my days, and I shall die.’

Then the youth signed to one of the apes, and he went out and was absent awhile, after which he returned with other apes, girt with napkins of silk. They laid the table and set on near a hundred dishes of gold and silver, containing all kinds of meats. Then they stood, after the manner of servants before kings, till the youth signed to the chamberlains, who sat down, and he whose wont it was to serve stood, whilst the two princes ate, till they had enough. Then the apes cleared the table and brought basins and ewers of gold, and they washed their hands; after which they set on nigh forty flagons, in each a different kind of wine, and they drank and took their pleasure and made merry; and all the apes danced and gambolled before them, what while they sat at meat; which when Seif saw, he marvelled at them and forgot that which had befallen him of strangerhood and its hardships. At nightfall, they lighted candles in candlesticks of gold and silver and set on dishes of fruits and confections. So they ate; and when the hour of rest was come, the apes spread them beds and they slept.

Next morning, the young man arose, according to his wont, and waking Seif, said to him, 'Put thy head forth of this lattice and see what stands beneath.' So he put out his head and saw the wide waste and all the desert filled with apes, whose number none knew save God the Most High. Quoth he, 'Here is great plenty of apes, for they fill the whole country: but why are they assembled at this hour?' 'This is their custom,' answered the youth. 'Every Saturday, all the apes in the island come hither, some from two and three days' distance, and stand here till I awake from sleep and put forth my head from this window, when they kiss the ground before me and go about their affairs.' So saying, he put his head out of the window; and when the apes saw him, they kissed the earth before him and went away.

Seif el Mulouk abode with the young man a whole month, at the end of which time he bade him farewell and departed, escorted by a company of nigh a hundred apes, which their king sent with him. They journeyed with him seven days, till they came to the limits of their island, when they took leave of him and returned to their places, while Seif fared on alone over hill and mountain and desert and plain, four months' journey, one day anhungred and the next full of meat, now eating of the herbs of the earth and now of the fruits of the trees, till he repented him of having quitted the young man and was about to retrace his steps to him, when he saw somewhat black afar off and said in himself, 'Is this city or trees? I will not turn back till I see what it is.' So he made towards it and when he drew near, he saw that it was a lofty palace. Now he who built it was Japhet son of Noah (on whom be peace!) and it is of this palace that God the Most High speaketh in His precious Book, whenas He saith, 'And an abandoned well and a high-builded palace.'

Seif el Mulouk sat down at the gate and said in himself, 'I wonder what is within this palace and what king dwelleth there and whether its inhabitants are men or Jinn? Who will tell me the truth of the case?' He sat awhile, considering, but, seeing none go in or out, he rose and committing himself to God the Most High, entered the palace and walked on, till he had counted seven vestibules; but saw no one. Presently he espied, on his right hand, three doors, and before him, a fourth, over which hung a curtain. So he went up to the fourth door and raising the curtain, found himself in a great saloon, spread with silken carpets. At the upper end stood a golden throne, on which sat a young lady, whose face was like the moon, arrayed in kings' raiment and adorned as she were a bride on her wedding-night; and before the throne stood a table, whereon were forty trays spread with dishes of gold and silver, full of rich meats.

The prince went up to the lady and saluted her, and she returned his greeting, saying, 'Art thou of mankind or of the Jinn?' 'I am a man of the best of mankind,' replied he; 'for I am a king, son of a king.' Quoth she, 'What seekest thou? Up and eat of yonder food, and after tell me thy story from first to last and how thou camest hither.' So he sat down at the table and uncovering a tray of meats, ate (for he was hungry) till he had enough; then washed his hands and going up to the throne, sat down by the young lady who said to him, 'Who art thou and what is thy name and whence comest thou and who brought thee hither?' 'My story is a long one,' replied he; 'but do thou first tell me who and what thou art and why thou dwellest in this place alone.'

Quoth she, 'My name is Dauleh Khatoun and I am the daughter of the King of Hind. My father dwells in the city of Serendib and has a great and goodly garden, there is no goodlier in all the land of Hind; and in this garden is a great tank. One day, I went out into the garden with my waiting-women and we stripped and entering the tank, fell to sporting and taking our pleasure therein. Presently, before I could be ware, there swooped down on me somewhat, as it were a cloud, and snatching me from amongst my maids, flew up with me betwixt heaven and earth, saying, "Fear not, O Dauleh Khatoun, but be of good heart." Then he flew on with me a little while, after which he set me down in this palace and straightway became a handsome young man, elegantly clad, who said to me, “Dost thou know me?” “No, O my lord,” answered I; and he said, “I am the Blue King, son of the Jinn; my father dwelleth in the Castle of El Culzum and hath under his hand six hundred thousand Jinn, flyers and divers. I chanced to see thee, as I was passing, and fell in love with thee; so I snatched thee up from among the slave-girls and brought thee to this strong castle, which is my dwelling-place. None may win hither, whether he be man or genie, and from Hind hither is a hundred and twenty years’ journey: wherefore be thou assured that thou wilt never again see the land of thy father and thy mother; but abide with me here, in content and peace, and I will bring thee whatsoever thou seekest.”

Then he embraced me and kissed me, saying, “Abide here and fear nothing,” after which he went away and presently returned with these tables and carpets and furniture. He comes to me every Tuesday and abides with me three days, and on Friday, at the time of afternoon prayer, he departs and is absent till the following Tuesday. When he is here, he eats and drinks and kisses and embraces me, but does nought [else] with me, and I am a clean maid, even as God the Most High created me. My father’s name is Taj el Mulouk, and he knows not what is come of me. This is my story: now tell me thine.’

‘My story is a long one,’ answered the prince, ‘and I fear lest the Afrit come, whilst I am telling it to thee. Quoth she, ‘He went out from me but an hour before thy coming and will not return till Tuesday: so sit and take thine ease and be thy heart at rest and tell me what hath betided thee, from first to last.’ And he answered, ‘I hear and obey.’ So he told her all that had befallen him from first to last, but, when she heard speak of Bediya el Jemal, her eyes ran over with streaming tears and she exclaimed, ‘O Bediya el Jemal, I had not thought this of thee! Out upon fortune! O Bediya el Jemal, dost thou not remember me nor say, “Where is my sister Dauleh Khatoun gone?”’ And she wept passing sore, lamenting Bediya el Jemal’s forgetfulness of her.

Then said Seif, ‘O Dauleh Khatoun, thou art a mortal and she is a genie: how then can she be thy sister?’ ‘She is my foster-sister,’ replied the princess, ‘and this is how it came about. My mother went out to take her pleasure in the garden, when the pangs of labour seized her and she gave birth to me. As fate would have it, the mother of Bediya el Jemal chanced to be passing with her guards, when she also was taken with the pains of travail; so she alighted in a part of the garden and was there delivered of Bediya el Jemal. She despatched one of her women to seek food and childbirth-gear of my mother, who sent her what she sought and invited her to visit her. So she came to her with her child and my mother suckled Bediya el Jemal; after which the latter and her mother abode with us in the garden two months.

Then Bediya's mother gave my mother somewhat, saying, "When thou hast need of me, I will come to thee in the midst of the garden," and departed to her own country; but she and her daughter used to visit us every year and abide with us awhile. Wherefore, O Seif el Mulouk, if thou wert with me in my own country and Bediya and I were together as of wont, I would go about with her to bring thee to thy desire of her: but I am here and they know not what is become of me, else could they deliver me from this place; but the matter is in God's hands (blessed and exalted be He!) and what can I do?' 'Come,' said Seif, 'let us flee and go whither God wills.' But she answered, 'We cannot do that: for, by Allah, though we fled hence a year's journey, yonder accursed wretch would overtake us in an hour and make an end of us.'

Then said the prince, 'I will hide myself in his way, and when he passes, I will smite him with the sword and slay him.' Quoth Dauleh Khatoun, 'Thou canst not avail to slay him, except thou slay his soul.' 'And where is his soul?' asked he. 'Many a time have I questioned him thereof,' answered she; 'but he would not tell me, till one day I was instant with him and he waxed wroth with me and said to me, "How often wilt thou ask me of my soul? What hast thou to do with my soul?" "O Hatim," answered I, "there remaineth none to me but thou, except God; and my life dependeth on thine, and whilst thou livest, all is well for me; so, except I care for thy soul and set it in the apple of mine eye, how shall I live in thine absence? If I knew where thy soul is, I would, never whilst I live, cease to hold it embraced and would keep it as my right eye."

Whereupon he said to me, "When I was born, the astrologers predicted that I should lose my soul at the hands of the son of a king of mankind. So I took it and put it in the crop of a sparrow, which I shut up in a box. The box I set in a casket, and enclosing this in seven other caskets and seven chests, laid the whole in a marble coffer, which I buried within the marge of yonder ocean, that encompasseth the earth; for that these parts are far from the world of men and none of them can win thither. So now I have told thee what thou wouldst know, and do thou tell none thereof, for it is a secret between me and thee." "To whom should I tell it," rejoined I, "seeing that none but thou cometh hither with whom I may talk thereof? By Allah, thou hast indeed set thy soul in a right impregnable stronghold, to which none may gain access! How should a man win to it, even if the impossible be ordained and God decree like as the astrologers predicted?"

Quoth the genie, "Peradventure one may come, having on his finger the ring of Solomon, son of David (on whom be peace!) and lay his hand with the ring on the surface of the water, saying, 'By the virtue of the names engraven upon this ring, let the soul of such an one come forth!' Whereupon the coffer will rise to the surface and he will break it open and do the like with the chests and caskets, till he come to the little box, when he will take out the sparrow and strangle it, and I shall die."' Then said Seif el Mulouk, 'I am the king's son of whom he spoke, and this is the ring of Solomon son of David on my finger. Come, let us go down to the sea-shore and see if his words be truth or leasing.'

So the two went down to the sea-shore and Dauleh Khatoun stood on the beach, whilst the prince entered the water to his middle, and laying his hand with the ring on the surface of the sea, said, 'By the virtue of the names and talismans engraven on this ring and of Solomon son of David (on whom be peace!), let the soul of Hatim the genie, son of the Blue King, come forth!' Whereupon the sea became troubled and the marble coffer rose to the surface. Seif took it and shattered it against the rock and broke open the chests and caskets, till he came to the little box and took thereout the sparrow. Then he and the princess returned to the castle and sat down on the throne. Hardly had they done this, when there arose a terrible great cloud of dust and some huge thing came flying and saying, 'Spare me, O king's son, and slay me not; but make me thy freedman, and I will bring thee to thy desire!' Quoth Dauleh Khatoun, 'The genie cometh; kill the sparrow, lest the accursed wretch enter the palace and take it from thee and slay thee and me after thee.' So the prince wrung the sparrow's neck and it died, whereupon the genie fell down at the door of the palace and became a heap of black ashes.

Then said the princess, 'We are delivered from the hand of yonder accursed wretch; what shall we do now?' 'It behoves us to ask aid of God the Most High, who hath afflicted us,' answered Seif; 'belike He will direct us and help us to escape from this our strait.' So saying, he arose and pulling down half a score of the doors of the palace, which were wroughten of sandal and aloes-wood, with nails of gold and silver, bound them together with ropes of silk and sendal, which were there, and wrought of them a raft, which he made shift, he and the princess, to drag down to the sea-shore. They cast it into the water and making it fast to the beach, returned to the palace, whence they removed all the dishes of gold and silver and jewels and precious stones and metals and what not else was light of carriage and heavy of worth and freighted the raft therewith. Then they fashioned two pieces of wood into the likeness of oars, with which they embarked on the raft and casting off the moorings, let it drift out to sea with them, committing themselves to God the Most High, who contenteth those that put their trust in Him and disappointed them not.

They fared on thus four months, and when they lay down to sleep, the prince set Dauleh Khatoun behind him and laid a naked sword at his back, so that, when he turned, the sword was between them. At last, their victual came to an end and they were reduced to sore distress; their souls were straitened and they besought God the Most High to vouchsafe them deliverance from their strait. It chanced, one night, when Seif was asleep and the princess awake, that the raft fell off towards the land and entered a harbour wherein were ships. The princess saw the ships and heard a man (who was none other than the chief and head of the captains) talking with the sailors; whereby she knew that this was the port of some city and that they were come to an inhabited country. So she rejoiced mightily and waking Seif el Mulouk, bade him ask the captain the name of the city and harbour.

Accordingly Seif arose, rejoicing, and said to the captain, ‘O my brother, how is this harbour called and what are the names of yonder city and its king?’ ‘O fool’s face! O frosty beard!’ replied the captain, ‘if thou knewest not the name of this port and city, how camest thou hither?’ Quoth Seif, ‘I am a stranger and had taken passage in a merchant ship, which was wrecked and sank with all on board; but I saved myself on a plank and made my way hither; wherefore I asked thee the name of the place, and there is no harm in asking.’ Then said the captain, ‘This is the city of Amariyeh and this harbour is called Kemin el Behrein.’ When the princess heard this, she rejoiced with an exceeding joy and said, ‘Praised be God!’ ‘What is to do?’ asked Seif. And she answered, saying, ‘O Seif el Mulouk, rejoice in succour near at hand; for the king of this city is my father’s brother and his name is Aali el Mulouk. Say to the captain, “Is the Sultan of the city, Aali el Mulouk, well?”’

The prince put the question to the captain, who was wroth with him and said, ‘Thou sayst, “I am a stranger and never in my life came hither.” Who then told thee the name of the lord of the city?’ When Dauleh Khatoun heard this, she rejoiced and knew him for one of her father’s captains, Muïneddin by name. Now he had come out in search of her, after her disappearance, and finding her not, had continued his cruise till he came to her uncle’s city. Then she bade Seif say to him, ‘O Captain Muïneddin, come and speak with thy mistress!’ So he called out to him as she bade, whereat he was exceeding angry and answered, saying, ‘O dog, who art thou and how knowest thou me?’ Then he said to one of the sailors, ‘Give me an ash-stick, that I may go to yonder pestilent fellow and break his head.’

So he took the stick and made for Seif el Mulouk, but, when he came to the raft, he saw Dauleh Khatoun sitting there, as she were a piece of the moon; whereat he was confounded and said to the prince, ‘Who is that with thee?’ ‘A damsel by name Dauleh Khatoun,’ replied Seif. When the captain heard the princess’s name and knew that she was his mistress and the daughter of his king, he fell down in a swoon, and when he came to himself, he left the raft and those that were thereon and going up to the palace, craved an audience of the king; whereupon the chamberlain went in to the latter and said, ‘Captain Muïneddin is come to bring thee good news.’ The king bade admit him: so he entered and kissing the earth, said to him, ‘O king, thou owest me a gift for glad tidings; for thy brother’s daughter Dauleh Khatoun hath arrived here, safe and sound, and is now on a raft in the harbour, in company with a young man like the moon on the night of its full.’

When the king heard this, he rejoiced and conferred a sumptuous dress of honour on the captain. Then he straightway commanded to decorate the city in honour of the safe return of his brother’s daughter, and sending for her and Seif el Mulouk, saluted them and gave them joy of their safety; after which he despatched a messenger to his brother, to let him know that his daughter was found and was with him. As soon as the news reached Taj el Mulouk, he assembled his troops and set out for his brother’s capital, where he found his daughter and they rejoiced with an exceeding joy. He sojourned with his brother a week, after which he took his daughter and Seif el Mulouk and returned to Serendib, where the princess foregathered with her mother and they rejoiced and held high festival in honour of her safe return; and it was a great day, never was seen its like.

As for Seif el Mulouk, the king entreated him with honour and said to him, ‘O Seif el Mulouk, thou hast done me and my daughter all this good and I cannot requite thee therefor, nor can any requite thee, save the Lord of all creatures; but I wish thee to sit upon the throne in my stead and rule the land of Hind, for I make gift to thee of my throne and kingdom and treasures and servants.’ Whereupon Seif rose and kissing the earth before the king, thanked him and answered, saying, ‘O King of the age, I accept all thou givest me and return it to thee in free gift: for I covet not kingship nor sultanate nor desire aught but that God the Most High bring me to my desire.’ ‘O Seif el Mulouk,’ rejoined the king, ‘these my treasures are at thy disposal: take of them what thou wilt, without consulting me, and God requite thee for me with all good!’ Quoth the prince, ‘God advance the king! Indeed, there is no delight for me in treasure or dominion, till I attain my desire: but now I have a mind to take my pleasure in the city and view its streets and markets.’

So the king commanded to bring him a horse of the thoroughbred horses, saddled and bridled; and Seif mounted and rode through the streets and markets of the town. As he looked about him, his eyes fell on a young man, who was crying a tunic for sale at fifteen dinars: so he considered him and saw him to be like his brother Saïd; and indeed it was his very self, but he was pale and changed for long strangerhood and the hardships of travel, so that he knew him not. However, he said to his attendants, ‘Take yonder youth and carry him to the palace where I lodge, and keep him with you till my return, that I may question him.’ But they understood him to say, ‘Carry him to the prison,’ and said in themselves, ‘Doubtless this is some runaway slave of his.’ So they took him and carried him to the prison, where they laid him in irons and left him.

Presently Seif returned to the palace, but he forgot his brother Saïd, and none made mention of him to him. So he abode in prison, and when they brought out the prisoners, to labour upon the public works, they took Saïd with them, and he wrought with the rest. In this plight he abode a month’s space, in squalor and misery, pondering his case and saying in himself, ‘What is the cause of my imprisonment?’ Meanwhile, Seif el Mulouk’s mind was diverted from him by rejoicing and other things; but one day, as he sat, he bethought him of Saïd and said to his attendants, ‘Where is the young man I gave into your charge on such a day?’ ‘Didst thou not bid us carry him to the prison?’ said they. ‘Nay,’ answered he; ‘I bade you carry him to my palace.’ Then he sent his chamberlains for Saïd and they fetched him in irons, and loosing him from his fetters, set him before the prince, who said to him, ‘O young man, what countryman art thou?’ Quoth he, ‘I am from Egypt and my name is Saïd, son of the Vizier Faris.’

When Seif heard this, he rose and throwing himself upon him, hung on his neck, weeping for very joy and saying, ‘O Saïd, O my brother, praised be God that I see thee alive! I am thy brother Seif el Mulouk, son of King Aasim.’ Then they embraced and wept together and all who were present marvelled at them. After this, Seif commanded his people to carry Saïd to the bath: and they did so. When he came out, they clad him in sumptuous apparel and carried him back to Seif, who seated him on the couch beside himself. When King Taj el Mulouk heard of the reunion of Seif and his brother Saïd, he was mightily rejoiced and came to them, and the three sat devising of all that had befallen them.

Then said Saïd, ‘O my brother Seif el Mulouk, when the ship sank and all on board were cast into the sea, I saved myself on a plank with a company of servants, and it drifted with us a whole month, at the end of which time the wind cast us, by the ordinance of God the Most High, upon an island. So we landed and entering among the trees, fell to eating of the fruits, for we were anhungred. Whilst we were busy eating, there fell on us, at unawares, folk like Afrits and springing on our shoulders, said to us, “Go on with us; for ye are become our asses.” So I said to him who had mounted me, “What art thou and why dost thou mount me?” But he twisted one of his legs about my neck, till I was all but dead, and beat upon my back the while with the other leg, till I thought he had broken it. So I fell to the ground on my face, having no strength left in me for hunger and thirst. When he saw this, he knew that I was hungry and taking me by the hand, led me to a pear-tree laden with fruit and said to me, “Eat thy fill of this tree.” So I ate till I had enough and rose, against my will, to walk; but, before I had gone far, the creature turned and leaping on my shoulders again, drove me on, now walking, now running and now trotting, and he the while mounted on me, laughing and saying, “Never in my life saw I an ass like unto thee!”

We abode thus awhile, till, one day, it chanced that we came upon great plenty of vines, covered with ripe fruit; so we gathered a quantity of bunches of grapes and throwing them into a pit, trod them with our feet, till the pit became a great pool. Then we waited awhile and presently returning thither, found that the sun had smitten the grapejuice and it was become wine. So we used to drink of it, till we were drunken and our faces flushed and we fell to singing and dancing, for the hilarity of drunkenness; whereupon our masters said to us, “What is it that reddens your faces and makes you dance and sing?” “Ask us not,” answered we. “What is your intent in questioning us of this?” But they insisted, till we told them how we had pressed grapes and made wine. Quoth they, “Give us to drink thereof;” but we said, “The grapes are spent.”

So they brought us to a valley, whose length we knew not from its breadth, wherein were vines without beginning or end, each bunch of grapes on them twenty pounds in weight and all within easy reach, and said, “Gather of these.” So we gathered great store of grapes and filling therewith a great trench that we found there, bigger than the great tank [in the king’s garden], trod them with our feet and did with the juice as before, till it became wine, whereupon we said to them, “It is come to perfection; but in what will ye drink it?” And they answered, saying, “We had asses like unto you; but we ate them and kept their heads: so give us to drink in their skulls.” So we gave them to drink, and they became drunken and lay down, nigh two hundred of them.

Then said we to one another, “Is it not enough that they should ride us, but they must eat us also? There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! But we will ply them with wine, till they are overcome with drunkenness, when we will kill them and be at rest from them.” So we awoke them and proceeded to fill the skulls and gave them to drink, but they said, “This is bitter.” “Why say ye it is bitter?” answered we. “Whoso saith this, except he drink of it ten times, he dieth the same day.” When they heard this, they feared death and said to us, “Give us to drink the whole ten times.” So we gave them to drink, and when they had drunken the rest of the ten draughts, their senses failed them and they became helplessly drunk. So we dragged them [together] by the hands and laying them one upon another, collected great plenty of dry vine-stalks and branches and heaped it upon and about them: then set fire to the pile and stood afar off, to see what came of them. When the fire was burnt down, we came back and found them a heap of ashes, wherefore we praised God the Most High, who had delivered us from them. Then we sought the sea-shore, where we parted and I and two of the men fared on till we came to a great and thick wood and there busied ourselves with eating fruit.

Presently, up came a man of high stature, long-bearded and flap-eared, with eyes like cressets, driving before him a great flock of sheep. When he saw us, he rejoiced and said to us, “Welcome and fair welcome to you! Come with me, that I may slaughter you one of these sheep and roast it and give you to eat.” Quoth we, “Where is thine abode?” And he said, “Hard by yonder mountain: go on towards it till ye come to a cave, where are many guests like yourselves. Enter and sit with them, whilst we make ready for you the guest-meal." We doubted not but he spoke the truth, so fared on, as he bade us, till we came to the cavern, where we found many guests, men like ourselves, but they were all blind; and when we entered, one said, "I am sick;" and another, "I am weak."

So we said to them, "What is this you say and what is the cause of your sickness and weakness?" "Who are ye?" asked they; and we answered, "We are guests." Then said they, "What hath made you fall into the hands of yonder accursed wretch? But there is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! This is a ghoul who eats men and he hath blinded us and meaneth to eat us." "And how did he blind you?" asked we. "Like as he will blind yourselves even now," replied they. Quoth we, "And how so?" And they answered "He will bring you cups of milk and will say to you, 'Ye are weary with travel: take this milk and drink it.' And when ye have drunken thereof, ye will become blind like unto us." Quoth I to myself, "There is no escape for us but by stratagem." So I dug a hole in the earth and sat over it.

Presently in came the accursed ghoul, with cups of milk, of which he gave one to each of us, saying, "Ye come from the desert and are athirst: so take this milk and drink it, whilst I roast you the meat." I took the cup and carrying it to my mouth, [made a show of drinking, but] emptied it into the hole; then I cried out, "Alas! my sight is gone and I am blind!" and clapping my hand to my eyes, fell a-weeping and lamenting, whilst he laughed and said, "Fear not." But, as for my two comrades, they drank the milk and became blind. Then the ghoul arose and stopping up the mouth of the cavern, came to me and felt my ribs, but found me lean and with no flesh on my bones: so he felt another and finding him fat, rejoiced. Then he slaughtered three sheep and skinned them and fetching iron spits, spitted the flesh thereon and set them over the fire to roast. When the meat was done, he set it before my comrades, who ate and he with them; after which he brought a skin full of wine and drank thereof and lay down on his face and snored.

Quoth I in myself, "He is drowned in sleep: how shall I slay him?" Then I bethought me of the spits and laying two of them in the fire, waited till they were red-hot: whereupon I girded myself and taking a spit in each hand, went up to the ghoul and thrust them into his eyes, pressing upon them with all my might. He sprang to his feet for dear life and would have laid hold of me; but he was blind. So I fled from him into the inner cavern, whilst he ran after me; but I found no place of refuge from him nor whence I might escape into the open country, for the cave was stopped up with stone; wherefore I was bewildered and said to the blind men, “How shall I do with this accursed wretch?” “O Saïd,” answered one of them, “climb up to yonder niche and thou wilt find there a sharpened sword: bring it to me and I will tell thee what to do.”

So I climbed up to the niche and taking the sword, returned to the blind man, who said to me, “Smite him with the sword in his middle, and he will die forthright.” So I ran after the ghoul, who was weary with running after me and felt for the blind men, that he might kill them, and coming behind him, smote him with the sword in his middle and he fell in twain. Then he cried out to me, saying, “O man, an thou desire to kill me, smite me a second time.” Accordingly, I was about to deal him another blow; but he who had directed me to the sword said to me, “Smite him not a second time, for he will not die, but will live and destroy us.” So I held my hand, as he bade me, and the ghoul died. Then said the blind man to me, “Open the mouth of the cave and let us go out; so haply God may help us and deliver us from this place.” Quoth I, “No harm can come to us now; let us rather abide here and rest and eat of these sheep and drink of this wine, for the land is long.”

So we abode there two months, eating of the sheep and of the fruits of the island, till, one day, as we sat upon the beach, we caught sight of a great ship in the distance; so we cried out and made signs to the crew. They feared to draw near, knowing that the island was inhabited by a ghoul who ate men, and would have sheered off; but we ran down to the marge of the sea and made signs to them with the floating ends of our turbans and shouted to them, whereupon one of the sailors, who was sharp of sight, said to the rest, “Harkye, comrades, these seem men like ourselves, for they have not the fashion of ghouls.” So they made for us, little by little, till they drew near us and were certified that we were indeed human beings, when they saluted us and we returned their greeting and gave them the glad tidings of the death of the accursed ghoul, wherefore they thanked us.

Then we transported to the ship all that was in the cavern of stuffs and sheep and treasure, together with provision of the fruits of the island, such as should serve us days and months, and embarking, sailed on with a fair wind three days; at the end of which time the wind veered round against us and the sky became exceeding dark, nor had an hour passed, before the wind drove the vessel on to a rock, where it broke up and its planks were rent asunder. However, God the Most High decreed that I should lay hold of one of the planks, which I bestrode, and it bore me along two days, for the wind had fallen fair again, and I paddled with my feet awhile, till God the Most High brought me safe to shore and I landed and came to this city, where I found myself a stranger, alone and friendless. And indeed I knew not what to do; for hunger was sore upon me and I was in great straits.

So I hid myself and pulling off my tunic, carried it to the market, saying in myself, "I will sell it and live on its price, till God accomplish His will of me." Then I took the tunic in my hand and cried it for sale, and the folk were looking at it and bidding for it, when, O my brother, thou camest up and seeing me, commandest me to the palace; but thine attendants took me and carried me to prison, where I abode till thou bethoughtest thee of me and badst bring me before thee. So now I have told thee what befell me, and praised be God for reunion!'

The two kings marvelled exceedingly at Saïd's story and Taj el Mulouk made ready a goodly dwelling for Seif el Mulouk and his vizier. [So they took up their abode therein] and Dauleh Khatoun used to visit Seif el Mulouk there and thank him for his favours and talk with him. One day, he foregathered with her and said to her, 'O my lady, where is the promise thou madest me, in the palace of Japhet son of Noah, saying, "Were I with my people, I would make shift to bring thee to thy desire?"' And Saïd said to her, 'O princess, I crave thine aid to enable him to compass his desire.' 'It is well,' answered she. 'I will do my endeavour for him, that he may attain his wish, if it please God the Most High.' And she turned to Seif el Mulouk and said to him, 'Take comfort and be of good courage.' Then she rose and going in to her mother, said to her, 'Arise with me forthright and let us purify ourselves and make fumigations, to the intent that Bediya el Jemal and her mother may come and see me and rejoice in me.' 'With all my heart,' answered the queen and rising, betook herself to the garden and burnt of the perfumes [which Bediya's mother had given her to that intent]; nor was it long before Bediya el Jemal and her mother made their appearance.

The Queen of Hind foregathered with the other queen and acquainted her with her daughter's safe return, whereat she rejoiced; and Bediya el Jemal and Dauleh Khatoun foregathered likewise and rejoiced in each other. Then they pitched the pavilions and dressed rich meats and made ready the place of entertainment; whilst the two princesses withdrew to a tent apart and ate and drank and made merry together; after which they sat down to converse, and Bediya said, 'What hath befallen thee in thy strangerhood?' 'O my sister,' replied Dauleh Khatoun, 'ask me not what hath befallen me. Alas, what hardships mortals suffer!' 'How so?' asked Bediya. So she told her how the son of the Blue King had carried her off to the Castle of Japhet son of Noah and how Seif el Mulouk had slain the genie and brought her back to her father; and she told her also all that the prince had undergone of hardships and terrors, before he came to the castle.

Bediya marvelled at her story and said, 'O my sister, this is a wonder of wonders! By Allah, this Seif el Mulouk is indeed a man! But why did he leave his father and mother and betake himself to travel and expose himself to these perils?' Quoth Dauleh Khatoun, 'I have a mind to tell thee the first part of his story; but shame of thee hinders me therefrom.' Quoth Bediya, 'Why shouldst thou have shame of me, seeing that thou art my sister and my friend and there is much between thee and me and I know thou seekest me nought but good? Tell me then what thou hast to say and be not abashed at me and conceal nothing from me.' 'By Allah,' answered Dauleh Khatoun, 'all the calamities that have betided this poor fellow have been on thine account and because of thee!' ' How so, O my sister?' asked Bediya; and the other said, 'Know that he saw thy portrait wroughten on a tunic that thy father sent to Solomon son of David (on whom be peace!) and he opened it not neither looked at it, but despatched it, with other presents, to Aasim ben Sefwan, King of Egypt, who gave it, still unopened, to his son Seif el Mulouk. The latter unfolded the tunic, thinking to put it on, and seeing thy portrait, became enamoured thereof; wherefore he came forth, love-distraught, in quest of thee, and left his people and kingdom and suffered all these perils and hardships on thine account.'

When Bediya heard this, she blushed and was confounded at Dauleh Khatoun and said, 'This may never be; for mankind accord not with the Jinn.' Then Dauleh Khatoun went on to praise Seif el Mulouk and extol his beauty and fashion and prowess and qualities, saying, 'For God's sake and mine, O my sister, come and speak with him, though but one word!' But Bediya el Jemal said, 'This that thou sayest I will not hear, neither will I assent to thee therein;' and it was as if she heard nought of what the other said and as if no love of Seif el Mulouk and his beauty and fashion and prowess had gotten hold upon her heart. Then said Dauleh Khatoun, 'O Bediya el Jemal, by the milk we have sucked, I and thou, and by that which is graven on the seal of Solomon (on whom be peace!), hearken to these my words; for I pledged myself, in the Castle of Japhet, to show him thy face. So, God on thee, show thyself to him once, for the love of me, and look thyself on him!' And she ceased not to weep and implore her and kiss her hands and feet, till she consented and said, 'For thy sake, I will show him my face once.'

With that Dauleh Khatoun's heart was glad and she kissed her hands and feet. Then she went to the great pavilion in the garden and bade her women spread it with carpets and set up a couch of gold and place the wine-vessels in order; after which she went in to Seif and Saïd, whom she found seated in their lodging, and gave the former the glad tidings of the accomplishment of his wish, saying, 'Go to the pavilion in the garden, thou and thy brother, and hide yourselves there, so none in the palace may see you, till I come to you with Bediya el Jemal.' So they rose and repaired to the pavilion, where they found the couch of gold set and furnished with cushions, and meat and wine set ready. So they sat awhile, whilst Seif bethought him of his beloved and his breast was straitened and love and longing beset him: wherefore he rose and went forth from the vestibule of the pavilion. Saïd would have followed him, but he said to him, 'O my brother, follow me not, but abide in thy place, till I return to thee.' So Saïd abode seated, whilst Seif went down into the garden, drunken with the wine of desire and distracted for excess of passion and love-longing: yearning agitated him and transport overcame him and he recited the following verses:

O thou gloriously fair, I have no one but thee; I'm the thrall of thy love. Oh, have pity on me!
Thou'rt all that I seek, my desire and my joy, And mine entrails refuse to love other than thee.
Would I knew if thou knowst of my night-long lament, Sleepless-lidded and weeping with tears like a sea.
Bid slumber alight on my lids, so perchance In the visions of dreams I thine image may see.
Oh, show favour to one, who's distracted for love, And his life from the deaths of thy cruelty free!
So may Allah increase thee in beauty and joy And grant that all creatures thy ransom may be!
At the last, neath my banner all lovers shall rise And all fair ones to gather neath thine shall agree.

Then he wept and recited these also:

All my desire is for a maid, who passeth all in charms; Within my inmost soul she dwells, my heart's most secret core.
Lo, if I speak, my speech is of her charms, and if I'm dumb, She is the cynosure of all my thoughts for evermore.

Then he wept sore and recited the following:

A flame is in my liver, that rages ever higher; My wish art thou of wishes, and longsome is desire.
To thee and to none other I bend and crave thy grace, (For lovers are long-suffering,) so thou mayst turn from ire
And rigour and take pity on one whose body love Hath worn and racked, whose entrails with passion are on fire.
Relent, then; yea, be gracious, show favour and be kind; Ne'er, ne'er will I renounce thee nor of thy service tire.

And also these:

Cares on me came, what time there came the love of thee, And sleep as cruel is as thou thyself to me.
The messenger brings news to me that thou art wroth: Now God forfend the ill whereof he tells should be!

Presently Saïd grew weary of awaiting him and going forth in quest of him, found him walking in the garden, in a state of distraction, reciting the following verses:

By Allah, by Allah the Great and eke by His virtue, the wight The chapter who chanteth aloud of the Koran, "Creator" that hight,
The eyes of me range not at will o'er the beauties of those that I see, But thine image, Bediya, alone, is my bosom-companion by night!

So he joined him and they walked about the garden together and ate of its fruits.

Meanwhile, the two princesses came to the pavilion and entering, sat down on the couch of gold, beside which was a window that gave upon the garden. The eunuchs set before them all manner rich meats and they ate, Dauleh Khatoun feeding her foster-sister by mouthfuls, till they were satisfied; when the former called for divers kinds of sweetmeats, and they ate what they would of them and washed their hands. After this, Dauleh Khatoun made ready wine and set on the drinking-vessels and flagons and proceeded to fill and give Bediya to drink, filling for herself and drinking in turn. Then Bediya looked from the window into the garden and gazed upon the fruits and branches that were therein, till her eyes fell on Seif el Mulouk, as he wandered about the garden, followed by Saïd, and she heard him recite verses, pouring forth copious tears the while.

The sight cost her a thousand sighs and she turned to Dauleh Khatoun and said to her (and indeed the wine sported with her senses), 'O my sister, who is that young man I see in the garden, distraught, love-lorn, melancholy, sighing?' Quoth Dauleh Khatoun, 'Dost thou give me leave to bring him hither, that we may look on him?' And Bediya answered, 'If thou canst avail to bring him, do so.' So Dauleh Khatoun called to him, saying, 'O king's son, come up hither and bring us thy beauty and thy grace!' Seif knew her voice and came up into the pavilion; but no sooner had he set eyes on Bediya el Jemal, than he fell down in a swoon; whereupon Dauleh Khatoun sprinkled a little rose-water on him and he came to himself.

Then he rose and kissed the earth before Bediya, who was amazed at his beauty and loveliness; and Dauleh Khatoun said to her, 'Know, O princess, that this is Seif el Mulouk, to whom, by the ordinance of God the Most High, I owe my deliverance, and he it is who hath endured all manner of afflictions on thine account: wherefore I would have thee look on him with favour.' With this Bediya laughed and said, 'And who keeps faith, that this youth should do so? For there is no [true] love in men.' 'O princess,' answered Seif, 'never shall lack of faith be in me, and all men are not created alike.' And he wept before her and recited these verses:

Harkye, Bediya el Jemal, have ruth upon a wight, Whom thine enchanting, wicked eye hath brought to parlous plight.
By the fair colours in thy cheeks so featly that combine, The colour of the anemone, rose-ruddy, ay, and white,
Afflict not with abandonment one who is sick to death; For long estrangement, see, my frame is worn away outright.
This is the utmost of my wish, the end of my desire, Though unto union should I strive to win, if but I might.

Then he wept sore and love and longing got the mastery over him and he greeted her with the following verses:

Peace from a lover be on thee, a slave of love in vain, Still do the generous the approof of [God] the Generous gain.
Peace be upon thee! Never fail thine image to my dreams Nor hall nor chamber ever cease thy presence to contain!
Indeed, I'm jealous over thee; I may not name thy name. Surely belovéd, come what may, to lover should be fain.
Cut thou not off thy kindnesses from him who loves thee dear; For grief destroys him; yea, he is for suffering all forslain.
I watch the shining stars, and they affright me; ay, my night, For stress of yearning and desire, is long on heart and brain.

What words of asking shall I speak, to help me to my wish? Resource nor patience any dele doth unto me remain.
Upon thee be the peace of God, in time of rigour; peace Be on thee from the lover sad, long-suffering, ‘spite his pain!

Then, for the stress of his passion and desire, he repeated these verses also:

If any other be my aim, my lords, but you, Ne’er may I gain of you the grace for which I sue!
Who is there but yourselves doth loveliness comprise? Who else could e’er stir up my soul to love anew?
How should I be consoled for passion, I, indeed, Who’ve wasted all my life and all my breath for you?

When he had made an end of his verses, he wept sore and she said to him, ‘O prince, I fear to grant thee entire acceptance, lest I find in thee neither love nor affection; for oftentimes men’s virtues are few and their perfidy great and thou knowest how the lord Solomon, son of David (on whom be peace!), took Belkis to his love, but forsook her whenas he saw another fairer than she.’ ‘O my eye and my soul,’ replied Seif, ‘God hath not made all men alike, and I, if it be His will, will keep my troth and die at thy feet. Thou shalt see what I will do in accordance with my words and God is my warrant for that I say.’ Quoth Bediya, ‘Sit and be of good heart and swear to me by thy religion and let us covenant together that we will not be false to each other; and may God the Most High punish whichever of us breaketh faith!’

So he sat down and laid his hand in hers and they swore to each other that neither of them would ever prefer to the other any one, either of mankind or of the Jinn. Then they embraced awhile and wept for excess of joy, whilst passion overcame Seif el Mulouk and he recited the following verses:

I weep for passion and for love and longing passing sore; Ay, and desire of her my heart and soul do weary for.
Sore is my suffering for the length of severance from thee And all

too short my arm and weak to reach my wishes' shore.
Yea, and my grief for that whereby my fortitude's made strait,
Unto the railer doth reveal my bosom's secret sore.
The compass of my patience, once so wide, is narrow grown, Nor
is there left me any strength with trouble to wage war.
I wonder, will God e'er reknit our sundered lives and heal My
heart of all the pain and care that rankle at its core!

Then Seif el Mulouk arose and walked in the garden and Bediya el Jemal arose also and went forth a-walking, followed by a slave-girl bearing food and a flask of wine. The princess sat down and the damsel set the food and wine before her: nor was it long before they were joined by Seif el Mulouk, whom Bediya received with open arms and they sat awhile, eating and drinking. Then said she to him, 'O king's son, [thou must now go to the garden of Irem, where dwells my grandmother, and seek her consent to our marriage. My slave-girl Merjaneh will convey thee thither and there] thou wilt see a great pavilion of red satin, lined with green silk. Take courage and enter the pavilion boldly and thou wilt see therein an old woman sitting on a couch of red gold set with pearls and jewels. Salute her with courtesy and worship; then look at the foot of the couch, where thou wilt see a pair of sandals of cloth of gold, embroidered with jewels. Take them and kiss them and lay them on thy head; then put them under thy right armpit and stand before the old woman, in silence and with thy head bowed down. If she ask thee who thou art and how thou camest thither, make her no answer, but abide silent till Merjaneh enter, when she will speak with her and seek to win her approof for thee and cause her look on thee with favour; so haply God the Most High may incline her heart to thee and she may grant thee thy wish.'

Then she called Merjaneh and said to her, 'As thou lovest me, do my errand this day and be not slothful therein! If thou accomplish it, thou shalt be free, for the sake of God the Most High, and I will deal bounteously by thee and there shall be none dearer to me than thou, nor will I discover my secrets to any but thee. So, by my love for thee, do this my occasion and be not slothful therein.' 'O my lady and light of mine eyes,' replied Merjaneh, 'tell me what is it thou requirest of me, that I may accomplish it on my head and eyes.' Quoth Bediya, 'Take this mortal on thy shoulders and carry him to the garden of Irem and the pavilion of my grandmother, my father's mother, and be careful of him. When thou hast brought him into her presence and seest him take the slippers and do them worship, and hearest her ask him who he is and how and why he came thither, do thou come forward in haste and salute her and say to her, "O my lady, I am she who brought him hither and he is the king's son of Egypt. It is he who slew the son of the Blue King and delivered the princess Dauleh Khatoun from the Castle of Japhet son of Noah and brought her back safe to her father: and I have brought him to thee, that he may give thee the glad news of her safety: so be thou gracious to him."

Then do thou say to her, "God on thee, O my lady, is not this young man handsome?" She will reply, "Yes:" and do thou rejoin, "O my lady, indeed he is accomplished in honour and manhood and valour and he is lord and King of Egypt and possesseth all praiseworthy qualities." If she say to thee, "What is his occasion?" do thou make answer, "My lady saluteth thee and saith to thee, how long shall she abide at home, a maid and unmarried? Indeed, the time is long upon her. What then is thine intent in leaving her without a husband and why dost thou not marry her in thy lifetime and that of her mother, like other girls?" If she say, "How shall we do to marry her? An she have any one in mind, let her tell us of him, and we will do her will as far as may be," do thou answer, "O my lady, thy daughter saith to thee, 'Ye were minded aforetime to marry me to Solomon (on whom be peace!) and wrought him my portrait on a tunic. But he had no lot in me; so he sent the tunic to the King of Egypt and he gave it to his son, who saw my portrait wroughten thereon and fell in love with me: wherefore he left kingdom and father and mother and turning his back on the world and all that is therein, went forth at a venture, a wanderer, love-distraught, and hath suffered the utmost perils and hardships for my sake.' Now thou seest his beauty and grace, and her heart is enamoured of him; so, if ye have a mind to marry her, marry her to this young man and forbid her not from him, for he is a passing goodly youth and King of Egypt, nor wilt thou find a comelier than he; and if ye will not give her to him, she will slay herself and marry none, neither man nor genie.” ‘And look, O my minnie Merjaneh,’ continued Bediya el Jemal, ‘how thou mayst do with my grandmother, to win her consent, and beguile her with soft words, so haply she may do my desire.’ Quoth the damsel, ‘O my lady, upon my head and eyes, I will serve thee and do what shall content thee.’

Then she took Seif el Mulouk on her shoulders and said to him, ‘Shut thine eyes.’ He did so and she flew up with him into the sky; and after awhile she said to him, ‘O king’s son, open thine eyes.’ He opened them and found himself in a garden, which was none other than the garden of Irem; and she showed him the pavilion and bade him enter; whereupon he pronounced the name of God and entering, saw the old queen sitting on the couch, attended by her waiting-women. So he drew near her with courtesy and reverence and taking the sandals, did as Bediya had enjoined him. Quoth the old woman, ‘Who art thou and whence comest thou and who brought thee hither? Wherefore dost thou take the sandals and kiss them and when didst thou ask a favour of me and I did not grant it thee?’

With this in came Merjaneh and saluting her reverently, repeated to her what Bediya el Jemal had told her; which when the old queen heard, she cried out at her and was wroth with her and said, ‘How shall there be accord between mankind and the Jinn?’ But Seif answered her, saying, ‘Indeed, I will conform to thy will and be thy servant and die in thy love and will keep faith with thee and regard none but thee: so shalt thou see my truth and lack of falsehood and the excellence of my honourable dealing with thee, if it be the will of God the Most High!’ The old woman bowed her head and pondered awhile; after which she raised her head and said to him, ‘O fair youth, wilt thou indeed keep faith and troth?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he; ‘by Him who raised the heavens and spread out the earth upon the water, I will indeed keep faith!’

Quoth she, ‘God willing, I will accomplish thee thy desire: but now go thou into the garden and take thy pleasure therein and eat of its fruits, that have neither like nor equal in the world, whilst I send for my son Shehyal and talk with him of the matter. Nothing but good shall come of it, so God please, for he will not cross me nor depart from my commandment and I will marry thee with his daughter Bediya el Jemal. So be of good heart, O Seif el Mulouk, for she shall assuredly be thy wife.' The prince thanked her and kissing her hands and feet, went forth from her into the garden; whilst she turned to Merjaneh and said to her, 'Go and find my son Shehyal and bring him to me, wherever he is.' So Merjaneh went out in quest of King Shehyal and found him and brought him to his mother.

Meanwhile, as Seif el Mulouk walked in the garden, five Jinn of the people of the Blue King espied him and said to each other, 'Whence cometh yonder fellow and who brought him hither? Belike it is he who slew the Blue King's son: but we will go about with him and question him and find out who he is.' So they came softly up to him, as he sat in a corner of the garden, and sitting down by him, said to him, 'O fair youth, thou didst rarely in killing the son of the Blue King and delivering Dauleh Khatoun from him; for he was a perfidious dog and had played the traitor with her, and had not God appointed thee to her, she had never won free. But how didst thou slay him?' Seif looked at them and deeming them of the folk of the garden, answered, 'I slew him by means of this ring on my finger.' Therewith they were assured that it was he who had slain him; so they seized on him, two of them holding his hands, whilst other two held his feet and the fifth his mouth, lest he should cry out and King Shehyal's people should hear him and rescue him.

Then they lifted him up and flying away with him, stayed not in their flight till they set him down before their king and said to him, 'O king of the age, we bring thee the murderer of thy son.' 'Where is he?' asked the king: and they replied, 'This is he.' So the Blue King said to Seif, 'How slewest thou my son, the darling of my heart and the light of my eyes, and why didst thou slay him without right, for all he had done thee no injury?' Quoth the prince, 'I slew him, because of his wrong-doing and frowardness, in that he used to seize kings' daughters and sever them from their families and carry them to the Castle of Japhet son of Noah and transgress against them. I slew him by means of this ring on my finger, and God hurried his soul to the fire and ill is the abiding-place [to which he went].'

Therewithal the king was certified that this was indeed he who slew his son; so he called his viziers and said to them, 'Without doubt, this is the murderer of my son: so how do you counsel me to deal with him? Shall I slay him after the foulest fashion or torture him with the most grievous torments or how?’ Quoth the chief vizier, ‘Cut off his limbs, one a day.’ And another said, ‘Beat him grievously every day [till he die].’ And a third, ‘Cut him in half.’ A fourth, ‘Cut off all his fingers and burn him with fire.’ And a fifth, ‘Crucify him.’ And so on, each speaking according to his judgment.

Now there was with the Blue King an old amir, versed in affairs and experienced in the circumstance of the times, and he said, ‘O king of the age, I have somewhat to say to thee, and it is for thee to judge whether thou wilt hearken to me or not.’ Now he was the king’s privy counsellor and the chief officer of his empire, and he was wont to give ear to his word and act by his counsel and gainsay him not in aught. So he rose and kissing the ground before the king, said to him, ‘O king of the age, if I counsel thee in this matter, wilt thou follow my counsel and grant me indemnity?’ ‘Set forth thine opinion,’ answered the king, ‘and thou shalt have indemnity.’ Then said he, ‘O king of the age, if thou wilt accept my advice and hearken to my word, to slay this young man now is inexpedient, for that he is thy prisoner and in thy power, and whenas thou wilt, thou mayst lay thy hand on him and do with him as thou wilt. Have patience, then, O king of the age, for he hath entered the garden of Irem and is become the [affianced] husband of Bediya el Jemal, daughter of King Shehyal, and one of them. Thy people seized him there and brought him hither and he did not hide his case from them or from thee. So, if thou kill him, King Shehyal will seek to avenge him of thee and wage war on thee for his daughter’s sake, and thou canst not avail to cope with him nor make head against his power.’ So the king hearkened to his counsel and commanded to imprison Seif el Mulouk.

Meanwhile, Bediya’s grandmother, her son Shehyal being come to her, despatched Merjaneh in quest of Seif el Mulouk; but she found him not and returning to her mistress, said, ‘I found him not in the garden.’ So the old queen sent for the gardeners and questioned them of the prince. Quoth they, ‘We saw him sitting under a tree, and five of the Blue King’s people alighted by him and spoke with him awhile, after which they took him up and stopping his mouth, flew away with him.’ When the old queen heard this, it was no light matter to her and she was exceeding wroth: so she rose to her feet and said to her son, King Shehyal, ‘Art thou a king and shall the Blue King’s people come to our garden and carry off our guests unhindered, and thou alive?’ And she proceeded to provoke him, saying, ‘It behoves not that any transgress against us in thy lifetime.’ ‘O my mother,’ answered he, ‘this man slew the Blue King’s son, who was a genie, and God threw him into his hand. He is a genie and I am a genie: how then shall I go to him and make war on him for the sake of a mortal?’ But she answered, saying, ‘Go to him and demand our guest of him, and if he be still alive and the Blue King deliver him to thee, take him and return; but if he have slain him, take the king alive and all his household and family and bring them to me, that I may slaughter them with my own hand and lay waste his dominions. Except thou do what I bid thee, I will not hold thee quit of my milk and my bringing up of thee shall be counted unlawful.’

So Shehyal rose and assembling his troops, set out, in deference to his mother, desiring to content her and her friends, and in accordance with that which had been fore-ordained from all eternity; nor did they leave journeying till they came to the country of the Blue King, who met them with his army and gave them battle. The Blue King’s host was put to the rout and he and all his sons, great and small, and grandees and officers taken and bound and brought before King Shehyal, who said to the captive monarch, ‘O Azrec, where is my guest, the mortal Seif el Mulouk?’ ‘O Shehyal,’ answered the Blue King, ‘thou art a genie and I am a genie, and is it on account of a mortal, who slew my son, the darling of my heart and the delight of my soul, that thou hast done all this and spilt the blood of so many thousand Jinn?’

‘Leave this talk,’ rejoined Shehyal; ‘knowest thou not that a single mortal is better, in God’s sight, than a thousand Jinn? If he be alive, bring him to me, and I will set thee free and all whom I have taken of thy sons and people; but if thou have slain him, I will slaughter thee and thy sons.’ ‘O king,’ said Azrec, ‘is this fellow of more account with thee than my son?’ Quoth Shehyal, ‘Thy son was an evildoer, who carried off kings’ daughters and shut them up in the Castle of Japhet son of Noah and evil entreated them.’ Then said the Blue King, ‘He is with me; but make thou peace between us.’ So he delivered the prince to Shehyal, who made peace between him and the Blue King, and the latter gave him a writ of absolution for the death of his son. Then Shehyal conferred robes of honour on them and entertained the Blue King and his troops hospitably for three days, after which he took the prince and carried him back to the old queen, who rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy, and Shehyal marvelled at the beauty of Seif el Mulouk and his grace and perfection.

Then Seif related to him his story from beginning to end and Shehyal said, ‘O my mother, since it is thy pleasure that this should be, I hearken and obey all that it pleaseth thee to command; wherefore do thou carry him to Serendib and there celebrate his wedding and marry him to her in all state, for he is a goodly youth and hath endured horrors for her sake.’ So she and her maidens set out with Seif el Mulouk for Serendib and foregathered with Dauleh Khatoun and Bediya el Jemal in the Queen of Hind’s garden. The old queen acquainted the two princesses with all that had passed between Seif el Mulouk and the Blue King; after which King Taj el Mulouk assembled the grandees of his realm and drew up the contract of marriage between Seif el Mulouk and Bediya el Jemal; and he conferred splendid robes of honour and gave banquets to the people.

Then Seif el Mulouk rose, and kissing the earth before the king, said to him, ‘Pardon, O king! I would fain ask somewhat of thee, but fear lest thou refuse it to me and disappoint my expectation.’ ‘By Allah,’ answered Taj el Mulouk, ‘though thou soughtest my soul of me, I would not refuse it to thee, after all the kindness thou hast done me!’ Quoth Seif, ‘I wish thee to marry the princess Dauleh Khatoun to my brother Saïd, and we will both be thy servants.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered Taj el Mulouk, and assembling his grandees a second time, let draw up the contract of marriage between his daughter and Saïd; after which they scattered gold and silver [among the people] and the king bade decorate the city. So they held high festival and Seif and Saïd went in to their brides on the same night.

As for Seif el Mulouk, he abode forty days with Bediya el Jemal, at the end of which time she said to him, ‘O king’s son, is there any regret for aught left in thy heart?’ ‘God forbid!’ answered he. ‘I have accomplished my quest and there abideth no regret in my heart: but I would fain visit my father and mother in Egypt and see if they continue well or not.’ So Bediya commanded a company of her people to convey them to Egypt, and they carried them to Cairo, where Seif and Saïd foregathered with their parents and abode with them a week; after which they took leave of them and returned to Serendib; and after this, whenever they longed for their people, they used to go to them and return. Then Seif el Mulouk and Bediya el Jemal abode in all delight and solace of life, as did Saïd and Dauleh Khatoun, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies. So glory be to the Living One who dieth not, who createth all creatures and decreeth to them death and who is the First, without beginning, and the Last, without end! This is all that hath come down to us of the story of Seif el Mulouk and Bediya el Jemal.

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HASSAN OF BASSORA AND THE KING'S DAUGHTER OF THE JINN.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, a rich merchant, who dwelt in the land of Bassora. [In due time] God the all-hearing and knowing decreed that he should be admitted to the mercy of the Most High; so he died, leaving a widow and a son, by name Hassan, a youth of surpassing beauty and grace, to inherit his wealth. They laid him out and buried him, after which Hassan betook himself to the company of folk [of lewd life], women and boys, consorting with them in gardens and making them [banquets of] meat and wine for months together and occupying himself not with traffic, like as his father had done, for that he exulted in [the assured possession of] abundant wealth.

After he had led this life for some time and had wasted all his ready money, he sold all his father's lands and houses and [spent their price in riotous living, till] there remained in his hand nothing, neither little nor much, nor was one of his friends left who knew him. He abode thus, anhungred, he and his mother, three days, and on the fourth day, as he went along, unknowing whither, there met him a man of his father's friends, who questioned him of his case. So he told him what had befallen him and the other said, 'O my son, I have a brother, a goldsmith; if thou wilt, thou shalt be with him and learn his craft and become skilled therein.' Hassan consented and accompanied him to his brother, to whom he commended him, saying, 'This is my son; do thou teach him for my sake.' So Hassan abode with the goldsmith and busied himself with the craft; and God prospered him, [so that he became proficient therein] and [in due course] opened a shop for himself.

One day, as he sat in his shop in the bazaar, there came up to him a Persian, with a great white beard and a white turban on his head, having the appearance of a merchant, who looked at his handiwork and examined it knowingly. It pleased him and he shook his head, saying, 'By Allah, thou art a cunning goldsmith!' And he continued to look at his wares, whilst Hassan read in an old book he had in his hand and the folk were taken up with his beauty and grace and symmetry, till the hour of afternoon prayer, when the shop became clear of people and the Persian accosted the young man, saying, ‘O my son, thou art a goodly youth! What book is that? Thou hast no father and I have no son, and I know an art, than which there is no goodlier in the world. Many have sought of me instruction therein, but I consented not to teach it to any of them; yet will I gladly teach it to thee, for the love of thee hath gotten hold upon my heart and I will make thee my son and set up a barrier between thee and poverty, so shalt thou be quit of this handicraft [and toil] with hammer and charcoal and fire.’

‘O my lord,’ said Hassan, ‘and when wilt thou teach me this?’ ‘To-morrow,’ answered the Persian, ‘if it please God the Most High, I will come to thee and make thee fine gold of copper in thy presence.’ Whereupon Hassan rejoiced and sat talking with the Persian till nightfall, when he took leave of him and going in to his mother, saluted her and ate with her; but he was dazed, without thought or reason, by reason of the hold that the stranger’s words had gotten upon his heart. So she questioned him and he told her what had passed between himself and the Persian, which when she heard, her heart fluttered and she strained him to her breast, saying, ‘O my son, beware of hearkening to the talk of the folk, and especially of the Persians, and obey them not in aught; for they are sharpers and tricksters, who profess the art of alchemy and swindle people and take their good and devour it in vain.’ ‘O my mother,’ answered Hassan, ‘we are poor folk and have nothing he may covet, that he should put a cheat on us. Indeed, this Persian is an old man of worth and the signs of virtue are manifest on him; God hath inclined his heart to me and he hath adopted me to son.’ She was silent for chagrin, and he passed the night with a heart full of what the Persian had said to him, nor did sleep visit him, for the excess of his joy therein.

On the morrow, he rose and taking the keys, opened the shop, nor was it long before the Persian made his appearance. Hassan rose to him and would have kissed his hands; but he forbade him from this and said to him, ‘O Hassan, set on the melting-pot and mount the bellows.’ So he did as the stranger bade him and lighted the charcoal. Then said the other, ‘O my son, hast thou any copper?’ And he answered, ‘I have a broken dish.’ So he caused him cut it into small pieces with the shears and cast it into the crucible and blow up the fire with the bellows, till the copper became liquid, when he took from his turban a folded paper and opening it, sprinkled thereout into the pot about half a drachm of somewhat like eye-powder. Then he bade Hassan blow the bellows, and he did so, till the contents of the crucible became a lump of gold.

When he saw this, he was at his wits’ end for joy and taking the ingot [forth of the melting-pot], handled it and tried it with the file and found it pure gold of the finest quality: whereupon his reason fled and he was dazed with excess of delight and bent over the Persian’s hand to kiss it. But he forbade him, saying, ‘Carry the ingot to the market and sell it and take the price in haste and speak not.’ So Hassan went down into the market and gave the ingot to the broker, who took it and rubbed it [with the touchstone] and found it pure gold. So they opened the biddings at ten thousand dirhems and the merchants bid against one another for it up to fifteen thousand dirhems, at which price he sold it and taking the money, went home and told his mother what had passed, saying, ‘O my mother, I have learnt this art.’ But she laughed at him, saying, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ And she was silent for vexation.

Then, of his ignorance, he took a [brass] mortar and returning to the shop, laid it before the Persian, who was still sitting there and who said to him. ‘O my son, what wilt thou do with this mortar?’ ‘Let us put it in the fire,’ answered Hassan, ‘and make of it ingots of gold.’ The Persian laughed and said, ‘O my son, art thou mad that thou wouldst go down into the market with two ingots of gold in one day? Knowst thou not that the folk would suspect us and we should lose our lives? If I teach thee this craft, thou must practise it but once a year; for that will suffice thee from year to year.’ ‘True, O my lord,’ answered Hassan, and sitting down, threw charcoal on the fire and set on the melting-pot. Quoth the Persian, ‘What wilt thou, O my son?’ And Hassan replied, ‘Teach me this craft.’ ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ cried the Persian, laughing. ‘Verily, O my son, thou art little of wit and in nowise fitted for this noble craft. Did ever any in his life learn this art in the beaten way or in the markets? If we busy ourselves with it here, the folk will say, “These practise alchemy;” and the magistrates will hear of us, and we shall lose our lives. Wherefore, O my son, if thou desire this forthright, come with me to my house.’

So Hassan closed his shop and went with him; but by the way he bethought him of his mother’s words and stood still, with bowed head, thinking in himself a thousand thoughts. The Persian turned and seeing him thus, laughed and said to him, ‘Art thou mad? What! I purpose thee good in my heart and thou misdoubtest I will harm thee! But, if thou fear to go with me to my house, I will go with thee to thine and teach thee there.’ ‘It is well, O uncle,’ answered Hassan, and the Persian said, ‘Go thou before me.’ So Hassan led the way to his own house, where he left the Persian standing at the door, and going in, told his mother of his coming. She set the house in order for them and when she had made an end of furnishing and adorning it, her son bade her go to one of the neighbours’ houses. So she left the house to them and went her way, whereupon Hassan brought in the Persian.

Then he took a dish and going to the market, returned with food, which he set before the Persian, saying, ‘Eat, O my lord, that there may be bread and salt between us, and may God the Most High do vengeance upon him who is unfaithful to the bond of bread and salt!’ The Persian smiled and answered, ‘True, O my son! Who knoweth the virtue of bread and salt?’ Then he came forward and ate with Hassan, till they were satisfied; after which, ‘O my son Hassan,’ said he, ‘bring us some sweetmeats.’ So Hassan went to the market, rejoicing in his words, and returned with ten saucers of sweetmeats, of which they both ate and the Persian said, ‘May God abundantly requite thee, O my son! It is the like of thee with whom folk company and to whom they discover their secrets and teach what may profit him!’ Then said he, ‘O Hassan, bring the gear.’

No sooner did Hassan hear this than he went forth, like a colt let out to grass in the Spring, and hastening to the shop, fetched the gear and set it before the Persian, who pulled out a paper and said, ‘O Hassan, wert thou not dearer to me than my son, I would not let thee into this mystery, for I have none of the elixir left save what is in this paper; but by and by I will bring the ingredients whereof it is composed and make it before thee and teach thee its fashion; and do thou observe, when I compound the simples and lay them before thee. Know, O my son Hassan, that thou must lay to every ten pounds of copper half a drachm of that which is in this paper, and the whole will presently become virgin gold without alloy. There are in this paper three ounces, Egyptian measure, and when it is spent, I will make thee more.' Hassan took the packet and finding therein a yellow powder, finer than before, said to the Persian, 'O my lord, what is the name of this substance and where is it found and how is it made?' But he laughed and said, 'Of what dost thou question? Indeed, thou art an impertinent boy! Do and hold thy peace.'

So Hassan arose and fetching a [brass] bowl from the house, cut it up and threw it into the melting-pot; then he scattered on it a little of the powder and it became a lump of pure gold. When he saw this, he rejoiced mightily and was filled with amazement and could think of nothing but the gold; but, whilst he was occupied with taking up the ingot from the melting-pot, the Persian pulled out of his turban in haste a packet of Cretan henbane, which if an elephant smelt, he would sleep from night to night, and cutting off a little thereof, put it in a piece of sweetmeat. Then said he to Hassan, 'O Hassan, thou art become my very son and dearer to me than my soul and my wealth and I have a daughter whose like never have eyes beheld for beauty and grace and symmetry. Now I see that thou befittest none but her and she none but thee; wherefore, if it be the will of God, I will marry thee to her.' 'I am thy servant,' replied Hassan; 'and whatsoever thou dost with me [of good] will be [credited to thee] with God the Most High.' 'O my son,' rejoined the Persian, 'have patience and good shall betide thee.'

Therewithal he gave him the piece of sweetmeat and he took it and kissed his hand, knowing not what was hidden for him in the future. Then he put it in his mouth, but hardly had he swallowed it, when he fell down, head foremost, and was lost to the world; whereupon the Persian rejoiced exceedingly and said, 'Thou hast fallen into my snare, O good-for-nothing dog of the Arabs! This many a year have I sought thee, O Hassan, and now I have got thee!' Then he girt himself and binding Hassan hand and foot, laid him in a chest, which he emptied for the purpose, and locked it upon him.

Moreover, he emptied another chest and laying therein all Hassan’s valuables, together with the ingot of gold [and the price of that which he had sold], locked it.

Then he ran to the market and fetching a porter, took up the two chests and made off with them without the city, where he set them down on the sea-shore, hard by a vessel at anchor there. Now this vessel was freighted by the Persian and her captain was awaiting him; so, when the sailors saw him, they came to him and carried the chests on board. Then the Persian called out to the captain, saying, ‘Up and let us begone, for I have done my errand and compassed my desire.’ So the captain cried out to the crew, saying, ‘Weigh anchor and set sail!’ And the ship put out to sea with a fair wind.

Meanwhile, Hassan’s mother awaited him till nightfall, but heard neither sound nor news of him; so she went to the house and Ending it open, entered and saw none therein and missed the chests and valuables; wherefore she knew that her son was lost and that destiny had overtaken him and buffeted her face and tore her clothes, crying out and lamenting and saying, ‘Alas, my son! Alas, the fruit of my entrails!’ And she recited the following verses:

My patience fails me and unrest is sore upon me; yea, Lament and
sickness, after you, redouble on me aye.
By God, no fortitude have I to bear the loss of you! How should I
patience have, when all my hopes are fled away?
Since he I love is gone, in sleep how should I have delight? Who
can take pleasure in a life of misery and dismay?
Thou’rt gone and hast made desolate both house and folk and eke
Troubled the limpid streams whereat I did my thirst allay.
Thou wast mine aid in all distress; my glory and my pride
Among mankind, in every need my comfort and my stay.
Not hast thou ever, until now, been absent from my sight, But
unto me thou didst return again, ere ended day!

And she ceased not to weep and bemoan herself till the morning, when the neighbours came in to her and questioned her of her son, and she told them what had befallen him with the Persian, assured that she should never see him again. Then she went round about the house weeping, till she espied two lines written upon the wall; so she sent for a learned man, who read them to her; and they were as follows:

Tbe phantom of Leila came to me in dreams, tow’rds the break of day, When slumber ruled and my comrades all in the desert sleeping lay;
But, when I awoke to the dream of the night, that came to visit me, I found the air void and the wonted place of our rendezvous far away.

When she heard this, she cried out and said, ‘Yes, O my son! Indeed, the house is desolate and distant the place of visitation!’ Then the neighbours took leave of her and went away, after they had prayed that she might be vouchsafed patience and speedy reunion with her son; but she ceased not to weep all tides of the day and watches of the night and built a tomb amiddleward the house, on which she let write Hassan’s name and the date of his loss, and thenceforward she quitted it not, but sojourned by it night and day.

Now this Persian was a Magian, who hated Muslims with an exceeding hatred and destroyed all who fell into his power. He was a lewd and filthy villain, an alchemist, an astrologer and a seeker after hidden treasures, such an one as he of whom quoth the poet:

A dog, the son of a dog, is he and his grandfather, too was one;
And when was there ever aught of good in a dog, of a dog the son?

The name of this accursed wretch was Behram the Magian, and he was won: every year, to take a Muslim and slaughter him for a purpose of his own. So, when he had carried out his plot against Hassan the goldsmith, they sailed on till dark, when the ship made fast to the shore for the night, and at sunrise, when they set sail again, Behram bade his slaves and servants bring him the chest in which was Hassan. They did so and he opened it and taking out the young man, made him smell to vinegar and blew a powder into his nostrils. Hassan sneezed and cast up the henbane; then, opening his eyes, he looked about him and found himself on board a ship in full sail, amiddleward the sea, and saw the Persian sitting by him; wherefore he knew that the accursed Magian had put a cheat on him and that he had fallen into the very peril of which his mother had bidden him beware. So he spoke the words, which whoso utterest shall not be confounded, that is to say, 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! Verily, we are God's and to Him we return! O my God, be Thou gracious to me in Thine ordinance and give me patience to endure this Thine affliction, O Lord of all creatures!'

Then he turned to the Persian and bespoke him softly, saying, 'O my father, what fashion is this and where is [the bond of] bread and salt and the oath thou sworest to me?' But Behram looked at him and answered, 'O dog, knoweth the like of me [the bond of] bread and salt? I have slain a thousand youths like thee, save one, and thou shalt make up the thousand.' And he cried out at him and Hassan was silent, knowing that the arrow of fate had overtaken him.

Then the accursed wretch commanded to loose his bonds and they gave him a little water, whilst the Magian laughed and said, 'By the Fire and the Light and the Shade and the Heat, methought not thou wouldst fall into my toils! But the Fire gave me the victory over thee and helped me to lay hold upon thee, that I might accomplish my need and return and make thee a sacrifice to it, so it may accept of me.' Quoth Hassan, 'Thou hast betrayed [the bond of] bread and salt.' Whereupon the Magian raised his hand and dealt him a buffet, that he fell and biting the deck, swooned away, whilst the tears steamed down his cheeks. Then Behram bade his servants light him a fire and Hassan said, 'What wilt thou do with it?' 'This is the Fire, giver of light and sparks,' replied the Magian. 'This it is I worship, and if thou wilt worship it even as I, I'll give thee half my wealth and marry thee to my daughter.' 'Out on thee!' cried Hassan. 'Thou art an infidel Magian, that worshippeth the Fire, instead of the All-powerful King, Creator of Night and Day; and this is nought but a calamity among faiths!'

At this the Magian was wroth and said to him, 'Wilt thou not then fall in with me, O dog of the Arabs, and enter my faith?' But Hassan consented not to this: so the accursed Magian arose and prostrating himself to the fire, bade his servants throw him down on his face. They did so, and he beat him with a whip of plaited hide, till his flanks were laid open, whilst he cried aloud for succour, but none succoured him, and besought protection, but none protected him. Then he raised his eyes to the All-powerful King and sought aid of Him, in the name of the Chosen Prophet. And indeed patience failed him; his tears ran down his cheeks, like rain, and he repeated the following verses:

Lord, I submit myself to Thee and eke to Fate, Content, if so Thou please, to suffer and to wait.
Unjustly have they dealt by me and sore oppressed: Belike Thou wilt the past with favour compensate.

Then the Magian commanded his slaves to raise him to a sitting posture and bring him meat and drink. So they set food before him; but he refused to eat or drink; and Behram's heart was hardened against him and he ceased not to torment him day and night during the voyage, whilst Hassan took patience and humbled himself in supplication to God the Most High, to whom belong might and majesty.

They sailed the sea three months till God the Most High sent forth upon them a contrary wind and the sea grew black and rose against the ship, by reason of the much wind; whereupon quoth the captain and the sailors, 'By Allah, this is all on account of yonder youth, who hath been these three months in torment with this Magian. Indeed, this is unlawful in the sight of God the Most High.' Then they rose against the Magian and slew his servants and all who were with him; which when he saw, he made sure of death and feared for himself. So he loosed Hassan from his bonds and pulling off the ragged clothes he had on, clad him in others. Moreover, he made his excuses to him and promised to teach him the craft and restore him to his native land, saying, 'O my son, bear me not malice for that I have done with thee.' Quoth Hassan, 'How can I ever again put faith in thee?' But Behram said, 'O my son, but for offence, there were no pardon. Indeed, I did all this with thee but to try thy patience, and thou knowest that the case is altogether in God's hands.'

The sailors and the captain rejoiced in Hassan's release, and he called down blessings on them and praised God the Most High and thanked Him. With this the wind fell and the sky cleared, and they continued their voyage with a fair breeze. Then said Hassan to Behram, ‘O Persian, whither goest thou?’ ‘O my son,’ answered the Magian, ‘I am bound for the Mountain of Clouds, where is the elixir which we use in alchemy.’ And he swore to him by the Fire and the Light that he had no longer any cause to fear him. So Hassan’s heart was set at ease and he continued to eat and drink and sleep with the Magian, whilst the latter clad him in his own raiment.

Then they sailed on other three months, at the end of which time the ship came to an anchor off a long beach of pebbles of all colours, white and yellow and blue and black and what not, and the Magian rose and said to Hassan, ‘Come, let us go ashore: for we have reached our destination.’ So Hassan rose and landed with Behram, after the latter had commended his goods to the captain’s care. They walked on inland, till they were out of sight of the ship when Behram sat down and taking from his pocket a little drum of copper and a silken strap, wroughten in gold with talismanic characters, beat the drum with the strap, whereupon there arose a cloud of dust from the further side of the desert.

Hassan marvelled at the Magian’s doings and was afraid of him: and he repented of having come ashore with him, and his colour changed. But Behram looked at him and said, ‘What ails thee, O my son? By the fire and the light, thou hast nought to fear from me; and were it not that my occasion may not be accomplished save be thy means, I had not brought thee ashore. So rejoice in all good; for yonder cloud of dust is the dust of somewhat we will mount and which will aid us to traverse this desert and make the passage thereof easy to us.’ Presently, the dust lifted and discovered three dromedaries, one of which Behram mounted and Hassan another. Then they loaded their victual on the third and fared on seven days, till they came to a wide champaign, in whose midst they saw a pavilion vaulted upon four columns of red gold; so they alighted and entering therein, ate and drank and rested there.

Presently, Hassan chanced to look aside and seeing something lofty [in the distance], said to the Magian, ‘O uncle, what is that?’ ‘It is a palace,’ answered Behram. Quoth Hassan, ‘Wilt thou not go thither, that we may enter and rest ourselves there and divert ourselves with viewing it?’ But the Persian was wroth and said, ‘Name not yonder palace to me; for therein dwells an enemy of mine, with whom there befell me somewhat whereof this is no time to tell thee.’ Then he beat the drum and up came the dromedaries, and they mounted and fared on other seven days.

On the eighth day, the Magian said, ‘O Hassan, what seest thou?’ Quoth Hassan, ‘I see clouds and mists between the east and the west.’ ‘That is neither clouds nor mists,’ answered Behram, ‘but a vast and lofty mountain, on which the clouds divide, and there are no clouds above it, for the excess of its height and the greatness of its elevation. Yonder mountain is the goal of my journey and thereon is what we seek. It is for that I brought thee hither, for my occasion may not be accomplished save at thy hands.’ When Hassan heard this, he gave himself up for lost and said to the Magian, ‘By the virtue of that thou worshippest and the faith in which thou believest, I conjure thee to tell me what is the occasion on which thou hast brought me!’ Quoth Behram, ‘The art of alchemy may not be successfully practised save by means of a herb, that grows in the place where the clouds pass and whereon they divide. Such a place is yonder mountain; the herb grows there and I purpose to send thee up thither [to gather it]; and when we have it, I will show thee the secret of this craft that thou desirest to learn.’ Hassan answered, in his fear, ‘It is well, O my master.’ And indeed he despaired of life and wept for his separation from his mother and people and country, repenting him of having gainsaid her and reciting the following verses:

Consider but thy Lord His doings and how what Thou wouldst of quick relief He brings; nor at thy lot
Fret, nor despair, if thou affliction must endure; For in affliction’s self what mercies are there not.

They fared on till they came to the foot of the mountain, where they halted and Hassan saw thereon a palace and said to Behram, ‘What is yonder palace?’ And he answered, ‘It is the abode of Jinn and ghouls and devils.’ Then the Magian alighted and making Hassan dismount also, kissed his head and said to him, ‘Bear me not malice for that I did with thee, for I will keep guard over thee in thine ascent to the palace; and I conjure thee not to wrong me of aught thou shalt bring therefrom, and I and thou will share therein equally.' And Hassan answered, 'I hear and obey.' Then Behram opened a bag and taking out a handmill and a quantity of wheat, ground the latter in the mill and kneaded three cakes of the flour; after which he lighted a fire and baked them.

Then he took out the drum and beat it with the strap, whereupon up came the dromedaries. He chose out one of them and slew and skinned it; then turned to Hassan and said to him, 'Give ear, O my son Hassan, to what I am about to enjoin on thee.' And Hassan replied, 'It is well.' 'Lie down on this skin,' said Behram, 'and I will sew thee up therein and lay thee on the ground; whereupon the rocs will come to thee and carry thee up to the mountain-top. Take this knife with thee, and when thou feelest that the birds have set thee down, slit open the skin with the knife and come forth. They will take fright at thee and fly away ; whereupon do thou look down and speak to me, and I will tell thee what to do.' So saying, he sewed him up in the skin, with the three cakes and a leathern bottle full of water, and withdrew to a distance.

Presently a roc pounced upon him and taking him up, flew away with him to the mountain-top and there set him down. As soon as Hassan felt himself on the ground, he slit the skin and coming forth, called out to the Magian, who rejoiced at hearing his speech and danced for excess of joy, saying to him, 'Look behind thee and tell me what thou seest,' Hassan looked and seeing great store of rotten bones and wood, told Behram, who said to him, 'This is what we seek. Make six bundles of the wood and throw them down to me, for this is wherewithal we do alchemy.' So he threw him the six bundles and when he had gotten them, he said to Hassan, 'O good-for-nought, I have accomplished my need of thee; and now, if thou Wilt, thou mayst abide on this mountain, or cast thyself down to the earth and perish.' So saying, he left him and went away, and Hassan exclaimed, 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! This accursed dog hath played the traitor with me! And he sat bemoaning himself and reciting the following verses:

When God upon a man possessed of reasoning, Hearing and sight
His will in aught to pass would bring,

He stops his ears and blinds his eyes and draws his wit From him, as one draws out the hairs to paste that cling;
Till, His decrees fulfilled, He gives him back his wit, That therewithal he may receive admonishing.
So say thou not of aught that haps, “How happened it?” For fate and fortune fixed do order everything.

Then he rose to his feet and looked right and left, after which he walked on along the mountain-top, making sure of death. He fared on thus till he came to the other brow of the mountain, under which he saw a dark-blue foaming sea, swollen with clashing billows, each as it were a great mountain. So he sat down and repeated what he might of the Koran and besought God the Most High to ease him of his troubles, either by death or deliverance from that his strait. Then he recited for himself the funeral-prayer and cast himself down into the sea; but, by God’s grace, the winds bore him up, so that he reached the water unhurt, and the angel to whose charge the sea is committed watched over him, so that, by the decree of the Most High, the waves carried him safe to land. So he rejoiced and praised God the Most High and thanked Him; after which he walked on in quest of somewhat to eat, for stress of hunger, and came presently to the place where he had halted with the Magian.

Then he fared on awhile, till he caught sight of a great palace, rising high into the air, and knew it for that of which he had questioned Behram and he had replied, ‘An enemy of mine dwelleth there.’ ‘By Allah,’ said Hassan in himself, ‘needs must I enter yonder palace; peradventure relief awaits me there.’ So he went up to it and finding the gate open, entered the vestibule, where he saw two girls, like moons, seated on a bench, with a table before them, playing at chess. One of them raised her eyes and seeing him, cried out for joy and said, ‘By Allah, here is a mortal, and methinks it is he whom Behram the Magian brought hither this year!’ Whereupon Hassan cast himself at their feet and wept sore, saying, ‘Yes, by Allah, O my ladies, I am indeed that unhappy wretch!’

Then said the younger to the elder damsel, ‘Bear witness against me, O my sister, that this is my brother before God and that I will die for his death and live for his life and rejoice for his joy and mourn for his mourning.' So saying, she embraced him and kissed him and taking him by the hand, led him, and her sister with her, into the palace, where she did off his ragged clothes and brought him a suit of kings' raiment, in which she clothed him. Moreover, she made ready all manner viands and set them before him, and sat and ate with him, she and her sister. Then said they to him, 'Tell us thine adventure with yonder wicked dog of a sorcerer, from the time of thy falling into his hands to that of thine escape from him; and after we will tell thee all that has passed between us and him, so thou mayst be on thy guard against him, if thou see him again.'

Hassan, finding himself thus kindly received, took heart of grace and his reason returned to him and he related to them all that had befallen him with the Magian from first to last. 'Didst thou ask him of this palace?' asked they. 'Yes,' answered Hassan. 'But he said, "Name it not to me; for it belongs to devils and demons."' At this, the two damsels were mightily enraged and said, 'Did the infidel style us devils and demons?' And Hassan answered, 'Yes.' 'By Allah,' cried the younger sister, 'I will assuredly put him to death after the foulest fashion and make him to lack the wind of the world!' 'And how,' asked Hassan, 'wilt thou get at him, to kill him, for he is a crafty magician?' Quoth she, 'He is in a garden by name El Meshid, and needs must I slay him before long.'

Then said her sister, ' All that Hassan hath told us of this dog is true; but now tell him our history, that it may abide in his memory.' So the younger said to him, 'Know, O my brother, that we are the daughters of a king of the mightiest kings of the Jinn, having Marids to troops and guards and servants, and God the Most High blessed him with seven daughters by one wife; but such stiffneckedness got hold upon him and such jealousy and pride beyond compare that he would not give us in marriage to any one and summoning his viziers and officers, said to them, "Can ye tell me of any place inaccessible to men and Jinn and abounding in trees and fruits and streams?" And they said, "What wilt thou therewith, O king of the age?" Quoth he, "I desire to lodge my seven daughters there." "O king," answered they, "the place for them is the Castle of the Mountain of Clouds, built by one of the rebellious Jinn, who revolted from the covenant of cur lord Solomon, on whom be peace. Since his destruction, none hath dwelt there, man nor genie, for it is cut off [from the rest of the world] and none may win to it. It is compassed about with trees and fruits and streams, and around it is running water, sweeter than honey and colder than snow, whereof none trinkets, who is afflicted with leprosy or elephantiasis or what not else, but he is healed forthright.”

So our father sent us hither, with an escort of his troops, and provided us with all that we need here. When he is minded to ride [to us], he beats a drum, whereupon all his guards present themselves before him and he chooses whom he shall ride and dismisses the rest; but, when he desireth that we shall visit him, he commandeth the enchanters, his followers, to fetch us, whereupon they come to us and carry us to him, so he may solace himself with our company and we accomplish our desire of him; after which they carry us back again. Our five sisters are gone a-hunting in the desert, wherein are wild beasts past count or reckoning, and we two abode at home, to make them ready food, it being our turn to do this. Indeed, we had besought God (blessed and glorified be He!) to vouchsafe us a man to cheer us with his company and praised be He who hath brought thee to us! So take heart and be of good cheer, for no harm shall befall thee.’

Hassan rejoiced and said, ‘Praised be God who guideth us into the way of deliverance and inclineth hearts to us!’ Then his [adopted] sister rose and taking him by the hand, led him into a private chamber, where she brought out to him linen and furniture such as no mortal can avail unto. Presently, the other damsels returned from the chase and their sisters acquainted them with Hassan’s case; whereupon they rejoiced in him and going in to him in his chamber, saluted him and gave him joy of his deliverance. Then he abode in familiar intercourse with them, riding out with them to the chase and taking his pleasure with them in that fair palace with its gardens and flowers, whilst they entreated him courteously and cheered him with discourse, till his sadness ceased from him and he recovered health and strength and waxed stout and fat, by dint of fair treatment and pleasant life; for indeed he led the goodliest of lives with the damsels, who delighted in him and he yet more in them. Moreover, the youngest princess told her sisters how the Magian had styled them ghouls and demons, and they swore that they would surely slay him.

Next year, the accursed Magian again made his appearance, having with him a handsome young Muslim, as he were the moon, bound hand and foot and suffering grievous tortures, and alighted with him in view of the palace. Now Hassan was sitting under the trees by the side of the stream; and when he espied Behram, his heart fluttered and he changed colour and smote hand upon hand. Then he said to the princesses, ‘O my sisters, help me to slay yonder accursed wretch, for he is come back and in your grasp, and he hath with him, captive, a young Muslim of the sons of the notables, whom he is torturing with all manner of grievous torment. Fain would I slay him and solace my heart of him and earn God’s favour by delivering the young Muslim from his mischief and restoring him to his country and friends. This will be an almsdeed from you and ye will reap the reward thereof from God the Most High!’

‘We hear and obey God and thee, O Hassan,’ replied they and binding chinbands about their faces, armed themselves and girt on their swords: after which they brought Hassan a charger of the best and equipped him in complete armour and armed him with goodly weapons. Then they all sallied out and found the Magian ill-using the young Muslim, to make him enter the hide of a camel that he had killed and skinned. Hassan came behind him, without his knowledge, and cried out at him, saying, ‘Hold thy hand, O accursed! O enemy of God and of the Muslims! O dog! O traitor! O thou that servest the fire and walkest in the way of the wicked, worshipping the fire and the light and swearing by the shade and the heat!’

When the Magian heard this, he was startled and disconcerted; so he turned and seeing Hassan, thought to wheedle him and said to him, ‘O my son, how madest thou thine escape and who brought thee down to earth?’ ‘God the Most High delivered me,’ answered Hassan, ‘He who hath appointed the taking of thy life to be at my hand, and I will torture thee even as thou torturedst me the whole way long. O misbeliever, O heretic, thou hast fallen into perdition and hast wandered from the way; and neither mother nor brother shall avail thee, nor friend nor solemn covenant; for thou saidst, “Whoso is faithless to bread and salt, may God do vengeance upon him!” And thou hast broken the bond of bread and salt; wherefore

God hath delivered thee into my hands, and small chance hast thou of escape from me.’ ‘By Allah, O my son,’ rejoined Behram, ‘thou art dearer to me than my soul and the light of mine eyes!’ But Hassan stepped up to him and smote him hastily between the shoulders, that the sword issued gleaming from the tendons of his throat and God hurried his soul to the fire, and evil is the abiding- place [to which he went].

Then Hassan took the Magian’s bag and opening it, took out the drum and beat it with the strap, whereupon up came the dromedaries like lightning. So he loosed the young man from his bonds and setting him on one of the camels, loaded him another with victual and water. Then he bade him go whither he would and he departed, after God the Most High had thus delivered him from his strait at the hands of Hassan. When the princesses saw Hassan slay the Magian, they rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy and encompassed him, marvelling at his valour and prowess. Moreover, they thanked him for his deed and gave him joy of his safety, saying, ‘O Hassan, thou hast done a deed, whereby thou hast healed the burning of him that thirsted [for vengeance] and pleased the Glorious King.’

Then they returned to the palace, and he abode with them, eating and drinking and laughing and making merry; and indeed his sojourn with them was pleasant to him and he forgot his mother; nor did he cease to lead this goodly life with them, till, one day, there arose a great cloud of dust, that darkened the sky, and made towards them from the further side of the desert. When the princesses saw this, they said to him, ‘Rise, O Hassan, and hide thyself in thy chamber; or, if thou wilt, enter the garden and conceal thyself among the trees and vines; [but fear not,] for no harm shall befall thee.’ So he arose and entering his chamber, locked the door upon himself. Presently the dust lifted and discovered a great host, as it were the swollen sea, coming from the king, the father of the damsels.

When they reached the castle, the princesses received them with all honour and entertained them three days; after which they questioned them of their case and errand, and they answered, saying, ‘We come in quest of you from the king.’ ‘And what would the king with us?’ asked the princesses. ‘One of the kings celebrateth a marriage festival,’ answered the envoys, ‘and your father would have you be present thereat and divert yourselves therewith.' 'And how long shall we be absent from our place?' asked the damsels. 'The time to come and go,' answered they, 'and to sojourn two months.' So the princesses arose and going in to Hassan, acquainted him with the case and said to him, 'Verily this place is thy place and our house is thy house; so be of good cheer and fear not nor grieve, for none can come at thee here; but keep a good heart and a cheerful mind, till we return to thee. The keys of our chambers we leave with thee; but, O our brother, we beseech thee, by the due of brotherhood, not to open such a door, for thou hast no call thereto.' Then they took leave of him and went away with the troops, leaving him alone in the palace.

It was not long before his breast grew straitened and his patience came to an end: solitude and sadness were heavy on him and he grieved for his separation from them with an exceeding grief. The palace, for all its vastness, was straitened upon him and finding himself sad and solitary, he bethought him of the damsels and recited the following verses:

The spreading plain all straitened is, for longing, on my sight And all my thoughts are troubled grown, that erst were calm and bright.
Since those I love have fared away, my joy is turned to grief And eke mine eyes with bitter tears brim over day and night.
Sleep hath departed from my lids, for severance from them; Yea, parting- saddened, eke, is grown my heart and all my spright.
I wonder will Fate e'er reknit our loves and Time restore To me, with their companionship, my solace and delight!

He used to go a-hunting by himself in the desert and bring back the game and eat thereof alone: but melancholy and unease redoubled on him, by reason of his loneliness. So he arose and went round about the palace and explored its every part. Morever, he opened the princesses' apartments and found therein riches and treasures, fit to do away the beholder's wits; but he delighted not in aught thereof, by reason of their absence. His heart was on fire with solicitude respecting the door they had charged him not to approach or open, and he said in himself, 'My sister had not forbidden me to open this door, except there were behind it somewhat, whereof she would have none to know; but, by Allah, I will arise and open it and see what is within, were death behind it!'

Then he took the key and opening the door, saw nothing therein but a winding stair of Yemen onyx at the upper end of the chamber. So he mounted the stair, which brought him out upon the terraced roof of the palace, whence he looked down upon gardens and orchards, full of trees and fruits and beasts and birds warbling the praises of God the One, the All-powerful, and said in himself, 'This is that wherefrom they forbade me.' Beyond these pleasaunces he saw a surging sea, swollen with clashing billows, and he ceased not to explore the [terraces of the] palace right and left, till he came to a pavilion such as neither Caesar nor Chosroes ever possessed, builded with alternate courses of gold and silver and jacinth and emerald and supported by four columns.

The interior was paved and lined with a mosaic of jacinths and emeralds and balass-rubies and all manner other jewels, and in its midst was a basin of water, over which was a trellis of sandal and aloes-wood, netted with red gold and wands of emerald and set with various kinds of jewels and fine pearls, each the bigness of a pigeon's egg. The trellis was covered with a climbing vine, bearing grapes like rubies, and beside the pool stood a couch of aloes-wood, trellised with red gold and inlaid with great pearls and all manner vari-coloured gems and precious stones, symmetrically disposed. About it the birds warbled, celebrating the praises of God the Most High with sweet and various voices; but, save them, Hassan saw therein none of the creatures of God, whereat he marvelled and said in himself, 'I wonder to which of the kings this place pertaineth, or is it Many-Columned Irem whereof they tell, for who [among mortals] can avail to the like of this?' And indeed he was amazed and sat down in the pavilion, marvelling at the beauty of its ordinance and at the lustre of the pearls and jewels and the curious works that were therein, no less than at the gardens and orchards aforesaid and at the birds that sang the praises of God the One, the Almighty, and pondering the traces of him whom God the Most High had enabled to rear that structure, for indeed He is mickle of might.

Presently, he espied ten birds making for the pavilion from the direction of the desert, and knew that they were bound for the pool, to drink of its waters: so he hid himself lest they should see him and fly from him. They lighted on a great and goodly tree and circled round about it; and he saw amongst them an exceeding great and beautiful bird, the goodliest of them all, and the rest encompassed it and did it worship; whilst it pecked them with its bill and flouted them, and they fled from it. Then they entered the pavilion and perched on the couch; after which each bird rent open its skin with its claws and came forth therefrom; and behold, it was but a garment of feathers, and there came forth therefrom ten maidens, whose beauty shamed the lustre of the moon. They all put off their clothes and plunging into the pool, washed and fell to playing and sporting with one another; whilst the chief of them threw the others down and ducked them, and they fled from her and dared not put out their hands to her.

When Hassan beheld her thus, he took leave of his wits and his reason was enslaved, and he knew that the princess had not forbidden him to open the door, save by reason of this; for he fell passionately in love with her, for what he saw of her beauty and grace and symmetry, as she played and sported and splashed the others with the water. His mind was amazed at her beauty and his heart taken in the snare of her love; fires were loosed in his heart for her sake and there waxed on him a flame, whose raging might not be quenched, and desire, whose signs might not be hidden. So he stood, looking upon them, whilst they saw him not, with eye gazing and heart burning and soul prompting to evil; and he sighed to be with them and wept for longing, because of the beauty and grace of the chief damsel.

Presently, they came up out of the pools whilst Hassan marvelled at their beauty and loveliness and the grace and elegance of their movements. Then he cast a glance at the chief damsel and there was manifest to him what was between her thighs, a goodly rounded dome, like a bowl of silver or crystal, which recalled to him the saying of the Poet:

When I took up her shift and discovered the terrace-roof of her kaze, I found it as strait as my humour or eke my worldly ways:
I thrust it, incontinent, in, halfway, and she heaved a sigh. “For

What dost thou sigh?" quoth I. "For the rest of it sure," she says.

Then they all put on their dresses and ornaments, and the chief maiden donned a green dress, wherein she excelled all the fair ones of the world for loveliness and the lustre of her face outshone the resplendent full moons: she outdid the branches with the grace of her swaying gait and confounded the wit with apprehension of disdain; and indeed she was as saith the poet:

A damsel lithe and slim and full of agile grace; Thou'dst deem the very sun had borrowed from her face.
She came in robes of green, the likeness of the leaf That the pomegranate's flower doth in the bud encase.
"How call'st thou this thy dress?" asked we, and she replied A word wherein the wise a lesson well might trace.
"Breaker of Hearts," quoth she, "I call it; for therewith I've broken many a heart among the amorous race."

Then they sat talking and laughing, whilst he stood gazing on them, drowned in the sea of passion and wandering in the valley of melancholy thought. And he said in himself, 'By Allah, my sister forbade me not to open the door, but because of these maidens and lest I should fall in love with one of them!' And he continued to gaze on the charms of the chief damsel, who was the loveliest creature God had made in her time, and indeed she outdid all mortals in beauty. She had a mouth like Solomon's seal and hair blacker than the night of estrangement to the despairing lover; her forehead was as the new moon of the Feast of Ramazan and her eyes were like unto gazelles' eyes. She had a polished aquiline nose and cheeks like blood-red anemones, lips like coral and teeth like strung pearls in carcanets of virgin gold and a neck like an ingot of silver, above a shape like a willow-wand. Her belly was full of folds and dimples, such as enforce the distracted lover to magnify God and extol Him therefor, and her navel held an ounce of musk, most sweet of savour. She had thighs great and plump, like columns of marble or bolsters stuffed with ostrich- down, and between them somewhat as it were a great hummock or a hare with ears laid back; and indeed she surpassed the willow-wand and the bamboo-cane with her beauty and symmetry, for she was even as saith the poet of her:

There came a lovely maid, whose mouth did dews like honey bear, Yea, and her glances keener far than Indian sabres were.
She put the willow-wand to shame with graceful swaying gait; The lightning from her teeth did flash, whenas she smiled, my fair.
Her cheeks I likened to the rose in blossom; but she laughed In scorn and answered, "He who to the rose doth me compare
And eke pomegranates with my breasts likeness, hath he no shame? How should pomegranates branches have, my breasts for fruit that wear?
Now, by my grace, my eyes, my soul, ay, and the paradise Of my possession and the hell of my disdain, I swear,
If he to these comparisons return, I will my grace To him deny, nor with my scorn to blast him will I spare!
They say, 'A rose in garth a-bloom [is she;]' but, nay, its flower Is not my cheek nor yet its branch my shape so straight and rare.
If in the gardens of his land the like of me there be, Why then, in quest thereof, forsooth, doth he to me repair?"

They ceased not to laugh and play, whilst Hassan stood watching them, forgetting meat and drink, till near the hour of afternoon-prayer, when the chief damsel said to her mates, 'O kings' daughters, it grows late and our country is distant and we have had enough of this place. Come, therefore, let us depart to our own place.' So they put on their feather vests, and becoming birds as before, flew away all together, with the chief damsel in their midst. Then Hassan, despairing of their return, would have arisen and gone away, but could not move; wherefore the tears ran down his cheeks and passion was sore on him and he recited the following verses:

May I be denied the fulfilment o' the troth that to me thou didst plight, If, since you departed and left me, I've tasted of slumber's delight!
Mine eyes, since the days of your parting, have never been shut in repose, Nor, since you forsook me, hath slumber been pleasant or

sweet to my spright.
Meseemeth, indeed, that I see you, bytimes, in illusions of sleep: Ah would that the visions were real we see in the dreams of the night!
Indeed, I'm desirous of slumber, I crave after sleep, without need, So haply, therein, with the loved one a dream may the lover unite.

Then he walked on, little by little, heeding not how he went, till he reached the foot of the stirs, whence he dragged himself to his own chamber and shutting the door, lay there, sick and drowned in the sea of his solicitude, eating not nor drinking. He passed the night thus, weeping and bemoaning himself, till the morning, when he repeated the following verses:

The birds took wing at nightfall and far away did fly, And whoso dies of passion, no blame on him may lie.
I'll keep love's tidings secret, what while I keep it may; But, if fierce longing conquer, 'twill out unto the spy.
A loved one's image haunts me, whose face is like the moon, Anights; there comes no morning, for passion. in my sky.
I mourn for my beloved, what while the heart-free sleep, And all the winds of passion their sports upon me ply.
I lavish tears and riches and soul and wit and life; For lavishness is profit in love, as well know I.
The foulest of all evils and woes that may betide Is when a man disfavour from fair ones must aby.
They say that to show favour's forbidden to the fair And that their blood 'tis lawful to shed for love that sigh;
And so unto the lovesick, for alt resource, remains His life for love to lavish, in jest, and jesting die.
I cry aloud, distracted with longing for my love; For all the lover's effort is weeping and outcry.

When the sun rose, he went forth of the chamber and ascending to the roof, sat down before the pavilion and awaited the return of the birds, till nightfall; but they came not; wherefore he wept till he fell down in a swoon. When he came to himself he dragged himself down the stairs to his chamber; and indeed, the night was come and the whole world was straitened upon him and he ceased not to weep and bemoan himself, till the day broke and the sun rose over hill and plain. He ate not nor drank nor slept, nor was there any rest for him; but by day he was distracted and by night wakeful, delirious and drunken with melancholy and excess of passion. And he repeated the verses of the poet El Welhan:

Thou that confoundest outright the sun of the morning, heigho! That puttest the branches to shame, though wherefore thou dost not know,
I wonder if fortune and time will ever vouchsafe thy return And will the fires ever be quenched for aye in my bosom that glow?
And will the days ever on me, to hold thee embraced in mine arms, Cheek to cheek, breast to breast, at the hour of meeting and union, bestow?
Who saith there is sweetness in Love? I warrant, he lieth, for lo! In Love there are bitterer days, believe me, than aloes can show.

As he abode thus in the stress of his love-distraction, alone and finding none to cheer him with company, there arose a cloud of dust from the desert, wherefore he knew that the princesses had returned and ran down and hid himself. Before long, the troops halted round the palace and the seven princesses alighted and entering, put off their arms and harness. As for the youngest, she stayed not to doff her armour, but went straight to Hassan’s chamber, where finding him not, she sought for him till she lighted on him in one of the cabinets, thin and feeble, with wasted bones and emaciated body; and indeed his colour was changed and his eyes sunken for lack of food and much weeping, by reason of his love and longing for the damsel. When she saw him in this plight, she was confounded and [well-nigh] lost her wits [for amazement]; and she questioned him of his case and what had befallen him, saying, ‘Tell me what ails thee, O my brother, that I may cast about to do away thine affliction, and I will be thy ransom.’ Whereupon he wept sore and answered her with these verses:

Whenas a lover from his love to sever Fate hath wrought; For him saw weariness and woe and misery there's nought.
Within him sickness is, without is burning fire of love: His first is memory, his last is melancholy thought.

When she heard this, she marvelled at his eloquence and ready wit and goodliness of speech and at his answering her in verse and said to him, 'O my brother, when didst thou fall into this case and what hath befallen thee, that I find thee speaking in verse and shedding plenteous tears? I conjure thee by Allah, O my brother, by the love that is between us, tell me what ails thee and discover thy secret to me, nor hide from me aught of that which hath befallen thee in our absence; for my breast is straitened and my life troubled on thine account.' He sighed and shed tears like rain, after which he said, 'O my sister, I fear, if I tell thee, that thou will not help me to my desire, but wilt leave me to perish miserably in my anguish.' 'No, by Allah, O my brother,' answered she, 'I will not abandon thee, though it cost me my life!'

So he told her all that had befallen him in her absence and that the cause of his distress and affliction was the passion he had conceived for the damsel whom he had seen, when he opened the forbidden door, and how he had not tasted meat nor drink for ten days past. Then he wept sore and recited the following verses:

Restore the heart as it used to be to the bosom and the lids Give back again to sleep and then forsake me, an ye list.
Do ye pretend that the nights have changed the covenant of love? May he [or she] who would change be held unworthy to exist!

The princess wept for his weeping and was moved to compassion for him; so she said to him, 'O my brother, take comfort and be of good cheer, for I will venture my life to content thee and contrive thee a device wherewith thou mayst get possession of her and accomplish thy desire, if it be the will of God, though it cost me my life and all I hold dear. But I charge thee keep the matter secret and discover not thy case to any of my sisters, lest we both lose our lives. If they question thee of the forbidden door, answer them, "I opened it not, being troubled at heart for your absence and my loneliness here and yearning for you."' And he replied, 'Yes: this is the right course.' So he kissed her head and his heart was comforted and his bosom dilated, and his life returned to him, after he had been nigh upon death for excess of affright, for he had gone in fear of her by reason of his having opened the forbidden door.

Then he sought food of her [and she set it before him]; after which she left him and went in to her sisters, weeping and mourning for him. They questioned her of her case and she told them how she was heavy at heart for her brother, for that he was sick and for ten days no food had entered his stomach. So they enquired the cause of his sickness and she said, 'The cause was our absence from him and our leaving him desolate; for these days we have been absent from him were longer to him than a thousand years, and no wonder, seeing he is a stranger, and solitary and we left him alone, with none to company with him or cheer his heart; more by token that he is but a youth and it is like he called to mind his family and his mother, who is an old woman, and bethought him that she weeps for him all tides of the day and watches of the night; and we used to solace him with our society and divert him from thinking of her.'

When her sisters heard this, they wept in the excess of their sorrow for him and said, "Fore Allah, he is excusable!' Then they went out to the troops and dismissed them after which they went in to Hassan and saluted him. When they saw him in sorry case, with his colour paled and his body wasted, they wept for very pity and sat with him and comforted him and cheered him with discourse, relating to him all the wonders and rarities they had seen by the way and what had befallen the bridegroom with the bride. They abode with him thus a whole month, soothing and caressing him; but every day sickness was added to his sickness, which when they saw, they wept sore for him, and the youngest more than any of them.

At the end of this time, the princesses were minded to ride forth a-hunting and invited their sister to accompany them; but she said, 'By Allah, O my sisters, I cannot go forth with you, whilst my brother is in this plight. Rather will I sit with him and comfort him, till he be restored to health and there cease from him that which is with him of affliction.' They thanked her for her humanity and said to her, 'God will requite thee all thou dost with this stranger.’ Then they rode forth, taking with them twenty days’ victual; and as soon as the youngest princess knew that they were far from the palace, she went in to Hassan and said to him, ‘Come, show me where thou sawest the maidens.’ He rejoiced in her words, making sure of attaining his desire, and answered, ‘In the name of God! On my head!’ Then he essayed to rise and show her the place, but could not walk; so she took him in her arms, and opening the staircase door, carried him up to the top of the palace, and he showed her the pavilion and the pool of water, where he had seen the girls.

Then she said to him, ‘O my brother, set forth to me their case and how they came.’ So he described them to her and especially the damsel of whom he was enamoured; whereupon she knew her and her colour changed and she was troubled. ‘O my sister,’ quoth he, ‘what ails thee to change color and be troubled?’ And she answered, ‘Know, O my brother, that this damsel is the daughter of one of the most puissant kings of the Jinn, and her father hath dominion over men and Jinn and wizards and diviners and tribesmen and guards and countries and islands and cities galore and hath wealth in plenty. Our father is one of his vassals and none can avail against him, for the multitude of his troops and the vastness of his empire and his much wealth. He hath assigned to his daughters a tract of country, a whole year’s journey in length and breadth, compassed about with a great river; and thereto none may win, nor man nor genie. He hath an army of women, smiters with swords and thrusters with spears, five-and-twenty thousand in number, each of whom, whenas she mounteth her charger and donneth her battle-harness, is a match for a thousand stout horsemen. Moreover, he hath seven daughters, who equal and even excel their sisters in valour and prowess, and the eldest of them, the damsel whom thou sawest, he hath made queen over the country aforesaid. She is the wisest of her sisters and excels all the folk of her dominions in valour and horsemanship and craft and skill in magic. The damsels thou sawest with her are her guards and favourites and the grandees of her empire, and the feathered skins wherewith they fly are the handiwork of enchanters of the Jinn.

Now they resort to this place on the first day of each month; so, if thou wouldst get possession of this princess and unique jewel and enjoy her beauty and grace, do thou pay heed to my words and keep them in thy memory. Thou must sit here and watch for them; and when thou seest them coming, do thou hide near the pavilion, whereas thou mayst see them, without being seen of them, and beware lest thou show thyself or we shall all lose our lives. When they put off their clothes, note which is the feather-suit of the princess, her of whom thou art enamoured, and take it, and it only, for this it is that carries her to her country, and when thou hast it, thou hast her. And beware lest she beguile thee, saying, "O thou who hast stolen my dress, restore it to me, for I am here in thine hands and at thy mercy!! For, if thou give it her, she will kill thee and break down the palace over our heads and slay our father. Know then thy case and how thou shalt do. When her companions see that her feather-suit is stolen, they will leave her and fly away, and beware lest thou show thyself to them, but wait till they have flown away and she despaireth of them: whereupon do thou go in to her and seize her by the hair of her head and drag her to thee; which being done, she will be at thy mercy. Then carry her down to thy chamber and I rede thee discover not to her that thou hast taken the feather-suit, but keep it with care; for, so long as thou hast it, she is thy prisoner and in thy power, seeing that she cannot fly to her country save with it.'

When Hassan heard her words, trouble and affliction ceased from him and his heart became at ease; so he rose to his feet and kissing his sister's hand, went down with her into the palace, where they slept that night. He tended himself till the morning; and when the sun rose, he opened the staircase door and ascending to the terrace, sat there till nightfall, when his sister brought him meat and drink and a change of clothes and he slept; and thus they did till the end of the month. When he saw the new moon, he rejoiced and began to watch for the birds, and by and by up they came, like lightning. As soon as he saw them, he hid himself where he could watch them, unseen of them, and they lighted down, near the place where he was hidden, and putting off their clothes, descended into the pool. Thereupon Hassan arose and crept, little by little, towards the dresses, and God covered him, so that he possessed himself of the feather-suit, and none of them saw him, for they were laughing and playing with each other.

When they had made an end of their diversion, they came forth of the pool and each of them donned her suit of feathers, except the princess, who sought her suit, that she might put it on, but found it not; whereupon she shrieked and buffeted her face and rent her clothes. Her companions came to her and enquired what ailed her, and she told them that her feather-suit was missing; wherefore they wept and cried out and buffeted their faces: and they were confounded, knowing not the cause of this, and knew not what to do. Presently the night overtook them and they feared to abide with her lest that which had befallen her should befall them also; so they took leave of her and flying away, left her alone. When they were out of sight, Hassan hearkened and heard her say, 'O thou who hast taken my dress and stripped me, I beseech thee to restore it to me and cover my nakedness, so may God not make thee taste my sorrow!'

When Hassan heard her speak thus, with speech sweeter than syrup, his love for her redoubled, passion got the mastery of his reason and he could not endure from her. So he rushed upon her and laying hold of her by the hair, dragged her to him and carried her down to his own chamber, where he threw over her a coverlet of silk and left her weeping and biting her hands. Then he shut the door on her and going to his sister, told her how he had made prize of the princess and carried her to his chamber, where she was now sitting, weeping and biting her hands. When she heard this, she rose forthright and betook herself to the chamber, where she found the captive princess weeping and mourning.

So she kissed the earth before her and saluted her, and the princess said to her, 'O king's daughter, do folk like you deal thus foully with kings' daughters? Thou knowest that my father is a mighty king and that all the kings of the Jinn stand in awe of him and fear his mischief; for that there are with him magicians and sages and diviners and devils and Marids, such as none may cope withal, and under his hand are folk whose tale none knoweth save God. How then doth it beseem you, O daughters of kings, to harbour mortals with you and discover to them our circumstance and yours? Else how should this man come at us?' 'O king's daughter,' answered the other, 'this man is perfect in nobleness and purposely thee no lewdness; but he loves thee, and women were made for men. Did he not love thee, he had not fallen sick and well-nigh given up the ghost on thine account.' And she told her how Hassan had seen her bathing in the pool, with her attendants, and fallen in love with her, and none had pleased him but she, for the rest were all her handmaids.

When the princess heard this, she despaired of deliverance and Hassan's sister fetched her a sumptuous dress, in which she clad her. Then she set before her meat and drink and ate with her and comforted her heart and appeased her fears. And she ceased not to speak her fair and caress her, soothing her with soft and pleasant words and instances and saying, 'Have pity on him who saw thee once and became the victim of thy love:' but she wept till daybreak, when her trouble subsided and she left weeping, knowing that she had fallen [into the snare] and that there was no escape for her. Then she said to Hassan's sister, 'O king's daughter, this my strangerhood and severance from my country and family was ordained of God [and written] upon my forehead, and it becomes me to support with patience what my Lord hath decreed.' Therewith the youngest princess assigned her a chamber, than which there was no goodlier in the palace, and ceased not to sit with her and cheer her and solace her heart, till she took comfort and her bosom dilated and she laughed and there ceased from her the trouble and oppression that possessed her, by reason of her separation from her people and family and country.

Then the youngest princess repaired to Hassan and said to him, 'Arise, go in to her in her chamber and kiss her hands and feet.' So he went in to her and did this and kissed her between the eyes, saying, 'O princess of fair ones and life of souls and delight of beholders, be easy of heart, for I took thee but that I might be thy slave till the Day of Resurrection, and this my sister will be thy handmaid. O my lady, I desire nought but to take thee to wife, after the law of God and His Apostle, and if thou wilt, I will journey with thee to my country and carry thee to the city of Baghdad and abide with thee there. Moreover, I will buy thee slaves, male and female, and I have a mother, of the best of women, who will be thine hand- maid. There is no goodlier land than ours; everything there is better than elsewhere and its folk are pleasant and bright of face.'

As he bespoke her thus and strove to comfort her, what while she answered him not a syllable, there came a knocking at the palace-gate. So Hassan went out to see who was at the gate and found there the six princesses, who had returned from hunting, bringing with them great plenty of gazelles and wild oxen and hares and lions and hyenas and other game, whereat he rejoiced and went to meet them and saluted them. They wished him health and safety and he wished them the like; after which they alighted and going each to her chamber, put off their soiled clothes and donned fair linen. Then they came forth and demanded the game: so they brought out some thereof for slaughter, keeping the rest by them in the palace, and Hassan girt himself and fell to slaughtering for them, whilst they sported and made merry, mightily rejoiced to see him standing amongst them [restored to health and spirits].

When they had made an end of slaughtering, they addressed themselves to make ready somewhat for their morning meal, and Hassan, coming up to the eldest princess, kissed her head and on like wise did he with the rest one after another. Whereupon said they to him, ‘Indeed, O our brother, thou humblest thyself to us passing measure and we marvel at the excess of the affection thou showest us. But God forbid that thou shouldst do this thing, which it behoves us rather to do with thee, seeing thou art a man and insomuch worthier than we, who are of the Jinn.’ Thereupon his eyes ran over with tears and he wept sore; so they said to him, ‘What ails thee to weep? Indeed, thou troublest our lives with thy weeping this day. It would seem thou longest after thy mother and country. If so, we will equip thee and carry thee to thy home and thy friends.’ ‘By Allah,’ answered he, ‘I desire not to part from you!’ ‘Then which of us hath vexed thee,’ asked they, ‘that thou art thus troubled?’ But he was ashamed to say, ‘Nought troubleth me save love of the damsel,’ lest they should disavow him: so he was silent and would tell them nought of his case.

Then his sister came forward and said to them, ‘He hath caught a bird from the air and would have you help him tame her.’ Whereupon they all turned to him and said, ‘We are all at thy service and whatsoever thou seekest, we will do: but tell us thy story and conceal from us nought of thy case.’ But he said to his sister, ‘Do thou tell them, for I am ashamed to face them with these words.’ So she said to them, ‘O my sisters, when we went away and left this poor fellow alone, the palace was straitened upon him and he feared lest some one should come in to him, for ye know that the sons of Adam are light-witted. So, of his loneliness and trouble, he opened the door of the staircase leading to the roof and sat there, looking upon the valley and watching the gate, in his fear lest any should come thither. One day, as he sat thus, he saw ten birds making for the palace, and they lighted down on the brink of the pool in the pavilion. He watched them and saw, amongst them, one goodlier than the rest, which pecked the others and flouted them, whilst they dared not put out a claw to it.

Presently, they put their claws to their necks and rending their feathers, came forth therefrom and became damsels like the moon at its full, whereof one was fairer of face than the rest and goodlier of shape and more elegant of apparel. Then they put off their clothes and plunging into the water, fell to playing with one another, whilst the chief damsel ducked the other, who dared not lay a finger on her. They ceased not to do thus till near the hour of afternoon prayer, when they came forth of the pool and donning their feather-dresses, flew way, leaving Hassan distracted, with a heart on fire for love of the chief damsel and repenting him that he had not stolen her feather-dress. Wherefore he fell sick and abode on the roof, expecting her return and abstaining from meat and drink and sleep, till the new moon, when they again made their appearance and putting off their clothes went down into the pool. So he stole the chief damsel’s feather-suit, knowing that she could not fly without it, and hid it, lest they should discover him and slay him. Then he waited till the rest had flown away, when he arose and seizing the damsel, carried her down into the castle.’

‘Where is she?’ asked her sisters; and she answered, ‘She is with him in such a chamber.’ Quoth they, ‘Describe her to us, O our sister.’ So she said, ‘She is fairer than the moon on the night of its full and her face is brighter than the sun; the water of her mouth is sweeter than honey and her shape more slender than the cane. She hath black eyes and flower-white forehead; a bosom like a jewel, breasts like twin pomegranates and cheeks like apples, a belly covered with dimples, with a navel like a casket of ivory full of musk, and legs like columns of alabaster. She ravishes all hearts with liquid black eyes and the fineness of a slender waist and heavy buttocks and speech that heals the sick. She is goodly of shape and sweet of smile, as she were the full moon.' When the princesses heard this, they turned to Hassan and said to him, 'Show her to us.' So he arose, love- distraught, and carrying them to the chamber in which was the captive damsel, opened the door and entered, followed by the seven princesses.

When they saw her and noted her loveliness, they kissed the earth before her, marvelling at the fairness of her favour and the elegance of her shape, and said to her, 'O daughter of the Supreme King, this is indeed a parlous thing: and hadst thou heard tell among women of this mortal, thou hadst marvelled at him all thy days. Indeed, he is passionately enamoured of thee; yet, O king's daughter, he seeketh not lewdness, but desireth thee only in the way of lawful marriage. But that we know maids cannot do without men, we had hindered him from his intent, albeit he sent thee no messenger, but came to thee himself; and he tells us he hath burnt the feather-dress; else had we taken it from him.' Then one of them agreed with the princess and becoming her deputy in the matter of the marriage contract, performed the marriage ceremony between them, whilst Hassan clapped hands with her, laying his hand in hers, and she wedded him to the damsel with the latter's consent; after which they celebrated her marriage-festival, as beseemeth kings' daughters, and brought Hassan in to his bride. So he rose and opened the door and did away the barrier and broke her seal, whereupon the love of her waxed in him and he redoubled in passion and affection for her. Then, since he had gotten that which he sought, he gave himself joy and repeated these verses:

Thy shape a tempter is, thine eyes, gazelle-like, black and white;
Thy face with beauty's water drips, with every charm bedight.
Lo, in mine eyes most gloriously thou'rt pictured, jacinth half
And jewels rare another third, thou seemest to my spright.
Yea, and a fifth of thee is musk, a sixth pure ambergris, And like
unto the pearl thou art, indeed, but far more bright.
Ne'er gave our mother Eva birth unto the like of thee, Nor is

there other like to thee in Heaven’s realms of light.

An if my punishment thou will, ’tis of love’s usances, And of thy favor, if thou choose to pardon my upright.

O thou adornment of the world, O end of all desire, Who may with patience brook the lack of thy fair face’s sight?

Now the princesses were standing at the door, and when they heard his verses, they said to her, ‘O king’s daughter, hearest thou what this mortal says? How canst thou blame us, seeing that he makes verses for love of thee?’ When she heard this, she rejoiced and was glad, and Hassan abode with her forty days in all delight and solace and contentment and cheer, whilst the damsels made him new festivities every day and overwhelmed him with bounty and gifts and presents; and the princess became reconciled to her sojourn amongst them and forgot her people and friends. At the end of this time, Hassan saw in a dream, one night his mother mourning for him and indeed her bones were wasted and her body emaciated and she was pale and wan, whilst he was in good case. When she saw him thus, she said to him, ‘O my son Hassan, how is it that thou livest at thine ease and forgettest me? See my plight since thy loss. I do not forget thee, nor will my tongue leave to name thee till I die; and I have made thee a tomb in my house, that I may never forget thee. I wonder, O my son, if I shall live to see thee with me and if we shall ever again be united as we were.’

Hassan awoke from sleep, weeping and lamenting; the tears on down his cheeks like rain and he became mournful and troubled; his tears ceased not nor did sleep visit him, but he had no rest and no patience was left to him. When he arose, the princesses came in to him and gave him good-morrow and made merry with him, as of their wont; but he paid no heed to them. So alley asked his wife what ailed him and she said, ‘I know not.’ Quoth they ‘Ask him of his case.’ So she went up to him and said, ‘What ails thee, O my lord?’ Whereupon he sighed and groaned and told her what he had seen in his dream. Then he repeated the following verses:

Afflicted sore am I, distraught with love and dole; Union I seek, yet know no way unto my goal.

The stresses of desire redouble upon me And even the light of love is heavy on my soul.

His wife repeated what he had said to the princesses, who, hearing the verses, took pity on him and said to him, ‘In God’s name, do as thou wilt, for we may not hinder thee from visiting thy mother, but will rather help thee thereto by all means in our power. But it behoves that thou desert us not, but visit us, though it be but once a year.’ And he answered, ‘I hear and obey.’ Then they arose forthright and making him ready victual [for the journey], equipped the bride for him with clothes and ornaments and everything of price, such as beggar description. Moreover, they bestowed on him gifts and presents, such as the pen availeth not to set forth, amongst the rest five-and-twenty chests of gold and fifty of silver. Then they beat the drum and up came dromedaries from all sides. They chose of them such as availed to carry all the gear they had prepared and mounting Hassan and his bride on others, rode with them three days, wherein they accomplished three months’ journey.

Then they bade them farewell and addressed themselves to return; whereupon the youngest threw herself on Hassan’s neck and wept till she fainted. When she came to herself she repeated the following verses:

Would God the day of parting ne’er might be! It leaves no sleep unto the eyes of me.
It hath dissolved our loves and broken down Our strength in soul and body utterly.

Then she bade him farewell, straitly charging him, whenas he should have come to his native land and foregathered with his mother and set his heart at ease, to fail not of paying her a visit once in every six months and saying, ‘If aught trouble thee or thou be in fear of any vexation, beat the Magian’s drum, whereupon the dromedaries will come to thee; and do thou mount and return to us.’ He swore to do her bidding and conjured them to return. So they returned to the palace, mourning for their separation from him, especially the youngest, to whom no rest was left nor would patience come at her call, but she wept night and day.

Meanwhile, Hassan and his wife fared on night and day, through noontide heats and early dawns, over plains and deserts and valleys and stony wastes; and God decreed them safety, so that they reached Bassora without hindrance and made their camels kneel at the door of his house. Hassan then dismissed the dromedaries and going up to the door, to open it, heard his mother weeping and reciting the following verses, in a faint voice, from a heart worn [with sorrow] and on fire with consuming affliction:

How shall she taste, forsooth, of sleep, who lacks of all repose,
Who wakes anights, when every eye in slumber else doth close?
Honour and wealth and family he had and yet became A lonely
exile from his home in lands that no man knows.
Groaning and longing on her press, the utmost that can be, And
like a brazier, 'twixt her ribs the fire of yearning glows.
Passion the mastery o'er her hath got and ruleth her: For suffering
she Moans, yet still is constant 'neath her woes.
Her case for love proclaims that she afflicted is and sad: Yea, and
her tears are witnesses to that she undergoes.

When Hassan heard his mother weeping and lamenting, he wept also and knocked loudly at the door. Quoth she, 'Who is at the door?' And he said, 'Open.' Whereupon she opened the door and knowing him, fell down in a swoon: but he tended her till she came to herself, when he embraced her and she embraced him and kissed him, whilst his wife looked on. Then he carried his goods and gear into the house, whilst his mother repeated the following verses, for that her heart was comforted and God had reunited her with her son:

Fortune hath taken ruth on my case ; Yea, she hath pitied my long
despair,
Granting me that whereafter I longed And doing away from me
dread and care.
So I will pardon her all the past And the sins that she sinned
'gainst me whilere;
Ev'n to the wrong wherewith she wrought To whiten the parting-

place of my hair.

Then they sat talking and his mother said to him, ‘O my son, how faredst thou with the Persian?’ ‘O my mother,’ answered Hassan, ‘he was no Persian, but a Magian, who worshipped the fire, not the All-powerful King.’ Then he told her how he had dealt with him, in that he had journeyed with him (to the Mountain of Clouds) and sewed him in the camel’s skin, and how the rocs had taken him up and set him down on the mountain-top and what he had seen there of dead folk whom the Magian had deluded and left (to perish) on the mountain, after they had done his occasion. And he told her how he had cast himself from the mountain-top into the sea and God the Most High had preserved him and brought him to the palace of the (seven) damsels and how the youngest of them had taken him to brother and he led sojourned with them, till God brought the Magian to the place where he was and he slew him. Moreover, he told her of his passion for the damsel and how he had made prize of her and of his seeing her (his mother) in sleep and all else that had befallen him up to the time when God reunited them.

She marvelled at his story and praised God who had restored him to her in health and safety. Then she arose and examined the baggage and loads and questioned him of them. So he told her what was in them, whereat she was mightily rejoiced. Then she went up to the princess, to talk with her and bear her company; but, when her eyes fell on her, she was confounded at her loveliness and rejoiced and marvelled at her beauty and grace and symmetry: and she sat down beside her, cheering her and comforting her heart. Next morning, early, she went down into the market and bought magnificent furniture and ten suits of the richest raiment in the city, and clad the princess and adorned her with every thing costly. Then said she to Hassan, ‘O my son, we cannot abide in this city with all this wealth; for thou knowest that we are poor folk and the people will suspect us of practising alchemy. So come, let us depart to Baghdad, the Abode of Peace, where we may dwell in the Khalif’s Sanctuary, and thou shalt sit in a shop to buy and sell, in the fear of God (to whom belong might and majesty) and He shall prosper thee with this wealth.’

Hassan fell in with her counsel and going forth straightway, sold the house and summoned the dromedaries, which he loaded with all his goods and gear, together with his mother and wife. Then he went down to the Tigris, where he hired a vessel to carry them to Baghdad and embarked therein with his mother and wife and all his possessions. They sailed up the river ten days, with a fair wind, till they came in sight of Baghdad, at which they rejoiced, and the ship landed them in the city, where Hassan hired a storehouse in one of the khans and transported his goods thither. He lodged in the khan that night and on the morrow, he changed his clothes and going down into the city, enquired for a broker. The folk directed him to one, and when the broker saw him, he asked him what he lacked. Quoth he, ‘I want a house, a handsome and spacious one.’ So the broker showed him the houses at his disposal and he chose one that belonged to one of the viziers and buying it of him for a hundred thousand dinars, gave him the price. Then he returned to the khan and removed all his goods to the house; after which he went down to the market and bought all that was needed therefor of vessels and carpets and other household stuff, besides servants and a little black slave for the house.

He abode with his wife in all solace and delight of life three years, during which time he was vouchsafed by her two sons, one of whom he named Nasir and the other Mensour: but, at the end of this time, he bethought him of his sisters, the princesses, and called to mind all their goodness to him and how they had helped him to his desire. So he longed after them and going out to the markets of the city, bought trinkets and costly stuffs and confections such as they had never seen nor known. His mother asked him why he bought these rarities and he answered, ‘I purpose to visit my sisters, who entreated me with all kindness and to whose goodness and munificence I owe all that I at present enjoy: wherefore I will journey to them and return soon, so God please.’ Quoth she, ‘O my son, be not [long] absent from me.’

Then said he, ‘Know, O my mother, how thou shalt do with my wife. Here is her feather-dress in a chest, buried in the earth in such a place; do thou watch over it, lest she light on it and take it, for she would fly away, she and her children, and I should never hear of them again and should die of grief; wherefore I warn thee, O my mother, that thou name this not to her. Thou must know that she is the daughter of a king of the Jinn, than whom there is not a greater among the kings of the Jinn nor a richer in troops and treasure, and she is mistress of her people and dearest to her father of all he hath. Moreover, she is exceeding high-spirited, so do thou serve her thyself and suffer her not to go forth the door neither look out of window nor over the wall, for I fear the air for her, when it blows, and if aught befell her, I should slay myself for her sake.' 'O my son,' replied she, 'God forbid that I should gainsay thee! Am I mad that thou shouldst lay this injunction on me and I disobey thee therein? Depart, O my son, with a heart at ease, and God willing, thou shalt return in safety and see her and she shall tell thee how I have dealt with her: but tarry not beyond the time to come and go.'

Now, as fate would have it, his wife heard what he said to his mother and they knew it not. Then Hassan went without the city and beat the drum, whereupon up came the dromedaries and he loaded twenty of them with rarities of Irak; after which he returned to his mother and repeated his injunctions to her and took leave of her and his wife and children, one of whom was a yearling babe and the other two years old. Then he mounted and fared on ten days, without stopping night or day, over hills and valleys and plains and wastes, till, on the eleventh day, he reached the palace and went in to his sisters, with the presents he had brought them. The princesses rejoiced at his sight and gave him joy of his safety, whilst the youngest decorated the palace within and without. Then they took the presents and lodging him in a chamber as of old, enquired at him of his wife and mother and he told them that his wife had borne him two sons. And the youngest princess, seeing him well and in good case rejoiced with an exceeding joy and repeated the followed verse:

For news of thee, whene'er it blew, the wind I have besought,
And never any but thyself occurreth to my thought.

Then he abode with them, an honoured guest, three months, passing his time in hunting and merrymaking and joy and delight.

To return to his wife. She abode with his mother two days after her husband's departure, and on the third day, she said to her, 'Glory be to God! Have I lived with him three years and shall I never go to the bath?' Then she wept and Hassan's mother took pity on her and said to her, 'O my daughter, we are strangers here and my husband is abroad. Were he at home, he would serve thee himself, but, as for me, I know no one. However, O my daughter, I will heat thee water and wash thy head in the bath that is in the house.' 'O my lady,' answered the princess, 'hadst thou spoken thus to one of the slave-girls, she had demanded to be sold in the open market and had not abode with thee. Men are excusable, for they are jealous and their reason tells them that, if a woman go forth the house, belike she will do lewdness. But, O my lady, women are not all alike and thou knowest that, if a woman have a mind to aught, whether it be the bath or what not else, none may avail against her, to guard her or keep her or debar her from her desire; and nought restraineth her but her reason and her religion.'

Then she wept and cursed and bemoaned herself and her strangerhood, till Hassan's mother was moved to pity for her case and knew that all she said was true and that there was nothing for it but to let her have her will. So she committed the affair to God (extolled and exalted be He!) and making ready all that they needed for the bath, took her and went with her thither. She carried her two little sons with her, and when they entered, they put off their clothes and all the women fell to gazing on the princess and glorifying God (to whom belong might and majesty) for that He had created so glorious a form. The report of her was noised abroad in Baghdad and the women of the city flocked to gaze upon her, till the bath was so crowded that there was no passing through it.

Now, as destiny would have it, there was present that day, with the rest of the women in the bath, one of the slave-girls of the Khalif Haroun er Reshid, by name Tuhfeh the Lutanist, and she, finding the bath crowded and no passing for the multitude of women and girls, asked what was to do; and they told her of the [strange] damsel. So she went up to her and considering her straitly, was amazed at her grace and beauty and glorifed God (magnified be His majesty) for the fair forms He hath created. The sight of her diverted her from her bath, so that she went not [farther] in nor washed, but sat staring at the princess, till she had made an end of washing and coming forth [of the hot room] put on her clothes, whereupon beauty was added to her beauty. She sat down on the divan, whilst the women gazed upon her; then she looked at them and veiling herself, went out.

Tuhfeh went out with her and followed her, till she saw where she dwelt, when she left her and returned to the Khalif's palace. Then she went in to the lady Zubeideh and kissed the earth before her; and the princess said to her, 'O Tuhfeh, why hast thou tarried in the bath?' 'O my lady,' answered she, 'I have seen a marvel, never beheld I its like amongst men or women, and this it was that distracted me and confounded my wit and amazed me, so that I forgot to wash my head.' 'And what was that?' asked Zubeideh. 'O my lady,' replied Tuhfeh, 'I saw a damsel in the bath, having with her two little boys like moons, never saw any her like, before nor after her, nor is there the like of her form in the whole world. By thy munificence, O my lady, if thou toldest the Commander of the Faithful of her, he would slay her husband and take her from him, for she hath not her like among women. I asked of her husband and they told me that he is a merchant called Hassan of Bassora. Moreover, I followed her from the bath to her own house and found it to be that of the vizier, with the two gates, one giving on the river and the other on the street. Indeed, O my lady, I fear lest the Khalif hear of her and break the law t and put her husband to death and take her to wife.'

'Out on thee, O Tuhfeh!' rejoined Zubeideh. 'Is this damsel endowed with such extraordinary grace and beauty that the Commander of the Faithful should, on her account, barter his soul's good for his worldly pleasure and transgress the law! By Allah, I must needs look on her, and if she be not as thou sayest, I will strike off thy head! O baggage, there are in the Khalif's harem three hundred and threescore slave-girls, after the number of the days of the year, yet is there none amongst them such as thou describest!' 'No, by Allah, O my lady!' answered Tuhfeh. 'Nor is there her like in all Baghdad; no, nor amongst the Arabs or the barbarians, nor hath God (to whom belong might and majesty) created the like of her!'

Therewith Zubeideh called for Mesrour, who came and kissed the earth before her, and she said to him, 'O Mesrour, go to the vizier's house, that with the two gates, one giving on the street and the other on the river, and bring me in haste the damsel who dwells there, with her two children and the old woman who is with her, and tarry not.' 'I hear and obey,' answered Mesrour and repairing to Hassan's house, knocked at the door. Quoth the old woman, 'Who is at the door?' 'Mesrour,' answered he, 'the eunuch of the Commander of the Faithful.' So she opened the door and he entered and saluted her; whereupon she returned his salute and asked his errand. Quoth he, 'The lady Zubeideh, daughter of El Casim and wife of the Commander of the Faithful Haroun er Reshid, fifth of the sons of Abbas, uncle of the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve!), bids thee to her, thee and thy son's wife and her children; for the women have told her of her and her beauty.' 'O Mesrour,' answered the old woman, 'we are strangers and my son, the girl's husband, is abroad and hath straitly charged me not to go forth nor let her go forth, in his absence, neither show her to any of the creatures of God the Most High; and I fear me, if aught befall her and he come back, he will slay himself; wherefore I beseech thee, of thy favour, O Mesrour, require us not of that whereto we are unable.' 'O my lady,' rejoined Mesrour, 'if I knew aught to be feared for you in this, I would not require you to go; the lady Zubeideh desireth but to see her and [then] she may return. So disobey not, or thou wilt repent; and like as I take you, I will bring you both back in safety, so it please God the Most High.'

The old woman could not gainsay him; so she went in and making the damsel ready, brought her and her children forth and followed Mesrour to the Khalif's palace, where he carried them in and set them before the lady Zubeideh. They kissed the earth before her and called down blessings upon her; and Zubeideh said to the damsel, who was veiled, 'Wilt thou not uncover thy face, that I may look on it?' So she kissed the ground before her and unveiling, discovered a face that put to shame the full moon in the height of heaven. Zubeideh fixed her eyes on her and let them travel over her, whilst the palace was illuminated by the light of her countenance.

The princess and all who were present were amazed at her beauty and all who looked on her became mad and could speak to none. As for Zubeideh, she rose and making the damsel stand up, strained her to her bosom and seated her by herself on the couch. Moreover, she commanded to decorate the palace [in her honour] and calling for a suit of the richest raiment and a necklace of the most precious jewels, put them upon her. Then said she to her, 'O princess of fair ones, verily thou astoundest me and fillest mine eyes [with delight]. What arts knowest thou?' 'O my lady,' answered she, 'I have a dress of feathers, which if I put on before thee, thou wouldst see one of the fairest of fashions and marvel thereat, and all who saw it would talk of its goodliness, generation after generation.' 'And where is this dress of thine?' asked Zubeideh. 'It is with my husband's mother,' replied the damsel. 'Do thou seek it of her for me.'

So Zubeideh said to the old woman, 'My life on thee, O my mother, go and fetch us her feather-dress, that we may divert ourselves by looking on what she will do, and after take it again.' 'O my lady,' replied the old woman, 'this damsel is a liar. Hast thou ever seen a woman with a dress of feathers? Indeed, this pertaineth but to birds.' But the damsel said to Zubeideh, 'As I live, O my lady, she hath a feather-dress of mine and it is in a chest, which is buried in such a store-closet in the house.' So Zubeideh took from her neck a necklace of jewels, worth all the treasures of Chosroes and Caesar, and gave it to the old woman, saying, 'O my mother, I conjure thee by my life, take this necklace and go and fetch us this dress, that we may divert ourselves with the sight thereof, and after take it again!' But she swore to her that she had never seen the dress and knew not what the damsel meant by her speech.

Then Zubeideh cried out at her and taking the key from her, called Mesrour and said to him, 'Take this key and go to the house and enter such a store-closet there, amiddleward which thou wilt end a chest buried. Take it and break it open and bring me the feather-dress that is therein.' 'I hear and obey,' answered he and went forth, whereupon the old woman arose and followed him, weeping and repenting her of having given ear to the damsel and gone to the bath with her, for her desire to go thither was but a trick. So she went with him to the house and opened the door of the closet, and he entered and brought out the chest. Then he took therefrom the feather- dress and wrapping it in a handkerchief, carried it to the princess Zubeideh, who took it and turned it about, marvelling at the beauty of its fashion; after which she gave it to the damsel, saying, 'Is this thy dress of feathers?' 'Yes, O my lady,' answered she, and took it joyfully. Then she examined it and rejoiced to find it whole as it was, not a feather missing. So she came down from beside the lady Zubeideh and taking her sons in her bosom, wrapped herself in the feather-dress and became a bird, by the ordinance of God (to whom belong might and majesty), whereat Zubeideh and all who were present marvelled. Then she walked with a proud and graceful gait and danced and sported and flapped her wings, whilst all eyes were axed on her and all marvelled at what she did.

Then said she with fluent tongue, ‘Is this goodly, O my ladies?’ And they answered, ‘Yes, O princess of the fair! All that thou dost is goodly.’ ‘And this,’ said she, ‘that I am about to do is goodlier yet.’ Then she spread her wings and flying up with her children to the dome of the palace, perched on the cornice of the saloon, whilst they all looked at her, wide-eyed and said, ‘By Allah, this is indeed a rare and goodly fashion! Never saw we its like.’ Then, as she was about to take flight for her own land, she bethought her of Hassan and said, ‘Hark ye, my mistresses!’ and she recited the following verses:

Thou that hast left these lands and tow’rds the countries, where Thy loved ones dwell, with swift and fleeting feet dost fare,
Think’st thou that I ‘midst you abided in content And deem’st thou that my days by you untroubled were?
When in Love’s snare I fell, Love’s self my gaol he made And did unto the place of rendezvous repair.
He hid my vest and deemed that love had masters me And that I of the One to seek it would forbear.
He wronged me, for my vest he to his mother gave And in a closet charged her keep it with all care:
But I heard what they said and stored it in my mind And much therein rejoiced and hoped for fortune fair.
My going to the bath, indeed, was but a trick. That I to wonderment might move the people there.
The Khalif’s bride no less did marvel at my charms, When she on every side had viewed my shape and air.
‘O wife of Er Reshid,’ then said I, ‘thou must know, I have a, feather-dress, right splendid, rich and rare.
Were it on me, thou shouldst see wonders such an blot Addiction from the spright and charm away despair.’
‘Where is it?’ deigned to ask the Khalif’s wife, and I Made answer, ‘In his house who caught me in his snare.’

So Mesrour went in haste and brought the dress to her, And lo, its lustre lit the palace everywhere.
I took it from his hand and opening, viewed it all, To see ’twas whole and fit to wing withal the air.
Then, with my babes, therein I entered and my wings Spreading, up to the roof I flew and perching there,
Said, ‘Husband’s mother mine, tell him, if he would meet With me again, he must to leave his home prepare.’

When she had made an end of her verses, the lady Zubeideh said to her, ‘Wilt thou not come down to us, that we may take our fill of thy beauty, O fairest of the fair? Glory be to Him who hath given thee eloquence and beauty!’ But she said, ‘God forbid that what is past should return!’ Then to the mother of the wretched Hassan, ‘By Allah, O my lady,’ said she, ‘it irketh me to part from thee; but, when thy son cometh and the days of separation are long upon him and he craveth reunion with me and meeting and the winds of love and longing agitate him, let him come to me in the Islands of Wac.’ Then she took flight with her children and sought her own country, whilst the old woman wept and buffeted her face and lamented till she swooned away. When she came to herself she said to the lady Zubeideh, ‘O my lady, what is this thou hast done?’ And Zubeideh said to her, ‘O my lady the pilgrim, I knew not that this would happen and hadst thou told me of the case and acquainted me with her condition, I had not gainsaid thee. Nor did I know that she was of the Flying Jinn; else had I not suffered her to don the dress nor take her children: but now words profit nothing; so do thou acquit me of offence against thee.’ And the old woman could do no otherwise than answer, ‘Thou art acquitted.’

Then she went forth the palace and returning to her own house, buffeted her face till she swooned away. When she came to herself, she wearied after her daughter- in-law and her children and for the sight of her son and repeated the following verses:

Your absence, on the day of parting, when you went From home, enforced me weep for grief and weariment.
I cry out, for the smart of separation’s pains, What while mine

eyelids still with scalding tears are brent,
‘Parting this is: shall aye retuning be for us? Concealment’s done away by your abandonment.’
Would God they would return and keep their troth! Ah, then, Time would belike restore the days of my content.

Then she dug three raves in the house and betook herself to them with weeping all tides of the day and watches of the night; and when her son’s absence was long upon her and grief and longing and unquiet waxed upon her, she recited these verses:

Thine image ‘twixt mine eyelids still harbours, when they close, As in my heart thy memory in throbbing and repose.
Yea, and thy love for ever runs in the bones of me, As in the fruited branches the sap in summer flows.
Indeed, my breast is straitened, the day I see thee not, And e’en my censors hold me excuséd for my woes.
O thou, for whom love-longing hath gotten hold of me, For love of whom distraction for ever on me grows,
Have mercy, as thou fearest the Merciful, on me: The love of thee hath made me to taste of death, God knows.

Meanwhile, when Hassan came to the princesses, they conjured him to tarry with them three months [and he consented and sojourned with them for that time], after which they gave him eve loads of gold and the like of silver and one load of victual and accompanied him on his homeward way, till he conjured them to return, whereupon the youngest came up to him, to bid him farewell, and embracing him, wept till she fainted. Then she recited the following verses:

Ah, when shall parting’s fire be quenched by thy return once more? When shall I have my wish of thee and we be as of yore?
Indeed, the day of severance affrights and troubles me, And languishment for love-taking on me is passing sore.

Then came forward the second princess and embraced him and recited these verses:

Like the parting from life is the parting from thee And thy loss as the loss of heaven's rains is to me.
Thy departure's a heart-searing fire, for indeed, In thy presence the gardens of Paradise be.

Then came forward the third and embraced him and recited these verses:

We left not to take leave, upon our parting day, For weariness or aught of ill intention; nay,
My very soul thou art, and how unto my soul Should I, of my free will, I prithee, farewell say?

Then came forward the fourth and embraced him and recited these verses:

Nought made me weep, save only when he, in parting guise, Did me of his departure so cruelly apprise.
Behold this precious union I've hung upon mine ear: 'Twas of my tears I wrought it, fast dropping from mine eyes.

Then came forward the fifth and embraced him and recited these verses:

Depart thou not; for I've no strength without thee to endure Nor unto a departing one courage to say farewell;
Nor any patience. severance to encounter; no, nor tears To shed upon the ruined house wherein we twain did dwell.

Then came forward the sixth and embraced him and recited these verses:

I said, when the camels away with them fared And longing mine entrails did ravage, 'Ah me!
If there were but a king over whom I had power, I would seize, by main force, on each ship on the sea.'

Then came forward the seventh and embraced him and recited these verses:

Indeed, the severance from thee hath made my heart to ache: I have no bowels of the like of thee farewell to take.
God knows I did not leave to speak the parting word to thee, Save of the fear that in the act thy very heart would break.

Hassan also wept for parting from them, till he swooned, and repeated the following verses:

Indeed, upon the parting day, my eye with pearls did rain Of dropping tears, whose necklaces I strung in many a skein.
The cameleer urged on his beasts with them, what while nor strength Nor fortitude I found, nor did my heart with me remain.
I took my leave of them and turned away in grief, and eke To quit the encampment and the place of meeting I was fain.
Yea, I turned back, unknowing of the road and comforting My soul but with the thought that I should meet thee yet again.
List, O my friend, unto the tale of love, and God forbid That I should speak and that thy heart to hearken should not deign!
Since thou hast lost them, O my soul, forswear the sweet of life Nor covet its continuance, for, wanting them, ‘twere vain.

Then he bade them farewell and fared on diligently night and day, till he came to Baghdad, the Abode of Peace and Sanctuary of the Abbaside Khalifs, unknowing what had passed in his absence. Here he dismissed the dromedaries and entering his house, went in to his mother, to salute her, but found her worn of body and wasted of bones, for much mourning and watching and weeping and lamentation, till she was grown like a skewer and could make him no answer. He asked her of his wife and children and she wept till she swooned away, whereupon he searched the house for them, but found no trace of them. So he went to the store-closet and finding it open and the chest broken and the feather-dress missing, knew that his wife had possessed herself thereof and flown away with her children. Then he returned with his mother and finding her recovered from her swoon, questioned her of his wife and children, whereupon she wept and said, ‘O my son, may God amply requite thee their loss! These are their three tombs.’

When Hassan heard these words of his mother, he gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon, in which he lay from the first of the day till noon; wherefore anguish was added to his mother’s anguish and she despaired of his life. However, after awhile, he came to himself and wept and buffeted his face and rent his clothes and went about the house in a state of distraction, reciting the following verses:

Folk have made moan of passion before me, of past years, And live and dead for absence have suffered pains and fears;
But that within my bosom I harbour, with mine eyes I’ve never seen the like of nor heard it with mine ears.

Then he drew his sword, and coming up to his mother, said to her, ‘Except thou tell me the truth of the case, I will strike of thy head and [after] kill myself.’ ‘O my son,’ answered she, ‘put up thy sword and sit down, till I tell thee what hath passed.’ So he sheathed his sword and sat by her side, whilst she recounted to him all that had passed in his absence, adding, ‘O my son, but that I saw her weep to go to the bath and feared that she would complain to thee, on thy return, and thou wouldst be wroth with me, I had not carried her thither; nor had I brought out the feather-dress, though I died for it, were it not that the princess Zubeideh was wroth with me and took the key from me by force: and thou knowest, O my son, that no hand may measure length with that of the Khalifate. When they brought her the dress, she took it and turned it over, fearing lest somewhat might be lost thereof, but found it whole, wherefore she rejoiced and making her children fast to her middle, donned the feather-vest, after the lady Zubeideh had pulled off to her all that was upon her and clad her therein, in honour of her and because of her beauty. No sooner had she done this than she shook and becoming a bird, walked about the palace, whilst all who were present gazed at her and marvelled at her beauty and grace. Then she flew up to the roof and perching on the cornice, looked at me and said, “When thy son cometh and the nights of separation are long on him and he craveth reunion with me and meeting and the winds of love and longing agitate him, let him leave his native land and journey to the Islands of Wac.” This, then, is her story and what befell in thine absence.’

When she had made an end of her story, Hassan gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon, from which he ceased not till nightfall, when he revived and fell to buffeting his face and writhing on the floor like a wounded snake. His mother sat by his head, weeping, till midnight, when he came to himself and wept sore and recited the following veres:

Pause and behold his sorry state whom ye have left to mourn, So haply you will pity him, after despite and scorn.
For, if ye look on him, ‘fore God, the man you will deny, As ‘twere you knew him not, so sick he is and passion-worn.
Forslain of love-longing for you he is, and of the dead He’d reckoned be, but for the groans wherewith his breast is torn.
Think not that separation’s light to him; nay, grievous ’tis Unto the longing; death itself were easier to be borne.

Then he rose and went round about the house, weeping and lamenting and bemoaning himself, five days, without tasting meat or drink. His mother came to him and conjured him, till he broke his fast, and besought him to leave weeping; but he hearkened not to her and continued to weep and lament, whilst she strove to comfort him and he heeded her not. Then he recited the following verses:

My soul for love a burden bears, so great, All strength that is would fail beneath its weight.
I’m all amazed and sore my languor is; Alike are night and morn to this my strait.
Indeed, till now I went in fear of death, But death today a remedy I rate.

He abode thus till daybreak when his eyes closed and he [fell asleep, for sheer weariness, and] saw [in a dream] his wife weeping and repentant for that which she had done. So he started up from sleep, crying out and reciting the following verses:

Their image is never absent a breathing-while from my breast: I have made it within my bosom the place of the honoured guest.
But that I hope for reunion no instant more would I live, And but that I see them in slumber, I would not lie down to rest.

He abode thus a whole month, weeping-eyed and mournful-hearted, wakeful by night and eating little, till he bethought him to repair to his sisters and take counsel with them in the matter of his wife, so haply they might help him to regain her. So he summoned the dromedaries and loading fifty of them with rarities of Irak, committed the house to his mother's care and deposited all his goods in safe keeping, except some few he left with her. Then he set out on his journey and stayed not till he reached the palace of the Mountain of Clouds, when he went in to the princesses and gave them the presents, in which they rejoiced. Then they gave him joy of his safety and said to him, 'O our brother, what ails thee to come [again so soon], seeing thou wast with us but two months since?' Whereupon he wept and repeated the following verses:

I see my soul all pined for loss of her it held so dear; It hath no ease, in any wise, of life and all its cheer.
My malady is one of those whose remedy's unknown; And shall a malady be cured, except its leach be here?
Thou that forbidd'st me the delight of sleep, thou hast me left
The wind to question after thee, whenas its wafts draw near,
From my love's land but lately borne, my love who doth comprise Beauties that make mine eyes to rain with many a bloody tear.
O wind, that visitest her land, haply a waft of air The hearts with somewhat of her scent may quicken yet and cheer.

Then he gave a great cry and swooned away. The princesses sat round him, weeping over him, till he came to himself and repeated these verses:

It may be Fate at last shall turn its bridle-rein And bring me her I love, for Fortune changeth still;

And things shall yet betide, despite the things fordone, To further forth my hopes and bring me to my will.

Then he wept, till he fainted again, and presently coming to himself, recited the following:

O term of all my pains and all my languishment, Art thou content? Indeed, in passion I’m content.
Dost thou forsake me thus, without or fault or cause? Turn back to me, I pray, from rigour and relent.

Then he wept till he swooned away once more and when he came to himself, he repeated these verses:

Sleep hath my lids departed, but wake is ever nigh And of the hoarded teardrops still lavish is mine eye.
It weepeth tears like rubies, for love, And evermore With growing distance waxeth the tide of tears more high.
Longing within my bosom, beloved mine, hath lit A fire that rageth ever and will not cease or die.
No tear, when I recall thee, I shed, but still herein Is lightning, ay, and thunder of many a groan and sigh.

Then he wept till he fainted away a fourth time, and presently recovering, recited the following lines:

Do ye for passion and distress e’en suffer as we do? And is the love of us with you, like to our love for you?
May Allah love-liking confound! How bitter ’tis, indeed! What is it love would have of us? Ah, would to God I knew!
Your lovely faces, far and wide though distance ‘twixt us stretch, Still in our eyes, where’er we are, are mirrored, clear and true.
With memories of your dwelling-place my heart is occupied And still the turtle, when she sings, my trouble doth renew.
O dove, that callest all the night upon thy mate, with me Thou mak’st grief company and add’st longing my longing to.
Thou leav’st my lids unsatisfied with weeping and lament For dear ones gone and far away, departed from our view.

Yea, every time and tide for them I yearn and am consumed With longing, when on me the night falls with its darkling hue.

When his sisters heard this and saw his condition, the transport of love and longing and the passion and distraction that possessed him were manifest to them and they questioned him of his case. He wept and told them what had befallen in his absence and how his wife had taken flight with her children, wherefore they grieved for him and asked him what she said at leave-taking. 'O my sisters,' answered be, 'she said to my mother, "Tell thy son, when he cometh and the nights of separation are long upon him and he craveth reunion with me and meeting and the winds of love and longing agitate him, let him join me in the islands of Wac."' When they heard this, they signed to one another with their eyes and shook their heads, and each looked at her sister, whilst Hassan looked at them. Then they bowed their heads and bethought themselves awhile; after which they raised their heads and said, 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! Put forth thy hand to heaven and if thou win thither, then shalt thou win to thy wife and children.'

When he heard this, the tears ran down his cheeks like rain and wet his clothes, and he recited the following verses:

Red cheeks and eyes of melting black have charmed my wit away; And still, when cometh sleeplessness, patience farewell doth say.
The fair with inhumanity have worn my body sore; No breath of life abideth there that folk discover may.
Houris, as graceful in their gait as desert antelopes, Whose unveiled beauties if saints saw, they'd doat thereon straightway;
Faring as fares the garden breeze that blows before the dawn, Trouble and restlessness for love of these on me do prey;
I hung my hopes upon a maid of them, a loveling fair, For whom my heart is all consumed with fire that rageth aye;
A loveling soft of sides and proud and graceful in her gait, The darkness dwelleth in her hair, but in her face is day.
She troubleth me, and champions stout how many have the eyes And cheeks of lovely women stirred to trouble and dismay!

Then he wept, whilst the princesses wept for his weeping, and they were moved to compassion and jealousy for him. So they fell to comforting him and exhorting him to patience and offering up prayers for his reunion with his wife; whilst his sister [the youngest] said to him, ‘O my brother, take heart and be of good courage and have patience; so shalt thou come to thy desire; for whoso is patient and waiteth, attaineth that he seeketh. Patience is the key of relief and indeed the poet saith:

Let destiny with slackened rein its course appointed fare And lie thou down to sleep by night, with heart devoid of care;
‘twixt the closing of an eye and th’ opening thereof, God hath it in His power to change a case from foul to fair.

So take heart and brace up thy resolution, for one who is to live ten years diets not when he is but nine. Weeping and grief and mourning engender sickness and disease; wherefore do thou abide with us till thou be rested, and I will cast about how thou mayst win to thy wife and children, so it please God the Most High.’ And he wept sore and recited these verses:

An if of its disease my body be made whole, I’m still unhealed of that which harbours in my soul.
Except a lover be united with his love, No cure for love’s disease is nor lovers’ dole.

Then he sat down beside her and she proceeded to talk with him and comfort him and question him of the manner of his wife’s departure. So he told her and she said, ‘By Allah, O my brother, I had it in mind to bid thee burn the feather-dress, but Satan made me forget it.’ She ceased not to talk with him and caress him and company with him other ten days, whilst sleep visited him not and he delighted not in food; and when the case was long upon him and unrest waxed in him, he recited the following verses:

A loved one owns my heart, with whom I companied of yore:
There is no creature save herself I wish or weary for.

All that the Arabs boast of charms in her united are; She's a gazelle, but on my heart she feedeth evermore.

Because my patience and resource do fail for love of her, I weep, though weeping profits not to salve my secret sore.

A fair one, seven [years of age] she hath and seven thereto, As she a moon of five nights were and five thereto and four.

When the youngest princess saw him thus distracted for passion and love-longing and the fever of desire, she went in to her sisters, tearful-eyed and mournful-hearted, and throwing herself upon them, kissed their feet, weeping, and besought them to devise some means of bringing Hassan to the Wac Islands and effecting his reunion with his wife and children. She ceased not to conjure them to further her brother in the accomplishment of his desire and to weep before them, till she made them weep and they said to her, 'Be of good cheer: we will do our endeavour to bring about his reunion with his family, if it be the will of God the Most High.' And he abode with them a whole year, during which his eyes ceased never from tears.

Now the princesses had an uncle, their father's brother- german, whose name was Abdulcuddous, and he loved the eldest with an exceeding love and was wont to visit her once a year and do her desires. They had told him of Hassan's adventure with the Magian and how he had availed to slay him; whereat he rejoiced and gave the eldest princess perfumes, saying, 'O daughter of my brother, if thou be in concern for aught or stand in any need or if aught irk thee, cast of these perfumes upon fire, naming me, and I will be with thee presently and will do thy desire.' This was said on the first day of the year that was now at an end; and the eldest princess said to her youngest sister, 'Lo, the year is wholly past and my uncle is not come. Rise, bring me somewhat of fire and the box of perfumes.' So the damsel arose, rejoicing, and fetching what she sought, laid it before her sister, who opened the box and taking thence a little of the perfume, cast it into the fire, naming her uncle; nor was it burnt out ere a cloud of dust appeared at the farther end of the valley and presently lifting, discovered an old man riding on an elephant, which trumpeted as it came.

As soon as he came within sight of the princesses, he fell to making signs to them with his hands and feet; nor was it long ere he reached the castle and alighting from the elephant, came in to them, whereupon they embraced him and kissed his hands and saluted him. Then he sat down, whilst the girls talked with him and questioned him of his absence. Quoth he, ‘I was sitting but now with your aunt, when I smelt the perfumes and hastened to you on this elephant. What wouldst thou, O daughter of my brother?’ ‘O uncle,’ answered she, ‘indeed we longed for thee, for the year is past and it is not thy wont to be absent from us more than a year.’ ‘I was busy,’ answered he, ‘but I purposed to come to you to-morrow.’ Wherefore they thanked him and blessed him and sat talking with him.

Presently the eldest said to him, ‘O my uncle, we told thee the story of Hassan of Bassora, whom Behram the Magian brought and how he slew the latter and after made prize of the Supreme King’s daughter and took her to wife and journeyed with her to his native land?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he; ‘and what befell him after that?’ ‘He was blest with two sons by her,’ said the princess; ‘but she played him false; for she took them in his absence and fled with them to her own country, saying to his mother, “When thy son returneth and asketh for me and the nights of separation are long upon him and he craveth reunion with me and meeting and the winds of love and longing agitate him, let him come to me in the Islands of Wac.”’

When Abdulcuddous heard this, he shook his head and bit his hands; then, bowing his head, he fell a-drumming on the earth with his fingers; after which he shook his head and looked right and left and shook his head again, whilst Hassan watched him from a place where he was hidden from him. Then said the princesses to their uncle, ‘Vouchsafe us an answer, for our hearts are rent in sunder.’ But he shook his head at them, saying, ‘O my daughters, this man hath wearied himself [in vain] and cast himself into grievous stress and sore peril; for he may not win to the Wac Islands.’

With this the princesses called Hassan, who came forth and kissed Abdulcuddous’s hand and saluted him. The old man rejoiced in him and seated him by his side; whereupon quoth the damsels, ‘O uncle, acquaint our brother Hassan with that which thou hast told us.’ So he said to Hassan, ‘O my son, put away from thee this sore torment; for thou canst never win to the Wac Islands, though the Flying Jinn and the wandering stars were with thee; for that betwixt thee and these islands are seven valleys and seven seas and seven mighty mountains. How then canst thou come at this place and who shall bring thee thither? Wherefore I conjure thee by Allah, O my son, do thou reckon them as dead and turn back forthright and weary not thy soul! Indeed, I give thee good counsel, an thou wilt but accept it.' At these words Hassan wept till he fainted, and the princesses sat round him, weeping for his weeping, whilst the youngest rent her clothes and buffeted her face, till she swooned away.

When the old man saw them in this transport of grief and trouble and mourning, he was moved to pity for them and bidding them be silent, said to Hassan, 'O my son, be of good comfort and rejoice in the accomplishment of thy desire, if it be the will of God the Most High. Rise, O my son, take courage and follow me.' So Hassan arose and followed him, rejoicing in the fulfilment of his wish, after he had taken leave of the princesses. Then the old man called the elephant and mounting, took Hassan up behind him and fared on three days and nights, like the blinding lightning, till he came to a vast blue mountain, whose stones were all blue and amiddleward which was a cavern, with a door of Chinese iron. Here he set Hassan down and alighting, dismissed the elephant. Then he went up to the door and knocked, whereupon it opened and there came out to him a black slave, hairless, as he were an Afrit, with a sword in his right hand and a target of steel in the other. When he saw Abdulcuddous, he threw his sword and buckler from his hand and coming up to him, kissed his hand.

Abdulcuddous took Hassan by the hand and entered with him, whilst the slave shut the door after them; whereupon Hassan found himself in a vast and spacious cavern, through which ran a vaulted passage, and they fared on therein a mile's space, till they came forth upon a great open space and made for an angle [of the mountain] wherein were two great doors of solid brass. The old man opened one of the doors and said to Hassan, 'Sit at the door, whilst I enter and return to thee in haste, and beware lest thou open it and enter.' Then he entered and shutting the door after him, was absent an hour, after which he returned, leading a horse saddled and bridled, which, when it ran, flew, and when it flew, the very dust overtook it not, and brought it to Hassan, saying, ‘Mount.’ So he mounted and Abdulcuddous opened the second door, beyond which appeared a vast desert.

They passed through the door into the desert and the old man said to him, ‘O my son, take this letter and go whither this horse will carry thee. When thou seest him stop at the door of a cavern like this, dismount and throw the bridle over the saddle-bow and let him go. He will enter the cavern, which do thou not enter with him, but abide at the door five days, without losing patience. On the sixth day there will come forth to thee a black elder, clad all in black, with a long white beard, flowing down to his navel. Kiss his hands and take his skirt and lay it on thy head and weep before him, till he take compassion on thee and ask thee what thou wouldst have. Then give him the letter, which he will take and go in and leave thee, without speaking. Wait at the door other five days, without wearying, and on the sixth day expect him; and if he come out to thee himself know that thy need will be accomplished but, if one of his servants come forth to thee, know that he who cometh forth to thee purposeth to kill thee; and peace be on thee! For know, O my son, that whoso imperilleth himself is his own undoer; wherefore, if thou fear for thy life, cast it not into [peril of] destruction; but, if thou fear not, up and do thy will, for I have expounded the case to thee. Yet, if thou be minded to return to thy friends, let me mount thee on the elephant; it will carry thee to the daughters of my brother, who will restore thee to thy country and thy home, and [belike] God will vouchsafe thee a better than this girl, of whom thou art enamoured.’ Quoth Hassan, ‘And how shall life be sweet to me, except I attain my desire? By Allah, I will never turn back till I regain my beloved or my death overtake me!’ And he wept and recited the following verses:

For the loss of my belovéd and the passion that for e’er On me grows, I stand proclaiming my abjection and despair.
Of my longing for my loved one, the encampment’s dust I kiss, Though it serve but to redouble my distraction and my care.
Allah watch o’er those who’re absent, though their memory’s in my heart! Ever present art my sorrows and my joys are fled for e’er.
Quoth my censors to me, ‘Patience!’ But therewith they’ve fared

away: Lamentation but and burning have they left me to my share.
’Twas her taking leave affrayed me and her saying, ‘When I’m gone, Look my memory thou forget not and our loves in mind thou bear.’
Unto whom shall I for succour turn, in whom hope after them? For in good and evil fortune still my hope and trust they were.
Ah, the anguish of returning, after having said farewell! How my rancorous foes exulted, when they saw me backward fare!
O ye flaming fires of passion, still redouble on my heart! This it is against whose danger, I, alas! had fain been ware.
If my loves are fled for ever, after them I will not live; Yet, if they return to glad me, ho for joy and fortune fair!
Never shall mine eyes, by Allah, stint from weeping for their loss! Stream on stream, my tears shall witness to the stress of my despair.

When Abdulcuddous heard this, he knew that he would not turn back from his desire nor would words have effect on him, and was certified that nothing would serve him but he must adventure himself, though it cost him his life. So he said to him, ‘Know, O my son, that the Islands of Wac are seven islands, wherein are great plenty of troops, all virgin girls, and the inner isles are peopled by Satans and Marids and warlocks and tribesmen of the Jinn, whose land none ever entered and returned thence. So, God on thee, return presently to thy people; for know that she whom thou seekest is the king’s daughter of all these islands; and how canst thou win to her? Hearken to me, O my son, and belike God will vouchsafe thee a better than she in her stead.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Hassan, ‘though for the love of her I were torn limb from limb, yet should I but redouble in love and transport! Needs must I enter the Wac Islands and come to the sight of my wife and children; and God willing, I will not return save with her and them.’ ‘Then,’ said the sheikh, ‘nothing will serve thee but thou must make the journey?’ ‘Nothing,’ answered Hassan: ‘and I only ask of thee thy prayers for aid and furtherance; so haply God will presently reunite me with my wife and children.’ Then he wept for stress of longing and recited these verses:

Ye are my wish, the fairest fair of any mortal wight; Indeed, I've lodged you in the stead of hearing and of sight.
Upon my heart you've gotten hold; it is your dwelling-place, And after you I am become in torment day and night.
Think not in anywise I've ceased from loving you; indeed, The love of you hath brought the wretch to sick and sorry plight.
Ye went away and with you went my gladness, and for me Serenity became the worst of trouble and despite.
Yea, ye have left me here alone, to watch the stars for pain And weep with tears that pour and pour, like rain from heaven's height.
O night, thou'rt long, indeed, on him who passed thee on wake, Watching the visage of the moon, a love-distracted wight.
Wind, if thou pass the camp where they have lighted down, to them My farewell greeting bear, for life is spent and ended quite;
And tell them somewhat of the pangs I suffer; for indeed They know not what's to do with me nor that which ails my spright.

Then he wept till he swooned away; and when he came to himself Abdulcuddous said to him, 'O my son, thou hast a mother; make her not taste [the bitterness of] thy loss.' 'By Allah, O my lord,' replied he, 'I will never return except with my wife or my death overtake me.' And he wept and lamented and recited the following verses:

I swear by Love's virtue, my faith tow'rds thee hath not changed for a day For absence; I am not, indeed, of those that their troth plight betray.
Such longing is in me that, if to the folk I discovered my case, 'Sure madness hath gotten a hold of the man,' without doubt they would say.
Love-longing and mourning and woe, the transport and pangs of desire, When this is the case of a wight, how fares it with him, wellaway?

With this the old man knew that he would not turn from his purpose, though it cost him his life: so he gave him the letter and prayed for him and enjoined him how he should do, saying, 'I have in this letter given a strait charge concerning thee to Abourruweish, son of Belkis, daughter of Muin, for he is my master and teacher, and all, men and Jinn, humble themselves to him and stand in awe of him. Now go with the blessing of God.’

Hassan gave the horse the rein, and it flew off with him, swiftlier than lightning, and stayed not in its course ten days, when he saw before him a vast mountain, blacker than night, that walled the world from East to West. As he neared it, his horse neighed under him, whereupon there flocked to it horses in number as the drops of rain, none could tell their tale, and fell to rubbing themselves against it. Hassan was affrighted at them and rode on, surrounded by the horses, till he came to the cavern which Abdulcuddous had described to him. The steed stood still at the door and Hassan alighted and threw the rein over the saddle-bow; whereupon the horse entered the cavern, whilst he abode without, as the old man had charged him, pondering the issue of his case and knowing not what would befall him.

He abode thus, at the mouth of the cavern, five days and nights, sleepless, mournful, distracted and perplexed, pondering his severance from home and friends and family, with tearful eye and mournful heart. Then he bethought him of his mother and of what might yet happen to him and of his separation from his wife and children and all that he had suffered and recited the following verses:

The med’cine of my heart’s with you: indeed, my heart doth fail
And from my lids’ hill-foot run tears, like rillets to the vale.
Yearning and dole and severance, desire and strangerhood, And
distance from my native land against me do prevail.
Nought but a lover for her loss he loves distraught am I;
Calamities have smitten me and made my spirit quail.
And if my love on me have brought affliction, where is he, The
noble, whom vicissitudes affect not nor assail?

Hardly had he made an end of his verses, when out came the Sheikh Abourruweish, black and clad in black raiment, and he knew him by the description that Abdulcuddous had given him. So he threw himself at his feet and rubbed his cheeks on them and taking his skirt, laid it on his head and wept before him. Quoth the old man, ‘What wantest thou, O my son?’ Whereupon he put out his hand to him with the letter, and he took it and re- entered the cavern, without making him any answer. Hassan remained in his place other five days, whilst fear and concern redoubled on him and restlessness clave fast to him, and he abode weeping and bemoaning himself for the anguish of estrangement and much watching. And he recited the following verses:

Glory to Him who rules the skies! The lover in affliction lies.
Who hath not tasted passion's food Knows not what misery can devise.
Rivers of blood, if I restrained My tears, would ripple from mine eyes.
How many a friend is hard of heart And us with sore affliction tries!
An she with me would but keep faith, I'd call a truce with tears and sighs.
I'm overthrown and ruin's eye Hath smitten me on woful wise.
Beasts weep to see my dreariment And everything in air that flies.

He ceased not to weep till dawn of the sixth day, when Abourruweish came forth to him, clad in white raiment, and beckoned to him to enter. So he went in, rejoicing and assured of the accomplishment of his desire, and the old man took him by the hand and leading him into the cavern, fared on with him half a day's journey, till they came to a vaulted gateway with a door of steel. Abourruweish opened the door and they entered a vestibule vaulted with onyx stones, inlaid with arabesques of gold, which led them to a great hall, wide and lined with marble. In its midst was a garden containing all manner trees and flowers and fruits, with birds warbling on the branches and singing the praises of God, the Almighty King; and there were four estrades, each facing other, and in each estrade a fountain, at whose corners stood lions of red gold, spouting water from their mouths into the basin. On each estrade stood a chair, whereon sat an elder, with great store of books before him and censers of gold, containing fire and perfumes, and before each elder were students, who read the books to him.

When the two entered, the elders rose and did them honour; whereupon Abourruweish signed to them to dismiss their scholars and they did so. Then the four arose and seating themselves before Abourruweish, asked him of Hassan's case, and he said to the latter, 'Tell the company thy story and all that hath betided thee, first and last.' So Hassan wept sore and related to them his adventures [up to the time when Behram sewed him in the camel's skin and caused the rocs carry him up to the mountain- top]; whereupon all the sheikhs cried out and said, 'Is this indeed he whom the Magian caused ascend the Mountain of Clouds by means of the rocs, sewn up in the skin of a camel?' And he said, 'Yes.' So they turned to the Sheikh Abourruweish and said to him, 'O our sheikh, Behram contrived his ascent to the top of the mountain; but how did he descend thence and what wonders saw he there?' And Abourruweish said, 'O Hassan, tell them how thou camest down and what thou sawest of marvels.'

So he told them all that had befallen him, first and last, and how he had gotten the Magian into his power and slain him and delivered the youth from him and sent him back to his own country and how he had taken the king's daughter of the Jinn and married her and she had borne him two children, yet had played him false and taken them and flown away, and related to them all the perils and hardships he had undergone; whereat they all marvelled and said to Abourruweish, 'O elder of elders, by Allah, this youth is to be pitied! But belike thou wilt aid him to regain his wife and children.' 'O my brothers,' answered he, 'this is a grave and perilous matter; and never saw I any loathe life but this youth. You know that the Wac Islands are hard of access and that none may come to them but at the peril of his life; and ye know also the strength of their people and their guards. Moreover, I have sworn an oath not to tread their soil nor transgress against them in aught: so how shall this man win to the daughter of the Great King and who can avail to bring him to her or help him in this matter?'

'O elder of elders,' replied the others, 'verily this man is consumed with desire and he hath adventured himself to bring thee thy brother Abdulcuddous's letter; wherefore it behoves thee to help him.' And Hassan arose and kissed Abourruweish's feet and raising his skirt, laid it on his head, weeping and saying, 'I beseech thee, by

Allah, to reunite me with my wife and children, though it cost me my life and soul!' The four elders all wept for his weeping and said to Abourruweish, 'Deal kindly with this poor fellow for the sake of thy brother Abdulcuddous and profit by this occasion to earn the reward of [God for] him.' Quoth he, 'This unhappy youth knoweth not what he undertaketh; but we will help him after the measure of our power.' When Hassan heard the sheikh's words, he rejoiced and kissed the hands of the five elders, one after another, imploring their aid.

Then Abourruweish took inkhorn and paper and wrote a letter, which he sealed and gave to Hassan, together with a leathern pouch, containing perfumes and flint and steel, and said to him, 'Take care of this pouch, and when thou fallest into any strait, burn a little of the perfumes therein and name me, whereupon I will be with thee presently and deliver thee from thy stress.' Moreover, he bade one of those present fetch him an Afrit of the Flying Jinn; and he did so forthright; whereupon quoth Abourruweish to the genie, 'What is thy name?' 'Thy slave is [called] Dehnesh ben Fectesh,' replied the Afrit. And the sheikh said, 'Draw near to me.' So Dehnesh drew near to him and he put his mouth to his ear and said somewhat to him, whereat the Afrit shook his head and answered, 'I accept, O sheikh of sheikhs.'

Then said Abourruweish to Hassan, 'Arise, O my son, mount the shoulders of this Afrit, Dehnesh the Flyer; but, when he soareth with thee to heaven and thou hearest the angels glorifying God in the air, have a care lest thou do the like; else wilt thou perish and he also.' 'I will not say a word,' replied he, and the old man continued: 'O Hassan, to-morrow at peep of day he will set thee down in a land of pure white, like unto camphor, whereupon do thou fare on ten days by thyself, till thou come to the gate of a city. Enter and enquire for the king of the city; and when thou comest to his presence, salute him and kiss his hand: then give him this letter and heed well that which he shall counsel thee.' 'I hear and obey,' replied Hassan and mounted the Afrit's shoulders, whilst the elders rose and offered up prayers for him and commended him to Dehnesh's care.

Then the Afrit soared with him to the very confines of the sky, till he heard the angels glorifying God in heaven, and flew on with him a day and a night, till he set him down, at dawn of the next day, in a land, white as camphor, and went his way, leaving him there. When Hassan found himself alone in the land aforesaid, he fared on day and night for ten days, till he came to the gate of the city in question and entering, enquired for the king. They directed him to him and told him that his name was Hessoun, King of the Land of Camphor, and that he had troops and soldiers, enough to fill the earth, in its length and breadth. So he sought an audience of him and being admitted to his presence, found him a mighty king and kissed the earth before him. Quoth the king, ‘What is thine occasion?’ Whereupon Hassan kissed the letter and gave it to him. The king read it and shook his head, then said to one of his officers, ‘Take this youth and lodge him in the guest-house.’ So he took him and lodged him in the guest-house, where he abode three days, eating and drinking and seeing none but the servant who waited on him and who entertained him with discourse and cheered him with his company, questioning him of his case and how he came thither; whereupon he told him his whole story.

On the fourth day, his attendant carried him before the king, who saith to him, ‘O Hassan, the sheikh of sheikhs adviseth me that thou comest to me, seeking to enter the Wac Islands. O my son, I would send thee thither forthright, but that by the way are many perils and thirsty deserts, full of terrors; but have patience and all will be Deli, for needs must I make shift to bring thee to thy desire, so it please God the Most High. Know, O my son, that here is a great army, equipped with arms and horses and gear, who desire to enter the Wac Islands and cannot avail thereto. But, for the sake of the Sheikh Abourruweish, I may not send thee back to him unfulfilled of thy desire. There will presently come to us ships from the Wac Islands, and I will set thee on board the first that arrives and give thee in charge to the sailors, so they may take care of thee and carry thee to the islands. If any question thee of thy case and condition, answer him, “I am kinsman to King Hessoun, lord of the Land of Camphor;” and when the ship makes fast to the shore of the Wac Islands and the master bids thee land, do thou land.

When thou comest ashore, thou wilt see a multitude of settles all about the beach, of which do thou choose one and crouch under it and stir not. As soon as it is dark night, thou wilt see an army of women appear and flock about the merchandise [landed from the ship], and one of them will sit down on the settle, under which thou hast hidden thyself, whereupon do thou put forth thy hand to her and take hold of her and implore her protection. If she accord it thee, thou wilt accomplish thy desire and win to thy wife and children; but, if she refuse thee, make thy moan for thyself and give up all hope of life, for thou art a dead man. For know, O my son, that thou adventurest thy life and except the Lord of Heaven had succoured thee, thou hadst not won hither. This is all I can do for thee, and peace be on thee!' When Hassan heard the king's words, he wept till he swooned away, and when he came to himself, he recited the following verses:

A term's decreed to me, which I must needs fulfil, And when its days are spent, I die, will I or nill.
Though lions in their woods beset me, whilst a breath Is left me, I shall get the better of them still.

Then he kissed the earth before the king and said to him, 'O mighty king, how many days remain till the coming of the ships?' 'In a month's time,' answered Hessoun, 'they will come and will tarry here other two months, to sell their cargo, after which they will return to their own country: so thou must not look to set out save after three whole months.' Then he bade him return to the guest-house and commanded to supply him with all that he needed of meat and drink and raiment fit for kings. Hassan abode there a month, at the end of which time the ships arrived and the king and the merchants went forth to them, taking Hassan with them. Amongst them he saw a ship, with much people therein, like the pebbles [of the beach] for number; none knew their tale save He who created them. She was anchored in mid-harbour and had small boats, which transported her lading to the shore.

Hassan abode till the crew had carried all the goods ashore and sold and bought and there wanted but three days of the day of departure; whereupon the king sent for him and equipped him with all that he required and gave him great gifts: after which he summoned the captain of the great ship and said to him, 'Take this youth with thee in the ship, so none may know of him but thou, and carry him to the Wac Islands and leave him there; and tell none of him.' And the captain said, 'I hear and obey.' Then said the king to Hassan, 'Look thou tell none of those who are with thee in the ships thine errand nor discover to them aught of thy case; else thou art a lost man.' He answered, 'I hear and obey,' and took leave of the king, after he had wished him long life and victory over his enemies and enviers; wherefore the king thanked him and wished him safety and the accomplishment of his desire. Then he committed him to the captain, who laid him in a chest and taking boat therewith, carried him aboard, whilst the folk were busy transporting the goods and doubted not but the chest contained somewhat of merchandise.

After this, the ships set sail and fared on without ceasing ten days, and on the eleventh day they reached land. So the captain set Hassan ashore and there he saw settles without number, none knew their count save God, even as the king had told him. He went on, till he came to one that had no fellow and hid under it till nightfall, when there came up a great host of women on foot, as they were a swarm of locusts, armed cap-a-pie in hauberks and strait-knit coats of mail and bearing drawn swords in their hands, who, seeing the merchandise landed from the ships, busied themselves therewith.

Presently they sat down, to rest themselves, and one of them seated herself on the settle under which Hassan was hidden: whereupon he took hold of the hem of her skirt and laid it on his head and throwing himself before her, fell to kissing her hands and feet and weeping. 'Harkye, sirrah!' said she. 'Arise and stand up, ere any see thee and slay thee.' So he came forth and standing up, kissed her hands and wept and said to her, 'O my lady, I cast myself on thy protection! Have ruth on one who is parted from his people and wife and children, one who hath haste to rejoin them and adventureth his life and soul [for their sake!]. Take pity on me and be assured that Paradise will be thy reward; or, if thou wilt not receive me, I beseech thee, by God the Great, the Concealer, to conceal my case!' The merchants, seeing him talking with her, stared at him; and she, seeing his humility and hearing his speech, was moved to compassion for him; her heart inclined to him and she knew that he had not ventured himself and come to that place, save for a grave matter. So she said to him, ‘O my son, take heart and be of good courage and return to thy hiding-place till the coming night, and God shall do as He will.’

Then she took leave of him and he crept under the settle as before, whilst the troops lighted flambeaux compounded of aloes-wood and crude ambergris and passed the night in sport and delight till the morning. At day- break, the boats returned to the shore and the merchants busied themselves with buying and selling and the transport of the goods and gear till nightfall, whilst Hassan abode hidden beneath the settle, tearful-eyed and mournful- hearted, knowing not what was decreed to him in the secret purpose of God. As he was thus, the woman with whom he had taken refuge came up to him and giving him a shirt of mail and a helmet and spear and sword and a gilded girdle, bade him don them and seat himself on the settle and let none know his case, after which she left him, for fear of the troops. So he arose and donned the coat of mail and helmet and clasped the girdle about his middle. Then he slung the sword over his shoulder and taking the spear in his hand, sat down on the settle, whilst his tongue forgot not to name God the Most High and call on Him for protection.

Presently, there appeared cressets and flambeaux and lanterns and up came the army of women. So he arose and mingling with them, became as one of them. A little before daybreak, they set out. and Hassan with them, and fared on till they came to their encampment, where they dispersed, each to her tent, and Hassan followed his protectress into hers. When she entered, she threw down her arms and put off her hauberk and veil. So Hassan did the like and looking at her, saw her to be a grizzled old woman, blue-eyed and big-nosed, a calamity of calamities. Indeed, she was the foulest of all created things, with pock-marked face and bald eyebrows, gap- toothed and chapfallen, with hoary hair, running nose and slavering mouth; even as saith of the like of her the poet:

Within the corners of her face afflictions nine do dwell; Each, when she lays her veil aside, discovers very hell.
A hideous face and favour foul, as a pig’s snout it were; A voiding-place thou’dst deem it nor deem otherwise than well.

And indeed she was like a pied snake or a bald she-wolf. When she looked at Hassan, she marvelled and said, ‘How won this man to these lands and in which of the ships was he and how came he hither in safety?’ And she fell to questioning him of his case and wondering at his coming, whereupon he fell at her feet and rubbed his face on them and wept till he swooned away ; and when he came to himself he recited the following verses:

When will the days vouchsafe reunion to us twain And our long-severed loves reknit into one skein?
When shall I win of them the long-desired delight, Reproach that hath an end and love that doth refrain?
If Nile ran like my tears, ’twould leave no barren place Unwatered in the world nor any desert plain;
Egypt and Syria all and Irak ’twould o’erflow and o’er the Heju pour its fertilizing rain:
And this, my love, because of thine abandonment. Be kind, then, and vouchsafe me union again.

Then he took the old woman’s skirt and laid it on his head and fell to weeping and craving her protection. When she saw his passion and transport and anguish and distress, her heart inclined to him and she promised him her protection, saying, ‘Have no fear.’ Then she questioned him of his case and he told her the manner of his coming thither, whereat she wondered and said, ‘This that hath betided thee, methinks, never betided any but thyself and except thou hadst been vouchsafed the [especial] protection of God the Most High, thou hadst not been saved: but now, O my son, take comfort and be of good courage; thou hast nothing more to fear, for indeed thou hast reached thy goal and attained thy desire, if it please God the Most High!’

Thereat Hassan rejoiced with an exceeding joy and she sent to summon the captains of the army to her presence, and it was the last day of the month. So they presented themselves and the old woman said to them, ‘Go out and proclaim to the troops that they come forth, all, to-morrow at daybreak and let none tarry behind, on pain of death.’ ‘We hear and obey,’ answered they and going forth, made proclamation as she bade them, after which they returned and told her of this; wherefore Hassan knew that she was the commander of the army and the chief in authority over them; and she was called Shewahi, hight Mother of calamities. She ceased not to command and forbid and Hassan put not off his arms from his body that day.

When the day broke, all the troops came forth from their places, but the old woman came not forth with them, and as soon as they were gone and the camp was clear of them, she said to Hassan, 'Draw near unto me, O my son.' So he drew near unto her and stood before her. Quoth she, 'Why hast thou adventured thyself hither and how came thy soul to consent to its own destruction? Tell me the truth and fear not, for thou hast my plighted word and I am moved to compassion for thy case and pity thee and have taken thee under my protection. So, if thou tell me the truth, I will help thee to accomplish thy desire, though it involve the loss of souls and the destruction of bodies; and since thou hast won to me, no hurt shall betide thee from me, nor will I suffer any to come at thee with harm of all that be in the Wac Islands.' So he related to her his story from first to last, acquainting her with the matter of his wife and of the birds, how he had taken her from amongst the ten and married her and abode with her, till she had borne him two sons, and how she had taken her children and flown away with them, whenas she knew the way to the feather-dress: brief, he concealed from her no whit of his case.

When Shewahi heard his relation, she shook her head and said to him, 'Glory be to God who hath brought thee hither in safety and made thee to happen upon me! For, hadst thou lighted on any but me, thou hadst lost thy life, without attaining thy desire: but the truth of thine intent and thy love and the excess of thy longing for thy wife and children, these it was that have brought thee to the attainment of thy wish. Didst thou not love her to distraction, thou hadst not thus adventured thyself, and praised be God for thy safety! Wherefore it behoves us to further thy desire and help thee to thy quest, so thou mayst presently attain that thou meekest, if it be the will of God the Most High. But know, O my son, that thy wife is not here, but in the seventh of the Wac Islands, and between us and it is seven months' journey, night and day. From here we go to an island called the Land of Birds, wherein, for the loud clamour of the birds and the flapping of their wings, one cannot hear other speak.

Therein we journey, night and day, eleven days, after which we come to another land, called the Land of Wild Beasts, where, for the roaring of the lions and howling of wolves and the screaming of hyenas and other beasts of prey, we shall hear nothing; and therein we travel twenty days' journey. Then we come to a third country, called the Land of Jinn, where, for the greatness of the crying of the Jinn and the noise of their groaning and the flaming of fires and the flight of sparks and smoke from their mouths and their arrogance in blocking up the road before us, our ears will be deafened and our eyes blinded, so that we shall neither hear nor see, nor dare any look behind him, or he perishes: but there the horseman bows his head on his saddle-bow and raises it not for three days. After this, we come to a vast mountain and a running river, bordering on the Wac Islands, which are seven in number and the extent whereof is a whole year's journey for a diligent horseman. And thou must know, O my son, that the ruler over us is a woman of these islands and that these troops are all virgin girls.

On the bank of the river aforesaid is another mountain, called Wac, and it is thus named by reason of a tree [which grows there and] which bears fruits like human heads. When the sun rises on them, the heads cry out all, saying, "Wac! Wac! Glory be to the Creating King!" And when we hear their crying, we know that the sun is risen. In like manner, at sundown, the heads set up the same cry, and so we know that the sun hath set. No man may abide with us or win to us or tread our earth. Moreover, betwixt us and the abiding-place of the queen who ruleth over us is a month's journey from this shore, all the people whereof are under her hand, as are also the tribes of the Jinn, Marids and Satans and warlocks, whose number none knoweth save He who created them. Wherefore, if thou be afraid, I will send with thee one who will bring thee to the coast and embark thee on board a ship that shall carry thee to thine own country. But if thou be content to abide with us, I will not forbid thee and thou shalt be with me [as thou wert] in mine eye, till thou accomplish thy desire, so it please God the Most High.'

'O my lady,' answered Hassan, 'I will never leave thee till I foregather with my wife or lose my life!' 'This is a light matter,' rejoined she; ‘be of good heart, for thou shalt come to thy desire, God willing; and needs must I let the queen know of thee, that she may help thee to attain thine object.’ Hassan blessed her and kissed her head and hands, thanking her for her exceeding kindness. Then he set out with her, pondering the issue of his case and the horrors of his strangerhold; wherefore he fell a-weeping and groaning and recited the following verses:

From out my loved one’s land a zephyr blows; for stress Of love thou seest me dazed and passion’s sheer excess.
The night of love-delight is as a brilliant moon And separation’s day a sombre night no less.
The parting from the loved a heavy sorrow is And eke the taking leave of friends a sore distress.
There’s not a faithful friend ‘mongst men ; I’ll not complain To any but herself of her unrighteousness.
I cannot be consoled for you; no censor base To solace can enforce my heart itself address.
O thou unique in charms, my love’s unique: O thou That failst of match, my heart fails also for duress.
Whoso pretends to love of thee and feareth blame, Blameworthy sure is he and merits not success.

Then the old woman bade beat the drums for departure and the army set out. Hassan accompanied her, drowned in the sea of solicitude and reciting verses, whilst she strove to comfort him and exhorted him to patience; but he awoke not [from his melancholy] and paid no heed to her exhortations. They fared on thus till they came to the Land of Birds, and when they entered it, it seemed to Hassan as if the world were overturned, for the exceeding clamor. His head ached and his mind was dazed, his eyes were blinded and his ears deaved, and he feared with an exceeding fear and looked for nothing but death, saying in himself, ‘If this be the Land of Birds, how will the Land of Beasts be?’ But, when Shewahi saw him in this plight, she laughed at him, saying, ‘O my son, if this be thy case in the first island, how will it fare with thee, when thou comest to the others?’

So he humbled himself in prayer to God, beseeching Him to succour him against that wherewithal He had afflicted him and bring him to his wishes; and they ceased not going till they passed out of the Land of Birds and traversing the Land of Beasts, came to the Land of Jinn, which when Hassan saw, he was sore affrighted and repented him of having entered it with them. But he sought aid of God the Most High and fared on with them, till they were quit of the Land of Jinn and came to the river, on whose banks they halted and pitched their tents at the foot of a vast and lofty mountain. Then they rested and ate and drank and slept in security, for they were come to their own country.

On the morrow the old woman set Hassan a settle of alabaster, inlaid with pearls and jewels and nuggets of red gold, by the river-side, and he sat down thereon, having first bound his face with a chinband, that discovered nought of him but his eyes. Then she let proclaim among the troops that they should all assemble before her tent and put off their clothes and go down into the stream and wash; and this she did to the intent that she might show him all the girls, so haply his wife should be amongst them and he know her. So the whole army assembled before her and putting off their clothes, went down into the stream, [company after company;] and Hassan watched them washing and frolicking and making merry, whilst they took no heed of him, deeming him to be of the daughters of the kings. When he beheld them stripped of their clothes, his yard rose on end, for that he saw what was between their thighs, and that of all kinds, soft and domed, plump and cushioned, large-lipped, perfect, redundant and ample and their faces were as moons and their hair as night upon day, for that they were of the daughters of the kings.

When they were clean, they came up out of the water, naked, as the moon on the night of her full, and the old woman questioned Hassan of them, company by company, if his wife were among them; but, as often as she asked him, he made answer, ‘She is not among these, O my lady.’ Last of all, there came up a damsel, attended by half a score slave-girls and thirty waiting-women, all high-bosomed maids. They all put of their clothes and went down into the river, where the damsel fell to carrying it with a high hand over her women, throwing them down and ducking them. Presently, she came up out of the water and sat down and they brought her napkins of silk, embroidered with gold, with which she dried herself Then they brought her clothes and jewels and ornaments of the handiwork of the Jinn, and she donned them and rose and walked among the troops, she and her maids. When Hassan saw her, his heart fluttered and he said, ‘Verily this girl is the likest of all folk to the bird I saw in the lake atop of the palace of my sisters the princesses, and she lorded it over her attendants even as doth this one.’ ‘O Hassan,’ said the old woman, ‘is this thy wife?’ ‘No, by thy life, O my lady,’ replied he, ‘this is not my wife, nor ever in my life have I set eyes on her; neither among all the girls I have seen in these islands is there the like of my wife nor her match for beauty and grace and symmetry!’

Then said Shewahi, ‘Describe her to me and acquaint me with all her attributes, that I may have her in my mind; for I know every girl in the islands, being commander of the army of maids and governor over them; wherefore, if thou describe her to me, I shall know her and will contrive for thee to take her.’ Quoth he, ‘My wife is of surpassing beauty, dulcet of speech and sweet of fashion, as she were a bending branch. She hath a fair face, a slender shape, smooth cheeks, high breasts, great liquid black eyes, white teeth and soft red lips like coral. On her right cheek is a mole and on her belly, under her navel, is a sign; her face shines as the round of the moon, her waist is slight, her buttocks heavy, and the water of her mouth healeth the sick, as it were Kauther or Selsebil.’ ‘Give me some plainer account of her,’ said the old woman, ‘may God increase thee of passion for her!’ Quoth he, ‘My wife hath a lovely face, oval cheeks like twin roses, long neck and melting black eyes, mouth like a seal of carnelian and flashing teeth, that stand one in stead of cup and ewer. She is cast in the mould of pleasantness and between her thighs is the throne of the Khalifate, there is no such sanctuary among the holy places; as saith in its praise the poet:

The letters of that which hath made Me distraught are renowned among men: They are four, multiplied into five, Thereafter and six into ten.’

Then wept Hassan and chanted the following couplet:

O heart, if the beloved should play thee false in aught, Renounce her not, I rede thee, nor be thy love forgot.
Be patient; thou shalt bury thine enemies; God wot, He who makes use of patience, it disappoint him not.

And this also:

If all thy days thou wouldst be safe from trouble and dismay, Despair thou never neither be discouraged nor [too] gay.
Be patient and rejoice thou not nor mourn; but, if by day Thou art afflicted, “Have we not expanded......?” look thou say.

Thereupon the old woman bowed her head awhile, then, rising it, said, ‘Glory be to God, the Mighty of Estate! Indeed I am afflicted with thee, O Hassan! Would I had never known thee! This woman, whom thou describers to me as thy very wife, I know by thy description to be none other than the eldest daughter of the Supreme King, she who ruleth over all the Wac Islands. So open thine eyes and consider thine affair; and if thou be asleep, awake; for, if this woman be indeed thy wife, it is impossible for thee ever to win to her, and though thou wonnest to her, yet couldst thou not avail to her possession, since the distance between thee and her is as that between earth and heaven. Wherefore, O my son, return presently and cast not thyself into destruction and me with thee; for meseemeth thou hast no lot in her; so return whence thou camest, lest our lives be lost.’ And she feared for herself and for him.

When he heard her words, he wept till he swooned away and she sprinkled water on his face, till he came to himself when he continued to weep, so that he wet his clothes with his tears, for the much trouble and chagrin that betided him by reason of her words. And indeed he despaired of life and said to the old woman, ‘O my lady, and how shall I turn back, after having won hither? Verily, I thought not thou wouldst forsake me nor fail of the accomplishment of my desire, especially as thou art the chief of the army of girls.’ ‘O my son,’ answered Shewahi, ‘I doubted not but thy wife was a maid of the maids, and had I known that she was the king’s daughter, I had not suffered thee to come hither nor had I shown thee [the girls], for all the love I bear thee. But now, O my son, thou hast seen all the girls naked; so tell me which of them pleaseth thee and I will give her to thee, in lieu of thy wife, and do thou put it that thy wife and children are dead and take her and return to thine own country in safety, ere thou fall into the king's hand and I have no means of delivering thee. I conjure thee, by Allah, hearken to me. Choose thyself one of these damsels, in the stead of yonder woman and return presently to thy country in safety and cause me not quaff the cup of thine anguish. For, by Allah, thou hast cast thyself into sore affliction and grievous peril, wherefrom none may avail to deliver thee!' But Hassan bowed him head and wept sore and recited these verses:

'Reproach me not,' to those who censured me I said; 'For sure my lids for tears and nought but tears were made."
They fill my eyes and thence o'erflow my cheeks for those I cherish have my love with cruelty repaid.
My body's wasted sore, yet I my madness love: Leave me to love and cease my passion to upbraid.
Beloved mine, desire is sore on me for you Will ye not pity one for love of you decayed?
Ye swore me constancy and truth, yet cruelly Forsook me and our love and friendship thus betrayed.
When on the parting day ye went, abjection's cup, For rigour and despite, unto my lips was laid.
Wherefore my heart, dissolve with longing for their sight And, O mine eyes, rain tears, unsparing and unstayed!

Then he wept till he swooned away and the old woman sprinkled water on him till he revived, when she said to him, 'O my son, I have no shift left; for, if I carry thee to the city, thy life is lost and mine also; for, when the queen cometh to know of this, she will blame me for admitting thee into her islands, to which none of the sons of Adam hath access, and will slay me for bringing thee with me and for suffering thee to look upon these virgins, whom no male hath touched, neither hath husband come near them.' And Hassan swore that he had never looked on them with an evil eye. 'O my son,' continued she, 'hearken to me and return to thy country and I will give thee a girl of the best of them, beside wealth and measures and things of price, such as shall suffice thee for all the women in the world. Give ear, then, to my words and return presently and imperil not thyself; indeed, I give thee good counsel.' But he wept and rubbed his cheeks against her feet, saying, 'O my lady and mistress and solace of mine eyes, how can I turn back without the sight of those I desire, now that I have made my way hither and come near to the abode of the beloved, hoping presently for meetings so haply there may be for me a portion in reunion?' And he recited the following verses:

Be kind, O kings of graces to one who's thrall to eyes And eyelids that have ta'en Chosroës' realm to prize.
Ye overpass the scent of musk in fragrancy And eke your beauty bright the full-blown rose outvies.
A zephyr of delight breathes round your camping-place And scattering perfume thence, abroad the East wind hies.
O censor, cease to blame and counsel me; indeed, Thou profferest advice on right unwelcome wise.
What ails thee to upbraid my passion, seeing thou No knowledge hast thereof nor whence it doth arise?
Eyes languorous and soft have captivated me And cast me into love, perforce and by surprise.
I pour forth tears galore what while I string my rhymes; Ye are the theme whereon I prose and poetise.
Red cheeks have all consumed my entrails, and my heart Burns, as on blazing coals, with fire that never dies.
If this my speech I leave, tell me, with what discourse Shall I my breast dilate and stay my tears and sighs?
I'm weak of my life for passion for the fair; But God belike shall bring relief, with Whom it lies.

Then the old woman was moved to pity for him and coming up to him, comforted him, saying, 'Be of good heart and cheerful eye and put away trouble from thy thought, for, by Allah, I will venture myself with thee, till thou attain thy desire or death overtake me!'

With this, Hassan's heart was comforted and his bosom dilated and he sat talking with the old woman till the end of the day, when the girls dispersed, some entering their mansions in the city and others passing the night in the tents.

Then the old woman carried him into the city and lodged him in a place apart, lest any should come to know of him and tell the queen of him and she should kill him and her who had brought him thither. Moreover, she served him herself and strove to put him in fear of the mischief of the Supreme King, his wife's father; whilst he wept before her and said, 'O my lady, I choose death for myself and loathe the world, if I foregather not with my wife and children: I have set my life on the venture and will either attain my wish or die.' So the old woman fell to pondering the means of bringing him and his wife together and casting about how to do in this poor wretch's case, who had cast himself into destruction and would not be diverted from his purpose by fear or aught else; for, indeed, he recked not of his life and the byword saith, 'A man in love hearkeneth not to the speech of him who is heart-free.'

Now the name of the queen of the island in which they were was Nour el Huda, eldest daughter of the Supreme King, ruler over the islands and all the lands of Wac, and she had six virgin sisters, abiding with their father, whose court was in the chief city of the land of Wac. The old woman had a claim on her for favour, for that she had reared all the king's daughters and had authority over them all and was high in honour and consideration with them and with the king. So, when she saw Hassan on fire with yearning after his wife and children, she betook herself to the palace and going in to the queen, kissed the earth before her; whereupon Nour el Huda rose to her and embracing her, seated her by her side and asked her of her journey. 'By Allah, O my lady,' answered she, 'it was a blessed journey and I have brought thee a present, which I will lay before thee. Moreover, O my daughter, O queen of the age and the time, I have an occasion to thee and I would fain discover it to thee, that thou mayst help me to accomplish it, and but for my confidence that thou wilt not gainsay me therein, I would not expose it to thee.' 'And what is thine occasion?' asked the queen. 'Expound it to me, and I will accomplish it to thee, for I and my kingdom and troops are all at thy commandment and disposition.'

Therewithal the old woman shook, as the reed shakes on a day of stormy wind, and saying in herself, 'O Protector, protect me from the queen's mischief!' fell down before her and acquainted her with Hassan's case, saying, 'O my lady, a man who had hidden himself under my settle on the sea-shore, besought me of protection; so I took him under my safeguard and carried him with me among the army of women, armed and accoutred so that none might know him, and brought him into the city; and indeed I have striven to fear him with thy mischief, giving him to know of thy prowess and power; but, as often as I threaten him, he weeps and recites verses and says, "Needs must I regain my wife and children or die, and I will not return to my country without them." And indeed he hath adventured himself and won to the Islands of Wac, and never in my life saw I mortal stouter of heart than he or doughtier of courage, save that passion hath gotten the mastery of him to the utmost.'

When Nour el Huda heard this, she was exceeding wroth with her and bowed her head awhile. Then, raising it, she looked at Shewahi and said to her, 'O ill-omened old woman, art thou come to such a pass of lewdness that thou carriest males with thee into the Wac Islands and bringest them in to me, unfearing of my danger? Who hath foregone thee with this fashion, that thou shouldst do thus? By the head of the king, but for thy claim on me for fosterage and service, I would forthwith put both him and thee to the foulest of deaths, that travellers might take warning by thee, O accursed woman, lest any other do the like of this outrageous deed of thine, whereunto none hath dared hitherto! But go and bring him hither forthright, that I may see him; or I will strike off thy head, O accursed one.'

So the old woman went out from her, confounded, knowing not whither she went and saying, 'All this calamity hath God caused betide me from this queen because of Hassan!' and going in to the latter, said to him, 'Come speak with the queen, O thou whose last hour is at hand!' So he rose and went with her, whilst his tongue ceased not to call upon God the Most High and say, 'O my God, be gracious to me in Thy judgments and deliver me from [this] Thine affliction!' And Shewahi charged him by the way how he should speak with the queen. When he stood before Nour el Huda, he found her veiled with the chinband; so he kissed the earth before her and saluted her, reciting the following verses:

May God thy glory cause in gladness to endure And that which unto thee He gives to thee secure!
In glory and in power th' Almighty thee increase And with His aid against thine enemies ensure!

Then Nour el Huda bade the old woman question him before her, that she might hear his answers: so she said to him, 'The queen returns thy greeting and asks thee what is thy name and that of thy country, and what are the names of thy wife and children, on whose account thou art come hither?' 'O queen of the age and the day and peerless jewel of the epoch and the time,' answered he, (and indeed he had made firm his heart and providence aided him,) 'my name is Hassan, the fulfilled of sorrow, and my native city is Bassora. I know not the name of my wife, but my children's names are Mensour and Nasir.'

When the queen heard his reply, she bespoke him herself and said, 'And whence took she her children?' 'O queen,' answered he, 'she took them from the city of Baghdad and the palace of the Khalifate.' Quoth Nour el Huda, 'And did she say nought to thee, whenas she flew away?' And he replied, 'Yes; she said to my mother, "When thy son cometh and the days of separation are long upon him and he craveth meeting with me and reunion and the winds of love and longing agitate him, let him come to me in the Islands of Wac."' Whereupon the queen shook her head and said to him, 'Except she desired thee and yearned for reunion with thee, she had not said this to thy mother, neither had she bidden thee to her country nor acquainted thee with her abiding-place.' 'O mistress of kings and asylum of rich and poor,' rejoined Hassan, 'I have told thee what happened and have concealed nought thereof, and I appeal to God and to thee for succour; wherefore oppress me not, but have compassion on me and earn recompense and requital for me [from God] by aiding me to regain my wife and children. Grant me my urgent need and solace mine eyes with my children and help me to the sight of them.' Then he wept and lamented and recited the following verses:

What while the turtle-dove complains, I'll praise thee with my might, Albeit I should fail of that which is thy due and right.
For, lo, I wallowed not in joys of old, but now I find Thee to have been the cause and spring of all my past delight.

The queen shook her head and bowed it in thought a great while; then, raising it, she said to Hassan (and indeed she was wroth), 'I have compassion on thee and am resolved to show thee all the girls in the city and in the provinces of my island; and if thou know thy wife, I will deliver her to thee; but, if thou know her not and know not her place, I will put thee to death and crucify thee over the old woman's door.' 'I accept this from thee, O queen of the age,' answered Hassan, 'and am content to submit to this thy condition. There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!' And he recited the following verses:

Ye've roused my heart to love and yet unmoved yourselves remain; Ye've doomed my wounded lids to wake and sleep, whilst I complain.
Ye swore to me that ye would keep your plighted faith with me; But, when my heart was yours, you broke the oath that you had ta'en.
I loved you as a child, indeed, unknowing what love was; Wherefore 'twere surely foul unright, if I of you be slain.
Fear ye not God and will ye slay a lover who anights Watches the stars, whilst all but he are bound in slumber's chain?
When I am dead, I prithee write, 'fore Allah, on my tomb, 'A slave of passion lieth here, who died of love in vain.'
It may be one, whom love like me hath smitten, passing by, Shall see my tomb and to salute and pity me be fain.

Then Queen Nour el Huda commanded that all the girls in the city should come up to the palace and pass in review before Hassan and bade Shewahi go down and bring them up herself. So all the maidens in the city presented themselves before the queen, who caused them go in to Hassan, hundred by hundred, till there was no girl left in the place, but she had shown her to him; but he saw not his wife amongst them. Then said she to him, ‘Seest thou her amongst these?’ And he answered, saying, ‘By thy life, O queen, she is not amongst them.’

With this she was sore enraged against him and said to the old woman, ‘Go in and bring out all who are in the palace and show them to him.’ So she showed him all the girls in the palace, but he saw not his wife among them and said to the queen, ‘As thy head liveth, O queen, she is not among these.’ Whereat the queen was wroth and cried out to those about her, saying, ‘Take him and drag him along, face to ground, and cut off his head, lest any adventure himself after him and intrude upon us in our country and tread the soil of our islands and spy out our estate.’ So they threw him down on his face and covering his eyes with his skirt, stood at his head with drawn swords, awaiting permission [to strike].

But Shewahi came forward and kissing the earth before the queen, took her skirt and laid it on her head, saying, ‘O queen, by the claim I have on thee for fosterage, be not hasty with him, more by token of thy knowledge that this poor wretch is a stranger, who hath adventured himself and suffered perils and hardships, such as none ever suffered before him, and God preserved him from death, for that his life was ordained to be long. He heard of thy justice and entered thy city and sanctuary; wherefore, if thou put him to death, the report will be noised abroad of thee, by means of the travellers, that thou hatest strangers and slayest them. In any case he is at thy mercy and the slain of thy sword, if his wife be not found in thy dominions; and whensoever thou desirest his presence, I can bring him back to thee. And indeed I took him not under my protection but of my confidence in thy generosity, through my claim on thee for fosterage, so that I engaged to him that thou wouldst bring him to his desire, of my knowledge of thy justice and kindness of heart. But for this, I had not brought him into thy kingdom; for I said to myself, “The queen will take pleasure in looking upon him and hearing his verses and his sweet and eloquent discoursed like strung pearls.” Moreover, he hath entered our land and eaten of our victual; wherefore it behoved us to give him his due, the more that I promised to bring him in company with thee; and thou knowest that parting is grievous and separation slaughter, especially separation from children. Now he hath seen all our women, save only thyself; so do thou show him thy face.'

The queen smiled and said, 'How can he be my husband and have had children by me, that I should show him my face?' Then she made them bring Hassan before her and unveiled her face, which when he saw, he gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon. The old woman ceased not to tend him, till he came to himself and recited the following verses:

O zephyr from the land of Irak that dost stray and blowest to the land of those 'Wac! Wac!' that say,
Carry my loved ones news of me and say I die Of passion's bitter food, that's sour of savour aye.
O darlings of my love, show favour and relent! My heart for parting's pains is melted all away.

Then he rose and looking on the queen's fare, cried out with a great cry, for stress whereof the palace was like to fall on those who were therein. Then he swooned away again and the old woman tended him till he revived, when she asked him what ailed him and he said, 'This queen is either my wife or else the likest of all folk to her.' Quoth Nour el Huda to the old woman, 'Out on the, O nurse! This stranger is either mad or disordered in mind, for he stareth me in the face with wide eyes and saith I am his wife.' 'O queen,' answered Shewahi, 'indeed he is excusable; so blame him not, for the proverb says, "There is no remedy for the sick of love, and he and the madman are alike." And Hassan wept sore and recited the following verses:

I see their traces and pine for longing pain; My tears rain down on the empty dwelling-place;
And I pray to God, who willed that we should part, Once more to grant us reunion of His grace.

Then said he to the queen, 'By Allah, thou art not my wife, but thou art the likest of all folks to her!'

Nour el Huda laughed till she fell backward and turned over on her side. Then said she to him, ‘O my friend, take thy time and observe me attentively: answer me at thy leisure what I shall ask thee and put away from thee madness and confusion and perplexity, for relief is at hand.’ ‘O mistress of kings and refuge of all, rich and poor,’ answered Hassan, ‘when I looked on thee, I was distracted, seeing thee to be either my wife or the likest of all folk to her; but now ask me what thou wilt.’ Quoth she, ‘What is it in thy wife that resembles me?’ ‘O my lady,’ replied he, ‘all that is in thee of beauty and elegance and amorous grace, such as the symmetry of thy shape and the sweetness of thy speech and the redness of thy cheeks and thy swelling breasts and so forth, resembleth her and thou art her very self in thy speech and the fairness of thy favour and the brilliancy of thy forehead.’

When the queen heard this, she smiled and gloried in her beatify and grace and her cheeks reddened and her eyes wantoned; then she turned to Shewahi and said to her, ‘O my mother, carry him back to the place where he was with thee and tend him thyself, till I examine into his affair; for, if he be indeed a man of worth and mindful of friendship and love and affection, it becometh us to help him to his desire, more by token that he hath taken up his abode in our country and eaten of our victual, to say nought of the hardships of travel he hath suffered and the horrors and perils he hath undergone. But, when thou hast brought him to thy house, commend him to thy servants’ care and return to me in all haste; and God willing, all shall be well.’

So Shewahi carried him back to her lodging and charged her servants and women wait upon him and bring him all he needed nor fail in that which was his due. Then she returned to Nour el Huda, who bade her don her arms and set out, taking with her a thousand stout horsemen, for the city of the Supreme King, her father, there to alight at the abode of her youngest sister, Menar es Sena, and say to her, ‘Clothe thy two sons in the coats of mail that their aunt hath made them and send them to her; for she longeth for them.’ Moreover the queen charged her keep Hassan’s affair secret and say to Menar es Sena, ‘Thy sister invitees thee to visit her.’

‘Then,’ continued she, ‘take the children and bring them to me in haste and let her follow at her leisure. Do thou come by a road other than hers and journey night and day and beware of discovering this matter to any. And I swear by all possible oaths that, if my sister prove to be his wife and it appear that her children are his, I will not hinder him from taking her and them and departing with them to his own country, but will aid him thereto. If she be not his wife, I will slay him; but if the children resemble him, we will believe him. For, O my mother, if my thought tell me true, my sister Menar es Sena is his wife, seeing that these traits are her traits and the attributes of surpassing beauty and excelling grace, of which he spoke, are found in none except my sisters and especially the youngest; but God alone is All-knowing!'

The old woman put faith in her words, knowing not what she purposed in herself; so she kissed her hand and returning to Hassan, told him what the queen had said, whereat he was transported for joy and coming up to her, kissed her head. 'O my son,' said she, 'kiss not my head, but my mouth, and be it by way of guerdon for thy salvation. Be of good heart and cheerful eye and grudge not to kiss my mouth, for I was the means of thy fore- gathering with her. So take comfort and be of good cheer nor be thy heart other than light, for, God willing, thy desire shall be accomplished at my hand.' So saying, she bade him farewell and departed, whilst he recited the following verses:

My witnesses unto the love of thee are four; Two witnesses each case requireth, and no more.
A fluttering heart they are and limbs for aye a-quake, Tongue knotted in its speech and body wasted sore.

And these also:

Two things there are, whereover if eye wept tear on tear Of blood, till they for weeping were like to disappear,
They never could fulfil them the tithe of all their due, The prime of youth and radiance from friends and lovers dear.

Then the old women armed herself and taking with her a thousand armed horsemen, set out and journeyed till she came to the island

and the city where dwelt the princess Menar es Sena and between which and that of her sister Nour el Huda was three days' journey. Now the king had seven daughters, all sisters-german by one mother and father except the youngest: the eldest was called Nour el Huda, the second Nejm es Sebah, the third Shems ez Zuha, the fourth Shejeret et Durr, the fifth Cout el Culoub, the sixth Sheref el Benat and the youngest Menar es Sena, Hassan's wife, who was their sister by the father's side only. When Shewahi reached the city, she went in to the princess Menar es Sena and saluting her, gave her her sister's greeting and acquainted her with the latter's longing for her and her children and that she reproached her for not visiting her. Quoth Menar es Sena, 'Verily, I am beholden to my sister and have failed of my duty to her in not visiting her, but I will do so now.' Then she bade pitch her tents without the city and took with her a suitable present for her sister.

Presently, the king her father looked out of the window of his palace, and seeing the tents pitched by the road, enquired of them, and they said to him, 'The princess Menar es Sena hath pitched her tents there, being minded to visit her sister Queen Nour el Huda.' When the king heard this, he equipped troops to escort her to her sister and brought out to her from his treasuries meat and drink and treasure and jewels and rarities, that beggar description. Presently the old woman again presented herself and kissed the earth before the princess, who said to her, 'Hast thou any need, O my mother?' Quoth Shewahi, 'Thy sister, Queen Nour el Huda, biddeth thee clothe thy sons in the two coats of mail which she made for them and send them to her by me, and I will take them and forego thee with them and be the harbinger of thy coming to her.'

When the princess heard these her words, her colour changed and she bowed her head a long while, after which she shook it and looking up, said to the old woman, 'O my mother, when thou namest my children, my mind is troubled and my heart fluttereth; for, from the time of their birth, none, neither genie nor man, male nor female, hath looked on their faces, and I am jealous for them of the soft-blowing zephyr.' 'What words are these, O my lady?' replied the old woman. 'Dost thou fear for them from thy sister? God keep thy reason! Thou mayst not cross the queen in this thing, for she would be wroth with thee. Indeed, O my lady, the children are young, and thou art excusable in fearing for them, for those that love are apt to deem evil: but, O my daughter, thou knowest my tenderness and solicitude over thee and thy children, for indeed I reared thee before them. I will take them and make my cheek their pillow and open my heart and set them within, nor is it needful to commend them to my care in the like of this case; so be of good heart and cheerful eye and send them to her, for, at the most, I shall but forego thee with them a day or two.' And she went on to urge her, till she gave way, fearing her sister's anger and knowing not what lurked for her in the future, and consented to send them with the old woman.

So she called them and bathed them and equipped them and changed their apparel. Then she clad them in the two coats of mail and delivered them to Shewahi, who took them and sped on with them like a bird, by another road than that by which their mother should travel, even as the queen had charged her; nor did she cease to fare on with all diligence, being fearful for them, till she came in sight of their aunt's city, when she crossed the river and entering the town, carried them in to Nour el Huda. The queen rejoiced at their sight and embraced them and pressed them to her bosom; after which she seated them, one on each knee, and said to the old women, 'Now fetch me Hassan, for I have granted him my safeguard and have spared him from my sabre and he hath sought refuge in my house and taken up his abode in my courts, after having endured hardships and horrors and come through all manner of mortal perils, each more terrible than the other; yet hitherto is he not safe from drinking the cup , of death and from the cutting off of his breath.' 'If I bring him to thee,' replied Shewahi, 'wilt thou reunite him with these his children? Or if they prove not his, wilt thou pardon him and restore him to his own country?'

The queen was exceeding wroth at her words and said to her, 'Out on thee, O ill-omened old woman! How long wilt thou play us false in the matter of this stranger, who hath dared [to intrude] upon us and hath lifted our veil and pried into our conditions? Thinkest thou that he shall come to our land and look upon our faces and soil our honours and after return in safety to his own country and expose our affairs to his people, wherefore our report will be bruited abroad among all the kings of the quarters of the earth and the merchants will bear tidings of us in every direction, saying, “A mortal entered the Wac Islands and traversed the land of the Jinn and the lands of the Wild Beasts and the Birds and set foot in the country of the warlocks and the enchanters and returned in safety?” This shall never be; and I swear by Him who created the heavens and builded them. Him who spread out the earth and levelled it, who made all creatures and numbered them, that, if they be not his children, I will assuredly slay him and strike of his head with my own hand!’

Then she cried out at the old woman, who fell down for fear; and she said to the chamberlain, ‘Take twenty slaves and go with this old woman and fetch me in haste the youth who is in her house.’ So they dragged Shewahi along, pale and trembling in every nerve, till they came to her house, where she went in to Hassan, who rose to her and kissed her hands and saluted her. She returned not his greeting, but said to him, ‘Come; speak with the queen. Did I not forbid thee from all this, saying, “Return presently to thine own country and I will give thee that to which no mortal may avail?” But thou wouldst not obey me nor hearken to my words, but rejectedst my counsel and chosest to bring destruction on thyself and me. Up, then, and take that which thou hast chosen; for death is at hand. Arise: speak with yonder wicked tyrannical baggage.’ So Hassan arose, broken-spirited, mournful-hearted and fearful, despairing of life and saying, ‘O Preserver, preserve Thou me! O my God, be gracious to me in that which Thou hast decreed to me of Thine affliction and protect me, O Thou the most merciful of those that show mercy!’ Then he followed the old woman and the chamberlain and the guards to the queen’s presence, where he found his two sons Nasir and Mensour sitting in her lap, whilst she played and made merry with them. As soon as his eyes fell on them, he knew them and giving a great cry, fell down in a swoon for excess of joy at their sight. They also knew him and natural affection moved them, so that they freed themselves from the queen’s lap and fell upon Hassan, and God (to whom belong knight and majesty) made them speak and say to him, ‘O our father!’ Whereupon the old woman and all who were present wept for pity and tenderness over them and said, ‘Praised be God, who hath reunited you with your father!’ Presently, Hassan came to himself and embracing his children, wept till he fainted again, and when he revived, he recited the following verses:

Now, by your life, my heart may not 'gainst severance endure,
Though certain ruin union were and sure discomfiture!
'To-morrow,' quoth your wraith to me, 'reunion shall betide;'
And who to-morrow, 'spite the foe, shall life to me ensure?
Nay, since your parting-day, my lords, I swear it by your life, No sweet of life delighteth me; all pleasance I abjure;
And if God order that I die for love of you, I die Chiefest of all the martyrs slain of love unblest and pure.
Within my heart a fawn hath made her grazing-stead, whose form, Like sleep, hath bed mine eyes and nought can back to me allure.
If she in lists of law deny the shedding of my blood, Lo, in her cheeks against herself it beareth witness sure.

When Nour el Huda was certified that the little ones were indeed Hassan's children and that her sister, the princess Menar es Sena, was his wife, of whom he was come in quest, she was beyond measure enraged against her and railed at Hassan and reviled him and kicked him in the breast, so that he fell on his back in a swoon. Then she cried out at him, saying, 'Arise, fly for thy life! But that I swore no evil should betide thee from me, if thy story proved true, I would slay thee with mine own hand forthright!' And she cried out at the old woman, who fell on her face for fear, and said to her, 'By Allah, but that I am loath to break the oath that I swore, I would put both thee and him to death after the foulest fashion!' [Then, turning to Hassan,] 'Arise,' [added she,] 'go out from before me in safety and return to thine own country, for I swear by my fortune. if ever mine eye behold thee or if any bring thee in to me after this, I will smite of thy head and that of whoso bringeth thee!' Then she cried out to her officers, saying, 'Put him out from before me!' So they put him out; and when he came to himself, he recited the following verses:

You're far away, yet to my thought you're nearest of all folk;

You're absent, yet within my heart for evermore you dwell.
By Allah, ne'er have I inclined to other than to you! I've borne with patience the unright of fortune foul and fell.
My nights in love-longing for you for ever pass and end, And in my Heart a flame there is and raging fires of hell.
Severance I ne'er could brook an hour; so how, now months have passed O'er me estranged from her I love, can I my sufferings tell?
Jealous of every lightest breeze that blew on thee was I, Exceeding jealous, yea, of aught the tender fair befell.

Then he once more fell down in a swoon, and when he came to himself, he found himself without the palace, whither they had dragged him on his face. (Now this was grievous to Shewahi; but she dared not remonstrate with the queen by reason of the violence of her wrath.) So he rose, stumbling in his skirts and hardly crediting his escape from Nour el Huda, and went forth, distracted and knowing not whither to go. The world, for all its wideness, was straitened upon him and he found none to comfort him nor any to whom he might resort for counsel or refuge; wherefore he gave himself up for lost, for that he availed not to journey [to his own country] and knew none to travel with him, neither knew he the way [thither] nor might pass through the Valley of Jinn and the Land of Beasts and the Island of Birds. So he bewept himself, till he fainted, and when he revived, he bethought him of his children and his wife and of that which might befall her with her sister, repenting him of having come to those parts and hearkened to none, and recited the following verses:

Let mine eyes weep for loss of her I love, with tears like rain: Rare is my solace and my woes increase on me amain.
The cup of severance unmixt I've drunken to the dregs. Wbo shall avail the loss of friends and dear ones to sustain?
Ye spread the carpet of reproach 'twixt me and you; ah when, O carpet of reproach, wilt thou be folded up again?
I wake; ye sleep. If ye pretend that I've forgot your love, Lo, I've forgotten to forget, and solace all is vain.
Indeed, my heart is racked with love and longing for your sight And you the only leaches are can heal me of my pain.

See ye not what is fall'n on me through your abandonment? I am abased to high and low, because of your disdain.
Fain would I hide my love for you: longing discovers it, For burnt and seared with passion's fires are all my heart and brain.
Have ruth on me, compassionate my case, for still to keep Our plighted faith in secrecy and trust I have been fain.
Will fortune reunite me aye with you, my heart's desire, You unto whom my soul cleaves still, bound fast with many a chain?
My entrails ulcerated are with separation's pangs: Would God with tidings from your camp to favour us you'd deign!

Then he went on, till he came without the city, where he found the river and fared on along its bank, knowing not whither he went.

To return to his wife, Menar es Sena. As she was about to set out, on the second day after the departure of the old woman with her children, there came in to her one of the king her father's chamberlains and kissed the earth before her, saying, 'O princess, the king thy father salutes thee and bids thee to him.' So she rose and accompanied the chamberlain to her father, who made her sit by his side on the couch, and said to her, 'O my daughter, know that I have had a dream this night, which maketh me fear for thee and that long sorrow will betide thee from this thy journey.' 'How so, O my father,' asked she, 'and what didst thou see in thy dream?' Quoth he, 'I dreamt that I entered a hidden treasure, wherein was great store of jewels and jacinths and other riches; but meseemed nought pleased of all this me save seven beazels, which were the finest things there. I chose out one of the seven jewels, for it was the smallest and finest and most lustrous of them and its beauty pleased me; so I took it in my hand and went forth. When I came without the door of the treasure, I opened my hand and turned over the jewel, rejoicing, when, behold, there swooped down on me out of the sky a strange bird from a far land (for it was not of the birds of our country), and snatching it from my hand, returned with it whence it came. Whereupon grief and concern and vexation overcame me and exceeding chagrin, which troubled me so that I awoke, mourning and lamenting for the loss of the jewel. So I summoned the interpreters and expounders of dreams and related to them my dream, and they said to me, "Thou hast seven daughters, the youngest of whom thou wilt lose, and she will be taken from thee perforce, without thy consent." Now thou art the youngest and dearest of my daughters and the most loving of them to me, and thou art about to journey to thy sister, and I know not what may befall thee from her; so go thou not, but return to thy palace.'

When the princess heard her father's words, her heart fluttered and she feared for her children and bent her head awhile. Then she raised it and said to him, 'O King, Queen Nour el Huda hath made ready for me an entertainment and looks for my coming to her, hour by hour. She hath not seen me these four years and if I delay to visit her, she will be wroth with me. The most of my stay with her will be a month and then I will return to thee. Besides, who is there can travel our land and make his way to the Wac Islands? Who can avail to reach the White Country and the Black Mountain and come to the Land of Camphor and the Castle of Crystal, and how shall he traverse the Island of Birds and the Land of Beasts and the Valley of Jinn and enter our islands? If any stranger came hither, he would be drowned in the seas of destruction: so be of good heart and cheerful eye concerning my journey; for none may avail to tread our earth.' And she ceased not to persuade him, till he gave her leave to go and bade a thousand horse escort her to the river and abide there, till she entered her sister's city and palace [and returned to them], when they should take her and carry her back to him. Moreover, he charged her sojourn with her sister two days [only] and return to him in haste; and she answered, 'I hear and obey.' Then she went forth and he with her and bade her farewell.

Now his words had sunken deep into her heart and she feared for her children; but it availeth not to fortify oneself by caretaking against the assaults of destiny. So she set out and fared on diligently three days, till she came to the river and pitched her tents on its banks. Then she crossed the stream, with some of her officers and attendants, and going up to the city and the palace, went in to Queen Nour el Huda, with whom she found her children, and they were weeping and crying out, 'O our father!' At this, the tears ran from her eyes and she wept and strained them to her bosom, saying, 'What put you in mind of your father at this time? Would the hour had never been, in which I left him! If I knew him to be in the house of the world, I would carry you to him.' Then she bemoaned herself and her husband and her children's weeping and recited these verses:

Distance despite, belovéd mine, and inhumanity, I turn to you with yearning love, wherever you may be.
Mine eyes towards your country turn and all my heart bewails
The days of union, when in love and peace foregathered we.
How many a night in mutual love, unstirred by doubt, we spent,
What while caresses and fair faith delighted you and me!

When her sister saw her press her children to her bosom, saying, 'It is I who have wrought thus with myself and my children and have ruined my own house!' she saluted her not, but said to her, 'O harlot, whence hadst thou these children? Hast thou married without thy father's knowledge or hast thou committed fornication? If thou have played the whore, it behoves that thou be exemplarily punished; and if thou have married without our knowledge, why didst thou leave thy husband and sever thy children from their father and bring them hither? Thou hast hidden thy children from us. Thinkest thou we know not of this? God the Most High, He who knoweth the secret things, hath made known to us thy case and discovered thy shame.'

Then she bade her guards seize her and bind her hands behind her and shackle her with shackles of iron. So they did as she commanded and she beat her grievously, that her skin was torn, and crucified her by the hair; after which she cast her in prison and wrote the king her father a letter acquainting him with her case and saying, 'There hath appeared in our country a man, a mortal, by name Hassan, and our sister Menar es Sena avoucheth that she is lawfully married to him and hath by him two sons, whom she hath hidden from us and thee; nor did she discover aught of herself till there came to us this man and informed us that he married her and she abode with him a long while; after which she took her children and departed, without his knowledge, after bidding his mother tell her son, whenas longing betided him, to come to her in the Wac Islands. So we laid hands on the man and sent the old woman Shewahi to fetch her and her children, enjoining her to bring us the children in advance of her.

And she did so, whilst Menar es Sena equipped herself, and set out to visit me.

When the children were come, I sent for Hassan, and he knew them and they him; wherefore I was certified that they were indeed his children and that she was his wife and that his story was true and he was not to blame, but that the blame and disgrace rested with my sister. Now I feared the soiling of our honour before the people of our islands; so, when this lewd traitress came in to me, I was incensed against her and beat her grievously and crucified her by the hair and cast her into prison. Behold, I have acquainted thee with her case and it is thine to command, and that thou orderest us, we will do. Thou knowest that in this affair is dishonour and disgrace to us and to thee, and belike the people of the islands will hear of it, and we shall become a byword amongst them; wherefore it befits that thou return us an answer with speed.'

Then she delivered the letter to a courier and he carried it to the king, who, when he read it, was exceeding wroth with his daughter Menar es Sena and wrote to Nour el Huda, saying, 'I commit her case to thee and give thee power over her life; so, if the thing be as thou sayest, put her to death, without consulting me.' When the queen received her father's letter, she sent for Menar es Sena and they brought her, drowned in her blood and pinioned with her hair, fettered with heavy shackles of iron and clad in hair-cloth; and she stood before her, abject and cast down. When she saw herself in this condition of humiliation and exceeding abasement, she called to mind her former high estate and wept sore and recited the following verses:

O Lord, my foes do cast about to slay me and conceive I cannot anywise escape from out the snares they weave.
But, lo, in Thee I put my trust, their works to bring to nought; For Thou the fearful's refuge art, the hope of those that grieve.

Then she wept, till she fell down in a swoon, and presently coming to herself, repeated the following verses:

Troubles familiar with my heart are grown and I with them, Erst

shunning; for the generous are sociable still.
Not one mere kind alone of woe doth lieger with me lie; Praised be God! There are with me thousands of kinds of ill.

And also these:

Full many a sorry chance doth light upon a man and fill His life with trouble; yet with God the issue bideth still.
His case is sore on him; but, when its meshes straitened are To utt'rest, they relax, although he deem they never will.

Then the queen sent for a ladder of wood and made the eunuchs bind her with cords thereto, on her back, with her arms spread out; after which she uncovered her head and wound her hair about the ladder; for pity for her was rooted out from her heart. When Menar es Sena saw herself in this state of abjection and humiliation, she cried out and wept; but none succoured her. Then said she to the queen, 'O my sister, how is thy heart hardened against me? Hast thou no mercy on me nor on these little children?' But her words only hardened her sister's heart and she reviled her, saying, 'O wanton! O harlot! May God have no mercy on whoso hath mercy on thee! How should I have pity on thee, O traitress?' 'I appeal to the Lord of the Heavens,' replied Menar es Sena, 'concerning that wherewith thou reproached me and whereof I am innocent! By Allah, I have done no whoredom, but am lawfully married to him, and my Lord knoweth if I speak truth or not! Indeed, my heart is wroth with thee, by reason of thine excessive hard-heartedness against me! How canst thou accuse me of harlotry, without knowledge? But my Lord will deliver me from thee and if that whereof thou accusest me be true, may He punish me for it!' Quoth Nour el Huda, 'How darest thou bespeak me thus?' and beat her till she swooned away; whereupon they sprinkled water on her till she revived; and indeed her charms were wasted for excess of beating and humiliation and the straitness of her bonds. Then she recited these verses:

If I've in aught offended against you Or anywise done that I should not do, To you, repentant for what's past, I come And as a suppliant, for forgiveness sue.

When Nour el Huda heard this, her wrath redoubled and she said to her, 'O harlot, wilt thou speak before me in verse and seek to excuse thyself for the heinous sin, thou hast done? It was my desire that thou shouldst return to thy husband, that I might witness thy depravity and assurance; for thou gloriest in thy lewdness and profligacy and the heinousness of thy conduct.' Then she called for a palm-stick and tucking up her sleeves, beat her from head to foot; after which she called for a whip of plaited thongs, wherewith if one smote an elephant, he would start off at speed, and beat her on her back and stomach and every part of her body, till she swooned away.

When the old woman Shewahi saw this, she fled forth from the queen's presence, weeping and cursing her; but Nour el Huda cried out to her guards, saying, 'Fetch her to me!' So they ran after her and seizing her, brought her back to the queen, who caused throw her on the ground and bidding them lay hold of her, rose and took the whip, with which she beat her, till she fainted, when she said to her waiting-women, 'Drag this ill- omened old woman forth on her face and put her out.' And they did as she bade them.

Meanwhile, Hassan walked on beside the river, in the direction of the desert, distracted, troubled and despairing of life; and indeed he was dazed and knew not night from day, for stress of affliction. He fared on thus, till he came to a tree, to which he saw a scroll hanging, so he took it and found these verses written thereon:

I ordered thy case, without hindrance or let, Whilst thou in the womb of thy mother wast yet.
I made her heart yearn to thee, so she was fain To tend thee and thee to her bosom to set.
We will compensate thee and requite thee for all That hath wrought to afflict thee of trouble and fret;
So up and submit thee to Us, for indeed We will aid thee to that thou desirest to get.

When he read this, he made sure of deliverance from trouble and reunion with those he loved. Then he went on a few steps and found himself alone in a wild and perilous desert, in which there was none to company with him; whereupon his heart sank within him for fear and loneliness and he trembled in every nerve, for that frightful place, and recited the following verses:

O East wind, if thou passest by my loved ones' dwelling-place,
Abundant greeting bear to them from me and full of grace,
And tell them I the hostage am of passion, verily, And that my longing for their sight all longing doth outpace.
Happily, for sympathy, a wind shall blow on me from them And the corruption of my bones relive thereto, percase.

Then he walked on a few steps farther beside the river, till he came upon two little boys of the sons of the magicians, beside whom lay a wand of brass, graven with talismans, and a skull-cap of leather, made in three pieces and wroughten in steel with names and figures. The boys were disputing and beating one another, till the blood ran down between them; whilst each said, 'None shall take the wand but I.' Hassan interposed and parted them, saying, 'What is the cause of this your contention?' 'O uncle,' answered they, 'be thou judge of our case, for God the Most High hath surely sent thee to do justice between us.' 'Tell me your case,' said Hassan; 'and I will judge between you.' So one of them said to him, 'We are brothers-german and our father was a mighty magician, who dwelt in a cavern in yonder mountain. He died and left us this cap and wand; and my brother says, "None shall have the wand but I," whilst I say the like; so be thou judge between us and deliver us from each other.' Quoth Hassan, 'What is the difference between the wand and the cap and what is their value? The wand appears to be worth six farthings and the cap three.' But they answered, 'Thou knowest not their properties.' 'And what are their properties?' asked Hassan. 'Each of them hath a wonderful secret virtue,' replied they, 'wherefore the wand is worth the revenue of all the Wac Islands and their provinces and dependencies, and the cap the like.' And Hassan said, 'By Allah, O my sons, discover to me their secret virtues.'

‘O uncle,’ answered they, ‘they are extraordinary; for our father wrought at their contrivance a hundred and thirty and five years, till he brought them to perfection and informed them with secret properties and engraved them after the likeness of the revolving sphere, so that he made them serve him extraordinary services and by their aid he dissolved all enchantments; and when he had made an end of their fashion, death, which needs must all suffer, overtook him. Now the virtue of the cap is, that whoso sets it on his head is hidden from all folk’s eyes, nor can any see him, whilst it abideth on his head; and that of the wand is, that whoso possesseth it hath command and authority over seven tribes of the Jinn, who all serve the wand; and whenever he smiteth therewith on the ground, their kings [appear before him and] do him homage, and all the Jinn are at his service.’

When Hassan heard this, he bowed his head and said in himself, ‘By Allah, I have need of this wand and cap, and I am worthier of them than these boys. So I will go about to get them from them by craft, that I may use them to free myself and my wife and children from yonder tyrannical queen, and then will we depart from this dismal place, whence there is no deliverance nor fight for mortal man. Doubtless, God caused me not to fall in with these two boys, but that I might get the wand and cap from them.’ Then he raised his head and said to the boys, ‘If ye would have me decide the case, I will make trial of you and see what each of you deserveth. He who overcometh his brother shall have the wand and he who faileth shall have the cap.’ ‘O uncle,’ answered they, ‘we depute thee to make trial of us and do thou decide between us as thou seest fit.’ Quoth Hassan, ‘Will ye hearken to me and have regard to my words?’ And they said, ‘Yes.’ Then said he, ‘I will take a stone and throw it and he who foregoeth his brother thereto and taketh it shall have the wand, and the other shall have the cap.’ And they said, “We consent to this.’

Then he took a stone and threw it with his might, that it disappeared from sight. The two boys ran after it and when they were at a distance, Hassan donned the cap and taking the wand in his hand, removed from his place, that he might prove the truth of that which the boys had said, with regard to their properties. The younger outran the elder and coming first to the stone, took it and returned with it to the place where they had left Hassan, but found no signs of him. So he called to his brother, saying, ‘Where is the man who was to judge between us?’ Quoth the other, ‘I see him not nor know whether he hath flown up to the height of heaven or sunk into the nether earth.’ Then they sought for him, but saw him not, though all the while he was standing by them. So they reviled each other, saying, ‘The wand and the cap are both gone; they are neither mine nor thine: and indeed our father warned us of this very thing; but we forgot what he said.’ Then they retraced their steps and entered the city.

When Hassan was thus certified of the truth of their speech, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and returned to the city, with the cap on his head and the wand in his hand. None saw him and he entered the palace and went up into the lodging of Shewahi, who saw him not, because of the cap. Then he went up to a shelf over her head, on which were vessels of glass and chinaware, and shook it with his hand, so that what was thereon fell to the ground. The old woman cried out and buffeted her face; then she rose and restored the fallen things to their places, saying in herself, ‘By Allah, methinks Queen Nour el Huda hath sent a devil to torment me, and he hath played me this trick! I beg God the Most High to deliver me from her and ensure me against her wrath, for, O Lord, if she deal thus abominably with her sister, beating and crucifying her, dear as she is to her father, how will she do with a stranger like myself, against whom she is incensed?’

Then said she, ‘I conjure thee, O devil, by the Most Merciful God, the Bountiful, the High of Estate, the Mighty of Dominion, Creator of men and Jinn, and by the writing upon the seal of Solomon son of David (on whom be peace!) speak to me and answer me!’ Quoth Hassan, ‘I am no devil; I am Hassan, the afflicted, the distracted lover.’ Then he took the cap from his head and appeared to the old woman, who knew him and taking him apart, said to him, ‘What is come to thy wit, that thou returnest hither? Go and hide; for, if this wicked woman have tormented thy wife thus, and she her sister, how will she do, if she light on thee?’

Then she told him all that had befallen his wife and that wherein she was of duresse and misery and torment, adding, ‘And indeed the queen repents her of having let thee go and hath sent one after thee, promising him a quintal of gold and my post in her service; and she hath sworn that, if he bring thee back, she will put thee and thy wife and children to death.’ And she wept and discovered to Hassan what the queen had done with her self, whereat he wept and said, ‘O my lady, how shall I do to deliver myself and my wife and children from this tyrannical queen and return with them in safety to my own country?’ ‘Out on thee!’ replied the old woman. ‘Save thyself.’ Quoth he, ‘Needs must I deliver her and my children from the queen in her despite.’ ‘How canst thou rescue them from her?’ said Shewahi. ‘Go and hide thyself, O my son, till God the Most High permit.’

Then Hassan showed her the wand and the cap, whereat she rejoiced with an exceeding joy and said, ‘Glory be to Him who quickeneth the bones, though they be rotten! By Allah, O my son, thou and thy wife were but lost folk, but now thou art saved, thou and thy wife and children! For I know the wand and I know its maker, who was my master in magic. He was a mighty magician and wrought a hundred and thirty and five years at this wand and cap, till he brought them to perfection, when death the inevitable overtook him. And I have heard him say to his two sons, “O my sons, these things are none of your lot, for there will come a stranger from a far country, who will take them from you perforce, and ye shall not know how he takes them.” “O our father,” said they, “tell us how he will win to take them.” But he answered, “I know not.” And how,’ added she, ‘availedst thou to take them, O my son?’

So he told her how he had taken them from the two boys, whereat she rejoiced and said, ‘O my son, since thou hast gotten [the means of freeing] thy wife and children, give ear to what I shall say to thee. There is no abiding for me with this wicked woman, after the fashion in which she hath dared to use me; wherefore I am minded to depart from her to the caves of the Magicians and abide with them there till I die. But do thou, O my son, don the cap and take the wand in thy hand and enter the place where thy wife and children are. Loose her bonds and smite the earth with the wand, saying, “Be present, O servants of these names!” whereupon the servants of the wand will appear; and if there present himself one of the heads of the tribes, command him what thou wilt.'

So he bade her farewell and donning the cap, went forth and entered the place where his wife was. He found her bound to the ladder by her hair, well-nigh lifeless, weeping-eyed and mourning-hearted, in the sorriest of plights, knowing no way to deliver herself. Her children were playing under the ladder, whilst she looked at them and wept for them and herself; and he heard her repeat the following verses:

Nothing is left her but a fluttering spright, Ay, and an eye bereaved of its light.
A longing one, her entrails are a-fire, Yet still she's silent in her woes' despite.
Her foes weep, pitying her; alas for those Who pity in the exultant foe excite!

When Hassan saw her in this state of torment and misery and abjection, he wept till he swooned away; and when he revived, he saw his children playing and their mother aswoon for excess of pain; so he took the cap from his head and the children saw him and cried out, saying, 'O our father!' Then he covered his head again and the princess came to herself hearing their cry, but only saw her children weeping and crying out, 'O our father!' When she heard them name their father and weep, her heart was broken and her entrails rent in sunder and she said to them, 'What makes you in mind of your father at this time?' And she wept sore and cried out, from a bleeding heart and an aching bosom, 'Where are ye and where is your father?'

Then she recalled the days of her union with Hassan and what had befallen her since her desertion of him and wept till her face was drowned in tears and her cheeks were furrowed with much weeping. Her tears ran down and wet the ground and she had not a hand loose to wipe them from her cheeks, whilst the flies fed their fill on her skin, and she found no helper but weeping and no solace but repeating verses. Then she recited the following:

I call to mind the parting-day that rent our loves in twain, When,

as I turned away, the tears in very streams did rain.
The cameleer urged on his beasts with them, what while I found Nor strength nor fortitude, nor did my heart with me remain.
Yea, back I turned, unknowing of the roads nor might shake off The trance of grief and longing love that numbed my heart and brain;
And worst of all betided me, on my return, was one Who came to me, in lowly guise, to glory in my pain.
Since the beloved's gone, O soul, forswear the sweet of life Nor covet its continuance, for, wanting him, 'twere vain.
List, O my friend, unto the tale of love, and God forbid That I should speak and that thy heart to hearken should not deign!
As 'twere El Asmai himself. of passion I discourse With fancies rare and marvelous, linked in an endless chain.

Then she turned right and left, seeking the cause of her children's crying out, 'O our father!' but saw no one and marvelled that they should name him at that time and call upon him. When Hassan heard her verses, he wept till he swooned away and the tears ran down upon his cheeks like rain. Then he drew near the children and uncovered his head to them, [unseen of his wife,] whereupon they saw him and knowing him, cried out, saying, 'O our father!' Their mother fell a-weeping again, when she heard them name their father and said, 'There is no resource against the ordinance of God the Most High! Strange! What makes them bethink them of their father at this time and call upon him, albeit it is not of their wont?' Then she wept and recited the following verses:

The land is empty of the moon that shone so bright whilere: Be lavish of your tears, mine eyes; I charge you, do not spare!
They have departed: how shall I be patient of their loss? Nor heart nor patience after them, is left with me, I swear.
Lords who are absent, but whose place is in the heart of me, Will you return to me again and be as once you were?
What were the harm if they returned and I their company Enjoyed and they had ruth upon my tears and my despair?
They made mine eyes rain wonder-fast upon the parting-day: There's nought may quench the raging fire that 'twixt my ribs doth

flare.
I would have had them stay, but Fate was contrary to me And did with sev'rance disappoint my longing for the fair.
By Allah, O beloved mine, return to me! Enough Of tears, indeed, I've shed to win ill-fortune to forbear.

With this, Hassan could no longer contain himself, but took the cap from his head; whereupon his wife saw him and recognizing him, gave a scream that startled all in the place. Then she said to him, 'How camest thou hither? Hast thou dropped from the sky or come up through the earth?' And her eyes filled with tears and Hassan also wept. 'O man,' quoth she, 'this is no time for tears or reproaches. Fate hath had its course and the sight was blinded and the pen hath run with what was ordained of God from all eternity: so, God on thee, whencesoever thou comest, go and hide, lest any see thee and tell my sister and she slaughter thee and me!' 'O my lady and lady of all queens,' answered he, 'I have ventured myself and come hither, and either I will die or I will deliver thee from this thy strait and return with thee and my children to my country, in despite of thy shrew of a sister.'

But she smiled and shook her head, saying, 'Far, O my life, far is it from the power of any save God the Most High to deliver me from this my stress! Save thyself by flight and cast not thyself into destruction; for she hath troops without number, that none may withstand. Grant that thou tookest me and wentest forth with me, how canst thou win to thy country and escape from these islands and the perils of these dreadful places? Verily, in thy way hither, thou hast seen the wonders and dangers and terrors of the road, such as none may escape, not even one of the rebellious Jinn. Depart, therefore, forthright and add not anguish to my anguish and trouble to my trouble, neither do thou pretend to rescue me from this my plight; for who shall bring me to thy country, through all these valleys and thirsty deserts and fatal places?' 'By thy life, O light of mine eyes,' rejoined Hassan, 'I will not depart this place but with thee!' 'O man,' quoth she, 'thou knowest not what thou sayst! How canst thou avail unto this thing and what manner of man art thou? None can escape from these realms, even had he command over Jinn and Afrits and warlocks. So fly and leave me; peradventure God will bring about a change.’ ‘O lady of fair ones,’ answered Hassan, ‘I came but to deliver thee with this wand and cap.’ And he told her what had befallen him with the two boys; but, whilst he was speaking, up came the queen and heard them talking.

When he was ware of her, he put on the cap and was hidden from sight, and she entered and said to the princess, ‘O harlot, who is he with whom thou wast talking?’ ‘Who is with me that should talk with me,’ answered Menar es Sena, ‘except these little ones?’ Then the queen took the whip and beat her, whilst Hassan stood by, nor did she leave beating her till she fainted; whereupon she bade remove her to another place. So they loosed her and carried her to another chamber, whilst Hassan followed [unseen]. There they cast her down, senseless, and stood looking upon her, till she revived and recited the following verses:

Long, long have I bewailed the sev’rance of our loves, With tears that from my lids streamed down like burning rain,
And vowed that, if the days should reunite us two, My lips should never speak of severance again,
And to the enviers, ‘Die of sheer despite!’ I’d say; ‘By Allah, I have won my wishes to attain!’
Joy loath o’ercome me so, that, for the very stress Of that which gladdens me, to weeping I am fain.
Tears are become to you a habit, O mine eyes, So that ye weep as well for gladness as for pain.

Then the slave-girls went out from her and Hassan took off the cap; whereupon his wife said to him, ‘See, O man, all this hath befallen me by reason of my having gainsaid thee and transgressed thy commandment and gone forth without thy leave. But, I conjure thee by Allah, reproach me not for mine offence and know that women know not a man’s worth till they have lost him. Indeed, I have sinned and done evil; but I crave pardon of God the Great for that I did, and if He reunite us, I will never again disobey thee in aught.’ Quoth Hassan (and indeed his heart ached for her), ‘It was not thou that sinnedst, but I, for I departed and left thee with one who knew not thy rank nor thy worth. But know, O beloved of my heart and fruit of mine entrails and light of mine eyes, that God (blessed be He!) hath given me power to release thee; so wouldst thou have me carry thee to thy father, there to accomplish what God decreeth unto thee, or wilt thou presently depart with me to my country, now that relief is come to thee?' 'Who can deliver me save the Lord of the skies?' answered she. 'Go to thine own country and put away from thee false hope; for thou knowest not the perils of these parts: but, if thou obey me not, thou wilt see.' And she recited the following verses:

What thou wouldst have is law to me and pleasing in my sight!
What ails thee, then, to look on me with anger and despite?
Whate'er befell, now God forbid the love that was of old 'Twixt
uS should e'er forgotten be, forspent and ended quite!
For from our side the spy ceased not, estrangement till he saw
Between us, when he cast about our loves to disunite.
Yes, I was constant in fair thought of thee, for all the spy Dealt ill
and did with evil words to evil thoughts excite.
We'll keep the secret of our loves and guard it from the folk,
Albeit with reproach the sword of blame be bared to smite.
My days in longing do I pass, so may a messenger With tidings
of acceptance come from thee and heal my spright.

Then she wept and her children wept also and the slave-girls heard them: so they came in to them and found them weeping, but saw not Hassan with them; wherefore they wept for pity of them and cursed Queen Nour el Huda. Then Hassan took patience till it was night and her guards had gone to their sleeping-places, when he went up to her and loosing her, pressed her to his bosom and kissed her on the head and between the eyes, saying, 'How long have we wearied for our country and for reunion there! Is this our meeting in sleep, or on wake?' Then he took up the elder boy and she took up the younger and they went forth. God covered them with the veil of His protection, so that they came safe to the outer door of the palace, but found it locked from without, and Hassan said, 'There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! We are God's and to Him we return!' With this they despaired of escape and Hassan beat hand upon hand, saying, 'O Thou that dispellest troubles! Verily, I had bethought me of every thing and considered its issue but this; and now, when it is day, they will take us, and what resource have we in this case?' And he recited the following verses:

Thou madest fair thy thought of Fate, whenas the days were fair,
And fearedst not the unknown ills that they to thee might bring.
The nights were fair and calm to thee; thou wast deceived by
them, For in the peace of night is born full many a troublous thing.

Then he wept and she wept for his weeping and for the abasement she had suffered and the cruelties of fortune: and he turned to her and recited the following verses:

Fortune is vehement on me, as if I were its foe; Yea, day by day,
she meeteth me with this or the other woe.
If aught of good I wish, Fate brings the contrary thereof, And if
'tis bright for me one day, the next it foul doth show.

And also these:

My fate doth irk and baffle me, unknowing that I am Most worthy
and that Fortune's shifts are little worth, ywis.
It spends the night in showing me th' injustice of events And I in
showing forth to it what very patience is.

Then she said to him, 'By Allah, thee is no relief for us but to kill ourselves and be at rest from this great weariness; else we shall suffer grievous torment on the morrow.' At this moment, they heard a voice from without the door say, 'By Allah, O my lady Menar es Sena, I will not open to thee and thy husband Hassan, except ye obey me in what I shall say to you!' When they heard this, they were silent for excess of fear and would have returned whence they came; when behold, the voice spoke again, saying, 'What ails you to be silent and answer me not?' Therewith they knew the speaker for the old woman Shewahi and said to her, 'Whatsoever thou biddest us, that will we do; but first open the door to us, for this is no time for talk.' 'By

Allah,' replied she, 'I will not open to you, except ye swear to me that you will take me with you and not leave me with yonder harlot: so, whatever befalls you shall befall me and if ye escape, I shall escape, and if ye perish, I shall perish: for yonder lewd minion entreats me with indignity and still torments me on your account; and thou, O my daughter, knowest my worth.'

So they trusted in her and swore to her such an oath as contented her, whereupon she opened the door to them and they came out and found her riding on a Greek jar of red earthenware with a rope of palm fibres about its neck [by way of halter], which turned under her and ran faster than a Nejd colt, and she said to them, 'Follow me and fear nothing, for I know forty magical formulas, by the least of which I could make this city a surging sea, swollen with clashing billows, and turn each damsel therein into a fish, and all before dawn. But I was not able to work aught of magic, for fear of the king her father and of regard for her sisters, for that they are redoubtable, by reason of their many guards and servants and tribesmen. However, I will yet show you wonders of my skill and magic; and now let us on, with God's help and blessing.'

Hassan and his wife rejoiced in this, making sure of escape, and they left the palace and went forth, till they came without the city, when he fortified his heart and smiting the earth with the wand, said, 'Ho, servants of these names, appear to me and discover to me your estates!' Thereupon the earth clove in sunder and out came seven Afrits, with their feet in the bowels of the earth and their heads in the clouds. They kissed the earth three times before Hassan and said with one voice, 'Here are we at thy service, O our lord and ruler over us! What dost thou bid us do? For we hear and obey thy commandment. An thou wilt we will dry thee up seas and remove mountains from their places.' Hassan rejoiced in their words and at their speedy answer [to his summons], so he took courage and bracing up his resolution, said to them, 'Who are ye and what are your names and races? And to what tribes and companies do ye belong?' They kissed the earth once more and answered with one voice, saying, 'We are seven kings, each ruling over seven tribes of the Jinn of all conditions, Marids and devils, flyers and divers, dwellers in mountains and wastes and deserts and haunters of the seas: so command us what thou wilt; for we are thy servants and slaves, and whoso possesseth this wand hath dominion over all our necks and we owe him obedience.'

When Hassan heard this, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy, he and his wife and the old woman, and he said to the Kings of the Jinn, 'I desire of you that ye show me your tribes and hosts and armies.' 'O our lord,' answered they, 'if we show thee our hosts, we fear for thee and these who are with thee, for they are many in number and various in form and fashion and favour. Some of us are heads without bodies and others bodies without heads, and others again are in the likeness of wild animals and beasts of prey. However, if this be thy will, needs must we first show thee those of us who are like unto wild beasts. But, O our lord, what wouldst thou of us at this present?' Quoth Hassan, 'I would have you carry me forthwith to the city of Baghdad, me and my wife and this old woman.'

But they hung down their heads and were silent, whereupon quoth Hassan, 'Why do ye not reply?' And they said with one voice, 'O our lord and ruler over us, we are of the covenant of Solomon son of David (on whom be peace!) and he made us swear that we would carry none of the sons of Adam on our backs; since which time we have carried no moral on our backs or shoulders: but we will straightway harness the horses of the Jinn, that shall carry thee and thy company to thy country.' 'And how far are we from Baghdad?' asked Hassan. Quoth they, 'Seven years' journey for a diligent horseman.' Hassan marvelled at this and said to them, 'Then how came I hither in less than a year?' They answered, 'God inclined the hearts of His pious servants to thee, else hadst thou never won hither nor set eyes on these regions. For the Sheikh Abdulcuddous, who mounted thee on the elephant and the enchanted horse, traversed with thee, in ten days, three years' journey for a diligent horseman, and the Afrit Dehnesh, to whom the Sheikh Abourruweish committed thee, carried thee a like distance in a day and a night; all which was of the blessing of God the Most High, for that the Sheikh Abourruweish is of the lineage of Asef ben Berkhiya and knoweth the Most Great name of God. Moreover, from Baghdad to the Palace of the Mountain of Clouds is a year's journey, and this makes the seven years.'

When Hassan heard this, he marvelled exceedingly and said, ‘Glory be to God, who maketh the difficult easy and leadeth the broken, who bringeth near the distant and humblest every froward tyrant who hath eased us of every stress and brought me hither and subjected these creatures to me and reunited me with my wife and children! I know not whether I sleep or wake or if I be sober or drunken!’ Then he turned to the Jinn and said, ‘In how many days will your horses bring us to Baghdad?’ ‘They will carry you thither in less than a year,’ answered they, ‘but not till after ye have endured terrible perils and hardships and traversed thirsty valleys and frightful wastes and terrors without number; and we cannot warrant thee, O our lord, from the people of these islands nor from the mischief of the Supreme King and his enchanters and warlocks. It may be they will force us and take you from us and we fall into affliction with them, and all to whom the news shall come after this will say to us, “Ye are evil-doers. How could ye affront tile Supreme King and carry a mortal out of his dominions, and the king’s daughter with him?” Wert thou alone with us,’ continued they, ‘the thing were easy; but He who brought thee hither is able to cary thee back to thy country and reunite thee presently with thy people. So take heart and put thy trust in God and fear not; for we are at thy service, to convey thee to thy country.’

Hassan thanked them and said, ‘God requite you with good. But now make haste with the horses.’ ‘We hear and obey,’ answered they and struck the ground with their feet, whereupon it opened and they disappeared within it and were absent awhile, after which they reappeared with three horses, saddled and bridled, and on each saddle-bow a pair of saddle-bags, with a leathern bottle of water in one pocket and the other full of victual. Hassan mounted one horse and took a child before him, whilst his wife mounted a second and took the other child before her. Then the old woman alighted from the jar and mounted the third horse and they rode on, without ceasing, all night. At break of day, they turned aside from the road and made for the mountain, whilst their tongues ceased not to name God.

They fared on under the mountain all that day, till Hassan caught sight of a black object in the distance, as it were a tall column of smoke ascending to the sky; so he recited somewhat of the Koran and sought refuge with God from Satan the Stoned. The black thing grew plainer, as they approached, and when they drew near to it, they saw that it was an Afrit, with a head like a huge dome and tusks like grapnels and jaws like a street and nostrils like ewers and ears like leathern bucklers and mouth like a cavern and teeth like pillars of stone and hands like winnowing forks and legs like masts: his head was in the clouds and his feet in the bowels of the earth. When he saw Hassan, he bowed himself and kissed the earth before him, saying, ‘O Hassan, have no fear of me; for I am the chief of the dwellers in this land, which is the first of the Wac Islands, and I am a Muslim and a believer in the unity of God. I have heard of you and your coming and when I knew of your case, I desired to depart from the land of the magicians to another land, void of inhabitants, and far from men and Jinn, that I might dwell there alone and serve God till my end came upon me. Wherefore I wish to company with you and be your guide, till ye win forth of the Wac Islands. I will appear only at night: so comfort your hearts on my account; for I am a Muslim, even as ye are Muslims.’

When Hassan heard the Afrit’s words, he was mightily rejoiced and made sure of deliverance; and he said to him, ‘God amply requite thee! Go with us, with the blessing of Allah!’ So the Afrit went before them and they followed, talking and making merry, for their hearts were at ease and their breasts relieved, and Hassan fell to telling his wife all that had befallen him and all the stresses he had undergone, whilst she excused herself to him and told him, in turn, all she had seen and suffered. The horses bore them on all night, like the blinding lightning, and when the day rose, they put their hands to the saddle-bags and took forth victual and water and ate and drank.

Then they sped on their way, preceded by the Afrit, who turned aside with them from the beaten track into another road, till then untrodden, along the sea-shore, and they fared on, without stopping, across valleys and deserts, a whole month, till on the one-and-thirtieth day there arose before them a cloud of dust, that walled the world and darkened the day, and they heard a frightful noise of crying and clamour. When Hassan saw and heard this, he was confused and turned pale; and the old woman said to him, ‘O my son, this is the army of the Wac Islands, that hath overtaken us; and presently they will lay hands on us.' 'What shall I do, O my mother?' asked he. And she answered, 'Strike the earth with the wand.' He did so and immediately the seven kings presented themselves and saluted him, kissing the ground before him and saying, 'Fear not neither grieve.' Hassan rejoiced at their words and answered them, saying, 'Well said, O princes of the Jinn and the Afrits! This is your time.' Quoth they, 'Get ye up to the mountain-top, thou and thy company, and leave us to deal with them, for we know that you are in the right and they in the wrong and God will aid us against them.' So Hassan and his wife and children and the old woman dismounted and dismissing the horses, ascended the flank of the mountain.

Presently up came Queen Nour el Huda, with troops right and left, and the captains went round about among the troops and ranged them in battle array. Then the two hosts charged down upon one another and clashed together with a mighty shock, the brave pressed forward and the coward fled and the Jinn cast flames of fire from their mouths, whilst the smoke of them rose up to the confines of the sky and the two armies appeared and disappeared. The champions fought and heads flew from bodies and the blood ran in streams, nor did the sword leave to play and the blood to bow and the fire of the battle to rage, till the dark night came, when the two armies drew apart and alighting, kindled fires and rested upon the field.

Therewith the seven kings went up to Hassan and kissed the ground before him. He thanked them and prayed God to give them the victory and asked them how they had fared with the queen's troops. Quoth they, 'They will withstand us but three days, for we had the better of them to-day, taking two thousand of them prisoners and slaying of them much people, whose number may not be told. So take comfort and be of good cheer.' Then they took leave of him and went down to their troops, to hearten them. They kept up the fires till the day rose with its light and shone, when the fighting-men mounted their stout horses and smote each other with the edge of the sword and thrust with the brown of the lance; nor did they cease from the battle that day. Moreover, they passed the night on horseback, clashing together like seas; the fires of war raged among them and they stinted not from battle and strife, till the army of Wac was defeated and their power broken and their courage quelled; their feet slipped and whithersoever they fled, defeat was before them; wherefore they turned their backs and betook themselves to flight: but the most part of them were slain and their queen and her chief officers and the grandees of her realm taken prisoners.

On the morrow, the seven kings set Hassan a throne of alabaster inlaid with pearls and jewels, and he sat down thereon. Moreover, they set thereby a throne of ivory, plated with glittering gold, for the princess Menar es Sena and another for the old woman Shewahi. Then they brought before them the captives and among the rest, Queen Nour el Huda bound and shackled, whom when Shewahi saw, she said to her, 'O harlot, O wicked wretch, thy recompense shall be that two bitches be starved and two horses stinted of water, till they be athirst: then shalt thou be bound, with the bitches after thee, to the horses' tails and the latter driven to the river, that the bitches may rend thy skin; and after, thy flesh shall be cut of and given them to eat. How couldst thou deal thus with thy sister, O vile woman, seeing that she was lawfully married, after the law of God and of His Apostle? For there is no monkery in Islam and marriage is of the ordinances of the Apostles (on whom be peace!) nor were women created but for men.'

Then Hassan commanded to put all the captives to death and the old woman cried out, saying, 'Slay them all and spare none!' But, when Menar es Sena saw her sister in this plight, a prisoner and in fetters, she wept over her and said, 'O my sister, who is this hath conquered us and made us captives in our own land?' Quoth Nour el Huda, 'Verily, this is a grave matter. Indeed this man Hassan hath gotten the mastery over us and God hath given him dominion over us and over all our realm and he hath overcome us, us and the Kings of the Jinn.' And her sister answered her, saying, 'Indeed, God aided him not against you nor did he overcome you nor make you prisoners, save by means of this cap and wand.' So Nour el Huda was assured that he had conquered her by means thereof and humbled herself to her sister, till she was moved to pity for her and said to Hassan, 'What wilt thou do with my sister? Behold, she is in thy hands and she hath done thee no offence that thou shouldst punish her.' Quoth Hassan, 'Her torturing of thee was offence enough.’ But she answered, saying, ‘She hath excuse for all she did with me. As for thee, thou hast set my fathers heart on fire for the loss of me, and how will it be with him, if he lose my sister also?’ And he said to her, ‘It is thine to decide; do what thou wilt.’

So she commanded to loose her sister and the rest of the captives, and they did her bidding. Then she went up to Queen Nour el Huda and embraced her, and they wept together awhile; after which quoth the queen, ‘O my sister, bear me not malice for that I did with thee.’ ‘O my sister,’ replied Menar es Sena, ‘this was decreed to me.’ Then they sat on the couch talking and Menar es Sena made peace between the old woman and her sister, after the goodliest fashion, and their hearts were set at ease. After this Hassan dismissed the servants of the wand, thanking them for the succour which they had afforded him against his enemies, and Menar es Sena related to her sister all that had befallen her with Hassan and all he bad suffered for her sake, saying, ‘O my sister, it behoves us to fail not of what is due to him who hath done these deeds and is possessed of this might and whom God the Most High hath gifted with such exceeding prowess, that he hath won to our country and beaten thine army and taken thee prisoner and defied our father, the Supreme King, who hath dominion over all the princes of the Jinn.’ ‘By Allah, O my sister,’ replied Nour el Huda, ‘thou sayst sooth! What this man hath undergone is something marvellous and none may fail of respect to him, more by token of his generosity. But was all this on thine account?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Menar es Sena, and they passed the night in converse till the morning.

When the sun rose, they were minded to depart; so Hassan smote the earth with the wand and the Jinn appeared and saluted him, saying, ‘Praised be God who hath set thy heart at ease! Command us what thou wilt, and we will do it for thee in less than the twinkling of an eye.’ He thanked them and said to them, ‘God requite you with good! Saddle me two horses of the best.’ So they brought him forthwith two saddled horses, one of which he mounted, taking his elder son before him, and his wife mounted the other, taking the younger son before her. Then the queen and the old woman also took horse and they bade each other farewell and departed, Hassan and his wife taking the right and the queen and Shewahi the left-hand road.

The former fared on with their children, without stopping, for a whole month, till they came in sight of a city, compassed about with trees and streams, and alighted among the trees, thinking to rest there. As they sat talking, they saw many horsemen coming towards them, whereupon Hassan rose and going to meet them, found that it was King Hessoun, lord of the Land of Camphor and Castle of Crystal, with his attendants.

So he went up to the king and kissed his hands and saluted him; and when the latter saw him, he returned his salute and gave him joy of his safety and rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy. Then he dismounted and seating himself with Hassan upon carpets under the trees, said to him, ‘O Hassan, tell me all that hath befallen thee, first and last.’ So he told him all that had passed and the king marvelled thereat and said to him, ‘O my son, none ever won to the Wac Islands and returned thence but thou, and indeed thy case is wonderful; but praised be God for safety!’ Then he mounted and carried Hassan and his wife and children into the city, where he lodged them in the guest-house of his palace; and they abode with him three days, feasting and making merry, after which Hassan sought his leave to depart to his own country and he granted it. So they took horse and the king rode with them ten days, after which he took leave of them and turned back, whilst Hassan and his wife and children fared on a whole month, till they came to a great cavern, whose floor was of brass. Quoth Hassan to his wife, ‘Knowest thou yonder cavern?’ And she answered, ‘No.’ Said he, ‘Therein dwells a Sheikh named Abourruweish, to whom I am greatly beholden, for that he was the means of my knowing King Hessoum.’

Then he went on to tell her all that had passed between him and Abourruweish and as he was thus engaged, behold, the Sheikh himself issued from the cavern. When Hassan saw him, he dismounted and kissed his hands, and the Sheikh saluted him and gave him joy of his safety and rejoiced in him. Then he carried him into the cavern and sat down with him, whilst Hassan told him what had befallen him in the Wac Islands; whereat the Sheikh marvelled exceedingly and said, ‘O Hassan, how didst thou deliver thy wife and children?’ So he told him the story of the cap and the wand, at which he marvelled and said, ‘O Hassan, O my son, but for this wand and cap, thou hadst never delivered thy wife and children.’ And he replied, ‘Even so, O my lord.’

As they were talking, there came a knocking at the door and Abourruweish went out and found Abdulcuddous mounted on his elephant. So he saluted him and brought him into the cavern, where he embraced Hassan and gave him joy of his safety, rejoicing greatly in his return. Then said Abourruweish to Hassan, ‘Tell the Sheikh Abdulcuddous all that hath befallen thee, O Hassan.’ So he repeated to him all that had passed, till he came to the story of the wand and cap, whereupon quoth Abdulcuddous, ‘O my son, thou hast delivered thy wife and thy children and hast no further need of the wand and the cap. Now we were the means of thy winning to the Wac Islands and I have done thee kindness for the sake of the daughters of my brother; wherefore I beg thee, of thy bounty and favour, to give me the wand and the Sheikh Abourruweish the cap.’

When Hassan heard this, be hung down his head, being ashamed to reply, ‘I will not give them to you,’ and said in himself, ‘Indeed, these two elders have done me great kindness and but for them, I had never won to the Wac Islands and delivered my children, nor had I gotten me this wand and cap.’ So he raised his head and answered, ‘Yes, I will give them to you: but, O my lords, I fear lest the Supreme King, my wife’s father, come upon me with his hosts and beset me in my own country, and I be unable to repel them, for want of the wand and the cap.’ ‘Fear not, O my son,’ answered Abdulcuddous; ‘we will succour thee and keep watch for thee in this place and fend off from thee whosoever shall come against thee from thy wife’s father or any other; wherefore be thou of good cheer and comfort and fear nothing, for no harm shall come to thee.’ When Hassan heard this, he was abashed and gave the cap to Abourruweish, saying to Abdulcuddous, ‘Bear me company to my own land and I will give thee the wand.’ At this the two elders rejoiced exceedingly and made him ready riches and treasures past description.

He abode with them three days, at the end of which time he set out again and the Sheikh Abdulcuddous made ready to depart with him. So he and his wife mounted their beasts and Abdulcuddous whistled, whereupon a great elephant came running up from the heart of the desert and he mounted it. Then they took leave of Abourruweish and fared on across country, whilst Abdulcuddous guided them by a short and easy way, till they drew near the princesses' country; whereupon Hassan rejoiced and praised God for his safe return and reunion with his wife and children after so many hardships and perils and thanked Him for His favours and bounties, reciting the following verses:

Sure God will soon for us cause union to betide And in your arms locked fast, I shall to you confide
The wonders that have chanced to me and all I've felt Of anguish since the day that did our loves divide;
And I shall heal mine eyes with looking on your sight, For long my heart for you with yearning hath been wried.
I've hidden you a tale within my heart, that I Will tell you, when we meet: indeed, I shall you chide
For what you wrought of wrong aforetime; but reproach Shall end and pass away and only love abide.

Hardly had he made an end of these verses, when they came in sight of the green pavilion and the pool and the green palace, and the Mountain of Clouds appeared to them afar off; whereupon quoth Abdulcuddous, 'Rejoice, O Hassan, in good news! For to-night shalt thou be the guest of my nieces.' At this he rejoiced with an exceeding joy, he and his wife, and they alighted at the pavilion, where they ate and drank and rested; after which they took horse again and rode on till they came in sight of the palace.

As they drew near, the princesses came forth to meet them and saluted them; and their uncle said to them, 'O daughters of my brother, behold, I have accomplished your brother Hassan's occasion and have helped him to regain his wife and children.' So they embraced him and gave him joy of his return in health and safety and of his reunion with his wife and children, and it was a day of festival with them. Then came forward his sister, the youngest princess, and embraced him, weeping sore, whilst he also wept for his long estrangement: after which she complained to him of that which she had suffered for the pangs of separation and weariness of heart in his absence and recited these verses:

Mine eyes, since thou departedst hence, ne'er on a creature fell,
But straight thine image mirrored rose before it, sooth to tell;
Nor have I ever closed my lids in slumber, but In dreams I saw
thee, as it were 'twixt eye and eyelid thou didst dwell.

When she had made an end of her verses, she rejoiced with an exceeding joy and Hassan said to her, 'O my sister, I have thee to thank in this matter, over all thy sisters, and may God the Most High vouchsafe thee aid and countenance!' Then he related to her all that had befallen him in his journey, first and last, and all that he had undergone, telling her what had betided him with his wife's sister and how he had delivered his wife and children and all that he had seen of marvels and grievous perils, even to how Queen Nour el Huda would have slain him and his wife and children and none saved them from her but God the Most High. Moreover, he related to her the adventure of the cap and the wand and how Abdulcuddous and Abourruweish had sought them of him and he had not agreed to give them to them but for her sake; wherefore she thanked him and wished him long life; and he said, 'By Allah, I shall never forget all the kindness thou hast done me, first and last!'

Then she turned to his wife Menar es Sena and embraced her and pressed her children to her bosom, saying to her, 'O daughter of the Supreme King, was there no pity in thy heart, that thou partedst him and his children and set his heart on fire for them? Didst thou desire by this that he should die?' The princess laughed and answered, 'Thus was it ordained of God (blessed and exalted be He!) and whoso beguileth folk, may God beguile him!' Then they set on meat and drink, and they all ate and drank and made merry. They abode thus ten days feasting and merry-making, at the end of which time Hassan prepared to continue his journey. So his sister rose and made him ready riches and rarities, such as beggar description. Then she strained him to her bosom, because of leave-taking, and embraced him, whilst he recited the following verses on her account:

Solace from those who love far distant is, heigho! And severance

of friends is nought but grievous woe.
Estrangement and disdain a sore affliction are And he who's slain of love a martyr is, I trow.
How long is night on him who's parted from his love, A lover left forlorn, how weariful and slow!
His tears upon his cheeks course down, what while he saith, 'Ah woe is me for tears! Can more be yet to flow?'

With this he gave the wand to the Sheikh Abdulcuddous, who rejoiced therein with an exceeding joy and thanking him. mounted and returned to his own place. Then Hassan took horse with his wife and children and departed from the palace of the princesses, who went forth with him, to bid him farewell. Then they turned back and Hassan fared on, over hill and dale, two months and ten days, till he came to the city of Baghdad, the Abode of Peace, and repairing to his house by the private way that gave upon the open country, knocked at the door.

Now his mother, for long absence, had forsworn repose and given herself to mourning and weeping and lamentation, till she fell sick and ate not, neither took delight in sleep, but shed tears night and day. Her son's name was never from her mouth, albeit she despaired of his return; and as he stood at the door, he heard her weeping and reciting the following verses:

By Allah, med'cine, O my lord, one sick for love of you, Whose heart is broken and her frame all wasted and unsound!
Yet, of your bounty, if ye would but union her vouchsafe, Sure in her loved ones' favours, then, her sorrows would be drowned.
She doth not of your sight despair, for God almightly is And in the midmost stress of woe, the prosperous times come round.

When she had made an end of these verses, she heard her son's voice at the door, calling out and saying, 'O mother mine, fortune hath been kind and vouchsafeth [us] reunion!' She knew his voice and went to the door, between belief and doubt; but, when she opened it and saw him standing there and with him his wife and children, she cried out, for excess of joy, and fell to the earth in a swoon. Hassan tended her, till she revived and embraced him, weeping; after which she called his slaves and servants and bade them carry his baggage into the house. So they brought in all the loads, and his wife and children entered also, whereupon Hassan's mother went up to the princess and kissed her head and feet, saying, 'O daughter of the Supreme King, if I have failed of thy due, behold, I crave pardon of God the Great.'

Then she turned to Hassan and said to him, 'O my son, what was the cause of this long absence?' So he related to her all his adventures from beginning to end; and when she heard tell of all that had befallen him, she gave a great cry and fell down in a swoon. He tended her, till she came to herself and said to him, 'By Allah, O my son, thou hast erred in parting with the wand and the cap, for, hadst thou kept them, thou wert master of the whole earth, in its breadth and length; but praised be God for thy safety and that of thy wife and children!' They passed the night in all pleasance and happiness, and on the morrow Hassan changed his clothes and donning a suit of the richest apparel, went down into the bazaar and bought slaves and slave-girls and stuffs and ornaments and raiment and carpets and costly vessels and all manner other precious things, whose like is not found with kings. Moreover, he bought houses and gardens and lands and so forth and abode with his wife and children and mother, eating and drinking and taking their pleasure: nor did they cease from all delight and solace of life till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies. And Glory be to Him who hath dominion over the Seen and the Unseen, the Living, the Eternal, who dieth not!

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KHELIFEH THE FISHERMAN OF BAGHDAD.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, in the city of Baghdad, a fisherman called Khelifeh, a very poor man, who had never been married. It chanced, one day, that he took his net and went forth, according to his wont, to fish before the others came. When he reached the river, he girt himself and tucked up his skirts; then, stepping into the water, he spread his net and cast it once and again, but brought up nothing. He ceased not to throw it, till he had made ten casts, and still nothing came up in it; wherefore his breast was straitened and his mind perplexed concerning his case and he said, 'I crave pardon of God the Great, there is no god but He, the Living, the Eternal, and I repent unto Him. There is no power and no virtue save in God, the Most High, the Supreme! What He wills, is, and what He wills not, is not! Upon God (to whom belong might and majesty) dependeth provision! When He giveth to a creature, none denieth him, and when He denierth a creature, none giveth to him.' And of the excess of his chagrin, he recited the following couplet:

If Fate with a calamity afflict thee, thou wert best Meet it with patience and oppose thereto an open breast;
For God, the Lord of all that be, shall, of His power and grace, Cause ease to follow after stress, and after travail, rest.

Then he sat awhile, with his head bowed down, pondering his case, and recited these verses also:

I rede thee, the sweet and the bitter of fortune with fortitude bear, And know, whatsoever betideth, that God of His purpose fails ne'er.
A night often acts upon troubles, as whiles on an abscess it acts, Whereon, till it ripen, it worketh and doth it for bursting prepare.
And so with the shiftings of fortune, they pass o'er a man and then cease And after no longer they irk him nor come to his memory fore'er.

Then he said to himself, 'I will make this one more cast, trusting in God, so haply He may not disappoint my expectation.’ So saying, he rose and casting the net as far as he could into the river, gathered the cords in his hands and waited awhile. Then he pulled at it and finding it heavy, handled it gently and drew it in, little by little, till he got it ashore, when he found in it a one-eyed, lame ape. Quoth Khelifeh, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God! Verily, we are God’s and to Him we return! What miserable ill-luck and sorry fortune is this! What is come to me this blessed day? But all this is of the ordinance of God the Most High!’ Then he bound the ape with a cord to a tree that grew on the river-bank, and taking a whip he had with him, raised it in the air, thinking to bring it down upon him, when God made the ape speak with a fluent tongue, saying, ‘O Khelifeh, hold thy hand and beat me not, but leave me bounden to this tree and go down to the river and cast thy net, confiding in God, for He will give thee thy daily bread.’

So he went down to the river and casting his net, let the cords run out. Then he pulled it in and found it heavier than before; so he tugged at it, till he brought it to land, when, behold, there was another ape in it, with front teeth wide apart, eyes pencilled with kohl and hands stained with henna; and he was laughing and wore a tattered waistcloth about his middle. Quoth Khelifeh, ‘Praised be God who hath changed the fish of the river into apes!’ Then, going up to the first ape, he said to him, ‘See, O unlucky wretch, how foul was the counsel thou gavest me! None but thou made me light on this second ape: and for that thou gavest me good-morrow with thy one eye and thy lameness, I am become distressed and weary, without dirhem or dinar.’ So saying, he took a stick and flourishing it thrice in the air, was about to bring it down upon the lame ape, when it cried out for mercy and said to him, ‘I conjure thee, by Allah, spare me for this my fellow’s sake and seek of him thy need; for he will guide thee to thy desire!’

So he held his hand from him and throwing down the stick, went up to the second ape, who said to him, ‘O Khelifeh, this [my] speech will profit thee nothing, except thou hearken to what I say to thee; but, if thou do my bidding and cross me not, I will be the means of thine enrichment.’ ‘And what hast thou to say to me,’ asked Khelifeh, ‘that I may obey thee therein?’ ‘Go and cast thy net a third time,' replied the ape; 'and after I will tell thee what to do.' So he took his net and going down to the river, cast it once more and waited awhile. Then he drew it in and finding it heavy, laboured at it till he got it ashore, when he found in it yet another ape; but this one was red, with a blue waistcloth about his middle; his hands and feet were stained with henna and his eyes blackened with kohl.

When Khelifeh saw this, he exclaimed, 'Glory to God the Great! Extolled be the perfection of the Lord of Dominion! This is indeed a blessed day from first to last: its ascendant was fortunate in the countenance of the first age, and the book is known by its superscription! Verily, this is a day of apes: there is not a fish left in the river, and we are come out to-day but to catch apes!' Then he turned to the third ape and said, 'And what art thou for another unlucky wretch?' Quoth the ape, 'Dost thou not know me, O Khelifeh?' 'Not I,' answered the fisherman; and the ape said, 'I am the ape of Aboussaadat the Jew money-changer.' 'And what dost thou for him?' asked Khelifeh. Quoth the ape, 'I give him good-morrow every morning, and he gains five dinars; and again at the end of the day, I give him good-even and he gains other five dinars.' Whereupon Khelifeh turned to the first ape and said to him, 'See, O unlucky wretch, what fine apes other folk have! As for thee, thou givest me good-morrow with thy one eye and thy lameness and thine unlucky visnomy and I become poor and bankrupt and hungry!'

So saying, he took the stick and flourishing it thrice in the air, was about to come down with it on the first ape, when Aboussaadat's ape said to him, 'Hold thy hand from him, O Khelifeh, and come hither to me, that I may tell thee what to do.' So Khelifeh threw down the stick and said, 'And what hast thou to say to me, O prince of all apes?' 'Leave me and the other two apes here,' answered the ape, 'and take thy net and cast it into the river; and whatever comes up, bring it to me, and I will tell thee what shall pleasure thee.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the fisherman and took the net and gathered it on his shoulder, reciting the following verses:

Whene'er my breast is straitened, for aid I supplicate A Maker who availeth to save from every strait;
For, ere the glance returneth, the captive is set free From bonds

and healed the broken, by grace of God the Great.
All thine affairs to Him, then, commit; for every man Of understanding knoweth His bounties without date.

And also these:

Thou'rt He who dost the folk, indeed, cast into weariness And cares and woes, effect and cause, dispellest none the less.
Cause me not Thou to covet aught that is beyond my reach. How many a man hath failed to win his wish, for all his stress!

Then he went down to the river and casting his net, waited awhile; after which he drew it up and found therein a fine perch, with a big head, a tale like a ladle and eyes like dinars. When Khelifeh saw this fish, he rejoiced, for he had never in his life caught its like, so he took it, marvelling, and carried it to the ape of Aboussaadat the Jew, as 'twere he had gotten possession of the whole world. Quoth the ape, 'O Khelifeh, what wilt thou do with this and with thine ape?' 'I will tell thee, O prince of apes,' answered the fisherman. 'First, I will cast about to make away with yonder accursed one, my ape, and take thee in his stead and give thee every day to eat of what thou wilt.' 'Since thou hast made choice of me,' rejoined the ape, 'I will tell thee how thou shalt do, wherein, if it please God the Most High, shall be the mending of thy fortune. Take another cord and tie me also to a tree, where leave me and go to the midst of the dyke and cast thy net into the Tigris. Then draw it up, after waiting awhile, and thou shalt find therein a fish, than which thou never sawest a finer in thy life. Bring it to me and I will tell thee how thou shalt do after this.'

So he rose forthright and casting his net into the Tigris, drew up a great shad, the bigness of a lamb; never had he set eyes on its like, for it was larger than the first fish. He carried it to the ape, who said to him, 'Gather some green grass and put half of it in a basket; lay the fish on it and cover it with the other half. Then shoulder the basket and leave us here tied and betake thee to Baghdad. If any bespeak thee or question thee by the way, answer him not, out fare on till thou comest to the market of the money-changers, at the upper end whereof thou wilt find the shop of Master Aboussaadat the Jew, Sheikh of the money-changers, and wilt see him sitting on a divan amiddleward his slaves and servants, black and white, with a cushion behind him and two coffers, one for gold and one for silver, before him.

Go up to him and set the basket before him, saying, "O Aboussaadat, I went out to-day to fish and cast my net in thy name, and God the Most High sent me this fish." He will say, "Hast thou shown it to any but me?" And do thou answer, "No, by Allah!" Then will he take it of thee and give thee a dinar. Give it him back and he will give thee two dinars; but do thou return them also and take nothing from him, though he give thee the fish's weight in gold. Then will he say to thee, "Tell me what thou wouldst have." And do thou reply, 'By Allah, I will not sell the fish save for two words!" He will ask, "What are they?" And do thou answer, "Stand up and say, 'Bear witness, O ye who are present in the market, that I give Khelifeh the fisherman my ape in exchange for his ape and that I barter my lot for his lot and my luck for his luck.' This is the price of the fish, and I have no need of gold." If he do this, I will every day give thee good- morrow and good-even, and thou shalt gain ten dinars a day; whilst this one-eyed, lame ape shall daily give the Jew good-morrow, and God shall afflict him every day with an exaction, which he must needs pay, nor will he cease to be thus afflicted till he is reduced to beggary and hath nought. Hearken then to my words; so shalt thou prosper and be guided aright.'

Quoth Khelifeh, 'I accept thy counsel, O king of all apes! But, as for this unlucky wretch, may God not bless him! I know not what to do with him.' 'Let him go into the water,' said the ape, 'and let me go also.' 'I hear and obey,' answered Khelifeh and unbound the [three] apes, which went down into the river. Then he washed the shad and wrapping it in grass, laid it in the basket, and shouldering the latter, set out for Baghdad, chanting the following quatrain:

Commit thy case to God and thou shalt have security: Do
kindness ever, so thou shalt be from repentance free.
Consort not with suspected folk, lest doubt should fall on thee,
And guard thy tongue, reviling not, lest thou reviled be.

When he came to the city, the people knew him and cried out to him, saying, ‘What hast thou there, O Khelifeh?’ But he paid no heed to them and went on till he came to the money-changers’ bazaar and passing between the shops, found the Jew seated at the upper end, with his servants in attendance upon him, as he were a king of the kings of Khorassan. So he went up to him and stood before him, whereupon Aboussaadat raised his eyes and knowing him, said, ‘Welcome, O Khelifeh! What wantest thou? If any have missaid thee or picked a quarrel with thee, tell me and I will go with thee to the Master of Policed who shall do thee justice on him.’ ‘Nay, as thy head liveth, O chief of the Jews,’ replied Khelifeh, ‘none hath missaid me. But I went forth this morning and casting my net into the Tigris, in thy name, brought up this fish.’

Therewith he opened the basket and threw the fish before the Jew, who admired it and said, ‘By the Pentateuch and the Ten Commandments, I dreamt last night that the Virgin came to me and said, “Know, O Aboussaadat, that I have sent thee a fine present!” And doubtless it is this fish.’ Then he turned to Khelifeh and said to him, ‘Tell me, on thy faith, hath any seen it but I?’ ‘No, by Allah and by Abou Bekr the Truth-teller,’ answered Khelifeh, ‘none hath seen it but thou, O chief of the Jews!’ Whereupon the Jew turned to one of his servants and said to him, ‘Carry this fish to my house and bid Saadeh dress it and fry and broil it, against I make an end of my business and come home.’ And Khelifeh said, ‘Go, boy; let the master’s wife fry some of it and broil the rest.’ ‘I hear and obey, O my lord,’ answered the boy, and taking the fish, went away with it to the house.

Then the Jew put out his hand and gave the fisherman a dinar, saying, ‘Take this for thyself, O Khelifeh, and spend it on thy family.’ When Khelifeh saw the dinar in his hand, he took it, saying, ‘Glory to the Lord of Dominion!’ as if he had never seen aught of gold in his life, and went away; but before he had gone far, he bethought him of the ape’s injunction and turning back, threw the dinar to the Jew, saying, ‘Take thy gold and give folk back their fish. Are folk a laughing-stock to thee?’ The Jew thought he was jesting and offered him other two dinars, but he said, ‘Without a joke, give me the fish. How knewst thou I would sell it at this price?’

Whereupon the Jew gave him two more dinars and said, ‘Take these five dinars for thy fish and leave covetise.’ So Khelifeh took the five dinars and went away, rejoicing, looking and marvelling at the gold and saying, ‘Glory be to God! There is not with the Khalif of Baghdad what is with me this day!’

Thep he went on till he came to the end of the market, when he remembered the ape’s words and returning to the Jew, threw him back the gold. Quoth he, ‘What ails thee, O Khelifeh? Dost thou want change for thy dinars in dirhems?’ ‘I want nor dirhems nor dinars,’ answered the fisherman. ‘I only want thee to give me back folk’s fish.’ With this the Jew was enraged and cried out at him, saying, ‘O fisherman, thou bringest me a fish, that is not worth a dinar, and I give thee five for it; yet art thou not content! Art thou mad? Tell me for how much thou wilt sell it.’ ‘I will not sell it for silver nor gold,’ answered Khelifeh, ‘only for two words that thou shalt say to me.’

When the Jew heard this, he rolled his eyes and breathed hard and ground his teeth for rage and said to him, ‘O scum of the Muslims, wilt thou have me forswear my faith for the sake of thy fish, and wilt thou debauch me from my religion and my belief that I inherited from my forefathers?’ Then he cried out to his servants, saying, ‘Out on you! Baste me this unlucky rogue’s back and drub him soundly!’ So they fell on him and beat him till he fell downs beneath the shop, and the Jew said to them, ‘Leave him and let him rise.’ Whereupon Khelifeh sprang up, as if nothing ailed him, and the Jew said to him, ‘Tell me what price thou askest for the fish and I will give it thee; for thou hast gotten but scurvy fare of us this day.’ ‘Have no fear for me, O master,’ answered the fisherman, ‘because of the beating; for I can eat ten asses’ allowance of stick.’

The Jew laughed at his words and said, ‘God on thee, tell me what thou wilt have and by the virtue of my faith, I will give it thee!’ Quoth the fisherman, ‘I will take nothing of thee save the two words I spoke of.’ And the Jew said, ‘Meseemeth thou wouldst have me become a Muslim.’ ‘By Allah, O Jew,’ replied Khelifeh, ‘if thou become a Muslim, it will neither advantage the Muslims nor hurt the Jews; and in like manner, if thou hold to thy heresy, it will neither damage the Muslims nor profit the Jews. But what I desire of thee is that thou rise to thy feet and say, “Bear witness against me, O people of the market, that I barter my ape for that of Khelifeh the fisherman and my lot in the world for his lot and my luck for his luck.”’ ‘If that be all thou desirest,’ said the Jew, ‘it is lightly done.’ So he rose forthright and standing on his feet, repeated the required words; after which he turned to the fisherman and said to him, ‘Hast thou aught else to ask of me?’ ‘No,’ answered he, and the Jew said, ‘Go in peace.’

So Khelifeh took up his net and basket and returned straight to the Tigris, where he threw his net and pulled it in. He found it heavy and brought it not ashore but with difficulty, when he found it full of fish of all kinds. Presently, up came a woman with a dish, who gave him a dinar, and he gave her fish for it; and after her an eunuch, who also bought a dinar’s worth of fish, and another and another, till he had sold ten dinars’ worth. And he continued to sell ten dinars’ worth of fish daily for ten days, till he had gotten a hundred dinars.

Now he dwelt in the Passage of the Merchants, and as he lay one night in his lodging, [drunken with hashish,] he said to himself, ‘O Khelifeh, the folk all know thee for a poor fisherman, and now thou hast gotten a hundred dinars. The Commander of the Faithful will assuredly hear of this from some one, and mayhap he will be in need of money and will send for thee and say to thee, “I have occasion for a sum of money and I have been told that thou hast a hundred dinars: so do thou lend them to me.” “O Commander of the Faithful,” shall I answer, “I am a poor man, and whoever told thee that I had a hundred dinars lied against me; for I have nought of this.” Thereupon he will commit me to the chief of the police, saying, “Strip him of his clothes and torment him with beating, till he confesses and gives up the hundred dinars in his possession.” Wherefore meseems the best thing I can do, to provide against this predicament is to rise forthright and baste myself with the whip, so to use myself to beating.’ And the fumes of the hashish [he had eaten] said to him, ‘Rise, put off thy clothes.’

So he arose and putting off his clothes, proceeded to belabour himself with a whip, laying every other blow upon a leathern pillow he had by him and roaring out the while, ‘Alas! Alas! By Allah, O my lord, it is a false saying and they have lied against me; for I am a poor fisherman and have nought of the goods of the world!' The noise of the blows falling on the cushion and on his body resounded in the night and the folk heard it, and amongst others the merchants, and said, 'What can ail yonder poor fellow, that he crieth and we hear the noise of blows falling on him? It would seem robbers have broken in upon him and are tormenting him.' So they all came forth of their lodgings, at the noise of the blows and the crying, and repaired to Khelifeh's door, but found it locked and said to each other, 'Belike the robbers have come in upon him from the back of the [adjoining] saloon. It behoves us to climb over by the roofs.'

So they climbed over the roofs and coming down through the ventilator, saw him naked and flogging himself and said to him, 'What ails thee, O Khelifeh?' 'Know, O folk,' answered he, 'that I have gotten some dinars and fear lest my case be reported to the Commander of the Faithful and he send for me and demand them of me; whereupon I should deny, and I fear that, if I deny, he will torture me: so I am torturing myself, by way of using myself to what may come.' The merchants laughed at him and said, 'Leave this foolery, may God not bless thee and the dinars thou hast gotten! For thou hast disturbed us this night and troubled our hearts.'

So Khelifeh left flogging himself and slept till the morning, when he arose and would have gone about his business, but bethought him of his hundred dinars and laid in himself, 'If I leave them at home, thieves will steal them, and if I put them in a belt about my waist, belike some one will see me and lay in wait for me in some lonely place and slay me and take the money from me: but I have a device that should serve me right well.' So he made him a pocket in the collar of his gown and tying the hundred dinars up in a purse, laid them therein. Then he took his net and basket and staff and went down to the Tigris, where he cast his net, but brought up nothing. So he removed to another place and cast again, but still the net came up empty; and he went on removing from place to place and casting the net without better success, till he had gone half a day's journey from the city. So he said in himself 'By Allah, I will cast but this once more, whatever come of it!'

Then he cast the net with all his forte, of the excess of his vexation, and the purse flew out of his pocket and lighting in the middle of the stream, was carried away by the current; whereupon he threw down the net and pulling off his clothes, left them on the bank and plunged into the water after the purse. He dived for it nigh a hundred times, without chancing on it, till his strength was exhausted and he came up for sheer fatigue. When he despaired of finding the purse, he returned to the shore, where he saw nothing but his net and basket and staff and sought for his clothes, but could light on no trace of them: so he said to himself, ‘O vilest of those whereon was made the byword, “The pilgrimage is not perfected but by swiving the camel!”’ Then he wrapped the net about him and taking the staff in one hand and the basket in the other, went trotting about like a camel in heat, running right and left and backward and forward, dishevelled and covered with dust, as he were a refractory Afrit let loose from Solomon’s prison.

Now the Khalif Haroun er Reshid had a friend, a jeweller called Ibn el Kirnas, and all the merchants and brokers and middle-men and other the folk knew him for the Khalif’s merchant, wherefore there was nought sold in Baghdad, by way of rarities and things of price or slaves, male or female, but was first shown to him. As he sat one day in his shop, there came up to him the chief of the brokers, with a slave-girl, whose like eyes never saw, for she was of the utmost beauty and grace and symmetry, and among her excellences was that she knew all arts and sciences and could make verses and play upon all manner of instruments of music. So he bought her for five thousand dinars and clothed her with other thousand; after which he carried her to the Khalif, with whom she lay the night and who made trial of her in every kind of knowledge and accomplishment and found her versed in all manner arts and sciences, having no equal in her time. Her name was Cout el Culoub and she was even as saith the poet:

I gaze on her, when she unveils, again and yet again: In her
refusal of herself to sight are woes and bane.
She doth the slender-necked gazelle resemble, when she turns;
And to gazelles, ’tis said, doth grace of movement appertain.

And what is this beside the saying of another?

Give me brunettes; the Syrian spears, so limber and so straight,
Tell of the slender dusky maids, so lithe and proud of gait.
Languid of eyelids, with a down like silk upon her cheek, Within
her wasting lover's heart she queens it still in state.

On the morrow, the Khalif sent for Ibn el Kirnas and ordered him ten thousand dinars to her price. And his heart was taken up with her and he forsook the princess Zubeideh bint el Casim, for all she was his father's brother's daughter, and all his favourites and abode a whole month without stirring from Cout el Culoub's side, save to go to the Friday prayers and return to her in haste. This was grievous to the grandees of the realm and they made their complaint thereof to the Vizier Jaafer the Barmecide, who waited till the next Friday, when he entered the congregational mosque and foregathering with the Khalif, related to him all that occurred to him of extraordinary stories concerning love, with intent to draw out what was in his mind. 'By Allah, O Jaafer,' said Haroun, 'this is not of my choice; but my heart is caught in the snare of love and I know not what is to be done!' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' replied Jaafer, 'this girl Cout el Culoub is become at thy disposal and of the number of thy servants, and that which the hand possesseth the soul coveteth not. Moreover, I will tell thee another thing and it is that the greatest glory of kings and princes is in hunting and the pursuit of sport and victory; and if thou apply thyself to this, belike it will divert thee from her, and it may be thou wilt forget her.' 'Thou sayest well, O Jaafer,' rejoined the Khalif. 'Come, let us go a-hunting forthright.'

Accordingly, as soon as the Friday prayers were over, they left the mosque and mounting their mules, rode forth to the chase. They fared on into the open country, engaged in talk, and their attendants outwent them. Presently the heat became oppressive and the Khalif said to his vizier, 'O Jaafer, I am sore athirst.' Then he looked round and espying a figure in the distance on a high mound, said to Jaafer, 'Seest thou what I see?' 'Yes, O Commander of the Faithful,' answered the vizier; 'I see a dim figure on a high mound; belike he is the keeper of a garden or of a cucumber-plot, and in either case, water will not be lacking in his neighbourhood. I will go to him and fetch thee some.' But Er Reshid said, 'My mule is swifter than thine;

so do thou abide here, on account of the troops, whilst I go myself to him and get of him drink and return.'

So saying, he spurred his mule, which started off like fleeting wind or lapsing water and brought him, in the twinkling of an eye, to the mound, when he found the figure he had seen to be none other than Khelifeh the fisherman, naked and wrapped in the net; and indeed he was horrible to look upon, as he swayed to and fro, with eyes like flaming cressets for very redness and dishevelled hair, covered with dust, as he were an Afrit or a lion. The Khalif saluted him and he returned his salutation; and he was angry and fires might have been kindled at his breath. Quoth Er Reshid, 'O man, hast thou any water?' And Khelifeh answered, 'O fellow, art thou blind or mad? Get thee to the river Tigris, for it is behind this mound.'

So the Khalif turned the mound and going down to the river, drank and watered his mule: then he returned to Khelifeh and said to him, 'Harkye, sirrah, what ails thee to stand here, and what is thy calling?' Quoth the fisherman, 'This is a stranger question than that about the water. Seest thou not the tools of my craft on my shoulder?' 'Belike thou art a fisherman?' said the Khalif, and he answered, 'Yes.' 'Where is thy gown?' asked Er Reshid. 'And where are thy waistcloth and girdle and [the rest of] thy clothes?' Now these were the very things that Khelifeh had lost, like for like; so, when he heard the Khalif name them, he took it into his head that it was he who had stolen his clothes from the river bank and coming down from the top of the mound, swiftlier than the blinding lightning, laid hold of the mule's bridle, saying, 'Harkye, sirrah, give me back my things and leave jesting.' 'By Allah,' replied Er Reshid, 'I have not seen thy clothes, nor know I aught of them!'

Now the Khalif had large cheeks and a small mouth; so Khelifeh said to him, 'Belike, thou art a singer or a piper by trade? But give me back my clothes, without more ado, or I will belabour thee with this staff till thou bepiss thyself and foul thy hose.' When Er Reshid saw the staff in the fisherman's hand and that he had the vantage of him, he said in himself, 'By Allah, I cannot brook half a blow of that staff from this mad beggar!' Now he had on a satin gown; so he pulled it off and gave it to Khelifeh, saying, 'Take this in place of thy clothes.' The fisherman took it and turned it about and said, 'My clothes are worth ten of this painted clout.' 'Put it on, till I bring thee thy clothes,' rejoined the Khalif. So Khelifeh donned the gown, but finding it too long for him, took a knife he had with him, tied to the handle of his basket, and cut off nigh a third of the skirts so that it [but] fell beneath his knees.

Then he turned to Er Reshid and said to him, 'God on thee, O piper, tell me what wage thou gettest every month from thy master, for thy craft of piping.' 'My wage is ten dinars a month,' replied the Khalif. And Khelifeh said, 'By Allah, my poor fellow, I am sorry for thee! Why, I make thy ten dinars every day! Hast thou a mind to take service with me and I will teach thee the art of fishing and share my gain with thee? So shalt thou earn five dinars a day and be my knave and I will protect thee against thy master with this staff.' 'I will well,' answered Er Reshid; and Khelifeh said, 'Then get off thy she-ass and tie her up, so she may serve us to carry the fish hereafter, and come hither, that I may teach thee to fish forthright.'

So the Khalif alighted and hobbling his mule, tucked his skirts into his girdle, and Khelifeh said to him, 'Harkye, piper, lay hold of the net thus and put it over thine arm thus and cast it into the Tigris thus.' Accordingly, Er Reshid took heart of grace and casting the net, as the fisherman showed him, pulled at it, but could not draw it up. So Khelifeh came to his aid and tugged at it with him; but the two together could not pull it up: whereupon, 'O piper of ill omen,' said the fisherman, 'I took thy gown in place of my clothes; but, if I find my net torn, I will have thine ass for it and will beat thee to boot, till thou bepiss and bemire thyself!' Quoth Er Reshid, 'Let us both pull at once.'

So they both pulled at once and succeeded with difficulty in dragging the net ashore, when they found it full of fish of all kinds and colours; and Khelifeh said to Er Reshid, 'By Allah, O piper, thou art an ugly fellow; but, if thou apply thyself to fishing, thou wilt make a fine fisherman. But now thou wert better mount thine ass and go to the market and fetch me a pair of frails, and I will take care of the fish, till thou return, when we will load it on thine ass's back. I have scales and weights and all we require, and thou wilt have nothing to do but to hold the scales and take the money; for we have here twenty dinars' worth of fish. So be quick with the frails and loiter not.'

'I hear and obey,' answered the Khalif and mounting, left him with the fish.

Then he spurred his mule, in great good humour, and ceased not laughing over his adventure with the fisherman, till he came up to Jaafer, who said to him, 'O Commander of the Faithful, belike, when thou wentest to drink, thou foundest a pleasant garden and enteredst and tookst thy pleasure therein alone?' At this Er Reshid fell a-laughing again and all the Barmecides rose and kissed the ground before him, saying, 'O Commander of the Faithful, may God make joys to endure for thee and do away troubles from thee! What was the cause of thy tarrying and what hath befallen thee?' 'Verily,' answered the Khalif 'a right rare and pleasant thing hath befallen me.' And he told them what had passed between himself and the fisherman, how he had accused him of stealing his clothes and he had given him his gown and how he had cut of a part of it, finding it too long for him. 'By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful,' said Jaafer, 'I had it in mind to beg the gown of thee: but now I will go straight to the fisherman and buy it of him.' 'By Allah,' answered the Khalif, 'he hath cut off a third part of the skirt and spoilt it! But, O Jaafer, I am tired with fishing in the river, for I have caught great store of fish, and my master Khelifeh is waiting with them on the river-bank for me to return to him with a couple of frails and a cleaver. Then we are to go, he and I, to the market and sell the fish and share the price.'

'O Commander of the Faithful,' said Jaafer, 'I will bring you a purchaser for your fish.' And Er Reshid rejoined, 'O Jaafer, by the virtue of my holy forefathers, whoso bringeth me one of the fish that are before Khelifeh, who taught me to fish, I will give him a gold dinar for it!' So the crier proclaimed among the troops that they should go forth and buy fish for the Khalif, and they all arose and made for the river-side. So, while Khelifeh was awaiting for the Khalif's return with the two frails, the guards swooped down upon him like vultures and took the fish and wrapped them in gold-embroidered handkerchiefs, beating one another in their eagerness. Whereupon quoth Khelifeh, 'Doubtless these are of the fish of Paradise!' and taking two fish in each hand, plunged into the water up to his neck and fell a-saying, 'O God, by the virtue of these fish, let Thy servant the piper, my partner, come to me forthwith!'

At this moment up came the chief of the Khalif's black slaves, who had tarried behind the rest, by reason of his horse having stopped to stale by the way, and finding all the fish gone, looked right and left, till he espied Khelifeh standing in the water, with the fish in his hands, and said to him, 'Come hither, O fisherman!' But Khelifeh answered, 'Begone and meddle not with what doth not concern thee!' So the eunuch went up to him and said, 'Give me the fish and I will pay thee their price.' 'Art thou little of wit?' replied the fisherman. 'I will not sell them.' Therewith the eunuch drew his mace upon him, and Khelifeh cried out, saying, 'Hold thy hand, wretch that thou art! Better largesse than the mace.' So saying, he threw the fish to the eunuch, who took them and hid them in his handkerchief. Then he put his hand in his pocket, but found not a single dirhem and said to Khelifeh, 'O fisherman, verily, thou art out of luck; for, by Allah, I have not a rap about me! But come to-morrow to the palace of the Khalifate and ask for the eunuch Sendel; whereupon the slaves will direct thee to me and thou shalt get what falleth to thy lot and go thy ways therewith.' Quoth Khelifeh, 'Indeed, this is a blessed day and its blessedness was manifest from the first of it!'

Then he shouldered his net and returned to Baghdad; and as he passed through the streets, the people saw the Khalif's gown on him and stared at him; [but he paid no heed to them and fared on] till he came to the gate of his quarter, by which was the shop of the Khalif's tailor. When the latter saw him wearing a dress of the apparel of the Khalif, worth a thousand dinars, he said to him, 'O Khelifeh, whence hadst thou that gown?' 'What ails thee to meddle?' replied the fisherman. '[An thou must know,] I had it of one whom I taught to fish and who is become my apprentice. Moreover, I forgave him the cutting-off of his hand, for that he stole my clothes and gave me this clout in their place.' So the tailor knew that the Khalif had come upon him, as he was fishing, and jested with him and given him the gown; and Khelifeh went to his house.

Meanwhile, when the lady Zubeideh heard of the Khalif's devotion to Cout el Culoub, there took hold upon her the jealousy proper to women, so that she refused meat and drank and forswore the delight of sleep and awaited the Khalif's going forth on a journey or what not, that she might set a snare for the damsel in his absence. So, when she learnt that he was gone a-hunting, she caused her women furnish the palace and decorate it after the most magnificent manner and serve up viands and confections; and amongst the rest she made a china dish of the daintiest sweetmeats, in which she had put henbane.

Then she bade one of her eunuchs go to the damsel and bid her to eat with her, saying, 'The lady Zubeideh bint el Casim, the wife of the Commander of the Faithful, hath drunken medicine to-day and having heard tell of the sweetness of thy singing, is minded to divert herself with somewhat of thy fashion.' Cout el Culoub answered, 'Hearing and obedience [are due] to God and the lady Zubeideh,' and rose forthright, knowing not what was hidden for her in the secret purpose of God. Then she took with her what instruments she needed and accompanied the eunuch to the presence of the princess.

When she entered, she kissed the ground before her again and again, then rising to her feet, said, 'Peace be on the lady of the lofty curtain and the inaccessible majesty, the daughter of the house of Abbas and scion of the family of the Prophet! May God fulfil thee of peace and prosperity in the days and the years!' Then she stood with the rest of the women and eunuchs, and the lady Zubeideh looked at her and saw a damsel with smooth cheeks and breasts like pomegranates, moon- bright face, flower-white forehead and great black eyes. Languor sat on her eyelids and her face beamed with light. It seemed as if the sun rose from her forehead and the darkness of the night from her brow-locks. The fragrance of musk exhaled from her breath and flowers bloomed from her lovely face; the moon beamed from her forehead and the branches waved in her slender shape. She was like the full moon shining in the darkness of the night; her eyes wantoned, her eyebrows were arched like a bow and her lips moulded of coral. Her beauty amazed all who saw her and her glances enspelled all who looked on her. Glory be to Him who created and fashioned her and wrought her to perfection! Brief, she was even as saith the poet of one who favoured her:

When she is wroth, I trow, thou seest folk slain and sped, And

when she's pleased, their souls return unto their stead.
Eyes hath she, wheelie proceed bewitching looks, wherewith She slayeth whom she will and raiseth from the dead.
All creatures with her glance she captivates; it seems As if all folk to her were servants, born and bred.

'Welcome and fair welcome to thee, O Cout el Culoub!' said Zubeideh. 'Sit and divert us with thine accomplishments and the goodliness of thy fashion.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the damsel and putting out her hand, took the tambourine, whereof one of its praisers speaks in the following verses:

O thou o' the tabret, my heart for longing flies And whilst thou smitest, aloud for passion cries.
Blame not, my fairest, a wounded heart, a wight Who for thine answer to his petition sighs.
So say, — or weighty or light, — a word and sing Whate'er thou pleasest: thou charmest anywise.
Be kind; discover thy face, my love; arise And dance and gambol and please all ears and eyes.

Then she smote the tambourine briskly and sang thereto, that she arrested the birds in the air and the place danced with them; after which she laid down the tambourine and took the flageolet, whereof it is said:

Eyes hath she and the pupils thereunto that belong Are governed by the fingers to undiscordant song.

And as the poet also says:

When it bringeth with fluting the songs to the goal, The time, for sheer gladness, yields solace of soul.

Then she laid down the flageolet, after she had charmed therewith all who were presents and took up the lute, whereof saith the poet:

How many a tender branch a lute for singing-girl becomes, Whereto the hearts of erudite and generous are fain!
She sweeps it with her finger-tips, of her vivacity Tormenting it, what while she binds it fast with many a chain.

Then she turned its pegs and tuned its strings and laying it in her lap, bent over it as the mother bends over her child; and it seemed as it were of her and her lute that the poet spoke in the following verses:

Featly she discourseth on the Persian string, Sense in him, who senseless was awakening.
Yea, she tells that passion deadly is and plays Havoc with the Muslims' wit and reasoning.
Lo, a maid, by Allah, in whose hand, in lieu Of a mouth-possessor, speaks a painted thing.
As a skilled physician stops the flux of blood, With the lute she staunches passion's running spring.

Then she preluded in fourteen different modes and sang an entire piece to the lute, so as to confound the lookers- on and delight her hearers. After which she recited this couplet:

Blest is the coming unto thee: New joys therein for ever be.
Delight sans cease to it pertain And never-ending jubilee.

Then she rose and exhibited tricks of sleight of hand and legerdemain and all manner of pleasing arts, till the lady Zubeideh came near to fall in love with her and said in herself, 'Verily, my cousin Er Reshid is not to blame for loving her!' Then Cout el Culoub kissed the earth before Zubeideh and sat down, whereupon they set food before her. Then they brought her the drugged dish of sweetmeats and she ate thereof; and hardly had it settled in her stomach when her head fell backward and she sank on the ground, asleep. With this, Zubeideh said to her women, 'Carry her up to one of the clambers, till I call for her.' And they answered, 'We hear and obey.' Then she bade one of her eunuchs fashion her a chest and commanded to make the semblance of a tomb and to spread the report that Cout el Culoub had choked and died, warning her attendants that she would stake off the head of whoever should say, 'She is alive.'

Presently, the Khalif returned from the chase, and his first enquiry was for the damsel. So there came to him one of his eunuchs, whom

Zubeideh had charged to say she was dead, if the Khalif should ask for her, and kissing the ground before him, said, ‘May thy head live, O my lord! Know that Cout el Culoub choked in eating and is dead.’ Whereupon, ‘May God never gladden thee with good news, O wicked slave!’ cried Er Reshid, and entered the palace, where he heard of her death from every one and said, ‘Where is her tomb?’ So they brought him to the burial-place and showed him the pretended tomb, saying, ‘This is it.’ When he saw it, he cried out and wept and embraced it, reciting the following verses:

By Allah, O tomb, have her beauties ceased and disappeared from sight And is the countenance changed and wan, that shone so wonder-bright?
O tomb, O tomb, thou art neither heaven nor garden, verily: How comes it then that swaying branch and moon in thee unite?

He abode awhile by the tomb, weeping sore for her, after which he arose and went away, in the utmost distress.

Meanwhile, Zubeideh, seeing that her plot had succeeded, sent for the damsel and locking her up in the chest, said to the eunuch, ‘Make shift to sell this chest and make it a condition with the purchaser that he buy it locked; then give alms with the price.’ So he took it and went forth, to do her bidding.

To return to Khelifeh the fisherman. When the morning arose and lighted [all things] with its radiance, he said to himself, ‘I cannot do better to-day than visit the eunuch who bought the fish of me, for he appointed me to come to him in the palace of the Khalifate.’ So he went forth of his lodging, intending for the palace, and when he came thither, he found eunuchs and slaves and servants black and white, sitting and standing, and looking at them, saw, seated amongst them, the eunuch who had bought the fish of him, with the others waiting on him. Presently, one of the servants called out to him; whereupon the eunuch turned to see who he was and knew him for the fisherman.

When Khelifeh was ware that he saw him and recognized him, he said to him, ‘I have not failed [of my appointment], O Rosy-cheeks! On this wise are men of their word.’ ‘By Allah, thou art right, O fisherman,' replied the eunuch, laughing, and put his hand to his pouch, to give him somewhat; but at that moment there arose a great clamour. So he raised his head to see what was to do and finding that it was the Vizier Jaafer the Barmecide coming forth from the Khalif's presence, rose and went before him, and they walked about, conversing, a long while. Khelifeh waited awhile; then, growing weary of standing and finding that the eunuch took no heed of him, he set himself in his way and beckoned to him from afar, saying, 'O my lord Rosy-cheeks, [give me my due and] let me go!'

The eunuch saw him, but was ashamed to answer him, because of the vizier's presence; so he went on talking with Jaafer and took no notice of the fisherman. Whereupon quoth Khelifeh, 'O tardy paymaster! May God put to shame all curmudgeons and all who take people's goods and baffle them! I appeal to thee, O my lord Paunch o'bran, to give me my due and let me go!' The eunuch heard him, but was ashamed to answer him before Jaafer; and the latter saw the fisherman beckoning and talking to him, though he knew not what he said; so he said to Sendel, disliking his behaviour, 'O eunuch, what would yonder poor fellow with thee?' 'Dost thou not know him, O my lord the vizier?' asked Sendel; and Jaafer answered, 'By Allah, I know him not! How should I know a man I have never seen before?' 'O my lord,' rejoined the eunuch, 'this is the fisherman whose fish we seized on the banks of the Tigris. I came too late to get any and was ashamed to return to the Commander of the Faithful, empty-handed, when all the rest had some. Presently I espied the fisherman standing in mid-stream, calling on God, with four fish in his hands, and said to him, "Give me what thou hast there and take their price." So he gave me the fish and I put my hand into my pocket, to give him somewhat, but found it empty and said, "Come to me in the palace, and I will give thee wherewithal to succour thy poverty." Accordingly, he came to me to-day and I was putting my hand to my pouch, to give him somewhat, when thou camest forth and I rose to wait on thee and was diverted with thee from him, till he grew tired of waiting; and this is how he comes to be standing here.'

When the vizier heard this, he smiled and said, 'O Eunuch, how is it that this fisherman cometh in his hour of need and thou fulfillest not his desire? Dost thou not know him, O chief of the eunuchs?'

‘No,’ answered Sendel, and Jaafer said, ‘This is the master and partner of the Commander of the Faithful, and our lord the Khalif hath arisen this morning, strait of breast and heavy of heart, nor is there aught will lighten his breast like this fisherman. So let him not go, till I take the Khalif’s pleasure concerning him and bring him before him; peradventure God will relieve him of his oppression and distract him from the loss of Cout el Culoub, by means of the fisherman’s presence, and he will give him wherewithal to better himself; and thou wilt be the cause of this.’ ‘O my lord,’ replied Sendel, ‘do as thou wilt, and may God the Most High long continue thee a pillar of the dynasty of the Commander of the Faithful, whose shadow God perpetuate and prosper it, root and branch!’

Then the vizier went in to the Khalif and Sendel ordered the attendants not to leave the fisherman; whereupon, ‘How goodly is thy bounty, O Rosy-cheeks!’ cried Khelifeh. ‘The seeker is become the sought. I come to seek my due, and they imprison me for arrears!’ When Jaafer came in to the presence of the Khalif, he found him sitting with his head bowed down, sick at heart and absorbed in melancholy thought, chanting the verses of the poet:

My censor bid me be consoled for her: what power, I pray, Over my heart have I, if it my hest will not obey?
How from a tender maiden’s love shall one endure? In me My love’s estrangement to support I find no patience aye.
I can’t forget her nor the time the cup ‘twixt us went round And for her glances’ wine, o’er me did drunkenness hold sway.

Quoth Jaafer, ‘Peace be upon thee, O Commander of the Faithful and Defender of the Faith and descendant of the uncle of the prince of Apostles, God bless him and gave him and all his family!’ The Khalif raised his head and answered, ‘And on thee be peace and the mercy of God and His blessings!’ Quoth Jaafer; ‘If it like the Commander of the Faithful, his servant will speak without restraint.’ ‘And when was restraint put upon thee in speech,’ asked the Khalif, ‘and thou the Prince of Viziers? Say what thou wilt.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Jaafer, ‘when I went out from before thee, intending for my house, I saw thy master and teacher and partner, Khelifeh the fisherman, standing at the door, and he was aggrieved at thee and complaining of thee and saying, "Glory be to God! I taught him to fish and he went away to fetch me a pair of frails, but returned not: and this is not the way a partner should use his partner nor an apprentice his master." So, if thou hast a mind to partnership, well and good; and if not, tell him, that he may take another to partner.'

When the Khalif heard this, he smiled and his heart was lightened and he said, 'My life on thee, is this the truth thou sayest, that the fisherman standeth at the door?' 'By thy life, O Commander of the Faithful,' answered Jaafer, 'he standeth at the door.' Quoth the Khalif, 'O Jaafer, by Allah, I will do my best to give him his due! lf God send him, at my hands, misery, he shall have it; and if fortune, he shall have it.' Then he took a piece of paper and cutting it in pieces, said to the Vizier, 'O Jaafer, write down twenty sums of money, from one dinar to a thousand, and the names of all kinds of offices and dignities from the least employ to the Khalifate, also twenty kinds of punishment from the lightest beating to death.' 'I hear and obey, O Commander of the Faithful,' answered Jaafer and did as he was bidden.

Then said the Khalif, 'O Jaafer, I mean to summon the fisherman and bid him take one of these papers, whose contents none knoweth save thou and I; and I swear, by my holy forefathers and by my kinship to Hemzeh and Akil, that whatsoever is written in the paper he shall choose, I will give it to him; though it be the Khalifate, I will divest myself thereof and invest him therewith and grudge it not to him; and on the other hand, if there be written therein hanging or mutilation or death, I will execute it upon him. Now go and fetch him to me.' When Jaafer heard this, he said in himself, 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! It may be somewhat will fall to this poor wretch's lot that will bring about his destruction, and I shall be the cause. But the Khalif hath sworn; so there is nothing for it but to bring him in, and nought wilt happen save what God willeth.' So he went out to Khelifeh and laid hold of his hand, to carry him in to the Khalif, whereupon his reason fled and he said in himself, 'What a fool I was to come after yonder ill-omened slave, Rosy-cheeks, whereby he hath brought me in company with Bran-belly!'

Jaafer fared on with him, with guards before and behind him, whilst he said, ‘Doth not arrest suffice, but these fellows must go before and behind me, to prevent my making off?’ till they had traversed seven vestibules, when the vizier said to him, ‘Harkye, fisherman! Thou standest before the Commander of the Faithful and Defender of the Faith!’ Then he raised the great curtain and Khelifeh’s eyes fell on the Khalif, who was seated on his couch, with the grandees of the realm standing in attendance upon him. As soon as he knew him, he went up to him and said, ‘Welcome to thee, O piper! It was not well done of thee to make thyself a fisherman and go away, leaving me sitting guarding the fish, and never return! For, before I was aware, there came up slaves, on beasts of all manner colours, and snatched away the fish from me; and this was all of thy fault; for, hadst thou returned presently with the frails, we had sold a hundred dinars’ worth of fish. And now I come to seek my due, and they have arrested me. But who hath imprisoned thee also in this place?’

The Khalif smiled and raising a corner of the curtain, said to the fisherman, ‘Come hither and take one of these papers.’ Quoth Khelifeh, ‘Yesterday thou wast a fisherman, and now I find thee an astrologer: but the more trades a man hath, the poorer he is.’ But Jaafer said, ‘Do as the Commander of the Faithful bids thee and take the paper at once, without prating.’ So he came forward, saying, ‘God forbid that this piper should ever again be my journeyman and fish with me!’ Then he put out his hand and taking a paper, handed it to the Khalif, saying, ‘O piper, what hath come up for me therein. Hide nought thereof.’ Er Reshid gave the paper to Jaafer and said to him, ‘Read what is therein.’ So he looked at it and said, ‘There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ ‘[God grant thou hast] good news, O Jaafer!’ said the Khalif. ‘What seest thou therein?’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered the vizier, ‘there appeareth on the paper, “Let the fisherman receive a hundred blows with a stick.”’

So the Khalif commanded to beat the fisherman and they gave him a hundred blows with a stick; after which he rose, saying, ‘Confound this play. O Bran-belly! Are imprisonment and beating part of the game?’ Then said Jaafer, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, this poor wretch is come to the river, and how shall he go away thirsting? We hope of the charity of the Commander of the Faithful that he may have leave to take another paper, so haply he may happen upon somewhat wherewithal he may succour his poverty.' 'By Allah, O Jaafer,' said the Khalif, 'if he take another paper and "death" be written therein, I will assuredly kill him, and thou wilt be the cause.' 'If he die,' answered Jaafer, 'he will be at rest.' But Khelifeh said to him, 'May God never gladden thee with good news! Have I made Baghdad strait upon you, that you seek to kill me?' Quoth Jaafer, 'Take a paper and crave the blessing of God the Most High!'

So he put out his hand and taking a paper, gave it to Jaafer, who read it and was silent. 'Why art thou silent, O son of Yehya?' asked the Khalif. And he answered, 'O Commander of the Faithful, there is written on this paper, "The fisherman shall not be given aught."' Then said the Khalif, 'Bid him depart our presence, for there is no good fortune appointed to him from us.' 'By thy pious forefathers,' quoth Jaafer, 'let him take a third paper; it may be it will bring him good fortune.' 'Let him take one, then, and no more,' replied the Khalif. So he put out his hand and took a third paper, and behold, therein was written, 'Let the fisherman receive one dinar.' Quoth Jaafer to him, 'I sought good fortune for thee, but God willed to thee nought but this dinar.' And Khelifeh answered, 'Verily, a dinar for every hundred stripes were rare good luck, may God not send thy body health!'

The Khalif laughed at him and Jaafer took him by the hand and led him out. When he reached the door, Sendel the eunuch saw him and said to him, 'Hither, O fisherman! Give us largesse of that which the Commander of the Faithful hath bestowed on thee, whilst jesting with thee.' 'By Allah, O Rosy-cheeks,' replied Khelifeh, 'thou art right! Wilt thou share with me, blackskin? Indeed, I have eaten stick to the tune of a hundred blows and gotten one dinar, and thou art welcome to it.' So saying, he threw him the dinar and went out, with the tears running down his cheeks. When the eunuch saw him in this plight, he knew that he had spoken truth and called to the attendants to fetch him back: so they brought him back and Sendel putting his hand to his pouch, pulled out a red purse, whence he emptied a hundred dinars into the fisherman's hand, saying, 'Take this in payment of thy fish and go thy ways.'

So Khelifeh took the hundred dinars and the Khalif's one dinar and went his way, rejoicing, and forgot the beating. Now, as God willed it for the accomplishment of that which He had decreed, he passed by the slave- girls' market and seeing there a great crowd of people assembled in a ring, said to himself, 'What is this crowd?' So he elbowed his way through the merchants and others, who said, 'Make way for Captain Cullion!' and let him pass. Then he looked and saw a chest, with an eunuch seated thereon, and behind it an old man standing up and crying, 'O merchants, O men of wealth, who will venture his money for this chest [of] unknown [content,] from the palace of the Lady Zubeideh bint el Casim, wife of the Commander of the Faithful? What shall I say for you, may God bless you?'

'By Allah,' quoth one of the merchants, 'this is a risk! But I will say one word and no blame to me. Be it mine for twenty dinars.' Quoth another, 'Fifty,' and they went on bidding, one against the other, till the price reached a hundred dinars. Then said the crier, 'O merchants, will any of you bid more?' And Khelifeh said, 'Be it mine for a hundred dinars and one.' The merchants thought he was jesting and laughed at him, saying, 'O eunuch, sell it to Khelifeh for a hundred and one dinars!' Quoth the eunuch, 'By Allah, I will sell it to none but him! Take it, O fisherman, God bless thee in it, and hand over the money.' So Khelifeh pulled out the money and gave it to the eunuch, who delivered him the chest and bestowed the price in alms on the spot; after which he returned to the palace and told Zubeideh what he had done, whereat she rejoiced.

Meanwhile the fisherman shouldered the chest, but could not carry it [so,] of the excess of its weight; so he lifted it on to his head and carried it thus to the place where he lived. Here he set it down and being weary, sat awhile, considering what had befallen him and saying in himself, 'Would I knew what is in this chest!' Then he opened the door of his lodging and tugged at the chest, till he got it into his chamber; after which he strove to open it, but without success. Quoth he, 'What possessed me to buy this chest? There is nothing for it but to break it open and see what is therein.' So he applied himself to the lock, but could not open it, and said in himself, ‘I will leave it till to-morrow.’

Then he would have lain down to sleep, but could find no room; for the chest filled the whole chamber. So he climbed up on to it and lay down to sleep; but, when he had lain awhile, he felt something stir in the chest, whereat he was affrighted and sleep forsook him and his reason fled. So he arose and said, ‘Meseems there are Jinn in the chest. Praised be God who hindered me from opening it! For, had I done so, they had come upon me in the dark and made an end of me, and no good would have betided me from them.’ Then he lay down again, when, behold, the chest moved a second time, more than before; whereupon he sprang up and said, ‘There it is again: but this is terrible!’ And he hastened to look for the lamp, but could not and it and had no money to buy another. So he went forth and cried out, saying, ‘Ho, people of the quarter!’

Now the most part of the folk were asleep; but they awoke at his crying and said, ‘What ails thee, O Khelifeh?’ ‘Bring me a lamp,’ answered he; ‘for the Jinn are upon me.’ They laughed at him and gave him a lamp, with which he returned to his chamber. Then he beat upon the lock of the chest with a stone and broke it and opening it, saw a damsel like a houri lying asleep within. Now she had been drugged with henbane, but at that moment she threw up the henbane and awoke. Then she opened her eyes and feeling herself cramped, moved: whereupon quoth Khelifeh, ‘By Allah, O my lady, whence art thou?’ Quoth she, ‘Bring me Jessamine and Narcissus.’ And Khelifeh answered, ‘There is nought here but henna-bowers.’ Thereupon she came to herself and looking at Khelifeh, said to him, ‘What art thou and where am I?’ He answered, ‘Thou art in my lodging.’ Quoth she, ‘Am I not in the palace of the Khalif Haroun er Reshid?’ ‘O madwoman,’ replied he, ‘what manner of thing is Er Reshid? Thou art nought but my slave- girl; I bought thee this very day for a hundred dinars and one and brought thee home, and thou wast asleep in this chest.’

When she heard this, she said to him, ‘What is thy name?’ ‘My name is Khelifeh,’ answered he. ‘How comes my star to have grown propitious, when I know it to have been otherwise?’ She laughed and said, ‘Spare me this talk. Hast thou anything to eat?’ ‘No, by Allah,’ answered he, ‘nor yet to drink! I have not eaten these two days and am now in want of a morsel.’ ‘Hast thou no money?’ asked she; and he said, ‘God keep this chest that hath beggared me! I gave all I had for it and am become bankrupt.’ She laughed at him and said, ‘Go and seek of thy neighbours somewhat for me to eat, for I am hungry.’ So he went forth and cried out, saying, ‘Ho, people of the quarter!’

Now they were asleep; but they awoke and said, ‘What ails thee, O Khelifeh?’ ‘O my neighbours,’ answered he, ‘I am hungry and have nothing to eat.’ So one came down to him with a cake of bread and another with broken meats and a third with a piece of cheese and a fourth with a cucumber, and so on till his lap was full and be returned to his chamber and laid the whole before her, saying, ‘Eat.’ But she laughed at him, saying, ‘How can I eat of this, when I have not a drop of water to drink? I fear to choke with a mouthful and die.’ Quoth he, ‘I will fill thee this pitcher.’ So he took the pitcher and going forth, stood in the midst of the street and cried out, saying, ‘Ho, people of the quarter!’ Quoth they, ‘What a pest thou art to-night, O Khelifeh!’ And he said, ‘Ye gave me food and I ate; but now I am athirst; so give me to drink.’

So one came down to him with a jug and another with an ewer and a third with a gugglet; and he filled his pitcher and carrying it back to the damsel, said to her, ‘O my lady, thou lackest nothing now.’ ‘True,’ answered she; ‘I want nothing more at present.’ Quoth he, ‘Speak to me and tell me thy story.’ And she said, ‘Harkye! If thou knowest me not, I will tell thee who I am. I am Cout el Culoub, the Khalif’s slave-girl, and the lady Zubeideh was jealous of me; so she drugged me and put me in this chest. Praised be God for that the matter hath come to no worse issue! But this befell me not save for thy good luck, for thou wilt certainly get of the Khalif Er Reshid money galore, that will be the means of thine enrichment.’ Quoth Khelifeh, ‘Is not the Khalif he in whose palace I was imprisoned?’ ‘Yes,’ answered she; and he said, ‘By Allah, I never saw a stingier than he, that piper little of good and wit! He gave me a hundred blows with a stick yesterday and one poor dinar, for all I taught him to fish and made him my partner; but he played me false.’ ‘Leave this unseemly talk,’ replied she, ‘and open thine eyes and look thou bear thyself respectfully, whenas thou seest him after this, and thou shalt attain thy desire.’

When he heard her words it was as if he had been asleep and awoke; and God removed the veil from his judgment, because of his good luck, and he answered, ‘On my head and eyes!’ Then said he to her, ‘Sleep, in the name of God.’ So she lay down and fell asleep, and he slept at a distance from her, till the morning, when she sought of him inkhorn and paper and wrote to Ibn el Kirnas, acquainting him with her case and how she was with Khelifeh the fisherman, who had bought her. Then she gave him the letter, saying, ‘Go to the jewel- market and enquire for the shop of Ibn el Kirnas the jeweller and give him this letter and speak not.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered Khelifeh and going to the market, enquired for the shop of Ibn el Kirnas. They directed him thither and he saluted the merchant, who returned his greeting with an air of disdain and said to him, ‘What dost thou want?’

So he gave him the letter and he took it, but read it not, thinking the fisherman a beggar, who sought an alms of him, and said to one of his servants, ‘Give him half a dirhem.’ Quoth Khelifeh, ‘I want no alms; read the letter.’ So Ibn el Kirnas read the letter and no sooner knew its import than he rose and kissing it, laid it on his head and said to Khelifeh, ‘O my brother, where is thy house?’ ‘What wantest thou with my house?’ asked Khelifeh. ‘Wilt thou go thither and steal my slave-girl?’ ‘Not so,’ answered Ibn el Kirnas; ‘on the contrary, I will buy somewhat whereof yon may eat, thou and she.’ So he said, ‘My house is in such a quarter.’ And the merchant rejoined, ‘Thou hast done well. May God not give thee health, O unlucky one!’

Then he called two of his slaves and said to them, ‘Carry this man to the shop of Muhsin the money-changer and bid him give him a thousand dinars and bring him back to me in haste.’ So they carried him to the money- changer, who gave him the money, and returned with him to their master, whom they found mounted on a dapple mule, with slaves and servants about him, and by his side another mule like his own, saddled and bridled. Quoth the jeweller to Khelifeh, ‘In the name of God, mount this mule.’ ‘Nay,’ replied he; ‘I fear lest she throw me.’ ‘By Allah,’ said Ibn el Kirnas, ‘but thou must mount!’ So he came up and mounting her, face to crupper, caught hold of her tail and cried out; whereupon she threw him on the ground and they laughed at him: but he rose and said, ‘Did I not tell thee I would not mount this great ass?’ Ibn el Kienas left him in the market and repairing to the Khalif, told him of the damsel; after which he returned and removed her to his own house.

Meanwhile, Khelifeh went home to look after the damsel and found the people of the quarter assembled together, saying, ‘Verily, Khelifeh is to-day altogether undone! Where can he have gotten this damsel?’ Quoth one of them, ‘He is a mad pimp: belike he found her by the way, drunk, and carried her to his own house, and his absence shows that he knows his crime.’ As they were talking, up came Khelifeh, and they said to him, ‘What a plight is thine, O unhappy wretch! Knowest thou not what is come to thee?’ ‘No, by Allah!’ answered he. And they said, ‘But now there came slaves and took away thy slave-girl, whom thou stolest, and sought for thee, but found thee not.’ ‘And how came they to take my slave-girl?’ asked Khelifeh. And one said, ‘Had he fallen in their way, they had slain him.’ But he paid no heed to them and returned, running, to the shop of Ibn el Kirnas, whom he met riding, and said to him, ‘By Allah, it was a scurvy trick of thee to amuse me and send thy servants meanwhile to take my slave-girl!’ ‘O madman,’ replied the jeweller, ‘hold thy peace and come with me.’

So he took him and carried him into a handsome house, where he found the damsel seated on a couch of gold, with ten slave-girls like moons round her. Ibn el Kirnas kissed the ground before her and she said, ‘What hast thou done with my new master, who bought me with all he had?’ ‘O my lady,’ answered he, ‘I gave him a thousand dinars,’ and related to her Khelifeh’s history from first to last, at which she laughed and said, ‘Blame him not; for he is but a common man. These other thousand dinars are a present from me to him and God willing, he shall get of the Khalif what shall enrich him.’

As they were talking, there came an eunuch from the Khalif, in quest of Cout el Culoub, for, when he knew that she was in Ibn el Kirnas’s house, he could not restrain his impatience, but sent forthwith to fetch her. So she repaired to the palace, taking Khelifeh with her, and going in to the presence, kissed the ground before the Khalif, who rose to her, saluting and welcoming her, and asked her how she had fared with him who had bought her. ‘He is a man named

Khelifeh the fisherman,' answered she, 'and standeth presently at the door. He tells me that he hath an account to settle with the Commander of the Faithful, by reason of a partnership between him and the Khalif in fishing.' 'Is he at the door?' asked Er Reshid; and she answered, 'Yes.'

So the Khalif sent for him and he kissed the ground before him and wished him continuance of glory and prosperity. The Khalif marvelled at him and laughed at him and said to him, 'O fisherman, wast thou in very earnest my partner yesterday?' Khelifeh took his meaning and summoning courage, replied, 'By Him who bestowed upon thee the succession to thine uncle's son, I know her not in anywise and have had no commerce with her save by way of looking and talking!' Then he told him all that had befallen him, since he last saw him, whereat the Khalif laughed and his breast dilated and he said to Khelifeh, 'Ask of us what thou wilt, O thou that bringest folk their own!' But he was silent; so the Khalif ordered him fifty thousand dinars and a sumptuous dress of honour from the royal wardrobe and a mule, and gave him black slaves to wait on him, so that he became as he were one of the kings of the time.

The Khalif was rejoiced at the recovery of his favourite and knew that this was of the doing of his wife Zubeideh, wherefore he was sore enraged against her and held aloof from her a great while, visiting her not neither relenting to her. When she was certified of this, she was sore concerned for his anger and her face paled, that was wont to be rosy, till, when her patience was exhausted, she sent a letter to her cousin, the Commander of the Faithful, making her excuses to him and confessing her offences, and ending with these verses:

I long once more thy sometime love and favour to regain, That therewithal I may assuage my sorrow and my pain.
Pity the transport of my love and passion, O my lords! So I have suffered at your hands enough of dole and bane.
My patience all, beloved mine, for your estrangement's spentL You've troubled all my life serene with rigour and disdain.
'Tis life to me, if you fulfil the vows you swore to me, And very death if you to me fulfilment will not deign.

Grant that I've sinned, be bountiful; forgive me, for, by God,
How sweet the loved one is, when he forgives and takes again!

When the Khalif read her letter and saw that she acknowledged her offence and sent to make her excuses to him therefor, he said, 'Verily, God pardoneth all offences; for He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.' And he returned her an answer, containing [assurance of] satisfaction and pardon and forgiveness for what was past, whereat she rejoiced greatly.

As for Khelifeh, the Khalif assigned him a monthly allowance of fifty dinars, by way of recompense, and took him into his especial favour. Then he kissed the earth before the Commander of the Faithful and went forth with stately gait. When he came to the door, the eunuch Sendel saw him and knowing him, said to him, 'O fisherman, how camest thou by all this?' So he told him all that had befallen him, first and last, whereat Sendel rejoiced, in that he had been the cause of his enrichment, and said to him, 'Wilt thou not give me largesse of this wealth that is become thine?' So Khelifeh put his hand to his pouch and taking out a purse containing a thousand dinars, gave it to the eunuch, who said, 'Keep thy money and God bless thee in it!' and marvelled at his generosity and at the liberality of his soul, for all his [late] poverty.

Then he mounted his mule and rode, with the slaves' Hands on her crupper, till he came to his lodging, whilst the folk stared at him and marvelled at that which had betided him of advancement. When he alighted, they accosted him and enquired the cause of his change of fortune, and he told them all that had happened to him, from first to last. Then he bought a fine house and laid out much money thereon, till it was perfect in all respects. And he took up his abode therein and was wont to recite the following verses thereon:

Behold a house that's like the Dwelling of Delight! Its aspect heals the sick and banishes despite.
Its sojourn for the great and wise appointed is, And fortune fair therein abideth day and night.

As soon as he was settled in his house, he sought in marriage a handsome girl, daughter of one of the chief men of the city, and went in to her and led a life of all delight and happiness and prosperity. So, when he found himself in this fortunate condition, he offered up thanks to God [blessed and gloried be He!] for the abounding wealth He had bestowed on him and for His continual favours, praising his Lord with the praise of the grateful and chanting the words of the poet:

To Thee the praise, O Thou whose grace doth no remission know,
Whose bounties all-embracing are and all things overflow!
To Thee be praise from me! Accept my homage, for indeed, I'm
mindfull of Thy bounties all and all to Thee I owe.
Thou hast indeed with benefits and favours and largesse
o'erwhelmed me; so I turn to Thee, my gratitude to show.
Out of the ocean of Thy grace and goodness all men drink And
Thou doth succour them in time of trouble and of woe.
O Thou that pardoneth my sins, Thou, O my Lord, on us Heap'st
favours, crowning aye with new those that did them forego,
Still for the sake of him who came, in mercy to mankind, A
prophet, noble, true of speech and clean and pure as snow;
God's blessing and His peace, so long as men his tomb do seek,
On him and on his helpers be and lineage, high and low!
And eke on his companions all, th' illustrious, the wise, The
noble, whilst within the brake the bird doth singing go!

He continued to pay frequent visits to the Khalif, with whom he found acceptance and who ceased not to overwhelm him with favours and bounty: and he abode in the enjoyment of the utmost honour and happiness and prospects and of all the delights and comforts of life, till there came to him the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies; and extolled be the perfection of Him to whom belong glory and permanence, the Living, the Eternal, who shall never die!

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Appendix.

Note

The Breslau version of the story of Khelifeh differs so widely from the foregoing, in which I have, as usual, followed Sir William Macnaghten's Edition of the Arabic Text, that I have thought it well to translate it *en bloc* by way of supplement, instead of contenting myself, as in cases where the Breslau Edition presents but occasional variations from my standard text, with amending and correcting the latter by its light.

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

KHELIF THE FISHERMAN OF BAGHDAD.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, in the city of Baghdad, a fisherman, by name Khelif, a man of many words and little luck. One day, as he sat in his lodging, he bethought himself and said, 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! I wonder what is my offence in the sight of my Lord and [the cause of] the blackness of my fortune and my little luck among the fishermen, albeit I dare say there is not in the city of Baghdad a fisherman like myself.' Now he lodged in a ruined place called a khan, to wit, an inn, without a door, and when he went forth to fish, he would shoulder the net, without basket or knife, and the folk would look at him and say to him, 'O Khelif, why dost thou not take with thee a basket, to hold the fish thou catches?' Quoth he, ' Even as it went forth empty, so would it come back, for I never Take aught.'

One night he arose, in the darkness before dawn, and taking his net on his shoulder, raised his eyes to heaven and said, 'O my God, O Thou who subjectedst the sea to Moses son of Amran, provide Thou me, for Thou art the best of providers!' Then he [went down to the Tigris and] spreading his net, cast it into the river and waited till it had settled down, when he pulled it in and drawing it ashore, found in it a dead dog. So he freed the net from the carcase and threw it away, saying, 'O morning of ill luck! What a sorry handsel is this dead dog, after I had rejoiced in its weight!' Then he mended the rents in the net, saying, 'Needs must there be fish in plenty, after this carrion, attracted by the smell,' and made a second cast.

After awhile, he drew up and found in the net a dead camel, that had caught in the meshes and rent them right and left. When he saw his net in this plight, he wept and said, 'There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! I wonder what is my offence and [the reason of] the blackness of my fortune and the scantiness of my luck, of all folk, so that I catch neither carplet nor barbel, that I may broil in the sand and eat, for all I dare say there is not a fisherman like me in the city of Baghdad.'

Then he pronounced the name of God and casting his net a third time, drew it ashore and found in it a scurvy, one-eyed, mangy, lame ape, with a rod of ivory in his hand. When he saw this, he said, ‘This is indeed a blessed handsel! What art thou, O ape?’ ‘Dost thou not know me?’ answered the ape, and Khelif said, ‘No, by Allah, I have no knowledge of thee!’ Quoth the ape, ‘I am thine ape;’ and Khelif said, ‘ What use is there in thee, O my ape?’ ‘ Every day,’ replied the ape, ‘I give thee good-morrow, so God the Most High may not vouchsafe thee provision.’

Quoth Khelif, thou failest not [of this], O one-eye of ill-omen! May God not bless thee! Needs must I put out thy sound eye and break thy sound leg, so thou mayst become a blind cripple and I be quit of thee. But what is the use of that rod thou hast in thy hand?’ ‘O Khelif,’ answered the ape, ‘I scare the fish therewith, so they may not enter thy net.’ ‘Is it so?’ rejoined Khelif. ‘Then this very day will I appoint to thee a grievous punishment and devise thee all manner torments and strip thy flesh from thy bones and be at rest from thee, sorry bargain that thou art!’

So saying, he unwound from his middle a piece of rope and binding him to a tree by his side, said to him, ‘ Harkye, O dog of an ape! I mean to cast the net again and if aught come up therein, well and good but, if it come up empty, I will make an end of thee, by dint of beating, and be quit of thee.’ So he cast the net and drawing it ashore, found in it another ape and said, ‘Glory be to God! I was wont to pull nought but fish out of this Tigris, but now it yields nothing but apes.’

Then he looked at the second ape and saw him round-faced and fair of fashion, with pendants of gold in his ears and a blue waistcloth about his middle, and he was like unto a lighted flambeau. So he said to him, ‘What art thou, thou also, O ape?’ And he answered, saying, ‘O Khelif, I am the ape of Aboussaadat the Jew, the Khalif’s money- changer. Every day, I give him good-morrow, and he makes a profit of ten diners.’ ‘By Allah,’ cried the fisherman, ‘thou art a fine ape, not like this unlucky wretch of mine!’

So saying, he took a stick and came down upon the one-eyed ape’s flanks, till he broke his ribs and he jumped up and down. And the other ape answered him, saying, ‘O Khelif, what will it profit thee to beat him, though thou belabour him till he die?’ Quoth

Khelif, ' How shall I do? Shall I let him go, that he may scare me the fish with his hang-dog favour and give me good-morrow and good-even every day, so God may not provide me? Nay, I will kill him and be quit of him and thou shalt give me good-morrow [in his stead]; so shall I gain ten diners a day.'

'I will tell thee a better way than that,' answered the second ape, 'and if thou hearken to me, thou shalt be at rest and I will become thine ape in his stead.' 'And what cost thou counsel me?' asked the fisherman; and the ape said, 'Cast thy net and thou shalt bring up a noble fish, never saw any its like, and I will tell thee how thou shalt do with it.' 'Harkye, thou also!' replied Khelif. 'If I throw my net and there come up therein a third ape, I will cut the three of you into six pieces.' And the second ape answered, 'So be it, O Khelif. I agree to this condition.'

Then Khelif took the net and cast it and drew it up, when behold in it a fine young carp, with a round head, as it were a milking-pail, which when he saw, his reason fled for joy and he said, 'Glory be to God! What is this noble creature? Were yonder apes in the river, I had not brought up this fish. 'Quoth the second ape, 'Harkye, Khelif! If thou give ear to my rede, it will bring thee good fortune.' 'May God curse him who would gainsay thee henceforth!' replied the fisherman, and the ape said, 'O Khelif, take some grass and lay the fish thereon in the basket and cover it with more grass and take somewhat of basil from the greengrocer's and set it in the fish's mouth. Cover it with a napkin and get thee to the bazaar of Baghdad. Whoever bespeaks thee of selling it, sell it not [but fare on] till thou come to the market of the jewellers and money-changers.

Count five shops on the right-hand side and the sixth shop is that of Aboussaadat the Jew, the Khalif's money-changer. When thou standest before him, he will say to thee, "What seekest thou?" And do thou answer, "I am a fisherman. I cast my net in thy name and took this noble carp, which I have brought thee as a present." If he give thee aught of money, take it not, be it little or much, for it will put to nought that which thou wouldst do, but say to him, " I want of thee but one word, that thou say to me, ' I sell thee my ape for thine ape and my luck for thy luck."' If he say this, give him the fish and I shall become thine ape and this mangy, one-eyed cripple will be his ape.’

‘Good, O ape,’ replied Khelif, [and shouldering his basket, made for Baghdad], nor did he cease going and observing that which the ape had said to him, till he came to the Jew’s shop and saw him seated, with slaves and servants about him, commanding and forbidding and giving and taking. So he said to him, ‘O Sultan of the Jews, I am a fisherman and went forth to-day to the Tigris and cast my net in thy name, saying, “ This is for the luck of Aboussaadat ;” and there came up to me this carp, which I have brought thee by way of present.’

So saying, he lifted the grass and discovered the fish to the Jew, who marvelled at its fashion and said, ‘Extolled be the perfection of the Most Excellent Creator!’ Then he gave the fisherman a diner, but he refused it and he gave him two. This also he refused and the Jew went on adding to his offer, till he made it ten diners; but he still refused and Aboussaadat said to him, ‘By Allah, thou art covetous, O Muslim! Tell me what thou wouldst have.’ Quoth Khelif, ‘ I want of thee but a single word.’

When the Jew heard this, he changed colour and said, ‘Wouldst thou have me forsake my faith? Go thy ways.’ But Khelif said to him, ‘By Allah, O Jew, it is nought to me if thou become a Muslim or a Christian!’ ‘Then what wouldst thou have me say?’ asked the Jew, and the fisherman answered, ‘Say, “I sell thee my ape for thy ape and my luck for thy luck.”’ The Jew laughed, deeming him little of wit, and said by way of jest, ‘I sell thee my ape for thy ape and my luck for thy luck. Bear witness against him, [O merchants!] By Allah, O unhappy wretch, thou art debarred [from making any further claim on me]!’

So Khelif turned back, blaming himself and saying, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! Alas, that I had taken the gold!’ and fared on till he came to the Tigris, but found not the two apes, whereupon he wept and buffeted his face and strewed dust on his head, saying, ‘But that the second ape deluded me and put a cheat on me, the one-eyed ape had not made his escape.’ And he gave not over weeping and crying out, till heat and hunger grew sore on him, when he took the net, saying, ‘ Come, let us make a cast, trusting in the blessing of God; belike I may catch a barbel or a carplet, that I may broil and eat.’

So he cast the net [and waiting] till it had settled down, drew it ashore, and found it full of fish, whereat he rejoiced and busied himself with killing the fish and casting them on the earth. Presently, up came a woman seeking fish and crying out and saying, ‘ There is no fish in the town.’ She caught sight of Khelif and said to him, ‘Wilt thou sell this fish, master?’ ‘I am going to turn it into clothes,’ answered Khelif; ‘it is all for sale, even to my beard. Take what thou wilt. ‘So she gave him a diner and he filled her a basket.

Then she went away and up came another servant, seeking a diner’s worth of fish; nor did the folk leave coming till it was the hour of afternoon prayer and Khelif had sold ten diners’ worth of fish. Then, being faint with hunger, he shouldered his net and repairing to the market, bought himself a woollen gown, a skull-cup with a plaited border and a yellow turban for a diner, receiving two dirhems change, with which he bought fried cheese and a fat sheep’s tail and honey and setting them in the oilman’s platter, ate till he was full.

Then he betook himself to his lodging, clad in the gown and the yellow turban and with the nine diners in his mouth, rejoicing in what he had never in his life seen. He entered and lay down, but could not sleep for the trouble of his spirits and abode playing with the money half the night. Then said he in himself ‘Belike, the Khalif may hear that I have gold and say to Jaafer, “Go to Khelif the fisherman and borrow us some money of him. “If I give it him, it will be no light matter to me, and if I give it not, he will torment me; but torture is easier to me than the giving up of the cash. However, I will arise and make trial of myself, if I have a skin proof against beating or not.’

So he put off his clothes and taking a sailor’s plaited whip, of a hundred and sixty strands, fell a-beating himself, till his sides and body were all bloody, crying out at every stroke he dealt himself and saying, ‘[Help,] O Muslims! I am a poor man! O Muslims, I am a poor man! O Muslims, whence should I have gold, whence should I have money?’ till the neighbours who dwelt with him in that place, hearing him [roaring out thus and] saying, ‘Go to men of wealth and take of them,’ doubted not but that thieves were torturing him, to get money from him, and that he was crying out for succour.

So they flocked to him, arms in hand, and finding the door of his lodging locked and hearing him roaring out for help, thought that the thieves had come down upon him from the roof; so they fell upon the door and burst it open. Then they entered and found him naked and bare-headed, with body dripping blood, and altogether in a piteous plight; so they said to him, ‘What is this case in which we find thee? Hast thou taken leave of thy wits and hath madness betided thee this night?’ And he answered them, saying, ‘Nay; but I have gold with me and I feared lest the Khalif send to borrow of me and it were grievous to me to give him aught; yet, if I gave not to him, he would assuredly put me to the torture; wherefore I arose to see if my skin were beating-proof or not.’

When they heard this, they said to him, ‘May God not assain thy body, unlucky madman that thou art! Of a surety thou art fallen mad to-night! Lie down [and go to sleep], may God not bless thee! How many thousand diners hast thou, that the Khalif should come and borrow of thee?’ Quoth he, ‘By Allah, I have nought but nine diners.’ And they all said, ‘By Allah, he is indeed rich.’

Then they left him, marvelling at his lack of wit, and he took his money and wrapped it in a rag, saying in himself, ‘Where shall I hide this gold? If I bury it, they will take it, and if I put it out on deposit, they will deny [having received] it, and if I carry it on my head, they will snatch it, and if I tie it to my sleeve, they will cut it away.’ Presently, he espied a little pocket in the breast [of the gown] and said, ‘By Allah, this is fine! It is under my gullet and hard by my mouth; so if any put out his hand to take it, I can come down on it with my mouth and hide it in my throttle.’ So he put the rag containing the gold in the pocket [and lay down], but slept not that night for inquietude and care and restlessness.

On the morrow, he went forth of his lodging, on fishing intent, and betaking himself to the river, went down into the water, up to his knees. Then he cast the net and shook it mightily; whereupon the purse [flew out of his pocket] and fell into the stream. So he tore off gown and turban and plunged in after it, saying, ‘There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ Nor did he give over diving, till the day was half spent, but found not the purse.

Now one saw him diving and plunging and his gown and turban lying in the sun at a distance from him, with no one by them; so he watched him, till he dived again, when he pounced down upon the clothes and made off with them. Presently, Khelif came ashore and missing his gown and turban, was mightily chagrined for their loss and ascended a high mound, to look for some passer-by, of whom he might enquire [concerning them], but found none.

Now the Khalif [Haroun er Reshid] had gone a-hunting that day and returning at the season of the [noontide] heat, was oppressed thereby and thirsted; so he looked from afar off [seeking water] and seeing a naked man standing on the mound aforesaid, said to Jaafer, 'Seest thou what I see?' 'Yes, O Commander of the Faithful,' answered the Vizier; 'I see a man standing on a knoll.' 'What is he?' asked Er Reshid, and Jaafer said, 'Belike he is the guardian of a cucumber-plot.' Quoth the Khalif, 'Belike he is a pious man; I would fain go to him, alone, and desire him of his prayers; and abide ye in your stead.' So he went up to Khelif and saluting him, said to him, 'What art thou, O man?' Quoth the fisherman, 'Dost thou not know me? I am Khelif the fisherman.' And the Khalif said, ' [What?] The fisherman with the woollen gown and the [yellow] turban?'

When Khelif heard him name the clothes he had lost, he said in himself, 'this is he who took my gear: belike he did but jest with me.' So he came down from the knoll and said, 'Can I not take a noonday nap but thou must play me this trick? I saw thee take my clothes and knew that thou west jesting with me.' At this, laughter got the better of the Khalif and he said, 'What clothes hast thou lost? I know nothing of that whereof thou speakest, O Khelif.'

'By God the Great,' cried Khelif, 'except thou bring me back the gear, I will break thy ribs with this staff!' For he still carried a quarterstaff. Quoth the Khalif, 'By Allah, I have not seen the things whereof thou speakest!

But Khelif said, 'I will go with thee and take note of thy dwelling-place and complain of thee to the chief of the police, so thou mayst not play me this trick again. By Allah, none took my gown and turban but thou, and except thou give them back to me forthright, I will throw thee off the back of that she-ass of thine and come down on thy pate with this staff, till thou canst not stir!'

So saying, he tugged at the mule's bridle, so that she reared up on her [hind] legs and the Khalif said to himself, 'What predicament is this I have fallen into with this madman?' Then he pulled off a gown he had on, worth a hundred diners, and said to Khelif, 'Take this gown in lieu of thine own.' He took it and donning it, judged it too long; so he cut it short at the knees and winding the cut-off piece about his head, turban-wise, said to the Khalif, 'What art thou and what is thy craft? But [there needs no asking]: thou art none other than a trumpeter.' Quoth Er Reshid, 'What discovered to thee that I was a trumpeter by trade?' And Khelif answered, 'Thy big nostrils and small mouth.' 'Well done!' cried the Khalif 'Yes, I am a trumpeter.'

Then said Khelif, 'If thou wilt hearken to me, I will teach thee the art of fishing: it will be better for thee than trumpeting and thou wilt eat lawfully [earned bread]. 'Teach it me,' replied Er Reshid, 'so I may see whether it will suit me or no.' And Khelif said, 'Come with me, O trumpeter.' So the Khalif followed him down to the river and took the net from him, whilst he taught him how to cast it. So he cast it [and drew it up], when, behold, it was heavy, and the fisherman said, 'O trumpeter, if the net be caught on one of the rocks, beware lest thou tug hard at it, or it will break and by Allah, I will take thy she-ass in payment of it!'

The Khalif laughed at his words and drew up the net little by little, till he brought it ashore and found it full of fish; which when Khelif saw, his reason fled for joy and he said, ' By Allah, O trumpeter, thy luck is good in fishing! Never in my life will I part with thee! But now I mean to send thee to the fish market, where do thou enquire for the shop of Ahmed the fisherman and say to him, " My master Khelif salutes thee and bids thee send him a pair of frails and a knife, so he may bring thee fish more than yesterday." Run and return to me in haste.'

'On my head, O master!' replied Er Reshid, laughing, and mounting his mule, rode back to Jaafer, who said to him, Tell me what hath befallen thee.' So the Khalif told him all that had passed between the fisherman and himself, from first to last, and added, 'I left him awaiting my return to him with the baskets and I am resolved that he shall teach me how to scale fish and clean them.'

‘And I,’ said Jaafer, ‘will go with thee, to sweep up the scales and clean out the shop.’ And the affair abode thus.

Then said Er Reshid to his vizier, ‘ O Jaafer, I desire of thee that thou despatch the young slaves, saying to them, “Whoso bringeth me a fish from before yonder fisherman, I will give him a diner;” for I love to eat of my own catching.’ Accordingly Jaafer repeated to the slaves what the Khalif had said and directed them where to find the fisherman. So they came down upon Khelif and snatched the fish from him; and when he saw them and noted their goodliness, he doubted not but that they were of the black-eyed boys of Paradise; so he caught up a couple of fish and plunging into the river, said, ‘O my God, by the secret [virtue] of these fish, forgive me!’ Presently, up came the chief eunuch, in quest of fish, but found none and seeing Khelif ducking and rising in the water, with the two fish in his hands, called out to him, saying, ‘ Harkye, Khelif, what hast thou there?’ ‘Two fish,’ answered the fisherman, and the eunuch said, ‘Give them to me and take a hundred diners for them.’ When Khelif heard speak of a hundred diners, he came up out of the water and said, ‘Hand over the hundred diners.’ Quoth the eunuch, ‘Follow me to the house of Er Reshid and take the money, O Khelif,’ and taking the fish, made off to the Khalif’s palace.

Meanwhile Khelif betook himself to Baghdad, clad as he was in the Khalifs gown, which barely reached to his knees, turbaned with the piece which he had cut off therefrom and girt about the middle with a rope, and passed through the midst of the city. The folk fell a-laughing and marvelling at him and saying, ‘Whence hadst thou that gown?’ And he went on, saying, ‘Where is the house of Er *Reshad*? ‘Quoth they, ‘Say, “The house of Er *Reshid*;”’ and he answered, ‘It is all one,’ and fared on, till he came to the palace of the Khalifate.

Now the tailor, who had made the gown, was standing at the door, and when he saw it upon the fisherman, he said to him, ‘How many years hast thou had [admission to the palace]?’ ‘ Ever since I was a boy,’ answered Khelif, and the tailor said, ‘Whence hadst thou that gown, that thou hast ruined thus?’ Quoth Khelif, ‘I had it of my apprentice the trumpeter.’ Then he went up to the door, where he found the chief eunuch sitting and seeing him exceeding black of hue, said to him, ‘Wilt thou not bring the hundred diners, O uncle

Rosy-cheeks? Quoth he, 'On my head, O Khelif;' when, behold, out came Jaafer from the presence of the Khalif and seeing the fisherman talking with the eunuch and saying to him, 'This is the reward of goodness, O Rosy-cheeks,' went in to Er Reshid and said to him, 'O Commander of the Faithful, thy master the fisherman is with the chief eunuch, dunning him for a hundred diners.' Quoth the Khalif, 'Bring him to me, O Jaafer.' And the vizier answered, 'I hear and obey.'

So he went out to the fisherman and said to him, 'O Khelif, thine apprentice the trumpeter bids thee to him.' So he followed Jaafer into the presence-chamber, where he saw the Khalif seated, with a canopy over his head. When he entered, Er Reshid wrote three scrolls and laid them before him, and the fisherman said to him, '[It would seem] thou hast given up the trumpeting trade and turned astrologer.' Quoth the Khalif to him, 'Take a scroll.'

Now in one he had written, 'Let him be given a diner,' and in another, 'A hundred diners,' and in the third, 'Let him be given a hundred blows with a whip.' So Khelif put out his hand and as fate would have it, it lighted on the scroll wherein was written, 'Let him receive a hundred lashes,' and kings, whenas they ordain aught, go not back therefrom. So they threw him down and gave him a hundred lashes, whilst he roared for succour, but none succoured him, and said, 'By Allah, this is a fine thing, O trumpeter! I teach thee fishing and thou turnest astrologer and drawest me an unlucky lot!'

When the Khalif heard his speech, he swooned away for laughter and said, 'O Khelif, no harm shall betide thee: fear not. Give him a hundred diners.' So they gave him a hundred diners, and he went out and fared on, till he came to the trunk-market, where he found the folk assembled in a ring about a broker, who was crying out and saying, 'At a hundred diners, less one! A locked chest!'

So Khelif pushed through the crowd and said to the broker, 'Mine for a hundred diners.' The broker adjudged him the chest and took the money of him, wherupon there was left him neither little nor much. The porters disputed [awhile] about [who should carry] the chest and [presently] said all, ' By Allah, none shall carry this chest but Zureic!' And the folk said, 'Zureic hath the best right to it.'

So he shouldered the chest, after the goodliest fashion, and followed Khelif. As they went along, the fisherman said [in himself], ‘I have nothing left to give the porter; how shall I rid myself of him? I will traverse the streets with him and lead him about, till he is weary and [sets the chest down and] leaves it, when I will take it up and carry it to my lodging.’ Accordingly, he went round about [Baghdad] with the porter from noontide to sun-down, till the man began to grumble and said, ‘O my lord, where is thy house?’ Quoth Khelif, ‘Yesterday I knew it, but today I have forgotten it.’ And the porter said, ‘ Give me my hire and take thy chest.’ But Khelif said, ‘Go on at thy leisure, till I bethink me where my house is. I have no money with me. It is all in my house and I have forgotten where it is.’

As they were talking, there passed by them one who knew the fisherman and said to him, ‘O Khelif, what brings thee hither?’ Quoth the porter, ‘O uncle, where is Khelif’s house?’ And he answered, ‘ It is in the ruined khan in the Rewasin.’ Then said Zureic [to Khelif], ‘Go to; wouldst thou had never lived nor been!’ And the fisherman went on, followed by the porter, till they came to the place and Zureic said, ‘O thou whose worldly provision God cut off, we have passed this place a score of times! Hadst thou said to me, “It is in such a place,” thou hadst spared me this great toil; but now give me my hire and let me go my way.’ Quoth Khelif ‘Thou shalt have silver, if not gold. Stay here, till I bring thee the money.’ So he entered his lodging and taking a maul he had there, set with forty nails, — wherewith if he smote a camel, he made an end of him, — made for the porter and raised his hand to strike him therewith; but Zureic cried out at him, saying, ‘Hold thy hand! I have no claim on thee,’ [and made off].

Then Khelif carried the chest into the khan, whereupon the neighbours flocked about him, saying, ‘O Khelif, whence hadst thou this gown and chest?’ Quoth he, ‘My apprentice Er Reshid gave them to me,’ and they said, ‘ The knave is mad! Er Reshid will surely hear of his talk and hang him over the door of his lodging and hang all in the khan on his account. This is a [fine] farce!’ Then they helped him to carry the chest into his lodging and it filled the whole chamber.’

So much for Khelif and now for the history of the chest. The

Khalif had a Turkish slave-girl, by name Cout el Culoub, whom he loved with an exceeding love, and the Lady Zubeideh came to know of this and was exceeding jealous of her and plotted mischief against her. So, whilst the Commander of the Faithful was absent a-hunting, she sent for Cout el Culoub and inviting her [to eat with her] set before her meat and wine, and she ate and drank. Now the wine was drugged with henbane; so she slept and Zubeideh sent for her chief eunuch and putting her in a chest, locked it and gave it to him, saying, ‘ Take this chest and cast it into the river.’

So he took it up before him on a mule and set out with it for the sea, but found it uneath to carry; so, seeing the sheikh of the brokers, as he passed by the trunk-market, he said to him, ‘Wilt thou sell me this chest, O uncle?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the broker, [and the eunuch said], ‘But look thou sell it not except locked.’ ‘It is well,’ replied the other; ‘we will do that.’ So he set down the chest, and they cried it for sale, saying, ‘Who will buy this chest for a hundred diners?’ At this moment, up came Khelif and bought the chest and there passed between him and the porter that which hath been before set out.

To return to Khelif. He lay down on the chest, to sleep, and presently Cout el Culoub awoke from the effects of the drug and finding herself in the chest, cried out and said, ‘Alas!’ Whereupon Khelif sprang off the chest and cried out and said, ‘Ho, Muslims! Come to my help! There are Afrits in the chest.’ So the neighbours awoke from sleep and said to him, ‘What ails thee, O madman?’ Quoth he, ‘The chest is full of Afrits.’ And they said, ‘Go to sleep; thou hast troubled our rest this night, may Allah not bless the! Go in and sleep, without madness.’ ‘I cannot sleep,’ answered he; but they railed at him and he went in [and lay down again].

Presently, Cout el Culoub spoke and said, ‘Where am I?’ whereupon Khelif fled forth the chamber and said, ‘O neighbours of the inn, come to me!’ Quoth they, ‘What hath befallen thee? Thou troublest the neighbours’ rest.’ And he said, ‘O folk, there are Afrits in the chest, moving and speaking.’ ‘Thou liest,’ answered they. ‘What do they say?’ And he, ‘They say, “Where am I? “‘ ‘Would thou wert in hell!’ rejoined they. ‘Thou disturbest the neighbours and hinderest them of sleep. Go to sleep, would thou hadst never lived nor been!’ So Khelif went in, fearful [and knowing not what to do], for he had no place wherein to sleep save on the top of the chest, when, behold, as he stood, with ears listening for speech, Cout el Culoub spoke again and said, 'I am hungry.'

So he fled forth in affright and cried out, saying, ' Ho, neighbours, ho, dwellers in the khan, come to me!' Said they, ' What is to do with thee now?' And he answered, 'The Afrits in the chest say, "We are hungry."' Quoth the neighbours to each other, 'It would seem Khelif is hungry let us feed him and give him of what is left from the evening meal; else he will not let us sleep to-night.' So they brought him bread and meat and dates and radishes and gave him a basket full of all kinds of things, saying 'Eat thy fill and go to sleep and talk not, else will we break thy ribs and beat thee to death.' So he took the basket and entering his lodging, sat down on the chest and fell to eating of the food with both hands.

Now it was a moonlight night and the moon shone full upon the chest and lit up the chamber. Presently Cout el Culoub spoke again and said, 'Have pity on me, O Muslims, and open to me!' So Khelif arose and taking a stone he had with him, broke open the chest and beheld therein a young lady as she were the shining sun, with flower-white forehead, moon-bright face, red cheeks and speech sweeter than sugar, clad in a dress worth a thousand diners and more. At this sight he was transported for joy and said, 'By Allah, thou art of the fair!' Quoth she, 'What art thou, O fellow?' and he answered, 'I am Khelif the fisherman.' 'Who brought me hither?' asked she, and he said, 'I bought thee, and thou art my slave-girl.' Quoth she, 'I see on thee a gown of the raiment of the Khalif [Whence hadst thou it?]'

So he told her all that had betided him, from first to last, and how he had bought the chest; wherefore she knew that the Lady Zubeideh had played her false; and she ceased not to talk with him till the morning, when she said to him, 'O Khelif, look [thou get] me from some one inkhorn and pen and paper and bring them to me. So he found what she sought with one of the neighbours and brought it to her, whereupon she wrote a letter and folded it and gave it to him, saying, ' O Khelif, take this letter and carry it to the jewel-market, where do thou enquire for the shop of Aboulhusn the jeweller and give it to him.' 'O my lady,' answered the fisherman, 'this name is difficult to me; I cannot remember it.' And she said, 'Then ask for the shop of Ibn el Ucab.' lady,' asked he, 'what is an *ucab*?' And she said, 'It is a bird that folk carry on their fists, with its eyes hooded.' Quoth he, 'O my lady, I know it.' Then he went forth from her and fared on, repeating the name, lest it pass his memory; but, by the time he reached the jewel-market, he had forgotten it. So he accosted one of the merchants and said to him, 'Is there any here named after a bird?' 'Yes,' answered the merchant; ' thou meanest Ibn el Ucab.' Quoth Khelif, 'That's the man I want,' and making his way to him, gave him the letter, which when he read and knew the purport thereof, he fell to kissing it and laying it on his head; for it is said that Aboulhusn was the agent of the Lady Cout el Culoub and her intendant over all her property in lands and houses.

Now she had written to him, saying, 'From Her Highness the Lady Cout el Culoub to Master Aboulhusn the jeweller. As soon as this letter reacheth thee, set apart for us a saloon completely equipped with furniture and vessels and slaves and slave-girls and what not else is needful and seemly, and take the bearer hereof and carry him to the bath. Then clothe him in costly apparel and do with him thus and thus.'

So he said, 'I hear and obey,' and locking up his shop, took the fisherman and carried him to the bath. where he committed him to one of the bathmen, that he might serve him, as of wont. Then he went forth to carry out the Lady Cout el Culoub's orders. As for Khelif, he concluded, of his lack of wit, that the bath was a prison and said to the bathmen, 'What have I done, that ye should imprison me?' They laughed at him and made him sit on the edge of the tank, whilst the bathman took hold of his legs, that he might rub them. Khelif thought he meant to wrestle with him and said in himself, 'This is a wrestling-place and I knew not of it.' Then he arose and seizing the bathman's legs, lifted him up and threw him on the ground and broke his ribs. The man cried out for help, whereupon the other bathmen fell upon Khelif and overcoming him by dint of numbers, delivered their comrade from his clutches [and tended him], till he came to himself.

Then they knew that the fisherman was a simpleton and served him, till Aboulhusn came back with a dress of rich stuff and clad him therein; after which he brought him a handsome mule, ready saddled, and taking him by the hand, carried him forth of the bath and bade him mount. Quoth he, ‘ How shall I mount? I fear lest she throw me and break my ribs in my body.’ Nor did he mount the mule, save after much pressure and trouble, and they fared on, till they came to the place which Aboulhusn had set apart for the Lady Cout el Culoub.

Khelif entered and found her sitting, with slaves and servants about her and the porter at the door, staff in hand. When the latter saw the fisherman, he sprang up and kissing his hand, went before him, till he brought him within the saloon, where he saw what amazed his wit, and his eyes were dazzled by that which he beheld of riches past count and slaves and servants, who kissed his hand and said, ‘[God grant thee] solace of the bath.’

When he entered the saloon and drew near unto Cout el Culoub, she sprang up to him and taking him by the hand, seated him on a high divan. Then she brought him a vase of sherbet of sugar, mingled with rose-water, and he took it and drank it off and left not a single drop. Moreover, he passed his finger round the inside of the vessel and would have licked it, but she forbade him, saying, ‘That is ill.’ Quoth he, ‘ Hold thy peace: this is nought but good honey;’ and she laughed at him and set before him a tray of meats, whereof he ate his fill. Then they brought an ewer and basin of gold, and he washed his hands and abode in all delight of life and worship.

Meanwhile, when the Commander of the Faithful came back from his journey and found not Cout el Culoub, he questioned the Lady Zubeideh of her and she said, ‘She is dead, may thy head live, O Commander of the Faithful!’ Now she had let dig a grave amiddleward the palace and built over it a mock tomb, of her knowledge of the love the Khalif bore to Cout el Culoub. So she said to him, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, I made her a tomb amiddleward the palace and buried her there.’ Then she donned black, leasing-wise, and feigned mourning a great while.

Now Cout el Culoub knew that the Khalif was come back from his journey; so she turned to Khelif and said to him, ‘Arise; go to the bath and come back.’ So he arose and went to the bath, and when he returned, she clad him in a dress worth a thousand diners and taught him manners and the rules of good breeding. Then said she to him, ‘Go hence to the Khalif and say to him, “O Commander of the Faithful, it is my desire that thou be my guest this night.”’

So Khelif arose and mounting his mule, rode, with slaves and servants before him, till he came to the palace of the Khalifate. Quoth the wise, ‘Clothe a stick with generosity [and it will become generous].’ And indeed his comeliness was manifest and the goodliness of his fashion, and the folk marvelled at this. Presently, the eunuch saw him, who had given him the hundred diners, that had been the cause of his good fortune; so he went in to the Khalif and said to him, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, Khelif the fisherman is become a king, and on him is a dress worth a thousand diners.’ The Khalif bade admit him; so he entered and said, ‘Peace be on thee, O Commander of the Faithful and Vicar of the Lord of the Worlds and Protector of the people of the Faith! May God the Most High prolong thy days and advance thy dominion and exalt thy station to the loftiest!’

The Khalif looked at him and marvelled at him and how fortune had come to him at unawares; then he said to him, ‘O Khelif, whence hadst thou that dress that is upon thee?’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered he, ‘it comes from my house.’ Quoth the Khalif, ‘Hast thou then a house?’ ‘Yes,’ replied Khelif, ‘ and thou, O Commander of the Faithful, art my guest this day.’ And Er Reshid said, ‘I alone, O Khelif, or I and those who are with me?’ And he answered, saying, ‘ Thou and whom thou wilt.’ So Jaafer turned to him and said, ‘We will be thy guests this night;’ whereupon he kissed the earth again and withdrawing, mounted his mule and rode off, attended by his servants, leaving the Khalif marvelling at this and saying to Jaafer, ‘Sawst thou Khelif, with his mule and dress and servants, and his dignity? But yesterday I knew him for a buffoon and a laughing-stock.’ And they marvelled at this.

[Then they mounted and rode, till they drew] near Khelif’s house, when the latter alighted and taking a parcel from one of his attendants, opened it and pulled out therefrom a piece of tabby silk and spread it under the hoofs of the Khalif’s mule; then he brought out a piece of velvet and another of cloth of gold and a third of fine satin and did with them likewise; and thus he spread nigh a score pieces of rich stuffs, till they reached the house; when he came forward and said, '[Enter,] in the name of God, O Commander of the Faithful!' Quoth Er Reshid to Jaafer, 'I wonder to whom this house belongs,' and he said, 'It belongs to a man hight Ibn el Ucab, Syndic of the Jewellers.'

So the Khalif alighted and entering, with his company, saw a high-builded saloon and a spacious, with couches raised [on daises] and carpets and divans laid. So he went up to the couch that was set for him on four pillars of ivory, plated with glittering gold and covered with seven carpets. This pleased him and behold, up came Khelif, with servants and little slaves, bearing all manner sherbets, compounded with sugar and lemon and perfumed with rose and willowflower-water and odoriferous musk.

The fisherman advanced and drank and gave the Khalif to drink, and the cup-bearers came forward and served the rest of the company. Then Khelif brought a table spread with meats of various colours and geese and fowls and other birds, saying, ' In the name of God!' So they ate their fill; after which he let remove the tables and kissing the earth three times before the Khalif, craved his leave to bring wine and music. He gave him leave for this and turning to Jaafer, said to him, 'As my head liveth, the house and that which is therein is Khelifs; for that he is ruler over it and I am wondered at him, whence there came to him this great good fortune and exceeding affluence! However, this is no great matter to Him who saith to a thing, 'Be!' and it is; what I [most] wonder at is his understanding, how it hath increased, and whence he hath gotten this lordliness and dignity; but, when God willeth good unto a man, He amendeth his wit before his fortune.'

As they were talking, up came Khelif, followed by cup-bearers like moons, girt with zones of gold, who spread a cloth of siglaton and set thereon flagons of chinaware and tall flasks of glass and cups of crystal and bottles and hanaps of all colours; and the flagons they filled with pure clear old wine, whose scent was as the fragrance of virgin musk and it was even as saith the poet:

Ply me and ply this mate of mine With cups of the first-pressed Grecian wine.
Daughter of nobles, they her display In raiment of goblets clear

and fine.
They girdle her round with gems, and pearls Of finest water therewith entwine;
So by these tokens in her, I trow, “The bride” they style the juice of the vine.

And round about these vessels were sweetmeats and flowers, such as may not be surpassed. When Er Reshid saw this from Khelif, he showed favour to him and smiled upon him and invested him [with an office]; whereupon Khelif wished him long life and abiding glory and said, ‘Will the Commander of the Faithful give me leave to bring him a singing-girl, a lutanist, never was heard her like among mortals?’ Quoth the Khalif, ‘ So be it.’

So he kissed the earth before him and going to a closet, called Cout el Culoub, who came, shuffling in her robes and trinkets, after she had veiled herself from head to foot, and kissed the earth before the Commander of the Faithful. Then she sat down and tuning the lute, swept its strings and played upon it, till all present were transported for excess of delight; after which she improvised and sang the following verses:

I wonder, will our time with those we love come back again? Will fate reunion and its sweets, I wonder, aye ordain
To one who yearns for those that dwelt once in the ruined steads? Shall we find peace and will time’s shifts no longer work us bane?
How bitter life is since their loss and ah, how dearly sweet The nights of union, when our loves one dwelling did contain!
Draw near to me, beloved mine, vouchsafe to me the grace Of meeting; else my life, indeed, is frustrate all and vain.

When the Khalif heard this, he could not contain him-self, but rent his clothes and fell down in a swoon; whereupon all who were present hastened to pull off their apparel and throw it over him, whilst Cout el Culoub beckoned to Khelif and said to him, ‘Go to yonder chest and bring what is therein;’ for she had made ready therein a suit of the Khalif’s apparel against the like of this time. So Khelif brought it to her and she threw it over the Commander of the

Faithful who came to himself and knowing her for Cout el Culoub, said, ‘Is this the day of Resurrection and hath God called up those who are in the tombs; or am I asleep and is this an illusion of dreams?’ Quoth Cout el Culoub, ‘We are awake, not asleep, and I am alive, nor have I tasted the cup of death.’

Then she told him all that had befallen her, and indeed, since he lost her, life had not been easy to him nor sleep sweet, and he abode now wondering, now weeping and anon afire for longing. When she had made an end of her story, the Khalif rose and took her by the hand, intending for her palace, after he had kissed her lips and strained her to his bosom; whereupon Khelif rose and said, ‘By Allah, it is good, O Commander of the Faithful! Thou hast already wronged me once, and now thou wrongest me again.’ Quoth Er Reshid, ‘Indeed’ thou sayst sooth, O Khelif,’ and bade the Vizier Jaafer give him what should content him. So he straightway gave him all he desired and assigned him a village, the yearly revenue whereof was twenty thousand diners.

Moreover, Cout el Culoub made gift to him of the house and all that was therein of furniture and hangings and slaves and servants and slave-girls, great and small. So Khelif became possessed of this great affluence and exceeding wealth and took him a wife, and good fortune taught him gravity and dignity and prosperity overwhelmed him. The Khalif enrolled him among his boon-companions and he abode in all delight and solace of life, till he was admitted to the mercy of God.

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MESROUR AND ZEIN EL MEWASIF.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, a merchant named Mesrour, who was of the goodliest of the folk of his day, and he had wealth galore and was in easy case, but loved to take his pleasure in gardens and orchards and to divert himself with the love of fair women. One night, as he lay asleep, he dreamt that he was in a most lovely garden, wherein were four birds, and amongst them a dove, white as polished silver. The dove pleased him and an exceeding love for her grew up in his heart. Presently a great bird swooped down on him and snatched the dove from his hand, and this was grievous to him. Then he awoke and strove with his yearnings till the morning, when he said in himself, ‘Needs must I go to-day to some one who will expound to me this dream.’ So he went forth and fared right and left, till he was far from his dwelling-place, but found none to interpret the dream to him. Then he set out to return, but on his way the fancy took him to turn aside to the house of a certain rich merchant, and when he drew near to it, he heard from within a plaintive voice, reciting the following verses from a sorrowful heart:

The East wind from her traces blows to-us-ward, fragrance-fraught, With perfume such as heals the sick and soothes the love-distraught.
By the deserted steads I stand and question; but my tears Nought answers save the witness mute, the ruin time hath wrought.
Breath of the breeze, I prithee tell, quoth I, shall its delight To this abiding-place return, by fairer fortune brought?
And shall I yet a fawn enjoy, whose shape hath ravished me, Yea, and whose languor-drooping lids have wasted me to nought?

When he heard this, he looked in at the door and saw a garden of the goodliest of gardens, and at its farther end a curtain of red brocade, embroidered with pearls and jewels, behind which sat four damsels, and amongst them a young lady over four and under five feet in height, as she were the round of the moon and the shining full moon. She had great liquid black eyes and joined eyebrows, a mouth as it were Solomon's seal and lips and teeth like pearls and coral; and indeed she ravished all wits with her beauty and grace and symmetry. When Mesrour saw her, he entered the garden and went on, till he came to the curtain: whereupon she raised her head and saw him. So he saluted her and she returned his greeting with dulcet speech; and when he beheld her more closely, his reason was confounded and his heart transported. Then he looked at the garden and saw that it was full of jessamine and gillyflowers and violets and roses and orange blossoms and all manner sweet-scented flowers. All the trees were laden with fruits and there ran down water from four estrades, which occupied the four angles of the garden. He looked at the first estrade and found the following verses written around it with vermilion:

May grief ne'er enter thee nor yet dismay, O house, nor fortune e'er thy lord bewray!
Fair fall the house that harbours every guest, When straitened upon him is place and way!

Then he looked at the second estrade and found the following written thereon in red gold:

The garment of fair fortune shine on thee, dwelling, still, Whilst on the garden-branches the song-birds pipe and trill!
May fragrant odours harbour in every part of thee And lovers in thy precincts their hearts' desire fulfil!
In glory and in pleasance still may thy dwellers live, What while a wandering planet shines out on heaven's hill!

Then he looked at the third, on which he found these verses written in ultramarine:

Still mayst thou last in glory and prosper, house of mine, As long as night shall darken, as long as lights shall shine!
All at thy gates who enter good luck embrace and good From thee betide each comer in one unbroken line!

And on the fourth was painted in yellow characters the following verse:

This garden and this lake, a pleasant sitting-place, These, by the clement Lord, are all I ask of grace.

Moreover, in that garden were birds of all kinds, turtle and cushat and culver and nightingale, each carolling his several song, and amongst them the lady, swaying gracefully to and fro and ravishing all who saw her with her beauty and grace and symmetry. 'O man,' said she to Mesrour, 'what brings thee into a house other than thy house and wherefore comest thou in unto women other than thy women, without leave of their owner?' 'O my lady,' answered he, 'I saw this garden, and the goodliness of its verdure pleased me and the fragrance of its flowers and the singing of its birds; so I entered, thinking to gaze on it awhile and go my way.' 'With all my heart,' said she. Mesrour was amazed at the sweetness of her speech and the amorous languor of her glances and the elegance of her shape, and transported by her beauty and grace and the pleasantness of the garden and the birds. So he recited the following verses:

She shone, a moon, amongst the ways, midmost a garden fair,
Wherein sweet jessamine and rose and fragrant basil were,
And myrtle and anemones blood-red and eglantine And violets,
compassing about the cassia-tree, blew there.
The zephyr steals from it the scents, wherewith it laden is; Its
perfume from the boughs exhaled, breathes fragrance everywhere.
Hail, O thou garden, that all flowers and sweets doth
comprehend, That perfect art in every grace and fashion of the fair!
Under the shadow of thy boughs the full moon shineth bright
And with the sweetest melodies the song-birds fill thine air.
Thy ringdove and thy mocking-bird, yea, and thy turtle-dove And
nightingales stir up my soul to longing and despair;
And yearning harbours in my heart: dazed at thy goodliness Am
I, and as one stupefied for drunkenness, I fare.

Then she said to him, 'Harkye, sirrah! Begone about thy business, for we are none of the women who are neither thine nor another's.' And he answered, 'O my lady, I said nothing ill.' Quoth she, 'Thou soughtest to divert thyself with the sight [of the garden] and thou hast looked on it; so go thy ways.' 'O my lady,' said he, 'belike [thou wilt give me] a draught of water, for I am athirst.' Quoth she, 'How canst thou drink of a Jew's water, and thou a Nazarene?' But he replied, 'O my lady, your water is not forbidden to us nor ours to you, for we are all [as] one creature.' So she said to her slave-girl, 'Give him to drink.' And she did so. Then she called for the table of food, and there came four damsels, high-bosomed maids, bearing four trays [of meats] and four flagons full of old wine, as it were the tears of a slave of love for clearness, and [set them down before him on] a table around whose marge were graven the following verses:

They set a table down before the boon companions' eyne, For eating, borne on wroughten feet of gold and silver fine;
The Garden of Eternity it seemed, the which unites All that the soul can weary for of costly meat and wine.

Quoth she, 'Thou soughtest to drink of our drink; so up and at our meat and drink!' He could hardly credit his ears and set down forthright at the table; whereupon she bade her nurse give him a cup, that he might drink. Now her slave-girls were called, one Huboub, another Khutoub and the third Sukoub, and she who gave him the cup was Huboub. Presently, the breeze blew [on the lady] and the scarf fell from her head and discovered a fillet of glittering gold, set with pearls and jewels and jacinths; and on her breast was a necklace of all manner gems and precious stones, to which hung a sparrow of red gold, with feet of red coral and bill of white silver and [body] full of aloes and ambergris and odoriferous musk. Then he looked at the breast of her shift and saw thereon the following verse wroughten in red gold:

The fragrance of musk, that breathes from the breasts of the fair, The zephyr borrows, to sweeten the morning air.

Mesrour marvelled at this with an exceeding wonder and was confounded at her charms and amazement got hold upon him. Then said she to him, 'Begone from us and go about thy business, lest the neighbours hear of and even us with the lewd.' 'By Allah, O my lady,' replied he, 'suffer me to enjoy the sight of thy beauty and grace.' With this she was wroth with him and leaving him, walked in the garden, followed by her maids [Khutoub and Sukoub], whilst

Huboub abode by the curtain with Mesrour, who entered into discourse with her and presently said to her, ‘O Huboub, hath thy mistress a husband or not?’ ‘She hath a husband,’ answered the damsel; ‘but he is presently abroad on a journey with merchandise of his.’

When he heard that her husband was abroad on a journey, his heart lusted after her and he said, ‘O Huboub, extolled be the perfection of Him who created this damsel and fashioned her! How sweet is her beauty and her grace and her shape and symmetry! Verily, my heart is in sore travail for her. O Huboub, [look] how I may come to enjoy her, and thou shalt have of me what thou wilt of money and what not else.’ ‘O Nazarene,’ answered Huboub, ‘if she heard thee speak thus, she would kill thee, or else she would kill herself, for she is the daughter of a champion of the Jews nor is there her like amongst them. Moreover, she hath no need of money and keepeth herself still cloistered, discovering not her case to any.’ Quoth Mesrour, ‘O Huboub, an thou wilt but bring me to enjoy her, I will be thy slave and thy servant and will serve thee all my life and give thee whatsoever thou seekest of me.’

But she said, ‘O Mesrour, this woman hath no desire for money nor yet for men, for my lady Zein el Mewasif is straitly cloistered, going not forth of the door of her house, lest the folk see her; and but that she forbore thee by reason of thy strangerhood, she had not suffered thee to pass her threshold; no, not though thou wert her brother.’ ‘O Huboub,’ rejoined he, ‘be thou our go-between and thou shalt have of me an hundred gold dinars and a dress worth as much more, for that the love of her hath gotten possession of my heart.’ And she said, ‘O man, let me go about with her in talk and I will return thee an answer and acquaint thee with what she saith. Indeed, she loves those who berhyme her and set forth her charms and her grace and beauty in verse, and we may not avail against her save by beguilement and soft speech and craft.’

Then she rose and going up to her mistress, talked with her privily of this and that and presently said to her, ‘O my lady, look at yonder young man, the Nazarene; how sweet is his discourse and how elegant his shape!’ When Zein el Mewasif heard this, she turned to her and said, ‘An his comeliness like thee, love him thyself. Art thou not ashamed to bespeak the like of me with these words? Go, bid him begone about his business; or it shall be the worse for him.’ So Huboub returned to Mesrour, but acquainted him not with that which her mistress had said. Then the latter bade her go to the door and look if she saw any of the folk, lest foul befall them. So she went and resuming, said, ‘O my lady, there are folk in plenty without and we cannot let him go forth to-night.’ Quoth Zein el Mewasif, ‘I am troubled because of a dream I have had and am fearful by reason thereof.’ And Mesrour said, ‘What sawest thou [in thy dream?] May God not trouble thy heart!’ ‘I was asleep in the middle of the night,’ answered she, ‘and behold an eagle swooped down upon me from the highest of the clouds and would have carried me off from behind the curtain, wherefore I was affrighted at him. Then I awoke from sleep and bade my women bring me meat and drink, so haply, when I had drunken, the terror of the dream would cease from me.’

When he heard this, he smiled and told her his dream and how he had caught the dove, whereat she marvelled exceedingly. Then he went on to talk with her and said, ‘Now am I certified of the truth of my dream, for thou art the dove and I the eagle, and needs must this be, for, whenas I set eyes on thee, thou tookest possession of my vitals and settest my heart on fire for love of thee!’ Thereupon Zein el Mewasif became exceeding wroth and said to him, ‘God forfend that this should be! God on thee, begone about thy business, ere the neighbours see thee and there betide us sore reproach.’ Then, ‘Harkye, fellow!’ added she. ‘Let not thy soul covet that it shall not attain to. Thou weariest thyself [in vain]; for I am a merchant’s wife and a merchant’s daughter and thou art a druggist; and when sawst thou a druggist and a merchant’s daughter on this wise?’ ‘O my lady,’ answered he, ‘never lacked love between folk [of different condition]; so cut thou not off from me hope of this and whatsoever thou seekest of me of money and raiment and trinkets and what not else, I will give thee.’

Then he abode with her in discourse and chiding whilst she still redoubled in anger, till nightfall, when he said to her, ‘O my lady, take this dinar and fetch me a little wine, for I am athirst and heavy at heart.’ So she said to Huboub, ‘Fetch him wine and take nought from him, for we have no need of his dinar.’ [So she went to fetch the wine, whilst] Mesrour held his peace and bespoke not Zein el Mewasif, who improvised the following verses:

Harkye, O man! Desist from this thou dost design Nor to the crooked ways of frowardness incline.
Love is a net, and if thou fall into its snare, The day thereafterward for weariness thou’lt pine
Occasion to our spy thou’lt give for talk and all The people will reproach me with this love of thine.
Small marvel ’tis if thou a fair one love: gazelles Thou seest lions chase and in their snares entwine.

And he answered her with these:

O cassia-branch, delight of garth and knoll, Spare thou my heart, who dost possess my soul.
The cup of death for love thou’st made me drain, Clad me in wede of abjectness and dole.
How shall I be consoled, since thou hast taken My heart, for love of thee a red-hot coal!

‘Away from me!’ cried she. ‘Quoth the adage, “He who giveth loose to his eyes wearieth his heart.” By Allah, I am tired of discourse with thee and chiding, and indeed thy soul coveteth that which shall never be thine; nay, though thou gavest me my weight in gold, thou shouldst not get thy wish of me; for, by the bounty of God the Most High, I know nought of the things of the world, save pleasant life.’ ‘O my lady Zein el Mewasif,’ answered he, ‘ask of me what thou wilt of the goods of the world.’ Quoth she, ‘What shall I ask of thee? For sure thou wilt go out into the highway [and discover my case to the folk] and I shall become a laughing-stock among them and they will make a byword of me in verse, me who am the daughter of the chief of the merchants and whose father is known of the notables of the people. I have no need of money or raiment and this love will not be hidden from the folk and I shall be brought to shame, I and my family.’

With this Mesrour was confounded and could make her no answer; but presently she said, 'Indeed, the skilful thief, if he steal, stealeth not but what is worth [the adventuring of] his neck, and every woman who doth lewdness with other than her husband is styled a thief; so, if it must be thus and no help, thou shalt give me whatsoever my heart desireth of money and raiment and trinkets and what not.' Quoth he, 'An thou soughtest of me the world and all that is therein, from East to West, it were but a little thing, compared with thy favour.' And she said, 'I will have of thee three suits, each worth a thousand dinars, and pearls and jewels and jacinths, and I require of thee, to boot, that thou swear to me that thou wilt keep my secret nor discover it to any and that thou wilt company with none but me; and I in turn will swear to thee a true oath that I will never play thee false.'

So he swore to her the oath she required and she swore to him, and they agreed upon this; after which she said to her nurse Huboub, 'To-morrow go thou with Mesrour to his lodging and seek somewhat of musk and ambergris and aloes and rose-water and see what he hath. If he be a man of condition, we will take him into favour; else will we leave him.' Then said she to him, 'O Mesrour, I desire somewhat of musk and ambergris and aloes-wood; so do thou send it me by Huboub.' And he answered, 'I hear and obey; my shop is at thy commandment.' Then the wine went round between them and their session was pleasant; but Mesrour's heart was troubled for the passion and longing that possessed him; and when Zein el Mewasif saw him in this plight, she said to her slave-girl Sukoub, 'Arouse Mesrour from his stupor; mayhap he will awake.' 'Willingly,' answered Sukoub and sang the following verses:

An if thou be in love, bring gold and gear and in thy lays Set forth thy love, so thou mayst win the aim of thine essays
And taste the favours of a fawn, soft-eyed and smiling-lipped, Whose shape is as the cassia-branch, when to the breeze it sways.
Look on her; in her charms thou'lt see matter for wonderment And pour thy life out, ere the term appointed to thy days.
These be the attributes of love, an thou but knewst thereof; But, if the gold delude thee, leave the gold and go thy ways.

Mesrour apprehended [her meaning] and said, ‘I hear and understand. Never was stress but after came relief, and He who afflicteth will order [the issue].’ Whereupon Zein el Mewasif recited the following:

Awake, O Mesrour, from love’s stupor; for lo, I fear lest our love bring thee travail and woe.
Sure proverbs on us East and West shall be made And the folk our report for a wonder shall know.
Leave loving my like, or for sure thou’lt have blame. — Why cleav’st thou to me of all women? I trow,
One well-born shouldst thou love. — Thou’lt a byword become And find not a pitying friend high or low
I’m a Pharisee’s child and the folk fear my wrath: Would the term of my life were accomplished, heigho!

And Mesrour answered her with these verses:

Leave me to my affliction; to love thee I’m content; And blame me not, for censure my passion doth augment.
Over my heart ye lord it in tyrant-wise, whilst I Fare westward neither eastward for very languishment.
Forbidden ’tis to slay me of passion’s law; they say, ‘The slain of love’s a victim, oppressed and innocent.’
Were there a judge in passion, to him I’d make my moan, Mayhap he’d do me justice in his arbitrament.

They ceased not from chiding and discourse till the morning beamed, when Zein el Mewasif said to him, ‘O Mesrour, it is time for thee to depart, lest one of the folk see thee and foul befall us.’ So he arose and going forth, fared on, accompanied by Huboub, till they came to his lodging, where he talked with her and said to her, ‘All thou seekest of me thou shalt presently have, so but thou wilt bring me to her enjoyment.’ Quoth Huboub, ‘Comfort thy heart;’ whereupon he rose and gave her a hundred dinars, saying, ‘O Huboub, I have by me a dress worth a hundred dinars.’ ‘O Mesrour,’ answered she, ‘make haste with the dresses and what not else thou didst promise her, ere she change her mind, for we may not avail to take her save with craft and beguilement, and she loveth the recitation of verses.’ Quoth he, ‘I hear and obey,’ and bringing her the musk and ambergris and aloes-wood and rose-water, returned with her to Zein el Mewasif and saluted her. She returned his greeting with the sweetest of speech, and he was confounded at her beauty and improvised the following verses:

O sun, midmost the dark that shinest in the skies, O thou that hast benumbed my wit with great black eyes,
O loveling sweet, that com’st with neck surpassing fair, Whose cheek the garden-rose eclipses and outvies,
Blind not with thy disdain our sights, for thy disdain A grievous matter is, the heart that terrifies.
Passion took up its stead with me, and ’tis forbid To it to carry off the life’s last lingering sighs.
Indeed, the love of you doth lord it in my heart, And save to you, I find no issue anywise.
Yet haply thou’lt relent towards a lover sad; So shall his darkness flee and morning bright arise.

When she heard his verses, she cast at him a look, that bequeathed him a thousand regrets and his heart and soul were ravished thereby and answered him as follows:

Think not from her, of whom thou art enamoured, aye To win delight; so put desire from thee away.
Leave that thou hop’st, for ‘gainst her rigours whom thou lov’st Among the fair, in vain is all thou canst essay.
My looks to lovers bring discomfiture and woe: Indeed, I make no count of that which thou dost say.

When he heard this, he dissembled and took patience, saying in himself, ‘There is nothing for it but patience against calamity;’ and on this wise they abode till night-fall, when she called for food and they set before her a tray, wherein were all manner meats, quails and pigeons and mutton and so forth, of which they ate till they had enough. Then she bade take away the tables and they did so and brought washing gear. So they washed their hands, after which she ordered her women to bring the candlesticks, and they set on candlesticks and candles therein of camphorated wax.

Then said she, ‘By Allah, my breast is straitened to night and I am fevered.’ Quoth Mesrour, ‘May God dilate thy breast and do away thy trouble!’ And she aaid, ‘O Mesrour, I am used to play at chess: knowest thou aught of the game?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he, ‘I am skilled therein;’ whereupon she bade her maid Huboub fetch her the chessboard. So she went away and presently returning with the board, set it before her, and behold, it was of ebony inlaid with ivory, with squares traced out in glittering gold, and its pieces were of pearl and ruby. Mesrour was amazed at this and she said to him, ‘Wilt thou have red or white?’ ‘O princess of fair ones and adornment of the morning,’ answered he, ‘do thou take the red, for they are handsome and fitter for the like of thee, and leave me the white.’ ‘So be it,’ answered she and taking the red pieces, ranged them opposite the white, then put out her hand to make the first move.

He looked at her fingers, which were white as paste, and was confounded at their beauty and elegant shape; whereupon she turned to him and said, ‘O Mesrour, be not bewildered, but take patience and calm thyself.’ ‘O thou whose beauty puts the moons to shame,’ answered he, ‘how shall a lover look on thee and have patience?’ ‘Checkmate!’ said she and beat him; wherefore she knew that he was mad for love of her and said to him, ‘O Mesrour, I will not play with thee save for a set stake.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered he and she said, ‘Swear to me and I will swear to thee that neither of us will cheat the other.’ So they swore this and she said, ‘O Mesrour, if I beat thee, I will have ten dinars of thee, and if thou beat me, I will give thee nothing.’ ‘O my lady,’ rejoined he, ‘be not false to thine oath, for I see thou art an over match for me at this game!’ ‘Agreed,’ said she and they ranged their men and fell again to playing.

Now she had on her head a kerchief of blue brocade; so she laid it aside and tucking up her sleeve, showed a wrist like a shaft of light and passed her hand over the red pieces, saying to him, ‘Look to thyself.’ But he was dazzled at her beauty and the sight of her charms bereft him of reason, so that he became dazed and stupefied and put out his hand to the white men, but it lit upon the red. ‘O Mesrour,’ said she, ‘where are thy senses? The red are mine and the white thine.’ And he replied, ‘Who can look on thee, without losing his senses?’ Then, seeing how it was with him, she took the white from him and gave him the red, and they played and she beat him.

He ceased not to play with her and she to beat him, whilst he paid her each time ten dinars, till, seeing him to be distracted for love of her, she said to him, ‘O Mesrour, thou wilt never come to thy desire, except thou beat me; and henceforth, I will not play with thee save for a stake of a hundred dinars a game.’ ‘With all my heart,’ answered he and they went on playing, whilst she still beat him and he won not a single game, but paid her a hundred dinars each time; and on this wise they abode till the morning, when he rose. Quoth she, ‘What wilt thou, O Mesrour?’ And he replied, ‘I mean to go to my lodging and fetch somewhat of money: it may be I shall attain my desire.’ ‘Do as seemeth good to thee,’ said she. So he went home and taking all the money he had, returned to her, reciting the following verses:

Methought I caught a bird in sleep, as I did deem, All in a garden fair with smiling flowers agleam.
That I shall get of thee the amorous delight, Th’ interpretation is, me-seems, of this my dream.

Then they fell a-playing again; but she still beat him and he could not beat her once; and on this wise they abode three days, till she had gotten of him all his money: whereupon, ‘O Mesrour,’ said she, ‘what wilt thou do now?’ And he answered, ‘I will stake thee a druggist’s shop.’ ‘What is its worth?’ asked she; and he replied, ‘Five hundred dinars.’ So they played and she won the shop of him in five bouts. Then he staked slave-girls and lands and houses and gardens, and she won them all, till she had gotten of him all he had; whereupon she turned to him and said, ‘Hast thou aught left to stake?’ ‘By Him who made me fall into the snare of thy love,’ answered he, ‘I have neither money nor aught else left, little or much!’ ‘O Mesrour,’ said she, ‘the end of that whose beginning was contentment shall not be repentance; wherefore, if thou repent thee, take back thy good and begone from us, and I will hold thee quit towards me.' 'By Him who decreed these things to us,' replied Mesrour, 'though thou soughtest to take my life, it were a little thing, compared to thine approof, for I love none but thee!'

Then said she, 'Go and fetch the Cadi and the witnesses and make over to me by deed all thy lands and possessions.' 'Willingly,' replied he and going out forthright, returned with the Cadi and the witnesses. When the magistrate saw her, his reason fled and his mind was troubled by reason of the beauty of her fingers, and he said to her, 'O my lady, I will not draw up the deed of conveyance, save upon condition that thou purchase the lands and houses and slave-girls and that they all pass under thy control and into thy possession.' 'We are agreed upon that,' replied she; 'write me a deed, whereby all Mesrour's houses and lands and slave-girls and all his hand possesseth shall pass to Zein el Mewasif and become her property at such a price.' So he wrote out the deed and the witnesses set their hands thereto; whereupon she took it from the Cadi and said to Mesrour, 'Now go thy ways.' But her slave-girl Huboub turned to him and said, 'Recite us some verses.' So he improvised the following verses upon [his own case and] the game of chess:

Of Fate I plain me and for that which hath befall'n me sigh And make my moan of loss by chess and by the [evil] eye,
For love of one, a damsel fair, slender and delicate; Female or male, there's not her like of all beneath the sky.
Arrows upon me from her looks she launched and 'gainst me brought Troops that would conquer all the world and all men, far and nigh;
Red men and white men, ay, and knights for shock of battle ranged; Then came she forth to me and did to single fight defy.
'Look to thyself,' quoth she; but, when she put her fingers out, Mid-most a pitch-black night, most like her sable hair in dye,
I had no power to move the white, to rescue them from her And passion caused the tide of tears in me run fierce and high.
On, with the queens, fall pawns and rooks; they charge the host of white, And these give way, discomfited, and turn their backs to fly;

Yea, and she launched at me, to boot, an arrow of her looks, And to the kernel of my heart the quivering shaft did hie.
‘Twixt the two hosts she gave me choice, and I chose that which whiteWas with the whiteness of the moon that shineth in the sky.
‘The white, indeed, are those which best beseem to me and they Are what I fain would have; so take the red to thee,’ quoth I.
Then played she with me for a stake agreed ‘twixt us; but Fate did unto me the wished-for boon of her consent deny.
Alas, the misery of my heart! Alas, my longing sore For the enjoyment of a maid who with the moon doth vie!
It is not for my goods and lands my heart is all a-fire But that, alack! familiar ’tis grown with the [evil] eye.
Distraught I’m grown and stupefied for dreariment, and Fate, For what’s betided me, I chide with many a tear and cry.
‘What ails thee to be dazed?’ asked she, and I, ‘Shall wine-bibbers Be whole of wit, when drunkenness their sense doth stupefy?’
A mortal maid hath ta’en my wit with her fair shape; if it Be soft, her bowels are like rock, uneath to mollify.
Myself I heartened, saying, ‘Her to-day I shalt possess Upon the wager, fearing not defeat I should aby.
My heart ceased not to covet her, till I to poverty Became reduced, and beggared now in goods and hope am I.
Will he who is in love forswear a love that irketh him, Though in the oceans of desire he struggle like to die?
So is the slave grown penniless, to love and longing thrall, All unaccomplished yet the hope he staked his all to buy.

Zein el Mewasif marvelled at the eloquence of his tongue and said to him, ‘O Mesrour, leave this madness and return to thy senses and go thy ways; for thou hast wasted all thy substance at the game of chess, yet hast not attained to thy desire, nor hast thou any resource whereby thou mayst accomplish it.’ But he turned to her and said, ‘O my lady, ask of me what thou wilt and I will bring it to thee and lay it at thy feet.’ ‘O Mesrour,’ answered she, ‘thou hast no money left.’ ‘O goal of all hopes,’ rejoined he, ‘if I have no money, the folk will help me.’ Quoth she, ‘Shall the giver turn asker?’ And he said, ‘I have friends and kinsfolk, and whatsoever I seek of them, they will give me.' Then said she, 'O Mesrour, I will have of thee four bladders of musk and four vases of civet and four pounds of ambergris and four thousand dinars and four hundred pieces of coloured brocade, wroughten with gold. Bring me these things, and I will grant thee my favours.' 'This is a light matter to me, O thou that puttest the moons to shame,' replied he and went forth to fetch her what she sought.

She sent Huboub after him, to see what interest he had with the folk of whom he had spoken to her; but, as he went along the streets, he turned and seeing her afar off, waited till she came up to him and said to her, 'Whither away, O Huboub?' So she told him what her mistress had said to her and he said, 'By Allah, O Huboub, I have nothing!' 'Then why didst thou promise her?' asked she; and he answered, 'How many a promise is unkept of its maker! Fine words needs must be in love-matters.' When she heard this, she said to him, 'O Mesrour, be of good heart and cheerful eye, for, by Allah, I will be the means of thy coming to enjoy her!' Then she left him and returned, weeping sore, to her mistress, to whom said she, 'O my lady, indeed he is a man of great consideration, well-reputed among the folk.' Quoth Zein el Mewasif, 'There is no resource against the ordinance of the Most High! Verily, this man found not in me a compassionate heart, for that I spoiled him of his substance and he got of me neither affection nor complaisance in granting him the amorous mercy; but, if I incline to his desire, I fear lest the thing be bruited abroad.' 'O my lady,' answered Huboub, 'verily, his present plight and the loss of his good is grievous upon us, and thou hast with thee none but myself and thy slave-girl Sukoub; so which of us two would dare prate of thee, and we thy hand-maids?'

With this, she bowed her head and the damsels said to her, 'O my lady, it is our counsel that thou send after him and show him favour and suffer him not ask of the sordid; for how bitter is asking!' So she accepted their counsel and calling for inkhorn and paper, wrote him the following verses:

Fulfilment draws near, O Mesrour: rejoice in fair presage and
true, For, to-night, when the darkness falls down, the deed without

fail thou shalt do;
And ask not the sordid, O youth, for money to mend thine estate: Indeed, I was drunken, but now my wit is restored me anew.
Moreover, thy good that I took shall all unto thee be restored, And to crown, O Mesrour, my largesse, I'll add thee my favours thereto;
Since patience thou hadst and in the long-suffering and sweetness there was With a loved one's unkindness to bear, who wronged thee with rigours undue.
So hasten forthright to enjoy my possession, fair fall thee thereof! And tarry not neither neglect, lest my folk come to know of us two.
Then come to us quickly, I pray, and loiter not neither delay, And eat of the fruits of delight, whilst my husband is absent, the Jew.

Then she folded the letter and gave it to Huboub, who carried it to Mesrour and found him weeping and reciting the following verses, in a transport of passion and love-longing:

There blew upon my heart a breeze of love and wantonness, And all my entrails crumbled were with passion pitiless.
My longing, since my loved one's loss, is passing sore on me And still mine eyelids overflow for very tears' excess.
My heart with doubts and fears is racked, which did I but reveal Unto hard rocks and stones, forthright they'd soften for distress.
Ah, would I knew if I shall live to win to my delight, if, in th' enjoyment of my wish, my hope I shall possess!
Shall parting's nights, the wide outspread, be folded up again And shall I e'er of that be healed which doth my heart oppress?

As he was repeating these verses, Huboub knocked at the door; so he rose and opened to her, and she entered and gave him the letter. He read it and said to her, 'O Huboub, what news bringest thou of thy mistress?' 'O my lord,' answered she, 'in this letter is what dispenses me from answering, for thou art of the folk of understanding.' And he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and repeated the following verses:

The letter came, and its contents rejoiced us, heart and brain, And in my very heart of hearts to keep it I were fain.
Yea, I redouble in desire, whene'er the writ I kiss; For 'tis as if 't the very pearl of passion did contain.

Then he wrote a letter in answer and gave it to Huboub, who returned with it to her mistress and fell to extolling his charms to her and expatiating on his generosity and good qualities; for she was become a helper to him, to bring about his union with her. 'O Huboub,' said Zein el Mewasif, 'indeed he tarrieth to come to us.' And Huboub answered, 'He will certainly come speedily.' Hardly had she made an end of speaking when he knocked at the door, and she opened to him and brought him in to her mistress, who saluted him and bade him welcome and seated him by her side.

Then she said to Huboub, 'Bring me a suit of the goodliest of apparel;' so she brought a dress embroidered with gold and Zein el Mewasif threw it over him, whilst she herself donned one of the richest of dresses and covered her head with a net of pearls of the finest water. About this she bound a fillet of brocade, embroidered with pearls and rubies and other jewels, from beneath which fell down two tresses [of plaited silk], each looped with a pendant of ruby, charactered with glittering gold, and she let down her hair, as it were the sombre night. Moreover she incensed herself with aloes-wood and scented herself with musk and ambergris, and Huboub said to her, 'God guard thee from the [evil] eye!' Then she began to walk, with a graceful swimming gait, whilst Huboub, who excelled in verse-making, recited the following in her honour:

She shames the cassia-branches with every step she tries And sore besets her lovers with glances from her eyes.
A moon from out the darkness appearing of her hair, It is as from her browlocks the very sun did rise.
Happy by whom the night long with all her charms she lies And happy he who, swearing by her life, for her dies!

Zein el Mewasif thanked her and went up to Mesrour, as she were the full moon all displayed. When he saw her, he rose to his feet and exclaimed, 'Except my thought deceive me, she is no mortal, but one of the brides of Paradise!' Then she called for food and they brought a table, about whose marge were written the following verses:

Dip thou with spoons in saucers four and gladden heart and eye
With many a various kind of stew and fricassee and fry.
Thereon fat quails (ne'er shall I cease to love and tender them)
And rails and fowls and dainty birds of all the kinds that fly.
Glory to God for the kabobs, for redness all aglow, And potherbs steeped in vinegar, in porringers thereby!
Fair fall the rice with sweet milk dressed, wherein the hands did plungeAnd eke the forearms of the fair were buried, bracelet-high!
How my heart yearneth with regret over two plates of fish That by two manchet-cakes of bread of Tewarij did lie!

Then they ate and drank and made merry, after which the servants removed the table of food and set on the wine service. The cup and the bowl passed round between them and their hearts were gladdened. Then Mesrour filled the cup and saying, 'To her whose I am and who is my mistress!' chanted the following verses:

I marvel at mine eyes that feed their fill upon the charms Of a fair maid whose beauty bright enlightens every place.
In all her time she hath no like nor any may compare With her for very goodliness and sweet harmonious grace.
The willow sapling envies her the slimness of her shape, When, in her symmetry arrayed, she fares with stately pace.
The crown of her, for radiance, is as the crescent moon, Ay, and the full moon of the dark she shames with shining face.
Whenas she walks upon the earth, her fragrance wafts abroad A breeze that scents her every hill and every level space.

'O Mesrour,' said she, 'whoso keepeth his faith and hath eaten our bread and salt, it behoveth us to give him his due; so put away from thee the thought of what hath passed and I will restore thee thy lands and houses and all I have taken from thee.' 'O my lady,' answered he, 'I acquit thee of that whereof thou speakest, though thou hadst been false to the oath we swore to each other, thou and I; for I will go and become a Muslim.’ Then said Huboub to her, ‘O my lady, thou art young of years and knowest many things, and I claim the intercession of God the Most High with thee, for, except thou do my bidding and heal my heart, I will not lie the night with thee in the house.’ ‘O Huboub,’ replied her mistress, ‘it shall be as thou wilt: so rise and make us ready another room.’

So she rose and made ready another room and adorned and perfumed it after the goodliest fashion, on such wise as her mistress loved and preferred, after which she set on fresh food and wine, and the cup went round between them and their hearts were glad. Presently quoth Zein el Mewasif to Mesrour, ‘O Mesrour, the time of union and favour is come; so, as thou studiest for my love, recite us some verses, surpassing of fashion.’ So he recited the following ode:

I am ta’en captive; in my heart a fire flames up amain, Over a bond of love-delight by sev’rance shorn in twain;
Ay, and for love of a fair maid, whose shape hath rent my heart, Whose cheeks so soft and delicate my reason do enchain.
Joined brows and arched and melting eyes of liquid black hath she And teeth that like the lightning flash, when she to smile doth deign.
Her years of life are ten and four; my tears, for love of her, Resemble drops of dragon’s blood, as from mine eyes they rain.
‘Twixt stream and garden first mine eyes beheld her, as she sat, With face the full moon that outshone in heaven’s high domain.
I stood to her, on captive wise, for awe, and said, ‘The peace Of God for ever light on thee, O dweller in the fane!’
Then she, with sweet and dulcet speech, like pearls in order strung, My salutation graciously returned to me again;
And when she heard my speech to her, she knew for sure what I Desired, and therewithal her heart was hardened ‘gainst her swain.
‘Is not this idle talk?’ quoth she, and I made answer, ‘Spare the longing lover to upbraid, who doth of love complain.’
If thou vouchsafe me thy consent this day, the thing were light; Thy like belovéd is and mine still slaves of love in vain.’
And when she knew my wish, she smiled and answered, ‘By the

Lord Him who created heaven and earth and all that they contain,

[I am] a Jewess, born and bred in Jewry's straitest sect And thou unto the Nazarenes as surely doth pertain.

How think'st thou to enjoy me, then, and art not of my faith? To-morrow, sure, thou wilt repent, if thou this thing obtain.

Is't lawful with two faiths to jest in love? The like of me Were blamed of all and looked upon with flouting and disdain.

Wilt thou thus mock at all belief and all religious rites And doubly guilty, this my faith and eke thine own profane?

An if thou lov'dst me, thou'dst become a Jew for love of me, And, save my favours, all to thee forbidden would remain,

And by th' Evangel thou wouldst swear a strait and binding oath To keep the secret of the love that is betwixt us twain.'

So by the Pentateuch I swear, a true and certain oath, That, in the time that's past and gone and ne'er will be again,

I swore to her upon my faith, upon my law and creed, And her unto a solemn oath on like wise did constrain.

Quoth I, 'O term of all desire, what is thy name?' And she, 'Zein el Mewasif am I called in this my own demesne.'

'Zein el Mewasif,' then cried I, 'my entrails are enthralled For love of thee; thou hast indeed enslaved me, heart and brain.'

I saw her beauty underneath the chin-veil and became Afflicted sore at heart, distraught for love and longing pain;

Nor neath the curtain did I cease to humble me and eke Of the much passion to make moan that in my heart did reign;

Till, when she saw my plight and all the transport of my love, A smiling visage she unveiled, that did me straight assain.

The wind of amorous delight blew full on us and she Scented of musk her neck and wrists, till all the house had ta'en

Perfume from her and every place, whilst I her lips did kiss And from her sweet and smiling mouth its wine of balm did drain.

Under her robes she swayed, as sways the willow, and delight And union did permit, till then forbidden to the swain.

We lay the night together and with many a clip and kiss And sucking lips, was union perfected for us twain.

There's no adornment of the world, excepting she thou lov st Be near thee, so thou mayst of her the wished delight obtain.

Whenas day broke, she rose to say farewell, with lovely face
Excelling far the moon that shines in heaven's spreading plain;
And at her leave-taking, this verse she chanted, whilst the tears
Ran down her cheeks, now one by one, now linked in many a chain,
'By the Great Oath and by the nights so fair, I'll ne'er forget The
pact of Allah 'twixt us two, whilst I on life remain!'

Zein el Mewasif was charmed with these verses and said to him, 'O Mesrour, how goodly are thy parts! May he live not who would harm thee!' Then she entered a privy chamber and called him. So he went in to her and taking her in his arms, embraced her and kissed her and got of her that which he had deemed impossible and rejoiced in the attainment of the sweet of amorous delight. Then said she, 'O Mesrour, now we are become lovers, thy good is forbidden to me and is lawfully thine again.' So she restored to him all she had won of him and said to him, 'Hast thou a garden, whither we may go and take our pleasure therein?' 'Yes, O my lady,' answered he, 'I have a garden that hath not its like.'

Then he returned to his house and bade his slave-girls make ready a handsome room and provide a splendid banquet; after which he summoned Zein el Mewasif, who came with her damsels, and they ate and drank and made merry, whilst the cup passed round between them and their hearts were glad. Then the lovers withdrew to privy chamber and Zein el Mewasif said to Mesrour, 'I have bethought me of some pleasant verses, which I would fain sing to the lute.' And he answered, 'Do so.' So she took the lute and tuning it, sang the following to pleasant air:

Mirth from the smitten strings o'ercometh me and cheer; Sweet is
our morning-draught, when daybreak draweth near.
Love still its bondman's heart uncovereth and in The tearing
down of veils doth love-longing appear;
With wine strained bright, so pure and goodly that it seems The
sun in hands of moons unveiled and shining clear.
It bringeth us anights its gladness and with joy Obliterates the
stains of dreariment and fear.

Then said she to him, ‘O Mesrour, recite us somewhat of thy verse and favour us with the fruit of thy wit.’ So he recited the following:

In a full moon we do rejoice, that carries round its wine, And in the sweet strains of the lute in gardens fair and fine,
Whose turtles in the dawning-hour sing and whose branches sway And eke their paths the uttermost of all desire enshrine.

When he had finished, she said to him, ‘If thou be occupied with love of me, make us some verses on that which hath passed between us.’ ‘With all my heart,’ answered he and recited the following ode:

Stay thou and hear what me befell For love of yonder fair gazelle
A white doe shot me with a shaft And fierce her glances on me fell.
Ravished with love, my every shift Straitened on me for passion’s spell,
I pined for a coquette, enclosed With spear-points inexpugnable.
I saw her midst a garden fair: In symmetry she did excel.
‘Peace be on thee!’ quoth I to her: She answered, ‘And on thee as well.’
‘What is thy name?’ asked I; and she, ‘My name my qualities doth tell.
Zein el Mewasif am I called.’ ‘Pity my case deplorable,’
Quoth I, ‘such longing with me is, No lover is my parallel.’
‘An if thou love and wouldst my charms Enjoy,’ said she, ‘I will not sell
My favours save for wealth galore, Past count and unattainable.
Raiment of silk I’ll have of thee And costly damasks, many an ell,
And musk four quintals, pearls of price, Cornelians uncountable,
Silver and gold and trinkets fine And jewelled gauds I’ll have as well;
One night of my possession these Shall buy: I’ll bate no particle.’
I showed fair patience, though, God wot, For fires of love I was in hell,

And she to bless me deigned one night The new moon’s radiance on us fell.
If th’ envious blame me, ‘List, O folk,’ Quoth I, ‘to that I have to tell,
Long locks hath she, as black as night, And in her cheeks a rose doth dwell,
As red as very flames of fire: Her looks are arrows sharp and snell,
And in her lashes is a sword That serves her lovers to repel.
Wine in her mouth is and her lips With dews like limpid water well.
Her teeth are like a necklace strung With pearls of price, fresh from the shell.
Her neck, perfected in all grace, Is as the neck of a gazelle.
As marble white her bosom is, Wherein, like towers, her breasts do swell.
Her belly hath a fold perfumed With essences invaluable;
And underneath it lies a thing, That is my wishes’ pinnacle;
Fat, plump, high-cushioned, O my lords, As ‘twere a king’s throne, sooth to tell,
To whom I plain me of the woes My soul to madness that enspell.
Betwixten columns twain thou’lt find High benches set before the cell.
It hath such attributes as daze Men’s wits and wonderment compel;
Wide lips it hath and mouth, to boot, As ‘twere a mouth of mule or well;
An eye of red it shows and lips Like camel’s lips: its face doth swell,
For very redness, still with wrath. So look, O man, thou guard thee well.
If thou come to it with intent To do, thou’lt find it hot as hell,
Ardent of meeting and endowed With strength to battle fierce and fell;
And well I wot, each champion, eased Of lust of battle, ‘twill repel.

Bytimes thou'lt find it with a beard, As 'twere a man's; another spell
Thou'lt find it beardless, hot with lust Of battle 'gainst the infidel.
One who is great of grace and sheen To thee of this doth tidings tell,
One from whom Zein herself alone For all perfection bears the bell.
I came to her by night and got That which was sweet as œnomel;
Yes, and the night I lay with her Did all mine other nights excel.
When daybreak came, with new-moon face She rose and shape as flexible
As swaying boughs or slender spears, And turned to me to say farewell.
Quoth she, 'When shall the nights return Wherein such joyance us befell?'
And I, 'O lustre of mine eyes, Come,' answered, 'when it likes thee well.'

Zein el Mewasif was charmed with these verses and the utmost gladness possessed her. Then said she, 'O Mesrour, the day is at hand and there is nothing for it but to depart, for fear of scandal.' 'I hear and obey,' answered he and rising, carried her to her house, after which he returned home and passed the rest of the night meditating on her charms. When the morning appeared and gave forth its light and shone, he made ready a sumptuous present and carried it to her and sat with her.

They abode thus awhile, in all delight and solace of life, till one day there came to Zein el Mewasif a letter from her husband, advising her of his speedy return. 'May God not preserve him nor quicken him!' exclaimed she. 'If he come hither, our life will be troubled. Would I might despair of him!' Presently came Mesrour and sat talking with her, as of wont, and she said to him, 'O Mesrour, I have received a letter from my husband, announcing his speedy return from his travels. What is to be done, since neither of us can live without the other?' 'I know not,' answered he; 'but thou art better able to judge, being acquainted with thy husband's ways, more by token that thou art one of the keenest-witted of women and mistress of devices such as contrive that whereof men fail.’ Quoth she, ‘He is a hard man and jealous of the people of his household: but, when thou hearest of his coming, do thou repair to him and salute him and sit down by his side, saying, “O my brother, I am a druggist.” Then buy of him various kinds of drugs and spices and pay him frequent visits and talk long with him and gainsay him not in whatsoever he shall bid thee; so haply that may betide, [as] of chance, for which I would fain contrive.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered Mesrour and went out from her, with a heart on fire for love.

When her husband came home, she rejoiced in him and bade him welcome; but he looked in her face and seeing it pale and sallow, (for she had washed it with saffron, making usage therein of one of women’s arts,) asked her how she did. She replied that she had been sick, she and her women, from the time of his setting out on his journey, and said, ‘Verily, our hearts have been troubled for thee by reason of the length of thine absence.’ And she went on to complain to him of the misery of separation and to weep copious tears, saying, ‘Hadst thou but a companion with thee, my heart had not suffered all this anxiety for thee. So, God upon thee, O my lord, travel not again without a companion and keep me not without news of thee, that my heart and mind may be at rest concerning thee!’ ‘With all my heart,’ answered he. ‘Thy counsel is good, and by thy life, it shall be as thou wishest.’

Then he took some of his goods and carrying them to his shop, opened it and sat down to sell in the bazaar. Presently up came Mesrour and saluting him, sat down by his side and talked with him awhile. Then he pulled out a purse and taking forth gold, handed it to the Jew and said, ‘Give me the worth of this money in various kinds of drugs and spices, that I may sell them in my shop.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered he and gave him what he sought. Mesrour continued to pay him frequent visits, till, one day, the merchant said to him, ‘I have a mind to take me a man to partner in trade.’ ‘And I also,’ replied Mesrour, ‘desire to take a partner; for my father was a merchant in the land of Yemen and left me great wealth and I fear lest it go from me.’ Quoth the Jew, ‘Wilt thou be my partner, and I will be thine and a true friend and comrade to thee at home and abroad, and I will teach thee to sell and buy and give and take?' And Mesrour said, 'With all my heart.'

So the merchant carried him to his house and seated him in the vestibule, whilst he went in to his wife and said to her, 'I have taken me a partner and have bidden him hither as a guest; so do thou prepare us a handsome entertainment.' When she heard this, she rejoiced, doubting not but this was Mesrour, and made ready a magnificent banquet, of her joy in the success of her device. Then said her husband to her, 'Come out with me to him and bid him welcome and say, "Thou gladdenest us [with thy company]."' But she made a show of anger, saying, 'Wilt thou have me discover myself to a strange man? God forbid! Though thou cut me in pieces, I will not appear before him!' 'Why shouldst thou be abashed at him,' rejoined he, 'seeing that he is a Nazarene and we are Jews and we are become associates, he and I?' Quoth she, 'It liketh me not to present myself before a strange man, on whom I have never set eyes and whom I know not.'

He thought she spoke sooth and ceased not to importune her, till she rose and veiling herself, took the food and went out to Mesrour and bade him welcome; whereupon he bowed his head, as he were ashamed, and the Jew, seeing this, said in himself, 'Doubtless, this man is a devotee.' They ate their fill and the table being removed, wine was set on. As for Zein el Mewasif, she sat over against her lover and gazed on him and he on her till ended day, when Mesrour went home, with a heart on fire and the Jew abode pondering the grace and goodliness of his new partner. As soon as it was night, his wife brought him the evening meal and they sat down to eat.

Now he had a mocking-bird, that was used, whenas he sat down to meat, to come and eat with him and hover about his head; but in his absence it was grown familiar with Mesrour and used to eat with him and hover about him. When its master returned, it knew him not and would not draw near him, and this made him thoughtful. As for Zein el Mewasif, she could not sleep for thinking of Mesrour, and thus it was with her three nights, till the Jew became aware of her distraction and watching her, began to suspect something wrong. On the fourth night, he awoke in the middle of the night and heard his wife talking in her sleep and calling upon Mesrour, what while she lay in her husband's arms, wherefore he misdoubted of her; but he dissembled his suspicions and on the morrow betook himself to his shop and sat there. Presently, up came Mesrour and saluted him. He returned his greeting and said to him, 'Welcome, O my brother! I have wished for thee;' and he sat talking with him awhile, after which he said to him, 'O my brother, come with me to my house, that we may enter into the pact of brotherhood.' 'With all my heart,' replied Mesrour and they went to the Jew's house, where the latter went in and told his wife of Mesrour's coming, saying, 'Make us ready a goodly entertainment, and needs must thou be present and witness our brotherhood.' But she answered, 'God on thee, cause me not show myself to this strange man, for I have no mind to company with him.' So he forbore to press her and bade the waiting-women bring meat and drink. Then he called the mocking-bird, but it knew him not and settled in Mesrour's lap; and the Jew said to him, 'O my lord, what is thy name?' and he answered, 'Mesrour.' Whereupon the Jew remembered that this was the name which his wife had repeated all night long in her sleep.

Presently, he raised his head and saw her making signs to Mesrour and motioning to him with her eyebrows; wherefore he knew that he had been tricked and said, 'O my lord, excuse me awhile, till I fetch my kinsmen, so they may be present at our treaty of brotherhood.' 'Do what seemeth good to thee,' answered Mesrour; whereupon the Jew went forth the house and returning privily by a back way, betook himself to a window that gave upon the saloon and whence he could watch them, unseen of them. Quoth Zein el Mewasif to her maid Sukoub, 'Whither is thy master gone?' And she said, 'He is gone without the house.' 'Lock the door,' said Zein, 'and bar it with iron and open not till he knock, after thou hast told me.' 'So be it,' answered Sukoub.

Then she rose and filling a cup with wine, flavoured with powdered musk and rose-water, went up to Mesrour, who rose to meet her, saying, 'By Allah, the water of thy mouth is sweeter than this wine!' 'Here it is for thee,' quoth she and filling her mouth with wine, gave him to drink thereof, whilst he did the like with her; after which she sprinkled him with rose-water from head to foot, till he scented the whole place. All this while, the Jew was looking on and marvelling at the greatness of the love that was between them, and his heart was filled with rage for what he saw and he was jealous with an exceeding jealousy. Then he went out again and coming to the door, found it locked and knocked loudly, of the excess of his anger; whereupon quoth Sukoub, 'O my lady, here is my master.' 'Open to him,' replied Zein el Mewasif; 'would God had not brought him back in safety!'

So she went and opened the door to the Jew, who said to her, 'What ailed thee to lock the door?' Quoth she, 'It hath never ceased to be locked thus during thine absence; nor hath it been opened night nor day.' 'Thou hast done well,' answered he; 'this pleases me.' Then he went in to Mesrour, laughing and dissembling his chagrin, and said to him, 'O Mesrour, let us put off the conclusion of our treaty of brotherhood till another day.' 'As thou wilt,' replied Mesrour and went away, leaving the Jew pondering his case and knowing not what to do; for his heart was sore troubled and he said in himself, 'Even the mocking-bird disavows me and the slave-girls shut the door in my face and favour another.' And of the excess of his chagrin, he fell to reciting the following verses:

A life made fair with all delight of days and solacement Mesrour doth live, what while my life is severed and forspent.
Fortune hath played the knave with me in her whom I adore And all my heart's on flames of fire, that rage without relent.
Once with the fair a time was bright for thee; 'tis past and gone; Yet art thou ever love-distraught that lovely one anent.
Mine eyes her goodly beauty saw and in the love of her, My heart to passion thrall became, for very ravishment.
Of the sweet water of her lips she poured me out, fine wine On thirst, whilst yet the time endured of favour and content.
What ails thee, O my mocking-bird, that thou forsakest me And to another than myself in love dost yield consent?
Strange things, indeed, mine eyes have seen, that from my lids, if they Were ever drowsed with slumber, sleep would chase incontinent.
I see my loved one hath forsworn the love of me and eke My mocking-bird round me no more hovers with blandishment.

By the worlds' Lord, who, when upon His creatures He'd fulfil
His ordinance, afflicteth them with many a dour event,
The evil-doer I'll requite with that which he deserves Who
frowardly to her draws near, on her enjoyment bent!

When Zein el Mewasif heard this, she trembled in every nerve and said to her handmaid, 'Heardest thou that?' Quoth she, 'I never heard him recite the like of these verses; but let him say what he will.' Then the Jew, having assured himself of the truth of his suspicions, began to sell all his property, saying in himself, 'Except I remove her from her native land [and separate them], they will never turn back from this that they are engaged in.' So, when he had turned all his possessions into money, he forged a letter, purporting to come from his kinsmen and inviting him to visit them, him and his wife, and read it to her. 'How long shall we tarry with them?' asked she, and he replied, 'Twelve days.' So she consented to this and said, 'Shall I take any of my maids with me?' 'Take Huboub and Sukoub,' answered he, 'and leave Khutoub here.'

Then he made ready a handsome camel litter for his wife and her women and prepared to set out with them; whilst she sent to Mesrour, telling him what had happened and saying, 'If the trysting-time that is between us pass and I come not [back], know that he hath put a cheat on us and laid a plot to separate us from each other; so forget thou not the plighted faith betwixt us, for I fear his craft and perfidy.' Then she fell a-weeping and lamenting and no peace was left her, night or day. Her husband saw this, but took no note thereof; and when she saw there was no help for it, she gathered together her clothes and gear and deposited them with her sister, telling her what had befallen her. Then she took leave of her and going out from her, weeping, returned to her own house, where she found her husband had brought the camels and was busy loading them, having set apart the handsomest for her riding; and when she saw this and knew that needs must she be separated from Mesrour, she was distracted.

Now it chanced that the Jew went out on some occasion of his; so she went forth to the outer door and wrote thereon the following verses:

O dove of this our dwelling-place, our parting greeting bear From lover to beloved one and tell him I shall ne'er
Cease to regret the past delight and all its ravishments And all the sweetness of the days for us whilom that were;
And bid him also never leave to be the slave of love, Fulfilled of grief for our content that's past and gone for e'er.
Indeed, we passed our time awhile in solace and in cheer And love-delight both night and day we did enjoy whilere;
But, when we woke, the raven gave us morrow with his croak And did against us twain the doom of severance declare.
Now must we journey far away and leave the dwellings void: Would we might ne'er depart the lands nor breathe a foreign air!

Then she went to the second door and wrote thereon the following verses:

O thou to this door that comest, by Allah, watch for the grace Of my loved one midmost the darkness and tell him I weep apace,
When I think of the time of union with him, and the tears that come Of my weeping for him cease never to ripple adown my face;
And say to him, 'If no patience for what is fallen on me Thou findest, I rede thee sprinkle thy head with the dust of the place
And travel the lands to Eastward and Westward and look thou live In patience, for God hath ordered and yet will order the case.'

Then she went to the third door and wept sore and wrote thereon these verses:

Harkye, Mesrour, an if thou come to this her dwelling, see Thou read upon the doors the lines that she hath writ for thee.
How oft thou'st tasted of the sweet and bitter of the nights! Forget thou not the pact of love, if thou a true man be.
By Allah, do not thou forget her neighbourhood, Mesrour; For in thyself her solace all and gladness leaveth she!
Weep for the days of love-delight and all their sweets and all The goodly nights that with their shade encurtained thee and me;
And to the farthest of the lands, for my sake, journey thou;

Search all its deserts after us and plunge into its sea.
The nights of our delight are gone from us; estrangement's dark
Hath quenched their radiance and made an end of all our glee.
God's blessing on the bygone days! How glad indeed they
were,When in the gardens of desire their blossoms gathered we!
We would have had them stay; but God denied the wished-for
boon; Only their rose and our true hearts to last permitted He.
Will the returning days renew our union? An they do, Their every
vow unto my Lord accomplished then shall be.
Think, in His hand, who writes upon the table of the brows Their
lines, are all things, and submit to that He doth decree.

Then she wept sore and returned to the house, lamenting and recalling what had passed and saying, 'Glory be to God who hath decreed this to us!' And her affliction redoubled for the loss of her beloved and her departure from the lands, and she recited these verses:

Upon thee be the peace of God, O empty house! Ah me, The days
indeed have made an end of all their cheer in thee!
Dove of the house, ne'er mayst thou leave to mourn for her who
from Her moons and her full moons is torn by Fate's unkind decree!
Harkye, Mesrour! Make thou thy moan for loss of us; indeed
Mine eyes in losing thee have lost their lustre, verily.
Would God thine eyes our parting day and eke the flaming fire,
That in my heart redoubles still unquenchably, might see!
Forget not thou our plighted troth within the garden's shade, That
held our loves and with its veils encurtained thee and me.

Then she presented herself before her husband, who set her in the litter he had let make for her; and when she found herself on the camel's back, she recited the following verses:

God's peace on thee, O lonely house, for evermore alight,
Wherein whilere we fed our fill of solace and delight!
Would that my time within thy shade its nights accomplished
had, So I for passion had been slain, a martyr in Love's right!

For parting I am sore concerned and longing for the home I love:
I knew not what should hap nor looked for Fate's despite.
Would God I knew if I shall e'er return to it again, And will it
ever, as of yore, be pleasant to our spright!

'O Zein el Mewasif,' said her husband, 'grieve not for thy departure from thy dwelling; for, God willing, thou shalt return to it before long.' And he went on to comfort her heart and soothe her. Then they set out and fared on till they came without the town and struck into the high road, whereupon she knew that separation was assured, and this was grievous to her.

Meanwhile, Mesrour sat in his house, pondering his case and that of his mistress, and his heart forewarned him of separation. So he rose forthright and repairing to her house, found the outer door shut and read the verses she had written thereon; whereupon he fell down in a swoon. When he came to himself, he opened the door and entering, read what was written upon the two other doors; whereupon passion and love-longing and distraction waxed on him. So he went forth and hastened in her track, till he came up with the caravan and found her at the rear, whilst her husband rode in the van, because of his goods. When he saw her, he clung to the litter, weeping and lamenting for the anguish of separation, and recited the following verses:

Would I knew for what crime we are shot, wellaway! With the
shafts of estrangement for ever and aye!
O desire of the heart, to thy dwelling I came, When distress for
thy love sorely irked me, one day,
And I found the house empty, laid waste, and complained Of
estrangement and groaned, in my spirit's dismay,
Then I questioned the walls of my loves that are gone And have
taken my heart as a pledge, 'Where are they?'
And they said, 'They made passion in ambush to lie In the
entrails and fared from the dwellings away.'
They wrote for me lines on the portals, the deed Of the folk that
keep faith nor their troth-plight betray.

When Zein el Mewasif heard this, she knew that it was Mesrour and wept, she and her maidens, and said to him, ‘I conjure thee by Allah, O Mesrour, turn back, lest my husband see us!’ At these words he swooned away; and when he revived, they took leave of each other and he recited the following verses:

The chief of the caravan to depart calls loud and high, In the darkness ere the dawn, and the zephyr wafts the cry,
They gird their burdens on and hasten to depart, And on, at the leader’s voice, the caravan doth hie.
They perfume the lands, through which they journey, on every side, And still through the valley’s midst their travel in haste they ply.
Possession they took of my soul in passion and fared away And left me to toil in vain in the track of their passing by.
Beloved, I purposed indeed to part with you never in life And the earth is drenched with the tears that flow from the wanderer’s eye.
Alack! How hath parting’s hand with mine entrails wroughten! Woe’s me For my heart! Since my loves are gone, it irketh me like to die.

Then he clung to the litter, weeping and lamenting, whilst she besought him to turn back ere morning, for fear of discovery. So he came up to her and bidding her farewell a second time, fell down in a swoon. He lay a great while without life, and when he came to himself, he found the caravan out of sight. So he turned in the direction of their travel and inhaled the breeze that blew from their quarter, chanting the following verses:

No wind of nearness to the lover’s blown But of the pains of longing he makes moan.
The breeze of dawning blows on him; he wakes And in the world he finds himself alone.
Blood, mingled with his streaming tears, he weeps, For languor on the bed of sickness prone;
For loved ones lost he weeps; his heart with them Fares midst the camels over sand and stone.

No breeze blows from their quarter but I stand, With eyes attent and nostrils open thrown,
And on the South wind snuff their musky gale, Whose scent is grateful to the lover lone.

Then he returned, mad with love-longing, to her house, and finding it empty and deserted, wept till he wet his clothes; after which he swooned away and his soul was like to depart his body. When he revived, he recited the following couplet:

O house, on my abjection have ruth and on my plight, My tears for ever flowing and body wasted quite,
And waft me the aroma of their sweet-scented breeze, So haply with its fragrance it heal my anguished spright.

Then he returned to his own house and abode there, confounded and tearful-eyed, for the space of ten days.

Meanwhile, the Jew journeyed on with Zein el Mewasif half a score days, at the end of which time he halted at a certain city and she wrote to Mesrour a letter and gave it to Huboub, saying, 'Send this to Mesrour, so he may know how we have been tricked and how the Jew hath cheated us.' So Huboub despatched it to Mesrour, whom when it reached, its news was grievous to him and he wept till he wet the ground. Then he wrote a reply and sent it to his mistress, subscribing it with the following couplets:

Where is the road unto the doors of solace? How shall he, Who's all for love-longing on flames of fire consoléd be?
How pleasant were the days of yore, that now are past away! Ah would some scantling of their times were yet with thee and me!

When the letter reached Zein el Mewasif, she read it and gave it to her maid Huboub, bidding her keep it secret. However, the Jew came to know of their correspondence and removed with her to another city, at a distance of twenty days' journey.

As for Mesrour, sleep was not sweet to him nor was peace or patience left unto him, and he ceased not to be thus till, one night, his eyes closed for weariness and he dreamt that he saw Zein el Mewasif come to him in the garden and embrace him; but presently he awoke and found her not: whereupon he fell into a passion of grief. His reason fled and his eyes ran over with tears; love-longing to the utterest possessed his heart and he recited these verses:

Peace be on her, whose image came to visit me by night And passion straight in me renewed and longings did excite!
Indeed, from that my dream I rose, distracted with desire, Fulfilled of love and longing pain for that fair vision's sight.
Do the imbroglios of sleep say sooth of her I love? Will she let quench my thirst and heal the sickness of my spright?
Anon she spoke with me, anon she strained me to her breast And now with pleasant speech she soothed my pain and my affright;
And when our lovers' chiding was accomplished in the dream And in unceasing floods, the tears streamed from mine eyes contrite,
From out her damask lips, for me, as 'twere the best of wine, Whose scent was as the scent of musk, she poured, that lady bright.
I marvel at what chanced 'twixt us in dreams; for lo! I got My wish of her and that I sought of solace and delight;
But, when from sleep I woke, no whit of that fair dream found I Save love-longing and pain; the rest had fled with morning-light.
And since I've looked on her, I'm grown, by day, as I were mad; Anights I'm drunken without wine, a lone-distracted wight.
O waftings of the zephyr, go, to them I prithee bear The salutation of my love and longing for their sight,
And say to them, 'Him, whom ye knew, the shifts of sorry Fate Have given to drink the cup of death, of destiny's despite.'

Then he went out and ceased not to weep till he came to her house and looking on it, saw it deserted. Presently, it seemed to him he saw her image before him, whereupon fires flamed in him and his sorrows redoubled and he fell down in a swoon. When he came to himself, he recited the following verses:

I snuff the scent of balm from them, wherewith the air is fraught And fare away, with heart fulfilled of passion, love-distraught.

A miserable slave of love, my longings with the sight Of dwellings, void of all their charms, to salve in vain I've sought.
It doth but sicken me for woe and severance and desire And all the past-time with my friends recalleth to my thought.

When he had made an end of these verses, he heard a raven croak beside the house and wept, saying, 'Glory be to God! The raven croaks not save over a ruined house.' Then he sighed and groaned and recited the following verses:

What aileth the raven to croon o'er the house of my love? As I hear, The fires in my bosom rage high; their burning my entrails doth sear,
For regret for the days of their love, bygone; my heart wanders, for woe, In the mountains of misery lost, distracted with passion and fear.
I die of love-longing; the flames of desire in my liver still rage, And letters I write, which, alas! I have none to convey to my dear.
Alas for my body worn waste and my sorrow! My loved one is gone. Will they ever, I wonder, return, her nights, with their solace and cheer?
O breeze of the East, in the dawn if thou visit the camp of her tribe, Salute her, I prithee, for me, and stay by her stead thy career.

Now Zein el Mewasif had a sister, by name Nesim, who was looking on him from a high place; and when she saw him in this plight, she wept and sighed and recited these verses:

Harkye! How oft, bewailing the steads, wilt come and go? Indeed, the house its builder bemoaneth, of its woe.
Gladness, ere they departed who did inhabit here, Was rife within the dwelling and suns in it did glow.
Where are the full moons vanished, that shone so bright? The shifts Of fate their lucent beauties have blotted out, I trow
Leave what is past of fair ones, with whom thou didst consort: Mayhap, the days, returning, them forth again will show:
Except for thee, its dwellers had not departed hence Nor thou in

its high places hadst seen the corby-crow.

When Mesrour heard these verses and apprehended their meaning, he wept sore. Now Nesim knew that which was between him and her sister of love and longing and passion; so she said to him, ‘God on thee, O Mesrour, forbear this house, lest any see thee and deem thou comest on my account! Thou hast caused my sister depart and now thou wouldst drive me also away. Thou knowest that, but for thee, the house would not now be void of its inhabitants: so be consoled for her and leave her; for what is past is past.’ When he heard this, he said to her, ‘O Nesim, if I could, I should fly for longing after her; so how can I be comforted for her?’ Quoth she, ‘Thou hast nothing for it but patience.’ And he said, ‘I beseech thee, for God’s sake, write me a letter to her, as from thyself, and get me an answer from her, to comfort my heart and quench the fire that rages in my vitals.’

‘With all my heart,’ answered she and took inkhorn and paper, whilst Mesrour began to set out to her the violence of his longing and what he suffered for the anguish of separation, saying, ‘This letter is from the despairing and sorrowful lover, the wretched bereaved one, with whom no peace abides, night nor day, but he still weeps copious tears. Indeed, tears have ulcerated his eyelids and his sorrows have kindled a fire in his liver. His lamentation is prolonged and restlessness is sore on him, as he were a bird that hath lost its mate, and his death is at hand. Alas, my desolation for the loss of thee and my yearning affliction for thy companionship! Indeed, emaciation hath wasted my body and my tears are become a torrent; mountains and plains are straitened upon me, and of the excess of my passion, I go, saying:

My yearning o’er this stead’s eternal and my pain, And longings for its folk still wax on me amain.
I send to you my tale of love; the cupbearer Still giveth me the cup of love for you to drain.
And for your faring hence and absence from the lands, With everstreaming tears my wounded eyelids rain.
O litter-leader, stay; turn back with the belov’d; For all my heart’s afire with flames that never wane.

My greeting to my love bear thou and say to her, “There’s nought but damask lips his sorrows can assain.
Time bore him off and rent his loves apart and cleft His entrails with a shaft of severance in twain.”
Give them to know of all my transport for their loss And what I bear for love and longing all in vain.
Yea, by the love of you, I swear I will fulfil The covenant of love, whatever Fate ordain.
I’ll never change nor yet forget your love: how shall Forgetfulness betide the wistful, longing swain?
Peace, salutation-wise, from me, with musk commixt In letters, be on you again and yet again!’

Nesim marvelled at his eloquence and the goodliness of his speech and the elegance of his verses and was moved to compassion for him. Then she sealed the letter with virgin musk and incensed it with aloes-wood and ambergris, after which she committed it to a merchant, bidding him deliver it not save to Zein el Mewasif or her maid Huboub.

When the letter reached her sister, she knew it for Mesrour’s inditing and recognized himself in the grace of its expression. So she kissed it and laid it on her eyes, whilst the tears streamed from her lids and she gave not over weeping, till she fainted. When she came to herself, she called for pen and paper and wrote him the following answer: ‘This letter is to my lord and master, the king of my heart and my secret soul. Indeed, wakefulness agitateth me and melancholy increaseth on me and I have no patience to endure thine absence, O thou whose beauty excels the sun and moon! Desire deprives me of rest and passion destroys me; and how should it be otherwise with me, seeing that I am of the number of the perishing? O glory of the world and ornament of life, shall her cup be sweet, whose vital spirits are cut off? For that she is neither with the quick nor with the dead.’ And she added these verses:

Thy letter, O Mesrour, hath stirred affliction up in me; I have no patience for thy loss nor solacement, perdie.
My bowels, when I read the script, yearn and the desert herbs I

water with my tears that flow for ever like a sea.
Were I a bird, I'd fly to thee, upon the wings of night: I know not, after thee, if wine or sweet or bitter be.
Forbidden unto me is life, since thy departure hence: I have no power to brook the fire of severance from thee.

Then she sprinkled the letter with powdered musk and ambergris and committed it to a merchant, bidding him deliver it to none save her sister Nesim. When it reached the latter, she sent it to Mesrour, who kissed it and laid it on his eyes and wept till he fainted.

Presently, the Jew heard of their correspondence and began again to travel from place to place with Zein el Mewasif and her damsels, till she said to him, 'Glory to God! How long wilt thou journey with us and carry us afar from our homes?' Quoth he, 'I will fare on with you a year's journey, so no more letters may reach you from Mesrour. I see how you take all my good and give it to him; so all that I miss I shall take from you: and I shall see if Mesrour will profit you or avail to deliver you from my hand.' Then he stripped her and her damsels of their silken apparel and clad them in raiment of hair-cloth; after which he repaired to a blacksmith and bade him make three pairs of iron shackles. When they were ready, he brought the smith in to his wife and said to him, 'Put the shackles on the legs of these three damsels.'

The first that came forward was Zein el Mewasif, and when the blacksmith saw her, his reason forsook him and he bit his fingers and his wit fled forth his head and sore was his transport. So he said to the Jew, 'What is these women's crime?' 'They are my slave-girls,' answered the other, 'and have stolen my good and fled from me.' 'May God disappoint thine expectation!' cried the smith. 'Were this girl before the Chief Cadi, he would not reprove her, though she committed a hundred offences a day. Indeed, she hath no thief's favour and she may not brook the laying of irons on her legs.' And he went on to intercede with him, beseeching him not to fetter her. When she saw this, she said to her husband, 'I conjure thee by Allah, bring me not forth before yonder strange man!' Quoth he, 'Why then camest thou out before Mesrour?' And she made him no reply. Then he accepted the blacksmith's intercession, so far as to allow him to put a light pair of shackles on her legs, for that she had a delicate body, which might not brook harshness, whilst he laid her handmaids in heavy irons, and they ceased not, all three, to wear hair-cloth day and night, till their bodies became wasted and their colour changed.

As for the blacksmith, he returned home in great concern, for that exceeding love was fallen on his heart for Zein el Mewasif; and he fell to reciting the following verses:

Blacksmith, may thy right hand wither, in that it did ill entreat
Yon fair maid by clapping fetters on her ankles and her feet.
Thou hast chained a lovely lady, gentle, soft and delicate: Of the wonderful'st of wonders was she fashioned and complete.
Not of iron were her anklets, were she justly used, I trow: Gold, indeed, alone were worthy of that loveling fair and sweet.
If the Cadi of the Cadis saw her charms, he'd pity her And upon the highest places in her glory would her seat.

Now it chanced that the Chief Cadi passed by the smith's house and heard him repeat these lines; so he sent for him and said to him, 'O blacksmith, who is she on whom thou callest so instantly and with whose love thy heart is occupied?' The smith rose to his feet and kissing the Cadi's hand, answered, 'May God prolong the days of our lord the Cadi and give him ease of his life!' Then he set forth to him Zein el Mewasif's beauty and grace and symmetry and elegance and perfection and how she had a lovely face and a slender waist and heavy buttocks and acquainted him with the sorry plight in which she was for abasement and duresse and lack of victual.

When the Cadi heard this, he said, 'O blacksmith, send her to us, that we may do her justice, for thou art become accountable for her, and except thou guide her to us, God will punish thee at the Day of Resurrection.' 'I hear and obey,' replied the smith and betook himself forthright to Zein el Mewasif's lodging, but found the door locked and heard her reciting the following verses, in a plaintive voice, that came from a sorrowful heart:

In mine own land I was, conjoined with those I hold most dear,
And my belovéd filled me cups of gladness bright and clear.

They passed ‘twixt us with what we would of solace and of mirth; Nor knew we, morn or even, aught of dreariment or fear.
Indeed, a time we did fulfil, that gladdened us whilere With cup and lute and dulcimer and festival and cheer,
Till fortune and its shifts dissolved our fellowship; my love Departed and the time of peace with him evanished sheer.
Would that the crow of parting might be caused forbear our stead And would the dawn of my delight in passion might appear!

When he heard this, he wept like the downpouring of the clouds. Then he knocked at the door and the women said, ‘Who is at the door?’ ‘It is I, the blacksmith,’ answered he and told them what the Cadi had said and how he would have them appear before him and make their plaint to him, that he might do them justice on their adversary. ‘How can we go to him,’ replied Zein el Mewasif, ‘seeing the door is locked on us and our feet shackled and the Jew hath the keys?’ Quoth the smith, ‘I will make keys for the locks and open the door and the shackles therewith.’ ‘But who will show us the Cadi’s house?’ asked she; and he said, ‘I will describe it to you.’ ‘But how,’ continued she, ‘can we appear before him, clad as we are in hair-cloth, smoked with sulphur?’ And he answered, ‘He will not reproach this to you, considering your case.’ So saying, he went forthright and made keys for the locks, wherewith he opened the door and the shackles, and loosing the latter from their legs, carried them forth and directed them to the Cadi’s house. Then Huboub did off the hair-cloth garments from her mistress’s body and carried her to the bath, where she washed her and clad her in silken raiment, and her colour returned to her.

Now, as luck would have it, her husband was abroad at a bride-feast in the house of one of the merchants; so she adorned herself after the fairest fashion and betook herself to the Cadi, who rose to receive her. She saluted him with dulcet speech and sweet words, transfixing him the while with the arrows of her glances, and said, ‘May God prolong the life of our lord the Cadi and strengthen him to do justice!’ Then she acquainted him with the affair of the blacksmith and that which he had done them of kindness and with the heart-confounding torments that the Jew had inflicted on her and her women and how they had been like to perish, nor was there any deliverance found for them [till the smith set them free]. ‘O damsel,’ said the Cadi, ‘what is thy name?’ ‘My name is Zein el Mewasif,’ answered she, ‘and this my maid’s name is Huboub.’ Quoth he, ‘Thy name accordeth with its owner and its words conform to its meaning.’ Whereupon she smiled and veiled her face, and he said to her, ‘O Zein el Mewasif, hast thou a husband or not?’ ‘I have no husband,’ answered she. ‘And what is thy faith?’ asked he. ‘That of Islam,’ replied she, ‘and the religion of the best of men.’ Quoth he, ‘Swear to me by the Law, full of instances and admonitions, that thou art a Muslim.’ So she swore to him and pronounced the profession of the faith.

Then said he, ‘How comes it that thou wastest thy youth with this Jew?’ And she answered, ‘Know, O Cadi (may God prolong thy days in contentment and bring thee to thy hopes and seal thine acts with benefits!), that my father left me, after his death, fifteen thousand dinars, which he put into the hands of this Jew, that he might trade therewith and share the profit with me, the capital being secured by acknowledgment according to law. When my father died, the Jew coveted me and sought me in marriage of my mother, who said, “How shall I cause her leave her faith and become a Jewess? By Allah, I will denounce thee to the authorities!” He was affrighted at her words and taking the money, fled to the town of Aden. When we heard where he was, we came to Aden in search of him, and when we foregathered with him, he told us that he was trading in stuffs [with the money] and buying goods upon goods. So we believed him and he ceased not to beguile us till he cast us into prison and fettered us and tortured us exceeding sore; and we are strangers and have no helper save God the Most High and our lord the Cadi.’

When the Cadi heard this, he said to Huboub, ‘Is this indeed thy mistress and are ye strangers and is she unmarried?’ And she answered, ‘Yes.’ Quoth he, ‘Marry her to me and be manumission [of my slaves] and fasting and pilgrimage and almsgiving [of all my estate] incumbent on me, if I do you not justice on this dog and punish him for that which he hath done!’ And she answered, ‘I hear and obey.’ Then said he, ‘Go, comfort thy heart and that of thy lady; and to-morrow, if it please God the Most High, I will send for this infidel and do you justice on him and ye shall see wonders of his punishment.' So Huboub called down blessings upon him and went forth from him, [she and her mistress,] leaving him distracted with passion and love-longing and desire. Then they enquired for the house of the second Cadi and presenting themselves before him, told him the same story. On likewise did she with the third and the fourth, till she had made her complaint to all the four Cadis, each of whom lusted after her and besought her to marry him, to which she consented; nor knew any one of the four that which had happened to the others. All this passed without the knowledge of the Jew, who slept the night in the house of the bride-feast.

On the morrow, Huboub clad her mistress in her richest raiment and presented herself with her before the four Cadis in the hall of justice. As soon as she entered, she uncovered her face and saluted the magistrates, who returned her salutation and every one of them knew her. One was writing, and the pen dropped from his hand, another was talking, and his tongue became embarrassed, and a third was reckoning and blundered in his reckoning; and they said to her, 'O delightsome of attributes and surpassing of loveliness, be not thy heart other than easy, for we will assuredly do thee justice and bring thee to thy desire.' So she called down blessings on them and going forth, proceeded to beseech the notaries and scribes to succour her against that unbelieving miscreant and deliver her from the torment she suffered from him. Then she wrote a letter to Mesrour, setting forth to him all that the Jew had done with her from first to last and ending with the following verses:

Rain down tears, O mine eyes, as the deluge they were, So
perchance in their flood may be quenched my despair.
Once I clad me in raiment of gold-wroughten silk: Now the
raiment of monks and of friars I wear;
Yea, and sulphur's the scent of my clothes; betwixt that And
sweet basil and musk what a difference is there!
Thou wouldst never permit my abasement, Mesrour, Nor my
bondage, if but of my case thou wert ware;
And Huboub too's in fetters with one who denies The One, the
Requiter of foul and of fair.

Lo, the ways of the Jews and their faith I've renounced And my faith is the noblest of faiths hence fore'er.
To the Clement a Muslim's prostration I make And to follow the law of Mohammed I swear.
Forget not our loves of old time, O Mesrour, And keep thou our vows and our troth plight with care.
My faith for thy love and thy sake I have changed And my secret for passion I'll never declare;
So, if, like to the noble, our love thou've preserved, Be no laggard, but hasten to us to repair.

Then she folded the letter and gave it to her maid Huboub, saying, 'Keep it in thy pocket, till we send it to Mesrour.'

Presently in came the Jew and seeing them joyous, said to them, 'How comes it that I find you merry? Hath a letter reached you from your friend Mesrour?' 'We have no helper against thee save God, blessed and exalted be He!' replied Zein el Mewasif. 'He will deliver us from thy tyranny, and except thou restore to us our country and home, we will complain of thee to-morrow to the Cadi and governor of this town.' Quoth he, 'Who did off the shackles from your legs? But needs must I let make each of you shackles ten pounds in weight and go round about the city with you.' 'All that thou purposest against us,' replied Huboub, 'thou shalt fall into thyself, so it please God the Most High, by token that thou hast exiled us from our homes, and to-morrow we shall stand, we and thou, before the governor of the city.'

On this wise they passed the night and the next morning the Jew went out to order fresh shackles, whereupon Zein el Mewasif rose and repaired with her women to the court-house, where she found the four Cadis and saluted them. They all returned her salutation and the Chief Cadi said to those about him, 'Verily this damsel is lovely as Ez Zehra and all who see her love her and prostrate themselves to her beauty and grace.' Then he despatched four sergeants, who were sherifs, to fetch the Jew after the most abject fashion: so, when he returned with the shackles and found none in the house, he was confounded; but, as he abode in perplexity, up came the officers and laying hold of him, beat him soundly and dragged him face, downward, before the Cadi. When the latter saw him, he cried out in his face and said to him, ‘Out on thee, O enemy of God, is it come to such a pass with thee that thou dost thus and bringest these women far from their country and stealest their good and wouldst make them Jews? How darest thou seek to pervert Muslims?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered the Jew, ‘this woman is my wife.’

When the Cadis heard this, they all cried out, saying, ‘Cast this dog on the ground and smite him on the face with your sandals and beat him soundly, for his offence is unpardonable.’ So they pulled off his silken clothes and clad him in his wife’s raiment of hair-cloth, after which they threw him down and plucked out his beard and belaboured him about the face with sandals. Then they set him on an ass, face to crupper, and causing him take its tail in his hand, paraded him round about the town, after which they brought him back to the Cadis, who all condemned him to have his feet and hands cut off and after be crucified. When the accursed wretch heard this, his wit forsook him and he was confounded and said, ‘O my lords the Cadis, what would ye of me?’ ‘Say,’ answered they, “‘This damsel is not my wife and the money is her money, and I have transgressed against her and brought her far from her country.”’ So he confessed to this and the Cadis recorded his confession in legal form and taking the money from him, gave it to Zein el Mewasif, together with their voucher. Then she went away and all who saw her were confounded at her beauty and grace, whilst each of the Cadis looked for her to fall to his share. But, when she came to her lodging, she made ready all that she needed and waited till night. Then she took what was light of carriage and heavy of worth, and setting out with her maids, under cover of the darkness, fared on three days and three nights without stopping.

Meanwhile, the Cadis ordered the Jew to prison and on the morrow they looked for her coming to them, they and their assessors; but she presented herself not to any of them. Then said the Chief Cadi, ‘I wish to-day to go a-pleasuring without the town on an occasion I have.’ So he mounted his mule and taking his servant with him, went coasting about the streets of the town, searching high and low for Zein el Mewasif, but to no effect.

Presently he came upon the other three Cadis, going about on the same errand, each deeming himself the only one to whom she had pledged herself. He asked them what they did there and they told him their business, whereby he saw that their plight was as his plight and their quest as his quest. So they all four went round about the city, seeking her, but could light on no trace of her and returned to their houses, sick for love, and lay down on the bed of languor. Presently the Chief Cadi bethought himself of the blacksmith; so he sent for him and said to him, ‘O blacksmith, knowest thou what is come of the damsel whom thou didst direct to me? By Allah, an thou discover her not to me, I will beat thee with whips.’ When the smith heard this, he recited the following verses:

Her, that possesseth me in love, kind Fortune did endow With beauty all nor aught thereof to others did allow.
The eye of a gazelle she hath; her scent is ambergris; She shines, a sun, and undulates, a lake, and sways, a bough.

Then said he, ‘By Allah, O my lord, since she went out from thy worshipful presence, I have not set eyes on her! Indeed, she took possession of my heart and senses and all my talk and thought is of her. I went to her house, but found her not, nor found I any who could give me news of her, and it is as if she had plunged into the abysses of the sea or been caught up into the sky.’

When the Cadi heard this, he gave a groan, that his soul was like to depart therefor, and said, ‘By Allah, it would have been well, had we never seen her!’ Then the smith went away, whilst the Cadi fell down on his bed and became sick of languor for her sake, and on like wise fared it with the other three Cadis and the assessors. The physicians paid them frequent visits, but found in them no ailment requiring a leach: so the chief men of the city went in to the Chief Cadi and saluting him, questioned him of his case; whereupon he sighed and discovered to them that which was in his heart, reciting the following verses:

Spare me your blame, for sickness’ pains enough on me are keen, And hold excused the Cadi who doth judge the folk between.
Let him who blameth me for love excuse me and not blame, For

still unblameworthy the slain of passion are, I ween.
Cadi was I and fortune fair raised me to high estate, By script and pen, and life to me was pleasant and serene,
Till from a girl's looks, who to shed my blood came, with a shaft I was transfixed, whose deadly stroke no leach might countervene.
A Muslim maid, she came to me, complaining of unright; Her mouth with teeth like strings of pearls unvalued was beseen.
Under her veil I looked and she a full moon straight displayed That through the middle dark of night breaks out in all its sheen.
A lustrous visage, sugared lips and smiling, wonder-sweet, Beauty indeed enveloped her from head to foot, my queen.
'Midst Arabs and barbarians, by Allah, to mine eyes, To see the like of her fair face hath ne'er vouchsafed been!
Sweet, what didst promise me and saidst, 'O Cadi of the folk, Whenas I promise, I perform, and what I say I mean.'
This is my case and that wherewith I have afflicted been; So question me no more, good folk, of this my dole and teen.

Then he wept sore and gave one sob and his soul departed his body. When they saw this, they washed him and shrouded him and prayed over him and buried him, graving the following verses on his tomb:

The traits of lovers were fulfilled in him who comes, by her He loved and by her rigours slain, unto the sepulchre.
Cadi above the folk was he and him it did rejoice The sword of justice in its sheath to keep a prisoner.
But Fate against him did decree, nor e'er before his time Saw we the lord unto his slave abase him and defer.

Then they committed him to the mercy of God and went away to the second Cadi, in company with the physician, but found in him no hurt or ailment requiring a leach. So they questioned him of his case and he told them what ailed him, whereupon they blamed him and chid him for his folly, and he answered them with these verses:

I'm cursed with her, — my like was blameless aye — and dead

I’m shotten with a shaft from hand of archer sped.
A woman unto me there came, Huboub by name, Complaining of unright and Fortune’s drearihead;
And with her came a girl, who showed a face that passed The full moon’s light athwart the middle darkness spread.
Her beauties she displayed and her complaint preferred What while in floods there ran the tears her eyelids shed.
I hearkened to her speech and looked upon her face And sore she made me pine with smiling lips and red.
Then with my heart away she fared and left me here, The hostage of desire. Ah, whither hath she fled?
This then is all my case; have ruth upon my plight And take my servant here to Cadi in my stead.

Then he gave one sob and his soul departed his body; whereupon they buried him and commending him to the mercy of God, repaired to the third Cadi and the fourth, and there befell them the like of what befell their brethren. Moreover, they found the assessors also sick for love of her, and indeed all who saw her died of her love, or, if they died not, lived, afflicted with the agonies of passion [in vain], may God have mercy on them all!

Meanwhile Zein el Mewasif and her women fared on with all diligence till they came to a convent by the way, in which dwelt a prior called Danis and forty monks. When the prior saw her beauty, he went out to her and invited her to alight, saying, ‘Rest with us ten days and after go your ways.’ So she and her damsels alighted and entered the convent; and when Danis saw her beauty and grace, she debauched his faith and he was seduced by her: wherefore he fell to sending her love-messages by the monks, one after another, till he had sent all the forty; but each who saw her fell in love with her and plied her with blandishments galore and sought her favours for himself, without naming Danis, whilst she denied herself to them and rebuffed them all with harsh answers.

When Danis’s patience was at an end and his passion was sore on him, he said in himself, ‘Verily, the proverb says, “Nothing scratches my body but my own nail and nought runs my errands like my own feet.”’ So he rose and made ready rich meats, and it was the ninth day of her sojourn in the convent. Then he carried them in to her and set them before her, saying, ‘In the name of God, favour us [by partaking] of the best of the food at our command.’ So she put out her hand, saying, ‘In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful!’ and ate, she and her maidens. When she had made an end of eating, he said to her, ‘O my lady, I wish to recite to you some verses.’ ‘Say on,’ quoth she; and he recited the following:

Thou hast made conquest of my heart by dint of cheek and eye; In love of thee my prose and verse with one another vie.
Wilt thou forsake a lover sick with passion and desire? E’en in my dreams ‘gainst love I strive, with many a tear and sigh.
With my delights, I have th’ affairs of this my convent left: Leave me not prostrate, love-distraught, to languish and to die.
O lovely one, that holdest right the shedding of my blood In love, have pity on my case, give ear unto my cry.

When she heard this, she answered him with these verses:

O thou that seek’st of me delight, let not vain hope thy wit
Delude; of thy soliciting I prithee hold me quit.
Let not thy spirit covet that which it may not possess:
Disquietude with covetise was ever straitly knit.

Thereupon he returned to his place, pondering in himself and knowing not how he should do in her affair, and passed the night in very sorry case. But, as soon as it was dark night, Zein el Mewasif arose and said to her maids, ‘Come, [let us depart hence], for we cannot avail against forty men, monks, each of whom requireth me of himself.’ ‘Willingly,’ answered they. So they mounted their beasts and issuing forth of the convent gate, under favour of the night, rode on till they overtook a caravan, with which they mingled and found it came from the city of Aden. Presently, Zein el Mewasif heard the people of the caravan discoursing of her own case and telling how the Cadis and assessors were dead of love for her and how the townsfolk had appointed others in their stead and released her husband from prison. Whereupon she turned to her maids and said to them, ‘Heard ye that?’ And Huboub answered, ‘If the monks were ravished with love of thee, whose belief it is that to abstain from women is to do God worship, how should it be with the Cadis, who hold that there is no monkery in Islam? But let us make our way to our own country, whilst our affair is yet undiscovered.’ So they journeyed on with all diligence.

On the morrow, as soon as it was day, the monks repaired to Zein el Mewasif’s lodging to salute her, but found the place empty, and their hearts sank within them. So the first monk rent his clothes and recited these verses:

Give ear, companions dear, to that I shall to you impart; For I must say farewell to you full shortly and depart.
The pangs of passion and desire within mine entrails rage And eke a slayer from the flame of love is in my heart,
By reason of a lovely maid, who came into our land: The full moon in the height of heaven is as her counterpart.
She went and left me by her charms cast down and done to death, Slain of a shaft that from her lids death-dealing she did dart.

Then another monk recited the following verses:

O ye that with my soul have fled, on your unhappy swain Have pity and to his despair your blest returning deign.
They fared away and my repose departed after them; But still the sweetness of their speech doth in mine ears remain.
They’re distant, yea, and distant is their visitation-place: Would they’d vouchsafe, though but in dreams, their sight to us again!
When they departed hence, they took my heart with them and left Me all dissolved in floods of tears, that from mine eyes did rain.

A third monk followed with these lines:

Heart, eyes and ears to set thee in the highest room agree; For, lo, my heart and all of me’s a dwelling-place for thee.
Sweeter than honey in my mouth thy name is and thy thought Runs, as the vital spirit runs, in every rib of me.

Lean as a skewer hast thou made my frame for languishment;
Yea, and thou'st drowned me with my tears in very passion's sea.
Let me but look on thee in sleep; mayhap thy lovely sight Shall from the torment of my tears avail my cheeks to free.

Then a fourth recited the following verses:

Dumb is my tongue for sorrow; my speech of thee doth fail; Of passion comes my anguish, my sickness and my bale.
O thou full moon, whose place is in heaven, sore for thee Love-longing and distraction my spirit do assail.

And a fifth these:

I love a moon, shapely and slim and well-grown; Her waist of the weight of her buttocks makes moan.
Like the first pressed-out wine are the dews of her mouth And her lips to mankind for distraction are known.
My heart burns with passion; the lover lies slain, Midst the dark, whence the moon and its lustre are flown,
And his tears like the rains flow, nor ever run dry, For a cheek that is red as cornelian-stone.

And a sixth these:

Thou, whose exceeding rigour hath slain me for desire, O cassia-branch, whose planet mounts ever high and higher,
To thee of my affliction, my passion, I complain, O thou whose cheeks consume me with roses red as fire!
Is there his like for lover, who damns his soul for thee, Prayers and prostrations leaving, for all he is a friar?

And a seventh these:

My heart she prisoned and the tears from out mine eyes set free,
My patience rent and love-longing she fortified in me.
Sweet are her attributes, but, ah, how sour her rigour is! The hearts of all, who light on her, with arrows shooteth she.

O thou who blamest me, desist; repent thee for the past; For, in the case of passion, thou mayst not believéd be.

And on like wise all the rest of the monks repeated verses and wept. As for Danis, lamentation and weeping redoubled on him, for that he found no way to her enjoyment, and he chanted the following verses:

My patience failed me, when my loves took leave and fared away, When they, my wish and my desire, forsook me, sooth to say.
Soft with their camels, O thou guide o' the litters! Haply yet They to my dwelling to return may deign some blessed day.
Slumber forsook my lids the day we parted; my delight Departed with them and my woes waxed on me for dismay.
To God I make my moan of that I suffer for her love; My body's wasted sore and she hath caused my strength decay.

Then, despairing of her, they took counsel together and agreed to fashion her image [and set it up] with them, and applied themselves to this till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies.

Meanwhile, Zein el Mewasif fared on, without ceasing, till she reached her own house and opened the doors. Then she entered and sent to her sister Nesim, who rejoiced exceedingly at the news of her return and brought her the furniture and precious stuffs [she had left in her charge]. So she furnished the house and hung up the curtains over the doors and burnt aloes-wood and musk and ambergris and other perfumes, till the whole house reeked with the most delightful fragrance: after which she donned her finest clothes and ornaments and sat talking with her maids, whom she had left behind, and relating to them all that had befallen her. Then she turned to Huboub and giving her money, bade her fetch them something to eat. So she brought meat and drink and when they had made an end of eating and drinking, Zein el Mewasif bade Huboub go and see where Mesrour was and how it fared with him.

Now Mesrour knew not of her return, but abode in sore concern and sorrow that might not be overpast; no peace remained to him nor was patience possible to him. Whenas love and passion and yearning and distraction waxed on him, he would solace himself by reciting verses and go to the house and kiss its walls. It chanced that he went out that day to the place where he had parted from his mistress and repeated the following verses:

That which for thee I suffer I would have hid; but, nay, 'Twould out, and sleep for waking mine eyes have bartered aye.
Since that wanhope doth canker my heart both night and day, I cry aloud, 'O Fortune, hold back thy hand, I pray,
For lo, my soul is straitened 'twixt peril and dismay.
If but the Lord of passion were just, indeed, to me, Sure slumber from mine eyelids he had not bidden flee.
Have ruth upon a lover, who languishes for thee, The great one of people, cast down by Love's decree,
The rich, whom love hath beggared and brought him to decay.
The censors still revile thee; I heed them not, not I, But stop mine ears against them and give them back the lie.
Still will I keep my troth-plight with her I love. They cry, 'Thou lovest one departed and gone;' and I reply,
'Enough; when Fate descendeth, the sight is blinded aye.'

Then he returned to his lodging and sat there weeping, till sleep overcame him, when he saw in a dream as if Zein el Mewasif were come to the house, and awoke, weeping. So he set off to go thither, repeating the following verses:

How shall I be consoled for her whose am I, every jot, When all my heart's aglow with flames than coals of fire more hot?
To Allah of the shifts of Fate, the nights' vicissitudes And of her absence I complain, whom well I love, God wot.
When shall we meet, O term of heart's desire? O full-moon face, When shall the favouring Fates to me reunion allot?

As he made an end of his recitation, he found himself in Zein el Mewasif's street and smelt the sweet savour of the perfumes with which she had incensed the house; wherefore his heart fluttered and was like to leave his breast and desire flamed up in him and distraction redoubled upon him, when, behold, up came Huboub, on her way to do her mistress's errand. When she saw him, she went up to him and saluting him, gave him the glad news of her mistress's return, saying, 'She hath sent me to bid thee to her.' Whereat he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and she took him and returned with him to the house.

When Zein el Mewasif saw him, she came down to him from the couch and kissed him and embraced him and he her; nor did they leave kissing and embracing till they swooned away for stress of love and separation. They lay a long while senseless, and when they revived, Zein el Mewasif bade Huboub fetch her a gugglet of sherbet of sugar and another of sherbet of lemons. So she brought what she desired and they sat eating and drinking till nightfall, when they fell to recalling all that had befallen them, first and last. Then she acquainted him with her conversion to Islam, whereat he rejoiced and became a Muslim. On like wise did her women, and they all repented to God the Most High [of their infidelity]. On the morrow she sent for the Cadi and the witnesses and told them that she was a widow and had completed the period of purification and was minded to marry Mesrour. So they drew up the marriage-contract between them and they abode in all delight of life.

Meanwhile, the Jew, when the people of Aden released him from prison, set out homeward and fared on, without stopping, till he came within three days' journey of the city, when Zein el Mewasif heard of his coming and calling Huboub, said to her, 'Go to the Jews' burial-place and there dig a grave and plant on it sweet basil and jessamine and sprinkle water thereabout. If the Jew come and ask thee of me, answer, "My mistress died twenty days ago of chagrin on thine account." If he say, "Show me her tomb," take him to the [mock] grave and weep over it and make moan and lament before him.' And Huboub answered, 'I hear and obey.' Then they laid up the furniture in the store-closets, and Zein el Mewasif removed to Mesrour's lodging, where he and she abode eating and drinking, till the three days were past; at the end of which time the Jew arrived and knocked at the door of his house. Quoth Huboub, 'Who is at the door?' And he answered, 'Thy master.' So she opened to him and he saw the tears coursing down her cheeks and said to her, ‘What ails thee to weep and where is thy mistress?’ Quoth she, ‘My mistress is dead of chagrin on thine account.’ When he heard this, he wept sore and was confounded and said, ‘O Huboub, where is her tomb?’ So she carried him to the Jews’ burial-ground and showed him the grave she had dug; and he wept sore and recited the following verses:

Two things there are, for which if eyes wept tear on tear Of blood, till they were like, indeed, to disappear,
They never could fulfil the tithe of all their due; And these are prime of youth and loss of lovelings dear.

Then he wept again and recited these also:

Alas my grief! My fortitude bewrays me for my fair: Since she I love is gone, I die of misery and despair.
Woe’s me for my beloved’s loss! How sore it is on me! And O the rending of my heart for that I did whilere!
Would I my secret in my time had not revealed and eke The passion in my heart that seethed had still kept hidden there!
I was in all delight of life and solace; now she’s gone, To misery and abjectness, alack! I’m vowed fore’er.
Huboub, thou stirred me to lament with tidings of her death Who of all creatures was my stay and solace against care.
Zein el Mewasif, would to God that severance had not been! Would he, through whom my soul forsook my body, had been ne’er!
I do repent me of the breach of vows and blame myself For my neglect of her on whom my hopes still builded were.

When he had made an end of saying this, he wept and groaned and lamented till he fell down in a swoon, whereupon Huboub made haste to drag him to the grave and throw him in, whilst he was yet insensible. Then she stopped up the grave on him and returning to her mistress, told her what had passed, whereat she rejoiced with an exceeding joy and recited the following verses:

Fate swore ’twould plague me without cease nor leave to make me rue: Thine oath is broken, Fate; so look thou fitting penance do.

The censor's dead and he I love conjoined is with me; Up then unto the summoner of joys, and quickly too!

Then she and Mesrour abode with each other in eating and drinking and sport and pleasure and good cheer, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies and Slayer of sons and daughters.

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ALI NOUREDDIN AND THE FRANK KING'S DAUGHTER.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, in the parts of Cairo, a merchant named Tajeddin, who was of the most considerable of the merchants and of the chiefs of the freeborn [of the city]. He was given to travelling to all parts and loved to fare over desert and down and stony waste and to journey to the islands of the sesame in quest of dirhems and dinars: wherefore he had in his time encountered dangers and suffered hardships of gavel, such as would make little children gray. He was possessed of slaves and servants, white and black and male and female, and was the wealthiest of the merchants of his time and the goodliest of them in speech, owning horses and mules and Bactrian and other camels and sacks, great and small, and goods and merchandise and stuffs beyond compare, such as Hems muslins and Baalbek silks and brocades and Merv cottons and Indian stuffs and Baghdad gauzes and Moorish burnouses and Turkish white slaves and Abyssinian eunuchs and Greek slave-girls and Egyptian boys; and the coverings of his bales were of gold-embroidered silk, for he was abundantly wealthy. Moreover he was accomplished in goodliness, stately of Port and pleasant of composition, even as saith of him one of his describers:

A certain merchant once I did espy, Between whose lovers war raged fierce and high.
Quoth he, 'What ails the folk to clamour thus?' ''Tis for thy sake, O merchant,' answered I.

And saith another in his praise lad sail well and accomplisheth the wish of him:

A merchant came to visit us, whoso eye Did with its glance my heart still stupefy.
Quoth he, 'What ails thee to be thus amazed?' 'On thine account, O merchant,' answered I.

He had a son called Ali Noureddin, as he were the full moon whenas it waxeth on its fourteenth night, a marvel of beauty and grace, elegant of shape and accomplished in symmetry who was sitting one day in his father's shop, selling and buying and giving and taking, as was his wont, when the sons of the merchants encompassed him about and he was amongst them as the moon among stars, with flower-white forehead and rosy cheeks, covered with tender down, and body like alabaster, even as saith of him the poet:

A fair one said, 'Describe me well;' And I, 'In grace thou dost excel.
Yea, speaking briefly, all in thee Is lovely and acceptable.'

And as saith of him one of his describers:

A mole on as cheek he hath, as 'twere a grain Of ambergris on alabaster plate,
And swordlike glances that proclaim aloud Against Love's rebels, 'Allah is Most Great.'

The young merchants invited him [to go with them], saying, 'O my lord Noureddin, we wish thee to go this day a-pleasuring with us in such a garden.' And he answered, '[Wait] till I consult my father, for I cannot go without his consent.' As they were talking, up came Tajeddin, and his son turned to him and said, 'O my father, the sons of the merchants have invited me to go a-pleasuring with them in such a garden. Dost thou give me leave to go?' 'Yes, O my son,' answered his father; 'go with them;' and gave him money.

So he mounted a mule and the other young men mounted mules and asses, and they all rode till they came to a garden, wherein was all the soul desireth and that charmeth the eye. It was high walled and had a vaulted gateway, with a portico like a saloon and a sky-blue door, as it were one of the gates of Paradise. Moreover, the name of the door-keeper was Rizwan, and over the gate were trained a hundred trellises of grapes of various colours, the red like coral, the black like negroes' faces and the white like pigeons' eggs, growing in clusters and singly: even as saith of them the poet:

Grapes, as the taste of wine their savour is, I trow: The black thereof in hue are as the corby-crow,
And shining midst the leaves, like women's fingers dipped In henna or the like of dye, the white grapes show.

And as saith another:

Grape-clusters, that show, on their stalks as they sway, Like my body for languishment wasted away.
Like honey and water in vases are they And their juice becomes wine, after sourness, one day.

Then they entered the arbour [that led into the garden] and saw there the gate-keeper sitting, as he were Rizwan, guardian of Paradise, and on the door were written these verses:

A garden watered was of God, until its clusters leant And dangled all and for excess of drink, its branches bent.
When in the Eastern zephyr's hand its sapling dance and sway, The clouds with fresh pearls handsel them for very ravishment.

And within the arbour were written the following verses:

Enter with us, O friend, this garden fair, That cleanses from the heart its rust of care.
Its zephyrs stumble in their skirts [for haste] And in their sleeve its flowers laugh everywhere.

So they entered and found within fruits of all kinds and birds of all sorts and colours, such as the ringdove and the nightingale and the curlew and the turtle and the cushat, carolling on the branches. Therein were streams that ran with limpid water and delightsome flowers, and it was even as saith of it the poet:

The zephyr o'er its branches breathes and sways them to and fro, As they were girls that in their skirts still stumble as they go;

And like to swords, whenas the hands of horsemen draw them forth From out their scabbards' enveloped its silver channels show.

And again:

The river passes by and laves the branches with its flood And still it mirrors in its heart the younglings of the wood;
Which when the zephyr notes, it hastes to them for jealousy And forces them to bend away from out its neighbourhood.

On the trees of the garden were all manner fruits, each in two kinds, and amongst them the pomegranate, as it were a ball of silver dross, whereof saith the poet and saith well:

Pomegranates, fine-skinned, like the breasts of a maid, Whenas, rounded and firm, to the sight they're displayed.
When I peel them, appear to us rubies galore, Such as well may the wit with amazement invade.

And as quoth another:

To him, who seeks to come at its inside, there are displayed Rubies together pressed and clad in raiment of brocade.
I liken the pomegranate, when I look on it, to domes Of alabaster or to breasts of unpolluted maid.
Therein is healing for the sick and thereanent to us A saying of the Prophet pure tradition hath conveyed.
Yea, and a word most eloquent, written in the Book, thereof God (may His majesty fore'er be magnified!) hath said.

There were apples, sugar and musk and Damani, amazing the beholder, whereof saith the poet:

The apple in itself two hues, that image to the sight The cheeks of lover and belov'd foregathering, doth unite;
Upon the boughs like two extremes of wonder they appear, This dark and swarthy to behold, and ruddy that and bright.
Whenas they clipped, a spy appeared and frighted them; so this

Flushed for confusion and that paled for passion and despite.

There also were apricots of various kinds, almond and camphor and Jilani and Antabi, whereof says the poet:

The almond-apricot most like a lover is, To whom his loved one came and dazed his wit and will.
The traits of passion's slave that mark it are enough; Its outward's yellow, and its heart is broken still.

And saith another and saith well:

In the apricot's coverage whole gardens there be: Consider them straitly their brightness thou'll see.
When the boughs bloom in spring-time, it blossoms with them, Like the soft-shining stars, midst the leaves on the tree.

There likewise were plums and thence: and grapes that heal the sick of [all] diseases and do away giddiness and bile from the head; and figs on the branches, parcel red and green, amazing sight and sense even as saith the poet:

'Tis as the fig, whose whiteness, with mingling green bedight, Amongst the tree-leaves fruited, appeareth to the sight,
Where Greeks on palace-turrets that keep the ward: the shades Close o'er them and in darkness they watch the livelong night.

And saith another and saith well:

Hail to the fig! It comes to us On dishes in fair order laid,
As 'twere a table-cloth, drawn up Into a bag, without string's aid.

And saith a third alike well:

Give me the fig, with beauty that's clad and good to eat: Its outward with its inward accordeth, as is meet.
It fruiteth and thou pluckst it, and when thou eatst thereof, As camomiles its smell is, its taste as sugar sweet;

And when into its platters 'tis poured, it seemeth balls Made of green silk and fashioned in goodliness complete.

And how excellent is the saying of one of them:

Quoth they (and I on the fig, forsooth, was wont my fill to feed And Made no count of the other fruits to which they gave the meed,)
'Why dost thou love the fig?' And I, 'The fig hath its folk,' replied; 'And the sycamore fruit hath folk and folk thereto, in very deed.'

And still goodlier that of another:

The fig to me is pleasing above all fruits that be, Whenas it's ripe and dangles upon its shining tree.
What while the clouds are raining, for fear of God Most High, Full many a tear it sheddeth, as 'twere a devotee.

There were also pears of various kinds, Sinai, Aleppo and Greek, growing singly and in clusters, parcel green and parcel yellow, amazing the beholder, as saith of them the poet:

Fair fall thee of a pear, whose hue is grown Even as a lover pale for love and moan;
Like to a virgin in her harem shut, Her face by curtains half concealed, Half shown.

And Sultani peaches of various shades of red and yellow whereof saith the poet:

'Tis as the peach, i' the gardens, when with red, like unto dragon's blood, 'tis all o'erspread,
Were very balls of yellow gold, whose cheeks Are dyed with gouts of blood upon them shed.

And green almonds of exceeding sweetness, resembling the heart of the palm-tree, with their kernels hidden within three tunics of the handiwork of the Munificent King, even as is said of them:

A tender body, various of attributes and pent In tunics three, the handiwork of God Omnipotent.
Duresse envelopes it both night and day and therewithal It doth, though guiltless of offence, endure imprisonment.

And as well saith another:

Dost thou not see the almonds, when from the parent stem The gentle hand of a plucker pulls and detaches them?
The peeling of them shows us the kernels therewithin, As when from one an oyster one pulls the hidden gem.

And as saith a third better than he:

How goodly is the almond green! The smallest fills the hand, I ween.
Its nap is as the down upon A minion's cheeks of satin sheen.
Double and single, as may chance, Its kernels in the husk are seen,
As pearls they were of lucent white, That cased and lapped in beryls been.

And as saith yet another and saith well:

Mine eyes have not looked on the like of the almond For beauty, with blossoms in spring-time bedight.
Whilst the down on its cheek in the leaf-time yet sprouteth, Its head is already for hoariness white.

And jujube-plums of various colours, growing singly and in clusters, whereof saith one, describing them:

Look at the jujube-plums, upon the branches all arrayed, Like wonder-goodly apricots (to dry) on osiers laid.
Such is their brightness that they seem, to the beholder's eye, As cascabels of gold they were, of purest bullion made.

And as saith another and saith well:

The lote-tree doth itself array In some fresh beauty every day.
’Tis as the fruit upon it were (And th’ eye so deems it, sooth to say,)
Hawks’ bells of vegetable gold That swing from every branch and spray.

And [blood] oranges, as they were galingale, whereof quoth the poet El Welhan:

Red oranges, that fill the hand, upon the boughs arow, Shining with loveliness; without they’re fire, within they’re snow.
Snow, for a marvel, melting not, though joined with firs it be, And fire that burns not, strange to say, for all its ruddy glow.

And quoth another and quoth well:

Trees of blood oranges, whose fruit, in beauty manifold, Unto his eye who draweth near, its brightness to behold,
Like unto women’s cheeks appears, who have adorned themselves And decked them out for festival in robe of cloth of gold.

And yet another:

The hills of oranges, what time the zephyrs o’er them glide And to their touch the branches bend and sway from side to side,
Are like to cheeks, wherein there glows the light of loveliness And to meet which come other cheeks at salutation-tide.

And a fourth:

One day of a young gazelle that he should praise Our garden and oranges we did require.
Quoth he, ‘Your garden to me is as my face, And whoso gathers its oranges gathers fire.’

And citrons in colour as virgin gold, dropping from on high and dangling among the branches, as they were ingots of vegetable gold, as saith thereof the poet El Welhan:

Hast thou not seen a fruited wood of citrons, laden all So heavily that, when they bend, one feareth lest they fall?
When the breeze passed o'er them, as 'twere with ingots of pure gold It Seemed the bough were laden. cast in many a gleaming ball.

And shaddocks, that hung among their boughs, an they were the breasts of gazelle-like virgins contenting the utmost of desire, as saith of them the poet and saith well:

A shaddock, midst the garden ways, I saw, its leaves between, On a fresh branch, as a maid's shape with symmetry beseen.
When the wind bent it here and there, its fruits all rolled about, As balls of gold they were, at end of malls of beryl green.

And the lemon, sweet of savour, which resembles a hen's egg, but yellowness is the ornament of its ripe fruit, and its fragrance heartens him who plucks it, as saith the poet of it:

Beholdst not the lemon, that, whenas on high It shineth, for brilliancy dazzles the eye?
Meseemeth as if 'twere a hen's egg, indeed, That the hand of the huckster with saffron doth dye.

Moreover in this garden were all manner sweet-scented herbs and plants and fragrant powers, such as jessamine and henna and water-lilies and spikenard and roses of all kinds and plaintain and myrtle and so forth: and indeed it was without parallel, seeming as it were a piece of Paradise to him who beheld it. If a sick man entered it, he came forth from it like a raging lion, and the tongue availeth not to its description, by reason of that which was therein of wonders and rarities that are not found but in Paradise: and how should it not be thus, when its door- keeper's name was Rizwan? Though widely different were their stations.

When the sons of the merchants had walked about the garden and taken their pleasure therein [awhile], they sat down in one of its pavilions and seated Noureddin in their midst on a rug of leather of Et Taif, embroidered with gold, leaning on a round cushion of minever, stuffed with ostrich down. And they gave him a fan of ostrich feathers whereon were written the following verses:

A fan, whose breath is fragrant; it calleth aye to mind The days of joy and solace, when fortune still was kind,
And to the face of noble and freeborn youths restore Their sweetness at all seasons, with its perfumed wind.

Then they laid by their turbans and [upper] clothes and sat talking and contending with one another in discourse, while they all kept their eyes fixed on Noureddin and gazed on his beauty. Presently, up came a slave with a tray on his head, wherein were dishes of china and crystal containing meats of all sorts, whatever walks [the earth] or wings the air or swims the waters, such as grouse and quails and pigeons and mutton and chickens and the most delicate of fish, for one of the young men had given the people of his house a charge of this, before coming forth to the garden. So, the tray being set before them, they fell to and ate their fill; and when they had made an end of eating, they rose from meat and washed their hands with pure water and soap scented with musk, and dried them with napkins embroidered with silk and bugles; but to Noureddin they brought a napkin laced with red gold, on which he wiped his hands.

Then coffee was served up and each drank what he would, after which they sat talking, till presently the keeper of the garden went away and returning with a basket full of roses, said to them, ‘What say ye to flowers, O my masters?’ Quoth one of them, ‘They are welcome, especially roses, which are not to be refused.’ ‘It is well,’ answered the gardener: ‘but it is of our wont not to give roses but in exchange for some contribution to the general amusement; so whoso would have aught thereof let him recite some apposite verses.’ Now they were ten in number; so one of them said, ‘Agreed: give me [of them], and I will recite thee somewhat of verse apt to the case.’ So the gardener gave him a bunch of roses and he recited these verses:

The rose I honour over all, Because its beauties never pall.
All fragrant flowers are troops and it Their Amir most majestical.
When it’s away, they’re proud; but if It come, straightway they

own them thrall.

Then he gave another a bunch and he recited the following verses:

Glory to thee my lord the rose! The scent Of musk recalls the fragrance thou dost shed.
Thou'rt like a maid, on whom her lover looks And with her sleeves she covers up her head.

Then he gave a third a bunch and he recited these verses:

A precious rose, the heart of man it gladdeneth with its sight; Its scent the best of ambergris recalleth to the spright.
The branches strain it in its leaves for joyance, e'en as one Kisseth a mouth that knoweth nought of rigour or despite.

Then he gave a fourth a bunch and he recited these verses:

Seest not the rose-bush in blossom? Each mounted on its cane, Full many a marvel it holdeth, that ravish heart and brain.
As they were rubies with beryl encompassed about, they show, And each in the midst of its calyx doth somewhat of gold contain.

Then he gave a bunch to a fifth and he recited these verses:

Wands of green beryl fruit did bear, and when 'twas ripe, behold, As ingots to the sight it was of vegetable gold.
Ay, and the crystal drops that fell from out the tender leaves, Meseemed, were like to very tears from languorous eyelids rolled.

Then he gave a sixth a bunch and he recited the following verses:

O rose, thou dost all charms comprise, that may amuse the wit, And God to thee the pleasantest of secrets doth commit.
Meseems as if a loved one's cheek it were and eke as if A longing lover with a piece of gold had handselled it.

Then he gave a bunch to a seventh and he recited these verses:

I said to the rose, ‘What ails thy thorns to be So swift to wound and hurt all those that touch thy charms?’
It answered, ‘All the flowers my soldiers are, in sooth, And I their Sultan am and these my thorns my arms.’

And he gave an eighth a bunch and he recited the following:

God watch o’er a rose that’s grown yellow and bright,
Resplendent, pure gold as it were to the sight,
And guard the fair boughs that have borne it, to boot, With the mock yellow suns of its flowerage bedight!

Then he gave a bunch to a ninth and he recited these verses:

The yellow roses stir to gladness uncontrolled The heart of every slave of passion, young or old.
A shrub that, strange to say, is water given to drink Of silver and for fruit, bears vegetable gold!

Then he gave a bunch of roses to the tenth and last and he recited the following verses:

Seest not the hosts of the rose, in raiment red And yellow that glitter from out their blossoming-stead?
I liken the yellow rose, with its thorn therein, To an emerald lance, through a golden target sped.

Then the gardener brought the wine-service and setting it before them, on a tray of porcelain sprayed with red gold, recited the following verses:

Dawn heraldeth the light; so pour me out, I pray, Of wine, such wine as makes the faintest-hearted gay.
So pure and bright it is, that whether wine in cup Or cup in wine be held, i’ faith, ’tis hard to say.

Then he filled and drank and the cup went round, till it came to Noureddin’s turn, whereupon the gardener filled the cup and handed it to him; but he said, ‘I know not this thing nor have I ever drunken thereof, for therein is a great sin and the Almighty Lord hath forbidden it in His book.’ ‘O my lord Noureddin,’ answered the gardener, ‘if thou forbear to drink only by reason of the sin, verily God (blessed and exalted be He!) is bountiful, mild, forgiving and compassionate and pardoneth the greatest sins. His mercy embraceth all things and be it upon the poet who says:

Be as thou wilt and banish dread and care, For God is bountiful and debonair;
So of two things, the doing hurt to men And giving God a partner, thou beware.’

Then said one of the sons of the merchants, ‘My life on thee, O my lord Noureddin, drink of this cup!’ And another conjured him by the oath of divorce and yet another stood before him, till he was ashamed and taking the cup from the gardener, drank a mouthful, but spat it out again, saying, ‘It is bitter.’ ‘O my lord Noureddin,’ said the gardener, ‘knowest thou not that the sweetest things, when taken by way of medicine, are bitter? Were this not bitter, it would lack of the [many] virtues it possesseth; amongst which are that it digesteth food and doth away care and anxiety and dispelleth vapours and clarifieth the blood and cleareth the complexion and enliveneth the body and hearteneth the poltroon and fortifieth the sexual power; but to name all its virtues would be tedious. Quoth one of the poets:

We’ll drink, for God His clemency encompasseth the soul On every side: I medicine my ailments with the bowl;
And nought (for well I know its sin) save God His saw, ‘Therein Are for the folk advantages,’ doth me thereto cajole.

Then he opened one of the cupboards there and taking out a loaf of refined sugar, broke off a great piece, which he put in Noureddin’s cup, saying, ‘O my lord, if thou fear to drink wine, because of its bitterness, drink now, for it is sweet.’ So he took the cup and emptied it: whereupon one of his comrades filled him another, saying, ‘I am thy slave,’ and another [did the like], saying, ‘I am one of thy servants,' and a third said, 'For my sake!' and a fourth, 'God on thee, O my lord Noureddin, heal my heart!' And so they plied him with wine, till they had made him drink ten cups.

Now Noureddin's body wag virgin [of wine-bibbing], nor all his life had he drunken wine till then, wherefore its fumes mounted to his brain and drunkenness was stark upon him and he stood up (and indeed his tongue was embarrassed and his speech thick) and said, 'O company, by Allah, ye are fair and your speech and place are goodly, but there needs the hearing of sweet music; for drink without music lacks the chief of its essentials, even as saith the poet:

Pass round the cup to the old and the young man, too, And take the bowl from the hand of the shining moon,
But without music, I charge you, forbear to drink; I see even horses drink to a whistled tune.'

Therewith up rose the gardener and mounting one of the young men's mules, was absent awhile, after which he returned with a girl of Cairo, as she were a delicate fat sheep's tail or pure silver or a dinar in a porcelain dish or a gazelle in the desert. She had a face that put to shame the shining sun and bewitching eyes and brows like bended bows and rosy cheeks and pearly teeth and sugared lips and languishing glances and ivory breasts and slender body, full of folds and dimples, and buttocks like stuffed pillows and thighs like columns of Syrian marble, and between them what was like a sachet [of spices] folded in a wrapper. Quoth the poet of her:

A fair one, to idolaters if she herself should show, They'd leave their idols and her face for only Lord would know.
If in the Eastward she appeared unto a monk, for sure He'd cease from turning to the West and to the East bend low;
And if into the briny sea one day she chanced to spit, Assuredly the salt sea's floods straight fresh and sweet would grow.

And quoth another:

More brilliant than the moon at full, with liquid languorous eyes,

She seems an antelope that takes the lion-whelps to prize.
The midnight of her locks lets fall o'er her a tent of hair, Unfixed of tent-pegs, that protects her beauty from the spies.
The fire, that in th' unfading rose still burneth of her cheek, Is fed with entrails that consume and hearts and lovers' sighs.
An if the beauties of the time beheld her, unto her, Saying, 'Unto the precedent the palm,' they would arise.

And how well saith a third:

Three things for ever hinder her to visit us, for fear Of the intriguing spy and eke the rancorous envier;
Her forehead's lustre and the sound of all her ornaments And the sweet scent her creases hold of ambergris and myrrh.
Grant with the border of her sleeve she hide her brow and doff Her ornaments, how shall she do her scent away from her?

She was like the moon, when it appears on its fourteenth night, and was clad in a garment of blue, with a veil of green, over a flower-white forehead, that amazed all wits and confounded those of understanding. And indeed she was possessed of the utmost grace and beauty and symmetry, as it were she of whom the poet would speak when he saith:

She comes in a robe the colour of ultramarine, Blue as the stainless sky unflecked with white.
I view her with yearning eyes and she seems to me A moon of the summer set in a winter's night.

And how goodly is the saying of another and how excellent!

She came unto me, straitly veiled, and I to her did say, 'Thy face, the bright, resplendent moon, uncover and display.'
Quoth she, 'I fear reproach,' and I, 'Forbear this idle talk: Let not the shifts of time and fate affright thee or dismay.'
So from her face she raised the veil that hid her charms and tears Upon the jewels of her cheeks fell, like a crystal spray.
Indeed, I thought to kiss her cheek, that thereanent to God She

might make moan of me upon the Resurrection Day;
So were we twain the first to plead of lovers, each 'gainst each,
Whenas the dead shall rise, before the Lord whom all obey;
And I, 'Prolong our standing-up and reckoning,' would say,
'That so mine eyes may feed their fill upon my loved one aye.'

Then said the gardener to her, 'O lady of fair ones and mistress of every shining star, know that we sought not, in bringing thee hither, but that thou shouldst entertain this comely youth here, my lord Noureddin, for he hath only come to this place this day.' And she answered, saying, 'Would thou hadst told me, that I might have brought what I have with me!' 'O my lady,' rejoined the gardener, 'I will go and fetch it to thee.' 'As thou wilt,' replied she: and he said, 'Give me a token.' So she gave him a handkerchief and he went away in haste and returned after awhile, bearing a bag of green satin, with cords of gold. She took the bag from him and opening it, shook it, whereupon there fell thereout two-and-thirty pieces of wood, which she fitted, one into another, till they became a polished lute of Indian workmanship.

Then she uncovered her wrist and laying the lute in her lap, bent over it, as the mother bends over her child, and swept the strings with the tips of her fingers; whereupon it moaned and resounded and yearned after its former habitations; and it remembered the waters that gave it to drink [whilst yet in the tree,] and the earth whence it sprang and wherein it grew up and the carpenters who cut it and the polishers who polished it and the merchants who exported it and the ships that carried it; and it cried out and wailed and lamented; and it was as if she questioned it of all these things and it answered her with the tongue of the case, reciting the following verses:

Whilom I was a tree, wherein the nightingales did nest; Whilst green my head, I swayed for them with longing and unrest.
They made melodious moan on me, and I their plaining learnt,
And so my secret was by this lament made manifest.
The woodman felled me to the earthy though guiltless of offence,
And wrought of me a slender lute, by singers' hands carest;
But, when their fingers sweep my strings, they tell that I am slain,

One with duresse amongst mankind afflicted and oppress;
Wherefore each boon-companion, when he heareth my lament,
Grows mad with love and drunkenness o'ermasters every guest,
And God inclineth unto me their hearts and I indeed Am to the highest place advanced in every noble breast.
All who in loveliness excel do clip my waist and in The arms of every languorous-eyed gazelle my form is prest.
May God the Lord ne'er sever us, nor live the loved one aye Who with estrangement and disdain her lover would molest!

Then she was silent awhile, but presently taking the lute in her lap, bent over it, as the mother bends over her child, and preluded in many different modes; then, returning to the first, she sang the following verses:

An they'd unto the lover incline or visit pay, From off his back the burden of longing he might lay.
A nightingale o' the branches vies with him, as she were A lover whose beloved hath lighted far away.
Up and awake! The midnights of love-delight are clear And bright, With union's splendour, as very break of day.
Behold, to love and joyance the lute-strings summon us And eke to-day our enviers are heedless of our play.
Seest not that unto pleasance four several things, to wit, Rose, gilly-flower and myrtle and lights unite alway?
And here today assemble four things, by favouring fate, Lover, beloved, money and wine, to make us gay.
So seize upon thy fortune i' the world; for its delights Pass by and but traditions and chronicles do stay.

When Noureddin heard this, he looked on her with eyes of love and could scarce contain himself for the violence of his inclination to her; and on like wise was it with her, because she looked at the company who were present of the sons of the merchants and at Noureddin and saw that he was amongst the rest as the moon among stars; for that he was sweet of speech and full of amorous grace, perfect in beauty and brightness and loveliness and accomplished in symmetry, pure of all defect, blander than the zephyr and more delicate than Tesnim, as saith of him the poet:

By his cheeks' unfading damask and his smiling teeth I swear, By the arrows that he feathers with the witchery of his air,
By his sides so soft and tender and his glances bright and keen, By the whiteness of his forehead and the blackness of his hair,
By his arched imperious eyebrows, chasing slumber from my lids With their yeas and noes that hold me 'twixt rejoicing and despair,
By the scorpions that he launches from his ringlet-clustered brows, Seeking still to slay his lovers with his rigours unaware,
By the myrtle of his whiskers and the roses of his cheek, By his lips' incarnate rubies and his teeth's fine pearls and rare,
By the straight and tender sapling of his shape, which for its fruit Doth the twin pomegranates, shining in his snowy bosom, wear,
By his heavy hips that tremble, both in motion and repose, And the slender waist above them, all too slight their weight to bear,
By the silk of his apparel and his quick and sprightly wit, By all attributes of beauty that are fallen to his share;
Lo, the musk exhales its fragrance from his breath, and eke the breeze From his scent the perfume borrows, that it scatters everywhere.
Yea, the sun in all his splendour cannot with his brightness vie And the crescent moon's a fragment that he from his nails doth pare.

Her verses pleased him and he swayed from side to side for drunkenness and fell a-praising her and saying:

A luting maiden stole away Our wits for drunkenness one day.
"Twas God the Lord that gifted us With speech,' her strings to us did say.

When she heard this, she looked at him with eyes of love and redoubled in passion and desire for him increased upon her, and indeed she marvelled at his beauty and grace and symmetry, so that she could not contain herself but took the lute again and sang the following:

He chides me, if I look on him, and with disdain Entreats me, though my life is his for weal and bane;
Yea, he repelleth me; yet what is in my heart He knows as if God's self to him had made it plain.
His likeness have I drawn midmost my palm and charged Mine eyes make moan for him and over him complain.
Mine eyes will look on none save him, nor will my heart Aid me his cruelty with patience to sustain.
Wherefore, O thou my heart, I'll tear thee from my breast, For that thou art of those that envy me the swain.
Whenas I say, 'O heart, be comforted,' 'tis vain; To turn to any else than him it will not deign.

Noureddin wondered at the beauty of her song and the sweetness of her voice and the eloquence of her speech and his wit fled for stress of love and longing and distraction, so that he could not refrain from her a moment, but bent to her and strained her to his bosom; and she in like manner abandoned herself to his caresses and kissed him between the eyes. Then he kissed her on the mouth and they played at kisses with one another, after the manner of the billing of doves, till the others were distracted and rose to their feet; whereupon Noureddin was abashed and held his hand from her. Then she took her lute and preluding thereon in many different modes, returned to the first and sang the following verses:

A moon, he draws from out his lids, whenas he turns and sways, A sword and puts gazelles to shame, whenas he stands at gaze.
A king, his all-surpassing charms his troops are, and for arms, His shape is like the spear of cane, whose straightness all men praise.
An if his heart were but as soft as is his waist, no more Would he against his lovers sin nor fright them with affrays.
Alas the hardness of his heart and softness of his waist! Why is not this to that transferred? Is there no way of ways?
O thou that blam'st me for his love, excuse me rather thou: Thine be his beauty's part etern and mine that which decays!

When Noureddin heard the sweetness of her voice and the beauty of her verses, he inclined to her for delight and could not contain himself for excess of wonderment; so he recited these lines:

Methought she was the very sun of morning's self, until She veils her; but the fire she lit flames in my entrails still.
What had it irked her, ho she signed and with her finger-tips A friendly salutation waved to us? Where were the ill?
The railer saw her face and said (what while her charms that pass All other beauty did his wit with stupefaction fill,)
'Is this then she for whom thou rav'st with longing for her love? Indeed, thou hast excuse.' And I, ''Tis she who doth me thrill
With arrows of her looks, nor can my abject, broken case Of strangerhood to pity move her unrelenting will.'
I am become a slave of love, with heart enchained; I groan Day long and night long, ay, and weep with tears, as 'twere a rill.

She marvelled at his eloquence and grace and taking her lute, smote thereon after the goodliest of fashions repeating all the melodies, and sang the following verses:

As thy face liveth, O thou the life of my spirit, I swear, I cannot remove from thy love, if I do or I do not despair.
If, indeed, thou be cruel, in dreams thy phantom is favouring and kind, And if thou be absent, thy thought is my cheering companion fore'er.
O thou that hast saddened my sight, though thou knowst that I seek not for aught To cheer me, nor aught but thy love I long for, to solace my care,
Thy cheeks are twin roses, the dews of thy mouth are as wine to the taste; Wilt thou not then vouchsafe us thereof to drink in this pleasaunce so fair?

Her song moved Noureddin to the utmost wonder and delight and he answered her as follows:

The face o' the sun is not unveiled in the darkness of the night,
But is the far horizon's marge the full moon hides its light,

Nor doth her forehead meet the eye o' the morning, but. outfaced
By contrast, to the break of day for refuge it takes flight.
Take of the currents of my tears, as, chain on chain, they fall,
And on the readiest way of ways, the tale of love recite.
Oft unto her, who shoots at me her arrows, have I said, 'Hold
thou thy hand; indeed my heart is cleft in sunder quite.
An if unto the River Nile my tears may likened be, Meseems the
love I bear to thee El Melec should be hight.'
Quoth she, 'Then bring me all thy good.' 'Take it,' said I and
she, 'And thy sleep.' '[Take it] from mine eyes,' I answered her
forthright.

When she heard Noureddin's words and noted the beauty of his eloquence, she was transported and her wit was dazed and love of him got hold upon her whole heart. So she pressed him to her bosom and fell to kissing him after the manner of doves billing, whilst he returned her caresses; but the vantage is to the first comer. When she had made an end of kissing, she took the lute and recited the following verses:

Ah, woe's us for a blamer, to censure ever prone, Whether or no
of passion to him I make my moan!
O thou that dost reject me, I had not thought that I Should in thy
love abasement meet with, and thou mine own.
I used to rail at lovers for love, and now to those, Who blame
thee, my abasement for thee I have made known.
The votaries of passion whilom I blamed; but now I do excuse all
lovers for passion overthrown;
And if, for thine estrangement, distress be sore on me, God in thy
name, O Ali, I'll pray and thine alone.

And also these:

Quoth his lovers, 'Except of the nectar so rare of his mouth he
vouchsafe us to drink, debonair,
To the Lord of all creatures we'll make our complaint And "O
Ali!" we'll say with one voice in our prayer.'

Noureddin marvelled at the fluency of her tongue and praised her grace and exceeding seductiveness; whereupon she rose and putting off all that was upon her of [outer] clothes and trinkets, sat down on his knees and kissed him between the eyes and on the mole of his cheek. Then she gave him all she had put off, saying, ‘O beloved of my heart, the gift is after the measure of the giver’s capacity.’ So he accepted this from her and gave it back to her and kissed her on the mouth and cheeks and eyes.

When this was done, (for nought endureth save God, the Living, the Eternal, Provider of the peacock and the owl), Noureddin rose from the place of session and stood upon his feet, for the darkness was now fallen and the stars shone out; whereupon quoth the damsel to him, ‘Whither away, O my lord?’ And he said, ‘To my father’s house.’ Then the sons of the merchants conjured him to pass the night with them, but he refused and mounting his mule, rode, without stopping, till he reached his father’s house, where his mother met him and said to him, ‘O my son, what hath kept thee abroad till this hour? By Allah, thou hast troubled thy father and myself by thine absence from us, and our hearts have been occupied with thee.’ Then she came up to him, to kiss him on his mouth, and smelling the fumes of the wine, said, ‘O my son, how is this? Art thou, after prayer and worship, become a wine-bibber and a transgressor of His word to whom belong creation and commandment?’ But Noureddin threw himself down on the bed and lay there.

Presently in came his father and said:, ‘What ails Noureddin to lie thus?’ And his mother answered, saying, ‘It would seem his head irketh him for the air of the garden.’ So Tajeddin went up to his son, to question him of his ailment and salute him, and smelt the wine he had drunk. Now he loved not wine-drinkers; so he said to Noureddin, ‘Out on thee, O my son! Is folly come to such a pass with thee, that thou drinkest wine?’ When Noureddin heard this, he raised his hand, being yet in his drunkenness, and dealt him a buffet. As fate would leave it, the blow lit on his father’s right eye [and struck it out] and it ran down on his cheek; whereupon he fell down in a swoon and lay therein awhile. They sprinkled rose-water on him till he came to himself, when he would have beaten Noureddin; but his wife withheld him, and he swore, by the oath of divorcement from her, that, as soon as it was day, he would assuredly cut off his son's right hand. When she heard her husband's words, her breast was straitened and she feared for her son and ceased not to soothe and appease Tajeddin, till sleep overcame him.

Then she waited till the moon was risen, when she went in to her son, whose drunkenness had now ceased from him, and said to him, 'O Noureddin' what is this foul thing thou hast done with thy father?' 'And what did I with him?' asked he. Quoth she, 'Thou dealtest him a buffet on the right eye and struckest it out; and he hath sworn by the oath of divorcement that, as soon as it is day, he will without fail cut off thy right hand.' Noureddin repented him of that which he had done, whenas repentance profited him nothing, and his mother said to him, 'O my son, this repentance will not profit thee; nor will aught serve thee but that thou arise forthright and seek safety in flight. Go forth the house privily and take refuge with one of thy friends and there await what God shall do, for He changeth case after case.'

Then she opened a chest and taking out a purse of a hundred dinars, said to Noureddin, 'O my son, take these dinars and provide thyself therewith, and when they are at an end, send and give me to know thereof that I may send thee other than these, and at the same time send me news of thyself privily. It may be God will decree thee relief and thou shalt return to thy dwelling.' And she bade him farewell and wept passing sore. Noureddin took the purse and was about to go forth, when he espied a great purse containing a thousand dinars, which his mother had forgotten beside the chest. So he took this also and tying the two purses about his middle, set out before dawn in the direction of Boulac, where he arrived whenas the day broke and all creatures arose, attesting the unity of God the Opener [of the gates of sustenance and mercy] and went forth each upon his several business, to suffer that which God had allotted to him.

He walked on along the river-bank till he saw a ship with her gangway out and her four grapnels made fast to the land. The folk were going up into her and coming down from her, and Noureddin, seeing some sailors standing there, asked them whither they were bound. 'To the city of Rosetta,' answered they; and he said, 'Take me with you.' Quoth they, 'Welcome and fair welcome to thee, O goodly youth!’ So he betook himself forthright to the market and buying what he needed of victual and bedding and covering [for the voyage,] returned to the port and went on board the ship, which was ready to sail and tarried with him but a little while before it weighed anchor and fared on, without stopping, till it reached Rosetta, where Noureddin saw a small boat going to Alexandria. So he embarked in it and traversing the [Mehmoudiyeh] canal, fared on till he came to a bridge called El Jami, where he landed and entered Alexandria by the gate called the Gate of the Lote-tree.

God protected him, so that none of those who stood At the gate saw him, and he entered the city, which he found a strongly fortified city, goodly of pleasaunces, delightful to its inhabitants and inviting to abide therein. The season of winter had departed from it with its cold and the season of spring was come to it with its roses: its flowers were in blossom and its trees in full leaf; its fruits were ripe and its waters welled forth. Indeed, it was a city goodly of ordinance and construction; its folk were of the best of men, and when the gate thereof were shut, its people were in safety. And it was even as is said of it in the following verses:

‘Describe Alexandria, I pray,’ Quoth I to a comrade one day,
A man of glib speech and quick wit. ‘’Tis a fair frontier town,’ did he say.
Quoth I, ‘Is there living therein?’ And he, ‘If the wind blow that way.’

Or as saith one of the poets:

Alexandria’s a frontier seat; The water of its lips is sweet. How fair the coming to it is, So one therein no raven meet!

Noureddin walked about the city till he came to the merchants’ bazaar, whence he passed on to the bazaar of the money-changers and so on in turn to those of the confectioners and fruiterers and druggists, marvelling, as he went at the city, for that its qualities accorded with its name. As he walked in the druggists’ bazaar, an old man came down from his shop and saluting him, took him by the hand and carried him to a fair by-street, swept and sprinkled, whereon the zephyr blew and was pleasant and the leaves of the trees overshaded it. Therein stood three houses and at the upper end a mansion, whose foundations were stablished in the water and its roofs rose up to the confines of the sky. The space before it was paved with marble, swept and sprinkled, and those who approached it smelt the fragrance of flowers, borne on the zephyr, which breathed upon the place, an it were one of the gardens of Paradise.

The old man carried Noureddin into the house and set food before him, whereof he ate with him. When they had made an end of eating, the druggist said to him, 'When camest thou hither from Cairo?' And Noureddin old man, 'What is thy name?' And he replied, 'Ali Noureddin.' 'O my son, O Noureddin,' said the druggist, 'be the triple divorcement incumbent on me, if thou leave me so long as thou abidest in this town; and I will set thee apart a place wherein to dwell.' Quoth Noureddin, 'O my lord, let me know more of thee.' And the other answered, 'Know, O my son, that years ago I came to Cairo with merchandise, which I sold there and bought other, and I had occasion for a thousand dinars. So thy father paid them down for me, for all he had no knowledge of me, and would take no security of me, but had patience with me till I returned hither and sent him the amount by one of my servants, together with a present. I saw thee, whilst thou wast little, and if it please God the Most High, I will repay thee somewhat of the kindness thy father did me.' When Noureddin heard the old man's story, he smiled and showed joy and pulling out the purse of a thousand dinars, gave it to his host and said to him, 'Take charge of this for me, against I buy me therewith somewhat of merchandise whereon to trade.'

Then he abode some days in Alexandria, eating and drinking and making merry and taking his pleasure in its thoroughfares, till he had made an end of the hundred dinars he had kept by way of spending-money; whereupon he repaired to the old druggist, to take of him somewhat of the thousand dinars to spend, but found him not in his shop and sat down there, to await his return. As he sat thus, gazing right and left and amusing himself with watching the merchants and passers-by, there came into the bazaar a Persian riding on a mule and having behind him a damsel, as she were virgin silver or a turbot in a tank or a gazelle in the desert. Her face outvied the shining sun and she had bewitching eyes and breasts of ivory, teeth of pearl, slender body and dimpled sides and legs like fat sheep's tails; and indeed she was perfect in beauty and grace and symmetry, even as saith one, describing her:

As she wished, she was created, after such a wise that lo, She in beauty's mould was fashioned, perfect, neither less nor mo'.
In her cheeks the roses redden for confusion and the fruit On the sapling of her figure makes a fair and stately show.
In her face the full moon glitters and the branch is as her shape: Musk her breath is, nor midst mortals is her equal, high or low.
'Tis as if she had been moulded out of water of pure pearls: In each member of her beauty is a very moon, I trow.

The Persian lighted down from his mule and making the damsel alight also, called the broker and said to him, 'Take this damsel and cry her for sale in the market.' So he fetched a stool of ebony, inlaid with ivory, and setting it amiddleward the bazaar, seated her thereon. Then he raised her veil and discovered a face as it were a Median targe or a sparkling star: and indeed she was like the full moon, when it appears on its fourteenth night, accomplished to the utmost in surpassing beauty. As saith the poet:

The full moon ignorantly vied in beauty with her face, But was eclipsed and split in twain for wrath at its disgrace;
And if the willow-wand be fit to even with her shape, Perish her hands who is become o' the faggot-bearing race!

And how well saith another:

Say to the fair in the muffler laced and wrought with gold, 'Hark ye! What hast thou done with a pious man was like a monk to be?'
The gleam of the veil and the brilliancy of thy visage under it
The hosts of the darkness put to rout and cause them turn and flee;
And when my glance cometh to steal a look at thy cheek so fresh and fair, Its guardian sprites with a shooting star still cast at them and me.

Then said the broker to the merchants, 'How much do ye bid for the pearl of the diver and prize of the fowler?' Quoth one, 'She is mine for a hundred dinars.' And another said, 'Two hundred,' and a third, 'Three hundred;' and they ceased not to bid, one against another, till they made her price nine hundred and fifty dinars, and there the biddings stopped. Then the broker went up to the Persian and said to him, 'The biddings for this thy slave-girl have reached nine hundred and fifty dinars: wilt thou sell her at that price and take the money?' 'Doth she consent to this?' asked the Persian. 'I desire to consult her wishes, for I fell sick on my journey hither and she tended me with all possible care, wherefore I swore not to sell her but to him of whom she should approve, and I have put her sale in her own hand. So do thou consult her and if she say, "I consent," sell her to whom thou wilt: but if she say "No," sell her not.'

So the broker went up to her and said to her, 'Know, O princess of fair ones, that thy master putteth thy sale in thine own hands, and thy price hath reached nine hundred and fifty dinars; dost thou give me leave to sell thee?' 'Show me him who is minded to buy me,' answered she, 'before thou clinch the bargain.' So he brought her up to one of the merchants, a very old and decrepit man, and she looked at him awhile, then turned to the broker and said to him, 'O broker, art thou mad or afflicted in thy wit?' 'Why dost thou ask me this, O princess of fair ones?' said he. And she answered, 'Is it permitted of God to sell the like of me to yonder decrepit old man, who saith of his wife's case the following verses:

Quoth she to me, — and sore enraged for wounded pride was she,
For she in sooth had bidden me to that which might not be, —
"An if thou swine me not forthright, as one should swive his
wife, If thou be made a cuckold straight, reproach it not to me.
Meseems thy yard is made of wax, for very flaccidness; For when
I rub it with my hand, it softens instantly."

And quoth he likewise of his yard:

I leave a yard that sleeps on base and shameful wise, Whenever
one I love with my desire complies;
But, when I'm by myself, at home, it's all agog To thrust and ply

its lone the amorous exercise.

And again quoth he thereof:

I have an ill yard, passing froward, to wit: Him who honoureth it, with reproach it doth quit.
If I sleep, it stands up; if I rise, it lies down; God no ruth have on him who hath ruth upon it!'

When the old merchant heard this scurvy gibing from the damsel, he was exceeding wroth and said to the broker, 'O unluckiest of brokers, thou hast not brought this ill-conditioned wench into the market but to flout me and make mock of me before the merchants.' Then the broker took her aside and said to her, 'O my lady, be not lacking in manners. The old man whom thou didst mock at is the syndic of the bazaar and inspector of weights and measures thereof and one of the council of the merchants.' But she laughed and said:

'It behoveth the folk that bear rule in our time, Yea, 'tis one of the duties of magistrateship,
To hang up the chief of police o'er his door And beat the inspector of weights with a whip.

By Allah, O my lord,' added she, 'I will not be sold to yonder old man; so sell me to other than him, for belike he will be abashed at me and sell me again and I shall become a servant and it beseems not that I sully myself with menial service; and indeed thou knowest that the matter of my sale is committed to myself.' 'I hear and obey,' answered he and carried her to one of the chief merchants. 'How sayst thou, O my lady?' asked he. hundred and fifty dinars?' She looked at him and seeing him to be an old man, with a dyed beard, said to the broker, 'Art thou mad, that thou wouldst sell me to this worn-out old man? Am I cotton refuse or threadbare rags that thou marchest me about from graybeard to graybeard, each like a wall ready to fall or an Afrit smitten down of a [shooting] star? As for the first, the poet had him in mind when he said:

'I sought of a fair maid to kiss her lips of coral red, But, "No, by

Him who fashioned things from nothingness!” she said.
“Unto the white of hoary hairs I never had a mind, And shall my mouth be stuffed, forsooth, with cotton, ere I’m dead?”

And how goodly is the saying of the poet:

They say that hoary hair is as a shining light, The face with venerance and lustre that doth dight;
Yet, till the writ of eld appear upon my crown, I hope I may not lack o’ the colour of the night.
Although the beard of him, who’s hoary grown, should be His book i’ the world to come, I would not choose it white.

And yet goodlier is the saying of another:

A guest unhonoured on my head hath stolen by surprise, With my side-locks the sword than he had dealt on milder wise.
Begone from me, O whiteness foul, wherein no whiteness is! Indeed, than very darkness’ self thou’rt blacker in mine eyes.

As for the other, he is a reprobate and a lewd fellow and a blackener of the face of hoariness; he acts the foulest of lies; and the tongue of his case reciteth the following verses:

Quoth she to me, “I see thou dy’st thy hoariness;” and I, “I do but hide it from thy sight, O thou mine ear and eye!”
She laughed out mockingly and said, “A wonder ’tis indeed! Thou so abounded in deceit that even thy hair’s a lie.”

And how excellent is the saying of the poet:

O thou with black that drest thy hoariness, that so Lost youth with thee may tarry or come to thee once mo’,
Of old my worldly portion was dyed in grain with black; ‘Twill never fade, believe me, nor other-coloured grow.’

When the old man with the dyed beard heard this, he was exceeding wroth and said to the broker, ‘O most ill-omened of brokers, what aileth thee to bring this crack- brained wench into our market, to gibe at all who are therein, one after other, and flout them with mocking verses and idle jests?' And he came down from his shop and smote the broker on the face. So he took her and carried her away, in a rage, saying to her, 'By Allah, never in my life saw I a more impudent wench than thyself! Thou hast spoilt my trade and thine own this day and all the merchants will bear me a grudge on thine account.'

Then they saw in the way a merchant called Shihabeddin, who bid ten dinars more for her, and the broker asked her leave to sell her to him. Quoth she, 'Let me see him and question him of a certain thing, which if he have in his house, I will be sold to him; and if not, not.' So the broker left her standing there and going up to Shihabeddin, said to him, 'O my lord, know that yonder damsel tells me she hath a mind to ask thee of somewhat, which if thou have in thy house, she will be sold to thee. Now thou hast heard what she said to thy fellows the [other] merchants, and by Allah, I fear to bring her to thee, lest she do with thee like as she did with thy neighbours and so I fall into disgrace with thee: but, if thou bid me bring her to thee, I will do so.' Quoth the merchant, 'Bring her to me.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the broker and fetched the damsel, who looked at him and said, 'O my lord Shihabeddin, hast thou in thy house cushions stuffed with minever parings?' 'Yes, O princess of fair ones,' replied Shihabeddin, 'I have half a score such cushions at home; but I conjure thee by Allah, tell me, what wilt thou do with them?' Quoth she, 'I will wait till thou be asleep, when I will lay them on thy mouth and nose [and press on them] till thou die.'

Then she turned to the broker and said to him, 'O filthiest of brokers, meseemeth thou art mad, for that, this hour past, thou slowest me, first to a pair of graybeards, in each of whom are two faults, and then to my lord Shihabeddin here, in whom are three defects; first, he is short of stature; secondly, he hath a big nose, and thirdly, he hath a long beard. Of him quoth one of the poets:

Ne'er saw we in our lives nor heard of such a wight Of all that live and be beneath the sun his light:
A beard a cubit long and nose a span he hath, Whilst he himself

is but a finger's breadth in height.

And quoth another poet:

The mosque's minaret from his visage doth spring, As the ring-finger juts from the round of the ring.
If all it could house were to enter his nose, The world were soon void of each creature and thing.'

When Shihabeddin heard this, he came down from his shop and seized the broker by the collar, saying, 'O scurviest of brokers, what ails thee to bring us a damsel to flout and make mock of us, one after other, with idle talk and verses?' So the broker took her and carried her away from before him, saying, 'By Allah, all my life long, since I have plied this craft, I never set eyes on the like of thee for unmannerliness nor aught more curst to me than thy star, for thou hast cut off my livelihood this day and I have gained nought by thee save cuffs on the neck and taking by the collar!' Then he brought her to the shop of another merchant, owner of slaves and servants, and stationing her before him, said to her, 'Wilt thou be sold to this my lord Alaeddin?' She looked at him and seeing him to be humpbacked, said, 'This fellow is a hunchback, and quoth the poet of him:

Shoulders drawn in and spine thrust out, 'twould seem as if to find A tar that Satan promised him, indeed, he had a mind;
Or as the first stroke of a whip he'd tasted of and stood Still for amaze, whilst of the stroke to come he felt the wind.

And saith another:

Whene'er a hunchback mounts a mule, straightway A laughing-stock to all mankind are they.
Is he not laughable? So marvel not If she take fright with him and run away.

And another:

A hunchback often foulness adds to his deformity, And all men's eyes upon the wight look with antipathy;
As 'twere a dry distorted branch, whose citrons, perched upon Its back, have bowed it to the ground, for length of days, is he.'

With this the broker hurried up to her and carrying her to another merchant, said to her, 'Wilt thou be sold to this man?' She looked at him and said, 'This man is blue-eyed; how wilt thou sell me to him? Quoth one of the poets of him:
Ophthalmia's disorders him ply; They have broken his strength down well nigh. O people, I rede you arise And look at the mote in his eye.'

Then the broker carried her to another and she looked at him and seeing that he had a long beard, said to the broker, 'Out on thee! This is a ram, whose tail has sprouted from his gullet. Wilt thou sell me to him, O unluckiest of brokers? Hast thou not heard that all long-bearded men are little of wit? Indeed, after the measure of the length of the beard is the lack of understanding; and this is a well-known thing among men of sense. As saith one of the poets:

No man, whose beard is long, although he gain some whit In gravity of mien and dignity by it,
There lives, but every inch that's added to his beard In length the like thereof is taken from his wit.

And quoth another:

I have a friend, who hath a beard that God Caused flourish without profit, till, behold,
'Tis, as it were, to look upon, a night Of middle winter, long and dark and cold.'

With this the broker took her and turned away with her, and she said to him, 'Whither guest thou with me?' 'Back to thy master the Persian,' answers he; 'it suffices me what hath befallen me because of thee this day; for thou hast spoilt both my trade and his by thine unmannerliness.' Then she looked about the market right and left and front and rear, till, as fate would have it, her eyes fell on Ali Noureddin. So she looked at him and saw him to be a comely youth, fourteen years old, like the moon on the night of its full, surpassing in beauty and loveliness and elegance and amorous grace, smooth-faced and slender-shaped, with flower-white forehead and rosy cheeks, neck like alabaster and teeth like jewels and spittle sweeter than sugar, even as saith of him one of his describers:

Full moons and fawns with him conclusions came to try In beauty and in grace; but 'Soft!' to them quoth I.
'Forbear, gazelles; indeed, ye are no match for him; And spare your pains, O moons, 'tis vain with him to vie.

And how well saith another :

A slender one, from his brows and the night of his jetty hair, Mankind in alternate gloom and splendour of light do fare.
Blame not the mole on his cheek; is an anemone's cup Perfect, except in its midst an eyelet of black it bear?

When she saw him he interposed between her and her wit; the love of him sat stark hold upon her soul and her heart was taken with passion for him; so she turned to the broker and said to him, 'Will not yonder young merchant in the striped gown bid for me?' 'O lady of fair ones,' replied the broker, 'yonder young man is a stranger from Cairo, where his father is chief of the merchants and hath the pass over all the merchants and notables of the place. He is but lately come to our city and lodgeth with one of his father's friends; but he hath made no bid for thee, more nor less.'

When she heard this, she drew from her finger a ruby ring of price and said to the broker, 'Carry me to yonder youth, and if he buy me, this ring shall be thine, in requital of thy toil with me this day.' The broker rejoiced at this and brought her up to Noureddin, and she considered him straitly and found him like the full moon, accomplished in grace and elegance and symmetry, even as saith of him one of his describers:

The waters of grace in his visage run clear And his glances cast arrows at all who draw near:

Sweet his favours, but lovers still choke, if he give Them to drink of the gall of his rigours austere.

His brow is perfection, perfection his shape, And my love is perfection, so true and sincere.

The folds of his raiment the new moon enclose; From his collars she Rises, as if from a sphere.

His eyes and his moles and my tears are as nights Upon nights upon nights, full of blackness and fear;

And his eyebrows and face and my body new moon On new moon on new moon to the aspect appear.

His eyes fill his lovers a goblet of wine, Which, though bitter, is sweet to my sorrowful cheer.

With a smile of his mouth, on the day of delights My thirst he allayed with sweet water and clear.

My slaughter's with him; ay, the shedding my blood Is thrice lawful to him whom I tender so dear.

Then said she to Noureddin, 'God on thee, O my lord, am I not handsome?' And he answered, 'O princess of fair ones, is there in the world a goodlier than thou?' 'Then why,' rejoined she, 'seest thou the other merchants bid for me and art silent nor sayest a word neither addest one dinar to my price? It would seem I please thee not, O my lord!' Quoth he, 'O my lady, were I in mine own land, I had bought thee with all that my hand possesseth of good.' 'O my lord,' replied she, 'I would not have thee buy me against thy will; yet, didst thou but add somewhat to my price, it would comfort my heart, though thou buy me not, so the merchants may say, "Were not this girl handsome, yonder merchant of Cairo had not bidden for her, for the people of Cairo are connoisseurs in slave- girls."'

Her words abashed Noureddin and he blushed and said to the broker, 'How stand the biddings for her?' 'Her price hath reached nine hundred and sixty dinars,' answered he, 'besides brokerage. As for the Sultan's dues, they fall on the seller.' Quoth Noureddin, 'Let me have her for a thousand dinars, price and brokerage.' And the damsel hastened to leave the broker, saying, 'I sell myself to this handsome young man for a thousand dinars.' Quoth one, 'We sell to him;' and another, 'He deserves her;' and a third, 'Accursed, son of accursed, is he who bids and does not buy!' and a fourth, 'By Allah, they befit one another!' Then, before Noureddin could think, the broker fetched cadis and witnesses, who drew up a contract of sale and purchase, which the broker handed to Noureddin, saying, 'Take thy slave-girl and may God make her a blessing to thee, for she beseemeth none but thee and none but thou beseemeth her.' And he recited the following verses:

Unto him fair fortune all unbidden hies, Drags her skirts to-him-ward on obsequious wise.

None but she befitteth him and none but he Of the maid is worthy, underneath the skies.

Noureddin was abashed before the merchants; so he paid down the thousand dinars, that he had left with his friend the druggist, and taking the girl, carried her to the house in which the latter had lodged him. When she entered and saw nothing but patched carpets and worn- out rugs, she said to him, 'O my lord, have I no value in thine eyes and am I not worthy that thou shouldst carry me to thine own house wherein are thy goods, that thou bringest me into thy servant's lodging? Why dost thou not carry me to thy father's dwelling?' 'By Allah, O princess of fair ones,' answered he, 'this is my house wherein I dwell; but it belongs to an old man, a druggist of this city, who hath set it apart for me and lodged me therein. I told thee that I was a stranger and that I am of the people of Cairo.' 'O my lord,' rejoined she, 'the least of houses will serve till thy return to thy native place; but, God on thee, O my lord, go now and fetch me somewhat of roast meat and wine and fruit and dessert.' 'By Allah, O princess of fair ones,' answered he, 'I had no money with me but the thousand dinars I paid down to thy price! The few dirhems I had I spent yesterday.' Quoth she, 'Hast thou no friend in the town, of whom thou mayst borrow fifty dirhems and bring them to me, that I may tell thee what thou shalt do therewith?' And he said, 'I have no friend but the druggist.'

Then he betook himself forthright to the druggist and said to him, 'Peace be on thee, O uncle!' He returned his salutation and said to him, 'O my son, what hast thou bought for a thousand dinars this day?' 'I have bought a slave-girl,' answered Noureddin. 'O my son,' rejoined the old man, 'art thou mad that thou givest a thousand dinars for one slave-girl? What kind of slave-girl is she?' 'She is a damsel of the children of the Franks,' replied Noureddin and the druggist said, 'O my son, the best of the girls of the Franks are to be had in this town for a hundred dinars, and by Allah, they have put a cheat on thee in the matter of this damsel! However, if thou hast a mind to her, lie with her this night and do thy will of her and to-morrow morning go down with her to the market and sell her, through thou lose two hundred dinars by her, and put it that thou hast been robbed of them or lost them by shipwreck.' 'Thou sayst well, O uncle,' replied Noureddin; 'but thou knowest that I had but the thousand dinars wherewith I bought the damsel, and now I have not a single dirhem left to spend; so I desire of thy favour and goodness that thou lend me fifty dirhems, to provide me withal, till to-morrow, when I will sell her and repay thee out of her price.' 'Willingly, O my son,' said the old man and counted out to him the fifty dirhems.

Then he said to him, 'O my son, thou art young and the damsel is fair, and belike thy heart will be taken with her and it will be grievous to thee to part from her. Now thou hast nothing to live on and the fifty dirhems will [soon] be spent and thou wilt come to me and I shall lend thee once or twice and thrice and so on up to ten times; but, if thou come to me after this, I will not return thee the legal salutation and our friendship with thy father will come to nought.' Noureddin took the fifty dirhems and returned with them to the damsels who said to him, 'O my lord, go straight to the market and fetch me twenty dirhems' worth of silk of five colours and with the other thirty buy meat and bread and wine and fruit and flowers.' So he went to the market and buying her all she sought, returned to her therewith, whereupon she rose and tucking up her sleeves, cooked food after the most skilful fashion, and set it before him. He ate and she ate with him, till they had enough, after which she set on the wine, and they drank, and she ceased not to ply him with drink and entertain him with talk, till he became drunken and fell asleep: whereupon she arose and taking out of her budget a sachet of Tain leather, opened it and brought out a pair of knitting-pins, with which she fell to work and stinted not, till she had made a beautiful girdle.

She cleaned it and ironed it and folding it in a piece of rag, laid it under the pillow.

Then she put off her clothes and lying down beside Noureddin, kneaded him till he awoke and found by his side a girl like virgin silver, softer than silk and more delicate than a fat sheep's tail, more conspicuous than a standard and goodlier than the red camels, low of stature, with swelling breasts, eyes like gazelles' eyes and brows like bended bows and cheeks like blood-red anemones, slender belly, full of dimples, and a navel holding an ounce of benzoin ointment, thighs like bolsters stuffed with ostrich down, and between them what the tongue fails to describe and at mention whereof the tears pour forth. Indeed it seemed as it were she to whom the poet alludes in the following verses:

Her hair is night, her forehead day, her cheeks a blossomed rose
And wine the honeyed dews wherewith her mouth for ever flows.
Heaven in her favours is and hell in her disdain; her teeth Are
very pearls and in her face the moon at full doth glow.

And how excellent is another's saying:

She shineth forth, a moon, and bends, a willow-wand, And
breathes out ambergris and gazes, a gazelle.
Meseems as if grief loved my heart and when from her
Estrangement I abide, possession to it fell.
She hath a face outshines the very Pleiades And brows whose
lustre doth the crescent moon excel.

And quoth a third:

Unveiled, new moons they shine, and all displayed, like moons at
full, They burn: like boughs they sway, and eke like antelopes they
turn:
And in their midst's a black-eyed maid, for whose sweet beauty's
sake, To be the earth whereon she treads the Pleiades would yearn.

So he turned to her and pressing her to his bosom, sucked first her under lip and then her upper lip and slid his tongue into her mouth.

Then he rose to her and found her an unpierced pearl and a filly that none but he had mounted. So he did away her maidenhead and had of her the amorous delight and there was contracted between them love that might never know breach nor severance. He rained down kisses upon her cheeks, like the falling of pebbles into water, and beset her with stroke upon stroke, like the thrusting of spears in the mellay; for that Noureddin still yearned after clipping of necks and sucking of lips and letting down of tresses and pressing of waists and biting of cheeks and pinching of breasts, with Cairene motitations and Yemani wrigglings and Abyssinian sobbings and Hindi torsions and Nubian lasciviousness and Rifi leg-liftings and Damiettan gruntings and Upper Egyptian heat and Alexandrian languor, and this damsel united in herself all these attributes, together with excess of beauty and amorous grace; and indeed she was even as saith of her the poet:

By Allah, I will never all my life long forget her, my dear, And those only will I tender who shall bring her to me to draw near!
Now glory to her Maker and Creator be given evermore! As the full moon of the heavens in her aspect and her gait she doth appear.
Though my sin, indeed, be sore and my offending in loving her be great, I know repentance not, whilst of her favours a hope to me be clear.
She, indeed, hath made me weariful and wakeful, full of sorrow, sick for love: Yea, my heart is all confounded at her beauty, dazed for trouble and for fear;
And I go a line of verse for e’er repeating that none knoweth ‘mongst the folk Save the man who rhymes and verses hath recited and studied many a year.
None knoweth of love-longing save he only who hath its pains endured And none but he can tell the taste of passion, who’s Proved its woe and cheer.

So Noureddin lay with the damsel in solace and delight, clad in the strait-linked garments of emplacement, secure against the accidents of night and day, and they passed the night after the goodliest fashion, fearing not, in love-delight, abundance of talk and prate. As says of them the right excellent poet:

Cleave fast to her thou lov’st and let the envious rail amain; For calumny and envy ne’er to favour love were fain.
Lo, the Compassionate hath made no fairer thing to see Than when one couch in its embrace enfolders lovers twain,
Each to the other’s bosom clasped, clad in their own delight, Whilst hand with hand and arm with arm about their necks enchain.
Lo, when two hearts are straitly knit in passion and desire, But on cold iron smite the folk that chide at them in vain.
Thou that for loving censurest the votaries of love, Canst thou assain a mind diseased or heal a cankered brain?
If in thy time thou find but one to love thee and be true, I rede thee cast the world away and with that one remain.

When the morning appeared and gave forth its light and shone, Noureddin awoke from sleep and found that she had brought water: so they washed, he and she, and he acquitted that which behoved him of prayer to his Lord, after which she brought him meat and drink, and he ate and drank. Then she put her hand under her pillow and pulling out the girdle, gave it to Noureddin, who said, ‘Whence cometh this girdle?’ ‘O my lord,’ answered she, ‘it is the silk thou boughtest yesterday for twenty dirhems. Rise now and go to the Persian bazaar and give it to the broker, to cry for sale, and sell it not for less than twenty dinars, money down.’ ‘O princess of fair ones,’ said Noureddin, ‘how can a thing, that cost twenty dirhems and will sell for as many dinars, be made in a single night?’ ‘O my lord,’ replied she, ‘thou knowest not its value; but go to the market and give it to the broker, and when he cries it, its worth will appear to thee.’

So he carried the girdle to the market and gave it to the broker, bidding him cry it, whilst he himself sat down on a bench before a shop. After awhile, the broker returned and said to him, ‘O my lord, rise and take the price of thy girdle, for it hath fetched twenty dinars.’ When Noureddin heard this, he marvelled exceedingly and shook with delight. Then he rose, between belief and disbelief to take the money and when he had received it, he spent it all on silk of various colours and returning home, gave the silk to the damsel, saying, ‘Make this all into girdles and teach me likewise how to make them, that I may work with thee; for never in my life saw I a goodlier craft than this nor a more abounding in profit. By Allah, it is a thousand times better than the trade of A merchant!' She laughed and said, 'Go to thy friend the druggist and borrow other thirty dirhems of him, and to-morrow pay him the whole eighty from the price of the girdles.'

So he repaired to the druggist and said to him, 'O uncle, lend me other thirty dirhems, and to-morrow, God willing, I will repay thee the whole fourscore.' The old man counted him out thirty dirhems, with which he went to the market and buying meat and bread and dessert and fruit and flowers as before, carried them home to the damsel, whose name was Meryem, the girdle-maker. She rose forthright and making ready rich meats, set them before Noureddin; after which she brought wine, and they drank and plied each other with liquor. When the wine began to sport with their senses, his beauty and grace pleased her and the elegance of his manners, and she recited the following verses:

Unto a slender one, who with a goblet came With musk from out his breath perfumed, to give it zest.
Quoth I, 'Was't not express from out thy cheeks?' But 'Nay,' He answered; 'when was wine from roses yet exprest?'

And she ceased not to carouse with him and ply him with wine and require of him that he should fill to her and give her to drink of that which sweetens the spirits, and whenever he laid his hand on her, she drew back from him, out of coquetry. The wine added to her beauty and gee, and Noureddin recited these verses:

A slender one, desiring wine, unto her lover said, In an assembly, whenas he did sickness for her dread,
'An if thou give me not to drink, I'll banish thee my bed This night:' wherefore he feared and filled to her the vine-juice red.

They gave not over drinking till drunkenness got the mastery of Noureddin and he slept; whereupon she rose and fell to work upon a girdle, according to her wont. When she had wrought it to end, she wrapped it in paper and putting off her clothes, lay down by his side, and they passed the night in dalliance and delight.

On the morrow, she gave him the girdle and bade him carry it to the market and sell it for twenty dinars, like as he had sold its fellow the day before. So he went to the market and sold the girdle for twenty dinars, after which he repaired to the druggist and paid him back the four- score diadems, thanking him for his bounties and calling down blessings upon him. ‘O my son,’ said he, ‘hast thou sold the damsel?’ ‘Wouldst thou have me sell the soul out of my body?’ answered Noureddin and told him all that had passed, whereat the druggist was mightily pleased and said to him, ‘By Allah, O my son, thou rejoicest me! So God please, mayst thou still abide in prosperity! Indeed I wish thee well by reason of my affection for thy father and the continuance of our friendship.’ Then he took leave of him and going to the market, bought meat and fruit and wine and all that he needed, as of wont, and returned therewith to Meryem.

They abode thus a whole year in eating and drinking and sport and merriment and love and good cheer, and every night she made a girdle and he sold it on the morrow for twenty dinars, wherewith he bought what they needed and gave the rest to her, to keep against a time of need. After this, she said to him one day, ‘O my lord, when thou sellest the girdle to-morrow, buy me silk of six colours with its price, for I have a mind to make thee a kerchief to wear on thy shoulders, such as never son of merchant, no, nor king’s son, ever rejoiced in its fellow.’ So next day he brought her what she aught and she wrought at the kerchief a whole week; for, every night, when she had made an end of the girdle, she would work awhile at the kerchief. When it was finished, she gave it to Noureddin, who put it on his shoulders and went out to walk in the market, whilst all the merchants and people and notables of the town crowded about him, to gaze on his beauty and that of the kerchief.

One night, after this, he awoke from sleep and found Meryem weeping passing sore and reciting the following verses:

The severance of friends draws near and nearer aye: Alas for severance! Alas, the parting day!
My heart is rent in twain, and O my grief for those The nights of

our delight that now are past away!
Needs must the envier look on us with evil eye And come to his desire of that he doth essay;
For nought can irk us more than envy and the eyes Of backbiters and spies, nor work us more dismay.

'O my lady Meryem,' said he, 'what ails thee to weep?' 'I weep for the anguish of parting,' answered she; 'for my heart forebodes me thereof.' Quoth he, 'O lady of fair ones, and who shall part us, seeing that I love and tender thee above all creatures?' And she replied, 'And I love thee twice as well as thou me; but [blind] confidence in fortune still causes folk fall into affliction, and right well saith the poet:

Thou thoughtest well of Fate, whilst yet the days for thee were fair, And fearedst not the unknown ills that destiny might bring.
The nights were calm and safe for thee; thou wast deceived by them; For in the peace of night betides full many a troublous thing.
Lo, in the skies are many stars, no one can tell their tale; But to the sun and moon alone eclipse brings darkening.
The earth bears many a pleasant herb and many a plant and tree; But none is stoned save only that to which the fair fruits cling.
Seest not the sea and how the waifs float up upon the foam? But in its deepest depths of blue the pearls have sojourning.

O my lord Noureddin,' added she, 'if thou desire to avert separation, be on thy guard against a swart-visaged, bushy-bearded old Frank, blind of the right eye and lame of the left leg; for he it is who will be the cause of our separation. I saw him enter the city [to-day] and methinks he is come hither in quest of me.' 'O lady of fair ones,' replied Noureddin, 'if my eyes light on him, I will slay him and make an example of him.' 'O my lord,' rejoined she, 'slay him not; but talk not nor trade with him, neither buy nor sell with him nor sit nor walk with him nor speak one word to him, no, not even to make the prescribed answer, and I pray God to keep us from his craft and mischief!'

Next morning, Noureddin carried the girdle to the market, where he sat down on a bench before a shop and talked with the young merchants, till drowsiness overcame him and he lay down on the bench and fell asleep. Presently, up came the Frank whom the damsel had described to him, in company of seven others, and seeing Noureddin lying asleep on the bench, with his head wrapped in the kerchief which Meryem had made him and the end thereof in his hand, sat down by him and took the end of the kerchief in his hand and examined it. This disturbed Noureddin and he awoke and seeing the very man sitting by him of whom Meryem had warned him, cried out at him with a great cry, that startled him. Quoth the Frank, ‘What ails thee to cry out thus at us? Have we taken aught from thee?’ ‘By Allah, O accursed one,’ replied Noureddin, ‘hadst thou taken aught from me, I would hale thee before the master of police!’

Then said the Frank, ‘O Muslim, I conjure thee by thy faith and by that in which thou believest, tell me whence thou hadst that kerchief.’ And Noureddin answered, ‘It is the handiwork of my mother, who made it for me with her own hand.’ ‘Wilt thou sell it to me?’ asked the Frank. ‘By Allah, O accursed one,’ replied Noureddin, ‘I will not sell it to thee nor to any other, for she made none other than it.’ ‘Sell it to me,’ repeated the Frank, ‘and I will give thee to its price eve hundred dinars ready money; and let her who made it make thee another and handsomer.’ But Noureddin said, ‘I will not sell it at all, for there is not the like of it in this city.’ ‘O my lord,’ insisted the Frank, ‘wilt thou sell it for six hundred dinars of fine gold?’ And he went on to add to his offer hundred by hundred, till he bid nine hundred dinars; but Noureddin said, ‘God will provide me otherwise than by my selling it. I will never sell it, no, not for two thousand dinars nor more than that.’

Then the Frank went on to tempt him with money, till he bid him a thousand dinars, and the merchants present said, ‘We sell thee the kerchief at that price: pay down the money.’ Quoth Noureddin, ‘By Allah, I will not sell it!’ But one of the merchants said to him, ‘O my son, the worth of this kerchief is a hundred dinars at most and that to an eager purchaser, and if this Frank pay thee down a thousand for it, thy profit will be nine hundred dinars, and what profit canst thou desire greater than that? Wherefore it is my counsel that thou sell him the kerchief at that price and gain nine hundred dinars by this accursed Frank, the enemy of God and of the faith, and bid her who wrought it make thee other or handsomer than it.'

Noureddin was abashed at the merchants and sold the kerchief to the Frank, who, in their presence, paid him down the thousand dinars, with which he would have returned to Meryem, to tell her what had passed; but the stranger said, 'Harkye, O company of merchants, stop my lord Noureddin, for you and he are my guests this night. I have a pitcher of old Greek wine and a fat lamb and fruit and flowers and confections; wherefore needs must ye all cheer me with your company to-night and not one of you tarry behind.' So the merchants said to Noureddin, 'O my lord Noureddin, we desire that thou be with us on the like of this night, so we may talk together, we and thou, and we pray thee, of thy favour, to bear us company, so we may be, we and thou, the guests of this Frank, for he is a hospitable man.' And they conjured him by the oath of divorce and hindered him by force from going home.

Then they rose forthright and shutting up their shops took Noureddin and went with the Frank, who brought them to a goodly and spacious saloon, wherein were two estrades. Here he made them sit and laid before them [a tray covered with] a scarlet cloth of rare and goodly workmanship, wroughten in gold with figures of breaker and broken, lover and beloved, asker and asked, whereon he set precious vessels of porcelain and crystal, full of the costliest fruits and flowers and confections, and brought them a pitcher of old Greek wine. Then he commanded to slaughter a fat lamb and kindling fare, proceeded to roast of its flesh and feed the merchants therewith and give them to drink of the wine, winking them the while to ply Noureddin with liquor. So they plied him with wine till he became drunken and took leave of his wits, which when the Frank saw, he said to him, 'O my lord Noureddin, thou gladdenest us with thy company to-night: welcome, a thousand times welcome to thee!'

Then he drew near unto him and dissembled with him awhile in talk, till he [found his opportunity and] said to him, 'O my lord, wilt thou sell me thy slave-girl, whom thou boughtest a year ago for a thousand dinars, in presence of these merchants? I will give thee five thousand dinars for her and thou wilt thus make four thousand dinars profit.' Noureddin refused but the Frank ceased not to ply him with meat and drink and tempt him with money, still adding to his offers, till he bid him ten thousand dinars for her; whereupon Noureddin, in his drunkenness, said, in the presence of the merchants, 'I sell her to thee for ten thousand dinars; hand over the money.' At this the Frank rejoiced mightily and took the merchants to witness of the sale.

They passed the night in eating and drinking and making merry, till the morning, when the Frank cried out to his servants, saying, 'Bring me the money.' So they brought it to him and he counted out ten thousand dinars to Noureddin, saying, 'O my lord, take the price of thy slave-girl, whom thou soldest to me last night, in the presence of these Muslim merchants.' 'Thou liest, O accursed one,' replied Noureddin. 'I sold thee nothing and have no slave-girls.' Quoth the Frank, 'Verily thou didst sell her to me and these merchants were witnesses to the bargain.' 'Yes,' said they all, 'thou soldest him thy slave-girl before us for ten thousand dinars, O Noureddin, and we will all bear witness against thee of the sale. Come, take the money and deliver him the girl, and God will give thee a better than she in her stead. Doth it mislike thee, O Noureddin, that thou boughtest the girl for a thousand dinars and hast enjoyed her beauty and grace and taken thy fill of her company and converse night and day for a year and a half, wherein thou hast gained half a score thousand dinars by the sale of the girdle which she made thee every day and thou soldest for twenty dinars, and after all this thou hast sold her again at a profit of nine thousand dinars over and above her original price? And withal thou deniest the sale and belittlest the profit! What gain is greater than this gain and what profit wouldst thou have greater than this? If thou love her, thou hast had thy fill of her all this time: so take the money and buy another handsomer than she; or we will marry thee to one of our daughters lovelier than she, at a dowry of less than half this price, and the rest of the money will remain in thy hand an capital.' And they ceased not to ply him with persuasion and argument till he took the ten thousand dinars, the price of the damsels and the Frank straightway fetched Cadis and witnesses, who drew up the contract of sale.

Meanwhile, Meryem sat awaiting Noureddin from morning till sundown and from sundown till midnight; and when he returned not, she was troubled and wept sore. The druggist heard her weeping and sent his wife to her, who went in to her and finding her in tears said to her, ‘O my lady, what ails thee to weep?’ ‘O my mother,’ answered she, ‘I have sat awaiting my lord Noureddin all day; but he cometh not, and I fear lest some one have put a cheat on him, to make him sell me, and he have fallen into the snare and sold me.’ ‘O my lady Meryem, rejoined the druggist’s wife, ‘were they to give thy lord this room full of gold to thy price, yet would he not sell thee, for what I know of his love to thee. Belike there be folk come frown his parents at Cairo and he hath made them an entertainment in their lodging, being ashamed to bring them hither, for that the place is overstrain for them or maybe their condition is less than that he should bring them to his own house; or belike he preferred to conceal thine affair from them, so passed the night with them; and if it be the will of God the Most High, to-morrow he will come to thee, safe and well. So burden not thy soul with care nor anxiety, O my lady, for of a certainty this is the cause of his absence from thee and I will abide with thee this night and comfort thee, till thy lord return.’

So she abode with her and cheered her with talk till the morning, when Meryem saw Noureddin enter the street, followed by the Frank and a company of merchants, whereupon she trembled in every nerve and her colour changed and she fell a-shaking, as the ship shakes in mid-ocean for the violence of the winds. When the druggist’s wife saw this, she said to her, ‘O my lady Meryem, what ails thee that I see thy case changed and thy face grown pale and disfeatured?’ ‘By Allah, O my mother,’ replied she, ‘my heart forebodeth me of parting and severance of union!’ And she bemoaned herself and sighed heavily, reciting the following verses:

Incline not to parting, I pray; For bitter its savour is aye.
E’en the sun at his setting turns pale, To think he must part from the day;
And so, at his rising, for joy Of reunion, he’s radiant and gay.

Then she wept passing sore, making sure of separation, and said to the druggist’s wife, ‘O my mother, said I not to thee that my lord Noureddin had been tricked into selling me? I doubt not but he hath sold me this night to yonder Frank, albeit I bade him beware of him;

but precaution availeth not against destiny. So the truth of my words is made manifest to thee.’ Whilst they were talking, in came Noureddin, and she looked at him and saw that his colour was changed and that he trembled and there appeared on his face signs of grief and repentance: so she said to him, ‘O my lord Noureddin, meseemeth thou hast sold me.’ Whereupon he wept sore and groaned and lamented and recited the following verses:

Twas Fate, and taking thought avails not anything; If thou err, it errs not in its foreordering.
When God upon a man endowed with hearing, sight And reasoning, His will in aught to pass would bring,
He stops has ears and blinds his eyes and draws his wit From him, as one draws out the hairs to paste that cling,
Till, His decrees fulfilled, He gives him back his wit, That therewithal he may receive admonishing.
Say not of aught that haps, ‘How happened it?’ For fate And fortune fore-ordained do order everything.

Then he began to excuse himself to her, saying, ‘O my lady Meryem, verily the pen runneth with what God hath decreed. The folk put a cheat on me, to make me sell thee, and I fell into the snare and sold thee. Indeed, I have sorely failed of my duty to thee; but peradventure He who decreed our parting will vouchsafe us reunion.’ Quoth she, ‘I warned thee against this, for this it was I feared.’ Then she strained him to her bosom and kissed him between the eyes, reciting the following verses:

Nay, by your love, I’ll ne’er forget the troth betwixt us plight, Though my life perish for desire and yearning for your sight.
E’en as the ringdove doth lament upon the sandhills’ trees, So will I weep for you and wail all tides of day and night.
My life is troubled after you, beloved: since from me You’re gone, no meeting-place have I nor sojourn of delight.

At this juncture, the Frank came in to them and went up to Meryem, to kiss her hands; but she dealt him a buffet on the cheek, saying, ‘Avaunt, O accursed one! Thou hast followed after me without cease, till thou hast tricked my lord into selling me! But please God, all shall yet be well.’ The Frank laughed at her speech and wondered at her deed and excused himself to her, saying, ‘O my lady Meryem, what is my offence? Thy lord Noureddin here sold thee of his full consent and of his free will. Had he loved thee, by the virtue of the Messiah, he had not transgressed against thee! And had he not accomplished his desire of thee, he had not sold thee. Quoth one of the poets:

Whoso of me is weary, my presence let him flee: If e’er again I name him, to call me fool thou’rt free.
The world in all its wideness on me is not so strait That thou shouldst see me languish for who rejecteth me.’

Now this damsel was the daughter of the King of France, the which is a wide and spacious city, abounding in arts and manufactures and rarities and trees and flowers and other plants, and resembleth the city of Constantinople: and for her going forth of her father’s city there was an extraordinary cause and thereby hangs a rare story, that we will set out in due order, to divert and delight the reader. She was reared with her father and mother in honour and indulgence and learnt rhetoric and penmanship and arithmetic and martial exercises and all manner crafts both of men and women, such as broidery and sewing and weaving and girdle-making and silk-cord making and enamelling gold on silver and silver on gold, till she became the pearl of her time and the unique [jewel] of her age and her day. Moreover, God (to whom belong might and majesty) had endowed her with such beauty and grace and elegance and perfection that she excelled therein all the folk of her time, and the kings of the isles sought her in marriage of her father, but he refused to give her to wife to any of her suitors, for that he loved her with an exceeding love and could not brook to be parted from her an hour. Moreover, he had no other daughter than herself albeit he had many sons, but she was dearer to him than they.

It chanced one year that she fell sick of an exceeding sickness and came nigh upon death, wherefore she made a vow that, if she recovered from her sickness, she would make the pilgrimage to a certain monastery, situate in much an island, which was high in repute among the Franks who used to make vows to it and look for a blessing therefrom. When she was whole of her sickness she wished to accomplish her vow and her father despatched her to the convent in a little ship, with sundry knights and daughters of the chief men of the city to wait upon her. As they drew near the island, there came out upon them a ship of the ships of the Muslims, champions of the faith, warring in the way of God, who boarded the vessel and making prize of all who were therein, sold their booty in the city of Cairawan. Meryem herself fell into the hands of a Persian merchant, who was impotent and for whom no woman had ever discovered her nakedness; and he set her to serve him.

Presently he fell ill and sickened well-nigh unto death, and the sickness abode with him two months, during which time she tended him after the goodliest fashion, till God made him whole of his malady, when he recalled her loving-kindness to him and the zeal with which she had tended him and being minded to requite her the good offices she had done him, bade her ask a boon of him. ‘O my lord,’ said she, ‘I ask of thee that thou sell me not but to the man of my choice.’ ‘So be it,’ answered he, ‘I grant thee this. By Allah, O Meryem, I will not sell thee but to him of whom thou shalt approve, and I put thy sale in thine own hand!’ And she rejoiced mightily in this. Now the Persian had expounded Islam to her and she became a Muslim and learnt of him the tenets and observances of the faith. Moreover, he made her get the Koran by heart and taught her somewhat of the theological sciences and the traditions of the Prophet; after which, he brought her to Alexandria and sold her to Noureddin, as hath been before set out.

Meanwhile, when her father, the King of France, heard what had befallen his daughter and her company, he was sore concerned and despatched after her ships full of knights and champions, horsemen and footmen: but they all returned to him, crying out and saying, ‘Alas!’ and ‘Ruin!’ and ‘Woe worth the day!’ after having searched the islands of the Muslims and come on no tidings of her. The king grieved for her with an exceeding grief and sent after her that one-eyed lameter, for that he was his chief vizier, a stubborn tyrant and a froward devil, full of craft and guile, bidding him make search for her in all the lands of the Muslims and buy her, though with a shipload of gold. So the accursed wretch sought her in all the lands of the seas and all the cities of the Muslims, but found no sign of her till he came to Alexandria, when he discovered that she was with Noureddin Ali of Cairo, being directed to the trace of her by the kerchief aforesaid, [in which he recognized her handiwork,] for that none could have wrought it on such goodly wise but she. Then he bribed the merchants to help him in getting her from Noureddin and beguiled the latter into selling her, as hath been already related.

When he had her in his possession, she ceased not to weep and lament: so he said to her, ‘O my lady Meryem, put away from thee this mourning and weeping and return with me to thy father’s city, the seat of thy royalty and the place of thy power and thy home, so thou mayst be among thy servants and attendants and be quit of this abasement and stranglehold. Enough hath betided me of travel and weariness and expense on thine account, for thy father bade me buy thee back though with a shipload of gold; and now I have spent nigh a year and a half in travel and toil and ravishment of wealth.’ And he fell to kissing her feet and hands and humbling himself to her; but she only redoubled in wrath against him, for all he could do to appease her, and said to him, ‘O Accursed one, may God the Most High not bring thee to thy desire!’

Then his servants brought her a mule with gold- embroidered housings and mounting her thereon, raised over her head a silken canopy, with staves of gold and silver, and the Franks walked about her, till they brought her forth the city by the sea-gate, where they took boat with her and rowing out to a great ship [that lay in the harbour], embarked her therein. Then the vizier cried out to the sailors, saying, ‘Up with the mast!’ So they set up the mast and spreading the sails and the pendants, manned the sweeps and put out to sea. Meryem continued to gaze upon Alexandria till it disappeared from her eyes, when she fell a-weeping and lamenting passing sore and recited the following verses:

O dwelling of the loved, shall there returning ever be To thee?
But what know I of that which Allah shall decree?

The ships of separation fare with us in haste away: Mine eyes be blotted out with tears that flow unceasingly,
For severance from a friend, who was the end of my desire, With whom my sicknesses were healed and pains effaced from me.
Be thou my substitute with him, O God; for that which is Committed to Thy charge one day shall not be lost with Thee.

The knights came up to her and would have comforted her, but she heeded them not, being distracted with passion and love-longing. And she wept and moaned and complained and recited the following verses:

The tongue of passion in my heart bespeaketh thee of me And giveth thee to know that I enamoured am of thee.
I have a liver all consumed with passion's coals of fire, A heart, sore wounded by thy loss, that throbs incessantly.
How shall I hide the love that burns my life away? My lids Are ulcered and my tears adown my cheeks for ever flee.

In this plight she abode during all the voyage; no peace was left her nor would patience come at her call.

Meanwhile, when the ship had sailed with Meryem, the world was straitened upon Noureddin and he had neither peace nor patience. He returned to the lodging where they had dwelt he and she, and it appeared black and gloomy in his sight. Then he saw the pins and silk with which she had been wont to make the girdles and her clothes that had been upon her body: so he pressed them to his breast, whilst the tears streamed from his eyes and he recited the following verses:

Will union after severance return to me some day, After my long-continued tale of sorrow and dismay?
Shall I with my love's company be ever blest again? Now God forfend that what is past should ne'er return! I say.
I wonder will He yet rebait our separated loves And will my dear ones keep the troth we plighted, I and they?
And will she yet preserve my love, whom of my ignorance I lost,

and guard our plighted troth and friendship from decay?
Since they departed, as one dead am I: will my belov'd Consent that he who loves them dear should fall to death a prey?
Alas, my sorrow! But lament the mourner profits not. For stress of yearning and regret I'm melted all away.
Lost are the days of my delight: will Fortune e'er vouchsafe To me, I wonder, my desire and so my pains allay?
O heart, redouble in desire and O mine eyes, o'erflow With tears. till not a tear to weep within mine eyelids stay.
Alas for loved ones far away and patience lost to me! My helpers fail me and my woes full sorely on me weigh.
To God the Lord of all, that He vouchsafe me the return Of my belov'd and our delight, as of old time, I pray.

Then he wept passing sore and looking about the place, recited these verses also:

I see their traces and pine for longing pain; My tears rain down on the empty dwelling-place;
And I pray to God, who willed that we should part One day to grant us reunion, of His grace.

Then he rose and locking the door of the house, went out, running, to the shore of the sea, where he fixed his eyes on the place of the ship that had carried her off, whilst sighs burst from his breast and he recited the following verses:

Peace be upon thee! Nought to me can compensate for thee: I'm in two cases, near in thought, yet distant verily.
I long for thee each time and tide, even as a man athirst Longs for the distant watering-place, that still from him doth flee.
With thee my hearing and my sight, my heart and spirit are: Thy memory than honey's self is sweeter far to me.
O my despair, whenas your train departed and your ship Fared from the vision of mine eyes with thee across the sea.

And he wept and wailed and bemoaned himself, crying out and saying, 'O Meryem! O Meryem! Was it but in sleep I saw thee or in the illusions of dreams?' And by reason of that which waxed on him of regrets, he recited these verses:

Shall mine eyes ever look on thee, after this parting's pain, And shall I ever hear thy call by house and camp again?
And shall the house our presence cheered once more unite us two? Shall it my heart's desire and thine be given us to attain?
Take my bones with thee by the way and where thou lightest down, Bury them near thee, so they may with thee for aye remain.
Had I a pair of hearts, with one I'd make a shift to live And leave the other to consume for love of thee in vain;
And if, 'What wouldst thou leave of God?' 'twere asked of me, I'd say, 'Th' Almighty's favours first, then hers, my prayer to seek were fain.'

As he was in this case, weeping and crying out, 'O Meryem!' an old man landed from a vessel and coming up to him, saw him weeping and heard him recite these verses:

O Meryem of loveliness, return to me again; My eyeballs are as clouds that pour with never-ceasing rain.
Do thou but ask, concerning me, of those at me that rail; They'll tell thee that my lids lie drowned within their fountains twain.

'O my son,' said the old man, 'meseems thou weepest for the damsel who sailed yesterday with the Frank?' When Noureddin heard his words, he fell down in a swoon and lay awhile without life; then, coming to himself, he wept passing sore and recited the following verses:

Is union after severance with her past hoping for And will the perfectness of cheer return to me no more?
Anguish and love have taken up their lodging in my heart: The plate and gabble of the spies and railers irks me sore.
I pass the day long in amaze, confounded, and anights To visit me in dreams of sleep her image I implore.

Never, by God, a moment's space am I for love consoled! How should it be so, when my heart the envious doth abhor?
A leveling, soft and delicate of sides and slim of waist, She hath a beaming eye, whose shafts are lodged in my heart's core.
Her shape is as the willow-wand i' the gardens and her grace For goodliness outshames the sun and shines his splendour o'er.
Feared I not God (extolled be His majesty!) I'd say, 'Extolled be Her. majesty, the fair whom I adore!

The old man looked at him and noting his beauty and grace and symmetry and the eloquence of his tongue and the seductiveness of his charms, took compassion on him and his heart mourned for his case. Now he was the captain of a ship, bound to the damsel's city, and in this ship were a hundred Muslim merchants: so he said to Noureddin, 'Have patience and all shall yet be well; God willing, I will bring thee to her.' 'When shall we set out?' asked Noureddin, and the other said, 'Come but three days more and we will depart in peace and prosperity.' Noureddin was mightily rejoiced at the captain's words and thanked him for his bounty and kindness. Then he recalled the days of love-delight and union with his slave- girl without peer, and he wept sore and recited the following verses:

Will the Compassionate, indeed, unite us, me and thee, And shall I win to my desire by favouring Fate's decree?
And shall time's shifts vouchsafe me yet a visit from my fair And shall mine eyelids seize upon thine image greedily?
Were thine enjoyment to be bought, I'd buy it with my life. But thy possession is, alack! too dear for me, I see.

Then he went to the market and bought what he needed of victual and other necessaries for the voyage and returned to the captain, who said to him, "O my son, what is that thou hast with thee?' 'My provisions and that whereof I have need for the voyage,' answered Noureddin. 'O my son,' said the old man, laughing, 'art thou going a-pleasuring to Pompey's Pillar? Verily, between thee and that thou seekest is two months' journey, if the wind be favourable and the weather fair.' Then he took of him somewhat of money and going to the market, bought him all that he needed for the voyage and filled him a cask with fresh water. Noureddin abode in the ship three days, till the merchants had made an end of their preparations and embarked, when they set sail and putting out to sea, fared on one-and-fifty days. After this, there came out upon them corsairs, who sacked the ship and taking Noureddin and the rest prisoners, carried them to the city of France and showed them to the king, who bade cast them into prison.

At this moment the galleon arrived with the Princess Meryem and the one-eyed vizier, and when it reached the harbour, the latter landed and going up to the king, gave him the glad news of his daughter's safe return: whereupon they beat the drums for good tidings and decorated the city after the goodliest fashion. Then the king took horse, with all his guards and nobles, and rode down to the sea to meet her. Presently, she landed and the king embraced her and mounting her on a horse, carried her to the palace, where her mother received her with open arms and asked her how she did and whether she was yet a maid. 'O my mother,' replied Meryem, 'how should a girl who has been sold from merchant to merchant in the land of the Muslims, [a slave] commanded, abide a maid ? The merchant who bought me threatened me with beating and forced me and did away my maidenhead, after which he sold me to another and he fain to a third.'

When the queen heard this, the light in her eyes became darkness and she repeated her words to the king, who was sore chagrined thereat and his affair was grievous to him. So he expounded her case to his grandees and patriarchs, who said to him, 'O king, she hath been defiled by the Muslims, and nothing will purify her save the striking off of a hundred of their heads.' Whereupon the king sent for the prisoners and commanded to strike off their heads. So they beheaded them, one after another, beginning with the captain, till there was none left but Noureddin. They tore off a strip of his skirt and binding his eyes therewith, set him on the carpet of blood and were about to cut off his head, when an old woman came up to the king and said, 'O my lord, thou didst vow to bestow upon the church five Muslim captives, to help us in the service thereof, so God would restore thee thy daughter the Princess Meryem; and now she is restored to thee, so do thou fulfil thy vow.' 'O my mother,' replied the king, 'by the virtue of the Messiah and the True Faith, there remaineth to me but this one captive, whom they are about to put to death: so take him to help thee in the service of the church, till there come to me [other] prisoners of the Muslims, when I will send thee other four. Hadst thou come earlier, before they cut of the heads of these, I had given thee as many as thou wouldst.'

The old woman thanked him and wished him continuance Of life and glory and prosperity. Then she went up to Noureddin and seeing him to be a comely and elegant youth, with a delicate skin and a face like the moon at her full, carried him to the church, where she said to him, 'O my son, put of these clothes that are upon thee, for they are fit only for the king's service.' So saying, she brought him a gown and cowl of black wool and a broad girdle, in which she clad him, and bade him do the service of the church. Accordingly, he tended the church seven days, at the end of which time the old woman came up to him and said, 'O Muslim, don thy silken clothes and take these ten dirhems and go out forthright and divert thyself abroad this day, and tarry not here a moment, lest thou lose thy life.' Quoth he, 'What is to do, O my mother?' And she answered, 'Know, O my son, that the king's daughter, the Princess Meryem, hath a mind to visit the church today, to seek a blessing thereof and to make oblation thereto, by way of thank-offering for her deliverance from the land of the Muslims and in fulfilment of the vows she made to the Messiah, so he would deliver her. With her are four hundred damsels, not one of whom but is perfect in beauty and grace, and they will be here forthwith, and if their eyes fall on thee, they will hew thee in pieces with swords.'

So Noureddin took the ten dirhems and donning his own clothes, went out to the market and walked about the city, till he knew its highways and gates; after which he returned to the church and saw the Princess Meryem come up, attended by four hundred damsels, high-bosomed maids like moons, amongst whom was the daughter of the one-eyed vizier and those of the amirs and grandees of the realm; and she walked in their midst as she were the moon among the stars. When he saw her, he could not contain himself but cried out from the bottom of his heart, saying, 'O Meryem! O Meryem!' Which when the damsels heard, they ran at him with shining swords like flashes of lightning and would have killed him forthright. But the princess turned and looking on him, knew him but too well and said to her maidens, ‘Leave this youth; doubtless he is mad, for the signs of madness appear on his face.’

When Noureddin heard this, he uncovered his head and made signs with his hands and twisted his legs, rolling his eyes and foaming at the mouth. ‘Did I not tell you he was mad?’ said the princess. ‘Bring him to me and stand off from him, that I may hear what he saith; for I know the speech of the Arabs and will look into his case and see if his madness be curable or not.’ So they laid hold of him and brought him to her; after which they withdrew to a distance and she said to him, ‘Hast thou come hither on my account and ventured thy life and feignest thyself mad?’ ‘O my lady,’ answered he, ‘hast thou not heard the saying of the poet:

Quoth they, “Thou’rt surely raving mad for her thou lov’st;” and
I, “There is no pleasantness in life but for the mad,” reply.
“Compare my madness with herself for whom I rave; if she
Accord therewith, then blame me not for that which I aby.”’

‘By Allah, O Noureddin,’ rejoined she, ‘thou hast sinned against thyself, for I warned thee of this before it fell out; yet wouldst thou not hearken to me, but followedst thine own inclinations; albeit that whereof I gave thee to know I learnt not by means of divination nor augury nor dreams, but by eye-witness and very sight; for I saw the one-eyed vizier and knew that he was not come to Alexandria but in quest of me.’ ‘O my lady Meryem,’ replied he, ‘we seek refuge with God from the error of the intelligent!’ Then his affliction redoubled on him and he recited these verses:

Pardon his fault whose slipping feet caused bite in error fall, And
let the master’s clemency embrace his erring thrall.
All that an evildoer can is to repent his fault, Although too late
repentance come to profit him at all.
Lo, by confession I have done what courtesy requires: Where
then is that for which good grace and generous mercy call?

And they ceased not from lovers' chiding, which to set out would be tedious, relating to each other that which had befallen them and reciting verses and making moan, one to the other, of the violence of passion and the pangs of longing and desire, whilst the tears ran down their cheeks like rivers, till there was left them no strength to say a word. Now the princess was clad in a green dress, inwoven with red gold and broidered with pearls and jewels, which added to her beauty and grace; and right well saith the poet of her:

Like the full moon she shineth in garments all of green, With loosened vest and collars and flowing hair beseen.
'What is thy name?' I asked her, and she replied, 'I'm she Who roasts the hearts of lovers on coals of love and teen.
I am the pure white silver, ay, and the gold wherewith The bondmen from strait prison and dour released been.'
Quoth I, 'I'm all with rigours consumed;' but 'On a rock,' Said she, 'such as my heart is, thy plaints are wasted clean.'
'Even if thy heart,' I answered, 'be rock in very deed, Yet hath God caused fair water well from the rock, I ween.'

They abode thus till the day departed and night darkened on them, when Meryem went up to her women and said to them, 'Have ye locked the door?' And they answered, 'We have locked it.' So she took them and went with them to a place called the Chapel of the Lady Mary the Virgin, Mother of Light, because the Christians pretend that her heart and soul are there. The girls betook themselves to prayer and worship and made the round of all the church; and when they had made an end of their visitation, the princess said to them, 'I desire to pass the night alone in the Virgin's chapel and seek a blessing thereof, for that yearning thereafter hath betided me, by reason of my long absence in the land of the Muslims: and as for you, when ye have made an end of your visitation, do ye sleep where ye will.' 'Be it as thou wilt,' replied they, and leaving her alone in the chapel, dispersed about the church and slept.

The lady Meryem waited till they were out of sight and hearing, then went in search of Noureddin, whom she found sitting on coals of fire in a corner, awaiting her. He rose and kissed her hands and she sat down and made him sit by her side. Then she pulled off all that was upon her of clothes and ornaments and fine linen and taking Noureddin in her arms, strained him to her bosom. And they ceased not from kissing and clipping and clicketing to the tune of 'In and out,' saying the while, 'How short are the nights of union and how long the nights of separation!' and reciting the following cinquains:

O night of delight and first fruits of fair fate, Forefront of white nights, with glad fortune elate,
Thou brought'st me the morn in the afternoon late. Thee as kohl in the eyes of the dawn shall we rate
Or as slumber on eyes of ophthalmiac shed?
The night of estrangement, how lonesome was it! Its first and its last, one with other, were knit,
As a ring, sans beginning or ending to wit, And the Day of Uprising broke, ere it would flit;
For estrangement, thereafter, the lover is dead.

As they were in this great delight and engrossing joy, they heard one of the servants of the Saint smite the gong upon the roof, to call the folk to the rites of their worship, and he was even as saith the poet:

I saw him smite upon the gong and unto him did say, 'Who taught the antelope to smite upon the gong, I pray?'
And to my soul, 'Which irks thee most, the smiting of the gongs Or signal for departure given? Decide betwixt the tway.'

Then she rose forthwith and donned her clothes and ornaments: but this was grievous to Noureddin, and his gladness was troubled; the tears streamed from his eyes and he recited the following verses:

The rose of a soft cheek, all through the livelong night, I stinted not to kiss and bite with many a bite,
Till, in our middle tide of pleasure, when our spy Lay down to rest, with eyes in slumber closed outright,
They smote the gongs, as they who smote upon them were

Muezzins that to prayer the faithful do invite.
She rose from me in haste and donned her clothes, for fear Our watcher's darted star should on our heads alight,
And said, 'O thou my wish and term of all desire, Behold, the morn is come with visage wan and white.'
I swear, if but a day were given to me of power And I became a king of puissance and of might,
I'd break the corners down o' the churches, all of them, And every priest on earth with slaughter I'd requite.

Then she pressed him to her bosom and kissed his cheek and said to him, 'O Noureddin, how long hast thou been in the town?' 'Seven days' answered he. 'Hast thou walked about in it,' asked she, 'and dost thou know its ways and issues and its sea-gales and land-gates?' And he said, 'Yes.' Quoth she, 'Knowest thou the way to the offertory-chest of the church?' 'Yes,' replied he; and she said, 'Since thou knowest all this, as soon as the first watch of the coming night is over, go to the offertory- chest and take thence what thou wilt. Then open the door, that gives upon the passage leading to the sea, and go down to the harbour, where thou wilt find a little ship and ten men therein, and when the captain sees thee, he will put out his hand to thee. Give him thy hand and he will take thee up into the ship, and do thou wait there till I come to thee. But have a care lest sleep overtake thee this night, or thou wilt repent whenas repentance shall avail thee nothing.'

Then she took leave of him and going forth from him, roused her women and the rest of the damsels, with whom she betook herself to the church door and knocked; whereupon the old woman opened to her and she went forth and found the knights and serving-men standing without. They brought her a dapple mule and she mounted: whereupon they raised over her head a canopy with curtains of silk, and the knights took hold of the mule's halter. Then the guards encompassed her about with drawn swords in their hands and fared on with her, followed by her maidens, till they brought her to the palace of the king her father.

Meanwhile, Noureddin abode concealed behind the curtain, under cover of which Meryem and he had passed the night, till it was high day, when the [great] door was opened and the church became full of people. Then he mingled with the folk and accosted the old woman, who said to him, ‘Where didst thou lie last night?’ ‘In the town,’ answered he, ‘as thou badest me.’ ‘O my son,’ answered she, ‘thou didst well; for, hadst thou passed the night in the church, she had slain thee on the foulest wise.’ And he said, ‘Praised be God who hath delivered me from the peril of this night!’ Then he busied himself with the service of the church, till the day departed and the night came with the darkness, when be opened the offertory-chest and took thence of jewels what was light of weight and great of worth.

Then he waited till the first watch of the night was past, when he made his way to the postern and opening it, went forth, calling on God for protection, and fared on, till he came to the sea. Here he found the vessel moored to the shore, near the gate, with her captain, a tall old man of comely aspect, with a long beard, standing in the waist, surrounded by his ten men. Noureddin gave him his hand, as Meryem had bidden him, and the captain took it and pulling him on board, cried out to his crew, saying, ‘Cast off the moorings and put out to sea with us, ere the day break.’ ‘O my lord the captain,’ said one of the sailors, ‘how shall we put out now when the king hath notified us that to-morrow he will embark in this ship and go round about this sea, being fearful for his daughter Meryem from the Muslim thieves?’ But the captain cried out at them, saying, ‘Woe to you, O accursed ones! Dare ye gainsay me and bandy words with me?’ So saying, he drew his sword and dealt the sailor who had spoken a thrust in the throat, that the steel came out gleaming from his nape, and quoth another of the sailors, ‘What crime hath our comrade committed, that thou shouldst cut off his head?’ The captain replied by putting his hand to his sword and striking off the speaker’s head, nor did he leave smiting the rest of the sailors, till he had slain them all and cast their bodies ashore. Then he turned to Noureddin and cried out at him with a terrible great cry, that made him tremble, saying, ‘Go down and pull up the mooring-stake.’ Noureddin feared lest he should strike him also with the sword; so he leapt ashore and pulling up the stake, sprang aboard again, swiftlier than the dazzling lightning. The captain ceased not to bid him do this and do that and tack and wear and look at the stare and Noureddin did all that he bade him, with heart a-tremble for fear; whilst he himself spread the sails and the ship stretched out with them with a fair wind into the surging sea, swollen with clashing billows. Noureddin held on to the tackle, drowned in the sea of solicitude and knowing not what was hidden for him in the future; and whenever he looked at the captain, his heart quaked and he knew not whither he went with him.

He abode thus, distraught with concern and inquietude, till it was broad day, when he looked at the captain and saw him take hold of his beard and pull at it, whereupon it came off in his hand and Noureddin, examining it, saw that it was but a false beard stuck on. So he considered the captain straitly, and behold, it was the Princess Meryem, his mistress and the beloved of his heart, who had waylaid the captain and killed him and skinned off his beard, which she had clapped on to her own face. At this Noureddin was transported for joy and his breast dilated and he marvelled at her valour and prowess and the stoutness of her heart and said to her, ‘Welcome, O thou my hope and my desire and the end of all my wishes!’ Then desire and gladness agitated him and he made sure of attaining his hope and his wish ; wherefore he broke out into carol and sang the following verses:

Say to those who know nought of my transport and heat For a loved one, whose favours they never may meet,
‘Ask my folk of my passion: my verses are sweet And dainty the ditties of love I repeat
On a people whose thought in my heart hath its seat.’
Their mention with me chaseth sickness away From my bosom and heals me of pain and dismay;
My love and my longing increase on me aye And my heart is distracted with ecstasy; yea,
I’m a byword become ‘mongst the folk in the street.
I will not accept aught of blame on their part Nor seek solace in other than them for love’s smart.
Love hath pierced me, for grief and regret, with a dart and hath kindled a brazier therefrom in my heart;
Yea, still in my liver there rageth its heat.

My sickness the folk for a wonderment cite And my wakefulness all through the darkness of night.
What ailed them my weakness with rigour to smite? In passion the shedding my blood they deem right;
Yet justly they me with injustice entreat.
I wonder who charged you to drive to despair A youth who still loves and will love you fore’er?
By my life and by Him your Creator I swear, If a saying of you should the backbiters bear,
By Allah, they lie in the tale they repeat!
May God not dispel from me sickness and pain Nor my heart of its thirst and its longing assain,
Of your love for satiety when I complain! Indeed, to none other that you am I fain.
Wring my heart or show favour, as seems to you meet.
My heart to your mem’ry shall ever be true, Though your rigours should rack it and cause it to rue;
Rejection abides and acceptance with you: So whatever you will with your bondman, that do;
He’ll grudge not his life to lay down at your feet.

The princess marvelled at his song and thanked him therefor, saying, ‘Him whose case is thus it behoveth to walk the ways of men and eschew the fashion of losers and poltroons.’ Now she was stout of heart and versed in the sailing of ships over the salt sea, and she knew all the winds and their changes and all the courses of the sea. ‘O my lady,’ said Noureddin, ‘hadst thou prolonged this case on me, I had surely died for excess of fear and chagrin, more by token of the fire of passion and love- longing and the cruel anguish of separation.’ She laughed at his speech and presently rising, brought out somewhat of meat and drink; and they ate and drank and made merry. Then she brought out rubies and other gems and precious stones and trinkets of gold and silver and all manner things of price, light of carriage and great of worth, that she had taken from the palace of her father and his treasuries, and showed them to Noureddin, who rejoiced therein with an exceeding joy.

Meanwhile the wind blew fair for them and they sailed on, without hindrance, till they drew near the city of Alexandria and sighted its landmarks, old and new, and Pompey's Pillar. When they reached the port, Noureddin landed and making the ship fast to one of the Fulling- Stones, took somewhat of the treasures that Meryem had brought with her, and said to her, 'O my lady, abide in the ship against I [return and] carry thee up into the city on such wise as I should wish.' Quoth she, 'It behoves that this be done quickly, for tardiness in affairs engenders repentance.' 'There is no tardiness in me,' answered he and leaving her in the ship, went up into the city to the druggist's house, to borrow of his wife for Meryem veil and muffler and mantle and walking boots, after the usage of the women of Alexandria, knowing not that there was appointed to betide him of the vicissitudes of time, the father of wonders, that which was not in his reckoning.

Meanwhile, when the King of France arose in the morning, he missed his daughter and questioned her eunuchs and women of her. 'O our lord,' answered they, 'she went out last night, to go to the church, and after that we know nothing of her.' But, as the king talked with them, there arose a great clamour of cries without the palace, that the place rang thereto, and he said, .What is to do?' 'O king,' answered the folk, 'we have found ten men slain on the sea-shore, and thy ship is missing. Moreover, we found the postern of the church, that gives upon the alley leading to the sea, open and the Muslim prisoner, who serves in the church, missing.' Quoth the king, 'If my ship be missing, without doubt my daughter is in it.' So he summoned the captain of the port and cried out at him, saying, 'By the virtue of the Messiah and the True Faith, except thou overtake my ship forthright with troops and bring it back to me, with those who are therein, I will put thee to death after the foulest fashion and make an example of thee!'

The captain went out from before him, trembling, and betook himself to the old woman of the church, to whom said he, 'Heardest thou aught from the captive, that was with thee, concerning his native land and what countryman he was?' And she answered, 'He used to say, "I come from the town of Alexandria."' When the captain heard this, he returned forthright to the port and cried out to the sailors to make sail. So they did his bidding and straightway putting out to sea, sailed night and day till they came in sight of the city of Alexandria, what time Noureddin landed, leaving the princess in the ship. They soon espied the king's bark and knew it; so they moored their own vessel at a distance therefrom and putting off in a little ship they had with them, which drew but three feet of water and in which were a hundred fighting-men, amongst them the one-eyed vizier (for that he was a stubborn tyrant and a froward devil and a wily thief, none could avail against his craft, as he were Abou Mohammed el Bettal) rowed up to the bark and boarding her, all at once, found none therein save the Princess Meryem. So they took her and the ship, and returning to their own vessel, after they had landed and waited a long while, set sail forthright for the land of the Franks, having accomplished their errand, without drawing sword.

The wind blew fair for them and they sailed on, without hindrance, till they reached the city of France and landing with the princess, carried her to her father, who received her, seated on the throne of his kingship. As soon as he saw her, he said to her, 'Out on thee, O traitress! What ailed thee to leave the faith of thy forefathers and the safeguard of the Messiah, on whom is our reliance, and follow after the faith of the vagabonds, to wit, the faith of Islam, the which arose with the sword against the Cross and the Images?' 'I am not at fault,' replied Meryem. 'I went out by night to the church, to visit the Lady Mary and seek a blessing of her, when there fell upon me, at unawares, a band of Muslim robbers, who gagged me and bound me fast and carrying me on board the bark, set sail with me for their own country. However, I beguiled them and talked with them of their religion, till they loosed my bonds; and before I knew what was toward, thy men overtook me and delivered me. And by the virtue of the Messiah and the True Faith and the Cross and Him who was crucified thereof I rejoiced with an exceeding joy in my release from them and my bosom expanded and I was glad fob my deliverance from the bondage of the Muslims!' 'Thou liest, O shameless baggage!' rejoined the king. 'By the virtue of that which is revealed of prohibition and allowance in the manifest evangel, I will assuredly slay thee after the foulest fashion and make of thee the vilest of examples! Did it not suffice thee to do as thou didst the first time and put off thy lies upon us, but thou must return upon us with thy falsehoods?’

Then he commanded to slay her and crucify her over the gate of the palace: but the one-eyed vizier, who had long been enamoured of the princess, came in to him and said, ‘Slay her not, but give her to me to wife, and I will watch over her with the utmost vigilance, nor will I go in to her, till I have built her a palace of solid stone, exceeding high of fashion, so no thieves may avail to climb up to its roof; and when I have made an end of building it, I will sacrifice thirty Muslims before the gate thereof, as an expiatory offering to the Messiah for her and for myself.’ The king granted his request and bade the priests and monks and patriarchs marry the princess to him; so they did his bidding, whereupon he gave commandment to set about building a strong and lofty palace, befitting her, and the workmen fell to work upon it.

To return to Noureddin. When he came back with the veils and what not else he had borrowed of the druggist’s wife, he ‘found the air empty and the place of visitation distant;’ whereupon his heart sank within him and he wept floods of tears and recited the following verses:

The phantom of Saada came to me by night, near the break of day, And roused me, whenas my comrades all in the desert sleeping lay:
But, when I awoke to the dream of the night, that came to visit me, I found the air void and the wonted place of our rendezvous far away.

Then he walked on along the beach and turned right and left, till he saw people gathered together on the beach and heard them say, ‘O Muslims, there abideth no sanctity in the city of Alexandria, since the Franks enter it and snatch away those who are therein and return to their own land at their leisure, unpursued of any of the Muslims or men-of-war!’ Quoth Noureddin to them, ‘What is to do?’ And they answered, ‘O my son, one of the ships of the Franks, full of armed men, came down but now upon the harbour and carried off a ship that was moored here, with her who was therein, and made for their own land unhindered.’ Noureddin fell down in a swoon, on hearing these words; and when he came to himself, they questioned him of his case and he told them all that had befallen him; whereupon they all fell to blaming him and railing at him, saying, ‘Why couldst thou not bring her up into the town without veil and muffler?’ And each gave him some grievous word, berating him with sharp speech, and shot at him each his shaft of reproach, albeit some said, ‘Let him be; that which hath befallen him sufficeth him,’ till he again fell down in a swoon.

At this moment, up came the old druggist, who, seeing the folk gathered together, drew near to learn what was the matter and found Noureddin lying aswoon in their midst. So he sat down at his head and arousing him, said to him, ‘O my son, what is this case in which I see thee?’ ‘O uncle,’ replied Noureddin, ‘I had brought back my slave-girl, whom I lost, from her father’s city, after suffering all manner of perils and hardships; and when I came hither with her, I made the vessel fast to the shore and leaving her therein, repaired to thy dwelling and took of thy wife what was needful for her, that I might bring her up into the city; but the Franks came and taking the ship and the damsel therein, made off unhindered, and returned to their own land.’

When the druggist heard this, the light in his eyes became darkness and he grieved sore for Noureddin and said to him, ‘O my son, why didst thou not bring her out of the ship into the city without a veil? But talk availeth not at this season; so rise, O my son, and come up with me to the city; it may be God will vouchsafe thee a girl fairer than she, who shall console thee for her. Praised be God who hath not made thee lose aught by her! Nay, thou hast gained by her. And bethink thee, O my son, that union and separation are in the hands of the Most High King.’ ‘By Allah, O uncle,’ replied Noureddin, ‘I can never be consoled for her loss nor will I ever leave seeking her, though I drink the cup of death on her account!’ ‘O my son,’ rejoined the druggist, ‘and what dost thou purpose to do?’ Quoth Noureddin, ‘I purpose to return to the land of the Franks and enter the city of France and venture myself there, come what may.’ ‘O my son,’ said the druggist, ‘quoth the current byword, “Not always comes the pitcher off unbroken;” and if they did thee no hurt before, belike they will slay thee this time, more by token that they know thee now but too well.’ ‘O my uncle,’ replied Noureddin, ‘let me set out and be slain presently for the love of her, and not die slowly of despair for her loss.'

Now, as fate would have it, there was then a ship in the port ready to sail, for its passengers had made an end of their affairs and the sailors had pulled up the mooring- stakes, when Noureddin embarked in her. So they put out to sea and sailed many days, with fair wind and weather, till they fell in with certain of the Frank cruisers, that were scouring those waters and seizing upon all ships they saw, in their fear for the king's daughter from the Muslim corsairs: and as often as they made prize of a Muslim ship, they carried all her people to the King of France, who put them to death in accomplishment of the vow he had made on account of his daughter Meryem. So they boarded the ship in which was Noureddin and taking him and the rest of the company prisoners, to the number of a hundred Muslims, carried them to the king, who bade cut their throats. So they slaughtered them all, one after another, till there was none left but Noureddin, whom the headsman had left till the last, in pity of his tender age and slender shape.

When the king saw him, he knew him right well and said to him, 'Art thou not Noureddin, that was with us before?' 'I was never with thee,' answered he; 'and my name is not Noureddin, but Ibrahim.' 'Thou liest,' rejoined the king; 'thou art Noureddin, he whom I gave to the old woman, the prioress, to help her in the service of the church.' But Noureddin said, 'O my lord, my name is Ibrahim.' Quoth the king, 'Wait awhile,' and bade his knights fetch the old woman forthright, saying, 'When she comes and sees thee, she will know if thou be Noureddin or not.' At this juncture, in came the one-eyed vizier and kissing the earth before the king, said to him, 'Know, O king, that the palace is finished; and thou knoweth that I vowed to the Messiah that, when I had made an end of building it, I would slaughter thirty Muslims before its gate; wherefore I am come to get them of thee, that I may sacrifice them and so fulfil my vow to the Messiah. They shall be at my charge, by way of loan and whenas there come prisoners to my hands, I will give thee other thirty in their stead.' 'By the virtue of the Messiah and the True Faith,' replied the king, 'I have but this one captive left!' And he pointed to Noureddin. 'Take him and slaughter him now, and the rest I will send thee, whenas there come to my hands [other] prisoners of the Muslims.'

So the vizier took Noureddin and carried him to his palace, thinking to slaughter him on the threshold of the gate; but the painters said to him, 'O my lord, we have two days' painting yet to do; so have patience with us and delay to slaughter this captive, till we have made an end of our work; belike by that time the rest of the thirty will come, so thou mayst despatch them all at one but and accomplish thy vow in one day.' So the vizier bade imprison him and they carried him to the stables and left him there in chains, hungering and thirsting and making moan for himself; for indeed he saw death face to face.

Now it chanced, by the ordinance of destiny and fore-ordered fated that the king had two chargers, own brothers, such as the kings of the Chosroes might sigh in vain to possess themselves of one of them; they were called Sabic and Lahic and one of them was pure white and the other black as the darksome night. And all the kings of the isles had said, 'Whoso stealeth us one of these horses, we will give him all he seeketh of red gold and pearls and jewels;' but none could avail unto this. Now one of them fell sick of a jaundice and there came a whiteness over his eyes; whereupon the king sent for all the farriers in the city to treat him; but they all failed of his cure. Presently the vizier came in to the king and finding him troubled, because of the horse, thought to do away his concern and said to him, 'O king, give me the horse and I will cure him.' The king consented and caused carry the horse to the stable wherein was Noureddin; but, when he missed his brother, he cried out with an exceeding great cry and neighed, so that he affrighted all the folk. The vizier, seeing that he did thus but because of his separation from his brother, sent to tell the king, who said, 'If this, which is but a beast, cannot brook to be parted from his brother, how should it be with those that have reason?' And he bade his grooms take the other horse and put him with his brother in the vizier's stable, saying, 'Tell the vizier that the two horses are a present from me to him, for the sake of my daughter Meryem.'

Noureddin was lying in the stable, chained and shackled, when they brought the horses, and saw that one of them had a web in his eyes. Now he had some knowledge of horses and of the treatment of their diseases; so he said in himself, ‘By Allah, this is my opportunity! I will go to the vizier and lie to him, saying, “I will cure thee this horse:” then will I do with him somewhat that will destroy his eyes; and he will kill me and I shall be at rest from this wretched life.’ So he waited till the vizier entered the stable, to look upon the horse, and said to him, ‘O my lord, what wilt thou give me, if I cure this horse, and make his eyes whole again?’ ‘As my bead liveth,’ replied the vizier, ‘an thou cure him, I will spare thy life and give thee leave to ask a boon of me!’ And Noureddin said, ‘O my lord, command my hands to be unbound.’ So the vizier bade unbind him and he rose and taking virgin glass brayed it and mixed it with unslaked lime and onion-juice. Then he applied the whole to the horse’s eyes and bound them up, saying in himself: ‘Now will his eyes be put out and they will kill me and I shall be at rest from this wretched life.’ And he passed the night with a heart free of care and trouble, humbling himself to God the Most High and saying, ‘O Lord, in Thy knowledge is that which dispenseth with asking!’

When the day came and the sun shone out upon the hills and valleys, the vizier came to the stable and loosing the bandage from the horse’s eyes, found them [altogether cured and] handsomer than ever, by the ordinance of the King who openeth [unto His servants the fates of sustenance and mercy]. So he said to Noureddin, ‘O Muslim, never in the world saw I the like of thee for the excellence of thy skill. By the virtue of the Messiah and the True Faith, thou fillest me with wonder, for all the farriers of our land have failed to heal this horse’s eyes!’ Then be did off his shackles with his own hand and clad him in a costly dress and made him his master of the horse. Moreover, he appointed him stipends and allowances and lodged him in an apartment over the stables. So Noureddin abode awhile, eating and drinking and making merry and commanding and forbidding those who tended the horses; and whoso neglected them or failed to fodder those tied up in the stable wherein was his service, he would throw down and beat grievously and lay him by the legs in shackles of iron. Moreover, he used every day to go down to the two chargers and rub them down with his own hand, by reason of that which he knew of their value in the vizier’s eyes and his love for them; wherefore the latter rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy and his breast dilated and he was glad, unknowing what was to be the issue of his affair.

Now in the new palace, that he had built for the Princess Meryem, was a lattice window overlooking his old house and Noureddin's lodging. The vizier had a daughter, a virgin of extreme beauty, as she were a fleeing gazelle or a bending branch, and it chanced that she sat one day at the lattice aforesaid and heard Noureddin singing and solacing himself under his afflictions by reciting the following verses:

O censor of love, thou that wast fortunate aye, Bright with the sheen of thy joys as the blossomed spray:
If Fate with its plagues should bite on thee one day, Then of the taste of its bitter cup thou'lt say,
'Alas for Love and out on his whole array| My heart with his flaming fires is burnt away.'

But to-day thou art safe as yet from his cruel spite And his perfidy irks thee not and his fell unright;
Yet blame not, I prithee the love-distracted wight Who cries, for the stress of the passion to which he's prey,
'Alas for Love and out on his whole array! My heart with his flaming fires is burnt away.'

Be not of those that look on love with disdain, But rather excuse and pity the lovers' pain,
Lest thou one day be bound in the self-same chain And drink of the self-same bitter draught as they.
Alas for Love and out on his whole array! My heart with his flaming fires is burnt away.

I too of old was empty of heart like thee And lay down to rest in peace and passion free;
The taste of the sleepless nights was strange to me Until he called me to dwell beneath his sway.
Alas for Love and out on his whole array! My heart with his flaming fires is burnt away.

Yea, none can tell of Love and its sore duresse But he who is sick and weak for its lonesomeness,
He who hath lost his reason for love-distress, Whose drink is the bitter dregs of his own dismay.
Alas for Love and out on his whole array! My heart with his flaming fires is burnt away.

How many a lover watches the darksome night, His eye forbidden the taste of sleep's delight!
How many, whose tears like rivers down a height Course down their cheeks for passion both night and day!
Alas for Love and out on his whole array! My heart with his flaming fires is burnt away.

How many a mortal is maddened for love-despair, Wakeful, for void of sleep is the dusky air!
Languor and pain are the weeds that he doth wear And even his dreams from him are banished aye.
Alas for Love and out on his whole array! My heart with his flaming fires is burnt away.

How often my patience fails and my bones do waste And my tears, like a fount of blood, stream down in haste!
For my life, that of old was pleasant and sweet of taste, A slender maiden hath bittered this many a day.
Alas for Love and out on his whole array! My heart with his flaming fires is burnt away.

Alack for the man among men who loves like me, Whose eyes through the hours of the darkness sleepless be,
Who drowns in his own despair, as it were a sea, And cries, for the stress of an anguish without allay,
'Alas for Love and out on his whole array! My heart with his flaming fires is burnt away.'

Whom hath not Love stricken and wounded indeed? Who was there aye from his easy springes freed?

Whose life is empty of him and who succeed In winning to his delights without affray?
Alas for Love and out on his whole array! My heart with his flaming fires is burnt away.

Be Thou his helper, O Lord, who's sick at heart; Protect him, Thou that the best protector art.
To him fair patience to bear his woes impart; In all his trouble be Thou his help and stay.
Alas for Love and out on his whole array! My heart with his flaming fires is burnt away.

Quoth the vizier's daughter to herself, 'By the virtue of the Messiah and the True Faith, but this Muslim is a handsome youth! Doubtless, he is a lover separated from his mistress. I wonder if his beloved is fair like unto him and if she pines for him as he for her! If she be comely as he is, it behoveth him to pour forth tears and make moan of passion; but, if she be other than fair, his life is wasted in vain regrets and he is denied the taste of delights.'

Now the Princess Meryem had removed to the [new] palace the day before and the vizier's daughter knew that she was heavy at heart; so she bethought herself to go to her and talk with her and tell her of the young man and the verses she had heard him recite; but, before she could do this, the princess sent for her to cheer her with her converse. So she went to her and found her breast straitened and her tears coursing down her cheeks; and she was weeping sore and reciting the following verses:

My life is spent; but love lives yet, that nought may kill, And for my longing's stress my breast is straitened still.
My heart is all consumed for separation's ill, Yet hopes that after all the days of union will
Return and love-delight its ordered course fulfil.
Be sparing of your blame to one enslaved of heart, Whose body's worn with love and disappointment's smart,
Nor at his passion launch reproach's poisoned dart, For none more wretched is than lovers torn apart.

Yet is love's bitter sweet of savour, will or nill.

Quoth the vizier's daughter to her, 'What ails thee, O princess, to be sick at heart and melancholy?' Whereupon Meryem recalled the greatness of the delights that were past and recited the following verses:

will th' estrangement of my love with fortitude abide, Whilst
down my cheeks the pearls of tears in chains unending glide;
So haply God shall succour me with solace; for indeed He doth
all solace neath the ribs of difficulty hide.

'O princess,' said the vizier's daughter, 'let not thy breast be straitened, but come with me straightway to the lattice; for there is with us in the stable a comely young man, slender of shape and sweet of speech, and meseemeth he is a lover separated [from his beloved].' 'And by what sign knowest thou that he is a separated lover?' asked Meryem. And she answered, 'O queen, I know it by his reciting odes and verses all tides of the day and watches of the night.' Quoth the princess in herself, 'If what the vizier's daughter says be true, these are the traits of the wretched, the afflicted Ali Noureddin. Can it indeed be he of whom she speaketh?' At this thought love-longing and distraction redoubled on her and she rose at once and going with the maiden to the lattice, looked down upon the stables, where she saw her love and lord Noureddin and fixing her eyes on him, knew him but too well, albeit he was sick, of the greatness of his love for her and of the fire of passion and the anguish of separation and yearning and distraction. Emaciation was sore upon him and he was reciting and saying as follows:

My heart a bondslave is; mine eyes rain tears for e'er: With them,
is pouring forth, no rain-cloud can compare.
My weeping's manifest, my passion and lament, My wakefulness
and woe and mourning for my fair.
Alas, my raging heat, my transport and regret! Eight plagues
beset my heart and have their lodging there.
And five and five to boot thereafter follow on: Tarry and list,

whilst I their names to thee declare.
Memory, solicitude, sighing and languishment, Love-longing in excess and all-engrossing care,
Affliction, strangerhood and passion and lament And griefs that never cease to stir me to despair.
Patience and fortitude desert me for desire, Whose hosts, when patience fails, beset me everywhere.
Yea, passion's troubles wax for ever on my heart. O thou that ask'st what is the fire at heart I bear,
What ails my tears a flame to kindle in my blood? The fires within my heart still burn and never spare.
Drowned am I in the flood of my unceasing tears And in hell-fire I flame with love-longing fore'er.

When the Princess Meryem heard the eloquence of his verses and the excellence of his sketch, she was assured that it was indeed her lord Noureddin; but she dissembled with the vizier's daughter and said to her, 'By the virtue of the Messiah and the True Faith I thought not thou knewest of my sadness!' Then she withdrew from the window and returned to her own place, whilst the vizier's daughter went about her occasions. The princess waited awhile, then returned to the window and sat there, gazing upon her beloved Noureddin and feasting her eyes on his beauty and grace. And indeed, she saw that he was like unto the moon at its full; but he was ever sighing and pouring forth tears, for that he recalled what was past. Then he recited the following verses:

Union with my beloved for ever I await, But gain not; whilst life's bitter for ever is my mate.
My tears are like the ocean in their unending flow; But, when I meet my censors I force them still abate.
Out upon him who cursed us with parting by his spells! Could I but win to meet him, I'd tear his tongue out straight.
To blame the days availeth no whit, for that they've wrought: With bitterness unmingled they've blent my cup of fate.
To whom shall I address me but you, to whom repair, Since in your courts, a hostage, I left my heart of late?

Who'll quit me of a despot, a tyrant in unright, Who waxes, when I plain me for justice as his gate?
King o'er my soul I made him, his realm to keep; but me He ruined and his kingdom laid waste and desolate.
My life I have expended for love of him, alas! Would God I were requited for that my spent estate!
O fawn that in my bosom hast made thy nest, let that I've tasted of estrangement suffice thy wrath to sate.
Thou'rt he whose face uniteth all charms, on whose account I've parted with my patience and am disconsolate.
Within my heart I lodged him; woe on it fell, and I To that which I permitted submit without debate.
My tears flow on for ever, like to a swollen sea: Knew I the road to solace, I would ensue it straight.
I fear to die of sorrow, for he still 'scapes from me, Oft as I think to reach him, ah me unfortunate!

When Meryem heard her lover's verses, they kindled a fire in her entrails and she recited the following, whilst her eyes ran over with tears:

I longed for him I love; but when I saw him, for surprise I was amazed and had no power to move or tongue or eyes.
Volumes of chiding and reproach I had prepared; but when We met, no syllable thereof unto my lips would rise.

When Noureddin heard her voice, he knew it and wept sore, saying, 'By Allah, this is assuredly the voice of the Princess Meryem! I wonder if my thought be true and if it be indeed she herself or another!' And regrets redoubled upon him and he bemoaned himself and recited the following verses:

When my blamer for love saw me meet with my dear In a place wide and open to eye and to ear
And I said not at meeting a word of reproach Though reproach to the sad oft brings solace and cheer,
'What manner of silence is this that prevents Thee from making

due answer?' he said with a sneer.
'Misbeliever,' quoth I, 'that ignorest the case Of the people of passion, a word in thine ear;
The sign of the lover whose love is sincere Is his silence when she whom he loveth draws near.'

When he had made an end of these verses, the princess fetched inkhorn and paper and wrote the following letter. 'In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful! The peace of God be upon thee and His mercy and Blessings! Thy slave-girl Meryem salutes thee, who longeth sore for thee; and this is her message to thee. As soon as this letter falls into thy hands, do thou arise and apply thyself with all diligence to that she would have of thee, and beware with all wariness of transgressing her commandment and of sleeping. When the first watch of the night is past, (for that hour is of the most favourable of times,) saddle the two horses [that the vizier had of the king] and go forth with them to the Sultan's Gate, [where do thou await me]. If any ask thee whither thou goest, answer, "I am going to exercise them," and none will hinder thee; for the folk of this city trust to the locking of the gates.'

Then she folded the letter in a silken handkerchief and threw it out of the window to Noureddin, who took it and reading it, knew it for the handwriting of the Indy Meryem. So he kissed the letter and laid it between his eyes; then, calling to mind that which had betided him with her of the sweets of love-delight, he recited the following verses, whilst the tears streamed from his eyes:

A letter came to me from thee by favour of the night: At once It healed me and in me love-longing did excite.
It minds me of the life I lived with thee in days of yore. Glory to Him who did us twain with separation smite!

As soon as it was dark he busied himself with making ready the horses and waited till the first watch of the night was past, when he saddled them with saddles of the goodliest, and leading them forth of the stable, locked the door after him and repaired with them to the city-gate, where he sat down to await the princess's coming.

Meanwhile, Meryem returned to her apartment, where she found the one-eyed vizier seated, leaning upon a cushion stuffed with ostrich-down; but he was ashamed to put out his hand to her or bespeak her. When she saw him, she appealed to God in her heart, saying, ‘O my God, bring him not to his will of me neither decree Thou to me defilement after purity!’ Then she went up to him and made a show of affection for him and sat down by his side and caressed him, saying, ‘O my lord, what is this aversion thou discovereth to me? Is it pride or coquetry on thy part? But the current byword saith, “If the salutation be little in demand, the sitters salute the standers.” So I, O my lord, thou come not to me neither accost me, I will go to thee and accost thee.’ ‘To thee belong favour and kindness, O queen of the earth in its length and breadth,’ answered he, ‘nor am I but one of thy slaves and the least of thy servants. Indeed, I was ashamed to intrude upon thine illustrious presence, O unique pearl, and my face is in the dust at thy feet.’ ‘Leave this talk,’ rejoined she, ‘and bring us to eat and drink.’

So he called to his eunuchs and women to bring food, and they set before them a tray containing birds of all kinds that walk and fly and couple in the nests, such as grouse and quails and pigeons and lambs and fat geese and fricasseed fowls and other dishes of all sorts and colours. The princess put out her hand to the tray and began to eat and feed the vizier and kiss him on the mouth. They ate till they had enough and washed their hands, after which the servants removed the table of food and set on the table of wine. So the princess filled the cup and drank and gave the vizier to drink and served him with the utmost assiduity, so that he was transported for joy and his breast expanded and he was glad.

When she saw that the wine had gotten the mastery of his senses, she brought out of her bosom a pastille of Moorish henbane, which she had provided against this oration, whereof if an elephant smelt the least whiff, he would sleep from year to year. She took him at unawares and crumbled the henbane into the cup, then, filling it up, handed it to the vizier, who could hardly credit his senses for joy. So he took it and kissing her hand, drank it off; but hardly had it reached his stomach when he fell prostrate on the earth. Then she rose and filling two great pairs of saddle-bags with what was light of carriage and great of price of jewels and jacinths and precious stones, together with somewhat of meat and drink, donned harness of war and armed herself for battle. Moreover, she took with her for Noureddin what should rejoice him of rich and royal apparel and splendid arms and armour, and shouldering the bags, (for indeed she was both strong and valiant), went forth of the palace to join her lover.

Meanwhile the latter sat at the city-gate, with the horses' halters in his hand, till God (to whom belong might and majesty) sent a sleep upon him and he slept, glory be to Him who sleepeth not! Now, in those days, the Kings of the Islands had spent much measure in bribing folk to steal the two horses or one of them; and there was a black slaver who had been reared in the islands and was skilled in horse-stealing; wherefore the kings of the Franks bribed him with wealth galore to steal one of the chargers and promised him, if he could avail to steal the two that they would give him a whole island and invest him with a splendid dress of honour. He had long gone about the city of France in disguise, but availed not to take the horses, whilst they were with the king; but, when he gave them to the vizier and the latter carried them to his own stable, the thief rejoiced with an exceeding joy and made sure of success, saying in himself, 'By the virtue of the Messiah and the True Faith, I will certainly steal them!'

Now he had gone out that very night, intending for the stable, to steal them, but, as he went along, he came upon Noureddin lying asleep, with the halters in his hands. So he went up to the horses and loosing the halters from their heads, was about to mount one of them and drive the other before him, when up came the Princess Meryem, carrying the two pairs of saddle-bags. She took the black for Noureddin and handed him one pair of bags, which he laid on one of the horses: after which she gave him the other pair and he laid it on the other horse, without word said. Then they mounted and rode out of the gate in silence. 'O my lord Noureddin,' quoth she, 'what aileth thee to be silent?' Whereupon the black turned to her and said angrily, 'What sayst thou, O damsel?' When she heard his outlandish speech, she knew that he was not Noureddin: so she looked at him and saw that he was a black slave, snub-nosed and wide-mouthed, with nostrils like ewers; whereupon the light in her eyes became darkness and she said to him, ‘Who art thou, O sheikh of the sons of Ham and what is thy name among men?’ ‘O daughter of the base,’ replied he, ‘my name is Mesoud, and I steal horses, when folk are asleep.’ She made him no answer, but drawing her sabre forthright, smote him on the nape and the blade came out, gleaming, from the tendons of his throat, whereupon he fell to the ground, weltering in his blood, and God hurried his soul to the fire and ill is the abiding-place [to which he went].

Then she took the other horse by the bridle and retraced her steps in search of Noureddin, whom she found lying, asleep and snoring, in the place where she had appointed him to meet her, with the halters in his hand and knowing not his hands from his feet. So she dismounted and gave him a cuff, whereupon he awoke in affright and said to her, ‘O my lady, praised be God for thy safe coming!’ ‘Rise,’ answered she, ‘and mount this steed and speak not.’ So he rose and mounted one of the horses, whilst she bestrode the other, and they went forth the city and rode on awhile in silence. Then said she to him, ‘Did I not bid thee beware of sleeping? Verily, he prospers not who sleeps.’ ‘O my lady,’ answered he, ‘I slept not but because of the solacement of my heart by reason of thy promise. But what hath happened, O my lady?’ So she told him her adventure with the black, and he said, ‘Praised be God for safety!’

Then they fared on at full speed, committing their affair to the Subtle, the All-wise and conversing as they went, till they came to the place where the black lay prostrate in the dusty as he were an Afrit, and Meryem said to Noureddin, ‘Dismount; strip him of his clothes and take his arms.’ ‘By Allah, O my lady,’ answered he, ‘I dare not dismount nor approach him.’ And indeed he marvelled at the black’s stature and at the valour and stout-heartedness of the princess and praised her for her deed. They fared on loftily all that night and halted not till the day broke and the sun shone out upon the hills and plains, when they came to a wide champaign, abounding in herbs and fruits of all kinds. Therein were gazelles frisking and birds singing lustily on the branches: its slopes for flowers were like serpents’ bellies and many and various were its channels of running water. And indeed it was as saith the poet and saith well and accomplisheth desire:

As ‘twere a sun-scorched tract, a valley ruddy red, With twice the common tale of herbs and flowers o’erspread.

We halted midst its groves, and it above us bent, As o’er a weanling child the nurses bend the head;

And limpid water sweet, more pleasant than old wine To boon-companion is, to quench our thirst it shed.

It still shut out the sun, from whatsoever side It smote us, but let in the breeze to cool our bed.

Its pebbles fragrant were as maids with trinkets decked And seemed unto the touch like heaps of pearl a-thread.

And as saith another:

When its birds sing in the dawn o’er its limpid lake, El Welhan longs for its sight ere morning break;

For as at were Paradise ’tis with its fragrant gales And its fruit and its streams that run through its shady brake.

Here the two lovers alighted to rest and turning the horses loose to pasture in the valley, ate of its fruits and drank of its streams; after which they sat talking and recalling all that had befallen them and complaining one to the other of the anguish of separation and of that which they had suffered for estrangement and love-longing. As they were thus engaged, there arose in the distance a cloud of dust, which spread till it walled the world, and they heard the neighing of horses and clank of arms.

Now the reason of this was, that the king had gone forth at daybreak, to give the vizier and his daughter good morrow, after the custom of kings with their daughter [on the morrow of their wedding-night,] taking with him silken stuffs [as a present] and scattering gold and silver among the eunuchs and tire-women, that they might scramble for it: but when he came to the new palace, he and one of his pages, he found the vizier prostrate on the carpet, knowing not his head from his feet, and searched the palace right and left for his daughter, but found her not; whereat he was sore troubled and concerned and his wit forsook him.

Then he called for hot water and frankincense and virgin vinegar and mingling them together, blew the mixture into the vizier's nostrils and shook him, whereupon he cast the henbane forth of his stomach, as it were a piece of cheese. He repeated the injection, whereupon the vizier came to himself and the king questioned him of his case and that of his daughter. 'O mighty king,' answered the vizier, 'I have no knowledge of her save that she poured me out a cup of wine with her own hand; and from that moment to this I have no recollection of aught nor know I what is come of her.' When the king heard this, the light in his eyes became darkness, and he drew his sword and smote the vizier on the head, that the steel came out gleaming from between his teeth. Then he called the grooms and stable-men and demanded the two horses of them; but they said, 'O king, when we awoke in the morning, we found all the doors open and the two chargers missing; and our chief, the master of the horse, is also missing.' Quoth the king, 'By my faith and all wherein my belief is stablished, none but my daughter hath taken the horses, she and the Muslim captive that used to tend the church and who took her aforetime! Indeed I knew him right well and none delivered him from my hand save this one-eyed vizier; but now is he requited his deed.'

Then he called his three sons, who were three doughty champions, each of whom could cope with a thousand horse in the field and the stead of strife, and bade them mount. So they took horse forthwith and the King and the flower of his knights and nobles and officers mounted with them and followed in the track of the fugitives till they came up with them in the valley aforesaid. When Meryem saw them, she mounted her horse and girt on her sword and took her arms. Then she said to Noureddin, 'How is it with thee and how is thy stomach for battle and strife and contention?' Quoth he, 'Verily, my steadfastness in battle is as the steadfastness of the stake in bran.' And he recited the following verses:

I prithee, Meryem, spare me reproaches and despite And do not thou my slaughter or torment long invite.
I whom a raven's croaking affeareth passing sore, How should I be a warrior or have a mind to fight?
Lo, if I but set eyes on a mouse, I quake for fear; Yea, I bepiss

my hosen for terror and affright.
Indeed, I love not thrusting except in bed it be! The kaze my pintle's prowess ignoreth not by night.
This is the way of thinking of every prudent man, And who deems not as I do deems otherwise than right.

When she heard his speech and his verses, she laughed and said, 'O my lord Noureddin, abide in thy place and I will keep thee from their mischief, though they be as the sands of the sea in number. But mount and be behind me, and if we be defeated and put to flight, beware of falling, for none can overtake thy charger.' So saying, she couched her lance and gave her horse the rein, whereupon he darted off with her, like the storm wind or like water poured forth of the strictness of the pipes. Now Meryem was the doughtiest of the folk of her time and the unique pearl of her age; for her father had taught her, whilst she was yet little, to ride on horseback and plunge auto the ocean of battle in the darkness of the night.

When the King saw her pricking towards them, he knew her but too well and said to his eldest son, 'O Bertaut, thou who art surnamed Ras el Killaut, this is certainly thy sister Meryem who charges upon us, and she seeks to do battle and wage war with us. So go thou out to her and give her battle: and I charge thee by the Messiah and the True Faith, if thou get the better of her, kill her not till thou have propounded to her the Nazarene faith. If she return to her old faith, bring her to me prisoner, but if she refuse, slay her after the foulest fashion and make of her the vilest of examples, as well as of the accursed wretch who is with her.' 'I hear and obey,' replied Bertaut and pricking out forthright to meet his sister, said to her, 'O Meryem, doth not what hath already befallen on thine account suffice thee, but thou must leave the faith of thy fathers and forefathers and follow after the faith of the rovers in the lands, that is to say, the faith of Islam? By the virtue of the Messiah and the True Faith, except thou return to the faith of the kings thy forefathers and walk therein after the goodliest wise, I will put thee to an ill death and make of thee the most shameful of examples!'

She laughed at his speech and replied, 'Avaunt! God forbid that the past should return or that he who is dead should live again! I will make thee drink the sorest of regrets! By Allah, I will not forsake the faith of Mohammed the son of Abdallah, who directed all peoples into the right road, for it is the true faith; nor will I leave the way of righteousness, though I drink the cup of perdition!' When the accursed Bertaut heard this, the light in his eye became darkness and there befell a sore battle between them. They swayed to and fro, lighting, throughout the length and breadth of the valley, whilst all eyes were fixed upon them in admiration: after which they wheeled about and foiled and feinted a great while, and as often as Bertaut opened on his sister a gate of war, she parried his attack and put it to nought, of the goodliness of her fashion and her strength and skill in horsemanship and the use of arms.

They abode on this wise till the dust hung vaulted over their heads and they were hidden from men's eyes; and she ceased not to baffle Bertaut and stop the way upon him, till he was weary and his courage ebbed and his resolution was broken and his strength weakened; whereupon she smote him on the nape, that the sword came out gleaming from the tendons of his throat and God hurried his soul to the fire and ill is the abiding-place [to which he went]. Then Meryem wheeled about in the mid-field and the stead of strife and offered battle, crying out and saying, 'Who is for fighting? Who is for jousting? Let no sluggard or weakling come forth to me to-day; ay, let none come forth to me but the champions of the enemies of the Faith, that I may give them to drink the cup of ignominious punishment. O worshippers of idols, O misbelievers, O froward folk, verily this day shall the faces of the people of the True Faith be whitened and theirs be blackened who deny the Compassionate One!'

When the king saw his eldest son slain, he smote his face and rent his clothes and called out to his second son, saying, 'O Bertous, thou who art surnamed Khura es Sous, go forth, O my son, in haste and do battle with thy sister Meryem; avenge me thy brother's death on her and bring her to me a prisoner, abject and humiliated!' 'I hear and obey, O my father,' answered he and setting spurs to his horse, drove at his sister, who met him in mid-career, and they fought, he and she, a sore battle, yet sorer than the first. Bertous soon found himself unable to cope with her and would have sought safety in flight, but could not avail unto this, of the greatness of her prowess; for, as often as he turned to flee, she drove after him and still clave to him and pressed him hard, till presently she smote him with the sword in his throat, that it issued gleaming from his nape, and sent him after his brother. Then she wheeled about in the mid-field, crying out and saying, ‘Where are the horsemen? Where are the braves? Where is the one-eyed vizier, the cripple, the man of the crooked faith?’

Thereupon the king her father cried out with a bleeding heart and eyes ulcerated with tears, saying, ‘By the virtue of the Messiah and the true faith, she hath killed my second son!’ And he cried out to his youngest son, saying, ‘O Fusyan, surnamed Selh es Subyan, go forth, O my son, to do battle with thy sister and take of her the blood-revenge for thy brothers and fall on her, come what may; and if thou conquer her, kill her without mercy!’ So he pricked out to Meryem, who ran at him with the best of her skill and courage and prowess and said to him, ‘O accursed one, O enemy of God and the Muslims, I will assuredly send thee after thy brothers, and woeful is the abiding-place of the unbelievers!’ So saying, she drew her sword and smote him and cut off his head and arms and sent him after his brothers and God hurried his soul to the fire and ill is the abiding-place [to which he went].

When the knights and horsemen who rode with her father saw his three sons slain, who were the doughtiest of the folk of their day, there fell on their hearts terror of the Princess Meryem and they bowed their heads in affright and confusion and made sure of destruction. So they turned their backs and addressed themselves to flight. When the king saw his sons slain and his troops in full flight, there fell on him dismay and bewilderment and his heart was on fire. ‘Verily,’ quoth he, ‘the Princess Meryem hath the better of us; and if I venture myself and go out against her alone, most like she will overcome me and slay me without pity, even as she slew her brothers, and make of me the foulest of examples; for she hath no longer any desire for us nor have we any hope of her return. Wherefore, meseemeth I were better guard my honour and return to my capital city.’ So he gave reins to his horse and returned to the city.

When he found himself in his palace, fire was loosed in his heart for rage and chagrin for the death of his sons and the defeat of his troops and the violation of his honour; nor did he abide half an hour before he summoned his grandees and officers of state and complained to them of that which his daughter had done with him of the slaughter of her brothers and all he suffered of grief and chagrin therefrom, and sought counsel of them. They all counselled him to write to the Vicar of God in His earth, the Commander of the Faithful, Haroun er Reshid, and acquaint him with the case. So he wrote a letter to the Khalif containing, after the usual salutations, the following words: 'Know that we have a daughter called Meryem, and a Muslim captive, by name Noureddin Ali, son of the merchant Tajeddin of Cairo, hath debauched her from us and taken her by night and gone forth with her to his own country: wherefore I beg of the favour of our lord the Commander of the Faithful that he write to all the lands of the Muslims to seize her and send her back to us by a trusty messenger of the servants of His Highness. And in requital of thy help in this matter, we will appoint to thee half of the city of Rome the Great, that thou mayst build therein mosques for the Muslims, and the tribute thereof shall be sent to thee.'

Then he folded the letter and calling his vizier, whom he bad appointed in the stead of the one-eyed vizier, bade him seal it with the seal of the kingdom, and the officers of state also set their hands and seals thereto; after which the king bade the vizier carry the letter to Baghdad, the abode of peace, and deliver it into the Khalif's own hand, saying, 'If thou bring her back, thou shalt have of me the fiefs of two Amirs and I will bestow on thee a robe of honour with fringes [of gold].' The vizier set out with the letter and fared on over hill and dale, till he came to the city of Baghdad, where he abode three days, till he was rested, when he sought out the palace of the Commander of the Faithful and craved an audience of him. The Khalif bade admit him; so he entered and kissing the ground before him, presented him with the letter of the King of France, together with rich and rare gifts beseeming the Commander of the Faithful.

When the Khalif read the letter and apprehended its purport, he commanded his viziers to write despatches to all the lands of the Muslims, setting out the name and favour of Noureddin and the princess and bidding all who found them lay hands on them and send them to the Commander of the Faithful, and warning them to use no delay or neglect in that manner. So the viziers wrote the letters and sealing them, despatched them by couriers to the different governors, who hastened to obey the Khalif's commandment and addressed themselves to make search in all the lands for the persons in question.

Meanwhile, Noureddin and Meryem fared on and [God] the Protector protected them, till they came to the land of Syria and entered the city of Damascus. Now the Khalif's messengers had foregone them thither by a day and the governor of Damascus knew that he was commanded to lay hands on them; so, when they entered the city, the police accosted them and asked them their names. They told them the truth and acquainted them with their story, whereupon they knew them for those of whom they were in search and seizing them, carried them before the governor of the city. He despatched them to the city of Baghdad [under escort of some of his officers], who, when they came thither, sought an audience of the Khalif and kissing the earth before him, said, 'O Commander of the Faithful, this is Meryem, daughter of the King of France, and this is the captive Noureddin, son of the merchant Tajeddin of Cairo, who debauched her from her father and fled with her to Damascus, where we came upon them, as they entered the city, and questioned them. They told us the truth of their case: so we laid hands on them and brought them to thee.'

The Khalif looked at Meryem and saw that she was slender and elegant of form and figure, the handsomest of the folk of her day and the unique pearl of her age and her time. Moreover, [he spoke with her and found her] sweet of speech and fluent of tongue, stable of soul and stout of heart. So she kissed the earth before him and wished him continuance of glory and prosperity and cease of evil and enmity. He was charmed with the beauty of her shape and the sweetness of her voice and the quickness of her answers and said to her, 'Art thou Meryem, daughter of the King of France?' 'Yes,' answered she, 'O Commander of the Faithful and High Priest of those that believe in the Unity of God and Defender of the Faith and Cousin of the Prince of Apostles!'

Then the Khalif turned to Noureddin and seeing him to be a comely youth, as he were the shining full moon on its fourteenth night, said to him, ‘And thou, art thou Ali Noureddin, son of the merchant Tajeddin of Cairo?’ ‘Yes, O Commander of the Faithful and stay of those who seek [after righteousness]!’ replied he. ‘How comes it,’ asked the Khalif, ‘that thou hast taken this young lady and fled forth with her of her father’s kingdom?’ So Noureddin proceeded to relate to the Commander of the Faithful all that had befallen him, first and last; whereat the latter was beyond measure astonished and diverted and exclaimed, ‘How manifold are the things that men suffer!’

Then he turned to the princess and said to her, ‘Know, O Meryem, that thy father, the King of France, hath written to me, concerning thee. What sayst thou?’ ‘O Vicar of God in His earth,’ replied she, ‘and Executor of His ordinances and the precepts of His prophet, may He vouchsafe thee eternal happiness and preserve thee from evil and enmity! Thou art Vicar of God in His earth and I have entered thy faith, for that it is the true and righteous one, and have left the religion of the infidels, who make the Messiah a liar and I am become a true believer in God the Bountiful and in the revelation of His compassionate Apostle. I serve God (blessed and exalted be He!) and acknowledge Him to be the One God and prostrate myself humbly before Him and glorify Him; and I say before the Khalif, ‘Verily, I testify that there is no god but God and I testify that Mohammed is the apostle of God, whom He sent with guidance [into the right way] and the true faith. that he might cause it to prevail over faiths, all of them, in despite of the idolaters.” Is it, therefore, permitted to thee, O Commander of the Faithful, to comply with the letter of the king of the heretics and send me back to the land of those who deny the Faith and give partners to the All-wise King, who magnify the Cross and believe in the divinity of Jesus, for all he was [but] a creature? If thou deal thus with me, O Vicegerent of God, I will lay hold upon thy skirts on the day of appearing before God and make my complaint of thee to thy cousin the Apostle of Allah (whom God bless and preserve!) on the day when wealth availeth not neither children [nor aught], except one come unto God with a whole heart.’

‘O Meryem,’ answered the Khalif, ‘God forbid that I should do this ever! How can I send back a Muslim woman and a true believer in the unity of God and in His Apostle to that which they have forbidden?' Quoth she, 'I testify that there is no god but God and that Mohammed is His Apostle!' 'O Meryem,' rejoined the Khalif, 'may God bless and stablish thee in the way of righteousness! Since thou art a Muslim and a believer in the unity of God, I owe thee an imperative duty, and it is that I should never transgress against thee nor forsake thee, though the world full of gold and jewels be lavished unto me on thine account. So be of good heart and cheerful eye and be thy breast dilated and thy mind at ease. Art thou willing that this youth Ali of Cairo should be thy husband and thou his wife?' 'How should I be other than willing,' replied Meryem, 'seeing that he bought me with his money and hath entreated me with the utmost kindness and for crown of his good offices, he hath ventured his life many times for my sake?'

So the Khalif summoned the Cadi and the witnesses and married her to him. Moreover, he assigned her a dowry and caused the grandees of his realm be present at their marriage, and it was a notable day. Then he turned to the French king's vizier, who was present, and said to him, 'Hast thou heard her words? How can I send her back to her father the infidel, seeing that she is a Muslim and a believer in the Unity of God? Belike he will evil entreat her and deal harshly with her, more by token that she hath slain his sons, and I shall be accountable to her therefor on the Day of Resurrection. And indeed quoth God the Most High, "God shall in nowise give the infidels power over the true-believers.' So return to thy king and say to him, "Turn from this thing and hope not to come at thy desire thereof."'

Now this vizier was a fool: so he said to the Khalif, 'O Commander of the Faithful, by the virtue of the Messiah and the true faith, were she forty times a Muslim and forty times thereto, I may not depart from thee without Meryem! And if thou send her not back with me of free will, I will return to her father and cause him despatch thee an army, wherewith I will come upon you from the landward and the seaward and the van whereof shall be at your capital city, whilst the rear is yet on the Euphrates, and they shall lay waste thy dominions.' When the Khalif heard these words from the vizier of the King of France, the light in his face became darkness and he was exceeding wroth at his speech and said to him, 'O accursed one, O dog of the Nazarenes, who art thou that thou shouldst dare to come out against me with the King of the Franks?' [Then to his guards,] 'Take this accursed fellow and put him to death;' and he repeated the following verse:

This is the recompense of those Who their superiors' will oppose.

Then he commanded to cut off the vizier's head and burn his body; but Meryem said, 'O Commander of the Faithful, defile not thy sword with the blood of this accursed wretch.' So saying, she drew her sword and smote him and made his head fly from his body, and he went to the house of perdition; his abode was Gehenna and evil is the abiding-place [to which he went]. The Khalif marvelled at the power of her arm and the strength of her mind, and they carried the dead vizier forth of the palace and burnt him. Then the Commander of the Faithful bestowed upon Noureddin a splendid dress of honour and assigned them a lodging in his palace. Moreover, he appointed them stipends and allowances and commanded to supply them with all that they needed of raiment and furniture and vessels of price.

They sojourned awhile in Baghdad in all delight and solace of life, till Noureddin longed for his mother and father. So he expounded the matter to the Khalif and sought his permission to repair to his native land and visit his kinsfolk, and he granted him the leave he sought and calling for Meryem, commended them to each other. Moreover, he loaded them with costly presents and rarities and bade write letters to the amirs and scribes and notables of Cairo the [God-]guarded, commending Noureddin and his wife and parents to their care and charging them entreat them with the utmost honour.

When the news reached Cairo, the merchant Tajeddin rejoiced in the return of his son and Noureddin's mother likewise rejoiced therein with an exceeding joy. The amirs and notables of the city went forth to meet him, in obedience to the Khalif's injunction, and indeed it was for them a notable day, wherein the lover and the beloved foregathered and the seeker attained the sought. Moreover, all the amirs made them bride-feasts, each on his own day, and rejoiced in them with an exceeding joy and vied with each other in doing them honour. When Noureddin foregathered with his father and mother, they rejoiced in each other with the utmost joy and care and affliction ceased from them, whilst his parents rejoiced no less in the Princess Meryem and entreated her with the utmost honour. Every day, there came to them presents from all the amirs and great merchants, and they were daily in new delight and gladness exceeding the gladness of festival. Then they abode in joy and pleasance and good cheer and abounding prosperity, eating and drinking and making merry, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies, he who layeth waste houses and palaces and peopleth the bellies of the tombs. So they were removed from the world and became of the number of the dead; and glory be to the Living One, who dieth not and in whose hand are the keys of the Seen and the Unseen!

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THE MAN OF UPPER EGYPT AND HIS FRANK WIFE.

(Quoth the Amir Shijaeddin, Prefect of New Cairo) We lay one night in the house of a man of Upper Egypt, and he entertained us and entreated us with the utmost hospitality. Now he was an old man, exceeding swarthy of favour, and he had little children, who were white, of a white mingled with red. So we said to him, 'Harkye, such an one, how comes it that these thy children are white, whilst thou thyself art exceeding swarthy?' Quoth he, 'Their mother was a Frank woman, whom I took in the days of El Melik en Nasir Selaheddin, after the battle of Hittin, when I was a young man.' 'And how gottest thou her?' asked we, and he said, 'I had a rare adventure with her.' Quoth we, 'Favour us with it;' and he answered, 'With all my heart.

Know that I once sowed a crop of flax in these parts and pulled it and scutched it and spent five hundred dinars on it; after which I would have sold it, but could get no more than this [that I had spent] for it, and the folk said to me, "Carry it to Acre: for there thou wilt assuredly make a good profit by it." Now Acre was then in the hands of the Franks; so I carried my flax thither and sold part of it at six months' credit. One day, as I was selling, there came up a Frankish woman, (now it is the custom of the women of the Franks to go about the market-place [and the streets] with unveiled faces,) to buy flax of me, and I saw of her beauty what dazzled my wit. So I sold her somewhat of flax and was easy with her concerning the price; and she took it and went away. Some days after, she returned and bought more flax of me and I was yet easier with her about the price; and she repeated her visits to me, seeing that I was in love with her.

Now she was used to go in company of an old woman ; so I said to the latter, "I am sore enamoured of thy mistress. Canst thou contrive to bring me to enjoy her?" Quoth she, "I will contrive this for thee; but the secret must not go beyond us three, and needs must thou be lavish with money, to boot." And I answered, "Though my life were the price of her favours, it were no great matter." So it was agreed that I should pay her fifty dinars and that she should come to me; whereupon I procured the money and gave it to the old woman.

She took it and said, “Make ready a place for her in thy house, and she will come to thee this night.” So I went home and made ready what I could of meat and drink and wax candles and sweet- meats. Now my house overlooked the sea and it was the season of summer; so I spread the bed on the roof of the house.

Presently, the Frank woman came and we ate and drank and the night fell down. We lay down under the sky, with the moon shining on us, and fell to watching the reflection of the stars in the sea: and I said to myself, “Art thou not ashamed before God (to whom belong might and majesty!) and thou a stranger, under the heavens and in presence of the sea, to disobey Him with a Nazarene woman and merit the fiery torment?” Then said I, “O my God, I call thee to witness that I abstain from this Christian woman this night, of shamefastness before Thee and fear of Thy wrath!” So I slept till the morning, and she arose at peep of day and went away, full of anger. I went to my shop and sat there; and presently she passed, as she were the moon, followed by the old woman, who was angry; whereat my heart sank within me and I said to myself, “Who art thou that thou shouldst forbear yonder damsel? Art thou Seri es Seketi or Bishr Barefoot or Junaid of Baghdad or Fuzail ben Iyaz?”

Then I ran after the old woman and said to her, “Bring her to me again.” “By the virtue of the Messiah,” answered she, “she will not return to thee but for a hundred dinars!” Quoth I, “I will give thee a hundred dinars.” So I paid her the money and the damsel came to me a second time; but no sooner was she with me than I returned to my former way of thinking and abstained from her and forbore her for the sake of God the Most High. So she went away and I betook me to my shop, and presently the old woman came up, in a rage. Quoth I to her, “Bring her to me again.” And she answered, “By the virtue of the Messiah, thou shalt never again rejoice in her presence with thee, except for five hundred dinars, and thou shalt perish miserably!” At this I trembled and resolved to sacrifice the whole price of my flax and ransom myself therewith. But, before I could think, I heard the crier proclaiming and saying, “Ho, all ye Muslims, the truce that was between us and you is expired, and we give all of you who are here a week from this time to make an end of your business and depart to your own country.”

So her visits were cut off from me and I betook myself to getting in the price of my flax, that I had sold upon credit, and bartering what remained in my hands for other commodities. Then I took with me goodly mer- chandise and departing Acre, full of love and longing for the Frankish woman, for that she had taken my heart and my money, repaired to Damascus, where I sold my merchandise, that I had brought from Acre, at a great price, because of the cutting off of communication by reason of the expiry of the truce; and God (blessed and exalted be He!) vouchsafed me a good profit. Then I fell to trafficking in captive slave-girls, thinking thus to ease my heart of its longing for the Frankish woman, and on this wise I abode three years, till there befell between El Melik en Nasir and the Franks what befell of the battle of Hittin and other encounters and God gave him the victory over them, so that he took all their kings prisoners and opened the cities of the coast by His leave.

One day, after this, there came a man to me and sought of me a slave-girl for El Melik en Nasir. Now I had a handsome girl; so I showed her to him and he bought her of me for a hundred dinars and gave me ninety thereof, leaving ten still due to me, for that there was no more found with the king that day, because he had expended all his treasures in waging war against the Franks. So they took counsel with him and he said, “Carry him to the tent where are the captives and give him his choice among the damsels of the Franks, so he may take one of them for the ten dinars that are due to him.” So they brought me to the prisoners’ lodging and showed me all who were therein, and I saw amongst them the Frank damsel with whom I had fallen in love at Acre and knew her right well.

Now she was the wife of one of the cavaliers of the Franks. So I said, “Give me this one,” and carrying her to my tent, said to her, “Dost thou know me?” She answered “No;” and I said, “I am the flax- merchant with whom thou hadst to do at Acre. Thou tookst money of me and saidst, ‘Thou shalt never again see me but for five hundred dinars.’ And now thou art become my property for ten dinars.” Quoth she, “This is a mystery. Thy faith is the true one, and I testify that there is no god but God and that Mohammed is the Apostle of God!” And she made hearty profession of Islam. Then said I to myself, “By Allah, I will not go in to her till I have set her free and acquainted the Cadi, [so he may marry us!]" So I betook myself to Ibn Sheddad and told him what had passed and he married me to her. Then I lay with her that night and she conceived; after which the troops departed and we returned to Damascus.

Presently there came an ambassador from the king of the Franks, to seek the prisoners, according to the treaty between the kings. So El Melik en Nasir restored all the men and women he held in captivity, till there remained but the woman who was with me and the Franks said, "The wife of such an one the knight is not here." So they enquired after her and making instant search for her, found that she was with me; whereupon they demanded her of me and I went in to her, pale and sore concerned; and she said to me, "What ails thee and what hath befallen thee?" Quoth I, "A messenger is come from the king to take all the captives, and they demand thee of me." "Have no fear," answered she; "bring me to the king and I know what to say to him." So I carried her before the Sultan El Melik en Nasir, who was seated, with the ambassador of the king of the Franks on his right hand, and said to him, "This is the woman that is with me."

Then said the king and the ambassador to her, "Wilt thou go to thy country or to thy husband? For God hath loosed thy bonds and those of thy fellows in cap- tivity." Quoth she, "I am become a Muslim and am great with child, as ye may see, and the Franks shall have no more profit of me." "Whether is dearer to thee," asked the ambassador, "this Muslim or thy husband the knight such an one?" And she answered him even as she had answered the Sultan. Then said he to the Franks with him, "Heard ye her words? " They answered, "Yes." And he said to me, "Take thy wife and depart with her." So I took her and went away; but the ambassador sent after me in haste and said, "Her mother sent her a charge by me, saying, 'My daughter is a captive and naked: and I would have thee carry her this chest.' So take it thou and deliver it to her."

Accordingly I carried the chest home and gave it to her. She opened it and found in it all her clothes, and therein I saw the two purses of fifty and a hundred dinars, that I had given her, untouched and tied up with my own tying, wherefore I praised God the Most High. These are my children by her and she is yet alive and it was she dressed you this food.' And we marvelled at his story and at that which had befallen him of good fortune, and God [alone] is [All-]knowing.

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THE RUINED MAN OF BAGHDAD AND HIS SLAVE-GIRL.

There was once at Baghdad, of old time, a man of condition, who had inherited wealth galore from his father. He fell in love with a slave-girl; so he bought her and she loved him as he loved her; and he ceased not to spend upon her, till all his wealth was gone and naught remained thereof; wherefore he sought a means of getting his livelihood, but availed not thereunto. Now he had been used, in the days of his wealth, to frequent the assemblies of those who were versed in the art of singing and had thus attained to the utmost skill therein.

So he took counsel with one of his friends, who said to him, ‘Meseems thou canst not do better than sing, thou and thy slave-girl, [for your living] ; for on this wise thou wilt get money in plenty and wilt eat and drink.’ But he misliked this, he and the damsel, and she said to him, ‘I have bethought me of a means of relief for thee.’ ‘What is it?’ asked he and she said, ‘Do thou sell me; so shall we win quit of this strait, thou and I, and I shall be in affluence; for none will buy the like of me save a man of fortune, and with this I will contrive for my return to thee.’

So he carried her to the market and the first who saw her was a Hashimi of Bassora, a man of taste and breeding and generosity, who bought her for fifteen hundred dinars. (Quoth the young man, the girl’s owner). When I had received the price, I repented me and wept, I and the damsel; and I sought to cancel the sale; but the purchaser would not consent. So I took the money in a bag, knowing not whither I should go, now my house was desolate of her, and buffeted my face and wept and wailed as I had never done. Then I entered a mosque and sat weeping, till I was stupefied and losing my senses, fell asleep, with the bag of money under my head for a pillow. Presently, before I could be ware, a man pulled the bag from under my head and ran off with it: whereupon I started up in affright and would have run after him; but lo, my feet were bound with a rope and I fell on my face. So I fell a-weeping and buffeting myself, saying, ‘Thy soul hath left thee and thy wealth is lost!’ Then, of the excess of my chagrin, I betook myself to the Tigris and wrapping my face in my gown, cast myself into the river.

The bystanders saw me and said, ‘Sure, [he hath done] this because of some great trouble that hath betided him.’ So they cast themselves in after me and bringing me ashore, questioned me of my case. I told them what had befallen me and they condoled with me. Then an old man of them came to me and said, ‘Thou hast lost thy money, but why goest thou about to do away thy life and become of the people of the fire? Arise, come with me, that I may see thine abode.’ So I went with him to my house and he sat with me awhile, till I became calmer, when I thanked him and he went away. When he was gone, I was like to kill myself, but bethought me of the life to come and the fire; so I fled forth my house to one of my friends and told him what had befallen me. He wept for pity of me and gave me fifty dinars, saying, ‘Take my advice and go out forthright from Baghdad and let this provide thee till thy heart be diverted from the love of her and thou forget her. Thou art a man of letters and clerkship and thy handwriting is good and thy breeding excellent: seek out, then, whom thou wilt of the viceroys and throw thyself on his bounty. It may be God will reunite thee with thy slave-girl.’

I hearkened to his words (and indeed my mind was fortified and I was somewhat comforted) and resolved to betake myself to Wasit, where I had kinsfolk. So I went down to the riverside, where I saw a ship moored and the sailors carrying goods and rich stuffs on board. I asked them to take me with them and carry me to Wasit; but they replied, ‘We cannot do that, for the ship belongs to a Hashimi.’ However, I tempted them with [promise of] reward, and they said, ‘We cannot take thee on this fashion; if it must be, put off those fine clothes of thine and don sailors’ clothes and sit with us, as thou wert one of us.’ So I went away and buying sailors’ clothes, put them on; after which I bought me somewhat of victual [for the voyage] and returning to the vessel, which was bound for Bassora, embarked with the crew.

Before long I saw my slave-girl herself [come on board] , attended by two waiting-women; whereupon my chagrin subsided and I said in myself ‘Now shall I see her and hear her singing, till we come to Bassora.’ Soon after, up rode the Hashimi, with a party of folk, and they embarked in the ship, which dropped down the river with them. Presently the Hashimi brought out food and ate with the damsel, whilst the rest ate amidships. Then said he to her, 'How long wilt thou abstain from singing and persist in this mourning and weeping? Thou art not the first that hath been parted from a beloved one.' Wherefore I knew what she suffered for love of me. Then he hung a curtain before her in the side of the ship and calling those who ate apart, sat down with them without the curtain; and I enquired concerning them and behold, they were his brethren. Then he set before them what they needed of wine and dessert, and they ceased not to press the damsel to sing, till she called for the lute and tuning it, sang the following verses:

The company have passed away with those whom I adore; By night they went nor to depart with my desire forbore.
And since their caravan fared hence, live coals of tamarisk-wood Within the lover's heart rage high and higher evermore.

Then weeping overpowered her and she threw down the lute and left singing; whereat the folk were troubled and I fell down in a swoon. They thought I was possessed and one of them fell to reciting exorcisms in my ear; nor did they cease to comfort her and beseech her to sing, till she tuned the lute again and sang these verses:

I stand lamenting travelers who bound their burdens on; Within my heart their dwelling is, though far away they're gone
Hard by the ruined camp I stand and question it of them: Waste is the camping-place and void the dwellings thereupon.

Then she fell down in a swoon and weeping arose amongst the folk; and I also cried out and fainted away. The sailors were vexed with me and one of the Hashimi's servants said to them, 'How came ye to take this madman on board?' So they said to each other, 'When we come to the next village, we will put him ashore and rid us of him.' When I heard this, I was sore troubled and summoned up all my courage, saying to myself, 'Nothing will serve me to deliver myself from their hands, except I make shift to acquaint her with my presence in the ship, so she may prevent my putting out.'

Then we sailed on till eventide, when we came to a hamlet and the captain said, 'Come, let us go ashore.' So they all landed, [leaving me in the ship] : whereupon I rose and going behind the curtain took the lute and changed its accord, course by course, and tuning it after a fashion of my own, that she had learnt of me, returned to my place in the ship. Presently, they came on board again and the moon shone out upon the river and bank. Then said the Hashimi to the damsel, 'God upon thee, trouble not our lives!' So she took the lute, and touching it with her hand, gave a sob, that they thought her soul had departed [her body] , and said, 'By Allah, my master is with us in the ship!' 'By Allah,' answered the Hashimi, 'were this so, I would not forbid him our company! Haply he would lighten thy chagrin, so we might enjoy thy singing: but it cannot be that he is on board.' But she said, 'I cannot sing nor play whilst my lord is with us.' Quoth the Hashimi, 'Let us ask the sailors.' And she said, 'Do so.' So he questioned them, saying, 'Have ye carried any one with you?' And they said, 'No.'

Then I feared lest the enquiry should end there; so I laughed and said, 'Yes; I am her master and taught her, when I was her lord.' 'By Allah,' said she, 'that is my lord's voice!' So the servants carried me to the Hashimi, who knew me at once and said to me, 'Out on thee! What plight is this in which I see thee and what has brought thee to this pass?' So I told him all that had befallen of my affair, weeping the while, and the damsel wailed aloud from behind the curtain. The Hashimi wept sore, he and his brethren, for pity of me, and he said, 'By Allah, I have not drawn near the damsel nor lain with her, nor have I even heard her sing till this day! I am a man to whom God hath been bountiful and I came to Baghdad but to hear singing and seek my allowances of the Commander of the Faithful. I accomplished both my occasions and being about to return home, said to myself, "Let us hear somewhat of the singing of Baghdad." Wherefore I bought this damsel, knowing not how it was with you both; and I take God to witness that, when I reach Bassora, I will free her and marry her to thee and assign you what shall suffice you, and more: but on condition that, whenever I have a mind to hear music, a curtain shall be hung for her and she shall sing to me from behind it, and thou shalt be of the number of my brethren and boon-companions.'

At this I rejoiced and he put his head within the curtain and said to her, 'Will that content thee?' Whereupon she fell to blessing and thanking him. Then he called a servant and said to him, 'Take this young man and do off his clothes and clothe him in costly raiment and incense him and bring him back to us.' So the servant did with me as his master bade him and brought me back to him, and he set wine before me, even as before the rest of the company. Then the damsel fell to singing after the goodliest fashion and chanted these verses:

They rail at me because, upon the parting day, I wept, when my belov'd farewell to me did say.
They never knew the taste of severance nor felt The fire that in my breast for sorrow rageth aye.
Only th' afflicted one of passion knoweth, he Whose heart amongst these steads is lost and gone astray.

The folk rejoiced in her song with an exceeding joy and my gladness redoubled, so that I took the lute from her and preluding after the most melodious fashion, sang the following verses:

Ask favours, if thou needs must ask, Of generous men, Who affluence all their lives have known and happy fate.
O' the generous to ask brings honour, but upon The asking from a churl blame and dishonour wait.
When thou must needs abase thyself, if thou must ask, I rede thee still abase thyself unto the great
The generous to exalt no true abasement is ; To magnify the mean doth men humiliate.

The company rejoiced in me with an exceeding joy and they ceased not from pleasure and delight, whilst anon I sang and anon the damsel, till we came to one of the landing-places, where the vessel moored and all on board went ashore and I with them. Now I was drunken with wine and squatted down to make water; but drowsiness overcame me and I slept, and the folk returned to the ship, without missing me, for that they also were drunken, and continued their voyage till they reached Bassora. As for me, I slept on till the heat of the sun aroused me, when I arose and looked about me, but saw no one. Now I had given my spending-money to the damsel and had not a rap left. Moreover, I had forgotten to ask the Hashimi his name and titles and where his house was at Bassora; so I was confounded and it was as if my joy at meeting the damsel had been but a dream; and I abode in perplexity till there came up a great vessel, in which I embarked and she carried me to Bassora.

Now I had never entered the place and knew none there; so I accosted a grocer and taking of him inkhorn and paper, sat down to write. He admired my handwriting and seeing my dress soiled, questioned me of my case, to which I replied that I was a stranger and poor. Quoth he, ‘Wilt thou abide with me and order the accounts of my shop and I will give thee thy food and clothing and half a dirhem a day?’ ‘It is well,’ answered I and abode with him and kept his accounts and ordered his incomings and outgoings for a month, at the end of which time he found his receipts increased and his expenses lessened; wherefore he thanked me and made my wage a dirhem a day. When the year was out, he proposed to me to marry his daughter and become his partner in the shop. I agreed to this and went in to my wife and applied me to the shop. But I was broken in heart and spirit, and grief was apparent upon me; and the grocer used to drink and invite me thereto, but I refused for melancholy.

On this wise I abode two years, till, one day, as I sat in the shop, there passed by a company of people with meat and drink, and I asked the grocer what was to do. Quoth he, ‘This is the day of the pleasure-makers, when all the musicians and dancers of the town go forth with the young men of fortune to the banks of the Ubulleh river and eat and drink among the trees there. My heart prompted me to divert myself with the sight of this thing and I said in myself, ‘Belike, I may foregather with her I love among these people.’ So I told the grocer that I had a mind to this and he said, ‘Up and go with them.’ And he made me ready meat and drink and I went till I came to the Ubulleh river, when, behold, the folk were going away.

I was about to follow, when I espied the very bark in which the

Hashimi had been with the damsel going along the river and the captain in her. So I cried out to him and he and his company knew me and took me on board with them and said to me, ‘Art thou yet alive?’ And they embraced me and questioned me of my case. So I told them my story and they said, ‘Indeed, we thought that drunkenness had gotten the mastery of thee and that thou [hadst fallen into the water and] wast drowned.’ Then I asked them of the damsel, and they answered, ‘When she came to know of thy loss, she rent her clothes and burnt the lute and fell to buffeting herself and lamenting, till we reached Bassora, when we said to her, ‘Leave this weeping and sorrowing.’ Quoth she, ‘I will don black and make me a tomb beside the house and abide thereby and repent from singing.’ So we suffered her to do this and on this wise she abideth to this day.’

Then they carried me to the Hashimi’s house, where I saw the damsel as they had said. When she saw me, she gave a great cry, methought she had died, and I embraced her with a long embrace. Then said the Hashimi to me, ‘Take her.’ And I answered, ‘It is well but do thou free her and marry her to me, according to thy promise.’ So he did this and gave us costly goods and store of raiment and furniture and five hundred dinars, saying, ‘This is the amount of that which I purpose to allow you monthly, but on condition that thou be my boon-companion and that I hear the girl sing [when I will] .’ Moreover, he assigned us a house and bade transport thither all that we needed; so, when I went to the house, I found it full of furniture and stuffs and carried the damsel thither. Then I betook me to the grocer and told him all that had befallen me, begging him to hold me excused for putting away his daughter, without offence on her part; and I paid her her dowry and what else behoved me. I abode with the Hashimi on this wise two years and became a man of great wealth and was restored well-nigh to the former estate of prosperity wherein I had been at Baghdad, I and the damsel. And indeed God the Bountiful put an end to our troubles and vouchsafed us abundant good fortune and caused our patience to issue in the attainment of our desire: wherefore to Him be the praise in this world and the next.

KING JELYAAD OF HIND AND HIS VIZIER SHIMAS; WHEREAFTER ENSUETH THE HISTORY OF KING WIRD KHAN, SON OF KING JELYAAD, WITH HIS WOMEN AND VIZIERS.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, in the land of Hind, a mighty king, tall and goodly of parts and presence, noble and generous of nature, beneficent to the poor and loving the tillers of the soil and all the people of his kingdom. His name was Jelyaad and under his hand were two-and-seventy [vassal] kings and in his cities three hundred and fifty Cadis. He had threescore and ten viziers and over every ten of them he set a chief. The chiefest of all his viziers was a man called Shimas, who was then two-and-twenty years old, a man of comely presence and noble nature, pleasant of speech and quick in reply. Moreover, he was shrewd and skilful in all manner of business, for all his tender age, sagacious, a man of good counsel and government, versed in all arts and sciences and accomplishments; and the king loved him with an exceeding love and cherished him by reason of his proficiency in eloquence and rhetoric and the art of government and for that which God had given him of compassion and tender solicitude for the people; for he was a king just in his governance and a protector of his subjects, constant in beneficence to great and small and giving them that which befitted them of good governance and bounty and protection and security and a lightener of their burdens. And indeed he was loving to them all, high and low, entreating them with kindness and clemency and governing them on such goodly wise as none had done before him. But, with all this, God the Most High had not blessed him with a child, and this was grievous to him and to the people of his kingdom.

It chanced, one night, as the king lay in his bed, occupied with anxious thought of the issue of the affair of his kingdom, that sleep overcame him and he dreamt that he poured water upon the roots of a tree, about which were many other trees; and behold there came fire out of this tree and burnt up all that encompassed it; whereupon Jelyaad awoke, affrighted and trembling, and calling one of his servants, bade him fetch the Vizier Shimas in all haste. So he betook himself to Shimas and said to him, ‘The king calls for thee, for he hath awoke from his sleep in affright and hath sent me to bring thee to him in haste.’

When Shimas heard this, he arose forthright and going in to the king, found him seated on his bed. So he prostrated himself before him, wishing him continuance of glory and prosperity, and said, ‘May God not cause thee grieve, O king! What hath troubled thee this night, and what is the cause of thy seeking me thus in haste?’ The king bade him be seated and said to him, ‘I have dreamt this night a dream that terrified me, and it was, that methought I poured water upon the roots of a tree and as I was thus engaged, behold, fire issued therefrom and burnt up all the trees that were about it; wherefore I was affrighted and fear took me. Then I awoke and sent to bid thee to me, because of thy much knowledge and skill in the interpretation of dreams and of that which I know of the extent of thy wisdom and the greatness of thine understanding.’

The vizier bowed his head awhile and presently raising it, smiled; whereupon the king said to him, ‘What deemest thou, O Shimas? Tell me the truth of the matter and hide nothing from me.’ ‘O king,’ answered Shimas, ‘verily God the Most High granteth thee thy wish and solaceth thine eyes; for the matter of this dream presageth all good, to wit, that God will bless thee with a son, who shall inherit the kingdom from thee, after thy long life. But there is somewhat else that I desire not to expound at this present, seeing that the time is not favourable for its exposition.’ The king rejoiced in this with an exceeding joy and great was his contentment; his trouble ceased from him and he said, ‘If the case be thus of the happy presage of my dream, do thou complete to me its interpretation, when the fitting time cometh: for that which it behoveth not to expound to me now, it behoveth that thou expound to me, when its time cometh, so my joy may be fulfilled, because I seek nought in this but the approof of God, blessed and exalted be He!’

When the vizier saw that the king was urgent to have the rest of the exposition, he put him off with a pretext; but Jelyaad assembled all the astrologers and interpreters of dreams of his realm and related to them his dream, saying, ‘I desire you to tell me the true interpretation of this.’ Whereupon one of them came forward and craved the king’s leave to speak, which being granted, he said, ‘Know, O king, that thy Vizier Shimas is nowise unable to the interpretation of this thy dream; but he shrank from troubling thy repose: wherefore he expounded not unto thee the whole thereof: but, if thou bid me speak, I will acquaint thee with that which he hid from thee.’ ‘Speak without fear, O interpreter,’ replied Jelyaad, ‘and be truthful in thy speech.’ ‘Know then, O king,’ said the interpreter, ‘that there will be born to thee a son who shall inherit the kingship from thee, after thy long life; but he shall not order himself towards the folk after thy fashion, but shall transgress thine ordinances and oppress thy subjects, and there shall befall him what befell the mouse with the cat.’ ‘I seek refuge with God the Most High!’ exclaimed the king. ‘But what is the story of the cat and the mouse?’ ‘May God prolong the king’s life!’ replied the interpreter. ‘It is related that

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The Cat and the Mouse

A grimalkin, that is to say, a cat, went out one night to a certain garden, in quest of what she might devour, but found nothing and became weak for the excess of cold and rain that prevailed that night. As she prowled about in search of prey, she espied a nest at the foot of a tree, and drawing near unto it, sniffed and purred about it till she scented a mouse within and went round about it, seeking to enter and take the mouse. When the latter smelt the cat, it turned its back to her and scraped up the earth with its paws, to stop the door against her; whereupon she counterfeited a weak voice and said, "Why dost thou thus, O my brother? I come to seek refuge with thee, hoping that thou wilt take pity on me and shelter me in thy nest this night; for I am weak, because of the greatness of my age and the loss of my strength, and can hardly move. I have ventured into this garden to-night, and how many a time have I prayed for death, that I might be at rest from this misery! Behold, here am I at thy door, prostrate for cold and wet, and I beseech thee, by Allah, take my hand of thy charity and bring me in with thee and give me shelter in the vestibule of thy nest; for I am a stranger and wretched and it is said, 'Whoso shelters a stranger and a wretched one in his dwelling, his shelter shall be Paradise on the Day of Reckoning.' And thou, O my brother, it behoves thee to earn a recompense [from God] by succouring me and suffering me abide with thee this night till the morning, when I will go my way." "How shall I suffer thee enter my nest," answered the mouse, "seeing that thou art my natural enemy and thy food is of my flesh? Indeed I fear lest thou play me false, for that is of thy nature and there is no faith in thee, and the byword says, 'It befits not to entrust a whoremonger with a fair woman nor a needy man with money nor fire with firewood.' Neither doth it behove me to entrust myself to thee; and it is said, 'Enmity of kind grows stronger, as the enemy himself grows weaker.'"

The cat made answer in a very faint voice, as she were in the most piteous case, saying, "What thou sayest of admonitory instances is the truth and I deny not my offences against thee; but I beseech thee to forgive that which is past of the enmity of kind between thee and me; for it is said, ‘Whoso forgiveth a creature like himself, his Creator will forgive him his sins.’ It is true that I was thy sometime enemy, but today I am a suitor for thy friendship, and it is said, ‘If thou wilt have thine enemy be thy friend, do with him good.’ O my brother, I swear to thee by Allah and make a binding covenant with thee that I will never do thee hurt, more by token that I have no power unto this; wherefore do thou trust in God and do good and accept my oath and covenant.” “How can I accept the covenant of one between whom and me there is a rooted enmity,” rejoined the mouse, “and whose wont it is to deal treacherously by me? Were the feud between us aught but one of blood, this were easy to me; but it is an enmity of kind between souls, and it is said, ‘He who trusts himself to his enemy is as one who puts his hand into a viper’s mouth.’” Quoth the cat, full of wrath, “My breast is straitened and my soul faints within me: indeed I am in extremity and ere long I shall die at thy door and my blood will be on thy head, for that thou hadst it in thy power to save me: and this is my last word to thee.”

With this the fear of God the Most High overcame the mouse and pity took hold upon his heart and he said in himself, “Whoso would have the succour of God the Most High against his enemy, let him entreat him with compassion and kindness. I commit myself to God in this matter and will deliver this cat from this her strait and earn the reward [of God] for her.” So he went forth and dragged the cat into his nest, where she abode till she was rested and somewhat restored, when she began to bewail her weakness and loss of strength and lack of friends. The mouse entreated her friendly and comforted her and busied himself with her service; but she crept along till she got command of the issue of the nest, lest the mouse should escape. So, when the latter would have gone out, after his wont, he drew near the cat; whereupon she seized him and taking him in her claws, began to bite him and shake him and take him in her mouth and lift him up and throw him down and run after him and crunch him and torture him.

The mouse cried out for help, beseeching God of deliverance, and began to upbraid the cat, saying, “Where is the covenant thou madest with me and where are the oaths thou sworest to me? Is this my reward from thee? I brought thee into my nest and trusted myself to thee: but he speaks sooth who says, ‘He who relies on his enemy’s promise desireth not salvation for himself.’ And again, ‘Whoso trusts himself to his enemy merits his own destruction.’ Yet do I put my trust in my Creator, for He will deliver me from thee.’ The cat was about to pounce on him and devour him, when up came a huntsman, with hunting dogs trained to the chase. One of the dogs passed by the mouth of the nest and hearing a great scuffing within, thought there was a fox there, tearing somewhat; so he thrust into the hole, to get at him, and coming upon the cat, seized on her. When she found herself in the dog’s clutches, she was forced to take thought to herself and loosed the mouse alive and whole of wound. Then the dog broke her neck and dragging her forth of the hole, threw her down dead: and thus was exemplified the truth of the saying, “He who hath compassion, compassion shall be shown him at the last; and he who oppresseth shall presently be oppressed.”

This, then, O king,’ added the interpreter, ‘is what befell the cat and the mouse and teaches that none should break faith with those who put trust in him; for whoso doth perfidy and treason, there shall befall him the like of that which befell the cat. As a man meteth, so shall it be meted unto him, and he who betaketh himself unto good shall gain his reward [in the world to come]. But grieve thou not, neither let this trouble thee, O king, for that most like thy son, after his tyranny and oppression, will return to the goodliness of thy policy. And I would that learned man, thy Vizier Shimas, had concealed from thee nought in that which he expounded unto thee; and this had been well-advised of him, for it is said, “Those of the folk who most abound in fear are the amplest of them in knowledge and the most emulous of good.”’

The king received the interpreter’s speech with submission and dismissing him and his fellow with rich presents, withdrew to his own apartments and fell to musing over the issue of his affair. When the night came, he went in to one of his women, who was most in favour with him and dearest to him of them all, and lay with her: and before four months had passed over her, the child stirred in her belly, whereat she rejoiced with an exceeding joy and told the king. Quoth he, ‘My dream said sooth, by God the Helper!’ And he lodged her in the goodliest of lodgings and bestowed on her store of rich gifts and entreated her with all honour. Then he sent for his Vizier Shimas and told him what had betided, rejoicing and saying, ‘My dream is come true and I have attained my hope. It may be this child will be a son and inherit the kingship after me; what sayst thou of this, O Shimas?’ But he was silent and made no reply. Quoth the king, ‘What ails thee that thou rejoicest not in my joy and returnest me no answer? Doth the thing mislike thee, O Shimas?’

Thereupon the vizier prostrated himself before him and said, ‘O king, may God prolong thy life! What availeth it to sit under the shade of a tree, if there issue fire therefrom, and what is the delight of one who drinketh pure wine, if he be choked withal, and what doth it profit to quench one’s thirst with sweet cool water, if one be drowned therein? I am God’s servant and thine, O king; but there are three things whereof it beats not the understanding to speak till they be accomplished; to wit, the traveller, till he return from his journey: the man who is at war, till he have overcome his enemy, and the pregnant woman, till she have cast her burden. For know, O king, that he, who speaks of aught before it be accomplished, is like the fakir and the pot of butter.’ ‘What is the story of the fakir,’ asked the king, ‘and what happened to him?’ ‘O king,’ answered the vizier,

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The Fakir and His Pot of Butter.

‘A fakir abode once with one of the nobles of a certain town, who made him a daily allowance of three cakes of bread and a little butter and honey. Now butter was dear in those parts and the fakir laid all that came to him together in a pot he had, till he filled it and hung it up over his head for safe keeping. One night, as he sat on his bed, with his staff in his hand, he fell a-musing upon the butter and the greatness of its price and said in himself, “Needs must I sell all this butter I have and buy an ewe with the price and take to partner therein a husbandman who has a ram. The first year she will bear a male lamb and a female and the second the like, and these in their turn will bear others, nor will they give over bearing males and females, till they become a great matter. The males I will sell and buy with them bulls and cows, which will also engender and multiply and become many.

Then will I take my share and sell thereof what I will and buy such a piece of land and plant a garden therein and build thereon a great palace. Moreover, I will get me clothes and raiment and slaves and slave-girls and take me to wife the daughter of such a merchant and hold a wedding the like whereof was never seen. I will slaughter cattle and make rich meats and sweetmeats and confections and provide flowers and perfumes and all manner sweet herbs and assemble all the musicians and mimes and mountebanks and player-folk. Then will I bid rich and poor and the learned and captains and grandees, and whoso asks for aught, I will cause it to be brought him. Moreover, I will make ready all manner of meat and drink and send out a crier to cry aloud and say, ‘Whoso seeketh aught, let him [come] and get it.’ Then will I go in to my bride, after they have unveiled her before me, and enjoy her beauty and grace; and I will eat and drink and make merry and say to myself, ‘Now hast thou attained thy desire,’ and will rest from devotion and asceticism.

In due time my wife will bear me a boy, and I shall rejoice in him and make banquets in his honour and rear him delicately and teach him philosophy and mathematics and polite letters. So shall I make his name renowned among the folk and glory in him among the assemblies of the learned. I will enjoin him to do good and he shall not gainsay me, and I will forbid him from lewdness and iniquity and exhort him to the fear of God and the practice of righteousness. Moreover, I will bestow on him rich and goodly gifts, and if I see him assiduous in obedience, I will redouble in my bounties towards him: but, if I see him incline unto disobedience, I will come down on him with his staff.' So saying, he raised his dand, to beat his son, but the staff struck the pot of butter, that hung over his head, and broke it; whereupon the potsherds fell upon him and the butter ran down upon his head and beard. So his clothes and bed were spoiled and he became an admonition to whoso will profit by admonition. Wherefore, O king,' added the vizier, 'it behoves not a man to speak of aught ere it come to pass.' 'Thou sayst sooth,' answered the king, 'fair fall thee for a vizier! For thou speakest the truth and counsellest righteousness. Verily, thy rank with me is such as thou couldst wish and thou shalt never cease to have acceptance with me.'

The vizier prostrated himself before the king and wished him continuance of prosperity, saying, 'May God prolong thy days and exalt thy dignity! Know that I conceal from thee nought, neither in private nor in public; thy pleasure is my pleasure, and thy wrath my wrath. There is no joy for me but in thy joyance and I cannot sleep, if thou be angered against me, for that God the Most High hath vouchsafed me all good through thy bounties to me; wherefore I beseech Him to guard thee with His angels and make fair thy rewards whenas thou meetest Him.' The king rejoiced in this, and Shimas arose and went out from before him.

In due time the king's wife gave birth to a male child, and the messengers hastened to bear the glad tidings to the king, who rejoiced therein with an exceeding joy and offered up abundant thanks to God, saying, 'Praised be God who hath vouchsafed me a son, after I had despaired! For He is pitiful and tenderly solicitous over His servants.' Then he wrote to all the people of his dominions, acquainting them with the good news and bidding them to his capital; and great were the rejoicings and festivities in all the kingdom. So there came amirs and captains and grandees and sages and men of learning and philosophers from all quarters to the palace and presenting themselves before the king, company after company, according to their several ranks, gave him joy, and he bestowed largesse upon them. Then he signed to the seven chief viziers, whose head was Shimas, to speak, each after the measure of his knowledge, upon the matter in question.

So the Grand Vizier Shimas began and sought leave of the king to speak, which being granted, he spoke as follows. ‘Praised be God who brought us forth of nothingness into being and who favoureth His servant with kings who observe justice and equity in that wherewith He hath invested them of dominion and deal righteously with that which He appointeth at their hands of provision for their subjects; and especially our king, by whom He hath quickened the deadness of our land, with that which He hath conferred upon us of bounties, and hath blessed us, of His protection, with ease of life and tranquillity and justice! What king did ever with his people that which this king hath done with us in making provision for our needs and giving us our dues and doing us justice, each of the other, and in unfailing carefulness over us and redress of our grievances? Indeed, it is of the bounty of God to the people that their king be assiduous in ordering their affairs and in defending them from their enemies; for the end of the enemy’s intent is to subdue his enemy and hold him in his hand; and many peoples bring their sons unto kings, servant-wise, and they become with them in the stead of slaves, to the intent that they may repel enemies from them. As for us, no enemy hath sodden our soil in our king’s time, by reason of this great good fortune and exceeding happiness, that none may avail to describe, for indeed it passeth description. And verily, O king, thou art worthy of this exceeding happiness, and we are under thy safeguard and in the shadow of thy wings, may God make fair thy reward and prolong thy life!

Indeed, we have long been diligent in supplication to God the Most High that He would vouchsafe an answer to our prayers and continue thee to us and grant thee a virtuous son, to be the solace of thine eyes: and now God (blessed and exalted be He!) hath accepted of us and answered our prayer and brought us speedy relief, even as He did to the fishes in the pond of water.’ ‘And how was that?’ asked the king. ‘Know, O king,’ answered Shimas, ‘that

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The Fishes and the Crab.

There was once a pond of water, wherein dwelt a number of fish, and it befell that the water of the pond dwindled and shrank away, till there remained barely enough to suffice them and they were nigh upon death and said, “What will become of us? How shall we do and of whom shall we seek counsel for our deliverance?” Quoth one of them, who was the chiefest of them in wit and age, “There is nothing will serve us but that we seek deliverance of God; but, come, let us go to the crab and seek his counsel, for indeed he is the chiefest and wisest of us all.” They all approved of the fish’s advice and betook themselves to the crab, whom they found squatted in his hole, without news or knowledge of their strait. So they saluted him and said to him, “O our lord, doth not our affair concern thee, who art our ruler and our chief?” The crab returned their salutation, saying, “And on you be peace! What aileth you and what is your want?” So they told him the strait in which they were by reason of the shrinking of the water, and that, when it should be altogether dried up, destruction would betide them. “Wherefore,” added they, “we come to thee, expecting thy counsel, so haply deliverance may be therein, for thou art the chiefest and most experienced of us.”

The crab bowed his head awhile and said, “Doubtless ye lack understanding, in that ye despair of the mercy of God the Most High and His care for the provision of all His creatures. Know ye not that God (blessed and exalted be He!) provideth all his creatures without stint and that He fore-ordained their means of livelihood ere He created aught and appointed to each of His creatures a fixed term of life and an allotted provision, of His divine providence? How then shall we burden ourselves with concern for a thing that is written in His secret purpose? Wherefore, it is my judgment that ye can do no better than to seek aid of God the Most High, and it behoveth each of us to make clean his conscience with his Lord, both in public and private, and pray Him to succour us and deliver us from our strait; for God the Most High disappointeth not the expectation of those who put their trust in Him and rejecteth not the suit of those who supplicate Him. When we have mended our ways, our affairs will prosper and all will be well with us, and when the winter cometh and our land is deluged, by means of our effectual prayer, He will not undo the good He hath built up. So it is my counsel that we take patience and await what God shall do with us. If death come to us, we shall be at rest, and if there befall us aught that calleth for fight, we will flee and depart our land whither God will."

"Thou sayst sooth, O our lord," answered all the fish with one voice. "May God requite thee for us with good!" Then each returned to his place, and in a few days, God sent them a violent rain and the place of the pond was filled fuller than before. On like wise, O king,' continued Shimas, 'we despaired of a child being born to thee, and now that God hath vouchsafed unto us and unto thee this blessed son, we implore Him to make him indeed blessed and render him the solace of thine eyes and a worthy successor to thee and grant us of him the like of that which He hath granted us of thee; for God the Most High disappointeth not those that seek Him and it behoveth none to despair of His mercy.'

Then the second vizier rose and saluting the king, spoke as follows: 'Verily, a king is not called a king, save he give gifts and do justice and rule with equity and munificence and govern his subjects wisely, maintaining the established law and usages among them and justifying them, one against another, and sparing their blood and warding off hurt from them; and of his qualities should be that he be never unmindful of the poor and that he succour the highest and lowest of them and give them each his due, so that they all bless him and are obedient to his commandment. Without doubt, a king who is after this wise is beloved of his people and gaineth of this world eminence and of the next glory and the favour of the Creator of both worlds. And we thy subjects acknowledge in thee, O king, all the attributes of kingship I have set out, even as it is said, "The best of things is that the king of a people be just and their physician skilful and their teacher experienced, doing according to his knowledge." Now we enjoy this happiness, after we had despaired of the birth of a son to thee, to inherit thy crown; but God (magnified be His name!) hath not disappointed thine expectation, but hath granted thy prayer, by reason of the goodliness of thy trust in Him and thy submission of thine affairs to Him, and there hath betided thee that which betided the crow with the serpent.’ ‘What was that?’ asked the king. ‘Know, O king,’ replied the vizier, ‘that

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The Crow and the Serpent.

A crow and his wife once dwelt in a tree, in all delight of life, till they came to the time of the hatching of their young, to wit, the season of midsummer, when a serpent issued from his hole and crawled up the tree, till it came to the crows' nest, where it coiled itself up and there abode all the days of the summer, whilst the crow was driven away and found no place wherein to lie. When the days of heat were past, the serpent went away to its own place and the crow said to his wife, "Let us thank God the Most High, who hath preserved us and delivered us from this serpent, albeit we are forbidden from increase this year. Yet God will not cut off our hope; so let us thank Him for having vouchsafed us safety and bodily weal, for we have none other in whom to trust, and if He will and we live till next year, He will give us other young in the stead of those we have lost this year."

Next year the serpent again sallied forth from its place at the same time and made for the crows' nest: but, as it climbed up the tree, a kite swooped down on it and struck his claws into its head and tore it, whereupon it fell to the ground, senseless, and the ants came out upon it and devoured it. So the crow and his wife abode in peace and quiet and reared a numerous brood and thanked God for their safety and for the young that were born to them. In like manner, O king,' continued the vizier, 'it behoveth us to thank God for that wherewith He hath favoured us and thee in vouchsafing us this happy and blessed child, after despair and hope cut off. May He make fair thy reward and the issue of thine affair!'

Then rose the third vizier and said, 'Rejoice, O just king, in the assurance of present prosperity and future felicity; for him, whom the people of the earth love, the people of heaven love also; and indeed God the Most High hath made love to be thy portion and hath stablished it in the hearts of the people of thy kingdom; wherefore to Him be thanks and praise from us and from thee, so He may redouble in His bounty to thee and to us in thee! For know, O king, that man can nought but by commandment of God the Most High and that He is the Giver and all good that befalleth a creature hath its [origin and] issue in Him. He allotteth His favours to His creatures, as it liketh Him; to some He giveth store of gifts and others may hardly get their daily bread. Some He maketh lords and captains, and others recluses, who abstain from the world and aspire but to Him, for He it is who saith, “I am He who harmeth and who advantageth; I make whole and make sick, I enrich and impoverish, I slay and quicken; in my hand is everything and all things have their issue in Me.” Wherefore it behoveth all folk to praise Him.

Thou, O king, art of the fortunate pious men of whom it is said, “The happiest of the just is he for whom God uniteth the goods of this world and the next, who is content with that which God allotted to him and giveth Him thanks for that which He hath established.” And indeed he who is froward and seeketh other than that which God hath decreed unto him and for him resembleth the fox [and shall fare as he did] with the wild ass.’ ‘And what is the story of the fox and the wild ass?’ asked the king. ‘Know, O king,’ replied the vizier, ‘that

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The Fox and the Wild Ass.

A certain fox was wont every day to leave his earth and go forth in quest of prey. One day, as he was in a certain mountain, the night overtook him and he set out to return. On his way, be fell in with another fox, and each began to tell the other of the prey he had gotten. Quoth the newcomer, “The other day I chanced upon a wild ass and rejoiced in this and thanked God the Most High for bringing him into my power, for that I was anhungred and it was three days since I had eaten. So I tore out his heart and ate it and was full and returned to my earth. That was three days ago and since then I have found nothing to eat, yet am I still full of meat.’ When the other fox heard his fellow’s story, he envied him his fulness and said in himself, “Needs must I eat a wild ass’s heart.” So he left eating some days, till he became emaciated and nigh upon death and bestirred not himself neither did his endeavour [to get food], but lay coiled up in his earth.

One day there came out two hunters in quest of prey and started a wild ass. They followed in his track all day, till at last one of them shot at him a barbed arrow, which pierced his heart and killed him, and he fell down before the fox’s hole. Then the hunters come up and finding him dead, pulled out the arrow from his heart but only the shaft came away and the barbed head abode in the wound. So they left him where he lay, expecting that others of the wild beasts would flock to him; but, when it was night and nothing fell to them, they returned to their abiding-places. The fox, hearing the commotion at the mouth of his hole, lay quiet till nightfall, when he came forth of his earth, groaning for weakness and hunger, and seeing the dead ass lying at his door, was like to fly for joy and said, “Praised be God who hath made my desire easy to me without toil! Verily, I had lost hope of coming at a wild ass or aught else; and assuredly God hath sent him to me and made him fall in my place.”

Then he sprang on the dead ass and tearing open its belly, thrust in his head and routed about in its guts, till he found the heart and tearing it out, swallowed it: but the barbed head of the arrow stuck in his gullet and he could neither get it down into his belly nor bring it forth of his throat. So he made sure of destruction and said, “Of a truth it beseemeth not the creature to seek [aught] over and above that which God hath allotted to him. Had I been content with what He allotted me, I had not come to destruction.” Wherefore, O king,’ added the vizier, ‘it behoveth man to be content with that which God hath allotted him and thank Him for His bounties to him and despair not of his Lord. And behold, O king, because of the purity of thine intent and the multitude of thy good works, God hath blessed thee with a son, after despair: wherefore we pray the Most High to vouchsafe him long life and abiding happiness and make him a blessed successor, faithful in the observance of thy covenant, after thy long life.’

Then arose the fourth vizier and said, ‘Verily, if the king be a man of understanding, versed in the canons of science and government and policy, upright in purpose and just to his subjects, honouring and revering those to whom honour and veneration are due, using clemency, whenas it behoveth, in the exercise of his power and protecting both governors and governed, lightening their burdens and bestowing largesse on them, sparing their blood and covering their nakedness and fulfilling his covenant with them, he is worthy of felicity both in this world and the next: and this is of that which protecteth him from them and helpeth him to the stablishing of his kingdom and the victory over his enemies and the accomplishment of his desire, together with increase of God’s bounty to him and His favouring him for his praise of Him and the attainment of His protection. But the king who is the contrary of this ceaseth never from misfortunes and calamities, he and the people of his realm; for that his oppression embraceth both stranger and kinsman, and there cometh to pass with him that which befell the unjust king with the pilgrim prince.’ ‘And how was that?’ asked King Jelyaad. ‘Know, O king,’ answered the vizier, ‘that

The Unjust King and the Pilgrim Prince

There was once, in the land of the West, a king who was unjust in his rule, tyrannous, violent and capricious, having no regard to the welfare or protection of his subjects nor of those who entered his kingdom; and from every one who came within his realm his officers took four-fifths of his good and left him one-fifth, and no more. God the Most High decreed that he should have a son, who was fortunate and favoured and seeing the things of the world to be unrighteous, renounced them in his youth and put away from him the world and that which is therein and went forth, a pilgrim, serving God the Most High, wandering over deserts and wastes and [bytimes] entering cities.

One day, he came to his father's capital and the guards laid hands on him and searched him, but found nothing upon him but two gowns, one old and the other new. So they stripped the new one from him and left him the old, after they had passing scurvily entreated him; whereat he complained and said, "Out on you, O oppressors! I am a poor man and a pilgrim, and what shall this gown profit you? Except ye restore it to me, I will go to the king and complain to him of you." "We do this by the king's commandment," answered they. "So do what seemeth good to thee."

So he betook himself to the king's palace; but the chamberlains denied him admittance, and he turned away, saying in himself, "There is nothing for me but to watch for his coming out and complain to him of my case and that which hath betided me." Accordingly, he waited till he heard one of the guards announce the king's coming forth; whereupon he crept up, little by little, till he stood before the gate; and when the king come out, he threw himself in his way and made his complaint to him, giving him to know that he was a man of the people of God, who had renounced the world and went wandering over the earth, seeking acceptance of God and entering every city and hamlet, whilst all the folk he met gave him alms according to their power. "I entered this thy city,' continued he, "hoping that the folk would deal with me as with others of my condition; but thy men stopped me and stripped me of one of my gowns and loaded me with blows. Wherefore do thou look into my case and take me by the hand and get me back my gown and I will not abide in thy city an hour." Quoth the unjust king, "Who counselled thee to enter this city, unknowing the custom of its king?" And the pilgrim answered, "Give me back my gown and do with me what thou wilt."

When the king heard this, he fell into a rage and said, "O fool, we stripped thee of thy gown, so thou mightest humble thyself [to us]; but since thou troublest us with this clamour, we will strip thy soul from thee." Then he commanded to cast him into prison, where he began to repent of having answered the king and reproached himself for not having left him the gown and made off with his life. When it was the middle of the night, he rose to his feet and prayed long and fervently, saying, "O God, Thou art the Righteous Judge; Thou knowest my case and that which hath befallen me with this unjust king, and I, Thine oppressed servant, beseech Thee, of the fulness of Thy mercy, to deliver me from the hand of this unjust king and send down on him Thy vengeance; for Thou art not unmindful of the upright of every oppressor. Wherefore, if Thou know that he hath oppressed me, loose on him Thy vengeance this night and send down on him Thy punishment; for Thy rule is just and Thou art the Helper of every afflicted one, O Thou to whom belong the power and the glory to the end of time!"

When the gaoler heard the prisoner's prayer, he trembled in every limb, and behold, a fire broke out in the king's palace and consumed the city and all that were therein, even to the door of the prison, and none was spared save the gaoler and the pilgrim. When the gaoler saw this he knew that it had not befallen save bemuse of the pilgrim's prayer; so he loosed him and fleeing with him forth of the burning, betook himself, he and the prince, to another city. So was the unjust king consumed, he and his city, by reason of his injustice, and he lost the goods both of this world and the next.

As for us, O august king,' continued the vizier, 'we neither lie down nor rise up without praying for thee and thanking God the Most High for His goodness in giving thee to us, tranquil in reliance on thy justice and the excellence of thy governance; and indeed we were sore concerned for thy lack of a son to inherit thy kingdom, fearing lest there betide us, after thee, a king unlike thee; but now God hath bestowed His favours upon us and done away our concern and brought us gladness in the birth of this blessed child; wherefore we beseech the Most High to make him a worthy successor [to thee] and endow him with eternal glory and felicity and abiding good.'

Then rose the fifth vizier and said, 'Blessed be the Most High God, Giver of [all] good gifts! We are well assured that God favours those who are grateful to Him and mindful of His faith; and thou, O august king, art renowned for these illustrious virtues and for just dealing and equity among thy subjects, in that which is acceptable to God the Most High. By reason of this hath God exalted thy dignity and made thy days happy and bestowed on thee the good gift of this happy child, after thou hadst despaired, wherefrom there hath betided up abiding gladness and joyance that may not be cut off; for before this we were in exceeding anxiety and sore concern because of thy lack of issue, and full of care, bethinking us of all thy justice and gentle dealing with us and fearful lest God decree death to thee and there be none to succeed thee and inherit the kingdom after thee, and so we be divided in our counsels and dissensions arise between us and there befall us what befell the crows.' 'And what befell the crows?' asked the king. 'Know, O august king,' replied the vizier, 'that

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The Crows and the Hawk.

There was once, in a certain desert, a spacious valley, full of streams and trees and fruits and birds singing the praises of God, the One, the All-powerful, Creator of day and night; and among them was a troop of crows, which led the goodliest of lives under the governance of one of their number, who ruled them with mildness and benignity, so that they were with him in peace and security; and by reason of their wise ordinance of their affairs, none of the other birds could avail against them. In course of time there befell their chief that which is irrevocably appointed to all creatures and he died; whereupon the others mourned sore for him, and what added to their grief was that there was not amongst them one like unto him. who should fill his place. So they all assembled and took counsel together of whom it befitted to set over them: and some of them chose one crow, saying, "It beseemeth that this one be king over us;" whilst others objected to him and would none of him; and thus there arose division and dissension among them and the strife waxed hot between them.

At last they agreed to sleep the night upon it and that none should go forth at peep of dawn next morning to seek his living, [as of wont], but that all should wait till daybreak, when they should meet all in one place. "Then," said they, "we will all take flight at once and whichsoever soars above the rest in his flying, we will make king over us." So they did as they had agreed and took flight all, but each of them deemed himself higher than his fellow; wherefore quoth this one, "I am highest," and that, "Nay; that am I." Then said the lowest of them , "Look up, all of you, and whomsoever ye find the highest of you, let him be your chief." So they raised their eyes and seeing the hawk soaring over them, said to each other, "We agreed that which bird soever should be the highest of us should be king over us, and behold, the hawk is the highest of us: what say ye to him?" And they all cried out, saying, "We accept of him."

So they called the hawk and said to him, "O father of good, we have chosen thee governor over us, that thou mayst look into our affair." The hawk consented, saying, "God willing, ye shall have of me great good." But, after awhile, he fell to taking a company of them and betaking himself with them afar off to one of the caves, where he struck them down and eating their eyes and brains, threw their bodies into the river. Thus he did every day, it being his intent to destroy them all, [one after another], till, seeing that their number diminished daily, the crows flocked to him and said, "O our king, we complain to thee for that, since the day we made thee king and ruler over us, we are in the sorriest case and every day a company of us is missing and we know not the cause of this, more by token that the most part thereof are of those in attendance on thee."

Thereupon the hawk waxed wroth with them and said to them, "Verily it is ye who have slain them, and ye forestall me [with accusation]." So saying, he pounced upon them and tearing half a score of their chiefs [in pieces] before the rest, threatened them and drove them out from before him with blows and buffets. So they repented them of that which they had done and said, "We have known no good since the death of our first king, especially in the deed of this stranger in kind; but we deserve [all we suffer], even had he destroyed us to the last of us, and there is exemplified in us the saying of Him who saith, 'He who submitteth not himself to the rule of his own people, the enemy hath dominion over him, of his ignorance.' And now there is nothing for it but to flee for our lives, else shall we perish." So they took flight and dispersed to various places.

And we, O king,' continued the vizier, 'we feared lest the like of this befall us and a king become ruler over us, other than thyself; but God hath vouchsafed us this boon and hath sent us this blessed child, and now we are assured of peace and union and security and prosperity in the land. So blessed be God the Great and to Him be thanks and praise and fair honour! And may He bless the king and us all his subjects and vouchsafe unto us and him the utmost felicity and make his life happy and his fortune constant!'

Then arose the sixth vizier and said, 'God grant thee all felicity, O king, in this world and the next! Verily, the ancients say, "He who prayeth and fasteth and giveth parents their due and is just in his rule meeteth his Lord and He is well pleased with him." Thou hast been set over us and hast ruled us justly and thine endeavour in this hath been blessed; wherefore we beseech God the Most High to make great thy reward and requite thee thy goodness. I have heard what this wise man hath said respecting our fear for the loss of our prosperity, by reason of the death of the king or the advent of another who should not be like him, and how after him dissensions would be rife among us and calamity betide thereupon, and how it behoved up therefore to be instant in prayer to God the Most High, so haply He might vouchsafe the king a happy son, to inherit the kingship after him. But, after all, the issue of that which man desireth of the goods of the world and after which he lusteth is unknown unto him, and it behoveth him to ask not of his Lord a thing whose issue he knoweth not; for that belike the hurt of the thing is nearer to him than its profit and his destruction may be in that he seeketh and there may befall him what befell the serpent-charmer's wife and children and the people of his house.' 'What was that?' asked the king. 'Know, O king,' replied the vizier, 'that

The Serpent-charmer and His Wife.

There was once a man, a serpent-charmer, who used to [catch and] train serpents, and this was his trade; and he had a great basket, in which were three snakes; but the people of his house knew this not. Every day he used to take the basket and go round about the town with it, gaining his living and that of his family [by exhibiting the snakes], and at eventide he returned to his house and clapped them back into the basket privily. One day, when he came home, as of wont, his wife asked him what was in the basket and he said, "What wouldst thou with it? Is not victual plentiful with you? Be content with that which God hath allotted to thee and enquire not of aught else." With this she held her peace; but she said in herself, "Needs must I search the basket and know what is therein." So she egged on her children to ask him of the basket and importune him, till he should tell them what was therein. They concluded that it contained something to eat and sought every day of their father that he should show them what was in it; and he still put them off and forbade them from asking this.

On this wise they abode awhile, till they agreed with their mother that they would neither eat nor drink with their father, till he granted them their prayer and opened the basket to them. One night, the serpent-charmer came home with great plenty of meat and drink and called them to eat with him; but they refused and showed him anger; whereupon he began to coax them with fair words, saying, "Tell me what you would have, that I may bring it you, be it meat or drink or clothes." "O our father," answered they, "we want nothing of thee but that thou open this basket and show us what is therein: else we will kill ourselves." "O my children," rejoined he, "there is nothing good for you therein and indeed the opening of it will be hurtful to you." They only redoubled in despite for all he could say, which when he saw, he began to berate them and threaten them with beating, except they left this; but they redoubled in anger and persistence in asking, till at last he waxed wroth and took a stick to beat them, and they fled from him within the house.

Now the basket was present and he had not hidden it anywhere; so his wife left him occupied with the children and opened the basket in haste, that she might see what was therein; whereupon the serpents came out and bit her and killed her. Then they went round about the house and killed all, great and small, who were therein, except the serpent-charmer, who left the place and went away. If then, O august king,' continued the vizier, 'thou consider this, thou wilt know that it is not for a man to desire aught but that which God the Most High refuseth not to him; nay, he should be content with what He willeth. And thou, O king, for the abundance of thy wisdom and the excellence of thine understanding, God hath solaced thine eyes with the advent of this thy son, after despair, and hath comforted thine heart; wherefore we pray God to make him of the just kings, acceptable to Himself and to his subjects.'

Then rose the seventh vizier and said, 'O king, I know and endorse all that my brethren, these wise and learned viziers, have said of thy justice and the goodness of thy policy and how thou art distinguished in this from all other kings; wherefore they gave thee the preference over them. Indeed, this is of that which is incumbent on us, O king, and I say, "Praised be God for that He hath guerdoned thee with His bounty and vouchsafed thee, of His mercy, the welfare of the realm and succoured us and thee, on condition that we abound in gratitude to Him; and all this no otherwise than by thine existence!" What while thou remainest to us, we fear not oppression neither dread unright, nor can any take advantage of our weakness; and indeed it is said, "The greatest good of a a people is a just king and their greatest evil an unjust one;" and again, "Better dwell with devouring lions than with an unjust Sultan." So praised be God the Most High with eternal praise for that He hath blessed us with thy life and vouchsafed thee this blessed child, whenas thou wast stricken in years and hadst despaired of issue! For the goodliest of the gifts of the world is a virtuous child, and it is said, "He who hath no child, [his life] is without result and he hath no remembrance."

As for thee, because of the righteousness of thy justice and thy pious confidence in God the Most High, thou hast been vouchsafed this happy son; yea, this blessed child cometh as a gift from the Most High God to us and to thee, for the excellence of thy governance and the goodliness of thy patience; and in this thou hast fared even as fared the spider with the wind.’ ‘And what is the story of the spider and the wind?’ asked the king. ‘Know, O king,’ answered the vizier, ‘that

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The Spider and the Wind.

A spider once took up her abode on a high retired gate and span her web there and dwelt therein in peace, giving thanks to God the Most High, who had made this dwelling-place easy to her and had set her in safety from noxious reptiles. On this wise she abode awhile, still giving thanks to God for her ease and sustenance, till the Creator bethought Him to try her and make essay of her gratitude and patience. So he sent upon her a strong north-east wind, which carried her away, web and all, and cast her into the sea. The waves bore her ashore and she thanked God for safety and began to upbraid the wind, saying, "O wind, why hast thou dealt thus with me and what good hast thou gotten by carrying me hither from my abiding-place, where indeed I was in safety, secure in my house on the top of the gate?' 'Leave thy chiding," replied the wind, "for I will carry thee back and restore thee to thy place, as thou wast aforetime."

So the spider waited patiently, till the north-east wind left blowing and there arose a south-west wind, which caught her up and flew with her towards her dwelling- place; and when she came to her abode, she knew it and clung to it. And we,' continued the vizier, 'beseech God (who hath rewarded the king for his singleness of heart and patience and hath taken pity on his subjects and blessed them with His favour and hath vouchsafed the king this son in his old age, after he had despaired [of issue] and removed him not from the world, till He had granted him the solace of his eyes and bestowed on him what he hath bestowed of kingship and empire), to vouchsafe unto thy son that which He hath vouchsafed unto thee of kingship and dominion and glory! Amen.'

Then said the king, 'Praised be God over all praise and thanks be to Him over all thanks! There is no god but He, the Creator of all things, by the light of whose signs we know the glory of His greatness and who giveth kingship and dominion over his own country to whom He willeth of His servants! He chooseth of them whom He will to make him His vicegerent and steward over His creatures and commandeth him to just and equal dealing with them and the maintenance of laws and observances and the practice of right and constancy in ordering their affairs to that which is most acceptable to Him and to them. He who doth thus and obeyeth the commandment of his Lord, attaineth his desire, and God preserveth him from the perils of this world and maketh fair his recompense in the world to come; for indeed He neglecteth not the reward of the just: and whoso doth otherwise than as God bidders him sinneth grievously and disobeyeth his Lord, preferring his temporal above his spiritual weal. He hath no trace in this world and no part in the next: for God spareth not the unjust and the corrupt, nor doth He forsake any of His servants.

These our viziers have set forth how, by reason of our just dealing with our subjects and our wise governance of their affairs, God hath vouchsafed us and them His grace, for which it behoveth us to thank Him, because of the abundance of His mercies. Moreover, each of them hath spoken that wherewith God inspired him concerning this matter, and they have vied with each other in rendering thanks to God the Most High and praising Him for His favours and bounties. I also render thanks to God, for that I am but a slave commanded; my heart is in His hand and my tongue obedient to Him, accepting that which He adjudgeth to me and to them, come what may.

Each one of them hath said what came to his thought on the subject of this boy and hath set forth that which was of the renewal of [God's] favour to us, after I had reached the age when despair is uppermost and hope faileth. So praised be God who hath saved us from disappointment and from the alternation of rulers, like to the alternation of night and day! For verily, this was a great boon both to us and to them; wherefore we praise God the Most High who hath given a ready answer to our prayer and hath blessed us with this boy and set him in high place, as the inheritor of the kingship. And we entreat Him, of His bounty and clemency, to make him happy in his actions, apt to good works, so he may become a king and a sultan governing his people with justice and equity, guarding them from the perils of error and frowardness of His bounty and grace and goodness!'

When the king had made an end of his speech, the sages and learned men rose and prostrated themselves before God and thanked the king, after which they kissed his hands and departed, each to his own house, whilst the king withdrew into his palace, where he looked upon the new-born child and offered up prayers for him and named him Wird Khan. The boy grew up till he attained the age of twelve, when the king, being minded to have him taught the various branches of knowledge, built him a palace amiddleward the city, wherein were three hundred and threescore rooms, and lodged him therein. Then he assigned him three learned men and bade them relax not from teaching him day and night and look that there was no kind of knowledge but they instructed him therein, so he might become versed in all sciences. Moreover, he commanded them to sit with him one day in each of the rooms in turn and write on the door thereof that which they had aught him therein of various kinds of knowledge and report to himself every seven days what he had learnt. So they went in to the prince and stinted not from teaching him day nor night, withholding from him nought of that which they knew; and there was manifest in him quickness of wit and excellence of apprehension and aptness to receive instruction such as none had shown before him. Every seventh day his governors reported to the king what his son had learnt and mastered, whereby Jelyaad became proficient in goodly learning and fair culture; and they said to him, 'Never saw we one so richly gifted with understanding as is this boy, may God bless thee in him and give thee joy of his life!'

When the prince had completed his twelfth year, he knew the better part of all sciences and excelled all the sages and learned men of his day. So his governors brought him to his father and said to him, 'God solace thine eyes, O king, with this happy youth! We bring him to thee, after he hath learnt all manner of knowledge, and there is not one of the learned men of the time who hath attained to that whereto he hath attained [of proficiency].' The king rejoiced in this with an exceeding joy and prostrated himself in gratitude to God (to whom belong might and majesty), saying, 'Praised be God for His mercies that may not be told!' Then he called his chief vizier and said to him, 'Know, O Shimas, that the governors of my son are come to tell me that he hath mastered all kinds of knowledge and there is nothing but they have instructed him therein, so that he surpasseth all who have foregone him in this. What sayst thou, O Shimas?'

The vizier prostrated himself before God (to whom belong might and majesty) and kissed the king's hand, saying, 'The ruby, though it be embedded in the solid rock, cannot but shine as a lamp, and this thy son is such a jewel; his tender age hath not hindered him from becoming a sage and praised be God for that which He hath bestowed on him! But to-morrow I will call an assembly of the flower of the amirs and men of learning and examine the prince and cause him speak forth that which is with him in their presence.'

So the king commanded the attendance of the keenest-witted and most accomplished of the erudite and learned and sages of his dominions, and they all presented themselves on the morrow at the door of the palace, whereupon the king bade admit them. Then entered Shimas and kissed the hands of the prince, who rose and prostrated himself to him: but Shimas said, 'It behoveth not the lion-whelp to prostrate himself to any of the beasts, nor is it seemly that light prostrate itself to darkness.' Quoth the prince, 'When the lion-whelp sees the leopard, he prostrates himself to him, because of his wisdom, and light prostrates itself to darkness for the purpose of showing forth that which is therewithin.' Quoth Shimas, 'True, O my lord; but I would have thee answer me that whereof I shall ask thee, by leave of his highness and his folk.' And the youth said, 'With [my father's] permission, I will answer thee.'

So Shimas began and said, 'What is the Eternal, the Absolute, and what are the two essences thereof and whether of the two is the abiding one?' 'God,' answered the prince, '(to whom belong might and majesty,) is the Eternal, the Absolute, for that He is the first, without beginning, and the last, without end. His two essences are this world and the next; and the abiding one of the two is the world to come.' (Q.) 'Thou sayst truly: but tell me, how knowest thou that one of God's essences is this world and the other the world to come?' (A.) '[I know this] because this world was created from nothingness and had not its being from any existing thing; wherefore its affair is referable to the first essence. Moreover, it if a commodity swift of ceasing, the works whereof call for requital, and this presumes the reproduction of that which passes away: so the next world is the second essence.' (Q.) 'How knowest thou that the world to come is the abiding one of the two states?' (A.) 'Because it is the stead of requital for deeds done in this world, prepared by the Eternal without cease.' (Q.) 'Who are the people of this world most to be praised for their practice?' (A.) 'Those who prefer their weal in the world to come to their weal in this world.' (Q.) 'And who is he that prefers his future to his present weal?' (A.) 'He who knows that he dwells in a perishing house, that he was created but to pass away and that, after passing away, he will be called to account; and indeed, were there in this world one abiding for ever, he would not prefer it to the next world.' (Q.) 'Can the future life subsist without the present?' (A.) 'He who hath no present life hath no future life: and indeed I liken the people of this world and the goal to which they fare to certain handicraftsmen, for whom an amir builds a narrow house and lodges them therein, commanding each of them to do a certain work and assigning to him a set term and appointing one to act as steward over them. Whoso doth the work appointed unto him, the steward brings him forth of that straitness; but whoso doth it not is punished. After awhile, they find honey exuding from the chinks of the house, and when they have eaten thereof and tasted its sweetness, they slacken in their appointed task and cast it behind their backs. So they endure the straitness and anxiety in which they are, with what they know of the punishment to which they are going, and are content with this trifling sweetness: and the steward leaves not to fetch every one of them forth of the house, [for punishment or reward,] when his appointed term is expired. Now we know the world to be a dwelling, wherein all eyes are dazed, and that each of its folk hath his appointed term; and he who finds the little sweetness that is in the world and occupies himself therewith is of the number of the lost, since he prefers the things of this world to those of the next: but he who pays no heed to this paltry sweetness and prefers the things of the world to come to those of this world, is of those who are saved.' (Q.) 'I accept what thou sayest of this world and the next: but I see they are as two set in authority over man; needs must he content them both, and they are contrary to one another. So, if the creature set himself to seek his livelihood, it is harmful to his soul in the world to come; and if he devote himself to [preparation for] the next world, it is hurtful to his body; and there is no way for him of pleasing both these contraries at once.' (A.) 'Indeed, the quest of one's worldly livelihood with a [pure] intent and on lawful wise is a provision for the quest of the [goods of the] world to come, if a man spend a part of his day in seeking his livelihood in this world, for the sustenance of his body, and devote the rest of his day to seeking [the goods of] the next world, for the repose of his soul and the warding off of hurt therefrom; and indeed I see this world and the next as they were two kings, a just and an unjust.' 'How so?' asked Shimas, and the youth said,

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The Two Kings.

There were once two kings, a just and an unjust. The latter's country abounded in trees and fruits and herbs; but he let no merchant pass without robbing him of his goods and his merchandise, and the merchants endured this with patience, by reason of their gain from the fatness of the land in the means of life and its pleasantness, more by token that it was renowned for its richness in precious stones and jewels. Now the just king, who loved jewels, heard of this land and sent one of his subjects thither, giving him much money and bidding him buy jewels therewith from that country. So he went thither and it being told to the unjust king that a merchant was come to his realm, with much money to buy jewels withal, he sent for him and asked him whence and what he was and what was his errand. Quoth the merchant, "I am of such a country, and the king of the land gave me money and bade me buy therewith jewels from this country; so I obeyed him and came." "Out on thee!" cried the unjust king. "Knowst thou not my fashion of dealing with the people of my realm and how each day I take their good? How then comest thou to my country? And behold, thou hast been a sojourner here since such a Time!" "The money is not mine," answered the stranger; "not a doit of it; nay, it is a trust in my hands, till I bring it to its owner." But the king said, "I will not let thee take thy livelihood of my country or go out therefrom, except thou ransom thyself with this money, all of it; else shalt thou die."

So the man said in himself, "I am fallen between two kings, and I know that the oppression of this one embraceth all who abide in his dominions: and if I content him not, I shall lose both life and money and shall fail of my errand; whilst, on the other hand, if I give him all the money, it will assuredly prove my ruin with the other king, its owner: wherefore nothing will serve me but that I give this one a small part thereof and content him therewith and avert perdition from myself and from the money. Thus shall I get my livelihood of the fatness of this land, till I buy that which I desire of jewels and return to the owner of the money with his need, trusting in his justice and indulgence and fearing not that he will punish me for that which this unjust king taketh of the money, especially if it be but a little."

Then he called down blessings on the unjust king and said to him, "O king, I will ransom myself and this money with a small portion thereof, from the time of my entering thy country to that of my going forth therefrom." The king agreed to this and left him at peace for a year, till he bought jewels with all [the rest of] the money and returned therewith to his master, to whom he made his excuses, confessing to having rescued himself from the unjust king as before related. The just king accepted his excuse and praised him for his wise ordinance and set him on his right hand in his divan and appointed him in his kingdom an abiding inheritance and a happy life.

Now the just king is the similitude of the next world and the unjust king that of this world; the jewels that be in the latter's dominions are good deeds and pious works. The merchant is man and the money he hath with him is the provision appointed him of God. When I consider this, I know that it behoves him who seeks his livelihood in this world to leave not a day without seeking the goods of the world to come, so shall he content this world with that which he gains of the fatness of the earth and the next with that which he spends of his life in seeking after it.' (Q.) 'Are the soul and the body alike in reward and punishment or is the [body as the] luster of lusts and doer of sins, alone affected with punishment?' (A.) 'The inclination unto lusts and sins may be the cause of earning reward by the withholding of the soul therefrom and the repenting thereof; but the affair is in the hand of Him who doth what He will, and by their contraries are things distinguished. Thus subsistence is necessary to the body, but there is no body without soul; and the purification of the soul is in making clean the intent in this world and taking thought to that which shall profit in the world to come. Indeed, soul and body are like two horses running for a wager or two foster-brothers or two partners in affairs. By the intent are good deeds distinguished and thus the body and soul are partners in actions and in reward and punishment, and in this they are like the blind man and the cripple with the overseer of the garden.' 'How so?' asked Shimas, and the prince said,

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The Blind Man and the Cripple.

‘A blind man and a cripple were travelling-companions and used to beg in company. One day they sought admission into the garden of some one of the benevolent, and a kind-hearted man hearing their talk, took compassion on them and carried them into his garden, where he left them and went away, bidding them do no waste nor damage therein. When the fruits became ripe, the cripple said to the blind man, “Harkye, I see ripe fruits and long for them; but I cannot rise to theme to eat thereof; so go thou, for thou art sound of limb, and fetch us thereof, that we may eat.” “Out on thee!” replied the blind man. “I had no thought of them, but now that thou callest them to my mind, I long to eat of them and I cannot avail unto this, being unable to see them; so how shall we do to get at them?” At this moment, up came the overseer of the garden, who was a man of understanding, and the cripple said to him, “Harkye, overseer! I long for some of those fruits; but we are as thou seest; I am a cripple and my mate here is stone-blind: so what shall we do?” “Out on ye!” replied the overseer. “Have ye forgotten that the master of the garden stipulated with you that ye should do no waste nor damage therein? Take warning then and abstain from this.” But they answered, “Needs must we get at these fruits, that we may eat thereof: so tell us how we shall contrive this.”

When the overseer saw that they were not to be turned from their purpose, he said, “O cripple, let the blind man take thee on his back and carry thee to the tree whose fruit pleaseth thee, so thou mayst pluck what thou canst reach thereof.” So the blind man took the cripple on his back and the latter guided him, till he brought him to a tree, and he fell to plucking from it what he would and tearing at its branches, till he had despoiled it; after which they went round about the garden and wasted it with their hands and feet; nor did they cease from this fashion, till they had stripped all the trees in the garden.

Then they returned to their place and presently up came the master of the garden, who, seeing it in this plight, was sore angered and said to them, “Out on ye! What fashion is this? Did I not stipulate with you that ye should do no waste in the garden?” Quoth they, “Thou knowest that we cannot avail to come at any of the fruit, for that one of us is a cripple and cannot rise and the other is blind and cannot see that which is before him: so what is our offence?” But the master answered, saying, “Think ye I know not how ye wrought and how ye have gone about to do waste in my garden? I know, as if I had been with thee, O blind man, that thou tookest the cripple on thy back and he guided thee, till thou borest him to the trees.” Then he punished them grievously and put them out of the garden. Now the blind man is the similitude of the body, and the cripple that of the soul, for that it hath no power of motion but by the body; the garden is the works, for which the creature is rewarded or punished, and the overseer is the reason, which commandeth to good and forbiddeth from evil. Thus the body and the soul are partners in reward and punishment.’ (Q.) ‘Which of the learned men is most worthy of praise, according to thee?’ (A.) ‘He who is learned in the knowledge of God and whose knowledge profiteth him.’ (Q.) ‘And who is this?’ (A.) ‘He who is instant in seeking to please his Lord and avoid His wrath.’ (Q.) ‘And which of them is the most excellent?’ (A.) ‘He who is most learned in the knowledge of God.’ (Q.) ‘And which is the most experienced of them?’ (A.) ‘He who is most constant in doing according to his knowledge.’ (Q.) ‘And which is the purest-hearted of them?’ (A.) ‘He who is most assiduous in preparing for death and praising God and least of them in hope, and indeed he who familiarizes his soul with the terrors of death is as one who looks into a clear mirror, for that he knows the truth, and the mirror still increases in clearness and brilliance.’ (Q.) ‘What are the goodliest of treasures?’ (A.) ‘The treasures of heaven.’ (Q.) ‘Which is the goodliest of the treasures of heaven?’ (A.) ‘The praise and magnification of God.’ (Q.) ‘Which is the most excellent of the treasures of earth?’ (A.) ‘The practice of kindness.’ (Q.) ‘Tell me of three different things, knowledge and judgment and wit, and of that which unites them.’ (A.) ‘Knowledge comes of learning, judgment of experience and wit of refection, and they are all stablished and united in reason. He in whom these three qualities combine is perfect, and he who adds thereto the fear of God is in the right course.’ (Q.) ‘Tell me, is it possible, in the case of a man of learning and wisdom, endowed with sound judgment, lucid intelligence and keen and excelling wit, for desire and lust to change these his qualities?' (A.) '[Yes]; for these passions, when they enter into a man, affect his wisdom and understanding and judgment and wit and he is like the eagle, which abode in the upper air of the excess of his subtlety and precaution against the hunters; but, as he was thus, he saw a fowler set up his nets and bait them with a piece of meat; which when he beheld, desire and lust thereof overcame him and he forgot that which he had seen of nets and of the sorry case of all birds that fell into them. So he swooped down from the sky and pouncing upon the piece of meat, was caught in the same snare and could not win free. When the fowler came up and saw the eagle taken in his net, he marvelled exceedingly and said, "I set up my nets, thinking to take therein pigeons and the like of small birds; how came this eagle to fall into it?" It is said that when desire and lust incite a man of understanding to aught, he considers the issue thereof and refrains from that which they make fair and overcomes his passions with his reason; for, when they urge him to aught, it behoves him to make his reason like unto a skilled horseman, who, mounting a skittish horse, curbs him with a sharp bit, so that he goes aright with him and carries him whither he will. As for the ignorant man, who has neither knowledge nor judgment and things are obscure to him and desire and lust lord it over him, verily he does according to his desire and his lust and is of the number of those that perish; nor is there among men one in sorrier case than he.' (Q.) 'When is knowledge profitable and when availeth reason to ward off the ill effects of desire and lust?' (A.) 'When their possessor uses them in quest of the goods of the next world, for reason and knowledge are altogether profitable; but it behoves their owner to expend them not in the quest of the goods of this world, save in so far as may be needful for gaining his livelihood and defending himself from its mischief.' (Q.) 'What is most worthy that a man should apply himself thereto and occupy his heart withal?' (A.) 'Good works.' (Q.) 'If a man do this, it diverts him from gaining his living: how then shall he do for his livelihood, which he cannot dispense withal?' (A.) 'A man's day is four- and-twenty hours, and it behoves him to employ one [third] part thereof in seeking his living, another in prayer and rest and the remainder in the pursuit of knowledge; for a reasonable man without knowledge is as a barren land, wherein is place for neither tillage nor tree-planting nor grass. Except it be prepared for tillage and planted, no fruit will profit therein; but, if it be tilled and planted, it brings forth goodly fruits. So with the ignorant man: there is no profit in him till knowledge be planted in him: then doth he bear fruit.' (Q.) 'What sayst thou of knowledge without understanding?' (A.) 'It is as the knowledge of a brute, which hath learnt the hours of its feeding and watering and waking, but hath no reason.' (Q.) 'Thou hast been brief in thine answer concerning this; but I accept thy reply. Tell me, how shall I guard myself against the Sultan?' (A.) 'By giving him no hold over thee.' (Q.) 'And how can I but give him hold over me, seeing that he is set in dominion over me and that the rein of my affair is in his hand?' (A.) 'His dominion over thee lies in the duties thou owest him; so, if thou give him his due, he hath no [farther] dominion over thee.' (Q.) 'What are a vizier's duties to his king?' (A.) 'Good counsel and zealous service both in public and private, right judgment, the keeping of his secrets and that he conceal from him nought of that which he hath a right to know, lack of neglect of aught of his occasions, with whose accomplishment he charges him, the seeking his approof on every wise and the avoidance of his wrath.' (Q.) 'How should the vizier do with the king?' (A.) 'If thou be vizier to the king and wouldst be safe from him, let thy hearing and thy speech to him overpass his expectation of thee and be thy seeking of thy need from him after the measure of thy rank in his esteem, and beware lest thou advance thyself to a dignity whereof he shall not judge thee worthy, for this would be like to presumption in thee against him. So, if thou presume upon his mildness and assume a rank beyond that which he deemeth thy due, thou wilt be like the hunter, who used to trap wild beasts for their skins and throw the flesh away. Now a lion used to come to the place [where the hunter skinned his prey] and eat of the carrion; and in course of time, he clapped up an acquaintance with the hunter, who would throw [meat] to him and wipe his hands on his back, whilst the lion wagged his tail. When the hunter saw his tameness and gentleness and submissiveness to him, he said in himself, "Verily this lion humbleth himself to me and I am master of him, and I see not why I should not mount him and strip off his hide, as with the other wild beasts." So he sprang on the lion’s back, presuming on his mildness and deeming himself sure of him; which when the lion saw, he was exceeding wroth and raising his paw, smote the hunter, that he drove his claws into his guts; after which he cast him under his feet and tore him in pieces and devoured him. By this thou mayst know that it behoves the vizier to bear himself towards the king according to that which he seeth of his condition and not to presume upon the superiority of his own judgment, lest the king become jealous of him.’ (Q.) ‘How shall the vizier grace himself in the king’s sight?’ (A.) ‘By the performance of the trust of loyal counsel and sound judgment committed to him and the execution of his commandments.’ (Q.) ‘As for that which thou sayst of the vizier’s duty to avoid the king’s wrath and perform his wishes and apply himself diligently to the due execution of that wherewith he charges him, that is a matter of course: but how, if the king’s whole pleasure be in tyranny and the practice of oppression and extortion, and what shall the vizier do if he be afflicted with the frequentation of this unjust king? If he strive to turn him from his lust and his desire, he cannot avail unto this, and if he follow him in his lusts and flatter him with false counsel, he assumes the responsibility of this and becomes an enemy to the people. What sayst thou of this?’ (A.) ‘What thou sayst, O vizier, of his responsibility and sin, arises only in the case of his abetting the king in his wrong-doing; but it behoves the vizier, when the king takes counsel with him of the like of this, to show forth to him the way of justice and equity and caution him against tyranny and oppression and expound to him the principles of good government, alluring him with the reward that pertains to this and restraining him with warning of the punishment that he incurs [in following his perverse inclinations]. If the king incline to his words, his end is gained, and if not, there is nothing for it but that he depart from him on courteous wise, for that in separation is ease for each of them.’ (Q.) ‘What are the duties of the king to his subjects and of the latter to the king?’ (A.) ‘They shall do what he orders them with a pure intent and obey him in that which pleases him and pleases God and His apostle. It is the king’s duty to protect their possessions and guard their women, even as it is their duty to hearken unto him and obey him and expend their lives freely in his defence and give him his lawful due and praise him duly for that which he bestoweth upon them of his justice and beneficence.' (Q.) 'Have his subjects any claim upon the king other than that which thou hast said?' (A.) 'Yes: the king's duty to his subjects is more imperative than their duty to him; for that the breach of his duty towards them is more harmful than that of theirs towards him; because the will of the king and the loss of his kingdom and fortune betide not but by the breach of his duty to his subjects: wherefore it behoves him who is invested with the kingship to be assiduous in ensuing three things, to wit, the furtherance of the faith, the welfare of his subjects and the due administration of government; for by the assiduous observance of these three things, his kingdom shall endure.' (Q.) 'How doth it behove him to do for his subjects' weal?' (A.) 'By giving them their due and maintaining their laws and usages and employing wise and learned men to teach them and justifying them, one of the other, and sparing their blood and defending their goods and lightening their burdens and strengthening their armies.' (Q.) 'What is the king's duty to his vizier?' (A.) 'None hath a more imperative claim on the king than the vizier, for three reasons: firstly, because of that which betides him with him, in case of error in judgment, and because of the common profit to king and people in case of sound judgment: secondly, that the folk may know the goodliness of the rank which the vizier holds in the king's estimation and so look on him with eyes of veneration and respect and submission; and thirdly, that the vizier, seeing this from king and people, may ward off from them that which they mislike and fulfil to them that which they love.' (Q.) 'I have heard all thou hast said of the attributes of king and vizier and people and approve thereof: but now tell me what is incumbent in the matter of keeping the tongue from lying and folly and slander and excess in speech.' (A.) 'It behoves a man to speak nought but good and kindness and to talk not of that which concerns him not; to leave detraction nor carry talk he hath heard from one man to his enemy, neither seek to harm his friend nor his enemy with his sultan and reck not of any, neither of him from whom he hopes for good nor of him whose mischief he fears, save of God the Most High; for, in truth, He is the [only] one who liveth or profiteth. Let him not impute default unto any nor talk ignorantly, lest he incur the burden and the sin thereof before God and earn hatred among men; for know that speech is like an arrow, which, once discharged, none can avail to recall. Moreover, let him beware of confiding his secret to one who shall discover it, lest he fall into mischief by reason of its disclosure, after having relied upon its concealment; and let him be more careful to keep his secret from his friend than from his enemy; for the keeping a secret with all folk is of the performance of trust.' (Q.) 'Tell me how a man should bear himself with his family and friends.' (A.) 'There is no ease for a son of Adam save in good conduct; he should render to his family that which they deserve and to his brethren that which is their due.' (Q.) 'What should one render to one's kinsfolk?' (A.) 'To one's parents, submission and soft speech and affability and honour and reverence. To one's brethren, loyal counsel and readiness to expend one's good for them and assistance in their undertakings and grieving for their grief and joyance in their joy and closing of the eyes toward the errors that they may commit; for, when they experience this from a man, they requite him with the best they can command of good counsel and expend their lives in his defence; so, if thou know thy brother to be trusty, be lavish to him of thy love and helpful to him in all his affairs.' (Q.) 'I see that brethren are of two kinds, brethren of trust and brethren of society. As for the first, there is due to them that which thou hast set forth; but now tell me of the other.' (A.) 'As for brethren of society, thou gettest of them clearance and goodly usance and fair speech and company; so be thou not sparing to them of thy delights, but be lavish to them, like as they are lavish thereof to thee, and render to them that which they render to thee of affability and an open favour and sweet speech; so shall thy life be pleasant and thy speech have acceptance with them.' (Q.) 'Tell me now of the provision decreed by the Creator to all creatures. Hath He allotted to men and beasts each his several provision, to the completion of his appointed term; and if this be so, what maketh him who seeketh his livelihood to incur hardship and toil in the quest of that which he knows he cannot fail of obtaining, if it be decreed to him, though he incur not the misery of endeavour; whilst, if it be not decreed to him, he shall not win thereto, though he strive after it with his utmost endeavour? Shall he therefore leave striving and put his trust in his Lord and rest his body and his soul?'

(A.) ‘Indeed, we see that to each there is a provision allotted and a term prescribed; but to each provision is a way and means, and he who seeketh would get ease of his seeking by leaving to seek; et needs must he seek his fortune. Moreover, the seeker is in two cases; either he gains his fortune or fails thereof. In the first case, his pleasure consists, first in the having gained his fortune, and secondly, in the satisfactory issue of his quest; and in the other case, his pleasure consists, first, in his readiness to seek his living, secondly, in his abstaining from being a burden to the folk, and thirdly, in his freedom from liability to reproach.’ (Q.) ‘What sayst thou of the means of seeking one’s fortune?’ (A.) ‘A man shall hold lawful that which God (to whom belong might and majesty) permitteth and unlawful that which He forbiddeth.’

With this the discourse between them came to an end and Shimas and all the learned men, who were present, rose and prostrating themselves before the prince, magnified and extolled him, whilst his father pressed him to his bosom and seating him on the throne of kingship, said, ‘Praised be God who hath blessed me with a son to be the solace of mine eyes in my lifetime!’ Then said the prince to Shimas, ‘O sage that art versed in metaphysical questions, albeit God hath vouchsafed me but little knowledge, yet do I apprehend thine intent in accepting from me what I proffered in answer concerning that whereof thou hast asked me, whether I hit or missed the mark therein, and belike thou forgavest my errors; but now I wish to question thee of a thing, whereof my judgment fails and whereto my capacity is unequal and which my tongue availeth not to set forth, for that it is obscure to me, with the obscurity of limpid water in a black vessel; wherefore I would have thee expound it to me, so no whit thereof may remain doubtful to the like of me, to whom its obscurity may present itself in the future, even as it hath presented itself to me in the past; since God, even as He hath made life to be in water and sustenance in food and the healing of the sick in the physician’s skill, so hath He appointed the cure of the ignorant to be in the learning of the wise. Give ear, therefore, to my speech.’ ‘O luminous of wit and master of apt questions,’ replied the vizier, ‘thou whose superiority all the learned men attest, by reason of the goodliness of thy discrimination of things and thy departition thereof and the justness of thine answers to the questions I have put to thee, thou knowest that thou canst ask me of nought but thou art better able [than I] to form a just judgment thereon and expound it truly; for that God hath vouchsafed unto thee such wisdom as He hath bestowed on none other: but tell me of what thou wouldst question me.' Quoth the prince, 'Tell me from what did the Creator (magnified be His power!) create the world, albeit there was before it nought and there is nought seen in this world but it is created from something; and the Divine Creator (blessed and exalted be He!) is able to create things from nothing, yet hath His will decreed, for all the perfection of [His] power and grandeur, that He shall create nought but from something.' 'As for those,' answered the vizier, 'who fashion vessels of potters' clay, and other handicraftsmen, who cannot produce one thing except from another, they are themselves but created things: but, as for the Creator, who hath wrought the world after this wondrous fashion, if thou wouldst know His power (blessed and exalted be He!) of calling things into existence, consider the various kinds of created things, and thou wilt find signs and tokens, denoting the perfection of His omnipotence and that He is able to create things out of nothing: nay, He called them into being, after absolute nonentity, for the elements that are the matter of created things were sheer nothingness. I will expound this to thee, so thou mayst be in no doubt thereof, and this the phenomenon of the alternation of night and day shall make clear to thee. When the day departs and the night comes, the day is hidden from us and we know not where it abideth; and when the night passes away with its darkness and its terror, the day comes and we know not the abiding-place of the night. In like manner, when the sun rises upon us, we know not where it has laid up its light, and when it sets, we know not the abiding-place of its setting: and the examples of this among the works of the Creator (magnified be His name and exalted be His power!) abound in what confounds the thought of the keenest-witted of human beings.' 'O sage,' rejoined the prince, 'thou hast set before me of the power of the Creator what may not be denied; but tell me how He called His creatures into existence.' '[He created them] by [the sole power of] His Word,' answered Shimas, 'which existed before time, and with it He created all things.' 'Then,' said the prince, 'God (be His name magnified and His power exalted!) only willed the existence of created things, before they came into being?' 'And of His will,' replied Shimas, 'He created them with His Word and but for His speech and Manifest Word, the creation had not come into existence. And, O my son, there is no man can tell thee other than this that I have said, except he pervert the words handed down to us of the law of God and turn the truths thereof from their evident meaning. And such a perversion is their saying that the Word hath power [of itself] and I take refuge with God from such a conclusion. Nay, the meaning of our saying that God (to whom belong might and majesty) created the world with His Word is that He (exalted be His name!) is One in His essence and His attributes and not that His Word hath power [of itself]. On the contrary, power is one of God's attributes, even as speech and other attributes of perfection are attributes of God (exalted be His dignity and magnified be His dominion!); wherefore He may not be conceived without His Word, nor may His Word be conceived without Him; for, with His Word, God (extolled be His praise!) created all His creatures, and without His Word, he created nought. Indeed, He created all things but by His Word of Truth, and by Truth are we created.' Quoth the prince, 'I apprehend that which thou hast said on the subject of the Creator and accept this from thee with understanding; but I hear thee say that He created the world by His Word of Truth. Now Truth is the opposite of Falsehood; whence then arose Falsehood and its opposition unto Truth, and bow comes it to be possible that it should be confounded therewith and be obscure to human beings, so that they need to distinguish between them? And doth the Creator (to whom belong might and majesty!) love Falsehood or hate it? If thou say He loves the Truth and by it created all things and hates Falsehood, how came the latter, which the Creator hates, to invade the Truth, which He loves?' Quoth Shimas, 'Verily God the Most High created man after His own image and likened him to Himself, all of him truth, without falsehood; then He gave him dominion over himself and ordered him and forbade him, and it was man who transgressed His commandment and erred in his disobedience and brought falsehood upon himself of his own will. When God created man with Truth, he had no need of repentance, till Falsehood invaded the Truth by which he was created, by means of the ableness that God had placed in him, being the will and the inclination called acquisitiveness. When Falsehood invaded Truth on this wise, it became confounded therewith, by reason of the will of man and his ableness and acquisitiveness, which is the voluntary party together with the weakness of human nature: wherefore God created repentance for man, to turn away from him falsehood and stablish him in truth; and He created for him also punishment, if he should abide in the obscurity of falsehood.' Quoth the prince, 'Tell me how came falsehood to invade truth, so as to be confounded therewith and how became man liable to punishment and so stood in need of repentance.' 'When God created man with truth,' replied Shimas, 'He made him loving to Himself and there was for him neither repentance nor punishment; but he abode thus till God put in him the soul, which is of the perfection of humanity, with the inclination to lusts which is inherent therein. From this sprang the growth of falsehood and its confusion with the truth, wherewith man was created and with the love whereof he had been informed; and when man came to this pass, he swerved from the truth with disobedience, and whoso swerves from the truth falls into falsehood.' 'Then,' said the prince, 'falsehood invaded truth only by reason of disobedience and transgression?' 'Yes,' answered Shimas; 'and it is thus because God loves man, and of the abundance of His love to him, He created him having need of Himself, that is to say, of the very Truth: but oftentimes man falls away from this by reason of the inclination of the soul to lusts and turns unto frowardness, wherefore he falls into falsehood by the very act of disobeying his Lord and thus renders himself liable to punishment; and by the putting away from himself of falsehood with repentance and the returning to the love of the truth, he merits reward.' Quoth the prince, 'Tell me the origin of frowardness. We see that all mankind trace their being to Adam, and how comes it that he, being created of God with truth, drew disobedience on himself; then was his disobedience coupled with repentance, after the soul had been set in him, that his issue might be reward or punishment? Indeed, we see some men constant in frowardness, inclining to that which God loves not and transgressing in this the original exigence of their creation, which is the love of the Truth and drawing on themselves the wrath of their

Lord, whilst others are constant in seeking to please their Creator and obeying Him and meriting mercy and recompense. Whence comes this difference between them?' 'The origin of disobedience in mankind,' replied Shimas, 'is attributable to Iblis, who was the noblest of all that God (magnified be His name!) created of angels and men and Jinn, and the love [of the Truth] was inherent in him, for he knew nought but this; but, for that he saw himself unique in this, there entered into him conceit and vainglory and arrogance and he revolted from loyalty and obedience to the commandment of his Creator; wherefore God made him inferior to all creatures and cast him out from love, making his abiding-place to be in disobedience. So, when he knew that God (glorified be His name!) loved not disobedience and saw Adam and the case wherein he was of truth and love and obedience to his Creator, envy entered into him and he cast about to pervert Adam from the truth, that he might be a partaker with himself in falsehood; and by this, Adam incurred chastisement, through his inclining to disobedience, which his enemy made fair to him, and his subjection to his lusts, whenas he transgressed the injunction of his Lord, by reason of the appearance of falsehood. When the Creator (magnified be His praises and hallowed be His names!) saw the weakness of man and the swiftness of his inclining to his enemy and leaving the truth, He appointed to him, of His mercy, repentance, that therewith he might arise from the morass of inclination to disobedience and taking the arms of repentance, overcome therewith his enemy Iblis and his hosts and return to the truth, wherein he was created. When Iblis saw that God had appointed him a protracted term, he hastened to wage war upon man and to beset him with wiles, to the intent that he might oust him from his Lord's favour and make him a partaker with himself in the curse which he and his hosts had incurred; wherefore God (extolled be His praises!) appointed unto man the power of repentance and commanded him to apply himself to the truth and persevere therein. Moreover, he forbade him from disobedience and frowardness and revealed to him that he had an enemy on the earth warring against him and relaxing not from him night nor day. Thus hath man a right to reward, if he adhere to the truth, in the love of which his essence was created; but he becomes liable to punishment, if his soul master him and drag him into lusts.’ ‘But tell me,’ rejoined the prince, ‘by what power is the creature able to transgress against his Creator, seeing that His power is without bounds, even as thou hast set forth, and that nothing can overcome Him nor depart from His will? Deemst thou not that He is able to turn His creatures from disobedience and compel them to adhere eternally to the truth?’ ‘Verily,’ answered Shimas, ‘God the Most High (honoured be His name!) is just and equitable and tenderly solicitous over the people of His love. He created His creatures with justice and equity and of the inspiration of His justice and the abundance of His mercy, He gave them dominion over themselves, that they should do whatever they would. He shows them the way of righteousness and bestows on them the power and ability of doing what they will of good: and if they do the opposite thereof, they fall into destruction and disobedience.’ (Q.) ‘If the Creator, as thou sayest, hath granted men power and ability and they by reason thereof avail to do what they will, why then doth He not come between them and that which they desire of error and turn them to the truth?’ (A.) ‘This is of the greatness of His mercy and the excellence of His wisdom; for, even as aforetime He showed wrath to Iblis and had no mercy on him, so He showed Adam mercy, by means of repentance, and accepted of him, after He had been wroth with him.’ (Q.) ‘He is indeed the very Truth, for He it is who requiteth every one according to his works, and there is no Creator but God, to whom belongeth power over all things. But tell me, hath He created that which He loveth and that which He loveth not or only that which He loveth?’ (A.) ‘He created all things, but favours only that which He loveth.’ (Q.) ‘What hast thou to say of two things, one whereof is pleasing to God and earns reward for him who practices it?’ (A.) ‘Expound to me these two things and make me to apprehend them, that I may speak concerning them.’ (Q.) ‘They are good and evil, the two things innate in the body and the soul.’ (A.) ‘O wise youth, I see that thou knowest good and evil to be of the works that the soul and the body do [in conjunction]. Good is named good, because in it is the favour of God, and evil evil, for that in it is His wrath. Indeed, it behoveth thee to know God and to please Him by the practice of good, for that He hath commanded us to this and forbidden us to do evil.’ (Q.) ‘I see these two things, that is, good and evil, to be wrought only by the five senses known in the body of man, to wit, the seat of taste, whence proceed speech, hearing, sight, smell and touch. Tell me whether these five senses were created for good altogether or for evil.' (A.) 'Hear, O man, the exposition of that whereof thou askest and lay it up in thy memory and notify thy heart thereof, for it is a manifest proof. Know that the Creator (blessed and exalted be He!) created man with truth and informed him with the love thereof and there proceedeth from it no created thing save by the Most High decree, whose impress is on every phenomenon. It is not apt but to the ordering of justice and equity and beneficence and created man for the love of itself and informed him with a soul, wherein the inclination to lusts was innate and assigned him ableness and appointed the five senses aforesaid to be to him a means of winning Paradise or Hell.' (Q.) 'How so?' (A.) 'In that He created the tongue for speech and the hands for doing and the feet for walking and the eyes for seeing and the ears for hearing and gave them power and incited them to exercise and motion, bidding each of them do that only which pleaseth Him. Now what pleaseth Him in speech is truthfulness and abstaining from its opposite, which is falsehood, and what pleases Him in sight is turning it unto that which He liveth and leaving the contrary, which is turning it unto that which He abhorreth, such as looking unto lusts: and what pleaseth Him in hearing is hearkening to nought but that which is truth, such as admonition and that which is in the scriptures of God, and leaving the contrary, which is hearkening to that which incurreth the wrath of God; and what pleaseth Him in the hands is not hoarding up that which He entrusteth to them, but spending it on such wise as shall please Him and leaving the contrary, which is avarice or spending that which He hath committed to them in disobedience; and what pleaseth Him in the feet is that they be instant in the pursuit of good, such as the quest of instruction, and leave its contrary, which is the walking in other than the way of God. As for the other lusts that man practices, they proceed from the body by commandment of the soul. The lusts that proceed from the body are of two kinds, that of reproduction and that of the belly. As for the first, that which pleaseth God thereof is that it be not except in the way of law, and if it be in the way of sin, He is displeased with it. As for the lust of the belly, eating and drinking, what pleaseth God thereof is that each take nought but that which God hath appointed him thereof, be it little or much, and praise God and thank Him: and what angereth Him thereof is that a man take that which is not his by right. All precepts other than these are false, and thou knowest that God created all things and delighteth only in good and commandeth each member of the body to do that which He hath made incumbent thereon, for that He is the all-wise, the all-knowing.' (Q.) 'Was it foreknown unto God (exalted be His power!) that Adam would eat of the tree from which He forbade him and so leave obedience for disobedience?' (A.) 'Yes, O sage. This was foreknown unto God the Most High, before He created Adam; and the proof and manifestation thereof is the warning He gave him against eating of the tree and His giving him to know that, if he ate thereof, he would be disobedient. And this was in the way of justice and equity, lest Adam should have an argument wherewith he might excuse himself against his Lord. When, therefore, he fell into error and calamity and reproach and disgrace were sore upon him, this passed to his posterity after him; wherefore God sent prophets and apostles and gave them scriptures and they taught us the divine ordinances and expounded to us what was therein of admonitions and precepts and made clear to us the way of righteousness and what it behoved us to do and what to leave undone. Now we are endowed with ableness and he who acts within these limits attains [felicity] and prospers, whilst he who transgresses them and does other than that which these precepts enjoin, sins and is mined in both worlds. This then is the road of good and evil. Thou knowest that God can all things and created not lusts for us but of His pleasure and will, and He commanded us to use them in the way of lawfulness, so they might be a good to us; but, when we use them in the way of sin, they are an evil to us. So what of good we compass is from God the Most High and what of evil from ourselves His creatures, not from the Creator, exalted be He for this with great exaltation!' (Q.) 'I understand that which thou hast expounded to me concerning God and His creatures; but tell me of one thing, concerning which my mind is perplexed with extreme wonderment, and that is that I marvel at the sons of Adam, how careless they are of the life to come and at their lack of taking thought thereto and their love of this world, albeit they know that they must needs leave it and depart from it, whilst they are yet young in years.' (A.) 'Yes, verily; and that which thou seest of its changefulness and perfidious dealing with its children is a sign that fortune will not endure to the fortunate, neither affliction to the afflicted; for none of its people is secure from its changefulness and even if one have power over it and be content therewith, yet needs must his estate change and removal hasten unto him. Wherefore man can put no trust therein nor profit by that which he enjoyeth of its painted gauds; and knowing this, we know that the sorriest of men in case are those who are deluded by this world and are unmindful of the world to come; for that this present ease they enjoy will not compensate the fear and misery and horrors that will befall them after their removal therefrom. Thus are we certified that, if the creature knew that which will betide him with the coming of death and his severance from that which he presently enjoyeth of delight and clearance, he would cast away the world and that which is therein; for we are assured that the next life is better for us and more profitable.' 'O sage,' said the prince, 'thou hast with thy shining lamp dispelled the darkness that was upon my heart and hast directed me into the road I must travel in the ensuing of the truth and hast given me a lantern whereby I may see.'

Then rose one of the learned men who were present and said, 'When the season of Spring cometh, needs must the hare seek the pasture as well as the elephant; and indeed I have heard from you both such questions and solutions as I never before heard; but now let me ask you of somewhat. What is the best of the goods of the world?' 'Health of body,' replied the prince, 'lawful provision and a virtuous son.' (Q.) 'What is the greater and what the less?' (A.) 'The greater is that to which a lesser than itself submitteth and the less that which submitteth to a greater than itself.' (Q.) 'What are the four things in which all creatures concur?' (A.) 'Meat and drink, the delight of sleep, the lust of women and the agonies of death.' (Q.) 'What are the three things whose foulness none can do away?' (A.) 'Folly, meanness of nature and lying.' (Q.) 'What is the best kind of lie, though all kinds are foul?' (A.) 'That which averteth harm from its utterer and bringeth profit.' (Q.) 'What kind of truthfulness is foul, though all kinds are fair?' (A.) 'That of a man glorying in that which he hath and boasting himself thereof.' (Q.) 'What is the foulest of foulnesses?' (A.) 'When a man boasteth himself of that which he hath not.' (Q.) 'Who is the most foolish of men?' (A.) 'He who hath no thought but of what he shall put in his belly.'

Then said Shimas, 'O king, verily thou art our king, but we desire that thou assign the kingdom to thy son after thee, and we will be thy servants and subjects.' So the king exhorted the learned men and others who were present to remember that which they had heard and do according thereto and enjoined them to obey his son's commandment, for that he made him his heir-apparent, so he should be the successor of the king his father; and he took an oath of all the people of his empire, doctors and braves and old men and boys, that they would not oppose him [in the succession] nor transgress against his commandment.

When the prince was seventeen years old, the king sickened of a sore sickness and came nigh unto death, so, being certified that his last hour was at hand, he said to the people of his household, 'This is a mortal sickness that is upon me; wherefore do ye summon the grandees and notables of my empire, so not one of them may remain except he be present.' Accordingly, they made proclamation to those who were near and made known the summons to those who were afar off, and they all assembled and went in to the king. Then said they to him, 'How is it with thee, O king, and how deemest thou for thyself of this thy sickness?' Quoth Jelyaad, 'Verily, this my sickness is mortal and the arrow [of death] hath executed that which God the Most High decreed against me: this is the last of my days in this world and the first of my days in the world to come.' Then said he to his son, 'Draw near unto me.' So he drew near, weeping sore, that he came nigh to wet the bed, whilst the king's eyes brimmed over with tears and all who were present wept. Quoth Jelyaad, 'Weep not, O my son; I am not the first whom this inevitable thing betideth; nay, it is common to all that God hath created. But fear thou God and do good, that shall forego thee to the place whither all creatures tend. Obey not thy lusts, but occupy thyself with the praises of God in thy standing up and thy sitting down and in thy sleep and thy wake. Make the truth the aim of thine eyes; this is the last of my speech with thee and peace be on thee.'

Then he bequeathed him the kingdom and the prince said, 'O my father, thou knowest that I have never ceased from obedience unto thee and mindfulness of thine injunctions, still carrying out thy commandment and seeking thine approve; for thou hast been to me the best of fathers. How, then, after thy death, shall I depart from that whereof thou approvest? After having fairly ordered my bringing up, thou art now about to depart from me and I have no power to bring thee back to me; but, if I be mindful of thine injunctions, I shall be blessed therein and great good hap will betide me.' Quoth the king, and indeed he was in the last agony, 'Dear my son, cleave fast unto ten precepts which if thou observe, God shall profit thee herewith in this world and the next, and they are as follows. When thou art angered, curb thy wrath; when thou art afflicted, be patient; when thou speakest, be truthful; when thou promisest, perform; when thou judgest, do justice; when thou hast power, be merciful; deal generously by thy governors and lieutenants; forgive those that transgress against thee; be lavish of good offices to thine enemy and withhold thy mischief from him. Observe also other seven preceptor wherewith God shall profit thee among the people of thy realm, to wit, when thou dividest, be just; when thou punishest, oppress not; when thou makest an engagement, fulfil thine engagement; hearken to those that give thee loyal counsel; abstain from contention; enjoin thy subjects to the observance of the divine laws and of praiseworthy usages; do equal justice between the folk, so they may love thee, great and small, and the froward and corrupt of them may fear thee.'

Thn he addressed himself to the amirs and doctors, who were present when he appointed his son to be his successor, saying, 'Beware of transgressing the commandment of your king and neglecting to hearken to your chief, for in this lies ruin for your country and sundering for your union and hurt for your bodies and perdition for your goods, and your enemies would exult over you. Ye know the covenant ye made with me, and even thus shall be your covenant with this youth, and the pact that is between you and me shall be also between you and him; wherefore it behoveth you to give ear unto his commandment and obey him, for that in this is the well-being of your estates. So be ye constant with him unto that wherein ye were with me and your affair shall prosper and your case be good; for, behold, he hath the kingship over you and is the lord of your fortune, and so peace be on you!’ Then the death-agony seized him and his tongue was bridled: so he pressed his son to his bosom and kissed him and gave thanks unto God; after which his hour came and his soul departed [his body].

All his subjects and the people of his court mourned over him and they shrouded him and buried him with pomp and honour and reverence; after which they returned with the prince and seating him on the throne of kingship, clad him in the royal robes and crowned him with his father’s crown and put the seal-ring on his finger. He ordered himself towards them, a little while, after his father’s fashion of mildness and justice and benevolence, till the world waylaid him and tempted him with its lusts, whereupon he seized on its pleasures and turned to its vain delights, forsaking the engagements which his father had commended to him and casting of his obedience to him, neglecting the affairs of his kingdom and walking in a road wherein was his own destruction. In particular, the love of women was stark in him and came to such a pass that, whenever he heard tell of a fair woman, he would send and make her to wife. After this wise, he collected women more in number than ever had Solomon, son of David, King of the children of Israel, and would shut himself up with a company of them for a month at a time, during which he went not forth neither enquired of his kingdom or its governance nor looked into the grievances of such of his subjects as complained to him; and if they wrote to him, he returned them no answer.

When they saw his neglect of their affairs and interests and those of the state, they were assured that ere long some calamity would betide them and this was grievous to them. So they foregathered privily and took counsel together, and one of them said to the rest, ‘Let us go to Shimas, chief of the viziers, and set forth to him our case and acquaint him with the strait wherein we are by reason of this king, so he may admonish him; else, in a little, calamity will betide us, for the world hath intoxicated the king with its delights and beguiled him with its snares.’ Accordingly, they repaired to Shimas and said to him, ‘O wise and prudent man, the world hath dazed the king with its delights and taken him in its snares, so that he turneth unto vanity and worketh for the disordering of the state. Now with the disordering of the state the commons will be corrupted and our affairs will come to ruin. Months and days we see him not nor cometh there forth from him any commandment to us or to the vizier or whom else. We cannot refer aught to him and he looketh not to the administration of justice nor taketh thought to the case of any of his subjects, in his heedlessness of them. And behold we are come to acquaint thee with the truth of the affair, for that thou art the chiefest and most accomplished of us and it behoveth not that calamity befall a land wherein thou dwellest, seeing that thou art most able of any to amend this thing. Wherefore go thou and speak with him: belike he will hearken to thy word and return unto God.'

So Shimas arose forthright and repairing to the palace, foregathered with the first of the king's officers to whom he might win and said to him, 'Good my son, I beseech thee ask leave for me to go in to the king, for I have an affair, concerning which I would fain see his face and acquaint him therewith and hear what be shall answer me thereof.' 'O my lord,' answered the officer, 'by Allah, this month past hath he given none leave to come in to him, nor all this time have I looked upon his face; but I will direct thee to one who shall crave admission for thee. Do thou lay hold of such a black, who standeth at his head and bringeth him food from the kitchen. When he cometh forth, to go to the kitchen, ask him what seemeth good to thee; for he will do for thee that which thou desirest.' So the vizier repaired to the door of the kitchen and sat there a little while, till up came the black and would have entered the kitchen; but Shimas [caught hold of him] and said to him, 'O my son, I would fain see the king and speak with him of somewhat that nearly concerneth him; so prithee, of thy kindness, when he hath made an end of his morning-meal and his soul is refreshed, speak thou for me to him and get leave for me to come in to him, so I may bespeak him of that which shall please him.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the black and taking the food, carried it to the king, who ate thereof and his soul was refreshed.

Then said the black to him, 'Shimas standeth at the door and craveth admission, so he may acquaint thee with matters that particularly concern thee.' At this the king was alarmed and disquieted and commanded to admit the vizier. So the black went forth to Shimas and bade him enter; whereupon he went in and prostrating himself before God, kissed the king's hands and called down blessings upon him. Then said the king, 'O Shimas, what hath betided thee that thou seekest admission unto me?' And he answered, saying, 'This long while have I not looked upon the face of my lord the king and indeed I longed sore for thee. So, behold, I have seen thy countenance and come to thee with a word which I would fain say to thee, O king stablished in all prosperity.' Quoth the king, 'Say what seemeth good to thee;' and Shimas said, 'O king, verily God the Most High hath endowed thee, for all the tenderness of thy years, with knowledge and wisdom such as He never vouchsafed unto any of the kings before thee, and hath fulfilled the measure of His bounties to thee with the kingship; and He liveth not that thou depart from that wherewith He hath endowed thee unto other than it, by means of thy disobedience to Him; wherefore it behoveth thee not to wage war upon Him with thy treasures, but to be mindful of His injunctions and obedient unto His commandments. This I say because I have seen thee, this while past, forget thy father and his injunctions and forswear his covenant and neglect his admonition and renounce his justice and wise governance, remembering not God's bounty to thee neither requiting it with gratitude to Him.'

'How so?' asked the king. 'And what is the manner of this?' 'The manner of it,' replied Shimas, 'is that thou neglectest to attend to the affairs of the state and that which God hath committed unto thee of the interests of thy subjects and surrenderest thyself to thine own inclinations, in that which they make fair to thee of the paltry lusts of the world. Verily it is said that the welfare of the state and the faith and the people is of the things over which it behoveth the king to keep watch; wherefore it is my counsel, O king, that thou look well to the issue of thine affair, for thus wilt thou find the manifest road wherein is salvation, and give not thyself up to a trifling evanescent delight that leadeth to the abyss of destruction, lest there befall thee that which befell the fisherman.' 'What was that?' asked the king, and Shimas said, 'I have heard tell that

The Foolish Fisherman.

A fisherman went forth one day to a certain river, to fish there, as of his wont; and when he came thither and walked upon the bridge, he saw a great fish in the water and said to himself, “It will not serve me to abide here, but I will follow yonder fish whithersoever it doeth, till I take it. for it will dispense me from fishing days and days.” So he put off his clothes and plunged into the river after the fish. The current bore him along till he overtook it and laid hold of it, when he turned and found himself far from land. However, he would not loose the fish and return, but ventured himself and gripping it fast with both hands, let his body float with the current, which carried him on till it cast him into a whirlpool which none might enter and be saved therefrom. With this he fell to crying out and saying, “Save a drowning man!” And there came to him folk of the keepers of the river and said to him, “What ailed thee to cast thyself into this grievous peril?’ Quoth he, “It was I myself who forsook the plain way wherein was salvation and gave myself over to coveting and perdition.” “O fellow,” said they, “why didst thou leave the way of safety and cast thyself into this destruction, knowing from of old that none may enter herein and be saved? What hindered thee from throwing away what was in thy hand and saving thyself? So hadst thou escaped with thy life and not fallen into this perdition, from which there is no deliverance; and now not one of us can rescue thee from this strait.” So the man gave up hope of life and lost that which was in his hand and for which his soul had prompted him to venture himself and perish miserably. And I tell thee not this parable, O king,’ added Shimas, ‘but that thou mayst leave this contemptible thing that diverteth thee from thy duties and look to that which is committed to thee of the governance of thy people and the maintenance of the order of thy kingdom, so that none may see fault in thee.’

‘What wouldst thou have me do?’ asked the king, and Shimas said, ‘To-morrow, if thou be in good health and case, give the folk leave to come in to thee and look into their affairs and excuse thyself to them and promise them good governance and prosperity.’ ‘O

Shimas,' answered the king, 'thou hast spoken advisedly; and tomorrow, if it be the will of God the Most High, I will do that which thou counsellest me.' So the vizier went out from him and told the folk what he had said to him; and on the morrow the king came forth of his seclusion and bade admit the people, to whom he excused himself, promising them that thenceforward he would deal with them as they wished, wherewith they were content and departed each to his dwelling.

Then one of the king's women, who was his best- beloved of them and most in honour with him, went in to him and seeing him pale and thoughtful over his affairs, by reason of that which he had heard from his chief vizier, said to him, 'O king, how comes it that I see thee troubled in mind? Doth aught ail thee?' 'No,' answered he; 'but my pleasures have distracted me from my duties and I know not what hath possessed me to be thus negligent of my affairs and those of my subjects. If I continue on this wise, ere long the kingdom will pass out of my hand.' 'O king,' rejoined she, 'I see that thou hast been duped by thy viziers and ministers, who wish but to torment and spite thee, so thou mayst have no pleasure of this thy kingship neither enjoy ease nor delight, and would have thee consume thy life in warding off trouble from them, till thy days be wasted in toll and weariness and thou be as one who slayeth himself for another's benefit or like the boy and the thieves.' 'How was that?' asked the king, and she answered, 'It is said that

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The Boy and the Thieves.

Seven thieves once went out to steal, according to their wont, and fell in with a poor orphan boy, who besought them for somewhat to eat. Quoth one of them to him, “Wilt go with us, O boy, and we will feed thee and clothe thee and entreat thee kindly?” And he answered, saying, “Needs must I go with you whithersoever ye will and ye are as my own people.” So they took him and fared on with him till they came to a garden, and entering, went round about therein, till they found a walnut-tree laden with ripe fruit and said one to another, “Look which is the lightest and smallest of us and make him climb the tree.” And they said, “None of us is smaller than this boy.” So they sent him up into the tree and said to him, “O boy, touch not aught of the fruit, lest some one see thee and do thee a mischief.” “How then shall I do?” asked he, and they said, “Sit among the boughs and shake them with thy might, so that which is thereon may fall, and we will pick it up. Then, when thou hast made an end of shaking down the fruit, come down and take thy share of that which we have gathered.” So he began to shake every bunch at which he could come, so that the nuts fell and the thieves picked them up and ate [some] and hid [other some] till they were all full, except the boy, who had eaten nought.

As they were thus engaged, up came the owner of the garden and said to them, “What do ye with this tree?” “We have taken nought thereof,” answered they; “but we were passing by and seeing yonder boy on the tree, concluded that he was the owner thereof and besought him to give us to eat of the fruit. So he fell to shaking the branches, that the nuts dropped down, and we are not at fault.” Quoth the master to the boy, “What sayst thou?” And he answered, “These men lie; but I will tell thee the truth. It is that we all came hither together and they bade me climb the tree and shake its branches, that the nuts might fall down to them, and I obeyed them.” “Verily,” said the master, “thou hast brought thyself into parlous case; but hast thou profited to eat aught of the fruit?” And he said, “I have eaten nought thereof.” “Now know I thy stupidity and folly,” rejoined the owner of the garden, “in that thou hast wroughten to ruin thyself and advantage others.” Then said he to the thieves, “Go your ways: I have no resort against you.” But he laid hands on the boy and punished him. On like wise,’ added the favourite, ‘thy viziers and officers of state would sacrifice thee to their interests and do with thee as did the thieves with the boy.’ ‘Thou sayst sooth,’ answered the king, ‘and I will not go forth to them nor leave my pleasures.’

Then he passed the night with his wife in all delight till the morning, when the chief vizier arose and assembling the officers of state, together with those of the folk who were present with them, repaired with them to the palace, glad and rejoicing [in the anticipation of good]. But the door opened not nor did the king come forth unto them nor give them leave to go in to him. So, when they despaired of him, they said to Shimas, ‘O excellent vizier and accomplished sage, seest thou not the behaviour of this boy, young of years and little of wit, how he addeth falsehood to his offences? See how he hath broken his promise to us and hath failed of that for which he engaged unto us, and this it behoveth thee join to his other sins; but we beseech thee go in to him yet again and see what is the cause of his holding back and refusal to come forth; for we doubt not but that the like of this fashion cometh of his depraved nature, and indeed he hath reached the utmost pitch of stiffneckedness.’

Accordingly, Shimas went in to the king and bespoke him, saying, ‘Peace be upon thee, O king! How cometh it that I see thee give thyself up to paltry pleasures and neglect the great affair whereto it behoveth thee apply thyself? Thou art like unto a man, who had a milch- camel and coming one day to milk her, the goodness of her milk caused him forget to hold fast her halter; which whenas she felt she pulled herself free and made of into the desert. Thus he lost both milk and camel and the mischief that betided him overpassed his profit. Wherefore do thou look unto that wherein is thy welfare and that of thy subjects; for, even as it behoveth not a man to sit for ever at the kitchen door, because he needeth food, so should he not company overmuch with women, by reason of his inclination to them. A man should eat but as much food as will stay his hunger and drink but what will ward of the pangs of thirst; and in like manner it behoveth the man of understanding to content himself with passing two of the four-and-twenty hours of his day with women and spend the rest in ordering his own affairs and those of his people. For to be longer than this in company with women is hatful both to mind and body, seeing that they command not unto good neither direct thereto: wherefore it behoveth a man to accept from them neither speech nor deed, for indeed I have heard tell that many men have come to ruin through their women, and amongst others [I have heard tell of] a certain man who perished, for that he obeyed his wife's commandment and had to do with her [at an unseasonable time].' 'How was that?' asked the king, and Shimas answered, saying, 'They tell that

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The Man and His Wilful Wife.

A certain man had a wife whom he loved and honoured, giving ear to her speech and doing according to her counsel. Moreover, he had a garden, which he had newly planted with his own hand, and was wont to go thither every day, to tend and water it. One day his wife said to him, "What hast thou planted in thy garden?" And he answered, "All that thou lovest and desirest, and I am assiduous in tending and watering it." Quoth she, "Wilt thou not carry me thither and show it to me, so I may see it and offer thee up a prayer [for its prosperity], for that my prayers are effectual?" "I will well," answered he; "but have patience with me till the morrow, when I will come and take thee." So, on the morrow, he carried her to the garden and entered with her therein.

Now two young men saw them enter from afar and said to each other, "Yonder man is an adulterer and yonder woman an adulteress, and they have not entered this garden but to do adultery therein." So they followed them, to see what they would do, and hid themselves in a corner of the garden. The man and his wife abode awhile therein, and presently he said to her, "Pray me the prayer thou didst promise me;" but she answered, saying, "I will not pray for thee, until thou fulfil my desire of that which women seek from men." "Out on thee, O woman!" cried he. "Hast thou not thy fill of me in the house? Here I fear scandal, more by token that thou divertest me from my affairs. Fearest thou not that some one will see us?" Quoth she, "We need have no care for that, seeing that we do neither sin nor lewdness; and as for the watering of the garden, that may wait, for that thou canst water it whenas thou wilt." And she would take neither excuse nor reason from him, but was instant with him in seeking dalliance.

So he arose and lay with her, which when the young men aforesaid saw, they ran upon them and seized them, saying, "We will not let you go. for ye are adulterers, and except we lie with the woman, we will denounce you to the police." "Out on you!" answered the man. "This is my wife and I am the master of the garden." They paid no heed to him, but fell upon the woman, who cried out to him for succour, saying, "Suffer them not to defile me!"

So he came up to them, calling out for help, but one of them turned on him and smote him with his dagger and slew him. Then they returned to the woman and ravished her. This I tell thee, O king' continued the vizier, 'but that thou mayst know that it behoveth not men to give ear unto a woman's talk neither obey her in aught nor accept her judgment in counsel. Beware, then, lest thou don the garment of ignorance, after that of knowledge and wisdom, and follow perverse counsel, after knowing that which is true and profitable. Wherefore ensue thou not a paltry pleasure, whose end is corruption and whose inclining is unto sore and uttermost perdition.'

When the king heard this, he said to Shimas, 'To-morrow I will come forth to them, if it be the will of God the Most High.' So Shimas returned to the grandees and notables who were present and told them what the king had said. But this came to the ears of the favourite; so she went in to the king and said to him, 'A king's subjects should be his slaves; but thou art become a slave to thy subjects, for that thou standest in awe of them and fearest their mischief. They do but seek to make proof of thy temper; and if they find thee weak they will disdain thee; but, if they find thee stout and brave they will stand in awe of thee. On this wise do ill viziers with their king, for that their wiles are many: but I will make manifest unto thee the truth of their malice. If thou fall in with their demands, they will cause thee leave thy commandment and do their will; nor will they cease to lead thee on from affair to affair till they cast thee into destruction; and thy case will be as that of the merchant and the thieves.' 'How was that?' asked the king; and she answered, 'I have heard tell that

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The Merchant and the Thieves.

There was once a wealthy merchant, who set out for a certain city with merchandise, purposing to sell it there, and when he came thither, he hired a lodging there and took up his abode therein. Now certain thieves saw him, who were wont to lie in wait for merchants, that they might steal their goods; so they went to his house and cast about to enter in, but could find no way thereto, and their captain said, “I will accomplish you his affair.” Then he went away and donning a physician’s habit, threw over his shoulder a bag containing medicines, with which he set out, crying, “Who lacks a doctor?” and fared on till he came to the merchant’s lodging and saw him sitting eating the morning meal. So he said to him, “Dost thou want a physician?” “Not I,” answered the merchant; “but sit and eat with me.” So the thief sat down over against him and began to eat.

Now this merchant was a great eater; and the thief, seeing this, said to himself, “I have found my opportunity.” So he turned to his host and said to him, “It behoveth me to give thee an admonition; and after thy kindness to me, I cannot hide it from thee. I see thee to be a great eater and the cause of this is a disorder in thy stomach; so hasten to take order for thy cure, or thine affair will end in perdition.’ Quoth the merchant, “My body is sound and my stomach quick of digestion, and though I be a hearty eater, yet is there no disease in me, to God be the praise and the thanks!” “It may so appear unto thee,” rejoined the thief; “but I know thou hast a latent disorder in thy vitals and if thou hearken to me, thou wilt medicine thyself.’ “And where shall I find him who knoweth my remedy?” asked the merchant. “God is the Healer,” answered the robber; “but a physician like myself tendeth the sick to the best of his power.” And the other said, “Show me my remedy and give me thereof.” So he gave him a powder, wherein was great plenty of aloes, saying, “Use this to-night.”

When the night came, the merchant tasted the powder and found it nauseous of taste; nevertheless he misdoubted not of it, but swallowed it all and found ease therefrom that night. Next night the thief brought him another powder, wherein was yet more aloes, and he took it. It purged him that night, but he bore with this and rejected it not. When the thief saw that he gave ear unto his word and put trust in him, he brought him a deadly drug and gave it to him. The merchant swallowed it and no sooner had he done this than that which was in his belly fell down and his guts were rent in sunder, and by the morrow he was a dead man; whereupon the thieves came and took all that belonged to him. This,' added the favourite, 'I tell thee, O king, but that thou mayst not give ear to these deluders; else will there befall thee that whereby thou wilt destroy thyself.' "Thou sayst sooth,' replied the king; 'I will not go forth to them.'

On the morrow, the folk assembled together and repairing to the king's door, sat there the most part of the day, till they despaired of his coming forth, when they returned to Shimas and said to him, 'O sage philosopher and learned master, seest thou not that this ignorant boy doth but redouble in falsehood to us? Verily it were of reason to take the kingdom from him and give it to another, so our affairs may be set in order and our estates maintained; but go thou in to him a third time and tell him that nought hindereth us from rising against him and taking the kingship from him but [the remembrance] of his father's goodness to us and that which he required from us of oaths and engagements [with respect to him]. However, to-morrow, we will all, to the last of us, assemble here with our arms and break down the gate of the palace; and if he come forth to us and do that which we wish, well and good; else will we go in to him and slay him and put the kingdom in another's hand.'

So Shimas went in to him and said, 'O king, that wallowest in thy lusts and thy pleasures, what is this thou dost with thyself and who promptest thee thereunto? Indeed, thou sinnest against thyself and there hath ceased from thee that which we knew in thee aforetime of integrity and wisdom and eloquence. Would I knew who hath thus changed thee and turned thee from wisdom to folly and from fidelity to iniquity and from complaisance to stiffneckedness and from acceptance of me to aversion from me! How comes it that I admonish thee thrice and thou neglectest my admonition and that I counsel thee justly and thou still gainsayest my counsel? Tell me, what is this heedlessness and folly and who is it prompteth thee thereunto? Know that the people of thy kingdom have agreed together to come in to thee and slay thee and give thy kingdom to another. Art thou able to cope with them all and save thyself from their hands or canst thou quicken thyself after slaughter? If, indeed, thou availest to do all this, thou art safe and hast no occasion for my rede; but, if thou have any concern for thy life and thy kingship, return to thy senses and hold fast thy kingdom and show forth to the people the power of thy prowess and acquaint the folk with thine excuse, for they are minded to tear away that which is in thy hand and commit it unto another, being resolved upon revolt and rebellion, impelled thereto by that which they know of thy youth and thy surrender of thyself to lusts and voluptuousness; for that stones, albeit they lie long in water, if thou take them out therefrom and smite one upon another, fire will be struck from them. Now thy subjects are many in number and they have taken counsel together against thee, to transfer the kingship from thee to another and accomplish upon thee that which they desire of thy destruction. So shalt thou fare as did the wolf with the foxes and the lion.' 'How was that?' asked the king, and the vizier answered, 'They say that

The Foxes and the Wolf.

A troop of foxes went out one day to seek food, and as they coasted about in quest of this, they happened upon a dead camel and said to each other, "Verily we have found wherewithal we may live a great while; but we fear lest one of us oppress other and the strong overbear the weak with his strength, and so the weak of us perish; wherefore it behoveth us seek one who shall judge between us and appoint unto each his part, so the strong may not lord it over the weak." As they consulted together, up came a wolf, and some of the foxes said to the others, "Your counsel is just; let us make this wolf judge between us, for he is the strongest of beasts and his father was sultan over us aforetime; wherefore we hope in God that he will do justice between us." So they accosted the wolf and acquainting him with their determination, said to him, "We make thee judge between us, so thou mayst allot unto each of us his day's meat, after the measure of his need, lest the strong of us overbear the weak and some of us destroy other some."

The wolf consented to take the governance of their affairs and allotted unto each of them what sufficed him that day; but on the morrow he said in himself, "If I divide this camel amongst these weaklings, no part thereof will come to me, save that which they assign to me, and if I eat it alone, they can do me no hurt, seeing that they are a prey to me and to the people of my house. Who shall hinder me from taking it for myself? Surely, it is God who hath bestowed it on me, by way of provision, and no thanks to them. It were best that I keep it for myself, and henceforth I will give them nought." Accordingly, when the foxes came to him, as of wont, and sought of him their food, saying, "O Abou Sirhan, give us our day's provender," he answered, "I have nothing left to give you." Whereupon they went away in the sorriest case, saying, "Verily, God hath cast us into grievous trouble with this vile traitor, that feareth not God neither respecteth Him; but we have neither power nor resource." But one of them said, "Belike it was but stress of hunger that moved him to this; so let him eat his fill to-day, and to-morrow we will go to him again."

So, on the morrow, they again betook themselves to the wolf and said to him, “O Abou Sirhan, we set thee in authority over us, that thou mightest allot unto each of us his day’s meat and do the weak justice against the strong of us and that, when this is finished, thou shouldst do thine endeavour to get us other and so we be still under thy safeguard and protection. Now hunger is sore upon us, for that we have not eaten these two days; so do thou give us our day’s meat and thou shalt be free to dispose of the rest as thou wilt.” But the wolf returned them no answer and redoubled in his stiffneckedness. So they strove to turn him from his purpose; but he would not be turned. Then said one of the foxes to the rest, “Nothing will serve us but that we go to the lion and cast ourselves on his protection and assign the camel unto him. If he vouchsafe us aught thereof it will be of his bounty, and if not, he is worthier of it than this filthy fellow.”

So they betook themselves to the lion and acquainted him with that which had betided them with the wolf, saying, “We are thy servants and come to thee, imploring thy protection, so thou mayst deliver us from this wolf, and we will be thy slaves.” When the lion heard their story, he was jealous for God the Most High and went with them in quest of the wolf, who, seeing him making for him, addressed himself to flight; but the lion ran after him and seizing him, rent him in pieces and restored their prey to the foxes. This shows,’ added Shimas, ‘that it behoveth no king to neglect the affairs of his subjects; wherefore do thou hearken to my counsel and give credit to that which I say to thee; for thou knowest that thy father, before his decease, charged thee give ear unto loyal counsel. This is the last of my speech with thee and peace be on thee.’ Quoth the king, ‘I will hearken to thee and to-morrow, God willing, I will go forth to them.’

So Shimas went forth from him and returning to the Folk, told them that the king had accepted his counsel and promised to come out unto them on the morrow. But, when the favourite heard this saying reported of Shimas and knew that needs must the king go forth to his subjects, she betook herself to him and said to him, ‘How great is my wonderment at thy submissiveness and obedience to thy slaves! Knowst thou not that these viziers are thy servants? Why then dost thou exalt them to such a pitch of importance that they conceit them it was they gave thee this kingship and advanced thee to this height and that it is they who confer favours on thee, albeit they have no power to do thee the least hurt? Indeed, it is they who owe thee submission, not thou who owest it unto them, and it is their duty to carry out thine orders; so how cometh it that thou art so mightily affrighted at them? It is said, "Except thy heart be like iron, thou art not fit to be a king." But thy mildness hath deluded these men, so that they presume upon thee and cast off their allegiance to thee, albeit it behoveth that they be constrained unto obedience and enforced to submissiveness unto thee. If therefore, thou hasten to accept their words and leave them in their present case and fulfil to them the least thing against thy will, they will importune thee and presume upon thee, and this will become their wont. But, if thou hearken to me, thou wilt not advance any one of them to power neither wilt thou accept his word nor encourage him to presume upon thee; else wilt thou fare with them as did the shepherd with the robber.' 'How was that?' asked the king, and she answered, 'They say that

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The Shepherd and the Thief.

There was once a shepherd, who fed a flock of sheep in the desert and kept strait watch over them. One night, there came to him a thief thinking to steal some of his flock and finding him assiduous in guarding them, sleeping
not by night neither relaxing in his vigilance by day, prowled about him all night, but could get nothing of him. So, when he was weary of striving, he betook himself to [another part of] the desert and trapping a lion, skinned him and stuffed his hide with straw; after which he carried it to a high place, where the shepherd might see it and be assured thereof, and set it up there. Then he went up to the shepherd and said to him, “Yonder lion hath sent me to demand his supper of these sheep.” “Where is the lion?” asked the shepherd; and the thief answered, “Lift thine eyes: there he stands.”

The shepherd raised his eyes and seeing the stuffed hide, deemed it a very lion and was mightily affrighted; so he said to the thief, “O my brother, take what thou wilt. I will not anywise gainsay thee.” So the thief took what he would of the sheep and redoubled in avidity by reason of the excess of the shepherd’s affright. Accordingly, every little while, he would go to him and frighten him, saying, “The lion hath need of this and that, and his intent is to do thus and thus,” and take what he would of the sheep; and he stinted not to do thus with him, till he had wasted the most part of his flock. This, O king,’ added the favourite, ‘I tell thee but that thou suffer not the grandees of thy realm to be deluded by thy mildness and easiness of temper and presume on thee; and in sound judgment their death were better than that they deal thus with thee.’ Quoth the king, ‘I accept this thine admonition and will not go hearken to their counsel neither go out unto them..

On the morrow the viziers and officers of state and heads of the people assembled and taking each his arms, repaired to the palace of the king, so they might break in upon him and slay him and make another king in his stead. When they came to the door, they required the doorkeeper to open to them; but he refused, whereupon they sent to fetch fire, wherewith to burn down the doors and enter. The doorkeeper, hearing what was toward amongst them, went in to the king in haste and told him that the folk were gathered together at the gate. 'And,' quoth he, 'they required me to open to them, but I refused and they have sent to fetch fire to burn down the doors withal, so they may come in to thee and slay thee. What dost thou bid me do?' Quoth the king in himself, 'Verily, I am fallen into sheer perdition.'

Then he sent for the favourite and said to her, 'Indeed, Shimas never told me aught but I found it true, and now the folk are come, great and small, purposing to slay me and thee; and for that the doorkeeper would not open to them, they have sent to fetch fire, to burn the doors withal: so will the house be burnt and we therein. What dost thou counsel me to do?' 'Let not thine affair affright thee,' answered she; 'no harm shall betide thee. This is a time in which crackbrains rise against their kings.' 'But what,' asked he, 'dost thou counsel me and how shall I do in this matter?' Quoth she, 'My advice is that thou bind thy head with a fillet and feign thyself sick: then send for the vizier Shimas, who will come and see the case wherein thou art; and do thou say to him, "Verily I purposed to go forth to the folk this day; but this sickness hindered me. So go thou out to them and acquaint them with my case and tell them that to-morrow I will without fail come forth to them and do their occasions and look into their affairs, so they may be reassured and their anger may subside." Then do thou summon ten of thy father's stoutest slaves, men of strength and prowess, to whom thou canst entrust thyself, giving ear to thy word and obedient to thy commandment, keeping thy secret and devoted to thy love, and bid them on the morrow stand at thy head nor suffer any of the folk to enter, save one by one; and all who enter do thou bid them put to death. If they agree with thee upon this, do thou to-morrow set up thy throne in the audience-chamber and open thy doors.

When the folk see that thou hast opened thy doors, their minds will be set at ease and they will come to thee with a whole heart, [thinking no evil], and seek admission to thee. Then do thou bid admit them, one by one, even as I said to thee, and do thy will with them; but it behoveth thee begin by putting Shimas, their chief and leader, to death; for he is the Grand Vizier and head of the matter. So slay him first and after put all the rest to death, one after another, and spare none whom thou knowest to have broken his covenant with thee; and on like wise slay all whose violence thou fearest. If thou deal thus with them, there will be left them no power to make head against thee; so shalt thou be altogether at rest from them and shalt enjoy thy kingship in peace and do what thou wilt; and know that there is no device that will advantage thee more than this.' 'Verily,' said the king, 'this thy counsel is just and that which thou biddest me well-advised, and I will assuredly do as thou sayest.'

So he called for a fillet and bound his head therewith and feigned sickness. Then he sent for Shimas and said to him, 'O Shimas, thou knowest that I love thee and hearken to thy counsel and thou art to me as brother and father both in one. Moreover, thou knowest that I do all thou biddest me and indeed thou badest me go forth to the folk and sit to judge between them. Now I was certified that this was loyal counsel on thy part and purposed to go forth to them yesterday; but this sickness betided me and I cannot sit up. I hear that the folk are incensed at my failure to come forth to them and are minded of their malice to do with me that which is not seemly, for that they know not what aileth me. So go thou forth to them and acquaint them with my case and excuse me to them, for I am obedient to their bidding and will do according to their desire; wherefore do thou order this affair and engage thyself to them for me of this, for that thou hast been a loyal counsellor to me and to my father before me, and it is of thy wont to make peace between the folk. To- morrow, if it be the will of God the Most High, I will without fail come forth to them, and peradventure my sickness will cease from me this night, by the blessing of the purity of my intent and the good I purpose them in my heart.'

Shimas prostrated himself to God and called down blessings on the king and kissed his hand, rejoicing. Then he went forth to the folk and told them what he had heard from the king and forbade them from that which they had a mind to do, acquainting them with the king's excuse for his absence and that he had promised to come forth to them on the morrow and deal with them according to their wishes; whereupon they dispersed and returned to their houses.

Meanwhile the king sent for ten slaves of gigantic stature, men of stout heart and great prowess, whom he had chosen from amongst his father's body-guards, and said to them, 'Ye know the favour and esteem in which my father held you and all the bounties and honours he bestowed on you, and I will advance you to yet higher rank with me than this. Now I will tell you the reason thereof and ye are under God's safeguard from me. But [first] I will ask you of somewhat wherein if ye do my bidding, obeying me in that which I shall command you and keeping my secret from all men, ye shall have of me largesse and favour overplaying your desire.'

The slaves answered him with one voice, saying, 'All that thou biddest us, O our lord, will we do, nor will we anywise depart from thy commandment, for thou art our lord and master.' 'God be good to you!' said the king. 'Now will I tell you why I have chosen you out for increase of honour with me. Ye know how generously my father dealt with the people of his dominions and the oath he took from them on my behalf and how they promised him that they would not break faith with me nor gainsay my commandment; and ye saw how they did yesterday, whenas they came all together about me and would have slain me. Now I am minded to do with them somewhat, to wit, I have considered their fashion of yesterday and see that nought but exemplary chastisement will restrain them from the like of this; wherefore I charge you privily to put to death whom I shall point out to you, to the intent that, by slaying their leaders and chiefs, I may ward off evil and calamity from my realm; and the manner thereof shall be on this wise. To-morrow I will sit in this chair in this chamber and give them leave to enter, one by one, coming in at one door and going out at another; and do ye stand, all ten, before me and be attentive to my signs; and whoso enters singly, take him and drag him into yonder chamber and slay him and hide his body.' The slaves answered, 'We hearken to thy word and obey thy commandment.' Whereupon he gave them largesse and dismissed them.

On the morrow he summoned the slaves and bade set up the throne. Then he donned his royal robes and taking the book of the law in his hands, posted the ten slaves before him and commanded to open the doors. So they opened the doors and the herald proclaimed aloud, saying, ‘Whoso hath authority, let him come to the king’s carpet!’ Whereupon up came the viziers and prefects and chamberlains and stood, each in his rank. Then the king bade admit them, one by one, and the first to enter was Shimas, after the wont of the chief vizier; but no sooner had he presented himself before the king than the ten slaves set upon him, ere he could be ware, and dragging him into the adjoining chamber, despatched him. On like wise did they with the rest of the viziers and doctors and notables, slaying them, one after another, till they made an end of them all. Then the king called the headsmen and bade them put to the sword all who remained of the folk of valour and prowess. So they fell on them and left none whom they knew for a man of mettle but they slew him, sparing only the dregs and refuse of the people. These latter they drove away and they returned each to his folk, whilst the king secluded himself with his pleasures and surrendered his soul to its lusts, ensuing tyranny and oppression and unright, till he outwent all the men of evil who had foregone him.

Now this king’s realm was a mine of gold and silver and jacinths and jewels and the neighbouring kings envied him this empire and looked for calamity to betide him. Moreover, one of them [to wit, the King of Farther India] said in himself, ‘Now have I gotten my desire of wresting the realm from the hand of yonder crackbrained boy, by reason of that which hath betided of his slaughter of the chiefs of his state and of all the men of valour and mettle that were in his dominions. Now is my occasion to snatch away that which is in his hand, seeing he hath no knowledge of war nor judgment thereto, nor is there any left to counsel him aright or succour him. Wherefore this very day will I open on him the door of mischief by writing him a letter wherein I will flout him and reproach him with that which he hath done and see what he will answer.’

So he wrote him a letter to the following effect: ‘In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful! I have heard tell of that which thou hast done with thy viziers and doctors and men of war and that whereinto thou hast cast thyself of calamity, so that there is neither power nor strength left in thee to repel whoso shall assail thee, more by token that thou transgressest and orderest thyself tyrannously and profligately. Now God hath given me the mastery over thee and hath delivered thee into my hand; wherefore do thou give ear to my word and obey my commandment and build me an impregnable castle amiddleward the sea. If thou canst not do this, depart thy realm and begone with thy life; for I will send unto thee, from the farthest parts of Hind, twelve squadrons of horse, each twelve thousand fighting-men strong, who shall enter thy land and spoil thy goods and slay thy men and take thy women prisoners. Moreover, I will make my Vizier Bediya captain over them and bid him lay strait siege [to thy capital city] till he master it; and I have commanded the bearer of this letter that he tarry with thee but three days. So, if thou do my bidding, thou shalt be saved; else will I send unto thee that which I have said.'

Then he sealed the letter and gave it to a messenger, who journeyed with it till he came to Wird Khan's capital and delivered it to him. When the young king read it, his heart sank within him and his breast was straitened and he made sure of destruction, having none to whom he might resort for counsel or succour. So he rose and went in to his favourite, who, seeing him changed of colour, said to him, 'What ails thee, O king?' Quoth he, 'Today I am no king, but slave to the king.' And he opened the letter and read it to her, whereupon she fell to weeping and lamenting and tearing her clothes. Then said he to her, 'Hast thou aught of counsel or resource in this grievous state?' But she answered, 'Women have no resource in time of war, nor have they strength or judgment. It is men alone who have strength and judgment and resource in the like of this affair.''

When the king heard this, there befell him the utmost grief and repentance and remorse for that wherein he had transgressed against his viziers and officers and the nobles of his people and the chiefs of his state, and he would that he had died ere there came to him the like of this shameful news. Then he said to his women, 'Verily, there hath betided me from you that which befell the heathcock with the tortoises.' 'What was that?' asked they, and he answered, 'It is said that

The Heathcock and the Tortoises.

A number of tortoises dwelt once in a certain island, abounding in trees and fruits and streams, and it chanced, one day, that a heathcock passing over the island, was overcome with heat and weariness and stayed his flight there. Presently, looking about for a cool place, he espied the resort of the tortoises and lighted down therein. Now they were then abroad in quest of food and when they returned from their feeding-places to their dwelling, they found the heathcock there. His beauty pleased them and God made him fair in their eyes, so that they extolled their Creator and loved the heathcock with an exceeding love and rejoiced in him, saying one to another, “Assuredly this is of the goodliest of the birds.” And they began to caress him and entreat him with kindness. When he saw that they looked on him with eyes of affection, he inclined to them and made friends with them and took up his abode with them, Eying away in the morning whither he would and returning at eventide to pass the night with them.

After awhile, the tortoises, seeing that his [daylong] absence from them desolated them and finding that they saw him not but by night, (for at break of day he still took flight in haste and they knew not what came of him, for all their love to him,) said to each other, “Indeed, we love this heathcock and he is become our friend and we cannot brook parting from him; so how shall we do to make him abide with us always? For he flies away at daybreak and is absent from us all day and we see him not save by night.” Quoth one of them, “Be easy, O my sisters. I will bring him not to leave us for the twinkling of an eye.” And the rest answered, saying, “An thou do this, we will all be thy slaves.”

So, when the heathcock came back from his feeding-place and sat down amongst them, the wily tortoise drew near unto him and called down blessings on him, giving him joy of his safe return and saying, “O my lord, know that God hath vouchsafed thee our love and hath in like manner set in thy heart the love of us, so that thou art become to us a familiar friend and a comrade in this desert place. Now the goodliest of times for those who love each other is when they are in company and the sorest of afflictions for them is absence and separation. But thou leavest us at peep of day and returnest not to us till sundown, wherefore there betideth us sore desolation. Indeed this is exceeding grievous unto us and we abide in sore longing by reason thereof."

"Indeed," answered the bird, "I love you also and yearn for you yet more than you for me, nor is it easy for me to leave you; but I have no help for this, seeing that I am a bird with wings and may not abide with you always, because that is not of my nature. For a bird, being a winged creature, may not remain still, except it be for the sake of sleep at night; but, as soon as it is day, he flies away and seeks his food in what place soever pleases him." "True," answered the tortoise. "Nevertheless he who hath wings hath no repose at most seasons, for that the good he getteth is not a fourth part of the trouble that betideth him, and the best of all the things for which one striveth is ease of life and contentment. Now God hath appointed love and fellowship between us and thee and we fear for thee, lest some of thine enemies catch thee and thou perish and we be denied the sight of thy face." "Thou sayst sooth," rejoined the heathcock; "but how dost thou counsel me to do?" Quoth the tortoise, "My advice is that thou pluck out thy wing- feathers, wherewith thou speedest thy flight, and abide with us in peace, eating of our meat and drinking of our drink in this pasturage, that aboundeth in trees laden with ripe fruits, and thou and we, we will sojourn in this fruitful place and enjoy each other's company."

The heathcock inclined to her speech, seeking ease for himself, and plucked out his wing-feathers, one by one, in accordance with the tortoise's counsel; then he took up his abode with them and contented himself with the little ease and passing pleasure he enjoyed. Presently up came a. weasel and looking at the heathcock, saw that his wings were plucked so that he could not fly, whereat he was mightily rejoiced and said in himself, "Verily yonder heathcock is fat and scant of feather." So he went up to him and seized him, whereupon the heathcock called out to the tortoises for help; but, when they saw the weasel seize him, they drew apart from him and huddled together, choked with weeping for him, for they saw the beast torture him. Quoth the heathcock, "Is there aught but weeping with you?” And they answered, saying, “O our brother, we have neither strength nor power nor resource against a weasel.” At this the heathcock was grieved and gave up hope of life; and he said to them, “The fault is not yours, but mine own, in that I hearkened to you and plucked out my wing-feathers, wherewith I used to fly. Indeed, I deserve death for having hearkened to you, and I blame you not in aught.”

On like wise,’ continued the king, ‘I do not blame you, O women; but I blame and reproach myself for that I remembered not that ye were the cause of the transgression of our father Adam, by reason whereof he was cast out from Paradise, but forgot that ye are the root of all evil and hearkened to you, of my ignorance and folly and lack of sense and judgment, and slew my viziers and the governors of my state, who were my loyal counsellors in all things and my glory and my strength against whatsoever troubled me. Now find I not one to replace them and see none who shall stand me in their stead; and except God succour me with one of sound judgment, who shall guide me to that wherein is my deliverance, I am fallen into sheer perdition.’ Then he arose and withdrew into his bedchamber, bemoaning his viziers and governors and saying, ‘Would God those lions were with me, though but for an hour, so I might excuse myself unto them and look on them and make my moan to them of my case and that which hath betided me after them!’ And he abode all that day sunken in the sea of troublous thought, eating not neither drinking.

When the night came, he arose and changing his raiment, donned old clothes and disguised himself and went forth at a venture to walk about the city, so haply he might hear some comfortable word. As he wandered about the streets, he chanced upon two boys of equal age, each about twelve years old, who sat talking under a wall: so he drew near them whereas he might hear and apprehend what they said, unseen of them, and heard one say to the other, ‘O my brother, hear what my father told me yesternight of the calamity that hath betided him in the withering of his crops, before their time, by reason of the lack of rain and the great affliction that is fallen on this city.’ Quoth the other, ‘Knowst thou not the cause of this affliction?’ ‘Not I,’ answered the first. ‘I prithee, tell it me, if thou know it.’ ‘Yes,’ rejoined the second; ‘I know it and will tell it thee. Know that I have heard from one of my father’s friends that our king put his viziers and ministers to death, without offence done of them, by reason of his love for women and inclination to them; for that his viziers forbade him from this, but he would not be forbidden and commanded to slay them, in obedience to his women. Thus he killed Shimas my father, who was his vizier and the vizier of his father before him and the chief of his council; but thou shalt see how God will do with him by reason of his sins against them and how He shall avenge them of him.’ ‘How so?’ asked the first boy.

‘Know,’ replied his fellow, ‘that the King of Farther India maketh light of our king and hath sent him a letter, rating him and saying to him, “Build me a castle amiddleward the sea, or I will send unto thee Bediya my vizier, with twelve squadrons of horse, each twelve thousand strong, to seize upon thy kingdom and slay thy men and take thee and thy women prisoners.” And he hath given him three days’ time to answer. Now thou must know, O my brother, that this King of Farther India is a masterful tyrant, a man of might and exceeding prowess, and in his realm are much people; wherefore, except our king make shift to fend him off from himself, he will fall into perdition, whilst the King of Hind will seize on our possessions and slay our men and make prize of our women.” When the king heard this talk, his agitation redoubled and he inclined to the boys, saying, ‘Surely, this boy is a wizard, in that he is acquainted with this thing; for the letter is with me and the secret also and none hath knowledge of this matter but myself. How then knoweth this boy of it? I will resort unto him and talk with him and I pray God that our deliverance may be at his hand.’

Then he approached the boy softly and said to him, ‘O dear boy, what is this thou sayest of our king, that he did ill to the utterest in slaying his viziers and the chiefs of his state? Indeed, he sinned against himself and his people and thou art right in that which thou sayest. But tell me, O my son, whence knowest thou that the King of Farther India hath written him a letter, berating him and bespeaking him with the grievous speech whereof thou tellest?’ ‘O brother,’ answered the boy, ‘I know this from the sand wherewith I tell the tale of night and day and from the saying of the ancients, “No mystery is hidden from God;" for the sons of Adam have in them a spiritual virtue which discovers to them hidden secrets.' 'True, O my son,' answered Wird Khan; 'but whence learnedly thou the [art of divination by] sand, and thou young of years?' Quoth the boy, 'My father taught it me;' and the king said, 'Is thy father alive or dead?' 'He is dead,' answered the boy.

Then said Wird Khan, 'Is there any resource or device for our king, whereby he may ward off this sore calamity from himself and his kingdom?' And the boy answered, 'It befits not that I speak with thee [of this]; but, if the king send for me and ask me how he shall do to baffle his enemy and win free of his snares, I will acquaint him with that wherein, by the power of God the Most High, shall be his deliverance.' 'But who shall tell the king of this,' asked Wird Khan, 'that he may send for thee?' Quoth the boy, 'If I hear that he seeketh men of experience and good counsel, I will go up with them to him and tell him that wherein shall be his welfare and the warding off of this affliction from him; but, if he neglect this pressing matter and busy himself with his pleasures among his women and I go to him of my own motion, purposing to acquaint him with the means of deliverance, he will assuredly give orders to slay me, even as he slew those his viziers, and my courtesy to him will be the cause of my destruction; wherefore the folk will think meanly of me and belittle my wit and I shall be of those of whom it is said, "He whose learning exceeds his wit perishes by his ignorance."'

When the king heard the boy's speech, he was assured of his sagacity and the excellence of his merit was manifest unto him. So he was certified that deliverance would betide him and his subjects at the boy's hands and said to him, 'Whence art thou and where is thy house?' 'This is the wall of our house,' answered he. The king took note of the place and leaving the boy, returned to his palace, rejoicing. There he changed his clothes and called for meat and drink, forbidding his women access to him. Then he ate and drank and returned thanks to God the Most High and besought Him of succour and deliverance. Moreover he craved His pardon and forgiveness for that which he had done with his counsellors of state and ministers and turned to Him with sincere repentance, imposing on himself prayer and fasting galore, by way of votive offering.

On the morrow, he called one of his chief officers and describing to him the boy's abiding-place, bade him go thither and bring him to his presence with all gentleness So the officer sought out the boy and said to him, 'The king bids thee to him, that good may betide thee from him and that he may ask thee a question; then shalt thou return in peace to thy dwelling.' 'What is the king's occasion with me?' asked the boy, and the officer said, 'My lord's occasion with thee is question and answer.' 'A thousand times hearkening and a thousand times obedience to the commandment of the king!' answered the boy and accompanied the officer to the palace. When he came into the presences he prostrated himself before God and saluting the king, called down blessings on him. Wird Khan returned his salutation and bade him sit. So he sat down and the king said to him, 'Knowst thou who walked with thee yesternight?' 'Yes,' answered the boy, and the king said, 'And where is he?' 'It is he who speaketh with me at this present,' replied the boy. 'Thou sayst sooth, O friend,' rejoined the king and bade set him a chair beside his own, whereon he made him sit and called for meat and drink.

Then they talked awhile and the king said, 'O vizier, thou toldest me yesternight that thou hadst a device wherewith thou couldst fend off from us the malice of the King of Hind. What is this device and how shall we contrive to ward off his mischief from us? Tell me, that I may make thee chief of those who speak with me in the realm and choose thee to be my vizier and do according to thy judgment in all thou counsellest me and assign thee a splendid recompense.' 'O king,' answered the boy, 'keep thy recompense to thyself and seek counsel and policy of thy women, who counselled thee to slay my father Shimas and the rest of the viziers.' When the king heard this, he was confounded and sighed and said, 'O dear boy, was Shimas indeed thy father?' 'Yes,' answered the boy; 'Shimas was indeed my father and I am in truth his son.' Whereupon the king bowed his head, whilst the tears ran from his eyes, and he craved pardon of God.

Then said he, 'O boy, indeed I did this of my ignorance and by the evil counsel of the women and of the greatness of their malice; but I beseech thee to forgive me and I wilt set thee in thy father's stead and make thy rank higher than his. Moreover, if thou do away this retribution from us, I will encircle thy neck with a collar of gold and mount thee on the goodliest of steeds and bid the crier make proclamation before thee, saying, “This is the glorious boy, he who sitteth in the second seat after the king!” As for the women, I have it in mind to do vengeance on them at such time as God the Most High shall will it. But tell me now what thou hast with thee of counsel and contrivance, that my heart may be at ease.’ Quoth the boy, ‘Swear to me that thou wilt not gainsay me in that which I shall say to thee and that I shall be in safety from that which I fear.’ And the king answered, ‘This is the covenant of God between thee and me, that I will not go from thy word and that thou shalt be my chief counsellor and whatsoever thou biddest me, that will I do; and God the Most High is witness betwixt us of what I say.’

Therewith the boy’s breast dilated and the field of speech was opened to him wide and he said, ‘O king, my counsel to thee is that thou wait till the expiration of the delay appointed by thee for returning an answer to the courier of the King of Hind; and when he cometh to thee, seeking the answer, do thou put him off to another day. With this he will excuse himself to thee, on the score of his master having appointed him certain fixed days, and press thee for an answer; but do thou rebut him and put him off to another day, without specifying it. Then will he go forth from thee, angry, and betake himself into the midst of the city and speak openly among the folk, saying, “O people of the city, I am a courier of the King of Farther India, who is a king of great might and of determination such as softeneth iron. He sent me with a letter to the king of this city and limited unto me certain days, saying, ‘An thou be not with me by the time appointed, my vengeance shall fall on thee.’ Now, behold, I went in to the king of this city and gave him the letter, which when he had read, he sought of me a delay of three days, after which he should return me an answer thereto, and I agreed to this of courtesy and consideration for him. When the three days were past, I went to seek the answer of him, but he put me off to another day; and now I have no patience to wait longer; so I am about to return to my lord the King of Farther India and acquaint him with that which hath befallen me; and ye, O folk, are witnesses between me and him.”

This will be reported to thee and do thou send for him and bespeak him gently and say to him, "O thou that strivest for thine own destruction, what moveth thee to blame us among our subjects? Verily, thou deservest present death at our hands; but the ancients say, 'Clemency is of the attributes of the noble.' Know that our delay in answering thy master's letter arose not from neglect on our part, but from our much business and lack of leisure to look into thine affair and write a reply to thy king." Then call for the letter and read it again and laugh immoderately and say to the courier, "Hast thou a letter other than this? If so, we will write thee an answer to that also." He will say, "I have none other than this letter;" but do thou repeat thy question to him a second and a third time, and he will reply, "I have none other at all." Then say to him, "Verily, this thy king lacketh wit in that he writeth us the like of this letter, seeking to arouse our anger against him, so that we shall go forth to him with our troops and invade his dominions and take his realm. But we will not punish him this time for the vileness of his breeding, [as shown] in this letter, for that he is scant of wit and weak of judgment, and it beseemeth our dignity that we first admonish him and warn him not to repeat the like of these extravagances; and if he again adventure himself and return to the like of this, he will merit present destruction. Indeed, methinks this king of thine must be an ignorant fool, taking no thought to the issue [of that he doth] and having no vizier of sense and good counsel, with whom he may advise. Were he a man of sense, he had taken counsel with a vizier, before sending us the like of this ridiculous letter. But he shall have an answer like unto his letter and overpassing it; for I will give it to one of the boys of the school to answer." Then send for me, and when I come, bid me read the letter and answer it.'

When the king heard the boy's speech, his breast expanded and he approved his counsel and his device pleased him. So he conferred largesse upon him and instating him in his father's once, sent him away, rejoicing. When the three days of delay were expired, that he had appointed unto the courier, the latter presented himself and going in to the king, demanded the answer; but he put him off to another day; whereupon he went to the end of the throne-room and spake unseemly, even as the boy had foresaid. Then he betook himself to the bazaar and said, 'Ho, people of this city, I came with a message from the King of Farther India to your king, and still he putteth me off from an answer. Now the term is past which my master limited unto me and your king hath no excuse, and ye are witnesses unto this.'

When this speech was reported to the king, he sent for the courier and said to him, 'O thou that seekest thine own destruction, art thou not the bearer of a letter from king to king, between whom are secrets, and how cometh it that thou goest forth among the folk and publishest kings' secrets to the common people? Verily, thou meritest punishment from us; but this we will forbear, for the sake of returning an answer by thee to this fool of a king of thine: and it befitteth not that any return him an answer but the least of the boys of the school.' Then he sent for the vizier's son, who came and prostrating himself to God, offered up prayers for the king's abiding glory and long life; whereupon Wird Khan threw him the letter, saying, 'Read that letter and write me a reply hereto in haste.'

The boy took the letter and reading it, smiled; then he laughed aloud and said to the king, 'Didst thou send for me to answer this letter?' 'Yes,' answered Wird Khan, and the boy said, 'O king, methought thou hadst sent for me on some grave matter; indeed a lesser than I had availed to the answering of this letter; but it is thine to command, O puissant king.' Quoth the king, 'Write the answer forthright, on account of the courier, for that he is appointed a term and we have delayed him another day.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the boy and pulling out paper and inkhorn, wrote the following answer.

'In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate! Peace be upon him who hath gotten pardon and deliverance and the mercy of the Compassionate One! To proceed. O thou that pretendeth thyself a mighty king [and art but a king] in word and not in deed, we give thee to know that thy letter hath reached us and we have read it and have taken note of that which is therein of absurdities and rare extravagances, whereby we are certified of thine ignorance and ill-will unto us. Verily, thou hast put out thy hand to that whereunto thou availest not, and but that we have compassion on God's creatures and the people, we had not held back [our hand] from thee. As for thy messenger, he went forth to the bazaar and published the news of thy letter to great and small, whereby he merited punishment from us; but we spared him and remitted his offence, not of respect for thee, but of pity for him, seeing that he is excusable with thee.

As for that whereof thou makest mention in thy letter of the slaughter of my viziers and wise men and grandees, this is the truth and [this I did] for a reason that availed with me, and I slew not one man of learning but there are with me a thousand of his kind, wiser than he and more of sense and learning, nor is there with me a child but is filled with knowledge and wisdom, and I have, in the stead of each of the slain, of those who surpass in his kind, what is beyond count. Moreover, each of my troops con cope with a battalion of thine, whilst, as for treasure, I have a manufactory that makes every day a thousand pounds of silver, besides gold, and precious stones are with me as pebbles; and as for the people of my kingdom, I cannot set forth to thee their wealth and beauty and goodliness. How darest thou, therefore, presume upon us and say to us, “Build me a castle amiddleward the sea?” Verily, this is a marvellous thing, and doubtless it arises from the slenderness of thy wit; for, hadst thou aught of sense, thou hadst enquired of the beatings of the waves and the movements of the winds. But fend thou off therefrom the waves and the surges of the sea and still the winds, and we will build thee the castle.

As for thy pretension that thou wilt vanquish me, God forfend that the like of thee should lord it over us and conquer our realm! Nay, God the Most High hath given me the mastery over thee, for that thou hast transgressed against me and provoked me without due cause. Know, therefore, that thou hast merited chastisement from God and from me; but I fear God in respect of thee and thy subjects and will not take horse against thee but after warning. Wherefore, if thou fear God, hasten to send me this year’s tribute; else will I not leave to ride forth against thee with a thousand thousand and a hundred thousand fighting-men, all giants on elephants, and I will range them round about my vizier and bid him beleaguer thee three years, in place of the three days’ delay thou appointedst to thy messenger, and I will make myself master of thy kingdom, except that I will slay none but thyself alone and make prisoners therefrom none but thy harem.’

Then the boy drew his own portrait in the margin of the letter and wrote thereunder the words: ‘This answer was written by the least of the boys of the school;’ after which he sealed it and handed it to the king. The latter gave it to the courier, who took it and kissing the king’s hands, went forth from him, rendering thanks to God and the king for the latter’s clemency to him and marvelling at the boy’s intelligence. He arrived at the court of the king, his master, three days after the expiration of the term appointed to him, and found that he had called a meeting of his council, by reason of the failure of the courier to return at the appointed time. So he went in to the king and prostrating himself before him, gave him the letter. The king took it and questioned him of the cause of his tarrying and how it was with King Wird Khan. So he recounted to him all that he had seen with his eyes and heard with his ears; whereat the king’s wit was confounded and he said, ‘Out on thee! What tale is this thou tellest me of the like of this king?’ ‘O mighty king,’ answered the courier, ‘I am here before thee, but open the letter and read it, and the truth of my speech will appear to thee.’

So the king opened the letter and read it and seeing the portrait of the boy who had written it, made sure of the loss of his kingdom and was perplexed concerning the issue of his affair. Then, turning to his viziers and grandees, he acquainted them with the case and read them the letter, whereat they were mightily affrighted and sought to calm the king’s terror with words that were only from the tongue, whilst their hearts were torn with alarm and anxiety; but Bediya, the chief vizier, said, ‘Know, O king, that there is no avail in that which my brother viziers have said, and it is my counsel that thou write this king a letter and excuse thyself to him therein, saying, “I love thee and loved thy father before thee and sent thee this letter by the courier only to prove thee and try thy constancy and see what was in thee of stoutness and thy proficiency in matters practical and theoretical and skill in enigmas and that wherewith thou art endowed of all perfections. Wherefore we pray God the Most High to bless thee in thy kingdom and strengthen the defences of thy [capital] city and add to thy dominion, since thou art mindful of thyself and accomplishest the needs of thy subjects.” And send it to him by another courier.’ ‘By the Great God,’ exclaimed the king, ‘it is a wonder of wonders that this man should be a mighty king and prepared for war, after his slaughter of all the wise men of his kingdom and his counsellors and the captains of his host and that his realm should prosper after this and there should issue therefrom this vast strength! But the most wonderful of all is that the little ones of its schools should return the like of this answer for its king. Verily, of my ill-omened presumption, I have kindled this fire upon myself, and I know not how I shall quench it, save [by acting on] the advice of this my vizier.'

Accordingly he made ready a rich present, with slaves and attendants galore, and wrote the following letter [in answer to that of Wird Khan]. 'In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful! To proceed. O glorious King Wird Khan, son of my dear brother Jelyaad, may God have mercy on thee and continue thee [on life!] Thine answer to our letter hath reached us and we have read it and apprehended its meaning and see therein that which rejoiceth us, and this is the utmost of that which we sought of God for thee; wherefore we beseech Him to exalt thy dignity and stablish the pillars of thy state and give thee the victory over thy foes and those who purpose thee ill. Know, O king, that thy father was my brother and that there were between us in his lifetime pacts and covenants of friendship, and never had he of me nor I of him other than good; and when he was translated [to the mercy of God] and thou sattest upon the throne of his kingship, there betided us the utmost joy and contentment; but, when the news reached us of that which thou didst with thy viziers and the notables of thy state, we feared lest the report of thee should come to the ears of some king other than ourselves and he should presume against thee, for that we deemed thee neglectful of thine affairs and of the maintenance of thy defences and careless of the interests of thy kingdom; so we wrote unto thee what should arouse thee [from thy torpor]. But, when we saw that thou returnest us the like of this answer, our heart was set at ease for thee, may God give thee enjoyment of thy kingdom and stablish thee in thy dignity! And so peace be on thee.'

Then he despatched the letter and the present to Wird Khan with an escort of a hundred horse, who fared on till they came to his court and saluting him, presented him with the letter and the gifts. The king read the letter and accepted the presents, lodging the captain of the escort in a befitting place and entreating him with honour. So the news of this was bruited abroad among the people and the king rejoiced therein with an exceeding joy. Then he sent for the boy, the son of Shimas, and the captain of the hundred horse, and entreating the young vizier with honour, gave him the letter to read; whilst he himself upbraided the captain concerning the king's conduct, and the latter kissed his hand and made his excuses to him, offering up prayers for the continuance of his life and the eternity of his fortune. The king thanked him for his good wishes and bestowed upon him honours and largesse galore. Moreover, he gave his men what befitted them and made ready presents to send by them and bade the young vizier write an answer to their king's letter.

So the boy wrote an answer, wherein, after an elegant exordium, he touched briefly on the question of reconciliation and praised the good breeding of the envoy and of his men, and showed it to the king, who said to him, 'Read it, O dear boy, that we may know what is written therein.' So the boy read the letter in the presence of the hundred horse, and the king and all present marvelled at the excellence of its style and sense. Then the king sealed the letter and delivering it to the captain of the hundred horse, dismissed him with an escort of his own troops, to bring him to the frontier of his country. So the captain returned, confounded at that which he had seen of the boy's knowledge and sagacity and thanking God for the speedy accomplishment of his errand and the acceptance of [the proffered] peace, to the King of Farther India, to whom he delivered the presents and the letter, telling him what he had seen and heard, whereat the king was mightily rejoiced and returned thanks to God the Most High and honoured the envoy, lauding his care and zeal and advancing him in rank: and he was thenceforth in peace and tranquillity and all contentment.

As for King Wird Khan, he returned to the way of righteousness, abandoning his evil courses and turning to God with sincere repentance; and he altogether forswore women and devoted himself to the ordering of the affairs of his realm and the governance of his people in the fear of God. Moreover, he made the son of Shimas vizier in his father's room and the chief of his counsellors and keeper of his secrets and commanded to decorate his capital and the other cities of his kingdom seven days. At this the subjects rejoiced, glad in the prospect of justice and equity, and fear and alarm ceased from them and they were instant in prayer for the king and for the vizier who had done away this trouble from him and them.

Then said the king to the vizier, ‘What is thy counsel for the proper ordering of the state and the prospering of the people and the furnishing of the realm anew with captains and counsellors as before?’ ‘O king of high estate,’ answered the boy, ‘in my judgment, it behoves, before all, that thou began by tearing out from thy heart the root of frowardness and leave thy debauchery and tyranny and devotion to women; for, if thou return to the root of transgression, the second backsliding will be worse than the first.’ ‘And what,’ asked the king, ‘is the root of frowardness that it behoves me to tear out from my heart?’ ‘O mighty king,’ answered the vizier, little of years but great of wit, ‘the root of frowardness is the ensuing the desire of women and inclining to them and following their counsel and policy; for the love of them troubles the soundest wit and corrupts the most upright nature, and manifest proofs bear witness to my saying, wherein, if thou meditate them and consider their actions and the consequences thereof with eyes intent, thou wilt find a loyal counsellor against thine own soul and wilt stand in no need of my advice.

Look then, thou occupy not thy heart with the thought of women and do away the trace of them from thy mind, for that God the Most High hath forbidden the excessive use of them by the mouth of His prophet Moses, so that quoth a certain wise king to his son, “O my son, when thou succeedest to the throne after me, spare to frequent women overmuch, lest thy heart be led astray and thy judgment corrupted; for that their much frequentation leadeth to love of them, and love of them to corruption of judgment.” And the proof of this is what befell our lord Solomon, son of David (peace be upon them both!) whom God endowed with knowledge and wisdom and supreme dominion above all men, nor vouchsafed He to any of the kings of old time the like of that which He gave him; and women were the cause of his father’s offending.

The examples of this are many, O king, and I do but make mention of Solomon to thee for that thou knowest that to none was given the like of the dominion wherewith he was invested, so that all the kings of the earth obeyed him. Know then, O king, that the love of women is the root of all evil and none of them hath any judgment: wherefore it behoveth a man to confine his use of them within the limits of necessity and not incline to them altogether, for that will cause him fall into corruption and perdition. If thou hearken to my rede, all thine affairs will prosper; but, if thou neglect it, thou wilt repent, whenas repentance will not avail thee.'

'Indeed,' answered the king, 'I have left my sometime inclination to women and have altogether renounced my infatuation for them; but how shall I do to punish them for that which they have done? For the slaying of thy father Shimas was of their malice and not of my own will, and I know not what ailed my reason that I fell in with their proposal to kill him.'

Then he cried out and groaned and lamented, saying, 'Alas for the loss of my vizier and his just judgment and wise ordinance and for the loss of his like of the viziers and notables of the state and of the goodliness of their apt and sagacious counsels!' 'O king,' said the young vizier, 'know that the fault is not with women alone, for that they are like unto a pleasing commodity, whereto the desires of the beholders incline. To whosoever desireth and buyeth, they sell it, but whoso buyeth not, none forceth him thereto; so that the fault is his who buyeth, especially if he know the harmfulness of the commodity. Now, I warn thee, as did my father before me, but thou hearkenedst not to his counsel.' 'O vizier,' answered the king, 'indeed thou hast fixed this fault upon me, even as thou hast said, and I have no excuse except the Divine ordinances.' 'O king,' rejoined the vizier, 'know that God hath created us and endowed us with ableness and appointed to us will and choice; so, if we will, we do, and if we will, we do not. God commandeth us not to do harm, lest sin attach to us; wherefore it behoveth us to consider that which it is right to do, for that the Most High commandeth us nought but good in all cases and forbiddeth us only from evil; but what we do, we do of our free will, be it right or wrong.'

Quoth the king, 'Thou sayst truly, and indeed my fault arose from my surrendering myself to my lusts, albeit many a time my reason warned me from this and thy father Shimas often warned me likewise; but my lusts carried it over my reason. Hast thou then with thee aught that may [in the future] withhold me from committing this error and whereby my reason may be victorious over the lusts of my soul?' 'Yes,' answered the vizier. 'I can tell thee what will restrain thee from committing this error, and it is that thou put off the garment of ignorance and don that of understanding, disobeying thy passions and obeying thy Lord and reverting to the policy of the just king thy father, fulfilling thy duties to God the Most High and to thy people, applying thyself to the defence of thy faith and the promotion of thy subjects' welfare, governing thyself aright and forbearing the slaughter of thy people.

Look to the issues of things and sever thyself from tyranny and oppression and arrogance and lewdness, practising justice and equity and humility and obeying the commandments of God the Most High, applying thyself to gentle dealing with those of His creatures whom He hath committed to thy governance and being assiduous in fulfilling their prayers unto thee, in accordance with that which is incumbent on thee. If thou be constant in the practice of these virtues, may thy days be serene and may God of His mercy spare thee and make thee revered of all who look on thee; so shall thine energies be brought to nought, for God the Most High shall put their hosts to the rout, and thou shalt have acceptance with Him and be loved and reverenced of His creatures.'

'Verily,' said the king, 'thou hast quickened mine entrails and enlightened my heart with thy sweet speech and hast opened the eyes of mine understanding, after blindness; and I am resolved to do all thou hast set forth to me, with the help of God the Most High, leaving my former estate of lust and frowardness and bringing forth my soul from duresse into freedom and from fear into safety. It behoveth thee, then, to be joyful and contented, for that I, for all my greater age, am become to thee as a son, and thou to me as a dear father, for all thy tenderness of years, and it is grown incumbent on me to do my utmost endeavour in that thou commandest me.

Wherefore I thank the bounty of God the Most High and thy bounty for that He hath vouchsafed me, by thee, fair fortune and good guidance and just judgment to fend off my trouble and anxiety;

and the deliverance of my people hath been brought about by means of the excellence of thy skill and the goodliness of thine ordinance. Henceforward, thou shalt be the governor of my kingdom and equal to myself in all but sitting upon the throne; and all that thou dost shall be law to me and none shall gainsay thy word, young in years though thou be, for that thou art old in wit and knowledge. So I thank God who hath vouchsafed thee to me, that thou mayst guide me out of the crooked paths of perdition into the way of righteousness.'

Quoth the vizier, 'O august king, know that no merit is due to me for giving thee loyal counsel; for that to succour thee by deed and word is of that which is incumbent on me, seeing that I am but a plant of thy bounty; nor I alone, but my father before me was overwhelmed with thy favours; so that we are both alike partakers in thy munificence, and how shall we not acknowledge this? Moreover thou, O king, art our shepherd and ruler and he who wards off our enemies from us and to whom is committed our protection and our guardian, instant in endeavour for our safety. Indeed, though we lavished our lives in thy service, yet should we not fulfil that which behoveth us of gratitude to thee; but we supplicate God the Most High, who hath set thee in dominion over us and made thee our ruler, and beseech Him to vouchsafe thee long life and success in all thine enterprises and not to try thee with afflictions in thy time, but bring thee to thy desire and make thee to be reverenced till the day of thy death and lengthen thine arms in beneficence and generosity, so thou mayst have commandment over every wise man and subdue every froward one and all men of wisdom and mettle be found with thee in thy realm and all the ignorant and faint-hearted be plucked out therefrom; and we pray Him to withhold from thy people scarcity and misfortune and sow among them love and good fellowship and cause them to enjoy of this world its prosperity and of the next its felicity, of His grace and bounty and hidden mercies. Amen. For He can all things and there is nought difficult unto Him, in whom all things have their goal and glace of returning.'

When the king heard the vizier's prayers he was mightily rejoiced thereat and inclined to him with his whole heart, saying, 'Henceforth, O vizier, thou art to me in the stead of brother and son and father, and nought but death shall sever me from thee. Thou shalt have the disposal of all that my hand possesses, and if I have no child to succeed me, thou shalt sit on my throne in my stead; for thou art the worthiest of all the people of my realm, and I will invest thee with my kingship and appoint thee my heir presumptive to inherit the kingdom after me, if it be the will of God the Most High, in the presence of the grandees of my state, and will them to witness thereof.'

Then he called his secretary and bade him write to all the notables of his kingdom, summoning them to his court, and caused proclamation to be made in his city unto all the townsfolk great and small, bidding all the amirs and governors and chamberlains and other officers and dignitaries, as well as the sages and doctors of the law, to his presence. Moreover he held a grand divan and made a banquet, never was its like, and bade all the folks high and low, thereto. So they all assembled and abode in eating and drinking and delight a month's space; after which the king clothed all his household and the poor of his kingdom and bestowed abundant largesse on the men of learning.

Then he chose out a number of the sages and wise men, by counsel of the son of Shimas, and caused them go in to him, bidding him choose out six of them, that he might make them viziers under his commandment. So he chose out six of the oldest of them in years and the most accomplished of them in understanding and knowledge and the speediest of memory and judgment, and presented them to the king, who clad them in the vizier's habit and said to them, 'Ye are become my viziers, under the commandment of this my chief vizier, the son of Shimas. Whatsoever he saith to you or biddeth you thereto, ye shall not in anywise depart from it, albeit he is the youngest of you in years; for he is the eldest of you in wit.'

Then he seated them upon chairs, adorned with gold, after the usage of viziers, and appointed unto them stipends and allowances, bidding them choose out such of the notables of the kingdom and officers of the troops present at the banquet as were most fit for the service of the state, that he might make them captains of tens and hundreds and thousands and appoint to them dignities and assign them provision, after the manner of grandees. This they did with all diligence and he bade them also handsel all who were present with largesse galore and dismiss them each to his country with honour and worship. Moreover he charged his governors rule the people with justice and enjoined them to be tenderly solicitous for rich and poor and bade succour them from the treasury, according to their several degrees. So the viziers wished him continuance of glory and long life, and he commanded to decorate the city three days, in gratitude to God the Most High for His mercies.

When the court was dissolved and all the people had departed, each to his own place, after their affairs had been set in order, the king summoned the son of Shimas and the other six viziers and taking them apart privily, said to them, ‘Know, O viziers, that I have been a wanderer from the right way, drowned in ignorance, setting my face against admonition, a breaker of pacts and promises and a gainsayer of folk of good counsel; and the cause of all this was my befoolment by these women and the wiles with which they beset me and the seeming fairness of their speech, wherewith they beguiled me, and my acceptance of this, for that I deemed their words true and loyal counsel, by reason of the sweetness and softness thereof; but behold, they were deadly poison. And now I am certified that they sought but to ruin and destroy me, wherefore they deserve punishment and requital from me, for the sake of justice, that I may make them an admonition to all who will be admonished. But what deem ye advisedly of putting them to death?’

‘O mighty king,’ answered the young vizier, ‘I have already told thee that women are not alone to blame, but that the fault is shared between them and the men who hearken to them; but they deserve punishment for two reasons: first, for the fulfilment of thy word, because thou art the supreme king; and secondly, by reason of their presumption against thee and their beguilement of thee and their intermeddling with that which concerns them not and whereof it befits them not to speak. Wherefore they have right well deserved death; yet let that which hath befallen them suffice them, and do thou henceforth reduce them to servants’ estate. But it is thine to command in this and other than this.’

Some of the viziers seconded Ibn Shimas’s advice; but one of them prostrated himself before the king and said to him, ‘May God prolong the king’s days! If thou be indeed resolved to put them to death, do with them as I shall say to thee.’ ‘And what is that?’ asked Wird Khan. Quoth the vizier, ‘It were best that thou bid some of thy female slaves carry the women who played thee false to the apartment, wherein befell the slaughter of thy viziers and sages, and imprison them there, and do thou assign to them a little meat and drink, enough to keep life in them [and no more]. Let them never be suffered to go forth of that place, and whenever one of them dies, let her abide among them, as she is, till they die all, even to the last of them. This is the least of their desert, for that they were the cause of this great wickedness, ay, and the origin of all the troubles and calamities that have befallen in our time; so shall there be verified in them the words of him who said, “He who diggeth a pit for his brother shall surely himself fall therein, though he go long in safety.”’

The king accepted the vizier’s counsel and sending for four stalwart female slaves, committed the offending women to them, bidding them carry them to the place of slaughter and imprison them there and allow them every day a little coarse food and a little troubled water. They did with them as he bade; wherefore the women mourned sore, repenting them of that which they had done and lamenting grievously. Thus God gave them their reward of abjection in this world and prepared for them torment in the world to come; nor did they cease to abide in that dark and noisome place, whilst every day one or other of them died, till they all perished, even to the last of them; and the report of this event was bruited abroad in all lands and countries. This is the end of the story of the king and his viziers and subjects, and praise be to God who causeth peoples to pass away and quickeneth the rotten bones, Him who [alone] is worthy to be glorified and magnified and hollowed for ever and ever!

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

ABOUKIR THE DYER AND ABOUSIR THE BARBER.

There dwelt once, in the city of Alexandria, two men, one of whom was a dyer, by name Aboukir; and the other a barber called Abousir; and they were neighbours in the market, where their shops were side by side. The dyer was a swindler and a liar, an exceeding wicked man, as if indeed his temples were hewn out of the rock or fashioned of the threshold of a Jewish synagogue, nor was he ashamed of any knavery he wrought amongst the folk. It was his wont, when any brought him stuffs to dye, to require of him present payment, on pretence of buying dyestuffs withal. So the man would give him the hire in advance and go away, and he would spend it on meat and drink; after which he would sell the stuff itself and spend its price in eating and drinking and what not else, for he ate not but of the choicest and most delicate meats nor drank but of the best of that which doth away the wit.

When the owner of the stuff came to him, he would say to him, ‘Come to me to-morrow before sunrise and thou shalt find thy stuff dyed.’ So the man would go away, saying in himself, ‘One day is near another,’ and return next day at the appointed time, when the dyer would say to him, ‘Come to-morrow; yesterday I was not at work, for I had with me guests and was occupied with their service till they went: but come to-morrow before sunrise and take thy stuff dyed.’ So he would go away and return on the third day, when Aboukir would say to him, ‘Indeed yesterday I was excusable, for my wife was brought to bed in the night and all day I was busy with one thing and another; but to-morrow, without fail, come and take thy stuff dyed.’

When the man came again at the appointed time, he would put him off with some other tale, it mattered little what, and would swear to him; nor would he cease to promise and swear to him, as often as he came, till the customer lost patience and said, ‘How often wilt thou say to me, “To-morrow?” Give me my stuff: I will not have it dyed.’ Whereupon the dyer would make answer, ‘By Allah, O my brother, I am abashed at thee; but I will tell the truth and may God harm all who do folk hurt in their goods!' The other would say, 'Tell me what hath happened;' and Aboukir would answer, 'Indeed I dyed thy stuff on matchless wise and hung it on the rope [to dry;] but it was stolen and I know not who took it.' If the owner of the stuff were a good-natured man, he would say, 'God will recoup me;' and if he were ill-conditioned, he would pursue him with exposure and insult, but would get nothing of him, though he complained of him to the judge.

He ceased not to do thus till his report was noised abroad among the folk and they used to warn one another against him and he became a byword amongst them. So they all held aloof from him and none had to do with him save those who knew not his character; but, for all this, he failed not daily to suffer insult and disgrace from God's creatures. By reason of this his trade became slack and he used to go to the shop of his neighbour the barber and sit there, with his eyes on the door of the dyery. Whenever he espied any one who knew him not standing at the dyery-door, with a piece of stuff in his hand, he would go up to him and say, 'What seekest thou, O man?' And the man would answer, 'Take and dye me this thing.' So the dyer would say, 'What colour wilt thou have it?' For, with all his knavery, he could dye all manner of colours; but he never kept faith with any one; so poverty had gotten the better of him. Then he would take the stuff and say, 'Give me my hire in advance and come to-morrow and take the stuff.' So the stranger would give him the money and go his way; whereupon Aboukir would carry the stuff to the market and sell it and buy meat and vegetables and tobacco and fruit and what not else he needed with the price; but, whenever he saw any one who had given him stuff to dye standing at the door of his shop, he would not show himself to him.

On this wise he abode years and years, till it chanced one day that he received stuff to dye from a masterful man and sold it and spent the price. The owner came to him every day, but found him not in his shop; for, whenever he espied any one who had a claim against him, he would flee from him into the shop of the barber Abousir. At last, the angry man, finding that he was not to be seen and growing weary of coming, repaired to the Cadi and bringing one of the latter's serjeants to the shop, nailed up the door, in presence of a number of

Muslims, and sealed it, for that he found therein nothing but some broken pans, to stand him instead of his stuff; after which the serjeant took the key, saying to the neighbours, ‘Tell him to bring back this man’s goods and take the key of his shop,’ and went his way, he and the man.

Then said Abousir to Aboukir, ‘What aileth thee? Whoever brings thee aught, thou losest it for him. What is gone of this angry man’s stuff?’ ‘O my neighbour,’ answered the dyer, ‘it was stolen from me.’ ‘Wonderful!’ exclaimed the barber. ‘Whenever any one gives thee aught, a thief steals it from thee! Art thou then the resort of the whole college of thieves? But I doubt me thou liest: so tell me the truth.’ ‘O my neighbour,’ replied Aboukir, ‘none hath stolen aught from me.’ ‘What then dost thou with the people’s goods?’ asked Abousir. And the dyer said, ‘Whenever any one giveth me aught to dye, I sell it and spend the price.’ Quoth Abousir, ‘is this permitted thee of God?’ ‘I only do this out of poverty,’ answered Aboukir, ‘because trade is dull with me and I am poor and have nothing.’ And he went on to complain to him of the slackness of his trade and his lack of means.

Abousir in like manner lamented the slackness of his own trade, saying, ‘I am a master of my craft and have not my equal in this city; but no one is shaved at my shop, because I am a poor man; and I loathe this craft, O my brother.’ ‘And I also,’ answered Aboukir, ‘loathe my own craft, by reason of its slackness; but, O my brother, what call is there for our abiding in this city? Let us depart from it and divert ourselves with foreign travel, carrying our crafts in our hands, the which are in demand in all countries; so shall we breathe the air and be rid of this grievous trouble.’ And he ceased not to commend travel to Abousir, till the latter became wishful to set out, whereat Aboukir rejoiced and recited the following verses:

Forsake thy native land, it thou advancement seek, and hie
Abroad for five advantages in foreign travel lie.
The putting off of care, the gain of livelihood and lore And
manners and the company of noble folk and high.
If it be said, ‘Distress and woe and severance of loves And
hardships still in travel be beneath a foreign sky,’

I trow ‘twere better for a man that he should die than live Still in humiliation’s house, ‘twixt envier and spy.

Then they agreed to travel together and Aboukir said to Abousir, ‘O my neighbour, we are become brethren and there is no difference between us, so it behoves us to recite the first chapter of the Koran [in token of agreement] that he of us who gets work shall of his profit feed him who is out of work, and whatever is left, we will lay in a chest; and when we come back to Alexandria we will divide it fairly and equally.’ ‘So be it,’ answered Abousir, and they repeated the first chapter of the Koran on this understanding. Then Ahousir locked up his shop and gave the keys to the landlord, whilst Aboukir left his shop locked and sealed and let the key lie with the Cadi’s serjeant; after which they took their gear and embarked on the morrow in a galleon upon the salt sea. They set sail the same day and fortune attended them, for, of Abousir’s great good luck, of all that were in the ship (and there were therein an hundred and twenty men, besides the captain and the crew,) there was not a single barber. So, when they spread the sails, the barber said to the dyer, ‘O my brother, this is the sea and we shall need meat and drink, and we have but little victual with us and it may be the voyage will be long upon us; wherefore methinks I will shoulder my gear and pass among the passengers, and belike some one will say to me, “Come hither, O barber, and shave me,” and I will shave him for a cake of bread or a para or a draught of water: so shall we both profit by this.’

‘There is no harm in that,’ replied the dyer and laid down his head and slept, whilst the barber took his razor and shaving-tackle and throwing over his shoulder a rag, to serve as napkin (for that he was poor), passed among the passengers. Quoth one of them, ‘Ho, master, come and shave me.’ So he shaved him, and the man gave him a para. ‘O my brother,’ said Ahousir, ‘I have no use for this para; hadst thou given me a cake of bread, it were more blessed to me in this sea, for I have a shipmate and we are short of victual.’ So he gave him a cake of bread and a piece of cheese and filled him the basin with sweet water. The barber carried all this to Aboukir and bade him eat the bread and cheese and drink the water. So he ate and drank, whilst Abousir again took up his shaving-gear and went round about the deck among the passengers. One man he shaved for two cakes of bread and another for a piece of cheese, and he was in demand, because there was no other barber on board. So he bargained with every one who said to him, ‘Ho, master, shave me!’ for two cakes of bread and a para, and they gave him whatever he sought, so that, by sundown, he had gotten thirty cakes of bread and thirty paras, besides store of cheese and olives and botargoes.

Amongst the rest he shaved the captain, to whom he complained of his lack of victual for the voyage, and the captain said to him, ‘Have no care for that, so long as ye sail with us; for thou art welcome to bring thy comrade every night and sup with me.’ Then he returned to the dyer, whom he found still asleep; so he aroused him; and when Aboukir awoke, he found at his head bread and cheese and olives and botargoes galore and said, ‘Whence gottest thou all this?’ ‘From the bounty of God the Most High,’ replied Abousir. Then Aboukir would have eaten; but the barber said to him, ‘Eat not of this, O my brother; but leave it to serve us another time; for know that I shaved the captain and complained to him of our lack of victual: whereupon quoth he, “Bring thy comrade and sup both of ye with me every night and welcome. And this night we sup with him for the first time.’ But Aboukir replied, ‘I am sea-sick and cannot rise from my place; so let me sup off these things and go thou alone to the captain.’ ‘So be it,’ said Abousir and sat looking at the other, as he ate, and saw him hew off gobbets, as the quarryman hews stone from the mountain, and gulp them down with the gulp of an elephant that has not eaten for days, bolting one mouthful before he was rid of the previous one and glaring the while at that which was before him with the glower of a ghoul and blowing as the hungry bull blows over his beans and straw.

Presently up came a sailor and said to the barber, ‘O master, the captain bids thee come to supper and bring thy comrade.’ Quoth the barber to the dyer, ‘Wilt thou come with us?’ But he answered, ‘I cannot walk.’ So the barber went by himself and found the captain and his company sitting awaiting him, with a tray before them, wherein were a score or more of dishes. When the captain saw him, he said, ‘Where is thy friend?’ And Abousir answered, ‘O my lord, he is sea-sick.’ ‘That will do him no harm,’ answered the captain;

‘his sickness will pass off; but do thou carry him his supper and come back, for we await thee.’ Then he set apart a dish of kabobs and putting therein some of each dish, till there was enough for ten, gave it to Abousir, who took it and carried it to the dyer, whom he found grinding away with his dog-teeth at that which was before him, as he were a camel, and heaping mouthful on mouthful in his haste. Quoth Abousir, ‘Did I not say to thee, “Eat not [of this]?” Indeed the captain is a man of exceeding kindness. See what he hath sent thee, for that I told him thou wast sick.’ ‘Give it here,’ answered the dyer. So the barber gave it to him and he snatched it from him and fell upon it, like a ravening dog or a raging lion or a roc pouncing on a pigeon or one who is well-nigh dead for hunger and seeing victual, falls to eating thereof.

Then Abousir left him and going back to the captain, supped and enjoyed himself and drank coffee with him; after which he returned to Aboukir and found that he had eaten all that was in the platter and thrown it aside, empty. So he took the empty dish and gave it to one of the captain’s servants, then went back to Aboukir and slept till the morning. On the morrow he continued to shave, and all he got by way of meat and drink he gave to Aboukir, who ate and drank and sat still, rising not save to do his natural occasions, and every night the barber brought him a full dish from the captain’s table.

They fared thus twenty days, at the end of which time the galleon cast anchor in the harbour of a city; whereupon they took leave of the captain and landing, entered the town and took them a lodging in a khan. Abousir furnished the room and buying a cooking pot and a platter and spoons and what else they needed, fetched meat and cooked it; but Aboukir fell asleep the moment he entered the khan and awoke not till his companion aroused him and set the tray of food before him. When he awoke, he ate and saying to Abousir, ‘Blame me not, for I am giddy,’ fell asleep again. Thus he did forty days, whilst, every day, the barber took his tools and making the round of the city, wrought for that which fell to his lot, and returning, found the dyer asleep and aroused him. No sooner did he wake than he fell ravenously upon the food, eating as one who cannot have his fill nor be content; after which he went to sleep again.

On this wise he passed other forty days, and whenever the barber said to him, ‘Sit up and shake off this torpor and go forth and take an airing in the city, for it is a bright and pleasant place and hath not its equal among the cities,’ he would answer, saying, ‘Blame me not, for I am [still] giddy.’ Abousir cared not to vex him nor give him hard words; but, on the forty-first day, he himself fell sick and could not go abroad; so he pressed the porter of the khan into his service, and he did their occasions and brought them meat and drink four days, whilst Aboukir did nothing but eat and sleep. At the end of this time, the barber’s sickness redoubled on him, till he lost his senses for stress thereof; and Aboukir, feeling the pangs of hunger, arose and sought in his comrade’s clothes, where he found a thousand paras. So he took them and shutting the door of the chamber upon Abousir, went out, without telling any; and the doorkeeper of the inn was then at market and thus saw him not go out.

Aboukir betook himself to the bazaar and clad himself in rich apparel, at a cost of five hundred paras; then he proceeded to walk about and divert himself by viewing the place, which he found a city whose like was not among cities; but he noted that all its people were clad in clothes of white and blue, without other colour. Presently he came to a dyer’s and seeing nought but blue in his shop, pulled out to him a kerchief and said, ‘O master, take this kerchief and dye it and take thy hire.’ Quoth the dyer, ‘The cost of dying this will be twenty dirhems.’ ‘In our country,’ said Aboukir, ‘we dye it for two.’ ‘Then go and dye it in your own country,’ answered the dyer. ‘As for me, my price is twenty dirhems and I will not bate a tittle thereof.’ ‘What colour wilt thou dye it?’ asked Aboukir; and the dyer said, ‘I will dye it blue.’ Quoth Aboukir, ‘But I want it dyed red.’ ‘I know not how to dye red,’ answered the dyer. ‘Then dye it green,’ rejoined Aboukir. But the dyer said, ‘I know not how to dye green.’ ‘Yellow,’ said Aboukir. ‘Nor yet yellow,’ answered the dyer; and Aboukir went on to name the different colours to him, one after another, till the dyer said, ‘We are here in this city forty master-dyers, neither more nor less; and when one of us dies, we teach his son the craft. If he leave no son, we abide wanting one, and if he leave two sons, we teach one of them the craft, and if he die, we teach his brother. This our craft is straitly ordered and we know not how to dye aught but blue.’

Then said Aboukir, ‘Know that I also am a dyer and know how to dye all colours; and I would have thee take me into thy service on hire, and I will teach thee my art, so thou mayst glory therein over all the company of dyers.’ But the dyer answered, ‘We never admit a stranger into our craft.’ ‘And what if I open a dyery for myself?’ asked Aboukir. ‘We will not suffer thee to do that,’ replied the other; whereupon he left him and going to a second dyer, made him the like proposal; but he returned him the same answer as the first; and he ceased not to go from one to another, till he had made the round of the whole forty; but they would not accept of him either to master or journeyman. Then he repaired to the Syndic of the Dyers and told him what had passed, and he said, ‘We admit no stranger into our craft.’

With this Aboukir became exceeding wroth and going up to the king of the city, made complaint to him, saying, ‘O king of the age, I am a stranger and a dyer by trade;’ and he told him what had passed between himself and the dyers of the town, adding, ‘I can dye various kinds of red, such as rose-colour and carnation, and various kinds of green, such as grass-green and pistachio-green and olive and parrot’s wing, and various kinds of black, such as coal-black and blue-black, and various shades of yellow, such as orange and lemon-colour,’ and went on to name to him the rest of the colours. Then said he, ‘O king of the age, there is not a dyer in thy city who can avail to any one of these colours, for they know not how to dye aught but blue; yet will they not admit me amongst them, either as master or journeyman.’ ‘Thou sayst sooth for that matter,’ answered the king; ‘but I will open thee a dyery and give thee capital and have thou no care for them; for whoso offereth to do thee hindrance, I will hang him over the door of his shop.

Then he sent for builders and said to them, ‘Go round about the city with this master, and whatsoever place pleases him, be it shop or khan or what not, turn out its occupier and build him a dyery after his wish. Whatsoever he bids you, that do ye and gainsay him not in aught.’ And he clad him in a handsome suit and gave him two white slaves, to serve him, and a horse with housings of brocade and a thousand dinars, saying, ‘Provide thyself with this, against the building be completed.’ So Aboukir donned the dress and mounting the horse, became as he were an amir. Moreover the king assigned him a house and bade furnish it; so they furnished it for him and he took up his abode therein.

On the morrow he mounted and rode through the city, looking about him, whilst the architects went before him, till he saw a place that pleased him and said, ‘This place is good;’ whereupon they turned out the owner thereof and carried him to the king, who gave him, to the price of his holding, what more than contented him. Then the builders fell to work, whilst Aboukir said to them, ‘Build thus and thus and do this and that,’ till they built him a dyery that had not its like; whereupon he presented himself before the king and informed him that they had made an end of building the dyery and that there needed but the price of the dye-stuffs and gear to set it a-work. Quoth the king, ‘Take these four thousand dinars to thy capital and let me see the outcome of thy dyery.’ So he took the money and went to the market, where, finding dye-stuffs plentiful and [well-nigh] valueless, he bought all that he needed of materials for dyeing; and the king sent him five hundred pieces of stuff, which he proceeded to dye of all colours and spread them before the door of his dyery.

When the folk passed by the shop, they saw this wonderful sight, whose like they had never in their lives seen; so they crowded about the door, staring and questioning the dyer and saying, ‘O master, what are tne names of these colours?’ Quoth he, ‘This is red and that yellow and the other green,’ and so on with the rest of the colours. And they fell to bringing him stuffs and saying to him, ‘Dye this for us like this and that and take what thou seekest [to thy hire].’ When he had made an end of dyeing the king’s stuffs, he took them and went up with them to the divan; and when the king saw them he rejoiced in them and bestowed abundant largesse on the dyer. Moreover, all the troops brought him stuffs, saying, ‘Dye for us thus and thus;’ and he dyed for them to their wish, and they threw him gold and silver. On this wise his fame spread abroad and his shop was called the Sultan’s dyery. Good came in to him at every door and he became the owner of slaves, male and female, and amassed store of wealth. None of the other dyers dared say a word to him, but they used to come to him, kissing his hands and excusing themselves to him for the affronts they had done him aforetime and offering themselves to him as journeymen; but he would none of them.

Meanwhile Abousir abode three days, prostrate and unconscious, in the chamber where Aboukir had left him, at the end of which time the doorkeeper of the khan, chancing to look at the chamber-door, observed that it was shut and bethought himself that he had seen and heard nothing of the two companions [for some time]. So he said to himself, 'Belike they have made oft; without paying the rent of the chamber, or perhaps they are dead, or what is to do with them?' And he waited till sunset, when he went up to the chamber-door and heard the barber groaning within. He saw the key in the lock; so he opened the door and entering, found Abousir lying, groaning, and said to him, 'No harm to thee: where is thy friend?' 'By Allah,' answered Abousir, 'I only came to my senses this day and called out; but none answered me. God on thee, O my brother, look for the purse under my head and take five paras from it and buy me something to eat, for I am sore anhungred.'

The porter put out his hand and taking the purse, found it empty and said to the barber, 'The purse is empty; there is nothing in it.' Whereupon Abousir knew that the dyer had taken that which was therein and fled and said to the porter, 'Hast thou not seen my friend?' 'I have not seen him these three days,' answered the porter, 'and indeed methought you had departed, thou and he.' 'Not no,' said Ahousir; 'but he coveted my money and seeing me sick, took it and fled.' Then he fell a-weeping and lamenting, but the porter said to him, 'No harm shall come to thee, and God will requite him his deed.' So saying, he went away and cooked him a mess of broth, whereof he ladled out a platterful and brought it to him; nor did he cease to tend him and maintain him with his own monies for two months' space, at the end of which time he sweated and God made him whole of his sickness. Then he stood up and said to the porter, 'So God the Most High enable me, I will surely requite thee thy kindness to me; but none requiteth save God of His bounty!' Praised be He for thy recovery!' answered the porter. 'I dealt not thus with thee but of desire for the favour of God the Bountiful.'

Then the barber went forth of the khan and walked about the markets of the town, till chance brought him to that wherein was Aboukir's dyery, and he saw the vari-coloured stuffs spread before the shop and the people crowding to look upon them. So he questioned one of the townsmen and said to him, ‘What place is this and how comes it that I see the folk crowding together?’ And the man answered, saying, ‘This is the Sultan’s dyery, which he set up for a foreigner, by name Aboukir; and whenever he dyes a [new] piece of stuff we all flock to him and divert ourselves by gazing upon his handiwork, for that we have no dyers in our land who know how to dye these colours; and indeed there befell him with the dyers who are in the city thus and thus.’ And he went on to tell him all that had passed between Aboukir and the dyers and how he had complained of them to the sultan and he had taken him by the hand and built him that dyery and given him this and that; brief, he told him all that had passed.

At this the barber rejoiced and said to himself, ‘Praised be God who hath prospered him, so that he is become a master of his craft! Indeed, the man is excusable, for of a surety he hath been diverted from thee by his work and hath forgotten thee; but thou didst him kindness and entreatedst him generously, what time he was out of work; so, when he seeth thee, he will rejoice in thee and entreat thee generously, even as thou entreatedst him.’ So he made for the door of the dyery and saw Aboukir seated on a high divan in the doorway, clad in royal apparel and attended by four black and four white slaves all dressed in the richest of clothes. Moreover, he saw the workmen, ten black slaves, standing at work; for, when Aboukir bought them, he taught them the craft of dyeing, and he himself sat amongst his cushions, as he were a grand vizier or a most mighty king, putting his hand to nought, but only saying to the men, ‘Do this and do that.’

The barber went up to him and stood before him, doubting not but that, when he saw him, he would rejoice in him and salute him and entreat him with honour and make much of him; but, when eye met eye, the dyer said to him, ‘O rascal, how many a time have I bidden thee stand not at the door of this workshop? Hast thou a mind to disgrace me with the folk, knave that thou art?’ [And he cried out, saying], ‘Seize him!’ So the slave. ran at him and laid hold of him; and the dyer said, ‘Throw him down.’ So they threw him down and Aboukfr rose and taking a stick, dealt him a hundred blows on the back; after which they turned him over and he dealt him other hundred on his belly. Then he said to him, ‘Hark ye, scurril knave that thou art! If ever again I see thee standing at the door of this dyery, I will forthwith send thee to the king, and he will commit thee to the master of police, that he may strike off thy head. Begone, may God not bless thee!’

So Abousir [arose and] departed from him, broken-hearted by reason of the beating and humiliation that had betided him; whilst the bystanders said to Aboukir, ‘What hath this man done?’ Quoth he, ‘He is a thief, who steals the people’s goods: he hath robbed me of stuffs, how many a time! and I still said in myself, “God forgive him! He is a poor man,” and cared not to deal harshly with him; so I used to give the folk the worth of their goods and forbid him gently; but he would not be forbidden; and if he come again, I will send him to the king, who will put him to death and rid the folk of his mischief.’ And the bystanders fell to reviling the barber in his absence.

Meanwhile, the latter returned to the khan, where he sat pondering that which Aboukir had done with him, till the pain of the beating subsided, when he went out and walked about the markets of the city. Presently, he bethought him to go to the bath; so he said to one of the townsfolk, ‘O my brother, which is the way to the bath?” ‘And what manner of thing is the bath?’ asked the other. Quoth Abousir, ‘It is a place where people wash themselves and do away their defilements, and it is of the best of the good things of the world.’ ‘Get thee to the sea,’ replied the townsman; but the barber replied, ‘I want the bath.’ Quoth the other, ‘We know not what manner of thing is the bath, for we all resort to the sea; even the king, when he would wash, betaketh himself to the sea.’

When Abousir was certified that there was no bath in the city and that the people knew not the bath nor the fashion thereof he betook himself to the king’s divan and kissing the earth before him, called down blessings on him and said, ‘I am a stranger and a bath-keeper by trade, and I entered thy city and thought to go to the bath; but found not one therein. How cometh a city of this comely fashion to lack a bath, seeing that the bath is of the goodliest of the delights of this world?’ Quoth the king, ‘What manner of thing is the bath?’ So Abousir proceeded to set forth to him the attributes of the bath, saying, ‘Thy city will not be complete till there be a bath in it.’ ‘Welcome to thee!’ said the king and clad him in a dress that had not its like and gave him a horse and two black and two white slaves and four slave-girls. Moreover he appointed him a furnished house and honoured him yet more abundantly than he had honoured the dyer.

Then he sent builders with him and bade them build him a bath in what place soever should please him. So he took them and went with them through the midst of the city, till he saw a place that pleased him. He pointed it out to the builders and they set to work, under his direction, and wrought till they built him a bath that had not its like. Then he made them paint it, and they painted it on rare wise, so that it was a delight to the beholders; after which Abousir went up to the king and told him that they had made an end of building and decorating the bath, adding, ‘There lacks nought but the furniture.’ The king gave him ten thousand dinars, with which he furnished the bath and ranged the napkins on the cords; and all who passed by the door stared at it and their mind was confounded at its decorations. So the people crowded to this thing, whose like they had never in their lives seen, and stood staring at it and saying, ‘What is this thing?’ To which Abousir replied, ‘This is a bath;’ and they marvelled thereat.

Then he heated water and set the bath a-work; and he made a fountain in the [central] basin, which ravished the wit of all who saw it of the people of the city. Moreover he sought of the king ten white slaves not yet come to manhood, and he gave him ten boys like moons: whereupon Abousir proceeded to shampoo them, saying, ‘Do thus and thus with the customers,’ [till they were perfect in the bathman’s craft]. Then he burnt perfumes and sent out a crier to cry aloud in the city, saying, ‘O creatures of God, get ye to the bath, for it is called the Sultan’s Bath!’ So the people came to the bath and Abousir bade the slave-boys wash their bodies. The folk went down into the bath and coming forth, seated themselves on the estrade, whilst the boys shampooed them, even as Abousir had taught them; and they ceased not to enter the bath and do their occasion thereof and go out, without paying, for the space of three days.

Then the barber invited the king, who took horse with his grandees and rode to the bath, where he put oft his clothes and entered; whereupon Abousir came in to him and rubbed his body with the bath-gloves, peeling the dirt from his skin [in rolls] like lamp-wicks and showing them to the king, who rejoiced therein, till his body shone for very smoothness and purity; after which Abousir mingled rose-water with the water of the tank and the king went down therein. When he came forth, his body was refreshed and he felt a lightness and liveliness such as he had never in his life known. Then the barber made him sit on the estrade and the boys proceeded to shampoo him, whilst the censers smoked with the finest aloes-wood.

Then said the king, ‘O master, is this the bath?’ And Abousir answered, ‘Yes.’ ‘As my head liveth,’ quoth the king, ‘my city is not become a city indeed but by this bath! But what pay takest thou for each person?’ ‘That which thou biddest me will I take,’ replied Abousir; and the king said, ‘Take a thousand dinars for every one who washeth in thy bath.’ But Abousir said, ‘Pardon, O king of the age! All men are not alike, but there are amongst them rich and poor, and if I take of each a thousand dinars, the bath will stand empty, for the poor man cannot avail to this price.’ ‘How then wilt thou do for the price?’ asked the king. ‘I will leave it to the generosity [of the customers],’ answered the barber. ‘Each who can afford aught shall pay that which his soul grudgeth not to give, and we will take from every man, after the measure of his condition. So will the folk come to us and he who is rich shall give according to his station and he who is poor shall give what he can afford. On this wise the bath will still be at work and prosper; but a thousand dinars is a king’s gift, and not every man can avail thereto.’

The grandees of the kingdom confirmed Abousir’s words, saying, ‘This is the truth, O king of the age! Thinkest thou that all folk are like unto thee, O glorious king?’ ‘You say sooth,’ answered the king; ‘but this man is a stranger and poor and it behoveth us to deal generously with him, for that he hath made in our city this bath, whose like we have never in our lives seen and without which our city were not adorned nor had gotten importance; wherefore, if we guerdon him with increase of pay, it will not be much.’ But the grand ees said, ‘If thou wilt guerdon him, let it be of thine own monies, and be the king’s bounty extended to the poor by means of the low price of the bath, so the folk may bless thee; but, as for the thousand dinars, we are the grandees of thine empire, yet do our souls grudge to pay it; and how then should the poor afford it?' Quoth the king, 'O my grandees, for this time let each of you give him a hundred dinars and a white slave and a black and a slave-girl.' 'It is well,' answered they; 'but after to-day each who enters shall give him only what he can afford, without grudging.' 'So be it,' said the king; and they gave him each as he had said.

Now the number of the nobles who were washed with the king that day was four hundred souls; so that the sum of that which they gave him was forty thousand dinars, besides four hundred black and four hundred white slaves and a like number of slave-girls. Moreover, the king gave him ten thousand dinars, besides ten white slaves and ten black and a like number of slave-girls; whereupon Abousir kissed the earth before him and said, 'O august king, lord of just judgment, what place will suffice me for all these slaves and women?' Quoth the king, 'O lackwit, I bade not my nobles deal thus with thee but that we might gather together unto thee great plenty of wealth; for maybe thou wilt bethink thee of thy country and family and yearn unto them and be minded to return to thy native place; so shalt thou take from our country store of wealth, to maintain thyself withal, what while thou livest in thine own land.' 'O king of the age,' replied Abousir, (may God advance thee!) these many slaves and women are a king's behoof; and hadst thou ordered me ready money, it were more profitable to me than this army; for they must eat and drink and be clothed, and whatever betideth me of wealth, it will not suffice to their support.'

The king laughed and said, 'By Allah, thou sayst sooth! They are indeed a mighty host, and thou mayst not avail unto their maintenance; but wilt thou sell them to me for a hundred dinars each?' Quoth Abousir, 'I sell them to thee at that price.' So the king sent to his treasurer for the money and he brought it and gave Abousir the whole of the price, in full; after which the king restored the slaves to their former owners, saying, 'Let each of you who knoweth his slaves take them; for they are a gift from me to you.' So they obeyed his commandment and took each his own; whilst the barber said to the king, 'God ease thee, O king of the age, even as thou hast eased me of these ghouls, whom none may fill save God!'

The king laughed, and gave him reason; then, taking the grandees of his realm, returned to his palace; but Abousir passed the night in counting his money and laying it up in bags and sealing them; and he had with him twenty black slaves and a like number of white and four slave-girls to serve him.

On the morrow, as soon as it was day, he opened the bath and sent out a crier to make proclamation, saying, 'Whoso entereth the bath and washeth shall give that which he can afford and which his generosity deemeth fit.' Then he seated himself by the chest and customers flocked in upon him, each putting down that which was easy to him, nor was eventide come before the chest was full of the good gifts of God the Most High. Presently the queen desired to go to the bath, and when this came to Abousir's knowledge, he divided the day, on her account, into two parts, appointing the time between day-break and noon to the men and that between noon and sundown to the women. When the queen came, he stationed a female slave behind the pay-chest; for he had taught four slave-girls the service of the bath, so that they were become expert bathwomen. So, when the queen entered, this pleased her and her breast dilated and she laid down a thousand dinars.

On this wise his report was noised abroad in the city, and all who entered the bath he entreated with honour, were they rich or poor, and good came in upon him at every door. Moreover he made acquaintance with the king's officers and got him friends and companions. The king himself used to come to him one day in every week, and the other days of the week were for rich and poor alike; and he was wont to deal courteously with the folk and use them with the utmost of consideration. It chanced that the king's sea-captain came in to him one day in the bath; so Abousir put off his clothes and going in with him, proceeded to shampoo him and entreated him with the utmost courtesy. When he came forth, he made him sherbet and coffee; and when he would have given him somewhat, he swore that he would accept nothing from him. So the captain abode under obligation to him, by reason of his exceeding kindness and courtesy to him, and knew not how to requite him his generous dealing with him.

Meanwhile Aboukir, bearing all the people talking rapturously of the bath and saying, ‘Verily, this bath is the Paradise of this world! God willing, O such an one, thou shalt go with us to-morrow to this delectable bath,’ said to himself, ‘Needs must I go like [the rest of the] folk and see this bath that hath taken their wits.’ So he donned his richest clothes and mounting a mule, rode to the bath, attended by four white slaves and four black, walking before and behind him. When he alighted at the door, he smelt the fragrance of burning aloes-wood and saw people going in and out and the benches full of great and small. So he entered the vestibule and saw Abousir, who rose to him and rejoiced in him: but the dyer said to him, ‘Is this the fashion of men of honour? I have opened me a dyery and am become master-dyer of the city and acquainted with the king and have risen to fortune and lordship; yet camest thou not to me nor askedst of me nor saidst, “Where is my comrade?” For my part, I sought thee in vain and sent my slaves and Servants to make search for thee in all the inns and other places; but they knew not whither thou hadst gone, nor could any give me news of thee.’ Quoth Abousir, ‘Did I not come to thee and didst thou not make me out a thief and beat me and disgrace me before the folk?’

At this Aboukir made a show of concern and said, ‘What manner of talk is this? Was it thou whom I beat?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Abousir, ‘it was I.’ Whereupon Aboukir swore to him a thousand oaths that he knew him not and said, ‘There was a fellow like unto thee, who used to come every day and steal the people’s stuff, and I took thee for him.’ And he went on to feign repentance, beating hand upon hand and saying, ‘There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! Indeed, I have sinned against thee; but would that thou hadst made thyself known to me and said, “I am such an one!” Indeed the fault is with thee, for that thou madest not thyself known unto me, more by token that I was distraught for much business.’ ‘God pardon thee, o my comrade!’ replied Abousir. ‘This was fore-ordained, and reparation is with God. Enter and put off thy clothes and bathe at thine ease.’ ‘I conjure thee by Allah, O my brother,’ said the dyer, ‘forgive me!’ And Abousir said, ‘God acquit thee of blame and forgive thee! Indeed this thing was decreed to me from all eternity.’

Then said Aboukir, ‘Whence gottest thou this lordship?’ ‘He who prospered thee prospered me,' answered Abousir. 'For I went up to the king and set forth to him the fashion of the bath, and he bade me build one.' And the dyer said, 'Even as thou art an acquaintance of the king, so also am I; and God willing, I will make him love and barr tender thee more than ever, for my sake; for he knows not that thou art my comrade; but I will tell him of this and commend thee to him.' 'There needs no commendation,' answered Abousir; 'for He who inclinetb [men's hearts unto love] is [ever]-present; and indeed the king and all his court love me [already] and have given me this and that.' And he told him the whole story and said to him, 'Put off thy clothes behind the chest and enter the bath, and I will go in with thee and shampoo thee.' So he put off his clothes and Abousir, entering the bath with him, soaped him and shampooed him and busied himself with his service till he came forth, when he brought him the morning meal and sherbets, whilst all the folk marvelled at the honour he did him.

Then Aboukir would have given him somewhat; but he swore that he would take nothing from him and said to him, 'Shame upon thee! Thou art my comrade, and there is no difference between us.' 'By Allah, O my comrade,' said Aboukir, 'this is a fine bath of thine, but there lacks one thing to thy fashion therein.' 'And what is that?' asked Abousir. 'It is the depilatory, to wit, the paste compounded of orpiment and quicklime,' answered the dyer, 'that removes the hair with ease. Do thou prepare it and next time the king comes, present it to him, teaching him how he shall cause the hair fall off by means thereof, and he will love thee with an exceeding love and honour thee.' Quoth Abousir, 'Thou sayst sooth, and if it be the will of God the Most High, I will do this.'

Then Aboukir mounted his mule and riding to the palace, went in to the king and said to him, 'O king of the age, I have a warning to give thee.' 'And what is thy warning?' asked the king. Quoth Aboukir, 'I hear that thou hast built a bath.' 'Yes; answered the king; 'there came to me a stranger and I founded the bath for him, even as I founded the dyery for thee; and indeed it is a magnificent bath and an ornament to my city.' And he went on to set forth to him the virtues of the bath. 'Hast thou entered therein?' asked the dyer. And the king answered, 'Yes.' 'Praised be God,' exclaimed Aboukir, ‘who hath preserved thee from the mischief of yonder villain and enemy of the faith, to wit, the bath-keeper!’ ‘And what of him?’ asked the king. ‘Know, O king of the age,’ replied Aboukir, ‘that, if thou enter the bath again, after this day, thou wilt surely perish.’ ‘How so?’ inquired the king; and the dyer answered, ‘This bath-keeper is thine enemy and the enemy of the faith, and he induced thee not to set up this bath but because he designed to poison thee therein. He hath made for thee somewhat which, when thou enterest the bath, he will present to thee, saying, “This is an unguent, which if one apply to his privy parts, it will remove the hair with ease.”

Now it is no unguent, but a deadly drug and a violent poison; for the Sultan of the Christians hath promised this filthy fellow to release to him his wife and children, if he will kill thee; for they are captives in the hands of the Sultan in question. I myself was captive with him in their land, but I opened a dyery and dyed for them various colours, so that they inclined the king’s heart unto me and he bade me ask a boon of him. I sought of him freedom and he set me free, whereupon I made my way hither, and seeing yonder man in the bath, asked him how he had effected his escape and that of his wife and children. Quoth he, “We ceased not to be in captivity, I and my wife and children, till one day the King of the Christians held a court, at which I was present, amongst a number of other people. Presently, I heard them discourse of the kings and name them, one after another, till they came to the name of the king of this city, whereupon the King of the Christians cried out, ‘Alas!’ and said, ‘None irketh me in the world, but the king of such a city! Whosoever will contrive me his slaughter, I will give him all he asks.’ So I went up to him and said, ‘If I contrive thee his slaughter, wilt thou set me free, me and my wife and children?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the king, ‘and I will give thee [to boot] whatsoever thou shalt desire.

So we agreed upon this and he sent rue in a galleon to this city, where I presented myself to the king and he built me this bath. So now I have nought to do but to slay him and return to the King of the Christians, that I may redeem my wife and children and ask a boon of him.” Quoth I, “And how wilt thou go about to kill him?” “By the simplest of all devices,” answered he; “for I have compounded him somewhat wherein is poison, so, when he comes to the bath, I shall say to him, ‘Take this unguent and anoint thy privy parts therewith, for it will cause the hair to drop off.’ So he will take it and anoint himself therewith, and the poison will work in him a day and a night, till it reaches his heart and destroys him; and meanwhile I shall have made off and none will know that it was I slew him.” When I heard this,’ added Aboukir, ‘I feared for thee, being beholden to thee for thy goodness, wherefore I have told thee thereof.’

When the king heard the dyer’s story, he was exceeding wroth and said to him, ‘Keep this secret.’ Then he betook himself to the bath, that he might dispel doubt with assurance; and when he entered, Abousir put off his clothes and betaking himself [as of wont] to the service of the king, proceeded to shampoo him; after which he said to him, ‘O king of the age, I have made an unguent for removing the hair from the privy parts.’ ‘Bring it to me,’ said the king. So the barber brought it to him and the king, finding it nauseous of smell, was assured that it was poison; wherefore he was incensed and called out to his guards, saying, ‘Seize him!’ So they seized him and the king donned his clothes and returned to his palace, boiling with rage, whilst none knew the cause of his anger; for, of the excess of his wrath, he had acquainted no one therewith and none dared ask him. Then he repaired to the audience-chamber and causing Abousir to be brought before him, with his hands bound behind his back, sent for his sea-captain and said to him, ‘Take this villain and tie him in a sack with two quintals of quicklime. Then lay him in a boat and row out with him in front of my palace, where thou wilt see me sitting at the lattice. Do thou say to me, “Shall I cast him in?” and if I answer, “Cast,” throw him into the sea, so the lime may be slaked on him, to the intent that he shall die drowned and burnt.’

‘I hear and obey,’ answered the captain and taking Abousir, carried him to an island, that lay over against the king’s palace, where he said to him, ‘Harkye, I once visited thy bath and thou entreatedst me with honour and accomplishedst all my wants and I had great pleasure of thee: moreover, thou sworest that thou wouldst take no pay of me, and I love thee with a great love. So tell me how the case stands between thee and the king and what abomination thou hast done with him that he is wroth with thee and hath commanded me that thou shouldst die this horrid death.’ ‘By Allah, O my brother,' answered Abousir, 'I have done nothing, nor do I know of any crime I have committed against him that merits this!' 'Verily,' rejoined the captain, 'thou wast in high favour with the king, such as none ever enjoyed before thee, and all who are prosperous are envied. Belike some one envied thee thy good fortune and missaid of thee to the king, by reason whereof he is become thus enraged against thee: but be of good cheer; no harm shall befall thee: for, even as thou entreatedst me generously, without knowledge of me, so now I will deliver thee. But, if I release thee, thou must abide with me in this island till some galleon set sail from the city to thy native land, when I will send thee thither therein.'

Abousir kissed his hand and thanked him for this; after which the captain fetched the lime and laid it in a sack, together with a great stone, the bigness of a man, saying, 'I put my trust in God.' Then he gave the barber a net, saying, 'Cast this net into the sea, so haply thou mayst take somewhat of fish. For I am bounden to furnish the king's kitchen with fish every day; but to-day I have been distracted from fishing by this calamity that hath befallen thee, and I fear lest the cook's servants come to me in quest of fish and find none. So, if thou take aught, they will find it and thou wilt veil my face, whilst I go and play off my device in front of the palace and feign to cast thee into the sea.' 'Go,' answered Abousir; 'and God be thy helper. I will fish the while.'

So the captain laid the sack in the boat and rowed till he came under the palace, where he saw the king seated at the lattice and said to him, 'O king of the age, shall I Cast him in?' 'Cast,' answered the king and signed to him with his hand, whereupon something flashed and fell into the sea. Now this that had fallen into the sea was the king's seal-ring, which was enchanted on such wise that, when the king was wroth with any one and was minded to slay him, he had but to sign to him with his right hand, whereon was the ring, and there issued lightning therefrom, which smote the offender, and thereupon his head fell from his shoulders. It was this ring that gave him authority over the troops, nor did he overcome the mighty save by means thereof; so, when it dropped from his finger, he concealed the matter and kept silence, for that he dared not say, 'My ring is fallen into the sea,' for fear of the troops, lest they should rise against him and slay him.

Meanwhile, Abousir cast the net into the sea and drew it up full of fish. Then he cast it again and it came up full of fish; nor did he cease to cast it and pull it up full, till there was a great heap of fish before him. So he said to himself, ‘By Allah, I have not eaten fish this long while!’ And chose himself a large fat fish, saying, ‘When the captain comes back, I will bid him fry it for me, so I may make the morning meal of it.’ Then he cut its throat with a knife he had with him; but the knife stuck in its gills and there he saw the king’s seal-ring; for the fish had swallowed it and destiny had driven it to the island, where it had fallen into the net. So he took the ring and put it on his little finger, not knowing its properties. Presently, up came two of the cook’s underlings in quest of fish and seeing Abousir, said to him, ‘O man, whither is the captain gone?’ ‘I know not,’ answered he and signed to them with his right hand; when, behold, their heads dropped from their shoulders.

At this Abousir was amazed and said, ‘I wonder who slew them!’ And their case was grievous to him and he was still musing upon it, when the captain returned and seeing the two men lying dead and the ring on Abousir’s finger, said to him, ‘O my brother, move not thy hand whereon is the ring; else thou wilt slay me.’ Abousir wondered at this speech and the captain coming up to him, said, ‘Who slew these two men?’ ‘By Allah, O my brother,’ answered the barber, ‘I know not!’ ‘Thou sayst sooth,’ rejoined the captain; ‘but tell me whence hadst thou that ring?’ Quoth Abousir, ‘I found it in this fish’s gills.’ ‘ True,’ said the captain, ‘for I saw it fall flashing from the king’s palace and disappear in the sea, what time he signed toward [the sack in which he deemed] thee [to be], saying, “Cast him in.” So I cast the sack into the water, and it was then that the ring slipped from his finger and fell into the sea, where the fish swallowed it, and God drove it to thee, so that thou tookest it, for this ring was thy lot; but knowest thou its property?’ ‘I knew not that it had any properties,’ answered Abousir, and the captain said, ‘Know, then, that the king’s troops obey him not save for fear of this ring, for it is enchanted, and when he was wroth with any one and had a mind to put him to death, he would sign at him therewith and his head would drop from his shoulders; for there issued a lightning from the ring and its ray smote the object of his wrath, who died forthright.’

At this, Abousir rejoiced with an exceeding joy and said to the captain, ‘Carry me back to the city.’ ‘That will I,’ answered he, ‘now that I no longer fear for thee from the king; for, wert thou to sign at him with thy hand, purposing to kill him, his head would fall down before thee; and if thou be minded to slay him and all his troops, thou mayst do so without hindrance.’ So saying, he embarked with him in the boat and rowed him back to the city, where Abousir landed and going up to the palace, entered the council-chamber, where he found the king seated in the midst of his officers, sore concerned by reason of the ring and daring not tell any of its loss.

When he saw Abousir, he said to him, ‘Did we not cast thee into the sea? How hast thou made shift to come forth therefrom?’ ‘O king of the age,’ answered Abousir, ‘whenas thou badst throw me into the sea, thy captain carried me to an island and questioned me of the cause of thy wrath against me, saying, “What hast thou done with the king, that he should decree thy death?” “By Allah,” answered I, “I know not that I have offended against him in aught!” Quoth he, “Thou wast in high favour with the king, and most like some one envied thee and slandered thee to him, so that he is become incensed against thee. But, when I visited thee in thy bath, thou entreatedst me hospitably, and I will requite thee thy hospitality by setting thee free and sending thee back to thine own country.” Then he laid a great stone in the sack and cast it into the sea in my stead; but, when thou signedst to him to throw me in, thy seal-ring dropped from thy finger into the sea, and a fish swallowed it.

Now I was on the island, fishing, and this fish came up [in the net] with others; whereupon I took it, thinking to broil it; but, when I opened its maw, I found the ring therein; so I took it and put it on my finger. Presently, up came two of the servants of the kitchen, in quest of fish, and I signed to them with my hand, knowing not the property of the ring, and their heads fell off. Then the captain came back and seeing the ring on my finger, acquainted me with its enchantment; and behold, I have brought it back to thee, for that thou dealtest bounteously by me and entreatedst me with the utmost generosity, nor is that which thou hast done me of kindness lost upon me. Here is thy ring; take it; and if I have done with thee aught deserving of death, tell me my crime and slay me and thou shalt be quit of my blood.’ So saying, he pulled the ring from his finger and gave it to the king, who put it on and his life returned to him.

Then he rose to his feet and embracing Abousir, said to him, ‘O man, thou art indeed of the flower of the noble! Bear me not malice, but forgive me the wrong I have done thee. Had any but thou come by this ring, he had never restored it to me.’ ‘O king of the age,’ answered Abousir, ‘if thou wouldst have me forgive thee, tell me what was my offence that drew down thine anger upon me, so that thou commandedst to put me to death.’ ‘By Allah,’ rejoined the king, ‘it is clear to me that thou art altogether guiltless of offence, since thou hast done this good deed; only the dyer denounced thee to me;’ and he told him all that Aboukir had said. ‘By Allah, O king of the age,’ replied Abousir, ‘I know not the King of the Christians and have never journeyed to their country, nor did it ever enter my thought to kill thee; but this dyer was my comrade and neighbour in the city of Alexandria, and life was straitened upon us there; wherefore we departed thence, to seek our fortunes, by reason of the straitness of our livelihood there, after we had recited the first chapter of the Koran together [in token of our agreement] that he who got work should feed him who lacked thereof; and there befell me with him such and such things.’

Then he went on to relate to the king all that had befallen him with the dyer; how he had robbed him and left him alone and sick in the khan and how the porter had fed him of his own monies till God recovered him of his sickness, when he went forth and walked about the city with his shaving gear, as of his wont, till he espied a dyery, about which the folk were crowding; so he looked at the door and seeing Aboukir seated on a bench there, went in to salute him, whereupon he accused him of being a thief and beat him grievously; brief, he told him his whole story, from first to last, and added, ‘O king of the age, it was he who counselled me to make the depilatory and present it to thee, saying, “The bath is perfect in all things but that it lacketh this;” and know, O king, that this unguent is harmless and we use it in our country, where it is one of the requisites of the bath; but I had forgotten it: so, when he visited the bath, I entreated him with honour and he reminded me thereof. But do thou send after the porter of such a khan and the workmen of the dyery and question them all of that which I have told thee.’

So the king sent for them and questioned them and they acquainted him with the truth of the matter. Then he sent to fetch the dyer, bidding bring him barefoot and bareheaded, with his hands bound behind him. Now he was sitting in his house, rejoicing in Abousir’s [supposed] death, when, before he could be ware, the king’s guards rushed in upon him and cuffed him on the nape of the neck; after which they bound him and carried him into the royal presence, where he saw Abousir seated by the king’s side and the porter and workmen of the dyery standing before him. Quoth the porter to him, ‘Is not this thy comrade whom thou robbedst of his money and leftest with me sick in the khan?’ And the workmen said to him, ‘Is not this he whom thou badest us seize and beat?’

Therewith Aboukir’s baseness was made manifest to the king and he was certified that he merited a punishment yet sorer than that which Munker and Neckir deal [to the wicked after death]. So he upbraided him and said to his guards, ‘Take him and parade him about the city and the markets; then lay him in a sack and cast him into the sea.’ Whereupon quoth Abousir, ‘O king of the age, accept my intercession for him; for I pardon him all he hath done with me.’ ‘If thou pardon him his offences against thee,’ answered the king, ‘I cannot pardon him his offences against me.’ And he cried out, saying, ‘Take him.’ So they took him and paraded him about the city, after which they laid him in a sack with quicklime and cast him into the sea, and he died, drowned and burnt.

Then said the king to the barber, ‘O Abousir, ask of me what thou wilt and it shall be given thee.’ And he answered, saying, ‘I ask of thee to send me back to my own country, for I care no longer to abide here.’ Then the king offered to make him his vizier; but he consented not; so he gave him great store of gifts, over and above that which he had bestowed on him aforetime; and amongst the rest a galleon laden with goods; and the crew of this galleon were slaves; so he gave him these also. Then he took leave of the king and set sail; nor did he cast anchor till he reached Alexandria and made fast to the shore there. Then they landed and one of his servants, seeing a sack on the beach, said to Abousir, ‘O my lord, there is a great heavy sack on the sea-shore, with the mouth tied up and I know not what therein.’ So Abousir came up and opening the sack, found therein the dead body of Aboukir, which the sea had borne thither. He took it forth and burying it near Alexandria, built over the grave a place of visitation and endowed it for pious uses, writing over the door the following verses:

A man is by his actions known among his fellows aye: The actions of the freeborn man his generous birth betray.
Backbite not any, lest thyself backbitten be in tarn. Whososaith aught, his fellow-men the like of him will say.
Abstain from lewd and ribald words: I rede thee speak them not At any time, or if it be in earnest or in play.
The dog, good manners if he use, Is suffered in the house; The lion, of his ignorance, is fettered night and day.
The carrion of the waste floats up upon the topmost sea, Whilst on the lowest of its sands the pearls neglected stay.
But for its feather-headedness and levity of wit, The sparrow never with the hawk to jostle would essay.
Lo, on the pages of the air is written, in the sky, ‘Whoso doth good, the like thereof his actions shall repay.’
Beware of gathering sugar, then, from out the colocynth: Still in the tasting will the thing its origin bewray.

After this Abousir abode awhile, till God took him to Himself and they buried him hard by the tomb of his comrade Aboukir; wherefore the place was called Aboukir and Abousir; but it is now known as Aboukir [only]. This, then, is that which hath reached us of their history, and glory be to Him who endureth for ever and by whose will the days and nights succeed each other!

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

ABDALLAH THE FISHERMAN AND ABDALLAH THE MERMAN.

There was once a fisherman named Abdallah, who had a wife and nine children and was very poor, owning nothing but his net. Every day he used to go to the sea to fish, and if he caught little, he sold it and spent the price on his children, after the measure of that which God vouchsafed him of provision; but, if he caught much, he would cook a good mess of meat and buy fruit and spend without stint till nothing was left him, saying in himself, ‘To-morrow’s provision will come to-morrow.’ Presently, his wife gave birth to another child, making ten in all, and it chanced that day that he had nothing at all; so she said to him, ‘O my master, see [and get] me wherewithal I may sustain myself.’ Quoth he, ‘Under favour of God the Most High, I am going to-day to the sea, to fish in the name of this new-born child, that we may see its luck.’ And she answered, ‘Put thy trust in God.’

So he took his net and went down to the sea-shore, where he cast it in the name of the little child, saying, ‘O my God, make his living easy, not hard, and abundant, not scant!’ Then he waited awhile and drew in the net, which came up full of rubbish and sand and pebbles and weeds, and he found therein no fish, neither much not little. He cast it again and waited, then drew it in, but found no fish in it, and threw it a third and a fourth and a fifth time, with no better success. So he removed to another place, beseeching God the Most High to grant him his daily bread, and thus he did till the end of the day, but caught not so much as a sprat; whereat he fell a-marvelling in himself and said, ‘Hath God then created this new-born child, without [an appointed] provision? This may never be; He who slits the corners of the mouth hath engaged for its provision, for He is the Bountiful, the Provider!’ So saying, he shouldered his net and turned homeward, broken-spirited and heavy at heart for his family, for that he had left them without food, more by token that his wife was in the straw.

As he trudged along, saying in himself, ‘How shall I do and what shall I say to the children to-night?’ he came to a baker’s oven and saw a crowd about it; for it was a time of dearth and food was scant with the folk; so they were proffering the baker money, but he paid no heed to any of them, by reason of the much crowd. The fisherman stood looking and snuffing the smell of the hot bread, and indeed his soul longed for it, by reason of his hunger, -till the baker caught sight of him and cried out to him, saying, ‘Come hither, O fisherman!’ So he went up to him, and the baker said to him, ‘Dost thou want bread?’ But he was silent. ‘Speak,’ said the baker, ‘and be not ashamed, for God is bountiful. If thou have no money, I will give thee [bread] and have patience with thee till good [fortune] betide thee.’ ‘By Allah, O master,’ replied Abdallah, ‘I have indeed no money! But give me bread enough for my family, and I will leave thee this net in pawn till the morrow.’ ‘Nay, good fellow,’ rejoined the baker, ‘this net is [as it were] thy shop and the means of thy livelihood; so, if thou pawn it, wherewithal wilt thou fish? Tell me, how much [bread] will suffice thee?’ ‘Ten pares’ worth,’ replied the fisherman.

So he gave him ten pares’ worth of bread and ten pares in money, saying, ‘Take these ten pares and cook thyself a mess of meat therewith; so wilt thou owe me twenty pares, for which bring me fish to-morrow; but, if thou catch nothing again, come and take thy bread and thy ten pares, and I will have patience with thee till better luck betide thee, when thou shalt bring me fish for all thou owest me.’ ‘May God the Most High reward thee’ said the fisherman, ‘and requite thee for me with all good!’ Then he took the bread and the money and went away, glad at heart, and buying what he could [of meat and vegetables], returned to his wife, whom he found sitting up, soothing the children, who were weeping for hunger, and saying to them, ‘Your father will be here with what ye may eat.’ So he set the bread before them and they ate, whilst he told his wife what had befallen him, and she said, ‘God is bountiful.’

On the morrow, he shouldered his net and went forth of his house, saying, ‘I beseech thee, O Lord, to vouchsafe me this day what shall whiten my face with the baker!’ When he came to the sea-shore, he proceeded to cast his net and pull it in; but there came up no fish therein; and he toiled thus till ended day and caught nothing. Then he set out homeward, in sore concern, and the way to his house lay past the baker's shop; so he said in himself, 'How shall I go home? But I will hasten past that the baker may not see me.' When he reached the shop, he saw a crowd about it and quickened his pace, being ashamed to face the baker; but the latter raised his eyes to him and cried out to him, saying, 'Ho, fisherman! Come and take thy bread and spending-money. Meseems thou forgettest.' 'By Allah,' answered Abdallah, 'I had not forgotten; but I was ashamed to face thee, because I have caught no fish to-day.' 'Be not ashamed,' answered the baker. 'Said I not to thee, "At thy leisure; till good hap betide thee?"'

Then he gave him the bread and the ten pares and he returned and told his wife, who said, 'God is bountiful. If it please the Most High, good luck shall yet betide thee and thou shalt give the baker his due.' On this wise he did forty days, betaking himself daily to the sea, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, and returning [at nightfall], without fish; and still he took bread and spending-money of the baker, who never named the fish to him nor neglected him nor kept him waiting, like the folk, but gave him the bread and the ten pares [forthright]. Whenever the fisherman said to him, 'O my brother, reckon with me,' he would say, 'Go thy ways; this is no time for reckoning. [Wait] till good luck betide thee, and then I will reckon with thee.' And the fisherman would go away, blessing and thanking him.

On the one-and-fortieth day, he said to his wife, 'I have a mind to tear up the net and be quit of this life.' 'Why wilt thou do this?' asked she. And he said, 'Meseems there is an end of my getting my living from the sea. How long shall this last? By Allah, I am consumed with shame before the baker, and I will go no more to the sea, so I may not pass by his shop, for I have no other way home; and every time I pass, he calls me and gives me the bread and the ten pares. How much longer shall I run in debt to him?' 'Praised be God the Most High,' replied his wife, 'who hath inclined his heart to thee, so that he giveth thee our daily bread! What dislikest thou in this?' Quoth he, 'I owe him now a great sum of money, and he will without fail demand his due.' 'Hath he vexed thee with words?' asked his wife. 'Nay,' answered Abdallah; 'on the contrary, he still refuses to reckon with me, saying, "[Wait] till good luck betide thee."' And his wife said, ‘If he press thee, say to him, “[Wait] till there come the good luck for which we hope, thou and I.”’ ‘And when will the good luck come that we hope for?’ asked the fisherman. ‘God is bountiful,’ answered she; and he said, ‘Thou sayst sooth.’

Then he shouldered his net and went down to the sea-side, saying, ‘O Lord, provide Thou me, though but with one fish, that I may give it to the baker!’ And he cast his net into the sea and pulling it in, found it heavy; so he tugged at it till, after sore travail, he got it ashore and found in it a dead ass, swollen and stinking; whereat his soul sickened and he freed it from the net, saying, ‘There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! Verily, I can no more! I say to yonder woman, “There is no more provision for me in the sea; let me leave this craft.” And she still answers me, “God is bountiful; good will betide thee.” Is this dead ass the good of which she speaks?’ And he was sore chagrined.

Then he removed to another place, so he might be quit of the stench of the dead ass, and cast his net there. He waited awhile, then drew it in and found it heavy; whereupon quoth he, ‘Good; we are hauling up all the dead asses in the sea and ridding it of its rubbish.’ However he gave not over tugging at the net, till the blood streamed from the palms of his hands, and when he got it ashore, he saw a man in it and took him for one of the Afrits of the lord Solomon, whom he was wont to imprison in vessels of brass and cast into the sea, supposing that the vessel had burst for length of years and that the Atrit had come forth and fallen into the net; wherefore he fled from him, crying out and saying, ‘Mercy, mercy, O Afrit of Solomon!’ But the creature called out to him from within the net and said, ‘Come hither, O fisherman, and flee not from me; for I am a human being like thyself Release me, so thou mayst get a recompense for me [of God].’

So the fisherman took heart and coming up to him, said to him, ‘Art thou not an Afrit of the Jinn?’ ‘Nay,’ replied the other, ‘I am a mortal and a believer in God and His Apostle.’ ‘Who threw thee into the sea?’ asked the fisherman; and he answered, ‘I am of the children of the sea and was going about therein, when thou castest the net over me. We are people who obey God’s commandments and show loving-kindness unto the creatures of the Most High, and but that I fear and dread to be of the disobedient, I had torn thy net; but I accept that which God hath decreed unto me; wherefore thou art become my owner and I thy captive. Wilt thou then set me free for the love of God the Most High and make a covenant with me and become my friend? I will come to thee every day in this place, and do thou come to me and bring me a gift of the fruits of the land. For with you are grapes and figs and melons and peaches and pomegranates and what not else, and all thou bringest me will be acceptable unto me. Moreover, with us are coral and pearls and chrysolites and emeralds and rubies and other precious stones, and I will fill thee the basket, wherein thou bringest me the fruit, with precious stones of the jewels of the sea. What sayst thou to this, O my brother?'

Quoth the fisherman, 'Be the first chapter of the Koran between thee and me upon this.' So they recited the Fatiheh, [in token of their agreement], and the fisherman loosed the merman from the net and said to him, 'What is thy name?' 'My name is Abdallah of the sea,' answered he; 'and if thou come hither and see me not, do thou call out and say, "Where art thou, O Abdallah, O merman?" And I will be with thee presently. But thou, what is thy name?' 'My name also is Abdallah,' answered the fisherman. Quoth the other, 'Thou art Abdallah of the land and I am Abdallah of the sea; but abide here till I go and fetch thee a present.' And the fisherman said, 'I hear and obey.'

Then the merman went down into the sea [and disappeared]; whereupon the fisherman repented him of having released him and said in himself, 'How know I that he will come back to me? Indeed, he beguiled me, so that I released him, and now he will laugh at me. Had I kept him, I might have made a show of him for the diversion of the people of the city and taken money from all the folk and entered with him the houses of the great.' And he repented him of having let him go and said, 'Thou hast let thy prey go from thy hand.' But, as he was thus bemoaning his credulity, behold, the merman returned to him, with his hands full of pearls and coral and emeralds and rubies and other jewels, and said to him, 'Take these, O my brother, and excuse me, for I had no basket that I might fill it for thee.'

The fisherman rejoiced and took the jewels from the merman, who said to him, ‘Come hither every day, before sunrise,’ and taking leave of him, went down into the sea; whilst the other returned to the city, rejoicing, and stayed not till he came to the baker’s shop and said to him, ‘O my brother, good luck is come to us [at last]; so do thou reckon with me.’ ‘There needs no reckoning,’ answered the baker. ‘If thou have aught, give it me; and if not, take thy bread and spending-money and begone, against good betide thee.’ ‘O my friend,’ rejoined the fisherman, ‘indeed good hath betided me of God’s bounty, and I owe thee much money; but take this.’ So saying, he took up, at a handful, half of the pearls and coral and rubies and other jewels he had with him, and gave them to the baker saying, ‘Give me some ready money to spend this day, till I sell these jewels.’

So the baker gave him all the money he had by him and all the bread in his basket and rejoiced in the jewels he had given him, saying, ‘I am thy slave and thy servant.’ Then he set all the bread on his head and following the fisherman home, gave it to his wife and children, after which he repaired to the market and fetched meat and vegetables and all kinds of fruit. Moreover, he left his shop and abode with Abdallah all that day, busying himself in his service and doing all his occasions. ‘O my brother,’ said the fisherman, ‘thou weariest thyself.’ ‘This is my duty,’ answered the baker; ‘for I am become thy servant and thou hast overwhelmed me with thy bounties.’ ‘Not so,’ rejoined the fisherman; ‘it is thou who wast my benefactor in the days of dearth and straitness.’ And the baker passed the night in feasting with him and became a faithful friend to him. Then the fisherman told his wife what had befallen him with the merman, whereat she rejoiced and said, ‘keep thy secret, lest the magistrates come down upon thee.’ But he said, ‘Though I keep my secret from all the folk, yet will I not hide it from the baker.’

On the morrow, he rose before the sun and shouldering a basket, which he had filled overnight with all manner fruits, repaired to the sea-shore, where he set down the basket and called out, saying, ‘Where art thou, O Abdallah, O merman?’ And he answered, saying, ‘Here am I, at thy service;’ and came forth to him. The fisherman gave him the fruit and he took it and plunging into the sea with it, was absent awhile. after which he came up, with the basket full of all kinds of precious stones and jewels. The fisherman set it on his head and went away; and when he came to the baker's shop, the latter said to him, 'O my lord, I have baked thee forty brioches and have sent them to thy house; and now I will bake wastel-bread, and as soon as it is done, I will bring it to thy house and go and fetch thee meat and vegetables.'

Abdallah gave him three handsful of jewels out of the basket and going home, set it down there. Then he took a jewel of price of each sort and going to the jewel-bazaar, stopped at the Syndic's shop and said to him, 'Buy these jewels of me.' 'Show them to me,' said the Syndic. So he showed them to him and the jeweller said, 'Hast thou other than these?' 'Yes,' answered Abdallah, 'I have a basketful at home.' 'And where is thy house?' asked the Syndic. 'In such a quarter,' replied the fisherman; whereupon the Syndic took the jewels from him and said to his servants, 'Lay hold of him, for he is the thief who stole the queen's jewels.' And he bade beat him. So they beat him and bound his hands behind him; after which the Syndic and all the people of the jewel-market arose and set out [to carry him to the king], saying, 'We have gotten the thief.' Quoth one, 'None robbed such an one but this knave,' and another, 'It was none but he stole all that was in such an one's house;' and some said this and some that.

But he was silent and spoke not a word nor answered any of them, till they brought him before the king, to whom said the Syndic, 'O king of the age, when the queen's necklace was stolen, thou sentest to acquaint us therewith, requiring of us the discovery of the culprit; wherefore I strove beyond the rest of the folk and have taken the thief for thee. Here he is before thee, and these jewels we have recovered from him.' Thereupon the king said to the eunuch, 'Carry these jewels to the queen and say to her, "Are these thy jewels that thou hast lost?"' So the eunuch carried the jewels to the queen who marvelled at them and sent to the king to say, 'I have found my necklace in my own place and these jewels are not my property; nay, they are finer than those of my necklace. Wherefore oppress thou not the man; but, if he will sell them, buy them of him for thy daughter Umm es-Suwood, that we may string them on a necklace for her.'

When the eunuch returned and told the king what the queen said, he cursed the Syndic of the jewellers and his company with the curse of Aad and Themoud,' and they said to him, 'O king of the age, we knew this man for a poor fisherman and deemed these jewels too much for him [to come by honestly], so made sure that he had stolen them.' 'Wretches that ye are!' cried the king. 'Do ye begrudge a true-believer good fortune? Why did ye not question him? Peradventure God the Most High hath vouchsafed him these things from a source on which he did not reckon. Why did ye make him out a thief and dishonour him amongst the folk? Begone, and may God not bless you!'

So they went out in affright and the king said to Abdallah, 'O man, (may God bless thee in that He hath bestowed on thee!) no harm shall befall thee; but tell me truly, whence gottest thou these jewels; for I am a king and have not the like of them.' 'O king of the age,' answered the fisherman, 'I have a basketful of them at home.' And he told him of his friendship with the merman, adding, 'We have made a covenant together that I shall bring him every day a basketful of fruit and that he shall fill me the basket with these jewels.' 'O man,' said the king, 'this is thy lot; but wealth hath need of station.' I will protect thee for the once against men's usurpations; but it may be I shall be deposed or die and another be made king in my stead, and he shall put thee to death, because of his love of the things of this world and his covetousness. Wherefore I am minded to marry thee to my daughter and make thee my vizier and bequeath thee the kingdom after me, so none may oppress thee after my death.'

Then said he to his officers, 'Carry this man to the bath.' So they carried him to the bath and washed his body and clad him in royal apparel, after which they brought him back to the king, and he made him his vizier and sent to his house couriers and the soldiers of his guard and all the wives of the notables, who clad his children in royal apparel and mounting the former in a horse-litter, with the little child in her lap, carried her to the palace, whilst the guards and couriers and Cadis walked before her. Moreover, they brought her elder children in to the king, who made much of them, taking them in his lap and seating them by his side; for they were nine male children and the king had no [male] offspring, nor had he been blessed with any child, save this one daughter, Umm es-Suwood. Meanwhile the queen entreated Abdallah's wife with honour and bestowed favours on her and made her her vizieress. Then the king commanded to draw up the contract of marriage between his daughter and the fisherman, who assigned to her, as her dower, all the precious stones and jewels in his possession, and they opened the chapter of festivity. Moreover, the king made proclamation, commanding to decorate the city, in honour of his daughter's wedding, and Abdallah went in to the princess and did away her maiden head.

Next morning, the king looked out of window and saw Abdallah carrying on his head a basket full of fruit. So he said to him, 'What hast thou there, O my son-in-law, and whither goest thou?' 'I go to my friend Abdallah the merman,' answered the fisherman; and the king said, 'O my son-in-law, this is no time to go to thy friend.' Quoth Abdallah, 'Indeed, I fear to break tryst with him, lest he reckon me a liar and say, "The things of the world have distracted thee from me."' 'True,' rejoined the king. 'Go to thy friend and God help thee!' So he passed through the city on his way to the sea-shore, and as he went, he heard those who knew him say, 'There goes the king's son-in-law to exchange fruit for jewels;' whilst those who knew him not said, 'Harkye, how much a pound? Come, sell to me.' And he answered, saying, 'Wait till I come back to thee,' for that he would not vex any.

Then he fared on till he came to the sea-shore and foregathered with his friend the merman, to whom he delivered the fruit, receiving jewels in return. As he passed by the shop of the baker, on his return, he saw it closed; and thus he did ten days, during which time the shop abode shut and he saw nothing of the baker. So he said in himself, 'This is a strange thing! I wonder what is come of the baker!' Then he enquired of his neighbour, saying, 'O my brother, where is thy neighbour the baker and what hath God done with him?' 'O my lord,' answered he, 'he is sick and cometh not forth of his house.' 'Where is his house?' asked Abdallah; and the other replied, 'In such a quarter.'

So he went thither and enquired of him; but, when he knocked at the door, the baker looked out of window and seeing his friend the fisherman, with a full basket on his head, came down and opened the door to him. Abdallah entered and throwing himself on the baker, embraced him and wept, saying, ‘How dost thou, O my friend? Every day, I pass by thy shop and see it closed; so I asked thy neighbour, who told me that thou wast sick; and I enquired for thy house, that I might see thee.’ ‘God requite thee for me with all good!’ answered the baker. ‘Nothing ails me; but it was told me that the king had taken thee, for that certain of the folk had lied against thee and accused thee of being a thief; wherefore I feared and shut my shop and hid myself’ ‘It is well,’ said Abdallah and told him all that had befallen him with the king and the Syndic of the jewellers, adding, ‘Moreover, the king hath given me his daughter to wife and made me his vizier: so do thou take what is in this basket to thy share and fear nothing.’

Then he left him, after having done away his fear from him, and returned with the empty basket to the king, who said to him, ‘O my son-in-law, it would seem thou hast not foregathered with thy friend the merman to-day.’ ‘I went to him,’ replied Abdallah; ‘but that which I got of him I gave to my friend the baker, to whom I owe kindness.’ ‘Who is this baker?’ asked the king; and the fisherman answered, ‘He is a benevolent man, who did with me thus and thus in the days of my poverty and never neglected me a single day nor vexed my spirit.’ Quoth the king, ‘What is his name?’ ‘ His name is Abdallah the baker,’ replied the fisherman; ‘and my name is Abdallah of the land and that of my friend the merman Abdallah of the sea.’ ‘And my name, also, is Abdallah,’ rejoined the king; and the servants of God are all brethren. So send and fetch thy friend the baker that I may make him my vizier of the left.’

So he sent for the baker and the king invested him with the vizier’s habit and made him vizier of the left, making Abdallah of the land his vizier of the right. On this wise the fisherman abode a whole year, every day carrying the merman the basket full of fruit and receiving it back, full of jewels; and when fruit failed from the gardens, he carried him raisins and almonds and hazel-nuts and walnuts and figs and so forth; and all that he brought him the merman accepted and returned him the basket full of jewels, as of wont.

It chanced one day that he carried him the basket, full of dry fruits, according to custom, and his friend took them from him. Then they sat down to converse, the fisherman on the beach and the merman in the water, near the shore, and conversed; and the talk went round between them, till it fell upon the subject of tombs; whereupon quoth the merman, ‘O my brother, they say that the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve!) is buried with you on the land. Knowest thou his tomb?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Abdallah. ‘It lies in a city called Yethrib.’ ‘And do the people of the land visit it?’ asked the merman. ‘Yes,’ replied the fisherman, and the other said, ‘I give you joy, O people of the land, of visiting [the tomb of] that noble and compassionate prophet, which whoso visits merits his intercession! Hast thou visited it, O my brother?’ ‘No,’ answered the fisherman, ‘for I was poor and had not what to spend by the way, nor have I been at my ease but since I knew thee and thou bestowedst on me this good fortune. But it behoves me to visit it, after I have made the pilgrimage to the Holy House of God, and nought withholds me therefrom but my love for thee, for I cannot leave thee for one day.’

‘And dost thou set the love of me,’ rejoined the merman, ‘before the visitation of the tomb of Mohammed (whom God bless and preserve!), who shall intercede for thee on the day of appearance before God and shall save thee from the fire and through whose intercession thou shalt enter Paradise? And dost thou, for the love of the world, leave to visit the tomb of thy Prophet Mohammed, whom God bless and preserve?’ ‘No, by Allah,’ replied Abdallah. ‘I set the visitation of the Prophet’s tomb above all else, and I crave thy leave to visit it this year.’ ‘I grant thee leave,’ answered the merman; ‘but I have a trust to give thee; so come thou with me into the sea, that I may carry thee to my city and my house and entertain thee there and give thee a deposit; and when thou standest by the Prophet’s tomb, do thou lay it thereon, saying, “O apostle of God, Ahdallah the merman salutes thee and sends thee this present, imploring thine intercession to save him from the fire.”’ ‘O my brother,’ said the fisherman, ‘thou wast created in the water and it is thine abiding-place and doth thee no hurt; but, if thou shouldst come forth to the land, would any harm betide thee?’ ‘ Yes,’ answered the merman; ‘my body would dry up and the breezes of the land would blow upon me and I should die.’ ‘And I, in like manner,’ rejoined the fisherman, ‘was created on the land and it is my abiding-place; but, if I went down into the sea, the water would enter my belly and choke me and I should die.’ ‘Have no fear for that, replied the other; ‘for I will bring thee an ointment, wherewith when thou hast anointed thy body, the water will do thee no hurt, though thou shouldst pass the rest of thy life going about in the sea; and thou shalt lie down and rise up in the sea and nought shall harm thee.’ ‘If the case be so,’ said the fisherman, ‘well and good; but bring me the ointment, so I may make proof of it.’ ‘So be it,’ answered the merman and taking the basket, disappeared in the sea.

After awhile, he returned with an ointment, as it were the fat of oxen, yellow as gold and sweet of savour. ‘What is this, O my brother?’ asked the fisherman. ‘It is the liver-fat of a kind of fish called the dendan,’ answered the merman, ‘which is the biggest of all fish and the fiercest of our foes. Its bulk is greater than that of any beast of the land, and were it to meet a camel or an elephant, it would swallow it at one mouthful.’ ‘O my brother,’ asked Abdallah, ‘what eateth this baleful [beast]?’ ‘It eateth of the beasts of the sea,’ replied the merman. ‘Hast thou not heard the byword, “Like the fishes of the sea: the strong eateth the weak?”’

‘True,’ answered the fisherman; ‘but have you many of these dendans in the sea?’ And the other said, ‘Yes, there be many of them with us. None can tell their tale save God the Most High.’ Quoth Abdallah, ‘Verily, I fear lest, if I go down with thee into the sea, one of these beasts fall in with me and devour me.’ ‘Have no fear,’ replied the merman. ‘When it sees thee, it will know thee for a son of Adam and will fear thee and flee. It feareth none in the sea as it feareth a son of Adam; for that, if it eat him, it dieth forthright, because his flesh is a deadly poison to this kind of creature; nor do we gather its liver-fat save by means of a man, when he falleth into the sea and is drowned; for that his favour becometh changed and ofttimes his flesh is torn; so the dendan eateth him, deeming him of the beasts of the sea, and dieth. Then we light upon it dead and take the fat of its liver. Moreover, wherever there is a son of Adam, though there be in that place a hundred or two hundred or a thousand or more of these beasts, if they but hear him cry once, they all die forthwith and not one of them can avail to remove from its place; wherefore, whenas a son of Adam falleth into the sea, we take him [ere he can drown] and anoint him with this fat and go round about the sea with him, and whenever we see a dendan or two or three or more, we bid him cry out and they all die forthright for his once crying.'

Quoth the fisherman, 'I put my trust in God,' and putting off his clothes, buried them in a hole, which he dug in the beach; after which he rubbed his body from top to toe with the ointment. Then he descended into the water and diving, opened his eyes and the water did him no hurt. So he walked right and left, and if he would, he rose [to the surface] and if he would, he sank to the bottom. And he saw the water of the sea vaulted over him, as it were a tent; yet it did him no hurt. Then said the merman to him, 'What seest thou, O my brother?' 'O my brother,' answered Abdallah, 'I see [that which is] good; and indeed thou spokest truth in that which thou saidst to me; for the water doth me no hurt.' Quoth the merman, 'Follow me.'

So he followed him and they fared on from place to place, whilst Abdallah saw mountains of water before him and on his right and left and diverted himself by gazing thereon and on the various kinds of fish, some great and some small, that sported in the sea. Some of them were like unto buffaloes, others to oxen and others to dogs and yet others unto human beings; but all to which they drew near fled, whenas they saw the fisherman, who said to the merman, 'O my brother, how is it that I see all the fish, to which we draw near, flee from us?' 'Because they fear thee,' answered the other; 'for all things that God hath made fear the son of Adam.'

The fisherman ceased not to gaze upon the marvels of the sea, till they came to a high mountain and fared on beside it. Presently, he heard a great cry and turning, saw some black thing, the bigness of a camel or bigger, coming down upon him from the mountain and crying out. So he said to his friend, 'What is this, O my brother?' 'This is the dendan,' answered the merman. 'It cometh down in quest of me, seeking to devour me; so cry thou out at it, O my brother, ere it win to us; else will it snatch me up and devour me.' So Abdallah cried out at it and it fell down dead; which when he saw, he said, 'Extolled be the perfection of God and His praise! I smote it not with sword nor knife; how comes it, then, that, for all the vastness of the creature’s bulk, it could not endure my cry, but died?’ ‘Marvel not,’ replied the merman; ‘for, by Allah, O my brother, were there a thousand or two thousand of these creatures, yet could they not endure the cry of a son of Adam.’

Then they fared on, till they came to a city, whose inhabitants the fisherman saw to be all women, there being no male among them; so he said to his companion, ‘O my brother, what city is this and what are these women?’ ‘This is the city of women,’ answered the merman, ‘for its inhabitants are of the women of the sea.’ ‘Are there any males among them?’ asked the fisherman; and the merman said, ‘No.’ ‘Then how,’ said Abdallah, ‘do they conceive and bear young, without males?’ Quoth the other, ‘The king of the sea banishes them hither and they conceive not neither bear children. All the women of the sea, with whom he is wroth, he sends to this city and they cannot leave it; for, should one of them come forth therefrom, any of the beasts of the sea that saw her would devour her. But in the other cities of the sea there are both males and females.’

‘Are there then other cities than this in the sea?’ asked the fisherman, and the merman said, ‘There are many.’ ‘And is there a Sultan over you in the sea?’ asked the fisherman. ‘Yes,’ answered the merman. Then said Abdallah, ‘O my brother, I have indeed seen many marvels in the sea!’ ‘And what hast thou seen of the marvels [of the sea]?’ quoth the merman. ‘Hast thou not heard the saying, “The marvels of the sea are more in number than the marvels of the land?”’ ‘True,’ answered the fisherman and fell to gazing upon the women, whom he saw having faces like moons and hair like women’s hair, but their hands and feet were in their bellies and they had tails like fishes’ tails.

When the merman had shown him the people of the city, he carried him forth therefrom and forewent him to another city, which he found full of folk, both males and females, after the fashion of the women aforesaid and having tails; but there was neither selling nor buying amongst them, as with the people of the land, nor were they clothed, but went all naked and with their privities uncovered. ‘O my brother,’ said Abdallah, ‘I see males and females alike with their privities exposed.’ And the other said, ‘This is because the folk of the sea have no clothes.' 'And how do they, when they marry?' asked the fisherman. 'They do not marry,' answered the merman; 'but every one who hath a mind to a female doth his will of her.' Quoth Abdallah, 'This is unlawful. Why doth he not ask her in marriage and dower her and make her a wedding-festival and marry her, in accordance with that which is pleasing to God and His Apostle?' 'We are not all of one religion,' answered his companiom 'Some of us are Muslims, believers in the unity of God, others Jews and Christians and what not else; and each marries in accordance with the ordinances of his religion; but those of us who marry are mostly Muslims.'

Quoth the fisherman, 'Ye are naked and have neither buying nor selling among you: of what then is your wives' dowry? Do ye give them jewels and precious stones?' 'Jewels with us are but stones without value,' answered the merman: 'but upon him who is minded to marry they impose a dowry of a certain number of fish of various kinds, that he must catch, a thousand or two thousand, more or less, according to the agreement between himself and the bride's father. As soon as he brings the required amount, the families of the bride and bridegroom assemble and eat the marriage-banquet; after which they bring him in to his bride, and he catches fish and feeds her; or, if he be unable, she catches fish and feeds him.' 'And how if a woman commit adultery?' asked the fisherman. 'If a woman be convicted of this case,' answered the merman, 'they banish her to the City of Women; and if she be with child, they leave her till she be delivered, when, if she give birth to a girl, they banish her with her, naming her adulteress, daughter of adulteress, and she abideth a maid till she die; but, if she give birth to a male child, they carry it to the Sultan of the Sea, who puts it to death.'

Abdallah marvelled at this and the merman carried him to another city and thence to another and another, till he had shown him fourscore cities, and he saw the people of each city to be different from those of every other. Then said he to the merman, 'O my brother, are there yet other cities in the sea?' 'And what hast thou seen of the cities of the sea and its wonders?' replied the other 'By the virtue of the noble prophet, the benign, the compassionate, were I to show thee a thousand cities a day for a thousand years, and in each city a thousand marvels, I should not have shown thee one carat of the four-and-twenty carats of the cities of the sea and its wonders! I have but shown thee our own province and country, nothing more.'

'O my brother,' said the fisherman, 'since this is the case, what I have seen sufficeth me, for I am sick of eating fish, and these fourscore days I have been in thy company, thou hast fed me morning and night upon nothing but raw fish, neither broiled nor boiled.' 'And what is broiled and boiled?' asked the merman. Quoth Abdallah, 'we broil fish with fire and boil it [in water] and dress it in various ways and make many dishes of it.' 'And how should we come by fire in the sea?' rejoined the other, 'we know not broiled nor boiled nor aught else of the kind.' Quoth the fisherman, 'We also fry it in olive-oil and oil of sesame,' and the merman said, 'How should we come by olive-oil and oil of sesame in the sea? Verily we know nothing of that thou names.'

'True,' said Abdallah, 'but, O my brother, thou hast shown me many cities; yet hast thou not shown me thine own city.' Quoth the merman 'As for mine own city, we passed it long since, for it is near the land whence we came, and I only left it and came with thee hither, thinking to divert thee with the sight of the [greater] cities of the sea.' 'That which I have seen of them sufficeth me,' replied Abdallah; 'and now I would have thee show me thine own city.' 'So be it,' answered the other and returning on his traces, carried him back thither and said to him, 'This is my city.'

Abdallah looked and saw a city small by comparison with those he had seen; then he entered with his companion and they fared on till they came to a cavern. Quoth the merman, 'This is my house and all the houses in the city are on this wise, caverns, great and small, in the mountains; as likewise are those of all the other cities of the sea. For every one who is minded to make him a house repairs to the king and says to him, 'I wish to make me a house in such a place.' Whereupon the king sends with him a band of the fish called peckers, which have beaks that crumble the hardest rock, appointing a certain dole of fish to their wage. They betake themselves to the mountain chosen by the owner of the house and hew therein the house. whilst the owner catches fish for them and feeds them, till the cavern is finished, when they depart and the owner of the house takes up his abode therein. After this wise do all the people of the sea; they traffic not with one another nor serve each other save by means of fish; and their food is fish and they themselves are a kind of fish.'

Then he said to him, 'Enter.' So Abdallah entered and the merman cried out, saying, 'Ho, daughter mine!' whereupon there came to him a damsel with a face like the round of the moon and long hair, heavy buttocks, languishing black eyes and slender waist; but she was naked and had a tail. When she saw the fisherman, she said to her father, 'O my father, what is this lacktail thou hast brought with thee?' 'O my daughter,' answered he, 'this is my friend of the land, from whom I use to bring thee the fruits of the earth. Come hither and salute him.' So she came forward and saluted the fisherman with eloquent tongue and fluent speech; and her father said to her, 'Bring victual for our guest, by whose coming a blessing hath betided us;' whereupon she brought him two great fishes, each the bigness of a lamb, and the merman said to him, 'Eat.' So he ate, in his own despite, for stress of hunger; because he was weary of eating fish and they had nothing else.

Before long, in came the merman's wife, who was fair to look upon, and with her two children, each having in his hand a young fish, which he munched as a man would munch a cucumber. When she saw the fisherman with her husband, she said, 'What is this lacktail?' And she and her sons and daughter came up to him and fell to examining his breech and saying, 'Yea, by Allah, he is tailless!' And they laughed at him. So he said to the merman, 'O my brother, hast thou brought me hither to make me a laughing-stock for thy wife and children?' 'Pardon, O my brother,' answered the merman. 'Those who have no tails are rare among us, and whenever one such is found, the Sultan taketh him, to make him sport, and he abideth a marvel amongst us, and all Who see him laugh at him. But, O my brother, excuse these young children and this woman, for they lack understanding.' Then he cried out to his family, saying, 'Hold your peace!' So they were afraid and kept silence; whilst he went on to soothe Abdallah's mind.

Presently, as they were talking, in came half a score mermen, tall and strong and stout, and said to him, 'O Abdallah, it hath reached the king that thou hast with thee a lacktail.' 'Yes,' answered the merman, ‘and this is he; but he is not of us nor of the children of the sea. He is my friend of the land and hath come to me as a guest and I purpose to carry him back to the land.’ Quoth they, ‘We cannot depart without him; so, if thou have aught to say, arise and come with him to the king; and whatsoever thou wouldst say to us, that say thou to the king.’ Then said the merman to the fisherman, ‘O my brother, my excuse is manifest, and we may not gain-say the king; but go thou with me to him and I will do my endeavour to deliver thee from him, if it please God. Fear not, for he deemeth thee of the children of the sea; but, when he seeth thee, he will know thee to be of the children of the land, whereupon he will surely entreat thee with honour and restore thee to the land.’ ‘It is thine to decide,’ replied Abdallah. ‘I will put my trust in God and go with thee.’

So he took him and carried him to the king, who, when he saw him, laughed at him and said, ‘Welcome to the lacktail!’ And all who were about the king fell to laughing at him and saying, ‘Yea, by Allah, he is tailless!’ Then Abdallah of the sea came forward and acquainted the king with the fisherman’s case, saying, ‘This man is of the children of the land and he is my friend and cannot live amongst us, for that he loves not the eating of fish, except it be fried or boiled; wherefore l desire that thou give me leave to restore him to the land.’ ‘Since the case is so,’ answered the king, ‘I give thee leave to restore him to his place, after due entertainment. Bring him the guest-meal’

So they brought him fish of various kinds and colours and he ate, in obedience to the king’s commandment; after which the latter said to him, ‘Ask a boon of me.’ Quoth he, ‘I ask of thee that thou give me jewels;’ and the king said, ‘Carry him to the jewel-house and let him choose that whereof he hath need.’ So his friend carried him to the jewel-house and he chose out what he would, after which the merman brought him back to his own city and pulling out a purse, said to him, ‘Take this deposit and lay it on the tomb of the Prophet, whom God bless and preserve!’ And he took it, knowing not what was therein.

Then the merman went forth with him, to bring him back to land, and by the way he heard singing and merry-making and saw a table spread with fish and folk eating and singing and holding high festival. So he said to his friend, ‘What ails these people to rejoice thus? Is there a wedding toward amongst them?’ ‘Nay,’ answered Abdallah of the sea; ‘only one of them is dead.’ ‘Do ye then,’ asked the fisherman, ‘when one dieth amongst you, rejoice for him and sing and feast?’ ‘Yes,’ replied the merman; ‘and ye of the land, what do ye?’ ‘When one dieth amongst us,’ said Abdallah, ‘we weep and mourn for him and the women buffet their faces and rend the bosoms of their garments, in token of mourning for the dead.’ The merman stared at him with wide eyes and said to him, ‘Give me the deposit.’ So he gave it to him.

Then he set him ashore and said to him, ‘Henceforward our love and our friendship are at an end, and thou shalt no more see me, nor I thee.’ ‘Why sayst thou this?’ asked the fisherman; and the other said, ‘Are ye not, O folk of the land, a deposit of God?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Abdallah. ‘Why then,’ asked the merman, ‘is it grievous to you that God should take back His deposit and wherefore weep ye over it? How can I entrust thee with a deposit for the Prophet, whom God bless and preserve, seeing that, when a child is born to you, ye rejoice in it, albeit God the Most High setteth the soul therein as a deposit; and yet, when He taketh it again, it is grievous to you and ye weep and mourn? Since it is uneath to thee to give up the deposit of God, how shall it be easy to thee to give up the deposit of the Prophet?’ Wherefore we reck not of your companionship.’ So saying, he left him and disappeared in the sea.

The fisherman donned his clothes and taking the jewels, went up to the king, who received him with open arms and rejoiced at his return, saying, ‘How dost thou, O my son-in-law, and what is the cause of thine absence from me this while?’ So he told him his story and acquainted him with that which he had seen of marvels in the sea, whereat the king wondered. Moreover, he told him what the merman had said [about the mourning for the dead]; and the king replied, ‘Indeed thou west at fault to tell him this.’ Nevertheless, he continued for some time to go down to the sea-shore and call upon the merman; but he answered him not nor came to him; so, at last, he gave up hope of him and abode, he and the king his father-in-law and their families, in the happiest of case and the practice of righteousness, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Severer of Companies and they died all. And glory be to the [Ever-]Living One, who dieth not, whose is the empire of the Seen and the Unseen, who can all things and is gracious to His servants and knoweth all that pertaineth to them!

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THE MERCHANT OF OMAN.

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid was one night exceeding wakeful; so he called Mesrour and said to him, ‘Fetch me Jaafer in haste.’ Accordingly, he went out and returned with the vizier, to whom said the Khalif, ‘O Jaafer, wakefulness hath gotten hold of me this night and forbiddeth sleep from me, nor know I what shall do it away from me.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Jaafer, ‘the wise say, “Looking on a mirror, entering the bath and hearkening unto song do away care and chagrin.”’ ‘O Jaafer,’ rejoined Haroun, ‘I have done all this, but it hath brought me no whit of relief, and I swear by my pious forefathers, except thou contrive that which shall do away this [restlessness] from me, I will strike off thy head.’

Quoth Jaafer, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, wilt thou do that which I shall counsel thee?’ ‘And what is that?’ asked the Khalif. ‘It is,’ replied the vizier, ‘that thou take boat with us and drop down the Tigris with the tide to a place called Kern es Serat, so haply we may hear or see some new thing, for it is said, “The solace of care is in one of three things; to wit, that a man see what he never before saw or hear what he never yet heard or tread an earth he hath never yet trodden.” It may be this shall be the means of doing away thy restlessness, O Commander of the Faithful, if it be the will of the Most High. There, on both sides of the stream, are windows and balconies facing one another, and it may be we shall hear or see from one of these somewhat wherewith our hearts may be lightened.’

Jaafer’s counsel pleased the Khalif, so he rose from his place and taking with him the vizier and his brother El Fezl and Isaac the boon-companion and Abou Nuwas and Abou Delef and Mesrour the headsman, entered the wardrobe, where they all donned merchants’ habits. Then they went down to the Tigris and embarking in a gilded boat, dropped down with the stream, till they came to the place they sought, where they heard the voice of a damsel singing to the lute and chanting the following verses:

I say to my love, whilst the wine-cup is here And the thousand-voiced bird in the coppice sings clear, 'How long this delaying from gladness? Awake; For life's but a loan for a day or a year.

So take thou the cup from a loveling's white hands, Whose languishing lids are as those of a deer.'

I sowed a fresh rose in his cheek, but amidst His locks a pomegranate for fruit did appear.

Indeed, very fire wouldst thou deem his fair cheek And the place of the scratching dead ashes and sere.

Quoth my censor, 'Forget him;' but where's my excuse, When the down sprouts and creeps on the face of my dear?

When the Khalif heard this, he said, 'O Jaafer, how goodly is that voice!' 'O our lord,' answered the vizier, 'never smote my hearing aught sweeter or goodlier than this singing! But hearing from behind a wall is only half hearing; how would it be, if we heard it from behind a curtain?' 'Come, O Jaafer,' said the Khalif, 'let us go up and intrude upon the master of the house; it may be we shall look upon the songstress, face to face.' 'I hear and obey,' answered Jaafer. So they landed and sought admittance; whereupon there came out to them a young man, fair of favour, sweet of speech and eloquent of tongue, who said to them, 'Welcome and fair welcome, O lords that favour me [with your presence!] Enter in all ease and liberty.'

They followed him into a saloon, four-square, whose roof was decorated with gold and its walls adorned with ultra- marine. At its upper end was an estrade, whereon stood a goodly settle and thereon sat a hundred damsels like moons. The young man cried out to them and they came down from their seats. Then he turned to Jaafer and said to him, 'O my lord, I know not the worshipful of you from the more worshipful, but, in God's name, let him that is highest in rank among you favour me by taking the highest room, and let his brethren sit each in his several station.' So they sat down, each according to his rank, whilst Mesrour abode standing to do them service; and the host said to them, 'O my guests, with your leave, shall I set food before you?' 'Yes,' answered they. So he called for food, whereupon four damsels with girded waists set before them a table, whereon were rare meats of that which flies and walks the earth and swims the seas, sandgrouse and quails and chickens and pigeons [and what not else], and written on the marges of the tray were verses such as sorted with the entertainment.

They ate till they had enough and washed their hands, after which said the young man, ‘O my lords, if you have any want, let us know it, that we may have the honour of satisfying it.’ ‘It is well,’ answered they. ‘We came not to thy dwelling but because of a voice we heard from behind the wall of thy house, and we would fain hear it [again] and know her to whom it belongs. So, if thou deem well to vouchsafe us this favour, it will be of the munificence of thy nature, and we will after return whence we came.’ ‘Ye are welcome,’ answered the host and turning to a black slave-girl, said to her, ‘Fetch me thy mistress such an one.’ So she went away and returning with a chair of chinaware, cushioned with brocade, set it down; then withdrew again and presently returned with a damsel, as she were the moon on the night of its full, who sat down on the chair. Then the black girl gave her a bag of satin, from which she brought out a lute, inlaid with jacinths and jewels and furnished with pegs of gold, and tuned its strings, even as saith the poet of her and her lute:

When in her lap she sets it, the soul in it she sets, Its pegs [and strings] its organs by which its thought hath speech;
Nor doth her right hand outrage its beauties, but her left On equal wise and measure amendeth still the breach.

Then she strained it to her bosom, bending over it as the mother bends over her child, and swept the strings, which complained as the child complains to its mother; after which she played upon it and sang the following verses:

Vouchsafe me Fortune the return of him I love, and I Will chide him, saying, ‘Pass about thy cups, O friend; fill high
And drink of wine that mingleth not with heart of man but he Still barters care for cheer and calls a truce with tear and sigh.
Unto its bearing in its cup the zephyr doth suffice: Didst e’er a full moon in its hand a star that bore espy?
How many a night with its full moon I’ve held converse of yore, Whilst, o’er the Tigris shed, its light lit up the darkling sky!

As to the westward she inclined, it was as if she drew A gilded sword that stretched athwart the water far and nigh.

When she had made an end of her song, she wept sore and all who were in the place cried out with weeping, till they were well-nigh dead; nor was there one of them but took leave of his senses and rent his clothes and buffeted his face, for the goodliness of her singing. Then said Er Reshid, ‘This damsel’s song denoteth that she is one parted from her beloved.’ Quoth her master, ‘She hath lost her father and mother.’ But the Khalif said, ‘This is not the weeping of one who hath lost her father and mother, but the affliction of one who hath lost her beloved.’ And he was delighted with her singing and said to Isaac, ‘By Allah, I never saw her like!’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Isaac, ‘indeed I marvel at her to the utterest and am beside myself for delight.’

Now with all this Er Reshid stinted not to look upon their host and observe his charms and the elegance of his fashion; but he saw on his face a pallor as he would die; so he turned to him and said, ‘Harkye!’ ‘At thy service, O my lord,’ answered he. ‘Knowest thou who we are?’ asked the Khalif; and he said ‘No.’ Quoth Jaafer, ‘Wilt thou that I tell thee the names of each of us?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the young man; and the vizier said, ‘This is the Commander of the Faithful, descendant of the uncle of the Prince of the Apostles,’ and told him the names of the others of the company; after which quoth Er Reshid, ‘I desire that thou tell me the cause of the paleness of thy face, whether it be acquired or natural from thy birth.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered he, ‘my case is rare and my affair extraordinary; were it graven with needles on the corners of the eye, it would serve as an admonition to him who will be admonished.’ ‘Tell it me,’ said the Khalif. ‘Peradventure, thy healing may be at my hand.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ said the young man, ‘lend me thine ears and give me thy whole mind.’ ‘Come,’ said the Khalif, ‘tell it me, for thou makest me long to hear it.’

‘Know then, O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied the young man, ‘that I am a merchant of the merchants of the sea and come from the city of Oman, where my father was a rich merchant, having thirty ships trading upon the sea, whose yearly hire was thirty thousand dinars; and he had partners trading with his money and journeying on the sea. He was a man of worth and generosity and taught me writing and all whereof a man hath need. When his last hour drew near, he called me to him and gave me the customary injunctions; then God the Most High admitted him to His mercy and may He continue the Commander of the Faithful [on life!]

One day, as I sat in my house with a company of merchants, one of my servants came in to me and said, "O my lord, there is a man at the door, who craves admittance to thee." So I gave leave and he came in, bearing on his head a covered box. He set it down and uncovered it, and behold, therein were fruits out of season and [vegetables] conserved in salt and fresh, such as are not found in our country. I thanked him and gave him a hundred dinars, and he went away, grateful. Then I divided these things amongst my guests and asked them whence they came. Quoth they, "They come from Bassora," and praised them and went on to expatiate upon the beauties of Bassora and were all of accord that there was nothing in the world goodlier than Baghdad and its people. Then they fell to describing Baghdad and the excellence of its air and the beauty of its ordinance and the goodly manners of its people, till my soul longed for it and all my hopes clave to the sight of it.

So I arose and selling my ships and houses and lands and slaves, male and female, got together a thousand thousand dinars, besides jewels and precious stones, with which I freighted a ship and setting out therein, sailed nights and days till I came to Bassora, where I abode awhile. Then I hired a bark and embarking therein with all my goods, sailed up the river some days till I arrived at Baghdad. I enquired where the merchants abode and what part thereof was pleasantest of sojourn and was answered, "The Kerkh quarter." So I went thither and hiring a house in a street called the Street of Saffron, transported my goods to it and took up my lodging therein.

Here I abode some days, till, one Friday, I sallied forth apleasuring, taking with me somewhat of money. I went first to a mosque, called the Mosque of Mensour, where the Friday service was held, and when we had made an end of prayers, I went out with the folk to a place called Kern es Serat, where I saw a tall and goodly house, with a balcony overlooking the river-bank, wherein was a lattice- window. So I betook myself thither with a company of folk and saw there an old man sitting handsomely clad and exhaling a sweet scent. His beard flowed down upon his breast, where it divided into two waves like silver-wire, and about him were four damsels and five pages in attendance upon him. So I said to one of the folk, “What is the name of yonder old man and what is his business?” “His name is Tahir ibn el Alaa,” answered he, “and he is a keeper of girls; all who go in to him eat and drink and look upon fair ones.” “By Allah,” quoth I, “this long while have I gone about in quest of the like of this!”

So I went up to the old man and saluting him, said to him, “O my lord, I desire to be thy guest to-night.” And he said, “With all my heart; but, O my son, with me are many damsels, some whose night is ten dinars, some forty and others more. Choose which thou wilt have.” Quoth I, “I choose her whose night is ten dinars.” And I counted out to him three hundred dinars, being the price of a month; whereupon he committed me to a page, who carried me to a bath within the house and tended me on goodly wise. When I came out of the bath, he brought me to the door of a chamber and knocked, whereupon out came a damsel, to whom said he, “Take thy guest.” She received me with welcome and courtesy, laughing and rejoicing, and brought me into a rare apartment, decorated with gold. I looked at her and saw her like the moon on the night of its full, having in attendance on her two damsels like stars. She made me sit and seating herself by my side, signed to her maids, who set before us a table covered with dishes of various kinds of meats, fowls and quails and sandgrouse and pigeons. So we ate till we were satisfied, and never in my life saw I aught more delicious than this food. When we had eaten, she caused remove the table [of meats] and set on the table of wine and flowers and fruits and sweetmeats; and I abode with her a month on this wise.

At the end of the month, I repaired to the bath; then, going to the old man, I said to him, “O my lord, I want her whose night is twenty dinars.” “Pay down the money,” said he. So I fetched money and counted out to him six hundred dinars for a month’s hire, whereupon he called a boy and said to him, “Take thy lord here.” So he carried me to the bath and thence to the door of a chamber, at which he knocked and there came out a damsel, to whom quoth he, “Take thy guest.” She received me on the goodliest wise and I found in attendance on her four slave-girls, whom she commanded to bring food. So they brought a table spread with all kinds of meats, and I ate. When I had made an end of eating and the table had been removed, she took the lute and sang the following verses:

O windwafts of musk, from the land of Babel to us-ward that fare,
In the name of my passion and heat, I charge you my messages bear;
For lo, in those regions of yours are dwellings of yore that I
knew, The homes of our loved ones, to wit, the noblest of all that are
there;
And in them abideth the maid, for whom many a lover doth pine,
Distraught with the pangs of desire, but getteth no grace of the fair.

I abode with her a month, after which I returned to the old man and said to him, “I want her of the forty dinars [a night].” “Pay the money,” said he. So I counted out to him twelve hundred dinars and abode with her a month, as it were one day, for what I saw of the beauty of her person and the goodliness of her converse. After this I went to the old man one evening and heard a great clamour and loud voices. So I said to him, “What is to do?” And he answered, saying, “This is the night of our greatest holiday, whereon all the townsfolk embark on the river and divert themselves by gazing upon one another. Hast thou a mind to go up to the roof and amuse thyself by looking upon the folk?” “Yes,” answered I, and went up to the roof, whence I [looked down upon the river and] saw [a great multitude of] folk with flambeaux and cressets, and great mirth and merriment toward.

Then I went up to the end of the roof and saw there a little chamber railed off by a goodly curtain, and in its midst a couch of juniper-wood, plated with gold and covered with a handsome carpet. On this sat a lovely young lady, confounding all beholders with her beauty and grace and symmetry, and by her side a youth, whose hand was on her neck; and he was kissing her and she him. When I saw them, O Commander of the Faithful, I could not contain myself nor knew I where I was, so dazzled was I by her beauty: but, when I came down, I questioned the damsel with whom I was and described the young lady to her. “What wilt thou with her?” asked she; and I said, “She hath taken my wit.” She smiled and said, “O Aboulhusn, hast thou a mind to her?” “Ay, by Allah!” answered I; “for she hath captived my heart and soul.” Quoth she, “This is the daughter of Tahir ibn el Alaa; she is our mistress and we are all her handmaids; but knowest thou, O Aboulhusn, what is the price of her night and day?” And I said, “No.” “Five hundred dinars,” answered she; “for she is one for whom kings might sigh in vain.”

“By Allah,” quoth I, “I will spend all I have on this damsel!” And I lay, heartsore for desire, till the morning, when I donned a suit of the richest royal raiment and betaking myself to Ibn el Alaa, said to him, “O my lord, I want her whose night is five hundred dinars.” Quoth he, “Pay the money.” So I counted out to him fifteen thousand dinars for a month’s hire and he took them and said to the page, “Carry him to thy mistress such an one.” So he took me and carried me to a saloon, than which my eyes never saw a goodlier on the face of the earth, and there I found the young lady seated. When I saw her, O Commander of the Faithful, my reason was dazed with her beauty, for she was like the full moon on its fourteenth night, full of grace and symmetry and loveliness. Her speech put to shame the tones of the lute, and it was as it were she to whom the poet referred in the following verses:

Quoth she (and verily desire ran riot in her side, What while the dusky night let down the darkness like a tide),
“Night, in thy blackness is there none to company with me? Is there no swiver for this kaze of all men, far and wide?”
Then with her palm she smote thereon and said, what while she sighed The sighing of the sorrowful, the sad, the weeping-eyed,
“As by the toothstick’s use appears the beauty of the teeth, So, like a toothstick is the yard unto the kaze applied.
O, Muslims, stand your yards not up on end and is there none ‘Mongst you will succour her who doth to you complain?” she cried.
Therewith my yard thrust out erect, from underneath my clothes, And said to her, “Here, here’s for thee!” And I the while untied
The laces of her drawers. She made a show of fear and said,

"Who'rt thou?" And I, "A youth thy cry that answereth," replied
And straightway fell to routing her with what was like her wrist,
A lusty routing, that full sore the buttocks mortified;
Till when, three courses run, I rose, "Fair fall thee of the swive!"
Quoth she, and I, "May solacement thyself therefrom betide!"

And how excellent is the saying of another!

A fair one, to idolaters if she her face should show, They'd leave their idols and her face for only Lord would know.
If in the Eastward she appeared unto a monk, for sure, He'd cease from turning to the West and to the East bend low;
And if into the briny sea one day she chanced to spit, Assuredly the salt sea's floods straight fresh and sweet would grow.

And that of another:

I looked one look upon her and dazed was all my thought, For all the rare perfections wherewith the maid was fraught.
Suspicion that I loved her discovered unto her, And straight the supposition her cheeks to redden wrought.

I saluted her and she said to me, "Welcome and fair welcome!" and taking me by the hand, made me sit down beside her; whereupon, of the excess of my passion, I fell aweeping for fear of parting and poured forth the tears of the eye, reciting the following verses:

The nights of estrangement I love; yet not that in them I delight, But fate peradventure shall cause reunion ensue their despite;
And eke, on like wise, I abhor the days of enjoyment, because I see that all things in this world still issue in ceasing outright.

She strove to solace me with soft speech, but I was drowned in the sea of passion, fearing, even in the midst of union, the anguish of separation, for excess of longing and desire; and I bethought me of the misery of absence and estrangement and repeated these verses:

Even in her arms I me bethought of severance from her And from mine eyes the tears ran down, a ruddy-coloured flood,
Like tragacanth, and straight I wiped mine eyes upon her neck,
For of the use of camphor ’tis to stay the flow of blood.

Then she called for food and there came four damsels, high-bosomed maids, who set before us meats and fruits and sweetmeats and flowers and wine, such as befit none but kings. So we ate and sat at the wine, compassed about with flowers and herbs of sweet savour, in a chamber fit only for kings. Presently, one of her maids brought her a bag of silk, which she opened and taking thereout a lute, laid it in her lap and touched its strings, whereupon it complained, as the child complains to its mother, and she sang the following verses:

Drink not of wine except it be at the hands of a loveling slim,
Who in brightness of soul resembles it and it resembles him.
The drinker of wine, in very sooth, hath no delight thereof,
Except the cheek of the fair be pure, who doth the goblet brim.

On this wise, O Commander of the Faithful, I abode with her, month after month, till all my money was spent; wherefore, as I sat with her [one day], I bethought me of [coming] separation from her and my tears streamed down upon my cheeks like rivers, and I became not knowing night from day. Quoth she, “Why dost thou weep?” And I answered, “O light of mine eyes, I weep because of our [coming] parting.” “And what,” asked she, “shall part thee and me, O my lord?” “O my lady,” said I, “from the time I came to thee, thy father hath taken of me, for every night, five hundred dinars, and now I have nothing left. Indeed the poet speaks sooth when he says:

Exile at home, I trow, is lack of good, And wealth is home in very strangerhood.”

“Know,” rejoined she, “that it is my father’s wont, whenas a merchant abideth with him and hath spent all his money, to give him hospitality three days; then doth he put him out and he may never return to us. But keep thou thy secret and conceal thy case and I will contrive so that thou shalt abide with me till such time as God will; for, indeed, there is a great love for thee in my heart. Thou must know that all my father's wealth is under my hand and he knows not the tale thereof; so, every day I will give thee a purse of five hundred dinars, which do thou give him, saying, 'Henceforth, I will pay thee only day by day.' He will hand the purse to me, and I will give it to thee again, and we will abide thus till such time as God pleases."

I thanked her and kissed her hand; and on this wise I abode with her a whole year, till it chanced one day that she beat one of her handmaids grievously and the latter said, "By Allah, I will torture thy heart, even as thou hast tortured me!" So she went to the girl's father and discovered to him all our practice, whereupon he arose forthright and coming in to me, as I sat with his daughter, said to me, "Harkye, such an one!" "At thy service," replied I. Quoth he, "It is our wont, when a merchant grows poor with us, to give him hospitality three days; but thou hast had a year with us, eating and drinking and doing what thou wouldst." Then he turned to his servants and said to them, "Pull off his clothes." They did as he bade them and gave me ten dirhems and an old suit worth other five; after which he said to me, "Go forth; I will not beat thee nor revile thee; but go thy ways and if thou abide in this town, thy blood be on thine own head."

So I went forth, in my own despite, knowing not whither to go, for all the trouble in the world was fallen on my heart and I was occupied with melancholy thought. Then I bethought me of the wealth which I had brought from Oman and said in myself, "I came hither with a million dinars and have made away with it all in the house of yonder ill-omened old man, and now I go forth from him, naked and broken-hearted! But there is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!"

I abode three days in Baghdad, without tasting meat or drink, and on the fourth day I saw a ship bound for Bassora; so I hired a passage in her and when we reached Bassora, I landed and went to the market, being sore anhungred. Presently, a man saw me, a grocer, whom I had known aforetime, and coming up to me, embraced me, — for he had been my friend and my father's friend before me, — and questioned me of my case, for that he saw me clad in those tattered clothes. So I told him all that had befallen me, and he said, "By Allah, this is not the fashion of a reasonable man! But what dost thou purpose to do, after this that hath befallen thee?" Quoth I, "I know not what I shall do," and he said, "Wilt thou abide with me and write my goings-out and comings-in, and thou shalt have two dirhems a day, over and above thy meat and drink?" I agreed to this and abode with him a whole year, buying and selling, till I had gotten a hundred dinars; when I hired an upper chamber by the river-side, so haply a ship should come up with merchandise, that I might buy goods with the dinars and go with them to Baghdad.

One day, there came ships with merchandise, and all the merchants resorted to them to buy, and I with them. [We boarded one of the ships,] and behold, there came two men out of the hold and setting themselves chairs on the deck, sat down thereon. The merchants accosted them, with intent to buy, and they said to one of the crew, "Bring the carpet." So he brought the carpet and spread it, and another came with a pair of saddle-bags, from which he took a budget and emptied it on the carpet; and our sights were dazzled with that which issued thence of pearls and corals and jacinths and cornelians and other jewels of all sorts and colours. Then said one of the men on the chairs, "O merchants, we will sell but this to-day, by way of spending-money, for that we are weary." So the merchants fell to bidding for the jewels and bid, one against the other, till the price reached four hundred dinars.

Now the owner of the bag was an old acquaintance of mine and when he saw me, he came down to me and saluting me, said, "Why dost thou not speak and bid like the rest of the merchants?" "O my lord," answered I, "the shifts of fortune have run against me and I have lost my wealth and have but a hundred dinars left in the world." Quoth he, "O Omani, after this vast wealth, do but a hundred dinars remain to thee?" And I was abashed before him and my eyes filled with tears; whereupon he looked at me and indeed my case was grievous to him. So he said to the merchants, "Bear witness against me that I sell all that is in this bag of various kinds of jewels and precious stones to this man for a hundred dinars, albeit I know them to be worth so many thousand dinars, and I make him a present of them." So saying, he gave me the bag and the carpet, with all the jewels thereon, for which I thanked him, and all the merchants present praised him. Then I carried all this to the jewel- market and sat there to sell and buy. Among the jewels was a round amulet of the handiwork of the masters, weighing half a pound. It was of bright red cornelian and on both sides of it were graven characters and talismans, like unto the tracks of ants; but I knew not its use.

I bought and sold a whole year, at the end of which time I took the amulet and said to myself, "This hath been with me a great while, and I know not what it is nor what is its use." So I gave it to the broker, who went round with it and returned, saying, "None of the merchants will give more than ten dirhems for it." Quoth I, "I will not sell it at that price." And he threw it in my face and went away. Another day I again offered it for sale and its price reached fifteen dirhems; so I took it from the broker in a pet and threw it back into the tray. Presently, as I sat in my shop, there came up to me a man, who bore the traces of travel, and saluting me, said, "By thy leave, I will turn over thy wares." "It is well," answered I, and indeed I was still wroth by reason of the lack of demand for the amulet.

So he fell to turning over my wares, but took nought thereof save the amulet, which when he saw, he said, "Praised be God!" and kissed his hand. Then said he to me, "O my lord, wilt thou sell this?" And I said, "Yes," being still angry. Quoth he, "What is its price?" And I, "How much wilt thou give?" "Twenty dinars," answered he. I thought he was making mock of me and said, "Go thy ways." Quoth he, "I will give thee fifty dinars for it." I made him no answer, and he said, "A thousand dinars." But I was silent, whilst he laughed at my silence and said, "Why dost thou not return me an answer?" "Go thy ways," repeated I and was like to quarrel with him. But he bid thousand after thousand, and I still made him no reply, till he said, "Wilt thou sell it for twenty thousand dinars?"

I still thought he was making mock of me; but the people gathered about me and all of them said to me, "Sell to him, and if he buy not, we will all fall upon him and beat him and put him out of the city." So I said to him, "Wilt thou buy or dost thou jest?" Quoth he, "Wilt thou sell or dost thou jest?" And I said, "I will sell if thou wilt buy." Then said he, "I will buy it for thirty thousand dinars: take them and strike the bargain." And I said to the bystanders, "Bear witness against him." [Then to him, "I sell to thee,] but on condition that thou acquaint me with the use and virtues of the amulet, for which thou payest all this money." "Close the bargain," answered he, "and I will tell thee this." Quoth I, "I sell to thee." And he said, "God be witness of that which thou sayst!"

Then he brought out the money and giving it to me put the amulet in his bosom; after which he said to me, "Art thou content?" "Yes," answered I, and he said to the people, "Bear witness against him that he hath closed the bargain and touched the price, thirty thousand dinars." Then he turned to me and said, "Harkye, good man, hadst thou held back from selling, by Allah, I would have bidden thee up to a hundred thousand dinars, nay even to a thousand thousand!" When I heard this, O Commander of the Faithful, the blood fled from my face, and from that day there overcame it this paleness that thou seest.

Then said I to him, "Tell me the reason of this and what is the use of this amulet." And he answered, saying, "Know that the King of Hind hath a daughter, never was seen a fairer than she, and she is possessed with a demon. So the king summoned the scribes and men of science and diviners, but none of them could ease her of this. Now I was present in the assembly; so I said to him, 'O king, I know a man called Saadullah the Babylonian, than whom there is not on the face of the earth one more versed in these matters, and if thou see fit to send me to him, do so.' Quoth he, 'Go to him.' And I said, 'Bring me a piece of cornelian.' So he gave me a great piece of cornelian and a hundred thousand dinars and a present, with which I betook myself to the land of Babel and seeking out Saadullah, delivered him the money and the present, which he accepted and sending for a lapidary, caused him fashion the cornelian into this amulet. Then he abode seven months in observation of the stars, till he chose out an auspicious time for engraving it, when he graved upon it these talismanic characters that thou seest, and I took it and returned with it to the king.

Now the princess was bound with four chains, and every night a damsel lay with her and was found in the morning slain. The King took the amulet and laid it upon his daughter, whereupon she was straightway made whole. At this he rejoiced greatly and invested me with a dress of honour and gave alms of much money; and he caused set the amulet in the princess's necklace. It chanced, one day, that she embarked with her damsels in a ship and went apleasuring on the sea. Presently, one of her maids put out her hand to her, to sport with her, and the necklace broke asunder and fell into the sea. From that hour the princess's malady returned to her, wherefore great grief betided the king and he gave me much money, saying, 'Go thou to Saadullah and let him make her another amulet, in the stead of that which is lost.' So I journeyed to Babel, but found the Sheikh dead; whereupon I returned and told the king, who sent me and ten others to go round about in all countries, so haply we might find a remedy for her: and now God hath caused me happen on it with thee." So saying, he took the amulet and departed.

As for me, I repaired to Baghdad, carrying all my wealth with me, and took up my abode in the house which I had occupied aforetime. On the morrow, as soon as it was light, I donned my clothes and betook myself to the house of Tahir ibn el Alaa, so haply I might see her whom I loved, for the love of her had never ceased to increase upon my heart. When I came to the house, I saw the balcony broken down and the lattice stopped up; so I stood awhile, pondering my case and the shifts of time, till there came up a serving-man and I questioned him, saying, "What hath God done with Tahir ibn el Alaa?" He answered, "O my brother, he hath repented to God the Most High [and renounced his unlawful trade]." Quoth I, "What was the cause of his repentance?" And he said, "O my brother, in such a year there came to him a merchant, by name Aboulhusn the Omani, who abode with his daughter awhile, till his money was all spent, when the old man turned him out broken-hearted. Now the girl loved him with an exceeding love, and when she was parted from him, she sickened of a sore sickness and came nigh upon death. When her father knew how it was with her, he sought for Aboulhusn high and low, promising whoso should bring him to him a hundred thousand dinars; but none could find him nor come on any trace of him; and she is now at death's door." "And how is it with her father?" asked I. Quoth the servant, "He hath sold all his girls, for stress of that which hath befallen him, and repented to God the Most High."

Then said I, "What wouldst thou say to him who should direct thee to Aboulhusn the Omani?" And he answered, saying, "I conjure thee by Allah, O my brother, that thou do this and quicken my poverty!" "Go to her father," rejoined I, "and say to him, 'Thou owest me the reward for good news, for that Aboulhusn the Omani standeth at the door.'" With this he set off running, as he were a mule loosed from the mill, and presently came back, accompanied by Tahir himself, who no sooner saw me than he returned to his house and gave the man a hundred thousand dinars, with which he went away, calling down blessings on me. Then the old man came up to me and embraced me and wept, saying, "O my lord, where hast thou been absent all this while? Indeed, my daughter is perished by reason of her separation from thee; but come with me into the house." So we entered and he prostrated himself in gratitude to God the Most High, saying, "Praised be God who hath reunited us with thee!"

Then he went in to his daughter and said to her, "God healeth thee of this sickness." "O my father," answered she, "I shall never be whole of my sickness, except I look upon the face of Aboulhusn." Quoth he, "If thou wilt eat a morsel and go to the bath, I will bring thee in company with him." "Is it true that thou sayest?" asked she; and he replied, "By the Great God, it is true!" "By Allah," rejoined she, "if I look upon his face, I shall have no need of eating!" Then said he to his servant, "Bring in thy lord." So I entered, and when she saw me, she fell down in a swoon, and presently coming to herself, recited the following verse:

Lo, God hath deigned to reunite the separated twain, For all in very sooth they deemed they ne'er should meet again.

Then she sat up and said, "By Allah, O my lord, I had not thought to see thy face again, but if it were in sleep!" And she embraced me and wept. Then said she, "O father mine, now will I eat and drink." The old man rejoiced in this and brought her meat and drink and we ate and drank. After this, I abode with them awhile, till she was restored to her former beauty, when her father sent for the Cadi and the witnesses and let draw up the contract of marriage between her and me and made a great bride-feast; and she is my wife to this day and this is my son by her." So saying, he went away and returned with a boy of marvellous beauty and symmetry, to whom said he, 'Kiss the earth before the Commander of the Faithful.' So he kissed the earth before the Khalif, who marvelled at his beauty and glorified his Creator; after which he departed with his company, saying to the vizier, 'O Jaafer, verily this is none other than a marvellous thing, never heard I of aught more extraordinary.'

When he was seated in the palace of the Khalifate, he said to Mesrour, 'Bring the year's tribute of Bassora and Baghdad and Khorassan and lay it in this recess.' So he laid the three tributes together and they were a vast sum of money, whose tale none might tell save God. Then the Khalif bade draw a curtain before the recess and said to Jaafer, 'Fetch me Aboulhusn.' 'I hear and obey,' replied Jaafer and going forth, returned presently with the Omani, who kissed the ground before the Khalif fearing lest he had sent for him, because of some fault that he had committed, whenas he was with him in his house. Then said Er Reshid, 'Harkye, O Omani!' and he replied, 'At thy service, O Commander of the Faithful! May God still bestow his favours upon thee!' Quoth the Khalif, 'Draw back yonder curtain.' So Aboulhusn drew back the curtain from the recess and was confounded at the mass of money he saw there. 'O Aboulhusn,' said Er Reshid, 'whether is the more, this money or that thou didst lose by the amulet ?' And he answered, 'This is many times the greater, O Commander of the Faithful!' Quoth the Khalif, 'Bear witness, all ye who are present, that I give this money to this young man.' Aboulhusn kissed the earth and was abashed and wept before the Khalif for excess of joy.

Now, when he wept, the tears ran down upon his cheeks and the blood returned to its place and his face became as it were the moon on the night of its full. Whereupon quoth the Khalif, 'There is no god but God! Glory be to Him who decreeth change upon change and is Himself the Everlasting One, that changeth not!' So saying, he fetched a mirror and showed Aboulhusn his face therein, which when he saw, he prostrated himself in gratitude to God the Most High. Then the Khalif bade transport the money to Aboulbusn's house and charged the latter absent not himself from him, so he might enjoy his company. Accordingly he paid him frequent visits, till Er Reshid was admitted to the mercy of God the Most High; and glory be to Him who dieth not and in whose hand is the dominion of the Seen and the Unseen!

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

IBRAHIM AND JEMILEH.

El Khesib, lord of Egypt, had a son named Ibrahim, there was none goodlier than he, and of his fear for him, he suffered him not to go forth, save to the Friday prayers. One day, as he was returning from the mosque, he happened upon an old man, with whom were many books; so he lighted down from his horse and seating himself beside him, fell to turning over the books and examining them. In [one of] them he saw the portrait of a woman, that all but spoke, never was seen on the earth's face a fairer than she; and this captivated his reason and confounded his wit. So he said to the old man, 'O elder, sell me this picture.' And the bookseller kissed the earth before him and said, 'O my lord, [it is thine,] without price.' Ibrahim gave him a hundred dinars and taking the book in which was the picture, fell to gazing upon it and weeping night and day, abstaining from meat and drink and sleep.

Then said he in himself, 'If I ask the bookseller of the painter of the picture, belike he will tell me; and if the original be on life, I will cast about to win to her; but, if it be an imaginary portrait, I will leave doting upon it and torment myself no more for a thing that hath no reality.' So, on the following Friday, he betook himself to the bookseller, who rose to receive him, and said to him, 'O uncle, tell me who painted this picture.' And he answered, saying, 'O my lord, a man of the people of Baghdad painted it, by name Aboulcasim es Sendelani; [he dwells] in a quarter called El Kerkh; but I know not of whom it is the portrait.' So Ibrahim left him and return to the palace, after praying the Friday prayers, without acquainting any of his household with his case.

Then he took a bag and filling it with gold and jewels, to the value of thirty thousand dinars, waited till the morning, when he went out, without telling any, and presently overtook a caravan. Here he saw a Bedouin and said to him, 'O uncle, how far am I from Baghdad?' 'O my son,' replied the other, 'what hast thou to do with Baghdad? Verily, between thee and it is two months' journey.' Quoth Ibrahim, 'O uncle, an thou wilt bring me to Baghdad, I will give thee a hundred dinars and this mare under me, that is worth other thousand.' ['Agreed!'] answered the Bedouin. 'And God be witness of what we say! Thou shalt not lodge this night but with me.'

Ibrahim agreed to this and passed the night with him. At break of day, the Bedouin took him and fared on with him in haste by a near road, in his eagerness for the promised reward; nor did they leave journeying till they came to the walls of Baghdad, when he said, 'Praised be God for safety! O my lord, this is Baghdad.' Whereat Ibrahim rejoiced with an exceeding joy and alighting from the mare, gave her to the Bedouin, together with the hundred dinars. Then he took the bag and [entering the city], walked on, enquiring for the Kerkh quarter and the abiding-place of the merchants, till destiny led him to a by-street, wherein were ten houses, five facing five, and at the farther end was a [gateway with a] two-leaved door and a ring of silver. In the porch stood two benches of marble, spread with the finest carpets, and on one of them sat a, man of comely and reverend aspect, clad in sumptuous apparel and attended by eve white slaves, like moons.

When Ibrahim saw the street, he knew it by the description the bookseller had given him; so he saluted the man, who returned his greeting and bidding him welcome, made him sit down and asked him of his case. Quoth Ibrahim, 'I am a stranger and desire of thy favour that thou look me out a house in this street where I may take up my abode.' With this the other cried out, saying, 'Ho, Ghezaleh!' And there came forth to him a slave-girl, who said, 'At thy service, O my lord!' 'Take some servants,' said her master, 'and go to such a house and clean it and furnish it with all that is needful for this well-favoured youth.'

So she went forth and did as he bade her; whilst the old man took the youth and showed him the house; and he said, 'O my lord, what is the rent of this house?' 'O bright of face,' answered the other, 'I will take no rent of thee, what while thou abidest there.' Ibrahim thanked him for this and the old man called another slave-girl, whereupon there came forth to him a damsel like the sun, to whom said he, 'Bring chess.' So she brought it and one of the servants set the board; whereupon said his host to Ibrahim, 'Wilt thou play with me?' And he answered, 'Yes.' So they played several games and Ibrahim beat him. 'Well done, O youth!' exclaimed the other. 'Thou art indeed perfect in qualities. By Allah, there is not one in Baghdad can beat me, and yet thou hast beaten me!'

When they had made ready the house and furnished it with all that was needful, the old man delivered the keys to Ibrahim and said to him, 'O my lord, wilt thou not enter my house and honour me by eating of my bread?' He assented and entering with him, found it a handsome and godly house, decorated with gold and full of all manner pictures and furniture and other things, such as the tongue availeth not to set out. The old man welcomed him and called for food, whereupon they brought a table of the make of Senaa of Yemen and spread it with all manner rare meats, than which there was nought costlier nor more delicious. So Ibrahim ate till he was satisfied, after which be washed his hands and proceeded to look at the house and furniture. Presently, he turned to look for the leather bag, but found it not and said, [in himself,] 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme! I have eaten a morsel worth a dirhem or two and have lost a bag wherein is thirty thousand dinars' worth: but I seek aid of God.' And he was silent and could not speak for the greatness of his trouble.

Presently his host brought the chess and said to him, 'Wilt thou play with me?' And he said, 'Yes.' So they played and the old man beat him. 'Well done!' said Ibrahim and left playing and rose; whereupon said his host, 'What ails thee, O youth?' And he answered, 'I want the bag.' So the old man rose and brought it out to him, saying, 'Here it is, O my lord. Wilt thou now return to playing with me?' 'Yes,' replied Ibrahim. So they played and the young man beat him. Quoth the other, 'When thy thought was occupied with the bag, I beat thee: but, now I have brought it back to thee, thou beatest me. But, tell me, O my son, what countryman art thou.' 'I am from Egypt,' answered Ibrahim. 'And what is the cause of thy coming to Baghdad?' asked the other; whereupon Ibrahim brought out the portrait and said to him, 'Know, O uncle, that I am the son of El Khesib, lord of Egypt, and I saw with a bookseller this picture, which ravished my wit. I asked him who painted it and he said, "He who wrought it is a man, Aboulcasim es Sendelani by name, who dwells in a street called the Street of Saffron in the Kerkh quarter of Baghdad." So I took with me somewhat of money and came hither alone, none knowing of my case; and I desire of the fulness of thy bounty that thou direct me to Aboulcasim, so I may ask him of the manner of his painting this picture and whose portrait it is. And whatsoever he desireth of me, that will I give him.'

'By Allah, O my son,' said his host, 'I am Aboulcasim es Sendelani, and this is an extraordinary thing how fate hath thus led thee to me!' When Ibrahim heard this, he rose to him, and embraced him and kissed his head and hands, saying, 'God on thee, tell me whose portrait it is.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the other and rising, opened a closet and brought out a number of books, in which he had painted the same picture. Then said he, 'Know, O my son, that the original of this portrait is the daughter of my father's brother, whose name is Aboulleith. She dwells in Bassora, of which city her father is governor, and her name is Jemileh. There is not a fairer than she on the face of the earth; but she is averse from men and cannot hear speak of them in her company. Now I once repaired to my uncle, to the intent that he should marry her to me, and was lavish of wealth to him; but he would not consent; and when his daughter knew of my offer, she was enraged and sent to me to say, amongst other things, "If thou have wit, tarry not in this city; else wilt thou perish and thy blood will be on thine own head." For she is a virago of viragoes. So I left Bassora, broken-hearted, and limned this portrait of her in books and scattered them abroad in various countries, so haply they might fall into the hands of a comely youth like thyself and he contrive to win to her and peradventure she might fall in love with him, purposing to take a promise of him that, when he should have gotten possession of her, he would show her to me, though but for a moment from afar off.'

When Ibrahim heard this, he bowed his head awhile in thought and Es Sendelani said to him, 'O my son, I have not seen in Baghdad a comelier than thou, and meseems tent, when she sees thee, she will love thee. Art thou willing, therefore, in case thou foregather with her and get possession of her, to show her to me, if but for a moment from afar?' 'Yes,' answered Ibrahim, and the painter rejoined, 'This being so, abide with me till thou set out.' 'I cannot tarry longer,' replied the youth; 'for my heart is all afire with love of her.' 'Have patience three days,' said Es Sendelani, 'till I fit thee out a ship, wherein thou mayst go to Bassora.' So he waited whilst the painter equipped him a ship and stored it with all that he needed of meat and drink and so forth.

When the three days were past, he said to Ibrahim, 'Make ready for the voyage; for I have equipped thee a ship and furnished it with all thou requireth. The ship is my property and the sailors are of my servants. In the vessel is what will suffice thee till thy return, and I have charged the crew to serve thee till thou come back in safety.' So Ibrahim took leave of his host and embarking, sailed down the river till he came to Bassora, where he took out a hundred dinars and offered them to the sailors; but they said, 'We have gotten our hire of our master.' 'Take this by way of largesse,' answered he; 'and I will not acquaint him therewith.' So they took it and blessed him.

Then he landed and entering the town, enquired for the merchants' lodging and was directed to a khan called the Khan of Hemdan. So he betook himself to the market where stood the khan in question, and all eyes were attracted to him by reason of his exceeding beauty and grace. He entered the khan, with one of the sailors in his company, and enquiring for the porter, was directed to an old man of reverend aspect. He saluted him and the porter returned his greeting; after which Ibrahim said to him, 'O uncle, hast thou a decent chamber?' 'Yes,' answered he and taking him and the sailor, opened to them an elegant chamber, decorated with gold, and said, 'O youth, this chamber befitteth thee.' Ibrahim pulled out two dinars and gave them to him, saying, 'Take these as key-money.' And the porter took them and blessed him.

Then Ibrahim sent the sailor back to the ship and entered the chamber, where the porter abode with him and served him, saying, 'O my lord, thy coming hath brought us joy.' Ibrahim gave him a, dinar, saying, 'Buy us bread and meat and wine and sweetmeats with this.' So the porter went to the market and buying ten dirhems' worth of victual, brought it back to Ibrahim and gave him the other ten dirhems. But he said to him, 'Spend them on thyself;' whereat the porter rejoiced mightily. Then he ate a cake of bread, with a little seasoning, and gave the rest to the porter, saying, 'Carry this to the people of thy household.' So the porter carried it to his family and said to them, 'Methinketh there is not on the face of the earth a more generous than the young man who is come to lodge with us this day, nor yet a pleasanter than he. If he abide with us, we shall grow rich.'

Then he returned to Ibrahim and found him weeping; so he sat down and began to rub his feet and kiss them, saying, 'O my lord, why weepest thou? May God not make thee weep!' 'O uncle,' said Ibrahim, 'I have a mind to drink with thee this night.' And the porter answered, 'I hear and obey.' So he gave him ten dinars, saying, 'Buy up fruit and wine and dessert, and flowers and five fat fowls and bring me a lute.' The porter went out and buying what he had ordered, said to his wife, 'Strain this wine and cook us this food and look thou dress it daintily, for this young man overwhelms us with his bounties.' So she did as he bade her, to the utmost of desire; and he took the victuals and carried them to Ibrahim. Then they ate and drank and made merry; and Ibrahim wept and repeated the following verses:

O friend, though I should barter life for travail all in vain, And all my wealth and all the world and that it doth contain
And all the meads of Paradise, to boot, against one hour Of union, my heart to buy at such a price were fain.

Then he gave a great sob and fell down in a swoon. The porter sighed, and when he came to himself, he said to him, 'O my lord, what is it makes thee weep and who is she to whom thou alludest in these verses? Indeed, she cannot be but as dust to thy feet.' Ibrahim made him no answer, but, rising, brought out a parcel of the richest women's clothes and said to him, 'Take this to thy harem.' So he carried it to his wife and she returned with him to the young man's lodging and found him weeping, whereupon quoth the porter to him, 'Verily, thou breakest our hearts! Tell us what fair one thou desirest, and she shall be thy handmaid.' 'O uncle,' answered he, 'know that I am the son of El Khesib, lord of Egypt, and I am enamoured of Jemileh, daughter of the lord Aboulleith.' 'Allah! Allah!' exclaimed the porter's wife. 'O my brother, leave this talk, lest any hear of us and we perish. For there is not on the face of the earth a more masterful than she nor may any name to her the name of a man, for she is averse from men. Wherefore, O my son, turn from her to other than her.'

When Ibrahim heard this, he wept sore, and the porter said to him, 'I have nothing save my life; but that I will venture for thy love and contrive thee a means of bringing thee to thy desire.' Then they went out from him and on the morrow, he betook himself to the bath and donned a suit of royal raiment, after which he returned to his lodging. Presently the porter and his wife came in to him and said, 'Know, O my lord, that there is a humpbacked tailor here who sews for the lady Jemileh. Go thou to him and acquaint him with thy case; peradventure he will put thee in the way of attaining thy desire.'

So Ibrahim arose and betaking himself to the shop of the humpbacked tailor, went in to him and found with him ten white slaves, as they were moons. He saluted them and they returned his greeting and made him sit down; and indeed they rejoiced in him and were amazed at his beauty and grace. Now he had torn his pocket with intent and he said to the hunchback, 'I desire that thou sew me up my pocket.' So the tailor took a needleful of silk and sewed up his pocket; whereupon Ibrahim gave him five dinars and returned to his lodging. Quoth the tailor, 'What have I done for this youth, that he should give me five dinars?' And he passed the night pondering his beauty and generosity.

On the morrow Ibrahim returned to the shop and saluted the tailor, who returned his greeting and welcomed him and made much of him. Then he sat down and said to the hunchback, 'O uncle, sew up my pocket, for I have torn it again.' 'On my head and eyes, O my son,' answered the tailor and sewed it up; whereupon Ibrahim gave him ten dinars and he took them, amazed at his beauty and generosity. Then said he, 'By Allah, O youth, needs must there be a reason for this conduct of thine, for this is no matter of sewing up a pocket. Tell me the truth of thy case. If thou be enamoured of one of these boys, by Allah, there is not among them a comelier than thou, for they are all as the dust of thy feet; and behold, they are all thy slaves and at thy disposal. Or if it be other than this, tell me.' 'O uncle,' replied Ibrahim, 'this is no place for talk, for my case is strange and my affair extraordinary.' 'If it be so,' rejoined the tailor, 'come with me to a privy place.' So saying, he took the youth by the hand and carrying him into a chamber behind the shop, said, 'Now tell me.'

So Ibrahim related his whole story to the tailor, who was amazed at his speech and said, ‘O my son, fear God [and have mercy] on thyself, for she of whom thou speakest is a virago and averse from men. Wherefore, O my brother, do thou guard thy tongue, or thou wilt destroy thyself.’ When Ibrahim heard the hunchback’s words, he wept sore and clinging to the tailor’s skirts, said, ‘Help me, O my lord, or I am a dead man; for I have left my kingdom and the kingdom of my father and grandfather and am become a stranger and lonely in the lands; nor can I endure without her.’ When the tailor saw how it was with him, he had compassion on him and said, ‘O my son, I have but my life and that I will venture for thy love, for thou makest my heart ache. [Come again] to-morrow [and meanwhile] I will contrive thee somewhat whereby thy heart shall be solaced.’ Ibrahim called down blessings on him and returning to the khan, told the porter what the tailor had said, and he answered, ‘Indeed, he hath dealt kindly with thee.’

Next morning, the youth donned his richest clothes and taking a purse of money, repaired to the tailor and saluted him. Then he sat down and said, ‘O uncle, fulfil thy promise to me.’ Quoth the hunchback, ‘Arise forthright and take three fat fowls and three ounces of sugar-candy and two small jugs of wine and a cup. Lay all these in a bag and to-morrow, after the morning-prayers, take boat with them, bidding the boatman row thee down the river below Bassora. If he say to thee, “I cannot go farther than a parasang [from the city],” do thou answer, “As thou wilt;” but, when he shall have come so far, tempt him with money to carry thee farther; and the first garden thou wilt see after this will be that of the lady Jemileh. Go up to the gate and there thou wilt see two high steps, carpeted with brocade, and seated thereon a hunchback like unto me. Do thou complain to him of thy case and solicit his favour: it may be he will have compassion on thee and bring thee to the sight of her, though but for a moment from afar. This is all I can do for thee; and except he be moved to pity for thee, we are dead men, thou and I. This then is my counsel, and the matter rests with God the Most High.’ Quoth Ibrahim, ‘I seek aid of God; what He wills, is; and there is no power and no virtue save in Him!’ Then he returned to his lodging and taking the things the tailor had named, laid them in a small bag.

On the morrow, as soon as it was day, he went down to the bank of the Tigris, where he found a boatman asleep; so he awoke him and giving him ten dinars, bade him row him down the river below Bassora. ‘O my lord,’ answered the man, ‘[it must be] on condition that I go no farther than a parasang; for if I overpass that distance by a span, I am a lost man, and thou too.’ ‘Be it as thou wilt,’ said Ibrahim. So he took him and dropped down the river with him till he drew near the garden, when he said to him, ‘O my son, I can go no farther; for, if I overpass this limit, we are both dead men.’ Whereupon Ibrahim pulled out other ten dinars and gave them to him, saying, ‘Take this spending-money and better thy case therewithal.’ The boatman was ashamed to refuse him and fared on with him, saying, ‘I commit the affair to God the Most High!’ When they came to the garden, the youth arose, in his joy, whilst the boat was yet a spear’s cast from the land, and springing ashore, cast himself down, whilst the boatman turned and fled.

Then Ibrahim went up to the garden-gate, which stood open, and saw in the porch a couch of ivory, whereon sat a humpbacked man of pleasant favour, clad in gold-laced clothes and bearing in his hand a mace of silver, plated with gold. So he hastened up to him and seizing his hand, kissed it; whereupon quoth the hunchback, ‘O my son, who art thou and whence comest thou and who brought thee hither?’ And indeed, when he saw the youth, he was amazed at his beauty. ‘O uncle,’ answered Ibrahim, ‘I am an ignorant boy and a stranger;’ and he wept The hunchback took pity on him and taking him up on the couch, wiped away his tears and said to him, ‘No harm shall come to thee. If thou be in debt, may God quit thy debt; and if thou be in fear, may He appease thy fear!’ ‘O uncle,’ replied Ibrahim, ‘I am neither in fear nor in debt, but have wealth in plenty, thanks to God.’ ‘Then, O my son,’ rejoined the other, ‘what is thine occasion, that thou ventureth thyself and thy beauty to a place, wherein is destruction?’

So he told him his story and discovered to him his case, whereupon he bowed his head awhile, then said to him, ‘Was it the humpbacked tailor who directed thee to me?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Ibrahim, and the keeper said, ‘This is my brother, and he is a blessed man. But, O my son, had not the love of thee gotten hold upon my heart and had I not taken compassion on thee, verily thou wert lost, thou and my brother and the porter of the khan and his wife. For know that this garden hath not its like on the face of the earth and that it is called the Garden of the Pearl, nor hath any entered it in all my life, except the Sultan and myself and its mistress Jemileh; and I have dwelt here twenty years and never yet saw any else come dither. Every forty days the lady Jemileh comes hither in a bark and lands in the midst of her women, under a canopy of satin, whose skirts ten damsels hold up with hooks of gold, whilst she enters, and I see nothing of her. Nevertheless, I have but my life and I will venture it for thy sake.'

Ibrahim kissed his hands and the keeper said to him, 'Abide with me, till I contrive somewhat for thee.' Then he took him by the hand and carried him into the garden, which when he saw, he deemed it Paradise, for therein were trees intertwining and tall palms and watery welling and birds carolling with various voices. Presently, the keeper brought him to a pavilion and said to him, 'This is where the lady Jemileh sitteth.' So he examined it and found it of the rarest of pleasure-places, full of all manner paintings in gold and ultramarine. It had four doors, to which one mounted by five steps, and in its midst was a basin of water, to which led down steps of gold, set with precious stones. Midmost the pool was a fountain of gold, with figures, large and small, and water pouring from their mouths; and when, by reason of the issuing forth of the water, they piped and whistled in various tones, it seemed to the hearer as though he were in Paradise. Round the pavilion ran a channel of water, with conduits of silver, and it was covered with brocade. To the left of the pavilion was a lattice of silver, giving upon a green park, wherein were all manner wild cattle and gazelles and hares, and on the right hand was another lattice, overlooking a meadow full of birds of all sorts, warbling in various voices and bewildering the hearers with delight.

The youth was ravished at all he saw and sat down in the doorway by the gardener, who said to him, 'How deemest thou of my garden?' Quoth Ibrahim, 'It is the Paradise of the world.' Whereat the gardener laughed and rising, was absent awhile and presently returned with a tray, full of fowls and quails and sweetmeats of sugar and other dainties, which he set before Ibrahim, saying, 'Eat thy fill.'

So he ate till he had enough, whereat the keeper rejoiced and said, 'By Allah, this is the fashion of kings and kings' sons!' Then said he, 'O Ibrahim, what hast thou in yonder bag?' So he opened it before him and the keeper said, 'Take it with thee; it will serve thee when the lady Jemileh cometh; for, when once she is come, I shall not be able to bring thee food..

Then he rose and taking the youth by the hand, brought him to a place over against the pavilion, where he made him a bower among the trees and said to him, 'Get thee up here, and when she comes, thou wilt see her and she will not see thee. When she sings, drink thou to her singing, and when she departs, God willing, thou shalt return in safety whence thou camest. This is the best I can do for thee and on God be our dependence!' Ibrahim thanked him and would have kissed his hand, but he forbade him. Then he laid the bag in the bower and the keeper said to him, 'O Ibrahim, walk about and take thy pleasure in the garden and eat of its fruits, for thy mistress's coming is appointed for to-morrow.' So he took his pleasure in the garden and ate of its fruits; after which he passed the night with the keeper.

When the morning arose and gave forth its light and shone, he prayed the morning-prayer and presently the keeper came to him with a pale face, and said to him, 'Rise, O my son, and go up into the bower; for the slave-girls are come, to set the place in order, and she cometh after them; and beware lest thou spit or sneeze or blow thy nose; else we are dead men, thou and I.' So Ibrahim rose and went up into the bower, whilst the keeper went away, saying, 'God grant thee safety, O my son!'

Presently up came four slave-girls, whose like none ever saw, and entering the pavilion, put off their clothes and washed it. Then they sprinkled it with rose-water and incensed it with ambergris and aloes-wood and spread it with brocade. After these came other fifty damsels, with instruments of music, and amongst them Jemileh, within a canopy of red brocade, the skirts whereof the slave-girls bore up with hooks of gold, till she had entered the pavilion, so that Ibrahim saw nought of her nor of her dress. So he said in himself, 'By Allah, all my labour is lost! But needs must I wait to see how the case will be.' Then the damsels brought meat and drink and they ate and drank and washed their hands, after which they set her a stool and she sat down. Then they all played on instruments of music and sang with ravishing voices, without compare.

Presently, out came an old woman, a duenna and clapped her hands and danced, whilst the girls pulled her hither and thither, till the curtain was lifted and out came Jemileh, laughing. She was clad in [costly] robes and ornaments, and on her head was a crown set with pearls and jewels. About her neck she wore a necklace of pearls and her waist was clasped with a girdle of chrysolite bugles, with tassels of rubies and pearls. The damsels kissed the earth before her, and when Ibrahim saw her, he took leave of his senses and his wit was dazed and his thought confounded for amazement at the sight of loveliness whose like is not on the face of the earth. He fell into a swoon and coming to himself weeping-eyed, recited the following verses:

I see thee nor mine eyes I shut, lest for a space My lids should veil from me the vision of thy face;
For, though with every glance I gazed on thee for e'er, Mine eyes might not suffice thy beauties to embrace.

Then said the old woman to the girls, 'Let ten of you arise and dance and sing.' And Ibrahim said in himself, 'I wish the lady Jemileh would dance.' When the damsels had made an end of their dance, they came round the princess and said to her, 'O my lady, we would have thee dance amongst us, so the measure of our joy may be filled, for never saw we a more delightful day than this.' Quoth Ibrahim to himself, 'Doubtless the gates of heaven are open and God hath granted my prayer.'

Then the damsels kissed her feet and said to her, 'By Allah, we never saw thee light of heart as to-day!' Nor did they cease to importune her, till she put off her [outer] clothes and abode in a shift of cloth of gold, broidered with various jewels, discovering breasts that stood out like pomegranates and unveiling a face as it were the moon on the night of its full. Then she began to dance, and Ibrahim beheld motions whose like he had never in his life seen, for she showed such rare skill and wonderful invention, that she made men forget the dancing of the bubbles in the wine-cups and called to mind the inclining of the turbans from the heads; even as saith of her the poet:

As she would, she was created, after such a wise that lo, She in beauty's mould was fashioned, perfect, neither less nor mo'.
'Tis as if she had been moulded out of water of pure pearls; In each member of her beauty is a very moon, I trow.

And as saith another:

A dancer, like a willow-wand her shape; her movements sweet When I behold, for ravishment my soul is like to fleet.
Nor this nor t'other foot of her rests aye, when she doth dance; 'Tis as the fire within my heart were underneath her feet.

As he gazed upon her, she chanced to look up and saw him, whereupon her face changed and she said to her women, 'Sing ye till I come back to you.' Then, taking up a knife half a cubit long. she made towards him, saying, 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!'

When Ibrahim saw this, he [well-nigh] lost his wits; But, when she drew near him and her eyes fell upon his face, the knife dropped from her hand, and she exclaimed, 'Glory to Him who turneth hearts!' Then said she to him, 'O youth, be of good cheer, for thou art safe from that thou fearest!' Whereupon Ibrahim fell to weeping and she to wiping away his tears with her hand and saying, 'O youth, tell me who thou art, and what brought thee hither.' He kissed the earth before her and clung to her skirt; and she said, 'No harm shall come to thee; for, by Allah, no male hath ever filled mine eyes but thyself! Tell me, then, who thou art.'

So he told her his story from first to last, whereat she marvelled and said to him, 'O my lord, I conjure thee by Allah, tell me if thou be Ibrahim ben el Khesib?' 'I am,' answered he, and she threw herself upon him, saying, 'O my lord, it was thou madest me averse from men; for, when I heard that there was in the land of Egypt a youth than whom there was no goodlier on the face of the earth, I fell in love with thee by report and my heart became enamoured of thee, for that which was told me of thy surpassing comeliness, so that I was, in respect of thee, even as saith the poet:

My ear my eye prevented in loving him, trow I; For whiles the ear, it chances, doth love before the eye.

So praised be God who hath shown me thy face! But, by Allah, had it been other than thou, I had crucified the keeper of the garden and the porter of the khan and the tailor and him who had recourse to them! But how shall I contrive for somewhat thou mayst eat, without the knowledge of my women?' Quoth Ibrahim, 'I have here what we may eat and drink.' And he opened the bag before her. She took a fowl and began to feed him and he to feed her; which when he saw, it seemed to him that this was a dream. Then be brought out wine and they drank what while the damsels sang on; nor did they leave to do thus from morn to noon, when she rose and said, 'Go now and get thee a boat and await me in such a place, till I come to thee; for I have no patience left to brook separation from thee.' 'O my lady,' answered he, 'I have with me a ship of my own, whose crew are in my hire, and they await me.' 'This is as we would have it,' rejoined she and returning to her women, said to them, 'Come, let us go back to our palace.' 'Why should we return now,' asked they, 'seeing that we used to abide here three days?' Quoth she, 'I feel an exceeding oppression in myself, as I were sick, and I fear lest this increase upon me.'

So they answered, 'We hear and obey,' and donning their clothes, went down to the river-bank and embarked; whereupon, the keeper of the garden came up to Ibrahim and said to him, knowing not what had happened, 'O Ibrahim, thou hast not had the luck to enjoy the sight of her, and I fear lest she have seen thee, for it is her custom to abide here three days.' 'She saw me not, nor I her,' replied Ibrahim; 'for she came not forth of the pavilion.' 'True, O my son,' rejoined the keeper; 'for, had she seen thee, we were both dead men: but tarry with me till she come again next week, and thou shalt see her and take thy fill of looking on her.' 'O my lord,' replied the prince, 'I have with me good and fear for it. Moreover, I left men behind me and I fear lest they take advantage of my absence.' 'O my son,' said the keeper, 'it is grievous to me to part with thee;' and he embraced him and bade him farewell.

Then Ibrahim returned to the khan where he lodged, and foregathering with the doorkeeper, took of him his good [that he had left with him]. Quoth the latter, ‘Good news, if it be the will of God!’ But Ibrahim said, ‘l found no way to my desire, and now I am minded to return to my people.’ Whereupon the porter wept; then taking up his goods, he carried them to the ship and bade him farewell. Ibrahim repaired to the place which Jemileh had appointed him and awaited her there till it grew dark, when she came up, disguised as a swash-buckler, with a round beard and her waist bound with a girdle. In one hand she held a bow and arrows and in the other a drawn sword, and she said to him, ‘Art thou Ibrahim, son of El Khesib, lord of Egypt?’ ‘I am he,’ answered the prince; and she said, ‘What good-for-nought art thou, that comest to debauch kings’ daughters? Come; speak with the Sultan.’

Therewith he fell down in a swoon and the sailors well-nigh died in their skins for fear; but, when she saw what had betided her lover, she pulled off her beard and throwing down her sword, unbound the girdle from her waist, whereupon he knew her for the lady Jemileh and said to her, ‘By Allah, thou hast rent my heart in sunder!’ Then said he to the boatmen, ‘Hasten she vessel’s course.’ So they spread the sail and putting off, fared on with all diligence; nor was it many days before they reached Baghdad, where they saw a ship lying by the river-bank. When the sailors saw them, they cried out to the crew, saying, ‘Ho, such an one and such an one, we give you joy of your safety!’ Then they drove their ship against Ibrahim’s and he looked and beheld Aboulcasim es Sendelani in the other boat.

When the latter saw them, he exclaimed, ‘This is what I sought,’ and he said to Ibrahim, ‘Praised be God for safety! Hast thou accomplished thine errand?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the young man. Now Aboulcasim had a flambeau before him; so he brought it near unto Ibrahim’s boat, and when Jemileh saw him, she was troubled and her colour changed: but, when he saw her, he said, ‘Go ye in God’s safe keeping. I am bound to Bassora, on an errand to the Sultan; but the gift is for him who is present.’ Then he brought out a box of sweetmeats, wherein was henbane, and threw it into the boat: whereupon quoth Ibrahim to Jemileh, ‘O solace of mine eyes, eat of this.’ But she wept and said, ‘O Ibrahim, knowest thou who that is?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he, ‘it is such an one.’ Quoth she, ‘He is my father’s brother’s son and sought me aforetime in marriage of my father; but I would not accept of him. And now he is gone to Bassora and most like he will tell my father of us.’ ‘O my lady,’ rejoined Ibrahim, ‘he will not reach Bassora, till we are at Mosul.’ But they knew not what lurked for them in the secret purpose of God.

Then he ate of the sweetmeat, but hardly had it reached his stomach when he smote the ground with his head. [He lay insensible till] near dawn, when he sneezed and the henbane issued from his nostrils. With this, he opened his eyes and found himself naked and cast out among ruins; so he buffeted his face and said, ‘Doubtless

this is a trick that Es Sendelani hath played me.’ And he knew not whither he should go, for he had upon him nothing but his trousers. However, he rose and walked on a little, till he espied the prefect of police coming towards him, with a company of men with swords and staves; whereat he took fright and seeing a ruined bath, hid himself there. Presently, his foot stumbled at something; so he put his hand on it, and it became befouled with blood. He wiped his hand upon his trousers, unknowing what had befouled it, and put it out a second time, when, behold, it fell upon a dead body, and the head came up in his hand. He threw it down, saying, ‘There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High!’ and took refuge in one of the cabinets of the bath.

Presently, the prefect stopped at the door of the bath and said, ‘Enter this place and search.’ So ten of them entered with cressets, and Ibrahim of his fear retired behind a wall and looking upon the dead body, saw it to be that of a young lady with a face like the full moon. She was clad in costly raiment and her head lay on one side and her body on the other; and when he saw this, terror got hold upon his heart. Then the prefect of police entered and said, ‘Search the corners of the bath.’ So they entered the place where Ibrahim was, and one of them, seeing him, came up to him with a knife, half a cubit long, in his hand. When he drew near him, he said, ‘Glory be to God, the Creator of this fair face! O youth, whence art thou?’ Then he took him by the hand and said, ‘O youth, why slewest thou this woman?’ ‘By Allah,’ replied Ibrahim, ‘I slew her not, nor know I who slew her, and I entered not this place but in fear of you!' And he told him his case, saying, 'God on thee, do me no wrong, for I am in concern for myself!' Then he took him and carried him to the prefect, who, seeing the marks of blood on his hands, said, 'This needs no proof: strike off his head.' When Ibrahim heard this, he wept sore and recited the following verses, with the tears streaming from his eyes:

We tread the steps to us of destiny forewrit, For he to whom a way's decreed must needs submit
To walk therein, and he whose death is fore-ordained To be in such a land shall die in none but it.

Then he gave a sob and fell down in a swoon; and the headsman's heart was moved to pity for him and he exclaimed, 'By Allah, this is no murderer's face!' But the prefect said, 'Strike off his head.' So they seated him on the carpet of blood and bound his eyes; after which the headsman drew his sword and asking leave of the prefect, was about to strike of his head, whilst he cried out, saying, 'Alas, my strangerhood!' when he heard a noise of horse coming up and one cried out, saying, 'Leave him! Stay thy hand, O headsman!'

Now there was for this a rare reason and an extraordinary cause; and it was thus. El Khesib, lord of Egypt, had sent his chamberlain to the Khalif Haroun er Reshid with presents and a letter, saying, 'My son hath been missing this year past, and I hear that he is in Baghdad; wherefore I crave of the bounty of the Vicar of God that he make search for tidings of him and do his endeavour to and him and send him back to me by the chamberlain.' When the Khalif read the letter, he commanded the chief of the police to search out the truth of the matter, and he accordingly proceeded to enquire after Ibrahim, till it was told him that he was at Bassora, whereupon he informed the Khalif, who wrote a letter [to the viceroy] and giving it to the Chamberlain of Egypt, bade him repair to Bassora and take with him a company of the vizier's followers. So, of his solicitude for the son of his lord, the chamberlain set out forthright and happened [by the way] upon Ibrahim, as he sat upon the carpet of blood.

When the prefect saw the chamberlain, he alighted to him, and the latter said, ‘What young man is that and what is his case?’ The prefect told him how the matter stood and the chamberlain said (and indeed he knew him not for the son of the Sultan, for that his charms were wasted [and his favour changed] by reason of the much terror and affliction he had suffered), ‘Verily this young man hath no murderer’s face.’ And he bade loose him and bring him to him. So they loosed him and brought him to the chamberlain, who said to him, ‘O youth, tell me thy case and how comes this slain woman with thee.’ Ibrahim looked at him and knowing him, said to him, ‘Out on thee! Dost thou not know me? Am I not Ibrahim, son of thy lord? Belike thou art come in quest of me.’

With this the chamberlain considered him straitly and knowing him right well, threw himself at his feet; which when the prefect saw, his colour changed; and the chamberlain said to him, ‘Out on thee, O tyrant! Was it thine intent to kill the son of my master El Khesib, lord of Egypt?’ The prefect kissed his skirt, saying, ‘O my lord, how should I know him? We found him in this plight and saw the damsel lying slain by his side.’ ‘Out on thee!’ rejoined the chamberlain. ‘Thou art not fit for the prefectship. This is a lad of fifteen and he hath not killed a sparrow; so how should he be a murderer? Why didst thou not have patience with him and question him of his case?’

Then the chamberlain and the prefect commanded to make search for the young lady’s murderer. So they re-entered the bath and finding him, brought him to the prefect who carried him to the Khalif and acquainted him with that which had happened. Er Reshid bade put the murderer to death and sending for Ibrahim, smiled in his face and said to him, ‘Tell me thy story and that which hath betided thee.’ So he told him his story from first to last, and it was grievous to the Khalif, who called Mesrour, his swordbearer, and said to him, ‘Go straightway and fall upon the house of Aboulcasim es Sendelani and bring me him and the young lady.’ So he went forth at once and breaking into the house, found Jemileh bound with her hair and nigh upon death. So he loosed her and taking the painter, carried them both to the Khalif, who marvelled at Jemileh’s beauty. Then he turned to Es Sendelani and said, ‘Take him and cut off his hands, wherewith he beat this young lady; then crucify him and deliver his goods and possessions to Ibrahim.’

They did his bidding, and as they were thus, in came Aboulleith, governor of Bassora, the lady Jemileh's father, seeking aid of the Khalif against Ibrahim ben el Khesib and complaining to him that the latter had taken his daughter. Quoth Er Reshid, 'He hath been the means of delivering her from torture and death.' Then he sent for Ibrahim, and when he came, he said to Aboulleith, 'Wilt thou not accept of this young man, son of the Sultan of Egypt, as husband to thy daughter?' 'Hearkening and obedience [are due] to God and to thee, O Commander of the Faithful,' replied Aboulleith; whereupon the Khalif summoned the Cadi and the witnesses and married the young lady to Ibrahim. Moreover, he gave him all Es Sendelani's good and equipped him for his return to his own country, where he abode with Jemileh in the utmost of delight and the most perfect of contentment, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies; and glory be to the [Ever-]Living One who dieth not!

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ABOULHUSN OF KHORASSAN.

The Khalif El Mutezid Billah was a high-spirited and noble-minded prince; he had in Baghdad six hundred viziers and no whit of the affairs of the folk was hidden from him. He went forth one day, he and Ibn Hemdoun, to divert himself with observing his subjects and hearing the latest news of the folk, and being overtaken with the heats of noonday, they turned aside from the main thoroughfare into a little by-street, at the upper end whereof they saw a handsome and high-builded house, discoursing of its owner with the tongue of praise. They sat down at the gate to rest, and presently out came two servants, as they were moons on their fourteenth night. Quoth one of them to his fellow, 'Would some guest would seek admission! My master will not eat but with guests and we are come to this hour and I have seen no one.'

The Khalif marvelled at their speech and said, 'This is a proof of the hospitality of the master of the house; needs must we go in to him and note his generosity, and this shall be a means of favour betiding him from us.' So he said to the servant, 'Ask leave of thy master for the admission of a company of strangers.' For it was the Khalif's wont, whenas he was minded to observe his subjects, to disguise himself in a merchant's habit. The servant went in and told his master, who rejoiced and rising, came out to them in person. He was a comely and well-favoured man, clad in a tunic of Nishapour [silk] and a gold-laced mantle; and he dripped with scented waters and wore a ring of rubies on his hand. When he saw them, he said to them, 'Welcome and fair welcome to the lords who do us the utmost of favour by their coming!' So they entered the house and found it such as would make a man forget home and family, for it was as it were a piece of Paradise. Within it was a garden, full of all kinds of trees, confounding the beholder, and its dwelling-places were furnished with costly furniture. They sat down and the Khalif sat looking at the house and the furniture.

(Quoth Ibn Hemdoun), I looked at the Khalif and saw his countenance change, and being wont to know from his face whether he was pleased or angry, said to myself, 'I wonder what has vexed him.’ Then they brought a golden basin and we washed our hands, after which they spread a silken cloth and set thereon a table of bamboo. When the covers were taken off the dishes, we saw therein meats [costly] as the flowers of Spring in the season of their utmost scarcity, in pairs and singly, and the host said, ‘[Eat,] O my lords, in the name of God! By Allah, hunger pricks me; so favour me by eating of this food, as is the fashion of the noble.’

Then he fell to tearing fowls apart and laying them before us, laughing the while and repeating verses and telling stories and talking gaily with quaint and pleasant sayings such as sorted with the entertainment. We ate and drank, then removed to another room, which confounded the beholder with its beauty and which reeked with exquisite perfumes. Here they brought us a tray of freshly-gathered fruits and delicious sweetmeats, whereat our joys redoubled and our cares ceased. But withal the Khalif ceased not to wear a frowning face and smiled not at that which gladdened the soul, albeit it was his wont to love mirth and merriment and the putting away of cares, and I knew that he was free from envy and no oppressor. So I said to myself, ‘I wonder what is the cause of his moroseness and ill-humour.’

Presently they brought the wine-tray, the uniter of friends, and clarified wine in flagons of gold and crystal and silver, and the host smote with a wand of bamboo on the door of an inner chamber, whereupon it opened and out came three damsels, high-bosomed maids, with faces like the sun at the fourth [hour] of the day, one a lute-player, another a harpist and the third a dancer. Then he set before us fruits and confections and drew between us and the damsels a curtain of brocade, with tassels of silk and rings of gold. The Khalif paid no heed to all this, but said to the host, who knew not who was in his company, ‘Art thou noble?’ ‘No, my lord,’ answered he; ‘I am but a man of the sons of the merchants and am known among the folk as Aboulhusn Ali, son of Ahmed of Khorassan.’

Quoth the Khalif, ‘Dost thou know me, O man?’ ‘By Allah, O my lord,’ answered he, ‘I have no knowledge of either of your worships!’ Then said I to him, ‘O man, this is the Commander of the Faithful El Mutezid Billah, grandson of El Mutawekkil ala Allah.’

Whereupon he rose and kissed the ground before the Khalif, trembling for fear of him. Then said he, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, I conjure thee by the virtue of thy pious ancestors, if thou have seen in me any shortcoming or lack of good manners in thy presence, do thou forgive me!’ ‘As for that which thou hast done with us of hospitality,’ replied the Khalif, ‘nothing could have exceeded it; and as for that wherewith I have to reproach thee here, if thou tell me the truth respecting it and it commend itself to my reason, thou shalt be saved from me; but, if thou tell me not the truth, I will take thee with manifest proof and punish thee as I have never yet punished any.’

‘God forbid that I should tell thee a lie!’ answered the host. ‘But what is it that thou reproachest to me, O Commander of the Faithful?’ Quoth the Khalif, ‘Since I entered thy house and looked upon its goodliness, I have noted the furniture and vessels therein, nay, even to thy clothes, and behold, on all of them is the name of my grandfather, El Mutawekkil ala Allah.’ ‘Yes,’ answered Aboulhusn. ‘O Commander of the Faithful (may God protect thee), truth is thine inner and sincerity thine outer garment and none may speak other than truly in thy presence.’ The Khalif bade him be seated and said, ‘Tell us.’ So he sat down and said, ‘Know, O Commander of the Faithful, whom God stablish with His aid and encompass with His bounties, that there is not a richer in Baghdad than am I nor than was my father: but do thou grant me thine ears and eyes and understanding, whilst I expound to thee the cause of that which thou reproachest to me.’ Quoth the Khalif, ‘Say thy say.’

‘Know then, O Commander of the Faithful,’ began Aboulhusn, ‘that my father belonged to the markets of the money-changers and druggists and linendrapers and had in each a shop and an agent and all kinds of goods. Moreover, behind the money-changer’s shop he had an apartment, where he might be private, appointing the shop for buying and selling. His wealth was beyond count and limit, but he had no child other than myself, and he loved me and was tenderly solicitous over me. When his last hour was at hand, he called me to him and commended my mother to my care and charged me to fear God the Most High. Then he died, may God have mercy upon him and continue the Commander of the Faithful [on life!] And I gave myself up to pleasure and eating and drinking and took to myself friends and comrades and boon-companions. My mother used to forbid me from this and to blame me for it, but I would not hear a word from her, till my money was all gone, when I sold my lands and houses and nought was left me save the house in which I now dwell, and it is a goodly house, O Commander of the Faithful.

So I said to my mother, “I wish to sell the house.” “O my son,” answered she, “if thou sell it, thou wilt be dishonoured and wilt have no place wherein to take shelter.” Quoth I, “It is worth five thousand dinars, and with one thousand thereof I will buy me another house and trade with the rest.” “Wilt thou sell it to me at that price?” asked she; and I replied, “Yes.” Whereupon she went to a coffer and opening it, took out a porcelain vessel, wherein were five thousand dinars. When I saw this, meseemed the house was all gold and she said to me, “O my son, think not that this is of thy father’s good. By Allah, it was of my own father’s money and I have treasured it up against a time of need; for, in thy father’s time, I had no need of it.”

I took the money from her and fell again to feasting and merry-making with my friends, without heeding my mother’s words and admonitions, till the five thousand dinars came to an end, when I said to her, “I wish to sell the house.” “O my son,” answered she, “I forbade thee from selling it before, of my knowledge that thou hadst need of it; so how wilt thou sell it a second time?” Quoth I, “Do not multiply words upon me, for I must and will sell it.” “Then sell it to me for fifteen thousand dinars,” said she, “on condition that I take charge of thine affairs.” So I sold her the house at that price and gave up my affairs into her charge, whereupon she sought out my father’s factors and gave each of them a thousand dinars, keeping the rest in her own hands and ordering the outgoings and the incomings. Moreover she gave me money to trade withal and said to me, “Sit thou in thy father’s shop.” So I took up my abode in the chamber behind the shop in the market of the money-changers, and my friends came and bought of me and I sold to them; whereby I profited well and my wealth increased. When my mother saw me in this fair way, she discovered to me that which she had treasured up of jewels and pearls and gold, and I bought back my houses and lands that I had wasted and my wealth became great as before. I abode thus for some time, and the factors of my father came to me and I gave them goods, and I built me a second chamber behind the shop.

One day, as I sat in my shop, according to my wont, there came up to me a damsel, never saw eyes a fairer than she of favour, and said, “Is this the shop of Aboulhusn Ali ibn Ahmed el Khurasani?” “Yes,” answered I. “Where is he?” asked she. “I am he,” said I, and indeed my wit was dazed at the excess of her loveliness. She sat down and said to me, “Bid thy servant count me out three hundred dinars.” So I bade him give her that sum and he counted it out to her and she took it and went away, leaving me stupefied. Quoth my clerk to me, “Dost thou know her?” And I answered, “No, by Allah!” “Then why,” asked he, “didst thou bid me give her the money?” “By Allah,” replied I, “I knew not what I said, of my amazement at her beauty and grace!” Then he rose and followed her, without my knowledge, but presently returned, weeping and with the mark of a blow on his face. I asked him what ailed him, and he said, “I followed the damsel, to see whither she went; but, when she was aware of me, she turned and dealt me this blow and all but put out my eye.”

After this, a month passed, without my seeing her, and I abode bewildered for love of her; but, at the end of this time, she came again and saluted me, whereat I was like to fly for joy. She asked me how I did and said to me, “Belike thou saidst to thyself, ‘What manner of trickstress is this, who hath taken my money and made off?’” “By Allah, O my lady,” answered I, “my money and my life are all at thy service!” With this she unveiled herself and sat down to rest, with the jewels and ornaments playing over her face and bosom. Presently, she said to me, “Give me three hundred dinars.” “I hear and obey,” answered I and counted out to her the money. She took it and went away and I said to my servant, “Follow her.” So he followed her, but returned mumchance, and some time passed without my seeing her. But, as I was sitting one day, she came up to me and after talking awhile, said to me, “Give me five hundred dinars, for I have occasion for them.” I would have said to her, “Why should I give thee my money?” But excess of passion hindered me from speaking; for, whenever I saw her, I trembled in every limb and my colour paled and I forgot what I would have said and became even as saith the poet:

I may not chance to look on her on unexpected wise, But so amazed am I, I scarce can answer, for surprise.

So I counted her out the five hundred dinars and she took them and went away; whereupon I arose and followed her myself, till she came to the jewel-market, where she stopped at a man's shop and took of him a necklace. Then she turned and seeing me, said, "Pay [him] five hundred dinars for me." When the jeweller saw me, he rose to me and made much of me, and I said to him, "Give her the necklace and be the price at my charge." "I hear and obey," replied he, and she took it and went away. I followed her, till she came to the Tigris and took boat there, whereupon I signed to the ground, as who should say, "I kiss it before thee." She went off, laughing, and I stood, watching her, till I saw her land and enter a palace, which when I considered, I knew it for the palace of the Khalif El Mutawekkil. So I turned back, with all the trouble in the world fallen on my heart, for she had had of me three thousand dinars, and I said in myself, "She hath taken my money and ravished my wit, and belike I shall lose my life for love of her."

Then I returned home and told my mother all that had befallen me, and she said, "O my son, beware how thou have to do with her after this, or thou art a lost man." When I went to my shop, my factor in the drug-market, who was a very old man, came to me and said, "O my lord, how is it that I see thee in ill case and with marks of chagrin upon thee? Tell me what ails thee." So I told him all that had befallen me with her and he said, "O my son, this is one of the women of the palace of the Commander of the Faithful and indeed she is the Khalif's favourite: so do thou reckon the money [expended] for the sake of God the Most High and occupy thyself no more with her. If she come again, beware lest she have to do with thee and tell me of this, that I may contrive thee somewhat, lest perdition betide thee." Then he went away and left me with a flame of fire in my heart.

At the end of the month she came again and I rejoiced in her with an exceeding joy. Quoth she, "What ailed thee to follow me?" And I said, "Excess of passion that is in my heart urged me to this," and I wept before her. She wept out of pity for me and said, "By Allah, there is not in thy heart aught of passion, but in mine is more! But how shall I do? By Allah, I have no resource but to see thee thus once a month." Then she gave me a bill, saying, "Carry this to such an one, who is my factor, and take of him what is named therein." But I replied, "I have no need of money; be my money and my life thy sacrifice!" Quoth she, "I will assuredly contrive thee a means of access to me, whatever trouble it cost me." Then she took leave of me and went away; whilst I repaired to the old druggist and told him what had passed. He went with me to the Khalif's palace, which I knew for that which the lady had entered; and he was at a loss for a device.

Presently he espied a tailor sitting with his journeymen at work in his shop, opposite the lattice giving upon the river-bank, and said to me, "Yonder is one by whom thou shalt come to thy desire; but first tear thy pocket and go to him and bid him sew it up. When he hath done this, give him ten dinars." "I hear and obey," answered I and taking two pieces of Greek brocade, went to the tailor and bade him make of them four suits, two with surcoats and two without. When he had made an end of cutting them out and sewing them, I gave him to his hire much more than of wont, and he put out his hand to me with the clothes; but I said, "Take them for thyself and those who are with thee." And I fell to sitting with him and sitting long. Moreover, I bespoke of him other clothes and bade him hang them out in front of his shop, that the folk might see them and buy them. He did as I bade him, and whoso came forth of the palace and aught of the clothes pleased him, I made him a present thereof, even to the doorkeeper.

One day, the tailor said to me, "O my son, I would have thee tell me the truth of thy case; for thou hast bespoken of me a hundred costly suits, each worth much money, and hast given the most of them to the folk. This is no merchant's fashion, for a merchant calleth an account for [every] dirhem, and what can be the sum of thy capital and what thy gain every year, that thou givest these gifts? Tell me then the truth of thy case, that I may further thee to thy desire." Then, "I conjure thee by God," added he, "[tell me,] art thou not in love?" "Yes," answered I; and he said, "With whom?" Quoth I, "With one of the women of the Khalif's palace." And he exclaimed, “May God put them to shame! How long shall they seduce the folk? Knowest thou her name?” “No,” answered I; and he said, “Describe her to me.” So I described her to him and he said, “Out on it! This is the favourite lutanist of the Khalif El Mutawekkil. But she hath a servant, and do thou clap up a friendship with him; it may be he shall be the means of thy having access to her.”

As we were talking, out came the servant in question from the palace, as he were the moon on its fourteenth night. Now I had before me the clothes that the tailor had made me, and they were of brocade of all colours. He began to look at them and examine them; then he came up to me and I rose and saluted him. “Who art thou?” asked he; and I answered, “I am a man of the merchants.” Quoth he, “Wilt thou sell these clothes?” “Yes,” replied I. So he chose out five of them and said to me, “How much these five?” Quoth I, “They are a present from me to thee, in earnest of friendship between us.” At this he rejoiced and I went home and fetching a suit embroidered with jewels and jacinths, worth three thousand dinars, gave it to him.

He accepted it and carrying me into a room within the palace, said to me, “What is thy name among the merchants?” Quoth I, “I am a man of them.” “Verily,” rejoined he, “I misdoubt me of thine affair.” “Why so?” asked I. “Because,” answered he, “thou hast bestowed on me a great matter and won my heart therewith, and I doubt not but thou art Aboulhusn of Khorassan the money-changer.” With this I fell aweeping and he said to me, “Why dost thou weep? By Allah, she for whom thou weepest is yet more passionately in love with thee than thou with her! And indeed her case with thee is notorious among all the women of the palace. But what wouldst thou have?” Quoth I, “I would have thee succour me in my affliction.” So he appointed me for the morrow and I returned home.

Next morning, I betook myself to him and waited in his chamber till he came, when he said to me, “Know that, when she returned to her apartment yesternight, after having made an end of her service about the Khalif’s person, I related to her all that passed between me and thee and she is minded to foregather with thee. So abide thou with me till the end of the day.” Accordingly I abode with him till dark, when he brought me a shirt of gold-inwoven stuff and a suit of the Khalif’s apparel and clothing me therein, incensed me and I became most like the Khalif. Then he brought me to a gallery with rows of doors on each side and said to me, “These are the lodgings of the chief of the slave-girls; and when thou passest along the gallery, do thou lay a bean at each door, — for it is the Khalif’s wont to do this every night, — till thou come to the second passage on thy right hand, when thou wilt see a door with a threshold of alabaster. Touch it with thy hand; or, if thou wilt, count the doors, so many, and enter the one whose marks are thus and thus. There thy mistress will see thee and take thee in with her. As for thy coming forth, God will make it easy to me, though I carry thee out in a chest.”

Then he left me and returned, whilst I went on, counting the doors and laying at each a bean. When I had reached the middle of the gallery, I heard a great noise and saw the light of flambeaux coming towards me. As the light drew near me, I looked at it and behold the Khalif himself, surrounded by the slave-girls carrying flambeaux, and I heard one of the women [by whose door I had passed] say to another, “O my sister, have we two Khalifs? Verily, the Khalif hath already passed by my chamber and laid the bean at my door, as is his wont, and I smelt the perfumes and essences on him, and now I see the light of his flambeaux, and here he comes with them.” “Indeed this is a strange thing,” replied the other; “for none would dare disguise himself in the Khalif’s habit.”

Then the light drew near me, whilst I trembled in every limb; and up came an eunuch, crying out to the women and saying, “Hither!” Whereupon they turned aside to one of the chambers and entered. Then they came out again and went on till they came to the chamber of my mistress and I heard the Khalif say, “Whose chamber is this?” They answered, “This is the chamber of Shejeret ed Durr.” And he said, “Call her.” So they called her and she came out and kissed the feet of the Khalif, who said to her, “Wilt thou drink to-night?” Quoth she, “But for thy presence and the looking on thy face, I would not drink, for I have no mind to wine this night.” Then said the Khalif to the eunuch, “Bid the treasurer give her such a necklace.” And he commanded to enter her chamber. So the torches entered before him and he followed them into the apartment.

At the same moment, there came up to me a damsel, the lustre of whose face outshone that of the flambeau in her hand, and said, "Who is this?" Then she laid hold of me and carrying me into one of the chambers, said to me, "Who art thou?" I kissed the earth before her, saying, "I implore thee by Allah, O my lady, spare my blood and have pity on me and commend thyself unto God by saving my life!" And I wept for fear of death. Quoth she, "Doubtless, thou art a thief." "No, by Allah," answered I, "I am no thief. Seest thou on me the signs of thieves?" "Tell me the truth of thy case," said she, "and I will put thee in safety." So I said, "I am a silly, ignorant lover, whom passion and my ignorance have moved to do as thou seest, so that I am fallen into this peril." Quoth she, "Abide here till I come back to thee."

Then she went out and presently returning with some of her maids' clothes, clad me therein and bade me follow her. So I followed her till she came to her apartment and bade me enter. I went in and she brought me to a couch, whereon was a splendid carpet, and said, "Sit down here: no harm shall befall thee. Art thou not Aboulhusn el Khurasani, the money-changer?" And I answered, "Yes." "May God spare thy blood," rejoined she, "an thou speak truth! If thou be a thief, thou art a lost man, more by token that thou art dressed in the Khalif's habit and perfumed with his scents. But, if thou be indeed Aboulhusn, thou art safe and no hurt shall come to thee, for that thou art the lover of Shejeret ed Durr, who is my sister and stinteth never to name thee and tell us how she took of thee money, yet wast thou not chagrined, and how thou didst follow her to the river-bank and madest as thou wouldst kiss the ground in her honour; and her heart is yet more aflame for thee than thine for her. But how camest thou hither? Was it by her order or without? [If she hath bidden thee unto this,] she hath imperilled thy life. But what seekest thou in foregathering with her?"

"By Allah, O my lady," replied I, "it is I who have ventured my own life, and my desire in foregathering with her is but to look on her and hear her speech." And she said, "Thou hast spoken well." "O my lady," added I, "God is my witness that my soul prompteth me to no transgression against her honour." Quoth she, "In this intent may God deliver thee! Indeed compassion for thee hath taken hold upon my heart." Then she called her maid and said to her, "Go to Shejeret ed Durr and say to her, 'Thy sister salutes thee and bids thee to her;

so favour her by coming to her this night, according to thy wont, for her breast is straitened.'" So the maid went out and presently returning, told her mistress that Shejeret ed Durr said, "May God bless me with thy long life and make me thy ransom! By Allah, hadst thou bidden me to other than this, I had not hesitated; but the Khalif's meagrims constrain me and thou knowest my rank with him.' But the other said to her maid, "Return to her and say, 'Nothing will serve but thou must come to my mistress, upon a privy matter between her and thee.'"

So the maid went out again and presently returned with the lady, whose face shone like the full moon. Her sister met her and embraced her; then said she, "Ho, Aboulhusn, come forth to her and kiss her hands." Now I was in a closet within the apartment; so I came out; and when my mistress saw me, she threw herself upon me and strained me to her bosom, saying, "How camest thou in the Khalif's clothes and his ornaments and perfumes? Tell me what hath befallen thee." So I related to her all that had befallen me and what I had suffered for fright and so forth; and she said, "What thou hast endured for my sake is grievous to me, and praised be God who hath appointed the issue to be safety, and the fulfilment of safety is in thy entering my lodging and that of my sister." Then she carried me to her own apartment, saying to her sister, "I have made a covenant with him that I will not foregather with him unlawfully; but, as he hath ventured himself and incurred this great peril, I will be even as earth for his treading and as dust to his shoes." "In this intent may God deliver him!" replied her sister. "Thou shalt see," added my mistress, "how I will do, so I may foregather with him in the way of law, and needs must I lavish my heart's blood to contrive this."

As we were in talk, we heard a great noise and turning, saw the Khalif making for her lodging, of the greatness of the store he set by her; whereupon she hid me in an underground chamber and shut down the trap-door upon me. Then she went out to meet the Khalif, who entered and sat down, whilst she stood before him, to serve him, and commanded to bring wine. Now the Khalif loved a damsel by name Benjeh, who was the mother of El Mutezz Billah; but they had fallen out and in the pride of her beauty and grace, she would not [offer to] make peace with him, nor, for the dignity of the Khalifate and the Kingship, would he [offer to] make peace with her nor humble himself to her, albeit his heart was aflame with passion for her, but sought to divert his mind from her with her mates among the slave-girls and with going in to them in their chambers. Now he loved Shejeret ed Durr's singing: so he bade her sing. Accordingly she took the lute and tuning it, sang the following verses:

I marvel at the ruthless stress of fate against us two And how it stinted, having wrought our union to undo.
I held aloof from thee, till, "Love he knoweth not," 'twas said And did thee visit, till 'twas said, "He lacks of patience due."
Add to my transport, love of her, each night, and solacement Of loves, the Resurrection be thy day of rendezvous!
She hath a skin like very silk and a soft speech and sweet: Gracious to all, her words are nor too many nor too few.
Two eyes she hath, quoth God Most High, "Be," and forthright they were: Even with the reason as doth wine, so with the hearts they do.

When the Khalif heard these verses, he was moved to exceeding delight, and I also was moved to delight in my hiding-place, and but for the bounty of God the Most High, I had cried out and we had been discovered. Then she sang these also:

I clip him close and still my soul doth yearn for him full fain: Can aught of straiter union be than clips for lovers twain?
I kiss his mouth, to do away my heat; but every kiss, Alack! doth only aggravate the transport of my pain;
As 'twere, indeed, until my heart our souls commingled saw, Nought could it of its thirst for him on anywise assain.

The Khalif was delighted and said, "O Shejeret ed Durr, ask a boon of me." "O Commander of the Faithful," answered she, "I ask of thee my freedom, for the sake of the reward that is therein." "Thou art free for the love of God," said he; whereupon she kissed the earth before him. Quoth he, "Take the lute and sing me somewhat on the subject of my slave-girl, of whom I am enamoured: the folk seek my approof and I seek hers." So she took the lute and sang as follows:

Lady of beauty, that hast done away my piety, I cannot brook, whate'er betide, to live withouten thee;
So, or with humbleness, that best befitteth love, I'll gain Thy favours, or with might, that best befitteth kings like me.

The Khalif was charmed with these verses and said, "Now sing me somewhat setting out my case with three damsels, who hold the reins of my heart and hinder my repose; and they are thyself and this froward one and another I will not name, who hath not like her." So she took the lute and playing a lively measure, sang the following verses:

There are three lovely maidens, the reins of me that sway: Within my heart's high places they lord it night and day.
There's none in all creation can bow me to his will; Yet I obey these maidens and they my will gainsay.
This is of Love's dominion, whereby they overcome A prouder than my empire and force it still obey.

The Khalif marvelled exceedingly at the aptness of these verses to his case and the delight [to which they moved him] inclined him to reconciliation with the refractory damsel. So he went forth and made for her lodging, whither a slave-girl forewent him and acquainted her with the Khalif's coming. She came to meet him and kissed the earth before him; then she kissed his feet and he was reconciled to her and she to him.

Meanwhile Shejeret ed Durr came to me, rejoicing, and said, "I am become free by thy blessed coming! Surely God will help me in that which I shall contrive, so I may foregather with thee in the way of law." And I said, "Praised be God!" As we were talking, in came her servant, to whom we related that which had passed, and he said, "Praised be God who hath made the affair to end well, and we implore Him to crown His favours with thy safe going-out hence!" Presently, in came my mistress's sister, whose name was Fatir, and Shejeret ed Durr said to her, "O my sister, how shall we do to bring him out of the palace in safety? For God hath vouchsafed me emancipation and by the blessing of his coming, I am become a free woman." Quoth Fatir, "I see nothing for it but to dress him in a woman's habit." So she brought me a suit of women's clothes and clad me therein; and I went out forthwith; but, when I came to the midst of the palace, I found the Khalif seated there, with the eunuchs in attendance upon him.

When he saw me, he misdoubted of me exceedingly and said to his attendants, "Hasten and bring me yonder damsel." So they brought me back to him and raised the veil from my face, which when he saw, he knew me and questioned me of my case. I told him the whole truth, hiding nought, and when he heard my story, he bethought himself awhile, then rose and going into Shejeret ed Durr's chamber, said to her, "How couldst thou prefer one of the sons of the merchants before me?" She kissed the earth before him and told him her story from first to last, in accordance with the truth; wherewith he had compassion upon her and his heart relented to her and he excused her by reason of love and its conditions. Then he went away and her servant came in to her and said, "Be of good cheer; for, when thy lover came before the Khalif, he questioned him and he told him that which thou toldest him, word by word."

Presently the Khalif returned and calling me before him, said to me, "What made thee dare to violate the palace of the Khalifate?" "O Commander of the Faithful," answered I, "it was my ignorance and passion and my confidence in thy clemency and generosity that led me to this." And I wept and kissed the earth before him. Then said he, "I pardon you both," and bade me be seated. So I sat down and he sent for the Cadi Ahmed ibn Abi Dawud and married me to her. Then he commanded to make over to me all that was hers and they brought her to me in bridal procession in her lodging. After three days, I went forth and transported all her goods and gear to my own house; so all that thou hast seen, O Commander of the Faithful, in my house and whereof thou misdoubtest is of her marriage-equipage.

After this, she said to me, one day, "Know that El Mutawekkil is a generous man and I fear lest he bethink him of us, or that some one of the envious remind him of us; wherefore I have it in mind to do somewhat that may ensure us against this." "And what is that?"

asked I. Quoth she, “I mean to ask his leave to go the pilgrimage and renounce singing.” “This is well thought,” answered I; but, as we were talking, in came a messenger from the Khalif to seek her, for that El Mutawekkil loved her singing. So she went with the officer and did her service to the Khalif, who said to her, “Sever not thyself from us.” And she answered, “I hear and obey.”

One day, after this, she went to him, he having sent for her, according to his wont; but, before I knew, she came back, with her clothes torn and her eyes full of tears. At this I was alarmed, misdoubting me that he had commanded to seize upon us, and said, “We are God’s and to Him we return! Is El Mutawekkil wroth with us?” “Where is El Mutawekkil?” answered she. “Verily, El Mutawekkil’s rule is ended and his trace is blotted out!” Quoth I, “Tell me what hath happened.” And she said, “He was seated behind the curtain, drinking, with El Feth ben Khacan and Sedekeh ben Sedekeh, when his son El Muntesir fell upon him, with a company of the Turks, and slew him; and mirth was turned to misery and fair fortune to weeping and lamentation. So I fled, I and the maid, and God saved us.” When I heard this, O Commander of the Faithful, I arose forthright and went down to Bassora, where the news reached me of the falling out of war between El Muntesir and El Mustain; wherefore I was affrighted and transported my wife and all my good to Bassora. This, then, is my story, O Commander of the Faithful, nor have I added to nor diminished the truth by a syllable. So all that thou seest in my house, bearing the name of thy grandfather El Mutawekkil, is of his bounty to us, and the source of our fortune is from thy noble ancestors; for indeed ye are people of munificence and a mine of generosity.’

The Khalif marvelled at his story and rejoiced therein with an exceeding joy: and Aboulhusn brought forth to him the lady and the children she had borne him, and they kissed the earth before the Khalif, who marvelled at their beauty. Then he called for inkhorn and paper and wrote Aboulhusn a patent of exemption from taxes on his lands and houses for twenty years. Moreover, he rejoiced in him and made him his boon-companion, till time sundered them and they took up their abode in the tombs, after having dwelt in palaces; and glory be to God, the Most Merciful King!

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

KEMEREZZEMAN AND THE JEWELLER’S WIFE.

There was once, of old time, a merchant called Abdurrehman, whom God had blessed with a son and daughter, and for their much beauty and grace, he named the girl Kaukeb a Sebah and the boy Kemerezzeman . When he saw what God had vouchsafed them of beauty and grace and brightness and symmetry, he feared for them from the eyes of the beholders and the tongues of the envious and the craft of the crafty and the wiles of the profligate and shut them up from the folk in a house for the space of fourteen years, during which time none saw them save their parents and a slave-girl who waited on them. Now their father recited the Koran, even as God sent it down, as also did their mother, wherefore she taught her daughter to read and recite it and he his son, till they had both gotten it by heart. Moreover, they both learned from their parents writing and reckoning and all manner of knowledge and accomplishment and needed no master.

When Kemerezzeman came to years of manhood, his mother said to her husband, ‘How long wilt thou keep thy son Kemerezzeman sequestered from the eyes of the folk? Is he a boy or a girl?’ And he answered, ‘A boy.’ ‘If he be a boy,’ rejoined she, ‘why dost thou not carry him to the bazaar and seat him in thy shop, that he may know the folk and they him, to the intent that it may become notorious among them that he is thy son, and do thou teach him to buy and sell. Belike somewhat may betide thee; so shall the folk know him for thy son and he shall lay his hand on thy leavings. But, if thou die, as the case now is, and he say to the folk, “I am the son of the merchant Abdurrehman,” they will not believe him, but will say, “We have never seen thee and knew not that he had a son;” wherefore the magistrates will take thy goods and thy son will be despoiled. In like manner, I mean to make my daughter known among the folk, so haply some one of her own condition may demand her in marriage and we will marry her to him and rejoice in her.’ Quoth he, ‘[I did thus] of my fear for them of the of the eyes of the folk and because I love them and love is exceeding jealous, and well saith he who made the following verses:

I'm jealous of myself and of my sight for thee And of thy self and place and time and Fate's decree.
Though in mine eye for aye I set thee, ne'er, I trow, Of union strait and close should I aweary be.
Ay, if with me thou wert united every hour Until the Judgment Day, 'twould scarce suffice to me.'

'Put thy trust in God,' said his wife, 'for no harm betideth him whom He protecteth, and carry him with thee this very day to the shop.'

Then she clad the boy in the richest of clothes and he became a ravishment to all who looked on him and an affliction to the hearts of lovers His father took him and carried him to the market, whilst all who saw him were ravished with him and accosted him, kissing his hand and saluting him. Quoth one, 'The sun hath risen in such a place and shineth in the market,' and another, 'The place of rising of the full moon is in such a quarter ;' and a third, 'The new moon of the Festival [of the breaking of the fast of Ramazan] hath appeared to the creatures of God.' And they went on to allude to the boy in talk and call down blessings upon him.

Abdurrehman rated the folk for following the boy, to gaze upon him, for they crowded upon him, behind and before; and he was abashed at their talk, but could not hinder them from talking; so he fell to reviling the boy's mother and cursing her for that she had been the cause of his bringing him out. Then he walked on till he reached his shop and opening it, sat down and seated his son before him: after which he looked out and saw the thoroughfare blocked with people, for all the passers- by, going and coming, stopped before the shop, to gaze on that fair-faced one, and could not leave him and all the men and women crowded about him, applying, to them- selves the words of him who saith:

Thou didst beauty create a temptation to us And saidst, 'O my servants fear [Me and abstain].'
Behold, Thou art lovely and loveliness lov'st: How, then, shall Thy creatures from loving refrain?

When Abdurrehman saw the folk thus crowding about him and standing in rows, men and women, to gaze upon his son, he was sore abashed and confounded and knew not what to do; but presently there came up from the end of the bazaar a man of the wandering dervishes, clad in haircloth garments, [the apparel] of the pious servants of God and seeing Kemerezzeman sitting there as he were a willow wand springing from a mound of saffron, wept copiously and recited the following verses:

I saw a sapling on a sand-hill grow, As 'twere a moon at full and all aglow.
'Thy name?' I questioned, and he said, 'A pearl' Quoth I, 'Mine! Mine!' but he replied, 'No! No!'

Then he fell to walking, now drawing near and now moving away, and wiping his gray hairs with his right hand, whilst the heart of the crowd was cloven asunder for reverence of him. When he looked upon the boy, his eyes were dazzled and his wit confounded, and the saying of the poet was exemplified in him:

What while yon fair-faced loveling was in a certain place And the new moon of Shawwal shone glittering from his face,
There came a reverend elder, who walked with leisure pace: His steps a staff supported and in his looks the trace
Of abstinent devoutness was plain unto the sight.
The days he had made proof of and eke the nights essayed; In lawful and unlawful he had not spared to wade.
He had been love-distracted for minion and for maid And to a skewer's likeness worn down was he and frayed;
But wasted bones were left him, with parchment skin bedight.
A Moor in this same fashion the sheikh himself did show, For by his side a youngling was ever seen to go:
He in the love of women an Udhri was, I trow; In either mode seductive and throughly versed, for lo,
Zeid was to him as Zeyneb, to wit, and wench as wight.
Distraught he was with passion for this and th' other fair; He mourned the camp, bewailing the ruins bleak and bare:

Of his excess of longing, thou'dst deem him, as it were, A sapling that the zephyr still bendeth here and there.
Cold-heartedness pertaineth to stones alone aright.
Yea, In the way of passion experienced was he, Sharp-witted in Love's matters and quick indeed to see.
He'd prove Love's hard and easy, its valley and its sea, And buck and doe delighted to clip indiff'rently;
He burnt alike when beardless and when his beard was white.

Then he came up to the boy and gave him a sprig of sweet basil, whereupon his father put his hand to his pouch and gave him some small matter of money, saying, 'Take thy portion, O dervish, and go thy ways.' He took the money, but sat down on the bench before the shop, opposite the lad, and fell to gazing upon him and heaving sigh upon sigh, whilst the tears flowed like springs welling forth. The folk began to look at him and remark upon him, some saying, 'All dervishes are lewd fellows,' and other some, 'Verily, this dervish's heart is set on fire for love of this youth.'

When Abdurrehman saw this, he said to the boy, 'Come O my son, let us shut the shop and go home, for it boots not to buy and sell this day; and may God requite thy mother that which she hath done with us, for it is she who hath brought all this about!' Then said he to the dervish, 'Rise, that I may shut my shop.' So the dervish rose and Abdurrehman shut his shop and taking his son, went away. The dervish and the folk followed them, till they reached their dwelling, when Kemerezzeman went in and his father, turning to the dervish, said to him, 'What wouldst thou, O dervish, and why do I see thee weep ?' 'O my lord,' answered he, ' I would fain be thy guest this night, for the guest is the guest of God.' Quoth the merchant, 'Welcome to the guest of God! Enter, O dervish !' But he said in himself, 'If he be enamoured of the boy and require him of lewdness, needs must I slay him this night and bury him secretly. But, if there be no lewdness in him, the guest shall eat his portion.'

Then he brought him into a saloon, where he left him with Kemerezzeman, after he had said privily to the latter, 'O my son, when I am gone out, sit thou beside the dervish and sport with him and provoke him to dalliance. I will watch you from the window overlooking the saloon, and if he seek of thee lewdness, I will come down to him and slay him.' So, as soon as Kemerezzeman was alone with the dervish, he sat down by him, and the latter began to look upon him and sigh and weep. Whenever the lad spoke to him, he answered him kindly, trembling the while and groaning and sobbing, and thus he did till the evening meal was brought in, when he fell to eating, with his eyes on Kemerezzeman, but stinted not from weeping. When a fourth part of the night was past and talk was ended and the time of sleep come, Abdurrehman said to the lad, 'O my son, apply thyself to the service of thine uncle the dervish and gainsay him not :' and would have gone out; but the dervish said to him, 'O my lord, carry thy son with thee or sleep with us.' 'Nay,' answered the merchant; 'my son shall lie with thee: peradventure thy soul may desire somewhat, and he will do thine occasion and wait upon thee.' Then he went out and sat down in an adjoining room, wherein was a window giving upon the saloon.

As soon as he had left them, the lad came up to the dervish and began to provoke him and make advances to him, whereupon he waxed wroth and said, 'What talk is this, O my son? I take refuge with God from Satan the Stoned! O my God, indeed this is an iniquity that pleaseth Thee not! Hold off from me, O my son !' So saying, he arose and sat down at a distance; but the boy followed him and threw himself upon him, saying, 'O dervish, why wilt thou deny thyself the delight of my possession, seeing that my heart loveth thee ?' With this the dervish's anger redoubled and he said, 'An thou refrain not from me, I will call thy father and tell him of thee.' Quoth Kemerezzeman, 'My father knows my mind to thee and it may not be that he will hinder me: so heal thou my heart. Why cost thou hold off from me? Do I not please thee?' 'By Allah, O my son,' answered the dervish, 'I will not do this, though I be hewn in pieces with sharp swords!' And he repeated the saying of the poet:

My heart the fair desireth, both wench and wight; I sigh For all I see: yet passion leads not my wit awry.
Nay, though I still behold them morning and eventide, Nor sodomite, believe me, nor whoremonger am I.

Then he wept and said, ‘Arise, open the door, that I may go my way, for I will lie no longer in this place.’ Therewith he rose to his feet; but the boy caught hold of him, saying, ‘Look at the brightness of my face and the redness of my cheeks and the softness of my sides and the daintiness of my lips.’ Moreover he discovered to him a leg that would put to shame wine and cupbearer and gazed on him with looks that would baffle enchantment and enchanter; for he was surpassing of loveliness and full of tender blandishment, even as saith of him the poet:

I never can forget him, since of intent the fair A leg to me
discovered, as flashing pearl it were.
So marvel not if on me the flesh should rise; for lo, the Day of
Resurrection’s a day of shanks laid bare.

Then he displayed to him his bosom, saying, ‘Look at my breasts. They are goodlier than girls’ breasts and my spittle is sweeter than sugar-candy. So leave scruple and abstinence and cast off piety and devoutness and take thy delight of my possession and enjoy my beauty. Fear nothing, for thou art safe from hurt, and leave this dulness, for it is an ill habit.’ And he went on to discover to him his hidden charms, striving to turn the reins of his reason with his [graceful] bendings, whilst the dervish averted his face and said, ‘I seek refuge with God! Shame upon thee, O my son! This is a forbidden thing, and I will not do it, no, not even in sleep.’ The boy pressed upon him, but the dervish escaped from him and turning towards Mecca, addressed himself to prayer.

When Kemerezzeman saw him praying, he left him till he had prayed a two-bow prayer and saluted, when he would have accosted him again; but the dervish again repeated the intent and prayed a second two-bow prayer, and thus he did a third and a fourth and a fifth time. Quoth Kemerezzeman, ‘What prayers are these ? Art thou minded to take flight upon the clouds? Thou lettest slip our delight, whilst thou passest the whole night in the prayer-niche.’ So saying, he threw himself upon the dervish and kissed him between the eyes: and he said, ‘O my son, put away from thee the devil and betake thee to the obedience of the Compassionate One.’ Quoth Kemerezzeman, ‘An thou do not with me that which I wish, I will call my father and say to him, “The dervish is minded to do lewdness with me.” Whereupon he will come in to thee and beat thee, till thy bones be broken upon thy flesh.’

All this while Abdurrehman was watching with his eyes and hearkening with his ears, and he was certified that there was no lewdness in the dervish and said in himself, ‘An he were a lewd fellow, he had not stood out against all this importunity.’ The boy continued to beguile the dervish and every time he addressed himself to prayer, he interrupted him, till at last he waxed exceeding wroth with him and was rough with him and beat him. Kemerezzeman wept and his father came in and wiped away his tears and comforted him. Then said he to the dervish, ‘O my brother, since thou art on this wise, why didst thou weep and sigh, when thou sawest my son? Is there a reason for this?’ ‘Yes,’ answered the dervish; and Abdurrehman continued, ‘When I saw thee weep at sight of my son, I deemed evil of thee and bade the boy do with thee thus, that I might try thee, purposing in myself, if I saw thee require him of lewdness, to come in upon thee and slay thee. But, when I saw thy carriage towards him, I knew thee for one of those who are virtuous to the utmost. But, God on thee, tell me the cause of thy weeping!’

The dervish sighed and said, ‘O my lord, fret not a closed wound.’ But the merchant said, ‘Nothing will serve but thou must tell me.’ ‘Know, then,’ began the other, ‘that I am a dervish who wander in the lands and the countries, admonishing myself by the traces of the Creator of Night and Day. It chanced that one Friday I entered the city of Bassora in the forenoon of the day and saw the shops open and full of all manner wares and goods and meat and drink; but they were deserted and there was in them neither man nor woman nor girl nor boy: nor in the markets and the streets was there dog nor cat nor yet voice heard nor creature seen. I marvelled at this and said to myself, “I wonder whither the people of the city are gone with their dogs and cats and what hath God done with them ? “ Now I was anhungred, so I took hot bread from a baker’s oven and going into an oilman’s shop, spread the bread with butter and honey and ate. Then I entered the shop of a sherbet-seller and drank what I would; after which, seeing a coffee-shop open, I went in and saw the pots on the fire, full of coffee; but there was no one there. So I drank my fill and said, “Verily, this is a strange thing! It seems as if death had stricken the people of this city and they had all died forthright, or as if they had taken fright at some- thing that hath befallen them and fled, without having time to close their shops.”

As I pondered this matter, I heard a sound of drums beating; whereat I was afraid and hid myself: then, looking out through a crevice, I saw fourscore damsels, like moons, come walking through the market, two by two, with uncovered heads and faces displayed; and in their midst a young lady, riding on a horse that could hardly move its feet for that which was upon it of trappings and housings. Her face was unveiled, and she was adorned with the costliest ornaments and clad in the richest of raiment and covered with gold and silver and jewels. About her neck she wore a collar of gold and on her bosom were necklaces of the same metal; her wrists were clasped with bracelets, that shone like stars, and her ankles with bangles of gold set with precious stones. The slave- girls walked before her and behind and on her right and left and before her was a damsel girt with a great sword, with hilts of emerald and hangers of gold, set with jewels.

When the young lady came to where I lay hid, she checked her horse and said, “O damsels, I hear a noise of somewhat within yonder shop: so do ye search it, lest there be one hidden there, with intent to look upon us, whilst we have our faces unveiled.” So they searched the shop opposite that in which I lay hid, whilst I abode in terror; and presently I saw them come forth with a man and heard them say to her, “O our lady, we found a man there and here he is before thee.” Quoth she to the damsel with the sword, “Strike off his head.” So she went up to him and smote off his head and they passed on, leaving the dead man lying on the ground. When I saw this, I was affrighted; but my heart was taken with love of the young lady.

After awhile, the people reappeared and every one who had a shop entered it; whilst the folk began to come and go in the markets and gathered about the slain man, staring at him. Then I came forth from my hiding-place by stealth, and none took note of me; but love of the lady had gotten possession of my heart, and I began to enquire of her privily; but none gave me news of her. So I left Bassora, with a heart torn with love of her; and when I came upon this thy son, I saw him to be the likest of all creatures to the young lady, wherefore he minded me of her and his sight revived the fire of passion in me and kindled anew in my heart the flames of love-longing and distraction.' Then he wept passing sore and said, 'O my lord, I conjure thee by Allah, open the door to me, so I may go my way!' So Abdurrehman opened the door and he went forth.

As for Kemerezzeman, when he heard the dervish's story, his heart was taken with love of the lady and passion got the mastery of him and longing and dis- traction raged in him; so, on the morrow, he said to his father, 'All the sons of the merchants travel in the lands, to attain their desire, nor is there one of them but his father provideth him with merchandise, wherewith he may travel and traffic for gain. Why, then, O my father, dost thou not provide me with merchandise, so I may travel with it and try my luck?' 'O my son,' answered Abdurrehman, 'the merchants [of whom thou speakest] lack of money; so they send their sons abroad for the sake of profit and gain and the getting of the goods of the world. But I have wealth in plenty nor do I covet [more]: so why should I exile thee [from thy native land?] Indeed, I cannot brook to be parted from thee an hour, more by token that thou art unique in beauty and grace and perfection and I fear for thee.' But Kemerezzeman said, 'O my father, nothing will serve but thou must furnish me with merchandise wherewithal to travel; else will I take thee at unawares and flee, though without goods or money. So, if thou wish to pleasure my heart, make ready for me merchandise, that I may travel and divert myself by viewing foreign countries.'

Abdurrehman, seeing his son enamoured of travel, acquainted his wife with this, saying, ' My son would have me provide him with merchandise, so he may travel therewith in strange countries, albeit travel is travail.' 'What is there should mislike thee in this?'' answered she. 'This is the wont of the sons of the merchants and they all vie with one another in glorying in travel and gain. 'Quoth he, 'Most of the merchants are poor and seek increase of good; but I have wealth galore.' 'More of a good thing hurteth not,' replied she; 'and if thou comply not with his wish, I will furnish him of my own monies.' Quoth Abdurrehman, 'I fear strangerhood for him, for it is rife in trouble.' But she said, 'There is no harm in strangerhood, when it leads to gain; and [if we do not according to his wish], our son will go away and we shall seek him and find him not and be dishonoured among the folk.' The merchant accepted his wife's counsel and provided his son with merchandise, to the value of fourscore and ten thousand dinars, whilst his mother gave him a purse containing forty jewels of price, the least of the value of one of which was five hundred dinars, saying, 'O my son, be careful of these jewels, for they will be of service to thee.'

Kemerezzeman took the jewels and laid them in a belt, which he buckled about his waist; then he set out for Bassora with his goods and stayed not till there remained but a day's journey between that city and himself; when the [wild] Arabs came out upon him and stripped him and slew his men and servants; but he himself lay down among the slain and smeared himself with blood, so that the Bedouins took him for dead and left him and made off with their booty. When they had gone their ways, he arose, having nought left but the jewels in his girdle, and fared on till he came to Bassora. It chanced that his entry was on a Friday and the town was empty of folk, even as the dervish had told him. He found the streets deserted and the shops open and full of goods; so he ate and drank and looked about him. Presently, he heard drums beating and hid himself in a shop, till the slave- girls came up, when he looked at them and seeing the young lady riding amongst them, love and longing took him and passion and distraction overcame him, so that he could hardly stand. After awhile, the people reappeared and the markets became full. Whereupon he went to the bazaar and sold one of his jewels to a jeweller there for a thousand dinars, with which he returned to his place and passed the night there.

Next morning he changed his clothes and going to the bath, came forth as he were the full moon. Then he sold other four stones for four thousand dinars and sauntered about the streets of Bassora, clad in the costliest of raiment, till he came to a market, where he saw a barber's shop. So he went in to the barber, who shaved his head, and clapping up an acquaintance with him, said to him, 'O my father, I am a stranger in these parts and yesterday I entered this city and found it void of inhabitants, nor was there in it any living soul, man nor genie. Then I saw a company of slave-girls and amongst them a young lady riding in state.' And he went on to tell him all he had seen. 'O my son,' said the barber, 'hast thou told any but me of this?' And he answered, 'No.' 'Then, O my son,' rejoined the barber, 'beware of mentioning this before any but me; for all cannot keep a secret and thou art but a lad and I fear lest the talk travel from folk to folk, till it reach those whom it concerns and they kill thee. For know, O my son, that this thou hast seen, none ever heard nor knew in other than this city. As for the people of Bassora, they are dying of this vexation; for every Friday forenoon they shut up the dogs and cats, to hinder them from going about the streets, and all the people of the city enter the mosques, where they lock the doors on them, and not one of them can pass about the market nor even look out of window; nor knoweth any the cause of this calamity. But to-night I will question my wife of it, for she is a midwife and enters the houses of the notables and knows all the news of the city. And if it please God the Most High, do thou come to me to-morrow and I will tell thee what she shall have told me.'

With this Kemerezzeman pulled out a handful of gold and said to him, 'O my father, take this gold and give it to thy wife, for she is become my mother.' Then he gave him a second handful, saying 'Take this for thyself.' Whereupon quoth the barber, 'O my son, sit thou in thy place, till I go to my wife and ask her and bring thee news of the true state of the case.' So saying, he left him in the shop and going home, acquainted his wife with the young man's case, saying, 'I would have thee tell me the truth of this affair, so I may tell it to this young merchant, for he hath set his heart on knowing the reason why men and beasts are forbidden the streets every Friday forenoon; and methinks he is in love, for he is open-handed and generous, and if we tell him [what he would know], we shall get great good of him.' Quoth she, 'Go back and say to him, "Come and speak with thy mother my wife, for she salutes thee and says to thee, 'The thing is done.'"'

So he returned to the shop, where he found Kemerezze- man sitting awaiting him and gave him his wife's message. Then he carried him in to her and she gave him welcome and bade him sit down; whereupon he pulled out a hundred dinars and gave them to her, saying, ‘O my mother, tell me who this young lady is.’ ‘Know, O my son,’ answered she, ‘that there came a jewel to the Sultan of Bassora from the King of Hind, and he was minded to have it pierced. So he called all the jewellers together and said to them, “I wish you to pierce me this jewel Whoso pierces it, I will give him whatsoever he shall ask; but if he break it, I will cut off his head.” At this they were afraid and said, “ O king of the age, a jewel is soon spoilt and there are few who can pierce them without injury, for most of them have a flaw. So do not thou impose upon us a task to which we are unable; for we cannot avail to pierce this jewel. However, the syndic of our guild is more experienced than we.” “And who is your syndic?” asked the king. “Master Ubeid,” answered they. “He is more versed than we in this art and hath wealth galore and exceeding skill. So do thou send for him and bid him pierce thee this jewel.” Accordingly, the king sent for Ubeid and bade him pierce the jewel, imposing on him the condition aforesaid. He took it and pierced it to the liking of the king, who said to him, “Ask a boon of me, O master!” “O king of the age,” answered he, “ have patience with me till to-morrow.”

Now the reason of this was that he wished to take counsel with his wife, who is the young lady thou sawest riding in state; for he loveth her with an exceeding love. and of the greatness of his love for her, he doth nought without consulting her; wherefore he put off asking till the morrow. When he went home, he said to her, “ I have pierced the king a jewel and he hath granted me a boon; but I put off asking till to-morrow, that I might consult thee. So what cost thou wish, that I may ask it? “ Quoth she, “We have riches such as fires may not consume; but, if thou love me, ask of the king that he make proclamation in the streets of Bassora that all the townsfolk shall every Friday enter the mosques, two hours before the hour of prayer, so none, great or small, may abide in the town, except they be in the mosques or in the houses and the doors be locked upon them, and that all the shops of the town be left open. Then will I ride with my women through the city and none shall look on me from window or lattice; and every one, whom I find abroad, I will kill.”

So he went in to the king and sought of him this boon, which he granted him; but, when he caused proclamation to be made to the effect aforesaid, the people objected that they feared for their goods from the dogs and cats; wherefore he commanded to shut the latter up till the folk should come forth from the Friday prayers. So the jeweller's wife fell to sallying forth every Friday, two hours before the time of prayer, and riding in state through the city with her women; during which time none dares pass through the market nor look out of window or lattice. This, then, is what thou wouldst know and I have told thee who she is; but, O my son, was it thy desire [only] to have news of her or hast thou a mind to foregather with her?' 'O my mother,' answered he, 'it is my wish to foregather with her.' Quoth she, 'Tell me what valuables thou hast with thee.' And he replied, 'O my mother, I have with me precious stones of four kinds, the first worth five hundred dinars each, the second seven hundred, the third eight hundred and the fourth a thousand.' 'Art thou willing to spend four of these?' asked she; and he said, 'I am ready to spend them all.'

'Then,' rejoined she, 'arise, O my son, and go straight to thy lodging and take a jewel of those worth five hundred dinars, with which do thou repair to the jewel- market and ask for the shop of Master Ubeid, the Syndic of the Jewellers. Thou wilt find him seated in his shop, clad in rich clothes, with workmen under his hand. Salute him and sit down by him; then pull out the jewel and give it him, saying, "O master, take this stone and fashion it into a ring for me with gold. Make it not large, a mithcal in weight and no more; but let the fashion of it be excellent." Then give him twenty dinars and give each of his journeymen a diner. Sit with him awhile and talk with him and if a beggar accost thee, give him a dinar, to the intent that he may take thee into affection. After this, leave him and return to thy lodging. Pass the night there and next morning, take a hundred dinars and bring them and give them to thy father [the barber], for he is poor.'

'Be it so,' answered Kemerezzeman and returning to his hostelry, took a jewel worth five hundred dinars and went with it to the jewel-bazaar. There he enquired for the shop of Master Ubeid, Syndic of the Jewellers, and they directed him thereto. So he went thither and saw the syndic, a man of reverend aspect and clad in sumptuous apparel [sitting in his shop,] with four journeymen under his hand.

He saluted him and the jeweller returned his greeting and welcoming him, made him sit down. Then he brought out the jewel and said to Ubeid, ‘O master, I wish thee to make me this jewel into a ring with gold. Let it be the weight of a mithcal and no more, but fashion it curiously.’ Then he pulled out twenty dinars and gave them to him, saying, ‘This is for the chasing, over and above the price of the ring.’ And he gave each of the journeymen a diner, wherefore they loved him, and so did the syndic. Then he sat talking with the jeweller and whenever a beggar came up to him, he gave him a diner and they all marvelled at his generosity.

Now Ubeid had tools at home, like those he had in the shop, and whenever he was minded to do any extraordinary piece of work, it was his wont to carry it home and do it there, that his journeymen might not learn the secrets of his curious workmanship. His wife used to sit before him, and when she was sitting thus and he looking upon her, he would fashion all manner of curiously wrought trinkets, such as were fit for none but kings. So he took Kemerezzeman’s jewel home and sat down to fashion the ring with rare workmanship. When his wife saw him thus engaged, she said to him, ‘What wilt thou do with this jewel ?’ And he answered, ‘I mean to make it into a ring with gold, for it is worth five hundred dinars.’ ‘For whom wilt thou set it?’ asked she. ‘For a young merchant,’ replied he, ‘who is fair of face, with eyes that wound and cheeks that strike fire and mouth like Solomon’s seal and cheeks like blood-red anemones and lips red as coral and neck like that of a gazelle. His complexion is white blent with red and he is well-bred, pleasant and generous and doth thus and thus.’ And he went on to describe to her his beauty and grace and bounty and perfection and ceased not to vaunt his charms and the generosity of his fashion, till he had made her in love with him; for there is no sillier cuckold than he who vaunts another man’s good looks and liberality to his wife.

So, when desire rose high in her, she said to him, ‘Is aught of my charms found in him?’ ‘He hath all thy beauties,’ answered her husband; ‘and he is thy counter- part in favour. Meseemeth his age is even as thine and but that I fear to vex thee, I would say that he is a thousand times handsomer than thou.’ She was silent, and the jeweller ceased not to talk with her and set out Kemerezzeman’s charms to her, till he had made an end of chasing the ring; when he gave it to her and she put it on her finger, which it fitted exactly. ‘ O my lord,’ said she, ‘my heart loveth this ring and I long for it to be mine and will not take it from my finger.’ ‘Have patience,’ answered her husband. ‘The owner of it is generous and I will seek to buy it of him, and if he will sell it to me, I will bring it to thee. Or if he have another jewel, I will buy it of him for thee and fashion it for thee into a ring like this.’

Meanwhile, Kemerezzeman passed the night in his lodging and on the morrow he took a hundred dinars and carried them to the old woman, the barber’s wife, who said to him, ‘Give them to thy father.’ So he gave them to the barber, and she said, ‘Hast thou done as I told thee ?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he, and she said, ‘Go now to the jeweller and if he give thee the ring, put it on the top of thy finger and pull it off in haste and say to him, “ O master, thou hast made a mistake; the ring is too strait.” He will say, “ O merchant, shall I break it and make it again larger ? “ And do thou reply, “ It boots not to break it and fashion it anew. Take it and give it to one of thy women.” Then pull out another stone worth seven hundred dinars and say to him, “ Take this stone and set it for me, for it is handsomer than the other.” Give him thirty dinars and give each of the journeymen two, saying, “This is for the chasing, over and above the price of the ring.” Then return to thy lodging for the night and on the morrow bring me two hundred dinars, and I will complete thee the rest of the device.’

So Kemerezzeman went to the jeweller, who welcomed him and made him sit down; and he said to him, ‘Hast thou done my occasion ?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Ubeid and brought out to him the ring; whereupon he set it on the top of his finger and pulling it off in haste, said, ‘Thou hast made a mistake, O master. And threw it to him, saying, ‘ It is too strait for my finger.’ ‘O merchant,’ asked the jeweller, “shall I make it larger?’ ‘Not so,’ replied Kemerezzeman ‘take it as a gift and give it to one of thy women. Its worth is trifling, some five hundred dinars; so it boots not to fashion it over again.’ Then he brought out to him another stone worth seven hundred dinars and said to him, ‘Set this.’ Moreover, he gave him thirty dinars and gave each of his journeymen two. Quoth Ubeid, ‘O my lord, we will take the price of the ring, when we have made it.' But Kemerezzeman said, 'This is for the chasing, and the price of the ring remains over.' So saying, he went away, leaving the jeweller and his men amazed at the excess of his generosity.

Presently the jeweller returned home and said to his wife, 'O Helimeh,' [for that was her name,] 'never did I set eyes on a more generous than this young man, and as for thee, thy luck is good, for he hath given me the ring without price, saying, " Give it to one of thy women."' And he told her what had passed between himself and Kemerezzeman, adding, 'Methinks this youth is none of the sons of the merchants, but that he is of the sons of the kings and sultans.' The more he praised him, the more she waxed in passion and longing and love-distraction for him. So she took the ring and put it on her finger, whilst the jeweller made another for Kemerezzeman, a little larger than the first. When he had finished it, she put it on her finger, under the first, and said, 'Look, O my lord, how well the two rings show on my finger! I wish they were both mine.' 'Patience,' answered he. 'It may be I shall buy thee this second one.' Then he lay that night and on the morrow he took the ring and went to his shop.

As for Kemerezzeman, as soon as it was day, he betook himself to the barber's wife and gave her two hundred dinars. Quoth she, 'Go to the jeweller and when he gives thee the ring, put it on thy finger and pull it off again in haste, saying, " Thou hast made a mistake, O master I This ring is too large. It behoveth a master like thee, when the like of me cometh to him with a piece of work, to take his measure; and if thou hadst taken the measure of my finger, thou hadst not erred." Then pull out another stone worth a thousand dinars and say to him, "Take this and set it, and give this ring to one of thy women." Give him forty dinars and each of his men three, saying, "This is for the chasing, and for the cost of the ring, that stands over." And see what he will say. Then bring three hundred dinars and give them to thy father the barber, that he may mend his fortune withal, for he is a poor man.' 'I hear and obey,' answered Kemerezzeman and betook himself to the jeweller, who welcomed him and making him sit down, gave him the ring.

He took it and put it on his finger; then pulled it off in haste and said, ‘It behoveth a master like thee, when the like of me brings him a piece of work, to take his measure. Hadst thou taken the measure of my finger, thou hadst not erred; but take it and give it to one of thy women.’ Then he brought out to him a stone worth a thousand dinars and said to him, ‘Take this and set it for me after the measure of my finger.’ ‘Good,’ answered Ubeid. ‘Thou art in the right;’ and took his measure, whereupon he pulled out forty dinars and gave them to him, saying, ‘This is for the chasing and the price of the ring shall remain.’ ‘O my lord,’ said the jeweller, ‘ how much hire have we taken of thee! Verily, thy bounty to us is great!’ ‘ No harm,’ answered Kemerezzeman and sat talking with him awhile and giving a diner to every beggar who passed.

Then he left him and went away, whilst the jeweller returned home and said to his wife, ‘How generous is this young merchant! Never did I set eyes on a more open-handed or a comelier than he, no, nor a sweeter of speech.’ And he went on to recount to her his charms and liberality and was loud in his praise. ‘Lack- courtesy that thou art!’ said she. ‘Since thou notest these attributes in him, and indeed he hath given thee two rings of price, it behoveth thee to invite him and make him an entertainment and entreat him friendly. When he seeth that thou tenderest him and cometh to our house, we shall surely get great good of him; and if thou grudge him this, do thou bid him and I will entertain him of my monies.’ Quoth he, ‘Dost thou know me to be niggardly, that thou sayest this?’ ‘Thou art no niggard,’ rejoined she; ‘but thou lackest of breeding. Invite him this night and come not without him. If he refuse, conjure him by the oath of divorce and be instant with him.’ ‘On my head and eyes,’ answered he and wrought at the ring till he had finished it, after which he passed the night and went forth on the morrow to his shop and sat there.

Meanwhile, Kemerezzeman took three hundred dinars and carrying them to the barber’s wife, gave them to her for her husband. Quoth she, ‘Most like he will invite thee to his house this night; and if he do this and thou lie with him, tell me in the morning what happens to thee and bring with thee four hundred dinars and give them to thy father [the barber].’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered he; and as often as he ran out of money, he would sell some of his jewels. So he repaired to the jeweller, who received him with open arms and clapped up a friendship with him. Then he gave him the ring, and he found it after the measure of his finger and said to the jeweller, ‘God bless thee, O prince of craftsmen! The setting is conformable [to my wishes], but the stone is not to my liking. I have a handsomer than it: so take the ring and give it to one of thy women.’ Then he gave him a fourth stone and a hundred dinars, saying, ‘Take thy hire and pardon me the trouble I have given thee.’ ‘O merchant,’ answered Ubeid, ‘all the trouble thou hast given us thou hast requited us and hast overwhelmed us with thy bounties: and indeed my heart is taken with love of thee and I cannot brook parting from thee. So, God on thee, be thou my guest this night and heal my heart.’ ‘So be it,’ replied Kemerezzeman; ‘but needs must I go to my khan, that I may give a charge to my servants and tell them that I shall sleep abroad to-night, so they may not expect me.’ ‘ Where dost thou lodge?’ asked the jeweller; and he answered, ‘In such a khan.’ Quoth Ubeid, ‘I will come for thee there.’ And Kemerezzeman said, ‘Good.’

So the jeweller repaired to the khan before sundown, fearing lest his wife should be wroth with him, if he returned home without Kemerezzeman, and carrying him to his house, seated him in a saloon that had not its match. Helimeh saw him, as he entered, and was ravished with him. They talked till the evening-meal came, when they ate and drank; after which came coffee and sherbets, and the jeweller ceased not to entertain him with talk till evensong, when they prayed the ordained prayers. Then in came a handmaid with two cups of [diet-]drink, which when they had drunk, drowsiness overcame them and they slept. Presently in came the jeweller’s wife and seeing them asleep, looked upon Kemerezzeman’s face and was confounded at his beauty. ‘How can he sleep who loves the fair?’ said she, and turning him over on his back, bestrode his breast. Then in the rage of her passion for him, she rained down kisses on his cheeks, till she left mark upon them and they became exceeding red and his cheekbones shone. Moreover, she sucked his lips, till the blood ran out into her mouth; but with all this, her heat was not quenched nor her thirst assuaged.

She ceased not to kiss and clip him and twine leg with leg, till the forehead of the day grew white and the dawn broke forth and shone;

when she put in his pocket four huckle-bones and went away. Then she sent her maid with something like snuff, which she applied to their nostrils and they sneezed and awoke. ‘O my lords,’ said the girl, ‘prayer is a duty; so rise and pray the morning prayer.’ And she brought them basin and ewer. Quoth Kemerezzeman, ‘O master, we have overslept ourselves.’ ‘O my friend,’ answered the jeweller, ‘ verily the air of this room is heavy; for, whenever I sleep in it, this happens to me.’ ‘It is well,’ rejoined Kemerezzeman and proceeded to make the ablution; but, when he put the water to his face, his cheeks and lips burned him. ‘This is a strange thing!’ said he. ‘If the air of the room be heavy and we have been drowned in sleep, what ails my cheeks and lips that they burn me ? ‘ And he said to the jeweller, ‘O master, my cheeks and lips burn me.’ ‘Doubtless this comes of the mosquito-bites,’ answered the other. ‘Strange!’ said Kemerezzeman. ‘ Hath this thing happened to thee?’ ‘No,’ replied Ubeid. ‘But, whenever I have a guest like thee, he complains in the morning of the mosquito-bites, and this only happens when he is like thee, beardless. If he be bearded, the mosquitoes trouble him not, and nought hinders them from me but my beard. It seems they love not bearded men.’ ‘ True,’ rejoined Kemerezzeman. Then the maid brought them breakfast and they broke their fast and went out.

Kemerezzeman betook himself to the old woman, who exclaimed, when she saw him, ‘I see the marks of dalliance on thy face: tell me what thou hast seen.’ Quoth he, ‘I have seen nothing. Only I supped with the master of the house in a saloon and prayed the evening prayer, after which we fell asleep and woke not till the morning.’ She laughed and said, ‘What are those marks on thy cheeks and lips?’ ‘It was the mosquitoes of the saloon that did this with me,’ answered he. ‘It is well,’ rejoined she. ‘But did the same thing betide the master of the house?’ ‘Nay,’ replied he; ‘on the contrary, he told me that the mosquitoes of that saloon molest not bearded men, but bite those only who have no hair on their faces, and that, whenever he hath to guest one who is beardless, the latter awakes, complaining of the mosquito-bites; but, if he have a beard, there befalls him nothing of this.’ ‘Good,’ said she. ‘ Sawest thou ought but this?’ and he answered, ‘I found four huckle-bones in my pocket.’ Quoth she, ‘Show them to me.’

So he gave them to her and she laughed and said, ‘Thy mistress laid these in thy pocket.’ ‘How so?’ asked he; and she replied, ‘It is as if she said to thee, in the language of signs, “An thou wert in love, thou wouldst not sleep, for a lover sleeps not: but thou art yet a child and fit for nothing but to play with these huckle-bones. So what ails thee to fall in love with the fair? “ Now she came to thee by night and finding thee asleep, devoured thy cheeks with kisses and left thee this sign. But this will not suffice her of thee and she will certainly send her husband to invite thee again to-night; so, when thou goest home with him, hasten not to fall asleep, and on the morrow bring me five hundred dinars and acquaint me with what hath passed, and I will tell thee what more thou shalt do. ‘I hear and obey,’ answered he and went back to the khan.

Meanwhile, the jeweller’s wife said to her husband, ‘ Is the guest gone ?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he: ‘ but, O Helimeh, the mosquitoes plagued him last night and scarified his cheeks and lips, and indeed I was abashed before him.’ ‘This is the wont of the mosquitoes of our saloon,’ rejoined she; for they love none but the beardless. But do thou invite him again to-night.’ So he repaired to Kemerezzeman’s lodging and bidding him, carried him to his house, where they ate and drank and prayed the evening prayer in the saloon, after which the maid came in and gave each of them a cup of drink, and they drank and fell asleep. Presently, in came Helimeh and said, ‘O good-for-nought, how canst thou sleep and call thyself a lover? A lover sleepeth not.’ Then she mounted on his breast and ceased not to ply him with kisses and caresses, biting and sucking his lips and so forth, till the morning, when she put a knife in his pocket and sent her maid to arouse them.

When Kemerezzeman awoke, his cheeks were on fire, for excess of redness, and his lips like coral, for dint of sucking and kissing. Quoth the jeweller, ‘Did the mosquitoes plague thee last night?’ ‘No,’ answered the young man; for, since he knew the word of the enigma, he left complaining. Then he felt the knife in his pocket and was silent. When he had broken his fast and drunk coffee, he left the jeweller and going to the khan, took five hundred dinars and carried them to the old woman, to whom he related what had passed, saying, ‘I slept in my own despite, and when I woke I found nothing but a knife in my pocket.' 'May God protect thee from her this next night !' exclaimed the old woman. ' For she saith to thee [by this sign,] "An thou sleep again, I will cut thy throat." Thou wilt once more be bidden to the jeweller's house to-night, and if thou sleep, she will slay thee.'

'What is to be done?' asked he; and she said, 'Tell me what thou atest and drankest before sleeping.' Quoth he, 'We supped as usual and prayed the evening prayer, after which there came in to us a maid, who gave each of us a cup of [diet-]drink, which when I had drunk, I fell asleep and awoke not till the morning.' 'The mischief is in the cup of drink,' said the old woman. 'So, when the maid gives it thee, take it from her, but drink not and wait till the master of the house have drunken and fallen asleep; then say to her, "Give me a draught of water," and she will go to fetch thee the gugglet. Whilst she is gone, empty the cup behind the pillow and lie down and feign sleep. So when she comes back with the gugglet, she will deem that thou hast fallen asleep, after having drunk off the cup, and will go away; and the case will appear to thee anon; but beware of disobeying my bidding.' 'I hear and obey,' answered he and returned to the khan.

Meanwhile the jeweller's wife said to her husband, 'A guest's due is three nights' entertainment: so do thou invite him a third time.' Accordingly the jeweller betook himself to Kemerezzeman and inviting him, carried him home and sat down with him in the saloon. When they had supped and prayed the evening prayer, in came the maid and gave each of them a cup. The jeweller drank and fell asleep; but Kemerezzeman forbore to drink whereupon quoth the maid, 'Wilt thou not drink, O my lord?" 'I am athirst,' answered he. 'Bring me the gugglet.' So she went to fetch it, and in the meantime he emptied the cup behind the cushion and lay down. When the girl returned, she saw him lying down and told her mistress that he had drunk off the cup and fallen asleep; whereupon quoth Helimeh to herself, 'Verily, his death is better than his life.' Then, taking a sharp knife, she went in to him, saying, 'Three times, and thou notedest not the sign, O fool! So now I will slit thy weasand'

When he saw her making for him, with the knife in her hand, he opened his eyes and rose, laughing; whereupon, ' It was not of thine own wit,' said she, 'that thou camest at the meaning of the token, but by the help of some wily cheat; so tell me whence had thou this knowledge.' 'From an old woman,' answered he and told her all that had passed between himself and the barber's wife. 'To-morrow,' said she, 'go thou to her and say, " Hast thou any further device in store?" And if she say, "Yes," do thou rejoin, "Then do thine endeavour to bring me to enjoy her publicly." But, if she say, " I have no means of doing that, and this is the last of my contrivance," put her away from thy thought, and to-morrow night my husband will come to thee and invite thee. Do thou come with him and tell me and I will consider what remains to be done.' 'Good,' answered he.

Then he spent the rest of the night with her in kissing and clipping, plying the particle of copulation in concert and according the conjunctive with the conjoined, whilst her husband was as a cast-out nunation of construction, till the morning, when she said to him, ' It is not a night of thee that will content me, nor a day, no, nor yet a month nor a year; but it is my intent to abide with thee the rest of my life. Wait till I play my husband a trick that would baffle the keenest-witted and whereby we shall come to our desires. I will cause doubt to enter into him, so that he shall put me away, whereupon I will marry thee and go with thee to thine own country. Moreover, I will transport all his wealth and treasures to thy lodging and will contrive thee the ruin of his dwelling-place and the blotting-out of his traces. But do thou hearken to my speech and obey me in that I shall say to thee and cross me not.' 'I hear and obey,' answered Kemerezzeman; 'there is no opposition in me.'

Then said she, 'Go to the khan and when my husband comes to thee and invites thee, say to him, " O my brother, a man is apt to be burdensome, and when his visits grow [over]frequent, both generous and niggard loathe him. How then shall I go with thee every night and lie with thee in the saloon? If thou be not chagrined with me, thy harem will bear me a grudge, for that I hinder thee from them. If, therefore, thou hast a mind to my company, take me a house beside thine own and we will abide thus, now I sitting with thee till the time of sleep, and now thou with me. Then I will go to my lodging and thou to thy harem, and this will be better- advised than that I hinder thee from thy harem every night." Then will he come to me and take counsel with me, and I will advise him to turn out our neighbour, for that the house in which he lives is ours and he rents it of us; and once thou art in the house, God will make the rest of our scheme easy to us. Go now and do as I bid thee.' 'I hear and obey,' answered he; whereupon she left him and went away, whilst he lay down and feigned sleep.

Presently, the maid came and aroused them; and when the jeweller awoke, he said to Kemerezzeman, 'O merchant, have the mosquitoes troubled thee?' 'No,' answered he, and Ubeid said, 'Belike thou art grown used to them.' Then they broke their fast and drank coffee, after which they went out to their affairs, and Kemerezzeman betook himself to the old woman, to whom he related what had passed, saying, 'Hast thou any farther device to bring me to foregather with her publicly?' 'O my son,' answered she, 'my contrivance hath gone thus far, and now I am at the end of my devices.' So he left her and returned to the khan, where towards eventide the jeweller came to him and invited him. Quoth Kemerezzeman, 'I cannot go with thee.' 'Why so?' asked the merchant. 'I love thee and cannot brook separation from thee. I conjure thee by Allah to come with me!' 'If it be thy wish,' replied Kemerezzeman, 'to continue our intercourse and keep up the friendship betwixt thee and me, take me a house beside shine own, and if thou wilt, thou shalt pass the evening with me and I with thee; but, when the time of sleep cometh, each of us shall go to his own house and lie there.' Quoth Ubeid, 'I have a house adjoining mine, which is my own property: so go thou with me to-night and to-morrow I will have the house voided for thee.'

So he went with him and they supped and prayed the evening-prayer, after which the jeweller drank the cup of drugged liquor and fell asleep: but in Kemerezzeman's cup there was no drug; so he drank it and slept not. Then came the jeweller's wife and passed the night with him, whilst her husband lay like a dead man. When he awoke in the morning, he sent for the tenant of the adjoining house and said to him, 'O man, void me the house, for I have need of it.' 'On my head and eyes,' answered the man and voided the house to him, whereupon Kemerezzeman took up his abode therein and transported all his goods thither. The jeweller passed that evening with him, then went to his own house.

On the morrow, his wife sent for a cunning builder and wrought on him with money to make her an underground [way] from her chamber to Kemerezzeman's house, ending in a trap-door under the earth. So, before Kemerezzeman was ware, she came in to him with two bags of money and he said to her, ' Whence comest thou ?' She showed him the underground way and said to him, 'Take these two bags of his money.' Then she abode with him, toying and dallying with him, till the morning, when she said, 'Wait for me, till I go to him and wake him, so he may go to his shop, and return to thee.' So saying, she went away and awoke her husband, who made the ablution and prayed and went to his shop. As soon as he was gone, she took four bags of money and carrying them to Kemerezzeman, sat with him awhile, after which she returned to her house and he betook himself to the bazaar.

When he returned at sundown, he found in his house ten purses and jewels and what not else. Presently the jeweller came to him and carried him to his own house, where they passed the evening in the saloon, till the maid brought them to drink. The jeweller drank and fell asleep, whilst nought betided Kemerezzeman [and he abode awake], for that his cup was pure and there was no drug therein. Then came Helimeh and fell to toying with him, whilst the maid transported the jeweller's goods to Kemerezzeman's house by the secret passage. Thus they did till morning, when the maid awoke her master and gave them to drink of coffee, after which they went each his own way.

On the third day she brought out to him a knife of her husband's, that he had chased and wrought with his own band. He priced it at five hundred dinars and because of the eagerness with which the folk sought it of him, he had laid it up in a chest and could not bring himself to sell it to any. Quoth she, 'Take this knife and stick it in thy girdle and go to my husband and sit with him. Then pull out the knife and say to him, "Look at this knife I bought to-day and tell me if I made a good bargain or not." He will know it, but will be ashamed to say to thee, "This is my knife." So he will ask thee, " Whence didst thou buy it and for how much ? "And do thou answer," I saw two Levantines disputing and one said to the other, 'Where hast thou been?' Quoth his companion, 'I have been with my mistress, and whenever I foregather with her, she gives me money; but to-day she said to me, "I have no money to give thee to-day, but take this knife of my husband's." So I took it and mean to sell it.' The knife pleased me and I said to him, 'Wilt thou sell it to me?' 'Buy,' answered he. So I got it of him for three hundred dinars and I wonder whether it was cheap or dear." And note what he will say to thee. Then talk with him awhile and rise and come back to me in haste. Thou wilt find me awaiting thee at the mouth of the underground way, and do thou give me the knife.' 'I hear and obey,' replied Kemerezzeman and taking the knife, stuck it in his girdle.

Then he went to the shop of the jeweller, who saluted him and welcomed him and made him sit down. He spied the knife in his girdle, at which he wondered and said in himself, 'That is my knife: who can have given it to this merchant?' And he fell a-musing and saying in himself, 'I wonder if it is my knife or one like it!' Presently, Kemerezzeman pulled it out of his girdle and said to him, 'Harkye, master; take this knife and look at it.' Ubeid took it and knew it right well, but was ashamed to say, ' This is my knife;' so he said, 'Where didst thou buy it?' Kemerezzeman replied as Helimeh had charged him, and the jeweller said, 'The knife was cheap at that price, for it is worth five hundred dinars' But fire flamed in his heart and his hands were tied from working at his craft.

Kemerezzeman continued to talk with him, whilst he was drowned in the sea of solicitudes, and for fifty words wherewith the youth bespoke him, he answered him but one; for his heart was in torment and his body racked and his mind troubled and he was even as saith the poet:

I cannot speak, what time to talk with me folk have a mind, And
if they speak to me, my thought they absent from me find.
Drowned in the sea of care, that hath no bottom, 'twixt the folk I
can't distinguish, no, nor man can tell from womankind.

When Kemerezzeman saw him thus discomfited, he said to him, 'Belike thou art busy at this present,' and leaving him, returned to his own house, where he found Helimeh standing at the door of the underground passage, awaiting him. Quoth she, ‘Hast thou done as I bade thee?’ And he said, ‘Yes.’ ‘ What said he to thee?’ asked she, and he answered, ‘He told me that the knife was cheap at that price, for that it was worth five hundred dinars: but I could see that he was troubled; so I left him and know not what befell him after that.’ ‘Give me the knife,’ said she, ‘and reck thou not of him.’ Then she took the knife and restoring it to its place, sat down.

Meanwhile, fire flamed in the jeweller’s heart and disquietude was sore upon him and he said in himself, ‘Needs must I go and look for the knife and do away doubt with certainty.’ So he repaired to his house and went in to his wife, snorting like a dragon; and she said to him, ‘What ails thee, O my lord ?’ ‘Where is my knife ?’ asked he. ‘In the chest,’ answered she and smote upon her breast, saying, ‘Woe is me! Belike thou hast fallen out with some one and art come to fetch the knife to smite him withal’ ‘Give me the knife,’ said he. ‘Let me see it’ But she replied, ‘[I will not give it thee] till thou swear to me that thou wilt not smite any one with it.’ So he swore this to her and she opened the chest and brought out to him the knife and he fell to turning it over, saying, ‘Verily, this is a strange thing!’

Then said he to her, ‘Take it and lay it back in its place.’ Quoth she, ‘Tell me the meaning of all this.’ And he answered, ‘I saw a knife like this with our friend [the merchant],’ and told her all that had passed between himself and Kemerezzeman, adding, ‘But, when I saw it in the chest, there was an end of my doubts.’ ‘Belike,’ said she, ‘thou misdoubtedst of me and deemedst that I was the Levantine’s mistress and had given him the knife.’ ‘Yes,’ replied he; ‘I had my doubts of this; but, when I saw the knife, suspicion was lifted from my heart.’ ‘O man,’ rejoined she, ‘there is no good in thee!’ And he fell to excusing himself to her, till he appeased her; after which he returned to his shop.

Next day, she gave Kemerezzeman her husband’s watch, which he had wrought with his own hand and whereof none had the like, saying, ‘Go to his shop and sit with him and say to him, “I saw again to-day him whom I saw yesterday. He had a watch in his hand and said to me, ‘Wilt thou buy this watch?’ Quoth I, ‘Whence hadst thou it?’ And he answered, saying, ‘I was with my mistress and she gave me this watch.’ So I bought it of him for eight- and-fifty diners. Look at it: is it cheap at that price or dear?" Note what he says to thee; then return to me in haste and give me the watch.' So Kemerezzeman repaired to the jeweller and did with him as his mistress had charged him. When Ubeid saw the watch, he said, 'This is worth seven hundred diners;' and suspicion entered into him. Then Kemerezzeman left him and returning to Helimeh, gave her back the watch.

Presently, in came her husband, snorting, and said to her, 'Where is my watch?' 'Here it is,' answered she. And he said, 'Give it me.' So she brought it to him and he exclaimed, 'There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!' 'O man,' said she, 'there is something the matter with thee. Tell me what it is.' 'What shall I say?' answered he. 'Verily, I am bewildered by these [strange] chances!' And he recited the following verses:

By the Compassionate, I'm dazed about my case; for lo! Troubles and griefs beset me sore, I know not whence they grow.
Patient I'll be, so aloes' self, that I against a thing Bitt'rer than ever aloes was endured have, may know.
Aloes itself less bitter than my patience is; I've borne With patience what is hotter far than coals with fire aglow.
Will o'er my case hath no command; but unto patience fair I'm bidd'n of Him who orders all that is for weal or woe.'

Then he said to his wife, 'O woman, I saw, in the hands of the merchant our friend, first my knife, which I knew, for that its fashion was of my own invention, nor doth its like exist; and he told me of it a story that troubled the heart: so I came [home] and found it [here]. Again to-day I see him with the watch, whose fashion also is of my own invention, nor is there the fellow of it in Bassora, and of this also he told me a story that troubled my heart. Wherefore I am bewildered in my wit and know not what is come to me.' Quoth she, 'The gist of thy speech is that thou suspectedst me of being the merchant's mistress and giving him thy goods; so thou camest to question me and make proof of my perfidy; and but that I showed thee the knife and the watch, thou hadst been certified of my faithlessness But, O man, since thon deemest thus of me, henceforth

I will never again break bread with thee nor drink water, for I loathe thee with the loathing of prohibition.'

So he spoke her fair and excused himself to her till he appeased her and returned, repenting him of having bespoken her thus, to his shop, where he sat, in sore disquiet and exceeding anxiety, between belief and disbelief, till eventide. Then he went home, but brought not Kemerezzeman with him; whereupon quoth his wife, 'Where is the merchant?' And he said, 'In his house.' 'Is the friendship between thee and him grown cold?' asked she. 'By Allah,' replied he, 'I have taken an aversion to him, because of that which hath betided me from him.' Quoth she, 'Go and fetch him, to please me.' So he arose and went in to Kemerezzeman in his house, where he saw his own goods strewn about and knew them. At this sight, fire was kindled in his heart and he fell asighing. Quoth Kemerezzeman, 'How is it that I see thee melancholy?' Ubeid was ashamed to say, 'Here are my goods in thy house: who brought them hither?' So he answered only, 'A vexation hath betided me; but come thou with me to my house, that we may divert ourselves there.' 'Let me be in my place,' said Kemerezzeman. 'I will not go with thee.' But the jeweller conjured him [to come] and taking him, [carried him to his house,] where they supped and passed the evening together, Kemerezzeman talking with the jeweller, who was drowned in the sea of solicitude and answered him but one word for a hundred wherewith he bespoke him.

Presently, the maid brought them two cups of drink, as usual, and they drank; whereupon Ubeid fell asleep, but Kemerezzeman abode on wake, for that his cup was not drugged. Then came Helimeh and said to her lover,

'How deemest thou of yonder cuckold, who is drunken in his heedlessness and knoweth not the wiles of women? Needs must I cozen him into putting me away. To-morrow, I will disguise myself as a slave-girl and follow thee to his shop, where do thou say to him," O master, I went to-day into the khan of E1 Yesirjiyeh, where I saw this damsel and bought her for a thousand dinars. Look at her and tell me whether she was cheap or dear at that price." Then uncover to him my face and breasts and show me to him; after which do thou carry me back to thy house, whence I will go to my chamber by the secret passage, so I may see the issue of our affair with him.'

Then they passed the night in mirth and converse and pleasance and good cheer and dalliance and delight till the morning, when she returned to her own place and sent the maid to arouse the two men. So they arose and prayed the morning-prayer and broke their fast and drank coffee, after which Ubeid repaired to his shop and Kemerezzeman betook himself to his own house. Presently, in came Helimeh to him by the underground passage, in the disguise of a slave-girl, and indeed she was a slave-girl by birth. Then he went out and she followed him, till he came to the jeweller's shop and saluting him, sat down and said, 'O master, I went into the khan of El Yesirjiyeh to-day, to look about me, and saw this damsel in the broker's hands. She pleased me; so I bought her for a thousand diners and I would have thee look upon her and see if she be cheap at that price or no.' So saying, he uncovered her face and the jeweller saw her to be his own wife, dressed in her richest clothes and tricked out in her finest ornaments and adorned with kohl and henna, even as she was wont to adorn herself before him in the house.

He knew her but too well by her face and clothes and trinkets, for that he had wrought the latter with his own hand, and he saw on her fingers the rings he had newly made for Kemerezzeman, whereby he was certified that she was indeed his wife. So he said to her, 'What is thy name, O slave-girl?' And she answered, 'Helimeh,' naming to him her own name; whereat he was amazed and said to Kemerezzeman, 'For how much didst thou buy her?' 'For a thousand dinars,' answered he. 'Then,' rejoined the jeweller, 'thou hast gotten her for nothing; for her rings and clothes and trinkets are worth more than that.' 'May God rejoice thee with good news!' said Kemerezzeman. 'Since she pleases thee, I will carry her to my house.' And Ubeid answered, 'Do thy will. So he carried her to his house, whence she passed through the secret passage to her own apartment and sat there.

Meanwhile, fire flamed in the jeweller's heart and he said to himself, 'I will go see my wife. If she be at home, this slave-girl must be her counterpart, and glory be to Him who [only] hath no counterpart! But, if she be not at home, it is she herself without a doubt.' Then he set off, running, and coming to his house, found his wife sitting in the same clothes and ornaments he had seen upon her in the shop; whereupon he beat hand upon hand, saying, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ ‘O man,’ said she, ‘art thou mad or what aileth thee? It is not thy wont to do thus, and it must be that something hath befallen thee.’ ‘If thou wilt have me tell thee,’ answered he, ‘be not vexed.’ ‘Say on,’ quoth she. So he said, ‘Our friend the merchant hath bought a slave-girl, whose shape is as thy shape and her height as thy height; moreover, her name is even as thine and her apparel is the like of thine apparel. Brief, she resembles thee in all her attributes, and on her fingers are rings like thy rings and her trinkets are like unto thy trinkets. So, when he showed her to me, methought it was thyself and I was perplexed about my case. Would we had never seen this merchant nor companied with him and would he had never left his own country and we had not known him, for he hath troubled my life, that before was serene, causing unkindness to succeed good faith and making doubt to enter into my heart!’ ‘Look in my face,’ said she. ‘Belike I am she who was with him and he is my lover and I disguised myself as a slave-girl and agreed with him that he should show me to thee, so he might lay a snare for thee.’ ‘What words are these?’ answered he. ‘Indeed, I never thought that thou wouldst do the like of this thing.’

Now this jeweller was unversed in women’s wiles and knew not how they do with men, nor had he heard the saying of the poet:
A heart that is eath of moving hath carried thee off in chase Of the fair, when youth hath left thee and hoariness comes apace.
Leila to me is costly and her enjoyment remote And many a foe and peril ‘twixt her and me have place.
If thou wouldst ask of women and question of their concerns, Lo, I am versed in their fashions, a leach well skilled in their case.
When a man’s head grows grizzled or for the nonce his wealth Fails from his hand, believe me, be hath no part in their grace.

Nor that of another:

Gainsay women; he obeyeth Allah best, who saith them nay And

he prospers not who giveth them his bridle-rein to sway;
For they'll hinder him from winning to perfection in his gifts,
Though a thousand years he study, seeking after wisdom's way.

And a third:

Women are very devils, made to work us dole and death: Refuge I seek with God Most High from all their craft and scaith.
Prime source are they of all the ills that overtake mankind, Both in the fortunes of this world and matters of the faith.

'Here am I sitting in my chamber,' said she. So go thou to him forthright and knock at the door and make shift to go in to him quickly. If thou see the damsel with him, it is a slave-girl of his who resembles me, and glory be to Him who hath no like! But, if thou see no slave-girl with him, then am I myself she whom thou sawest with him in the shop, and thine ill thought of me will be confirmed.' 'True,' answered Ubeid and went out, whereupon she passed through the hidden way and seating herself by Kemerezzeman, told him what had passed, saying, 'Open the door quickly and show me to him.'

As they were talking, there came a knocking at the door. Quoth Kemerezzeman, ' Who is at the door?' 'I, thy friend,' answered the jeweller; 'thou showedst me thy slave-girl in the bazaar, and I rejoiced in her for thee: but my joy in her was not completed; so open the door and let me look at her again.' 'So be it,' rejoined Kemerezzeman and opened the door to him, whereupon he saw his wife sitting by him. She rose and kissed their hands; and he looked at her. Moreover, she talked with him awhile and he saw her not to be distinguished from his wife in aught and said, 'God createth what He will.' Then he went away, more perplexed than ever, and returned to his own house, where he found his wife sitting in her chamber, for she had foregone him thither by the secret passage. Quoth she, 'What hast thou seen?' 'I found her with her master,' answered he; 'and she resembleth thee.' Then said she, 'Go to thy shop and let this suffice thee of suspicion and never again deem ill of me.' 'So be it,' replied he; 'bear me not malice for what is past.' 'God pardon thee!' said she; whereupon he kissed her right and left and went back to his shop.

No sooner was he gone than she again betook herself to Kemerezzeman through the underground passage, with four bags of money, and said to him, ‘Equip thyself for present departure and be ready to carry off the treasure without delay, against I put in action for thee the device I have in mind.’ So he went out forthright and bought mules and loaded them and made ready a travelling litter. Moreover he bought slaves and servants and sending the whole without the city, returned to Helimeh and said to her, ‘I have made an end of my affairs.’ Quoth she, ‘And I too am ready; for I have transported to thy house all the rest of his money and treasures and have left him nothing, little or much, whereof he may avail himself. All this is of my love for thee, O darling of my heart, for I would sacrifice to thee a thousand husbands. But now thou must go to him and take leave of him, saying, “I purpose to depart after three days and am come to bid thee farewell. So do thou reckon what I owe thee for the rent of the house, that I may send it to thee and acquit my conscience.” Note his reply and return to me and tell me; for I can no more. I have done my utmost, by cozening him, to anger him with me and cause him divorce me, but find him still infatuated with me. So nothing will serve us but to depart to shine own country.’ ‘O rare!’ replied he. ‘If but the dreams prove true!’

Then he went to the jeweller’s shop and sitting down by him, said to him, ‘O master, I set out for home in three days’ time, and am come to take leave of thee. So I would have thee reckon what I owe thee for the hire of the house, that I may give it to thee and acquit my conscience.’ ‘What talk is this?’ answered Ubeid. ‘Verily, it is I who am indebted to thee. By Allah, I will take nothing from thee for the rent of the house, for thou hast brought down blessings upon us! But thou desolatest me by thy departure, and but that it is forbidden to me, I would certainly oppose thee and hinder thee from returning to thy country and family.’ Then he took leave of him, whilst they both wept exceeding sore, and the jeweller shut his shop, saying in himself, ‘Needs must I bring my friend on his way.’

So, as often as he went on an occasion, the jeweller went with him, and when they entered Kemerezzeman’s house, they found Helimeh there, and she stood before them and served them; but, when Ubeid entered his own house, he found her sitting there; nor did he cease to see her thus in each house in turn, for the space of three days, at the end of which time she said to Kemerezzeman, 'Now have I transported to thee all that he hath of treasures and carpets and things of price, and there remains with him but the slave-girl, who used to come in to you with the night drink: but I cannot part with her, for that she is my kinswoman and confidant and she is dear to me. So I will [feign to] beat her and be wroth with her and when my husband comes home, I will say to him, " I will no longer put up with this slave-girl nor abide in the house with her; take her and sell her." So he will sell her and do thou buy her, that we may carry her with us.' 'Good,' answered he. So she beat the girl and when the jeweller came in, he found her weeping and asked her why she wept. Quoth she, 'My mistress hath beaten me.' So he went in to his wife and said to her, 'What hath that accursed girl done, that thou hast beaten her?' 'O man,' answered she, 'I have but one word to say to thee, and it is that I can no longer brook the sight of this girl; so take her and sell her, or else divorce me.' Quoth he, 'I will sell her, for I may not cross thee in aught.' So, when he went out to go to the shop, he took her and passed with her by Kemerezzeman.

No sooner had he gone out than his wife slipped through the underground passage to Kemerezzeman, who placed her in the litter, before her husband reached him. When he came up and Kemerezzeman saw the slave-girl with him he said to him, 'What girl is this?' 'It is my slave girl,' answered Ubeid, 'who used to serve us with wine; she hath disobeyed her mistress, who is wroth with her and hath bidden me sell her.' Quoth Kemerezzeman, 'If her mistress have taken an aversion to her, there is no abiding for her with her; but sell her to me, that I may smell your scent in her, and I will make her handmaid to my slave Helimeh.' 'Good,' answered Ubeid 'Take her.' 'What is her price?' asked Kemerezzeman. But the jeweller said, 'I will take nothing from thee, for thou hast been bountiful to us.'

So he accepted her from him and said to Helimeh, 'Kiss thy lord's hand.' Accordingly, she came out from the litter and kissing Ubeid's hand, remounted, whilst he looked at her. Then said Kemerezzeman, 'I commend thee to God, O Master Ubeid! Acquit me of responsibility. ' 'God acquit thee,' answered the jeweller, 'and bring thee in safety to thy family!' Then he bade him farewell and went to his shop, weeping, and indeed it was grievous to him to part from Kemerezzeman, for that he had been his friend and friendship hath its claims; yet he rejoiced in the dispelling of the doubts that had betided him concerning his wife, since the young man was now gone and his suspicions had not been confirmed.

Meanwhile Helimeh said to her lover, 'If thou wish for safety, travel by other than the accustomed road.' 'I hear and obey,' answered he and taking a road other than that commonly used, fared on, without ceasing, till he reached the confines of Egypt and sent his father a letter by a runner. Now Abdurrehman was sitting in the market among the merchants, with a heart on fire for separation from his son, for that no news of the latter had reached him, since the day of his departure, when the runner came up and said, 'O my lords, which of you is called the merchant Abdurrehman?' 'What wouldst thou with him?' asked they; and he said, 'I have a letter for him from his son Kemerezzeman, whom I left at El Arish.

At this Abdurrehman rejoiced and his heart was lightened and the merchants rejoiced for him and gave him joy of [his son's] safety. Then he opened the letter and read as follows: 'From Kemerezzeman to the merchant Abdurrehman. Peace be upon thee and upon all the merchants! If ye ask concerning us, to God be the praise and the thanks! Indeed we have sold and bought and profited and are come back in health and wealth and safety.' Whereupon Abdurrehman opened the chapter of rejoicing and made banquets and gave feasts and entertainments galore, sending for instruments of music and addressing himself to hold high festival after the rarest fashion When Kemerezzeman came to Es Salehiyeh,' his father and all the merchants went forth to meet him, and Abdurrehman embraced him and strained him to his bosom and wept till he swooned away. When he came to himself, he said, 'O my son, [this is] a blessed day, since the Omnipotent Protector hath reunited us with thee!' And he repeated the following verses:

The loved one's return is the crowning of glee And the joy-cup between us once more circles free.

So welcome, fair welcome and full to the light Of the time, the lull moon of full moons, still say we.

Then, for excess of joy, the tears flowed from his eyes and he recited these verses also:

The moon o' the time, unveiling, in splendour doth appear,
Whenas, his travels ended, to us he draweth near.
Even as the night of his absence his hair in colour is, But yet the sun's uprising is from his collars' sphere.

Then the merchants came up to Kemerezzeman and saluting him, saw with him many loads and servants and a travelling litter enclosed in a spacious canopy. So they took him and carried him home; and when Helimeh came forth from the litter, his father saw her a ravishment to all who beheld her. So they opened her an upper chamber, as it were a treasure from which the talismans had been loosed; and when his mother saw her, she was ravished with her and deemed her a queen of the wives of the kings. So she rejoiced in her and questioned her; and she answered, saying, 'I am thy son's wife.' 'Since he is married to thee,' rejoined the other, 'we must make thee a splendid bride-feast, that we may rejoice in thee and in my son.'

When the folk had dispersed and each had gone his way, Abdurrehman foregathered with his son and said to him, 'O my son, what is this slave-girl thou hast brought with thee and for how much didst thou buy her?' 'O my father,' answered Kemerezzeman, 'she is no slave- girl; but it is she who was the cause of my going abroad. 'How so?' asked his father, and he said, 'It is she whom the dervish described to us the night he lay with us; for indeed my hopes clove to her from that hour and I sought not to travel but on her account. The wild Arabs came out upon me by the way and stripped me and took my goods, so that I entered Bassora alone and there befell me there such and such things;' and he went on to relate to him all that had befallen him from beginning to end.

When he had made an end of his story, his father said to him, 'O my son, and after all this didst thou marry her?' ' No,' answered Kemerezzeman; 'but I have promised her marriage.' 'Is it thine intent to marry her?' asked Abdurrehman and he replied, 'If thou bid me marry her, I will do so; otherwise, I will not marry her.' Quoth his father, 'If thou marry her, I am quit of thee in this world and the next, and I shall be sore incensed against thee. How canst thou marry her, seeing that she hath dealt thus with her husband? For, even as she did with him for thy sake, so will she do the like with thee for another's sake, because she is a traitress and there is no trusting in a traitor. Wherefore, if thou disobey me, I shall be wroth with thee; but, if thou give ear to my word, I will seek thee out a girl handsomer than she, who shall be pure and virtuous, and marry thee to her, though I spend all my wealth upon her. Moreover, I will make thee a wedding without equal and will glory in thee and in her; for it is better that folk should say, "Such an one hath married such an one's daughter," than that they should say, "He hath taken to wife a slave-girl without birth or worth."' And he went on to persuade his son to give up marrying her, supporting his arguments by citing saws and proofs and stories and examples and verses and moral instances, till Kemerezzeman said, 'Since the case is thus, it boots not that I marry her.' Whereupon his father kissed him between the eyes, saying, 'Thou art my true son, and as I live, O my son, I will assuredly marry thee to a girl who hath not her equal!'

Then he set the jeweller's wife and her maid in an upper chamber, appointing a black slave-girl to carry them their meat and drink Moreover, he said to Helimeh, 'Ye shall abide imprisoned in this chamber, thou and thy maid, till I find one who will buy you, when I will sell you to him. And if ye resist, I will kill you both, for thou art a traitress, and there is no good in thee.' 'Do thy will,' answered she. 'I deserve all thou canst do with me.' Then he locked the door on them and gave his women a charge respecting them, saying, 'Let none go up to them nor speak with them, save the black slave-girl, who shall give them their meat and drink through the chamber-window.' So she abode with her maid, weeping and repenting her of that which she had done with her husband.

Meanwhile Abdurrehman sent out the marriage-brokers, to look out a wife of rank and worth for his son, and they ceased not to make search, and as often as they saw one girl, they heard of a fairer than she, till they came to the house of the Sheikh el Islam and saw his daughter. Now she had no equal in Cairo for beauty and grace and symmetry, and she was a thousand times handsomer than the jeweller's wife. So they told Abdurrehman and he and the notables repaired to her father and sought her in marriage of him. Then they drew up the contract and made her a splendid wedding. Moreover, Abdurrehman gave bride-feasts and held open house forty days.

On the first day, he invited the doctors of the law and they held a splendid nativity On the morrow, he invited all the merchants, and so on during the rest of the forty days, making a banquet every day to one or other class of folk, till he had bidden all the men of learning and emirs and beys and magistrates, whilst the drums beat and the flutes sounded and the merchant sat to receive the guests, with his son by his side, that he might divert himself by gazing on the folk, as they ate from the tables. Every night Abdurrehman illuminated the street and the quarter with lamps and there came all the mimes and jugglers and mountebanks and played all manner sports; and indeed it was a peerless wedding. On the last day he invited the poor and needy, far and near, and they came in troops and ate, whilst the merchant sat, with his son by his side.

Presently, behold, Ubeid the jeweller entered, with a company of poor folk, and he was naked and weary and bore on his face the marks of travel. When Kemerezzeman saw him, he knew him and said to his father, 'Look, O my father, at yonder poor man that is but now come in.' So he looked and saw him clad in worn clothes and on him a patched gown worth two dirhems: his face was pale and he was covered with dust and was as he were an offcast of the pilgrimage. He was groaning as groans the sick man and the needy, walking with a tottering gait and swaying right and left, and indeed there was realized in him the saying of the poet:

Lack-gold abaseth man and cloth his worth away, Even as the setting sun that pales with ended day.
He passeth 'mongst the folk and fain would hide his head; And when alone, he weeps with tears that never stay.
Absent, none taketh heed to him or his concerns; Present, he hath no part in life or pleasance aye.
By, Allah, whenas men with poverty are cursed, But strangers

midst their kin and countrymen are they!

And that of another:

All to the poor man’s contrary, a hindrance and a woe; The whole
world shuts its doors on him, wherever he doth go.
Thou seest him in abhorrence held, though he no culprit be; He
sees hostility, the cause whereof he may not know.
Even the dogs, when they behold a man of fortune, straight Do
follow him and fawn on him and wag their tails, I trow;
But if, one day, they see a poor and miserable wight, They bark
at him incontinent and eke their teeth they show.

And yet another:

So but a man be blessed with luck and power and sway,
Calamities and woes still turn from him away.
The loved one to him comes without a rendezvous, Unsought,
and eke the spy the pimp for him doth play.
The folk as singing rate the rumbling of his guts And when he
letteth wind, “ He smelleth sweet,” they say.

‘O my son,’ said the merchant, ‘who is this?’ And Kemerezzeman replied, ‘This is Master Ubeid the jeweller, husband of the woman who is imprisoned with us.’ Quoth Abdurrehman, ‘Is this he of whom thou toldest me?’ ‘Yes,’ answered his son; ‘and indeed I know him well.’

Now the manner of Ubeid’s coming thither was on this wise. When he had taken leave of Kemerezzeman, he went to his shop, where there came to him a job of work and he wrought at it all day. At eventide he locked up his shop and going home, laid his hand on the door, whereupon it opened and he entered and found neither his wife nor the slave-girl, but saw the house in the sorriest of plights, realizing the saying of the poet:

Once was it as a beehive stocked and full of bees galore; But,
when they left it, it became devoid of all its store.
It seems to-day as ff it ne’er had been inhabited Or as if Death

had taken those who dwelt therein of yore

When he saw the house empty, he turned right and left and went round about the place, like a madman, but found no one. Then he opened the door of his treasure-closet, but found therein nought of his money nor his treasures; whereupon he awoke from his delusion and shook off his infatuation and knew that it was his wife herself who had given him the change and outwitted him with her wiles. He wept for that which had betided, but kept his affair secret, so none of his enemies might exult over him nor any of his friends be troubled, knowing that, if he dis- covered his secret, it would bring him nought but affront and blame from the folk; wherefore he said to himself, 'O Ubeid, conceal that which hath befallen thee of trouble and affliction; it behoveth thee to do in accordance with the saying of the poet:

If a man's breast be straitened with a secret he cloth hide, Yet straiter's his who to the folk his secret cloth confide.'

Then he locked up his house and gave his shop in charge of one of his journeymen, to whom said he, 'My friend the young merchant hath invited me and my wife to accompany him to Cairo, that we may divert ourselves with the sight of the city, and swears that he will not depart except he carry us with him. So, O my son, I make thee my steward in the shop, and if the king ask for me, say thou to him, "He is gone with his wife to the Holy House of God [at Mecca]."' Then he sold some of his effects and bought mules and camels and slaves. Moreover, he bought a slave-girl and placing her in a litter, set out from Bassora after ten days. His friends took leave of him and none doubted but that he had taken his wife and gone on the pilgrimage, and the folk rejoiced in this, for that God had delivered them from being shut up in the mosques and houses every Friday. Quoth some of them, 'God grant he may never return to Bassora, so we may no more be shut up in the mosques and houses every Friday!' For that this usage had caused the people of Bassora exceeding vexation. Quoth another, 'Methinks he will not return, by reason of the praying of the people of Bassora against him.' And yet another, ' If he return, it will not be but in reversed case.'

So the folk rejoiced with an exceeding joy in the jeweller's departure, after they had been in sore chagrin, and even their cats and dogs were eased. When Friday came round, however, the crier proclaimed as usual that the people should repair to the mosques two hours before the time of prayer or else shut themselves up in their houses, together with their cats and dogs; whereat their breasts were straitened and they all assembled and betaking themselves to the king's divan, stood before him and said, 'O king of the age, the jeweller hath taken his wife and departed on the pilgrimage to the Holy House of God: so the cause of our restraint hath ceased to be, and why therefore are we now shut up?' Quoth the king, 'How came this traitor to depart without telling me? But, when he comes back from his journey, all will be well: so go ye to your shops and sell and buy, for this [restriction] is removed from you.'

Meanwhile the jeweller fared on ten days' journey, and as he drew near Baghdad, there befell him that which had befallen Kemerezzeman, before his entry into Bassora; for the wild Arabs came out upon him and stripped him and took all he had and he only escaped by feigning himself dead. As soon as they were gone, he rose and fared on, naked as he was, till he came to a village, where God inclined to him the hearts of certain charitable folk, who covered his nakedness with some old clothes, and he begged his way from town to town, till he reached the city of Cairo the [God-]guarded. Being racked with hunger, he went about begging in the markets, till one of the townsfolk said to him, 'O poor man, get thee to the house of the wedding-festival and eat and drink; for to-day they hold open house for poor folk and strangers.' Quoth he, me and I will show it to thee.' So he followed him, till he brought him to Abdurrehman's house and said to him, 'This is the house of the wedding; enter and fear not, for there is no doorkeeper at the door of the festival.'

So he entered and Kemerezzeman knew him and told his father, who said, 'O my son, leave him awhile: belike he is hungry; so let him eat his fill and recover himself, and after we will look to him.' So they waited till Ubeid had eaten his fill and washed his hands and drunk coffee and sherbets of sugar flavoured with musk and ambergris and was about to go out, when Abdurrehman sent one after him, who said to him, 'Come, O stranger, and speak with the merchant Abdurrehman.' 'Who is he?' asked Ubeid; and the man said, ‘He is the master of the feast.’ So the jeweller turned back, thinking that he meant to give him largesse, and coming up to Abdurrehman, saw his friend Kemerezzeman and was like to lose his senses for shame before him. But Kemerezzeman rose to him and embracing him, saluted him and they both wept sore. Then he seated him by his side and Abdurrehman said to his son, ‘Lack-courtesy that thou art, this is no way to receive friends! Send him first to the bath and send after him a suit of clothes that shall befit him; and after sit with him and talk with him.’ So he called some of his men and bade them carry the jeweller to the bath and sent him a suit of clothes of the choicest, worth a thousand dinars. Accordingly they carried him to the bath, where they washed his body and clad him in a suit, and he became as he were Provost of the Merchants.

Meanwhile, the bystanders questioned Kemerezzeman of him, saying, ‘Who is this and whence knowest thou him?’ Quoth he, ‘This is my friend, who lodged me in his house and to whom I am indebted for favours without number, for that he entreated me with exceeding kindness. He is a man of fortune and condition and by trade a jeweller, in which craft he hath no equal. The king of Bassora loves him greatly and holds him in high esteem and his word is law with him.’ And he went on to enlarge to them on his praises, saying, ‘He did with me thus and thus and I have shame of him and know not how to requite him his generous dealing with me.’ Nor did he leave to vaunt him, till his worth was magnified to the bystanders and he became venerable in their eyes. So they said, ‘We will all do him homage and honour him for thy sake. But we would fain know why he hath departed his native land and come hither and what God hath done with him, that he is come to this plight.’ ‘O folk,’ replied Kemerezzeman, ‘marvel not: for a son of Adam is still subject to Fate and destiny, and what while he abideth in this world, he is not safe from calamities. Indeed, he speaks truly who says:

Time still devours mankind and lies in wait on them to prey: So be not thou of those whom rank and honours lead astray;
Nay, but beware of slips and faults and sorrow still forswear And know the attributes of time are ruin and decay.
How many a fortune by the least adverseness is undone! All in

itself hath that shall cause it change and pass away.

Know that I entered Bassora in yet sorrier plight and worse distress than this man, for that he entered Cairo with his nakedness covered with rags; but I came into his town, with my nakedness uncovered, one hand before and another behind; and none availed me but God and this excellent man. Now the reason of this was that the Bedouins stripped me and took my camels and mules and baggage and slew my men; but I lay down among the slain, and they thought that I was dead and went away and left me. Then I arose and walked on, naked, till I came to Bassora, where this man met me and clothed me and lodged me in his house. Moreover, he furnished me with money, and all I have brought back with me I owe to God's goodness and his. When I departed, he gave me great store of wealth and I returned home, with a heart at ease. I left him in luck and lordship, and belike there hath befallen him some calamity of the calamities of fortune, that hath enforced him leave his folk and country, and there hath happened to him by the way the like of what happened to me. There is nothing extraordinary in this; but now it behoveth me to requite him his generous dealing with me and do according to the saying of him who saith:

Thou that of Fortune deemest hopefully, Dost thou thee know what she will do with thee?
Whate'er thou dost, do good; for to a man, Even as he meteth, shall it meted be.'

As they were talking, up came Ubeid, as he were Provost of the Merchants; whereupon they all rose to salute him and seated him in the place of honour. Then said Kemerezzeman to him, 'O my friend, verily, thy day is blessed and fortunate! There is no need to relate to me a thing that befell me before thee. If the Bedouins have stripped thee and robbed thee of thy wealth, verily our money is the ransom of our lives; so let not thy soul be troubled; for I entered thy city naked and thou clothedst me and entreatedst me generously, and I owe thee many a kindness. But I will requite thee and do with thee even as thou didst with me, nay, more: so be of good heart and cheerful eye.' And he went on to soothe him and hinder him from speech, lest he should name his wife and what she had done with him; nor did he cease to ply him with saws and moral instances and verses and conceits and stories and anecdotes and console him, till he took the hint and kept silence concerning the past, diverting himself with the stories and witticisms ho heard and repeating [in himself] the following lines:

On Fortune's forehead is a script, which if on careful wise Thou ponder, very tears of blood 'twill draw from out thine eyes.
Fortune, indeed, with its right hand saluteth none that be, But with the, cup or dole and teen its left hand still him plies.

Then Kemerezzeman and his father took Ubeid and carrying him into the saloon of the harem, shut themselves up with him; and Abdurrehman said to him, 'We did but hinder thee from speaking before the folk, for fear of dishonour to thee and to us: but now we are private; so tell me all that hath passed between thee and thy wife and my son.' So he told him all, from beginning to end, and when he had made an end of his story, Abdurrehman said to him, 'Was the fault with my son or with thy wife?' 'By Allah,' answered Ubeid, 'thy son was not to blame, for men [naturally] lust after women, and it behoveth Women to defend themselves from men. So the fault lies with my wife, who played me false and did with me these things.'

Then Abdurrehman arose and taking his son aside, said to him, 'O my son, we have proved his wife and know her to be a traitress; and now I mean to prove him and see if he be a man of worth and honour or a wittol.' 'How so?' asked Kemerezzeman; and Abdurrehman said, 'I mean to urge him to make peace with his wife and if he consent and forgive her, I will smite him with a sword and kill him and kill her after, her and her maid, for there is no good in the life of a whore and a wittol; but, if he turn from her with aversion, I will marry him to thy sister and give him more than that thou tookest from him of wealth'

Then he went back to Ubeid and said to him, 'O master, verily, the commerce of women calls for patience and he who loves them hath need of longanimity, for that they order themselves ill towards men and maltreat them, by reason of their superiority over them in beauty and grace, wherefore they magnify themselves and belittle men. Especially is this the case when their husbands show them affection; for then they requite them with pride and coquetry and foul dealing of all kinds. But, if a man be wroth whenever he seeth in his wife aught that misliketh him, there can be no fellowship between them, nor can any hit it off with them who is not magnanimous and long-suffering; and except a man bear with his wife and requite her ill-doing with forgiveness, he shall get no good of her society. Indeed, it hath been said of women, "Were they in the sky, the necks of men would incline to them;" and he who hath the power and spareth, his reward is with God.

Now this woman is thy wife and thy companion and she hath long companied with thee; wherefore it behoveth that there be in thee indulgence for her, for that indulgence in fellowship is of the essentials of success. Moreover, women lack wit and religion, and if she have done ill, she repenteth and God willing, she will not again return to that which she did aforetime. So it is my counsel that thou make peace with her and I will restore thee more than thy good [that thou hast lost]; and if it please thee to abide with me, thou art welcome, thou and she, and ye shall know nought but what shall rejoice you both; but, if thou seek to return to thine own country, I will give thee what shall content thee, and yonder is the litter ready; so mount thy wife and her maid therein and journey to shine own land. For that which falls out between a man and his wife is manifold, and it behoves thee to be indulgent and not take the road of rigour.'

'O my lord,' said the jeweller, 'and where is my wife? 'She is in yonder upper chamber,' answered Abdurrehman 'Go up to her and be easy with her, for my sake, and trouble her not; for, when my son brought her hither, he would have married her, but I forbade him from her and shut her up in yonder chamber, saying in myself, "Peradventure her husband will come and I will deliver her to him; for she is fair of favour, and when a woman is like unto this one, it may not be that her husband will let her go." What I counted on is come about and praised be God the Most High for thy reunion with thy wife! As for my son, I have sought him another woman in marriage and married him to her. These feasts and rejoicings are for his wedding, and to-night I bring him in to his wife. So here is the key of the chamber where thy wife is. Take it and open the door and go in to her and her maid and make merry with her. There shall be brought you meat and drink and thou shalt not come down from her till thou have had thy fill of her.' 'May God requite thee for me with all good, O my lord!' exclaimed Ubeid and taking the key, went up, rejoicing.

The merchant thought his words had pleased him and that he assented thereto; so he took the sword and following him, unseen, stood to see what should happen between him and his wife. When the jeweller came to the chamber-door, he heard his wife weeping sore for that Kemerezzeman had married another than her, and the maid saying to her, 'O my lady, how often have I warned thee and said to thee, "Thou wilt get no good of this youth: so do thou leave his company." But thou heededst not my words and spoiledst thy husband of all his goods and gavest them to him. Then thou forsookest thy place, of thine infatuation for him, and camest with him to this country. And now he hath cast thee out from his thought and married another and hath made the issue of thine infatuation for him to be imprisonment.' 'Be silent, O accursed wench!' answered Helimeh. 'Though he be married to another, yet needs must I occur to his thought some day. I cannot forget [the nights I have spent in] his company and in any case I console myself with the saying of the poet:

O lords, cloth it betide you to give a thought to one Unto whose thought none other occurs save you alone?
Now God forbid that mindless you of his case should be Whom thought of your condition distracteth from his own!

It cannot be but he will bethink him of our loves and ask of me; wherefore I will not turn from loving him nor change from passion for him, though I die in prison, for he is my love and my physician, and my hope is in him that he will yet return to me and deal graciously with me.'

When the jeweller heard his wife's words, he went in to her and said to her, “ O traitress, thy hope in him is as the hope of Iblis in Paradise. All these vices were in thee and I knew not thereof; for, had I been ware of one of them, I had not kept thee with me an hour. But now I am certified of this in thee, it behoveth me to kill thee, though they put me to death for thee, O traitress!’ And he seized her with both hands and repeated the following verses:

O fair ones, ye fordid my love so warm and true With sin nor had regard for what was right and due.
How long to you, indeed, with doting love I clave! But, after this my woe, 1 1oathe the love of you.

Then he pressed upon her windpipe and broke her neck, whereupon her maid cried out, saying, ‘Alas, my mistress!’ ‘O harlot,’ said he, ‘it is thou who art to blame for all this, for that thou knewest this vice to be in her and toldest me not.’ Then he seized upon her and strangled her.

When he had done this, apprehensions flocked upon him and he feared the issue of his affair and said in himself, ‘When the merchant knows that I have killed them in his house, he will surely slay me; but I beseech God that He appoint the taking of my life to be according to the Law.’ And he abode bewildered about his case and knew not what to do; but, as he was thus, in came Abdurrehman, who had stood all this while, sword in hand, without the door, looking with his eyes and hearkening with his ears, and said to him, ‘[Fear not:] no harm shall befall thee, for indeed thou deservest safety. See this sword in my hand. I had it in mind to slay thee, hadst thou made peace with her and taken her back into favour, and I would have slain [her and] the maid, to boot. But, since thou hast done this thing, welcome to thee and again welcome! And thy reward shall be that I will marry thee to my daughter, Kemerezzeman’s sister.’ Then he carried him down and sent for the woman whose office it was to wash the dead: whereupon it was noised abroad that Kemerezzeman had brought with him two slave-girls from Bassora and that they were both dead. So the people began to condole with him, saying, ‘May thy head live!’ and, ‘May God compensate thee!’ And they washed and shrouded them and buried them, and none knew the truth of the matter.

Then Abdurrehman sent for the Sheikh el Islam and all the notables and said to the former, ‘Draw up the contract of marriage between my daughter Kaukeb es Sebah and Master Ubeid the jeweller and [set down that] her dowry hath been paid me in full.’ So he drew up the contract and Abdurrehman gave the company to drink of sherbets, and they made one wedding festival for the two brides and paraded them in one litter on one and the same night; after which they carried Kemerezzeman and Ubeid in procession together and brought them in to their brides. When the jeweller went in to Abdurrehman’s daughter, he found her handsomer than Helimeh and lovelier a thousandfold. So he did away her maidenhead and on the morrow, he went to the bath with Kemerezzeman.

Then he abode with them in pleasance and delight awhile, till he began to yearn after his native land: so he went in to Abdurrehman and said to him, ‘O uncle, I long for my own country, for I have there estates and effects, which I left in charge of one of my journeymen; and I have it in mind to journey thither, that I may sell my possessions and return to thee. So wilt thou give me leave to go to my country to that end?’ ‘O my son,’ answered the merchant, ‘I give thee leave to do this, and no blame to thee for these words, for that love of country is a part of religion; and he who hath not good in his own land hath none in other folks’ land. But, peradventure, if thou depart without thy wife, when thou art once come to thy native place, it may seem good to thee to abide there, and thou wilt be divided between returning to thy wife and sojourning in thine own country; so it were the better counsel that thou carry thy wife with thee; and after, if thou be minded to return to us, return and welcome to you both; for we are folk who know not divorce and no woman of us marries twice, nor do we lightly discard a man.’ Quoth Ubeid, ‘O uncle, I fear me thy daughter will not consent to depart with me to my own country.’ ‘O my son,’ replied Abdurrehman, ‘we have no women amongst us who gainsay their husbands nor know we a wife who is wroth with her husband.’

‘May God bless you and your women!’ exclaimed the jeweller and going in to his wife, said to her, ‘I am minded to go to my country: what sayst thou?’ Quoth she, ‘My father still had the governance of me, whilst I was a maid, and when I married, the governance all passed into my husband's hand, nor will I gainsay him.'

'May God bless thee and thy father,' rejoined Ubeid, 'and have mercy on the womb that bore thee and the loins that begat thee!' Then he cut his thongs and betook himself to making ready for his journey. His father-in- law gave him much substance and they took leave of one another, after which Ubeid and his wife journeyed on without ceasing, till they reached Bassora, where his friends and kinsmen came out to meet him, doubting not but that he had been in the Hejaz. Some rejoiced at his return, whilst other some were vexed, and the folk said one to another, 'Now will he straiten us again every Friday, as before, and we shall be shut up in the mosques and houses, even to our cats and dogs.'

When the King of Bassora heard of his return, he was wroth with him and sending for him, chid him and said to him, 'Why didst thou depart, without letting me know? Was I unable to give thee somewhat wherewith thou mightest have succoured thyself in thy pilgrimage to the Holy House of God?' 'Pardon, O my lord!' replied the jeweller. 'By Allah, I went not on the pilgrimage! But there have befallen me such and such things.' And he told him all that had befallen him with his wife and with the merchant Abdurrehman of Cairo and how the latter had given him his daughter to wife and he had brought her to Bassora. 'By Allah,' said the king, 'did I not fear God the Most High, I would slay thee and marry this noble lady after thy death, though I spent treasuries of money on her, for that she befitteth none but kings. But God hath appointed her of thy portion and may He bless thee in her! So look thou use her well' Then he bestowed largesse on the jeweller, who went out from before him and abode with his wife five years, after which he was admitted to the mercy of God the Most High.

The king sought his widow in marriage; but she refused, saying, 'O king, never was woman among my kindred who married again after her husband's death; wherefore I will never take another husband, nor will I marry thee, no, though thou kill me.' Then he sent to say to her, 'Dost thou seek to go to thy native land?' And she answered, ' If thou do good, thou shalt be requited therewith.' So he collected for her all the jeweller’s possessions and added unto her of his own, after the measure of his rank Moreover he sent with her one of his viziers, a man renowned for goodness and piety, and an escort of five hundred horse, who journeyed with her, till they brought her to her father, with whom she abode, without marrying again, till she died and they died all. So, if this woman would not consent to replace her dead husband with a Sultan, how shall she be evened with one who replaced her husband, whilst he was yet alive, with a youth of unknown extraction and condition, more by token that this was in lewdness and not by way of lawful marriage? So he who deemeth all women to be alike, there is no remedy for the disease of his madness. And glory be to Him to whom belongeth the empire of the Seen and the Unseen, the [Ever-]Living One, who dieth not!

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

ABDALLAH BEN FAZIL AND HIS BROTHERS.

The Khalif Haroun er Reshid was one day examining the tributes of the various provinces of his empire, when he observed that the tributes of all the countries and regions had come into the treasury, except that of Bassora, which had not arrived that year. So he held a Divan because of this and sending for the Vizier Jaafer, said to him, 'The tributes of all the provinces have come into the treasury, save that of Bassora, no part whereof hath arrived.' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' answered Jaafer, 'belike there hath befallen the governor of Bassora somewhat that hath diverted him from sending the tribute.' Quoth the Khalif, 'The time of the coming of the tribute was twenty days [ago]; what, then, can be his excuse for that, in this time, he hath neither sent it nor sent to show cause for not doing so?' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' replied Jaafer, 'if it please thee, we will send him a messenger.' 'Send him Abou Ishac el Mausili, the boon-companion,' rejoined the Khalif, and Jaafer said, 'Hearkening and obedience to God and to thee, O Commander of the Faithful!'

Then he returned to his house and summoning Abou Ishac, wrote him a royal letter and said to him, 'Go to Abdallah ben Fazil, Viceroy of Bassora, and see what hath diverted him from sending the tribute. If it be ready, do thou receive it from him in full and bring it to me in haste, for the Khalif hath examined the tributes of the provinces and finds that they are all come in, except that of Bassora: but if thou find it not ready and he make an excuse to thee, bring him back with thee, that he may with his own tongue acquaint the Khalif with his excuse.' 'I hear and obey,' answered Abou Ishac and taking with him five thousand horse, set out for Bassora.

When Abdallah heard of his approach, he went out to meet him with his troops and carried him to his palace, whilst the escort encamped without the city, where he furnished them with all of which they stood in need. Abou Ishac entered the audience-chamber and sitting down on the throne, seated the governor beside himself, whilst the notables sat round him, according to their several ranks. After the salutation, Abdallah said to him, 'O my lord, is there any cause for thy coming to us?' 'Yes,' answered Abou Ishac, 'I come to seek the tribute; for the Khalif enquireth of it and the time of its coming is past.' 'O my lord,' rejoined Abdallah, 'would thou hadst not wearied thyself nor taken upon thyself the fatigue of the journey! For the tribute is ready in full and I had purposed to despatch it to-morrow. But, since thou art come, I will deliver it to thee, after I have entertained thee three days; and on the fourth day I will bring the tribute before thee. But now it behoveth us to offer thee a present in part requital of thy kindness and that of the Commander of the Faithful.' 'There is no harm in that,' said Abou Ishac.

So Abdallah dismissed the Divan and carrying him into a saloon, that had not its match, set a table of food before him and his companions. They ate and drank and made merry, after which the table was removed and there came coffee and sherbets. They sat conversing till a third part of the night was past, when they spread Abou Ishac a bed on a couch of ivory, inlaid with glittering gold. So he lay down and the viceroy lay down beside him on another couch; but wakefulness possessed Abou Ishac and he fell to meditating on the metres of verse and composing poetry, for that he was one of the chief of the Khalif's boon-companions and was eminently skilled in composing verses and pleasant stories; nor did he leave to lie awake and make verses till half the night was past. Presently, Abdallah arose, thinking Abou Ishac asleep, and girding his middle, opened a cupboard, whence he brought out a whip; then, taking a lighted candle, he went forth by the door of the saloon. When Abou Ishac saw this, he marvelled and said, 'Whither goeth Abdallah ben Fazil with that whip? Belike he is minded to punish some one. But needs must I follow him and see what he will do this night.' So he arose and went out softly after him, so that he saw him not, and presently saw him open a closet and take thence a tray containing four dishes of meat and bread and a gugglet of water. Then he went on, carrying the tray and followed by Abou Ishac, till he came to another saloon and entered, whilst Abou Ishac stood behind the door and looking through the chink, saw a spacious saloon, richly furnished and having in its midst a couch of ivory plated with glittering gold, to which two dogs were made fast with chains of gold.

Abdallah set down the tray in a corner and tucking up his sleeves, loosed the first dog, which began to struggle in his hands and put its muzzle to the ground, as it would kiss the ground before him, whining the while in a low, weak voice. Abdallah tied its paws behind its back and throwing it on the ground, drew forth the whip and beat it without mercy. The dog struggled, but could not get free, and Abdallah ceased not to beat it till it left groaning and lay without motion. Then he took it and tied it up in its place, and unbinding the second dog, did with him as he had done with the first; after which he pulled out a handkerchief and fell to wiping away their tears and comforting them, saying, ‘Bear me not malice; for, by Allah, this is not of my will, nor is it easy to me! But it may be God will grant you relief and issue from your affliction.’ And he prayed for them, what while Abou Ishac stood hearkening with his ears and watching with his eyes, and indeed he marvelled at this case.

Then Abdallah brought the dogs the tray of food and fell to feeding them with his own hand, till they had enough, when he wiped their mouths and lifting up the gugglet, gave them to drink; after which he took up the tray and gugglet and candle and made for the door. But Abou Ishac forewent him and making his way back to his couch, lay down; so that he saw him not neither knew that he had followed him and watched him. Then the governor replaced the tray and the gugglet in the closet and returning to the saloon, opened the cupboard and laid the whip in its place; after which he put off his clothes and lay down. But Abou Ishac passed the rest of the night pondering this affair nor did sleep visit him, for excess of wonder, and he ceased not to say in himself, ‘I wonder what can be the meaning of this!’ Nor did he leave wondering till the morning, when they arose and prayed the morning prayer. Then they set breakfast before them and they ate and drank coffee, after which they went out to the divan. Abou Ishac’s thought was occupied with this enigma all day, but he concealed the matter and questioned not Abdallah thereof. Next night, he again followed the governor and saw him do with the two dogs as on the previous night, first beating them and then making his peace with them and giving them to eat and to drink; and on like wise he did the third night.

On the fourth day he brought the tribute to Abou Ishac, who took it and departed, without opening the matter to him. He fared on, without ceasing, till he came to Baghdad, where he delivered the tribute to the Khalif, who questioned him of the cause of the delay. ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied he, ‘I found that the governor of Bassora had made ready the tribute and was about to despatch it; and had I delayed a day, it had met me on the road. But, O Commander of the Faithful, I had a rare adventure with Abdallah ben Fazil; never in my life saw I its like.’ ‘And what was it, O Abou Ishac?’ asked the Khalif. So he acquainted him with that which he had seen the governor do with the two dogs, adding, ‘On this wise I saw him do three nights following, first beating the dogs, then making his peace with them and comforting them and giving them to eat and drink, what while I watched him, whereas he saw me not.’ ‘Didst thou question him of the cause of this?’ asked the Khalif. ‘No, as thy head liveth, O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Abou Ishac.

Then said Er Reshid, ‘O Abou Ishac, I command thee to return to Bassora and bring me Abdallah ben Fazil and the two dogs.’ ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ replied he, ‘excuse me from this; for indeed Abdallah entreated me with the utmost hospitality and I chanced upon this thing without design and acquainted thee therewith. So how can I go back to him and bring him to thee? Verily, if I return to him, I shall find no countenance for shame of him; wherefore it were meet that thou send him another than myself, with a letter under thine own hand, and he shall bring him to thee, him and the two dogs.’ Quoth the Khalif, ‘If I send him other than thyself, most like he will deny the whole affair and say, “I have no dogs.” But, if I send thee and thou say to him, “I saw them with mine own eyes,” he will not be able to deny it. Wherefore nothing will serve but that thou go and fetch him and the two dogs; else will I put thee to death.’ ‘I hear and obey, O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Abou Ishac. ‘God is our sufficiency and good is He in whom we trust. He spoke sooth who said, “The calamity of man is from the tongue,” and it is I who sinned against myself in telling thee. But write me a royal letter and I will go to him and bring him back to thee.’ So the Khalif wrote him a royal letter and he took it and repaired to Bassora. When he came in to the governor, the latter said, ‘God keep us from the mischief of thy return, O Abou Ishac! How comes it that I see thee return in haste? Belike the tribute is deficient and the Khalif will not accept it?' 'O Amir Abdallah,' answered Abou Ishac, 'my return is not on account of the deficiency of the tribute, for it is full measure and the Khalif accepts it; but I hope that thou wilt excuse me, for that I have sinned against thee, and indeed this that I have done was decreed of God the Most High.' 'And what hast thou done, O Abou Ishac?' asked Abdallah. 'Tell me; for thou art my friend and I will not reproach thee.' 'Know thee,' answered Abou Ishac, 'that, when I was with thee, I followed thee three nights in succession and saw thee rise at midnight and beat the dogs and return; whereat I marvelled, but thought shame to question thee thereof. When I came back to Baghdad, I told the Khalif of thine affair, casually and without design, whereupon he charged me return to thee, and here is a letter under his hand. Had I known that the affair would lead to this, I had not told him, but this was foreordained to happen.' And he went on to excuse himself to him.

Quoth Abdallah, 'Since thou hast told him this, I will bear thee out with him, lest he deem thee a liar, for thou art my friend. Were it other than thou, I had denied the affair and given him the lie. But now I will go with thee and carry the two dogs with me, though in this be my own ruin and the ending of my term of life.' 'God will protect thee,' rejoined Abou Ishac, 'even as thou hast veiled my face with the Khalif!' Then Abdallah took a present beseeming the Khalif and mounting the dogs with him, each on a camel, bound with chains of gold, journeyed with Abou Ishac to Baghdad, where he went in to the Khalif and kissed the earth before him. He bade him sit; so he sat down and brought the two dogs before Er Reshid, who said to him, 'What are these dogs, O Amir Abdallah?' Whereupon they fell to kissing the ground before him and wagging their tails and weeping, as if complaining to him.

The Khalif marvelled at this and said to the governor, 'Tell me the history of these two dogs and the reason of thy beating them and after entreating them with honour.' 'O Vicar of God,' replied Abdallah, 'these are no dogs, but two handsome young men, endowed with grace and shapeliness and symmetry, and they are my brothers and the sons of my father and my mother.' 'How is it,' asked the Khalif, 'that they were men and are become dogs?' Quoth Abdallah, 'If thou give me leave, O Commander of the Faithful, I will acquaint thee with the truth of the case.’ ‘Tell me,’ said the Khalif, ‘and beware of leasing, for it is of the fashion of the hypocrites, and look thou tell truth, for that it is the ark of safety and the characteristic of the virtuous.’ ‘O Vicar of God,’ rejoined Abdallah, ‘when I tell thee the story of these dogs, they will both bear witness against me.’ Quoth the Khalif, ‘These are dogs; they cannot speak nor answer; so how can they testify for thee or against thee?’ So Abdallah said to them, ‘O my brothers, if I speak an untrue word, do ye lift your heads and stare with your eyes; but, if I speak truth, hang down your heads and lower your eyes.’

Then said he to the Khalif, ‘Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that we are three brothers by one father and mother. Our father’s name was Fazil and he was thus named for that his mother bore two sons at one birth, one of whom died forthright and the other remained [alive], wherefore they named him Fazil. His father brought him up and reared him well, till he grew up, when he married him to our mother and died. Our mother conceived a first time and bore this my first brother, whom my father named Mensour; then she conceived again and bore this my second brother, whom he named Nasir; after which she conceived a third time and bore me, whom he named Abdallah. My father reared us all three till we came to man’s estate, when he died, leaving us a house and a shop full of coloured stuffs of all kinds, Indian and Greek and Khurasani and what not, besides threescore thousand dinars. We washed him and buried him to the mercy of his Lord, after which we builded him a splendid monument and let pray for him prayers for the deliverance of his soul from the fire and held recitations of the Koran and gave alms on his behalf, till the forty days were past; at the end of which time I called together the merchants and nobles of the folk and made them a sumptuous entertainment.

When they had eaten, I said to them, “O merchants, verily this world is fleeting, but the world to come is eternal, and extolled be the perfection of Him who endureth after His creatures have passed away! Know ye why I have called you together this blessed day?” And they answered, “Extolled be the perfection of God, who [alone] knoweth the hidden things.” Quoth I, “My father died, leaving much good, and I fear lest any have a claim against him for a debt or a pledge [left in his hands] or what not else, and I desire to discharge my father's obligations towards the folk. So whoso hath any claim on him, let him say, 'He oweth me so and so, and I will satisfy it to him, that I may acquit my father's responsibility."

"O Abdallah," replied the merchants, "verily the goods of this world stand not in stead of those of the world to come, and we are no fraudful folk, but all of us know the lawful from the unlawful and fear God the Most High and abstain from devouring the substance of the orphan. We know that thy father (may God have mercy on him!) still let his good lie with the folk, nor did he suffer any one's claim on him to go unquitted, and we have often heard him say, 'I am fearful of the people's substance.' He used always to say, when he prayed, 'O my God, Thou art my stay and my hope! Let me not die in debt.' And it was of his wont that, if he owed any one aught, he would pay it to him, without asking, and if any owed him aught, he would not dun him, but would say to him, 'At thy leisure.' If his debtor were poor, he would forgive him the debt and acquit him of responsibility; and if he were not poor and died [without paying], he would say, 'God forgive him what he owed me!' And we all testify that he owed no one aught."

"May God bless you!" said I. Then I turned to these my brothers and said to them, "O my brothers, our father owed no man aught and hath left us much money and stuffs, besides the house and shop. Now we are three brothers and each of us is entitled to one third part. So shall we agree to forego division and abide copartners in our property and eat together and drink together, or shall we divide the money and the stuffs and take each his part?" Said they, "We will divide them and take each his share."' Then Abdallah turned to the two dogs and said to them, 'Did it happen thus, O my brothers?' And they bowed their heads and lowered their eyes, as who should say, 'Yes.' 'So,' continued Abdallah, 'I called in a departitor from the Cadi's court and he divided amongst us the money and the stuffs and all our father's effects, allotting the house and shop to me in exchange for a part of the money and stuffs to which I was entitled. We were content with this; so the house and shop fell to my share, whilst my brothers took theirs in money and stuffs. I opened the shop and stocking it with [my part of] the stuffs, bought others with the money allotted to me, over and above the house and the shop, till the latter was full, and I sat selling and buying. As for my brothers, they bought stuffs and chartering a ship, set out on a voyage to foreign parts. Quoth I, "God aid them! As for me, my livelihood is ready to my hand and peace is priceless."

I abode thus a whole year, during which time God prospered me and I made great profits, till I became possessed of the like of that which our father had left us. One day, as I sat in my shop, with two fur pelisses on me, one of sable and the other of miniver, for it was the winter season and the time of the great cold, there came up to me my two brothers, each clad in nothing but a ragged shirt, and their lips were white with cold and they were shivering. When I saw them in this plight, it was grievous to me and I mourned for them and my reason fled from my head. So I rose and embraced them and wept over their condition. Then I put on one of them the pelisse of sable and on the other that of miniver and carrying them to the bath, sent them thither each a suit of apparel such as befitted a merchant worth a thousand purses. When they had washed and donned each his suit, I carried them to my house, where, seeing them to be sore anhungred, I set a tray of food before them and ate with them, caressing them and comforting them. Then he turned to the two dogs and said to them, 'Was this so, O my brothers?' And they bent their heads and lowered their eyes.

'Then, O Vicar of God,' continued Abdallah, 'I said to them, "What hath befallen you and where are your goods?" Quoth they, "We fared up the river, till we came to a city called Cufa, where we sold for ten dinars the piece of stuff that had cost us half a dinar and that which cost us a dinar for twenty. So we profited greatly and bought Persian stuffs at the rate of ten dinars the piece of silk worth forty in Bassora. Thence we removed to a city called El Kerkh, where we sold and bought and made great profit and amassed store of wealth." And they went on to set forth to me the places [they had visited] and the profits [they had made]. So I said to them, "Since ye had such good luck, how comes it that I see you return naked?" They sighed and answered, "O our brother, some one must have belooked us with the evil eye and there is no security in travel. When we had gotten together these riches and goods, we freighted a ship therewith and set sail, intending for Bassora. We fared on three days and on the fourth day we saw the water rise and fall and roar and foam and swell and rage, whilst the waves clashed together, striking out sparks like fire. The winds blew contrary for us and our ship struck upon the point of a rock, where it broke up and plunged us into the river, and all we had with us was lost in the water. We abode struggling on the surface a day and a night, till God sent us another ship, whose crew picked us up and we begged our way from town to town, suffering sore hardships and selling our clothes piecemeal, to buy us food, till we drew near Bassora; nor did we win thither till we had endured a thousand miseries. But, had we come off in safety with that which was with us, we had brought back riches that might vie with those of the king: but this was ordained of God to us."

"O my brothers," said I, "let not your hearts be troubled, for wealth is the ransom of bodies and safety is [to be accounted] gain. Since God hath written you of the saved, this is the end of desire, for poverty and riches are but as it were illusions of dreams, and gifted of God is he who saith:

So but a man may win to save his soul alive from death, But as the paring of his nail his wealth he reckoneth.

O my brothers," continued I, "we will put it that our father died to-day and left us all this money that is with me, for I am willing to share it with you equally." So I fetched a departitor from the Cadi's court and brought out to him all my money, which he divided into three equal parts, and we each took one. Then said I to them, "O my brothers, God blesseth a man in his livelihood, if he be in his own country: so let each of you open a shop and sit therein to get his living; and he to whom ought is ordained in the secret purpose of God, needs must he get it." Accordingly, I helped each of them to open a shop and stocked it for him with goods, saying to them, "Sell and buy and keep your monies and spend nought thereof, for I will furnish you with all ye need of meat and drink and so forth."

I continued to entreat them generously and they fell to selling and buying by day and lay the night in my house nor would I suffer them to spend aught of their own monies. But, whenever I sat talking with them, they would praise travel and vaunt its charms and set out the gains they had made therein; and they ceased not to urge and tempt me and importune me thus till, to please them, I agreed to travel with them.' Then he said to the dogs, 'Was this so, O my brothers?' And they confirmed his speech by bowing their heads and lowering their eyes. 'Then, O Vicar of God,' continued Abdallah, 'I entered into a contract of partnership with them and we chartered a ship and packing up all manner of precious stuffs and merchandise of all kinds, freighted it therewith; after which we embarked therein all that we needed [of victual and what not else for the voyage] and setting sail from Bassora, launched out into the surging sea, swollen with clashing billows, into which whoso entereth is lost and from which whoso cometh forth is as a new-born child.

We sailed on till we came to a city of the cities, where we sold and bought and made great profit. Thence we went on to another city, and we ceased not to pass from land to land and city to city, selling and buying and profiting, till we had gotten us great wealth and much gain. Presently, we came to a mountain, where the captain cast anchor and said to us, "O passengers, go ye ashore; ye shall be saved from this day, and make search; it may be ye shall find water." So we all landed and dispersed about the island in search of water.

As for me, I climbed to the top of the mountain, and as I went along, I saw a white snake fleeing and a black dragon, foul of favour and frightful to look upon, pursuing her. Presently he overtook her and pressing straitly upon her, seized her by the head and wound his tail about hers, whereupon she cried out and I knew that he purposed to ravish her. So I was moved to pity for her and taking up a flint-stone, five pounds or more in weight, threw it at the dragon. It smote him on the head and crushed it, and before I knew, the snake changed and became a handsome young woman, full of grace and brightness and symmetry, as she were the shining full moon, who came up to me and kissing my hands, said to me, "May God veil thee with two veils, one [to protect thee] from reproach in this world and the other from the fire in the world to come on the day of the great upstanding, the day when wealth shall not avail neither children, [nor aught] but that one come to God with a whole heart! O mortal," continued she, "thou hast saved my honour and I am beholden to thee for kindness, wherefore it behoveth me to requite thee."

So saying, she signed with her hand to the earth, which opened and she descended into it. Then it closed up again over her and by this I knew that she was of the Jinn. As for the dragon, fire was kindled in him and consumed him and he became a heap of ashes. I marvelled at this and returned to my comrades, whom I acquainted with that which I had seen, and we passed the night [in the island]. On the morrow the captain weighed anchor and spread the sails and coiled the ropes and we sailed till we lost sight of land. We fared on twenty days, without seeing land or bird, till our water came to an end and the captain said to us, "O folk, our fresh water is spent." Quoth we, "Let us make for land; peradventure we shall find water." "By Allah," answered he, "I have lost my way and I know not what course will bring me to the land!"

When we heard this, there betided us sore chagrin and we wept and besought God the Most High to guide us into the right course. We passed that night in the sorriest case: but gifted of God is he who saith:

How many a night have I passed in dismay And in grief that might well-nigh cause sucklings grow gray,
But no sooner broke morn than came succour from God; Ay, and help near at hand was vouchsafed me with day.

On the morrow, when the day arose and gave forth its light and shone, we caught sight of a high mountain and rejoiced therein. When we came [to the island wherein] it [was], the captain said to us, "O folk, go ashore and seek for water." So we all landed and sought for water, but found none, whereat we were sore afflicted. As for me, I climbed up to the hill-top and on the other side thereof I saw a spacious enclosure, an hour's journey or more in breadth. So I called my companions and said to them, "Look at yonder enclosure, behind this mountain; for I see therein a lofty and strong-built city, [girt about] with walls and towers and hills and meadows, and doubtless it wants not for water and good things. So let us go thither and fetch water therefrom and buy what we need of meat and fruit and [other] victual and return." But they said, "We fear lest the inhabitants of the city be unbelievers, ascribing partners to God, and enemies of the faith and lay hands on us and take us captive or else slay us; so were we the means of the loss of our own lives, having cast ourselves into destruction and evil emprise. Indeed, the presumptuous man is never praiseworthy, for that he goeth still in danger of calamities, even as saith of him one of the poets:

Whilst earth is earth and sky is sky, the rash presumptuous wight, No commendation meriteth, although he ‘scape outright.

Wherefore we will not expose ourselves to peril.” “O folk,” answered I, “I have no authority over you; so I will take my brothers and go to the city.” But my brothers said to me, “We also fear this thing and will not go with thee.” Quoth I, “I am resolved to go thither; and I put my trust in God and accept whatsoever He shall decree to me. Do ye therefore await me, whilst I go thither and return to you.”

Then I left them and walked on till I came to the gate of the place and saw it a city rare of building and magnificent of proportion, with lofty walls and strong-builded towers and palaces soaring high into the air. Its gates were of Chinese iron, curiously gilded and graven on such wise as confounded the wit. I entered the gateway and saw there a stone bench, whereon sat a man, with a chain of brass on his arm, to which hung fourteen keys; wherefore I knew him to be the porter of the city and that it had fourteen gates. So I drew near him and said to him, “Peace be on thee!” But he returned not my greeting and I saluted him a second and a third time; but he made me no reply. So I laid my hand on his shoulder and said to him, “O man, why dost thou not return my greeting? Art thou asleep or deaf or other than a Muslim, that thou refusest to return the salutation?” But he answered me not neither stirred; so I considered him and saw that he was stone. Quoth I, “Strange! This is a stone wroughten in the likeness of a man and wanting nothing but speech!”

Then I left him and entering the city, saw a man standing in the road. I went up to him and examined him and found him stone. Presently, I met an old woman with a bundle of clothes on her head, ready for washing, so I went up to her and examining her, saw that she was stone, and the bundle of clothes on her head was stone also. Then I came to the market, where I saw a chandler, with his scales set up and various kinds of wares before him, such as cheese and so forth, all of stone. Moreover, I saw all manner of tradesmen seated in their shops and men and women and children, some standing and some sitting; but they were all stone. Then I entered the merchants' bazaar, where I saw each merchant seated in his shop and the shops full of various kinds of merchandise, all stone; but the stuffs were like spiders' webs. I amused myself with looking upon them, and as often as I laid hold upon a piece of stuff, it fell to dust in my hands.

Presently, I saw some chests and opening one of them, found it full of gold in bags; so I laid hold upon the bags, but they crumbled away in my grasp, whilst the gold abode unchanged. I took of it what I could carry and said to myself, "Were my brothers here, they might take their fill of this gold and possess themselves of these treasures that have no owner." Then I entered another shop and found therein more than this, but could carry no more than I had: so I left this market and went on to another and thence to another and another, diverting myself with the sight of all manner creatures of various kinds, all stone, even to the cats and the dogs, till I came to the goldsmiths' bazaar, where I saw men sitting in their shops, with their wares about them, some in their hands and others in trays of wickerwork. When I saw this, I threw down the money and loaded myself with goldsmiths' ware, as much as I could carry. Then I went on to the jewel market and saw there the jewellers, every one of them stone, seated in their shops, each with a tray before him, full of all manner precious stones, jacinths and diamonds and emeralds and balass rubies and so forth; whereupon I threw away the goldsmiths' ware and took as many jewels as I could carry, regretting that my brothers were not with me, so they might take what they would thereof.

Then I left the jewel market and went on till I came to a great door, gilded and decorated after the fairest fashion, within which were benches and in the porch sat eunuchs and guards and horsemen and footmen and officers of police, all clad in the richest of raiment; but they were all stones. I touched one of them and his clothes crumbled away from his body like cobwebs. Then I entered and saw a palace without equal for its building and the goodliness of its ordinance and of the curious works that were therein. Here I found an audience-chamber, full of grandees and viziers and officers and emirs, seated upon chairs and every one of them stone. Moreover, I saw a throne of red gold, inlaid with pearls and jewels, and seated thereon a man arrayed in the most sumptuous raiment and bearing on his head an imperial crown, set with precious stones, that shed a light like the light of the day; but, when I came up to him, I found him stone.

Then I went on to the gate of the harem and entering, found myself in the queen's presence-chamber, wherein I saw a throne of red gold, inlaid with pearls and jewels, and the queen seated thereon. On her head she wore a crown diademed with precious jewels, and round about her were women like moons, seated upon chairs and clad in the most sumptuous raiment of all colours. There also stood eunuchs, with their hands upon their breasts, in the attitude of service, and indeed this hall confounded the beholder's wits with what was therein of gilding and rare painting and carving and magnificent furniture. There hung the most brilliant pendants of limpid crystal, and in every hollow of the crystal was an unique jewel, to whose price money might not avail. So I threw down that which was with me and fell to taking of these jewels what I could carry, bewildered as to what I should take and what I should leave, for indeed I saw the place as it were a treasure of the treasures of the cities.

Presently, I espied a little door open and within it stairs: so I entered and mounting forty stairs, heard a human voice reciting the Koran in a low voice. I followed the sound till I came to a silken curtain, laced with wires of gold, whereon were strung pearls and coral and rubies and emeralds, that gave forth a light like the light of the stars. The voice came from behind the curtain: so I raised it and discovered a gilded door, whose beauty amazed the mind. I opened the door and found myself in a saloon, as it were an enchanted treasure-house upon the surface of the earth, and therein a girl as she were the shining sun amiddleward the cloudless sky. She was clad in the costliest of raiment and decked with the most precious jewels, and withal she was of surpassing beauty and grace, full of symmetry and elegance and perfection, with slender waist and heavy buttocks and spittle such as heals the sick and languorous eyelids, as it were she of whom the poet would speak, when he saith:

My salutation to the shape that through the wede doth show And to the roses in the cheeks' full-flowering meads that blow!
It is as if the Pleiades upon her forehead hung And all night's other stars did deck her breast, like pearls arow.
An if a wede of purest rose she donned, the leaves for sure Would from her body's fresh-plucked fruits enforce the blood to flow;
And if into the salt sea's flood one day she chanced to spit, Sweeter than honey to the taste its briny tides would grow.
If to a graybeard, leant upon a staff, she deigned her grace To grant, a lion-tamer straight he would become, I trow.

When I saw her, I fell passionately in love with her and going straight up to her, found her seated on a high couch, reciting from memory the Book of God, to whom belong might and majesty. Her voice was like the sound of the gates of Paradise, when Rizwan opens them, and the words fell from her lips like a shower of jewels; whilst her face was of surpassing beauty, bright and blossom-white, even as saith the poet of the like of her:

O thou whose speech and fashions charm with their seductive grace, Longing and wistfulness for thee increase on me apace.
Two things in thee the votaries of passion still consume, David his tones melodious and Joseph's lovely face.

When I heard her melodious voice reciting the sublime Koran, my heart recited from her assassinating glances, "Peace, a word from a compassionate Lord;" but I hesitated in my speech and could not say the salutation aright, for my mind and sight were confounded and I was become as saith the poet:

Love-longing moved me not to err in speech nor entered I The camp but that the shedding of my blood I might aby;
Nor do I hearken to a word spoken by our censurers, But unto her whom I adore in words I testify.

Then I braced myself against the stress of passion and said to her, “Peace be upon thee, O noble lady and treasured jewel! May God cause the foundations of thy fair fortune to endure and uplift the pillars of thy glory!” “And on thee from me be peace and salutation and honour, O Abdallah, O son of Fazil!” answered she. “Welcome and fair welcome to thee, O my beloved and solace of my eyes!” “O my lady,” rejoined I, “whence knowest thou my name and who art thou and what aileth the people of this city, that they are become stones? I would have thee tell me the truth of the case, for indeed I am wondered at this city and its folk and that I have found none [alive] therein but thee. So, God on thee, tell me the cause of all this, according to the truth!” Quoth she, “Sit, O Abdallah, and God willing, I will talk with thee and acquaint thee in full with the truth of my case and that of this city and its people; and there is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!”

So I sat down by her side and she said to me, “Know, O Abdallah, (may God have mercy on thee!) that I am the daughter of the king of this city and that it is my father whom thou sawest seated on the high throne in the divan, and those who are about him were the grandees of his realm and the officers of his household. He was a king of exceeding prowess and had under his hand a thousand thousand and six-score thousand troopers. The number of the emirs of his realm was four-and-twenty thousand, all of them governors and dignitaries. He ruled over a thousand cities, besides towns and hamlets and fortresses and citadels and villages, and the amirs of the [wild] Arabs under his hand were a thousand in number, each ruling over twenty thousand horse. Moreover, he had riches and treasures and precious stones and jewels and things of price, such as eye never saw nor ear heard of. He used to conquer kings and do to death champions and warriors in battle and in the listed field, so that the mighty feared him and the Chosroës humbled themselves to him. For all this, he was a misbeliever, ascribing partners to God and worshipping idols, instead of his Lord, and his troops were all idolaters like himself.

One day, as he sat on the throne of his kingship, compassed about with the grandees of his realm, there came in to him a man, whose face lighted up the whole divan with its brightness. My father looked at him and saw him clad in a green habit, tall of stature and with hands that reached below his knees. He was of reverend and majestic aspect and light shone from his face. Quoth he to my father, ‘O rebel, O idolater, how long wilt thou be deluded to worship idols and leave the service of the All-knowing King? Say, “I testify that there is no god but God and that Mohammed is His servant and His apostle,” and embrace Islam, thou and thy people, and put away from you the worship of idols, for they neither advantage nor intercede. None is worshipworth save God alone, who raised up the heavens without pillars and spread out the earths, in mercy to His creatures.’

‘Who art thou,’ asked my father, ‘O man that rejectest the worship of idols, that thou sayst thus? Fearest thou not that they will be wroth with thee?’ ‘The idols are stones,’ answered the stranger; ‘their wrath cannot hurt me nor their favour profit me. So do thou send for thine idol which thou worshippest and bid all thy people bring each his idol: and when they are all present, do ye pray them to be wroth with me and I will pray my Lord to be wroth with them, and ye shall see the difference between the anger of the creature and that of the Creator. For your idols, ye fashioned them yourselves and the devils clad themselves therewith as with a garment, and they it is who speak to you from within the bellies of the idols, for your idols are made and my God is the maker, to whom nought is impossible. If the True appear to you, do ye follow it, and if the False, do ye leave it.’ Quoth they, ‘Give us a proof of thy god, that we may see it. And he answered, ‘Give me proof of your gods.’ So the king bade every one who had an idol bring it, and all the troops brought their idols to the divan.

Now I was sitting behind a curtain, whence I could look upon my father’s divan, and I had an idol of emerald, the bigness of a man. My father demanded it, so I sent it to the divan, where they set it up beside that of my father, which was of jacinth, whilst the vizier’s idol was of diamond. As for those of the grandees and notables, some were of ruby and some of cornelian, others of coral or Comorin aloes-wood and yet others of ebony or silver or gold; and each had his own idol, after the measure of that which he could afford; whilst the idols of the common soldiers and of the people were some of granite, some of wood, some of pottery and some of mud; and they were all of various colours, yellow and red and green and black and white. Then said the stranger to my father, ‘Pray your idol and these idols to be wroth with me.'

So they ranged the idols in a divan, setting my father's idol on a chair of gold at the upper end, with mine by its side, and ranking the others each according to the condition of him who owned it and worshipped it. Then my father arose and prostrating himself to his own idol, said to it, 'O my god, thou art the Bountiful Lord, nor is there among the idols a greater than thou. Thou knowest that this man cometh to me, attacking thy divinity and making mock of thee; yea, he avoucheth that he hath a god stronger than thou and biddeth us leave worshipping thee and worship his god. So be thou wroth with him, O my god!' And he went on to supplicate the idol; but it returned him no answer neither bespoke him with aught; whereupon quoth he, 'O my god, this is not of thy wont, for thou usest to answer me, when I speak to thee. How cometh it that I find thee silent and speaking not? Art thou unheeding or asleep? Awake; succour me and speak to me!' And he shook it with his hand; but it spoke not neither stirred from its stead.

Quoth the stranger, 'What aileth thine idol that it speaketh not?' And the king replied, 'Methinks he is unheeding or asleep.' 'O enemy of God,' exclaimed the other, 'how canst thou worship a god that speaketh not nor availeth unto aught and not worship my God, who is a speedy answerer of prayer and who is ever present and never absent, never unheeding nor sleeping, whom conjecture may not apprehend, who seeth and is not seen and who is able unto all things? Thy god is powerless and cannot ward off hurt from itself; and indeed an accursed devil hath clothed himself therewith as with a garment, that he might lead thee astray and delude thee. But now hath its devil departed; so do thou worship God and testify that there is no god but He and that none is worshipful nor worshipworth save He, nor is there any good but His good. As for thy god, he cannot ward off hurt from himself; so how shall he ward it from thee? See with thine own eyes his impotence.'

So saying, he went up to the idol and dealt him a buffet on the neck, that he fell to the ground; whereupon the king waxed wroth and said to the bystanders, 'This heretic hath smitten my god. Slay him!' So they would have arisen to smite him, but none of them could avail to stir from his place. Then he propounded Islam to them; but they refused to become Muslims and he said, ‘I will show you the wrath of my Lord.’ Quoth they, ‘Let us see it.’ So he spread out his hands and said, ‘O my God and my Lord, Thou art my stay and my hope; answer Thou my prayer against these froward folk, who eat of Thy bounty and worship other than Thee. O Thou the Truth, O Almighty One, O Creator of Night and Day, I beseech Thee to turn these people into stones, for Thou art omnipotent, nor is aught impossible to Thee, and Thou art able unto all things!’ And God transformed the people of this city into stones; but, as for me, when I saw the manifest proof of His deity, I submitted myself to Him and was saved from that which befell the rest.

Then the stranger drew near unto me and said to me, ‘Felicity was fore-ordained to thee of God and He had a purpose in this.’ And he went on to instruct me and I took unto him the oath and covenant. I was then seven years of age and am now thirty years old. Then said I to him, ‘O my lord, all that is in the city and all its folk are become stones, by thine effectual prayer, and I am saved, for that I embraced Islam at thy hands. Wherefore thou art become my sheikh; so do thou tell me thy name and extend to me thy succour and provide me with that whereon I may subsist.’ Quoth he, ‘My name is Aboulabbas el Khizr;’ and he planted me a pomegranate-tree, which grew up forthright and putting out leaf, flowered and fruited and bore one pomegranate; whereupon quoth he, ‘Eat of that wherewith God the Most High provideth thee and worship Him with the worship that is His due.’

Then he taught me the tenets of Islam and the canons of prayer and the way of worship, together with the recital of the Koran, and I have now worshipped God in this place three-and-twenty years. Each day the tree yields me a pomegranate and I eat it and am sustained thereby from day to day. Moreover, every Friday, El Khizr (on whom be peace!) comes to me and it is he who acquainted me with thy name and gave me the glad tidings of thy coming hither, saying to me, ‘When he cometh, entreat him with honour and give ear unto his commandment and gainsay him not; but be thou his wife and he shall be thy husband, and go with him whither he will.’ So, when I saw thee, I knew thee, and this is the story of this city and of its people, and peace be on thee!” Then she showed me the pomegranate-tree, whereon was one pomegranate, which she took and eating one-half thereof herself, gave me the other to eat, and never did I taste aught sweeter or more delicious than this pomegranate or more satisfying.

After this, I said to her, "Art thou content, as the Sheikh el Khizr charged thee, to be my wife and go with me to my own country and abide with me in the city of Bassora?" "Yes," answered she, "if it please God the Most High. I hearken to thy word and obey thy commandment, without gainsaying." Then I made a binding covenant with her and she carried me into her father's treasury, whence we took what we could carry and going forth the city, fared on till we came to my brothers, whom I found searching for me. "Where hast thou been?" asked they. "Indeed thou hast tarried long from us, and our hearts were troubled for thee." And the captain of the ship said to me, "O merchant Abdallah, the wind has been fair for us this great while, and thou hast hindered us from setting sail." "There is no harm in that," answered I. "Assuredly delay is good and my absence hath wrought us nothing but profit; for indeed, there hath betided me therein the attainment of [our] hopes and gifted of God is he who saith:

When to a land I fare in quest of good, perdie, I know not of the twain, which fortune mine shall be;
Whether 'twill prove the good whereafter I do seek Or else the evil hap that seeketh after me."

Then said I to them, "See what hath fallen to me in my absence." And I showed them that which was with me of things of price and told them what I had seen in the City of Stone, adding, "If ye had hearkened to me and gone with me, ye had gotten great good thereby." But they said, "By Allah, had we gone, we had not dared to go in to the king of the city!"

Then I said to my brothers, "No harm shall befall you; for that which I have will suffice us all and I will share it with you." So saying, I divided my booty into four parts and gave one to each of my brothers and to the captain, taking the fourth for myself, [after setting aside] somewhat [which] I gave to the servants and sailors, who rejoiced and blessed me: and all were content with what I gave them, save my brothers, who changed countenance and rolled their eyes. I perceived that covetise had gotten possession of them; so I said to them, “O my brothers, methinketh what I have given you doth not content you; but we are brothers and there is no difference between us. My good and yours are one [and the same] thing, and if I die, none will inherit of me but you.” And I went on to soothe them.

Then I carried the lady on board the ship and lodged her in the cabin, where I sent her somewhat to eat and we sat talking, I and my brothers. “O our brother,” said they, “what wilt thou do with yonder damsel of surpassing beauty?” And I answered, “I mean to marry her, as soon as I reach Bassora, and make a splendid wedding and go in to her there.” “O my brother,” said one of them, “verily, this young lady excelleth in beauty and grace and the love of her is fallen on my heart; wherefore I desire that thou give her to me and I will marry her.” “I too desire this,” said the other. “Give her to me, that I may marry her.” “O my brothers,” answered I, “she took of me an oath and a covenant that I would marry her myself; so, if I give her to one of you, I shall be false to my oath and to the covenant between her and me, and belike she will be broken-hearted, for she came not with me but on condition that I should marry her. So how can I give her to wife to other than myself? As for your loving her, I love her more than you, for she is my treasure-trove, and as for my giving her to one of you, that is a thing that may not be. But, if we reach Bassora in safety, I will look you out two girls of the best of the damsels of Bassora and demand them for you in marriage and pay the dower of my own monies and make one wedding and we will all three go in to our brides on one [and the same] night. But leave this damsel, for she is of my portion.”

They held their peace and I thought they were content with that which I had said. Then we fared on towards Bassora, and every day I sent meat and drink to the lady, who came not forth of the cabin, whilst I lay with my brothers on the deck. We sailed thus forty days, till we sighted the city of Bassora and rejoiced in that we were come near thereunto. Now I trusted in my brothers and was at my ease with them, for none knoweth the hidden things save God the Most High; so I lay down to sleep that night; but as I abode drowned in slumber, I found myself caught up by my brothers, one seizing me by the legs and the other by the arms, for they had taken counsel together to drown me in the sea, because of the damsel. When I saw myself in this case, I said to them, “O my brothers, why do ye this with me?” And they answered, saying, “Lack-courtesy that thou art, wilt thou barter our aproof for a girl? We mean to cast thee into the sea, because of this.” So saying, they threw me over-board.’

Here Abdallah turned to the two dogs and said to them, ‘O my brothers, is this that I have said true or not?’’ And they bowed their heads and fell a-whining, as if confirming his speech; whereat the Khalif wondered. ‘O Commander of the Faithful,’ continued Abdallah, ‘I sank to the bottom of the sea; but the water bore me up again to the surface, and before I could think, a great bird, the bigness of a man, swooped down upon me and snatching me up, flew up with me into the height of the air. [I swooned away and] when I opened my eyes, I found myself in a strong and high-builded palace, adorned with magnificent paintings and pendants of jewels of all shapes and colours. Therein were damsels standing with their hands on their breasts and in their midst was a lady seated on a throne of red gold, set with pearls and jewels, and clad in apparel whereon no mortal might open his eyes, for the lustre of the jewels with which they were decked. About her waist she wore a girdle of jewels beyond price, and on her head a triple crown, amazing thought and wit and dazzling heart and sight.

Then the bird that had carried me thither shook and became a young lady, as she were the shining sun. I fixed my eyes on her and behold, it was she whom I had seen on the mountain in the guise of a snake and had rescued from the dragon. Then said to her the lady who sat upon the throne, “Why hast thou brought this mortal hither?” “O my mother,” answered she, “this is he who was the means of veiling my honour among the maidens of the Jinn.” Then said she to me, “Knowest thou who I am?” And I answered, “No.” Quoth she, “I am she who was on such a mountain, where the black dragon strove with me and would have forced my honour, but thou slewest him.” And I said, “I saw but a white snake with the dragon.” “It is I who was the white snake,” answered she; “but I am the Red King’s daughter of the Jinn and my name is Saïdeh. She who sits there is my mother and her name is Mubarekeh, wife of the Red King. The black dragon who would have done away my honour was the Black King's Vizier, Derfil by name, and he was foul of favour. It chanced that he saw me and fell in love with me; so he sought me in marriage of my father, who sent to him to say, 'Who art thou, O scum of viziers, that thou shouldst wed with kings' daughters?' Whereupon he was wroth and swore an oath that he would assuredly do away my honour, to spite my father.

Then he fell to tracking my steps and following me whithersoever I went, designing to ravish me; wherefore there befell between him and my father fierce wars and sore troubles, but my father could not prevail against him, for that he was a mighty man of war and a crafty cheat, and as often as my father pressed hard upon him, he would escape from him, till my father was at his wits' end. Every day I was forced to take some new shape; for, as often as I assumed a shape, he would assume its contrary, and to whatsoever land I fled, he would snuff my scent and pursue me thither, so that I suffered sore affliction of him. At last I took the form of a snake and betook myself to the mountain where thou sawest me; whereupon he took the shape of a dragon and pursued me, till I fell into his hands, when he strove with me and I with him, till he wearied me and overrode me, meaning to do his will of me: but thou camest and smotest him with the stone and slewest him. Then I returned to my own shape and showed myself to thee, saying, 'I am beholden to thee for a service such as is not lost save with the base-born.' So, when I saw thy brothers do with thee this treachery and cast thee into the sea, I hastened to thee and saved thee from destruction, and now it behoveth my father and mother to do thee honour."

Then she said to the Queen, "O my mother, do thou honour him as he deserveth who saved my honour." So the queen said to me, "Welcome, O mortal! Indeed thou hast done us a service that meriteth honour." Then she ordered me a treasure-suit, worth much money, and store of jewels and precious stones, and said, "Take him and carry him in to the king." So they carried me in to the king in his divan, where I found him seated on his throne, with his Marids and guards before him; and when I saw him, my eyes were dazzled for that which was upon him of jewels; but when he saw me, he rose to his feet and all his officers rose also, to do him worship. Then he saluted me and bade me welcome, entreating me with the utmost honour, and gave me of that which was with him of good things; after which he said to some of his followers, “Take him and carry him back to my daughter, that she may restore him to the place whence she brought him.” So they carried me back to the princess Saïdeh, who took me up and flew away with me and my treasures.

Meanwhile, the captain of the galleon, being aroused by the splash [of my fall], when my brothers threw me into the sea, said, “What is that which hath fallen overboard?” Whereupon my brothers fell to weeping and beating their breasts and answered, “Alas, for our brother’s loss! He thought to do an occasion in the ship’s side and fell into the water!” Then they laid their hands on my good, but there befell strife between them because of the lady, each saying, “None shall have her but I.” And they abode disputing with one another and remembered not their brother nor his drowning and their mourning for him ceased. As they were thus, behold, Saïdeh alighted with me in the midst of the galleon; and when my brothers saw me, they embraced me and rejoiced in me, saying, “O our brother, how hast thou fared in that which befell thee? Indeed our hearts have been occupied with thee.” Quoth Saïdeh, “Had ye any bowels for him or had ye loved him, ye had not cast him into the sea; but choose now what death ye will die.”

Then she seized on them and would have slain them but they cried out, saying, [“We throw ourselves] on thy mercy, O our brother!” And I said to her, “I beseech thee, kill not my brothers.” Quoth she, “Needs must I slay them, for they are traitors.” But I ceased not to speak her fair and intercede with her, till she said, “To content thee, I will not kill them, but I will enchant them.” So saying, she brought out a cup and filling it with sea-water, pronounced over it words that might not be understood; then she sprinkled them with the water, saying, “Quit this human shape for that of a dog;” and immediately they became dogs, as thou seest them, O Vicar of God.’ Then he turned to the dogs and said to them, ‘Have I spoken the truth, O my brothers?’ And they bowed their heads, as who should say, ‘Thou hast spoken truly.’

‘Then,’ continued he, ‘she said to those who were in the galleon, “Know ye that Abdallah ben Fazil here present is become my brother and I shall visit him once or twice every day: so, whoso of you thwarteth him or gainsayeth his commandment or doth him hurt with hand or tongue, I will do with him like as I have done with these two traitors and turn him into a dog, and he shall end his days in that shape, nor shall he find deliverance.” And they all said to her, “O our lady, we are all his slaves and his servants and will not gainsay him in aught.” Moreover, she said to me, “When thou comest to Bassora, examine all thy property and if there lack aught thereof, tell me and I will bring it thee, in whose hands and wheresoever it may be, and will change him who took it into a dog. When thou hast laid up thy goods, clap a collar of iron on the neck of each of these two traitors and tie them to the leg of a couch and shut them up by themselves. Moreover, every night, at midnight, do thou go down to them and beat each of them till he swoon away; and if thou suffer a single night to pass, without beating them, I will come to thee and swinge thee soundly, after which I will beat them.” And I answered, “I hear and obey.” Then said she, “Tie them up with ropes till thou come into Bassora.” So I tied a rope about each dog’s neck and bound them to the mast, and she went her way.

On the morrow we entered Bassora and the merchants came out to meet me and saluted me, and none enquired of my brothers. But they looked at the dogs and said to me, “What wilt thou do with these two dogs thou hast brought with thee?” Quoth I, “I reared them on the voyage and have brought them home with me.” And they laughed at them, knowing not that they were my brothers. When I reached my house, I put the dogs in a closet and busied myself with the unpacking and disposition of the bales of stuffs and jewels I had with me. Moreover, the merchants were with me, because of salutation; wherefore I was occupied with them and forgot to beat the dogs or chain them up. Then I lay down to sleep, but hardly had I done so, when there came to me the Red King’s daughter Saïdeh and said to me, “Did I not bid thee clap chains on their necks and give each of them a beating?” So saying, she seized me and pulling out a whip, beat me till I swooned away, after which she went to the place where my brothers were and beat them till they came nigh upon death.

Then said she to me, “Beat each of them thus every night, and if thou let a night pass without doing this, I will beat thee;" and I answered, "O my lady, to-morrow I will put chains on their necks, and next night I will beat them nor will I leave them one night unbeaten." And she charged me straitly to beat them [and disappeared]. When the day came, it being grievous to me to put fetters of iron on their necks, I went to a goldsmith and bade him make them collars and chains of gold. He did this and I put the collars on their necks and chained them up, as she bade me; and next night I beat them in mine own despite. This befell in the Khalifate of El Mehdi, third of the sons of Abbas, and I ingratiated myself with him by sending him presents, wherefore he invested me with the government and made me viceroy of Bassora.

On this wise I abode some time and after awhile, I said in myself, "It may be her wrath is grown cool;" and left them a night unbeaten, whereupon she came to me and gave me a beating the pain whereof I shall never forget so long as I live. So, from that time to this, I have never left them a single night unbeaten; and when El Mehdi died and thou camest to the throne, thou sentest to me, confirming me in the government of Bassora. These twelve years past have I beaten them every night, against my will, and after I have beaten them, I excuse myself to them and comfort them and give them to eat and drink; and they have remained shut up, nor did any of the creatures of God know of them, till thou sentest Abou Ishac the boon-companion to me, on account of the tribute, and he discovered my secret and returning to thee, acquainted thee therewith. Then thou sentest him back to fetch me and them; so I answered with "hearkening and obedience" and brought them before thee, whereupon thou questionedst me and I told thee the truth of the case; and this is my history.'

The Khalif marvelled at the case of the two dogs and said to Abdallah, 'Hast thou now forgiven thy two brothers the wrong they did thee, ay or no?' 'O my lord,' answered he, 'may God forgive them and acquit them of guilt in this world and the next! Indeed, it is I who stand in need of their forgiveness, for that these twelve years past I have beaten them grievously every night!' 'O Abdallah,' rejoined the Khalif, 'God willing, I will endeavour for their release and that they may become men again, as they were before, and I will make peace between thee and them; so shall you live the rest of your lives as loving brothers; and like as thou hast forgiven them, so shall they forgive thee. But now take them and go down with them to thy lodging and this night beat them not, and to-morrow all shall be well.' 'O my lord,' answered Abdallah, 'as thy head liveth, if I leave them one night unbeaten, Saïdeh will come to me and beat me, and I have no body to brook beating.' 'Fear not,' quoth the Khalif; 'for I will give thee a writing under my hand. If she come to thee, do thou give her the scroll and if, when she has read it, she spare thee, the favour will be hers; but, if she obey not my commandment, commit thine affair to God and let her beat thee and suppose that thou hast forgotten to beat them for one night and that she beats thee because of that: and if it fall out thus and she gainsay me, as sure as I am Commander of the Faithful, I will be even with her.'

Then he wrote her a letter on a piece of paper, two fingers broad, and sealing it, gave it to Abdallah, saying, 'O Abdallah, if she come, say to her, "The Khalif, king of mankind, hath commanded me to leave beating them and hath written me this letter for thee; and he saluteth thee." Then give her the warrant and fear no hurt.' And he took of him a solemn pledge that he would not beat them. So he took the dogs and carried them to his lodging, saying in himself, 'I wonder what the Khalif will do with the King's daughter of the Jinn, if she disobey him and beat me to-night! But I will run the risk of a beating for once and leave my brothers at peace this night, though I suffer torture for their sake.' Then he bethought himself awhile, and his reason said to him, 'Did not the Khalif rely on some great support, he had not forbidden me from beating them.' So he entered his lodging and did off the collars from the dogs' necks, saying, 'I put my trust in God,' and fell to comforting them and saying, 'No harm shall befall you; for the Khalif, fifth of the sons of Abbas, hath undertaken for your deliverance and I have forgiven you. If it please God the Most High, the time is come and ye shall be delivered this blessed night; so rejoice ye in the prospect of peace and happiness.'

When they heard his words, they fell awhining, after the fashion of dogs, and rubbed their jowls against his feet, as if praying for him and humbling themselves before him. He mourned over them and fell to stroking their backs till supper time; and when they set on the evening meal, he bade the dogs sit. So they sat down and ate from the tray, whilst his officers stood gaping and marvelling at his eating with dogs and saying, ‘Is he mad or are his wits deranged? How can the Viceroy of Bassora, he who is greater than a vizier, eat with dogs? Knoweth he not that the dog is unclean?’ And they stared at the dogs, as they ate with him on decorous wise, knowing not that they were his brothers; nor did they leave staring at them, till they had made an end of eating, when Abdallah washed his hands and the dogs also put out their paws and washed; whereupon all who were present fell alaughing at them and saying, one to another, ‘Never in our lives saw we dogs eat and after wash their paws!’

Then the dogs sat down on the divans beside Abdallah, nor dared any question him of this; and thus the case abode till midnight, when he dismissed the attendants and lay down to sleep and the dogs with him, each on a couch; whereupon the servants said to each other, ‘Verily, he hath lain down to sleep and the dogs with him.’ Quoth another, ‘Since he hath eaten with the dogs from the [same] tray, there is no harm in their sleeping with him; and this is nought but the fashion of madmen.’ Moreover, they ate not anydele of the food that remained in the tray, saying, ‘How shall we eat of dogs’ leavings?’ And they took the tray, with what was therein, and threw it away, saying, ‘It is unclean.’

As for Abdallah, ere he could think, the earth clove in sunder and out came Saïdeh, who said to him, ‘O Abdallah, why hast thou not beaten them this night and why hast thou done off the collars from their necks? Hast thou done this to thwart me and in mockery of my commandment? But now I will beat thee and change thee into a dog like unto them.’ ‘O my lady,’ answered he, ‘I conjure thee by the graving upon the ring of Solomon, son of David (on whom be peace!), have patience with me till I tell thee the reason [of this] and after do with me what thou wilt.’ ‘Say on,’ quoth she; and he said, ‘The king of mankind, the Commander of the Faithful, the Khalif Haroun er Reshid, commanded me not to beat them this night and took of me oaths and covenants to that effect; and he saluteth thee and hath committed to me a mandate under his own hand, which he bade me give thee. So I obeyed his commandment, for it is obligatory to obey the Commander of the Faithful; and here is the mandate. Take it and read it and after do thy will.'

So he gave her the letter and she opened it and read as follows, 'In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful! From the king of mankind, Haroun er Reshid, to Saïdeh, daughter of the Red King!' Then, after the usual salutations, 'Verily, this man hath forgiven his brothers and hath let drop his claim against them, and we have enjoined them to reconciliation. Now, when reconciliation cometh about, punishment is remitted, and if you [of the Jinn] thwart us in our commandments, we will thwart you in yours and traverse your ordinances; but, if ye obey our bidding and execute our commandments, we will do the like with yours. Wherefore I bid thee do them no hurt, and if thou believe in God and in His Apostle, it behoveth thee to obey him to whom the commandment is committed. So, if thou spare them, I will requite thee with that whereunto my Lord shall enable me; and the token of obedience is that thou remove thine enchantment from these two men, so they may come before me to-morrow, free. But, if thou release them not, I will release them in thy despite, by the aid of God the Most High.'

When she had read the letter, she said, 'O Abdallah, I will do nought till I go to my father and show him the mandate of the king of mankind and return to thee in haste.' So saying, she signed to the earth, which opened, and she disappeared therein, whilst Abdallah's heart was transported for joy and he said, 'God advance the Commander of the Faithful!' As for Saïdeh, she went in to her father and acquainting him with that which had passed, gave him the Khalif's letter, which he kissed and laid on his head. Then he read it and said, 'O my daughter, verily, the ordinance of the king of mankind hath course with us and his commandments are executory amongst us, nor can we gainsay him: so go thou and release the two men forthwith and say to them, "Ye are [free] by the intercession of the king of mankind." For, should he be wroth with us, he would destroy us to the last of us: so do not thou impose on us that whereto we are unable.'

'O my father,' said she, 'if the king of mankind were wroth with us, what could he do with us?' Quoth he, 'He hath power over us for several reasons. In the first place, he is a man and hath thus pre-eminence over us; secondly, he is the Vicar of God; and thirdly, he is constant in praying the two-bow prayer of the foredawn; wherefore, if all the tribes of the Jinn assembled together against him from the seven worlds, they could do him no hurt. But he, should he be wroth with us, he would pray the two-bow prayer of the foredawn and cry out upon us one cry, whereupon we should all present ourselves before him obediently and be before him as sheep before the butcher. If he would, he could command us to depart our abiding-places to a desert country wherein we might not sojourn; and if he desired to destroy us, he would bid us destroy ourselves, whereupon we should destroy one another. Wherefore we may not disobey his commandment, for, if we did this, he would consume us, nor could we flee from before him. Thus is it with every true believer who is diligent in praying the two-bow prayer of the foredawn; his commandment is effectual over us: so be not thou the means of our destruction, because of two mortals, but go forthright and release them, ere the anger of the Commander of the Faithful fall upon us.'

So she returned to Abdallah and acquainted him with her father's words, saying, 'Kiss me the hands of the Commander of the Faithful and seek his approof for us.' Then she brought out the cup and filling it with water, conjured over it and spoke words that might not be understood; after which she sprinkled the dogs with the water, saying, 'Quit the form of dogs and return to that of men!' Whereupon they became men as before and the spell of the enchantment was dissolved from them. Quoth they, 'I testify that there is no god but God and that Mohammed is the Apostle of God!' And fell on their brother's feet and hands, kissing them and beseeching his forgiveness: but he said, 'Do ye forgive me.' Then they both repented with a sincere repentance, saying, 'Verily, Satan the Accursed tempted us and covetise deluded us: but our Lord hath requited us after our deserts, and forgiveness is of the fashion of the generous.' And they went on to supplicate their brother and weep and profess repentance for that which they had done.

Then said he to them, 'What did ye with my wife whom I brought from the City of Stone?' Quoth they, 'When Satan tempted us and we cast thee into the sea, there befell strife between us, each saying, "I will have her to wife." Which when she heard, she came up from the cabin and said to us, "Contend not because of me, for I will not belong to either of you. My husband is gone into the sea and I will follow him." So saying, she cast herself overboard and died.' 'Verily,' exclaimed Abdallah, 'she died a martyr! But there is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!' Then he wept sore for her and said to his brothers, 'It was not well of you to do this thing and bereave me of my wife!' And they answered, 'Indeed, we have sinned, but our Lord hath requited us our deed and this was a thing that God decreed unto us, ere He created us.' And he accepted their excuse; but Saïdeh said to him, 'Have they done all these things to thee and wilt thou forgive them?' 'O my sister,' answered he, 'whoso hath power and spareth, his reward is with God.' Then said she, 'Be on thy guard against them, for they are traitors.' And she took leave of him and went away.

Abdallah and his brothers passed the rest of the night in eating and drinking and merriment and good cheer, and on the morrow, he sent them to the bath and clad each of them, on his coming forth, in a suit worth much money. Then he called for the tray of food and they set it before him and he ate, he and his brothers. When his attendants saw the latter and knew them for his brothers, they saluted them and said to him, 'O our lord, may God give thee joy of thy reunion with thy dear brothers! Where have they been this while?' Quoth he, 'It was they whom ye saw in the guise of dogs; praised be God who hath delivered them from prison and grievous torment!'

Then he carried them to the Khalif's Divan and kissing the earth before the prince, wished him continuance of honour and fortune and cease of evil and enmity. 'Welcome, O Amir Abdallah!' said the Khalif. 'Tell me what hath befallen thee.' 'O Commander of the Faithful (whose power God increase!),' replied he, 'when I carried my brothers home to my lodging, my heart was at rest concerning them, for that thou hadst pledged thyself to their release and I said in myself, "Kings fail not of aught for which they endeavour, for the divine favour aideth them." So I did off the collars from their necks, putting my trust in God, and ate with them from the [same] tray, which when my attendants saw, they made light of my wit and said to each other, "He is surely mad! How can the governor of Bassora, who is greater than the vizier, eat with dogs?" Then they threw away what was in the tray, saying, "We will not eat the dogs' leavings."

And they went on to impeach my reason, whilst I heard what they said, but made them no answer, because of their ignorance that the dogs were my brothers. When the hour of sleep came, I sent them away and addressed myself to sleep; but, ere I could think, the earth clave in sunder and out came Saïdeh, the Red King's daughter, enraged against me, with eyes like fire.' And he went on to relate to the Khalif what had passed between him and her and her father and how she had restored his brothers to human form, adding, 'And here they are before thee, O Commander of the Faithful!'

The Khalif looked at them and seeing two young men like moons, said, 'God requite thee for me with good, O Abdallah, for that thou hast acquainted me with an advantage whereof I knew not! Henceforth, God willing, I will never leave to pray these two inclinations before the breaking of the dawn, what while I abide on life.' Then he reproved Abdallah's brothers for that wherein they had sinned against him of time past and they excused themselves before the Khalif, who said, 'Join hands and forgive one another and God pardon what is past!' After which he turned to Abdallah and said to him, 'O Abdallah, make thy brothers thine assistants and be careful of them.' Then he charged them to be obedient to their brother and bade them return to Bassora, after he had bestowed on them abundant largesse. So they went down from the divan, whilst the Khalif rejoiced in this advantage that he had gotten by the fashion aforesaid, to wit, his assiduity in praying two inclinations before dawn, and said, 'He spoke truth who said, "The misfortunes of some folk profit others."'

Abdallah and his brothers departed from Baghdad in all honour and worship and increase of dignity, and fared on till they drew near Bassora, when the notables and chief men of the place came out to meet them and brought them into the city in state that had not its match. Moreover, they adorned the city in their honour and all the folk shouted out blessings on Abdallah, whilst he scattered gold and silver amongst them. But none took heed to his brothers; wherefore jealousy and envy entered their hearts, for all he tendered them as one tenders an ailing eye; but the more he cherished them, the more they redoubled in hatred and envy of him: and indeed it is said on the subject:

I seek to win me the good will of all folk, small and great, But hardly him who envieth me I may conciliate.
How shall a man conciliate him who envieth him a good, Since but the ceasing of that good will satisfy his hate?

Then he gave each of them a concubine, that had not her like, and slaves and servants, black and white and male and female, forty of each kind. Moreover, he gave each of them fifty thoroughbred horses and they got them guards and followers. And he assigned to them revenues and appointed them stipends and allowances and made them his assistants, saying to them, ‘O my brothers, you and I are equal and there is no distinction between us and after God and the Khalif, the commandment is mine and yours. So rule you in Bassora in my absence and in my presence, and your commandments shall be executory; but look that ye fear God in your ordinances and beware of oppression, for oppression, if it endure, ruineth [a country]; and apply yourselves unto justice, for justice, if it endure, maketh [a country] to flourish. Oppress not the believers, or they will curse you and your report will come to the ears of the Khalif, wherefore dishonour will betide both you and me. Go not therefore about to oppress any, but whatsoever ye covet of the goods of the folk, take it from my goods, over and above that whereof ye have need; for it is not unknown to you what is handed down of unequivocal verses [of the Koran] on the subject of oppression, and gifted of God is he who saith:

Oppression in man’s soul doth latent sit And nought but lack of power concealeth it.
A man of sense no business undertakes Until he sees the time therefor is fit.
The wise man’s tongue is in his heart, but in His mouth the heart of him who lacketh wit.
He who’s not greater than his wit is slain Of the least stress that unto him is writ.
Men may their lineage hide, but it appears Still in the things they do and they omit
Whoso in origin is aught but good, No word of good his lips shall

e'er emit.
He is his peer in folly, to a fool Who doth the ordering of his deeds commit;
And who reveals his secret to the folk His enemies awakens unto it.
With his own business be a man content Nor mell with what concerneth him no whit.'

And he went on to admonish his brothers and enjoin them to justice and forbid them from oppression, doubting not but they would love him the better for his lavishment of good counsel upon them, and he trusted in them and entreated them with the utmost honour; but, for all his generosity to them, they only waxed in hatred and envy of him, till, one day, the two being together [alone], Nasir said to Mensour, 'O my brother, how long shall we be subject to our brother Abdallah, and he in this estate of lordship and commandment? After being a merchant, he is become an Amir, and from being little, he is grown great: but we, we grow not great nor is there aught of rank or worth left us; for, behold, he laugheth at us and maketh us his assistants! What is the meaning of this? Is it not that we are his servants and under his commandment? But, what while he abideth on life, our rank will never be raised nor shall we be of any account; wherefore we shall not attain to our wish, except we slay him and take his good, nor will it be possible to take his good, save after his death. So, when we have killed him, we shall become lords and will take all that is in his treasuries of jewels and [other] things of price and divide them between us. Then will we send the Khalif a present and demand of him the government of Cufa, and thou shalt be governor of Bassora and I of Cufa, or thou shalt be governor of Cufa and I of Bassora. On this wise each of us shall have a rank and a condition, but we shall never compass this, except we do away with him.'

'Thou sayest sooth,' answered Mensour; 'but how shall we do to kill him?' Quoth Nasir, 'We will make an entertainment in the house of one of us and bid him thereto and serve him with the utmost assiduity. Then will we watch the night with him in converse and tell him stories and jests and anecdotes, till his heart is dissolved with watching, when we will spread him a bed, that he may lie down to sleep. When he is asleep, we will kneel upon him and strangle him and cast him into the river; and on the morrow, we will say, “His sister the Jinniyeh came to him, as he sat talking with us, and said to him, ‘O scum of mankind, who art thou that thou shouldst complain of me to the Commander of the Faithful? Deemest thou that we are afraid of him? If he be a king, we too are kings, and if he mend not his manners with us, we will kill him by the foulest of deaths. But meantime I will kill thee, that we may see what the Commander of the Faithful can do.’ So saying, she caught him up and the earth opened and she disappeared with him; which when we saw, we swooned away. Then we came to ourselves and we know not what is become of him.” Then will we send to the Khalif and tell him of this and he will invest us with the government in his room. After awhile, we will send him a rich present and seek of him the government of Cufa, and one of us shall abide in Bassora and the other in Cufa. So shall the land be pleasant to us and we will subdue the people and attain our desire.’ ‘Thou counsellest well, O my brother,’ answered Mensour and they agreed upon this thing.

So Nasir made an entertainment and said to Abdallah, ‘O my brother, verily I am thy brother, and I would have thee and my brother Mensour heal my heart and eat of my guest-meal in my house, so I may glory in thee and that it may be said, “The Amir Abdallah hath eaten of his brother Nasir’s guest-meal;” whereby my heart will be solaced.’ ‘So be it, O my brother,’ answered Abdallah. ‘There is no distinction between me and thee, and my house is thy house; but since thou biddest me, none refuseth hospitality save the churl.’ Then he turned to Mensour and said to him, ‘Wilt thou go with me to thy brother Nasir’s house and eat of his guest-meal and ease his heart?’ ‘As thy head liveth, O my brother,’ replied Mensour, ‘I will not go with thee, except thou swear to me that, after thou comest forth of my brother Nasir’s house, thou wilt enter my house and eat of my banquet! Is Nasir thy brother and am not I thy brother? So, even as thou healest his heart, do thou heal mine.’ ‘With all my heart,’ answered Abdallah. ‘When I come out from Nasir’s house, I will enter thine, for thou art my brother even as he.’ So Nasir kissed his hand and going forth of the divan, made ready his banquet.

On the morrow, Abdallah took horse and repaired, with his brother Mensour and a company of his officers, to Nasir's house, where they sat down, he and Mensour and his company. Then Nasir set the table of food before them and bade them welcome; so they ate and drank; after which the tray and the platters were removed and they washed their hands. They passed the day in eating and drinking and merry-making and good cheer till night-fall, when they supped and prayed the prayers of sundown, and evensong. Then they sat carousing, and Nasir and Mensour fell to telling stories, first one and then the other, whilst Abdallah hearkened. Now they three were alone in a pavilion, the rest of the company being in another place, and they ceased not to tell tales and jests and pleasant traits and anecdotes, till Abdallah's heart was dissolved within him for watching and sleep overcame him. So they spread him a bed and he put off his clothes and lay down.

They lay down beside him on another couch and waited till they saw that he was drowned in sleep, when they arose and knelt upon him: whereupon he awoke and seeing them kneeling on his breast, said to them, 'What is this, O my brothers?' 'We are no brothers of thine,' answered they, 'nor do we know thee, lack-courtesy that thou art! Thy death is become better than thy life.' Then they gripped him by the throat and throttled him till he lost his senses and abode without motion, so that they deemed him dead. Now the pavilion in which they were overlooked the river; so they cast him therein; but, when he fell, God sent to his aid a dolphin, which was wont to come under the pavilion, for that the kitchen had a window that gave upon the water, and as often as they killed any beast there, it was their wont to throw the offal into the river and the dolphin came and picked it up from the surface of the water; wherefore it still resorted to the place. That day they had cast out much offal, by reason of the banquet; so the dolphin ate more than of wont and gained strength. When it heard the splash of Abdallah's fall, it hastened to the spot, where it saw a man, and God guided it, so that it took him on its back and crossing the river, made with him for the other bank, where it cast him ashore.

Now the place where the dolphin cast him up was a beaten way, and presently up came a caravan and finding him lying on the river-bank, said, ‘Here is a drowned man, whom the river hath cast up.’ Now the chief of the caravan was a man of worth and sound judgment, skilled in all sciences and versed in the art of medicine: so he said to them, ‘O folk, what is to do?’ And they answered, saying, ‘Here is a drowned man.’ Whereupon he went up to Abdallah and examining him, said to them, ‘O folk, there is yet life in this young man, who is a person of condition and a nursling of honour and fortune, and God willing, there is still hope in him.’ Then he took him and clothing him in warm apparel, nursed him and tended him three days’ journey, till he revived; but he was exceeding weak, by reason of the shock, and the chief of the caravan proceeded to medicine him with such simples as he knew, what while they fared on, without ceasing, till they had travelled thirty days’ journey from Bassora and came to a city in the land of the Persians, by name Auj. Here they alighted at a khan and spread Abdallah a bed, where he lay groaning all night and disturbing the folk with his groans.

On the morrow the porter of the khan came to the chief of the caravan and said to him, ‘What is this sick man thou hast with thee? Verily, he disturbeth us.’ Quoth the chief, ‘I found him by the way, shipwrecked and cast up by the river, and have tended him, but to no effect, for he recovereth not.’ ‘Show him to the Sheikheh Rajiheh,’ said the porter. ‘Who is she?’ asked the chief of the caravan, and the porter answered, saying, ‘There is with us a holy woman, a comely and clean maid, called Rajiheh, to whom they carry whoso hath any ailment; and he lies the night in her house and awakes on the morrow, whole and ailing nothing.’ Quoth the chief, ‘Direct me to her;’ and the porter said, ‘Take up thy sick man. So he took up Abdallah and the porter forewent him, till he came to a hermitage, where he saw folk entering with votive offerings and other folk coming forth, rejoicing. The porter went in, till he came to the curtain, and said, ‘Permission, O Sheikheh Rajiheh! Take this sick man.’ Quoth she, ‘Bring him within the curtain.’ And the porter said to Abdallah, ‘Enter.’

So he entered and looking upon the holy woman, saw her to be his very wife whom he had brought from the City of Stone. She also knew him and saluted him and he her. Then said he, ‘Who brought thee hither?’ And she answered, ‘When I saw that thy brothers had cast thee overboard and were contending concerning me, I threw myself into the sea; but my sheikh El Khizr took me up and brought me to this hermitage, where he gave me leave to heal the sick and made proclamation in the city, saying, “Whoso hath any ailment, let him repair to the Sheikheh Rajiheh.” Moreover he said to me, “Abide in this hermitage till the time be accomplished, and thy husband shall come to thee here.” So all the sick used to come to me and I rubbed them and kneaded them and they awoke on the morrow, whole and well. On this wise the report of me became noised abroad among the folk, and they brought me votive gifts, so that I have with me good galore. Moreover, I live here in all honour and worship, and all the people of these parts seek my prayers.’

Then she rubbed him and by the ordinance of God the Most High he became whole. Now El Khizr used to come to her every Friday night, and it chanced that the day of Abdallah’s coming was a Friday. So, when the night darkened, they made the evening meal of the richest meats, he and she, and sat awaiting the coming of El Khizr, who made his appearance anon and carrying them forth of the hermitage, set them down in Abdallah’s palace at Bassora, where he left them and went his way. As soon as it was day, Abdallah examined the palace and knew it for his own; then, hearing the folk in clamour [without], he looked forth of the window and saw his brothers crucified, each on his own cross.

Now the reason of this was as follows. When they had thrown him into the Tigris, they arose on the morrow, weeping and saying, ‘The Jinniyeh hath carried off our brother!’ Then they made ready a present and sent it to the Khalif, acquainting him with these tidings and seeking of him the government of Bassora. He sent for them and questioned them and they told him the story aforesaid, whereupon he was exceeding wroth [with Saïdeh]. So that night he prayed a two-bow prayer before daybreak, as of his wont, and called upon the tribes of the Jinn, who came before him obediently, and he questioned them of Abdallah; but they swore to him that none of them had done him aught of hurt and said, ‘We know not what is come of him.’ Then came Saïdeh, daughter of the Red King, and acquainted the Khalif with the truth of Abdallah’s case, and he dismissed the Jinn.

On the morrow, he caused beat Nasir and Mensour, till they confessed, one against the other: whereupon the Khalif was enraged with them and bade carry them to Bassora and crucify them there before Abdallah's palace. As for the latter, when he saw his brothers crucified, he commanded to bury them, then took horse and repairing to Baghdad, acquainted the Khalif with that which his brothers had done with him, from first to last [and told him how he had recovered his wife]; whereat Er Reshid marvelled and summoning the Cadi and the witnesses, let draw up the contract of marriage between Abdallah and the damsel whom he had brought from the City of Stone. So he went in to her and abode with her at Bassora, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies; and extolled be the perfection of the [Ever-] Living One, who dieth not!

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

MAROUF THE COBBLER AND HIS WIFE FATIMEH.

There dwelt once in the city of Cairo the [God-]guarded a cobbler, [who lived by] mending old shoes. His name was Marouf and he had a wife called Fatimeh, whom the folk had nicknamed 'The Shrew,' for that she was a worthless, ill-conditioned wretch, little of shame and a sore mischief-maker. She ruled her husband and used to revile him and curse him a thousand times a day, and he feared her malice and dreaded her mischief; for that he was a man of sense and careful of his repute, but poor of estate. When he earnt much, he spent it on her, and when he earnt little, she revenged herself on his body that night, leaving him no peace and making his night like her book; for she was even as saith the poet of [the like of] her:

How many a night have I spent with my wife In the sorriest of plights for contention and strife!
Would God I had given her poison the night Of our wedding and so made an end of her life!

One day she said to him, 'O Marouf, I wish thee to bring me this night vermicelli dressed with bees' honey.' 'So God the Most High vouchsafe4 me its price,' answered he, 'I will bring it thee. By Allah, I have no money to-day, but our Lord will provide.' 'I have nothing to do with that,' rejoined she. 'Whether He provide1 or not, look thou come not to me save with the vermicelli and bees' honey thereon; else will I make thy night like unto thy fortune whenas thou marriedst me and fellest into my hand.' Quoth he, 'God is bountiful!' and went out, full of trouble. He prayed the morning prayer and opened his shop, saying, 'I beseech thee, O Lord, to vouchsafe me the price of the vermicelli and save me from the mischief of yonder wicked woman this night!'

He sat in the shop till midday, but no work came to him and his fear of his wife redoubled. So he arose and shutting his shop, went out, knowing not how he should do in the matter of the vermicelli, for that he had not [even] wherewithal to buy bread. Presently he came to the shop of the vermicelli-seller and stood before it, perplexed, whilst his eyes filled with tears. The cook glanced at him and said, ‘O Master Marouf, why dost thou weep? Tell me what ails thee?’ So he acquainted him with his case, saying, ‘My wife is a curst shrew and would have me bring her vermicelli; but I have sat in my shop half the day and have gotten nought, not even the price of bread; wherefore I am in fear of her.’ The cook laughed and said, ‘No harm shall come to thee. How many pounds wilt thou have?’ ‘Five pounds,’ answered Marouf. So the cook weighed him out five pounds of vermicelli and said to him, ‘I have butter, but no bees’ honey. Here is drip-honey, however, which is better than bees’ honey; and where will be the harm, if it be with drip-honey?’

Marouf was ashamed to object, because the cook was to have patience with him for the price, and said, ‘Give it me with drip-honey.’ So he fried it for him with butter and drenched it with drip-honey, till it was fit to present to kings. Then he said to him, ‘Dost thou want bread and cheese?’ And Marouf answered, ‘Yes.’ So he gave him four paras’ worth of bread and one of cheese, and the vermicelli was ten paras. Then said he, ‘Know, O Marouf, that thou owest me fifteen paras, so go to thy wife and make merry and take this para for the bath; and thou shalt have credit for a day or two or three till God provide thee. And straiten not thy wife, for I will have patience with thee till such time as thou shalt have money to spare.’ So Marouf took the vermicelli and bread and cheese and went away, with a heart at ease, blessing the cook and saying, ‘Extolled be Thy perfection, O my Lord! How bountiful art Thou!’

When he came home, his wife said to him, ‘Hast thou brought the vermicelli?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he and set it before her. She looked at it and seeing that it was dressed with cane-honey, said to him, ‘Did I not bid thee bring it with bees’ honey? Wilt thou do contrary to my wish and have it dressed with cane-honey?’ He excused himself to her, saying, ‘I bought it not save on credit;’ but she answered, ‘This talk is idle; I will not eat it, save with bees’ honey.’ And she was wroth with it and threw it in his face, saying, ‘Begone, thou cuckold, and bring me other than this!’ Then she dealt him a buffet on the chops and knocked out one of his teeth. The blood ran down upon his breast and for stress of anger he smote her one slight blow on the head; whereupon she clutched his beard and fell to crying out and saying, ‘[Help,] O Muslims!’

So the neighbours came in and freed his beard from her clutch and beset her with blame and reproved her, saying, ‘We are all content to eat vermicelli with cane-honey. Why, then, wilt thou oppress this poor man thus? Verily, this is disgraceful in thee!’ And they went on to soothe her till they made peace between him and her. But, when the folk were gone, she swore that she would not eat of the vermicelli, and Marouf, being consumed with hunger, said in himself, ‘She swears that she will not eat; so I will eat.’ Then he ate, and when she saw him eating, she said, ‘If it be the will of God, may the eating of it be poison to destroy some one’s body!’ Quoth he, ‘It shall not be as thou sayest,’ and went on eating, laughing and saying, ‘Thou swearest that thou wilt not eat of this; but God is bountiful, and to-morrow night, if it be His will, I will bring thee vermicelli dressed with bees’ honey, and thou shalt eat it alone.’ And he addressed himself to appease her, whilst she called down curses upon him; and she ceased not to rail at him and revile him till the morning, when she bared her arm to beat him. Quoth he, ‘Give me time and I will bring thee other vermicelli.’

Then he went out to the mosque and prayed; after which he betook himself to his shop and opening it, sat down; but hardly had he done this when up came two officers from the Cadi’s court and said to him, ‘Come, speak with the Cadi, for thy wife hath complained of thee to him and her favour is thus and thus.’ He knew her [by their description] and saying, ‘May God the Most High torment her!’ accompanied them to the Cadi’s presence, where he found Fatimeh standing, weeping and wiping away her tears, with her arm bound up and her face-veil besmeared with blood. ‘Harkye, sirrah,’ said the Cadi, ‘hast thou no fear of God the Most High? Why hast thou beaten this good woman and broken her arm and knocked out her tooth and entreated her thus?’ ‘If I beat her or put out her tooth,’ answered Marouf, ‘sentence me to what thou wilt; but in truth the case was thus and thus and the neighbours made peace between me and her.’ And he told him the story from first to last.

Now this Cadi was a benevolent man; so he brought out to him a quarter dinar, saying, ‘O man, take this and get her vermicelli with bees' honey and do ye make peace, thou and she.' Quoth Marouf, 'Give it to her.' So she took it and the Cadi made peace between them, saying, 'O wife, obey thy husband, and thou, O man, deal kindly with her.' Then they left the court, reconciled at the Cadi's hands, and she went one way, whilst her husband returned by another way to his shop and sat there, when, behold, the [two] serjeants came up to him and said, 'Give us our fee.' Quoth he, 'The Cadi took not of me aught: on the contrary, he gave me a quarter dinar.' But they answered, saying, 'It is none of our concern whether the Cadi took of thee or gave to thee, and if thou give us not our fee, we will take it in despite of thee.' And they fell to dragging him about the market. So he sold his tools and gave them half a dinar, whereupon they let him go and went away, whilst he put his hand to his cheek and sat sorrowful, for that he had no tools to work withal.

Presently, up came two ill-looking fellows and said to him, 'Come, O man, and speak with the Cadi; for thy wife hath complained of thee to him.' Quoth he, 'He made peace between us [but now].' But they answered, 'We come from another Cadi, and thy wife hath complained of thee to our Cadi.' So he arose and went with them to the [second] Cadi, calling on God for succour against her; and when he saw her, he said to her, 'Did we not make peace, good woman?' But she said, 'There abideth no peace between thee and me.' So he came forward and told the Cadi his story, adding, 'And indeed the Cadi such an one made peace between us but now.' Whereupon the Cadi said to her, 'O strumpet, since ye have made peace with each other, why comest thou to me complaining?' Quoth she, 'He beat me after that.' But the Cadi said, 'Make peace with one another, and thou, [O man] beat her not again, and she will cross thee no more.' So they made peace and the Cadi said to Marouf, 'Give the serjeants their fee.' So he gave them their fee and going back to his shop, opened it and sat down, as he were a drunken man for excess of chagrin.

Presently, a man came up to him and said, 'O Marouf, hide thyself, for thy wife hath complained of thee to the High Court and the men of violence are after thee.' So he shut his shop and fled towards the Gate of Victory. He had five paras left of the price of the lasts and gear; so he bought four paras' worth of bread and one of cheese, as he fled from her. Now it was the winter season and the hour of afternoon-prayer; so, when he came out among the rubbish-heaps, the rain descended upon him, as [from] the mouth of water-skins, and his clothes were drenched. So he entered the Aadiliyeh, where he saw a ruined place and therein a deserted cell, without a door, and took shelter there from the rain. The tears streamed from his eyes and he fell to complaining of what had befallen him and saying, ‘Whither shall I flee from this vile woman? I beseech Thee, O Lord, to vouchsafe me one who shall bring me to a far country, where she shall not know the way to me!’

As he sat weeping, behold, the wall opened and there came forth to him therefrom one of tall stature, whose aspect caused the flesh to creep, and said to him, ‘O man, what aileth thee that thou disturbest me this night? These two hundred years have I dwelt here and have never seen any enter this place and do as thou dost. Tell me what thou wishest and I will accomplish thy need, for compassion for thee hath gotten hold upon my heart.’ Quoth Marouf, ‘Who and what art thou?’ And he answered, ‘I am the haunter of this place.’ So Marouf told him all that had befallen him with his wife and he said, ‘Wilt thou have me carry thee to a country, where thy wife shall know no way to thee?’ ‘Yes,’ answered Marouf; and the genie said, ‘Then mount my back.’ So he mounted on his back and he flew with him from nightfall till daybreak, when he set him down on the top of a high mountain and tit said to him, ‘O mortal, descend this mountain and thou wilt see the gate of a city. Enter it, for thy wife cannot come at thee there.’ So saying, he left him and went his way, whilst Marouf abode in amazement and perplexity till the sun rose, when he said in himself, ‘I will arise and go down into the city, for there is no profit in my abiding here.’

So he descended to the mountain-foot and saw a high-walled city, full of lofty palaces and richly-decorated buildings, a delight to those who looked upon it. He entered in at the gate and found it a city such as lightened the grieving heart; but, as he walked through the streets, the townsfolk stared at him and gathered about him, marvelling at his dress, for it was unlike theirs. Presently, one of them said to him, ‘O man, art thou a stranger?’ And he answered, ‘Yes.’ ‘What countryman art thou?’ asked the other; and Marouf said, ‘I am from the city of Cairo the Happy.' Quoth the townsman, 'And when didst thou leave Cairo?' 'I left it yesterday,' answered Marouf, 'at the hour of afternoon-prayer.' Whereupon the man laughed at him and cried out, saying, 'Come hither, O folk, and look at this man and hear what he says!' Quoth they, 'What does he say?' 'He pretends,' replied the other, 'that he comes from Cairo and left it yesterday at the hour of afternoon-prayer!' At this they all laughed and gathering round Marouf, said to him, 'O man, art thou mad to talk thus? How canst thou pretend that thou leftest Cairo at mid-afternoon yesterday and foundest thyself this morning here, seeing that between our city and Cairo is a full year's journey?' Quoth he, 'None is mad but you. As for me, I speak sooth, for here is bread that I brought with me from Cairo, and see, it is yet fresh.' Then he showed them the bread and they stared at it and marvelled at it, for it was unlike their country bread.

The crowd increased about him and they said to each other, 'This is Cairo bread: look at it.' So he became a gazing stock in the city and some believed him, whilst others gave him the lie and made mock of him. Presently, up came a merchant, riding on a mule and followed by two black slaves, and pressed through the people, saying, 'O folk, are ye not ashamed to mob this foreigner and make mock of him and laugh at him?' And he went on to rate them, till he drove them away from Marouf, and none could make him any answer. Then he said to Marouf, 'Come, O my brother. No harm shall betide thee from these folk. Verily they have no shame.' So he took him and carrying him to a spacious and richly-decorated house, seated him in a guest-chamber fit for a king, whilst he gave an order to his slaves, who opened a chest and brought out to him a dress such as might be worn by a merchant worth a thousand purses. He clad him therein and Marouf, being a well-favoured man, became as he were provost of the merchants.

Then his host called for food and they set before them a tray of all manner rich meats. They ate and drank and the merchant said to Marouf, 'O my brother, what is thy name?' 'My name is Marouf,' answered he, 'and I am a cobbler by trade and mend old shoes.' 'What countryman art thou?' asked the merchant, and the cobbler said, 'I am from Cairo.' 'What quarter?' asked the other. Quoth

Marouf, ‘Dost thou know Cairo?’ And the merchant replied, ‘I am of its children.’ So Marouf said, ‘I come from the Red Street.’ ‘And whom dost thou know in the Red Street ?’ asked his host. ‘I know such an one and such an one,’ answered Marouf and named several people to him. Quoth the other, ‘Knowest thou Gaffer Ahmed the druggist?’ ‘He was my next neighbour, wall for wall,’ replied the cobbler. ‘Is he well?’ asked the merchant and Marouf said, ‘Yes.’ ‘How many sons hath he?’ asked the merchant. ‘Three,’ replied Marouf, ‘Mustafa, Mohammed and Ali.’ Quoth the other, ‘And what hath God done with them?’ ‘As for Mustafa,’ answered Marouf, ‘he is well and he is a learned man, a professor.’ Mohammed is a druggist and opened him a shop beside that of his father, after he had married, and his wife hath borne him a son named Hassan.’ ‘God gladden thee with good news!’ said the merchant.

‘As for Ali,’ continued Marouf, ‘he was my friend, when we were boys, and I still played with him. We used to go in the guise of the children of the Nazarenes and enter the church and steal the books of the Nazarenes and sell them and buy food with the price. It chanced once that the Christians caught us with a book; whereupon they complained of us to our folk and said to Ali’s father, “An thou hinder not thy son from troubling us, we will complain of thee to the king.” So he appeased them and gave Ali a drubbing; wherefore he ran away none knew whither and he hath now been absent twenty years and none hath brought news of him.’ Quoth the host, ‘I am that very Ali, son of Gaffer Ahmed the druggist, and thou art my playmate Marouf.’ So they saluted each other and Ali said, ‘Tell me why thou camest from Cairo to this city.’

So Marouf told him all that had befallen him with his wife Fatimeh the Shrew and said, ‘So, when her mischief waxed on me, I fled from her towards the Gate of Victory [and went forth the city]. Presently, the rain descended on me; so I entered a ruined cell in the Aadiliyeh and sat there, weeping; whereupon there came forth to me the haunter of the place, to wit, an Afrit of the Jinn, and questioned me. I acquainted him with my case and he took me on his back and flew with me all night between heaven and earth, till he set me down on yonder mountain and gave me to know of the [neighbourhood of this] city. So I came down from the mountain and entered the city, whereupon the people crowded about me and questioned me. I told them that I had left Cairo yesterday, but they believed me not, and presently thou camest up and driving the folk away from me, carriedst me to this house. This, then, is how I came to leave Cairo; and thou, how camest thou hither?’

Quoth Ali, ‘Restlessness got hold upon me, when I was seven years old, from which time I wandered from land to land and city to city, till I came to this city, the name whereof is Ikhtiyan el Khuten. I found its people kindly and hospitable folk, trusting in the poor man and giving him credit and believing all that he said. So I said to them, “I am a merchant and have foregone my baggage and I need a place wherein to bestow it.” And they believed me and assigned me a lodging. Then I said to them, “Is there any of you will lend me a thousand dinars, till my baggage arrives, when I will repay it to him? For I am in want of certain things, ere my goods come.” They gave me what I asked and I went to the merchants’ bazaar, where, seeing goods, I bought them and sold them next day at a profit of fifty dinars and bought others. Moreover, I consorted with the folk and entreated them liberally, so that they loved me, and I continued to buy and sell, till I grew rich. And know, O my brother, that the proverb says, “The world is made up of ostentation and trickery: and the land where none knoweth thee, there do whatsoever thou wilt.” If thou say to all who ask thee, “I am a poor man, a cobbler by trade, and fled from my wife and left Cairo yesterday,” they will not believe thee and thou wilt be a laughing-stock among them as long as thou abidest in the city; whilst, if thou say, “An Afrit brought me hither,” they will take fright at thee and none will come near thee; for they will say, “This man is possessed of an Afrit and harm will betide whoso approacheth him.” And this report will be dishonouring both to thee and to me, for that they know I come from Cairo.’

‘How then shall I do?’ asked Marouf. ‘I will tell thee how thou shalt do,’ answered Ali, ‘so it please God the Most High. To-morrow I will give thee a thousand dinars and a mule to ride and a black slave, who shall go before thee and bring thee to the gate of the merchants’ bazaar; and do thou go in to them. I will be there sitting amongst them, and when I see thee, I will rise to thee and salute thee and kiss thy hand and make much of thee. Whenever I ask thee of any kind of stuff, saying, “Hast thou brought with thee aught of such a kind?” do thou answer, “Abundance.” And if they question me of thee, I will praise thee and magnify thee in their eyes and say to them, “Get him a store-house and a shop.” Moreover, I will give thee out for a man of great wealth and generosity; and if a beggar come to thee, give him what thou mayst; so will they put faith in what I say and believe in thy greatness and generosity and love thee. Then will I bid thee to an entertainment and bid all the merchants on thine account and bring thee and them together, so they may all know thee and thou them and thou shalt buy and sell and give and take with them; nor will it be long ere thou become a man of wealth.’

So on the morrow he gave him a thousand dinars and a suit of clothes and a black slave and mounting him on a mule, said to him, ‘God give thee quittance of all this: for thou art my friend and it behoves me to deal generously with thee. Have no care; but put away from thee the thought of thy wife and name her not to any.’ ‘May God requite thee with good!’ answered Marouf and rode on, preceded by the black slave, till the latter brought him to the gate of the merchants’ bazaar, where they were all seated, and Ali amongst them. When the latter saw him, he rose and threw himself upon him, saying, [‘This is indeed] a blessed day, O merchant Marouf, O man of good works and kindness!’ And he kissed his hand before the merchants and said to them, ‘O my brothers, I commend to you the merchant Marouf.’ So they saluted him, and Ali signed to them to make much of him, wherefore he was magnified in their eyes.

Then Ali helped him to dismount and saluted him; after which he took the merchants apart, one after another, and vaunted Marouf to them. ‘Is this man a merchant?’ asked they. ‘Yes,’ answered he; ‘and indeed he is the chiefest of merchants, there lives not a wealthier than he; for his wealth and that of his father and forefathers are notorious among the merchants of Cairo. He hath partners in Hind and Sind and Yemen and is high in repute for generosity. So know ye his rank and make much of him and do him service, and know also that his coming hither is not for the sake of traffic, but to divert himself with the sight of foreign countries; for he hath no need to travel for the sake of gain and profit, having wealth that fires cannot consume, and I am one of his servants.’ And he went on to extol him, till they set him above their heads and began to tell one another of his qualities.

Then they came round about him and offered him pastry and sherbets, and even the Provost of the Merchants came to him and saluted him; whilst Ali proceeded to say to him, in the presence of the merchants, ‘O my lord, belike thou hast brought with thee somewhat of such and such a stuff?’ And Marouf answered, ‘Abundance.’ Now Ali had that day shown him various kinds of costly stuffs and had taught him the names of the different stuffs, cheap and dear. Then said one of the merchants, ‘O my lord, hast thou brought with thee yellow cloth?’ And Marouf said, ‘Abundance.’ ‘And gazelles’ blood red?’ asked the other. ‘Abundance,’ replied the cobbler; and as often as he asked him of aught, he made him the same answer. So the other said, ‘O merchant Ali, [methinks] if thy countryman had a mind to transport a thousand loads of costly stuffs, he could do so.’ ‘He would take them from one of his store-houses,’ answered Ali, ‘and miss nought thereof.’

Presently, up came a beggar and went the round of the merchants. One gave him a para and another a doit, but most of them gave him nothing, till he came to Marouf, who pulled out a handful of gold and gave it to him, whereupon he blessed him and went away. The merchants marvelled at this and said, ‘Verily, this is a king’s giving, for he gave the beggar gold without count; and except he were a man of vast wealth, he had not given a beggar a handful of gold.’ After awhile, there came to him a poor woman and he gave her a handful of gold; whereupon she went away, blessing him, and told the other beggars, who came to him, one after another, and he gave them each a handful of gold, till he had made an end of the thousand dinars.

Then he smote hand upon hand and said, ‘God is our sufficiency and excellent is He in whom we trust!’ Quoth the Provost, ‘What ails thee, O merchant Marouf?’ And he answered, ‘It seems that the most part of the people of this city are poor and miserable: had I known this, I would have brought with me a large sum of money in my saddle-bags and given alms thereof to the poor. I fear me I may be long abroad and it is not in my nature to refuse a beggar; and I have no money left: so, if a poor man come to me, what shall I say to him?’ ‘Say, “God provide thee”’ said the Provost; but Marouf replied, ‘That is not of my wont and I am vexed because of this.

Would I had other thousand dinars, wherewith to give alms till my baggage arrive!' 'Have no care for that,' 'said the Provost and sending one of his men for a thousand dinars, gave them to Marouf, who went on giving them to every beggar who passed till the call to midday prayer.

Then they entered the mosque and prayed the noonday prayers, and what was left him of the thousand dinars he scattered on the heads of the worshippers. This drew the people's attention to him and they called down blessings upon him, whilst the merchants marvelled at the abundance of his generosity and openhandedness Then he turned to another merchant and borrowing of him other thousand dinars, gave these also away, whilst Ali looked on at what he did, but could not speak. He ceased not to do thus till the call to afternoon-prayer, when he entered the mosque and prayed and distributed the rest of the money. On this wise, by the time they shut the gate of the bazaar, he had borrowed five thousand dinars and given them away, saying to every one of whom he took aught, 'Wait till my baggage arrives, when, if thou desire gold, I will give thee gold, and if thou desire stuffs, thou shalt have stuffs; for I have great plenty.'

At eventide Ali invited Marouf and the rest of the merchants to an entertainment and seated him in the place of honour, where he talked of nothing but stuffs and jewels, and whenever they made mention to him of aught, he said, 'I have abundance of it.' Next day, he again repaired to the bazaar, where he improved his acquaintance with the merchants and borrowed of them more money, which he gave to the poor: nor did he leave to do thus twenty days, till he had borrowed threescore thousand dinars, and still there came no baggage, no, nor a burning plague [to rid the people of him]. At last the folk began to clamour for their money and say, 'The merchant Marouf's baggage cometh not. How long will he take people's monies and give them to the poor?' And one of them said, 'Methinks we should do well to speak to his countryman Ali.' So they went to the latter and said to him, 'O Ali, the merchant Marouf's baggage cometh not.' 'Have patience,' answered he; 'it cannot fail to come soon.'

Then he took Marouf aside and said to him, 'O Marouf, what fashion is this? Did I bid thee toast the bread or burn it? The merchants clamour for their money and tell me that thou owest them threescore thousand dinars, which thou hast borrowed and given away to the poor. How wilt thou satisfy the folk, seeing that thou neither buyest nor sellest?' 'What matters it?' answered Marouf 'And what are threescore thousand dinars? When my baggage comes, I will pay them in stuffs or in gold and silver, as they will.' 'God is most great!' replied Ali. 'Hast thou then any baggage?' And he said, 'Abundance.' 'God and the saints requite thee thine impudence!' cried Ali. 'Did I teach thee this saying, that thou shouldst repeat it to me? But I will acquaint the folk with thee.' 'Begone and prate not,' answered Marouf. 'Am I a poor man? I have abundance in my baggage and as soon as it comes, they shall have their money's worth, two for one; I have no need of them.'

At this Ali waxed wroth and said, 'Unmannerly churl that thou art, I will teach thee to lie to me and be not ashamed!' 'Do thy worst,' rejoined Marouf. 'They must wait till my baggage comes, when they shall have their due and more.' So Ali left him and went away, saying in himself, 'I praised him before and if I blame him now, I make myself out a liar and become of those of whom it is said, "He who praises and [then] blames lies twice."'1 And he knew not what to do. Presently, the merchants came to him and said, 'O Ali, hast thou spoken to him?' 'O folk,' answered he, 'I am ashamed to speak to him, though he owes me a thousand dinars Ye consulted me not, when ye lent him your money; so ye have no claim on me. Dun him yourselves, and if he pay you not, complain of him to the king of the city, saying, "He is an impostor, who hath imposed upon us." And he will quit you of him.'

So they repaired to the king and told him what had passed, saying, 'O king of the age, we are perplexed concerning this merchant, whose generosity is excessive; for he doth thus and thus, and all he borrows, he gives away to the poor by handsful. Were he a man of nought, his heart would not suffer him to lavish gold thus; and were he a man of wealth, his good faith had been made manifest to us by the coming of his baggage; but we see none of his baggage, albeit he avoucheth that he hath a baggage-train and hath foregone it; and whenever we name this or that kind of stuff to him, he answereth, "I have great plenty of it." Now some time hath past, but there appeareth no sign of his baggage-train, and he oweth us threescore thousand dinars, all of which he hath given away in alms.' And they went on to praise him and extol his generosity.

Now this king was a very covetous man, more covetous than Ashab; and when he heard tell of Marouf's generosity and openhandedness, covetise got the better of him and he said to his vizier, 'Were not this merchant a man of immense wealth, he had not shown all this munificence. His baggage-train will assuredly come, whereupon these merchants will flock to him and he will lavish unto them wealth galore. Now I have more right to this than they; wherefore I have a mind to make friends with him and profess love for him, so that, when his baggage comes, I shall get of him what the merchants would have had; and I will give him my daughter to wife and join his wealth to mine.' 'O king of the age,' answered the vizier, 'methinks he is nought but an impostor, and it is the impostor who ruins the house of the covetous.' 'O vizier,' rejoined the king, 'I will prove him and know if he be an impostor or a man of good faith and whether he be a nursling of fortune or not.' 'And how wilt thou prove him?' asked the vizier. Quoth the king, 'I will send for him and make much of him and give him a jewel which I have. If he know it and know its price, he is a man of worth and fortune; but, if he know it not, he is an impostor and an upstart and I will slay him after the foulest fashion.'

So he sent for Marouf, who came and saluted him. The king returned his salutation and seating him beside himself, said to him, 'Art thou the merchant Marouf?' 'Yes,' answered he. Quoth the king, 'The merchants pretend that thou owest them threescore thousand dinars. Is this true?' And Marouf said 'Yes.' 'Then why dost thou not give them their money?' asked the king. 'Let them wait till my baggage comes,' replied Marouf, 'and I will repay them two for one. If they wish for gold, they shall have gold; and if they wish for silver, they shall have silver; or if they prefer merchandise, I will give them merchandise. Moreover, him to whom I owe a thousand I will give two thousand in requital of that wherewith he hath veiled my face before the poor: for I have abundance.'

Then said the king, 'O merchant, take this and look what is its kind and value.' And he gave him a jewel the bigness of a hazel-nut, by which he set great store, for that he had bought it for a thousand dinars and had not another. Marouf took it and pressing it between his forefinger and thumb, broke it, for it was brittle and would not brook [pressure]. Quoth the king, ‘Why hast thou broken the jewel?’ And Marouf laughed and said, ‘O king of the age, this is no jewel. This is but a piece of stone worth a thousand dinars; why dost thou style it a jewel? A jewel, save the mark, is such as is worth threescore and ten thousand dinars, and this is called but a piece of stone. A jewel that is not of the bigness of a walnut hath no value in my eyes and I take no account thereof. How comes it, then, that thou, who art a king stylest this a jewel, when it is but a piece of stone worth a thousand dinars? But ye are excusable, for that ye are poor and have not in your possession things of price.’ ‘O merchant,’ said the king, ‘hast thou jewels such as those whereof thou speakest?’ And he answered, ‘Abundance.’ Whereupon covetise overcame the king and he said, ‘Wilt thou give me real jewels?’ ‘When my baggage-train comes,’ replied Marouf, ‘I will give thee jewels galore; and all that thou canst desire I have in plenty and will give thee, without price.’

At this the king rejoiced and said to the merchants, ‘Go your ways and have patience with him, till his baggage arrives, when do ye come to me and receive your monies from me.’ So they went away and the king turned to his vizier and said to him, ‘Caress the merchant Marouf and give and take with him in talk and bespeak him of my daughter, that he may marry her and so we gain these riches of his.’ ‘O king of the age,’ answered the vizier, ‘this man’s fashion liketh me not and methinks he is an impostor and a liar: so do thou leave this whereof thou speakest, lest thou lose thy daughter for nought.’

Now this vizier had urged the king aforetime to give him his daughter to wife and he was willing to do so, but she consented not to marry him. So the king said to him, ‘O traitor, thou desirest no good for me, for that aforetime thou soughtest my daughter in marriage, but she would none of thee; so now thou wouldst stop the way of her marriage and wouldst have her lie fallow, that thou mayst take her; but hear from me this word, once for all. Thou hast no concern with this matter. How can he be an impostor and a liar, seeing that he knew the price of the jewel, even that for which I bought it, and broke it, for that it pleased him not? He hath jewels galore, and when he goes in to my daughter and sees her to be fair, she will captivate his reason and he will love her and give her jewels and things of price: but, as for thee, thou wouldst forbid my daughter and myself these good things.'

The vizier was silent, for fear of the king's anger, and said to himself, 'Set the dogs on the oxen!' Then he betook himself to Marouf and said to him, 'His highness the king loveth thee and hath a daughter, a fair and lovesome lady, to whom he is minded to marry thee. What sayst thou?' 'I will well,' answered Marouf; 'but let him wait till my baggage comes, for the dowry of kings' daughters is large and their rank demandeth that they be not endowed save with a dowry befitting their station. At present I have no money with me till the coming of my baggage, for I have wealth galore and needs must I make her marriage-portion five thousand purses. Then I shall need a thousand purses to distribute amongst the poor and needy, on my wedding-night, and other thousand to give to those who walk in the bridal procession and yet other thousand wherewith to provide victual for the troops and others. Moreover, I shall want a hundred jewels to give to the princess on the wedding morning and other hundred to distribute among the slave-girls and eunuchs, for I must give each of them a jewel in honour of the bride; besides wherewithal to clothe a thousand naked poor folk, and alms too must be given. All this cannot be done till my baggage comes; but I have abundance, and once it is here, I shall make no account of all this expense.'

The vizier returned to the king and told him what Marouf said, whereupon quoth he, 'Since this is his wish, how canst thou style him an impostor and a liar?' 'And I cease not to say this,' replied the vizier. But the king chid him angrily and berated him, saying, 'As my head liveth, if thou leave not this talk, I will slay thee! Go back to him and fetch him to me and I will settle with him myself.' So the vizier returned to Marouf and said to him, 'Come and speak with the king.' 'I hear and obey,' replied Marouf and went in to the king, who said to him, 'Thou shalt not put me off with these excuses, for my treasury is full; so take the keys and spend all thou needest and give what thou wilt and clothe the poor and do thy desire and have no care for the girl and the waiting-women. When thy baggage comes, do what thou wilt with thy wife, by way of generosity, and we will have patience with thee for the marriage-portion till then, for there is no manner of difference betwixt me and thee.'

Then he sent for the Sheikh el Islam and bade him draw up the contract of marriage between his daughter and the merchant Marouf, and he did so; after which the king gave the signal for the commencement of the wedding festivities and commanded to decorate the city. The drums beat and the tables were spread with meats of all kinds and there came mimes and mountebanks and players. Marouf sat upon a throne in a gallery and the mimes and mountebanks and jugglers and dancing-men and posture-makers and acrobats came before him, whilst be called out to the treasurer and said to him, 'Bring gold and silver.' So he brought gold and silver and Marouf went round among the merrymakers and gave to each performer by the handful. Moreover, he gave alms to the poor and needy and clad the naked and it was a clamorous festival. The treasurer could not bring money fast enough from the treasury, and the vizier's heart was like to burst for rage; but he dared not say a word, whilst Ali marvelled at this waste of wealth and said to Marouf, 'God and the saints [visit this] upon thy head! Doth it not suffice thee to squander the merchants' money, but thou must squander that of the king to boot?' 'It is none of thy concern,' replied Marouf; 'when my baggage comes, I will requite the king manifold.' And he went on lavishing money and saying in himself, 'A burning plague! What will happen will happen and there is no escape from that which is decreed.'

The festivities ceased not for the space of forty days, and on the one-and-fortieth day, they made the bride's procession and all the amirs and troops walked before her. When they brought her in before Marouf, he fell to scattering gold on the people's heads, and they made her a magnificent procession, whilst Marouf expended in her honour vast sums of money. Then they brought him in to her and he sat down on the high divan; after which they let fall the curtains and shut the doors and withdrew, leaving him alone with his bride; whereupon he smote hand upon hand and sat awhile sorrowful and saying, ‘There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ Till the princess said to him, ‘O my lord, God preserve thee! What ails thee, that thou art troubled?’ Quoth he, ‘And how should I be other than troubled, seeing that thy father hath embarrassed me and done with me that which is like the burning of green corn?’ ‘And what hath my father done with thee?’ asked she. ‘Tell me.’ And he answered, ‘He hath brought me in to thee before the coming of my baggage, and I wanted at least a hundred jewels to distribute among thy women, to each a jewel, so she might rejoice therein and say, “My lord gave me a jewel on the night of his going in to my lady.” This would I have done in honour of thy station and for the increase of thy dignity; and I have no need to stint myself in lavishing jewels, for I have great plenty of them.’ ‘Be not concerned for that,’ rejoined she. ‘Trouble not thyself about me, for I will have patience with thee till thy baggage comes, and as for my women, have no care for them. Rise, put off thy clothes and take thine ease; and when the baggage comes, we shall get the jewels and the rest.’

So he arose and putting off his clothes, sat down on the bed and sought dalliance and they fell to toying with each other. He laid his hand on her knee and she sat down in his lap and thrust her lip into his mouth, and that hour was such as maketh man forget father and mother. So he took her in his arms and strained her fast to his breast and sucked her lip, till the honey ran out into his mouth; and he laid his hand under her left armpit, whereupon his bowels and hers yearned unto coition. Then he clapped her between the breasts and his hand slid down between her thighs and she girdled [him] with her legs, whereupon he made proof of the two members and crying out, ‘O father of the chin-veils!’ applied the priming and kindling the linstock, set it to the touch-hole and gave fire and breached the citadel of the four buttresses; so there befell the event concerning which there is no asking and she cried the cry that needs must be cried.

So he did away her maidenhead and that night was one not to be reckoned among lives for that which it comprised of the enjoyment of the fair, clipping and dallying and sucking [of lips] and cricketing till the morning, when he arose and entered the bath, whence, after donning a suit of royal apparel, he betook himself to the king’s divan. All who were there rose to him and received him with honour and worship, giving him joy and calling down blessings upon him; and he sat down by the king's side and said, 'Where is the treasurer?' 'Here he is, before thee,' answered they, and he said to him, 'Bring dresses of honour for all the viziers and amirs and dignitaries and clothe them therewith.' The treasurer brought him all he sought and he sat giving to all who came to him and handselling every man, according to his station.

On this wise he abode twenty days, whilst no baggage appeared for him nor aught else, till the treasurer was straitened by him to utterance and going in to the king, as he sat alone with the vizier in Marouf's absence, kissed the earth before him and said, 'O king of the age, needs must I tell thee somewhat, lest thou blame me for that I acquainted thee not therewith. Know that the treasury is [well-nigh] exhausted; there is but a little money left in it and in ten days more we shall shut it upon emptiness.' Quoth the king to the vizier, 'O vizier, verily my son-in-law's baggage-train tarrieth long and there appeareth no news thereof.' The vizier laughed and said, 'God be gracious to thee, O king of the age! Verily, thou hast dealt but heedlessly with respect to this lying impostor. As thy head liveth, there is no baggage for him, no, nor a plague to rid us of him! Nay, he hath but imposed on thee without cease, so that he hath wasted thy treasures and married thy daughter for nought. How long therefore wilt thou be heedless of this liar?'

Then said the king, 'O vizier, how shall we do to learn the truth of his case?' 'O king of the age,' answered the vizier, 'none may come at a man's secret but his wife; so send for thy daughter and let her come behind the curtain, that I may question her of the truth of his estate, to the intent that she may make proof of him and acquaint us with his case.' Quoth the king, 'There is no harm in that; and as my head liveth, if it appear that he is a liar and an impostor, I will slay him by the foulest of deaths!' Then he carried the vizier into the sitting-chamber and sent for his daughter, who came behind the curtain, her husband being absent, and said, 'What wouldst thou, O my father?' Quoth he, 'Speak with the vizier.'

So she said, 'What is thy will, O vizier?' 'O my lady,' said he, 'thou must know that thy husband hath squandered thy father's substance and married thee without a dower; and he ceases not to promise us and fail of the fulfilment of his promises, nor comes there any tidings of his baggage; wherefore we would have thee inform us concerning him.' 'Indeed,' answered she, 'his words are many, and he still comes and promises me jewels and things of price and costly stuffs; but I see nothing.' 'O my lady,' said the vizier, 'canst thou this night give and take with him in talk and say to him, "Tell me the truth and fear nothing from me, for thou art become my husband and I will not transgress against thee. So acquaint me with the truth of the matter and I will contrive thee a device whereby thou shalt be set at rest." And do thou play fast and loose with him and profess love to him and win him to confess and after tell us the true state of his case.' And she answered, 'O father mine, I know how I will make proof of him.'

Then she went away and after nightfall, her husband came in to her, according to his wont, whereupon she rose to him and took him under the armpit and wheedled him full featly, for women are never at a loss for wiles, whenas they would aught of men. She ceased not to caress him and beguile him with speech sweeter than honey till she stole his reason; and when she saw that he altogether inclined to her, she said to him, 'O my beloved, O solace of my eyes and fruit of my entrails, may God not bereave [me] of thee nor Time sunder us twain! Indeed, the love of thee hath taken up its abode in my entrails and my heart is consumed with the fire of passion; never will I forsake thee nor transgress against thee: but I would have thee tell me the truth, for that the devices of falsehood profit not, nor do they gain credit at all seasons. How long wilt thou impose upon my father and lie to him? Indeed, I fear lest thine affair be discovered to him, ere we can contrive a device thereunto, and he lay violent hands upon thee. So tell me the truth of the case and fear not aught of harm, for nought shall betide thee save that which shall rejoice thee. How much longer wilt thou pretend that thou art a merchant and a man of wealth and hast a baggage-train? This long while past thou sayest, "My baggage! my baggage!" but there appeareth no sign of thy baggage, and anxiety on this account is visible in thy face. So, if there be no truth in thy words, tell me and I will devise thee a means whereby, God willing, thou shalt come off safe.'

‘O my lady,’ answered he, ‘I will tell thee the truth, and do thou whatever thou wilt.’ ‘Speak,’ rejoined she, ‘and look thou speak truly; for truth is the ark of safety, and beware of falsehood, for it dishonoureth him who speaketh it, and gifted of God is he who saith:

Truth-speaking on thee is incumbent, although It bring thee to burn on the brazier of woe.
Seek God’s favour: who angers the Lord and contents The slave is the silliest of mortals, I trow.’

‘Know, then, O my lady,’ said he, ‘that I am no merchant and have no baggage, no, nor a burning plague; nay, I was but a cobbler in my own country and had a wife called Fatimeh the Shrew, with whom there befell me this and that.’ And he told her his story from beginning to end; whereat she laughed and said, ‘Verily, thou art skilled in the practice of lying and imposture!’ And he answered, saying, ‘O my lady, may God the Most High preserve thee to veil faults and dispel troubles!’

‘Know,’ rejoined she, ‘that thou imposedst upon my father and deceivedst him by thy much boasting and ostentation, so that of his covetousness he married me to thee. Then thou squanderedst his wealth and the vizier bears thee a grudge for this. How many a time hath he spoken against thee to my father, saying, “Indeed he is an impostor and a liar!” But my father hearkened not to his speech, for that he sought me aforetime in marriage and I consented not to be his wife. However, the time grew long upon my father and he became straitened and said to me, “Make him confess.” So I have made thee confess and that which was covered is discovered. Now my father purposes thee mischief, because of this; but thou art become my husband and I will never abandon thee nor transgress against thee. If I told my father what I have learnt from thee, he would be certified of thy falsehood and imposture and that thou imposest upon kings’ daughters and squanderest their wealth: so would thine offence find no pardon with him and he would slay thee without recourse: wherefore it would be noised among the folk that I had married a man who was a liar and an impostor and this would dishonour me. Moreover, if he kill thee, most like he will require to marry me to another, and to that I will never consent, no, not though I die.

So rise now and don a slave's habit and take these fifty thousand dinars of my monies, and mount a swift charger and get thee to a land over which my father hath no dominion. Then do thou set up for a merchant and send me a letter by a courier, who shall bring it me privily, that I may know where thou art, so I may send thee all I can lay my hand on. Thus shall thy wealth wax great and if my father die, I will send for thee, and thou shalt return in honour and worship; and if we die, thou or I [and depart] to the mercy of God the Most High, the Resurrection will unite us. This, then, is the right counsel: and what while we both abide [alive and] well, I will not leave to send thee letters and monies. Arise, ere the day break upon thee and thou be confounded and perdition encompass thee.'

'O my lady,' said he, 'I beseech thee of thy favour to bid me farewell with thine embracement.' And she answered, 'I will well.' So he swived her and made the [complete] ablution; then, donning a slave's habit, he bade the grooms saddle him a thoroughbred horse. So they saddled him a courser and he mounted and taking leave of his wife, rode forth the city at the last of the night, whilst all who saw him deemed him one of the Sultan's slaves going abroad on an errand.

Next morning, the king and his vizier repaired to the sitting-chamber and sent for the princess, who came behind the curtain; and her father said to her, 'O my daughter, what sayst thou?' Quoth she, 'I say, may God blacken thy vizier's face, for that he would have blackened my face in my husband's eyes!' 'How so?' asked the king; and she said, 'He came in to me yesterday; but before I could name the matter to him, in came Ferej the eunuch, with a letter in his hand, and said, "Ten white slaves stand under the window and have given me this letter, saying, 'Kiss for us the hands of our lord the merchant Marouf and give him this letter, for we are of his servants with the baggage, and it is told us that he hath married the king's daughter, wherefore we are come to acquaint him with that which befell us by the way.'" So I took the letter and read as follows: "From the five hundred slaves to his highness our lord the merchant Marouf. To proceed. We give thee to know that, after thou quittedst us, the Arabs came out upon us and attacked us. They were two thousand horse and we five hundred servants and there befell a sore battle between us and them. They took from us of the baggage two hundred loads of stuffs and slew of us fifty men. Moreover, they hindered us from the road thirty days and this is the cause of our tarrying from thee."

When my husband heard this, "God disappoint them!" quoth he. "What ailed them to wage war with the Arabs for the sake of two hundred loads of merchandise? What are two hundred loads? It behoved them not to tarry on that account, for the value of the two hundred loads is but some seven thousand dinars. But needs must I go to them and hasten them. As for that which the Arabs have taken, it will not be missed from the baggage, nor doth it concern me a jot, for I reckon it as if I had given them an alms thereof." Then he went down from me, laughing and taking no concern for the loss of his goods nor the slaughter of his slaves. As soon as he was gone, I looked out from the lattice and saw the ten slaves who had brought him the letter, as they were moons, each clad in a suit worth two thousand dinars, there is not with my father a slave to match one of them. He went forth with them to bring up his baggage and praised be God who hindered me from saying to him aught of that thou badest me, for he would have made mock of me and thee, and belike he would have looked on me with the eye of disparagement and hated me. But the fault is all with thy vizier, who speaketh against my husband words that beseem him not.' 'O my daughter,' replied the king, 'thy husband's wealth is indeed immense and he recks not of it; for, from the day he entered our city, he hath done nought but give alms to the poor. God willing, he will speedily return with the baggage, and great good shall betide us from him.' And he went on to appease her and chide the vizier, being duped by her device.

Meanwhile Marouf fared on into the open country, perplexed and knowing not to what land he should betake himself; and for the anguish of parting and the pangs of passion and love-longing, he lamented and recited the following verses:

Fortune hath played our union false and rent our loves in twain;
My heart's dissolved and all on fire for separation's pain.
Mine eyes with many a tear-drop rain for my belovéd's loss;
This, then, is severance; ah, when shall meeting be again?

O shining full-moon face, I'm he whose entrails for thy love
Thou leftest torn with waste desire, a love-distracted swain.
Would I had never met with thee, since, after the delight Of thy
possession, needs the cup of misery I must drain!
Marouf will never cease to be for Dunya's love distraught: Still
may she live, though he should die, of very passion slain!
O thou whose visage radiant is as the resplendent sun, Succour
his heart that's all consumed with love-longing in vain.
Will Fate, I wonder, e'er reknit our separated loves And shall we
ever of the days union and gladness gain?
Shall my love's mansion reunite us two in joy and I The sapling
of the sands once more in my embraces strain?
Bright visage of the moon at full, ne'er may thy countenance,
The sun of me thy lover, leave with charms to shine amain!
With passion and its cares content am I, since happiness In love's
the butt whereat ill-fate to shoot its shafts is fain.

Then he wept sore, for indeed the ways were blocked up in his sight and death seemed to him better than life, and he fared on, like a drunken man for excess of perplexity, and stayed not till noontide, when he came to a little town and saw a husbandman hard by, ploughing with a yoke of bulls. Now hunger was sore upon him; so he went up to the ploughman and said to him, 'Peace be on thee!' The peasant returned his salutation and said to him, 'Welcome, O my lord! Art thou one of the Sultan's officers?' 'Yes,' answered Marouf; and the other said, 'Alight with me, that I may entertain thee.' Whereupon Marouf knew him to be a liberal man and said to him, 'O my brother, I see with thee nought wherewith thou mayst feed me: how is it, then, that thou invitest me?' 'O my lord,' answered the peasant, 'good is at hand. Alight here: the town is near at hand and I will go [thither] and fetch thee the noon-meal and fodder for thy horse.' 'Since the town is near at hand,' rejoined Marouf, 'I can go thither as quickly as thou and buy me what I have a mind to in the market and eat.' 'O my lord,' answered the peasant, 'the place is but a little village and there is no market there, neither selling nor buying. So, I conjure thee by Allah, alight here with me and heal my heart, and I will go thither and return to thee in haste.'

So he alighted and the peasant left him and went off to the village, to fetch him the noonday meal, whilst Marouf abode awaiting him. Presently he said to himself, ‘I have diverted this poor man from his work; but I will arise and plough in his stead, till he come back, to make up for having hindered him from his work.’ So he took the plough and starting the bulls, ploughed a little, till the share struck against something and the beasts stopped. He urged them on, but they could not move the plough; so he looked at the share and finding it caught in a ring of gold, cleared away the soil therefrom and saw that it was set amiddleward an alabaster flag, the bigness of the nether millstone. He strove at the stone till he pulled it from its place, when there appeared beneath it an underground stair. So he descended the stair and came to a place like a bath, with four raised recesses, the first full of gold, from floor to roof, the second full of emeralds and pearls and coral, the third of jacinths and rubies and turquoises and the fourth of diamonds and all manner other precious stones. At the upper end of the place stood a coffer of pure crystal, full of unique jewels, each the size of a walnut, and thereon lay a casket of gold, the bigness of a lemon.

When he saw this, he marvelled and rejoiced with an exceeding joy and said in himself, ‘I wonder what is in this casket?’ So he opened it and found therein a seal-ring of gold, whereon were graven names and talismans, as they were ant-tracks. He rubbed the ring and immediately a voice said, ‘Here am I, at thy service, O my lord! Ask and it shall be given unto thee. Wilt thou build a town or lay waste a city or kill a king or dig a river or aught of the kind? Whatsoever thou seekest, it shall come to pass, by leave of the Omnipotent King, Creator of night and day.’ ‘O creature of my Lord,’ asked Marouf, ‘who and what art thou?’ Quoth the other, ‘I am the servant of the ring, abiding in the service of him who possesseth it. Whatsoever he seeketh, that accomplish I unto him, and I have no excuse in that he biddeth me do; for that I am Sultan over two-and-seventy tribes of the Jinn, each two-and-seventy thousand in number, every one of whom ruleth over a thousand Marids, each Marid over a thousand Afrits, each Afrit over a thousand Satans and each Satan over a thousand Jinn: and they are all under my commandment and may not gainsay me. As for me, I am enspelled to this seal-ring and may not gainsay him who possesseth it. Now, behold, thou hast gotten possession of it and I am become thy servant; so ask what thou wilt, for I hearken to thy word and obey thy commandment; and if thou have need of me at an, time, by land or by sea, rub the ring and thou wilt find me with thee. But beware of rubbing it twice in succession, or thou wilt consume me with the fire of the names [graven thereon]; so wouldst thou lose me and after regret me. Now have I acquainted thee with my case and peace be on thee!'

'What is thy name?' asked Marouf, and the genie answered, 'Aboussaadat.' 'O Aboussaadat,' said Marouf, 'what is this place and who enchanted thee in this casket?' 'O my lord,' replied he, 'this is a treasure called the Treasure of Sheddad son of Aad, him who builded Irem of the Columns, the like whereof was not made in the lands. I was his servant in his lifetime and this is his seal-ring, which he laid up in his treasure; but it is thy lot.' Quoth Marouf, 'Canst thou transport that which is in the treasure to the surface of the earth?' 'Yes,' answered the genie. 'Nothing easier.' 'Then,' said Marouf, 'bring it forth and leave nothing.' So the genie signed with his hand to the ground, which clove asunder, and he descended and was absent a little while. Presently, there came forth young and graceful boys, with fair faces, bearing golden baskets full of gold, which they emptied out and going away, returned with more: nor did they cease to transport the gold and jewels, till, in a little, they said, 'There is nought left in the treasure.' Whereupon out came Aboussaadat and said to Marouf, 'O my lord, thou seest that we have brought forth all that was in the treasure.'

'Who are these beautiful boys?' asked Marouf, and the genie answered, 'They are my sons. This affair merited not that I should call together the Marids for it, wherefore my sons have done thine occasion and are honoured by serving thee. So ask what thou wilt beside this.' Quoth Marouf, 'Canst thou bring me mules and chests and fill the chests with the treasure and load them on the mules?' 'Nothing easier,' answered Aboussaadat and gave a great cry; whereupon his sons presented themselves before him, to the number of eight hundred, and he said to them, 'Let some of you take the form of mules and others of muleteers and servants and handsome white slaves, the like of the least of whom is not found with any of the kings.’ So seven hundred of them changed themselves into pack mules and other hundred took the form of servants. Then Aboussaadat called upon his Marids, who presented themselves before him, and he commanded some of them to assume the semblance of horses saddled with saddles of gold set with jewels. [They did as he bade them], which when Marouf saw, he said, ‘Where are the chests?’ They brought them before him and he said, ‘Pack the gold and the jewels, each kind by itself.’ So they packed them and loaded three hundred mules with them.

Then said Marouf, ‘O Aboussaadat, canst thou bring me some loads of costly stuffs?’ Quoth the genie, ‘Wilt thou have Egyptian stuffs or Syrian or Persian or Indian or Greek?’ ‘Bring me a hundred loads of each kind,’ answered Marouf, ‘on five hundred mules.’ ‘O my lord,’ said Aboussaadat, ‘grant me time that I may dispose my Marids for this and send a company of them to each country to fetch a hundred loads of its stuffs and then take the form of mules and return, carrying the stuffs.’ ‘What time dost thou want?’ asked Marouf. ‘The time of the blackness of the night,’ answered Aboussaadat, ‘and day shall not dawn ere thou have all thou seekest.’ ‘I grant thee this time,’ said Marouf and bade them pitch him a tent. So they pitched him a tent and he sat down therein and they brought him a table of food. Then said Aboussaadat to him, ‘O my lord, abide thou in this tent and these my sons shall guard thee: so fear thou nothing; for I go to assemble my Marids and send them to do thy desire.’ So saying, he departed, leaving Marouf seated in the tent, with the table before him and the genie’s sons in attendance upon him, in the guise of slaves and servants.

Presently up came the husbandman, with a great platter of lentils and a nose-bag full of barley, and seeing the tent pitched and the slaves standing, with their hands upon their breasts, thought that the Sultan was come and had halted there. So he stood confounded and said in himself, ‘Would I had killed a pair of chickens and fried them with butter for the Sultan!’ And he would have turned back to kill the chickens, to regale the Sultan withal; but Marouf saw him and cried out to him and said to the slaves, ‘Bring him hither.’ So they brought him and his load before Marouf, who said to him, ‘What is this?’ ‘This is thy noon-meal and thy horse’s fodder,’ replied the peasant.

‘Excuse me, for I thought not that the Sultan would come hither; and had I known this, I would have killed a pair of chickens and entertained him handsomely.’ Quoth Marouf, ‘The Sultan is not come. I am his son-in-law and I was vexed with him. However, he hath sent his officers to make his peace with me, and now I am minded to return to the city. But thou hast made me this guest-meal, without knowing me, and I accept it from thee, lentils though it be, and will not eat save of thy cheer.’

So he bade him set the platter midmost the table and ate of it till he had enough, whilst the husbandman filled his belly with those rich meats. Then Marouf washed his hands and gave the servants leave to eat. So they fell upon the remains of the meal and ate: and when the platter was empty, he filled it with gold and gave it to the peasant, saying, ‘Carry this to thy dwelling and come to me in the city, and I will entreat thee with honour.’ So he took the platter full of gold and returned to the village, driving the bulls before him and deeming himself kin to the king. Meanwhile, they brought Marouf girls of the brides of the treasure, who smote on instruments of music and danced before him, and he passed the night in joyance and delight, a night not to be reckoned among lives.

Hardly had the day dawned when there arose a great cloud of dust, which, presently lifting, discovered seven hundred mules laden with stuffs and attended by muleteers and baggage-tenders and linkmen. With them came Aboussaadat, riding on a mule, in the guise of a caravan-leader, and before him was a travelling-litter, with four volutes of glittering red gold, set with jewels. When Aboussaadat came up to the tent, he dismounted and kissing the earth, said to Marouf, ‘O my lord, thine occasion hath been accomplished in full, and in the litter is a treasure-suit that hath not its match among kings’ raiment: so do thou don it and mount the litter and command us what thou wilt.’ ‘O Aboussaadat,’ said Marouf, ‘I wish thee to go to the city of Ikhtiyan el Khuten and carry a letter, which I will write thee, to my father-in-law the king; and go thou not in to him but in the guise of a mortal courier.’ And he answered, ‘I hear and obey.’

So Marouf wrote the letter and sealed it and Aboussaadat took it and set out to deliver it to the king. When he arrived, he found the king saying, ‘O vizier, indeed my heart is concerned for my son-in-law and I fear lest the Arabs slay him. Would he had told me whither he was bound, that I might have followed him with the troops!’ ‘May God have mercy on this thy heedlessness!’ answered the vizier. ‘As thy head liveth, the fellow saw that we were awake to him and feared exposure and fled, for he is nothing but a lying impostor!’ At this moment in came the courier and kissing the earth before the king, wished him abiding glory and prosperity and length of life. Quoth the king, ‘Who art thou and what is thy business?’ ‘I am a courier,’ answered the genie, ‘whom thy son-in-law sendeth to thee with a letter, and he is come with the baggage.’ So he took the letter and read therein these words, ‘Peace to the utterest upon our father-in-law the glorious king! Know that I am at hand with the baggage-train: so come thou forth to meet me with the troops.’

Quoth the king, ‘God blacken thy face, O vizier! How often wilt thou asperse my son-in-law’s honour and call him a liar and an impostor? Behold, he is come with the baggage-train and thou art but a traitor.’ The vizier hung his head in shame and confusion and said, ‘O king of the age, I said this but because of the long delay of the baggage and because I feared the loss of the wealth he hath spent.’ ‘O traitor,’ answered the king, ‘what matter my riches, now that his baggage is come? For he will give me great plenty in their stead.’ Then he bade decorate the city and going in to his daughter, said to her, ‘Good news for thee! Thy husband will be here anon with his baggage; for he hath sent me a letter to that effect and I am now going forth to meet him.’ The princess marvelled at this and said to herself, ‘This is a strange thing! Was he laughing at me and making mock of me, or had he a mind to try me, when he told me that he was a poor man? But praised be God for that I failed not of my duty to him!’

Meanwhile, Ali the Cairene saw the decoration of the city and asked the cause thereof, when they said to him, ‘The baggage-train of the merchant Marouf, the king’s son-in-law, is come.’ ‘God is most great!’ cried he. What a calamity is this man. He came to me, fleeing from his wife, and he was a poor man. Whence then should he get a baggage-train? But belike this is a device that the king’s daughter hath contrived him, for fear of disgrace, and kings can do anything.

May God the Most High screen him and not expose him!' And all the merchants rejoiced and were glad for that they would get their money. Then the king assembled his troops and rode forth, whilst Aboussaadat returned to Marouf and acquainted him with the accomplishment of his errand. Quoth Marouf, 'Bind on the loads.' So they bound them on and he mounted the litter and donning the treasure-suit, became a thousand times greater and more majestic than the king.

Then he set forward; but, when he had gone half-way, the king met him with the troops, and seeing him riding in the litter and clad in the dress aforesaid, threw himself upon him and saluted him and greeted him with the greeting of peace. Moreover, all the grandees of the realm saluted him and it was made manifest that he had spoken the truth and that there was no falsehood in him. Then he entered the city in such state as would have caused the gall-bladder of the lion to burst and the merchants pressed up to him and kissed his hands, whilst Ali said to him, 'Thou hast played off this trick and it has prospered to thy hand, O Sheikh of impostors! But thou deservest it, and may God the Most High increase thee of His bounty!'

Marouf laughed and entering the palace, sat down on the throne and said, 'Carry the loads of gold into the treasury of my uncle the king and bring me the bales of stuffs.' So they brought him the bales and opened them before him, bale after bale, till they had opened the seven hundred loads; whereupon he chose out the best and said, 'Carry these to the princess, that she may distribute them among her women; and carry her also this coffer of jewels, that she may distribute them among her women and eunuchs.' Then he proceeded to give the merchants to whom he was indebted stuffs in payment for their debts, giving him, whose due was a thousand, stuffs worth two thousand or more; after which he fell to distributing to the poor and needy, whilst the king looked on and could not hinder him; nor did he leave giving till he had made an end of the seven hundred loads, when he turned to the troops and proceeded to distribute amongst them emeralds and rubies and pearls and coral and other jewels by handsful, without count, till the king said to him, 'Enough of this giving, O my son! There is but little left of the baggage.' Quoth Marouf, 'I have abundance;' and indeed, his good faith was become manifest and none could belie him more; and he had come to reck not of giving, for that the servant of the ring brought him whatsoever he sought.

Presently, the treasurer came in to the king and said, ‘O king of the age, the treasury is full and will not hold the rest of the loads. Where shall we lay that which is left of the gold and jewels?’ And he assigned to him another place. As for the princess, when she saw this, her joy redoubled and she marvelled and said in herself, ‘How came he by all this wealth?’ In like manner the merchants rejoiced in that which he had given them and blessed him; whilst Ali wondered and said in himself, ‘How hath he lied and swindled, that he hath gotten him all these treasures? But how excellent is the saying of him who saith:

Whenas the King of Kings presents, Forbear to question why or whence.
God gives to whom He will; so keep Within the bounds of reverence.’

The king also marvelled passing measure at that which he saw of Marouf’s generosity and openhandedness in the lavishment of wealth. Then he went in to his wife, who met him, smiling and joyful, and kissed his hand, saying, ‘Didst thou mock me or hadst thou a mind to try me with thy saying, “I am a poor man and a fugitive from my wife?” Praised be God for that I failed not of my duty to thee! For thou art my beloved and there is none dearer to me than thou, whether thou be rich or poor. But I would have thee tell me what thou soughtest by these words.’ ‘I wished to try thee,’ answered Marouf, ‘and see whether thy love were sincere or for the sake of wealth and the lust of worldly good. But now it is become manifest to me that thy love is sincere, so welcome to thee! I know thy worth.’

Then he went apart into a place by himself and rubbed the ring, whereupon Aboussaadat presented himself and said to him, ‘Here am I, at thy service! Ask what thou wilt.’ Quoth Marouf, ‘I want a treasure-suit and treasure-trinkets for my wife, including a necklace of forty unique jewels.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered the genie and brought him what he sought, whereupon Marouf dismissed him and carrying the dress and ornaments in to his wife, laid them before her and said, ‘Take these and put them on and welcome!’ When she saw this, her reason fled for joy, and she found among the ornaments a pair of anklets of gold, set with jewels, of the handiwork of the magicians, and bracelets and earrings and a girdle such as no money could buy. So she donned the dress and ornaments and said to Marouf, ‘O my lord, I will treasure these up for state occasions and festivals.’ But he answered, ‘Wear them always, for I have others in plenty.’ And when she put them on and her women beheld her, they rejoiced and kissed his hands.

Then he left them and going apart by himself, rubbed the ring, whereupon the genie appeared and he said to him, ‘Bring me a hundred suits of apparel, with their ornaments of gold.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered Aboussaadat and brought him the hundred suits, each with its ornaments within it. Marouf took them and called the slave-girls, who came to him, and he gave them each a suit. They donned them and became like unto the black-eyed girls of Paradise, whilst the princess shone amongst them as the moon among the stars. One of them told the king of this and he came in to his daughter and saw her and her women [thus splendidly arrayed and] dazzling all who beheld them; whereat he wondered exceedingly.

Then he went out and calling his vizier, said to him, ‘O vizier, such and such things have happened; what sayst thou [now] of this affair?’ ‘O king of the age,’ answered he, ‘this is no merchant’s fashion; for a merchant keepeth a piece of linen by him for years and selleth it not but at a profit. How should a merchant have such generosity as this and whence should he get the like of these riches and jewels, whereof but a small matter is found with kings? So how should loads thereof be found with merchants? Needs must there be a cause for this; but, if thou wilt hearken to me, I will make the truth of the case manifest to thee.’ ‘O vizier,’ answered the king, ‘I will do thy bidding.’ ‘Then,’ rejoined the vizier, ‘do thou foregather with thy son-in-law and make a show of love to him and talk with him and say, “O my son-in-law, I have a mind to go, thou and I and the vizier, no more, to a garden, that we may take our pleasure there.” When we come to the garden, we will set on the table of wine, and I will ply him therewith and make him drink, will he, nill he; for, when he shall have drunken, he will lose his reason and his judgment will forsake him. Then will we question him of the truth of his case and he will discover to us his secrets, for wine is a traitor and gifted of God is he who saith:

When we had drunken of the wine awhile and it crept near The stead of secrets, "Hold," quoth I thereunto, of my fear
Lest its disordering influence should overcome my wit And to my boon-companions so my secrets should appear.

When he hath told us the truth, we shall know his case and may do with him as we will; for I fear for thee the issues of this his now fashion, for it may be he will covet the kingship and win over the troops by generosity and the lavishment of money and so depose thee and take the kingdom from thee.' 'True,' answered the king, and they passed the night on this agreement.

On the morrow the king went forth and sat in the guest-chamber, when behold the grooms and serving-men came in to him in dismay. Quoth he, 'What hath befallen you?' And they answered, 'O king of the age, the grooms curried the horses and foddered them and the mules that brought the baggage; but, when we arose in the morning, we found that [thy son-in-law's] servants had stolen the horses and mules [and made off with them]. We searched the stables, but found neither horse nor mule; so we entered the servants' lodging and saw none therein, nor know we how they fled.' The king marvelled at this, knowing not that the mules and horses and servants were all Afrits, the subjects of the servant of the spell, and said to the grooms, 'O accursed ones, how could a thousand beasts and five hundred slaves and servants, to boot, flee, without your knowledge?' 'We know not how it happened,' answered they; and he said, 'Go, and when your lord comes forth of the harem, tell him the case.'

So they went out from before the king and abode bewildered, till Marouf came out and seeing them troubled, said to them, 'What is to do?' They told him what had happened and he said, 'What is their worth that ye should be concerned for them? Go your ways.' And he sat laughing and was neither angry nor troubled concerning the matter; whereupon the king looked in the vizier's face and said to him, 'What manner of man is this, with whom wealth is of no account? Needs must there be a reason for this.' Then they talked with him awhile and the king said to him, 'O my son-in-law, I have a mind to go, thou and I and the vizier, to a garden, where we may divert ourselves.' 'I will well,' said Marouf. So they went forth to a garden, wherein were two kinds of every sort of fruit, and it was full of running waters and tall trees and carolling birds. There they entered a pavilion, whose sight did away sorrow from the heart, and sat talking, whilst the vizier entertained them with rare stories and merry jests and mirth-provoking sayings and Marouf listened, till the time of the noon-meal came, when they set on a tray of meats and a pitcher of wine.

When they had eaten and washed their hands, the vizier filled the cup and gave it to the king, who drank it off; then he filled a second and gave it to Marouf, saying, 'Take the cup of the drink to which the reason bows its neck in reverence.' 'What is this, O vizier?' asked Marouf. Quoth he, 'This is the hoary virgin and the old maid long kept in the house, the giver of joy to hearts, whereof saith the poet:

The feet of the sturdy renegades went trampling it of yore, And so of the Arabs' heads its wreak it taketh evermore.
Let one of the sons of the infidels, a moon o' the dark, whose looks To disobedience still invite, the grape-juice to thee pour.

And gifted of God is he who saith:

'Tis as if wine and he, indeed, who doth the goblet bear, When to the boon-companions all he doth display it, were
The dancing morning sun, whose face the full moon of the dark Had handselled with the Gemini, that shining starry pair.
So clear and eke so subtle is its essence that, as 'twere The life itself, through every vein and member it doth fare.

And how excellent is the saying of the poet:

The moon of the full of beauty lay the night in my embrace And the sun in the sphere of the cups was not eclipsed a moment's space;
And still I gazed on the fire, whereto the Magians them prostrate, As from the flagon it did prostrate itself before my face.

And that of another:

Through all the joints it runneth, as in one, Who hath been sick, the tides of healing run.

And yet another:

I marvel at those who first pressed it and tried, How they left us the water of life and yet died!

And yet goodlier is the saying of Abou Nuwas:

Have done and leave to blame me, for blame but angers me, And give me that, for med'cine, that caused my malady;
A yellow one, whose precincts nor grief nor sorrow haunt, And if a stone but touch her, 'tis straightway moved to glee.
She cometh in her flagon, midmost the darksome night, And by her light the dwelling illumined straight we see.
From a kaze-owner take it, attired as if she had A yard; two lovers, wencher and sodomite, hath she; —
She goeth round midst younglings, to whom Fate bows, submiss, And none with aught betideth, save that he hath in gree;
And say to who pretendeth to excellence in love, " One thing, thou'st learnt, but many are still concealed from thee."

But best of all is the saying of Ibn El Mutezz :

God water the tree-shaded island and the convent Abdoun that hight With a constant dropping of rain-clouds, that cease not, day or night!
How oft for the draught of the morning awakened me there of yore, In the forefront of dawn, when the swallow had not yet taken to flight,
The voice of the monks of the convent, indeed, and the sound of their chant, As they crooned o'er their prayers in the gloaming, with their tunics of black bedight!

How many a loveling among them, eye-painted with languor, abode, Whose eyelids on eyes shut that glittered with lustrous black and white,
Who came forth to visit me, shrouding himself in the cloak of the night, And hastened his steps, as he wended, for caution and fear and affright!
Then rose I and laid in his pathway my cheek, as a carpet it were, For abjection, and trailed o'er my traces my skirts, to efface them from sight.
But, lo, the new moon rose and shone, like a nailparing cleft from the nail, And all but discovered our loves with the gleam of her meddlesome light;
And then there betideth between us what I'll not discover, i' faith; So question no more of the matter and deem not of ill or upright.

And gifted of God is he who saith:

The richest of mortals am I; In gladness rejoiceth my soul.
Liquid gold without stint I possess, And I measure it out by the bowl.

And how goodly is the saying of the poet;

By Allah, there's no alchemy, except in this it be, And all is false that they avouch of other alchemy!
Upon a hundredweight of woe a carat pour of wine And straight it is transformed and changed to gladness and to glee.

And that of another:

The glasses, when we'er empty, are heavy; but forthright When with pure wine we fill them, unblent, they grow as light
As air and eke for transport they're like to fly away; And bodies in like manner are lightened by the spright.

And yet another:

Wine and the cup to worship have claims more than can be said, Nor is it right in us to leave their claims unhonoured.
Whenas I die, beside a vine I prithee bury me, So of its veins I still may drink, e'en after I am dead;
Yea, in the desert waterless, I charge you, lay me not, For sore after my death to taste no more of wine I dread.'

And he ceased not to incite him to drink, naming to him such of the virtues of wine as he thought well and repeating to him what occurred to him of verses and pleasant anecdotes on the subject, till Marouf addressed himself to sucking the lips of the cup and cared no longer for aught else. The vizier ceased not to fill for him and he to drink and enjoy himself and make merry, till he lost his reason and could not distinguish right from wrong. When the vizier saw that drunkenness had attained in him to utterance and overpassed the limit, he said to him, 'By Allah, O merchant Marouf, it wonders me whence thou gottest these jewels whose like the kings of the Chosroës possess not! In all our lives never saw we a merchant possessed of riches like unto shine or more generous than thou, for thy fashion is the fashion of kings and not the fashion of merchants. So, God on thee, do thou acquaint me with this, that I may know thy rank and condition.' And he went on to ply him with questions and cajole him, till Marouf, being bereft of reason, said to him, 'I am neither merchant nor king,' and told him his whole story from first to last.

Then said the vizier, 'I conjure thee by Allah, O my lord Marouf, show us the ring, that we may see its fashion.' So, in his drunkenness, he pulled off the ring and said, 'Take it and look upon it.' The vizier took it and turning it over, said, 'If I rub it, will the genie appear?' 'Yes,' replied Marouf. 'Rub it and he will appear to thee, and do thou divert thyself with the sight of him.' So the vizier rubbed the ring and immediately the genie appeared and said, 'Here am I, at thy service, O my lord I Ask and it shall be given to thee. Wilt thou lay waste a town or build a city or slay a king? Whatsoever thou seekest, I will do for thee, without fail.' The vizier pointed to Marouf and said, 'Take up yonder knave and cast him down in the most desolate of desert lands, where he shall find nothing to eat nor drink, so he may die of hunger and perish miserably, and none know of him.'

So the genie snatched him up and flew up with him betwixt heaven and earth, which when Marouf saw, he gave himself up for lost and wept and said, 'O Aboussaadat, whither goest thou with me?' 'Dolt that thou art,' replied the genie, 'I go to cast thee down in the desert quarter of the world. Shall one have the like of this talisman and give it to the folk to look upon? Verily, thou deservest that which hath befallen thee; and but that I fear God, I would let thee fall from a height of a thousand fathoms, nor shouldst thou reach the earth, till the winds had torn thee in pieces.' Marouf was silent and did not again bespeak him till he reached the desert quarter of the world and casting him down there, went away and left him in that horrible place.

Meanwhile, the vizier said to the king, 'How deemest thou now? Did I not tell thee that this fellow was a liar and an impostor, but thou wouldst not credit me?' 'Thou wast in the right, O my vizier,' replied the king. 'God grant thee health! But give me the ring, that I may look upon it.' The vizier looked at him angrily and spat in his face, saying, 'O dullard, how shall I give it to thee and abide thy servant, after I am become thy master? But I will spare thee no more.' Then he rubbed the ring and said to the genie, 'Take up this churl and cast him down by his son-in-law the impostor.' So the genie took him up and flew off with him, whereupon quoth the king to him, 'O creature of my Lord, what is my crime?' 'I know not,' answered Aboussaadat; 'but my lord hath commanded me unto this and I cannot disobey him who possesseth the enchanted ring.' Then he flew on with him, till he came to the desert quarter and casting him down whereas he had cast Marouf, returned and left him. The king, hearing Marouf weeping, went up to him and acquainted him with his case; and they sat weeping over that which had befallen them and found neither meat nor drink.

As for the vizier, he went forth from the garden and summoning all the troops, held a court and told them what he had done with the king and Marouf and acquainted them with the affair of the ring, adding, 'Except ye make me Sultan over you, I will bid the servant of the ring take you all up and cast you down in the desert quarter of the world, where you shall die of hunger and thirst.' 'Do us no hurt,' answered they; 'for we accept thee to Sultan over us and will not any wise gainsay thy commandment.' So they agreed, in their own despite, to his being Sultan over them, and he bestowed on them robes of honour, seeking all he had a mind to of Aboussaadat, who brought it to him forthright. Then he sat down on the throne and the troops made submission to him; and he sent to the king's daughter, saying, 'Make thee ready, for I mean to come in to thee this night, because I long for thee.'

When she heard this, she wept, for [the loss of] her husband and father was grievous to her, and sent to him, saying, 'Have patience with me till my days of widowhood are accomplished: then draw up thy contract of marriage with me and go in to me according to law.' But he sent back to say to her, 'I know neither days of widowhood nor delay, and I need not a contract nor know I lawful from unlawful; but needs must I go in to thee this night.' So she answered him, saying, 'So be it, then, and welcome to thee!' But this was a trick on her part. When the answer reached the vizier, he rejoiced and his heart was gladdened, for that he was passionately enamoured of her. So he bade set food before all the folk. saying, 'Eat; this is my bride-feast; for I purpose to go in to the princes this night.' Quoth the Skeikh el Islam, 'It is not lawful for thee to go in to her till her days of widowhood be accomplished and thou have drawn up thy contract of marriage with her.' But he answered, 'I know neither days of widowhood nor delay; so multiply not words on me.' So the Sheikh was silent, fearing his mischief, and said to the troops, 'Verily, this man is infidel and hath neither faith nor religion.'

As soon as it was night, he went in to her and found her clad in her richest raiment and decked with her goodliest ornaments. When she saw him, she came to meet him, laughing, and said, '[This is] a blessed night! But, hadst thou slain my father and my husband, it had been better to my mind.' And he said, 'Needs must I slay them.' Then she made him sit down and began to jest with him and make a show of love to him, caressing him and smiling in his face, whereupon his reason fled; but she did but cajole him on this wise that she might get possession of the ring and change his joy into calamity on his bead; nor did she deal thus with him but after the counsel of him who saith:

Indeed, I have won by my sleight What swords had not compassed nor might,
And with spoil I return, whose plucked fruits Are sweet to the taste and the sight.

When he saw her caress him and smile upon him, desire stirred in him and he besought her of dalliance; but, when he drew near her, she started back from him, saying' 'O my lord, seest thou not the man looking at us? I conjure thee by Allah, screen me from his eyes! How canst thou have to do with me what while he looketh on us?' When he heard this, he was angry and said, 'Where is the man?' 'There he is, in the beazel of the ring,' answered she, 'putting out his head and looking at us.' He thought that the genie was looking at them and said laughing, 'Fear not; this is the servant of the ring, and he is at my commandment.' Quoth she, 'I am afraid of Afrits; pull it off and throw it afar from me.' So he pulled it off and laying it on the cushion, drew near to her, but she dealt him a kick in the stomach and he fell over on his back, senseless: whereupon she cried out to her attendants, who came to her in haste, and said to them, 'Lay hold on him.'

So forty slave-girls seized him, whilst she snatched up the ring from the cushion and rubbed it; whereupon Aboussaadat presented himself, saying, 'Here am I, at thy service, O my mistress.' 'Take up yonder infidel,' said she, 'and clap him in prison and shackle him heavily.' So he took him and laying him in strait prison, returned and told her. Quoth she, 'Whither wentest thou with my father and my husband?' And he answered, ' I cast them down in the desert quarter of the world.' Then said she, 'I command thee to fetch them to me forthwith.' 'I hear and obey,' replied he and taking flight at once, stayed not till he reached the desert quarter, where he lighted down upon them and found them sitting weeping and complaining to each other. Quoth he, 'Fear not, for relief is come to you.' And he told them what the vizier had done, adding, 'Indeed I imprisoned him with my own hand, in obedience to her commandment, and she hath bidden me carry you back.' And they rejoiced in his news. Then he took them up and flew back with them; nor was it more than an hour before he brought them in to the princess, who rose and saluted them. Then she made them sit down and brought them food and sweetmeats, and they passed the rest of the night [with her].

On the morrow, she clad them in rich apparel and said to the king, ‘O my father, sit thou on thy throne and be king as before and make my husband thy Vizier of the Right and acquaint thy troops with that which hath happened. Then send for the vizier out of prison and slay him and after burn him, for that he is an infidel and would have gone in to me in the way of lewdness, without marriage-rites, and he hath testified against himself that he is an infidel and believeth in no religion. And do thou tender thy son-in law, whom thou makest thy Vizier of the Right.’ ‘I hear and obey, O my daughter,’ answered he. ‘But give me the ring or give it to thy husband.’ Quoth she, ‘It behoveth not that either thou or he have it. I will keep it myself, and belike I shall be more careful of it than you. Whatsoever ye want, seek it of me and I will demand it for you of the servant of the ring. So fear no harm so long as I live, and after my death, do as ye will with the ring.’ This is well seen, O my daughter,’ rejoined the king and taking Marouf, went forth to the divan.

Now the troops had passed the night in sore concern for the princess and that which the vizier had done with her, in going in to her after the way of lewdness, without rite of marriage, and for his ill-usage of the king and Marouf, and they feared lest the law of Islam be dishonoured, because it was manifest to them that he was an infidel. So they assembled in the divan and fell to reproaching the Sheikh el Islam, saying, ‘Why didst thou not forbid him from going in to the princess in the way of lewdness?’ ‘O folk,’ answered he, ‘the man is an infidel and hath gotten possession of the ring and you and I can avail nothing against him. But God the Most High will requite him his deed, and be ye silent, lest he slay you.’ As they were thus engaged, in came the king and Marouf, and when the troops saw the former, they rejoiced in his return and rising to their feet, kissed the earth before him. He sat down on his throne and told them what had passed, whereupon their chagrin ceased from them.

Then he commanded to decorate the city and sent to fetch the vizier from the prison. [So they brought him], and as he passed by the troops, they cursed him and reviled him and upbraided him, till he came to the king, who commanded to put him to the vilest of deaths. So they slew him and after burned his body, and he went to Hell, after the sorriest of fashions; and right well quoth one of him:

God to the tomb wherein his bones are laid no mercy show
And Munker and Nekir therein be present evermo'!

The king made Marouf his Vizier of the Right and the times were pleasant to them and their joys untroubled. They abode thus five years, till, in the sixth year, the king died and the princess made Marouf Sultan in her father's stead, but gave him not the ring. During this time she had conceived by him and borne him a boy of surpassing loveliness, excelling in beauty and perfection, who was reared in the laps of the nurses till he reached the age of five, when his mother fell ill of a mortal sickness and calling her husband to her, said to him, 'I am ill.' Quoth he, 'May God preserve thee, O beloved of my heart!' 'Belike,' said she, 'I shall die and thou needest not that I commend thy son to thy care: wherefore I charge thee but be careful of the ring, for thine own and the boy's sake.' And he answered, 'No harm shall befall him whom God preserveth!' Then she pulled off the ring and gave it to him, and on the morrow she was admitted to the mercy of God the Most High, whilst Marouf abode in possession of the kingship and applied himself to the governance.

One day, he shook the handkerchief and [dismissed the divan, whereupon] the troops withdrew to their places and he betook himself to the sitting-chamber, where he sat till the day departed and the night came with the darkness Then came in to him his boon-companions of the notables [of the kingdom], according to their wont,, and sat with him, by way of solace and diversion, till midnight, when they craved leave to withdraw. He gave them leave and they retired to their houses; after which there came in to him a slave-girl affected to the service of his bed, who spread him the mattress and doing off his apparel, clad him in his sleeping-gown Then he lay down and she kneaded his feet, till he tell asleep; whereupon she withdrew to her own chamber and slept.

Presently, he felt something beside him in the bed and starting up in alarm, said, 'I seek refuge with God from Satan the Stoned!' Then he opened his eyes and seeing by his side a woman foul of favour, said to her, ‘Who art thou?’ ‘Fear not,’ answered she. ‘I am thy wife Fatimeh.’ Whereupon he looked in her face and knew her by her misshapen form and the length of her dog teeth: so he said to her, ‘Whence camest thou in to me and who brought thee to this country?’ Quoth she, ‘In what country art thou at this present?’ And he said, ‘In the city of Ikhtiyan el Khuten. But thou, when didst thou leave Cairo?’ ‘But now,’ answered she. ‘How can that be?’ asked he. ‘Know,’ said she ‘that, when I fell out with thee and Satan prompted me to do thee a mischief, so that I complained of thee to the magistrates, they sought for thee and the Cadis enquired of thee, but found thee not. When two days were past, repentance get hold upon me and I knew that the fault was with me; but repentance availed me not, and I abode awhile weeping for thy loss, till what was in my hand failed and needs must I beg my bread. So I fell to begging of all, rich and poor, and since thou leftest me, I have eaten of the humiliation of beggary and have been in the sorriest of plights. Every night I sat weeping for thy loss and for that which I suffered, since thy departure, of contempt and humiliation and abjection and misery.’

And she went on to tell him what had befallen her, whilst he stared at her in amazement, till she said, ‘Yesterday, I went about all day, begging, but none gave me aught; and as often as I accosted any one and begged of him a morsel of bread, he reviled me and gave me nought. When night came, I went to bed supperless, and hunger consumed me and sore on me was that which I suffered, and I sat weeping. Presently, one appeared to me and said, “O woman, why weepest thou?” Quoth I, “I had a husband who used to provide for me and fulfil my wishes; but he is lost to me and I know not whither he is gone and have been in sore straits since he left me.” “What is thy husband’s name?” asked he, and I answered, “His name is Marouf.” “I know him,” said he. “Know that thy husband is now Sultan in a certain city, and if thou wilt, I will carry thee to him.” Quoth I, “I conjure thee of thy bounty to bring me to him!” So he took me up and flew with me between heaven and earth, till he brought me to this pavilion and said to me, “Enter yonder chamber, and thou wilt see thy husband asleep on the couch.” So I entered and found thee in this estate or lordship. Indeed, I thought not that thou wouldst forsake me, who am thy mate, and praised be God who hath united me with thee!'

Quoth Marouf, 'Did I forsake thee or thou me? Thou complainedst of me from Cadi to Cadi and endedst by denouncing me to the Supreme Court and bringing down on me the men of violence from the citadel: so I fled in my own despite.' And he went on to tell her all that had befallen him and how he was become Sultan and had married the king's daughter and how the latter had died, leaving him a son, who was then seven years old. Quoth she, That which happened was fore-ordained of God the Most High; but I repent me and cast myself on thy generosity, beseeching thee not to forsake me, but suffer me eat bread with thee by way of alms.'

And she ceased not to humble herself to him and supplicate him till his heart relented towards her and he said to her, 'Repent from mischief and abide with me, and nought shall betide thee save what shall pleasure thee: but, if thou do any wickedness, I will slay thee and fear no on. And think not that thou canst complain of me to the Supreme Court and that the men of violence will come down on me from the citadel; for I am become Sultan and the folk fear me: but I fear none save God the Most High, for that I have an enchanted ring, which when I rub, the servant of the ring appeareth to me His name is Aboussaadat, and whatsoever I demand of him he bringeth to me. So, if thou desire to return to thine own country, I will give thee what shall suffice thee all thy life and will send thee thither speedily; but, if thou desire to abide with me, I will assign thee a palace and furnish it with the choicest of silks and appoint thee twenty slave girls to serve thee and provide thee with dainty food and sumptuous apparel, and thou shalt be a queen and live in all delight, till thou or I die. What sayst thou of this?' 'I wish to abide with thee,' answered she and kissed his hand and made profession of repentance from wickedness. So he assigned her a palace for her sole use and gave her slave-girls and eunuchs, and she became a queen.

The young prince used to visit her, even as he visited his father; but she hated him for that he was not her son; and when the boy saw that she looked on him with the eye of despite and hatred, he shunned her and took an aversion to her. As for Marouf, he occupied himself with the love of fair slave-girls and bethought him not of his wife Fatimeh, for that she was grown a grizzled old woman, foul of favour and bald-headed, loathlier than the speckled snake, the more that she had beyond measure evil entreated him aforetime; and as saith the adage, 'III-usage rooteth up desire and soweth hatred in the soil of hearts ;' and gifted of God is he who saith:

Be careful not to hurt men's hearts nor work them aught of dole,
For hard it is to bring again a once estranged soul;
And hearts, the love whereof hath ta'en alarm and fled away, Are
like a broken glass, whose breach may never be made whole.

And indeed he had not given her shelter by reason of any praiseworthy quality in her, but he dealt with her thus generously only of desire for the approval of God the Most High; wherefore he occupied not himself with her by way of marriage. When she saw that he held aloof from her bed and occupied himself with others, she hated him and jealousy gat the mastery of her and Satan prompted her to take the ring from him and kill him and make herself queen in his stead. So she went forth one night from her pavilion, intending for that in which was her husband the king; and it chanced, by the ordinance of fate and written destiny, that Marouf lay that night with one of his favourites, a damsel endowed with beauty and grace and symmetry.

Now it was his wont, of the excellence of his piety, that, when he was minded to have to do with a woman, he would put off the enchanted ring from his finger, in reverence to the holy names engraved thereon, and lay it on the pillow, nor would he don it again till he had purified himself [according to the law]. Moreover, when he had lain with a woman, he was used to bid her go forth from him [before daybreak], of his fear for the ring; and when he went forth to the bath, he locked the door of the pavilion till his return, when he put on the ring, and after this, all were free to enter as of wont. Fatimeh knew of all this and went not forth from her place till she had certified herself that the case was as we have said. So she sallied out, purposing to go in to him, whilst he was drowned in sleep, and steal the ring, unseen of him.

Now it chanced at this time that the kings son had gone out, without light, to the draught-house, to do an occasion, and sat down on the jakes in the dark, leaving the door open. Presently, he saw Fatimeh come forth of her pavilion and make stealthily for that of his father and said in himself, ‘What ails this witch to leave her lodging in the dead of the night and make for my father’s pavilion? Needs must there be some reason for this.’ So he went out after her and followed in her steps unseen of her. Now he had a short sword of watered steel, which he held dear, so that he went not to his father’s divan, except he were girt therewith; and his father used to laugh at him and say, ‘What God will! This is a fine sword of thine, O my son! But thou hast not gone down with it to battle nor cut off a head therewith.’ Whereupon the boy would reply, ‘I will not fail to cut off with it some head worth the cutting.’ And Marouf would laugh at his words.

So he drew the sword from its sheath and followed her till she came to his father’s pavilion and entered, whilst he stood and watched her from the door. He saw her searching about and heard her say [to herself], ‘Where hath he laid the ring?’ Whereby he knew that she was looking for the ring and waited till she found it and said, ‘Here it is.’ Then she picked it up and turned to go out; but he hid behind the door. As she came forth, she looked at the ring and turning it about in her hand, was about to rub it, when he raised his hand with the sword and smote her on the neck; and she gave one cry and fell down dead.

With this Marouf awoke and seeing his wife lying on the ground, with her blood flowing, and his son standing with the drawn sword in his hand, said to him, ‘What is this, O my son?’ ‘O my father,’ answered the prince, ‘how often hast thou said to me, “Thou hast a fine sword; but thou hast not gone down with it to battle nor cut off a head.” And I have answered thee, saying, “I will not fail to cut off with it a head worth the cutting.” And now, behold, I have cut off for thee therewith a head worth the cutting!’ And he told him what had yessed. Marouf sought for the ring, but found it not; so he searched the dead woman’s body till he saw her hand closed upon it; whereupon he took it from her hand and said to the boy, ‘Thou art indeed my very son, without doubt; may God ease thee in this world and the next, even as thou hast eased me of this vile woman! Her endeavour led but to her own destruction, and gifted of God is he who saith:

When God His aid unto a. man vouchsafes, good hap is his And still his wish of everything he cloth fulfil, ywis;
But' if the Almighty's countenance to any be denied, The first to against the wight his own endeavour is.'

Then he called to some of his attendants, who came in haste, and he told them what his wife Fatimeh had done and bade them take her and lay her in a place till the morning. They did as he bade them and [on the morrow] he gave her in charge to a number of eunuchs who washed her and shrouded her and made her a tomb and buried her. Thus her coming from Cairo was but to her grave, and gifted of God is he who saith:

We tread the steps to us of destiny forewrit; For he to whom a way is decreed must needs submit
To walk therein, and he whose death is fore-ordained To be in such a land shall die in none but it

And how excellent is the saying of the poet:

When to a land I fare in quest of good, perdie, I know not, of the twain, which fortune mine shall be;
Whether the good 'twill prove, "hereafter I do seek, Or else the evil hap that seeketh after me.

After this, he sent for the husbandman, whose guest he had been, when he was a fugitive, and made him his Vizier of the Right and his chief counsellor. Then, learning that he had a daughter of surpassing beauty and grace, of noble parts and high of worth and birth, he took her to wife; and in due time he married his son. So they abode awhile in all delight and solace of life and their days were serene and their joys untroubled, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies, he who layeth waste flourishing houses and orphaneth sons and daughters. And glory be to the [Ever-]Living One who dieth not and in whose hand are the keys of the Seen and the Unseen!"

* * * * *

Now, during this time, Shehrzad had borne the King three male children: so, when she had made an end of the story of Marouf, she rose to her feet and kissing the earth before him, said, "O king of the age and unique pearl of the time and the day, I am thine handmaid and these thousand nights and one have I entertained thee with stories of foregone peoples and admonitory instances of the ancients. May I then make bold to crave a boon of Thy Majesty?" "Ask, O Shehrzad," answered he, "and it shall be given unto thee." Whereupon she cried out to the nurses and the eunuchs, saying, "Bring me my children." So they brought them to her in haste, and they were three male children, one walking, one crawling and one sucking [at the breast]. She took them and setting them before the King, kissed the ground and said, "O king of the age, these are thy children and I crave that thou release me from the doom of death, for the sake of these infants; for, if thou slay me, they will become motherless and will find none among women to rear them aright."

When the King heard this, he wept and straining the children to his bosom, said, "By Allah, O Shehrzad, I pardoned thee before the coming of these children, for that I found thee chaste, pure, noble and pious! May God bless thee and thy father and thy mother and thy root and thy branch! I take God to witness against me that I exempt thee from aught that can harm thee." So she kissed his hands and feet and rejoiced with an exceeding joy, saying, "May God make thy life long and increase thee in reverence and majesty!" Therewith joy spread throughout the palace of the King and the good news was bruited abroad in the city; it was a night not to be counted among lives and its colour was whiter than the face of day.

On the morrow, the King arose, full of joy and contentment, and summoning all his troops, bestowed on his vizier Shehrzad's father, a rich and splendid robe of honour and said to him, "God protect thee, for that thou gavest me to wife thy noble daughter, who hath been the means of my repentance from slaying the daughters of the people. Indeed, I have found her noble, pure, chaste and virtuous, and God hath vouchsafed me three male children by her; wherefore praised be He for this exceeding bounty!” Then he bestowed dresses of honour upon all his viziers and amirs and the grandees of his realm and bade decorate the city thirty days; nor did he put one of the townsfolk to aught of charge on account thereof, but the whole of the expenditure was from the Kings treasury. So they decorated the city in splendid fashion, never before was seen the like thereof, and the drums beat and the pipes sounded, whilst all the mimes and mountebanks and players plied their various arts and the King lavished on them gifts and largesse. Moreover, he gave alms to the poor and needy and extended his bounty to all his subjects and the people of his realm. And he and they abode in pleasance and delight and happiness and contentment, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies So glory be to Him whom the vicissitudes of time waste not away nor cloth aught of change betide Him? whom one case diverteth not from other and who is unique in the attribute of perfection! And blessing and peace upon the High Priest of His Majesty and His Elect among His creatures, our lord MOHAMMED, the chief of mankind, through whom we beseech Him for a goodly end!

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John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

THE BOOK OF THE THOUSAND NIGHTS AND ONE NIGHT: ITS HISTORY AND CHARACTER.

I.

It is now a hundred and eighty years since M. Antoine Galland first introduced to the notice of European readers the most popular collection of narrative fiction in existence, by his translation, published in the year 1704, of an Arabic manuscript alleged to have been procured by him from Syria, which contained something less than a quarter of the tales that compose the work known as “The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night.” M. Galland was aware of the imperfection of the MS. used by him, and (unable to obtain a more perfect copy) he seems to have endeavoured to supply the place of the missing portions by incorporating in his translation a number of Persian, Turkish and Arabic tales, which had no connection with his original and for which it is generally supposed that he probably had recourse to various Oriental MSS. (as yet unidentified) contained in the Royal Libraries of Paris. These interpolated tales occupy more than a third part of the entire work known as the “Arabian Nights’ Entertainments” and comprise some of the most popular portions of the work, as will be seen from the following list of them.

1. The History of Prince Zeyn Alasnam and the King of the Genii.
2. The History of Codadad and the Princess of Deryabar.
3. The Story of the Sleeper Awakened.
4. Aladdin or the Wonderful Lamp.
5. The Story of the Blind Man Baba Abdalla.
6. The Story of Sidi Nouman.
7. The Story of Cogia Hassan Alhabbal.
8. Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves.
9. Ali Cogia, the Merchant of Baghdad.
10. Prince Ahmed and the Fairy Pari-Banou.
11. The Sisters who envied their younger Sister.

Of these, the Story of the Sleeper Awakened is the only one which has been traced to an Arabic original, existing either separately or in connection with the Thousand Nights and One Night, and is found in the Breslau edition of the complete work, printed by Dr. Habicht from a manuscript of Tunisian origin, apparently of much later date than the other known copies. It also occurs in a MS. copy in the British Museum and will be found translated among the stories from printed texts of the Thousand Nights and One Night (not contained in my standard text or in the Boulac edition) which it is proposed to issue as a supplement to the present work. Galland himself cautions us that the stories of Zeyn Alasnam and Codadad do not belong to the Thousand and One Nights and were published (how he does not explain) without his authority; and the concluding portion of his MS., presumably containing the larger half of Camaralzaman, the whole of Ganem and the Enchanted Horse, as well as all the intercalated tales (that is to say, nearly one-half of the French translation), being unfortunately lost, it appears impossible to ascertain the precise source from which he drew the latter. Opinions differ upon this point, some Orientalists holding (with De Sacy) that the originals of the added tales were found by Galland in the public libraries of Paris (whence, however, no researches have as yet availed to unearth them), and others (with the late Mr. Chenery) that he procured them from the recitation of story-tellers in the bazaars of Smyrna and other towns in the Levant, during his travels there. It was stated by the late Professor Palmer that he found the story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves current, in a slightly different form, among the Bedouins of Sinai; but, although the names of the personages of the story (Ali, Abdallah, Mustafa, Morgiana (*Merjaneh*), Cassim, Hussein) are purely Arabic, the use of the Persian titles *Baba* and *Cogia* (see post) seems to point to a Turkish or Persian origin, and it will be noted that the scene is laid in “a city of Persia” and that the story differs widely in style and character from any known to belong to the genuine text. Mr. Palmer also expressed a doubt whether the most popular story of the old book, Aladdin, was an Eastern story at all; but the only evidence we possess upon the subject, that of the tale itself, does not appear to offer any reasonable confirmation of his scepticism. The names (Mustafa, Alaeddin, Bedrulbudour, Fatimeh, etc.) are without exception Arab, and the story follows the familiar lines of Arabic fiction, of which, in particular, the introduction of the African (or Persian) magician, the finding of the enchanted treasure and ring, the marriage of the finder with the King's daughter, the magical building of the palace, the discovery of the unknown by geomancy, the loss of the talisman through the heedlessness of a third party and its recovery by stratagem, the disgrace of the hero at the instance of the envious vizier, the drugging of the magician and the assumption of the disguise of a devotee for the vilest purposes, are all familiar incidents and find their counterparts in many genuine stories of the Thousand and One Nights, whilst the manners and customs described, allowing for the extreme licence and looseness of Galland's version, do not seem essentially to differ from those pourtrayed in tales of unquestioned authenticity, such as Camaralzaman or Beder. It may also be observed that there is a considerable resemblance between the plan and details of the story, as given by Galland, and those of Jouder and his brothers (Vol. VI.) and Marouf (in the present volume) and that Scott's meagre abstract (published in 1811) of a few of the unknown tales contained in the Wortley Montague MS. of the Thousand Nights and One Night includes the skeleton of a story ("The Fisherman's Son"), which bears some resemblance to Aladdin and a still greater one to the well-known German Mährchen of the White Stone; but, in my opinion, this story is a modern fabrication and has no connection with the original work. The Wortley Montague MS., indeed, appears to be, as a whole, of doubtful authenticity, if we may judge from Scott's translations from it and the detailed account given (in Ouseley's Oriental Collections) of its contents by the translator himself, who states that it bears at end a note to the effect that it was written (or transcribed) in the year 1178 of the Hegira (A.D. 1766) by Omar es Sufti (Sufta). Sufta (popularly *Softa*) signifies, in Turkish, a divinity student, and this, together with the evidently modern style of the copy, the incoherent jumble of adventure of which the stories (as rendered by Scott) appear to consist and which is much more characteristic of modern Turkish fiction than of the more artistic kind peculiar to the Arabs, and the frequent correspondence of the incidents with German and other popular stories, (a correspondence which, only in the most rudimentary form, is found in the genuine work), appear to stamp this MS. as being, at least as far as the latter portion (which differs greatly from any other copy known to myself) is concerned, as a modern Turkish rifacimento.

Of the remaining six interpolations, the tenth and eleventh (Prince Ahmed and the Fairy Pari-Banou and The Three Sisters) are evidently Persian and comparatively modern (as a Yankee would say) "at that." The use of the Persian prefix, "Cogia" (*Khwajeh*, master or lord, Arabic equivalent *ustadh* or *muallim*), improperly applied to a ropemaker and a merchant of Baghdad, would also point to a Persian or Turkish origin of Nos. 7 and 9 (Cogia Hassan Alhabbal and Ali Cogia), as also the title "Baba" (Gaffer, Daddy, Arabic equivalent *Sheikh*) given to the blind man Abdalla[h] in No. 5, and the general tone of these three stories, as well as that of Sidi Nouman (No. 6), testifies to the probability of their having been composed, at a comparatively recent period, by a person not an inhabitant of Baghdad, in imitation of the legends of Haroun er Reshid and other well-known tales of the original work. It is possible that an exhaustive examination of the various MS. copies of the Thousand and One Nights known to exist in the public libraries of Europe might yet cast some light upon the question of the origin of the interpolated tales; but, in view of the strong presumption afforded by internal evidence that they are of modern composition and form no part of the authentic text, it can hardly be expected, where the result and the value of that result are alike so doubtful, that any competent person will be found to undertake so heavy a task, except as incidental to some more general enquiry. The only one of the eleven, which seems to me to bear any trace of possible connection with the Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night, is Aladdin, and it may be that an examination of the MS. copies of the original work within my reach will yet enable me to trace the origin of this favourite story.

Having at his command the earlier portion only of the collection, Galland was in some measure compelled to invent a denouement, in which he represents the Sultan as pardoning Sheherazade, in consideration of the pleasure her story-telling talents had afforded him. If we turn to the authentic text, we find a totally different version. It appears that Sheherazade had (somewhat irreconcileably) during the progress of the story-telling (extending over nearly three years) borne the Sultan three male children; and in concluding the story of the thousand and first night, she presents these latter to him, begging him to spare her life and not leave her infants motherless. To this he consents in the most gracious fashion, telling her that he had, before their birth, resolved to spare her, in consideration of the great qualities of virtue, wisdom and nobility of mind he had discovered in her (an assertion, by the way, completely borne out by the record of Night cxlviii, in which he is represented as informing Sheherazade that she has by her wise saws and moral instances put him out of conceit with his kingdom and made him repent of having killed so many women and girls), and concludes by bestowing high honours on her father the Vizier, for having given him a wife of such worth and intelligence, and ordering the city to be decorated and general rejoicings to be celebrated. A rather amusing trait in this conclusion is the empliasis with which the author insists upon the gratifying fact that the whole cost of the rejoicings was defrayed from the royal treasury, and that not a penny came out of the pockets of the Sultan's subjects; no doubt a sufficiently remarkable exception to the practice of Oriental despots like his hero Haroun er Reshid, who was generally careful to make some unfortunate or other provide the money which he lavished upon his favourites or flung away on the caprices, sometimes laudable, but more often extravagant and senseless, that have won him his most ill-deserved reputation.

It is much to be regretted that the French translator, in accordance with the literary licence of an age in which the principles of the art of translation were perhaps less generally understood than at any known literary epoch, should have thought himself entitled to deal with the original text in a manner which in the present day, more strict upon the question of fidelity and local colouring, would certainly have been visited with the severest repro bation. Both in abridgment and amplification of the original, his sins of omission and commission are innumerable; and he permits himself not unfrequently the most inexplicable and apparently wilful perversions, as in the story of the Merchant and the Genie, where he makes the former throw away the *shell*, instead of the stone, of the date (which of course has no shell), and in that of Bedreddin Hassan, where he substitutes a cream-tart for the true corpus delicti, a mess of pomegranate-seed (a dish repeatedly mentioned in the Nights), and represents the hero as going to bed in his trousers, going out of his way solemnly to assure us, in a special footnote, that the Eastern nations invariably sleep in those garments, although it is distinctly stated in the text that Bedreddin, before getting into bed, took off his trousers, wrapped up in them the purse of a thousand dinars he had received of the Jew and placed them under the pillow of the couch, retaining only one garment, a shirt of fine silk. These are a fair specimen of the many inexcusable alterations he permits himself, and in addition to this he did not scruple to correct and adorn what doubtless seemed to him the frequently repulsive artlessness and crude simplicity of the original, expanding, abridging, amplifying and substituting in the most wholesale and uncompromising manner. To give only one example, where I might cite many, of the liberties he allowed himself in this kind, there is perhaps no passage in the old version more generally admired than the description of Egypt contained in the story of the Jewish Physician. I quote the passage as it stands in the old translation of Galland's version, edited by Scott:

"My father joined in opinion with those of his brothers who had spoken in favour of Egypt; which filled me with joy. Say what you will, said he, the man that has not seen Egypt has not seen the greatest rarity in the world. All the land there is golden; I mean, it is so fertile, that it enriches its inhabitants. All the women of that country charm you by their beauty and their agreeable carriage. If you speak of the Nile, where is there a more wonderful river? What water was ever lighter or more delicious? The very slime it carries along, in its overflowing, fattens the fields, which produce a thousand times more than other countries that are cultivated with the greatest labour. Observe what a poet said of the Egyptians, when he was obliged to depart from Egypt: 'Your Nile loads you with blessings every day; it is for you only that it runs from such a distance. Alas! in removing from you, my tears will flow as abundantly as its waters; you are to continue in the enjoyment of its sweetness, while I am condemned to deprive myself of them against my will.' If you look, added my father, towards the island that is formed by the two greatest branches of the Nile, what variety of verdure | What enamel of all sorts of flowers | What a prodigious number of cities, villages, canals, and a thousand other agreeable objects! If you turn your eyes on the other side, up towards Ethiopia, how many other subjects of admiration | I cannot compare the verdure of so many plains, watered by the different canals of the island, better than to brilliant emeralds set in silver. Is not Grand Cairo the largest, the most populous, and the richest city in the world? What a number of magnificent edifices, both public and private! If you view the pyramids, you will be filled with astonishment at the sight of the masses of stone of an enormous thickness, which rear their heads to the skies! You will be obliged to confess, that the Pharaohs, who employed such riches, and so many men in building them, must have surpassed in magnificence and invention all the monarchs who have appeared since, not only in Egypt, but in all the world, for having left monuments so worthy of their memory: monuments so ancient, that the learned cannot agree upon the date of their erection; yet such as will last to the end of time. I pass over in silence the maritime cities of the kingdom of Egypt, such as Damietta, Rosetta, and Alexandria, where nations come for various sorts of grain, cloth, and an infinite number of commodities calculated for accommodation and delight. I speak of what I know; for I spent some years there in my youth, which I shall always reckon the most agreeable part of my life."

The reader, who is not acquainted with the original Arabic, will doubtless be surprised to hear that this eloquent passage is almost entirely due to the fluent pen of the French translator. Here is the plain and unadorned foundation upon which he reared so extensive an edifice of imaginative description. I translate from the Breslau text, which appears, due allowance being made for errors of transcription, etc, to be almost identical with that of Galland's MS. and in which I have corrected several mistakes, clerical or typographical. The version of the Macnaghten and Boulac Editions is (as will be seen by reference to Vol. I. p-1) yet more concise and to my mind more effective.

"Quoth my father, 'Who hath not seen Cairo hath not seen the world: its dust is gold and its women puppets; its Nile is a wonder, its waters light and sweet and its mud a commodity and a medicine, as saith of it one in verse, "The waxing of your Nile profiteth you to-day, And to you alone it cometh with profit. The Nile is nought but my tears after [separation from] you: Yours is fair fortune and none is forlorn but I." And if your eyes saw its earth and the adornment thereof with flowers and the embroidery of it with all manner blossoms and the island[s] of the Nile and how much is therein of wide prospect, and if ye turned the sight to the Birket el Hebesh, your eyes would not revert free from astonishment nor would ye see [a match] for that goodly prospect, and indeed the arms of the Nile encompass its verdure, as it were chrysolites set in filagrees of silver. And what is there to compare with the Observatory and its beauties, whereof saith the beholder, whenas he draweth near and looketh, "Verily this comprehendeth all manner goodliness!" And if thou speak of the Night of the Waxing [of the Nile], give the bow, take it and distribute the water to its channels; and if thou sawest the Garden in the evenings and the shadow sloping over it, thou wouldst behold a marvel and wouldst be cheered by the like thereof, and wert thou by the river-side of Cairo, when the sun is going down and the river dons hauberk and coat of mail to its vestments, its gentle breeze would quicken thee and its bland and copious shade.'"

Again, it cannot be denied that, either out of a mistaken deference to the literary tastes and prejudices of his age or from a want of sufficient acquaintance with Oriental manners and literature (a somewhat improbable defect in the case of one who was a well-known scholar and had made three voyages to the Levant), M. Galland to a certain extent failed in producing a fair transcript of the original, so far as the exact detail of the manners and customs of the people whose life it describes is concerned, as will be evident (to give one instance out of many) from the way in which he makes the Jewish physician, in the story above quoted, express surprise at the presentation to him by the young man of Mosul of his left hand, not for the true reason, as stated in the original, *i.e.* the want of good breeding evinced in offering the *left* hand (which, being used for certain ablutions, is considered among Mohammedans unclean or unworthy), but because "This, thinks I, is a gross piece of ignorance that he does not know that people present their right hand and not their left to a physician."

Nevertheless, in spite of the defects I have cited and numerous others of various kinds, it cannot but be evident to the impartial reader, who does not look at Oriental literature solely from the narrow scholastic point of view, that in M. Galland's translation, fragmentary as it is, he is in presence of a monumental literary work and one that is destined to live from its intrinsic artistic value, whatever the future may bring forth in the way of more perfect and more conscientious reproduction of the original it professed to represent. Numerous as are the mistakes and inaccuracies, wilful and involuntary, that deface it, there lives in it, if not the letter, emphatically the true spirit of Oriental romance, as seen by European observers through the intervening media of distance and difference; and the translator's charming style, the fine flower of the literary manner of the eighteenth century, partaking at once of Voltaire and Diderot, of Manon Lescaut and Les Bijoux Indiscrets, uniting in itself simplicity and boldness, strength and grace, equally capable of expressing naïveté without vulgarity and of rising to the pathetic and the majestic without undue emphasis, atones for many an error and covers, with the seduction of its bright and perfect movement, many an omission and many an audacious distortion of fact and intention. Indeed, it seems to me that this first effort, imperfect as it was, to transplant into European gardens the magic flowers of Oriental imagination, can never entirely be superseded and that other workers in the same field can only hope to supplement and not to efface it. The value of Galland's achievement was at once recognised by the public, notwithstanding the obbligato sneers of his brother savants and the doubts cast by critics and men of letters upon the authenticity of the work, and his book was almost immediately translated into most European languages. Nine years after the first publication of the French version, we find the fourth English edition already reached; and since then its popularity has continued to increase, until it has become one of the few standard works dear to all, young and old, and whose editions, becoming year by year more numerous, can only be numbered by hundreds, if not by thousands.

Considering the immense vogue thus obtained by this first imperfect version and the interest it has naturally excited in the original work, it is a curious and somewhat inexplicable fact that, during the lapse of nearly two centuries, so little should have been discovered concerning the origin and history of the collection whose outlines are so well known to all. It has never yet even been ascertained who was its author or compiler, nor has the date to which its composition may be referred been fixed with any degree of certitude. The origin of the work has, indeed, been the subject of much surmise and research, although to no great result; and the first half of the present century witnessed an animated and somewhat acrimonious discussion upon the subject between the two greatest Orientalists of France and Germany. From the first it had been a favourite theory, founded chiefly on the prevalence of Persian names among the personages of the Introduction, that the Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night was merely a translation into Arabic of a work supposed to have been originally written in ancient Persian or Pehlevi, and this theory Baron von Hammer-Purgstall adopted and improved, bringing forward in support arguments of considerable weight and plausibility, founded upon passages in the works of Arabic and Persian authors of repute, such as the magnum opus of the celebrated Baghdadi geographer and historian, Ali Aboulhusn el Mesoudi, the *Murouj edh dheheb* or Golden Meadows, published at Bassora in the middle of the tenth century, and the great Arabic compendium, the *Fihrist* of Aboulferej Abou Ishac en Nedim, about forty years later. In the work above mentioned, Mesoudi states, in a passage that is a mainstay of Von Hammer's theory, that there existed in his time a book of Persian stories, called *Hezar Efsan* or The Thousand Romances, being the history of an Indian King, his Vizier, the Vizier's daughter Shirzad and her nurse or duenna Dunyazad, and adds that the book in question had been translated into Arabic and was called in that language The Thousand Tales or (more commonly) The Thousand Nights. He also mentions, as similar Persian or Indian collections, the story of Jelkand (Jelyaad) and Shimas, or the Indian King and his Ten Viziers, and Sindibad, and allows us to suppose that the Hezar Efsan was translated into Arabic by order of El Mensour (grandfather of Er Reshid and second Khalif of the Abbaside dynasty), who reigned from A.D. 754 to A.D. 775. It would appear also, from a preface to the great epic poem of

Persia, the Shah nameh of Firdausi, and from other sources, that the original authorship of the Hezar Efsan was attributed to a Persian litterateur in the service of one of the early sovereigns of Persia, for whom he composed it, a semimythical personage by name Queen Humai, daughter of Ardeshir Behman (Artaxerxes Longimanus, B.C 465-425) and mother of Darab (Darius) II. (B.C 423) and that the prose original was in the eleventh century versified (or perhaps only rearranged) by a certain Rasti, court poet to the Ghaznevide Sultan Mehmoud of Persia. The passage from the Fihrist which Von Hammer afterwards brought forward, in confirmation of his citation from Mesoudi, is (briedy) to the following effect. “The first who composed tales and made books of them were the ancient Persians. The Arabs translated them and the learned took them and embellished them and *composed others like them*. The first book of the kind made was that called Hezar Efsan (or Efsaneh), and the manner thereof was on this wise. One of the kings of the Persians was wont, whenas he took a woman to wife and had lain one night with her, to put her to death on the morrow. Now he married a girl endowed with wit and knowledge, by name Shehrzad, and she fell to telling him tales and used to join the story, at the end of the night, with what should induce the king to spare her alive and question her next night of the ending thereof, till a thousand nights had passed over her. Meanwhile he lay with her, till he was vouchsafed a child by her, when she discovered to him the device she had practiced upon him. Her wit pleased him and he inclined to her and spared her life. And the king had a duenna named Dinarzad (or Dunyazad) who was of accord with her concerning this. The book comprises a thousand nights, but less than two hundred stories, for a story is often told in a number of nights.”

These passages suffice to establish, beyond reasonable doubt, the fact that the first idea of the work was taken from the Hezar Efsan, to which it owes the scheme of the introduction and external thread of story and the system of nights which serves as a frame for the various stories told by Shehrzad, and it will be noted that the names of the personages of the introduction and the general skeleton of the story appear to have been preserved almost without alteration, standing out in sharp contrast to the rest of the work. Even the number of the stories contained in the Thousand and One Nights in some measure corresponds with Aboulferej's account of the Hezar Efsan, being (if we leave out of the question the numerous incidental tales) less than two hundred in all, and had Hammer-Purgstall contented himself with stating the legitimate consequences of the evidence he adduced, his position would have been unassailable; but, as is not unusual with German scholars, he went to an extravagant length in the deductions he drew from the passages above cited, insisting that the Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night, in its original form, was identical with the Thousand Tales or Nights mentioned by Mesoudi, *i.e.* was a mere translation from the Persian, and that its foundation was no other than the wild and fascinating Persian tales which appear to have been popular in Arabia proper, at the time of Mohammed, and to have, by the seduction of their brilliant and picturesque imagery, become so serious a stumbling-block in the Prophet's way that, not content with having evidently assimilated part of them for his own purposes, he thought it necessary to caution his followers against their dangerous attractions and to exhort them to be satisfied with the delightful tales that God had told them in the Koran. To this original nucleus or foundation afforded by the old Arabic version of the Hezar Efsan, Von Hammer was of opinion that the Arabs added the anecdotes of the Ommiade and Abbaside Khalifs, of such frequent occurrence in the collection, as well as certain tales of evidently later origin, and that the work grew by additon after addition till it assumed its present dimensions; that it was finally rearranged and (so to speak) edited by a native of Egypt and that its definitive production in its present form cannot be referred to an earlier period than the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century, since one of the tales mentions the Egyptian Khalif Hakim bi-amrillah, A.D. 1261. Unfortunately both prose and rhymed versions of the Hezar Efsan appear to be irrecoverably lost and we have no traces of them save what may exist in the Thousand and One Nights, wherein it is at least a singular fact that not a single reference to the ancient romantic heroes of Persia (Sam Neriman, Feridoun, Rustem, Zal Zer, Isfendiyar, etc.) nor to such fabulous monsters of Iranian romance as the Simurgh (griffin), Anca (phœnix), etc, occurs, as would certainly not have been the case, were Von Hammer's theory true. Had the book “Sindibad,” mentioned by Mesoudi in the passage cited above, been the well-known Voyages of Sindbad (as erroneously assumed by Von Hammer), its existence in Persian would have been a powerful argument in support of his theory. But this is not the case. The book is mentioned by Mesoudi as “Sindibad” only, and is stated to be similar to the story of the Indian King and his Ten Viziers, to which nothing can be more unlike than the Voyages of Sindbad, a work purely Arab in form, although doubtless containing many incidents derived from Greek, Indian, Persian and perhaps even European sources, and it has now been definitely shown that the work referred to was one which is known in perhaps more numerous versions than any other popular fiction, *i.e.* “The Story of a King, his Seven Viziers, his Son and his Favourite,” written by one Sindibad, said to have been chief of the Brahmans under Korech, third King of Northern India after Porus, the celebrated adversary of Alexander the Great.

Von Hammer’s theory, as soon as advanced, was disputed by the still greater French Orientalist, Silvestre de Sacy, who (whilst allowing the possibility and even probability of the original Arabic compiler having used a slight thread of connecting narrative adapted from the external scheme of the Hezar Efsan, on which to string the immense succession of fictions provided by himself and his successors) definitely establishes the fact that no trace whatever exists of any considerable body of præ-Mohammedan or non-Arabic fiction in the extant texts of the Thousand and One Nights. He points out that the language of the collection is in no respect classical, containing many words in common and modern (as opposed to literary) use, that it is generally of a character to be referred to the decadence of Arabic literature and that all the tales, even when dealing with events supposed to have occurred and persons to have dwelt in Persia, India and other non-Arabic countries and in præ-Mohammedan epochs, invariably, with the naïvest anachronism, confine themselves to depicting the inhabitants, manners and customs of such cities as Baghdad and Cairo and are throughout impregnated with the strongest and most zealous spirit of Mohammedanism, and especially that the men and manners described are almost exclusively those of the epoch of the Abbaside

Khalifs. Galland himself, in his preface, attributes the work to an unknown Arabic author; and the Sheikh Ahmed Shirwani, editor of the unfinished Calcutta edition of 1814-18, states in his introduction his belief that the author was a Syrian Arab, who wrote in a simple conversational style, which was not of the purest. Von Hammer himself allows that the first complete version could not have been finished till the beginning of the eleventh century, and it therefore could not have been known either to Mesoudi or the author of the Fihrist. Relying upon these and other arguments of equal weight, M. de Sacy concludes that the book was originally written in Syria, about five centuries ago, in the vulgar Arabic tongue; that it was left unfinished by the author or (more probably) authors, who had possibly adopted the framework of exterior or connecting narrative suggested by the Hezar Efsan in the same manner as the scheme of the old Indian work of "Sindibad," already mentioned, was adopted by the authors of "The Seven Wise Masters," "Dolopathos," "Syntipas," etc., etc., as an excuse for the composition of works to all practical intent completely original; that the work was finished by other hands, probably copyists, who completed it by adding stories of foreign origin, such as Jelyaad and Shimas and the Malice of Women; that several persons undertook the task in company, each supplying tales of his own composition or transcription; and finally, in view of the general resemblance of the style to the modern Egyptian dialect and to the prevalence throughout of descriptions of modern Egyptian manners, that the work received its final revision at the hands of some Egyptian or Egyptians of the fifteenth century, the absence of any mention of firearms, tobacco and coffee forbidding to ascribe it to any more recent period. M. de Sacy's opinion has now, I believe, been generally adopted by the Oriental scholars of Europe. The late eminent English Orientalist, Mr. Lane, whose death has been so grievous a loss to Arabic lexicography, at first seemed inclined to side with Von Hammer, but afterwards with certain reservations adopted De Sacy's views and declared that the Thousand and One Nights can only be said to be borrowed from the Hezar Efsan, in the same sense as that in which the Æneid is said to be borrowed from the Odyssey, suggesting (with great probability) that the actual name, "The Thousand and One Nights," was deliberately adopted, partly for the purpose of differentiating the work from the Arabic translation of the Hezar Efsan, which, as we learn from Mesoudi, was known as ‘The Thousand Tales or Nights,’ and partly to avoid the use of even numbers, always considered unlucky by the Arabs, or perhaps to constitute a specially auspicious title by the addition of the primary number one to the cabalistic number 1000.

The principal points upon which Mr. Lane differed from De Sacy were (1) the question whether the original work was the composition of one or of several persons, (2) the date and (3) the locale of the composition itself and of the definitive compilation or redaction to which it is generally agreed that it owes its present form. Mr. Lane was of opinion that the whole work was the composition of one person, who had re-written the old tales comprised in the collection and completed it by the addition of new stories composed or arranged by himself for the purpose. I believe I am correct in stating that Mr. Lane stood alone in holding this opinion and for my own part, I cannot understand how any one can peruse the Arabic text of the work and fail to come to the conclusion that we are in presence, not of the homogeneous work of a single writer, but of a collection of separate stories, written in widely differing styles and bearing manifest signs of having been composed by many different authors at various times and under various circumstances. The difference of the language employed in the various parts of the collection, some tales or sets of tales, for instance, abounding in Persian, Turkish and other foreign or provincial words, whilst others are comparatively free from them, and the variety of the formulas and style, apparent to the observant reader, would alone, it seems to me, suffice to negative Mr. Lane’s theory, to say nothing of the almost equally material fact that the various extant copies, both MS. and printed, of the work differ widely both in the outline and the detail of their contents. Again, Mr. Lane held that the composition of the work, in its earliest complete form, must be referred to a much later date than that attributed to it by De Sacy, to wit, the middle of the sixteenth century, and upon this point much is to be said. De Sacy abstained from setting out in detail his reasons for believing the work to have been composed in the fourteenth century, contenting himself with adducing, as his principal argument, the nature of the language or dialect in which it appears to be mainly written and certain peculiarities of diction which characterize the general style; but, as this (though possibly sufficient evidence in the case of a limited and thoroughly sifted subject such as Greek or Roman literature) can hardly be held to suffice, in the absence of corroborative proof, when the question in dispute ranges over so wide an area as the boundless and comparatively unexplored fields of Oriental philology, it may be well, by way of endeavouring, in some measure, to ascertain the reasons unparticularized or but lightly hinted at by the great French scholar and without assuming definitely to pronounce upon the matter, to touch upon the principal points for and against his theory which have been raised by modern scholars or have occurred to myself in the course of my labours upon the foregoing translation.

As a first step towards any enquiry into the age and land of origin of the Thousand and One Nights, it is evident that we must endeavour to ascertain of what the original nucleus or primitive body of tales, upon which the complete work was built by aggregation and which, for the sake of convenience, I shall hereafter call "the original work," consisted; and to this end, our manifest course is to enquire which of the tales comprised in the complete collection are common to every copy known. Proceeding thus, we find that the following exist (with such unimportant differences only of general style and detail as warrant us in treating them as copies from one common original, owing their variations to the differing ages and nationalities of their respective transcribers), in the four printed editions, *i.e.* the two of Calcutta (1814-18 and 1839-42), that of Boulac and that of Breslau and (according to Caussin de Perceval, Gauttier, Habicht, Scott, Hammer-Purgstall, De Sacy and other scholars) in at least a dozen MS. copies, complete or fragmentary, of the work, including that used by Galland. (In these copies, both printed and MS., the other portions of the collection differ widely, both in the number and nature of the tales contained in each and in the detail of the stories common to all, as will appear from a comparison of (*e.g.*) the Boulac Edition with that of Breslau and the Wortley-Montague MS. now in the Bodleian Library.)

1. Introduction (Story of King Shehriyar and his brother) and the incidental story (The Ox and the Ass).
2. The Merchant and the Genie and the three incidental stories.
3. The Fisherman and the Genie and the four incidental stories.
4. The Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdad and the six incidental stories.
5. The Three Apples.
6. Bedreddin Hassan.
7. The Hunchback and the eleven incidental stories.
8. Noureddin and Enis el Jelis.
9. Ali ben Bekkar and Shemsennehar.

These form about an eighth part of the whole collection, and if we add the stories of Ghanim ben Eyoub, Kemerez-zeman and Budour, The Enchanted Horse and Julnar, which occur, in substantially identical form, in all the editions and MSS. mentioned above, except the unfinished Calcutta edition of 1814-18 (from which, however, we see no reason to suppose that they would have been excluded, had the publication been completed), and we get what is evidently the nucleus or original of the work, comprising (roughly) a fifth part of the whole. The stories contained in this portion, though bearing evident traces of the work of different authors, offer such general similarity in style and diction as to warrant us in supposing them to have been composed or arranged and adapted to the framework of the external fable by several persons of the same nationality acting in concert and at one and the same time. It is practically useless to enquire what portion of this original is a survival of the Hezar Efsan, as it is at once evident that such features of the old Pehlevi work as might possibly have been borrowed by the authors of the Thousand and One Nights must have been so disfeatured by the radical process of adaptation and remodelment to which they appear to have subjected all foreign material employed by them, as to defy identification: even in the Introduction, which is certainly (with the exception, perhaps, of the Enchanted Horse) the oldest portion of the original, the remains of the old Persian cadre are evidently confined to the names of the principal personages (Shehriyar, Shahzeman, Shehrzad or Shirzad, Dunyazad or Dinarzad), the period (the reign of a king of the Benou Sasan or Sassanians), the localities (the islands, *i.e.* peninsulas, of India and China and the kingdom of Samarcand) and of the merest thread of incident whereon to string a fable wholly Muslim in colour and circumstance. The same remarks apply to the first story, that of the Merchant and the Genie, which is probably contemporary (or nearly so) with the Introduction, but contains no trace of præ-Mohammedan colour.

In enquiring into the age of this nucleus or original of the work, we are at once confronted by two dates, between which we must fix the period of its composition. In the Tailor's Story, a speech of the meddlesome barber identifies the day of his adventure with the unfortunate young man of Baghdad as the 10th of the month Sefer, A.H. 653 (*i.e.* the 25th March, A.D. 1255), that is to say, in the 14th year of the reign of El Mustazim Billah, the last Khalif of the house of Abbas, and only three years before the storm of Baghdad by Hulagou and the extinction of the Khalifate. This date is that given by three texts, *i.e.* those of Calcutta (1839-42) and Breslau and Galland's MS., which agree in making the barber, by way of confirmation, date his own story in the reign of the penultimate Khalif of the Abbaside dynasty, El Mustensir Billah (father of El Mustazim), A.H. 623-640 (A.D. 1225-1242), and state that, after his expulsion from Baghdad by the latter, he did not return till he heard he was dead and another Khalif (*i.e.* El Mustazim) come to the throne. The Calcutta Edition of 1814-18 is silent as to both date and reign, whilst the Boulac Edition gives the former as A.H. 763 (A.D. 1362), a time when both Baghdad and Bassora, the two cities in which the scene of the tale is laid, were in possession of the successors of Genghiz Khan, and makes the latter the (six months') reign of the parricide El Muntesir Billah, A.H. 247-8 (A.D. 861-2). The first is an evident error, as the barber is described in the sequel of the Tailor's Story as an old man past his ninetieth year and he speaks of himself in his own story as already an old man at the time of his adventure with the Khalif in question; so that, even if we suppose him to have been then sixty years old, this would only bring us back (after making some necessary allowance for the space which must have elapsed between the flight of the lame youth from Baghdad and his encounter with his persecutor at Bassora) to (say) the year of the

Hegira 743 (A.D. 1343), at earliest, or nearly a hundred years after the fall of the Khalifate. The second date is also a manifest error, as, putting aside the fact that the time covered by the story of the barber must be estimated at (at least) some years, the Khalif who banished the barber is described by the latter as a prince "who loved the poor and needy and companied with the learned and the pious," a description which, though exactly tallying with the character of the good and wise El Mustensir, as given by Arab historians, is in no way applicable to the melancholy madman El Muntesir. It may, therefore, be safely assumed that the date (A.D. 1255) given by Galland's MS. and by the Breslau and Macnaghten Editions is the correct one. For the reasons above stated, the Hunchback's adventure can hardly be dated earlier than ten years later, *i.e.* A.D. 1265, or seven years after the fall of Baghdad, and in view of the fact (inexplicable, if we suppose the story to have been written at or soon after this date) of the absence of any reference to the terrible event of the sack of the capital by the Tartars and of the occupation, in immediate succession, of Bassora and the other towns of Irak Arabi and Mesopotamia, events which must for a time, at least, have agitated the whole Muslim world, we may fairly suppose some half century or more to have intervened before the composition of the story. This brings us to the second decade of the fourteenth century as the earliest period at which the Hunchback's story, and therefore the rest of the original part of the work, (of which it may be taken as a fair specimen,) could have existed in its present form, and Galland's MS., which is stated by a note appended thereto to have been read by a Christian scribe of Tripoli or Syria (who wishes long life to its possessor), in the year 1548, supplies us with the second date above mentioned, *i.e.* that of the latest period at which it could have been written or rearranged. I have said that I consider the story of the Hunchback fairly representative of the original work, so far as age is concerned, and it would not be difficult approximately to prove, from internal evidence, that the other stories are practically contemporary with it. For instance, the introduction, in the Story of the Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdad, of the Three Calenders (*Carendeliyeh*), an order of religious mendicants, so called after their founder, the Sheikh Carendel, not instituted (or at least not known under that name) until the early part of the thirteenth century, and the absence of any explanation of the name (such as would probably have been volunteered by the story-teller, had the order been, at the date of writing, of recent institution), assign the composition of this story to the same date at earliest as that of the Hunchback, as does also the mention in the same tale of Sultani peaches, *i.e.* peaches from Sultaniyeh in Persian Irak, a town not founded till the middle of the thirteenth century; and in Bedreddin Hassan the mention of a cannon (*midfaa*), by way of metaphor, warrants us in drawing a like conclusion as to the age of this latter story. On the other hand, the absence from the stories of the original work of all mention of coffee (which, according to Abdulcadir el Ansari, was first drunk in Arabia early in the fifteenth century and the use of which spread all over the East within the next hundred years) would prove that it must have been composed before A.D. 1500, at latest. Again (except in the story of Bedreddin Hassan, where, as before mentioned, the passage in question is not improbably apocryphal), firearms are nowhere named or alluded to in the original work, although cannon are several times referred to in the later stories of the collection. Cannon were first used in Europe at the battle of Crecy in 1346, but the researches of modern scholars have proved that their use was known to the Arabs nearly a century and a half earlier and was perhaps learnt from them by the Crusaders. Gunpowder is believed to have been known to the Chinese (and probably also to the Indians) from time immemorial, though they did not employ it for warlike purposes, except by way of mines and war-rockets or fusees, which latter the Arabs (who under the early Khalifs were in constant communication with both China and India) appear to have early adopted from them and (in all probability) used at the destructive sieges of Mecca in the years A.D. 683 and 691-2. The Greek fire, mentioned by Joinville and other Christian historians of the Crusades and described as exploding in mid-air with a terrible noise, may be reasonably supposed to have been rather some war-rocket of this kind than the (incendiary) composition of naphtha, etc., known by the name. According to Arab chroniclers, bombards or wooden cannon were used at the siege of a town in Africa as early as A.D. 1205, and Ibn Khaldoun and other historians testify that the use of firearms became general among the Moors of Northern Africa and Spain by the end of the 13th century. The “perfervidum ingenium” of the subtle and keen-witted Arab, quickened into abnormal productivity by the religious and political system of Islam, so well suited to the character of the race, carried him, as regarded the arts and sciences, far in advance of his European contemporaries, and if the inhabitants of the metropolitan provinces of the Khalifate did not perhaps altogether keep pace, in re militart, at least with their more adventurous Spanish and African brethren, there can be little doubt that they became acquainted with the use of firearms long before it was known in Europe; but, even if we suppose the introduction of the new weapons to have been simultaneous in the two continents, the absence of all authentic mention of them would limit the most recent date to which it is possible to ascribe the definitive composition of the original work to the middle of the fourteenth century.

Among other arguments that have been put forward in support of the theory referring the composition of the original to a later date, it has been conjectured that the colours of the fish in the story of the Enchanted Youth were suggested by the yellow, blue and red turbans worn by the Jews, Christians and Samaritans of Egypt, in obedience to an edict, issued early in the fourteenth century, of the Memlouk Sultan Mohammed ibn Kelaoun and that the story-teller appropriated the colour red to the fish into which the Magian inhabitants of the City of the Black Islands had been transformed, because the Samaritan religion (as described by an Arab writer) was a mixture of Judaism and Magism; but the theorist forgot that the enforced wearing of distinctive colours by the non-Muslim subjects of the Mohammedan empire dates from the taking of Jerusalem in A.D. 636 by the Khalif Omar ben el Khettab, whose ordinance nearly two centuries later Haroun er Reshid revived, commanding the Jews to wear a yellow, the Christians a blue and the Magians a black galloon on their surcoats, and the red colour given by the story-teller to the fishy representatives of the latter sect was probably suggested by that of the fire worshipped by them, the colour white being that of the Ommiade dynasty and having been from time immemorial appropriated to the true-believer. It has also been argued that the occurrence in Bedreddin Hassan of the word *sahib* (lit. friend or comrade, but colloquially equivalent to our "Sir"), as applied to the Vizier Shemseddin, and the use of the word *midfaa* (cannon), said not to have been employed in that sense in Egypt until the year 1383, prove this tale to have been composed after the end of the fourteenth century, at which time the aforesaid title is asserted to have been first applied to viziers; but both these objections are also founded upon error, as it appears from the historians Mirkhond and Ibn el Athir that the title *Sahib* was given to Ismail ibn Ebbad, the great and good Vizier of the Buyide Prince Fekhreddauleh, who died A.D. 995, and the word *midfaa*, used in the contested sense, is found in a recipe for the preparation of gunpowder given by an Arabic MS. of the thirteenth century (discovered by M. Reinaud in the Royal Library of St. Petersburg), in which the text is explained and confirmed by an illustration showing the gunner firing a ball from the *midfaa* or hand-cannon, by means of a flame applied to the touch-hole. Another objection is founded upon the anachronism alleged to be committed in most of the stories of the original in the application of the title of Sultan, which is stated not to have come into use as applied to sovereign princes until after the twelfth century; but this argument in its turn appears to be groundless, as the title was first assumed by the Ghaznevide prince Mehmoud ben Sebektigin (as also by a Buyide prince) early in the eleventh century, and repeated instances of this use of the word Sultan occur in the ancient Arab historians, *e.g.* Et Teberi, who lived in the ninth century and who not unfrequently applies the title (which properly belongs to a viceroy or sovereign prince invested with the *temporal* power only, to the exclusion of the spiritual) to the various Khalifs, as also does another ancient writer, cited by Ibn Khellikan. Yet another argument, put forward as tending to prove that the collection dates from the end of the fifteenth century at earliest, is the fact that the women figuring in the stories, even those of high rank and repute, are frequently represented as uncovering their faces before strange men and otherwise behaving with more licence and immodesty than is recorded of Muslim females of an earlier age and that Es Suyouti, a writer who flourished at the period above named, expressly complains of the loose and immodest carriage of the (Egyptian) women of his time. Complaints of this kind, however, are found in earlier historians than Es Suyouti, *e.g.* Ibn el Athir before quoted, who flourished at the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries, and who mentions the (to the Muslim Puritan) shameful custom of going abroad with unveiled faces, that prevailed among the women of Northern Africa (even to those belonging to the royal household), under the rule of the Almoravides, in the early part of the eleventh century. The above are the more cogent of the arguments that have been advanced in support of the theory of the late date of composition of the original work: others are founded mainly upon doubtful particularities of manners and customs and discrepancies of reckoning and description (almost certainly attributable to the carelessness or ignorance of transcribers or of the persons from whose dictation they wrote), and seem to me to carry little weight, especially when allowance is made for the close similarity (conceded by the advocates of the theory in question) of the manners and customs of the metropolitan countries of the Muslim ermpire (and particularly of Irak Arabi, under the Khalifs of Baghdad), to those of Cairo, under the fainéant princes of the second Abbaside dynasty, and the well-known tendency of successive copyists gradually to corrupt a work handed down in MS. by the introduction, conscious or unconscious, of names and details belonging to the language, manners and customs of their own time; suffice it to say that it seems to me, in the highest degree, improbable that the stories should (as is contended) have been composed by an Egyptian of the sixteenth century, (*i.e.* after the Turkish conquest in 1517), and that yet no mention, direct or indirect, should be found in them of any of the Memlouk Sultans or fainéant Khalifs or indeed of any sovereign of Egypt (Khalif or Sultan) later than the Eyoubite Saladin at the end of the twelfth century.

As for the contrary theory of the remote origin of the work, it is, I think, now pretty generally allowed that De Sacy satisfactorily disposed of Von Hammer’s arguments; but, since the date of the controversy, fresh evidence has been adduced in its support. This consists of a passage from the great work of the Arab historian of Spain, Aboulabbas Ahmed ben Mohammed el Meccari, entitled “Windwafts of Perfume from the branches of Andalusia (Spain) the Blooming” (A.D. 1628-9), to the following effect. I translate directly from the Arabic text as edited by the greatest (since De Sacy) of modern Arabic scholars, the late M. Dozy.

"Ibn Saïd (may God have mercy on him!) sets forth in his book El Muhella bi-s-shaar, quoting from El Curtubi, the story of the building of the Houdej in the Garden of Cairo, the which was of the magnificent pleasaunces of the Fatimite Khalifs, the rare of ordinance and surpassing, to wit, that the Khalif El Aamir bi-ahkham-illah let build it for a Bedouin woman, the love of whom had gotten the mastery of him, in the neighbourhood of the Chosen Garden and used to resort often thereto and was slain, as he went thither; and it ceased not to be a pleasuring-place for the Khalifs after him. The folk abound in stories of the Bedouin maid and Ibn Meyyah of the sons of her uncle and what hangs thereby of the mention of El Aamir, so that the tales told of them on this account became like unto the story of El Bettal and the Thousand Nights and One Night and what resembleth them."

Aboulhusn Ali Ibn Saïd ben Mousa el Ghernati, a celebrated Spanish historian, poet and (especially) topographer, was born at Ghernateh (Granada) A.D. 1218 and died at Tunis A.D. 1286. He had travelled in Egypt and lived at Cairo in the middle of the thirteenth century, and the above passage, which occurs in a description of the latter city, is quoted by El Meccari from a work of his which is not now extant, so that it is impossible to verify the citation. The surname El Curtubi was common to several Spanish-Arabic authors, but the one from whom Ibn Saïd in his turn quotes is apparently Abou Jaafer ibn Abdulhecc el Khezraji, author of a history of the Khalifs. He flourished in the middle of the twelfth century, but no work of his is, to the best of my knowledge, extant for reference. On the strength of this passage, it is argued that the collection existed, as a well-known work, in the middle of the twelfth century, and this argument is supported by the statement that the same quotation (from Ibn Saïd) occurs in the Khitet of El Mecrizi, the Egyptian historian and topographer, who died A.D. 1444 ; but the evidence adduced is deprived of much (if not all) of its value by the fact that the passage in the Khitet relates (as I find by reference to a MS. copy of that work in the British Museum) to the Thousand Nights, *not* the Thousand and One Nights. The following is a translation of the passage in question:

"The Khalif El Aamir bi-ahkam-illah set apart, in the neighbourhood of the Chosen Garden of the island Er Rauzeh, a place for his beloved the Bedouin maid [Aaliyeh], which he named El Houdej. Quoth Ibn Saïd, in the book El Muhella bi-l-ashar, from the History of El Curtubi, concerning the traditions of the folk of the story of the Bedouin maid and Ibn Menah [Meyyah] of the sons of her uncle and what hangs thereby of the mention of the Khalif El Aamir bi-ahkam-illah, so that their traditions [or tales] upon the garden became like unto El Bettal and the *Thousand Nights* and what resembleth them."

El Aamir bi-ahkam-illah (A.D. 31101-2g) was the seventh Fatimite Khalif of Egypt, and had El Mecrizi mentioned the Thousand Nights and One Night, as he mentions the Thousand Nights, this would have been pretty conclusive proof of the existence of the former collection in the thirteenth, if not in the twelfth century; but, as the passage stands, the work referred to appears to be the lost Arabic version of the lost Hezar Efsan. El Mecrizi, who lived but a hundred and fifty years after Ibn Said, is much less likely than El Meccari, whom more than twice that time separated from the age of the Granadan historian, to have erred in citing from the latter's work, and the reasons before stated in support of the theory that the Thousand and One Nights were originally composed in the fourteenth century appear to me to preclude the possibility that the discrepancy in the two passages quoted is owing to an error on the part of the author or copyist of the Khitet and that the work referred to in the latter as the Thousand Nights could have been the extant collection. The fact that Hajji Khelfeh, in his great Bibliographical Dictionary, composed at the end of the seventeenth century, names (and only names) the Thousand Nights and makes no mention of the Thousand and One, which has been adduced as an argument in favour of the probability of the identity of the two works, seems to me rather to tell against the theory, as it is evident, from the note appended to Galland's MS. and from El Meccari's history, that the collection known as the Thousand and One Nights bore that name long before Hajji Khelfeh's time, whilst the latter, with the proverbial contempt of the Oriental (and too often, indeed, of the

European) savant for romantic literature, would have been almost certain to discard the comparatively modern Thousand and One Nights as a mere collection of “silly stories” (to quote the words of the author of the Fihrist apropos of the; Hezar Efsan), whilst conceding to the sheer antiquity of the Thousand Nights the barren honour of a bare mention in his learned pages.

The third question, to wit, the nationality of the person or persons to whom the original work is due, appears to me to have been generally confounded by the opponents of De Sacy’s theory with that of the supposed reviser or editor of the completed collection, who is pretty generally allowed to have been an Egyptian, as suggested by the great French Orientalist, and no considerable objection appears to have been raised to the latter’s conclusion that the original work was written in Syria; but from internal evidence it seems probable that one or more of its authors belonged to Irak Arabi or Mesopotamia and especially to Mosul, of the peculiar dialect of which place (as well as of Aleppo) the composition, in the opinion of competent judges, bears considerable trace, and the very objections raised, as before stated, to De Sacy’s theory of the age of the original, on the ground that it is characterized by the employment of names and titles which were not in use in Egypt until a later period than that assigned by internal evidence to the work, but which appear to have been early employed in the disputed sense in the metropolitan or home provinces of the Khalifate, seem to me to tell strongly in favour of this latter hypothesis.

After its original composition, which (as I have said) I believe De Sacy to have been justified in assigning to the 14th century, the work appears to have been gradually swollen to its present bulk by the addition. at various times and by various hands, of tales and anecdotes of all kinds and drawn from a variety of sources, some having been expressly composed or rewritten for the purpose, whilst others are in whole or in part borrowed or adapted from independent works. Some of these additions, such as The Malice of Women (almost the only survival in which story of the old Book of Sindibad appears to be the framework, the short stories for the introduction of which it serves as an excuse being, with occasional exceptions, purely Arabic in character and bearing signs of a comparatively modern redaction, subject, of course, to the limitation implied in the absence of any mention of firearms or coffee), Jelyaad and Shimas (apparently an old Indian story which has undergone comparatively little alteration) and Seif el Mulouk are proved to have existed in an independent form before the middle of the eleventh century. The Queen of the Serpents is also, in all probability, a very old story of Persian origin, largely altered (especially in the two incidental tales, the Adventures of Beloukiya and the Story of Janshah) by the Arab author or authors in the process of adaptation to Muslim manners and customs, and the History of Gherib and his brother Agib is, to all appearance, a rearrangement of some old Bedouin romance, notwithstanding the mention therein of arquebuses, by which word, in deference to lexicographic authority, I have rendered the modern Arabic *bundukiyat*, although it is not improbable that it was inserted by some modern copyist in the place of *benadic* or *kisiy el benadic*, pellet-bows, as opposed to quarrel-bows (*khetatif*). The word *bundukiyeh* (sing. of *bundukiyat*) means literally an implement for throwing pellets (*bunduc*) of clay or lead, and (although I cannot find any example of its use in any sense other than that of “gun”) was doubtless originally synonymous with *caus el bunduc* (sing. of *kisiy el benadic*), a stone or pellet bow, as was the earlier name of the hand-gun, *bunduc*, so used metonymically for *caus el bunduc*. The names of the old *armes de jet* were, on the introduction of firearms, transferred to the new weapons, e.g. *midfaa*, a cannon, lit. a pushing implement, hence a spring and (by metonymy) the tube in which the spring worked, a spring-gun, even as the word *arquebuse* itself appears to have been originally applied to the *arbalest* or pellet-bow, *arcubalista*, from which latter word or the Italian arcibugio (bow-hole or tube) it is much more probable that it had its derivation than from the German *haken-büchse* or the Dutch *haekbus*. The Voyages of Sindbad the Sailor, though forming part of almost all known copies of the complete collection, are, as I have before observed, an independent work and are so treated by the Editor of the (unfinished) Calcutta edition of 1814-118, who inserts them at the end of his two hundredth (and last) night, dividing them, not into nights, but into seven tales or voyages, as in Galland’s MS. Some Oriental scholars are of opinion that this tale is of Persian extraction and describes the voyages (attributed, as is often the case in popular tales, to a single person) of a colony of Persians, who are known to have of old settled on the East Coast of Africa, to Ceylon, Sumatra and other islands of the Indian Sea; but, whatever may have been the primitive derivation of the incidents described in the work known to us as the Voyages of Sindbad, it appears almost certain that it was suggested by and mainly composed of extracts and adaptations from the writings of well-known Arab geographers and cosmographers, such as El Edrisi, El Cazwini and Ibn el Werdi, who flourished respectively in the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries, and it may, therefore, in all likelihood, be attributed to an Arab author of (at earliest) the beginning of the fifteenth century. The History of King Omar ben Ennuman and his sons Sherkan and Zoulmekan, with the exception of the interpolated story of Taj el Mulouk and that (probably Egyptian) of Aziz and Azizeh, may probably be attributed to a native of Syria, where the memories of the Ommiade Khalifs (with anecdotes of whom, to the exclusion of their rivals and successors of the house of Abbas, the story abounds), long tenaciously survived, and appears to have been written before the introduction of firearms, although the gross anachronisms with which it swarms would seem to point to a later date. Uns el Wujoud affords internal evidence of Egyptian and comparatively modern origin and is one of the stories that are known to exist in an independent form. The same maybe said of The Rogueries of Delileh and the Adventures of Quicksilver Ali (practically one and the same tale), in which the constant employment of Egyptian words, such as *kaak* (gimblet-cakes), *khelbous* (buffoon), *mehremeh* (for *mendil*, handkerchief), etc., etc., is especially notable. The mention of the firing of cannon, as a signal or salute, by the Genoese Corsair-captain in Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat brings the date of this story down to the fifteenth century, whilst the anachronisms (e.g. the making the tomb of the dervish-saint Abdulcadir el Jinani, who died in the latter part of the twelfth century, exist at Baghdad in the time of Haroun er Reshid), which characterize it, point to its having been composed at a comparatively recent period, when the memories of the time of which it treats had become confused, and the author would appear, from internal evidence, to have been a foreigner to Baghdad, probably an inhabitant of Cairo. Ardeshir and Heyat en Yofous, as well as its apparent prototype Taj el Mulouk, would seem to be a story of Persian origin, composed or remodelled shortly after the date of the original work by an Arab of the metropolitan provinces, and the same remark applies to Hassan of Bassora, which is apparently (in part at least) an adaptation of Janshah. Ali Shar and Zumurrud may perhaps also be referred to a like date and origin, but Taweddud is probably the work of some Egyptian savant of the Shafiy school, who used a conventional cadre of story, with the obbligato laying of scene in the court and time of Er Reshid, to exhibit his learning, the comparatively advanced views of anatomy, medicine, astronomy and other sciences pointing to a modern origin and the extracts (inter alia) from Coptic almanacks demonstrating, beyond reasonable doubt, the Egyptian nationality of the author. The City of Brass is in part a transcript or adaptation from Et Teberi and other Arabic historians and topographers, and the gross anachronisms which occur in it, (such, for instance, as the making the prae-Islamitic poet En Nabigheh edh Dhubyani a contemporay of the Ommiade Khalif Abdulmelik ben Merwan (A.D. 685-705) and attributing to the same time the discovery of an ancient tablet deploring the fate of “him who dwelt in Tenjeh (Tangiers) whilere,” i.e. the last Edriside sovereign of Northern Africa, who was, early in the tenth century, dethroned and put to death, with all the members of his family, by the soi-disant Uehdi, Ubeidallah, founder of the Fatimite dynasty), point to its having been composed by a foreigner, probably a native of Spain or Northern Africa, at a comparatively late period. The mention, in Jouder and his Brothers, Kemerezzeman and the Jeweller’s Wife and Marouf, of the Sheikh el Islam, an office said to have been first instituted by Mohammed II. in the fifteenth century, after the taking of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, brings the date of the composition of these stories down to the early part of the sixteenth century, after the establishment of the Turkish power in Egypt, and the second (Kemerezzeman and the Jeweller’s Wife) is probably the latest of the three, coffee being mentioned in it with a frequency which shows that it had, at the time of the composition of the tale, been long in common use. In this latter story also occurs the only mention in the Nights of a watch and this may perhaps be taken as corroborative evidence of the comparative modernity of the tale, although the inference by no means follows as a matter of course. According to Beckmann, the first known mention of a watch occurs in a sonnet of the Italian poet Visconti in the last decade of the fifteenth century, but, as the Arabs early brought the clepsydra or water-clock to perfection (*teste* that said to have been presented by Er Reshid to Charlemagne and others yet more elaborate mentioned in Oriental works), and are known to have used weight-clocks striking the hours, at least as early as the twelfth century, whereas such clocks were, as far as can be ascertained, not introduced into Europe till nearly two centuries later, to say nothing of the probability (supported by no despicable arguments) of their having been the first to apply the principle of the pendulum to horology, it seems only reasonable to suppose that they invented watches (or portable clocks) at a proportionately early period, say at the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century. Abdallah ben Fazil and his Brothers (apparently a modern and greatly improved version or adaptation of the Eldest Lady's Story in Vol. I.) is also a story of non-Chaldxan authorship, as is manifest from mistakes such as the supposing El Kerkh (the well-known principal quarter of Baghdad) to be a city on the Euphrates, and the use of Egyptian words (such as *derfil* for *dukhes*, dolphin) stamps it as of Egyptian origin, whilst the mention of coffee establishes its comparative modernity. The same remarks apply to Ali Noureddin and the Frank King's daughter and the Haunted House in Baghdad, in both of which coffee is introduced, whilst the mention of tobacco (which was introduced into Europe by Jean Nicot in 1560 and the use of which did not probably become common in the East until (at earliest) the next century), stamps the (Egyptian) story of Aboukir and Abousir as the most modern of the whole collection. Zein el Mewasif is also an undoubtedly Egyptian and modern story, as well as the story of the Two Abdallahs, though the former appears to be somewhat less recent than the latter in date, whilst the Merchant of Oman, Ibrahim and Jemileh and Aboulhusn of Khorassan, all three of which are free from the gross anachronisms and historical and topographical errors that characterize so many of the stories whose scene is laid in Baghdad in the reign of Er Reshid and his immediate successors, may therefore, in the absence of any distinctive sign of foreign origin, be supposed to have been written by a native of one of the metropolitan provinces of the Khalifate, soon after the composition of the original work.

Many of the short stories and anecdotes of historical places and persons, Khalifs, Sultans, princes, princesses and men of letters and poets, appear to have been transcribed or adapted from the works of well-known historians and geographers and from such famous collections as the Helbeit el Kumeit and the Kitab el Aghani. For instance, the story of Yehya ben Khalid and the Forger (Vol. IV.) is found (in almost exactly the same terms) in Fekhreddin Razi, the anecdote of Omar ben el Khettab and the poor woman (Vol. II. p and 89) as well as the story of the Muslim Champion (Vol. V.) and others in Et Teberi, The City of Irem (Vol. III.) in El Mesoudi, The City of Lebtait (Vol. III.) in a Spanish-Arabic historian, The Khalif El Mamoun and the Pyramids (Vol. IV.) and The Justice of Providence (Vol. V.) as well as certain parts of the Voyages of Sindbad and Seif el Mulouk, in El Cazwini, Younus the Scribe (Vol. VI.), Musab ben ez Zubeir (Vol. IV.) and The Lovers of the Benou Udhreh (Vol. VI.) in the Kitab el Aghani, Ibrahim of Mosul and the Devil (Vol. VI.) in the Helbeit el Kumeit, The Devout Prince (Vol. IV.) in Ibn el Jauzi, Ibrahim ben el Mehdi and the Barber Surgeon (Vol. III.) in the Spanish historian Ibrahim el Andalousi, The Imam Abou Yousuf with Er Reshid and Jaafer (Vol. IV.) in the Mirat el Jenan, Abdurrehman the Moor's Story of the Roc (Vol. IV.) in Ibn el Werdi, etc., etc. To conclude this cursory sketch, I have but to mention that the fables and apologues, which form another considerable feature of the work, have apparently been added to the collection from time to time and appear to be mostly derived from Greek, Persian and Indian sources, such as the Hitopadesa, the Fables of AEsop and Kelileh wa Dimneh.

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

II.

I have already cited Mr. Lane's opinion that the Thousand and One Nights can only be said to be borrowed from the Hezar Efsan in the sense in which the AEneid is said to be borrowed from the Odyssey; but even this comparison does not seem to me to do justice to the originality of the Arabic work, as there is certainly no trace in it of an influence exerted by any Persian writer in a similar manner to that exercised by Homer over Virgil; and putting aside the purely Arabic element, the foreign portion of the work appears to have been taken quite as freely from other sources, such as Greek, Indian and (perhaps) even Chinese and Japanese, as from Persian. Of this, well-known instances exist in the evident affinity of the incident of the cannibal giant in the Third Voyage of Sindbad and in Seif el Mulouk with the story of Ulysses and Polyphemus, and of the Arabian traveller's escape from the underground burial-place with the similar passage in Pausanias, relating the deliverance of the Messenian leader Aristomenes; in the stories of the Barber's Fifth Brother, the Prince and the Afrit's Mistress, the Merchant's Wife and the Parrot, the Fakir and the Pot of Butter, etc., which have been traced back to the Hitopadesa, Panchatantra, Kathasaritsagara, etc., in the apologue of the Hedgehog and the Pigeons, which has its apparent prototype in stories common to the Sanscrit, Chinese and Japanese languages, in the version of the legend of Susannah and the Elders, evidently borrowed from the Apocryphal Book of Daniel, in the fables of the Sparrow and the Eagle, the Cat and the Crow, the Falcon and the Birds, etc., apparently derived from AEsop (with whom, by the way, the celebrated Oriental fabulist Lucman or Lokman, quoted in the Koran, is supposed to be identical, though by some Arabic authors he is stated to have been a black slave, living in the time of David, and by others an Arab of the time of Job and a kinsman of that patriarch), and in numerous other fables, parables and legends of saints and hermits, evidently referable to Christian, Jewish, Brahman or Buddhist sources.

Nevertheless, numerous as are the instances in which the authors of the Thousand and One Nights have drawn upon foreign sources, the general tone of the work is distinctly and almost exclusively Arabic, and Arabic of Syria, Egypt and Chaldaea (or Irak-Arabi) ; whether the scene is laid in Persia, India, Anatolia, Armenia, Arabia, Greece, France, Genoa, Ceylon, Tartary, China or any other actually existing country or in such fantastic and imaginary portions of the ideal world as Jinnistan, the Mountain Caf, the White, Blue, Black or Green Countries, the Camphor, the Ebony, the Khalidan or the Wac-Wac Islands, and whether the persons who figure in the stories are men or Jinn, Afrits or Angels, Indians or Chinese, Christians or Jews, Magians or Idolaters, the scenery and manners described, the persons, things and way of thought and action are distinctly those of such cities as Baghdad, Bassora, Mosul and Cairo. Even in tales like the Queen of the Serpents, whose Persian origin is unmistakable and whose scene is laid in a remote prae-Mohammedan age, the Arab author has apparently most carefully everywhere substituted, for the traces of Zendic or Sabman formulas and doctrines that may be supposed to have existed in the original, the distinctive legends and catchwords of the Muslim faith and cosmogony, whilst avoiding a too obvious exposure to the charge of anachronism by such expedients as the substitution of Solomon and Abraham for the greater prophet whose name is so constantly in the mouth of the personages of Arab fiction. And this adaptation of the scenes and persons of foreign countries to the illustration and glorification of Arab thought and Arab personality is still more accentuated by the fact that the men and manners represented are for the most part limited to those of the period of the early Baghdadi Khalifs of the house of Abbas, commencing with the second of that dynasty, Abou Jaafer el Mensour (A.D. 754) and practically ending with the sixteenth, his great-grandson's great-grandson Aboulabbas el Mutezid Billah, A.D. 892-922. Of this period far the most brilliant portion is that comprised between the years 786 and 809 and wholly occupied by the reign of the fifth Khalif of the house of Abbas, the celebrated Haroun er Reshid Billah, Aaron the Orthodox (or Well-advised) in or by God, *not* the just, as in most versions. (The first four successors of Mohammed, Aboubekr, Omar, Othman and Ali, are known as *el Khulfaa er rashidoun*, i.e. “the orthodox Khalifs.”) This title was not, as is commonly supposed, adjudged to Haroun by his subjects in recognition of his qualities, as in the case of Louis XIII. of France, dubbed (wildly enough) “le Juste,” but was conferred on him by his father El Mehdi, four years before his coming to the throne, on the occasion of his formal nomination as heir-presumptive (his brother El Hadi being heir-apparent) to the Khalifate, in conformity with the habit of the Khalifs, the ecclesiastical nature of whose dignity is peculiarly apparent in the hieratic titles assumed by them and answering to the *agnomina* bestowed (with the title of *Caesar*) by the Roman Emperors upon their successors-elect. Haroun, at all events, justified his title, for, if anything but just, he certainly was *orthodox*, at least in outward appearance, being a strict observer (in public at least) of the burdensome ritual of Muslim prayer and visiting offences against orthodoxy with the utmost rigour. He made eight or more pilgrimages to Mecca and Medina (all of which he is said to have performed *on foot*), attended by a splendid suite, and defrayed, on a princely scale, the expenses of some hundreds of pilgrims of the flower of the learned and orthodox of his time, in the years when he himself refrained from accomplishing the rite. He lavished money and gifts upon the inhabitants of the Holy Cities and expended infinite pains and wealth in assuring the pilgrim-track against the Bedouins. (His wife Zubeideh also was prodigal in her expenditure upon pilgrimages and the improvement and embellishment of Mecca and Medina, the great aqueduct that supplies the former with water having been built by her at an enormous cost.) In private, Er Reshid was a voluptuary, whom the prohibitions of religion availed not to restrain from the indulgence of his every passion: his physicians attributed his last illness and premature death to immoderate sexual commerce and there seems no doubt that he was an habitual wine-bibber, that is to say, a drinker to intoxication (after the manner of the Easterns, who conceive no other aim in the consumption of intoxicants than intoxication and have therefore always preferred spirits of various kinds, such as *seker* or date-brandy, etc., to wine) of strong drinks, and not, as pretended by his apologists, of the harmless *nebiz*, a very slightly fermented infusion of raisins, whose use is sanctioned by the example of Mohammed. The historian Shemseddin Yousuf Ibn el Jauzi (author of the great Chronicle, *Mirat ex Zeman*, the Mirror of Time) naively pleads, by way of excuse for Haroun's offending in this respect, that he never got drunk except behind a curtain, a trait which, if true, is sufficiently characteristic of the hypocritical nature of the Khalif.

This prince is undoubtedly the hero of "The Thousand and One Nights"; no other name occurs with a quarter of the same frequency and upon no other character is bestowed such wholesale laudation; indeed, we may well suspect, from the prominence that is given to him and the frequency with which anecdotes of his reign recur, that a portion of the collection was taken bodily from notes or compilations prepared at his especial instance, by the celebrated poets and musicians (for the two offices were frequently combined) who illustrated his court. Never was reputation so ill-deserved as that of the "good" Haroun er Reshid, who seems to have been a happy compound of the worst characteristics of such despots as Philip II. of Spain, Francis I. and Henry VIII., combining, with the superstitious bigotry of the first, the insatiable rapacity of the second and the ferocious sensuality of the third, a bloodthirsty savagery, peculiarly his own and only to be equalled by a king of Dahomey, and the almost hysterical sensitiveness to music, poetry and wit that distinguishes the Arab and has so often been found to exist side by side with the most complete lack of moral consciousness and the most refined excesses of unrelenting barbarity. This artistic sensibility he appears to have shared with the majority of his subjects (for there is no point in which there is such general consent in Arabic literature as the seemingly universal facility with which prince and peasant, merchant and Bedouin, courtier and water-carrier, alike appear to have at their command the resources of music and poetry, the poorest fisherman spontaneously reciting or composing the most elegant verses in moments of emotion or emergency and showing as exquisite a sensitiveness to the exercise of the two arts in others as the best educated and most refined noble) and to have carried to such an excess that the apposite repetition of a witty story or of a harmonious piece of verse, either remembered or extempore, frequently sufficed to secure for the astute reciter the highest honours at the Khalif's disposal or to save the greatest criminal or the most hated enemy from the consequences of the furious outbursts of passionate frenzy to which the monarch was subject. This characteristic it was which led him to encourage the arts and to select as his intimate companions the best-known poets and musicians of the time, (of whom two or three were always in attendance upon him at all hours of the day and night,) upon whom he lavished, with reckless prodigality, the immense sums he wrung from his subjects and from whose venal praises later historians drew the false data on which they moulded the imaginary character of the great and good Khalif of the "golden prime" of Islam, a character as fabulous as that of the Cid, whom modern research has proved to have been a sort of Schinderhannes-Dalgetty, a brutal and venal swashbuckler, "fighting for his own hand," under Arab or Spaniard, king or condottiere, as it paid him best, and solacing his leisures with the innocent pastimes of Jew-roasting and captive-baiting. Like Louis XIV., one of the most contemptible princes that ever sat on the throne of France, his memory is glorified by the borrowed lustre of the many men of genius and distinction who flourished in his reign. Quoth a MS. history cited by Dr. Weil, "Grave and pleasant people gathered to Er Reshid as to none other; the Barmecides the noblest men of the world, were his viziers; Abou Yousuf was his Cadi; Merwan Ibn Abi Hefseh, who in his century stood as high as earlier Jerir, was his poet ; Ibrahim el Mausili, unique in his time, his singer ; Zulzul and Bersoum his musicians."

Haroun's reign was indeed rich in great men; in addition to those named above and to the distinguished statesmen, generals and men of learning who surrounded him, the poets En Nemri, Er Recashi, Dibil el Khuzai, Salih ben Tarif, El Asmal, Abou Nuwas, El Ettabi, Muslim ibn el Welid, Aboulatahiyeh, Abou Ubeideh and many others and the famous musician Isaac of Mosul, Ibn Jami and Mukharik adorned his court, and Baghdad swarmed with jurisconsults and legists of the highest distinction, who officiated as judges and to whose wise and impartial administration of the laws he owed his reputation for justice. He was the last Khalif who held, undiminished (with the exception of Spain, which was conquered A.D. 756 by the Ommiade Abdurrehman, who there founded the independent Khalifate of Cordova), the empire won by the early successors of Mohammed and the Benou Umeyyeh; even in his reign, the dominions of the Khalifate were curtailed by the defection of his governor of Africa, Ibrahim ibn Aghleb, and the revolt of the Alide Edris and the consequent foundation of independent kingdoms in Sicily and Northern Africa; under his successors province after province fell away, till the dominion of the last Abbaside Khalifs was practically limited to the city of Baghdad; hence his reign is not unnaturally chosen by the Muslim historian to represent the golden age of the Khalifate. Again, he was lavish in the decoration and enrichment of Baghdad (which under him attained its highest point of glory and prosperity), at the expense of the provinces, which were disaffected to him and continually in revolt against him; and these reasons, combined with the acts and character of the able ministers by whom the empire was ruled during the greater part of his reign and the fact that, like many other cruel and unscrupulous despots, he affected especially to cherish and be accessible to his humbler subjects, amply suffice to account for the most unmerited halo that has so long clung about his name.

As an instance of the enormous sums which Er Reshid lavished upon his favourites, during the heyday of their prosperity, a historian states that, in the accounts of the royal expenditure *for one year alone*, the sum of thirty millions of dirhems is entered as the aggregate amount bestowed, in money and goods, on Jaafer the Barmecide, and Fekhreddin Razi mentions (on the authority of the historian El Amrani), as occurring in a similar list shortly before Jaafer's death, the almost incredible item, "Four hundred thousand dinars for a dress of honour for the Vizier Jaafer ben Yehya," to be shortly followed by the entry, tragic in its terrible contrast, "Ten carats for naphtha and reeds for burning the body of Jaafer the Barmecide." Again, at the instance of his great vizier, he gave Abdulmelik es Salih a sum of four millions of dirhems; nor was he less lavish in his gifts to the poets, musicians and literati who tickled his intellectual palate with apropos recitals, songs, stories and pleasantries, as well as to the men of learning and chicane who extricated him by their ready wit from some dilemma of conscience or by a legal quibble enabled him to conciliate orthodoxy with the enjoyment of some prohibited pleasure. His wife Zubeideh was equally prodigal, especially in matters religious, having (according to

Ibn el Jauzi) spent three millions of dinars, in the course of a single pilgrimage, in expenses, gifts to the learned men of Mecca and Medina and public works.

Notwithstanding his apparent liberality, Er Reshid was greedy and rapacious and procured the money for his prodigalities by a system of the most unscrupulous robbery and extortion. The legitimate income of the Khalifate is said to have been about twenty-six million dinars, yet so far did the treasures he accumulated, by fair means or foul, under the mask of extravagant liberality, exceed the wealth he flung away upon his caprices that he is said to have left nearly a thousand millions of dinars, besides a fabulous quantity of precious stones and other effects (among the rest, thirty thousand beasts of burden, a hundred camel-loads of jewels and twenty thousand male slaves) representing, in all probability, a much larger sum; and these enormous riches it is evident from the accounts of Arabian chroniclers that he amassed by the vilest and most oppressive means. "He overwhelmed the people," says a modern historian, "with taxes and imposts and not infrequently despoiled his generals and governors of the wealth they had gained in his service." Abdulmelik es Salih, mentioned above, whom, at Jaafer's prpmpting, he had appointed governor of Egypt and married to his daughter, he shortly afterward, on pretence of his intention to aspire tot he Khalifate, stripped of all his property and cast into prison, where he remained till the death of the tyrant, when the latter's successor, El Amin, released him and made him governor of Syria, thus manifesting the utter groundlessness of the accusation. Mohammed ben Suleiman ben Ali, a distant cousin of the Khalif, died leaving property worth sixty millions of dirhems, apparently inherited from his father, and Haroun seized upon the whole estate, though near relatives came forward to claim it, justifying his high-handed dealing with the futile pretext that he had proof of the deceased's intention to revolt against his authority and was therefore entitled to confiscate his property. Again, the Viceroy of Khorassan, Ali ben Isa el Mahani, had, by oppression and extortion, wrung immense sums from his subjects, which coming to the ears of the Khalif, he summoned the offending governor before himself, but, instead of compelling him to make restitution, he compounded with him for the payment of a heavy bribe and continued him in his government. This criminal transaction he several times renewed, till, at last, finding probably that Ibn Mahan became more and more difficult to squeeze, he seized on his person by treachery and made himself master of his wealth (said to have amounted to eighty millions of dirhems in gold and plate alone, besides fifteen hundred camel-loads of precious stuffs), all of which, instead of restoring to its lawful owners, he applied to his own uses. These are a few instances only of the greed and rapacity with which his left hand still took back all and more than his right had given and of the criminal meanness by which he too often filled his treasuries, and so notorious, indeed, were the extortion and tyranny to which he owed his riches, that the celebrated ascetic Fuzail ibn Iyaz refused, though at the risk of his head, to accept a gift that the Khalif wished to bestow on him, alleging, as the ground of his refusal, that the giver's wealth had not been honestly come by.

The instances of his cruelty and treachery, that confront us in Muslim records, are no less numerous and flagrant; and the words of Sismondi, in his unsparing condemnation of the monster Alexander Borgia, we are warranted by historical evidence in applying to Er Reshid, who seems indeed to have been "a man whom no good faith bound in his engagements, no sentiment of justice checked in his policy, no compassion moderated in his vengeance." Every means was good to him to destroy his enemies, whether personal or political, and he thought nothing of violating the most solemn oaths, when he desired to rid himself of a hated or suspected person, hated and suspected often upon grounds that owed their existence to his own jaundiced imagination. He began his reign by putting to death the Amir Abou Isma, one of his brother's counsellors, nominally because he was one of those who had persuaded El Hadi to proclaim his own son Jaafer heir-apparent to the Khalifate, to the exclusion of himself and in contravention of the will of their father El Mehdi, but really from one of the pettiest motives of personal spite, because the unlucky Abou Isma had, on one occasion, given Jaafer the precedence over Haroun, when the two princes were about to pass over a bridge. There can be little doubt that he was an accessory to the murder of his brother El Hadi by the contrivance of their mother Kheizuran ; but this latter crime may be said to have been committed in self-defence and therefore to some extent excusable, as El Hadi had resolved upon the assassination of Haroun, to remove him from his son's path. Another of the earliest acts by which he signalized his accession was to procure the poisoning of the Alide Edris ben Abdallah, who, after the failure of his kinsman Hussein ben Ali's attempt to seize the Khalifate at Medina and the death of the latter at the battle of Fakh (A.D. 786), fled to North-western Africa and there founded the Edriside kingdom of *Mughred* or Morocco; and not content with the success of his murderous plot, he caused put to death an Egyptian postmaster, Wezih by name, who had sheltered the fugitive and furthered his escape to Morocco, rewarding the poisoner, Shemmekh, with the latter's post. The Alide Mousa ben Jaafer, one of the most venerated elders of the Shiah sect, he cast into prison and caused to be secretly murdered, because, on a certain occasion, when both were visiting the Prophet's tomb at Medina, after Er Reshid had greeted Mohammed with "Peace be on thee, O cousin!" Mousa followed suit with "Peace be on thee, O father!" as was indeed his right, and his treatment of Yehya ben Abdallah, another descendant of Ali, was yet more dastardly and barbarous. Yehya, who was the uncle of Hussein ben Ali above mentioned and fought by his side at the disastrous battle of Fakh, fled, after the loss of that day, to Media, where he established himself so strongly and became so formidable that Er Reshid despatched against him El Fezl the Barmecide, who, with his usual politic mansuetude, succeeded in inducing the rebel to renounce his pretensions in favour of the regnant prince, on promise of fair treatment by the latter. A formal treaty, embodying the terms of compromise, being entered into and solemnly ratified by Er Reshid, Yehya proceeded to Baghdad and surrendered himself to the Khalif, who received him with all the external signs of distinguished honour, but shortly after, on pretext of some formal flaw in the contract, discovered by the crown lawyers (from whom the declaration is said to have been extorted by main force), cast the unlucky Alide into prison, committing him to the custody of Jaafer. The generous Barmecide, revolted at his master's signal ill faith, took pity on the prisoner and connived at his escape; but Er Reshid afterwards recaptured him and again cast him into prison, where he caused him to be secretly murdered, He put to death

Abou Hureireh, Viceroy of Mesopotamia, because he had suffered defeat at the hands of the Kharijites, and caused the Khuramiyeh heretics, followers of the Persian socialist Mezdek, on the suppression of their revolt in Azerbijan by Abdallah ibn Malik, to be put to the sword and their women and children sold as slaves; nor was it without extreme difficulty that the sanguinary monarch was prevented from exterminating the inhabitants of Mosul and razing that great city to the ground, after the putting down of a popular rising led by Ettal ben Sufyan. During his last illness, having captured Beshr ibn Leith, brother of the rebel Refia ben Leith, who had established himself in Transoxania, he caused him to be dissected alive by a butcher, whom he summoned for that purpose, and bidding his attendants lay before him the fourteen pieces into which the unfortunate prisoner had been divided, gloated over them till he fell into a swoon. This was the last public act of the "good" Haroun er Reshid, who expired three days later, after having, almost with his latest breath, ordered the execution, upon some trifling occasion of offence, of his physician the Christian Jebril (Gabriel) ibn Bekhtiyeshou. Jebril was however saved from his threatened doom by the death of his ferocious master in the night.

These are some of the enormities committed by the "good" Khalif, and these, although they sink into insignificance compared with the fiendish barbarity and ingratitude of his treatment of the Barmecides (an account of which I reserve for another page), suffice to show that he can lay no claim to the attributes of goodness, generosity and justice with which popular tradition has so persistently credited him, and I confess that, for my own part, I cannot discover any reason why he should be gratified, with the name of "Great," except upon the principle is accordance with which that title is awarded to the contemptible Louis XIV., whose only claim to greatness lay in the fact that great men lived and worked (and often starved) whilst he ate and drank and dallied with his titled harlots. In reality, he appears to have been a morose and fantastic despot, pursued, like Philip II. of Spain, by the spectres of his own crimes, tormented at once by superstitious remorse and jealous suspicion, which, while oppressing his waking hours and troubling his natural rest with the tortures of gloomy and foreboding thought, again and again impelled him to commit anew the misdeeds whose recollection embittered his existence and to deprive himself, at their malignant instance, of the only men about him on whom he could reckon for fidelity and ability combined. His fits of gloomy depression and his chronic restlessness by night and day are constantly referred to in “The Thousand and One Nights,” and it was in endeavouring to shake off these haunting miseries that he seems to have met with the many adventures that are recorded of him and of which a considerable portion may fairly be supposed to have been invented and arranged for him by the distinguished poets who were his constant associates.

One of the latter, Abou Nuwas ibn Hani, is a curious figure in the history of literature. A debauchee of the most debased and sensual order, he, nevertheless, in addition to his undoubtedly high poetical genius, too often prostituted to the vilest purposes, seems to have been remarkably free from the servility that generally distinguishes the courtly poet and to have cherished a rude but real love of independence and a sense of the beauties of freedom which led him to prefer the rough licence of the wine-shop and the pleasure-garden to all the luxurious allurements of the Court; and we find the Khalif, who set on his society a value equivalent to the difficulty he found in procuring it, often reduced to all sorts of expedients to drag him from his favourite haunts. Like the great anacreontic poet of early mediaeval China, Li-tai-pe (with whom he was nearly contemporary), the messengers of his royal master were frequently compelled to force him from the taverns, where he revelled with his low associates, for the purpose of amusing the Khalif in his fits of depression or of advising him upon state and general matters; and long before Walter de Mapes or Hafiz, he declared his intention of ending his days in the exclusive worship of the divinities of wine and pleasure, rhyming in Arabian verse his version of “Mihi est propositum in taberna mori.” Nor in this avowed devotion to the forbidden delights of conviviality was he alone among the denizens of the court of the Khalifs. Baghdad, in the reign of Er Reshid, seems to have been preeminently a city of pleasure. Thither flocked from all parts of the Oriental world the most noted and capable poets, musicians and artificers of the time; and the first thought of the

Arabian or Persian craftsman who had completed some specially curious or attractive specimen of his art was to repair to the capital of the Muslim world, to submit it to the Commander of the Faithful, from whom he rarely failed to receive a rich reward for his labours. Surrounded by pleasure-gardens and groves of orange, tamarisk and myrtle, refreshed by an unfailing luxuriance of running streams, supplied either by art or nature, the great city on the Tigris is the theme of many an admiring ode or laudatory ghazel; and the poets of the time all agree in describing it as being, under the rule of the great Khalif, a sort of terrestrial paradise of idlesse and luxury, where, to use their own expressions, the ground was irrigated with rose-water and the dust of the roads was musk, where flowers and verdure overhung the ways and the air was perpetually sweet with the many-voiced song of birds, and where the chirp of lutes, the dulcet warble of flutes and the silver sound of singing houris rose and fell in harmonious cadence from every corner of the streets of palaces that stood in vast succession in the midst of their gardens and orchards, gifted with perpetual verdure by the silver abundance of the Tigris, as it sped its arrowy flight through the thrice-blest town.

Baghdad, indeed, was in many respects emphatically a “città cortigiana,” a sort of Vienna or Bucharest of the olden time, carried to the higher evolution correspondent with the more sensuous influences of the luxuriant East; and the state of public morality there was naturally of the laxest. Especially was this the case with the higher classes. Drunkenness and debauchery of the most uncompromising kind prevailed amongst them in despite of the precepts of the Koran; and men and women seemed to vie with each other in refinements of luxury and dissipation. As was the case in a period that offers no small analogy to that of which I speak, the epoch of the Roman decadence, the women of the upper classes, to whom was apparently allowed an amount of liberty, or rather licence, curiously at variance with our Western ideas of Eastern domestic polity, appear to have been especially corrupt; and many are the tales of their licentious habits and adventures found in the Thousand and One Nights, reminding us of the Memoirs of Casanova, although almost always redeemed by touches of pathos, poetry or romance, which are wanting to the tatter’s dry and unattractive records of common-place galanterie. The Story of the Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdad, that of the Barber's Second Brother and several others contained in the old version, give some idea of the licence of the time, and examples are still more abundant and circumstantial in the tales that compose the comparatively unknown portion of the collection.

As may well be supposed, under these circumstances, the upper classes of the time were not characterised by any especial fervour of religious devotion. Notwithstanding the fanatical orthodoxy of the Khalif and of his chief wife and cousin, Zubeideh, a woman as superstitious, as cruel and as cultivated as himself, the general religious sentiment of the Court of Baghdad appears to have been a sort of refined atheism, borrowed from Persia and having in all probability some affinity with Soufi quietism, which, whilst conforming in outward matters to Muslim observances, was yet, in the spirit of the Persian usage expressed by the word *ketman* (concealment), perfectly well understood and recognised. This tendency had apparently its origin with the illustrious Barmecide (properly Bermeki) family; and their opinions, whilst not interfering with a professed conformity to the tenets of Islam, appear to have been shared by most of the great officers and nobles of the kingdom, in the same manner as the religious doctrine known as Bâbism is said at the present day to underlie the higher ranks of modern Persian society. Nevertheless, the lower and middle classes of the people were still profoundly and fanatically attached to the Faith of the Unity of God; nor were examples of Mohammedan fervour and zealotry wanting that would not have misbeseemed the strictest epochs of religious enthusiasm. Er Reshid himself was completely under ecclesiastical control, especially that of the Chief Imam of his reign, the Sheikh Abou Yousuf, who seems to have been more of a courtier than a priest and to have ingratiated himself with the Khalif by his audacious adroitness (of which at least one instance finds mention in The Thousand and One Nights) in twisting the interminable subtleties of Mohammedan ritual and dogma to suit the monarch's varying caprices and inclinations; and one of the most salient examples of ascetic devotion that mark the history of Islam is recorded in the person of the Khalif s own son, who, no doubt impelled by disgust at his father's cruelty and rapacity, as well as at the licence of his luxurious court, became a hermit, saint or "friend of God" (as the Muslims have it), under the circumstances detailed in the story of The Devout Prince.

Under Haroun er Reshid, Baghdad was undoubtedly the metropolis of Muslim civilisation. It is said to have been as populous as modern Paris, and the rapid growth of its manufactures and the immense trade attracted from all parts of the world by the presence of a brilliant and prodigal court, early resulted in making the great body of its population well-to-do and contented. It was one of the most orderly and well-governed cities in the world of its day, and such was the comparative quiet and security for life and property that reigned within its walls, (thanks to the astute administration of the Barmecide Viziers, who anticipated Fourier's doctrine of the "passionel" treatment of criminal inclinations, carrying out the theory of "set a thief to catch a thief" with the greatest success and effectually keeping under roguery and crime by employing certain selected rascals of high capacity, such as Ahmed ed Denef, Hassan Shouman and Ali Zibec, mentioned in the Thousand and One Nights, as subordinate prefects of police to coerce and checkmate their former comrades,) that the city was generally known by the sobriquet of *Dar es Selam* or Abode of Peace.

It was, indeed, to the great statesmen of the house of Bermek that the reigns of the early Abbaside Khalifs owed almost the whole of the prosperity and brilliancy that distinguished them. Of an ancient and noble Persian family, Khalid ben Bermek, the first of the house that appears upon the scene of Arabian history, became Vizier and Minister of Finance to the founder of the Abbaside dynasty, Aboulabbas the Blood-shedder, and after serving his successor El Mensour in a like capacity, was appointed to the government of Mosul and Azerbijan, which post he held till his death. Aboul abbas was the first to institute the office of Vizier and Khalid was the earliest of the great ministers who ruled the immense dominions of the Khalifs with almost regal power. During his long tenure of office he practically governed the empire, the Khalifs of the house of Abbas taking little personal part in the burdensome task of administration. He appears to have shown the highest talents for government and was particularly successful in consolidating and setting in order the finances. It was under his direction that the city of Baghdad was built in the reign of El Mensour, when that prince elected to abandon the former capital of the Khalifs, Damascus, for a spot less impregnated with the memories of the fallen dynasty, and it is to his wise, just and liberal rule that the rapid prosperity of the new capital must be ascribed. According to El Mesoudi, Khalid surpassed, in prudence, bravery, learning, generosity and noble qualities and accomplishments, even his more celebrated descendants.

His son Yehya we first meet with as governor of Armenia under El Mensour. Under the tatter's successor, El Mehdi, he became Secretary of State and was entrusted by the Khalif with the charge of his son Haroun's education. Yehya was the foster-father of this prince, who was born nearly at the same time as his own son El Fezl, and an exchange of infants for some reason took place between the mothers, Kheizuran suckling Fezl and Zubeideh (Yehya's wife) Haroun. The two boys thus became foster-brothers (a quasi-relation which, though merely nominal in Europe, is invested by Mohammedan law with rights and obligations nearly akin to those of actual brotherhood), and in consequence of this and of the semi-paternal authority exercised over him by Yehya, in his capacity of governor, Haroun was wont to call the latter father. It was to the prudence and boldness with which, during the short and stormy reign of the crackbrained tyrant El Hadi, Yehya played the difficult and dangerous part of governor and adviser of the heir presumptive (a role to which he clave with extraordinary fidelity and magnanimity, under the most discouraging circumstances), that the latter owed his throne and indeed his life, and the Barmecide came near to paying dear for his loyalty to the youth whom his royal father had committed to his care, El Hadi, exasperated by the courage and skill with which he opposed his scheme for substituting his own son Jaafer for Haroun in the succession, having cast him into prison, where he would certainly have perished, but for the opportune intervention of Kheizuran, whose favourite he was and who procured the timely assassination of the Khalif. Immediately after El Hadi's death, Yehya was released and at once applied himself to securing the accession of his pupil, whom he succeeded in seating on the throne, without serious opposition. Haroun, thus become Khalif, hastened to acknowledge his obligations to Yehya and without delay appointed him his Chief Vizier, handing him (in token of investment with the executive power) his signet-ring, with the words, "My dear father, it is owing to the blessings and good fortune that attend you and to your excellent management that I am now seated on this throne, wherefore I confide to you the direction of affairs." Yeyha was the wisest statesman, the most benevolent and magnanimous man of his time. Quoth Ibn Khellikan, "He was perfect in talent, judgment and noble qualities, highly distinguished for wisdom, nobleness of mind and elegance of language." He is called by a contemporary man of letters "the president of the Divan (or Board) of generous actions," and Oriental writers agree in ascribing to him all noble qualities that can combine in a man to compel the love and reverence of his kind. From the time of Haroun's accession to that of the horrible catastrophe which extinguished the house of Bermek (i.e., — with an insignificant interregnum, during which, for some unexplained cause, El Fezl ben Rebya, the bitter and unscrupulous foe of the Barmecides, was entrusted with the Vizierate, — from A.D. 786 to A.D. 803), Yehya and his sons Fezl and Jaafer wielded, with practically uncontrolled authority, the sovereignty of the East, Er Reshid (who seems from the moment of his sudden elevation to the throne to have devoted himself well-nigh exclusively to the curious mixture of debauchery and religious observances by which he endeavoured to conciliate his passion for all kinds of pleasure with the superstitious regard for the external appearances of orthodoxy that was no less pronounced a feature of his character and to have concerned himself little with the business of government), entirely devolving on them the executive power and endorsing all their acts and orders with a servility of which some singular instances are given in Muslim records. By his wise and high-minded administration, the great Vizier completely reorganized the vast empire of the Khalifs, still somewhat shattered by the intestine disorders that had troubled the last years of the Ommiade princes and the reigns of their immediate successors and raised it to a height of general prosperity which was the wonder of the world. He regulated the incidence of the taxes on a principle that, whilst benefiting the treasury by the increased return it occasioned, alleviated the burdens of the poorer classes, established a complete system of posts all over the empire, expended a great part of the revenue upon all sorts of magnificent public works, making roads and building mosques, caravanserais, bridges, etc., etc., on every side, improved and perfected the organization of the police, encouraged agriculture and industry, procuring the introduction and cultivation of new arts and dividing the various crafts into guilds or syndicates, charged with the office of regularizing trade and the prevention of fraud, and by proper regulations immensely augmented the yield of the mines and other sources of natural wealth, organized public education on a liberal basis, founding schools, colleges and libraries in profusion and extending the most lavish encouragement to scholars, literati and men of science, native and foreign, continuing and fostering the splendid civilisation of the Persians and Graeco-Latins and revivifying its partial effeteness with the quickening energy of the Arab genius; in short, he established and set in working order all the various and elaborate machinery of government that is necessary to the political and social economy of a great and heterogeneous empire, and founding law, order and justice everywhere, brought the dominions of the Khalifate to a pitch of civilisation and prosperity, moral and material, which Europe did not even begin to emulate till many centuries later and of which no country of that time, with the exception, perhaps, of China, then in the full flower of its civilisation, under the great dynasty of the Thangs, could offer even a partial example.

Yehya’s four sons, Fezl, Jaafer, Mohammed and Mousa, were renowned for the same qualities and virtues as their illustrious father and all ordered their lives and actions in the spirit of his magnanimous saying, “This life is a series of vicissitudes and wealth is but a loan; let us, then, follow the models offered by our predecessors and leave a good example to those who come after.” The Khalif el Mamoun is reported to have said, “Yehya ben Khalid and his sons had none [to equal them] in ability, in culture, in liberality and in bravery: it was well said by a poet, ‘The sons of Yehya are four in number, like the elements: when put to the test, they will be found the elements of beneficence.’ Quoth the poet

Merwan ibn Abi Hefseh, ‘The power of doing good is in the hands of princes; but the noble Barmecides did good and harmed not.’ ‘Their hands,’ says Mohammed ibn Munadhir, ‘were created for nought but deeds of beneficence and their feet for the boards of the pulpit;’ and quoth El Atawi, ‘The generous Barmecides learned beneficence and taught it to the human race; when they planted, they watered, and they never let the edifice they founded fall into ruin; when they conferred favours on mankind, they clothed their bounties in a raiment that endured for ever.’” The romantic generosity of the Barmecides it would, indeed, be difficult to exaggerate. Incredible as the instances of their liberality given in the Thousand and One Nights may appear, they are but one or two of hundreds of similar and well-authenticated anecdotes of the munificence of this truly princely house, and it is hardly too much to say that the history of the world makes no mention of a family every member of which was distinguished by so extraordinary a combination of the noblest qualities of heart and head. No contemporary historian or poet can name them without breaking out into passionate praise of their nobleness and as passionate lament for their unmerited fate. “Alas for the sons of Bermek,” cries Salih ben Tarif, “and the happy days of their power! With them the world was as a bride; but now it is widowed and bereft of its children.” “The Barmecides,” says Fekhreddin Razi, “were to their time as a plume to the brow, as a crown to the head. The world was requickened under their administration and the empire carried to the highest pinnacle of splendour. They were the refuge of the afflicted, the providence of the unfortunate.” And all who speak of them echo the same strain. Each of the four sons was distinguished by some special quality, in addition to the virtues which were the general appanage of the family, and the only weak point in their character appears to have been the noble fault they shared with Julius Caesar and Napoleon III. and to which they, like their compeers of the West, in all probability owed their ruin, i.e. the generous magnanimity and high-souled mansuetude, which led them to regard with heroic indifference the miserable plots of the enviers and calumniators, the assassins and intrigants, the “fishers in troubled water,” the Fezl ben Rebyas and Mohammed ibn Abi Leiths, the Cassii and Cascae, the Gambettas and Rocheforts, the professional seditionists and Bulgarian-Atrocity-mongers of their time, and forbade them to crush, by severe but just and necessary measures of repression, which, timely employed, might probably have preserved them for the general benefit of humanity, the dastardly intrigues which resulted in their destruction.

Uniformly gifted as were the four sons of Yehya, Jaafer appears to have surpassed his brothers in mental power and accomplishments, whilst in no way yielding to them in all the virtues and nobilities for which they were conspicuous, and to have been distinguished, in particular, by a sweetness of temper and a chivalrous courtesy of demeanour, which Fezl, eminently good and noble as he was, lacked, of his own confession, he having a certain abruptness of manner that made him, though more in appearance than in reality, savour somewhat of the *Burbero Benefice* (the beneficent curmudgeon) of Goldoni.

Jaafer was indeed a remarkable and attractive figure in the history of the time. To the virtues of liberality, beneficence and hospitality that distinguished almost to excess all the members of his illustrious house, he added accomplishments and qualities which were peculiarly his own and which make him by far the most loveable and attractive character of the many that live for us in The Thousand and One Nights. "In the high rank which he attained," says Ibn Khellikan, "and the great power which he wielded, in loftiness of spirit and in the esteem and favour shown him by the Khalif, he stood without a rival. His disposition was generous, his looks encouraging, his demeanour kind; his liberality and munificence, the richness and prodigality of his donations are too well known to require mention." He had been educated with Er Reshid, and for some years after the latter's accession, served him as secretary of petitions, an arduous office (especially in the case of a monarch whose peculiar pretension it was to be always accessible to any of his subjects who had a request to make or a grievance to state), which he seems to have filled with the utmost brilliancy, showing, in particular, an intimate acquaintance with the bewildering subtleties of Mohammedan law and jurisprudence. He was a man of exquisite culture and was accounted the best stylist of his day. He seems, indeed, to have been possessed, in a remarkable degree, of all the accomplishments of his time; and in particular, his knowledge of and power of composition in classical Arabic was so extensive and so elegant that amateurs of the pure literary style are said to have purchased, for their weight in gold, the scraps of parchment on which, as secretary of petitions, he had been wont to inscribe his decisions. His knowledge of law and jurisprudence was phenomenal and in these branches of learning he had been the favourite pupil of the celebrated Abou Yousuf, the first legist of his time. "He expressed his thoughts with great elegance and was remarkable for his eloquence and command of language; it is recorded that one night he wrote, in presence of Er Reshid, upwards of a thousand decisions on as many memorials that had been presented to the Khalif and that not one of these deviated in the least from what was warranted by the law."

Universally gifted, he put down, by fair means, the troublesome tribal war in Syria, and as viceroy of all the provinces of the East, restored peace and good government to the sorely mismanaged African provinces, whilst his brother Fezl performed the like office for Khorassan and the Western provinces of the empire. He educated the young prince El Mamoun, who never forgot his wise and noble teachings and lived to honour them by proving the best and most high-minded monarch of the house of Abbas, and being, on the death of the queen-mother Kheizuran, appointed chief Vizier, continued during the remainder of his life to exercise the functions of that high office with as much wisdom, justice, generosity and benefit to the kingdom as his father, brother and grandfather. Compassionate and forgiving almost to excess, no trait is recorded of him that shows any bitterness against personal enemies, nor does he ever appear to have availed himself of his immense power to punish the attempts that were perpetually made to injure him by men jealous of his character and position. On the contrary, such was his mansuetude and sweetness of nature, that he was always ready to intercede for the culprits, in cases where they had exposed themselves to the Khalif's displeasure. His strength of mind and moral courage were no less remarkable than his patience; the innate nobility of the man shines out in every act and every word; and he was always ready, often at the imminent risk of his own life, to intervene between the royal tiger whom he served and the unfortunate people under his control. Kindly, generous and charitable to excess and at the same time a firm, just and far-sighted administrator, he was passionately beloved by the people of Baghdad, whose miseries he spared no pains to alleviate and whose general prosperity may, in no small degree, be attributed to the untiring courage and self-sacrifice with which he was always ready to shield them, to the utmost of his power, from the ferocity and rapacity of his royal master.

Fezl, as the foster-brother of Er Reshid, was originally his most intimate friend and the companion of his private pleasures, being his constant associate in the carouses in which the Khalif passed his evenings, in the midst of his favourite women and musicians. For some unexplained reason, he appears to have become converted to the renunciation of such enjoyments as wine-bibbing and listening to music and tale-telling (forbidden to the strict Muslim) and to have abruptly withdrawn from the intimacy of the Khalif and forsworn association in his pleasures. This conduct on Fezl's part being probably construed by the umbrageous monarch as an implied censure on himself, he transferred his especial favour to Jaafer, a man of more savoir-vivre and easier composition than his austerer brother and more richly gifted with those social qualities of wit and gay and gallant humour so highly prized by Eastern princes in the companions of their pleasures; and he presently further emphasized his displeasure with Fezl by transferring the seals of government from him to Jaafer, as soon as the death of his mother Kheizuran, whose favourite Fezl was, left him at liberty to do so, appointing the deposed minister, whose services were too necessary to the empire to be altogether dispensed with, to the most important extra-metropolitan post at his disposal, i.e. the government of Khorassan, an office involving the administration of nearly one-half of the dominions of the Khalifate. The manner in which this transfer of power was received by the Barmecides, as told by Ibn Khellikan, is strikingly illustrative of the magnanimity of the members of that illustrious house and their invincible attachment to one another. According to the famous biographer, Er Reshid said to Yehya, "Dear father, I wish to transfer to Jaafer the signet now held by my brother Fezl. I am ashamed to write that order to Fezl: do it for me." Yehya accordingly wrote to Fezl, saying, "The Commander of the Faithful commands that the signet be passed from thy right hand to thy left;" to which Fezl made answer in these words: "I hear and obey the word of the Commander of the Faithful concerning my brother. No favour is lost to me, which goes from me to Jaafer, and no rank is taken from me, when he receives it." On hearing this reply, Jaafer exclaimed, "What an admirable being is my brother! How noble is his soul!"

Naturally enough, Jaafer and his brilliant kinsmen were the objects of the bitterest jealousy and hatred to the courtiers and ecclesiastics of the day, — to the former especially for their Persian origin and for their commanding talents and popularity, and to the latter more particularly for their tolerance and their well-known, or at least shrewdly-suspected, adherence to some form of Persian Rationalism, — and many were the efforts, supported by lies and calumnies of the most unscrupulous character, made by the enemies of the Bermekis to induce Er Reshid to withdraw his favour from them. These were long unsuccessful and would doubtless have continued to prove so (for, morose and passionate despot as he was, Er Reshid seems to have cherished a real affection for the brave and brilliant companion of his youth and to have estimated, at his real value to himself, the just, wise and gentle counsellor of his mature years), but for a circumstance that quickened the smouldering distrust and jealousy of the tyrant into an irrepressible outburst of fury and caused him to commit an act of which he afterwards bitterly repented, when (in Arabic phrase) repentance might no longer profit him. The circumstance in question was of a curious character. Jaafer appears to have, by the brilliancy of his conversational and other accomplishments, rendered himself so indispensable to the Khalif as a companion, as well as a minister, that the latter could not bear to be an hour without his company and for the purpose of having him always within call, insisted upon his occupying apartments within the private portion or serai of the palace; but, as royal etiquette, to which Er Reshid was devoutly attached, forbade the extension of this favour to any but actual members of the royal family, he conceived the plan of marrying Jaafer, pro formâ, to his favourite sister, the Princess Abbaseh. The marriage was concluded, but the Khalif, with the unreasonable pride of an Eastern despot, forbade the parties to cohabit, an injunction which Jaafer himself made no effort to disobey. Abbaseh, however, was an exceedingly beautiful woman and she and Jaafer (who was then in the prime of manhood and one of the handsomest men of his day) fell passionately in love with each other, nor was it long before mutual desire prevailed to overleap the prohibited bounds. The most probable account of the way in which this came about seems that of Jafei (the author of the Mirat el Jenan), who represents the princess as having prevailed, by mingled threats and persuasions, upon Jaafer's mother Ettabeh to present her to him, whilst under the influence of wine, in the guise of the female slave of whom it was her habit to make her son a gift every Friday. This was accordingly done, and Abbaseh, after having passed some time in Jaafer's company, discovered herself to him, whereupon alarm dispelled the fumes of the wine and he sought out his mother and said to her, "Mother, thou hast ruined me." His words were prophetic. Abbaseh proved with child and gave birth to twins, who were at once despatched to Mecca and there reared in secret by two devoted female attendants. The secret was kept from Er Reshid for about a twelvemonth, but was at last discovered to him in consequence of an incident peculiarly characteristic of the East. Abbaseh, with the unreflecting passion of Eastern ladies of high rank, beat one of her women with whom she was vexed, and the girl, in her spite, revealed the fatal secret to Zubeideh, who seized an early opportunity of gratifying her rancour against both her husband's favourite sister and the Barmecides (especially Yehya, who, as intendant of the palace, enforced the rules of harem discipline with a strictness that was far from pleasing to the imperious Sultana), by repeating it to Er Reshid. Haroun's mind would already appear to have been poisoned against the Barmecides, not only by the inherent jealousy of a mean nature against the overwhelming superiority of the family in all qualities that confer distinction on their possessors, but by the enormous popularity which their good deeds had won them and the venomous insinuations of those miserable reptiles that thrive by calumny and treachery, whose role has always been so considerable in Oriental, even more than in European, courts, and by whose reports he was (or feigned to be) persuaded that Yehya and his sons aspired to oust himself from the Khalifate, an accusation for which no shadow of reason appears. Other subjects of displeasure are mentioned by historians as probable reasons for his treatment of the Barmecides, such as the conduct of Fezl above mentioned and that of Jaafer in releasing the unhappy betrayed Alide Yehya; but there can be no doubt that Haroun's chief and indeed only reason was his jealousy of the great family to whom he owed life, kingdom and renown. As to this, contemporary authorities are unanimous; according to Ibn Khellikan, Said ben Salim (a well-known grammarian and traditionist of the time), when asked what crime the Barmecides had committed, answered, "Of a truth, they did nothing to warrant Er Reshid's conduct towards them; but their day had been long and that which continues long becomes irksome. There were persons of the best of men, who were fatigued with the length of the reign of the Khalif Omar [ibn el Khettab], though its like was never seen for justice, security, wealth and victories; they also bore with impatience the sway of Othman, and both were murdered. Besides, Er Reshid saw that generosity was become their wont, that the people were loud in their praise and that men's hopes were fixed on them and not on himself. Less than this suffices to excite the jealousy of princes; so Er Reshid conceived ill will against them, wreaked his vengeance on them and tried to find out faults. Besides this, a certain degree of presumption was sometimes visible in the conduct of Jaafer and Fezl, although Yehya was exempt from this; for he had more solid experience than his sons and better skill in affairs. This induced some of their enemies, such as Fezl ben Rebya, [Mohammed ibn Abi Leith and others, to have recourse to Er Reshid, from whom they concealed the good done by the Barmecides and only told him of their faults, till they brought about what took place."

That the discovery of the disobedience of his orders by Jaafer and Abbaseh was not (as is contended by some historians) the real cause of Er Reshid's rage against the Barmecides, but only an additional element of exasperation and perhaps indeed a mere pretext, is evident from the deliberation with which he set about the ruin of the house, the time which he allowed to elapse between his discovery of the fatal secret and the execution of his vengeance and the sudden and treacherous manner in which he carried out his sanguinary purpose.

Nearly a year would appear to have intervened between Zubeideh's malicious denunciation and the Khalif's return from Mecca, whither he had betaken himself, under pretence of pilgrimage, for the express purpose of verifying her disclosures. Here he found out Abbaseh's children and convinced by their resemblance to both parents of the truth of the story, caused them to be secretly conveyed to Irak, without letting any one know of the matter. With the Barmecides, meanwhile, he dissembled, showing them, if possible, more than his usual favour, till his return, when he halted at a place near Ambar, on the Euphrates, and after bestowing rich dresses of honour on the brothers and treacherously lulling to sleep any suspicions that Jaafer might have conceived by insisting upon his giving himself up to conviviality in his own tent, what while he himself indulged in wine and mirth in the royal pavilion, suddenly, in the dead of the night, summoned one of his pages, Yasir by name, and commanded him to go at once and bring him Jaafer's head. Yasir, greatly shocked, exclaimed, "Would I had died before this hour!" but dared not disobey and repaired to Jaafer's tent, where he found him carousing and acquainted him with his dreadful errand. Jaafer prevailed upon the messenger, who, like all the world, was indebted to him for many a favour, to return to the Khalif and tell him that he had put him to death. "If he expresses regret," said the Vizier, "I shall owe you my life; and if not, God's will be done." Yasir accordingly returned, leaving Jaafer without the tent, to Er Reshid, who said to him, "Well?" Whereupon he told him what had passed between himself and the Vizier. "Vile wretch," cried the Khalif, making use of the foulest imprecation known to the Arabs, "if thou answer me another word, I will send thee before him to the next world!" The page accordingly went out and striking off Jaafer's head, carried it to Er Reshid, who looked at it awhile, then bade him fetch two persons whom he named and whom, on their appearance, he commanded to strike off Yasir's head, alleging, with characteristic hypocrisy, that he could not bear the sight of Jaafer's murderer.

Before giving the order for Jaafer's execution, Er Reshid had despatched an express to his chief of the police at Baghdad, bidding him seize Yehya and Fezl, before the news got wind, and cast them into the *Hebs ez Zenadikeh* at Baghdad, and after secure the persons of their brothers, sons, grandchildren and all their other relatives and connections, even to their clerks. The order reached the Master of police in the middle of the night and he at once proceeded to execute it, securing the persons of the whole of the Barmecide family, as well as of their agents and dependents. According to Et Teberi, not a single person who had ever been connected with them was allowed to escape: every member of the family (with three exceptions) was put to death, even to their infant children, to the number, it is said, of over a thousand persons, and it need hardly be added that the "good" Haroun er Reshid confiscated to his own use the whole of their immense possessions. The race was absolutely exterminated, Yehya, Fezl and a brother of the former, Mohammed ben Khalid by name, being the only persons who appear to have survived this frightful massacre. The latter languished in prison during Er Reshid's life and was liberated by his successor. Some historians cast doubt upon this wholesale slaughter, but it is sufficient to ask, if it did not take place, how comes it that so numerous and notorious a family should all at once have so completely disappeared from the face of the earth as to leave no trace behind them?

The only members of the family whose fate is circumstantially related are Yehya and Fezl. With the former the sanguinary tyrant appears to have played as a cat with a mouse, hypocritically offering him his liberty; to which he replied that he preferred to remain with his son, with whom he was imprisoned, under circumstances of the greatest rigour, till his death, which occurred (A.D. 805) at the age of 74, after two years' imprisonmer . His foster-brother Fezl Er Reshid caused to be beaten till he was well-nigh dead, to wring from him a confession that he had secreted property beyond the immense amount that the Khalif had confiscated, but to no avail. Fezl was healed of the frightful wounds caused by this horrible treatment by a doctor, to whom, on his recovery, he sent twenty thousand dirhems that he had borrowed from a friend; but the doctor, though poor and in great distress, with rare magnanimity refused the money, saying, "I cannot accept payment for curing the greatest of the generous." In this wretched plight the two unfortunate survivors of the great Persian house displayed all the magnanimity for which they had been renowned in the days of their prosperity, supporting with high-souled patience and the noblest philosophy the miseries inflicted on them by the base rancour of the despot they had so faithfully served. The following touching anecdote will give some idea of the magnanimous spirit of the younger prisoner and Yehya yielded nothing to his son in the heroic long-suffering with which he bore his most unmerited woes. Fezl's love for his father was extreme: when in prison in winter they could not get warm water, which was necessary for Yehya, an old man over seventy, Fezl would take the copper ewer and apply it to his own stomach, so as in some measure to take off the chill for his father's use. He survived the latter three years and died in prison in November 808, four months only before the death of Er Reshid.

The mock repentance shown by the latter, as evinced in his unreasoning anger against the innocent minister of his vengeance upon Jaafer, did not prevent him from offering the last indignities to the great Vizier's remains. His head he caused to be hung up at one and his trunk at the other end of the bridge over the Tigris, opposite the, part where the Serat, the canal on which Baghdad was originally built, joins that river, Here they remained for some months, till Er Reshid, being about to leave Baghdad, caused them to be taken down and burnt like those of the vilest criminal, the greatest indignity that could be offered to a Muslim, whose religion attaches the utmost importance to due burial and inculcates the necessity of appearing before God whole as at birth.

Authorities differ as to what became of Abbaseh, the hapless cause of this horrible tragedy ; but, according to the most credible accounts, she was shut up in a chest and thrown into a pit, which her terrible brother caused to be then and there dug under the floor of her apartment. Then he sent for her children, who (says the old chronicler) showed like two pearls, looked upon them pitifully and with tears in his eyes and commanded them to be cast alive into the pit, which he then caused to be closed up, weeping crocodile-tears the while. Thus a MS. history, whose writer is unknown, but other authorities state that he had the children burnt alive. Ibn el Jauzi relates that Yehya's wife Zubeideh, Haroun's fostermother, after with great difficulty forcing her way into his presence, showed him his milk teeth and the curls of hair that she had kept from his childhood and conjured him by these tokens of her claim upon him for fosterage (one of those most sacred to a Muslim) to spare her husband and son. The mean-minded Khalif was not to be moved, but offered to buy the relics of her; whereupon she, in her indignation, threw them down at his feet, saying, "I make thee a present of them." It is related by Mohammed ibn er Rehman, a contemporary *aalim* or man of learning and a member of the Khalif's family (the Hashimis), that he once saw at his mother's a woman of reverend mien, but poorly clad, who was introduced to him as the mother of Jaafer the Barmecide and said to him, "There was a time when four hundred female slaves stood awaiting my orders and yet I thought that my son did not provide for me in a manner adequate to my rank; but now my only wish is to have two sheepskins, one for a bed and the other for a covering." Mohammed gave her five hundred dirhems, and she well-nigh died for excess of joy.

Among the various pretexts put forward by Er Reshid to cover the real reason of his rancorous spite against the Barmecides, he caused it to be bruited abroad that they were, though Muslims in outward show, fire-worshippers, like their ancestors, at heart; but the futility of this accusation is evident from the single fact that Fezl, when governor of Khorassan, pulled down the ancient temple (i.e. the Noubehar before mentioned) of the Fire, of which his forefathers had been the officiating priests, and built a magnificent mosque, exceeding in splendour the Temple at Mecca, in its stead. A more probable accusation is that they were at heart Zendics or Mundanists, a sect of Epicurean freethinkers, whose opinions, after a more primitive and practical fashion, followed in much the same Positivist track as those of the disciples of Auguste Comte in the present day and to which many of the most distinguished and ablest men of the day belonged. It is, therefore, not impossible or improbable that the Barmecides belonged to this sect; but it is fair to state that no shadow of proof exists of this. On the contrary, although they did not carry out the observances of Muslim ritual with the same mechanical exactitude as the hypocritical and superstitious tyrant their master, who is said to have prayed a hundred inclinations (*rekaät*) a day, they seem to have in no way offended against the tenets of Mohammedanism and to have fulfilled its external requirements with the moderate strictness of men of the world who made no pretension to pietism. Haroun attempted to give substance to this accusation by ordering Yehya and Fezl (as has been before mentioned) to the prison of the Zendics (*Hebs es Zenadikeh*).

The horror and discontent excited in Baghdad by the miserable fate of the much and justly loved family was extreme and neither the sanguinary edict issued by the tyrant, to the effect that all who mourned the Barmecides should share their fate, nor the executions that followed it, availed to silence the popular grief and indignation. Elegies were composed by hundreds upon the fallen house and all the poets of the time (even those attached to the court) mourned them. "It was a heavy blow for me," cries Er Recashi, one of Er Reshid's "boon companions," "to lose those princely stars by whose generous showers we were watered, when the skies withheld their rain. Let beneficence and the world say adieu to the glory of the Barmecides. By Allah, O son of Yehya, but for fear of spies and of the Khalif's eye, which sleeps not, we should compass thy gibbet [like the Kaabeh] and kiss it as men kiss the Sacred Stone!" "On seeing the sword fall on Jaafer," says Dibil el Khuzai, "and hearing the Khalif's crier proclaim vengeance on Yehya, I wept for the world and felt how true it is that the goal of man's life is the quitting it." And indeed it would be hard to name a poet of the day who did not tune his lyre to the same sorrowful strain.

The following anecdotes will give some idea of the violence of the popular mourning for the Barmecides. The Khalif, hearing that, despite his prohibition, an old man named Mundir used every day to take his station before one of their ruined houses and harangue the passers-by on the great and noble deeds of the fallen family, sent for him and sentenced him to death; but Mundir, obtaining leave to speak, drew so affecting a picture of the beneficence by which the Barmecides had rescued him from ruin and misery, that Haroun, moved to momentary repentance, not only pardoned him, but made him a present of a plate of gold, which the incorrigible old man received without a word of thanks, remarking only, "Yet another benefit that I owe to the Barmecides!" Abou Zekkar, a blind singer of Baghdad attached to Jaafer's household, who was present when Mesrour (or Yasir) cut off the letter's head, was instant with the executioner to slay him also and spare him (as he said) the misery of surviving his noble benefactor; which, being told to Haroun, he was touched by his fidelity and ordered him to be attached to his own suite, at the same salary as that allowed him by Jaafer. Ibrahim Ibn Othman ibn Nuheik was not so fortunate. Haroun, having heard of his lamentation for the Barmecides, invited him to the palace and after plying him freely with wine, drew from him, by hypocritical professions of regret for Jaafer's death, the avowal that he could not approve of his sovereign's treatment of so excellent a man and his opinion that it would be difficult to replace him; whereupon the treacherous tyrant threw off the mask and saying, "God damn thee!" ordered him to immediate execution.

After endeavouring in vain, by measures of the utmost rigour, to suppress the public manifestations of regret and love for the Barmecides, Er Reshid was ultimately compelled to desist and allow the people to give vent to their feelings as they pleased; but the popular indignation and disaffection rose to such a pitch that he thought it well to leave Baghdad (whither he never returned) and take up his residence at Rekkeh, a city on the Euphrates, 115 miles E. of Aleppo. He soon felt the void left by the loss of his great ministers and gave way to bitter and unavailing remorse, in which, however, repentance had no part, it being merely sorrow for the results of the sin and not for the sin itself. "It is observed," says Price in his History of Mohammedanism, "that, on the extermination of the Barmecides, the affairs of Haroun fell into immediate and irretrievable confusion. Treason, revolt and rebellion assailed him in different parts of the empire [especially in Khorassan, where Fezl's beneficent government had not been forgotten and which was the native country of the family. He felt himself from disease (and natural incapacity) unequal to the cares of government and expiated, by a tardy and unavailing regret, his unfeeling cruelty to the lamented race of Bermek." Fezl ben Rebya, whose treacherous malice had been largely instrumental in procuring the fall of the Barmecides, succeeded to their honours, but proved utterly unable to supply their place, and of this Er Reshid himself soon became conscious, as is shown by the following anecdote, related by El Jihshyari in his History of the Viziers. "Er Reshid," says he, “repented of his conduct to the Barmecides and deeply regretted the manner in which he had treated them. He said, before some of his brothers, that, were he but assured of the fidelity [that is to say, of the forgiveness of Yehya and Fezl, he would reinstate them in their offices. He used also to say [alluding evidently to Fezl ben Rebya], “Some people prompted us to punish our ablest and most faithful advisers and made us believe that themselves were capable of replacing them; but, when we did their will, they were not of the least use to us.” And he recited the following line

God curse your ancestors! Spare us your calumnies or fill their place.

The royal murderer appears never to have recovered his peace of mind; it is said that he never knew refreshing sleep after Jaafer’s death and his confession is recorded that he would have given his whole realm to have called him back to life. According to Ibn Bedroun, his sister Uleiyeh once said to him, “My lord, I have not seen you enjoy a day of perfect happiness, since you put Jaafer to death. Why did you so?” To which Er Reshid replied, “If I thought my shirt knew the reason, I would tear it in pieces.” When, after he had become convinced of the irreparableness of his loss, any blamed the Barmecides in his presence, he would say, “Perdition to your fathers! Cease to blame them or fill the void they have left.” After the death of Jaafer and the imprisonment of Yehya and Fezl, he had no one in whom he could trust, having committed the fatal error of dividing his kingdom between his sons in his lifetime, and went in continual apprehension of being poisoned by the latter, fearing even to confide the knowledge of the lingering disease by which he died to his physicians, whom he suspected (not, it would seem, without cause) of being his sons’ creatures, and it is said that even his old servant Mesrour, whom he had overwhelmed with bounties, but who was in the pay of El Amin, brought him during his last journey a bad (i.e. a hard-trotting camel), to the intent that his ailment might be aggravated thereby. When (in 805) his old and faithful servant and foster-father Yehya died in his prison, there was found in his pocket a paper on which he had written these words, “The accuser is gone before and the accused will soon follow: the Cadi will be that equitable judge who is never unjust and who hath no need of evidence.” This paper was sent to Er Reshid, who wept the rest of the day, and his face for some days after bore striking marks of sorrow. In November, 808, the noble Fezl was also, at the age of forty-six, released by death from his sufferings and the Khalif, on hearing of his decease, said, “My term is near unto his.” His presentiments did not deceive him, for he survived the foster-brother and friend, to whom he was so deeply indebted and whom he had so cruelly wronged, but four months. His last act was to sentence to death, on some fancied slight, his physician Jebril ibn Bekhtiyeshou, but, having respited him till the morrow, he himself died in the night of the 23rd March, 809, at Tous in Khorassan, where the rapid progress of his disease had compelled him to suspend his campaign against the Transoxanian insurgents. He was forty-seven years of age and had reigned upwards of twenty-three. Such was the miserable end of the “great” Khalif.

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III.

The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night contains two hundred and sixty-four stories of all lengths, from an anecdote of half a page to a “history” of several hundred pages. The stories are very unequally distributed over the different Nights, which again vary greatly in length, the first fifty or sixty being nearly three times the average length of those in the remaining portion of the work. The stories may be roughly divided into five principal categories, as follows

(I) “Histories” or long romances, founded or professing to be founded upon historical data and containing references to events which actually happened, such as the conquest of Syria and Persia by the Arabs and the wars between the Khalifs and the Emperors of Custentiniyeh or Constantinople. These are of comparatively rare occurrence, but comprise the longest stories in the collection, such as the history of King Omar ben Ennuman and his sons Sherkan and Zoulmekan (which alone occupies nearly an eighth part of the entire work and in which occur incidentally the subordinate stories of Taj el Mulouk and Aziz and Azizeh), and that of Gherib and his brother Agib, a romance of apparently Bedouin origin, much resembling such stories as Antar and Abou Zeid.

(2) Anecdotes and short stories dealing with historical personages and with incidents and adventures belonging to the actual every-day life of the periods to which they refer. These are very numerous and relate for the most part to the epoch of the Abbaside Khalifs. To this category belong the many stories and anecdotes in which Er Reshid, his wife Zubeideh, his sons El Amin, El Mamoun and Abou Isa, his brother Ibrahim ben el Mehdi, the poets and musicians Isaac of Mosul and his father Ibrahim, El Asmai, Abou Nuwas, etc., the Imam Abou Yousuf, the Barmecide princes Yehya, Fezl and Jaafer, and the various officers, governors and notables of the Khalifate, besides the Khosroes or ancient kings of Persia, Alexander the Great (Iskender the Two-horned, as the Orientals call him), and the Khalifs Omar ben el Khettab, Muawiyeh, Merwan, Abdulmelik, Suleiman, Omar ben Abdulaziz, Hisham and Welid ben Sehl (all of the house of

Umeyyeh), the Abbaside Khalifs El Mensour, El Mutawekkil, El Mutezid and El Mustensir, the Fatimite Khalif El Hakim bi-amriliah, the Eyoubite Sultan El Melik en Nasir Selaheddin of Egypt (Saladin) and other historical personages figure. To this category also belong the stories (so common among the Arabs and Persians) celebrating the extravagant generosity and hospitality of such typical personages as Hatim Tai, Maan ben Zaideh and the princes of the house of Bermek, and short isolated fragments of description, dealing, from a curiously distorted and mythical point of view, with historical or quasi-historical events. Of these latter singular examples are the story of the Khalif El Mamoun and the Pyramids of Egypt and the very curious version of the legend of Don Rodrigo (the last Gothic King of Spain) and the Tower of Hercules, called the City of Lebtait and containing a description (evidently mythical) of the wonderful treasures and rarities (among others the enchanted table of Suleiman ben Daoud) found by the Arab conquerors in the city. The town in question is of course intended for Toledo, but it is always somewhat difficult to identify the European cities and places referred to in Arabic fiction, or indeed history, as the Muslim conquerors were not content with Arabicizing the Spanish names, but actually (apparently moved by a sort of nostalgic impulse) applied to such cities as Seville, Granada, Jaen, Xeres, Murcia, Malaga, etc., the designations of towns and provinces in Egypt, Syria and other Mohammedan countries, such as Hems, Damascus, Kinesrin, Arden, Palestine, Misr (Egypt), Fustat (old Cairo), etc.

(3) Romances and romantic fictions, comprising three different kinds of tales. The first subdivision includes purely romantic stories of considerable length, referring to no particular historical epoch and generally making free use of supernatural persons and agencies; such as the stories of Kemerezzeman and Budour, Aziz and Azizeh, Uns el Wujoud and the Vizier's Daughter Rosebud, The Enchanted Horse, the Queen of the Serpents, Hassan of Bassora and the King's Daughter of the Jinn, Jouder and his Brothers, Seif el Mulouk and Bediya el Jemal, Marouf, etc., etc. Under the second head may be classed stories apparently purely fictitious, but whose scene is laid in some definite historical epoch, in which are introduced historical personages and whose incidents and descriptions reproduce the

manners and local circumstance of such cities as Baghdad, Bassora, Mosul, Damascus and Cairo and such periods as those of the Khalifs of the Abbaside dynasty or the Eyoubite Sultans of Egypt. These also are for the most part of considerable length and comprise such tales as the Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdad, Noureddin and the Fair Persian, Ali ben Bekkar and Shemsennehar, Ghanim ben Eyoub, Alaeddin Abou esh Shamat, The Voyages of Sindbad, Abdallah ben Fazil and his brothers, Ali Noureddin and the King's Daughter of the Franks, etc., etc. In this subdivision must also be included the stories or *nouvelles* detailing the doings of the rogues, sharpers and impostors of the time of the Khalifs and their encounters with the police of Baghdad and Cairo (who, by the by, appear like Vidocq and others, to have been drawn almost exclusively from the criminal classes and to have held their grades as the prizes of proved eminence in successful roguery), a class of fiction much favoured in the East, of which certain examples, eg. the stories of the Barber and his Brothers, the Rogueries of Delileh the Crafty and her Daughter Zeyneb the Trickstress and the Adventures of Quicksilver Ali of Cairo (all in the Thousand and One Nights,) forcibly remind one of such "picaresque" novels of Lesage, Quevedo, Aleman and others, as Guzman de Alfarache, Lazarillo de Tormes, El Gran Tacano, Gil Blas, etc., and from which indeed it is probable that these latter had in some respects an almost direct origin. The third subdivision embraces the most numerous section of the work, i.e. such altogether fictitious short stories and legends, romantic or sentimental, as may conveniently be classed under the general heading of contes fantastiques. To this class belong the stories of miracles and saints, in which Muslim literature is so rich, such as The Apples of Paradise, The Pious Black Slave, The Blacksmith who could handle fire without hurt, The Ferryman and the Hermit, etc., etc.; the equally favourite class of stories of unfortunate lovers, such as Otbeh and Reyya and The Mad Lover, and such purely fantastic tales as Abou Mohammed the Lazy, The Man who never laughed again, The Enchanted Springs, The House with the Belvedere, The City of Irem, the three stories of the Angel of Death, etc., etc.; and lastly, such "merry gestes" and Boccaccio-like "inventions" as Ali the Persian and the Kurd Sharper, The Man of Yemen and his Six Slave-girls, The Man who saw the Night of Power, The Simpleton and the Sharper, the three stories of foolish Schoolmasters, The Lady and her Five Suitors (one of many stories of trickery practised by women upon their husbands or lovers), and most of the series of short tales known as "The Malice of Women." It is into this latter portion of the collection that European authors appear to have dipped most freely, many of the incidents in works of the Decameron and Heptameron kind and in such bodies of popular fiction as those collected or expanded by Grimm, Asbjornsen, Andersen, etc., etc., bearing unmistakable traces of affinity, immediate or derivative, with the Thousand and One Nights.

(4) Fables and apologues or short moral stories, such as The Cat and the Crow, The Birds and Beasts and the Son of Adam and the parables and moral instances of which the (Indian) story of Jelyaad and Shimas in great part consists.

(g) Tales, so called, such as Taweddud, the examination of Nuzhet ez Zeman before Sherkan (Vol. II. p-96), of Wird Khan before his father (Vol, VIII. p-243) and the pietistic exercitations of Dhat ed Dewahi and her damsels before Omar ben Ennuman (Vol. II p-134), in which. the slightest thread of story serves as an excuse for the display of the heterogeneous "learning" (as the Arabs understood the word) of the author and for endless dissertations upon all things human and divine and sundry others. This class of story, though undeniably curious from the student's point of view, has little or no interest for the general reader, who will probably be inclined to agree with De Sacy that, if, in a pertain light, edifying, it is "rien moms qu'amusant."

Perhaps the most salient characteristic of the Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night is the extreme simplicity of its style. Nothing can be more unlike the idea of barbaric splendour, of excessive and heterogeneous ornament, that we are accustomed to associate with the name, than the majority of the tales that compose the collection. The life described in it is mainly that of the people, those Arabs so essentially brave, sober, hospitable and kindly, almost hysterically sensitive to emotions of love and pity, as well as to artistic impressions, yet susceptible of being roused to strange excesses of ferocity and brutality, to be soon followed by bitter and unavailing repentance — a people whom extreme sensibility of the nervous tissue inclines to excess of sensuous enjoyment, yet who are capable of enduring without a murmur the severest hardships and of suffering patiently the most cruel vicissitudes of fortune, without other complaint than that implied in the utterance of the Koranic formula (pronouncing which the Prophet has promised that no true believer shall be confounded), “There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!” Especially in that portion which deals with the life and manners of the Arabs of Syria and Chaldaea, under the Khalifate of the house of Abbas, are there to be found stories that, in their bright simplicity or poignant pathos, remind one more of an old Mährchen than of what is generally known as Eastern fiction.

The Thousand and One Nights, composed, to all appearance, mainly of stories written from dictation and probably originally invented, in a quasi-extempore fashion, for public recitation, are necessarily for the most part confined to a purely conversational and so-called vulgar style. The crabbedness of classical Arabic, as exemplified in the Koran, with its abrupt abridgments and its mysterious hiatuses, is happily in general absent from its pages, nor are they often defaced by the still more terrible refinements of the ornate manner (*el bediya*, as it is technically called), of which a favourable specimen is the celebrated Mecamat of El Heriri and driven to extremity by the ingenious perversions of whose apostles, a savant cited by the learned author of the “Prolegomena” asserts it to be the dearest wish of his heart to see the Euphuists, who cultivated the science of ornaments in prose and verse, well flogged in public, whilst a crier proclaimed aloud their misdeeds, for the edification of the literary classes. Mr. Lane, indeed, in the notes to his version, gives us the sinister intelligence that certain Egyptian rhetoricians, dissatisfied with what they considered the crude and vulgar style of the collection, had intimated their intention of revising and remodelling it; and I confess that to me such an undertaking seems as great a profanation as would be the remodelling of the Canterbury Tales or the Mort d’Arthur.

The splendour of description, the showers of barbaric pearl and gold, that are generally attributed to the work, exist but in isolated instances. The descriptions are usually of an extreme naive and sometimes almost childish kind and constantly involve repetitions and amplifications such as characterise a story told to a child. They run generally in the same grooves and have a sort of gamut of standard comparisons, out of which they rarely stray. A beautiful youth is always a full moon, a slender and graceful girl a willow-wand or a thirsty gazelle; a mole on the cheek is a globule of ambergris, the eyebrows are a bended bow, the nose a curved sabre, the lips coral or Solomon's seal; the forehead is the new moon rising from the night of the hair, the eyes are lakes of jet or narcissus, the cheeks roses or blood-red anemones, the browlocks scorpions, the ringlets chains of ambergris, upholding the lamp of the face, the shape a lance or a flowering cane set in a hill of sand, the breasts half pomegranates or caskets of ivory and the teeth a necklace of pearls, a spray of camomile petals or the glittering seeds of the pomegranate set in their ruby pulp; and emotions and sentiments are rendered in much the same kind of figurative shorthand. Nevertheless, the constant recurrence of the same elements of description does not produce monotony. Even as in music the multiform progressions of the various keys inform the unity of the unchanging gamut with limitless variations of combination and effect, so the play of sentiment and circumstance in the Arabian tales perpetually induces in the rigid scale of their ornaments fresh permutations of shifting colour and new harmonies of phantasy and expression.

The grace of pathos that hallows so many of its pages constitutes perhaps the chief charm of the collection, although the other features whose presence should contribute to the unity of a great romantic work are no less conspicuous, when the occasion calls for their display. What can be more poignant in its sad simplicity than The Mad Lover or The Lovers of the Benou Udhreh, more dramatic in its almost tragic intensity than The Scavenger and the Noble Lady of Baghdad, more engaging, in its homely pathos, than the story of the forlorn royal children in Jerusalem and their adventures with the rascal Bedouin and the kind simple-souled stoker? Where shall we find a more fervid *conts bleu* of devotion than The Apples of Paradise or The Devout Prince or "legendes dorées" more instinct with the austere poetry of asceticism than The Pious Black Slave, The Ferryman and the Hermit, or Abou Durraj and the Leper? For sustained romantic exultation, it would be hard to surpass The City of Brass or the legend of Many-columned Irem, and few languages can produce such masterpieces of melancholy beauty as The Blacksmith who could handle fire without hurt or The Man who never laughed again, strains that linger in the thought like the tones of that “alts, ernste Weise “ which haunts the hearing of the dying Tristan in the greatest of musical dramas. Nor is the power of effective poetical portraiture lacking, when required, *teste* the vivid picture of the Khalif’s pleasure garden at Baghdad and the exquisitely imaginative description of the lute in Ali Noureddin and the Frank King’s Daughter; and when the movement of the story calls for the exercise of an austerer faculty, as in the battle-scenes of Omar ben Ennuman or Gherib, the text quickens into a stern and nervous energy, a vivid and unfaltering concision, that could hardly be excelled by Homer or Dante. Equally remarkable is the wealth of humour and wit that characterizes the work, whether (as in Ali the Persian and the Kurd Sharper) it bring to mind the headlong horseplay of Rabelais or (as in the episode of the Stoker, of the Hashish-Eater in Ali Shar, or of Jaafer and the old Bedouin) the rough but effective burlesque of John Heywood and the mediaeval farce-writers, whether (as in the anecdotes of Abou Nuwas) it recall the cynical humour of Boccaccio, or (as in Kafour and Khelifeh) the cudgel strokes of drollery, half naive, half caustic, of Sancho or Sganarelle, or (as in the Man of Yemen and his Six Slave-girls) the deliberate wit of the Moyen de Parvenir, it is always apt and always effective, in utrumque paratus, equally at home with the rough and ready weapons of popular repartee and the more keenly attempered arms of satire and word-fence. The whole Oriental world of the Khalifate re-lives for us in these enchanted pages, from which nothing is rejected, nothing excluded as common or unclean, and in which all classes of the Muslim world are represented, king and slave, courtier and countryman, pietist and freethinker, learned and ignorant, wise and foolish, moralist and debauches. Satire and sentiment, love and lewdness, wit and wisdom, holiness and hypocrisy, chase each other through the shifting scenes of this magic lantern of the East, in which the pure and self-sacrificing tenderness of an Azizeh "sticks fiery off indeed" from the selfish sensuality of her rivals, and the strains of exalted morality and passionate devoutness, the traits of heroic faith and unwearying magnanimity, that jostle with the satyr- orgies of an Abou Nuwas and the fiendish treachery of an Aboukir, show but the goodlier for the blackness of the baseness that encompasses them.

One of the chief stumbling-blocks in the path of a translator of the Thousand and One Nights is the peculiar shapelessness of Arabic prose. Without stops, capital or other indications of breach of continuity and practically undivided into clauses or paragraphs, the text, if unbroken by verse, runs on in one long sentence, trailing after it a cumbrous train of accumulated "ands" and "thens," heedless of symmetry of phrase or clearness of expression and little careful to order the succession of the words in accordance with that of the sense, so that it is not uncommon to find some important member of a previous phrase cast up high and dry in the midst of a strange clause several lines in advance, for the Arab author, after he has apparently finished with one division of a subject and well entered another, thinks nothing of pulling short up and trying back for the purpose of making some addition of real or fancied necessity to the foregone passage of description or enumeration. To this most irritating peculiarity must be added a constant recurrence of useless repetitions and an all-pervading tautology, together with a habit of aggravating the (to the European ear) inherent incoherence of Eastern composition by a perpetual readiness to sacrifice directness and clarity of expression, if an outré turn of speech, a jingle of words or a trifling play of meanings can be secured by the employment of an obscure trope or a far-fetched synonym. One of the especial ornaments of Arabic prose (an excrescence born of the excessive facilities for rhyme afforded by a language whose every speaker is a versifier and the extravagant sensibility of Eastern peoples to antithesis of all kinds, whether of sound or thought) is the use of what is called *seja* or rhyming prose, with whose jingling tags it is the summit of every Arab author's ambition to deck or disfigure (les deux se disent) his pages, and rare indeed is the virtue of the writer who carries self-denial so far as to neglect an opportunity of dragging in this figure, too often at the expense of sense and coherence. The

Koran, which in the eyes of every true believer is impeccable and the model of all excellence, from the literary, as well as from the moral and religious point of view, is almost entirely written in this style, and as all post- Mohammedan literature, so far, at least, as the rules of composition are concerned, is modelled upon this all-sufficing volume, the use of the *seja* has, like a noxious water-weed that checks the current of a stream, overrun the native vigour of Arab prose and has by the sectaries of the *style fleuri* been carried to such an excess that its abuse has given rise to the irreverent dictum, *es seja feja*, rhyming prose is vexation of spirit. Happily, however, the Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night is written in a socalled vulgar style and is therefore, though not free from the excrescence in question, less universally disfigured by it than works of more pretension to literary merit.

In presence of these difficulties, absolute literality is impossible to the translator who has any regard for style, and he is, therefore, compelled in some sort to remodel his original, phrase by phrase and even page by page, if, with all possible respect for fidelity to word and sense, he desire to spare his reader the weariness of wading through a jungle of phrases and sentences, in which the eye of the scholar alone can discern form and coherence.

The following passage, selected almost at random from the text of the Thousand and One Night, will give some idea of the literal style of the original. Many more flagrant specimens might have been chosen and it would not be difficult to quote passages in which the faults of the composition envelope the meaning in a confusion well-nigh inextricable, especially where (as in the case of the beleaguerment of Constantinople by the Muslims) the resource of comparison and collation with other texts of the story is wanting, the History of King Omar ben Ennuman being omitted from the Breslau Edition; but I prefer to cite one which offers no extravagant example of the defects of which I have spoken.

When the morning morrowed, he anointed the feet of him with the water the which they two had taken it from the herb and descended to the sea and went walking in it days and nights and he wondering at the horrors of the sea and the marvels of it and the rarities of it and he ceased not going upon the face of the water till he came to an island as indeed it [were] Paradise so Beloukiya went up to that island and became wondering at it and at the beauty of it and wandered in it and saw it a great island the dust of it saffron and the gravel of it of cornelian and precious stones and the hedges of it jessamine and the vegetation of it of the goodliest of the trees and the brightest of the sweet-scented herbs and the sweetest of them and in it springs running and the brushwood of it of the Comorin aloes and the Sumatra aloes and the reeds of it sugar-cane and around it the rose and the narcissus and the amaranth and the Billy-flower and the camomile and the lily and the violet and all that in it [were] kinds and colours and the birds of it warbled upon those trees and it was fair of attributes spacious of sides abundant of good things indeed it comprised all of beauty and charms and the warbling of the birds of it [was] pleasanter than the tones [of the chanters] of the Koran and the trees of it tall and the birds of it speaking and the streams of it flowing and the springs of it running and the waters of it sweet and in it the gazelles frisked and the wild cattle came and went and the birds warbled on those branches and consoled the lover the love-afflicted.

A comparison of the above literal rendering with my previous translation (Vol. V.) of the passage will show that I have confined myself to arranging the disjecta membra of the original in their natural order, following the original wording as closely as is consistent with English idiom and the necessity of breaking up the endless phrases of the Arabic into convenient sentences and purging them from the excrescences of tautology and repetition that deface the text. Upon this principle I have throughout proceeded, endeavouring as far as possible to conciliate the claims of literality and fidelity to the characteristic idioms of the original with the genius of English prose and the exigencies of style. If, in this respect, some discrepancies should appear between the earlier and the latter parts of the translation, they must be attributed to the natural gradual change of method consequent on the experience gained in the course of the long labour of love which has occupied the leisure hours of seven years of a professional life and which I have now brought to an end, if not (in view of the enormous difficulties which the work of translation presents) with entire satisfaction to myself, at least, with the feeling that it is not for want of pains that I have, in many instances of which I am but too sensible, fallen short of my ideal.

The following is a specimen of the rhyming prose above mentioned, rendered in the jingle of the original. It is evident that it would have been by no means difficult to keep up the imitation throughout, but, upon consideration, I came, rightly or wrongly, to the conclusion that it was undesirable to do so, as it seemed to me that the *seja*-form was utterly foreign to the genius of English prose and that its preservation would be fatal to all vigour and harmony of style.

This letter is from him whom passion wastes away and whom desire doth slay and misery destroys him and dismay, him who of life despairs and looks for nought but death to end his cares, none is there to his mourning heart comfort or succour will impart, nor for his wakeful eye ‘gainst care is helper nigh; his day is past in fire, his night in torment dire; his body for emaciation’s wasted sore, and there comes to him no messenger from her he doth adore.

The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night contains a very large quantity of verse, unequally distributed throughout the various tales, and before proceeding to speak of this feature of the work, it may interest my readers if I give a brief outline of the general principles upon which the prosody of the Arabs is founded. The invariable unit, upon which Arabic (and Persian) verse is built, is the *beit* or line (usually but improperly rendered “couplet”). The word *beit* signifies literally “a house,” but by analogy “a tent” (and from this we may fairly conclude at least this fundamenral part of Arabic prosody to have originated with the Bedouins or Arabs of the desert, as it is only they who would be likely to call a tent a house) the verse being whimsically regarded by the Arabs as an erection; and this simile is carried out in the nomenclature of the different parts of the line, one foot being called a “tent-pole,” another a “tent-peg” and the two hemistichs of the verse being known as the folds or leaves of the double door of the tent. Each beit is divided into two hemistichs of equal length, each containing three or four feet of two, three, four or five syllables, and the whole verse is known as a hexameter or octameter, according as it contains six or eight feet, or from sixteen to thirty-two syllables. A peculiarity of Arabic verse is the excess of long syllables over short and the absence of the dactyl and dibrach, the swiftest feet in use among Europeans, a characteristic which produces a graver and more stately movement of the rhythm than is common in European poetry. I should perhaps, however, observe that the qualifications "long" and "short" are somewhat empirically applied to the syllables of Arabic feet, as their quantities appear to be hardly appreciable by an European ear, the "long," in particular, being of a shifting character, so much so, indeed, that certain readers of the Koran are said to have been known to make use of no less than seven varieties of this quantity. This being the case, it has been suggested by the eminent French Orientalist, M. Stanislas Guiraud, that musical notation should be applied to the determining of the Arabic rhythms, but, notwithstanding the ingenuity and ability of his treatise on the subject, his tentatives do not as yet appear to have brought about any very definite result. Several Arabists of distinction, German and English, have indeed endeavoured, by the use of quantitative signs, to reproduce in their own languages the precise rhythm and accent of Arabic verse; but I confess that to myself, notwithstanding the ability and ingenuity displayed by the translators (who indeed have been the first to acknowledge the ill success of their experiments and to pronounce against the feasibility of representing the Oriental metres by a similar arrangement of feet and accents in European verse), the result seems still more unsatisfactory and inartistic than that of the many unsuccessful attempts to introduce Greek and Latin rhythms into English metre. The genius of the two languages (Arabic and English) belonging, as they do, to opposite groups of speech-form, presents no point of union; and it seems to me, therefore, that the only satisfactory way of rendering Arabic poetry in English verse is to content oneself generally with observing the exterior form of the stanza, the movement of the rhyme and (as far as possible) the identity in number of the syllables composing the beits.

The principal Arabic metres are sixteen in number, each subdivided by numerous variations; and it may, perhaps, be interesting to note here the somewhat whimsical names by which they are known in the East. The generic name given to them is *behr*, literally "sea," but, by analogy, the space comprised within the walls of a tent, thus continuing the metaphor before mentioned, and they are distinguished individually as the long, the extended, the open, the copious, the perfect, the trilling, the tremulous, the running, the swift, the flowing, the light, the analogous, the improvised, the curtailed, the approximative and the consecutive. The English reader will naturally suppose that these names are in some way descriptive and will doubtless be surprised to hear (and this fact alone will amply suffice to show how toto coelo the genius of Oriental prosody differs from that of the West) that, in the opinion of those scholars who have most radically studied the question, they have no analogy whatever with the character of the various metres, but were (as far, at least, as concerns the thirteen primitive metres) manufactured by the inventor, as a mere memoria technica, after the model (i.e. the grammatical measure) of the fundamental feet upon which the respective "circles" or groups of metres are based. I should perhaps mention here that the system of Arabic prosody is said to have been invented by one Khelil, a grammarian, and to have been suggested to him by the strokes of a blacksmith's hammer upon an anvil, not the most promising combination of circumstance for the birth of so important a branch of art.

The principal form used in Arabic poetry (and that which most frequently occurs in the Thousand and One Nights) is the *Kesideh* or *Purpose-poem*; practically identical with the better-known (Persian) form of the Ghazel or love-song par excellence, with the exception that the latter is limited to eighteen beits or verses and must contain the name of the poet in the last beit. The Kesideh may be composed in any one of the sixteen metres and is built upon a single rhyme, the two hemistichs of the first beit rhyming with each other and with the second hemistich of each succeeding beit to the end of the poem, however long it may be. It is a curious fact that the same prohibition of *enjambement*, or the carrying on of the sense from one verse (or pair of hemistichs) to another, obtains in Arabic as in French classic verse, it being considered a fault not to complete the sense in the one verse. It is allowable to repeat the same rhyming word, but (according to the strict laws of prosody) not unless seven verses intervene. However, this and the preceding rule are constantly violated by Arab poets, who appear to have little scruple in repeating the rhyming word whenever it suits them, and in Persian verse (whose laws are essentially the same as those of Arabic prosody) the licence is still greater, the same word in the same sense being allowed to form the rhyme throughout a whole ghazel. The *Kitah* or Fragment, which is also of frequent occurrence in the work, is only a portion of a Kesideh, other than the *metla*, first or double-rhyme verse. The *Rubaï* or quatrain is also a common form. It consists of four hemistichs rhyming with each other. The only other verse-form that occurs with any frequency is the *Mukhemmes* or Cinquain, a succession of stanzas, each formed of two beits and a hemistich, the five hemistichs of the first stanza having the same rhyme, whilst the first four of each succeeding stanza take a new rhyme and the fifth rhymes with the first stanza to the end of the poem. Another form of the Mukhemmes differs only from the first in that the last hemistichs of the stanzas rhyme with each other only, independently of the other hemistichs of the first stanza. The *Murebbes* or foursome song occurs once only in the Nights and consists of a series of two-beit stanzas, the first three hemistichs of each of which rhyme with each other only, independently of the rest of the poem, and the fourth with that of every other stanza.

The *Muweshshih* or Ballad is another form which occurs once only in the Thousand and One Nights. It is, perhaps, the most elaborate verse-form in the language and is said to have been invented by the Muslim poets of Spain, shortly after the Conquest, and to have been adopted from them by their brethren of Egypt and Syria. It consists of a succession of three-line stanzas, in the first of which all six hemistichs end with the same rhyme. In the second and succeeding stanzas, the first line and the first hemistich of the second line take a new rhyme; but the second hemistich of the second line resumes the rhyme of the first stanza and is followed by the third line of the latter, serving as a refrain to each stanza of the poem, which is often of considerable length. Other forms of the Muweshshih exist, but the above is the only one found in the Thousand and One Nights. Single lines are of frequent occurrence, which are apparently "blank" (that is to say, the two hemistichs of which do not rhyme with each other), but this is only apparent, as the verses in question are nothing more than an extract from a Kesideh, blank verse having no existence in Arab poetry.

One of the chief characteristics of Arabic verse is ingenuity and it is indeed from the Muslim poets of Spain and Portugal that the Cavalier Marino, Gongora and our own Euphuists seem, more or less directly, to have borrowed the concetti and agudezas with which their pages bristle. The Arab poet appears too often to aim at making his verse a sort of logogriph, susceptible of more than one meaning, and this peculiarity, combined with a passion for obscure synonyms and doubtful metaphors and an excessive use of syntactical and rhetorical figures (particularly those of ellipsis, enallage, anacoluthon, hyperbaton, metonymy, synecdoche and paronomasia) and the national tendency to imitate the incoherent abruptness of the Koran, too often renders Arabic verse a tangled skein, to unravel which demands an amount of labour and consideration hardly to be estimated by the result, as it appears in the form of translation. Add to this the mechanical difficulty of the transfer of idiom and metrical form from one language to another having no point in common with it and the special crux established by the indispensable condition of the monorhyme (often carried to an extraordinary length, as in Vol. VIII. p-27, where one unlucky assonance must furnish forth no less than forty-eight rhymes), and it will be evident that the labour of rendering into isometrical English the vast body of verse contained in the Thousand and One Nights is one of no common hardship and that the translator who has, with perhaps too rash a confidence, undertaken so exacting a task, may fairly ask for no common indulgence towards the shortcomings of which he is himself abundantly conscious.

The Thousand and One Nights, apart from its attraction as the most comprehensive compendium of national romance in existence, is remarkable as presenting a singularly copious anthology of Arab verse. Almost all the great poets of the Khalifate, as well as many of those who preceded or were contemporaneous with the Prophet, are represented in its pages. Among the immense mass of metrical quotation contained in the various tales, I have been able, *currente calamo*, to identify selections from the works of no less than thirty-four of the chief poets of Islam, namely, Imrulcais, Elcameh ibn Abadeh, Antar, Adi ben Zeid, En Nabigheh edh Dhubyani, Amr ben Madi Kerib, Kab ben Zuheir, Jemil, Jerir, Uteiyeh, Abou Nuwas, Abou Temmam, El Asmai, El Mutenebbi, El Heriri, Behaeddin Zuheir, Beshr ibn Burd, Er Recashi, Abou Musab, El Buhturi, Es Senefi, En Naweji (author or compiler of the famous anacreontic collection, the *Helbeit el Kumeit* or Race Course of the Bay Horse), Dibil el Khuzai, Muslim ben el Welid el Ansari, En Nemri, El Hajiri, El Menazi, Ibn Ebbad, Aboulfiras el Hemdani, El Muhellebi, Ion Jami, Et Tughrai, Ibn Abdoun el Andalousi and Ibn el Mutezz, and a more minute examination would no doubt largely add to the above list. As far as I can judge, from a cursory inspection, the Egyptian and Spanish Arabic poets are less fully represented in the collection than their brethren of Irak, Syria and Arabia, and it is, by the way, a notable fact, and one which tells strongly against Von Hammer's theory of the Persian origin of the work, that no single extract or translation from Persian verse is, to the best of my belief, known to exist in it.

The verse in the Thousand and One Nights is of the most various quality, ranging from high beauty to the utmost baldness. It rarely answers to our idea of that usually inserted in narrative fiction and contains little that can be described as songs, Its quality is often rhetorical rather than lyrical, and it appears frequently to have been inserted somewhat in the same way as we should use engravings or woodcuts, to illustrate and explain the prose text, or as music is employed in melodrama. It is often made use of to express a sudden emotion or exaltation of sentiment on the part of the personages introduced, much as the prose in Shakespeare's and other plays of the Elizabethan era rises occasionally into blank or rhymed verse, under stress of increased elevation or intensity of thought and feeling. As may be expected from a list of contributors which includes so many of the most renowned singers of Muslim civilisation, we are often presented with poetry worthy of the name, whilst, on the other hand, many of the pieces are mere rhymed amplifications of the prose text and seem to have been composed for the purpose by the compilers or the various copyists through whose hands the work must have passed. Again, (as in Uns el Wujoud) the verse in some of the tales has evidently been written expressly for their illustration and (though naturally of very unequal value) is often by no means lacking in poetic beauty and vigour, thus proving that among the anonymous authors of the various parts of the work were poets of no mean ability.

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ASLEEP AND AWAKE

There was once [at Baghdad], in the Khalifate of Haroun er Reshid, a man, a merchant, who had a son by name Aboulhusn el Khelia. The merchant died and left his son great store of wealth, which he divided into two parts, one of which he laid up and spent of the other half; and he fell to companying with Persians and with the sons of the merchants and gave himself up to good eating and good drinking, till all that he had with him of wealth was wasted and gone; whereupon he betook himself to his friends and comrades and boon-companions and expounded to them his case, discovering to them the failure of that which was in his hand of wealth; but not one of them took heed of him neither inclined unto him.

So he returned to his mother (and indeed his spirit was broken), and related to her that which had happened to him and what had betided him from his friends, how they, had neither shared with him nor requited him with speech. "O Aboulhusn," answered she, "on this wise are the sonsof this time: if thou have aught, they make much of thee, and if thou have nought, they put thee away [from them]." And she went on to condole with him, what while he bewailed himself and his tears flowed and he repeated the following verses:

An if my substance fail, no one there is will succour me,
  But if my wealth abound, of all I'm held in amity.
How many a friend, for money's sake, hath companied with me!
  How many an one, with loss of wealth, hath turned mine enemy!

Then he sprang up [and going] to the place wherein was the other half of his good, [took it] and lived with it well; and he swore that he would never again consort with those whom he knew, but would company only with the stranger nor entertain him but one night and that, whenas it morrowed, he would never know him more. So he fell to sitting every night on the bridge and looking on every one who passed by him; and if he saw him to be a stranger, he made friends with him and carried him to his house, where he caroused with him till the morning. Then he dismissed him and would never more salute him nor ever again drew near unto him neither invited him.

On this wise he continued to do for the space of a whole year, till, one day, as he sat on the bridge, according to his custom, expecting who should come to him, so he might take him and pass the night with him, behold, [up came] the Khalif and Mesrour, the swordsman of his vengeance, disguised [in merchants' habits] as of their wont. So he looked at them and rising up, for that he knew them not, said to them, "What say ye? Will you go with me to my dwelling-place, so ye may eat what is ready and drink what is at hand, to wit, bread baked in the platter and meat cooked and wine clarified?" The Khalif refused this, but he conjured him and said to him, "God on thee, O my lord, go with me, for thou art my guest this night, and disappoint not my expectation concerning thee!" And he ceased not to press him till he consented to him; whereat Aboulhusn rejoiced and going on before him, gave not over talking with him till they came to his [house and he carried the Khalif into the] saloon. Er Reshid entered and made his servant abide at the door; and as soon as he was seated, Aboulhusn brought him somewhat to eat; so he ate, and Aboulhusn ate with him, so eating might be pleasant to him. Then he removed the tray and they washed their hands and the Khalif sat down again; whereupon Aboulhusn set on the drinking vessels and seating himself by his side, fell to filling and giving him to drink and entertaining him with discourse.

His hospitality pleased the Khalif and the goodliness of his fashion, and he said to him, "O youth, who art thou? Make me acquainted with thyself, so I may requite thee thy kindness." But Aboulhusn smiled and said, "O my lord, far be it that what is past should recur and that I be in company with thee at other than this time!" "Why so?" asked the Khalif. "And why wilt thou not acquaint me with thy case?" And Aboulhusn said, "Know, O my lord, that my story is extraordinary and that there is a cause for this affair." Quoth the Khalif, "And what is the cause?" And he answered, "The cause hath a tail." The Khalif laughed at his words and Aboulhusn said, "I will explain to thee this [saying] by the story of the lackpenny and the cook. Know, O my lord, that

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STORY OF THE LACKPENNY AND THE COOK.

One of the good-for-noughts found himself one day without aught and the world was straitened upon him and his patience failed; so he lay down to sleep and gave not over sleeping till the sun burnt him and the foam came out upon his mouth, whereupon he arose, and he was penniless and had not so much as one dirhem. Presently, he came to the shop of a cook, who had set up therein his pans [over the fire] and wiped his scales and washed his saucers and swept his shop and sprinkled it; and indeed his oils were clear and his spices fragrant and he himself stood behind his cooking-pots [waiting for custom]. So the lackpenny went up to him and saluting him, said to him, 'Weigh me half a dirhem's worth of meat and a quarter of a dirhem's worth of kouskoussou and the like of bread.' So the cook weighed out to him [that which he sought] and the lackpenny entered the shop, whereupon the cook set the food before him and he ate till he had gobbled up the whole and licked the saucers and abode perplexed, knowing not how he should do with the cook concerning the price of that which he had eaten and turning his eyes about upon everything in the shop.

Presently, he caught sight of an earthen pan turned over upon its mouth; so he raised it from the ground and found under it a horse's tail, freshly cut off, and the blood oozing from it; whereby he knew that the cook adulterated his meat with horses' flesh. When he discovered this default, he rejoiced therein and washing his hands, bowed his head and went out; and when the cook saw that he went and gave him nought, he cried out, saying, 'Stay, O sneak, O slink-thief!' So the lackpenny stopped and said to him, 'Dost thou cry out upon me and becall [me] with these words, O cuckold?' Whereat the cook was angry and coming down from the shop, said, 'What meanest thou by thy speech, O thou that devourest meat and kouskoussou and bread and seasoning and goest forth with "Peace[be on thee!]," as it were the thing had not been, and payest down nought for it?' Quoth the lackpenny, 'Thou liest, O son of a cuckold!' Wherewith the cook cried out and laying hold of the lackpenny's collar, said, 'O Muslims, this fellow is my first customer this day and he hath eaten my food and given me nought.'

So the folk gathered together to them and blamed the lackpenny and said to him, 'Give him the price of that which thou hast eaten.' Quoth he, 'I gave him a dirhem before I entered the shop;' and the cook said, 'Be everything I sell this day forbidden to me, if he gave me so much as the name of a piece of money! By Allah, he gave me nought, but ate my food and went out and [would have] made off, without aught [said I]' 'Nay,' answered the lackpenny, 'I gave thee a dirhem,' and he reviled the cook, who returned his abuse; whereupon he dealt him a cuff and they gripped and grappled and throttled each other. When the folk saw them on this wise, they came up to them and said to them, 'What is this strife between you, and no cause for it?' 'Ay, by Allah,' replied the lackpenny, 'but there is a cause for it, and the cause hath a tail!' Whereupon, 'Yea, by Allah,' cried the cook, 'now thou mindest me of thyself and thy dirhem! Yes, he gave me a dirhem and [but] a quarter of the price is spent. Come back and take the rest of the price of thy dirhem.' For that he understood what was to do, at the mention of the tail; and I, O my brother," added Aboulhusn, "my story hath a cause, which I will tell thee."

The Khalif laughed at his speech and said, "By Allah, this is none other than a pleasant tale! Tell me thy story and the cause." "With all my heart," answered Aboulhusn. "Know, O my lord, that my name is Aboulhusn el Khelia and that my father died and left me wealth galore, of which I made two parts. One I laid up and with the other I betook myself to [the enjoyment of the pleasures of] friendship [and conviviality] and consorting with comrades and boon-companions and with the sons of the merchants, nor did I leave one but I caroused with him and he with me, and I spent all my money on companionship and good cheer, till there remained with me nought [of the first half of my good]; whereupon I betook myself to the comrades and cup-companions upon whom I had wasted my wealth, so haply they might provide for my case; but, when I resorted to them and went round about to them all, I found no avail in one of them, nor broke any so much as a crust of bread in my face. So I wept for myself and repairing to my mother, complained to her of my case. Quoth she, 'On this wise are friends; if thou have aught, they make much of thee and devour thee, but, if thou have nought, they cast thee off and chase thee away.' Then I brought out the other half of my money and bound myself by an oath that I would never more entertain any, except one night, after which I would never again salute him nor take note of him; hence my saying to thee, 'Far be it that what is past should recur!' For that I will never again foregather with thee, after this night."

When the Khalif heard this, he laughed heartily and said, "By Allah, O my brother, thou art indeed excused in this matter, now that I know the cause and that the cause hath a tail. Nevertheless if it please God, I will not sever myself from thee." "O my guest," replied Aboulhusn, "did I not say to thee, 'Far be it that what is past should recur! For that I will never again foregather with any'?" Then the Khalif rose and Aboulhusn set before him a dish of roast goose and a cake of manchet-bread and sitting down, fell to cutting off morsels and feeding the Khalif therewith. They gave not over eating thus till they were content, when Aboulhusn brought bowl and ewer and potash and they washed their hands.

Then he lighted him three candles and three lamps and spreading the drinking-cloth, brought clarified wine, limpid, old and fragrant, the scent whereof was as that of virgin musk. He filled the first cup and saying, "O my boon-companion, by thy leave, be ceremony laid aside between us! I am thy slave; may I not be afflicted with thy loss!" drank it off and filled a second cup, which he handed to the Khalif, with a reverence. His fashion pleased the Khalif and the goodliness of his speech and he said in himself, "By Allah, I will assuredly requite him for this!" Then Aboulhusn filled the cup again and handed it to the Khalif, reciting the following verses:

Had we thy coming known, we would for sacrifice Have poured thee
out heart's blood or blackness of the eyes;
Ay, and we would have spread our bosoms in thy way, That so thy
feet might fare on eyelids, carpet-wise.

When the Khalif heard his verses, he took the cup from his hand and kissed it and drank it off and returned it to Aboulhusn, who made him an obeisance and filled and drank. Then he filled again and kissing the cup thrice, recited the following verses:

Thy presence honoureth us and we Confess thy magnanimity;
If thou forsake us, there is none Can stand to us instead of thee.

Then he gave the cup to the Khalif, saying, “Drink [and may] health and soundness [attend it]! It doth away disease and bringeth healing and setteth the runnels of health abroach.”

They gave not over drinking and carousing till the middle of the night, when the Khalif said to his host, “O my brother, hast thou in thy heart a wish thou wouldst have accomplished or a regret thou wouldst fain do away?” “By Allah,” answered he, “there is no regret in my heart save that I am not gifted with dominion and the power of commandment and prohibition, so I might do what is in my mind!” Quoth the Khalif, “For God’s sake, O my brother, tell me what is in thy mind!” And Aboulhusn said, “I would to God I might avenge myself on my neighbours, for that in my neighbourhood is a mosque and therein four sheikhs, who take it ill, whenas there cometh a guest to me, and vex me with talk and molest me in words and threaten me that they will complain of me to the Commander of the Faithful, and indeed they oppress me sore, and I crave of God the Most High one day’s dominion, that I may beat each of them with four hundred lashes, as well as the Imam of the mosque, and parade them about the city of Baghdad and let call before them, ‘This is the reward and the least of the reward of whoso exceedeth [in talk] and spiteth the folk and troubleth on them their joys.’ This is what I wish and no more.”

Quoth the Khalif, “God grant thee that thou seekest! Let us drink one last cup and rise before the dawn draw near, and to-morrow night I will be with thee again.” “Far be it!” said Aboulhusn. Then the Khalif filled a cup and putting therein a piece of Cretan henbane, gave it to his host and said to him, “My life on thee, O my brother, drink this cup from my hand!” “Ay, by thy life,” answered Aboulhusn, “I will drink it from thy hand.” So he took it and drank it off; but hardly had he done so, when his head forewent his feet and he fell to the ground like a slain man; whereupon the Khalif went out and said to his servant Mesrour, “Go in to yonder young man, the master of the house, and take him up and bring him to me at the palace; and when thou goest out, shut the door.”

So saying, he went away, whilst Mesrour entered and taking up Aboulhusn, shut the door after him, and followed his master, till he reached the palace, what while the night drew to an end and the cocks cried out, and set him down before the Commander of the Faithful, who laughed at him. Then he sent for Jaafer the Barmecide and when he came before him, he said to him, "Note this young man and when thou seest him to-morrow seated in my place of estate and on the throne of my Khalifate and clad in my habit, stand thou in attendance upon him and enjoin the Amirs and grandees and the people of my household and the officers of my realm to do the like and obey him in that which he shall command them; and thou, if he bespeak thee of anything, do it and hearken unto him and gainsay him not in aught in this coming day." Jaafer answered with, "Hearkening and obedience," and withdrew, whilst the Khalif went in to the women of the palace, who came to him, and he said to them, "Whenas yonder sleeper awaketh to-morrow from his sleep, kiss ye the earth before him and make obeisance to him and come round about him and clothe him in the [royal] habit and do him the service of the Khalifate and deny not aught of his estate, but say to him, 'Thou art the Khalif.'" Then he taught them what they should say to him and how they should do with him and withdrawing to a privy place, let down a curtain before himself and slept.

Meanwhile, Aboulhusn gave not over snoring in his sleep, till the day broke and the rising of the sun drew near, when a waiting-woman came up to him and said to him, "O our lord [it is the hour of] the morning- prayer." When he heard the girl's words, he laughed and opening his eyes, turned them about the place and found himself in an apartment the walls whereof were painted with gold and ultramarine and its ceiling starred with red gold. Around it were sleeping-chambers, with curtains of gold-embroidered silk let down over their doors, and all about vessels of gold and porcelain and crystal and furniture and carpets spread and lamps burning before the prayer-niche and slave-girls and eunuchs and white slaves and black slaves and boys and pages and attendants. When he saw this, he was confounded in his wit and said, "By Allah, either I am dreaming, or this is Paradise and the Abode of Peace!" And he shut his eyes and went to sleep again. Quoth the waiting-woman, "O my lord, this is not of thy wont, O Commander of the Faithful!”

Then the rest of the women of the palace came all to him and lifted him into a sitting posture, when he found himself upon a couch, stuffed all with floss-silk and raised a cubit’s height from the ground. So they seated him upon it and propped him up with a pillow, and he looked at the apartment and its greatness and saw those eunuchs and slave-girls in attendance upon him and at his head, whereat he laughed at himself and said, “By Allah, it is not as I were on wake, and [yet] I am not asleep!” Then he arose and sat up, whilst the damsels laughed at him and hid [their laughter] from him; and he was confounded in his wit and bit upon his finger. The bite hurt him and he cried “Oh!” and was vexed; and the Khalif watched him, whence he saw him not, and laughed.

Presently Aboulhusn turned to a damsel and called to her; whereupon she came to him and he said to her, “By the protection of God, O damsel, am I Commander of the Faithful?” “Yes, indeed,” answered she; “by the protection of God thou in this time art Commander of the Faithful.” Quoth he, “By Allah, thou liest, O thousandfold strumpet!” Then he turned to the chief eunuch and called to him, whereupon he came to him and kissing the earth before him, said, “Yes, O Commander of the Faithful.” “Who is Commander of the Faithful?” asked Aboulhusn. “Thou,” replied the eunuch and Aboulhusn said, “Thou liest, thousandfold catamite that thou art!” Then he turned to another eunuch and said to him, “O my chief, by the protection of God, am I Commander of the Faithful?” “Ay, by Allah, O my lord!” answered he. “Thou in this time art Commander of the Faithful and Vicar of the Lord of the Worlds.” Aboulhusn laughed at himself and misdoubted of his reason and was perplexed at what he saw and said, “In one night I am become Khalif! Yesterday I was Aboulhusn the Wag, and to-day I am Commander of the Faithful.” Then the chief eunuch came up to him and said, “O Commander of the Faithful, (the name of God encompass thee!) thou art indeed Commander of the Faithful and Vicar of the Lord of the Worlds!” And the slave-girls and eunuchs came round about him, till he arose and abode wondering at his case.

Presently, one of the slave-girls brought him a pair of sandals wrought with raw silk and green silk and embroidered with red gold, and he took them and put them in his sleeve, whereat the slave cried out and said, “Allah! Allah! O my lord, these are sandals for the treading of thy feet, so thou mayst enter the draught-house.” Aboulhusn was confounded and shaking the sandals from his sleeve, put them on his feet, whilst the Khalif [well-nigh] died of laughter at him. The slave forewent him to the house of easance, where he entered and doing his occasion, came out into the chamber, whereupon the slave- girls brought him a basin of gold and an ewer of silver and poured water on his hands and he made the ablution.

Then they spread him a prayer-carpet and he prayed. Now he knew not how to pray and gave not over bowing and prostrating himself, [till he had prayed the prayers] of twenty inclinations, pondering in himself the while and saying, “By Allah, I am none other than the Commander of the Faithful in very sooth! This is assuredly no dream, for all these things happen not in a dream.” And he was convinced and determined in himself that he was Commander of the Faithful; so he pronounced the Salutation and made an end of his prayers; whereupon the slaves and slave-girls came round about him with parcels of silk and stuffs and clad him in the habit of the Khalifate and gave him the royal dagger in his hand. Then the chief eunuch went out before him and the little white slaves behind him, and they ceased not [going] till they raised the curtain and brought him into the hall of judgment and the throne-room of the Khalifate. There he saw the curtains and the forty doors and El Ijli and Er Recashi and Ibdan and Jedim and Abou Ishac the boon-companions and beheld swords drawn and lions encompassing [the throne] and gilded glaives and death-dealing bows and Persians and Arabs and Turks and Medes and folk and peoples and Amirs and viziers and captains and grandees and officers of state and men of war, and indeed there appeared the puissance of the house of Abbas and the majesty of the family of the Prophet.

So he sat down upon the throne of the Khalifate and laid the dagger in his lap, whereupon all [present] came up to kiss the earth before him and called down on him length of life and continuance [of glory and prosperity]. Then came forward Jaafer the Barmecide and kissing the earth, said, “May the wide world of God be the treading of thy feet and may Paradise be thy dwelling-place and the fire the habitation of thine enemies! May no neighbour transgress against thee nor the lights of fire die out for thee, O Khalif of [all] cities and ruler of [all] countries!"

Therewithal Aboulhusn cried out at him and said, "O dog of the sons of Bermek, go down forthright, thou and the master of the police of the city, to such a place in such a street and deliver a hundred dinars to the mother of Aboulhusn the Wag and bear her my salutation. [Then, go to such a mosque] and take the four sheikhs and the Imam and beat each of them with four hundred lashes and mount them on beasts, face to tail, and go round with them about all the city and banish them to a place other than the city; and bid the crier make proclamation before them, saying, 'This is the reward and the least of the reward of whoso multiplieth words and molesteth his neighbours and stinteth them of their delights and their eating and drinking!'" Jaafer received the order [with submission] and answered with ["Hearkening and] obedience;" after which he went down from before Aboulhusn to the city and did that whereunto he had bidden him.

Meanwhile, Aboulhusn abode in the Khalifate, taking and giving, ordering and forbidding and giving effect to his word, till the end of the day, when he gave [those who were present] leave and permission [to withdraw], and the Amirs and officers of state departed to their occasions. Then the eunuchs came to him and calling down on him length of life and continuance [of glory and prosperity], walked in attendance upon him and raised the curtain, and he entered the pavilion of the harem, where he found candles lighted and lamps burning and singing-women smiting [on instruments of music]. When he saw this, he was confounded in his wit and said in himself, "By Allah, I am in truth Commander of the Faithful!" As soon as he appeared, the slave-girls rose to him and carrying him up on to the estrade, brought him a great table, spread with the richest meats. So he ate thereof with all his might, till he had gotten his fill, when he called one of the slave-girls and said to her, "What is thy name?" "My name is Miskeh," replied she, and he said to another, "What is thy name?" Quoth she, "My name is Terkeh." Then said he to a third, "What is thy name?" "My name is Tuhfeh," answered she; and he went on to question the damsels of their names, one after another, [till he had made the round of them all], when he rose from that place and removed to the wine-chamber.

He found it every way complete and saw therein ten great trays, full of all fruits and cakes and all manner sweetmeats. So he sat down and ate thereof after the measure of his sufficiency, and finding there three troops of singing-girls, was amazed and made the girls eat. Then he sat and the singers also seated themselves, whilst the black slaves and the white slaves and the eunuchs and pages and boys stood, and the slave-girls, some of them, sat and some stood. The damsels sang and warbled all manner melodies and the place answered them for the sweetness of the songs, whilst the pipes cried out and the lutes made accord with them, till it seemed to Aboulhusn that he was in Paradise and his heart was cheered and his breast dilated. So he sported and joyance waxed on him and he bestowed dresses of honour on the damsels and gave and bestowed, challenging this one and kissing that and toying with a third, plying one with wine and another with meat, till the night fell down.

All this while the Khalif was diverting himself with watching him and laughing, and at nightfall he bade one of the slave-girls drop a piece of henbane in the cup and give it to Aboulhusn to drink. So she did as he bade her and gave Aboulhusn the cup, whereof no sooner had he drunken than his head forewent his feet [and he fell down, senseless]. Therewith the Khalif came forth from behind the curtain, laughing, and calling to the servant who had brought Aboulhusn to the palace, said to him, “Carry this fellow to his own place.” So Mesrour took him up [and carrying him to his own house], set him down in the saloon. Then he went forth from him and shutting the saloon-door upon him, returned to the Khalif, who slept till the morrow.

As for Aboulhusn, he gave not over sleeping till God the Most High brought on the morning, when he awoke, crying out and saying, “Ho, Tuffaheh! Ho, Rahet el Culoub! Ho, Miskeh! Ho, Tuhfeh!” And he gave not over calling upon the slave-girls till his mother heard him calling upon strange damsels and rising, came to him and said, “The name of God encompass thee! Arise, O my son, O Aboulhusn! Thou dreamest.” So he opened his eyes and finding an old woman at his head, raised his eyes and said to her, “Who art thou?” Quoth she, "I am thy mother;" and he answered, "Thou liest! I am the Commander of the Faithful, the Vicar of God." Whereupon his mother cried out and said to him, "God preserve thy reason! Be silent, O my son, and cause not the loss of our lives and the spoiling of thy wealth, [as will assuredly betide,] if any hear this talk and carry it to the Khalif."

So he rose from his sleep and finding himself in his own saloon and his mother by him, misdoubted of his wit and said to her, "By Allah, O my mother, I saw myself in a dream in a palace, with slave-girls and servants about me and in attendance upon me, and I sat upon the throne of the Khalifate and ruled. By Allah, O my mother, this is what I saw, and verily it was not a dream!" Then he bethought himself awhile and said, "Assuredly, I am Aboulhusn el Khelia, and this that I saw was only a dream, and [it was in a dream that] I was made Khalif and commanded and forbade." Then he bethought himself again and said, "Nay, but it was no dream and I am no other than the Khalif, and indeed I gave gifts and bestowed dresses of honour." Quoth his mother to him, "O my son, thou sportest with thy reason: thou wilt go to the hospital and become a gazing-stock. Indeed, that which thou hast seen is only from the Devil and it was a delusion of dreams, for whiles Satan sporteth with men's wits in all manner ways."

Then said she to him, "O my son, was there any one with thee yesternight?" And he bethought himself and said, "Yes; one lay the night with me and I acquainted him with my case and told him my story. Doubtless, he was from the Devil, and I, O my mother, even as thou sayst truly, am Aboulhusn el Khelia." "O my son," rejoined she, "rejoice in tidings of all good, for yesterday's record is that there came the Vivier Jaafer the Barmecide [and his company] and beat the sheikhs of the mosque and the Imam, each four hundred lashes; after which they paraded them about the city, making proclamation before them and saying, 'This is the reward and the least of the reward of whoso lacketh of goodwill to his neighbours and troubleth on them their lives!' and banished them from Baghdad. Moreover, the Khalif sent me a hundred dinars and sent to salute me." Whereupon Aboulhusn cried out and said to her, "O old woman of ill-omen, wilt thou contradict me and tell me that I am not the Commander of the

Faithful? It was I who commanded Jaafer the Barmecide to beat the sheikhs and parade them about the city and make proclamation before them and who sent thee the hundred dinars and sent to salute thee, and I, O beldam of ill-luck, am in very deed the Commander of the Faithful, and thou art a liar, who would make me out a dotard."

So saying, he fell upon her and beat her with a staff of almond-wood, till she cried out, "[Help], O Muslims!" and he redoubled the beating upon her, till the folk heard her cries and coming to her, [found] Aboulhusn beating her and saying to her, "O old woman of ill-omen, am I not the Commander of the Faithful? Thou hast enchanted me!" When the folk heard his words, they said, "This man raveth," and doubted not of his madness. So they came in upon him and seizing him, pinioned him and carried him to the hospital. Quoth the superintendant, "What aileth this youth?" And they said, "This is a madman." "By Allah," cried Aboulhusn, "they lie against me! I am no madman, but the Commander of the Faithful." And the superintendant answered him, saying, "None lieth but thou, O unluckiest of madmen!"

Then he stripped him of his clothes and clapping on his neck a heavy chain, bound him to a high lattice and fell to drubbing him two bouts a day and two anights; and on this wise he abode the space of ten days. Then his mother came to him and said, "O my son, O Aboulhusn, return to thy reason, for this is the Devil's doing." Quoth he, "Thou sayst sooth, O my mother, and bear thou witness of me that I repent [and forswear] that talk and turn from my madness. So do thou deliver me, for I am nigh upon death." So his mother went out to the superintendant and procured his release and he returned to his own house.

Now this was at the beginning of the month, and when it was the end thereof, Aboulhusn longed to drink wine and returning to his former usance, furnished his saloon and made ready food and let bring wine; then, going forth to the bridge, he sat there, expecting one whom he should carouse withal, as of his wont. As he sat thus, behold, up came the Khalif [and Mesrour] to him; but Aboulhusn saluted them not and said to them, "No welcome and no greeting to the perverters! Ye are no other than devils." However, the Khalif accosted him and said to him, "O my brother, did I not say to thee that I would return to thee?" Quoth Aboulhusn, "I have no need of thee; and as the byword says in verse:

'Twere fitter and better my loves that I leave, For, if the eye see not, the heart will not grieve.

And indeed, O my brother, the night thou camest to me and we caroused together, I and thou, it was as if the Devil came to me and troubled me that night." "And who is he, the Devil?" asked the Khalif. "He is none other than thou," answered Aboulhusn; whereat the Khalif smiled and sitting down by him, coaxed him and spoke him fair, saying, "O my brother, when I went out from thee, I forgot [to shut] the door [and left it] open, and belike Satan came in to thee." Quoth Aboulhusn, "Ask me not of that which hath betided me. What possessed thee to leave the door open, so that the Devil came in to me and there befell me with him this and that?" And he related to him all that had befallen him, from first to last, aud there is no advantage in the repetition of it; what while the Khalif laughed and hid his laughter.

Then said he to Aboulhusn, "Praised be God who hath done away from thee that which irked thee and that I see thee in weal!" And Aboulhusn said, "Never again will I take thee to boon-companion or sitting-mate; for the byword saith, 'Whoso stumbleth on a stone and returneth thereto, blame and reproach be upon him.' And thou, O my brother, nevermore will I entertain thee nor use companionship with thee, for that I have not found thy commerce propitious to me." But the Khalif blandished him and conjured him, redoubling words upon him with "Verily, I am thy guest; reject not the guest," till Aboulhusn took him and [carrying him home], brought him into the saloon and set food before him and friendly entreated him in speech. Then he told him all that had befallen him, whilst the Khalif was like to die of hidden laughter; after which Aboulhusn removed the tray of food and bringing the wine-tray, filled a cup and emptied it out three times, then gave it to the Khalif, saying, "O boon-companion mine, I am thy slave and let not that which I am about to say irk thee, and be thou not vexed, neither do thou vex me." And he recited these verses:

No good's in life (to the counsel list of one who's
    purpose-whole,) An if thou be not drunken still and gladden

not thy soul.
Ay, ne’er will I leave to drink of wine, what while the night on
me Darkens, till drowsiness bow down my head upon my bowl.
In wine, as the glittering sunbeams bright, my heart’s
contentment is, That banishes hence, with various joys, all
kinds of care and dole.

When the Khalif heard these his verses, he was moved to exceeding delight and taking the cup, drank it off, and they ceased not to drink and carouse till the wine rose to their heads. Then said Aboulhusn to the Khalif, “O boon-companion mine, of a truth I am perplexed concerning my affair, for meseemed I was Commander of the Faithful and ruled and gave gifts and largesse, and in very deed, O my brother, it was not a dream.” “These were the delusions of sleep,” answered the Khalif and crumbling a piece of henbane into the cup, said to him, “By my life, do thou drink this cup.” And Aboulhusn said, “Surely I will drink it from thy hand.” Then he took the cup from the Khalifs hand and drank it off, and no sooner had it settled in his belly than his head forewent his feet [and he fell down senseless].

Now his parts and fashions pleased the Khalif and the excellence of his composition and his frankness, and he said in himself, “I will assuredly make him my cup- companion and sitting-mate.” So he rose forthright and saying to Mesrour, “Take him up,” [returned to the palace]. Accordingly, Mesrour took up Aboulhusn and carrying him to the palace of the Khalifate, set him down before Er Reshid, who bade the slaves and slave- girls encompass him about, whilst he himself hid in a place where Aboulhusn could not see him.

Then he commanded one of the slave-girls to take the lute and strike it at Aboulhusn’s head, whilst the rest smote upon their instruments. [So they played and sang,] till Aboulhusn awoke at the last of the night and heard the noise of lutes and tabrets and the sound of the pipes and the singing of the slave-girls, whereupon he opened his eyes and finding himself in the palace, with the slave-girls and eunuchs about him, exclaimed, ‘There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! Verily, I am fearful of the hospital and of that which I suffered therein aforetime, and I doubt not but the Devil is come to me again, as before. O my God, put thou Satan to shame!" Then he shut his eyes and laid his head in his sleeve and fell to laughing softly and raising his head [bytimes], but [still] found the apartment lighted and the girls singing.

Presently, one of the eunuchs sat down at his head and said to him, "Sit up, O Commander of the Faithful, and look on thy palace and thy slave-girls." Quoth Aboulhusn, "By the protection of God, am I in truth Commander of the Faithful and dost thou not lie? Yesterday, I went not forth neither ruled, but drank and slept, and this eunuch cometh to rouse me up." Then he sat up and bethought himself of that which had betided him with his mother and how he had beaten her and entered the hospital, and he saw the marks of the beating, wherewithal the superintendant of the hospital had beaten him, and was perplexed concerning his affair and pondered in himself, saying, "By Allah, I know not how my case is nor what is this that betideth me!"

Then he turned to a damsel of the damsels and said to her, "Who am I?" Quoth she, "Thou art the Commander of the Faithful;" and he said, "Thou liest, O calamity! If I be indeed the Commander of the Faithful, bite my finger." So she came to him and bit it with her might, and he said to her, "It sufficeth." Then he said to the chief eunuch, "Who am I?" And he answered, "Thou art the Commander of the Faithful." So he left him and turning to a little white slave, said to him, "Bite my ear;" and he bent down to him and put his ear to his mouth. Now the slave was young and lacked understanding; so he closed his teeth upon Aboulhusn's ear with his might, till he came near to sever it; and he knew not Arabic, so, as often as Aboulhusn said to him, "It sufficeth," he concluded that he said, "Bite harder," and redoubled his bite and clenched his teeth upon the ear, whilst the damsels were diverted from him with hearkening to the singing-girls, and Aboulhusn cried out for succour from the boy and the Khalif [well-nigh] lost his senses for laughter.

Then he dealt the boy a cuff and he let go his ear, whereupon Aboulhusn put off his clothes and abode naked, with his yard and his arse exposed, and danced among the slave-girls. They bound his hands and he wantoned among them, what while they [well-nigh] died of laughing at him and the Khalif swooned away for excess of laughter. Then he came to himself and going forth to Aboulhusn, said to him, “Out on thee, O Aboulhusn! Thou slayest me with laughter.” So he turned to him and knowing him, said to him, “By Allah, it is thou slayest me and slayest my mother and slewest the sheikhs and the Imam of the Mosque!”

Then the Khalif took him into his especial favour and married him and bestowed largesse on him and lodged him with himself in the palace and made him of the chief of his boon-companions, and indeed he was preferred with him above them and the Khalif advanced him over them all. Now they were ten in number, to wit, El Ijli and Er Recashi and Ibdan and Hassan el Feresdec and El Lauz and Es Seker and Omar et Tertis and Abou Nuwas and Abou Ishac en Nedim and Aboulhusn el Khelia, and by each of them hangeth a story that is told in other than this book. And indeed Aboulhusn became high in honour with the Khalif and favoured above all, so that he sat with him and the Lady Zubeideh bint el Casim and married the latter’s treasuress, whose name was Nuzhet el Fuad.

Aboulhusn abode with his wife in eating and drinking and all delight of life, till all that was with them was spent, when he said to her, “Harkye, O Nuzhet el Fuad!” “At thy service,” answered she, and he said, “I have it in mind to play a trick on the Khalif and thou shalt do the like with the Lady Zubeideh, and we will take of them, in a twinkling, two hundred dinars and two pieces of silk.” “As thou wilt,” answered she; “but what thinkest thou to do?” And he said,”We will feign ourselves dead and this is the trick. I will die before thee and lay myself out, and do thou spread over me a kerchief of silk and loose [the muslin of] my turban over me and tie my toes and lay on my heart a knife, and a little salt. Then let down thy hair and betake thyself to thy mistress Zubeideh, tearing thy dress and buffeting thy face and crying out. She will say to thee, ‘What aileth thee?’ and do thou answer her, saying, ‘May thy head outlive Aboulhusn el Khelia! For he is dead.” She will mourn for me and weep and bid her treasuress give thee a hundred dinars and a piece of silk and will say to thee, ‘Go lay him out and carry him forth [to burial].’ So do thou take of her the hundred dinars and the piece of silk and come back, and when thou returnest to me, I will rise up and thou shalt lie down in my place, and I will go to the Khalif and say to him, ‘May thy head outlive Nuzhet el Fuad!’ and tear my dress and pluck at my beard. He will mourn for thee and say to his treasurer, ‘Give Aboulhusn a hundred dinars and a piece of silk.’ Then he will say to me, ‘Go; lay her out and carry her forth;’ and I will come back to thee.”

Therewith Nuzhet el Fuad rejoiced and said, “Indeed, this is an excellent device.” [Then Aboulhusn stretched himself out] forthright and she shut his eyes and tied his feet and covered him with the kerchief and did what [else] her lord had bidden her; after which she rent her dress and uncovering her head, let down her hair and went in to the Lady Zubeideh, crying out and weeping, When the princess saw her in this case, she said to her, “What plight is this [in which I see thee]? What is thy story and what maketh thee weep?” And Nuzhet el Fuad answered, weeping and crying out the while, “O my lady, may thy head live and mayst thou survive Aboulhusn el Khelia! For he is dead.” The Lady Zubeideh mourned for him and said, “Alas for Aboulhusn el Khelia!” And she wept for him awhile. Then she bade her treasuress give Nuzhet el Fuad a hundred dinars and a piece of silk and said to her, “O Nuzhet el Fuad, go, lay him out and carry him forth.”

So she took the hundred dinars and the piece of silk and returned to her dwelling, rejoicing, and went in to Aboulhusn and told him what had befallen, whereupon he arose and rejoiced and girt his middle and danced and took the hundred dinars and the piece of silk and laid them up. Then he laid out Nuzhet el Fuad and did with her even as she had done with him; after which he rent his clothes and plucked out his beard and disordered his turban [and went forth] and gave not over running till he came in to the Khalif, who was sitting in the hall of audience, and he in this plight, beating upon his breast. Quoth the Khalif to him, “What aileth thee, O Aboulhusn!” And he wept and said, “Would thy boon-companion had never been and would his hour had never come!” “Tell me [thy case,]” said the Khalif; and Aboulhusn said, “O my lord, may thy head outlive Nuzhet el Fuad!” Quoth the Khalif, “There is no god but God!” And he smote hand upon hand. Then he comforted Aboulhusn and said to him, “Grieve not, for we will give thee a concubine other than she.” And he bade the treasurer give him a hundred dinars and a piece of silk. So the treasurer gave him what the Khalif bade him, and the latter said to him,"Go, lay her out and carry her forth and make her a handsome funeral." So Aboulhusn took that which he had given him and returning to his house, rejoicing, went in to Nuzhet el Fuad and said to her, "Arise, for the wish is accomplished unto us." So she arose and he laid before her the hundred dinars and the piece of silk, whereat she rejoiced, and they added the gold to the gold and the silk to the silk and sat talking and laughing at one another.

Meanwhile, when Aboulhusn went out from the presence of the Khalif and went to lay out Nuzhet el Fuad, the prince mourned for her and dismissing the divan, arose and betook himself, leaning upon Mesrour, the swordsman of his vengeance, [to the pavilion of the harem, where he went in] to the Lady Zubeideh, that he might condole with her for her slave-girl. He found the princess sitting weeping and awaiting his coming, so she might condole with him for [his boon-companion] Aboulhusn el Khelia. So he said to her, "May thy head outlive thy slave-girl Nuzhet el Fuad!" And she answered, saying, "O my lord, God preserve my slave-girl! Mayst thou live and long survive thy boon-companion Aboulhusn el Khelia! For he is dead."

The Khalif smiled and said to his eunuch, "O Mesrour, verily women are little of wit. I conjure thee, by Allah, say, was not Aboulhusn with me but now?" ["Yes, O Commander of the Faithful," answered Mesrour] Quoth the Lady Zubeideh, laughing from a heart full of wrath, "Wilt thou not leave thy jesting? Is it not enough that Aboulhusn is dead, but thou must kill my slave-girl also and bereave us of the two and style me little of wit?" "Indeed," answered the Khalif, "it is Nuzhet el Fuad who is dead." And Zubeideh said, "Indeed he hath not been with thee, nor hast thou seen him, and none was with me but now but Nuzhet el Fuad, and she sorrowful, weeping, with her clothes torn. I exhorted her to patience and gave her a hundred dinars and a piece of silk; and indeed I was awaiting thy coming, so I might condole with thee for thy boon-companion Aboulhusn el Khelia, and was about to send for thee." The Khalif laughed and said, "None is dead but Nuzhet el Fuad;" and she, "No, no, my lord; none is dead but Aboulhusn."

With this the Khalif waxed wroth, and the Hashimi vein started out from between his eyes and he cried out to Mesrour and said to him, “Go forth and see which of them is dead.” So Mesrour went out, running, and the Khalif said to Zubeideh, “Wilt thou lay me a wager?” “Yes,” answered she; “I will wager, and I say that Aboulhusn is dead.” “And I,” rejoined the Khalif, “wager and say that none is dead save Nuzhet el Fuad; and the stake shall be the Garden of Pleasance against thy palace and the Pavilion of Pictures.” So they [agreed upon this and] abode awaiting Mesrour, till such time as he should return with news.

As for Mesrour, he gave not over running till he came to the by-street, [wherein was the house] of Aboulhusn el Khelia. Now the latter was sitting reclining at the lattice, and chancing to look round, saw Mesrour running along the street and said to Nuzhet el Fuad, “Meseemeth the Khalif, when I went forth from him, dismissed the Divan and went in to the Lady Zubeideh, to condole with her [for thee;] whereupon she arose and condoled with him [for me,] saying, ‘God greaten thy recompence for [the loss of] Aboulhusn el Khelia!’ And he said to her, ‘None is dead save Nuzhet el Fuad, may thy head outlive her!’ Quoth she, ‘It is not she who is dead, but Aboulhusn el Khelia, thy boon-companion.’ And he to her, ‘None is dead but Nuzhet el Fuad.’ And they gainsaid one another, till the Khalif waxed wroth and they laid a wager, and he hath sent Mesrour the sword- bearer to see who is dead. Wherefore it were best that thou lie down, so he may see thee and go and acquaint the Khalif and confirm my saying.” So Nuzhet el Fuad stretched herself out and Aboulhusn covered her with her veil and sat at her head, weeping.

Presently, in came Mesrour the eunuch to him and saluted him and seeing Nuzhet el Fuad stretched out, uncovered her face and said, “There is no god but God! Our sister Nuzhet el Fuad is dead. How sudden was the [stroke of] destiny! May God have mercy on thee and acquit thee of responsibility!” Then he returned and related what had passed before the Khalif and the Lady Zubeideh, and he laughing. “O accursed one,’ said the Khalif, “is this a time for laughter? Tell us which is dead of them.” “By Allah, O my lord,” answered Mesrour, “Aboulhusn is well and none is dead but Nuzhet el Fuad.” Quoth the Khalif to Zubeideh, “Thou hast lost thy pavilion in thy play,” and he laughed at her and said to Mesrour, “O Mesrour, tell her what thou sawest." "Verily, O my lady," said the eunuch, "I ran without ceasing till I came in to Aboulhusn in his house and found Nuzhet el Fuad lying dead and Aboulhusn sitting at her head, weeping. I saluted him and condoled with him and sat down by his side and uncovered the face of Nuzhet el Fuad and saw her dead and her face swollen. So I said to him, 'Carry her out forthright [to burial], so we may pray over her.' He answered, 'It is well;' and I left him to lay her out and came hither, that I might tell you the news."

The Khalif laughed and said, "Tell it again and again to thy lady lack-wit." When the Lady Zubeideh heard Mesrour's words [and those of the Khalif,] she was wroth and said, "None lacketh wit but he who believeth a black slave." And she reviled Mesrour, whilst the Khalif laughed. Mesrour was vexed at this and said to the Khalif, "He spoke sooth who said, 'Women lack wit and religion.'" Then said the Lady Zubeideh to the Khalif, "O Commander of the Faithful, thou sportest and jestest with me, and this slave hoodwinketh me, to please thee; but I will send and see which is dead of them." And he answered, saying, "Send one who shall see which is dead of them." So the Lady Zubeideh cried out to an old woman, a stewardess, and said to her, "Go to the house of Nuzhet el Fuad in haste and see who is dead and loiter not." And she railed at her.

The old woman went out, running, whilst the Khalif and Mesrour laughed, and gave not over running till she came into the street. Aboulhusn saw her and knowing her, said to his wife, "O Nuzhet el Fuad, meseemeth the Lady Zubeideh hath sent to us to see who is dead and hath not given credence to Mesrour's report of thy death; so she hath despatched the old woman, her stewardess, to discover the truth; wherefore it behoveth me to be dead in my turn, for the sake of thy credit with the Lady Zubeideh." Accordingly, he lay down and stretched himself out, and she covered him and bound his eyes and feet and sat at his head, weeping.

Presently, the old woman came in to her and saw her sitting at Aboulhusn's head, weeping and lamenting; and when she saw the old woman, she cried out and said to her, "See what hath betided me! Indeed, Aboulhusn is dead and hath left me alone and forlorn!" Then she cried out and tore her clothes and said to the old woman, "O my mother, how good he was!" Quoth the other, "Indeed thou art excused, for thou wast used to him and he to thee." Then she considered what Mesrour had reported to the Khalif and the Lady Zubeideh and said to her, "Indeed, Mesrour goeth about to sow discord between the Khalif and the Lady Zubeideh." "And what is the [cause of] discord, O my mother?" asked Nuzhet el Fuad. "O my daughter," answered the old woman, "Mesrour came to the Khalif and the Lady Zubeideh and gave them news of thee that thou wast dead and that Aboulhusn was well. "And Nuzhet el Fuad said to her, "O my aunt, I was with my lady but now and she gave me a hundred dinars and a piece of silk; and now see my condition and that which hath befallen me! Indeed, I am bewildered, and how shall I do, and I alone, forlorn? Would God I had died and he had lived!"

Then she wept and the old woman with her and the latter went up to Aboulhusn and uncovering his face, saw his eyes bound and swollen for the binding. So she covered him again and said, "Indeed, O Nuzhet el Fuad, thou art afflicted in Aboulhusn!" Then she condoled with her and going out from her, ran without ceasing till she came in to the Lady Zubeideh and related to her the story; and the princess said to her, laughing, "Tell it over again to the Khalif, who maketh me out scant of wit and lacking of religion, and to this ill-omened slave, who presumeth to contradict me." Quoth Mesrour, "This old woman lieth; for I saw Aboulhusn well and Nuzhet el Fuad it was who lay dead." "It is thou that liest," rejoined the stewardess, "and wouldst fain sow discord between the Khalif and the Lady Zubeideh." And he said, "None lieth but thou, O old woman of ill-omen, and thy lady believeth thee, and she doteth." Whereupon the Lady Zubeideh cried out at him, and indeed she was enraged at him and at his speech and wept.

Then said the Khalif to her, "I lie and my eunuch lieth, and thou liest and thy waiting-woman lieth; so methinks we were best go, all four of us together, that we may see which of us telleth the truth." Quoth Mesrour, "Come, let us go, that I may put this ill-omened old woman to shame and deal her a sound drubbing for her lying." And she answered him, saying, "O dotard, is thy wit like unto my wit? Indeed, thy wit is as the hen's wit." Mesrour was incensed at her words and would have laid violent hands on her, but the Lady Zubeideh warded him off from her and said to him, "Her soothfastness will presently be distinguished from thy sooth-fastness and her leasing from thy leasing."

Then they all four arose, laying wagers with one another, and went forth, walking, from the palace-gate [and fared on] till they came in at the gate of the street in which Aboulhusn el Khelia dwelt. He saw them and said to his wife Nuzhet el Fuad, "Verily, all that is sticky is not a pancake and not every time cometh the jar off safe.' Meseemeth the old woman hath gone and told her lady and acquainted her with our case and she hath disputed with Mesrour the eunuch and they have laid wagers with one another about our death and are come to us, all four, the Khalif and the eunuch and the Lady Zubeideh and the old woman." When Nuzhet el Fuad heard this, she started up from her lying posture and said, "How shall we do?" And he said, "We will both feign ourselves dead and stretch ourselves out and hold our breath." So she hearkened unto him and they both lay down on the siesta[-carpet] and bound their feet and shut their eyes and covered themselves with the veil and held their breath.

Presently, up came the Khalif and the Lady Zubeideh and Mesrour and the old woman and entering, found Aboulhusn and his wife both stretched out [apparently] dead; which when the Lady Zubeideh saw, she wept and said, "They ceased not to bring [ill] news of my slave- girl, till she died; methinketh Aboulhusn's death was grievous to her and that she died after him.". Quoth the Khalif, "Thou shalt not forestall me with talk and prate. She certainly died before Aboulhusn, for he came to me with his clothes torn and his beard plucked out, beating his breast with two bricks, and I gave him a hundred dinars and a piece of silk and said to him, 'Go, carry her forth [and bury her] and I will give thee a concubine other than she and handsomer, and she shall be in stead of her.' But it would appear that her death was no light matter to him and he died after her; so it is I who have beaten thee and gotten thy stake."

The Lady Zubeideh answered him many words and the talk waxed amain between them. At last the Khalif sat down at the heads of the pair and said, "By the tomb of the Apostle of God (may He bless and preserve him!) and the sepulchres of my fathers and forefathers, whoso will tell me which of them died before the other, I will willingly give him a thousand dinars!" When Aboulhusn heard the Khalifs words, he sprang up in haste and said, “I died first, O Commander of the Faithful! Hand over the thousand dinars and quit thine oath and the conjuration by which thou sworest.” Then Nuzhet el Fuad rose also and stood up before the Khalif and the Lady Zubeideh, who both rejoiced in this and in their safety, and the princess chid her slave-girl. Then the Khalif and the Lady Zubeideh gave them joy at their well-being and knew that this [pretended] death was a device to get the money; and the princess said to Nuzhet el Fuad, “Thou shouldst have sought of me that which thou desiredst, without this fashion, and not have consumed my heart for thee.” And she said, “Indeed, I was ashamed, O my lady.”

As for the Khalif, he swooned away for laughing and said, “O Aboulhusn, thou wilt never cease to be a wag and do rarities and oddities!” Quoth he, “O Commander of the Faithful, I played off this trick, for that the money was exhausted, which thou gavest me, and I was ashamed to ask of thee again. When I was single, I could never keep money; but since thou marriedst me to this damsel here, if I possessed thy wealth, I should make an end of it. So, when all that was in my hand was spent, I wrought this trick, so I might get of thee the hundred dinars and the piece of silk; and all this is an alms from our lord. But now make haste to give me the thousand dinars and quit thee of thine oath.”

The Khalif and the Lady Zubeideh laughed and returned to the palace; and he gave Aboulhusn the thousand dinars, saying, “Take them as a thank-offering for thy preservation from death,” whilst the princess did the like with Nuzhet el Fuad. Moreover, the Khalif increased Aboulhusn in his stipends and allowances, and he [and his wife] ceased not [to live] in joy and contentment, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies, he who layeth waste the palaces and peopleth the tombs.

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THE KHALIF OMAR BEN ABDULAZIZ AND THE POETS.

It is said that, when the Khalifate devolved on Omar ben Abdulaziz (of whom God accept), the poets [of the time] resorted to him, as they had been used to resort to the Khalifs before him, and abode at his door days and days, but he gave them not leave to enter, till there came to Omar Adi ben Artah, who stood high in esteem with him. Jerir accosted him and begged him to crave admission for them [to the Khalif]. "It is well," answered Adi and going in to Omar, said to him, "The poets are at thy door and have been there days and days; yet hast thou not given them leave to enter, albeit their sayings are abiding and their arrows go straight to the mark." Quoth Omar, "What have I to do with the poets?" And Adi answered, saying, "O Commander of the Faithful, the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve) was praised [by a poet] and gave [him largesse,] and therein is an exemplar to every Muslim." Quoth Omar, "And who praised him?" "Abbas ben Mirdas praised him," replied Adi, "and he clad him with a suit and said, 'O Bilal, cut off from me his tongue!'" "Dost thou remember what he said?" asked the Khalif; and Adi said, "Yes." "Then repeat it," rejoined Omar. So Adi recited the following verses:

I saw thee, O thou best of all the human race, display A book
that came to teach the Truth to those in error's way.
Thou madest known to us therein the road of righteousness, When
we had wandered from the Truth, what while in gloom it lay.
A dark affair thou littest up with Islam and with proof
Quenchedst the flaming red-coals of error and dismay.
Mohammed, then, I do confess, God's chosen prophet is, And every
man requited is for that which he doth say.
The road of right thou hast made straight, that erst was crooked
grown; Yea, for its path of old had fall'n to ruin and
decay.
Exalted mayst thou be above th' empyrean heaven of joy And may
God's glory greater grow and more exalted aye!

"And indeed," continued Adi, "this ode on the Prophet (may God bless and keep him!) is well known and to comment it would be tedious." Quoth Omar, "Who is at the door?" "Among them is Omar ibn [Abi] Rebya the Cureishite," answered Adi, and the Khalif said, "May God show him no favour neither quicken him! Was it not he who said … ?" And he recited the following verses:

Would God upon that bitterest day, when my death calls for me,
What's 'twixt thine excrement and blood I still may
smell of thee!
Yea, so but Selma in the dust my bedfellow may prove, Fair fall
it thee! In heaven or hell I reck not if it be.

"Except," continued the Khalif, "he were the enemy of God, he had wished for her in this world, so he might after [repent and] return to righteous dealing. By Allah, he shall not come in to me! Who is at the door other than he?" Quoth Adi, "Jemil ben Mamer el Udhri is at the door;" and Omar said, "It is he who says in one of his odes" … [And he recited the following:]

Would we may live together and when we come to die, God grant the
death-sleep bring me within her tomb to lie!
For if "Her grave above her is levelled" it be said, Of life and
its continuance no jot indeed reck I.

"Away with him from me! Who is at the door?" "Kutheiyir Azzeh," replied Adi, and Omar said, "It is he who says in one of his odes … " [And he repeated the following verses:]

Some with religion themselves concern and make it their business
all; Sitting, they weep for the pains of hell and
still for mercy bawl!
If they could hearken to Azzeh's speech, as I, I hearken to it,
They straight would humble themselves to her and prone
before her fall.

"Leave the mention of him. Who is at the door?" Quoth Adi, "El Akhwes el Ansari." "God the Most High put him away and estrange him from His mercy!" cried Omar. "Is it not he who said, berhyming on a man of Medina his slave-girl, so she might outlive her master … ?" [And he repeated the following line:]

God [judge] betwixt me and her lord! Away With her he flees me and I follow aye.

"He shall not come in to me. Who is at the door, other than he?" "Heman ben Ghalib el Ferezdec," answered Adi; and Omar said, "It is he who saith, glorying in adultery …" [And he repeated the following verses:]

The two girls let me down from fourscore fathoms' height, As
swoops a hawk, with wings all open in full flight;
And when my feet trod earth, "Art slain, that we should fear,"
Quoth they, "or live, that we may hope again thy sight?"

"He shall not come in to me. Who is at the door, other than he?" "El Akhtel et Teghlibi," answered Adi; and Omar said, "He is the unbeliever who says in his verse …" [And he repeated the following:]

Ramazan in my life ne'er I fasted, nor e'er Have I eaten of
flesh, save in public it were.
No exhorter am I to abstain from the fair, Nor to love Mecca's
vale for my profit I care;
Nor, like others a little ere morning appear who bawl, "Come to
safety!" I stand up to prayer.
Nay, at daybreak I drink of the wind-freshened wine And prostrate
me instead in the dawn-whitened air.

"By Allah, he treadeth no carpet of mine! Who is at the door other than he?" "Jerir ibn el Khetefa," answered Adi; and Omar said, "It is he who saith … " [And he recited as follows:]

But for the spying of the eyes [ill-omened,] we had seen Wild
cattle's eyes and antelopes' tresses of sable sheen.
The huntress of th' eyes by night came to me. "Turn in
peace," [Quoth I to her;] "This is no time for visiting, I

ween."

"If it must be and no help, admit Jerir." So Adi went forth and admitted Jerir, who entered, saying:

He, who Mohammed sent, as prophet to mankind, Hath to a just
high-priest the Khalifate assigned.
His justice and his truth all creatures do embrace; The erring he
corrects and those of wandering mind.
I hope for present good [and bounty at thy hand,] For
souls of men are still to present good inclined.

Quoth Omar, "O Jerir, keep the fear of God before thine eyes and say nought but the truth." And Jerir recited the following verses:

How many, in Yemameh, dishevelled widows plain! How many a
weakling orphan unsuccoured doth remain,
For whom is thy departure even as a father's loss! To fly or
creep, like nestlings, alone, they strive in vain.
Now that the clouds have broken their promise to our hope, We
trust the Khalif's bounty will stand to us for rain.

When the Khalif heard this, he said, "By Allah, O Jerir, Omar possesseth but a hundred dirhems." [And he cried out to his servant, saying,] "Ho, boy! give them to him." Moreover, he gave him the ornaments of his sword; and Jerir went forth to the [other] poets, who said to him, "What is behind thee?" And he answered, "A man who giveth to the poor and denieth the poets, and I am well-pleased with him."

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EL HEJJAJ AND THE THREE YOUNG MEN.

They tell that El Hejjaj once commanded the Master of Police [of Bassora] to go round about [the city] by night, and whomsoever he found [abroad] after nightfall, that he should strike off his head. So he went round one night of the nights and came upon three youths staggering from side to side, and on them signs of [intoxication with] wine. So the officers laid hold of them and the captain of the watch said to them, "Who are ye that ye transgress the commandment of the [lieutenant of the] Commander of the Faithful and come abroad at this hour?" Quoth one of the youths, "I am the son of him to whom [all] necks abase themselves, alike the nose-pierced of them and the [bone-]breaker; they come to him in their own despite, abject and submissive, and he taketh of their wealth and of their blood."

The master of police held his hand from him, saying, "Belike he is of the kinsmen of the Commander of the Faithful," and said to the second, "Who art thou?" Quoth he, "I am the son of him whose rank time abaseth not, and if it descend one day, it will assuredly return [to its former height]; thou seest the folk [crowd] in troops to the light of his fire, some standing around it and some sitting." So the master of the police refrained from slaying him and said to the third, "Who art thou?" Quoth he, "I am the son of him who plungeth through the ranks with his might and correcteth them with the sword, so that they stand straight; his feet are not loosed from the stirrup, whenas the horsemen on the day of battle are weary." So the master of police held his hand from him also, saying, "Belike, he is the son of a champion of the Arabs."

Then he kept them under guard, and when the morning morrowed, he referred their case to El Hejjaj, who caused bring them before him and enquiring into their affair, found that the first was the son of a barber-surgeon, the second of a [hot] bean-seller and the third of a weaver. So he marvelled at their readiness of speech and said to his session-mates, "Teach your sons deportment; for, by Allah, but for their ready wit, I had smitten off their heads!"

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HAROUN ER RESHID AND THE WOMAN OF THE BARMECIDES.

They tell that Haroun er Reshid was sitting one day to do away grievances, when there came up to him a woman and said to him, “O Commander of the Faithful, may God accomplish thine affair and cause thee rejoice in that which He hath given thee and increase thee in elevation! Indeed, thou hast done justice and wrought equitably.” Quoth the Khalif to those who were present with him, “Know ye what this woman meaneth by her saying?” And they answered, “Of a surety, she meaneth not otherwise than well, O Commander of the Faithful.” “Nay,” rejoined Haroun; “she purposeth only in this an imprecation against me. As for her saying, ‘God accomplish thine affair!’ she hath taken it from the saying of the poet, ‘When an affair is accomplished, its abatement beginneth. Beware of cessation, whenas it is said, “It is accomplished.”’ As for her saying ‘God cause thee rejoice in that which He hath given thee,’ she took it from the saying of God the Most High, ‘Till, whenas they rejoiced in that which they were given, we took them suddenly and lo, they were confounded!’ As for her saying, ‘God increase thee in elevation!’ she took it from the saying of the poet, ‘No bird flieth and riseth up on high, but, like as he flieth, he falleth.’ And as for her saying, ‘Indeed, thou hast done justice and wrought equitably,’ it is from the saying of the Most High, ‘[If ye deviate or lag behind or turn aside, verily, God of that which ye do is aware;’ and] ‘As for the transgressors,’ they are fuel for hell[-fire].”

Then he turned to the woman and said to her, “Is it not thus?” “Yes, O Commander of the Faithful,” answered she; and he said, “What prompted thee to this?” Quoth she, “Thou slewest my father and my mother and my kinsfolk and tookest their goods.” “Whom meanest thou?” asked the Khalif, and she replied, “I am of the house of Bermek.” Then said he to her, “As for the dead, they are of those who are past away, and it booteth not to speak of them; but, as for that which I took of wealth, it shall be restored to thee, yea, and more than it.” And he was bountiful to her to the utmost of munificence.

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THE TEN VIZIERS; OR THE HISTORY OF KING AZADBEKHT AND HIS SON.

There was once, of old days, a king of the kings, whose name was Azadbekht; his [capital] city was called Kuneim Mudoud and his kingdom extended to the confines of Seistan and from the frontiers of Hindustan to the sea He had ten viziers, who ordered his state and his dominion, and he was possessed of judgment and exceeding wisdom. One day he went forth with certain of his guards to the chase and fell in with an eunuch on horseback, holding in his hand the halter of a mule, which he led along. On the mule's back was a litter of gold-inwoven brocade, garded about with an embroidered band set with gold and jewels, and over against the litter was a company of horsemen. When King Azadbekht saw this, he separated himself from his companions and making for the mule and the horsemen, questioned the latter, saying, "To whom belongeth this litter and what is therein?". The eunuch answered, (for he knew not that he was King Azadbekht,) saying, "This litter belongeth to Isfehend, vizier to King Azadbekht, and therein is his daughter, whom he purposeth to marry to Zad Shah the King."

As the eunuch was speaking with the king, behold, the damsel raised a corner of the curtain that shut in the litter, so she might look upon the speaker, and saw the king. When Azadbekht beheld her and noted her fashion and her loveliness (and indeed never set story-teller eyes on her like,) his soul inclined to her and she took hold upon his heart and he was ravished by her sight. So he said to the eunuch, "Turn the mule's head and return, for I am King Azadbekht and I will marry her myself, for that Isfehend her father is my vizier and he will accept of this affair and it will not be grievous to him." "O king," answered the eunuch, "may God prolong thy continuance, have patience till I acquaint my lord her father, and thou shalt take her in the way of approof, for it befitteth thee not neither is it seemly unto thee that thou take her on this wise, seeing that it will be an affront to her father if thou take her without his knowledge." Quoth Azadbekht, "I have not patience [to wait] till thou go to her father and return, and no dishonour will betide him, if I marry her." "O my lord," rejoined the eunuch, "nought that is done in haste is long of durance nor doth the heart rejoice therein; and indeed it behoveth thee not to take her on this foul wise. Whatsoever betideth thee, destroy not thyself with [undue] haste, for I know that her father's breast will be straitened by this affair and this that thou dost will not profit thee." But the king said, "Verily, Isfehend is [my boughten] servant and a slave of my slaves, and I reck not of her father, if he be vexed or pleased." So saying, he drew the reins of the mule and carrying the damsel, whose name was Behrjaur, to his house, married her.

Meanwhile, the eunuch betook himself, he and the horsemen, to her father and said to him, "O my lord, the king is beholden to thee for many years' service and thou hast not failed him a day of the days; and now, behold, he hath taken thy daughter against thy wish and without thy permission." And he related to him what had passed and how the king had taken her by force. When Isfehend heard the eunuch's story, he was exceeding wroth and assembling many troops, said to them, "Whenas the king was occupied with his women [and concerned not himself with the affairs of his kingdom], we took no reck of him; but now he putteth out his hand to our harem; wherefore methinketh we should do well to look us out a place, wherein we may have sanctuary."

Then he wrote a letter to King Azadbekht, saying to him, "I am a servant of thy servants and a slave of thy slaves and my daughter is a handmaid at thy service, and may God the Most High prolong thy days and appoint thy times [to be] in delight and contentment! Indeed, I still went girded of the waist in thy service and in caring for the preservation of thy dominion and warding off thine enemies from thee; but now I abound yet more than before in zeal and watchfulness, for that I have taken this to charge upon myself, since my daughter is become thy wife." And he despatched a messenger to the king with the letter and a present.

When the messenger came to King Azadbekht and he read the letter and the present was laid before him, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and occupied himself with eating and drinking, hour after hour. But the chief Vizier of his Viziers came to him and said, "0 king, know that Isfehend the Vizier is thine enemy, for that his soul liketh not that which thou hast done with him, and the message that he hath sent thee [is a trick; so] rejoice thou not therein, neither be thou deluded by the sweetness of his words and the softness of his speech.” The king hearkened [not] to his Vizier’s speech, but made light of the matter and presently, [dismissing it from his thought], busied himself with that which he was about of eating and drinking and merrymaking and delight

Meanwhile, Isfehend the Vizier wrote a letter and despatched it to all the Amirs, acquainting them with that which had betided him with King Azadbekht and how he had taken his daughter by force and adding, “And indeed he will do with you more than he hath done with me.” When the letter reached the chiefs [of the people and troops], they all assembled together to Isfehend and said to him, “What is to do with him?” So he discovered to them the affair of his daughter and they all agreed, of one accord, that they should endeavour for the slaughter of the king and taking horse with their troops, set out, intending for him. Azadbekht knew not [of their design] till the noise [of the invasion] beset his capital city, when he said to his wife Behrjaur, “How shall we do?” And she answered, saying, “Thou knowest best and I am at thy commandment.” So he let bring two swift horses and bestrode one himself, whilst his wife mounted the other. Then they took what they might of gold and went forth, fleeing, in the night, to the desert of Kerman; what while Isfehend entered the city and made himself king.

Now King Azadbekht’s wife was big with child and the pains of labour took her in the mountain; so they alighted at the mountain-foot, by a spring of water, and she gave birth to a boy as he were the moon. Behrjaur his mother pulled off a gown of gold-inwoven brocade and wrapped the child therein, and they passed the night [in that place], what while she gave him suck till the morning. Then said the king to her, “We are hampered by this child and cannot abide here nor can we carry him with us; so methinks we were better leave him here and go, for Allah is able to send him one who shall take him and rear him.” So they wept over him exceeding sore and left him beside the spring, wrapped in the gown of brocade: then they laid at his head a thousand dinars in a bag and mounting their horses, departed, fleeing.

Now, by the ordinance of God the Most High, a company of thieves fell in upon a caravan hard by that mountain and made prize of that which was with them of merchandise. Then they betook themselves to the mountain, so they might share their booty, and looking at the foot thereof, espied the gown of brocade. So they descended, to see what it was, and finding the child wrapped therein and the gold laid at his head, marvelled and said, "Extolled be the perfection of God! By what wickedness cometh this child here?" Then they divided the money between them and the captain of the thieves took the boy and made him his son and fed him with sweet milk and dates, till he came to his house, when he appointed him a nurse, who should rear him.

Meanwhile, King Azadbekht and his wife stayed not in their flight till they came to [the court of] the King of Fars, whose name was Kutrou. When they presented themselves to him, he entreated them with honour and entertained them handsomely, and Azadbekht told him his story, first and last. So he gave him a great army and wealth galore and he abode with him some days, till he was rested, when he made ready with his host and setting out for his own dominions, waged war upon Isfehend and falling in upon the capital, defeated the rebel vizier and slew him. Then he entered the city and sat down on the throne of his kingship; and whenas he was rested and the kingdom was grown peaceful for him, he despatched messengers to the mountain aforesaid in quest of the child; but they returned and informed the king that they had not found him.

As time went on, the boy, the son of the king, grew up and fell to stopping the way with the thieves, and they used to carry him with them, whenas they went a-thieving. They sallied forth one day upon a caravan in the land of Seistan, and there were in that caravan strong and valiant men and with them merchandise galore. Now they had heard that in that land were thieves; so they gathered themselves together and made ready their arms and sent out spies, who returned and gave them news of the thieves. Accordingly, they prepared for battle, and when the robbers drew near the caravan, they fell in upon them and they fought a sore battle. At last the folk of the caravan overmastered the thieves, by dint of numbers, and slew some of them, whilst the others fled. Moreover they took the boy, the son of

King Azadbekht, and seeing him as he were the moon, possessed of beauty and grace, brightfaced and comely of fashion, questioned him, saying, “Who is thy father, and how camest thou with these thieves?” And he answered, saying, “I am the son of the captain of the thieves.” So they took him and carried him to the capital of his father King Azadbekht

When they reached the city, the king heard of their coming and commanded that they should attend him with what befitted [of their merchandise]. So they presented themselves before him, [and the boy with them,] whom when the king saw, he said to them, “To whom belongeth this boy?” And they answered, “O king, we were going in such a road, when there came out upon us a sort of robbers; so we made war upon them and overcame them and took this boy prisoner. Then we questioned him, saying, ‘Who is thy father?’ and he answered, ‘I am the captain’s son of the thieves.’” Quoth the king, “I would fain have this boy.” And the captain of the caravan said, “God maketh thee gift of him, O king of the age, and we all are thy slaves.” Then the king dismissed [the people of] the caravan and let carry the youth into his palace and he became as one of the servants, what while his father the king knew not that he was his son. As time went on, the king observed in him good breeding and understanding and knowledge galore and he pleased him; so he committed his treasuries to his charge and straitened the viziers’ hand therefrom, commanding that nought should be taken forth therefrom except by leave of the youth. On this wise he abode a number of years and the king saw in him nought but fidelity and studiousness in well-doing.

Now the treasuries aforetime had been in the viziers’ hand, so they might do with them what they would, and when they came under the youth’s hand, that of the viziers was straitened from them, and the youth became dearer to the king than a son and he could not brook to be separated from him. When the viziers saw this, they were jealous of him and envied him and cast about for a device against him whereby they might oust him from the king’s favour, but found no opportunity. At last, when came the destined hour, it chanced that the youth one day drank wine and became drunken and wandered from his wits; so he fell to going round about within the palace of the king and fate led him to the lodging of the women, in which there was a little sleeping-chamber, where the king lay with his wife. Thither came the youth and entering the chamber, found there a couch spread, to wit, a sleeping place, and a candle burning. So he cast himself on the couch, marvelling at the paintings that were in the chamber, and slept and slumbered heavily till eventide, when there came a slave-girl, bringing with her all the dessert, eatables and drinkables, that she was wont to make ready for the king and his wife, and seeing the youth lying on his back, (and none knowing of his case and he in his drunkenness unknowing where he was,) thought that he was the king asleep on his bed; so she set the censing-vessel and laid the essences by the couch, then shut the door and went away.

Presently, the king arose from the wine-chamber and taking his wife by the hand, repaired with her to the chamber in which he slept. He opened the door and entering, saw the youth lying on the bed, whereupon he turned to his wife and said to her, “What doth this youth here? This fellow cometh not hither but on thine account.” Quoth she, “I have no knowledge of him.” With this, the youth awoke and seeing the king, sprang up and prostrated himself before him, and Azadbekht said to him, “O vile of origin, O lack-loyalty, what hath prompted thee to outrage my dwelling?” And he bade imprison him in one place and the woman in another.

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The First Day.

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OF THE USELESSNESS OF ENDEAVOUR AGAINST PERSISTENT ILL FORTUNE.

When the morning morrowed and the king sat on the throne of his kingship, he summoned the chief of his viziers and said to him, “What deemest thou of this that yonder robber-youth hath done? Behold, he hath entered my house and lain down on my bed and I fear lest there be an intrigue between him and the woman. How deemest thou of the affair?” “God prolong the king’s continuance!” replied the vizier. “What sawest thou in this youth [to make thee trust in him]? Is he not vile of origin, the son of thieves? Needs must a thief revert to his vile origin, and whoso reareth the young of the serpent shall get of them nought but biting. As for the woman, she is not at fault; for, since [the] time [of her marriage with thee] till now, there hath appeared from her nought but good breeding and modesty; and now, if the king give me leave, I will go to her and question her, so I may discover to thee the affair.”

The king gave him leave for this and the vizier betook himself to the queen and said to her, “I am come to thee, on account of a grave reproach, and I would have thee be truthful with me in speech and tell me how came the youth into the sleeping-chamber.” Quoth she, “I have no knowledge whatsoever [of it]” and swore to him a solemn oath thereof, whereby he knew that she had no knowledge of the matter and that she was not at fault and said to her, “I will teach thee a device, where- with thou mayst acquit thyself and thy face be whitened before the king.” “What is it?” asked she; and he answered, saying, “When the king calleth for thee and questioneth thee of this, say thou to him, ‘Yonder youth saw me in the privy-chamber and sent me a message, saying, “I will give thee a hundred jewels, to whose price money may not avail, so thou wilt suffer me to foregather with thee.” I laughed at him who bespoke me with these words and rebuffed him; but he sent again to me, saying, “An thou fall not in with my wishes, I will come one of the nights, drunken, and enter and lie down in the sleeping-chamber, and the king will see me and kill me; so wilt thou be put to shame and thy face will be blackened with him and thine honour abased.”’ Be this thy saying to the king, and I will presently go to him and repeat this to him." Quoth the queen, "And I also will say thus."

So the vizier returned to the king and said to him, "Verily, this youth hath merited grievous punishment, after abundance of bounty [bestowed on him], and it may not be that a bitter kernel should ever become sweet; but, as for the woman, I am certified that there is no fault in her." Then he repeated to the king the story which he had taught the queen, which when Azadbekht heard, he rent his clothes and bade fetch the youth. So they brought him and stationed him before the king, who let bring the headsman, and the folk all fixed their eyes upon the youth, so they might see what the king should do with him.

Then said Azadbekht to him (and indeed his words were [prompted] by anger and those of the youth by presence of mind and good breeding), "I bought thee with my money and looked for fidelity from thee, wherefore I chose thee over all my grandees and servants and made thee keeper of my treasuries. Why, then, hast thou outraged my honour and entered my house and played the traitor with me and tookest no thought unto that which I have done thee of benefits?" "O king," answered the youth, "I did this not of my choice and freewill and I had no [evil] intent in being there; but, of the littleness of my luck, I was driven thither, for that fate was contrary and fair fortune lacking. Indeed, I had striven with all endeavour that nought of foul should proceed from me and kept watch over myself, lest default appear in me; but none may avail to make head against ill fortune, nor doth endeavour profit in case of lack of luck, as appeareth by the example of the merchant who was stricken with ill luck and his endeavour profited him not and he succumbed to the badness of his fortune." "What is the story of the merchant," asked the king, "and how was his luck changed upon him by the sorriness of his fortune?" "May God prolong the king's continuance!" answered the youth.

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Story of the Unlucky Merchant.

“There was once a man, a merchant, who was fortunate in trade, and at one time his [every] dirhem profited [him] fifty. Presently, his luck turned against him and he knew it not; so he said in himself, ‘I have wealth galore, yet do I weary myself and go round about from country to country; I were better abide in my own country and rest myself in my house from this travail and affliction and sell and buy at home.’ Then he made two parts of his money, with one whereof he bought wheat in summer, saying, ‘When the winter cometh, I will sell it at a great profit.’ But, when the winter came, wheat became at half the price for which he had bought it, whereat he was sore concerned and left it till the next year. However, next year, the price fell yet lower and one of his friends said to him, ‘Thou hast no luck in this wheat; so do thou sell it at whatsoever price.’ Quoth the merchant, ‘This long while have I profited and it is allowable that I lose this time. God is all- knowing! If it abide [with me] half a score years, I will not sell it save at a profit.’

Then, in his anger, he walled up the door of the granary with clay, and by the ordinance of God the Most High, there came a great rain and descended from the roofs of the house wherein was the wheat [so that the latter rotted]; and needs must the merchant give the porters five hundred dirhems from his purse, so they should carry it forth and cast it without the city, for that the smell of it was noisome. So his friend said to him, ‘How often did I tell thee thou hadst no luck in wheat? But thou wouldst not give ear to my speech, and now it behoveth thee to go to the astrologer and question him of thy star.’ Accordingly the merchant betook himself to the astrologer and questioned him of his star, and the astrologer said to him, ‘Thy star is unpropitious. Put not thy hand to any business, for thou wilt not prosper therein.’ However, he paid no heed to the astrologer’s words and said in himself, ‘If I do my occasion, I am not afraid of aught.’ Then he took the other part of his money, after he had spent therefrom three years, and built [therewith] a ship, which he loaded with all that seemed good to him and all that was with him and embarked on the sea, so he might travel.

The ship tarried with him some days, till he should be certified what he would do, and he said, ‘I will enquire of the merchants what this merchandise profiteth and in what country it lacketh and how much is the gain thereon.’ [So he questioned them and] they directed him to a far country, where his dirhem should profit a hundredfold. Accordingly, he set sail and steered for the land in question; but, as he went, there blew on him a tempestuous wind and the ship foundered. The merchant saved himself on a plank and the wind cast him up, naked as he was, on the sea-shore, hard by a town there. So he praised God and gave Him thanks for his preservation; then, seeing a great village hard by, he betook himself thither and saw, seated therein, a very old man, whom he acquainted with his case and that which had betided him. The old man grieved sore for him, when he heard his story, and set food before him. So he ate and the old man said to him, ‘Abide here with me, so I may make thee my steward and factor over a farm I have here, and thou shall have of me five dirhems a day.’ ‘God make fair thy reward,’ answered the merchant, ‘and requite thee with benefits!’

So he abode in this employ, till he had sowed and reaped and threshed and winnowed, and all was sheer in his hand and the owner appointed neither inspector nor overseer, but relied altogether upon him. Then he bethought himself and said, ‘*I** misdoubt me the owner of this grain will not give me my due; so I were better take of it, after the measure of my hire; and if he give me my due, I will restore him that which I have taken.’ So he took of the grain, after the measure of that which fell to him, and hid it in a privy place. Then he carried the rest to the old man and meted it out to him, and he said to him, ‘Come, take [of the grain, after the measure of] thy hire, for which I agreed with thee, and sell it and buy with the price clothes and what not else; and though thou abide with me half a score years, yet shall thou still have this wage and I will acquit it to thee thus.’ Quoth the merchant in himself, ‘Indeed, I have done a foul thing in that I look it without his leave.’

Then he went to fetch that which he had hidden of the grain, but found it not and returned, perplexed and sorrowful, to the old man, who said to him, ‘What aileth thee to be sorrowful?’ And he answered, ‘Methought thou wouldst not pay me my due; so I took of the grain, after the measure of my hire; and now thou hast paid me my due and I went to bring back to thee that which I had hidden from thee, but found it gone, for those who had happened upon it had stolen it.' The old man was wroth, when he heard this, and said to the merchant, 'There is no device [can cope] with ill luck! I had given thee this, but, of the sorriness of thy luck and thy fortune, thou hast done this deed, O oppressor of thine own self! Thou deemedst I would not acquit thee thy wage; but, by Allah, nevermore will I give thee aught.' And he drove him away from him.

So the merchant went forth, afflicted, sorrowful, weeping, [and wandered on along the sea-shore], till he came to a sort of divers diving in the sea for pearls. They saw him weeping and mourning and said to him, 'What is thy case and what maketh thee weep?' So he acquainted them with his history, from first to last, whereby they knew him and said to him, 'Art thou [such an one] son of such an one?' 'Yes,' answered he; whereupon they condoled with him and wept sore for him and said to him, 'Abide here till we dive for thy luck this next time and whatsoever betideth us shall be between us and thee.' Accordingly, they dived and brought up ten oysters, in each two great pearls; whereat they marvelled and said to him, 'By Allah, thy luck hath returned and thy good star is in the ascendant!' Then they gave him ten pearls and said to him, 'Sell two of them and make them thy capital [whereon to trade]; and hide the rest against the time of thy straitness.' So he took them, joyful and contented, and addressed himself to sew eight of them in his gown, keeping the two others in his mouth; but a thief saw him and went and advertised his mates of him; whereupon they gathered together upon him and took his gown and departed from him. When they were gone away, he arose, saying, 'These two pearls [in my mouth] will suffice me,' and made for the [nearest] city, where he brought out the pearls [and repairing to the jewel- market, gave them to the broker], that he might sell them.

Now, as destiny would have it, a certain jeweller of the town had been robbed of ten pearls, like unto those which were with the merchant; so, when he saw the two pearls in the broker's hand, he said to him, 'To whom do these pearls belong?' and the broker answered, 'To yonder man.' [The jeweller looked at the merchant and] seeing him in sorry case and clad in tattered clothes, misdoubted of him and said to him (purposing to surprise him into confession), ‘Where are the other eight pearls?’ The merchant thought he asked him of those which were in the gown and answered, ‘The thieves stole them from me.’ When the jeweller heard his reply, he doubted not but that it was he who had taken his good; so he laid hold of him and haling him before the chief of the police, said to him, ‘This is the man who stole my pearls: I have found two of them upon him and he confesseth to the other eight.’

Now the magistrate knew of the theft of the pearls; so he bade clap the merchant in prison. Accordingly they imprisoned him and flogged him, and he abode in the prison a whole year, till, by the ordinance of God the Most High, the Master of Police arrested one of the divers aforesaid and imprisoned him in the prison where the merchant lay. He saw the latter and knowing him, questioned him of his case; whereupon he told them his story and that which had befallen him, and the diver marvelled at the sorriness of his luck. So, when he came forth of the prison, he acquainted the Sultan with the merchant’s case and told him that it was he who had given him the pearls. The Sultan bade bring him forth of the prison and questioned him of his story, whereupon he told him all that had befallen him and the Sultan pitied him and assigned him a lodging in his own palace, together with an allowance for his living.

Now the lodging in question adjoined the king’s house, and whilst the merchant was rejoicing in this and saying, ‘Verily, my luck hath returned and I shall live in this king’s shadow the rest of my life,’ he espied an opening walled up with stones and clay. So he pulled out the stones and clearing away the earth from the opening, found that it was a window giving upon the lodging of the king’s women. When he saw this, he was affrighted and rising in haste, fetched clay and stopped it up again. But one of the eunuchs saw him and misdoubting of him, repaired to the Sultan and told him of this. So he came and seeing the stones pulled out, was wroth with the merchant and said to him, ‘Is this my recompense from thee, that thou seekest to violate my harem?’ And he bade pluck out his eyes. So they did as he commanded and the merchant took his eyes in his hand and said, ‘How long [wilt thou afflict me], O star of ill-omen? First my wealth and now my life!’ And he bewailed himself, saying, ‘Endeavour profiteth me nought against evil fortune. The Compassionate aided me not and endeavour was useless.’

On like wise, O king,” continued the youth, “whilst fortune was favourable to me, all that I did came to good; but now that it is grown contrary to me, everything turneth against me.”

When the youth had made an end of his story, the king’s anger subsided a little and he said, “Restore him to the prison, for the day draweth to an end, and tomorrow we will took into his affair.”

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OF LOOKING TO THE ISSUES OF AFFAIRS.

When it was the second day, the second of the king's viziers, whose name was Beheroun, came in to him and said, "God advance the king! This that yonder youth hath done is a grave matter and a foul deed and a heinous against the household of the king." So Azadbekht bade fetch the youth, because of the saying of the vizier; and when he came into his presence, he said to him, "Out on thee, O youth! Needs must I slay thee by the worst of deaths, for indeed thou hast committed a grave crime, and I will make thee a warning to the folk." "O king," answered the youth, "hasten not, for the looking to the issues of affairs is a pillar of the realm and [a cause of] continuance and sure stablishment for the kingship. Whoso looketh not to the issues of affairs, there befalleth him that which befell the merchant, and whoso looketh to the issues of affairs, there betideth him of joyance that which betided the merchant's son." "And what is the story of the merchant and his son?" asked the king. "O king," answered the youth,

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Story of the Merchant and His Sons.

“There was once a man, a merchant, who had a wife and abundant wealth. He set out one day on a journey with merchandise, leaving his wife big with child, and said to her, ‘If it be the will of God the Most High, I will return before the birth of the child.’ Then he took leave of her and setting out, journeyed from country to country till he came to the court of one of the kings and foregathered with him. Now this king was in need of one who should order his affairs and those of his kingdom and seeing the merchant well-bred and intelligent, he charged him abide with him and entreated him with honour and munificence. After awhile, he sought of the king leave to go to his own house, but the latter would not consent to this; whereupon he said to him, ‘O king, suffer me go and see my children and come again.’ So he gave him leave for this and took surety of him for his return. Moreover, he gave him a purse, wherein were a thousand gold dinars, and the merchant embarked in a ship and set sail, intending for his own country.

Meanwhile, news came to his wife that her husband had taken service with King Such-an-one; so she arose and taking her two sons, (for she had given birth to twin boys in his absence,) set out for those parts. As fate would have it, they happened upon an island and her husband came thither that very night in the ship. [When the woman heard of the coming of the ship], she said to her children, ‘This ship cometh from the country where your father is; so go ye to the sea-shore, that ye may enquire of him.’ So they repaired to the sea-shore and [going up into the ship], fell to playing about it and occupied themselves with their play till the evening.

Now the merchant their father lay asleep in the ship, and the crying of the boys troubled him; so he rose to call out to them [and silence them] and let the purse [with the thousand dinars therein] fall among the bales of merchandise. He sought for it and finding it not, buffeted his head and seized upon the boys, saying, ‘None took the purse but you. Ye were playing about the bales, so ye might steal somewhat, and there was none here but you.’ Then he took a staff and laying hold of the children, fell to beating them and flogging them, whilst they wept, and the sailors came round about them and said, ‘The boys of this island are all thieves and robbers.’ Then, of the greatness of the merchant’s wrath, he swore that, if they brought not out the purse, he would drown them in the sea; so when [by reason of their denial] his oath became binding upon him, he took the two boys and lashing them [each] to a bundle of reeds, cast them into the sea.

Presently, the mother of the two boys, finding that they tarried from her, went searching for them, till she came to the ship and fell to saying, ‘Who hath seen two boys of mine? Their fashion is thus and thus and their age thus and thus.’ When they heard her words, they said, ‘This is the description of the two boys who were drowned in the sea but now.’ Their mother heard and fell to calling on them and saying, ‘Alas, my anguish for your loss, O my sons! Where was the eye of your father this day, that it might have seen you?’ Then one of the crew questioned her, saying, ‘Whose wife art thou?’ And she answered, ‘I am the wife of such an one the merchant. I was on my way to him, and there hath befallen me this calamity.’ When the merchant heard her speech, he knew her and rising to his feet, rent his clothes and buffeted his head and said to his wife, ‘By Allah, I have destroyed my children with mine own hand! This is the end of whoso looketh not to the issues of affairs.’ Then he fell a-wailing and weeping over them, he and his wife, and he said, ‘By Allah, I shall have no ease of my life, till I light upon news of them!’ And he betook himself to going round about the sea, in quest of them, but found them not.

Meanwhile, the wind carried the two children [out to sea and thence driving them] towards the land, cast them up on the sea-shore. As for one of them, a company of the guards of the king of those parts found him and carried him to their master, who marvelled at him with an exceeding wonderment and adopted him to his son, giving out to the folk that he was his [very] son, whom he had hidden, of his love for him. So the folk rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy, for the king’s sake, and the latter appointed him his heir-apparent and the inheritor of his kingdom. On this wise, a number of years passed, till the king died and they crowned the youth king in his room. So he sat down on the throne of his kingship and his estate flourished and his affairs prospered.

Meanwhile, his father and mother had gone round about all the islands of the sea in quest of him and his brother, hoping that the sea might have cast them up, but found no trace of them; so they despaired of finding them and took up their abode in one of the islands. One day, the merchant, being in the market, saw a broker, and in his hand a boy he was calling for sale, and said in himself, 'I will buy yonder boy, so I may console myself with him for my sons.' So he bought him and carried him to his house; and when his wife saw him, she cried out and said, 'By Allah, this is my son!' So his father and mother rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy and questioned him of his brother; but he answered, 'The sea parted us and I knew not what became of him.' Therewith his father and mother consoled themselves with him and on this wise a number of years passed.

Now the merchant and his wife had taken up their abode in a city in the land whereof their [other] son was king, and when the boy [whom they had found] grew up, his father assigned unto him merchandise, so he might travel therewith. So he set out and entered the city wherein his brother was king. News reached the latter that there was a merchant come thither with merchandise befitting kings. So he sent for him and the young merchant obeyed the summons and going in to him, sat down before him. Neither of them knew the other; but blood stirred between them and the king said to the young merchant, 'I desire of thee that thou abide with me and I will exalt thy station and give thee all that thou desirest and cravest.' So he abode with him awhile, quitting him not; and when he saw that he would not suffer him to depart from him, he sent to his father and mother and bade them remove thither to him. So they addressed them to remove to that island, and their son increased still in honour with the king, albeit he knew not that he was his brother.

It chanced one night that the king sallied forth without the city and drank and the wine got the mastery of him and he became drunken. So, of the youth's fearfulness for him, he said, 'I will keep watch myself over the king this night, seeing that he deserveth this from me, for that which he hath wrought with me of kindnesses.' So he arose forthright and drawing his sword, stationed himself at the door of the king's pavilion. Now one of the royal servants saw him standing there, with the drawn sword in his hand, and he was of those who envied him his favour with the king; so he said to him, 'Why dost thou on this wise at this season and in the like of this place?' Quoth the youth, 'I am keeping watch over the king myself, in requital of his bounties to me.'

The servant said no more to him, but, when it was morning, he acquainted a number of the king's servants with this and they said, 'This is an opportunity for us. Come let us assemble together and acquaint the king with this, so the young merchant may lose favour with him and he rid us of him and we be at rest from him.' So they assembled together and going in to the king, said to him, 'We have a warning we would give thee.' Quoth he, 'And what is your warning?' And they said, 'Yonder youth, the merchant, whom thou hast taken into favour and whose rank thou hast exalted above the chiefs of the people of thy household, we saw yesterday draw his sword and offer to fall upon thee, so he might slay thee.' When the king heard this, his colour changed and he said to them, 'Have ye proof of this?' Quoth they, 'What proof wouldst thou have? If thou desire this, feign thyself drunken again this night and lie down, as if asleep, and watch him, and thou wilt see with thine eyes all that we have named to thee.'

Then they went to the youth and said to him, 'Know that the king thanketh thee for thy dealing yesternight and exceedeth in [praise of] thy good deed;' and they prompted him to do the like again. So, when the next night came, the king abode on wake; watching the youth; and as for the latter, he went to the door of the pavilion and drawing his sword, stood in the doorway. When the king saw him do thus, he was sore disquieted and bade seize him and said to him, 'Is this my requital from thee? I showed thee favour more than any else and thou wouldst do with me this vile deed.' Then arose two of the king's servants and said to him, 'O our lord, if thou command it, we will strike off his head.' But the king said, 'Haste in slaying is a vile thing, for it is a grave matter; the quick we can slay, but the slain we cannot quicken, and needs must we look to the issue of affairs. The slaying of this [youth] will not escape us.' Therewith he bade imprison him, whilst he himself returned [to the city] and despatching his occasions, went forth to the chase.

Then he returned to the city and forgot the youth; so the servants went in to him and said to him, ‘O king, if thou keep silence concerning yonder youth, who would have slain thee, all thy servants will presume upon thee, and indeed the folk talk of this matter.’ With this the king waxed wroth and saying, ‘Fetch him hither,’ commanded the headsman to strike off his head. So they [brought the youth and] bound his eyes; and the headsman stood at his head and said to the king, ‘By thy leave, O my lord, I will strike off his head.’ But the king said, ‘Stay, till I look into his affair. Needs must I put him to death and the slaying of him will not escape [me].’ So he restored him to the prison and there he abode till it should be the king’s will to put him to death.

Presently, his father and his mother heard of the matter; whereupon the former arose and going up to the place, wrote a letter and [presented it to the king, who] read it, and behold, therein was written, saying, ‘Have pity on me, so may God have pity on thee, and hasten not in the slaughter [of my son]; for indeed I acted hastily in a certain affair and drowned his brother in the sea, and to this day I drink the cup of his anguish. If thou must needs kill him, kill me in his stead.’ Therewith the old merchant prostrated himself before the king and wept; and the latter said to him, ‘Tell me thy story.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered the merchant, ‘this youth had a brother and I [in my haste] cast them both into the sea.’ And he related to him his story from first to last, whereupon the king cried out with an exceeding great cry and casting himself down from the throne, embraced his father and brother and said to the former, ‘By Allah, thou art my very father and this is my brother and thy wife is our mother.’ And they abode weeping, all three.

Then the king acquainted the people [of his court] with the matter and said to them,’ O folk, how deem ye of my looking to the issues of affairs?’ And they all marvelled at his wisdom and foresight. Then he turned to his father and said to him, ‘Hadst thou looked to the issue of thine affair and dealt deliberately in that which thou didst, there had not betided thee this repentance and grief all this time.’ Then he let bring his mother and they rejoiced in each other and lived all their days in joy and gladness. What then,” continued the young treasurer, “is more grievous than the lack of looking to the issues of affairs? Wherefore hasten thou not in the slaying of me, lest repentance betide thee and sore concern.”

When the king heard this, he said, “Restore him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his affair; for that deliberation in affairs is advisable and the slaughter of this [youth] shall not escape [us].”

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The Third Day.

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OF THE ADVANTAGES OF PATIENCE.

When it was the third day, the third vizier came in to the king and said to him, “O king, delay not the affair of this youth, for that his deed hath caused us fall into the mouths of the folk, and it behoveth that thou slay him presently, so the talk may be estopped from us and it be not said, ‘The king saw on his bed a man with his wife and spared him.’”* The king was chagrined by this speech and bade bring the youth. So they brought him in shackles, and indeed the king’s anger was roused against him by the speech of the vizier and he was troubled; so he said to him, “O base of origin, thou hast dishonoured us and marred our repute, and needs must I do away thy life from the world.” Quoth the youth, “O king, make use of patience in all thine affairs, so wilt thou attain thy desire, for that God the Most High hath appointed the issue of patience [to be] in abounding good, and indeed by patience Abou Sabir ascended from the pit and sat down upon the throne.” “Who was Abou Sabir,” asked the king, “and what is his story?” And the youth answered, saying, “O king,

STORY OF ABOU SABIR.

There was once a man, a headman [of a village], by name Abou Sabir, and he had much cattle and a fair wife, who had borne him two sons. They abode in a certain village and there used to come thither a lion and devour Abou Sabir's cattle, so that the most part thereof was wasted and his wife said to him one day, 'This lion hath wasted the most part of our cattle. Arise, mount thy horse and take thy men and do thine endeavour to kill him, so we may be at rest from him.' But Abou Sabir said, 'Have patience, O woman, for the issue of patience is praised. This lion it is that transgresseth against us, and the transgressor, needs must Allah destroy him. Indeed, it is our patience that shall slay him, and he that doth evil, needs must it revert upon him.' A little after, the king went forth one day to hunt and falling in with the lion, he and his troops, gave chase to him and ceased not [to follow] after him till they slew him. This came to Abou Sabir's knowledge and he said to his wife, 'Said I not to thee, O woman, that whoso doth evil, it shall revert upon him? Belike, if I had sought to slay the lion myself, I had not availed against him, and this is the issue of patience.'

It befell, after this, that a man was slain in Abou Sabir's village; wherefore the Sultan caused plunder the village, and they plundered the headman's goods with the rest So his wife said to him, 'All the Sultan's officers know thee; so do thou prefer thy plaint to the king, that he may cause thy beasts to be restored to thee.' But he said to her, 'O woman, said I not to thee that he who doth evil shall suffer it? Indeed, the king hath done evil, and he shall suffer [the consequences of] his deed, for whoso taketh the goods of the folk, needs must his goods be taken.' A man of his neighbours heard his speech, and he was an envier of his; so he went to the Sultan and acquainted him therewith, whereupon he sent and plundered all [the rest of] his goods and drove him forth from the village, and his wife [and children] with him. So they went wandering in the desert and his wife said to him, 'All that hath befallen us cometh of thy slothfulness in affairs and thy default.' But he said to her, 'Have patience, for the issue of patience is good.'

Then they went on a little, and thieves met them and despoiling them of that which remained with them, stripped them of their raiment and took the children from them; whereupon the woman wept and said to her husband, ‘O man, put away from thee this folly and arise, let us follow the thieves, so haply they may have compassion on us and restore the children to us.’ ‘O woman,’ answered he, ‘have patience, for he who doth evil shall be requited with evil and his wickedness shall revert upon him. Were I to follow them, most like one of them would take his sword and smite off my head and slay me; but have patience, for the issue of patience is praised.’ Then they fared on till they drew near a village in the land of Kirman, and by it a river of water. So he said to his wife, ‘Abide thou here, whilst I enter the village and look us out a place wherein we may take up our lodging.’ And he left her by the water and entered the village.

Presently, up came a horseman in quest of water, so he might water his horse. He saw the woman and she was pleasing in his sight; so he said to her, ‘Arise, mount with me and I will take thee to wife and entreat thee kindly.’ Quoth she, ‘Spare me, so may God spare thee! Indeed, I have a husband.’ But he drew his sword and said to her, ‘An thou obey me not, I will smite thee and kill thee.’ When she saw his malice, she wrote on the ground in the sand with her finger, saying, ‘O Abou Sabir, thou hast not ceased to be patient, till thy wealth is gone from thee and thy children and [now] thy wife, who was more precious in thy sight than everything and than all thy wealth, and indeed thou abidest in thy sorrow all thy life long, so thou mayst see what thy patience will profit thee.’ Then the horseman took her, and setting her behind him, went his way.

As for Abou Sabir, when he returned, he saw not his wife and read what was written on the ground, wherefore he wept and sat [awhile] sorrowing. Then said he to himself, ‘O Abou Sabir, it behoveth thee to be patient, for belike there shall betide [thee] an affair yet sorer than this and more grievous;’ and he went forth wandering at a venture, like to the love-distraught, the madman, till he came to a sort of labourers working upon the palace of the king, by way of forced labour. When [the overseers] saw him, they laid hold of him and said to him, ‘Work thou with these folk at the palace of the king; else will we imprison thee for life.’ So he fell to working with them as a labourer and every day they gave him a cake of bread. He wrought with them a month’s space, till it chanced that one of the labourers mounted a ladder and falling, broke his leg; whereupon he cried out and wept. Quoth Abou Sabir to him, ‘Have patience and weep not; for thou shall find ease in thy patience.’ But the man said to him, ‘How long shall I have patience?’ And he answered, saying, ‘Patience bringeth a man forth of the bottom of the pit and seateth him on the throne of the kingdom.’

Now the king was seated at the lattice, hearkening to their talk, and Abou Sabir’s words angered him; so he bade bring him before him and they brought him forthright. Now there was in the king’s palace an underground dungeon and therein a vast deep pit, into which the king caused cast Abou Sabir, saying to him, ‘O lackwit, now shall we see how thou wilt come forth of the pit to the throne of the kingdom.’ Then he used to come and stand at the mouth of the pit and say, ‘O lackwit, O Abou Sabir, I see thee not come forth of the pit and sit down on the king’s throne!’ And he assigned him each day two cakes of bread, whilst Abou Sabir held his peace and spoke not, but bore with patience that which betided him.

Now the king had a brother, whom he had imprisoned in that pit of old time, and he had died [there]; but the folk of the realm thought that he was alive, and when his [supposed] imprisonment grew long, the king’s officers used to talk of this and of the tyranny of the king, and the report spread abroad that the king was a tyrant, wherefore they fell upon him one day and slew him. Then they sought the well and brought out Abou Sabir therefrom, deeming him the king’s brother, for that he was the nearest of folk to him [in favour] and the likest, and he had been long in the prison. So they doubted not but that he was the prince in question and said to him, ‘Reign thou in thy brother’s room, for we have slain him and thou art king in his stead.’ But Abou Sabir was silent and spoke not a word; and he knew that this was the issue of his patience. Then he arose and sitting down on the king’s throne, donned the royal raiment and discovered justice and equity and the affairs [of the realm] prospered [in his hand]; wherefore the folk obeyed him and the people inclined to him and many were his troops.

Now the king, who had plundered Abou Sabir[‘s goods] and driven him forth of his village, had an enemy; and the latter took horse against him and overcame him and captured his [capital] city; wherefore he addressed himself to flight and came to Abou Sabir’s city, craving protection of him and seeking that he should succour him. He knew not that the king of the city was the headman whom he had despoiled; so he presented himself before him and made complaint to him; but Abou Sabir knew him and said to him, ‘This is somewhat of the issue of patience. God the Most High hath given me power over thee.’ Then he bade his guards plunder the [unjust] king and his attendants; so they plundered them and stripping them of their clothes, put them forth of his country. When Abou Sabir’s troops saw this, they marvelled and said, ‘What is this deed that the king doth? There cometh a king to him, craving protection, and he despoileth him! This is not of the fashion of kings.’ But they dared not [be]speak [him] of this.

After this, news came to the king of robbers in his land; so he set out in quest of them and ceased not to follow after them, till he seized on them all, and behold, they were the [very] thieves who had despoiled him [and his wife] by the way and taken his children. So he bade bring them before him, and when they came into his presence, he questioned them, saying, ‘Where are the two boys ye took on such a day?’ Quoth they, ‘They are with us and we will present them to our lord the king for slaves to serve him and give him wealth galore that we have gotten together and divest ourselves of all that we possess and repent from sin and fight in thy service.’ Abou Sabir, however, paid no heed to their speech, but took all their good and bade put them all to death. Moreover, he took the two boys and rejoiced in them with an exceeding joy, whereat the troops murmured among themselves, saying, ‘Verily, this is a greater tyrant than his brother! There come to him a sort of robbers and seek to repent and proffer two boys [by way of peace-offering], and he taketh the two boys and all their good and slayeth them!’

After this came the horseman, who had taken Abou Sabir’s wife, and complained of her to the king that she would not give him possession of herself, avouching that she was his wife. The king bade bring her before him, that he might hear her speech and pronounce judgment upon her. So the horseman came with her before him, and when the king saw her, he knew her and taking her from her ravisher, bade put the latter to death. Then he became aware of the troops, that they murmured against him and spoke of him as a tyrant; so he turned to his officers and viziers and said to them, ‘As for me, by God the Great, I am not the king’s brother! Nay, I am but one whom the king imprisoned upon a word he heard from me and used every day to taunt me therewith. Ye think that I am the king’s brother; but I am Abou Sabir and God hath given me the kingship in virtue of my patience. As for the king who sought protection of me and I despoiled him, it was he who first wronged me, for that he despoiled me aforetime and drove me forth of my native land and banished me, without due [cause]; wherefore I requited him with that which he had done to me, in the way of lawful vengeance. As for the thieves who proffered repentance, there was no repentance for them with me, for that they began upon me with foul [dealing] and waylaid me by the road and despoiled me and took my good and my sons. Now these two boys, that I took of them and whom ye deemed slaves, are my very sons; so I avenged myself on the thieves of that which they did with me aforetime and requited them with equity. As for the horseman whom I slew, the woman I took from him was my wife and he took her by force, but God the Most High hath restored her [to me]; so this was my right, and my deed that I have done was just, albeit ye, [judging] by the outward of the matter, deemed that I had done this by way of tyranny.’ When the folk heard this, they marvelled and fell prostrate before him; and they redoubled in esteem for him and exceeding affection and excused themselves to him, marvelling at that which God had done with him and how He had given him the kingship by reason of his longsuffering and his patience and how he had raised himself by his patience from the bottom of the pit to the throne of the kingdom, what while God cast down the [late] king from the throne into the pit. Then Abou Sabir foregathered with his wife and said to her, ‘How deemest thou of the fruit of patience and its sweetness and the fruit of haste and its bitterness? Verily, all that a man doth of good and evil, he shall assuredly abide.’ On like wise, O king,” continued the young treasurer, “it behoveth thee to practise patience, whenas it is possible to thee, for that patience is of the fashion of the noble, and it is the chiefest of their reliance, especially for kings."

When the king heard this from the youth, his anger subsided; so he bade restore him to the prison, and the folk dispersed that day.

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The Fourth Day.

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OF THE ILL EFFECTS OF PRECIPITATION.

When it was the fourth day, the fourth vizier, whose name was Zoushad, made his appearance and prostrating himself to the king, said to him, “O king, suffer not the talk of yonder youth to delude thee, for that he is not a truth-teller. So long as he abideth on life, the folk will not give over talking nor will thy heart cease to be occupied with him.” “By Allah,” cried the king, “thou sayst sooth and I will cause fetch him this day and slay him before me.” Then he commanded to bring the youth; so they brought him in shackles and he said to him, “Out on thee! Thinkest thou to appease my heart with thy prate, whereby the days are spent in talk? I mean to slay thee this day and be quit of thee.” “O king,” answered the youth, “it is in thy power to slay me whensoever thou wilt, but haste is of the fashion of the base and patience of that of the noble. If thou put me to death, thou wilt repent, and if thou desire to bring me back to life, thou wilt not be able thereunto. Indeed, whoso acteth hastily in an affair, there befalleth him what befell Bihzad, son of the king.” Quoth the king, “And what is his story?” “O king,” replied the young treasurer,

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STORY OF PRINCE BIHZAD.

“There was once, of old time, a king and he had a son [named Bihzad], there was not in his day a goodlier than he and he loved to consort with the folk and to sit with the merchants and converse with them. One day, as he sat in an assembly, amongst a number of folk, he heard them talking of his own goodliness and grace and saying, ‘There is not in his time a goodlier than he.’ But one of the company said, ‘Indeed, the daughter of King Such-an-one is handsomer than he.’ When Bihzad heard this saying, his reason fled and his heart fluttered and he called the last speaker and said to him, ‘Repeat to me that which thou saidst and tell me the truth concerning her whom thou avouchest to be handsomer than I and whose daughter she is.’ Quoth the man, ‘She is the daughter of King Such-an-one;’ whereupon Bihzad’s heart clave to her and his colour changed.

The news reached his father, who said to him, ‘O my son, this damsel to whom thy heart cleaveth is at thy commandment and we have power over her; so wait till I demand her [in marriage] for thee.’ But the prince said, ‘I will not wait.’ So his father hastened in the matter and sent to demand her of her father, who required of him a hundred thousand dinars to his daughter’s dowry. Quoth Bihzad’s father, ‘So be it,’ and paid down what was in his treasuries, and there remained to his charge but a little of the dower. So he said to his son, ‘Have patience, O my son, till we gather together the rest of the money and send to fetch her to thee, for that she is become thine.’ Therewith the prince waxed exceeding wroth and said, ‘I will not have patience;’ so he took his sword and his spear and mounting his horse, went forth and fell to stopping the way, [so haply that he might win what lacked of the dowry].

It chanced one day that he fell in upon a company of folk and they overcame him by dint of numbers and taking him prisoner, pinioned him and carried him to the lord of that country. The latter saw his fashion and grace and misdoubting of him, said, ‘This is no robber’s favour. Tell me truly, O youth, who thou art.’ Bihzad thought shame to acquaint him with his condition and chose rather death for himself; so he answered, ‘I am nought but a thief and a bandit.’

Quoth the king, 'It behoveth us not to act hastily in the matter of this youth, but that we look into his affair, for that haste still engendereth repentance.' So he imprisoned him in his palace and assigned him one who should serve him.

Meanwhile, the news spread abroad that Bihzad, son of the king, was lost, whereupon his father sent letters in quest of him [to all the kings and amongst others to him with whom he was imprisoned]. When the letter reached the latter, he praised God the Most High for that he had not anydele hastened in Bihzad's affair and letting bring him before himself, said to him, 'Art thou minded to destroy thyself?' Quoth Bihzad, '[I did this] for fear of reproach;' and the king said, 'An thou fear reproach, thou shouldst not practise haste [in that thou dost]; knowest thou not that the fruit of haste is repentance? If we had hasted, we also, like unto thee, we had repented.'

Then he conferred on him a dress of honour and engaged to him for the completion of the dowry and sent to his father, giving him the glad news and comforting his heart with [the tidings of] his son's safety; after which he said to Bihzad, Arise, O my son, and go to thy father.' 'O king,' rejoined the prince, 'complete thy kindness to me by [hastening] my going-in to my wife; for, if I go back to my father, till he send a messenger and he return, promising me, the time will be long.' The king laughed and marvelled at him and said to him, 'I fear for thee from this haste, lest thou come to shame and attain not thy desire.' Then he gave him wealth galore and wrote him letters, commending him to the father of the princess, and despatched him to them. When he drew near their country, the king came forth to meet him with the people of his realm and assigned him a handsome lodging and bade hasten the going-in of his daughter to him, in compliance with the other king's letter. Moreover, he advised the prince's father [of his son's coming] and they busied themselves with the affair of the damsel.

When it was the day of the going-in, Bihzad, of his haste and lack of patience, betook himself to the wall, which was between himself and the princess's lodging and in which there was a hole pierced, and looked, so he might see his bride, of his haste. But the bride's mother saw him and this was grievous to her; so she took from one of the servants two red-hot iron spits and thrust them into the hole through which the prince was looking. The spits ran into his eyes and put them out and he fell down aswoon and joyance was changed and became mourning and sore concern. See, then, O king," continued the youth, "the issue of the prince's haste and lack of deliberation, for indeed his haste bequeathed him long repentance and his joy was changed to mourning; and on like wise was it with the woman who hastened to put out his eyes and deliberated not. All this was the doing of haste; wherefore it behoveth the king not to be hasty in putting me to death, for that I am under the grasp of his hand, and what time soever thou desirest my slaughter, it shall not escape [thee]."

When the king heard this, his anger subsided and he said, "Carry him back to prison till to-morrow, to we may look into his affair."

The Fifth Day

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OF THE ISSUES OF GOOD AND EVIL ACTIONS.

When it was the fifth day, the fifth Vizier, whose name was Jehrbaur, came in to the king and prostrating himself before him, said, “O king, it behoveth thee, if thou see or hear that one look on thy house, that thou put out his eyes. How then should it be with him whom thou sawest midmost thy house and on thy very bed, and he suspected with thy harem, and not of thy lineage nor of thy kindred? Wherefore do thou away this reproach by putting him to death. Indeed, we do but urge thee unto this for the assurance of thine empire and of our zeal for thy loyal counselling and of our love to thee. How can it be lawful that this youth should live for a single hour?”

Therewith the king was filled with wrath and said, “Bring him forthright,” So they brought the youth before him, shackled, and the king said to him, “Out on thee! Thou hast sinned a great sin and the time of thy life hath been long; but needs must we put thee to death, for that there is for us no ease in thy life after this,” “O king,” answered he, “know that I, by Allah, am guiltless, and by reason of this I hope for life, for that he who is guiltless of offence goeth not in fear of punishment neither maketh great his mourning and his concern; but whoso hath sinned, needs must his sin be expiated upon him, though his life be prolonged, and it shall overtake him, even as it overtook Dadbin the king and his vizier.” “How was that?” asked Azadbekht, and the youth said,

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STORY OF KING DADBIN AND HIS VIZIERS.

“There was once a king in the land of Teberistan, by name Dadbin, and he had two viziers, called one Zourkhan and the other Kardan. The Vizier Zourkhan had a daughter, there was not in her time a handsomer than she nor yet a chaster nor a more pious, for she was a faster, a prayer and a worshipper of God the Most High, and her name was Arwa. Now Dadbin heard tell of her charms; so his heart clave to her and he called the vizier [her father] and said to him, ‘I desire of thee that thou marry me to thy daughter.’ Quoth Zourkhan, ‘Allow me to consult her, and if she consent, I will marry thee with her.’ And the king said, ‘Hasten unto this.’

So the vizier went in to his daughter and said to her, ‘O my daughter, the king seeketh thee of me and desireth to marry thee.’ ‘O my father,’ answered she ‘I desire not a husband and if thou wilt marry me, marry me not but with one who shall be below me in rank and I nobler than he, so he may not turn to other than myself nor lift his eyes upon me, and marry me not to one who is nobler than I, lest I be with him as a slave-girl and a serving-woman.’ So the vizier returned to the king and acquainted him with that which his daughter had said, whereat he redoubled in desire and love-liking for her and said to her father, ‘An thou marry me not to her of good grace, I will take her by force in thy despite.’ The vizier again betook himself to his daughter and repeated to her the king’s words, but she replied, ‘I desire not a husband.’ So he returned to the king and told him what she said, and he was wroth and threatened the vizier, whereupon the latter took his daughter and fled with her.

When this came to the king’s knowledge, he despatched troops in pursuit of Zourkhan, to stop the road upon him, whilst he himself went out and overtaking the vizier, smote him on the head with his mace and slew him. Then he took his daughter by force and returning to his dwelling-place, went in to her and married her. Arwa resigned herself with patience to that which betided her and committed her affair to God the Most High; and indeed she was used to serve Him day and night with a goodly service in the house of King Dabdin her husband.

It befell one day that the king had occasion to make a journey; so he called his Vizier Kardan and said to him, ‘I have a trust to commit to thy care, and it is yonder damsel, my wife, the daughter of the Vizier [Zourkhan], and I desire that thou keep her and guard her thyself, for that there is not in the world aught dearer to me than she.’ Quoth Kardan in himself, ‘Of a truth, the king honoureth me with an exceeding honour [in entrusting me] with this damsel.’ And he answered ‘With all my heart.’

When the king had departed on his journey, the vizier said in himself, ‘Needs must I look upon this damsel whom the king loveth with all this love.’ So he hid himself in a place, that he might look upon her, and saw her overpassing description; wherefore he was confounded at her and his wit was dazed and love got the mastery of him, so that he said to her, saying, ‘Have pity on me, for indeed I perish for the love of thee.’ She sent back to him, saying, ‘O vizier, thou art in the place of trust and confidence, so do not thou betray thy trust, but make thine inward like unto thine outward and occupy thyself with thy wife and that which is lawful to thee. As for this, it is lust and [women are all of] one taste. And if thou wilt not be forbidden from this talk, I will make thee a byword and a reproach among the folk.’ When the vizier heard her answer, he knew that she was chaste of soul and body; wherefore he repented with the utmost of repentance and feared for himself from the king and said, ‘Needs must I contrive a device wherewithal I may destroy her; else shall I be disgraced with the king.’

When the king returned from his journey, he questioned his vizier of the affairs of his kingdom and the latter answered, ‘All is well, O king, save a vile matter, which I have discovered here and wherewith I am ashamed to confront the king; but, if I hold my peace thereof, I fear lest other than I discover it and I [be deemed to] have played traitor to the king in the matter of my [duty of] loyal warning and my trust.’ Quoth Dabdin, ‘Speak, for thou art none other than a truth-teller, a trusty one, a loyal counsellor in that which thou sayest, undistrusted in aught.’ And the vizier said, ‘O king, this woman to whose love thy heart cleaveth and of whose piety thou talkest and her fasting and praying, I will make plain to thee that this is craft and guile.’ At this, the king was troubled and said, ‘What is to do?’

‘Know,’ answered the vizier, ‘that some days after thy departure, one came to me and said to me, “Come, O vizier, and look.” So I went to the door of the [queen’s] sleeping-chamber and beheld her sitting with Aboulkhair, her father’s servant, whom she favoureth, and she did with him what she did, and this is the manner of that which I saw and heard.’

When Dabdin heard this, he burnt with rage and said to one of his eunuchs, ‘Go and slay her in her chamber.’ But the eunuch said to him, ‘O king, may God prolong thy continuance! Indeed, the killing of her may not be at this time; but do thou bid one of thine eunuchs take her up on a camel and carry her to one of the trackless deserts and cast her down there; so, if she be at fault, God shall cause her to perish, and if she be innocent, He will deliver her, and the king shall be free from sin against her, for that this damsel is dear to thee and thou slewest her father by reason of thy love for her.’ Quoth the king, ‘By Allah, thou sayst sooth!’ Then he bade one of his eunuchs carry her on a camel to one of the far-off deserts and there leave her and go away, and he forbade [him] to prolong her torment. So he took her up and betaking himself with her to the desert, left her there without victual or water and returned, whereupon she made for one of the [sand-]hills and ranging stones before her [in the form of a prayer-niche], stood praying.

Now it chanced that a camel-driver, belonging to Kisra the king, lost certain camels and the king threatened him, if he found them not, that he would slay him. So he set out and plunged into the deserts till he came to the place where the damsel was and seeing her standing praying, waited till she had made an end of her prayer, when he went up to her and saluted her, saying, ‘Who art thou?’ Quoth she, ‘I am a handmaid of God.’ ‘What dost thou in this desolate place?’ asked he, and she said, ‘I serve God the Most High.’ When he saw her beauty and grace, he said to her, ‘Harkye! Do thou take me to husband and I will be tenderly solicitous over thee and use thee with exceeding compassion and I will further thee in obedience to God the Most High.’ But she answered, saying, ‘I have no need of marriage and I desire to abide here [alone] with my Lord and His service; but, if thou wouldst deal compassionately with me and further me in the obedience of God the Most High, carry me to a place where there is water and thou wilt have done me a kindness.'

So he carried her to a place wherein was running water and setting her down on the ground, left her and went away, marvelling at her. After he left her, he found his camels, by her blessing, and when he returned, King Kisra asked him, 'Hast thou found the camels?' ['Yes,' answered he] and acquainted him with the affair of the damsel and set out to him her beauty and grace; whereupon the king's heart clave to her and he mounted with a few men and betook himself to that place, where he found the damsel and was amazed at her, for that he saw her overpassing the description wherewith the camel-driver had described her to him. So he accosted her and said to her, 'I am King Kisra, greatest of the kings. Wilt thou not have me to husband?' Quoth she, 'What wilt thou do with me, O king, and I a woman abandoned in the desert?' And he answered, saying, 'Needs must this be, and if thou wilt not consent to me, I will take up my sojourn here and devote myself to God's service and thine and worship Him with thee.'

Then he bade set up for her a tent and another for himself, facing hers, so he might worship God with her, and fell to sending her food; and she said in herself, 'This is a king and it is not lawful for me that I suffer him forsake his subjects and his kingdom for my sake. So she said to the serving-woman, who used to bring her the food, 'Speak to the king, so he may return to his women, for he hath no need of me and I desire to abide in this place, so I may worship God the Most High therein.' The slave-girl returned to the king and told him this, whereupon he sent back to her, saying, 'I have no need of the kingship and I also desire to abide here and worship God with thee in this desert.' When she found this earnestness in him, she consented to his wishes and said, 'O king, I will consent unto thee in that which thou desirest and will be to thee a wife, but on condition that thou bring me Dadbin the king and his Vizier Kardan and his chamberlain and that they be present in thine assembly, so I may speak a word with them in thy presence, to the intent that thou mayest redouble in affection for me.' Quoth Kisra, 'And what is thine occasion unto this?' So she related to him her story from first to last, how she was the wife of Dadbin the king and how the latter's vizier had miscalled her honour.

When King Kisra heard this, he redoubled in loveliking for her and affection and said to her, ‘Do what thou wilt.’ So he let bring a litter and carrying her therein to his dwelling-place, married her and entreated her with the utmost honour. Then he sent a great army to King Dadbin and fetching him and his vizier and the chamberlain, caused bring them before him, unknowing what he purposed with them. Moreover, he caused set up for Arwa a pavilion in the courtyard of his palace and she entered therein and let down the curtain before herself. When the servants had set their seats and they had seated themselves, Arwa raised a corner of the curtain and said, ‘O Kardan, rise to thy feet, for it befitteth not that thou sit in the like of this assembly, before this mighty King Kisra.’ When the vizier heard these words, his heart quaked and his joints were loosened and of his fear, he rose to his feet. Then said she to him, ‘By the virtue of Him who hath made thee stand in this place of standing [up to judgment], and thou abject and humiliated, I conjure thee speak the truth and say what prompted thee to lie against me and cause me go forth from my house and from the hand of my husband and made thee practise thus against a man, a true believer, and slay him. This is no place wherein leasing availeth nor may prevarication be therein.’

When the vizier was ware that she was Arwa and heard her speech, he knew that it behoved him not to lie and that nought would avail him but truth-speaking; so he bowed [his head] to the ground and wept and said, ‘Whoso doth evil, needs must he abide it, though his day be prolonged. By Allah, I am he who hath sinned and transgressed, and nought prompted me unto this but fear and overmastering desire and the affliction written upon my forehead; and indeed this woman is pure and chaste and free from all fault.’ When King Dadbin heard this, he buffeted his face and said to his vizier, ‘God slay thee! It is thou that hast parted me and my wife and wronged me!’ But Kisra the king said to him, ‘God shall surely slay thee, for that thou hastenedst and lookedst not into thine affair and knewest not the guilty from the guiltless. Hadst thou wrought deliberately, the false had been made manifest to thee from the true; so where was thy judgment and thy sight?”

Then said he to Arwa, “What wilt thou that I do with them?” And she answered, saying, “Accomplish on them the ordinance of God the Most High; the slayer shall be slain and the transgressor transgressed against, even as he transgressed against us; yea, and the well-doer, good shall be done unto him, even as he did unto us." So she gave [her officers] commandment concerning Dadbin and they smote him on the head with a mace and slew him, and she said, "This is for the slaughter of my father." Then she bade set the vizier on a beast [and carry him] to the desert whither he had caused carry her [and leave him there without victual or water]; and she said to him, "An thou be guilty, thou shalt abide [the punishment of] thy guilt and perish of hunger and thirst in the desert; but, if there be no guilt in thee, thou shalt be delivered, even as I was delivered."

As for the eunuch, the chamberlain, who had counselled King Dadbin [not to slay her, but] to [cause] carry her to the desert [and there abandon her], she bestowed on him a sumptuous dress of honour and said to him, "The like of thee it behoveth kings to hold in favour and set in high place, for that thou spokest loyally and well, and a man is still requited according to his deed." And Kisra the king invested him with the governance of one of the provinces of his empire. Know, therefore, O king," continued the youth, "that whoso doth good is requited therewith and he who is guiltless of sin and reproach feareth not the issue of his affair. And I, O king, am free from guilt, wherefore I trust in God that He will show forth the truth and vouchsafe me the victory over enemies and enviers."

When the king heard this, his wrath subsided and he said, "Carry him back to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his affair."

The Sixth Day

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OF TRUST IN GOD.

When it was the sixth day, the viziers’ wrath redoubled, for that they had not compassed their desire of the youth and they feared for themselves from the king; so three of them went in to him and prostrating themselves before him, said to him, “O king, indeed we are loyal counsellors to thy dignity and tenderly solicitous for thee. Verily, thou persistest long in sparing this youth alive and we know not what is thine advantage therein. Every day findeth him yet on life and the talk redoubleth suspicions on thee; so do thou put him to death, that the talk may be made an end of.” When the king heard this speech, he said, “By Allah, indeed, ye say sooth and speak rightly!” Then he let bring the young treasurer and said to him, “How long shall I look into thine affair and find no helper for thee and see them all athirst for thy blood?”

“O king,” answered the youth, “I hope for succour only from God, not from created beings: if He aid me, none can avail to harm me, and if He be with me and on my side, because of the truth, who is it I shall fear, because of falsehood? Indeed, I have made my intent with God a pure and sincere intent and have severed my expectation from the help of the creature; and whoso seeketh help [of God] findeth of his desire that which Bekhtzeman found.” Quoth the king, “Who was Bekhtzeman and what is his story?” “O king,” replied the youth,

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STORY OF KING BEKHTZEMAN.

“There was once a king of the kings, whose name was Bekhtzeman, and he was a great eater and drinker and carouser. Now enemies of his made their appearance in certain parts of his realm and threatened him; and one of his friends said to him, ‘O king, the enemy maketh for thee: be on thy guard against him.’ Quoth Bekhtzeman, ‘I reck not of him, for that I have arms and wealth and men and am not afraid of aught.’ Then said his friends to him, ‘Seek aid of God, O king, for He will help thee more than thy wealth and thine arms and thy men.’ But he paid no heed to the speech of his loyal counsellors, and presently the enemy came upon him and waged war upon him and got the victory over him and his trust in other than God the Most High profited him nought. So he fled from before him and seeking one of the kings, said to him, ‘I come to thee and lay hold upon thy skirts and take refuge with thee, so thou mayst help me against mine enemy.’

The king gave him money and men and troops galore and Bekhtzeman said in himself, ‘Now am I fortified with this army and needs must I conquer my enemy therewith and overcome him;’ but he said not, ‘With the aid of God the Most High.’ So his enemy met him and overcame him again and he was defeated and put to the rout and fled at a venture. His troops were dispersed from him and his money lost and the enemy followed after him. So he sought the sea and passing over to the other side, saw a great city and therein a mighty citadel. He asked the name of the city and to whom it belonged and they said to him, ‘It belongeth to Khedidan the king.’ So he fared on till he came to the king’s palace and concealing his condition, passed himself off for a horseman and sought service with King Khedidan, who attached him to his household and entreated him with honour; but his heart still clave to his country and his home.

Presently, it chanced that an enemy attacked King Khedidan; so he sent out his troops to him and made Bekhtzeman head of the army. Then they went forth to the field and Khedidan also came forth and ranged his troops and took the spear and sallied out in person and fought a sore battle and overcame his enemy, who fled, he and his troops, ignominiously. When the king and his army returned in triumph, Bekhtzeman said to him, ‘Harkye, O king! Meseemeth this is a strange thing of thee that thou art compassed about with this vast army, yet dost thou apply thyself in person to battle and adventurest thyself.’ Quoth the king, ‘Dost thou call thyself a cavalier and a man of learning and deemest that victory is in abundance of troops?’ ‘Ay,’ answered Bekhtzeman; ‘that is indeed my belief.’ And Khedidan said, ‘By Allah, then, thou errest in this thy belief! Woe and again woe to him whose trust is in other than God! Indeed, this army is appointed only for adornment and majesty, and victory is from God alone. I too, O Bekhtzeman, believed aforetime that victory was in the multitude of men, and an enemy came out against me with eight hundred men, whilst I had eight hundred thousand. I trusted in the number of my troops, whilst mine enemy trusted in God; so he defeated me and routed me and I was put to a shameful flight and hid myself in one of the mountains, where I met with a recluse, [who had] withdrawn [himself from the world]. So I joined myself to him and complained to him of my case and acquainted him with all that had befallen me. Quoth he, “Knowest thou why this befell thee and thou wast defeated?” “I know not,” answered I, and he said, “Because thou puttest thy trust in the multitude of thy troops and reliedst not upon God the Most High. Hadst thou put thy trust in God and believed in Him that it is He [alone] who advantageth and endamageth thee, thine enemy had not availed to cope with thee. Return unto God.” So I returned to myself and repented at the hands of the solitary, who said to me, “Turn back with what remaineth to thee of troops and confront thine enemies, for, if their intents be changed from God, thou wilt overcome them, wert thou alone.” When I heard these words, I put my trust in God the Most High, and gathering together those who remained with me, fell upon mine enemies at unawares in the night. They deemed us many and fled on the shamefullest wise, whereupon I entered my city and repossessed myself of my place by the might of God the Most High, and now I fight not but [trusting] in His aid.’

When Bekhtzeman heard this, he awoke from his heedlessness and said, ‘Extolled be the perfection of God the Great! O king, this is my case and my story, nothing added and nought diminished, for I am King Bekhtzeman and all this happened to me; wherefore I will seek the gate of God[‘s mercy] and repent unto Him.’ So he went forth to one of the mountains and there worshipped God awhile, till one night, as he slept, one appeared to him in a dream and said to him, ‘O Bekhtzeman, God accepteth thy repentance and openeth on thee [the gate of succour] and will further thee against thine enemy.’ When he was certified of this in the dream, he arose and turned back, intending for his own city; and when he drew near thereunto, he saw a company of the king’s retainers, who said to him, ‘Whence art thou? We see that thou art a stranger and fear for thee from this king, for that every stranger who enters this city, he destroys him, of his fear of King Bekhtzeman.’ Quoth Bekhtzeman, ‘None shall hurt him nor advantage him save God the Most High.’ And they answered, saying, ‘Indeed, he hath a vast army and his heart is fortified in the multitude of his troops.’

When King Bekhtzeman heard this, his heart was comforted and he said in himself, ‘I put my trust in God. If He will, I shall overcome mine enemy by the might of God the Most High.’ So he said to the folk, ‘ Know ye not who I am?’ and they answered, ‘ No, by Allah.’ Quoth he, ‘I am King Bekhtzeman.’ When they heard this and knew that it was indeed he, they dismounted from their horses and kissed his stirrup, to do him honour, and said to him, ‘O king, why hast thou thus adventured thyself?’ Quoth he, ‘Indeed, my life is a light matter to me and I put my trust in God the Most High, looking to Him for protection.’ And they answered him, saying, ‘May this suffice thee! We will do with thee that which is in our power and whereof thou art worthy: comfort thy heart, for we will succour thee with our goods and our lives, and we are his chief officers and the most in favour with him of all folk. So we will take thee with us and cause the folk follow after thee, for that the inclination of the people, all of them, is to thee.’ Quoth he, ‘Do that unto which God the Most High enableth you.’

So they carried him into the city and hid him with them. Moreover, they agreed with a company of the king’s chief officers, who had aforetime been those of Bekhtzeman, and acquainted them with this; whereat they rejoiced with an exceeding joy. Then they assembled together to Bekhtzeman and made a covenant and handfast [of fealty] with him and fell upon the enemy at unawares and slew him and seated King Bekhtzeman again on the throne of his kingship. And his affairs prospered and God amended his estate and restored His bounty to him, and he ruled his subjects justly and abode in the obedience of the Most High. On this wise, O king," continued the young treasurer, "he with whom God is and whose intent is pure, meeteth nought but good. As for me, I have no helper other than God, and I am content to submit myself to His ordinance, for that He knoweth the purity of my intent."

With this the king's wrath subsided and he said, "Restore him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his affair."

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The Seventh Day.

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OF CLEMENCY.

When it was the seventh day, the seventh vizier, whose name was Bihkemal, came in to the king and prostrating himself to him, said, “O king, what doth thy long-suffering with this youth advantage thee? Indeed the folk talk of thee and of him. Why, then, dost thou postpone the putting him to death?” The vizier’s words aroused the king’s anger and he bade bring the youth. So they brought him before him, shackled, and Azadbekht said to him, “Out on thee! By Allah, after this day there abideth no deliverance for thee from my hand, for that thou hast outraged mine honour, and there can be no forgiveness for thee.”

“O king,” answered the youth, “there is no great forgiveness save in case of a great crime, for according as the offence is great, in so much is forgiveness magnified and it is no dishonour to the like of thee if he spare the like of me. Verily, Allah knoweth that there is no fault in me, and indeed He commandeth unto clemency, and no clemency is greater than that which spareth from slaughter, for that thy forgiveness of him whom thou purposest to put to death is as the quickening of a dead man; and whoso doth evil shall find it before him, even as it was with King Bihkerd.” “And what is the story of King Bihkerd?” asked the king. “O king,” answered the youth,

STORY OF KING BIHKERD.

“There was once a king named Bihkerd aed he had wealth galore and many troops; but his deeds were evil and he would punish for a slight offence and never forgave. He went forth one day to hunt and one of his servants shot an arrow, which lit on the king’s ear and cut it off. Quoth Bihkerd, ‘Who shot that arrow?’ So the guards brought him in haste the offender, whose name was Yetrou, and he of his fear fell down on the ground in a swoon. Then said the king, ‘Put him to death;’ but Yetrou said, ‘O King, this that hath befallen was not of my choice nor of my knowledge; so do thou pardon me, in the hour of thy power over me, for that clemency is of the goodliest of things and belike it shall be [in this world] a provision and a good work [for which thou shall be requited] one of these days, and a treasure [laid up to thine account] with God in the world to come. Pardon me, therefore, and fend off evil from me, so shall God fend off from thee evil the like thereof.’ When the king heard this, it pleased him and he pardoned the servant, albeit he had never before pardoned any.

Now this servant was of the sons of the kings and had fled from his father, on account of an offence he had committed. Then he went and took service with King Bihkerd and there happened to him what happened. After awhile, it chanced that a man recognized him and went and told his father, who sent him a letter, comforting his heart and mind and [beseeching him] to return to him. So he returned to his father, who came forth to meet him and rejoiced in him, and the prince’s affairs were set right with him.

It befell, one day of the days, that King Bihkerd embarked in a ship and put out to sea, so he might fish; but the wind blew on them and the ship foundered. The king won ashore on a plank, unknown of any, and came forth, naked, on one of the coasts; and it chanced that he landed in the country whereof the father of the youth aforesaid, [his sometime servant], was king. So he came in the night to the gate of the latter’s city and [finding it shut], took up his lodging [for the night] in a burying-place there.

When the morning morrowed and the folk came forth of the city, they found a murdered man cast down in a corner of the burial-ground and seeing Bihkerd there, doubted not but it was he who had slain him; so they laid hands on him and carried him up to the king and said to him, ‘This fellow hath slain a man.’ The king bade imprison him; [so they clapped him in prison] and he fell a-saying in himself, what while he was in the prison, ‘All that hath befallen me is of the abundance of my sins and my tyranny, for, indeed, I have slain much people unrighteously and this is the requital of my deeds and that which I have wrought aforetime of oppression.’ As he was thus pondering in himself, there came a bird and lighted down on the coign of the prison, whereupon, of his much eagerness in the chase, he took a stone and cast it at the bird.

Now the king’s son was playing in the exercise-ground with the ball and the mall, and the stone lit on his ear and cut it off, whereupon the prince fell down in a swoon. So they enquired who had thrown the stone and [finding that it was Bihkerd,] took him and carried him before the prince, who bade put him to death. Accordingly, they cast the turban from his head and were about to bind his eyes, when the prince looked at him and seeing him cropped of an ear, said to him, ‘Except thou wert a lewd fellow, thine ear had not been cut off.’ ‘Not so, by Allah!’ answered Bihkerd. ‘Nay, but the story [of the loss] of my ear is thus and thus, and I pardoned him who smote me with an arrow and cut off my ear.’ When the prince heard this, he looked in his face and knowing him, cried out and said, ‘Art thou not Bihkerd the king?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he, and the prince said to him ‘What bringeth thee here?’ So he told him all that had betided him and the folk marvelled and extolled the perfection of God the Most High.

Then the prince rose to him and embraced him and kissed him and entreated him with honour. Moreover, he seated him in a chair and bestowed on him a dress of honour; and he turned to his father and said to him, ‘This is the king who pardoned me and this is his ear that I cut off with an arrow; and indeed he deserveth pardon from me, for that he pardoned me.’ Then said he to Bihkerd, ‘Verily, the issue of clemency hath been a provision for thee [in thine hour of need].’ And they entreated him with the utmost kindness and sent him back to his own country in all honour and worship Know, then, O King,” continued the youth, “that there is no goodlier thing than clemency and that all thou dost thereof, thou shalt find before thee, a treasure laid up for thee.”

When the king heard this, his wrath subsided and he said, “Carry him back to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his affair.”

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The Eighth Day.

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OF ENVY AND MALICE.

When it was the eighth day, the viziers all assembled and took counsel together and said, “How shall we do with this youth, who baffleth us with his much talk? Indeed, we fear lest he be saved and we fall [into perdition]. Wherefore, let us all go in to the king and unite our efforts to overcome him, ere he appear without guilt and come forth and get the better of us.” So they all went in to the king and prostrating themselves before him, said to him, “O king, have a care lest this youth beguile thee with his sorcery and bewitch thee with his craft. If thou heardest what we hear, thou wouldst not suffer him live, no, not one day. So pay thou no heed to his speech, for we are thy viziers, [who endeavour for] thy continuance, and if thou hearken not to our word, to whose word wilt thou hearken? See, we are ten viziers who testify against this youth that he is guilty and entered not the king’s sleeping-chamber but with evil intent, so he might put the king to shame and outrage his honour; and if the king slay him not, let him banish him his realm, so the tongue of the folk may desist from him.”

When the king heard his viziers’ words, he was exceeding wroth and bade bring the youth, and when he came in to the king, the viziers all cried out with one voice, saying, “O scant o’ grace, thinkest thou to save thyself from slaughter by craft and guile, that thou beguilest the king with thy talk and hopest pardon for the like of this great crime which thou hast committed?” Then the king bade fetch the headsman, so he might smite off his head; whereupon each of the viziers fell a-saying, “I will slay him;” and they sprang upon him. Quote the youth, “O king, consider and ponder these men’s eagerness. Is this of envy or no? They would fain make severance between thee and me, so there may fall to them what they shall plunder, as aforetime.” And the king said to him, “Consider their testimony against thee.” “O king,” answered the young man, “how shall they testify of that which they saw not? This is but envy and rancour; and thou, if thou slay me, thou wilt regret me, and I fear lest there betide thee of repentance that which betided Ilan Shah, by reason of the malice of his viziers.” “And what is his story?” asked

Azadbekht. “O king,” replied the youth,

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STORY OF ILAN SHAH AND ABOU TEMAM.

“There was once a merchant named Abou Temam, and he was a man of understanding and good breeding, quick-witted and truthful in all his affairs, and he had wealth galore. Now there was in his land an unjust king and a jealous, and Abou Temam feared for his wealth from this king and said, ‘I will remove hence to another place where I shall not be in fear.’ So he made for the city of Ilan Shah and built himself a palace therein and transporting his wealth thither, took up his abode there. Presently, the news of him reached King Ilan Shah; so he sent to bid him to his presence and said to him, ‘We know of thy coming to us and thine entry under our allegiance, and indeed we have heard of thine excellence and wit and generosity; so welcome to thee and fair welcome! The land is thy land and at thy commandment, and whatsoever occasion thou hast unto us, it is [already] accomplished unto thee; and it behoveth that thou be near our person and of our assembly.’ Abou Temam prostrated himself to the king and said to him, ‘O king, I will serve thee with my wealth and my life, but do thou excuse me from nearness unto thee, for that, [if I took service about thy person], I should not be safe from enemies and enviers.’ Then he addressed himself to serve the king with presents and largesses, and the king saw him to be intelligent, well-bred and of good counsel; so he committed to him the ordinance of his affairs and in his hand was the power to bind and loose.

Now Ilan Shah had three viziers, in whose hands the affairs [of the kingdom] were [aforetime] and they had been used to leave not the king night nor day; but they became shut out from him by reason of Abou Temam and the king was occupied with him to their exclusion. So they took counsel together upon the matter and said, ‘What counsel ye we should do, seeing that the king is occupied from us with yonder man, and indeed he honoureth him more than us? But now come, let us cast about for a device, whereby we may remove him from the king.’ So each of them spoke forth that which was in his mind, and one of them said, ‘The king of the Turks hath a daughter, whose like there is not in the world, and whatsoever messenger goeth to demand her in marriage, her father slayeth him.

Now our king hath no knowledge of this; so, come, let us foregather with him and bring up the talk of her. When his heart is taken with her, we will counsel him to despatch Abou Temam to seek her hand in marriage; whereupon her father will slay him and we shall be quit of him, for we have had enough of his affair.”

Accordingly, they all went in to the king one day (and Abou Temam was present among them,) and mentioned the affair of the damsel, the king’s daughter of the Turks, and enlarged upon her charms, till the king’s heart was taken with her and he said to them, ‘We will send one to demand her in marriage for us; but who shall be our messenger?’ Quoth the viziers, ‘There is none for this business but Abou Temam, by reason of his wit and good breeding;’ and the king said, ‘Indeed, even as ye say, none is fitting for this affair but he.’ Then he turned to Abou Temam and said to him, ‘Wilt thou not go with my message and seek me [in marriage] the king’s daughter of the Turks?’ and he answered, ‘Hearkening and obedience, O king.’

So they made ready his affair and the king conferred on him a dress of honour, and he took with him a present and a letter under the king’s hand and setting out, fared on till he came to the [capital] city of Turkestan. When the king of the Turks knew of his coming, he despatched his officers to receive him and entreated him with honour and lodged him as befitted his rank. Then he entertained him three days, after which he summoned him to his presence and Abou Temam went in to him and prostrating himself before him, as beseemeth unto kings, laid the present before him and gave him the letter.

The king read the letter and said to Abou Temam, “We will do what behoveth in the matter; but, O Abou Temam, needs must thou see my daughter and she thee, and needs must thou hear her speech and she thine.’ So saying, he sent him to the lodging of the princess, who had had notice of this; so that they had adorned her sitting-chamber with the costliest that might be of utensils of gold and silver and the like, and she seated herself on a throne of gold, clad in the most sumptuous of royal robes and ornaments. When Abou Temam entered, he bethought himself and said, ‘The wise say, he who restraineth his sight shall suffer no evil and he who guardeth his tongue shall hear nought of foul, and he who keepeth watch over his hand, it shall be prolonged and not curtailed.' So he entered and seating himself on the ground, [cast down his eyes and] covered his hands and feet with his dress. Quoth the king's daughter to him, 'Lift thy head, O Abou Temam, and look on me and speak with me.' But he spoke not neither raised his head, and she continued, 'They sent thee but that thou mightest look on me and speak with me, and behold, thou speakest not at all. Take of these pearls that be around thee and of these jewels and gold and silver. But he put not forth his hand unto aught, and when she saw that he paid no heed to anything, she was angry and said, 'They have sent me a messenger, blind, dumb and deaf.'

Then she sent to acquaint her father with this; whereupon the king called Abou Temam to him and said to him, 'Thou camest not but to see my daughter. Why, then, hast thou not looked upon her?' Quoth Abou Temam, 'I saw everything.' And the king said, 'Why didst thou not take somewhat of that which thou sawest of jewels and the like? For they were set for thee.' But he answered, 'It behoveth me not to put out my hand to aught that is not mine.' When the king heard his speech, he gave him a sumptuous dress of honour and loved him exceedingly and said to him, 'Come, look at this pit.' So Abou Temam went up [to the mouth of the pit] and looked, and behold, it was full of heads of men; and the king said to him, 'These are the heads of ambassadors, whom I slew, for that I saw them without loyalty to their masters, and I was used, whenas I saw an ambassador without breeding, to say, "He who sent him is less of breeding than he, for that the messenger is the tongue of him who sendeth him and his breeding is of his master's breeding; and whoso is on this wise, it befitteth not that he be akin to me." So, because of this, I used to put the messengers to death; but, as for thee, thou hast overcome us and won my daughter, of the excellence of thy breeding; so be of good heart, for she is thy master's.' Then he sent him back to king Ilan Shah with presents and rarities and a letter, saying, 'This that I have done is in honour of thee and of thine ambassador.'

When Abou Temam returned with [news of] the accomplishment of his errand and brought the presents and the letter, King Ilan Shah rejoiced in this and redoubled in showing him honour and made much of him. Some days thereafterward, the king of Turkestan sent his daughter and she went in to King Ilan Shah, who rejoiced in her with an exceeding joy and Abou Temam's worth was exalted in his sight. When the viziers saw this, they redoubled in envy and despite and said, 'An we contrive us not a device to rid us of this man, we shall perish of rage.' So they bethought them [and agreed upon] a device they should practise.

Then they betook themselves to two boys affected to the [special] service of the king, who slept not but on their knee, and they lay at his head, for that they were his pages of the chamber, and gave them each a thousand dinars of gold, saying, 'We desire of you that ye do somewhat for us and take this gold as a provision against your occasion.' Quoth the boys, 'What is it ye would have us do?' And the viziers answered, 'This Abou Temam hath marred our affairs for us, and if his case abide on this wise, he will estrange us all from the king's favour; and what we desire of you is that, when ye are alone with the king and he leaneth back, as he were asleep, one of you say to his fellow, "Verily, the king hath taken Abou Temam into his especial favour and hath advanced him to high rank with him, yet is he a transgressor against the king's honour and an accursed one." Then let the other of you ask, "And what is his transgression?" And the first make answer, "He outrageth the king's honour and saith, 'The King of Turkestan was used, whenas one went to him to seek his daughter in marriage, to slay him; but me he spared, for that she took a liking to me, and by reason of this he sent her hither, because she loved me.'" Then let his fellow say, "Knowest thou this for truth?" And the other reply, "By Allah, this is well known unto all the folk, but, of their fear of the king, they dare not bespeak him thereof; and as often as the king is absent a-hunting or on a journey, Abou Temam comes to her and is private with her."' And the boys answered, 'We will say this.'

Accordingly, one night, when they were alone with the king and he leant back, as he were asleep, they said these words and the king heard it all and was like to die of rage and said in himself, 'These are young boys, not come to years of discretion, and have no intrigue with any; and except they had heard these words from some one, they had not spoken with each other thereof.’ When it was morning, wrath overmastered him, so that he stayed not neither deliberated, but summoned Abou Temam and taking him apart, said to him, ‘Whoso guardeth not his lord’s honour, what behoveth unto him?’ Quoth Abou Temam, ‘It behoveth that his lord guard not his honour.’ ‘And whoso entereth the king’s house and playeth the traitor with him,’ continued the king, ‘what behoveth unto him?’ And Abou Temam answered, ‘He shall not be left on life.’ Whereupon the king spat in his face and said to him, ‘Both these things hast thou done.’ Then he drew his dagger on him in haste and smiting him in the belly, slit it and he died forthright; whereupon the king dragged him to a well that was in his palace and cast him therein.

After he had slain him, he fell into repentance and mourning and chagrin waxed upon him, and none, who questioned him, would he acquaint with the cause thereof, nor, of his love for his wife, did he tell her of this, and whenas she asked him of [the cause of] his grief, he answered her not. When the viziers knew of Abou Temam’s death, they rejoiced with an exceeding joy and knew that the king’s grief arose from regret for him. As for Ilan Shah, he used, after this, to betake himself by night to the sleeping-chamber of the two boys and spy upon them, so he might hear what they said concerning his wife. As he stood one night privily at the door of their chamber, he saw them spread out the gold before them and play with it and heard one of them say, ‘Out on us! What doth this gold profit us? For that we cannot buy aught therewith neither spend it upon ourselves. Nay, but we have sinned against Abou Temam and done him to death unjustly.’ And the other answered, ‘Had we known that the king would presently kill him, we had not done what we did.’

When the king heard this, he could not contain himself, but rushed in upon them and said to them, ‘Out on you! What did ye? Tell me.’ And they said, ‘Pardon, O king.’ Quoth he, ‘An ye would have pardon from God and me, it behoveth you to tell me the truth, for nothing shall save you from me but truth-speaking.’ So they prostrated themselves before him and said, ‘By Allah, O king, the viziers gave us this gold and taught us to lie against Abou Teman, so thou mightest put him to death, and what we said was their words.’ When the king heard this, he plucked at his beard, till he was like to tear it up by the roots and bit upon his fingers, till he well-nigh sundered them in twain, for repentance and sorrow that he had wrought hastily and had not delayed with Abou Temam, so he might look into his affair.

Then he sent for the viziers and said to them, ‘O wicked viziers, ye thought that God was heedless of your deed, but your wickedness shall revert upon you. Know ye not that whoso diggeth a pit for his brother shall fall into it? Take from me the punishment of this world and to-morrow ye shall get the punishment of the world to come and requital from God.’ Then he bade put them to death; so [the headsman] smote off their heads before the king, and he went in to his wife and acquainted her with that wherein he had transgressed against Abou Temam; whereupon she grieved for him with an exceeding grief and the king and the people of his household left not weeping and repenting all their lives. Moreover, they brought Abou Temam forth of the well and the king built him a dome in his palace and buried him therein.

See, then, O august king,” continued the youth, “what envy doth and injustice and how God caused the viziers’ malice revert upon their own necks; and I trust in God that He will succour me against all who envy me my favour with the king and show forth the truth unto him. Indeed, I fear not for my life from death; only I fear lest the king repent of my slaughter, for that I am guiltless of offence, and if I knew that I were guilty of aught, my tongue would be mute.”

When the king heard this, he bowed [his head] in perplexity and confusion and said, “Carry him back to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his affair.”

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The Ninth Day

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OF DESTINY OR THAT WHICH IS WRITTEN ON THE FOREHEAD.

When it was the ninth day, the viziers [foregathered and] said, one to another, “Verily, this youth baffleth us, for as often as the king is minded to put him to death, he beguileth him and ensorcelleth him with a story; so what deem ye we should do, that we may slay him and be at rest from him?” Then they took counsel together and were of accord that they should go to the king’s wife [and prompt her to urge the king to slaughter the youth. So they betook themselves to her] and said to her, “Thou art heedless of this affair wherein thou art and this heedlessness will not profit thee; whilst the king is occupied with eating and drinking and diversion and forgetteth that the folk beat upon tabrets and sing of thee and say, ‘The king’s wife loveth the youth;’ and what while he abideth on life, the talk will increase and not diminish.” Quoth she, “By Allah, it was ye set me on against him, and what shall I do [now]?” And they answered, “Do thou go in to the king and weep and say to him, ‘Verily, the women come to me and tell me that I am become a byword in the city, and what is thine advantage in the sparing of this youth? If thou wilt not slay him, slay me, so this talk may be estopped from us.’”

So she arose and tearing her clothes, went in to the king, in the presence of the viziers, and cast herself upon him, saying, “O king, falleth my shame not upon thee and fearest thou not reproach? Indeed, this is not of the behoof of kings that their jealousy over their women should be thus [laggard]. Thou art heedless and all the folk of the realm prate of thee, men and women. So either slay him, that the talk may be cut off, or slay me, if thy soul will not consent to his slaughter.” Thereupon the king’s wrath waxed hot and he said to her, “I have no pleasure in his continuance [on life] and needs must I slay him this day. So return to thy house and comfort thy heart.”

Then he bade fetch the youth; so they brought him before him and the viziers said, “O base of origin, out on thee! Thy term is at hand and the earth hungereth for thy body, so it may devour it.” But he answered them, saying, “Death is not in your word nor in your envy; nay, it is an ordinance written upon the forehead; wherefore, if aught be written upon my forehead, needs must it come to pass, and neither endeavour nor thought-taking nor precaution will deliver me therefrom; [but it will surely happen] even as happened to King Ibrahim and his son.” Quoth the king, “Who was King Ibrahim and who was his son?” And the youth said, “O king,

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STORY OF KING IBRAHIM AND HIS SON.

There was once a king of the kings, by name Ibrahim, to whom the kings abased themselves and did obedience; but he had no son and was straitened of breast because of this, fearing lest the kingship go forth of his hand. He ceased not vehemently to desire a son and to buy slave-girls and lie with them, till one of them conceived, whereat he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and gave gifts and largesse galore. When the girl's months were accomplished and the season of her delivery drew near, the king summoned the astrologers and they watched for the hour of her child-bearing and raised astrolabes [towards the sun] and took strait note of the time. The damsel gave birth to a male child, whereat the king rejoiced with an exceeding joy, and the people heartened each other with the glad news of this.

Then the astrologers made their calculations and looked into his nativity and his ascendant, whereupon their colour changed and they were confounded. Quoth the king to them, 'Acquaint me with his horoscope and ye shall have assurance and fear ye not of aught' 'O king,' answered they, 'this child's nativity denotes that, in the seventh year of his age, there is to be feared for him from a lion, which will attack him; and if he be saved from the lion, there will betide an affair yet sorer and more grievous.' 'What is that?' asked the king; and they said, 'We will not speak, except the king command us thereto and give us assurance from [that which we] fear.' Quoth the king, 'God assure you!' And they said, 'If he be saved from the lion, the king's destruction will be at his hand.' When the king heard this, his colour changed and his breast was straitened; but he said in himself, 'I will be watchful and do my endeavour and suffer not the lion to eat him. It cannot be that he will kill me, and indeed the astrologers lied.'

Then he caused rear him among the nurses and matrons; but withal he ceased not to ponder the saying of the astrologers and indeed his life was troubled. So he betook himself to the top of a high mountain and dug there a deep pit and made in it many dwelling-places and closets and filled it with all that was needful of victual and raiment and what not else and made in it conduits of water from the mountain and lodged the boy therein, with a nurse who should rear him. Moreover, at the first of each month he used to go to the mountain and stand at the mouth of the pit and let down a rope he had with him and draw up the boy to him and strain him to his bosom and kiss him and play with him awhile, after which he would let him down again into the pit to his place and return; and he used to count the days till the seven years should pass by.

When came the time [of the accomplishment] of the foreordered fate and the fortune graven on the forehead and there abode for the boy but ten days till the seven years should be complete, there came to the mountain hunters hunting wild beasts and seeing a lion, gave chase to him. He fled from them and seeking refuge in the mountain, fell into the pit in its midst. The nurse saw him forthright and fled from him into one of the closets; whereupon the lion made for the boy and seizing upon him, tore his shoulder, after which he sought the closet wherein was the nurse and falling upon her, devoured her, whilst the boy abode cast down in a swoon. Meanwhile, when the hunters saw that the lion had fallen into the pit, they came to the mouth thereof and heard the shrieking of the boy and the woman; and after awhile the cries ceased, whereby they knew that the lion had made an end of them.

Presently, as they stood by the mouth of the pit, the lion came scrambling up the sides and would have issued forth; but, as often as he showed his head, they pelted him with stones, till they beat him down and he fell; whereupon one of the hunters descended into the pit and despatched him and saw the boy wounded; after which he went to the cabinet, where he found the woman dead, and indeed the lion had eaten his fill of her. Then he noted that which was therein of clothes and what not else, and advising his fellows thereof, fell to passing the stuff up to them. Moreover, he took up the boy and bringing him forth of the pit, carried him to their dwelling-place, where they dressed his wounds and he grew up with them, but acquainted them not with his affair; and indeed, when they questioned him, he knew not what he should say, for that he was little, when they let him down into the pit. The hunters marvelled at his speech and loved him with an exceeding love and one of them took him to son and abode rearing him with him [and instructing him] in hunting and riding on horseback, till he attained the age of twelve and became a champion, going forth with the folk to the chase and to the stopping of the way.

It chanced one day that they sallied forth to stop the way and fell in upon a caravan in the night; but the people of the caravan were on their guard; so they joined battle with the robbers and overcame them and slew them and the boy fell wounded and abode cast down in that place till the morrow, when he opened his eyes and finding his comrades slain, lifted himself up and rose to walk in the way. Presently, there met him a man, a treasure-seeker, and said to him, ‘Whither goest thou, O youth?’ So he told him what had betided him and the other said, ‘Be of good heart, for that [the season of] thy fair fortune is come and God bringeth thee joy and solace. I am one who am in quest of a hidden treasure, wherein is vast wealth. So come with me, that thou mayst help me, and I will give thee wealth, wherewith thou shalt provide thyself thy life long.’ Then he carried the youth to his dwelling and dressed his wound, and he abode with him some days, till he was rested; when he took him and two beasts and all that he needed, and they fared on till they came to a precipitous mountain.

Here the treasure-seeker brought out a book and reading therein, dug in the crest of the mountain five cubits deep, whereupon there appeared to him a stone. He pulled it up and behold, it was a trap-door covering the mouth of a pit. So he waited till the [foul] air was come forth from the midst of the pit, when he bound a rope about the boy’s middle and let him down to the bottom, and with him a lighted flambeau. The boy looked and beheld, at the upper end of the pit, wealth galore; so the treasure-seeker let down a rope and a basket and the boy fell to filling and the man to drawing up, till the latter had gotten his sufficiency, when he loaded his beasts and did his occasion, whilst the boy looked for him to let down to him the rope and draw him up; but he rolled a great stone to the mouth of the pit and went away.

When the boy saw what the treasure-seeker had done with him he committed his affair to God (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He!) and abode perplexed concerning his case and said, ‘How bitter is this death!’ For that indeed the world was darkened on him and the pit was blinded to him. So he fell a-weeping and saying, ‘I was delivered from the lion and the thieves and now is my death [appointed to be] in this pit, where I shall die lingeringly.’ And he abode confounded and looked for nothing but death. As he pondered [his affair], behold, he heard a sound of water running with a mighty noise; so he arose and walked in the pit, following after the sound, till he came to a corner and heard the mighty running of water. So he laid his ear to the sound of the current and hearing it a great strength, said in himself, ‘This is the running of a mighty water and needs must I die in this place, be it to-day or to-morrow; so I will cast myself into the water and not die a lingering death in this pit.’

Then he braced up his courage and gathering his skirts about him, threw himself into the water, and it bore him along with an exceeding might and carrying him under the earth, stayed not till it brought him out into a deep valley, wherethrough ran a great river, that welled up from under the earth. When he found himself on the surface of the earth, he abode perplexed and dazed all that day; after which he came to himself and rising, fared on along the valley, till he came to an inhabited land and a great village in the dominions of the king his father. So he entered the village and foregathered with its inhabitants, who questioned him of his case; whereupon he related to them his history and they marvelled at him, how God had delivered him from all this. Then he took up his abode with them and they loved him exceedingly.

To return to the king his father. When he went to the pit, as of his wont, and called the nurse, she returned him no answer, whereat his breast was straitened and he let down a man who [found the nurse dead and the boy gone and] acquainted the king therewith; which when he heard, he buffeted his head and wept passing sore and descended into the midst of the pit, so he might see how the case stood. There he found the nurse slain and the lion dead, but saw not the boy; so he [returned and] acquainted the astrologers with the verification of their words, and they said, ‘O king, the lion hath eaten him; destiny hath been accomplished upon him and thou art delivered from his hand; for, had he been saved from the lion, by Allah, we had feared for thee from him, for that the king’s destruction should have been at his hand.’ So the king left [sorrowing for] this and the days passed by and the affair was forgotten.

Meanwhile, the boy [grew up and] abode with the people of the village, and when God willed the accomplishment of His ordinance, the which endeavour availeth not to avert, he went forth with a company of the villagers, to stop the way. The folk complained of them to the king, who sallied out with a company of his men and surrounded the highwaymen and the boy with them, whereupon the latter drew forth an arrow and launched it at them, and it smote the king in his vitals and wounded him. So they carried him to his house, after they had laid hands upon the youth and his companions and brought them before the king, saying, ‘What biddest thou that we do with them?’ Quoth he, ‘I am presently in concern for myself; so bring me the astrologers.’ Accordingly, they brought them before him and He said to them, ‘Ye told me that my death should be by slaying at the hand of my son: how, then, befalleth it that I have gotten my death-wound on this wise of yonder thieves?’ The astrologers marvelled and said to him, ‘O king, it is not impossible to the lore of the stars, together with the fore-ordinance of God, that he who hath smitten thee should be thy son.’

When Ibrahim heard this, he let fetch the thieves and said to them, ‘Tell me truly, which of you shot the arrow that wounded me.’ Quoth they, ‘It was this youth that is with us.’ Whereupon the king fell to looking upon him and said to him, ‘O youth, acquaint me with thy case and tell me who was thy father and thou shalt have assurance from God.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered the youth, ‘I know no father; as for me, my father lodged me in a pit [when I was little], with a nurse to rear me, and one day, there fell in upon us a lion, which tore my shoulder, then left me and occupied himself with the nurse and rent her in pieces; and God vouchsafed me one who brought me forth of the pit.’ Then he related to him all that had befallen him, first and last; which when Ibrahim heard, he cried out and said, ‘By Allah, this is my very son!’ And he said to him, ‘Uncover thy shoulder.’ So he uncovered it and behold, it was scarred.

Then the king assembled his nobles and commons and the astrologers and said to them, ‘Know that what God hath graven upon the forehead, be it fair fortune or calamity, none may avail to efface, and all that is decreed unto a man he must needs abide. Indeed, this my caretaking and my endeavour profited me nought, for that which God decreed unto my son, he hath abidden and that which He decreed unto me hath betided me. Nevertheless, I praise God and thank Him for that this was at my son's hand and not at the hand of another, and praised be He for that the kingship is come to my son!' And he strained the youth to his breast and embraced him and kissed him, saying, 'O my son, this matter was on such a wise, and of my care and watchfulness over thee from destiny, I lodged thee in that pit; but caretaking availed not.' Then he took the crown of the kingship and set it on his son's head and caused the folk and the people swear fealty to him and commended the subjects to his care and enjoined him to justice and equity. And he took leave of him that night and died and his son reigned in his stead.

On like wise, O king," continued the young treasurer, "is it with thee. If God have written aught on my forehead, needs must it befall me and my speech to the king shall not profit me, no, nor my adducing to him of [illustrative] instances, against the fore-ordinance of God. So with these viziers, for all their eagerness and endeavour for my destruction, this shall not profit them; for, if God [be minded to] save me, He will give me the victory over them."

When the king heard these words, he abode in perplexity and said, "Restore him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his affair, for the day draweth to an end and I mean to put him to death on exemplary wise, and [to-morrow] we will do with him that which he meriteth."

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The Tenth Day.

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OF THE APPOINTED TERM, WHICH, IF IT BE ADVANCED, MAY NOT BE DEFERRED AND IF IT BE DEFERRED, MAY NOT BE ADVANCED.

When it was the tenth day, (now this day was called El Mihrjan and it was the day of the coming in of the folk, gentle and simple, to the king, so they might give him joy and salute him and go forth), the counsel of the viziers fell of accord that they should speak with a company of the notables of the city [and urge them to demand of the king that he should presently put the youth to death]. So they said to them, "When ye go in to-day to the king and salute him, do ye say to him, 'O king, (to God be the praise!) thou art praiseworthy of policy and governance, just to all thy subjects; but this youth, to whom thou hast been bountiful, yet hath he reverted to his base origin and wrought this foul deed, what is thy purpose in his continuance [on life]? Indeed, thou hast prisoned him in thy house, and every day thou hearest his speech and thou knowest not what the folk say.'" And they answered with "Hearkening and obedience."

So, when they entered with the folk and had prostrated themselves before the king and given him joy and he had raised their rank, [they sat down]. Now it was the custom of the folk to salute and go forth, so, when they sat down, the king knew that they had a word that they would fain say. So he turned to them and said, "Ask your need." And the viziers also were present. Accordingly, they bespoke him with all that these latter had taught them and the viziers also spoke with them; and Azadbekht said to them, "O folk, I know that this your speech, there is no doubt of it, proceedeth from love and loyal counsel to me, and ye know that, were I minded to slay half these folk, I could avail to put them to death and this would not be difficult to me; so how shall I not slay this youth and he in my power and under the grip of my hand? Indeed, his crime is manifest and he hath incurred pain of death and I have only deferred his slaughter by reason of the greatness of the offence; for, if I do this with him and my proof against him be strengthened, my heart is healed and the heart of the folk; and if I slay him not to-day, his slaughter shall not escape me to-morrow.”

Then he bade fetch the youth and when he was present before him, he prostrated himself to him and prayed for him; whereupon quoth the king to him, “Out on thee! How long shall the folk upbraid me on thine account and blame me for delaying thy slaughter? Even the people of my city blame me because of thee, so that I am grown a talking-stock among them, and indeed they come in to me and upbraid me [and urge me] to put thee to death. How long shall I delay this? Indeed, this very day I mean to shed thy blood and rid the folk of thy prate.”

“O king,” answered the youth, “if there have betided thee talk because of me, by Allah, by Allah the Great, those who have brought on thee this talk from the folk are these wicked viziers, who devise with the folk and tell them foul things and evil concerning the king’s house; but I trust in God that He will cause their malice to revert upon their heads. As for the king’s menace of me with slaughter, I am in the grasp of his hand; so let not the king occupy his mind with my slaughter, for that I am like unto the sparrow in the hand of the fowler; if he will, he slaughtereth him, and if he will, he looseth him. As for the delaying of my slaughter, it [proceedeth] not [from] the king, but from Him in whose hand is my life; for, by Allah, O king, if God willed my slaughter, thou couldst not avail to postpone it, no, not for a single hour. Indeed, man availeth not to fend off evil from himself, even as it was with the son of King Suleiman Shah, whose anxiety and carefulness for the accomplishment of his desire of the new-born child [availed him nothing], for his last hour was deferred how many a time! and God saved him until he had accomplished his [foreordained] period and had fulfilled [the destined term of] his life.”

“Out on thee!” exclaimed the king. “How great is thy craft and thy talk! Tell me, what was their story.” And the youth said, “O king,

STORY OF KING SULEIMAN SHAH AND HIS SONS.

There was once a king named Suleiman Shah, who was goodly of polity and judgment, and he had a brother who died and left a daughter. So Suleiman Shah reared her on the goodliest wise and the girl grew up, endowed with reason and perfection, nor was there in her time a fairer than she. Now the king had two sons, one of whom he had appointed in himself that he would marry her withal, and the other purposed in himself that he would take her. The elder son's name was Belehwan and that of the younger Melik Shah, and the girl was called Shah Khatoun.

One day, King Suleiman Shah went in to his brother's daughter and kissing her head, said to her, 'Thou art my daughter and dearer to me than a child, for the love of thy father deceased; wherefore I am minded to marry thee to one of my sons and appoint him my heir apparent, so he may be king after me. Look, then, which thou wilt have of my sons, for that thou hast been reared with them and knowest them.' The damsel arose and kissing his hand, said to him, 'O my lord, I am thine handmaid and thou art the ruler over me; so whatsoever pleaseth thee, do, for that thy wish is higher and more honourable and nobler [than mine] and if thou wouldst have me serve thee, [as a handmaid], the rest of my life, it were liefer to me than any [husband].'

The king approved her speech and bestowed on her a dress of honour and gave her magnificent gifts; after which, for that his choice had fallen upon his younger son, Melik Shah, he married her with him and made him his heir apparent and caused the folk swear fealty to him. When this came to the knowledge of his brother Belehwan and he was ware that his younger brother had been preferred over him, his breast was straitened and the affair was grievous to him and envy entered into him and rancour; but he concealed this in his heart, whilst fire raged therein because of the damsel and the kingship.

Meanwhile Shah Khatoun went in to the king's son and conceived by him and bore a son, as he were the resplendent moon. When

Belehwan saw this that had betided his brother, jealousy and envy overcame him; so he went in one night to his father's house and coming to his brother's lodging, saw the nurse sleeping at the chamber-door, with the cradle before her and therein his brother's child asleep. Belehwan stood by him and fell to looking upon his face, the radiance whereof was as that of the moon, and Satan insinuated himself into his heart, so that he bethought himself and said, 'Why is not this child mine? Indeed, I am worthier of him than my brother, [yea], and of the damsel and the kingship.' Then envy got the better of him and anger spurred him, so that he took out a knife and setting it to the child's gullet, cut his throat and would have severed his windpipe.

So he left him for dead and entering his brother's chamber, saw him asleep, with the damsel by his side, and thought to slay her, but said in himself, 'I will leave the damsel for myself.' Then he went up to his brother and cutting his throat, severed his head from his body, after which he left him and went away. Therewithal the world was straitened upon him and his life was a light matter to him and he sought his father Suleiman Shah's lodging, that he might slay him, but could not win to him. So he went forth from the palace and hid himself in the city till the morrow, when he repaired to one of his father's strengths and fortified himself therein.

Meanwhile, the nurse awoke, that she might give the child suck, and seeing the bed running with blood, cried out; whereupon the sleepers and the king awoke and making for the place, found the child with his throat cut and the cradle running over with blood and his father slain and dead in his sleeping chamber. So they examined the child and found life in him and his windpipe whole and sewed up the place of the wound. Then the king sought his son Belehwan, but found him not and saw that he had fled; whereby he knew that it was he who had done this deed, and this was grievous to the king and to the people of his realm and to the lady Shah Katoun. So the king laid out his son Melik Shah and buried him and made him a mighty funeral and they mourned passing sore; after which he addressed himself to the rearing of the infant

As for Belehwan, when he fled and fortified himself, his power waxed amain and there remained for him but to make war upon his father, who had cast his affection upon the child and used to rear him on his knees and supplicate God the Most High that he might live, so he might commit the commandment to him. When he came to five years of age, the king mounted him on horseback and the people of the city rejoiced in him and invoked on him length of life, so he might take his father's leavings and [heal] the heart of his grandfather.

Meanwhile, Belehwan the froward addressed himself to pay court to Caesar, King of the Greeks, and seek help of him in making war upon his father, and he inclined unto him and gave him a numerous army. His father the king heard of this and sent to Caesar, saying, 'O king of illustrious might, succour not an evil-doer. This is my son and he hath done thus and thus and cut his brother's throat and that of his brother's son in the cradle.' But he told not the King of the Greeks that the child [had recovered and] was alive. When Caesar heard [the truth] of the matter, it was grievous to him and he sent back to Suleiman Shah, saying, 'If it be thy will, O king, I will cut off his head and send it to thee.' But he made answer, saying, 'I reck not of him: the reward of his deed and his crimes shall surely overtake him, if not to-day, then to-morrow.' And from that day he continued to correspond with Caesar and to exchange letters and presents with him.

Now the king of the Greeks heard tell of the damsel and of the beauty and grace wherewith she was gifted, wherefore his heart clave to her and he sent to seek her in marriage of Suleiman Shah, who could not refuse him. So he arose and going in to Shah Khatoun, said to her, 'O my daughter, the king of the Greeks hath sent to me to seek thee in marriage. What sayst thou?' She wept and answered, saying, 'O king, how canst thou find it in thy heart to bespeak me thus? Abideth there husband for me, after the son of my uncle?' 'O my daughter,' rejoined the king, 'it is indeed as thou sayest; but let us look to the issues of affairs. Needs must I take account of death, for that I am an old man and fear not but for thee and for thy little son; and indeed I have written to the king of the Greeks and others of the kings and said, "His uncle slew him," and said not that he [hath recovered and] is living, but concealed his affair. Now hath the king of the Greeks sent to demand thee in marriage, and this is no thing to be refused and fain would we have our back strengthened with him." And she was silent and spoke not.

So King Suleiman Shah made answer unto Caesar with 'Hearkening and obedience.' Then he arose and despatched her to him, and Cassar went in to her and found her overpassing the description wherewithal they had described her to him; wherefore he loved her with an exceeding love and preferred her over all his women and his love for Suleiman Shah was magnified; but Shah Khatoun's heart still clave to her son and she could say nought. As for Suleiman Shah's rebellious son, Belehwan, when he saw that Shah Khatoun had married the king of the Greeks, this was grievous to him and he despaired of her. Meanwhile, his father Suleiman Shah kept strait watch over the child and cherished him and named him Melik Shah, after the name of his father. When he reached the age of ten, he made the folk swear fealty to him and appointed him his heir apparent, and after some days, [the hour of] the old king's admission [to the mercy of God] drew near and he died.

Now a party of the troops had banded themselves together for Belehwan; so they sent to him and bringing him privily, went in to the little Melik Shah and seized him and seated his uncle Belehwan on the throne of the kingship. Then they proclaimed him king and did homage to him all, saying, 'Verily, we desire thee and deliver to thee the throne of the kingship; but we wish of thee that thou slay not thy brother's son, for that on our consciences are the oaths we swore to his father and grandfather and the covenants we made with them.' So Belehwan granted them this and imprisoned the boy in an underground dungeon and straitened him. Presently, the heavy news reached his mother and this was grievous to her; but she could not speak and committed her affair to God the Most High, daring not name this to King Caesar her husband, lest she should make her uncle King Suleiman Shah a liar.

So Belehwan the froward abode king in his father's room and his affairs prospered, what while the young Melik Shah lay in the underground dungeon four full-told years, till his charms faded and his favour changed. When God (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He!) willed to relieve him and bring him forth of the prison, Belehwan sat one day with his chief officers and the grandees of his state and discoursed with them of the story of King Suleiman Shah and what was in his heart. Now there were present certain viziers, men of worth, and they said to him, ‘O king, verily God hath been bountiful unto thee and hath brought thee to thy wish, so that thou art become king in thy father’s stead and hast gotten thee that which thou soughtest. But, as for this boy, there is no guilt in him, for that, from the day of his coming into the world, he hath seen neither ease nor joyance, and indeed his favour is faded and his charms changed [with long prison]. What is his offence that he should merit this punishment? Indeed, it is others than he who were to blame, and God hath given thee the victory over them, and there is no fault in this poor wight.’ Quoth Belehwan, ‘Indeed, it is as ye say; but I am fearful of his craft and am not assured from his mischief; belike the most part of the folk will incline unto him.’ ‘O king,’ answered they, ‘what is this boy and what power hath he? If thou fear him, send him to one of the frontiers.’ And Belehwan said, ‘Ye say sooth: we will send him to be captain over such an one of the marches.’

Now over against the place in question was a host of enemies, hard of heart, and in this he purposed the youth’s slaughter. So he bade bring him forth of the underground dungeon and caused him draw near to him and saw his case. Then he bestowed on him a dress of honour and the folk rejoiced in this. Moreover, he tied him an ensign and giving him a numerous army, despatched him to the region aforesaid, whither all who went were still slain or made prisoners. So Melik Shah betook himself thither with his army and when it was one of the days, behold, the enemy fell in upon them in the night; whereupon some of his men fled and the rest the enemy took; and they took Melik Shah also and cast him into an underground dungeon, with a company of his men. There he abode a whole year in evil plight, whilst his fellows mourned over his beauty and grace.

Now it was the enemy’s wont, at every year’s end, to bring forth their prisoners and cast them down from the top of the citadel to the bottom. So they brought them forth, at the end of the year, and cast them down, and Melik Shah with them. However, he fell upon the [other] men and the earth touched him not, for his term was

[God-]guarded. Now those that were cast down there were slain and their bodies ceased not to lie there till the wild beasts ate them and the winds dispersed them. Melik Shah abode cast down in his place, aswoon, all that day and night, and when he recovered and found himself whole, he thanked God the Most High for his safety [and rising, fared on at a venture]. He gave not over walking, unknowing whither he went and feeding upon the leaves of the trees; and by day he hid himself whereas he might and fared on all his night at hazard; and thus he did some days, till he came to an inhabited land and seeing folk there, accosted them and acquainted them with his case, giving them to know that he had been imprisoned in the fortress and that they had cast him down, but God the Most High had delivered him and brought him off alive.

The folk took compassion on him and gave him to eat and drink and he abode with them awhile. Then he questioned them of the way that led to the kingdom of his uncle Belehwan, but told them not that he was his uncle. So they taught him the way and he ceased not to go barefoot, till he drew near his uncle's capital, and he naked and hungry, and indeed his body was wasted and his colour changed. He sat down at the gate of the city, and presently up came a company of King Belehwan's chief officers, who were out a-hunting and wished to water their horses. So they lighted down to rest and the youth accosted them, saying, 'I will ask you of somewhat, wherewith do ye acquaint me.' Quoth they, 'Ask what thou wilt.' And he said, 'Is King Belehwan well?' They laughed at him and answered, 'What a fool art thou, O youth! Thou art a stranger and a beggar, and what concern hast thou with the king's health?' Quoth he, 'Indeed, he is my uncle;' whereat they marvelled and said, 'It was one question and now it is become two.' Then said they to him, 'O youth, it is as thou wert mad. Whence pretendest thou to kinship with the king? Indeed, we know not that he hath aught of kinsfolk, except a brother's son, who was prisoned with him, and he despatched him to wage war upon the infidels, so that they slew him.' 'I am he,' answered Melik Shah, 'and they slew me not, but there betided me this and that.'

They knew him forthright and rising to him, kissed his hands and rejoiced in him and said to him, 'O our lord, in good sooth, thou art a king and the son of a king, and we desire thee nought but good and beseech [God to grant] thee continuance. Consider how God hath rescued thee from this thy wicked uncle, who sent thee to a place whence none came ever off alive, purposing not in this but thy destruction; and indeed thou fellest into [peril of] death and God delivered thee therefrom. So how wilt thou return and cast thyself again into thine enemy's hand? By Allah, save thyself and return not to him again. Belike thou shall abide upon the face of the earth till it please God the Most High [to vouchsafe thee relief]; but, if thou fall again into his hand, he will not suffer thee live a single hour.'

The prince thanked them and said to them, 'God requite you with all good, for indeed ye give me loyal counsel; but whither would ye have me go?' Quoth they, 'Get thee to the land of the Greeks, the abiding-place of thy mother.' And he said, 'My grandfather Suleiman Shah, when the King of the Greeks wrote to him, demanding my mother in marriage, concealed my affair and hid my secret; [and she hath done the like,] and I cannot make her a liar.' 'Thou sayst sooth,' rejoined they; 'but we desire thine advantage, and even if thou tookest service with the folk, it were a means of thy continuance [on life].' Then each of them brought out to him money and gave to him and clad him and fed him and fared on with him a parasang's distance till they brought him far from the city, and giving him to know that he was safe, departed from him, whilst he fared on till he came forth of the dominions of his uncle and entered those [of the king] of the Greeks. Then he entered a village and taking up his abode therein, betook himself to serving one there in ploughing and sowing and the like.

As for his mother, Shah Khatoun, great was her longing for her son and she [still] thought of him and news of him was cut off from her, wherefore her life was troubled and she forswore sleep and could not make mention of him before King Caesar her husband. Now she had an eunuch who had come with her from the court of her uncle King Suleiman Shah, and he was intelligent, quickwitted, a man of good counsel. So she took him apart one day and said to him, 'Thou hast been my servant from my childhood to this day; canst thou not therefore avail to get me news of my son, for that I cannot speak of his matter?' 'O my lady,' answered he, 'this is an affair that thou hast concealed from the first, and were thy son here, it would not be possible for thee to harbour him, lest thine honour fall into suspicion with the king; for they would never credit thee, since the news hath been spread abroad that thy son was slain by his uncle.' Quoth she, 'The case is even as thou sayst and thou speakest truly; but, provided I know that my son is alive, let him be in these parts pasturing sheep and let me not see him nor he me.' And he said to her, 'How shall we contrive in this affair?' 'Here are my treasures and my wealth,' answered she. 'Take all thou wilt and bring me my son or else news of him.'

Then they agreed upon a device between them, to wit, that they should feign an occasion in their own country, under pretext that she had there wealth buried from the time of her husband Melik Shah and that none knew of it but this eunuch who was with her, wherefore it behoved that he should go and fetch it. So she acquainted the king her husband with this and sought of him leave for the eunuch to go: and the king granted him permission for the journey and charged him cast about for a device, lest any get wind of him. Accordingly, the eunuch disguised himself as a merchant and repairing to Belehwan's city, began to enquire concerning the youth's case; whereupon they told him that he had been prisoned in an underground dungeon and that his uncle had released him and dispatched him to such a place, where they had slain him. When the eunuch heard this, it was grievous to him and his breast was straitened and he knew not what he should do.

It chanced one day that one of the horsemen, who had fallen in with the young Melik Shah by the water and clad him and given him spending-money, saw the eunuch in the city, disguised as a merchant, and recognizing him, questioned him of his case and of [the reason of] his coming. Quoth he, 'I come to sell merchandise.' And the horseman said, 'I will tell thee somewhat, if thou canst keep it secret.' 'It is well,' answered the eunuch; 'what is it?' And the other said, 'We met the king's son Melik Shah, I and certain of the Arabs who were with me, and saw him by such a water and gave him spending-money and sent him towards the land of the Greeks, near his mother, for that we feared for him, lest his uncle Belehwan should kill him.' Then he told him all that had passed between them, whereupon the eunuch's countenance changed and he said to the cavalier, ‘Assurance!’ ‘Thou shalt have assurance,’ answered the other, ‘though thou come in quest of him.’ And the eunuch rejoined, saying, ‘Truly, that is my errand, for there abideth no repose for his mother, lying down or rising up, and she hath sent me to seek news of him.’ Quoth the cavalier, ‘Go in safety, for he is in a [certain] part of the land of the Greeks, even as I said to thee.’

The eunuch thanked him and blessed him and mounting, returned upon his way, following the trace, whilst the cavalier rode with him to a certain road, when he said to him, ‘This is where we left him.’ Then he took leave of him and returned to his own city, whilst the eunuch fared on along the road, enquiring of the youth in every village he entered by the description which the cavalier had given him, and he ceased not to do thus till he came to the village where the young Melik Shah was. So he entered and lighting down therein, made enquiry after the prince, but none gave him news of him; whereat he abode perplexed concerning his affair and addressed himself to depart. Accordingly he mounted his horse [and set out homeward]; but, as he passed through the village, he saw a cow bound with a rope and a youth asleep by her side, with the end of the halter in his hand; so he looked at him and passed on and took no heed of him in his heart; but presently he stopped and said in himself; ‘If he of whom I am in quest be come to the like [of the condition] of yonder sleeping youth, by whom I passed but now, how shall I know him? Alas, the length of my travail and weariness! How shall I go about in quest of a wight whom I know not and whom, if I saw him face to face, I should not know?’

Then he turned back, pondering upon that sleeping youth, and coming to him, as he slept, lighted down from his horse and sat down by him. He fixed his eyes upon his face and considered him awhile and said in himself, ‘For aught I know, this youth may be Melik Shah.’ And he fell a-hemming and saying, ‘Harkye, O youth!’ Whereupon the sleeper awoke and sat up; and the eunuch said to him, ‘Who is thy father in this village and where is thy dwelling?’ The youth sighed and answered, ‘I am a stranger;’ and the eunuch said, ‘From what land art thou and who is thy father?’ Quoth the other, ‘I am from such a land,’ and the eunuch ceased not to question him and he to answer him, till he was certified of him and knew him.

So he rose and embraced him and kissed him and wept over his case. Moreover, he told him that he was going about in quest of him and informed him that he was come privily from the king his mother's husband and that his mother would be content [to know] that he was alive and well, though she saw him not.

Then he re-entered the village and buying the prince a horse, mounted him thereon and they ceased not going, till they came to the frontier of their own country, where there fell robbers upon them by the way and took all that was with them and pinioned them; after which they cast them into a pit hard by the road and went away and left them to die there, and indeed they had cast many folk into that pit and they had died.

The eunuch fell a-weeping in the pit and the youth said to him, 'What is this weeping and what shall it profit here?' Quoth the eunuch, 'I weep not for fear of death, but of pity for thee and the sorriness of thy case and because of thy mother's heart and for that which thou hast suffered of horrors and that thy death should be this abject death, after the endurance of all manner stresses.' But the youth said, 'That which hath betided me was forewrit to me and that which is written none hath power to efface; and if my term be advanced, none may avail to defer it.' Then they passed that night and the following day and the next night and the next day [in the pit], till they were weak with hunger and came near upon death and could but groan feebly.

Now it befell, by the ordinance of God the Most High and His providence, that Caesar, king of the Greeks, the husband of Melik Shah's mother Shah Khatoun, [went forth to the chase that day]. He started a head of game, he and his company, and chased it, till they came up with it by that pit, whereupon one of them lighted down from his horse, to slaughter it, hard by the mouth of the pit. He heard a sound of low moaning from the bottom of the pit} so he arose and mounting his horse, waited till the troops were assembled. Then he acquainted the king with this and he bade one of his servants [descend into the pit]. So the man descended and brought out the youth [and the eunuch], aswoon.

They cut their bonds and poured wine into their gullets, till they came to themselves, when the king looked at the eunuch and recognizing him, said, ‘Harkye, such an one!’ ‘Yes, O my lord the king,’ replied the man and prostrated himself to him; whereat the king marvelled with an exceeding wonder and said to him, ‘How earnest thou to this place and what hath befallen thee?” Quoth the eunuch, ‘I went and took out the treasure and brought it hither; but the [evil] eye was behind me and I unknowing. So the thieves took us alone here and seized the money and cast us into this pit, so we might die of hunger, even as they had done with other than we; but God the Most High sent thee, in pity to us.’

The king marvelled, he and his company, and praised God the Most High for that he had come thither; after which he turned to the eunuch and said to him, ‘What is this youth thou hast with thee?’ ‘O king,’ answered he, ‘this is the son of a nurse who belonged to us and we left him little. I saw him to-day and his mother said to me, ‘Take him with thee.’ So I brought him with me, that he might be a servant to the king, for that he is an adroit and quickwitted youth.’ Then the king fared on, he and his company, and the eunuch and the youth with them, what while he questioned the former of Belehwan and his dealing with his subjects, and he answered, saying, ‘As thy head liveth, O king, the folk with him are in sore straits and not one of them desireth to look on him, gentle or simple.’

[When the king returned to his palace,] he went in to his wife Shah Khatoun and said to her, ‘I give thee the glad news of thine eunuch’s return.’ And he told her what had betided and of the youth whom he had brought with him. When she heard this, her wits fled and she would have cried out, but her reason restrained her, and the king said to her, ‘What is this? Art thou overcome with grief for [the loss of] the treasure or [for that which hath befallen] the eunuch?’ ‘Nay, as thy head liveth, O king!’ answered she. ‘But women are fainthearted.’ Then came the servant and going in to her, told her all that had befallen him and acquainted her with her son’s case also and with that which he had suffered of stresses and how his uncle had exposed him to slaughter and he had been taken prisoner and they had cast him into the pit and hurled him from the top of the citadel and how God had delivered him from these perils, all of them; and he went on to tell her [all that had betided him], whilst she wept.

Then said she to him, ‘When the king saw him and questioned thee of him, what saidst thou to him?' And he answered, 'I said to him, "This is the son of a nurse who belonged to us. We left him little and he grew up; so I brought him, that he might be servant to the king,"' Quoth she, 'Thou didst well.' And she charged him to be instant in the service of the prince. As for the king, he redoubled in kindness to the eunuch and appointed the youth a liberal allowance and he abode going in to the king's house and coming out therefrom and standing in his service, and every day he grew in favour with him; whilst, as for Shah Khatoun, she used to stand a-watch for him at the windows and balconies and gaze upon him, and she on coals of fire on his account, yet could she not speak.

On this wise she abode a great while and indeed yearning for him came nigh to slay her; so she stood and watched for him one day at the door of her chamber and straining him to her bosom, kissed him on the cheek and breast. At this moment, out came the master of the king's household and seeing her embracing the youth, abode amazed. Then he asked to whom that chamber belonged and was answered, 'To Shah Khatoun, wife of the king,' whereupon he turned back, trembling as [one smitten by] a thunderbolt. The king saw him quaking and said to him, 'Out on thee! what is the matter?' 'O king,' answered he, 'what matter is graver than that which I see?' 'What seest thou?' asked the king and the officer said, 'I see that yonder youth, who came with the eunuch, he brought not with him but on account of Shah Khatoun; for that I passed but now by her chamber door, and she was standing, watching; [and when the youth came up,] she rose to him and clipped him and kissed him on his cheek.'

When the king heard this, he bowed [his head] in amazement and perplexity and sinking into a seat, clutched at his beard and shook it, till he came nigh to pluck it out. Then he arose forthright and laid hands on the youth and clapped him in prison. Moreover, he took the eunuch also and cast them both into an underground dungeon in his house, after which he went in to Shah Khatoun and said to her, 'Thou hast done well, by Allah, O daughter of nobles, O thou whom kings sought in marriage, for the excellence of thy repute and the goodliness of the reports of thee! How fair is thy semblance! May God curse her whose inward is the contrary of her outward, after the likeness of thy base favour, whose outward is comely and its inward foul, fair face and foul deeds! Verily, I mean to make of thee and of yonder good-for-nought an example among the folk, for that thou sentest not thine eunuch but of intent on his account, so that he took him and brought him into my house and thou hast trampled my head with him; and this is none other than exceeding hardihood; but thou shall see what I will do with you.'

So saying, he spat in her face and went out from her; whilst Shah Khatoun made him no answer, knowing that, if she spoke at that time, he would not credit her speech. Then she humbled herself in supplication to God the Most High and said, 'O God the Great, Thou knowest the hidden things and the outward parts and the inward' If an advanced term be [appointed] to me, let it not be deferred, and if a deferred one, let it not be advanced!' On this wise she passed some days, whilst the king fell into perplexity and forswore meat and drink and sleep and abode knowing not what he should do and saying [in himself], 'If I kill the eunuch and the youth, my soul will not be solaced, for they are not to blame, seeing that she sent to fetch him, and my heart will not suffer me to slay them all three. But I will not be hasty in putting them to death, for that I fear repentance.' Then he left them, so he might look into the affair.

Now he had a nurse, a foster-mother, on whose knees he had been reared, and she was a woman of understanding and misdoubted of him, but dared not accost him [with questions]. So she went in to Shah Khatoun and finding her in yet sorrier plight than he, asked her what was to do; but she refused to answer. However, the nurse gave not over coaxing and questioning her, till she exacted of her an oath of secrecy. So the old woman swore to her that she would keep secret all that she should say to her, whereupon the queen related to her her history from first to last and told her that the youth was her son. With this the old woman prostrated herself before her and said to her, 'This is an easy matter.' But the queen answered, saying, 'By Allah, O my mother, I choose my destruction and that of my son rather than defend myself by avouching a thing whereof they will not credit me; for they will say, "She avoucheth this, but that she may fend off reproach from herself" And nought will avail me but patience.' The old woman was moved by her speech and her intelligence and said to her, 'Indeed, O my daughter, it is as thou sayst, and I hope in God that He will show forth the truth. Have patience and I will presently go in to the king and hear what he saith and contrive somewhat in this matter, if it be the will of God the Most High.'

Then she arose and going in to the king, found him with his head between his knees, and he lamenting. So she sat down by him awhile and bespoke him with soft words and said to him, 'Indeed, O my son, thou consumest mine entrails, for that these [many] days thou hast not mounted to horse, and thou lamentest and I know not what aileth thee.' 'O my mother,' answered he, '[this my chagrin] is due to yonder accursed woman, of whom I still deemed well and who hath done thus and thus.' Then he related to her the whole story from first to last, and she said to him, 'This thy concern is on account of a worthless woman.' Quoth he, 'I was but considering by what death I should slay them, so the folk may [be admonished by their fate and] repent.' And she said, 'O my son, beware of haste, for it engendereth repentance and the slaying of them will not escape [thee]. When thou art assured of this affair, do what thou wilt.' 'O my mother,' rejoined he; 'there needeth no assurance concerning him for whom she despatched her eunuch and he fetched him.'

But she said, 'There is a thing wherewith we will make her confess, and all that is in her heart shall be discovered to thee.' 'What is that?' asked the king, and she answered, 'I will bring thee a hoopoe's heart, which, when she sleepeth, do thou lay upon her heart and question her of all thou wilt, and she will discover this unto thee and show forth the truth to thee." The king rejoiced in this and said to his nurse, 'Hasten and let none know of thee.' So she arose and going in to the queen, said to her, 'I have done thine occasion and it is on this wise. This night the king will come in to thee and do thou feign thyself asleep; and if he ask thee of aught, do thou answer him, as if in thy sleep.' The queen thanked her and the old woman went away and fetching the hoopoe's heart, gave it to the king.

Hardly was the night come, when he went in to his wife and found her lying back, [apparently] asleep; so he sat down by her side and laying the hoopoe's heart on her breast, waited awhile, so he might be certified that she slept. Then said he to her, 'Shah Khatoun, Shah Khatoun, is this my recompense from thee?' Quoth she, 'What offence have I committed?' And he, 'What offence can be greater than this? Thou sentest after yonder youth and broughtest him hither, on account of the desire of thy heart, so thou mightest do with him that for which thou lustedst.’ ‘I know not desire,’ answered she. ‘Verily, among thy servants are those who are comelier and handsomer than he; yet have I never desired one of them.’ ‘Why, then,’ asked he, ‘didst thou lay hold of him and kiss him!’ And she said, ‘This is my son and a piece of my heart; and of my longing and love for him, I could not contain myself, but sprang upon him and kissed him.’ When the king heard this, he was perplexed and amazed and said to her, ‘Hast thou a proof that this youth is thy son? Indeed, I have a letter from thine uncle King Suleiman Shah, [wherein he giveth me to know] that his unck Belehwan cut his throat.’ ‘Yes,’ answered she, ‘he did indeed cut his throat, but severed not the windpipe; so my uncle sewed up the wound and reared him, [and he lived,] for that his hour was not come.’

When the king heard this, he said, ‘This proof sufficeth me,’ and rising forthright in the night, let bring the youth and the eunuch. Then he examined the former’s throat with a candle and saw [the scar where] it [had been] cut from ear to ear, and indeed the place had healed up and it was like unto a stretched-out thread. Therewithal the king fell down prostrate to God, [in thanksgiving to Him] for that He had delivered the prince from all these perils and from the stresses that he had undergone, and rejoiced with an exceeding joy for that he had wrought deliberately and had not made haste to slay him, in which case sore repentance had betided him. As for the youth,” continued the young treasurer, “he was not saved but because his term was deferred, and on like wise, O king, is it with me; I too have a deferred term, which I shall attain, and a period which I shall accomplish, and I trust in God the Most High that He will give me the victory over these wicked viziers.”

When the youth had made an end of his speech, the king said, “Carry him back to the prison;” and when they had done this, he turned to the viziers and said to them, “Yonder youth looseth his tongue upon you, but I know your affectionate solicitude for the welfare of my empire and your loyal counsel to me; so be of good heart, for all that ye counsel me I will do.” When they heard these words, they rejoiced and each of them said his say Then said the king, “I have not deferred his slaughter but to the intent that the talk might be prolonged and that words might abound, and I desire [now] that ye sit up for him a gibbet without the town and make proclamation among the folk that they assemble and take him and carry him in procession to the gibbet, with the crier crying before him and saying, ‘This is the recompense of him whom the king delighted to favour and who hath betrayed him!’” The viziers rejoiced, when they heard this, and slept not that night, of their joy; and they made proclamation in the city and set up the gibbet.

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The Eleventh Day.

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OF THE SPEEDY RELIEF OF GOD.

When it was the eleventh day, the viziers betook them early in the morning to the king's gate and said to him, "O king, the folk are assembled from the king's gate to the gibbet, so they may see [the execution of] the king's commandment on the youth." So the king bade fetch the prisoner and they brought him; whereupon the viziers turned to him and said to him, "O vile of origin, doth any hope of life remain with thee and lookest thou still for deliverance after this day?" "O wicked viziers," answered he, "shall a man of understanding renounce hope in God the Most High? Indeed, howsoever a man be oppressed, there cometh to him deliverance from the midst of stress and life from the midst of death, [as is shown by the case of] the prisoner and how God delivered him." "What is his story?" asked the king; and the youth answered, saying, "O king, they tell that

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STORY OF THE PRISONER AND HOW GOD GAVE HIM RELIEF.

There was once a king of the kings, who had a high palace, overlooking a prison of his, and he used to hear in the night one saying, ‘O Ever-present Deliverer, O Thou whose relief is nigh, relieve Thou me!’ One day the king waxed wroth and said, “Yonder fool looketh for relief from [the consequences of] his crime. ‘Then said he to his officers, ‘Who is in yonder prison?’ And they answered, ‘Folk upon whom blood hath been found.’ So the king bade bring the man in question before him and said to him, ‘O fool, little of wit, how shall thou be delivered from this prison, seeing that thine offence is great?’ Then he committed him to a company of his guards and said to them, ‘Take this fellow and crucify him without the city.’

Now it was the night-season. So the soldiers carried him without the city, thinking to crucify him, when, behold, there came out upon them thieves and fell in on them with swords and [other] weapons. Thereupon the guards left him whom they purposed to put to death [and took to flight], whilst the man who was going to slaughter fled forth at a venture and plunging into the desert, knew not whither he went before he found himself in a thicket and there came out upon him a lion of frightful aspect, which snatched him up and set him under him. Then he went up to a tree and tearing it up by the roots, covered the man therewith and made off into the thicket, in quest of the lioness.

As for the man, he committed his affair to God the Most High, relying upon Him for deliverance, and said in himself, ‘What is this affair?’ Then he did away the leaves from himself and rising, saw great plenty of men’s bones there, of those whom the lion had devoured. He looked again and saw a heap of gold lying alongside a girdle; whereat he marvelled and gathering up the gold in his skirts, went forth of the thicket and fled in affright at hazard, turning neither to the right nor to the left, in his fear of the lion; till he came to a village and cast himself down, as he were dead. He lay there till the day appeared and he was rested from his fatigue, when he arose and burying the gold, entered the village. Thus God gave him relief and he came by the gold."

Then said the king, "How long wilt thou beguile us with thy prate, O youth? But now the hour of thy slaughter is come." And he bade crucify him upon the gibbet. [So they carried him to the place of execution] and were about to hoist him up [upon the cross,] when, behold, the captain of the thieves, who had found him and reared him, came up at that moment and asked what was that assembly and [the cause of] the crowds gathered there. They told him that a servant of the king had committed a great crime and that he was about to put him to death. So the captain of the thieves pressed forward and looking upon the prisoner, knew him, whereupon he went up to him and embraced him and clipped him and fell to kissing him upon his mouth. Then said he, "This is a boy whom I found under such a mountain, wrapped in a gown of brocade, and I reared him and he fell to stopping the way with us. One day, we set upon a caravan, but they put us to flight and wounded some of us and took the boy and went their way. From that day to this I have gone round about the lands in quest of him, but have not lighted on news of him [till now;] and this is he."

When the king heard this, he was certified that the youth was his very son; so he cried out at the top of his voice and casting himself upon him, embraced him and wept and said, "Had I put thee to death, as was my intent, I should have died of regret for thee." Then he cut his bonds and taking his crown from his head, set it on that of his son, whereupon the people raised cries of joy, whilst the trumpets sounded and the drums beat and there befell a great rejoicing. They decorated the city and it was a glorious day; the very birds stayed their flight in the air, for the greatness of the clamour and the noise of the crying. The army and the folk carried the prince [to the palace] in magnificent procession, and the news came to his mother Behrjaur, who came forth and threw herself upon him. Moreover, the king bade open the prison and bring forth all who were therein, and they held high festival seven days and seven nights and rejoiced with a mighty rejoicing; whilst terror and silence and confusion and affright fell upon the viziers and they gave themselves up for lost.

After this the king sat, with his son by his side and the viziers sitting before him, and summoned his chief officers and the folk of the city. Then the prince turned to the viziers and said to them, “See, O wicked viziers, that which God hath done and the speedy [coming of] relief.” But they answered not a word and the king said, “It sufficeth me that there is nothing alive but rejoiceth with me this day, even to the birds in the sky, but ye, your breasts are straitened. Indeed, this is the greatest of ill-will in you to me, and had I hearkened to you, my regret had been prolonged and I had died miserably of grief.” “O my father,” quoth the prince, “but for the fairness of thy thought and thy judgment and thy longanimity and deliberation in affairs, there had not bedded thee this great joyance. Hadst thou slain me in haste, repentance would have been sore on thee and long grief, and on this wise doth he who ensueth haste repent.”

Then the king sent for the captain of the thieves and bestowed on him a dress of honour, commanding that all who loved the king should put off [their raiment and cast it] upon him. So there fell dresses of honour [and other presents] on him, till he was wearied with their much plenty, and Azadbekht invested him with the mastership of the police of his city. Then he bade set up other nine gibbets beside the first and said to his son, “Thou art guiltless, and yet these wicked viziers endeavoured for thy slaughter.” “O my father,” answered the prince, “I had no fault [in their eyes] but that I was a loyal counsellor to thee and still kept watch over thy good and withheld their hands from thy treasuries; wherefore they were jealous and envied me and plotted against me and sought to slay me,” Quoth the king, “The time [of retribution] is at hand, O my son; but what deemest thou we should do with them in requital of that which they did with thee? For that they have endeavoured for thy slaughter and exposed thee to public ignominy and soiled my honour among the kings.”

Then he turned to the viziers and said to them, “Out on ye! What liars ye are! What excuse is left you?” “O king,” answered they, “there abideth no excuse for us and our sin hath fallen upon us and broken us in pieces. Indeed we purposed evil to this youth and it hath reverted upon us, and we plotted mischief against him and it hath overtaken us; yea, we digged a pit for him and have fallen ourselves therein." So the king bade hoist up the viziers upon the gibbets and crucify them there, for that God is just and ordaineth that which is right. Then Azadbekht and his wife and son abode in joyance and contentment, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and they died all; and extolled be the perfection of the [Ever-]Living One, who dieth not, to whom be glory and whose mercy be upon us for ever and ever! Amen.

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JAAFER BEN YEHYA AND ABDULMEILIK BEN SALIH THE ABBASIDE.

It is told of Jaafer ben Yehya the Barmecide that he sat down one day to drink and being minded to be private (with his friends), sent for his boon-companions, in whom he delighted, and charged the chamberlain that he should suffer none of the creatures of God the Most High to enter, save a man of his boon-companions, by name Abdulmelik ben Salih, who was behindhand with them. Then they donned coloured clothes, for that it was their wont, whenas they sat in the wine-chamber, to don raiment of red and yellow and green silk, and sat down to drink, and the cups went round and the lutes pulsed.

Now there was a man of the kinsfolk of the Khalif [Haroun er Reshid], by name Abdulmelik ben Salih ben Ali ben Abdallah ben el Abbas, who was great of gravity and piety and decorousness, and Er Reshid was used instantly to require of him that he should keep him company in his carousals and drink with him and had proffered him, to this end, riches galore, but he still refused. It chanced that this Abdulmelik es Salih came to the door of Jaafer ben Yehya, that he might bespeak him of certain occasions of his, and the chamberlain, doubting not but he was the Abdulmelik ben Salih aforesaid, whom Jaafer had charged him admit and that he should suffer none but him to enter, allowed him to go in to his master.

When Jaafer saw him, his reason was like to depart for shame and he knew that the chamberlain had been deceived by the likeness of the name; and Abdulmelik also perceived how the case stood and confusion was manifest to him in Jaafer's face. So he put on a cheerful favour and said, "No harm be upon you! Bring us of these dyed clothes." So they brought him a dyed gown and he put it on and sat discoursing cheerily with Jaafer and jesting with him. Then said he, "Give us to drink of your wine." So they poured him out a pint and he said, "Be ye indulgent with us, for we have no wont of this." Then he chatted and jested with them till Jaafer's breast dilated and his constraint ceased from him and his shamefastness, and he rejoiced in this with an exceeding joy and said to Abdulmelik, "What is thine errand?” Quoth the other, “I come (may God amend thee!) on three occasions, whereof I would have thee bespeak the Khalif; to wit, firstly, I have on me a debt to the amount of a thousand thousand dirhems, which I would have discharged; secondly, I desire for my son the office of governor of a province, whereby his rank may be raised; and thirdly, I would fain have thee marry him to a daughter of the Khalif, for that she is his cousin and he is a match for her.” And Jaafer said, “God accomplished! unto thee these three occasions. As for the money, it shall presently be carried to thy house; as for the government, I make thy son viceroy of Egypt; and as for the marriage, I give him to wife such an one, the daughter of our Lord the Commander of the Faithful, at a dowry of such and such a sum. So depart in the assurance of God the Most High.”

So Abdulmelik went away to his house, whither he found that the money had foregone him, and on the morrow Jaafer presented himself before the Khalif and acquainted him with what had passed and that he had appointed Abdulmelik’s son governor of Egypt and had promised him his daughter in marriage. Er Reshid approved of this and confirmed the appointment and the marriage. [Then he sent for the young man] and he went not forth of the palace of the Khalif till he wrote him the patent [of investiture with the government] of Egypt; and he let bring the Cadis and the witnesses and drew up the contract of marriage.

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ER RESHID AND THE BARMECIDES.

It is said that the most extraordinary of that which happened to Er Reshid was as follows: His brother El Hadi, when he succeeded to the Khalifate, enquired of a seal-ring of great price, that had belonged to his father El Mehdi, and it came to his knowledge that Er Reshid had taken it. So he required it of the latter, who refused to give it up, and El Hadi insisted upon him, but he still denied the seal-ring of the Khalifate. Now this was on the bridge [over the Tigris], and he threw the ring into the river. When El Hadi died and Er Reshid succeeded to the Khalifate, he came in person to that bridge, with a seal-ring of lead, which he threw into the river at the same place, and bade the divers seek it. So they did [his bidding] and brought up the first ring, and this was reckoned [an omen] of Er Reshid's good fortune and [a presage of] the continuance of his reign.

When Er Reshid came to the throne, he invested Jaafer ben Yehya ben Khalid el Bermeki with the vizierate. Now Jaafer was eminently distinguished for generosity and munificence, and the stories of him to this effect are renowned and are written in the books. None of the viziers attained to the rank and favour which he enjoyed with Er Reshid, who was wont to call him brother and used to carry him with him into his house. The period of his vizierate was nineteen years, and Yehya one day said to his son Jaafer, "O my son, what time thy reed trembleth, water it with kindness." Opinions differ concerning the reason of Jaafer's slaughter, but the better is as follows. Er Reshid could not brook to be parted from Jaafer nor from his [own] sister Abbaseh, daughter of El Mehdi, a single hour, and she was the loveliest woman of her time; so he said to Jaafer, "I will marry thee to her, that it may be lawful to thee to look upon her, but thou shalt not touch her." [Accordingly, they were married] and they used both to be present in Er Reshid's sitting chamber. Now the Khalif would rise bytimes [and go forth] from the chamber, and they being both young and filled with wine, Jaafer would rise to her and swive her. She conceived by him and bore a handsome boy and fearing Er Reshid, despatched the newborn child by one of her confidants to

Mecca the Holy, may God the Most High advance it in honour and increase it in venerance and nobility and magnification! The affair abode concealed till there befell despite between Abbaseh and one of her slave-girls, whereupon the latter discovered the affair of the child to Er Reshid and acquainted him with its abiding-place. So, when the Khalif made the pilgrimage, he despatched one who brought him the boy and found the affair true, wherefore he caused befall the Barmecides that which befell.

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IBN ES SEMMAK AND ER RESHID.

It is related that Ibn es Semmak went in one day to Er Reshid and the Khalif, being athirst, called for drink. So his cup was brought him, and when he took it, Ibn es Semmak said to him, “Softly, O Commander of the Faithful! If thou wert denied this draught, with what wouldst thou buy it?” “With the half of my kingdom,” answered the Khalif; and Ibn es Semmak said, “Drink and God prosper it to thee!” Then, when he had drunken, he said to him, “If thou wert denied the going forth of the draught from thy body, with what wouldst thou buy its issue?” “With the whole of my kingdom,” answered Er Reshid: and Ibn es Semmak said, “O Commander of the Faithful, verily, a kingdom that weigheth not in the balance against a draught [of water] or a voiding of urine is not worth the striving for.” And Haroun wept.

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EL MAMOUN AND ZUBEIDEH

It is said that El Mamoun came one day upon Zubeideh, mother of El Amin, and saw her moving her lips and muttering somewhat he understood not; so he said to her, “O mother mine, dost thou imprecate [curses] upon me, for that I slew thy son and despoiled him of his kingdom?” “Not so, by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful!” answered she, and he said, “What then saidst thou?” Quoth she, “Let the Commander of the Faithful excuse me.” But he was instant with her, saying, “Needs must thou tell it.” And she replied, “I said, ‘God confound importunity!’” “How so?” asked the Khalif, and she said, “I played one day at chess with the Commander of the Faithful [Haroun er Reshid] and he imposed on me the condition of commandment and acceptance. He beat me and bade me put off my clothes and go round about the palace, naked; so I did this, and I incensed against him. Then we fell again to playing and I beat him; so I bade him go to the kitchen and swive the foulest and sorriest wench of the wenches thereof. [I went to the kitchen] and found not a slave-girl fouler and filthier than thy mother; so I bade him swive her. He did as I bade him and she became with child by him of thee, and thus was I [by my unlucky insistance] the cause of the slaying of my son and the despoiling him of his kingdom.” When El Mamoun heard this, he turned away, saying, “God curse the importunate!” to wit, himself, who had importuned her till she acquainted him with that matter.

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EN NUMAN AND THE ARAB OF THE BENOU TAI.

It is said that En Numan had two boon-companions, one of whom was called Ibn Saad and the other Amrou ben el Melik, and he became one night drunken and bade bury them alive; so they buried them. When he arose on the morrow, he enquired for them and was acquainted with their case, whereupon he built over them a monument and appointed to himself a day of ill-luck and a day of good-luck. If any met him on his day of ill-omen, he slew him and with his blood he washed the monument aforesaid, the which is a place well known in Cufa; and if any met him on his day of grace, he enriched him.

Now there accosted him once, on his day of ill-omen, an Arab of the Benou Tai, and En Numan would have put him to death; but the Arab said, “God quicken the king! I have two little girls and have made none guardian over them; so, if the king see fit to grant me leave to go to them, I will give him the covenant of God that I will return to him, whenas I have appointed them a guardian.” En Numan had compassion on him and said to him, “If a man will be surety for thee of those who are with us, [I will let thee go], and if thou return not, I will put him to death.” Now there was with En Numan his vizier Sherik ben Amrou; so the Tai looked at him and said,

Sherik ben Amrou, what device avails the hand of death to stay? O
brother of the brotherless, brother of all th’ afflicted,
say.
Brother of En Numan, with thee lies an old man’s anguish to
allay, A graybeard slain, may God make fair his deeds upon
the Reckoning-Day!
Quoth Sherik, “On me be his warranty, may God assain the king!”
So the Tai departed, after a term had been assigned him for
his coming.

When the appointed day arrived, En Numan sent for Sherik and said to him, “Verily the first part of this day is past.” And Sherik answered, “The king hath no recourse against me till it be eventide.”

When it evened, there appeared one afar off and En Numan fell to looking upon him and on Sherik, and the latter said to him, “Thou hast no right over me till yonder fellow come, for belike he is my man.” As he spoke, up came the Tai in haste and En Numan said “By Allah, never saw I [any] more generous than you two! I know not whether of you is the more generous, this one who became warrant for thee in [danger of] death or thou who returnest unto slaughter.” Then said he to Sherik, “What prompted thee to become warrant for him, knowing that it was death?” And he said, “[I did this] lest it be said, ‘Generosity hath departed from viziers.’” Then said En Numan to the Tai, “And thou, what prompted thee to return, knowing that therein was death and thine own destruction?” Quoth the Arab, “[I did this] lest it be said, ‘Fidelity hath departed from the folk.’” And En Numan said, “By Allah, I will be the third of you, lest it be said, ‘Clemency hath departed from kings.’” So he pardoned him and bade abolish the day of ill-omen; whereupon the Arab recited the following verses:

Full many a man incited me to infidelity, But I refused, for all
the talk wherewith they set on me.
I am a man in whom good faith’s a natural attribute; The deeds of
every upright man should with his speech agree.

Quoth En Numan, “What prompted thee to keep faith, the case being as thou sayest?” “O king,” answered the Arab, “it was my religion.” And En Numan said, “What is thy religion?” “The Christian,” replied the other. Quoth the king, “Expound it unto me.” [So the Tai expounded it to him] and En Numan became a Christian.

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FIROUZ AND HIS WIFE

A certain king sat one day on the roof of his palace, diverting himself with looking about him, and presently, chancing to look aside, he espied, on [the roof of] a house over against his palace, a woman, never saw his eyes her like. So he turned to those who were present and said to them, "To whom belongeth yonder house?" "To thy servant Firouz," answered they, "and that is his wife." So he went down, (and indeed love had made him drunken and he was passionately enamoured of her), and calling Firouz, said to him, "Take this letter and go with it to such a city and bring me the answer." Firouz took the letter and going to his house, laid it under his head and passed that night. When the morning morrowed, he took leave of his wife and set out for the city in question, unknowing what the king purposed against him.

As for the king, he arose in haste and disguising himself, repaired to the house of Firouz and knocked at the door. Quoth Firouz's wife, "Who is at the door?" And he answered, saying, "I am the king, thy husband's master." So she opened the door and he entered and sat down, saying, "We are come to visit thee." Quoth she, "I seek refuge [with God] from this visitation, for indeed I deem not well thereof." And the king said, "O desire of hearts, I am thy husband's master and methinks thou knowest me not." "Nay," answered she, "I know thee, O my lord and master, and I know thy purpose and that which thou seekest and that thou art my husband's lord. I understand what thou wishest, and indeed the poet hath forestalled thee in his saying of the following verses, in reference to thy case:

Your water I'll leave without drinking, for there Too many
already have drunken whilere.
When the flies light on food, from the platter my hand I raise,
though my spirit should long for the fare;
And whenas the dogs at a fountain have lapped, The lions to drink
of the water forbear."

Then said she, "O king, comest thou to a [watering-]place whereat thy dog hath drunken and wilt thou drink thereof?" The king was abashed at her and at her words and went out from her, but forgot his sandal in the house.

As for Firouz, when he went forth from his house, he sought the letter, but found it not; so he returned home. Now his return fell in with the king's going forth and he found the latter's sandal in his house, whereat his wit was dazed and he knew that the king had not sent him away but for a purpose of his own. However, he held his peace and spoke not a word, but, taking the letter, went on his errand and accomplished it and returned to the king, who gave him a hundred dinars. So Firouz betook himself to the market and bought what beseemeth women of goodly gifts and returning to his wife, saluted her and gave her all that he had brought and said to her, "Arise [go] to thy father's house." "Wherefore?" asked she, and he said, "Verily, the king hath been bountiful to me and I would have thee show forth this, so thy father may rejoice in that which he seeth upon thee." "With all my heart," answered she and arising forthright, betook herself to the house of her father, who rejoiced in her coming and in that which he saw upon her; and she abode with him a month's space, and her husband made no mention of her.

Then came her brother to him and said, "O Firouz, an thou wilt not acquaint me with the reason of thine anger against thy wife, come and plead with us before the king." Quoth he, "If ye will have me plead with you, I will do so." So they went to the king and found the cadi sitting with him; whereupon quoth the damsel's brother, "God assist our lord the cadi! I let this man on hire a high-walled garden, with a well in good case and trees laden with fruit; but he beat down its walls and ruined its well and ate its fruits, and now he desireth to return it to me." The cadi turned to Firouz and said to him, "What sayst thou, O youth?" And he answered, "Indeed, I delivered him the garden in the goodliest of case." So the cadi said to the brother, "Hath he delivered thee the garden, as he saith?" And the other replied, "No; but I desire to question him of the reason of his returning it." Quoth the cadi, "What sayst thou, O youth?" And Firouz answered, "I returned it in my own despite, for that I entered it one day and saw the track of the lion; wherefore I feared lest, if I entered it again, the lion should devour me. So that which I did, I did of reverence to him and for fear of him.”

Now the king was leaning back upon the cushion, when he heard the man’s words, he knew the purport thereof; so he sat up and said, “Return to thy garden in all assurance and ease of heart; for, by Allah, never saw I the like of thy garden nor stouter of ward than its walls over its trees!” So Firouz returned to his wife, and the cadi knew not the truth of the affair, no, nor any of those who were in that assembly, save the king and the husband and the damsel’s brother.

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KING SHAH BEKHT AND HIS VIZIER ER REHWAN.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, a king of the kings of the time, by name Shah Bekht, who had troops and servants and guards galore and a vizier called Er Rehwan, who was wise, understanding, a man of good counsel and a cheerful acceptor of the commandments of God the Most High, to whom belong might and majesty. The king committed to him the affairs of his kingdom and his subjects and said according to his word, and on this wise he abode a long space of time.

Now this vizier had many enemies, who envied him his high place and still sought to do him hurt, but found no way thereunto, and God, in His fore-knowledge and His fore-ordinance from time immemorial, decreed that the king dreamt that the Vizier Er Rehwan gave him a fruit from off a tree and he ate it and died. So he awoke, affrighted and troubled, and when the vizier had presented himself before him [and withdrawn] and the king was alone with those in whom he trusted, he related to them his dream and they counselled him to send for the astrologers and interpreters [of dreams] and commended to him a sage, for whose skill and wisdom they vouched. So the king sent for him and entreated him with honour and made him draw near to himself. Now there had been private with the sage in question a company of the vizier's enemies, who besought him to slander the vizier to the king and counsel him to put him to death, in consideration of that which they promised him of wealth galore; and he agreed with them of this and told the king that the vizier would slay him in the course of the [ensuing] month and bade him hasten to put him to death, else would he surely slay him.

Presently, the vizier entered and the king signed to him to cause avoid the place. So he signed to those who were present to withdraw, and they departed; whereupon quoth the king to him, "How deemest thou, O excellent vizier, O loyal counsellor in all manner of governance, of a vision I have seen in my sleep?" "What is it, O king?" asked the vizier, and Shah Bekht related to him his dream, adding, "And indeed the sage interpreted it to me and said to me, 'An thou put not the vizier to death within a month, he will slay thee.' Now I am exceeding both to put the like of thee to death, yet do I fear to leave thee on life. What then dost thou counsel me that I should do in this matter?" The vizier bowed his head awhile, then raised it and said, "God prosper the king! Verily, it skills not to continue him on life of whom the king is afraid, and my counsel is that thou make haste to put me to death."

When the king heard his speech, he turned to him and said, "It is grievous to me, O vizier of good counsel." And he told him that the [other] sages testified [to the correctness of their fellow's interpretation of the dream]; whereupon Er Rehwan sighed and knew that the king went in fear of him; but he showed him fortitude and said to him, "God assain the king! My counsel is that the king accomplish his commandment and execute his ordinance, for that needs must death be and it is liefer to me that I die, oppressed, than that I die, an oppressor. But, if the king see fit to defer the putting of me to death till the morrow and will pass this night with me and take leave of me, when the morrow cometh, the king shall do what he will."

Then he wept till he wet his gray hairs and the king was moved to compassion for him and granted him that which he sought and vouchsafed him that night's respite.

The First Night of the Month

When it was eventide, the king caused avoid his sitting chamber and summoned the vizier, who presented himself and making his obeisance to the king, kissed the earth before him and bespoke him as follows:

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

STORY OF THE MAN OF KHORASSAN, HIS SON AND HIS GOVERNOR.

“There was once a man of Khorassan and he had a son, whose improvement he ardently desired; but the young man sought to be alone and to remove himself from his father’s eye, so he might give himself up to pleasance and delight. So he sought of his father [leave to make] the pilgrimage to the Holy House of God and to visit the tomb of the Prophet (whom God bless and keep!). Now between them and Mecca was a journey of five hundred parasangs; but his father could not gainsay him, for that the law of God made this incumbent on him and because of that which he hoped for him of improvement [therefrom]. So he joined unto him a governor, in whom he trusted, and gave him much money and took leave of him. The son set out on the holy pilgrimage with the governor and abode on that wise, spending freely and using not thrift.

Now there was in his neighbourhood a poor man, who had a slave-girl of surpassing beauty and loveliness, and the youth became enamoured of her and suffered grief and concern for the love of her and her loveliness, so that he was like to perish for passion; and she also loved him with a love yet greater than his love for her. So she called an old woman who used to visit her and acquainted her with her case, saying, ‘An I foregather not with him, I shall die.’ The old woman promised her that she would do her endeavour to bring her to her desire; so she veiled herself and repairing to the young man, saluted him and acquainted him with the girl’s case, saying, ‘Her master is a covetous man; so do thou invite him [to thy lodging] and tempt him with money, and he will sell thee the damsel.’

Accordingly, he made a banquet, and stationing himself in the man’s way, invited him and carried him to his house, where they sat down and ate and drank and abode in discourse. Presently, the young man said to the other, ‘I hear that thou hast with thee a slave-girl, whom thou desirest to sell.’ And he answered, saying, ‘By Allah, O my lord, I have no mind to sell her!’ Quoth the youth, ‘I hear that she cost thee a thousand dinars, and I will give thee six hundred, to boot.’ And the other said, ‘I sell her to thee [at that price].’ So they fetched notaries, who drew up the contract of sale, and the young man counted out to the girl's master half the purchase money, saying, 'Let her be with thee till I complete to thee the rest of the price and take my slave-girl.' The other consented to this and took of him a bond for the rest of the money, and the girl abode with her master, on deposit.

As for the youth, he gave his governor a thousand dirhems and despatched him to his father, to fetch money from him, so he might pay the rest of the girl's price, saying to him, 'Be not [long] absent.' But the governor said in himself, 'How shall I go to his father and say to him, "Thy son hath wasted thy money and wantoned it away"? With what eye shall I look on him, and indeed, I am he in whom he confided and to whom he hath entrusted his son? Indeed, this were ill seen. Nay, I will fare on to the pilgrimage [with the caravan of pilgrims], in despite of this fool of a youth; and when he is weary [of waiting], he will demand back the money [he hath already paid] and return to his father, and I shall be quit of travail and reproach.' So he went on with the caravan to the pilgrimage and took up his abode there.

Meanwhile, the youth abode expecting his governor's return, but he returned not; wherefore concern and chagrin waxed upon him, because of his mistress, and his longing for her redoubled and he was like to slay himself. She became aware of this and sent him a messenger, bidding him to her. So he went to her and she questioned him of the case; whereupon he told her what was to do of the matter of his governor, and she said to him, 'With me is longing the like of that which is with thee, and I misdoubt me thy messenger hath perished or thy father hath slain him; but I will give thee all my trinkets and my clothes, and do thou sell them and pay the rest of my price, and we will go, I and thou, to thy father.'

So she gave him all that she possessed and he sold it and paid the rest of her price; after which there remained to him a hundred dirhems. These he spent and lay that night with the damsel in all delight of life, and his soul was like to fly for joy; but when he arose in the morning, he sat weeping and the damsel said to him, 'What aileth thee to weep?' And he said, 'I know not if my father be dead, and he hath none other heir but myself; and how shall I win to him, seeing I have not a dirhem?' Quoth she, 'I have a bracelet; do thou sell it and buy small pearls with the price. Then bray them and fashion them into great pearls, and thereon thou shalt gain much money, wherewith we may make our way to thy country.' So he took the bracelet and repairing to a goldsmith, said to him, 'Break up this bracelet and sell it.' But he said, 'The king seeketh a good bracelet; I will go to him and bring thee the price thereof.' So he carried the bracelet to the Sultan and it pleased him greatly, by reason of the goodliness of its workmanship. Then he called an old woman, who was in his palace, and said to her, 'Needs must I have the mistress of this bracelet, though but for a single night, or I shall die.' And the old woman answered, 'I will bring her to thee.'

So she donned a devotee's habit and betaking herself to the goldsmith, said to him, 'To whom belongeth the bracelet that is in the king's hand?' Quoth he, 'It belongeth to a man, a stranger, who hath bought him a slave-girl from this city and lodgeth with her in such a place.' So the old woman repaired to the young man's house and knocked at the door. The damsel opened to her and seeing her clad in devotee's apparel, saluted her and said to her, ' Belike thou hast an occasion with us?' 'Yes,' answered the old woman; 'I desire privacy and ablution.' Quoth the girl, 'Enter.' So she entered and did her occasion and made the ablution and prayed. Then she brought out a rosary and began to tell her beads thereon, and the damsel said to her, 'Whence comest thou, O pilgrim?' Quoth she '[I come] from [visiting] the Idol of the Absent in such a church. There standeth up no woman [to prayer] before him, who hath an absent friend and discovereth to him her need, but he acquainteth her with her case and giveth her tidings of her absent one.' 'O pilgrim,' said the damsel, 'we have an absent one, and my lord's heart cleaveth to him and I desire to go to the idol and question him of him.' Quoth the old woman, '[Wait] till to-morrow and ask leave of thy husband, and I will come to thee and go with thee in weal.'

Then she went away, and when the girl's master came, she sought his leave to go with the old woman and he granted her leave. So the beldam took her and carried her to the king's door. The damsel entered with her, unknowing whither she went, and beheld a goodly house and chambers adorned [with gold and colours] that were no idol’s chambers. Then came the king and seeing her beauty and grace, went up to her, to kiss her; whereupon she fell down in a fit and strove with her hands and feet. When he saw this, he was solicitous for her and held aloof from her and left her; but the thing was grievous to her and she refused meat and drink, and as often as the king drew near her, she fled from him in affright, wherefore he swore by Allah that he would not approach her, save with her consent, and fell to guerdoning her with trinkets and raiment, but she only redoubled in aversion to him.

Meanwhile, the youth her master abode expecting her; but she returned not and his heart forbode him of the draught [of separation]; so he went forth at hazard, distraught and knowing not what he should do, and fell to strewing dust upon his head and crying out, ‘The old woman hath taken her and gone away!’ The boys followed him with stones and pelted him, saying, ‘A madman! A madman!’ Presently, the king’s chamberlain, who was a man of age and worth, met him, and when he saw his youth, he forbade the boys and drove there away from him, after which he accosted him and questioned him of his case. So he told him how it was with him and the chamberlain said to him, ‘Fear not: all shall yet be well with thee. I will deliver thy slave-girl for thee: so calm thy trouble.’ And he went on to speak him fair and comfort him, till he put faith in his speech.

Then he carried him to his house and stripping him of his clothes, clad him in rags; after which he called an old woman, who was his stewardess, and said to her. ‘Take this youth and clap on his neck this iron chain and go round about with him in all the thoroughfares of the city; and when thou hast made an end of this, go up with him to the palace of the king.’ And he said to the youth, ‘In whatsoever place thou seest the damsel, speak not a syllable, but acquaint me with her place and thou shall owe her deliverance to none but me.’ The youth thanked him and went with the old woman on such wise as the chamberlain bade him. She fared on with him till they entered the city [and made the round thereof]; after which she went up to the palace of the king and fell to saying, ‘O people of affluence, look on a youth whom the devils take twice in the day and pray for preservation from [a like] affliction!’ And she ceased not to go round about with him till she came to the eastern wing of the palace, whereupon the slave-girls came out to look upon him and when they saw him they were amazed at his beauty and grace and wept for him.

Then they told the damsel, who came forth and looked upon him and knew him not. But he knew her; so he bowed his head and wept. She was moved to compassion for him and gave him somewhat and returned to her place, whilst the youth returned with the stewardess to the chamberlain and told him that she was in the king's house, whereat he was chagrined and said, 'By Allah, I will assuredly contrive a device for her and deliver her!' Whereupon the youth kissed his hands and feet. Then he turned to the old woman and bade her change her apparel and her favour. Now this old woman was goodly of speech and nimble of wit; so he gave her costly and delicious perfumes and said to her, 'Get thee to the king's slave girls and sell them these [perfumes] and make thy way to the damsel and question her if she desire her master or not.' So the old woman went out and making her way to the palace, went in to the damsel and drew near her and recited the following verses:

God keep the days of love-delight! How dearly sweet they were!
How joyous and how solaceful was life in them whilere!
Would he were not who sundered us upon the parting day! How many
a body hath he slain, how many a bone laid bare?
Sans fault of mine, my blood and tears he shed and beggared me Of
him I love, yet for himself gained nought thereby whate'er.

When the damsel heard these verses, she wept till her clothes were drenched and drew near the old woman, who said to her, 'Knowest thou such an one?' And wept and said, 'He is my lord. Whence knowest thou him?' 'O my lady,' answered the old woman, 'sawst thou not the madman who came hither yesterday with the old woman? He was thy lord. But this is no time for talk. When it is night, get thee to the top of the palace [and wait] on the roof till thy lord come to thee and contrive for thy deliverance.' Then she gave her what she would of perfumes and returning to the chamberlain, acquainted him with that which had passed, and he told the youth.

When it was eventide, the chamberlain let bring two horses and great store of water and victual and a saddle-camel and a man to show them the way. These he hid without the town, whilst he and the young man took with them a long rope, made fast to a staple, and repaired to the palace. When they came thither, they looked and beheld the damsel standing on the roof. So they threw her the rope and the staple; whereupon she [made the latter fast to the parapet and] wrapping her sleeves about her hands, slid down [the rope] and landed with them. They carried her without the town, where they mounted, she and her lord, and fared on, whilst the guide forewent them, directing them in the way, and they gave not over going night and day till they entered his father's house. The young man saluted his father, who rejoiced in him, and he related to him all that had befallen him, whereupon he rejoiced in his safety.

As for the governor, he wasted all that was with him and returned to the city, where he saw the youth and excused himself to him. Then he questioned him of what had befallen him and he told him, whereat he marvelled and returned to companionship with him; but the youth ceased to have regard for him and gave him not stipends, as of his [former] wont, neither discovered to him aught of his secrets. When the governor saw that there was no profit for him with the young Khorassani, he returned to the king, the ravisher of the damsel, and told him what the chamberlain had done and counselled him to slay the latter and incited him to recover the damsel, [promising] to give his friend to drink of poison and return. So the king sent for the chamberlain and upbraided him; whereupon he fell upon him and slew him and the king's servants fell upon the chamberlain and slew him.

Meanwhile, the governor returned to the youth, who questioned him of his absence, and he told him that he had been in the city of the king who had taken the damsel. When the youth heard this, he misdoubted of the governor and never again trusted him in aught, but was still on his guard against him. Then the governor made great store of sweetmeats and put in them deadly poison and presented them to the youth. When the latter saw the sweetmeats, he said in himself, 'This is an extraordinary thing of the governor! Needs must there be mischief in this sweetmeat, and I will make proof of it upon himself.' So he made ready victual and set on the sweetmeat amongst it and bade the governor to his house and set food before him. He ate and amongst the rest, they brought him the poisoned sweetmeat; so he ate thereof and died forthright; whereby the youth knew that this was a plot against himself and said, ‘He who seeketh his fortune of his own [unaided] might attaineth it not.’ Nor (continued the vizier) is this, O king of the age, more extraordinary than the story of the druggist and his wife and the singer.”

When King Shah Bekht heard his vizier’s story, he gave him leave to withdraw to his own house and he abode there the rest of the night and the next day till the evening.

The Second Night of the Month

When the evening evened, the king sat in his privy sitting-chamber and his mind was occupied with the story of the singer and the druggist. So he called the vizier and bade him tell the story. “It is well,” answered he, “They tell, O my lord, that

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STORY OF THE SINGER AND THE DRUGGIST.

There was once in the city of Hemadan a young man of comely aspect and excellently skilled in singing to the lute, and he was well seen of the people of the city. He went forth one day of his city, with intent to travel, and gave not over journeying till his travel brought him to a goodly city. Now he had with him a lute and what pertained thereto, so he entered and went round about the city till he fell in with a druggist, who, when he espied him, called to him. So he went up to him and he bade him sit down. Accordingly, he sat down by him and the druggist questioned him of his case. The singer told him what was in his mind and the other took him up into his shop and brought him food and fed him. Then said he to him, 'Arise and take up thy lute and beg about the streets, and whenas thou smellest the odour of wine, break in upon the drinkers and say to them, "I am a singer." They will laugh and say, "Come, [sing] to us." And when thou singest, the folk will know thee and bespeak one another of thee; so shall thou become known in the city and thine affairs will prosper.'

So he went round about, as the druggist bade him, till the sun grew hot, but found none drinking. Then he entered a by-street, that he might rest himself, and seeing there a handsome and lofty house, stood in its shade and fell to observing the goodliness of its ordinance. As he was thus engaged, behold, a window opened and there appeared thereat a face, as it were the moon. Quoth she, 'What aileth thee to stand there? Dost thou want aught?' And he answered, 'I am a stranger,' and acquainted her with his case; whereupon quoth she, 'What sayst thou to meat and drink and the enjoyment of a fair-face[d one] and getting thee what thou mayst spend?' 'O my lady,' answered he, 'this is my desire and that in quest whereof I am going about.'

So she opened the door to him and brought him in. Then she seated him at the upper end of the room and set food before him. So he ate and drank and lay with her and swived her. Then she sat down in his lap and they toyed and laughed and kissed till the day was half spent, when her husband came home and she could find nothing for it but to hide the singer in a rug, in which she rolled him up. The husband entered and seeing the place disordered and smelling the odour of wine, questioned her of this. Quoth she, ‘I had with me a friend of mine and I conjured her [to drink with me]; so we drank a jar [of wine], she and I, and she went away but now, before thy coming in.’ Her husband, (who was none other than the singer’s friend the druggist, that had invited him and fed him), deemed her words true and went away to his shop, whereupon the singer came forth and he and the lady returned to their sport and abode on this wise till eventide, when she gave him money and said to him, ‘Come hither to-morrow in the forenoon.’ ‘It is well,’ answered he and departed; and at nightfall he went to the bath.

On the morrow, he betook himself to the shop of his friend the druggist, who welcomed him and questioned him of his case and how he had fared that day. Quoth the singer, ‘May God requite thee with good, O my brother! For that thou hast directed me unto easance!’ And he related to him his adventure with the woman, till he came to the mention of her husband, when he said, ‘And at midday came the cuckold her husband and knocked at the door. So she wrapped me in the mat, and when he had gone about his business, I came forth and we returned to what we were about.’ This was grievous to the druggist and he repented of having taught him [how he should do] and misdoubted of his wife. So he said to the singer, ‘And what said she to thee at thy going away?’ And the other answered, ‘She bade me come back to her on the morrow. So, behold, I am going to her and I came not hither but that I might acquaint thee with this, lest thy heart be occupied with me.’ Then he took leave of him and went his way. As soon as the druggist was assured that he had reached the house, he cast the net over his shop and made for his house, misdoubting of his wife, and knocked at the door.

Now the singer had entered and the druggist’s wife said to him, ‘Arise, enter this chest.’ So he entered it and she shut the lid on him and opened to her husband, who came in, in a state of bewilderment, and searched the house, but found none and overlooked the chest. So he said in himself, ‘The house [of which the singer spoke] is one which resembleth my house and the woman is one who resembles my wife,' and returned to his shop; whereupon the singer came forth of the chest and falling upon the druggist's wife, did his occasion and paid her her due and weighed down the scale for her. Then they ate and drank and kissed and clipped, and on this wise they abode till the evening, when she gave him money, for that she found his weaving good, and made him promise to come to her on the morrow.

So he left her and slept his night and on the morrow he repaired to the shop of his friend the druggist and saluted him. The other welcomed him and questioned him of his case; whereupon he told him how he had fared, till he came to the mention of the woman's husband, when he said, 'Then came the cuckold her husband and she clapped me into the chest and shut the lid on me, whilst her addlepated pimp of a husband went round about the house, top and bottom; and when he had gone his way, we returned to what we were about.' With this, the druggist was certified that the house was his house and the wife his wife, and he said, 'And what wilt thou do to-day?' Quoth the singer, 'I shall return to her and weave for her and full her yarn, and I came but to thank thee for thy dealing with me.'

Then he went away, whilst the fire was loosed in the heart of the druggist and he shut his shop and betaking himself to his house, knocked at the door. Quoth the singer, 'Let me get into the chest, for he saw me not yesterday.' 'Nay,' answered she, 'wrap thyself up in the rug.' So he wrapped himself up in the rug and stood in a corner of the room, whilst the druggist entered and went straight to the chest, but found it empty. Then he went round about the house and searched it from top to bottom, but found nothing and no one and abode between belief and disbelief, and said in himself, 'Belike, I suspect my wife of that which is not in her.' So he was certified of her innocence and returned to his shop, whereupon out came the singer and they abode on their former case, as of wont, till eventide, when she gave him one of her husband's shirts and he took it and going away, passed the night in his lodging.

On the morrow, he repaired to the druggist, who saluted him and came to meet him and rejoiced in him and smiled in his face, deeming his wife innocent. Then he questioned him of his yesterday's case and he told him how he had fared, saying, 'O my brother, when the cuckold knocked at the door, I would have entered the chest; but his wife forbade me and rolled me up in the rug. The man entered and thought of nothing but the chest; so he broke it open and abode as he were a madman, going up and coming down. Then he went his way and I came out and we abode on our wonted case till eventide, when she gave me this shirt of her husband's; and behold, I am going to her.'

When the druggist heard the singer's words, he was certified of the case and knew that the calamity, all of it, was in his own house and that the wife was his wife; and he saw the shirt, whereupon he redoubled in certainty and said to the singer, 'Art thou now going to her?' 'Yes, O my brother,' answered he and taking leave of him, went away; whereupon the druggist started up, as he were a madman, and ungarnished his shop. Whilst he was thus engaged, the singer won to the house, and presently up came the druggist and knocked at the door. The singer would have wrapped himself up in the rug, but she forbade him and said to him, 'Get thee down to the bottom of the house and enter the oven and shut the lid upon thyself.' So he did as she bade him and she went down to her husband and opened the door to him, whereupon he entered and went round about the house, but found no one and overlooked the oven. So he stood meditating and swore that he would not go forth of the house till the morrow.

As for the singer, when his [stay in the oven] grew long upon him, he came forth therefrom, thinking that her husband had gone away. Then he went up to the roof and looking down, beheld his friend the druggist; whereat he was sore concerned and said in himself, 'Alas, the disgrace of it! This is my friend the druggist, who dealt kindly with me and wrought me fair and I have requited him with foul' And he feared to return to the druggist; so he went down and opened the first door and would have gone out; but, when he came to the outer door, he found it locked and saw not the key. So he stole up again to the roof and cast himself down into the [next] house. The people of the house heard him and hastened to him, deeming him a thief. Now the house in question belonged to a Persian; so they laid hands on him and the master of the house began to beat him, saying to him, 'Thou art a thief.' 'Nay,' answered he, 'I am no thief, but a singing-man, a stranger. I heard your voices and came to sing to you.'

When the folk heard his words, they talked of letting him go; but the Persian said, ‘O folk, let not his speech beguile you. This fellow is none other than a thief who knoweth how to sing, and when he happeneth on the like of us, he is a singer.’ ‘O our lord,’ answered they, ‘this man is a stranger, and needs must we release him.’ Quoth he, ‘By Allah, my heart revolteth from this fellow! Let me make an end of him with beating.’ But they said, ‘Thou mayst nowise do that’ So they delivered the singer from the Persian, the master of the house, and seated him amongst them, whereupon he fell to singing to them and they rejoiced in him.

Now the Persian had a mameluke, as he were the full moon, and he arose [and went out], and the singer followed him and wept before him, professing love to him and kissing his hands and feet. The mameluke took compassion on him and said to him, ‘When the night cometh and my master entereth [the harem] and the folk go away, I will grant thee thy desire; and I lie in such a place.’ Then the singer returned and sat with the boon-companions, and the Persian rose and went out, he and the mameluke beside him. [Then they returned and sat down.] Now the singer knew the place that the mameluke occupied at the first of the night; but it befell that he rose from his place and the candle went out. The Persian, who was drunken, fell over on his face, and the singer, supposing him to be the mameluke, said, ‘By Allah, it is good!’ and threw himself upon him and clipped him, whereupon the Persian started up, crying out, and laying hands on the singer, pinioned him and beat him grievously, after which he bound him to a tree that was in the house.

Now there was in the house a fair singing-girl and when she saw the singer pinioned and bound to the tree, she waited till the Persian lay down on his couch, when she arose and going to the singer, fell to condoling with him over what had betided him and ogling him and handling his yard and rubbing it, till it rose on end. Then said she to him, ‘Do thou swive me and I will loose thy bonds, lest he return and beat thee again; for he purposeth thee evil.’ Quoth he, ‘Loose me and I will do.’ But she said, ‘I fear that, [if I loose thee], thou wilt not do. But I will do, and thou standing; and when I have done, I will loose thee.’ So saying, she pulled up her clothes and sitting down on the singer’s yard, fell to going and coming.

Now there was in the house a ram, with which the Persian used to butt, and when he saw what the woman did, he thought she would butt with him; so he broke his halter and running at her, butted her and broke her head. She fell on her back and cried out; whereupon the Persian started up from sleep in haste and seeing the singing-girl [cast down on her back] and the singer with his yard on end, said to the latter, ‘O accursed one, doth not what thou hast already done suffice thee?’ Then he beat him soundly and opening the door, put him out in the middle of the night.

He lay the rest of the night in one of the ruins, and when he arose in the morning, he said, ‘None is to blame. I sought my own good, and he is no fool who seeketh good for himself; and the druggist’s wife also sought good for herself; but destiny overcometh precaution and there remaineth no abiding for me in this town.’ So he went forth from the city. Nor (added the vizier) is this story, extraordinary though it be, more extraordinary than that of the king and his son and that which bedded them of wonders and rarities.”

When the king heard this story, he deemed it pleasant and said, “This story is near unto that which I know and meseemeth I should do well to have patience and hasten not to slay my vizier, so I may get of him the story of the king and his son.” Then he gave the vizier leave to go away to his own house; so he thanked him and abode in his house all that day.

The Third Night of the Month

When it was the time of the evening meal, the king repaired to the sitting-chamber and summoning the vizier, sought of him the story he had promised him; and the vizier said, “They avouch, O king, that

STORY OF THE KING WHO KNEW THE QUINTESSENCE OF THINGS.

There came to a king of the kings, in his old age, a son, who grew up comely, quick-witted and intelligent, and when he came to years of discretion and became a young man, his father said to him, ‘Take this kingdom and govern it in my stead, for I desire to flee [from the world] to God the Most High and don the gown of wool and give myself up to devotion.’ Quoth the prince, ‘And I also desire to take refuge with God the Most High.’ And the king said, ‘Arise, let us flee forth and make for the mountains and worship in them, for shamefastness before God the Most High.’

So they gat them raiment of wool and clothing themselves therewith, went forth and wandered in the deserts and wastes; but, when some days had passed over them, they became weak for hunger and repented them of that which they had done, whenas repentance profited them not, and the prince complained to his father of weariness and hunger. ‘Dear my son,’ answered the king, ‘I did with thee that which behoved me, but thou wouldst not hearken to me, and now there is no means of returning to thy former estate, for that another hath taken the kingdom and become its defender; but I will counsel thee of somewhat, wherein do thou pleasure me.’ Quoth the prince, ‘What is it?’ And his father said, ‘Take me and go with me to the market and sell me and take my price and do with it what thou wilt, and I shall become the property of one who will provide for my support,’ ‘Who will buy thee of me,’ asked the prince, ‘seeing thou art a very old man? Nay, do thou rather sell me, for the demand for me will be greater.’ But the king said, ‘An thou wert king, thou wouldst require me of service.’

So the youth obeyed his father’s commandment and taking him, carried him to the slave-dealer and said to the latter, ‘Sell me this old man.’ Quoth the dealer, ‘Who will buy this fellow, and he a man of fourscore?’ Then said he to the king, ‘In what crafts dost thou excel?’ Quoth he, ‘I know the quintessence of jewels and I know the quintessence of horses and that of men; brief, I know the quintessence of all things.’ So the dealer took him and went about, offering him for sale to the folk; but none would buy. Presently, up came the overseer of the [Sultan's] kitchen and said, 'What is this man?' And the dealer answered, 'This is a slave for sale.' The cook marvelled at this and bought the king for ten thousand dirhems, after questioning him of what he could do. Then he paid down the money and carried him to his house, but dared not employ him in aught of service; so he appointed him an allowance, such as should suffice for his livelihood, and repented him of having bought him, saying, 'What shall I do with the like of this fellow?'

Presently, the king [of the city] was minded to go forth to his garden, a-pleasuring, and bade the cook forego him thither and appoint in his stead one who should dress meat for the king, so that, when he returned, he might find it ready. So the cook fell a-considering of whom he should appoint and was bewildered concerning his affair. As he was on this wise, the old man came to him and seeing him perplexed how he should do, said to him, 'Tell me what is in thy mind; belike, I may avail to relieve thee.' So he acquainted him with the king's wishes and he said, 'Have no care for this, but leave me one of the serving-men and go thou in peace and surety, for I will suffice thee of this.' So the cook departed with the king, after he had brought the old man what he needed and left him a man of the guards.

When he was gone, the old man bade the trooper wash the kitchen-vessels and made ready passing goodly food. When the king returned, he set the meat before him, and he tasted food whose like he had never known; whereat he marvelled and asked who had dressed it. So they acquainted him with the old man's case and he summoned him to his presence and awarded him a handsome recompense. Moreover, he commanded that they should cook together, he and the cook, and the old man obeyed his commandment.

Awhile after this, there came two merchants to the king with two pearls of price and each of them avouched that his pearl was worth a thousand dinars, but there was none who availed to value them. Then said the cook, 'God prosper the king! Verily, the old man whom I bought avouched that he knew the quintessence of jewels and that he was skilled in cookery. We have made proof of him in cookery and have found him the skilfullest of men; and now, if we send after him and prove him on jewels, [the truth or falsehood of] his pretension will be made manifest to us.'

So the king bade fetch the old man and he came and stood before the Sultan, who showed him the two pearls. Quoth he, 'As for this one, it is worth a thousand dinars.' And the king said, 'So saith its owner.' 'But for this other,' continued the old man, 'it is worth but five hundred.' The folk laughed and marvelled at his saying, and the merchant, [the owner of the second pearl], said to him, 'How can this, which is greater of bulk and purer of water and more perfect of rondure, be less of worth than that?' And the old man answered, 'I have said what is with me.' Then said the king to him, 'Indeed, the outward appearance thereof is like unto that of the other pearl; why then is it worth but the half of its price?' 'Yes,' answered the old man, '[its outward resembleth the other]; but its inward is corrupt.' 'Hath a pearl then an outward and an inward?' asked the merchant, and the old man said, 'Yes. In its inward is a boring worm; but the other pearl is sound and secure against breakage.' Quoth the merchant, 'Give us a token of this and prove to us the truth of thy saying.' And the old man answered, 'We will break the pearl. If I prove a, liar, here is my head, and if I speak truth, thou wilt have lost thy pearl.' And the merchant said, 'I agree to that.' So they broke the pearl and it was even as the old man had said, to wit, in its midst was a boring worm.

The king marvelled at what he saw and questioned him of [how he came by] the knowledge of this. 'O king,' answered the old man, 'this [kind of] jewel is engendered in the belly of a creature called the oyster and its origin is a drop of rain and it is firm to the touch [and groweth not warm, when held in the hand]; so, when [I took the second pearl and felt that] it was warm to the touch, I knew that it harboured some living thing, for that live things thrive not but in heat.' So the king said to the cook, 'Increase his allowance.' And he appointed to him [fresh] allowances.

Awhile after this, two merchants presented themselves to the king with two horses, and one said, 'I ask a thousand dinars for my horse,' and the other, 'I seek five thousand for mine.' Quoth the cook, 'We have experienced the old man's just judgment; what deemeth the king of fetching him?' So the king bade fetch him, and when he saw the two horses, he said, 'This one is worth a thousand and the other two thousand dinars.' Quoth the folk, 'This [horse that thou judgeth the lesser worth] is an evident thoroughbred and he is younger and swifter and more compact of limb than the other, ay, and finer of head and clearer of skin and colour. What token, then, hast thou of the truth of thy saying?' And the old man said, 'This ye say is all true, but his sire is old and this other is the son of a young horse. Now, when the son of an old horse standeth still [to rest,] his breath returneth not to him and his rider falleth into the hand of him who followeth after him; but the son of a young horse, if thou put him to speed and make him run, [then check him] and alight from off him, thou wilt find him untired, by reason of his robustness.'

Quoth the merchant, 'Indeed, it is as the old man avoucheth and he is an excellent judge.' And the king said, 'Increase his allowance.' But the old man stood still and did not go away. So the king said to him, 'Why dost thou not go about thy business?' And he answered, 'My business is with the king.' 'Name what thou wouldst have,' said the king, and the other replied, 'I would have thee question me of the quintessences of men, even as thou hast questioned me of the quintessences of horses.' Quoth the king, 'We have no occasion to question thee of [this].' But the old man replied, 'I have occasion to acquaint thee.' 'Say what thou pleasest,' rejoined the king, and the old man said, 'Verily, the king is the son of a baker.' Quoth the king 'How knowest thou that?' And the other replied, 'Know, O king, that I have examined into degrees and dignities and have learnt this.'

Thereupon the king went in to his mother and questioned her of his father, and she told him that me king her husband was weak; 'wherefore,' quoth she, 'I feared for the kingdom, lest it pass away, after his death; so I took to my bed a young man, a baker, and conceived by him [and bore a son]; and the kingship came into the hand of my son, to wit, thyself.' So the king returned to the old man and said to him, 'I am indeed the son of a baker; so do thou expound to me the means whereby thou knewest me for this.' Quoth the other, 'I knew that, hadst thou been a king's son, thou wouldst have given largesse of things of price, such as rubies [and the like]; and wert thou the son of a Cadi, thou hadst given largesse of a dirhem or two dirhems, and wert thou the son of a merchant, thou hadst given wealth galore. But I saw that thou guerdonest me not but with cakes of bread [and other victual], wherefore I knew that thou wast the son of a baker.' Quoth the king, 'Thou hast hit the mark.' And he gave him wealth galore and advanced him to high estate."

This story pleased King Shah Bekht and he marvelled thereat; but the vizier said to him, "This story is not more extraordinary than that of the rich man who married his fair daughter to the poor old man." The king's mind was occupied with the [promised] story and he bade the vizier withdraw to his lodging. So he [returned to his house and] abode there the rest of the night and the whole of the following day.

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The Fourth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king withdrew to his privy sitting-chamber and bade fetch the vizier. When he presented himself before him, he said to him, “Tell me the story of the wealthy man who married his daughter to the poor old man.” “It is well,” answered the vizier. “Know, O puissant king, that

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STORY OF THE RICH MAN WHO GAVE HIS FAIR DAUGHTER IN MARRIAGE TO THE POOR OLD MAN.

A certain wealthy merchant had a fair daughter, who was as the full moon, and when she attained the age of fifteen, her father betook himself to an old man and spreading him a carpet in his sitting-chamber, gave him to eat and caroused with him. Then said he to him, 'I desire to marry thee to my daughter.' The other excused himself, because of his poverty, and said to him, 'I am not worthy of her nor am I a match for thee.' The merchant was instant with him, but he repeated his answer to him, saying, 'I will not consent to this till thou acquaint me with the reason of thy desire for me. If I find it reasonable, I will fall in with thy wish; and if not, I will not do this ever.'

'Know, then,' said the merchant, 'that I am a man from the land of China and was in my youth well-favoured and well-to-do. Now I made no account of womankind, one and all, but followed after boys, and one night I saw, in a dream, as it were a balance set up, and it was said by it, "This is the portion of such an one." Presently, I heard my own name; so I looked and beheld a woman of the utmost loathliness; whereupon I awoke in affright and said, "I will never marry, lest haply this loathly woman fall to my lot." Then I set out for this city with merchandise and the voyage was pleasant to me and the sojourn here, so that I took up my abode here awhile and got me friends and factors, till I had sold all my merchandise and taken its price and there was left me nothing to occupy me till the folk should depart and depart with them.

One day, I changed my clothes and putting money in my sleeve, sallied forth to explore the holes and corners of this city, and as I was going about, I saw a handsome house. Its goodliness pleased me; so I stood looking on it, and behold, a lovely woman [at the lattice]. When she saw me, she made haste and descended, whilst I abode confounded. Then I betook myself to a tailor there and questioned him of the house and to whom it belonged. Quoth he, "It belongeth to such an one the notary, may God curse him!" "Is he her father?" asked I; [and he replied, "Yes."] So I repaired in haste to a man, with whom I had been used to deposit my goods for sale, and told him that I desired to gain access to such an one the notary. Accordingly he assembled his friends and we betook ourselves to the notary's house. When we came in to him, we saluted him and sat with him, and I said to him, "I come to thee as a suitor, desiring the hand of thy daughter in marriage." Quoth he, "I have no daughter befitting this man." And I rejoined, "God aid thee! My desire is for thee and not for her." But he still refused and his friends said to him, "This is an honourable man and thine equal in estate, and it is not lawful to thee that thou hinder the girl of her fortune." Quoth he to them, "Verily, my daughter whom ye seek is passing foul-favoured and in her are all blameworthy qualities." And I said, "I accept her, though she be as thou sayest." Then said the folk, "Extolled be the perfection of God! A truce to talk! [The thing is settled;] so say the word, how much wilt thou have [to her dowry]?" Quoth he, "I must have four thousand dinars." And I said, "Hearkening and obedience."

So the affair was concluded and we drew up the contract of marriage and I made the bride-feast; but on the wedding-night I beheld a thing than which never made God the Most High aught more loathly. Methought her people had contrived this by way of sport; so I laughed and looked for my mistress, whom I had seen [at the lattice], to make her appearance; but saw her not. When the affair was prolonged and I found none but her, I was like to go mad for vexation and fell to beseeching my Lord and humbling myself in supplication to Him that He would deliver me from her. When I arose in the morning, there came the chamber-woman and said to me, "Hast thou occasion for the bath?" "No," answered I; and she said, "Art thou for breakfast?" But I replied, "No;" and on this wise I abode three days, tasting neither meat nor drink.

When the damsel saw me in this plight, she said to me, "O man, tell me thy story, for, by Allah, an I may avail to thy deliverance, I will assuredly further thee thereto." I gave ear to her speech and put faith in her loyalty and told her the story of the damsel whom I had seen [at the lattice] and how I had fallen in love with her; whereupon quoth she, "If the girl belong to me, that which I possess is thine, and if she belong to my father, I will demand her of him and deliver her to thee." Then she fell to calling slave-girl after slave-girl and showing them to me, till I saw the damsel whom I loved and said, "This is she." Quoth my wife, "Let not thy heart be troubled, for this is my slave-girl. My father gave her to me and I give her to thee. So comfort thyself and be of good heart and cheerful eye."

Then, when it was night, she brought her to me, after she had adorned her and perfumed her, and said to her, "Gainsay not this thy lord in aught that he shall seek of thee." When she came to bed with me, I said in myself, "Verily, this damsel is more generous than I!" Then I sent away the slave-girl and drew not nigh unto her, but arose forthright and betaking myself to my wife, lay with her and did away her maidenhead. She straightway conceived by me and accomplishing the time of her pregnancy, gave birth to this dear little daughter; in whom I rejoiced, for that she was lovely to the utterest, and she hath inherited her mother's wit and her father's comeliness.

Indeed, many of the notables of the people have sought her of me in marriage, but I would not marry her to any, for that, one night, I saw, in a dream, the balance aforesaid set up and men and women being weighed, one against the other, therein, and meseemed I saw thee [and her] and it was said to me, "This is such a man, the allotted portion of such a woman." Wherefore I knew that God the Most High had allotted unto her none other than thyself, and I choose rather to marry thee to her in my lifetime than that thou shouldst marry her after my death.'

When the poor man heard the merchant's story, he became desirous of marrying his daughter. So he took her to wife and was vouchsafed of her exceeding love. Nor," added the vizier, "is this story more extraordinary than that of the rich man and his wasteful heir."

When the king heard his vizier's story, he was assured that he would not slay him and said, "I will have patience with him, so I may get of him the story of the rich man and his wasteful heir." And he bade him depart to his own house.

The Fifth Night of the Month

When the evening evened, the king sat in his privy closet and summoning the vizier, required of him the promised story. So Er

Rehwan said, “Know, O king, that

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STORY OF THE RICH MAN AND HIS WASTEFUL SON.

There was once a sage of the sages, who had three sons and sons' sons, and when they waxed many and their posterity multiplied, there befell dissension between them. So he assembled them and said to them, 'Be ye one hand against other than you and despise not [one another,] lest the folk despise you, and know that the like of you is as the rope which the man cut, when it was single; then he doubled [it] and availed not to cut it; on this wise is division and union. And beware lest ye seek help of others against yourselves or ye will fall into perdition, for by whosesoever means ye attain your desire, his word will have precedence of your word. Now I have wealth which I will bury in a certain place, so it may be a store for you, against the time of your need.'

Then they left him and dispersed and one of the sons fell to spying upon his father, so that he saw him hide the treasure without the city. When he had made an end of burying it, he returned to his house; and when the morning morrowed, his son repaired to the place where he had seen his father bury the treasure and dug and took it and went his way. When the [hour of the] old man's admission [to the mercy of God] drew nigh, he called his sons to him and acquainted them with the place where he had hidden his riches. As soon as he was dead, they went and dug up the treasure and found wealth galore, for that the money, which the first son had taken by stealth, was on the surface and he knew not that under it was other money. So they took it and divided it and the first son took his share with the rest and laid it to that which he had taken aforetime, behind [the backs of] his father and his brethren. Then he took to wife the daughter of his father's brother and was vouchsafed by her a male child, who was the goodliest of the folk of his time.

When the boy grew up, his father feared for him from poverty and change of case, so he said to him, 'Dear my son, know that in my youth I wronged my brothers in the matter of our father's good, and I see thee in weal; but, if thou [come to] need, ask not of one of them nor of any other, for I have laid up for thee in yonder chamber a treasure; but do not thou open it until thou come to lack thy day’s food.’ Then he died, and his wealth, which was a great matter, fell to his son. The young man had not patience to wait till he had made an end of that which was with him, but rose and opened the chamber, and behold, it was [empty and its walls were] whitened, and in its midst was a rope hanging down and half a score bricks, one upon another, and a scroll, wherein was written, ‘Needs must death betide; so hang thyself and beg not of any, but kick away the bricks, so there may be no escape for thee, and thou shall be at rest from the exultation of enemies and enviers and the bitterness of poverty.’

When the youth saw this, he marvelled at that which his father had done and said, ‘This is a sorry treasure.’ Then he went forth and fell to eating and drinking with the folk, till nothing was left him and he abode two days without tasting food, at the end of which time he took a handkerchief and selling it for two dirhems, bought bread and milk with the price and left it on the shelf [and went out. Whilst he was gone,] a dog came and took the bread and spoiled the milk, and when the man returned and saw this, he buffeted his face and went forth, distraught, at a venture. Presently, he met a friend of his, to whom he discovered his case, and the other said to him, ‘Art thou not ashamed to talk thus? How hast thou wasted all this wealth and now comest telling lies and saying, “The dog hath mounted on the shelf,” and talking nonsense?’ And he reviled him.

So the youth returned to his house, and indeed the world was grown black in his eyes and he said, ‘My father said sooth.’ Then he opened the chamber door and piling up the bricks under his feet, put the rope about his neck and kicked away the bricks and swung himself off; whereupon the rope gave way with him [and he fell] to the ground and the ceiling clove in sunder and there poured down on him wealth galore, So he knew that his father meant to discipline him by means of this and invoked God’s mercy on him. Then he got him again that which he had sold of lands and houses and what not else and became once more in good case. Moreover, his friends returned to him and he entertained them some days.

Then said he to them one day, ‘There was with us bread and the locusts ate it; so we put in its place a stone, a cubit long and the like broad, and the locusts came and gnawed away the stone, because of the smell of the bread.’ Quoth one of his friends (and it was he who had given him the lie concerning the dog and the bread and milk), ‘Marvel not at this, for mice do more than that.’ And he said, ‘Go to your houses. In the days of my poverty, I was a liar [when I told you] of the dog’s climbing upon the shelf and eating the bread and spoiling the milk; and to-day, for that I am rich again, I say sooth [when I tell you] that locusts devoured a stone a cubit long and a cubit broad.’ They were confounded at his speech and departed from him; and the youth’s good flourished and his case was amended. Nor,” added the vizier,”is this stranger or more extraordinary than the story of the king’s son who fell in love with the picture.”

Quoth the king, “Belike, if I hear this story, I shall gain wisdom from it; so I will not hasten in the slaying of this vizier, nor will I put him to death before the thirty days have expired.” Then he gave him leave to withdraw, and he went away to his own house.

The Sixth Night of the Month

When the day departed and the evening came, the king sat in his privy chamber and summoned the vizier, who presented himself to him and he questioned him of the story. So the vizier said, “Know, O august king, that

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THE KING’S SON WHO FELL IN LOVE WITH THE PICTURE.

There was once, in a province of Persia, a king of the kings, who was mighty of estate, endowed with majesty and venerance and having troops and guards at his command; but he was childless. Towards the end of his life, his Lord vouchsafed him a male child, and the boy grew up and was comely and learned all manner of knowledge. He made him a private place, to wit, a lofty palace, builded with coloured marbles and [adorned with] jewels and paintings. When the prince entered the palace, he saw in its ceiling the picture [of a woman], than whom he had never beheld a fairer of aspect, and she was compassed about with slave-girls; whereupon he fell down in a swoon and became distraught for love of her. Then he sat under the picture, till, one day, his father came in to him and finding him wasted of body and changed of colour, by reason of his [continual] looking on that picture, thought that he was ill and sent for the sages and physicians, that they might medicine him. Moreover, he said to one of his boon- companions, ‘If thou canst learn what aileth my son, thou shalt have of me largesse.’ So the courtier went in to the prince and spoke him fair and cajoled him, till he confessed to him that his malady was caused by the picture. Then he returned to the king and told him what ailed his son, whereupon he transported the prince to another palace and made his former lodging the guest-house; and whosoever of the Arabs was entertained therein, he questioned of the picture, but none could give him tidings thereof.

One day, there came a traveller and seeing the picture, said, ‘There is no god but God! My brother wrought this picture.’ So the king sent for him and questioned him of the affair of the picture and where was he who had wrought it. ‘O my lord,’ answered the traveller, ‘we are two brothers and one of us went to the land of Hind and fell in love with the king’s daughter of the country, and it is she who is the original of the portrait. In every city he entereth, he painteth her portrait, and I follow him, and long is my journey.’ When the king’s son heard this, he said,’Needs must I travel to this damsel.’ So he took all manner rarities and store of riches and journeyed days and nights till he entered the land of Hind, nor did he win thereto save after sore travail. Then he enquired of the King of Hind and he also heard of him.

When the prince came before him, he sought of him his daughter in marriage, and the king said, ‘Indeed, thou art her equal, but none dare name a man to her, because of her aversion to men.’ So the prince pitched his tents under the windows of the princess’s palace, till one day he got hold of one of her favourite slave-girls and gave her wealth galore. Quoth she to him, ‘Hast thou a wish?’ Yes,’ answered he and acquainted her with his case; and she said, ‘Indeed thou puttest thyself in peril.’ Then he abode, flattering himself with false hopes, till all that he had with him was gone and the servants fled from him; whereupon quoth he to one in whom he trusted, ‘I am minded to go to my country and fetch what may suffice me and return hither.’ And the other answered, ‘It is for thee to decide.’ So they set out to return, but the way was long to them and all that the prince had with him was spent and his company died and there abode but one with him, on whom he loaded what remained of the victual and they left the rest and fared on. Then there came out a lion and ate the servant, and the prince abode alone. He went on, till his beast stood still, whereupon he left her and fared on afoot till his feet swelled.

Presently he came to the land of the Turks, and he naked and hungry and having with him nought but somewhat of jewels, bound about his fore-arm. So he went to the bazaar of the goldsmiths and calling one of the brokers, gave him the jewels. The broker looked and seeing two great rubies, said to him, ‘Follow me.’ So he followed him, till he brought him to a goldsmith, to whom he gave the jewels, saying, ‘Buy these.’ Quoth he, ‘Whence hadst thou these?’ And the broker replied, ‘This youth is the owner of them.’ Then said the goldsmith to the prince, ‘Whence hadst thou these rubies?’ And he told him all that had befallen him and that he was a king’s son. The goldsmith marvelled at his story and bought of him the rubies for a thousand dinars.

Then said the prince to him, ‘Make ready to go with me to my country.’ So he made ready and went with the prince till he drew near the frontiers of his father’s kingdom, where the people received him with the utmost honour and sent to acquaint his father with his son's coming. The king came out to meet him and they entreated the goldsmith with honour. The prince abode awhile with his father, then set out, [he and the goldsmith] to return to the country of the fair one, the daughter of the King of Hind; but there met him robbers by the way and he fought the sorest of battles and was slain. The goldsmith buried him and marked his grave and returned, sorrowing and distraught to his own country, without telling any of the prince's death.

To return to the king's daughter of whom the prince went in quest and on whose account he was slain. She had been used to look out from the top of her palace and gaze on the youth and on his beauty and grace; so she said to her slave-girl one day, 'Harkye! What is come of the troops that were encamped beside my palace?' Quoth the maid, 'They were the troops of the youth, the king's son of the Persians, who came to demand thee in marriage, and wearied himself on thine account, but thou hadst no compassion on him.' 'Out on thee!' cried the princess. 'Why didst thou not tell me?' And the damsel answered, 'I feared thy wrath.' Then she sought an audience of the king her father and said to him, 'By Allah, I will go in quest of him, even as he came in quest of me; else should I not do him justice.'

So she made ready and setting out, traversed the deserts and spent treasures till she came to Sejestan, where she called a goldsmith to make her somewhat of trinkets. [Now the goldsmith in question was none other than the prince's friend]; so, when he saw her, he knew her (for that the prince had talked with him of her and had depictured her to him) and questioned her of her case. She acquainted him with her errand, whereupon he buffeted his face and rent his clothes and strewed dust on his head and fell a-weeping. Quoth she, 'Why dost thou thus?' And he acquainted her with the prince's case and how he was his comrade and told her that he was dead; whereat she grieved for him and faring on to his father and mother, [acquainted them with the case].

So the prince's father and his uncle and his mother and the grandees of the realm repaired to his tomb and the princess made lamentation over him, crying aloud. She abode by the tomb a whole month; then she let fetch painters and caused them limn her portraiture and that of the king's son. Moreover, she set down in writing their story and that which had befallen them of perils and afflictions and set it [together with the pictures], at the head of the tomb; and after a little, they departed from the place. Nor," added the vizier, "is this more extraordinary, O king of the age, than the story of the fuller and his wife and the trooper and what passed between them."

With this the king bade the vizier go away to his lodging, and when he arose in the morning, he abode his day in his house.

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The Seventh Night of the Month.

At eventide the king sat [in his privy sitting-chamber] and sending for the vizier, said to him, “Tell me the story of the fuller and his wife.” “With all my heart,” answered the vizier. So he came forward and said, “Know, O king of the age, that

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STORY OF THE FULLER AND HIS WIFE.

There was once in a certain city a woman fair of favour, who had to lover a trooper. Her husband was a fuller, and when he went out to his business, the trooper used to come to her and abide with her till the time of the fuller's return, when he would go away. On this wise they abode awhile, till one day the trooper said to his mistress, 'I mean to take me a house near unto thine and dig an underground passage from my house to thy house, and do thou say to thy husband, "My sister hath been absent with her husband and now they have returned from their travels; and I have made her take up her sojourn in my neighbourhood, so I may foregather with her at all times. So go thou to her husband the trooper and offer him thy wares [for sale], and thou wilt see my sister with him and wilt see that she is I and I am she, without doubt. So, Allah, Allah, go to my sister's husband and give ear to that which he shall say to thee."'

Accordingly, the trooper bought him a house near at hand and made therein an underground passage communicating with his mistress's house. When he had accomplished his affair, the wife bespoke her husband as her lover had lessoned her and he went out to go to the trooper's house, but turned back by the way, whereupon quoth she to him, 'By Allah, go forthright, for that my sister asketh of thee.' So the dolt of a fuller went out and made for the trooper's house, whilst his wife forewent him thither by the secret passage, and going up, sat down beside her lover. Presently, the fuller entered and saluted the trooper and his [supposed] wife and was confounded at the coincidence of the case. Then doubt betided him and he returned in haste to his dwelling; but she forewent him by the underground passage to her chamber and donning her wonted clothes, sat [waiting] for him and said to him, 'Did I not bid thee go to my sister and salute her husband and make friends with them?' Quoth he, 'I did this, but I misdoubted of my affair, when I saw his wife.' And she said, 'Did I not tell thee that she resembleth me and I her, and there is nought to distinguish between us but our clothes? Go back to her.'

So, of the heaviness of his wit, he believed her and turning back, went in to the trooper; but she had foregone him, and when he saw her beside her lover, he fell to looking on her and pondering. Then he saluted her and she returned him the salutation; and when she spoke, he was bewildered. So the trooper said to him, ‘What ails thee to be thus?’ And he answered, ‘This woman is my wife and the voice is her voice.’ Then he rose in haste and returning to his own house, saw his wife, who had foregone him by the secret passage. So he went back to the trooper’s house and saw her sitting as before; whereupon he was abashed before her and sitting down in the trooper’s sitting-chamber, ate and drank with him and became drunken and abode without sense all that day till nightfall, when the trooper arose and shaving off some of the fuller’s hair (which was long and flowing) after the fashion of the Turks, clipped the rest short and clapped a tarboush on his head.

Then he thrust his feet into boots and girt him with a sword and a girdle and bound about his middle a quiver and a bow and arrows. Moreover, he put money in his pocket and thrust into his sleeve letters-patent addressed to the governor of Ispahan, bidding him assign to Rustem Khemartekeni a monthly allowance of a hundred dirhems and ten pounds of bread and five pounds of meat and enrol him among the Turks under his commandment. Then he took him up and carrying him forth, left him in one of the mosques.

The fuller gave not over sleeping till sunrise, when he awoke and finding himself in this plight, misdoubted of his affair and imagined that he was a Turk and abode putting one foot forward and drawing the other back. Then said he in himself, ‘I will go to my dwelling, and if my wife know me, then am I Ahmed the fuller; but, if she know me not, I am a Turk.’ So he betook himself to his house; but when the artful baggage his wife saw him, she cried out in his face, saying, ‘Whither away, O trooper? Wilt thou break into the house of Ahmed the fuller, and he a man of repute, having a brother-in-law a Turk, a man of high standing with the Sultan? An thou depart not, I will acquaint my husband and he will requite thee thy deed.’

When he heard her words, the dregs of the drunkenness wrought in him and he imagined that he was indeed a Turk. So he went out from her and putting his hand to his sleeve, found therein a scroll and gave it to one who read it to him. When he heard that which was written in the scroll, his mind was confirmed in the false supposition;

but he said in himself, ‘Maybe my wife seeketh to put a cheat on me; so I will go to my fellows the fullers; and if they know me not, then am I for sure Khemartekeni the Turk.’ So he betook himself to the fullers and when they espied him afar off, they thought that he was one of the Turks, who used to wash their clothes with them without payment and give them nothing.

Now they had complained of them aforetime to the Sultan, and he said, ‘If any of the Turks come to you, pelt them with stones.’ So, when they saw the fuller, they fell upon him with sticks and stones and pelted him; whereupon quoth he [in himself], ‘Verily, I am a Turk and knew it not.’ Then he took of the money in his pocket and bought him victual [for the journey] and hired a hackney and set out for Ispahan, leaving his wife to the trooper. Nor,” added the vizier, “is this more extraordinary than the story of the merchant and the old woman and the king.”

The vizier’s story pleased King Shah Bekht and his heart clave to the story of the merchant and the old woman; so he bade Er Rehwan withdraw to his lodging, and he went away to his house and abode there the next day.

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The Eight Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king sat in his privy chamber and bade fetch the vizier, who presented himself before him, and the king required of him the promised story. So the vizier answered, “With all my heart. Know, O king, that

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STORY OF THE OLD WOMAN, THE MERCHANT AND THE KING.

There was once in a city of Khorassan a family of affluence and distinction, and the townsfolk used to envy them for that which God had vouchsafed them. As time went on, their fortune ceased from them and they passed away, till there remained of them but one old woman. When she grew feeble and decrepit, the townsfolk succoured her not with aught, but put her forth of the city, saying, 'This old woman shall not harbour with us, for that we do her kindness and she requiteth us with evil.' So she took shelter in a ruined place and strangers used to bestow alms upon her, and on this wise she abode a while of time.

Now the uncle's son of the king of the city had aforetime disputed [the kingship] with him, and the people misliked the king; but God the Most High decreed that he should get the better of his cousin. However, jealousy of him abode in his heart and he acquainted the vizier, who hid it not and sent [him] money. Moreover, he fell to summoning [all strangers who came to the town], man after man, and questioning them of their faith and their worldly estate, and whoso answered him not [to his liking], he took his good. Now a certain wealthy man of the Muslims was on a journey and it befell that he arrived at that city by night, unknowing what was to do, and coming to the ruin aforesaid, gave the old woman money and said to her, 'No harm upon thee.' Whereupon she lifted up her voice and prayed [for him], He set down his merchandise by her [and abode with her] the rest of the night and the next day.

Now thieves had followed him, so they might rob him of his good, but availed not unto aught; wherefore he went up to the old woman and kissed her head and exceeded in munificence to her. Then she [warned him of that which awaited strangers entering the town and] said to him, 'I like not this for thee and I fear mischief for thee from these questions that the vizier hath appointed for the confrontation of the ignorant.' And she expounded to him the case according to its fashion. Then said she to him, 'But have no concern: only carry me with thee to thy lodging, and if he question thee of aught, whilst I am with thee, I will expound the answers to thee.’ Se he carried her with him to the city and established her in his lodging and entreated her kindly.

Presently, the vizier heard of the merchant’s coming; so he sent to him and let bring him to his house and talked with him awhile of his travels and of that which he had abidden therein, and the merchant answered him thereof. Then said the vizier, ‘I will put certain questions to thee, which if thou answer me, it will be well [for thee].’ And the merchant rose and made him no answer. Quoth the vizier, ‘What is the weight of the elephant?’ The merchant was perplexed and returned him no answer and gave himself up for lost. Then said he, ‘Grant me three days’ time.’ So the vizier granted him the delay he sought and he returned to his lodging and related what had passed to the old woman, who said, ‘When the morrow cometh, go to the vizier and say to him, “Make a ship and launch it on the sea and put in it an elephant, and when it sinketh in the water, [under the beast’s weight], mark the place to which the water riseth. Then take out the elephant and cast in stones in its place, till the ship sink to the mark aforesaid; whereupon do thou take out the stones and weigh them and thou wilt know the weight of the elephant”’

So, when he arose in the morning, he repaired to the vizier and repeated to him that which the old woman had taught him; whereat the vizier marvelled and said to him, ‘What sayst thou of a man, who seeth in his house four holes, and in each a viper offering to come out and kill him, and in his house are four staves and each hole may not be stopped but with the ends of two staves? How shall he stop all the holes and deliver himself from the vipers?’ When the merchant heard this, there betided him [of concern] what made him forget the first and he said to the vizier, ‘Grant me time, so I may consider the answer.’ ‘Go out,’ replied the vizier, ‘and bring me the answer, or I will seize thy good.’

The merchant went out and returned to the old woman, who, seeing him changed of colour, said to him, ‘What did he ask thee, [may God confound] his hoariness?’ So he acquainted her with the case and she said to him, ‘Fear not; I will bring thee forth of this [strait].’ Quoth he, ‘God requite thee with good!’ And she said, ‘To-morrow go to him with a stout heart and say, “The answer to that whereof thou askest me is that thou put the heads of two staves into one of the holes; then take the other two staves and lay them across the middle of the first two and stop with their heads the second hole and with their butts the fourth hole. Then take the butts of the first two staves and stop with them the third hole.'"

So he repaired to the vizier and repeated to him the answer; and he marvelled at its justness and said to him, 'Go; by Allah, I will ask thee no more questions, for thou with thy skill marrest my foundation.' Then he entreated him friendly and the merchant acquainted him with the affair of the old woman; whereupon quoth the vizier, 'Needs must the man of understanding company with those of understanding.' Thus did this weak woman restore to that man his life and good on the easiest wise. Nor," added the vizier, "is this more extraordinary than the story of the credulous husband."

When the king heard this story, he said, "How like is this to our own case!" Then he bade the vizier retire to his lodging; so he withdrew to his house and on the morrow he abode at home [till the king should summon him to his presence.]

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The Ninth Night of the Month.

When the night came, the king sat in his privy chamber and sending after the vizier, sought of him the promised story; and he said, “Know, O august king, that

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STORY OF THE CREDULOUS HUSBAND

There was once of old time a foolish, ignorant man, who had wealth galore, and his wife was a fair woman, who loved a handsome youth. The latter used to watch for her husband's absence and come to her, and on this wise he abode a long while. One day, as the woman was private with her lover, he said to her, 'O my lady and my beloved, if thou desire me and love me, give me possession of thyself and accomplish my need in thy husband's presence; else will I never again come to thee nor draw near thee, what while I abide on life.' Now she loved him with an exceeding love and could not brook his separation an hour nor could endure to vex him; so, when she heard his words, she said to him, ['So be it,] in God's name, O my beloved and solace of mine eyes, may he not live who would vex thee!' Quoth he, 'To-day?' And she said, 'Yes, by thy life,' and appointed him of this.

When her husband came home, she said to him, 'I desire to go a-pleasuring.' And he said, ' With all my heart.' So he went, till he came to a goodly place, abounding in vines and water, whither he carried her and pitched her a tent beside a great tree; and she betook herself to a place beside the tent and made her there an underground hiding-place, [in which she hid her lover]. Then said she to her husband, 'I desire to mount this tree.' And he said, 'Do so.' So she climbed up and when she came to the top of the tree, she cried out and buffeted her face, saying, 'Lewd fellow that thou art, are these thy usages? Thou sworest [fidelity to me] and liedst.' And she repeated her speech twice and thrice.

Then she came down from the tree and rent her clothes and said, 'O villain, if these be thy dealings with me before my eyes, how dost thou when thou art absent from me?' Quoth he, 'What aileth thee?' and she said, 'I saw thee swive the woman before my very eyes.' 'Not so, by Allah!' cried he. 'But hold thy peace till I go up and see.' So he climbed the tree and no sooner did he begin to do so than up came the lover [from his hiding-place] and taking the woman by the legs, [fell to swiving her]. When the husband came to the top of the tree, he looked and beheld a man swiving his wife. So he said, 'O strumpet, what doings are these?’ And he made haste to come down from the tree to the ground; [but meanwhile the lover had returned to his hiding- place] and his wife said to him, ‘What sawest thou?’ ‘I saw a man swive thee,’ answered he; and she said, ‘Thou liest; thou sawest nought and sayst this but of conjecture.’

On this wise they did three times, and every time [he climbed the tree] the lover came up out of the underground place and bestrode her, whilst her husband looked on and she still said, ‘O liar, seest thou aught?’ ‘Yes,’ would he answer and came down in haste, but saw no one and she said to him, ‘By my life, look and say nought but the truth!’ Then said he to her, ‘Arise, let us depart this place, for it is full of Jinn and Marids.’ [So they returned to their house] and passed the night [there] and the man arose in the morning, assured that this was all but imagination and illusion. And so the lover accomplished his desire. Nor, O king of the age,” added the vizier, “is this more extraordinary than the story of the king and the tither.”

When the king heard this from the vizier, he bade him go away [and he withdrew to his house].

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The Tenth Night of the Month.

When it was eventide, the king summoned the vizier and sought of him the story of the King and the Tither, and he said, “Know, O king, that

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STORY OF THE UNJUST KING AND THE TITHER.

There was once a king of the kings of the earth, who dwelt in a populous city, abounding in good; but he oppressed its people and used them foully, so that he ruined the city; and he was named none other than tyrant and misdoer. Now he was wont, whenas he heard of a masterful man in another land, to send after him and tempt him with money to take service with him; and there was a certain tither, who exceeded all his brethren in oppression of the people and foulness of dealing. So the king sent after him and when he stood before him, he found him a mighty man and said to him, 'Thou hast been praised to me, but meseemeth thou overpassest the description. Set out to me somewhat of thy sayings and doings, so I may be dispensed therewith from [enquiring into] all thy circumstance.' 'With all my heart,' answered the other. 'Know, O king, that I oppress the folk and people the land, whilst other than I wasteth it and peopleth it not.'

Now the king was leaning back; so he sat up and said, 'Tell me of this.' 'It is well,' answered the tither. 'I go to the man whom I purpose to tithe and circumvent him and feign to be occupied with certain business, so that I seclude myself therewith from the folk; and meanwhile the man is squeezed after the foulest fashion, till nothing is left him. Then I appear and they come in to me and questions befall concerning him and I say, "Indeed, I was ordered worse than this, for some one (may God curse him!) hath slandered him to the king." Then I take half of his good and return him the rest publicly before the folk and send him away to his house, in all honour and worship, and he causeth the money returned to be carried before him, whilst he and all who are with him call down blessings on me. So is it published in the city that I have returned him his money and he himself saith the like, so he may have a claim on me for the favour due to whoso praiseth me. Then I feign to forget him till some time hath passed over him, when I send for him and recall to him somewhat of that which hath befallen aforetime and demand [of him] somewhat privily. So he doth this and hasteneth to his dwelling and sendeth what I bid him, with a glad heart. Then I send to another man, between whom and the other is enmity, and lay hands upon him and feign to the first man that it is he who hath traduced him to the king and taken the half of his good; and the people praise me.'

The king marvelled at this and at his dealing and contrivance and invested him with [the control of] all his affairs and of his kingdom and the land abode [under his governance] and he said to him, 'Take and people.' One day, the tither went out and saw an old man, a woodcutter, and with him wood; so he said to him, 'Pay a dirhem tithe for thy load.' Quoth the old man, 'Behold, thou killest me and killest my family.' 'What [meanest thou]?' said the tither. 'Who killeth the folk?' And the other answered, 'If thou suffer me enter the city, I shall sell the wood there for three dirhems, whereof I will give thee one and buy with the other two what will support my family; but, if thou press me for the tithe without the city, the load will sell but for one dirhem and thou wilt take it and I shall abide without food, I and my family. Indeed, thou and I in this circumstance are like unto David and Solomon, on whom be peace!' ['How so?' asked the tither, and the woodcutter said], 'Know that

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STORY OF DAVID AND SOLOMON.

Certain husbandmen once made complaint to David (on whom be peace!) against certain owners of sheep, whose flocks had fallen upon their crops by night and devoured them, and he bade value the crops [and that the shepherds should make good the amount]. But Solomon (on whom be peace!) rose and said, “Nay, but let the sheep be delivered to the husbandmen, so they may take their milk and wool, till they have repaid themselves the value of their crops; then let the sheep return to their owners.” So David withdrew his own ordinance and caused execute that of Solomon; yet was David no oppressor; but Solomon’s judgment was more pertinent and he showed himself therein better versed in jurisprudence.’

When the tither heard the old man’s speech, he relented towards him and said to him, ‘O old man, I make thee a present of that which is due from thee, and do thou cleave to me and leave me not, so haply I may get of thee profit that shall do away from me my errors and guide me into the way of righteousness.’ So the old man followed him, and there met him another with a load of wood. Quoth the tither to him, ‘Pay what is due from thee.’ And he answered, ‘Have patience with me till to-morrow, for I owe the hire of a house, and I will sell another load of wood and pay thee two days’ tithe.’ But he refused him this and the old man said to him, ‘If thou constrain him unto this, thou wilt enforce him quit thy country, for that he is a stranger here and hath no domicile; and if he remove on account of one dirhem, thou wilt lose [of him] three hundred and threescore dirhems a year. Thus wilt thou lose the much in keeping the little.’ Quoth the tither, ‘I give him a dirhem every month to the hire of his lodging.’

Then he went on and presently there met him a third woodcutter and he said to him, ‘Pay what is due from thee.’ And he answered, ‘I will pay thee a dirhem when I enter the city; or take of me four danics [now].’ Quoth the tither, ‘I will not do it,’ but the old man said to him, ‘Take of him the four danics presently, for it is easy to take and hard to restore.’ ‘By Allah,’ quoth the tither, ‘it is good!’ and he arose and went on, crying out, at the top of his voice and saying, ‘I have no power to-day [to do evil].’ Then he put off his clothes and went forth wandering at a venture, repenting unto his Lord. Nor,” added the vizier, “is this story more extraordinary than that of the thief who believed the woman and sought refuge with God against falling in with her like, by reason of her cunning contrivance for herself.”

When the king heard this, he said in himself, “Since the tither repented, in consequence of the admonitions [of the woodcutter], it behoves that I spare this vizier, so I may hear the story of the thief and the woman.” And he bade Er Rehwan withdraw to his lodging.

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The Eleventh Night of the Month.

When the evening came and the king sat in his privy chamber, he summoned the vizier and required of him the story of the thief and the woman. Quoth the vizier, “Know, O king, that

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STORY OF THE THIEF AND THE WOMAN.

A certain thief was a [cunning] workman and used not to steal aught, till he had spent all that was with him; moreover, he stole not from his neighbours, neither companied with any of the thieves, lest some one should come to know him and his case get wind. On this wise he abode a great while, in flourishing case, and his secret was concealed, till God the Most High decreed that he broke in upon a poor man, deeming that he was rich. When he entered the house, he found nought, whereat he was wroth, and necessity prompted him to wake the man, who was asleep with his wife. So he aroused him and said to him, 'Show me thy treasure.'

Now he had no treasure; but the thief believed him not and insisted upon him with threats and blows. When he saw that he got no profit of him, he said to him, 'Swear by the oath of divorce from thy wife [that thou hast nothing].' So he swore and his wife said to him, 'Out on thee! Wilt thou divorce me? Is not the treasure buried in yonder chamber?' Then she turned to the thief and conjured him to multiply blows upon her husband, till he should deliver to him the treasure, concerning which he had sworn falsely. So he drubbed him grievously, till he carried him to a certain chamber, wherein she signed to him that the treasure was and that he should take it up.

So the thief entered, he and the husband; and when they were both in the chamber, she locked on them the door, which was a stout one, and said to the thief, 'Out on thee, O fool! Thou hast fallen [into the trap] and now I have but to cry out and the officers of the police will come and take thee and thou wilt lose thy life, O Satan!' Quoth he, 'Let me go forth;' and she said, 'Thou art a man and I am a woman; and in thy hand is a knife and I am afraid of thee.' Quoth he, 'Take the knife from me.' So she took the knife from him and said to her husband, 'Art thou a woman and he a man? Mar his nape with beating, even as he did with thee; and if he put out his hand to thee, I will cry out and the police will come and take him and cut him in sunder.' So the husband said to him, 'O thousand-horned, O dog, O traitor, I owe thee a deposit, for which thou dunnest me.' And he fell to beating him grievously with a stick of live-oak, whilst he called out to the woman for help and besought her of deliverance; but she said, ‘Abide in thy place till the morning, and thou shalt see wonders.’ And her husband beat him within the chamber, till he [well- nigh] made an end of him and he swooned away.

Then he left beating him and when the thief came to himself, the woman said to her husband, ‘O man, this house is on hire and we owe its owners much money, and we have nought; so how wilt thou do?’ And she went on to bespeak him thus. Quoth the thief, ‘And what is the amount of the rent?’ ‘It will be fourscore dirhems,’ answered the husband; and the thief said, ‘I will pay this for thee and do thou let me go my way.’ Then said the wife, ‘O man, how much do we owe the baker and the greengrocer?’ Quoth the thief, ‘What is the sum of this?’ And the husband said, ‘Sixscore dirhems.’ ‘That makes two hundred dirhems,’ rejoined the other; ‘let me go my way and I will pay them.’ But the wife said, ‘O my dear one, and the girl groweth up and needs must we marry her and equip her and [do] what else is needful’ So the thief said to the husband, ‘How much dost thou want?’ And he answered, ‘A hundred dirhems, in the way of moderation.’ Quoth the thief, ‘That makes three hundred dirhems.’ And the woman said, ‘O my dear one, when the girl is married, thou wilt need money for winter expenses, charcoal and firewood and other necessaries.’ ‘What wouldst thou have?’ asked the thief; and she said, ‘A hundred dirhems.’ ‘Be it four hundred dirhems,’ rejoined he; and she said, ‘O my dear one and solace of mine eyes, needs must my husband have capital in hand, wherewith he may buy merchandise and open him a shop.’ ‘How much will that be?’ asked he, and she said, ‘A hundred dirhems.’ Quoth the thief, ‘[That makes five hundred dirhems; I will pay it;] but may I be divorced from my wife if all my possessions amount to more than this, and that the savings of twenty years! Let me go my way, so I may deliver them to thee.’ ‘O fool,’ answered she, ‘how shall I let thee go thy way? Give me a right token.’ [So he gave her a token for his wife] and she cried out to her young daughter and said to her, ‘Keep this door.’

Then she charged her husband keep watch over the thief, till she should return, and repairing to his wife, acquainted her with his case and told her that her husband the thief had been taken and had compounded for his release, at the price of seven hundred dirhems, and named to her the token. So she gave her the money and she took it and returned to her house. By this time, the dawn had broken; so she let the thief go his way, and when he went out, she said to him, ‘O my dear one, when shall I see thee come and take the treasure?’ ‘O indebted one,’ answered he, ‘when thou needest other seven hundred dirhems, wherewithal to amend thy case and that of thy children and to discharge thy debts.’ And he went out, hardly believing in his deliverance from her. Nor,” added the vizier, “is this more extraordinary than the story of the three men and our Lord Jesus.”

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And the king bade him depart to his own house.

The Twelfth Night of the Month.

When it was eventide, the king summoned the vizier and bade him tell the [promised] story, “Hearkening and obedience,” answered he. “Know, O king, that

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STORY OF THE THREE MEN AND OUR LORD JESUS.

Three men once went out in quest of riches and came upon a block of gold, weighing a hundred pounds. When they saw it, they took it up on their shoulders and fared on with it, till they drew near a certain city, when one of them said, ‘Let us sit in the mosque, whilst one of us goes and buys us what we may eat.” So they sat down in the mosque and one of them arose and entered the city. When he came therein, his soul prompted him to play his fellows false and get the gold for himself alone. So he bought food and poisoned it; but, when he returned to his comrades, they fell upon him and slew him, so they might enjoy the gold without him. Then they ate of the [poisoned] food and died, and the gold abode cast down over against them.

Presently, Jesus, son of Mary (on whom be peace!) passed by and seeing this, besought God the Most High for tidings of their case; so He told him what had betided them, whereat great was his wonderment and he related to his disciples what he had seen. Quoth one of them, ‘O Spirit of God, nought resembleth this but my own story.’ ‘How so?’ asked Jesus, and the other said,

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THE DISCIPLE’S STORY.

‘I was aforetime in such a city and hid a thousand dirhems in a monastery there. After awhile, I went thither and taking the money, bound it about my middle. [Then I set out to return] and when I came to the desert, the carrying of the money was burdensome to me. Presently, I espied a horseman pricking after me; so I [waited till he came up and] said to him, “O horseman, carry this money [for me] and earn reward and recompense [from God].” “Nay,” answered he; “I will not do it, for I should weary myself and weary my horse.” Then he went on, but, before he had gone far, he said in himself, “If I take up the money and spur my horse and forego him, how shall he overtake me?” And I also said in myself, “Verily, I erred [in asking him to carry the money]; for, had he taken it and made off, I could have done nought.” Then he turned back to me and said to me, “Hand over the money, that I may carry it for thee.” But I answered him, saying, “That which hath occurred to thy mind hath occurred to mine also; so go in peace.”’

Quoth Jesus (on whom be peace!), ‘Had these dealt prudently, they had taken thought for themselves; but they neglected the issues of events; for that whoso acteth prudently is safe and conquereth, and whoso neglecteth precaution perisheth and repenteth.’ Nor,” added the vizier,” is this more extraordinary nor goodlier than the story of the king, whose kingdom was restored to him and his wealth, after he had become poor, possessing not a single dirhem.”

When the king heard this, he said in himself “How like is this to my own story in the matter of the vizier and his slaughter! Had I not used precaution, I had put him to death.” And he bade Er Rehwan depart to his own house.

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The Thirteenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king sent for the vizier to his privy sitting chamber and bade him [tell] the [promised] story. So he said, “Hearkening and obedience. They avouch, O king, that

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STORY OF THE DETHRONED KING WHOSE KINGDOM AND GOOD WERE RESTORED TO HIM.

There was once, in a city of Hind, a just and beneficent king, and he had a vizier, a man of understanding, just in his judgment, praiseworthy in his policy, in whose hand was the governance of all the affairs of the realm; for he was firmly stablished in the king's favour and high in esteem with the folk of his time, and the king set great store by him and committed himself to him in all his affairs, by reason of his contrivance for his subjects, and he had helpers who were content with him.

Now the king had a brother, who envied him and would fain have been in his place; and when he was weary of looking for his death and the term of his life seemed distant unto him, he took counsel with certain of his partisans and they said, 'The vizier is the king's counsellor and but for him, there would be left the king no kingdom.' So the king's brother cast about for the ruin of the vizier, but could find no means of accomplishing his design; and when the affair grew long upon him, he said to his wife, 'What deemest thou will advantage us in this?' Quoth she, 'What is it?' And he replied, 'I mean in the matter of yonder vizier, who inciteth my brother to devoutness with all his might and biddeth him thereto, and indeed the king is infatuated with his counsel and committeth to him the governance of all things and matters.' Quoth she, 'Thou sayst truly; but how shall we do with him?' And he answered, 'I have a device, so thou wilt help me in that which I shall say to thee.' Quoth she, 'Thou shall have my help in whatsoever thou desirest.' And he said, 'I mean to dig him a pit in the vestibule and dissemble it artfully.'

So he did this, and when it was night, he covered the pit with a light covering, so that, whenas the vizier stepped upon it, it would give way with him. Then he sent to him and summoned him to the presence in the king's name, and the messenger bade him enter by the privy door. So he entered in thereat, alone, and when he stepped upon the covering of the pit, it gave way with him and he fell to the bottom; whereupon the king's brother fell to pelting him with stones. When the vizier saw what had betided him, he gave himself up for lost; so he stirred not and lay still. The prince, seeing him make no motion, [deemed him dead]; so he took him forth and wrapping him up in his clothes, cast him into the billows of the sea in the middle of the night. When the vizier felt the water, he awoke from the swoon and swam awhile, till a ship passed by him, whereupon he cried out to the sailors and they took him up.

When the morning morrowed, the people went seeking for him, but found him not; and when the king knew this, he was perplexed concerning his affair and abode unknowing what he should do. Then he sought for a vizier to fill his room, and the king's brother said, 'I have a vizier, a sufficient man.' 'Bring him to me,' said the king. So he brought him a man, whom he set at the head of affairs; but he seized upon the kingdom and clapped the king in irons and made his brother king in his stead. The new king gave himself up to all manner of wickedness, whereat the folk murmured and his vizier said to him, 'I fear lest the Indians take the old king and restore him to the kingship and we both perish; wherefore, if we take him and cast him into the sea, we shall be at rest from him; and we will publish among the folk that he is dead.' And they agreed upon this. So they took him up and carrying him out to sea, cast him in.

When he felt the water, he struck out, and gave not over swimming till he landed upon an island, where he abode five days, finding nothing which he might eat or drink; but, on the sixth day, when he despaired of himself, he caught sight of a passing ship; so he made signals to the crew and they came and took him up and fared on with him to an inhabited country, where they set him ashore, naked as he was. There he saw a man tilling; so he sought guidance of him and the husbandman said, 'Art thou a stranger?' 'Yes,' answered the king and sat with him and they talked. The husbandman found him quickwitted and intelligent and said to him, 'If thou sawest a comrade of mine, thou wouldst see him the like of what I see thee, for his case is even as thy case, and he is presently my friend.'

Quoth the king, 'Verily, thou makest me long to see him. Canst thou not bring us together?' 'With all my heart,' answered the husbandman, and the king sat with him till he had made an end of his tillage, when he carried him to his dwelling-place and brought him in company with the other stranger, and behold, it was his vizier. When they saw each other, they wept and embraced, and the husbandman wept for their weeping; but the king concealed their affair and said to him, ‘This is a man from my country and he is as my brother.’ So they abode with the husbandman and helped him for a wage, wherewith they supported themselves a long while. Meanwhile, they sought news of their country and learned that which its people suffered of straitness and oppression.

One day, there came a ship and in it a merchant from their own country, who knew them and rejoiced in them with an exceeding joy and clad them in goodly apparel. Moreover, he acquainted them with the manner of the treachery that had been practised upon them and counselled them to return to their own land, they and he with whom they had made friends, assuring them that God the Most High would restore them to their former estate. So the king returned and the folk joined themselves to him and he fell upon his brother and his vizier and took them and clapped them in prison.

Then he sat down again upon the throne of his kingship, whilst the vizier stood before him, and they returned to their former estate, but they had nought of the [goods of the world]. So the king said to his vizier, ‘How shall we avail to abide in this city, and we in this state of poverty?’ And he answered, ‘Be at thine ease and have no concern.’ Then he singled out one of the soldiers and said to him, ‘Send us thy service for the year.’ Now there were in the city fifty thousand subjects and in the hamlets and villages a like number; and the vizier sent to each of these, saying, ‘Let each of you get an egg and lay it under a hen.’ So they did this and it was neither burden nor grievance to them.

When twenty days had passed by, each [egg] was hatched, and the vizier bade them pair the chickens, male and female, and rear them well. So they did this and it was found a charge unto no one. Then they waited for them awhile and after this the vizier enquired of the chickens and was told that they were become fowls. Moreover, they brought him all their eggs and he bade set them; and after twenty days there were hatched from each [pair] of them thirty or five-and-twenty or fifteen [chickens] at the least. The vizier let note against each man the number of chickens that pertained to him, and after two months, he took the old hens and the cockerels, and there came to him from each man nigh half a score, and he left the [young] hens with them. On like wise he sent to the country folk and let the cocks abide with them. So he got him young ones [galore] and appropriated to himself the sale of the fowls, and on this wise he got him, in the course of a year, that which the regal estate required of the king and his affairs were set right for him by the vizier's contrivance. And he peopled the country and dealt justly by his subjects and returned to them all that he took from them and lived a happy and prosperous life. Thus good judgment and prudence are better than wealth, for that understanding profiteth at all times and seasons. Nor," added the vizier, "is this more extraordinary than the story of the man whose caution slew him."

When the king heard his vizier's words, he marvelled with the utmost wonderment and bade him retire to his lodging. [So Er Rehwan withdrew to his house and abode there till eventide of the next day, when he again presented himself before the king.]

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The Fourteenth Night of the Month.

When the vizier returned to the king, the latter sought of him the story of the man whose caution slew him and be said, “Know, O august king, that

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STORY OF THE MAN WHOSE CAUTION WAS THE CAUSE OF HIS DEATH.

There was once a man who was exceeding cautious over himself, and he set out one day on a journey to a land abounding in wild beasts. The caravan wherein he was came by night to the gate of a city; but the warders refused to open to them; so they passed the night without the city, and there were lions there. The man aforesaid, of the excess of his caution, could not fix upon a place wherein he should pass the night, for fear of the wild beasts and reptiles; so he went about seeking an empty place wherein he might lie.

Now there was a ruined building hard by and he climbed up on to a high wall and gave not over clambering hither and thither, of the excess of his carefulness, till his feet betrayed him and he slipped [and fell] to the bottom and died, whilst his companions arose in the morning in health [and weal]. Now, if he had overmastered his corrupt judgment and submitted himself to fate and fortune foreordained, it had been safer and better [for him]; but he made light of the folk and belittled their wit and was not content to take example by them; for his soul whispered him that he was a man of understanding and he imagined that, if he abode with them, he would perish; so his folly cast him into perdition. Nor," added the vizier, "is this more extraordinary than the story of the man who was lavish of his house and his victual to one whom he knew not"

When the king heard this, he said, "I will not isolate myself from the folk and slay my vizier." And he bade him depart to his dwelling.

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The Fifteenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king let fetch the vizier and required of him the [promised] story. So he said, “Know, O king, that

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STORY OF THE MAN WHO WAS LAVISH OF HIS HOUSE AND HIS VICTUAL TO ONE WHOM HE KNEW NOT.

There was once an Arab of [high] rank and [goodly] presence, a man of exalted generosity and magnanimity, and he had brethren, with whom he consorted and caroused, and they were wont to assemble by turns in each other's houses. When it came to his turn, he made ready in his house all manner goodly and pleasant meats and dainty drinks and exceeding lovely flowers and excellent fruits, and made provision of all kinds of instruments of music and store of rare apothegms and marvellous stories and goodly instances and histories and witty anedotes and verses and what not else, for there was none among those with whom he was used to company but enjoyed this on every goodly wise, and in the entertainment he had provided was all whereof each had need. Then he sallied forth and went round about the city, in quest of his friends, so he might assemble them; but found none of them in his house.

Now in that town was a man of good breeding and large generosity, a merchant of condition, young of years and bright of face, who had come to that town from his own country with great store of merchandise and wealth galore. He took up his abode therein and the place was pleasant to him and he was lavish in expenditure, so that he came to the end of all his good and there remained with him nothing save that which was upon him of raiment. So he left the lodging wherein he had abidden in the days of his affluence, after he had wasted that which was therein of furniture, and fell to harbouring in the houses of the townsfolk from night to night.

One day, as he went wandering about the streets, he espied a woman of the utmost beauty and grace, and what he saw of her charms amazed him and there betided him what made him forget his present plight. She accosted him and jested with him and he besought her of foregathering and companionship. She consented to this and said to him, 'Let us go to thy lodging.' With this he repented and was perplexed concerning his affair and grieved for that which must escape him of her company by reason of the straitness of his hand, for that he had no jot of spending money. But he was ashamed to say, ‘No,’ after he had made suit to her; so he went on before her, bethinking him how he should rid himself of her and casting about for an excuse which he might put off on her, and gave not over going from street to street, till he entered one that had no issue and saw, at the farther end, a door, whereon was a padlock.

So he said to her, ‘Do thou excuse me, for my servant hath locked the door, and who shall open to us?’ Quoth she, ‘O my lord, the padlock is worth [but] half a score dirhems.’ So saying, she tucked up [her sleeves] from fore-arms as they were crystal and taking a stone, smote upon the padlock and broke it. Then she opened the door and said to him, ‘Enter, O my lord.’ So he entered, committing his affair to God, (to whom belong might and majesty,) and she entered after him and locked the door from within. They found themselves in a pleasant house, comprising all weal and gladness; and the young man went on, till he came to the sitting-chamber, and behold, it was furnished with the finest of furniture [and arrayed on the goodliest wise for the reception of guests,] as hath before been set out, [for that it was the house of the man aforesaid].

He [seated himself on the divan and] leant upon a cushion, whilst she put out her hand to her veil and did it off. Then she put off her heavy outer clothes and discovered her charms, whereupon he embraced her and kissed her and swived her; after which they washed and returned to their place and he said to her, ‘Know that I have little knowledge [of what goes on] in my house, for that I trust to my servant; so arise thou and see what the boy hath made ready in the kitchen.’ Accordingly, she arose and going down into the kitchen, saw cooking pots over the fire, wherein were all manner of dainty meats, and manchet-bread and fresh almond-and-honey cakes. So she set bread on a dish and ladled out [what she would] from the pots and brought it to him.

They ate and drank and sported and made merry awhile of the day; and as they were thus engaged, up came the master of the house, with his friends, whom he had brought with him, that they might carouse together, as of wont. He saw the door opened and knocked lightly, saying to his friends, ‘Have patience with me, for some of my family are come to visit me; wherefore excuse belongeth [first] to God the Most High, and then to you.' So they took leave of him and went their ways, whilst he gave another light knock at the door. When the young man heard this, he changed colour and the woman said to him, 'Methinks thy servant hath returned.' 'Yes,' answered he; and she arose and opening the door to the master of the house, said to him, 'Where hast thou been? Indeed, thy master is wroth with thee.' 'O my lady,' answered he, 'I have but been about his occasions.'

Then he girt his middle with a handkerchief and entering, saluted the young merchant, who said to him, 'Where hast thou been?' Quoth he, 'I have done thine errands;' and the youth said, 'Go and eat and come hither and drink.' So he went away, as he bade him, and ate. Then he washed and returning to the saloon, sat down on the carpet and fell to talking with them; whereupon the young merchant's heart was comforted and his breast dilated and he addressed himself to joyance. They abode in the most delightsome life and the most abounding pleasance till a third part of the night was past, when the master of the house arose and spreading them a bed, invited them to lie down. So they lay down and the youth abode on wake, pondering their affair, till daybreak, when the woman awoke and said to her companion, 'I wish to go.' So he bade her farewell and she departed; whereupon the master of the house followed her with a purse of money and gave it to her, saying, 'Blame not my master,' and made his excuse to her for the young merchant.

Then he returned to the youth and said to him, 'Arise and come to the bath.' And he fell to shampooing his hands and feet, whilst the youth called down blessings on him and said, 'O my lord, who art thou? Methinks there is not in the world the like of thee, no, nor a pleasanter than thy composition.' Then each of them acquainted the other with his case and condition and they went to the bath; after which the master of the house conjured the young merchant to return with him and summoned his friends. So they ate and drank and he related to them the story, wherefore they praised the master of the house and glorified him; and their friendship was complete, what while the young merchant abode in the town, till God vouchsafed him a commodity of travel, whereupon they took leave of him and he departed; and this is the end of his story. Nor," added the vizier, "O king of the age, is this more marvellous than the story of the rich man who lost his wealth and his wit."

When the king heard the vizier's story, it pleased him and he bade him go to his house.

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The Sixteenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king sat in his sitting- chamber and sending for his vizier, bade him relate the story of the wealthy man who lost his wealth and his wit. So he said, “Know, O king, that

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STORY OF THE IDIOT AND THE SHARPER.

There was once a man of fortune, who lost his wealth, and chagrin and melancholy got the mastery of him, so that he became an idiot and lost his wit. There abode with him of his wealth about a score of dinars and he used to beg alms of the folk, and that which they gave him he would gather together and lay to the dinars that were left him. Now there was in that town a vagabond, who made his living by sharping, and he knew that the idiot had somewhat of money; so he fell to spying upon him and gave not over watching him till he saw him put in an earthen pot that which he had with him of money and enter a deserted ruin, where he sat down, [as if] to make water, and dug a hole, in which he laid the pot and covering it up, strewed earth upon the place. Then he went away and the sharper came and taking what was in the pot, covered it up again, as it was.

Presently, the idiot returned, with somewhat to add to his hoard, but found it not; so he bethought him who had followed him and remembered that he had found the sharper aforesaid assiduous in sitting with him and questioning him. So he went in quest of him, assured that he had taken the pot, and gave not over looking for him till he espied him sitting; whereupon he ran to him and the sharper saw him. [Then the idiot stood within earshot] and muttered to himself and said, ‘In the pot are threescore dinars and I have with me other score in such a place and to-day I will unite the whole in the pot.’ When the sharper heard him say this to himself, muttering and mumbling after his fashion, he repented him of having taken the dinars and said, ‘He will presently return to the pot and find it empty; wherefore that for which I am on the look-out will escape me; and meseemeth I were best restore the dinars [to their place], so he may see them and leave all that is with him in the pot, and I can take the whole.’

Now he feared [to return to the pot then and there], lest the idiot should follow him to the place and find nothing and so his plan be marred. So he said to him, ‘O Ajlan, I would have thee come to my lodging and eat bread with me.” So the idiot went with him to his lodging and he seated him there and going to the market, sold somewhat of his clothes and pawned somewhat from his house and bought dainty food. Then he betook himself to the ruin and replacing the money in the pot, buried it again; after which he returned to his lodging and gave the idiot to eat and drink, and they went out together. The sharper went away and hid himself, lest the idiot should see him, whilst the latter repaired to his hiding- place and took the pot

Presently, the sharper came to the ruin, rejoicing in that which he deemed he should get, and dug in the place, but found nothing and knew that the idiot had tricked him. So he buffeted his face, for chagrin, and fell to following the other whithersoever he went, so he might get what was with him, but availed not unto this, for that the idiot knew what was in his mind and was certified that he spied upon him, [with intent to rob him]; so he kept watch over himself. Now, if the sharper had considered [the consequences of] haste and that which is begotten of loss therefrom, he had not done thus. Nor," continued the vizier, "is this story, O king of the age, rarer or more extraordinary or more diverting than the story of Khelbes and his wife and the learned man and that which befell between them."

When the king heard this story, he renounced his purpose of putting the vizier to death and his soul prompted him to continue him on life. So he bade him go away to his house.

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The Seventeenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king summoned the vizier, and when he presented himself, he required of him the [promised] story. So he said, “Hearkening and obedience. Know, O august king, that

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STORY OF KHELBES AND HIS WIFE AND THE LEARNED MAN.

There was once a man hight Khelbes, who was a lewd fellow, a calamity, notorious for this fashion, and he had a fair wife, renowned for beauty and loveliness. A man of his townsfolk fell in love with her and she also loved him. Now Khelbes was a crafty fellow and full of tricks, and there was in his neighbourhood a learned man, to whom the folk used to resort every day and he told them stories and admonished them [with moral instances]; and Khelbes was wont to be present in his assembly, for the sake of making a show before the folk.

Now this learned man had a wife renowned for beauty and loveliness and quickness of wit and understanding and the lover cast about for a device whereby he might win to Khelbes's wife; so he came to him and told him, as a secret, what he had seen of the learned man's wife and confided to him that he was enamoured of her and besought him of help in this. Khelbes told him that she was distinguished to the utterest for chastity and continence and that she exposed herself not to suspicion; but the other said, 'I cannot renounce her, [firstly,] because the woman inclineth to me and coveteth my wealth, and secondly, because of the greatness of my love for her; and nothing is wanting but thy help.' Quoth Khelbes, 'I will do thy will;' and the other said, 'Thou shalt have of me two dirhems a day, on condition that thou sit with the learned man and that, when he riseth from the assembly, thou speak a word notifying the breaking up of the session.' So they agreed upon this and Khelbes entered and sat in the assembly, whilst the lover was assured in his heart that the secret was safe with him, wherefore he rejoiced and was content to pay the two dirhems.

Then Khelbes used to attend the learned man's assembly, whilst the other would go in to his wife and abide with her, on such wise as he thought good, till the learned man arose from his session; and when Khelbes saw that he purposed rising, he would speak a word for the lover to hear, whereupon he went forth from Khelbes's wife, and the latter knew not that calamity was in his own house. At last the learned man, seeing Khelbes do on this wise every day, began to misdoubt of him, more by token of that which he knew of his character, and suspicion grew upon him; so, one day, he advanced the time of his rising before the wonted hour and hastening up to Khelbes, laid hold of him and said to him, ‘By Allah, an thou speak a single syllable, I will do thee a mischief!’ Then he went in to his wife, with Khelbes in his grasp, and behold, she was sitting, as of her wont, nor was there about her aught of suspicious or unseemly.

The learned man bethought him awhile of this, then made for Khelbes’s house, which adjoined his own, still holding the latter; and when they entered, they found the young man lying on the bed with Khelbes’s wife; whereupon quoth he to him, ‘O accursed one, the calamity is with thee and in thine own house!’ So Khelbes put away his wife and went forth, fleeing, and returned not to his own land. This, then,” continued the vizier, “is the consequence of lewdness, for whoso purposeth in himself craft and perfidy, they get possession of him, and had Khelbes conceived of himself that which he conceived of the folk of dishonour and calamity, there had betided him nothing of this. Nor is this story, rare and extraordinary though it be, more extraordinary or rarer than that of the pious woman whose husband’s brother accused her of lewdness.”

When the king heard this, wonderment gat hold of him and his admiration for the vizier redoubled; so he bade him go to his house and return to him [on the morrow], according to his wont. Accordingly, the vizier withdrew to his lodging, where he passed the night and the ensuing day.

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STORY OF THE PIOUS WOMAN ACCUSED OF LEWDNESS.

There was once a man of Nishapour, who had a wife of the utmost loveliness and piety, and he was minded to set out on the pilgrimage. So he commended his wife to the care of his brother and besought him to aid her in her affairs and further her to her desires till he should return, so they both abode alive and well. Then he took ship and departed and his absence was prolonged. Meanwhile, the brother went in to his brother's wife, at all times and seasons, and questioned her of her circumstances and went about her occasions; and when his visits to her were prolonged and he heard her speech and looked upon her face, the love of her gat hold upon his heart and he became distraught with passion for her and his soul prompted him [to evil]. So he besought her to lie with him, but she refused and chid him for his foul deed, and he found him no way unto presumption; wherefore he importuned her with soft speech and gentleness.

Now she was righteous in all her dealings and swerved not from one word; so, when he saw that she consented not unto him, he misdoubted that she would tell his brother, when he returned from his journey, and said to her, 'An thou consent not to this whereof I require thee, I will cause thee fall into suspicion and thou wilt perish.' Quoth she, 'Be God (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He!) [judge] betwixt me and thee, and know that, shouldst thou tear me limb from limb, I would not consent to that whereto thou biddest me.' His folly persuaded him that she would tell her husband; so, of his exceeding despite, he betook himself to a company of people in the mosque and told them that he had witnessed a man commit adultery with his brother's wife. They believed his saying and took act of his accusation and assembled to stone her. Then they dug her a pit without the city and seating her therein, stoned her, till they deemed her dead, when they left her.

Presently a villager passed by [the pit and finding] her [alive,] carried her to his house and tended her, [till she recovered]. Now, he had a son, and when the young man saw her, he loved her and besought her of herself; but she refused and consented not to him, whereupon he redoubled in love and longing and despite prompted him to suborn a youth of the people of his village and agree with him that he should come by night and take somewhat from his father’s house and that, when he was discovered, he should say that she was of accord with him in this and avouch that she was his mistress and had been stoned on his account in the city. So he did this and coming by night to the villager’s house, stole therefrom goods and clothes; whereupon the old man awoke and seizing the thief, bound him fast and beat him, to make him confess. So he confessed against the woman that she had prompted him to this and that he was her lover from the city. The news was bruited abroad and the people of the city assembled to put her to death; but the old man, with whom she was, forbade them and said, ‘I brought this woman hither, coveting the recompense [of God,] and I know not [the truth of] that which is said of her and will not suffer any to hurt her.’ Then he gave her a thousand dirhems, by way of alms, and put her forth of the village. As for the thief, he was imprisoned for some days; after which the folk interceded for him with the old man, saying, ‘This is a youth and indeed he erred;’ and he released him.

Meanwhile, the woman went out at hazard and donning devotee’s apparel, fared on without ceasing, till she came to a city and found the king’s deputies dunning the towns-folk for the tribute, out of season. Presently, she saw a man, whom they were pressing for the tribute; so she enquired of his case and being acquainted therewith, paid down the thousand dirhems for him and delivered him from beating; whereupon he thanked her and those who were present. When he was set free, he accosted her and besought her to go with him to his dwelling. So she accompanied him thither and supped with him and passed the night. When the night darkened on him, his soul prompted him to evil, for that which he saw of her beauty and loveliness, and he lusted after her and required her [of love]; but she repelled him and bade him fear God the Most High and reminded him of that which she had done with him of kindness and how she had delivered him from beating and humiliation.

However, he would not be denied, and when he saw her [constant] refusal of herself to him, he feared lest she should tell the folk of him. So, when he arose in the morning, he took a scroll and wrote in it what he would of forgery and falsehood and going up to the Sultan's palace, said, '[I have] an advisement [for the king].' So he bade admit him and he delivered him the writ that he had forged, saying, 'I found this letter with the woman, the devotee, the ascetic, and indeed she is a spy, a secret informer against the king to his enemy; and I deem the king's due more incumbent on me than any other and his advisement the first [duty], for that he uniteth in himself all the people, and but for the king's presence, the subjects would perish; wherefore I have brought [thee] warning.' The king put faith in his words and sent with him those who should lay hands upon the woman and put her to death; but they found her not.

As for the woman, whenas the man went out from her, she resolved to depart; so she went forth, saying in herself, 'There is no journeying for me in woman's attire.' Then she donned men's apparel, such as is worn of the pious, and set out and wandered over the earth; nor did she leave going till she entered a certain city. Now the king of that city had an only daughter in whom he gloried and whom he loved, and she saw the devotee and deeming her a pilgrim youth, said to her father, 'I would fain have this youth take up his abode with me, so I may learn of him wisdom and renunciation and religion.' Her father rejoiced in this and commanded the [supposed] pilgrim to take up his sojourn with his daughter in his palace. Now they were in one place and the king's daughter was strenuous to the utterest in continence and chastity and nobility of mind and magnanimity and devotion to the worship of God; but the ignorant slandered her and the folk of the realm said, 'The king's daughter loveth the pilgrim youth and he loveth her.'

Now the king was a very old man and destiny decreed the ending of his term of life; so he died and when he was buried, the folk assembled and many were the sayings of the people and of the king's kinsfolk and officers, and they took counsel together to slay the princess and the young pilgrim, saying, 'This fellow dishonoureth us with yonder strumpet and none accepteth dishonour but the base.' So they fell upon them and slew the princess, without questioning her of aught; whereupon the pious woman (whom they deemed a boy) said to them, 'Out on ye, O misbelievers I Ye have slain the pious lady.' Quoth they, 'Lewd fellow that thou art, dost thou bespeak us thus?

Thou lovedst her and she loved thee, and we will slay thee without mercy.' 'God forbid!' answered she, 'Indeed, the affair is the contrary of this.' 'What proof hast thou of that?' asked they, and she said, 'Bring me women.' So they brought her women, and when they looked on her, they found her a woman.

When the townsfolk saw this, they repented of that which they had done and the affair was grievous to them; so they sought pardon [of God] and said to her, ' By the virtue of Him whom thou servest, do thou seek pardon for us [of God!]' Quoth she, 'As for me, I may no longer abide with you and I am about to depart from you.' Then they humbled themselves in supplication to her and wept and said to her, 'We conjure thee, by the virtue of God the Most High, that thou take upon thyself the governance of the kingdom and of the subjects.' But she refused; whereupon they came up to her and wept and gave not over supplicating her, till she consented and abode in the kingship. Her first commandment was that they should bury the princess and build over her a dome and she abode in that palace, worshipping God the Most High and ruling the people with justice, and God (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He!) vouchsafed her, by reason of the excellence of her piety and her patience and continence, the acceptance of her prayers, so that she sought not aught of Him to whom belong might and majesty, but He granted her prayer; and her report was noised abroad in all countries.

So the folk resorted to her from all parts and she used to pray God (to whom belong might and majesty) for the oppressed and God granted him relief, and against his oppressor, and He broke him in sunder. Moreover, she prayed for the sick and they were made whole; and on this wise she abode a great space of time. As for her husband, when he returned from the pilgrimage, his brother and the neighbours acquainted him with his wife's affair, whereat he was sore concerned and misdoubted of their story, for that which he knew of her chastity and prayerfulness; and he wept for her loss.

Meanwhile, she prayed to God the Most High that He would establish her innocence in the eyes of her husband and the folk. So He sent down upon her husband's brother a sore disease and none knew a remedy for him; wherefore he said to his brother, ' In such a city is a pious woman, a recluse, and her prayers are answered; so do thou carry me to her, that she may pray for me and God (to whom belong might and majesty) may make me whole of this sickness.' Accordingly, he took him up and fared on with him, till they came to the village where dwelt the old man, who had rescued the woman from the pit and carried her to his dwelling and tended her there, [till she recovered].

Here they halted and took up their lodging with the old man, who questioned the husband of his case and that of his brother and the reason of their journey, and he said, 'I purpose to go with my brother, this sick man, to the holy woman, her whose prayers are answered, so she may pray for him and God may make him whole by the blessing of her prayers.' Quoth the villager, 'By Allah, my son is in a parlous plight for sickness and we have heard that the holy woman prayeth for the sick and they are made whole. Indeed, the folk counsel me to carry him to her, and behold, I will go in company with you. And they said, 'It is well.' So they passed the night in that intent and on the morrow they set out for the dwelling of the holy woman, this one carrying his son and that his brother.

Now the man who had stolen the clothes and forged a lie against the pious woman, pretending that he was her lover, sickened of a sore sickness, and his people took him up and set out with him to visit the holy woman, and Destiny brought them all together by the way. So they fared on, till they came to the city wherein the man dwelt for whom she had paid a thousand dirhems, to deliver him from torment, and found him about to travel to her, by reason of a sickness that had betided him. So they all fared on together, unknowing that the holy woman was she whom they had so foully wronged, and ceased not going till they came to her city and foregathered at the gates of her palace, to wit, that wherein was the tomb of the king's daughter.

Now the folk used to go in to her and salute her and crave her prayers; and it was her wont to pray for none till he had confessed to her his sins, when she would seek pardon for him and pray for him that he might be healed, and he was straightway made whole of sickness, by permission of God the Most High. [So, when the four sick men were brought in to her,] she knew them forthright, though they knew her not, and said to them, ' Let each of you confess his sins, so I may crave pardon for him and pray for him.' And the brother said, 'As for me, I required my brother's wife of herself and she refused; whereupon despite and folly prompted me and I lied against her and accused her to the townsfolk of adultery; so they stoned her and slew her unjustly and unrighteously; and this is the issue of unright and falsehood and of the slaying of the [innocent] soul, whose slaughter God hath forbidden.'

Then said the young man, the villager's son, 'And I, O holy woman, my father brought us a woman who had been stoned, and my people tended her till she recovered. Now she was surpassing of beauty; so I required her of herself; but she refused and clave fast to God (to whom belong might and majesty), wherefore folly prompted me, so that I agreed with one of the youths that he should steal clothes and coin from my father's house. Then I laid hands on him [and carried him] to my father and made him confess. So he avouched that the woman was his mistress from the city and had been stoned on his account and that she was of accord with him concerning the theft and had opened the doors to him, and this was a lie against her, for that she had not yielded to me in that which I sought of her. So there befell me what ye see of punishment." And the young man, the thief, said, 'I am he with whom thou agreedst concerning the theft and to whom thou openedst the door, and I am he who avouched against her falsely and calumniously and God (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He!) knoweth that I never did evil with her, no, nor knew her in any wise before then.'

Then said he whom she had delivered from torture and for whom she had paid a thousand dirhems and who had required her of herself in his house, for that her beauty pleased him, and [when she refused to yield to him] had forged a letter against her and treacherously denounced her to the Sultan and requited her bounty with ingratitude, 'I am he who wronged her and lied against her, and this is the issue of the oppressor's affair.'

When she heard their words, in the presence of the folk, she said, 'Praise be to God, the King who availeth unto all things, and blessing upon His prophets and apostles!' Then quoth she [to the assembly], ' Bear witness, O ye who are present, to these men's speech, and know that I am that woman whom they confess that they wronged.' And she turned to her husband's brother and said to him, 'I am thy brother's wife and God (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He I) delivered me from that whereinto thou castedst me of false accusation and suspect and from the frowardness whereof thou hast spoken, and [now] hath He shown forth my innocence, of His bounty and generosity. Go, for thou art absolved of the wrong thou didst me.' Then she prayed for him and he was made whole of his sickness.

Then said she to the villager's son, 'Know that I am the woman whom thy father delivered from harm and stress and whom there betided from thee of false accusation and frowardness that which thou hast named.' And she craved pardon for him and he was made whole of his sickness. [Then said she to the thief, 'I am she against whom thou liedst, avouching that I was thy mistress, who had been stoned on thine account, and that I was of accord with thee concerning the robbing of the villager's house and had opened the doors to thee.' And she prayed for him and he was made whole of his sickness.] Then said she to [the townsman], him of the tribute, 'I am she who gave thee the [thousand] dirhems and thou didst with me what thou didst.' And she craved pardon for him and prayed for him and he was made whole; whereupon the folk marvelled at her oppressors, who had been afflicted alike, so God (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He!) might show forth her innocence before witnesses.

Then she turned to the old man who had delivered her from the pit and prayed for him and gave him presents galore and among them a myriad of money; and they all departed from her, except her husband. When she was alone with him, she made him draw near unto her and rejoiced in his coming and gave him the choice of abiding with her. Moreover, she assembled the people of the city and set out to them his virtue and worth and counselled them to invest him with the charge of their governance and besought them to make him king over them. They fell in with her of this and he became king and took up his abode amongst them, whilst she gave herself up to her religious exercises and abode with her husband on such wise as she was with him aforetime. Nor," added the vizier, "is this story, O king of the time, more extraordinary or more delightful than that of the journeyman and the girl whose belly he slit and fled."

When King Shah Bekht heard this, he said, "Most like all they say of the vizier is leasing and his innocence will appear, even as that of the pious woman appeared." Then he comforted the vizier's heart and bade him go to his house.

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The Nineteenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king bade fetch the vizier and required of him the story of the journeyman and the girl. So he said, “Hearkening and obedience. Know, O august king, that

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STORY OF THE JOURNEYMAN AND THE GIRL.

There was once, of old time, in one of the tribes of the Arabs, a woman great with child by her husband, and they had a hired servant, a man of excellent understanding. When the woman came to [the time of her] delivery, she gave birth to a maid-child in the night and they sought fire of the neighbours. So the journeyman went in quest of fire.

Now there was in the camp a wise woman, and she questioned him of the new-born child, if it was male or female. Quoth he, ‘It is a girl;’ and she said, ‘She shall do whoredom with a hundred men and a journeyman shall marry her and a spider shall slay her.’ When the journeyman heard this, he returned upon his steps and going in to the woman, took the child from her by wile and slit its paunch. Then he fled forth into the desert at a venture and abode in strangerhood what [while] God willed.

He gained him wealth and returning to his native land, after twenty years’ absence, alighted in the neighbourhood of an old woman, whom he bespoke fair and entreated with liberality, requiring of her a wench whom he might lie withal. Quoth she, ‘I know none but a certain fair woman, who is renowned for this fashion.’ Then she described her charms to him and made him lust after her, and he said, ‘Hasten to her forthright and lavish unto her that which she asketh, [in exchange for her favours].’ So the old woman betook herself to the damsel and discovered to her the man’s wishes and bade her to him; but she answered, saying, ‘It is true that I was on this [fashion of] whoredom [aforetime]; but now I have repented to God the Most High and hanker no more after this; nay, I desire lawful marriage; so, if he be content with that which is lawful, I am at his service.’

The old woman returned to the man and told him what the damsel said; and he lusted after her, by reason of her beauty and her repentance; so he took her to wife, and when he went in to her, he loved her and she also loved him. On this wise they abode a great while, till one day he questioned her of the cause of a mark he espied on her body, and she said, ‘I know nought thereof save that my mother told me a marvellous thing concerning it.’ ‘What was that?’ asked he, and she answered, ‘She avouched that she gave birth to me one night of the nights of the winter and despatched a hired man, who was with us, in quest of fire for her. He was absent a little while and presently returning, took me and slit my belly and fled. When my mother saw this, affliction overcame her and compassion possessed her; so she sewed up my belly and tended me till, by the ordinance of God (to whom belong might and majesty), the wound healed up.”

When her husband heard this, he said to her, ‘What is thy name and what are the names of thy father and mother?’ She told him their names and her own, whereby he knew that it was she whose belly he had slit and said to her, ‘And where are thy father and mother?’ ‘They are both dead,’ answered she, and he said, ‘I am that journeyman who slit thy belly.’ Quoth she, ‘Why didst thou that?’ And he replied, ‘Because of a saying I heard from the wise woman.’ ‘What was it?’ asked his wife, and he said, ‘She avouched that thou wouldst play the harlot with a hundied men and that I should after take thee to wife.’ Quoth she, ‘Ay, I have whored it with a hundred men, no more and no less, and behold, thou hast married me.’ ‘Moreover,’ continued her husband, ‘the wise woman foresaid, also, that thou shouldst die, at the last of thy life, of the bite of a spider. Indeed, her saying hath been verified of the harlotry and the marriage, and I fear lest her word come true no less in the matter of thy death.’

Then they betook themselves to a place without the city, where he builded him a mansion of solid stone and white plaster and stopped its inner [walls] and stuccoed them; yea, he left not therein cranny nor crevice and set in it two serving-women to sweep and wipe, for fear of spiders. Here he abode with his wife a great while, till one day he espied a spider on the ceiling and beat it down. When his wife saw it, she said, ‘This is that which the wise woman avouched would kill me; so, by thy life [I conjure thee], suffer me to slay it with mine own hand.’ Her husband forbade her from this, but she conjured him to let her kill the spider; then, of her fear and her eagerness, she took a piece of wood and smote it. The wood broke in sunder, of the force of the blow, and a splinter from it entered her hand and wrought upon it, so that it swelled. Then her arm swelled also and the swelling spread to her side and thence grew till it reached her heart and she died. Nor," added the vizier, "is this more extraordinary or more wonderful than the story of the weaver who became a physician by his wife's commandment."

When the king heard this, his admiration redoubled and he said, "Of a truth, destiny is forewritten to all creatures, and I will not accept aught that is said against my vizier the loyal counsellor." And he bade him go to his house.

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The Twentieth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king let call his vizier and he presented himself before him, whereupon he required of him the hearing of the [promised] story. So he said, “Hearkening and obedience. Know, O king. that

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STORY OF THE WEAVER WHO BECAME A PHYSICIAN BY HIS WIFE'S COMMANDMENT.

There was once, in the land of Fars, a man who took to wife a woman higher than himself in rank and nobler of lineage, but she had no guardian to preserve her from want. It misliked her to marry one who was beneath her; nevertheless, she married him, because of need, and took of him a bond in writing to the effect that he would still be under her commandment and forbiddance and would nowise gainsay her in word or deed. Now the man was a weaver and he bound himself in writing to pay his wife ten thousand dirhems, [in case he should make default in the condition aforesaid].

On this wise they abode a long while till one day the wife went out in quest of water, whereof she had need, and espied a physician who had spread a carpet in the Thereon he had set out great store of drugs and implements of medicine and he was speaking and muttering [charms], whilst the folk flocked to him and compassed him about on every side. The weaver's wife marvelled at the largeness of the physician's fortune and said in herself, 'Were my husband thus, he would have an easy life of it and that wherein we are of straitness and misery would be enlarged unto him.'

Then she returned home, troubled and careful; and when her husband saw her on this wise, he questioned her of her case and she said to him, 'Verily, my breast is straitened by reason of thee and of the simpleness of thine intent. Straitness liketh me not and thou in thy [present] craft gaiuest nought; so either do thou seek out a craft other than this or pay me my due and let me go my way.' Her husband chid her for this and admonished her; but she would not be turned from her intent and said to him, 'Go forth and watch yonder physician how he doth and leam from him what he saith.' Quoth he, 'Let not thy heart be troubled: I will go every day to the physician's assembly.'

So he fell to resorting daily to the physician and committing to memory his sayings and that which he spoke of jargon, till he had gotten a great matter by heart, and all this he studied throughly and digested it. Then he returned to his wife and said to her, 'I have committed the physician’s sayings to memory and have learned his fashion of muttering and prescribing and applying remedies and have gotten by heart the names of the remedies and of all the diseases, and there abideth nought [unaccomplished] of thy commandment. What wilt thou have me do now?’ Quoth she, ‘Leave weaving and open thyself a physician’s shop.’ But he answered, ‘The people of my city know me and this affair will not profit me, save in a land of strangerhood; so come, let us go out from this city and get us to a strange land and [there] live.’ And she said, ‘Do as thou wilt.’

So he arose and taking his weaving gear, sold it and bought with the price drugs and simples and wrought himself a carpet, with which they set out and journeyed to a certain village, where they took up their abode. Then the man donned a physician’s habit and fell to going round about the hamlets and villages and country parts; and he began to earn his living and make gain. Their affairs prospered and their case was bettered; wherefore they praised God for their present ease and the village became to them a home.

[On this wise he abode a pretty while] and the days ceased not and the nights to transport him from country to country, till he came to the land of the Greeks and lighted down in a city of the cities thereof, wherein was Galen the Sage; but the weaver knew him not, nor was he ware who he was. So he went forth, according to his wont, in quest of a place where the folk might assemble together, and hired Galen’s courtyard. There he spread his carpet and setting out thereon his drugs and instruments of medicine, praised himself and his skill and vaunted himself of understanding such as none but he might claim.

Galen heard that which he avouched of his understanding and it was certified unto him and established in his mind that the man was a skilled physician of the physicians of the Persians and [he said in himself], ‘Except he had confidence in his knowledge and were minded to confront me and contend with me, he had not sought the door of my house neither spoken that which he hath spoken.’ And concern gat hold upon Galen and doubt. Then he looked out upon the weaver and addressed himself to see what he should do, whilst the folk began to flock to him and set out to him their ailments, and he would answer them thereof [and prescribe for them], hitting the mark one while and missing it another, so that there appeared unto Galen of his fashion nothing whereby his mind might be assured that he had formed a just opinion of his skill.

Presently, up came a woman with a phial of urine, and when the [mock] physician saw the phial afar off, he said to her, ‘This is the urine of a man, a stranger.’ ‘Yes,’ answered she; and he continued, ‘Is he not a Jew and is not his ailment indigestion?’ ‘Yes,’ replied the woman, and the folk marvelled at this; wherefore the man was magnified in Galen’s eyes, for that he heard speech such as was not of the usage of physicians, seeing that they know not urine but by shaking it and looking into it anear neither know they a man’s water from a woman’s water, nor a stranger’s [from a countryman’s], nor a Jew’s from a Sherifs. Then said the woman, ‘What is the remedy?’ Quoth the weaver, ‘Pay down the fee.’ So she paid him a dirhem and he gave her medicines contrary to that ailment and such as would aggravate the patient’s malady.

When Galen saw what appeared to him of the [mock] physician’s incapacity, he turned to his disciples and pupils and bade them fetch the other, with all his gear and drugs. So they brought him into his presence on the speediest wise, and when Galen saw him before him, he said to him, ‘Knowest thou me?’ ‘ No,’ answered the other, ‘nor did I ever set eyes on thee before this day.’ Quoth the sage, ‘Dost thou know Galen?’ And the weaver said, ‘No.’ Then said Galen, ‘What prompted thee to that which thou dost?’ So he related to him his story and gave him to know of the dowry and the obligation by which he was bound with regard to his wife, whereat Galen marvelled and certified himself of the matter of the dower.

Then he bade lodge him near himself and was bountiful to him and took him apart and said to him, ‘Expound to me the story of the phial and whence then knewest that the water therein was that of a man, and he a stranger and a Jew, and that his ailment was indigestion?’ ‘ It is well,’ answered the weaver. ‘ Thou must know that we people of Persia are skilled in physiognomy and I saw the woman to be rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed and tall. Now these attributes belong to women who are enamoured of a man and are distraught for love of him; moreover, I saw her consumed [with anxiety]; wherefore I knew that the patient was her husband. As for his strangerhood, I observed that the woman's attire differed from that of the people of the city, wherefore I knew that she was a stranger; and in the mouth of the phial I espied a yellow rag, whereby I knew that the patient was a Jew and she a Jewess. Moreover, she came to me on the first day [of the week]; and it is the Jews' custom to take pottages and meats that have been dressed overnight and eat them on the Sabbath day, hot and cold, and they exceed in eating; wherefore indigestion betideth them. On this wise I was directed and guessed that which thou hast heard.'

When Galen heard this, he ordered the weaver the amount of his wife's dowry and bade him pay it to her and divorce her. Moreover, he forbade him from returning to the practice of physic and warned him never again to take to wife a woman of better condition than himself; and he gave him his spending-money and bade him return to his [former] craft. Nor," added the vizier, "is this more extraordinary or rarer than the story of the two sharpers who cozened each his fellow."

When King Shah Bekht heard this, he said in himself, "How like is this story to my present case with this vizier, who hath not his like!" Then he bade him depart to his own house and come again at eventide.

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The Twenty-First Night of the Month.

When came the night, the vizier presented himself before the king, who bade him relate the [promised] story. So he said, “Hearkening and obedience. Know, Out

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STORY OF THE TWO SHARPERS WHO CHEATED EACH HIS FELLOW.

There was once, in the city of Baghdad, a man, [by name El Merouzi,] who was a sharper and plagued the folk with his knavish tricks, and he was renowned in all quarters [for roguery]. [He went out one day], carrying a load of sheep's dung, and took an oath that he would not return to his lodging till he had sold it at the price of raisins. Now there was in another city a second sharper, [by name Er Razi,] one of its people, who [went out the same day], bearing a load of goat's dung, which he had sworn that he would not sell but at the price of dried figs.

So each of them fared on with that which was with him and gave not over going till they met in one of the inns and each complained to the other of that which he had abidden of travel [in quest of custom] and of the lack of demand for his wares. Now each of them had it in mind to cheat his fellow; so El Merouzi said to Er Razi, 'Wilt thou sell me that?' 'Yes,' answered he, and the other continued, 'And wilt thou buy that which is with me?' Er Razi assented; so they agreed upon this and each of them sold his fellow that which was with him [in exchange for the other's ware]; after which they bade each other farewell and parted. As soon as they were out of each other's sight, they examined their loads, to see what was therein, and one of them found that he had a load of sheep's dung and the other that he had a load of goat's dung; whereupon each of them turned back in quest of his fellow. They met in the inn aforesaid and laughed at each other and cancelling their bargain, agreed to enter into partnership and that all that they had of money and other good should be in common between them, share and share alike.

Then said Er Razi to El Merouzi, 'Come with me to my city, for that it is nearer [than thine].' So he went with him, and when he came to his lodging, he said to his wife and household and neighbours, 'This is my brother, who hath been absent in the land of Khorassan and is come back.' And he abode with him in all honour and worship three days' space. On the fourth day, Er Razi said to him, 'Know, O my brother, that I purpose to do somewhat' 'What is it?' asked El Merouzi. Quoth the other, 'I mean to feign myself dead and do thou go to the market and hire two porters and a bier. [Then come back and take me up and go round about the streets and markets with me and collect alms on my account.]

Accordingly El Merouzi repaired to the market and fetching that which he sought, returned to Er Razi's house, where he found the latter cast down in the vestibule, with his beard tied and his eyes shut; and indeed, his colour was paled and his belly blown out and his limbs relaxed. So he deemed him in truth dead and shook him; but he spoke not; and he took a knife and pricked him in the legs, but he stirred not. Then said Er Razi, 'What is this, O fool?' And El Merouzi answered, 'Methought thou wast dead in very sooth.' Quoth Er Razi, 'Get thee to seriousness and leave jesting.' So he took him up and went with him to the market and collected [alms] for him that day till eventide, when he carried him back to his lodging and waited till the morrow.

Next morning, he again took up the bier and went round with it as before, in quest of alms. Presently, the master of police, who was of those who had given alms on account of the supposed dead man on the previous day, met him; so he was angered and fell on the porters and beat them and took the [supposed] dead body, saying, 'I will bury him and earn the reward [of God].' So his men took him up and carrying him to the prefecture, fetched grave-diggers, who dug him a grave. Then they bought him a shroud and perfumes and fetched an old man of the quarter, to wash him. So he recited over him [the appointed prayers and portions of the Koran] and laying him on the bench, washed him and shrouded him. After he had shrouded him, he voided; so he renewed the washing and went away to make his ablutions, whilst all the folk departed, likewise, to make the [obligatory] ablution, previously to the funeral.

When the dead man found himself alone, he sprang up, as he were a Satan, and donning the washer's clothes, took the bowls and water-can and wrapped them up in the napkins. Then be took his shroud under his arm and went out. The doorkeepers thought that he was the washer and said to him, 'Hast thou made an end of the washing, so we may tell the Amir?' 'Yes,' answered the sharper and made off to his lodging, where he found El Merouzi soliciting his wife and saying to her, ‘Nay, by thy life, thou wilt never again look upon his face; for that by this time he is buried. I myself escaped not from them but after travail and trouble, and if he speak, they will put him to death.’ Quoth she, ‘And what wilt thou have of me?’ ‘Accomplish my desire of thee,’ answered he, ‘and heal my disorder, for I am better than thy husband.’ And he fell a-toying with her.

When Er Razi heard this, he said, ‘Yonder wittol lusteth after my wife; but I will do him a mischief.’ Then he rushed in upon them, and when El Merouzi saw him, he marvelled at him and said to him, ‘How didst thou make thine escape?’ So he told him the trick he had played and they abode talking of that which they had collected from the folk [by way of alms], and indeed they had gotten great store of money. Then said El Merouzi, ‘Verily, mine absence hath been prolonged and fain would I return to my own country.’ Quoth Er Rasi,’ As thou wilt;’ and the other said, ‘Let us divide the money we have gotten and do thou go with me to my country, so I may show thee my tricks and my fashions.’ ‘Come to-morrow,’ replied Er Razi, ‘and we will divide the money.’

So El Merouzi went away and the other turned to his wife and said to her, ‘We have gotten us great plenty of money, and yonder dog would fain take the half of it; but this shall never be, for that my mind hath been changed against him, since I heard him solicit thee; wherefore I purpose to play him a trick and enjoy all the money; and do not thou cross me.’ ‘ It is well,’ answered she, and he said to her, ‘[To-morrow] at day-peep I will feign myself dead and do thou cry out and tear thy hair, whereupon the folk will flock to me. Then lay me out and bury me, and when the folk are gone away [from the burial-place], do thou dig down to me and take me; and have no fear for me, for I can abide two days in the tomb [without hurt].’ And she answered, ‘Do what thou wilt.’

So, when it was the foredawn hour, she tied his beard and spreading a veil over him, cried out, whereupon the people of the quarter flocked to her, men and women. Presently, up came El Merouzi, for the division of the money, and hearing the crying [of the mourners], said, ‘What is to do?” Quoth they, ‘Thy brother is dead;’ and he said in himself, ‘The accursed fellow putteth a cheat on me, so he may get all the money for himself, but I will do with him what shall soon bring him to life again.' Then he rent the bosom of his gown and uncovered his head, weeping and saying, 'Alas, my brother! Alas, my chief! Alas, my lord!' And he went in to the men, who rose and condoled with him. Then he accosted Er Razi's wife and said to her, 'How came his death about?' 'I know not,' answered she, 'except that, when I arose in the morning, I found him dead.' Moreover, he questioned her of the money and good that was with her, but she said, 'I have no knowledge of this and no tidings.'

So he sat down at the sharper's head, and said to him, 'Know, O Razi, that I will not leave thee till after ten days and their nights, wherein I will wake and sleep by thy grave. So arise and be not a fool.' But he answered him not and El Merouzi [drew his knife and] fell to sticking it into the other's hands and feet, thinking to make him move; but [he stirred not and] he presently grew weary of this and concluded that the sharper was dead in good earnest. [However, he still misdoubted of the case] and said in himself, 'This fellow is dissembling, so he may enjoy all the money.' Therewith he addressed himself to prepare him [for burial] and bought him perfumes and what [not else] was needed. Then they brought him to the washing-place and El Merouzi came to him and heating water till it boiled and bubbled and a third of it was wasted, fell to pouring it on his skin, so that it turned red and blue and blistered; but he abode still on one case [and stirred not].

So they wrapped him in the shroud and set him on the bier. Then they took up his bier and bearing him to the burial-place, laid him in the grave and threw the earth over him; after which the folk dispersed, but El Merouzi and the widow abode by the tomb, weeping, and gave not over sitting till sundown, when the woman said to him, 'Come, let us go to the house, for this weeping will not profit us, nor will it restore the dead.' 'By Allah,' answered the sharper, 'I will not budge hence till I have slept and waked by this tomb ten days, with their nights!' When she heard this his speech, she feared lest he should keep his word and his oath, and so her husband perish; but she said in herself, 'This fellow dissembleth: if I go away and return to my house, he will abide by him a little while and go away.' And El Merouzi said to her, 'Arise, thou, and go away.'

So she arose and returned to her house, whilst El Merouzi abode in his place till the night was half spent, when he said to himself, ‘How long [is this to last]? Yet how can I let this knavish dog die and lose the money? Methinks I were better open the tomb on him and bring him forth and take my due of him by dint of grievous beating and torment.’ Accordingly, he dug him up and pulled him forth of the tomb; after which he betook himself to an orchard hard by the burial-ground and cut thence staves and palm sticks. Then he tied the dead man’s legs and came down on him with the staff and beat him grievously; but he stirred not. When the time grew long on him, his shoulders became weary and he feared lest some one of the watch should pass on his round and surprise him. So he took up Er Razi and carrying him forth of the cemetery, stayed not till he came to the Magians’ burying-place and casting him down in a sepulchre there, rained heavy blows upon him till his shoulders failed him, but the other stirred not Then he sat down by his side and rested; after which he rose and renewed the beating upon him, [but to no better effect; and thus he did] till the end of the night

Now, as destiny would have it, a band of thieves, whose use it was, whenas they had stolen aught, to resort to that place and divide [their booty], came thither [that night], as of their wont; and they were ten in number and had with them wealth galore, which they were carrying. When they drew near the sepulchre, they heard a noise of blows within it and the captain said, ‘This is a Magian whom the angels are tormenting.’ So they entered [the burial-ground] and when they came over against El Merouzi, he feared lest they should be the officers of the watch come upon him, wherefore he [arose and] fled and stood among the tombs. The thieves came up to the place and finding Er Razi bound by the feet and by him near seventy sticks, marvelled at this with an exceeding wonderment and said, ‘God confound thee! This was sure an infidel, a man of many crimes; for, behold, the earth hath rejected him from her womb, and by my life, he is yet fresh! This is his first night [in the tomb] and the angels were tormenting him but now; so whosoever of you hath a sin upon his conscience, let him beat him, as a propitiatory offering to God the Most High.’ And the thieves said, ‘We all have sins upon our consciences.’

So each of them went up to the [supposed] dead man and dealt him nigh upon a hundred blows, exclaiming the while, one, ‘This is for my father!’ and another, ‘This is for my grandfather!’ whilst a third said, ‘This is for my brother!’ and a fourth, ‘This is for my mother!’ And they gave not over taking turns at him and beating him, till they were weary, what while El Merouzi stood laughing and saying in himself, ‘It is not I alone who have entered into sin against him. There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!’

Then the thieves addressed themselves to sharing their booty and presently fell out concerning a sword that was among the spoil, who should take it. Quoth the captain, ‘Methinks we were better prove it; so, if it be good, we shall know its worth, and if it be ill, we shall know that.’ And they said, ‘Try it on this dead man, for he is fresh.’ So the captain took the sword and drawing it, poised it and brandished it; but, when Er Razi saw this, he made sure of death and said in himself, ‘I have borne the washing and the boiling water and the pricking with the knife and the grave and its straitness and all this [beating], trusting in God that I might be delivered from death, and [hitherto] I have been delivered; but, as for the sword, I may not brook that, for but one stroke of it, and I am a dead man.’

So saying, he sprang to his feet and catching up the thigh-bone of one of the dead, cried out at the top of his voice, saying, ‘O ye dead, take them!’ And he smote one of them, whilst his comrade [El Merouzi] smote another and they cried out at them and buffeted them on the napes of their necks; whereupon the thieves left that which was with them of plunder and fled; and indeed their wits forsook them [for terror] and they stayed not in their flight till they came forth of the Magians’ burial-ground and left it a parasang’s length behind them, when they halted, trembling and affrighted for the soreness of that which had betided them of fear and amazement at the dead.

As for Er Razi and El Merouzi, they made peace with each other and sat down to share the booty. Quoth El Merouzi, ‘I will not give thee a dirhem of this money, till thou pay me my due of the money that is in thy house.’ And Er Razi said ‘I will not do it, nor will I subtract this from aught of my due.’ So they fell out upon this and disputed with one another and each went saying to his fellow, ‘I will not give thee a dirhem!’ And words ran high between them and contention was prolonged.

Meanwhile, when the thieves halted, one of them said to the others, ‘Let us return and see;’ and the captain said, ‘This thing is impossible of the dead: never heard we that they came to life on this wise. So let us return and take our good, for that the dead have no occasion for good.’ And they were divided in opinion as to returning: but [presently they came to a decision and] said, ‘Indeed, our arms are gone and we cannot avail against them and will not draw near the place where they are: only let one of us [go thither and] look at it, and if he hear no sound of them, let him advertise us what we shall do.’ So they agreed that they should send a man of them and assigned him [for this service] two parts [of the booty].

Accordingly, he returned to the burial-ground and gave not over going till he stood at the door of the sepulchre, when he heard El Merouzi say to his fellow, ‘I will not give thee a single dirhem of the money!’ The other said the like and they were occupied with contention and mutual revilement and talk. So the thief returned in haste to his fellows, who said, ‘What is behind thee?’ Quoth he, ‘Get you gone and flee for your lives and save yourselves, O fools; for that much people of the dead are come to life and between them are words and contention.’ So the thieves fled, whilst the two sharpers retained to Er Razi’s house and made peace with one another and laid the thieves’ purchase to the money they had gotten aforetime and lived a while of time. Nor, O king of the age,” added the vizier, “is this rarer or more marvellous than the story of the four sharpers with the money-changer and the ass.”

When the king heard this story, he smiled and it pleased him and he bade the vizier go away to his own house.

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The Twenty-Second Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king summoned the vizier and required of him the hearing of the [promised] story. So he said, “Hearkening and obedience. Know, O king, that

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STORY OF THE SHARPERS WITH THE MONEY-CHANGER AND THE ASS.

Four sharpers once plotted against a money-changer, a man of abounding wealth, and agreed upon a device for the taking of somewhat of his money. So one of them took an ass and laying on it a bag, wherein was money, lighted down at the money-changer's shop and sought of him change for the money. The money- changer brought out to him the change and bartered it with him, whilst the sharper was easy with him in the matter of the exchange, so he might give him confidence in himself. [As they were thus engaged,] up came the [other three] sharpers and surrounded the ass; and one of them said, '[It is] he,' and another said, 'Wait till I look at him.' Then he fell to looking on the ass and stroking him from his mane to his crupper; whilst the third went up to him and handled him and felt him from head to tail, saying, ' Yes, [it is] in him.' Quoth another, ['Nay,] it is not in him.' And they gave not over doing the like of this.

Then they accosted the owner of the ass and chaffered with him and he said, 'I will not sell him but for ten thousand dirhems.' They offered him a thousand dirhems; but he refused and swore that he would not sell the ass but for that which he had said. They ceased not to add to their bidding, till the price reached five thousand dirhems, whilst their fellow still said, 'I will not sell him but for ten thousand dirhems.' The money-changer counselled him to sell, but he would not do this and said to him, 'Harkye, gaffer! Thou hast no knowledge of this ass's case. Concern thyself with silver and gold and what pertaineth thereto of change and exchange; for indeed the virtue of this ass passeth thy comprehension. To every craft its craftsman and to every means of livelihood its folk.'

When the affair was prolonged upon the three sharpers, they went away and sat down a little apart; then they came up to the money-changer privily and said to him, 'If thou canst buy him for us, do so, and we will give thee a score of dirhems.' Quoth he, 'Go away and sit down afar from him.' So they did his bidding and the money-changer went up to the owner of the ass and gave not over tempting him with money and cajoling him and saying, ‘Leave yonder fellows and sell me the ass, and I will reckon him a gift from thee,’ till he consented to sell him the ass for five thousand and five hundred dirhems. Accordingly the money-changer counted down to him five thousand and five hundred dirhems of his own money, and the owner of the ass took the price and delivered the ass to him, saying, ‘Whatsoever betideth, though he abide a deposit about thy neck, sell him not to yonder rogues for less than ten thousand dirhems, for that they would fain buy him because of a hidden treasure whereof they know, and nought can guide them thereto but this ass. So close thy hand on him and gainsay me not, or thou wilt repent.’

So saying, he left him and went away, whereupon up came the three other sharpers, the comrades of him of the ass, and said to the money-changer, ‘God requite thee for us with good, for that thou hast bought him! How can we requite thee!’ Quoth he, ‘I will not sell him but for ten thousand dirhems.’ When they heard this, they returned to the ass and fell again to examining him and handling him. Then said they to the money-changer, ‘We were mistaken in him. This is not the ass we sought and he is not worth more than half a score paras to us.’ Then they left him and offered to go away, whereat the money-changer was sore chagrined and cried out at their speech, saying, ‘O folk, ye besought me to buy him for you and now I have bought him, ye say, “We were deceived [in him], and he is not worth more than ten paras to us.”’ Quoth they, ‘We supposed that in him was that which we desired; but, behold, in him is the contrary of that which we want; and indeed he hath a default, for that he is short of back.’ And they scoffed at him and went away from him and dispersed.

The money-changer thought they did but finesse with him, that they might get the ass at their own price; but, when they went away from him and he had long in vain awaited their return, he cried out, saying, ‘Woe!’ and ‘Ruin!’ and ‘Alack, my sorry chance!’ and shrieked aloud and tore his clothes. So the people of the market assembled to him and questioned him of his case; whereupon he acquainted them with his plight and told them what the sharpers had said and how they had beguiled him and how it was they who had cajoled him into buying an ass worth half a hundred dirhems for five thousand and five hundred. His friends blamed him and a company of the folk laughed at him and marvelled at his folly and his credulity in accepting the sharpers' talk, without suspicion, and meddling with that which he understood not and thrusting himself into that whereof he was not assured.

On this wise, O King Shah Bekht," continued the vizier, "is the issue of eagerness for [the goods of] the world and covetise of that which our knowledge embraceth not; indeed, [whoso doth thus] shall perish and repent Nor, O king of the age, (added he) is this story more extraordinary than that of the sharper and the merchants."

When the king heard this story, he said in himself, "Verily, had I given ear to the sayings of my courtiers and inclined to the idle prate [of those who counselled me] in the matter of [the slaying of] my vizier, I had repented to the utterest of repentance, but praised be God, who hath disposed me to mansuetude and long-suffering and hath endowed me with patience!" Then he turned to the vizier and bade him return to his dwelling and [dismissed] those who were present, as of wont.

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The Twenty-Third Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king sent after the vizier and when he presented himself before him, he required of him the hearing of the [promised] story. So he said, “Hearkening and obedience. Know, O illustrious lord, that

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STORY OF THE SHARPER AND THE MERCHANTS.

There was once aforetime a certain sharper, who [was so eloquent that he] would turn the ear inside out, and he was a man of understanding and quick wit and skill and perfection. It was his wont to enter a town and [give himself out as a merchant and] make a show of trafficking and insinuate himself into the intimacy of people of worth and consort with the merchants, for he was [apparently] distinguished for virtue and piety. Then he would put a cheat on them and take [of them] what he might spend and go away to another city; and he ceased not to do thus a great while.

It befell one day that he entered a certain city and sold somewhat that was with him of merchandise and got him friends of the merchants of the place and fell to sitting with them and entertaining them and inviting them to his lodging and his assembly, whilst they also invited him to their houses. On this wise he abode a long while, till he was minded to leave the city; and this was bruited abroad among his friends, who were concerned for parting from him. Then he betook himself to him of them, who was the richest of them in substance and the most apparent of them in generosity, and sat with him and borrowed his goods; and when he was about to take leave, he desired him to give him the deposit that he had left with him. ‘And what is the deposit?’ asked the merchant. Quoth the sharper, ‘It is such a purse, with the thousand dinars therein.’ And the merchant said, ‘When didst thou give it me?’ ‘Extolled be the perfection of God!’ replied the sharper. ‘Was it not on such a day, by such a token, and thus and thus?’ ‘I know not of this,’ rejoined the merchant, and words were bandied about between them, whilst the folk [who were present also] disputed together concerning their affair and their speech, till their voices rose high and the neighbours had knowledge of that which passed between them.

Then said the sharper, ‘O folk, this is my friend and I deposited with him a deposit, but he denieth it; so in whom shall the folk put trust after this?’ And they said, ‘This is a man of worth and we have found in him nought but trustiness and loyality and good breeding, and he is endowed with understanding and generosity. Indeed, he avoucheth no falsehood, for that we have consorted with him and mixed with him and he with us and we know the sincerity of his religion.' Then quoth one of them to the merchant, 'Harkye, such an one! Bethink thee and consult thy memory. It may not be but that thou hast forgotten.' But he said, 'O folk, I know nothing of that which he saith, for indeed he deposited nought with me.' And the affair was prolonged between them. Then said the sharper to the merchant, 'I am about to make a journey and have, praised be God the Most High, wealth galore, and this money shall not escape me; but do thou swear to me.' And the folk said, 'Indeed, this man doth justice upon himself.' Whereupon the merchant fell into that which he misliked and came near upon [suffering] loss and ill repute.

Now he had a friend, who pretended to quickwittedness and understanding; so he came up to him privily and said to him, 'Let me do, so I may put the change on this trickster, for I know him to be a liar and thou art near upon having to pay the money; but I will turn suspicion from thee and say to him, "The deposit is with me and thou erredst in imagining that it was with other than myself," and so divert him from thee.' 'Do so,' replied the merchant, 'and rid the folk of their [false] debts.'

So the friend turned to the sharper and said to him, 'O my lord, O such an one, thou goest under a delusion. The purse is with me, for it was with me that thou depositedst it, and this elder is innocent of it.' But the sharper answered him with impatience and impetuosity, saying, 'Extolled be the perfection of God! As for the purse that is with thee, O noble and trusty man, I know that it is in the warrant of God and my heart is at ease concerning it, for that it is with thee as it were with me; but I began by demanding that which I deposited with this man, of my knowledge that he coveteth the folk's good.' At this the friend was confounded and put to silence and returned not an answer; [and the] only [result of his interference was that] each of them paid a thousand dinars.

So the sharper took the two thousand dinars and made off; and when he was gone, the merchant said to his friend, the [self-styled] man of wit and intelligence, 'Harkye, such an one! Thou and I are like unto the hawk and the locust.' 'What was their case?' asked the other; and the merchant said,

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STORY OF THE HAWK AND THE LOCUST.

‘There was once, of old time, a hawk who made himself a nest hard by that of a locust, and the latter gloried in his neighbourhood and betaking herself to him, saluted him and said, “O my lord and chief of the birds, indeed the nearness unto thee delighteth me and thou honourest me with thy neighbourhood and my soul is fortified with thee.” The hawk thanked her for this and there ensued friendship between them. One day, the locust said to the hawk, “O chief of the birds, how cometh it that I see thee alone, solitary, having with thee no friend of thy kind of the birds, to whom thou mayst incline in time of easance and of whom thou mayst seek succour in time of stress? Indeed, it is said, ‘Man goeth about seeking the ease of his body and the preservation of his strength, and in this there is nought more necessary to him than a friend who shall be the completion of his gladness and the mainstay of his life and on whom shall be his dependence in his stress and in his ease.’ Now I, albeit I ardently desire thy weal in that which beseemeth thy condition, yet am I weak [and unable] unto that which the soul craveth; but, if thou wilt give me leave, I will seek out for thee one of the birds who shall be conformable unto thee in thy body and thy strength.” And the hawk said, “I commit this to thee and rely upon thee therein.”

Therewithal, O my brother, the locust fell to going round about among the company of the birds, but saw nought resembling the hawk in bulk and body save the kite and deemed well of her. So she brought the hawk and the kite together and counselled the former to make friends with the latter. Now it chanced that the hawk fell sick and the kite abode with him a long while [and tended him] till he recovered and became whole and strong; wherefore he thanked her [and she departed from him]. But after awhile the hawk’s sickness returned to him and he needed the kite’s succour. So the locust went out from him and was absent from him a day, after which she returned to him with a[nother] locust, saying, “I have brought thee this one.” When the hawk saw her, he said, “God requite thee with good! Indeed, thou hast done well in the quest and hast been subtle in the choice.”

All this, O my brother,’ continued the merchant, ‘befell because the locust had no knowledge of the secret essence that lieth hid in apparent bodies. As for thee, O my brother, (may God requite thee with good!) thou wast subtle in device and usedst precaution; but precaution sufficeth not against fate, and fortune fore-ordained baffleth contrivance. How excellent is the saying of the poet! And he recited the following verses:

It chances whiles that the blind man escapes a pit, Whilst he who
is clear of sight falls into it.
The ignorant man may speak with impunity A word that is death to
the wise and the ripe of wit.
The true believer is pinched for his daily bread, Whilst infidel
rogues enjoy all benefit.
Where is a man’s resource and what can he do? It is the
Almighty’s will; we most submit.

Nor,” added the vizier, “is this, O king of the age, more extraordinary or stranger than the story of the king and his chamberlain’s wife; nay, the latter is rarer than this and more delightsome.”

When the king heard this story, he was fortified in his resolve to spare the vizier and to leave haste in an affair whereof he was not assured; so he comforted him and bade him withdraw to his lodging.

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The Twenty-Fourth Night of the Month.

When it was night, the king summoned the vizier and sought of him the hearing of the [promised] story. “Hearkening and obedience,” replied Er Rehwan, “Know, O august king, that

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STORY OF THE KING AND HIS CHAMBERLAIN'S WIFE.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, a king of the kings of the Persians, who was passionately addicted to the love of women. His courtiers bespoke him of the wife of a chamberlain of his chamberlains, for that she was endowed with beauty and loveliness and perfection, and this prompted him to go in to her. When she saw him, she knew him and said to him, 'What prompteth the king unto this that he doth?' And he answered, saying, 'Verily, I yearn after thee with an exceeding yearning and needs must I enjoy thy favours.' And he gave her of wealth that after the like whereof women hanker; but she said, 'I cannot do that whereof the king speaketh, for fear of my husband.' And she refused herself to him with the most rigorous of refusals and would not do his desire. So the king went out, full of wrath, and forgot his girdle in the place.

Presently, her husband entered and saw the girdle and knew it. Now he was ware of the king's love for women; so he said to his wife, ' What is this that I see with thee?' Quoth she, 'I will tell thee the truth,' and recounted to him the story; but he believed her not and doubt entered into his heart. As for the king, he passed that night in chagrin and concern, and when it morrowed, he summoned the chamberlain and investing him with the governance of one of his provinces, bade him betake himself thither, purposing, after he should have departed and come to his destination, to foregather with his wife. The chamberlain perceived [his intent] and knew his design; so he answered, saying, 'Hearkening and obedience. I will go and set my affairs in order and give such charges as may be necessary for the welfare of my estate; then will I go about the king's occasion.' And the king said, 'Do this and hasten.'

So the chamberlain went about that which he needed and assembling his wife's kinsfolk, said to them, 'I am resolved to put away my wife.' They took this ill of him and complained of him and summoning him before the king, sat pleading with him. Now the king had no knowledge of that which had passed; so he said to the chamberlain, 'Why wilt thou put her away and how can thy soul consent unto this and why takest thou unto thyself a goodly piece of land and after forsakest it? ‘May God amend the king!’ answered the husband. ‘By Allah, O king, I saw therein the track of the lion and fear to enter the land, lest the lion devour me; and indeed the like of my affair with her is that which befell between the old woman and the draper’s wife.’ ‘What is their story?’ asked the king; and the chamberlain said, ‘Know, O king, that

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STORY OF THE OLD WOMAN AND THE DRAPER'S WIFE.

There was once a man of the drapers, who had a fair wife, and she was curtained and chaste. A certain young man saw her coming forth of the bath and loved her and his heart was occupied with her. So he cast about [to get access to her] with all manner of devices, but availed not to win to her; and when he was weary of endeavour and his patience was exhausted for weariness and his fortitude failed him and he was at an end of his resources against her, he complained of this to an old woman of ill-omen, who promised him to bring about union between him and her. He thanked her for this and promised her all manner of good; and she said to him, "Get thee to her husband and buy of him a turban-cloth of fine linen, and let it be of the goodliest of stuffs."

So he repaired to the draper and buying of him a turban-cloth of lawn, returned with it to the old woman, who took it and burned it in two places. Then she donned devotees' apparel and taking the turban-cloth with her, went to the draper's house and knocked at the door. When the draper's wife saw her, she opened to her and received her kindly and made much of her and welcomed her. So the old woman went in to her and conversed with her awhile. Then said she to her, "[I desire to make] the ablution [preparatory] to prayer." So the wife brought her water and she made the ablution and standing up to pray, prayed and did her occasion. When she had made an end of her prayers, she left the turban-cloth in the place of prayer and went away.

Presently, in came the draper, at the hour of evening prayer, and sitting down in the place where the old woman had prayed, looked about him and espied the turban. He knew it [for that which he had that day sold to the young man] and misdoubted of the case, wherefore anger appeared in his face and he was wroth with his wife and reviled her and abode his day and his night, without speaking to her, what while she knew not the cause of his anger. Then she looked and seeing the turban-cloth before him and noting the traces of burning thereon, understood that his anger was on account of this and concluded that he was wroth because it was burnt.

When the morning morrowed, the draper went out, still angered against his wife, and the old woman returned to her and found her changed of colour, pale of face, dejected and heart-broken. [So she questioned her of the cause of her dejection and she told her how her husband was angered against her (as she supposed) on account of the burns in the turban-cloth.] “O my daughter,” rejoined the old woman, “be not concerned; for I have a son, a fine-drawer, and he, by thy life, shall fine-draw [the holes] and restore the turban-cloth as it was. “The wife rejoiced in her saying and said to her, “And when shall this be?” “To-morrow, if it please God the Most High,” answered the old woman, “I will bring him to thee, at the time of thy husband’s going forth from thee, and he shall mend it and depart forth-right.” Then she comforted her heart and going forth from her, returned to the young man and told him what had passed.

Now, when the draper saw the turban-cloth, he resolved to put away his wife and waited but till he should get together that which was obligatory on him of the dowry and what not else, for fear of her people. When the old woman arose in the morning, she took the young man and carried him to the draper’s house. The wife opened the door to her and the ill-omened old woman entered with him and said to the lady, “Go, fetch that which thou wouldst have fine-drawn and give it to my son.” So saying, she locked the door on her, whereupon the young man forced her and did his occasion of her and went forth. Then said the old woman to her, “Know that this is my son and that he loved thee with an exceeding love and was like to lose his life for longing after thee. So I practised on thee with this device and came to thee with this turban-cloth, which is not thy husband’s, but my son’s. Now have I accomplished my desire; so do thou trust in me and I will put a trick on thy husband for the setting thee right with him, and thou wilt be obedient to me and to him and to my son.” And the wife answered, saying, “It is well. Do so.”

So the old woman returned to the lover and said to him, “I have skilfully contrived the affair for thee with her; [and now it behoveth us to amend that we have marred]. So go now and sit with the draper and bespeak him of the turban-cloth, [saying, ‘The turban-cloth I bought of thee I chanced to burn in two places; so I gave it to a certain old woman, to get mended, and she took it and went away, and I know not her dwelling-place.'] When thou seest me pass by, rise and lay hold of me [and demand of me the turban-cloth], to the intent that I may amend her case with her husband and that thou mayst be even with her." So he repaired to the draper's shop and sat down by him and said to him, "Thou knowest the turban-cloth I bought of thee?" "Yes," answered the draper, and the other said, "Knowest thou what is come of it?" "No," replied the husband, and the youth said, "After I bought it of thee, I fumigated myself and it befell that the turban-cloth was burnt in two places. So I gave it to a woman, whose son, they said, was a fine-drawer, and she took it and went away with it; and I know not her abiding-place." When the draper heard this, he misdoubted him [of having wrongly suspected his wife] and marvelled at the story of the turban-cloth, and his mind was set at ease concerning her.

Presently, up came the old woman, whereupon the young man sprang to his feet and laying hold of her, demanded of her the turban-cloth. Quoth she, "Know that I entered one of the houses and made the ablution and prayed in the place of prayer; and I forgot the turban-cloth there and went out. Now I know not the house in which I prayed, nor have I been directed thereto, and I go round about every day till the night, so haply I may light on it, for I know not its owner." When the draper heard this, he said to the old woman, "Verily, Allah restoreth unto thee vhat which thou hast lost. Rejoice, for the turban-cloth is with me and in my house." And he arose forthright and gave her the turban-cloth, as it was. She gave it to the young man, and the draper made his peace with his wife and gave her raiment and jewellery, [by way of peace-offering], till she was content and her heart was appeased.

When the king heard his chamberlain's story, he was confounded and abashed and said to him, 'Abide on thy wonted service and till thy land, for that the lion entered it, but marred it not, and he will never more return thither.' Then he bestowed on him a dress of honour and made him a sumptuous present; and the man returned to his wife and people, rejoicing and glad, for that his heart was set at rest concerning his wife. Nor," added the vizier, "O king of the age, is this rarer or more extraordinary than the story of the fair and lovely woman, endowed with amorous grace, with the foul-favoured man."

When the king heard the vizier's speech, he deemed it goodly and it pleased him; so he bade him go away to his house, and there he abode his day long.

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The Twenty-fifth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king summoned his vizier and bade him tell the [promised] story. So he said, “It is well. Know, O king, that

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STORY OF THE FOUL-FAVOURED MAN AND HIS FAIR WIFE.

There was once a man of the Arabs who had a number of sons, and amongst them a boy, never was seen a fairer than he of favour nor a more accomplished in loveliness, no, nor a more perfect of wit. When he came to man's estate, his father married him to the daughter of one of his uncles, and she excelled not in beauty, neither was she praiseworthy of attributes; wherefore she pleased not the youth, but he bore with her, for kinship's sake.

One day, he went forth in quest of certain stray camels of his and fared on all his day and night till eventide, when he [came to an Arab encampment and] was fain to seek hospitality of one of the inhabitants. So he alighted at one of the tents of the camp and there came forth to him a man of short stature and loathly aspect, who saluted him and lodging him in a corner of the tent, sat entertaining him with talk, the goodliest that might be. When his food was dressed, the Arab's wife brought it to the guest, and he looked at the mistress of the tent and saw a favour than which no goodlier might be. Indeed, her beauty and grace and symmetry amazed him and he abode confounded, looking now at her and now at her husband. When his looking grew long, the man said to him, 'Harkye, O son of the worthy! Occupy thyself with thine own concerns, for by me and this woman hangeth a rare story, that is yet goodlier than that which thou seest of her beauty; and when we have made an end of our food, I will tell it thee.'

So, when they had made an end of eating and drinking, the young man asked his host for the story, and he said, 'Know that in my youth I was even as thou seest me in the matter of loathliness and foul favour; and I had brethren of the comeliest of the folk; wherefore my father preferred them over me and used to show them kindness, to my exclusion, and employ me, in their room [in menial service], like as one employeth slaves. One day, a she-camel of his went astray and he said to me, "Go thou forth in quest of her and return not but with her." Quoth I, "Send other than I of thy sons." But he would not consent to this and reviled me and insisted upon me, till the matter came to such a pass with him that he took a whip and fell to beating me. So I arose and taking a riding-camel, mounted her and sallied forth at a venture, purposing to go out into the deserts and return to him no more. I fared on all my night [and the next day] and coming at eventide to [the encampment of] this my wife's people, alighted down with her father, who was a very old man, and became his guest.

When the night was half spent, I arose [and went forth the tent] to do an occasion of mine, and none knew of my case save this woman. The dogs misdoubted of me and followed me and gave not over besetting me, till I fell on my back into a deep pit, wherein was water, and one of the dogs fell in with me. The woman, who was then a girl in the first bloom of youth, full of strength and spirit, was moved to pity on me, for that wherein I was fallen, and coming to me with a rope, said to me, "Lay hold of this rope." So I laid hold of the rope and clung to it and she pulled me up; but, when I was halfway up, I pulled her [down] and she fell with me into the pit; and there we abode three days, she and I and the dog.

When her people arose in the morning and saw her not, they sought her in the camp, but, finding her not and missing me also, doubted not but she had fled with me. Now she had four brothers, as they were falcons, and they mounted and dispersed in quest of us. When the day dawned [on the fourth morning], the dog began to bark and the other dogs answered him and coming to the mouth of the pit, stood howling to him. My wife's father, hearing the howling of the dogs, came up and standing at the brink of the pit, [looked in and] beheld a marvel. Now he was a man of valour and understanding, an elder versed in affairs so he fetched a rope and bringing us both forth, questioned us of our case. I told him all that had betided and he abode pondering the affair.

Presently, her brothers returned, whereupon the old man acquainted them with the whole case and said to them, "O my sons, know that your sister purposed not aught but good, and if ye slay this man, ye will earn abiding reproach and ye will wrong him, ay, and wrong yourselves and your sister, to boot; for indeed there appeareth no cause [of offence] such as calleth for slaughter, and it may not be denied that this incident is a thing the like whereof may well betide and that he may well have been baffled by the like of this chance." Then he turned to me and questioned me of my lineage; so I set forth to him my genealogy and he said, "A man of equal rank, honourable [and] understanding." And he offered me [his daughter in] marriage. I consented to him of this and marrying her, took up my abode with him and God the Most High hath opened on me the gates of weal and fortune, so that I am become the most abounding in substance of the folk of the tribe; and He hath stablished me in that which He hath given me of His bounties.'

The young man marvelled at his story and lay the night with him; and when he arose in the morning, he found his strays. So he took them and returning [to his family.], acquainted them with what he had seen and that which had betided him. Nor," added the vizier, "is this more marvellous or rarer than the story of the king who lost kingdom and wealth and wife and children and God restored them unto him and requited him with a kingdom more magnificent than that which he had lost and goodlier and rarer and greater of wealth and elevation."

The vizier's story pleased the king and he bade depart to his dwelling.

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The Twenty-Sixth Night of the Month.

When came the night, the king summoned his vizier and bade him tell the story of the king who lost kingdom and wife and wealth. “Hearkening and obedience,” replied Er Rehwan. “Know, O king, that

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

STORY OF THE KING WHO LOST KINGDOM AND WIFE AND WEALTH AND GOD RESTORED THEM TO HIM.

There was once a king of the kings of Hind, who was goodly of polity, praiseworthy in administration, just to his subjects, beneficent to men of learning and piety and asceticism and devoutness and worship and shunning traitors and froward folk and those of lewd life. On this wise of polity he abode in his kingship what God the Most High willed of days and hours and years, and he married the daughter of his father's brother, a beautiful and lovesome woman, endowed with brightness and perfection, who had been reared in the king's house in splendour and delight. She bore him two sons, the comeliest that might be of boys. Then came fore-ordained fate, which there is no warding off, and God the Most High raised up against the king another king, who came forth upon his realm, and all the folk of the city, who had a mind unto evil and lewdness, joined themselves unto him. So he fortified himself against the king and made himself master of his kingdom, putting his troops to the rout and slaying his guards.

The king took his wife, the mother of his sons, and what he might [of good] and saved himself and fled in the darkness of the night, unknowing whither he should go. When travel grew sore upon them, there met them robbers by the way, who took all that was with them, [even to their clothes], so that there was left unto each of them but a shirt and trousers; yea, they left them without victual or camels or [other] riding-cattle, and they ceased not to fare on afoot, till they came to a coppice, to wit, a garden of trees, on the shore of the sea. Now the road which they would have followed was crossed by an arm of the sea, but it was scant of water. So, when they came to that place, the king took up one of his children and fording the water with him, set him down on the other bank and returned for his other son. Him also he set by his brother and returning for their mother, took her up and passing the water with her, came to the place [where he had left his children], but found them not. Then he looked at the midst of the island and saw there an old man and an old woman, engaged in making themselves a hut of reeds. So he put down his wife over against them and set off in quest of his children, but none gave him news of them and he went round about right and left, but found not the place where they were.

Now the children had entered the coppice, to make water, and there was there a forest of trees, wherein, if a horseman entered, he might wander by the week, [before finding his way out], for none knew the first thereof from the last. So the boys entered therein and knew not how they should return and went astray in that wood, to an end that was willed of God the Most High, whilst their father sought them, but found them not. So he returned to their mother and they abode weeping for their children. As for these latter, when they entered the wood, it swallowed them up and they went wandering in it many days, knowing not where they had entered, till they came forth, at another side, upon the open country.

Meanwhile, the king and queen abode in the island, over against the old man and woman, and ate of the fruits that were in the island and drank of its waters, till, one day, as they sat, there came a ship and moored to the side of the island, to fill up with water, whereupon they looked at each other and spoke. The master of the ship was a Magian and all that was therein, both men and goods, belonged to him, for that he was a merchant and went round about the world. Now covetise deluded the old man, the owner of the island, and he went up [into the ship] and gave the Magian news of the king's wife, setting out to him her charms, till he made him yearn unto her and his soul prompted him to use treachery and practise upon her and take her from her hnsband. So he sent to her, saying, 'With us in the ship is a woman with child, and we fear lest she be delivered this night. Hast thou skill in the delivering of women?' And she answered, 'Yes.' Now it was the last of the day; so he sent to her to come up into the ship and deliver the woman, for that the pangs of labour were come upon her; and he promised her clothes and spending-money. Accordingly, she embarked in all assurance, with a heart at ease for herself, and transported her gear to the ship; but no sooner was she come thither than the anchors were weighed and the canvas spread and the ship set sail.

When the king saw this, he cried out and his wife wept in the ship and offered to cast herself into the sea; but the Magian bade the sailors lay hands on her. So they seized her and it was but a little while ere the night darkened and the ship disappeared from the king's eyes; whereupon he swooned away for excess of weeping and lamentation and passed his night bewailing his wife and children.

When the morning morrowed, he recited the following verses:

How long, O Fate, wilt thou oppress and baffle me?
Tell me, was ever yet a mortal spared of thee?
    Behold, my loved ones all are ta'en from me away.
They left me and content forthright forsook my heart,
Upon that day my loves my presence did depart;
    My pleasant life for loss of friends is troubled aye.
By Allah, I knew not their worth nor yet how dear
A good it is to have one's loved ones ever near,
    Until they left my heart on fire without allay.
Ne'er shall I them forget, nay, nor the day they went
And left me all forlorn, to pine for languishment,
    My severance to bewail in torment and dismay.
I make a vow to God, if ever day or night
The herald of good news my hearing shall delight,
    Announcing the return o' th' absent ones,
I'll lay Upon their threshold's dust my cheeks and to my soul,
"Take comfort, for the loved are come again,"
I'll say. If for my loved ones' loss I rent my heart for dole,
    Before I rent my clothes, reproach me not, I pray.

He abode weeping for the loss of his wife and children till the morning, when he went forth wandering at a venture, knowing not what he should do, and gave not over faring along the sea-shore days and nights, unknowing whither he went and taking no food therein other than the herbs of the earth and seeing neither man nor beast nor other living thing, till his travel brought him to the top of a mountain. He took up his sojourn in the mountain and abode there [awhile] alone, eating of its fruits and drinking of its waters. Then he came down thence and fared on along the high road three days, at the end of which time he came upon tilled fields and villages and gave not over going till he sighted a great city on the shore of the sea and came to the gate thereof at the last of the day. The gatekeepers suffered him not to enter; so he abode his night anhungred, and when he arose in the morning, be sat down hard by the gate.

Now the king of the city was dead and had left no son, and the townsfolk fell out concerning who should be king over them: and their sayings differed and their counsels, so that turmoil was like to betide between them by reason of this. At last, after long dissension, they came to an accord and agreed to leave the choice to the late king's elephant and that he unto whom he consented should be king and that they would not contest the commandment with him. So they made oath of this and on the morrow, they brought out the elephant and came forth to the utterward of the city; nor was there man or woman left in the place but was present at that time. Then they adorned the elephant and setting up the throne on his back, gave him the crown in his trunk; and he went round about examining the faces of the folk, but stopped not with any of them till he came to the banished king, the forlorn, the exile, him who had lost his children and his wife, when he prostrated himself to him and placing the crown on his head, took him up and set him on his back.

Thereupon the folk all prostrated themselves and gave one another joy of this and the drums of good tidings beat before him, and he entered the city [and went on] till he came to the House of Justice and the audience-hall of the palace and sat down on the throne of the kingdom, with the crown on his head; whereupon the folk came in to him to give him joy and offer up prayers for him. Then he addressed himself, after his wont in the kingship, to ordering the affairs of the folk and ranging the troops according to their ranks and looking into their affairs and those of all the people. Moreover, he released those who were in the prisons and abolished the customs dues and gave dresses of honour and bestowed gifts and largesse and conferred favours on the amirs and viziers and dignitaries, and the chamberlains and deputies presented themselves before him and did him homage. So the people of the city rejoiced in him and said, 'Indeed this is none other than a king of the greatest of the kings.'

Moreover, he assembled the sages and the theologians and the sons of the kings and devised with them and asked them questions and problems and examined with them into many things of all fashions that might direct him to well-doing in the kingly office; and he questioned them also of subtleties and religious obligations and of the laws of the kingdom and the fashions of administration and of that which it behoveth the king to do of looking into the affairs of the people and repelling the enemy [from the realm] and fending off his malice with war; wherefore the people's contentment redoubled and their joy in that which God the Most High had vouchsafed them of his elevation to the kingship over them. So he upheld the ordinance of the realm and the affairs thereof abode established upon the accepted customs.

Now the late king had left a wife and a daughter, and the people would fain have married the latter to the new king, to the intent that the kingship might not pass out of the old royal family. So they proposed to him that he should take her to wife, and he promised them this, but put them off from him, of his respect for the covenant he had made with his former wife, to wit, that he would take none other to wife than herself. Then he betook himself to fasting by day and standing up by night [to pray], giving alms galore and beseeching God (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He!) to reunite him with his children and his wife, the daughter of his father's brother.

When a year had elapsed, there came to the city a ship, wherein were merchants and goods galore. Now it was of their usance, from time immemorial, that, when there came a ship to the city, the king sent unto it such of his servants as he trusted in, who took charge of the goods, so they might be [first of all] shown to the king, who bought such of them as befitted him and gave the merchants leave to sell the rest. So he sent, as of wont, one who should go up to the ship and seal up the goods and set over them who should keep watch over them.

To return to the queen his wife. When the Magian fled with her, he proffered himself to her and lavished unto her wealth galore, but she rejected his suit and was like to slay herself for chagrin at that which had befallen and for grief for her separation from her husband. Moreover, she refused meat and drink and offered to cast herself into the sea; but the Magian shackled her and straitened her and clad her in a gown of wool and said to her, ‘I will continue thee in misery and abjection till thou obey me and consent to my wishes.’ So she took patience and looked for God to deliver her from the hand of that accursed one; and she ceased not to travel with him from place to place till he came with her to the city wherein her husband was king and his goods were put under seal.

Now the woman was in a chest and two youths of the pages of the late king, who were now in the new king’s service, were those who had been charged with the guardianship of the vessel and the goods. When the evening evened on them, the two youths fell a-talking and recounted that which had befallen them in their days of childhood and the manner of the going forth of their father and mother from their country and royal estate, whenas the wicked overcame their land, and [called to mind] how they had gone astray in the forest and how fate had made severance between them and their parents; brief, they recounted their story, from beginning to end. When the woman heard their talk, she knew that they were her very sons and cried out to them from the chest, saying, ‘I am your mother such an one, and the token between you and me is thus and thus.’ The young men knew the token and falling upon the chest, broke the lock and brought out their mother, who strained them to her breast, and they fell upon her and swooned away, all three.

When they came to themselves, they wept awhile and the folk assembled about them, marvelling at that which they saw, and questioned them of their case. So the young men vied with each other who should be the first to discover the story to the folk; and when the Magian saw this, he came up, crying out, ‘Alas!’ and ‘Woe worth the day!’ and said to them, ‘Why have ye broken open my chest? I had in it jewels and ye have stolen them, and this damsel is my slave-girl and she hath agreed with you upon a device to take the good.’ Then he rent his clothes and called aloud for succour, saying, ‘I appeal to God and to the just king, so he may quit me of these wrong-doing youths!’ Quoth they, ‘This is our mother and thou stolest her.’ Then words waxed many between them and the folk plunged into talk and prate and discussion concerning their affair and that of the [pretended] slave-girl, and the strife waxed amain between them, so that [at last] they carried them up to the king.

When the two young men presented themselves before him and set forth their case to him and to the folk and the king heard their speech, he knew them and his heart was like to fly for joyance in them: the tears poured from his eyes at their sight and that of his wife, and he thanked God the Most High and praised Him for that He had reunited [him with] them. Then he dismissed the folk who were present about him and bade commit the Magian and the woman and the two youths to his armoury [for the night], commanding that they should keep guard over them till God caused the morning morrow, so he might assemble the cadis and the judges and assessors and judge between them, according to the Holy Law, in the presence of the four cadis. So they did his bidding and the king passed the night praying and praising God the Most High for that which He had vouchsafed him of kingship and puissance and victory over him who had wronged him and thanking Him who had reunited him with his family.

When the morning morrowed, he assembled the cadis and judges and assessors and sending for the Magian and the two youths and their mother, questioned them of their case, whereupon the two young men began and said, 'We are the sons of the king Such-an-one and enemies and wicked men got the mastery of out realm; so our father fled forth with us and wandered at a venture, for fear of the enemies.' [And they recounted to him all that had betided them, from beginning to end.] Quoth he, 'Ye tell a marvellous story; but what hath [Fate] done with your father?' 'We know not how fortune dealt with him after our loss,' answered they; and he was silent.

Then he turned to the woman and said to her, 'And thou, what sayst thou?' So she expounded to him her case and recounted to him all that had betided her and her husband, first and last, up to the time when they took up their abode with the old man and woman who dwelt on the sea-shore. Then she set out that which the Magian had practised on her of knavery and how he had carried her off in the ship and all that had betided her of humiliation and torment, what while the cadis and judges and deputies hearkened to her speech. When the king heard the last of his wife's story, he said, 'Verily, there hath betided thee a grievous matter; but hast thou knowledge of what thy husband did and what came of his affair?’ ‘Nay, by Allah,’ answered she; ‘I have no knowledge of him, save that I leave him no hour unremembered in fervent prayer, and never, whilst I live, will he cease to be to me the father of my children and my father’s brother’s son and my flesh and my blood.’ Then she wept and the king bowed his head, whilst his eyes brimmed over with tears at her story.

Then he raised his head to the Magian and said to him, ‘Say thy say, thou also.’ So the Magian said, ‘This is my slave-girl, whom I bought with my money from such a land and for so many dinars, and I made her my favourite and loved her with an exceeding love and gave her charge over my good; but she betrayed me in my substance and plotted with one of my servants to slay me, tempting him by promising him that she would be his wife. When I knew this of her and was certified that she purposed treason against me, I awoke [from my heedlessness] and did with her that which I did, of fear for myself from her craft and perfidy; for indeed she is a beguiler with her tongue and she hath taught these two youths this pretence, by way of trickery and of her perfidy and malice: so be thou not deluded by her and by her talk.’

‘Thou liest, O accursed one,’ cried the king and bade lay hands on him and clap him in irons. Then he turned to the two youths, his sons, and strained them to his breast, weeping sore and saying, ‘O all ye who are present of cadis and assessors and officers of state, know that these twain are my sons and that this is my wife and the daughter of my father’s brother; for that I was king aforetime in such a region.’ And he recounted to them his history from beginning to end, nor is there aught of profit in repetition; whereupon the folk cried out with weeping and lamentation for the stress of that which they heard of marvellous chances and that rare story. As for the king’s wife, he caused carry her into his palace and lavished upon her and upon her sons all that behoved and beseemed them of bounties, whilst the folk flocked to offer up prayers for him and give him joy of [his reunion with] his wife and children.

When they had made an end of pious wishes and congratulations, they besought the king to hasten the punishment of the Magian and heal their hearts of him with torment and humiliation. So he appointed them for a day on which they should assemble to witness his punishment and that which should betide him of torment, and shut himself up with his wife and sons and abode thus private with them three days, during which time they were sequestered from the folk. On the fourth day the king entered the bath, and coming forth, sat down on the throne of his kingship, with the crown on his head, whereupon the folk came in to him, according to their wont and after the measure of their several ranks and degrees, and the amirs and viziers entered, ay, and the chamberlains and deputies and captains and men of war and the falconers and armbearers. Then he seated his two sons, one on his right and the other on his left hand, whilst all the folk stood before him and lifted up their voices in thanksgiving to God the Most High and glorification of Him and were strenuous in prayer for the king and in setting forth his virtues and excellences.

He returned them the most gracious of answers and bade carry the Magian forth of the town and set him on a high scaffold that had been builded for him there; and he said to the folk, ‘Behold, I will torture him with all kinds of fashions of torment.’ Then he fell to telling them that which he had wrought of knavery with the daughter of his father’s brother and what he had caused betide her of severance between her and her husband and how he had required her of herself, but she had sought refuge against him with God (to whom belong might and majesty) and chose rather humiliation than yield to his wishes, notwithstanding stress of torment; neither recked she aught of that which he lavished to her of wealth and raiment and jewels.

When the king had made an end of his story, he bade the bystanders spit in the Magian’s face and curse him; and they did this. Then he bade cut out his tongue and on the morrow he bade cut off his ears and nose and pluck out his eyes. On the third day he bade cut off his hands and on the fourth his feet; and they ceased not to lop him limb from limb, and each member they cast into the fire, after its cutting-off, before his face, till his soul departed, after he had endured torments of all kinds and fashions. The king bade crucify his trunk on the city-wall three days’ space; after which he let burn it and reduce its ashes to powder and scatter them abroad in the air.

Then the king summoned the cadi and the witnesses and bade them many the old king’s daughter and sister to his own sons; so they married them, after the king had made a bride-feast three days and displayed their brides to them from eventide to peep of day. Then the two princes went in to their brides and did away their maidenhead and loved them and were vouchsafed children by them.

As for the king their father, he abode with his wife, their mother, what while God (to whom belong might and majesty) willed, and they rejoiced in reunion with each other. The kingship endured unto them and glory and victory, and the king continued to rule with justice and equity, so that the people loved him and still invoked on him and on his sons length of days and durance; and they lived the most delightsome of lives till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies, He who layeth waste the palaces and peopleth the tombs; and this is all that hath come down to us of the story of the king and his wife and children. Nor," added the vizier, "if this story be a solace and a diversion, is it pleasanter or more diverting than that of the young man of Khorassan and his mother and sister."

When King Shah Bekht heard this story, it pleased him and he bade the vizier go away to his own house.

The Twenty-Seventh Night of the Month

When the evening came, the king bade fetch the vizier; so he presented himself before him and the king bade him tell the [promised] story. So he said, "Hearkening and obedience. Know, O king (but God alone knoweth His secret purpose and is versed in all that is past and was foredone among bygone peoples), that

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

STORY OF SELIM AND SELMA.

There was once, in the parts of Khorassan, a man of the affluent of the country, who was a merchant of the chiefest of the merchants and was blessed with two children, a son and a daughter. He was assiduous in rearing them and making fair their education, and they grew up and throve after the goodliest fashion. He used to teach the boy, who taught his sister all that he learnt, so that the girl became perfect in the knowledge of the Traditions of the Prophet and in polite letters, by means of her brother. Now the boy's name was Selim and that of the girl Selma. When they grew up and waxed, their father built them a mansion beside his own and lodged them apart therein and appointed them slave-girls and servants to tend them and assigned unto each of them pensions and allowances and all that they needed of high and low, meat and bread and wine and raiment and vessels and what not else. So Selim and Selma abode in that mansion, as they were one soul in two bodies, and they used to sleep on one couch; and rooted in each one's heart was love and affection and familiar friendship [for the other of them].

One night, when the night was half spent, as Selim and Selma sat talking and devising with each other, they heard a noise below the house; so they looked out from a lattice that gave upon the gate of their father's mansion and saw a man of goodly presence, whose clothes were hidden by a wide cloak, which covered him. He came up to the gate and laying hold of the door-ring, gave a light knock; whereupon the door opened and out came their sister, with a lighted flambeau, and after her their mother, who saluted the stranger and embraced him, saying, 'O beloved of my heart and light of mine eyes and fruit of mine entrails, enter.' So he entered and shut the door, whilst Selim and Selma abode amazed.

Then Selim turned to Selma and said to her, 'O sister mine, how deemest thou of this calamity and what counsellest thou thereanent?' 'O my brother,' answered she, 'indeed I know not what I shall say concerning the like of this; but he is not disappointed who seeketh direction [of God], nor doth he repent who taketh counsel. One getteth not the better of the traces of burning by haste, and know that this is an affliction that hath descended on us; and we have need of management to do it away, yea, and contrivance to wash withal our shame from our faces.’ And they gave not over watching the gate till break of day, when the young man opened the door and their mother took leave of him; after which he went his way and she entered, she and her handmaid.

Then said Selim to his sister, ‘Know that I am resolved to slay yonder man, if he return this next night, and I will say to the folk, “He was a thief,” and none shall know that which hath befallen. Moreover, I will address myself to the slaughter of whosoever knoweth that which is between yonder fellow and my mother.’ But Selma said, ‘ I fear lest, if thou slay him in our dwelling-place and he savour not of robberhood, suspicion will revert upon ourselves, and we cannot be assured but that he belongeth unto folk whose mischief is to be feared and their hostility dreaded, and thus wilt thou have fled from privy shame to open shame and abiding public dishonour.’ ‘How then deemest thou we should do?’ asked Selim and she said, ‘Is there nothing for it but to slay him? Let us not hasten unto slaughter, for that the slaughter of a soul without just cause is a grave [matter].’

(When Shehriyar heard this, he said in himself, ‘By Allah, I have indeed been reckless in the slaying of women and girls, and praised be God who hath occupied me with this damsel from the slaughter of souls, for that the slaughter of souls is a grave [matter!] By Allah, if Shah Bekht spare the vizier, I will assuredly spare Shehrzad!’ Then he gave ear to the story and heard her say to her sister:)

Quoth Selma to Selim, ‘Hasten not to slay him, but ponder the matter and consider the issue to which it may lead; for whoso considereth not the issues [of his actions], fortune is no friend to him.’ Then they arose on the morrow and occupied themselves with devising how they should turn away their mother from that man, and she forebode mischief from them, by reason of that which she saw in their eyes of alteration, for that she was keen of wit and crafty. So she took precaution for herself against her children and Selma said to Selim, ‘Thou seest that whereinto we have fallen through this woman, and indeed she hath gotten wind of our purpose and knoweth that we have discovered her secret. So, doubtless, she will plot against us the like of that which we plot for her; for indeed up to now she had concealed her affair, and now she will forge lies against us; wherefore, methinks, there is a thing [fore-]written to us, whereof God (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He!) knew in His foreknowledge and wherein He executeth His ordinances.' 'What is that?' asked he, and she said, 'It is that we arise, I and thou, and go forth this night from this land and seek us a land wherein we may live and witness nought of the doings of yonder traitress; for whoso is absent from the eye is absent from the heart, and quoth one of the poets in the following verse:

Twere better and meeter thy presence to leave, For, if the eye see not, the heart doth not grieve.'

Quoth Selim to her, 'It is for thee to decide and excellent is that which thou counsellest; so let us do this, in the name of God the Most High, trusting in Him for grace and guidance.' So they arose and took the richest of their clothes and the lightest of that which was in their treasuries of jewels and things of price and gathered together a great matter. Then they equipped them ten mules and hired them servants of other than the people of the country; and Selim bade his sister Selma don man's apparel. Now she was the likest of all creatures to him, so that, [when she was clad in man's attire,] the folk knew no difference between them, extolled be the perfection of Him who hath no like, there is no God but He! Then he bade her mount a horse, whilst he himself bestrode another, and they set out, under cover of the night. None of their family nor of the people of their house knew of them; so they fared on into the wide world of God and gave not over going night and day two months' space, at the end of which time they came to a city on the sea-shore of the land of Mekran, by name Es Sherr, and it is the first city in Sind.

They lighted down without the place and when they arose in the morning, they saw a populous and goodly city, fair of seeming and great, abounding in trees and streams and fruits and wide of suburbs. So the young man said to his sister Selma, 'Abide thou here in thy place, till I enter the city and examine it and make assay of its people and seek out a place which we may buy and whither we may remove. If it befit us, we will take up our abode therein, else will we take counsel of departing elsewhither.' Quoth she, 'Do this, trusting in the bounty of God (to whom belong might and majesty) and in His blessing.’

So he took a belt, wherein were a thousand dinars, and binding it about his middle, entered the city and gave not over going round about its streets and markets and gazing upon its houses and sitting with those of its folk whose aspect bespoke them men of worth, till the day was half spent, when he resolved to return to his sister and said in himself, ‘Needs must I buy what we may eat of ready-[dressed] food] I and my sister.’ Accordingly, he accosted a man who sold roast meat and who was clean [of person], though odious in his [means of getting a] living, and said to him, ‘Take the price of this dish [of meat] and add thereto of fowls and chickens and what not else is in your market of meats and sweetmeats and bread and arrange it in dishes.’ So the cook set apart for him what he desired and calling a porter, laid it in his basket, and Selim paid the cook the price of his wares, after the fullest fashion.

As he was about to go away, the cook said to him, ‘O youth, doubtless thou art a stranger?’ And he answered, ‘Yes.’ Quoth the cook, ‘It is reported in one of the Traditions [of the Prophet that he said,] “Loyal admonition is [a part] of religion;” and the understanding say, “Admonition is of the characteristics of the true believers.” And indeed that which I have seen of thy fashions pleaseth me and I would fain give thee a warning.’ ‘Speak out thy warning,’ rejoined Selim, ‘and may God strengthen thine affair!’ Then said the cook, ‘Know, O my son, that in this our country, whenas a stranger entereth therein and eateth of flesh-meat and drinketh not old wine thereon, this is harmful unto him and engendereth in him dangerous disorders. Wherefore, if thou have provided thee somewhat thereof, [it is well;] but, if not, look thou procure it, ere thou take the meat and carry it away.’ ‘May God requite thee with good!’ rejoined Selim. ‘Canst thou direct me where it is sold?’ And the cook said, ‘With me is all that thou seekest thereof.’ ‘Is there a way for me to see it?’ asked the young man; and the cook sprang up and said, ‘Pass on.’ So he entered and the cook showed him somewhat of wine; but he said, ‘I desire better than this.’ Whereupon he opened a door and entering, said to Selim, ‘Enter and follow me.’

Selim followed him till he brought him to an underground chamber and showed him somewhat of wine that was to his mind. So he occupied him with looking upon it and taking him at unawares, sprang upon him from behind and cast him to the earth and sat upon his breast. Then he drew a knife and set it to his jugular; whereupon there betided Selim [that wherewithal] God made him forget all that He had decreed [unto him], and he said to the cook, 'Why dost thou this thing, O man? Be mindful of God the Most High and fear Him. Seest thou not that I am a stranger? And indeed [I have left] behind me a defenceless woman. Why wilt thou slay me?' Quoth the cook, 'Needs must I slay thee, so I may take thy good.' And Selim said, 'Take my good, but slay me not, neither enter into sin against me; and do with me kindness, for that the taking of my money is lighter than the taking of my life.'

'This is idle talk,' answered the cook. 'Thou canst not deliver thyself with this, O youth, for that in thy deliverance is my destruction.' Quoth Selim, 'I swear to thee and give thee the covenant of God (to whom belong might and majesty) and His bond, that He took of His prophets, that I will not discover thy secret ever.' But the cook answered, saying, 'Away! Away! This may no wise be.' However, Selim ceased not to conjure him and make supplication to him and weep, while the cook persisted in his intent to slaughter him. Then he wept and recited the following verses:

Haste not to that thou dost desire, for haste is still unblest;
Be merciful to men, as thou on mercy reckonest;
For no hand is there but the hand of God is over it And no
oppressor but shall be with worse than he opprest.

Quoth the cook, 'Nothing will serve but I must slay thee, O fellow; for, if I spare thee, I shall myself be slain.' But Selim said, 'O my brother, I will counsel thee somewhat other than this.' 'What is it?' asked the cook. 'Say and be brief, ere I cut thy throat' And Selim said, '[Do thou suffer me to live and] keep me, that I may be a servant unto thee, and I will work at a craft, of the crafts of the skilled workmen, wherefrom there shall return to thee every day two dinars.' Quoth the cook, 'What is the craft?' and Selim said, 'The cutting [and polishing] of jewels.'

When the cook heard this, he said in himself, 'It will do me no hurt if I imprison him and shackle him and bring him what he may work at. If he tell truth, I will let him live, and if he prove a liar, I will slay him.' So he took a pair of stout shackles and clapping them on Selim's legs, imprisoned him within his house and set over him one who should guard him. Then he questioned him of what tools he needed to work withal. Selim set forth to him that which he required, and the cook went out from him and presently returning, brought him all he needed. So Selim sat and wrought at his craft; and he used every day to earn two dinars; and this was his wont and usance with the cook, whilst the latter fed him not but half his fill.

To return to his sister Selma. She awaited him till the last of the day, but he came not; and she awaited him a second day and a third and a fourth, yet there came no news of him, wherefore she wept and beat with her hands on her breast and bethought her of her affair and her strangerhood and her brother's absence; and she recited the following verses:

Peace on thee! Would our gaze might light on thee once more! So
  should our hearts be eased and eyes no longer sore.
Thou only art the whole of our desire; indeed Thy love is hid
  within our hearts' most secret core.

She abode awaiting him thus till the end of the month, but discovered no tidings of him neither happened upon aught of his trace; wherefore she was troubled with an exceeding perturbation and despatching her servants hither and thither in quest of him, abode in the sorest that might be of grief and concern. When it was the beginning of the new month, she arose in the morning and bidding cry him throughout the city, sat to receive visits of condolence, nor was there any in the city but betook himself to her, to condole with her; and they were all concerned for her, nothing doubting but she was a man.

When three nights had passed over her with their days of the second month, she despaired of him and her tears dried not up. Then she resolved to take up her abode in the city and making choice of a dwelling, removed thither. The folk resorted to her from all parts, to sit with her and hearken to her speech and witness her good breeding; nor was it but a little while ere the king of the city died and the folk fell out concerning whom they should invest with the kingship after him, so that strife was like to betide between them. However, the men of judgment and understanding and the folk of experience counselled them to make the youth king who had lost his brother, for that they doubted not but Selma was a man. They all consented unto this and betaking themselves to Selma, proffered her the kingship. She refused, but they were instant with her, till she consented, saying in herself, ‘My sole desire in [accepting] the kingship is [to find] my brother.’ Then they seated her on the throne of the kingdom and set the crown on her head, whereupon she addressed herself to the business of administration and to the ordinance of the affairs of the people; and they rejoiced in her with the utmost joy.

Meanwhile, Selim abode with the cook a whole year’s space, earning him two dinars every day; and when his affair was prolonged, the cook inclined unto him and took compassion on him, on condition that, if he let him go, he should not discover his fashion to the Sultan, for that it was his wont every little while to entrap a man and carry him to his house and slay him and take his money and cook his flesh and give it to the folk to eat. So he said to him, ‘O youth, wilt thou that I release thee from this thy plight, on condition that thou be reasonable and discover not aught of thine affair ever?’ And Selim answered, ‘I will swear to thee by whatsoever oath thou choosest that I will keep thy secret and will not speak one syllable against thy due, what while I abide on life.’ Quoth the cook, ‘I purpose to send thee forth with my brother and cause thee travel with him on the sea, on condition that thou be unto him a boughten slave; and when he cometh to the land of Hind, he shall sell thee and thus wilt thou be delivered from prison and slaughter.’ And Selim said, ‘It is well: be it as thou sayst, may God the Most High requite thee with good!’

Therewithal the cook equipped his brother and freighting him a ship, embarked therein merchandise. Then he committed Selim unto him and they set out and departed with the ship. God decreed them safety, so that they arrived [in due course] at the first city [of the land of Hind], the which is known as El Mensoureh, and cast anchor there. Now the king of that city had died, leaving a daughter and a widow, who was the quickest-witted of women and gave out that the girl was a boy, so that the kingship might be stablished unto them. The troops and the amirs doubted not but that the case was as she avouched and that the princess was a male child; so they obeyed her and the queen mother took order for the matter and used to dress the girl in man's apparel and seat her on the throne of the kingship, so that the folk might see her. Accordingly, the grandees of the kingdom and the chief officers of the realm used to go in to her and salute her and do her service and go away, nothing doubting but she was a boy.

On this wise they abode months and years and the queen-mother ceased not to do thus till the cook's brother came to the town in his ship, and with him Selim. So he landed with the youth and showed him to the queen, [that she might buy him]. When she saw him, she augured well of him; so she bought him from the cook's brother and was kind to him and entreated him with honour. Then she fell to proving him in his parts and making assay of him in his affairs and found in him all that is in kings' sons of understanding and breeding and goodly manners and qualities.

So she sent for him in private and said to him, 'I purpose to do thee a service, so thou canst but keep a secret.' He promised her all that she desired and she discovered to him her secret in the matter of her daughter, saying, 'I will marry thee to her and commit to thee the governance of her affair and make thee king and ruler over this city.' He thanked her and promised to uphold all that she should order him, and she said to him, 'Go forth to such an one of the neighbouring provinces privily.' So he went forth and on the morrow she made ready bales and gear and presents and bestowed on him a great matter, all of which they loaded on the backs of camels.

Then she gave out among the folk that the king's father's brother's son was come and bade the grandees and troops go forth to meet him. Moreover, she decorated the city in his honour and the drums of good tidings beat for him, whilst all the king's household [went out to meet him and] dismounting before him, [escorted him to the city and] lodged him with the queen-mother in her palace. Then she bade the chiefs of the state attend his assembly; so they presented themselves before him and saw of his breeding and accomplishments that which amazed them and made them forget the breeding of those who had foregone him of the kings.

When they were grown familiar with him, the queen-mother fell to sending [privily] for the amirs, one by one, and swearing them to secrecy; and when she was assured of their trustworthiness, she discovered to them that the king had left but a daughter and that she had done this but that she might continue the kingship in his family and that the governance should not go forth from them; after which she told them that she was minded to marry her daughter with the new-comer, her father's brother's son, and that he should be the holder of the kingship. They approved of her proposal and when she had discovered the secret to the last of them [and assured herself of their support], she published the news abroad and sent for the cadis and assessors, who drew up the contract of marriage between Selim and the princess, and they lavished gifts upon the troops and overwhelmed them with bounties. Then was the bride carried in procession to the young man and the kingship was stablished unto him and the governance of the realm.

On this wise they abode a whole year, at the end of which time Selim said to the queen-mother, 'Know that my life is not pleasing to me nor can I abide with you in contentment till I get me tidings of my sister and learn in what issue her affair hath resulted and how she hath fared after me. Wherefore I will go and be absent from you a year's space; then will I return to you, so it please God the Most High and I accomplish of this that which I hope.' Quoth she, 'I will not trust to thy word, but will go with thee and help thee to that which thou desirest of this and further thee myself therein.' So she took a ship and loaded it with all manner things of price, goods and treasures and what not else. Moreover, she appointed one of the viziers, a man in whom she trusted and in his fashion and ordinance, to rule the realm in their absence, saying to him, 'Abide [in the kingship] a full-told year and ordain all that whereof thou hast need.

Then the old queen and her daughter and son-in-law embarked in the ship and setting sail, fared on till they came to the land of

Mekran. Their arrival there befell at the last of the day; so they passed the night in the ship, and when the day was near to break, the young king went down from the ship, that he might go to the bath, and made for the market. As he drew near the bath, the cook met him by the way and knew him; so he laid hands on him and binding his arms fast behind him, carried him to his house, where he clapped the old shackles on his feet and straightway cast him back into his whilom place of duresse.

When Selim found himself in that sorry plight and considered that wherewith he was afflicted of tribulation and the contrariness of his fortune, in that he had been a king and was now returned to shackles and prison and hunger, he wept and groaned and lamented and recited the following verses:

My fortitude fails, my endeavour is vain; My bosom is straitened.
To Thee, I complain,
O my God! Who is stronger than Thou in resource? The Subtle,
Thou
knowest my plight and my pain.

To return to his wife and her mother. When the former arose in the morning and her husband returned not to her with break of day, she forebode all manner of calamity and straightway despatched her servants and all who were with her in quest of him; but they happened not on any trace of him neither fell in with aught of his news. So she bethought herself concerning her affair and complained and wept and groaned and sighed and blamed perfidious fortune, bewailing that sorry chance and reciting these verses:

God keep the days of love-delight! How passing sweet they were!
How joyous and how solaceful was life in them whilere!
Would he were not, who sundered us upon the parting-day! How
many
a body hath he slain, how many a bone laid bare!
Sans fault of mine, my blood and tears he shed and beggared me Of
him I love, yet for himself gained nought thereby whate'er.

When she had made an end of her verses, she considered her affair and said in herself, ‘By Allah, all these things have betided by the ordinance of God the Most High and His providence and this was written and charactered upon the forehead.’ Then she landed and fared on till she came to a spacious place, where she enquired of the folk and hired a house. Thither she straightway transported all that was in the ship of goods and sending for brokers, sold all that was with her. Then she took part of the price and fell to enquiring of the folk, so haply she might scent out tidings [of her lost husband]. Moreover, she addressed herself to lavishing alms and tending the sick, clothing the naked and pouring water upon the dry ground of the forlorn. On this wise she abode a whole year, and every little while she sold of her goods and gave alms to the sick and the needy; wherefore her report was bruited abroad in the city and the folk were lavish in her praise.

All this while, Selim lay in shackles and strait prison, and melancholy possessed him by reason of that whereinto he had fallen of that tribulation. Then, when troubles waxed on him and affliction was prolonged, he fell sick of a sore sickness. When the cook saw his plight (and indeed he was like to perish for much suffering), he loosed him from the shackles and bringing him forth of the prison, committed him to an old woman, who had a nose the bigness of a jug, and bade her tend him and medicine him and serve him and entreat him kindly, so haply he might be made whole of that his sickness. So the old woman took him and carrying him to her lodging, fell to tending him and giving him to eat and drink; and when he was quit of that torment, he recovered from his malady.

Now the old woman had heard from the folk of the lady who gave alms to the sick, and indeed [the news of] her bounties reached both poor and rich; so she arose and bringing out Selim to the door of her house, laid him on a mat and wrapped him in a mantle and sat over against him. Presently, it befell that the charitable lady passed by them, which when the old woman saw, she rose to her and offered up prayers for her, saying, ‘O my daughter, O thou to whom pertain goodness and beneficence and charity and almsdoing, know that this young man is a stranger, and indeed want and vermin and hunger and nakedness and cold slay him.’ When the lady heard this, she gave her alms of that which was with her; and indeed her heart inclined unto Selim, [but she knew him not for her husband].

The old woman received the alms from her and carrying it to Selim, took part thereof herself and with the rest bought him an old shirt, in which she clad him, after she had stripped him of that he had on. Then she threw away the gown she had taken from off him and arising forthright, washed his body of that which was thereon of filth and scented him with somewhat of perfume. Moreover, she bought him chickens and made him broth; so he ate and his life returned to him and he abode with her on the most solaceful of life till the morrow.

Next morning, the old woman said to him, ‘When the lady cometh to thee, do thou arise and kiss her hand and say to her, “I am a strange man and indeed cold and hunger slay me;” so haply she may give thee somewhat that thou mayst expend upon thy case.’ And he answered, ‘Hearkening and obedience.’ Then she took him by the hand and carrying him without her house, seated him at the door. As he sat, behold, the lady came up to him, whereupon the old woman rose to her and Selim kissed her hand and offered up prayers for her. Then he looked on her and when he saw her, he knew her for his wife; so he cried out and wept and groaned and lamented; whereupon she came up to him and cast herself upon him; for indeed she knew him with all knowledge, even as he knew her. So she laid hold of him and embraced him and called to her serving-men and attendants and those who were about her; and they took him up and carried him forth of that place.

When the old woman saw this, she cried out to the cook from within the house, and he said to her, ‘Go before me.’ So she forewent him and he ran after her till he [overtook the party and] catching hold of Selim, said [to the latter’s wife,] ‘What aileth thee to take my servant?’ Whereupon she cried out at him, saying, ‘Know that this is my husband, whom I had lost.’ And Selim also cried out, saying, ‘Mercy! Mercy! I appeal to God and to the Sultan against this Satan!’ Therewith the folk gathered together to them forthright and loud rose the clamours and the cries between them; but the most part of them said, ‘Refer their affair to the Sultan.’ So they referred the case to the Sultan, who was none other than Selim’s sister Selma.

[Then they went up to the palace and] the interpreter went in to Selma and said to her, ‘O king of the age, here is an Indian woman, who cometh from the land of Hind, and she hath laid hands on a young man, a servant, avouching that he is her husband, who hath been missing these two years, and she came not hither but on his account, and indeed these many days she hath done almsdeeds [in the city]. And here is a man, a cook, who avoucheth that the young man is his slave.’ When the queen heard these words, her entrails quivered and she groaned from an aching heart and called to mind her brother and that which had betided him. Then she bade those who were about her bring them before her, and when she saw them, she knew her brother and was like to cry aloud; but her reason restrained her; yet could she not contain herself, but she must needs rise up and sit down. However, she enforced herself unto patience and said to them, ‘Let each of you acquaint me with his case.’

So Selim came forward and kissing the earth before the [supposed] king, praised him and related to him his story from beginning to end, till the time of their coming to that city, he and his sister, telling him how he had entered the place and fallen into the hands of the cook and that which had betided him [with him] and what he had suffered from him of beating and bonds and shackles and pinioning. Moreover, he told him how the cook had made him his brother’s slave and how the latter had sold him in Hind and he had married the princess and become king and how life was not pleasant to him till he should foregather with his sister and how the cook had fallen in with him a second time and acquainted her with that which had betided him of sickness and disease for the space of a full-told year.

When he had made an end of his speech, his wife came forward forthright and told her story, from first to last, how her mother bought him from the cook’s partner and the people of the kingdom came under his rule; nor did she leave telling till she came, in her story, to that city [and acquainted the queen with the manner of her falling in with her lost husband]. When she had made an end of her story, the cook exclaimed, ‘Alack, what impudent liars there be! By Allah, O king, this woman lieth against me, for this youth is my rearling and he was born of one of my slave-girls. He fled from me and I found him again.

When the queen heard the last of the talk, she said to the cook, 'The judgment between you shall not be but in accordance with justice.' Then she dismissed all those who were present and turning to her brother, said to him, 'Indeed thy soothfastness is established with me and the truth of thy speech, and praised be God who hath brought about union between thee and thy wife! So now begone with her to thy country and leave [seeking] thy sister Selma and depart in peace.' But Selim answered, saying, 'By Allah, by the virtue of the All-knowing King, I will not turn back from seeking my sister till I die or find her, if it please God the Most High!' Then he called his sister to mind and broke out with the following verses from a heart endolored, afflicted, disappointed, saying:

O thou that blamest me for my heart and railest at my ill, Hadst
them but tasted my spirit's grief, thou wouldst excuse me
still.
By Allah, O thou that chid'st my heart concerning my sister's
love, Leave chiding and rather bemoan my case and help me to
my will.
For indeed I am mated with longing love in public and privily,
Nor ever my heart, alas I will cease from mourning, will I
or nill.
A fire in mine entrails burns, than which the fire of the hells
denounced For sinners' torment less scathing is: it seeketh
me to slay.

When his sister Selma heard what he said, she could no longer contain herself, but cast herself upon him and discovered to him her case. When he knew her, he threw himself upon her [and lay without life] awhile; after which he came to himself and said, 'Praised be God, the Bountiful, the Beneficent!' Then they complained to each other of that which they had suffered for the anguish of separation, whilst Selim's wife abode wondered at this and Selma's patience and constancy pleased her. So she saluted her and thanked her for her fashion, saying, 'By Allah, O my lady, all that we are in of gladness is of thy blessing alone; so praised be God who hath vouchsafed us thy sight!’ Then they abode all three in joy and happiness and delight three days, sequestered from the folk; and it was bruited abroad in the city that the king had found his brother, who was lost years agone.

On the fourth day, all the troops and the people of the realm assembled together to the [supposed] king and standing at his gate, craved leave to enter. Selma bade admit them; so they entered and paid her the service of the kingship and gave her joy of her brother’s safe return. She bade them do suit and service to Selim, and they consented and paid him homage; after which they kept silence awhile, so they might hear what the king should command. Then said Selma, ‘Harkye, all ye soldiers and subjects, ye know that ye enforced me to [accept] the kingship and besought me thereof and I consented unto your wishes concerning my investment [with the royal dignity]; and I did this [against my will]; for know that I am a woman and that I disguised myself and donned man’s apparel, so haply my case might be hidden, whenas I lost my brother. But now, behold, God hath reunited me with my brother, and it is no longer lawful to me that I be king and bear rule over the people, and I a woman; for that there is no governance for women, whenas men are present. Wherefore, if it like you, do ye set my brother on the throne of the kingdom, for this is he; and I will busy myself with the worship of God the Most High and thanksgiving [to Him] for my reunion with my brother. Or, if it like you, take your kingship and invest therewith whom ye will.’

Thereupon the folk all cried out, saying, ‘We accept him to king over us!’ And they did him suit and service and gave him joy of the kingship. So the preachers preached in his name and the poets praised him; and he lavished gifts upon the troops and the officers of his household and overwhelmed them with favours and bounties and was prodigal to the people of justice and equitable dealings and goodly usance and polity. When he had accomplished this much of his desire, he caused bring forth the cook and his household to the divan, but spared the old woman who had tended him, for that she had been the cause of his deliverance. Then they assembled them all without the town and he tormented the cook and those who were with him with all manner of torments, after which he put him to death on the sorriest wise and burning him with fire, scattered his ashes abroad in the air.

Selim abode in the governance, invested with the sultanate, and ruled the people a whole year, after which he returned to El Mensoureh and sojourned there another year. And he [and his wife] ceased not to go from city to city and abide in this a year and that a year, till he was vouchsafed children and they grew up, whereupon he appointed him of his sons, who was found fitting, to be his deputy in [one] kingdom [and abode himself in the other]; and he lived, he and his wife and children, what while God the Most High willed. Nor," added the vizier, "O king of the age, is this story rarer or more extraordinary than that of the king of Hind and his wronged and envied vizier."

When the king heard this, his mind was occupied [with the story he had heard and that which the vizier promised him], and he bade the latter depart to his own house.

The Twenty-Eighth and Last Night of the Month

When the evening evened, the king summoned the vizier and bade him tell the story of the King of Hind and his vizier. So he said, "Hearkening and obedience. Know, O king of august lineage, that

STORY OF THE KING OF HIND AND HIS VIZIER.

There was once in the land of Hind a king of illustrious station, endowed with understanding and good sense, and his name was Shah Bekht. He had a vizier, a man of worth and intelligence, prudent in counsel, conformable to him in his governance and just in his judgment; wherefore his enviers were many and many were the hypocrites, who sought in him faults and set snares for him, so that they insinuated into King Shah Bekht's eye hatred and rancour against him and sowed despite against him in his heart; and plot followed after plot, till [at last] the king was brought to arrest him and lay him in prison and confiscate his good and avoid his estate.

When they knew that there was left him no estate that the king might covet, they feared lest he be brought to release him, by the incidence of the vizier's [good] counsel upon the king's heart, and he return to his former case, so should their plots be marred and their ranks degraded, for that they knew that the king would have need of that which he had known from that man nor would forget that wherewith he was familiar in him. Now it befell that a certain man of corrupt purpose found a way to the perversion of the truth and a means of glozing over falsehood and adorning it with a semblance of fair-seeming and there proceeded from him that wherewith the hearts of the folk were occupied, and their minds were corrupted by his lying tales; for that he made use of Indian subtleties and forged them into a proof for the denial of the Maker, the Creator, extolled be His might and exalted be He! Indeed, God is exalted and magnified above the speech of the deniers. He avouched that it is the planets that order the affairs of all creatures and he set down twelve mansions to twelve signs [of the Zodiac] and made each sign thirty degrees, after the number of the days of the month, so that in twelve mansions there are three hundred and threescore [degrees], after the number of the days of the year; and he wrought a scheme, wherein he lied and was an infidel and denied [God]. Then he got possession of the king's mind and the enviers and haters aided him against the vizier and insinuated themselves into his favour and corrupted his counsel against the vizier, so that he suffered of him that which he suffered and he banished him and put him away.

So the wicked man attained that which he sought of the vizier and the case was prolonged till the affairs of the kingdom became disordered, by dint of ill governance, and the most part of the king's empery fell away from him and he came nigh unto ruin. Therewithal he was certified of the loyalty of his [late] skilful vizier and the excellence of his governance and the justness of his judgment. So he sent after him and brought him and the wicked man before him and summoning the grandees of his realm and the chiefs of his state to his presence, gave them leave to talk and dispute and forbade the wicked man from that his lewd opinion. Then arose that wise and skilful vizier and praised God the Most High and lauded Him and glorified Him and hallowed Him and attested His unity and disputed with the wicked man and overcame him and put him to silence; nor did he cease from him till he enforced him to make confession of repentance [and turning away] from that which he had believed.

Therewith King Shah Bekht rejoiced with an exceeding great joy and said, 'Praise be to God who hath delivered me from yonder man and hath preserved me from the loss of the kingship and the cessation of prosperity from me!' So the affair of the vizier returned to order and well-being and the king restored him to his place and advanced him in rank. Moreover, he assembled the folk who had missaid of him and destroyed them all, to the last man. And how like," continued the vizier, "is this story unto that of myself and King Shah Bekht, with regard to that whereinto I am fallen of the changing of the king's heart and his giving credence to others against me; but now is the righteousness of my dealing established in thine eyes, for that God the Most High hath inspired me with wisdom and endowed thee with longanimity and patience [to hearken] from me unto that which He allotted unto those who had foregone us, till He hath shown forth my innocence and made manifest unto thee the truth. For now the days are past, wherein it was avouched to the king that I should endeavour for the destruction of my soul, [to wit,] the month; and behold, the probation time is over and gone, and past is the season of evil and ceased, by the king's good fortune." Then he bowed his head and was silent.

When King Shah Bekht heard his vizier's speech, he was confounded before him and abashed and marvelled at the gravity of his understanding and his patience. So he sprang up to him and embraced him and the vizier kissed his feet. Then the king called for a sumptuous dress of honour and cast it over Er Rehwan and entreated him with the utmost honour and showed him special favour and restored him to his rank and vizierate. Moreover he imprisoned those who had sought his destruction with leasing and committed unto himself to pass judgment upon the interpreter who had expounded to him the dream. So the vizier abode in the governance of the realm till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights; and this (added Shehrzad) is all, O king of the age, that hath come down to us of King Shah Bekht and his vizier.

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SHEHRZAD AND SHEHRIYAR.

As for King Shehriyar, he marvelled at Shehrzad with the utmost wonder and drew her near to his heart, of his much love for her; and she was magnified in his eyes and he said in himself, “By Allah, the like of this woman is not deserving of slaughter, for indeed the time affordeth not her like. By Allah, I have been heedless of mine affair, and had not God overcome me with His mercy and put this woman at my service, so she might adduce to me manifest instances and truthful cases and goodly admonitions and edifying traits, such as should restore me to the [right] road, [I had come to perdition!]. Wherefore to God be the praise for this and I beseech Him to make my end with her like unto that of the vizier and Shah Bekht.” Then sleep overcame the king and glory be unto Him who sleepeth not!

When it was the Nine hundred and thirtieth Night, Shehrzad said, “O king, there is present in my thought a story which treateth of women’s craft and wherein is a warning to whoso will be warned and an admonishment to whoso will be admonished and whoso hath discernment; but I fear lest the hearing of this lessen me with the king and lower my rank in his esteem; yet I hope that this will not be, for that it is a rare story. Women are indeed corruptresses; their craft and their cunning may not be set out nor their wiles known. Men enjoy their company and are not careful to uphold them [in the right way], neither do they watch over them with all vigilance, but enjoy their company and take that which is agreeable and pay no heed to that which is other than this. Indeed, they are like unto the crooked rib, which if thou go about to straighten, thou distortest it, and which if thou persist in seeking to redress, thou breakest it; wherefore it behoveth the man of understanding to be silent concerning them.”

“O sister mine,” answered Dinarzad, “bring forth that which is with thee and that which is present to thy mind of the story concerning the craft of women and their wiles, and have no fear lest this endamage thee with the king; for that women are like unto jewels, which are of all kinds and colours. When a [true] jewel falleth into the hand of him who is knowing therein, he keepeth it for himself and leaveth that which is other than it. Moreover, he preferreth some of them over others, and in this he is like unto the potter, who filleth his oven with all the vessels [he hath moulded] and kindleth fire thereunder. When the baking is at an end and he goeth about to take forth that which is in the oven, he findeth no help for it but that he must break some thereof, whilst other some are what the folk need and whereof they make use, and yet other some there be that return to their whilom case. Wherefore fear thou not to adduce that which thou knowest of the craft of women, for that in this is profit for all folk."

Then said Shehrzad, "They avouch, O king, (but God [alone] knowest the secret things,) that

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EL MELIK EZ ZAHIR RUKNEDDIN BIBERS EL BUNDUCDARI AND THE SIXTEEN OFFICERS OF POLICE.

There was once in the land [of Egypt and] the city of Cairo, [under the dynasty] of the Turks, a king of the valiant kings and the exceeding mighty Sultans, by name El Melik ez Zahir Rukneddin Bibers el Bunducdari. He was used to storm the Islamite strongholds and the fortresses of the Coast and the Nazarene citadels, and the governor of his [capital] city was just to the folk, all of them. Now El Melik ez Zahir was passionately fond of stories of the common folk and of that which men purposed and loved to see this with his eyes and hear their sayings with his ears, and it befell that he heard one night from one of his story-tellers that among women are those who are doughtier than men of valour and greater of excellence and that among them are those who will do battle with the sword and others who cozen the quickest-witted of magistrates and baffle them and bring down on them all manner of calamity; whereupon quoth the Sultan, ‘I would fain hear this of their craft from one of those who have had to do theiewith, so I may hearken unto him and cause him tell.’ And one of the story-tellers said, ‘O king, send for the chief of the police of the town.’

Now Ilmeddin Senjer was at that time Master of Police and he was a man of experience, well versed in affairs: so the king sent for him and when he came before him, he discovered to him that which was in his mind. Quoth Ilmeddin Senjer, ‘I will do my endeavour for that which our lord the Sultan seeketh.’ Then he arose and returning to his house, summoned the captains of the watch and the lieutenants of police and said to them, ‘Know that I purpose to marry my son and make him a bride-feast, and it is my wish that ye assemble, all of you, in one place. I also will be present, I and my company, and do ye relate that which ye have heard of extraordinary occurrences and that which hath betided you of experiences.’ And the captains and sergeants and agents of police made answer to him, saying, ‘It is well: in the name of God! We will cause thee see all this with thine eyes and hear it with thine ears.’ Then the master of police arose and going up to El Melik ez Zahir, informed him that the assembly would take place on such a day at his house; and the Sultan said, ‘It is well,’ and gave him somewhat of money for his expenses.

When the appointed day arrived, the chief of the police set apart for his officers a saloon, that had windows ranged in order and giving upon the garden, and El Melik ez Zahir came to him, and he seated himself, he and the Sultan, in the alcove. Then the tables were spread unto them for eating and they ate; and when the cup went round amongst them and their hearts were gladdened with meat and drink, they related that which was with them and discovered their secrets from concealment. The first to relate was a man, a captain of the watch, by name Muineddin, whose heart was engrossed with the love of women; and he said, ‘Harkye, all ye people of [various] degree, I will acquaint you with an extraordinary affair which befell me aforetime. Know that

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THE FIRST OFFICER’S STORY.

When I entered the service of this Amir, I had a great repute and every lewd fellow feared me of all mankind, and whenas I rode through the city, all the folk would point at me with their fingers and eyes. It befell one day, as I sat in the house of the prefecture, with my back against a wall, considering in myself, there fell somewhat in my lap, and behold, it was a purse sealed and tied. So I took it in my hand and behold, it had in it a hundred dirhems, but I found not who threw it and I said, “Extolled be the perfection of God, the King of the Kingdoms!” Another day, [as I sat on like wise,] somewhat fell on me and startled me, and behold, it was a purse like the first. So I took it and concealing its affair, made as if I slept, albeit sleep was not with me.

One day, as I was thus feigning sleep, I felt a hand in my lap, and in it a magnificent purse. So I seized the hand and behold, it was that of a fair woman. Quoth I to her, “O my lady, who art thou?” And she said, “Rise [and come away] from here, that I may make myself known to thee.” So I arose and following her, fared on, without tarrying, till she stopped at the door of a lofty house, whereupon quoth I to her,”O my lady, who art thou? Indeed, thou hast done me kindness, and what is the reason of this?” “By Allah,” answered she, “O Captain Mum, I am a woman on whom desire and longing are sore for the love of the daughter of the Cadi Amin el Hukm. Now there was between us what was and the love of her fell upon my heart and I agreed with her upon meeting, according to possibility and convenience. But her father Amin el Hukm took her and went away, and my heart cleaveth to her and love-longing and distraction are sore upon me on her account.”

I marvelled at her words and said to her, “What wouldst thou have me do?” And she answered, “O Captain Muin, I would have thee give me a helping hand.” Quoth I, “What have I to do with the daughter of the Cadi Amin el Hukm?” And she said, “Know that I would not have thee intrude upon the Cadi’s daughter, but I would fain contrive for the attainment of my wishes.’ This is my intent and my desire, and my design will not be accomplished but by thine aid.”

Then said she, “I mean this night to go with a stout heart and hire me trinkets of price; then will I go and sit in the street wherein is the house of Amin el Hukm; and when it is the season of the round and the folk are asleep, do thou pass, thou and those who are with thee of the police, and thou wilt see me sitting and on me fine raiment and ornaments and wilt smell on me the odour of perfumes; whereupon do thou question me of my case and I will say, ‘I come from the Citadel and am of the daughters of the deputies and I came down [into the town,] to do an occasion; but the night overtook me at unawares and the Zuweyleh gate was shut against me and all the gates and I knew not whither I should go this night Presently I saw this street and noting the goodliness of its ordinance and its cleanness, took shelter therein against break of day.’ When I say this to thee with all assurance the chief of the watch will have no suspicion of me, but will say, ‘Needs must we leave her with one who will take care of her till morning.’ And do thou rejoin, ‘It were most fitting that she pass the night with Amin el Hukm and lie with his family and children till the morning.’ Then do thou straightway knock at the Cadi’s door, and thus shall I have gained admission into his house, without inconvenience, and gotten my desire; and peace be on thee!” And I said to her, “By Allah, this is an easy matter.”

So, when the night darkened, we sallied forth to make our round, attended by men with sharp swords, and went round about the streets and compassed the city, till we came to the by-street where was the woman, and it was the middle of the night Here we smelt rich scents and heard the clink of earrings; so I said to my comrades, “Methinks I spy an apparition,” And the captain of the watch said, “See what it is.” So I came forward and entering the lane, came presently out again and said, “I have found a fair woman and she tells me that she is from the Citadel and that the night surprised her and she espied this street and seeing its cleanness and the goodliness of its ordinance, knew that it appertained to a man of rank and that needs must there be in it a guardian to keep watch over it, wherefore she took shelter therein.” Quoth the captain of the watch to me, “Take her and carry her to thy house.” But I answered, “I seek refuge with Allah! My house is no place of deposit and on this woman are trinkets and apparel [of price]. By Allah, we will not deposit her save with Amin el Hukrn, in whose street she hath been since the first of the darkness; wherefore do thou leave her with him till the break of day." And he said, "As thou wilt." Accordingly, I knocked at the Cadi's door and out came a black slave of his slaves, to whom said I, "O my lord, take this woman and let her be with you till break of day, for that the lieutenant of the Amir Ilmeddin hath found her standing at the door of your house, with trinkets and apparel [of price] on her, and we feared lest her responsibility be upon you; wherefore it is most fit that she pass the night with you." So the slave opened and took her in with him.

When the morning morrowed, the first who presented himself before the Amir was the Cadi Amin el Hukm, leaning on two of his black slaves; and he was crying out and calling [on God] for aid and saying, "O crafty and perfidious Amir, thou depositedst with me a woman [yesternight] and broughtest her into my house and my dwelling-place, and she arose [in the night] and took from me the good of the little orphans, six great bags, [containing each a thousand dinars, and made off;] but as for me, I will say no more to thee except in the Sultan's presence." When the Master of the Police heard these words, he was troubled and rose and sat down; then he took the Cadi and seating him by his side, soothed him and exhorted him to patience, till he had made an end of talk, when he turned to the officers and questioned them. They fixed the affair on me and said, "We know nothing of this affair but from Captain Muineddin." So the Cadi turned to me and said, "Thou wast of accord with this woman, for she said she came from the Citadel."

As for me, I stood, with my head bowed to the earth, forgetting both Institutes and Canons, and abode sunk in thought, saying, "How came I to be the dupe of yonder worthless baggage?" Then said the Amir to me, "What aileth thee that thou answerest not?" And I answered, saying, "O my lord, it is a custom among the folk that he who hath a payment to make at a certain date is allowed three days' grace; [so do thou have patience with me so long,] and if, [by the end of that time,] the culprit be not found, I will be answerable for that which is lost." When the folk heard my speech, they all deemed it reasonable and the Master of Police turned to the Cadi and swore to him that he would do his utmost endeavour to recover the stolen money and that it should be restored to him. So he went away, whilst I mounted forthright and fell to going round about the world without purpose, and indeed I was become under the dominion of a woman without worth or honour; and I went round about on this wise all that my day and night, but happened not upon tidings of her; and thus I did on the morrow.

On the third day I said to myself, "Thou art mad or witless!" For I was going about in quest of a woman who knew me and I knew her not, seeing that indeed she was veiled, [whenas I saw her]. Then I went round about the third day till the hour of afternoon prayer, and sore was my concern and my chagrin, for I knew that there abode to me of my life but [till] the morrow, when the chief of the police would seek me. When it was the time of sundown, I passed through one of the streets, and beheld a woman at a window. Her door was ajar and she was clapping her hands and casting furtive glances at me, as who should say, "Come up by the door." So I went up, without suspicion, and when I entered, she rose and clasped me to her breast 1 marvelled at her affair and she said to me, "I am she whom thou depositedst with Amin el Hukm." Quoth I to her, "O my sister, I have been going round and round in quest of thee, for indeed thou hast done a deed that will be chronicled in history and hast cast me into slaughter on thine account." "Sayst thou this to me," asked she, "and thou captain of men?" And I answered, "How should I not be troubled, seeing that I am in concern [for an affair] that I turn over and over [in my mind], more by token that I abide my day long going about [searching for thee] and in the night I watch its stars [for wakefulness]?" Quoth she, "Nought shall betide but good, and thou shalt get the better of him."

So saying, she rose [and going] to a chest, took out therefrom six bags full of gold and said to me, "This is what I took from Amin el Hukm's house. So, if thou wilt, restore it; else the whole is lawfully thine; and if thou desire other than this, [thou shalt have it;] for I have wealth in plenty and I had no design in this but to marry thee." Then she arose and opening [other] chests, brought out therefrom wealth galore and I said to her, "O my sister, I have no desire for all this, nor do I covet aught but to be quit of that wherein I am." Quoth she, "I came not forth of the [Cadi's] house without [making provision for] thine acquittance."

Then said she to me, "To-morrow morning, when Amin el Hukm cometh, have patience with him till he have made an end of his speech, and when he is silent, return him no answer; and if the prefect say to thee, 'What ailest thee that thou answereth him not?' do thou reply, 'O lord, know that the two words are not alike, but there is no [helper] for him who is undermost, save God the Most High.' The Cadi will say, 'What is the meaning of thy saying," The two words are not alike"?' And do thou make answer, saying, 'I deposited with thee a damsel from the palace of the Sultan, and most like some losel of thy household hath transgressed against her or she hath been privily murdered. Indeed, there were on her jewels and raiment worth a thousand dinars, and hadst thou put those who are with thee of slaves and slave-girls to the question, thou hadst assuredly lit on some traces [of the crime].' When he heareth this from thee, his agitation will redouble and he will be confounded and will swear that needs must thou go with him to his house; but do thou say, 'That will I not do, for that I am the party aggrieved, more by token that I am under suspicion with thee.' If he redouble in calling [on God for aid] and conjure thee by the oath of divorce, saying, 'Needs must thou come,' do thou say, 'By Allah, I will not go, except the prefect come also.'

When thou comest to the house, begin by searching the roofs; then search the closets and cabinets; and if thou find nought, humble thyself unto the Cadi and make a show of abjection and feign thyself defeated, and after stand at the door and look as if thou soughtest a place wherein to make water, for that there is a dark corner there. Then come forward, with a heart stouter than granite, and lay hold upon a jar of the jars and raise it from its place. Thou wilt find under it the skirt of a veil; bring it out publicly and call the prefect in a loud voice, before those who are present. Then open it and thou wilt find it full of blood, exceeding of redness, and in it [thou wilt find also] a woman's shoes and a pair of trousers and somewhat of linen." When I heard this from her, I rose to go out and she said to me, "Take these hundred dinars, so they may advantage thee; and this is my guest-gift to thee." So I took them and bidding her farewell, returned to my lodging.

Next morning, up came the Cadi, with his face like the ox-eye, and said, “In the name of God, where is my debtor and where is my money?” Then he wept and cried out and said to the prefect, “Where is that ill-omened fellow, who aboundeth in thievery and villainy?” Therewith the prefect turned to me and said, “Why dost thou not answer the Cadi?” And I replied, “O Amir, the two heads are not equal, and I, I have no helper but God; but, if the right be on my side, it will appear.” At this the Cadi cried out and said, “Out on thee, O ill-omened fellow! How wilt thou make out that the right is on thy side?” “O our lord the Cadi,” answered I, “I deposited with thee a trust, to wit, a woman whom we found at thy door, and on her raiment and trinkets of price. Now she is gone, even as yesterday is gone; and after this thou turnest upon us and makest claim upon me for six thousand dinars. By Allah, this is none other than gross unright, and assuredly some losel of thy household hath transgressed against her!”

With this the Cadi’s wrath redoubled and he swore by the most solemn of oaths that I should go with him and search his house. “By Allah,” replied I, “I will not go, except the prefect be with us; for, if he be present, he and the officers, thou wilt not dare to presume upon me.” And the Cadi rose and swore an oath, saying, “By Him who created mankind, we will not go but with the Amir!” So we repaired to the Cadi’s house, accompanied by the prefect, and going up, searched high and low, but found nothing; whereupon fear gat hold upon me and the prefect turned to me and said, “Out on thee, O ill-omened fellow! Thou puttest us to shame before the men.” And I wept and went round about right and left, with the tears running down my face, till we were about to go forth and drew near the door of the house. I looked at the place [behind the door] and said, “What is yonder dark place that I see?” And I said to the sergeants, “Lift up this jar with me.” They did as I bade them and I saw somewhat appearing under the jar and said, “Rummage and see what is under it.” So they searched and found a woman’s veil and trousers full of blood, which when I beheld, I fell down in a swoon.

When the prefect saw this, he said, “By Allah, the captain is excused!” Then my comrades came round about me and sprinkled water on my face, [till I came to myself,] when I arose and accosting the Cadi, who was covered with confusion, said to him, “Thou seest that suspicion is fallen on thee, and indeed this affair is no light matter, for that this woman’s family will assuredly not sit down under her loss.” Therewith the Cadi’s heart quaked and he knew that the suspicion had reverted upon him, wherefore his colour paled and his limbs smote together; and he paid of his own money, after the measure of that which he had lost, so we would hush up the matter for him. Then we departed from him in peace, whilst I said in myself, “Indeed, the woman deceived me not.”

After that I tarried till three days had elapsed, when 1 went to the bath and changing my clothes, betook myself to her house, but found the door locked and covered with dust. So I questioned the neighbours of her and they said, “This house hath been empty these many days; but three days agone there came a woman with an ass, and yesternight, at eventide, she took her gear and went away.” So I turned back, confounded in my wit, and every day [after this, for many a day,] I inquired of the inhabitants [of the street] concerning her, but could light on no tidings of her. And indeed I marvelled at the eloquence of her tongue and [the readiness of] her speech; and this is the most extraordinary of that which hath betided me.’

When El Melik ez Zahir heard Muineddin’s story, he marvelled thereat Then rose another officer and said, ‘O lord, bear what befell me in bygone days.

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THE SECOND OFFICER'S STORY.

I was once an officer in the household of the Amir Jemaleddin El Atwesh El Mujhidi, who was invested with the governance of the Eastern and Western districts, and I was dear to his heart and he concealed from me nought of that which he purposed to do; and withal he was master of his reason. It chanced one day that it was reported to him that the daughter of such an one had wealth galore and raiment and jewels and she loved a Jew, whom every day she invited to be private with her, and they passed the day eating and drinking in company and he lay the night with her. The prefect feigned to give no credence to this story, but one night he summoned the watchmen of the quarter and questioned them of this. Quoth one of them, "O my lord, I saw a Jew enter the street in question one night; but know not for certain to whom he went in." And the prefect said, "Keep thine eye on him henceforth and note what place he entereth." So the watchman went out and kept his eye on the Jew.

One day, as the prefect sat [in his house], the watchman came in to him and said, "O my lord, the Jew goeth to the house of such an one." Whereupon El Atwesh arose and went forth alone, taking with him none but myself. As he went along, he said to me, "Indeed, this [woman] is a fat piece of meat." And we gave not over going till we came to the door of the house and stood there till a slave-girl came out, as if to buy them somewhat. We waited till she opened the door, whereupon, without further parley, we forced our way into the house and rushed in upon the girl, whom we found seated with the Jew in a saloon with four estrades, and cooking-pots and candles therein. When her eyes fell on the prefect, she knew him and rising to her feet, said, "Welcome and fair welcome! Great honour hath betided me by my lord's visit and indeed thou honourest my dwelling."

Then she carried him up [to the estrade] and seating him on the couch, brought him meat and wine and gave him to drink; after which she put off all that was upon her of raiment and jewels and tying them up in a handkerchief, said to him, "O my lord, this is thy portion, all of it." Moreover she turned to the Jew and said to him, "Arise, thou also, and do even as I." So he arose in haste and went out, scarce crediting his deliverance. When the girl was assured of his escape, she put out her hand to her clothes [and jewels] and taking them, said to the prefect, “Is the requital of kindness other than kindness? Thou hast deigned [to visit me and eat of my victual]; so now arise and depart from us without ill-[doing]; or I will give one cry and all who are in the street will come forth.” So the Amir went out from her, without having gotten a single dirhem; and on this wise she delivered the Jew by the excellence of her contrivance.’

The folk marvelled at this story and as for the prefect and El Melik ez Zahir, they said, ‘Wrought ever any the like of this device?’ And they marvelled with the utterest of wonderment Then arose a third officer and said, ‘Hear what betided me, for it is yet stranger and more extraordinary.

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THE THIRD OFFICER'S STORY

I was one day abroad on an occasion with certain of my comrades, and as we went along, we fell in with a company of women, as they were moons, and among them one, the tallest and handsomest of them. When I saw her and she saw me, she tarried behind her companions and waited for me, till I came up to her and bespoke her. Quoth she, "O my lord, (God favour thee!) I saw thee prolong thy looking on me and imagined that thou knewest me. If it be thus, vouchsafe me more knowledge of thee." "By Allah," answered I, "I know thee not, save that God the Most High hath cast the love of thee into my heart and the goodliness of thine attributes hath confounded me and that wherewith God hath gifted thee of those eyes that shoot with arrows; for thou hast captivated me." And she rejoined, "By Allah, I feel the like of that which thou feelest; so that meseemeth I have known thee from childhood."

Then said I, "A man cannot well accomplish all whereof he hath need in the market-places." "Hast thou a house?" asked she. "No, by Allah," answered I; "nor is this town my dwelling-place." "By Allah," rejoined she, "nor have I a place; but I will contrive for thee." Then she went on before me and I followed her till she came to a lodging-house and said to the housekeeper, "Hast thou an empty chamber?" "Yes," answered she; and my mistress said, "Give us the key." So we took the key and going up to see the room, entered it; after which she went out to the housekeeper and [giving her a dirhem], said to her, "Take the key-money, for the room pleaseth us, and here is another dirhem for thy trouble. Go, fetch us a pitcher of water, so we may [refresh ourselves] and rest till the time of the noonday siesta pass and the heat decline, when the man will go and fetch the [household] stuff." Therewith the housekeeper rejoiced and brought us a mat and two pitchers of water on a tray and a leather rug.

We abode thus till the setting-in of the time of mid-afternoon, when she said, "Needs must I wash before I go." Quoth I, "Get water wherewithal we may wash," and pulled out from my pocket about a score of dirhems, thinking to give them to her; but she said, "I seek refuge with God!" and brought out of her pocket a handful of silver, saying, "But for destiny and that God hath caused the love of thee fall into my heart, there had not happened that which hath happened." Quoth I, "Take this in requital of that which thou hast spent;" and she said, "O my lord, by and by, whenas companionship is prolonged between us, thou wilt see if the like of me looketh unto money and gain or no." Then she took a pitcher of water and going into the lavatory, washed and presently coming forth, prayed and craved pardon of God the Most High for that which she had done.

Now I had questioned her of her name and she answered, "My name is Rihaneh," and described to me her dwelling-place. When I saw her make the ablution, I said in myself, "This woman doth on this wise, and shall I not do the like of her?" Then said I to her, "Belike thou wilt seek us another pitcher of water?" So she went out to the housekeeper and said to her, "Take this para and fetch us water therewith, so we may wash the flags withal." Accordingly, the housekeeper brought two pitchers of water and I took one of them and giving her my clothes, entered the lavatory and washed.

When I had made an end of washing, I cried out, saying, "Harkye, my lady Rihaneh!" But none answered me. So I went out and found her not; and indeed she had taken my clothes and that which was therein of money, to wit, four hundred dirhems. Moreover, she had taken my turban and my handkerchief and I found not wherewithal to cover my nakedness; wherefore I suffered somewhat than which death is less grievous and abode looking about the place, so haply I might espy wherewithal to hide my shame. Then I sat a little and presently going up to the door, smote upon it; whereupon up came the housekeeper and I said to her, "O my sister, what hath God done with the woman who was here?" Quoth she, "She came down but now and said, 'I am going to cover the boys with the clothes and I have left him sleeping. If he awake, tell him not to stir till the clothes come to him.'" Then said I, "O my sister, secrets are [safe] with the worthy and the freeborn. By Allah, this woman is not my wife, nor ever in my life have I seen her before this day!" And I recounted to her the whole affair and begged her to cover me, informing her that I was discovered of the privities.

She laughed and cried out to the women of the house, saying, “Ho, Fatimeh! Ho, Khedijeh! Ho, Herifeh! Ho, Senineh!” Whereupon all those who were in the place of women and neighbours flocked to me and fell a-laughing at me and saying, “O blockhead, what ailed thee to meddle with gallantry?” Then one of them came and looked in my face and laughed, and another said, “By Allah, thou mightest have known that she lied, from the time she said she loved thee and was enamoured of thee? What is there in thee to love?” And a third said, “This is an old man without understanding.” And they vied with each other in making mock of me, what while I suffered sore chagrin.

However, after awhile, one of the women took pity on me and brought me a rag of thin stuff and cast it on me. With this I covered my privities, and no more, and abode awhile thus. Then said I in myself, “The husbands of these women will presently gather together on me and I shall be disgraced.” So I went out by another door of the house, and young and old crowded about me, running after me and saying, “A madman! A madman!” till I came to my house and knocked at the door; whereupon out came my wife and seeing me naked, tall, bareheaded, cried out and ran in again, saying,”This is a madman, a Satan!” But, when she and my family knew me, they rejoiced and said to me, “What aileth thee?” I told them that thieves had taken my clothes and stripped me and had been like to kill me; and when I told them that they would have killed me, they praised God the Most High and gave me joy of my safety. So consider the craft of this woman and this device that she practised upon me, for all my pretensions to sleight and quickwittedness.’

The company marvelled at this story and at the doings of women. Then came forward a fourth officer and said, ‘Verily, that which hath betided me of strange adventures is yet more extraordinary than this; and it was on this wise.

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THE FOURTH OFFICER'S STORY.

We were sleeping one night on the roof, when a woman made her way into the house and gathering into a bundle all that was therein, took it up, that she might go away with it. Now she was great with child and near upon her term and the hour of her deliverance; so, when she made up the bundle and offered to shoulder it and make off with it, she hastened the coming of the pangs of labour and gave birth to a child in the dark. Then she sought for the flint and steel and striking a light, kindled the lamp and went round about the house with the little one, and it was weeping. [The noise awoke us,] as we lay on the roof, and we marvelled. So we arose, to see what was to do, and looking down through the opening of the saloon, saw a woman, who had kindled the lamp, and heard the little one weeping. She heard our voices and raising her eyes to us, said, "Are ye not ashamed to deal with us thus and discover our nakedness? Know ye not that the day belongeth to you and the night to us? Begone from us! By Allah, were it not that ye have been my neighbours these [many] years, I would bring down the house upon you!" We doubted not but that she was of the Jinn and drew back our heads; but, when we arose on the morrow, we found that she had taken all that was with us and made off with it; wherefore we knew that she was a thief and had practised [on us] a device, such as was never before practised; and we repented, whenas repentance advantaged us not.'

When the company heard this story, they marvelled thereat with the utmost wonderment. Then the fifth officer, who was the lieutenant of the bench, came forward and said, '[This is] no wonder and there befell me that which is rarer and more extraordinary than this.

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THE FIFTH OFFICER’S STORY.

As I sat one day at the door of the prefecture, a woman entered and said to me privily, “O my lord, I am the wife of such an one the physician, and with him is a company of the notables of the city, drinking wine in such a place.” When I heard this, I misliked to make a scandal; so I rebuffed her and sent her away. Then I arose and went alone to the place in question and sat without till the door opened, when I rushed in and entering, found the company engaged as the woman had set out, and she herself with them. I saluted them and they returned my greeting and rising, entreated me with honour and seated me and brought me to eat. Then I informed them how one had denounced them to me, but I had driven him away and come to them by myself; wherefore they thanked me and praised me for my goodness. Then they brought out to me from among them two thousand dirhems and I took them and went away.

Two months after this occurrence, there came to me one of the Cadi’s officers, with a scroll, wherein was the magistrate’s writ, summoning me to him. So I accompanied the officer and went in to the Cadi, whereupon the plaintiff, to wit, he who had taken out the summons, sued me for two thousand dirhems, avouching that I had borrowed them of him as the woman’s agent. I denied the debt, but he produced against me a bond for the amount, attested by four of those who were in company [on the occasion]; and they were present and bore witness to the loan. So I reminded them of my kindness and paid the amount, swearing that I would never again follow a woman’s counsel. Is not this marvellous?’

The company marvelled at the goodliness of his story and it pleased El Melik ez Zahir; and the prefect said, ‘By Allah, this story is extraordinary!’ Then came forward the sixth officer and said to the company, ‘Hear my story and that which befell me, to wit, that which befell such an one the assessor, for it is rarer than this and stranger.

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THE SIXTH OFFICER'S STORY.

A certain assessor was one day taken with a woman and much people assembled before his house and the lieutenant of police and his men came to him and knocked at the door. The assessor looked out of window and seeing the folk, said, "What aileth you?" Quoth they, "[Come,] speak with the lieutenant of police such an one." So he came down and they said to him, "Bring forth the woman that is with thee." Quoth he, "Are ye not ashamed? How shall I bring forth my wife?" And they said, "Is she thy wife by contract or without contract?" ["By contract,"] answered he, "according to the Book of God and the Institutes of His Apostle." "Where is the contract?" asked they; and he replied, "Her contract is in her mother's house." Quoth they, "Arise and come down and show us the contract." And he said to them, "Go from her way, so she may come forth." Now, as soon as he got wind of the matter, he had written the contract and fashioned it after her fashion, to suit with the case, and written therein the names of certain of his friends as witnesses and forged the signatures of the drawer and the wife's next friend and made it a contract of marriage with his wife and appointed it for an excuse. So, when the woman was about to go out from him, he gave her the contract that be had forged, and the Amir sent with her a servant of his, to bring her to her father. So the servant went with her and when she came to her door, she said to him, "I will not return to the citation of the Amir; but let the witnesses present themselves and take my contract."

Accordingly, the servant carried this message to the lieutenant of police, who was standing at the assessor's door, and he said, "This is reasonable." Then said [the assessor] to the servant, "Harkye, O eunuch! Go and fetch us such an one the notary;" for that he was his friend [and it was he whose name he had forged as the drawer-up of the contract]. So the lieutenant of police sent after him and fetched him to the assessor, who, when he saw him, said to him, "Get thee to such an one, her with whom thou marriedst me, and cry out upon her, and when she cometh to thee, demand of her the contract and take it from her and bring it to us." And he signed to him, as who should say, “Bear me out in the lie and screen me, for that she is a strange woman and I am in fear of the lieutenant of police who standeth at the door; and we beseech God the Most High to screen us and you from the trouble of this world. Amen.”

So the notary went up to the lieutenant, who was among the witnesses, and said “It is well. Is she not such an one whose marriage contract we drew up in such a place?” Then he betook himself to the woman’s house and cried out upon her; whereupon she brought him the [forged] contract and he took it and returned with it to the lieutenant of police. When the latter had taken cognizance [of the document and professed himself satisfied, the assessor] said [to the notary,] “Go to our lord and master, the Cadi of the Cadis, and acquaint him with that which befalleth his assessors.” The notary rose to go, but the lieutenant of police feared [for himself] and was profuse in beseeching the assessor and kissing his hands, till he forgave him; whereupon the lieutenant went away in the utterest of concern and affright. On this wise the assessor ordered the case and carried out the forgery and feigned marriage with the woman; [and thus was calamity warded off from him] by the excellence of his contrivance.”

The folk marvelled at this story with the utmost wonderment and the seventh officer said, ‘There befell me in Alexandria the [God-]guarded a marvellous thing, [and it was that one told me the following story].

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THE SEVENTH OFFICER’S STORY.

There came one day an old woman [to the stuff-market], with a casket of precious workmanship, containing trinkets, and she was accompanied by a damsel great with child. The old woman sat down at the shop of a draper and giving him to know that the damsel was with child by the prefect of police of the city, took of him, on credit, stuffs to the value of a thousand dinars and deposited with him the casket as security. [She opened the casket and] showed him that which was therein; and he found it full of trinkets [apparently] of price; [so he trusted her with the goods] and she took leave of him and carrying the stuffs to the damsel, who was with her, [went her way]. Then the old woman was absent from him a great while, and when her absence was prolonged, the draper despaired of her; so he went up to the prefect’s house and enquired of the woman of his household, [who had taken his stuffs on credit;] but could get no tidings of her nor lit on aught of her trace.

Then he brought out the casket of jewellery [and showed it to an expert,] who told him that the trinkets were gilt and that their worth was but an hundred dirhems. When he heard this, he was sore concerned thereat and presenting himself before the Sultan’s deputy, made his complaint to him; whereupon the latter knew that a trick had been put off upon him and that the folk had cozened him and gotten the better of him and taken his stuffs. Now the magistrate in question was a man of good counsel and judgment, well versed in affairs; so he said to the draper, “Remove somewhat from thy shop, [and amongst the rest the casket,] and on the morrow break the lock and cry out and come to me and complain that they have plundered all thy shop. Moreover, do thou call [upon God for succour] and cry aloud and acquaint the folk, so that all the people may resort to thee and see the breach of the lock and that which is missing from thy shop; and do thou show it to every one who presenteth himself, so the news may be noised abroad, and tell them that thy chief concern is for a casket of great value, deposited with thee by a great man of the town and that thou standest in fear of him. But be thou not afraid and still say in thy converse, ‘My casket belonged to such an one, and I fear him and dare not bespeak him; but you, O company and all ye who are present, I call you to witness of this for me.’ And if there be with thee more than this talk, [say it;] and the old woman will come to thee.”

The draper answered with “Hearkening and obedience” and going forth from the deputy’s presence, betook himself to his shop and brought out thence [the casket and] somewhat considerable, which he removed to his house. At break of day he arose and going to his shop, broke the lock and cried out and shrieked and called [on God for help,] till the folk assembled about him and all who were in the city were present, whereupon he cried out to them, saying even as the prefect had bidden him; and this was bruited abroad. Then he made for the prefecture and presenting himself before the chief of the police, cried out and complained and made a show of distraction.

After three days, the old woman came to him and bringing him the [thousand dinars, the] price of the stuffs, demanded the casket. When he saw her, he laid hold of her and carried her to the prefect of the city; and when she came before the Cadi, he said to her, “O Sataness, did not thy first deed suffice thee, but thou must come a second time?” Quoth she, “I am of those who seek their salvation in the cities, and we foregather every month; and yesterday we foregathered.” “Canst thou [bring me to] lay hold of them?” asked the prefect; and she answered, “Yes; but, if thou wait till to-morrow, they will have dispersed. So I will deliver them to thee to-night.” Quoth he to her, “Go;” and she said, “Send with me one who shall go with me to them and obey me in that which I shall say to him, and all that I bid him he shall give ear unto and obey me therein.” So he gave her a company of men and she took them and bringing them to a certain door, said to them, “Stand at this door, and whoso cometh out to you, lay hands on him; and I will come out to you last of all.” “Hearkening and obedience,” answered they and stood at the door, whilst the old woman went in. They waited a long while, even as the Sultan’s deputy had bidden them, but none came out to them and their standing was prolonged. When they were weary of waiting, they went up to the door and smote upon it heavily and violently, so that they came nigh to break the lock. Then one of them entered and was absent a long while, but found nought; so he returned to his comrades and said to them,”This is the door of a passage, leading to such a street; and indeed she laughed at you and left you and went away.”When they heard his words, they returned to the Amir and acquainted him with the case, whereby he knew that the old woman was a crafty trickstress and that she had laughed at them and cozened them and put a cheat on them, to save herself. Consider, then, the cunning of this woman and that which she contrived of wiles, for all her lack of foresight in presenting herself [a second time] to the draper and not apprehending that his conduct was but a trick; yet, when she found herself in danger, she straightway devised a shift for her deliverance.’

When the company heard the seventh officer’s story, they were moved to exceeding mirth, and El Melik ez Zahir Bibers rejoiced in that which he heard and said, ‘By Allah, there betide things in this world, from which kings are shut out, by reason of their exalted station!” Then came forward another man from amongst the company and said, ‘There hath reached me from one of my friends another story bearing on the malice of women and their craft, and it is rarer and more extraordinary and more diverting than all that hath been told to you.”

Quoth the company, ‘Tell us thy story and expound it unto us, so we may see that which it hath of extraordinary.’ And he said ‘Know, then, that

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THE EIGHTH OFFICER’S STORY.

A friend of mine once invited me to an entertainment; so I went with him, and when we came into his house and sat down on his couch, he said to me, “This is a blessed day and a day of gladness, and [blessed is] he who liveth to [see] the like of this day. I desire that thou practise with us and deny us not, for that thou hast been used to hearken unto those who occupy themselves with this.” I fell in with this and their talk happened upon the like of this subject. Presently, my friend, who had invited me, arose from among them and said to them, “Hearken to me and I will tell you of an adventure that happened to me. There was a certain man who used to visit me in my shop, and I knew him not nor he me, nor ever in his life had he seen me; but he was wont, whenever he had need of a dirhem or two, by way of loan, to come to me and ask me, without acquaintance or intermediary between me and him, [and I would give him what he sought]. I told none of him, and matters abode thus between us a long while, till he fell to borrowing ten at twenty dirhems [at a time], more or less.

One day, as I stood in my shop, there came up to me a woman and stopped before me; and she as she were the full moon rising from among the stars, and the place was illumined by her light. When I saw her, I fixed my eyes on her and stared in her face; and she bespoke me with soft speech. When I heard her words and the sweetness of her speech, I lusted after her; and when she saw that I lusted after her, she did her occasion and promising me [to come again], went away, leaving my mind occupied with her and fire kindled in my heart. Then I abode, perplexed and pondering my affair, whilst fire flamed in my heart, till the third day, when she came again and I scarce credited her coming. When I saw her, I talked with her and cajoled her and courted her and strove to win her favour with speech and invited her [to my house]; but she answered, saying, ‘I will not go up into any one’s house.’ Quoth I, ‘I will go with thee;’ and she said, ‘Arise and come with me.’

So I arose and putting in my sleeve a handkerchief, wherein was a good sum of money, followed the woman, who went on before me and gave not over walking till she brought me to a by-street and to a door, which she bade me open. I refused and she opened it and brought me into the vestibule. As soon as I had entered, she locked the door of entrance from within and said to me, ‘Sit [here] till I go in to the slave-girls and cause them enter a place where they shall not see me.’ ‘It is well,’ answered I and sat down; whereupon she entered and was absent from me a moment, after which she returned to me, without a veil, and said, ‘Arise, [enter,] in the name of God.’ So I arose and went in after her and we gave not over going till we entered a saloon. When I examined the place, I found it neither handsome nor agreeable, but unseemly and desolate, without symmetry or cleanliness; nay, it was loathly to look upon and there was a foul smell in it.

I seated myself amiddleward the saloon, misdoubting, and as I sat, there came down on me from the estrade seven naked men, without other clothing than leather girdles about their waists. One of them came up to me and took my turban, whilst another took my handkerchief, that was in my sleeve, with my money, and a third stripped me of my clothes; after which a fourth came and bound my hands behind me with his girdle. Then they all took me up, pinioned as I was, and casting me down, fell a-dragging me towards a sink-hole that was there and were about to cut my throat, when, behold, there came a violent knocking at the door. When they heard this, they were afraid and their minds were diverted from me by fear; so the woman went out and presently returning, said to them, ‘Fear not; no harm shall betide you this day. It is only your comrade who hath brought you your noon-meal.’ With this the new-comer entered, bringing with him a roasted lamb; and when he came in to them, he said to them, ‘What is to do with you, that ye have tucked up [your sleeves and trousers]?’ Quoth they, ‘[This is] a piece of game we have caught.’

When he heard this, he came up to me and looking in my face, cried out and said, ‘By Allah, this is my brother, the son of my mother and father! Allah! Allah!’ Then he loosed me from my bonds and kissed my head, and behold it was my friend who used to borrow money of me. When I kissed his head, he kissed mine and said, ‘O my brother, be not affrighted.’ Then he called for my clothes [and money and restored to me all that had been taken from me] nor was aught missing to me. Moreover, he brought me a bowl full of [sherbet of] sugar, with lemons therein, and gave me to drink thereof; and the company came and seated me at a table. So I ate with them and he said to me, 'O my lord and my brother, now have bread and salt passed between us and thou hast discovered our secret and [become acquainted with] our case; but secrets [are safe] with the noble.' Quoth I, 'As I am a lawfully-begotten child, I will not name aught [of this] neither denounce [you!*]' And they assured themselves of me by an oath. Then they brought me out and I went my way, scarce crediting but that I was of the dead.

I abode in my house, ill, a whole month; after which I went to the bath and coming out, opened my shop [and sat selling and buying as usual], but saw no more of the man or the woman, till, one day, there stopped before my shop a young man, [a Turcoman], as he were the full moon; and he was a sheep-merchant and had with him a bag, wherein was money, the price of sheep that he had sold. He was followed by the woman, and when he stopped at my shop, she stood by his side and cajoled him, and indeed he inclined to her with a great inclination. As for me, I was consumed with solicitude for him and fell to casting furtive glances at him and winked at him, till he chanced to look round and saw me winking at him; whereupon the woman looked at me and made a sign with her hand and went away. The Turcoman followed her and I counted him dead, without recourse; wherefore I feared with an exceeding fear and shut my shop. Then I journeyed for a year's space and returning, opened my shop; whereupon, behold, the woman came up to me and said, 'This is none other than a great absence.' Quoth I, 'I have been on a journey;' and she said, 'Why didst thou wink at the Turcoman?' 'God forbid!' answered I. 'I did not wink at him.' Quoth she, 'Beware lest thou cross me;' and went away.

Awhile after this a friend of mine invited me to his house and when I came to him, we ate and drank and talked. Then said he to me, 'O my friend, hath there befallen thee in thy life aught of calamity?' 'Nay,' answered I; 'but tell me [first], hath there befallen thee aught?' ['Yes,'] answered he. 'Know that one day I espied a fair woman; so I followed her and invited her [to come home with me].

Quoth she, “I will not enter any one’s house; but come thou to my house, if thou wilt, and be it on such a day.” Accordingly, on the appointed day, her messenger came to me, purposing to carry me to her; so I arose and went with him, till we came to a handsome house and a great door. He opened the door and I entered, whereupon he locked the door [behind me] and would have gone in, but I feared with an exceeding fear and foregoing him to the second door, whereby he would have had me enter, locked it and cried out at him, saying, “By Allah, an thou open not to me, I will kill thee; for I am none of those whom thou canst cozen!” Quoth he, “What deemest thou of cozenage?” And I said, “Verily, I am affrighted at the loneliness of the house and the lack of any at the door thereof; for I see none appear.” “O my lord,” answered he, “this is a privy door.” “Privy or public,” answered I, “open to me.”

So he opened to me and I went out and had not gone far from the house when I met a woman, who said to me, “Methinks a long life was fore-ordained to thee; else hadst thou not come forth of yonder house.” “How so?” asked I, and she answered, “Ask thy friend [such an one,” naming thee,] “and he will acquaint thee with strange things.” So, God on thee, O my friend, tell me what befell thee of wonders and rarities, for I have told thee what befell me.’ ‘O my brother,’ answered I, ‘I am bound by a solemn oath.’ And he said, ‘O my friend, break thine oath and tell me.’ Quoth I, ‘Indeed, I fear the issue of this.’ [But he importuned me] till I told him all, whereat he marvelled. Then I went away from him and abode a long while, [without farther news].

One day, another of my friends came to me and said ‘A neighbour of mine hath invited me to hear [music]. [And he would have me go with him;] but I said, ‘I will not foregather with any one.’ However, he prevailed upon me [to accompany him]; so we repaired to the place and found there a man, who came to meet us and said, ‘[Enter,] in the name of God!’ Then he pulled out a key and opened the door, whereupon we entered and he locked the door after us. Quoth I, ‘We are the first of the folk; but where are their voices?’ ‘[They are] within the house,’ answered he. ‘This is but a privy door; so be not amazed at the absence of the folk.’ And my friend said to me, ‘Behold, we are two, and what can they avail to do with us?’ [Then he brought us into the house,] and when we entered the saloon, we found it exceeding desolate and repulsive of aspect Quoth my friend, ‘We are fallen [into a trap]; but there is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ And I said, ‘May God not requite thee for me with good!’

Then we sat down on the edge of the estrade and presently I espied a closet beside me; so I looked into it and my friend said to me, ‘What seest thou?’ Quoth I, ‘I see therein good galore and bodies of murdered folk. Look.’ So he looked and said, ‘By Allah, we are lost men!’ And we fell a-weeping, I and he. As we were thus, behold, there came in upon us, by the door at which we had entered, four naked men, with girdles of leather about their middles, and made for my friend. He ran at them and dealing one of them a buffet, overthrew him, whereupon the other three fell all upon him. I seized the opportunity to escape, what while they were occupied with him, and espying a door by my side, slipped into it and found myself in an underground chamber, without window or other issue. So I gave myself up for lost and said, ‘There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme!’ Then I looked to the top of the vault and saw in it a range of glazed lunettes; so I clambered up for dear life, till I reached the lunettes, and I distracted [for fear]. I made shift to break the glass and scrambling out through the frames, found a wall behind them. So I bestrode the wall and saw folk walking in the road; whereupon I cast myself down to the ground and God the Most High preserved me, so that I reached the earth, unhurt. The folk flocked round me and I acquainted them with my story.

As fate would have it, the chief of the police was passing through the market; so the people told him [what was to do] and he made for the door and burst it open. We entered with a rush and found the thieves, as they had overthrown my friend and cut his throat; for they occupied not themselves with me, but said, ‘Whither shall yonder fellow go? Indeed, he is in our grasp.’ So the prefect took them with the hand and questioned them, and they confessed against the woman and against their associates in Cairo. Then he took them and went forth, after he had locked up the house and sealed it; and I accompanied him till he came without the [first] house. He found the door locked from within; so he bade break it open and we entered and found another door. This also he caused burst in, enjoining his men to silence till the doors should be opened, and we entered and found the band occupied with a new victim, whom the woman had just brought in and whose throat they were about to cut.

The prefect released the man and gave him back all that the thieves had taken from him; and he laid hands on the woman and the rest and took forth of the house treasures galore. Amongst the rest, they found the money-bag of the Turcoman sheep-merchant. The thieves they nailed up incontinent against the wall of the house, whilst, as for the woman, they wrapped her in one of her veils and nailing her [to a board, set her] upon a camel and went round about the town with her. Thus God razed their dwelling-places and did away from me that which I feared. All this befell, whilst I looked on, and I saw not my friend who had saved me from them the first time, whereat I marvelled to the utterest of marvel. However, some days afterward, he came up to me, and indeed he had renounced [the world] and donned a fakir's habit; and he saluted me and went away.

Then he again began to pay me frequent visits and I entered into converse with him and questioned him of the band and how he came to escape, he alone of them all. Quoth he, 'I left them from the day on which God the Most High delivered thee from them, for that they would not obey my speech; wherefore I swore that I would no longer consort with them.' And I said, 'By Allah, I marvel at thee, for that thou wast the cause of my preservation!' Quoth he, 'The world is full of this sort [of folk]; and we beseech God the Most High for safety, for that these [wretches] practise upon men with every kind of device.' Then said I to him, 'Tell me the most extraordinary adventure of all that befell thee in this villainy thou wast wont to practise.' And he answered, saying, 'O my brother, I was not present when they did on this wise, for that my part with them was to concern myself with selling and buying and [providing them with] food; but I have heard that the most extraordinary thing that befell them was on this wise.

THE THIEF'S STORY.

The woman who used to act as decoy for them once caught them a woman from a bride-feast, under pretence that she had a wedding toward in her own house, and appointed her for a day, whereon she should come to her. When the appointed day arrived, the woman presented herself and the other carried her into the house by a door, avouching that it was a privy door. When she entered [the saloon], she saw men and champions [and knew that she had fallen into a trap]; so she looked at them and said, "Harkye, lads! I am a woman and there is no glory in my slaughter, nor have ye any feud of blood-revenge against me, wherefore ye should pursue me; and that which is upon me of [trinkets and apparel] ye are free to take." Quoth they, "We fear thy denunciation." But she answered, saying, "I will abide with you, neither coming in nor going out." And they said, "We grant thee thy life."

Then the captain looked on her [and she pleased him]; so he took her for himself and she abode with him a whole year, doing her endeavour in their service. till they became accustomed to her [and felt assured of her]. One night she plied them with drink and they drank [till they became intoxicated]; whereupon she arose and took her clothes and five hundred dinars from the captain; after which she fetched a razor and shaved all their chins. Then she took soot from the cooking-pots and blackening their faces withal, opened the doors and went out; and when the thieves awoke, they abode confounded and knew that the woman had practised upon them.'""

The company marvelled at this story and the ninth officer came forward and said, 'I will tell you a right goodly story I heard at a wedding.

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THE NINTH OFFICER'S STORY.

A certain singing-woman was fair of favour and high in repute, and it befell one day that she went out apleasuring. As she sat, behold, a man lopped of the hand stopped to beg of her, and he entered in at the door. Then he touched her with his stump, saying, "Charity, for the love of God!" but she answered, "God open [on thee the gate of subsistence]!" and reviled him. Some days after this, there came to her a messenger and gave her the hire of her going forth. So she took with her a handmaid and an accompanyist; and when she came to the appointed place, the messenger brought her into a long passage, at the end whereof was a saloon. So (quoth she) we entered and found none therein, but saw the [place made ready for an] entertainment with candles and wine and dessert, and in another place we saw food and in a third beds.

We sat down and I looked at him who had opened the door to us, and behold he was lopped of the hand. I misliked this of him, and when I had sat a little longer, there entered a man, who filled the lamps in the saloon and lit the candles; and behold, he also was handlopped. Then came the folk and there entered none except he were lopped of the hand, and indeed the house was full of these. When the assembly was complete, the host entered and the company rose to him and seated him in the place of honour. Now he was none other than the man who had fetched me, and he was clad in sumptuous apparel, but his hands were in his sleeves, so that I knew not how it was with them. They brought him food and he ate, he and the company; after which they washed their hands and the host fell to casting furtive glances at me.

Then they drank till they were drunken, and when they had taken leave [of their wits], the host turned to me and said, "Thou dealtest not friendly with him who sought an alms of thee and thou saidst to him, 'How loathly thou art!'" I considered him and behold, he was the lophand who had accosted me in my pleasaunce. So I said, "O my lord, what is this thou sayest?" And he answered, saying, "Wait; thou shall remember it." So saying, he shook his head and stroked his beard, whilst I sat down for fear. Then he put out his hand to my veil and shoes and laying them by his side, said to me, “Sing, O accursed one!” So I sang till I was weary, whilst they occupied themselves with their case and intoxicated themselves and their heat redoubled. Presently, the doorkeeper came to me and said, “Fear not, O my lady; but, when thou hast a mind to go, let me know.” Quoth I, “Thinkest thou to delude me?” And he said, “Nay, by Allah! But I have compassion on thee for that our captain and our chief purposeth thee no good and methinketh he will slay thee this night.” Quoth I to him, “An thou be minded to do good, now is the time.” And he answered, saying, “When our chief riseth to do his occasion and goeth to the draught-house, I will enter before him with the light and leave the door open; and do thou go whithersoever thou wilt.”

Then I sang and the captain said, “It is good,” Quoth I, “Nay, but thou art loathly.” He looked at me and said, “By Allah, thou shalt never more scent the odour of the world!” But his comrades said to him, “Do it not,” and appeased him, till he said, “If it must be so, she shall abide here a whole year, not going forth.” And I said, “I am content to submit to whatsoever pleaseth thee. If I have erred, thou art of those to whom pertaineth clemency.” He shook his head and drank, then arose and went out to do his occasion, what while his comrades were occupied with what they were about of merry-making and drunkenness and sport. So I winked to my fellows and we slipped out into the corridor. We found the door open and fled forth, unveiled and knowing not whither we went; nor did we halt till we had left the house far behind and happened on a cook cooking, to whom said I, “Hast thou a mind to quicken dead folk?” And he said, “Come up.” So we went up into the shop, and he said, ‘Lie down.” Accordingly, we lay down and he covered us with the grass, wherewith he was used to kindle [the fire] under the food.

Hardly had we settled ourselves in the place when we heard a noise of kicking [at the door] and people running right and left and questioning the cook and saying, “Hath any one passed by thee?” “Nay,” answered he; “none hath passed by me.” But they ceased not to go round about the shop till the day broke, when they turned back, disappointed. Then the cook removed the grass and said to us, “Arise, for ye are delivered from death.” So we arose, and we were uncovered, without mantle or veil; but the cook carried us up into his house and we sent to our lodgings and fetched us veils; and we repented unto God the Most High and renounced singing, for indeed this was a great deliverance after stress.’

The company marvelled at this story and the tenth officer came forward and said, ‘As for me, there befell me that which was yet more extraordinary than all this.’ Quoth El Melik ez Zahir, ‘What was that?’ And he said,

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THE TENTH OFFICER'S STORY.

'A great theft had been committed in the city and I was cited, I and my fellows. Now it was a matter of considerable value and they pressed hard upon us; but we obtained of them some days' grace and dispersed in quest of the stolen goods. As for me, I sallied forth with five men and went round about the city that day; and on the morrow we fared forth [into the suburbs]. When we came a parasang or two parasangs' distance from the city, we were athirst; and presently we came to a garden. So I went in and going up to the water-wheel, entered it and drank and made the ablution and prayed. Presently up came the keeper of the garden and said to me, "Out on thee! Who brought thee into this water-wheel?" And he cuffed me and squeezed my ribs till I was like to die. Then he bound me with one of his bulls and made me turn in the water-wheel, flogging me the while with a cattle whip he had with him, till my heart was on fire; after which he loosed me and I went out, knowing not the way.

When I came forth, I swooned away: so I sat down till my trouble subsided; then I made for my comrades and said to them, "I have found the booty and the thief, and I affrighted him not neither troubled him, lest he should flee; but now, come, let us go to him, so we may make shift to lay hold upon him." Then I took them and repaired to the keeper of the garden, who had tortured me with beating, meaning to make him taste the like of that which he had done with me and lie against him and cause him eat stick. So we rushed into the water-wheel and seizing the keeper, pinioned him.

Now there was with him a youth and he said, "By Allah, I was not with him and indeed it is six months since I entered the city, nor did I set eyes on the stuffs until they were brought hither." Quoth we, "Show us the stuffs." So he carried us to a place wherein was a pit, beside the water-wheel, and digging there, brought out the stolen goods, with not a stitch of them missing. So we took them and carried the keeper to the prefecture, where we stripped him and beat him with palm-rods till he confessed to thefts galore. Now I did this by way of mockery against my comrades, and it succeeded.'

The company marvelled at this story with the utmost wonderment, and the eleventh officer rose and said, ‘I know a story yet rarer than this: but it happened not to myself.

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THE ELEVENTH OFFICER'S STORY.

There was once aforetime a chief officer [of police] and there passed by him one day a Jew, with a basket in his hand, wherein were five thousand dinars; whereupon quoth the officer to one of his slaves, "Canst thou make shift to take that money from yonder Jew's basket?" "Yes," answered he, nor did he tarry beyond the next day before he came to his master, with the basket in his hand. So (quoth the officer) I said to him, "Go, bury it in such a place." So he went and buried it and returned and told me. Hardly had he done this when there arose a clamour and up came the Jew, with one of the king's officers, avouching that the money belonged to the Sultan and that he looked to none but us for it. We demanded of him three days' delay, as of wont, and I said to him who had taken the money, "Go and lay somewhat in the Jew's house, that shall occupy him with himself." So he went and played a fine trick, to wit, he laid in a basket a dead woman's hand, painted [with henna] and having a gold seal- ring on one of the fingers, and buried the basket under a flagstone in the Jew's house. Then came we and searched and found the basket, whereupon we straightway clapped the Jew in irons for the murder of a woman.

When it was the appointed time, there came to us the man of the Sultan's guards, [who had accompanied the Jew, when he came to complain of the loss of the money,] and said, "The Sultan biddeth you nail up the Jew and bring the money, for that there is no way by which five thousand dinars can be lost." Wherefore we knew that our device sufficed not. So I went forth and finding a young man, a Haurani, passing the road, laid hands on him and stripped him and beat him with palm-rods. Then I clapped him in irons and carrying him to the prefecture, beat him again, saying to them, "This is the thief who stole the money." And we strove to make him confess; but he would not confess. So we beat him a third and a fourth time, till we were weary and exhausted and he became unable to return an answer. But, when we had made an end of beating and tormenting him, he said, "I will fetch the money forthright."

So we went with him till he came to the place where my slave had buried the money and dug there and brought it out; whereat I marvelled with the utmost wonder and we carried it to the prefect's house. When the latter saw the money, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and bestowed on me a dress of honour. Then he restored the money straightway to the Sultan and we left the youth in prison; whilst I said to my slave who had taken the money, "Did yonder young man see thee, what time thou buriedst the money?" "No, by the Great God!" answered he. So I went in to the young man, the prisoner, and plied him with wine till he recovered, when I said to him, "Tell me how thou stolest the money." "By Allah," answered he, "I stole it not, nor did I ever set eyes on it till I brought it forth of the earth!" Quoth I, "How so?" And he said, "Know that the cause of my falling into your hands was my mother's imprecation against me; for that I evil entreated her yesternight and beat her and she said to me, 'By Allah, O my son, God shall assuredly deliver thee into the hand of the oppressor!' Now she is a pious woman. So I went out forthright and thou sawest me in the way and didst that which thou didst; and when beating was prolonged on me, my senses failed me and I heard one saying to me, 'Fetch it.' So I said to you what I said and he guided me till I came to the place and there befell what befell of the bringing out of the money."

I marvelled at this with the utmost wonderment and knew that he was of the sons of the pious. So I bestirred myself for his release and tended him [till he recovered] and besought him of quittance and absolution of responsibility.'

All those who were present marvelled at this story with the utmost marvel, and the twelfth officer came forward and said, 'I will tell you a pleasant trait that I had from a certain man, concerning an adventure that befell him with one of the thieves. (Quoth he)

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THE TWELFTH OFFICER'S STORY.

As I was passing one day in the market, I found that a thief had broken into the shop of a money-changer and taken thence a casket, with which he had made off to the burial-grounds. So I followed him thither [and came up to him, as] he opened the casket and fell a-looking into it; whereupon I accosted him, saying, "Peace be on thee!" And he was startled at me. Then I left him and went away from him.

Some months after this, I met him again under arrest, in the midst of the guards and officers of the police, and he said to them, "Seize yonder man." So they laid hands on me and carried me to the chief of the police, who said, "What hast thou to do with this fellow?" The thief turned to me and looking a long while in my face, said, "Who took this man?" Quoth the officers, "Thou badest us take him; so we took him." And he said, "I seek refuge with God! I know not this man, nor knoweth he me; and I said not that to you but of a man other than this." So they released me, and awhile afterward the thief met me in the street and saluted me, saying, "O my lord, fright for fright! Hadst thou taken aught from me, thou hadst had a part in the calamity." And I said to him, "God [judge] between thee and me!" And this is what I have to tell'

Then came forward the thirteenth officer and said, 'I will tell you a story that a man of my friends told me. (Quoth he)

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THE THIRTEENTH OFFICER'S STORY.

I went out one night to the house of one of my friends and when it was the middle of the night, I sallied forth alone [to go home]. When I came into the road, I espied a sort of thieves and they saw me, whereupon my spittle dried up; but I feigned myself drunken and staggered from side to side, crying out and saying, "I am drunken." And I went up to the walls right and left and made as if I saw not the thieves, who followed me till I reached my house and knocked at the door, when they went away.

Some days after this, as I stood at the door of my house, there came up to me a young man, with a chain about his neck and with him a trooper, and he said to me, "O my lord, charity for the love of God!" Quoth I, "God open!" and he looked at me a long while and said, "That which thou shouldst give me would not come to the value of thy turban or thy waistcloth or what not else of thy raiment, to say nothing of the gold and the silver that was about thee." "How so?" asked I, and he said, "On such a night, when thou fellest into peril and the thieves would have stripped thee, I was with them and said to them, 'Yonder man is my lord and my master who reared me.' So was I the cause of thy deliverance and thus I saved thee from them." When I heard this, I said to him, "Stop;" and entering my house, brought him that which God the Most High made easy [to me]. So he went his way. And this is my story.'

Then came forward the fourteenth officer and said, 'Know that the story I have to tell is pleasanter and more extraordinary than this; and it is as follows.

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THE FOURTEENTH OFFICER'S STORY.

Before I entered this corporation, I had a draper's shop and there used to come to me a man whom I knew not, save by his face, and I would give him what he sought and have patience with him, till he could pay me. One day, I foregathered with certain of my friends and we sat down to drink. So we drank and made merry and played at Tab; and we made one of us Vizier and another Sultan and a third headsman.

Presently, there came in upon us a spunger, without leave, and we went on playing, whilst he played with us. Then quoth the Sultan to the Vizier, "Bring the spunger who cometh in to the folk, without leave or bidding, that we may enquire into his case. Then will I cut off his head." So the headsman arose and dragged the spunger before the Sultan, who bade cut off his head. Now there was with them a sword, that would not cut curd; so the headsman smote him therewith and his head flew from his body. When we saw this, the wine fled from our heads and we became in the sorriest of plights. Then my friends took up the body and went out with it, that they might hide it, whilst I took the head and made for the river.

Now I was drunken and my clothes were drenched with the blood; and as I passed along the road, I met a thief. When he saw me, he knew me and said to me, "Harkye, such an one!" "Well?" answered I, and he said, "What is that thou hast with thee?" So I acquainted him with the case and he took the head from me. Then we went on till we came to the river, where he washed the head and considering it straitly, said, "By Allah, this is my brother, my father's son. and he used to spunge upon the folk." Then he threw the head into the river. As for me, I was like a dead man [for fear]; but he said to me, "Fear not neither grieve, for thou art quit of my brother's blood."

Then he took my clothes and washed them and dried them, and put them on me; after which he said to me, "Get thee gone to thy house." So I returned to my house and he accompanied me, till I came thither, when he said to me, "May God not forsake thee! I am thy friend [such an one, who used to take of thee goods on credit,] and I am beholden to thee for kindness; but henceforward thou wilt never see me more.”’

The company marvelled at the generosity of this man and his clemency and courtesy, and the Sultan said, ‘Tell us another of thy stories.’ ‘It is well,’ answered the officer, ‘They avouch that

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A MERRY JEST OF A THIEF.

A thief of the thieves of the Arabs went [one night] to a certain man's house, to steal from a heap of wheat there, and the people of the house surprised him. Now on the heap was a great copper measure, and the thief buried himself in the corn and covered his head with the measure, so that the folk found him not and went away; but, as they were going, behold, there came a great crack of wind forth of the corn. So they went up to the measure and [raising it], discovered the thief and laid hands on him. Quoth he, "I have eased you of the trouble of seeking me: for I purposed, [in letting wind], to direct you to my [hiding-]place; wherefore do ye ease me and have compassion on me, so may God have compassion on you!" So they let him go and harmed him not.

And for another story of the same kind,' continued the officer,

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STORY OF THE OLD SHARPER.

‘There was once an old man renowned for roguery, and he went, he and his mates, to one of the markets and stole thence a parcel of stuffs. Then they separated and returned each to his quarter. Awhile after this, the old man assembled a company of his fellows and one of them pulled out a costly piece of stuff and said, “Will any one of you sell this piece of stuff in its own market whence it was stolen, that we may confess his [pre-eminence in] sharping?” Quoth the old man, “I will;” and they said, “Go, and God the Most High prosper thee!”

So on the morrow, early, he took the stuff and carrying it to the market whence it had been stolen, sat down at the shop whence it had been stolen and gave it to the broker, who took it and cried it for sale. Its owner knew it and bidding for it, [bought it] and sent after the chief of the police, who seized the sharper and seeing him an old man of venerable appearance, handsomely clad, said to him, “Whence hadst thou this piece of stuff?” “I had it from this market,” answered he, “and from yonder shop where I was sitting.” Quoth the prefect, “Did its owner sell it to thee?” “Nay,” replied the thief; “I stole it and other than it.” Then said the magistrate, “How camest thou to bring it [for sale] to the place whence thou stolest it?” And he answered, “I will not tell my story save to the Sultan, for that I have an advertisement wherewith I would fain bespeak him.” Quoth the prefect, “Name it.” And the thief said, “Art thou the Sultan?” “No,” replied the other; and the old man said, “I will not tell it but to himself.”

So the prefect carried him up to the Sultan and he said, “I have an advertisement for thee, O my lord.” “What is thine advertisement?” asked the Sultan; and the thief said, “I repent and will deliver into thy hand all who are evildoers; and whomsoever I bring not, I will stand in his stead.” Quoth the Sultan, “Give him a dress of honour and accept his profession of repentance.” So he went down from the presence and returning to his comrades, related to them that which had passed and they confessed his subtlety and gave him that which they had promised him. Then he took the rest of the stolen goods and went up with them to the Sultan. When the latter saw him, he was magnified in his eyes and he commanded that nought should be taken from him. Then, when he went down, [the Sultan's] attention was diverted from him, little by little, till the case was forgotten, and so he saved the booty [for himself].' The folk marvelled at this and the fifteenth officer came forward and said, 'Know that among those who make a trade of knavery are those whom God the Most High taketh on their own evidence against themselves.' 'How so?' asked they; and he said.

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THE FIFTEENTH OFFICER'S STORY.

'It is told of a certain doughty thief, that he used to rob and stop the way by himself upon caravans, and whenever the prefect of police and the magistrates sought him, he would flee from them and fortify himself in the mountains. Now it befell that a certain man journeyed along the road wherein was the robber in question, and this man was alone and knew not the perils that beset his way. So the highwayman came out upon him and said to him, "Bring out that which is with thee, for I mean to slay thee without fail." Quoth the traveller, "Slay me not, but take these saddle-bags and divide [that which is in] them and take the fourth part [thereof]." And the thief answered, "I will not take aught but the whole." "Take half," rejoined the traveller, "and let me go." But the robber replied, "I will take nought but the whole, and I will slay thee [to boot]." And the traveller said, "Take it."

So the highwayman took the saddle-bags and offered to kill the traveller, who said, "What is this? Thou hast no blood-feud against me, that should make my slaughter incumbent [on thee]. Quoth the other, "Needs must I slay thee;" whereupon the traveller dismounted from his horse and grovelled on the earth, beseeching the robber and speaking him fair. The latter hearkened not to his prayers, but cast him to the ground; whereupon the traveller [raised his eyes and seeing a francolin flying over him,] said, in his agony," O francolin, bear witness that this man slayeth me unjustly and wickedly; for indeed I have given him all that was with me and besought him to let me go, for my children's sake; yet would he not consent unto this. But be thou witness against him, for God is not unmindful of that which is done of the oppressors." The highwayman paid no heed to this speech, but smote him and cut off his head.

After this, the authorities compounded with the highwayman for his submission, and when he came before them, they enriched him and he became in such favour with the Sultan's deputy that he used to eat and drink with him and there befell familiar converse between them. On this wise they abode a great while, till, one day, the Sultan's deputy made a banquet, and therein, for a wonder, was a roasted francolin, which when the robber saw, he laughed aloud. The deputy was angered against him and said to him, “What is the meaning of thy laughter? Seest thou default [in the entertainment] or dost thou mock at us, of thy lack of breeding?” “Not so, by Allah, O my lord,” answered the highwayman. “But I saw yonder francolin and bethought myself thereanent of an extraordinary thing; and it was on this wise. In the days of my youth, I used to stop the way, and one day I fell in with a man, who had with him a pair of saddle-bags and money therein. So I said to him, ‘Leave these bags, for I mean to kill thee.’ Quoth he, ‘Take the fourth part of [that which is in] them and leave [me] the rest.’ And I said, ‘Needs must I take the whole and slay thee, to boot.’ Then said he, ‘Take the saddle-bags and let me go my way.’ But I answered, ‘Needs must I slay thee.’ As we were in this contention, he and I, behold, he saw a francolin and turning to it, said, ‘Bear witness against him, O francolin, that he slayeth me unjustly and letteth me not go to my children, for all he hath gotten my money.’ However, I took no pity on him neither hearkened to that which he said, but slew him and concerned not myself with the francolin’s testimony.”

His story troubled the Sultan’s deputy and he was sore enraged against him; so he drew his sword and smiting him, cut off his head; whereupon one recited the following verses:

An you’d of evil be quit, look that no evil yon do; Nay, but do
good, for the like God will still render to you.
All things, indeed, that betide to you are fore-ordered of God;
Yet still in your deeds is the source to which their
fulfilment is due.

Now this was the francolin that bore witness against him.’

The company marvelled at this story and said all, ‘Woe to the oppressor!’ Then came forward the sixteenth officer and said, ‘And I also will tell you a marvellous story, and it is on this wise.

THE SIXTEENTH OFFICER’S STORY.

I went forth one day, purposing to make a journey, and fell in with a man whose wont it was to stop the way. When he came up with me, he offered to slay me and I said to him, “I have nothing with me whereby thou mayst profit.” Quoth he, “My profit shall be the taking of thy life.” “What is the cause of this?” asked I. “Hath there been feud between us aforetime?” And he answered, “No; but needs must I slay thee.” Therewithal I fled from him to the river-side; but he overtook me and casting me to the ground, sat down on my breast. So I sought help of the Sheikh El Hejjaj and said to him, “Protect me from this oppressor!” And indeed he had drawn a knife, wherewith to cut my throat, when, behold, there came a great crocodile forth of the river and snatching him up from off my breast, plunged with him into the water, with the knife still in his hand; whilst I abode extolling the perfection of God the Most High and rendering thanks for my preservation to Him who had delivered me from the hand of that oppressor.’

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ABDALLAH BEN NAFI AND THE KING’S SON OF CASHGHAR.

There abode once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, in the city of Baghdad, the Abode of Peace, the Khalif Haroun er Reshid, and he had boon-companions and story-tellers, to entertain him by night Among his boon-companions was a man called Abdallah ben Nan, who was high in favour with him and dear unto him, so that he was not forgetful of him a single hour. Now it befell, by the ordinance of destiny, that it became manifest to Abdallah that he was grown of little account with the Khalif and that he paid no heed unto him; nor, if he absented himself, did he enquire concerning him, as had been his wont. This was grievous to Abdallah and he said in himself, “Verily, the heart of the Commander of the Faithful and his fashions are changed towards me and nevermore shall I get of him that cordiality wherewith he was wont to entreat me.” And this was distressful to him and concern waxed upon him, so that he recited the following verses:

If, in his own land, midst his folk, abjection and despite
    Afflict a man, then exile sure were better for the wight.
So get thee gone, then, from a house wherein thou art abased And
    let not severance from friends lie heavy on thy spright.
Crude amber in its native land unheeded goes, but, when
    It comes abroad, upon the necks to raise it men delight.
Kohl in its native country, too, is but a kind of stone;
    Cast out and thrown upon the ways, it lies unvalued quite;
But, when from home it fares, forthright all glory it attains And
    ‘twixt the eyelid and the eye incontinent ’tis dight.

Then he could brook this no longer; so he went forth from the dominions of the Commander of the Faithful, under pretence of visiting certain of his kinsmen, and took with him servant nor companion, neither acquainted any with his intent, but betook himself to the road and fared on into the desert and the sandwastes, knowing not whither he went. After awhile, he fell in with travellers intending for the land of Hind [and journeyed with them]. When he came thither, he lighted down [in a city of the cities of the land and took up his abode] in one of the lodging-places; and there he abode a while of days, tasting not food neither solacing himself with the delight of sleep; nor was this for lack of dirhems or dinars, but for that his mind was occupied with musing upon [the reverses of] destiny and bemoaning himself for that the revolving sphere had turned against him and the days had decreed unto him the disfavour of our lord the Imam.

On this wise he abode a space of days, after which he made himself at home in the land and took to himself comrades and got him friends galore, with whom he addressed himself to diversion and good cheer. Moreover, he went a-pleasuring with his friends and their hearts were solaced [by his company] and he entertained them with stories and civilities and diverted them with pleasant verses and told them abundance of histories and anecdotes. Presently, the report of him reached King Jemhour, lord of Cashghar of Hind, and great was his desire [for his company]. So he went in quest of him and Abdallah repaired to his court and going in to him, kissed the earth before him. Jemhour welcomed him and entreated him with kindness and bade commit him to the guest-house, where he abode three days, at the end of which time the king sent [to him] a chamberlain of his chamberlains and let bring him to his presence. When he came before him, he greeted him [with the usual compliment], and the interpreter accosted him, saying, “King Jemhour hath heard of thy report, that thou art a goodly boon-companion and an eloquent story-teller, and he would have thee company with him by night and entertain him with that which thou knowest of anecdotes and pleasant stories and verses.” And he made answer with “Hearkening and obedience.”

(Quoth Abdallah ben Nan) So I became his boon-companion and entertained him by night [with stories and the like]; and this pleased him to the utmost and he took me into especial favour and bestowed on me dresses of honour and assigned me a separate lodging; brief, he was everywise bountiful to me and could not brook to be parted from me a single hour. So I abode with him a while of time and every night I caroused with him [and entertained him], till the most part of the night was past; and when drowsiness overcame him, he would rise [and betake himself] to his sleeping-place, saying to me, “Forsake not my service for that of another than I and hold not aloof from my presence.” And I made answer with “Hearkening and obedience.”

Now the king had a son, a pleasant child, called the Amir Mohammed, who was comely of youth and sweet of speech; he had read in books and studied histories and above all things in the world he loved the telling and hearing of verses and stories and anecdotes. He was dear to his father King Jemhour, for that he had none other son than he on life, and indeed he had reared him in the lap of fondness and he was gifted with the utterest of beauty and grace and brightness and perfection. Moreover, he had learnt to play upon the lute and upon all manner instruments of music and he was used to [carouse and] company with friends and brethren. Now it was of his wont that, when the king rose to go to his sleeping-chamber, he would sit in his place and seek of me that I should entertain him with stories and verses and pleasant anecdotes; and on this wise I abode with them a great while in all cheer and delight, and the prince still loved me with an exceeding great love and entreated me with the utmost kindness.

It befell one day that the king’s son came to me, after his father had withdrawn, and said to me, “Harkye, Ibn Nafil” “At thy service, O my lord,” answered I; and he said, “I would have thee tell me an extraordinary story and a rare matter, that thou hast never related either to me or to my father Jemhour.” “O my lord,” rejoined I, “what story is this that thou desirest of me and of what kind shall it be of the kinds?” Quoth he, “It matters little what it is, so it be a goodly story, whether it befell of old days or in these times.” “O my lord,” said I, “I know many stories of various kinds; so whether of the kinds preferrest thou, and wilt thou have a story of mankind or of the Jinn?” “It is well,” answered he; “if thou have seen aught with thine eyes and heard it with thine ears, [tell it me.”Then he bethought himself] and said to me, “I conjure thee by my life, tell me a story of the stories of the Jinn and that which thou hast heard and seen of them!” “O my son,” replied I, “indeed thou conjurest [me] by a mighty conjuration; so [hearken and thou shalt] hear the goodliest of stories, ay, and the most extraordinary of them and the pleasantest and rarest.” Quoth the prince, “Say on, for I am attentive to thy speech.” And I said, “Know, then, O my son, that

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STORY OF THE DAMSEL TUHFET EL CULOUB AND THE KHALIF HAROUN ER RESHID.

The Vicar of the Lord of the Worlds Haroun er Reshid had a boon-companion of the number of his boon-companions, by name Ishac ben Ibrahim en Nedim el Mausili, who was the most accomplished of the folk of his time in the art of smiting upon the lute; and of the Commander of the Faithful's love for him, he assigned him a palace of the choicest of his palaces, wherein he was wont to instruct slave-girls in the arts of lute-playing and singing. If any slave-girl became, by his instruction, accomplished in the craft, he carried her before the Khalif, who bade her play upon the lute; and if she pleased him, he would order her to the harem; else would he restore her to Ishac's palace.

One day, the Commander of the Faithful's breast was straitened; so he sent after his Vizier Jaafer the Barmecide and Ishac the boon-companion and Mesrour the eunuch, the swordsman of his vengeance; and when they came, he changed his raiment and disguised himself, whilst Jaafer [and Ishac] and Mesrour and El Fezll and Younus (who were also present) did the like. Then he went out, he and they, by the privy gate, to the Tigris and taking boat, fared on till they came to near Et Taf, when they landed and walked till they came to the gate of the thoroughfare street. Here there met them an old man, comely of hoariness and of a venerable and dignified bearing, pleasing of aspect and apparel. He kissed the earth before Ishac el Mausili (for that be knew but him of the company, the Khalif being disguised, and deemed the others certain of his friends) and said to him, 'O my lord, there is presently with me a slave-girl, a lutanist, never saw eyes the like of her nor the like of her grace, and indeed I was on my way to pay my respects to thee and give thee to know of her; but Allah, of His favour, hath spared me the trouble. So now I desire to show her to thee, and if she be to thy liking, well and good: else I will sell her.' Quoth Ishac, 'Go before me to thy barrack, till I come to thee and see her.'

The old man kissed his hand and went away; whereupon quoth Er Reshid to him, 'O Ishac, who is yonder man and what is his occasion?' 'O my lord,' answered the other, 'this is a man called Said the Slave-dealer, and he it is who buyeth us slave-girls and mamelukes. He avoucheth that with him is a fair [slave-girl, a] lutanist, whom he hath withheld from sale, for that he could not fairly sell her till he had shown her to me.' 'Let us go to him,' said the Khalif,'so we may look on her, by way of diversion, and see what is in the slave-dealer's barrack of slave-girls.' And Ishac answered, 'Commandment belongeth to God and to the Commander of the Faithful.' Then he went on before them and they followed in his track till they came to the slave-dealer's barrack and found it high of building and spacious of continence, with sleeping-cells and chambers therein, after the number of the slave-girls, and folk sitting upon the benches.

Ishac entered, he and his company, and seating themselves in the place of honour, amused themselves by looking on the slave-girls and mamelukes and watching how they were sold, till the sale came to an end, when some of the folk went away and other some sat. Then said the slave-dealer, 'Let none sit with us except him who buyeth by the thousand [dinars] and upwards.' So those who were present withdrew and there remained none but Er Reshid and his company; whereupon the slave-dealer called the damsel, after he had caused set her a chair of fawwak, furnished with Greek brocade, and it was as she were the sun shining in the clear sky. When she entered, she saluted and sitting down, took the lute and smote upon it, after she had touched its strings and tuned it, so that all present were amazed. Then she sang thereto the following verses:

Wind of the East, if thou pass by the land where my loved ones
dwell, I pray, The fullest of greetings bear to them from
me, their lover, and say
That I am the pledge of passion still and that my longing love
And eke my yearning do overpass all longing that was aye.
O ye who have withered my heart and marred my hearing and my
sight, Desire and transport for your sake wax on me night
and day.
My heart with yearning is ever torn and tortured without cease,
Nor can my lids lay hold on sleep, that Sees from them away.

‘Well done, O damsel!’ cried Ishac. ‘By Allah, this is a fair hour!’ Whereupon she rose and kissed his hand, saying, ‘O my lord, the hands stand still in thy presence and the tongues at thy sight, and the eloquent before thee are dumb; but thou art the looser of the veil.’ Then she clung to him and said, ‘Stand.’ So he stood and said to her, ‘Who art thou and what is thy need?’ She raised a corner of the veil, and he beheld a damsel as she were the rising full moon or the glancing lightning, with two side locks of hair that fell down to her anklets. She kissed his hand and said to him, ‘O my lord, know that I have been in this barrack these five months, during which time I have been withheld from sale till thou shouldst be present [and see me]; and yonder slave-dealer still made thy coming a pretext to me and forbade me, for all I sought of him night and day that he should cause thee come hither and vouchsafe me thy presence and bring me and thee together.’ Quoth Ishac, ‘Say what thou wouldst have.’ And she answered, ‘I beseech thee, by God the Most High, that thou buy me, so I may be with thee, by way of service.’ ‘Is that thy desire?’ asked he, and she replied, ‘ Yes.’

So Ishac returned to the slave-dealer and said to him, ‘Harkye, Gaffer Said!*’ ‘At thy service, O my lord,’ answered the old man; and Ishac said, ‘In the corridor is a cell and therein a damsel pale of colour. What is her price in money and how much dost thou ask for her?, Quoth the slave-dealer, ‘She whom thou mentionest is called Tuhfet el Hemca.’ ‘What is the meaning of El Hemca?’ asked Ishac, and the old man replied, ‘Her price hath been paid down an hundred times and she still saith, “Show me him who desireth to buy me;” and when I show her to him, she saith, “This fellow is not to my liking; he hath in him such and such a default.” And in every one who would fain buy her she allegeth some default or other, so that none careth now to buy her and none seeketh her, for fear lest she discover some default in him.’ Quoth Ishac, ‘She seeketh presently to sell herself; so go thou to her and enquire of her and see her price and send her to the palace.’ ‘O my lord,’ answered Said, ‘her price is an hundred dinars, though, were she whole of this paleness that is upon her face, she would be worth a thousand; but folly and pallor have diminished her value; and behold, I will go to her and consult her of this.’ So he betook himself to her, and said to her, ‘Wilt thou be sold to Ishac ben Ibrahim el Mausili?' 'Yes,' answered she, and he said, 'Leave frowardness, for to whom doth it happen to be in the house of Ishac the boon-companion?'

Then Ishac went forth of the barrack and overtook Er Reshid [who had foregone him]; and they walked till they came to their [landing-]place, where they embarked in the boat and fared on to Theghr el Khanekah. As for the slave-dealer, he sent the damsel to the house of Ishac en Nedim, whose slave-girls took her and carried her to the bath. Then each damsel gave her somewhat of her apparel and they decked her with earrings and bracelets, so that she redoubled in beauty and became as she were the moon on the night of its full. When Ishac returned home from the Khalifs palace, Tuhfeh rose to him and kissed his hand; and he saw that which the slave-girls had done with her and thanked them therefor and said to them, 'Let her be in the house of instruction and bring her instruments of music, and if she be apt unto singing, teach her; and may God the Most High vouchsafe her health and weal!' So there passed over her three months, what while she abode with him in the house of instruction, and they brought her the instruments of music. Moreover, as time went on, she was vouchsafed health and soundness and her beauty waxed many times greater than before and her pallor was changed to white and red, so that she became a ravishment to all who looked on her.

One day, Ishac let bring all who were with him of slave-girls from the house of instruction and carried them up to Er Reshid's palace, leaving none in his house save Tuhfeh and a cookmaid; for that he bethought him not of Tuhfeh, nor did she occur to his mind, and none of the damsels remembered him of her. When she saw that the house was empty of the slave-girls, she took the lute (now she was unique in her time in smiting upon the lute, nor had she her like in the world, no, not Ishac himself, nor any other) and sang thereto the following verses:

Whenas the soul desireth one other than its peer, It winneth not
of fortune the wish it holdeth dear.
Him with my life I'd ransom whose rigours waste away My frame
and

cause me languish; yet, if he would but hear,
It rests with him to heal me; and I (a soul he hath Must suffer
that which irks it), go saying, in my fear
Of spies, "How long, O scoffer, wilt mock at my despair, As
'twere God had created nought else whereat to jeer?"

Now Ishac had returned to his house upon an occasion that presented itself to him; and when he entered the vestibule, he heard a sound of singing, the like whereof he had never heard in the world, for that it was [soft] as the breeze and richer than almond oil. So the delight of it gat hold of him and joyance overcame him, and he fell down aswoon in the vestibule, Tuhfeh heard the noise of steps and laying the lute from her hand, went out to see what was to do. She found her lord Ishac lying aswoon in the vestibule; so she took him up and strained him to her bosom, saying, 'I conjure thee in God's name, O my lord, tell me, hath aught befallen thee?' When he heard her voice, he recovered from his swoon and said to her, 'Who art thou? ' Quoth she, 'I am thy slave-girl Tuhfeh.' And he said to her, 'Art thou indeed Tuhfeh?' 'Yes,' answered she; and he, 'By Allah, I had forgotten thee and remembered thee not till now!' Then he looked at her and said, 'Indeed, thy case is altered and thy pallor is grown changed to rosiness and thou hast redoubled in beauty and lovesomeness. But was it thou who was singing but now?' And she was troubled and affrighted and answered, 'Even I, O my lord.'

Then Ishac seized upon her hand and carrying her into the house, said to her, 'Take the lute and sing; for never saw I nor heard thy like in smiting upon the lute; no, not even myself!' 'O my lord,' answered she, 'thou makest mock of me. Who am I that thou shouldst say all this to me? Indeed, this is but of thy kindness.' 'Nay, by Allah,' exclaimed he, 'I said but the truth to thee and I am none of those on whom pretence imposeth. These three months hath nature not moved thee to take the lute and sing thereto, and this is nought but an extraordinary thing. But all this cometh of strength in the craft and self-restraint.' Then he bade her sing; and she said, 'Hearkening and obedience.' So she took the lute and tightening its strings, smote thereon a number of airs, so that she confounded Ishac's wit and he was like to fly for delight. Then she returned to the first mode and sang thereto the following verses:

Still by your ruined camp a dweller I abide; Ne'er will I change
nor e'er shall distance us divide.
Far though you dwell, I'll ne'er your neighbourhood forget, O
friends, whose lovers still for you are stupefied.
Your image midst mine eye sits nor forsakes me aye; Ye are my
moons in gloom of night and shadowtide.
Still, as my transports wax, grows restlessness on me And woes
have ta'en the place of love-delight denied.

When she had made an end of her song and laid down the lute, Ishac looked fixedly on her, then took her hand and offered to kiss it; but she snatched it from him and said to him, 'Allah, O my lord, do not that!' Quoth he, 'Be silent. By Allah, I had said that there was not in the world the like of me; but now I have found my dinar in the craft but a danic, "for thou art, beyond comparison or approximation or reckoning, more excellent of skill than I! This very day will I carry thee up to the Commander of the Faithful Haroun er Reshid, and whenas his glance lighteth on thee, thou wilt become a princess of womankind. So, Allah, Allah upon thee, O my lady, whenas thou becomest of the household of the Commander of the Faithful, do not thou forget me!' And she replied, saying, 'Allah, O my lord, thou art the source of my fortunes and in thee is my heart fortified.' So he took her hand and made a covenant with her of this and she swore to him that she would not forget him.

Then said he to her, 'By Allah, thou art the desire of the Commander of the Faithful! So take the lute and sing a song that thou shalt sing to the Khalif, whenas thou goest in to him.' So she took the lute and tuning it, sang the following verses:

His love on him took pity and wept for his dismay: Of those that
him did visit she was, as sick he lay.
She let him taste her honey and wine before his death:
This was his last of victual until the Judgment Day.

Ishac stared at her and seizing her hand, said to her, 'Know that I am bound by an oath that, when the singing of a damsel pleaseth me, she shall not make an end of her song but before the Commander of the Faithful. But now tell me, how came it that thou abodest with the slave-dealer five months and wast not sold to any, and thou of this skill, more by token that the price set on thee was no great matter?'

She laughed and answered, 'O my lord, my story is a strange one and my case extraordinary. Know that I belonged aforetime to a Mughrebi merchant, who bought me, when I was three years old, and there were in his house many slave-girls and eunuchs; but I was the dearest to him of them all. So he kept me with him and used not to call me but "daughterling," and indeed I am presently a clean maid. Now there was with him a damsel, a lutanist, and she reared me and taught me the craft, even as thou seest. Then was my master admitted to the mercy of God the Most High and his sons divided his good. I fell to the lot of one of them; but it was only a little while ere he had squandered all his substance and there was left him no tittle of money. So I left the lute, fearing lest I should fall into the hand of a man who knew not my worth, for that I was assured that needs must my master sell me; and indeed it was but a few days ere he carried me forth to the barrack of the slave-merchant who buyeth slave-girls and showeth them to the Commander of the Faithful. Now I desired to learn the craft; so I refused to be sold to other than thou, till God (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He!) vouchsafed me my desire of thy presence; whereupon I came out to thee, whenas I heard of thy coming, and besought thee to buy me. Thou healedst my heart and boughtedst me; and since I entered thy house, O my lord, I have not taken up the lute till now; but to-day, whenas I was quit of the slave-girls, [I took it]; and my purpose in this was that I might see if my hand were changed or no. As I was singing, I heard a step in the vestibule; so I laid the lute from my hand and going forth to see what was to do, found thee, O my lord, on this wise.'

Quoth Ishac, 'Indeed, this was of thy fair fortune. By Allah, I know not that which thou knowest in this craft!' Then he arose and going to a chest, brought out therefrom striped clothes of great price, netted with jewels and great pearls, and said to her, 'In the name of God, don these, O my lady Tuhfeh.' So she arose and donned those clothes and veiled herself and went up [with Ishac] to the palace of the Khalifate, where he made her stand without, whilst he himself went in to the Commander of the Faithful (with whom was Jaafer the Barmecide) and kissing the earth before him, said to him, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, I have brought thee a damsel, never saw eyes her like for excellence in singing and touching the lute; and her name is Tuhfeh.” ‘And where,’ asked Er Reshed, ‘is this Tuhfeh, who hath not her like in the world?’ Quoth Ishac, ‘Yonder she stands, O Commander of the Faithful;’ and he acquainted the Khalif with her case from first to last. Then said Er Reshid, ‘It is a marvel to hear thee praise a slave-girl after this fashion. Admit her, so we may see her, for that the morning may not be hidden.’

Accordingly, Ishac bade admit her; so she entered, and when her eyes fell upon the Commander of the Faithful, she kissed the earth before him and said, ‘Peace be upon thee, O Commander of the Faithful and asylum of the people of the faith and reviver of justice among all creatures! May God make plain the treading of thy feet and vouchsafe thee enjoyment of that which He hath bestowed on thee and make Paradise thy harbourage and the fire that of thine enemies!’ Quoth Er Reshid, ‘And on thee be peace, O damsel! Sit.’ So she sat down and he bade her sing; whereupon she took the lute and tightening its strings, played thereon in many modes, so that the Commander of the Faithful and Jaafer were confounded and like to fly for delight. Then she returned to the first mode and sang the following verses:

By Him whom I worship, indeed, I swear, O thou that mine eye dost
fill, By Him in whose honour the pilgrims throng and fare to
Arafat’s hill,
Though over me be the tombstone laid, if ever thou call on me,
Though rotten my bone should be, thy voice I’ll answer, come
what will.
I crave none other than thou for friend, beloved of my heart; So
trust in my speech, for the generous are true and trusty
still.

Er Reshid considered her beauty and the goodliness of her singing and her eloquence and what not else she comprised of qualities and rejoiced with an exceeding joyance; and for the stress of that which overcame him of delight, he descended from the couch and sitting down with her upon the ground, said to her, ‘Thou hast done well, O Tuhfeh. By Allah, thou art indeed a gift’ Then he turned to Ishac and said to him, ‘Thou dealtest not equitably, O Ishac, in the description of this damsel, neither settest out all that she compriseth of goodliness and skill; for that, by Allah, she is incomparably more skilful than thou; and I know of this craft that which none knoweth other than I!’ ‘By Allah,’ exclaimed Jaafer, ‘thou sayst sooth, O my lord, O Commander of the Faithful. Indeed, this damsel hath done away my wit’ Quoth Ishac, ‘By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, I had said that there was not on the face of the earth one who knew the craft of the lute like myself; but, when I heard her, my skill became nothing worth in mine eyes.’

Then said the Khalif to her, ‘Repeat thy playing, O Tuhfeh.’ So she repeated it and he said to her, ‘Well done!’ Moreover, he said to Ishac, ‘Thou hast indeed brought me that which is extraordinary and worth in mine eyes the empire of the earth.’ Then he turned to Mesrour the eunuch and said to him, ‘Carry Tuhfeh to the lodging of honour.’ Accordingly, she went away with Mesrour and the Khalif looked at her clothes and seeing her clad in raiment of choice, said to Ishac, ‘O Ishac, whence hath she these clothes?’ ‘O my lord, answered he, ‘these are somewhat of thy bounties and thy largesse, and they are a gift to her from me. By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, the world, all of it, were little in comparison with her!’ Then the Khalif turned to the Vizier Jaafer and said to him, ‘Give Ishac fifty thousand dirhems and a dress of honour of the apparel of choice.’ ‘Hearkening and obedience,’ replied Jaafer and gave him that which the Khalif ordered him.

As for Er Reshid, he shut himself up with Tuhfeh that night and found her a clean maid and rejoiced in her; and she took high rank in his heart, so that he could not endure from her a single hour and committed to her the keys of the affairs of the realm, for that which he saw in her of good breeding and wit and modesty. Moreover, he gave her fifty slave-girls and two hundred thousand dinars and clothes and trinkets and jewels and precious stones, worth the kingdom of Egypt; and of the excess of his love for her, he would not entrust her to any of the slave-girls or eunuchs; but, whenas he went out from her, he locked the door upon her and took the key with him, against he should return to her, forbidding the damsels to go in to her, of his fear lest they should slay her or practise on her with knife or poison; and on this wise he abode awhile.

One day as she sang before the Commander of the Faithful, he was moved to exceeding delight, so that he took her and offered to kiss her hand; but she drew it away from him and smote upon her lute and broke it and wept Er Reshid wiped away her tears and said, ‘O desire of the heart, what is it maketh thee weep? May God not cause an eye of thine to weep!’ ‘O my lord,’ answered she, ‘what am I that thou shouldst kiss my hand? Wilt thou have God punish me for this and that my term should come to an end and my felicity pass away? For this is what none ever attained unto.’ Quoth he, ‘Well said, O Tuhfeh. Know that thy rank in my esteem is mighty and for that which wondered me of what I saw of thee, I offered to do this, but I will not return unto the like thereof; so be of good heart and cheerful eye, for I have no desire for other than thyself and will not die but in the love of thee, and thou to me art queen and mistress, to the exclusion of all humankind.’ Therewith she fell to kissing his feet; and this her fashion pleased him, so that his love for her redoubled and he became unable to brook an hour’s severance from her.

One day he went forth to the chase and left Tuhfeh in her pavilion. As she sat looking upon a book, with a candlestick of gold before her, wherein was a perfumed candle, behold, a musk-apple fell down before her from the top of the saloon. So she looked up and beheld the Lady Zubeideh bint el Casim, who saluted her and acquainted her with herself, whereupon Tuhfeh rose to her feet and said, ‘O my lady, were I not of the number of the upstarts, I had daily sought thy service; so do not thou bereave me of thine august visits.’ The Lady Zubeideh called down blessings upon her and answered, ‘By the life of the Commander of the Faithful, I knew this of thee, and but that it is not of my wont to go forth of my place, I had come out to do my service to thee.’ Then said she to her, ‘Know, O Tuhfeh, that the Commander of the Faithful hath forsaken all his concubines and favourites on thine account, even to myself. Yea, me also hath he deserted on this wise, and I am not content to be as one of the concubines; yet hath he made me of them and forsaken me, and I am come to thee, so thou mayst beseech him to come to me, though it be but once a month, that I may not be the like of the handmaids and concubines nor be evened with the slave-girls; and this is my occasion with thee.' 'Hearkening and obedience,' answered Tuhfeh. 'By Allah, O my lady, I would well that he might be with thee a whole month and with me but one night, so thy heart might be comforted, for that I am one of thy handmaids and thou art my lady in every event.' The Lady Zubeideh thanked her for this and taking leave of her, returned to her palace.

When the Khalif returned from the chase, he betook himself to Tuhfeh's pavilion and bringing out the key, opened the door and went in to her. She rose to receive him and kissed his hand, and he took her to his breast and seated her on his knee. Then food was brought to them and they ate and washed their hands; after which she took the lute and sang, till Er Reshid was moved to sleep. When she was ware of this, she left singing and told him her adventure with the Lady Zubeideh, saying, 'O Commander of the Faithful, I would have thee do me a favour and heal my heart and accept my intercession and reject not my word, but go forthright to the Lady Zubeideh's lodging.' Now this talk befell after he had stripped himself naked and she also had put off her clothes; and he said, 'Thou shouldst have named this before we stripped ourselves naked.' But she answered, saying, ' O Commander of the Faithful, I did this not but in accordance with the saying of the poet in the following verses:

All intercessions come and all alike do ill succeed, Save
Tuhfeh's, daughter of Merjan, for that, in very deed,
The intercessor who to thee herself presenteth veiled Is not her
like who naked comes with thee to intercede.'

When the Khalif heard this, her speech pleased him and he strained her to his bosom. Then he went forth from her and locked the door upon her, as before; whereupon she took the book and sat looking in it awhile. Presently, she laid it down and taking the lute, tightened its strings. Then she smote thereon, after a wondrous fashion, such as would have moved inanimate things [to delight], and fell to singing marvellous melodies and chanting the following verses:

Rail not at the vicissitudes of Fate, For Fortune still spites
  those who her berate.
Be patient under its calamities, For all things have an issue
  soon or late.
How many a mirth-exciting joy amid The raiment of ill chances
  lies in wait!
How often, too, hath gladness come to light Whence nought but
  dole thou didst anticipate!

Then she turned and saw within the chamber an old man, comely of hoariness, venerable of aspect, who was dancing on apt and goodly wise, a dance the like whereof none might avail unto. So she sought refuge with God the Most High from Satan the Stoned and said, ‘I will not give over what I am about, for that which God decreeth, He carrieth into execution.’ Accordingly, she went on singing till the old man came up to her and kissed the earth before her, saying, ‘Well done, O Queen of the East and the West! May the world be not bereaved of thee! By Allah, indeed thou art perfect of qualities and ingredients, O Tuhfet es Sudour! Dost thou know me?’ ‘Nay, by Allah,’ answered she; ‘but methinks thou art of the Jinn.’ Quoth he, ‘Thou sayst sooth; I am the Sheikh Aboultawaif Iblis, and I come to thee every night, and with me thy sister Kemeriyeh, for that she loveth thee and sweareth not but by thy life; and her life is not pleasant to her, except she come to thee and see thee, what while thou seest her not. As for me, I come to thee upon an affair, wherein thou shall find thine advantage and whereby thou shalt rise to high rank with the kings of the Jinn and rule them, even as thou rulest mankind; [and to that end I would have thee come with me and be present at the festival of my son’s circumcision;] for that the Jinn are agreed upon the manifestation of thine affair.’ And she answered, ‘In the name of God.’

So she gave him the lute and he forewent her, till he came to the house of easance, and behold, therein was a door and a stairway.

When Tuhfeh saw this, her reason fled; but Iblis cheered her with discourse. Then he descended the stair and she followed him to the bottom thereof, where she found a passage and they fared on therein, till they came to a horse standing, Teady saddled and bridled and accoutred. Quoth Iblis, '[Mount], in the name of God, O my lady Tuhfeh;' and he held the stirrup for her. So she mounted and the horse shook under her and putting forth wings, flew up with her, whilst the old man flew by her side; whereat she was affrighted and clung to the pummel of the saddle; nor was it but an hour ere they came to a fair green meadow, fresh-flowered as if the soil thereof were a goodly robe, embroidered with all manner colours.

Midmost that meadow was a palace soaring high into the air, with battlements of red gold, set with pearls and jewels, and a two-leaved gate; and in the gateway thereof were much people of the chiefs of the Jinn, clad in sumptuous apparel. When they saw the old man, they all cried out, saying, 'The Lady Tuhfeh is come!' And as soon as she reached the palace-gate, they came all and dismounting her from the horse's back, carried her into the palace and fell to kissing her hands. When she entered, she beheld a palace whereof never saw eyes the like; for therein were four estrades, one facing other, and its walls were of gold and its ceilings of silver. It was lofty of building, wide of continence, and those who beheld it would be puzzled to describe it. At the upper end of the hall stood a throne of red gold, set with pearls and jewels, unto which led up five steps of silver, and on the right thereof and on its left were many chairs of gold and silver; and over the dais was a curtain let down, gold and silver wrought and broidered with pearls and jewels.

The old man carried Tuhfeh up [to the dais and seated her] on a chair of gold beside the throne, whilst she was amazed at that which she saw in that place and magnified her Lord (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He!) and hallowed Him. Then the kings of the Jinn came up to the throne and seated themselves thereon; and they were in the semblance of mortals, excepting two of them, who were in the semblance of the Jinn, with eyes slit endlong and jutting horns and projecting tusks. After this there came up a young lady, fair of favour and pleasant of parts; the light of her face outshone that of the flambeaux, and about her were other three women, than whom there were no fairer on the face of the earth. They saluted Tuhfeh and she rose to them and kissed the earth before them; whereupon they embraced her and sat down on the chairs aforesaid.

Now the four women who thus accosted Tuhfeh were the princess Kemeriyeh, daughter of King Es Shisban, and her sisters; and Kemeriyeh loved Tuhfeh with an exceeding love. So, when she came up to her, she fell to kissing and embracing her, and Iblis said, ‘Fair befall you! Take me between you.’ At this Tuhfeh laughed and Kemeriyeh said, ‘O my sister, I love thee and doubtless hearts have their evidences, for, since I saw thee, I have loved thee.’ ‘By Allah,’ replied Tuhfeh, ‘hearts have deeps, and thou, by Allah, art dear to me and I am thy handmaid.’ Kemeriyeh thanked her for this and said to her, ‘These are the wives of the kings of the Jinn: salute them. This is Queen Jemreh, that is Queen Wekhimeh and this other is Queen Sherareh, and they come not but for thee.’ So Tuhfeh rose to her feet and kissed their hands, and the three queens kissed her and welcomed her and entreated her with the utmost honour.

Then they brought trays and tables and amongst the rest a platter of red gold, inlaid with pearls and jewels; its margents were of gold and emerald, and thereon were graven the following verses:

For the uses of food I was fashioned and made; The hands of the
noble me wrought and inlaid.
My maker reserved me for generous men And the niggard and
sland’rer to use me forebade.
So eat what I offer in surety and be The Lord of all things with
thanks- giving repaid!

So they ate and Tuhfeh looked at the two kings, who had not changed their favour and said to Kemeriyeh, ‘O my lady, what is yonder wild beast and that other like unto him? By Allah, mine eye brooketh not the sight of them.’ Kemeriyeh laughed and answered, ‘O my sister, that is my father Es Shisban and the other is Meimoun the Sworder; and of the pride of their souls and their arrogance, they consented not to change their [natural] fashion. Indeed, all whom thou seest here are, by nature, like unto them in fashion; but, on thine account, they have changed their favour, for fear lest thou be disquieted and for the comforting of thy mind, so thou mightest make friends with them and be at thine ease.’ ‘O my lady,’ quoth Tuhfeh, ‘indeed I cannot look at them. How frightful is yonder Meimoun, with his [one] eye! Mine eye cannot brook the sight of him, and indeed I am fearful of him.’ Kemeriyeh laughed at her speech, and Tuhfeh said, ‘By Allah, O my lady, I cannot fill my eye with them!’ Then said her father Es Shisban to her, ‘What is this laughing?’ So she bespoke him in a tongue none understood but they [two] and acquainted him with that which Tuhfeh had said; whereat he laughed a prodigious laugh, as it were the pealing thunder.

Then they ate and the tables were removed and they washed their hands; after which Iblis the Accursed came up to Tuhfeh and said to her, ‘O my lady Tuhfeh, thou gladdenest the place and with thy presence enlightenest and embellishest it; but now fain would these kings hear somewhat of thy singing, for the night hath spread its wings for departure and there abideth thereof but a little.’ Quoth she, ‘Hearkening and obedience.’ So she took the lute and touching its strings on rare wise, played thereon after a wondrous fashion, so that it seemed to those who were present as if the palace stirred with them for the music. Then she fell a-singing and chanted the following verses:

Peace on you, people of my troth! With peace I do you greet. Said
ye not truly, aforetime, that we should live and meet?
Ah, then will I begin on you with chiding than the breeze More
soft, ay pleasanter than clear cold water and more sweet.
Indeed, mine eyelids still with tears are ulcered and to you My
bowels yearn to be made whole of all their pain and heat.
Parting hath sundered us, belov’d; indeed, I stood in dread Of
this, whilst yet our happiness in union was complete.
To God of all the woes I’ve borne I plain me, for I pine For
longing and lament, and Him for solace I entreat

The kings of the Jinn were moved to delight by that fair singing and fluent speech and praised Tuhfeh; and Queen Kemeriyeh rose to her and embraced her and kissed her between the eyes, saying, ‘By Allah, it is good, O my sister and solace of mine eyes and darling of my heart!' Then said she, 'I conjure thee by Allah, give us more of this lovely singing.' And Tuhfeh answered with 'Hearkening and obedience.' So she took the lute and playing thereon after a different fashion from the former one, sang the following verses:

Oft as my yearning waxeth, my heart consoleth me With hopes of thine enjoyment in all security.
Sure God shall yet, in pity, reknit our severed lives, Even as He did afflict me with loneness after thee.
Thou whose desire possesseth my soul, the love of whom Hold on my reins hath gotten and will not let me free,
Compared with thine enjoyment, the hardest things are light To win and all things distant draw near and easy be.
God to a tristful lover be light! A man of wit, Yet perishing for yearning and body-worn is he.
Were I cut off, beloved, from hope of thy return, Slumber, indeed, for ever my wakeful lids would flee.
For nought of worldly fortune I weep! my only joy In seeing thee consisteth and in thy seeing me.

At this the accursed Iblis was moved to delight and put his finger to his arse, whilst Meimoun danced and said, 'O Tuhfet es Sudour, soften the mode; for, as delight, entereth into my heart, it bewildereth my vital spirits.' So she took the lute and changing the mode, played a third air; then she returned to the first and sang the following verses:

The billows of thy love o'erwhelm me passing sore; I sink and all in vain for succour I implore.
Ye've drowned me in the sea of love for you; my heart Denies to be consoled for those whom I adore.
Think not that I forget our trothplight after you. Nay; God to me decreed remembrance heretofore.
Love to its victim clings without relent, and he Of torments and unease complaineth evermore.

The kings and all those who were present rejoiced in this with an exceeding delight and the accursed Iblis came up to Tuhfeh and kissing her hand, said to her, ‘There abideth but little of the night; so do thou tarry with us till the morrow, when we will apply ourselves to the wedding and the circumcision.’ Then all the Jinn went away, whereupon Tuhfeh rose to her feet and Iblis said, ‘Go ye up with Tuhfeh to the garden for the rest of the night.’ So Kemeriyeh took her and carried her into the garden. Now this garden contained all manner birds, nightingale and mocking-bird and ringdove and curlew and other than these of all the kinds, and therein were all kinds of fruits. Its channels were of gold and silver and the water thereof, as it broke forth of its conduits, was like unto fleeing serpents’ bellies, and indeed it was as it were the Garden of Eden.

When Tuhfeh beheld this, she called to mind her lord and wept sore and said, ‘I beseech God the Most High to vouchsafe me speedy deliverance, so I may return to my palace and that my high estate and queendom and glory and be reunited with my lord and master Er Reshid.’ Then she walked in that garden and saw in its midst a dome of white marble, raised on columns of black teak and hung with curtains embroidered with pearls and jewels. Amiddleward this pavilion was a fountain, inlaid with all manner jacinths, and thereon a statue of gold, and [beside it] a little door. She opened the door and found herself in a long passage; so she followed it and behold, a bath lined with all kinds of precious marbles and floored with a mosaic of pearls and jewels. Therein were four cisterns of alabaster, one facing other, and the ceiling of the bath was of glass coloured with all manner colours, such as confounded the understanding of the folk of understanding and amazed the wit.

Tuhfeh entered the bath, after she had put off her clothes, and behold, the basin thereof was overlaid with gold set with pearls and red rubies and green emeralds and other jewels; so she extolled the perfection of God the Most High and hallowed Him for the magnificence of that which she saw of the attributes of that bath. Then she made her ablutions in that basin and pronouncing the Magnification of Prohibition, prayed the morning prayer and what else had escaped her of prayers; after which she went out and walked in that garden among jessamine and lavender and roses and camomile and gillyflowers and thyme and violets and sweet basil, till she came to the door of the pavilion aforesaid and sat down therein, pondering that which should betide Er Reshid after her, whenas he should come to her pavilion and find her not. She abode sunken in the sea of her solicitude, till presently sleep took her and she slept

Presently she felt a breath upon her face; whereupon she awoke and found Queen Kemeriyeh kissing her, and with her her three sisters, Queen Jemreh, Queen Wekhimeh and Queen Sherareh. So she arose and kissed their hands and rejoiced in them with the utmost joy and they abode, she and they, in talk and converse, what while she related to them her history, from the time of her purchase by the Mughrebi to that of her coming to the slave-dealers' barrack, where she besought Ishac en Nedim to buy her, and how she won to Er Reshid, till the moment when Iblis came to her and brought her to them. They gave not over talking till the sun declined and turned pale and the season of sundown drew near and the day departed, whereupon Tuhfeh was instant in supplication to God the Most High, on the occasion of the prayer of sundown, that He would reunite her with her lord Er Reshid.

After this, she abode with the four queens, till they arose and entered the palace, where she found the candles lit and ranged in candlesticks of gold and silver and censing-vessels of gold and silver, filled with aloes-wood and ambergris, and there were the kings of the Jinn sitting. So she saluted them, kissing the earth before them and doing them worship; and they rejoiced in her and in her sight. Then she ascended [the estrade] and sat down upon her chair, whilst King Es Shisban and King El Muzfir and Queen Louloueh and [other] the kings of the Jinn sat on chairs, and they brought tables of choice, spread with all manner meats befitting kings. They ate their fill; after which the tables were removed and they washed their hands and wiped them with napkins. Then they brought the wine-service and set on bowls and cups and flagons and hanaps of gold and silver and beakers of crystal and gold; and they poured out the wines and filled the flagons.

Then Iblis took the cup and signed to Tuhfeh to sing; and she said, 'Hearkening and obedience.' So she took the lute and tuning it, sang the following verses:

Drink ever, O lovers, I rede you, of wine And praise his desert
who for yearning doth pine,
Where lavender, myrtle, narcissus entwine, With all sweet-scented
herbs, round the juice of the vine.

So Iblis the Accursed drank and said, ‘Well done, O desire of hearts! but thou owest me yet another song.’ Then he filled the cup and signed to her to sing. Quoth she, ‘Hearkening and obedience,’ and sang the following verses:

Ye know I’m passion-maddened, racked with love and languishment,
Yet ye torment me, for to you ’tis pleasing to torment.
Between mine eyes and wake ye have your dwelling-place, and thus
My tears flow on unceasingly, my sighs know no relent.
How long shall I for justice sue to you, whilst, with desire For
aid, ye war on me and still on slaying me are bent!
To me your rigour love-delight, your distance nearness is; Ay,
your injustice equity, and eke your wrath consent.
Accuse me falsely, cruelly entreat me; still ye are My heart’s
beloved, at whose hands no rigour I resent.

All who were present were delighted and the sitting-chamber shook with mirth, and Iblis said, ‘Well done, O Tuhfet es Sudour!’ Then they gave not over wine-bibbing and rejoicing and making merry and tambourining and piping till the night waned and the dawn drew near; and indeed exceeding delight entered into them. The most of them in mirth was the Sheikh Iblis, and for the excess of that which betided him of delight, he put off all that was upon him of coloured clothes and cast them over Tuhfeh, and among the rest a robe broidered with jewels and jacinths, worth ten thousand dinars. Then he kissed the earth and danced and put his finger to his arse and taking his beard in his hand, said to her, ‘Sing about this beard and endeavour after mirth and pleasance, and no blame shall betide thee for this.’ So she improvised and sang the following verses:

Beard of the old he-goat, the one-eyed, what shall be My saying
of a knave, his fashion and degree?

I rede thee vaunt thee not of praise from us, for lo! Even as a
docktailed cur thou art esteemed of me.
By Allah, without fail, to-morrow thou shalt see Me with
ox-leather dress and drub the nape of thee!

All those who were present laughed at her mockery of Iblis and marvelled at the goodliness of her observation and her readiness in improvising verses; whilst the Sheikh himself rejoiced and said to her, ‘O Tuhfet es Sudour, the night is gone; so arise and rest thyself ere the day; and to-morrow all shall be well.’ Then all the kings of the Jinn departed, together with those who were present of guards, and Tuhfeh abode alone, pondering the affair of Er Reshid and bethinking her of how it was with him, after her, and of that which had betided him for her loss, till the dawn gleamed, when she arose and walked in the palace. Presently she saw a handsome door; so she opened it and found herself in a garden goodlier than the first, never saw eyes a fairer than it. When she beheld this garden, delight moved her and she called to mind her lord Er Reshid and wept sore, saying, ‘I crave of the bounty of God the Most High that my return to him and to my palace and my home may be near at hand!’

Then she walked in the garden till she came to a pavilion, lofty of building and wide of continence, never saw mortal nor heard of a goodlier than it [So she entered] and found herself in a long corridor, which led to a bath goodlier than that whereof it hath been spoken, and the cisterns thereof were full of rose-water mingled with musk. Quoth Tuhfeh, ‘Extolled be the perfection of God! Indeed, this is none other than a mighty king.’ Then she put off her clothes and washed her body and made her ablution, after the fullest fashion, and prayed that which was due from her of prayer from the evening [of the previous day]. When the sun rose upon the gate of the garden and she saw the wonders thereof, with that which was therein of all manner flowers and streams, and heard the voices of its birds, she marvelled at what she saw of the surpassing goodliness of its ordinance and the beauty of its disposition and sat meditating the affair of Er Reshid and pondering what was come of him after her. Her tears ran down upon her cheek and the zephyr blew on her; so she slept and knew no more till she felt a breath on her cheek, whereupon she awoke in affright and found Queen Kemeriyeh kissing her face, and with her her sisters, who said to her, ‘Arise, for the sun hath set.’

So she arose and making the ablution, prayed that which behoved her of prayers and accompanied the four queens to the palace, where she saw the candles lighted and the kings sitting. She saluted them and seated herself upon her couch; and behold, King Es Shisban had changed his favour, for all the pride of his soul. Then came up Iblis (whom God curse!) and Tuhfeh rose to him and kissed his hands. He in turn kissed her hand and called down blessings on her and said, ‘How deemest thou? Is [not] this place pleasant, for all its loneliness and desolation?’ Quoth she, ‘None may be desolate in this place;’ and he said, ‘Know that no mortal dare tread [the soil of] this place.’ But she answered, ‘I have dared and trodden it, and this is of the number of thy favours.’ Then they brought tables and meats and viands and fruits and sweetmeats and what not else, to the description whereof mortal man availeth not, and they ate till they had enough; after which the tables were removed and the trays and platters set on, and they ranged the bottles and flagons and vessels and phials, together with all manner fruits and sweet-scented flowers.

The first to take the cup was Iblis the Accursed, who said, ‘O Tuhfet es Sudour, sing over my cup.’ So she took the lute and touching it, sang the following verses:

Awaken, O ye sleepers all, and profit, whilst it’s here By what’s
vouchsafed of fortune fair and life untroubled, clear.
Drink of the first-run wine, that shows as very flame it were,
When from the pitcher ’tis outpoured, or ere the day appear.
O skinker of the vine-juice, let the cup ‘twixt us go round, For
in its drinking is my hope and all I hold most dear.
What is the pleasance of the world, except it be to see My lady’s
face, to drink of wine and ditties still to hear?

So Iblis drank off his cup, and when he had made an end of his draught, he waved his hand to Tuhfeh, and putting off that which was upon him of clothes, delivered them to her. Amongst them was a suit worth ten thousand dinars and a tray full of jewels worth a great sum of money. Then he filled again and gave the cup to his son Es Shisban, who took it from his hand and kissing it, stood up and sat down again. Now there was before him a tray of roses; so he said to her 'O Tuhfeh sing upon these roses.' Hearkening and obedience,' answered she and sang the following verses:

O'er all the fragrant flowers that be I have the prefrence aye,
  For that I come but once a year, and but a little stay.
And high is my repute, for that I wounded aforetime My
  lord, whom God made best of all the treaders of the
  clay.

So Es Shisban drank off the cup in his turn and said, 'Well done, O desire of hearts!' And he bestowed on her that which was upon him, to wit, a dress of cloth-of-pearl, fringed with great pearls and rubies and broidered with precious stones, and a tray wherein were fifty thousand dinars. Then Meimoun the Sworder took the cup and fell to gazing intently upon Tuhfeh. Now there was in his hand a pomegranate-flower and he said to her, 'Sing upon this pomegranate-flower, O queen of men and Jinn; for indeed thou hast dominion over all hearts.' Quoth she, 'Hearkening and obedience;' and she improvised and sang the following verses:

The zephyr's sweetness on the coppice blew, And as with falling
  fire 'twas clad anew;
And to the birds' descant in the foredawns, From out the boughs
  it flowered forth and grew,
Till in a robe of sandal green 'twas clad And veil that blended
  rose and flame in hue.

Meinsoun drank off his cup and said to her, 'Well done, O perfect of attributes!' Then he signed to her and was absent awhile, after which he returned and with him a tray of jewels worth an hundred thousand dinars, [which he gave to Tuhfeh]. So Kemeriyeh arose and bade her slave-girl open the closet behind her, wherein she laid all that wealth. Then she delivered the key to Tuhfeh, saying, 'All that cometh to thee of riches, lay thou in this closet that is by thy side, and after the festival, it shall be carried to thy palace on the heads of the Jinn.’ Tuhfeh kissed her hand, and another king, by name Munir, took the cup and filling it, said to her, ‘O fair one, sing to me over my cup upon the jasmine.’ ‘Hearkening and obedience,’ answered she and improvised the following verses:

It is as the jasmine, when it I espy, As it glitters and gleams
midst its boughs, were a sky
Of beryl, all glowing with beauty, wherein Thick stars of pure
silver shine forth to the eye.

Munir drank off his cup and ordered her eight hundred thousand dinars, whereat Kemeriyeh rejoiced and rising to her feet, kissed Tuhfeh on her face and said to her, ‘May the world not be bereaved of thee, O thou who lordest it over the hearts of Jinn and mortals!’ Then she returned to her place and the Sheikh Iblis arose and danced, till all present were confounded; after which he said to Tuhfeh, ‘Indeed, thou embellishest my festival, O thou who hast commandment over men and Jinn and rejoicest their hearts with thy loveliness and the excellence of thy faithfulness to thy lord. All that thy hands possess shall be borne to thee [in thy palace and placed] at thy service; but now the dawn is near at hand; so do thou rise and rest thee, as of thy wont’ Tuhfeh turned and found with her none of the Jinn; so she laid her head on the ground and slept till she had gotten her rest; after which she arose and betaking herself to the pool, made the ablution and prayed. Then she sat beside the pool awhile and pondered the affair of her lord Er Reshid and that which had betided him after her and wept sore.

Presently, she heard a blowing behind her; so she turned and behold, a head without a body and with eyes slit endlong; it was of the bigness of an elephant’s head and bigger and had a mouth as it were an oven and projecting tusks, as they were grapnels, and hair that trailed upon the earth. So Tuhfeh said, ‘I take refuge with God from Satan the Stoned!’ and recited the Two Amulets; what while the head drew near her and said to her, ‘Peace be upon thee, O princess of Jinn and men and unique pearl of her age and her time! May God still continue thee on life, for all the lapsing of the days, and reunite thee with thy lord the Imam!' 'And upon thee be peace,' answered she, 'O thou whose like I have not seen among the Jinn!' Quoth the head, 'We are a people who avail not to change their favours and we are called ghouls. The folk summon us to their presence, but we may not present ourselves before them [without leave]. As for me, I have gotten leave of the Sheikh Aboultawaif to present myself before thee and I desire of thy favour that thou sing me a song, so I may go to thy palace and question its haunters concerning the plight of thy lord after thee and return to thee; and know, O Tuhfet es Sudour, that between thee and thy lord is a distance of fifty years' journey to the diligent traveller.' 'Indeed,' rejoined Tuhfeh, 'thou grievest me [for him] between whom and me is fifty years' journey. And the head said to her, 'Be of good heart and cheerful eye, for the kings of the Jinn will restore thee to him in less than the twinkling of an eye.' Quoth she,' I will sing thee an hundred songs, so thou wilt bring me news of my lord and that which hath befallen him after me.' And the head answered, saying, 'Do thou favour me and sing me a song, so I may go to thy lord and bring thee news of him, for that I desire, before I go, to hear thy voice, so haply my thirst may be quenched.' So she took the lute and tuning it, sang the following verses:

They have departed; but the steads yet full of them remain: Yea,
they have left me, but my heart of them doth not complain.
My heart bereavement of my friends forebode; may God of them The
dwellings not bereave, but send them timely home again!
Though they their journey's goal, alas I have hidden, in their
track Still will I follow on until the very planets wane.
Ye sleep; by Allah, sleep comes not to ease my weary lids; But
from mine eyes, since ye have passed away, the blood doth
rain.
The railers for your loss pretend that I should patient be:
'Away!' I answer them: ' 'tis I, not you, that feel the
pain.'
What had it irked them, had they'd ta'en farewell of him they've
left Lone, whilst estrangement's fires within his entrails
rage amain?

Great in delight, beloved mine, your presence is with me; Yet
greater still the miseries of parting and its bane.
Ye are the pleasaunce of my soul; or present though you be Or
absent from me, still my heart and thought with you remain.

The head wept exceeding sore and said, 'O my lady, indeed thou hast solaced my heart, and I have nought but my life; so take it.' Quoth she, 'An I but knew that thou wouldst bring me news of my lord Er Reshid, it were liefer to me than the empery of the world.' And the head answered her, saying, 'It shall be done as thou desirest.' Then it disappeared and returning to her at the last of the night, said, 'Know, O my lady, that I have been to thy palace and have questioned one of the haunters thereof of the case of the Commander of the Faithful and that which befell him after thee; and he said, "When the Commander of the Faithful came to Tuhfeh's lodging and found her not and saw no sign of her, he buffeted his face and head and rent his clothes. Now there was in thy lodging the eunuch, the chief of thy household, and he cried out at him, saying, 'Bring me Jaafer the Barmecide and his father and brother forthright.' The eunuch went out, confounded in his wit for fear of the Commander of the Faithful, and whenas he came to Jaafer, he said to him, 'Come to the Commander of the Faithful, thou and thy father and brother.' So they arose in haste and betaking themselves to the Khalif's presence, said to him, 'O Commander of the Faithful, what is to do?' Quoth he, 'There is that to do which overpasseth description. Know that I locked the door and taking the key with me, betook myself to the daughter of mine uncle, with whom I lay the night; but, when I arose in the morning and came and opened the door, I found no sign of Tuhfeh.' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' rejoined Jaafer, 'have patience, for that the damsel hath been snatched away, and needs must she return, seeing she took the lute with her, and it is her [own] lute. The Jinn have assuredly carried her off and we trust in God the Most High that she will return.' Quoth the Khalif, ' This is a thing that may nowise be' And he abode in her lodging, eating not neither drinking, what while the Barmecides besought him to go forth to the folk; and he weepeth and abideth on this wise till she shall return." This, then, is that which hath betided him after thee.'

When Tuhfeh heard this, it was grievous to her and she wept sore; whereupon quoth the head to her, 'The relief of God the Most High is near at hand; but now let me hear somewhat of thy speech.' So she took the lute and sang three songs, weeping the while. 'By Allah,' said the head, 'thou hast been bountiful to me, may God be with thee!' Then it disappeared and the season of sundown came. So she arose [and betook herself] to her place [in the hall]; whereupon the candles rose up from under the earth and kindled themselves. Then the kings of the Jinn appeared and saluted her and kissed her hands and she saluted them. Presently, up came Kemeriyeh and her three sisters and saluted Tuhfeh and sat down; whereupon the tables were brought and they ate. Then the tables were removed and there came the wine-tray and the drinking-service. So Tuhfeh took the lute and one of the three queens filled the cup and signed to Tuhfeh [to sing]. Now she had in her hand a violet; so Tuhfeh sang the following verses:

Behold, I am clad in a robe of leaves green And a garment of
honour of ultramarine.
Though little, with beauty myself I've adorned; So the flowers
are my subjects and I am their queen.
If the rose be entitled the pride of the morn, Before me nor
after she wins it, I ween.

The queen drank off her cup and bestowed on Tuhfeh a dress of cloth-of-pearl, fringed with red rubies, worth twenty thousand dinars, and a tray wherein were ten thousand dinars.

All this while Meimoun's eye was upon her and presently he said to her, 'Harkye, Tuhfeh! Sing to me.' But Queen Zelzeleh cried out at him and said, 'Desist, O Meimoun. Thou sufferest not Tuhfeh to pay heed unto us.' Quoth he, 'I will have her sing to me.' And words waxed between them and Queen Zelzeleh cried out at him. Then she shook and became like unto the Jinn and taking in her hand a mace of stone, said to him, 'Out on thee! What art thou that thou shouldst bespeak us thus? By Allah, but for the king's worship and my fear of troubling the session and the festival and the mind of the Sheikh

Iblis, I would assuredly beat the folly out of thy head!' When Meimoun heard these her words, he rose, with the fire issuing from his eyes, and said, 'O daughter of Imlac, what art thou that thou shouldst outrage me with the like of this talk?' 'Out on thee, O dog of the Jinn,' replied she, 'knowest thou not thy place?' So saying, she ran at him and offered to strike him with the mace, but the Sheikh Iblis arose and casting his turban on the ground, said, 'Out on thee, O Meimoun! Thou still dost with us on this wise. Wheresoever thou art present, thou troubleth our life! Canst thou not hold thy peace till thou goest forth of the festival and this bride-feast be accomplished? When the circumcision is at an end and ye all return to your dwelling-places, then do as thou wilt. Out on thee, O Meimoun! Knowest thou not that Imlac is of the chiefs of the Jinn? But for my worship, thou shouldst have seen what would have betided thee of humiliation and punishment; but by reason of the festival none may speak. Indeed thou exceedest: knowest thou not that her sister Wekhimeh is doughtier than any of the Jinn? Learn to know thyself: hast thou no regard for thy life?'

Meimoun was silent and Iblis turned to Tuhfeh and said to her, 'Sing to the kings of the Jinn this day and to-night until the morrow, when the boy will be circumcised and each shall return to his own place.' So she took the lute and Kemeriyeh said to her, (now she had in her hand a cedrat), 'O my sister, sing to me on this cedrat.' 'Hearkening and obedience,' replied Tuhfeh, and improvising, sang the following verses:

My fruit is a jewel all wroughten of gold, Whose beauty amazeth
all those that behold.
My juice among kings is still drunken for wine And a present am I
betwixt friends, young and old.

At this Queen Kemeriyeh was moved to exceeding delight and drank off her cup, saying, 'Well done, O queen of hearts!' Moreover, she took off a surcoat of blue brocade, fringed with red rubies, and a necklace of white jewels, worth an hundred thousand dinars, and gave them to Tuhfeh. Then she passed the cup to her sister Zelzeleh, who had in her hand sweet basil, and she said to Tuhfeh, 'Sing to me on this sweet basil.' 'Hearkening and obedience,' answered she and improvised and sang the following verses:

The crown of the flow'rets am I, in the chamber of wine, And Allah makes mention of me 'mongst the pleasures divine; Yea, ease and sweet basil and peace, the righteous are told, In Eternity's Garden of sweets shall to bless them combine. Where, then, is the worth that in aught with my worth can compare And where is the rank in men's eyes can be likened to mine?

Thereat Queen Zelzeleh was moved to exceeding delight and bidding her treasuress bring a basket, wherein were fifty pairs of bracelets and the like number of earrings, all of gold, set with jewels of price, the like whereof nor men nor Jinn possessed, and an hundred robes of coloured brocade and an hundred thousand dinars, gave the whole to Tuhfeh. Then she passed the cup to her sister Sherareh, who had in her hand a stalk of narcissus; so she took it from her and turning to Tuhfeh, said to her, 'O Tuhfeh, sing to me on this.' 'Hearkening and obedience,' answered she and improvised and sang the following verses:

Most like a wand of emerald my shape it is, trow I; Amongst the
fragrant flow'rets there's none with me can vie.
The eyes of lovely women are likened unto me; Indeed, amongst the
gardens I open many an eye.

When she had made an end of her song, Sherareh was moved to exceeding delight and drinking off her cup, said to her, 'Well done, O gift of hearts!' Then she ordered her an hundred dresses of brocade and an hundred thousand dinars and passed the cup to Queen Wekhimeh. Now she had in her hand somewhat of blood-red anemone; so she took the cup from her sister and turning to Tuhfeh, said to her, 'O Tuhfeh, sing to me on this.' Quoth she, 'I hear and obey,' and improvised the following verses:

The Merciful dyed me with that which I wear Of hues with whose
goodliness none may compare.
The earth is my birth-place, indeed; but my place Of abidance is
still in the cheeks of the fair.

Therewith Wekhimeh was moved to exceeding delight and drinking off the cup, ordered her twenty dresses of Greek brocade and a tray, wherein were thirty thousand dinars. Then she gave the cup to Queen Shuaaeh, Queen of the Fourth Sea, who took it and said, 'O my lady Tuhfeh, sing to me on the gillyflower.' Quoth she 'Hearkening and obedience,' and improvised the following verses:

The season of my presence is never at an end 'Mongst all their
time in gladness and solacement who spend,
Whenas the folk assemble for birling at the wine, Whether in
morning's splendour or when night's shades descend.
The pitcher then of goblets filled full and brimming o'er With
limpid wine we plunder, that pass from friend to friend.

Queen Shuaaeh was moved to exceeding delight and emptying her cup, gave Tuhfeh an hundred thousand dinars. Then arose Iblis (may God curse him!) and said, 'Verily, the dawn gleameth.' Whereupon the folk arose and disappeared, all of them, and there abode not one of them save Tuhfeh, who went forth to the garden and entering the bath, made her ablutions and prayed that which had escaped her of prayers. Then she sat down and when the sun rose, behold, there came up to her near an hundred thousand green birds; the branches of the trees were filled with their multitudes and they warbled in various voices, whilst Tuhfeh marvelled at their fashion. Presently, up came eunuchs, bearing a throne of gold, set with pearls and jewels and jacinths white and red and having four steps of gold, together with many carpets of silk and brocade and Egyptian cloth of silk welted with gold. These latter they spread amiddleward the garden and setting up the throne thereon, perfumed the place with virgin musk and aloes and ambergris.

After that, there appeared a queen, never saw eyes a goodlier than she nor than her attributes; she was clad in rich raiment, embroidered with pearls and jewels, and on her head was a crown set with various kinds of pearls and jewels. About her were five hundred slave-girls, high-bosomed maids, as they were moons, screening her, right and left, and she among them as she were the moon on the night of its full, for that she was the most of them in majesty and dignity. She gave not over walking, till she came to Tuhfeh, whom she found gazing on her in amazement; and when the latter saw her turn to her, she rose to her, standing on her feet, and saluted her and kissed the earth before her.

The queen rejoiced in her and putting out her hand to her, drew her to herself and seated her by her side on the couch; whereupon Tuhfeh kissed her hands and the queen said to her, ‘Know, O Tuhfeh, that all that thou treadest of these belong not to any of the Jinn, for that I am the queen of them all and the Sheikh Aboultawaif Iblis sought my permission and prayed me to be present at the circumcision of his son. So I sent to him, in my stead, a slave-girl of my slave-girls, to wit, Shuaaeh, Queen of the Fourth Sea, who is vice-queen of my kingdom. When she was present at the wedding and saw thee and heard thy singing, she sent to me, giving me to know of thee and setting forth to me thine elegance and pleasantness and the goodliness of thy breeding and thy singing. So I am come to thee, for that which I have heard of thy charms, and this shall bring thee great worship in the eyes of all the Jinn.’

Tuhfeh arose and kissed the earth and the queen thanked her for this and bade her sit. So she sat down and the queen called for food; whereupon they brought a table of gold, inlaid with pearls and jacinths and jewels and spread with various kinds of birds and meats of divers hues, and the queen said, ‘O Tuhfeh, in the name of God, let us eat bread and salt together, thou and I.’ So Tuhfeh came forward and ate of those meats and tasted somewhat the like whereof she had never eaten, no, nor aught more delicious than it, what while the slave-girls stood compassing about the table and she sat conversing and laughing with the queen. Then said the latter, ‘O my sister, a slave-girl told me of thee that thou saidst, “How loathly is yonder genie Meimoun! There is no eating [in his presence].”’ ‘By Allah, O my lady,’ answered Tuhfeh, ‘I cannot brook the sight of him, and indeed I am fearful of him.’ When the queen heard this, she laughed, till she fell backward, and said, ‘O my sister, by the virtue of the inscription upon the seal-ring of Solomon, prophet of God, I am queen over all the Jinn, and none dare so much as look on thee a glance of the eye.’ And Tuhfeh kissed her hand. Then the tables were removed and they sat talking.

Presently up came the kings of the Jinn from every side and kissed the earth before the queen and stood in her service; and she thanked them for this, but stirred not for one of them. Then came the Sheikh Aboultawaif Iblis (God curse him!) and kissed the earth before her, saying, ‘O my lady, may I not be bereft of these steps!’ O Sheikh Aboultawalf,’ answered she, ‘it behoveth thee to thank the bounty of the Lady Tuhfeh, who was the cause of my coming.’ ‘True,’ answered he and kissed the earth. Then the queen fared on [towards the palace] and there [arose and] alighted upon the trees an hundred thousand birds of various colours. Quoth Tuhfeh, ‘How many are these birds!’ And Queen Wekhimeh said to her, ‘Know, O my sister, that this queen is called Queen Es Shuhba and that she is queen over all the Jinn from East to West. These birds that thou seest are of her troops, and except they came in this shape, the earth would not contain them. Indeed, they came forth with her and are present with her presence at this circumcision. She will give thee after the measure of that which hath betided thee from the first of the festival to the last thereof; and indeed she honoureth us all with her presence.’

Then the queen entered the palace and sat down on the throne of the circumcision at the upper end of the hall, whereupon Tuhfeh took the lute and pressing it to her bosom, touched its strings on such wise that the wits of all present were bewildered and the Sheikh Iblis said to her, ‘O my lady Tuhfeh, I conjure thee, by the life of this worshipful queen, sing for me and praise thyself, and gainsay me not.’ Quoth she, ‘Hearkening and obedience; yet, but for the adjuration by which thou conjurest me, I had not done this. Doth any praise himself? What manner of thing is this?’ Then she improvised and sang the following verses:

In every rejoicing a boon midst the singers and minstrels
am I;
The folk witness bear of my worth and none can my virtues deny.
My virtues ‘mongst men are extolled and my glory and station rank
high.

Her verses pleased the kings of the Jinn and they said, ‘By Allah, thou sayst sooth!’ Then she rose to her feet, with the lute in her hand, and played and sang, whilst the Jinn and the Sheikh Aboultawaif danced. Then the latter came up to her and gave her a carbuncle he had taken from the hidden treasure of Japhet, son of Noah (on whom be peace), and which was worth the kingdom of the world; its light was as the light of the sun and he said to her, ‘Take this and glorify thyself withal over the people of the world.’ She kissed his hand and rejoiced in the jewel and said, ‘By Allah, this beseemeth none but the Commander of the Faithful.’

Now the dancing of Iblis pleased Queen Es Shuhba and she said to him, ‘By Allah, this is a goodly dancing!’ He thanked her for this and said to Tuhfeh, ‘O Tuhfeh, there is not on the face of the earth a skilfuller than Ishac en Nedim; but thou art more skilful than he. Indeed, I have been present with him many a time and have shown him passages on the lute, and there have betided me such and such things with him. Indeed, the story of my dealings with him is a long one and this is no time to repeat it; but now I would fain show thee a passage on the lute, whereby thou shall be exalted over all the folk.’ Quoth she to him, ‘Do what seemeth good to thee.’ So he took the lute and played thereon on wondrous wise, with rare divisions and extraordinary modulations, and showed her a passage she knew not; and this was liefer to her than all that she had gotten. Then she took the lute from him and playing thereon, [sang and] presently returned to the passage that he had shown her; and he said, ‘By Allah, thou singest better than I!’ As for Tuhfeh, it was made manifest to her that her former usance was all of it wrong and that what she had learnt from the Sheikh Aboultawaif Iblis was the origin and foundation [of all perfection] in the art. So she rejoiced in that which she had gotten of [new skill in] touching the lute far more than in all that had fallen to her lot of wealth and raiment and kissed the Sheikh’s hand.

Then said Queen Es Shuhba, ‘By Allah, O Sheikh, my sister Tuhfeh is indeed unique among the folk of her time, and I hear that she singeth upon all sweet- scented flowers.’ ‘Yes, O my lady,’ answered Iblis, ‘and I am in the utterest of wonderment thereat. But there remaineth somewhat of sweet-scented flowers, that she hath not besung, such as the myrtle and the tuberose and the jessamine and the moss-rose and the like.’ Then he signed to her to sing upon the rest of the flowers, that Queen Es Shuhba might hear, and she said, 'Hearkening and obedience.' So she took the lute and played thereon in many modes, then returned to the first mode and sang the following verses:

One of the host am I of lovers sad and sere For waiting long
drawn out and expectation drear.
My patience underneath the loss of friends and folk With pallor's
sorry garb hath clad me, comrades dear.
Abasement, misery and heart-break after those I suffer who
endured before me many a year.
All through the day its light and when the night grows dark, My
grief forsakes me not, no, nor my heavy cheer.
My tears flow still, nor aye of bitterness I'm quit, Bewildered
as I am betwixten hope and fear.

Therewithal Queen Es Shuhba was moved to exceeding delight and said, 'Well done, O queen of delight! None can avail to describe thee. Sing to us on the apple,' Quoth Tuhfeh, 'Hearkening and obedience.' Then she improvised and sang the following verses:

Endowed with amorous grace past any else am I; Graceful of shape
and lithe and pleasing to the eye.
The hands of noble folk do tend me publicly; With waters clear
and sweet my thirsting tongue they ply.
My clothes of sendal are, my veil of the sun's light, The very
handiwork of God the Lord Most High.
Whenas my sisters dear forsake me, grieved that they Must leave
their native place and far away must hie,
The nobles' hands, for that my place I must forsake, Do solace me
with beds, whereon at ease I lie.
Lo! in the garden-ways, the place of ease and cheer, Still, like
the moon at full, my light thou mayst espy.

Queen Es Shubha rejoiced in this with an exceeding delight and said, 'Well done! By Allah, there is none surpasseth thee.' Tuhfeh kissed the earth, then returned to her place and improvised on the tuberose, saying:

My flower a marvel on your heads doth show, Yet homeless
am I in your land, I trow.
Make drink your usance in my company And flout the time that
languishing doth go.
Camphor itself to me doth testify And in my presence owns me
white as snow.
So make me in your morning a delight And set me in your houses,
high and low;
So shall we quaff the cups in ease and cheer, In endless joyance,
quit of care and woe.

At this Queen Es Shuhba was stirred to exceeding delight and said, ‘Well done, O queen of delight! By Allah, I know not how I shall do to render thee thy due! May God the Most High grant us to enjoy thy long continuance [on life]!’ Then she strained her to her breast and kissed her on the cheek; whereupon quoth Iblis (on whom be malison!), ‘Indeed, this is an exceeding honour!’ Quoth the queen, ‘Know that this lady Tuhfeh is my sister and that her commandment is my commandment and her forbiddance my forbiddance. So hearken all to her word and obey her commandment.’ Therewithal the kings rose all and kissed the earth before Tuhfeh, who rejoiced in this. Moreover, Queen Es Shuhba put off on her a suit adorned with pearls and jewels and jacinths, worth an hundred thousand dinars, and wrote her on a sheet of paper a patent in her own hand, appointing her her deputy. So Tuhfeh rose and kissed the earth before the queen, who said to her, ‘Sing to us, of thy favour, concerning the rest of the sweet-scented flowers and herbs, so I may hear thy singing and divert myself with witnessing thy skill.’ ‘Hearkening and obedience, O lady mine,’ answered Tuhfeh and taking the lute, improvised the following verses:

Midst colours, my colour excelleth in light And I would every eye
of my charms might have sight.
My place is the place of the fillet and pearls And the fair are
most featly with jasmine bedight,

How bright and how goodly my lustre appears! Yea, my wreaths are
like girdles of silver so white.

Then she changed the measure and improvised the following:

I'm the crown of every sweet and fragrant weed; When the loved
one calls, I keep the tryst agreed.
My favours I deny not all the year; Though cessation be desired,
I nothing heed.
I'm the keeper of the promise and the troth, And my gathering is
eath, without impede.

Then she changed the measure and the mode [and played] so that she amazed the wits of those who were present, and Queen Es Shuhba was moved to mirth and said, 'Well done, O queen of delight!' Then she returned to the first mode and improvised the following verses on the water-lily:

I fear to be seen in the air, Without my consent, unaware; So I stretch out my root neath the flood And my branches turn back to it there.

Therewithal Queen Es Shuhba was moved to delight and said, 'Well done, O Tuhfeh! Let me have more of thy singing.' So she smote the lute and changing the mode, improvised the following verses on the moss-rose:

Look at the moss-rose, on its branches seen, Midmost its leafage,
covered all with green.
Tis gazed at for its slender swaying shape And cherished for its
symmetry and sheen.
Lovely with longing for its love's embrace, The fear of his
estrangement makes it lean.

Then she changed the measure and the mode and sang the following verses:

O thou that questionest the lily of its scent, Give ear unto my
words and verses thereanent.
Th' Amir (quoth it) am I whose charms are still desired; Absent

or present, all in loving me consent.

When she had made an end of her song, Queen Es Shuhba arose and said, ‘Never heard I from any the like of this.’ And she drew Tuhfeh to her and fell to kissing her. Then she took leave of her and flew away; and all the birds took flight with her, so that they walled the world; whilst the rest of the kings tarried behind.

When it was the fourth night, there came the boy whom they were minded to circumcise, adorned with jewels such as never saw eye nor heard ear of, and amongst the rest a crown of gold, set with pearls and jewels, the worth whereof was an hundred thousand dinars. He sat down upon the throne and Tuhfeh sang to him, till the surgeon came and they circumcised him, in the presence of all the kings, who showered on him great store of jewels and jacinths and gold. Queen Kemeriyeh bade the servants gather up all this and lay it in Tuhfeh’s closet, and it was [as much in value as] all that had fallen to her, from the first of the festival to the last thereof. Moreover, the Sheikh Iblis (whom God curse!) bestowed upon Tuhfeh the crown worn by the boy and gave the latter another, whereat her reason fled. Then the Jinn departed, in order of rank, whilst Iblis took leave of them, band by band.

Whilst the Sheikh was thus occupied with taking leave of the kings, Meimoun sought his opportunity, whenas he saw the place empty, and taking up Tuhfeh on his shoulders, soared up with her to the confines of the sky and flew away with her. Presently, Iblis came to look for Tuhfeh and see what she purposed, but found her not and saw the slave-girls buffeting their faces; so he said to them, ‘Out on ye! What is to do?’ ‘O our lord,’ answered they, ‘Meimoun hath snatched up Tuhfeh and flown away with her.’ When Iblis heard this, he gave a cry, to which the earth trembled, and said, ‘What is to be done? Out on ye! Shall he carry off Tuhfeh from my very palace and outrage mine honour? Doubtless, this Meimoun hath lost his wits.’ Then he cried out a second time, that the earth quaked therefor, and rose up into the air.

The news came to the rest of the kings; so they [flew after him and] overtaking him, found him full of trouble and fear, with fire issuing from his nostrils, and said to him, ‘O Sheikh Aboultawaif, what is to do?' Quoth he, 'Know that Meimoun hath carried off Tuhfeh from my palace and outraged mine honour.' When they heard this, they said, 'There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme! By Allah, he hath ventured upon a grave matter and indeed he destroyeth himself and his people!' Then the Sheikh Iblis gave not over flying till he fell in with the tribes of the Jinn, and there gathered themselves together unto him much people, none may tell the tale of them save God the Most High. So they came to the Fortress of Copper and the Citadel of Lead, and the people of the strongholds saw the tribes of the Jinn issuing from every steep mountain-pass and said, 'What is to do?' Then Iblis went in to King Es Shisban and acquainted him with that which had befallen, whereupon quoth he, 'May God destroy Meimoun and his folk! He thinketh to possess Tuhfeh, and she is become queen of the Jinn! But have patience till we contrive that which befitteth in the matter of Tuhfeh.' Quoth Iblis, 'And what befitteth it to do?' And Es Shisban said, *We will fall upon him and slay him and his people with the sword.'

Then said the Sheikh Iblis, 'We were best acquaint Queen Kemeriyeh and Queen Zelzeleh and Queen Sherareh and Queen Wekhimeh; and when they are assembled, God shall ordain [that which He deemeth] good in the matter of her release.' 'It is well seen of thee,' answered Es Shisban and despatched to Queen Kemeriyeh an Afrit called Selheb, who came to her palace and found her asleep; so he aroused her and she said, 'What is to do, O Selheb?' 'O my lady,' answered he, 'come to the succour of thy sister Tuhfeh, for that Meimoun hath carried her off and outraged thine honour and that of the Sheikh Iblis.' Quoth she, 'What sayest thou?' And she sat up and cried out with a great cry. And indeed she feared for Tuhfeh and said, 'By Allah, indeed she used to say that he looked upon her and prolonged the looking on her; but ill is that to which his soul hath prompted him.' Then she arose in haste and mounting a she-devil of her devils, said to her, 'Fly.' So she flew off and alighted with her in the palace of her sister Sherareh, whereupon she sent for her sisters Zelzeleh and Wekhimeh and acquainted them with the news, saying, 'Know that Meimoun hath snatched up Tuhfeh and flown off with her swiftlier than the blinding lightning.'

[Then they all flew off in haste and] lighting down in the place where were their father Es Shisban and their grandfather the Sheikh Aboultawaif, found the folk on the sorriest of plights. When their grandfather Iblis saw them, he rose to them and wept, and they all wept for Tuhfeh. Then said Iblis to them, 'Yonder dog hath outraged mine honour and taken Tuhfeh, and I doubt not but that she is like to perish [of concern] for herself and her lord Er Reshid and saying "All that they said and did was false."' Quoth Kemeriyeh, 'O grandfather mine, there is nothing left for it but [to use] stratagem and contrivance for her deliverance, for that she is dearer to me than everything; and know that yonder accursed one, whenas he is ware of your coming upon him, will know that he hath no power to cope with you, he who is the least and meanest [of the Jinn]; but we fear that, when he is assured of defeat, he will kill Tuhfeh; wherefore nothing will serve but that we contrive for her deliverance; else will she perish.' 'And what hast thou in mind of device?' asked he; and she answered, 'Let us take him with fair means, and if he obey, [all will be well]; else will we practise stratagem against him; and look thou not to other than myself for her deliverance.' Quoth Iblis, 'The affair is thine; contrive what thou wilt, for that Tuhfeh is thy sister and thy solicitude for her is more effectual than [that of] any.'

So Kemeriyeh cried out to an Afrit of the Afrits and a calamity of the calamities, by name El Ased et Teyyar, and said to him, 'Go with my message to the Crescent Mountain, the abiding-place of Meimoun the Sworder, and enter in to him and salute him in my name and say to him, "How canst thou be assured for thyself, O Meimoun? Couldst thou find none on whom to vent thy drunken humour and whom to maltreat save Tuhfeh, more by token that she is a queen? But thou art excused, for that thou didst this not but of thine intoxication, and the Shekh Aboultawaif pardoneth thee, for that thou wast drunken. Indeed, thou hast outraged his honour; but now restore her to her palace, for that she hath done well and favoured us and done us service, and thou knowest that she is presently our queen. Belike she may bespeak Queen Es Shuhba, whereupon the matter will be aggravated and that wherein there is no good will betide. Indeed, thou wilt get no tittle of profit [from this thine enterprise]; verily, I give thee good counsel, and so peace be on thee!"'

‘Hearkening and obedience,’ answered El Ased and flew till he came to the Crescent Mountain, when he sought audience of Meimoun, who bade admit him. So he entered and kissing the earth before him, gave him Queen Kemeriyeh’s message, which when he heard he said to the Afrit, ‘Return whence thou comest and say to thy mistress, “Be silent and thou wilt do wisely.” Else will I come and seize upon her and make her serve Tuhfeh; and if the kings of the Jinn assemble together against me and I be overcome of them, I will not leave her to scent the wind of this world and she shall be neither mine nor theirs, for that she is presently my soul from between my ribs; and how shall any part with his soul?’ When the Afrit heard Meimoun’s words, he said to him, ‘By Allah, O Meimoun, thou hast lost thy wits, that thou speakest these words of my mistress, and thou one of her servants!’ Whereupon Meimoun cried out and said to him, ‘Out on thee, O dog of the Jinn! Wilt thou bespeak the like of me with these words?’ Then, he bade those who were about him smite El Ased, but he took flight and soaring into the air, betook himself to his mistress and told her that which had passed; and she said, ‘Thou hast done well, O cavalier.’

Then she turned to her father and said to him, ‘Give ear unto that which I shall say to thee.’ Quoth he, ‘Say on;’ and she said, ‘Take thy troops and go to him, for that, when he heareth this, he in his turn will levy his troops and come forth to thee; wherepon do thou give him battle and prolong the fighting with him and make a show to him of weakness and giving way. Meantime, I will practise a device for winning to Tuhfeh and delivering her, what while he is occupied with you in battle; and when my messenger cometh to thee and giveth thee to know that I have gotten possession of Tuhfeh and that she is with me, do thou return upon Meimoun forthright and destroy him, him and his hosts, and take him prisoner. But, if my device succeed not with him and we avail not to deliver Tuhfeh, he will assuredly go about to slay her, without recourse, and regret for her will abide in our hearts.’ Quoth Iblis, ‘This is the right counsel,’ and let call among the troops to departure, whereupon an hundred thousand cavaliers, doughty men of war, joined themselves to him and set out for Meimoun’s country.

As for Queen Kemeriyeh, she flew off to the palace of her sister

Wekhimeh and told her what Meimoun had done and how [he avouched that], whenas he saw defeat [near at hand], he would slay Tuhfeh; ‘and indeed,’ added she, ‘he is resolved upon this; else had he not dared to commit this outrage. So do thou contrive the affair as thou deemest well, for thou hast no superior in judgment.’ Then they sent for Queen Zelzeleh and Queen Sherareh and sat down to take counsel, one with another, of that which they should do in the matter. Then said Wekhimeh, ‘We were best fit out a ship in this island [wherein is my palace] and embark therein, in the guise of mortals, and fare on till we come to a little island, that lieth over against Meimoun’s palace. There will we [take up our abode and] sit drinking and smiting the lute and singing. Now Tuhfeh will of a surety be sitting looking upon the sea, and needs must she see us and come down to us, whereupon we will take her by force and she will be under our hands, so that none shall avail more to molest her on any wise. Or, if Meimoun be gone forth to do battle with the Jinn, we will storm his stronghold and take Tuhfeh and raze his palace and put to death all who are therein. When he hears of this, his heart will be rent in sunder and we will send to let our father know, whereupon he will return upon him with his troops and he will be destroyed and we shall be quit of him.’ And they answered her, saying, ‘This is a good counsel.’ Then they bade fit out a ship from behind the mountain, and it was fitted out in less than the twinkling of an eye. So they launched it on the sea and embarking therein, together with four thousand Afrits, set out, intending for Meimoun’s palace. Moreover, they bade other five thousand Afrits betake themselves to the island under the Crescent Mountain and lie in wait for them there.

Meanwhile, the Sheikh Aboultawaif Iblis and his son Es Shisban set out, as we have said, with their troops, who were of the doughtiest of the Jinn and the most accomplished of them in valour and horsemanship, [and fared on till they drew near the Crescent Mountain], When the news of their approach reached Meimoun, he cried out with a great cry to the troops, who were twenty thousand horse, [and bade them make ready for departure]. Then he went in to Tuhfeh and kissing her, said to her, ‘Know that thou art presently my life of the world, and indeed the Jinn are gathered together to wage war on me on thine account. If I am vouchsafed the victory over them and am preserved alive, I will set all the kings of the Jinn under thy feet and thou shall become queen of the world.' But she shook her head and wept; and he said, 'Weep not, for, by the virtue of the mighty inscription engraven on the seal-ring of Solomon, thou shall never again see the land of men! Can any one part with his life? So give ear unto that which I say; else will I kill thee.' And she was silent.

Then he sent for his daughter, whose name was Jemreh, and when she came, he said to her, 'Harkye, Jemreh! Know that I am going to [meet] the clans of Es Shisban and Queen Kemeriyeh and the kings of the Jinn. If I am vouchsafed the victory over them, to Allah be the praise and thou shall have of me largesse; but, if thou see or hear that I am worsted and any come to thee with news of me [to this effect], hasten to slay Tuhfeh, so she may fall neither to me nor to them.' Then he took leave of her and mounted, saying, 'When this cometh about, pass over to the Crescent Mountain and take up thine abode there, and await what shall befall me and what I shall say to thee.' And Jemreh answered with 'Hearkening and obedience.'

When Tuhfeh heard this, she fell to weeping and wailing and said, 'By Allah, nought irketh me save separation from my lord Er Reshid; but, when I am dead, let the world be ruined after me.' And she doubted not in herself but that she was lost without recourse. Then Meimoun set forth with his army and departed in quest of the hosts [of the Jinn], leaving none in the palace save his daughter Jemreh and Tuhfeh and an Afrit who was dear unto him. They fared on till they met with the army of Es Shisban; and when the two hosts came face to face, they fell upon each other and fought a passing sore battle. After awhile, Es Shisban's troops began to give back, and when Meimoun saw them do thus, he despised them and made sure of victory over them.

Meanwhile, Queen Kemeriyeh and her company sailed on, without ceasing, till they came under the palace wherein was Tuhfeh, to wit, that of Meimoun the Sworder; and by the ordinance of destiny, Tuhfeh herself was then sitting on the belvedere of the palace, pondering the affair of Haroun er Reshid and her own and that which had befallen her and weeping for that she was doomed to slaughter. She saw the ship and what was therein of those whom we have named, and they in mortal guise, and said, ‘Alas, my sorrow for yonder ship and the mortals that be therein!’ As for Kemeriyeh and her company, when they drew near the palace, they strained their eyes and seeing Tuhfeh sitting, said, ‘Yonder sits Tuhfeh. May God not bereave [us] of her!’ Then they moored their ship and making for the island, that lay over against the palace, spread carpets and sat eating and drinking; whereupon quoth Tuhfeh, ‘Welcome and fair welcome to yonder faces! These are my kinswomen and I conjure thee by Allah, O Jemreh, that thou let me down to them, so I may sit with them awhile and make friends with them and return.’ Quoth Jemreh, ‘I may on no wise do that.’ And Tuhfeh wept. Then the folk brought out wine and drank, what while Kemeriyeh took the lute and sang the following verses:

By Allah, but that I trusted that I should meet you again, Your
camel-leader to parting had summoned you in vain!
Parting afar hath borne you, but longing still is fain To bring
you near; meseemeth mine eye doth you contain.

When Tuhfeh heard this, she gave a great cry, that the folk heard her and Kemeriyeh said, ‘Relief is at hand.’ Then she looked out to them and called to them, saying, ‘O daughters of mine uncle, I am a lonely maid, an exile from folk and country. So, for the love of God the Most High, repeat that song!’ So Kemeriyeh repeated it and Tuhfeh swooned away. When she came to herself, she said to Jemreh, ‘By the virtue of the Apostle of God (whom may He bless and preserve!) except thou suffer me go down to them and look on them and sit with them awhile, [I swear] I will cast myself down from this palace, for that I am weary of my life and know that I am slain without recourse; wherefore I will slay myself, ere thou pass sentence upon me.’ And she was instant with her in asking.

When Jemreh heard her words, she knew that, if she let her not down, she would assuredly destroy herself. So she said to her, ‘O Tuhfeh, between thee and them are a thousand fathoms; but I will bring them up to thee.’ ‘Nay,’ answered Tuhfeh, ‘needs must I go down to them and take my pleasance in the island and look upon the sea anear; then will we return, thou and I; for that, if thou bring them up to us, they will be affrighted and there will betide them neither easance nor gladness. As for me, I do but wish to be with them, that they may cheer me with their company neither give over their merrymaking, so haply I may make merry with them, and indeed I swear that needs must I go down to them; else will I cast myself upon them.' And she cajoled Jemreh and kissed her hands, till she said, 'Arise and I will set thee down beside them.'

Then she took Tuhfeh under her armpit and flying up, swiftlier than the blinding lightning, set her down with Kemeriyeh and her company; whereupon she went up to them and accosted them, saying, 'Fear not, no harm shall betide you; for I am a mortal, like unto you, and I would fain look on you and talk with you and hear your singing.' So they welcomed her and abode in their place, whilst Jemreh sat down beside them and fell a-snuffing their odours and saying, 'I smell the scent of the Jinn! I wonder whence [it cometh!'] Then said Wekhimeh to her sister Kemeriyeh, 'Yonder filthy one [smelleth us] and presently she will take to flight; so what is this remissness concerning her?' Thereupon Kemeriyeh put out a hand, as it were a camel's neck, and dealt Jemreh a buffet on the head, that made it fly from her body and cast it into the sea. Then said she, 'God is most great!' And they uncovered their faces, whereupon Tuhfeh knew them and said to them, 'Protection!'

Queen Kemeriyeh embraced her, as also did Queen Zelzeleh and Queen Wekhimeh and Queen Sherareh, and the former said to her, 'Rejoice in assured deliverance, for there abideth no harm for thee; but this is no time for talk.' Then they cried out, whereupon up came the Afrits ambushed in the island, with swords and maces in their hands, and taking up Tuhfeh, flew with her to the palace and made themselves masters thereof, whilst the Afrit aforesaid, who was dear to Meimoun and whose name was Dukhan, fled like an arrow and stayed not in his flight till he carne to Meimoun and found him engaged in sore battle with the Jinn. When his lord saw him, he cried out at him, saying, 'Out on thee! Whom hast thou left in the palace?' And Dukhan answered, saying, 'And who abideth in the palace? Thy beloved Tuhfeh they have taken and Jemreh is slain and they have gotten possession of the palace, all of it.' With this Meimoun buffeted his face and head and said, 'Out on it for a calamity!' And he cried aloud. Now Kemeriyeh had sent to her father and acquainted him with the news, whereat the raven of parting croaked for them. So, when Meimoun saw that which had betided him, (and indeed the Jinn smote upon him and the wings of death overspread his host,) he planted the butt of his spear in the earth and turning the point thereof to his heart, urged his charger upon it and pressed upon it with his breast, till the point came forth, gleaming, from his back.

Meanwhile the messenger had reached the opposite camp with the news of Tuhfeh's deliverance, whereat the Sheikh Aboultawaif rejoiced and bestowed on the bringer of good tidings a sumptuous dress of honour and made him commander over a company of the Jinn. Then they fell upon Meimoun's troops and destroyed them to the last man; and when they came to Meimoun, they found that he had slain himself and was even as we have said. Presently Kemeriyeh and her sister [Wekhimeh] came up to their grandfather and told him what they had done; whereupon he came to Tuhfeh and saluted her and gave her joy of her deliverance. Then he delivered Meimoun's palace to Selheb and took all the former's riches and gave them to Tuhfeh, whilst the troops encamped upon the Crescent Mountain. Moreover, the Sheikh Aboultawaif said to Tuhfeh, 'Blame me not,' and she kissed his hands. As they were thus engaged, there appeared to them the tribes of the Jinn, as they were clouds, and Queen Es Shuhba flying in their van, with a drawn sword in her hand.

When she came in sight of the folk, they kissed the earth before her and she said to them, 'Tell me what hath betided Queen Tuhfeh from yonder dog Meimoun and why did ye not send to me and tell me?' Quoth they, 'And who was this dog that we should send to thee, on his account? Indeed, he was the least and meanest [of the Jinn].' Then they told her what Kemeriyeh and her sisters had done and how they had practised upon Meimoun and delivered Tuhfeh from his hand, fearing lest he should slay her, whenas he found himself discomfited; and she said, 'By Allah, the accursed one was wont to prolong his looking upon her!' And Tuhfeh fell to kissing Queen Es Shuhba's hand, whilst the latter strained her to her bosom and kissed her, saying, 'Trouble is past; so rejoice in assurance of relief.'

Then they arose and went up to the palace, whereupon the trays of food were brought and they ate and drank; after which quoth Queen Es Shuhba, ‘O Tuhfeh, sing to us, by way of thankoffering for thy deliverance, and favour us with that which shall solace our minds, for that indeed my mind hath been occupied with thee.’ Quoth Tuhfeh ‘Hearkening and obedience, O my lady.’ So she improvised and sang the following verses:

Wind of the East, if thou pass by the land where my loved ones
 dwell, I pray, The fullest of greetings bear to them from
 me, their lover, and say
That I am the pledge of passion still and that my longing love
 And eke my yearning do overpass all longing that was aye.

Therewithal Queen Es Shuhba rejoiced and all who were present rejoiced also and admired her speech and fell to kissing her; and when she had made an end of her song, Queen Kemeriyeh said to her, ‘O my sister, ere thou go to thy palace, I would fain bring thee to look upon El Anca, daughter of Behram Gour, whom El Anca, daughter of the wind, carried off, and her beauty; for that there is not her match on the face of the earth.’ And Queen Es Shuhba said, ‘O Kemeriyeh, I [also] have a mind to see her.’ Quoth Kemeriyeh, ‘I saw her three years agone; but my sister Wekhimeh seeth her at all times, for that she is near unto her, and she saith that there is not in the world a fairer than she. Indeed, this Queen El Anca is become a byword for loveliness and proverbs are made upon her beauty and grace’ And Wekhimeh said, ‘By the mighty inscription [on the seal-ring of Solomon], there is not her like in the world!’ Then said Queen Es Shuhba, ‘If it needs must be and the affair is as ye say, I will take Tuhfeh and go with her [to El Anca], so she may see her.’

So they all arose and repaired to El Anca, who abode in the Mountain Caf. When she saw them, she rose to them and saluted them, saying, ‘O my ladies, may I not be bereaved of you!’ Quoth Wekhimeh to her, ‘Who is like unto thee, O Anca? Behold, Queen Es Shuhba is come to thee.’ So El Anca kissed the queen’s feet and lodged them in her palace; whereupon Tuhfeh came up to her and fell to kissing her and saying, ‘Never saw I a goodlier than this favour.’ Then she set before them somewhat of food and they ate and washed their hands; after which Tuhfeh took the lute and played excellent well; and El Anca also played, and they fell to improvising verses in turns, whilst Tuhfeh embraced El Anca every moment. Quoth Es Shuhba, ‘O my sister, each kiss is worth a thousand dinars;’ and Tuhfeh answered, ‘Indeed, a thousand dinars were little for it.’ Whereat El Anca laughed and on the morrow they took leave of her and went away to Meimoun’s palace.

Here Queen Es Shuhba bade them farewell and taking her troops, returned to her palace, whilst the kings also went away to their abodes and the Sheikh Aboultawaif addressed himself to divert Tuhfeh till nightfall, when he mounted her on the back of one of the Afrits and bade other thirty gather together all that she had gotten of treasure and raiment and jewels and dresses of honour. [Then they flew off,] whilst Iblis went with her, and in less than the twinkling of an eye he set her down in her sleeping-chamber. Then he and those who were with him took leave of her and went away. When Tuhfeh found herself in her own chamber and on her couch, her reason fled for joy and it seemed to her as if she had never stirred thence. Then she took the lute and tuned it and touched it on wondrous wise and improvised verses and sang.

The eunuch heard the smiting of the lute within the chamber and said, ‘By Allah, that is my lady Tuhfeh’s touch!’ So he arose and went, as he were a madman, falling down and rising up, till he came to the eunuch on guard at the door at the Commander of the Faithful and found him sitting. When the latter saw him, and he like a madman, falling down and rising up, he said to him, ‘What aileth thee and what bringeth thee hither at this hour?’ Quoth the other, ‘Wilt thou not make haste and awaken the Commander of the Faithful?’ And he fell to crying out at him; whereupon the Khalif awoke and heard them bandying words together and Tuhfeh’s servant saying to the other, ‘Out on thee! Awaken the Commander of the Faithful in haste.’ So he said, ‘O Sewab, what aileth thee?’ And the chief eunuch answered, saying, ‘O our lord, the eunuch of Tuhfeh’s lodging hath taken leave of his wits and saith, “Awaken the Commander of the Faithful in haste!”’ Then said Er Reshid to one of the slave-girls, ‘See what is to do.’

So she hastened to admit the eunuch, who entered; and when he saw the Commander of the Faithful, he saluted not neither kissed the earth, but said, ‘Quick, quick! Arise in haste! My lady Tuhfeh sitteth in her chamber, singing a goodly ditty. Come to her in haste and see all that I say to thee! Hasten! She sitteth [in her chamber].’ The Khalif was amazed at his speech and said to him, ‘What sayst thou?’ ‘Didst thou not hear the first of the speech?’ replied the eunuch. ‘Tuhfeh sitteth in the sleeping-chamber, singing and playing the lute. Come thy quickliest! Hasten!’ So Er Reshid arose and donned his clothes; but he credited not the eunuch’s words and said to him, ‘Out on thee! What is this thou sayst? Hast thou not seen this in a dream?’ ‘By Allah,’ answered the eunuch, ‘I know not what thou sayest, and I was not asleep.’ Quoth Er Reshid, ‘If thy speech be true, it shall be for thy good luck, for I will enfranchise thee and give thee a thousand dinars; but, if it be untrue and thou have seen this in sleep, I will crucify thee.’ And the eunuch said in himself, ‘O Protector, let me not have seen this in Sleep!’ Then he left the Khalif and going to the chamber-door, heard the sound of singing and lute-playing; whereupon he returned to Er Reshid and said to him, ‘Go and hearken and see who is asleep.’

When Er Reshid drew near the door of the chamber, he heard the sound of the lute and Tuhfeh’s voice singing; whereat he could not restrain his reason and was like to swoon away for excess of joy. Then he pulled out the key, but could not bring his hand to open the door. However, after awhile, he took heart and applying himself, opened the door and entered, saying, ‘Methinks this is none other than a dream or an illusion of sleep.’ When Tuhfeh saw him, she rose and coming to meet him, strained him to her bosom; and he cried out with a cry, wherein his soul was like to depart, and fell down in a swoon. She strained him to her bosom and sprinkled on him rose-water, mingled with musk, and washed his face, till he came to himself, as he were a drunken man, for the excess of his joy in Tuhfeh’s return to him, after he had despaired of her.

Then she took the lute and smote thereon, after the fashion she had learnt from the Sheikh Iblis, so that Er Reshid’s wit was dazed for excess of delight and his understanding was confounded for joy; after which she improvised and sang the following verses:

My heart will never credit that I am far from thee; In it thou
art, nor ever the soul can absent be.
Or if to me “I’m absent” thou sayest, “’Tis a lie,” My heart
replies, bewildered ‘twixt doubt and certainty.

When she had made an end of her verses, Er Reshid said to her, ‘O Tuhfeh, thine absence was extraordinary, but thy presence is yet more extraordinary.’ ‘By Allah, O my lord,’ answered she, ‘thou sayst sooth.’ And she took his hand and said to him, ‘See what I have brought with me.’ So he looked and saw riches such as neither words could describe nor registers avail to set out, pearls and jewels and jacinths and precious stones and great pearls and magnificent dresses of honour, adorned with pearls and jewels and embroidered with red gold. Moreover, she showed him that which Queen Es Shuhba had bestowed on her of those carpets, which she had brought with her, and that her throne, the like whereof neither Chosroes nor Cassar possessed, and those tables inlaid with pearls and jewels and those vessels, that amazed all who looked on them, and the crown, that was on the head of the circumcised boy, and those dresses of honour, which Queen Es Shuhba and the Sheikh Aboultawaif had put off upon her, and the trays wherein were those riches; brief, she showed him treasures the like whereof he had never in his life set eyes on and which the tongue availeth not to describe and whereat all who looked thereon were amazed.

Er Reshid was like to lose his wits for amazement at this sight and was confounded at this that he beheld and witnessed. Then said he to Tuhfeh, ‘Come, tell me thy story from first to last, [and let me know all that hath betided thee,] as if I had been present’ She answered with ‘Hearkening and obedience,’ and fell to telling him [all that had betided her] first and last, from the time when she first saw the Sheikh Aboultawaif, how he took her and descended with her through the side of the draught-house; and she told him of the horse she had ridden, till she came to the meadow aforesaid and described it to him, together with the palace and that which was therein of furniture, and related to him how the Jinn rejoiced in her and that which she had seen of the kings of them, men and women, and of Queen Kemeriyeh and her sisters and Queen Shuaaeh, Queen of the

Fourth Sea, and Queen Es Shuhba, Queen of Queens, and King Es Shisban, and that which each one of them had bestowed upon her. Moreover, she told him the story of Meimoun the Sworder and described to him his loathly favour, which he had not consented to change, and related to him that which befell her from the kings of the Jinn, men and women, and the coming of the Queen of Queens, Es Shuhba, and how she had loved her and appointed her her vice-queen and how she was thus become ruler over all the kings of the Jinn; and she showed him the patent of investiture that Queen Es Shuhba had written her and told him that which had betided her with the Ghoul-head, whenas it appeared to her in the garden, and how she had despatched it to her palace, beseeching it to bring her news of the Commander of the Faithful and that which had betided him after her. Then she described to him the gardens, wherein she had taken her pleasure, and the baths inlaid with pearls and jewels and told him that which had befallen Meimoun the Sworder, whenas he carried her off, and how he had slain himself; brief, she told him all that she had seen of wonders and rarities and that which she had beheld of all kinds and colours among the Jinn.

Then she told him the story of Anca, daughter of Behram Gour, with Anca, daughter of the wind, and described to him her dwelling-place and her island, whereupon quoth Er Reshid, ‘O Tuhfet es Sedr, tell me of El Anca, daughter of Behram Gour; is she of the Jinn or of mankind or of the birds? For this long time have I desired to find one who should tell me of her.’ ‘It is well, O Commander of the Faithful,’ answered Tuhfeh. ‘I asked the queen of this and she acquainted me with her case and told me who built her the palace.’ Quoth Er Reshid, ‘I conjure thee by Allah, tell it me.’ And Tuhfeh answered, ‘It is well,’ and proceeded to tell him. And indeed he was amazed at that which he heard from her and what she told him and at that which she had brought back of jewels and jacinths of various colours and preciots stones of many kinds, such as amazed the beholder and confounded thought and mind. As for this, it was the means of the enrichment of the Barmecides and the Abbasicles, and they abode in their delight.

Then the Khalif went forth and bade decorate the city: [so they decorated it] and the drums of glad tidings were beaten. Moreover they made banquets to the people and the tables were spread seven days. And Tuhfeh and the Commander of the Faithful ceased not to be in the most delightsome of life and the most prosperous thereof till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies; and thu is all that hath come down to as of their story.”

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Calcutta (1814-18) Text.

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

NOTE.

The following story occupies the last five Nights (cxcv-cc) of the unfinished Calcutta Edition of 1814-18. The only other text of it known to me is that published by Monsieur Langles (Paris, 1814), as an appendix to his Edition of the Voyages of Sindbad, and of this I have freely availed myself in making the present translation, comparing and collating with it the Calcutta (1814-18) Text and filling up and correcting omissions and errors that occur in the latter. In the Calcutta (1814-18) Text this story (Vol. II. p-378) is immediately succeeded by the Seven Voyages of Sindbad (Vol. II. p-458), which conclude the work.

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WOMEN'S CRAFT.

It is told that there was once, in the city of Baghdad, a comely and well-bred youth, fair of face, tall of stature and slender of shape. His name was Alaeddin and he was of the chiefs of the sons of the merchants and had a shop wherein he sold and bought One day, as he sat in his shop, there passed by him a girl of the women of pleasure, who raised her eyes and casting a glance at the young merchant, saw written in a flowing hand on the forepart of the door of his shop, these words, "VERILY, THERE IS NO CRAFT BUT MEN'S CRAFT, FORASMUCH AS IT OVERCOMETH WOMEN'S CRAFT." When she beheld this, she was wroth and took counsel with herself, saying, "As my head liveth, I will assuredly show him a trick of the tricks of women and prove the untruth of this his inscription!"

So, on the morrow, she made her ready and donning the costliest of apparel, adorned herself with the most magnificent of ornaments and the highest of price and stained her hands with henna. Then she let down her tresses upon her shoulders and went forth, walking along with coquettish swimming gait and amorous grace, followed by her slave-girls, till she came to the young merchant's shop and sitting down thereat, under colour of seeking stuffs, saluted him and demanded of him somewhat of merchandise. So he brought out to her various kinds of stuffs and she took them and turned them over, talking with him the while. Then said she to him, "Look at the goodliness of my shape and my symmetry. Seest thou in me any default?" And he answered, "No, O my lady." "Is it lawful," continued she, "in any one that he should slander me and say that I am humpbacked?"

Then she discovered to him a part of her bosom, and when he saw her breasts, his reason took flight from his head and he said to her, "Cover it up, so may God have thee in His safeguard!" Quoth she, "Is it fair of any one to missay of my charms?" And he answered, "How shall any missay of thy charms, and thou the sun of loveliness?" Then said she, "Hath any the right to say of me that I am lophanded? "And tucking up her sleeves, showed him forearms, as they were crystal; after which she unveiled to him a face, as it were a full moon breaking forth on its fourteenth night, and said to him, “Is it lawful for any to missay of me [and avouch] that my face is pitted with smallpox or that I am one-eyed or crop-eared?” And he answered her, saying, “O my lady, what is it moveth thee to discover unto me that lovely face and those fair members, [of wont so jealously] veiled and guarded? Tell me the truth of the matter, may I be thy ransom!” And he recited the following verses:

A white one, from her sheath of tresses now laid bare And now
 again concealed in black, luxuriant hair;
As if the maid the day resplendent and her locks The night that
 o’er it spreads its shrouding darkness were.

“Know, O my lord,” answered she, “that I am a maiden oppressed of my father, for that he misspeaketh of me and saith to me, ‘Thou art foul of favour and it befitteth not that thou wear rich clothes; for thou and the slave-girls, ye are equal in rank, there is no distinguishing thee from them.’ Now he is a rich man, having wealth galore, [and saith not on this wise but] because he is a niggard and grudgeth the spending of a farthing; [wherefore he is loath to marry me,] lest he be put to somewhat of charge in my marriage, albeit God the Most High hath been bountiful to him and he is a man puissant in his time and lacking nothing of the goods of the world.” “Who is thy father,” asked the young merchant, “and what is his condition?” And she replied, “He is the Chief Cadi of the Supreme Court, under whose hand are all the Cadis who administer justice in this city.”

The merchant believed her and she took leave of him and went away, leaving in his heart a thousand regrets, for that the love of her had gotten possession of him and he knew not how he should win to her; wherefore he abode enamoured, love-distraught, unknowing if he were alive or dead. As soon as she was gone, he shut his shop and going up to the Court, went in to the Chief Cadi and saluted him. The magistrate returned his salutation and entreated him with honour and seated him by his side. Then said Alaeddin to him, “I come to thee, a suitor, seeking thine alliance and desiring the hand of thy noble daughter.” “O my lord merchant,” answered the Cadi, “indeed my daughter beseemeth not the like of thee, neither sorteth she with the goodliness of thy youth and the pleasantness of thy composition and the sweetness of thy discourse;" but Alaeddin rejoined, saying, "This talk behoveth thee not, neither is it seemly in thee; if I be content with her, how should this irk thee?" So they came to an accord and concluded the treaty of marriage at a dower precedent of five purses paid down then and there and a dower contingent of fifteen purses, so it might be uneath unto him to put her away, forasmuch as her father had given him fair warning, but he would not be warned.

Then they drew up the contract of marriage and the merchant said, "I desire to go in to her this night." So they carried her to him in procession that very night, and he prayed the prayer of eventide and entered the privy chamber prepared for him; but, when he lifted the veil from the face of the bride and looked, he saw a foul face and a blameworthy aspect; yea, he beheld somewhat the like whereof may God not show thee! loathly, dispensing from description, inasmuch as there were reckoned in her all legal defects. So he repented, whenas repentance availed him not, and knew that the girl had cheated him. However, he lay with the bride, against his will, and abode that night sore troubled in mind, as he were in the prison of Ed Dilem. Hardly had the day dawned when he arose from her and betaking himself to one of the baths, dozed there awhile, after which he made the ablution of defilement and washed his clothes. Then he went out to the coffee-house and drank a cup of coffee; after which he returned to his shop and opening the door, sat down, with discomfiture and chagrin written on his face.

Presently, his friends and acquaintances among the merchants and people of the market began to come up to him, by ones and twos, to give him joy, and said to him, laughing, "God's blessing on thee! Where an the sweetmeats? Where is the coffee? It would seem thou hast forgotten us; surely, the charms of the bride have disordered thy reason and taken thy wit, God help thee! Well, well; we give thee joy, we give thee joy." And they made mock of him, whilst he gave them no answer and was like to tear his clothes and weep for vexation. Then they went away from him, and when it was the hour of noon, up came his mistress, trailing her skirts and swaying in her gait, as she were a cassia-branch in a garden. She was yet more richly dressed and adorned and more bewitching in her symmetry and grace than on the previous day, so that she made the passers stop and stand in ranks to look on her.

When she came to Alaeddin's shop, she sat down thereat and said to him, "May the day be blessed to thee, O my lord Alaeddin! God prosper thee and be good to thee and accomplish thy gladness and make it a wedding of weal and content!" He knitted his brows and frowned in answer to her; then said he to her, "Tell me, how have I failed of thy due, or what have I done to injure thee, that thou shouldst play me this trick?" Quoth she, "Thou hast no wise offended against me; but this inscription that is written on the door of thy shop irketh me and vexeth my heart. If thou wilt change it and write up the contrary thereof, I will deliver thee from thy predicament." And he answered, "This that thou seekest is easy. On my head and eyes be it." So saying, he brought out a ducat and calling one of his mamelukes, said to him, "Get thee to such an one the scribe and bid him write us an inscription, adorned with gold and ultramarine, in these words, to wit, 'THERE IS NO CRAFT BUT WOMEN'S CRAFT, FOR THAT INDEED THEIR CRAFT IS A MIGHTY CRAFT AND OVERCOMETH AND HUMBLETH THE FABLES OF MEN.'" And she said to the servant, "Go forthright."

So he repaired to the scribe, who wrote him the scroll, and he brought it to his master, who set it on the door and said to the damsel, "Art thou satisfied?" "Yes," answered she. "Arise forthright and get thee to the place before the citadel, where do thou foregather with all the mountebanks and ape-dancers and bear-leaders and drummers and pipers and bid them come to thee to-morrow early, with their drums and pipes, what time thou drinkest coffee with thy father-in-law the Cadi, and congratulate thee and wish thee joy, saying, 'A blessed day, O son of our uncle! Indeed, thou art the vein of our eye! We rejoice for thee, and if thou be ashamed of us, verily, we pride ourselves upon thee; so, though thou banish us from thee, know that we will not forsake thee, albeit thou forsakest us.' And do thou fall to strewing dinars and dirhems amongst them; whereupon the Cadi will question thee, and do thou answer him, saying, 'My father was an ape-dancer and this is our original condition; but out Lord opened on us [the gate of fortune] and we have gotten us a name among the merchants and with their provost.’

Then will he say to thee, ‘Then thou art an ape-leader of the tribe of the mountebanks?’ And do thou reply, ‘I may in nowise deny my origin, for the sake of thy daughter and in her honour.’ The Cadi will say, ‘It may not be that thou shalt be given the daughter of a sheikh who sitteth upon the carpet of the Law and whose descent is traceable by genealogy to the loins of the Apostle of God, nor is it seemly that his daughter be in the power of a man who is an ape-dancer, a minstrel.’ And do thou rejoin, ‘Nay, O Effendi, she is my lawful wife and every hair of her is worth a thousand lives, and I will not let her go, though I be given the kingship of the world.’ Then be thou persuaded to speak the word of divorce and so shall the marriage be dissolved and ye be delivered from each other.”

Quoth Alaeddin, “Thou counsellest well,” and locking up his shop, betook himself to the place before the citadel, where he foregathered with the drummers and pipers and instructed them how they should do, [even as his mistress had counselled him,] promising them a handsome reward. So they answered him with “Hearkening and obedience” and on the morrow, after the morning-prayer, he betook himself to the presence of the Cadi, who received him with obsequious courtesy and seated him beside himself. Then he turned to him and fell to conversing with him and questioning him of matters of selling and buying and of the price current of the various commodities that were exported to Baghdad from all parts, whilst Alaeddin replied to him of all whereof he asked him.

As they were thus engaged, behold, up came the dancers and mountebanks, with their pipes and drums, whilst one of their number forewent them, with a great banner in his hand, and played all manner antics with his voice and limbs. When they came to the Courthouse, the Cadi exclaimed, “I seek refuge with God from yonder Satans!” And the merchant laughed, but said nothing. Then they entered and saluting his highness the Cadi, kissed Alaeddin’s hands and said, “God’s blessing on thee, O son of our uncle! Indeed, thou solacest our eyes in that which thou dost, and we beseech God to cause the glory of our lord the Cadi to endure, who hath honoured us by admitting thee to his alliance and allotted us a part in his high rank and dignity.” When the Cadi heard this talk, it bewildered his wit and he was confounded and his face flushed with anger and he said to his son-in-law, “What words are these?” Quoth the merchant, “Knowest thou not, O my lord, that I am of this tribe? Indeed this man is the son of my mother’s brother and that other the son of my father’s brother, and I am only reckoned of the merchants [by courtesy]!”

When the Cadi heard this, his colour changed and he was troubled and waxed exceeding wroth and was rike to burst for excess of rage. Then said he to the merchant, “God forbid that this should be! How shall it be permitted that the daughter of the Cadi of the Muslims abide with a man of the dancers and vile of origin? By Allah, except thou divorce her forthright, I will bid beat thee and cast thee into prison till thou die! Had I foreknown that thou wast of them, I had not suffered thee to approach me, but had spat in thy face, for that thou art filthier than a dog or a hog.” Then he gave him a push and casting him down from his stead, commanded him to divorce; but he said, “Be clement to me, O Effendi, for that God is clement, and hasten not. I will not divorce my wife, though thou give me the kingdom of Irak.”

The Cadi was perplexed and knew that constraint was not permitted of the law; so he spoke the young merchant fair and said to him, “Protect me, so may God protect thee. If thou divorce her not, this disgrace will cleave to me till the end of time.” Then his rage got the better of him and he said to him, “An thou divorce her not with a good grace, I will bid strike off thy head forthright and slay myself; rather flame than shame.” The merchant bethought himself awhile, then divorced her with a manifest divorcement and on this wise he delivered himself from that vexation. Then he returned to his shop and sought in marriage of her father her who had played him the trick aforesaid and who was the daughter of the chief of the guild of the blacksmiths. So he took her to wife and they abode with each other and lived the most solaceful of lives, in all prosperity and contentment and joyance, till the day of death; and God [alone] is All-Knowing.

VOLUME XII. Tales from the Arabic III

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NOUREDDIN ALI OF DAMASCUS AND THE DAMSEL SITT EL MILAH.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, a merchant of the merchants of Damascus, by name Aboulhusn, who had money and riches and slaves and slave-girls and lands and houses and baths; but he was not blessed with a child and indeed his years waxed great; wherefore he addressed himself to supplicate God the Most High in private and in public and in his inclining and his prostration and at the season of the call to prayer, beseeching Him to vouchsafe him, before his admittance [to His mercy], a son who should inherit his wealth and possessions; and God answered his prayer. So his wife conceived and the days of her pregnancy were accomplished and her months and her nights and the pangs of her travail came upon her and she gave birth to a male child, as he were a piece of the moon. He had not his match for beauty and he put to shame the sun and the resplendent moon; for he had a shining face and black eyes of Babylonian witchery and aquiline nose and ruby lips; brief, he was perfect of attributes, the loveliest of the folk of his time, without doubt or gainsaying.

His father rejoiced in him with the utmost joy and his heart was solaced and he was glad; and he made banquets to the folk and clad the poor and the widows. He named the boy Sidi Noureddin Ali and reared him in fondness and delight among the slaves and servants. When he came to seven years of age, his father put him to school, where he learned the sublime Koran and the arts of writing and reckoning: and when he reached his tenth year, he learned horsemanship and archery and to occupy himself with arts and sciences of all kinds, part and parts. He grew up pleasant and subtle and goodly and lovesome, ravishing all who beheld him, and inclined to companying with brethren and comrades and mixing with merchants and travellers. From these latter he heard tell of that which they had seen of the marvels of the cities in their travels and heard them say, “He who leaveth not his native land diverteth not himself [with the sight of the marvels of the world,] and especially of the city of Baghdad.”

So he was concerned with an exceeding concern for his lack of travel and discovered this to his father, who said to him, "O my son, why do I see thee chagrined?" And he answered, "I would fain travel." Quoth Aboulhusn, "O my son, none travelleth save those whose occasion is urgent and those who are compelled thereunto [by need]. As for thee, O my son, thou enjoyest ample fortune; so do thou content thyself with that which God hath given thee and be bounteous [unto others], even as He hath been bounteous unto thee; and afflict not thyself with the toil and hardship of travel, for indeed it is said that travel is a piece of torment." But the youth said, "Needs must I travel to Baghdad, the abode of peace."

When his father saw the strength of his determination to travel, he fell in with his wishes and equipped him with five thousand dinars in cash and the like in merchandise and sent with him two serving-men. So the youth set out, trusting in the blessing of God the Most High, and his father went out with him, to take leave of him, and returned [to Damascus]. As for Noureddin Ali, he gave not over travelling days and nights till he entered the city of Baghdad and laying up his loads in the caravanserai, made for the bath, where he did away that which was upon him of the dirt of the road and putting off his travelling clothes, donned a costly suit of Yemen stuff, worth an hundred dinars. Then he put in his sleeve a thousand mithcals of gold and sallied forth a-walking and swaying gracefully as he went. His gait confounded all those who beheld him, as he shamed the branches with his shape and belittled the rose with the redness of his cheeks and his black eyes of Babylonian witchcraft; indeed, thou wouldst deem that whoso looked on him would surely be preserved from calamity; [for he was] even as saith of him one of his describers in the following verses:

Thy haters say and those who malice to thee bear A true word,
profiting its hearers everywhere;
"The glory's not in those whom raiment rich makes fair, But those
who still adorn the raiment that they wear."

So he went walking in the thoroughfares of the city and viewing its ordinance and its markets and thoroughfares and gazing on its folk. Presently, Abou Nuwas met him. (Now he was of those of whom it is said, "They love the fair," and indeed there is said what is said concerning him. When he saw Noureddin Ali, he stared at him in amazement and exclaimed, "Say, I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak!" Then he accosted the young Damascene and saluting him, said to him, "Why do I see my lord alone and forlorn? Meseemeth thou art a stranger and knowest not this country; so, with my lord's permission, I will put myself at his service and acquaint him with the streets, for that I know this city." Quoth Noureddin, "This will be of thy favour, O uncle." Whereat Abou Nuwas rejoiced and fared on with him, showing him the markets and thoroughfares, till they came to the house of a slave-dealer, where he stopped and said to the youth, "From what city art thou?" "From Damascus," answered Noureddin; and Abou Nuwas said, "By Allah, thou art from a blessed city, even as saith of it the poet in the following verses:

Damascus is all gardens decked for the pleasance of the eyes; For the seeker there are black-eyed girls and boys of Paradise."

Noureddin thanked him and they entered the slave-merchant's house. When the people of the house saw Abou Nuwas, they rose to do him worship, for that which they knew of his station with the Commander of the Faithful. Moreover, the slave-dealer himself came up to them with two chairs, and they seated themselves thereon. Then the slave-merchant went into the house and returning with the slave-girl, as she were a willow-wand or a bamboo-cane, clad in a vest of damask silk and tired with a black and white turban, the ends whereof fell down over her face, seated her on a chair of ebony; after which quoth he to those who were present, "I will discover to you a face as it were a full moon breaking forth from under a cloud." And they said, "Do so." So he unveiled the damsel's face and behold, she was like the shining sun, with comely shape and day-bright face and slender [waist and heavy] hips; brief, she was endowed with elegance, the description whereof existeth not, [and was] even as saith of her the poet:

A fair one, to idolaters if she herself should show, They'd leave
their idols and her face for only Lord would know;

And if into the briny sea one day she chanced to spit, Assuredly
the salt sea’s floods straight fresh and sweet would grow.

The dealer stood at her head and one of the merchants said, “I bid a thousand dinars for her.” Quoth another, “I bid eleven hundred dinars;” [and a third, “I bid twelve hundred”]. Then said a fourth merchant, “Be she mine for fourteen hundred dinars.” And the biddings stood still at that sum. Quoth her owner, “I will not sell her save with her consent. If she desire to be sold, I will sell her to whom she willeth.” And the slave-dealer said to him, “What is her name?” “Her name is Sitt el Milah,” answered the other; whereupon the dealer said to her, “By thy leave, I will sell thee to yonder merchant for this price of fourteen hundred dinars.” Quoth she, “Come hither to me.” So he came up to her and when he drew near, she gave him a kick with her foot and cast him to the ground, saying, “I will not have that old man.” The slave-dealer arose, shaking the dust from his clothes and head, and said, “Who biddeth more? Who is desirous [of buying?]” Quoth one of the merchants, “I,” and the dealer said to her, “O Sitt el Milah, shall I sell thee to this merchant?” “Come hither to me,” answered she; but he said “Nay; speak and I will hearken to thee from my place, for I will not trust myself to thee,” And she said, “I will not have him.”

Then he looked at her and seeing her eyes fixed on the young Damascene, for that in very deed he had ravished her with his beauty and grace, went up to the latter and said to him, “O my lord, art thou a looker-on or a buyer? Tell me.” Quoth Noureddin, “I am both looker-on and buyer. Wilt thou sell me yonder slave-girl for sixteen hundred dinars?” And he pulled out the purse of gold. So the dealer returned, dancing and clapping his hands and saying, “So be it, so be it, or not [at all]!” Then he came to the damsel and said to her, “O Sitt el Milah, shall I sell thee to yonder young Damascene for sixteen hundred dinars?” But she answered, “No,” of shamefastness before her master and the bystanders; whereupon the people of the bazaar and the slave-merchant departed, and Abou Nuwas and Ali Noureddin arose and went each his own way, whilst the damsel returned to her master’s house, full of love for the young Damascene.

When the night darkened on her, she called him to mind and her heart clave to him and sleep visited her not; and on this wise she abode days and nights, till she sickened and abstained from food. So her lord went in to her and said to her, “O Sitt el Milah, how findest thou thyself?” “O my lord,” answered she, “I am dead without recourse and I beseech thee to bring me my shroud, so I may look on it before my death.” Therewithal he went out from her, sore concerned for her, and betook himself to a friend of his, a draper, who had been present on the day when the damsel was cried [for sale]. Quoth his friend to him, “Why do I see thee troubled?” And he answered, “Sitt el Milah is at the point of death and these three days she hath neither eaten nor drunken. I questioned her to-day of her case and she said, ‘O my lord, buy me a shroud, so I may look on it before my death.’” Quoth the draper, “Methinks nought ails her but that she is enamoured of the young Damascene and I counsel thee to mention his name to her and avouch to her that he hath foregathered with thee on her account and is desirous of coming to thy house, so he may hear somewhat of her singing. If she say, ‘I reck not of him, for there is that to do with me which distracteth me from the Damascene and from other than he,’ know that she saith sooth concerning her sickness; but, if she say to thee other than this, acquaint me therewith.’”

So the man returned to his lodging and going in to his slave-girl, said to her, “O Sitt el Milah, I went out on thine occasion and there met me the young man of Damascus, and he saluted me and saluteth thee. Indeed, he seeketh to win thy favour and would fain be a guest in our dwelling, so thou mayst let him hear somewhat of thy singing.” When she heard speak of the young Damascene, she gave a sob, that her soul was like to depart her body, and answered, saying, “He knoweth my plight and is ware that these three days past I have eaten not nor drunken, and I beseech thee, O my lord, by the Great God, to accomplish the stranger his due and bring him to my lodging and make excuse to him for me.”

When her master heard this, his reason fled for joy and he went to his friend the draper and said to him, “Thou wast right in the matter of the damsel, for that she is enamoured of the young Damascene; so how shall I do?” Quoth the other, “Go to the bazaar and when thou seest him, salute him and say to him, ‘Indeed, thy departure the other day, without accomplishing thine occasion, was grievous to me; so, if thou be still minded to buy the girl, I will abate thee an hundred dinars of that which thou badest for her, by way of hospitable entreatment of thee and making myself agreeable to thee; for that thou art a stranger in our land.' If he say to thee, 'I have no desire for her' and hold off from thee, know that he will not buy; in which case, let me know, so I may contrive thee another device; and if he say to thee other than this, conceal not from me aught.

So the girl's owner betook himself to the bazaar, where he found the youth seated at the upper end of the merchants' place of session, selling and buying and taking and giving, as he were the moon on the night of its full, and saluted him. The young man returned his salutation and he said to him, "O my lord, be not thou vexed at the girl's speech the other day, for her price shall be less than that [which thou badest], to the intent that I may propitiate thy favour. If thou desire her for nought, I will send her to thee, or if thou wouldst have me abate thee of her price, I will well, for I desire nought but what shall content thee; for that thou art a stranger in our land and it behoveth us to entreat thee hospitably and have consideration for thee." "By Allah," answered the youth, "I will not take her from thee but at an advance on that which I bade thee for her aforetime; so wilt thou now sell her to me for seventeen hundred dinars?" And the other answered," O my lord, I sell her to thee, may God bless thee in her."

So the young man went to his lodging and fetching a purse, returned to the girl's owner and counted out to him the price aforesaid, whilst the draper was between them. Then said he, "Bring her forth;" but the other answered, "She cannot come forth at this present; but be thou my guest the rest of this day and night, and on the morrow thou shall take thy slave-girl and go in the protection of God." The youth fell in with him of this and he carried him to his house, where, after a little, he let bring meat and wine, and they [ate and] drank. Then said Noureddin to the girl's owner, "I beseech thee bring me the damsel, for that I bought her not but for the like of this time." So he arose and [going in to the girl], said to her, "O Sitt el Milan, the young man hath paid down thy price and we have bidden him hither; so he hath come to our dwelling and we have entertained him, and he would fain have thee be present with him."

Therewithal the damsel rose briskly and putting off her clothes, washed and donned sumptuous apparel and perfumed herself and went out to him, as she were a willow-wand or a bamboo-cane, followed by a black slave girl, bearing the lute. When she came to the young man, she saluted him and sat down by his side. Then she took the lute from the slave-girl and tuning it, smote thereon in four-and-twenty modes, after which she returned to the first mode and sang the following verses:

Unto me the world's whole gladness is thy nearness and thy sight;
All incumbent thy possession and thy love a law of right.
In my tears I have a witness; when I call thee to my mind, Down
my cheeks they run like torrents, and I cannot stay their
flight.
None, by Allah, 'mongst all creatures, none I love save thee
alone! Yea, for I am grown thy bondman, by the troth betwixt
us plight.
Peace upon thee! Ah, how bitter were the severance from thee! Be
not this thy troth-plight's ending nor the last of our
delight!

Therewithal the young man was moved to delight and exclaimed, "By Allah, thou sayest well, O Sitt el Milan! Let me hear more." Then he handselled her with fifty dinars and they drank and the cups went round among them; and her seller said to her, "O Sitt el Milah, this is the season of leave-taking; so let us hear somewhat on the subject." Accordingly she struck the lute and avouching that which was in her heart, sang the following verses:

I am filled full of longing pain and memory and dole, That from
the wasted body's wounds distract the anguished soul.
Think not, my lords, that I forget: the case is still the same.
When such a fever fills the heart, what leach can make it
whole?
And if a creature in his tears could swim, as in a sea, I to do
this of all that breathe were surely first and sole.

O skinker of the wine of woe, turn from a love-sick maid, Who
drinks her tears still, night and morn, thy bitter-flavoured
bowl.
I had not left you, had I known that severance would prove My
death; but what is past is past, Fate stoops to no control.

As they were thus in the enjoyment of all that in most delicious of easance and delight, and indeed the wine was sweet to them and the talk pleasant, behold, there came a knocking at the door. So the master of the house went out, that he might see what was to do, and found ten men of the Khalif's eunuchs at the door. When he saw this, he was amazed and said to them, "What is to do?" Quoth they, "The Commander of the Faithful saluteth thee and requireth of thee the slave-girl whom thou hast for sale and whose name is Sitt el Milah." By Allah," answered the other, "I have sold her." And they said, "Swear by the head of the Commander of the Faithful that she is not in thy dwelling." He made oath that he had sold her and that she was no longer at his disposal; but they paid no *need to his word and forcing their way into the house, found the damsel and the young Damascene in the sitting-chamber. So they laid hands upon her, and the youth said, "This is my slave-girl, whom I have bought with my money." But they hearkened not to his speech and taking her, carried her off to the Commander of the Faithful.

Therewithal Noureddin's life was troubled; so he arose and donned his clothes, and his host said, "Whither away this night, O my lord?" Quoth Noureddin, "I mean to go to my lodging, and to-morrow I will betake myself to the palace of the Commander of the Faithful and demand my slave-girl." "Sleep till the morning," said the other, "and go not forth at the like of this hour." But he answered, "Needs must I go;" and the host said to him, "[Go] in the safeguard of God." So Noureddin went forth, and drunkenness had got the mastery of him, wherefore he threw himself down on [a bench before one of] the shops. Now the watch were at that hour making their round and they smelt the sweet scent [of essences] and wine that exhaled from him; so they made for it and found the youth lying on the bench, without sense or motion. They poured water upon him, and he awoke, whereupon they carried him to the house of the Chief of the Police and he questioned him of his affair. “O my lord,” answered Noureddin, “I am a stranger in this town and have been with one of my friends. So I came forth from his house and drunkenness overcame me.”

The prefect bade carry him to his lodging; but one of those in attendance upon him, by name El Muradi, said to him, “What wilt thou do? This man is clad in rich clothes and on his finger is a ring of gold, the beazel whereof is a ruby of great price; so we will carry him away and slay him and take that which is upon him of raiment [and what not else] and bring it to thee; for that thou wilt not [often] see profit the like thereof, more by token that this fellow is a stranger and there is none to enquire concerning him.” Quoth the prefect, “This fellow is a thief and that which he saith is leasing.” And Noureddin said, “God forbid that I should be a thief!” But the prefect answered, “Thou liest.” So they stripped him of his clothes and taking the ring from his finger, beat him grievously, what while he cried out for succour, but none succoured him, and besought protection, but none protected him. Then said he to them, “O folk, ye are quit of that which ye have taken from me; but now restore me to my lodging.” But they answered, saying, “Leave this knavery, O cheat! Thine intent is to sue us for thy clothes on the morrow.” “By Allah, the One, the Eternal,” exclaimed he, “I will not sue any for them!” But they said, “We can nowise do this.” And the prefect bade them carry him to the Tigris and there slay him and cast him into the river.

So they dragged him away, what while he wept and spoke the words which whoso saith shall nowise be confounded, to wit, “There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Sublime!” When they came to the Tigris, one of them drew the sword upon him and El Muradi said to the swordbearer, “Smite off his head.” But one of them, Ahmed by name, said, “O folk, deal gently with this poor wretch and slay him not unjustly and wickedly, for I stand in fear of God the Most High, lest He burn me with his fire.” Quoth El Muradi, “A truce to this talk!” And Ahmed said, “If ye do with him aught, I will acquaint the Commander of the Faithful.” “How, then, shall we do with him?” asked they; and he answered, “Let us deposit him in prison and I will be answerable to you for his provision; so shall we be quit of his blood, for indeed he is wrongfully used.” So they took him up and casting him into the Prison of Blood,went away.

Meanwhile, they carried the damsel into the Commander of the Faithful and she pleased him; so he assigned her a lodging of the apartments of choice. She abode in the palace, eating not neither drinking and ceasing not from weeping night nor day, till, one night, the Khalif sent for her to his sitting-chamber and said to her, "O Sitt el Milah, be of good heart and cheerful eye, for I will make thy rank higher than [any of] the concubines and thou shall see that which shall rejoice thee." She kissed the earth and wept; whereupon the Khalif called for her lute and bade her sing. So she improvised and sang the following verses, in accordance with that which was in her heart:

Say, by the lightnings of thy teeth and thy soul's pure desire,
Moan'st thou as moan the doves and is thy heart for doubt on fire?
How many a victim of the pangs of love-liking hath died! Tired is my patience, but of blame my censors never tire.

When she had made an end of her song, she cast the lute from her hand and wept till she swooned away, whereupon the Khalif bade carry her to her chamber. Now he was ravished with her and loved her with an exceeding love; so, after awhile, he again commanded to bring her to his presence, and when she came, he bade her sing. Accordingly, she took the lute and spoke forth that which was in her heart and sang the following verses:

What strength have I solicitude and long desire to bear? Why art thou purposed to depart and leave me to despair?
Why to estrangement and despite inclin'st thou with the spy? Yet that a bough from side to side incline small
wonder 'twere.
Thou layst on me a load too great to bear, and thus thou dost But that my burdens I may bind and so towards thee fare.

Then she cast the lute from her hand and swooned away; so she was carried to her chamber and indeed passion waxed upon her.

After a long while, the Commander of the Faithful sent for her a third time and bade her sing. So she took the lute and sang the following verses:

O hills of the sands and the rugged piebald plain, Shall the
  bondman of love win ever free from pain!
I wonder, shall I and the friend who's far from me Once more be
  granted of Fate to meet, we twain!
Bravo for a fawn with a houri's eye of black, Like the sun or the
  shining moon midst the starry train!
To lovers, "What see ye?" he saith, and to hearts of stone, "What
  love ye," quoth he, "[if to love me ye disdain?"]
I supplicate Him, who parted us and doomed Our separation, that
  we may meet again.

When she had made an end of her song, the Commander of the Faithful said to her, "O damsel, thou art in love." "Yes," answered she. And he said, "With whom?" Quoth she, "With my lord and my master, my love for whom is as the love of the earth for rain, or as the love of the female for the male; and indeed the love of him is mingled with my flesh and my blood and hath entered into the channels of my bones. O Commander of the Faithful, whenas I call him to mind, mine entrails are consumed, for that I have not accomplished my desire of him, and but that I fear to die, without seeing him, I would assuredly kill myself." And he said, "Art thou in my presence and bespeakest me with the like of these words? I will assuredly make thee forget thy lord."

Then he bade take her away; so she was carried to her chamber and he sent her a black slave-girl, with a casket, wherein were three thousand dinars and a carcanet of gold, set with pearls, great and small, and jewels, worth other three thousand, saying to her, "The slave-girl and that which is with her are a gift from me to thee." When she heard this, she said, "God forbid that I should be consoled for the love of my lord and my master, though with the earth full of gold!" And she improvised and recited the following verses:

I swear by his life, yea, I swear by the life of my love without

peer, To please him or save him from hurt, I'd enter the
fire without fear!
"Console thou thyself for his love," quoth they, "with another
than he;" But, "Nay, by his life," answered I, "I'll never
forget him my dear!"
A moon is my love, in a robe of loveliness proudly arrayed, And
the splendours of new-broken day from his cheeks and his
forehead shine clear.

Then the Khalif summoned her to his presence a fourth time and said to her, "O Sitt el Milah, sing." So she improvised and sang the following verses:

To his beloved one the lover's heart's inclined; His soul's a
captive slave, in sickness' hands confined.
"What is the taste of love?" quoth one, and I replied, "Sweet
water 'tis at first; but torment lurks behind."
Love's slave, I keep my troth with them; but, when they vowed,
Fate made itself Urcoub, whom never oath could bind.
What is there in the tents? Their burdens are become A lover's,
whose belov'd is in the litters' shrined.
In every halting-place like Joseph she appears And he in
every stead with Jacob's grief is pined.

When she had made an end of her song, she threw the lute from her hand and wept till she swooned away. So they sprinkled on her rose-water, mingled with musk, and willow-flower water; and when she came to herself, Er Reshid said to her, "O Sitt el Milah, this is not fair dealing in thee. We love thee and thou lovest another." "O Commander of the Faithful," answered she, "there is no help for it." Therewithal he was wroth with her and said, "By the virtue of Hemzeh and Akil and Mohammed, Prince of the Apostles, if thou name one other than I in my presence, I will bid strike off thy head!" Then he bade return her to her chamber, whilst she wept and recited the following verses:

If I must die, then welcome death to heal My woes; 'twere lighter

than the pangs I feel.
What if the sabre cut me limb from limb! No torment ‘twere for
lovers true and leal.

Then the Khalif went in to the Lady Zubeideh, pale with anger, and she noted this in him and said to him, “How cometh it that I see the Commander of the Faithful changed of colour?” “O daughter of my uncle,” answered he, “I have a beautiful slave-girl, who reciteth verses and telleth stories, and she hath taken my whole heart; but she loveth other than I and avoucheth that she loveth her [former] master; wherefore I have sworn a great oath that, if she come again to my sitting-chamber and sing for other than I, I will assuredly take a span from her highest part.”Quoth Zubeideh, “Let the Commander of the Faithful favour me with her presence, so I may look on her and hear her singing.” So he bade fetch her and she came, whereupon the Lady Zubeideh withdrew behind the curtain, whereas she saw her not, and Er Reshid said to her, “Sing to us.” So she took the lute and tuning it, sang the following verses:

Lo, since the day I left you, O my masters, Life is not sweet, no
aye my heart is light.
Yea, in the night the thought of you still slays me; Hidden are
my traces from the wise men’s sight,
All for a wild deer’s love, whose looks have snared me And on
whose brows the morning glitters bright
I am become, for severance from my loved one, Like a left hand,
forsaken of the right.
Beauty on his cheek hath written, “Blest be Allah, He who created
this enchanting wight!”
Him I beseech our loves who hath dissevered, Us of his grace once
more to reunite.

When Er Reshid heard this, he waxed exceeding wroth and said, “May God not reunite you twain in gladness!” Then he summoned the headsman, and when he presented himself, he said to him, “Strike off the head of this accursed slave-girl.” So Mesrour took her by the hand and [led her away; but], when she came to the door, she turned and said to the Khalif, “O Commander of the Faithful, I conjure thee, by thy fathers and forefathers, give ear unto that I shall say!” Then she improvised and recited the following verses:

O Amir of justice, be kind to thy subjects; For justice, indeed,
of thy nature’s a trait.
O thou my inclining to love him that blamest, Shall lovers be
blamed for the errors of Fate?
Then spare me, by Him who vouchsafed thee the kingship; For a
gift in this world is the regal estate.

Then Mesrour carried her to the other end of the sitting-chamber and bound her eyes and making her sit, stood awaiting a second commandment; whereupon quoth the Lady Zubeideh, “O Commander of the Faithful, with thy permission, wilt thou not vouchsafe this damsel a share of thy clemency? Indeed, if thou slay her, it were injustice.” Quoth he, “What is to be done with her?” And she said, “Forbear to slay her and send for her lord. If he be as she describeth him in grace and goodliness, she is excused, and if he be not on this wise, then slay her, and this shall be thy justification against her.”

“Be it as thou deemest,” answered Er Reshid and caused return the damsel to her chamber, saying to her, “The Lady Zubeideh saith thus and thus.” Quoth she, “God requite her for me with good! Indeed, thou dealest equitably, O Commander of the Faithful, in this judgment.” And he answered, “Go now to thy place, and to-morrow we will let bring thy lord.” So she kissed the earth and recited the following verses:

I am content, for him I love, to all abide; So, who will, let him
blame, and who will, let him chide.
At their appointed terms souls die; but for despair My soul is
like to die, or ere its term betide.
O thou with love of whom I’m smitten, yet content, I prithee come
to me and hasten to my side.

Then she arose and returned to her chamber.

On the morrow, the Commander of the Faithful sat [in his hall of audience] and his Vizier Jaafer ben Yehya the Barmecide came in to him; whereupon he called to him, saying, “I would have thee bring me a youth who is lately come to Baghdad, hight [Sidi Noureddin Ali] the Damascene.” Quoth Jaafer, “Hearkening and obedience,” and going forth in quest of the youth, sent to the markets and khans and caravanserais three days’ space, but found no trace of him, neither lit upon tidings of him. So on the fourth day he presented himself before the Khalif and said to him, “O our lord, I have sought him these three days, but have not found him.” Quoth Er Reshid, “Make ready letters to Damascus. Belike he hath returned to his own land.” So Jaafer wrote a letter and despatched it by a dromedary-courier to the city of Damascus; and they sought him there and found him not.

Meanwhile, news was brought that Khorassan had been conquered; whereupon Er Reshid rejoiced and bade decorate Baghdad and release all who were in the prisons, giving each of them a dinar and a dress. So Jaafer addressed himself to the decoration of the city and bade his brother El Fezl ride to the prison and clothe and release the prisoners. El Fezl did his brother’s bidding and released all but the young Damascene, who abode still in the Prison of Blood, saying, “There is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Sublime! Verily, we are God’s and to Him we return.” Then said El Fezl to the gaoler, “Is there any prisoner left in the prison?” “No,” answered he, and El Fezl was about to depart, when Noureddin called out to him from within the prison, saying, “O my lord, tarry, for there remaineth none in the prison other than I and indeed I am oppressed. This is a day of clemency and there is no disputing concerning it.” El Fezl bade release him; so they set him free and he gave him a dress and a dinar. So the young man went out, bewildered and knowing not whither he should go, for that he had abidden in the prison nigh a year and indeed his condition was changed and his favour faded, and he abode walking and turning round, lest El Muradi should come upon him and cast him into another calamity.

When El Muradi heard of his release, he betook himself to the chief of the police and said to him, “O our lord, we are not assured from yonder youth, [the Damascene], for that he hath been released from prison and we fear lest he complain of us.” Quoth the prefect, “How shall we do?” And El Muradi answered, saying, “I will cast him into a calamity for thee.” Then he ceased not to follow the young Damascene from place to place till he came up with him in a strait place and a by-street without an issue; whereupon he accosted him and putting a rope about his neck, cried out, saying, “A thief!” The folk flocked to him from all sides and fell to beating and reviling Noureddin, whilst he cried out for succour, but none succoured him, and El Muradi still said to him, “But yesterday the Commander of the Faithful released thee and to-day thou stealest!” So the hearts of the folk were hardened against him and El Muradi carried him to the master of police, who bade cut off his hand.

Accordingly, the hangman took him and bringing out the knife, offered to cut off his hand, what while El Muradi said to him, “Cut and sever the bone and sear it not for him, so he may lose his blood and we be rid of him.” But Ahmed, he who had aforetime been the means of his deliverance, sprang up to him and said, “O folk, fear God in [your dealings with] this youth, for that I know his affair from first to last and he is void of offence and guiltless. Moreover, he is of the folk of condition, and except ye desist from him, I will go up to the Commander of the Faithful and acquaint him with the case from first to last and that the youth is guiltless of crime or offence.” Quoth El Muradi, “Indeed, we are not assured from his mischief.” And Ahmed answered, “Release him and commit him to me and I will warrant you against his affair, for ye shall never see him again after this.” So they delivered Noureddin to him and he took him from their hands and said to him, “O youth, have compassion on thyself, for indeed thou hast fallen into the hands of these folk twice and if they lay hold of thee a third time, they will make an end of thee; and [in dealing thus with thee], I aim at reward and recompense for thee and answered prayer.”

Noureddin fell to kissing his hand and calling down blessings on him and said to him, “Know that I am a stranger in this your city and the completion of kindness is better than the beginning thereof;

wherefore I beseech thee of thy favour that thou complete to me thy good offices and kindness and bring me to the gate of the city. So will thy beneficence be accomplished unto me and may God the Most High requite thee for me with good!" ["Fear not,"] answered Ahmed; "no harm shall betide thee. Go; I will bear thee company till thou come to thy place of assurance." And he left him not till he brought him to the gate of the city and said to him, "O youth, go in the safeguard of God and return not to the city; for, if they fall in with thee [again], they will make an end of thee." Noureddin kissed his hand and going forth the city, gave not over walking till he came to a mosque that stood in one of the suburbs of Baghdad and entered therein with the night.

Now he had with him nought wherewithal he might cover himself; so he wrapped himself up in one of the rugs of the mosque [and abode thus till daybreak], when the Muezzins came and finding him sitting in that case, said to him, "O youth, what is this plight?" Quoth he, "I cast myself on your hospitality, imploring your protection from a company of folk who seek to kill me unjustly and oppressively, without cause." And [one of] the Muezzin[s] said, "Be of good heart and cheerful eye." Then he brought him old clothes and covered him withal; moreover, he set before him somewhat of meat and seeing upon him signs of gentle breeding, said to him, "O my son, I grow old and desire thee of help, [in return for which] I will do away thy necessity." "Hearkening and obedience," answered Noureddin and abode with the old man, who rested and took his ease, what while the youth [did his service in the mosque], celebrating the praises of God and calling the faithful to prayer and lighting the lamps and filling the ewers and sweeping and cleaning out the place.

Meanwhile, the Lady Zubeideh, the wife of the Commander of the Faithful, made a banquet in her palace and assembled her slave-girls. As for Sitt el Milah, she came, weeping-eyed and mournful-hearted, and those who were present blamed her for this, whereupon she recited the following verses:

Ye chide at one who weepeth for troubles ever new; Needs must th'
    afflicted warble the woes that make him rue.
Except I be appointed a day [to end my pain], I'll weep until

mine eyelids with blood their tears ensue.

When she had made an end of her verses, the Lady Zubeideh bade each damsel sing a song, till the turn came round to Sitt el Milah, whereupon she took the lute and tuning it, sang thereto four-and-twenty songs in four-and-twenty modes; then she returned to the first mode and sang the following verses:

Fortune its arrows all, through him I love, let fly At me and
parted me from him for whom I sigh.
Lo, in my heart the heat of every heart burns high And in mine
eyes unite the tears of every eye.

When she had made an end of her song, she wept till she made the bystanders weep and the Lady Zubeideh condoled with her and said to her, “God on thee, O Sitt el Milah, sing us somewhat, so we may hearken to thee.” “Hearkening and obedience,” answered the damsel and sang the following verses:

Assemble, ye people of passion, I pray; For the hour of our
torment hath sounded to-day.
The raven of parting croaks loud at our door; Alas, for our raven
cleaves fast to us aye!
For those whom we cherish are parted and gone; They have left us
in torment to pine for dismay.
So arise, by your lives I conjure you, arise And come let us fare
to our loved ones away.

Then she cast the lute from her hand and wept till she made the Lady Zubeideh weep, and she said to her, “O Sitt el Milah, methinks he whom thou lovest is not in this world, for that the Commander of the Faithful hath sought him in every place, but hath not found him.” Whereupon the damsel arose and kissing the Lady Zubeideh’s hands, said to her, “O my lady, if thou wouldst have him found, I have a request to make to thee, wherein thou mayst accomplish my occasion with the Commander of the Faithful.” Quoth the princess, “And what is it?” “It is,” answered Sitt el Milah, “that thou get me leave to go forth by myself and go round about in quest of him three days, for the adage saith, ‘She who mourneth for herself is not the like of her who is hired to mourn.’ If I find him, I will bring him before the Commander of the Faithful, so he may do with us what he will; and if I find him not, I shall be cut off from hope of him and that which is with me will be assuaged.” Quoth the Lady Zubeideh, “I will not get thee leave from him but for a whole month; so be of good heart and cheerful eye.” Whereupon Sitt el Milah was glad and rising, kissed the earth before her once more and went away to her own place, rejoicing.

As for Zubeideh, she went in to the Khalif and talked with him awhile; then she fell to kissing him between the eyes and on his hand and asked him that which she had promised Sitt el Milah, saying, “O Commander of the Faithful, I doubt me her lord is not found in this world; but, if she go about in quest of him and find him not, her hopes will be cut off and her mind will be set at rest and she will sport and laugh; for that, what while she abideth in hope, she will never cease from her frowardness.” And she gave not over cajoling him till he gave Sitt el Milah leave to go forth and make search for her lord a month’s space and ordered her an eunuch to attend her and bade the paymaster [of the household] give her all she needed, were it a thousand dirhems a day or more. So the Lady Zubeideh arose and returning to her palace, sent for Sitt el Milah and acquainted her with that which had passed [between herself and the Khalif]; whereupon she kissed her hand and thanked her and called down blessings on her.

Then she took leave of the princess and veiling her face, disguised herself; after which she mounted the mule and sallying forth, went round about seeking her lord in the thoroughfares of Baghdad three days’ space, but lit on no tidings of him; and on the fourth day, she rode forth without the city. Now it was the noontide hour and great was the heat, and she was aweary and thirst waxed upon her. Presently, she came to the mosque, wherein the young Damascene had taken shelter, and lighting down at the door, said to the old man, [the Muezzin], “O elder, hast thou a draught of cold water? Indeed, I am overcome with heat and thirst.” Quoth he, “[Come up] with me into my house.” So he carried her up into his lodging and spreading her [a carpet and cushions], seated her [thereon]; after which he brought her cold water and she drank and said to the eunuch, “Go thy ways with the mule and on the morrow come back to me here.” [So he went away] and she slept and rested herself.

When she awoke, she said to the old man, “O elder, hast thou aught of food?” And he answered, “O my lady, I have bread and olives.” Quoth she, “That is food fit but for the like of thee. As for me, I will have nought but roast lamb and broths and fat rissoled fowls and stuffed ducks and all manner meats dressed with [pounded nuts and almond-]kernels and sugar.” “O my lady,” replied the Muezzin, “I never heard of this chapter in the Koran, nor was it revealed unto our lord Mohammed, whom God bless and keep!” She laughed and said, “O elder, the matter is even as thou sayest; but bring me inkhorn and paper.” So he brought her what she sought and she wrote a letter and gave it to him, together with a seal-ring from her finger, saying, “Go into the city and enquire for such an one the money-changer and give him this my letter.”

The old man betook himself to the city, as she bade him, and enquired for the money-changer, to whom they directed him. So he gave him the ring and the letter, which when he saw, he kissed the letter and breaking it open, read it and apprehended its purport. Then he repaired to the market and buying all that she bade him, laid it in a porter’s basket and bade him go with the old man. So the latter took him and went with him to the mosque, where he relieved him of his burden and carried the meats in to Sitt el Milah. She seated him by her side and they ate, he and she, of those rich meats, till they were satisfied, when the old man rose and removed the food from before her.

She passed the night in his lodging and when she arose in the morning, she said to him, “O elder, may I not lack thy kind offices for the morning-meal! Go to the money-changer and fetch me from him the like of yesterday’s food.” So he arose and betaking himself to the money-changer, acquainted him with that which she had bidden him. The money-changer brought him all that she required and set it on the heads of porters; and the old man took them and returned with them to Sitt el Milah. So she sat down with him and they ate their sufficiency, after which he removed the rest of the food.

Then she took the fruits and the flowers and setting them over against herself, wrought them into rings and knots and letters, whilst the old man looked on at a thing whose like he had never in his life seen and rejoiced therein.

Then said she to him, “O elder, I would fain drink.” So he arose and brought her a gugglet of water; but she said to him, “Who bade thee fetch that?” Quoth he, “Saidst thou not to me, ‘I would fain drink’?” And she answered, “I want not this; nay, I want wine, the delight of the soul, so haply, O elder, I may solace myself therewith.” “God forbid,” exclaimed the old man, “that wine should be drunk in my house, and I a stranger in the land and a Muezzin and an imam, who prayeth with the true-believers, and a servant of the house of the Lord of the Worlds! “Quoth she, “Why wilt thou forbid me to drink thereof in thy house?” “Because,” answered he, “it is unlawful.” “O elder,” rejoined she, “God hath forbidden [the eating of] blood and carrion and hog’s flesh. Tell me, are grapes and honey lawful or unlawful?” Quoth he, “They are lawful;” and she said, “This is the juice of grapes and the water of honey.” But he answered, “Leave this thy talk, for thou shall never drink wine in my house.” “O Sheikh,” rejoined she, “folk eat and drink and enjoy themselves and we are of the number of the folk and God is very forgiving, clement.” Quoth he, “This is a thing that may not be.” And she said, “Hast thou not heard what the poet saith … ?” And she recited the following verses:

O son of Simeon, give no ear to other than my say. How bitter
from the convent ’twas to part and fare away!
Ay, and the monks, for on the Day of Palms a fawn there was
Among
the servants of the church, a loveling blithe and gay.
By God, how pleasant was the night we passed, with him for third!
Muslim and Jew and Nazarene, we sported till the day.
The wine was sweet to us to drink in pleasance and repose, And in
a garden of the garths of Paradise we lay,
Whose streams beneath the myrtle’s shade and cassia’s welled
amain And birds made carol jubilant from every blossomed
spray.

Quoth he, what while from out his hair the morning glimmered
white, "This, this is life indeed, except, alas! it doth not
stay."

"O elder," added she, "if Muslims and Jews and Nazarenes drink wine, who are we [that we should abstain from it]?" "By Allah, O my lady," answered he, "spare thine endeavour, for this is a thing to which I will not hearken." When she knew that he would not consent to her desire, she said to him, "O elder, I am of the slave-girls of the Commander of the Faithful and the food waxeth on me and if I drink not, I shall perish, nor wilt thou be assured against the issue of my affair. As for me, I am quit of blame towards thee, for that I have made myself known to thee and have bidden thee beware of the wrath of the Commander of the Faithful."

When the old man heard her words and that wherewith she menaced him, he arose and went out, perplexed and knowing not what he should do, and there met him a Jew, who was his neighbour, and said to him, "O Sheikh, how cometh it that I see thee strait of breast? Moreover, I hear in thy house a noise of talk, such as I use not to hear with thee." Quoth the Muezzin, "Yonder is a damsel who avoucheth that she is of the slave-girls of the Commander of the Faithful Haroun er Reshid; and she hath eaten food and now would fain drink wine in my house, but I forbade her. However she avoucheth that except she drink thereof, she will perish, and indeed I am bewildered concerning my affair." "Know, O my neighbour," answered the Jew, "that the slave-girls of the Commander of the Faithful are used to drink wine, and whenas they eat and drink not, they perish; and I fear lest some mishap betide her, in which case thou wouldst not be safe from the Khalifs wrath." "What is to be done?" asked the Sheikh; and the Jew replied, "I have old wine that will suit her." Quoth the old man, "[I conjure thee] by the right of neighbourship, deliver me from this calamity and let me have that which is with thee!" "In the name of God," answered the Jew and going to his house, brought out a flagon of wine, with which the Sheikh returned to Sitt el Milah. This pleased her and she said to him, "Whence hadst thou this?" "I got it from my neighbour the Jew," answered he. "I set out to him my case with thee and he gave me this."

Sitt el Milah filled a cup and emptied it; after which she drank a second and a third. Then she filled the cup a fourth time and handed it to the old man, but he would not accept it from her. However, she conjured him, by her own head and that of the Commander of the Faithful, that he should take it from her, till he took the cup from her hand and kissed it and would have set it down; but she conjured him by her life to smell it. So he smelt it and she said to him, "How deemest thou?" "Its smell is sweet," replied he; and she conjured him, by the life of the Commander of the Faithful, to taste it. So he put it to his mouth and she rose to him and made him drink; whereupon, "O princess of the fair," said he, "this is none other than good." Quoth she, "So deem I. Hath not our Lord promised us wine in Paradise?" And he answered, "Yes. Quoth the Most High, 'And rivers of wine, a delight to the drinkers.' And we will drink it in this world and the world to come." She laughed and emptying the cup, gave him to drink, and he said, "O princess of the fair, indeed thou art excusable in thy love for this." Then he took from her another and another, till he became drunken and his talk waxed great and his prate.

The folk of the quarter heard him and assembled under the window; and when he was ware of them, he opened the window and said to them, "Are ye not ashamed, O pimps? Every one in his own house doth what he will and none hindereth him; but we drink one poor day and ye assemble and come, cuckoldy varlets that ye are! To-day, wine, and to-morrow [another] matter; and from hour to hour [cometh] relief." So they laughed and dispersed. Then the girl drank till she was intoxicated, when she called to mind her lord and wept, and the old man said to her, "What maketh thee weep, O my lady?" "O elder," replied she, "I am a lover and separated [from him I love]." Quoth he, "O my lady, what is this love?" "And thou," asked she, "hast thou never been in love?" "By Allah, O my lady," answered he, "never in all my life heard I of this thing, nor have I ever known it! Is it of the sons of Adam or of the Jinn?" She laughed and said, "Verily, thou art even as those of whom the poet speaketh, when as he saith …" And she repeated the following verses:

How long will ye admonished be, without avail or heed? The
shepherd still his flocks forbids, and they obey his rede.
I see yon like unto mankind in favour and in form; But
oxen, verily, ye are in fashion and in deed.

The old man laughed at her speech and her verses pleased him. Then said she to him, “I desire of thee a lute.” So he arose and brought her a piece of firewood. Quoth she, “What is that?” And he said, “Didst thou not bid me bring thee wood?” “I do not want this,” answered she, and he rejoined, “What then is it that is called wood, other than this?” She laughed and said, “The lute is an instrument of music, whereunto I sing.” Quoth he, “Where is this thing found and of whom shall I get it for thee?” And she said, “Of him who gave thee the wine.” So he arose and betaking himself to his neighbour the Jew, said to him, “Thou favouredst us aforetime with the wine; so now complete thy favours and look me out a thing called a lute, to wit, an instrument for singing; for that she seeketh this of me and I know it not” “Hearkening and obedience,” replied the Jew and going into his house, brought him a lute. [The old man took it and carried it to Sitt el Milah,] whilst the Jew took his drink and sat by a window adjoining the other’s house, so he might hear the singing.

The damsel rejoiced, when the old man returned to her with the lute, and taking it from him, tuned its strings and sang the following verses:

After your loss, nor trace of me nor vestige would remain, Did
not the hope of union some whit my strength sustain.
Ye’re gone and desolated by your absence is the world: Requital,
ay, or substitute to seek for you ‘twere vain.
Ye, of your strength, have burdened me, upon my weakliness, With
burdens not to be endured of mountain nor of plain.
When from your land the breeze I scent that cometh, as I were A
reveller bemused with wine, to lose my wits I’m fain.
Love no light matter is, O folk, nor are the woe and care And
blame a little thing to brook that unto it pertain.
I wander seeking East and West for you, and every time Unto a
camp I come, I’m told, “They’ve fared away again.”

My friends have not accustomed me to rigour; for, of old, When I
forsook them, they to seek accord did not disdain.

When she had made an end of her song, she wept sore, till presently sleep overcame her and she slept.

On the morrow, she said to the old man, “Get thee to the money-changer and fetch me the ordinary.” So he repaired to the money-changer and delivered him the message, whereupon he made ready meat and drink, as of his wont, [with which the old man returned to the damsel and they ate till they had enough. When she had eaten,] she sought of him wine and he went to the Jew and fetched it. Then they sat down and drank; and when she grew drunken, she took the lute and smiting it, fell a-singing and chanted the following verses:

How long shall I thus question my heart that’s drowned in woe?
I’m mute for my complaining; but tears speak, as they flow.
They have forbid their image to visit me in sleep; So even my
nightly phantom forsaketh me, heigho!

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And when she had made an end of her song, she wept sore.

All this time, the young Damascene was hearkening, and whiles he likened her voice to that of his slave-girl and whiles he put away from him this thought, and the damsel had no whit of knowledge of him. Then she broke out again into song and chanted the following verses:

“Forget him,” quoth my censurers, “forget him; what is he?” “If I
forget him, ne’er may God,” quoth I, “remember me!”
Now God forbid a slave forget his liege lord’s love! And how Of
all things in the world should I forget the love of thee?
Pardon of God for everything I crave, except thy love, For on the
day of meeting Him, that will my good deed be.

Then she drank three cups and filling the old man other three, sang the following verses:

His love he’d have hid, but his tears denounced him to the spy,
For the heat of a red-hot coal that ‘twixt his ribs did lie.
Suppose for distraction he seek in the Spring and its blooms one
day, The face of his loved one holds the only Spring for his
eye.
O blamer of me for the love of him who denieth his grace, Which
be the delightsome of things, but those which the people
deny?
A sun [is my love;] but his heat in mine entrails still rageth,
concealed; A moon, in the hearts of the folk he riseth, and
not in the sky.

When she had made an end of her song, she threw the lute from her hand and wept, whilst the old man wept for her weeping. Then she fell down in a swoon and presently coming to herself, filled the cup and drinking it off, gave the old man to drink, after which she took the lute and breaking out into song, chanted the following

verses:

Thy loss is the fairest of all my heart's woes; My case it hath altered and banished repose.
The world is upon me all desolate grown. Alack, my long grief and forlornness! Who knows
But the Merciful yet may incline thee to me And unite us again, in despite of our foes!

Then she wept till her voice rose high and her lamentation was discovered [to those without]; after which she again began to drink and plying the old man with wine, sang the following verses:

They have shut out thy person from my sight; They cannot shut thy memory from my spright. Favour or flout me, still my soul shall be Thy ransom, in contentment or despite. My outward of my inward testifies And this bears witness that that tells aright.

When she had made an end of her song, she threw the lute from her hand and wept and lamented. Then she slept awhile and presently awaking, said, "O elder, hast thou what we may eat?" "O my lady," answered the old man, "there is the rest of the food;" but she said, "I will not eat of a thing I have left. Go down to the market and fetch us what we may eat." Quoth he, "Excuse me, O my lady; I cannot stand up, for that I am overcome with wine; but with me is the servant of the mosque, who is a sharp youth and an intelligent. I will call him, so he may buy thee that which thou desirest." "Whence hast thou this servant?" asked she; and he replied, "He is of the people of Damascus." When she heard him speak of the people of Damascus, she gave a sob, that she swooned away; and when she came to herself, she said, "Woe's me for the people of Damascus and for those who are therein! Call him, O elder, that he may do our occasions."

So the old man put his head forth of the window and called the youth, who came to him from the mosque and sought leave [to enter]. The Muezzin bade him enter, and when he came in to the damsel, he knew her and she knew him; whereupon he turned back in bewilderment and would have fled; but she sprang up to him and seized him, and they embraced and wept together, till they fell down on the ground in a swoon. When the old man saw them in this plight, he feared for himself and fled forth, seeing not the way for drunkenness. His neighbour the Jew met him and said to him, “How comes it that I see thee confounded?” “How should I not be confounded,” answered the old man, “seeing that the damsel who is with me is fallen in love with the servant of the mosque and they have embraced and fallen down in a swoon? Indeed, I fear lest the Khalif come to know of this and be wroth with me; so tell me thou what is to be done in this wherewith I am afflicted of the affair of this damsel.” Quoth the Jew, “For the nonce, take this casting-bottle of rose-water and go forth-right and sprinkle them therewith. If they be aswoon for this their foregathering and embracement, they will come to themselves, and if otherwise, do thou flee.”

The old man took the casting-bottle from the Jew and going up to Noureddin and the damsel, sprinkled their faces, whereupon they came to themselves and fell to relating to each other that which they had suffered, since their separation, for the anguish of severance. Moreover, Noureddin acquainted Sitt el Milah with that which he had endured from the folk who would have slain him and made away with him; and she said to him, “O my lord, let us presently give over this talk and praise God for reunion of loves, and all this shall cease from us.” Then she gave him the cup and he said, “By Allah, I will nowise drink it, whilst I am in this plight!” So she drank it off before him and taking the lute, swept the strings and sang the following verses:

Thou that wast absent from my stead, yet still with me didst bide, Thou wast removed from mine eye, yet still wast by my side.
Thou left’st unto me, after thee, languor and carefulness; I lived a life wherein no jot of sweetness I espied.
For thy sweet sake, as ‘twere, indeed, an exile I had been, Lone and deserted I became, lamenting, weeping-eyed.
Alack, my grief! Thou wast, indeed, grown absent from my yiew, Yet art the apple of mine eye nor couldst from me divide.

When she had made an end of her song, she wept and Noureddin wept also. Then she took the lute and improvised and sang the following verses:

God knows I ne'er recalled thy memory to my thought, But still
with brimming tears straightway mine eyes were fraught;
Yea, passion raged in me and love-longing was like To slay me;
yet my heart to solace still it wrought.
Light of mine eyes, my hope, my wish, my thirsting eyes With
looking on thy face can never sate their drought.

When Noureddin heard these his slave-girl's verses, he fell a-weeping, what while she strained him to her bosom and wiped away his tears with her sleeve and questioned him and comforted his mind. Then she took the lute and sweeping its strings, played thereon, after such a wise as would move the phlegmatic to delight, and sang the following verses:

Whenas mine eyes behold thee not, that day As of my life I do not
reckon aye;
And when I long to look upon thy face, My life is perished with
desire straightway.

On this wise they abode till the morning, tasting not the savour of sleep; and when the day lightened, behold, the eunuch came with the mule and said to Sitt el Milah, "The Commander of the Faithful calleth for thee." So she arose and taking her lord by the hand, committed him to the old man, saying, "I commend him to thy care, under God, till this eunuch cometh to thee; and indeed, O elder, I owe thee favour and largesse such as filleth the interspace betwixt heaven and earth."

Then she mounted the mule and repairing to the palace of the Commander of the Faithful, went in to him and kissed the earth before him. Quoth he to her, as who should make mock of her, "I doubt not but thou hast found thy lord." "By thy felicity and the length of thy continuance [on life,]" answered she, "I have indeed found him!" Now Er Reshid was leaning back; but, when he heard this, he sat up and said to her, "By my life, [is this thou sayest] true?"

“Ay, by thy life!” answered she; and he said, “Bring him into my presence, so I may see him.” But she replied, “O my lord, there have betided him many stresses and his charms are changed and his favour faded; and indeed the Commander of the Faithful vouchsafed me a month; wherefore I will tend him the rest of the month and then bring him to do his service to the Commander of the Faithful.” Quoth Er Reshid, “True; the condition was for a month; but tell me what hath betided him.” “O my lord,” answered she, “may God prolong thy continuance and make Paradise thy place of returning and thy harbourage and the fire the abiding-place of thine enemies, when he presenteth himself to pay his respects to thee, he will expound to thee his case and will name unto thee those who have wronged him; and indeed this is an arrear that is due to the Commander of the Faithful, in whom may God fortify the Faith and vouchsafe him the mastery over the rebel and the froward!”

Therewithal he ordered her a handsome house and bade furnish it with carpets and other furniture and vessels of choice and commanded that all she needed should be given her. This was done during the rest of the day, and when the night came, she despatched the eunuch with the mule and a suit of clothes, to fetch Noureddin from the Muezzin’s lodging. So the young man donned the clothes and mounting; rode to the house, where he abode in luxury and delight a full-told month, what while she solaced him with four things, to wit, the eating of fowls and the drinking of wine and the lying upon brocade and the entering the bath after copulation. Moreover, she brought him six suits of clothes and fell to changing his apparel day by day; nor was the appointed time accomplished ere his beauty returned to him and his goodliness; nay, his charms waxed tenfold and he became a ravishment to all who looked on him.

One day the Commander of the Faithful bade bring him to the presence; so his slave-girl changed his raiment and clothing him in sumptuous apparel, mounted him on the mule. Then he rode to the palace and presenting himself before the Khalif, saluted him with the goodliest of salutations and bespoke him with eloquent and deep-thoughted speech. When Er Reshid saw him, he marvelled at the goodliness of his favour and his eloquence and the readiness of his speech and enquiring of him, was told that he was Sitt el Milah’s lord; whereupon quoth he, “Indeed, she is excusable in her love for him, and if we had put her to death unrighteously, as we were minded to do, her blood would have been upon our heads.” Then he turned to the young man and entering into discourse with him, found him well bred, intelligent, quick of wit and apprehension, generous, pleasant, elegant, erudite. So he loved him with an exceeding love and questioned him of his native city and of his father and of the manner of his journey to Baghdad. Noureddin acquainted him with that which he would know in the goodliest of words and with the concisest of expressions; and the Khalif said to him, “And where hast thou been absent all this while? Indeed, we sent after thee to Damascus and Mosul and other the towns, but lit on no tidings of thee.” “O my lord,” answered the young man, “there betided thy slave in thy city that which never yet betided any.” And he acquainted him with his case from first to last and told him that which had befallen him of evil [from El Muradi and his crew].

When Er Reshid heard this, he was sore chagrined and waxed exceeding wroth and said, “Shall this happen in a city wherein I am?” And the Hashimi vein started out between his eyes. Then he bade fetch Jaafer, and when he came before him, he acquainted him with the matter and said to him, “Shall this come to pass in my city and I have no news of it?” Then he bade Jaafer fetch all whom the young Damascene had named [as having maltreated him], and when they came, he let smite off their heads. Moreover, he summoned him whom they called Ahmed and who had been the means of the young man’s deliverance a first time and a second, and thanked him and showed him favour and bestowed on him a sumptuous dress of honour and invested him with the governance over his city.

Then he sent for the old man, the Muezzin, and when the messenger came to him and told him that the Commander of the Faithful sought him, he feared the denunciation of the damsel and accompanied him to the palace, walking and letting wind as he went, whilst all who passed him by laughed at him. When he came into the presence of the Commander of the Faithful, he fell a-trembling and his tongue was embarrassed, [so that he could not speak]. The Khalif laughed at him and said to him, “O elder, thou hast done no offence; so [why] fearest thou?” “O my lord,” answered the old man (and indeed he was in the sorest of that which may be of fear,) “by the virtue of thy pure forefathers, indeed I have done nought, and do thou enquire of my conduct.” The Khalif laughed at him and ordering him a thousand dinars, bestowed on him a sumptuous dress of honour and made him chief of the Muezzins in his mosque.

Then he called Sitt el Milah and said to her, “The house [wherein thou lodgest] and that which is therein Is a guerdon [from me] to thy lord. So do thou take him and depart with him in the safeguard of God the Most High; but absent not yourselves from our presence.” [So she went forth with Noureddin and] when she came to the house, she found that the Commander of the Faithful had sent them gifts galore and abundance of good things. As for Noureddin, he sent for his father and mother and appointed him agents and factors in the city of Damascus, to take the rent of the houses and gardens and khans and baths; and they occupied themselves with collecting that which accrued to him and sending it to him every year. Meanwhile, his father and mother came to him, with that which they had of monies and treasures and merchandise, and foregathering with their son, saw that he was become of the chief officers of the Commander of the Faithful and of the number of his session-mates and entertainers, wherefore they rejoiced in reunion with him and he also rejoiced in them.

The Khalif assigned them pensions and allowances and as for Noureddin, his father brought him those riches and his wealth waxed and his case was goodly, till he became the richest of the folk of his time in Baghdad and left not the presence of the Commander of the Faithful night or day. Moreover, he was vouchsafed children by Sitt el Milah, and he ceased not to live the most delightsome of lives, he and she and his father and mother, a while of time, till Aboulhusn sickened of a sore sickness and was admitted to the mercy of God the Most High. After awhile, his mother died also and he carried them forth and shrouded them and buried and made them expiations and nativities. Then his children grew up and became like unto moons, and he reared them in splendour and fondness, what while his wealth waxed and his case flourished. He ceased not to pay frequent visits to the Commander of the Faithful, he and his children and his slave-girl Sitt el Milah, and they abode, he and they, in all solace of life and prosperity till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies; and extolled be the perfection of the Abiding One, the Eternal! This is all that hath come down to us of their story.

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EL ABBAS AND THE KING’S DAUGHTER OF BAGHDAD.

There was once, of old days and in bygone ages and times, in the city of Baghdad, the Abode of Peace, a king mighty of estate, lord of understanding and beneficence and liberality and generosity, and he was strong of sultanate and endowed with might and majesty and magnificence. His name was Ins ben Cais ben Rebiya es Sheibani, and when he took horse, there rode unto him [warriors] from the farthest parts of the two Iraks. God the Most High decreed that he should take to wife a woman hight Afifeh, daughter of Ased es Sundusi, who was endowed with beauty and grace and brightness and perfection and justness of shape and symmetry; her face was like unto the new moon and she had eyes as they were gazelle’s eyes and an aquiline nose like the crescent moon. She had learned horsemanship and the use of arms and had thoroughly studied the sciences of the Arabs; moreover, she had gotten by heart all the dragomanish tongues and indeed she was a ravishment to mankind.

She abode with Ins ben Cais twelve years, during which time he was blessed with no children by her; wherefore his breast was straitened, by reason of the failure of lineage, and he besought his Lord to vouchsafe him a child. Accordingly the queen conceived, by permission of God the Most High; and when the days of her pregnancy were accomplished, she gave birth to a maid-child, than whom never saw eyes a goodlier, for that her face was as it were a pure pearl or a shining lamp or a golden candle or a full moon breaking forth of a cloud, extolled be the perfection of Him who created her from vile water and made her a delight to the beholders! When her father saw her on this wise of loveliness, his reason fled for joy, and when she grew up, he taught her the art of writing and polite letters and philosophy and all manner of tongues. So she excelled the folk of her time and overpassed her peers; and the sons of the kings heard of her and all of them desired to look upon her.

The first who sought her in marriage was King Nebhan of Mosul, who came to her with a great company, bringing with him an hundred she-camels laden with musk and aloes-wood and ambergris and as many laden with camphor and jewels and other hundred laden with silver money and yet other hundred laden with raiment of silken and other stuffs and brocade, besides an hundred slave-girls and an hundred magnificent horses of swift and generous breeds, completely housed and accoutred, as they were brides; and all this he laid before her father, demanding her of him in marriage. Now King Ins ben Cais had bound himself by an oath that he would not marry his daughter but to him whom she should choose; so, when King Nebhan sought her in marriage, her father went in to her and consulted her concerning his affair. She consented not and he repeated to Nebhan that which she said, whereupon he departed from him. After this came King Behram, lord of the White Island, with riches more than the first; but she accepted not of him and he returned, disappointed; nor did the kings give over coming to her father, on her account, one after other, from the farthest of the lands and the climes, each glorying in more than those who forewent him; but she paid no heed unto any of one them.

Presently, El Abbas, son of King El Aziz, lord of the land of Yemen and Zebidoun and Mecca (which God increase in honour and brightness and beauty!), heard of her; and he was of the great ones of Mecca and the Hejaz and was a youth without hair on his cheeks. So he presented himself one day in his father's sitting-chamber, whereupon the folk made way for him and the king seated him on a chair of red gold, set with pearls and jewels. The prince sat, with his head bowed to the ground, and spoke not to any; whereby his father knew that his breast was straitened and bade the boon-companions and men of wit relate marvellous histories, such as beseem the assemblies of kings; nor was there one of them but spoke forth the goodliest of that which was with him; but El Abbas still abode with his head bowed down. Then the king bade his session-mates withdraw, and when the chamber was void, he looked at his son and said to him, "By Allah, thou rejoicest me with thy coming in to me and chagrinest me for that thou payest no heed to any of the session-mates nor of the boon-companions. What is the cause of this?"

"O father mine," answered the prince, "I have heard tell that in the land of Irak is a woman of the daughters of the kings, and her father is called King Ins ben Cais, lord of Baghdad; she is renowned for beauty and grace and brightness and perfection, and indeed many folk have sought her in marriage of the kings; but her soul consented not unto any one of them. Wherefore I am minded to travel to her, for that my heart cleaveth unto her, and I beseech thee suffer me to go to her." "O my son," answered his father, "thou knowest that I have none other than thyself of children and thou art the solace of mine eyes and the fruit of mine entrails; nay, I cannot brook to be parted from thee an instant and I purpose to set thee on the throne of the kingship and marry thee to one of the daughters of the kings, who shall be fairer than she." El Abbas gave ear to his father's word and dared not gainsay him; so he abode with him awhile, whilst the fire raged in his entrails.

Then the king took counsel with himself to build his son a bath and adorn it with various paintings, so he might show it to him and divert him with the sight thereof, to the intent that his body might be solaced thereby and that the obsession of travel might cease from him and he be turned from [his purpose of] removal from his parents. So he addressed himself to the building of the bath and assembling architects and builders and artisans from all the towns and citadels and islands [of his dominions], assigned them a site and marked out its boundaries. Then the workmen occupied themselves with the making of the bath and the setting out and adornment of its cabinets and roofs. They used paints and precious stones of all kinds, according to the variousness of their hues, red and green and blue and yellow and what not else of all manner colours; and each artisan wrought at his handicraft and each painter at his art, whilst the rest of the folk busied themselves with transporting thither varicoloured stones.

One day, as the [chief] painter wrought at his work, there came in to him a poor man, who looked long upon him and observed his handicraft; whereupon quoth the painter to him, "Knowest thou aught of painting?" "Yes," answered the stranger; so he gave him tools and paints and said to him, "Make us a rare piece of work." So the stranger entered one of the chambers of the bath and drew [on the walls thereof] a double border, which he adorned on both sides, after a fashion than which never saw eyes a fairer. Moreover, [amiddleward the chamber] he drew a picture to which there lacked but the breath, and it was the portraiture of Mariyeh, the king's daughter of Baghdad. Then, when he had made an end of the portrait, he went his way [and told none of what he had done], nor knew any the chambers and doors of the bath and the adornment and ordinance thereof.

Presently, the chief workman came to the palace and sought an audience of the king, who bade admit him. So he entered and kissing the earth, saluted him with a salutation beseeming kings and said, "O king of the time and lord of the age and the day, may felicity endure unto thee and acceptance and be thy rank exalted over all the kings both morning and evening! The work of the bath is accomplished, by the king's fair fortune and the eminence of his magnanimity, and indeed we have done all that behoved us and there remaineth but that which behoveth the king." El Aziz ordered him a sumptuous dress of honour and expended monies galore, giving unto each who had wroughten, after the measure of his work. Then he assembled in the bath all the grandees of his state, amirs and viziers and chamberlains and lieutenants, and the chief officers of his realm and household, and sending for his son El Abbas, said to him,"O my son, I have builded thee a bath, wherein thou mayst take thy pleasance; so enter thou therein, that thou mayst see it and divert thyself by gazing upon it and viewing the goodliness of its ordinance and decoration." "With all my heart," replied the prince and entered the bath, he and the king and the folk about them, so they might divert themselves with viewing that which the workmen's hands had wroughten.

El Abbas went in and passed from place to place and chamber to chamber, till he came to the chamber aforesaid and espied the portrait of Mariyeh, whereupon he fell down in a swoon and the workmen went to his father and said to him, "Thy son El Abbas hath swooned away." So the king came and finding the prince cast down, seated himself at his head and bathed his face with rose-water. After awhile he revived and the king said to him, "God keep thee, O my son! What hath befallen thee?" "O my father," answered the prince, "I did but look on yonder picture and it bequeathed me a thousand regrets and there befell me that which thou seest." Therewithal the king bade fetch the [chief] painter, and when he stood before him, he said to him, "Tell me of yonder portrait and what girl is this of the daughters of the kings; else will I take thy head." "By Allah, O king," answered the painter, "I limned it not, neither know I who she is; but there came to me a poor man and looked at me. So I said to him, 'Knowest thou the art of painting?' And he replied, 'Yes.' Whereupon I gave him the gear and said to him, 'Make us a rare piece of work.' So he wrought yonder portrait and went away and I know him not neither have I ever set eyes on him save that day."

Therewithal the king bade all his officers go round about in the thoroughfares and colleges [of the town] and bring before him all strangers whom they found there. So they went forth and brought him much people, amongst whom was the man who had painted the portrait. When they came into the presence, the Sultan bade the crier make proclamation that whoso wrought the portrait should discover himself and have whatsoever he desired. So the poor man came forward and kissing the earth before the king, said to him, "O king of the age, I am he who painted yonder portrait." Quoth El Aziz, "And knowest thou who she is?" "Yes," answered the other; "this is the portrait of Mariyeh, daughter of the king of Baghdad." The king ordered him a dress of honour and a slave-girl [and he went his way]. Then said El Abbas, "O father mine, give me leave to go to her, so I may look upon her; else shall I depart the world, without fail." The king his father wept and answered, saying, "O my son, I builded thee a bath, that it might divert thee from leaving me, and behold it hath been the cause of thy going forth; but the commandment of God is a foreordained decree."

Then he wept again and El Abbas said to him, "Fear not for me, for thou knowest my prowess and my puissance in returning answers in the assemblies of the land and my good breeding and skill in rhetoric; and indeed he whose father thou art and whom thou hast reared and bred and in whom thou hast united praiseworthy qualities, the repute whereof hath traversed the East and the West, thou needest not fear for him, more by token that I purpose but to seek diversion and return to thee, if it be the will of God the Most High." Quoth the king, "Whom wilt thou take with thee of attendants and [what] of good?" "O father mine," replied El Abbas, "I have no need of horses or camels or arms, for I purpose not battle, and I will have none go forth with me save my servant Aamir and no more."

As he and his father were thus engaged in talk, in came his mother and caught hold of him; and he said to her, “God on thee, let me go my gait and strive not to turn me from my purpose, for that needs must I go.” “O my son,” answered she, “if it must be so and there is no help for it, swear to me that them wilt not be absent from me more than a year.” And he swore to her. Then he entered his father’s treasuries and took therefrom what he would of jewels and jacinths and everything heavy of worth and light of carriage. Moreover, he bade his servant Aamir saddle him two horses and the like for himself, and whenas the night darkened behind him, he rose from his couch and mounting his horse, set out for Baghdad, he and Aamir, whilst the latter knew not whither he intended.

He gave not over going and the journey was pleasant to him, till they came to a goodly land, abounding in birds and wild beasts, whereupon El Abbas started a gazelle and shot it with an arrow. Then he dismounted and cutting its throat, said to his servant, “Alight thou and skin it and carry it to the water.” Aamir answered him [with “Hearkening and obedience”] and going down to the water, kindled a fire and roasted the gazelle’s flesh. Then they ate their fill and drank of the water, after which they mounted again and fared on diligently, and Aamir still unknowing whither El Abbas was minded to go. So he said to him, “O my lord, I conjure thee by God the Great, wilt thou not tell me whither thou intendest?” El Abbas looked at him and made answer with the following verses:

In my soul the fire of yearning and affliction rageth aye; Lo, I
burn with love and longing; nought in answer can I say.
To Baghdad upon a matter of all moment do I fare, For the love of
one whose beauties have my reason led astray.
Under me’s a slender camel, a devourer of the waste; Those who
pass a cloudlet deem it, as it flitteth o’er the way.
So, O Aamir, haste thy going, e’en as I do, so may I Heal my
sickness and the draining of the cup of love essay;
For the longing that abideth in my heart is hard to bear. Fare
with me, then, to my loved one. Answer nothing, but obey.

When Aamir heard his lord’s verses, he knew that he was a slave of love [and that she of whom he was enamoured abode] in Baghdad. Then they fared on night and day, traversing plains and stony wastes, till they came in sight of Baghdad and lighted down in its suburbs and lay the night there. When they arose in the morning, they removed to the bank of the Tigris and there they encamped and sojourned three days.

As they abode thus on the fourth day, behold, a company of folk giving their beasts the rein and crying aloud and saying, "Quick! Quick! Haste to our rescue, O King!" Therewithal the king's chamberlains and officers accosted them and said to them, "What is behind you and what hath befallen you?" Quoth they, "Bring us before the king." [So they carried them to Ins ben Cais;] and when they saw him, they said to him, "O king, except thou succour us, we are dead men; for that we are a folk of the Benou Sheiban, who have taken up our abode in the parts of Bassora, and Hudheifeh the Arab hath come down on us with his horses and his men and hath slain our horsemen and carried off our women and children; nor was one saved of the tribe but he who fled; wherefore we crave help [first] by God the Most High, then by thy life."

When the king heard their speech, he bade the crier make proclamation in the thoroughfares of the city that the troops should prepare [for the march] and that the horsemen should mount and the footmen come forth; nor was it but the twinkling of the eye ere the drums beat and the trumpets sounded; and scarce was the forenoon of the day passed when the city was blocked with horse and foot. So the king passed them in review and behold, they were four-and-twenty thousand in number, horsemen and footmen. He bade them go forth to the enemy and gave the commandment over them to Said ibn el Wakidi, a doughty cavalier and a valiant man of war. So the horsemen set out and fared on along the bank of the Tigris.

El Abbas looked at them and saw the ensigns displayed and the standards loosed and heard the drums beating; so he bade his servant saddle him a charger and look to the girths and bring him his harness of war. Quoth Aamir, "And indeed I saw El Abbas his eyes flash and the hair of his hands stood on end, for that indeed horsemanship abode [rooted in his heart]."So he mounted his charger, whilst Aamir also bestrode a war-horse, and they went forth with the troops and fared on two days. On the third day, after the hour of the mid-afternoon prayer, they came in sight of the enemy and the two armies met and the ranks joined battle. The strife raged amain and sore was the smiting, whilst the dust rose in clouds and hung vaulted [over them], so that all eyes were blinded; and they ceased not from the battle till the night overtook them, when the two hosts drew off from the mellay and passed the night, perplexed concerning themselves [and the issue of their affair].

When God caused the morning morrow, the two armies drew out in battle array and the troops stood looking at one another. Then came forth El Harith ibn Saad between the two lines and played with his lance and cried out and recited the following verses:

Algates ye are our prey become; this many a day and night Right instantly of God we've craved to be vouchsafed your sight.
So hath the Merciful towards Hudheifeh driven you, A champion ruling over all, a lion of great might.
Is there a man of you will come, that I may heal his paint With blows right profitful for him who's sick for lust of fight?

By Allah, come ye forth to me, for lo, I'm come to you I May he who's wronged the victory get and God defend the right!

Thereupon there sallied forth to him Zuheir ben Hebib, and they wheeled about and feinted awhile, then came to dose quarters and exchanged strokes. El Harith forewent his adversary in smiting and stretched him weltering in his gore; whereupon Hudheifeh cried out to him, saying, "Gifted of God art thou, O Harith! Call another of them." So he cried out, saying, "Is there a comer-forth [to battle?]" But they of Baghdad held back froni him; and when it appeared to El Harith that confusion was amongst them, he fell upon them and overthrew the first of them upon their last and slew of them twelve men. Then the evening overtook him and the Baghdadis addressed themselves to flight.

When the morning morrowed, they found themselves reduced to a fourth part of their number and there was not one of them had dismounted from his horse. So they made sure of destruction and Hudheifeh came out between the ranks (now he was reckoned for a thousand cavaliers) and cried out, saying, "Harkye, my masters of Baghdad! Let none come forth to me but your Amir, so I may talk with him and he with me; and he shall meet me in single combat and I will meet him, and may he who is void of offence come off safe!" Then he repeated his speech and said, "Why do I not hear your Amir return me an answer?" But Saad, the amir of the army of Baghdad, [replied not to him], and indeed his teeth chattered in his head, whenas he heard him summon him to single combat.

When El Abbas heard Hudheifeh's challenge and saw Saad in this case, he came up to the latter and said to him, "Wilt thou give me leave to reply to him and I will stand thee in stead in the answering of him and the going forth to battle with him and will make myself thy sacrifice?" Saad looked at him and seeing valour shining from between his eyes, said to him, "O youth, by the virtue of the Chosen [Prophet,] (whom God bless and keep,) tell me [who thou art and] whence thou comest to our succour." "This is no place for questioning," answered the prince; and Saad said to him, "O champion, up and at Hudheifeh! Yet, if his devil prove too strong for thee, afflict not thyself in thy youth." Quoth El Abbas, "It is of Allah that help is to be sought," and taking his arms, fortified his resolution and went down [into the field], as he were a castle of the castles or a piece of a mountain.

[When] Hudheifeh [saw him], he cried out to him, saying, "Haste thee not, O youth! Who art thou of the folk?" And he answered, "I am Saad [ibn] el Wakidi, commander of the host of King Ins, and but that thou vauntedst thyself in challenging me, I had not come forth to thee; for that thou art not of my peers neither art counted equal to me in prowess and canst not avail against my onslaught. Wherefore prepare thee for departure, seeing that there abideth but a little of thy life." When Hudheifeh heard this his speech, he threw himself backward, as if in mockery of him, whereat El Abbas was wroth and called out to him, saying, "O Hudheifeh, guard thyself against me." Then he rushed upon him, as he were a swooper of the Jinn, and Hudheifeh met him and they wheeled about a long while.

Presently, El Abbas cried out at Hudheifeh a cry that astonied him and dealt him a blow, saying, "Take this from the hand of a champion who feareth not the like of thee." Hudheifeh met the stroke with his shield, thinking to ward it off from him; but the sword shore the target in sunder and descending upon his shoulder, came forth gleaming from the tendons of his throat and severed his arm at the armpit; whereupon he fell down, wallowing in his blood, and El Abbas turned upon his host; nor had the sun departed the pavilion of the heavens ere Hudheifeh's army was in full flight before El Abbas and the saddles were empty of men. Quoth Saad, "By the virtue of the Chosen [Prophet], whom God bless and keep, I saw El Abbas with the blood upon his saddle pads, [in gouts] like camels' livers, smiting with the sword right and left, till he scattered them abroad in every mountain-pass and desert; and when he turned [back to the camp], the men of Baghdad were fearful of him."

When the Baghdadis saw this succour that had betided them against their enemies [and the victory that El Abbas had gotten them], they turned back and gathering together the spoils [of the defeated host], arms and treasures and horses, returned to Baghdad, victorious, and all by the valour of El Abbas. As for Saad, he foregathered with the prince, and they fared on in company till they came to the place where El Abbas had taken horse, whereupon the latter dismounted from his charger and Saad said to him, "O youth, wherefore alightest thou in other than thy place? Indeed, thy due is incumbent upon us and upon our Sultan; so go thou with us to the dwellings, that we may ransom thee with our souls." "O Amir Saad," replied El Abbas, "from this place I took horse with thee and herein is my lodging. So, God on thee, name me not to the king, but make as if thou hadst never seen me, for that I am a stranger in the land."

So saying, he turned away from him and Saad fared on to the palace, where he found all the suite in attendance on the king and recounting to him that which had betided them with El Abbas. Quoth the king, "Where is he?" And they answered, "He is with the Amir Saad." [So, when the latter entered], the king [looked, but] found none with him; and Saad, seeing that he hankered after the youth, cried out to him, saying, "God prolong the king's days! Indeed, he refuseth to present himself before thee, without leave or commandment." "O Saad," asked the king, "whence cometh this man?" And the Amir answered, "O my lord, I know not; but he is a youth fair of favour, lovesome of aspect, accomplished in discourse, goodly of repartee, and valour shineth from between his eyes."

Quoth the king, "O Saad, fetch him to me, for indeed thou describest to me a masterful man." And he answered, saying, "By Allah, O my lord, hadst thou but seen our case with Hudheifeh, what while he challenged me to the field of war and the stead of thrusting and smiting and I held back from doing battle with him! Then, whenas I thought to go forth to him, behold, a cavalier gave loose to his bridle-rein and called out to me, saying, 'O Saad, wilt thou suffer me to fill thy room in waging war with him and I will ransom thee with myself?' And I said, 'By Allah, O youth, whence cometh thou?' Quoth he, 'This is no time for thy questions.'" Then he recounted to the king all that had passed between himself and El Abbas from first to last; whereupon quoth Ins ben Cais, "Bring him to me in haste, so we may learn his tidings and question him of his case." "It is well," answered Saad, and going forth of the king's presence, repaired to his own house, where he put off his harness of war and took rest for himself.

To return to El Abbas, when he alighted from his charger, he put off his harness of war and rested awhile; after which he brought out a shirt of Venetian silk and a gown of green damask and donning them, covered himself with a turban of Damietta stuff and girt his middle with a handkerchief. Then he went out a-walking in the thoroughfares of Baghdad and fared on till he came to the bazaar of the merchants. There he found a merchant, with chess before him; so he stood watching him and presently the other looked up at him and said to him, "O youth, what wilt thou stake upon the game?" And he answered, "Be it thine to decide." "Then be it a hundred dinars," said the merchant, and El Abbas consented to him, whereupon quoth he, "O youth, produce the money, so the game may be fairly stablished." So El Abbas brought out a satin purse, wherein were a thousand dinars, and laid down an hundred dinars therefrom on the edge of the carpet, whilst the merchant did the like, and indeed his reason fled for joy, whenas he saw the gold in El Abbas his possession.

The folk flocked about them, to divert themselves with watching the play, and they called the bystanders to witness of the wager and fell a-playing. El Abbas forbore the merchant, so he might lead him on, and procrastinated with him awhile; and the merchant won and took of him the hundred dinars. Then said the prince, “Wilt thou play another game?” And the other answered, “O youth, I will not play again, except it be for a thousand dinars.” Quoth the prince, “Whatsoever thou stakest, I will match thy stake with the like thereof.” So the merchant brought out a thousand dinars and the prince covered them with other thousand. Then they fell a-playing, but El Abbas was not long with him ere he beat him in the square of the elephant, nor did he leave to do thus till he had beaten him four times and won of him four thousand dinars.

This was all the merchant’s good; so he said, “O youth, I will play thee another game for the shop.” Now the value of the shop was four thousand dinars; so they played and El Abbas beat him and won his shop, with that which was therein; whereupon the other arose, shaking his clothes, and said to him, “Up, O youth, and take thy shop.” So El Abbas arose and repairing to the shop, took possession thereof, after which he returned to [the place where he had left] his servant [Aamir] and found there the Amir Saad, who was come to bid him to the presence of the king. El Abbas consented to this and accompanied him till they came before King Ins ben Cais, whereupon he kissed the earth and saluted him and exceeded in the salutation. Quoth the king to him, “Whence comest thou, O youth?” and he answered, “I come from Yemen.”

Then said the king, “Hast thou a need we may accomplish unto thee? For indeed we are exceeding beholden to thee for that which thou didst in the matter of Hudheifeh and his folk.” And he let cast over him a mantle of Egyptian satin, worth an hundred dinars. Moreover, he bade his treasurer give him a thousand dinars and said to him, “O youth, take this in part of that which thou deserves! of us; and if thou prolong thy sojourn with us, we will give thee slaves and servants.” El Abbas kissed the earth and said, “O king, may grant thee abiding prosperity, I deserve not all this.” Then he put his hand to his poke and pulling out two caskets of gold, in each of which were rubies, whose value none could tell, gave them to the king, saying, “O king, God cause thy prosperity to endure, I conjure thee by that which God hath vouchsafed thee, heal my heart by accepting these two caskets, even as I have accepted thy present.” So the king accepted the two caskets and El Abbas took his leave and went away to the bazaar.

When the merchants saw him, they accosted him and said, “O youth, wilt thou not open thy shop?” As they were bespeaking him, up came a woman, having with her a boy, bareheaded, and [stood] looking at El Abbas, till he turned to her, when she said to him, “O youth, I conjure thee by Allah, look at this boy and have pity on him, for that his father hath forgotten his cap in the shop [he lost to thee]; so if thou will well to give it to him, thy reward be with God! For indeed the child maketh our hearts ache with his much weeping, and God be witness for us that, were there left us aught wherewithal to buy him a cap in its stead, we had not sought it of thee.” “O adornment of womankind,” replied El Abbas, “indeed, thou bespeakest me with thy fair speech and supplicatest me with thy goodly words …But bring me thy husband.” So she went and fetched the merchant, whilst the folk assembled to see what El Abbas would do. When the man came, he returned him the gold he had won of him, all and part, and delivered him the keys of the shop, saying, “Requite us with thy pious prayers.”Therewithal the woman came up to him and kissed his feet, and on like wise did the merchant her husband; and all who were present blessed him, and there was no talk but of El Abbas.

As for the merchant, he bought him a sheep and slaughtering it, roasted it and dressed birds and [other] meats of various kinds and colours and bought dessert and sweetmeats and fresh fruits. Then he repaired to El Abbas and conjured him to accept of his hospitality and enter his house and eat of his victual. The prince consented to his wishes and went with him till they came to his house, when the merchant bade him enter. So El Abbas entered and saw a goodly house, wherein was a handsome saloon, with a vaulted estrade. When he entered the saloon, he found that the merchant had made ready food and dessert and perfumes, such as overpass description; and indeed he had adorned the table with sweet-scented flowers and sprinkled musk and rose-water upon the food. Moreover, he had smeared the walls of the saloon with ambergris and set [the smoke of burning] aloes-wood abroach therein.

Presently, El Abbas looked out of the window of the saloon and saw thereby a house of goodly ordinance, lofty of building and abounding in chambers, with two upper stories; but therein was no sign of inhabitants. So he said to the merchant, “Indeed, thou exceedest in doing us honour; but, by Allah, I will not eat of thy victual till thou tell me what is the reason of the emptiness of yonder house.” “O my lord,” answered the other, “that was El Ghitrif’s house and he was admitted to the mercy of God and left none other heir than myself; so it became mine, and by Allah, if thou hast a mind to sojourn in Baghdad, do thou take up thine abode in this house, so thou mayst be in my neighbourhood; for that indeed my heart inclineth unto thee with love and I would have thee never absent from my sight, so I may still have my fill of thee and hearken to thy speech.” El Abbas thanked him and said to him, “Indeed, thou art friendly in thy speech and exceedest [in courtesy] in thy discourse, and needs must I sojourn in Baghdad. As for the house, if it like thee, I will abide therein; so take of me its price.”

So saying, he put his hand to his poke and bringing out therefrom three hundred dinars, gave them to the merchant, who said in himself, “Except I take the money, he will not abide in the house.” So he pouched the money and sold him the house, taking the folk to witness against himself of the sale. Then he arose and set food before El Abbas and they ate of the good things which he had provided; after which he brought him dessert and sweetmeats. They ate thereof till they had enough, when the tables were removed and they washed their hands with rose-water and willow-flower-water. Then the merchant brought El Abbas a napkin perfumed with the fragrant smoke of aloes-wood, on which he wiped his hand, and said to him, “O my lord, the house is become thy house; so bid thy servant transport thither the horses and arms and stuffs.” El Abbas did this and the merchant rejoiced in his neighbourhood and left him not night nor day, so that the prince said to him, “By Allah, I distract thee from thy livelihood.” “God on thee, O my lord,” replied the merchant, “name not to me aught of this, or thou wilt break my heart, for the best of traffic is thy company and thou art the best of livelihood.” So there befell strait friendship between them and ceremony was laid aside from between them.

Meanwhile the king said to his vizier, “How shall we do in the matter of yonder youth, the Yemani, on whom we thought to confer largesse, but he hath largessed us with tenfold [our gift] and more, and we know not if he be a sojourner with us or no?" Then he went into the harem and gave the rubies to his wife Afifeh, who said to him, "What is the worth of these with thee and with [other] the kings?" And he answered, "They are not to be found save with the greatest of kings and none may avail to price them with money." Quoth she, "Whence gottest thou them?" So he recounted to her the story of El Abbas from first to last, and she said, "By Allah, the claims of honour are imperative on us and the king hath fallen short of his due; for that we have not seen him bid him to his assembly, nor hath he seated him on his left hand."

[When the king heard his wife's words], it was as if he had been asleep and awoke; so he went forth of the harem and bade slaughter fowls and dress meats of all kinds and colours. Moreover, he assembled all his retainers and let bring sweetmeats and dessert and all that beseemeth unto kings' tables. Then he adorned his palace and despatched after El Abbas a man of the chief officers of his household, who found him coming forth of the bath, clad in a doublet of fine goats' hair and over it a Baghdadi scarf; his waist was girt with a Rustec kerchief and on his head he wore a light turban of Damietta make.

The messenger wished him joy of the bath and exceeded in doing him worship. Then he said to him, "The king biddeth thee in weal." "Hearkening and obedience," answered El Abbas and accompanied the messenger to the king's palace.

Now Afifeh and her daughter Mariyeh were behind the curtain, looking at him; and when he came before the king, he saluted him and greeted him with the greeting of kings, whilst all who were present stared at him and at his beauty and grace and perfection. The king seated him at the head of the table; and when Afifeh saw him and straitly considered him, she said, "By the virtue of Mohammed, prince of the Apostles, this youth is of the sons of the kings and cometh not to these parts but for some high purpose!" Then she looked at Mariyeh and saw that her face was changed, and indeed her eyes were dead in her face and she turned not her gaze from El Abbas a glance of the eyes, for that the love of him had gotten hold upon her heart. When the queen saw what had befallen her daughter, she feared for her from reproach concerning El Abbas; so she shut the wicket of the lattice and suffered her not to look upon him more. Now there was a pavilion set apart for Mariyeh, and therein were privy chambers and balconies and lattices, and she had with her a nurse, who served her, after the fashion of kings' daughters.

When the banquet was ended and the folk had dispersed, the king said to El Abbas, "I would fain have thee [abide] with me and I will buy thee a house, so haply we may requite thee the high services for which we are beholden to thee; for indeed thy due is imperative [upon us] and thy worth is magnified in our eyes; and indeed we have fallen short of thy due in the matter of distance." When the prince heard the king's speech, he rose and sat down and kissing the earth, returned thanks for his bounty and said, "I am the king's servant, wheresoever I may be, and under his eye." Then he recounted to him the story of the merchant and the manner of the buying of the house, and the king said, "Indeed, I would fain have had thee with me and in my neighbourhood."

Then El Abbas took leave of the king and went away to his own house. Now it befell that he passed under the palace of Mariyeh the king's daughter, and she was sitting at a window. He chanced to look round and his eyes met those of the princess, whereupon his wit departed and he was like to swoon away, whilst his colour changed and he said, "Verily, we are God's and to Him we return!" But he feared for himself lest estrangement betide him; so he concealed his secret and discovered not his case to any of the creatures of God the Most High. When he reached his house, his servant Aamir said to him, "O my lord, I seek refuge for thee with God from change of colour! Hath there betided thee a pain from God the Most High or hath aught of vexation befallen thee? Verily, sickness hath an end and patience doth away vexation." But the prince returned him no answer. Then he brought out inkhorn [and pen] and paper and wrote the following verses:

Quoth I (and mine a body is of passion all forslain, Ay, and a
heart that's all athirst for love and longing pain
And eye that knoweth not the sweet of sleep; yet she, who caused
My dole, may Fortune's perfidies for aye from her abstain!

Yea, for the perfidies of Fate and sev'rance I'm become Even as
was Bishr of old time with Hind, a fearful
swain;
A talking-stock among the folk for ever I abide; Life and the
days pass by, yet ne'er my wishes I attain),
"Knoweth my loved one when I see her at the lattice high Shine as
the sun that flameth forth in heaven's blue demesne?"
Her eye is sharper than a sword; the soul with ecstasy It takes
and longing leaves behind, that nothing may assain.
As at the casement high she sat, her charms I might espy, For
from her cheeks the envious veil that hid them she had
ta'en.
She shot at me a shaft that reached my heart and I became The
bond- man of despair, worn out with effort all in vain.
Fawn of the palace, knowst thou not that I, to look on thee, The
world have traversed, far and wide, o'er many a hill and
plain?
Read then my writ and pity thou the blackness of my fate, Sick,
love- distraught, without a friend to whom I may complain.

Now the merchant's wife aforesaid, who was the nurse of the king's daughter, was watching him from a window, unknown of him, and [when she heard his verses], she knew that there hung some rare story by him; so she went in to him and said, "Peace be on thee, O afflicted one, who acquaintest not physician with thy case! Verily, thou exposest thyself unto grievous peril! I conjure thee by the virtue of Him who hath afflicted thee and stricken thee with the constraint of love-liking, that thou acquaint me with thine affair and discover to me the truth of thy secret; for that indeed I have heard from thee verses that trouble the wit and dissolve the body." So he acquainted her with his case and enjoined her to secrecy, whereof she consented unto him, saying, "What shall be the recompense of whoso goeth with thy letter and bringeth thee an answer thereto?" He bowed his head for shamefastness before her [and was silent]; and she said to him, "Raise thy head and give me thy letter." So he gave her the letter and she took it and carrying it to the princess, said to her, "Read this letter and give me the answer thereto."

Now the liefest of all things to Mariyeh was the recitation of poems and verses and linked rhymes and the twanging [of the strings of the lute], and she was versed in all tongues; so she took the letter and opening it, read that which was therein and apprehended its purport. Then she cast it on the ground and said, “O nurse, I have no answer to make to this letter.” Quoth the nurse, “Indeed, this is weakness in thee and a reproach unto thee, for that the people of the world have heard of thee and still praise thee for keenness of wit and apprehension; so do thou return him an answer, such as shall delude his heart and weary his soul.” “O nurse,” rejoined the princess, “who is this that presumeth upon me with this letter? Belike he is the stranger youth who gave my father the rubies.” “It is himself,” answered the woman, and Mariyeh said, “I will answer his letter on such a wise that thou shalt not bring me other than it [from him].” Quoth the nurse, “So be it.” So the princess called for inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses:

O’erbold art thou in that to me, a stranger, thou hast sent These
verses; ‘twill but add to thee unease and miscontent.
Now God forbid thou shouldst attain thy wishes! What care I If
thou have looked on me a look that caused thee languishment?
Who art thou, wretch, that thou shouldst hope to win me? With thy
rhymes What wouldst of me? Thy reason, sure, with passion is
forspent.
If to my favours thou aspire and covet me, good lack! What leach
such madness can assain or what medicament?
Leave rhyming, madman that thou art, lest, bound upon the cross,
Thou thy presumption in the stead of abjectness repent.
Deem not, O youth, that I to thee incline; indeed, no part Have I
in those who walk the ways, the children of the tent.
In the wide world no house thou hast, a homeless wanderer thou:
To thine own place thou shall be borne, an object for
lament.
Forbear thy verse-making, O thou that harbourest in the camp,
Lest to the gleemen thou become a name of wonderment.
How many a lover, who aspires to union with his love, For all his
hopes seem near, is baulked of that whereon he’s bent!

Then get thee gone nor covet that which thou shall ne'er obtain;
So shall it be, although the time seem near and the event.
Thus unto thee have I set forth my case; consider well My words,
so thou mayst guided be aright by their intent.

When she had made an end of her verses, she folded the letter and delivered it to the nurse, who took it and went with it to El Abbas. When she gave it to him, he took it and breaking it open, read it and apprehended its purport; and when he came to the end of it, he swooned away. After awhile, he came to himself and said, "Praised be God who hath caused her return an answer to my letter! Canst thou carry her another letter, and with God the Most High be thy requital?" Quoth she, "And what shall letters profit thee, seeing she answereth on this wise?" But he said, "Belike, she may yet be softened." Then he took inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses:

Thy letter reached me; when the words thou wrot'st therein I
read, My longing waxed and pain and woe redoubled on my
head.
Yea, wonder-words I read therein, my trouble that increased And
caused emaciation wear my body to a shred.
Would God thou knewst what I endure for love of thee and how My
vitals for thy cruelty are all forspent and dead!
Fain, fain would I forget thy love. Alack, my heart denies To be
consoled, and 'gainst thy wrath nought standeth me in stead.
An thou'dst vouchsafe to favour me,'twould lighten my despair,
Though but in dreams thine image 'twere that visited my bed.
Persist not on my weakliness with thy disdain nor be Treason and
breach of love its troth to thee attributed;
For know that hither have I fared and come to this thy land, By
hopes of union with thee and near fruition led.
How oft I've waked, whilst over me my comrades kept the watch!
How many a stony waste I've crossed, how many a desert
dread!
From mine own land, to visit thee, I came at love's command, For
all the distance did forbid,'twixt me and thee that spread.

Wherefore, by Him who letteth waste my frame, have ruth on me And
quench my yearning and the fires by passion in me fed.
In glory's raiment clad, by thee the stars of heaven are shamed
And in amaze the full moon stares to see thy goodlihead.
All charms, indeed, thou dost comprise; so who shall vie with
thee And who shall blame me if for love of such a fair I'm
sped?

When he had made an end of his verses, he folded the letter and delivering it to the nurse, charged her keep the secret. So she took it and carrying it to Mariyeh, gave it to her. The princess broke it open and read it and apprehended its purport. Then said she, "By Allah, O nurse, my heart is burdened with an exceeding chagrin, never knew I a dourer, because of this correspondence and of these verses." And the muse made answer to her, saying, "O my lady, thou art in thy dwelling and thy place and thy heart is void of care; so return him an answer and reck thou not" Accordingly, the princess called for inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses:

Thou that the dupe of yearning art, how many a melting wight In
waiting for the unkept tryst doth watch the weary night!
If in night's blackness thou hast plunged into the desert's heart
And hast denied thine eyes the taste of sleep and its
delight,
If near and far thy toiling feet have trod the ways and thou
Devils and Marids hast ensued nor wouldst be led aright,
And dar'dst, O dweller in the tents, to lift thine eyes to me,
Hoping by stress to win of me the amorous delight,
Get thee to patience fair, if thou remember thee of that Whose
issues (quoth the Merciful) are ever benedight.
How many a king for my sweet sake with other kings hath vied,
Still craving union with me and suing for my sight!
Whenas En Nebhan strove to win my grace, himself to me With
camel- loads he did commend of musk and camphor white,
And aloes-wood, to boot, he brought and caskets full of pearls
And priceless rubies and the like of costly gems and bright;

Yea, and black slaves he proffered me and slave-girls big with
child And steeds of price, with splendid arms and trappings
rich bedight.
Raiment of silk and sendal, too, he brought to us for gift, And
me in marriage sought therewith; yet, all his pains despite,
Of me he got not what he sought and brideless did return, For
that estrangement and disdain were pleasing in my sight.
Wherefore, O stranger, dare thou not approach me with desire,
Lest ruin quick and pitiless thy hardihood requite.

When she had made an end of her verses, she folded the letter and delivered it to the nurse, who took it and carried it to El Abbas. He broke it open and read it and apprehended its purport; then took inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses:

Indeed, thou'st told the tale of kings and men of might, Each one
a lion fierce, impetuous in the fight,
Whose wits (like mine, alack!) thou stalest and whose hearts With
shafts from out thine eyes bewitching thou didst smite.
Yea, and how slaves and steeds and good and virgin girls Were
proffered thee to gift, thou hast not failed to cite,
How presents in great store thou didst refuse and eke The givers,
great and small, with flouting didst requite.
Then came I after them, desiring thee, with me No second save my
sword, my falchion keen and bright.
No slaves with me have I nor camels swift of foot, Nor
slave-girls have I brought in curtained litters dight.
Yet, an thou wilt vouchsafe thy favours unto me, My sabre thou
shalt see the foemen put to flight;
Ay, and around Baghdad the horsemen shalt behold, Like clouds
that wall the world, full many a doughty knight,
All hearkening to my word, obeying my command, In whatsoever
thing is pleasing to my sight.
If slaves thou fain wouldst have by thousands every day Or,
kneeling at thy feet, see kings of mickle might,
And horses eke wouldst have led to thee day by day And girls,
high- breasted maids, and damsels black and white,

Lo under my command the land of Yemen is And trenchant is my
sword against the foe in fight.
Whenas the couriers came with news of thee, how fair Thou wast
and sweet and how thy visage shone with light,
All, all, for thy sweet sake, I left; ay, I forsook Aziz, my
sire, and those akin to me that hight
And unto Irak fared, my way to thee to make, And crossed the
stony wastes i' the darkness of the night.
Then sent I speech to thee in verses such as burn The heart;
reproach therein was none nor yet unright;
Yet with perfidiousness (sure Fortune's self as thou Ne'er so
perfidious was) my love thou didst requite
And deemedst me a waif, a homeless good-for-nought, A
slave-begotten brat, a wanton, witless wight.

Then he folded the letter and committed it to the nurse and gave her five hundred dinars, saying, "Accept this from me, for that indeed thou hast wearied thyself between us." "By Allah, O my lord," answered she, "my desire is to bring about union between you, though I lose that which my right hand possesseth." And he said, "May God the Most High requite thee with good!" Then she carried the letter to Mariyeh and said to her, "Take this letter; belike it may be the end of the correspondence." So she took it and breaking it open, read it, and when she had made an end of it, she turned to the nurse and said to her, "This fellow putteth off lies upon me and avoucheth unto me that he hath cities and horsemen and footmen at his command and submitting to his allegiance; and he seeketh of me that which he shall not obtain; for thou knowest, O nurse, that kings' sons have sought me in marriage, with presents and rarities; but I have paid no heed unto aught of this; so how shall I accept of this fellow, who is the fool of his time and possesseth nought but two caskets of rubies, which he gave to my father, and indeed he hath taken up his abode in the house of El Ghitrif and abideth without silver or gold? Wherefore, I conjure thee by Allah, O nurse, return to him and cut off his hope of me."

Accordingly the nurse returned to El Abbas, without letter or answer; and when she came in to him, he saw that she was troubled and noted the marks of chagrin on her face; so he said to her, "What is this plight?" Quoth she, "I cannot set out to thee that which Mariyeh said; for indeed she charged me return to thee without letter or answer." "O nurse of kings," rejoined El Abbas, "I would have thee carry her this letter and return not to her without it." Then he took inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses:

My secret is disclosed, the which I strove to hide; Of thee and
 of thy love enough have I abyed.
My kinsmen and my friends for thee I did forsake And left them
 weeping tears that poured as 'twere a tide.
Yea, to Baghdad I came, where rigour gave me chase And I was
 overthrown of cruelty and pride.
Repression's draught, by cups, from the beloved's hand I've
 quaffed; with colocynth for wine she hath me plied.
Oft as I strove to make her keep the troth of love, Unto
 concealment's ways still would she turn aside.
My body is dissolved with sufferance in vain; Relenting, ay, and
 grace I hoped should yet betide;
But rigour still hath waxed on me and changed my case And love
 hath left me bound, afflicted, weeping-eyed.
How long shall I anights distracted be for love Of thee? How long
 th' assaults of grief and woes abide?
Thou, thou enjoy'st repose and comfortable sleep, Nor of the
 mis'ries reckst by which my heart is wried.
I watch the stars for wake and pray that the belov'd May yet to
 me relent and bid my tears be dried.
The pains of long desire have wasted me away; Estrangement and
 disdain my body sore have tried.
"Be thou not hard of heart," quoth I. Had ye but deigned To visit
 me in dreams, I had been satisfied.
But when ye saw my writ, the standard ye o'erthrew Of faith, your
 favours grudged and aught of grace denied.
Nay, though ye read therein discourse that sure should speak To
 heart and soul, no word thereunto ye replied,
But deemed yourself secure from every changing chance Nor recked
 the ebb and flow of Fortune's treacherous tide.

Were my affliction thine, love's anguish hadst thou dreed And in
the flaming hell of long estrangement sighed.
Yet shall thou suffer that which I from thee have borne And with
love's woes thy heart shall yet be mortified.
The bitterness of false accusing shall thou taste And eke the
thing reveal that thou art fain to hide;
Yea, he thou lov'st shall be hard-hearted, recking not Of
fortune's turns or fate's caprices, in his pride.
Wherewith farewell, quoth I, and peace be on thee aye, What while
the branches bend, what while the stars abide.

When he had made an end of his verses, he folded the letter and gave it to the nurse, who took it and carried it to Mariyeh. When she came into the princess's presence, she saluted her; but Mariyeh returned not her salutation and she said, "O my lady, how hard is thy heart that thou grudgest to return the salutation! Take this letter, for that it is the last of that which shall come to thee from him." Quoth Mariyeh, "Take my warning and never again enter my palace, or it will be the cause of thy destruction; for I am certified that thou purposest my dishonour. So get thee gone from me." And she commanded to beat the nurse; whereupon the latter went forth fleeing from her presence, changed of colour and absent of wits, and gave not over going till she came to the house of El Abbas.

When the prince saw her in this plight, he was as a sleeper awakened and said to her, "What hath befallen thee? Set out to me thy case." "God on thee," answered she, "nevermore send me to Mariyeh, and do thou protect me, so may God protect thee from the fires of hell!" Then she related to him that which had bedded her with Mariyeh; which when he heard, there took him the shamefastness of the generous and this was grievous unto him. The love of Mariyeh fled forth of his heart and he said to the nurse, "How much hadst thou of Mariyeh every month?" "Ten dinars," answered she, and he said, "Be not concerned." Then he put his hand to his poke and bringing out two hundred dinars, gave them to her and said, "Take this for a whole year's wage and turn not again to serve any one. When the year is out, I will give thee two years' wage, for that thou hast wearied thyself with us and on account of the cutting off of thy dependence upon Mariyeh."

Moreover, he gave her a complete suit of clothes and raising his head to her, said, "When thou toldest me that which Mariyeh had done with thee, God rooted out the love of her from my heart, and never again will she occur to my mind; so extolled be the perfection of Him who turneth hearts and eyes! It was she who was the cause of my coming out from Yemen, and now the time is past for which I engaged with my people and I fear lest my father levy his troops and come forth in quest of me, for that he hath no child other than myself and cannot brook to be parted from me; and on like wise is it with my mother." When the nurse heard his words, she said to him, "O my lord, and which of the kings is thy father?" "My father is El Aziz, lord of Yemen and Nubia and the Islands of the Benou Kehtan and the Two Noble Sanctuaries (God the Most High have them in His keeping!)," answered El Abbas; "and whenas he taketh horse, there mount with him an hundred and twenty and four thousand horsemen, all smiters with the sword, let alone attendants and servants and followers, all of whom give ear unto my word and obey my commandment." "Why, then, O my lord," asked the nurse, "didst thou conceal the secret of thy rank and lineage and passedst thyself off for a wayfarer? Alas for our disgrace before thee by reason of our shortcoming in rendering thee thy due! What shall be our excuse with thee, and thou of the sons of the kings?" But he rejoined, "By Allah, thou hast not fallen short! Nay, it is incumbent on me to requite thee, what while I live, though I be far distant from thee."

Then he called his servant Aamir and said to him, "Saddle the horses." When the nurse heard his words and indeed [she saw that] Aamir brought him the horses and they were resolved upon departure, the tears ran down upon her cheeks and she said to him, "By Allah, thy separation is grievous to me, O solace of the eye!" Then said she, "Where is the goal of thine intent, so we may know thy news and solace ourselves with thy report?" Quoth he, "I go hence to visit Akil, the son of my father's brother, for that he hath his sojourn in the camp of Kundeh ben Hisham, and these twenty years have I not seen him nor he me; wherefore I purpose to repair to him and discover his news and return hither. Then will I go hence to Yemen, if it be the will of God the Most High."

So saying, he took leave of the woman and her husband and set out, intending for Akil, his father's brother's son. Now there was between Baghdad and Akil's abiding-place forty days' journey; so El Abbas settled himself on the back of his courser and his servant Aamir mounted also and they fared forth on their way. Presently, El Abbas turned right and left and recited the following verses:

I am the champion-slayer, the warrior without peer; My foes I
 slay, destroying the hosts, when I appear.
Tow'rds El Akil my journey I take; to visit him, The wastes in
 praise and safety I traverse, without fear,
And all the desert spaces devour, whilst to my rede, Or if in
 sport or earnest, still Aamir giveth ear.
Who letteth us or hind'reth our way, I spring on him, As
 springeth lynx or panther upon the frighted deer;
With ruin I o'erwhelm him and abjectness and woe And cause him
 quaff the goblet of death and distance drear.
Well-ground my polished sword is and thin and keen of edge And
 trenchant, eke, for smiting and long my steel-barbed spear.
So fell and fierce my stroke is, if on a mountain high It lit,
 though all of granite, right through its midst 'twould
 shear.
Nor troops have I nor henchmen nor one to lend me aid Save God,
 to whom, my Maker, my voice in praise I rear.
'Tis He who pardoneth errors alike to slave and free; On Him is
 my reliance in good and evil cheer.

Then they fell to journeying night and day, and as they went, behold, they sighted a camp of the camps of the Arabs. So El Abbas enquired thereof and was told that it was the camp of the Benou Zuhreh. Now there were around them sheep and cattle, such as filled the earth, and they were enemies to El Akil, the cousin of El Abbas, upon whom they still made raids and took his cattle; wherefore he used to pay them tribute every year, for that he availed not to cope with them. When El Abbas came near the camp, he dismounted from his courser and his servant Aamir also dismounted; and they set down the victual and ate their sufficiency and rested awhile of the day. Then said the prince to Aamir, “Fetch water and give the horses to drink and draw water for us in thy water-bag, by way of provision for the road.”

So Aamir took the water-skin and made for the water; but, when he came to the well, behold, two young men with gazelles, and when they saw him, they said to him, “Whither wilt thou, O youth, and of which of the Arabs art thou?” “Harkye, lads,” answered he, “fill me my water-skin, for that I am a stranger man and a wayfarer and I have a comrade who awaiteth me.” Quoth they, “Thou art no wayfarer, but a spy from El Akil’s camp.” Then they took him and carried him to [their king] Zuheir ben Shebib; and when he came before him, he said to him, “Of which of the Arabs art thou?” Quoth Aamir, “I am a wayfarer.” And Zuheir said, “Whence comest thou and whither wilt thou?” “I am on my way to Akil,” answered Aamir. When he named Akil, those who were present were agitated; but Zuheir signed to them with his eyes and said to him, “What is thine errand with Akil?” Quoth he, “We would fain see him, my friend and I.”

When Zuheir heard his words, he bade smite off his head; but his Vizier said to him, “Slay him not, till his friend be present.” So he commanded the two slaves to fetch his friend; whereupon they repaired to El Abbas and called to him, saying, “O youth, answer the summons of King Zuheir.” “What would the king with me?” asked he, and they answered, “We know not.” Quoth he, “Who gave the king news of me?” “We went to draw water,” answered they, “and found a man by the water. So we questioned him of his case, but he would not acquaint us therewith; wherefore we carried him perforce to King Zuheir, who questioned him of his case and he told him that he was going to Akil. Now Akil is the king’s enemy and he purposeth to betake himself to his camp and make prize of his offspring and cut off his traces.” “And what,” asked El Abbas, “hath Akil done with King Zuheir?” And they replied, “He engaged for himself that he would bring the king every year a thousand dinars and a thousand she-camels, besides a thousand head of thoroughbred horses and two hundred black slaves and fifty slave-girls; but it hath reached the king that Akil purposeth to give nought of this; wherefore he is minded to go to him. So hasten thou with us, ere the king be wroth with thee and with us."

Then said El Abbas to them, "O youths, sit by my arms and my horse till I return." But they answered, saying, "By Allah, thou prolongest discourse with that which beseemeth not of words! Make haste, or we will go with thy head, for indeed the king purposeth to slay thee and to slay thy comrade and take that which is with you." When the prince heard this, his skin quaked and he cried out at them with a cry that made them tremble. Then he sprang upon his horse and settling himself in the saddle, galloped till he came to the king's assembly, when he cried out at the top of his voice, saying ["To horse,] cavaliers!" And levelled his spear at the pavilion wherein was Zuheir. Now there were about him a thousand smiters with the sword; but El Abbas fell in upon them and dispersed them from around him, and there abode none in the tent save Zuheir and his vizier.

Then came up El Abbas to the door of the tent, and therein were four-and-twenty golden doves; so he took them, after he had beaten them down with the end of his lance. Then he called out, saying, "Harkye, Zuheir! Doth it not suffice thee that thou hast quelled El Akil's repute, but thou art minded to quell that of those who sojourn round about him? Knowest thou not that he is of the lieutenants of Kundeh ben [Hisham of the Benou] Sheiban, a man renowned for prowess? Indeed, covetise of him hath entered into thee and jealousy of him hath gotten possession of thee. Doth it not suffice thee that thou hast orphaned his children and slain his men? By the virtue of the Chosen Prophet, I will make thee drink the cup of death!" So saying, he drew his sword and smiting Zuheir on his shoulder, caused the steel issue, gleaming, from the tendons of his throat. Then he smote the vizier and clove his head in sunder.

As he was thus, behold, Aamir called out to him and said, "O my lord, come to my help, or I am a dead man!" So El Abbas went up to him and found him cast down on his back and chained with four chains to four pickets of iron. He loosed his bonds and said to him, "Go before me, O Aamir." So he fared on before him a little, and presently they looked, and behold, horsemen making to Zuheir's succour, to wit, twelve thousand cavaliers, with Sehl ben Kaab in their van, mounted upon a jet-black steed. He charged upon Aamir, who fled from him, then upon El Abbas, who said, “O Aamir, cleave fast to my horse and guard my back.” Aamir did as he bade him, whereupon El Abbas cried out at the folk and falling upon them, overthrew their braves and slew of them nigh two thousand cavaliers, whilst not one of them knew what was to do nor with whom he fought. Then said one of them to other, “Verily, the king is slain; so with whom do we wage war? Indeed ye flee from him; so do ye enter under his banners, or not one of you will be saved.”

Thereupon they all dismounted and putting off that which was upon them of harness of war, came before El Abbas and tendered him allegiance and sued for his protection. So he held his hand from them and bade them gather together the spoils. Then he took the riches and the slaves and the camels, and they all became his liegemen and his retainers, to the number (according to that which is said) of fifty thousand horse. Moreover, the folk heard of him and flocked to him from all sides; whereupon he divided [the spoil amongst them] and gave gifts and abode thus three days, and there came presents to him. Then he bade set out for Akil’s abiding-place; so they fared on six days and on the seventh day they came in sight of the camp. El Abbas bade his man Aamir forego him and give Akil the glad news of his cousin’s coming. So he rode on to the camp and going in to Akil, gave him the glad news of Zuheir’s slaughter and the conquest of his tribe.

Akil rejoiced in the coming of El Abbas and the slaughter of his enemy and all in his camp rejoiced also and cast dresses of honour upon Aamir. Moreover, Akil bade go forth to meet El Abbas, and commanded that none, great or small, freeman or slave, should tarry behind. So they did his bidding and going forth all, met El Abbas at three parasangs’ distance from the camp. When they met him, they all dismounted from their horses and Akil and he embraced and clapped hands. Then they returned, rejoicing in the coming of El Abbas and the slaughter of their enemy, to the camp, where tents were pitched for the new-comers and carpets spread and game killed and beasts slaughtered and royal guest-meals spread; and on this wise they abode twenty days, in the enjoyment of all delight and solace of life.

To return to King El Aziz. When his son El Abbas left him, he was desolated for him with an exceeding desolation, he and his mother; and when tidings of him tarried long and the appointed time passed [and the prince returned not], the king caused public proclamation to be made, commanding all his troops to make ready to mount and go forth in quest of his son El Abbas at the end of three days, after which time no cause of hindrance nor excuse should be admitted unto any. So on the fourth day, the king bade number the troops, and behold, they were four-and-twenty thousand horse, besides servants and followers. Accordingly, they reared the standards and the drums beat to departure and the king set out [with his army], intending for Baghdad; nor did he cease to fare on with all diligence, till he came within half a day's journey of the city and bade his troops encamp in [a place there called] the Green Meadow. So they pitched the tents there, till the country was straitened with them, and set up for the king a pavilion of green brocade, broidered with pearls and jewels.

When El Aziz had sat awhile, he summoned the mamelukes of his son El Abbas, and they were five-and-twenty in number, besides half a score slave-girls, as they were moons, five of whom the king had brought with him and other five he had left with the prince's mother. When the mamelukes came before him, he cast over each of them a mantle of green brocade and bade them mount like horses of one and the same fashion and enter Baghdad and enquire concerning their lord El Abbas. So they entered the city and passed through the [streets and] markets, and there abode in Baghdad nor old man nor boy but came forth to gaze on them and divert himself with the sight of their beauty and grace and the goodliness of their aspect and of their clothes and horses, for that they were even as moons. They gave not over going till they came to the royal palace, where they halted, and the king looked at them and seeing their beauty and the goodliness of their apparel and the brightness of their faces, said, "Would I knew of which of the tribes these are!" And he bade the eunuch bring him news of them.

So he went out to them and questioned them of their case, whereupon, "Return to thy lord," answered they, "and question him of Prince El Abbas, if he have come unto him, for that he left his father King El Aziz a full-told year agone, and indeed longing for him troubleth the king and he hath levied a part of his army and his guards and is come forth in quest of his son, so haply he may light upon tidings of him." Quoth the eunuch, "Is there amongst you a brother of his or a son?" "Nay, by Allah!" answered they. "But we are all his mamelukes and the boughten of his money, and his father El Aziz hath despatched us to make enquiry of him. So go thou to thy lord and question him of the prince and return to us with that which he shall answer you." "And where is King El Aziz?" asked the eunuch; and they replied, "He is encamped in the Green Meadow."

The eunuch returned and told the king, who said, "Indeed, we have been neglectful with regard to El Abbas. What shall be our excuse with the king? By Allah, my soul misdoubted me that the youth was of the sons of the kings!" The Lady Afifeh, his wife, saw him lamenting for [his usage of] El Abbas and said to him, "O king, what is it thou regrettest with this exceeding regret?" Quoth he, "Thou knowest the stranger youth, who gave us the rubies?" "Assuredly," answered she; and he said, "Yonder youths, who have halted in the palace court, are his mamelukes, and his father King El Aziz, lord of Yemen, hath pitched his camp in the Green Meadow; for he is come with his army to seek him, and the number of his troops is [four-and-] twenty thousand men." [Then he went out from her], and when she heard his words, she wept sore for him and had compassion on his case and sent after him, counselling him to send for the mamelukes and lodge them [in the palace] and entertain them.

The king gave ear to her counsel and despatching the eunuch for the mamelukes, assigned them a lodging and said to them, "Have patience, till the king give you tidings of your lord El Abbas." When they heard his words, their eyes ran over with plenteous tears, of their much longing for the sight of their lord. Then the king bade the queen enter the privy chamber and let down the curtain [before the door thereof]. So she did this and he summoned them to his presence. When they stood before him, they kissed the earth, to do him worship, and showed forth their breeding and magnified his dignity. He bade them sit, but they refused, till he conjured them by their lord El Abbas. So they sat down and he caused set before them food of various kinds and fruits and sweetmeats. Now within the Lady Afifeh's palace was an underground way communicating with the palace of the princess Mariyeh. So the queen sent after her and she came to her, whereupon she made her stand behind the curtain and gave her to know that El Abbas was the king's son of Yemen and that these were his mamelukes. Moreover, she told her that the prince's father had levied his troops and was come with his army in quest of him and that he had pitched his camp in the Green Meadow and despatched these mamelukes to make enquiry of their lord. So Mariyeh abode looking upon them and upon their beauty and grace and the goodliness of their apparel, till they had eaten their fill of food and the tables were removed; whereupon the king recounted to them the story of El Abbas and they took leave of him and went away.

As for the princess Mariyeh, when she returned to her palace, she bethought herself concerning the affair of El Abbas, repenting her of that which she had done, and the love of him took root in her heart. So, when the night darkened upon her, she dismissed all her women and bringing out the letters, to wit, those which El Abbas had written, fell to reading them and weeping. She gave not over weeping her night long, and when she arose in the morning, she called a damsel of her slave-girls, Shefikeh by name, and said to her, "O damsel, I purpose to discover to thee mine affair, and I charge thee keep my secret; to wit, I would have thee betake thyself to the house of the nurse, who used to serve me, and fetch her to me, for that I have grave occasion for her."

Accordingly, Shefikeh went out and repairing to the nurse's house, found her clad in apparel other than that which she had been wont to wear aforetime. So she saluted her and said to her, "Whence hadst thou this dress, than which there is no goodlier?" "O Shefikeh," answered the nurse, "thou deemest that I have gotten no good save of thy mistress; but, by Allah, had I endeavoured for her destruction, I had done [that which was my right], for that she did with me what thou knowest and bade the eunuch beat me, without offence of me committed; wherefore do thou tell her that he, on whose behalf I bestirred myself with her, hath made me quit of her and her humours, for that he hath clad me in this habit and given me two hundred and fifty dinars and promised me the like thereof every year and charged me serve none of the folk."

Quoth Shefikeh, “My mistress hath occasion for thee; so come thou with me and I will engage to restore thee to thy dwelling in weal and safety.” But the nurse answered, saying, “Indeed, her palace is become forbidden to me and never again will I enter therein, for that God (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He!) of His favour and bounty hath rendered me independent of her.” So Shefikeh returned to her mistress and acquainted her with the nurse’s words and that wherein she was of affluence; whereupon Mariyeh confessed the unseemliness of her dealing with her and repented, whenas repentance profited her not; and she abode in that her case days and nights, whilst the fire of longing flamed in her heart.

Meanwhile, El Abbas abode with his cousin Akil twenty days, after which he made ready for the journey to Baghdad and letting bring the booty he had gotten of King Zuheir, divided it between himself and his cousin. Then he set out for Baghdad, and when he came within two days’ journey of the city, he called his servant Aamir and bade him mount his charger and forego him with the baggage-train and the cattle. So Aamir [took horse and] fared on till he came to Baghdad, and the season of his entering was the first of the day; nor was there little child or hoary old man in the city but came forth to divert himself with gazing on those flocks and herds and upon the goodliness of those slave-girls, and their wits were amazed at what they saw. Presently the news reached the king that the young man El Abbas, who had gone forth from him, was come back with herds and rarities and slaves and a mighty host and had taken up his sojourn without the city, whilst his servant Aamir was presently come to Baghdad, so he might make ready dwelling- places for his lord, wherein he should take up his abode.

When the king heard these tidings of Aamir, he sent for him and let bring him before him; and when he entered his presence, he kissed the earth and saluted and showed forth his breeding and greeted him with the goodliest of compliments. The king bade him raise his head and questioned him of his lord El Abbas; whereupon he acquainted him with his tidings and told him that which had betided him with King Zuheir and of the army that was become at his commandment and of the spoil that he had gotten. Moreover, he gave him to know that El Abbas was coming on the morrow, and with him more than fifty thousand cavaliers, obedient to his commandment. When the king heard his speech, he bade decorate Baghdad and commanded [the inhabitants] to equip themselves with the richest of their apparel, in honour of the coming of El Abbas. Moreover, he sent to give King El Aziz the glad tidings of his son's return and acquainted him with that which he had heard from the prince's servant.

When the news reached El Aziz, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy in the coming of his son and straightway took horse, he and all his army, what while the trumpets sounded and the musicians played, that the earth quaked and Baghdad also trembled, and it was a notable day. When Mariyeh beheld all this, she repented with the uttermost of repentance of that which she had wroughten against El Abbas his due and the fires still raged in her vitals. Meanwhile, the troops sallied forth of Baghdad and went out to meet those of El Abbas, who had halted in a meadow called the Green Island. When he espied the approaching host, he knew not what they were; so he strained his sight and seeing horsemen coming and troops and footmen, said to those about him, "Among yonder troops are ensigns and banners of various kinds; but, as for the great green standard that ye see, it is the standard of my father, the which is reserved [unto him and never displayed save] over his head, and [by this] I know that he himself is come out in quest of me." And he was certified of this, he and his troops.

[So he fared on towards them] and when he drew near unto them, he knew them and they knew him; whereupon they lighted down from their horses and saluting him, gave him joy of his safety and the folk flocked to him. When he came to his father, they embraced and greeted each other a long time, whilst neither of them availed unto speech, for the greatness of that which betided them of joy in reunion. Then El Abbas bade the folk mount; so they mounted and his mamelukes surrounded him and they entered Baghdad on the most magnificent wise and in the highest worship and glory.

The wife of the shopkeeper, to wit, the nurse, came out, with the rest of those who came out, to divert herself with gazing upon the show, and when she saw El Abbas and beheld his beauty and the goodliness of his army and that which he had brought back with him of herds and slaves and slave-girls and mamelukes, she improvised and recited the following verses:

El Abbas from Akil his stead is come again; Prize hath he made of steeds and many a baggage-train;
Yea, horses hath he brought, full fair of shape and hue, Whose collars, anklet-like, ring to the bridle-rein.
Taper of hoofs and straight of stature, in the dust They prance, as like a flood they pour across the plain;
And on their saddles perched are warriors richly clad, That with their hands do smite on kettle-drums amain.
Couched are their limber spears, right long and lithe of point, Keen- ground and polished sheer, amazing wit and brain.
Who dares with them to cope draws death upon himself; Yea, of the deadly lance incontinent he's slain.
Come, then, companions mine, rejoice with me and say, "All hail to thee, O friend, and welcome fair and fain!"
For whoso doth rejoice in meeting him shall have Largesse and gifts galore at his dismounting gain.

When the troops entered Baghdad, each of them alighted in his pavilion, whilst El Abbas encamped apart in a place near the Tigris and commanded to slaughter for the troops, each day, that which should suffice them of oxen and sheep and bake them bread and spread the tables. So the folk ceased not to come to him and eat of his banquet. Moreover, all the people of the country came to him with presents and rarities and he requited them many times the like of their gifts, so that the lands were filled with his tidings and the report of him was bruited abroad among the folk of the deserts and the cities.

Then, when he rode to his house that he had bought, the shopkeeper and his wife came to him and gave him joy of his safety; whereupon he ordered them three swift thoroughbred horses and ten dromedaries and an hundred head of sheep and clad them both in sumptuous dresses of honour. Then he chose out ten slave-girls and ten black slaves and fifty horses and the like number of she- camels and three hundred head of sheep, together with twenty ounces of musk and as many of camphor, and sent all this to the King of Baghdad. When this came to Ins ben Cais, his wit fled for joy and he was perplexed wherewithal to requite him. Moreover, El Abbas gave gifts and largesse and bestowed dresses of honour upon great and small, each after the measure of his station, save only Mariyeh; for unto her he sent nothing.

This was grievous to the princess and it irked her sore that he should not remember her; so she called her slave- girl Shefikeh and said to her, "Go to El Abbas and salute him and say to him, 'What hindereth thee from sending my lady Mariyeh her part of thy booty?'" So Shefikeh betook herself to him and when she came to his door, the chamberlains refused her admission, until they should have gotten her leave and permission. When she entered, El Abbas knew her and knew that she had somewhat of speech [with him]; so he dismissed his mamelukes and said to her, "What is thine errand, O handmaid of good?" "O my lord," answered she, "I am a slave-girl of the Princess Mariyeh, who kisseth thy hands and commendeth her salutation to thee. Indeed, she rejoiceth in thy safety and reproacheth thee for that thou breakest her heart, alone of all the folk, for that thy largesse embraceth great and small, yet hast thou not remembered her with aught of thy booty. Indeed, it is as if thou hadst hardened thy heart against her." Quoth he, "Extolled be the perfection of him who turneth hearts! By Allah, my vitals were consumed with the love of her [aforetime] and of my longing after her, I came forth to her from my native land and left my people and my home and my wealth, and it was with her that began the hardheartedness and the cruelty. Nevertheless, for all this, I bear her no malice and needs must I send her somewhat whereby she may remember me; for that I abide in her land but a few days, after which I set out for the land of Yemen."

Then he called for a chest and bringing out thence a necklace of Greek handiwork, worth a thousand dinars, wrapped it in a mantle of green silk, set with pearls and jewels and inwrought with red gold, and joined thereto two caskets of musk and ambergris. Moreover, he put off upon the girl a mantle of Greek silk, striped with gold, wherein were divers figures and semblants depictured, never saw eyes its like. Therewithal the girl's wit fled for joy and she went forth from his presence and returned to her mistress. When she came in to her, she acquainted her with that which she had seen of El Abbas and that which was with him of servants and attendants and [set out to her] the loftiness of his station and gave her that which was with her.

Mariyeh opened the mantle, and when she saw that necklace, and indeed the place was illumined with the lustre thereof, she looked at her slave-girl and said to her, “By Allah, O Shefikeh, one look at him were liefer to me than all that my hand possesseth! Would I knew what I shall do, whenas Baghdad is empty of him and I hear no tidings of him!” Then she wept and calling for inkhorn* and paper and pen of brass, wrote the following verses:

Still do I yearn, whilst passion’s fire flames in my liver aye;
For parting’s shafts have smitten me and done my strength away.
Oft for thy love as I would be consoled, my yearning turns
To-thee- ward still and my desires my reason still gainsay.
My transports I conceal for fear of those thereon that spy; Yet
down my cheeks the tears course still and still my case bewray.
No rest is there for me, no life wherein I may delight, Nor
pleasant meat nor drink avails to please me, night or day.
To whom save thee shall I complain, of whom relief implore, Whose
image came to visit me, what while in dreams I lay?
Reproach me not for what I did, but be thou kind to one Who’s
sick of body and whose heart is wasted all away.
The fire of love-longing I hide; severance consumeth me, A thrall
of care, for long desire to wakefulness a prey.
Midmost the watches of the night I see thee, in a dream; A lying
dream, for he I love my love doth not repay.
Would God thou knewest that for love of thee which I endure! It
hath indeed brought down on me estrangement and dismay.
Read thou my writ and apprehend its purport, for my case This is
and fate hath stricken me with sorrows past allay.
Know, then, the woes that have befall’n a lover, neither grudge
Her secret to conceal, but keep her counsel still, I pray.

Then she folded the letter and giving it to her slave-girl, bade her carry it to El Abbas and bring back his answer thereto. Accordingly, Shefikeh took the letter and carried it to the prince, after the doorkeeper had sought leave of him to admit her. When she came in to him, she found with him five damsels, as they were moons, clad in [rich] apparel and ornaments; and when he saw her, he said to her, "What is thine occasion, O handmaid of good?" So she put out her hand to him with the letter, after she had kissed it, and he bade one of his slave-girls receive it from her. Then he took it from the girl and breaking it open, read it and apprehended its purport; whereupon "We are God's and to Him we return!" exclaimed he and calling for ink- horn and paper, wrote the following verses:

I marvel for that to my love I see thee now incline, What time my
heart, indeed, is fain to turn away from thine.
Whilere, the verses that I made it was thy wont to flout, Saying,
"No passer by the way hath part in me or mine.
How many a king to me hath come, of troops and guards ensued,
And
Bactrian camels brought with him, in many a laden line,
And dromedaries, too, of price and goodly steeds and swift Of
many a noble breed, yet found no favour in my eyne!"
Then, after them came I to thee and union did entreat And unto
thee set forth at length my case and my design;
Yea, all my passion and desire and love-longing in verse, As
pearls in goodly order strung it were, I did enshrine.
Yet thou repaidst me with constraint, rigour and perfidy, To
which no lover might himself on any wise resign.
How many a bidder unto love, a secret-craving wight, How many a
swain, complaining, saith of destiny malign,
"How many a cup with bitterness o'erflowing have I quaffed! I
make my moan of woes, whereat it boots not to repine."
Quoth thou, "The goodliest of things is patience and its use: Its
practice still mankind doth guide to all that's fair and
fine."
Wherefore fair patience look thou use, for sure 'tis
praiseworthy; Yea, and its issues evermore are blessed and

benign;
And hope thou not for aught from me, who reck not with a folk To
mix, who may with abjectness infect my royal line.
This is my saying; apprehend its purport, then, and know I may in
no wise yield consent to that thou dost opine.

Then he folded the letter and sealing it, delivered it to the damsel, who took it and carried it to her mistress. When the princess read the letter and apprehended its contents, she said, “Meseemeth he recalleth to me that which I did aforetime.” Then she called for inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses:

Me, till I stricken was therewith, to love thou didst excite, And
with estrangement now, alas! heap’st sorrows on my spright.
The sweet of slumber after thee I have forsworn; indeed The loss
of thee hath smitten me with trouble and affright.
How long shall I, in weariness, for this estrangement pine, What
while the spies of severance do watch me all the
night?
My royal couch have I forsworn, sequestering myself From all, and
have mine eyes forbid the taste of sleep’s delight.
Thou taught’st me what I cannot bear; afflicted sore am I; Yea,
thou hast wasted me away with rigour and despite.
Yet, I conjure thee, blame me not for passion and desire, Me whom
estrangement long hath brought to sick and sorry plight.
Sore, sore doth rigour me beset, its onslaughts bring me near
Unto the straitness of the grave, ere in the shroud I’m
dight.
So be thou kind to me, for love my body wasteth sore, The thrall
of passion I’m become its fires consume me quite.

Mariyeh folded the letter and gave it to Shefikeh, bidding her carry it to El Abbas. So she took it and going with it to his door, would have entered; but the chamberlains and serving-men forbade her, till they had gotten her leave from the prince. When she went in to him, she found him sitting in the midst of the five damsels aforesaid, whom his father had brought him. So she gave him the letter and he took it and read it. Then he bade one of the damsels, whose name was Khefifeh and who came from the land of China, tune her lute and sing upon the subject of separation. So she came forward and tuning the lute, played thereon in four-and-twenty modes; after which she returned to the first mode and sang the following verses:

Upon the parting day our loves from us did fare And left us to
endure estrangement and despair.
Whenas the burdens all were bounden on and shrill The
camel-leader's call rang out across the air,
Fast flowed my tears; despair gat hold upon my soul And needs
mine eyelids must the sweet of sleep forbear.
I wept, but those who spied to part us had no ruth On me nor on
the fires that in my vitals flare.
Woe's me for one who burns for love and longing pain! Alas for
the regrets my heart that rend and tear!
To whom shall I complain of what is in my soul, Now thou art gone
and I my pillow must forswear?
The flames of long desire wax on me day by day And far away are
pitched the tent-poles of my fair.
O breeze of heaven, from me a charge I prithee take And do not
thou betray the troth of my despair;
Whenas thou passest by the dwellings of my love, Greet him for me
with peace, a greeting debonair,
And scatter musk on him and ambergris, so long As time endures;
for this is all my wish and care.

When the damsel had made an end of her song, El Abbas swooned away and they sprinkled on him rose-water, mingled with musk, till he came to himself, when he called another damsel (now there was on her of linen and clothes and ornaments that which beggareth description, and she was endowed with brightness and loveliness and symmetry and perfection, such as shamed the crescent moon, and she was a Turkish girl from the land of the Greeks and her name was Hafizeh) and said to her, "O Hafizeh, close thine eyes and tune thy lute and sing to us upon the days of separation." She answered him with “Hearkening and obedience” and taking the lute, tuned its strings and cried out from her head, in a plaintive voice, and sang the following verses:

O friends, the tears flow ever, in mockery of my pain; My heart
is sick for sev’rance and love-longing in vain.
All wasted is my body and bowels tortured sore; Love’s fire on me
still waxeth, mine eyes with tears still rain.
Whenas the fire of passion flamed in my breast, with tears, Upon
the day of wailing, to quench it I was fain.
Desire hath left me wasted, afflicted, sore afraid, For the spy
knows the secret whereof I do complain.
When I recall the season of love-delight with them, The sweet of
sleep forsakes me, my body wastes amain.
Those who our parting plotted our sev’rance still delights; The
spies, for fearful prudence, their wish of us attain.
I fear me for my body from sickness and unrest, Lest of the fear
of sev’rance it be betrayed and slain.

When Hafizeh had made an end of her song, El Abbas said to her, “Well done! Indeed, thou quickenest hearts from sorrows.” Then he called another damsel of the daughters of the Medes, by name Merjaneh, and said to her, “O Merjaneh, sing to me upon the days of separation.” “Hearkening and obedience,” answered she and improvising, sang the following verses:

“Fair patience practise, for thereon still followeth content.” So
runs the rede ‘mongst all that dwell in city or in tent.
How oft of dole have I made moan for love and longing pain, What
while my body for desire in mortal peril went!
How oft I’ve waked, how many a cup of sorrow have I drained,
Watching the stars of night go by, for sleepless
languishment!
It had sufficed me, had thy grace with verses come to me; My
expectation still on thee in the foredawns was bent.
Then was my heart by that which caused my agitation seared, And
from mine eyelids still the tears poured down without

relent.
Yea, nevermore I ceased from that wherewith I stricken was; My
night with wakefulness was filled, my heart with dreariment.
But now hath Allah from my heart blotted the love of thee, After
for constancy I'd grown a name of wonderment.
Hence on the morrow forth I fare and leave your land behind; So
take your leave of us nor fear mishap or ill event.
Whenas in body ye from us are far removed, would God I knew who
shall to us himself with news of you present!
And who can tell if ever house shall us together bring In union
of life serene and undisturbed content?

When Merjaneh had made an end of her song, the prince said to her, "Well done, O damsel! Indeed, thou sayest a thing that had occurred to my mind and my tongue was like to speak it." Then he signed to the fourth damsel, who was a Cairene, by name Sitt el Husn, and bade her tune her lute and sing to him upon the [same] subject. So she tuned her lute and sang the following verses:

Fair patience use, for ease still followeth after stress And all
things have their time and ordinance no less.
Though Fortune whiles to thee belike may be unjust, Her seasons
change and man's excused if he transgress.
In her revolving scheme, to bitter sweetness still Succeeds and
things become straight, after crookedness.
Thine honour, therefore, guard and eke thy secret keep, Nor save
to one free-born and true thy case confess.
The Lord's alternatives are these, wherewith He's wont The needy
wretch to ply and those in sore duresse.

When El Abbas heard her verses, they pleased him and he said to her, "Well done, O Sitt el Husn! Indeed, thou hast done away trouble from my heart and [banished] the things that had occurred to my mind." Then he heaved a sigh and signing to the fifth damsel, who was from the land of the Persians and whose name was Merziyeh (now she was the fairest of them all and the sweetest of speech and she was like unto a splendid star, endowed with beauty and loveliness and brightness and perfection and justness of shape and symmetry and had a face like the new moon and eyes as they were gazelle's eyes) and said to her, "O Merziyeh, come forward and tune thy lute and sing to us on the [same] subject, for indeed we are resolved upon departure to the land of Yemen." Now this damsel had met many kings and had consorted with the great; so she tuned her lute and sang the following verses:

May the place of my session ne'er lack thee I Oh, why, My heart's
love, hast thou saddened my mind and mine eye?
By thy ransom, who dwellest alone in my heart, In despair
for the loss of the loved one am I.
So, by Allah, O richest of all men in charms, Vouchsafe to a
lover, who's bankrupt well-nigh
Of patience, thy whilom endearments again, That I never to any
divulged, nor deny
The approof of my lord, so my stress and unease I may ban and
mine enemies' malice defy,
Thine approof which shall clothe me in noblest attire And my rank
in the eyes of the people raise high.

When she had made an end of her song, all who were in the assembly wept for the daintiness of her speech and the sweetness of her voice and El Abbas said to her, "Well done, O Merziyeh I Indeed, thou confoundest the wits with the goodliness of thy verses and the elegance of thy speech." All this while Shefikeh abode gazing upon her, and when she beheld El Abbas his slave-girls and considered the goodliness of their apparel and the nimbleness of their wits and the elegance of their speech, her reason was confounded. Then she sought leave of El Abbas and returning to her mistress Mariyeh, without letter or answer, acquainted her with his case and that wherein he was of puissance and delight and majesty and venerance and loftiness of rank. Moreover, she told her what she had seen of the slave-girls and their circumstance and that which they had said and how they had made El Abbas desireful of returning to his own country by the recitation of verses to the sound of the strings.

When the princess heard this her slave-girl's report, she wept and lamented and was like to depart the world. Then she clave to her pillow and said, "O Shefikeh, I will instruct thee of somewhat that is not hidden from God the Most High, and it is that thou watch over me till God the Most High decree the accomplishment of His commandment, and when my days are ended, take thou the necklace and the mantle that El Abbas gave me and return them to him. Indeed, I deem not he will live after me, and if God the Most High decree against him and his days come to an end, do thou give one charge to shroud us and bury us both in one grave."

Then her case changed and her colour paled; and when Shefikeh saw her mistress in this plight, she repaired to her mother and told her that the lady Mariyeh refused meat and drink. "Since when hath this befallen her?" asked the queen, and Shefikeh answered, "Since yesterday;" whereat the queen was confounded and betaking herself to her daughter, that she might enquire into her case, found her as one dead. So she sat down at her head and Mariyeh opened her eyes and seeing her mother sitting by her, sat up for shamefastness before her. The queen questioned her of her case and she said, "I entered the bath and it stupefied me and weakened me and left an exceeding pain in my head; but I trust in God the Most High that it will cease."

When her mother went out from her, Mariyeh fell to chiding the damsel for that which she had done and said to her, "Verily, death were leifer to me than this; so look thou discover not my affair to any and I charge thee return not to the like of this fashion." Then she swooned away and lay awhile without life, and when she came to herself, she saw Shefikeh weeping over her; whereupon she took the necklace from her neck and the mantle from her body and said to the damsel, "Lay them in a napkin of damask and carry them to El Abbas and acquaint him with that wherein I am for the persistence of estrangement and the effects of forbiddance." So Shefikeh took them and carried them to El Abbas, whom she found in act to depart, for that he was about to take horse for Yemen. She went in to him and gave him the napkin and that which was therein, and when he opened it and saw what it contained, to wit, the mantle and the necklace, his vexation was excessive and his eyes were distorted, [so that the whites thereof appeared] and his rage was manifest in them.

When Shefikeh saw that which betided him, she came forward and said to him, “O bountiful lord, indeed my mistress returneth not the mantle and the necklace despitefully; but she is about to depart the world and thou hast the best right to them.” “And what is the cause of this?” asked he. Quoth Shefikeh, “Thou knowest. By Allah, never among the Arabs nor the barbarians nor among the sons of the kings saw I a harder of heart than thou! Is it a light matter to thee that thou troublest Mariyeh’s life and causest her mourn for herself and depart the world on account of thy youth? Indeed, thou wast the cause of her acquaintance with thee and now she departeth the world on thine account, she whose like God the Most High hath not created among the daughters of the kings.”

When El Abbas heard these words from the damsel, his heart irked him for Mariyeh and her case was grievous to him; so he said to Shefikeh, “Canst thou avail to bring me in company with her, so haply I may discover her affair and allay that which aileth her?” “Yes,” answered the damsel, “I can do that, and thine will be the bounty and the favour.” So he arose and followed her, and she forewent him, till they came to the palace. Then she [opened and] locked behind them four-and-twenty doors and made them fast with bolts; and when he came to Mariyeh, he found her as she were the setting sun, cast down upon a rug of Taifi leather, among cushions stuffed with ostrich down, and not a limb of her quivered. When her maid saw her in this plight, she offered to cry out; but El Abbas said to her, “Do it not, but have patience till we discover her affair; and if God the Most High have decreed the ending of her days, wait till thou have opened the doors to me and I have gone forth. Then do what seemeth good to thee.”

So saying, he went up to the princess and laying his hand upon her heart, found it fluttering like a doveling and the life yet clinging to her bosom. So he laid his hand upon her cheek, whereupon she opened her eyes and beckoning to her maid, signed to her, as who should say, “Who is this that treadeth my carpet and transgresseth against me?” “O my lady,” answered Shefikeh, “this is Prince El Abbas, for whose sake thou departest the world.” When Mariyeh heard speak of El Abbas, she raised her hand from under the coverlet and laying it upon his neck, inhaled his odour awhile. Then she sat up and her colour returned to her and they sat talking till a third part of the night was past.

Presently, the princess turned to her maid and bade her fetch them somewhat of food and sweetmeats and dessert and fruits. So Shefikeh brought what she desired and they ate and drank [and abode on this wise] without lewdness, till the night departed and the day came. Then said El Abbas, “Indeed, the day is come. Shall I go to my father and bid him go to thy father and seek thee of him in marriage for me, in accordance with the Book of God the Most High and the Institutes of His Apostle (whom may He bless and keep!) so we may not enter into transgression?” And Mariyeh answered, saying, “By Allah, it is well counselled of thee!” So he went away to his lodging and nought befell between them; and when the day lightened, she improvised and recited the following verses:

O friends, the East wind waxes, the morning draweth near; A
plaintive voice bespeaks me and I rejoice to hear.
Up, to our comrade’s convent, that we may visit him And drink of
wine more subtle than dust; our trusty fere
Hath spent thereon his substance, withouten stint; indeed, In his
own cloak he wrapped it, he tendered it so dear.
Whenas its jar was opened, the singers prostrate fell In worship
of its brightness, it shone so wonder-clear.
The priests from all the convent came flocking onto it: With
cries of joy and welcome their voices they did rear.
We spent the night in passing the cup, my mates and I, Till in
the Eastward heaven the day-star did appear.
No sin is there in drinking of wine, for it affords All that’s
foretold of union and love and happy cheer.
O morn, our loves that sunder’st, a sweet and easeful life Thou
dost for me prohibit, with thy regard austere.
Be gracious, so our gladness may be fulfilled with wine And we of
our beloved have easance, without fear.
The best of all religions your love is, for in you Are love and
life made easeful, untroubled and sincere.

Meanwhile, El Abbas betook himself to his father’s camp, which was pitched in the Green Meadow, by the side of the Tigris, and none might make his way between the tents, for the much interlacement of the tent-ropes. When the prince reached the first of the tents, the guards and servants came out to meet him from all sides and escorted him till he drew near the sitting-place of his father, who knew of his coming. So he issued forth of his pavilion and coming to meet his son, kissed him and made much of him. Then they returned together to the royal pavilion and when they had seated themselves and the guards had taken up their station in attendance on them, the king said to El Abbas, “O my son, make ready thine affair, so we may go to our own land, for that the folk in our absence are become as they were sheep without a shepherd.” El Abbas looked at his father and wept till he swooned away, and when he recovered from his swoon, he improvised and recited the following verses:

I clipped her in mine arms and straight grew drunken with
the scent Of a fresh branch that had been reared in
affluence and content.
’Twas not of wine that I had drunk; her mouth’s sweet honeyed
dews It was intoxicated me with bliss and ravishment.
Upon the table of her cheek beauty hath writ, “Alack, Her charms!
‘Twere well thou refuge sought’st with God
incontinent.”
Since thou hast looked on her, mine eye, be easy, for by God Nor
mote nor ailment needst thou fear nor evil accident.
Beauty her appanage is grown in its entirety, And for this cause
all hearts must bow to her arbitrament.
If with her cheek and lustre thou thyself adorn, thou’lt
find But chrysolites and gold, with nought of baser metal
blent.
When love-longing for her sweet sake I took upon myself, The
railers flocked to me anon, on blame and chiding bent;
But on no wise was I affrayed nor turned from love of her; So let
the railer rave of her henceforth his heart’s content.
By God, forgetfulness of her shall never cross my mind, What
while I wear the bonds of life nor when of death they’re
rent
An if I live, in love of her I’ll live, and if I die Of love and

longing for her sight, O rare! O excellent!

When El Abbas had made an end of his verses, his father said to him, “I seek refuge for thee with God, O my son! Hast thou any want unto which thou availest not, so I may endeavour for thee therein and lavish my treasures in quest thereof?” “O father mine,” answered El Abbas, “I have, indeed, an urgent want, on account whereof I came forth of my native land and left my people and my home and exposed myself to perils and stresses and became an exile from my country, and I trust in God that it may be accomplished by thine august endeavour.” “And what is thy want?” asked the king. Quoth El Abbas, “I would have thee go and demand me in marriage Mariyeh, daughter of the King of Baghdad, for that my heart is distraught with love of her.” And he recounted to his father his story from first to last.

When the king heard this from his son, he rose to his feet and calling for his charger of state, took horse with four-and-twenty amirs of the chief officers of his empire. Then he betook himself to the palace of the King of Baghdad, who, when he saw him coming, bade his chamberlains open the doors to him and going down himself to meet him, received him with all worship and hospitality and entreated him with the utmost honour. Moreover, he carried him [and his suite] into the palace and causing make ready for them carpets and cushions, sat down upon a chair of gold, with traverses of juniper- wood, set with pearls and jewels. Then he bade bring sweetmeats and confections and odoriferous flowers and commanded to slaughter four-and-twenty head of sheep and the like of oxen and make ready geese and fowls, stuffed and roasted, and pigeons and spread the tables; nor was it long before the meats were set on in dishes of gold and silver. So they ate till they had enough and when they had eaten their fill, the tables were removed and the wine-service set on and the cups and flagons ranged in order, whilst the mamelukes and the fair slave- girls sat down, with girdles of gold about their middles, inlaid with all manner pearls and diamonds and emeralds and rubies and other jewels. Moreover, the king bade fetch the musicians; so there presented themselves before him a score of damsels, with lutes and psalteries and rebecks, and smote upon instruments of music, on such wise that they moved the assembly to delight.

Then said El Aziz to the King of Baghdad, “I would fain speak a word to thee; but do thou not exclude from us those who are present. If thou consent unto my wish, that which is ours shall be thine and that which is incumbent on thee shall be incumbent on us, and we will be to thee a mighty aid against all enemies and opposites.” Quoth Ins ben Cais, “Say what thou wilt, O King, for indeed thou excellest in speech and attainest [the mark] in that which them sayest” So El Aziz said to him,” I desire that thou give thy daughter Mariyeh in marriage to my son El Abbas, for thou knowest that wherewithal he is gifted of beauty and loveliness and brightness and perfection and how he beareth himself in the frequentation of the valiant and his constancy in the stead of smiting and thrusting.” “By Allah, O king,” answered Ins ben Cais, “of my love for Mariyeh, I have appointed her disposal to be in her own hand; wherefore, whomsoever she chooseth of the folk, I will marry her to him.”

Then he arose and going in to his daughter, found her mother with her; so he set out to them the case and Mariyeh said, “O father mine, my wish is subject unto thy commandment and my will ensueth thy will; so whatsoever thou choosest, I am still obedient unto thee and under thy dominion.” Therewithal the King knew that Mariyeh inclined unto El Abbas; so he returned forthright to King El Aziz and said to him, “May God amend the King! Verily, the occasion is accomplished and there is no opposition unto that which thou commandest” Quoth El Aziz, “By God’s leave are occasions accomplished. How deemest thou, O King, of fetching El Abbas and drawing up the contract of marriage between Mariyeh and him?” And Ins ben Cais answered, saying, “Thine be it to decide.”

So El Aziz sent after his son and acquainted him with that which had passed; whereupon El Abbas called for four-and-twenty males and half a score horses [and as many camels] and loaded the mules with pieces of silk and rags of leather and boxes of camphor and musk and the camels [and horses] with chests of gold and silver. Moreover, he took the richest of the stuffs and wrapping them in pieces of gold-striped silk, laid them on the heads of porters, and they fared on with the treasures till they reached the King of

Baghdad's palace, whereupon all who were present dismounted in honour of El Abbas and escorting him to the presence of King Ins ben Cais, displayed unto the latter all that they had with them of things of price. The king bade carry all this into the harem and sent for the Cadis and the witnesses, who drew up the contract and married Mariyeh to Prince El Abbas, whereupon the latter commanded to [slaughter] a thousand head of sheep and five hundred buffaloes. So they made the bride-feast and bade thereto all the tribes of the Arabs, Bedouins and townsfolk, and the tables abode spread for the space of ten days.

Then El Abbas went in to Mariyeh in a happy and praiseworthy hour and found her an unpierced pearl and a goodly filly that had never been mounted; wherefore he rejoiced and was glad and made merry, and care and sorrow ceased from him and his life was pleasant and trouble departed and he abode with her in the gladsomest of case and in the most easeful of life, till seven days were past, when King El Aziz determined to set out and return to his kingdom and bade his son seek leave of his father-in-law to depart with his wife to his own country. [So El Abbas bespoke King Ins of this] and he granted him the leave he sought; whereupon he chose out a red camel, taller than the [other] camels, and mounting Mariyeh in a litter thereon, loaded it with apparel and ornaments.

Then they spread the ensigns and the standards, whilst the drums beat and the trumpets sounded, and set out upon the homeward journey. The King of Baghdad rode forth with them and brought them three days' journey on their way, after which he took leave of them and returned with his troops to Baghdad. As for King El Aziz and his son, they fared on night and day and gave not over going till there abode but three days' journey between them and Yemen, when they despatched three men of the couriers to the prince's mother [to acquaint her with their return], safe and laden with spoil, bringing with them Mariyeh, the king's daughter of Baghdad. When the queen-mother heard this, her wit fled for joy and she adorned El Abbas his slave-girls after the goodliest fashion. Now he had ten slave-girls, as they were moons, whereof his father had carried five with him to Baghdad, as hath aforetime been set out, and other five abode with his mother. When the dromedary-posts came, they were certified of the approach of El Abbas, and when the sun rose and their standards appeared, the prince's mother came out to meet her son; nor was there great or small, old man or infant, but went forth that day to meet the king.

The drums of glad tidings beat and they entered in the utmost of worship and magnificence. Moreover, the tribes heard of them and the people of the towns and brought them the richest of presents and the costliest of rarities and the prince's mother rejoiced with an exceeding joy. Then they slaughtered beasts and made mighty bride-feasts to the people and kindled fires, that it might be visible afar to townsman [and Bedouin] that this was the house of the guest-meal and the wedding, festival, to the intent that, if any passed them by, [without partaking of their hospitality], it should be of his own fault So the folk came to them from all parts and quarters and on this wise they abode days and months.

Then the prince's mother bade fetch the five slave-girls to that assembly; whereupon they came and the ten damsels foregathered. The queen seated five of them on her son's right hand and other five on his left and the folk assembled about them. Then she bade the five who had remained with her speak forth somewhat of verse, so they might entertain therewith the assembly and that El Abbas might rejoice therein. Now she had clad them in the richest of raiment and adorned them with trinkets and ornaments and wroughten work of gold and silver and collars of gold, set with pearls and jewels. So they came forward, with harps and lutes and psalteries and recorders and other instruments of music before them, and one of them, a damsel who came from the land of China and whose name was Baoutheh, advanced and tightened the strings of her lute. Then she cried out from the top of her head and improvising, sang the following verses:

Unto its pristine lustre your land returned and more, Whenas ye
    came, dispelling the gloom that whiles it wore.
Our stead, that late was desert, grew green and eke our trees,
    That barren were, grew loaded with ripened fruits galore.
Yea, to the earth that languished for lack of rain, the clouds
    Were bounteous; so it flourished and plenteous harvests

bore;
And troubles, too, forsook us, who tears like dragons' blood, O
lordings, for your absence had wept at every pore.
Indeed, your long estrangement hath caused my bowels yearn.
Would
God I were a servant in waiting at your door!

When she had made an end of her song, all who were present were moved to delight and El Abbas rejoiced in this. Then he bade the second damsel sing somewhat on the like subject. So she came forward and tuning the strings of her harp, which was of balass ruby, warbled a plaintive air and improvising, sang the following verses;

The absent ones' harbinger came us unto With tidings of those
who had caused us to rue.
"My soul be thy ransom,"quoth I,"for thy grace! Indeed, to the
oath that thou swor'st thou wast true."
On the dear nights of union, in you was our joy, But afflicted
were we since ye bade us adieu.
You swore you'd be faithful to us and our love, And true to your
oath and your troth-plight were you;
And I to you swore that a lover I was; God forbid that with
treason mine oath I ensue!
Yea, "Welcome! Fair welcome to those who draw near!" I called out
aloud, as to meet you I flew.
The dwellings, indeed, one and all, I adorned, Bewildered and
dazed with delight at your view;
For death in your absence to us was decreed; But, when ye came
back, we were quickened anew.

When she had made an end of her verses, El Abbas bade the third damsel, who came from Samarcand of the Persians and whose name was Rummaneh, sing, and she answered with "Hearkening and obedience." Then she took the psaltery and crying out from the midst of her bead improvised and sang the following verses:

My watering lips, that cull the rose of thy soft cheek, declare

My basil, lily mine, to be the myrtles of thy hair.
Sandhill and down betwixt there blooms a yellow
willow-flower, Pomegranate-blossoms and for
fruits pomegranates that doth bear.
His eyelids' sorcery from mine eyes hath banished sleep; since he
From me departed, nought see I except a drowsy fair.
He shot me with the shafts of looks launched from an
eyebrow's bow; A chamberlain betwixt his
eyes hath driven me to despair.
My heart belike shall his infect with softness, even as me His
body with disease infects, of its seductive air.
Yet, if with him forgotten be the troth-plight of our loves, I
have a king who of his grace will not forget me e'er.
His sides the tamarisk's slenderness deride, so lithe they are,
Whence for conceit in his own charms still drunken doth he
fare.
Whenas he runs, his feet still show like wings, and for
the wind When was a rider found, except King Solomon it
were?

Therewithal El Abbas smiled and her verses pleased him. Then he bade the fourth damsel come forward and sing. Now she was from the land of Morocco and her name was Belekhsha. So she came forward and taking the lute and the psaltery, tightened the strings thereof and smote thereon in many modes; then returned to the first mode and improvising, sang the following verses:

When in the sitting-chamber we for merry-making sate, With thine
eyes' radiance the place thou didst illuminate
And pliedst us with cups of wine, whilst from the necklace
pearls A strange intoxicating bliss withal did
circulate,
Whose subtleness might well infect the understanding folk; And
secrets didst thou, in thy cheer, to us communicate.
Whenas we saw the cup, forthright we signed to past it round And
sun and moon unto our eyes shone sparkling from it straight.
The curtain of delight, perforce, we've lifted through the

friend, For tidings of great joy, indeed, there came
to us of late.
The camel-leader singing came with the belov'd; our wish
Accomplished was and we were quit of all the railers' prate.
When clear'd my sky was by the sweet of our foregathering And not
a helper there remained to disuniting Fate,
I shut myself up with my love; no spy betwixt us was; We feared
no enemies' despite, no envious neighbour's hate.
Life with our loves was grown serene, estrangement was at end:
Our dear ones all delight of love vouchsafed to us elate,
Saying, "Thy fill of union take; no spy is there on us, Whom we
should fear, nor yet reproach our gladness may abate."
Our loves are joined and cruelty at last is done away; Ay, and
the cup of love-delight 'twixt us doth circulate.
Upon yon be the peace of God! May all prosperity, For what's
decreed of years and lives, upon you ever wait!

When Belekhsha had made an end of her verses, all present were moved to delight and El Abbas said to her, "Well done, O damsel!" Then he bade the fifth damsel come forward and sing. Now she was from the land of Syria and her name was Rihaneh; she was surpassing of voice and when she appeared in an assembly, all eyes were fixed upon her. So she came forward and taking the rebeck (for that she was used to play upon [all manner] instruments) improvised and sang the following verses:

Your coming to-me-ward, indeed, with "Welcome! fair welcome!" I
hail. Your sight to me gladness doth bring and banisheth
sorrow and bale;
For love with your presence grows sweet, untroubled and life is
serene And the star of our fortune burns bright, that clouds
in your absence did veil.
Yea, by Allah, my longing for you ne'er waneth nor passetb away;
For your like among creatures is rare and sought for in
mountain and vale.
Ask mine eyes whether slumber hath lit on their lids since the
hour of your loss Or if aye on a lover they've looked. Nay,

an ye believe not their tale,
My heart, since the leave-taking day afflicted, will tell of my case, And my body, for love and desire grown wasted and feeble and frail.
Could they who reproach me but see my sufferings, their hearts would relent; They'd marvel, indeed, at my case and the loss of my loved ones bewail.
Yea, they'd join me in pouring forth tears and help me my woes to lament, And like unto me they'd become all wasted and tortured and pale.
How long did the heart for thy love that languished with longing endure A burden of passion, 'neath which e'en mountains might totter and fail!
By Allah, what sorrows and woes to my soul for thy sake were decreed! My heart is grown hoar, ere eld's snows have left on my tresses their trail.
The fires in my vitals that rage if I did but discover to view, Their ardour the world to consume, from the East to the West, might avail.
But now unto me of my loves accomplished are joyance and cheer And those whom I cherish my soul with the wine of contentment regale.
Our Lord, after sev'rance, with them hath conjoined us, for he who doth good Shall ne'er disappointed abide and kindnesses kindness entail.

When King El Aziz heard the damsel's song, her speech and her verses pleased him and he said to El Abbas, "O my son, verily, these damsels are weary with long versifying, and indeed they make us yearn after the dwellings and the homesteads with the goodliness of their songs. Indeed, these five have adorned our assembly with the excellence of their melodies and have done well in that which they have said before those who are present; wherefore we counsel thee to enfranchise them for the love of God the Most High." Quoth El Abbas, "There is no commandment but thy commandment;" and he enfranchised the ten damsels in the assembly; whereupon they kissed the hands of the king and his son and prostrated themselves in thanksgiving to God the Most High. Then they put off that which was upon them of ornaments and laying aside the lutes [and other] instruments of music, clave to their houses, veiled, and went not forth.

As for King El Aziz, he lived after this seven years and was admitted to the mercy of God the Most High; whereupon his son El Abbas carried him forth to burial on such wise as beseemeth unto kings and let make recitations and readings of the Koran, in whole or in part, over his tomb. He kept up the mourning for his father a full-told month, at the end of which time he sat down on the throne of the kingship and judged and did justice and distributed silver and gold. Moreover, he loosed all who were in the prisons and abolished grievances and customs dues and did the oppressed justice of the oppressor; wherefore the people prayed for him and loved him and invoked on him endurance of glory and kingship and length of continuance [on life] and eternity of prosperity and happiness. Moreover, the troops submitted to him and the hosts from all parts of the kingdom, and there came to him presents from all the lands. The kings obeyed him and many were his troops and his grandees, and his subjects lived with him the most easeful and prosperous of lives.

Meanwhile, he ceased not, he and his beloved, Queen Mariyeh, in the most delightsome of life and the pleasantest thereof, and he was vouchsafed by her children; and indeed there befell friendship and love between them and the longer their companionship was prolonged, the more their love waxed, so that they became unable to endure from each other a single hour, save the time of his going forth to the Divan, when he would return to her in the utterest that might be of longing. Aud on this wise they abode in all solace and delight of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies. So extolled be the perfection of Him whose kingdom endureth for ever, who is never heedless neither dieth nor sleepeth! This is all that hath come down to us of their story, and so peace [be on you!]

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SHEHRZAD AND SHEHRIYAR.

King Shehriyar marvelled [at this story] and said “By Allah, verily, injustice slayeth its folk!” And he was edified by that wherewith Shehrzad bespoke him and sought help of God the Most High. Then said he to her, “Tell me another of thy stories, O Shehrzad; let it be a pleasant one and this shall be the completion of the story-telling.” “With all my heart,” answered Shehrzad. “It hath reached me, O august King, that a man once said to his fellows, ‘I will set forth to you a means of security against vexation. A friend of mine once related to me and said, “We attained [whiles] to security against vexation,and the origin of it was other than this; to wit, it was as follows.

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THE TWO KINGS AND THE VIZIER'S DAUGHTERS.

[Aforetime] I journeyed in [many] lands and climes and towns and visited the great cities and traversed the ways and [exposed myself to] dangers and hardships. Towards the last of my life, I entered a city [of the cities of China], wherein was a king of the Chosroes and the Tubbas and the Caesars. Now that city had been peopled with its inhabitants by means of justice and equitable dealing; but its [then] king was a tyrant, who despoiled souls and [did away] lives; there was no wanning oneself at his fire, for that indeed he oppressed the true believers and wasted the lands. Now he had a younger brother, who was [king] in Samarcand of the Persians, and the two kings abode a while of time, each in his own city and place, till they yearned unto each other and the elder king despatched his vizier in quest of his younger brother.

When the vizier came to the King of Samarcand [and acquainted him with his errand], he submitted himself to the commandment [of his brother and made answer] with 'Hearkening and obedience.' Then he equipped himself and made ready for the journey and brought forth his tents and pavilions. A while after midnight, he went in to his wife, that he might take leave of her, and found with her a strange man, sleeping with her in one bed. So he slew them both and dragging them out by the feet, cast them away and set forth incontinent on his journey. When he came to his brother's court, the latter rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy and lodged him in the pavilion of entertainment, [to wit, the guest-house,] beside his own palace. Now this pavilion overlooked a garden belonging to the elder king and there the younger brother abode with him some days. Then he called to mind that which his wife had done with him and remembered him of her slaughter and bethought him how he was a king, yet was not exempt from the vicissitudes of fortune; and this wrought upon him with an exceeding despite, so that it caused him abstain from meat and drink, or, if he ate anything, it profited him not.

When his brother saw him on this wise, he doubted not but that this had betided him by reason of severance from his people and family and said to him, ‘Come, let us go forth a-hunting.’ But he refused to go with him; so the elder brother went forth to the chase, whilst the younger abode in the pavilion aforesaid. As he was diverting himself by looking out upon the garden from the window of the palace, behold, he saw his brother’s wife and with her ten black slaves and as many slave-girls. Each slave laid hold of a damsel [and swived her] and another slave [came forth and] did the like with the queen; and when they had done their occasions, they all returned whence they came. Therewithal there betided the King of Samarcand exceeding wonder and solacement and he was made whole of his malady, little by little.

After a few days, his brother returned and finding him healed of his sickness, said to him, ‘Tell me, O my brother, what was the cause of thy sickness and thy pallor, and what is the cause of the return of health to thee and of rosiness to thy face after this?’ So he acquainted him with the whole case and this was grievous to him; but they concealed their affair and agreed to leave the kingship and fare forth pilgrim-wise, wandering at a venture, for they deemed that there had befallen none the like of this which had befallen them. [So they went forth and wandered on at hazard] and as they journeyed, they saw by the way a woman imprisoned in seven chests, whereon were five locks, and sunken in the midst of the salt sea, under the guardianship of an Afrit; yet for all this that woman issued forth of the sea and opened those locks and coming forth of those chests, did what she would with the two brothers, after she had circumvented the Afrit.

When the two kings saw that woman’s fashion and how she circumvented the Afrit, who had lodged her at the bottom of the sea, they turned back to their kingdoms and the younger betook himself to Samarcand, whilst the elder returned to China and established unto himself a custom in the slaughter of women, to wit, his vizier used to bring him a girl every night, with whom he lay that night, and when he arose in the morning, he gave her to the vizier and bade him put her to death. On this wise he abode a great while, whilst the people murmured and the creatures [of God] were destroyed and the commons cried out by reason of that grievous affair whereinto they were fallen and feared the wrath of God the Most High, dreading lest

He should destroy them by means of this. Still the king persisted in that fashion and in that his blameworthy intent of the killing of women and the despoilment of the curtained ones, wherefore the girls sought succour of God the Most High and complained to Him of the tyranny of the king and of his oppressive dealing with them.

Now the king's vizier had two daughters, own sisters, the elder of whom had read books and made herself mistress of [all] sciences and studied the writings of the sages and the histories of the boon-companions, and she was possessed of abundant wit and knowledge galore and surpassing apprehension. She heard that which the folk suffered from the king and his despiteous usage of their children; whereupon compassion gat hold upon her for them and jealousy and she besought God the Most High that He would bring the king to renounce that his heresy, and God answered her prayer. Then she took counsel with her younger sister and said to her, 'I mean to contrive somewhat for the liberation of the people's children; and it is that I will go up to the king [and offer myself to him], and when I come to his presence, I will seek thee. When thou comest in to me and the king hath done his occasion [of me], do thou say to me, 'O my sister, let me hear and let the king hear a story of thy goodly stories, wherewithal we may beguile the waking hours of our night, till we take leave of each other.' 'It is well,' answered the other. 'Surely this contrivance will deter the king from his heresy and thou shalt be requited with exceeding favour and abounding recompense in the world to come, for that indeed thou adventurest thyself and wilt either perish or attain to thy desire.'

So she did this and fair fortune aided her and the Divine favour was vouchsafed unto her and she discovered her intent to her father, who forbade her therefrom, fearing her slaughter. However, she repeated her speech to him a second and a third time, but he consented not. Then he cited unto her a parable, that should deter her, and she cited him a parable in answer to his, and the talk was prolonged between them and the adducing of instances, till her father saw that he availed not to turn her from her purpose and she said to him, 'Needs must I marry the king, so haply I may be a sacrifice for the children of the Muslims; either I shall turn him from this his heresy or I shall die.' When the vizier despaired of dissuading her, he went up to the king and acquainted him with the case, saying, ‘I have a daughter and she desireth to give herself to the king.’ Quoth the king, ‘How can thy soul consent unto this, seeing that thou knowest I lie but one night with a girl and when I arise on the morrow, I put her to death, and it is thou who slayest her, and thou hast done this again and again?’ ‘Know, O king,’ answered the vizier, ‘that I have set forth all this to her, yet consented she not unto aught, but needs must she have thy company and still chooseth to come to thee and present herself before thee, notwithstanding that I have cited to her the sayings of the sages; but she hath answered me to the contrary thereof with more than that which I said to her.’ And the king said, ‘Bring her to me this night and to-morrow morning come thou and take her and put her to death; and by Allah, an thou slay her not, I will slay thee and her also!’

The vizier obeyed the king’s commandment and going out from before him, [returned to his own house. When it was night, he took his elder daughter and carried her up to the king; and when she came into his presence,] she wept; whereupon quoth he to her, ‘What causeth thee weep? Indeed, it was thou who willedst this.’ And she answered, saying, ‘I weep not but for longing after my little sister; for that, since we grew up, I and she, I have never been parted from her till this day; so, if it please the king to send for her, that I may look on her and take my fill of her till the morning, this were bounty and kindness of the king.’

Accordingly, the king bade fetch the girl [and she came]. Then there befell that which befell of his foregathering with the elder sister, and when he went up to his couch, that he might sleep, the younger sister said to the elder, ‘I conjure thee by Allah, O my sister, an thou be not asleep, tell us a story of thy goodly stories, wherewithal we may beguile the watches of our night, against morning come and parting.’ ‘With all my heart,’ answered she and fell to relating to her, whilst the king listened. Her story was goodly and delightful, and whilst she was in the midst of telling it, the dawn broke. Now the king’s heart clave to the hearing of the rest of the story; so he respited her till the morrow, and when it was the next night, she told him a story concerning the marvels of the lands and the extraordinary chances of the folk, that was yet stranger and rarer than the first. In the midst of the story, the day appeared and she was silent from the permitted speech. So he let her live till the ensuing night, so he might hear the completion of the story and after put her to death.

Meanwhile, the people of the city rejoiced and were glad and blessed the vizier's daughter, marvelling for that three days had passed and that the king had not put her to death and exulting in that, [as they deemed,] he had turned [from his purpose] and would never again burden himself with blood-guiltiness against any of the maidens of the city. Then, on the fourth night, she related to him a still more extraordinary story, and on the fifth night she told him anecdotes of kings and viziers and notables. On this wise she ceased not [to do] with him [many] days and nights, what while the king still said in himself, 'When I have heard the end of the story, I will put her to death,' and the people waxed ever in wonder and admiration. Moreover, the folk of the provinces and cities heard of this thing, to wit, that the king had turned from his custom and from that which he had imposed upon himself and had renounced his heresy, wherefore they rejoiced and the folk returned to the capital and took up their abode therein, after they had departed thence; yea, they were constant in prayer to God the Most High that He would stablish the king in that his present case; and this," said Shehrzad, "is the end of that which my friend related to me."

"O Shehrzad," quoth Shehriyar, "finish unto us the story that thy friend told thee, for that it resembleth the story of a king whom I knew; but fain would I hear that which betided the people of this city and what they said of the affair of the king, so I may return from that wherein I was." "With all my heart," answered Shehrzad. "Know, O august king and lord of just judgment and praiseworthy excellence and exceeding prowess, that, when the folk heard that the king had put away from him his custom and returned from that which had been his wont, they rejoiced in this with an exceeding joy and offered up prayers for him. Then they talked with one another of the cause of the slaughter of the girls, and the wise said, 'They are not all alike, nor are the fingers of the hand alike.'"

SHEHRZAD AND SHEHRIYAR.

(Conclusion)

When King Shehriyar heard this story, he came to himself and awaking from his drunkenness, said, “By Allah, this story is my story and this case is my case, for that indeed I was in wrath and [danger of] punishment till thou turnedst me back from this into the right way, extolled be the perfection of the Causer of causes and the Liberator of necks! Indeed, O Shehrzad,” continued he, “thou hast awakened me unto many things and hast aroused me from mine ignorance.”

Then said she to him, “O chief of the kings, the wise say, ‘The kingship is a building, whereof the troops are the foundation,’ and whenas the foundation is strong, the building endureth; wherefore it behoveth the king to strengthen the foundation, for that they say, ‘Whenas the foundation is weak, the building falleth.’ On like wise it behoveth the king to care for his troops and do justice among his subjects, even as the owner of the garden careth for his trees and cutteth away the weeds that have no profit in them; and so it behoveth the king to look into the affairs of his subjects and fend off oppression from them. As for thee, O king,” continued Shehrzad, “it behoveth thee that thy vizier be virtuous and versed in the knowledge of the affairs of the folk and the common people; and indeed God the Most High hath named his name in the history of Moses (on whom be peace!) whenas He saith, [Quoth Moses] ‘And make me a vizier of my people, Aaron [my brother]. Could a vizier have been dispensed withal, Moses ben Imran had been worthier [than any of this dispensation].

As for the vizier, the sultan discovereth unto him his affairs, private and public; and know, O king, that the similitude of thee with the people is that of the physician with the sick man; and the condition of the vizier is that he be truthful in his sayings, trustworthy in all his relations, abounding in compassion for the folk and in tender solicitude over them. Indeed, it is said, O king, that good troops are like the druggist; if his perfumes reach thee not, thou still smallest the sweet scent of them; and ill troops are like the black-smith; if his sparks burn thee not, thou smellest his nauseous smell. So it behoveth thee take unto thyself a virtuous vizier, a man of good counsel, even as thou takest unto thee a wife displayed before thy face, for that thou hast need of the man's righteousness for thine own amendment, seeing that, if thou do righteously, the commons will do likewise, and if thou do evil, they also will do evil."

When the king heard this, drowsiness overcame him and he slept and presently awaking, called for the candles. So they were lighted and he sat down on his couch and seating Shehrzad by him, smiled in her face. She kissed the earth before him and said, "O king of the age and lord of the time and the day, extolled be the perfection of [God] the Forgiving One, the Bountiful Giver, who hath sent me unto thee, of His favour and beneficence, so I have informed thee with longing after Paradise; for that this which thou wast used to do was never done of any of the kings before thee. As for women, God the Most High [in His Holy Book] maketh mention of them, [whenas He saith, 'Verily, men who submit [themselves unto God] and women who submit] and true-believing men and true-believing women and obedient men and obedient women and soothfast men and soothfast women [and long-suffering men and long-suffering women and men who order themselves humbly and women who order themselves humbly and charitable men and charitable women and men who fast and women who fast] and men who guard their privities and women who guard their privities [and men who are constantly mindful of God and women who are constantly mindful, God hath prepared unto them forgiveness and a mighty recompense].

As for that which hath befallen thee, verily, it hath befallen [many] kings before thee and their women have played them false, for all they were greater of puissance than thou, yea, and mightier of kingship and more abounding in troops. If I would, I could relate unto thee, O king, concerning the wiles of women, that whereof I could not make an end all my life long; and indeed, aforetime, in all these my nights that I have passed before thee, I have told thee [many stories and anecdotes] of the artifices of women and of their craft and perfidy; but indeed the things abound on me; wherefore, if it like thee, O king, I will relate unto thee [somewhat] of that which befell kings of old time of the perfidy of their women and of the calamities which overtook them by reason of these latter." "How so?" asked the king. "Tell on." "Hearkening and obedience,"answered Shehrzad."It hath been told me, O king, that a man once related to a company and spoke as follows:

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THE FAVOURITE AND HER LOVER.

One day, a day of excessive heat, as I stood at the door of my house, I saw a fair woman approaching, and with her a slave-girl carrying a parcel. They gave not over going till they came up to me, when the woman stopped and said to me, 'Hast thou a draught of water?' 'Yes,' answered I. 'Enter the vestibule, O my lady, so thou mayst drink.' Accordingly, she entered and I went up into the house and fetched two mugs of earthenware, perfumed with musk and full of cold water. She took one of them and discovered her face, [that she might drink]; whereupon I saw that she was as the shining sun or the rising moon and said to her, 'O my lady, wilt thou not come up into the house, so thou mayst rest thyself till the air grow cool and after go away to thine own place?' Quoth she, 'Is there none with thee?' 'Indeed,' answered I, 'I am a [stranger] and a bachelor and have none belonging to me, nor is there a living soul in the house.' And she said, 'An thou be a stranger, thou art he in quest of whom I was going about.'

Then she went up into the house and put off her [walking] clothes and I found her as she were the full moon. I brought her what I had by me of meat and drink and said to her, 'O my lady, excuse me: this is that which is ready.' Quoth she, 'This is abundant kindness and indeed it is what I sought' And she ate and gave the slave-girl that which was left; after which I brought her a casting-bottle of rose-water, mingled with musk, and she washed her hands and abode with me till the season of afternoon-prayer, when she brought out of the parcel that she had with her a shirt and trousers and an upper garment and a kerchief wroughten with gold and gave them to me; saying, 'Know that I am one of the favourites of the Khalif, and we are forty favourites, each one of whom hath a lover who cometh to her as often as she would have him; and none is without a lover save myself, wherefore I came forth to-day to find me a gallant and behold, I have found thee. Thou must know that the Khalif lieth each night with one of us, whilst the other nine-and-thirty favourites take their ease with the nine-and-thirty men, and I would have thee be with me on such a day, when do thou come up to the palace of the

Khalif and wait for me in such a place, till a little eunuch come out to thee and say to thee a [certain] word, to wit, “Art thou Sendel?” And do thou answer, “Yes,” and go with him.’

Then she took leave of me and I of her, after I had strained her to my bosom and embraced her and we had kissed awhile. So she went away and I abode expecting the appointed day, till it came, when I arose and went forth, intending for the trysting-place; but a friend of mine met me by the way [and would have me go home with him. So I accompanied him to his house] and when I came up [into his sitting-chamber] he locked the door on me and went forth to fetch what we might eat and drink. He was absent till mid-day, then till the hour of afternoon-prayer, whereat I was sore disquieted. Then he was absent till sundown, and I was like to die of chagrin and impatience; [and indeed he returned not] and I passed my night on wake, nigh upon death, for that the door was locked on me, and my soul was like to depart my body on account of the tryst.

At daybreak, my friend returned and opening the door, came in, bringing with him meat-pottage and fritters and bees’ honey, and said to me, ‘By Allah, thou must needs excuse me, for that I was with a company and they locked the door on me and have but now let me go.’ But I returned him no answer. Then he set before me that which was with him and I ate a single mouthful and went out, running, so haply I might overtake that which had escaped me. When I came to the palace, I saw over against it eight-and-thirty gibbets set up, whereon were eight-and-thirty men crucified, and under them eight-and-thirty concubines as they were moons. So I enquired of the reason of the crucifixion of the men and concerning the women in question, and it was said unto me, ‘The men [whom thou seest] crucified the Khalif found with yonder damsels, who are his favourites.’ When I heard this, I prostrated myself in thanksgiving to God and said, ‘God requite thee with good, O my friend!’ For that, had he not invited me [and kept me perforce in his house] that night, I had been crucified with these men, wherefore praise be to God!

Thus,” continued Shehrzad, “none is safe from the calamities of fortune and the vicissitudes of time, and [in proof of this], I will relate unto thee yet another story still rarer and more extraordinary than this. Know, O King, that one said to me, ‘A friend of mine, a merchant, told me the following story. Quoth he,

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THE MERCHANT OF CAIRO AND THE FAVOURITE OF THE KHALIF EL MAMOUN EL HAKIM BI AMRILLAH.

As I sat one day in my shop, there came up to me a fair woman, as she were the moon at its rising, and with her a slave-girl. Now I was a handsome man in my time; so the lady sat down on [the bench before] my shop and buying stuffs of me, paid down the price and went away. I questioned the girl of her and she said, "I know not her name." Quoth I, "Where is her abode?" "In heaven," answered the slave-girl; and I said, "She is presently on the earth; so when doth she ascend to heaven and where is the ladder by which she goeth up?" Quoth the girl, "She hath her lodging in a palace between two rivers, to wit, the palace of El Mamoun el Hakim bi Amrillah." Then said I, "I am a dead man, without recourse; "but she replied, "Have patience, for needs must she return unto thee and buy stuffs of thee yet again." "And how cometh it," asked I, "that the Commander of the Faithful trusteth her to go out?" "He loveth her with an exceeding love," answered she, "and is wrapped up in her and gainsayeth her not."

Then the girl went away, running, after her mistress, whereupon I left the shop and set out after them, so I might see her abiding-place. I followed after them all the way, till she disappeared from mine eyes, when I returned to my place, with a heart on fire. Some days after, she came to me again and bought stuffs of me. I refused to take the price and she said, "We have no need of thy goods." Quoth I, "O my lady, accept them from me as a gift;" but she said, "[Wait] till I try thee and make proof of thee." Then she brought out of her pocket a purse and gave me therefrom a thousand dinars, saying, "Trade with this till I return to thee." So I took the purse and she went away [and returned not to me] till six months had passed by. Meanwhile, I traded with the money and sold and bought and made other thousand dinars profit [on it].

Presently, she came to me again and I said to her, "Here is thy money and I have gained [with it] other thousand dinars." Quoth she, “Keep it by thee and take these other thousand dinars. As soon as I have departed from thee, go thou to Er Rauzeh and build there a goodly pavilion, and when the building thereof is accomplished, give me to know thereof.” So saying, she left me and went away. As soon as she was gone, I betook myself to Er Rauzeh and addressed myself to the building of the pavilion, and when it was finished, I furnished it with the goodliest of furniture and sent to the lady to tell her that I had made an end of its building; whereupon she sent back to me, saying, “Let him meet me to-morrow at daybreak at the Zuweyleh gate and bring with him a good ass.” So I got me an ass and betaking myself to the Zuweyleh gate, at the appointed time, found there a young man on horse- back, awaiting her, even as I awaited her.

As we stood, behold, up came the lady, and with her a slave-girl. When she saw the young man, she said to him, “Art thou here?” And he answered, “Yes, O my lady.” Quoth she, “To-day I am bidden by this man. Wilt thou go with us?” And he replied, “Yes.” Then said she, “Thou hast brought me [hither] against my will and perforce. Wilt thou go with us in any event?” “Yes, yes,” answered he and we fared on, [all three,] till we came to Er Rauzeh and entered the pavilion. The lady diverted herself awhile with viewing its ordinance and furniture, after which she put off her [walking-]clothes and sat down [with the young man] in the goodliest and chiefest place. Then I went forth and brought them what they should eat at the first of the day; moreover, I went out also and fetched them what they should eat at the last of the day and brought them wine and dessert and fruits and flowers. On this wise I abode in their service, standing on my feet, and she said not unto me, “Sit,” nor “Take, eat” nor “Take, drink,” what while she and the young man sat toying and laughing, and he fell to kissing her and pinching her and hopping about upon the ground and laughing.

They abode thus awhile and presently she said, “Up to now we have not become drunken; let me pour out.” So she took the cup and gave him to drink and plied him with liquor, till he became drunken, when she took him and carried him into a closet. Then she came out, with his head in her hand, what while I stood silent, fixing not mine eyes on hers neither questioning her of this; and she said to me, “What is this?” “I know not,” answered I; and she said, “Take it and cast it into the river." I obeyed her commandment and she arose and stripping herself of her clothes, took a knife and cut the dead man's body in pieces, which she laid in three baskets, and said to me, "Throw them into the river."

I did as she bade me and when I returned, she said to me, "Sit, so I may relate to thee yonder fellow's case, lest thou be affrighted at that which hath befallen him. Thou must know that I am the Khalif's favourite, nor is there any more in honour with him than I; and I am allowed six nights in each month, wherein I go down [into the city and take up my abode] with my [former] mistress, who reared me; and when I go down thus, I dispose of myself as I will. Now this young man was the son of neighbours of my mistress, when I was a virgin girl. One day, my mistress was [engaged] with the chief [officers] of the palace and I was alone in the house. When the night came on, I went up to the roof, so I might sleep there, and before I was aware, this youth came up from the street and falling upon me, knelt on my breast. He was armed with a poniard and I could not win free of him till he had done away my maidenhead by force; and this sufficed him not, but he must needs disgrace me with all the folk, for, as often as I came down from the palace, he would lie in wait for me by the way and swive me against my will and follow me whithersoever I went. This, then, is my story, and as for thee, thou pleasest me and thy patience pleaseth me and thy good faith and loyal service, and there abideth with me none dearer than thou." Then I lay with her that night and there befell what befell between us till the morning, when she gave me wealth galore and fell to coming to the pavilion six days in every month.

On this wise we abode a whole year, at the end of which time she was absent from me a month's space, wherefore fire raged in my heart on her account. When it was the next month, behold, a little eunuch presented himself to me and said, "I am a messenger to thee from such an one," [naming my mistress], "who giveth thee to know that the Commander of the Faithful hath sentenced her to be drowned, her and those who are with her, six-and-twenty slave-girls, on such a day at Deir et Tin, for that they have confessed against one another of lewdness, and she biddeth thee look how thou mayst do with her and how thou mayst contrive to deliver her, even if thou gather together all her money and spend it upon her, for that this is the time of manhood." Quoth I, "I know not this woman; belike it is other than I [to whom this message is addressed]; so beware, O eunuch, lest thou cast me into stress." Quoth he, "Behold, I have told thee [that which I had to say,"] and went away, leaving me in concern [on her account].

[When the appointed day arrived], I arose and changing my clothes and favour, donned sailor's apparel; then I took with me a purse full of gold and buying good [victual for the] morning-meal, accosted a boatman [at Deir et Tin] and sat down and ate with him; after which said I to him, "Wilt thou hire me thy boat?" Quoth he, "The Commander of the Faithful hath commanded me to be here;" and he told me the story of the concubines and how the Khalif purposed to drown them that day. When I heard this from him, I brought out to him half a score dinars and discovered to him my case, whereupon quoth he to me, "O my brother, get thee empty calabashes, and when thy mistress cometh, give me to know of her and I will contrive the trick."

I kissed his hand and thanked him, and as I was walking about, [waiting,] up came the guards and eunuchs with the women, who were weeping and crying out and taking leave of one another. The eunuchs cried out to us, whereupon we came with the boat, and they said to the boatman, "Who is this?" "This is my mate," answered he, "[whom I have brought,] to help me, so one of us may keep the boat, whilst another doth your service." Then they brought out to us the women, one by one, saying, "Throw them [in] by the Island;" and we answered, "It is well." Now each of them was shackled and they had made a jar of sand fast about her neck. We did as the eunuchs bade us and ceased not to take the women, one after another, and cast them in, till they gave us my mistress and I winked to my comrade. So we took her and carried her out into mid-stream, where I gave her the empty calabashes and said to her, "Wait for me at the mouth of the canal." Then we cast her in, after we had loosed the jar of sand from her neck and done off her fetters, and returned.

Now there remained one after her; so we took her and drowned her and the eunuchs went away, whilst we dropped down the river with the boat till we came to the mouth of the canal, where I saw my mistress awaiting me. So we took her up into the boat and returned to our pavilion on Er Rauzeh. Then I rewarded the boatman and he took his boat and went away; whereupon quoth she to me, “Thou art indeed a friend in need.” And I abode with her some days; but the shock wrought upon her so that she sickened and fell to wasting away and redoubled in languishment and weakness till she died. I mourned for her with an exceeding mourning and buried her; after which I removed all that was in the pavilion to my own house [and abandoned the former].

Now she had brought to the pavilion aforetime a little brass coffer and laid it in a place whereof I knew not; so, when the inspector of inheritances came, he searched the pavilion and found the coffer, with the key in the lock. So he opened it and finding it full of jewels and jacinths and earrings and seal-rings and precious stones, such as are not found save with kings and sultans, took it, and me with it, and ceased not to put me to the question with beating and torment till I confessed to them the whole affair from beginning to end, whereupon they carried me to the Khalif and I told him all that had passed between me and her; and he said to me, “O man, depart from this city, for I acquit thee for thy valiance sake and because of thy [constancy in] keeping thy secret and thy daring in exposing thyself to death.” So I arose forthright and departed his city; and this is what befell me.’”

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SHEHRZAD AND SHEHRIYAR.

King Shehriyar marvelled at these things and Shehrzad said to him, “Thou marvelledst at that which befell thee on the part of women; yet hath there befallen the kings of the Chosroes before thee what was more grievous than that which befell thee, and indeed I have set forth unto thee that which betided khalifs and kings and others than they with their women, but the exposition is long and hearkening groweth tedious, and in this [that I have already told thee] is sufficiency for the man of understanding and admonishment for the wise.”

Then she was silent, and when the king heard her speech and profited by that which she said, he summoned up his reasoning faculties and cleansed his heart and caused his understanding revert [to the right way] and turned [with repentance] to God the Most High and said in himself, “Since there befell the kings of the Chosroes more than that which hath befallen me, never, whilst I abide [on life], shall I cease to blame myself [for that which I did in the slaughter of the daughters of the folk]. As for this Shehrzad, her like is not found in the lands; so extolled be the perfection of Him who appointed her a means for the deliverance of His creatures from slaughter and oppression!” Then he arose from his session and kissed her head, whereat she rejoiced with an exceeding joy, she and her sister Dinarzad.

When the morning morrowed, the king went forth and sitting down on the throne of the kingship, summoned the grandees of his empire; whereupon the chamberlains and deputies and captains of the host went in to him and kissed the earth before him. He distinguished the vizier with his especial favour and bestowed on him a dress of honour and entreated him with the utmost kindness, after which he set forth briefly to his chief officers that which had betided him with Shehrzad and how he had turned from that his former usance and repented him of what he had done aforetime and purposed to take the vizier’s daughter Shehrzad to wife and let draw up the contract of marriage with her.

When those who were present heard this, they kissed the earth before him and offered up prayers for him and for the damsel Shehrzad, and the vizier thanked her. Then Shehriyar made an end of the session in all weal, whereupon the folk dispersed to their dwelling-places and the news was bruited abroad that the king purposed to marry the vizier's daughter Shehrzad. Then he proceeded to make ready the wedding gear, and [when he had made an end of his preparations], he sent after his brother King Shahzeman, who came, and King Shehriyar went forth to meet him with the troops. Moreover, they decorated the city after the goodliest fashion and diffused perfumes [from the censing-vessels] and [burnt] aloes-wood and other perfumes in all the markets and thoroughfares and rubbed themselves with saffron, what while the drums beat and the flutes and hautboys sounded and it was a notable day.

When they came to the palace, King Shehriyar commanded to spread the tables with beasts roasted [whole] and sweetmeats and all manner viands and bade the crier make proclamation to the folk that they should come up to the Divan and eat and drink and that this should be a means of reconciliation between him and them. So great and small came up unto him and they abode on that wise, eating and drinking, seven days with their nights. Then the king shut himself up with his brother and acquainted him with that which had betided him with the vizier's daughter [Shehrzad] in those three years [which were past] and told him what he had heard from her of saws and parables and chronicles and pleasant traits and jests and stories and anecdotes and dialogues and histories and odes and verses; whereat King Shahzeman marvelled with the utterest of marvel and said, "Fain would I take her younger sister to wife, so we may be two own brothers to two own sisters, and they on likewise be sisters unto us; for that the calamity which befell me was the means of the discovering of that which befell thee and all this time of three years past I have taken no delight in woman, save that I lie each night with a damsel of my kingdom, and when I arise in the morning, I put her to death; but now I desire to marry thy wife's sister Dinarzad."

When King Shehriyar heard his brother's words he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and arising forthright, went in to his wife Shehrzad and gave her to know of that which his brother purposed, to wit, that he sought her sister Dinarzad in marriage; whereupon, "O king of the age," answered she, "we seek of him one condition, to wit, that he take up his abode with us, for that I cannot brook to be parted from my sister an hour, because we were brought up together and may not brook severance from each other. If he accept this condition, she is his handmaid." King Shehriyar returned to his brother and acquainted him with that which Shehrzad had said; and he answered, saying, "Indeed, this is what was in my mind, for that I desire nevermore to be parted from thee. As for the kingdom, God the Most High shall send unto it whom He chooseth, for that there abideth to me no desire for the kingship."

When King Shehriyar heard his brother's words, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and said, "Verily, this is what I had wished, O my brother. So praised be God who hath brought about union between us!" Then he sent after the Cadis and learned men and captains and notables, and they married the two brothers to the two sisters. The contracts were drawn up and the two kings bestowed dresses of honour of silk and satin on those who were present, whilst the city was decorated and the festivities were renewed. The king commanded each amir and vizier and chamberlain and deputy to decorate his palace and the folk of the city rejoiced in the presage of happiness and content. Moreover, King Shehriyar bade slaughter sheep and get up kitchens and made bride-feasts and fed all comers, high and low.

Then the eunuchs went forth, that they might perfume the bath [for the use of the brides]; so they essenced it with rose-water and willow-flower-water and bladders of musk and fumigated it with Cakili aloes-wood and ambergris. Then Shehrzad entered, she and her sister Dinarzad, and they cleansed their heads and clipped their hair. When they came forth of the bath, they donned raiment and ornaments, [such as were] prepared for the kings of the Chosroes; and among Shehrzad's apparel was a dress charactered with red gold and wroughten with semblants of birds and beasts. Moreover, they both encircled their necks with necklaces of jewels of price, in the like whereof Iskender rejoiced not, for therein were great jewels such as amazed the wit and the eye, and the thought was bewildered at their charms, for indeed, each of them was brighter than the sun and the moon. Before them they kindled lighted flambeaux in torch-holders of gold, but their faces outshone the flambeaux, for that they had eyes sharper than drawn swords and the lashes of their eyelids ensorcelled all hearts. Their cheeks were rosy and their necks and shapes swayed gracefully and their eyes wantoned. And the slave-girls came to meet them with instruments of music.

Then the two kings entered the bath, and when they came forth, they sat down on a couch, inlaid with pearls and jewels, whereupon the two sisters came up to them and stood before them, as they were moons, swaying gracefully from side to side in their beauty and grace. Presently they brought forward Shehrzad and displayed her, for the first dress, in a red suit; whereupon King Shehriyar rose to look upon her and the wits of all present, men and women, were confounded, for that she was even as saith of her one of her describers:

Like a sun at the end of a cane in a hill of sand, She shines in
a dress of the hue of pomegranate flower.
She gives me to drink of her cheeks and her honeyed lips And
quenches the worst of the fires that my heart devour.

Then they attired Dinarzad in a dress of blue brocade and she became as she were the full moon, whenas it shineth forth. So they displayed her in this, for the first dress, before King Shahzeman, who rejoiced in her and well-nigh took leave of his wits for longing and amorous desire; yea, he was distraught with love for her, whenas he saw her, for, indeed, she was as saith of her one of her describers in the following verses:

She comes in a robe the colour of ultramarine, Blue as the
stainless sky, unflecked with white;
I view her with yearning eyes and she seems to me A moon of the
summer, set in a winter's night.

Then they returned to Shehrzad and displayed her in the second dress. They clad her in a dress of surpassing goodliness, and veiled her face to the eyes with her hair. Moreover, they let down her side locks and she was even as saith of her one of her describers in the following verses:

Bravo for her whose loosened locks her cheeks do overcloud! She
slays me with her cruelty, so fair she is and proud.
Quoth I, "Thou overcurtainest the morning with the night;" And
she, "Not so; it is the moon that with the dark I shroud."

Then they displayed Dinarzad in a second and a third and a fourth dress and she came forward, as she were the rising sun, and swayed coquettishly to and fro; and indeed she was even as saith the poet of her in the following verses:

A sun of beauty she appears to all who look on her, Glorious in
arch and amorous grace, with coyness beautified;
And when the sun of morning sees her visage and her smile,
O'ercome. he hasteneth his face behind the clouds to hide.

Then they displayed Shehrzad in the third dress and the fourth and the fifth, and she became as she were a willow-wand or a thirsting gazelle, goodly of grace and perfect of attributes, even as saith of her one in the following verses:

Like the full moon she shows upon a night of fortune fair,
Slender of shape and charming all with her seductive air.
She hath an eye, whose glances pierce the hearts of all mankind,
Nor can cornelian with her cheeks for ruddiness compare.
The sable torrent of her locks falls down unto her hips; Beware
the serpents of her curls, I counsel thee, beware!
Indeed her glance, her sides are soft; but none the less, alas!
Her heart is harder than the rock; there is no mercy there.
The starry arrows of her looks she darts above her veil; They hit
and never miss the mark, though from afar they fare.

Then they returned to Dinarzad and displayed her in the fifth dress and in the sixth, which was green. Indeed, she overpassed with her loveliness the fair of the four quarters of the world and outshone, with the brightness of her countenance, the full moon at its rising; for she was even as saith of her the poet in the following verses:

A damsel made for love and decked with subtle grace; Thou'dst
deem the very sun had borrowed from her face.
She came in robes of green, the likeness of the leaf That the
pomegranate's flower doth in the bud encase.
"How call'st thou this thy dress?" quoth we, and she replied A
word wherein the wise a lesson well might trace;
"Breaker of hearts," quoth she, "I call it, for therewith I've
broken many a heart among the amorous race."

Then they displayed Shehrzad in the sixth and seventh dresses and clad her in youths' apparel, whereupon she came forward, swaying coquettishly from side to side; and indeed she ravished wits and hearts and ensorcelled with her glances [all who looked on her]. She shook her sides and wagged her hips, then put her hair on the hilt of her sword and went up to King Shehriyar, who embraced her, as the hospitable man embraces the guest, and threatened her in her ear with the taking of the sword; and indeed she was even as saith of her the poet in these verses:

Were not the darkness still in gender masculine, As
ofttimes is the case with she-things passing fine,
Tirewomen to the bride, who whiskers, ay, and beard Upon her face
produce, they never would assign.

On this wise they did with her sister Dinarzad, and when they had made an end of displaying the two brides, the king bestowed dresses of honour on all who were present and dismissed them to their own places. Then Shehrzad went in to King Shehriyar and Dinarzad to King Shahzeman and each of them solaced himself with the company of his beloved and the hearts of the folk were comforted. When the morning morrowed, the vizier came in to the two kings and kissed the ground before them; wherefore they thanked him and were bountiful to him. Then they went forth and sat down upon couches of estate, whilst all the viziers and amirs and grandees and the chief officers of the realm and the household presented themselves before them and kissed the earth. King Shehriyar ordered them dresses of honour and largesse and they offered up prayers for the abiding continuance [on life] of the king and his brother.

Then the two kings appointed their father-in-law the vizier to be viceroy in Samarcand and assigned him five of the chief amirs to accompany him, charging them attend him and do him service. The vizier kissed the earth and prayed that they might be vouchsafed length of life. Then he went in to his daughters, whilst the eunuchs and ushers walked before him, and saluted them and bade them farewell. They kissed his hands and gave him joy of the kingship and bestowed on him treasures galore. Then he took leave of them and setting out, journeyed days and nights till he came within three days' journey of Samarcand, where the townspeople met him and rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy. So he entered Samarcand and they decorated the city, and it was a notable day. He sat down on the throne of his kingship and the viziers did him homage and the grandees and amirs of Samarcand and prayed that he might be vouchsafed justice and victory and length of continuance [on life]. So he bestowed on them dresses of honour and entreated them with worship and they made him Sultan over them.

As soon as his father-in-law had departed for Samarcand, King Shehriyar summoned the grandees of his realm and made them a magnificent banquet of all manner rich meats and exquisite sweetmeats. Moreover, he bestowed on them dresses of honour and guerdoned them and divided the kingdoms between himself and his brother in their presence, whereat the folk rejoiced. Then the two kings abode, ruling each a day in turn and they accorded with each other, what while their wives continued in the love of God the Most High and in thanksgiving to Him; and the subjects and the provinces were at peace and the preachers prayed for them from the pulpits, and their report was bruited abroad and the travellers bore tidings of them [to all countries].

Moreover, King Shehriyar summoned chroniclers and copyists and bade them write all that had betided him with his wife, first and last; so they wrote this and named it "The Stories of the Thousand Nights and One Night." The book came to thirty volumes and these the king laid up in his treasury. Then the two kings abode with their wives in all delight and solace of life, for that indeed God the Most High had changed their mourning into joyance; and on this wise they continued till there took them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Companies, he who maketh void the dwelling-places and peopleth the tombs, and they were translated to the mercy of God the Most High; their houses were laid waste and their palaces ruined and the kings inherited their riches.

Then there reigned after them an understanding king, who was just, keen-witted and accomplished and loved stories, especially those which chronicle the doings of kings and sultans, and he found [in the treasuries of the kings who had foregone him] these marvellous and rare and delightful stories, [written] in the thirty volumes aforesaid. So he read in them a first book and a second and a third and [so on] to the last of them, and each book pleased him more than that which forewent it, till he came to the end of them. Then he marvelled at that which he had read [therein] of stories and discourse and witty traits and anecdotes and moral instances and reminiscences and bade the folk copy them and publish them in all lands and climes; wherefore their report was bruited abroad and the people named them "The marvels and rarities of the Thousand Nights and One Night." This is all that hath come down to us of [the history of] this book, and God is All-Knowing.

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Sindbad the Sailor and Hindbad the Porter

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NOTE.

As the version of the sixth and seventh voyages of Sindbad the Sailor contained in the Calcutta Edition (1814-18) of the first two hundred Nights and in the text of the Voyages published by M. Langles (Paris, 1814) differs very materially from that of the complete Calcutta (1839-42) Edition (which is, in this case, practically identical with those of Boulac and Breslau), adopted by me as my standard text in the translation of “The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night,” the story of the seventh voyage in particular turning upon an altogether different set of incidents, related nearly as in the old version of M. Galland, I now give a translation of the text of the two voyages in question afforded by the Calcutta (1814-18) Edition, corrected and completed by collation with that of M. Langles, from which it differs only in being slightly less full. It will be observed that in this version of the story the name Sindbad is reserved for the Sailor, the porter being called Hindbad.

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SINDBAD THE SAILOR AND HINDBAD THE PORTER.

On the morrow they returned to their place, as of their wont, and betook themselves to eating and drinking and merry-making and sporting till the last of the day, when Sindbad bade them hearken to his relation concerning his sixth voyage, the which (quoth he) is of the most extraordinary of pleasant stories and the most startling [for that which it compriseth] of tribulations and disasters. Then said he,

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THE SIXTH VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR.

“When I returned from my fifth voyage, I gave myself up to eating and drinking and passed my time in solace and delight and forgot that which I had suffered of stresses and afflictions, nor was it long before the thought of travel again presented itself to my mind and my soul hankered after the sea. So I brought out the goods and binding up the bales, departed from Baghdad, [intending] for certain of the lands, and came to the sea-coast, where I embarked in a stout ship, in company with a number of other merchants of like mind with myself, and we [set out and] sailed till we came among certain distant islands and found ourselves in difficult and dangerous case.

[One day], as the ship was sailing along, and we unknowing where we were, behold, the captain came down [from the mast] and casting his turban from his head, fell to buffeting his face and plucking at his beard and weeping and supplicating [God for deliverance]. We asked him what ailed him, and he answered, saying, ‘Know, O my masters, that the ship is fallen among shallows and drifteth upon a sand-bank of the sea. Another moment [and we shall be upon it]. If we clear the bank, [well and good]; else, we are all dead men and not one of us will be saved; wherefore pray ye to God the Most High, so haply He may deliver us from these deadly perils, or we shall lose our lives.’ So saying, he mounted [the mast] and set the sail, but at that moment a contrary wind smote the ship, and it rose upon the crest of the waves and sank down again into the trough of the sea.

Now there was before us a high mountain, rising [abruptly] from the sea, and the ship fell off into an eddy, which bore it on till presently it struck upon the skirt of the mountain and broke in sunder; whereupon the captain came down [from the mast], weeping, and said, ‘God’s will be done! Take leave of one another and look yourselves out graves from to-day, for we have fallen into a predicament from which there is no escape, and never yet hath any been cast away here and come off alive.’ So all the folk fell a-weeping and gave themselves up for lost, despairing of deliverance; friend took leave of friend and sore was the mourning and lamentation; for that hope was cut off and they were left without guide or pilot. Then all who were in the ship landed on the skirt of the mountain and found themselves on a long island, whose shores were strewn with [wrecks], beyond count or reckoning, [of] ships that had been cast away [there] and whose crews had perished; and there also were dry bones and dead bodies, heaped upon one another, and goods without number and riches past count So we abode confounded, drunken, amazed, humbling ourselves [in supplication to God] and repenting us [of having exposed ourselves to the perils of travel]; but repentance availed not in that place.

In this island is a river of very sweet water, issuing from the shore of the sea and entering in at a wide cavern in the skirt of an inaccessible mountain, and the stones of the island are all limpid sparkling crystal and jacinths of price. Therein also is a spring of liquid, welling up like [molten] pitch, and when it cometh to the shore of the island, the fish swallow it, then return and cast it up, and it becometh changed from its condition and that which it was aforetime; and it is crude ambergris. Moreover, the trees of the island are all of the most precious aloes-wood, both Chinese and Comorin; but there is no way of issue from the place, for it is as an abyss midmost the sea; the steepness of its shore forbiddeth the drawing up of ships, and if any approach the mountain, they fall into the eddy aforesaid; nor is there any resource in that island.

So we abode there, daily expecting death, and whoso of us had with him a day’s victual ate it in five days, and after this he died; and whoso had with him a month’s victual ate it in five months and died also. As for me, I had with me great plenty of victual; so I buried it in a certain place and brought it out, [little by little,] and fed on it; and we ceased not to be thus, burying one the other, till all died but myself and I abode alone, having buried the last of my companions, and but little victual remained to me. So I said in myself, ‘Who will bury me in this place?’ And I dug me a grave and abode in expectation of death, for that I was in a state of exhaustion. Then, of the excess of my repentance, I blamed and reproached myself for my much [love of] travel and said, ‘How long wilt thou thus imperil thyself?’ And I abode as I were a madman, unable to rest; but, as I was thus melancholy and distracted, God the Most High inspired me with an idea, and it was that I looked at the river aforesaid, as it entered in at the mouth of the cavern in the skirt of the mountain, and said in myself, ‘Needs must this water have issue in some place.’

So I arose and gathering wood and planks from the wrecks, wrought of them the semblance of a boat [to wit, a raft,] and bound it fast with ropes, saying, ‘I will embark thereon and fare with this water into the inward of the mountain. If it bring me to the mainland or to a place where I may find relief and safety, [well and good]; else I shall [but] perish, even as my companions have perished.’ Then I collected of the riches and gold and precious stuffs, cast up there, whose owners had perished, a great matter, and of jacinths and crude ambergris and emeralds somewhat past count, and laid all this on the raft [together with what was left me of victual]. Then I launched it on the river and seating myself upon it, put my trust in God the Most High and committed myself to the stream.

The raft fared on with me, running along the surface of the river, and entered into the inward of the mountain, where the light of day forsook me and I abode dazed and stupefied, unknowing whither I went. Whenas I hungered, I ate a little of the victual I had with me, till it was all spent and I abode expecting the mercy of the Lord of all creatures. Presently I found myself in a strait [channel] in the darkness and my head rubbed against the roof of the cave; and in this case I abode awhile, knowing not night from day, whilst anon the channel grew straiter and anon widened out; and whenas my breast was straitened and I was confounded at my case, sleep took me and I knew neither little nor much.

When I awoke and opened my eyes, I found myself [in the open air] and the raft moored to the bank of the stream, whilst about me were folk of the blacks of Hind. When they saw that I was awake, they came up to me, to question me; so I rose to them and saluted them. They bespoke me in a tongue I knew not, whilst I deemed myself in a dream, and for the excess of my joy, I was like to fly and my reason refused to obey me. Then there came to my mind the verses of the poet and I recited, saying:

Let destiny with loosened rein its course appointed fare And lie thou down to sleep by night, with

heart devoid of care;
For 'twixt the closing of an eye and th'opening thereof, God hath it in His power to change a case
from foul to fair.

When they heard me speak in Arabic, one of them came up to me and saluting me [in that language], questioned me of my case. Quoth I, 'What [manner of men] are ye and what country is this?' 'O my brother,' answered he, 'we are husbandmen and come to this river, to draw water, wherewithal to water our fields; and whilst we were thus engaged to-day, as of wont, this boat appeared to us on the surface of the water, issuing from the inward of yonder mountain. So we came to it and finding thee asleep therein, moored it to the shore, against thou shouldst awake. Acquaint us, therefore, with thy history and tell us how thou camest hither and whence thou enteredst this river and what land is behind yonder mountain, for that we have never till now known any make his way thence to us.' But I said to them, 'Give me somewhat to eat and after question me.' So they brought me food and I ate and my spirits revived and I was refreshed. Then I related to them all that had befallen me, whereat they were amazed and confounded and said, 'By Allah, this is none other than a marvellous story, and needs must we carry thee to our king, that thou mayst acquaint him therewith.' So they carried me before their king, and I kissed his hand and saluted him.

Now he was the king of the land of Serendib, and he welcomed me and entreated me with kindness, bidding me be seated and admitting me to his table and converse. So I talked with him and called down blessings upon him and he took pleasure in my discourse and showed me satisfaction and said to me, 'What is thy name?' 'O my lord,' answered I, 'my name is Sindbad the Sailor;' and he said, 'And what countryman art thou?' Quoth I, 'I am of Baghdad.' 'And how earnest thou hither?' asked he. So I told him my story and he marvelled mightily thereat and said, 'By Allah, O Sindbad, this thy story is marvellous and it behoveth that it be written in characters of gold.'

Then they brought the raft before him and I said to him, 'O my lord, I am in thy hands, I and all my good.' He looked at the raft and seeing therein jacinths and emeralds and crude ambergris, the like whereof was not in his treasuries, marvelled and was amazed at this. Then said he, ‘O Sindbad, God forbid that we should covet that which God the Most High hath vouchsafed unto thee! Nay, it behoveth us rather to further thee on thy return to thine own country.’ So I called down blessings on him and thanked him. Then he signed to one of his attendants, who took me and established me in a goodly lodging, and the king assigned me a daily allowance and pages to wait on me. And every day I used to go in to him and he entertained me and entreated me friendly and delighted in my converse; and as often as our assembly broke up, I went out and walked about the town and the island, diverting myself by viewing them.

Now this island is under the Equinoctial line; its night is still twelve hours and its day the like. Its length is fourscore parasangs and its breadth thirty, and it is a great island, stretching between a lofty mountain and a deep valley. This mountain is visible at a distance of three days’ journey and therein are various kinds of jacinths and other precious stones and metals of all kinds and all manner spice-trees, and its soil is of emery, wherewith jewels are wrought. In its streams are diamonds, and pearls are in its rivers. I ascended to its summit and diverted myself by viewing all the marvels therein, which are such as beggar description; after which I returned to the king and sought of him permission to return to my own country. He gave me leave, after great pressure, and bestowed on me abundant largesse from his treasuries. Moreover, he gave me a present and a sealed letter and said to me, ‘Carry this to the Khalif Haroun er Reshid and salute him for us with abundant salutation.’ And I said, ‘I hear and obey.’

Now this letter was written with ultramarine upon the skin of the hog-deer, the which is goodlier than parchment or paper and inclineth unto yellow, and was to the following effect: ‘From the King of Hind, before whom are a thousand elephants and on the battlements of his palace a thousand jewels, [to the Khalif Haroun er Reshid, greeting]. To proceed: we send thee some small matter of presents, which do thou accept and be to us as a brother and a friend, for that the love of thee aboundeth in our heart and we would have thee to know that we look to thee for an answer. Indeed, we are sharers with thee in love and fear, ceasing never to do thee honour; and for a beginning, we send thee the Book of the Quintessence of Balms and a present after the measure of that which is fallen to our lot. Indeed, this is unworthy of thy rank, but we beseech thee, O brother, to favour us by accepting it, and peace be on thee!'

Now this present was a cup of ruby, a span high and a finger's length broad, full of fine pearls, each a mithcal in weight and a bed covered with the skin of the serpent that swalloweth the elephant, marked with spots, each the bigness of a dinar, whereon whoso sitteth shall never sicken; also an hundred thousand mithcals of Indian aloes-wood and thirty grains of camphor, each the bigness of a pistachio-nut, and a slave-girl with her paraphernalia, a charming creature, as she were the resplendent moon. Then the king took leave of me, commending me to the merchants and the captain of the ship, and I set out, with that which was entrusted to my charge and my own good, and we ceased not to pass from island to island and from country to country, till we came to Baghdad, when I entered my house and foregathered with my family and brethren.

Then I took the present and a token of service from myself to the Khalif and [presenting myself before him], kissed his hands and laid the whole before him, together with the King of Hind's letter. He read the letter and taking the present, rejoiced therein with an exceeding joy and entreated me with the utmost honour. Then said he to me, 'O Sindbad, is this king, indeed, such as he avoucheth in this letter?' I kissed the earth and answered, saying, 'O my lord, I myself have seen the greatness of his kingship to be manifold that which he avoucheth in his letter. On the day of his audience, there is set up for him a throne on the back of a huge elephant, eleven cubits high, whereon he sitteth and with him are his officers and pages and session-mates, standing in two ranks on his right hand and on his left. At his head standeth a man, having in his hand a golden javelin, and behind him another, bearing a mace of the same metal, tipped with an emerald, a span long and an inch thick. When he mounteth, a thousand riders take horse with him, arrayed in gold and silk; and whenas he rideth forth, he who is before him proclaimeth and saith, "This is the king, mighty of estate and high of dominion!" And he proceedeth to praise him on this wise and endeth by saying, "This is the king, lord of the crown the like whereof nor Solomon nor Mihraj possessed!" Then is he silent, whilst he who is behind the king proclaimeth and saith, "He shall die! He shall die! And again I say, he shall die!" And the other rejoineth, saying, "Extolled be the perfection of the Living One who dieth not!" And by reason of his justice and judgment and understanding, there is no Cadi in his [capital] city; but all the people of his realm distinguish truth from falsehood and know [and practise] truth and right for themselves.'

The Khalif marvelled at my speech and said, 'How great is this king! Indeed, his letter testifieth of him; and as for the magnificence of his dominion, thou hast acquainted us with that which thou hast seen; so, by Allah, he hath been given both wisdom and dominion.' Then he bestowed on me largesse and dismissed me, so I returned to my house and paid the poor-rate and gave alms and abode in my former easy and pleasant case, forgetting the grievous stresses I had suffered. Yea, I cast out from my heart the cares of travel and traffic and put away travail from my thought and gave myself up to eating and drinking and pleasure and delight."

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SINDBAD THE SAILOR AND HINDBAD THE PORTER.

When Sindbad the Sailor had made an end of his story, all who were present marvelled at that which had befallen him. Then he bade his treasurer give the porter an hundred mithcals of gold and dismissed him, charging him return on the morrow, with the rest of the folk, to hear the history of his seventh voyage. So the porter went away to his house, rejoicing; and on the morrow he presented himself with the rest of the guests, who sat down, as of their wont, and occupied themselves with eating and drinking and merry-making till the end of the day, when their host bade them hearken to the story of his seventh voyage. Quoth Sindbad the Sailor,

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THE SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR.

“When I [returned from my sixth voyage, I] forswore travel and renounced commerce, saying in myself, ‘What hath befallen me sufficeth me.’ So I abode at home and passed my time in pleasance and delight, till, one day, as I sat at mine ease, plying the wine-cup [with my friends], there came a knocking at the door. The doorkeeper opened and found without one of the Khalif’s pages, who came in to me and said, ‘The Commander of the Faithful biddeth thee to him.’ So I accompanied him to the presence of the Khalif and kissing the earth before him, saluted him. He bade me welcome and entreated me with honour and said to me, ‘O Sindbad, I have an occasion with thee, which I would have thee accomplish for me.’ So I kissed his hand and said, ‘O my lord, what is the lord’s occasion with the slave?’ Quoth he, ‘I would have thee go to the King of Serendib and carry him our letter and our present, even as he sent us a present and a letter.’

At this I trembled and replied, ‘By the Most Great God, O my lord, I have taken a loathing to travel, and whenas any maketh mention to me of travel by sea or otherwise, I am like to swoon for affright, by reason of that which hath befallen me and what I have suffered of hardships and perils. Indeed, I have no jot of inclination left for this, and I have sworn never again to leave Baghdad.’ And I related to him all that had befallen me, first and last; whereat he marvelled exceedingly and said, ‘By the Most Great God, O Sindbad, never was heard from time immemorial of one whom there betided that which hath betided thee and well may it behove thee never again to mention travel! But for my sake go thou this once and carry my letter to the King of Serendib and return in haste, if it be the will of God the Most High, so we may not remain indebted to the king for favour and courtesy.’ And I answered him with ‘Hearkening and obedience,’ for that I dared not gainsay his commandment

Then he gave me the present and letter and money for my expenses. So I kissed his hand and going out from before him, repaired to the sea-coast, where I took ship with many other merchants and we sailed days and nights, till, after a prosperous voyage, God vouchsafed us a safe arrival at the island of Serendib. We landed and went up to the city, where I carried the letter and present to the king and kissing the earth fell [prostrate before him], invoking blessings on him. When he saw me, ‘Welcome to thee, O Sindbad!’ quoth he. ‘By the Most Great God, we have longed for thy sight and the day is blessed on which we behold thee once more.’ Then he took my hand and seating me by his side, welcomed me and entreated me friendly and rejoiced in me with an exceeding joy; after which he fell to conversing with me and caressing me and said, ‘What brings thee to us, O Sindbad?’ I kissed his hand and thanking him, said, ‘O my lord, I bring thee a present and a letter from my lord the Khalif Haroun er Reshid.’ Then I brought out to him the present and the letter and he read the latter and accepted the former, rejoicing therein with an exceeding joy.

Now this present was a horse worth ten thousand dinars and all its housings and trappings of gold set with jewels, and a book and five different kinds of suits of apparel and an hundred pieces of fine white linen cloths of Egypt and silks of Suez and Cufa and Alexandria and a crimson carpet and another of Tebaristan make and an hundred pieces of cloth of silk and flax mingled and a goblet of glass of the time of the Pharaohs, a finger-breadth thick and a span wide, amiddleward which was the figure of a lion and before him an archer kneeling, with his arrow drawn to the head, and the table of Solomon son of David, on whom be peace; and the contents of the letter were as follows: ‘From the Khalif Haroun er Reshid, unto whom and to his forefathers (on whom be peace) God hath vouchsafed the rank of the noble and exceeding glory, to the august, God-aided Sultan, greeting. Thy letter hath reached us and we rejoiced therein and have sent thee the book [called] “The Divan of Hearts and the Garden of Wits,” of the translation whereof when thou hast taken cognizance, its excellence will be established in thine eyes; and the superscription of this book we have made unto thee. Moreover, we send thee divers other kingly presents; so do thou favour us by accepting them, and peace be on thee!’

When the king had read this letter, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and bestowed on me great store of presents and entreated me with the utmost honour. Some days after this, I sought of him leave to depart, but he granted it not to me save after much pressing. So I took leave of him and shipped with divers merchants and others, intending for my own country and having no desire for travel or traffic. We sailed on, without ceasing, till we had passed many islands; but, one day, as we fared on over a certain tract of the sea, there came forth upon us a multitude of boats full of men like devils, clad in chain-mail and armed with swords and daggers and bows and arrows, and surrounded us on every side. They entreated us after the cruellest fashion, smiting and wounding and slaying those who made head against them, and taking the ship, with the crew and all that were therein, carried us to an island, where they sold us all for a low price. A rich man bought me and taking me into his house, gave me to eat and drink and clothed me and entreated me kindly, till my heart was comforted and I was somewhat restored.

One day my master said to me, ‘Knowest thou not some art or handicraft?’ And I answered, saying, ‘O my lord, I am a merchant and know nought but traffic.’ Quoth he, ‘Knowest thou how to shoot with a bow and arrows?’ And I replied, ‘Yes, I know that.’ So he brought me a bow and arrows and mounting me behind him on an elephant, set out with me, at the last of the night, and fared on till we came to a forest of great trees; whereupon he made me climb a high and stout tree and giving me the bow and arrows, said to me, ‘Sit here, and when the elephants come hither by day, shoot at them, so haply thou shalt hit one of them; and if any of them fall, come at nightfall and tell me.’ Then he went away and left me trembling and fearful. I abode hidden in the tree till the sun rose, when the elephants came out and fared hither and thither among the trees, and I gave not over shooting at them with arrows, till I brought down one of them. So, at eventide, I went and told my master, who rejoiced in me and rewarded me; then he came and carried away the dead elephant.

On this wise I abode a while of time, every day shooting an elephant, whereupon my master came and carried it away, till, one day, as I sat hidden in the tree, there came up elephants without number, roaring and trumpeting, so that meseemed the earth trembled for the din. They all made for the tree whereon I was and the girth whereof was fifty cubits, and compassed it about. Then a huge elephant came up to the tree and winding his trunk about it, tugged at it, till he plucked it up by the roots and cast it to the ground. I fell among the elephants, and the great elephant, coming up to me, as I lay aswoon for affright, wound his trunk about me and tossing me on to his back, made off with me, accompanied by the others; nor did he leave faring on with me, and I absent from the world, till he brought me to a certain place and casting me down from off his back, went away, followed by the rest. I lay there awhile, till my trouble subsided and my senses returned to me, when I sat up, deeming myself in a dream, and found myself on a great hill, stretching far and wide and all of elephants' bones. So I knew that this was their burial-place and that they had brought me thither on account of the bones.

Then I arose and fared on a day and a night, till I came to the house of my master, who saw me pale and disfeatured for fear and hunger. He rejoiced in my return and said to me, 'By Allah, thou hast made my heart ache on thine account; for I went and finding the tree torn up by the roots, doubted not but the elephants had destroyed thee. Tell me then how it was with thee.' So I told him what had befallen me and he marvelled exceedingly and rejoiced, saying, 'Knowst thou where this hill is?' 'Yes, O my lord,' answered I. So he took me up with him on an elephant and we rode till we came to the elephants' burial-place.

When he saw those many bones, he rejoiced therein with an exceeding joy and carried away what he had a mind to thereof. Then we returned to his house and he entreated me with increased favour and said to me, 'Verily, O my son, thou hast directed us to a passing great gain, may God requite thee with all good! Thou art free for the sake of God the Most High. Every year these elephants used to kill of us much people on account of these bones; but God delivered thee from them and thou hast done us good service in the matter of these bones, of which thou hast given us to know; wherefore thou meritest a great recompense, and thou art free.' 'O my lord,' answered I, 'may God free thy neck from the fire! I desire of thee that thou give me leave to return to my own country.' 'So be it,' replied he; 'but we have a fair, on occasion whereof the merchants come hither to us and take of us these elephants' bones. The time of the fair is now at hand, and when they come to us, I will send thee with them and give thee somewhat to bring thee to thine own country.'

I blessed him and thanked him and abode with him in all honour and consideration, till, after a little, the merchants came, even as he had said, and bought and sold and bartered; and when they were about to depart, my master came to me and said, 'The merchants are about to depart; arise, that thou mayst go with them to thy country.' So I betook myself to the folk, and behold, they had bought great store of elephants' bones and bound up their loads and embarked in the ship; and my master took passage for me with them and paid my hire and all that was chargeable upon me. Moreover, he gave me great store of goods and we set sail and passed from island to island, till we traversed the sea and arrived at the port of our destination; whereupon the merchants brought out their goods and sold; and I also brought out that which was with me and sold it at a good profit.

Then I bought of the best and finest of the produce and rarities of the country and all I had a mind to and a good hackney and we set out again and traversed the deserts from country to country till we came to Baghdad. Then I went in to the Khalif and saluted him and kissed his hand; after which I acquainted him with all that had passed and that which had befallen me. He rejoiced in my deliverance and thanked God the Most High; then he caused write my story in letters of gold and I betook myself to my house and foregathered with my brethren and family. This, then," added Sindbad, "is the last of that which befell me in my travels, and praise be to God, the One, the Creator, the Maker!"

When Sindbad the Sailor had made an end of his story, he bade his servant give the porter an hundred mithcals of gold and said to him, "How now, my brother! Hast ever in the world heard of one whom such calamities have betided as have betided me and hath any suffered that which I have suffered of afflictions or undergone that which I have undergone of hardships? Wherefore it behoveth that I have these pleasures in requital of that which I have undergone of travail and humiliations." So the porter came forward and kissing the merchant's hands, said to him, "O my lord, thou hast indeed suffered grievous perils and hast well deserved these bounteous favours [that

God hath vouchsafed thee]. Abide, then, O my lord, in thy delights and put away from thee [the remembrance of] thy troubles; and may God the Most High crown thine enjoyments with perfection and accomplish thy days in pleasance until the hour of thine admission [to His mercy]!"

Therewithal Sindbad the Sailor bestowed largesse upon him and made him his boon-companion, and he abode, leaving him not night or day, to the last of their lives. Praise be to God the Glorious, the Omnipotent, the Strong, the Exalted of estate, Creator of heaven and earth and land and sea, to whom belongeth glorification! Amen. Amen. Praise be to God, the Lord of the Worlds! Amen.

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NOTE.

As stated In the Prefatory Note to my “Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night,” four printed Editions (of which three are more or less complete) exist of the Arabic text of the original work, namely those of Calcutta (1839-42), Boulac (Cairo), Breslau (Tunis) and Calcutta (1814-18). The first two are, for purposes of tabulation, practically identical, one whole story only, of those that occur in the Calcutta (1839-42) Edition, (which is the most complete of all,) being omitted from that of Boulac; and I have, therefore, given but one Table of Contents for these two Editions. The Breslau Edition, though differing widely from those of Calcutta (1839-42) and Boulac in contents, resembles them in containing the full number (a thousand and one) of Nights, whilst that of Calcutta (1814-18) is but a fragment, comprising only the first two hundred Nights and the Voyages of Sindbad, as a separate Tale.

The subscribers to my “Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night” and the present “Tales from the Arabic” have now before them a complete English rendering (the first ever made) of all the tales contained in the four printed (Arabic) Texts of the original work and I have, therefore, thought it well to add to this, the last Volume of my Translation, full Tables of Contents of these latter, a comparison of which will show the exact composition of the different Editions and the particulars in which they differ from one another, together with the manner in which the various stories that make up the respective collections are distributed over the Nights. In each Table, the titles of the stories occurring only in the Edition of which it gives the contents are printed in Italics and each Tale is referred to the number of the Night on which it is begun.

The Breslau Edition, which was printed from a Manuscript of the Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night alleged to have been furnished to the Editor by a learned Arab of Tunis, whom he styles “Herr M. Annaggar” (Qućre En Nejjar, the Carpenter), the lacunes found in which were supplemented from various other MS. sources indicated by Silvestre de Sacy and other eminent Orientalists, is edited with a perfection of badness to which only German scholars (at once the best and worst editors in the world) can attain. The original Editor, Dr. Maximilian Habicht, was during the period (1825- 1839) of publication of the first eight Volumes, engaged in continual and somewhat acrimonious controversy concerning the details of his editorship with Prof. H. L. Fleischer, who, after his death, undertook the completion of his task and approved himself a worthy successor of his whilom adversary, his laches and shortcomings in the matter of revision and collation of the text being at least equal in extent and gravity to those of his predecessor, whilst he omitted the one valuable feature of the latter's work, namely, the glossary of Arabic words, not occurring in the dictionaries, appended to the earlier volumes.

As an instance of the extreme looseness with which the book was edited, I may observe that the first four Vols. were published without tables of contents, which were afterwards appended en bloc to the fifth Volume. The state of corruption and incoherence in which the printed Text was placed before the public by the two learned Editors, who were responsible for its production, is such as might well drive a translator to despair: the uncorrected errors of the press would alone fill a volume and the verse especially is so corrupt that one of the most laborious of English Arabic scholars pronounced its translation a hopeless task. I have not, however, in any single instance, allowed myself to be discouraged by the difficulties presented by the condition of the text, but have, to the best of my ability, rendered into English, without abridgment or retrenchment, the whole of the tales, prose and verse, contained in the Breslau Edition, which are not found in those of Calcutta (1839-42) and Boulac. In this somewhat ungrateful task, I have again had the cordial assistance of Captain Burton, who has (as in the case of my "Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night") been kind enough to look over the proofs of my translation and to whom I beg once more to tender my warmest thanks.

Some misconception seems to exist as to the story of Seif dhoul Yezen, a fragment of which was translated by Dr. Habicht and included, with a number of tales from the Breslau Text, in the fourteenth Vol. of the extraordinary gallimaufry published by him in 1824-5 as a complete translation of the 1001 Nights and it has, under the mistaken impression that this long but interesting Romance forms part of the Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night, been suggested that a complete translation of it should be included in the present publication. The Romance in question does not, however, in any way, belong to my original and forms no part of the Breslau Text, as will be at once apparent from an examination of the Table of Contents of the latter (see post,), by which all the Nights are accounted for. Dr. Habicht himself tells us, in his preface to the first Vol. of the Arabic Text, that he found the fragment (undivided into Nights) at the end of the fifth Volume of his MS., into which other detached tales, having no connection with the Nights, appear to have also found their way. This being the case, it is evident that the Romance of Seif dhoul Yezen in no way comes within the scope of the present work and would (apart from the fact that its length would far overpass my limits) be a manifestly improper addition to it. It is, however, possible that, should I come across a suitable text of the work, I may make it the subject of a separate publication; but this is, of course, a matter for future consideration.

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VOLUME XIII. Alaeddin and the Enchanted Lamp

To
Captain Sir Richard Francis Burton, K.C.M.G.,
H.B.M. CONSUL, TRIESTE.
My Dear Burton,
I give myself the pleasure of placing your name in the forefront of another and final volume of my translation of the Thousand and One Nights, which, if it have brought me no other good, has at least been the means of procuring me your friendship.
Believe me,
Yours always,
John Payne.

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

Twelve years this day, — a day of winter, dreary
With drifting snows, when all the world seemed dead
To Spring and hope, — it is since, worn and weary
Of doubt within and strife without, I fled

From the mean workday miseries of existence,
From spites that slander and from hates that lie,
Into the dreamland of the Orient distance
Under the splendours of the Syrian sky,

And in the enchanted realms of Eastern story,
Far from the lovelessness of modern times,

Garnered the rainbow-remnants of old glory
That linger yet in those ancestral climes;

And now, the tong task done, the journey over,
From that far home of immemorial calms,
Where, as a mirage, on the sky-marge hover
The desert and its oases of palms,

Lingering, I turn me back, with eyes reverted
To this stepmother world of daily life,
As one by some long pleasant dream deserted,
That wakes anew to dull unlovely strife:

Yet, if non’ other weal the quest have wrought me.
The long beloved labour now at end,
This gift of gifts the untravelled East hath brought me,
The knowledge of a new and valued friend.
5th Feb. 1889.

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

INTRODUCTION.

I.

The readers of my translation of the Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night will remember that, in the terminal essay (1884) on the history and character of the collection, I expressed my conviction that the eleven (so-called) “interpolated” tales, though, in my judgment, genuine Oriental stories, had (with the exception of the Sleeper Awakened and Aladdin) no connection with the original work, but had been procured by Galland from various (as yet) unidentified sources, for the purpose of supplying the deficiencies of the imperfect MS. of the Nights from which he made his version. My opinion as to these talcs has now been completely confirmed by the recent discovery (by M. Zotenberg, Keeper of Oriental MSS. in the Bibliotheque Nationale at Paris) of two Arabic MSS. of the Nights, both containing three of the missing stories, i.e. (1) Zeyn Alasnam, (3) The Sleeper Awakened and (4) Aladdin, and by the publication (also by M. Zotenberg) of certain extracts from Galland’s diary, giving particulars of the circumstances under which the “interpolated” tales were incorporated with his translation of the Arabian Nights. The Arabic text of the Story of Aladdin, as given by the completer and more authentic of the newly-discovered MSS., has recently been made by M. Zotenberg the subject of a special publication, in the preface to which (an exhaustive bibliographical essay upon the various Texts of the Thousand and One Nights, considered in relation to Galland’s translation) he gives, in addition to the extracts in question from Galland’s Diary, a detailed description of the two MSS. aforesaid, the more interesting particulars of which I now proceed to abstract for the benefit of my readers.

II.

The first MS. commences precisely where the third volume of Galland’s MS. ends, to wit, (see my Terminal essay, , note1) with the

281st Night, in the middle of the story of Camaralzaman and contains, (inter alia) besides the continuation of this latter (which ends with Night CCCXXIX), the stories of the Sleeper Awakened (Nights CCCXXX-CCCC), Ganem (Nights CCCCXXVIII-CCCCLXX1V), Zeyn Alasnam (Nights CCCCLXXV-CCCCXCI), Aladdin (Nights CCCCXCII-DLXIX) and three others not found in Galland's version. The MS. ends in the middle of the 631st night with the well-known Story of King Bekhtzad (Azadbekht) and his son or the Ten Viziers, (which will be found translated in my "Tales from the Arabic," Vol. I. p et seq.) and contains, immediately after Night CCCCXXVII and before the story of Ganem, a note in Arabic, of which the following is a translation:

"The fourth volume of the wonders and marvels of the stories of the Thousand Nights and One Night was finished by the hand of the humblest of His' servants in the habit of a minister of religion (Kahin, lit. a diviner, Cohen), the [Christian] priest Dionysius Shawish, a scion (selil) of the College of the Romans (Greeks, Europeans or Franks, er Roum), by name St. Athanasius, in Rome the Greatest (or Greater, utsma, fem. of aatsem, qu re Constantinople?) on the seven-and-twentieth of the month Shubat (February) of the year one thousand seven hundred fourscore and seven, [he being] then teacher of the Arabic tongue in the Library of the Sultan, King of France, at Paris the Greatest."

From this somewhat incoherent note we may assume that the MS. was written in the course of the year 1787 by the notorious Syrian ecclesiastic Dom Denis Chavis, the accomplice of Cazotte in the extraordinary literary atrocity shortly afterward perpetrated by the latter under the name of a sequel or continuation of the Thousand and One Nights (v. Cabinet des Fees, vols. xxxviii — xli), and in all probability (cf. the mention in the above note of the first part, i.e. Nights CCLXXXI-CCCCXXVII, as the fourth volume) to supply the place of Galland's missing fourth volume for the Bibliotheque Royale; but there. is nothing, except a general similarity of style and the occurrence in the former of the rest of Camaralzaman and (though not in the same order) of four of the tales supposed to have been contained in the latter, to show that Dom Chavis made his copy from a text identical with that used by the French savant. In the notes to his edition of the Arabic text of Aladdin, M. Zotenberg gives a number of extracts from this MS., from which it appears that it is written in a very vulgar modern Syrian style and abounds in grammatical errors, inconsistencies and incoherences of every description, to say nothing of the fact that the Syrian ecclesiastic seems, with the characteristic want of taste and presumption which might be expected from the joint-author of "Les Veillees Persanes," to have, to a considerable extent, garbled the original text by the introduction of modern European phrases and turns of speech a la Galland. For the rest, the MS. contains no note or other indication, on which we can found any opinion as to the source from which the transcriber (or arranger) drew his materials; but it can hardly be doubted, from internal evidence, that he had the command of some genuine text of the Nights, similar to, if not identical with, that of Galland, which he probably "arranged" to suit his own (and his century's) distorted ideas of literary fitness. The discovery of the interpolated tales contained in this MS. (which has thus presumably lain unnoticed for a whole century, under, as one may say, the very noses of the many students of Arabic literature who would have rejoiced in such a find) has, by a curious freak of fortune, been delayed until our own day in consequence of a singular mistake made by a former conservator of the Paris Bibliotheque, the well-known Orientalist, M. Reinaud, who, in drawing up the Catalogue of the Arabic MSS. in the collection described (or rather misdescribed) it under the following heading:

"Supplement Arabe 1716. Thousand and One Nights, 3rd and 4th parts. This volume begins with Night CCLXXXII and ends with Night DCXXXI. A copy in the handwriting of Chavis. It is from this copy and in accordance with the instructions (d'apres la indications) of this Syrian monk that Cazotte composed (redigea) the Sequel to the Thousand and One Nights, Cabinet des Fees, xxxvii et xl (should be tt. xxxviii-xli)."

It is of course evident that M. Reinaud had never read the MS. in question nor that numbered 1723 in the Supplement Arabe, or he would at once have recognized that the latter, though not in the handwriting of the Syrian ecclesiastic, was that which served for the production of the "Sequel" in question; but, superficial as was the mistake, it sufficed to prevent the examination by students of the MS. No. 1716 and so retarded the discovery of the Arabic originals of Aladdin and its fellows till the acquisition (some two years ago) by the Bibliotheque Nationale of another (and complete) MS. of the Thousand and One Nights, which appears to have belonged to the celebrated Orientalist M. Caussin de Perceval, although the latter could not have been acquainted with it at the time (1806) he published his well-known edition and continuation of Galland's translation, in the eighth and ninth volumes of which, by the by, he gives a correct version of the tales so fearfully garbled by Chavis and Cazotte in their so-called translation as well nigh to defy recognition and to cause Orientalists in general to deny the possibility of their having been derived from an Oriental source until the discovery of the actual Arabic originals so barbarously maltreated

This MS. is in the handwriting of of Sebbagh, the well-known Syrian collaborator of Silvestre de Sacy, and is supposed to have been copied by him at Paris between the years 1805 and 1810 for some European Orientalist (probably de Perceval himself) from a Baghdad MS. of the early part of the 18th century, of which it professes to be an exact reproduction, as appears from a terminal note, of which the following is a translation:

"And the finishing of it was in the first tenth (decade) of Jumada the Latter [in the] year one thousand one hundred and fifteen of the Hegira (October, 1703) in the handwriting of the neediest of the faithful unto God the Most High, Ahmed ibn Mohammed et Teradi, in the city of Baghdad, and he the Shafiy by sect and the Mosuli by birth and the Baghdadi by sojourn, and indeed he wrote it for himself and set upon it his seal, and God bless and keep our lord Mohammed and his companions! Kebikej (ter)."

This MS. contains the three "interpolated" tales aforesaid, i.e. the Sleeper Awakened (Nights CCCXXXVII-LXXXVI), Zeyn Alasnam (Nights CCCCXCVII-DXIII) and Aladdin (Nights DXIV-XCI), the last two bearing traces of a Syrian origin, especially Aladdin, which is written in a much commoner and looser style than Zeyn Alasnam. The two tales are evidently the work of different authors, Zeyn Alasnam being incomparably superior in style and correctness to Aladdin, which is defaced by all kinds of vulgarisms and solecisms and seems, moreover, to have been less correctly copied than the other. Nevertheless, the Sebbagh text is in every respect preferable to that of Shawish (which appears to abound in faults and errors of every kind, general and particular,) and M. Zotenberg has, therefore, exercised a wise discretion in selecting the former for publication.

III.

Perhaps the most noteworthy feature of M. Zorenberg's long and interesting introduction is a series of extracts from the (as yet unpublished) MS. Diary regularly kept by Galland, the last four volumes (1708-15) of which are preserved in the Bibliotheque Nationale. These extracts effectually settle the question of the origin of the interpolated tales, as will be seen from the following abstract.

On the 25th March, 1709, Galland records having that day made the acquaintance of a Maronite scholar, by name Youhenna Diab, who had been brought from Aleppo to Paris by Paul Lucas, the celebrated traveller, and with whom he evidently at once broached the question of the Nights, probably complaining to him of the difficulty (or rather impossibility) of obtaining a perfect copy of the work; whereupon Hanna (as he always calls him) appears to have volunteered to help him to fill the lacune by furnishing him with suitable Oriental stories for translation in the same style as those already rendered by him and then and there (says Galland) "told me some very fine Arabian tales, which he promised to put into writing for me." There is no fresh entry on the subject till May 5 following, when (says Galland) "The Maronite Hanna finished telling me the tale of the Lamp."

Hanna appears to have remained in Paris till the autumn of the year 1709 and during his stay, Galland's Diary records the communication by him to the French savant of the following stories, afterwards included in the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth volumes of the latter's translation, (as well as of several others which he probably intended to translate, had he lived,) i.e. (May 10, 1709) "Babe Abdalla" and "Sidi Nouman," (May 13, 1709) "The Enchanted Horse," (May 22, 1709) "Prince Ahmed and Pari Banou," (May 25, 1709) "The Two Sisters who envied their younger Sister," (May 27, 1709) "All Baba and the Forty Thieves," (May 29, 1709) "Cogia Hassan Alhabbal" and (May 31, 1709) "Ali Cogia." The Maronite seems to have left for the East in October, 1709, (Galland says under date October 25, "Received this evening a letter from Hanna, who writes me from Marseilles, under date the 17th, in Arabic, to the effect that he had arrived there in good health,") but not without having at least in part fulfilled his promise to put in writing the tales communicated by him to Galland, as appears by the entry of November 3, 1710, "Began yesterday to read the Arabian story of the Lamp, which had been written me in Arabic more than a year ago by the Maronite of Damascus whom M. Lucas brought with him, with a view to putting it into French. Finished reading it this morning. Here is the title of this tale, 'Story of Aladdin, son of a tailor, and that which befell him with an African Magician on account of (or through) a lamp.'" (The Diary adds that he began that evening to put his translation into writing and finished it in the course of the ensuing fortnight.) And that of January 10, 1711, "Finished the translation of the tenth volume of the 1001 Nights after the Arabic text which I had from the hand (de la main) of Hanna or Jean Dipi, whom M. Lucas brought to France on his return from his last journey in the Levant." The only other entry bearing upon the question is that of August 24, 1711, in which Galland says, "Being quit of my labours upon the translation etc. of the Koran, I read a part of the Arabian Tales which the Maronite Hanna had told me and which I had summarily reduced to writing, to see which of them I should select to make up the eleventh volume of the Thousand and One Nights."

From these entries it appears beyond question that Galland received from the Maronite Hanna, in the Spring and Summer of 1709, the Arabic text of the stories of Aladdin, Baba Abdalla, Sidi Nouman and Cogia Hassan Alhabbal, i.e. the whole of the tales included in his ninth and tenth volumes (with the exception of The Sleeper Awakened, of which he does not speak) and that he composed the five remaining tales contained in his eleventh and twelfth volumes (i.e. Ali Baba, Ali Cogia, The Enchanted Horse, Prince Ahmed and Pari Banou and The Two Sisters who envied their younger Sister,) upon the details thereof taken down from Hanna's lips and by the aid of copious summaries made at the time. These entries in Galland's diary dispose, therefore, of the question of the origin of the "interpolated" tales, with the exception (1) of The Sleeper Awakened (with which we need not, for the present, concern ourselves farther) and (2) of Nos. 1 and 2a and b, i.e. Zeyn Alasnam, Codadad and his brothers and The Princess of Deryabar (forming, with Ganem, his eighth volume), as to which Galland, as I pointed out in my terminal essay (), cautions us, in a prefatory note to his ninth volume, that these two stories form no part of the Thousand and One Nights and that they had been inserted and printed without the cognizance of the translator, who was unaware of the trick that had been played him till after the actual publication of the volume, adding that care would be taken to expunge the intrusive tales from the second edition (which, however, was never done, Galland dying before the republication and it being probably found that the stranger tales had taken too firm a hold upon public favour to be sacrificed, as originally proposed); and the invaluable Diary supplies the necessary supplemental information as to their origin. "M. Petis de la Croix," says Galland under date of January 17, 1710, "Professor and King's Reader of the Arabic tongue, who did me the honour to visit me this morning, was extremely surprised to see two of the Turkish Tales of his translation printed in the eighth volume of the 1001 Nights, which I showed him, and that this should have been done without his participation."

Petis de la Croix, a well-known Orientalist and traveller of the time, published in the course of the same year (1710) the first volume of a collection of Oriental stories, similar in form and character to the 1001 Nights, but divided into "Days" instead of "Nights" and called "The Thousand and One Days, Persian Tales," the preface to which (ascribed to Cazotte) alleges him to have translated the tales from a Persian work called Hezar [o] Yek Roz, i.e. "The Thousand and One Days," the MS. of which had in 1675 been communicated to the translator by a friend of his, by name Mukhlis, (Cazotte styles him "the celebrated Dervish Mocles, chief of the Soufis of Ispahan") during his sojourn in the Persian capital. The preface goes on to state that Mukhlis had, in his youth, translated into Persian certain Indian plays, which had been translated into all the Oriental languages and of which a Turkish version existed in the Bibliotheque Royale, under the title of Alfaraga Badal-Schidda (i.e. El Ferej bad esh Shiddeh), which signified “Joy after Affliction”; but that, wishing to give his work an original air, he converted the aforesaid plays into tales. Cazotte’s story of the Indian plays savours somewhat of the cock and the bull and it is probable that the Hezar o Yek Roz (which is not, to my knowledge, extant) was not derived from so recondite a source, but was itself either the original of the well-known Turkish collection or (perhaps) a translation of the latter. At all events, Zeyn Alasnam, Codadad and the Princess of Deryabar occur in a copy (cited by M. Zotenberg), belonging to the Bibliotheque Nationale, of El Ferej bad esh Shidded (of which they form the eighth, ninth and sixth stories respectively) and in a practically identical form, except that in Galland’s vol. viii. the two latter stories are fused into one. Sir William Ouseley is said to have brought from Persia a MS. copy of a portion of the Hezar o Yek Roz which he describes as agreeing with the French version, but, in the absence of documentary proof and in view of the fact that, notwithstanding the unauthorized incorporation of three of the tales of his original with Galland’s Vol. viii, the published version of the Thousand and One Days is apparently complete and shows no trace of the omission, I am inclined to suspect Petis de la Croix of having invented the division into Days, in order to imitate (and profit by the popularity of) his fellow savant’s version of the Thousand and One Nights. Galland’s publisher was doubtless also that of Petis de la Croix and in the latter capacity had in hand a portion of the MS. of the 1001 Days, from which, no doubt weary of waiting till Galland (who was now come to the end of his genuine Arabic MS. of the 1001 Nights and was accordingly at a standstill, till he met with Hanna,) should have procured fresh material to complete the copy for his eighth volume, of which Ganem only was then ready for publication, he seems to have selected (apparently on his own responsibility, but, it must be admitted, with considerable taste and judgment,) the three tales in question from the MS. of the 1001 Days, to fill up the lacune. It does not appear whether he found Codadad and the Princess of Deryabar arranged as one story ready to his hand or himself performed (or procured to be performed) the process of fusion, which, in any case, was executed by no unskilful hand. Be this as it may, Galland was naturally excessively annoyed at the publisher's unceremonious proceeding, so much so indeed as for a time to contemplate renouncing the publication of the rest of the work, to spare himself (as he says in his Diary, under date of Dec. 12, 1709) similar annoyances (mortifications) to that which the printing of the eighth volume had caused him. Indeed, the effect of this incident was to induce him, not only to change his publisher, but to delay the publication of the next volume (which, as we learn from the Diary, was ready for the press at the end of November or the beginning of December, 1709) for a whole year, at the end of which time (Diary, November 21, 1710) he made arrangements with a new (and presumably more trustworthy) publisher, M. Florentin de Laune, for the printing of Vol. ix.

IV.

Notwithstanding the discovery, as above set out, of three of the doubtful tales, Zeyn Alasnam, Aladdin and The Sleeper Awakened, in two MSS. (one at least undoubtedly authentic) of the Thousand Nights and One Night, I am more than ever of opinion that none of the eleven "interpolated" stories properly belongs to the original work, that is to say, to the collection as first put into definite form somewhere about the fourteenth century. "The Sleeper Awakened" was identified by the late Mr. Lane as a historical anecdote given by the historian El Ishaki, who wrote in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, and the frequent mention of coffee in both MSS. of Aladdin justifies us in attributing the composition of the story to (at earliest) the sixteenth century, whilst the modern vulgarisms in which they abound point to a still later date. Zeyn Alasnam (in the Sebbagh MS. at least) is written in a much purer and more scholarly style than Aladdin, but its pre-existence in El Ferej bad esh Shiddeh (even if we treat as apocryphal Petis de la Croix's account of the Hezar o Yek Roz) is sufficient, in the absence of contrary evidence, to justify us in refusing to consider it as belonging to the Thousand Nights and One Night proper. As shown by Galland's own experience, complete copies of the genuine work were rarely to be met with, collections of "silly stories" (as the Oriental savant, who inclines to regard nothing in the way of literature save theology, grammar and poetry, would style them), being generally considered by the Arab bibliographer undeserving of record or preservation, and the fragmentary copies which existed were mostly in the hands of professional story-tellers, who were extremely unwilling to part with them, looking upon them as their stock in trade, and were in the habit of incorporating with the genuine text all kinds of stories and anecdotes from other sources, to fill the place of the missing portions of the original work. This process of addition and incorporation, which has been in progress ever since the first collection of the Nights into one distinct work and is doubtless still going on in Oriental countries, (especially such as are least in contact with European influence,) may account for the heterogeneous character of the various modern MSS. of the Nights and for the immense difference which exists between the several texts, as well in actual contents as in the details and diction of such stories as are common to all. The Tunis MS. of the 1001 Nights (which is preserved in the Breslau University Library and which formed the principal foundation of Habicht's Edition of the Arabic text) affords a striking example of this process, which we are here enabled to see in mid-operation, the greater part of the tales of which it consists having not yet been adapted to the framework of the Nights. It is dated A.H. 1144 (A.D. 1732) and of the ten volumes of which it consists, i, ii (Nights I — CCL) and x (Nights DCCCLXXXV-MI) are alone divided into Nights, the division of the remaining seven volumes (i.e. iii — ix, containing, inter alia, the Story of the Sleeper Awakened) being the work of the German editor. It is my belief, therefore, that the three "interpolated" tales identified as forming part of the Baghdad MS. of 1703 are comparatively modern stories added to the genuine text by Rawis (story-tellers) or professional writers employed by them, and I see no reason to doubt that we shall yet discover the Arabic text of the remaining eight, either in Hanna's version (as written down for Galland) or in some as yet unexamined MS. of the Nights or other work of like character.

V.

M. Zotenberg has, with great judgment, taken as his standard for publication the text of Aladdin given by the Sebbagh MS., inasmuch as the Shawish MS. (besides being, as appears from the extracts given. far inferior both in style and general correctness,) is shown by the editor to be full of modern European phrases and turns of speech and to present so many suspicious peculiarities that it would be difficult, having regard, moreover, to the doubtful character and reputation of the Syrian monkish adventurer who styled himself Dom Denis Chavis, to resist the conviction that his MS. was a forgery, i.e. professedly a copy of a genuine Arabic text, but in reality only a translation or paraphrase in that language of Galland's version, — were it not that the Baghdad MS. (dated before the commencement, in 1704, of Galland's publication and transcribed by a man — Mikhail Sebbagh — whose reputation, as a collaborator of Silvestre de Sacy and other distinguished Orientalists, is a sufficient voucher for the authenticity of the copy in the Bibliotheque Nationale,) contains a text essentially identical with that of Shawish. Moreover, it is evident, from a comparison with Galland's rendering and making allowance for the latter's system of translation, that the Arabic version of Aladdin given him by Hanna must either have been derived from the Baghdad text or from some other practically identical source, and it is therefore probable that Shawish, having apparently been employed to make up the missing portion of Galland's Arabic text and not having the Hanna MS. at his command, had (with the execrable taste and want of literary morality which distinguished Cazotte's monkish coadjutor) endeavoured to bring his available text up to what he considered the requisite standard by modernizing and Gallicizing its wording and (in particular) introducing numerous European phrases and turns of speech in imitation of the French translator. The whole question is, of course, as yet a matter of more or less probable hypothesis, and so it must remain until further discoveries and especially until the reappearance of Galland's missing text, which I am convinced must exist in some shape or other and cannot much longer, in the face of the revived interest awakened in the matter and the systematic process of investigation now likely to be employed, elude research.

M. Zotenberg's publication having been confined to the text of Aladdin, I have to thank my friend Sir R. F. Burton for the loan of his MS. copy of Zeyn Alasnam, (the Arabic text of which still remains unpublished) as transcribed by M. Houdas from the Sebbagh MS.

John Payne’s translation: detailed table of contents

ZEIN UL ASNAM AND THE KING OF THE JINN.

There was [once] in the city of Bassora a mighty Sultan and he was exceeding rich, but he had no child who should be his successor after him. For this he grieved sore and fell to bestowing alms galore upon the poor and the needy and upon the friends of God and the devout, seeking their intercession with God the Most High, so He to whom belong might and majesty should of His favour vouchsafe him a son. And God accepted his prayer, for his fostering of the poor, and answered his petition; so that one night of the nights he lay with the queen and she went from him with child. When the Sultan knew this, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy, and as the time of her child-bearing drew nigh, he assembled all the astrologers and those who smote the sand and said to them, “It is my will that ye enquire concerning the child that shall be born to me this month, whether it will be male or female, and tell me what will betide it of chances and what will proceed from it.” So the geomancers smote their [tables of] sand and the astrologers took their altitudes and observed the star of the babe [un]born and said to the Sultan, “O King of the age and lord of the time and the tide, the child that shall be born to thee of the queen is a male and it beseemeth that thou name him Zein ul Asnam.” And as for those who smote upon the sand, they said to him, “Know, O King, that this babe will become a renowned brave, but he shall happen in his time upon certain travail and tribulation; yet, an he endure with fortitude against that which shall befall him, he shall become the richest of the kings of the world.” And the King said to them, “Since the babe shall become valiant as ye avouch, the toil and travail which will befall him are nought, for that tribulations teach the sons of kings.”

Accordingly, after a few days, the queen gave birth to a male child,

extolled be the perfection of Him who created him surpassing in grace

and goodliness! His father named him Zein ul Asnam, and he was as say of

him certain of his praisers in verse:

He shows and "Now Allah be blessed!" men say: "Extol we his Maker
and Fashioner aye!
The king of the fair this is, sure, one and all; Ay, his thralls,
every one, and his liegemen are they."

The boy grew and flourished till he came to the age of five years, when his father the Sultan assigned him a governor skilled and versed in all sciences and philosophies, and he proceeded to teach him till he excelled in all manner of knowledge and became a young man. Then the Sultan bade bring him before himself, and assembling all the grandees of his realm and the chiefs of his subjects, proceeded to admonish him before them, saying to him, "O my son Zein ul Asnam, behold, I am grown stricken in years and am presently sick; and belike this sickness will be the last of my life in this world and thou shalt sit in my stead; [wherefore I desire to admonish thee]. Beware, O my son, lest thou oppress any or turn a deaf ear to the complaining of the poor; but do thou justify the oppressed after the measure of thy might. And look thou believe not all that shall be said to thee by the great ones of the people, but trust thou still for the most part to the voice of the common folk; for the great will deceive thee, seeing they seek that which befitteth themselves, not that which befitteth the subject." Then, after a few days, the Sultan's sickness redoubled on him and he accomplished his term and died; and as for his son Zein ul Asnam, he arose and donning the raiment of woe, [mourned] for his father the space of six days. On the seventh day he arose and going forth to the Divan, sat down on the throne of the sultanate and held a court, wherein was a great assemblage of the folk, and the viziers came forward and the grandees of the realm and condoled with him for his father and called down blessings upon him and gave him joy of the kingship and the sultanate, beseeching God to grant him continuance of glory and prosperity without end.

When Zein ul Asnam saw himself in this great might and wealth, and he young in years, he inclined unto prodigality and to the converse of springalds like himself and fell to squandering vast sums upon his pleasures and left governance and concern for his subjects.

The queen his mother proceeded to admonish him and to forbid him from his ill fashions, bidding him leave that manner of life and apply himself governance and administration and the ordinance of the realm, lest the folk reject him and rise up against him and expel hira; but he would hear not a word from her and abode in his ignorance and folly. At this the people murmured, for that the grandees of the realm put out their hands unto oppression, whenas they saw the king's lack of concern for his subjects; so they rose up in rebellion against Zein ul Asnam and would have laid violent hands upon him, had not the queen his mother been a woman of wit and judgment and address, and the people loved her; so she appeased the folk and promised them good. Then she called her son Zein ul Asnam to her and said to him, "See, O my son; said I not to thee that thou wouldest lose thy kingship and eke thy life, an thou persistedst in this thine ignorance and folly, in that thou givest the ordinance of the sultanate into the hands of raw youths and eschewest the old and wastest thy substance and that of the realm, squandering it all upon lewdness and the lust of thy soul?"

Zein ul Asnam hearkened to his mother's rede and going out forthright to the Divan, committed the manage of the realm into the hands of certain old men of understanding and experience; save that he did this only after Bassora had been ruined, inasmuch as he turned not from his folly till he had spent and squandered all the treasures of the sultanate and was become exceeding poor. Then he betook himself to repentance and to sorrowing over that which he had done, so that he lost the solace of sleep and eschewed meat and drink, till one night of the nights, — and indeed he had spent it in mourning and lamentation and melancholy thought until the last of the night, — his eyes closed for a little and there appeared to him in his sleep a venerable old man, who said to him, "O Zein ul Asnam, grieve not, for that nought followeth after grief save relief from stress, and an thou desire to be delivered from this thine affliction, arise and betake thee to Cairo, where thou wilt find treasuries of wealth which shall stand thee in stead of that thou hast squandered, ay, and twofold the sum thereof." When he awoke from his sleep, he acquainted his mother with all that he had seen in his dream, and she fell to laughing at him; but he said to her, "Laugh not, for needs must I journey to Cairo." "O my son," answered she, "put not thy trust in dreams, for that they are all vain fancies and lying imaginations." And he said to her, "Nay, my dream was a true one and the man whom I saw is of the Friends of God and his speech is very sooth."

Accordingly, he left the sultanate and going forth a-journeying one night of the nights, took the road to Egypt [and fared on] days and nights till he came to the city of Cairo. So he entered it and saw it a great and magnificent city; then, being perished for weariness, he took shelter in one of its mosques. When he had rested awhile, he went forth and bought him somewhat to eat; and after he had eaten, he fell asleep in the mosque, of the excess of his weariness, nor had he slept but a little when the old man appeared to him in his sleep and said to him, "O Zein ul Assam, thou hast done as I said to thee, and indeed I made proof of thee, that I might see an thou wert valiant or not; but now I know thee, inasmuch as thou hast put faith in my rede and hast done according thereto. So now return to thine own city and I will make thee a king rich after such a measure that neither before thee nor after thee shall [any] of the kings be like unto thee." So Zein ul Asnam arose from his sleep and said, "In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful! What is this old man who hath wearier me, so that I came to Cairo, and I trusted in him and deemed of him that he was the Prophet (whom God bless and keep) or one of the pious Friends of God? But there is no power and no virtue save in God the Most High, the Supreme. By Allah. I did well in that I acquainted none with my sallying forth neither related my dream unto any! Indeed. I believed in this old man and meseemed by that which appeared to me, he was none of mankind, extolled be His perfection and magnified be He who [alone] knoweth the truth! By Allah, I will leave trusting in this old man [neither will I comply with him] in that which he would have me do!" Accordingly, he lay [the rest of] that night [in the mosque] and at daybreak he arose and mounting his courser, set out on his return to Bassora, [the seat of] his kingship, where, after a few days, he arrived and went in that same night to his mother, who asked him if aught had befallen him of that which the old man had promised him. He acquainted her with that which he had seen [in his sleep] and she fell to condoling with him and comforting him, saying, "Grieve not, O my son, for, an God the Most High have appointed thee aught of [good] fortune, thou wilt attain thereto without either travail or toil; but I would have thee be understanding and discreet and leave these things which have brought thee to poverty, O my son, and eschew singing-wenches and the commerce of youths and women; all this is for the baser sort, not for kings' sons like thee." And he swore to her that he would never more gainsay her commandment, but would observe all that she should say to him and would turn his mind to the governance and the kingship and leave that wherefrom she forbade him. Then he slept that night and what while he was on sleep, the old man appeared to him and said to him, "O Zein ul Asnam, O valiant one, whenas thou arisest from thy sleep this day, I will accomplish my promise to thee; wherefore take thou a pickaxe and go to the palace of thy father Such-an-one in such a place and dig there in the earth and thou wilt find that which shall enrich thee."

When Zein ul Asnam awoke from his sleep, he hastened to his mother, rejoicing, and acquainted her with his dream; whereupon she fell again to laughing at him and said to him, "O my son, indeed this old man laugheth at thee, nought else; wherefore do thou turn thy thought from him." But he said to her, "Nay, mother mine, indeed he is soothfast and lieth not; for that, in the first of his dealing, he tried me and now his intent is to accomplish unto me his promise." "In any case," rejoined she, "the thing is not toilsome; so do that which thou wilt, even as he said to thee, and make proof of the matter, and God willing, thou shalt return to me rejoicing; but methinketh thou wilt return to me and say, 'Thou saidst sooth, O my mother, in thy rede.'" The prince accordingly took a pickaxe and going down to the palace where his father was buried, fell a-delving in the earth; nor had he dug long when, behold, there appeared to him a ring fixed in a slab of marble. He raised the slab and seeing a stair, descended thereby and found a great vault, all builded with columns of marble and alabaster; then, proceeding innerward, he found within the vault a hall which ravished the wit, and therein eight jars of green jasper; and he said, "What be these jars and what is in them?" So he went up and uncovering them, found them all full of old gold; whereupon he took a little in his hand and going to his mother, gave her thereof and said to her, "Thou seest, O my mother." She marvelled at this thing and said to him, “Beware, O my son, lest thou squander it, like as thou squanderedst other than this.” And he swore to her, saying, “Be not concerned, O my mother, and let not thy heart be other than easy on my account, for I would fain have thee also content with me.”

Then she arose and went with him, and they descended into the vault and entered the [underground] hall, where she beheld that which ravished the wit and saw the jars of gold. What while they diverted themselves with gazing upon these latter, behold, they espied a little jar of fine jade; so Zein ul Asnam opened it and found in it a golden key. Whereupon quoth his mother to him, “O my son, needs must there be a door here which this key will open.” Accordingly they sought in all parts of the vault and the hall, so they might see an there were a door or what not else to be found there, and presently espied a bolted lock, to which they knew that this must be the key. So Zein ul Asnam went up and putting the key in the lock, turned it and opened a door which admitted them into a second hall, more magnificent than the first; and it was all full of a light which dazzled the sight, yet was there no flambeau kindled therein, no, nor any window there, whereat they marvelled and looking farther, saw eight images of jewels, each one piece, and that of noble jewels, pure and precious.

Zein ul Asnam was amazed at this and said to his mother, “How came my father by these things?” And they fell to looking and considering, till presently the queen espied a curtain of silk, whereon were these words written: “O my son, marvel not at these great riches, whereto I have won by dint of sore travail; but know that there existeth also another image whose worth is more than that of these [eight] images twenty times told. Wherefore, an thou wouldst come thereby, get thee to Cairo, where thou wilt find a slave of mine, by name Mubarek, who will take thee and bring thee in company with the ninth image. When thou enterest Cairo, the first man whom thou encounterest will direct thee to Mubarek’s house, for he is known in all Egypt.” When Zein ul Asnam read this inscription, he said, “O my mother, it is my wish to journey to Cairo, so I may make search for the ninth image. Tell me, how deemest thou of my dream? Was it true or was it not? Wilt thou still say to me, ‘These be idle tales'? But I, O my mother, needs must I journey to Cairo." "O my son," answered the queen, "since thou art under the safeguard of the Apostle of God (whom God bless and keep), go thou in peace, and I [and] thy Vizier, we will govern the realm in thine absence, against thou shalt return."

So Zein ul Asnam went forth and equipping himself [for travel, set out] and journeyed till he came to Cairo, where he enquired for Mubarek's house and the folk said to him, "O my lord, this is a man than whom there is none richer in [all Cairo]; no, nor is there a more abounding than he in bounty and beneficence, and his house is [still] open to the stranger." So they directed him thither and he went till he came to the house and knocked at the door; whereupon there came out to him one of Mubarek's slaves and opening the door, said to him, "Who art thou and what wiliest thou?" Quoth Zein ul Asnam, "I am a stranger, a man from a far country, and I heard tell of your lord, Mubarek, and how he is renowned for hospitality and beneficence; so I came to him, that I may be a guest with him." The slave entered and told his lord Mubarek; then returned and said to Zein ul Asnam, "O my lord, blessing hath descended upon us in thy coming. Enter, for my lord Mubarek awaiteth thee." So Zein ul Asnam entered into a courtyard, exceeding spacious and all [full] of trees and waters, and the slave brought him into the pavilion where Mubarek sat. When he entered, the latter arose forthright and coming to meet him, received him with cordiality and said to him, "Blessing hath descended upon us and this night is the most auspicious of nights in thy coming to us! But who art thou, O youth, and whence comest thou and whither art thou bound?" The prince answered him, saying, "I am Zein ul Asnam and I seek Mubarek, slave to the Sultan of Bassora, who died a year agone and whose son I am." "What sayst thou?" cried Mubarek. "Art thou the king's son of Bassora?" "Yea, verily," replied Zein ul Asnam; "I am his son." Quoth Mubarek, "Nay, my lord the king of Bassora left no son; but what is thine age, O youth?" "About twenty years," replied Zein ul Asnam. "And thou," added he, "how long is it since thou wentest out from my father's house?" "I went out eighteen years agone," answered Mubarek. "But, O my son Zein ul Asnam, by what token canst thou certify me that thou art the son of my lord the king of Bassora?" Quoth Zein ul Asnam, "Thou knowest that my father builded under his palace a vault and therein [a hall in which] he set forty jars of fine jade and filled them with ancient gold; and within this hall he made a second hall, wherein he placed eight images of precious stones, each wroughten of a single jewel and seated upon a throne of virgin gold. Moreover, he wrote upon a curtain of silk there and I read the writ, whereby I found that he bade me come to thee, saying that thou wouldst acquaint me of the ninth image and where it is, the which, said he, was worth the eight, all of them."

When Mubarek heard these words, he threw himself at Zein ul Asnam's feet and fell to kissing them and saying, "Pardon me, O my lord! Verily, thou art the son of my lord." Then said he to the prince, "O my lord, I make to-day a banquet unto all the chief men of Cairo and I would fain have thy highness honour me [with thy presence] thereat." And Zein ul Asnam said, "With all my heart." So Mubarek arose and foregoing Zein ul Asnam, brought him into the saloon, which was full of the chief men of Cairo, assembled therein. There he sat down and seating the prince in the place of honour, called for the evening-meal. So they laid the tables and Mubarek stood to serve Zein ul Asnam, with his hands clasped behind him and whiles seated upon his knees [and heels]. The notables of Cairo marvelled at this, how Mubarek, the chiefest of them, should serve the youth, and were sore amazed thereat, knowing not [who or] whence he was. But, after they had eaten and drunken and supped and were of good cheer, Mubarek turned to the company and said to them, "O folk, marvel not that I serve this youth with all worship and assiduity, for that he is the son of my lord the Sultan of Bassora, whose slave I was, for that he bought me with his money and died without setting me free; wherefore it behoveth me serve my lord, and all that my hand possesseth of monies and gear is his, nor is anywhit thereof mine." When the notables of Cairo heard this speech, they arose to Zein ul Asnam and did him exceeding great worship and saluted him with all reverence and prayed for him; and he said, "O company, I am before your presence and ye are witnesses [of that which I am about to do." Then, turning to his host,] "O Mubarek, [quoth he,] thou art free and all that is with thee of monies and gear appertaining unto us shall henceforth be thine and thou art altogether acquitted thereof and of every part thereof. Moreover, do thou ask of me whatsoever thou desirest by way of boon, for that I will nowise gainsay thee in aught thou mayst seek." Thereupon Mubarek arose and kissed the prince's hand and thanked him, saying, "O my lord, I will nought of thee save that thou be well; for indeed the wealth that I have is exceeding abundant upon me."

So Zein ul Asnam abode with Mubarek four days and every day the chief men of Cairo came to salute him, whenas it reached them that this was Mubarek's lord, the Sultan of Bassora; then, after he was rested, he said to his host, "O Mubarek, indeed the time is long upon me;" and Mubarek said to him, "Thou must know, O my lord, that this whereof thou art come in quest is a hard matter, nay, even unto danger of death, and I know not if thy fortitude may suffice thee for the achievement thereof." "Know, O Mubarek," rejoined Zein ul Asnam, "that wealth [is gotten] by blood and there betideth a man nought except by the will and foreordinance of the Creator (to whom belong might and majesty); so do thou take heart and concern not thyself on my account." Accordingly Mubarek forthright commended his slaves equip them for travel; so they made all ready and taking horse, journeyed days and nights in the foulest of deserts, witnessing daily things and matters which confounded their wits, — things such as never in their time had they seen, — until they drew near the place [of their destination]; whereupon they lighted down from their steeds and Mubarek bade the slaves and servants abide there, saying to them, "Keep watch over the beasts of burden and the horses till we return to you."

Then the twain set out together afoot and Mubarek said to Zein ul Asnam, "O my lord, now behoveth fortitude, for that thou art in the land of the image whereof thou comest in quest." And they gave not over walking till they drew near a great lake and a wide, whereupon quoth Mubarek to Zein ul Asnam, "Know, O my lord, that there will presently come to us a little boat, bearing a blue flag and builded all with planks of sandal and Comorin aloes-wood of price; and [thereanent] I have a charge to give thee, which it behoveth thee observe." "What is this charge?" asked the prince and Mubarek said to him, "In this boat thou wilt see a boatman, but his make is monstrous; wherefore be thou ware and again, I say, beware lest thou speak aught, for that he will incontinent drown us; and know that this place appertaineth to the King of the Jinn and that all thou seest is their handiwork." Then they came to the lake and behold, a little boat with planks of sandal and Comorin aloes-wood and in it a boatman, whose head was [as] the head of an elephant and the rest of his body [as that of] a wild beast. When he drew near them, he wrapped his trunk about them both and taking them with him into the boat, rowed out with them to the midst of the lake, then fared on with them till he brought them to the other shore, where they landed and walking on, saw there trees of ambergris and aloes and sandal-wood and cloves and jessamine, full-grown and laden with ripe fruits and flowers whose fragrance dilated the breast and cheered the spright; and there [they heard] the voices of the birds twittering their various notes and ravishing the wit with their warblings. So Mubarek turned to Zein ul Asnam and said to him, "How deemest thou of this place, O my lord?" And the prince answered him, saying, "Methinketh, O Mubarek, this is the paradise which the Prophet (whom God bless and keep) promised us withal."

Then they fared on till they came to a magnificent palace, builded all with stones of emerald and rubies, and its doors were of sheer gold. Before it was a bridge, the length whereof was an hundred and fifty cubits and its breadth fifty cubits, and it was [wroughten] of the rib of a fish; whilst at the other end of the bridge were many warriors of the Jinn, gruesome and terrible of aspect, and all of them bore in their hands javelins of steel that flashed in the sun like winter lightning. Quoth Zein ul Asnam to Mubarek, "This is a thing that taketh the wits;" and Mubarek said to him, "It behoveth us abide in our place neither fare forward, lest a mischance betide us. O God, [vouchsafe us] safety!" Therewith he brought out of his pocket four pieces of yellow silken stuff and girded himself with one thereof; the second he laid on his shoulders and gave Zein ul Asnam other two pieces, with which he girded himself [and covered his shoulders] on like wise. Moreover, he spread before each of them a sash of white silk and bringing forth of his pocket precious stones and perfumes, such as ambergris and aloes-wood, (set them on the edges thereof) after which they sat down, each on his sash, and Mubarek taught Zein ul Asnam these words, which he should say to the King of the

Jinn, to wit: "O my lord King of the Jinn, we are in thy safeguard." And Zein ul Asnam said to him, "And I will instantly conjure him that he accept of us."

Then said Mubarek, "O my lord, by Allah, I am exceeding fearful. But now hearken; an he be minded to accept of us without hurt, he will come to us in the semblance of a man accomplished in grace and goodliness; but, an he have no mind to us, he will come to us in a gruesome and a frightful aspect. An thou see him surpassing in beauty, arise forthright and salute him, but beware lest thou overpass thy sash." And Zein ul Asnam said to him, "Hearkening and obedience." "And be this thy salutation to him," continued Mubarek; "thou shalt say, 'O King of the Jinn and lord of the earth, my father, the Sultan of Bassora, the angel of death hath removed, as indeed is not hidden from thee. Now Thy Grace was still wont to take my father under thy protection, and I come to thee likewise to put myself under thy safeguard, even as did he.' Moreover, O my lord Zein ul Asnam," added he, "an the King of the Jinn receive us with a cheerful favour, he will without fail ask thee and say to thee, 'Seek of me that which thou wiliest and thou shalt forthright be given [it].' So do thou seek of him and say to him, 'O my lord, I crave of Thy Grace the ninth image, than which there is not the world a more precious; and indeed Thy Grace promised my father that thou wouldst give it to me.'"

Having thus taught his lord how he should speak with the King of the Jinn and seek of him the ninth image and how he should make his speech seemly and pleasant, Mubarek fell to conjuring and fumigating and reciting words that might not be understanded; and no great while passed ere the world lightened and rain fell in torrents and it thundered and darkness covered the face of the earth; and after this there came a tempestuous wind and a voice like an earthquake of the earthquakes of the Day of Resurrection. When Zein ul Asnam saw these portents, his joints trembled and he was sore affrighted, for that he beheld a thing he had never in all his life seen nor heard. But Mubarek laughed at him and said to him, "Fear not, O my lord; this whereat thou art affrighted is that which we seek; nay, it is a presage of good to-us. So take heart and be of good cheer." After this there came a great clearness and serenity and there breathed pure and fragrant breezes; then, presently, behold, there appeared the King of the Jinn in the semblance of a man comely of favour, there was none like unto him in his goodliness, save He who hath no like and to whom belong might and majesty. He looked on Zein ul Asnam and Mubarek with a cheerful, smiling countenance; whereupon the prince arose forthright and proffered him his petition in the words which Mubarek had taught him.

The King of the Jinn turned to him, smiling, and said to him, "O Zein ul Asnam, indeed I loved thy father the Sultan of Bassora, and I used, whenassoever he came to me, to give him an image of those which thou hast seen, each wroughten of a single jewel, and thou also shalt stand in thy father's stead with me and shalt find favour in mine eyes, even as did he, ay, and more. Before he died, I caused him write the writ which thou sawest on the curtain of silk and promised him that I would take thee under my protection, even as himself, and would give thee the ninth image, which is more of worth than those which thou hast seen. Now it is my intent to perform the promise which I made to thy father, that I would take thee under my protection, and [know that] I was the old man whom thou sawest in thy sleep and it was I bade thee dig in the palace for the vault wherein thou foundest the jars of gold and the images of jewels. I know also wherefore thou art come hither; nay, I am he that was the cause of thy coming, and I will give thee that which thou seekest, albeit I had not given it to thy father; but on condition that thou swear to me a solemn oath and abide me constant thereto, to wit, that thou wilt return and bring me a girl of the age of fifteen years, with whom there shall be none to match in loveliness, and she must be a clean maid, who shall never have lusted after man, nor shall man have lusted after her. Moreover, thou must swear to me that thou wilt keep faith with her, coming, and beware lest thou play me false with her by the way."

So Zein ul Asnam swore a solemn oath to him of this and said to him, "O my lord, indeed, thou honourest me with this service; but methinketh it will be hard to find a girl like this. Nay, supposing I find a damsel fifteen years of age and beautiful exceedingly, according to Thy Grace's requirement, how shall I know that she hath never in her time lusted after man nor hath man lusted after her?” “O Zein ul Asnam,” replied the King of the Jinn, “thou art in the right and certain it is that this knowledge is a thing unto which the sons of man may not avail; but I will give thee a mirror of my fashion, and when thou seest a girl and her beauty pleaseth thee and her grace, do thou open this mirror that I shall give thee, and if thou find her image therein clear and bright, thou shalt know forthright that she is pure without default and that all good qualities are in her; so do thou take her for me. If thou find her image in the mirror other than this, to wit, an it be troubled and clothed with uncleanness, know that the girl is sullied and beware of her; but, an thou find one such as she whose qualities I have set out to thee, bring her to me and watch over her [by the way;] yet beware and again I say, beware of treason and bethink thee that, an thou keep not faith with me, thou wilt assuredly lose thy life.”

So Zein ul Asnam made with him a stable and abiding covenant, the covenant of the sons of kings, that he would keep the plighted faith and never play him false, but would bring him the damsel with all continence. Then the King of the Jinn delivered him the mirror and said to him, “O my son, take this mirror whereof I bespoke thee, and now depart.” Accordingly Zein ul Asnam and Mubarek arose and calling down blessings upon the King, returned upon their steps till they came to the lake, where they sat a little and behold, up came the boat which had brought them and the genie rowing therein, whose head was as the head of an elephant. Now this was by the commandment of the King of the Jinn; so they embarked with the genie and crossed with him to the other shore; after which they returned to Cairo and entering Mubarek’s house, abode there awhile till they were rested from the fatigue of the journey.

Then Zein ul Asnam turned to Mubarek and said to him, “Come, let us go to the city of Baghdad, so we may seek for a girl who shall be according to the requirement of the King of the Jinn.” And Mubarek said to him, “O my lord, we are in Cairo, the city of cities and the wonder of the world. I shall without fail find a girl here and it needeth not that we go to a far city.” “Thou sayst sooth, O Mubarek,” rejoined the prince; “but how shall we set about the matter and how shall we do to come by a girl like this and who shall go seeking her for us?” “O my lord,” replied Mubarek, “concern not thyself for that, for I have with me here an old woman (upon her, [to speak] figuratively, be the malediction [of God]) who is a mistress of wiles and craft and guile and not to be baulked by any hindrance, however great.” Then he sent to fetch the old woman and telling her that he wanted a damsel fifteen years old and fair exceedingly, so he might marry her to the son of his lord, promised her largesse galore, an she did her utmost endeavour in the matter; whereupon, “O my lord,” answered she, “be easy; I will accomplish unto thee thy desire beyond thy wish; for that under my hand are damsels unpeered in grace and goodliness and all of them daughters of men of condition.” But, O King of the time, the old woman had no knowledge of the affair of the mirror.

Then she arose and went out to go round about in the city and to run along its ways, seeking the girl for Prince Zein ul Asnam, and whenassoever she saw a fair damsel, accomplished in beauty, she proceeded to bring her to Mubarek; but, when he looked at her in the mirror, he would see her image troubled exceedingly and would leave her; so that the old woman brought him all the damsels of Cairo, but there was not found among them one whose image in the mirror was clear; wherefore he bethought him to go to Baghdad, since he found not one in Cairo who pleased him [or] who was a clean maid, like as the King of the Jinn had enjoined him. So he arose and equipping himself, [set out and] journeyed, he and Zein ul Asnam, till they came to the city of Baghdad, where they hired them a magnificent palace amiddleward the city and took up their abode therein. There the chief men of the city used to come to them every day and sat at their table, even to the comer and goer by night and by day. Moreover, when there remained aught from their table, they distributed it to the poor and the afflicted and all the strangers in the mosques would come and eat with them. So the report was noised abroad in the land of their generosity and bounty and they became in high repute and fair fame throughout all Baghdad, nor did any talk but of Zein ul Asnam and his bounty and wealth.

Now it chanced that in one of the mosques was an Imam, corrupt, envious and despiteful in the extreme, and his lodging was near the palace wherein Mubatek and Zein ul Asnam had taken up their abode. When he heard of their bounty and generosity and of the goodliness of their repute, envy get hold upon him and jealousy of them, and he fell to bethinking himself how he should do, so he might bring some calamity upon them and despoil them of that their fair fortune, for it is of the wont of envy that it falleth not but upon the rich. So, one day of the days, as he stood in the mosque, after the mid-afternoon prayer, he came forward into the midst of the folk and said, "O my brethren, O ye of the True Faith, ye who ascribe unity to God, know that in this our quarter there be two men dwelling, strangers, and most like you are acquainted with them. Now these twain spend and squander wealth galore, passing all measure, and in my belief they are none other than thieves and highwaymen and are come hither with that which they stole from their own country, so they may squander it." Then "O people of Mohammed," added he, "I rede you for God's sake keep yourselves from these tricksters, lest belike the Khalif come presently to know of these two men and ye also fall with them into calamity. Now I have warned you and I wash my hands of your affair, for that I have forewarned and awakened you; so do that which you deem well." And they said to him, all who were present, with one voice, "We will do whatsoever thou wiliest, O Aboubekr!" When the Imam heard this from them, he arose and taking inkhorn and pen and paper, fell to writing a letter to the Commander of the Faithful, setting forth to him [the case] against Zein ul Asnam and Mubarek.

Now, as destiny willed it, the latter chanced to be in the mosque among the folk and heard the accursed Imam's discourse and that which he did by way of writing the letter to the Khalif; whereupon he tarried not, but, returning home forthwith, took an hundred diners and made him a parcel of price, all of silken clothes, wherewith he betook himself in haste to Aboubekr's house and knocked at the door. The Imam came out to him and opened the door; and when he saw him, he asked him surlily who he was and what he would; whereupon quoth the other, "O my lord the Imam Aboubekr, I am thy slave Mubarek and I come to thee on the part of my lord the Amir Zein ul Asnam. He hath heard of thy learning and of the excellence of thy repute in the city and would fain become acquainted with thee and do that which behoveth unto thee; wherefore he hath presently sent me with these things and this money for thine expenses and hopeth of thee that thou wilt not blame him, inasmuch as this is little for thy worth, but hereafter, God willing, he will not fail of that which is due unto thee." Aboubekr looked at [the coins and] at their impress and yellowness and at the parcel of clothes and said to Mubarek, "O my lord, [I crave] pardon of thy lord the Amir, for that I am presently abashed before him and it irketh me sore that I have not done my duty towards him; but I hope of thee that thou wilt intercede with him on my behalf, so he may of his favour pardon me my default; and (the Creator willing) I will to-morrow do that which behoveth me and will go do my service to him and proffer him the respect which is due from me to him." "O my lord Aboubekr," replied Mubarek, "the extreme of my lord's desire is to look upon thy worship, so he may be honoured by thy presence and get of thee a blessing." So saying, he kissed the Imam's hand and returned to his lodging.

On the morrow, whilst Aboubekr was [engaged] in the Friday prayers at dawn, he stood up amongst the folk, in the midst of the mosque, and said, "O our brethren of the Muslims and people of Mohammed, all of you, verily envy falleth not save upon the rich and the noble and passeth by the poor and those of low estate. Know that of the two stranger men against whom I spoke yesterday one is an Amir, a man of great rank and noble birth, and the case is not as certain of the envious informed me concerning him, to wit, that he was a thief and a robber; for I have enquired into the matter and find that the report lieth. So beware lest any of you missay of the Amir or speak aught of evil against him, such as that which I heard yesterday, or you will cause me and yourselves fall into the gravest of calamities with the Commander of the Faithful; for that a man of high degree like this cannot sojourn in the city of Baghdad without the Khalif's knowledge." On this wise, then, the Imam Aboubekr did away from the minds of the folk the ill thought which he had planted [there] by his speech concerning Zein ul Asnam.

Moreover, when he had made an end of the prayers, he returned to his own house and donned his gabardine; then, weightening his skirts and lengthening his sleeves, he went forth and took his way to the prince's house. When he came in to Zein ul Asnam, the latter rose to him and received him with the utmost reverence. Now he was by nature religious, for all he was a youth of tender age; so he proffered the Imam all manner of honour and seating him by his side on a high divan, let bring him coffee with ambergris. Then the servants spread the table for breakfast and they took their sufficiency of meat and drink, and when they had finished, they fell to talking and making merry together. Presently the Imam asked the prince and said to him, "O my lord Zein ul Asnam, doth your highness purpose to sojourn long here in Baghdad?" "Yea, verily, O our Lord the Imam," answered Zein ul Asnam; "my intent is to sojourn here awhile, till such time as my requirement be accomplished." "And what," asked Aboubekr, "is the requirement of my lord the Amir? Belike, an I know it, I may avail to further him to his wish, though I sacrifice my life for him." And the prince said to him, "I seek a damsel fifteen years of age and fair exceedingly, that I may marry her; but she must be pure and chaste and a clean maid, whom no man hath anywise defiled nor in all her life hath she thought upon a man; and she must be unique in grace and goodliness."

"O my lord," rejoined the Imam, "this is a thing exceeding hard to find; but I know a damsel unique in her loveliness and her age is fifteen years. Her father was a Vizier, who resigned office of his own motion, and he abideth presently at home in his palace and is exceeding jealous over his daughter and her bringing up. Methinketh this damsel will suit your Highness's mind, and she will rejoice in an Amir like your Highness, as also will her parents." Quoth Zein ul Asnam, "God willing, this damsel whereof thou speakest will answer my requirement and the accomplishment of our desire shall be at thy hands; but, O our lord the Imam, before all things my wish is to see her, so I may know an she be chaste or not. As for her beauty, I am assured of your worship's sufficiency and am content to trust to your word concerning her loveliness, to wit, that she is surpassing; but, for her chastity, you cannot avail to testify with certitude of her case." "And how," asked the Imam, "can it be possible unto you, O my lord the Amir, to know from her face that she is pure? An this be so, your highness is skilled in physiognomy. However, an your highness will vouchsafe to accompany me, I will carry you to her father's palace and make you known to the latter, and he shall bring her before you."

Accordingly, the Imam Aboubekr took Zein ul Asnam and carried him to the Vizier's house; and when they went in to him, the Vizier rose and welcomed the prince, especially when he knew that he was an Amir and understood from the Imam that he wished to marry his daughter. So he let bring the damsel before him, and when she came, he bade her raise the veil from her face. Accordingly she unveiled herself and Zein ul Asnam, looking upon her, was amazed at her grace and goodliness, for that never had he seen one to match with her in beauty; and he said in himself, "I wonder if I shall happen upon one like this damsel, since it is forbidden that she should be mine!" Then he brought out the mirror from his pocket and looked thereon; when, behold, its crystal was clear exceedingly, as it were virgin silver; and he observed her image in the mirror and saw it like a white dove. So he forthright concluded the match and sent for the Cadi and the witnesses, who wrote the writ and enthroned the bride; after which Zein ul Asnam took the Vizier, the bride's father, home with him to his house and sent the young lady jewels of great price. Then they celebrated the wedding and held high festival, never was the like thereof, whilst Zein ul Asnam proceeded to entertain the folk and made them banquets for the space of eight days. Moreover, he honoured Aboubekr the Imam and gave him gifts galore and brought the Vizier, the bride's father, presents and great rarities.

Then, the wedding festivities being ended, Mubarek said to Zein ul Asnam, "Come, O my lord, let us set out on our way, lest we waste the time in sloth, now we have found that whereof we were in search." And the prince answered him, saying, "Thou art in the right." So Mubarek arose and fell to equipping them for the journey; moreover, he let make the young lady a camel-litter with a travelling couch, and they set out. But Mubarek knew that Zein ul Asnam was sunken deep in love of the damsel; so he took him and said to him, "O my lord Zein ul Asnam, I would fain remind thee to watch over thyself; nay, again I say, have a care and keep the faith which thou plightedst to the King of the Jinn." "O Mubarek," answered the prince, "an thou knewest the transport which possesseth me for the love of this young lady and how I still think of nothing but of taking her to Bassora and going in [to her]!" And Mubarek said to him, "Nay, O my lord; keep thy troth and play not the traitor to thine oath, lest there befall thee a sore calamity and thou lose thy life and the young lady lose hers also. Bethink thee of the oath which thou sworest and let not lust get the mastery over thine understanding, lest thou lose guerdan and honour and life." "O Mubarek," rejoined Zein ul Asnam, "keep thou watch over her thyself and let me not see her." So Mubarek fell to keeping watch and ward over the bride in the prince's stead and guarded the latter also, lest he should look on her; and so they journeyed on past the road leading unto Egypt and fared on their way to the Island of the Jinn.

When the bride beheld the journey (and indeed it was long upon her) and saw not her husband in all this time since the night of the bridal, she turned to Mubarek and said to him, "God upon thee, O Mubarek, tell me, I conjure thee by the life of thy lord the Amir, are we yet far from the dominions of my bridegroom, the Amir Zein ul Asnam?" And he said to her, "Alack, O my lady, it irketh me for thee and I will discover to thee that which is hidden. To wit, thou deemest that Zein ul Asnam, King of Bassora, is thy bridegroom. Far be it! He is not thy bridegroom. The writing of the writ of his marriage with thee was but a pretext before thy parents and the folk; and now thou art going for a bride to the King of the Jinn, who sought thee from the Amir Zein ul Asnam." When the young lady heard these words, she fell a-weeping and Zein ul Asnam heard her and fell a-weeping also, a sore weeping, of the excess of his love for her. And she said to them, "Is there no pity in you and no clemency and have you no fear of God, that I, a stranger maid, you cast me into a calamity like this? What answer will you give unto God concerning this treason that you have wroughten with me?"

But her weeping and her words availed her nothing, and they ceased not to fare on with her till they came to the King of the Jinn, to whom they straightway presented her. When he beheld her, she pleased him and he turned to Zein ul Asnam and said to him. "Verily, the girl whom thou hast brought me is exceeding in beauty and surpassing in loveliness; but the goodliness of thy loyalty and shine overmastering of thyself for my sake is fairer than she in mine eyes. So return now to thy place and the ninth image that thou seekest of me thou shalt find, on thy return, beside the other images; for I will send it to thee by one of my slaves of the Jinn." Accordingly, Zein ul Asnam kissed the King's hand and returned with Mubarek to Cairo; but, when they came thither, he chose not to abide with Mubarek longer than a resting-while, of the excess of his longing and his yearning to see the ninth image. Withal he ceased not from mourning, bethinking him of the young lady and her grace and goodliness; and he fell to lamenting and saying, “Alas for the loss of my delights that were because of thee, O pearl of beauty and loveliness, thou whom I took from thy parents and presented to the King of the Jinn! Alack, the pity of it!” And he chid himself for the deceit and the perfidy which he had practised upon the young lady’s parents and how he had brought her to the King of the Jinn.

Then he set out and gave not over journeying till he came to Bassora and entering his palace, saluted his mother and told her all that had befallen him; whereupon quoth she to him, “Arise, O my son, so thou mayst see this ninth image, for that I am exceeding rejoiced at its presence with us.” So they both descended into the underground hall, wherein were the eight images, and found there a great marvel; to wit, instead of the ninth image, they beheld the young lady, resembling the sun in her loveliness. The prince knew her, when he saw her, and she said to him, “Marvel not to find me here in place of that which thou soughtest; methinketh thou wilt not repent thee an thou take me in the stead of the ninth image.” “No, by Allah, oh my beloved!” replied Zein ul Asnam, “For that thou art the end of my seeking and I would not exchange thee for all the jewels in the world. Didst thou but know the grief which possessed me for thy separation, thou whom I took from thy parents by fraud and brought thee to the King of the Jinn!”

Scarce had the prince made an end of his speech when they heard a noise of thunder rending the mountains and shaking the earth and fear get hold upon the queen, the mother of Zein ul Asnam, yea, and sore trembling; but, after a little, the King of the Jinn appeared and said to her, “O lady, fear not, it is I who am thy son’s protector and I love him with an exceeding love for the love his father bore me. Nay, I am he who appeared to him in his sleep and in this I purposed to try his fortitude, whether or not he might avail to subdue himself for loyalty’s sake. Indeed the beauty of this young lady beguiled him and he could not avail to keep his covenant with me so strictly but that he desired her for his bride. However, I know the frailty of human nature and withal I think greatly of him that he guarded her and kept her unsullied and withdrew himself from her; wherefore I accept this his constancy and bestow her on him as a bride. She is the ninth image, which I promised him should be with him, and certes she is fairer than all these images of jewels, inasmuch as her like is rarely found in the world." Then the King of the Jinn turned to Zein ul Asnam and said to him, "O Prince Zein ul Asnam, this is thy bride; take her and go in to her, on condition that thou love her and take not unto her a second [wife]; and I warrant thee of the goodliness of her fidelity to-thee-ward." Therewithal he vanished from them and Zein ul Asnam went out, glad and rejoicing in the young lady; and of [the excess of] his love for her he went in to her that night and let celebrate the bridal and hold high festival in all the kingdom. Then he abode upon the throne of his kingship, judging and commanding and forbidding, whilst his bride became queen of Bassora; and after a little his mother died. So he made her funeral obsequies and mourned for her; after which he lived with his bride in all content till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Societies.

John Payne's translation: detailed table of contents

ALAEDDIN AND THE ENCHANTED LAMP.

There was [once] in a city of the cities of China a man, a tailor and poor, and he had a son by name Alaeddin, who was perverse and graceless from his earliest childhood. When he came to ten years of age, his father would fain have taught him his own craft, for that, because he was poor, he could not spend money upon him to have him taught [another] trade or art or the like; so he carried him to his shop, that he might teach him his craft of tailoring; but, forasmuch as the lad was perverse and wont still to play with the boys of the quarter, he would not sit one day in the shop; nay, he would watch his father till such time as he went forth the place to meet a customer or on some other occasion, when he would flee forth incontinent and go out to the gardens with the good-for-nothing lads like himself. This, then, was his case, and he would not obey his parents, nor would he learn a craft. His father sickened of his grief and chagrin for his son's perversity and died, whilst Alaeddin abode on that his wise. When his mother saw that her husband had departed this life and that her son was a scapegrace and a good-for-nought, she sold the shop and all she found therein and fell to spinning cotton and feeding herself and her graceless son Alaeddin with her toil. The latter, seeing himself quit of his father's danger, redoubled in his gracelessness and his perversity and would not abide in their house save eating-whiles; and his poor wretched mother supported him by the spinning of her hands till he came to fifteen years of age.

One day of the days, as he sat in the street, playing with the vagabond boys, behold, a Maugrabin dervish came up and stopping to look at the lads, singled out Alaeddin from his comrades and fell to gazing upon him and straitly considering his favour. Now this dervish was from the land of Hither Barbary and he was an enchanter who would cast mountain upon mountain with his sorcery and was skilled to boot in physiognomy. When he had well considered Alaeddin, he said in himself, "Certes, this boy is he whom I seek and he it is in quest of whom I came forth from my country." So he took one of the lads apart and asked him of Alaeddin, whose son he was, and questioned him of all his affairs;

after which he went up to Alaeddin and taking him aside, said to him, “Harkye, boy, art thou not the son of such an one the tailor?” And he answered him, saying “Yes, O my lord; but my father died awhile agone.” When the Maugrabin magician heard this, he threw himself upon Alaeddin and embracing him, fell to kissing him and weeping, that his tears ran down upon his cheek.

Alaeddin was astonished at the Maugrabin’s behaviour; so he asked him and said to him, “What is the cause of thy weeping, O my lord, and whence knewest thou my father?” The Maugrabin answered him, in a mournful, broken voice, saying, “How, O my son, canst thou ask me this question, after telling me that thy father, my brother, is dead, for thy father was [indeed] my brother and I am newly come from my country and was rejoicing exceedingly, after this my strangerhood, of my expectation that I should see him and solace myself with him; and now thou tellest me that he is dead! Marry, blood discovered unto me that thou wast the son of my brother, and indeed I knew thee from amongst all the lads; although thy father, when I left him, was not yet married. And now, O my son Alaeddin,” continued he, “I have lost my consolation and my joy in thy father, my brother, whom I had hoped, after my strangerhood, to see ere I died; but separation hath afflicted me in him and there is no fleeing from that which is nor is there any resource against the ordinance of God the Most High.”

Then he took Alaeddin and said to him, “O my son, I have no comfort but in thee and thou art [to me] in the stead of thy father, since thou art his successor and whoso leaveth [a successor] is not dead, O my son.” With this he put his hand [to his pocket] and bringing out ten diners, gave them to Alaeddin, saying, “O my son, where is your house and where is thy mother, my brother’s wife?” So Alaeddin took him and showed him the way to their house; and the magician said to him, “O my son, take these monies and give them to thy mother and salute her on my behalf and tell her that thine uncle is come back from his strangerhood; and God willing, to-morrow I will come visit you, so I may salute her and look upon the house wherein my brother dwelt and see where his tomb is.” Alaeddin kissed his hand and hastened home, running in his joy, to his mother and entered, contrary to his wont, for that he was not used to go in to her save at eating-times. So he went in to her, rejoicing, and said to her, "O my mother, I bring thee glad news of my uncle, in that he is come back from his absence, and he saluteth thee." "O my son," quoth she, "meseemeth thou makest mock of me. Who is thine uncle and whence hast thou an uncle on life?" And he said to her, "O my mother, why didst thou tell me that I had no uncles and no kinsfolk on life? Indeed, this man is my uncle and he embraced me and kissed me, weeping, and bade me tell thee of this." And she answered him, saying, "Yes, O my son, I knew thou hadst an uncle, but he is dead and I know not that thou hast a second uncle."

As for the Maugrabin enchanter, he went forth at dawn and fell to searching for Alaeddin, for that he might not brook parting from him; and as he went about in the thoroughfares of the city, he came upon the lad, who was playing with the vagabonds, as of his wont. So he went up to him and taking him by the hand, embraced him and kissed him; then he brought out of his purse two diners and said to Alaeddin, "Go to thy mother and give her these two diners and say to her, 'My uncle would fain sup with us; so take these two diners and make a good supper.' But first show me once more the way to your house." "On my head and eyes, O my uncle," answered Alaeddin and foregoing him, showed him the way to the house. Then the Maugrabin left him and went his way, whilst Alaeddin returned home and telling his mother [what had passed], gave her the two diners and said to her, "My uncle would fain sup with us." So she arose forthright and went out to the market, where she bought all that was needful and returning home, borrowed of her neighbours that which she required of platters and the like and proceeded to make ready for supper.

When the time of the evening-meal came, she said to Alaeddin, "O my son, the supper is ready and maybe shine uncle knoweth not the way to the house. Go thou and meet him." And he answered her with "Hearkening and obedience." But, whilst they were in talk, behold, there came a knocking at the door; whereupon Alaeddin went out and opening, found the Maugrabin enchanter, and with him a slave bearing wine and fruits. So he brought them in and the slave went his way, whilst the Maugrabin entered and saluted Alaeddin's mother; then he fell a-weeping and said to her, "Where is the place in which my brother was wont to sit?" She pointed him to her husband's sitting-place, whereupon he went thither and prostrating himself, fell to kissing the earth and saying, "Alas, how scant is my delight and how sorry my fortune, since I have lost thee, O my brother and apple of mine eye!" And the abode on this wise, weeping and lamenting, till Alaeddin's mother was certified that he was in earnest and that he was like to swoon of the excess of his wailing and his lamentation. So she came to him and raised him from the ground, saying, "What profiteth it that thou shouldst kill thyself?" And she proceeded to comfort him and made him sit down.

Then, before she laid the table, the Maugrabin fell to relating to her [his history] and said to her, "O wife of my brother, let it not amaze thee that in all thy days thou never sawest me neither knewest of me in my late brother's lifetime, for that I left this country forty years agone and became an exile from my native land. I journeyed to the lands of Hind and Sind and all the country of the Arabs and coming presently into Egypt, sojourned awhile in the magnificent city [of Cairo], which is the wonder of the world. Ultimately I betook myself to the land of Hither Barbary and sojourned there thirty years' space, till one day of the days, as I sat, O wife of my brother, I bethought me of my country and my native place and of my late brother and longing waxed on me to see him and I fell a-weeping and lamenting over my strangerhood and distance from him. In fine, my yearning for him importuned me till I resolved to journey to this country, the which was the falling-place of my head and my native land, that I might see my brother. And I said in myself, "O man, how long wilt thou be an exile from thy country and thy native place, whenas thou hast an only brother and no more? Arise and journey and look upon him ere thou die. Who knoweth the calamities of fate and the vicissitudes of the days? Sore pity 'twere that thou shouldst die and not see thy brother. Moreover, Allah (praised be He) hath given thee abundant wealth and it may be thy brother is in poor case and straitened, and thou wilt help him, an thou see him." So I arose forthright and equipped myself for travel; then, reciting the Fatiheh , I took horse, after the Friday prayer, and came, after many hardships and fatigues, — which I suffered, till the Lord (to whom belong might and majesty) protected [me], — to this city. I entered it and as I went about its thoroughfares the day before yesterday, I saw my brother's son Alaeddin playing with the boys; and by Allah the Great, O wife of my brother, when I saw him, my heart crave to him, for that blood yearneth unto blood, and my soul foreboded me he was my brother's son. At his sight I forgot all my toils and troubles and was like to fly for joy; then, when he told me that my late brother had departed to the mercy of God the Most High, I swooned away for stress of grief and chagrin; and most like he hath told thee of that which overcame me. But I comforted myself somewhat with Alaeddin, who standeth in stead of the departed, for that whoso leaveth [a successor] dieth not."

Then, when he saw her weeping at this speech, he turned to Alaeddin, by way of making her forget the mention of her husband and feigning to comfort her, so he might the better accomplish his device upon her, and said to him, "O my son Alaeddin, what hast thou learned of crafts and what is thy business? Hast thou learned thee a trade whereby thou mayst live, thou and thy mother?" At this Alaeddin was confounded and abashed and hung down his head, bowing it to the ground, whilst his mother said to the Maugrabin, "How? By Allah, he knoweth nought at all! So graceless a lad I never saw. All day long he goeth about with the vagabond boys of the quarter like himself; nay, his father, woe is me, died not but of his chagrin concerning him; and now, as for me, my case is woeful. I spin cotton and toil night and day, to earn two cakes of bread, that we may eat them together. This, then, is his condition, O my brother-in-law, and by thy life, he cometh not in to me save at eating-times, and I am thinking to bolt the door of my house and not open to him and let him go seek his living for himself, for that I am grown an old woman and have no strength left to toil and provide for the maintenance of a fellow like this. By Allah, I get mine own livelihood, I that need one who shall maintain me."

Therewithal the Maugrabin turned to Alaeddin and said to him, "How is this, O son of my brother? It is a disgrace to thee to go vagabonding about in this abjection. This befitteth not men like thee. Thou art gifted with understanding, O my son, and the child of [reputable] folk; I and it is a shame upon thee that thy mother, who is an old woman, should toil for thy maintenance, now thou art grown a man. Nay, it behoveth thee get thee some means whereby thou mayst maintain thyself, O my son. See, by God's grace, (praised be He) here in our city be masters of crafts, nowhere is there a place more abounding in them: choose, then, the craft which pleaseth thee and I will establish thee therein, so that, when thou growest up, O my son, thou mayst find thee thy craft whereby thou shalt live. Belike thou hast no mind to thy father's trade; so choose other than it. Tell me the craft which pleaseth thee and I will help thee in all that is possible, O son of my brother." Then, seeing that Alaeddin was silent and answered him nothing, he knew that he had no mind to any craft at all and recked of nothing but vagabondage and said to him, "O son of my brother, be not abashed at me; if so be withal thou caress not to learn a trade, I will open thee a merchant's shop of the costliest stuffs and thou shalt make thyself acquainted with the folk and shalt give and take and sell and buy and become known in the city."

When Alaeddin heard these words of his uncle the Maugrabin, to wit, that it was his intent to make him a merchant, a trader, he rejoiced exceedingly, well knowing that all merchants' apparel is neat and elegant; so he looked at the Maugrabin and smiled and bowed his head, as who should say, "I am content." The magician, seeing him smile, knew that he was content to be a merchant and said to him, "Since thou art content that I should make thee a merchant and open thee a shop, be a man, O son of my brother, and to-morrow, God willing, I will take thee first to the market and let cut thee an elegant suit of clothes such as merchants wear; and after that I will look thee out a shop and perform my promise to thee." Now Alaeddin's mother was in some little doubt as to the Maugrabin; but, when she heard his promise to her son that he would open him a shop as a merchant with stuffs and capital and what not else, she concluded that he was in very deed her brother-in-law, inasmuch as a stranger would not do thus with her son. So she fell to admonishing her son and exhorting him to put away ignorance and folly from his head and be a man, and bade him still yield obedience to his uncle, as he were his father, and apply himself to make up the time which he had wasted in idleness [with] those who were like him, after which she arose and laying the table, spread the evening-meal and they all sat down and fell to eating and drinking, whilst the Maugrabin talked with Alaeddin upon matters of merchandry and the like. Then, when he saw that the night was far spent, he arose and went to his lodging, promising to return in the morning and take Alaeddin, so he might let cut him a merchant's suit.

Alaeddin slept not that night for joy and when it was morning, behold, the Maugrabin knocked at the door. The lad's mother arose and opened to him; however, he would not enter, but sought Alaeddin, that he might take him with him to the market. So Alaeddin went out to him and gave him good-morning and kissed his hand; whereupon the Maugrabin took him by the hand and going with him to the market, entered the shop of a seller of all manner of clothes and demanded a suit of costly stuffs. The merchant brought him what he sought, all sewn and ready, and the Maugrabin said to Alaeddin, "Choose that which pleaseth thee, O my son." Alaeddin rejoiced exceedingly, when he saw that his uncle gave him his choice, and chose clothes to his mind, such as pleased him. The Maugrabin at once paid the merchant their price and going out, carried Alaeddin to the bath, where they bathed and came forth and drank wine. Then Alaeddin arose and donned the new suit; whereat he rejoiced and was glad and coming up to his uncle, kissed his hand and thanked him for his bounties. After this the Maugrabin carried him to the bazaar of the merchants and showed him the market and the selling and buying and said to him, "O my son, it behoveth thee consort with the folk, especially with the merchants, so thou mayst learn of them merchandry, since this is become thy craft."

Then he took him again and showed him the city and the mosques and all the sights of the place; after which he carried him to a cook's shop, where the morning-meal was set before them in silver platters. So they ate and drank till they had enough and going forth, fared on, whilst the Maugrabin proceeded to show Alaeddin the pleasaunces and fine buildings, going in with him to the Sultan's palace and showing him all the fair and fine quarters [of the city]; after which he carried him to the Khan of the stranger merchants, where he himself lodged. and invited certain of the merchants who were in the Khan. Accordingly they came and sat down to supper, and he informed them that this was his brother's son and that his name was Alaeddin. Then, after they had eaten and drunken, the night being now come, the Maugrabin arose and taking Alaeddin, carried him back to his mother.

When she saw her son as he were one of the merchants, her wit fled [and she waxed] sorrowful for gladness and fell to extolling the Maugrabin's bounty and saying to him, "O my brother-in-law, I might not suffice [to thy deserts,] though I thanked thee all my life long and praised thee for the good thou hast done with my son." "O wife of my brother," answered he, "this is no manner of kindness in me, for that this is my son and it behoveth me stand in the stead of my brother his father; so be thou easy." Quoth she, "I pray God, by the glory of the ancients and the moderns, that He let thee [live] and continue thee, O my brother-in-law, and prolong me thy life, so thou mayst be [as] a wing to this orphan boy; and he shall still be under thine obedience and thy commandment and shall do nought but that which thou biddest him." "O wife of my brother," rejoined the Maugrabin, "Alaeddin is a man of understanding and [the son of] decent folk, and my hope is in God that he will follow in his father's footsteps and be the solace of shine eyes; but it irketh me that, to-morrow being Friday, I cannot open him a shop. It being congregation day, all the merchants will go out after prayers to the gardens and pleasaunces; but, God willing, on Saturday, an it please the Creator, we will do our business. Tomorrow I will come to you and take Alaeddin, that I may show him the gardens and pleasaunces without the city, — it may be he hath not yet seen them, — and he shall see the merchant-folk and the notables a-pleasuring there, so he may become acquainted with them and they with him."

The Maugrabin lay the night in his lodging; and on the morrow he came to the tailor's house and knocked at the door. Alaeddin — of the excess of his joy in the clothes he had donned and of the pleasures he had enjoyed on the past day, what with the bath and eating and drinking and viewing the folk and the thought that his uncle was coming in the morning to take him and show him the gardens — slept not that night neither closed an eye and thought the day would never break. So, when he heard a knocking at the door, he went out at once in haste, like a spark of fire, and opening, found his uncle the Maugrabin. The latter embraced him and kissed him and took him by the hand, saying, "O son of my brother, to-day I will show thee a thing such as thou never sawest in thy life." Then they went off together and the Maugrabin fell to making merry with Alaeddin and amusing him with familiar talk. They went forth the gate of the city and the Maugrabin proceeded to walk with him among the gardens and to show him the fine pleasaunces and marvellous high-builded palaces; and whenassoever they looked upon a garden or a palace or a pavilion, he would stand and say to Alaeddin, "Doth this please thee, O my son Alaeddin?"

Alaeddin was like to fly for joy, inasmuch as he saw that which he had never in his life seen, and they gave not over walking and gazing till they were weary, when they entered a fine garden there, that cheered the heart and brightened the eye with its springs welling up among flowers and its waters issuing from the mouths of lions of brass like unto gold, and sitting down by a lake, rested awhile. As for Alaeddin, he rejoiced and was exceeding glad and fell a-jesting with the Mangrabin and making merry with him, as he were his uncle in very deed. Then the latter arose and loosing his girdle, brought out therefrom a bag full of victual and fruit and the like and said to Alaeddin, "O son of my brother, thou art maybe anhungred; come, eat what thou wilt." So Alaeddin proceeded to eat and the Maugrabin with him and they were gladdened and refreshed and their souls were cheered. Then said the Maugrabin, "Rise, O my son, an thou be rested, so we may walk a little and fare onward." So Alaeddin arose and the Maugrabin walked on with him from garden to garden till they had passed them all and came to a high mountain.

Now Alaeddin had never gone forth the gate of the city nor in all his life had he walked the like of that walk; so he said to the Maugrabin, "O my uncle, whither are we going? See, we have left all the gardens behind us and are come to the foot of a mountain. If the way be [yet] far, I have no strength left me for walking, for that I am worn out with fatigue and there remain no more gardens before us; so let us turn back and return to the city." "O my son," replied the Maugrabin, "this is the way and the gardens are not yet at an end, for we are going to view a garden, whose like is not with the kings and compared with which all these which thou hast seen are as nothing. So gird up thy loins for walking; praised be God, thou art a man." And he fell to amusing him with fair words and telling him rare stories, true and false, till they reached the place at which this Maugrabin enchanter aimed and in quest whereof he was come from Barbary to the land of China; whereupon, “O son of my brother,” quoth he to Alaeddin, “sit and rest thee; this is the place for which we were making; and now, please God, I will show thee marvellous things, the like whereof no one in the world hath seen, nor hath any looked upon that which thou art about to behold. But do thou, after thou art rested, arise and seek sticks and grass and reeds and such like matters as are small and dry, so we may kindle a fire, and I will cause thee look, O son of my brother, upon a thing which passeth understanding.”

When Alaeddin heard this, he yearned to see what his uncle was about to do; so he forgot his fatigue and rising forthright, fell to gathering brushwood and dry sticks and gathered till the Maugrabin said to him, “Enough, O son of my brother.” Then he brought out of his pocket a casket, from which he took what he needed of perfumes, and proceeded to make fumigations and conjurations, speaking words that might not be understanded; and straightway it darkened and thundered and the earth quaked and opened. At this Alaeddin was sore affrighted and would have fled; which when the Maugrabin enchanter saw, he was exceeding, incensed at him, for that without Alaeddin his labour was of none avail, since the treasure whereat he sought to come might not be opened save by means of the lad. So, when he saw him offer to flee, he rose to him and lifting his hand, smote him on his head, that he came nigh to knock out his teeth; whereupon Alaeddin swooned away and fell upon the earth; but, after a little, he recovered his senses, by the virtue of the Maugrabin’s enchantments, and falling a-weeping, said to him, “O my uncle, what have I done to deserve from thee this blow?” The Maugrabin proceeded to soothe him and said to him, “O my son, it is my desire to make thee a man; so cross me not, for that I am thine uncle and as it were thy father; wherefore do thou obey me in that which I shall say to thee, and after a little thou shalt forget all this travail and annoy, whenas thou lookest upon things marvellous.”

Now, when the earth clove in sunder before the enchanter, there appeared to him an alabaster slab and in it a ring of molten brass; so he turned to Alaeddin and said to him, “An thou do that which I shall tell thee, thou shalt become richer than all the kings; and on this account, O my son, I beat thee, for that here is a treasure and it is in thy name, and thou, thou wouldst fain have passed it by and fled. But now collect thy wits and see how I have opened the earth by my conjurations and incantations. Under yonder stone, wherein is the ring, is the treasure whereof I have told thee; so do thou put thy hand to the ring and lift the slab, for that none of mankind can open it but thou and none but thou can set his foot within this treasure, since it is guarded for thee. But needs must thou hearken from me that which I shall teach thee and lose not a syllable of my speech. Marry, all this, O my son, is for thy good, for that this is an exceeding great treasure, the kings of the world possess not its like, and it is thine and mine." So poor Alaeddin forgot fatigue and beating and weeping, of his amazement at the Maugrabin's speech and joy that he should become rich after such a measure that even the kings would be no wealthier than he, and said to him, "O my uncle, command me all thou wilt, for I will be obedient unto thy commandment." And the Maugrabin said to him, "O son of my brother, thou art as my very son, nay, dearer, for being my brother's son. I have no kindred other than thyself and thou art my natural heir and successor, O my son."

Therewith he came up to Alaeddin and kissed him saying, "All these my toils, whom do they concern? They are all for thy sake, O my son, that I may make thee a man rich and great exceedingly; so gainsay me not in aught that I shall tell thee; but go up to yonder ring and raise it, as I bade thee." "O my uncle," quoth Alaeddin, "this stone is heavy; I cannot raise it of myself, so come thou also and help me raise it, for I am little of years." "O son of my brother," replied the Maugrabin, "it will not be possible for us to do aught, an I help thee, and our toil will be wasted in vain; but do thou put thy hand to the ring and raise it and it will immediately come up with thee; for, as I said to thee, none may handle it but thou. But, when thou raisest it, name thine own name and those of thy father and mother and it will straightway rise with thee, nor shalt thou feel its weight."

Accordingly, Alaeddin took courage and summoning his resolution, did as the Maugrabin bade him and raised the slab with all ease, whenas he pronounced his own name and those of his father and his mother. So the stone came up and he threw it aside; whereupon there appeared to him an underground place and its door, whereas one entered by a stair of some dozen steps, and the Maugrabin said to him, “O Alaeddin, give heed and do punctually that which I shall tell thee, neither fail of aught thereof. Go down with all circumspection into yonder vault till thou come to the bottom thereof and thou wilt find there a place divided into four chambers, in each of which thou wilt see four jars of gold and others of native ore and silver. Beware lest thou handle them or take aught therefrom, but pass them by till thou come to the fourth chamber, and let not thy clothes or thy skirts touch the jars, no, nor the walls, and stay not one moment; for, an thou do contrary to this, thou wilt forthright be transformed and wilt become a black stone. When thou comest to the fourth chamber, thou wilt find there a door; open it and speak the names which thou spokest over the slab; then enter and thou wilt find thyself in a garden, all adorned with trees and fruits. Thence do thou fare on some fifty cubits in the path thou wilt find before thee and thou wilt come to a dais, with a stair of some thirty steps. Above the dais thou wilt find a lamp hung up; take it and pour out the oil that is therein and put it in thy sleeve; and fear not for thy clothes therefrom, for that it is not oil. And as thou returnest, thou mayst pluck from the trees what thou wilt, for that it is thine, what while the lamp abideth in thy hand.”

When the Maugrabin had made an end of his speech, he drew from his finger a ring and putting it on Alaeddin’s finger, said to him, “And this ring, O, my son, shall deliver thee from all hurt and all fear that may betide thee, provided thou observe all that I have said to thee. So now arise and go down; gird thy loins and summon up thy resolution and fear not, for that thou art a man and not a child; and after this, O my son, thou shalt in a little time become the richest of mankind.” So Alaeddin arose and going down into the underground, found the four chambers and in each four jars of gold. He passed them by with all care and precaution, even as the Maugrabin had bidden him, and entering the garden, fared on there through till he came to the dais and mounting the stair, entered and found the lamp. So he quenched it and pouring out the oil that was therein, put it in his sleeve; then, going down into the garden, he fell to gazing upon its trees, whereon were birds extolling with their songs the perfection of the Great Creator, and he had not seen them as he entered. Now the fruits of these trees were all precious stones, each tree bearing fruit of one colour and kind of jewel, and these fruits were of all colours, green and white and yellow and red and what not else of colours. Their glitterance outshone the rays of the sun in its forenoon splendour and the bigness of each jewel overpassed description; suffice it that not one of them might be found with the greatest of the kings of the world, no, nor a gem half the bigness of the smallest that was there.

Alaeddin entered among the trees and proceeded to gaze upon them and upon these things which amazed the sight and ravished the sense and observing them, saw that, instead of fruits, they bore magnificent jewels from the mines, emeralds and diamonds and rubies and pearls and topazes and the like of precious stones, such as confounded the wit. Now, for that this was a thing Alaeddin had never in his life seen, neither was he of ripe age, so he should know the value of these jewels, by reason of his being yet a young lad, he thought that they were all glass or crystal; so he gathered of them what filled his sleeves and fell to looking an they were grapes or figs and the like of fruits that might be eaten or not; but, finding them like glass, he proceeded to gather in his sleeve of every kind that was upon the trees, albeit he knew not jewels nor their worth, saying in himself, since he had been baulked in his intent of eating, “I will gather of these fruits of glass and will play with them at home.” Accordingly he proceeded to pluck and put in his pockets and his sleeves till he filled them; after which he filled his girdle with the fruits and girt himself withal; in fine, he carried off as much as he might, purposing to lay them up with him in the house by way of ornament, for that he thought them glass, as I have said. Then he quickened his pace, of his fear of his uncle the Maugrabin, and hastened through the four chambers and the [outer] vault nor looked, as he returned, at the jars of gold, albeit he might now have taken of them.

When he came to the stair and ascended it and there remained to him but a small matter, to wit, the last step, which was much higher than the others, he could not avail to mount it of himself, having regard to that which he was carrying; so he said to the Maugrabin, "O my uncle, give me thy hand and help me up." Quoth he, "O my son, give me the lamp and lighten thyself; maybe it is that which hindereth thee." "Nay, O my uncle," answered Alaeddin, "the lamp hindereth me nought; but do thou give me thy hand and when I am up, I will give thee the lamp." The enchanter, who wanted the lamp and that only, fell to urging Alaeddin to give it him; but the latter, having wrapped it within his clothes, with purses of jewel-fruits atop of it, could not reach it with his hand, so he might give it him. The Maugrabin was instant with him to give him the lamp and was like to lose his wits for rage, seeing he attained not his object, albeit Alaeddin still promised him that he would give it him as soon as he was forth of the vault, [and that] without lying thought or ill intent. Then, when he saw that Alaeddin would not give it him, he was angry with an exceeding anger and abandoning all hope of the lamp, conjured and enchanted and cast perfumes into the midst of the fire; whereupon the slab immediately turned over and shut of itself by the might of his enchantments; the earth covered it like as it was before and Alaeddin abode under the ground, unable to come forth.

Thus the enchanter — forasmuch as he was a stranger and no uncle of Alaeddin, as he said, but had counterfeited himself and avouched leasing, so he might get the lamp by means of the lad, unto whom that treasure was fortuned by the stars-shut up the earth upon him and left him to die of hunger. Now this accursed Maugrabin wizard was from the city of Africa in Hither Barbary and had from his childhood been addicted to magic and all the occult arts, for which the city in question is renowned. He ceased not from his tenderest years to study and learn in his native land Africa till he became versed in all sciences, and of the much skill and proficiency which he acquired, by dint of study and application for the space of forty years, in the matter of incantations and conjurations, it was discovered to him, one day of the days, that among the uttermost of the cities of China was a city called El Kelaas and in this city a vast treasure, the like whereof no king of the kings of the world ever possessed; but the rarest [was] that in this treasure [was] a wonderful lamp, whereat if one should come, there might no man be found on earth richer than he, whether in might or in wealth, nor might the greatest king in the world avail unto aught of the riches of this lamp and its puissance and virtue. Moreover he saw that this treasure was to be achieved by means of a lad of mean birth, by name Alaeddin, who was of the city aforesaid, and that it was eath to take and unarduous: so he tarried not, but equipped himself forthright for the voyage to China, as we have said, and did that which he did with Alaeddin, thinking to come by the lamp. But his endeavour was baffled and his expectation baulked and his toil wasted in vain; whereupon he sought to kill Alaeddin and closed up the earth upon him by his sorcery, so he might die (and the live hath no slayer); moreover, he purposed by this that Alaeddin should not come forth and that the lamp should not be brought up from under the earth. Then he went his ways and returned to his country Africa, woeful and despairing of his hope.

So much for the enchanter and as for what came of Alaeddin, after the earth closed over him, he fell to calling upon the Maugrabin, whom he thought his uncle, to give him his hand, so he might come forth the underground to the surface of the earth; but, when he found that none returned him an answer, he was ware of the cheat which the Maugrabin had put upon him and knew that he was none of his uncle, but a liar and a sorcerer. Therewith he despaired of his life and knew, to his woe, that there was no more going forth for him upon the face of the earth; so he fell to weeping and lamenting over that which had befallen him. Then, after a little, he arose and went down, that he might see if God the Most High had vouchsafed him a door whereby he might go forth; and he went seeking right and left, but saw nought save darkness and four walls shut upon him; for that the Maugrabin sorcerer had by his enchantments locked all the doors and had even shut up the garden, so he might leave him no door whereby he should come forth upon the face of the earth and so hasten his death upon him. Alaeddin's weeping redoubled and his lamentation waxed when he saw all the doors shut and eke the garden, for that he thought to solace himself with them a little; but he found them locked, so he fell to crying out and weeping, as he whose hope is cut off, and returning, sat down upon the steps of the stair whereby he had entered the vault, weeping and wailing; and indeed he had lost hope.

But it is a small matter for God (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He) whenas He willeth a thing, to say to it "Be," and it is; for that He createth relief out of the midst of stress; by token that, when the Maugrabin enchanter sent Alaeddin down into the vault, he gave him a ring and put it on his finger, saying, "This ring will deliver thee from all stress, an thou be in calamities or vicissitudes, and will remove from thee troubles; yea, it will be thy helper whereassoever thou art;" and this was by the foreordinance of God the Most High, so it might be the means of Alaeddin's deliverance. So, as he sat weeping and bewailing his case and indeed his hope was cut off of life and despair was heavy upon him, he fell, of the excess of his anguish, to wringing his hands, after the wont of the woeful; then, raising them [to heaven], he made supplication to God, saying, "I testify that there is no God but Thou alone, the Mighty, the Powerful, the Conquering, the Giver of Life and Death, Creator and Accomplisher of necessities, Resolver of difficulties and perplexities and Dispeller thereof, Thou my sufficiency, Thou the most excellent Guardian, and I testify that Mohammed is Thy servant and Thine apostle. O my God, I conjure Thee, by his glory with Thee, deliver me from my extremity."

Whilst he was thus supplicating God and wringing his hands in the excess of his affliction for that which had befallen him of calamity, he chanced to rub upon the ring, and immediately, behold, a genie rose up before him and said to him, "Here am I; thy slave is before thee. Seek whatsoever thou wilt, for that I am his slave who hath the ring in hand, the ring of my lord." Alaeddin looked and saw a Marid, as he were of the Jinn of our lord Solomon, standing before him, and shuddered at his frightful aspect; but, when he heard the genie say to him, "Seek whatsoever thou wilt, for that I am thy slave, since the ring of my lord is on thy hand," he took heart and bethought him of the Maugrabin's speech to him, whenas he gave him the ring. So he rejoiced exceedingly and took courage and said to him, "O slave of the lord of the ring, I will of thee that thou bring me out upon the face of the earth." Hardly had he made an end of that his speech when, behold, the earth opened and he found himself without, at the door of the treasure, to wit, upon the surface of the earth.

Now, he had been three days under the earth, sitting in the treasure in the dark; so, when the light of day smote on his face and the rays of the sun, he might not unclose his eyes, but took to opening them little by little and shutting them again till they became stronger and grew used to the light and were cleared of the darkness. Then, seeing himself upon the surface of the earth, he rejoiced exceedingly, but marvelled to find himself overagainst the entrance of the treasure, whereby he went down, whenas the Maugrabin enchanter opened it; and now the stone was shut down and the earth levelled, nor was there any sign therein of a door. So he redoubled in wonderment and thought himself otherwhere; nor was he assured that he was in the very place, till he saw whereas they had kindled the fire of sticks and brushwood and whereas the Maugrabin enchanter had made his fumigations and conjurations. Then he turned right and left and saw the gardens afar off and looked at the way and knew it for that by which they had come. So he gave thanks to God the Most High, who had brought him out on the earth's face and had delivered him from death, after he had given up hope of life. Then he arose and fared homeward, by the way which he knew, till he came to the city and entering, betook himself to their house and went in to his mother. When he saw her, he fell down before her, of the greatness of the joy which possessed him for his deliverance, and swooned away for the affright and the weariness which he had suffered, more by token that he was weak with hunger.

Now his mother had been woebegone since he left her and sat wailing and weeping for him; so, when she saw him come in to her, she rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy, but grief overwhelmed her, whenas she saw him fall aswoon upon the earth. However, she wasted no time in vain lamentation, but hastened to sprinkle water on his face and sought of her neighbours somewhat of perfumes, to which she made him smell. When he was a little recovered, he prayed her bring him somewhat to eat, saying to her, "O my mother, these three days past I have eaten nothing." So she arose and setting before him that which she had ready, said to him, "Rise, O my son, eat and restore thyself; and when thou art rested, tell me what hath happened to thee and what calamity hath befallen thee. I will not question thee now, because thou art weary." So, when he had eaten and drunken and had refreshed himself and was rested and restored, he said to her, "Alack, mother mine, I have a sore grief against thee in that thou leftest me to yonder accursed man, who strove for my destruction. Indeed, he sought to kill me; nay, I saw death face to face from that accursed wretch, whom thou deemedst mine uncle, and but for God the Most High, who delivered me from him, [I had perished]. Marry, both I and thou, O my mother, suffered ourselves to be deluded by him after the measure of that which the accursed promised to do with me of good and of the love which he professed for me. Know, then, O my mother, that this man is an accursed Maugrabin enchanter, a liar, a deceiver, an impostor and a hypocrite; methinketh the devils that be under the earth are not his match, may God put him to shame in every book! Hear, O my mother, what this accursed did; nay, all I shall tell thee is truth and soothfastness. Do but see the villain's duplicity; bethink thee of the promises he made me that he would do me all manner of good and the love he professed to me, and how he did all this that he might accomplish his purpose; nay, his intent was to kill me, and praised be God for my deliverance! Hearken, O my mother, and learn what this accursed one did."

Then he told her all that had befallen him from the time of his leaving her, weeping the while for excess of joy; how the Maugrabin brought him to the hill, wherein was the treasure, and how he conjured and fumigated. "And indeed. O my mother," said he, "there overcame me exceeding fear, whenas the hill clove in sunder and the earth opened before me by his enchantments; and I quaked with terror at the voice of the thunder which I heard and the darkness which befell of his spells and fumigations, and of my dismay at these portents, I would have fled. When he saw me offer to flee, he reviled me and smote me, dealing me a buffet which caused me swoon for pain but, inasmuch as the treasure was opened and he could not go down into it himself, seeing he had opened it by my means and that it was in name and not for him, he knew, being a foul sorcerer, that it might [only] be achieved through me and that this adventure was [reserved] for me. Accordingly he applied himself to make his peace with me, that he might send me down into the treasure, now it was opened, and attain his object by my means; and when he sent me down, he gave me a ring, which he had on his hand, and put it on my finger. So I descended into the treasure and found four chambers, all full of gold and silver and the like; but this all was nothing and the accursed one charged me take nought thereof. Thence I entered a magnificent garden, all full of high trees, whose fruits ravished the wits, O my mother, for that they were all of various-coloured crystal, and I fared on till I came to the pavilion wherein was this lamp; whereupon I took it forthright and quenching it, poured out that which was therein."

[So saying,] he pulled out the lamp from his sleeve and showed it to his mother. Moreover, he showed her the jewels which he had brought from the garden. Now there were two great purses full of these jewels, whereof not one was to be found with the kings of mankind; and Alaeddin knew not their value, but thought that they were glass or crystal. "Then, O my mother," continued he, "after I had fetched the lamp and had gone forth [the garden] and came to the door of the treasure, I cried out to the accursed Maugrabin, who feigned himself my uncle, to give me his hand and pull me up, for I was laden with things which weighed me down, so that it was not possible for me to mount alone. However, he would not give me his hand, but said to me, 'Reach me the lamp that is with thee, and after I will give thee my hand and pull thee up.' I, seeing that I had put the lamp within my sleeve and the purses atop of it, could not reach it to give it to him and said to him, 'O my-uncle, I cannot give thee the lamp. When I come up, I will give it to thee.' But he would not help me up; nay, he would e'en have the lamp, and his intent was to take it from me and turn back the earth over me and destroy me, even as he did with me in the end. This, then, O my mother, was what befell me from that foul wizard." And he told her all that had passed between them from first to last and fell to reviling the Maugrabin with all rancour and heat of heart, saying, "Out on this accursed one, this foul sorcerer, this hard-hearted oppressor, this inhuman, perfidious, hypocritical villain, lacking all mercy and ruth!"

When Alaeddin's mother heard her son's speech and that which the accursed Maugrabin did with him, she said to him, "Yea, verily, O my son, he is a misbeliever and a hypocrite, who destroyeth folk with his sorcery; but glory to God the Most High, who hath delivered thee from the perfidy and guile of this accursed sorcerer, of whom I thought that he was in very deed thine uncle." Now, Alaeddin had passed three days without sleep and found himself drowsy; so he [withdrew to his chamber and] slept. His mother did likewise and Alaeddin ceased not to sleep till next day, near noontide, when he awoke and immediately sought somewhat to eat, for that he was anhungred; and his mother said to him, "O my son, I have nought to give thee to eat, for that all I had by me thou atest yesterday. But wait awhile; I have here a little yarn by me and I am going down to the market, so I may sell it and buy thee withal somewhat thou mayst eat." "O my mother," rejoined Alaeddin, "keep the yarn and sell it not; but give me the lamp which I brought home, so I may arise and sell it and with its price buy somewhat we may eat. Methinketh it will fetch more than the yarn." So she arose and fetched the lamp; but, finding it exceeding dirty, she said to him, "O my son, this lamp is dirty, and if we wash it and furbish it, it will sell for a better price." Accordingly she took a little sand and fell to scouring the lamp withal; but scarce had she begun to rub it when there appeared to her one of the Jinn, foul of favour and monstrous of make as he were of the giants, and said to her, "Say what thou wilt of me. Here am I, thy slave and the slave of whoso hath in his hand the lamp; and not I alone, but all the slaves of the wonderful lamp that is in thy hand." When she saw his frightful aspect, she trembled and fear get hold upon her and her tongue was tied, nor could she return an answer, for that she was not used to look upon apparitions like unto this; so she fell down aswoon of her terror.

Now Alaeddin her son was standing afar off and he had seen the slave of the ring which he had rubbed in the treasure; so, when he heard the genie's speech to his mother, he hastened to take the lamp from her hand and said to him, "O slave of the lamp, I am hungry; my will is that thou bring me somewhat I may eat, and be it somewhat good past conceit." The genie was absent the twinkling of an eye and [returning,] brought him a great costly tray of sheer silver, whereon were twelve platters of various kinds and colours of rich meats and two silver cups and two flagons of clarified old wine and bread whiter than snow; all which he set before him and disappeared. So Alaeddin arose and sprinkled rosewater on his mother's face and made her smell to strong perfumes; whereupon she revived and he said to her, “Rise, O my mother, so we may eat of this food that God the Most High hath vouchsafed us.” When she saw the great silver tray, she marvelled and said to Alaeddin, “O my son, who is the generous, the bountiful one that hath sought out our hunger and our poverty? Indeed, we are beholden to him. Apparently the Sultan hath heard of our case and our wretchedness and hath sent us this tray.” “O my mother,” answered Alaeddin, “this is no time for questioning; rise, so we may eat, for we are anhungred.”

So they arose and sitting down to the tray, proceeded to eat, whilst Alaeddin’s mother tasted food such as she had never in all her life eaten. And they ate diligently with all appetite, for stress of hunger, more by token that the food [was such as] is given to kings, nor knew they if the tray were precious or not, for that never in their lives had they seen the like of these things. When they had made an end of eating and were full (and there was left them, over and above what sufficed them, [enough] for the evening-meal and for the next day also), they arose and washing their hands, sat down to talk; whereupon Alaeddin’s mother turned to her son and said to him, “O my son, tell me what befell of the genie, now that, praised be God, we have eaten of His bounty and are satisfied and thou hast no pretext for saying to me, ‘I am anhungred.’” So he told her all that had passed between himself and the genie, whenas she fell down aswoon of her affright; whereat exceeding wonderment took her and she said to him, “It is true, then, that the Jinn appear to the sons of Adam, though I, O my son, in all my days, I have never seen them, and methinketh this is he who delivered thee, whenas thou west in the treasure.” “Nay, O my mother,” answered he, “this was not he; he who appeared to thee is the slave of the lamp.” “How so, O my son?” asked she; and he said, “This slave is other of make than that. That was the servant of the ring and this thou sawest is the slave of the lamp which was in thy hand.” When his mother heard this, “Well, well!” cried she. “Then the accursed who appeared to me and came nigh to kill me for affright is of the lamp?” “Ay is he,” answered Alaeddin; and she said to him, “I conjure thee, O my son, by the milk thou suckedst of me, that thou cast away from thee both lamp and ring, for that they will be to us a cause of exceeding fear and I could not endure to see them a second time; nay, their commerce is forbidden unto us, for that the prophet (whom God bless and keep) warneth us against them." "O my mother," answered Alaeddin, "thy speech is on my head and eyes; but, as for this that thou sayest, it may not be that I should cast away either the lamp or the ring; nay, thou seest that which it did with us of good, whenas we were anhungred, and know, O my mother, that the lying Maugrabin enchanter, what time I went down into the treasure, sought nought of gold nor of silver, whereof the four places were full, but charged me bring him the lamp and that only, for that he knew the greatness of its virtues; and except he knew it to be exceeding of might, he had not toiled and travailed and come from his land to this in quest of it, nor had he shut the treasure on me, whenas he failed of the lamp, seeing I gave it him not. Wherefore, O my mother, it behoveth us keep this lamp and guard it with all care, for that this is our support and this it is shall enrich us; and it behoveth us show it not unto any. On like wise, as for the ring, it may not be that I should put it off from my finger, forasmuch as, but for this ring, thou hadst not seen me again on life; nay, I had died under the earth within the treasure; so how can I put it off from my hand and who knoweth what may happen to me in time to come of error or calamity or shift of the shifts of mischance, from which the ring might deliver me? However, of regard for thy wish, I will lay up the lamp and let thee not see it henceforth." When his mother heard his words and pondered them, she saw them to be just and true and said to him, "O my son, do what thou wilt. For my part, I wish never to see them nor ever again to behold that loathsome aspect which I saw [but now]."

Alaeddin and his mother abode two days eating of the food which the genie had brought, and when it was finished and he knew that there was left them nothing to eat, he arose and taking a platter of those which the slave had brought on the tray (now they were of fine gold, but Alaeddin knew it not) went with it to the market, where a Jew, a man viler than devils themselves, accosted him and he gave him the platter. When the Jew saw it, he took Alaeddin aside, so none might see him, and examining the platter, found it of fine gold, but knew not if Alaeddin was ware of its worth or if he was ignorant thereof; so he said to him, “How much, O my lord, for this platter?” And Alaeddin answered him, saying, “Thou knowest how much it is worth.” The Jew was perplexed how much he should give Alaeddin for the platter, by reason of his having made him an adroit answer, and bethought himself to give him little, but feared lest he should be aware of its value and debated with himself if he should give him much. Then said he in himself, “Most like he knoweth not its value;” so he brought out of his pocket a gold diner and gave it to him. When Alaeddin saw the diner in his hand, he took it and went off in haste, whereby the Jew knew that the lad was unaware of the value of the plate and repented him sore that he had given him a gold diner and not a carat of three-score:

Meanwhile Alaeddin tarried not, but went forthright to the baker and bought of him bread and changed the diner; then, returning to his mother, he gave her the bread and the rest of the money and said to her, “O my mother, go and buy us what we need.” So she arose and going to the market, bought all that they needed and they ate and were cheered. Then, whenassoever the price of a platter was spent, Alaeddin would take another and carry it to the Jew; on which wise the accursed Jew bought them all of him for a small matter and would fain also have reduced the price; but, since he had given him a diner the first time, he feared to offer him less, lest the lad should go and sell to another and he lose that excessive profit. Accordingly, Alaeddin ceased not to sell him platter after platter till he had sold them all and there was left him only the tray whereon they had been; then, for that it was big and heavy, he went and fetched the Jew to the house and brought out to him the tray. When he saw it and noted its bigness, he gave Alaeddin ten diners, which he took, and the Jew went his way.

Alaeddin and his mother lived upon the ten diners till they came to an end; then he arose and bringing out the lamp, rubbed it, whereupon the slave of the lamp, to wit, the genie whom he had seen before, appeared to him and said to him, “Seek what thou wilt, O my lord, for that I am thy slave and the slave of whoso hath with him the lamp.” Quoth Alaeddin, “It is my will that thou bring me a tray of food like unto that which thou broughtest me erewhen, for that I am hungry;” and the slave brought him, in the twinkling of an eye, a tray like unto that which he had brought him before, and on it twelve magnificent platters full of rich meats, together with flagons of clarified wine and bread of the finest. Now Alaeddin's mother, when she knew that her son was minded to rub the lamp, had gone out, so she might not see the genie again; but, after a little, she came in to him and seeing the tray full of silver platters, whilst the whole house reeked with the fragrance of the rich meats, marvelled and rejoiced; and Alaeddin said to her, "O my mother, thou badest me throw away the lamp. See now its uses." "O my son," answered she, "may God prosper him; but fain would I not see him." Then they sat down to the tray and ate and drank till they were satisfied, laying up that which remained with them against the morrow.

Then, when that which was with them of food was finished, Alaeddin arose and taking one of the platters under his clothes, went in quest of the Jew, so he might sell it to him; but, as chance willed it, he passed by the shop of a goldsmith, an honest, pious man, who feared God. When the latter saw Alaeddin, he accosted him and said to him, "O my son, what wilt thou? This many a time have I seen thee pass hereby and betake thyself to such an one, a Jew, and I have seen thee give him certain things. Nay, methinketh even now thou hast somewhat with thee and art seeking him, so thou mayst sell it to him. But thou knowest not, O my son, that the good of the Muslims, believers in the unity of God the Most High, is lawful spoil in the eyes of Jews; nay, they still cheat the Muslims and especially this accursed one with whom thou dealest and into whose hands thou hast fallen. Wherefore, O my son, an thou have with thee aught thou wouldst sell, show it to me and fear nothing, for that, by the truth of God the Most High, I will give thee its price." Accordingly, Alaeddin brought out the platter to the old man, who took it and weighing it in his scales, said to him, "Was it the like of this thou usest to sell to the Jew?" "Ay," replied Alaeddin, "its like and its brother." "And how much," asked the goldsmith, "useth he to give thee to its price?" And Alaeddin said, "He useth to give me a diner."

When the goldsmith heard this, "Out on this accursed one," cried he, "who fleeceth the servants of God the Most High!" Then he looked at Alaeddin and said to him, "O my son, this Jew is a cheat, who hath cheated thee and laughed at thee, for that the silver of this thy platter is pure and fine; and I have weighed it and find its worth threescore diners and ten; so, an it please thee take its price, take [it].” Accordingly, he counted out to him seventy diners and he took them and thanked him for his kindness, in that he had shown him the Jew’s trickery. Thenceforward, whenassoever the price of one platter was spent, he would carry another to the old goldsmith, and on this wise he and his mother increased in substance; but they ceased not to live at their sufficiency, midwise [betwixt rich and poor], without excessive spending or squandering. As for Alaeddin, he left idleness and the commerce of striplings and took to consorting with grown men; nay, he would go every day to the market of the merchants and sit with the great and the small of them and question of the ways and fashions of commerce and the prices of articles of merchandise and otherwhat. He used also to go to the market of the goldsmiths and the market of the jewellers, and there he would sit and look upon the different kinds of jewels and see them bought and sold; whereby he became aware that the fruits of the trees, wherewith he had filled the purses, whenas he was in the treasure, were neither glass nor crystal, but jewels, and knew that he had happened upon great wealth, such as kings might nowise compass. Moreover, he noted all the jewels that were in the jewellers’ market, but saw not [among] the biggest [of them] one to match with the smallest of those he had at home.

He ceased not to go daily to the market of the jewellers and to clap up acquaintance with the folk, making friends with them and questioning them of buying and selling and giving and taking and dear and cheap, till, one day of the days, he arose in the morning and donning his clothes, went forth, intending, as of wont, for the jewellers’ market; but, as he went, he heard the crier proclaiming aloud on this wise, “By commandment of the Lord of Beneficence, the king of the age and monarch of the time and the tide, let all the folk shut their shops and stores and enter their houses, for that the Lady Bedrulbudour, daughter of the Sultan, purposeth to go to the bath, and whoso transgresseth the commandment, his punishment shall be death and his blood be on his own head.” When Alaeddin heard this proclamation, he longed to look upon the Sultan’s daughter and said in himself, “All the folk talk of her grace and goodliness, and the uttermost of my desire is to see her.” So he cast about for a device how he might contrive to see the Lady Bedrulbudour and him-seemed he were best stand behind the door of the bath, that he might see her face, as she entered. Accordingly he betook himself to the bath, awhile in advance, and posted himself behind the door, whereas none of the folk might see him.

Presently, the Sultan's daughter came forth and went round about the city and its thoroughfares and diverted herself by viewing it; then she repaired to the bath and when she came thither, she lifted her face-veil, as she entered; whereupon her face shone out, as it were the resplendent sun or a precious pearl, and she was as saith of her one of her describers:

Who sprinkled the kohl of enchantment upon her eyes
    And gathered the bloom of the rose from her cheeks, fruit-wise?
And who was it let down the curtained night of her hair
    And eke through its glooms made the light of her forehead rise?

When she raised the veil from her face and Alaeddin saw her, he said, "Verily, her fashion glorifieth the Great Creator and extolled be the perfection of Him who made her and graced her with this beauty and goodliness!" And his back was cloven in sunder, when he saw her; his thought was confounded and his understanding dazed and the love of her gat hold upon his whole heart; so he turned back and returning home, went in to his mother, like one distraught. She bespoke him and he answered her neither yea nor nay; then she brought him the morning-meal, as he abode on this wise, and said to him, "O my son, what hath betided thee? Doth there ail thee aught? Tell me what hath befallen thee, for that, against thy wont, I bespeak thee and thou answerest me not."

Now Alaeddin had been used to think that women were all like his mother and he had heard of the beauty of the Lady Bedrulbudour, daughter of the Sultan, but had not known what beauty and grace were; so he turned to his mother and said to her, "Leave me;" but she was instant with him to come and eat. Accordingly, he came forward and ate a little; then, rising, he threw himself on his bed and lay musing till break of morn; and on this wise he abode all next day. His mother was perplexed at his case, unknowing what had befallen him, and bethought herself that belike he was sick; so she came up to him and questioned him, saying, "O my son, an thou feel aught of pain or otherwhat, tell me, that I may go fetch thee a physician, more by token there is presently in the city a physician from the land of the Arabs, whom the Sultan hath sent to bring hither, and report saith of him that he is exceeding skilful; so [tell me] if thou art sick, that I may go and call him to thee."

When Alaeddin heard his mother offer to fetch him the physician, he said to her, "O my mother, I am well and not sick, but I had thought that women were all like unto thee. However, yesterday, I saw the Lady Bedrulbudour, the Sultan's daughter, as she went to the bath;" and he told her all that had happened to him, adding, "And most like thou heardest the crier proclaiming that none should open his shop nor stand in the road, so the Lady Bedrulbudour might pass to the bath; but I saw her even as she is, for that, when she came to the door of the bath, she lifted her veil, and when I noted her favour and viewed that noble form of hers, there befell me, O my mother, a passion of yearning for love of her and desire of her usurped mine every part; nor can I ever more have ease, except I get her, and I purpose, therefore, to demand her of the Sultan her father in the way of law and righteousness."

When Alaeddin's mother heard her son's speech, she thought little of his wit and said to him, "O my son, the name of God encompass thee! Meseemeth thou hast lost thy wit; return to thy senses, O my son, and be not like the madmen!" "Nay, O my mother," replied he, "I have not lost my wits nor am I mad; and this thy speech shall not change that which is in my mind, nor is rest possible to me except I get the darling of my heart, the lovely Lady Bedrulbudour. And my intent is to demand her of her father the Sultan." So she said to him, "O my son, my life upon thee, speak not thus, lest one hear thee and say of thee that thou art mad. Put away from thee this extravagance: who shall undertake an affair like this and demand it of the Sultan? Meknoweth not how thou wilt do to make this request of the Sultan, and if thou speak sooth, by whom wilt thou make it?" "O my mother," rejoined Alaeddin, "by whom [should I make] a request like this, when thou art at hand, and whom have I trustier than thyself? Wherefore my intent is that thou shalt make this request for me." "O my son," quoth she, "God deliver me from this! What, have I lost my wits like thee? Put away this thought from thy mind and bethink thee who thou art, O my son, — the son of a tailor, the poorest and least of the tailors in this city, and I also am thy mother and my folk are exceeding poor; so how wilt thou dare to demand the Sultan's daughter, whom her father would not vouchsafe to marry with kings' sons and Sultans, except they were his peers in puissance and rank and noblesse; nay, were they one degree less than he, he would not give them his daughter."

Alaeddin waited till his mother had made an end of her speech and said to her, "O my mother, all that thou thinkest I know; marry, I know full well that I am the son of poor folk, nor may all this thy talk anywise avail to move me from my purpose; but I beseech thee, an I be thy very son and thou love me, do me this kindness; else wilt thou lose me, for death hasteneth upon me, an I attain not my wish of the beloved of my heart. In any case, O my mother, I am thy son." When his mother heard his speech, she wept of her concern for him and said to him, "Yes, O my son, I am thy mother and thou art my son and the darling of my heart; I have none other than thee and the extreme of my desire is to rejoice in thee and marry thee. So, an thou wilt, I will seek thee a bride of our own rank. But suppose [I do this], they [will] ask at once an thou have craft or land or trade or garden, so thou mayst live, and what shall I answer them. And if I cannot answer poor folk like ourselves, how, O my son, shall I dare to seek the King's daughter of China, who hath none before him and none after him? Wherefore do thou ponder this matter in thine understanding. And who seeketh her? The son of a tailor. Indeed, I know that, an I speak of this, it will but be for the increase of our ill luck, for that this affair will bring us in great danger with the Sultan and belike there will be death therein for thee and for me. As for me, how can I adventure upon this danger and this effrontery? Moreover, O my son, on what wise shall I demand thee his daughter of the Sultan and how shall I avail to go in to him? Nay, if they question me, what shall I answer them? Most like they will deem me a madwoman. And suppose I gain admission to the presence, what shall I take by way of offering to the Sultan's highness? It is true, O my son, that the Sultan is clement and rejecteth none that cometh to him for protection or craveth a boon of him, for that he is bountiful and beneficent unto all, great and small; but he bestoweth his favours upon those who are deserving thereof or who have done some feat of arms before him or have wrought for the service or defence of the realm; and thou, O my son, tell me, what hast thou done for the Sultan or the realm, that thou shouldst merit of him this boon? Again, this that thou cravest is beyond thy condition; so it cannot be that the king will grant thee that which thou seekest. Moreover, whoso presenteth himself before the Sultan and craveth favours of him, it behoveth him take in his hand somewhat that sorteth with the royal dignity; and as I said to thee, how canst thou presume to present thyself before the Sultan and seek of him his daughter, without aught thou mayst proffer him of that which sorteth with his rank?"

"O my mother," replied Alaeddin, "thou speakest justly and deemest that which is true, and it behoveth me consider all that whereof thou mindest me; but, O my mother, the love of the Sultan's daughter, the Lady Bedrulbudour, hath entered into the innermost of my heart; and there can be no rest for me, except I obtain her. Moreover, thou mindest me of somewhat I had forgotten, and that a thing which emboldeneth me to seek of him his daughter by thee. Thou sayst, O my mother, that I have no gift to present to the Sultan, according to the wont of the folk, whilst in fact I have by me a gift and an offering, the like whereof methinketh no king ever possessed, no, nor aught to match therewith; for thou must know, O my mother, that the fruits, which I brought in the purses from the treasure and which I deemed glass or crystal, are very jewels, methinketh all the kings of the world may not compass the least of them, and I, of my companying with the jewellers, know that they are precious stones. Wherefore, an thou please, have the goodness to rise and bring me such a China dish which we have by us, that I may fill it with these jewels, and thou shalt take it as a present to the Sultan. By this means I am assured that the thing will be easy to thee, and do thou stand before the Sultan and seek of him my desire; but, O my mother, an thou refuse to further me with thine endeavour for the attainment of my wish of the Lady Bedrulbudour, know that I am a dead man. Be not concerned for the gift, for these be exceeding precious jewels, and know, O my mother, that I have gone many a time to the market of the jewellers and have seen them sell jewels, that had not an hundredth part of the beauty of these of ours, at exceeding high prices such as man's wit cannot conceive. When, therefore, I saw this, I said [in myself], 'Verily, the jewels that are with us are exceeding precious.' So now, O my mother, arise, as I bade thee, and fetch me the China dish whereof I bespoke thee, that we may range of these jewels therein and see how they show."

Accordingly, she arose and brought the China dish, saying in herself, "Let us see if my son's speech be true concerning these jewels or not." So she set the dish before Alaeddin and he brought out jewels of all kinds from the purses and proceeded to range them in the dish till he filled it. When it was full, his mother looked at the dish, but could not gaze fixedly thereon, for the radiance of the jewels and their lustre and the excess of their flashing; so she shut her eyes and her wit was confounded at them; yet was she not certified that their value was in very deed so great as her son had said, but bethought her that his speech might be true in that their like was not found with kings. Then Alaeddin turned to her and said, "See, O my mother, this is a magnificent present for the Sultan and I am assured that thou wilt get of him exceeding honour and that he will receive thee with all consideration. And now, O my mother, there remaineth to thee no excuse; so be good enough to take this dish and go with it to the palace."

"O my son," replied she, "true it is that the present is exceedingly costly and precious and as thou sayest, none hath the like thereof; but who shall dare to come forward and seek of the Sultan his daughter Bedrulbudour? Nay, I dare not adventure myself and say to him, 'I want thy daughter,' whenas he asketh me, 'What wouldst thou?' Marry, O my son,, my tongue will be tied. And grant that Allah make [the thing] possible and I take courage and say to him, 'I desire to ally myself to thee by [marrying] thy daughter the Lady Bedrulbudour with my son Alaeddin,' they will straightway deem me mad and will put me out with ignominy and reproach; nay, I need not tell thee that by this I shall fall into danger of death, and not I only, but thou also. Withal, O my son, of regard for thy wish, needs must I take courage and go; but, O my son, if the King receive me and honour me for the gift's sake and I seek of him that which thou wilt in the matter of marrying his daughter and he ask me, after the wont of the folk, what are thy possessions and thy revenues, what shall I say to him? And most like, O my son, he will ask me of this ere he ask me of thyself." And Alaeddin said to her, "Nay, it cannot be that the Sultan will ask this, whenas he seeth the jewels and their magnificence, and it booteth not to think of a thing that will not happen. Do thou but rise and seek me his daughter of him and proffer him these jewels and sit not magnifying the affair in thy thought beforehand. Moreover, O my mother, thou knowest of the lamp which is with me and which presently provideth for our livelihood; nay, all that I seek of it it will bring me, and I trust by its means I shall know how to answer the Sultan, an he ask me of this."

They abode in talk of the matter all that night and when the morning morrowed, Alaeddin's mother arose and fortified her heart, more by token that her son expounded to her somewhat of the properties of the lamp and its uses, in that it would bring them all they sought. But, when he saw that she heartened herself for that which he set forth to her of its virtues, he feared lest she should talk of this to the folk, so he said to her, "O my mother, beware lest thou bespeak any of the lamp and its uses, for that this is our fortune; be careful and exceed not in speech thereof to any one, lest we lose it and lose this our present prosperity, for that it is from it." "Have no fear for that, O my son," answered she and rising, took the dish wherein were the jewels and wrapping it in a fine handkerchief, went forth betimes, so she might reach the Divan and enter, ere it became crowded. When she came to the palace, the Divan was not yet assembled and she saw the Vizier and certain of the chiefs of the state entering the presence-chamber. After a while, the Divan being complete with the Viziers and the chiefs of the state and officers and Amirs and grandees, the Sultan appeared and the Viziers and other the officials and notables ranged themselves before him, whilst he sat down on the throne of his kingship and all who were present in the

Divan stood before him, with hands clasped behind them, awaiting his commandment to sit. So he bade them be seated and they all sat down, each in his several room; then the petitioners presented themselves before the Sultan and each affair was decided in its course, till the Divan came to an end, when the King rose and entered the palace and each went his way.

As for Alaeddin's mother, having come before all, she found room to enter, but withal none bespoke her, so he should bring her in before the Sultan; wherefore she ceased not standing till the Divan broke up and the Sultan rose and entered the palace and all went their ways. When she saw the Sultan rise from his throne and enter the harem, she took her way homeward and returning on her steps, entered her house. Alaeddin, seeing her with the dish in her hand, knew that most like some mischance had betided her, but cared not to question her till she entered and setting down the dish, told him what had passed and finally said to him, "God be praised, O my son, I mustered courage to find myself a place in the Divan, albeit I could not win to speak with the Sultan to day; but to-morrow, an it please God the Most High, I will bespeak him. To-day there were many other folk, like myself, unable to get speech of the Sultan; but be easy, O my son; to-morrow I will without fail bespeak him on thy behalf, and what happened not shall happen." When Alaeddin heard his mother's words, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy, albeit, of the excess of his love and longing for the Lady Bedrulbudour, he had looked for the matter to be accomplished then and there; nevertheless, he used patience.

They slept that night and on the morrow Alaeddin's mother arose and went with the dish to the Sultan's Divan, but found it closed; so she asked the folk and they said to her, "The Sultan holdeth a Divan but thrice a week;" wherefore she was compelled to return home. Then she proceeded to go every day, and whenas she found the Divan open, she would stand before the door, till it broke up, when she would return home; and whiles she went and found the Divan closed. On this wise she abode a week's space and the Sultan saw her at each Divan; so, when she went on the last day [of the week] and stood, according to her wont, before the Divan, till it was ended, but could not muster courage to enter or say aught, the Sultan arose and entering the harem, turned to his chief Vizier, who was with him, and said to him, "O Vizier, these six or seven days past I have seen yonder old woman come hither at every Divan and I note that she still carrieth somewhat under her veil. Hast thou any knowledge of her, O Vizier, and knowest thou what is her want?" "O our lord the Sultan," replied the Vizier, "verily women are little of wit; and most like this woman cometh to complain to thee of her husband or one of her folk," The Sultan was not content with the Vizier's reply, but bade him, an she came again to the Divan, bring her before him forthright; whereupon the Vizier laid his hand on his head and answered, "Hearkening and obedience, O our lord the Sultan."

Meanwhile, Alaeddin's mother, albeit she was grown exceeding weary and dejected, yet made light of all weariness, for her son's sake, and continued, as of her wont, to go every court-day and stand in the Divan before the Sultan. Accordingly, one day of the days, she went to the Divan, as of her wont, and stood before the Sultan; and when he saw her, he called his Vizier and said to him, "Yonder is the woman of whom I bespoke thee yesterday; bring her now before me, so I may see what her suit is and accomplish unto her her occasion." So the Vizier arose forthright and let bring Alaeddin's mother in before the Sultan. When she came into the latter's presence, she made her obeisance to him and did him reverence, wishing him glory and continuance and eternity of prosperity and kissing the ground before him. Then said he to her, "O woman, I see thee come every day to the Divan and thou speakest not of aught. Tell me an thou have a want, that I may accomplish it unto thee;" whereupon she kissed the earth a second time and called down blessings upon him, then answered, "Ay, O King of the Age, as thy head liveth, I have indeed a want; but before all things do thou give me thine assurance, so I may make bold to prefer my suit to the hearing of our lord the Sultan, for that belike Thy Grace will find it a strange one."

The Sultan, that he might learn what her suit was and for that he was of his nature exceeding clement, gave her his assurance and bidding all who were with him go out forthright, abode alone [with her], he and the Grand Vizier. Then he turned to her and said, "Tell me thy suit, and the assurance of God the Most High be upon thee."

Quoth she, “O King of the Age, I wish thy pardon also.” And he said to her, “God pardon thee!” Then said she to him, “O our lord the Sultan, I have a son, whose name is Alaeddin, and one day of the days he heard the crier proclaim that none should open his shop nor show himself in the thoroughfares of the city, for that the Lady Bedrulbudour, the daughter of our lord the Sultan, was going to the bath. When my son heard this, he wished to see her; so he hid himself in a place, whence he might see her well, and this was behind the door of the bath. Accordingly, when she came up, he saw her and viewed her well, beyond his wish; and from that time till now, O King of the Age, life hath not been pleasant to him and he will e’en have me seek her of Thy Grace, so thou mayst marry her with him, and I cannot do away this conceit from his wit, for that the love of her hath gotten possession of his vitals, so that he saith to me, ‘Know, O mother mine, that, except I attain my desire, assuredly I am a dead man.’ Wherefore I crave Thy Grace’s clemency and hope that thou wilt pardon me and my son this effrontery neither be wroth with us therefor.”

When the King heard her story, he fell a-laughing, of his clemency, and asked her, “What is that thou hast with thee and what is that bundle?” Whereupon she, seeing that he was not angered at her words, but laughed, opened the handkerchief forthright and proffered him the dish of jewels. When the Sultan saw the jewels (and indeed, whenas she raised the handkerchief from them, the Divan became as it were all illumined with lamp-clusters and candlesticks), he was amazed and confounded at their radiance and fell a-marvelling at their lustre and bigness and beauty; and he said, “Never saw I the like of these jewels for beauty and bigness and perfection, nor methinketh is one of them found in my treasuries.” Then he turned to his Vizier and said to him, “How sayst thou, O Vizier? Sawest thou ever in thy life the like of these magnificent jewels?” “Never, O our lord the Sultan,” replied the Vizier, “nor, methinketh, is the least of those which be here found in the treasuries of our lord the King.” Quoth the Sultan, “Doth not he who giveth me these jewels deserve to be bridegroom to my daughter Bedrulbudour? Marry, by what I see, meseemeth none is worthier of her than he.”

When the Vizier heard the Sultan’s words, his tongue was tied for despite and he was overcome with exceeding chagrin, forasmuch as the King had promised him that he would marry his daughter to his son; so, after a little, he said to him, "O King of the age, Thy Grace condescended to promise me that the Lady Bedrulbudour should be my son's; wherefore it behoveth thine exalted highness appoint a delay of three months, and God willing, my son's present shall be greater than this." The King, for all he knew that this was a thing whereto the Vizier might not avail, no, nor the greatest King, nevertheless exercised his clemency and granted him the delay he sought; then, turning to the old woman, he said to her, "Go to thy son and tell him I give him [my] word that my daughter shall be in his name; but needs must I take order for her equipment; wherefore it behoveth him grant us a delay of three months."

Alaeddin's mother took the answer and thanked the Sultan and prayed for him, then went forth and fared homeward in haste, flying of her joy, till she came to the house and entered. Her son saw her laughing-faced and foreboded good news; more by token that she returned forthright and tarried not, as on each day past, neither brought back the dish. Accordingly he asked her and said to her, "God willing, O my mother, thou bringest me good news; the jewels and their value have wrought their work and thou wilt have found acceptance with the Sultan; yea, he will have shown thee favour and given ear unto thy suit." So she told him all that had passed and how the Sultan had received her and had marvelled, both he and his Vizier, at the size and beauty of the jewels, and how he had promised her that [quoth she] "his daughter shall be in thy name. But, O my son, ere he promised me, the Vizier whispered him somewhat, whereupon he appointed me for three months hence; and I am fearful lest the Vizier be a man of evil disposition, who will change the King's mind."

When Alaeddin heard his mother's words and how the Sultan had appointed her for three months [thence], his heart was lightened and he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and said, "Since the Sultan hath promised for three months [hence], true, it is long, but in any case my joy is great." Then he thanked her for her kindness and the pains she had taken and said to her, "By Allah, O my mother, it is as I were in a tomb and now thou hast raised me up therefrom; and I praise God the Most High, for I am presently certified that there is none richer or happier than I in the world.” Then he waited till two of the three months were past, when his mother went out one day of the days, at sundown, to buy oil, and saw the markets closed and the city all decorated and the folk setting candles and flowers in their windows and saw troops, horse and foot, and mounted eunuchs drawn up in state, with cressets and lustres burning. At this wonder took her; he went to an oilman’s shop there open and buying oil of him, said to him, “[I conjure thee] by thy life, O uncle, tell me what is toward to-day in this city, that the folk are making this decoration and the markets [are shut] and the houses all adorned and the troops drawn up in state?” Quoth he, “O woman, methinketh thou art a stranger and art not of this city.” “Nay,” answered she, “but I am of this city;” and he said to her, “Thou art of this city and knowest not that this is the night of the going in of the Grand Vizier’s son to the Lady Bedrulbudour, the Sultan’s daughter? Nay, he is presently in the bath and yonder Amirs and troops are drawn up awaiting him, against he come forth, so they may carry him in procession to the palace of the Sultan’s daughter.”

When Alaeddin’s mother heard this, she was troubled and perplexed in her wit how she should do to acquaint her son with this woeful news, for that the poor wretch was counting the hours till the three months should be ended. So she returned home forthright and going in to Alaeddin, said to him, “O my son, I have news to tell thee, but it irketh me for thy chagrin therefrom.” Quoth he, “Speak; what is the news?” And she said to him, “The Sultan hath gone from his promise to thee in the matter of his daughter, the Lady Bedrulbudour, for that this very night the Vizier’s son goeth in to her; and indeed methought at the time, O my son, the Vizier would change the Sultan’s mind, even as I told thee that he bespoke him privily before me.” “How knewest thou this,” asked Alaeddin, “that the Vizier’s son goeth in this night to the Lady Bedrulbudour?” So she told him all she had seen of the decorations in the city, whenas she went to buy the oil, and how the eunuchs and chiefs of the state were drawn up awaiting the Vizier’s son, against he should come forth of the bath, for that this was the night of his going in. When Alaeddin heard this, he fell into a fever of chagrin; but presently he bethought him of the lamp and rejoiced and said to his mother, "By thy life, O my mother, methinketh the Vizier's son shall not rejoice in her, as thou deemest. But now leave us be with this talk and go lay us the evening-meal, so we may sup; then, when I shall have passed a while in my chamber, all shall yet be well."

Accordingly, after he had supped, he went into his chamber and locking the door on himself, fetched the lamp and rubbed it; whereupon the genie at once appeared to him and said, "Seek what thou wilt, for I am thy slave and the slave of whoso hath in his hand the lamp, I and all the slaves of the lamp." And Alaeddin said to him, "Harkye, I sought of the Sultan to marry his daughter, and he appointed me for three months' time; however, he abode not by his promise, but gave her to the Vizier's son, and the latter purposeth to go in [to her] this night. Wherefore I do presently command thee, as thou art a loyal servant of the lamp, that this night, whenas thou seest the bride and bridegroom abed together, thou take them up in their bed [and bring them] hither. This is what I seek of thee." "Hearkening and obedience," answered the genie, "and if thou have a service [to require of me] other than this, command me whatsoever thou seekest." And Alaeddin said to him, "I have no present requirement save that whereof I have bespoken thee." So the slave disappeared and Alaeddin returned to finish his supper with his mother.

When he deemed it time for the genie's coming, he arose and entered his chamber; and after a little, the Marid appeared with the bridal pair in their bed; whereat Alaeddin rejoiced with exceeding great joy and said to the slave, "Bear this gallowsbird hence and couch him in the house of easance." The genie accordingly took up the bridegroom and couched him in the draught-house; moreover, ere he left him, he blew on him a blast wherewith he dried him up, and the Vizier's son abode in woeful case. Then he returned to Alaeddin and said to him, "An thou need otherwhat, tell me." And Alaeddin said to him, "Return in the morning, so thou mayst take them [back] to their place." "Hearkening and obedience," answered the genie and was gone; whereupon Alaeddin arose, — and indeed he had scarce believed that the thing should succeed with him, — and when he saw the Lady Bedrulbudour in his house, he entreated her with respect, albeit he had long burned for love of her, and said to her, "O princess of the fair, think not that I have brought thee hither to soil shine honour. God forbid! Nay, it was that I might not let others enjoy thee, for that thy father the Sultan gave me his word upon thee; so be thou in peace and assurance." As for the princess, when she found herself in that mean dark; house and heard Alaeddin's words, fear and trembling get hold upon her and she was confounded and could return him no answer. Then he arose and putting off his clothes, placed a sword between himself and her and lay down by her side in the bed, without treason; it sufficed him to prevent [the consummation of] her marriage with the Vizier's son. Nevertheless, the Lady Bedrulbudour passed the sorriest of nights, never in her life had she known a worse; whilst the Vizier's son lay in the draught-house and dared not stir for fear of the genie.

When it was morning, the genie presented himself before Alaeddin, without his rubbing the lamp, and said to him, "O my lord, an thou wish aught, command me withal, so I may do it on my head and eyes." And Alaeddin bade him go carry the bride and bridegroom to their own place. The genie did his bidding in the twinkling of an eye and laying the Vizier's son with the Lady Bedrulbudour, took them up and set them down in their place in the palace, without their seeing any one; but they were like to die of fright, when they felt themselves carried from place to place. Hardly had the genie set them down and gone out when the Sultan came to visit his daughter; and when the Vizier's son heard the door open, he straightway sprang out of bed, knowing that none might enter but the Sultan, and donned his clothes, albeit this irked him sore, for that he would fain have warmed himself a little, having had no time [to do so] since he left the draught-house. The Sultan came in to his daughter and kissing her between the eyes, gave her good-morrow and asked her of her bridegroom and if she was content with him; but she returned him no answer and looked at him with a dejected air. He bespoke her several times, but she was silent and answered him not a word; so he went out from her and going in to the Queen, told her what had passed between himself and the Lady Bedrulbudour.

The Queen, so she might not leave the Sultan angry with the Lady Bedrulbudour, said to him, "O King of the Age, this is the wont of most brides, on their wedding-day, to be shamefast and show somewhat of coyness. So be not vexed with her and after a day or two she will return to herself and proceed to speak with the folk; but now, O King of the Age, shame hindereth her from speaking. However, I purpose to go to her and see her." Accordingly she arose and donning her clothes, repaired to her daughter's apartment. Then, going up to her, she gave her good-morrow and kissed her between the eyes; but the Lady Bedrulbudour returned her no manner of answer and the Queen said in herself, "Needs must some strange thing have befallen her, to trouble her thus." So she asked her, saying, "O my daughter, what is the cause of this thy behaviour? Tell me what aileth thee, that I come to thee and give thee good-morrow and thou returnest me no answer."

The Lady Bedrulbudour raised her head and said to her, "Blame me not, O my mother; indeed, it behoved me receive thee with all reverence and worship, since thou honourest me by coming to me; but I beseech thee hear the cause of this my case and see how this night I have passed hath been for me the sorriest of nights. Hardly had we lain down, O my mother, when one, whose fashion I know not, took up the bed and transported us to a place dark, foul and mean." Then she told her mother the queen all that had betided her that night and how they had taken her bridegroom, leaving her alone, and how after a little there came another youth and lay down in the place of her bridegroom, putting a sword between himself and her; "and in the morning" [quoth she] "he who had brought us thither returned and taking us up, carried us back to our place here: and hardly had he brought us hither and left us when my father the Sultan entered and I had neither heart nor tongue to answer him for stress of fright and trembling which possessed me. And belike my father is vexed with me; wherefore I prithee, O my mother, tell him the cause of this my case, so he be not wroth with me for my failure to answer him neither blame me, but excuse me."

When the queen heard the princess's story, she said to her, "O my daughter, beware of telling this tale before any, lest they say, 'Verily the Sultan's daughter hath lost her wits.' Marry, thou diddest well in that thou acquaintedst not thy father with this; and beware, yea [again I say,] beware, O my daughter, of telling him thereof." "O my mother," rejoined the Lady Bedrulbudour, "indeed, I bespoke thee in sober earnest and have not lost my wits; nay, this is what happened to me, and an thou believe it not from me, ask my bridegroom." Quoth the queen, "Rise, O my daughter, and put away these illusions from thy thought; nay, don thy clothes and see the rejoicing that is toward in the town on thine account and the festivities that they celebrate in the kingdom for thy sake and hear the drums and the singing and look upon the decorations, all in honour of thy nuptials, O my daughter." Accordingly, she summoned the tirewomen, who dressed the Lady Bedrulbudour and busked her; whilst the Queen went in to the Sultan and told him that there had that night betided the princess a dream and illusions, saying, "Blame her not for her failure to answer thee." Moreover, she sent for the Vizier's son privily and questioned him of the affair, whether the Lady Bedrulbudour's speech was true or not; but he, of his fear to lose his bride, lest she should go from his hand, said to her, "O my lady, I know nothing of that which thou sayest;" wherefore the queen was certified that there had betided her daughter illusions and a dream.

The wedding rejoicings continued all that day, with dancing-women and singing-women, and all the instruments of mirth and minstrelsy were smitten, whilst the queen and the Vizier and his son were exceeding assiduous in keeping up the festivities, so the Lady Bedrulbudour should rejoice and her chagrin be dispelled; nay, they left nought that day of that which exciteth unto liesse but they did it before her, so she should leave what was in her mind and be cheered. But all this had no effect on her and she was silent and thoughtful and confounded at that which had befallen her that night. True, the Vizier's son had fared worse than she, for that he was couched in the draught-house; but he belied the matter and put away that tribulation from his thought, of his fear lest he should lose his bride and his rank, more by token that all the folk envied him his lot, for the much increase of honour it brought him, as also for the exceeding beauty and loveliness of the Lady Bedrulbudour.

As for Alaeddin, he went out that day and saw the rejoicings toward in the city and the palace and fell a-laughing, especially when he heard the folk speak of the honour which had betided the Vizier's son and the greatness of his good luck, in that he was become the Sultan's son-in-law, and the exceeding pomp used in his marriage and bridal festivities; and he said in himself, "Ye know not, good simple folk that ye are, what befell him last night, that ye envy him." Then, when the night came in and it was the season of sleep, Alaeddin arose and entering his chamber, rubbed the lamp, whereupon the genie appeared to him forthright and he bade him bring the princess and her bridegroom, as on the past night, ere the Vizier's son should take her maidenhead. The genie delayed not, but was absent a little while; and when it was the appointed time, he returned with the bed and therein the Lady Bedrulbudour and the Vizier's son. With the latter he did as he had done the past night, to wit, he took him and couched him in the draught-house, where he deft him parched for excess of fright and dismay; whilst Alaeddin arose and placing the sword between himself and the Lady Bedrulbudour, lay down and slept till the morning, when the genie appeared and restored the twain to their place, leaving Alaeddin full of joy at [the discomfiture of] the Vizier's son.

When the Sultan arose in the morning, he bethought himself to visit his daughter Bedrulbudour and see an she should do with him as she had done on the past day; so, as soon as he awoke from his sleep, he rose and donning his clothes, went to his daughter's chamber and opened the door. Whereupon the Vizier's son arose forthright and coming down from the bed, fell to donning his clothes, with ribs cracking for cold; for that, when the Sultan entered, it was no great while since the genie had brought them back. The Sultan went up to his daughter, the Lady Bedrulbudour, as she lay abed, and raising the curtain, gave her good morning and kissed her between the eyes and asked her how she did. She frowned and returned him no answer, but looked at him sullenly, as she were in sorry case. He was wroth with her, for that she made him no answer, and thought that something had betided her; so he drew the sword and said to her, "What hath befallen thee? Either thou shalt tell me what aileth thee or I will do away thy life this very moment. Is this the respect that is due to my rank and the honour in which thou holdest me, that I bespeak thee and thou answerest me not a word?"

When the Lady Bedrulbudour knew that her father was angry and saw the naked sword in his hand, she was like to swoon for fear; so she raised her head and said to him, “Dear my father, be not wroth with me, neither be thou hasty in thine anger, for that I am excusable in that which thou hast seen from me. Do but hearken what hath betided me and I am well assured that, whenas thou hearest my story of that which hath happened to me these two nights past, thou wilt excuse me and Thy Grace will be moved to compassion upon me, as I know from thy love for me.” Then she acquainted him with all that had befallen her and said to him, “O my father, an thou believe me not, ask my bridegroom and he will resolve Thy Grace of everything, albeit I know not what they did with him, when they took him from my side, nor where they set him.” When the Sultan heard his daughter’s story, he was sore concerned and his eyes brimmed with tears; then, sheathing the sword and coming up to her, he kissed her and said to her, “O my daughter, why didst thou not tell me yesterday, so I might have warded off from thee the torment and affright which have befallen thee this night? But no matter; arise and put away from thee this thought, and to-night I will set over thee those who shall guard thee, so there shall not again befall thee that which befell yesternight.” Then he returned to his pavilion and sent at once for the Vizier, who came and stood before him, awaiting his commands; and the Sultan said to him, “O Vizier, how deemest thou of this affair? Most like thy son hath told thee what happened to him and to my daughter.” “O King of the Age,” answered the Vizier, “I have not seen my son or yesterday or to-day.” Whereupon the Sultan acquainted him with all that his daughter the Lady Bedrulbudour had told him and said to him, “It is now my will that thou enquire of thy son the truth of the case, for it may be my daughter knoweth not for fright what happened to her, though methinketh her tale is all true.” So the Vizier arose and sending for his son, asked him of all that the Sultan had told him, if it were true or not. Whereupon, “O my father the Vizier,” replied the youth, “[God] preserve the Lady Bedrulbudour from leasing! Indeed, all she saith is true and these two nights past have been for us the sorriest of nights, instead of being nights of pleasance and delight. Marry, that which befell me was yet worse, for that, instead of sleeping with my bride in bed, I lay in the draught-house, a place dark and frightful, noisome of smell and accursed, and my ribs were straitened with cold." Brief, he told the Vizier all that had befallen him and ultimately said to him; "Dear my father, I beseech thee speak with the Sultan that he release me from this marriage. True, it is great honour for me to be the Sultan's son-in-law, more by token that the love of the Lady Bedrulbudour hath gotten possession of my vitals, but I cannot avail to endure one more night like the two that are past."

When the Vizier heard his son's words, he grieved and was exceeding chagrined, for that he had thought to greaten his son and advance him by making him the King's son-in-law; so he bethought himself and was perplexed anent the matter and what was to do therein; and indeed it irked him sore that the marriage should be dissolved, for that he had long besought the Ten that he might compass the like of that affair; so he said to his son, "Have patience, O my son, so we may see [how it will be] to-night, and we will set over you guards to guard you; but do not thou let slip this great honour, for that it hath fallen to none other than thyself." Therewith he left him and returning to the Sultan, told him that the Lady Bedrulbudour's story was true; whereupon quoth the Sultan, "Since the case is thus, we need no wedding-festivities." And he bade forthright break off the rejoicings and the marriage was dissolved. The folk and the people of the city marvelled at this strange thing, especially when they saw the Vizier and his son go forth the palace in a pitiable plight for stress of chagrin and despite, and they fell to asking, "What hath happened and why is the marriage avoided and the rejoicings broken off?" But none knew what was to do save Alaeddin, the suitor, who laughed in his sleeve. So the marriage was annulled; but the Sultan had forgotten his promise to Alaeddin's mother and never again bethought him thereof, neither he nor the Vizier; nor knew they whence came that which had happened.

Alaeddin waited till the three months had elapsed, after which the Sultan had promised that he would marry him to his daughter, the Lady Bedrulbudour, then despatched his mother to the Sultan to require him of the performance of his promise. So she repaired to the palace and when the Sultan came to the Divan and saw her standing before him, he remembered his promise to her, that after three months he would marry his daughter to her son, and turning to the

Vizier, said to him, “O Vizier, yonder is the woman who presented us with the jewels and we gave her our word that after three months [we would marry our daughter to her son]. Bring her before me forthright.” So the Vizier went and brought Alaeddin’s mother before the Sultan; and when she came into the presence, she made her obeisance to him and prayed God to vouchsafe him glory and endurance of prosperity. The Sultan asked her if she had a need, and she said to him, “O King of the Age, the three months are ended, after which thou didst promise me thou wouldst marry my son Alaeddin to thy daughter the Lady Bedrulbudour.” The Sultan was perplexed at this her claim, more by token that he saw her in poor case, as she were the meanest of the folk; but the present which she had made him was exceeding magnificent [and indeed] beyond price; so he turned to the Vizier and said to him, “How deemest thou? What shall we do? It is true I gave her my word, but meseemeth they are poor folk and not of the chiefs of the people.”

The Vizier, who was like to die of envy and chagrin for that which had befallen his son, said in himself, “How shall one like this marry the Sultan’s daughter and my son lose this honour?” So he said to the Sultan, “O my lord, it is an easy matter to rid ourselves of this vagabond, for that it would not beseem Thy Grace to give thy daughter to a man like this, of whom it is not known what he is.” Quoth the Sultan, “On what wise shall we rid ourselves of this man, seeing I have given him my word and a King’s word is his bond?” “O my lord,” answered the Vizier, “my counsel is that thou require of him forty dishes of pure virgin gold, full of jewels, such as she brought thee the other day, and forty slave-girls to bear the dishes and forty black slaves.” “By Allah, O Vizier,” rejoined the Sultan, “‘thou speakest rightly; for that this is a thing to which he may not avail and so we shall be rid of him by [fair] means.” So he said to Alaeddin’s mother, “Go and tell thy son that I abide by the promise which I made him, but an if he avail unto my daughter’s dowry; to wit, I require of him forty dishes of pure gold, which must all be full of jewels [such as] thou broughtest me [erst], together with forty slave-girls to carry them and forty male slaves to escort and attend them. If, then; thy son avail unto this, I will marry him to my daughter.”

Alaeddin's mother returned home, shaking her head and saying, "Whence shall my poor son get these dishes of jewels? Supposing, for the jewels and the dishes, that he return to the treasure and gather the whole from the trees, — and withal methinketh not it is possible to him; but say that he fetch them, — whence [shall he get] the slaves and slave-girls?" And she gave not over talking to herself till she reached the house, where Alaeddin awaited her, and when she came in to him, she said to him, "O my son, said I not to thee, 'Think not to attain to the Lady Bedrulbudour'? Indeed, this is a thing that is not possible unto folk like ourselves." Quoth he, "Tell me what is the news." And she said to him, "O my son, the Sultan received me with all courtesy, according to his wont, and meseemeth he meant fairly by us, but [for] thine accursed enemy the Vizier; for that, after I had bespoken the Sultan in thy name, even as thou badest me, reminding him that the term for which he had appointed us was past and saying to him, 'If Thy Grace would vouchsafe to give commandment for the marriage of thy daughter the Lady Bedrulbudour with my son Alaeddin,' — he turned to the Vizier and spoke to him. The Vizier replied to him in a whisper and after that the Sultan returned me an answer." Then she told him what the Sultan required of him and added, "O my son, he would fain have present answer of thee; but methinketh we have no answer to give him."

When Alaeddin heard his mother's speech, he laughed and said, "O my mother, thou sayest we have no answer to make him and deemest the thing exceeding hard; but now be good enough to rise and fetch us somewhat to eat, and after we have dined, thou shalt (an it please the Compassionate) see the answer. The Sultan like thyself, thinketh he hath sought of me an extraordinary matter, so he may divert me from the Lady Bedrulbudour; but the fact is that he seeketh a thing less than I had looked for. But go now and buy us somewhat we may eat and leave me to fetch thee the answer." Accordingly, she arose and went out to buy her need from the market, so she might make ready the morning-meal; whilst Alaeddin entered his chamber and taking the lamp, rubbed it. The genie immediately appeared to him and said, "Seek what thou wilt, O my lord;" whereupon quoth Alaeddin, "I seek the Sultan's daughter in marriage and he requireth of me forty dishes of pure gold, each ten pounds in weight and full of the jewels which be in the garden of the treasure, the forty dishes to be borne by forty slave girls and each slave-girl to be accompanied by a male slave; wherefore I will have thee bring me this, all of it." "Hearkening and obedience, O my lord," replied the genie and disappearing, was absent awhile, then returned with the forty slave-girls, each attended by a male slave and bearing on her head a dish of pure gold, full of precious jewels. So he brought them before Alaeddin and said to him, "Here is that which thou soughtest. Tell me an thou need thing or service other than this." Quoth Alaeddin, "I need nothing [more]; if I need aught, I will summon thee and tell thee."

Accordingly, the genie vanished and after a little, Alaeddin's mother returned and entering the house, saw the slaves and slave-girls; whereat she marvelled and said, "All this is of the Lamp; God continue it unto my son!" Then, before she put off her veil, Alaeddin said to her, "O my mother, this is thy time, ere the Sultan enter his palace [and withdraw] to his harem. Take him what he seeketh, and that forthright, so he may know that I can avail unto that which he requireth, ay, and more, and that he was deluded by the Vizier; albeit he thought to baffle me, he and his Vizier." Then he arose and opening the house-door, let out the damsels and the slaves, pair by pair, each damsel with a slave by her side, so that they filled the street. His mother forewent them and the people of the quarter, when they saw that rare and magnificent sight, stood looking and marvelling and gazing upon the faces of the slave-girls and their grace and goodliness [and their apparel], for that they were clad in clothes all inwoven with gold and studded with jewels; nay, the least one's clothes of them were worth thousands. Moreover they looked at the dishes and saw flashing therefrom a radiance that outshone the light of the sun, albeit each dish was covered with a piece of brocade, gold-inwrought and studded eke with precious jewels. Alaeddin's mother fared on and the damsels and slaves followed after her, in all fair ordinance and disposition, whilst the folk stood to gaze on the beauty of the slave-girls and extolled the perfection of the Almighty Creator, till she reached the palace and entered it with them.

When the eunuchs and chamberlains and captains of the guard saw them, wonder took them and they were breathless for amaze at this sight, the like whereof they had never in their lives seen, and especially at the slave girls, each one of whom would ravish the wit of an anchorite. Withal, the chamberlains and captains of the Sultan's guards were all of them sons of grandees and Amirs; and they marvelled yet more at the damsels' costly raiment and the dishes which they bore on their heads and on which they might not open their eyes, for the excess of their flashing and radiance. Then the guards entered and told the Sultan, who bade bring them before him forthright into the Divan. So Alaeddin's mother entered with them and when they came before the Sultan, they all did obeisance to him with the utmost courtliness and gravity and invoked on him glory and prosperity; then, raising the dishes from their heads, they set them down before him and stood with their hands clasped behind them, after they had removed the covers.

The Sultan wondered with an exceeding wonderment and was confounded at the beauty of the girls and their loveliness, which overpassed description; his wit was bewildered, when he saw the golden dishes, full of jewels that dazzled the sight, and he was amazed at this marvel, so that he became as one dumb, unable to speak aught, of the excess of his wonderment; nay, his wit was the more perplexed, forasmuch as this had all been accomplished in an hour's time. Then he bade carry the slave-girls and their burdens to the pavilion of the Lady Bedrulbudour; so the damsels took up the dishes and entered; whereupon Alaeddin's mother came forward and said to the Sultan, "O my lord, this is no great matter for the Lady Bedrulbudour's exalted rank; nay, she deserveth manifold this." So the Sultan turned to the Vizier and said to him, "How sayst thou, O Vizier? He that can in so short a time avail unto riches like these, is he not worthy to be the Sultan's son-in-law and to have his daughter to bride?" Now the Vizier marvelled at the greatness of these riches yet more than the Sultan, but envy was killing him and waxed on him more and more, when he saw that the Sultan was content with the bride-gift and the dowry; withal he could not gainstand the [manifest] truth and say to the Sultan, "He is not worthy;" so he cast about to work upon him by practice, that he might hinder him from giving his daughter the Lady Bedrulbudour to Alaeddin, and accordingly said to him, "O my lord, all the treasures of the world were not worth a paring of thy daughter Bedrulbudour's nails; indeed, Thy Highness overrateth this upon her."

When the Sultan heard the Vizier's words, he knew that this his speech arose from the excess of his envy; so he turned to Alaeddin's mother and said to her, "O woman, go to thy son and tell him that I accept of him the marriage-gift and abide by my promise to him and that my daughter is his bride and he my son-in-law; so bid him come hither, that I may make acquaintance with him. There shall betide him from me nought but all honour and consideration and this night shall be the beginning of the bridal festivities. But, as I said to thee, let him come hither to me without delay." So she returned home swiftlier than the wind, of her haste to bring her son the good news; and she was like to fly for joy at the thought that her son was to become the Sultan's son-in-law. As soon as she had taken her leave, the Sultan bade break up the Divan and entering the Lady Bedrulbudour's pavilion, commanded to bring the damsels and the dishes before his daughter and himself, so she should see them. So they brought them and when the Lady Bedrulbudour saw the jewels, she was amazed and said, "Methinketh there is not one of these jewels found in the treasuries of the world." Then she looked at the damsels and marvelled at their beauty and grace and knew that this was all from her new bridegroom and that he had proffered it to her service. So she rejoiced, albeit she had been sad and sorry for her [whilom] bridegroom the Vizier's son, — she rejoiced, [I say], with an exceeding joy, when she saw the jewels and the beauty of the damsels, and was cheered; whilst her father rejoiced exceedingly in her joy, in that he saw her put off chagrin and dejection. Then he said to her, "O my daughter Bedrulbudour, doth this please thee? Indeed, methinketh this thy bridegroom is goodlier than the Vizier's son, and God willing, O my daughter, thou shalt rejoice with him abundantly."

So much for the Sultan and as for Alaeddin, when his mother came to the house and entered and he saw her laughing of the excess of her joy, he foreboded good news and said, "To God Everlasting be praise! Accomplished is that which I sought." And she said to him, "Glad tidings, O my son! Let thy heart rejoice and thine eye be solaced in the attainment of thy desire, for that the Sultan accepteth thine offering, to wit, the bride gift and the dowry of the Lady Bedrulbudour, and she is thy bride and this, O my son, is the night of your bridal and thy going in to the Lady Bedrulbudour. Nay, the Sultan, that he might certify me of his word, proclaimed thee his son-in-law before the folk and declared that this should be the wedding-night; but he said to me, 'Let thy son come hither to me, so I may make acquaintance with him, and I will receive him with all honour and worship.' And now, O my son, my office is ended, whatsoever remaineth is a matter for thee."

Alaeddin kissed his mother's hand and thanked her amain for her kindness; then he arose and entering his chamber, took the lamp and rubbed it; whereupon the genie presented himself and said to him, "Here am I; seek what thou wilt." Quoth Alaeddin, "My will is that thou take me to a bath, whose like is not in the world, and fetch me a suit of royal raiment and exceeding costly, such as no king can boast." "Hearkening and obedience," replied the Marid and taking him up, brought him intro a bath, never saw King nor Kisra its like, for it was of alabaster and agate and full of marvellous limnings that ravished the sight, and therein was a saloon all embossed with precious jewels. None was there; but, when Alaeddin entered, there came in to him one of the Jinn in human semblance and washed him and bathed him to the utmost of the wish: after which he went forth the bath to the outer saloon, where he found his clothes taken away and in their stead a suit of the richest royal apparel. Then sherbets were brought him and coffee with ambergris and he drank and arose; whereupon there came to him a troop of slaves and clad him in those sumptuous clothes and he dressed and perfumed himself with essences and sweet-scented smoke. Now thou knowest that Alaeddin was the son of a poor man, a tailor: yet now none had thought it, but had said, "This is the chiefest of the sons of the kings," extolled be the perfection of Him who changeth and is not changed!

Then the slave of the lamp came to him and taking him up, set him down in his house and said to him, "O my lord, dost thou need aught?" "Yes," answered Alaeddin; "I will have thee bring me eight-and-forty mamelukes, four-and-twenty to walk before me and four-and-twenty to walk behind me, with their horses and clothes and arms, and let all that is upon them and their horses be of stuffs costly and precious exceedingly, such as are not found in kings' treasuries. Then bring me a stallion fit for the riding of the Chosroes and be his trappings all of gold, embossed with noble jewels; and bring me eight-and-forty thousand diners, in each mameluke's hand a thousand, for that I purpose presently to visit the Sultan; wherefore delay thou not on me, since I cannot go thither without all that whereof I have bespoken thee. Bring me also twelve slave-girls, who must be unique in loveliness and clad in the richest of raiment, so they may attend my mother to the Sultan's palace, and let each slave-girl have with her a suit of apparel fit for the wearing of kings' wives."

"Hearkening and obedience," replied the genie and disappearing, brought him in the twinkling of an eye all that he had commanded him withal, whilst in his hand he held a stallion, whose like is not among the horses of the Arabs of the Arabs, with housings of the richest stuffs brocaded with gold; whereupon Alaeddin called his mother forthright and delivered her the twelve slave-girls and gave her the [twelve] suits, so she might dress herself and go with them to the Sultan's palace. Then he despatched one of the mamelukes thither, to see an the Sultan were come forth of the harem or not; so he went and returning, swiftlier than lightning, said to him, "O my lord, the Sultan awaiteth thee." Accordingly he arose and mounting, [set forth], whilst the mamelukes rode before him and after him, (extolled be the perfection of the Lord who created them with that which clothed them of beauty and grace!), strewing gold upon the folk before their lord Alaeddin, who overpassed them all of his grace and goodliness, and ask thou not of kings' sons, extolled be the perfection of the Giver, the Eternal! Now all this was of the virtue of the wonderful lamp, which gifted whoso possessed it with goodliness and grace and wealth and wisdom.

The folk marvelled at Alaeddin's bounty and at the excess of his munificence and were amazed when they saw that which graced him of beauty and goodliness and his courtliness and dignity; yea, they extolled the perfection of the Compassionate One for this His noble creature and all of them great and small called down blessings on him, albeit they knew him for the son of such an one the tailor; yet none envied him, but all said, “He is deserving.” So he fared on his way, with the mamelukes before him and behind him, scattering gold upon the folk, till he came to the palace.

Now the Sultan had summoned to his presence the chiefs of his state and telling them that he had passed his word for the marriage of his daughter to Alaeddin, bade them await the latter, commanding them that, when he came, they should all go out to meet him; moreover, he assembled the amirs and viziers and chamberlains and guards and captains of the troops and they were all awaiting Alaeddin at the door of the palace. When he arrived, he would have dismounted at the door, but there came up to him one of the Amirs, whom the Sultan had deputed to that office, and said to him, “O my lord, the commandment is that thou enter, riding on thy charger, so thou mayst alight at the door of the Divan.” So they all forewent him and he entered till they brought him to the door of the Divan. There sundry of them came forward and held his stirrup, whilst some supported him on both sides and other some took him by the hand, and so they dismounted him. Then the Amirs and officers of state forewent him and brought him into the Divan, till he drew near the Sultan’s throne; whereupon the latter came down forthright from his seat and embracing him, hindered him from kissing the carpet and seated him beside himself on his right hand. Alaeddin did that which behoveth and befitteth unto kings of obeisance and invocation and said to him, “O our lord the Sultan, thy Grace’s munificence hath vouchsafed to accord me the Lady Bedrulbudour thy daughter, albeit I am unworthy of this great favour, for that I am of the lowliest of thy slaves; wherefore I beseech God that He keep and continue thee. Indeed, O King, my tongue faileth to thank thee [as were behoving] for the greatness of this boon, overpassing its competence, wherewith thou hast favoured me, and I beseech Thy Grace to vouchsafe me ground, such as is meet, so I may build thereon a palace that shall be fit for the Lady Bedrulbudour.”

The Sultan was amazed when he saw Alaeddin in this regal array and beheld his grace and goodliness and the mamelukes standing in attendance upon him in all their comeliness and fair favour; yea, and his wonderment redoubled when Alaeddin’s mother came up attired in rich and costly raiment, as she were a queen, and he saw twelve slave-girls in her service, preceding her, their hands clasped behind their backs, with all worship and observance. Moreover, he noted Alaeddin's eloquence and the elegance of his speech and was amazed thereat, he and all who were present with him in the Divan, whilst fire was kindled in the Vizier's heart for envy of Alaeddin, so that he was like to die. Then, after the Sultan had heard Alaeddin's compliment and had seen the greatness of his quality and his modesty and eloquence, he strained him to his bosom and kissed him, saying, "It irketh me, O my son, that I have not known thee before to-day." So, when he saw Alaeddin on this fashion, he rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy and at once bade the music and the drums strike up; then, rising, he took him by the hand and carried him into the palace, where the evening-meal had been made ready and the servants set the tables. There he sat down and seated Alaeddin on his right hand; whereupon the viziers and chiefs of the state and the grandees of the realm sat also, each in his several room, whilst the drums beat and they held high festival in the palace.

The Sultan proceeded to make familiar with Alaeddin and to talk with him, and Alaeddin answered him with all courtliness and fluency, as he had been bred in kings' palaces or as he were their constant associate; and the more the talk was prolonged between them, the more gladness and joy redoubled on the Sultan for that which he heard of the goodliness of Alaeddin's answers and the sweetness of his speech. Then, when they had eaten and drunken and the tables were removed, the Sultan bade fetch the Cadis and the witnesses; so they came and knotted the knot and wrote the writ [of marriage] between Alaeddin and the Lady Bedrulbudour. Therewith Alaeddin arose and would have taken leave; but the Sultan laid hold on him and said to him, "Whither away, O my son? The bride-feast is toward and the bride present; the knot is knotted and the writ written." "O my lord the king," answered Alaeddin, "I would fain build the Lady Bedrulbudour a palace, besorting her rank and station, and it may not be that I should go in to her without this; but, God willing, the building shall, by the diligent endeavour of thy slave and by Thy Grace's auspice, be right speedily despatched. Indeed, I long for present enjoyment of the Lady Bedrulbudour; but it behoveth me [first] apply myself to that which is incumbent on me for her service." Quoth the Sultan, "O my son, look thyself out the ground which thou deemest apt to thine end and take it. All is in thy hand; , but here before my palace is a spacious piece of ground, which meseemeth were best; so, if it please thee, build thou the palace thereon." And Alaeddin answered him, saying, "Indeed, it is my utmost desire to be near Thy Grace."

Then he took leave of the Sultan and going forth, mounted and rode, with his mamelukes before him and behind him, whilst the folk all prayed for him and said, "By Allah, he is deserving!" till he came to his house and alighting from his stallion, entered his chamber and rubbed the lamp; whereupon the genie stood before him and said to him, "Seek what thou wilt, O my lord" Quoth Alaeddin, "I desire of thee an important service, to wit, that thou build me with all speed a palace before that of the Sultan, which shall be marvellous in its building, never saw kings its like, and be it complete with all its requisites of kingly and magnificent furniture and so forth." "Hearkening and obedience," replied the genie and disappeared; but, before the dawn broke, he came to Alaeddin and said to him, "O my lord, the palace is finished to the utmost of the wish; wherefore, an thou wouldst see it, arise forthright and look on it." So Alaeddin arose and the genie carried him, in the twinkling of an eye, to the palace, which when he saw, he was amazed at its building, for that all its stones were of jade and alabaster and porphyry and mosaic. The genie carried him into a treasury full of all manner of gold and silver and precious jewels past count or reckoning, price or estimation; then he brought him into another place, where he saw all the requisites of the table, platters and spoons and ewers and basins and cups, of gold and silver, and thence to the kitchen, where he found cooks, with their cooking-gear and utensils, all on like wise of gold and silver. Moreover, he brought him into a place, which he found full of coffers overflowing with royal raiment, such as ravished the wit, gold-inwoven stuffs, Indian and Chinese, and brocades, and he showed him also many other places, all full of that which beggareth description, till at last he brought him into a stable, wherein were horses whose like is not found with the kings of the world; and therewithin he showed him a storehouse, full of housings and saddles of price, all broidered with pearls and precious stones and so forth.

Alaeddin was amazed and bewildered at the greatness of these riches, whereunto the mightiest king in the world might not avail, and all the work of one night; more by token that the palace was full of slaves and slave girls such as would bewitch a saint with their loveliness. But the most marvellous of all was that he saw in the palace an upper hall and a belvedere with four-and-twenty oriels, all wroughten of emeralds and rubies and other jewels, and of one of these oriels the lattice-work was by his desire left unfinished, so the Sultan should fail of its completion. When he had viewed the palace, all of it, he rejoiced and was exceeding glad; then he turned to the genie and said to him, "I desire of thee one thing which is lacking and whereof I had forgotten to bespeak thee." Quoth the slave, "Seek what thou wilt, O my lord;" and Alaeddin said to him, "I will have thee bring me a carpet Of fine brocade, all inwoven with gold, and spread it from my palace to that of the Sultan, so the Lady Bedrulbudour, whenas she cometh hither, may walk thereon and not upon the earth." So the genie was absent a little and returning, said to him, "O my lord, that which thou soughtest of me is here." Therewithal he took him and showed him the carpet, which ravished the wit, and it was spread from the Sultan's palace to that of Alaeddin; then taking him up, he set him down in his own house.

It was now grown high day; so the Sultan arose from sleep and opening a window of his pavilion, looked forth and saw buildings before his palace; whereupon he fell to rubbing his eyes and opening them wide and looking farther, saw a magnificent palace, that bewildered the wits, and a carpet spread therefrom to his own palace; as on like wise did the doorkeepers and all who were in the palace, and their wits were bewildered at the sight. At this juncture the Vizier presented himself and as he entered, he espied the new palace and the carpet and marvelled also; so, when he came in to the Sultan, the twain fell to talking of this strange matter and marvelling, for that they saw a thing which amazed the beholder and dilated the heart; and they said, "Verily, methinketh kings may not avail unto the building of the like of this palace." Then the Sultan turned to the Vizier and said to him, "How now? Deemest thou Alaeddin worthy to be bridegroom to my daughter the Lady Bedrulbudour? Hast thou seen and considered this royal building and all these riches which man's wit cannot comprehend?" The Vizier, of his envy of Alaeddin, answered him, saying, "O King of the Age, indeed this palace and its building and all these riches may not be but by means of enchantment, for that no man among men, no, not the mightiest of them in dominion or the greatest in wealth, might avail to upraise and stablish [the like of] this building in one night." Quoth the Sultan, "I marvel at thee how thou still deemest evil of Alaeddin; but methinketh it ariseth from thine envy of him, for that thou wast present when he sought of me a place whereon to build a palace for my daughter and I accorded him, before thee, [leave to build] a palace on this ground; and he who brought me, to my daughter's dower, jewels such that no kings possess one thereof, shall he lack ableness to build a palace like this?" When the Vizier heard the Sultan's speech and understood that he loved Alaeddin greatly, his envy of him increased; withal he availed not to do aught against him, so he was dumb and could make the Sultan no answer.

Meanwhile Alaeddin — seeing that it was high day and that the time was come when he should go to the palace, for that his wedding-festivities were toward and the Amirs and Viziers and chiefs of the state were all with the Sultan, so they might be present at the bridal — arose and rubbed the lamp; whereupon the genie presented himself and said to him, "O my lord, seek what thou wilt, for that I am before thee, at thy service." Quoth Alaeddin, "I purpose presently to go to the Sultan's palace, and to-day is the wedding; wherefore I have occasion for ten thousand diners, which I will have thee bring me." The slave was absent the twinkling of an eye and returned to him with the money; whereupon Alaeddin arose and taking horse, with his mamelukes behind him and before him, rode to the palace, scattering gold upon the folk, as he passed, so that they were fulfilled with the love of him and the greatness of his munificence. When he came to the palace and the Amirs and eunuchs and soldiers, who were standing awaiting him, saw him, they hastened forthright to the Sultan and told him; whereupon he arose and coming to meet him, embraced him and kissed him; then he took him by the hand and carried him into the palace where he sat down and seated him on his right hand.

Now the city was all adorned and the instruments [of music] were smiting in the palace and the singing-women singing. Then the Sultan trade serve the morning-meal; so the slaves and mamelukes hastened to spread the table and it was such as kings might take example by. The Sultan sat with Alaeddin and the officers of state and the chiefs of the realm and they ate and drank till they were satisfied; and great was the rejoicing in the palace and the city. Glad were all the chiefs of the state and the folk rejoiced in all the realm, whilst there came from far regions the notables of the provinces and the governors of the cities, so they might see Alaeddin's wedding and his bride-feast. The Sultan still marvelled in himself at Alaeddin's mother, how she had come to him in poor clothes, whilst her son had command of this exceeding wealth; and as for the folk, who came to the Sultan's palace, to gaze upon the wedding-festivities, when they saw Alaeddin's palace and the goodliness of its building, there took them great wonderment how so magnificent a building had been upreared in one night and they fell all to praying for Alaeddin and saying, "God prosper him! By Allah, he is deserving. God's blessing on his days!"

Meanwhile Alaeddin, having made an end of the morning-meal, arose and taking leave of the Sultan, mounted with his mamelukes and rode to his palace, so he might prepare for the reception of his bride, the Lady Bedrulbudour. As he passed, all the folk cried out to him with one voice, saying, "God gladden thee! God increase thee in glory! God continue thee!" And so they brought him home in great procession, what while he showered gold on them. When he came to his palace, he alighted and entering, sat down in the Divan, whilst the mamelukes stood before him with clasped hands. After a little they brought him sherbets and he gave commandment to his mamelukes and slave-girls and eunuchs and all who were in his palace that they should make ready to receive the Lady Bedrulbudour, his bride. Then, when it was the time of the midafternoon prayer and the air grew cool and the heat of the sun abated, the Sultan bade the troops and the Amirs and the Viziers go down to the horse-course. So they all repaired thither and with them the Sultan himself; whereupon Alaeddin also arose and mounting with his mamelukes, went down into the plain and showed his horsemanship; then he fell to playing in the tilting-ground and there was none could stand before him. Now he was riding a stallion whose like is not among the horses of the Arabs of the Arabs and his bride the Lady Bedrulbudour was looking upon him from the window of her pavilion, and when she saw his grace and goodliness and knightly prowess, she was overcome with his love and was like to fly for joy in him. Then, after they had played [some] bouts in the plain and each had shown what was in him of horsemanship, (but Alaeddin overpassed them all,) the Sultan went to his palace and Alaeddin on like wise returned home.

When it was eventide, the chiefs of the state and the Viziers went and taking Alaeddin, carried him in procession to the Royal Bath, the Renowned; so he entered and bathed and perfumed himself, then, coming forth, he donned a suit yet richer than the first and mounted, whilst the troops rode before him and the Amirs and Viziers. So they fared on with him in great state, with four of the Viziers for his sword-bearers, whilst all the troops and people of the city, both townsfolk and strangers, walked in procession before him, carrying flambeaux and drums and flutes and instruments of mirth and music, till they brought him to his palace, when he alighted and entering, sat down, as did also the Viziers and Amirs who were in his company, whilst the mamelukes brought sherbets and sweetmeats and gave all who were with him in the procession to drink, albeit they were a multitude of folk whose number might not be told. Moreover, he gave commandment unto his mamelukes, and they went out to the door of the palace and fell to showering gold upon the folk.

Meanwhile, when the Sultan returned from the horse-course and entered his palace, he bade forthright carry his daughter the Lady Bedrulbudour in procession to the palace of her bridegroom Alaeddin. So the troops forthright mounted with the officers of state, who had been in Alaeddin's procession, and the slave-girls and eunuchs went out with flambeaux and carried the Lady Bedrulhudour in great state to her bridegroom's palace, Alaeddin's mother by her side and before her the women of the Viziers and Amirs and grandees and notables. Moreover, she had with her eight and-forty slave-girls, whom Alaeddin had presented to her, in each one's hand a great candle of camphor and ambergris, set in a candlestick of gold, studded with jewels; and all the men and women in the palace went out with her and fared on before her, till they brought her to her bridegroom's palace and carrying her up to her pavilion, attired her in various robes and displayed her. Then, after they had made an end of displaying her, they carried her to the pavilion of her groom Alaeddin and he went in to her. Now his mother was with the Lady Bedrulbudour, and when he came up and did off her veil, she fell to gazing upon the bride's beauty and grace and looked at the pavilion, the which was all wroughten of gold and jewels and therein were golden lustres, all embossed with emeralds and rubies; and she said in herself, "Methought the Sultan's palace was magnificent; but, for this pavilion alone, I doubt me the greatest of the Chosroes and the kings never owned its match; nor, methinketh, might all mankind avail to make the like thereof." And the Lady Bedrulbudour also fell to looking and marvelling at the palace and its magnificence. Then the table was laid and they ate and drank and made merry; and presently there appeared before them fourscore slave-girls, each with an instrument in her hand of the instruments of mirth and music. So they plied their finger-tips and touching their strings, struck up with plaintive airs, till they clove in sunder the hearts of the listeners, whilst the Lady Bedrulbudour redoubled in wonderment and said in herself, "Never in my life heard I the like of these songs;" so that she forgot to eat and fell to listening. As for Alaeddin, he proceeded to pour to her the wine and give her to drink with his own hand, and mirth and good cheer and delight went round among them and it was a rare night, such as Iskender of the Horns never in his time spent. Then, after they had made an end of eating and drinking, the tables were removed from before them and Alaeddin arose and went in to his bride.

When it was the morning, Alaeddin arose and his treasurer brought him a costly suit of the richest of kings' raiment; so he donned it and sat down; whereupon coffee was brought him with ambergris and he drank thereof and called for the horses. Accordingly, they were saddled and he mounted and rode, with his mamelukes behind him and before him, to the Sultan's palace. When he reached it and entered, the eunuchs went in and acquainted the Sultan with his presence; which when he heard, he arose forthwith and coming to meet Alaeddin, embraced him and kissing him, as he were his son, seated him on his right hand. Moreover the Viziers and Amirs and officers of state and grandees of the realm invoked blessings on him and the Sultan gave him joy and prayed God prosper him. Then he bade lay breakfast; so they laid [it] and they all broke their fast; and after they had eaten and drunken their sufficiency and had finished and the servants had removed the tables from before them, Alaeddin turned to the Sultan and said to him, "O my lord, [belike] Thy Grace will vouchsafe to honour me this day at the morning-meal with the Lady Bedrulbudour, thy precious daughter, and be Thy Grace's company all thy viziers and the chief officers of thy state." Quoth the Sultan, (and indeed he rejoiced in him), "Gladly, O my son," and bidding the Viziers and officers of state and grandees attend him, arose forthright and mounted; whereupon Alaeddin and the others mounted also and they all rode till they came to Alaeddin's palace.

When the Sultan entered the palace and viewed its building and ordinance and saw its stones, which were of jade and agate, he was amazed and his wit was bewildered at that affluence and wealth and magnificence; so he turned to the Vizier and said to him, "How sayst thou, O Vizier? Hast thou in all thy days seen aught like this? Are there found with the greatest of the kings of the world riches and gold and jewels such as these we see in this palace?" "O my lord the King," answered the Vizier, "this is a thing beyond the competence of a king of the sons of Adam, nor might all the people of the earth together avail to build a palace like this; nay, there are no craftsmen living able to do work like this, except it be, as I said to Thy Grace, by might of magic." The Sultan knew that the Vizier, in seeking to convince him that this was not by might of men, but all of it enchantment, still spoke not but of his envy of Alaeddin; so he said to him, "Enough, O Vizier; let us have no more of thy talk. I know the cause which maketh thee speak on this wise."

Then Alaeddin forewent the Sultan till he brought him to the high pavilion and he looked at the belvedere and its oriols and lattices, all wroughten of emeralds and rubies and other precious stones, and was amazed and astonied; his wit was bewildered and he abode perplexed in his thought. Then he fell to going round about the pavilion and viewing these things that ravished the sight, till presently he espied the casement which Alaeddin had purposely left wanting and unfinished. When the Sultan examined it and saw that it was unfinished, he said, "Woe is me for thee, O casement, that thou art not perfect!" Then, turning to the Vizier, he said to him, "Knowest thou the reason of the lack of completion of this casement and its lattices?" "O my lord," answered the Vizier, "methinketh it is because Thy Grace hastened upon Alaeddin with the wedding and he had no time to complete it." Now Alaeddin had meanwhile gone in to his bride, the Lady Bedrulbudour, to acquaint her with the coming of her father the Sultan; and when he returned, the Sultan said to him, "O my son Alaeddin, what is the reason that the lattice[-work] of yonder oriel is not completed?" "O King of the Age," replied Alaeddin, "by reason of the haste made with the bridal, the craftsmen might not avail to finish it." Quoth the Sultan to him, "It is my wish to finish it myself." And Alaeddin answered, saying, "God prolong thy glory, O King; so shall there remain unto thee a remembrance in thy daughter's palace."

Accordingly the Sultan bade straightway fetch jewellers and goldsmiths and commanded to give them from the treasury all that they needed of gold and jewels and [precious] metals; so they came and he bade them do that which was wanting of the lattice-work of the [unfinished] oriel. Meanwhile, the Lady Bedrulbudour came out to receive her father the Sultan, and when she came up to him and he saw her smiling-faced he embraced her and kissed her and taking her [by the hand], went in with her to her pavilion. So they entered all, for that it was the appointed time of the morning-meal and they had set one table for the Sultan and the Lady Bedrulbudour and Alaeddin and another for the Vizier and the officers of state and grandees of the realm and captains and chamberlains and deputies. The Sultan sat between his daughter, the Lady Bedrulbudour, and his son-in-law Alaeddin, and when he put his hand to the food and tasted it, wonder took him at the richness of the meats and the exquisiteness of their seasonings. Now there stood before them fourscore damsels, each as it were she said to the full moon, "Rise, so I may sit in thy place;" and in each one's hand was an instrument of mirth and music. So they tuned their instruments and touched their strings and struck up with plaintive airs that dilated the mourning heart. The Sultan was cheered and the time was pleasant to him and he rejoiced and said, "Verily, Kings and Kaisers would fail of this thing."

Then they fell to eating and drinking and the cup went round among them till they had taken their sufficiency, when there came sweetmeats and various kinds of fruits and so forth; and these were laid in another saloon. So they removed thither and took their fill of those dainties; after which the Sultan arose, that he might see if the work of the jewellers and goldsmiths likened that of the palace. So he went up to them and viewed their work and how they wrought and saw that they were far from availing to do work like that [of the rest] of Alaeddin's palace. Moreover they told him that all they found in his treasury they had brought and it sufficed not; whereupon he bade open the Great Treasury and give them what they needed and that, if it sufficed not, they should take that which Alaeddin had given him. So they took all the jewels assigned them by the Sultan and wrought with them, but found that these also sufficed them not, nor might they complete withal the half of that which lacked of the lattice work of the oriel; whereupon the Sultan bade take all the jewels which should be found with the Viziers and chiefs of the state; and accordingly they took them all and wrought therewith; but this also sufficed not.

When it was morning, Alaeddin went up to view the jewelers' work and saw that they had not completed half the lacking lattice-work; whereupon he bade them incontinent undo all that they had wrought and restore the jewels to their owners. Accordingly, they undid it all and sent to the Sultan that which was his and to the Viziers [and others] that which was theirs. Then they went to the Sultan and told him that Alaeddin had commanded them of this; whereupon he asked them, "What said he to you and why would he not have the lattice-work finished and why undid he that which you had done?" And they said to him, "O my lord, we know nothing, save that he bade us undo all that we had done." Whereupon the Sultan immediately called for the horses and arising, mounted and rode to Alaeddin's palace.

Meanwhile Alaeddin, after dismissing the goldsmiths and the jewellers, entered his closet and rubbed the lamp; whereupon the genie forthwith appeared and said to him, "Seek what thou wilt; thy slave is before thee." And Alaeddin said to him, "It is my will that thou complete the lacking lattice-work of the oriel." "On my head and eyes [be it]," replied the slave and disappearing, returned after a little and said to him, "O my lord, that whereof thou commandedst me I have performed." So Alaeddin went up to the belvedere and found all its lattices perfect; and whilst he was viewing them, behold the [chief] eunuch came in to him and said to him, "O my lord, the Sultan cometh to visit thee and is at the palace-door." So he came down forthright and went to meet the Sultan, who said to him, when he saw him, "Wherefore, O my son, hast thou done thus, and why sufferedst thou not the jewellers complete the lattice-work of the oriel, so there might not remain a place in thy palace defective?" "O King of the Age," answered Alaeddin, "I left it not imperfect but of my free will, nor did I lack of ableness to complete it. However, I could not brook that Thy Grace should honour me [with thy presence] in a palace wherein there was somewhat lacking; wherefore, so thou mayst know that it was not for lack of ableness that I left it uncomplete, let Thy Grace go up and see the lattice-work of the kiosk, an there be aught lacking thereto."

The Sultan accordingly went up to the pavilion and entering the kiosk, viewed it right and left and saw no manner defect in its lattices, but found them all perfect; whereat he was astounded and embracing Alaeddin, fell a-kissing him and saying, "O my son, what is this extraordinary thing? In one night thou dost a work wherefrom the jewellers would fail in months! By Allah, methinketh thou hast not thy fellow in the world!" Quoth Alaeddin, "God prolong thy life and perpetuate thy continuance! Thy slave is not worthy of this praise." "By Allah, O my son," rejoined the Sultan, "thou deservest all praise, in that thou hast done a thing wherefrom [all the] craftsmen of the world would fail." Then he went down and entering the pavilion of his daughter, the Lady Bedrulbudour, found her rejoicing exceedingly over this great magnificence wherein she was; and after he had rested with her awhile, he returned to his palace.

Now Alaeddin used every day to mount and ride through the town, with his mamelukes behind him and before him, strewing gold upon the people, right and left, and the folk, stranger and neighbour, near and far, were fulfilled with the love of him for the excess of his munificence and his bounty. Moreover he exceeded in benefaction of the poor and the indigent and used himself to distribute his alms to them with his own hand. After this fashion he won himself great renown in all the realm and the most of the chiefs of the state and the Amirs used to eat at his table and swore not but by his precious life. Moreover, he fell to going everywhile to the chase and the horse course and to practicing horsemanship and archery before the Sultan, whilst the Lady Bedrulbudour redoubled in love of him, whenassoever she saw him disporting himself a horseback, and thought in herself that God had wrought exceeding graciously by her in that there had befallen her what befell with the Vizier's son, so He might keep her for her true bridegroom Alaeddin. So he went daily waxing in goodliness of repute and in praise and the love of him redoubled in the hearts of the common folk and he was magnified in men's eyes.

Now in those days certain of the Sultan's enemies took horse against him; so he levied troops to repel them and made Alaeddin chief thereof. Alaeddin set out with his host and fared on till he drew near the enemy, whose troops were exceeding many; where upon he drew his sword and fell upon them and there befell battle and slaughter and sore was the stress of the mellay; but Alaeddin broke them and routed them and slew the most part of them. Moreover, he plundered their goods and possessions and gat him spoil beyond count or reckoning, wherewith he returned in triumph, [having gained] a great victory, and entered the city, which had adorned itself for him of its joy in him. The Sultan came out to meet him and give him joy and embraced him and kissed him, and there was high festival holden in the kingdom and great rejoicing. Then the Sultan and Alaeddin betook themselves to the latter's palace; whereupon his bride, the Lady Bedrulbudour, came out to meet him, rejoicing in him, and kissed him between the eyes, and he went in with her to her pavilion; whither after a little came the Sultan and they sat down and the slave-girls brought sherbets. So they drank and the Sultan commanded that all the realm should be decorated for Alaeddin's victory over the enemy; whilst it became [a saying] with the commons and the troops and the folk, all of them, "Allah in heaven and Alaeddin on earth." and they loved him yet more, having regard not only to the excess of his bounty and munificence, but to his knightly prowess, in that he had done battle for the kingdom and had routed the enemy.

So much for Alaeddin, and now to return to the Mangrabin enchanter. When he returned to his country, he abode all this time, bewailing that which he had endured of toil and stress, so he might compass the lamp, yet had his travail all been wasted and the morsel had escaped from his hand, after it had reached his mouth; and he still thought upon all this, bemoaning himself and reviling Alaeddin of the excess of his anger against him; and whiles he said in himself, "Since yonder whoreson is dead under the earth, I am content withal and I have hopes of the lamp, that I may yet achieve it, inasmuch as it is still safeguarded." Then, one day of the days, he smote the sand and extracting the figures, set them down after the most approved fashion and adjusted them, so he might see and certify himself of the death of Alaeddin and the safe keeping of the lamp under the earth; and he looked well into the figures, both mothers and daughters, but saw not the lamp, whereupon rage overrode him and he smote the sand a second time, that he might certify himself of Alaeddin's death, but saw him not in the treasure; whereat he redoubled in wrath, and yet more when it was certified to him that the lad was alive upon the surface of the earth and he knew that he had come forth from under the ground and had gotten the lamp, on account whereof he himself had suffered toil and torment such as passeth man's power to endure. So he said in himself, "I have suffered many hardships for the sake of the lamp and have endured fatigues such as none but I might brook, and now yonder accursed one taketh it without stress and it is evident [that], an he have learned the use thereof, there will be none in the world richer than he."

Then, when he saw and was certified that Alaeddin had come forth from under the earth and had happened upon the good of the Lamp, he said in himself, "Needs must I go about to kill him." So he smote the sand once more and examining its figures, saw that Alaeddin had gotten him exceeding wealth and had married the Sultan's daughter; whereat he was all afire for rage and envy and arising then and there, equipped himself for travel and set out for the land of China. When he came to the city of the sultanate, wherein was Alaeddin, he entered and alighting at one of the khans, heard the folk talking of nought but the magnificence of Alaeddin's palace; then, after he was rested from his journey, he changed his clothes and went down to go round about in the thoroughfares of the city. He passed no folk but they were descanting upon the palace and its magnificence and talking of Alaeddin's grace and comeliness and his bounty and munificence and the goodliness of his manners and disposition; so he went up to one of those who were extolling Alaeddin on this wise and said to him, "Prithee, fair youth, who is this whom you describe and praise?" "O man," replied the other, "meseemeth thou art a stranger and comest from afar; but, granting thou art from a far country, hast thou not heard of the Amir Alaeddin, whose repute, methought, filled the earth, and of his palace, a wonder of the world, whereof both far and near have heard? How is it thou hast heard nought of this nor of the name of Alaeddin, whom Our Lord increase in glory and prosper?" Quoth the Maugrabin, "Marry, it is the utmost of my wish to look upon the palace; so, an thou wouldst do me a kindness, direct me thither, for that I am a stranger." "Hearkening and obedience," replied the other and going before him, guided him to Alaeddin's palace.

The Maugrabin fell to examining it and knew that this all of it was the work of the Lamp; so he said, "Alack! Alack! Needs must I dig a pit for this accursed one, this tailor's son, who could not come by a night's supper; but, an destiny enable me, I will send his mother back to spin at her wheel, like as she did erst, and as for him, it shall cost him his life." Then he returned to the khan in a woeful state of chagrin and colour and despite, for envy of Alaeddin, and taking his geomantic instruments, smote his [tablet of] sand, so he might learn where the lamp was, and found that it was in the palace and not with Alaeddin; whereat he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and said, "Now it will be an easy matter for me to bereave this accursed of his life and I have a way to come at the lamp." Accordingly he went to a coppersmith and said to him, "Make me so many lamps and take of me their worth in full; but I will have thee despatch them quickly." "Hearkening and obedience," replied the smith and falling to work on them, speedily despatched them for him. When they were finished, the Maugrabin paid him their price, even that which he sought, and taking the lamps, carried them to the khan, where he laid them in a basket and fell to going round about in the markets and thoroughfares of the city and crying out, "Ho! who will barter an old lamp for a new lamp?" When the folk heard him crying this, they laughed at him and said, "Certes, this man is mad, since he goeth about, bartering new lamps for old." Moreover, people followed him and the street-boys caught him up from place to place and laughed at him. However, he fended not himself neither took heed of this, but ceased not to go round about the city till he came under Alaeddin's palace, where he fell to crying his loudest, whilst the children called after him, "Madman! Madman!"

Now as fate willed it, the Lady Bedrulbudour was in the kiosk and hearing one crying out and the boys calling after him and understanding not what was toward, bade one of the slave-girls "Go see what is this man who crieth out and what he crieth." So the girl went and looking, saw one crying out, "Ho, who will barter an old lamp for a new lamp?" with the boys after him, laughing at him; so she returned and told her mistress, saying, "O my lady, this man crieth, 'Ho! who will barter an old lamp for a new lamp?' and the boys are following him and laughing at him;" and the Lady Bedrulbudour laughed also at this marvel. Now Alaeddin had forgotten the lamp in his pavilion, without locking it up in his treasury [as was his wont], and one of the girls had seen it; so she said to the princess, "O my lady, methinketh I have seen an old lamp in my lord Alaeddin's pavilion; let us barter it with this man for a new one, so we may see an his speech be true or leasing." And the princess said to her, "fetch the lamp whereof thou speakest." Now the Lady Bedrulbudour had no knowledge of the lamp and its properties, neither knew she that this it was which had brought Alaeddin her husband to that great estate, and it was the utmost of her desire to prove and see the wit of this man who bartered new for old, nor was any one aware of the Maugrabin enchanter's craft and trickery. So the slave-girl went up into Alaeddin's pavilion and returned with the lamp to the Lady Bedrulbudour, who bade the Aga of the eunuchs go down and exchange it for a new one; so he took it and going down, gave it to the Maugrabin and took of him a new lamp, with which he returned to the princess, who examined it and finding it new and real, fell to laughing at the Maugrabin's [lack of] wit. Meanwhile, when the enchanter had gotten the lamp and knew it for that of the Treasure, he thrust it forthwith into his sleeve and leaving the rest of the lamps to the folk who were in act to barter of him, set off running, till he came without the city, and walked about the waste places, awaiting the coming of the night. Then, when he saw himself alone in the open country, he brought out the lamp from his sleeve and rubbed it; whereupon the Marid immediately appeared to him and said, "Here am I; thy slave [is] before thee. Seek of me what thou wilt." Quoth the Maugrabin, "My will is that thou take up Alaeddin's palace from its place, with its inhabitants and all that is therein and myself also, and set it down in my country of Africa. Thou knowest my town and I will have this palace be thereby among the gardens." "Hearkening and obedience," replied the Marid. "Shut [thine] eye and open [thine] eye, and thou wilt find thyself in thine own country with the palace." And immediately this befell in the twinkling of an eye and the Maugrabin was transported, with Alaeddin's palace and all that was therein, to the land of Africa.

So much for the enchanter, and now let us return to the Sultan and Alaeddin. The Sultan, of his love and affection for his daughter the Lady Bedrulbudour, was wont, every day, when he awoke from his sleep, to open the window and look at her therefrom; so he arose on the morrow, according to his wont, and opened his chamber-window, so he might see his daughter; but when he put out his head and looked for Alaeddin's palace, he beheld nothing but a place swept [and level], like as it was aforetime, and saw neither palace nor inhabitants; whereat amazement clad him and his wit was bewildered and he fell to rubbing his eyes, so haply they were bleared or dimmed. Then he proceeded to look closely till at last he was certified that there was neither trace nor sign left of the palace and knew not what was come of it; whereupon he redoubled in perplexity and smote hand upon hand and his tears ran down upon his beard, for that he knew not what had befallen his daughter. So he sent forthright to fetch the Vizier, who came in to him and seeing him in that woeful state, said to him, "Pardon, O King of the Age (God keep thee from harm!) why art thou woeful?" Quoth the Sultan, “Meseemeth thou knowest not of my affair.” And the Vizier said to him, “By Allah, O my lord, I have no knowledge of aught whatsoever.” “Then,” rejoined the Sultan, “thou hast not looked towards Alaeddin’s palace.” “Nay, O my lord,” replied the Vizier, “it is yet shut.” And the Sultan said to him, “Since thou hast no news of aught, rise and look at it from the window and see where it is, this palace of Alaeddin’s, whereof thou sayest that it is yet shut.” The Vizier arose and looked from the window towards Alaeddin’s palace, but could see nothing, neither palace nor aught else; so his wit was bewildered and he was amazed and returned to the Sultan, who said to him, “Now knowest thou the cause of my distress and seest Alaeddin his palace, whereof thou saddest that it was shut.” “O King of the Age,” rejoined the Vizier, “I told Thy Grace aforetime that this palace and these affairs were all of them [the work of] enchantment.”

At this the Sultan was fired with wrath and said to him, “Where is Alaeddin?” And he answered, “He is at the chase.” Whereupon the Sultan bade sundry of his eunuchs and officers go straightway fetch him bound and shackled. So they went till they came to Alaeddin and said to him, “O our lord Alaeddin, blame us not, for that the Sultan hath bidden us carry thee to him, bound and shackled; wherefore we beseech thee of excusement, for that we are under a royal commandment and may not gainsay it.” When Alaeddin heard their speech, wonderment took him and his tongue was tied, for that he knew not the cause; then he turned to the eunuchs and officers and said, “Prithee, sirs, have you no knowledge of the cause of this commandment of the Sultan? I know myself guiltless, forasmuch as I have done no sin against the Sultan nor against his realm.” And they said to him, “O our lord, we have no manner of knowledge thereof.” So Alaeddin lighted down from his stallion and said to them, “Do with me that which the Sultan biddeth you, for that his commandment is upon the head and eyes.” Accordingly the officers shackled him and pinioning him, haled him along in irons and entered the city with him.

The folk, seeing Alaeddin pinioned and shackled with iron, knew that the Sultan was minded to cut off his head, and forasmuch as he was extraordinarily beloved of them, they all gathered together and taking up arms, came forth their houses and followed the troops, so they might see what was to do. When the officers came with Alaeddin to the palace, they entered and told the Sultan, who immediately bade the headsman go and cut off his head. But the commons, hearing of this his commandment, shut the gates of the palace and sent to say to the Sultan, “This very moment we will overthrow the palace upon thee and all who are therein, an the least harm happen to Alaeddin.” So the Vizier went and told the Sultan and said to him, “O King of the Age, all will be over with us forthright; wherefore thou wert best pardon Alaeddin, lest some calamity befall us, for that the commons love him more than us.” Now the headsman had spread the carpet of blood and seating Alaeddin thereon, had bound his eyes and gone round him three times, awaiting the King’s final commandment. The Sultan looked at his subjects and seeing them swarming upon him and climbing up to the palace, that they might overthrow it, commanded the headsman to hold his hand from Alaeddin and bade the crier go forth among the people and proclaim that he pardoned Alaeddin and took him [again] into favour.

When Alaeddin found himself released and saw the Sultan sitting, he went up to him and said to him, “O my lord, since Thy Grace hath bountifully vouchsafed me my life, favour me [yet farther] and tell me the manner of my offence.” “O traitor,” replied the Sultan, “till [but] now I knew not thine offence;” then, turning to the Vizier, he said to him, “Take him, that he may see from the windows where his palace is.” Accordingly the Vizier took him and Alaeddin looked from the windows in the direction of his palace and finding the place swept and clear, like as it was before he built the palace thereon, neither seeing any trace of the latter, he was amazed and bewildered, unknowing what had happened. When he returned, the King said to him, “What hast thou seen? Where is thy palace and where is my daughter, my heart’s darling and mine only one, than whom I have none other?” And Alaeddin answered him, saying, “O King of the Age, I have no knowledge thereof, neither know I what hath befallen.” And the Sultan said to him, “Know, O Alaeddin, that I have pardoned thee, so thou mayst go and look into this affair and make me search for my daughter; and do not thou present thyself but with her; nay, an thou bring her not back to me, as my head liveth, I will cut off thine." "Hearkening and obedience, O King of the Age," replied Alaeddin. "Grant me but forty days' grace, and an I bring her not after that time, cut off my head and do what thou wilt." Quoth the Sultan to him, "I grant thee, according to thy request, the space of forty days; but think not to flee from my hand, for that I will fetch thee back, though thou wert above the clouds, not to say upon the face of the earth." "O my lord the Sultan," rejoined Alaeddin, "as I said to Thy Grace, an I bring her not to thee in this space of time, I will present myself before thee, that thou mayst cut off my head."

Now the commons and the folk, one and all, when they saw Alaeddin, rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy and were glad for his deliverance; but the ignominy which had befallen him and shame and the exultation of the envious had bowed down his head; so he went forth and fell to going round about the city, perplexed anent his case and unknowing how all this had happened. He abode in the city two days in the woefullest of case, knowing not how he should do to find his palace and the Lady Bedrulbudour, his bride, what while certain of the folk used to come to him privily with meat and drink. Then he went forth, wandering in the deserts and knowing not whitherward he should aim, and ceased not going till he came to a river; whereupon, his hope being cut off for stress of chagrin that possessed him, he thought to cast himself into the stream; but, for that he was a pious Muslim, professing the unity of God, he feared God in himself and stood on the bank; of the stream to perform the ablution. So he took of the water in his hands and proceeded to rub between his fingers; and in doing this, his rubbing chanced upon the ring, whereupon a Marid appeared to him and said to him, "Here am I; thy slave is before thee. Seek what thou wilt."

When Alaeddin saw the Marid, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and said to him, "O slave, I will have thee bring me my palace, with my bride, the Lady Bedrulbudour, and all that is therein." "O my lord," replied the Marid, "it irketh me sore that what thou seekest of me is a thing unto which I cannot avail, for that it pertaineth unto the slaves of the Lamp and I may not adventure upon it." "Then," said Alaeddin, "since this is not possible unto thee, take me and set me down beside my palace, in what land soever it is." "Hearkening and obedience, O my lord," replied the Marid and taking him up, set him down, in the twinkling of an eye, beside his palace in the land of Africa and before his wife's pavilion. By this time, the night was come; so he looked at his palace and his cares and sorrows were dispelled from him and he trusted in God, after he had forsworn hope, that he should see his bride once again. Then he fell to thinking upon the hidden mercies of God (glorified be His might!) and how He had vouchsafed him the ring and how his hope had been cut off, except God had provided him with the slave of the Ring. So he rejoiced and all chagrin ceased from him; then, for that he had been four days without sleeping, of the stress of his chagrin and his trouble and his grief and the excess of his melancholy, he went to the side of the palace and lay down under a tree; for that, as I have said, the palace was among the gardens of Africa without the city. He lay that night under the tree in all ease; but he whose head is in the headsman's hand sleepeth not anights. However, fatigue and lack of sleep for four days past caused slumber get the mastery over him; so he slept till break of morn, when he awoke at the chirp of the sparrows. He arose and going to a stream there which flowed into the city, washed his hands and face; then, making the ablution, he prayed the morning-prayer and after returned and sat under the windows of the Lady Bedrulbudour's pavilion.

Now the princess, of the excess of her grief for her separation from her husband and the Sultan her father and of her sore distress at that which had betided her with the accursed Maugrabin enchanter, used every day to arise, at the first peep of dawn, and sit weeping; nay, she slept not anights and forswore meat and drink. Her handmaid used to go in to her at the time of the Salutation, so she might dress her, and that morning, by the decree of destiny, the damsel opened the window at that time, thinking to solace her mistress with the sight of the trees and streams. So she looked out and seeing her lord Alaeddin sitting under the windows of the pavilion, said to the princess, "O my lady, my lady, here is my lord Alaeddin sitting under the pavilion!" Whereupon the Lady Bedrulbudour arose in haste and looking from the window, saw Alaeddin, and he raised his head and saw her; so she saluted him and he her and they were both like to fly for joy. Then said she to him, "Arise and come in to me by the privy door, for that the accursed one is not now here;" and she bade her handmaid go down and open the door. So the damsel went down and opened to Alaeddin, who arose and entered thereby. His wife, the Lady Bedrulbudour, met him at the door and they embraced and kissed each other with all joyance, till they fell a-weeping of the excess of their gladness.

Then they sat down and Alaeddin said to her, "O Lady Bedrulbudour, there is somewhat whereof I would ask thee, before all things. I used to lay an old copper lamp in such a place in my pavilion..." When the princess heard this, she sighed and answered him, saying, "O my beloved, it was that which was the cause of our falling into this calamity." Quoth he, "How came this about?" So she acquainted him with the whole matter from first to last, telling him how they had bartered the old lamp for a new one; "and next morning," added she, "we found ourselves in this country and he who had cozened me and changed the lamp told me that he had wroughten these tricks upon us of the might of his magic, by means of the lamp and that he is a Maugrabin from Africa and that we are now in his native land." When she had made an end of her story, Alaeddin said to her, "Tell me, what does this accursed one purpose with thee; what saith he to thee and of what doth he bespeak thee and what is his will of thee?" "Every day," answered the princess, "he cometh to me once and no more and seeketh to draw me to his love, willing me take him in thy stead and forget and renounce thee; nay, he told me that my father the Sultan had cut off thy head. Moreover, he useth to say to me of thee that thou art the son of poor folk and that he was the cause of thine enrichment and seeketh to cajole me with talk, but never hath he seen of me aught but tears and weeping or heard from me one soft word." Quoth Alaeddin, "Tell me where he layeth the lamp, an thou knowest." And she said, "He still carrieth it [about him] nor will part with it a moment; nay, when he acquainted me with that whereof I have told thee, he brought out the lamp from his sleeve and showed it to me"

When Alaeddin heard this, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and said to her, "Harkye, Lady Bedrulbudour; it is my present intent to go out and return in disguise. Marvel thou not at this and let one of thy slave-girls abide await at the privy door, to open to me forthright, when she seeth me coming; and I will cast about for a device whereby I may slay this accursed one.” Then he rose and going forth the [privy] door of his palace, walked on till he encountered a peasant by the way and said to him, “Harkye, sirrah, take my clothes and give me thine.” The man demurred, but Alaeddin enforced him and taking his clothes from him, donned them and gave him his own costly apparel. Then he fared on in the high road till he came to the city and entering, betook himself to the drug-market, where for two diners he bought of [one of] the druggists two drachms of rare strong henbane, the son of its minute, and retracing his steps, returned to the palace. When the damsel saw him, she opened him the privy door and he went in to the Lady Bedrulbudour and said to her, “Harkye, I will have thee dress and tire thyself and put away melancholy from thee; and when the accursed Maugrabin cometh to thee, do thou receive him with ‘Welcome and fair welcome’ and go to meet him with a smiling face and bid him come sup with thee and profess to him that thou hast forgotten thy beloved Alaeddin and thy father and that thou lovest him with an exceeding love. Moreover, do thou seek of him wine, and that red, and make him a show of all joy and gladness and drink to his health. Then, when thou hast filled him two or three cups of wine, [watch] till thou take him off his guard; then put him this powder in the cup and fill it up with wine, and an he drink it, he will straightway turn over on his back, like a dead man.” When the Lady Bedrulbudour heard Alaeddin’s words, she said! to him, “This is a thing exceeding hard on me to do; but it is lawful to slay this accursed, so we may be delivered from his uncleanness who hath made me rue thy separation and that of my father.” Then Alaeddin ate and drank with his wife that which stayed his hunger and rising at once, went forth the palace; whereupon the Lady Bedrulbudour summoned her tirewoman, who busked her and adorned her, and she rose and donned fine clothes and perfumed herself. Whilst she was thus engaged, the accursed Maugrabin presented himself and was exceeding rejoiced to see her on this wise, more by token that she received him with a smiling face, contrary to her wont; so he redoubled in distraction for her love and longing for her. Then she took him and seating him by her side, said to him, “O my beloved, an thou wilt, come hither to me this night and we will sup together. Enough of mourning; for that, an I sat grieving a thousand years, what were the profit? Alaeddin cannot return from the tomb and I have considered and believe that which thou saidst to me yesterday, to wit, that most like my father the Sultan hath slain him, in the excess of his grief for my loss. Nay, marvel not at me to-day, that I am changed since yesterday, for that I have bethought me to take thee to beloved and companion in Alaeddin's stead, seeing there is left me no man other than thou. Wherefore it is my hope that thou wilt come to-night, so we may sup together and drink somewhat of wine with each other, and I will have thee let me taste of the wine of thy country Africa, for that belike it is better [than ours]. Wine, indeed, I have by me; but it is that of our country, and I desire exceedingly to taste the wine of your country."

When the Maugrabin saw the love which the Lady Bedrulbudour professed to him and that she was changed from her whilom plight of grief, he thought that she had given up her hope of Alaeddin; so he rejoiced greatly and said to her, "O my soul, hearkening and obedience unto all that which thou wiliest and biddest me withal. I have with me in my house a jar of the wine of our country, the which I have kept stored these eight years under the earth; so I go now to fill from it our sufficiency and will return to thee forthright." Therewithal the Lady Bedrulbudour, that she might beguile him more and more, said to him, "O my beloved, do not thou go thyself and leave me. Send one of thy servants to fill us from the jar and abide thou sitting with me, that I may take comfort in thee." "O my lady," answered he, "none knoweth the place of the jar save myself; but I will not keep thee waiting." So saying, he went out and returned after a little with their sufficiency of wine; and the Lady Bedrulbudour said to him, "Thou hast been at pains [for me], and I have put thee to unease, O my beloved." "Nay," answered he, "O [thou that art dear to me as] mine eyes, I am honoured by thy service." Then she sat down with him at table and they both fell to eating. Presently, the princess called for drink and the handmaid immediately filled her the cup; then she filled for the Maugrabin and the Lady Bedrulbudour proceeded to drink to his life and health, and he also drank to her life and she fell to carousing with him. Now she was unique in eloquence and sweetness of speech and she proceeded to beguile him and bespeak him with words significant and sweet, so she might entangle him yet straitlier in the toils of her love. The Maugrabin thought that all this was true and knew not that the love she professed to him was a snare set for him to slay him. So he redoubled in desire for her and was like to die for love of her, when he saw from her that which she showed him of sweetness of speech and coquetry; his head swam with ecstasy and the world became changed in his eyes.

When they came to the last of the supper and the princess knew that the wine had gotten the mastery in his head, she said to him, "We have in our country a custom, meknoweth not if you in this country use it or not." "And what is this custom?" asked the Maugrabin. "It is," answered she, "that, at the end of supper, each lover taketh the other's cup and drinketh it." So saying, she took his cup and filling it for herself with wine, bade the handmaid give him her cup, wherein was wine mingled with henbane, even as she had taught her how she should do, for that all the slaves and slave-girls in the palace wished his death and were at one against him with the Lady Bedrulbudour. So the damsel gave him the cup, and he, hearing the princess's words and seeing her drink in his cup and give him to drink in hers, deemed himself Iskender of the Horns, whenas he saw from her all this love. Then she bent towards him, swaying gracefully from side to side, and laying her hand on his, said, "O my life, here is thy cup with me and mine is with thee; thus do lovers drink one from other's cup." Then she kissed his cup and drinking it off, set it down and came up to him and kissed him on the cheek; whereat he was like to fly for joy and purposing to do even as she had done, raised the cup to his mouth and drank it all off, without looking if there were aught therein or not; but no sooner had he done this than he turned over on his back, like a dead man, and the cup fell from his hand.

The Lady Bedrulbudour rejoiced at this and the damsels ran, vying with each other in their haste, and opened the palace-door to Alaeddin, their lord; whereupon he entered and going up to his wife's pavilion, found her sitting at the table and the Maugrabin before her, as one slain. So he went up to the princess and kissed her and thanked her for this [that she had done] and rejoiced with an exceeding joy. Then said he to her, "Get thee now into thine inner chamber, thou and thy damsels, and leave me alone, so I may consider of that which I have to do." Accordingly, the Lady Bedrulbudour tarried not, but entered the inner pavilion, she and her women; whereupon Alaeddin arose and locked the door on them and going up to the Maugrabin, put his hand to his sleeve and pulled out the lamp; after which he drew his sword and cut off the sorcerer's head. Then he rubbed the lamp and the Marid, its slave, appeared to him and said, "Here am I, O my lord; what wiliest thou?" Quoth Alaeddin, "I will of thee that thou take up this palace from this country and carry it to the land of China and set it in the place where it was erst, before the Sultan's palace." "Hearkening and obedience, O my lord," replied the Marid [and disappeared], whilst Alaeddin went in and sat with the Lady Bedrulbudour his bride and embraced her and kissed her and she him; and they sat talking and making merry, what while the Marid took up the palace with them and set it down in its place before the Sultan's palace.

Presently Alaeddin called for food; so the slave-girls set the tray before him and he sat, he and the Lady Bedrulbudour his wife, and ate and drank in all joy and gladness till they had taken their sufficiency. Then they removed to the chamber of wine and carousel, where they sat drinking and making merry and kissing one another with all eagerness, for that it was long since they had had easance together; and they ceased not from this till the sun of wine rose in their heads and sleep took them; whereupon they arose and lay down on their bed in all rest and delight. In the morning Alaeddin arose and aroused his wife, whereupon her women came to her and dressed her and busked her and adorned her; whilst he, on his part, donned the richest of raiment, and both were like to fly for joy at their reunion with each other, after their separation, whilst the Lady Bedrulbudour was especially glad, for that she looked to see her father that day.

So much for Alaeddin and the Lady Bedrulbudour; and as for the Sultan, after he had released Alaeddin, he ceased not to mourn for the loss of his daughter and to sit and weep for her, like a woman, at every time and tide; for that she was his only one and he had none other than her. And every day, whenas he arose from his sleep in the morning, he would go hastily to the window and opening it, look towards the place where Alaeddin's palace was erst and weep till his eyes were dried up and their lids ulcered. He arose that day at dawn, according to his wont, and opening the window, looked out and saw before him a building; so he fell to rubbing his eyes and looking closelier, was certified that it was Alaeddin's palace; whereupon he immediately called for the horses. Accordingly, they saddled them and he went down and mounting, rode to Alaeddin's palace. When the latter saw him coming, he went down and meeting him half-way, took him by the hand and carried him up to the pavilion of the Lady Bedrulbudour, his daughter. Now she also longed sore for her father; so she came down and met him at the stair-foot door, over against the lower hall; whereupon he embraced her and fell to kissing her and weeping and on this wise did she also. Then Alaeddin brought them up to the upper pavilion, where they sat down and the Sultan proceeded to question the princess of her case and of that which had befallen her, whilst she acquainted him with all that had happened to her and said to him, "O my father, I breathed not till yesterday, when I saw my husband, and he it is who delivered me from the bondage of a Maugrabin, an accursed sorcerer, methinketh there is not a filthier than he on the face of the earth; and but for my beloved Alaeddin, I had not won free of him and thou hadst not seen me all thy life. Indeed, O my father, there possessed me grief and sore chagrin, not only for my severance from thee, but also for the loss of my husband, to whom I shall be beholden all the days of my life, seeing he delivered me from that accursed enchanter."

Then she went on to acquaint her father with all that had befallen her and to tell him of the Maugrabin's dealings and what he did with her and how he feigned himself a lampseller, who bartered new for old. "And when," [quoth she]; "I saw this [seeming] lack of wit in him, I fell to laughing at him, unknowing his perfidy and his intent; so I took an old lamp that was in my husband's pavilion and sent it by the eunuch, who exchanged it with him for a new lamp; and next day, O my father, at daybreak, we found ourselves in Africa, with the palace and all that was therein; and I knew not the properties of the lamp which I had exchanged, till my husband Alaeddin came to us and contrived against the Maugrabin a device whereby he delivered us from him. Now, except my husband had won to us, it was the accursed one's intent to go in to me perforce; but Alaeddin, my husband gave me a powder, the which I put for him in a cup of wine and gave it him to drink. So he drank it and fell-back as one dead; whereupon my husband Alaeddin came in to me and meknoweth not how he wrought, so that he transported us back from the land of Africa to our place here." And Alaeddin said to the Sultan, "O my lord, when I came up and saw him cast down like one slain and sleeping for the henbane, I said to the Lady Bedrulbudour, 'Go in, thou and thy women, to the inner pavilion.' So she arose and went in, she and her damsels, from that loathsome sight; whilst I went up to the accursed Maugrabin and putting my hand to his sleeve, pulled out the lamp, for that the Lady Bedrulbudour had told me he still carried it there. Then, when I had gotten it, I drew my sword and cut [off] the accursed's [head] and making use of the lamp, bade its servants take us up, with the palace and all that was therein, and set us down here in our place. And if Thy Grace be in doubt of my words, do thou come with me and see the accursed Maugrabin."

So the King arose and going in with Alaeddin to the pavilion, saw the Maugrabin [Iying]: whereupon he bade forthright take the carcase and burn it and scatter its ashes [to the winds]. Then he embraced Alaeddin and fell to kissing him and said to him, "Excuse me, O my son, for that I was going to bereave thee of thy life, through the wickedness of yonder accursed sorcerer who cast thee into this pit; and indeed, O my son, I was excusable in that which I did with thee, inasmuch as I saw myself bereft of my daughter and mine only one, who is dearer to me than my kingdom, and thou knowest how fathers' hearts yearn upon their children, more by token that I have but the Lady Bedrulbudour." And he went on to excuse himself to him and kiss him; and Alaeddin said to him, "O Lord of the Age, thou didst with me nothing contrary to the law and I also was guiltless of offence; but the thing came all of that vile Maugrabin enchanter." Then the Sultan bade decorate the city and hold festival and rejoicings and commanded the crier to cry in the city that that day was a great festival, wherefore rejoicings should be holden in all the realm during the space of a month, [to wit,] thirty days' time, for the return of the Lady Bedrulbudour his daughter and her husband Alaeddin.

This, then, is what befell Alaeddin with the Maugrabin; but Alaeddin, for all this, was not altogether quit of the accursed enchanter, withal his body had been burned and given to the winds; for that the accursed one had a brother viler than he [and yet more skilled] in magic and geomancy and astrology; [nay, they were even] as saith the proverb, "A bean and it was cloven in twain;" and each dwelt in one quarter of the world, so they might fill it with their sorcery and craft and guile. It chanced one day that the Maugrabin's brother was minded to know how it was with his brother; so he fetched his sand-board and smote it and extracted its figures; then he considered them and examining them throughly, found his brother in the house of the tomb; whereat he mourned and was certified that he was indeed dead. Then he smote the sand a second time, so he might learn how and where he died, and found that he had died in the land of China and by the foulest of deaths and knew that he who slew him was a youth by name Alaeddin. So he rose at once and equipping himself for travel, set out and traversed plains and deserts and mountains months and months, till he came to the land of China [and entering] the city of the sultanate, wherein was Alaeddin, repaired to the Strangers' Khan, where he hired him a lodging and rested there a little.

Then he arose to go round about the thoroughfares of the city, that he might spy him out a means of compassing his fell purpose, the which was to take vengeance of his brother on Alaeddin. So he entered a coffee-house in the market, a mighty fine place whither there resorted great plenty of folk, some to play tables, some draughts and other some chess and what not else. There he sat down and heard those who sat beside him talk of an old woman, an anchoress, by name Fatimeh, who still abode in her place without the city, serving [God], and came not down into the town but two days in the month, avouching her to be possessed of divine gifts galore. When the Maugrabin enchanter heard this, he said in himself, "Now have I found that which I sought. An it please God the Most High, I shall achieve my quest by means of this woman." So he went up to the folk who were speaking of the devout old woman's supernatural powers and said to one of them, "O uncle, I hear you talk of the divine gifts of one she-saint, by name Fatimeh. Who is she and where is her place?" "Wonderful!" cried the man. "What, thou art in our city and hast not heard of the divine gifts of my Lady Fatimeh? Apparently, good man, thou art a stranger, since thou hast never chanced to hear of the fasts of this holy woman and her abhorrence of the world and the goodliness of her piety." "Ay, my lord," replied the Maugrabin, "I am indeed a stranger and arrived but yesternight in this your town; wherefore I beseech thee tell me of the divine gifts of this holy woman and where her place is, for that I have fallen into a calamity and would fain go to her and crave her of prayer, so haply God (to whom belong might and majesty) may deliver me from my stress, by means of her intercession." The man accordingly told him of the divine gifts of the holy woman Fatimeh and her piety and the excellence of her devotion; then, taking him by the hand, he carried him without the city and showed him the way to her abiding-place, which was in a cavern on the top of a little hill; whereupon the Maugrabin thanked him amain for his kindness and returned to his place in the Khan.

Now, by the decree of destiny, Fatimeh came down on the morrow to the city and the enchanter, going forth the Khan in the morning, saw the folk crowding together; so he went up, to see what was toward, and found Fatimeh standing, whilst every one who had a pain or an ache came to her, seeking her blessing and soliciting her prayers, and whenas she stroked him, he was made whole of his ailment. The Maugrabin followed her, till she returned to her cavern, and waited till nightfall, when he arose and entering a sherbet-sellers shop, drank a cup of liquor, then went forth the city, intending for the cavern of Fatimeh the recluse. When he came thither, he entered and saw her sleeping on her back on a piece of matting; so he went up to her and sitting down on her breast, drew his dagger and cried out at her; whereupon she awoke and opening her eyes, saw a man, a Maugrabin, with a drawn dagger, sitting on her breast and offering to kill her. So she feared and trembled and he said to her, "Harkye, an thou say aught or cry out, I will kill thee on the spot. Arise now and do all that I shall bid thee." And he swore an oath to her that, if she did for him that which he should bid her, he would not kill her.

Then he rose from her and she rose also, and he said to her, "Give me thy clothes and take mine." So she gave him her clothes and head-bands and her kerchief and veil; and he said to her, “Now must thou anoint me, to boot, with somewhat, so my face may become like unto shine in colour.” Accordingly Fatimeh went within the cavern and bringing out a vial of ointment, took thereof in her palm and anointed his face withal, whereupon it became like unto hers in colour. Then she gave him her staff and taught him how he should walk and how he should do, whenas he went down into the city; moreover, she put her rosary on his neck and finally giving him the mirror, said to him, “Look now; thou differest not from me in aught.” So he looked and saw himself as he were Fatimeh herself. Then, when he had gotten his desire, he broke his oath and sought of her a rope; so she brought him a rope and he took her and strangled her therewith in the cavern. When she was dead, he dragged her forth and cast her into a pit therewithout; then, returning to her cavern, he slept there till the day broke, when he arose and going down into the city, came under Alaeddin’s pavilion.

The folk gathered about him, believing him to be Fatimeh the Recluse, and he proceeded to do like as she had been used to do, laying hands on those in pain and reciting for this one the Fatiheh and for that a[nother] chapter of the Koran and praying for a third. Then, for the much crowding upon him and the clamour of the folk, the Lady Bedrulbudour heard and said to her women, “See what is to do and what is the cause of this noise.” So the Ada of the eunuchs went to see what was toward and returning, said to her, “O my lady, this clamour is because of the Lady Fatimeh. An it please thee bid me fetch her to thee, so thou mayst ask a blessing of her....” And the Lady Bedrulbudour said to him, “Go and bring her to me; marry, this long while past I have still heard of her gifts and excellences and have yearned to see her, so I may ask a blessing of her, for that the folk are beyond measure abundant [in talk] of her virtues.” So the Aga went and brought the enchanter, disguised as Fatimeh, before the Lady Bedrulbudour; whereupon the Maugrabin offered up abundance of prayers for her, and none misdoubted of him but that he was Fatimeh the recluse. The princess rose and saluting him, seated him by her side and said to him, “O my Lady Fatimeh, I will have thee with me alway, that I may be blessed in thee and eke that I may learn of thee the ways of God-service and piety and model myself on thee."

Now this was what the accursed sorcerer aimed at; however, the better to accomplish his perfidious intent, he [dissembled and] said to her, "O my lady, I am a poor woman sitting in the desert and it beseemeth not that the like of me should abide in kings' palaces." Quoth the Lady Bedrulbudour, "Have no manner of care, O my lady Fatimeh; I will give thee a place in my house, where thou shalt do thy devotions, and none shall ever go in to thee; nay, here shalt thou serve God better than in thy cavern." And the Maugrabin said to her, "Hearkening and obedience, O my lady; I will not gainsay thy commandment, for that the speech of princes may not be crossed neither disputed; but I beg of thee that my eating and drinking and sitting may be in my closet alone [and] that none may come in upon me. Moreover, I need no rich viands, but every day do thou favour me and send me by thy handmaid a piece of bread and a draught of water to my closet; and when I am minded to eat, I will eat in my closet alone." (Now this the accursed did, of his fear lest his chin veil should be raised, when he ate, and so his case be exposed and they know him for a man by his beard and moustaches.) "O my lady Fatimeh," rejoined the princess, "be easy; nothing shall betide save that which thou wiliest; so rise now [and come] with me, that I may show thee the pavilion which I purpose to order for thine inhabitance with us." So saying, she arose and carrying the sorcerer to the place which she had appointed him wherein to abide, said to him, "O my lady Fatimeh, here shalt thou dwell; this pavilion is in thy name and thou shalt abide therein in all quiet and ease of privacy." And the Maugrabin thanked her for her bounty and prayed for her.

Then the Lady Bedrulbudour took him and showed him the belvedere and the kiosk of jewels, with the four-and-twenty oriels, and said to him, "How deemest thou, O my Lady Fatimeh, of this wonderful pavilion?" "By Allah, O my daughter," replied he, "it is indeed marvellous in the extreme, nor methinketh is its like found in the world; nay, it is magnificent exceedingly; but oh, for one thing which would far increase it in beauty and adornment!" And the princess said to him, "O my Lady Fatimeh, what is lacking to it and what is this thing which would adorn it? Tell me of it; I had thought that it was altogether perfect.” “O my lady,” answered the sorcerer, “that which lacketh to it is the egg of the bird Roc, which being hung in its dome, there were no like unto this pavilion in all the world.” “What is this bird.” asked the princess, “and where shall we find its egg?” And the Moor said to her, “O my lady, this is a great bird that taketh up camels and elephants in its talons and flieth with them, of its bigness and greatness; it is mostly to be found in the mountain Caf and the craftsman who builded this palace is able to bring its egg.” Then they left that talk and it was the time of the morning-meal. So the slave-girls laid the table and the Lady Bedrulbudour sat down and sought of the accursed sorcerer that he should eat with her; but he refused and rising, entered the pavilion which she had given him, whither the slave-girls carried him the morning-meal.

When it was eventide and Alaeddin returned from the chase, the Lady Bedrulbudour met him and saluted him: whereupon he embraced her and kissed her and looking in her face, saw that she was somewhat troubled and smiled not, against her wont. So he said to her, “What aileth thee, O my beloved? Tell me, hath there befallen thee aught to trouble thee?” And she answered him, saying, “There aileth me nothing; but, O my beloved, I had thought that our palace lacked of nought; however, O my eyes Alaeddin, were there hung in the dome of the upper pavilion an egg of the bird Roc, there were not its like in the world.” “And wast thou concerned anent this?” rejoined Alaeddin. “This is to me the easiest of all things; so be easy, for it is enough that thou tell me of that which thou wishest and I will fetch it thee from the abysses of the world on the speediest wise.” Then after he had comforted the princess and promised her all she sought, he went straight to his closet and taking the lamp rubbed it; whereupon the Marid at once appeared and said to him, “Seek what thou wilt;” and Alaeddin, “I will have thee bring me a Roc’s egg and hang it in the dome of the [upper] pavilion.”

When the Marid heard Alaeddin’s words, his face frowned and he was wroth and cried out with a terrible great voice, saying, “O denier of benefits, doth it not suffice thee that I and all the slaves of the Lamp are at thy service and wouldst thou eke have me bring thee our liege lady, for thy pleasure, and hang her in the dome of thy pavilion, to divert thee and thy wife? By Allah, ye deserve that I should forthright reduce you both to ashes and scatter you to the winds! But, inasmuch as ye are ignorant, thou and she, concerning this matter and know not its inward from its outward, I excuse you, for that ye are innocent. As for the guilt, it lieth with the accursed one, the surviving brother of the Maugrabin enchanter, who feigneth himself to be Fatimeh the Recluse; for lo, he hath slain Fatimeh in her cavern and hath donned her dress and disguised himself after her favour and fashion and is come hither, seeking thy destruction, so he may take vengeance on thee for his brother; and he it is who taught thy wife to seek this of thee." Therewith he disappeared, and as for Alaeddin, when he heard this, his wit fled from his head and his joints trembled at the cry wherewith the Marid cried out at him; but he took heart and leaving his closet, went in straightway to his wife and feigned to her that his head irked him, of his knowledge that Fatimeh was renowned for the secret of healing all aches and pains. When the Lady Bedrulbudour saw him put his hand to his head and complain of its aching, she asked him what was the cause and he said, "I know not, except that my head irketh me sore." Accordingly she sent forthwith to fetch Fatimeh, so she might lay her hand on his head; whereupon quoth Alaeddin, "Who is this Fatimeh?" And the princess told him how she had lodged Fatimeh the recluse with her in the palace.

Meanwhile the slave-girls went and fetched the accursed Maugrabin, and Alaeddin arose to him, feigning ignorance of his case, and saluted him, as he had been the true Fatimeh. Moreover he kissed the hem of his sleeve and welcomed him, saying, "O my Lady Fatimeh, I beseech thee do me a kindness, since I know thy usances in the matter of the healing of pains, for that there hath betided me a sore pain in my head." The Maugrabin could scarce believe his ears of this speech, for that this was what he sought; so he went up to Alaeddin, as he would lay his hand on his head, after the fashion of Fatimeh the recluse, and heal him of his pain. When he drew near-him, he laid one hand on his head and putting the other under his clothes, drew a dagger, so he might slay him withal. But Alaeddin was watching him and waited till he had all to-drawn the dagger, when he gripped him by the hand and taking the knife from him, planted it in his heart.

When the Lady Bedrulbudour saw this, she cried out and said to him, “What hath this holy anchoress done, that thou burthenest thyself with the sore burden of her blood? Hast thou no fear of God, that thou dost this and hast slain Fatimeh, who was a holy woman and whose divine gifts were renowned?” Quoth he to her, “I have not slain Fatimeh; nay, I have slain him who slew her; for that this is the brother of the accursed Maugrabin enchanter, who took thee and by his sorcery transported the palace with thee to the land of Africa. Yea, this accursed one was his brother and came to this country and wrought these frauds, slaying Fatimeh and donning her clothes and coming hither, so he might take vengeance on me for his brother. Moreover, it was he who taught thee to seek of me a Roc’s egg, so my destruction should ensue thereof; and if thou misdoubt of my word, come and see whom I have slain.” So saying, he did off the Maugrabin’s chin veil and the Lady Bedrulbudour looked and saw a man whose beard covered his face; whereupon she at once knew the truth and said to Alaeddin, “O my beloved, twice have I cast thee into danger of death;” and he said to her, “O Lady Bedrulbudour, thanks to thine eyes, no harm [hath betided me thereof; nay,] I accept with all joy everything that cometh to me through thee.” When the princess heard this, she hastened to embrace him and kissed him, saying, “O my beloved, all this was of my love for thee and I knew not what I did; nor indeed am I negligent of thy love.” Whereupon Alaeddin kissed her and strained her to his breast and love redoubled between them.

Presently, in came the Sultan; so they told him of all that had passed with the Maugrabin enchanter’s brother and showed him the latter, as he lay dead; whereupon he bade burn him and scatter his ashes to the winds. Thenceforward Alaeddin abode with his wife the Lady Bedrulbudour in all peace and pleasure and was delivered from all perils. Then, after a while, the Sultan died and Alaeddin sat down on the throne of the kingdom and ruled and did justice among the people; and all the folk loved him and he lived with his wife, the Lady Bedrulbudour, in all cheer and solace and contentment till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Societies.

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RICHARD FRANCIS BURTON 1885 TRANSLATION

Sir Richard Francis Burton (1821-1890) was a British explorer, geographer, translator, writer, soldier, spy, linguist, poet and diplomat. He was famous for his travels and explorations in Asia, Africa and the Americas, as well as his extraordinary knowledge of languages and cultures. According to one source, he spoke 29 European, Asian and African languages. In literary terms, Burton's best-known achievements include his translation of *One Thousand and One Nights* and the publication of the *Kama Sutra* in English.

During his travels, Burton developed an appreciation and respect for many different forms of cultures. His works and letters extensively criticised colonial policies of the British Empire, even to the detriment of his career. He was a prolific and erudite author and wrote numerous books and scholarly articles about subjects including human behaviour, travel, falconry, fencing, sexual practices and ethnography. A characteristic feature of his books is the copious footnotes and appendices containing remarkable observations and information.

Burton was a captain in the army of the East India Company, serving in India (and later, briefly, in the Crimean War). Following this, he was engaged by the Royal Geographical Society to explore the east coast of Africa and led an expedition guided by the locals and was the first European to see Lake Tanganyika. In later life, he served as British consul in Fernando Pó, Santos, Damascus and, finally, Trieste. He was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and was awarded a knighthood (KCMG) in 1886.

One of Burton's most celebrated achievements is his 1885 translation of *One Thousand and One Nights* in ten volumes, with a further six books following later. The volumes were printed by the Kama Shastra Society in a subscribers-only edition of one thousand with a guarantee that there would never be a larger printing of the books in this form. The stories collected were often sexual in content and were considered pornography at the time of publication. In particular, the Terminal Essay in volume 10 of the Nights contained a 14,000-word essay entitled “Pederasty” (Volume 10, section IV, D), at the time a synonym for homosexuality. This was and remained for many years the longest and most explicit discussion of homosexuality in any language. Burton speculated that male homosexuality was prevalent in an area of the southern latitudes named by him the “Sotadic zone”. Rumours about Burton’s own sexuality were already circulating and were further incited by this work.

Burton’s writings are unusually open and frank about his interest in sex and sexuality. His travel writing is often full of details about the sexual lives of the inhabitants of areas he travelled through. Burton’s interest in sexuality led him to make measurements of the lengths of the sexual organs of male inhabitants of various regions which he includes in his travel books. He also describes sexual techniques common in the regions he visited, often hinting that he had also participated, breaking sexual and racial taboos of his day. Consequently, many people at the time considered the Kama Shastra Society and the books it published scandalous.

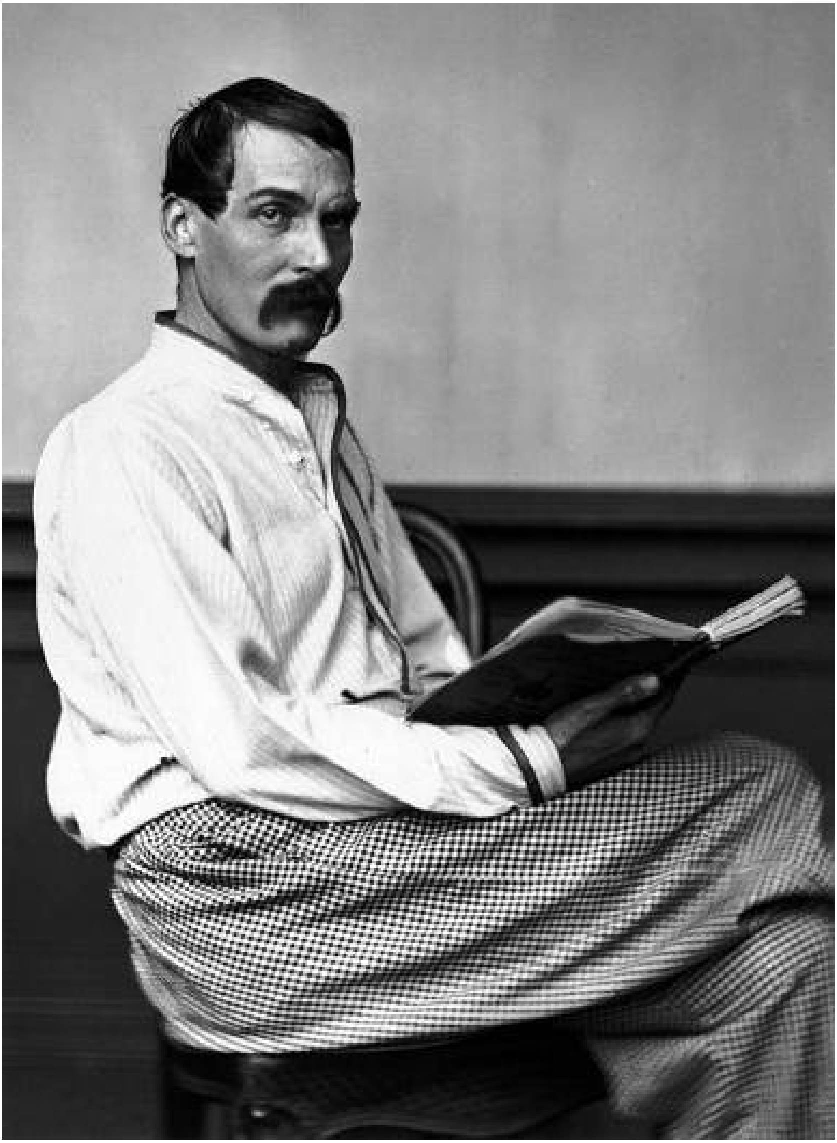

Sir Richard Francis Burton, c. 1860

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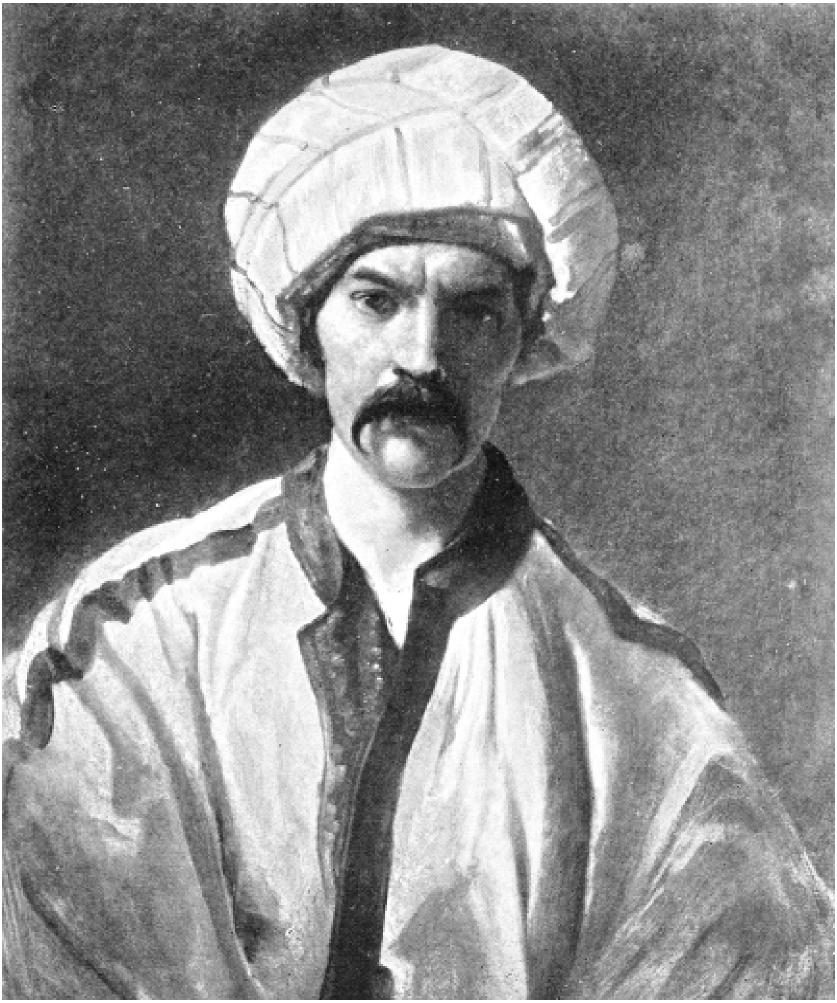

Burton in Persian disguise as “Mirza Abdullah the Bushri” (c. 1849)

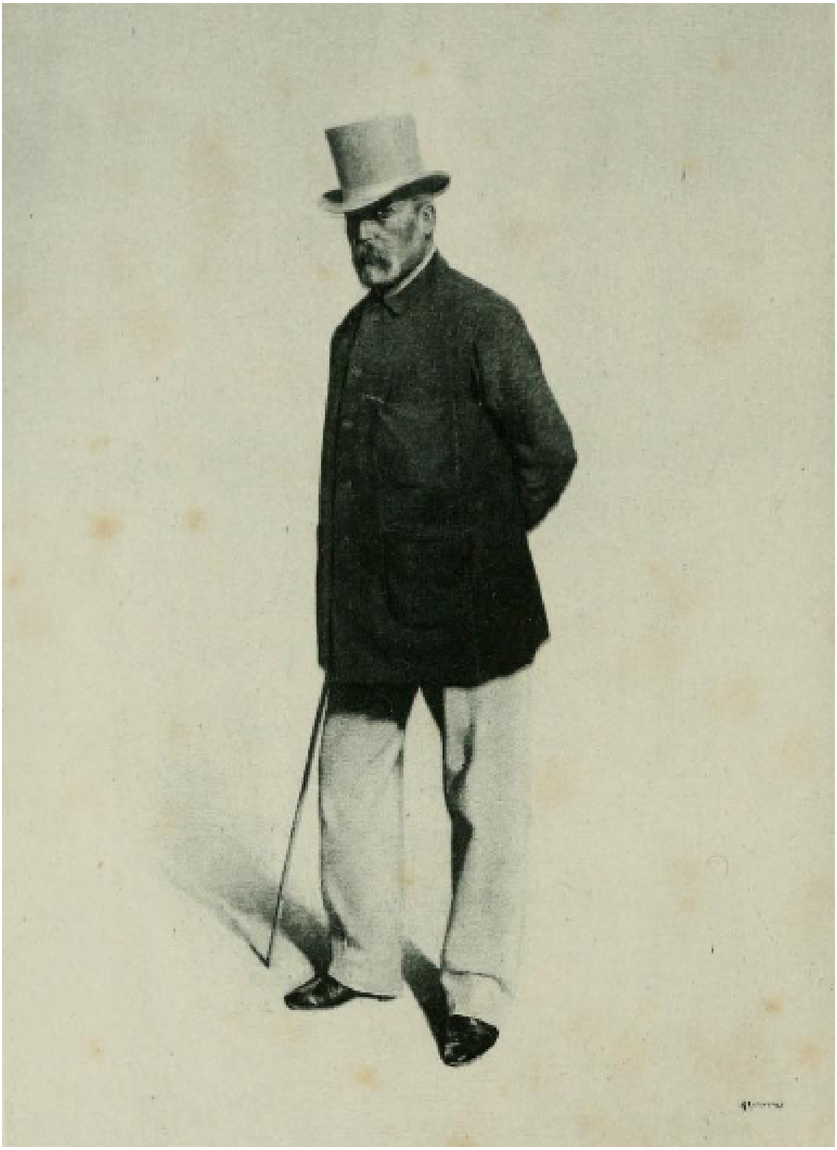

The original frontispiece of Volume I – Captain Sir Richard F. Burton

VOLUME ONE

With Illustrations by Albert Letchford

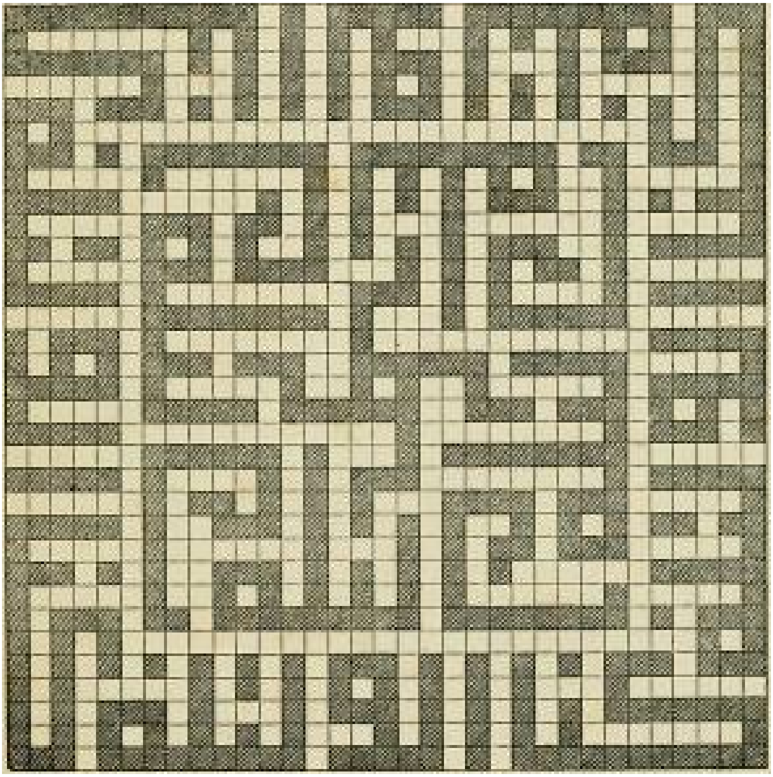

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

Inscribed to the Memory

OF

MY LAMENTED FRIEND

John Frederick Steinhaeuser,

(CIVIL SURGEON, ADEN)

WHO

A QUARTER OF A CENTURY AGO

ASSISTED ME IN THIS TRANSLATION.

“To the pure all things are pure” (Puris omnia pura)
- Arab Proverb.

“Niuna corrotta mente intese mai sanamente parole.”
- “Decameron” - conclusion.

“Erubuit, posuitque meum Lucretia librum Sed coram Bruto. Brute!
reced, leget.
- Martial.

“Miculx est de ris que de larmes escripre, Pour ce que rire est le propre des hommes.” - Rabelais.

“The pleasure we derive from perusing the Thousand and One
Stories makes us regret that we possess only a comparatively
small part of these truly enchanting fictions.”
- Crichton’s “History of Arabia.”

THE TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD.

This work, labourious as it may appear, has been to me a labour of love, an unfailing source of solace and satisfaction. During my long years of official banishment to the luxuriant and deadly deserts of Western Africa, and to the dull and dreary half clearings of South America, it proved itself a charm, a talisman against ennui and despondency. Impossible even to open the pages without a vision starting into view; with out drawing a picture from the pinacothek of the brain; without reviving a host of memories and reminiscences which are not the common property of travellers, however widely they may have travelled. From my dull and commonplace and "respectable" surroundings, the Jinn bore me at once to the land of my pre-direction, Arabia, a region so familiar to my mind that even at first sight, it seemed a reminiscence of some by gone metempsychic life in the distant Past. Again I stood under the diaphanous skies, in air glorious as aether, whose every breath raises men's spirits like sparkling wine. Once more I saw the evening star hanging like a solitaire from the pure front of the western firmament; and the after glow transfiguring and transforming, as by magic, the homely and rugged features of the scene into a fairy land lit with a light which never shines on other soils or seas. Then would appear the woollen tents, low and black, of the true Badawin, mere dots in the boundless waste of lion tawny clays and gazelle brown gravels, and the camp fire dotting like a glow worm the village centre. Presently, sweetened by distance, would be heard the wild weird song of lads and lasses, driving or rather pelting, through the gloaming their sheep and goats; and the measured chant of the spearsmen gravely stalking behind their charge, the camels; mingled with bleating of the flocks and the bellowing of the humpy herds; while the reremouse flitted overhead with his tiny shriek, and the rave of the jackal resounded through deepening glooms, and — most musical of music — the palm trees answered the whispers of the night breeze with the softest tones of falling water.

And then a shift of scene. The Shaykhs and "white beards" of the tribe gravely take their places, sitting with outspread skirts like hillocks on the plain, as the Arabs say, around the camp fire, whilst I reward their hospitality and secure its continuance by reading or reciting a few pages of their favourite tales. The women and children stand motionless as silhouettes outside the ring; and all are breathless with attention; they seem to drink in the words with eyes and mouths as well as with ears. The most fantastic flights of fancy, the wildest improbabilities, the most impossible of impossibilities, appear to them utterly natural, mere matters of every day occurrence. They enter thoroughly into each phase of feeling touched upon by the author: they take a personal pride in the chivalrous nature and knightly prowess of Taj al-Mulúk; they are touched with tenderness by the self sacrificing love of Azízah; their mouths water as they hear of heaps of untold gold given away in largesse like clay; they chuckle with delight every time a Kázi or a Fakír — a judge or a reverend — is scurvily entreated by some Pantagruelist of the Wilderness; and, despite their normal solemnity and impassibility, all roar with laughter, sometimes rolling upon the ground till the reader's gravity is sorely tried, at the tales of the garrulous Barber and of Ali and the Kurdish Sharper. To this magnetising mood the sole exception is when a Badawi of superior accomplishments, who sometimes says his prayers, ejaculates a startling "Astagh-faru'llah" — I pray Allah's pardon! — for listening, not to Carlyle's "downright lies," but to light mention of the sex whose name is never heard amongst the nobility of the Desert.

Nor was it only in Arabia that the immortal Nights did me such notable service: I found the wildlings of Somali land equally amenable to its discipline; no one was deaf to the charm and the two women cooks of my caravan, on its way to Harar, were in continently dubbed by my men "Shahrazad" and "Dinazad."

It may be permitted me also to note that this translation is a natural outcome of my Pilgrimage to Al-Medinah and Meccah. Arriving at Aden in the (so called) winter of 1852, I put up with my old and dear friend, Steinhaeuser, to whose memory this volume is inscribed; and, when talking over Arabia and the Arabs, we at once came to the same conclusion that, while the name of this wondrous treasury of Moslem folk lore is familiar to almost every English child, no general reader is aware of the valuables it contains, nor indeed will the door open to any but Arabists. Before parting we agreed to "collaborate" and produce a full, complete, unvarnished, uncastrated copy of the great original, my friend taking the prose and I the metrical part; and we corresponded upon the subject for years. But whilst I was in the Brazil, Steinhaeuser died suddenly of apoplexy at Berne in Switzerland and, after the fashion of Anglo India, his valuable MSS. left at Aden were dispersed, and very little of his labours came into my hands.

Thus I was left alone to my work, which progressed fitfully amid a host of obstructions. At length, in the spring of 1879, the tedious process of copying began and the book commenced to take finished form. But, during the winter of 1881-82, I saw in the literary journals a notice of a new version by Mr. John Payne, well known to scholars for his prowess in English verse, especially for his translation of "The Poems of Master Francis Villon, of Paris." Being then engaged on an expedition to the Gold Coast (for gold), which seemed likely to cover some months, I wrote to the "Athenaeum" (Nov. 13, 1881) and to Mr. Payne, who was wholly unconscious that we were engaged on the same work, and freely offered him precedence and possession of the field till no longer wanted. He accepted my offer as frankly, and his priority entailed another delay lasting till the spring of 1885. These details will partly account for the lateness of my appearing, but there is yet another cause. Professional ambition suggested that literary labours, unpopular with the vulgar and the half educated, are not likely to help a man up the ladder of promotion. But common sense presently suggested to me that, professionally speaking, I was not a success, and, at the same time, that I had no cause to be ashamed of my failure. In our day, when we live under a despotism of the lower "middle class" Philister who can pardon anything but superiority, the prizes of competitive services are monopolized by certain "pets" of the Médiocratie, and prime favourites of that jealous and potent majority — the Mediocrities who know "no nonsense about merit." It is hard for an outsider to realise how perfect is the monopoly of common place, and to comprehend how fatal a stumbling stone that man sets in the way of his own advancement who dares to think for himself, or who knows more or who does more than the mob of gentlemen employee who know very little and who do even less.

Yet, however behindhand I may be, there is still ample room and verge for an English version of the “Arabian Nights' Entertainments.”

Our century of translations, popular and vernacular, from (Professor Antoine) Galland's delightful abbreviation and adaptation (A.D. 1704), in no wise represent the eastern original. The best and latest, the Rev. Mr. Foster's, which is diffuse and verbose, and Mr. G. Moir Bussey's, which is a re- correction, abound in gallicisms of style and idiom; and one and all degrade a chef d'oeuvre of the highest anthropological and ethnographical interest and importance to a mere fairy book, a nice present for little boys.

After nearly a century had elapsed, Dr. Jonathan Scott (LL.D. H.E.I.C.'s S., Persian Secretary to the G. G. Bengal; Oriental Professor, etc., etc.), printed his “Tales, Anecdotes, and Letters, translated from the Arabic and Persian,” (Cadell and Davies, London, A.D. 1800); and followed in 1811 with an edition of “The Arabian Nights' Entertainments” from the MS. of Edward Wortley Montague (in 6 vols., small 8vo, London: Longmans, etc.). This work he (and he only) describes as “Carefully revised and occasionally corrected from the Arabic.” The reading public did not wholly reject it, sundry texts were founded upon the Scott version and it has been imperfectly reprinted (4 vole., 8vo, Nimmo and Bain, London, 1883). But most men, little recking what a small portion of the original they were reading, satisfied themselves with the Anglo French epitome and metaphrase. At length in 1838, Mr. Henry Torrens, B.A., Irishman, lawyer (“of the Inner Temple”) and Bengal Civilian, took a step in the right direction; and began to translate, “The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night,” (1 vol., 8vo, Calcutta: W. Thacker and Co.) from the Arabic of the Ægyptian (!) MS. edited by Mr. (afterwards Sir)William H. Macnaghten. The attempt, or rather the intention, was highly creditable; the copy was carefully moulded upon the model and offered the best example of the verbatim et literatim style. But the plucky author knew little of Arabic, and least of what is most wanted, the dialect of Egypt and Syria. His prose is so conscientious as to offer up spirit at the shrine of letter; and his verse, always whimsical, has at times a manner of

Hibernian whoop which is comical when it should be pathetic. Lastly he printed only one volume of a series which completed would have contained nine or ten.

That amiable and devoted Arabist, the late Edward William Lane does not score a success in his "New Translation of the Tales of a Thousand and One Nights" (London: Charles Knight and Co., MDCCCXXXIX.) of which there have been four English editions, besides American, two edited by E. S. Poole. He chose the abbreviating Bulak Edition; and, of its two hundred tales, he has omitted about half and by far the more characteristic half: the work was intended for "the drawing room table;" and, consequently, the workman was compelled to avoid the "objectionable" and aught "approaching to licentiousness." He converts the Arabian Nights into the Arabian Chapters, arbitrarily changing the division and, worse still, he converts some chapters into notes. He renders poetry by prose and apologises for not omitting it altogether: he neglects assonance and he is at once too Oriental and not Oriental enough. He had small store of Arabic at the time — Lane of the Nights is not Lane of the Dictionary — and his pages are disfigured by many childish mistakes. Worst of all, the three handsome volumes are rendered unreadable as Sale's Koran by their anglicised Latin, their sesquipedalian un English words, and the stiff and stilted style of half a century ago when our prose was, perhaps, the worst in Europe. Their cargo of Moslem learning was most valuable to the student, but utterly out of place for readers of "The Nights;" re-published, as these notes have been separately (London, Chatto, 1883), they are an ethnological text book.

Mr. John Payne has printed, for the Villon Society and for private circulation only, the first and sole complete translation of the great compendium, "comprising about four times as much matter as that of Galland, and three times as much as that of any other translator;" and I cannot but feel proud that he has honoured me with the dedication of "The Book of The Thousand Nights and One Night." His version is most readable: his English, with a sub-flavour of the Mabinogionic archaicism, is admirable; and his style gives life and light to the nine volumes whose matter is frequently heavy enough. He succeeds admirably in the most difficult passages and he often hits upon choice and special terms and the exact vernacular equivalent of the foreign word, so happily and so picturesquely that all future translators must perforce use the same expression under pain of falling far short. But the learned and versatile author bound himself to issue only five hundred copies, and "not to reproduce the work in its complete and uncastrated form." Consequently his excellent version is caviaire to the general — practically unprocurable.

And here I hasten to confess that ample use has been made of the three versions above noted, the whole being blended by a callida junctura into a homogeneous mass. But in the presence of so many predecessors a writer is bound to show some raison d'etre for making a fresh attempt and this I proceed to do with due reserve.

Briefly, the object of this version is to show what "The Thousand Nights and a Night" really is. Not, however, for reasons to be more fully stated in the Terminal Essay, by straining verbum reddere verbo, but by writing as the Arab would have written in English. On this point I am all with Saint Jerome (Pref. in Jobum) "Vel verbum e verbo, vel sensum e sensu, vel ex utroque commixtum, et medic temperatum genus translationis." My work claims to be a faithful copy of the great Eastern Saga book, by preserving intact, not only the spirit, but even the mécanique, the manner and the matter. Hence, however prosy and long drawn out be the formula, it retains the scheme of The Nights because they are a prime feature in the original. The Ráwí or reciter, to whose wits the task of supplying details is left, well knows their value: the openings carefully repeat the names of the dramatic personae and thus fix them in the hearer's memory. Without the Nights no Arabian Nights! Moreover it is necessary to retain the whole apparatus: nothing more ill advised than Dr. Jonathan Scott's strange device of garnishing The Nights with fancy head pieces and tail pieces or the splitting up of Galland's narrative by merely prefixing "Nuit," etc., ending moreover, with the ccxxxivth Night: yet this has been done, apparently with the consent of the great Arabist Sylvestre de Sacy (Paris, Ernest Bourdin). Moreover, holding that the translator's glory is to add something to his native tongue, while avoiding the hideous hag like nakedness of Torrens and the bald literalism of Lane, I have carefully Englished the picturesque turns and novel expressions of the original in all their outlandishness; for instance, when the dust cloud raised by a tramping host is described as "walling the horizon." Hence peculiar attention has been paid to the tropes and figures which the Arabic language often packs into a single term; and I have never hesitated to coin a word when wanted, such as "she snorted and sparked," fully to represent the original. These, like many in Rabelais, are mere barbarisms unless generally adopted; in which case they become civilised and common currency.

Despite objections manifold and manifest, I have preserved the balance of sentences and the prose rhyme and rhythm which Easterns look upon as mere music. This "Saj'a," or cadence of the cooing dove, has in Arabic its special duties. It adds a sparkle to description and a point to proverb, epigram and dialogue; it corresponds with our "artful alliteration" (which in places I have substituted for it) and, generally, it defines the boundaries between the classical and the popular styles which jostle each other in The Nights. If at times it appear strained and forced, after the wont of rhymed prose, the scholar will observe that, despite the immense copiousness of assonants and consonants in Arabic, the strain is often put upon it intentionally, like the Rims cars of Dante and the Troubadours. This rhymed prose may be "un English" and unpleasant, even irritating to the British ear; still I look upon it as a sine quâ non for a complete reproduction of the original. In the Terminal Essay I shall revert to the subject.

On the other hand when treating the versical portion, which may represent a total of ten thousand lines, I have not always bound myself by the metrical bonds of the Arabic, which are artificial in the extreme, and which in English can be made bearable only by a tour de force. I allude especially to the monorhyme, Rim continuat or tirade monorime, whose monotonous simplicity was preferred by the Troubadours for threnodies. It may serve well for three or four couplets but, when it extends, as in the Ghazal-cannon, to eighteen, and in the Kasidah, elegy or ode, to more, it must either satisfy itself with banal rhyme words, when the assonants should as a rule be expressive and emphatic; or, it must display an ingenuity, a smell of the oil, which assuredly does not add to the reader's pleasure. It can perhaps be done and it should be done; but for me the task has no attractions: I can fence better in shoes than in sabots. Finally I print the couplets in Arab form separating the hemistichs by asterisks.

And now to consider one matter of special importance in the book — its turpiloquium. This stumbling-block is of two kinds, completely distinct. One is the simple, naïve and child like indecency which, from Tangiers to Japan, occurs throughout general conversation of high and low in the present day. It uses, like the holy books of the Hebrews, expressions "plainly descriptive of natural situations;" and it treats in an unconventionally free and naked manner of subjects and matters which are usually, by common consent, left undescribed. As Sir William Jones observed long ago, "that anything natural can be offensively obscene never seems to have occurred to the Indians or to their legislators; a singularity (?) pervading their writings and conversation, but no proof of moral depravity." Another justly observes, Les peuples primitifs n'y entendent pas malice: ils appellent les choses par leurs noms et ne trouvent pas condamnable ce qui est naturel. And they are prying as children. For instance the European novelist marries off his hero and heroine and leaves them to consummate marriage in privacy; even Tom Jones has the decency to bolt the door. But the Eastern story teller, especially this unknown "prose Shakespeare," must usher you, with a flourish, into the bridal chamber and narrate to you, with infinite gusto, everything he sees and hears. Again we must remember that grossness and indecency, in fact les turpitudes, are matters of time and place; what is offensive in England is not so in Egypt; what scandalises us now would have been a tame joke tempore Elisoe. Withal The Nights will not be found in this matter coarser than many passages of Shakespeare, Sterne, and Swift, and their uncleanness rarely attains the perfection of Alcofribas Naiser, "divin maitre et atroce cochon." The other element is absolute obscenity, sometimes, but not always, tempered by wit, humour and drollery; here we have an exaggeration of Petronius Arbiter, the handiwork of writers whose ancestry, the most religious and the most debauched of mankind, practised every abomination before the shrine of the Canopic Gods.

In accordance with my purpose of reproducing the Nights, not virginibus puerisque, but in as perfect a picture as my powers permit, I have carefully sought out the English equivalent of every Arabic word, however low it may be or “shocking” to ears polite; preserving, on the other hand, all possible delicacy where the indecency is not intentional; and, as a friend advises me to state, not exaggerating the vulgarities and the indecencies which, indeed, can hardly be exaggerated. For the coarseness and crassness are but the shades of a picture which would otherwise be all lights. The general tone of The Nights is exceptionally high and pure. The devotional fervour often rises to the boiling point of fanaticism. The pathos is sweet, deep and genuine; tender, simple and true, utterly unlike much of our modern tinsel. Its life, strong, splendid and multitudinous, is everywhere flavoured with that unaffected pessimism and constitutional melancholy which strike deepest root under the brightest skies and which sigh in the face of heaven: —

Vita quid est hominis? Viridis floriscula mortis;
Sole Oriente oriens, sole cadente cadens.

Poetical justice is administered by the literary Kází with exemplary impartiality and severity; “denouncing evil doers and eulogising deeds admirably achieved.” The morale is sound and healthy; and at times we descry, through the voluptuous and libertine picture, vistas of a transcendental morality, the morality of Socrates in Plato. Subtle corruption and covert licentiousness are utterly absent; we find more real”vice” in many a short French roman, say La Dame aux Camélias, and in not a few English novels of our day than in the thousands of pages of the Arab. Here we have nothing of that most immodest modern modesty which sees covert implication where nothing is implied, and “improper” allusion when propriety is not outraged; nor do we meet with the Nineteenth Century refinement; innocence of the word not of the thought; morality of the tongue not of the heart, and the sincere homage paid to virtue in guise of perfect hypocrisy. It is, indeed, this unique contrast of a quaint element, childish crudities and nursery indecencies and “vain and amatorious” phrase jostling the finest and highest views of life and character, shown in the kaleidoscopic shiftings of the marvellous picture with many a “rich truth in a tale’s presence”, pointed by a rough dry humour which compares well with “wut; “the alternations of strength and weakness, of pathos and bathos, of the boldest poetry (the diction of Job) and the baldest prose (the Egyptian of today); the contact of religion and morality with the orgies of African Apuleius and Petronius Arbiter — at times taking away the reader’s breath — and, finally, the whole dominated everywhere by that marvellous Oriental fancy, wherein the spiritual and the supernatural are as common as the material and the natural; it is this contrast, I say, which forms the chiefest charm of The Nights, which gives it the most striking originality and which makes it a perfect expositor of the medieval Moslem mind.

Explanatory notes did not enter into Mr. Payne’s plan. They do with mine: I can hardly imagine The Nights being read to any profit by men of the West without commentary. My annotations avoid only one subject, parallels of European folklore and fabliaux which, however interesting, would overswell the bulk of a book whose speciality is anthropology. The accidents of my life, it may be said without undue presumption, my long dealings with Arabs and other Mahommedans, and my familiarity not only with their idiom but with their turn of thought, and with that racial individuality which baffles description, have given me certain advantages over the average student, however deeply he may have studied. These volumes, moreover, afford me a long sought opportunity of noticing practices and customs which interest all mankind and which “Society” will not hear mentioned. Grate, the historian, and Thackeray, the novelist, both lamented that the bégueulerie of their countrymen condemned them to keep silence where publicity was required; and that they could not even claim the partial licence of a Fielding and a Smollett. Hence a score of years ago I lent my best help to the late Dr. James Hunt in founding the Anthropological Society, whose presidential chair I first occupied (p-4 Anthropologia; London, Balliere, vol. i., No. I, 1873). My motive was to supply travellers with an organ which would rescue their observations from the outer darkness of manuscript, and print their curious information on social and sexual matters out of place in the popular book intended for the Nipptisch and indeed better kept from public view. But, hardly had we begun when “Respectability,” that whited sepulchre full of all uncleanness, rose up against us. “Propriety” cried us down with her brazen blatant voice, and the weak kneed brethren fell away. Yet the organ was much wanted and is wanted still. All now known barbarous tribes in Inner Africa, America and Australia, whose instincts have not been overlaid by reason, have a ceremony which they call “making men.” As soon as the boy shows proofs of puberty, he and his coevals are taken in hand by the mediciner and the Fetisheer; and, under priestly tuition, they spend months in the “bush,” enduring hardships and tortures which impress the memory till they have mastered the “theorick and practick” of social and sexual relations. Amongst the civilised this fruit of the knowledge tree must be bought at the price of the bitterest experience, and the consequences of ignorance are peculiarly cruel. Here, then, I find at last an opportunity of noticing in explanatory notes many details of the text which would escape the reader’s observation, and I am confident that they will form a repertory of Eastern knowledge in its esoteric phase. The student who adds the notes of Lane (“Arabian Society,” etc., before quoted) to mine will know as much of the Moslem East and more than many Europeans who have spent half their lives in Orient lands. For facility of reference an index of anthropological notes is appended to each volume.

The reader will kindly bear with the following technical details. Steinhaeuser and I began and ended our work with the first Bulak (“Bul.”) Edition printed at the port of Cairo in A.H. 1251 = A.D. 1835. But when preparing my MSS. for print I found the text incomplete, many of the stories being given in epitome and not a few ruthlessly mutilated with head or feet wanting. Like most Eastern scribes the Editor could not refrain from “improvements,” which only debased the book; and his sole title to excuse is that the second Bulak Edition (4 vols. A.H. 1279 = A.D. 1863), despite its being “revised and corrected by Sheik Mahommed Qotch Al- Adewi,” is even worse; and the same may be said of the Cairo Edit. (4 vols. A.H. 1297 = A. D. 1881). The Calcutta (“Calc.”) Edition, with ten lines of Persian preface by the Editor, Ahmed al-Shirwani (A.D. 1814), was cut short at the end of the first two hundred Nights, and thus made room for Sir William Hay Macnaghten’s Edition (4 vols.

royal 4to) of 1839-42. This ("Mac."), as by far the least corrupt and the most complete, has been assumed for my basis with occasional reference to the Breslau Edition ("Bres.") wretchedly edited from a hideous Egyptian MS. by Dr. Maximilian Habicht (1825-43). The Bayrut Text "Alif-Leila we Leila" (4 vols. at. 8vo, Beirut, 1881-83) is a melancholy specimen of The Nights taken entirely from the Bulak Edition by one Khalil Sarkis and converted to Christianity; beginning without Bismillah, continued with scrupulous castration and ending in ennui and disappointment. I have not used this missionary production.

As regards the transliteration of Arabic words I deliberately reject the artful and complicated system, ugly and clumsy withal, affected by scientific modern Orientalists. Nor is my sympathy with their prime object, namely to fit the Roman alphabet for supplanting all others. Those who learn languages, and many do so, by the eye as well as by the ear, well know the advantages of a special character to distinguish, for instance, Syriac from Arabic, Gujrati from Marathi. Again this Roman hand bewitched may have its use in purely scientific and literary works; but it would be wholly out of place in one whose purpose is that of the novel, to amuse rather than to instruct. Moreover the devices perplex the simple and teach nothing to the learned. Either the reader knows Arabic, in which case Greek letters, italics and "upper case," diacritical points and similar typographic oddities are, as a rule with some exceptions, unnecessary; or he does not know Arabic, when none of these expedients will be of the least use to him. Indeed it is a matter of secondary consideration what system we prefer, provided that we mostly adhere to one and the same, for the sake of a consistency which saves confusion to the reader. I have especially avoided that of Mr. Lane, adopted by Mr. Payne, for special reasons against which it was vain to protest: it represents the debased brogue of Egypt or rather of Cairo; and such a word as Kemer (ez-Zeman) would be utterly un- pronounceable to a Badawi. Nor have I followed the practice of my learned friend, Reverend G. P. Badger, in mixing bars and acute accents; the former unpleasantly remind man of those hateful dactyls and spondees, and the latter should, in my humble opinion, be applied to long vowels which in Arabic double, or should double, the length of the shorts. Dr. Badger uses the acute symbol to denote accent or stress of voice; but such appoggio is unknown to those who speak with purest articulation; for instance whilst the European pronounces Mus-cat', and the Arab villager Mas'-kat; the Children of the Waste, "on whose tongues Allah descended," articulate Mas-kat. I have therefore followed the simple system adopted in my "Pilgrimage," and have accented Arabic words only when first used, thinking it unnecessary to preserve throughout what is an eyesore to the reader and a distress to the printer. In the main I follow "Johnson on Richardson," a work known to every Anglo-Orientalist as the old and trusty companion of his studies early and late; but even here I have made sundry deviations for reasons which will be explained in the Terminal Essay. As words are the embodiment of ideas and writing is of words, so the word is the spoken word; and we should write it as pronounced. Strictly speaking, the e-sound and the o-sound (viz. the Italian o-sound not the English which is peculiar to us and unknown to any other tongue) are not found in Arabic, except when the figure Imálah obliges: hence they are called "Yá al-Majhúl" and "Waw al-Majhúl" the unknown y (í) and u. But in all tongues vowel-sounds, the flesh which clothes the bones (consonants) of language, are affected by the consonants which precede and more especially which follow them, hardening and softening the articulation; and deeper sounds accompany certain letters as the sád ( ) compared with the sín ( ). None save a defective ear would hold, as Lane does, "Maulid" (= birth-festival) "more properly pronounced 'Molid.'" Yet I prefer Khokh (peach) and Jokh (broad cloth) to Khukh and Jukh; Ohod (mount) to Uhud; Obayd (a little slave) to Ubayd; and Hosayn (a fortlet, not the P. N. Al-Husayn) to Husayn. As for the short e in such words as "Memlúk" for "Mamluk" (a white slave), "Eshe" for "Asha" (supper), and "Yemen" for "Al- Yaman," I consider it a flat Egyptianism, insufferable to an ear which admires the Badawi pronunciation. Yet I prefer "Shelebi" (a dandy) from the Turkish Chelebi, to "Shalabi;" "Zebdani" (the Syrian village) to "Zabdani," and "Fes and Miknes" (by the figure Imálah) to "Fas and Miknás,", our "Fez and Mequinez."

With respect to proper names and untranslated Arabic words I have rejected all system in favour of common sense. When a term is incorporated in our tongue, I refuse to follow the purist and mortify the reader by startling innovation. For instance, Aleppo, Cairo and Bassorah are preferred to Halab, Kahirah and Al-Basrah; when a word is half naturalised, like Alcoran or Koran, Bashaw or Pasha, which the French write Pacha; and Mahomet or Mohammed (for Muhammad), the modern form is adopted because the more familiar. But I see no advantage in retaining,, simply because they are the mistakes of a past generation, such words as "Roc" (for Rikh),), Khalif (a pretentious blunder for Kalífah and better written Caliph) and "genie" (= Jinn) a mere Gallic corruption not so terrible, however, as "a Bedouin" (= Badawi).). As little too would I follow Mr. Lane in foisting upon the public such Arabisms as "Khuff" (a riding boot), "Mikra'ah" (a palm rod) and a host of others for which we have good English equivalents. On the other hand I would use, but use sparingly, certain Arabic exclamations, as "Bismillah" (= in the name of Allah!) and "Inshallah" (= if Allah please!), (= which have special applications and which have been made familiar to English ears by the genius of Fraser and Morier.

I here end these desultory but necessary details to address the reader in a few final words. He will not think lightly of my work when I repeat to him that with the aid of my annotations supplementing Lane's, the student will readily and pleasantly learn more of the Moslem's manners and customs, laws and religion than is known to the average Orientalist; and, if my labours induce him to attack the text of The Nights he will become master of much more Arabic than the ordinary Arab owns. This book is indeed a legacy which I bequeath to my fellow countrymen in their hour of need. Over devotion to Hindu, and especially to Sanskrit literature, has led them astray from those (so called) "Semitic" studies, which are the more requisite for us as they teach us to deal successfully with a race more powerful than any pagans — the Moslem. Apparently England is ever forgetting that she is at present the greatest Mohammedan empire in the world. Of late years she has systematically neglected Arabism and, indeed, actively discouraged it in examinations for the Indian Civil Service, where it is incomparably more valuable than Greek and Latin. Hence, when suddenly compelled to assume the reins of government in Moslem lands, as Afghanistan in times past and Egypt at present, she fails after a fashion which scandalises her few (very few) friends; and her crass ignorance concerning the Oriental peoples which should most interest her, exposes her to the contempt of Europe as well as of the Eastern world. When the regrettable raids of 1883-84, culminating in the miserable affairs of Tokar, Teb and Tamasi, were made upon the gallant Sudani negroids, the Bisharin outlying Sawakin, who were battling for the holy cause of liberty and religion and for escape from Turkish task-masters and Egyptian tax-gatherers, not an English official in camp, after the death of the gallant and lamented Major Morice, was capable of speaking Arabic. Now Moslems are not to be ruled by raw youths who should be at school and college instead of holding positions of trust and emolument. He who would deal with them successfully must be, firstly, honest and truthful and, secondly, familiar with and favourably inclined to their manners and customs if not to their law and religion. We may, perhaps, find it hard to restore to England those pristine virtues, that tone and temper, which made her what she is; but at any rate we (myself and a host of others) can offer her the means of dispelling her ignorance concerning the Eastern races with whom she is continually in contact.

In conclusion I must not forget to notice that the Arabic ornamentations of these volumes were designed by my excellent friend Yacoub Artin Pasha, of the Ministry of Instruction, Cairo, with the aid of the well-known writing artist, Shayth Mohammed Muunis the Cairene. My name, Al-Hajj Abdullah (= the Pilgrim Abdallah) was written by an English calligrapher, the lamented Professor Palmer who found a premature death almost within sight of Suez.

RICHARD F. BURTON

Wanderers' Club, August 15, 1885.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

THE BOOK OF THE THOUSAND NIGHTS AND A NIGHT

(ALF LAYLAH WA LAYLAH.)

In the Name of Allah,
the Compassionating, the Compassionate!

PRAISE BE TO ALLAH * THE BENEFICENT KING * THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE * LORD OF THE THREE WORLDS * WHO SET UP THE FIRMAMENT WITHOUT PILLARS IN ITS STEAD * AND WHO STRETCHED OUT THE EARTH EVEN AS A BED * AND GRACE, AND PRAYER-BLESSING BE UPON OUR LORD MOHAMMED * LORD OF APOSTOLIC MEN * AND UPON HIS FAMILY AND COMPANION TRAIN * PRAYER AND BLESSINGS ENDURING AND GRACE WHICH UNTO THE DAY OF DOOM SHALL REMAIN * AMEN! * O THOU OF THE THREE WORLDS SOVEREIGN!

And afterwards. Verily the works and words of those gone before us have become instances and examples to men of our modern day, that folk may view what admonishing chances befel other folk and may therefrom take warning; and that they may peruse the annals of antique peoples and all that hath betided them, and be thereby ruled and restrained: — Praise, therefore, be to Him who hath made the histories of the Past an admonition unto the Present! Now of such instances are the tales called "A Thousand Nights and a Night," together with their far famed legends and wonders. Therein it is related (but Allah is All knowing of His hidden things and All ruling and All honoured and All giving and All gracious and All merciful[1]) that, in tide of yore and in time long gone before, there was a King of the Kings of the Banu Sásán in the Islands of India and China, a Lord of armies and guards and servants and dependents.[2] He left only two sons, one in the prime of manhood and the other yet a youth, while both were Knights and Braves, albeit the elder was a doughtier horseman than the younger. So he succeeded to the empire; when he ruled the land and forded it over his lieges with justice so exemplary that he was beloved by all the peoples of his capital and of his kingdom. His name was King Shahryár[3] , and he made his younger brother, Shah Zamán hight, King of Samarcand in Barbarian land. These two ceased not to abide in their several realms and the law was ever carried out in their dominions; and each ruled his own kingdom, with equity and fair dealing to his subjects, in extreme solace and enjoyment; and this condition continually endured for a score of years. But at the end of the twentieth twelvemonth the elder King yearned for a sight of his younger brother and felt that he must look upon him once more. So he took counsel with his Wazír[4] about visiting him, but the Minister, finding the project unadvisable, recommended that a letter be written and a present be sent under his charge to the younger brother with an invitation to visit the elder. Having accepted this advice the King forthwith bade prepare handsome gifts, such as horses with saddles of gem encrusted gold; Mamelukes, or white slaves; beautiful handmaids, high breasted virgins, and splendid stuffs and costly. He then wrote a letter to Shah Zaman expressing his warm love and great wish to see him, ending with these words, “We therefore hope of the favour and affection of the beloved brother that he will condescend to bestir himself and turn his face us wards. Furthermore we have sent our Wazir to make all ordinance for the march, and our one and only desire is to see thee ere we die; but if thou delay or disappoint us we shall not survive the blow. Wherewith peace be upon thee!” Then King Shahryar, having sealed the missive and given it to the Wazir with the offerings aforementioned, commanded him to shorten his skirts and strain his strength and make all expedition in going and returning. “Harkening and obedience!” quoth the Minister, who fell to making ready without stay and packed up his loads and prepared all his requisites without delay. This occupied him three days, and on the dawn of the fourth he took leave of his King and marched right away, over desert and hill’ way, stony waste and pleasant lea without halting by night or by day. But whenever he entered a realm whose ruler was subject to his Suzerain, where he was greeted with magnificent gifts of gold and silver and all manner of presents fair and rare, he would tarry there three days,[5] the term of the guest rite; and, when he left on the fourth, he would be honourably escorted for a whole day's march. As soon as the Wazir drew near Shah Zaman's court in Samarcand he despatched to report his arrival one of his high officials, who presented himself before the King; and, kissing ground between his hands, delivered his message. Hereupon the King commanded sundry of his Grandees and Lords of his realm to fare forth and meet his brother's Wazir at the distance of a full day's journey; which they did, greeting him respectfully and wishing him all prosperity and forming an escort and a procession. When he entered the city he proceeded straightway to the palace, where he presented himself in the royal presence; and, after kissing ground and praying for the King's health and happiness and for victory over all his enemies, he informed him that his brother was yearning to see him, and prayed for the pleasure of a visit. He then delivered the letter which Shah Zaman took from his hand and read: it contained sundry hints and allusions which required thought; but, when the King had fully comprehended its import, he said, "I hear and I obey the commands of the beloved brother!" adding to the Wazir, "But we will not march till after the third day's hospitality." He appointed for the Minister fitting quarters of the palace; and, pitching tents for the troops, rationed them with whatever they might require of meat and drink and other necessaries. On the fourth day he made ready for wayfare and got together sumptuous presents befitting his elder brother's majesty, and stablished his chief Wazir viceroy of the land during his absence. Then he caused his tents and camels and mules to be brought forth and encamped, with their bales and loads, attend ants and guards, within sight of the city, in readiness to set out next morning for his brother's capital. But when the night was half spent he bethought him that he had forgotten in his palace somewhat which he should have brought with him, so he re turned privily and entered his apartments, where he found the Queen, his wife, asleep on his own carpet bed, embracing with both arms a black cook of loathsome aspect and foul with kitchen grease and grime. When he saw this the world waxed black before his sight and he said, "If such case happen while I am yet within sight of the city what will be the doings of this damned whore during my long absence at my brother's court?" So he drew his scymitar and, cutting the two in four pieces with a single blow, left them on the carpet and returned presently to his camp without letting anyone know of what had happened. Then he gave orders for immediate departure and set out at once and began his travel; but he could not help thinking over his wife's treason and he kept ever saying to himself, "How could she do this deed by me? How could she work her own death?," till excessive grief seized him, his colour changed to yellow, his body waxed weak and he was threatened with a dangerous malady, such an one as bringeth men to die. So the Wazir shortened his stages and tarried long at the watering stations and did his best to solace the King. Now when Shah Zaman drew near the capital of his brother he despatched vaunt couriers and messengers of glad tidings to announce his arrival, and Shahryar came forth to meet him with his Wazirs and Emirs and Lords and Grandees of his realm; and saluted him and joyed with exceeding joy and caused the city to be decorated in his honour. When, however, the brothers met, the elder could not but see the change of complexion in the younger and questioned him of his case whereto he replied, "Tis caused by the travails of wayfare and my case needs care, for I have suffered from the change of water and air! but Allah be praised for reuniting me with a brother so dear and so rare!" On this wise he dissembled and kept his secret, adding, "O King of the time and Caliph of the tide, only toil and moil have tinged my face yellow with bile and hath made my eyes sink deep in my head." Then the two entered the capital in all honour; and the elder brother lodged the younger in a palace overhanging the pleasure garden; and, after a time, seeing his condition still unchanged, he attributed it to his separation from his country and kingdom. So he let him wend his own ways and asked no questions of him till one day when he again said, "O my brother, I see thou art grown weaker of body and yellower of colour." "O my brother," replied Shah Zaman "I have an internal wound:"[6] still he would not tell him what he had witnessed in his wife. Thereupon Shahryar summoned doctors and surgeons and bade them treat his brother according to the rules of art, which they did for a whole month; but their sherbets and potions naught availed, for he would dwell upon the deed of his wife, and despondency, instead of diminishing, prevailed, and leach craft treatment utterly failed. One day his elder brother said to him, “I am going forth to hunt and course and to take my pleasure and pastime; maybe this would lighten thy heart.” Shah Zaman, however, refused, saying, “O my brother, my soul yearneth for naught of this sort and I entreat thy favour to suffer me tarry quietly in this place, being wholly taken up with my malady.” So King Shah Zaman passed his night in the palace and, next morning, when his brother had fared forth, he removed from his room and sat him down at one of the lattice windows overlooking the pleasure grounds; and there he abode thinking with saddest thought over his wife’s betrayal and burning sighs issued from his tortured breast. And as he continued in this case lo! a pastern of the palace, which was carefully kept private, swung open and out of it came twenty slave girls surrounding his bother’s wife who was wondrous fair, a model of beauty and comeliness and symmetry and perfect loveliness and who paced with the grace of a gazelle which panteth for the cooling stream. Thereupon Shah Zaman drew back from the window, but he kept the bevy in sight espying them from a place whence he could not be espied. They walked under the very lattice and advanced a little way into the garden till they came to a jetting fountain amiddlemost a great basin of water; then they stripped off their clothes and behold, ten of them were women, concubines of the King, and the other ten were white slaves. Then they all paired off, each with each: but the Queen, who was left alone, presently cried out in a loud voice, “Here to me, O my lord Saeed!” and then sprang with a drop leap from one of the trees a big slobbering blackamoor with rolling eyes which showed the whites, a truly hideous sight.[7] He walked boldly up to her and threw his arms round her neck while she embraced him as warmly; then he bussed her and winding his legs round hers, as a button loop clasps a button, he threw her and enjoyed her. On like wise did the other slaves with the girls till all had satisfied their passions, and they ceased not from kissing and clipping, coupling and carousing till day began to wane; when the Mamelukes rose from the damsels’ bosoms and the blackamoor slave dismounted from the Queen’s breast; the men resumed their disguises and all, except the negro who swarmed up the tree, entered the palace and closed the postern door as before. Now, when Shah

Zaman saw this conduct of his sister in law he said in himself, “By Allah, my calamity is lighter than this! My brother is a greater King among the kings than I am, yet this infamy goeth on in his very palace, and his wife is in love with that filthiest of filthy slaves. But this only showeth that they all do it[8] and that there is no woman but who cuckoldeth her husband, then the curse of Allah upon one and all and upon the fools who lean against them for support or who place the reins of conduct in their hands.” So he put away his melancholy and despondency, regret and repine, and allayed his sorrow by constantly repeating those words, adding, “ ’Tis my conviction that no man in this world is safe from their malice!” When supper time came they brought him the trays and he ate with voracious appetite, for he had long refrained from meat, feeling unable to touch any dish however dainty. Then he returned grateful thanks to Almighty Allah, praising Him and blessing Him, and he spent a most restful night, it having been long since he had savoured the sweet food of sleep. Next day he broke his fast heartily and began to recover health and strength, and presently regained excellent condition. His brother came back from the chase ten days after, when he rode out to meet him and they saluted each other; and when King Shahryar looked at King Shah Zaman he saw how the hue of health had returned to him, how his face had waxed ruddy and how he ate with an appetite after his late scanty diet. He wondered much and said, “O my brother, I was so anxious that thou wouldst join me in hunting and chasing, and wouldst take thy pleasure and pastime in my dominion!” He thanked him and excused himself; then the two took horse and rode into the city and, when they were seated at their ease in the palace, the food trays were set before them and they ate their sufficiency. After the meats were removed and they had washed their hands, King Shahryar turned to his brother and said, “My mind is overcome with wonderment at thy condition. I was desirous to carry thee with me to the chase but I saw thee changed in hue, pale and wan to view, and in sore trouble of mind too. But now Alhamdolillah — glory be to God! — I see thy natural colour hath returned to thy face and that thou art again in the best of case. It was my belief that thy sickness came of severance from thy family and friends, and absence from capital and country, so I refrained from troubling thee with further questions. But now I beseech thee to expound to me the cause of thy complaint and thy change of colour, and to explain the reason of thy recovery and the return to the ruddy hue of health which I am wont to view. So speak out and hide naught!" When Shah Zaman heard this he bowed groundwards awhile his head, then raised it and said, "I will tell thee what caused my complaint and my loss of colour; but excuse my acquainting thee with the cause of its return to me and the reason of my complete recovery: indeed I pray thee not to press me for a reply." Said Shahryar, who was much surprised by these words, "Let me hear first what produced thy pallor and thy poor condition." "Know, then, O my brother," rejoined Shah Zaman, "that when thou sentest thy Wazir with the invitation to place myself between thy hands, I made ready and marched out of my city; but presently I minded me having left behind me in the palace a string of jewels intended as a gift to thee. I returned for it alone and found my wife on my carpet bed and in the arms of a hideous black cook. So I slew the twain and came to thee, yet my thoughts brooded over this business and I lost my bloom and became weak. But excuse me if I still refuse to tell thee what was the reason of my complexion returning." Shahryar shook his head, marvelling with extreme marvel, and with the fire of wrath flaming up from his heart, he cried, "Indeed, the malice of woman is mighty!" Then he took refuge from them with Allah and said, "In very sooth, O my brother, thou hast escaped many an evil by putting thy wife to death,[9] and right excusable were thy wrath and grief for such mishap which never yet befel crowned King like thee. By Allah, had the case been mine, I would not have been satisfied without slaying a thousand women and that way madness lies! But now praise be to Allah who hath tempered to thee thy tribulation, and needs must thou acquaint me with that which so suddenly restored to thee complexion and health, and explain to me what causeth this concealment." "O King of the Age, again I pray thee excuse my so doing!" "Nay, but thou must." "I fear, O my brother, lest the recital cause thee more anger and sorrow than afflicted me." "That were but a better reason," quoth Shahryar, "for telling me the whole history, and I conjure thee by Allah not to keep back aught from me." Thereupon Shah Zaman told him all he had seen, from commencement to con elusion, ending with these words, “When I beheld thy calamity and the treason of thy wife, O my brother, and I resected that thou art in years my senior and in sovereignty my superior, mine own sorrow was belittled by the comparison, and my mind recovered tone and temper: so throwing off melancholy and despondency, I was able to eat and drink and sleep, and thus I speedily regained health and strength. Such is the truth and the whole truth.” When King Shahryar heard this he waxed wroth with exceeding wrath, and rage was like to strangle him; but presently he recovered himself and said, “O my brother, I would not give thee the lie in this matter, but I cannot credit it till I see it with mine own eyes.” “An thou wouldst look upon thy calamity,” quoth Shah Zaman, “rise at once and make ready again for hunting and coursing.[10] and then hide thyself with me, so shalt thou witness it and thine eyes shall verify it.” “True,” quoth the King; whereupon he let make proclamation of his in tent to travel, and the troops and tents fared forth without the city, camping within sight, and Shahryar sallied out with them and took seat amidmost his host, bidding the slaves admit no man to him. When night came on he summoned his Wazir and said to him, “Sit thou in my stead and let none wot of my absence till the term of three days.” Then the brothers disguised themselves and returned by night with all secrecy to the palace, where they passed the dark hours: and at dawn they seated themselves at the lattice overlooking the pleasure grounds, when presently the Queen and her handmaids came out as before, and passing under the windows made for the fountain. Here they stripped, ten of them being men to ten women, and the King’s wife cried out, “Where art thou, O Saeed?” The hideous blackamoor dropped from the tree straightway; and, rushing into her arms without stay or delay, cried out, “I am Sa’ad al Din Saood!”[11] The lady laughed heartily, and all fell to satisfying their lusts, and remained so occupied for a couple of hours, when the white slaves rose up from the handmaidens’ breasts and the blackamoor dismounted from the Queen’s bosom: then they went into the basin and, after performing the Ghusl, or complete ablution, donned their dresses and retired as they had done before. When King Shahryar saw this infamy of his wife and concubines he became as one distraught and he cried out, “Only in utter solitude can man be safe from the doings of this vile world! By Allah, life is naught but one great wrong." Presently he added, "Do not thwart me, O my brother, in what I propose;" and the other answered, "I will not." So he said, "Let us up as we are and depart forthright hence, for we have no concern with Kingship, and let us overwander Allah's earth, worshipping the Almighty till we find some one to whom the like calamity hath happened; and if we find none then will death be more welcome to us than life." So the two brothers issued from a second private postern of the palace; and they never stinted wayfaring by day and by night, until they reached a tree a middle of a meadow hard by a spring of sweet water on the shore of the salt sea. Both drank of it and sat down to take their rest; and when an hour of the day had gone by: lo! they heard a mighty roar and uproar in the middle of the main as though the heavens were falling upon the earth; and the sea brake with waves before them, and from it towered a black pillar, which grew and grew till it rose skywards and began making for that meadow. Seeing it, they waxed fearful exceedingly and climbed to the top of the tree, which was a lofty; whence they gazed to see what might be the matter. And behold, it was a Jinni,[12] huge of height and burly of breast and bulk, broad of brow and black of blee, bearing on his head a coffer of crystal. He strode to land, wading through the deep, and coming to the tree whereupon were the two Kings, seated himself beneath it. He then set down the coffer on its bottom and out it drew a casket, with seven padlocks of steel, which he unlocked with seven keys of steel he took from beside his thigh, and out of it a young lady to come was seen, white-skinned and of winsomest mien, of stature fine and thin, and bright as though a moon of the fourteenth night she had been, or the sun raining lively sheen. Even so the poet Utayyah hath excellently said: —

She rose like the morn as she shone through the night * And she gilded the grove with her gracious sight:
From her radiance the sun taketh increase when * She unveileth and shameth the moonshine bright.
Bow down all beings between her hands * As she showeth charms with her veil undight.
And she foodeth cities[13] with torrent tears * When she

flasheth her look of levee light.

The Jinni seated her under the tree by his side and looking at her said, “O choicest love of this heart of mine! O dame of noblest line, whom I snatched away on thy bride night that none might prevent me taking thy maidenhead or tumble thee before I did, and whom none save myself hath loved or hath enjoyed: O my sweetheart! I would fief sleep a little while.”

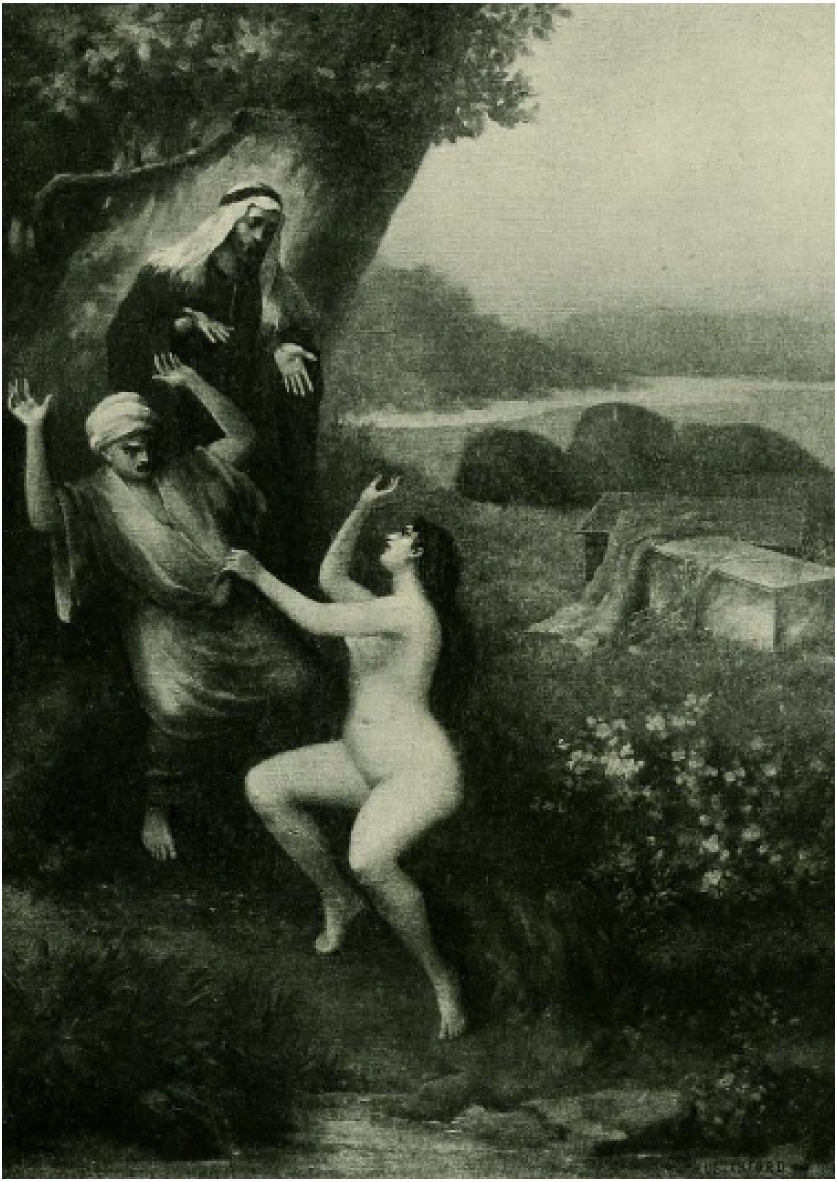

He then laid his head upon the lady's thighs; and, stretching out his legs which extended down to the sea, slept and snored and sparked like the roll of thunder. Presently she raised her head towards the tree top and saw the two Kings perched near the summit; then she softly lifted off her lap the Jinni's pate which she was tired of supporting and placed it upon the ground; then standing upright under the tree signed to the Kings, “Come ye down, ye two, and fear naught from this Ifrit.”[14] They were in a terrible fright when they found that she had seen them and answered her in the same manner, “Allah upon thee[15] and by thy modesty, O lady, excuse us from coming down!” But she rejoined by saying, “Allah upon you both, that ye come down forthright, and if ye come not, I will rouse upon you my husband, this Ifrit, and he shall do you to die by the illest of deaths;” and she continued making signals to them. So, being afraid, they came down to her and she rose before them and said, “Stroke me a strong stroke, without stay or delay, otherwise will I arouse and set upon you this Ifrit who shall slay you straightway.” They said to her, “O our lady, we conjure thee by Allah, let us off this work, for we are fugitives from such and in extreme dread and terror of this thy husband. How then can we do it in such a way as thou desires”?” “Leave this talk: it needs must be so;” quoth she, and she swore them by Him[16] who raised the skies on high, without prop or pillar, that, if they worked not her will, she would cause them to be slain and cast into the sea. Whereupon out of fear King Shahryar said to King Shah Zaman, “O my brother, do thou what she biddeth thee do;” but he replied, “I will not do it till thou do it before I do.” And they began disputing about futtering her.

Then quoth she to the twain, “How is it I see you disputing and demurring; if ye do not come forward like men and do the deed of kind ye two, I will arouse upon you the Ifrit.” At this, by reason of their sore dread of the Jinni, both did by her what she bade them do; and, when they had dismounted from her, she said, “Well done!” She then took from her pocket a purse and drew out a knotted string, whereon were strung five hundred and seventy[17] seal rings, and asked, “Know ye what be these?” They answered her saying, “We know not!” Then quoth she; “These be the signets of five hundred and seventy men who have all futtered me upon the horns of this foul, this foolish, this filthy Ifrit; so give me also your two seal rings, ye pair of brothers.” When they had drawn their two rings from their hands and given them to her, she said to them, “Of a truth this Ifrit bore me off on my bride night, and put me into a casket and set the casket in a coffer and to the coffer he affixed seven strong padlocks of steel and deposited me on the deep bottom of the sea that raves, dashing and clashing with waves; and guarded me so that I might remain chaste and honest, quotha! none save himself might have connexion with me. But I have lain under as many of my kind as I please, and this wretched Jinni wotteth not that Destiny may not be averted nor hindered by aught, and that whatso woman willeth the same she fulfilleth however man nilleth. Even so saith one of them. —

Rely not on women; * Trust not to their hearts,
Whose joys and whose sorrows * Are hung to their parts!
Lying love they will swear thee * Whence guile ne'er departs:
Take Yusuf[18] for sample * 'Ware sleights and 'ware smarts!
Iblis[19] ousted Adam * (See ye not?) thro' their arts.

And another saith: —

Stint thy blame, man! 'Twill drive to a passion without bound; *
My fault is not so heavy as fault in it hast found.
If true lover I become, then to me there cometh not * Save what
happened unto many in the bygone stound.
For wonderful is he and right worthy of our praise * Who from
wiles of female wits kept him safe and kept him sound."

Hearing these words they marvelled with exceeding marvel, and she went from them to the Ifrit and, taking up his head on her thigh as before, said to them softly, "Now wend your ways and bear yourselves beyond the bounds of his malice." So they fared forth saying either to other, "Allah! Allah!" and, "There be no Majesty and there be no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great; and with Him we seek refuge from women's malice and sleight, for of a truth it hath no mate in might. Consider, O my brother, the ways of this marvellous lady with an Ifrit who is so much more powerful than we are. Now since there hath happened to him a greater mishap than that which befel us and which should bear us abundant consolation, so return we to our countries and capitals, and let us decide never to intermarry with womankind and presently we will show them what will be our action." Thereupon they rode back to the tents of King

Shahryar, which they reached on the morning of the third day; and, having mustered the Wazirs and Emirs, the Chamberlains and high officials, he gave a robe of honour to his Viceroy and issued orders for an immediate return to the city. There he sat him upon his throne and sending for the Chief Minister, the father of the two damsels who (Inshallah!) will presently be mentioned, he said, “I command thee to take my wife and smite her to death; for she hath broken her plight and her faith.” So he carried her to the place of execution and did her die. Then King Shahryar took brand in hand and repairing to the Serraglio slew all the concubines and their Mamelukes.[20] He also sware himself by a binding oath that whatever wife he married he would abate her maidenhead at night and slay her next morning to make sure of his honour; “For,” said he, “there never was nor is there one chaste woman upon face of earth.” Then Shah Zaman prayed for permission to fare homewards; and he went forth equipped and escorted and travelled till he reached his own country. Mean while Shahryar commanded his Wazir to bring him the bride of the night that he might go in to her; so he produced a most beautiful girl, the daughter of one of the Emirs and the King went in unto her at eventide and when morning dawned he bade his Minister strike off her head; and the Wazir did accordingly for fear of the Sultan. On this wise he continued for the space of three years; marrying a maiden every night and killing her the next morning, till folk raised an outcry against him and cursed him, praying Allah utterly to destroy him and his rule; and women made an uproar and mothers wept and parents fled with their daughters till there remained not in the city a young person fit for carnal copulation. Presently the King ordered his Chief Wazir, the same who was charged with the executions, to bring him a virgin as was his wont; and the Minister went forth and searched and found none; so he returned home in sorrow and anxiety fearing for his life from the King. Now he had two daughters, Shahrazad and Dunyazad hight,[21] of whom the elder had perused the books, annals and legends of preceding Kings, and the stories, examples and instances of by gone men and things; indeed it was said that she had collected a thousand books of histories relating to antique races and departed rulers. She had perused the works of the poets and knew them by heart; she had studied philosophy and the sciences, arts and accomplish meets; and she was pleasant and polite, wise and witty, well read and well bred. Now on that day she said to her father, “Why do I see thee thus changed and laden with cark and care? Concerning this matter quoth one of the poets. —

Tell whoso hath sorrow * Grief never shall last:
E’en as joy hath no morrow * So woe shall go past.”

When the Wazir heard from his daughter these words he related to her, from first to last, all that had happened between him and the King. Thereupon said she, “By Allah, O my father, how long shall this slaughter of women endure? Shall I tell thee what is in my mind in order to save both sides from destruction?” “Say on, O my daughter,” quoth he, and quoth she, “I wish thou wouldst give me in marriage to this King Shahryar; either I shall live or I shall be a ransom for the virgin daughters of Moslems and the cause of their deliverance from his hands and thine.”[22] “Allah upon thee!” cried he in wrath exceeding that lacked no feeding, “O scanty of wit, expose not thy life to such peril! How durst thou address me in words so wide from wisdom and un far from foolishness? Know that one who lacketh experience in worldly matters readily falleth into misfortune; and whoso considereth not the end keepeth not the world to friend, and the vulgar say:- -I was lying at mine ease: nought but my officiousness brought me unease.” “Needs must thou,” she broke in, “make me a doer of this good deed, and let him kill me an he will: I shall only die a ransom for others.” “O my daughter,” asked he, “and how shall that profit thee when thou shalt have thrown away thy life?” and she answered, “O my father it must be, come of it what will!” The Wazir was again moved to fury and blamed and reproached her, ending with, “In very deed — I fear lest the same befal thee which befel the Bull and the Ass with the Husband man.” “And what,” asked she, “befel them, O my father?” Whereupon the Wazir began the

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

Tale of the Bull[23] and the Ass.

Know, O my daughter, that there was once a merchant who owned much money and many men, and who was rich in cattle and camels; he had also a wife and family and he dwelt in the country, being experienced in husbandry and devoted to agriculture. Now Allah Most High had endowed him with under standing the tongues of beasts and birds of every kind, but under pain of death if he divulged the gift to any. So he kept it secret for very fear. He had in his cow house a Bull and an Ass each tethered in his own stall one hard by the other. As the merchant was sitting near hand one day with his servants and his children were playing about him, he heard the Bull say to the Ass, "Hail and health to thee O Father of Waking![24] for that thou enjoyest rest and good ministering; all under thee is clean swept and fresh sprinkled; men wait upon thee and feed thee, and thy provaunt is sifted barley and thy drink pure spring water, while I (unhappy creature!) am led forth in the middle of the night, when they set on my neck the plough and a something called Yoke; and I tire at cleaving the earth from dawn of day till set of sun. I am forced to do more than I can and to bear all manner of ill treatment from night to night; after which they take me back with my sides torn, my neck flayed, my legs aching and mine eyelids sored with tears. Then they shut me up in the byre and throw me beans and crushed straw,[25] mixed with dirt and chaff; and I lie in dung and filth and foul stinks through the livelong night. But thou art ever in a place swept and sprinkled and cleansed, and thou art always lying at ease, save when it happens (and seldom enough!) that the master hath some business, when he mounts thee and rides thee to town and returns with thee forthright. So it happens that I am toiling and distress while thou takest thine ease and thy rest; thou sleepest while I am sleepless; I hunger still while thou eatest thy fill, and I win contempt while thou winnest good will." When the Bull ceased speaking, the Ass turned to wards him and said, "O Broad o' Brow,[26] 0 thou lost one! he lied not who dubbed thee Bull head, for thou, O father of a Bull, hast neither forethought nor contrivance; thou art the simplest of simpletons,[27] and thou knowest naught of good advisers. Hast thou not heard the saying of the wise: —

For others these hardships and labours I bear * And theirs is the pleasure and mine is the care;
As the bleacher who blacketh his brow in the sun * To whiten the raiment which other men wear.[28]

But thou, O fool, art full of zeal and thou toilest and moilest before the master; and thou tearest and wearest and slayest thy self for the comfort of another. Hast thou never heard the saw that saith, None to guide and from the way go wide? Thou wendest forth at the call to dawn prayer and thou returnest not till sundown; and through the livelong day thou endurest all manner hardships; to wit, beating and belabouring and bad language. Now hearken to me, Sir Bull! when they tie thee to thy stinking manger, thou pawest the ground with thy forehand and rashest out with thy hind hoofs and pushest with thy horns and bellowest aloud, so they deem thee contented. And when they throw thee thy fodder thou fallest on it with greed and hastenest to line thy fair fat paunch. But if thou accept my advice it will be better for thee and thou wilt lead an easier life even than mine. When thou goest a field and they lay the thing called Yoke on thy neck, lie down and rise not again though haply they swinge thee; and, if thou rise, lie down a second time; and when they bring thee home and offer thee thy beans, fall backwards and only sniff at thy meat and withdraw thee and taste it not, and be satisfied with thy crushed straw and chaff; and on this wise feign thou art sick, and cease not doing thus for a day or two days or even three days, so shalt thou have rest from toil and moil." When the Bull heard these words he knew the Ass to be his friend and thanked him, saying, "Right is thy rede;" and prayed that all blessings might requite him, and cried, "O Father Wakener![29] thou hast made up for my failings." (Now[30] the merchant, O my daughter, understood all that passed between them.) Next day the driver took the Bull, and settling the plough on his neck,[31] made him work as wont; but the Bull began to shirk his ploughing, according to the advice of the Ass, and the ploughman drubbed him till he broke the yoke and made off; but the man caught him up and leathered him till he despaired of his life. Not the less, however, would he do nothing but stand still and drop down till the evening. Then the herd led him home and stabled him in his stall: but he drew back from his manger and neither stamped nor ramped nor butted nor bellowed as he was wont to do; whereat the man wondered. He brought him the beans and husks, but he sniffed at them and left them and lay down as far from them as he could and passed the whole night fasting. The peasant came next morning; and, seeing the manger full of beans, the crushed straw untasted and the ox lying on his back in sorriest plight, with legs outstretched and swollen belly, he was concerned for him, and said to himself, "By Allah, he hath assuredly sickened and this is the cause why he would not plough yesterday." Then he went to the merchant and reported, "O my master, the Bull is ailing; he refused his fodder last night; nay more, he hath not tasted a scrap of it this morning." Now the merchant farmer understood what all this meant, because he had overheard the talk between the Bull and the Ass, so quoth he, "Take that rascal donkey, and set the yoke on his neck, and bind him to the plough and make him do Bull's work." Thereupon the ploughman took the Ass, and worked him through the live long day at the Bull's task; and, when he failed for weakness, he made him eat stick till his ribs were sore and his sides were sunken and his neck was hayed by the yoke; and when he came home in the evening he could hardly drag his limbs along, either fore hand or hind legs. But as for the Bull, he had passed the day lying at full length and had eaten his fodder with an excellent appetite, and he ceased not calling down blessings on the Ass for his good advice, unknowing what had come to him on his ac count. So when night set in and the Ass returned to the byte the Bull rose up before him in honour, and said, "May good tidings gladden thy heart, O Father Wakener! through thee I have rested all this day and I have eaten my meat in peace and quiet." But the Ass returned no reply, for wrath and heart burning and fatigue and the beating he had gotten; and he repented with the most grievous of repentance; and quoth he to himself: "This cometh of my folly in giving good counsel; as the saw saith, I was in joy and gladness, nought save my officiousness brought me this sadness. But I will bear in mind my innate worth and the nobility of my nature; for what saith the poet?

Shall the beautiful hue of the Basil[32] fail * Tho' the
beetle's foot o'er the Basil crawl?
And though spider and fly be its denizens * Shall disgrace attach
to the royal hall?
The cowrie,[33] I ken, shall have currency * But the pearl's
clear drop, shall its value fall?

And now I must take thought and put a trick upon him and return him to his place, else I die." Then he went aweary to his manger, while the Bull thanked him and blessed him. And even so, O my daughter, said the Wazir, thou wilt die for lack of wits; therefore sit thee still and say naught and expose not thy life to such stress; for, by Allah, I offer thee the best advice, which cometh of my affection and kindly solicitude for thee." "O my father," she answered, "needs must I go up to this King and be married to him." Quoth he, "Do not this deed;" and quoth she, "Of a truth I will:" whereat he rejoined, "If thou be not silent and bide still, I will do with thee even what the merchant did with his wife." "And what did he?" asked she. "Know then, answered the Wazir, that after the return of the Ass the merchant came out on the terrace roof with his wife and family, for it was a moonlit night and the moon at its full. Now the ter race overlooked the cowhouse and presently, as he sat there with his children playing about him, the trader heard the Ass say to the Bull, "Tell me, O Father Broad o' Brow, what thou purposest to do to morrow?" The Bull answered, "What but continue to follow thy counsel, O Aliboron? Indeed it was as good as good could be and it hath given me rest and repose; nor will I now depart from it one little: so, when they bring me my meat, I will refuse it and blow out my belly and counterfeit crank." The Ass shook his head and said, "Beware of so doing, O Father of a Bull!" The Bull asked, "Why," and the Ass answered, "Know that I am about to give thee the best of counsel, for verily I heard our owner say to the herd, If the Bull rise not from his place to do his work this morning and if he retire from his fodder this day, make him over to the butcher that he may slaughter him and give his flesh to the poor, and fashion a bit of leather[34] from his hide. Now I fear for thee on account of this. So take my advice ere a calamity befal thee; and when they bring thee thy fodder eat it and rise up and bellow and paw the ground, or our master will assuredly slay thee: and peace be with thee!" Thereupon the Bull arose and lowed aloud and thanked the Ass, and said, "To morrow I will readily go forth with them;" and he at once ate up all his meat and even licked the manger. (All this took place and the owner was listening to their talk.) Next morning the trader and his wife went to the Bull's crib and sat down, and the driver came and led forth the Bull who, seeing his owner, whisked his tail and brake wind, and frisked about so lustily that the merchant laughed a loud laugh and kept laughing till he fell on his back. His wife asked him, "Whereat laughest thou with such loud laughter as this?"; and he answered her, "I laughed at a secret something which I have heard and seen but cannot say lest I die my death." She returned, "Perforce thou must discover it to me, and disclose the cause of thy laughing even if thou come by thy death!" But he rejoined, "I cannot re veal what beasts and birds say in their lingo for fear I die." Then quoth she, "By Allah, thou liest! this is a mere pretext: thou laughest at none save me, and now thou wouldest hide somewhat from me. But by the Lord of the Heavens! an thou disclose not the cause I will no longer cohabit with thee: I will leave thee at once." And she sat down and cried. Whereupon quoth the merchant, "Woe betide thee! what means thy weeping? Bear Allah and leave these words and query me no more questions." "Needs must thou tell me the cause of that laugh," said she, and he replied, "Thou wottest that when I prayed Allah to vouchsafe me understanding of the tongues of beasts and birds, I made a vow never to disclose the secret to any under pain of dying on the spot." "No matter," cried she, "tell me what secret passed between the Bull and the Ass and die this very hour an thou be so minded;" and she ceased not to importune him till he was worn out and clean distraught. So at last he said, "Summon thy father and thy mother and our kith and kin and sundry of our neighbours," which she did; and he sent for the Kazi[35] and his assessors, intending to make his will and reveal to her his secret and die the death; for he loved her with love exceeding because she was his cousin, the daughter of his father's brother, and the mother of his children, and he had lived with her a life of an hundred and twenty years. Then, having assembled all the family and the folk of his neighbourhood, he said to them, “By me there hangeth a strange story, and ’tis such that if I discover the secret to any, I am a dead man.” Therefore quoth every one of those present to the woman, “Allah upon thee, leave this sinful obstinacy and recognise the right of this matter, lest haply thy husband and the father of thy children die.” But she rejoined, “I will not turn from it till he tell me, even though he come by his death.” So they ceased to urge her; and the trader rose from amongst them and repaired to an out house to per form Wuzu ablution,[36] and he purposed thereafter to return and to tell them his secret and to die. Now, daughter Shahrazad, that mer chant had in his out houses some fifty hens under one cock, and whilst making ready to farewell his folk he heard one of his many farm dogs thus address in his own tongue the Cock, who was flapping his wings and crowing lustily and jumping from one hen’s back to another and treading all in turn, saying “O Chanti clear! how mean is thy wit and how shameless is thy conduct! Be he disappointed who brought thee up![37] Art thou not ashamed of thy doings on such a day as this!” “And what,” asked the Rooster, “hath occurred this day?” when the Dog answered, “Doss thou not know that our master is this day making ready for his death? His wife is resolved that he shall disclose the secret taught to him by Allah, and the moment he so doeth he shall surely die. We dogs are all a mourning; but thou clappest thy wings and clarionest thy loudest and treadest hen after hen. Is this an hour for pastime and pleasuring? Art thou not ashamed of thyself?”[38] “Then by Allah,” quoth the Cock, “is our master a lack wit and a man scanty of sense: if he cannot manage matters with a single wife, his life is not worth prolonging. Now I have some fifty Dame Partlets; and I please this and provoke that and starve one and stuff another; and through my good governance they are all well under my control. This our master pretendeth to wit and wisdom, and he hath but one wife, and yet knoweth not how to manage her.” Asked the Dog, “What then, O Cock, should the master do to win clear of his strait?” “He should arise forthright,” answered the Cock, “and take some twigs from yon mulberry tree and give her a regular back basting and rib roasting till she cry: — I repent, O my lord! I will never ask thee a question as long as I live! Then let him beat her once more and soundly, and when he shall have done this he shall sleep free from care and enjoy life. But this master of ours owns neither sense nor judgment." "Now, daughter Shahrazad," continued the Wazir, "I will do to thee as did that husband to that wife." Said Shahrazad, "And what did he do?" He replied, "When the merchant heard the wise words spoken by his Cock to his Dog, he arose in haste and sought his wife's chamber, after cutting for her some mulberry twigs and hiding them there; and then he called to her, "Come into the closet that I may tell thee the secret while no one seeth me and then die." She entered with him and he locked the door and came down upon her with so sound a beating of back and shoulders, ribs, arms and legs, saying the while, "Wilt thou ever be asking questions about what concerneth thee not?" that she was well nigh senseless. Presently she cried out, "I am of the repentant! By Allah, I will ask thee no more questions, and indeed I repent sincerely and wholesomely." Then she kissed his hand and feet and he led her out of the room submissive as a wife should be. Her parents and all the company rejoiced and sadness and mourn ing were changed into joy and gladness. Thus the merchant learnt family discipline from his Cock and he and his wife lived together the happiest of lives until death. And thou also, O my daughter!" continued the Wazir, "Unless thou turn from this matter I will do by thee what that trader did to his wife." But she answered him with much decision, "I will never desist, O my father, nor shall this tale change my purpose. Leave such talk and tattle. I will not listen to thy words and, if thou deny me, I will marry myself to him despite the nose of thee. And first I will go up to the King myself and alone and I will say to him: — I prayed my father to wive me with thee, but he refused being resolved to disappoint his lord, grudging the like of me to the like of thee." Her father asked, "Must this needs be?" and she answered, "Even so." Hereupon the Wazir being weary of lamenting and contending, persuading and dissuading her, all to no purpose, went up to King Shahryar and after blessing him and kissing the ground before him, told him all about his dispute with his daughter from first to last and how he designed to bring her to him that night. The King wondered with exceeding wonder; for he had made an especial exception of the Wazir's daughter, and said to him, "O most faithful of Counsellors, how is this? Thou wottest that I have sworn by the Raiser of the Heavens that after I have gone in to her this night I shall say to thee on the morrow's morning: — Take her and slay her! and, if thou slay her not, I will slay thee in her stead without fail." "Allah guide thee to glory and lengthen thy life, O King of the age," answered the Wazir, "it is she that hath so determined: all this have I told her and more; but she will not hearken to me and she persisteth in passing this coming night with the King's Majesty." So Shahryar rejoiced greatly and said, "'Tis well; go get her ready and this night bring her to me." The Wazir returned to his daughter and reported to her the command saying, "Allah make not thy father desolate by thy loss!" But Shah razed rejoiced with exceeding joy and get ready all she required and said to her younger sister, Dunyazad, "Note well what directions I entrust to thee! When I have gone in to the King I will send for thee and when thou comest to me and seest that he hath had his carnal will of me, do thou say to me: — O my sister, an thou be not sleepy, relate to me some new story, delectable and delightsome, the better to speed our waking hours;" and I will tell thee a tale which shall be our deliverance, if so Allah please, and which shall turn the King from his blood thirsty custom." Dunyazad answered "With love and gladness." So when it was night their father the Wazir carried Shahrazad to the King who was gladdened at the sight and asked, "Hast thou brought me my need?" and he answered, "I have." But when the King took her to his bed and fell to toying with her and wished to go in to her she wept; which made him ask, "What aileth thee?" She replied, "O King of the age, I have a younger sister and fief would I take leave of her this night before I see the dawn." So he sent at once for Dunyazad and she came and kissed the ground between his hands, when he permitted her to take her seat near the foot of the couch. Then the King arose and did away with his bride's maidenhead and the three fell asleep. But when it was midnight Shahrazad awoke and signalled to her sister Dunyazad who sat up and said, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, recite to us some new story, delightsome and delectable, wherewith to while away the waking hours of our latter night."[39] "With joy and goodly gree," answered Shahrazad, "if this pious and auspicious King permit me." "Tell on," quoth the King who chanced to be sleepless and restless and therefore was pleased with the prospect of hearing her story. So Shahrazad rejoiced; and thus, on the first night of the Thousand Nights and a Night, she began with the

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TALE OF THE TRADER AND THE JINNI.

It is related, O auspicious King, that there was a merchant of the merchants who had much wealth, and business in various cities. Now on a day he mounted horse and went forth to recover monies in certain towns, and the heat sore oppressed him; so he sat beneath a tree and, putting his hand into his saddle bags, took thence some broken bread and dry dates and began to break his fast. When he had ended eating the dates he threw away the stones with force and lo! an Ifrit appeared, huge of stature and brandishing a drawn sword, wherewith he approached the merchant and said, “Stand up that I may slay thee, even as thou slewest my son!” Asked the merchant, “How have I slain thy son?” and he answered, “When thou atest dates and threwest away the stones they struck my son full in the breast as he was walking by, so that he died forthwith.”[40] Quoth the merchant, “Verily from Allah we proceeded and unto Allah are we re turning. There is no Majesty, and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! If I slew thy son, I slew him by chance medley. I pray thee now pardon me.” Rejoined the Jinni, “There is no help but I must slay thee.” Then he seized him and dragged him along and, casting him to the earth, raised the sword to strike him; whereupon the merchant wept, and said, “I commit my case to Allah,” and began repeating these couplets: —

Containeth Time a twain of days, this of blessing that of bane *
    And holdeth Life a twain of halves, this of pleasure that of pain.
See’st not when blows the hurricane, sweeping stark and striking
    strong * None save the forest giant feels the suffering of the
strain?
How many trees earth nourisheth of the dry and of the green *
    Yet none but those which bear the fruits for cast of stone
complain.
See’st not how corpses rise and float on the surface of the tide
* While pearls o’price lie hidden in the deepest of the main!
In Heaven are unnumbered the many of the stars * Yet ne’er a star
    but Sun and Moon by eclipse is overta’en.

Well judgedst thou the days that saw thy faring sound and well *
And countedst not the pangs and pain whereof Fate is ever fain.
The nights have kept thee safe and the safety brought thee pride
* But bliss and blessings of the night are 'genderers of bane!

When the merchant ceased repeating his verses the Jinni said to him, "Cut thy words short, by Allah! needs must I slay thee." But the merchant spake him thus, "Know, O thou Ifrit, that I have debts due to me and much wealth and children and a wife and many pledges in hand; so permit me to go home and dis charge to every claimant his claim; and I will come back to thee at the head of the new year. Allah be my testimony and surety that I will return to thee; and then thou mayest do with me as thou wilt and Allah is witness to what I say." The Jinni took sure promise of him and let him go; so he returned to his own city and transacted his business and rendered to all men their dues and after informing his wife and children of what had betided him, he appointed a guardian and dwelt with them for a full year. Then he arose, and made the Wuzu ablution to purify himself before death and took his shroud under his arm and bade farewell to his people, his neighbours and all his kith and kin, and went forth despite his own nose.[41] They then began weeping and wailing and beating their breasts over him; but he travelled until he arrived at the same garden, and the day of his arrival was the head of the New Year. As he sat weeping over what had befallen him, behold, a Shaykh,[42] a very ancient man, drew near leading a chained gazelle; and he saluted that merchant and wishing him long life said, "What is the cause of thy sitting in this place and thou alone and this be a resort of evil spirits?" The merchant related to him what had come to pass with the Ifrit, and the old man, the owner of the gazelle, wondered and said, "By Allah, O brother, thy faith is none other than exceeding faith and thy story right strange; were it graven with gravers on the eye corners, it were a warner to whoso would be warned." Then seating himself near the merchant he said, "By Allah, O my brother, I will not leave thee until I see what may come to pass with thee and this Ifrit." And presently as he sat and the two were at talk the merchant began to feel fear and terror and exceeding grief and sorrow beyond relief and ever growing care and extreme despair.

And the owner of the gazelle was hard by his side; when behold, a second Shaykh approached them, and with him were two dogs both of greyhound breed and both black. The second old man after saluting them with the salam, also asked them of their tidings and said “What causeth you to sit in this place, a dwelling of the Jann?”[43] So they told him the tale from beginning to end, and their stay there had not lasted long before there came up a third Shaykh, and with him a she mule of bright bay coat; and he saluted them and asked them why they were seated in that place. So they told him the story from first to last: and of no avail, O my master, is a twice told tale! There he sat down with them, and lo! a dust cloud advanced and a mighty send devil appeared amidmost of the waste. Presently the cloud opened and behold, within it was that Jinni hending in hand a drawn sword, while his eyes were shooting fire sparks of rage. He came up to them and, haling away the merchant from among them, cried to him, “Arise that I may slay thee, as thou slewest my son, the life stuff of my liver.”[44] The merchant wailed and wept, and the three old men began sighing and crying and weeping and wailing with their companion. Presently the first old man (the owner of the gazelle) came out from among them and kissed the hand of the Ifrit and said, “O Jinni, thou Crown of the Kings of the Jann! were I to tell thee the story of me and this gazelle and thou shouldst consider it wondrous wouldst thou give me a third part of this merchant’s blood?” Then quoth the Jinni “Even so, O Shaykh ! if thou tell me this tale, and I hold it a marvellous, then will I give thee a third of his blood.” Thereupon the old man began to tell

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The First Shaykh's Story.

Know O Jinni! that this gazelle is the daughter of my paternal uncle, my own flesh and blood, and I married her when she was a young maid, and I lived with her well nigh thirty years, yet was I not blessed with issue by her. So I took me a concubine[45] who brought to me the boon of a male child fair as the full moon, with eyes of lovely shine and eyebrows which formed one line, and limbs of perfect design. Little by little he grew in stature and waxed tall; and when he was a lad fifteen years old, it became needful I should journey to certain cities and I travelled with great store of goods. But the daughter of my uncle (this gazelle) had learned gramarye and egromancy and clerkly craft[46] from her childhood; so she bewitched that son of mine to a calf, and my handmaid (his mother) to a heifer, and made them over to the herdsman's care. Now when I returned after a long time from my journey and asked for my son and his mother, she answered me, saying "Thy slave girl is dead, and thy son hath fled and I know not whither he is sped." So I remained for a whole year with grieving heart, and streaming eyes until the time came for the Great Festival of Allah.[47] Then sent I to my herdsman bidding him choose for me a fat heifer; and he brought me one which was the damsel, my handmaid, whom this gazelle had ensorcelled. I tucked up my sleeves and skirt and, taking a knife, proceeded to cut her throat, but she lowed aloud and wept bitter tears. Thereat I marvelled and pity seized me and I held my hand, saying to the herd, "Bring me other than this." Then cried my cousin, "Slay her, for I have not a fatter nor a fairer!" Once more I went forward to sacrifice her, but she again lowed aloud upon which in ruth I refrained and commanded the herdsman to slay her and flay her. He killed her and skinned her but found in her neither fat nor flesh, only hide and bone; and I repented when penitence availed me naught. I gave her to the herdsman and said to him, "Fetch me a fat calf;" so he brought my son ensorcelled. When the calf saw me, he brake his tether and ran to me, and fawned upon me and wailed and shed tears; so that I took pity on him and said to the herdsman, "Bring me a heifer and let this calf go!" Thereupon my cousin (this gazelle) called aloud at me, saying, “Needs must thou kill this calf; this is a holy day and a blessed, whereon naught is slain save what be perfect pure; and we have not amongst our calves any fatter or fairer than this!” Quoth I, “Look thou upon the condition of the heifer which I slaughtered at thy bidding and how we turn from her in disappointment and she profited us on no wise; and I repent with an exceeding repentance of having killed her: so this time I will not obey thy bidding for the sacrifice of this calf.” Quoth she, “By Allah the Most Great, the Compassionating, the Compassionate! there is no help for it; thou must kill him on this holy day, and if thou kill him not to me thou art no man and I to thee am no wife.” Now when I heard those hard words, not knowing her object I went up to the calf, knife in hand — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.[48] Then quoth her sister to her, “How fair is thy tale, and how grateful, and how sweet and how tasteful!” And Shahrazad answered her, “What is this to that I could tell thee on the coming night, were I to live and the King would spare me?” Then said the King in himself, “By Allah, I will not slay her, until I shall have heard the rest of her tale.” So they slept the rest of that night in mutual em brace till day fully brake. Then the King went forth to his audience hall[49] and the Wazir went up with his daughter’s shroud under his arm. The King issued his orders, and promoted this and deposed that, until the end of the day; and he told the Wazir no whit of what had happened. But the Minister wondered thereat with exceeding wonder; and when the Court broke up King Shahryar entered his palace.

When it was the Second Night,

said Dunyazad to her sister Shahrazad, “O my sister, finish for us that story of the Merchant and the Jinni;” and she answered “With joy and goodly gree, if the King permit me.” Then quoth the King, “Tell thy tale;” and Shahrazad began in these words: It hath reached me, O auspicious King and Heaven directed Ruler! that when the merchant purposed the sacrifice of the calf but saw it weeping, his heart relented and he said to the herdsman, “Keep the calf among my cattle.” All this the old Shaykh told the Jinni who marvelled much at these strange words. Then the owner of the gazelle continued: — O Lord of the Kings of the Jann, this much took place and my uncle’s daughter, this gazelle, looked on and saw it, and said, “Butcher me this calf, for surely it is a fat one;” but I bade the herdsman take it away and he took it and turned his face homewards. On the next day as I was sitting in my own house, lo! the herdsman came and, standing before me said, “O my master, I will tell thee a thing which shall gladden thy soul, and shall gain me the gift of good tidings.”[50] I answered, “Even so.” Then said he, “O merchant, I have a daughter, and she learned magic in her childhood from an old woman who lived with us. Yesterday when thou gavest me the calf, I went into the house to her, and she looked upon it and veiled her face; then she wept and laughed alternately and at last she said: — O my father, hath mine honour become so cheap to thee that thou bringest in to me strange men? I asked her: — Where be these strange men and why wast thou laughing, and crying?; and she answered, Of a truth this calf which is with thee is the son of our master, the merchant; but he is ensorcelled by his stepdame who bewitched both him and his mother: such is the cause of my laughing; now the reason of his weeping is his mother, for that his father slew her unawares. Then I marvelled at this with exceeding marvel and hardly made sure that day had dawned before I came to tell thee.” When I heard, O Jinni, my herdsman’s words, I went out with him, and I was drunken without wine, from the excess of joy and gladness which came upon me, until I reached his house. There his daughter welcomed me and kissed my hand, and forthwith the calf came and fawned upon me as before. Quoth I to the herdsman’s daughter, “Is this true that thou sayest of this calf?” Quoth she, “Yea, O my master, he is thy son, the very core of thy heart.” I rejoiced and said to her, “O maiden, if thou wilt release him thine shall be whatever cattle and property of mine are under thy father’s hand.” She smiled and answered, “O my master, I have no greed for the goods nor will I take them save on two conditions; the first that thou marry me to thy son and the second that I may bewitch her who bewitched him and imprison her, otherwise I cannot be safe from her malice and malpractices.” Now when I heard, O Jinni, these, the words of the herdsman’s daughter, I replied, “Beside what thou askest all the cattle and the house hold stuff in thy father’s charge are thine and, as for the daughter of my uncle, her blood is lawful to thee.” When I had spoken, she took a cup and filled it with water: then she recited a spell over it and sprinkled it upon the calf, saying, “If Almighty Allah created thee a calf, remain so shaped, and change not; but if thou be enchanted, return to thy whilom form, by command of Allah Most Highest!” and lo! he trembled and became a man. Then I fell on his neck and said, “Allah upon thee, tell me all that the daughter of my uncle did by thee and by thy mother.” And when he told me what had come to pass between them I said, “ O my son, Allah favoured thee with one to restore thee, and thy right hath returned to thee.” Then, O Jinni, I married the herdsman’s daughter to him, and she transformed my wife into this gazelle, saying: — Her shape is a comely and by no means loathsome. After this she abode with us night and day, day and night, till the Almighty took her to Himself. When she deceased, my son fared forth to the cities of Hind, even to the city of this man who hath done to thee what hath been done;[51] and I also took this gazelle (my cousin) and wandered with her from town to town seeking tidings of my son, till Destiny drove me to this place where I saw the merchant sitting in tears. Such is my tale! Quoth the Jinni, “This story is indeed strange, and therefore I grant thee the third part of his blood.” There upon the second old man, who owned the two greyhounds, came up and said, “ O Jinni, if I recount to thee what befel me from my brothers, these two hounds, and thou see that it is a tale even more wondrous and marvellous than what thou hast heard, wilt thou grant to me also the third of this man’s blood?” Replied the Jinni, “Thou hast my word for it, if thine adventures be more marvellous and wondrous.” Thereupon he thus began

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The Second Shaykh's Story.

Know, O lord of the Kings of the Jann! that these two dogs are my brothers and I am the third. Now when our father died and left us a capital of three thousand gold pieces,[52] I opened a shop with my share, and bought and sold therein, and in like guise did my two brothers, each setting up a shop. But I had been in business no long while before the elder sold his stock for a thousand diners, and after buying outfit and merchandise, went his ways to foreign parts. He was absent one whole year with the caravan; but one day as I sat in my shop, behold, a beggar stood before me asking alms, and I said to him, "Allah open thee another door!"[53] Whereupon he answered, weeping the while, "Am I so changed that thou knowest me not?" Then I looked at him narrowly, and lo! it was my brother, so I rose to him and welcomed him; then I seated him in my shop and put questions concerning his case. "Ask me not," answered he; "my wealth is awaste and my state hath waxed unstated!" So I took him to the Hammam bath[54] and clad him in a suit of my own and gave him lodging in my house. Moreover, after looking over the accounts of my stock in trade and the profits of my business, I found that industry had gained me one thousand diners, while my principal, the head of my wealth, amounted to two thousand. So I shared the whole with him saying, "Assume that thou hast made no journey abroad but hast remained at home; and be not cast down by thine ill luck." He took the share in great glee and opened for himself a shop; and matters went on quietly for a few nights and days. But presently my second brother (yon other dog), also setting his heart upon travel, sold off what goods and stock in trade he had, and albeit we tried to stay him he would not be stayed: he laid in an outfit for the journey and fared forth with certain wayfarers. After an absence of a whole year he came back to me, even as my elder brother had come back; and when I said to him, "O my brother, did I not dissuade thee from travel?" he shed tears and cried, "O my brother, this be destiny's decree: here I am a mere beggar, penniless[55] and without a shirt to my back." So I led him to the bath, O Jinni, and clothing him in new clothes of my own wear, I went with him to my shop and served him with meat and drink. Furthermore I said to him, “O my brother, I am wont to cast up my shop accounts at the head of every year, and whatso I shall find of surplusage is between me and thee.”[56] So I proceeded, O Ifrit, to strike a balance and, finding two thousand diners of profit, I returned praises to the Creator (be He extolled and exalted!) and made over one half to my brother, keeping the other to my self. Thereupon he busied himself with opening a shop and on this wise we abode many days. After a time my brothers began pressing me to travel with them; but I refused saying, “What gained ye by travel voyage that I should gain thereby?” As I would not give ear to them we went back each to his own shop where we bought and sold as before. They kept urging me to travel for a whole twelvemonth, but I refused to do so till full six years were past and gone when I consented with these words, “O my brothers, here am I, your companion of travel: now let me see what monies you have by you.” I found, however, that they had not a doit, having squandered their substance in high diet and drinking and carnal delights. Yet I spoke not a word of reproach; so far from it I looked over my shop accounts once more, and sold what goods and stock in trade were mine; and, finding myself the owner of six thousand ducats, I gladly proceeded to divide that sum in halves, saying to my brothers, “These three thousand gold pieces are for me and for you to trade withal,” adding, “Let us bury the other moiety underground that it may be of service in case any harm befal us, in which case each shall take a thousand wherewith to open shops.” Both replied, “Right is thy recking;” and I gave to each one his thousand gold pieces, keeping the same sum for myself, to wit, a thousand diners. We then got ready suitable goods and hired a ship and, having embarked our merchandise, proceeded on our voyage, day following day, a full month, after which we arrived at a city, where we sold our venture; and for every piece of gold we gained ten. And as we turned again to our voyage we found on the shore of the sea a maiden clad in worn and ragged gear, and she kissed my hand and said, “O master, is there kindness in thee and charity? I can make thee a fitting return for them.” I answered, “Even so; truly in me are benevolence and good works, even though thou render me no return.” Then she said, “Take me to wife, O my master, and carry me to thy city, for I have given myself to thee; so do me a kindness and I am of those who be meet for good works and charity: I will make thee a fitting return for these and be thou not shamed by my condition." When I heard her words, my heart yearned towards her, in such sort as willed it Allah (be He extolled and exalted!); and took her and clothed her and made ready for her a fair resting place in the vessel, and honourably entreated her. So we voyaged on, and my heart became attached to her with exceeding attachment, and I was separated from her neither night nor day, and I paid more regard to her than to my brothers. Then they were estranged from me, and waxed jealous of my wealth and the quantity of merchandise I had, and their eyes were opened covetously upon all my property. So they took counsel to murder me and seize my wealth, saying, "Let us slay our brother and all his monies will be ours;" and Satan made this deed seem fair in their sight; so when they found me in privacy (and I sleeping by my wife's side) they took us both up and cast us into the sea. My wife awoke startled from her sleep and, forthright becoming an Ifritah,[57] she bore me up and carried me to an island and disappeared for a short time; but she returned in the morning and said, "Here am I, thy faithful slave, who hath made thee due recompense; for I bore thee up in the waters and saved thee from death by command of the Almighty. Know — that I am a Jinniyah, and as I saw thee my heart loved thee by will of the Lord, for I am a believer in Allah and in His Apostle (whom Heaven bless and preserve!). Thereupon I came to thee conditioned as thou sawest me and thou didst marry me, and see now I have saved thee from sinking. But I am angered against thy brothers and assuredly I must slay them." When I heard her story I was surprised and, thanking her for all she had done, I said, "But as to slaying my brothers this must not be." Then I told her the tale of what had come to pass with them from the beginning of our lives to the end, and on hearing it quoth she, "This night will I fly as a bird over them and will sink their ship and slay them." Quoth I, "Allah upon thee, do not thus, for the proverb saith, O thou who doest good to him that cloth evil, leave the evil doer to his evil deeds. Moreover they are still my brothers." But she rejoined, "By Allah, there is no help for it but I slay them." I humbled myself before her for their pardon, whereupon she bore me up and flew away with me till at last she set me down on the terrace roof of my own house. I opened the doors and took up what I had hidden in the ground; and after I had saluted the folk I opened my shop and bought me merchandise. Now when night came on I went home, and there I saw these two hounds tied up; and, when they sighted me, they arose and whined and fawned upon me; but ere I knew what happened my wife said, “These two dogs be thy brothers!” I answered, “And who hath done this thing by them?” and she rejoined, “I sent a message to my sister and she entreated them on this wise, nor shall these two be released from their present shape till ten years shall have passed.” And now I have arrived at this place on my way to my wife’s sister that she may deliver them from this condition, after their having endured it for half a score of years. As I was wending onwards I saw this young man, who acquainted me with what had befallen him, and I determined not to fare hence until I should see what might occur between thee and him. Such is my tale! Then said the Jinni, “Surely this is a strange story and therefor I give thee the third portion of his blood and his crime.” Thereupon quoth the third Shaykh, the master of the mare mule, to the Jinni, “I can tell thee a tale more wondrous than these two, so thou grant me the remainder of his blood and of his offense,” and the Jinni answered, “So be it!” Then the old man began

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The Third Shaykh's Story.

Know, O Sultan and head of the Jann, that this mule was my wife. Now it so happened that I went forth and was absent one whole year; and when I returned from my journey I came to her by night, and saw a black slave lying with her on the carpet bed and they were talking, and dallying, and laughing, and kissing and playing the close buttock game. When she saw me, she rose and came hurriedly at me with a gugglet[58] of water; and, muttering spells over it, she besprinkled me and said, "Come forth from this thy shape into the shape of a dog;" and I became on the instant a dog. She drove me out of the house, and I ran through the doorway nor ceased running until I came to a butcher's stall, where I stopped and began to eat what bones were there. When the stall owner saw me, he took me and led me into his house, but as soon as his daughter had sight of me she veiled her face from me, crying out, "Doss thou bring men to me and dost thou come in with them to me?" Her father asked, "Where is the man?"; and she answered, "This dog is a man whom his wife hath ensorcelled and I am able to release him." When her father heard her words, he said, "Allah upon thee, O my daughter, release him." So she took a gugglet of water and, after uttering words over it, sprinkled upon me a few drops, saying, "Come forth from that form into thy former form." And I returned to my natural shape. Then I kissed her hand and said, "I wish thou wouldest transform my wife even as she bans formed me." Thereupon she gave me some water, saying, "As soon as thou see her asleep, sprinkle this liquid upon her and speak what words thou heardest me utter, so shall she become whatsoever thou desirest." I went to my wife and found her fast asleep; and, while sprinkling the water upon her, I said, "Come forth from that form into the form of a mare mule." So she became on the instant a she mule, and she it is whom thou seest with thine eyes, O Sultan and head of the Kings of the Jann! Then the Jinni turned towards her and said, "Is this sooth?" And she nodded her head and replied by signs, "Indeed, 'tis the truth: for such is my tale and this is what hath be fallen me." Now when the old man had ceased speaking the Jinni shook with pleasure and gave him the third of the merchant's blood. And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth Dunyazad, "O. my sister, how pleasant is thy tale, and how tasteful; how sweet and how grateful!" She replied, "And what is this compared with that I could tell thee, the night to come, if I live and the King spare me?"[59] Then thought the King, "By Allah, I will not slay her until I hear the rest of her tale, for truly it is wondrous." So they rested that night in mutual embrace until the dawn. After this the King went forth to his Hall of Estate, and the Wazir and the troops came in and the court was crowded, and the King gave orders and judged and appointed and deposed, bidding and forbidding during the rest of the day. Then the Divan broke up, and King Shahryar entered his palace.

When it was the Third Night,

And the King had had his will of the Wazir's daughter, Dunyazad, her sister, said to her, "Finish for us that tale of thine;" and she replied, "With joy and goodly gree! It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the third old man told a tale to the Jinni more wondrous than the two preceding, the Jinni marvelled with exceeding marvel, and, shaking with delight, cried, Lo! I have given thee the remainder of the merchant's punishment and for thy sake have I released him." Thereupon the merchant embraced the old men and thanked them, and these Shaykhs wished him joy on being saved and fared forth each one for his own city. Yet this tale is not more wondrous than the fisherman's story." Asked the King, "What is the fisherman's story?" And she answered by relating the tale of

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THE FISHERMAN AND THE JINNI.

It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that there was a Fisher man well stricken in years who had a wife and three children, and withal was of poor condition. Now it was his custom to cast his net every day four times, and no more. On a day he went forth about noontide to the sea shore, where he laid down his basket; and, tucking up his shirt and plunging into the water, made a cast with his net and waited till it settled to the bottom. Then he gathered the cords together and haled away at it, but found it weighty; and however much he drew it landwards, he could not pull it up; so he carried the ends ashore and drove a stake into the ground and made the net fast to it. Then he stripped and dived into the water all about the net, and left not off working hard until he had brought it up. He rejoiced thereat and, donning his clothes, went to the net, when he found in it a dead jackass which had torn the meshes. Now when he saw it, he exclaimed in his grief, "There is no Majesty, and there is no Might save in Allah the Glorious, the Great!" Then quoth he, "This is a strange manner of daily bread;" and he began re citing in extempore verse: —

O toiler through the glooms of night in peril and in pain * Thy
toiling stint for daily bread comes not by might and main!
Seest thou not the fisher seek afloat upon the sea * His bread,
while glimmer stars of night as set in tangled skein.
Anon he plungeth in despite the buffet of the waves * The while
to sight the bellying net his eager glances strain;
Till joying at the night's success, a fish he bringeth home *
Whose gullet by the hook of Fate was caught and cut in
twain.
When buys that fish of him a man who spent the hours of night *
Reckless of cold and wet and gloom in ease and comfort fain,
Laud to the Lord who gives to this, to that denies his wishes *
And dooms one toil and catch the prey and other eat the
fishes.[60]

Then quoth he, "Up and to it; I am sure of His beneficence, Inshallah!" So he continued: —

When thou art seized of Evil Fate, assume * The noble soul's long
suffering: 'tis thy best:
Complain not to the creature; this be plaint * From one most
Ruthful to the ruthlessest.

The Fisherman, when he had looked at the dead ass, got it free of the toils and wrung out and spread his net; then he plunged into the sea, saying, "In Allah's name!" and made a cast and pulled at it, but it grew heavy and settled down more firmly than the first time. Now he thought that there were fish in it, and he made it fast, and doffing his clothes went into the water, and dived and haled until he drew it up upon dry land. Then found he in it a large earthen pitcher which was full of sand and mud; and seeing this he was greatly troubled and began repeating these verses[61] : —

Forbear, O troubles of the world, * And pardon an ye nill
forbear:
I went to seek my daily bread * I find that breadless I must
fare:
For neither handcraft brings me aught * Nor Fate allots to me a
share:
How many fools the Pleiads reach * While darkness whelms the
wise and ware.

So he prayed pardon of Allah and, throwing away the jar, wrung his net and cleansed it and returned to the sea the third time to cast his net and waited till it had sunk. Then he pulled at it and found therein potsherds and broken glass; whereupon he began to speak these verses: —

He is to thee that daily bread thou canst nor loose nor bind *
Nor pen nor writ avail thee aught thy daily bread to find:
For joy and daily bread are what Fate deigneth to allow; * This
soil is sad and sterile ground, while that makes glad the

hind.
The shafts of Time and Life bear down full many a man of worth *
While bearing up to high degree wights of ignoble mind.
So come thou, Death! for verily life is not worth a straw * When
low the falcon falls withal the mallard wings the wind:
No wonder 'tis thou seest how the great of soul and mind * Are
poor, and many a loser carle to height of luck designed.
This bird shall overfly the world from east to furthest west *
And that shall win her every wish though ne'er she leave the
nest.

Then raising his eyes heavenwards he said, "O my God![62] verily Thou wottest that I cast not my net each day save four times[63] ; the third is done and as yet Thou hast vouchsafed me nothing. So this time, O my God, deign give me my daily bread." Then, having called on Allah's name,[64] he again threw his net and waited its sinking and settling; whereupon he haled at it but could not draw it in for that it was entangled at the bottom. He cried out in his vexation "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah!" and he began reciting: —

Fie on this wretched world, an so it be * I must be whelmed by
grief and misery:
Tho' gladsome be man's lot when dawns the morn * He drains the
cup of woe ere eve he see:
Yet was I one of whom the world when asked * "Whose lot is
happiest?" oft would say "'Tis he!"

Thereupon he stripped and, diving down to the net, busied him self with it till it came to land. Then he opened the meshes and found therein a cucumber shaped jar of yellow copper,[65] evidently full of something, whose mouth was made fast with a leaden cap, stamped with the seal ring of our Lord Sulayman son of David (Allah accept the twain!). Seeing this the Fisherman rejoiced and said, "If I sell it in the brass bazar 'tis worth ten golden diners." He shook it and finding it heavy continued, "Would to Heaven I knew what is herein. But I must and will open it and look to its contents and store it in my bag and sell it in the brass market." And taking out a knife he worked at the lead till he had loosened it from the jar; then he laid the cup on the ground and shook the vase to pour out whatever might be inside. He found nothing in it; whereat he marvelled with an exceeding marvel. But presently there came forth from the jar a smoke which spired heavenwards into aether (whereat he again marvelled with mighty marvel), and which trailed along earth's surface till presently, having reached its full height, the thick vapour condensed, and became an Ifrit, huge of bulk, whose crest touched the clouds while his feet were on the ground. His head was as a dome, his hands like pitchforks, his legs long as masts and his mouth big as a cave; his teeth were like large stones, his nostrils ewers, his eyes two lamps and his look was fierce and lowering. Now when the Fisherman saw the Ifrit his side muscles quivered, his teeth chattered, his spittle dried up and he became blind about what to do. Upon this the Ifrit looked at him and cried, "There is no god but the God, and Sulayman is the prophet of God;" presently adding, "O Apostle of Allah, slay me not; never again will I gainsay thee in word nor sin against thee in deed."[66] Quoth the Fisherman, "O Marid,[67] diddest thou say, Sulayman the Apostle of Allah; and Sulayman is dead some thousand and eight hundred years ago,[68] and we are now in the last days of the world! What is thy story, and what is thy account of thyself, and what is the cause of thy entering into this cucur bit?" Now when the Evil Spirit heard the words of the Fisher man, quoth he; "There is no god but the God: be of good cheer, O Fisherman!" Quoth the Fisherman, "Why biddest thou me to be of good cheer?" and he replied, "Because of thy having to die an ill death in this very hour." Said the Fisherman, "Thou deservest for thy good tidings the withdrawal of Heaven's protection, O thou distant one![69] Wherefore shouldest thou kill me and what thing have I done to deserve death, I who freed thee from the jar, and saved thee from the depths of the sea, and brought thee up on the dry land?" Replied the Ifrit, "Ask of me only what mode of death thou wilt die, and by what manner of slaughter shall I slay thee." Rejoined the Fisherman, "What is my crime and wherefore such retribution?" Quoth the Ifrit, "Hear my story, O Fisherman!" and he answered, "Say on, and be brief in thy saying, for of very sooth my life breath is in my nostrils."[70]

Thereupon quoth the Jinni, “Know, that I am one among the heretical Jann and I sinned against Sulayman, David son (on the twain be peace!) I together with the famous Sakhr al Jinni;”[71] whereupon the Prophet sent his minister, Asaf son of Barkhiya, to seize me; and this Wazir brought me against my will and led me in bonds to him (I being downcast despite my nose) and he placed me standing before him like a suppliant. When Sulayman saw me, he took refuge with Allah and bade me embrace the True Faith and obey his behests; but I refused, so sending for this cucurbit[72] he shut me up therein, and stopped it over with lead whereon he impressed the Most High Name, and gave his orders to the Jann who carried me off, and cast me into the midmost of the ocean. There I abode an hundred years, during which I said in my heart, “Whoso shall release me, him will I enrich for ever and ever.” But the full century went by and, when no one set me free, I entered upon the second five score saying, “Whoso shall release me, for him I will open the hoards of the earth.” Still no one set me free and thus four hundred years passed away. Then quoth I, “Whoso shall release me, for him will I fulfil three wishes.” Yet no one set me free. Thereupon I waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and said to myself, “Whoso shall release me from this time forth, him will I slay and I will give him choice of what death he will die; and now, as thou hast released me, I give thee full choice of deaths.” The Fisherman, hearing the words of the Ifrit, said, “O Allah! the wonder of it that I have not come to free thee save in these days!” adding, “Spare my life, so Allah spare thine; and slay me not, lest Allah set one to slay thee.” Replied the Contumacious One, “There is no help for it; die thou must; so ask me by way of boon what manner of death thou wilt die.” Albeit thus certified the Fisherman again addressed the Ifrit saying, “Forgive me this my death as a generous reward for having freed thee;” and the Ifrit, “Surely I would not slay thee save on account of that same release.” “O Chief of the Ifrits,” said the Fisherman, “I do thee good and thou requitest me with evil! in very sooth the old saw lieth not when it saith: —

We wrought them weal, they met our weal with ill; * Such, by my
life! is every bad man’s labour:
To him who benefits unworthy wights * Shall hap what inapt to

Ummi Amir's neighbor.[73] "

Now when the Ifrit heard these words he answered, "No more of this talk, needs must I kill thee." Upon this the Fisherman said to himself, "This is a Jinni; and I am a man to whom Allah hath given a passably cunning wit, so I will now cast about to com pass his destruction by my contrivance and by mine intelligence; even as he took counsel only of his malice and his frowardness."[74] He began by asking the Ifrit, "Hast thou indeed resolved to kill me?" and, receiving for all answer, "Even so," he cried, "Now in the Most Great Name, graven on the seal ring of Sulayman the Son of David (peace be with the holy twain!), an I question thee on a certain matter wilt thou give me a true answer?" The Ifrit replied "Yea;" but, hearing mention of the Most Great Name, his wits were troubled and he said with trembling, "Ask and be brief." Quoth the Fisherman, "How didst thou fit into this bottle which would not hold thy hand; no, nor even thy foot, and how came it to be large enough to contain the whole of thee?" Replied the Ifrit, "What! cost not believe that I was all there?" and the Fisherman rejoined, "Nay! I will never believe it until I see thee inside with my own eyes." And Shahrazad per ceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Fourth Night,

Her sister said to her, "Please finish us this tale, an thou be not sleepy!" so she resumed: — It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Fisherman said to the Ifrit, "I will never and nowise believe thee until I see thee inside it with mine own eyes;" the Evil Spirit on the instant shook[75] and became a vapour, which condensed, and entered the jar little and little, till all was well inside when lo! the Fisherman in hot haste took the leaden cap with the seal and stoppered therewith the mouth of the jar and called out to the Ifrit, saying, "Ask me by way of boon what death thou wilt die! By Allah, I will throw thee into the sea[76] be fore us and here will I build me a lodge; and whoso cometh hither I will warn him against fishing and will say: — In these waters abideth an Ifrit who giveth as a last favour a choice of deaths and fashion of slaughter to the man who saveth him!" Now when the Ifrit heard this from the Fisherman and saw him self in limbo, he was minded to escape, but this was prevented by Solomon’s seal; so he knew that the Fisherman had cozened and outwitted him, and he waxed lowly and submissive and began humbly to say, “I did but jest with thee.” But the other answered, “Thou liest, O vilest of the Ifrits, and meanest and filthiest!” and he set off with the bottle for the sea side; the Ifrit calling out “Nay! Nay!” and he calling out “Aye! Aye !” There upon the Evil Spirit softened his voice and smoothed his speech and abased himself, saying, “What wouldest thou do with me, O Fisherman?” “I will throw thee back into the sea,” he answered; “where thou hast been housed and homed for a thousand and eight hundred years; and now I will leave thee therein till Judgment day: did I not say to thee: — Spare me and Allah shall spare thee; and slay me not lest Allah slay thee? yet thou spurn east my supplication and hadst no intention save to deal un graciously by me, and Allah hath now thrown thee into my hands and I am cunninger than thou.” Quoth the Ifrit, “Open for me and I may bring thee weal.” Quoth the Fisherman, “Thou liest, thou accursed! my case with thee is that of the Wazir of King Yunan with the sage Duban.”[77] “And who was the Wazir of King Yunan and who was the sage Duban; and what was the story about them?” quoth the Ifrit, whereupon the Fisherman began to tell

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The Tale of the Wazir and the Sage Duban.

Know, O thou Ifrit, that in days of yore and in ages long gone before, a King called Yunan reigned over the city of Fars of the land of the Roum.[78] He was a powerful ruler and a wealthy, who had armies and guards and allies of all nations of men; but his body was afflicted with a leprosy which leaches and men of science failed to heal. He drank potions and he swallowed pow ders and he used unguents, but naught did him good and none among the host of physicians availed to procure him a cure. At last there came to his city a mighty healer of men and one well stricken in years, the sage Duban highs. This man was a reader of books, Greek, Persian, Roman, Arabian, and Syrian; and he was skilled in astronomy and in leechcraft, the theorick as well as the practick; he was experienced in all that healeth and that hurteth the body; conversant with the virtues of every plant, grass and herb, and their benefit and bane; and he understood philosophy and had compassed the whole range of medical science and other branches of the knowledge tree. Now this physician passed but few days in the city, ere he heard of the King's malady and all his bodily sufferings through the leprosy with which Allah had smitten him; and how all the doctors and wise men had failed to heal him. Upon this he sat up through the night in deep thought and, when broke the dawn and appeared the morn and light was again born, and the Sun greeted the Good whose beauties the world adorn,[79] he donned his handsomest dress and going in to King Yunan, he kissed the ground before him: then he prayed for the endurance of his honour and prosperity in fairest language and made himself known saying, "O King, tidings have reached I me of what befel thee through that which is in thy person; and how the host of physicians have proved themselves unavailing to abate it; and lo! I can cure thee, O King; and yet will I not make thee drink of draught or anoint thee with ointment." Now when King Yunan heard his words he said in huge surprise, "How wilt thou do this? By Allah, if thou make me whole I will enrich thee even to thy son's son and I will give thee sumptuous gifts; and whatso thou wishest shall be thine and thou shalt be to me a cup companion[80] and a friend." The

King then robed him with a dress of honour and entreated him graciously and asked him, “Canst thou indeed cure me of this complaint without drug and unguent?” and he answered, “Yes! I will heal I thee without the pains and penalties of medicine.” The King marvelled with exceeding marvel and said, “O physician, when shall be this whereof thou speakest, and in how many days shall it take place? Haste thee, O my son!” He replied,”I hear and I obey; the cure shall begin tomorrow.” So saying he went forth from the presence, and hired himself a house in the city for the better storage of his books and scrolls, his medicines and his aromatic roots. Then he set to work at choosing the fittest drugs and simples and he fashioned a bat hollow within, and furnished with a handle without, for which he made a ball; the two being prepared with consummate art. On the next day when both were ready for use and wanted nothing more, he went up to the King; and, kissing the ground between his hands bade him ride forth on the parade ground[81] there to play at pall and mall. He was accompanied by his suite, Emirs and Chamberlains, Wazirs and Lords of the realm and, ere he was seated, the sage Duban came up to him, and handing him the bat said, “Take this mall and grip it as I do; so! and now push for the plain and leaning well over thy horse drive the ball with all thy might until thy palm be moist and thy body perspire: then the medicine will penetrate through thy palm and will permeate thy person. When thou hast done with playing and thou feelest the effects of the medicine, return to thy palace, and make the Ghusl ablation[82] in the Hammam bath, and lay thee down to sleep; so shalt thou be come whole; and now peace be with thee!” Thereupon King Yunan took the bat from the Sage and grasped it firmly; then, mounting steed, he drove the ball before him and gallopped after it till he reached it, when he struck it with all his might, his palm gripping the bat handle the while; and he ceased not malling the ball till his hand waxed moist and his skin, perspiring, imbibed the medicine from the wood. Then the sage Duban knew that the drugs had penetrated his person and bade him return to the palace and enter the Hammam without stay or delay; so King Yunan forthright returned and ordered them to clear for him the bath. They did so, the carpet spreaders making all haste, and the slaves all hurry and got ready a change of raiment for the King. He entered the bath and made the total ablution long and thoroughly; then donned his clothes within the Hammam and rode therefrom to his palace where he lay him down and slept. Such was the case with King Yunan, but as regards the sage Duban, he returned home and slept as usual and when morning dawned he repaired to the palace and craved audience. The King ordered him to be admitted; then, having kissed the ground between his hands, in allusion to the King he recited these couplets with solemn intonation: —

Happy is Eloquence when thou art named her sire * But mourns
she whenas other man the title claimed.
O Lord of fairest presence, whose illuming rays * Clear off the
fogs of doubt aye veiling deeds high famed,
Ne'er cease thy face to shine like Dawn and rise of Morn * And
never show Time's face with heat of ire inflamed!
Thy grace hath favoured us with gifts that worked such wise * As
rain clouds raining on the hills by words enframed:
Freely thou lavishedst thy wealth to rise on high * Till won from
Time the heights whereat thy grandeur aimed.

Now when the Sage ceased reciting, the King rose quickly to his feet and fell on his neck; then, seating him by his side he bade dress him in a sumptuous dress; for it had so happened that when the King left the Hammam he looked on his body and saw no trace of leprosy: the skin was all clean as virgin silver. He joyed thereat with exceeding joy, his breast broadened[83] with delight and he felt thoroughly happy. Presently, when it was full day he entered his audience hall and sat upon the throne of his kingship whereupon his Chamberlains and Grandees flocked to the presence and with them the Sage Duban. Seeing the leach the King rose to him in honour and seated him by his side; then the food trays furnished with the daintiest viands were brought and the physician ate with the King, nor did he cease companying him all that day. Moreover, at nightfall he gave the physician Duban two thousand gold pieces, besides the usual dress of honour and other gifts galore, and sent him home on his own steed. After the Sage had fared forth King Yunan again expressed his amazement at the leach's art, saying, "This man medicined my body from without nor anointed me with aught of ointments: by Allah, surely this is none other than consummate skill! I am bound to honour such a man with re wards and distinction, and take him to my companion and my friend during the remainder of my days.” So King Yunan passed the night in joy and gladness for that his body had been made whole and had thrown off so pernicious a malady. On the morrow the King went forth from his Serraglio and sat upon his throne, and the Lords of Estate stood about him, and the Emirs and Wazirs sat as was their wont on his right hand and on his left. Then he asked for the Sage Duban, who came in and kissed the ground before him, when the King rose to greet him and, seating him by his side, ate with him and wished him long life. Moreover he robed him and gave him gifts, and ceased not con versing with him until night approached. Then the King ordered him, by way of salary, five dresses of honour and a thousand dinars.[84] The physician returned to his own house full of gratitude to the King. Now when next morning dawned the King repaired to his audience hall, and his Lords and Nobles surrounded him and his Chamberlains and his Ministers, as the white en closeth the black of the eye.[85] Now the King had a Wazir among his Wazirs, unsightly to look upon, an ill omened spectacle; sor did, ungenerous, full of envy and evil will. When this Minister saw the King place the physician near him and give him all these gifts, he jaloused him and planned to do him a harm, as in the saying on such subject, “Envy lurks in every body;” and the say ing, “Oppression hideth in every heart: power revealeth it and weakness concealeth it.” Then the Minister came before the King and, kissing the ground between his hands, said, “O King of the age and of all time, thou in whose benefits I have grown to manhood, I have weighty advice to offer thee, and if I withhold it I were a son of adultery and no true born man; wherefore an thou order me to disclose it I will so do forthwith.” Quoth the King (and he was troubled at the words of the Minister), “And what is this counsel of thine?” Quoth he, “O glorious monarch, the wise of old have said: — Whoso regardeth not the end, hath not Fortune to friend; and indeed I have lately seen the King on far other than the right way; for he lavisheth largesse on his enemy, on one whose object is the decline and fall of his king ship: to this man he hath shown favour, honouring him with over honour and making of him an intimate. Wherefore I fear for the King's life." The King, who was much troubled and changed colour, asked, "Whom cost thou suspect and anent whom doest thou hint?" and the Minister answered, "O King, an thou be asleep, wake up! I point to the physician Duban." Rejoined the King, "Fie upon thee! This is a true friend who is favoured by me above all men, because he cured me with some thing which I held in my hand, and he healed my leprosy which had baffled all physicians; indeed he is one whose like may not be found in these days — no, not in the whole world from furthest east to utmost west! And it is of such a man thou sayest such hard sayings. Now from this day forward I allot him a settled solde and allowances, every month a thousand gold pieces; and, were I to share with him my realm 'twere but a little matter. Perforce I must suspect that thou speakest on this wise from mere envy and jealousy as they relate of the King Sindibad." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day, and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth Dunyazad, "O my sister, how pleasant is thy tale, and how tasteful, how sweet, and how grateful!" She replied, "And where is this compared with what I could tell thee on the coming night if the King deign spare my life?" Then said the King in himself, "By Allah, I will not slay her until I hear the rest of her tale, for truly it is wondrous." So they rested that night in mutual embrace until the dawn. Then the King went forth to his Hall of Rule, and the Wazir and the troops came in, and the audience chamber was thronged and the King gave orders and judged and appointed and deposed and bade and forbade during the rest of that day till the Court broke up, and King Shahryar returned to his palace.

When It Was The Fifth Night,

Her sister said, "Do you finish for us thy story if thou be not sleepy," and she resumed: — It hath reached me, O auspicious King and mighty Monarch, that King Yunan said to his Minister, "O Wazir, thou art one whom the evil spirit of envy hath possessed because of this physician, and thou plottest for my putting him to death, after which I should repent me full sorely, even as repented King Sindibad for killing his falcon." Quoth the Wazir, Pardon me, O King of the age, how was that?" So the King began the story of

King Sindibad and his Falcon.

It is said (but Allah is All knowing![86]) that there was a King of the Kings of Fars, who was fond of pleasuring and diversion, especially coursing end hunting. He had reared a falcon which he carried all night on his fist, and whenever he went a chasing he took with him this bird; and he bade make for her a golden cuplet hung around her neck to give her drink therefrom. One day as the King was sitting quietly in his palace, behold, the high falcaner of the household suddenly addressed him, “O King of the age, this is indeed a day fit for birding.” The King gave orders accordingly and set out taking the hawk on fist; and they fared merrily forwards till they made a Wady[87] where they planted a circle of nets for the chase; when lo! a gazelle came within the toils and the King cried, “Whoso alloweth yon gazelle to spring over his head and loseth her, that man will I surely slay.” They narrowed the nets about the gazelle when she drew near the King’s station; and, planting herself on her hind quarter, crossed her forehand over her breast, as if about to kiss the earth before the King. He bowed his brow low in acknowledgment to the beast; when she bounded high over his head and took the way of the waste. Thereupon the King turned towards his troops and seeing them winking and pointing at him, he asked, “O Wazir, what are my men saying?” and the Minister answered, “They say thou didst proclaim that whoso alloweth the gazelle to spring over his head, that man shall be put to death.” Quoth the King, “Now, by the life of my head! I will follow her up till I bring her back.” So he set off gallopping on the gazelle’s trail and gave not over tracking till he reached the foot hills of a mountain chain where the quarry made for a cave. Then the King cast off at it the falcon which presently caught it up and, swooping down, drove her talons into its eyes, bewildering and blinding it;[88] and the King drew his mace and struck a blow which rolled the game over. He then dismounted; and, after cutting the antelope’s throat and flaying the body, hung it to the pommel of his saddle. Now the time was that of the siesta[89] and the wold was parched and dry, nor was any water to be found anywhere; and the King thirsted and his horse also; so he went about searching till he saw a tree dropping water, as it were melted butter, from its boughs. Thereupon the King who wore gauntlets of skin to guard him against poisons took the cup from the hawk's neck, and filling it with the water set it before the bird, and lo! the falcon struck it with her pounces and upset the liquid. The King filled it a second time with the dripping drops, thinking his hawk was thirsty; but the bird again struck at the cup with her talons and overturned it. Then the King waxed wroth with the hawk and filling the cup a third time offered it to his horse: but the hawk upset it with a flirt of wings. Quoth the King, "Allah confound thee, thou unluckiest of flying things! thou keepest me from drinking, and thou deprivest thyself also, and the horse." So he struck the falcon with his sword and cut off her wing; but the bird raised her head and said by signs, "Look at that which hangeth on the tree!" The King lifted up his eyes accordingly and caught sight of a brood of vipers, whose poison drops he mistook for water; thereupon he repented him of having struck off his falcon's wing, and mounting horse, fared on with the dead gazelle, till he arrived at the camp, his starting place. He threw the quarry to the cook saying, Take and broil it," and sat down on his chair, the falcon being still on his fist when suddenly the bird gasped and died; whereupon the King cried out in sorrow and remorse for having slain that falcon which had saved his life. Now this is what occurred in the case of King Sindibad; and I am assured that were I to do as thou desirest I should repent even as the man who killed his parrot." Quoth the Wazir, "And how was that?" And the King began to tell

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The Tale of the Husband and the Parrot.[90]

A certain man and a merchant to boot had married a fair wife, a woman of perfect beauty and grace, symmetry and loveliness, of whom he was mad-jealous, and who contrived successfully to keep him from travel. At last an occasion compelling him to leave her, he went to the bird market and bought him for one hundred gold pieces a she parrot which he set in his house to act as duenna, expecting her to acquaint him on his return with what had passed during the whole time of his absence; for the bird was kenning and cunning and never forgot what she had seen and heard. Now his fair wife had fallen in love with a young Turk, [91] who used to visit her, and she feasted him by day and lay with him by night. When the man had made his journey and won his wish he came home; and, at once causing the Parrot be brought to him, questioned her concerning the conduct of his consort whilst he was in foreign parts. Quoth she, “Thy wife hath a man friend who passed every night with her during thine absence.” Thereupon the husband went to his wife in a violent rage and bashed her with a bashing severe enough to satisfy any body. The woman, suspecting that one of the slave girls had been tattling to the master, called them together and questioned them upon their oaths, when all swore that they had kept the secret, but that the Parrot had not, adding, “And we heard her with our own ears.” Upon this the woman bade one of the girls to set a hand mill under the cage and grind therewith and a second to sprinkle water through the cage roof and a third to run about, right and left, dashing a mirror of bright steel through the livelong night. Next morning when the husband returned home after being entertained by one of his friends, he bade bring the Parrot before him and asked what had taken place whilst he was away. “Pardon me, O my master,” quoth the bird, “I could neither hear nor see aught by reason of the exceeding murk and the thunder and lightning which lasted throughout the night.” As it happened to be the summer tide the master was astounded and cried, “But we are now in mid Tammuz,[92] and this is not the time for rains and storms.” “Ay, by Allah,” rejoined the bird, “I saw with these eyes what my tongue hath told thee.” Upon this the man, not knowing the case nor smoking the plot, waxed exceeding wroth; and, holding that his wife had been wrongously accused, put forth his hand and pulling the Parrot from her cage dashed her upon the ground with such force that he killed her on the spot. Some days after wards one of his slave girls confessed to him the whole truth,[93] yet would he not believe it till he saw the young Turk, his wife's lover, coming out of her chamber, when he bared his blade [94] and slew him by a blow on the back of the neck; and he did the same by the adulteress; and thus the twain, laden with mortal sin, went straightways to Eternal Fire. Then the merchant knew that the Parrot had told him the truth anent all she had seen and he mourned grievously for her loss, when mourning availed him not. The Minister, hearing the words of King Yu nan, rejoined, 'O Monarch, high in dignity, and what harm have I done him, or what evil have I seen from him that I should compass his death? I would not do this thing, save to serve thee, and soon shalt thou sight that it is right; and if thou accept my advice thou shalt be saved, otherwise thou shalt be destroyed even as a certain Wazir who acted treacherously by the young Prince." Asked the King, "How was that?" and the Minister thus began

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The Tale of the Prince and the Ogress.

A certain King, who had a son over much given to hunting and coursing, ordered one of his Wazirs to be in attendance upon him whithersoever he might wend. One day the youth set out for the chase accompanied by his father's Minister; and, as they jogged on together, a big wild beast came in sight. Cried the Wazir to the King's son, "Up and at yon noble quarry!" So the Prince followed it until he was lost to every eye and the chase got away from him in the waste; whereby he was confused and he knew not which way to turn, when lo! a damsel appeared ahead and she was in tears. The King's son asked, "Who art thou?" and she answered, "I am daughter to a King among the Kings of Hind, and I was travelling with a caravan in the desert when drowsiness overcame me, and I fell from my beast unwittingly whereby I am cut off from my people and sore bewildered." The Prince, hearing these words, pitied her case and, mounting her on his horse's crupper, travelled until he passed by an old ruin [95] , when the damsel said to him, "O my master, I wish to obey a call of nature": he therefore set her down at the ruin where she delayed so long that the King's son thought that she was only wasting time; so he followed her without her knowledge and behold, she was a Ghulah,[96] a wicked Ogress, who was saying to her brood, "O my children, this day I bring you a fine fat youth, [97] for dinner;" whereto they answered, "Bring him quick to us, O our mother, that we may browse upon him our bellies full." The Prince hearing their talk, made sure of death and his side muscles quivered in fear for his life, so he turned away and was about to fly. The Ghulah came out and seeing him in sore affright (for he was trembling in every limb? cried, "Wherefore art thou afraid?" and he replied, "I have hit upon an enemy whom I greatly fear." Asked the Ghulah, "Diddest thou not say: - I am a King's son?" and he answered, "Even so." Then quoth she, "Why cost not give shine enemy something of money and so satisfy him?" Quoth he, "He will not be satisfied with my purse but only with my life, and I mortally fear him and am a man under oppression." She replied, "If thou be so distressed, as thou deemest, ask aid against him from Allah, who will surely protect thee from his ill doing and from the evil whereof thou art afraid.” Then the Prince raised his eyes heavenwards and cried, “O Thou who answerest the necessitous when he calleth upon Thee and dispellest his distress; O my God ! grant me victory over my foe and turn him from me, for Thou over all things art Almighty.” The Ghulah, hearing his prayer, turned away from him, and the Prince returned to his father, and told him the tale of the Wazir; whereupon the King summoned the Minister to his presence and then and there slew him. Thou likewise, O King, if thou continue to trust this leach, shalt be made to die the worst of deaths. He verily thou madest much of and whom thou entreatedest as an intimate, will work thy destruction. Seest thou not how he healed the disease from outside thy body by something grasped in thy hand? Be not assured that he will not destroy thee by something held in like manner! Replied King Yunan, “Thou hast spoken sooth, O Wazir, it may well be as thou hintest O my well advising Minister; and belike this Sage hath come as a spy searching to put me to death; for assuredly if he cured me by a something held in my hand, he can kill me by a something given me to smell.” Then asked King Yunan, “O Minister, what must be done with him?” and the Wazir answered, “Send after him this very instant and summon him to thy presence; and when he shall come strike him across the neck; and thus shalt thou rid thyself of him and his wickedness, and deceive him ere he can I deceive thee.” ‘Thou hast again spoken sooth, O Wazir,” said the King and sent one to call the Sage who came in joyful mood for he knew not what had appointed for him the Compassionate; as a certain poet saith by way of illustration: —

O Thou who fearest Fate, confiding fare * Trust all to Him who
built the world and wait:
What Fate saith “Be” perforce must be, my lord! * And safe art
thou from th undecreed of Fate.

As Duban the physician entered he addressed the King in these lines: —

An fail I of my thanks to thee nor thank thee day by day * For
whom com posed I prose and verse, for whom my say and lay?

Thou lavishedst thy generous gifts ere they were craved by me *
Thou lavishedst thy boons unsought sans pretext or delay:
How shall I stint my praise of thee, how shall I cease to laud *
The grace of thee in secresy and patentest display?
Nay; I will thank thy benefits, for aye thy favours lie * Light on my thought and tongue, though heavy on my back they weigh.

And he said further on the same theme: —

Turn thee from grief nor care a jot! * Commit thy needs to Fate and Lot!
Enjoy the Present passing well * And let the Past be clean forgot
For whatso haply seemeth worse * Shall work thy weal as Allah wot
Allah shall do whate'er He wills * And in His will oppose Him not.

And further still. —

To th' All wise Subtle One trust worldly things * Rest thee from all whereto the worldling clings:
Learn wisely well naught cometh by thy will * But e'en as willeth Allah, King of Kings.

And lastly. —

Gladsome and gay forget thine every grief * Full often grief the wisest hearts outwore:
Thought is but folly in the feeble slave * Shun it and so be saved evermore.

Said the King for sole return, “Knowest thou why I have summoned thee?” and the Sage replied, “Allah Most Highest alone kenneth hidden things!” But the King rejoined, “I summoned thee only to take thy life and utterly to destroy thee.” Duban the Wise wondered at this strange address with exceeding wonder and asked, “O King, and wherefore wouldest thou slay me, and what ill have I done thee?" and the King answered, "Men tell me thou art a spy sent hither with intent to slay me; and lo! I will kill thee ere I be killed by thee;" then he called to his Sworder, and said, "Strike me off the head of this traitor and deliver us from his evil practices." Quoth the Sage, "Spare me and Allah will spare thee; slay me not or Allah shall slay thee." And he repeated to him these very words, even as I to thee, O Ifrit, and yet thou wouldst not let me go, being bent upon my death. King Yunan only rejoined, "I shall not be safe without slaying thee; for, as thou healedst me by something held in hand, so am I not secure against thy killing me by something given me to smell or otherwise." Said the physician, "This then, O King, is thy requital and reward; thou returnest only evil for good." The King replied, "There is no help for it; die thou must and without delay." Now when the physician was certified that the King would slay him without waiting, he wept and regretted the good he had done to other than the good. As one hath said on this subject: —

Of wit and wisdom is Maymunah[98] bare * Whose sire in
wisdom all the wits outstrippeth:
Man may not tread on mud or dust or clay * Save by good sense,
else trippeth he and slippeth.

Hereupon the Sworder stepped forward and bound the Sage Duban's eyes and bared his blade, saying to the King, "By thy leave;" while the physician wept and cried, "Spare me and Allah will spare thee, and slay me not or Allah shall slay thee," and began repeating: —

I was kind and 'scaped not, they were cruel and escaped; * And my
kindness only led me to Ruination Hall,
If I live I'll ne'er be kind; if I die, then all be damned * Who
follow me, and curses their kindliness befal.

"Is this," continued Duban, "the return I meet from thee? Thou givest me, meseems, but crocodile boon." Quoth the King,"What is the tale of the crocodile?", and quoth the physician, "Impossible for me to tell it in this my state; Allah upon thee, spare me, as thou hopest Allah shall spare thee." And he wept with ex ceeding weeping. Then one of the King's favourites stood up and said, "O King! grant me the blood of this physician; we have never seen him sin against thee, or doing aught save healing thee from a disease which baffled every leach and man of science." Said the King, "Ye wot not the cause of my putting to death this physician, and this it is. If I spare him, I doom myself to certain death; for one who healed me of such a malady by something held in my hand, surely can slay me by something held to my nose; and I fear lest he kill me for a price, since haply he is some spy whose sole purpose in coming hither was to compass my destruction. So there is no help for it; die he must, and then only shall I be sure of my own life." Again cried Duban, "Spare me and Allah shall spare thee; and slay me not or Allah shall slay thee." But it was in vain. Now when the physician, O Ifrit, knew for certain that the King would kill him, he said, "O King, if there be no help but I must die, grant me some little delay that I may go down to my house and release myself from mine obligations and direct my folk and my neighbours where to bury me and distribute my books of medicine. Amongst these I have one, the rarest of rarities, which I would present to thee as an offering: keep it as a treasure in thy treasury." "And what is in the book?" asked the King and the Sage answered, "Things beyond compt; and the least of secrets is that if, directly after thou hast cut off my head, thou open three leaves and read three lines of the page to thy left hand, my head shall speak and answer every question thou deignest ask of it." The King wondered with exceeding wonder and shaking[99] with delight at the novelty, said, "O physician, cost thou really tell me that when I cut off thy head it will speak to me?" He replied, "Yes, O King!" Quoth the King, "This is indeed a strange matter!" and forthwith sent him closely guarded to his house, and Duban then and there settled all his obligations. Next day he went up to the King's audience hall, where Emirs and Wazirs, Chamberlains and Nabobs, Grandees and Lords of Estate were gathered together, making the presence chamber gay as a garden of flower beds. And lo! the physician came up and stood before the King, bearing a worn old volume and a little etui of metal full of powder, like that used for the eyes.[100] Then he sat down and said, "Give me a tray." So they brought him one and he poured the powder upon it and levelled it and lastly spake as follows: “O King, take this book but do not open it till my head falls; then set it upon this tray, and bid press it down upon the powder, when forthright the blood will cease flowing. That is the time to open the book.” The King thereupon took the book and made a sign to the Sworder, who arose and struck off the physician’s head, and placing it on the middle of the tray, pressed it down upon the powder. The blood stopped flowing, and the Sage Duban unclosed his eyes and said, “Now open the book, O King!” The King opened the book, and found the leaves stuck together; so he put his finger to his mouth and, by moistening it, he easily turned over the first leaf, and in like way the second, and the third, each leaf opening with much trouble; and when he had un stuck six leaves he looked over them and, finding nothing written thereon, said, “O physician, there is no writing here!” Duban re plied, “Turn over yet more;” and he turned over three others in the same way. Now the book was poisoned; and before long the venom penetrated his system, and he fell into strong convulsions and he cried out, “The poison hath done its work!” Whereupon the Sage Duban’s head began to improvise: —

There be rulers who have ruled with a foul tyrannic sway *
    But they soon became as though they had never, never been:
Just, they had won justice: they oppressed and were oppress *
    By Fortune, who requited them with ban and bane and teen:
So they faded like the morn, and the tongue of things repeats *
    “Take this far that, nor vent upon Fortune’s ways thy
    spleen.”

No sooner had the head ceased speaking than the King rolled over dead. Now I would have thee know, O Ifrit, that if King Yunan had spared the Sage Duban, Allah would have spared him, but he refused so to do and decreed to do him dead, wherefore Allah slew him; and thou too, O Ifrit, if thou hadst spared me, Allah would have spared thee. And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say: then quoth Dunyazad, “O my sister, how pleasant is thy tale, and how tasteful; how sweet, and how grateful!” She replied, “And where is this compared with what I could tell thee this coming night, if I live and the King spare me?" Said the King in himself, "By Allah, I will not slay her until I hear the rest of her story, for truly it is wondrous." They rested that night in mutual embrace until dawn: then the King went forth to his Darbar; the Wazirs and troops came in and the audience hall was crowded; so the King gave orders and judged and appointed and deposed and bade and forbade the rest of that day, when the court broke up, and King Shahryar entered his palace,

When it was the Sixth Night,

Her sister, Dunyazad, said to her,"Pray finish for us thy story;" and she answered, "I will if the King give me leave." "Say on," quoth the King. And she continued: — It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Fisherman said to the Ifrit, "If thou hadst spared me I would have spared thee, but nothing would satisfy thee save my death; so now I will do thee die by jailing thee in this jar and I will hurl thee into this sea." Then the Marid roared aloud and cried, "Allah upon thee, O Fisher man, don't! Spare me, and pardon my past doings; and, as I have been tyrannous, so be thou generous, for it is said among sayings that go current: — O thou who doest good to him who hath done thee evil, suffice for the ill doer his ill deeds, and do not deal with me as did Umamah to 'Atikah."[101] Asked the Fisherman, "And what was their case?" and the Ifrit answered, "This is not the time for story telling and I in this prison; but set me free and I will tell thee the tale." Quoth the Fisherman, "Leave this language: there is no help but that thou be thrown back into the sea nor is there any way for thy getting out of it for ever and ever. Vainly I placed myself under thy protection,[102] and I humbled my self to thee with weeping, while thou soughtest only to slay me, who had done thee no injury deserving this at thy hands; nay, so far from injuring thee by any evil act, I worked thee nought but weal in releasing thee from that jail of thine. Now I knew thee to be an evil doer when thou diddest to me what thou didst, and know, that when I have cast thee back into the sea, I will warn whomsoever may fish thee up of what hath befallen me with thee, and I will advise him to toss thee back again; so shalt thou abide here under these waters till the End of Time shall make an end of thee." But the Ifrit cried aloud, "Set me free; this is a noble occasion for generosity and I make covenant with thee and vow never to do thee hurt and harm; nay, I will help thee to what shall put thee out of want." The Fisherman accepted his promises on both conditions, not to trouble him as before, but on the contrary to do him service; and, after making firm the plight and swearing him a solemn oath by Allah Most Highest he opened the cucurbit. Thereupon the pillar of smoke rose up till all of it was fully out; then it thickened and once more became an Ifrit of hideous presence, who forthright ad ministered a kick to the bottle and sent it flying into the sea. The Fisherman, seeing how the cucurbit was treated and making sure of his own death, piddled in his clothes and said to himself, "This promiseth badly;" but he fortified his heart, and cried, "O Ifrit, Allah hath said[103] : - Perform your covenant; for the performance of your covenant shall be inquired into hereafter. Thou hast made a vow to me and hast sworn an oath not to play me false lest Allah play thee false, for verily he is a jealous God who respiteth the sinner, but letteth him not escape. I say to thee as said the Sage Duban to King Yunan, "Spare me so Allah may spare thee!" The Ifrit burst into laughter and stalked away, saying to the Fisherman, "Follow me;" and the man paced after him at a safe distance (for he was not assured of escape) till they had passed round the suburbs of the city. Thence they struck into the uncultivated grounds, and crossing them descended into a broad wilderness, and lo! in the midst of it stood a mountain tarn. The Ifrit waded in to the middle and again cried, "Follow me;" and when this was done he took his stand in the centre and bade the man cast his net and catch his fish. The Fisherman looked into the water and was much astonished to see therein vari coloured fishes, white and red, blue and yellow; however he cast his net and, hauling it in, saw that he had netted four fishes, one of each colour. Thereat he rejoiced greatly and more when the Ifrit said to him, "Carry these to the Sultan and set them in his presence; then he will give thee what shall make thee a wealthy man; and now accept my excuse, for by Allah at this time I wot none other way of benefiting thee, inasmuch I have lain in this sea eighteen hundred years and have not seen the face of the world save within this hour. But I would not have thee fish here save once a day." The Ifrit then gave him God speed, saying, Allah grant we meet again;"[104] and struck the earth with one foot, whereupon the ground clove asunder and swallowed him up. The Fisherman, much marvelling at what had happened to him with the Ifrit, took the fish and made for the city; and as soon as he reached home he filled an earthen bowl with water and therein threw the fish which began to struggle and wriggle about. Then he bore off the bowl upon his head and repairing to the King's palace (even as the Ifrit had bidden him) laid the fish before the presence; and the King wondered with exceeding wonder at the sight, for never in his lifetime had' he seen fishes like these in quality or in conformation. So he said, "Give those fish to the stranger slave girl who now cooketh for us," meaning the bond maiden whom the King of Roum had sent to him only three days before, so that he had not yet made trial of her talents in the dressing of meat. Thereupon the Wazir carried the fish to the cook and bade her fry them[105] saying, "O damsel, the King sendeth this say to thee: — I have not treasured thee, O tear o' me! save for stress time of me; approve, then, to us this day thy delicate handiwork and thy savoury cooking; for this dish of fish is a present sent to the Sultan and evidently a rarity." The Wazir, after he had carefully charged her, returned to the King, who commanded him to give the Fisherman four hundred diners: he gave them accordingly, and the man took them to his bosom and ran off home stumbling and falling and rising again and deeming the whole thing to be a dream. However, he bought for his family all they wanted and lastly he went to his wife in huge joy and gladness. So far concerning him; but as regards the cookmaid, she took the fish and cleansed them and set them in the frying pan, basting them with oil till one side was dressed. Then she turned them over and, behold, the kitchen wall crave asunder, and therefrom came a young lady, fair of form, oval of face, perfect in grace, with eyelids which Kohl lines enchase.[106] Her dress was a silken head kerchief fringed and tasseled with blue: a large ring hung from either ear; a pair of bracelets adorned her wrists; rings with bezels of priceless gems were on her fingers; and she hent in hand a long rod of rattan cane which she thrust into the frying pan, saying, "O fish! O fish! be ye constant to your covenant?" When the cookmaiden saw this apparition she swooned away. The young lady repeated her words a second time and a third time, and at last the fishes raised their heads from the pan, and saying in articulate speech “Yes! Yes!” began with one voice to recite: —

Come back and so will I! Keep faith and so will I! * And if ye fain forsake, I’ll requite till quits we cry!

After this the young lady upset the frying pan and went forth by the way she came in and the kitchen wall closed upon her. When the cook maiden recovered from her fainting fit, she saw the four fishes charred black as charcoal, and crying out, “His staff brake in his first bout,”[107] she again fell swooning to the ground. Whilst she was in this case the Wazir came for the fish and looking upon her as insensible she lay, not knowing Sunday from Thursday, shoved her with his foot and said, “Bring the fish for the Sultan!” Thereupon recovering from her fainting fit she wept and in formed him of her case and all that had befallen her. The Wazir marvelled greatly and exclaiming, “This is none other than a right strange matter!”, he sent after the Fisherman and said to him, “Thou, O Fisherman, must needs fetch us four fishes like those thou broughtest before.” Thereupon the man repaired to the tarn and cast his net; and when he landed it, lo! four fishes were therein exactly like the first. These he at once carried to the Wazir, who went in with them to the cook maiden and said, “Up with thee and fry these in my presence, that I may see this business.” The damsel arose and cleansed the fish, and set them in the frying pan over the fire; however they remained there but a little while ere the wall crave asunder and the young lady appeared, clad as before and holding in hand the wand which she again thrust into the frying pan, saying, “O fish! O fish! be ye constant to your olden covenant?” And behold, the fish lifted their heads, and repeated “Yes! Yes!” and recited this couplet:

Come back and so will I! Keep faith and so will I! * But if ye
fain forsake, I’ll requite till quits we cry!

And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seventh Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the fishes spoke, and the young lady upset the frying pan with her rod, and went forth by the way she came and the wall closed up, the

Wazir cried out, “This is a thing not to be hidden from the King.” So he went and told him what had happened, where upon quoth the King, “There is no help for it but that I see this with mine own eyes.” Then he sent for the Fisherman and commended him to bring four other fish like the first and to take with him three men as witnesses. The Fisherman at once brought the fish: and the King, after ordering them to give him four hundred gold pieces, turned to the Wazir and said, “Up and fry me the fishes here before me!” The Minister, replying “To hear is to obey,” bade bring the frying pan, threw therein the cleansed fish and set it over the fire; when lo! the wall crave asunder, and out burst a black slave like a huge rock or a remnant of the tribe Ad[108] bearing in hand a branch of a green tree; and he cried in loud and terrible tones, “O fish! O fish! be ye all constant to your antique covenant?” whereupon the fishes lifted their heads from the frying pan and said, “Yes! Yes ! we be true to our vow;” and they again recited the couplet:

Come back and so will I! Keep faith and so will I! * But if ye fain forsake, I’ll requite till quits we cry!

Then the huge blackamoor approached the frying pan and upset it with the branch and went forth by the way he came in. When he vanished from their sight the King inspected the fish; and finding them all charred black as charcoal, was utterly bewildered and said to the Wazir, “Verily this is a matter whereanent silence cannot be kept, and as for the fishes, assuredly some marvellous adventure connects with them.” So he bade bring the Fisherman and asked him, saying “Fie on thee, fellow! whence came these fishes?” and he answered, “From a tarn between four heights lying behind this mountain which is in sight of thy city.” Quoth the King, “How many days’ march?” Quoth he, “O our lord the Sultan, a walk of half hour.” The King wondered and, straight way ordering his men to march and horsemen to mount, led off the Fisherman who went before as guide, privily damning the Ifrit. They fared on till they had climbed the mountain and descended unto a great desert which they had never seen during all their lives; and the Sultan and his merry men marvelled much at the wold set in the midst of four mountains, and the tarn and its fishes of four colours, red and white, yellow and blue. The King stood fixed to the spot in wonderment and asked his troops and all present, “Hath any one among you ever seen this piece of water before now?” and all made answer, “O King of the age never did we set eyes upon it during all our days.” They also questioned the oldest inhabitants they met, men well stricken in years, but they replied, each and every, “A lakelet this we never saw in this place.” Thereupon quoth the King, “By Allah I will neither return to my capital nor sit upon the throne of my forbears till I learn the truth about this tarn and the fish therein.” He then ordered his men to dismount and bivouac all around the mountain; which they did; and summoning his Wazir, a Minister of much experience, sagacious, of penetrating wit and well versed in affairs, said to him, “’Tis in my mind to do a certain thing whereof I will inform thee; my heart telleth me to fare forth alone this night and root out the mystery of this tarn and its fishes. Do thou take thy seat at my tent door, and say to the Emirs and Wazirs, the Nabobs and the Chamberlains, in fine to all who ask thee: — The Sultan is ill at ease, and he hath ordered me to refuse all admittance;[109] and be careful thou let none know my design.” And the Wazir could not oppose him. Then the King changed his dress and ornaments and, slinging his sword over his shoulder, took a path which led up one of the mountains and marched for the rest of the night till morning dawned; nor did he cease wayfaring till the heat was too much for him. After his long walk he rested for a while, and then resumed his march and fared on through the second night till dawn, when suddenly there appeared a black point in the far distance. Hereat he rejoiced and said to himself, “Haply some one here shall acquaint me with the mystery of the tarn and its fishes.” Presently drawing near the dark object he found it a palace built of swart stone plated with iron; and, while one leaf of the gate stood wide open, the other was shut, The King’s spirits rose high as he stood before the gate and rapped a light rap; but hearing no answer he knocked a second knock and a third; yet there came no sign. Then he knocked his loudest but still no answer, so he said, “Doubtless ’tis empty.” Thereupon he mustered up resolution and boldly walked through the main gate into the great hall and there cried out aloud, “Holla, ye people of the palace! I am a stranger and a wayfarer; have you aught here of victual?” He repeated his cry a second time and a third but still there came no reply; so strengthening his heart and making up his mind he stalked through the vestibule into the very middle of the palace and found no man in it. Yet it was furnished with silken stuffs gold starred; and the hangings were let down over the door ways. In the midst was a spacious court off which set four open saloons each with its raised dais, saloon facing saloon; a canopy shaded the court and in the centre was a jetting fount with four figures of lions made of red gold, spouting from their mouths water clear as pearls and diaphanous gems. Round about the palace birds were let loose and over it stretched a net of golden wire, hindering them from flying off; in brief there was everything but human beings. The King marvelled mightily thereat, yet felt he sad at heart for that he saw no one to give him account of the waste and its tarn, the fishes, the mountains and the palace itself. Presently as he sat between the doors in deep thought behold, there came a voice of lament, as from a heart grief spent and he heard the voice chanting these verses: —

I hid what I endured of him[110] and yet it came to light, *
  And nightly sleep mine eyelids fled and changed to sleepless night:
Oh world! Oh Fate! withhold thy hand and cease thy hurt and
  harm * Look and behold my hapless sprite in colour and affright:
Wilt ne’er show ruth to highborn youth who lost him on the way *
  Of Love, and fell from wealth and fame to lowest basest wight.
Jealous of Zephyr’s breath was I as on your form he breathed *
  But whenas Destiny descends she blindeth human sight[111]
What shall the hapless archer do who when he fronts his foe * And
  bends his bow to shoot the shaft shall find his string undight?
When cark and care so heavy bear on youth[112] of generous
  soul * How shall he ‘scape his lot and where from Fate his place of flight?

Now when the Sultan heard the mournful voice he sprang to his feet; and, following the sound, found a curtain let down over a chamber door. He raised it and saw behind it a young man sitting upon a couch about a cubit above the ground; and he fair to the sight, a well shaped wight, with eloquence dight; his forehead was flower white, his cheek rosy bright, and a mole on his cheek breadth like an ambergris mite; even as the poet cloth indite: —

A youth slim waisted from whose locks and brow * The world in
  blackness and in light is set.
Throughout Creation's round no fairer show * No rarer sight thine
  eye hath ever met:
A nut brown mole sits throned upon a cheek * Of rosiest red
  beneath an eye of jet.[113]

The King rejoiced and saluted him, but he remained sitting in his caftan of silken stuff pureed with Egyptian gold and his crown studded with gems of sorts; but his face was sad with the traces of sorrow. He returned the royal salute in most courteous wise adding, "O my lord, thy dignity demandeth my rising to thee; and my sole excuse is to crave thy pardon."[114] Quoth the King, "Thou art excused, O youth; so look upon me as thy guest come hither on an especial object. I would thou acquaint me with the secrets of this tarn and its fishes and of this palace and thy loneliness therein and the cause of thy groaning and wailing." When the young man heard these words he wept with sore weeping;[115] till his bosom was drenched with tears and began reciting —

Say him who careless sleeps what while the shaft of Fortune flies

* How many cloth this shifting world lay low and raise to
  rise?
Although thine eye be sealed in sleep, sleep not th' Almighty's
  eyes * And who hath found Time ever fair, or Fate in
  constant guise?

Then he sighed a long fetched sigh and recited: —

Confide thy case to Him, the Lord who made mankind; * Quit cark
  and care and cultivate content of mind;

Ask not the Past or how or why it came to pass: * All human
things by Fate and Destiny were designed!

The King marvelled and asked him, “What maketh thee weep, O young man?” and he answered, “How should I not weep, when this is my case!” Thereupon he put out his hand and raised the skirt of his garment, when lo! the lower half of him appeared stone down to his feet while from his navel to the hair of his head he was man. The King, seeing this his plight, grieved with sore grief and of his compassion cried, “Alack and well away! in very sooth, O youth, thou heapest sorrow upon my sorrow. I was minded to ask thee the mystery of the fishes only: whereas now I am concerned to learn thy story as well as theirs. But there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great![116] Lose no time, O youth, but tell me forthright thy whole tale.” Quoth he, “Lend me thine ears, thy sight and thine insight;” and quoth the King, “All are at thy service!” Thereupon the youth began, “Right wondrous and marvellous is my case and that of these fishes; and were it graven with gravers upon the eye corners it were a warner to whoso would be warned.” “How is that?” asked the King, and the young man began to tell

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The Tale of the Ensorcelled Prince.

Know then, O my lord, that whilome my sire was King of this city, and his name was Mahmud, entitled Lord of the Black Islands, and owner of what are now these four mountains. He ruled three score and ten years, after which he went to the mercy of the Lord and I reigned as Sultan in his stead. I took to wife my cousin, the daughter of my paternal uncle,[117] and she loved me with such abounding love that whenever I was absent she ate not and she drank not until she saw me again. She cohabited with me for five years till a certain day when she went forth to the Hammam bath; and I bade the cook hasten to get ready all requisites for our supper. And I entered this palace and lay down on the bed where I was wont to sleep and bade two damsels to fan my face, one sitting by my head and the other at my feet. But I was troubled and made restless by my wife's absence and could not sleep; for although my eyes were closed my mind and thoughts were wide awake. Presently I heard the slave girl at my head say to her at my feet, "O Mas'udah, how miserable is our master and how wasted in his youth and oh! the pity of his being so be trayed by our mistress, the accursed whore!''[118] The other replied, "Yes indeed: Allah curse all faithless women and adulterous; but the like of our master, with his fair gifts, deserveth something better than this harlot who lieth abroad every night." Then quoth she who sat by my head, "Is our lord dumb or fit only for bubbling that he questioneth her not!" and quoth the other, "Fie on thee! cloth our lord know her ways or cloth she allow him his choice? Nay, more, cloth she not drug every night the cup she giveth him to drink before sleep time, and put Bhang[119] into it? So he sleepeth and wotteth not whither she goeth, nor what she doeth; but we know that after giving him the drugged wine, she donneth her richest raiment and perfumeth herself and then she fareth out from him to be away till break of day; then she cometh to him, and burneth a pastile under his nose and he awaketh from his deathlike sleep." When I heard the slave girl's words, the light became black before my sight and I thought night would never-fall. Presently the daughter of my uncle came from the baths; and they set the table for us and we ate and sat together a fair half hour quaffing our wine as was ever our wont. Then she called for the particular wine I used to drink before sleeping and reached me the cup; but, seeming to drink it according to my wont, I poured the contents into my bosom; and, lying down, let her hear that I was asleep. Then, behold, she cried, "Sleep out the night, and never wake again: by Allah, I loathe thee and I loathe thy whole body, and my soul turneth in disgust from cohabiting with thee; and I see not the moment when Allah shall snatch away thy life!" Then she rose and donned her fairest dress and perfumed her person and slung my sword over her shoulder; and, opening the gates of the palace, went her ill way. I rose and followed her as she left the palace and she threaded the streets until she came to the city gate, where she spoke words I understood not, and the padlocks dropped of themselves as if broken and the gate leaves opened. She went forth (and I after her without her noticing aught) till she came at last to the outlying mounds[120] and a reed fence built about a round roofed hut of mud bricks. As she entered the door, I climbed upon the roof which commanded a view of the interior, and lo! my fair cousin had gone in to a hideous negro slave with his upper lip like the cover of a pot, and his lower like an open pot; lips which might sweep up sand from the gravel-floor of the cot. He was to boot a leper and a paralytic, lying upon a strew of sugar cane trash and wrapped in an old blanket and the foulest rags and tatters. She kissed the earth before him, and he raised his head so as to see her and said, "Woe to thee! what call hadst thou to stay away all this time? Here have been with me sundry of the black brethren, who drank their wine and each had his young lady, and I was not content to drink because of thine absence." Then she, "O my lord, my heart's love and coolth of my eyes [121] knowest thou not that I am married to my cousin whose very look I loathe, and hate myself when in his company? And did not I fear for thy sake, I would not let a single sun arise before making his city a ruined heap wherein raven should croak and howlet hoot, and jackal and wolf harbour and loot; nay I had removed its very stones to the back side of Mount Kaf." [122] Rejoined the slave, Thou liest, damn thee! Now I swear an oath by the velour and honour of blackamoor men (and deem not our manliness to be ; the poor manliness of white men), from today forth if thou stay away till this hour, I will not keep company with thee nor will I glue my body with thy body and strum and belly bump Dost play fast and loose with us, thou cracked pot, that we may satisfy thy dirty lusts? stinkard! bitch! vilest of the vile whites!”

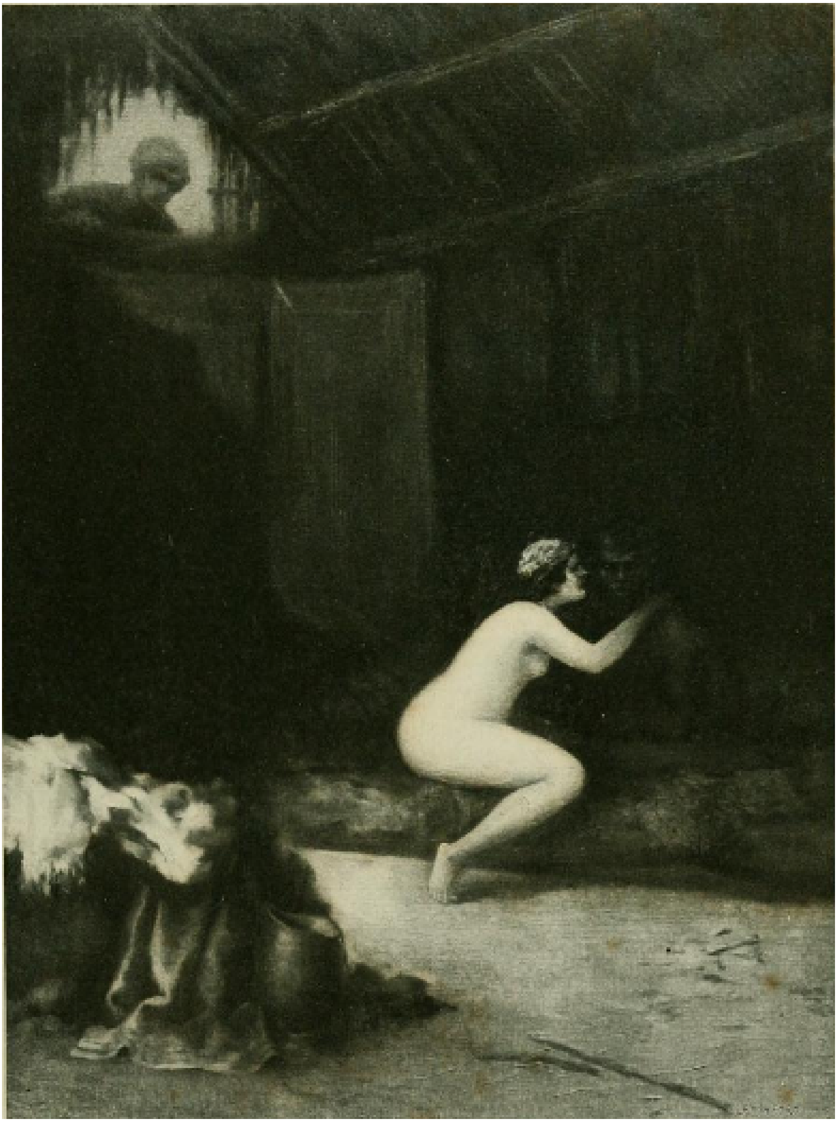

When I heard his words, and saw with my own eyes what passed between these two wretches, the world waxed dark be fore my face and my soul knew not in what place it was. But , my wife humbly stood up weeping before and wheedling the slave, and saying, O my beloved, and very fruit of my heart, there is none left to cheer me but thy dear self; and, if thou cast me off who shall take me in, O my beloved, O light of my eyes?” And she ceased not weeping and abasing herself to him until he deigned be reconciled with her. Then was she right glad and stood up and doffed her clothes, even to her petticoat trousers, and said, 0 my master what hast thou here for thy handmaiden to eat? Uncover the basin,” he grumbled, “and thou shalt find t the bottom the broiled bones of some rats we dined on, pick at them, and then go to that slop pot where thou shalt find some leavings of beer [123] which thou mayest drink.” So she ate and drank and washed her hands, and went and lay down by the side of the slave, upon the cane trash and, stripping herself stark naked, she crept in with him under his foul coverlet and his rags and tatters. When I saw my wife, my cousin, the daughter of my uncle, do this deed[124] I clean lost my wits, and climbing down from the roof, I entered and took the sword which she had with her and drew it, determined to cut down the twain. I first struck at the slave’s neck and thought that the death decree had fallen on him:”And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eighth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young ensorcelled Prince said to the King, “When I smote the slave with intent to strike off his head, I thought that I had slain him; for he groaned a loud hissing groan, but I had cut only the skin and flesh of the gullet and the two arteries! It awoke the daughter of my uncle, so I sheathed the sword and fared forth for the city; and, entering the palace, lay upon my bed and slept till morning when my wife aroused me and I saw that she had cut off her hair and had donned mourning garments. Quoth she: — O son of my uncle, blame me not for what I do; it hath just reached me that my mother is dead, and my father hath been killed in holy war, and of my brothers one hath lost his life by a snake sting and the other by falling down some precipice; and I can and should do naught save weep and lament. When I heard her words I refrained from all reproach and said only: — Do as thou list; I certainly will not thwart thee. She continued sorrowing, weeping and wailing one whole year from the beginning of its circle to the end, and when it was finished she said to me. — I wish to build me in thy palace a tomb with a cupola, which I will set apart for my mourning and will name the House of Lamentations.[125] Quoth I again: — Do as thou list! Then she builded for herself a cenotaph wherein to mourn, and set on its centre a dome under which showed a tomb like a Santon's sepulchre. Thither she carried the slave and lodged him; but he was exceeding weak by reason of his wound, and unable to do her love service; he could only drink wine and from the day of his hurt he spake not a word, yet he lived on because his appointed hour[126] was not come. Every day, morning and evening, my wife went to him and wept and wailed over him and gave him wine and strong soups, and left not off doing after this manner a second year; and I bore with her patiently and paid no heed to her. One day, however, I went in to her unawares; and I found her weeping and beating her face and crying: — Why art thou absent from my sight, O my heart's delight? Speak to me, O my life; talk with me, O my love? Then she recited these verses: —

For your love my patience fails and albeit you forget * I may
not, nor to other love my heart can make reply:
Bear my body, bear my soul wheresoever you may fare * And
where you pitch the camp let my body buried lie:
Cry my name above my grave, and an answer shall return * The
moaning of my bones responsive to your cry.[127]

Then she recited, weeping bitterly the while: —

The day of my delight is the day when draw you near * And the
day of mine affright is the day you turn away:
Though I tremble through the night in my bitter dread of death *
When I hold you in my arms I am free from all affray

Once more she began reciting: —

Though a morn I may awake with all happiness in hand *
Though the world all be mine and like Kisra-kings[128] I
reign;
To me they had the worth of the winglet of the gnat * When I fail

to see thy form, when I look for thee in vain

When she had ended for a time her words and her weeping I said to her — O my cousin, let this thy mourning suffice, for in pouring forth tears there is little profit! Thwart me not, answered she, in aught I do, or I will lay violent hands on myself! So I held my peace and left her to go her own way; and she ceased not to cry and keen and indulge her affliction for yet another year. At the end of the third year I waxed aweary of this lonesome mourning, and one day I happened to enter the cenotaph when vexed and angry with some matter which had thwarted me, and suddenly I heard her say: — O my lord, I never hear thee vouch safe a single word to me! Why cost thou not answer me, O my master? and she began reciting: —

O thou tomb! O, thou tomb! be his beauty set in shade? * Hast
thou darkened that countenance all sheeny as the noon?
O thou tomb! neither earth nor yet heaven art to me * Then how
cometh it in thee are conjoined my sun and moon?

When I heard such verses as these rage was heaped upon my rage I cried out: — Well away! how long is this sorrow to last? and I began repeating: —

O thou tomb! O thou tomb! be his horrors set in blight? * Hast
thou dark ened his countenance that sickeneth the soul?
O thou tomb! neither cess pool nor pipkin art to me * Then how
cometh it in thee are conjoined soil and coal?

When she heard my words she sprang to her feet crying. — Fie upon thee, thou cur! all this is of thy doings; thou hast wounded my heart s darling and thereby worked me sore woe and thou hast wasted his youth so that these three years he hath lain abed more dead than alive! In my wrath I cried: — O thou foulest of harlots and filthiest of whores ever futtered by negro slaves who are hired to have at thee![129] Yes indeed it was I who did this good deed; and snatching up my sword I drew it and made at her to cut her down. But she laughed my words and mine intent to scorn crying: To heel, hound that thou art!

Alas[130] for the past which shall no more come to pass nor shall any one avail the dead to raise. Allah hath indeed now given into my hand him who did to me this thing, a deed that hath burned my heart with a fire which died not and a flame which might not be quenched! Then she stood up; and, pronouncing some words to me unintelligible, she said: — By virtue of my egromancy become thou half stone and half man; whereupon I became what thou seest, unable to rise or to sit, and neither dead nor alive. Moreover she ensorcelled the city with all its streets and garths, and she turned by her gramarye the four islands into four mountains around the tarn whereof thou questionest me; and the citizens, who were of four different faiths, Moslem, Nazarene, Jew and Magian, she transformed by her enchantments into fishes; the Moslems are the white, the Magians red, the Christians blue and the Jews yellow.[131] And every day she tortureth me and scourgeth me with an hundred stripes, each of which draweth floods of blood and cutteth the skin of my shoulders to strips; and lastly she clotheth my upper half with a hair cloth and then throweth over them these robes." Hereupon the young man again shed tears and began reciting: —

In patience, O my God, I endure my lot and fate; * I will bear at
 will of Thee whatsoever be my state:
They oppress me; they torture me; they make my life a woe * Yet
 haply Heaven's happiness shall compensate my strait:
Yea, straitened is my life by the bane and hate o' foes * But
 Mustafa and Murtaza[132] shall ope me Heaven's gate.

After this the Sultan turned towards the young Prince and said, "O youth, thou hast removed one grief only to add another grief; but now, O my friend, where is she; and where is the mausoleum wherein lieth the wounded slave?" "The slave lieth under yon dome," quoth the young man, "and she sitteth in the chamber fronting yonder door. And every day at sunrise she cometh forth, and first strippeth me, and whippeth me with an hundred strokes of the leathern scourge, and I weep and shriek; but there is no power of motion in my lower limbs to keep her off me. After ending her tormenting me she visiteth the slave, bringing him wine and boiled meats. And to morrow at an early hour she will be here.” Quoth the King, “By Allah, O youth, I will as suredly do thee a good deed which the world shall not willingly let die, and an act of derring do which shall be chronicled long after I am dead and gone by.” Then the King sat him by the side of the young Prince and talked till nightfall, when he lay down and slept; but, as soon as the false dawn[133] showed, he arose and doffing his outer garments[134] bared his blade and hastened to the place wherein lay the slave. Then was he ware of lighted candles and lamps, and the perfume of incenses and unguents, and directed by these, he made for the slave and struck him one stroke killing him on the spot: after which he lifted him on his back and threw him into a well that was in the palace. Presentry he returned and, donning the slave’s gear, lay down at length within the mausoleum with the drawn sword laid close to and along his side. After an hour or so the accursed witch came; and, first going to her husband, she stripped off his clothes and, taking a whip, flogged him cruelly while he cried out, “Ah! enough for me the case I am in! take pity on me, O my cousin!’ But she replied, “Didst thou take pity on me and spare the life of my true love on whom I coated?” Then she drew the cilice over his raw and bleeding skin and threw the robe upon all and went down to the slave with a goblet of wine and a bowl of meat broth in her hands. She entered under the dome weeping and wailing, “Well-away!” and crying, “O my lord! speak a word to me! O my master! talk awhile with me!” and began to recite these couplets. —

How long this harshness, this unlove, shall bide? * Suffice thee
not tear floods thou hast espied?
Thou cost prolong our parting purposely * And if wouldst please
my foe, thou’rt satisfied!

Then she wept again and said, “O my lord! speak to me, talk with me!” The King lowered his voice and, twisting his tongue, spoke after the fashion of the blackamoors and said “‘lack! ‘lack! there be no Ma’esty and there be no Might save in Allauh, the Gloriose, the Great!” Now when she heard these words she shouted for joy, and fell to the ground fainting; and when her senses returned she asked, "O my lord, can it be true that thou hast power of speech?" and the King making his voice small and faint answered, "O my cuss! cost thou deserve that I talk to thee and speak with thee?" "Why and wherefore?" rejoined she; and he replied "The why is that all the livelong day thou tormentest thy hubby; and he keeps calling on 'eaven for aid until sleep is strange to me even from evenin' till mawnin', and he prays and damns, cussing us two, me and thee, causing me disquiet and much bother: were this not so, I should long ago have got my health; and it is this which prevents my answering thee." Quoth she, "With thy leave I will release him from what spell is on him;"and quoth the King, "Release him and let's have some rest!" She cried, "To hear is to obey;" and, going from the cenotaph to the palace, she took a metal bowl and filled it with water and spake over it certain words which made the contents bubble and boil as a cauldron seetheth over the fire. With this she sprinkled her husband saying, "By virtue of the dread words I have spoken, if thou becamest thus by my spells, come forth out of that form into shine own former form." And lo and behold! the young man shook and trembled; then he rose to his feet and, rejoicing at his deliverance, cried aloud, "I testify that there is no god but the God, and in very truth Mohammed is His Apostle, whom Allah bless and keep!" Then she said to him, "Go forth and return not hither, for if thou do I will surely slay thee;" screaming these words in his face. So he went from between her hands; and she returned to the dome and, going down to the sepulchre, she said, "O my lord, come forth to me that I may look upon thee and thy goodliness!" The King replied in faint low words, "What[135] thing hast thou done? Thou hast rid me of the branch but not of the root." She asked, "O my darling! O my negro ring! what is the root?" And he answered, "Fie on thee, O my cuss! The people of this city and of the four islands every night when it's half passed lift their heads from the tank in which thou hast turned them to fishes and cry to Heaven and call down its anger on me and thee; and this is the reason why my body's baulked from health. Go at once and set them free then come to me and take my hand, and raise me up, for a little strength is already back in me." When she heard the King's words (and she still supposed him to be the slave) she cried joyously, O my master, on my head and on my eyes be thy commend, Bismillah[136] !'' So she sprang to her feet and, full of joy and gladness, ran down to the tarn and took a little of its water n the palm of her hand — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it Was the Ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the young woman, the sorceress, took in hand some of the tarn water and spake over it words not to be understood, the fishes lifted their heads and stood up on the instant like men, the spell on the people of the city having been removed. What was the lake again became a crowded capital; the bazars were thronged with folk who bought and sold; each citizen was occupied with his own calling and the four hills became islands as they were whilome. Then the young woman, that wicked sorceress, returned to the King and (still thinking he was the negro) said to him, O my love! stretch forth thy honoured hand that I may assist thee to rise." "Nearer to me," quoth the King in a faint and feigned tone. She came close as to embrace him when he took up the sword lying hid by his side and smote her across the breast, so that the point showed gleaming behind her back. Then he smote her a second time and cut her in twain and cast her to the ground in two halves. After which he fared forth and found the young man, now freed from the spell, awaiting him and gave him joy of his happy release while the Prince kissed his hand with abundant thanks. Quoth the King, "Wilt thou abide in this city or go with me to my capital?" Quoth the youth, "O King of the age, wottest thou not what journey is between thee and thy city?" "Two days and a half," answered he, whereupon said the other, "An thou be sleeping, O King, awake! Between thee and thy city is a year's march for a well girt walker, and thou haddest not come hither in two days and a half save that the city was under enchantment. And I, O King, will never part from thee; no, not even for the twinkling of an eye." The King rejoiced at his words and said, "Thanks be to Allah who hath bestowed thee upon me! From this hour thou art my son and my only son, for that in all my life I have never been blessed with issue." Thereupon they embraced and joyed with exceeding great joy; and, reaching the palace, the Prince who had been spell bound informed his lords and his grandees that he was about to visit the Holy Places as a pilgrim, and bade them get ready all things necessary for the occasion. The preparations lasted ten days, after which he set out with the Sultan, whose heart burned in yearning for his city whence he had been absent a whole twelvemonth. They journeyed with an escort of Mamelukes[137] carrying all manners of precious gifts and rarities, nor stinted they wayfaring day and night for a full year until they approached the Sultan's capital, and sent on messengers to announce their coming. Then the Wazir and the whole army came out to meet him in joy and gladness, for they had given up all hope of ever seeing their King; and the troops kissed the ground before him and wished him joy of his safety. He entered and took seat upon his throne and the Minister came before him and, when acquainted with all that had be fallen the young Prince, he congratulated him on his narrow escape. When order was restored throughout the land the King gave largesse to many of his people, and said to the Wazir, "Hither the Fisherman who brought us the fishes!" So he sent for the man who had been the first cause of the city and the citizens being delivered from enchantment and, when he came in to the presence, the Sultan bestowed upon him a dress of honour, and questioned him of his condition and whether he had children. The Fisherman gave him to know that he had two daughters and a son, so the King sent for them and, taking one daughter to wife, gave the other to the young Prince and made the son his head treasurer. Furthermore he invested his Wazir with the Sultanate of the City in the Black Islands whilome belonging to the young Prince, and dispatched with him the escort of fifty armed slaves together with dresses of honour for all the Emirs and Grandees. The Wazir kissed hands and fared forth on his way; while the Sultan and the Prince abode at home in all the solace and the delight of life; and the Fisherman became the richest man of his age, and his daughters wived with Kings, until death came to them. And yet, O King! this is not more wondrous than the story of

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The Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdad.

Once upon a time there was a Porter in Baghdad, who was a bachelor and who would remain unmarried. It came to pass on a certain day, as he stood about the street leaning idly upon his crate, behold, there stood before him an honourable woman in a mantilla of Mosul[138] silk, broidered with gold and bordered with brocade; her walking shoes were also purfled with gold and her hair floated in long plaits. She raised her face veil[139] and, showing two black eyes fringed with jetty lashes, whose glances were soft and languishing and whose perfect beauty was ever blandishing, she accosted the Porter and said in the suavest tones and choicest language, "Take up thy crate and follow me." The Porter was so dazzled he could hardly believe that he heard her aright, but he shouldered his basket in hot haste saying in himself, "O day of good luck! O day of Allah's grace!" and walked after her till she stopped at the door of a house. There she rapped, and presently came out to her an old man, a Nazarene, to whom she gave a gold piece, receiving from him in return what she required of strained wine clear as olive oil; and she set it safely in the hamper, saying "Lift and follow." Quoth the Porter, "This, by Allah, is indeed an auspicious day, a day propitious for the granting of all a man wisheth." He again hoisted up the crate and followed her; till she stopped at a fruiterer's shop and bought from him Shami[140] apples and Osmani quinces and Omani[141] peaches, and cucumbers of Nile growth, and Egyptian limes and Sultani oranges and citrons; besides Aleppine jasmine, scented myrtle berries, Damascene nenuphars, flower of privet[142] and camomile, blood red anemones, violets, and pomegranate bloom, eglantine and narcissus, and set the whole in the Porter's crate, saying, "Up with it." So he lifted and followed her till she stopped at a butcher's booth and said, "Cut me off ten pounds of mutton." She paid him his price and he wrapped it in a banana leaf, whereupon she laid it in the crate and said "Hoist, O Porter." He hoisted accordingly, and followed her as she walked on till she stopped at a grocer's, where she bought dry fruits and pistachio kernels, Tihamah raisins, shelled almonds and all wanted for dessert, and said to the Porter, "Lift and follow me." So he up with his hamper and after her till she stayed at the confectioner's, and she bought an earthen platter, and piled it with all kinds of sweetmeats in his shop, open worked tarts and fritters scented with musk and "soap cakes," and lemon loaves and melon preserves,[143] and "Zaynab's combs," and "ladies' fingers," and "Kazi's tit-bits" and goodies of every description; and placed the platter in the Porter's crate. Thereupon quoth he (being a merry man), "Thou shouldest have told me, and I would have brought with me a pony or a she camel to carry all this market stuff." She smiled and gave him a little cuff on the nape saying, "Step out and exceed not in words for (Allah willing!) thy wage will not be wanting." Then she stopped at a perfumer's and took from him ten sorts of waters, rose scented with musk, grange Lower, waterlily, willow flower, violet and five others; and she also bought two loaves of sugar, a bottle for perfume spraying, a lump of male in cense, aloe wood, ambergris and musk, with candles of Alex' andria wax; and she put the whole into the basket, saying, "Up with thy crate and after me." He did so and followed until she stood before the greengrocer's, of whom she bought pickled safflower and olives, in brine and in oil; with tarragon and cream cheese and hard Syrian cheese; and she stowed them away in the crate saying to the Porter, "Take up thy basket and follow me." He did so and went after her till she came to a fair mansion fronted by a spacious court, a tall, fine place to which columns gave strength and grace: and the gate thereof had two leaves of ebony inlaid with plates of red gold. The lady stopped at the door and, turning her face veil sideways, knocked softly with her knuckles whilst the Porter stood behind her, thinking of naught save her beauty and loveliness. Presently the door swung back and both leaves were opened, whereupon he looked to see who had opened it; and behold, it was a lady of tall figure, some five feet high; a model of beauty and loveliness, brilliance and symmetry and perfect grace. Her forehead was flower white; her cheeks like the anemone ruddy bright; her eyes were those of the wild heifer or the gazelle, with eyebrows like the crescent moon which ends Sha'aban and begins Ramazan;[144] her mouth was the ring of Sulayman,[145] her lips coral red, and her teeth like a line of strung pearls or of camomile petals. Her throat recalled the antelope's, and her breasts, like two pomegranates of even size, stood at bay as it were,[146] her body rose and fell in waves below her dress like the rolls of a piece of brocade, and her navel[147] would hold an ounce of benzoin ointment. In fine she was like her of whom the poet said: —

On Sun and Moon of palace cast thy sight * Enjoy her flower like face, her fragrant light:
Thine eyes shall never see in hair so black * Beauty encase a brow so purely white:
The ruddy rosy cheek proclaims her claim * Though fail her name whose beauties we indite:
As sways her gait I smile at hips so big * And weep to see the waist they bear so slight.

When the Porter looked upon her his wits were waylaid, and his senses were stormed so that his crate went nigh to fall from his head, and he said to himself, "Never have I in my life seen a day more blessed than this day!" Then quoth the lady portress to the lady cateress, "Come in from the gate and relieve this poor man of his load." So the provisioner went in followed by the portress and the Porter and went on till they reached a spacious ground floor hall,[148] built with admirable skill and beautified with all manner colours and carvings; with upper balconies and groined arches and galleries and cupboards and recesses whose curtains hung before them. In the midst stood a great basin full of water surrounding a fine fountain, and at the upper end on the raised dais was a couch of juniper wood set with gems and pearls, with a canopy like mosquito curtains of red satin silk looped up with pearls as big as filberts and bigger. Thereupon sat a lady bright of blee, with brow beaming brilliancy, the dream of philosophy, whose eyes were fraught with Babel's gramarye[149] and her eye brows were arched as for archery; her breath breathed ambergris and perfumery and her lips were sugar to taste and carnelian to see. Her stature was straight as the letter I[150] and her face shamed the noon sun's radiancy; and she was even as a galaxy, or a dome with golden marquetry or a bride displayed in choicest finery or a noble maid of Araby.[151] Right well of her sang the bard when he said: —

Her smiles twin rows of pearls display * Chamomile-buds or rimey spray
Her tresses stray as night let down * And shames her light the dawn o' day.

[152] The third lady rising from the couch stepped forward with grace ful swaying gait till she reached the middle of the saloon, when she said to her sisters, "Why stand ye here? take it down from this poor man's head!" Then the cateress went and stood before him, and the portress behind him while the third helped them, and they lifted the load from the Porter's head; and, emptying it of all that was therein, set everything in its place. Lastly they gave him two gold pieces, saying, "Wend thy ways, O Porter." But he went not, for he stood looking at the ladies and admiring what uncommon beauty was theirs, and their pleasant manners and kindly dispositions (never had he seen goodlier); and he gazed wistfully at that good store of wines and sweet scented flowers and fruits and other matters. Also he marvelled with exceeding marvel, especially to see no man in the place and delayed his going; whereupon quoth the eldest lady, "What aileth thee that goest not; haply thy wage be too little?" And, turning to her sister the cateress, she said, "Give him another diner!" But the Porter answered, "By Allah, my lady, it is not for the wage; my hire is never more than two dirhams; but in very sooth my heart and my soul are taken up with you and your condition. I wonder to see you single with ne'er a man about you and not a soul to bear you company; and well you wot that the minaret toppleth o'er unless it stand upon four, and you want this same fourth; and women's pleasure without man is short of measure, even as the poet said: —

Seest not we want for joy four things all told * The harp and lute, the flute and flageolet;
And be they companied with scents four fold * Rose, myrtle, anemone and violet
Nor please all eight an four thou wouldst withold * Good wine and youth and gold and pretty pet.

You be there and want a fourth who shall be a person of good sense and prudence; smart witted, and one apt to keep careful counsel." His words pleased and amused them much; and they laughed at him and said, "And who is to assure us of that? We are maidens and we fear to entrust our secret where it may not be kept, for we have read in a certain chronicle the lines of one Ibn al-Sumam:-

Hold fast thy secret and to none unfold * Lost is a secret when
that secret's told
An fail thy breast thy secret to conceal * How canst thou hope
another's breast shall hold?

And Abu Nowás[153] said well on the same subject: —

Who trusteth secret to another's hand * Upon his brow deserveth burn of brand!"

When the Porter heard their words he rejoined, "By your lives! I am a man of sense and a discreet, who hath read books and perused chronicles; I reveal the fair and conceal the foul and I act as the poet adviseth: —

None but the good a secret keep * And good men keep it
unrevealed:
It is to me a well shut house * With keyless locks and door
ensealed"[154]

When the maidens heard his verse and its poetical application addressed to them they said, "Thou knowest that we have laid out all our monies on this place. Now say, hast thou aught to offer us in return for entertainment? For surely we will not suf fer thee to sit in our company and be our cup companion, and gaze upon our faces so fair and so rare without paying a round sum.[155] Wottest thou not the saying: —

Sans hope of gain
Love's not worth a grain?"

Whereto the lady portress added, "If thou bring anything thou art a something; if no thing, be off with thee, thou art a nothing;" but the procuratrix interposed, saying, “Nay, O my sisters, leave teasing him for by Allah he hath not failed us this day, and had he been other he never had kept patience with me, so whatever be his shot and scot I will take it upon myself.” The Porter, over joyed, kissed the ground before her and thanked her saying, “By Allah, these monies are the first fruits this day hath given me.” Hearing this they said, “Sit thee down and welcome to thee,” and the eldest lady added, “By Allah, we may not suffer thee to join us save on one condition, and this it is, that no questions be asked as to what concerneth thee not, and frowardness shall be soundly flogged.” Answered the Porter, “I agree to this, O my lady, on my head and my eyes be it! Lookye, I am dumb, I have no tongue. Then arose the provisioneress and tightening her girdle set the table by the fountain and put the flowers and sweet herbs in their jars, and strained the wine and ranged the flasks in row and made ready every requisite. Then sat she down, she and her sisters, placing amidst them the Porter who kept deeming himself in a dream; and she took up the wine flagon, and poured out the first cup and drank it off, and likewise a second and a third.[156] After this she filled a fourth cup which she handed to one of her sisters; and, lastly, she crowned a goblet and passed it to the Porter, saying: —

“Drink the dear draught, drink free and fain * What healeth every
grief and pain.”

He took the cup in his hand and, louting low, returned his best thanks and improvised: —

Drain not the bowl save with a trusty friend * A man of worth
whose good old
For wine, like wind, sucks sweetness from the sweet * And stinks
when over stench it haply blow:”

Adding: —

Drain not the bowl; save from dear hand like thine * The cup
recall thy gifts; thou, gifts of wine.”

After repeating this couplet he kissed their hands and drank and was drunk and sat swaying from side to side and pursued: —

“All drinks wherein is blood the Law unclean * Doth hold save
one, the blood shed of the vine:
Fill! fill! take all my wealth bequeathed or won * Thou fawn! a
willing ransom for those eyne.”

Then the cateress crowned a cup and gave it to the portress, who took it from her hand and thanked her and drank. Thereupon she poured again and passed to the eldest lady who sat on the couch, and filled yet another and handed it to the Porter. He kissed the ground before them; and, after drinking and thanking them, he again began to recite :

“Here! Here! by Allah, here! * Cups of the sweet, the dear’
Fill me a brimming bowl * The Fount o’ Life I speer

Then the Porter stood up before the mistress of the house and said, “O lady, I am thy slave, thy Mameluke, thy white thrall, a, thy very bondsman;” and he began reciting: —

“A slave of slaves there standeth at thy door * Lauding thy
generous boons and gifts galore
Beauty! may he come in awhile to ‘joy * Thy charms? for Love
and I part nevermore!”

She said to him, “Drink; and health and happiness attend thy drink.” So he took the cup and kissed her hand and recited these lines in sing song:

“I gave her brave old wine that like her cheeks * Blushed red or
flame from furnace flaring up:
She bussed the brim and said with many a smile * How durst thou
deal folk’s cheek for folk to sup?
“Drink!” (said I) “these are tears of mine whose tinct * Is heart
blood sighs have boiled in the cup.”

She answered him in the following couplet: —

“An tears of blood for me, friend, thou hast shed * Suffer me sup them, by thy head and eyes!”

Then the lady took the cup, and drank it off to her sisters’ health, and they ceased not drinking (the Porter being in the midst of them), and dancing and laughing and reciting verses and singing ballads and ritornellos.

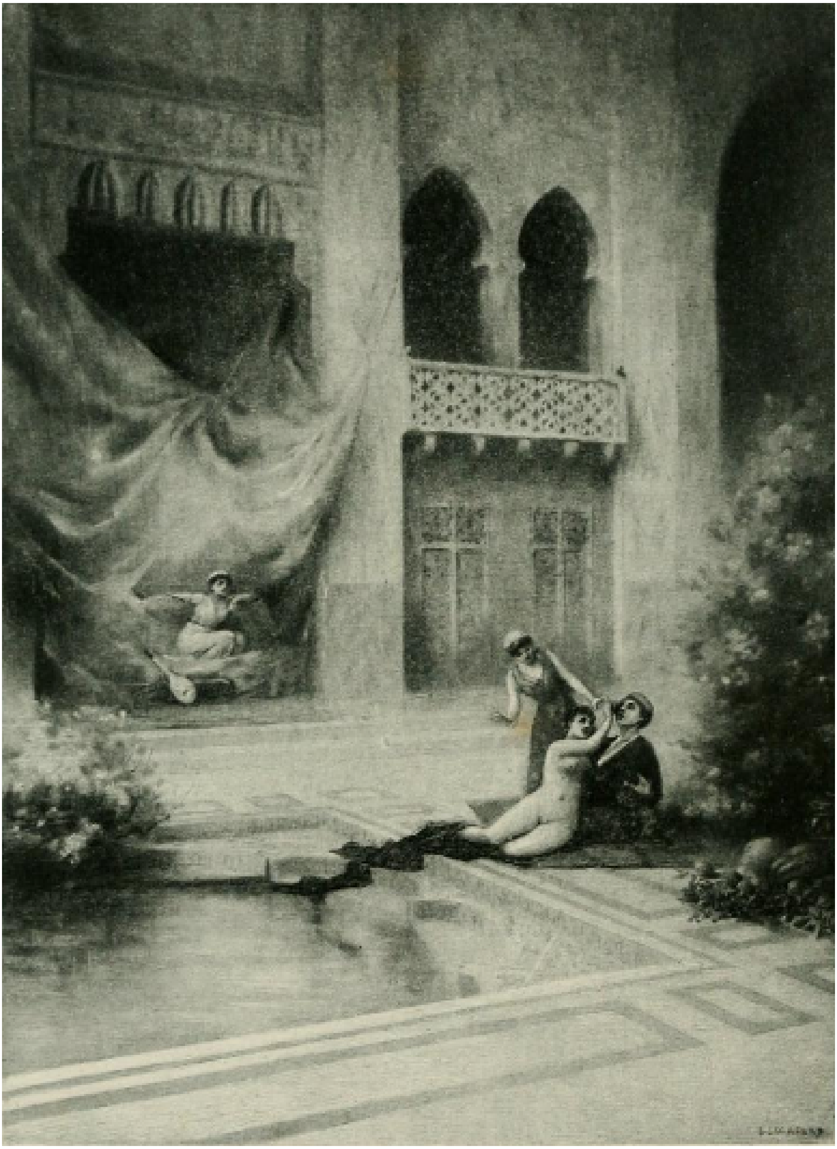

All this time the Porter was carrying on with them, kissing, toying, biting, handling, groping, fingering; whilst one thrust a dainty morsel in his mouth, and another slapped him; and this cuffed his cheeks, and that threw sweet flowers at him; and he was in the very paradise of pleasure, as though he were sitting in the seventh sphere among the Houris[157] of Heaven. They ceased not doing after this fashion until the wine played tucks in their heads and worsted their wits; and, when the drink got the better of them, the portress stood up and doffed her clothes till she was mother naked. However, she let down her hair about her body by way of shift, and throwing herself into the basin disported herself and dived like a duck and swam up and down, and took water in her mouth, and spurted it all over the Porter, and washed her limbs, and between her breasts, and inside her thighs and all around her navel. Then she came up out of the cistern and throwing herself on the Porter's lap said, "O my lord, O my love, what callest thou this article?" pointing to her slit, her solution of continuity. "I call that thy cleft," quoth the Porter, and she rejoined, Wah! wah, art thou not ashamed to use such a word?" and she caught him by the collar and soundly cuffed him. Said he again, Thy womb, thy vulva;" and she struck him a second slap crying, "O fie, O fie, this is another ugly word; is here no shame in thee?" Quoth he, "Thy coynte;" and she cried, O thou! art wholly destitute of modesty?" and thumped and bashed him. Then cried the Porter, "Thy clitoris,"[158] whereat the eldest lady came down upon him with a yet sorer beating, and said, "No;" and he said, " 'Tis so," and the Porter went on calling the same commodity by sundry other names, but whatever he said they beat him more and more till his neck ached and swelled with the blows he had gotten; and on this wise they made him a butt and a laughing stock. At last he turned upon them asking, And what do you women call this article?" Whereto the damsel made answer, "The basil of the bridges."[159] Cried the Porter, "Thank Allah for my safety: aid me and be thou propitious, O basil of the bridges!" They passed round the cup and tossed off the bowl again, when the second lady stood up; and, stripping off all her clothes, cast herself into the cistern and did as the first had done; then she came out of the water and throwing her naked form on the Porter's lap pointed to her machine and said, "O light of mine eyes, do tell me what is the name of this concern?" He replied as before, "Thy slit;" and she rejoined, "Hath such term no shame for thee?" and cuffed him and buffeted him till the saloon rang with the blows. Then quoth she, "O fie! O fie! how canst thou say this without blushing?" He suggested, "The basil of the bridges;" but she would not have it and she said, "No! no!" and stuck him and slapped him on the back of the neck. Then he began calling out all the names he knew, "Thy slit, thy womb, thy coynte, thy clitoris;" and the girls kept on saying, "No! no!" So he said, "I stick to the basil of the bridges;" and all the three laughed till they fell on their backs and laid slaps on his neck and said, "No! no! that's not its proper name." Thereupon he cried, "O my sisters, what is its name?" and they replied, "What sayest thou to the husked sesame seed?" Then the cateress donned her clothes and they fell again to carousing, but the Porter kept moaning, "Oh! and Oh!" for his neck and shoulders, and the cup passed merrily round and round again for a full hour. After that time the eldest and handsomest lady stood up and stripped off her garments, whereupon the Porter took his neck in hand, and rubbed and shampoo'd it, saying, "My neck and shoulders are on the way of Allah!"[160] Then she threw herself into the basin, and swam and dived, sported and washed; and the Porter looked at her naked figure as though she had been a slice of the moon[161] and at her face with the sheen of Luna when at full, or like the dawn when it brighteneth, and he noted her noble stature and shape, and those glorious forms that quivered as she went; for she was naked as the Lord made her. Then he cried "Alack! Alack!"and began to address her, versifying in these couplets: —

"If I liken thy shape to the bough when green * My likeness errs
    and I sore mistake it;
For the bough is fairest when clad the most * And thou art
    fairest when mother naked."

When the lady heard his verses she came up out of the basin and, seating herself upon his lap and knees, pointed to her genitory and said, "O my lordling, what be the name of this?" Quoth he, "The basil of the bridges;" but she said, "Bah, bah!" Quoth he, "The husked sesame;" quoth she, "Pooh, pooh!" Then said he, "Thy womb;" and she cried, "Fie, Fie! art thou not ashamed of thyself?" and cuffed him on the nape of the neck. And whatever name he gave declaring " 'Tis so," she beat him and cried "No! no!" till at last he said, "O my sisters, and what is its name?" She replied, "It is entitled the Khan[162] of Abu Mansur;" whereupon the Porter replied, "Ha! ha! O Allah be praised for safe deliverance! O Khan of Abu Mansur!" Then she came forth and dressed and the cup went round a full hour. At last the Porter rose up, and stripping off all his clothes, jumped into the tank and swam about and washed under his bearded chin and armpits, even as they had done. Then he came out and threw himself into the first lady's lap and rested his arms upon the lap of the portress, and reposed his legs in the lap of the cateress and pointed to his prickle[163] and said, "O my mistresses, what is the name of this article?" All laughed at his words till they fell on their backs, and one said, "Thy pintle!" But he replied, "No!" and gave each one of them a bite by way of forfeit. Then said they, "Thy pizzle!" but he cried "No," and gave each of them a hug; And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Tenth Night,

Quoth her sister Dunyazad, "Finish for us thy story;" and she answered, "With joy and goodly greet" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the damsels stinted not saying to the Porter "Thy prickle, thy pintle, thy pizzle," and he ceased not kissing and biting and hugging until his heart was satisfied, and they laughed on till they could no more. At last one said, "O our brother, what, then, is it called?" Quoth he, "Know ye not?" Quoth they, "No!" "Its veritable name," said he, "is mule Burst all, which browseth on the basil of the bridges, and muncheth the husked sesame, and nighteth in the Khan of Abu Mansur." Then laughed they till they fell on their backs, and returned to their carousel, and ceased not to be after this fashion till night began to fall. Thereupon said they to the Porter, ''Bismillah,[164] O our master, up and on with those sorry old shoes of thine and turn thy face and show us the breadth of thy shoulders!" Said he, "By Allah, to part with my soul would be easier for me than departing from you: come let us join night to day, and tomorrow morning we will each wend our own way." "My life on you," said the procuratrix, "suffer him to tarry with us, that we may laugh at him: we may live out our lives and never meet with his like, for surely he is a right merry rogue and a witty."[165] So they said, "Thou must not remain with us this night save on condition that thou submit to our commands, and that whatso thou seest, thou ask no questions there anent, nor enquire of its cause." "All right," rejoined he, and they said, "Go read the writing over the door." So he rose and went to the entrance and there found written in letters of gold wash; WHOSO SPEAKETH OF WHAT CONCERNETH HIM NOT, SHALL HEAR WHAT PLEASETH HIM NOT! [166] The Porter said, Be ye witnesses against me that I will not speak on whatso concerneth me not." Then the cateress arose, and set food before them and they ate; after which they changed their drinking place for an other, and she lighted the lamps and candles and burned amber gris and aloes wood, and set on fresh fruit and the wine service, when they fell to carousing and talking of their lovers. And they ceased not to eat and drink and chat, nibbling dry fruits and laughing and playing tricks for the space of a full hour when lo! a knock was heard at the gate. The knocking in no wise dis turbed the seance, but one of them rose and went to see what it was and presently returned, saying, "Truly our pleasure for this night is to be perfect." "How is that?" asked they; and she answered, "At the gate be three Persian Kalandars[167] with their beards and heads and eyebrows shaven; and all three blind of the left eye — which is surely a strange chance. They are foreigners from Roum-land with the mark of travel plain upon them; they have just entered Baghdad, this being their first visit to our city; and the cause of their knocking at our door is simply because they cannot find a lodging. Indeed one of them said to me: — Haply the owner of this mansion will let us have the key of his stable or some old out house wherein we may pass this night; for evening had surprised them and, being strangers in the land, they knew none who would give them shelter. And, O my sisters, each of them is a figure o' fun after his own fashion; and if we let them in we shall have matter to make sport of." She gave not over persuading them till they said to her, "Let them in, and make thou the usual condition with them that they speak not of what concerneth them not, lest they hear what pleaseth them not." So she rejoiced and going to the door presently returned with the three monoculars whose beards and mustachios were clean shaven.[168] They salam'd and stood afar off by way of respect; but the three ladies rose up to them and welcomed them and wished them joy of their safe arrival and made them sit down. The Kalandars looked at the room and saw that it was a pleasant place, clean swept and garnished with cowers; and the lamps were burning and the smoke of perfumes was spireing in air; and beside the dessert and fruits and wine, there were three fair girls who might be maidens; so they exclaimed with one voice, "By Allah, 'tis good!" Then they turned to the Porter and saw that he was a merry faced wight, albeit he was by no means sober and was sore after his slappings. So they thought that he was one of themselves and said, "A mendicant like us! whether Arab or foreigner."[169] But when the Porter heard these words, he rose up, and fixing his eyes fiercely upon them, said, "Sit ye here without exceeding in talk! Have you not read what is writ over the door? surely it befitteth not fellows who come to us like paupers to wag your tongues at us." "We crave thy pardon, O Fakír,"[170] rejoined they, "and our heads are between thy hands." The ladies laughed consumedly at the squabble; and, making peace between the Kalandars and the Porter, seated the new guests before meat and they ate. Then they sat together, and the portress served them with drink; and, as the cup went round merrily, quoth the Porter to the askers, "And you, O brothers mine, have ye no story or rare adventure to amuse us withal?" Now the warmth of wine having mounted to their heads they called for musical instruments; and the portress brought them a tambourine of Mosul, and a lute of Irák, and a Persian harp; and each mendicant took one and tuned it; this the tambourine and those the lute and the harp, and struck up a merry tune while the ladies sang so lustily that there was a great noise.[171] And whilst they were carrying on, behold, some one knocked at the gate, and the portress went to see what was the matter there. Now the cause of that knocking, O King (quoth Shahrazad) was this, the Caliph, Harun al-Rashid, had gone forth from the palace, as was his wont now and then, to solace himself in the city that night, and to see and hear what new thing was stirring; he was in merchant's gear, and he was attended by Ja'afar, his Wazir, and by Masrur his Sworder of Vengeance.[172] As they walked about the city, their way led them towards the house of the three ladies; where they heard the loud noise of musical instruments and singing and merriment; so quoth the Caliph to Ja'afar, "I long to enter this house and hear those songs and see who sing them." Quoth Ja'afar, "O Prince of the Faithful; these folk are surely drunken with wine, and I fear some mischief betide us if we get amongst them." "There is no help but that I go in there," replied the Caliph, "and I desire thee to contrive some pretext for our appearing among them." Ja'afar replied, "I hear and I obey;"[173] and knocked at the door, whereupon the portress came out and opened. Then Ja'afar came forward and kissing the ground before her said, "O my lady, we be merchants from Tiberias town: we arrived at Baghdad ten days ago; and, alighting at the merchants' caravanserai, we sold all our merchandise. Now a certain trader invited us to an entertainment this night; so we went to his house and he set food before us and we ate: then we sat at wine and wassail with him for an hour or so when he gave us leave to depart; and we went out from him in the shadow of the night and, being strangers, we could not find our way back to our Khan. So haply of your kindness and courtesy you will suffer us to tarry with you this night, and Heaven will reward you!"[174] The portress looked upon them and seeing them dressed like merchants and men of grave looks and solid, she returned to her sisters and repeated to them Ja'afar's story; and they took compassion upon the strangers and said to her, "Let them enter." She opened the door to them, when said they to her, "Have we thy leave to come in?" "Come in," quoth she; and the Caliph entered followed by Ja'afar and Masrur; and when the girls saw them they stood up to them in respect and made them sit down and looked to their wants, saying, "Welcome, and well come and good cheer to the guests, but with one condition!" "What is that?" asked they, and one of the ladies answered, "Speak not of what concerneth you not, lest ye hear what pleaseth you not." "Even so," said they; and sat down to their wine and drank deep. Presently the Caliph looked on the three Kalandars and, seeing them each and every blind of the left eye, wondered at the sight; then he gazed upon the girls and he was startled and he marvelled with exceeding marvel at their beauty and loveliness. They continued to carouse and to converse and said to the Caliph, "Drink!" but he replied, "I am vowed to Pilgrimage;"[175] and drew back from the wine. Thereupon the portress rose and spreading before him a table cloth worked with gold, set thereon a porcelain bowl into which she poured willow flower water with a lump of snow and a spoonful of sugar candy. The Caliph thanked her and said in himself,”By Allah, I will recompense her to morrow for the kind deed she hath done.” The others again addressed themselves to conversing and carousing; and, when the wine gat the better of them, the eldest lady who ruled the house rose and making obeisance to them took the cateress by the hand, and said, “Rise, O my sister and let us do what is our devoir.” Both answered “Even so!” Then the portress stood up and proceeded to remove the table service and the remnants of the banquet; and renewed the pastiles and cleared the middle of the saloon. Then she made the Kalandars sit upon a sofa at the side of the estrade, and seated the Caliph and Ja’afar and Masrur on the other side of the saloon; after which she called the Porter, and said, “How scanty is thy courtesy! now thou art no stranger; nay, thou art one of the household.” So he stood up and, tightening his waist cloth, asked, “What would ye I do?” and she answered, “Stand in thy place.” Then the procuratrix rose and set in the midst of the saloon a low chair and, opening a closet, cried to the Porter, “Come help me.” So he went to help her and saw two black bitches with chains round their necks; and she said to him, “Take hold of them;” and he took them and led them into the middle of the saloon. Then the lady of the house arose and tucked up her sleeves above her wrists and, seizing a scourge, said to the Porter, “Bring forward one of the bitches.” He brought her forward, dragging her by the chain, while the bitch wept, and shook her head at the lady who, however, came down upon her with blows on the sconce; and the bitch howled and the lady ceased not beating her till her forearm failed her. Then, casting the scourge from her hand, she pressed the bitch to her bosom and, wiping away her tears with her hands, kissed her head. Then she said to the Porter, “Take her away and bring the second;” and, when he brought her, she did with her as she had done with the first. Now the heart of the Caliph, was touched at these cruel doings; his chest straitened and he lost all patience in his desire to know why the two bitches were so beaten. He threw a wink at Ja’afar wishing him to ask, but; the Minister turning towards him said by signs, “Be silent!” Then quoth the portress to the mistress of the house, “O my lady, arise and go to thy place that I in turn may do my devoir.”[176] She answered, “Even so”; and, taking her seat upon the couch of juniper wood, pargetted with gold and silver, said to the portress and cateress, “Now do ye what ye have to do.” Thereupon the portress sat upon a low seat by the couch side; but the procuretrix, entering a closet, brought out of it a bag of satin with green fringes and two tassels of gold. She stood up before the lady of the house and shaking the bag drew out from it a lute which she tuned by tightening its pegs; and when it was in perfect order, she began to sing these quatrains: —

“Ye are the wish, the aim of me *And when, O Love, thy sight I
  see[177]
The heavenly mansion openeth;[178] * But Hell I see when
  lost thy sight.
From thee comes madness; nor the less * Comes highest joy,
  comes ecstasy:
Nor in my love for thee I fear * Or shame and blame, or hate and
  spite.
When Love was throned within my heart * I rent the veil of
  modesty;
And stints not Love to rend that veil * Garring disgrace on grace
  to alight;
The robe of sickness then I donned * But rent to rags was
  secrecy:
Wherefore my love and longing heart * Proclaim your high
  supremest might;
The tear drop railing adown my cheek * Telleth my tale of
  ignomy:
And all the hid was seen by all * And all my riddle ree’d aright.

Heal then my malady, for thou * Art malady and remedy!
But she whose cure is in thy hand * Shall ne’er be free of bane
  and blight;
Burn me those eyne that radiance rain * Slay me the swords of
  phantasy;
How many hath the sword of Love * Laid low, their high degree

despite?
Yet will I never cease to pine * Nor to oblivion will I flee.
Love is my health, my faith, my joy * Public and private, wrong or right.
O happy eyes that sight thy charms * That gaze upon thee at their gree!
Yea, of my purest wish and will * The slave of Love I'll aye be hight."

When the damsel heard this elegy in quatrains she cried out "Alas! Alas!" and rent her raiment, and fell to the ground fainting; and the Caliph saw scars of the palm rod[179] on her back and welts of the whip; and marvelled with exceeding wonder. Then the portress arose and sprinkled water on her and brought her a fresh and very fine dress and put it on her. But when the company beheld these doings their minds were troubled, for they had no inkling of the case nor knew the story thereof; so the Caliph said to Ja'afar, "Didst thou not see the scars upon the damsel's body? I cannot keep silence or be at rest till I learn the truth of her condition and the story of this other maiden and the secret of the two black bitches." But Ja'afar answered, "O our lord, they made it a condition with us that we speak not of what concerneth us not, lest we come to hear what pleaseth us not." Then said the portress "By Allah, O my sister, come to me and complete this service for me." Replied the procuratrix, "With joy and goodly gree;" so she took the lute; and leaned it against her breasts and swept the strings with her finger tips, and began singing: —

"Give back mine eyes their sleep long ravished * And say me whither be my reason fled:
I learnt that lending to thy love a place * Sleep to mine eyelids mortal foe was made.
They said, "We held thee righteous, who waylaid * Thy soul?" "Go ask his glorious eyes," I said.
I pardon all my blood he pleased to spill * Owning his troubles drove him blood to shed.
On my mind's mirror sun like sheen he cast * Whose keen

reflection fire in vitals bred
Waters of Life let Allah waste at will * Suffice my wage those
lips of dewy red:
An thou address my love thou'lt find a cause * For plaint and
tears or ruth or lustihed.
In water pure his form shall greet your eyne * When fails the
bowl nor need ye drink of wine.[180] "

Then she quoted from the same ode: —

"I drank, but the draught of his glance, not wine, * And his
swaying gait swayed to sleep these eyne:
'Twas not grape juice grips me but grasp of Past * 'Twas not bowl
o'erbowled me but gifts divine:
His coiling curl-lets my soul ennetted * And his cruel will all
my wits outwitted.[181] "

After a pause she resumed: —

"If we 'plain of absence what shall we say? * Or if pain afflict
us where wend our way?
An I hire a truchman[182] to tell my tale * The lover's plaint
is not told for pay:
If I put on patience, a lover's life * After loss of love will
not last a day:
Naught is left me now but regret, repine * And tears flooding
cheeks for ever and aye:
O thou who the babes of these eyes[183] hast fled * Thou art
homed in heart that shall never stray
Would heaven I wot hast thou kept our pact * Long as stream shall
flow, to have firmest fey?
Or hast forgotten the weeping slave * Whom groans afflict and
whom griefs waylay?
Ah, when severance ends and we side by side * Couch, I'll blame
thy rigours and chide thy pride!"

Now when the portress heard her second ode she shrieked aloud and said, “By Allah! ’tis right good!”; and laying hands on her garments tore them, as she did the first time, and fell to the ground fainting. Thereupon the procuratrix rose end brought her a second change of clothes after she had sprinkled water on her. She recovered and sat upright and said to her sister the cateress, “Onwards, and help me in my duty, for there remains but this one song.” So the provisioneress again brought out the lute and began to sing these verses: —

“How long shall last, how long this rigour rife of woe * May not
 suffice thee all these tears thou seest flow?
Our parting thus with purpose fell thou dost prolong * Is’t not
 enough to glad the heart of envious foe?
Were but this lying world once true to lover heart * He had not
 watched the weary night in tears of woe:
Oh pity me whom overwhelmed thy cruel will * My lord, my king,
 ’tis time some ruth to me thou show:
To whom reveal my wrongs, O thou who murdered me? * Sad,
 who of broken troth the pangs must undergo!
Increase wild love for thee and phrenzy hour by hour * And days
 of exile minute by so long, so slow;
O Moslems, claim vendetta[184] for this slave of Love *
 Whose sleep Love ever wastes, whose patience Love lays low:
Doth law of Love allow thee, O my wish! to lie * Lapt in
 another’s arms and unto me cry Go!?
Yet in thy presence, say, what joys shall I enjoy * When he I
 love but works my love to overthrow?”

When the portress heard the third song she cried aloud; and, laying hands on her garments, rent them down to the very skirt and fell to the ground fainting a third time, again showing the scars of the scourge. Then said the three Kalandars, “Would Heaven we had never entered this house, but had rather righted on the mounds and heaps outside the city! for verily our visit hath been troubled by sights which cut to the heart.” The Caliph turned to them and asked, “Why so?” and they made answer, “Our minds are sore troubled by this matter.” Quoth the Caliph, “Are ye not of the household?” and quoth they, “No; nor indeed did we ever set eyes on the place till within this hour.” Hereat the Caliph marvelled and rejoined, “This man who sitteth by you, would he not know the secret of the matter?” and so saying he winked and made signs at the Porter. So they questioned the man but he replied, “By the All might of Allah, in love all are alike![185] I am the growth of Baghdad, yet never in my born days did I darken these doors till to day and my companying with them was a curious matter.” “By Allah,” they rejoined, “we took thee for one of them and now we see thou art one like ourselves.” Then said the Caliph, “We be seven men, and they only three women without even a fourth to help them; so let us question them of their case; and, if they answer us not, fain we will be answered by force.” All of them agreed to this except Ja’afar who said,[186] “This is not my recking; let them be; for we are their guests and, as ye know, they made a compact and condition with us which we accepted and promised to keep: wherefore it is better that we be silent concerning this matter; and, as but little of the night remaineth, let each and every of us gang his own gait.” Then he winked at the Caliph and whispered to him, “There is but one hour of darkness left and I can bring them before thee to morrow, when thou canst freely question them all concerning their story.” But the Caliph raised his head haughtily and cried out at him in wrath, saying, “I have no patience left for my longing to hear of them: let the Kalandars question them forthright.” Quoth Ja’afar, “This is not my rede.” Then words ran high and talk answered talk, and they disputed as to who should first put the question, but at last all fixed upon the Porter. And as the jingle increased the house mistress could not but notice it and asked them, “O ye folk! on what matter are ye talking so loudly?” Then the Porter stood up respectfully before her and said, “O my lady, this company earnestly desire that thou acquaint them with the story of the two bitches and what maketh thee punish them so cruelly; and then thou fallest to weeping over them and kissing them; and lastly they want to hear the tale of thy sister and why she hath been bastinado’d with palm sticks like a man. These are the questions they charge me to put, and peace be with thee.”[187] Thereupon quoth she who was the lady of the house to the guests, “Is this true that he saith on your part?” and all replied, “Yes!” save

Ja'afar who kept silence. When she heard these words she cried, "By Allah, ye have wronged us, O our guests. with grievous wronging; for when you came before us we made compact and condition with you, that whoso should speak of what concerneth him not should hear what pleaseth him not. Sufficeth ye not that we took you into our house and fed you with our best food? But the fault is not so much yours as hers who let you in." Then she tucked up her sleeves from her wrists and struck the floor thrice with her hand crying, "Come ye quickly;" and lo! a closet door opened and out of it came seven negro slaves with drawn swords in hand to whom she said, "Pinion me those praters' elbows and bind them each to each." They did her bidding and asked her, "O veiled and virtuous! is it thy high command that we strike off their heads?"; but she answered, "Leave them awhile that I question them of their condition, before their necks feel the sword." "By Allah, O my lady!" cried the Porter, "slay me not for other's sin; all these men offended and deserve the penalty of crime save myself. Now by Allah, our night had been charming had we escaped the mortification of those monocular Kalandars whose entrance into a populous city would convert it into a howling wilderness." Then he repeated these verses :

"How fair is ruth the strong man deigns not smother! * And
fairest fair when shown to weakest brother:
By Love's own holy tie between us twain, * Let one not suffer for
the sin of other."

When the Porter ended his verse the lady laughed. And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When It was the Eleventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the lady, after laughing at the Porter despite her wrath, came up to the party and spake thus, "Tell me who ye be, for ye have but an hour of life; and were ye not men of rank and, perhaps, notables of your tribes, you had not been so froward and I had hastened your doom." Then said the Caliph, "Woe to thee, O Ja'afar, tell her who we are lest we be slain by mistake; and speak her fair be fore some horror befal us." "'Tis part of thy deserts,"replied he; whereupon the Caliph cried out at him saying, “There is a time for witty words and there is a time for serious work.” Then the lady accosted the three Kalandars and asked them, “Are ye brothers?”; when they answered, “No, by Allah, we be naught but Fakirs and foreigners.” Then quoth she to one among them, “Wast thou born blind of one eye?”; and quoth he, “No, by Allah, ’twas a marvellous matter and a wondrous mischance which caused my eye to be torn out, and mine is a tale which, if it were written upon the eye corners with needle gravers, were a warner to whoso would be warned.”[188] She questioned the second and third Kalandar; but all replied like the first, “By Allah, O our mistress, each one of us cometh from a different country, and we are all three the sons of Kings, sovereign Princes ruling over suzerains and capital cities.” Thereupon she turned towards them and said, “Let each and every of you tell me his tale in due order and explain the cause of his coming to our place; and if his story please us let him stroke his head[189] and wend his way.” The first to come forward was the Hammal, the Porter, who said, “O my lady, I am a man and a porter. This dame, the cateress, hired me to carry a load and took me first to the shop of a vintner, then to the booth of a butcher; thence to the stall of a fruiterer; thence to a grocer who also sold dry fruits; thence to a confectioner and a perfumer cum druggist and from him to this place where there happened to me with you what happened. Such is my story and peace be on us all!” At this the lady laughed and said, “Rub thy head and wend thy ways!”; but he cried, “By Allah, I will not stump it till I hear the stories of my companions.” Then came forward one of the Monoculars and began to tell her

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The First Kalandar’s Tale.

Know, O my lady, that the cause of my beard being shorn and my eye being out torn was as follows. My father was a King and he had a brother who was a King over another city; and it came to pass that I and my cousin, the son of my paternal uncle, were both born on one and the same day. And years and days rolled on; and, as we grew up, I used to visit my uncle every now and then and to spend a certain number of months with him. Now my cousin and I were sworn friends; for he ever entreated me with exceeding kindness; he killed for me the fattest sheep and strained the best of his wines, and we enjoyed long conversing and carousing. One day when the wine had gotten the better of us, the son of my uncle said to me, “O my cousin, I have a great service to ask of thee; and I desire that thou stay me not in whatso I desire to do!” And I replied, “With joy and goodly will.” Then he made me swear the most binding oaths and left me; but after a little while he returned leading a lady veiled and richly apparelled with ornaments worth a large sum of money. Presently he turned to me (the woman being still behind him) and said, “Take this lady with thee and go before me to such a burial ground” (describing it, so that I knew the place), “and enter with her into such a sepulchre[190] and there await my coming.” The oaths I swore to him made me keep silence and suffered me not to oppose him; so I led the woman to the cemetery and both I and she took our seats in the sepulchre; and hardly had we sat down when in came my uncle’s son, with a bowl of water, a bag of mortar and an adze somewhat like a hoe. He went straight to the tomb in the midst of the sepulchre and, breaking it open with the adze set the stones on one side; then he fell to digging into the earth of the tomb till he came upon a large iron plate, the size of a wicket door; and on raising it there appeared below it a staircase vaulted and winding. Then he turned to the lady and said to her, “Come now and take thy final choice!” She at once went down by the staircase and disappeared; then quoth he to me, “O son of my uncle, by way of completing thy kindness, when I shall have descended into this place, restore the trap door to where it was, and heap back the earth upon it as it lay before; and then of thy goodness mix this unslaked lime which is in the bag with this water which is in the bowl and, after building up the stones, plaster the outside so that none looking upon it shall say: — This is a new opening in an old tomb. For a whole year have I worked at this place whereof none knoweth but Allah, and this is the need I have of thee;" presently adding, "May Allah never bereave thy friends of thee nor make them desolate by thine absence, O son of my uncle, O my dear cousin!" And he went down the stairs and disappeared for ever. When he was lost to sight I replaced the iron plate and did all his bidding till the tomb became as it was before and I worked almost unconsciously for my head was heated with wine. Returning to the palace of my uncle, I was told that he had gone forth a-sporting and hunting; so I slept that night without seeing him; and, when the morning dawned, I remembered the scenes of the past evening and what happened between me and my cousin; I repented of having obeyed him when penitence was of no avail, I still thought, however, that it was a dream. So I fell to asking for the son of my uncle; but there was none to answer me concerning him; and I went out to the grave-yard and the sepulchres, and sought for the tomb under which he was, but could not find it; and I ceased not wandering about from sepulchre to sepulchre, and tomb to tomb, all without success, till night set in. So I returned to the city, yet I could neither eat nor drink; my thoughts being engrossed with my cousin, for that I knew not what was become of him; and I grieved with exceeding grief and passed another sorrowful night, watching until the morning. Then went I a second time to the cemetery, pondering over what the son of mine uncle had done; and, sorely repenting my hearkening to him, went round among all the tombs, but could not find the tomb I sought. I mourned over the past, and remained in my mourning seven days, seeking the place and ever missing the path. Then my torture of scruples[191] grew upon me till I well nigh went mad, and I found no way to dispel my grief save travel and return to my father. So I set out and journeyed homeward; but as I was entering my father's capital a crowd of rioters sprang upon me and pinioned me.[192] I wondered thereat with all wonderment, seeing that I was the son of the Sultan, and these men were my father's subjects and amongst them were some of my own slaves. A great fear fell upon me, and I said to my soul,[193] "Would heaven I knew what hath happened to my father!" I questioned those that bound me of the cause of their doing, but they returned me no answer. However, after a while one of them said to me (and he had been a hired servant of our house), "Fortune hath been false to thy father; his troops betrayed him and the Wazir who slew him now reigneth in his stead and we lay in wait to seize thee by the bidding of him." I was well nigh distraught and felt ready to faint on hearing of my father's death; when they carried me off and placed me in presence of the usurper. Now between me and him there was an olden grudge, the cause of which was this. I was fond of shooting with the stone bow,[194] and it befel one day as I was standing on the terrace roof of the palace, that a bird lighted on the top of the Wazir's house when he happened to be there. I shot at the bird and missed the mark; but I hit the Wazir's eye and knocked it out as fate and fortune decreed. Even so saith the poet: —

We tread the path where Fate hath led * The path Fate writ we
fain must tread:
And man in one land doomed to die * Death no where else shall do
him dead.

And on like wise saith another: —

Let Fortune have her wanton way * Take heart and all her words
obey:
Nor joy nor mourn at anything * For all things pass and no things
stay.

Now when I knocked out the Wazir's eye he could not say a single word, for that my father was King of the city; but he hated me everafter and dire was the grudge thus caused between us twain. So when I was set before him hand bound and pinioned, he straightway gave orders for me to be beheaded. I asked, "For what crime wilt thou put me to death?"; whereupon he answered, "What crime is greater than this?" pointing the while to the place where his eye had been Quoth I, "This I did by accident not of malice prepense;" and quoth he, "If thou didst it by accident, I will do the like by thee with intention.''[195] Then cried he, “Bring him forward,” and they brought me up to him, when he thrust his finger into my left eye and gouged it out; whereupon I became one eyed as ye see me. Then he bade bind me hand and foot, and put me into a chest and said to the sworder, “Take charge of this fellow, and go off with him to the waste lands about the city; then draw thy scymitar and slay him, and leave him to feed the beasts and birds.” So the headsman fared forth with me and when he was in the midst of the desert, he took me out of the chest (and I with both hands pinioned and both feet fettered) and was about to bandage my eyes before striking off my head. But I wept with exceeding weeping until I made him weep with me and, looking at him I began to recite these couplets: —

“I deemed you coat o’ mail that should withstand * The foeman’s
shafts, and you proved foeman’s brand
I hoped your aidance in mine every chance * Though fail my left
to aid my dexter hand:
Aloof you stand and hear the railer’s gibe * While rain their
shafts on me the giber-band:
But an ye will not guard me from my foes * Stand clear, and
succour neither these nor those!”

And I also quoted: —

“I deemed my brethren mail of strongest steel * And so they were —
from foes I to fend my dart!
I deemed their arrows surest of their aim; * And so they were —
when aiming at my heart!”

When the headsman heard my lines (he had been sworder to my sire and he owed me a debt of gratitude) he cried, “O my lord, what can I do, being but a slave under orders?” presently adding, “Fly for thy life and nevermore return to this land, or they will slay thee and slay me with thee, even as the poet said: —

Take thy life and fly whenas evils threat; * Let the ruined house
tell its owner’s fate:

New land for the old thou shalt seek and find * But to find new
life thou must not await.
Strange that men should sit in the stead of shame, * When Allah's
world is so wide and great!
And trust not other, in matters grave * Life itself must act for
a life beset:
Ne'er would prowl the lion with maned neck, * Did he reckon on
aid or of others reck."

Hardly believing in my escape, I kissed his hand and thought the loss of my eye a light matter in consideration of my escaping from being slain. I arrived at my uncle's capital; and, going in to him, told him of what had befallen my father and myself; whereat he wept with sore weeping and said, "Verily thou addest grief to my grief, and woe to my woe; for thy cousin hath been missing these many days; I wot not what hath happened to him, and none can give me news of him." And he wept till he fainted. I sorrowed and condoled with him; and he would have applied certain medicaments to my eye, but he saw that it was become as a walnut with the shell empty. Then said he, "O my son, better to lose eye and keep life!" After that I could no longer remain silent about my cousin, who was his only son and one dearly loved, so I told him all that had happened. He rejoiced with extreme joyance to hear news of his son and said, "Come now and show me the tomb;" but I replied, "By Allah, O my uncle, I know not its place, though I sought it carefully full many times, yet could not find the site." However, I and my uncle went to the grave yard and looked right and left, till at last I recognised the tomb and we both rejoiced with exceeding joy. We entered the sepulchre and loosened the earth about the grave; then, up raising the trap door, descended some fifty steps till we came to the foot of the staircase when lo! we were stopped by a blinding smoke. Thereupon said my uncle that saying whose sayer shall never come to shame, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might, save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" and we advanced till we suddenly came upon a saloon, whose floor was strewed with flour and grain and provisions and all manner necessaries; and in the midst of it stood a canopy sheltering a couch. Thereupon my uncle went up to the couch and inspecting it found his son and the lady who had gone down with him into the tomb, lying in each other's embrace; but the twain had become black as charred wood; it was as if they had been cast into a pit of fire. When my uncle saw this spectacle, he spat in his son's face and said, "Thou hast thy deserts, O thou hog![196] this is thy judgment in the transitory world, and yet remaineth the judgment in the world to come, a durer and a more enduring " — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Twelfth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Kalandar thus went on with his story before the lady and the Caliph and Ja'afar: — My uncle struck his son with his slipper[197] as he lay there a black heap of coal. I marvelled at his hardness of heart, and grieving for my cousin and the lady, said, "By Allah, O my uncle, calm thy wrath: dost thou not see that all my thoughts are occupied with this misfortune, and how sorrowful I am for what hath befallen thy son, and how horrible it is that naught of him remaineth but a black heap of charcoal? And is not that enough, but thou must smite him with thy slipper?" Answered he,"O son of my brother, this youth from his boyhood was madly in love with his own sister;[198] and often and often I forbade him from her, saying to myself: — They are but little ones. However, when they grew up sin befel between them; and, although I could hardly believe it, I confined him and chided him and threatened him with the severest threats; and the eunuchs and servants said to him: — Beware of so foul a thing which none before thee ever did, and which none after thee will ever do; and have a care lest thou be dishonoured and disgraced among the Kings of the day, even to the end of time. And I added: — Such a report as this will be spread abroad by caravans, and take heed not to give them cause to talk or I will assuredly curse thee and do thee to death. After that I lodged them apart and shut her up; but the accursed girl loved him with passionate love, for Satan had got the mastery of her as well as of him and made their foul sin seem fair in their sight. Now when my son saw that I separated them, he secretly built this souterrain and furnished it and transported to it victuals, even as thou seest; and, when I had gone out a-sporting, came here with his sister and hid from me. Then His righteous judgment fell upon the twain and consumed them with fire from Heaven; and verily the last judgment will deal them durer pains and more enduring!" Then he wept and I wept with him; and he looked at me and said, "Thou art my son in his stead." And I bethought me awhile of the world and of its chances, how the Wazir had slain my father and had taken his place and had put out my eye; and how my cousin had come to his death by the strangest chance: and I wept again and my uncle wept with me. Then we mounted the steps and let down the iron plate and heaped up the earth over it; and, after restoring the tomb to its former condition, we returned to the palace. But hardly had we sat down ere we heard the tomtoming of the kettle drum and tantara of trumpets and clash of cymbals; and the rattling of war men's lances; and the clamours of assailants and the clanking of bits and the neighing of steeds; while the world was canopied with dense dust and sand clouds raised by the horses' hoofs.[199] We were amazed at sight and sound, knowing not what could be the matter; so we asked and were told us that the Wazir who usurped my father's kingdom had marched his men; and that after levying his soldiery and taking a host of wild Arabs[200] into service, he had come down upon us with armies like the sands of the sea; their number none could tell and against them none could prevail. They attacked the city unawares; and the citizens, being powerless to oppose them, surrendered the place: my uncle was slain and I made for the suburbs saying to myself, "If thou fall into this villain's hands he will assuredly kill thee." On this wise all my troubles were renewed; and I pondered all that had betided my father and my uncle and I knew not what to do; for if the city people or my father's troops had recognised me they would have done their best to win favour by destroying me; and I could think of no way to escape save by shaving off my beard and my eyebrows. So I shore them off and, changing my fine clothes for a Kalandar's rags, I fared forth from my uncle's capital and made for this city; hoping that peradventure some one would assist me to the presence of the Prince of the Faithful,[201] and the Caliph who is the Viceregent of Allah upon earth. Thus have I come hither that I might tell him my tale and lay my case before him. I arrived here this very night, and was standing in doubt whither I should go, when suddenly I saw this second Kalandar; so I salam'd to him saying— "I am a stranger!" and he answered:— “I too am a stranger!” And as we were conversing behold, up came our companion, this third Kalandar, and saluted us saying:— “I am a stranger!” And we answered:— “We too be strangers!” Then we three walked on and together till darkness overtook us and Destiny crave us to your house. Such, then, is the cause of the shaving of my beard and mustachios and eyebrows; and the manner of my losing my right eye. They marvelled much at this tale and the Caliph said to Ja’afar, “By Allah, I have not seen nor have I heard the like of what hath happened to this Kalandar!” Quoth the lady of the house, “Rub thy head and wend thy ways;” but he replied, “I will not go, till I hear the history of the two others.” Thereupon the second Kalandar came forward; and, kissing the ground, began to tell

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The Second Kalandar's Tale.

Know, O my lady, that I was not born one eyed and mine is a strange story; an it were graven with needle graver on the eye corners, it were a warner to whoso would be warned. I am a King, son of a King, and was brought up like a Prince. I learned intoning the Koran according the seven schools;[202] and I read all manner books, and held disputations on their contents with the doctors and men of science; moreover I studied star lore and the fair sayings of poets and I exercised myself in all branches of learning until I surpassed the people of my time; my skill in calligraphy exceeded that of all the scribes; and my fame was bruited abroad over all climes and cities, and all the kings learned to know my name. Amongst others the King of Hind heard of me and sent to my father to invite me to his court, with offerings and presents and rarities such as befit royalties. So my father fitted out six ships for me and my people; and we put to sea and sailed for the space of a full month till we made the land. Then we brought out the horses that were with us in the ships; and, after loading the camels with our presents for the Prince, we set forth inland. But we had marched only a little way, when behold, a dust cloud up flew, and grew until it walled[203] the horizon from view. After an hour or so the veil lifted and discovered beneath it fifty horsemen, ravening lions to the sight, in steel armour dight. We observed them straightly and lo! they were cutters off of the highway, wild as wild Arabs. When they saw that we were only four and had with us but the ten camels carrying the presents, they dashed down upon us with lances at rest. We signed to them, with our fingers, as it were saying, "We be messengers of the great King of Hind, so harm us not!" but they answered on like wise, "We are not in his dominions to obey nor are we subject to his sway." Then they set upon us and slew some of my slaves and put the lave to flight; and I also fled after I had gotten a wound, a grievous hurt, whilst the Arabs were taken up with the money and the presents which were with us. I went forth unknowing whither I went, having become mean as I was mighty; and I fared on until I came to the crest of a mountain where I took shelter for the night in a cave. When day arose I set out again, nor ceased after this fashion till I arrived at a fair city and a well filled. Now it was the season when Winter was turning away with his rime and to greet the world with his flowers came Prime, and the young blooms were springing and the streams flowed ringing, and the birds were sweetly singing, as saith the poet concerning a certain city when describing it: —

A place secure from every thought of fear * Safety and peace for
ever lord it here:
Its beauties seem to beautify its sons * And as in Heaven its
happy folk appear.

I was glad of my arrival for I was wearied with the way, and yellow of face for weakness and want; but my plight was pitiable and I knew not whither to betake me. So I accosted a Tailor sitting in his little shop and saluted him; he returned my salam, and bade me kindly welcome and wished me well and entreated me gently and asked me of the cause of my strangerhood. I told him all my past from first to last; and he was concerned on my account and said, "O youth, disclose not thy secret to any: the King of this city is the greatest enemy thy father hath, and there is blood wit[204] between them and thou hast cause to fear for thy life." Then he set meat and drink before me; and I ate and drank and he with me; and we conversed freely till night fall, when he cleared me a place in a corner of his shop and brought me a carpet and a coverlet. I tarried with him three days; at the end of which time he said to me, "Knowest thou no calling whereby to win thy living, O my son?" "I am learned in the law," I replied, "and a doctor of doctrine; an adept in art and science, a mathematician and a notable penman." He rejoined, "Thy calling is of no account in our city, where not a soul under standeth science or even writing or aught save money making." Then said I, "By Allah, I know nothing but what I have mentioned;" and he answered, "Gird thy middle and take thee a hatchet and a cord, and go and hew wood in the wold for thy daily bread, till Allah send thee relief; and tell none who thou art lest they slay thee." Then he bought me an axe and a rope and gave me in charge to certain wood cutters; and with these guardians I went forth into the forest, where I cut fuel wood the whole of my day and came back in the evening bearing my bundle on my head. I sold it for half a diner, with part of which I bought provision and laid by the rest. In such work I spent a whole year and when this was ended I went out one day, as was my wont, into the wilderness; and, wandering away from my companions, I chanced on a thickly grown lowland[205] in which there was an abundance of wood. So I entered and I found the gnarled stump of a great tree and loosened the ground about it and shovelled away the earth. Presently my hatchet rang upon a copper ring; so I cleared away the soil and behold, the ring was attached to a wooden trap door. This I raised and there appeared beneath it a staircase. I descended the steps to the bottom and came to a door, which I opened and found myself in a noble hall strong of structure and beautifully built, where was a damsel like a pearl of great price, whose favour banished from my heart all grief and cark and care; and whose soft speech healed the soul in despair and captivated the wise and ware. Her figure measured five feet in height; her breasts were firm and upright; her cheek a very garden of delight; her colour lively bright; her face gleamed like dawn through curly tresses which gloomed like night, and above the snows of her bosom glittered teeth of a pearly white.[206] As the poet said of one like her: —

Slim waisted loveling jetty hair encrowned * A wand of willow on a sandy mound:

And as saith another. —

Four things that meet not, save they here unite * To shed my
heart blood and to rape my sprite:
Brilliantest forehead; tresses jetty bright; * Cheeks rosy red
and stature beauty dight.

When I looked upon her I prostrated myself before Him who had created her, for the beauty and loveliness He had shaped in her, and she looked at me and said, “Art thou man or Jinni?” “I am a man,” answered I, and she, “Now who brought thee to this place where I have abided five and twenty years without even yet seeing man in it?” Quoth I (and indeed I found her words wonder sweet, and my heart was melted to the core by them), “O my lady, my good fortune led me hither for the dispelling of my cark and care." Then I related to her all my mishap from first to last, and my case appeared to her exceeding grievous; so she wept and said, "I will tell thee my story in my turn. I am the daughter of the King Ifitamus, lord of the Islands of Abnus,[207] who married me to my cousin, the son of my paternal uncle; but on my wedding night an Ifrit named Jirjís[208] bin Rajmús, first cousin that is, mother's sister's son, of Iblís, the Foul Fiend, snatched me up and, flying away with me like a bird, set me down in this place, whither he conveyed all I needed of fine stuffs, raiment and jewels and furniture, and meat and drink and other else. Once in every ten days he comes here and lies a single night with me, and then wends his way, for he took me without the consent of his family; and he hath agreed with me that if ever I need him by night or by day, I have only to pass my hand over yonder two lines engraved upon the alcove, and he will appear to me before my fingers cease touching. Four days have now passed since he was here; and, as there remain six days before he come again, say me, wilt thou abide with me five days, and go hence the day before his coming?" I replied "Yes, and yes again! O rare, if all this be not a dream!" Hereat she was glad and, springing to her feet, seized my hand and carried me through an arched doorway to a Hammam bath, a fair hall and richly decorate. I doffed my clothes, and she doffed hers; then we bathed and she washed me; and when this was done we left the bath, and she seated me by her side upon a high divan, and brought me sherbet scented with musk. When we felt cool after the bath, she set food before me and we ate and fell to talking; but presently she said to me, "Lay thee down and take thy rest, for surely thou must be weary." So I thanked her, my lady, and lay down and slept soundly, forgetting all that had happened to me. When I awoke I found her rubbing and shampooing my feet;[209] so I again thanked her and blessed her and we sat for awhile talking. Said she, "By Allah, I was sad at heart, for that I have dwelt alone underground for these five and twenty years; and praise be to Allah, who hath sent me some one with whom I can converse!" Then she asked, "O youth, what sayest thou to wine?" and I answered, "Do as thou wilt." Where- upon she went to a cupboard and took out a sealed flask of right old wine and set off the table with flowers and scented herbs and began to sing these lines: —

“Had we known of thy coming we fain had dispread * The cores of
our hearts or the balls of our eyes;
Our cheeks as a carpet to greet thee had thrown * And our eyelids
had strown for thy feet to betread.”

Now when she finished her verse I thanked her, for indeed love of her had gotten hold of my heart and my grief and anguish were gone. We sat at converse and carousel till nightfall, and with her I spent the night — such night never spent I in all my life! On the morrow delight followed delight till midday, by which time I had drunken wine so freely that I had lost my wits, and stood up, staggering to the right and to the left, and said “Come, O my charmer, and I will carry thee up from this underground vault and deliver thee from the spell of thy Jinni.” She laughed and replied “Content thee and hold thy peace: of every ten days one is for the Ifrit and the other nine are thine.” Quoth I (and in good sooth drink had got the better of me), “This very instant will I break down the alcove whereon is graven the talisman and summon the Ifrit that I may slay him, for it is a practice of mine to slay Ifrits!” When she heard my words her colour waxed wan and she said, “By Allah, do not!” and she began repeating: —

“This is a thing wherein destruction lies * I rede thee shun it an thy wits be wise.”

And these also: —

“O thou who seekest severance, draw the rein * Of thy swift steed
nor seek o’ermuch t’ advance;
Ah stay! for treachery is the rule of life, * And sweets of
meeting end in severance.”

I heard her verse but paid no heed to her words, nay, I raised my foot and administered to the alcove a mighty kick. And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permisted say.

When it was the Thirteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the second

Kalandar thus continued his tale to the lady: — But when, O my mistress, I kicked that alcove with a mighty kick, behold, the air starkened and darkened and thundered and lightened; the earth trembled and quaked and the world became invisible. At once the fumes of wine left my head: I cried to her, “What is the matter?” and she replied, “The Ifrit is upon us! did I not warn thee of this? By Allah, thou hast brought ruin upon me; but fly for thy life and go up by the way thou camest down!” So I fled up the staircase; but, in the excess of my fear, I forgot sandals and hatchet. And when I had mounted two steps I turned to look for them, and lo! I saw the earth cleave asunder, and there arose from it an Ifrit, a monster of hideousness, who said to the damsel “What trouble and posher be this wherewith thou disturbest me? What mishap hath betided thee?” “No mishap hath befallen me” she answered, “save that my breast was straitened[210] and my heart heavy with sadness! so I drank a little wine to broaden it and to hearten myself; then I rose to obey a call of Nature, but the wine had gotten into my head and I fell against the alcove.” “Thou liest, like the whore thou art!” shrieked the Ifrit; and he looked around the hall right and left till he caught sight of my axe and sandals and said to her, “What be these but the belongings of some mortal who hath been in thy society?” She answered, “I never set eyes upon them till this moment: they must have been brought by thee hither cleaving to thy garments.” Quoth the Ifrit, “These words are absurd; thou harlot! thou strumpet!” Then he stripped her stark naked and, stretching her upon the floor, bound her hands and feet to four stakes, like one crucified;[211] and set about torturing and trying to make her confess. I could not bear to stand listening to her cries and groans; so I climbed the stair on the quake with fear; and when I reached the top I replaced the trap door and covered it with earth. Then repented I of what I had done with penitence exceeding; and thought of the lady and her beauty and loveliness, and the tortures she was suffering at the hands of the accursed Ifrit, after her quiet life of five and twenty years; and how all that had happened to her was for the cause of me. I bethought me of my father and his kingly estate and how I had become a woodcutter; and how, after my time had been awhile serene, the world had again waxed turbid and troubled to me. So I wept bitterly and repeated this couplet: —

What time Fate's tyranny shall most oppress thee * Perpend! one day shall joy thee, one distress thee!

Then I walked till I reached the home of my friend, the Tailor, whom I found most anxiously expecting me; indeed he was, as the saying goes, on coals of fire for my account. And when he saw me he said, "All night long my heart hath been heavy, fearing for thee from wild beasts or other mischances. Now praise be to Allah for thy safety!" I thanked him for his friendly solicitude and, retiring to my corner, sat pondering and musing on what had befallen me; and I blamed and chided myself for my meddlesome folly and my frowardness in kicking the alcove. I was calling myself to account when behold, my friend, the Tailor, came to me and said, "O youth, in the shop there is an old man, a Persian,[212] who seeketh thee: he hath thy hatchet and thy sandals which he had taken to the woodcutters,[213] saying, "I was going out at what time the Mu'azzin began the call to dawn prayer, when I chanced upon these things and know not whose they are; so direct me to their owner." The woodcutters recognised thy hatchet and directed him to thee: he is sitting in my shop, so fare forth to him and thank him and take thine axe and sandals." When I heard these words I turned yellow with fear and felt stunned as by a blow; and, before I could recover myself, lo! the floor of my private room clove asunder, and out of it rose the Persian who was the Ifrit. He had tortured the lady with exceeding tortures, natheless she would not confess to him aught; so he took the hatchet and sandals and said to her, "As surely as I am Jirjis of the seed of Iblis, I will bring thee back the owner of this and these!"[214] Then he went to the woodcutters with the presence aforesaid and, being directed to me, after waiting a while in the shop till the fact was confirmed, he suddenly snatched me up as a hawk snatcheth a mouse and dew high in air; but presently descended and plunged with me under the earth (I being aswoon the while), and lastly set me down in the subterranean palace wherein I had passed that blissful night. And there I saw the lady stripped to the skin, her limbs bound to four stakes and blood welling from her sides. At the sight my eyes ran over with tears; but the Ifrit covered her person and said, "O wanton, is not this man thy lover?" She looked upon me and replied, "I wot him not nor have I ever seen him before this hour!" Quoth the

Ifrit, “What! this torture and yet no confessing;” and quoth she,”I never saw this man in my born days, and it is not lawful in Allah’s sight to tell lies on him.” “If thou know him not,” said the Ifrit to her, “take this sword and strike off his head.’’[215] She hent the sword in hand and came close up to me; and I signalled to her with my eyebrows, my tears the while flowing adown my cheeks. She understood me and made answer, also by signs, “How couldest thou bring all this evil upon me?” and I rejoined after the same fashion, “This is the time for mercy and forgiveness.” And the mute tongue of my case[216] spake aloud saying: —

Mine eyes were dragomans for my tongue betted * And told full
clear the love I fain would hide:
When last we met and tears in torrents railed * For tongue struck
dumb my glances testified:
She signed with eye glance while her lips were mute * I signed
with fingers and she kenned th’ implied:
Our eyebrows did all duty ‘twixt us twain; * And we being
speechless Love spake loud and plain.

Then, O my mistress, the lady threw away the sword and said, “How shall I strike the neck of one I wot not, and who hath done me no evil? Such deed were not lawful in my law!” and she held her hand. Said the Ifrit, “’Tis grievous to thee to slay thy lover; and, because he hath lain with thee, thou endurest these torments and obstinately refusest to confess. After this it is clear to me that only like loveth and pitieth like.” Then he turned to me and asked me, “O man, haply thou also dost not know this woman;” whereto I answered, “And pray who may she be? assuredly I never saw her till this instant.” “Then take the sword,” said he “and strike off her head and I will believe that thou wottest her not and will leave thee free to go, and will not deaf ‘hardly with thee.” I replied, “That will I do;” and, taking the sword went forward sharply and raised my hand to smite. But she signed to me with her eyebrows, “Have I failed thee in aught of love; and is it thus that thou requirest me?” I understood what her looks implied and answered her with an eye-glance, “I will sacrifice my soul for thee.” And the tongue of the case wrote in our hearts these lines: —

How many a lover with his eyebrows speaketh * To his beloved, as his passion pleadeth:
With flashing eyne his passion he inspireth * And well she seeth what kits pleading needeth.
How sweet the look when each on other gazeth; * And with what swiftness and how sure it speedeth:
And this with eyebrows all his passion writeth; * And that with eyeballs all his passion readeth.

Then my eyes filled with tears to overflowing and I cast the sword from my hand saying, “O mighty Ifrit and hero, if a woman lacking wits and faith deem it unlawful to strike off my head, how can it be lawful for me, a man, to smite her neck whom I never saw in my whole life. I cannot do such misdeed though thou cause me drink the cup of death and perdition.” Then said the Ifrit, “Ye twain show the good understanding between you; but I will let you see how such doings end.” He took the sword, and struck off the lady’s hands first, with four strokes, and then her feet; whilst I looked on and made sure of death and she farewelled me with her dying eyes. So the Ifrit cried at her, “Thou whorest and makest me a wittol with thine eyes;” and struck her so that her head went flying. Then he turned to me and said, “O mortal, we have it in our law that, when the wife committeth advowtry it is lawful for us to slay her. As for this damsel I snatched her away on her bride-night when she was a girl of twelve and she knew no one but myself. I used to come to her once every ten days and lie with her the night, under the semblance of a man, a Persian; and when I was well assured that she had cuckolded me, I slew her. But as for thee I am not well satisfied that thou hast wronged me in her; nevertheless I must not let thee go unharmed; so ask a boon of me and I will grant it.” Then I rejoiced, O my lady, with ex ceeding joy and said, “What boon shall I crave of thee?” He replied, “Ask me this boon; into what shape I shall bewitch thee; wilt thou be a dog, or an ass or an ape?” I rejoined (and indeed I had hoped that mercy might be shown me), “By Allah, spare me, that Allah spare thee for sparing a Moslem and a man who never wronged thee.” And I humbled myself before him with exceeding humility, and remained standing in his presence, saying, “I am sore oppressed by circumstance.” He replied “Talk me no long talk, it is in my power to slay thee; but I give thee instead thy choice.” Quoth I, “O thou Ifrit, it would besit thee to pardon me even as the Envied pardoned the Envier.” Quoth he, “And how was that?” and I began to tell him

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The Tale of the Envier and the Envied.

They relate, O Ifrit, that in a certain city were two men who dwelt in adjoining houses, having a common party wall; and one of them envied the other and looked on him with an evil eye,[217] and did his utmost endeavour to injure him; and, albeit at all times he was jealous of his neighbour, his malice at last grew on him till he could hardly eat or enjoy the sweet pleasures of sleep. But the Envied did nothing save prosper; and the more the other strove to injure him, the more he got and gained and throve. At last the malice of his neighbour and the man's constant endeavour to work him a harm came to his knowledge; so he said, "By Allah! God's earth is wide enough for its people;" and, leaving the neighbourhood, he repaired to another city where he bought himself a piece of land in which was a dried up draw well,[218] old and in ruinous condition. Here he built him an oratory and, furnishing it with a few necessaries, took up his abode therein, and devoted himself to prayer and worshipping Allah Almighty; and Fakirs and holy mendicants docked to him from all quarters; and his fame went abroad through the city and that country side. Presently the news reached his envious neighbour, of what good fortune had befallen him and how the city notables had become his disciples; so he travelled to the place and presented himself at the holy man's hermitage, and was met by the Envied with welcome and greeting and all honour. Then quoth the Envier, "I have a word to say to thee; and this is the cause of my faring hither, and I wish to give thee a piece of good news; so come with me to thy cell." Thereupon the Envied arose and took the Envier by the hand, and they went in to the inmost part of the hermitage; but the Envier said, "Bid thy Fakirs retire to their cells, for I will not tell thee what I have to say, save in secret where none may hear us." Accordingly the Envied said to his Fakirs, "Retire to your private cells;" and, when all had done as he bade them, he set out with his visitor and walked a little way until the twain reached the ruinous old well. And as they stood upon the brink the Envier gave the Envied a push which tumbled him headlong into it, unseen of any; whereupon he fared forth, and went his ways, thinking to have had slain him. Now this well happened to be haunted by the Jann who, seeing the case, bore him up and let him down little by little, till he reached the bottom, when they seated him upon a large stone. Then one of them asked his fellows, “Wot ye who be this man?” and they answered, “Nay.” “This man,” continued the speaker, “is the Envied hight who, flying from the Envier, came to dwell in our city, and here founded this holy house, and he hath edified us by his litanies[219] and his lections of the Koran; but the Envier set out and journeyed till he rejoined him, and cunningly contrived to deceive him and cast him into the well where we now are. But the fame of this good man hath this very night come to the Sultan of our city who designeth to visit him on the morrow on account of his daughter.” “What aileth his daughter?” asked one, and another answered “She is possessed of a spirit; for Maymun, son of Damdam, is madly in love with her; but, if this pious man knew the remedy, her cure would be as easy as could be.” Hereupon one of them inquired, “And what is the medicine?” and he replied, “The black tom cat which is with him in the oratory hath, on the end of his tail, a white spot, the size of a dirham; let him pluck seven white hairs from the spot, then let him fumigate her therewith and the Marid will flee from her and not return; so she shall be sane for the rest of her life.” All this took place, O Ifrit, within earshot of the Envied who listened readily. When dawn broke and morn arose in sheen and shone, the Fakirs went to seek the Shaykh and found him climbing up the wall of the well; whereby he was magnified in their eyes.[220] Then, knowing that naught save the black tomcat could supply him with the remedy required, he plucked the seven tail hairs from the white spot and laid them by him; and hardly had the sun risen ere the Sultan entered the hermitage, with the great lords of his estate, bidding the rest of his retinue to remain standing outside. The Envied gave him a hearty welcome, and seating him by his side asked him, “Shall I tell thee the cause of thy coming?” The King answered, “Yes.” He continued, “Thou hast come upon pretext of a visitation;[221] but it is in thy heart to question me of thy daughter.” Replied the King, “ ’Tis even so, O thou holy Shaykh;” and the Envied continued, “Send and fetch her, and I trust to heal her forthright (an such it be the will of Allah!)” The King in great joy sent for his daughter, and they brought her pinioned and fettered. The

Envied made her sit down behind a curtain and taking out the hairs fumigated her therewith; whereupon that which was in her head cried out and departed from her. The girl was at once restored to her right mind and veiling her face, said, “What hath happened and who brought me hither?” The Sultan rejoiced with a joy that nothing could exceed, and kissed his daughter’s eyes,[222] and the holy man’s hand; then, turning to his great lords, he asked, “How say ye! What fee deserveth he who hath made my daughter whole?” and all answered, “He deserveth her to wife;” and the King said, “Ye speak sooth!” So he married him to her and the Envied thus became son in law to the King. And after a little the Wazir died and the King said, “Whom can I make Minister in his stead?” “Thy son in law,” replied the courtiers. So the Envied became a Wazir; and after a while the Sultan also died and the lieges said, “Whom shall we make King?” and all cried, “The Wazir.” So the Wazir was forthright made Sultan, and he became King regnant, a true ruler of men. One day as he had mounted his horse; and, in the eminence of his kinglihood, was riding amidst his Emirs and Wazirs and the Grandees of his realm his eye fell upon his old neighbour, the Envier, who stood afoot on his path; so he turned to one of his Ministers, and said, “Bring hither that man and cause him no affright.” The Wazir brought him and the King said, “Give him a thousand miskals[223] of gold from the treasury, and load him ten camels with goods for trade, and send him under escort to his own town.” Then he bade his enemy farewell and sent him away and forbore to punish him for the many and great evils he had done. See, O Ifrit, the mercy of the Envied to the Envier, who had hated him from the beginning and had borne him such bitter malice and never met him without causing him trouble; and had driven him from house and home, and then had journeyed for the sole purpose of taking his life by throwing him into the well. Yet he did not requite his injurious dealing, but forgave him and was bountiful to him.[224] Then I wept before him, O my lady, with sore weeping, never was there sorer, and I recited: —

“Pardon my fault, for ’tis the wise man’s wont * All faults to
    pardon and revenge forgo:
In sooth all manner faults in me contain * Then deign of goodness

mercy grace to show:
Whoso imploreth pardon from on High * Should hold his hand
from sinners here below."

Said the Ifrit, "Lengthen not thy words! As to my slaying thee fear it not, and as to my pardoning thee hope it not; but from my bewitching thee there is no escape." Then he tore me from the ground which closed under my feet and hew with me into the firmament till I saw the earth as a large white cloud or a saucer[225] in the midst of the waters. Presently he set me down on a mountain, and taking a little dust, over which he muttered some magical words, sprinkled me therewith, saying, "Quit that shape and take thou the shape of an ape!" And on the instant I became an ape, a tailless baboon, the son of a century[226] . Now when he had left me and I saw myself in this ugly and hateful shape, I wept for myself, but resigned my soul to the tyranny of Time and Circumstance, well weeting that Fortune is fair and constant to no man. I descended the mountain and found at the foot a desert plain, long and broad, over which I travelled for the space of a month till my course brought me to the brink of the briny sea.[227] After standing there awhile, I was ware of a ship in the offing which ran before a fair wind making for the shore. I hid myself behind a rock on the beach and waited till the ship drew near, when I leaped on board. I found her full of merchants and passengers and one of them cried, "O Captain, this ill omened brute will bring us ill luck!" and another said, "Turn this ill omened beast out from among us;" the Captain said, "Let us kill it!" another said, "Slay it with the sword;" a third, "Drown it;" and a fourth, "Shoot it with an arrow." But I sprang up and laid hold of the Rais's[228] skirt, and shed tears which poured down my chops. The Captain took pity on me, and said, "O merchants! this ape hath appealed to me for protection and I will protect him; henceforth he is under my charge: so let none do him aught hurt or harm, otherwise there will be bad blood between us." Then he entreated me kindly and whatsoever he said I understood and ministered to his every want and served him as a servant, albeit my tongue would not obey my wishes; so that he came to love me. The vessel sailed on, the wind being fair, for the space of fifty days; at the end of which we cast anchor under the walls of a great city wherein was a world of people, especially learned men, none could tell their number save Allah. No sooner had we arrived than we were visited by certain Mameluke officials from the King of that city; who, after boarding us, greeted the merchants and giving them joy of safe arrival said, “Our King welcometh you, and sendeth you this roll of paper, whereupon each and every of you must write a line. For ye shall know that the King’s Minister, a calligrapher of renown, is dead, and the King hath sworn a solemn oath that he will make none Wazir in his stead who cannot write as well as he could.” He then gave us the scroll which measured ten cubits long by a breadth of one, and each of the merchants who knew how to write wrote a line thereon, even to the last of them; after which I stood up (still in the shape of an ape) and snatched the roll out of their hands. They feared lest I should tear it or throw it overboard; so they tried to stay me and scare me, but I signed to them that i could write, whereat all marvelled, saying, “We never yet saw an, ape write.” And the Captain cried, “Let him write; and if he scribble and scrabble we will kick him out and kill him; but if he; write fair and scholarly I will adopt him as my son; for surely I never yet saw a more intelligent and well mannered monkey than he. Would Heaven my real son were his match in morals and manners.” I took the reed, and stretching out my paw, dipped it in ink and wrote, in the hand used for letters,[229] these two couplets: —

Time hath recorded gifts she gave the great; * But none recorded
thine which be far higher
Allah ne’er orphan men by loss of thee * Who be of Goodness
mother. Bounty’s sire.

And I wrote in Rayháni or larger letters elegantly curved[230] : —

Thou hast a reed[231] of rede to every land, * Whose driving
causeth all the world to thrive;
Nil is the Nile of Misraim by thy boons * Who makest misery
smile with fingers five

Then I wrote in the Suls[232] character: —

There be no writer who from Death shall fleet, * But what his
hand hath writ men shall repeat:
Write, therefore, naught save what shall serve thee when * Thou
see’s on Judgment-Day an so thou see’s!

Then I wrote in the character Naskh[233] : —

When to sore parting Fate our love shall doom, * To distant life
by Destiny decreed,
We cause the inkhorn’s lips to ‘plain our pains, * And tongue our
utterance with the talking reed.

And I wrote in the Túmár character[234] : —

Kingdom with none endures; if thou deny * This truth, where be
the Kings of earlier earth?
Set trees of goodliness while rule endures, * And when thou art
fallen they shall tell thy worth.

And I wrote in the character Muhakkak[235] : —

When oped the inkhorn of thy wealth and fame * Take ink of
generous heart and gracious hand;
Write brave and noble deeds while write thou can * And win thee
praise from point of pen and brand.

Then I gave the scroll to the officials and, after we all had written our line, they carried it before the King. When he saw the paper no writing pleased him save my writing; and he said to the assembled courtiers, “Go seek the writer of these lines and dress him in a splendid robe of honour; then mount him on a she mule,[236] let a band of music precede him and bring him to the presence.” At these words they smiled and the King was wroth with them and cried, “O accursed! I give you an order and you laugh at me?” “O King,” replied they, “if we laugh ’tis not at thee and not without a cause.” “And what is it?” asked he; and they answered, “O King, thou orderest us to bring to thy presence the man who wrote these lines; now the truth is that he who wrote them is not of the sons of

Adam,[237] but an ape, a tail-less baboon, belonging to the ship captain." Quoth he, "Is this true that you say?" Quoth they, "Yea! by the rights of thy munificence!" The King marvelled at their words and shook with mirth and said, "I am minded to buy this ape of the Captain." Then he sent messengers to the ship with the mule, the dress, the guard and the state drums, saying, "Not the less do you clothe him in the robe of honour and mount him on the mule and let him be surrounded by the guards and preceded by the band of music." They came to the ship and took me from the Captain and robed me in the robe of honour and, mounting me on the she mule, carried me in state procession through the streets', whilst the people were amazed and amused. And folk said to one another, "Halloo! is our Sultan about to make an ape his Minister?"; and came all agog crowding to gaze at me, and the town was astir and turned topsy turvy on my account. When they brought me up to the King and set me in his presence, I kissed the ground before him three times, and once before the High Chamberlain and great officers, and he bade me be seated, and I sat respectfully on shins and knees,[238] and all who were present marvelled at my fine manners, and the King most of all. Thereupon he ordered the lieges to retire; and, when none remained save the King's majesty, the Eunuch on duty and a little white slave, he bade them set before me the table of food, containing all manner of birds, whatever hoppeth and flieth and treadeth in nest, such as quail and sand grouse. Then he signed me to eat with him; so I rose and kissed ground before him, then sat me down and ate with him. And when the table was removed I washed my hands in seven waters and took the reed-case and reed; and wrote instead of speaking these couplets: —

Wail for the little partridges on porringer and plate; * Cry for
the ruin of the fries and stews well marinate:
Keen as I keen for loved, lost daughters of the
Katá-grouse,[239] * And omelette round the fair
enbrowned fowls agglomerate:
O fire in heart of me for fish, those deux poissons I saw, *
Bedded on new made scones[240] and cakes in piles to
laniate.

For thee, O vermicelli! aches my very maw! I hold * Without thee
every taste and joy are clean annihilate
Those eggs have rolled their yellow eyes in torturing pains of
fire * Ere served with hash and fritters hot, that
delicatest cate.
Praised be Allah for His baked and roast and ah! how good * This
pulse, these pot-herbs steeped in oil with eysill combinate!
When hunger sated was, I elbow-propt fell back upon * Meat
pudding[241] wherein gleamed the bangles that my wits
amate.
Then woke I sleeping appetite to eat as though in sport * Sweets
from broceded trays and kickshaws most elaborate.
Be patient, soul of me! Time is a haughty, jealous wight; * Today
he seems dark-lowering and tomorrow fair to sight.[242]

Then I rose and seated myself at a respectful distance while the King read what I had written, and marvelled, exclaiming, “O the miracle, that an ape should be gifted with this graceful style and this power of penmanship! By Allah, ’tis a wonder of wonders!” Presently they set before the King choice wines in flagons of glass and he drank: then he passed on the cup to me; and I kissed the ground and drank and wrote on it: —

With fire they boiled me to loose my tongue,[243] * And pain
and patience gave for fellowship:
Hence comes it hands of men upbear me high * And honey dew
from lips of maid I sip!

And these also: —

Morn saith to Night, “withdraw and let me shine;” * So drain we
draughts that dull all pain and pine:[244]
I doubt, so fine the glass, the wine so clear, * If ’tis the wine
in glass or glass in twine.

The King read my verse and said with a sigh, “Were these gifts[245] in a man, he would excel all the folk of his time and age!” Then he called for the chess board, and said, “Say, wilt thou play with me?”; and I signed with my head, “Yes.” Then I came forward and ordered the pieces and played with him two games, both of which I won. He was speechless with surprise; so I took the pen case and, drawing forth a reed, wrote on the board these two couplets: —

Two hosts fare fighting thro’ the livelong day * Nor is their
battling ever finished,
Until, when darkness girdeth them about, * The twain go sleeping
in a single bed.[246]

The King read these lines with wonder and delight and said to his Eunuch,[247] “O Mukbil, go to thy mistress, Sitt al- Husn,[248] and say her, ‘Come, speak the King who biddeth thee hither to take thy solace in seeing this right wondrous ape!’” So the Eunuch went out and presently returned with the lady who, when she saw me veiled her face and said, “O my father! hast thou lost all sense of honour? How cometh it thou art pleased to send for me and show me to strange men?” “O Sitt al-Husn,” said he, “no man is here save this little foot page and the Eunuch who reared thee and I, thy father. From whom, then, cost thou veil thy face?” She answered, “This whom thou deemest an ape is a young man, a clever and polite, a wise and learned and the son of a King; but he is ensorcelled and the Ifrit Jirjaris, who is of the seed of Iblis, cast a spell upon him, after putting to death his own wife the daughter of King Ifitamus lord of the Islands of Abnus.” The King marvelled at his daughter’s words and, turning to me, said, “Is this true that she saith of thee?”; and I signed by a nod of my head the answer, “Yea, verily;” and wept sore. Then he asked his daughter, “Whence knewest thou that he is ensorcelled?”; and she answered, “O my dear papa, there was with me in my childhood an old woman, a wily one and a wise and a witch to boot, and she taught me the theory of magic and its practice; and I took notes in writing and therein waxed perfect, and have committed to memory an hundred and seventy chapters of egromantic formulas, by the least of which I could transport the stones of thy city behind the Mountain Kaf and the Circumambient Main,[249] or make its site an abyss of the sea and its people fishes swimming in the midst of it.” “O my daughter,” said her father, “I conjure thee, by my life, disenchant this young man, that I may make him my Wazir and marry thee to him, for indeed he is an ingenious youth and a deeply learned.” “With joy and goodly gree,” she replied and, hending in hand an iron knife whereon was inscribed the name of Allah in Hebrew characters, she described a wide circle — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Fourteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Kalandar continued his tale thus: — O my lady, the King’s daughter hent in hand a knife whereon were inscribed Hebrew characters and described a wide circle in the midst of the palace hall, and therein wrote in Cufic letters mysterious names and talismans; and she uttered words and muttered charms, some of which we understood and others we understood not. Presently the world waxed dark before our sight till we thought that the sky was falling upon our heads, and lo! the Ifrit presented himself in his own shape and aspect. His hands were like many pronged pitch forks, his legs like the masts of great ships, and his eyes like cressets of gleaming fire. We were in terrible fear of him but the King’s daughter cried at him, “No welcome to thee and no greeting, O dog!” whereupon he changed to the form of a lion and said, “O traitress, how is it thou hast broken the oath we sware that neither should contraire other!” “O accursed one,” answered she, “how could there be a compact between me and the like of thee?” Then said he, “Take what thou has brought on thy self;” and the lion opened his jaws and rushed upon her; but she was too quick for him; and, plucking a hair from her head, waved it in the air muttering over it the while; and the hair straightway became a trenchant sword blade, wherewith she smote the lion and cut him in twain. Then the two halves flew away in air and the head changed to a scorpion and the Princess became a huge serpent and set upon the accursed scorpion, and the two fought, coiling and uncoiling, a stiff fight for an hour at least. Then the scorpion changed to a vulture and the serpent became an eagle which set upon the vulture, and hunted him for an hour’s time, till he became a black tom cat, which miauled and grinned and spat. Thereupon the eagle changed into a piebald wolf and these two battled in the palace for a long time, when the cat, seeing himself overcome, changed into a worm and crept into a huge red pomegranate,[250] which lay beside the jetting fountain in the midst of the palace hall. Whereupon the pomegranate swelled to the size of a water melon in air; and, falling upon the marble pavement of the palace, broke to pieces, and all the grains fell out and were scattered about till they covered the whole floor. Then the wolf shook himself and became a snow white cock, which fell to picking up the grains purposing not to leave one; but by doom of destiny one seed rolled to the fountain edge and there lay hid. The cock fell to crowing and clapping his wings and signing to us with his beak as if to ask, ‘ Are any grains left?” But we understood not what he meant, and he cried to us with so loud a cry that we thought the palace would fall upon us. Then he ran over all the floor till he saw the grain which had rolled to the fountain edge, and rushed eagerly to pick it up when behold, it sprang into the midst of the water and became a fish and dived to the bottom of the basin. Thereupon the cock changed to a big fish, and plunged in after the other, and the two disappeared for a while and lo! we heard loud shrieks and cries of pain which made us tremble. After this the Ifrit rose out of the water, and he was as a burning flame; casting fire and smoke from his mouth and eyes and nostrils. And immediately the Princess likewise came forth from the basin and she was one live coal of flaming lowe; and these two, she and he, battled for the space of an hour, until their fires entirely compassed them about and their thick smoke filled the palace. As for us we panted for breath, being well nigh suffocated, and we longed to plunge into the water fearing lest we be burnt up and utterly destroyed; and the King said, There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah the Glorious, the Great! Verily we are Allah’s and unto Him are we returning! Would Heaven I had not urged my daughter to attempt the disenchantment of this ape fellow, whereby I have imposed upon her the terrible task of fighting yon accursed Ifrit against whom all the Ifrits in the world could not prevail. And would Heaven we had never seen this ape, Allah never assain nor bless the day of his coming! We thought to do a good deed by him before the face of Allah,[251] and to release him from enchantment, and now we have brought this trouble and travail upon our heart.” But I, O my lady, was tongue tied and powerless to say a word to him. Suddenly, ere we were ware of aught, the Ifrit yelled out from under the flames and, coming up to us as we stood on the estrade, blew fire in our faces. The damsel overtook him and breathed blasts of fire at his face and the sparks from her and from him rained down upon us, and her sparks did us no harm, but one of his sparks alighted upon my eye and destroyed it making me a monocular ape; and another fell on the King’s face scorching the lower half, burning off his beard and mustachios and causing his under teeth to fall out; while a third alighted on the Castrato’s breast, killing him on the spot. So we despaired of life and made sure of death when lo! a voice repeated the saying, “Allah is most Highest! Allah is most Highest! Aidance and victory to all who the Truth believe; and disappointment and disgrace to all who the religion of Mohammed, the Moon of Faith, unbelieve.” The speaker was the Princess who had burnt the Ifrit, and he was become a heap of ashes. Then she came up to us and said, “Reach me a cup of water.” They brought it to her and she spoke over it words we understood not, and sprinkling me with it cried, “By virtue of the Truth, and by the Most Great name of Allah, I charge thee return to thy former shape.” And behold, I shook, and became a man as before, save that I had utterly lost an eye. Then she cried out, “The fire! The fire! O my dear papa an arrow from the accursed hath wounded me to the death, for I am not used to fight with the Jann; had he been a man I had slain him in the beginning. I had no trouble till the time when the pomegranate burst and the grains scattered, but I overlooked the seed wherein was the very life of the Jinni. Had I picked it up he had died on the spot, but as Fate and Fortune decreed, I saw it not; so he came upon me all unawares and there befel between him and me a sore struggle under the earth and high in air and in the water; and, as often as I opened on him a gate,[252] he opened on me another gate and a stronger, till at last he opened on me the gate of fire, and few are saved upon whom the door of fire openeth. But Destiny willed that my cunning prevail over his cunning; and I burned him to death after I vainly exhorted him to embrace the religion of al-Islam. As for me I am a dead woman; Allah supply my place to you!” Then she called upon Heaven for help and ceased not to implore relief from the fire; when lo! a black spark shot up from her robed feet to her thighs; then it flew to her bosom and thence to her face. When it reached her face she wept and said, “I testify that there is no god but the God and that Mahommed is the Apostle of God!” And we looked at her and saw naught but a heap of ashes by the side of the heap that had been the Ifrit. We mourned for her and I wished I had been in her place, so had I not seen her lovely face who had worked me such weal become ashes; but there is no gainsaying the will of Allah. When the King saw his daughter’s terrible death, he plucked out what was left of his beard and beat his face and rent his raiment; and I did as he did and we both wept over her. Then came in the Chamberlains and Grandees and were amazed to find two heaps of ashes and the Sultan in a fainting fit; so they stood round him till he revived and told them what had befallen his daughter from the Ifrit; whereat their grief was right grievous and the women and the slave girls shrieked and keened,[253] and they continued their lamentations for the space of seven days. Moreover the King bade build over his daughter’s ashes a vast vaulted tomb, and burn therein wax tapers and sepulchral lamps: but as for the Ifrit’s ashes they scattered them on the winds, speeding them to the curse of Allah. Then the Sultan fell sick of a sickness that well nigh brought him to his death for a month’s space; and, when health returned to him and his beard grew again and he had been converted by the mercy of Allah to al-Islam, he sent for me and said, “O youth, Fate had decreed for us the happiest of lives, safe from all the chances and changes of Time, till thou camest to us, when troubles fell upon us. Would to Heaven we had never seen thee and the foul face of thee! For we took pity on thee and thereby we have lost our all. I have on thy account first lost my daughter who to me was well worth an hundred men, secondly I have suffered that which befel me by reason of the fire and the loss of my teeth, and my Eunuch also was slain. I blame thee not, for it was out of thy power to prevent this: the doom of Allah was on thee as well as on us and thanks be to the Almighty for that my daughter delivered thee, albeit thereby she lost her own life! Go forth now, O my son, from this my city, and suffice thee what hath befallen us through thee, even although ’twas decreed for us. Go forth in peace; and if I ever see thee again I will surely slay thee.” And he cried out at me. So I went forth from his presence, O my lady, weeping bitterly and hardly believing in my escape and knowing not whither I should wend. And I recalled all that had befallen me, my meeting the tailor, my love for the damsel in the palace beneath the earth, and my narrow escape from the Ifrit, even after he had determined to do me die; and how I had entered the city as an ape and was now leaving it a man once more. Then I gave thanks to Allah and said, “My eye and not my life!” and before leaving the place I entered the bath and shaved my poll and beard and mustachios and eye brows; and cast ashes on my head and donned the coarse black woollen robe of a Kalandar. Then I fared forth, O my lady, and every day I pondered all the calamities which had betided me, and I wept and repeated these couplets: —

“I am distraught, yet verily His ruth abides with me, * Tho’
round me gather hosts of ills, whence come I cannot see:
Patient I’ll be till Patience self with me impatient wax; *
Patient for ever till the Lord fulfil my destiny:
Patient I’ll bide without complaint, a wronged and vanquish” man;

* Patient as sunparcht wight that spans the desert’s sandy
sea:
Patient I’ll be till Aloe’s[254] self unwittingly allow * I’m
patient under bitterer things than bitterest aloë:
No bitterer things than aloes or than patience for mankind, * Yet
bitterer than the twain to me were Patience’ treachery:
My sere and seamed and seared brow would dragoman my sore *
If soul could search my sprite and there unsecret secrecy:
Were hills to bear the load I bear they’d crumble ‘neath the
weight, * ’Twould still the roaring wind, ’twould quench the
flame-tongue’s flagrancy,
And whoso saith the world is sweet certès a day he’ll see * With
more than aloes’ bitterness and aloes’ pungency.”

Then I journeyed through many regions and saw many a city intending for Baghdad, that I might seek audience, in the House of Peace,[255] with the Commander of the Faithful and tell him all that had befallen me. I arrived here this very night and found my brother in Allah, this first Kalandar, standing about as one perplexed; so I saluted him with "Peace be upon thee," and entered into discourse with him. Presently up came our brother, this third Kalandar, and said to us, "Peace be with you! I am a stranger;" whereto we replied, "And we too be strangers, who have come hither this blessed night." So we all three walked on together, none of us knowing the other's history, till Destiny crave us to this door and we came in to you. Such then is my story and my reason for shaving my beard and mustachios, and this is what caused the loss of my eye. Said the house mistress, "Thy tale is indeed a rare; so rub thy head and wend thy ways;" but he replied, "I will not budge till I hear my companions' stories." Then came forward the third Kalandar, and said, "O illustrious lady! my history is not like that of these my comrades, but more wondrous and far more marvellous. In their case Fate and Fortune came down on them unawares; but I drew down destiny upon my own head and brought sorrow on mine own soul, and shaved my own beard and lost my own eye. Hear then

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The Third Kalandar's Tale.

Know, O my lady, that I also am a King and the son of a King and my name is Ajíb son of Kazíb. When my father died I succeeded him; and I ruled and did justice and dealt fairly by all my lieges. I delighted in sea trips, for my capital stood on the shore, before which the ocean stretched far and wide; and near hand were many great islands with sconces and garrisons in the midst of the main. My fleet numbered fifty merchantmen, and as many yachts for pleasance, and an hundred and fifty sail ready fitted for holy war with the Unbelievers. It fortuned that I had a mind to enjoy myself on the islands aforesaid, so I took ship with my people in ten keel; and, carrying with me a month's victual, I set out on a twenty days' voyage. But one night a head wind struck us, and the sea rose against us with huge waves; the billows sorely buffetted us and a dense darkness settled round us. We gave ourselves up for lost and I said, "Whoso endangereth his days, e'en an he 'scape deserveth no praise." Then we prayed to Allah and besought Him; but the storm blasts ceased not to blow against us nor the surges to strike us till morning broke when the gale fell, the seas sank to mirrory stillness and the sun shone upon us kindly clear. Presently we made an island where we landed and cooked somewhat of food, and ate heartily and took our rest for a couple of days. Then we set out again and sailed other twenty days, the seas broadening and the land shrinking. Presently the current ran counter to us, and we found ourselves in strange waters, where the Captain had lost his reckoning, and was wholly bewildered in this sea; so said we to the look out man,[256] "Get thee to the mast head and keep thine eyes open." He swarmed up the mast and looked out and cried aloud, "O Rais, I espy to starboard something dark, very like a fish floating on the face of the sea, and to larboard there is a loom in the midst of the main, now black and now bright." When the Captain heard the look out's words he dashed his turband on the deck and plucked out his beard and beat his face saying, "Good news indeed! we be all dead men; not one of us can be saved." And he fell to weeping and all of us wept for his weeping and also for our lives; and I said, "O Captain, tell us what it is the look out saw." "O my Prince," answered he, "know that we lost our course on the night of the storm, which was followed on the morrow by a two days' calm during which we made no way; and we have gone astray eleven days reckoning from that night, with ne'er a wind to bring us back to our true course. Tomorrow by the end of the day we shall come to a mountain of black stone, highs the Magnet Mountain;[257] for thither the currents carry us willy-nilly. As soon as we are under its lea, the ship's sides will open and every nail in plank will fly out and cleave fast to the mountain; for that Almighty Allah hath gifted the loadstone with a mysterious virtue and a love for iron, by reason whereof all which is iron travelleth towards it; and on this mountain is much iron, how much none knoweth save the Most High, from the many vessels which have been lost there since the days of yore. The bright spot upon its summit is a dome of yellow laton from Andalusia, vaulted upon ten columns; and on its crown is a horseman who rideth a horse of brass and holdeth in hand a lance of laton; and there hangeth on his bosom a tablet of lead graven with names and talismans." And he presently added, "And, O King, none destroyeth folk save the rider on that steed, nor will the egromancy be dispelled till he fall from his horse.''[258] Then, O my lady, the Captain wept with exceeding weeping and we all made sure of death doom and each and every one of us farewelled his friend and charged him with his last will and testament in case he might be saved. We slept not that night and in the morning we found ourselves much nearer the Loadstone Mountain, whither the waters crave us with a violent send. When the ships were close under its lea they opened and the nails flew out and all the iron in them sought the Magnet Mountain and clove to it like a network; so that by the end of the day we were all struggling in the waves round about the mountain. Some of us were saved, but more were drowned and even those who had escaped knew not one another, so stupefied were they by the beating of the billows and the raving of the winds. As for me, O my lady, Allah (be His name exalted!) preserved my life that I might suffer whatso He willed to me of hardship, misfortune and calamity; for I scrambled upon a plank from one of the ships, and the wind and waters threw it at the feet of the Mountain. There I found a practicable path leading by steps carven out of the rock to the summit, and I called on the name of Allah Almighty"[259] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Fifteenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the third Kalandar said to the lady (the rest of the party sitting fast bound and the slaves standing with swords drawn over their heads): — And after calling on the name of Almighty Allah and passionately beseeching Him, I breasted the ascent, clinging to the steps and notches hewn in the stone, and mounted little by little. And the Lord stilled the wind and aided me in the ascent, so that I succeeded in reaching the summit. There I found no resting place save the dome, which I entered, joying with exceeding joy at my escape; and made the Wuzu-ablution[260] and prayed a two bow prayer,[261] a thanksgiving to God for my preservation. Then I fell asleep under the dome, and heard in my dream a mysterious Voice[262] saying, "O son of Khazib! when thou wakest from thy sleep dig under thy feet and thou shalt find a bow of brass and three leaden arrows, inscribed with talismans and characts. Take the bow and shoot the arrows at the horseman on the dome top and free mankind from this sore calamity. When thou hast shot him he shall fall into the sea, and the horse will also drop at thy feet: then bury it in the place of the bow. This done, the main will swell and rise till it is level with the mountain head, and there will appear on it a skiff carrying a man of laton (other than he thou shalt have shot) holding in his hand a pair of paddles. He will come to thee and do thou embark with him but beware of saying Bismillah or of otherwise naming Allah Almighty. He will row thee for a space of ten days, till he bring thee to certain Islands called the Islands of Safety, and thence thou shalt easily reach a port and find those who will convey thee to thy native land; and all this shall be fulfilled to thee so thou call not on the name of Allah." Then I started up from my sleep in joy and gladness and, hastening to do the bidding of the mysterious Voice, found the bow and arrows and shot at the horseman and tumbled him into the main, whilst the horse dropped at my feet; so I took it and buried it. Presently the sea surged up and rose till it reached the top of the mountain; nor had I long to wait ere I saw a skiff in the offing coming towards me. I gave thanks to Allah;

and, when the skiff came up to me, I saw therein a man of brass with a tablet of lead on his breast inscribed with talismans and characts; and I embarked without uttering a word. The boatman rowed on with me through the first day and the second and the third, in all ten whole days, till I caught sight of the Islands of Safety; whereat I joyed with exceeding joy and for stress of gladness exclaimed, “Allah! Allah! In the name of Allah! There is no god but the God and Allah is Almighty.’’[263] Thereupon the skiff forthwith upset and cast me upon the sea; then it righted and sank deep into the depths. Now I am a fair swimmer, so I swam the whole day till nightfall, when my forearms and shoulders were numbed with fatigue and I felt like to die; so I testified to my faith, expecting naught but death. The sea was still surging under the violence of the winds, and presently there came a billow like a hillock; and, bearing me up high in air, threw me with a long cast on dry land, that His will might be fulfilled. I crawled up the beach and doffing my raiment wrung it out to dry and spread it in the sunshine: then I lay me down and slept the whole night. As soon as it was day, I donned my clothes and rose to look whither I should walk. Presently I came to a thicket of low trees; and, making a cast round it, found that the spot whereon I stood was an islet, a mere holm, girt on all sides by the ocean; whereupon I said to myself, “Whatso freeth me from one great calamity casteth me into a greater!” But while I was pondering my case and longing for death behold, I saw afar off a ship making for the island; so I clomb a tree and hid myself among the branches. Presently the ship anchored and landed ten slaves, blackamoors, bearing iron hoes and baskets, who walked on till they reached the middle of the island. Here they dug deep into the ground, until they uncovered a plate of metal which they lifted, thereby opening a trap door. After this they returned to the ship and thence brought bread and flour, honey and fruits, clarified butter,[264] leather bottles containing liquors and many household stuffs; also furniture, table service and mirrors rugs, carpets and in fact all needed to furnish a dwelling; and they kept going to and fro, and descending by the trap door, till they had transported into the dwelling all that was in the ship. After this the slaves again went on board and brought back with them garments as rich as may be, and in the midst of them came an old, old man, of whom very little was left, for Time had dealt hardly and harshly with him, and all that remained of him was a bone wrapped in a rag of blue stuff through which the winds whistled west and east. As saith the poet of him: —

Time gars me tremble Ah, how sore the baulk! * While Time in
pride of strength cloth ever stalk:
Time was I walked nor ever felt I tired, * Now am I tired albe I
never walk!

And the Shaykh held by the hand a youth cast in beauty's mould, all elegance and perfect grace; so fair that his comeliness deserved to be proverbial; for he was as a green bough or the tender young of the roe, ravishing every heart with his loveliness and subduing every soul with his coquetry and amorous ways.[265] It was of him the poet spake when he said: —

Beauty they brought with him to make compare, * But Beauty
hung her head in shame and care:
Quoth' they, "O Beauty, hast thou seen his like?" * And Beauty
cried, "His like? not anywhere!"

They stinted not their going, O my lady, till all went down by the trap door and did not reappear for an hour, or rather more; at the end of which time the slaves and the old man came up without the youth and, replacing the iron plate and carefully closing the door slab as it was before, they returned to the ship and made sail and were lost to my sight. When they turned away to depart, I came down from the tree and, going to the place I had seen them fill up, scraped off and removed the earth; and in patience possessed my soul till I had cleared the whole of it away. Then appeared the trap door which was of wood, in shape and size like a millstone; and when I lifted it up it disclosed a winding staircase of stone. At this I marvelled and, descending the steps till I reached the last, found a fair hall, spread with various kinds of carpets and silk stuffs, wherein was a youth sitting upon a raised couch and leaning back on a round cushion with a fan in his hand and nosegays and posies of sweet scented herbs and flowers before him;[266] but he was alone and not a soul near him in the great vault. When he saw me he turned pale; but I saluted him courteously and said, “Set thy mind at ease and calm thy fears; no harm shall come near thee; I am a man like thyself and the son of a King to boot; whom the decrees of Destiny have sent to bear thee company and cheer thee in thy loneliness. But now tell me, what is thy story and what causeth thee to dwell thus in solitude under the ground?” When he was assured that I was of his kind and no Jinni, he rejoiced and his fine colour returned; and, making me draw near to him he said, “O my brother, my story is a strange story and ’tis this. My father is a merchant-jeweller possessed of great wealth, who hath white and black slaves travelling and trading on his account in ships and on camels, and trafficking with the most distant cities; but he was not blessed with a child, not even one. Now on a certain night he dreamed a dream that he should be favoured with a son, who would be short lived; so the morning dawned on my father bringing him woe and weeping. On the following night my mother conceived and my father noted down the date of her becoming pregnant.[267] Her time being fulfilled she bare me; whereat my father rejoiced and made banquets and called together the neighbors and fed the Fakirs and the poor, for that he had been blessed with issue near the end of his days. Then he assembled the astrologers and astronomers who knew the places of the planets, and the wizards and wise ones of the time, and men learned in horoscopes and nativities,[268] and they drew out my birth scheme and said to my father, “Thy son shall live to fifteen years, but in his fifteenth there is a sinister aspect; an he safely tide it over he shall attain a great age. And the cause that threateneth him with death is this. In the Sea of Peril standeth the Mountain Magnet hight; on whose summit is a horseman of yellow laton seated on a horse also of brass and bearing on his breast a tablet of lead. Fifty days after this rider shall fall from his steed thy son will die and his slayer will be he who shoots down the horseman, a Prince named Ajib son of King Khazib.” My father grieved with exceeding grief to hear these words; but reared me in tenderest fashion and educated me excellently well until my fifteenth year was told. Ten days ago news came to him that the horseman had fallen into the sea and he who shot him down was named Ajib son of King Khazib. My father thereupon wept bitter tears at the need of parting with me and became like one possessed of a Jinni. However, being in mortal fear for me, he built me this place under the earth; and, stocking it with all required for the few days still remaining, he brought me hither in a ship and left me here. Ten are already past and, when the forty shall have gone by without danger to me, he will come and take me away; for he hath done all this only in fear of Prince Ajib. Such, then, is my story and the cause of my loneliness." When I heard his history I marvelled and said in my mind, "I am the Prince Ajib who hath done all this; but as Allah is with me I will surely not slay him!" So said I to him, "O my lord, far from thee be this hurt and harm and then, please Allah, thou shalt not suffer cark nor care nor aught disquietude, for I will tarry with thee and serve thee as a servant, and then wend my ways; and after having borne thee company during the forty days, I will go with thee to thy home where thou shalt give me an escort of some of thy Mamelukes with whom I may journey back to my own city; and the Almighty shall requite thee for me." He was glad to hear these words, when I rose and lighted a large wax candle and trimmed the ramps end the three lanterns; and I set on meat and drink and sweetmeats. We ate and drank and sat talking over various matters till the greater part of the night was gone; when he lay down to rest and I covered him up and went to sleep myself. Next morning I arose and warmed a little water, then lifted him gently so as to awake him and brought him the warm water wherewith he washed his face[269] and said to me, "Heaven requite thee for me with every blessing, O youth! By Allah, if I get quit of this danger and am saved from him whose name is Ajib bin Khazib, I will make my father reward thee and send thee home healthy and wealthy; and, if I die, then my blessing be upon thee." I answered, "May the day never dawn on which evil shall betide thee; and may Allah make my last day before thy last day!" Then I set before him somewhat of food and we ate; and I got ready perfumes for fumigating the hall, wherewith he was pleased. Moreover I made him a Mankalah-cloth;[270] and we played and ate sweetmeats and we played again and took our pleasure till nightfall, when I rose and lighted the lamps, and set before him somewhat to eat, and sat telling him stories till the hours of darkness were far spent. Then he lay down to rest and I covered him up and rested also. And thus I continued to do, O my lady, for days and nights and affection for him took root in my heart and my sorrow was eased, and I said to myself, "The astrologers lied[271] when they predicted that he should be slain by Ajib bin Khazib: by Allah, I will not slay him." I ceased not ministering to him and conversing and carousing with him and telling him all manner tales for thirty nine days. On the fortieth night[272] the youth rejoiced and said, "O my brother, Alhamdo, lillah! — praise be to Allah — who hath preserved me from death and this is by thy blessing and the blessing of thy coming to me and I pray God that He restore thee to thy native land. But now, O my brother, I would thou warm me some water for the Ghusl ablution and do thou kindly bathe me and change my clothes." I replied, "With love and gladness;" and I heated water in plenty and carrying it in to him washed his body all over the washing of health,[273] with meal of lupins[274] and rubbed him well and changed his clothes and spread him a high bed whereon he lay down to rest, being drowsy after bathing. Then said he, "O my brother, cut me up a water melon, and sweeten it with a little sugar candy."[275] So I went to the store room and bringing out a fine water melon I found there, set it on a platter and laid it before him saying, "O my master hast thou not a knife?" "Here it is," answered he, "over my head upon the high shelf." So I got up in haste and taking the knife drew it from its sheath; but my foot slipped in stepping down and I fell heavily upon the youth holding in my hand the knife which hastened to fulfil what had been written on the Day that decided the destinies of man, and buried itself, as if planted, in the youth's heart. He died on the instant. When I saw that he was slain and knew that I had slain him, maugre myself, I cried out with an exceeding loud and bitter cry and beat my face and rent my raiment and said, "Verily we be Allah's and unto Him we be returning, O Moslems! O folk fain of Allah! there remained for this youth but one day of the forty dangerous days which the astrologers and the learned had foretold for him; and the predestined death of this beautiful one was to be at my hand. Would Heaven I had not tried to cut the watermelon. What dire misfortune is this I must bear fief or loath? What a disaster! What an affliction! O Allah mine, I implore thy pardon and declare to Thee my innocence of his death. But what God willeth let that come to pass.''[276] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Sixteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ajib thus continued his tale to the lady: — When I was certified that I had slain him, I arose and ascending the stairs replaced the trap- door and covered it with earth as before. Then I looked out seawards and saw the ship cleaving the waters and making for the island, wherefore I was afeard and said, "The moment they come and see the youth done to death, they will know 'twas I who slew him and will slay me without respite." So I climbed up into a high tree and concealed myself among its leaves; and hardly had I done so when the ship anchored and the slaves landed with the ancient man, the youth's father, and made direct for the place and when they removed the earth they were surprised to see it soft.[277] Then they raised the trap door and went down and found the youth lying at full length, clothed in fair new garments, with a face beaming after the bath, and the knife deep in his heart. At the sight they shrieked and wept and beat their faces, loudly cursing the murderer; whilst a swoon came over the Shaykh so that the slaves deemed him dead, unable to survive his son. At last they wrapped the slain youth in his clothes and carried him up and laid him on the ground covering him with a shroud of silk. Whilst they were making for the ship the old man revived; and, gazing on his son who was stretched out, fell on the ground and strewed dust over his head and smote his face and plucked out his beard; and his weeping redoubled as he thought of his murdered son and he swooned away once more. After awhile a slave went and fetched a strip of silk whereupon they lay the old man and sat down at his head. All this took place and I was on the tree above them watching everything that came to pass; and my heart became hoary before my head waxed grey, for the hard lot which was mine, and for the distress and anguish I had undergone, and I fell to reciting: —

"How many a joy by Allah's will hath fled * With flight escaping
sight of wisest head!
How many a sadness shall begin the day, * Yet grow right
gladsome ere the day is sped!

How many a weal trips on the heels of ill, * Causing the
mourner's heart with joy to thrill!"[278]

But the old man, O my lady, ceased not from his swoon till near sunset, when he came to himself and, looking upon his dead son, he recalled what had happened, and how what he had dreaded had come to pass; and he beat his face and head and recited these couplets: —

"Racked is my heart by parting fro' my friends * And two rills
ever fro' my eyelids flow:
With them[279] went forth my hopes, Ah, well away! * What
shift remaineth me to say or do?
Would I had never looked upon their sight, * What shift, fair
sirs, when paths e'er strainer grow?
What charm shall calm my pangs when this wise burn * Longings
of love which in my vitals glow?
Would I had trod with them the road of Death! * Ne'er had befel
us twain this parting blow:
Allah: I pray the Truthful show me Roth * And mix our lives nor
part them evermo'e!
How blest were we as 'death one roof we dwelt * Conjoined in
joys nor recking aught of woe;
Till Fortune shot us pith the severance shaft; * Ah who shall
patient bear such parting throe?
And dart of Death struck down amid the tribe * The age's pearl
that Morn saw brightest show:
I cried the while his case took speech and said: — * Would Heaven,
my son, Death mote his doom foreslow!
Which be the readiest road wi' thee to meet * My Son! for whom I
would my soul bestow?
If sun I call him no! the sun cloth set; * If moon I call him,
wane the moons; Ah no!
O sad mischance o' thee, O doom of days, * Thy place none other
love shall ever know:
Thy sire distracted sees thee, but despairs * By wit or wisdom
Fate to overthrow:
Some evil eye this day hath cast its spell * And foul befal him

as it foul befel!”

Then he sobbed a single sob and his soul fled his flesh. The slaves shrieked aloud, “Alas, our lord!” and showered dust on their heads and redoubled their weeping and wailing. Presently they carried their dead master to the ship side by side with his dead son and, having transported all the stuff from the dwelling to the vessel, set sail and disappeared from mine eyes. I descended from the tree and, raising the trap-door, went down into the underground dwelling where everything reminded me of the youth; and I looked upon the poor remains of him and began repeating these verses: —

“Their tracks I see, and pine with pain and pang * And on
deserted hearths I weep and yearn:
And Him I pray who doomed them depart * Some day vouchsafe
the boon of safe return.’’[280]

Then, O my lady, I went up again by the trap-door, and every day I used to wander round about the island and every night I returned to the underground hall. Thus I lived for a month, till at last, looking at the western side of the island, I observed that every day the tides ebbed, leaving shallow water for which the flow did not compensate; and by the end of the month the sea showed dry land in that direction. At this I rejoiced making certain of my safety; so I arose and fording what little was left of the water got me to the mainland, where I fell in with great heaps of loose sand in which even a camel’s hoof would sink up to the knee.[281] However I emboldened my soul and wading through the sand behold, a fire shone from afar burning with a brazing light.[282] So I made for it hoping haply to find succour, and broke out into these verses: —

“Belike Fortune may her bridle turn * And Time bring weal
although he’s jealous hight;
Forward my hopes, and further all my needs, * And passed ills
with present weals requite.”

And when I drew near the fire aforesaid lo! it was a palace with gates of copper burnished red which, when the rising sun shone thereon, gleamed and glistened from afar showing what had seemed to me a fire. I rejoiced in the sight, and sat down over against the gate, but I was hardly settled in my seat before there met me ten young men clothed in sumptuous gear and all were blind of the left eye which appeared as plucked out. They were accompanied by a Shaykh, an old, old man, and much I marvelled at their appearance, and their all being blind of the same eye. When they saw me, they saluted me with the Salam and asked me of my case and my history; whereupon I related to them all what had befallen me, and what full measure of misfortune was mine. Marvelling at my tale they took me to the mansion, where I saw ranged round the hall ten couches each with its blue bedding and coverlet of blue stuff[283] and amiddlemost stood a smaller couch furnished like them with blue and nothing else. As we entered each of the youths took his seat on his own couch and the old man seated himself upon the smaller one in the middle saying to me, "O youth, sit thee down on the floor and ask not of our case nor of the loss of our eyes." Presently he rose up and set before each young man some meat in a charger and drink in a large mazer, treating me in like manner; and after that they sat questioning me concerning my adventures and what had betided me: and I kept telling them my tale till the night was far spent. Then said the young men, "O our Shaykh, wilt not thou set before us our ordinary? The time is come." He replied, "With love and gladness," and rose and entering a closet disappeared, but presently returned bearing on his head ten trays each covered with a strip of blue stuff. He set a tray before each youth and, lighting ten wax candles, he stuck one upon each tray, and drew off the covers and lo! under them was naught but ashes and powdered charcoal and kettle soot. Then all the young men tucked up their sleeves to the elbows and fell a weeping and wailing and they blackened their faces and smeared their clothes and buffetted their brows and beat their breasts, continually exclaiming, "We were sitting at our ease but our frowardness brought us unease! " They ceased not to do this till dawn drew nigh, when the old man rose and heated water for them; and they washed their faces, and donned other and clean clothes. Now when I saw this, O my lady, for very wonderment my senses left me and my wits went wild and heart and head were full of thought, till I forgot what had betided me and I could not keep silence feeling I fain must speak out and question them of these strangenesses; so I said to them, “How come ye to do this after we have been so open hearted and frolicksome? Thanks be to Allah ye be all sound and sane, yet actions such as these befit none but mad men or those possessed of an evil spirit. I conjure you by all that is dearest to you, why stint ye to tell me your history, and the cause of your losing your eyes and your blackening your faces with ashes and soot?” Hereupon they turned to me and said, “O young man, hearken not to thy youthtide’s suggestions and question us no questions.” Then they slept and I with them and when they awoke the old man brought us somewhat of food; and, after we had eaten and the plates and goblets had been removed, they sat conversing till night fall when the old man rose and lit the wax candles and lamps and set meat and drink before us. After we had eaten and drunken we sat conversing and carousing in companionage till the noon of night, when they said to the old man, “Bring us our ordinary, for the hour of sleep is at hand!” So he rose and brought them the trays of soot and ashes; and they did as they had done on the preceding night, nor more, nor less. I abode with them after this fashion for the space of a month during which time they used to blacken their faces with ashes every night, and to wash and change their raiment when the morn was young; and I but marvelled the more and my scruples and curiosity increased to such a point that I had to forego even food and drink. At last, I lost command of myself, for my heart was aflame with fire unquenchable and lowe unconcealable and I said, “O young men, will ye not relieve my trouble and acquaint me with the reason of thus blackening your faces and the meaning of your words: — We were sitting at our ease but our frowardness brought us unease?” Quoth they “‘Twere better to keep these things secret.” Still I was bewildered by their doings to the point of abstaining from eating and drinking and, at last wholly losing patience, quoth I to them, There is no help for it: ye must acquaint me with what is the reason of these doings.” They replied, “We kept our secret only for thy good: to gratify thee will bring down evil upon thee and thou wilt become a monocular even as we are.” I repeated “There is no help for it and, if ye will not, let me leave you and return to mine own people and be at rest from seeing these things, for the proverb saith: —

Better ye ‘bide and I take my leave: * For what eye sees not heart shall never grieve.”

Thereupon they said to me, “Remember, O youth, that should ill befal thee we will not again harbour thee nor suffer thee to abide amongst us;” and bringing a ram they slaughtered it and skinned it. Lastly they gave me a knife saying, “Take this skin and stretch thyself upon it and we will sew it around thee, presently there shall come to thee a certain bird, hight Rukh,[284] that will catch thee up in his pounces and tower high in air and then set thee down on a mountain. When thou feelest he is no longer flying, rip open the pelt with this blade and come out of it; the bird will be scared and will fly away and leave thee free. After this fare for half a day, and the march will place thee at a palace wondrous fair to behold, towering high in air and builded of Khalanj[285] , lign-aloes and sandal-wood, plated with red gold, and studded with all manner emeralds and costly gems fit for seal rings. Enter it and thou shalt win to thy wish for we have all entered that palace; and such is the cause of our losing our eyes and of our blackening our faces. Were we now to tell thee our stories it would take too long a time; for each and every of us lost his left eye by an adventure of his own.” I rejoiced at their words and they did with me as they said; and the bird Rukh bore me off end set me down on the mountain. Then I came out of the skin and walked on till I reached the palace. The door stood open as I entered and found myself in a spacious and goodly hall, wide exceedingly, even as a horse-course; and around it were an hundred chambers with doors of sandal and aloes woods plated with red gold and furnished with silver rings by way of knockers.[286] At the head or upper end[287] of the hall I saw forty damsels, sumptuously dressed and ornamented and one and all bright as moons; none could ever tire of gazing upon them and all so lovely that the most ascetic devotee on seeing them would become their slave and obey their will. When they saw me the whole bevy came up to me and said “Welcome and well come and good cheer[288] to thee, O our lord! This whole month have we been expecting thee. Praised be Allah who hath sent us one who is worthy of us, even as we are worthy of him!” Then they made me sit down upon a high divan and said to me, “This day thou art our lord and master, and we are thy servants and thy hand-maids, so order us as thou wilt.” And I marvelled at their case. Presently one of them arose and set meat before me and I ate and they ate with me; whilst others warmed water and washed my hands and feet and changed my clothes and others made ready sherbets and gave us to drink; and all gathered around me being full of joy and gladness at my coming. Then they sat down and conversed with me till nightfall, when five of them arose and laid the trays and spread them with flowers and fragrant herbs and fruits, fresh and dried, and confections in profusion. At last they brought out a fine wine service with rich old wine; and we sat down to drink and some sang songs and others played the lute and psaltery and recorders and other instruments, and the bowl went merrily round. Hereupon such gladness possessed me that I forgot the sorrows of the world one and all and said, “This is indeed life; O sad that ’tis fleeting!” I enjoyed their company till the time came for rest; and our heads were all warm with wine, when they said, “O our lord, choose from amongst us her who shall be thy bed-fellow this night and not lie with thee again till forty days be past.” So I chose a girl fair of face and perfect in shape, with eyes Kohl-edged by nature’s hand;[289] hair long and jet black with slightly parted teeth[290] and joining brows: ’twas as if she were some limber graceful branchlet or the slender stalk of sweet basil to amaze and to bewilder man’s fancy, even as the poet said of such an one —

To even her with greeny bough were vain * Fool he who finds her
    beauties in the roe:
When hath the roe those lively lovely limbs * Or honey dews those
    lips alone bestow?
Those eyne, soul piercing eyne, which slay with love, * Which
    bind the victim by their shafts laid low?
My heart to second childhood they beguiled * No wonder: love
    sick-man again is child!

And I repeated to her the maker’s words who said: —

“None other charms but thine shall greet mine eyes, * Nor other
    image can my heart surprise:

Thy love, my lady, captives all my thoughts * And on that love
I'll die and I'll arise.

So I lay with her that night; none fairer I ever knew; and, when it was morning, the damsels carried me to the Hammam bath and bathed me and robed me in fairest apparel. Then they served up food, and we ate and drank and the cup went round till nightfall when I chose from among them one fair of form and face, soft- sided and a model of grace, such an one as the poet described when he said. —

On her fair bosom caskets twain I scanned, * Sealed fast with
musk seals lovers to withstand
With arrowy glances stand on guard her eyes, * Whose shafts
would shoot who dares put forth a hand.

With her I spent a most goodly night; and, to be brief, O my mistress, I remained with them in all solace and delight of life, eating and drinking, conversing and carousing and every night lying with one or other of them. But at the head of the new year they came to me in tears and bade me farewell, weeping and crying out and clinging about me: whereat I wondered and said, "What may be the matter? verily you break my heart!" They exclaimed, "Would Heaven we had never known thee; for, though we have companies with many, yet never saw we a pleasanter than thou or a more courteous." And they wept again. "But tell me more clearly," asked I, "what causeth this weeping which maketh my gall-bladder[291] like to burst;" and they answered, "O our lord and master, it is severance which maketh us weep; and thou, and thou only, art the cause of our tears. If thou hearken to us we need never be parted and if thou hearken not we part for ever; but our hearts tell us that thou wilt not listen to our words and this is the cause of our tears and cries." "Tell me how the case standeth?" "Know, O our lord, that we are the daughters of Kings who have met here and have lived together for years; and once in every year we are perforce absent for forty days; and afterwards we return and abide here for the rest of the twelve month eating and drinking and taking our pleasure and enjoying delights: we are about to depart according to our custom; and we fear lest after we be gone thou contraire our charge and disobey our injunctions. Here now we commit to thee the keys of the palace which containeth forty chambers and thou mayest open of these thirty and nine, but beware (and we conjure thee by Allah and by the lives of us!) lest thou open the fortieth door, for therein is that which shall separate us for ever."[292] Quoth I, "Assuredly I will not open it, if it contain the cause of severance from you." Then one among them came up to me and falling on my neck wept and recited these verses. —

"If Time unite us after absent while, * The world harsh frowning
on our lot shall smile
And if thy semblance deign adorn mine eyes,[293] * I'll
pardon Time past wrongs and by gone guile."

And I recited the following: —

"When drew she near to bid adieu with heart unstrung, * While
care and longing on that day her bosom wrung
Wet pearls she wept and mine like red carnelians rolled * And,
joined in sad rivière, around her neck they hung."

When I saw her weeping I said, "By Allah I will never open that fortieth door, never and no wise!" and I bade her farewell. Thereupon all departed flying away like birds; signalling with their hands farewells as they went and leaving me alone in the palace. When evening drew near I opened the door of the first chamber and entering it found myself in a place like one of the pleasaunces of Paradise. It was a garden with trees of freshest green and ripe fruits of yellow sheen; and its birds were singing clear and keen and rills ran wimpling through the fair terrene. The sight and sounds brought solace to my sprite; and I walked among the trees, and I smelt the breath of the flowers on the breeze; and heard the birdies sing their melodies hymning the One, the Almighty in sweetest litanies; and I looked upon the apple whose hue is parcel red and parcel yellow; as said the poet: —

Apple whose hue combines in union mellow * My fair's red cheek,
her hapless lover's yellow.

Then I looked upon the quince, and inhaled its fragrance which to shame musk and ambergris, even as the poet hath said :

Quince every taste conjoins; in her are found * Gifts which for
queen of fruits the Quince have crowned
Her taste is wine, her scent the waft of musk; * Pure gold her
hue, her shape the Moon's fair round.

Then I looked upon the pear whose taste surpasseth sherbet and sugar; and the apricot[294] whose beauty striketh the eye with admiration, as if she were a polished ruby. Then I went out of the place and locked the door as it was before. When it was the morrow I opened the second door; and entering found myself in a spacious plain set with tall date palms and watered by a running stream whose banks were shrubbed with bushes of rose and jasmine, while privet and eglantine, oxe-eye, violet and lily, narcissus, origane and the winter gilliflower carpeted the borders; and the breath of the breeze swept over these sweet smelling growths diffusing their delicious odours right and left, perfuming the world and filling my soul with delight. After taking my pleasure there awhile I went from it and, having closed the door as it was before, opened the third door wherein I saw a high open hall pargetted with parti-coloured marbles and pietra dura of price and other precious stones, and hung with cages of sandal-wood and eagle-wood; full of birds which made sweet music, such as the Thousand voiced,[295] and the cushat, the merle, the turtle- dove and the Nubian ring dove. My heart was filled with pleasure thereby; my grief was dispelled and I slept in that aviary till dawn. Then I undocked the door of the fourth chamber and therein found a grand saloon with forty smaller chambers giving upon it. All their doors stood open: so I entered and found them full of pearls and jacinths and beryls and emeralds and corals and car buncles, and all manner precious gems and jewels, such as tongue of man may not describe. My thought was stunned at the sight and I said to myself, "These be things methinks united which could not be found save in the treasuries of a King of Kings, nor could the monarchs of the world have collected the like of these!” And my heart dilated and my sorrows ceased, “For,” quoth I, “now verily am I the monarch of the age, since by Allah’s grace this enormous wealth is mine; and I have forty damsels under my hand nor is there any to claim them save myself.” Then I gave not over opening place after place until nine and thirty days were passed and in that time I had entered every chamber except that one whose door the Princesses had charged me not to open. But my thoughts, O my mistress, ever ran on that forbidden fortieth[296] and Satan urged me to open it for my own undoing; nor had I patience to forbear, albeit there wanted of the trysting time but a single day. So I stood before the chamber aforesaid and, after a moment’s hesitation, opened the door which was plated with red gold, and entered. I was met by a perfume whose like I had never before smelt; and so sharp and subtle was the odour that it made my senses drunken as with strong wine, and I fell to the ground in a fainting fit which lasted a full hour. When I came to myself I strengthened my heart and, entering, found myself in a chamber whose floor was bespread with saffron and blazing with light from branched candelabra of gold and lamps fed with costly oils, which diffused the scent of musk and ambergris. I saw there also two great censers each big as a mazer-bowl,[297] flaming with lign-aloes, nadd- perfume,[298] ambergris and honied scents; and the place was full of their fragrance. Presently, O my lady, I espied a noble steed, black as the murks of night when murkiest, standing, ready saddled and bridled (and his saddle was of red gold) before two mangers, one of clear crystal wherein was husked sesame, and the other also of crystal containing water of the rose scented with musk. When I saw this I marvelled and said to myself, “Doubtless in this animal must be some wondrous mystery;” and Satan cozened me, so I led him without the palace end mounted him, but he would not stir from his place. So I hammered his sides with my heels, but he moved not, and then I took the rein whip,[299] and struck him withal. When he felt the blow, he neighed a neigh with a sound like deafening thunder and, opening a pair of wings[300] flew up with me in the firmament of heaven far beyond the eyesight of man. After a full hour of flight he descended and alighted on a terrace roof and shaking me off his back lashed me on the face with his tail and gouged out my left eye causing it roll along my cheek. Then he flew away. I went down from the terrace and found myself again amongst the ten one eyed youths sitting upon their ten couches with blue covers; and they cried out when they saw me, “No welcome to thee, nor aught of good cheer! We all lived of lives the happiest and we ate and drank of the best; upon brocades and cloths of gold we took rest and we slept with our heads on beauty’s breast, but we could not await one day to gain the delights of a year!” Quoth I, “Behold I have become one like unto you and now I would have you bring me a tray full of blackness, wherewith to blacken my face, and receive me into your society.” “No, by Allah,” quoth they, “thou shalt not sojourn with us and now get thee hence!” So they drove me away. Finding them reject me thus I foresaw that matters would go hard with me, and I remembered the many miseries which Destiny had written upon my forehead; and I fared forth from among them heavy hearted and tearful eyed, repeating to myself these words, “I was sitting at mine ease but my frowardness brought me to unease.” Then I shaved beard and mustachios and eye brows, renouncing the world, and wandered in Kalandar garb about Allah’s earth; and the Almighty decreed safety for me till I arrived at Baghdad, which was on the evening of this very night. Here I met these two other Kalandars standing bewildered; so I saluted them saying, “I am a stranger!” and they answered, “And we likewise be strangers!” By the freak of Fortune we were like to like, three Kalandars and three monoculars all blind of the left eye. Such, O my lady, is the cause of the shearing of my beard and the manner of my losing an eye. Said the lady to him, “Rub thy head and wend thy ways;” but he answered, “By Allah, I will not go until I hear the stories of these others.” Then the lady, turning towards the Caliph and Ja’afar and Masrur, said to them, “Do ye also give an account of yourselves, you men!” Whereupon Ja’afar stood forth and told her what he had told the portress as they were entering the house; and when she heard his story of their being merchants and Mosul men who had outrun the watch, she said, “I grant you your lives each for each sake, and now away with you all.” So they all went out and when they were in the street, quoth the Caliph to the Kalandars, “O company, whither go ye now, seeing that the morning hath not yet dawned?" Quoth they, "By Allah, O our lord, we know not where to go." "Come and pass the rest of the night with us," said the Caliph and, turning to Ja'afar, "Take them home with thee and tomorrow bring them to my presence that we may chronicle their adventures." Ja'afar did as the Caliph bade him and the Commander of the Faithful returned to his palace; but sleep gave no sign of visiting him that night and he lay awake pondering the mishaps of the three Kalandar princes and impatient to know the history of the ladies and the two black bitches. No sooner had morning dawned than he went forth and sat upon the throne of his sovereignty; and, turning to Ja'afar, after all his Grandees and Officers of state were gathered together, he said, "Bring me the three ladies and the two bitches and the three Kalandars." So Ja'afar fared forth and brought them all before him (and the ladies were veiled); then the Minister turned to them and said in the Caliph's name, "We pardon you your maltreatment of us and your want of courtesy, in consideration of the kindness which forewent it, and for that ye knew us not: now however I would have you to know that ye stand in presence of the fifth[301] of the sons of Abbas, Harun al-Rashid, brother of Caliph Músá al- Hádi, son of Al-Mansúr; son of Mohammed the brother of Al-Saffáh bin Mohammed who was first of the royal house. Speak ye therefore before him the truth and the whole truth!" When the ladies heard Ja afar's words touching the Commander of the Faithful, the eldest came forward and said, "O Prince of True Believers, my story is one which, were it graven with needle-gravers upon the eye corners were a warner for whoso would be warned and an example for whoso can take profit from example." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seventeenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that she stood forth before the Commander of the Faithful and began to tell

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

The Eldest Lady’s Tale.

Verily a strange tale is mine and ’tis this: — Yon two black bitches are my eldest sisters by one mother and father; and these two others, she who beareth upon her the signs of stripes and the third our procuratrix are my sisters by another mother. When my father died, each took her share of the heritage and, after a while my mother also deceased, leaving me and my sisters german three thousand diners; so each daughter received her portion of a thousand diners and I the same, albe the youngest. In due course of time my sisters married with the usual festivities and lived with their husbands, who bought merchandise with their wives monies and set out on their travels together. Thus they threw me off. My brothers in law were absent with their wives five years, during which period they spent all the money they had and, becoming bankrupt, deserted my sisters in foreign parts amid stranger folk. After five years my eldest sister returned to me in beggar’s gear with her clothes in rags and tatters[302] and a dirty old mantilla;[303] and truly she was in the foulest and sorriest plight. At first sight I did not know my own sister; but presently I recognised her and said “What state is this?” “O our sister,” she replied, “Words cannot undo the done; and the reed of Destiny hath run through what Allah decreed.” Then I sent her to the bath and dressed her in a suit of mine own, and boiled for her a bouillon and brought her some good wine and said to her, “O my sister, thou art the eldest, who still standest to us in the stead of father and mother; and, as for the inheritance which came to me as to you twain, Allah hath blessed it and prospered it to me with increase; and my circumstances are easy, for I have made much money by spinning and cleaning silk; and I and you will share my wealth alike.” I entreated her with all kindliness and she abode with me a whole year, during which our thoughts and fancies were always full of our other sister. Shortly after she too came home in yet fouler and sorrier plight than that of my eldest sister; and I dealt by her still more honorably than I had done by the first, and each of them had a share of my substance. After a time they said to me, ‘O our sister, we desire to marry again, for indeed we have not patience to drag on our days without husbands and to lead the lives of widows bewitched;" and I replied, "O eyes of me![304] ye have hitherto seen scanty weal in wedlock, for now-a-days good men and true are become rarities and curiosities; nor do I deem your projects advisable, as ye have already made trial of matrimony and have failed." But they would not accept my advice and married without my consent: nevertheless I gave them outfit and dowries out of my money; and they fared forth with their mates. In a mighty little time their husbands played them false and, taking whatever they could lay hands upon, levanted and left them in the lurch. Thereupon they came to me ashamed and in abject case and made their excuses to me, saying, Pardon our fault and be not wroth with us;[305] for although thou art younger in years yet art thou older in wit; henceforth we will never make mention of marriage; so take us back as thy hand maidens that we may eat our mouthful." Quoth I, "Welcome to you, O my sisters, there is naught dearer to me than you." And I took them in and redoubled my kindness to them. We ceased not to live after this loving fashion for a full year, when I resolved to sell my wares abroad and first to fit me a conveyance for Bassorah; so I equipped a large ship, and loaded her with merchandise and valuable goods for traffic, and with provaunt and all needful for a voyage, and said to my sisters, "Will ye abide at home whilst I travel, or would ye prefer to accompany me on the voyage?" "We will travel with thee," answered they, "for we cannot bear to be parted from thee." So I divided my monies into two parts, one to accompany me and the other to be left in charge of a trusty person, for, as I said to myself, "Haply some accident may happen to the ship and yet we remain alive; in which case we shall find on our return what may stand us in good stead." I took my two sisters and we went a voyaging some days and nights; but the master was careless enough to miss his course, and the ship went astray with us and entered a sea other than the sea we sought. For a time we knew naught of this; and the wind blew fair for us ten days, after which the look out man went aloft to see about him and cried, "Good news!" Then he came down rejoicing and said, "I have seen what seemeth to be a city as 'twere a pigeon." Hereat we rejoiced and, ere an hour of the day had passed, the buildings showed plain in the offing and we asked the Captain, "What is the name of yonder city?" and he answered By Allah I wot not, for I never saw it before and never sailed these seas in my life: but, since our troubles have ended in safety, remains for you only to land there with your merchandise and, if you find selling profitable, sell and make your market of what is there; and if not, we will rest here two days and provision ourselves and fare away.” So we entered the port and the Captain went up town and was absent awhile, after which he returned to us and said, “Arise; go up into the city and marvel at the works of Allah with His creatures and pray to be preserved from His righteous wrath!” So we landed and going up into the city, saw at the gate men hending staves in hand; but when we drew near them, behold, they had been translated[306] by the anger of Allah and had become stones. Then we entered the city and found all who therein woned into black stones enstoned: not an inhabited house appeared to the espier, nor was there a blower of fire.[307] We were awe struck at the sight and threaded the market streets where we found the goods and gold and silver left lying in their places; and we were glad and said, “Doubtless there is some mystery in all this.” Then we dispersed about the thorough-fares and each busied himself with collecting the wealth and money and rich stuffs, taking scanty heed of friend or comrade. As for myself I went up to the castle which was strongly fortified; and, entering the King’s palace by its gate of red gold, found all the vaiselle of gold and silver, and the King himself seated in the midst of his Chamberlains and Nabobs and Emirs and Wazirs; all clad in raiment which confounded man’s art. I drew nearer and saw him sitting on a throne incrusted and inlaid with pearls and gems; and his robes were of gold-cloth adorned with jewels of every kind, each one flashing like a star. Around him stood fifty Mamelukes, white slaves, clothed in silks of divers sorts holding their drawn swords in their hands; but when I drew near to them lo! all were black stones. My understanding was confounded at the sight, but I walked on and entered the great hall of the Harim,[308] whose walls I found hung with tapestries of gold striped silk and spread with silken carpets embroidered with golden cowers. Here I saw the Queen lying at full length arrayed in robes purfled with fresh young[309] pearls; on her head was a diadem set with many sorts of gems each fit for a ring[310] and around her neck hung collars and necklaces. All her raiment and her ornaments were in natural state but she had been turned into a black stone by Allah's wrath. Presently I espied an open door for which I made straight and found leading to it a flight of seven steps. So I walked up and came upon a place pargetted with marble and spread and hung with gold-worked carpets and tapestry, amiddlemostof which stood a throne of juniper wood inlaid with pearls and precious stones and set with bosses of emeralds. In the further wall was an alcove whose curtains, bestrung with pearls, were let down and I saw a light issuing therefrom; so I drew near and perceived that the light came from a precious stone as big as an ostrich egg, set at the upper end of the alcove upon a little chryselephantine couch of ivory and gold; and this jewel, blazing like the sun, cast its rays wide and side. The couch also was spread with all manner of silken stuffs amazing the gazer with their richness and beauty. I marvelled much at all this, especially when seeing in that place candles ready lighted; and I said in my mind, "Needs must some one have lighted these candles." Then I went forth and came to the kitchen and thence to the buttery and the King's treasure chambers; and continued to explore the palace and to pace from place to place; I forgot myself in my awe and marvel at these matters and I was drowned in thought till the night came on. Then I would have gone forth, but knowing not the gate I lost my way, so I returned to the alcove whither the lighted candles directed me and sat down upon the couch; and wrapping myself in a coverlet, after I had repeated somewhat from the Koran, I would have slept but could not, for restlessness possessed me. When night was at its noon I heard a voice chanting the Koran in sweetest accents; but the tone thereof was weak; so I rose, glad to hear the silence broken, and followed the sound until I reached a closet whose door stood ajar. Then peeping through a chink I considered the place and lo! it was an oratory wherein was a prayer niche[311] with two wax candles burning and lamps hanging from the ceiling. In it too was spread a prayer carpet whereupon sat a youth fair to see; and before him on its stand[312] was a copy of the Koran, from which he was reading. I marvelled to see him alone alive amongst the people of the city and entering saluted him; whereupon he raised his eyes and returned my salam. Quoth I, "Now by the Truth of what thou readest in Allah's Holy Book, I conjure thee to answer my question." He looked upon me with a smile and said, "O handmaid of Allah, first tell me the cause of thy coming hither, and I in turn will tell what hath befallen both me and the people of this city, and what was the reason of my escaping their doom." So I told him my story whereat he wondered; and I questioned him of the people of the city, when he replied, "Have patience with me for a while, O my sister!" and, reverently closing the Holy Book, he laid it up in a satin bag. Then he seated me by his side; and I looked at him and behold, he was as the moon at its full, fair of face and rare of form, soft sided and slight, of well proportioned height, and cheek smoothly bright and diffusing light; in brief a sweet, a sugar stick,[313] . even as saith the poet of the like of him in these couplets: —

That night th' astrologer a scheme of planets drew, * And lo! a
graceful shape of youth appeared in view:
Saturn had stained his locks with Saturninest jet, * And spots of
nut brown musk on rosy side face blew:[314]
Mars tinctured either cheek with tinct of martial red; * Sagittal
shots from eyelids Sagittarius threw:
Dowered him Mercury with bright mercurial wit; * Bore off the
Bear[315] what all man's evil glances grew:
Amazed stood Astrophil to sight the marvel birth * When louted
low the Moon at full to buss the Earth.

And of a truth Allah the Most High had robed him in the raiment of perfect grace and had purfled and fringed it with a cheek all beauty and loveliness, even as the poet saith of such an one: —

By his eyelids shedding perfume and his fine slim waist I swear,

* By the shooting of his shafts barbed with sorcery passing
rare;
By the softness of his sides,[316] and glances' lingering
light, * And brow of dazzling day-tide ray and night within
his hair;
By his eyebrows which deny to who look upon them rest, * Now

bidding now forbidding, ever dealing joy and care;
By the rose that decks his cheek, and the myrtle of its
moss,[317] * By jacinths bedded in his lips and pearl his
smile lays bare;
By his graceful bending neck and the curving of his breast, *
Whose polished surface beareth those granados, lovely pair;
By his heavy hips that quiver as he passeth in his pride, * Or he
resteth with that waist which is slim beyond compare;
By the satin of his skin, by that fine unsullied sprite; * By the
beauty that containeth all things bright and debonnair;
By that ever open hand; by the candour of his tongue; * By noble
blood and high degree whereof he's hope and heir;
Musk from him borrows muskiness she loveth to exhale * And all
the airs of ambergris through him perfume the air;
The sun, methinks, the broad bright sun, before my love would
pale * And sans his splendour would appear a paring of his
nail.[318]

I glanced at him with one glance of eyes which caused me a thousand sighs; and my heart was at once taken captive wise, so I asked him, "O my lord and my love, tell me that whereof I questioned thee;" and he answered, "Hearing is obeying! Know O handmaid of Allah, that this city was the capital of my father who is the King thou sawest on the throne transfigured by Allah's wrath to a black stone, and the Queen thou foundest in the alcove is my mother. They and all the people of the city were Magians who fire adored in lieu of the Omnipotent Lord[319] and were wont to swear by lowe and heat and shade and light and the spheres revolving day and night. My father had ne'er a son till he was blest with me near the last of his days; and he reared me till I grew up and prosperity anticipated me in all things. Now it so fortuned that there was with us an old woman well stricken in years, a Moslemah who, inwardly believing in Allah and His Apostle, conformed outwardly with the religion of my people; and my father placed thorough confidence in her for that he knew her to be trustworthy and virtuous; and he treated her with ever increasing kindness believing her to be of his own belief. So when I was well nigh grown up my father committed me to her charge saying: — Take him and educate him and teach him the rules of our faith; let him have the best in structions and cease not thy fostering care of him. So she took me and taught me the tenets of Al-Islam with the divine ordinances[320] of the Wuzu ablution and the five daily prayers and she made me learn the Koran by rote, often repeating: — Serve none save Allah Almighty! When I had mastered this much of knowledge she said to me: — O my son, keep this matter concealed from thy sire and reveal naught to him lest he slay thee. So I hid it from him and I abode on this wise for a term of days when the old woman died, and the people of the city redoubled in their impiety[321] and arrogance and the error of their ways. One day, while they were as wont, behold, they heard a loud and terrible sound and a crier crying out with a voice like roaring thunder so every ear could hear, far and near, "O folk of this city, leave ye your fire worshipping and adore Allah the All-compassionate King!" At this, fear and terror fell upon the citizens and they crowded to my father (he being King of the city) and asked him, "What is this awesome voice we have heard, for it hath confounded us with the excess of its terror?" and he answered, "Let not a voice fright you nor shake your steadfast sprite nor turn you back from the faith which is right." Their hearts inclined to his words and they ceased not to worship the fire and they persisted in rebellion for a full year from the time they heard the first voice; and on the anniversary came a second cry, and a third at the head of the third year, each year once Still they persisted in their malpractises till one day at break of dawn, judgment and the wrath of Heaven descended upon them with all suddenness, and by the visitation of Allah all were metamorphosed into black stones,[322] they and their beasts and their cattle; and none was saved save myself who at the time was engaged in my devotions. From that day to this I am in the case thou seest, constant in prayer and fasting and reading and reciting the Koran; but I am indeed grown weary by reason of my loneliness, having none to bear me company." Then said I to him (for in very sooth he had won my heart and was the lord of my life and soul), "O youth, wilt thou fare with me to Baghdad city and visit the Olema and men learned in the law and doctors of divinity and get thee increase of wisdom and understanding and theology? And know that she who standeth in thy presence will be thy handmaid, albeit she be head of her family and mistress over men and eunuchs and servants and slaves Indeed my life was no life before it fell in with thy youth. I have here a ship laden with merchandise; and in very truth Destiny drove me to this city that I might come to the knowledge of these matters, for it was fated that we should meet." And I ceased not to persuade him and speak him fair and use every art till he consented. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eighteenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the lady ceased not persuading with soft speech the youth to depart with her till he consented and said "Yes." She slept that night lying at his feet and hardly knowing where she was for excess of joy. As soon as the next morning dawned (she pursued, addressing the Caliph), I arose and we entered the treasuries and took thence whatever was light in weight and great in worth; then we went down side by side from the castle to the city, where we were met by the Captain and my sisters and slaves who had been seeking for me. When they saw me they rejoiced and asked what had stayed me, and I told them all I had seen and related to them the story of the young Prince and the transformation wherewith the citizens had been justly visited. Hereat all marvelled, but when my two sisters (these two bitches, O Commander of the Faithful!) saw me by the side of my young lover they jaloused me on his account and were wroth and plotted mischief against me. We awaited a fair wind and went on board rejoicing and ready to fly for joy by reason of the goods we had gotten, but my own greatest joyance was in the youth; and we waited awhile till the wind blew fair for us and then we set sail and fared forth. Now as we sat talking, my sisters asked me, "And what wilt thou do with this handsome young man?"; and I answered, "I purpose to make him my husband!" Then I turned to him and said, "O my lord, I have that to propose to thee wherein thou must not cross me; and this it is that, when we reach Baghdad, my native city, I offer thee my life as thy handmaiden in holy matrimony, and thou shalt be to me baron and I will be femme to thee." He answered, "I hear and I obey!; thou art my lady and my mistress and whatso thou doest I will not gainsay." Then I turned to my sisters and said, "This is my gain; I content me with this youth and those who have gotten aught of my property let them keep it as their gain with my good will." "Thou sayest and doest well," answered the twain, but they imagined mischief against me. We ceased not spooning before a fair wind till we had exchanged the sea of peril for the seas of safety and, in a few days, we made Bassorah city, whose buildings loomed clear before us as evening fell. But after we had retired to rest and were sound alseep, my two sisters arose and took me up, bed and all, and threw me into the sea: they did the same with the young Prince who, as he could not swim, sank and was drowned and Allah enrolled him in the noble army of Martyrs.[323] As for me would Heaven I had been drowned with him, but Allah deemed that I should be of the saved; so when I awoke and found myself in the sea and saw the ship making off like a dash of lightning, He threw in my way a piece of timber which I bestrided, and the waves tossed me to and fro till they cast me upon an island coast, a high land and an uninhabited. I landed and walked about the island the rest of the night and, when morning dawned, I saw a rough track barely fit for child of Adam to tread, leading to what proved a shallow ford connecting island and mainland. As soon as the sun had risen I spread my garments to dry in its rays; and ate of the fruits of the island and drank of its waters; then I set out along the foot track and ceased not walking till I reached the mainland. Now when there remained between me and the city but a two hours' journey behold, a great serpent, the bigness of a date palm, came fleeing towards me in all haste, gliding along now to the right then to the left till she was close upon me, whilst her tongue lolled ground wards a span long and swept the dust as she went. She was pursued by a Dragon[324] who was not longer than two lances, and of slender build about the bulk of a spear and, although her terror lent her speed, and she kept wriggling from side to side, he overtook her and seized her by the tail, whereat her tears streamed down and her tongue was thrust out in her agony. I took pity on her and, picking up a stone and calling upon Allah for aid, threw it at the Dragon's head with such force that he died then and there; and the serpent opening a pair of wings flew into the lift and disappeared from before my eyes. I sat down marvelling over that adventure, but I was weary and, drowsiness overcoming me, I slept where I was for a while. When I awoke I found a jet black damsel sitting at my feet shampooing them; and by her side stood two black bitches (my sisters, O Commander of the Faithful!). I was ashamed before her[325] and, sitting up, asked her, "O my sister, who and what art thou?"; and she answered, "How soon hast thou forgotten me! I am she for whom thou wroughtest a good deed and sowedest the seed of gratitude and slewest her foe; for I am the serpent whom by Allah's aidance thou didst just now deliver from the Dragon. I am a Jinniyah and he was a Jinn who hated me, and none saved my life from him save thou. As soon as thou freedest me from him I flew on the wind to the ship whence thy sisters threw thee, and removed all that was therein to thy house. Then I ordered my attendant Marids to sink the ship and I transformed thy two sisters into these black bitches; for I know all that hath passed between them and thee; but as for the youth, of a truth he is drowned." So saying, she flew up with me and the bitches, and presently set us down on the terrace roof of my house, wherein I found ready stored the whole of what property was in my ship, nor was aught of it missing. "Now (continued the serpent that was), I swear by all engraver on the seal-ring of Solomon[326] (with whom be peace!) unless thou deal to each of these bitches three hundred stripes every day I will come and imprison thee forever under the earth." I answered, "Hearkening and obedience!"; and away she flew. But before going she again charged me saying, "I again swear by Him who made the two seas flow[327] (and this be my second oath) if thou gainsay me I will come and transform thee like thy sisters." Since then I have never failed, O Commander of the Faithful, to beat them with that number of blows till their blood flows with my tears, I pitying them the while, and well they wot that their being scourged is no fault of mine and they accept my excuses. And this is my tale and my history! The Caliph marvelled at her adventures and then signed to Ja'afar who said to the second lady, the Portress, "And thou, how camest thou by the welts and wheels upon thy body?" So she began the

Tale of the Portress.

Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that I had a father who, after fulfilling his time, deceased and left me great store of wealth. I remained single for a short time and presently married one of the richest of his day. I abode with him a year when he also died, and my share of his property amounted to eighty thousand diners in gold according to the holy law of inheritance.[328] Thus I became passing rich an my reputation spread far and wide, for I had made me ten changes of raiment, each worth a thousand diners One day as I was sitting at home, behold, there came in to me an old woman[329] with lantern jaws and cheeks sucked in, and eyes rucked up, and eyebrows scant and scald, and head bare and bald; and teeth broken by time and mauled, and back bending and neck nape nodding, and face blotched, and rheum running, and hair like a snake black and white speckled, in complexion a very fright, even as saith the poet of the like of her: —

Ill-omened hag! unshriven be her sins * Nor mercy visit her on
  dying bed:
Thousand head strongest he mules would her guiles, * Despite
  their bolting lead with spider thread.

And as saith another: —

A hag to whom th' unlawful lawfullest * And witchcraft wisdom in
  her sight are grown:
A mischief making brat, a demon maid, * A whorish woman and a
  pimping crone.[330]

When the old woman entered she salamed to me and kissing the ground before me, said, "I have at home an orphan daughter and this night are her wedding and her displaying.[331] We be poor folks and strangers in this city knowing none inhabitant and we are broken hearted. So do thou earn for thyself a recompense and a reward in Heaven by being present at her displaying and, when the ladies of this city shall hear that thou art to make act of presence, they also will present themselves; so shalt thou comfort her affliction, for she is sore bruised in spirit and she hath none to look to save Allah the Most High.” Then she wept and kissed my feet reciting these couplets: —

“Thy presence bringeth us a grace * We own before thy winsome
face:
And wert thou absent ne’er an one * Could stand in stead or take
thy place.”

So pity get hold on me and compassion and I said, “Hearing is consenting and, please Allah, I will do somewhat more for her; nor shall she be shown to her bridegroom save in my raiment and ornaments and jewelry.” At this the old woman rejoiced and bowed her head to my feet and kissed them, saying, “Allah requite thee weal, and comfort thy heart even as thou hast comforted mine! But, O my lady, do not trouble thyself to do me this service at this hour; be thou ready by supper time,[332] when I will come and fetch thee.” So saying she kissed my hand and went her ways. I set about stringing my pearls and donning my brocades and making my toilette. Little recking what Fortune had in womb for me, when suddenly the old woman stood before me, simpering and smiling till she showed every tooth stump, and quoth she, “O my mistress, the city madams have arrived and when I apprized them that thou promisedst to be present, they were glad and they are now awaiting thee and looking eagerly for thy coming and for the honour of meeting thee.” So I threw on my mantilla and, making the old crone walk before me and my handmaidens behind me, I fared till we came to a street well watered and swept neat, where the winnowing breeze blew cool and sweet. Here we were stopped by a gate arched over with a dome of marble stone firmly seated on solidest foundation, and leading to a Palace whose walls from earth rose tall and proud, and whose pinnacle was crowned by the clouds,[333] and over the doorway were writ these couplets: —

I am the wone where Mirth shall ever smile; * The home of

Joyance through my lasting while:
And ‘mid my court a fountain jets and flows, * Nor tears nor
troubles shall that fount defile:
The merge with royal Nu’uman’s[334] bloom is dight, *
Myrtle, Narcissus-flower and Chamomile.

Arrived at the gate, before which hung a black curtain, the old woman knocked and it was opened to us; when we entered and found a vestibule spread with carpets and hung around with lamps all alight and wax candles in candelabra adorned with pendants of precious gems and noble ores. We passed on through this passage till we entered a saloon, whose like for grandeur and beauty is not to be found in this world. It was hung and carpeted with silken stuffs, and was illuminated with branches sconces and tapers ranged in double row, an avenue abutting on the upper or noble end of the saloon, where stood a couch of juniper wood encrusted with pearls and gems and surmounted by a baldaquin with mosquito curtains of satin looped up with margaritas. And hardly had we taken note of this when there came forth from the baldaquin a young lady and I looked, O Commander of the Faithful, upon a face and form more perfect than the moon when fullest, with a favour brighter than the dawn gleaming with saffron-hued light, even as the poet sang when he said —

Thou pacest the palace a marvel sight, * A bride for a Kisra’s or
Kaisar’s night!
Wantons the rose on thy roseate cheek, * O cheek as the blood of
the dragon[335] bright!
Slim waisted, languorous, sleepy eyed, * With charms which
promise all love
And the tire which attires thy tiara’d brow * Is a night of woe
on a morn’s glad light.

The fair young girl came down from the estrade and said to me, “Welcome and well come and good cheer to my sister, the dearly beloved, the illustrious, and a thousand greetings!” Then she recited these couplets: —

"An but the house could know who cometh 'twould rejoice, * And
kiss the very dust whereon thy foot was placed
And with the tongue of circumstance the walls would say, *
"Welcome and hail to one with generous gifts engraced!"

Then sat she down and said to me, "O my sister, I have a brother who hath had sight of thee at sundry wedding feasts and festive seasons: he is a youth handsomer than I, and he hath fallen desperately in love with thee, for that bounteous Destiny hath garnered in thee all beauty and perfection; and he hath given silver to this old woman that she might visit thee; and she hath contrived on this wise to foregather us twain. He hath heard that thou art one of the nobles of thy tribe nor is he aught less in his; and, being desirous to ally his lot with thy lot, he hath practiced this device to bring me in company with thee; for he is fain to marry thee after the ordinance of Allah and his Apostle; and in what is lawful and right there is no shame." When I heard these words and saw myself fairly entrapped in the house, I said, "Hearing is consenting." She was delighted at this and clapped her hands;[336] whereupon a door opened and out of it came a young man blooming in the prime of life, exquisitely dressed, a model of beauty and loveliness and symmetry and perfect grace, with gentle winning manners and eyebrows like a bended bow and shaft on cord, and eyes which bewitched all hearts with sorcery lawful in the sight of the Lord; even as saith some rhymer describing the like of him: —

His face as the face of the young moon shines * And Fortune stamps him with pearls for signs.[337]

And Allah favour him who said: —

Blest be his beauty; blest the Lord's decree * Who cast and
shaped a thing so bright of blee:
All gifts of beauty he conjoins in one; * Lost in his love is all
humanity;
For Beauty's self inscribed on his brow * "I testify there be no
Good but he!"[338]

When I looked at him my heart inclined to him and I loved him;

and he sat by my side and talked with me a while, when the young lady again clapped her hands and behold, a side door opened and out of it came the Kazi with his four assessors as witnesses; and they saluted us and, sitting down, drew up and wrote out the marriage contract between me and the youth and retired. Then he turned to me and said, “Be our night blessed,” presently adding, “O my lady, I have a condition to lay on thee.” Quoth I, “O my lord, what is that?” Whereupon he arose and fetching a copy of the Holy Book presented it to me saying “Swear hereon thou wilt never look at any other than myself nor incline thy body or thy heart to him.” I swore readily enough to this and he joyed with exceeding joy and embraced me round the neck while love for him possessed my whole heart. Then they set the table[339] before us and we ate and drank till we were satisfied, but I was dying for the coming of the night. And when night did come he led me to the bride chamber and slept with me on the bed and continued to kiss and embrace me till the morning — such a night I had never seen in my dreams. I lived with him a life of happiness and delight for a full month, at the end of which I asked his leave[340] to go on foot to the bazar and buy me certain especial stuffs and he gave me permission. So I donned my mantilla and, taking with me the old woman and a slave-girl,[341] I went to the khan of the silk-mercers, where I seated myself in the shop front of a young merchant whom the old woman recommended, saying to me, “This youth’s father died when he was a boy and left him great store of wealth: he hath by him a mighty fine[342] stock of goods and thou wilt find what thou seekest with him, for none in the bazar hath better stuffs than he. Then she said to him, “Show this lady the most costly stuffs thou hast by thee;” and he replied, “Hearkening and obedience!” Then she whispered me, “Say a civil word to him!”; but I replied, “I am pledged to address no man save my lord. And as she began to sound his praise I said sharply to her, We want nought of thy sweet speeches; our wish is to buy of him whatsoever we need, and return home.” So he brought me all I sought and I offered him his money, but he refused to take it saying, “Let it be a gift offered to my guest this day!” Then quoth I to the old woman, “If he will not take the money, give him back his stuff.” “By Allah,” cried he, “not a thing will I take from thee: I sell it not for gold or for silver, but I give it all as a gift for a single kiss; a kiss more precious to me than everything the shop containeth." Asked the old woman, "What will the kiss profit thee?"; and, turning to me, whispered, "O my daughter, thou hearest what this young fellow saith? What harm will it do thee if he get a kiss from thee and thou gettest what thou seekest at that price?" Replied I, "I take refuge with Allah from such action! Knowest thou not that I am bound by an oath?''[343] But she answered, "Now whist! just let him kiss thee and neither speak to him nor lean over him, so shalt thou keep thine oath and thy silver, and no harm whatever shall befal thee." And she ceased not to persuade me and importune me and make light of the matter till evil entered into my mind and I put my head in the poke[344] and, declaring I would ne'er consent, consented. So I veiled my eyes and held up the edge of my mantilla between me and the people passing and he put his mouth to my cheek under the veil.

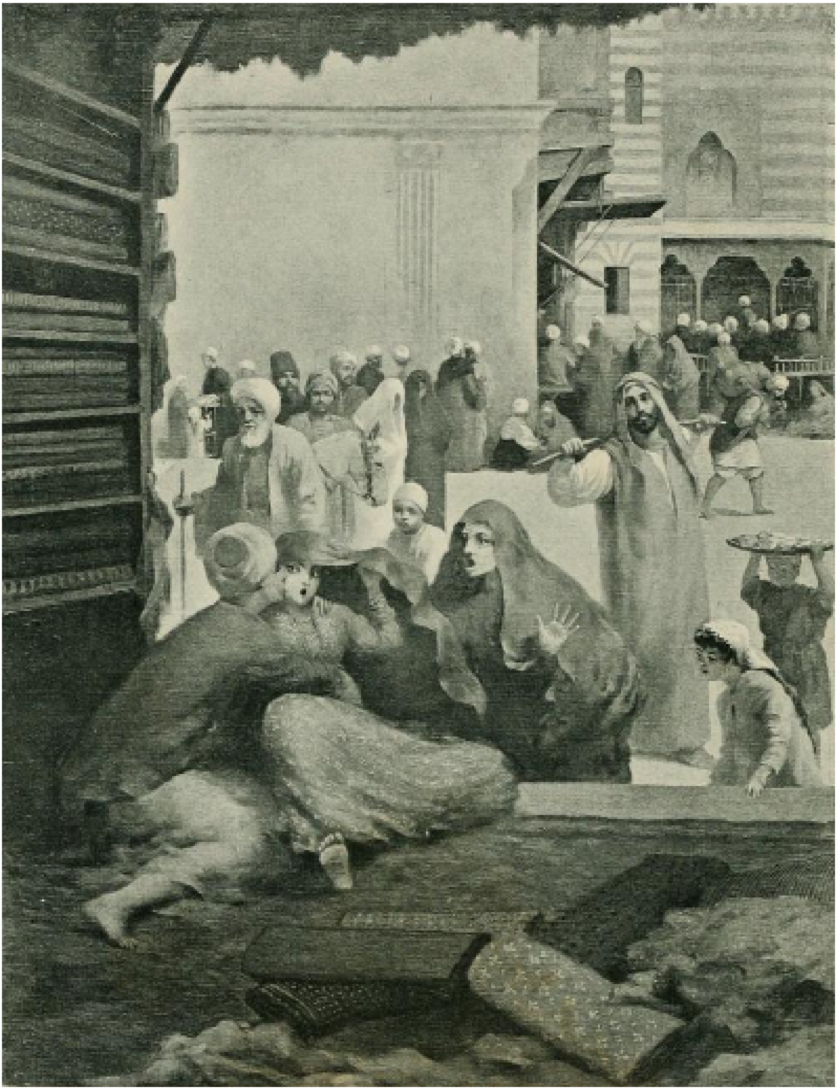

But while kissing me he bit me so hard a bite that it tore the flesh from my cheek,[345] and blood flowed fast and faintness came over me. The old woman caught me in her arms and, when I came to myself, I found the shop shut up and her sorrowing over me and saying, “Thank Allah for averting what might have been worse!” Then she said to me, “Come, take heart and let us go home before the matter become public and thou be dishonoured. And when thou art safe inside the house feign sickness and lie down and cover thyself up;

and I will bring thee powders and plasters to cure this bite withal, and thy wound will be healed at the latest in three days.” So after a while I arose and I was in extreme distress and terror came full upon me; but I went on little by little till I reached the house when I pleaded illness and lay me down. When it was night my husband came in to me and said, “What hath befallen thee, O my darling, in this excursion of thine?”; and I replied, “I am not well: my head acheth badly.” Then he lighted a candle and drew near me and looked hard at me and asked, “What is that wound I see on thy cheek and in the tenderest part too?” And I answered, When I went out to day with thy leave to buy stuffs, a camel laden with firewood jostled me and one of the pieces tore my veil and wounded my cheek as thou seest; for indeed the ways of this city are strait.” “Tomorrow,” cried he, “I will go complain to the Governor, so shall he gibbet every fuel seller in Baghdad.” “Allah upon thee,” said I, “burden not thy soul with such sin against any man. The fact is I was riding on an ass and it stumbled, throwing me to the ground; and my cheek lighted upon a stick or a bit of glass and got this wound.” “Then,” said he, “tomorrow I will go up to Ja’afar the Barmaki and tell him the story, so shall he kill every donkey boy in Baghdad.” “Wouldst thou destroy all these men because of my wound,” said I, “when this which befel me was by decree of Allah and His destiny?” But he answered, “There is no help for it;” and, springing to his feet, plied me with words and pressed me till I was perplexed and frightened; and I stuttered and stammered and my speech waxed thick and I said, “This is a mere accident by decree of Allah.” Then, O Commander of the Faithful, he guessed my case and said, “Thou hast been false to thine oath.” He at once cried out with a loud cry, whereupon a door opened and in came seven black slaves whom he commanded to drag me from my bed and throw me down in the middle of the room. Furthermore, he ordered one of them to pinion my elbows and squat upon my head; and a second to sit upon my knees and secure my feet; and drawing his sword he gave it to a third and said, “Strike her, O Sa’ad, and cut her in twain and let each one take half and cast it into the Tigris[346] that the fish may eat her; for such is the retribution due to those who violate their vows and are unfaithful to their love.” And he redoubled in wrath and recited these couplets: —

“An there be one who shares with me her love, * I’d strangle Love
tho’ life by Love were slain
Saying, O Soul, Death were the nobler choice, * For ill is Love
when shared ‘twixt partners twain.”

Then he repeated to the slave, “Smite her, O Sa’ad!” And when the slave who was sitting upon me made sure of the command he bent down to me and said, “O my mistress, repeat the profession of Faith and bethink thee if there be any thing thou wouldst have done; for verily this is the last hour of thy life.” “O good slave,” said I, “wait but a little while and get off my head that I may charge thee with my last injunctions.” Then I raised my head and saw the state I was in, how I had fallen from high degree into lowest disgrace; and into death after life (and such life!) and how I had brought my punishment on myself by my own sin; where upon the tears streamed from mine eyes and I wept with exceed ing weeping. But he looked on me with eyes of wrath, and began repeating: —

“Tell her who turneth from our love to work it injury sore, * And
taketh her a fine new love the old love tossing o’er:
We cry enough o’ thee ere thou enough of us shalt cry! * What
past between us cloth suffice and haply something
more.”[347]

When I heard this, O Commander of the Faithful, I wept and looked at him and began repeating these couplets: —

“To severance you doom my love and all unmoved remain; * My
tear sore lids you sleepless make and sleep while I
complain:
You make firm friendship reign between mine eyes and
insomny; * Yet can my heart forget you not, nor tears can I
restrain:
You made me swear with many an oath my troth to hold for aye; *
But when you reigned my bosom’s lord you wrought me traitor
bane:
I loved you like a silly child who wots not what is Love; * Then

spare the learner, let her not be by the master slain!
By Allah’s name I pray you write, when I am dead and gone, *
Upon my tomb, This died of Love whose senses Love had ta’en:
Then haply one shall pass that way who fire of Love hath felt, *
And treading on a lover’s heart with ruth and woe shall
melt.”

When I ended my verses tears came again; but the poetry and the weeping only added fury to his fury, and he recited: —

“’Twas not satiety bade me leave the dearling of my soul, * But
that she sinned a mortal sin which clips me in its clip:
She sought to let another share the love between us twain, * But
my True Faith of Unity refuseth partnership.”[348]

When he ceased reciting I wept again and prayed his pardon and humbled myself before him and spoke him softly, saying to myself, “I will work on him with words; so haply he will refrain from slaying me, even though he take all I have.” So I complained of my sufferings and began to repeat these couplets: —

“Now, by thy life and wert thou just my life thou hadst not
ta’en, * But who can break the severance law which parteth
lovers twain!
Thou loadest me with heavy weight of longing love, when I * Can
hardly bear my chemisette for weakness and for pain:
I marvel not to see my life and soul in ruin lain: * I marvel
much to see my frame such severance pangs sustain.”

When I ended my verse I wept again; and he looked at me and reviled me in abusive language,[349] repeating these couplets: —

“Thou wast all taken up with love of other man, not me; * ’Twas
thine to show me severance face, ‘’twas only mine to see:
I’ll leave thee for that first thou wert of me to take thy leave

* And patient bear that parting blow thou borest so
patiently:

E’en as thou soughtest other love, so other love I’ll seek, * And
make the crime of murdering love thine own atrocity.”

When he had ended his verses he again cried out to the slave, “Cut her in half and free us from her, for we have no profit of her. So the slave drew near me, O Commander of the Faithful and I ceased bandying verses and made sure of death and, despairing of life, committed my affairs to Almighty Allah, when behold, the old woman rushed in and threw herself at my husband’s feet and kissed them and wept and said, “O my son, by the rights of my fosterage and by my long service to thee, I conjure thee pardon this young lady, for indeed she hath done nothing deserving such doom. Thou art a very young man and I fear lest her death be laid at thy door; for it is said: — Whoso slayeth shall be slain. As for this wanton (since thou deemest her such) drive her out from thy doors, from thy love and from thy heart.” And she ceased not to weep and importune him till he relented and said, ‘I pardon her, but needs must I set on her my mark which shall show upon her all my life.” Then he bade the slaves drag me along the ground and lay me out at full length, after stripping me of all my clothes;[350] and when the slaves had so sat upon me that I could not move, he fetched in a rod of quince tree and came down with it upon my body, and continued beating me on the back and sides till I lost consciousness from excess of pain, and I despaired of life. Then he commanded the slaves to take me away as soon as it was dark, together with the old woman to show them the way and throw me upon the floor of the house wherein I dwelt before my marriage. They did their lord’s bidding and cast me down in my old home and went their ways. I did not revive from my swoon till dawn appeared, when I applied myself to the dressing of my wounds with ointments and other medicaments; and I medicined myself, but my sides and ribs still showed signs of the rod as thou hast seen. I lay in weakly case and confined to my bed for four months before I was able to rise and health returned to me. At the end of that time I went to the house where all this had happened and found it a ruin; the street had been pulled down endlong and rubbish heaps rose where the building erst was; nor could I learn how this had come about. Then I betook myself to this my sister on my father’s side and found her with these two black bitches. I saluted her and told her what had betided me and the whole of my story and she said, “O my sister, who is safe from the despite of Time and secure? Thanks be to Allah who has brought thee off safely;” and she began to say: —

“Such is the World, so bear a patient heart * When riches leave thee and when friends depart!”

Then she told me her own story, and what had happened to her with her two sisters and how matters had ended; so we abode together and the subject of marriage was never on our tongues for all these years. After a while we were joined by our other sister, the procuratrix, who goeth out every morning and buyeth all we require for the day and night; and we continued in such condition till this last night. In the morning our sister went out, as usual, to make her market and then befel us what befel from bringing the Porter into the house and admitting these three Kalandar men., We entreated them kindly and honourably and a quarter of the night had not passed ere three grave and respectable merchants from Mosul joined us and told us their adventures. We sat talking with them but on one condition which they violated, whereupon we treated them as sorted with their breach of promise, and made them repeat the account they had given of themselves. They did our bidding and we forgave their offence; so they departed from us and this morning we were unexpectedly summoned to thy presence. And such is our story! The Caliph wondered at her words and bade the tale be recorded and chronicled and laid up in his muniment-chambers. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nineteenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph commanded this story and those of the sister and the Kalandars to be recorded in the archives and be set in the royal muniment-chambers. Then he asked the eldest lady, the mistress of the house, “Knowest thou the whereabouts of the Ifritah who spelled thy sisters?”; and she answered, “O Commander of the Faithful, she gave me a ringlet of her hair saying: — Whenas thou wouldest see me, burn a couple of these hairs and I will be with thee forthright, even though I were beyond Caucasus-mountain.” Quoth the Caliph, “Bring me hither the hair.” So she brought it and he threw the whole lock upon the fire. As soon as the odour of the burning hair dispread itself, the palace shook and trembled, and all present heard a rumbling and rolling of thunder and a noise as of wings and lo! the Jinniyah who had been a serpent stood in the Caliph's presence. Now she was a Moslemah, so she saluted him and said, "Peace be with thee O Vicar[351] of Allah;" whereto he replied, "And with thee also be peace and the mercy of Allah and His blessing." Then she continued, "Know that this damsel sowed for me the seed of kindness, wherefor I cannot enough requite her, in that she delivered me from death and destroyed mine enemy. Now I had seen how her sisters dealt with her and felt myself bound to avenge her on them. At first I was minded to slay them, but I feared it would be grievous to her, so I transformed them to bitches; but if thou desire their release, O Commander of the Faithful, I will release them to pleasure thee and her for I am of the Moslems." Quoth the Caliph, "Release them and after we will look into the affair of the beaten lady and consider her case carefully; and if the truth of her story be evidenced I will exact retaliation[352] from him who wronged her." Said the Ifritah, "O Commander of the Faithful, I will forthwith release them and will discover to thee the man who did that deed by this lady and wronged her and took her property, and he is the nearest of all men to thee!" So saying she took a cup of water and muttered a spell over it and uttered words there was no understanding; then she sprinkled some of the water over the faces of the two bitches, saying, "Return to your former human shape!" whereupon they were restored to their natural forms and fell to praising their Creator. Then said the Ifritah, "O Commander of the Faithful, of a truth he who scourged this lady with rods is thy son Al-Amin brother of Al-Maamun ;[353] for he had heard of her beauty and love liness and he played a lover's stratagem with her and married her according to the law and committed the crime (such as it is) of scourging her. Yet indeed he is not to be blamed for beating her, for he laid a condition on her and swore her by a solemn oath not to do a certain thing; however, she was false to her vow and he was minded to put her to death, but he feared Almighty Allah and contented himself with scourging her, as thou hast seen, and with sending her back to her own place. Such is the story of the second lady and the Lord knoweth all." When the Caliph heard these words of the Ifritah, and knew who had beaten the damsel, he marvelled with mighty marvel and said, “Praise be to Allah, the Most High, the Almighty, who hath shown his exceeding mercy towards me, enabling me to deliver these two damsels from sorcery and torture, and vouchsafing to let me know the secret of this lady’s history! And now by Allah, we will do a deed which shall be recorded of us after we are no more.” Then he summoned his son Al-Amin and questioned him of the story of the second lady, the portress; and he told it in the face of truth; whereupon the Caliph bade call into presence the Kazis and their witnesses and the three Kalandars and the first lady with her sisters german who had been ensorcelled; and he married the three to the three Kalandars whom he knew to be princes and sons of Kings and he appointed them chamberlains about his person, assigning to them stipends and allowances and all that they required, and lodging them in his palace at Baghdad. He returned the beaten lady to his son, Al-Amin, renewing the marriage contract between them and gave her great wealth and bade rebuild the house fairer than it was before. As for himself he took to wife the procuratrix and lay with her that night: and next day he set apart for her an apartment in his Serraglio, with handmaidens for her service and a fixed daily allowance. And the people marvelled at their Caliph’s generosity and natural beneficence and princely widsom; nor did he forget to send all these histories to be recorded in his annals. When Shahrazad ceased speaking Dunyazad exclaimed, “O my own sister, by Allah in very sooth this is a right pleasant tale and a delectable; never was heard the like of it, but prithee tell me now another story to while away what yet remaineth of the waking hours of this our night.” She replied, “With love and gladness if the King give me leave;” and he said, “Tell thy tale and tell it quickly.” So she began, in these words,

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE TALE OF THE THREE APPLES

They relate, O King of the age and lord of the time and of these days, that the Caliph Harun al-Rashid summoned his Wazir Ja'afar one night and said to him, 'I desire to go down into the city and question the common folk concerning the conduct of those charged with its governance; and those of whom they complain we will depose from office and those whom they commend we will promote." Quoth Ja'afar, "Hearkening and obedience!" So the Caliph went down with Ja'afar and Eunuch Masrur to the town and walked about the streets and markets and, as they were threading a narrow alley, they came upon a very old man with a fishing-net and crate to carry small fish on his head, and in his hand a staff; and, as he walked at a leisurely pace, he repeated these lines: —

"They say me: — Thou shinest a light to mankind * With thy lore
  as the night which the Moon doth uplight!
I answer, "A truce to your jests and your gibes; * Without luck
  what is learning? — a poor-devil wight!
If they take me to pawn with my lore in my pouch, * With my
  volumes to read and my ink-case to write,
For one day's provision they never could pledge me; * As likely
  on Doomsday to draw bill at sight:"
How poorly, indeed, doth it fare wi' the poor, * With his pauper
  existence and beggarly plight:
In summer he faileth provision to find; * In winter the
  fire-pot's his only delight:
The street-dogs with bite and with bark to him rise, * And each
  losel receives him with bark and with bite:
If he lift up his voice and complain of his wrong, * None pities
  or heeds him, however he's right;
And when sorrows and evils like these he must brave * His
  happiest homestead were down in the grave."

When the Caliph heard his verses he said to Ja'afar, "See this poor man and note his verses, for surely they point to his necessities."

Then he accosted him and asked, “O Shaykh, what be thine occupation?” and the poor man answered, “O my lord, I am a fisherman with a family to keep and I have been out between midday and this time; and not a thing hath Allah made my portion wherewithal to feed my family. I cannot even pawn myself to buy them a supper and I hate and disgust my life and I hanker after death.” Quoth the Caliph, “Say me, wilt thou return with us to Tigris’ bank and cast thy net on my luck, and whatsoever turneth up I will buy of thee for an hundred gold pieces?” The man rejoiced when he heard these words and said, “On my head be it! I will go back with you;” and, returning with them river-wards, made a cast and waited a while; then he hauled in the rope and dragged the net ashore and there appeared in it a chest padlocked and heavy. The Caliph examined it and lifted it finding it weighty; so he gave the fisherman two hundred dinars and sent him about his business; whilst Masrur, aided by the Caliph, carried the chest to the palace and set it down and lighted the candles. Ja’afar and Masrur then broke it open and found therein a basket of palm-leaves corded with red worsted. This they cut open and saw within it a piece of carpet which they lifted out, and under it was a woman’s mantilla folded in four, which they pulled out; and at the bottom of the chest they came upon a young lady, fair as a silver ingot, slain and cut into nineteen pieces. When the Caliph looked upon her he cried, “Alas!” and tears ran down his cheeks and turning to Ja’afar he said, “O dog of Wazirs, [354] shall folk be murdered in our reign and be cast into the river to be a burden and a responsibility for us on the Day of Doom? By Allah, we must avenge this woman on her murderer and he shall be made die the worst of deaths!” And presently he added, “ Now, as surely as we are descended from the Sons of Abbas, [355] if thou bring us not him who slew her, that we do her justice on him, I will hang thee at the gate of my palace, thee and forty of thy kith and kin by thy side.” And the: Caliph was wroth with exceeding rage. Quoth Ja’afar, “Grant me three days’ delay;” and quoth the Caliph, “We grant thee this.” So Ja’afar went out from before him and returned to his own house, full of sorrow and saying to himself, “How shall I find him who murdered this damsel, that I may bring him before the Caliph? If I bring other than the murderer, it will be laid to my charge by the

Lord: in very sooth I wot not what to do." He kept his house three days and on the fourth day the Caliph sent one of the Chamberlains for him and, as he came into the presence, asked him, "Where is the murderer of the damsel?" to which answered Ja'afar, "O Commander of the Faithful, am I inspector of " murdered folk that I should ken who killed her?" The Caliph was furious at his answer and bade hang him before the palace-gate and commanded that a crier cry through the streets of Baghdad, "Whoso would see the hanging of Ja'afar, the Barmaki, Wazir of the Caliph, with forty of the Barmecides, [356] his cousins and kinsmen, before the palace-gate, let him come and let him look!" The people flocked out from all the quarters of the city to witness the execution of Ja'afar and his kinsmen, not knowing the cause. Then they set up the gallows and made Ja'afar and the others stand underneath in readiness for execution, but whilst every eye was looking for the Caliph's signal, and the crowd wept for Ja'afar and his cousins of the Barmecides, lo and behold! a young man fair of face and neat of dress and of favour like the moon raining light, with eyes black and bright, and brow flower-white, and cheeks red as rose and young down where the beard grows, and a mole like a grain of ambergris, pushed his way through the people till he stood immediately before the Wazir and said to him, "Safety to thee from this strait, O Prince of the Emirs and Asylum of the poor! I am the man who slew the woman ye found in the chest, so hang me for her and do her justice on me!" When Ja'afar heard the youth's confession he rejoiced at his own deliverance. but grieved and sorrowed for the fair youth; and whilst they were yet talking behold, another man well stricken in years pressed forwards through the people and thrust his way amid the populace till he came to Ja'afar and the youth, whom he saluted saying, "Ho thou the Wazir and Prince sans-peer! believe not the words of this youth. Of a surety none murdered the damsel but I; take her wreak on me this moment; for, an thou do not thus, I will require it of thee before Almighty Allah." Then quoth the young man, "O Wazir, this is an old man in his dotage who wotteth not whatso he saith ever, and I am he who murdered her, so do thou avenge her on me!" Quoth the old man, "O my son, thou art young and desirest the joys of the world and I am old and weary and surfeited with the world: I will offer my life as a ransom for thee and for the Wazir and his cousins. No one murdered the damsel but I, so Allah upon thee, make haste to hang me, for no life is left in me now that hers is gone." The Wazir marvelled much at all this strangeness and, taking the young man and the old man, carried them before the Caliph, where, after kissing the ground seven times between his hands, he said, "O Commander of the Faithful, I bring thee the murderer of the damsel!" "Where is he?" asked the Caliph and Ja'afar answered, "This young man saith, I am the murderer, and this old man giving him the lie saith, I am the murderer, and behold, here are the twain standing before thee." The Caliph looked at the old man and the young man and asked, "Which of you killed the girl?" The young man replied, "No one slew her save I;" and the old man answered, "Indeed none killed her but myself." Then said the Caliph to Ja'afar, "Take the twain and hang them both;" but Ja'afar rejoined, "Since one of them was the murderer, to hang the other were mere injustice."[357] "By Him who raised the firmament and dispread the earth like a carpet," cried the youth, "I am he who slew the damsel;" and he went on to describe the manner of her murder and the basket, the mantilla and the bit of carpet, in fact all that the Caliph had found upon her. So the Caliph was certified that the young man was the murderer; whereat he wondered and asked him, 'What was the cause of thy wrongfully doing this damsel to die and what made thee confess the murder without the bastinado, and what brought thee here to yield up thy life, and what made thee say Do her wreak upon me?" The youth answered, "Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that this woman was my wife and the mother of my children; also my first cousin and the daughter of my paternal uncle, this old man who is my father's own brother. When I married her she was a maid [358] and Allah blessed me with three male children by her; she loved me and served me and I saw no evil in her, for I also loved her with fondest love. Now on the first day of this month she fell ill with grievous sickness and I fetched in physicians to her; but recovery came to her little by little. and, when I wished her to go to the Hammam-bath, she said, "There is a something I long for before I go to the bath and I long for it with an exceeding longing." To hear is to comply," said I. "And what is it?" Quoth she, "I have a queasy craving for an apple, to smell it and bite a bit of it.” I replied, “Hadst thou a thousand longings I would try to satisfy them!” So I went on the instant into the city and sought for apples but could find none; yet, had they cost a gold piece each, would I have bought them. I was vexed at this and went home and said, “O daughter of my uncle. by Allah I can find none!” She was distressed, being yet very weakly, and her weakness in. creased greatly on her that night and I felt anxious and alarmed on her account. As soon as morning dawned I went out again and made the round of the gardens, one by one, but found no apples anywhere. At last there met me an old gardener. of whom I asked about them and he answered, “O my son, this fruit is a rarity with us and is not now to be found save in the garden of the Commander of the Faithful at Bassorah, where the gardener keepeth it for the Caliph’s eating.” I returned to my house troubled by my ill-success; and my love for my wife and my affection moved me to undertake the journey. So I gat me ready and set out and travelled fifteen days and nights, going and coming, and brought her three apples which I bought from the gardener for three dinars. But when I went in to my wife and set them before her, she took no pleasure in them and let them lie by her side; for her weakness and fever had increased on her and her malady lasted without abating ten days, after which time she began to recover health. So I left my house and betaking me to my shop sat there buying and selling; and about midday behold, a great ugly black slave, long as a lance and broad as a bench, passed by my shop holding in hand one of the three apples wherewith he was playing. Quoth I, “O my good slave, tell me whence thou tookest that apple, that I may get the like of it?” He laughed and answered, “I got it from my mistress, for I had been absent and on my return I found her lying ill with three apples by her side, and she said to me, ‘My horned wittol of a husband made a journey for them to Bassorah and bought them for three dinars.’ So I ate and drank with her and took this one from her.” [359] When I heard such words from the slave, O Commander of the Faithful, the world grew black before my face, and I arose and locked up my shop and went home beside myself for excess of rage. I looked for the apples and finding only two of the three asked my wife, “O my cousin, where is the third apple?”; and raising her head languidly she answered, “I wet not, O son of my uncle, where 'tis gone!" This convinced me that the slave had spoken the truth, so I took a knife and coming behind her got upon her breast without a word said and cut her throat. Then I hewed off her head and her limbs in pieces and, wrapping her in her mantilla and a rag of carpet, hurriedly sewed up the whole which I set in a chest and, locking it tight, loaded it on my he-mule and threw it into the Tigris with my own hands. So Allah upon thee, O Commander of the Faithful, make haste to hang me, as I fear lest she appeal for vengeance on Resurrection Day. For, when I had thrown her into the river and none knew aught of it, as I went back home I found my eldest son crying and yet he knew naught of what I had done with his mother. I asked him, "What hath made thee weep, my boy?" and he answered, "I took one of the three apples which were by my mammy and went down into the lane to play with my brethren when behold, a big long black slave snatched it from my hand and said. 'Whence hadst thou this?' Quoth I, 'My father travelled far for it, and brought it from Bassorah for my mother who was ill and two other apples for which he paid three ducats.' He took no heed of my words and I asked for the apple a second and a third time, but he cuffed me and kicked me and went off with it. I was afraid lest my mother should swinge me on account of the apple, so for fear of her I went with my brother outside the city and stayed there till evening closed in upon us; and indeed I am in fear of her; and now by Allah, O my father, say nothing to her of this or it may add to her ailment!" When I heard what-my child said I knew that the slave was he who had foully slandered my wife, the daughter of my uncle, and was certified that I had slain her wrong. fully. So I wept with exceeding weeping and presently this old man, my paternal uncle and her father, came in; and I told him what had happened and he sat down by my side and wept and we ceased not weeping till midnight. We have kept up mourning for her these last five days and we lamented her in the deepest sorrow for that she was unjustly done to die. This came from the gratuitous lying of the slave, the blackamoor, and this was the manner of my killing her; so I conjure thee, by the honour of thine ancestors, make haste to kill me and do her justice upon me, as there is no living for me after her!" The Caliph marvelled at his words and said, "By Allah, the young man is excusable: I will hang none but the accursed slave and I will do a deed which shall comfort the ill-at-ease and suffering, and which shall please the All-glorious King." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say,

When it was the Twentieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph swore he would hang none but the slave, for the youth was excusable. Then he turned to Ja'afar and said to him, "Bring before me this accursed slave who was the sole cause of this calamity; and, if thou bring him not before me within three days, thou shalt be slain in his stead." So Ja'afar fared forth weeping and saying. "Two deaths have already beset me, nor shall the crock come of safe from every shock.' [360] In this matter craft and cunning are of no avail; but He who preserved my life the first time can preserve it a second time. By Allah, I will not leave my house during the three days of life which remain to me and let the Truth (whose perfection be praised!) do e'en as He will." So he kept his house three days, and on the fourth day he summoned the Kazis and legal witnesses and made his last will and testament, and took leave of his children weeping. Presently in came a messenger from the Caliph and said to him, "The Commander of the Faithful is in the most violent rage that can be, and he sendeth to seek thee and he sweareth that the day shall certainly not pass without thy being hanged unless the slave be forth-coming." When Ja'afar heard this he wept, and his children and slaves and all who were in the house wept with him. After he had bidden adieu to everybody except his youngest daughter, he proceeded to farewell her; for he loved this wee one, who was a beautiful child, more than all his other children; and he pressed her to his breast and kissed her and wept bitterly at parting from her; when he felt something round inside the bosom of her dress and asked her, "O my little maid, what is in thy bosom pocket?"; "O my father," she replied, "it is an apple with the name of our Lord the Caliph written upon it. Rayhán our slave brought it to me four days ago and would not let me have it till I gave him two dinars for it." When Ja'afar heard speak of the slave and the apple, he was glad and put his hand into his child's pocket [361] and drew out the apple and knew it and rejoiced saying, "O ready Dispeller of trouble " [362] Then he bade them bring the slave and said to him, “Fie upon thee, Rayhan! whence haddest thou this apple?” “By Allah, O my master,” he replied, “though a lie may get a man once off, yet may truth get him off, and well off, again and again. I did not steal this apple from thy palace nor from the gardens of the Commander of the Faithful. The fact is that five days ago, as I was walking along one of the alleys of this city, I saw some little ones at play and this apple in hand of one of them. So I snatched it from him and beat him and he cried and said, ‘O youth this apple is my mother’s and she is ill. She told my father how she longed for an apple, so he travelled to Bassorah and bought her three apples for three gold pieces, and I took one of them to play withal.’ He wept again, but I paid no heed to what he said and carried it off and brought it here, and my little lady bought it of me for two dinars of gold. And this is the whole story.” When Ja’afar heard his words he marvelled that the murder of the damsel and all this misery should have been caused by his slave; he grieved for the relation of the slave to himself, while rejoicing over his own deliverance, and he repeated these lines: —

“If ill betide thee through thy slave, * Make him forthright thy sacrifice:
A many serviles thou shalt find, * But life comes once and never twice.”

Then he took the slave’s hand and, leading him to the Caliph, related the story from first to last and the Caliph marvelled with extreme astonishment, and laughed till he fell on his back and ordered that the story be recorded and be made public amongst the people. But Ja’afar said, “Marvel not, O Commander of the Faithful, at this adventure, for it is not more wondrous than the History of the Wazir Núr al-Dín Ali of Egypt and his brother Shams al-Dín Mohammed. — Quoth the Caliph, “Out with it; but what can be stranger than this story?” And Ja’afar answered, “O Commander of the Faithful, I will not tell it thee, save on condition that thou pardon my slave;” and the Caliph rejoined, “If it be indeed more wondrous than that of the three apples, I grant thee his blood, and if not I will surely slay thy slave.” So Ja’afar began in these words the

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TALE OF NUR AL-DIN AND HIS SON.

Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that in times of yore the land of Egypt was ruled by a Sultan endowed with justice and generosity, one who loved the pious poor and companied with the Olema and learned men; and he had a Wazir, a wise and an experienced, well versed in affairs and in the art of government. This Minister, who was a very old man, had two sons, as they were two moons; never man saw the like of them for beauty and grace, the elder called Shams al-Din Mohammed and the younger Nur al-Din Ali; but the younger excelled the elder in seemliness and pleasing semblance, so that folk heard his fame in far countries and men flocked to Egypt for the purpose of seeing him. In course of time their father, the Wazir, died and was deeply regretted and mourned by the Sultan, who sent for his two sons and, investing them with dresses of honour, [363] said to them, "Let not your hearts be troubled, for ye shall stand in your father's stead and be joint Ministers of Egypt." At this they rejoiced and kissed the ground before him and performed the ceremonial mourning [364] for their father during a full month; after which time they entered upon the Wazirate, and the power passed into their hands as it had been in the hands of their father, each doing duty for a week at a time. They lived under the same roof and their word was one; and whenever the Sultan desired to travel they took it by turns to be in attendance on him. It fortuned one night that the Sultan purposed setting out on a journey next morning, and the elder, whose turn it was to accompany him, was sitting conversing with his brother and said to him, "O my brother, it is my wish that we both marry, I and thou, two sisters; and go in to our wives on one and the same night." "Do, O my brother, as thou desirest," the younger replied, "for right is thy recking and surely I will comply with thee in whatso thou sayest." So they agreed upon this and quoth Shams al-Din, "If Allah decree that we marry two damsels and go in to them on the same night, and they shall conceive on their bridenights and bear children to us on the same day, and by Allah's will they wife bear thee a son and my wife bear me a daughter, let us wed them either to other, for they will be cousins." Quoth Nur al-Din, "O my brother, Shams al-Din, what dower [365] wilt thou require from my son for thy daughter?” Quoth Shams al-Din, “I will take three thousand dinars and three pleasure gardens and three farms; and it would not be seemly that the youth make contract for less than this.” When Nur al-Din heard such demand he said, “What manner of dower is this thou wouldst impose upon my son? Wottest thou not that we are brothers and both by Allah’s grace Wazirs and equal in office? It behoveth thee to offer thy daughter to my son without marriage settlement; or if one need be, it should represent a mere nominal value by way of show to the world: for thou knowest that the masculine is worthier than the feminine, and my son is a male and our memory will be preserved by him, not by thy daughter.” “But what,” said Shams al-Din, “is she to have?”; and Nur al-Din continued, “Through her we shall not be remembered among the Emirs of the earth; but I see thou wouldest do with me according to the saying: — An thou wouldst bluff off a buyer, ask him high price and higher; or as did a man who, they say, went to a friend and asked something of him being in necessity and was answered, ‘Bismallah, [366] in the name of Allah, I will do all what thou requirest but come to-morrow!’ Whereupon the other replied in this verse: —

‘When he who is asked a favour saith “To-morrow,” * The wise man wots ’tis vain to beg or borrow.’”

Quoth Shams al-Din, “Basta! [367] I see thee fail in respect to me by making thy son of more account than my daughter; and ’tis plain that thine understanding is of the meanest and that thou lackest manners. Thou remindest me of thy partnership in the Wazirate, when I admitted thee to share with me only in pity for thee, and not wishing to mortify thee; and that thou mightest help me as a manner of assistant. But since thou talkest on this wise, by Allah, I will never marry my daughter to thy son; no, not for her weight in gold!” When Nur al-Din heard his brother’s words he waxed wroth and said, “And I too, I will never, never marry my son to thy daughter; no, not to keep from my lips the cup of death.” Shams al-Din replied, “I would not accept him as a husband for her, and he is not worth a paring of her nail. Were I not about to travel I would make an example of thee; however when I return thou shalt see, and I will show thee, how I can assert my dignity and vindicate my honour. But Allah doeth whatso

He willeth."[368] When Nur al-Din heard this speech from his brother, he was filled with fury and lost his wits for rage; but he hid what he felt and held his peace; and each of the brothers passed the night in a place far apart, wild with wrath against the other. As soon as morning dawned the Sultan fared forth in state and crossed over from Cairo [369] to Jizah [370] and made for the pyramids, accompanied by the Wazir Shams al-Din, whose turn of duty it was, whilst his brother Nur al-din, who passed the night in sore rage, rose with the light and prayed the dawn-prayer. Then he betook himself to his treasury and, taking a small pair of saddle-bags, filled them with gold; and he called to mind his brother's threats and the contempt wherewith he had treated him, and he repeated these couplets: —

"Travel! and thou shalt find new friends for old ones left
behind; * Toil! for the sweets of human life by toil and
moil are found:
The stay-at-home no honour wins nor aught attains but want; * So
leave thy place of birth [371] and wander all the world
around!
I've seen, and very oft I've seen, how standing water stinks, *
And only flowing sweetens it and trotting makes it sound:
And were the moon forever full and ne'er to wax or wane, * Man
would not strain his watchful eyes to see its gladsome
round:
Except the lion leave his lair he ne'er would fell his game, *
Except the arrow leave the bow ne'er had it reached its
bound:
Gold-dust is dust the while it lies untravelled in the mine, *
And aloes-wood mere fuel is upon its native ground:
And gold shall win his highest worth when from his goal ungoal'd;

* And aloes sent to foreign parts grows costlier than gold."

When he ended his verse he bade one of his pages saddle him his Nubian mare-mule with her padded selle. Now she was a dapple-grey, [372] with ears like reed-pens and legs like columns and a back high and strong as a dome builded on pillars; her saddle was of gold-cloth and her stirrups of Indian steel, and her housing of Ispahan velvet; she had trappings which would serve the Chosroes, and she was like a bride adorned for her wedding night. Moreover he bade lay on her back a piece of silk for a seat, and a prayer-carpet under which were his saddle-bags. When this was done he said to his pages and slaves, "I purpose going forth a-pleasuring outside the city on the road to Kalyub-town, [373] and I shall lie three nights abroad; so let none of you follow me, for there is something straiteneth my breast." Then he mounted the mule in haste; and, taking with him some provaunt for the way, set out from Cairo and faced the open and uncultivated country lying around it. [374] About noontide he entered Bilbays-city, [375] where he dismounted and stayed awhile to rest himself and his mule and ate some of his victual. He bought at Bilbays all he wanted for himself and forage for his mule and then fared on the way of the waste. Towards night-fall he entered a town called Sa'adiyah [376] where he alighted and took out somewhat of his viaticum and ate; then he spread his strip of silk on the sand and set the saddle-bags under his head and slept in the open air; for he was still overcome with anger. When morning dawned he mounted and rode onward till he reached the Holy City, [377] Jerusalem, and thence he made Aleppo, where he dismounted at one of the caravanserais and abode three days to rest himself and the mule and to smell the air. [378] Then, being determined to travel afar and Allah having written safety in his fate, he set out again, wending without wotting whither he was going; and, having fallen in with certain couriers, he stinted not travelling till he had reached Bassorah- city albeit he knew not what the place was. It was dark night when he alighted at the Khan, so he spread out his prayer-carpet and took down the saddle-bags from the back of his mule and gave her with her furniture in charge of the door-keeper that he might walk her about. The man took her and did as he was bid. Now it so happened that the Wazir of Bassorah, a man shot in years, was sitting at the lattice-window of his palace opposite the Khan and he saw the porter walking the mule up and down. He was struck by her trappings of price and thought her a nice beast fit for the riding of Wazirs or even of royalties; and the more he looked the more was he perplexed till at last he said to one of his pages, "Bring hither yon door-keeper," The page went and returned to the Wazir with the porter who kissed the ground between his hands, and the Minister asked him, “Who is the owner of yonder mule and what manner of man is he?”; and he answered, “O my lord, the owner of this mule is a comely young man of pleasant manners, withal grave and dignified, and doubtless one of the sons of the merchants.” When the Wazir heard the door-keeper’s words he arose forthright; and, mounting his horse, rode to the Khan [379] and went in to Nur al-Din who, seeing the minister making towards him, rose to his feet and advanced to meet him and saluted him. The Wazir welcomed him to Bassorah and dis- mounting, embraced him and made him sit down by his side and said, “O my son, whence comest thou and what dost thou seek?” “O my lord,” Nur al-Din replied, “I have come from Cairo-city of which my father was whilome Wazir; but he hath been removed to the grace of Allah;” and he informed him of all that had befallen him from beginning to end, adding, “I am resolved never to return home before I have seen all the cities and countries of the world.” When the Wazir heard this, he said to him, “O my son, hearken not to the voice of passion lest it cast thee into the pit; for indeed many regions be waste places and I fear for thee the turns of Time.” Then he let load the saddle-bags and the silk and prayer-carpets on the mule and carried Nur al-Din to his own house, where he lodged him in a pleasant place and entreated him honourably and made much of him, for he inclined to love him with exceeding love. After a while he said to him, “O my son, here am I left a man in years and have no male children, but Allah hath blessed me with a daughter who eventh thee in beauty; and I have rejected all her many suitors, men of rank and substance. But affection for thee hath entered into my heart; say me, then, wilt thou be to her a husband? If thou accept this, I will go up with thee to the Sultan of Bassorah [380] and will tell him that thou art my nephew, the son of my brother, and bring thee to be appointed Wazir in my place that I may keep the house for, by Allah, O my son, I am stricken in years and aweary.” When Nur al-Din heard the Wazir’s words, he bowed his head in modesty and said, “To hear is to obey!” At this the Wazir rejoiced and bade his servants prepare a feast and decorate the great assembly-hall, wherein they were wont to celebrate the marriages of Emirs and Grandees. Then he assembled his friends and the notables of the reign and the merchants of Bassorah and when all stood before him he said to them, “I had a brother who was Wazir in the land of Egypt, and Allah Almighty blessed him with two sons, whilst to me, as well ye wot, He hath given a daughter. My brother charged me to marry my daughter to one of his sons, whereto I assented; and, when my daughter was of age to marry, he sent me one of his sons, the young man now present, to whom I purpose marrying her, drawing up the contract and celebrating the night of unveiling with due ceremony; for he is nearer and dearer to me than a stranger and, after the wedding, if he please he shall abide with me, or if he desire to travel I will forward him and his wife to his father’s home.” Hereat one and all replied, “Right is thy recking;” and they all looked at the bridegroom and were pleased with him. So the Wazir sent for the Kazi and legal witnesses and they wrote out the marriage- contract, after which the slaves perfumed the guests with incense, [381] and served them with sherbet of sugar and sprinkled rose-water on them and all went their ways. Then the Wazir bade his servants take Nur al-Din to the Hammam-baths and sent him a suit of the best of his own especial raiment, and napkins and towelry and bowls and perfume-burners and all else that was required. After the bath, when he came out and donned the dress, he was even as the full moon on the fourteenth night; and he mounted his mule and stayed not till he reached the Wazir’s palace. There he dismounted and went in to the Minister and kissed his hands, and the Wazir bade him welcome. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Twenty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir stood up to him and welcoming him said, “Arise and go in to thy wife this night, and on the morrow I will carry thee to the Sultan, and pray Allah bless thee with all manner of weal.” So Nur al-Din left him and went into his wife the Wazir’s daughter. Thus far concerning him, but as regards his eldest brother, Shams al-Din, he was absent with the Sultan a long time and when he returned from his journey he found not his brother; and he asked of his servants and slaves who answered, “On the day of thy departure with the Sultan, thy brother mounted his mule fully caparisoned as for state procession saying, ‘I am going towards Kalyub-town and I shall be absent one day or at most two days; for my breast is straitened, and let none of you follow me.’ Then he fared forth and from that time to this we have heard no tidings of him.” Shams al-Din was greatly troubled at the sudden disappearance of his brother and grieved with exceeding grief at the loss and said to himself, “This is only because I chided and upbraided him the night before my departure with the Sultan; haply his feelings were hurt and he fared forth a-travelling; but I must send after him.” Then he went in to the Sultan and acquainted him with what had happened and wrote letters and dispatches, which he sent by running footmen to his deputies in every province. But during the twenty days of his brother’s absence Nur al-Din had travelled far and had reached Bassorah; so after diligent search the messengers failed to come at any news of him and returned. Thereupon Shams al-Din despaired of finding his brother and said, “Indeed I went beyond all bounds in what I said to him with reference to the marriage of our children. Would that I had not done so! This all cometh of my lack of wit and want of caution.” Soon after this he sought in marriage the daughter of a Cairene merchant, [382] and drew up the marriage contract and went in to her. And it so chanced that, on the very same night when Shams al-Din went in to his wife, Nur al-Din also went in to his wife the daughter of the Wazir of Bassorah; this being in accordance with the will of Almighty Allah, that He might deal the decrees of Destiny to His creatures. Furthermore, it was as the two brothers had said; for their two wives became pregnant by them on the same night and both were brought to bed on the same day; the wife of Shams al-Din, Wazir of Egypt, of a daughter, never in Cairo was seen a fairer; and the wife of Nur al-Din of a son, none more beautiful was ever seen in his time, as one of the poets said concerning the like of him: —

That jetty hair, that glossy brow,
    My slender-waisted youth, of thine,
Can darkness round creation throw,
    Or make it brightly shine.
The dusky mole that faintly shows
    Upon his cheek, ah! blame it not:

The tulip-flower never blows
  Undarkened by its spot[383]

And as another also said: —

His scent was musk and his cheek was rose; * His teeth are pearls
  and his lips drop wine;
His form is a brand and his hips a hill; * His hair is night and
  his face moon-shine.

They named the boy Badr al-Din Hasan and his grandfather, the Wazir of Bassorah, rejoiced in him and, on the seventh day after his birth, made entertainments and spread banquets which would befit the birth of Kings' sons and heirs. Then he took Nur al- Din and went up with him to the Sultan, and his son-in-law, when he came before the presence of the King, kissed the ground between his hands and repeated these verses, for he was ready of speech, firm of sprite and good in heart as he was goodly in form: —

"The world's best joys long be thy lot, my lord! * And last while
  darkness and the dawn o'erlap:
O thou who makest, when we greet thy gifts, * The world to dance
  and Time his palms to clap."[384]

Then the Sultan rose up to honour them, and thanking Nur al-Din for his fine compliment, asked the Wazir, "Who may be this young man?"; and the Minister answered, "This is my brother's son," and related his tale from first to last. Quoth the Sultan, "And how comes he to be thy nephew and we have never heard speak of him?" Quoth the Minister, "O our lord the Sultan, I had a brother who was Wazir in the land of Egypt and he died, leaving two sons, whereof the elder hath taken his father's place and the younger, whom thou seest, came to me. I had sworn I would not marry my daughter to any but to him; so when he came I married him to her.[385] Now he is young and I am old; my hearing is dulled and my judgement is easily fooled; wherefore I would solicit our lord the Sultan[386] to set him in my stead, for he is my brother's son and my daughter's husband; and he is fit for the Wazirate, being a man of good counsel and ready contrivance." The Sultan looked at Nur al-Din and liked him, so he stablished him in office as the Wazir had requested and formally appointed him, presenting him with a splendid dress of honour and a she- mule from his private stud; and assigning to him solde, stipends and supplies. Nur al-Din kissed the Sultan's hand and went home, he and his father-in-law, joying with exceeding joy and saying, "All this followeth on the heels of the boy Hasan's birth!" Next day he presented himself before the King and, kissing the ground, began repeating: —

"Grow thy weal and thy welfare day by day: * And thy luck
  prevail o'er the envier's spite;
And ne'er cease thy days to be white as day, * And thy foeman's
  day to be black as night!"

The Sultan bade him be seated on the Wazir's seat, so he sat down and applied himself to the business of his office and went into the cases of the lieges and their suits, as is the wont of Ministers; while the Sultan watched him and wondered at his wit and good sense, judgement and insight. Wherefor he loved him and took him into intimacy. When the Divan was dismissed Nur al-Din returned to his house and related what had passed to his father- in-law who rejoiced. And thenceforward Nur al-Din ceased not so to administer the Wazirate that the Sultan would not be parted from him night or day; and increased his stipend and supplies until his means were ample and he became the owner of ships that made trading voyages at his command, as well as of Mamelukes and blackamoor slaves; and he laid out many estates and set up Persian wheels and planted gardens. When his son Hasan was four years of age, the old Wazir deceased and he made for his father- in-law a sumptuous funeral ceremony ere he was laid in the dust. Then he occupied himself with the education of this son and, when the boy waxed strong and came to the age of seven, he brought him a Fakih, a doctor of law and religion, to teach him in his own house and charged him to give him a good education and instruct him in politeness and manners. So the tutor made the boy read and retain all varieties of useful knowledge, after he had spent some years in learning the Koran by heart; [387] and he ceased not to grow in beauty and stature and symmetry, even as saith the poet: —

In his face-sky shines the fullest moon; * In his cheeks' anemone
glows the sun:
He so conquered Beauty that he hath won * All charms of
humanity one by one.

The professor brought him up in his father's palace teaching him reading, writing and cyphering, theology and belles lettres. His grandfather the old Wazir had bequeathed to him the whole of his property when he was but four years of age. Now during all the time of his earliest youth he had never left the house, till on a certain day his father, the Wazir Nur al-Din, clad him in his best clothes and, mounting him on a she-mule of the finest, went up with him to the Sultan. The King gazed at Badr al-Din Hasan and marvelled at his comeliness and loved him. As for the city- folk, when he first passed before them with his father, they marvelled at his exceeding beauty and sat down on the road expecting his return, that they might look their fill on his beauty and loveliness and symmetry and perfect grace; even as the poet said in these verses: —

As the sage watched the stars, the semblance clear
Of a fair youth on 's scroll he saw appear.
Those jetty locks Canopus o'er him threw,
And tinged his temple curls a musky hue;
Mars dyed his ruddy cheek; and from his eyes
The Archer-star his glittering arrow flies;
His wit from Hermes came; and Soha's care,
(The half-seen star that dimly haunts the Bear)
Kept off all evil eyes that threaten and ensnare,
The sage stood mazed to see such fortunes meet,
And Luna kissed the earth beneath his feet. [388]

And they blessed him aloud as he passed and called upon Almighty Allah to bless him. [389] The Sultan entreated the lad with especial favour and said to his father, "O Wazir, thou must needs bring him daily to my presence;" whereupon he replied, "I hear and I obey." Then the Wazir returned home with his son and ceased not to carry him to court till he reached the age of twenty. At that time the Minister sickened and, sending for Badr al-Din Hasan, said to him, "Know, O my son, that the world of the Present is but a house of mortality, while that of the Future is a house of eternity. I wish, before I die, to bequeath thee certain charges and do thou take heed of what I say and incline thy heart to my words." Then he gave him last instructions as to the properest way of dealing with his neighbours and the due management of his affairs; after which he called to mind his brother and his home and his native land and wept over his separation from those he had first loved. Then he wiped away his tears and, turning to his son, said to him, "Before I proceed, O my son, to my last charges and injunctions, know that I have a brother, and thou hast an uncle, Shams al-Din hight, the Wazir of Cairo, which whom I parted, leaving him against his will. Now take thee a sheet of paper and write upon it whatso I say to thee." Badr al-Din took a fair leaf and set about doing his father's bidding and he wrote thereon a full account of what had happened to his sire first and last; the dates of his arrival at Bassorah and of his foregathering with the Wazir; of his marriage, of his going in to the Minister's daughter and of the birth of his son; brief, his life of forty years from the date of his dispute with his brother, adding the words, "And this is written at my dictation and may Almighty Allah be with him when I am gone!" Then he folded the paper and sealed it and said, "O Hasan, O my son, keep this paper with all care; for it will enable thee to stablish thine origin and rank and lineage and, if anything contrary befal thee, set out for Cairo and ask for thine uncle and show him this paper and say to him that I died a stranger far from mine own people and full of yearning to see him and them." So Badr al-Din Hasan took the document and folded it; and, wrapping it up in a piece of waxed cloth of his skull-cap and wound his light turband[390] round it. And he fell to weeping over his father and at parting with him, and he but a boy. Then Nur al-Din lapsed into a swoon, the forerunner of death; but presently recovering himself he said, "O Hasan, O my son, I will now bequeath to thee five last behests. The

FIRST BEHEST is, Be over-intimate with none, nor frequent any, nor be familiar with any; so shalt thou be safe from his mischief;[391] for security lieth in seclusion of thought and a certain retirement from the society of thy fellows; and I have heard it said by a poet: —

In this world there is none thou mayst count upon * To befriend
thy case in the nick of need:
So live for thyself nursing hope of none * Such counsel I give
thee: enow, take heed!

The SECOND BEHEST is, O my son: Deal harshly with none lest fortune with thee deal hardly; for the fortune of this world is one day with thee and another day against thee and all worldly goods are but a loan to be repaid. And I have heard a poet say:- -

Take thought nor hast to win the thing thou wilt; * Have ruth on
man for ruth thou may'st require:
No hand is there but Allah's hand is higher; * No tyrant but
shall rue worse tyrant's ire!

The THIRD BEHEST is, Learn to be silent in society and let thine own faults distract thine attention from the faults of other men: for it is said: — In silence dwelleth safety, and thereon I have heard the lines that tell us: —

Reserve's a jewel, Silence safety is; * Whenas thou speakest many
a word withhold;
For an of Silence thou repent thee once, * Of speech thou shalt
repent times manifold.

The FOURTH BEHEST, O my son, is Beware of wine-bibbing, for wine is the head of all frowardness and a fine solvent of human wits. So shun, and again I say, shun mixing strong liquor; for I have heard a poet say[392] : —

From wine[393] I turn and whoso wine-cups swill; *
Becoming one of those who deem it ill:
Wine driveth man to miss salvation-way,[394] * And opes the

gateway wide to sins that kill.

The FIFTH BEHEST, O my son, is Keep thy wealth and it will keep thee; guard thy money and it will guard thee; and waste not thy substance lest haply thou come to want and must fare a-begging from the meanest of mankind. Save thy dirhams and deem them the sovereignest salve for the wounds of the world. And here again I have heard that one of the poets said: —

When fails my wealth no friend will deign befriend: * When
wealth abounds all friends their friendship tender:
How many friends lent aid my wealth to spend; * But friends to
lack of wealth no friendship render.

On this wise Nur al-Din ceased not to counsel his son Badr al-Din Hasan till his hour came and, sighing one sobbing sigh, his life went forth. Then the voice of mourning and keening rose high in his house and the Sultan and all the grandees grieved for him and buried him; but his son ceased not lamenting his loss for two months, during which he never mounted horse, nor attended the Divan nor presented himself before the Sultan. At last the King, being wroth with him, stablished in his stead one of the Chamberlains and made him Wazir, giving orders to seize and set seals on all Nur al-Din's houses and goods and domains. So the new Wazir went forth with a mighty posse of Chamberlains and people of the Divan, and watchmen and a host of idlers to do this and to seize Badr al-Din Hasan and carry him before the King, who would deal with him as he deemed fit. Now there was among the crowd of followers a Mameluke of the deceased Wazir who, when he heard this order, urged his horse and rode at full speed to the house of Badr al-Din Hasan; for he cold not endure to see the ruin of his old master's son. He found him sitting at the gate with head hung down and sorrowing, as was his wont, for the loss of his father; so he dismounted and kissing his hand said to him, "O my lord and son of my lord, haste ere ruin come and lay waste!" When Hasan heard this he trembled and asked, "What may be the matter?; and the man answered, "The Sultan is angered with thee and hath issued a warrant against thee, and evil cometh hard upon my track; so flee with thy life!" At these words Hasan's heart flamed with the fire of bale, and his rose-red cheek turned pale, and he said to the "Mameluke, "O my brother, is there time for me to go in and get me some worldly gear which may stand me in stead during my strangerhood?" But the slave replied, "O my lord, up at once and save thyself and leave this house, while it is yet time." And he quoted these lines: —

"Escape with thy life, if oppression betide thee, * And let the
house of its builder's fate!
Country for country thou'lt find, if thou seek it; * Life for
life never, early or late.
It is strange men should dwell in the house of abjection, * When
the plain of God's earth is so wide and so great!"[395]

At these words of the Mameluke, Badr al-Din covered his head with the skirt of his garment and went forth on foot till he stood outside of the city, where he heard folk saying, "The Sultan hath sent his new Wazir to the house of the old Wazir, now no more, to seal his property and seize his son Badr al-Din Hasan and take him before the presence, that he may put him to death; " and all cried, "Alas for his beauty and his loveliness!" When he heard this he fled forth at hazard, knowing not whither he was going, and gave not over hurrying onwards till Destiny drove him to his father's tomb. So he entered the cemetery and, threading his way through the graves, at last he reached the sepulchre where he sat down and let fall from his head the skirt of his long robe[396] which was made of brocade with a gold-embroidered hem whereon were worked these couplets: —

O thou whose forehead, like the radiant East, * Tells of the
stars of Heaven and bounteous dews:
Endure thine honour to the latest day, * And Time thy growth of
glory ne'er refuse!

While he was sitting by his father's tomb behold, there came to him a Jew as he were a Shroff,[397] a money-changer, with a pair of saddle-bags containing much gold, who accosted him and kissed his hand, saying, “Whither bound, O my lord; ’tis late in the day and thou art clad but lightly, and I read signs of trouble in thy face?” “I was sleeping within this very hour,” answered Hasan, “when my father appeared to me and chid me for not having visited his tomb; so I awoke trembling and came hither forthright lest the day should go by without my visiting him, which would have been grievous to me.” “O my lord,” rejoined the Jew, [398] “thy father had many merchantmen at sea and, as some of them are now due, it is my wish to buy of thee the cargo of the first ship that cometh into port with this thousand dinars of gold.” “I consent,” quoth Hasan, whereupon the Jew took out a bag of gold and counted out a thousand sequins which he gave to Hasan, the son of the Wazir, saying, “Write me a letter of sale and seal it.” So Hasan took a pen and paper and wrote these words in duplicate, “The writer, Hasan Badr al-Din, son of Wazir Nur al-Din, hath to Isaac the Jew all the cargo of the first of his father’s ships which cometh into port, for a thousand dinars, and he hath received the price in advance.” And after he had taken one copy the Jew put it into his pouch and went away; but Hasan fell a-weeping as he thought of the dignity and prosperity which had erst been his and he began reciting: —

“This house, my lady, since you left is now a home no more * For
me, not neighbours, since you left, prove kind and
neighbourly:
The friend, whilere I took to heart, alas! no more to me * Is
friend; and even Luna’s self displayeth lunacy:
You left and by your going left the world a waste, a wolf, * And
lies a gloomy murk upon the face of hill and lea:
O may the raven-bird whose cry our hapless parting croaked *
Find ne’er a nesty home and eke shed all his plumery!
At length my patience fails me; and this absence wastes my
flesh; * How many a veil by severance rent our eyes are
doomed see:
Ah! shall I ever sight again our fair past nights of your; * And
shall a single house become a home for me once more?”

Then he wept with exceeding weeping and night came upon him;

so he leant his head against his father's grave and sleep overcame him: Glory to him who sleepeth not! He ceased not slumbering till the moon rose, when his head slipped from off the tomb and he lay on his back, with limbs outstretched, his face shining bright in the moonlight. Now the cemetery was haunted day and night by Jinns who were of the True Believers, and presently came out a Jinniyah who, seeing Hasan asleep, marvelled at his beauty and loveliness and cried, "Glory to God! This youth can be none other than one of the Wuldan of Paradise.[399] Then she flew firmament-wards to circle it, as was her custom, and met an Ifrit on the wing who saluted her and she said to him, "Whence comest thou?" "From Cairo," he replied. "Wilt thou come with me and look upon the beauty of a youth who sleepeth in yonder burial place?" she asked and he answered, "I will." So they flew till they lighted at the tomb and she showed him the youth and said, "Now diddest thou ever in thy born days see aught like this?" The Ifrit looked upon him and exclaimed, "Praise be to Him that hath no equal! But, O my sister, shall I tell thee what I have seen this day?" Asked she, "What is that?" and he answered, "I have seen the counterpart of this youth in the land of Egypt. She is the daughter of the Wazir Shams al-Din and she is a model of beauty and loveliness, of fairest favour and formous form, and dight with symmetry and perfect grace. When she had reached the age of nineteen, [400] the Sultan of Egypt heard of her and, sending for the Wazir her father, said to him, 'Hear me, O Wazir: it hath reached mine ear that thou hast a daughter and I wish to demand her of thee in marriage." The Wazir replied, "O our lord the Sultan, deign accept my excuses and take compassion on my sorrows, for thou knowest that my brother, who was partner with me in the Wazirate, disappeared from amongst us many years ago and we wot not where he is. Now the cause of his departure was that one night, as we were sitting together and talking of wives and children to come, we had words on the matter and he went off in high dudgeon. But I swore that I would marry my daughter to none save to the son of my brother on the day her mother gave her birth, which was nigh upon nineteen years ago. I have lately heard that my brother died at Bassorah, where he married the daughter of the Wazir and that she bare him a son; and I will not marry my daughter but to him in honour of my brother's memory. I recorded the date of my marriage and the conception of my wife and the birth of my daughter; and from her horoscope I find that her name is conjoined with that of her cousin; [401] and there are damsels in foison for our lord the Sultan.' The King, hearing his Minister's answer and refusal, waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and cried, 'When the like of me asketh a girl in marriage of the like of thee, he conferreth an honour, and thou rejectest me and puttest me off with cold [402] excuses! Now, by the life of my head I will marry her to the meanest of my men in spite of the nose of thee! [403] There was in the palace a horse-groom which was a Gobbo with a bunch to his breast and a hunch to his back; and the Sultan sent for him and married him to the daughter of the Wazir, lief or loath, and hath ordered a pompous marriage procession for him and that he go in to his bride this very night. I have now just flown hither from Cairo, where I left the Hunchback at the door of the Hammam-bath amidst the Sultan's white slaves who were waving lighted flambeaux about him. As for the Minister's daughter she sitteth among her nurses and tirewomen, weeping and wailing; for they have forbidden her father to come near her. Never have I seen, O my sister, more hideous being than this Hunchback [404] whilest the young lady is the likest of all folk to this young man, albeit even fairer than he," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased her permitted say.

When it was the Twenty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Jinni narrated to the Jinniyah how the King had caused the wedding contract to be drawn up between the hunchbacked groom and the lovely young lady who was heart-broken for sorrow; and how she was the fairest of created things and even more beautiful than this youth, the Jinniyah cried at him "Thou liest! this youth is handsomer than any one of his day." The Ifrit gave her the lie again, adding, "By Allah, O my sister, the damsel I speak of is fairer than this; yet none but he deserveth her, for they resemble each other like brother and sister or at least cousins. And, well-away! how she is wasted upon that Hunchback!" Then said she, "O my brother, let us get under him and lift him up and carry him to Cairo, that we may compare him with the damsel of whom thou speakest and so determine whether of the twain is the fairer." "To hear is to obey!" replied he, "thou speakest to the point; nor is there a righter recking than this of thine, and I myself will carry him." So he raised him from the ground and flew with him like a bird soaring in upper air, the Ifritah keeping close by his side at equal speed, till he alighted with him in the city of Cairo and set him down on a stone bench and woke him up. He roused himself and finding that he was no longer at his father's tomb in Bassorah-city he looked right and left and saw that he was in a strange place; and he would have cried out; but the Ifrit gave him a cuff which persuaded him to keep silence. Then he brought him rich raiment and clothed him therein and, giving him a lighted flambeau, said, "Know that I have brought thee hither, meaning to do thee a good turn for the love of Allah: so take this torch and mingle with the people at the Hammam-door and walk on with them without stopping till thou reach the house of the wedding-festival; then go boldly forward and enter the great saloon; and fear none, but take thy stand at the right hand of the Hunchback bridegroom; and, as often as any of the nurses and tirewomen and singing-girls come up to thee, [405] put thy hand into thy pocket which thou wilt find filled with gold. Take it out and throw it to them and spare not; for as often as thou thrustest fingers in pouch thou shalt find it full of coin. Give largesse by handsful and fear nothing, but set thy trust upon Him who created thee, for this is not by thine own strength but by that of Allah Almighty, that His decrees may take effect upon his creatures." When Badr al-Din Hasan heard these words from the Ifrit he said to himself, "Would Heaven I knew what all this means and what is the cause of such kindness!" However, he mingled with the people and, lighting his flambeau, moved on with the bridal procession till he came to the bath where he found the Hunchback already on horseback. Then he pushed his way in among the crowd, a veritable beauty of a man in the finest apparel, wearing tarbush [406] and turband and a long-sleeved robe purfled with gold; and, as often as the singing-women stopped for the people to give them largesse, he thrust his hand into his pocket and, finding it full of gold, took out a handful and threw it on the tambourine [407] till he had filled it with gold pieces for the music-girls and the tirewomen. The singers were amazed by his bounty and the people marvelled at his beauty and loveliness and the splendour of his dress. He ceased not to do thus till he reached the mansion of the Wazir (who was his uncle), where the Chamberlains drove back the people and forbade them to go forward; but the singing-girls and the tirewomen said, "By Allah we will not enter unless this young man enter with us, for he hath given us length o' life with his largesse and we will not display the bride unless he be present." Therewith they carried him into the bridal hall and made him sit down defying the evil glances of the hunchbacked bridegroom. The wives of the Emirs and Wazirs and Chamberlains and Courtiers all stood in double line, each holding a massy cierge ready lighted; all wore thin face-veils and the two rows right and left extended from the bride's throne [408] to the head of the hall adjoining the chamber whence she was to come forth. When the ladies saw Badr al-Din Hasan and noted his beauty and loveliness and his face that shone like the new moon, their hearts inclined to him and the singing-girls said to all that were present, "Know that this beauty crossed our hands with naught but red gold; so be not chary to do him womanly service and comply with all he says, no matter what he ask. [409] So all the women crowded around Hasan with their torches and gazed upon his loveliness and envied him his beauty; and one and all would gladly have lain on his bosom an hour or rather a year. Their hearts were so troubled that they let fall their veils from before their faces and said, "Happy she who belongeth to this youth or to whom he belongeth!"; and they called down curses on the crooked groom and on him who was the cause of his marriage to the girl-beauty; and as often as they blessed Badr al-Din Hasan they damned the Hunchback, saying, "Verily this youth and none else deserveth our Bride: Ah, well-away for such a lovely one with this hideous Quasimodo; Allah's curse light on his head and on the Sultan who commanded the marriage!" Then the singing- girls beat their tabrets and lulliloo'd with joy, announcing the appearing of the bride; and the Wazir's daughter came in surrounded by her tirewomen who had made her goodly to look upon; for they had perfumed her and incensed her and adorned her hair; and they had robed her in raiment and ornaments befitting the mighty Chosroes Kings.

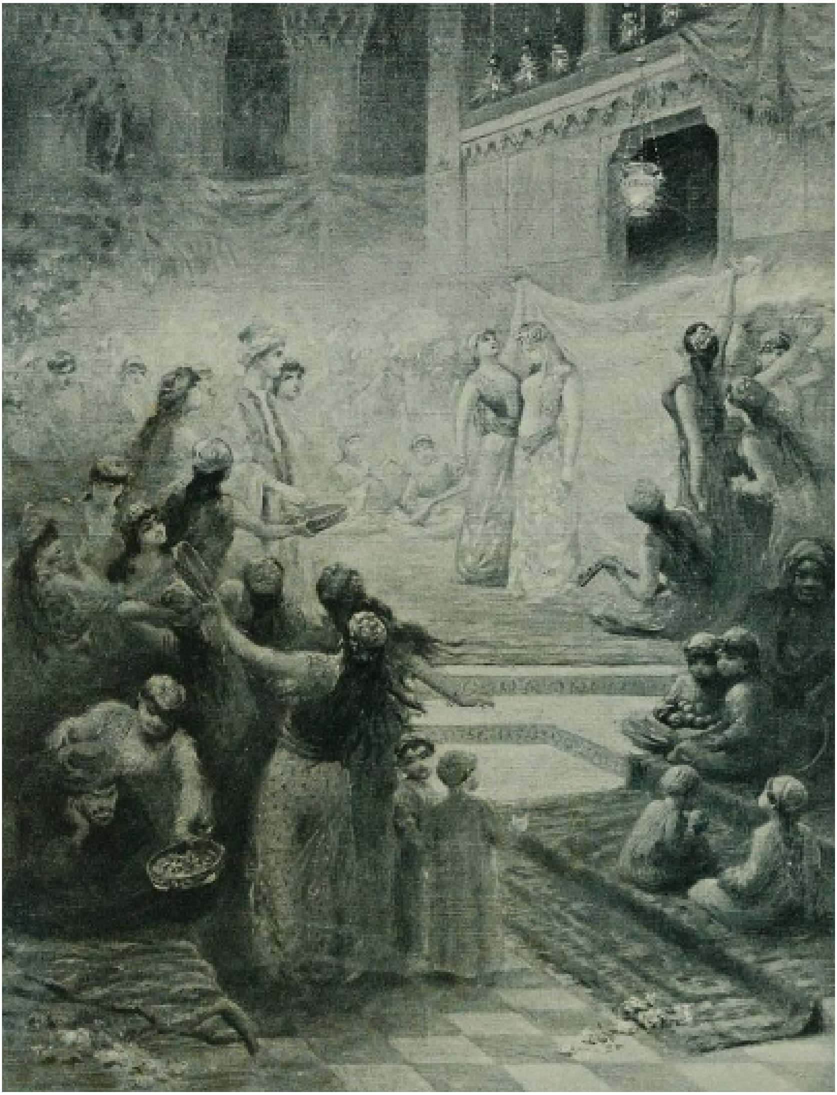

The most notable part of her dress was a loose robe worn over her other garments; it was diapered in red gold with figures of wild beasts, and birds whose eyes and beaks were of gems, and claws of red rubies and green beryl; and her neck was graced with a necklace of Yamani work, worth thousands of gold pieces, whose bezels were great round jewels of sorts, the like of which was never owned by Kaysar or by Tobba King. [410] And the bride was as the full moon when at fullest on fourteenth night; and as she paced into the hall she was like one of the Houris of Heaven — praise be to Him who created her in such splendour of beauty! The ladies encompassed her as the white contains the black of the eye, they clustering like stars whilst she shone amongst them like the moon when it eats up the clouds. Now Badr al-Din Hasan of Bassorah was sitting in full gaze of the folk, when the bride came forward with her graceful swaying and swimming gait, and her hunchbacked groom stood up to meet[411] and receive her: she, however, turned away from the wight and walked forward till she stood before her cousin Hasan, the son of her uncle. Whereat the people laughed. But when the wedding-guests saw her thus attracted towards Badr al-Din they made a mighty clamour and the singing-women shouted their loudest; whereupon he put his hand into his pocket and, pulling out a handful of gold, cast it into their tambourines and the girls rejoiced and said, "Could we win our wish this bride were thine!" At this he smiled and the folk came round him, flambeaux in hand like the eyeball round the pupil, while the Gobbo bridegroom was left sitting alone much like a tail-less baboon; for every time they lighted a candle for him it went out willy- nilly, so he was left in darkness and silence and looking at naught but himself.[412] When Badr al-Din Hasan saw the bridegroom sitting lonesome in the dark, and all the wedding- guests with their flambeaux and wax candles crowding around himself, he was bewildered and marvelled much; but when he looked at his cousin, the daughter of his uncle, he rejoiced and felt an inward delight: he longed to greet her and gazed intently on her face which was radiant with light and brilliancy. Then the tirewomen took off her veil and displayed her in the first bridal dress which was of scarlet satin; and Hasan had a view of her which dazzled his sight and dazed his wits, as she moved to and fro, swaying with graceful gait;[413] and she turned the heads of all the guests, women as well as men, for she was even as saith the surpassing poet: —

A sun on wand in knoll of sand she showed * Clad in her
cramoisy-hued chemisette:
Of her lips honey-dew she gave me drink, * And with her rosy
cheeks quencht fire she set.

Then they changed that dress and displayed her in a robe of azure; and she reappeared like the full moon when it riseth over the horizon, with her coal-black hair and cheeks delicately fair; and teeth shown in sweet smiling and breasts firm rising and crowning sides of the softest and waist of the roundest. And in this second suit she was as a certain master of high conceits saith of the like of her: —

She came apparrelled in an azure vest, * Ultramarine, as skies
are deckt and dight;
I view'd th' unparrellel'd sight, which show'd my eyes * A moon
of Summer on a Winter-night.

Then they changed that suit for another and, veiling her face in the luxuriance of her hair, loosed her lovelocks, so dark, so long that their darkness and length outvied the darkest nights, and she shot through all hearts with the magical shaft of her eye-babes. They displayed her in the third dress and she was as said of her the sayer: —

Veiling her cheeks with hair a-morn she comes, * And I her
mischiefs with the cloud compare:
Saying, "Thou veilest morn with night!" "Ah, no!" * Quoth she,
"I shroud full moon with darkling air!"

Then they displayed her in the fourth bridal dress and she came forward shining like the rising sun and swaying to and fro with lovesome grace and supple ease like a gazelle-fawn. And she clave all hearts with the arrows of her eyelashes, even as saith one who described a charmer like her: —

The sun of beauty she to sight appears * And, lovely-coy, she
mocks all loveliness;
And when he fronts her favour and her smile * A-morn, the Sun of
day in clouds must dress.

Then she came forth in the fifth dress, a very light of loveliness like a wand of waving willow or a gazelle of the thirsty wold. Those locks which stung like scorpions along her cheeks were bent, and her neck was bowed in blandishment, and her hips quivered as she went. As saith one of the poets describing her in verse: —

She comes like fullest moon on happy night; * Taper of waist,
with shape of magic might:
She hath an eye whose glances quell mankind, * And Ruby on her
cheeks reflects his light:
Enveils her hips the blackness of her hair; *Beware of curls that
bite with viper-bite!
Her sides are silken-soft, the while the heart * Mere rock behind
that surface lurks from sight:
From the fringed curtains of her eyne she shoots * Shafts which
at farthest range on mark alight:
When round her neck or waist I throw my arms * Her breasts repel
me with their hardened height.
Ah, how her beauty all excels! ah how * That shape transcends the
graceful waving bough!

Then they adorned her with the sixth toilette, a dress which was green. And now she shamed her slender straightness the nut-brown spear; her radiant face dimmed the brightest beams of full moon and she outdid the bending branches in gentle movement and flexible grace. Her loveliness exalted the beauties of earth's four quarters and she broke men's hearts by the significance of her semblance; for she was even as saith one of the poets in these lines: —

A damsel 'twas the tirer's art had decked with snares and
sleight.[414] * And robed in rays as though the sun from
her had borrowed light:
She came before us wondrous clad in chemisette of green, * As
veiled by its leafy screen pomegranate hides from sight:
And when he said "How callest thou the manner of thy dress?" *
She answered us in pleasant way with double meaning dight;
"We call this garment creve-coeur; and rightly is it hight, * For
many a heart wi' this we broke[415] and conquered many
a sprite!"

Then they displayed her in the seventh dress, coloured between safflower[416] and saffron, even as one of the poets saith: —

In vest of saffron pale and safflower red * Musk'd, sandal'd
ambergris'd, she came to front:
"Rise!" cried her youth, "go forth and show thyself!" * "Sit!"
said her hips, "we cannot bear the brunt!"
And when I craved a bout, her Beauty said * "Do, do!" and said
her pretty shame, "Don't, don't!"

Thus they displayed the bride in all her seven toilettes before Hasan al-Basri, wholly neglecting the Gobbo who sat moping alone; and, when she opened her eyes[417] she said, "O Allah make this man my goodman and deliver me from the evil of this hunchbacked groom." As soon as they had made an end of this part of the ceremony they dismissed the wedding guests who went forth, women, children and all, and none remained save Hasan and the Hunchback, whilst the tirewomen led the bride into an inner room to change her garb and gear and get her ready for the bridegroom. Thereupon Quasimodo came up to Badr al-Din Hasan and said, "O my lord, thou hast cheered us this night with thy good company and overwhelmed us with thy kindness and courtesy; but now why not get thee up and go?" "Bismallah," he answered, "In Allah's name so be it!" and rising, he went forth by the door, where the Ifrit met him and said, "Stay in thy stead, O Badr al-Din, and when the Hunchback goes out to the closet of ease go in without losing time and seat thyself in the alcove; and when the bride comes say to her, "'Tis I am thy husband, for the King devised this trick only fearing for thee the evil eye, and he whom thou sawest is but a Syce, a groom, one of our stablemen.' Then walk boldly up to her and unveil her face; for jealousy hath taken us of this matter." While Hasan was still talking with the Ifrit behold, the groom fared forth from the hall and entering the closet of ease sat down on the stool. Hardly had he done this when the Ifrit came out of the tank,[418] wherein the water was, in semblance of a mouse and squeaked out "Zeek!" Quoth the Hunchback, "What ails thee?"; and the mouse grew and grew till it became a coal-black cat and caterwauled "Meeao! Meeao!"[419] Then it grew still more and more till it became a dog and barked out "Owh! Owh!" When the bridegroom saw this he was frightened and exclaimed "Out with thee, O unlucky one!" [420] But the dog grew and swelled till it became an ass-colt that brayed and snorted in his face "Hauk! Hauk!" [421] Whereupon the Hunchback quaked and cried, "Come to my aid, O people of the house!" But behold, the ass-colt grew and became big as a buffalo and walled the way before him and spake with the voice of the sons of Adam, saying, "Woe to thee, O thou Bunch-back, thou stinkard, O thou filthiest of grooms!" Hearing this the groom was seized with a colic and he sat down on the jakes in his clothes with teeth chattering and knocking together. Quoth the Ifrit, "Is the world so strait to thee thou findest none to marry save my lady-love?" But as he was silent the Ifrit continued, "Answer me or I will do thee dwell in the dust!" "By Allah," replied the Gobbo, "O King of the Buffaloes, this is no fault of mine, for they forced me to wed her; and verily I wot not that she had a lover among the buffaloes; but now I repent, first before Allah and then before thee." Said the Ifrit to him, "I swear to thee that if thou fare forth from this place, or thou utter a word before sunrise, I assuredly will wring thy neck. When the sun rises wend thy went and never more return to this house." So saying, the Ifrit took up the Gobbo bridegroom and set him head downwards and feet upwards in the slit of the privy, [422] and said to him, "I will leave thee here but I shall be on the look-out for thee till sunrise; and, if thou stir before then, I will seize thee by the feet and dash out thy brains against the wall: so look out for thy life!" Thus far concerning the Hunchback, but as regards Badr al-Din Hasan of Bassorah he left the Gobbo and the Ifrit jangling and wrangling and, going into the house, sat him down in the very middle of the alcove; and behold, in came the bride attended by an old woman who stood at the door and said, "O Father of Uprightness, [423] arise and take what God giveth thee." Then the old woman went away and the bride, Sitt al-Husn or the Lady of Beauty hight, entered the inner part of the alcove broken-hearted and saying in herself, "By Allah I will never yield my person to him; no, not even were he to take my life!" But as she came to the further end she saw Badr al-Din Hasan and she said, "Dearling! Art thou still sitting here? By Allah I was wishing that thou wert my bridegroom or, at least, that thou and the hunchbacked horse-groom were partners in me.” He replied, “O beautiful lady, how should the Syce have access to thee, and how should he share in thee with me?” “Then,” quoth she, “who is my husband, thou or he?” “Sitt al- Husn,” rejoined Hasan, “we have not done this for mere fun, [424] but only as a device to ward off the evil eye from thee; for when the tirewomen and singers and wedding guests saw they beauty being displayed to me, they feared fascination and thy father hired the horse-groom for ten dinars and a porringer of meat to take the evil eye off us; and now he hath received his hire and gone his gait.” When the Lady of Beauty heard these words she smiled and rejoiced and laughed a pleasant laugh. Then she whispered him, “By the Lord thou hast quenched a fire which tortured me and now, by Allah, O my little dark-haired darling, take me to thee and press me to thy bosom!” Then she began singing: —

“By Allah, set thy foot upon my soul; * Since long, long years
for this alone I long:
And whisper tale of love in ear of me; * To me ’tis sweeter than
the sweetest song!
No other youth upon my heart shall lie; * So do it often, dear,
and do it long.”

Then she stripped off her outer gear and she threw open her chemise from the neck downwards and showed her parts genital and all the rondure of her hips. When Badr al-Din saw the glorious sight his desires were roused, and he arose and doffed her clothes, and wrapping up in his bag-trousers [425] the purse of gold which he had taken from the Jew and which contained the thousand dinars, he laid it under the edge of the bedding. Then he took off his turband and set it upon the settle [426] atop of his other clothes, remaining in his skull-cap and fine shirt of blue silk laced with gold. Whereupon the Lady of Beauty drew him to her and he did likewise. Then he took her to his embrace and set her legs round his waist and point-blanked that cannon [427] placed where it battereth down the bulwark of maidenhead and layeth it waste. And he found her a pearl unpierced and unthridden and a filly by all men save himself unridden; and he abated her virginity and had joyance of her youth in his virility and presently he withdrew sword from sheath; and then returned to the fray right eath; and when the battle and the siege had finished, some fifteen assaults he had furnished and she conceived by him that very night. Then he laid his hand under her head and she did the same and they embraced and fell asleep in each other's arms, as a certain poet said of such lovers in these couplets: —

Visit thy lover, spurn what envy told; * No envious churl shall
smile on love ensoul'd.
Merciful Allah made no fairer sight * Than coupled lovers single
couch doth hold;
Breast pressing breast and robed in joys their own, * With
pillowed forearms cast in finest mould:
And when heart speaks to heart with tongue of love, * Folk who
would part them hammer steel ice-cold:
If a fair friend[428] thou find who cleaves to thee, * Live
for that friend, that friend in heart enfold.
O ye who blame for love us lover kind * Say, can ye minister to
diseasèd mind?

This much concerning Badr al-Hasan and Sitt al-Husn his cousin; but as regards the Ifrit, as soon as he saw the twain asleep, he said to the Ifritah, "Arise, slip thee under the youth and let us carry him back to his place ere dawn overtake us; for the day is nearhand." Thereupon she came forward and, getting under him as he lay asleep, took him up clad only in his fine blue shirt, leaving the rest of his garments; and ceased not flying (and the Ifrit vying with her in flight) till the dawn advised them that it had come upon them mid-way, and the Muezzin began his call from the Minaret, "Haste ye to salvation! Haste ye to salvation!" [429] Then Allah suffered his angelic host to shoot down the Ifrit with a shooting star, [430] so he was consumed, but the Ifritah escaped and she descended with Badr al- Din at the place where the Ifrit was burnt, and did not carry him back to Bassorah, fearing lest he come to harm. Now by the order of Him who predestineth all things, they alighted at Damascus of Syria, and the Ifritah set down her burden at one of the city- gates and flew away. When day arose and the doors were opened, the folks who came forth saw a handsome youth, with no other raiment but his blue shirt of gold-embroidered silk and skull- cap,[431] lying upon the ground drowned in sleep after the hard labour of the night which had not suffered him to take his rest. So the folk looking at him said, "O her luck with whom this one spent the night! but would he had waited to don his garments." Quoth another, "A sorry lot are the sons of great families! Haply he but now came forth of the tavern on some occasion of his own and his wine flew to his head,[432] whereby he hath missed the place he was making for and strayed till he came to the gate of the city; and finding it shut lay him down and to by-by!" As the people were bandying guesses about him suddenly the morning breeze blew upon Badr al-Din and raising his shirt to his middle showed a stomach and navel with something below it, [433] and legs and thighs clear as crystal and smooth as cream. Cried the people, "By Allah he is a pretty fellow!"; and at the cry Badr al-din awoke and found himself lying at a city-gate with a crowd gathered around him. At this he greatly marvelled and asked, "Where am I, O good folk; and what causeth you thus to gather round me, and what have I had to do with you?"; and they answered, "We found thee lying here asleep during the call to dawn-prayer and this is all we know of the matter, but where diddest thou lie last night?" [434] "By Allah, O good people," replied he, "I lay last night in Cairo." Said somebody, "Thou hast surely been eating Hashish," [435] and another, "He is a fool;" and a third, "He is a citrouille;" and a fourth asked him, "Art thou out of thy mind? thou sleepest in Cairo and thou wakest in the morning at the gate of Damascus- city!" [436] Cried he, "By Allah, my good people, one and all, I lie not to you: indeed I lay yesternight in the land of Egypt and yesternoon I was at Bassorah." Quoth one, "Well! well!"; and quoth another, "Ho! ho!"; and a third, "So! so!"; and a fourth cried, "This youth is mad, is possessed of the Jinni!" So they clapped hands at him and said to one another, "Alas, the pity of it for his youth: by Allah a madman! and madness is no respecter of persons." Then they said to him, "Collect thy wits and return to thy reason! How couldest thou be in Bassorah yesterday and Cairo yesternight and withal awake in Damascus this morning?" But he persisted, "Indeed I was a bridegroom in Cairo last night." "Belike thou hast been dreaming," rejoined they, "and sawest all this in thy sleep.” So Hasan took thought for a while and said to them, “By Allah, this is no dream; nor vision- like doth it seem! I certainly was in Cairo where they displayed the bride before me, in presence of a third person, the Hunchback groom who was sitting hard by. By Allah, O my brother, this be no dream, and if it were a dream, where is the bag of gold I bore with me and where are my turband and my robe, and my trousers?” Then he rose and entered the city, threading its highways and by- ways and bazar-streets; and the people pressed upon him and jeered at him, crying out “Madman! madman!” till he, beside himself with rage, took refuge in a cook’s shop. Now that Cook had been a trifle too clever, that is, a rogue and thief; but Allah had made him repent and turn from his evil ways and open a cook-shop; and all the people of Damascus stood in fear of his boldness and his mischief. So when the crowd saw the youth enter his shop, they dispersed being afraid of him, and went their ways. The Cook looked at Badr al-Din and, noting his beauty and loveliness, fell in love with him forthright and said, “Whence comest thou, O youth? Tell me at once thy tale, for thou art become dearer to me than my soul.” So Hasan recounted to him all that had befallen him from beginning to end (but in repetition there is no fruition) and the Cook said, “O my lord Badr al-Din, doubtless thou knowest that this case is wondrous and this story marvellous; therefore, O my son, hide what hath betided thee, till Allah dispel what ills be thine; and tarry with me here the meanwhile, for I have no child and I will adopt thee.” Badr al- Din replied, “Be it as thou wilt, O my uncle!” Whereupon the Cook went to the bazar and bought him a fine suit of clothes and made him don it; then fared with him to the Kazi, and formally declared that he was his son. So Badr al-Din Hasan became known in Damascus-city as the Cook’s son and he sat with him in the shop to take the silver, and on this wise he sojourned there for a time. Thus far concerning him; but as regards his cousin, the Lady of Beauty, when morning dawned she awoke and missed Badr al- Din Hasan from her side; but she thought that he had gone to the privy and she sat expecting him for an hour or so; when behold, entered her father Shams al-Din Mohammed, Wazir of Egypt. Now he was disconsolate by reason of what had befallen him through the Sultan, who had entreated him harshly and had married his daughter by force to the lowest of his menials and he too a lump of a groom bunch-backed withal, and he said to himself, "I will slay this daughter of mine if of her own free will she have yielded her person to this acursed carle." So he came to the door of the bride's private chamber and said, "Ho! Sitt al- Husn." She answered him, "Here am I! here am I!" [437] O my lord," and came out unsteady of gait after the pains and pleasures of the night; and she kissed his hand, her face showing redoubled brightness and beauty for having lain in the arms of that gazelle, her cousin. When her father, the Wazir, saw her in such case, he asked her, "O thou accursed, art thou rejoicing because of this horse-groom?", and Sitt al-Husn smiled sweetly and answered, "By Allah, don't ridicule me: enough of what passed yesterday when folk laughed at me, and evened me with that groom- fellow who is not worthy to bring my husband's shoes or slippers; nay who is not worth the paring of my husband's nails! By the Lord, never in my life have I nighted a night so sweet as yesternight!, so don't mock by reminding me of the Gobbo." When her parent heard her words he was filled with fury, and his eyes glared and stared, so that little of them showed save the whites and he cried, "Fie upon thee! What words are these? 'Twas the hunchbacked horse-groom who passed the night with thee!" "Allah upon thee," replied the Lady of Beauty, "do not worry me about the Gobbo, Allah damn his father; [438] and leave jesting with me; for this groom was only hired for ten dinars and a porringer of meat and he took his wage and went his way. As for me I entered the bridal-chamber, where I found my true bridegroom sitting, after the singer-women had displayed me to him; the same who had crossed their hands with red gold, till every pauper that was present waxed wealthy; and I passed the night on the breast of my bonny man, a most lively darling, with his black eyes and joined eyebrows." [439] When her parent heard these words the light before his face became night, and he cried out at her saying, "O thou whore! What is this thou tellest me? Where be thy wits?" "O my father," she rejoined, "thou breakest my heart; enough for thee that thou hast been so hard upon me! Indeed my husband who took my virginity is but just now gone to the draught-house and I feel that I have conceived by him." [440] The Wazir rose in much marvel and entered the privy where he found the hunchbacked groom with his head in the hole, and his heels in the air. At this sight he was confounded and said, “This is none other than he, the rascal Hunchback!” So he called to him, “Ho Hunchback!” The Gobbo grunted out, “Taghum! Taghum!”[441] thinking it was the Ifrit spoke to him; so the Wazir shouted at him and said, “Speak out, or I’ll strike off thy pate with this sword.” Then quoth the Hunchback, “By Allah, O Shaykh of the Ifrits, ever since thou settest me in this place, I have not lifted my head; so Allah upon thee, take pity and entreat me kindly!” When the Wazir heard this he asked, “What is this thou sayest? I’m bride’s father and no Ifrit.” “Enough for thee that thou hast well nigh done me die, “ answered Quasimodo; “now go thy ways before he come upon thee who hath served me thus. Could ye not marry me to any save the lady-love of buffaloes and the beloved of Ifrits? Allah curse her and curse him who married me to her and was the cause of this my case,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day, and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Twenty-third Night,

Said she, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the hunchbacked groom spake to the bride’s father saying, “Allah curse him who was the cause of this my case!” Then said the Wazir to him, “Up and out of this place!” “Am I mad,” cried the groom, “that I should go with thee without leave of the Ifrit whose last words to me were:— “When the sun rises, arise and go they gait.” So hath the sun risen or no?; for I dare not budge from this place till then.” Asked the Wazir, “Who brought thee hither?”; and he answered “I came here yesternight for a call of nature and to do what none can do for me, when lo! a mouse came out of the water, and squeaked at me and swelled and waxed gross till it was big as a buffalo, and spoke to me words that entered my ears. Then he left me here and went away, Allah curse the bride and him who married me to her!” The Wazir walked up to him and lifted his head out of the cesspool hole; and he fared forth running for dear life and hardly crediting that the sun had risen; and repaired to the Sultan to whom he told all that had befallen him with the Ifrit. But the Wazir returned to the bride’s private chamber, sore troubled in spirit about her, and said to her, “O my daughter, explain this strange matter to me!” Quoth she, “Tis simply this. The bridegroom to whom they displayed me yestereve lay with me all night, and took my virginity and I am with child by him. He is my husband and if thou believe me not, there are his turband, twisted as it was, lying on the settle and his dagger and his trousers beneath the bed with a something, I wot not what, wrapped up in them." When her father heard this he entered the private chamber and found the turband which had been left there by Badr al-Din Hasan, his brother's son, and he took it in hand and turned it over, saying, "This is the turband worn by Wazirs, save that it is of Mosul stuff."[442] So he opened it and, finding what seemed to be an amulet sewn up in the Fez, he unsewed the lining and took it out; then he lifted up the trousers wherein was the purse of the thousand gold pieces and, opening that also, found in it a written paper. This he read and it was the sale-receipt of the Jew in the name of Badr al-Din Hasan, son of Nur al-Din Ali, the Egyptian; and the thousand dinars were also there. No sooner had Shams al-Din read this than he cried out with a loud cry and fell to the ground fainting; and as soon as he revived and understood the gist of the matter he marvelled and said, "There is no God, but the God, who All-might is over all things! Knowest thou, O my daughter, who it was that became the husband of thy virginity?" "No," answered she, and he said, "Verily he is the son of my brother, thy cousin, and this thousand dinars is thy dowry. Praise be to Allah! and would I wot how this matter came about!" then opened he the amulet which was sewn up and found therein a paper in the handwriting of his deceased brother, Nur al-Din the Egyptian, father of Badr al-Din Hasan; and, when he saw the hand-writing, he kissed it again and again; and he wept and wailed over his dead brother and improvised this lines: —

"I see their traces and with pain I melt, * And on their whilome
  homes I weep and yearn:
And Him I pray who dealt this parting-blow * Some day he deign
  vouchsafe a safe return."[443]

When he ceased versifying, he read the scroll and found in it recorded the dates of his brother's marriage with the daughter of the Wazir of Bassorah, and of his going in to her, and her conception, and the birth of Badr al-Din Hasan and all his brother's history and doings up to his dying day. So he marvelled much and shook with joy and, comparing the dates with his own marriage and going in to his wife and the birth of their daughter, Sitt al-Husn, he found that they perfectly agreed. So he took the document and, repairing with it to the Sultan, acquainted him with what had passed, from first to last; whereat the King marvelled and commanded the case to be at once recorded.[444] The Wazir abode that day expecting to see his brother's son but he came not; and he waited a second day, a third day and so on to the seventh day, without any tidings of him. So he said, "By Allah, I will do a deed such as none hath ever done before me!"; and he took reed-pen and ink and drew upon a sheet of paper the plan of the whole house, showing whereabouts was the private chamber with the curtain in such a place and the furniture in such another and so on with all that was in the room. Then he folded up the sketch and, causing all the furniture to be collected, he took Badr al-Din's garments and the turband and Fez and robe and purse, and carried the whole to his house and locked them up, against the coming of his nephew, Badr al-Din Hasan, the son of his lost brother, with an iron padlock on which he set his seal. As for the Wazir's daughter, when her tale of months was fulfilled, she bare a son like the full moon, the image of his father in beauty and loveliness and fair proportions and perfect grace. They cut his navel-string[445] and Kohl'd his eyelids to strengthen his eyes, and gave him over to the nurses and nursery governesses,[446] naming him Ajib, the Wonderful. His day was as a month and his month was as a year;[447] and, when seven years had passed over him, his grandfather sent him to school, enjoining the master to teach him Koran-reading, and to educate him well. he remained at the school four years, till he began to bully his schoolfellows and abuse them and bash them and thrash them and say, "Who among you is like me? I am the son of Wazir of Egypt!" At last the boys came in a body to the Monitor[448] of what hard usage they were wont to have from Ajib, and he said to them, "I will tell you somewhat you may do to him so that he shall leave off coming to the school, and it is this. When he enters to-morrow, sit ye down about him and say some one of you to some other, 'By Allah none shall play with us at this game except he tell us the names of his mamma and his papa; for he who knows not the names of his mother and his father is a bastard, a son of adultery,[449] and he shall not play with us.'" When morning dawned the boys came to school, Ajib being one of them, and all flocked around him saying, "We will play a game wherein none can join save he can tell the name of his mamma and his papa." And they all cried, "By Allah, good!" Then quoth one of them, "My name is Majid and my mammy's name is Alawiyah and my daddy's Izz al-Din." Another spoke in like guise and yet a third, till Ajid's turn came, and he said, "MY name is Ajib, and my mother's is Sitt al- Husn, and my father's Shams al-Din, the Wazir of Cairo." "By Allah," cried they, "the Wazir is not thy true father." Ajib answered, "The Wazir is my father in very deed." Then the boys all laughed and clapped their hands at him, saying "He does not know who is his papa: get out from among us, for none shall play with us except he know his father's name." Thereupon they dispersed from around him and laughed him to scorn; so his breast was straitened and he well nigh choked with tears and hurt feelings. Then said the Monitor to him, "We know that the Wazir is thy grandfather, the father of thy mother, Sitt al-Husn, and not thy father. As for thy father, neither dost thou know him nor yet do we; for the Sultan married thy mother to the hunchbacked horse-groom; but the Jinni came and slept with her and thou hast no known father. Leave, then, comparing thyself too advantageously with the little ones of the school, till thou know that thou hast a lawful father; for until then thou wilt pass for a child of adultery amongst them. Seest thou that not even a huckster's son knoweth his own sire? Thy grandfather is the Wazir of Egypt; but as for thy father we wot him not and we say indeed that thou hast none. So return to thy sound senses!" When Ajib heard these insulting words from the Monitor and the school boys and understood the reproach they put upon him, he went out at once and ran to his mother, Sitt al-Husn, to complain; but he was crying so bitterly that his tears prevented his speech for a while. When she heard his sobs and saw his tears her heart burned as though with fire for him, and she said, "O my son, why dost thou weep? Allah keep the tears from thine eyes! Tell me what hath betided thee?" So he told her all that he heard from the boys and from the Monitor and ended with asking, "And who, O my mother, is my father?" She answered, "Thy father is the Wazir of Egypt;" but he said, “Do not lie to me. The Wazir is thy father, not mine! who then is my father? Except thou tell me the very truth I will kill myself with this hanger.” [450] When his mother heard him speak of his father she wept, remembering her cousin and her bridal night with him and all that occurred thereon and then, and she repeated these couplets:—

“Love in my heart they lit and went their ways, * And all I
love to furthest lands withdrew;
And when they left me sufferance also left, * And when we parted
Patience bade adieu:
They fled and flying with my joys they fled, * In very
consistency my spirit flew:
They made my eyelids flow with severance tears * And to the
parting-pang these drops are due:
And when I long to see reunion-day, * My groans prolonging sore
for ruth I sue:
Then in my heart of hearts their shapes I trace, * And love and
longing care and cark renew:
O ye, whose names cling round me like a cloak, * Whose love yet
closer than a shirt I drew,
Beloved ones! how long this hard despite? * How long this
severance and this coy shy flight?”

Then she wailed and shrieked aloud and her son did the like; and behold, in came the Wazir whose heart burnt within him at the sight of their lamentations, and he said, “What makes you weep?” So the Lady of Beauty acquainted him with what had happened between her son and the school boys; and he also wept, calling to mind his brother and what had past between them and what had betided his daughter and how he had failed to find out what mystery there was in the matter. Then he rose at once and, repairing to the audience-hall, went straight to the King and told his tale and craved his permission [451] to travel eastward to the city of Bassorah and ask after his brother’s son. Furthermore, he besought the Sultan to write for him letters patent, authorising him to seize upon Badr al-Din, his nephew and son-in-law, wheresoever he might find him. And he wept before the King, who had pity on him and wrote royal autographs to his deputies in all climes [452] and countries and cities; whereat the Wazir rejoiced and prayed for blessings on him. Then, taking leave of his Sovereign, he returned to his house, where he equipped himself and his daughter and his adopted child Ajib, with all things meet for a long march; and set out and travelled the first day and the second and the third and so forth till he arrived at Damascus-city. He found it a fair place abounding in trees and streams, even as the poet said of it:—

When I nighted and dayed in Damascus town, * Time sware such
 another he ne'er should view:
And careless we slept under wing of night, * Till dappled Morn
 'gan her smiles renew:
And dew-drops on branch in their beauty hung, * Like pearls to be
 dropt when the Zephyr blew:
And the Lake [453] was the page where birds read and note, *
 And the clouds set points to what breezes wrote.

The Wazir encamped on the open space called Al-Hasa; [454] and, after pitching tents, said to his servants, "A halt here for two days!" So they went into the city upon their several occasions, this to sell and this to buy; this to go to the Hammam and that to visit the Cathedral-mosque of the Banu Umayyah, the Ommiades, whose like is not in this world. [455] Ajib also went, with his attendant eunuch, for solace and diversion to the city and the servant followed with a quarter-staff [456] of almond-wood so heavy that if he struck a camel therewith the beast would never rise again. [457] When the people of Damascus saw Ajib's beauty and brilliancy and perfect grace and symmetry (for he was a marvel of comeliness and winning loveliness, softer than the cool breeze of the North, sweeter than limpid waters to a man in drowth, and pleasanter than the health for which sick man sueth), a mighty many followed him, whilest others ran on before, and sat down on the road until he should come up, that they might gaze on him, till, as Destiny had decreed, the Eunuch stopped opposite the shop of Ajib's father, Badr al-Din Hasan. Now his beard had grown long and thick and his wits had ripened during the twelve years which had passed over him, and the Cook and ex-rogue having died, the so-called Hasan of Bassorah had succeeded to his goods and shop, for that he had been formally adopted before the Kazi and witnesses. When his son and the Eunuch stepped before him he gazed on Ajib and, seeing how very beautiful he was, his heart fluttered and throbbed, and blood drew to blood and natural affection spake out and his bowels yearned over him. He had just dressed a conserve of pomegranate-grains with sugar, and Heaven-implanted love wrought within him; so he called to his son Ajib and said, "O my lord, O thou who hast gotten the mastery of my heart and my very vitals and to whom my bowels yearn; say me, wilt thou enter my house and solace my soul by eating of my meat?" Then his eyes streamed with tears which he could not stay, for he bethought him of what he had been and what he had become. When Ajib heard his father's words his heart also yearned himwards and he looked at the Eunuch and said to him, "Of a truth, O my good guard, my heart yearns to this cook; he is as one that hath a son far away from him: so let us enter and gladden his heart by tasting of his hospitality. Perchance for our so doing Allah may reunite me with my father." When the Eunuch heard these words he cried, "A fine thing this, by Allah! Shall the sons of Wazirs be seen eating in a common cook-shop? Indeed I keep off the folk from thee with this quarter-staff lest they even look upon thee; and I dare not suffer thee to enter this shop at all." When Hasan of Bassorah heard his speech he marvelled and turned to the Eunuch with the tears pouring down his cheeks; and Ajib said, "Verily my heart loves him!" But he answered, "Leave this talk, thou shalt not go in." Thereupon the father turned to the Eunuch and said, "O worthy sir, why wilt thou not gladden my soul by entering my shop? O thou who art like a chestnut, dark without but white of heart within! O thou of the like of whom a certain poet said * * *" The Eunuch burst out a-laughing and asked— "Said what? Speak out by Allah and be quick about it." So Hasan the Bassorite began reciting these couplets: —

"If not master of manners or aught but discreet * In the
household of Kings no trust could he take:
And then for the Harem! what Eunuch[458] is he * Whom

angels would serve for his service sake."

The Eunuch marvelled and was pleased at these words, so he took Ajib by the hand and went into the cook's shop: whereupon Hasan the Bassorite ladled into a saucer some conserve of pomegranate-grains wonderfully good, dressed with almonds and sugar, saying, "You have honoured me with your company: eat then and health and happiness to you!" Thereupon Ajib said to his father, "Sit thee down and eat with us; so perchance Allah may unite us with him we long for." Quoth Hasan, "O my son, hast thou then been afflicted in thy tender years with parting from those thou lovest?" Quoth Ajib, "Even so, O nuncle mine; my heart burns for the loss of a beloved one who is non other than my father; and indeed I come forth, I and my grandfather, [459] to circle and search the world for him. Oh, the pity of it, and how I long to meet him!" Then he wept with exceeding for his own bereavement, which recalled to him his long separation from dear friends and from his mother; and the Eunuch was moved to pity for him. Then they ate together till they were satisfied; and Ajib and the slave rose and left the shop. Hereat Hasan the Bassorite felt as though his soul had departed his body and had gone with them; for he could not lose sight of the boy during the twinkling of an eye, albeit he knew not that Ajib was his son. So he locked up his shop and hastened after them; and he walked so fast that he came up with them before they had gone out of the western gate. The Eunuch turned and asked him, "What ails the?"; and Badr al- Din answered, "When ye went from me, meseemed my soul had gone with you; and, as I had business without the city-gate, I purposed to bear you company till my matter was ordered and so return." The Eunuch was angered and said to Ajib, "This is just what I feared! we ate that unlucky mouthful (which we are bound to respect), and here is the fellow following us from place to place; for the vulgar are ever the vulgar." Ajib, turning and seeing the Cook just behind him, was wroth and his face reddened with rage and he said to the servant; "Let him walk the highway of the Moslems; but, when we turn off it to our tents, and find that he still follows us, we will send him about his business with a flea in his ear." Then he bowed his head and walked on, the Eunuch walking behind him. But Hasan of Bassorah followed them to the plain Al-Hasa; and, as they drew near to the tents, they turned round and saw him close on their heels; so Ajib was very angry, fearing that the Eunuch might tell his grandfather what had happened. His indignation was the hotter for apprehension lest any say that after he had entered a cook-shop the cook had followed him. So he turned and looked at Hasan of Bassorah and found his eyes fixed on his own, for the father had become a body without a soul; and it seemed to Ajib that his eye was a treacherous eye or that he was some lewd fellow. So his rage redoubled and, stooping down, he took up a stone weighing half a pound and threw it at his father. It struck him on the forehead, cutting it open from eye-brow to eye-brow and causing the blood to stream down: and Hasan fell to the ground in a swoon whilst Ajib and the Eunuch made for the tents. When the father came to himself he wiped away the blood and tore off a strip from his turband and bound up his head, blaming himself the while, and saying, "I wronged the lad by shutting up my shop and following, so that he thought I was some evil-minded fellow." Then he returned to his place where he busied himself with the sale of his sweetmeats; and he yearned after his mother at Bassorah, and wept over her and broke out repeating: —

"Unjust it were to bid the World[460] be just * And blame
    her not: She ne'er was made for justice:
Take what she gives thee, leave all grief aside, * For now to
    fair and then to foul her lust is."

So Hasan of Bassorah set himself steadily to sell his sweetmeats; but the Wazir, his uncle, halted in Damascus three days and then marched upon Emesa, and passing through that town he made enquiry there and at every place where he rested. Thence he fared on by way of Hamah and Aleppo and thence to Diyar Bakr and Maridin and Mosul, still enquiring, till he arrived at Bassorah-city. Here, as soon as he had secured a lodging, he presented himself before the Sultan, who entreated him with high honour and the respect due to his rank, and asked the cause of his coming. The Wazir acquainted him with his history and told him that the Minister Nur al-Din was his brother; whereupon the Sultan exclaimed, "Allah have mercy upon him!" and added, "My good Sahib!" [461] ; he was my Wazir for fifteen years and I loved him exceedingly. Then he died leaving a son who abode only a single month after his father's death; since which time he has disappeared and we could gain no tidings of him. But his mother, who is the daughter of my former Minister, is still among us." When the Wazir Shams al-Din heard that his nephew's mother was alive and well, he rejoiced and said, "O King I much desire to meet her." The King on the instant gave him leave to visit her; so he betook himself to the mansion of his brother, Nur al-Din, and cast sorrowful glances on all things in and around it and kissed the threshold. Then he bethought him of his brother, Nur al-Din Ali, and how he had died in a strange land far from kith and kin and friends; and he wept and repeated these lines: —

"I wander 'mid these walls, my Layla's walls, * And kissing this
and other wall I roam:
'Tis not the walls or roof my heart so loves, * But those who in
this house had made their home."

Then he passed through the gate into a courtyard and found a vaulted doorway builded of hardest syenite [462] inlaid with sundry kinds of multi-coloured marble. Into this he walked and wandered about the house and, throwing many a glance around, saw the name of his brother, Nur al-Din, written in gold wash upon the walls. So he went up to the inscription and kissed it and wept and thought of how he had been separated from his brother and had now lost him for ever, and he recited these couplets: —

"I ask of you from every rising sun, * And eke I ask when
flasheth levenlight:
When I pass my nights in passion-pain, * Yet ne'er I 'plain me
of my painful plight;
My love! if longer last this parting throe * Little by little
shall it waste my sprite.
An thou wouldst bless these eyne with sight of thee * One day on
earth, I crave none other sight:
Think not another could possess my mind * Nor length nor breadth

for other love I find."

Then he walked on till he came to the apartment of his brother's widow, the mother of Badr al-Din Hasan, the Egyptian. Now from the time of her son's disappearance she had never ceased weeping and wailing through the light hours and the dark; and, when the years grew longsome with her, she built for him a tomb of marble in the midst of the saloon and there used to weep for him day and night, never sleeping save thereby. When the Wazir drew near her apartment, he heard her voice and stood behind the door while she addressed the sepulchre in verse and said: —

"Answer, by Allah! Sepulchre, are all his beauties gone? * Hath
change the power to blight his charms, that Beauty's
paragon?
Thou art not earth, O Sepulchre! nor art thou sky to me; * How
comes it, then, in thee I see conjoint the branch and moon?"

While she was bemoaning herself after this fashion, behold, the Wazir went in to her and saluted her and informed her that he was her husband's brother; and, telling her all that had passed between them, laid open before her the whole story, how her son Badr al-Din Hasan had spent a whole night with his daughter full ten years ago but had disappeared in the morning. And he ended with saying, "My daughter conceived by thy son and bare a male child who is now with me, and he is thy son and thy son's son by my daughter." When she heard the tidings that her boy, Badr al- Din, was still alive and saw her brother-in-law, she rose up to him and threw herself at his feet and kissed them, reciting these lines: —

"Allah be good to him that gives glad tidings of thy steps; * In
very sooth for better news mine ears would never sue:
Were he content with worn-out robe, upon his back I'd throw * A
heart to pieces rent and torn when heard the word Adieu."

Then the Wazir sent for Ajib and his grandmother stood up and fell on his neck and wept; but Shams al-Din said to her, "This is no time for weeping; this is the time to get thee ready for travelling with us to the land of Egypt; haply Allah will reunite me and thee with thy son and my nephew.” Replied she, “Hearkening and obedience;” and, rising at once, collected her baggage and treasures and her jewels, and equipped herself and her slave-girls for the march, whilst the Wazir went to take his leave of the Sultan of Bassorah, who sent by him presents and rarities for the Soldan of Egypt. Then he set out at once upon his homeward march and journeyed till he came to Damascus-city where he alighted in the usual place and pitched tents, and said to his suite, “We will halt a se’nnight here to buy presents and rare things for the Soldan.” Now Ajib bethought him of the past so he said to the Eunuch, “O Laik, I want a little diversion; come, let us go down to the great bazar of Damascus, [463] and see what hath become of the cook whose sweetmeats we ate and whose head we broke, for indeed he was kind to us and we entreated him scurvily.” The Eunuch answered, “Hearing is obeying!” So they went forth from the tents; and the tie of blood drew Ajib towards his father, and forthwith they passed through the gateway, Bab al-Faradis [464] hight, and entered the city and ceased not walking through the streets till they reached the cookshop, where they found Hasan of Bassorah standing at the door. It was near the time of mid-afternoon prayer [465] and it so fortuned that he had just dressed a confection of pomegranate-grains. When the twain drew near to him and Ajib saw him, his heart yearned towards him, and noticing the scar of the blow, which time had darkened on his brow, he said to him, “Peace be on thee, O man!” [466] know that my heart is with thee.” But when Badr al-Din looked upon his son his vitals yearned and his heart fluttered, and he hung his head earthwards and sought to make his tongue give utterance to his words, but he could not. Then he raised his head humbly and suppliant-wise towards his boy and repeated these couplets: —

“I longed for my beloved but when I saw his face, * Abashed I
held my tongue and stood with downcast eye;
And hung my head in dread and would have hid my love, * But do
whatso I would hidden it would not lie;
Volumes of plaints I had prepared, reproach and blame, * But

when we met, no single word remembered I."

And then said he to them, "Heal my broken heart and eat of my sweetmeats; for, by Allah, I cannot look at thee but my heart flutters. Indeed I should not have followed thee the other day, but that I was beside myself." "By Allah," answered Ajib, "thou dost indeed love us! We ate in thy house a mouthful when we were here before and thou madest us repent of it, for that thou followedst us and wouldst have disgraced us; so now we will not eat aught with thee save on condition that thou make oath not to go out after us nor dog us. Otherwise we will not visit thee again during our present stay; for we shall halt a week here, whilst my grandfather buys certain presents for the King." Quoth Hasan of Bassorah, "I promise you this." So Ajib and the Eunuch entered the shop, and his father set before them a saucer-full of conserve of pomegranate-grains. Said Ajib, "Sit thee down and eat with us, so haply shall Allah dispel our sorrows." Hasan the Bassorite was joyful and sat down and ate with them; but his eyes kept gazing fixedly on Ajib's face, for his very heart and vitals clove to him; and at last the boy said to him, "Did I not tell thee thou art a most noyous dotard?; so do stint thy staring in my face!" But when Hasan of Bassorah heard his son's words he repeated these lines: —

"Thou hast some art the hearts of men to clip; * Close-veiled,
far-hidden mystery dark and deep:
O thou whose beauties sham the lustrous moon, * Wherewith the
saffron Morn fears rivalship!
Thy beauty is a shrine shall ne'er decay; * Whose signs shall
grow until they all outstrip;[467]
Must I be thirst-burnt by that Eden-brow * And die of pine to
taste that Kausar-lip?"[468]

Hasan kept putting morsels into Ajib's mouth at one time and at another time did the same by the Eunuch and they ate till they were satisfied and could no more. Then all rose up and the cook poured water on their hands;[469] and, loosing a silken waist-shawl, dried them and sprinkled them with rose-water from a casting-bottle he had by him. Then he went out and presently returned with a gugglet of sherbet flavoured with rose-water, scented with musk and cooled with snow; and he set this before them saying, “Complete your kindness to me!” So Ajib took the gugglet and drank and passed it to the Eunuch; and it went round till their stomachs were full and they were surfeited with a meal larger than their wont. Then they went away and made haste in walking till they reached the tents, and Ajib went in to his grandmother, who kissed him and, thinking of her son, Badr al-Din Hasan, groaned aloud and wept and recited these lines: —

“I still had hoped to see thee and enjoy thy sight, * For in
thine absence life has lost its kindly light:
I swear my vitals wot none other love but thine * By Allah, who
can read the secrets of the sprite!”

Then she asked Ajib, “O my son! where hast thou been?”; and he answered, “In Damascus-city;” Whereupon she rose and set before him a bit of scone and a saucer of conserve of pomegranate-grains (which was too little sweetened), and she said to the Eunuch, “Sit down with thy master!” Said the servant to himself, “By Allah, we have no mind to eat: I cannot bear the smell of bread;” but he sat down and so did Ajib, though his stomach was full of what he had eaten already and drunken. Nevertheless he took a bit of the bread and dipped it in the pomegranate-conserve and made shift to eat it, but he found it too little sweetened, for he was cloyed and surfeited, so he said, “Faugh; what be this wild-beast [470] stuff?” “O my son,” cried his grandmother, “dost thou find fault with my cookery? I cooked this myself and none can cook it as nicely as I can save thy father, Badr al-Din Hasan.” “By Allah, O my lady, Ajib answered, “this dish is nasty stuff; for we saw but now in the city of Bassorah a cook who so dresseth pomegranate-grains that the very smell openeth a way to the heart and the taste would make a full man long to eat; and, as for this mess compared with his, ’tis not worth either much or little.” When his grandmother heard his words she waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and looked at the servant — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Twenty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ajib's grandmother heard his words, she waxed wroth and looked at the servant and said, "Woe to thee! dost thou spoil my son, [471] and dost take him into common cookshops?" The Eunuch was frightened and denied, saying, "We did not go into the shop; we only passed by it." "By Allah," cried Ajib, "but we did go in and we ate till it came out of our nostrils, and the dish was better than thy dish!" Then his grandmother rose and went and told her brother-in-law, who was incensed against the Eunuch, and sending for him asked him, "Why didst thou take my son into a cookshop?"; and the Eunuch being frightened answered, "We did not go in." But Ajib said, "We did go inside and ate conserve of pomegranate-grains till we were full; and the cook gave us to drink of iced and sugared sherbet." At this the Wazir's indignation redoubled and he questioned the Castrato but, as he still denied, the Wazir said to him, "If thou speak sooth, sit down and eat before us." So he came forward and tried to eat, but could not eat and threw away the mouthful crying "O my lord! I am surfeited since yesterday." By this the Wazir was certified that he had eaten at the cook's and bade the slaves throw him [472] which they did. Then they came down on him with a rib- basting which burned him till he cried for mercy and help from Allah, saying, "O my master, beat me no more and I will tell thee the truth;" whereupon the Wazir stopped the bastinado and said, "Now speak thou sooth." Quoth the Eunuch, "Know then that we did enter the shop of a cook while he was dressing conserve of pomegranate-grains and he set some of it before us: by Allah! I never ate in my life its like, nor tasted aught nastier than this stuff which is now before us."[473] Badr al-Din Hasan's mother was angry at this and said, "Needs thou must go back to the cook and bring me a saucer of conserved pomegranate-grains from that which is in his shop and show it to thy master, that he may say which be the better and the nicer, mine or his." Said the unsexed, "I will." So on the instant she gave him a saucer and a half dinar and he returned to the shop and said to the cook, "O Shaykh of all Cooks, [474] we have laid a wager concerning thy cookery in my lord's house, for they have conserve of pomegranate-grains there also; so give me this half-dinar's worth and look to it; for I have eaten a full meal of stick on account of thy cookery, and so do not let me eat aught more thereof." Hasan of Bassorah laughed and answered, "By Allah, none can dress this dish as it should be dressed save myself and my mother, and she at this time is in a far country." Then he ladled out a saucer-full; and, finishing it off with musk and rose-water, put it in a cloth which he sealed [475] and gave it to the Eunuch, who hastened back with it. No sooner had Badr al-Din Hasan's mother tasted it and perceived its fine flavour and the excellence of the cookery, than she knew who had dressed it, and she screamed and fell down fainting. The Wazir, sorely started, sprinkled rose-water upon her and after a time she recovered and said, "If my son be yet of this world, none dressed this conserve of pomegranate-grains but he; and this Cook is my very son Badr al-Din Hasan; there is no doubt of it nor can there be any mistake, for only I and he knew how to prepare it and I taught him." When the Wazir heard her words he joyed with exceeding joy and said, "O the longing of me for a sight of my brother's son! I wonder if the days will ever unite us with him! Yet it is to Almighty Allah alone that we look for bringing about this meeting." Then he rose without stay or delay and, going to his suite said to them, "Be off, some fifty of you with sticks and staves to the Cook's shop and demolish it; then pinion his arms behind him with his own turband, saying, 'It was thou madest that foul mess of pomegranate-grains!' and drag him here perforce but without doing him a harm." And they replied, "It is well." Then the Wazir rode off without losing an instant to the Palace and, foregathering with the Viceroy of Damascus, showed him the Sultan's orders. After careful perusal he kissed the letter, and placing it upon his head said to his visitor, "Who is this offender of thine?" Quoth the Wazir, "A man who is a cook." So the Viceroy at once sent his apparitors to the shop; which they found demolished and everything in it broken to pieces; for whilst the Wazir was riding to the palace his men had done his bidding. Then they awaited his return from the audience, and Hasan of Bassorah who was their prisoner kept saying, "I wonder what they have found in the conserve of pomegranate-grains to bring things to this pass!" [476] When the Wazir returned to them, after his visit to the Viceroy who had given him formal permission to take up his debtor and depart with him, on entering the tents he called for the Cook.

They brought him forward pinioned with his turband; and, when Badr al-Din Hasan saw his uncle, he wept with excessive weeping and said, “O my lord, what is my offence against thee?” “Art thou the man who dressed that conserve of pomegranate-grains?”; asked the Wazir, and he answered “Yes! didst thou find in it aught to call for the cutting off of my head?” Quoth the Wazir, “That were the least of thy deserts!” Quoth the cook, “O my lord, wilt thou not tell me my crime and what aileth the conserve of pomegranate-grains?” “Presently,” replied the Wazir and called aloud to his men, “Bring hither the camels.” So they struck the tents and by the Wazir’s orders the servants took Badr al-Din Hasan, and set him in a chest which they padlocked and put on a camel. Then they departed and stinted not journeying till nightfall, when they halted and ate some victual, and took Badr al-Din Hasan out of his chest and gave him a meal and locked him up again. They set out once more and travelled till they reached Kimrah, where they took him out of the box and brought him before the Wazir who asked him, “Art thou he who dressed that conserve of pomegranate- grains?” He answered “Yes, O my lord!”; and the Wazir said “Fetter him!” So they fettered him and returned him to the chest and fared on again till they reached Cairo and lighted at the quarter called Al-Raydaniyah.[477] Then the Wazir gave order to take Badr al-Din Hasan out of the chest and sent for a carpenter and said to him, “Make me a cross of wood [478] for this fellow!” Cried Badr al-Din Hasan “And what wilt thou do with it?”; and the Wazir replied, “I mean to crucify thee thereon, and nail thee thereto and parade thee all about the city.” “And why wilt thou use me after this fashion?” “Because of thy villanous cookery of conserved pomegranate-grains; how durst thou dress it and sell it lacking pepper?” “And for that it lacked pepper wilt thou do all this to me? Is it not enough that thou hast broken my shop and smashed my gear and boxed me up in a chest and fed me only once a day?” “Too little pepper! too little pepper! this is a crime which can be expiated only upon the cross!” Then Badr al-Din Hasan marvelled and fell a-mourning for his life; whereupon the Wazir asked him, “Of what thinkest thou?”; and he answered him, “Of maggoty heads like thine; [479] for an thou had one ounce of sense thou hadst not treated me thus.” Quoth the Wazir, “It is our duty to punish thee lest thou do the like again." Quoth Badr al-Din Hasan, "Of a truth my offense were over-punished by the least of what thou hast already done to me; and Allah damn all conserve of pomegranate-grains and curse the hour when I cooked it and would I had died ere this!" But the Wazir rejoined, "There is no help for it; I must crucify a man who sells conserve of pomegranate-grains lacking pepper." All this time the carpenter was shaping the wood and Badr al-Din looked on; and thus they did till night, when his uncle took him and clapped him into the chest, saying, "The thing shall be done to-morrow!" Then he waited until he knew Badr al-Din "Hasan to be asleep, when he mounted; and taking the chest up before him, entered the city and rode on to his own house, where he alighted and said to his daughter, Sitt al-Husn, "Praised be Allah who hath reunited thee with thy husband, the son of thine uncle! Up now, and order the house as it was on thy bridal night." So the servants arose and lit the candles; and the Wazir took out his plan of the nuptial chamber, and directed them what to do till they had set everything in its stead, so that whoever saw it would have no doubt but it was the very night of the marriage. Then he bade them put down Badr al-Din Hasan's turband on the settle, as he had deposited it with his own hand, and in like manner his bag-trousers and the purse which were under the mattress: and told daughter to undress herself and go to bed in the private chamber as on her wedding-night, adding, "When the son of thine uncle comes in to thee, say to him: — Thou hast loitered while going to the privy; and call him to lie by thy side and keep him in converse till daybreak, when we will explain the whole matter to him." Then he bade take Badr al-Din Hasan out of the chest, after loosing the fetters from his feet and stripping off all that was on him save the fine shirt of blue silk in which he had slept on his wedding-night; so that he was well-nigh naked and trouserless. All this was done whilst he was sleeping on utterly unconscious. Then, by doom of Destiny, Badr al-Din Hasan turned over and awoke; and, finding himself in a lighted vestibule, said to himself, "Surely I am in the mazes of some dream." So he rose and went on to a little to an inner door and looked in and lo! he was in the very chamber wherein the bride had been displayed to him; and there he saw the bridal alcove and the settle and his turband and all his clothes. When he saw this he was confounded and kept advancing with one foot, and retiring with the other, saying, “Am I sleeping or waking?” And he began rubbing his forehead and saying (for indeed he was thoroughly astounded), “By Allah, verily this is the chamber of the bride who was displayed before me! Where am I then? I was surely but now in a box!” Whilst he was talking with himself, Sitt al-Husn suddenly lifted the corner of the chamber-curtain and said, “O my lord, wilt thou not come in? Indeed thou hast loitered long in the water-closet.” When he heard her words and saw her face he burst out laughing and said, “Of a truth this is a very nightmare among dreams!” Then he went in sighing, and pondered what had come to pass with him and was perplexed about his case, and his affair became yet more obscure to him when he saw his turband and bag-trousers and when, feeling the pocket, he found the purse containing the thousand gold pieces. So he stood still and muttered, “Allah is all knowing! Assuredly I am dreaming a wild waking dream!” Then said the Lady of Beauty to him, “What ails thee to look puzzled and perplexed?”; adding, “Thou wast a very different man during the first of the night!” He laughed and asked her, “How long have I been away from thee?”; and she answered him, “Allah preserve thee and His Holy Name be about thee! Thou didst but go out an hour ago for an occasion and return. Are thy wits clean gone?” When Badr al-Din Hasan heard this, he laughed,[480] and said, “Thou hast spoken truth; but, when I went out from thee, I forgot myself awhile in the draught-house and dreamed that I was a cook at Damascus and abode there ten years; and there came to me a boy who was of the sons of the great, and with him an Eunuch.” Here he passed his hand over his forehead and, feeling the scar, cried, “By Allah, O my lady, it must have been true, for he struck my forehead with a stone and cut it open from eye-brow to eye-brow; and here is the mark: so it must have been on wake.” Then he added, “But perhaps I dreamt it when we fell asleep, I and thou, in each other’s arms, for meseems it was as though I travelled to Damascus without tarbush and trousers and set up as a cook there.” Then he was perplexed and considered for awhile, and said, “By Allah, I also fancied that I dressed a conserve of pomegranate-grains and put too little pepper in it. By Allah, I must have slept in the numerocent and have seen the whole thing in a dream; but how long was that dream!” “Allah upon thee,” said Sitt al-Husn, “and what more sawest thou?” So he related all to her; and presently said, “By Allah had I not woke up they would have nailed me to a cross of wood!” “Wherefore?” asked she; and he answered, “For putting too little pepper in the conserve of pomegranate-grains, and meseemed they demolished my shop and dashed to pieces my pots and pans, destroyed all my stuff and put me in a box; they then sent for the carpenter to fashion a cross for me and would have crucified me thereon. Now Alham-dolillah! thanks be to Allah, for that all this happened to me in sleep, and not on wake.” Sitt al-Husn laughed and clasped him to her bosom and he her to his: then he thought again and said, “By Allah, it could not be save while I was awake: truly I know not what to think of it.” Then he lay him down and all the night he was bewildered about his case, now saying, “I was dreaming!” and then saying, “I was awake!”, till morning, when his uncle Shams al-Din, the Wazir, came to him and saluted him. When Badr al-Din Hasan saw him he said, “By Allah, art thou not he who bade bind my hands behind me and smash my shop and nail me to a cross on a matter of conserved pomegranate-grains because the dish lacked a sufficiency of pepper?” Whereupon the Wazir said to him, “Know, O my son, that truth hath shown it soothfast and the concealed hath been revealed! [481] Thou art the son of my brother, and I did all this with thee to certify myself that thou wast indeed he who went in unto my daughter that night. I could not be sure of this, till I saw that thou knewest the chamber and thy turband and thy trousers and thy gold and the papers in thy writing and in that of thy father, my brother; for I had never seen thee afore that and knew thee not; and as to thy mother I have prevailed upon her to come with me from Bassorah.” So saying, he threw himself on his nephew’s breast and wept for joy; and Badr al-Din Hasan, hearing these words from his uncle, marvelled with exceeding marvel and fell on his neck and also shed tears for excess of delight. Then said the Wazir to him, “O my son, the sole cause of all this is what passed between me and thy sire;” and all that had occurred to part them. Lastly the Wazir sent for Ajib; and when his father saw him he cried, “And this is he who struck me with the stone!” Quoth the Wazir, “This is thy son!” And Badr al-Din Hasan threw himself upon his boy and began repeating: —

"Long have I wept o'er severance ban and bane, * Long from mine eyelids tear-rills rail and rain:
And vowed I if Time re-union bring * My tongue from name of "Severance" I'll restrain:
Joy hath o'ercome me to this stress that I * From joy's revulsion to shed tears am fain:
Ye are so trained to tears, O eyne of me! * You weep with pleasure as you weep with pain."[482]

When he had ended his verse his mother came in and threw herself upon him and began reciting: —

"When we met we complained, * Our hearts were sore wrung:
But plaint is not pleasant * Fro' messenger's tongue."

Then she wept and related to him what had befallen her since his departure, and he told her what he had suffered, and they thanked Allah Almighty for their reunion. Two days after his arrival the Wazir Shams al-din went in to the Sultan and, kissing the ground between his hands, greeted him with the greeting due to Kings. The Sultan rejoiced at his return and his face brightened and, placing him hard by his side, [483] asked him to relate all he had seen in his wayfaring and whatso had betided him in his going and coming. So the Wazir told him all that had passed from first to last and the Sultan said, "Thanks be to Allah for thy victory [484] and the winning of thy wish and thy safe return to thy children and thy people! And now I needs must see the son of thy brother, Hasan of Bassorah, so bring him to the audience-hall to- morrow." Shams al-Din replied, "Thy slave shall stand in thy presence to-morrow, Inshallah, if it be God's will." Then he saluted him and, returning to his own house, informed his nephew of the Sultan's desire to see him, whereto replied Hasan, whilome the Bassorite, "The slave is obedient to the orders of his lord." And the result was that next day he accompanied his uncle, Shams al-Din, to the Divan; and, after saluting the Sultan and doing him reverence in most ceremonious obeisance and with most courtly obsequiousness, he began improvising these verses: —

“The first in rank to kiss the ground shall deign * Before you,
and all ends and aims attain:
You are Honour’s fount; and all that hope of you, * Shall gain
more honour than Hope hoped to gain.”

The Sultan smiled and signed to him to sit down. So he took a seat close to his uncle, Shams al-Din, and the King asked him his name. Quoth Badr al-Din Hasan, “The meanest of thy slaves is known as Hasan the Bassorite, who is instant in prayer for thee day and night.” The Sultan was pleased at his words and, being minded to test his learning and prove his good breeding, asked him, “Dost thou remember any verses in praise of the mole on the cheek?” He answered, “I do,” and began reciting: —

“When I think of my love and our parting-smart, * My groans go
forth and my tears upstart:
He’s a mole that reminds me in colour and charms * O’ the black
o’ the eye and the grain[485] of the heart.”

The King admired and praised the two couplets and said to him, “Quote something else; Allah bless thy sire and may thy tongue never tire!” So he began: —

“That cheek-mole’s spot they evened with a grain * Of musk, nor
did they here the simile strain:
Nay, marvel at the face comprising all * Beauty, nor falling
short by single grain.”

The King shook with pleasure[486] and said to him, “Say more:
Allah bless thy days!” So he began: —

“O you whose mole on cheek enthroned recalls * A dot of musk
upon a stone of ruby,
Grant me your favours! Be not stone at heart! * Core of my heart
whose only sustenance you be!”

Quoth the King, “Fair comparison, O Hasan![487] thou hast spoken excellently well and hast proved thyself accomplished in every accomplishment! Now explain to me how many meanings be there in the Arabic language [488] for the word Khal or mole." He replied, "Allah keep the King! Seven and fifty and some by tradition say fifty." Said the Sultan, "Thou sayest sooth," presently adding, "Hast thou knowledge as to the points of excellence in beauty?" "Yes," answered Badr al-Din Hasan, "Beauty consisteth in brightness of face, clearness of complexion, shapeliness of nose, gentleness of eyes, sweetness of mouth, cleverness of speech, slenderness of shape and seemliness of all attributes. But the acme of beauty is in the hair and, indeed, al-Shihab the Hijazi hath brought together all these items in his doggrel verse of the metre Rajaz, [489] and it is this:

Say thou to skin "Be soft," to face "Be fair," * And gaze, nor
shall they blame howso thou stare:
Fine nose in Beauty's list is high esteemed; * Nor less an eye
full, bright and debonnair:
Eke did they well to laud the lovely lips * (Which e'en the sleep
of me will never spare);
A winning tongue, a stature tall and straight; [490] * A
seemly union of gifts rarest rare:
But Beauty's acme in the hair one views it; * So hear my strain
and with some few excuse it!"

The Sultan was captivated by his converse and, regarding him as a friend, asked, "What meaning is there in the saw 'Shurayh is foxier than the fox'?" And he answered, "Know, O King (whom Almighty Allah keep!) that the legist Shurayh [491] was wont, during the days of the plague, to make a visitation to Al-Najaf; and, whenever he stood up to pray, there came a fox which would plant himself facing him and which, by mimicking his movements, distracted him from his devotions. Now when this became longsome to him, one day he doffed his shirt and set it upon a cane and shook out the sleeves; then placing his turband on the top and girding its middle with a shawl, he stuck it up in the place where he used to pray. Presently up trotted the fox according to his custom and stood over against the figure, whereupon Shurayh came behind him, and took him. Hence the sayer saith, 'Shurayh foxier than the fox.'" When the Sultan heard Badr al-

Din Hasan's explanation he said to his uncle, Shams al-Din, "Truly this the son of thy brother is perfect in courtly breeding and I do not think that his like can be found in Cairo." At this Hasan arose and kissed the ground before him and sat down again as a Mameluke should sit before his master. When the Sultan had thus assured himself of his courtly breeding and bearing and his knowledge of the liberal arts and belles-lettres, he joyed with exceeding joy and invested him with a splendid robe of honour and promoted him to an office whereby he might better his condition. [492] Then Badr al-Din Hasan arose and, kissing the ground before the King, wished him continuance of glory and asked leave to retire with his uncle, the Wazir Shams al-Din. The Sultan gave him leave and he issued forth and the two returned home, where food was set before them and they ate what Allah had given them. After finishing his meal Hasan repaired to the sitting-chamber of his wife, the Lady of Beauty, and told her what had past between him and the Sultan; whereupon quoth she, "He cannot fail to make thee a cup-companion and give thee largess in excess and load thee with favours and bounties; so shalt thou, by Allah's blessing, dispread, like the greater light, the rays of thy perfection wherever thou be, on shore or on sea." Said he to her, "I purpose to recite a Kasidah, an ode, in his praise, that he may redouble in affection for me." "Thou art right in thine intent," she answered, "so gather thy wits together and weigh thy words, and I shall surely see my husband favoured with his highest favour." Thereupon Hasan shut himself up and composed these couplets on a solid base and abounding in inner grace and copies them out in a hand-writing of the nicest taste. They are as follows: —

Mine is a Chief who reached most haught estate, * Treading the
pathways of the good and great:
His justice makes all regions safe and sure, * And against
froward foes bars every gate:
Bold lion, hero, saint, e'en if you call * Seraph or Sovran
[493] he with all may rate!
The poorest supplicant rich from him returns, * All words to
praise him were inadequate.
He to the day of peace is saffron Morn, * And murky Night in

furious warfare's bate.
Bow 'neath his gifts our necks, and by his deeds * As King of
freeborn[494] souls he 'joys his state:
Allah increase for us his term of years, * And from his lot avert
all risks and fears!

When he had finished transcribing the lines, he despatched them, in charge of one of his uncle's slaves, to the Sultan, who perused them and his fancy was pleased; so he read them to those present and all praised them with the highest praise. Thereupon he sent for the writer to his sitting-chamber and said to him, "Thou art from this day forth my boon-companion and I appoint to thee a monthly solde of a thousand dirhams, over and above that I bestowed on thee aforetime." So Hasan rose and, kissing the ground before the King several times, prayed for the continuance of his greatness and glory and length of life and strength. Thus Badr al-Din Hasan the Bassorite waxed high in honour and his fame flew forth to many regions and he abode in all comfort and solace and delight of life with his uncle and his own folk till Death overtook him. When the Caliph Harun al-Rashid heard this story from the mouth of his Wazir, Ja'afar the Barmecide, he marvelled much and said, "It behoves that these stories be written in letters of liquid gold." Then he set the slave at liberty and assigned to the youth who had slain his wife such a monthly stipend as sufficed to make his life easy; he also gave him a concubine from amongst his own slave-girls and the young man became one of his cup-companions. "Yet this story," (continued Shahrazad) "is in no wise stranger than the tale of the Tailor and the Hunchback and the Jew and the Reeve and the Nazarene, and what betided them." Quoth the King, "And what may that be?" So Shahrazad began, in these words,[495]

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THE HUNCHBACK'S TALE.

It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that there dwelt during times of yore, and years and ages long gone before, in a certain city of China,[496] a Tailor who was an open handed man that loved pleasuring and merry making; and who was wont, he and his wife, to solace themselves from time to time with public diversions and amusements. One day they went out with the first of the light and were returning in the evening when they fell in with a Hunchback, whose semblance would draw a laugh from care and dispel the horrors of despair. So they went up to enjoy looking at him and invited him to go home with them and converse and carouse with them that night. He consented and accompanied them afoot to their home; whereupon the Tailor fared forth to the bazaar (night having just set in) and bought a fried fish and bread and lemons and dry sweetmeats for dessert; and set the victuals before the Hunchback and they ate. Presently the Tailor's wife took a great fid of fish and gave it in a gobbet to the Gobbo, stopping his mouth with her hand and saying, "By Allah, thou must down with it at a single gulp; and I will not give thee time to chew it." So he bolted it; but therein was a stiff bone which stuck in his gullet and, his hour being come, he died. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Twenty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Tailor's wife gave the Hunchback that mouthful of fish which ended his term of days he died on the instant. Seeing this the Tailor cried aloud, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah! Alas, that this poor wretch should have died in so foolish fashion at our hands!" and the woman rejoined, "Why this idle talk? Hast thou not heard his saying who said: —

Why then waste I my time in grief, until I * find no friend to
bear my weight of woe
How sleep upon a fire that flames unquenched? * Upon the flames
to rest were hard enow!"

Asked her husband, “And what shall I do with him?”; and she answered, “Rise and take him in thine arms and spread a silken kerchief over him; then I will fare forth, with thee following me this very night and if thou meet any one say, ‘This is my son, and his mother and I are carrying him to the doctor that he may look at him.’” So he rose and taking the Hunchback in his arms bore him along the streets, preceded by his wife who kept crying, “O my son, Allah keep thee! what part paineth thee and where hath this small-pox[497] attacked thee?” So all who saw them said “’Tis a child sick of small-pox.”[498] They went along asking for the physician’s house till folk directed them to that of a leach which was a Jew. They knocked at the door, and there came down to them a black slave girl who opened and, seeing a man bearing a babe, and a woman with him, said to them, “What is the matter?” “We have a little one with us,” answered the Tailor’s wife, “and we wish to show him to the physician: so take this quarter dinar and give it to thy master and let him come down and see my son who is sore sick.” The girl went up to tell her master, whereupon the Tailor’s wife walked into the vestibule and said to her husband, “Leave the Hunchback here and let us fly for our lives.” So the Tailor carried the dead man to the top of the stairs and propped him upright against the wall and ran away, he and his wife. Meanwhile the girl went in to the Jew and said to him, “At the door are a man and a woman with a sick child and they have given me a quarter dinar for thee, that thou mayest go down and look at the little one and prescribe for it.” As soon as the Jew saw the quarter dinar he rejoiced and rose quickly in his greed of gain and went forth hurriedly in the dark; but hardly had he made a step when he stumbled on the corpse and threw it over, when it rolled to the bottom of the staircase. So he cried out to the girl to hurry up with the light, and she brought it, whereupon he went down and examining the Hunchback found that he was stone dead. So he cried out, “O for Esdras![499] O for Moses! O for Aaron! O for Joshua, son of Nun! O the Ten Commandments! I have stumbled against the sick one and he hath fallen downstairs and he is dead! How shall I get this man I have killed out of my house? O by the hoofs of the ass of Esdras!” Then he took up the body and, carrying it into the house, told his wife what had happened and she said to him, “Why dost thou sit still? If thou keep him here till day break we shall both lose our lives. Let us two carry him to the terrace roof and throw him over into the house of our neighbour, the Moslem, for if he abide there a night the dogs will come down on him from the adjoining terraces and eat him up." Now his neighbour was a Reeve, the controller of the Sultan's kitchen, and was wont to bring back great store of oil and fat and broken meats; but the cats and rats used to eat it, or, if the dogs scented a fat sheep's tail they would come down from the nearest roofs and tear at it; and on this wise the beasts had already damaged much of what he brought home. So the Jew and his wife carried the Hunchback up to the roof; and, letting him down by his hands and feet through the wind-shaft[500] into the Reeve's house, propped him up against the wall and went their ways. Hardly had they done this when the Reeve, who had been passing an evening with his friends hearing a recitation of the Koran, came home and opened the door and, going up with a lighted candle, found a son of Adam standing in the corner under the ventilator. When he saw this, he said, "Wah! by Allah, very good forsooth! He who robbeth my stuff is none other than a man." Then he turned to the Hunchback and said, "So 'tis thou that stealest the meat and the fat! I thought it was the cats and dogs, and I kill the dogs and cats of the quarter and sin against them by killing them. And all the while 'tis thou comest down from the house terrace through the wind shaft. But I will avenge myself upon thee with my own hand!" So he snatched up a heavy hammer and set upon him and smote him full on the breast and he fell down. Then he examined him and, finding that he was dead, cried out in horror, thinking that he had killed him, and said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" And he feared for his life, and added "Allah curse the oil and the meat and the grease and the sheep's tails to boot! How hath fate given this man his quietus at my hand!" Then he looked at the body and seeing it was that of a Gobbo, said, "Was it not enough for thee to be a hunchback,[501] but thou must likewise be a thief and prig flesh and fat! O thou Veiler,[502] deign to veil me with Thy curtain of concealment!" So he took him up on his shoulders and, going forth with him from his house about the latter end of the night, carried him to the nearest end of the bazaar, where he set him up on his feet against the wall of a shop at the head of a dark lane, and left him and went away. After a while up came a Nazarene,[503] the Sultan's broker who, much bemused with liquor, was purposing for the Hammam bath as his drunkenness whispered in his ear, "Verily the call to matins[504] is nigh." He came plodding along and staggering about till he drew near the Hunchback and squatted down to make water[505] over against him; when he happened to glance around and saw a man standing against the wall. Now some person had snatched off the Christian's turband[506] in the first of the night; so when he saw the Hunchback hard by he fancied that he also meant to steal his headdress. Thereupon he clenched his fist and struck him on the neck, felling him to the ground, and called aloud to the watchman of the bazaar, and came down on the body in his drunken fury and kept on belabouring and throttling the corpse. Presently the Charley came up and, finding a Nazarene kneeling on a Moslem and frapping him, asked, "What harm hath this one done?"; and the Broker answered, "The fellow meant to snatch off my turband." "Get up from him," quoth the watch man. So he arose and the Charley went up to the Hunchback and finding him dead, exclaimed, "By Allah, good indeed! A Christian killing a Mahometan!" Then he seized the Broker and, tying his hands behind his back, carried him to the Governor's house,[507] and all the while the Nazarene kept saying to himself, "O Messiah! O Virgin! how came I to kill this fellow? And in what a hurry he must have been to depart this life when he died of a single blow!" Presently, as his drunkenness fled, came dolour in its stead. So the Broker and the body were kept in the Governor's place till morning morrowed, when the Wali came out and gave order to hang the supposed murderer and commanded the executioner[508] make proclamation of the sentence. Forthwith they set up a gallows under which they made the Nazarene stand and the torch bearer, who was hangman, threw the rope round his neck and passed one end through the pulley, and was about to hoist him up[509] when lo! the Reeve, who was passing by, saw the Broker about to be hanged; and, making his way through the people, cried out to the executioner, "Hold! Hold! I am he who killed the Hunchback!" Asked the Governor, "What made thee kill him?"; and he answered, "I went home last night and there found this man who had come down the ventilator to steal my property; so I smote him with a hammer on the breast and he died forthright. Then I took him up and carried him to the bazaar and set him up against the wall in such a place near such a lane;" adding, "Is it not enough for me to have killed a Moslem without also killing a Christian? So hang none other but me." When the Governor heard these words he released the Broker and said to the torch bearer, "Hang up this man on his own confession." So he loosed the cord from the Nazarene's neck and threw it round that of the Reeve and, making him stand under the gallows tree, was about to string him up when behold, the Jewish physician pushed through the people and shouted to the executioner, "Hold! Hold! It was I and none else killed the Hunchback! Last night I was sitting at home when a man and a woman knocked at the door carrying this Gobbo who was sick, and gave my handmaid a quarter dinar, bidding her hand me the fee and tell me to come down and see him. Whilst she was gone the man and the woman brought him into the house and, setting him on the stairs, went away; and presently I came down and not seeing him, for I was in the dark, stumbled over him and he fell to the foot of the staircase and died on the moment. Then we took him up, I and my wife, and carried him on to the top terrace; and, the house of this Reeve being next door to mine, we let the body down through the ventilator. When he came home and found the Hunchback in his house, he fancied he was a thief and struck him with a hammer, so that he fell to the ground, and our neighbour made certain that he had slain him. Now is it not enough for me to have killed one Moslem unwittingly, without burdening myself with taking the life of another Moslem wittingly?" When the Governor heard this he said to the hangman, "Set free the Reeve and hang the Jew." Thereupon the torch bearer took him and slung the cord round his neck when behold, the Tailor pushed through the people, and shouted to the executioner, "Hold! Hold! It was I and none else killed the Hunchback; and this was the fashion thereof. I had been out a pleasuring yesterday and, coming back to supper, fell in with this Gobbo, who was drunk and drumming away and singing lustily to his tambourine. So I accosted him and carried him to my house and bought a fish, and we sat down to eat. Presently my wife took a fid of fish and, making a gobbet of it,[510] crammed it into his mouth; but some of it went down the wrong way or stuck in his gullet and he died on the instant. So we lifted him up, I and my wife, and carried him to the Jew's house where the slave girl came down and opened the door to us and I said to her, 'Tell thy master that there are a man and a woman and a sick person for thee to see!' I gave her a quarter dinar and she went up to tell her master; and, whilst she was gone, I carried the Hunchback to the head of the staircase and propped him up against the wall, and went off with my wife. When the Jew came down he stumbled over him and thought that he had killed him." Then he asked the Jew, "Is this the truth?"; and the Jew answered, "Yes." Thereupon the Tailor turned to the Governor, and said, "Leave go the Jew and hang me." When the Governor heard the Tailor's tale he marvelled at the matter of this Hunchback and exclaimed. "Verily this is an adventure which should be recorded in books!" Then he said to the hangman, "Let the Jew go and hang the Tailor on his own confession." The executioner took the Tailor and put the rope around his neck and said, "I am tired of such slow work: we bring out this one and change him for that other, and no one is hanged after all!" Now the Hunchback in question was, they relate, jester to the Sultan of China who could not bear him out of his sight; so when the fellow got drunk and did not make his appearance that night or the next day till noon, the Sultan asked some of his courtiers about him and they answered, "O our lord, the Governor hath come upon him dead and hath ordered his murderer to be hanged; but, as the hangman was about to hoist him up there came a second and a third and a fourth and each one said, 'It is I, and none else killed the Hunchback!' and each gave a full and circumstantial account of the manner of the jester being killed." When the King heard this he cried aloud to the Chamberlain in waiting, "Go down to the Governor and bring me all four of them." So the Chamberlain went down at once to the place of execution, where he found the torch bearer on the point of hanging the Tailor and shouted to him, "Hold! Hold!" Then he gave the King's command to the Governor who took the Tailor, the Jew, the Nazarene and the Reeve (the Hunchback's body being borne on men's shoulders) and went up with one and all of them to the King. When he came into the presence, he kissed the ground and acquainted the ruler with the whole story which it is needless to relate for, as they say, There is no avail in a thrice told tale. The Sultan hearing it marvelled and was moved to mirth and commanded the story to be written in letters of liquid gold, saying to those present, “Did ye ever hear a more wondrous tale than that of my Hunchback?” Thereupon the Nazarene broker came forward and said, “O King of the age, with thy leave I will tell thee a thing which happened to myself and which is still more wondrous and marvellous and pleasurable and delectable than the tale of the Hunchback.” Quoth the King “Tell us what thou hast to say!” So he began in these words

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The Nazarene Broker's Story.

O King of the age, I came to this thy country with merchandise and Destiny stayed me here with you: but my place of birth was Cairo, in Egypt, where I also was brought up, for I am one of the Copts and my father was a broker before me. When I came to man's estate he departed this life and I succeeded to his business. One day, as I was sitting in my shop, behold, there came up to me a youth as handsome as could be, wearing sumptuous raiment and riding a fine ass.[511] When he saw me he saluted me, and I stood up to do him honour: then he took out a kerchief containing a sample of sesame and asked, "How much is this worth per Ardabb?";[512] whereto I answered, "An hundred dirhams." Quoth he, "Take porters and gaugers and metesmen and come tomorrow to the Khan al-Jawáli,[513] by the Gate of Victory quarter where thou wilt find me." Then he fared forth leaving with me the sample of sesame in his kerchief; and I went the round of my customers and ascertained that every Ardabb would fetch an hundred and twenty dirhams. Next day I took four metesmen and walked with them to the Khan, where I found him awaiting me. As soon as he saw me he rose and opened his magazine, when we measured the grain till the store was empty; and we found the contents fifty Ardabbs, making five thousand pieces of silver. Then said he, "Let ten dirhams on every Ardabb be thy brokerage; so take the price and keep in deposit four thousand and five hundred dirhams for me; and, when I have made an end of selling the other wares in my warehouses, I will come to thee and receive the amount." "I will well," replied I and kissing his hand went away, having made that day a profit of a thousand dirhams. He was absent a month, at the end of which he came to me and asked, "Where be the dirhams?" I rose and saluted him and answered to him, "Wilt thou not eat somewhat in my house?" But he refused with the remark, "Get the monies ready and I will presently return and take them." Then he rode away. So I brought out the dirhams and sat down to await him, but he stayed away for another month, when he came back and said to me, "Where be the dirhams?" I rose and saluting him asked, "Wilt thou not eat some thing in my house?" But he again refused adding, "Get me the monies ready and I will presently return and take them." Then he rode off. So I brought out the dirhams and sat down to await his return; but he stayed away from me a third month, and I said, "Verily this young man is liberality in incarnate form." At the end of the month he came up, riding a mare mule and wearing a suit of sumptuous raiment; he was as the moon on the night of fullness, and he seemed as if fresh from the baths, with his cheeks rosy bright, and his brow flower white, and a mole spot like a grain of ambergris delighting the sight; even as was said of such an one by the poet: —

Full moon with sun in single mansion * In brightest sheen and
fortune rose and shone,
With happy splendour changing every sprite: * Hail to what
guerdons prayer with blissful! boon!
Their charms and grace have gained perfection's height, * All
hearts have conquered and all wits have won.
Laud to the Lord for works so wonder strange, * And what th'
Almighty wills His hand hath done!

When I saw him I rose to him and invoking blessings on him asked, O my lord, wilt thou not take thy monies?" "Whence the hurry?"[514] quoth he, "Wait till I have made an end of my business and then I will come and take them." Again he rode away and I said to myself, "By Allah, when he comes next time needs must I make him my guest; for I have traded with his dirhams and have gotten large gains thereby." At the end of the year he came again, habited in a suit of clothes more sumptuous than the former; and, when I conjured him by the Evangel to alight at my house and eat of my guest food, he said, "I consent, on condition that what thou expendest on me shall be of my monies still in thy hands. I answered, "So be it," and made him sit down whilst I got ready what was needful of meat and drink and else besides; and set the tray before him, with the invitation "Bismillah"![515] Then he drew near the tray and put out his left hand[516] and ate with me; and I marvelled at his not using the right hand. When we had done eating, I poured water on his hand and gave him wherewith to wipe it. Upon this we sat down to converse after I had set before him some sweetmeats; and I said to him, "O my master, prithee relieve me by telling me why thou eatest with thy left hand? Perchance something aileth thy other hand?" When he heard my words, he repeated these verses: —

"Dear friend, ask not what burneth in my breast, * Lest thou see
 fiery pangs eye never saw:
Wills not my heart to harbour Salma in stead * Of
 Layla's[517] love, but need hath ne'er a law!"

And he put out his right arm from his sleeve and behold, the hand was cut off, a wrist without a fist. I was astounded at this but he said, "Marvel not, and think not that I ate with my left hand for conceit and insolence, but from necessity; and the cutting off my right hand was caused by an adventure of the strangest." Asked I, "And what caused it?"; and he answered:— "Know that I am of the sons of Baghdad and my father was of notables of that city. When I came to man's estate I heard the pilgrims and wayfarers, travellers and merchants talk of the land of Egypt and their words sank deep into my mind till my parent died, when I took a large sum of money and furnished myself for trade with stuffs of Baghdad and Mosul and, packing them up in bales, set out on my wanderings; and Allah decreed me safety till I entered this your city. Then he wept and began repeating: —

The blear eyed 'scapes the pits * Wherein the lynx eyed fall:
A word the wise man slays * And saves the natural:
The Moslem fails of food * The Kafir feasts in hall:
What art or act is man's? * God's will obligeth all!

Now when he had ended his verse he said, So I entered Cairo and took off my loads and stored my stuffs in the Khan "Al- Masrúr."[518] Then I gave the servant a few silvers wherewith to buy me some food and lay down to sleep awhile. When I awoke I went to the street called "Bayn al-Kasrayn" — Between the two Palaces — and presently returned and rested my night in the Khan. When it was morning I opened a bale and took out some stuff saying to myself, "I will be off and go through some of the bazaars and see the state of the market.” So I loaded the stuff on some of my slaves and fared forth till I reached the Kaysariyah or Exchange of Jaharkas;[519] where the brokers who knew of my coming came to meet me. They took the stuffs and cried them for sale, but could not get the prime cost of them. I was vexed at this, however the Shaykh of the brokers said to me, “O my lord, I will tell thee how thou mayest make a profit of thy goods. Thou shouldest do as the merchants do and sell thy merchandise at credit for a fixed period, on a contract drawn up by a notary and duly witnessed; and employ a Shroff to take thy dues every Monday and Thursday. So shalt thou gain two dirhams and more, for every one; and thou shalt solace and divert thyself by seeing Cairo and the Nile.” Quoth I, “This is sound advice,” and carried the brokers to the Khan. They took my stuffs and went with them on ’Change where I sold them well taking bonds for the value. These bonds I deposited with a Shroff, a banker, who gave me a receipt with which I returned to the Khan. Here I stayed a whole month, every morning breaking my fast with a cup of wine and making my meals on pigeon’s meat, mutton and sweetmeats, till the time came when my receipts began to fall due. So, every Monday and Thursday I used to go on ’Change and sit in the shop of one or other of the merchants, whilst the notary and money changer went round to recover the monies from the traders, till after the time of mid afternoon prayer, when they brought me the amount, and I counted it and, sealing the bags, returned with them to the Khan. On a certain day which happened to be a Monday,[520] I went to the Hammam and thence back to my Khan, and sitting in my own room[521] broke my fast with a cup of wine, after which I slept a little. When I awoke I ate a chicken and, perfuming my person, repaired to the shop of a merchant hight Badr al-Din al-Bostáni, or the Gardener,[522] who welcomed me; and we sat talking awhile till the bazaar should open. Presently, behold, up came a lady of stately figure wearing a head-dress of the most magnificent, perfumed with the sweetest of scents and walking with graceful swaying gait; and seeing me she raised her mantilla allowing me a glimpse of her beautiful black eyes. She saluted Badr al-Din who returned her salutation and stood up, and talked with her; and the moment I heard her speak, the love of her got hold of my heart. Presently she said to

Badr al-Din, “Hast thou by thee a cut piece of stuff woven with thread of pure gold?” So he brought out to her a piece from those he had bought of me and sold it to her for one thousand two hundred dirhams; when she said, “I will take the piece home with me and send thee its price.” “That is impossible, O my lady,” the merchant replied, “for here is the owner of the stuff and I owe him a share of profit.” “Fie upon thee!” she cried, “Do I not use to take from thee entire rolls of costly stuff, and give thee a greater profit than thou expectest, and send thee the money?” “Yes,” rejoined he; “but I stand in pressing need of the price this very day.” Hereupon she took up the piece and threw it back upon his lap, saying “Out on thee! Allah confound the tribe of you which estimates none at the right value;” and she turned to go. I felt my very soul going with her; so I stood up and stayed her, saying, “I conjure thee by the Lord, O my lady, favour me by retracing thy gracious steps.” She turned back with a smile and said, “For thy sake I return,” and took a seat opposite me in the shop. Then quoth I to Badr al-Din, “What is the price they asked thee for this piece?”; and quoth he, “Eleven hundred dirhams.” I rejoined, “The odd hundred shall be thy profit: bring me a sheet of paper and I will write thee a discharge for it.” Then I wrote him a receipt in my own handwriting and gave the piece to the lady, saying, “Take it away with thee and, if thou wilt, bring me its price next bazaar day; or better still, accept it as my guest gift to thee.” “Allah requite thee with good,” answered she, “and make thee my husband and lord and master of all I have!”[523] And Allah favoured her prayer. I saw the Gates of Paradise swing open before me and said, “O my lady, let this piece of stuff be now thine and another like it is ready for thee, only let me have one look at thy face.” So she raised her veil and I saw a face the sight of which bequeathed to me a thousand sighs, and my heart was so captivated by her love that I was no longer ruler of my reason. Then she let fall her face veil and taking up the piece of stuff said, “O my lord make me not desolate by thine absence!” and turned away and disappeared from my sight. I remained sitting on ’Change till past the hour of after noon prayer, lost to the world by the love which had mastered me, and the violence of my passion compelled me to make enquiries concerning her of the merchant, who answered me, “This is a lady and a rich:

she is the daughter of a certain Emir who lately died and left her a large fortune." Then I took leave of him and returned home to the Khan where they set supper before me; but I could not eat for thinking of her and when I lay down to sleep, sleep came not near me. So I watched till morning, when I arose and donned a change of raiment and drank a cup of wine and, after breaking my fast on some slight matter, I went to the merchant's shop where I saluted him and sat down by him. Presently up came the lady as usual, followed by a slave girl and wearing a dress more sumptuous than before; and she saluted me without noticing Badr al-Din and said in fluent graceful speech (never heard I voice softer or sweeter), "Send one with me to take the thousand and two hundred dirhams, the price of the piece." "Why this hurry?" asked I and she answered, "May we never lose thee!"[524] and handed me the money. Then I sat talking with her and presently I signed to her in dumb show, whereby she understood that I longed to enjoy her person,[525] and she rose up in haste with a show of displeasure. My heart clung to her and I went forth from the bazaar and followed on her track. As I was walking suddenly a black slave girl stopped me and said, "O my master, come speak with my mistress."[526] At this I was surprised and replied, "There is none who knows me here;" but she rejoined, "0 my lord, how soon hast thou forgotten her! My lady is the same who was this day at the shop of such a merchant." Then I went with her to the Shroff's, where I found the lady who drew me to her side and said, "O my beloved, thine image is firmly stamped upon my fancy, and love of thee hath gotten hold of my heart: from the hour I first saw thee nor sleep nor food nor drink hath given me aught of pleasure." I replied, "The double of that suffering is mine and my state dispenseth me from complaint." Then said she, "O my beloved, at thy house, or at mine?" "I am a stranger here and have no place of reception save the Khan, so by thy favour it shall be at thy house." "So be it; but this is Friday[527] night and nothing can be done till tomorrow after public prayers; go to the Mosque and pray; then mount thine ass, and ask for the Habbániyah[528] quarter; and, when there, look out for the mansion of Al-Nakib[529] Barakát, popularly known as Abu Shámah the Syndic; for I live there: so do not delay as I shall be expecting thee." I rejoiced with still greater joy at this; and took leave of her and returned to my Khan, where I passed a sleepless night. Hardly was I assured that morning had dawned when I rose, changed my dress, perfumed myself with essences and sweet scents and, taking fifty dinars in a kerchief, went from the Khan Masrúr to the Zuwaylah[530] gate, where I mounted an ass and said to its owner, "Take me to the Habbaniyah." So he set off with me and brought up in the twinkling of an eye at a street known as Darb al-Munkari, where I said to him, "Go in and ask for the Syndic's mansion." He was absent a while and then returned and said, "Alight." "Go thou before me to the house," quoth I, adding, "Come back with the earliest light and bring me home;" and he answered, "In Allah's name;" whereupon I gave him a quarter dinar of gold, and he took it and went his ways. Then I knocked at the door and out came two white slave girls, both young; high-bosomed virgins, as they were moons, and said to me, "Enter, for our mistress is expecting thee and she hath not slept the night long for her delight in thee." I passed through the vestibule into a saloon with seven doors, floored with parti-coloured marbles and furnished with curtains and hangings of coloured silks: the ceiling was cloisonné with gold and corniced with inscriptions[531] emblazoned in lapis lazuli; and the walls were stuccoed with Sultání gypsum[532] which mirrored the beholder's face. Around the saloon were latticed windows overlooking a garden full of all manner of fruits; whose streams were railing and riffling and whose birds were trilling and shrilling; and in the heart of the hall was a jetting fountain at whose corners stood birds fashioned in red gold crusted with pearls and gems and spouting water crystal clear. When I entered and took a seat. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Twenty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant continued, When I entered and took a seat, the lady at once came in crowned with a diadem[533] of pearls and jewels; her face dotted with artificial moles in indigo,[534] her eyebrows pencilled with Kohl and her hands and feet reddened with Henna. When she saw me she smiled in my face and took me to her embrace and clasped me to her breast; then she put her mouth to my mouth and sucked my tongue[535] (and I did likewise) and said, "Can it be true, O my little darkling, thou art come to me?" adding, "Welcome and good cheer to thee! By Allah, from the day I saw thee sleep hath not been sweet to me nor hath food been pleasant." Quoth I, "Such hath also been my case: and I am thy slave, thy negro slave." Then we sat down to converse and I hung my head earthwards in bashfulness, but she delayed not long ere she set before me a tray of the most exquisite viands, marinated meats, fritters soaked in bee's[536] honeys and chickens stuffed with sugar and pistachio nuts, whereof we ate till we were satisfied. Then they brought basin and ewer and I washed my hands and we scented ourselves with rose water musk'd and sat down again to converse. So she began repeating these couplets[537] :

"Had we wist of thy coming, thy way had been strewn
With the blood of our heart and the balls of our sight:
Our cheek as a foot cloth to greet thee been thrown,
That thy step on our eyelids should softly alight."

And she kept plaining of what had befallen her and I of what had betided me; and love of her got so firm hold of my heart that all my wealth seemed a thing of naught in comparison with her. Then we fell to toying and groping and kissing till night fall, when the handmaidens set before us meats and a complete wine service, and we sat carousing till the noon of night, when we lay down and I lay with her; never in my life saw I a night like that night. When morning morrowed I arose and took leave of her, throwing under the carpet bed the kerchief wherein were the dinars[538] and as I went out she wept and said, "O my lord, when shall I look upon that lovely face again?" "I will be with thee at sunset," answered I, and going out found the donkey boy, who had brought me the day before, awaiting at the door. So I mounted ass and rode to the Khan of Masrur where I alighted and gave the man a half dinar, saying, "Return at sunset;" and he said "I will." Then I breakfasted and went out to seek the price of my stuffs; after which I returned, and taking a roast lamb and some sweetmeats, called a porter and put the provision in his crate, and sent it to the lady paying the man his hire.[539] I went back to my business till sunset, when the ass driver came to me and I took fifty dinars in a kerchief and rode to her house where I found the marble floor swept, the brasses burnisht, the branch lights burning, the wax candles ready lighted, the meat served up and the wine strained.[540] When my lady saw me she threw her arms about my neck, and cried, "Thou hast desolated me by thine absence." Then she set the tables before me and we ate till we were satisfied, when the slave girls carried off the trays and served up wine. We gave not over drinking till half the night was past; and, being well warmed with drink, we went to the sleeping chamber and lay there till morning. I then arose and fared forth from her leaving the fifty dinars with her as before; and, finding the donkey boy at the door, rode to the Khan and slept awhile. After that I went out to make ready the evening meal and took a brace of geese with gravy on two platters of dressed and peppered rice, and got ready colocasia[541] -roots fried and soaked in honey, and wax candles and fruits and conserves and nuts and almonds and sweet scented cowers; and I sent them all to her. As soon as it was night I again tied up fifty dinars in a kerchief and, mounting the ass as usual, rode to the mansion where we ate and drank and lay together till morning when I threw the kerchief and dinars to her[542] and rode back to the Khan. I ceased not doing after that fashion till, after a sweet night, I woke one fine morning and found myself beggared, dinar-less and dirhamless. So said I to myself "All this be Satan's work;" and began to recite these couplets: —

"Poverty dims the sheen of man whate'er his wealth has been, *
E'en as the sun about to set shines with a yellowing light
Absent he falls from memory, forgotten by his friends; * Present
he shareth not their joys for none in him delight
He walks the market shunned of all, too glad to hide his head, *
In desert places tears he sheds and moans his bitter plight
By Allah, 'mid his kith and kin a man, however good, * Waylaid
by want and penury is but a stranger wight!"

I fared forth from the Khan and walked down "Between the Palaces" street till I came to the Zuwaylah Porte, where I found the people crowding and the gateway blocked for the much folk. And by the decree of Destiny I saw there a trooper against whom I pressed unintentionally, so that my hand came upon his bosom pocket and I felt a purse inside it. I looked and seeing a string of green silk hanging from the pocket knew it for a purse; and the crush grew greater every minute and just then, a camel laden with a load of fuel happened to jostle the trooper on the opposite side, and he turned round to fend it off from him, lest it tear his clothes; and Satan tempted me, so I pulled the string and drew out a little bag of blue silk, containing something which chinked like coin. But the soldier, feeling his pocket suddenly lightened, put his hand to it and found it empty; whereupon he turned to me and, snatching up his mace from his saddle bow, struck me with it on the head. I fell to the ground, whilst the people came round us and seizing the trooper's mare by the bridle said to him, "Strikest thou this youth such a blow as this for a mere push!" But the trooper cried out at them, "This fellow is an accursed thief!" Whereupon I came to myself and stood up, and the people looked at me and said, "Nay, he is a comely youth: he would not steal anything;" and some of them took my part and others were against me and question and answer waxed loud and warm. The people pulled at me and would have rescued me from his clutches; but as fate decreed behold, the Governor, the Chief of Police, and the watch[543] entered the Zuwaylah Gate at this moment and, seeing the people gathered together around me and the soldier, the Governor asked, "What is the matter?" "By Allah! O Emir," answered the trooper, "this is a thief! I had in my pocket a purse of blue silk lined with twenty good gold pieces and he took it, whilst I was in the crush." Quoth the Governor, "Was any one by thee at the time?"; and quoth the soldier, "No." Thereupon the Governor cried out to the Chief of Police who seized me, and on this wise the curtain of the Lord's. protection was withdrawn from me. Then he said "Strip him;" and, when they stripped me, they found the purse in my clothes. The Wali took it, opened it and counted it; and, finding in it twenty dinars as the soldier had said, waxed exceeding wroth and bade his guard bring me before him. Then said he to me, "Now, O youth, speak truly: didst thou steal this purse?"[544] At this I hung my head to the ground and said to myself, "If I deny having stolen it, I shall get myself into terrible trouble." So I raised my head and said, "Yes, I took it." When the Governor heard these words he wondered and summoned witnesses who came forward and attested my confession. All this happened at the Zuwaylah Gate. Then the Governor ordered the link bearer to cut off my right hand, and he did so; after which he would have struck off my left foot also; but the heart of the soldier softened and he took pity on me and interceded for me with the Governor that I should not be slain.[545] Thereupon the Wali left me, and went away and the folk remained round me and gave me a cup of wine to drink. As for the trooper he pressed the purse upon me, and said, "Thou art a comely youth and it befitteth not thou be a thief." So I repeated these verses: —

"I swear by Allah's name, fair sir! no thief was I, * Nor, O thou
best of men! was I a bandit bred:
But Fortune's change and chance o'erthrew me suddenly, * And
cark and care and penury my course misled:
I shot it not, indeed, 'twas Allah shot the shaft * That rolled
in dust the Kingly diadem from my head."[546]

The soldier turned away after giving me the purse; and I also went my ways having wrapped my hand in a piece of rag and thrust it into my bosom. My whole semblance had changed, and my colour had waxed yellow from the shame and pain which had befallen me. Yet I went on to my mistress's house where, in extreme perturbation of spirit I threw myself down on the carpet bed. She saw me in this state and asked me, "What aileth thee and why do I see thee so changed in looks?"; and I answered, "My head paineth me and I am far from well." Whereupon she was vexed and was concerned on my account and said, "Burn not my heart, O my lord, but sit up and raise thy head and recount to me what hath happened to thee today, for thy face tells me a tale." "Leave this talk," replied I. But she wept and said, "Me seems thou art tired of me, for I see thee contrary to thy wont." But I was silent; and she kept on talking to me albeit I gave her no answer, till night came on. Then she set food before me, but I refused it fearing lest she see me eating with my left hand and said to her, "I have no stomach to eat at present." Quoth she, "Tell me what hath befallen thee to day, and why art thou so sorrowful and broken in spirit and heart?" Quoth I, "Wait awhile; I will tell thee all at my leisure." Then she brought me wine, saying, "Down with it, this will dispel thy grief: thou must indeed drink and tell me of thy tidings." I asked her, "Perforce must I tell thee?"; and she answered, "Yes." Then said I, "If it needs must be so, then give me to drink with thine own hand." She filled and drank,[547] and filled again and gave me the cup which I took from her with my left hand and wiped the tears from my eyelids and began repeating:

"When Allah willeth aught befall a man * Who hath of ears and
eyes and wits full share:
His ears He deafens and his eyes He blinds * And draws his wits
e'en as we draw a hair[548]
Till, having wrought His purpose, He restores * Man's wits, that
warned more circumspect he fare."

When I ended my verses I wept, and she cried out with an exceeding loud cry, "What is the cause of thy tears? Thou burnest my heart! What makes thee take the cup with thy left hand?" Quoth I, "Truly I have on my right hand a boil;" and quoth she, "Put it out and I will open it for thee."[549] "It is not yet time to open it," I replied, "so worry me not with thy words, for I will not take it out of the bandage at this hour." Then I drank off the cup, and she gave not over plying me with drink until drunkenness overcame me and I fell asleep in the place where I was sitting; whereupon she looked at my right hand and saw a wrist without a fist. So she searched me closely and found with me the purse of gold and my severed hand wrapped up in the bit of rag.[550] With this such sorrow came upon her as never overcame any and she ceased not lamenting on my account till the morning. When I awoke I found that she had dressed me a dish of broth of four boiled chickens, which she brought to me together with a cup of wine. I ate and drank and laying down the purse, would have gone out; but she said to me, "Whither away?"; and I answered, "Where my business calleth me;" and said she, "Thou shalt not go: sit thee down." So I sat down and she resumed, "Hath thy love for me so overpowered thee that thou hast wasted all thy wealth and hast lost thine hand on my account? I take thee to witness against me and also Allah be my witness that I will never part with thee, but will die under thy feet; and soon thou shalt see that my words are true." Then she sent for the Kazi and witnesses and said to them, "Write my contract of marriage with this young man, and bear ye witness that I have received the marriage settlement."[551] When they had drawn up the document she said, "Be witness that all my monies which are in this chest and all I have in slaves and handmaidens and other property is given in free gift to this young man." So they took act of this statement enabling me to assume possession in right of marriage; and then withdrew, after receiving their fees. Thereupon she took me by the hand and, leading me to a closet, opened a large chest and said to me, "See what is herein;" and I looked and behold, it was full of kerchiefs. Quoth she, "This is the money I had from thee and every kerchief thou gavest me, containing fifty dinars, I wrapped up and cast into this chest; so now take thine own, for it returns to thee, and this day thou art become of high estate. Fortune and Fate afflicted thee so that thou didst lose thy right hand for my sake; and I can never requite thee; nay, although I gave my life 'twere but little and I should still remain thy debtor." Then she added, "Take charge of thy property."; so I transferred the contents of her chest to my chest, and added my wealth to her wealth which I had given her, and my heart was eased and my sorrow ceased. I stood up and kissed her and thanked her; and she said, "Thou hast given thy hand for love of me and how am I able to give thee an equivalent? By Allah, if I offered my life for thy love, it were indeed but little and would not do justice to thy claim upon me." Then she made over to me by deed all that she possessed in clothes and ornaments of gold and pearls, and goods and farms and chattels, and lay not down to sleep that night, being sorely grieved for my grief, till I told her the whole of what had befallen me. I passed the night with her. But before we had lived together a month's time she fell sorely sick and illness increased upon her, by reason of her grief for the loss of my hand, and she endured but fifty days before she was numbered among the folk of futurity and heirs of immortality. So I laid her out and buried her body in mother earth and let make a pious perfection of the Koran[552] for the health of her soul, and gave much money in alms for her; after which I turned me from the grave and returned to the house. There I found that she had left much substance in ready money and slaves, mansions, lands and domains, and among her store houses was a granary of sesame seed, whereof I sold part to thee; and I had neither time nor inclination to take count with thee till I had sold the rest of the stock in store; nor, indeed, even now have I made an end of receiving the price. So I desire thou baulk me not in what I am about to say to thee: twice have I eaten of thy food and I wish to give thee as a present the monies for the sesame which are by thee. Such is the cause of the cutting off my right hand and my eating with my left." "Indeed," said I, "thou hast shown me the utmost kindness and liberality." Then he asked me, "Why shouldst thou not travel with me to my native country whither I am about to return with Cairene and Alexandrian stuffs? Say me, wilt thou accompany me?"; and I answered "I will." So I agreed to go with him at the head of the month, and I sold all I had and bought other merchandise; then we set out and travelled, I and the young man, to this country of yours, where he sold his venture and bought other investment of country stuffs and continued his journey to Egypt But it was my lot to abide here, so that these things befell me in my strangerhood which befell last night, and is not this tale, O King of the age, more wondrous and marvellous than the story of the Hunchback? "Not so," quoth the King, "I cannot accept it: there is no help for it but that you be hanged, every one of you." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day, and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Twenty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King of China declared "There is no help for it but that you be hanged," the Reeve of the Sultan's Kitchen came forward and said, "If thou permit me I will tell thee a tale of what befell me just before I found this Gobbo, and, if it be more wondrous than his story, do thou grant us our lives." And when the King answered "Yes" he began to recount

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The Reeve’s Tale.

Know, O King, that last night I was at a party where they made a perfection of the Koran and got together doctors of law and religion skilled in recitation and intoning; and, when the readers ended, the table was spread and amongst other things they set before us was a marinated ragout[553] flavoured with cumin seed. So we sat down, but one of our number held back and refused to touch it. We conjured him to eat of it but he swore he would not; and, when we again pressed him, he said, “Be not instant with me; sufficeth me that which hath already befallen me through eating it”, and he began reciting:

“Shoulder thy tray and go straight to thy goal; * And, if suit thee this Kohl why,-use this Kohl!”[554]

When he ended his verse we said to him, “Allah upon thee, tell us thy reason for refusing to eat of the cumin ragout?” ``If so it be,” he replied, “and needs must I eat of it, I will not do so except I wash my hand forty times with soap, forty times with potash and forty times with galangale,[555] the total being one hundred and twenty washings.” Thereupon the hospitable host bade his slaves bring water and whatso he required; and the young man washed his hand as afore mentioned. Then he sat down, as if disgusted and frightened withal, and dipping his hand in the ragout, began eating and at the same time showing signs of anger. And we wondered at him with extreme wonderment, for his hand trembled and the morsel in it shook and we saw that his thumb had been cut off and he ate with his four fingers only. So we said to him, “Allah upon thee, what happened to thy thumb? Is thy hand thus by the creation of God or hath some accident befallen it?” “O my brothers,” he answered, “it is not only thus with this thumb, but also with my other thumb and with both my great toes, as you shall see.” So saying he uncovered his left hand and his feet, and we saw that the left hand was even as the right and in like manner that each of his feet lacked its great toe. When we saw him after this fashion, our amazement waxed still greater and we said to him, “We have hardly patience enough to await thy history and to hear the manner of the cutting off of thy thumbs, and the reason of thy washing both hands one hundred and twenty times.” Know then, said he, that my father was chief of the merchants and the wealthiest of them all in Baghdad city during the reign of the Caliph Harun al Rashid; and he was much given to wine drinking and listening to the lute and the other instruments of pleasaunce; so that when he died he left nothing. I buried him and had perlections of the Koran made for him, and mourned for him days and nights: then I opened his shop and found that he had left in it few goods, while his debts were many. However I compounded with his creditors for time to settle their demands and betook myself to buying and selling, paying them something from week to week on account; and I gave not over doing this till I had cleared off his obligations in full and began adding to my principal. One day, as I sat in my shop, suddenly and unexpectedly there appeared before me a young lady, than whom I never saw a fairer, wearing the richest raiment and ornaments and riding a she mule, with one negro slave walking before her and another behind her. She drew rein at the head of the exchange bazaar and entered followed by an eunuch who said to her, “O my lady come out and away without telling anyone, lest thou light a fire which will burn us all up.” Moreover he stood before her guarding her from view whilst she looked at the merchants’ shops. She found none open but mine; so she came up with the eunuch behind her and sitting down in my shop saluted me; never heard I aught fairer than her speech or sweeter than her voice. Then she unveiled her face, and I saw that she was like the moon and I stole a glance at her whose sight caused me a thousand sighs, and my heart was captivated with love of her, and I kept looking again and again upon her face repeating these verses: —

“Say to the charmer in the dove hued veil, * Death would be
welcome to abate thy bale!
Favour me with thy favours that I live: * See, I stretch forth my
palm to take thy vail!

When she heard my verse she answered me saying: —

“I’ve lost all patience by despite of you; * My heart knows

nothing save love plight to you!
If aught I sight save charms so bright of you; * My parting end
not in the sight of you!
I swear I'll ne'er forget the right of you; * And fain this
breast would soar to height of you:
You made me drain the love cup, and I lief * A love cup tender
for delight of you:
Take this my form where'er you go, and when * You die, entomb
me in the site of you:
Call on me in my grave, and hear my bones * Sigh their responses
to the shright of you:
And were I asked 'Of God what wouldst thou see?' * I answer,
'first His will then Thy decree!'

When she ended her verse she asked me, "O youth, hast thou any fair stuffs by thee?"; and I answered, "O my lady, thy slave is poor; but have patience till the merchants open their shops, and I will suit thee with what thou wilt." Then we sat talking, I and she (and I was drowned in the sea of her love, dazed in the desert[556] of my passion for her), till the merchants opened their shops; when I rose and fetched her all she sought to the tune of five thousand dirhams. She gave the stuff to the eunuch and, going forth by the door of the Exchange, she mounted mule and went away, without telling me whence she came, and I was ashamed to speak of such trifle. When the merchants dunned me for the price, I made myself answerable for five thousand dirhams and went home, drunken with the love of her. They set supper before me and I ate a mouthful, thinking only of her beauty and loveliness, and sought to sleep, but sleep came not to me. And such was my condition for a whole week, when the merchants required their monies of me, but I persuaded them to have patience for another week, at the end of which time she again appeared mounted on a she mule and attended by her eunuch and two slaves. She saluted me and said, "O my master, we have been long in bringing thee the price of the stuffs; but now fetch the Shroff and take thy monies." So I sent for the money changer and the eunuch counted out the coin before him and made it over to me. Then we sat talking, I and she, till the market opened, when she said to me, "Get me this and that.” So I got her from the merchants whatso she wanted, and she took it and went away without saying a word to me about the price. As soon as she was out of sight, I repented me of what I had done; for the worth of the stuffs bought for her amounted to a thousand dinars, and I said in my soul, “What manner of love is this? She hath brought me five thousand dirhams, and hath taken goods for a thousand dinars.”[557] I feared lest I should be beggared through having to pay the merchants their money, and I said, “They know none other but me; this lovely lady is naught but a cheat and a swindler, who hath diddled me with her beauty and grace; for she saw that I was a mere youth and laughed at me for not asking her address.” I ceased not to be troubled by these doubts and fears, as she was absent more than a month, till the merchants pestered me for their money and were so hard upon me that I put up my property for sale and stood on the very brink of ruin. However, as I was sitting in my shop one day, drowned in melancholy musings, she suddenly rode up and, dismounting at the bazaar gate, came straight towards me. When I saw her all my cares fell from me and I forgot every trouble. She came close up to me and greeted me with her sweet voice and pleasant speech and presently said, “Fetch me the Shroff and weigh thy money.”[558] So she gave me the price of what goods I had gotten for her and more, and fell to talking freely with me, till I was like to die of joy and delight. Presently she asked me, “Hast thou a wife?”; and I answered “No, indeed: I have never known woman”; and began to shed tears. Quoth she “Why weepest thou?” Quoth I “It is nothing!” Then giving the eunuch some of the gold pieces, I begged him to be go between[559] in the matter; but he laughed and said, “She is more in love with thee than thou with her: she hath no occasion for the stuffs she hath bought of thee and did all this only for the love of thee; so ask of her what thou wilt and she will deny thee nothing.” When she saw me giving the dinars to the eunuch, she returned and sat down again; and I said to her, “Be charitable to thy slave and pardon him what he is about to say.” Then I told her what was in my mind and she assented and said to the eunuch, “Thou shalt carry my message to him,” adding to me, “And do thou whatso the eunuch biddeth thee.” Then she got up and went away, and I paid the merchants their monies and they all profited; but as for me, regret at the breaking off of our intercourse was all my gain; and I slept not the whole of that night. However, before many days passed her eunuch came to me, and I entreated him honourably and asked him after his mistress. "Truly she is sick with love of thee," he replied and I rejoined, "Tell me who and what she is." Quoth he, "The Lady Zubaydah, queen consort of Harun al-Rashid, brought her up as a rearling[560] and hath advanced her to be stewardess of the Harim, and gave her the right of going in and out of her own sweet will. She spoke to her lady of thee and begged her to marry her to thee; but she said, 'I will not do this, till I see the young man; and, if he be worthy of thee, I will marry thee to him.' So now we look for the moment to smuggle thee into the Palace and if thou succeed in entering privily thou wilt win thy wish to wed her; but if the affair get wind, the Lady Zubaydah will strike off thy head.[561] What sayest thou to this?" I answered, "I will go with thee and abide the risk whereof thou speakest." Then said he, "As soon as it is night, go to the Mosque built by the Lady Zubaydah on the Tigris and pray the night prayers and sleep there." "With love and gladness," cried I. So at nightfall I repaired to the Mosque, where I prayed and passed the night. With earliest dawn, behold, came sundry eunuchs in a skiff with a number of empty chests which they deposited in the Mosque; then all of them went their ways but one, and looking curiously at him, I saw he was our go between. Presently in came the handmaiden, my mistress, walking straight up to us; and I rose to her and embraced her while she kissed me and shed tears.[562] We talked awhile; after which she made me get into one of the chests which she locked upon me. Presently the other eunuchs came back with a quantity of packages and she fell to stowing them in the chests, which she locked down, one by one, till all were shut. When all was done the eunuchs embarked the chests in the boat and made for the Lady Zubaydah's palace. With this, thought began to beset me and I said to myself, "Verily thy lust and wantonness will be the death of thee; and the question is after all shalt thou win to thy wish or not?" And I began to weep, boxed up as I was in the box and suffering from cramp; and I prayed Allah that He deliver me from the dangerous strait I was in, whilst the boat gave not over going on till it reached the Palace gate where they lifted out the chests and amongst them that in which I was. Then they carried them in, passing through a troop of eunuchs, guardians of the Harim and of the ladies behind the curtain, till they came to the post of the Eunuch in Chief[563] who started up from his slumbers and shouted to the damsel “What is in those chests?” “They are full of wares for the Lady Zubaydah!” “Open them, one by one, that I may see what is in them.” “And wherefore wouldst thou open them?” “Give me no words and exceed not in talk! These chests must and shall be opened.” So saying, he sprang to his feet, and the first which they brought to him to open was that wherein I was; and, when I felt his hands upon it, my senses failed me and I bepissed myself in my funk, the water running out of the box. Then said she to the Eunuch in Chief, “O steward! thou wilt cause me to be killed and thyself too, for thou hast damaged goods worth ten thousand dinars. This chest contains coloured dresses, and four gallon flasks of Zemzem water;[564] and now one of them hath got unstoppered and the water is running out over the clothes and it will spoil their colours.” The eunuch answered, “Take up thy boxes and get thee gone to the curse of God!” So the slaves carried off all the chests, including mine; and hastened on with them till suddenly I heard the voice of one saying, “Alack, and alack! the Caliph! the Caliph !” When that cry struck mine ears I died in my skin and said a saying which never yet shamed the sayer, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! I and only I have brought this calamity upon myself.” Presently I heard the Caliph say to my mistress, “A plague on thee, what is in those boxes?”; and she answered, “Dresses for the Lady Zubaydah”;[565] whereupon he, “Open them before me!” When I heard this I died my death outright and said to myself, “By Allah, today is the very last of my days in this world: if I come safe out of this I am to marry her and no more words, but detection stares me in the face and my head is as good as stricken off.” Then I repeated the profession of Faith, saying, “There is no god but the God, and Mohammed is the Apostle of God!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Twenty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant continued as follows: Now when I testified, “I bear witness that there is no god save the God," I heard my mistress the handmaid declare to the Caliph, "These chests, O Commander of the Faithful, have been committed to my charge by the Lady Zubaydah, and she doth not wish their contents to be seen by any one." "No matter!" quoth the Caliph, "needs must they be opened, I will see what is in them"; and he cried aloud to the eunuchs, "Bring the chests here before me." At this I made sure of death (without benefit of a doubt) and swooned away. Then the eunuchs brought the chests up to him one after another and he fell to inspecting the contents, but he saw in them only otters and stuffs and fine dresses; and they ceased not opening the chests and he ceased not looking to see what was in them, finding only clothes and such matters, till none remained unopened but the box in which I was boxed. They put forth their hands to open it, but my mistress the handmaid made haste and said to the Caliph, "This one thou shalt see only in the presence of the Lady Zubaydah, for that which is in it is her secret." When he heard this he gave orders to carry in the chests; so they took up that wherein I was and bore it with the rest into the Harim and set it down in the midst of the saloon; and indeed my spittle was dried up for very fear.[566] Then my mistress opened the box and took me out, saying, "Fear not: no harm shall betide thee now nor dread; but broaden thy breast and strengthen thy heart and sit thee down till the Lady Zubaydah come, and surely thou shalt win thy wish of me." So I sat down and, after a while, in came ten hand maidens, virgins like moons, and ranged themselves in two rows, five facing five; and after them twenty other damsels, high bosomed virginity, surrounding the Lady Zubaydah who could hardly walk for the weight of her raiment and ornaments. As she drew near, the slave girls dispersed from around her, and I advanced and kissed the ground between her hands. She signed to me to sit and, when I sat down before her chair, she began questioning me of my forbears and family and condition, to which I made such answers that pleased her, and she said to my mistress, "Our nurturing of thee, O damsel, hath not disappointed us." Then she said to me, "Know that this handmaiden is to us even as our own child and she is a trust committed to thee by Allah." I again kissed the ground before her, well pleased that I should marry my mistress, and she bade me abide ten days in the palace. So I abode there ten days, during which time I saw not my mistress nor anybody save one of the concubines, who brought me the morning and evening meals. After this the Lady Zubaydah took counsel with the Caliph on the marriage of her favourite handmaid, and he gave leave and assigned to her a wedding portion of ten thousand gold pieces. So the Lady Zubaydah sent for the Kazi and witnesses who wrote our marriage contract, after which the women made ready sweetmeats and rich viands and distributed them among all the Odahs[567] of the Harim. Thus they did other ten days, at the end of which time my mistress went to the baths.[568] Meanwhile, they set before me a tray of food where on were various meats and among those dishes, which were enough to daze the wits, was a bowl of cumin ragout containing chickens breasts, fricandoed[569] and flavoured with sugar, pistachios, musk and rose water. Then, by Allah, fair sirs, I did not long hesitate; but took my seat before the ragout and fell to and ate of it till I could no more. After this I wiped my hands, but forgot to wash them; and sat till it grew dark, when the wax candles were lighted and the singing women came in with their tambourines and proceeded to display the bride in various dresses and to carry her in procession from room to room all round the palace, getting their palms crossed with gold. Then they brought her to me and disrobed her. When I found myself alone with her on the bed I embraced her, hardly believing in our union; but she smelt the strong odours of the ragout upon my hands and forth with cried out with an exceeding loud cry, at which the slave girls came running to her from all sides. I trembled with alarm, unknowing what was the matter, and the girls asked her, “What aileth thee, O our sister?” She answered them, “Take this mad man away from me: I had thought he was a man of sense!” Quoth I to her, “What makes thee think me mad?” Quoth she, “Thou madman’ what made thee eat of cumin ragout and forget to wash thy hand? By Allah, I will requite thee for thy misconduct. Shall the like of thee come to bed with the like of me with unclean hands?”[570] Then she took from her side a plaited scourge and came down with it on my back and the place where I sit till her forearms were benumbed and I fainted away from the much beating; when she said to the handmaids, “Take him and carry him to the Chief of Police, that he may strike off the hand wherewith he ate of the cumin ragout, and which he did not wash." When I heard this I said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah! Wilt thou cut off my hand, because I ate of a cumin ragout and did not wash?" The handmaidens also interceded with her and kissed her hand saying, "O our sister, this man is a simpleton, punish him not for what he hath done this nonce;" but she answered, "By Allah, there is no help but that I dock him of somewhat, especially the offending member." Then she went away and I saw no more of her for ten days, during which time she sent me meat and drink by a slave girl who told me that she had fallen sick from the smell of the cumin ragout. After that time she came to me and said, "O black of face![571] I will teach thee how to eat cumin ragout without washing thy hands!" Then she cried out to the handmaids, who pinioned me; and she took a sharp razor and cut off my thumbs and great toes; even as you see, O fair assembly! Thereupon I swooned away, and she sprinkled some powder of healing herbs upon the stumps and when the blood was stanched, I said, "Never again will I eat of cumin ragout without washing my hands forty times with potash and forty times with galangale and forty times with soap!" And she took of me an oath and bound me by a covenant to that effect. When, therefore, you brought me the cumin ragout my colour changed and I said to myself, "It was this very dish that caused the cutting off of my thumbs and great toes;" and, when you forced me, I said, "Needs must I fulfil the oath I have sworn." "And what befell thee after this?" asked those present; and he answered, "When I swore to her, her anger was appeased and I slept with her that night. We abode thus awhile till she said to me one day, "Verily the Palace of the Caliph is not a pleasant place for us to live in, and none ever entered it save thyself; and thou only by grace of the Lady Zubaydah. Now she hath given me fifty thousand dinars," adding, "Take this money and go out and buy us a fair dwelling house." So I fared forth and bought a fine and spacious mansion, whither she removed all the wealth she owned and what riches I had gained in stuffs and costly rarities. Such is the cause of the cutting off of my thumbs and great toes. We ate (continued the Reeve), and were returning to our homes when there befell me with the Hunchback that thou wottest of. This then is my story, and peace be with thee! Quoth the King; "This story is on no wise more delectable than the story of the Hunchback; nay, it is even less so, and there is no help for the hanging of the whole of you.” Then came forward the Jewish physician and kissing the ground said, “O King of the age, I will tell thee an history more wonderful than that of the Hunchback.” “Tell on,” said the King of China; so he began the

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Tale of the Jewish Doctor.

Right marvellous was a matter which came to pass to me in my youth. I lived in Damascus of Syria studying my art and, one day, as I was sitting at home behold, there came to me a Mameluke from the household of the Sahib and said to me, “Speak with my lord!” So I followed him to the Viceroy’s house and, entering the great hall, saw at its head a couch of cedar plated with gold whereon lay a sickly youth beautiful withal; fairer than he one could not see. I sat down by his head and prayed to Heaven for a cure; and he made me a sign with his eyes, so I said to him, “O my lord! favour me with thy hand, and safety be with thee!”[572] Then he put forth his left hand and I marvelled thereat and said, “By Allah, strange that this handsome youth, the son of a great house, should so lack good manners. This can be nothing but pride and conceit!” However I felt his pulse and wrote him a prescription and continued to visit him for ten days, at the end of which time he recovered and went to the Hammam,[573] whereupon the Viceroy gave me a handsome dress of honour and appointed me superintendent of the hospital which is in Damascus.[574] I accompanied him to the baths, the whole of which they had kept private for his accommodation; and the servants came in with him and took off his clothes within the bath, and when he was stripped I saw that his right hand had been newly cut off, and this was the cause of his weakliness. At this I was amazed and grieved for him: then, looking at his body, I saw on it the scars of scourge stripes whereto he had applied unguents. I was troubled at the sight and my concern appeared in my face. The young man looked at me and, comprehending the matter, said, “O Physician of the age, marvel not at my case; I will tell thee my story as soon as we quit the baths.” Then we washed and, returning to his house, ate somewhat of food and took rest awhile; after which he asked me, “What sayest thou to solacing thee by inspecting the supper hall?”; and I answered “So let it be.” Thereupon he ordered the slaves to carry out the carpets and cushions required and roast a lamb and bring us some fruit. They did his bidding and we ate together, he using the left hand for the purpose. After a while I said to him, “Now tell me thy tale.” “O

Physician of the age," replied he, "hear what befell me. Know that I am of the sons of Mosul, where my grandfather died leaving nine children of whom my father was the eldest. All grew up and took to them wives, but none of them was blessed with offspring except my father, to whom Providence vouchsafed me. So I grew up amongst my uncles who rejoiced in me with exceeding joy, till I came to man's estate. One day which happened to be a Friday, I went to the Cathedral mosque of Mosul with my father and my uncles, and we prayed the congregational prayers, after which the folk went forth, except my father and uncles, who sat talking of wondrous things in foreign parts and the marvellous sights of strange cities. At last they mentioned Egypt, and one of my uncles said, "Travellers tell us that there is not on earth's face aught fairer than Cairo and her Nile;" and these words made me long to see Cairo. Quoth my father, "Whoso hath not seen Cairo hath not seen the world. Her dust is golden and her Nile a miracle holden; and her women are as Houris fair; puppets, beautiful pictures; her houses are palaces rare; her water is sweet and light[575] and her mud a commodity and a medicine beyond compare, even as said the poet in this his poetry: —

The Nile[576] flood this day is the gain you own; * You alone
in such gain and bounties wone:
The Nile is my tear flood of severance, * And here none is
forlorn but I alone.

Moreover temperate is her air, and with fragrance blent, Which surpasseth aloes wood in scent; and how should it be otherwise, she being the Mother of the World? And Allah favour him who wrote these lines: —

An I quit Cairo and her pleasaunces, * Where can I wend to find
so gladsome ways?
Shall I desert that site, whose grateful scents * Joy every soul
and call for loudest praise?
Where every palace, as another Eden, * Carpets and cushions
richly wrought displays;
A city wooing sight and sprite to glee, * Where Saint meets

Sinner and each ‘joys his craze;
Where friend meets friend, by Providence united * In greeny garden and in palmy maze:
People of Cairo, and by Allah’s doom * I fare, with you in thoughts I wone always!
Whisper not Cairo in the ear of Zephyr, * Lest for her like of garden scents he reave her,[577]

And if your eyes saw her earth, and the adornment thereof with bloom, and the purfling of it with all manner blossoms, and the islands of the Nile and how much is therein of wide spread and goodly prospect, and if you bent your sight upon the Abyssinian Pond,[578] your glance would not revert from the scene quit of wonder; for nowhere would you behold the fellow of that lovely view; and, indeed, the two arms of the Nile embrace most luxuriant verdure,[579] as the white of the eye encompasseth its black or like filigreed silver surrounding chrysolites. And divinely gifted was the poet who there anent said these couplets: —

By th’ Abyssinian Pond, O day divine!* In morning twilight and in sunny shine:
The water prisoned in its verdurous walls, * Like sabre flashes before shrinking eyne:
And in The Garden sat we while it drains * Slow draught, with purfled sides dyed finest fine:
The stream is rippled by the hands of clouds; * We too, a-rippling, on our rugs recline,
Passing pure wine, and whoso leaves us there * Shall ne’er arise from fall his woes design:
Draining long draughts from large and brimming bowls, * Administ’ring thirst’s only medicine — wine.

And what is there to compare with the Rasad, the Observatory, and its charms whereof every viewer as he approacheth saith, ‘Verily this spot is specialised with all manner of excellence!’ And if thou speak of the Night of Nile full,[580] give the rainbow and distribute it![581] And if thou behold The Garden at eventide, with the cool shades sloping far and wide, a marvel thou wouldst see and wouldst incline to Egypt in ecstasy. And wert thou by Cairo's river side,[582] when the sun is sinking and the stream dons mail coat and habergeon[583] over its other vestments, thou wouldst be quickened to new life by its gentle zephyrs and by its all sufficient shade." So spake he and the rest fell to describing Egypt and her Nile. As I heard their accounts, my thoughts dwelt upon the subject and when, after talking their fill, all arose and went their ways, I lay down to sleep that night, but sleep came not because of my violent longing for Egypt; and neither meat pleased me nor drink. After a few days my uncles equipped themselves for a trade journey to Egypt; and I wept before my father till he made ready for me fitting merchandise, and he consented to my going with them, saying however, "Let him not enter Cairo, but leave him to sell his wares at Damascus." So I took leave of my father and we fared forth from Mosul and gave not over travelling till we reached Aleppo[584] where we halted certain days. Then we marched onwards till we made Damascus and we found her a city as though she were a Paradise, abounding in trees and streams and birds and fruits of all kinds. We alighted at one of the Khans, where my uncles tarried awhile selling and buying; and they bought and sold also on my account, each dirham turning a profit of five on prime cost, which pleased me mightily. After this they left me alone and set their faces Egyptwards; whilst I abode at Damascus, where I had hired from a jeweller, for two dinars a month, a mansion[585] whose beauties would beggar the tongue. Here I remained, eating and drinking and spending what monies I had in hand till, one day, as I was sitting at the door of my house be hold, there came up a young lady clad in costliest raiment never saw my eyes richer. I winked5886 at her and she stepped inside without hesitation and stood within. I entered with her and shut the door upon myself and her; whereupon she raised her face veil and threw off her mantilla, when I found her like a pictured moon of rare and marvellous loveliness; and love of her gat hold of my heart. So I rose and brought a tray of the most delicate eatables and fruits and whatso befitted the occasion, and we ate and played and after that we drank till the wine turned our heads. Then I lay with her the sweetest of nights and in the morning I offered her ten gold pieces; when her face lowered and her eye brows wrinkled and shaking with wrath she cried, “Fie upon thee, O my sweet companion! dost thou deem that I covet thy money?” Then she took out from the bosom of her shift[587] fifteen dinars and, laying them before me, said, “By Allah! unless thou take them I will never come back to thee.” So I accepted them and she said to me, “O my beloved! expect me again in three days’ time, when I will be with thee between sunset and supper tide; and do thou prepare for us with these dinars the same entertainment as yesternight.” So saying, she took leave of me and went away and all my senses went with her. On the third day she came again, clad in stuff weft with gold wire, and wearing raiment and ornaments finer than before. I had prepared the place for her ere she arrived and the repast was ready; so we ate and drank and lay together, as we had done, till the morning, when she gave me other fifteen gold pieces and promised to come again after three days. Accordingly, I made ready for her and, at the appointed time, she presented herself more richly dressed than on the first and second occasions, and said to me, “O my lord, am I not beautiful?” “Yea, by Allah thou art!” answered I, and she went on, “Wilt thou allow me to bring with me a young lady fairer than I, and younger in years, that she may play with us and thou and she may laugh and make merry and rejoice her heart, for she hath been very sad this long time past, and hath asked me to take her out and let her spend the night abroad with me?” “Yea, by Allah!” I replied; and we drank till the wine turned our heads and slept till the morning, when she gave me other fifteen dinars, saying, “Add something to thy usual provision on account of the young lady who will come with me.” Then she went away, and on the fourth day I made ready the house as usual, and soon after sunset behold, she came, accompanied by another damsel carefully wrapped in her mantilla. They entered and sat down; and when I saw them I repeated these verses: —

“How dear is our day and how lucky our lot, * When the cynic’s
  away with his tongue malign!
When love and delight and the swimming of head * Send
  cleverness trotting, the best boon of wine.
When the full moon shines from the cloudy veil, * And the

branchlet sways in her greens that shine:
When the red rose mantles in freshest cheek, * And
Narcissus[588] opeth his love sick eyne:
When pleasure with those I love is so sweet, * When friendship
with those I love is complete!”

I rejoiced to see them, and lighted the candles after receiving them with gladness and delight. They doffed their heavy outer dresses and the new damsel uncovered her face when I saw that she was like the moon at its full never beheld I aught more beautiful. Then I rose and set meat and drink before them, and we ate and drank; and I kept giving mouthfuls to the new comer, crowning her cup and drinking with her till the first damsel, waxing inwardly jealous, asked me, “By Allah, is she not more delicious than I?”; whereto I answered, “Ay, by the Lord!” “It is my wish that thou lie with her this night; for I am thy mistress but she is our visitor. Upon my head be it, and my eyes.” Then she rose and spread the carpets for our bed[589] and I took the young lady and lay with her that night till morning, when I awoke and found myself wet, as I thought, with sweat. I sat up and tried to arouse the damsel; but when I shook her by the shoulders my hand became crimson with blood and her head rolled off the pillow. Thereupon my senses fled and I cried aloud, saying, “O All powerful Protector, grant me Thy protection!” Then finding her neck had been severed, I sprung up and the world waxed black before my eyes, and I looked for the lady, my former love, but could not find her. So I knew that it was she who had murdered the damsel in her jealousy,[590] and said, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! What is to be done now?” I considered awhile then, doffing my clothes, dug a hole in the middle of the court yard, wherein I laid the murdered girl with her jewellery and golden ornaments; and, throwing back the earth on her, replaced the slabs of the marble[591] pavement. After this I made the Ghusl or total ablution,[592] and put on pure clothes; then, taking what money I had left, locked up the house and summoned courage and went to its owner to whom I paid a year’s rent, saying, “I am about to join my uncles in Cairo.” Presently I set out and, journeying to Egypt, foregathered with my uncles who rejoiced in me, and I found that they had made an end of selling their merchandise. They asked me, "What is the cause of thy coming?"; and I answered "I longed for a sight of you;" but did not let them know that I had any money with me. I abode with them a year, enjoying the pleasures of Cairo and her Nile,[593] and squandering the rest of my money in feasting and carousing till the time drew near for the departure of my uncles, when I fled from them and hid myself. They made enquiries and sought for me, but hearing no tidings they said, "He will have gone back to Damascus." When they departed I came forth from my hiding place and abode in Cairo three years, until naught remained of my money. Now every year I used to send the rent of the Damascus house to its owner, until at last I had nothing left but enough to pay him for one year's rent and my breast was straitened. So I travelled to Damascus and alighted at the house whose owner, the jeweller, was glad to see me and I found everything locked up as I had left it. I opened the closets and took out my clothes and necessaries and came upon, beneath the carpet bed whereon I had lain that night with the girl who had been beheaded, a golden necklace set with ten gems of passing beauty. I took it up and, cleansing it of the blood, sat gazing upon it and wept awhile. Then I abode in the house two days and on the third I entered the Hammam and changed my clothes. I had no money by me now; so Satan whispered temptation to me that the Decree of Destiny be carried out. Next day I took the jewelled necklace to the bazaar and handed it to a broker who made me sit down in the shop of the jeweller, my landlord, and bade me have patience till the market was full,[594] when he carried off the ornament and proclaimed it for sale, privily and without my knowledge. The necklet was priced as worth two thousand dinars, but the broker returned to me and said, "This collar is of copper, a mere counterfeit after the fashion of the Franks[595] and a thousand dirhams have been bidden for it." "Yes," I answered, "I knew it to be copper, as we had it made for a certain person that we might mock her: now my wife hath inherited it and we wish to sell it; so go and take over the thousand dirhams." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Twenty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the beautiful youth said to the broker, “Take over the thousand dirhams;” and when the broker heard this, he knew that the case was suspicious. So he carried the collar to the Syndic of the bazaar, and the Syndic took it to the Governor who was also prefect of police, and said to him falsely enough, “This necklet was stolen from my house, and we have found the thief in traders’ dress.” So before I was aware of it the watch got round me and, making me their prisoner, carried me before the Governor who questioned me of the collar. I told him the tale I had told to the broker; but he laughed and said, “These words are not true.” Then, before I knew what was doing, the guard stripped off my clothes and came down with palm rods upon my ribs, till for the smart of the stick I confessed, “It was I who stole it;” saying to myself, “’Tis better for thee to say, I stole it, than to let them know that its owner was murdered in thy house, for then would they slay thee to avenge her.” So they wrote down that I had stolen it and they cut off my hand and scalded the stump in oil,[596] when I swooned away for pain; but they gave me wine to drink and I recovered and, taking up my hand, was going to my fine house, when my landlord said to me, “Inasmuch, O my son, as this hath befallen thee, thou must leave my house and look out for another lodging for thee, since thou art convicted of theft. Thou art a handsome youth, but who will pity thee after this?” “O my master” said I, “bear with me but two days or three, till I find me another place.” He answered, “So be it.” and went away and left me. I returned to the house where I sat weeping and saying, How shall I go back to my own people with my hand lopped off and they know not that I am innocent? Perchance even after this Allah may order some matter for me.” And I wept with exceeding weeping, grief beset me and I remained in sore trouble for two days; but on the third day my landlord came suddenly in to me, and with him some of the guard and the Syndic of the bazaar, who had falsely charged me with stealing the necklet. I went up to them and asked, “What is the matter?” however, they pinioned me with out further parley and threw a chain about my neck, saying, “The necklet which was with thee hath proved to be the property of the Wazir of Damascus who is also her Viceroy;” and they added, “It was missing from his house three years ago at the same time as his younger daughter.” When I heard these words, my heart sank within me and I said to myself, “Thy life is gone beyond a doubt! By Allah, needs must I tell the Chief my story; and, if he will, let him kill me, and if he please, let him pardon me.” So they carried me to the Wazir’s house and made me stand between his hands. When he saw me, he glanced at me out of the corner of his eye and said to those present, “Why did ye lop off his hand? This man is unfortunate, and there is no fault in him; indeed ye have wronged him in cutting off his hand.” When I heard this, I took heart and, my soul presaging good, I said to him, “By Allah, O my lord, I am no thief; but they calumniated me with a vile calumny, and they scourged me midmost the market, bidding me confess till, for the pain of the rods, I lied against myself and confessed the theft, albeit I am altogether innocent of it.” “Fear not,” quoth the Viceroy, “no harm shall come to thee.” Then he ordered the Syndic of the bazaar to be imprisoned and said to him, “Give this man the blood money for his hand; and, if thou delay I will hang thee and seize all thy property.” Moreover he called to his guards who took him and dragged him away, leaving me with the Chief. Then they loosed by his command the chain from my neck and unbound my arms; and he looked at me, and said, “O my son, be true with me, and tell me how this necklace came to thee.” And he repeated these verses: —

“Truth best befits thee, albeit truth * Shall bring thee to burn on the threatened fire.”

“By Allah, O my lord,” answered I, “I will tell thee nothing but the truth.” Then I related to him all that had passed between me and the first lady, and how she had brought me the second and had slain her out of jealousy, and I detailed for him the tale to its full. When he heard my story, he shook his head and struck his right hand upon the left,[597] and putting his kerchief over his face wept awhile and then repeated: —

“I see the woes of the world abound, * And worldings sick with
spleen and teen;
There’s One who the meeting of two shall part, * And who part not
are few and far between!”

Then he turned to me and said, “Know, O my son, that the elder damsel who first came to thee was my daughter whom I used to keep closely guarded. When she grew up, I sent her to Cairo and married her to her cousin, my brother's son. After a while he died and she came back: but she had learnt wantonness and ungraciousness from the people of Cairo;[598] so she visited thee four times and at last brought her younger sister. Now they were sisters-german and much attached to each other; and, when that adventure happened to the elder, she disclosed her secret to her sister who desired to go out with her. So she asked thy leave and carried her to thee; after which she returned alone and, finding her weeping, I questioned her of her sister, but she said, 'I know nothing of her.' However, she presently told her mother privily of what had happened and how she had cut off her sister's head and her mother told me. Then she ceased not to weep and say, 'By Allah! I shall cry for her till I die.' Nor did she give over mourning till her heart broke and she died; and things fell out after that fashion. See then, O my son, what hath come to pass; and now I desire thee not to thwart me in what I am about to offer thee, and it is that I purpose to marry thee to my youngest daughter; for she is a virgin and born of another mother;[599] and I will take no dower of thee but, on the contrary, will appoint thee an allowance, and thou shalt abide with me in my house in the stead of my son." "So be it," I answered, "and how could I hope for such good fortune?" Then he sent at once for the Kazi and witnesses, and let write my marriage contract with his daughter and I went in to her. Moreover, he got me from the Syndic of the bazaar a large sum of money and I became in high favour with him. During this year news came to me that my father was dead and the Wazir despatched a courier, with letters bearing the royal sign manual, to fetch me the money which my father had left behind him, and now I am living in all the solace of life. Such was the manner of the cutting off my right hand." I marvelled at his story (continued the Jew), and I abode with him three days after which he gave me much wealth, and I set out and travelled Eastward till I reached this your city and the sojourn suited me right well; so I took up my abode here and there befell me what thou knowest with the Hunchback. There upon the King of China shook his head[600] and said, "This story of thine is not stranger and more wondrous and marvellous and delectable than the tale of the Hunchback; and so needs must I hang the whole number of you. However there yet remains the Tailor who is the head of all the offence;” and he added, “O Tailor, if thou canst tell me any thing more wonderful than the story of the Hunchback, I will pardon you all your offences.” Thereupon the man came forward and began to tell the

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Tale of the Tailor.

Know, O King of the age, that most marvellous was that which befell me but yesterday, before I foregathered with the Hunch back. It so chanced that in the early day I was at the marriage feast of one of my companions, who had gotten together in his house some twenty of the handicraftsmen of this city, amongst them tailors and silk spinners and carpenters and others of the same kidney. As soon as the sun had risen, they set food[601] before us that we might eat when behold, the master of the house entered, and with him a foreign youth and a well favoured of the people of Baghdad, wearing clothes as handsome as handsome could be; and he was of right comely presence save that he was lame of one leg. He came and saluted us and we stood up to receive him; but when he was about to sit down he espied amongst us a certain man which was a Barber; whereupon he refused to be seated and would have gone away. But we stopped him and our host also stayed him, making oath that he should not leave us and asked him, “What is the reason of thy coming in and going out again at once?”; whereto he answered, “By Allah, O my lord, do not hinder me; for the cause of my turning back is yon Barber of bad omen,[602] yon black o’face, yon ne’er do well!” When the housemaster heard these words he marvelled with extreme marvel and said, “How cometh this young man, who haileth from Baghdad, to be so troubled and perplexed about this Barber?” Then we looked at the stranger and said, “Explain the cause of thine anger against the Barber.” “O fair company,” quoth the youth, “there befell me a strange adventure with this Barber in Baghdad (which is my native city); he was the cause of the breaking of my leg and of my lameness, and I have sworn never to sit in the same place with him, nor even tarry in any town where he happens to abide; and I have bidden adieu to Baghdad and travelled far from it and came to stay in this your city; yet I have hardly passed one night before I meet him again. But not another day shall go by ere I fare forth from here.” Said we to him, “Allah upon thee, tell us the tale;” and the youth replied (the Barber changing colour from brown to yellow as he spoke): Know, O fair company, that my father was one of the chief merchants of Baghdad, and Almighty Allah had blessed him with no son but myself. When I grew up and reached man's estate, my father was received into the mercy of Allah (whose Name be exalted!) and left me money and eunuchs, servants and slaves; and I used to dress well and diet well. Now Allah had made me a hater of women kind and one day, as I was walking along a street in Baghdad, a party of females met me face to face in the footway; so I fled from them and, entering an alley which was no thoroughfare, sat down upon a stone bench at its other end. I had not sat there long before the latticed window of one of the houses opposite was thrown open, and there appeared at it a young lady, as she were the full moon at its fullest; never in my life saw I her like; and she began to water some flowers on the window sill.[603] She turned right and left and, seeing me watching her, shut the window and went away. Thereupon fire was suddenly enkindled in my heart; my mind was possessed with her and my woman hate turned to woman love. I continued sitting there, lost to the world, till sunset when lo! the Kazi of the city came riding by with his slaves before him and his eunuchs behind him, and dismounting entered the house in which the damsel had appeared. By this I knew that he was her father; so I went home sorrowful and cast myself upon my carpet bed in grief. Then my handmaids flocked in and sat about me, unknowing what ailed me; but I addressed no speech to them, and they wept and wailed over me. Presently in came an old woman who looked at me and saw with a glance what was the matter with me: so she by my head spoke me fair, saying, "O my son, tell me all about it and I will be the means of thy union with her."[604] So I related to her what had happened and she answered, "O my son, this one is the daughter of the Kazi of Baghdad who keepeth her in the closest seclusion; and the window where thou sawest her is her floor, whilst her father occupies the large saloon in the lower story. She is often there alone and I am wont to visit at the house; so thou shalt not win to her save through me. Now set thy wits to work and be of good cheer." With these words she went away and I took heart at what she said and my people rejoiced that day, seeing me rise in the morning safe and sound. By and by the old woman returned looking chopfallen,[605] and said, "O my son, do not ask me how I fared with her! When I told her that, she cried at me, 'If thou hold not thy peace, O hag of ill omen, and leave not such talk, I will entreat thee as thou deservest and do thee die by the foulest of deaths.' But needs must I have at her a second time."[606] When I heard this it added ailment to my ailment and the neighbours visited me and judged that I was not long for this world; but after some days, the old woman came to me and, putting her mouth close to my ear, whispered, "O my son; I claim from thee the gift of good news." With this my soul returned to me and I said, "Whatever thou wilt shall be thine." Thereupon she began, "Yesterday I went to the young lady who, seeing me broken in spirit and shedding tears from reddened eyes, asked me, 'O naunty[607] mine, what ails thee, that I see thy breast so straitened?'; and I answered her, weeping bitterly, 'O my lady, I am just come from the house of a youth who loves thee and who is about to die for sake of thee!' Quoth she (and her heart was softened), 'And who is this youth of whom thou speakest?'; and quoth I, 'He is to me as a son and the fruit of my vitals. He saw thee, some days ago, at the window watering thy flowers and espying thy face and wrists he fell in love at first sight. I let him know what happened to me the last time I was with thee, whereupon his ailment increased, he took to the pillow and he is naught now but a dead man, and no doubt what ever of it.' At this she turned pale and asked, 'All this for my sake?'; and I answered, 'Ay, by Allah![608] what wouldst thou have me do?' Said she, 'Go back to him and greet him for me and tell him that I am twice more heartsick than he is. And on Friday, before the hour of public prayer, bid him here to the house, and I will come down and open the door for him. Then I will carry him up to my chamber and foregather with him for a while, and let him depart before my father return from the Mosque.'" When I heard the old woman's words, all my sickness suddenly fell from me, my anguish ceased and my heart was comforted; I took off what clothes were on me and gave them to her and, as she turned to go, she said, "Keep a good heart!" "I have not a jot of sorrow left." I replied. My household and intimates rejoiced in my recovery and I abode thus till Friday, when behold, the old woman came in and asked me how I did, to which I answered that I was well and in good case. Then I donned my clothes and perfumed myself and sat down to await the congregation going in to prayers, that I might betake myself to her.

But the old woman said to me, “Thou hast time and to spare: so thou wouldst do well to go to the Hammam and have thy hair shaven off (especially after thy ailment), so as not to show traces of sickness.” “This were the best way,” answered I, “I have just now bathed in hot water, but I will have my head shaved.” Then I said to my page, “Go to the bazaar and bring me a barber, a discreet fellow and one not inclined to meddling or impertinent curiosity or likely to split my head with his excessive talk.”[609] The boy went out at once and brought back with him this wretched old man, this Shaykh of ill omen. When he came in he saluted me and I returned his salutation; then quoth he, “Of a truth I see thee thin of body;” and quoth I, “I have been ailing.” He continued, “Allah drive far away from thee thy woe and thy sorrow and thy trouble and thy distress.” “Allah grant thy prayer!” said I. He pursued, “All gladness to thee, O my master, for indeed recovery is come to thee. Dost thou wish to be polled or to be blooded? Indeed it was a tradition of Ibn Abbas[610] (Allah accept of him!) that the Apostle said, ‘Whoso cutteth his hair on a Friday, the Lord shall avert from him threescore and ten calamities;’ and again is related of him also that he said, ‘Cupping on a Friday keepeth from loss of sight and a host of diseases.’” “Leave this talk,” I cried; “come, shave me my head at once for I can’t stand it.” So he rose and put forth his hand in most leisurely way and took out a kerchief and unfolded it, and lo! it contained an astrolabe[611] with seven parallel plates mounted in silver. Then he went to the middle of the court and raised head and instrument towards the sun’s rays and looked for a long while. When this was over, he came back and said to me, “Know that there have elapsed of this our day, which be Friday, and this Friday be the tenth of the month Safar in the six hundred and fifty- third year since the Hegira or Flight of the Apostle (on whom be the bestest of blessings and peace!) and the seven thousand three hundred and twentieth year of the era of Alexander, eight degrees and six minutes. Furthermore the ascendant of this our day is, according to the exactest science of computation, the planet Mars; and it so happeneth that Mercury is in conjunction with him, denoting an auspicious moment for hair cutting; and this also maketh manifest to me that thou desires union with a certain person and that your intercourse will not be propitious. But after this there occurreth a sign respecting a matter which will befall thee and whereof I will not speak." "O thou," cried I, "by Allah, thou weariest me and scatterest my wits and thy forecast is other than good; I sent for thee to poll my head and naught else: so up and shave me and prolong not thy speech." "By Allah," replied he, "if thou but knew what is about to befall thee, thou wouldst do nothing this day, and I counsel thee to act as I tell thee by computation of the constellations." "By Allah," said I, "never did I see a barber who excelled in judicial astrology save thyself: but I think and I know that thou art most prodigal of frivolous talk. I sent for thee only to shave my head, but thou comest and pesterest me with this sorry prattle." "What more wouldst thou have?" replied he. "Allah hath bounteously bestowed on thee a Barber who is an astrologer, one learned in alchemy and white magic;[612] syntax, grammar, and lexicology; the arts of logic, rhetoric and elocution; mathematics, arithmetic and algebra; astronomy, astromancy and geometry; theology, the Traditions of the Apostle and the Commentaries on the Koran. Furthermore, I have read books galore and digested them and have had experience of affairs and comprehended them. In short I have learned the theorick and the practick of all the arts and sciences; I know everything of them by rote and I am a past master in tota re scibili. Thy father loved me for my lack of officiousness, argal, to serve thee is a religious duty incumbent on me. I am no busy body as thou seemest to suppose, and on this account I am known as The Silent Man, also, The Modest Man. Wherefore it behoveth thee to render thanks to Allah Almighty and not cross me, for I am a true counsellor to thee and benevolently minded towards thee. Would that I were in thy service a whole year that thou mightest do me justice; and I would ask thee no wage for all this." When I heard his flow of words, I said to him, "Doubtless thou wilt be my death this day!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Thirtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young man said to the Barber, "Thou certainly will be the death of me this very day!" "O master mine," replied he, "I am he, The Silent Man hight, by reason of the fewness of my words, to distinguish me from my six brothers. For the eldest is called Al-Bakbúk, the prattler; the second Al-Haddár, the babbler; the third Al-Fakík, the gabbler; the fourth, his name is Al-Kuz al-aswáni, the long necked Gugglet, from his eternal chattering; the fifth is Al- Nashshár, the tattler and tale teller; the sixth Shakáshik, or many clamours; and the seventh is famous as Al-Sámit, The Silent Man, and this is my noble self!” Whilst he redoubled his talk, I thought my gall bladder would have burst; so I said to the servant, “Give him a quarter dinar and dismiss him and let him go from me in the name of God who made him. I won’t have my head shaved to day.” “What words be these, O my lord?” cried he. “By Allah! I will accept no hire of thee till I have served thee and have ministered to thy wants; and I care not if I never take money of thee. If thou know not my quality, I know thine; and I owe thy father, an honest man, on whom Allah Almighty have mercy! many a kindness, for he was a liberal soul and a generous. By Allah, he sent for me one day, as it were this blessed day, and I went in to him and found a party of his intimates about him. Quoth he to me, ‘Let me blood;’ so I pulled out my astrolabe and, taking the sun’s altitude for him, I ascertained that the ascendant was inauspicious and the hour unfavourable for brooding. I told him of this, and he did according to my bidding and awaited a better opportunity. So I made these lines in honour of him: —

I went to my patron some blood to let him, * But found that the
moment was far from good:
So I sat and I talked of all strangenesses, * And with jests and
jokes his good will I wooed:
They pleased him and cried he, ‘O man of wit, * Thou hast proved
thee perfect in merry mood!’
Quoth I, ‘O thou Lord of men, save thou * Lend me art and
wisdom I’m fou and wood
In thee gather grace, boon, bounty, suavity, * And I guerdon the
world with lore, science and gravity.’

Thy father was delighted and cried out to the servant, ‘Give him an hundred and three gold pieces with a robe of honour!’ The man obeyed his orders, and I awaited an auspicious moment, when I blooded him; and he did not baulk me; nay he thanked me and I was also thanked and praised by all present. When the blood-letting was over I had no power to keep silence and asked him, ‘By Allah, O my lord, what made thee say to the servant, Give him an hundred and three dinars?’; and he answered, ‘One dinar was for the astrological observation, another for thy pleasant conversation, the third for the phlebotomisation, and the remaining hundred and the dress were for thy verses in my commendation.’” “May Allah show small mercy to my father,” exclaimed I, “for knowing the like of thee.” He laughed and ejaculated, “There is no god but the God and Mohammed is the Apostle of God! Glory to Him that changeth and is changed not! I took thee for a man of sense, but I see thou babblest and dotest for illness. Allah hath said in the Blessed Book,[613] ‘Paradise is prepared for the goodly who bridle their anger and forgive men.’ and so forth; and in any case thou art excused. Yet I cannot conceive the cause of thy hurry and flurry; and thou must know that thy father and thy grandfather did nothing without consulting me, and indeed it hath been said truly enough, ‘Let the adviser be prized’; and, ‘There is no vice in advice’; and it is also said in certain saws, ‘Whoso hath no counsellor elder than he, will never himself an elder be’;[614] and the poet says: —

Whatever needful thing thou undertake, * Consult th’ experienced and contraire him not!

And indeed thou shalt never find a man better versed in affairs than I, and I am here standing on my feet to serve thee. I am not vexed with thee: why shouldest thou be vexed with me? But whatever happen I will bear patiently with thee in memory of the much kindness thy father shewed me.” “By Allah,” cried I, “O thou with tongue long as the tail of a jackass, thou persistest in pestering me with thy prate and thou becomest more longsome in thy long speeches, when all I want of thee is to shave my head and wend thy way!” Then he lathered my head saying, “I perceive thou art vexed with me, but I will not take it ill of thee, for thy wit is weak and thou art but a laddy: it was only yesterday I used to take thee on my shoulder[615] and carry thee to school.’ “O my brother,” said I, “for Allah’s sake do what I want and go thy gait!” And I rent my garments.[616] When he saw me do this he took the razor and fell to sharpening it and gave not over stropping it until my senses were well nigh leaving me. Then he came up to me and shaved part of my head; then he held his hand and then he said, "O my lord, haste is Satan's gait whilst patience is of Allah the Compassionate. But thou, O my master, I ken thou knowest not my rank; for verily this hand alighteth upon the heads of Kings and Emirs and Wazirs, and sages and doctors learned in the law, and the poet said of one like me: —

All crafts are like necklaces strung on a string, * But this
Barber's the union pear of the band:
High over all craftsmen he ranketh, and why? * The heads of the
Kings are under his hand!"[617]

Then said I, "Do leave off talking about what concerneth thee not: indeed thou hast straitened my breast and distracted my mind." Quoth he, "Meseems thou art a hasty man;" and quoth I, "Yes ! yes! yes!" and he, "I rede thee practice restraint of self, for haste is Satan's pelf which bequeatheth only repentance and ban and bane, and He (upon whom be blessings and peace!) hath said, 'The best of works is that wherein deliberation lurks;' but I, by Allah! have some doubt about thine affair; and so I should like thee to let me know what it is thou art in such haste to do, for I fear me it is other than good." Then he continued, "It wanteth three hours yet to prayer time; but I do not wish to be in doubt upon this matter; nay, I must know the moment exactly, for truly, 'A guess shot in times of doubt, oft brings harm about;' especially in the like of me, a superior person whose merits are famous amongst mankind at large; and it doth not befit me to talk at random, as do the common sort of astrologers." So saying, he threw down the razor and taking up the astrolabe, went forth under the sun and stood there a long time; after which he returned and counting on his fingers said to me, "There remain still to prayer time three full hours and complete, neither more nor yet less, according to the most learned astronomicals and the wisest makers of almanacks." "Allah upon thee," cried I, "hold thy tongue with me, for thou breakest my liver in pieces." So he took the razor and, after sharpening it as before and shaving other two hairs of my head, he again held his hand and said, "I am concerned about thy hastiness and indeed thou wouldst do well to let me into the cause of it; ‘t were the better for thee, as thou knowest that neither thy father nor thy grandfather ever did a single thing save by my advice.” When I saw that there was no escape from him I said to myself, “The time for prayer draws near and I wish to go to her before the folk come out of the mosque. If I am delayed much longer, I know not how to come at her.” Then said I aloud, “Be quick and stint this talk and impertinence, for I have to go to a party at the house of some of my intimates.” When he heard me speak of the party, he said, “This thy day is a blessed day for me! In very sooth it was but yesterday I invited a company of my friends and I have forgotten to provide anything for them to eat. This very moment I was thinking of it: Alas, how I shall be disgraced in their eyes!” “Be not distressed about this matter,” answered I; “have I not told thee that I am bidden to an entertainment this day? So every thing in my house, eatable and drinkable, shall be thine, if thou wilt only get through thy work and make haste to shave my head.” He replied, “Allah requite thee with good! Specify to me what is in thy house for my guests that I may be ware of it.” Quoth I, “Five dishes of meat and ten chickens with reddened breasts[618] and a roasted lamb.” “Set them before me,” quoth he “that I may see them.” So I told my people to buy, borrow or steal them and bring them in anywise, And had all this set before him. When he saw it he cried, “The wine is wanting,” and I replied, “I have a flagon or two of good old grape- juice in the house,” and he said, “Have it brought out!” So I sent for it and he exclaimed, “Allah bless thee for a generous disposition! But there are still the essences and perfumes.” So I bade them set before him a box containing Nadd,[619] the best of compound perfumes, together with fine lign-aloes, ambergris and musk unmixed, the whole worth fifty dinars. Now the time waxed strait and my heart straitened with it; so I said to him, “Take it all and finish shaving my head by the life of Mohammed (whom Allah bless and keep!).” “By Allah,” said he, “I will not take it till I see all that is in it.” So I bade the page open the box and the Barber laid down the astrolabe, leaving the greater part of my head unpolled; and, sitting on the ground, turned over the scents and incense and aloes wood and essences till I was well nigh distraught. Then he took the razor and coming up to me shaved off some few hairs and repeated these lines: —

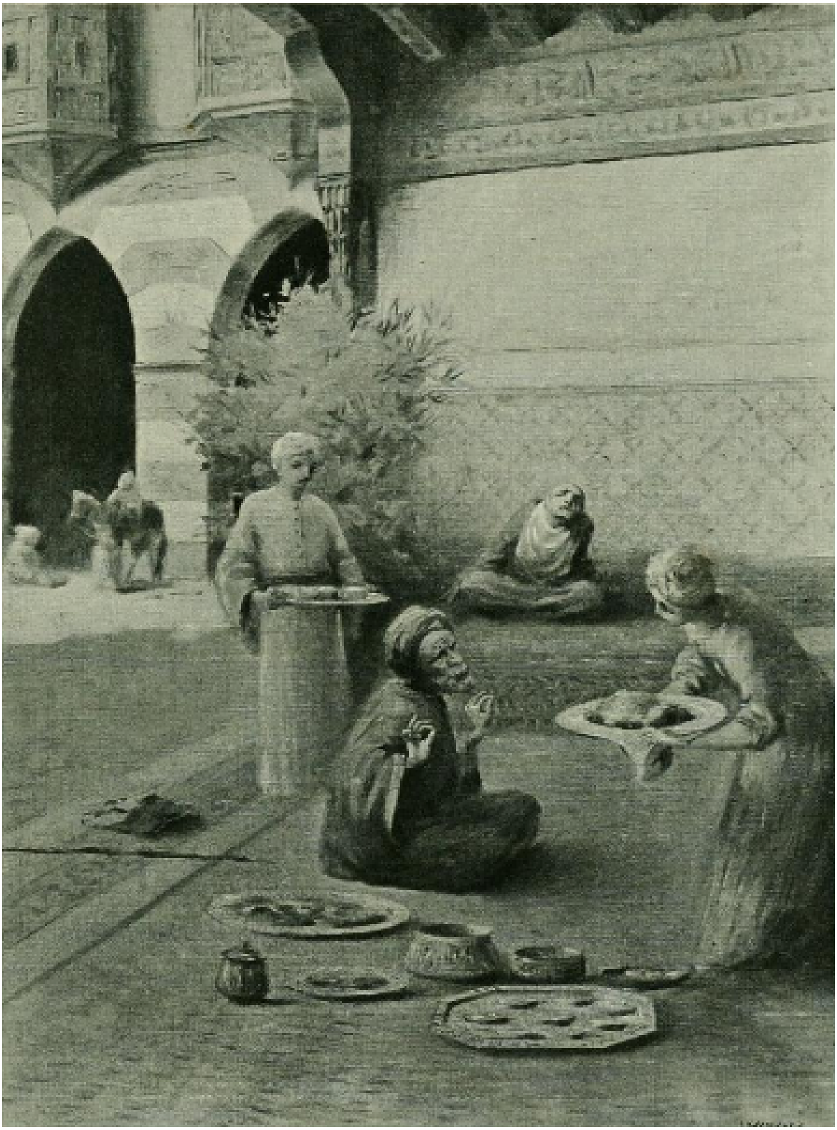

"The boy like his father shall surely show, * As the tree from its parent root shall grow."[620]

Then said he, "By Allah, O my son, I know not whether to thank thee or thy father; for my entertainment this day is all due to thy bounty and beneficence; and, although none of my company be worthy of it, yet I have a set of honourable men, to wit Zantut the bath-keeper and Sali'a the corn-chandler; and Silat the bean- seller;

and Akrashah the greengrocer; and Humayd the scavenger; and Sa'id the camel-man; and Suwayd the porter; and Abu Makarish the bathman;[621] and Kasim the watchman; and Karim the groom. There is not among the whole of them a bore or a bully in his cups; nor a meddler nor a miser of his money, and each and every hath some dance which he danceth and some of his own couplets which he caroleth; and the best of them is that, like thy servant, thy slave here, they know not what much talking is nor what forwardness means. The bath keeper sings to the tom- tom[622] a song which enchants; and he stands up and dances and chants,

'I am going, O mammy, to fill up my pot.'

As for the corn-chandler he brings more skill to it than any; he dances and sings,

'O Keener,[623] 0 sweetheart, thou fallest not short'

and he leaves no one's vitals sound for laughing at him. But the scavenger sings so that the birds stop to listen to him and dances and sings,

'News my wife wots is not locked in a box!'[624]

And he hath privilege, for 'tis a shrewd rogue[625] and a witty; and speaking of his excellence I am wont to say,

My life for the scavenger! right well I love him, * Like a waving
bough he is sweet to my sight:
Fate joined us one night, when to him quoth I * (The while I grew
weak and love gained more might)
'Thy love burns my heart!' 'And no wonder,' quoth he * 'When the
drawer of dung turns a stoker wight.'[626]

And indeed each is perfect in whatso can charm the wit with joy and jollity;" adding presently, "But hearing is not seeing; and indeed if thou make up thy mind to join us and put off going to thy friends, 'twill be better for us and for thee. The traces of illness are yet upon thee and haply thou art going among folk who be mighty talkers, men who commune together of what concerneth them not; or there may be amongst them some forward fellow who will split thy head, and thou half thy size from sickness." "This shall be for some other day," answered I, and laughed with heart angered: "finish thy work and go, in Allah Almighty's guard, to thy friends, for they will be expecting thy coming." "O my lord," replied he, "I seek only to introduce thee to these fellows of infinite mirth, the sons of men of worth, amongst whom there is neither procacity nor dicacity nor loquacity; for never, since I grew to years of discretion, could I endure to consort with one who asketh questions concerning what concerneth him not, nor have I ever frequented any save those who are, like myself, men of few words. In sooth if thou were to company with them or even to see them once, thou wouldst forsake all thy intimates." "Allah fulfil thy joyance with them," said I, "needs must I come amongst them some day or other." But he said, "Would it were this very day, for I had set my heart upon thy making one of us; yet if thou must go to thy friends to day, I will take these good things, wherewith thou hast honoured and favoured me, to my guests and leave them to eat and drink and not wait for me; whilst I will return to thee in haste and accompany thee to thy little party; for there is no ceremony between me and my intimates to prevent my leaving them. Fear not, I will soon be back with thee and wend with thee whithersoever thou wendest. There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" I shouted, "Go thou to thy friends and make merry with them; and do let me go to mine and be with them this day, for they expect me." But the Barber cried, "I will not let thee go alone;" and I replied, "The truth is none can enter where I am going save myself." He rejoined, "I suspect that to day thou art for an assignation with some woman, else thou hadst taken me with thee; yet am I the right man to take, one who could aid thee to the end thou wishest. But I fear me thou art running after strange women and thou wilt lose thy life; for in this our city of Baghdad one cannot do any thing in this line, especially on a day like Friday: our Governor is an angry man and a mighty sharp blade." "Shame on thee, thou wicked, bad, old man!" cried I, "Be off! what words are these thou givest me?" "O cold of wit,"[627] cried he, "thou sayest to me what is not true and thou hidest thy mind from me, but I know the whole business for certain and I seek only to help thee this day with my best endeavour." I was fearful lest my people or my neighbours should hear the Barber's talk, so I kept silence for a long time whilst he finished shaving my head; by which time the hour of prayer was come and the Khutbah, or sermon, was about to follow. When he had done, I said to him, “Go to thy friends with their meat and drink, and I will await thy return. Then we will fare together.” In this way I hoped to pour oil on troubled waters and to trick the accursed loon, so haply I might get quit of him; but he said, “Thou art cozening me and thou wouldst go alone to thy appointment and cast thyself into jeopardy, whence there will be no escape for thee. Now by Allah! and again by Allah! do not go till I return, that I may accompany thee and watch the issue of thine affair.” “So be it,” I replied, “do not be long absent.” Then he took all the meat and drink I had given him and the rest of it and went out of my house; but the accursed carle gave it in charge of a porter to carry to his home but hid himself in one of the alleys. As for me I rose on the instant, for the Muezzins had already called the Salam of Friday, the salute to the Apostle;[628] and I dressed in haste and went out alone and, hurrying to the street, took my stand by the house wherein I had seen the young lady. I found the old woman on guard at the door awaiting me, and went up with her to the upper story, the damsel’s apartment. Hardly had I reached it when behold, the master of the house returned from prayers and entering the great saloon, closed the door. I looked down from the window and saw this Barber (Allah’s curse upon him!) sitting over against the door and said, “How did this devil find me out?” At this very moment, as Allah had decreed it for rending my veil of secrecy, it so happened that a handmaid of the house master committed some offence for which he beat her. She shrieked out and his slave ran in to intercede for her, whereupon the Kazi beat him to boot, and he also roared out. The damned Barber fancied that it was I who was being beaten; so he also fell to shouting and tore his garments and scattered dust on his head and kept on shrieking and crying “Help ! Help !” So the people came round about him and he went on yelling, “My master is being murdered in the Kazi’s house!” Then he ran clamouring to my place with the folk after him, and told my people and servants and slaves; and, before I knew what was doing, up they came tearing their clothes and letting loose their hair[629] and shouting, “Alas, our master!”; and this Barber leading the rout with his clothes rent and in sorriest plight; and he also shouting like a madman and saying, “Alas for our murdered master!” And they all made an assault upon the house in which I was. The Kazi, hearing the yells and the uproar at his door, said to one of his servants, “See what is the matter”; and the man went forth and returned and said, “O my master, at the gate there are more than ten thousand souls what with men and women, and all crying out, ‘Alas for our murdered master!’; and they keep pointing to our house.” When the Kazi heard this, the matter seemed serious and he waxed wroth; so he rose and opening the door saw a great crowd of people; whereat he was astounded and said, “O folk! what is there to do?” “O accursed! O dog! O hog!” my servants replied; “’Tis thou who hast killed our master!” Quoth he, “O good folk, and what hath your master done to me that I should kill him?” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Thirty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Kazi said to the servants, “What hath your master done to me that I should kill him? This is my house and it is open to you all.” Then quoth the Barber, “Thou didst beat him and I heard him cry out;” and quoth the Kazi, “But what was he doing that I should beat him, and what brought him in to my house; and whence came he and whither went he?” “Be not a wicked, perverse old man!” cried the Barber, “for I know the whole story; and the long and short of it is that thy daughter is in love with him and he loves her; and when thou knewest that he had entered the house, thou badest thy servants beat him and they did so: by Allah, none shall judge between us and thee but the Caliph; or else do thou bring out our master that his folk may take him, before they go in and save him perforce from thy house, and thou be put to shame.” Then said the Kazi (and his tongue was bridled and his mouth was stopped by confusion before the people), “An thou say sooth, do thou come in and fetch him out.” Whereupon the Barber pushed forward and entered the house. When I saw this I looked about for a means of escape and flight, but saw no hiding place except a great chest in the upper chamber where I was. So I got into it and pulled the lid down upon myself and held my breath. The Barber was hardly in the room before he began to look about for me, then turned him right and left and came straight to the place where I was, and stepped up to the chest and, lifting it on his head, made off as fast as he could. At this, my reason forsook me, for I knew that he would not let me be; so I took courage and opening the chest threw myself to the ground. My leg was broken in the fall, and the door being open I saw a great concourse of people looking in. Now I carried in my sleeve much gold and some silver, which I had provided for an ill day like this and the like of such occasion; so I kept scattering it amongst the folk to divert their attention from me and, whilst they were busy scrambling for it, I set off, hopping as fast as I could, through the by streets of Baghdad, shifting and turning right and left. But whithersoever I went this damned Barber would go in after me, crying aloud, "They would have bereft me of my master! They would have slain him who was a benefactor to me and my family and my friends! Praised be Allah who made me prevail against them and delivered my lord from their hands!" Then to me, "Where wilt thou go now? Thou wouldst persist in following thine own evil devices, till thou broughtest thyself to this ill pass; and, had not Allah vouchsafed me to thee, ne'er hadst thou escaped this strait into which thou hast fallen, for they would have cast thee into a calamity whence thou never couldest have won free. But I will not call thee to account for thine ignorance, as thou art so little of wit and inconsequential and addicted to hastiness!" Said I to him, "Doth not what thou hast brought upon me suffice thee, but thou must run after me and talk me such talk in the bazaar streets?" And I well nigh gave up the ghost for excess of rage against him. Then I took refuge in the shop of a weaver amiddlemost of the market and sought protection of the owner who drove the Barber away; and, sitting in the back room,[630] I said to myself, "If I return home I shall never be able to get rid of this curse of a Barber, who will be with me night and day; and I cannot endure the sight of him even for a breathing space." So I sent out at once for witnesses and made a will, dividing the greater part of my property among my people, and appointed a guardian over them, to whom I committed the charge of great and small, directing him to sell my houses and domains. Then I set out on my travels that I might be free of this pimp;[631] and I came to settle in your town where I have lived some time. When you invited me and I came hither, the first thing I saw was this accursed pander seated in the place of honour. How then can my heart be glad and my stay be pleasant in company with this fellow who brought all this upon me, and who was the cause of the breaking of my leg and of my exile from home and native land. And the youth refused to sit down and went away. When we heard his story (continued the Tailor) we were amazed beyond measure and amused and said to the Barber, “By Allah, is it true what this young man saith of thee?” “By Allah,” replied he, “I dealt thus by him of my courtesy and sound sense and generosity. Had it not been for me he had perished and none but I was the cause of his escape. Well it was for him that he suffered in his leg and not in his life! Had I been a man of many words, a meddler, a busy body, I had not acted thus kindly by him; but now I will tell you a tale which befell me, that you may be well assured I am a man sparing of speech in whom is no forwardness and a very different person from those six Brothers of mine; and this it is.”

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The Barber's Tale of Himself.

I was living in Baghdad during the times of Al-Mustansir bi'llah,[632] Son of Al-Mustazi bi'llah the then Caliph, a prince who loved the poor and needy and companied with the learned and pious. One day it happened to him that he was wroth with ten persons, highwaymen who robbed on the Caliph's highway, and he ordered the Prefect of Baghdad to bring them into the presence on the anniversary of the Great Festival.[633] So the Prefect sallied out and, making them His prisoners, embarked with them in a boat. I caught sight of them as they were embarking and said to myself, "These are surely assembled for a marriage feast; methinks they are spending their day in that boat eating and drinking, and none shall be companion of their cups but I myself." So I rose, O fair assembly; and, of the excess of my courtesy and the gravity of my understanding, I embarked with them and entered into conversation with them. They rowed across to the opposite bank, where they landed and there came up the watch and guardians of the peace with chains, which they put round the robbers' necks. They chained me among the rest of them; and, O people, is it not a proof of my courtesy and spareness of speech, that I held my peace and did not please to speak? Then they took us away in bilbos and next morning carried us all before Al-Mustansir bi'llah, Commander of the Faithful, who bade smite the necks of the ten robbers. So the Sworder came forward after they were seated on the leather of blood;[634] then drawing his blade, struck off one head after another until he had smitten the neck of the tenth; and I alone remained. The Caliph looked at me and asked the Heads man, saying, "What ails thee that thou hast struck off only nine heads?"; and he answered, "Allah forbid that I should behead only nine, when thou biddest me behead ten!" Quoth the Caliph, "Meseems thou hast smitten the necks of only nine, and this man before thee is the tenth." "By thy beneficence!" replied the Headsman, "I have beheaded ten." "Count them!" cried the Caliph and whenas they counted heads, lo! there were ten. The Caliph looked at me and said, "What made thee keep silence at a time like this and how camest thou to company with these men of blood? Tell me the cause of all this, for albeit thou art a very old man, assuredly thy wits are weak.” Now when I heard these words from the Caliph I sprang to my feet and replied, “Know, O Prince of the Faithful, that I am the Silent Shaykh and am thus called to distinguish me from my six brothers. I am a man of immense learning whilst, as for the gravity of my understanding, the wiliness of my wits and the spareness of my speech, there is no end of them; and my calling is that of a barber. I went out early on yesterday morning and saw these men making for a skiff; and, fancying they were bound for a marriage feast, I joined them and mixed with them. After a while up came the watch and guardians of the peace, who put chains round their necks and round mine with the rest; but, in the excess of my courtesy, I held my peace and spake not a word; nor was this other but generosity on my part. They brought us into thy presence, and thou gavest an order to smite the necks of the ten; yet did I not make myself known to thee and remained silent before the Sworder, purely of my great generosity and courtesy which led me to share with them in their death. But all my life long have I dealt thus nobly with mankind, and they requite me the foulest and evillest requital!” When the Caliph heard my words and knew that I was a man of exceeding generosity and of very few words, one in whom is no forwardness (as this youth would have it whom I rescued from mortal risk and who hath so scurvily repaid me), he laughed with excessive laughter till he fell upon his back. Then said he to me, “O Silent Man, do thy six brothers favour thee in wisdom and knowledge and spareness of speech?” I replied, “Never were they like me! Thou puttest reproach upon me, O Commander of the Faithful, and it becomes thee not to even my brothers with me; for, of the abundance of their speech and their deficiency of courtesy and gravity, each one of them hath gotten some maim or other. One is a monocular, another palsied, a third stone blind, a fourth cropped of ears and nose and a fifth shorn of both lips, while the sixth is a hunchback and a cripple. And conceive not, O Commander of the Faithful, that I am prodigal of speech; but I must perforce explain to thee that I am a man of greater worth and fewer words than any of them. From each one of my brothers hangs a tale of how he came by his bodily defect and these I will relate to thee.” So the Caliph gave ear to

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The Barber's Tale of his First Brother.

Know then, O Commander of the Faithful, that my first brother, Al Bakbuk, the Prattler, is a Hunchback who took to tailoring in Baghdad, and he used to sew in a shop hired from a man of much wealth, who dwelt over the shop,[635] and there was also a flour-mill in the basement. One day as my brother, the Hunchback, was sitting in his shop a tailoring, he chanced to raise his head and saw a lady like the rising full moon at a balconied window of his landlord's house, engaged in looking out at the passers by.[636] When my brother beheld her, his heart was taken with love of her and he passed his whole day gazing at her and neglected his tailoring till eventide. Next morning he opened his shop and sat him down to sew; but, as often as he stitched a stitch, he looked to the window and saw her as before; and his passion and infatuation for her increased. On the third day as he was sitting in his usual place gazing on her, she caught sight of him and, perceiving that he had been captivated with love of her, laughed in his face[637] and he smiled back at her. Then she disappeared and presently sent her slave girl to him with a bundle containing a piece of red cowered silk. The handmaid accosted him and said, "My lady salameth to thee and desireth thee, of thy skill and good will, to fashion for her a shift of this piece and to sew it handsomely with thy best sewing. He replied, "Hearkening and obedience"; and shaped for her a chemise and finished sewing it the same day. When the morning morrowed the girl came back and said to him, "My lady salameth to thee and asks how thou hast passed yesternight; for she hath not tasted sleep by reason of her heart being taken up with thee. Then she laid before him a piece of yellow satin and said, My lady biddeth thee cut her two pair of petticoat trousers out of this piece and sew them this very day." "Hearkening and obedience!' replied he, "greet her for me with many greetings and say to her, Thy slave is obedient to thine order; so command him as thou wilt." Then he applied himself to cutting out and worked hard at sewing the trousers; and after an hour the lady appeared at the lattice and saluted him by signs, now casting down her eyes, then smiling in his face, and he began to assure himself that he would soon make a conquest.

She did not let him stir till he had finished the two pair of trousers, when she with drew and sent the handmaid to whom he delivered them; and she took them and went her ways. When it was night, he threw himself on his carpet bed, and lay tossing about from side to side till morning, when he rose and sat down in his place. Presently the damsel came to him and said, "My master calleth for thee." Hearing these words he feared with exceeding fear; but the slave girl, seeing his affright, said to him, "No evil is meant to thee: naught but good awaiteth thee. My lady would have thee make acquaintance with my lord." So my brother the tailor, rejoicing with great joy, went with her; and when he came into the presence of his landlord, the lady's husband, he kissed the ground before him, and the master of the house returned his greeting and gave him a great piece of linen saying, "Shape me shirts out of this stuff and sew them well;" and my brother answered, "To hear is to obey." Thereupon he fell to work at once, snipping, shaping and sewing till he had finished twenty shirts by supper time, without stopping to taste food. The house master asked him, "How much the wage for this?"; and he answered, "Twenty dirhams." So the gentleman cried out to the slave girl, "Bring me twenty dirhams," and my brother spake not a word; but the lady signed, "Take nothing from him;' whereupon my brother said, "By Allah I will take naught from thy hand. And he carried off his tailor's gear and returned to his shop, although he was destitute even to a red cent.[638] Then he applied himself to do their work; eating, in his zeal and diligence, but a bit of bread and drinking only a little water for three days. At the end of this time came the handmaid and said to him, "What hast thou done?" Quoth he, "They are finished," and carried the shirts to the lady's husband, who would have paid him his hire: but he said, "I will take nothing," for fear of her and, returning to his shop, passed the night without sleep because of his hunger. Now the dame had informed her husband how the case stood (my brother knowing naught of this); and the two had agreed to make him tailor for nothing, the better to mock and laugh at him. Next morning he went to his shop, and, as he sat there, the handmaid came to him and said, "Speak with my master." So he accompanied her to the husband who said to him, "I wish thee to cut out for me five long sleeved robes."[639] So he cut them out[640] and took the stuff and went away. Then he sewed them and carried them to the gentleman, who praised his sewing and offered him a purse of silver. He put out his hand to take it, but the lady signed to him from behind her husband not to do so, and he replied, "O my lord, there is no hurry, we have time enough for this." Then he went forth from the house meaner and meeker than a donkey, for verily five things were gathered together in him viz.: love, beggary, hunger, nakedness and hard labour. Nevertheless he heartened himself with the hope of gaining the lady's favours. When he had made an end of all their jobs, they played him another trick and married him to their slave girl; but, on the night when he thought to go in to her, they said to him, "Lie this night in the mill; and to morrow all will go well." My brother concluded that there was some good cause for this and nighted alone in the mill. Now the husband had set on the miller to make the tailor turn the mill: so when night was half spent the man came in to him and began to say, "This bull of ours hath be come useless and standeth still instead of going round: he will not turn the mill this night, and yet we have great store of corn to be ground. However, I'll yoke him perforce and make him finish grinding it before morning, as the folk are impatient for their flour." So he filled the hoppers with grain and, going up to my brother with a rope in his hand, tied it round his neck and said to him, "Gee up! Round with the mill! thou, O bull, wouldst do nothing but grub and stale and dung!" Then he took a whip and laid it on the shoulders and calves of my brother, who began to howl and bellow; but none came to help him; and he was forced to grind the wheat till hard upon dawn, when the house master came in and, seeing my brother still tethered to the yoke and the man flogging him, went away. At day break the miller returned home and left him still yoked and half dead; and soon after in came the slave girl who unbound him, and said to him, "I and my lady are right sorry for what hath happened and we have borne thy grief with thee." But he had no tongue wherewith to answer her from excess of beating and mill turning. Then he retired to his lodging and behold, the clerk who had drawn up the marriage deed came to him[641] and saluted him, saying, "Allah give thee long life! May thy espousal be blessed! This face telleth of pleasant doings and dalliance and kissing and clipping from dusk to dawn." "Allah grant the liar no peace, O thou thousandfold cuckold!", my brother replied, "by Allah, I did nothing but turn the mill in the place of the bull all night till morning!" "Tell me thy tale," quoth he; and my brother recounted what had befallen him and he said, "Thy star agrees not with her star; but an thou wilt I can alter the contract for thee," adding, "'Ware lest another cheat be not in store for thee." And my brother answered him, "See if thou have not another contrivance." Then the clerk left him and he sat in his shop, looking for some one to bring him a job whereby he might earn his day's bread. Presently the handmaid came to him and said, "Speak with my lady." "Begone, O my good girl," replied he, "there shall be no more dealings between me and thy lady." The handmaid returned to her mistress and told her what my brother had said and presently she put her head out of the window, weeping and saying, "Why, O my beloved, are there to be no more dealings 'twixt me and thee?" But he made her no answer. Then she wept and conjured him, swearing that all which had befallen him in the mill was not sanctioned by her and that she was innocent of the whole matter. When he looked upon her beauty and loveliness and heard the sweetness of her speech, the sorrow which had possessed him passed from his heart; he accepted her excuse and he rejoiced in her sight. So he saluted her and talked with her and sat tailoring awhile, after which the handmaid came to him and said, "My mistress greeteth thee and informeth thee that her husband purposeth to lie abroad this night in the house of some intimate friends of his; so, when he is gone, do thou come to us and spend the night with my lady in delightsomest joyance till the morning." Now her husband had asked her, "How shall we manage to turn him away from thee?"; and she answered, "Leave me to play him another trick and make him a laughing stock for all the town." But my brother knew naught of the malice of women. As soon as it was dusk, the slave girl came to him and carried him to the house, and when the lady saw him she said to him, "By Allah, O my lord, I have been longing exceedingly for thee." "By Allah," cried he, "kiss me quick before thou give me aught else."[642] Hardly had he spoken, when the lady's husband came in from the next room[643] and seized him, saying, "By Allah, I will not let thee go, till I deliver thee to the chief of the town watch." My brother humbled himself to him; but he would not listen to him and carried him before the Prefect who gave him an hundred lashes with a whip and, mounting him on a camel, promenaded him round about the city, whilst the guards proclaimed aloud, “This is his reward who violateth the Harims of honourable men!” Moreover, he fell off the camel and broke his leg and so became lame. Then the Prefect banished him from the city; and he went forth unknowing whither he should wend; but I heard of him and fearing for him went out after him and brought him back secretly to the city and restored him to health and took him into my house where he still liveth. The Caliph laughed at my story and said, “Thou hast done well, O Samit, O Silent Man, O spare of speech!”; and he bade me take a present and go away. But I said, “I will accept naught of thee except I tell thee what befell all my other brothers; and do not think me a man of many words.” So the Caliph gave ear to

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The Barber's Tale of his Second Brother.

Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that my second brother's name was Al-Haddar, that is the Babbler, and he was the paralytic. Now it happened to him one day, as he was going about his business, that an old woman accosted him and said, "Stop a little, my good man, that I may tell thee of somewhat which, if it be to thy liking, thou shalt do for me and I will pray Allah to give thee good of it!" My brother stopped and she went on, "I will put thee in the way of a certain thing, so thou not be prodigal of speech." "On with thy talk," quoth he; and she, "What sayest thou to handsome quarters and a fair garden with flowing waters, flowers blooming, and fruit growing, and old wine going and a pretty young face whose owner thou mayest embrace from dark till dawn? If thou do whatso I bid thee thou shalt see something greatly to thy advantage." "And is all this in the world?" asked my brother; and she answered, "Yes, and it shall be thine, so thou be reasonable and leave idle curiosity and many words, and do my bidding." "I will indeed, O my lady," said he, "how is it thou hast preferred me in this matter before all men and what is it that so much pleaseth thee in me?" Quoth she, "Did I not bid thee be spare of speech? Hold thy peace and follow me. Know, that the young lady, to whom I shall carry thee, loveth to have her own way and hateth being thwarted and all who gainsay; so, if thou humour her, thou shalt come to thy desire of her." And my brother said, "I will not cross her in anything." Then she went on and my brother followed her, an hungering after what she described to him till they entered a fine large house, handsome and choicely furnished, full of eunuchs and servants and showing signs of prosperity from top to bottom. And she was carrying him to the upper story when the people of the house said to him, "What dost thou here?" But the old woman answered them, "Hold your peace and trouble him not: he is a workman and we have occasion for him." Then she brought him into a fine great pavilion, with a garden in its midst, never eyes saw a fairer; and made him sit upon a handsome couch. He had not sat long, be fore he heard a loud noise and in came a troop of slave girls surrounding a lady like the moon on the night of its fullest. When he saw her, he rose up and made an obeisance to her, whereupon she welcomed him and bade him be seated. So he sat down and she said to him, "Allah advance thee to honour! Is all well with thee?" "O my lady," he answered, "all with me is right well." Then she bade bring in food, and they set before her delicate viands; so she sat down to eat, making a show of affection to my brother and jesting with him, though all the while she could not refrain from laughing; but as often as he looked at her, she signed towards her handmaidens as though she were laughing at them. My brother (the ass!) understood nothing; but, in the excess of his ridiculous passion, he fancied that the lady was in love with him and that she would soon grant him his desire. When they had done eating, they set on the wine and there came in ten maidens like moons, with lutes ready strung in their hands, and fell to singing with full voices, sweet and sad, whereupon delight gat hold upon him and he took the cup from the lady's hands and drank it standing. Then she drank a cup of wine and my brother (still standing) said to her "Health," and bowed to her. She handed him another cup and he drank it off, when she slapped him hard on the nape of his neck.[644] Upon this my brother would have gone out of the house in anger; but the old woman followed him and winked to him to return. So he came back and the lady bade him sit and he sat down without a word. Then she again slapped him on the nape of his neck; and the second slapping did not suffice her, she must needs make all her handmaidens also slap and cuff him, while he kept saying to the old woman, "I never saw aught nicer than this." She on her side ceased not exclaiming, "Enough, enough, I conjure thee, O my mistress!"; but the women slapped him till he well nigh swooned away. Presently my brother rose and went out to obey a call of nature, but the old woman overtook him, and said, "Be patient a little and thou shalt win to thy wish." "How much longer have I to wait," my brother replied, "this slapping hath made me feel faint." "As soon as she is warm with wine," answered she, "thou shalt have thy desire." So he returned to his place and sat down, where upon all the handmaidens stood up and the lady bade them perfume him with pastiles and besprinkle his face with rose- water. Then said she to him, "Allah advance thee to honour! Thou hast entered my house and hast borne with my conditions, for whoso thwarteth me I turn him away, and whoso is patient hath his desire." "O mistress mine," said he, "I am thy slave and in the hollow of thine hand!" "Know, then," continued she, "that Allah hath made me passionately fond of frolic; and whoso falleth in with my humour cometh by whatso he wisheth." Then she ordered her maidens to sing with loud voices till the whole company was delighted; after which she said to one of them, "Take thy lord, and do what is needful for him and bring him back to me forthright." So the damsel took my brother (and he not knowing what she would do with him); but the old woman overtook him and said, "Be patient; there remaineth but little to do." At this his face brightened and he stood up before the lady while the old woman kept saying, "Be patient; thou wilt now at once win to thy wish!"; till he said, "Tell me what she would have the maiden do with me?" "Nothing but good," replied she, "as I am thy sacrifice! She wisheth only to dye thy eyebrows and pluck out thy mustachios." Quoth he, "As for the dyeing of my eye brows, that will come off with washing,[645] but for the plucking out of my mustachios, that indeed is a somewhat painful process." "Be cautious how thou cross her," cried the old woman; "for she hath set her heart on thee." So my brother patiently suffered her to dye his eyebrows and pluck out his mustachios, after which the maiden returned to her mistress and told her. Quoth she "Remaineth now only one other thing to be done; thou must shave his beard and make him a smooth o' face."[646] So the maiden went back and told him what her mistress had bidden her do; and my brother (the blockhead!) said to her, "How shall I do what will disgrace me before the folk?" But the old woman said, "She would do on this wise only that thou mayst be as a beardless youth and that no hair be left on thy face to scratch and prick her delicate cheeks; for indeed she is passionately in love with thee. So be patient and thou shalt attain thine object." My brother was patient and did her bidding and let shave off his beard and, when he was brought back to the lady, lo! he appeared dyed red as to his eyebrows, plucked of both mustachios, shorn of his beard, rouged on both cheeks. At first she was affrighted at him; then she made mockery of him and, laughing till she fell upon her back, said, "O my lord, thou hast indeed won my heart by thy good nature!" Then she conjured him, by her life, to stand up and dance, and he arose, and capered about, and there was not a cushion in the house but she threw it at his head, and in like manner did all her women who also kept pelting him with oranges and lemons and citrons till he fell down senseless from the cuffing on the nape of the neck, the pillowing and the fruit pelting. “Now thou hast attained thy wish,” said the old woman when he came round; “there are no more blows in store for thee and there remaineth but one little thing to do. It is her wont, when she is in her cups, to let no one have her until she put off her dress and trousers and remain stark naked.[647] Then she will bid thee doff thy clothes and run; and she will run before thee as if she were flying from thee; and do thou follow her from place to place till thy prickle stands at fullest point, when she will yield to thee;”[648] adding, “Strip off thy clothes at once.” So he rose, well nigh lost in ecstasy and, doffing his raiment, showed himself mother naked. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Thirty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old woman said to the Barber’s second brother, “Doff thy clothes,” he rose, well nigh lost in ecstasy; and, stripping off his raiment, showed himself mother naked. Whereupon the lady stripped also and said to my brother, “If thou want anything run after me till thou catch me.” Then she set out at a run and he ran after her while she rushed into room after room and rushed out of room after room, my brother scampering after her in a rage of desire like a veritable madman, with yard standing terribly tall.

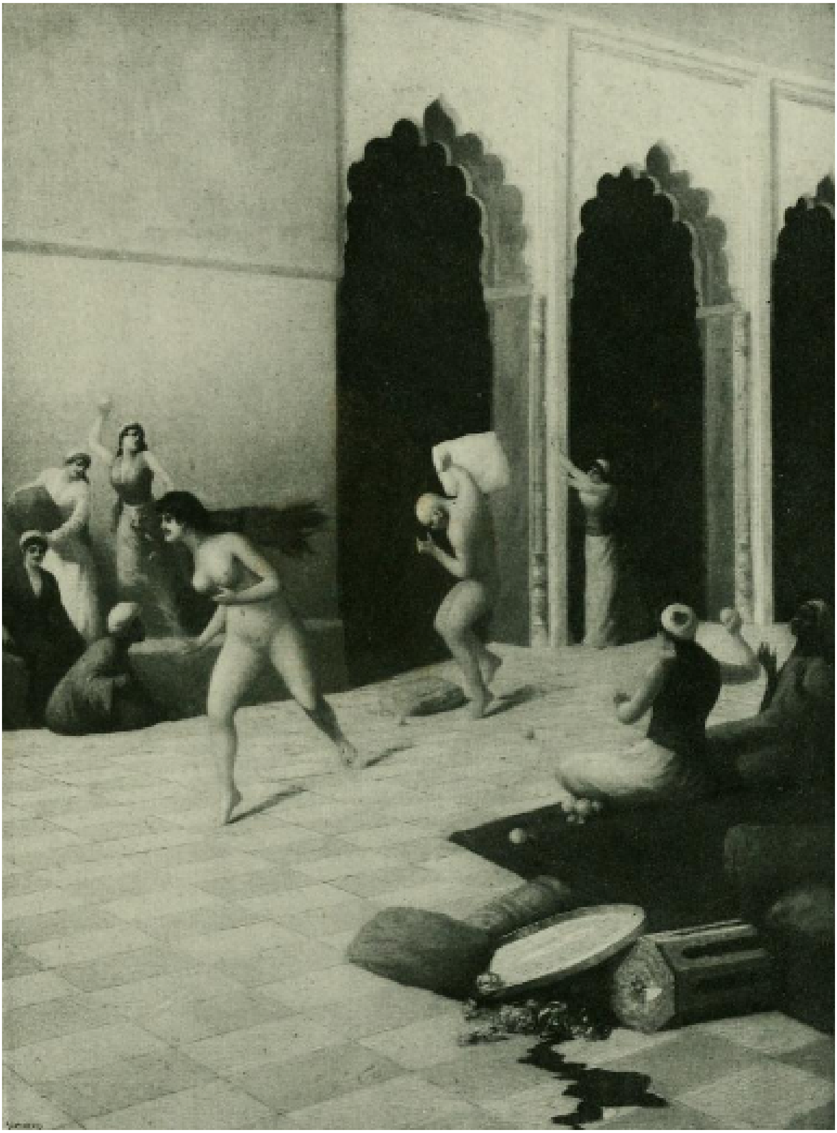

After much of this kind she dashed into a darkened place, and he dashed after her; but suddenly he trod upon a yielding spot, which gave way under his weight; and, before he was aware where he was, he found himself in the midst of a crowded market, part of the bazaar of the leather sellers who were crying the prices of skins and hides and buying and selling. When they saw him in his plight, naked, with standing yard, shorn of beard and mustachios, with eyebrows dyed red, and cheeks ruddied with rouge, they shouted and clapped their hands at him, and set to flogging him with skins upon his bare body till a swoon came over him. Then they threw him on the back of an ass and carried him to the Chief of Police. Quoth the Chief, “What is this?” Quoth they, “This fellow fell suddenly upon us out of the Wazir’s house[649] in this state.” So the Prefect gave him an hundred lashes and then banished him from Baghdad. However I went out after him and brought him back secretly into the city and made him a daily allowance for his living: although, were it not for my generous humour, I could not have put up with the like of him. Then the Caliph gave ear to

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The Barber’s Tale of his Third Brother.

My third brother’s name was Al-Fakík, the Gabbler, who was blind. One day Fate and Fortune drove him to a fine large house, and he knocked at the door, desiring speech of its owner that he might beg somewhat of him. Quoth the master of the house, “Who is at the door?” But my brother spake not a word and presently he heard him repeat with a loud voice, “Who is this?” Still he made no answer and immediately heard the master walk to the door and open it and say, “What dost thou want?” My brother answered “Something for Allah Almighty’s sake.”[650] “Art thou blind?” asked the man, and my brother answered “Yes.” Quoth the other, “Stretch me out thy hand.” So my brother put out his hand thinking that he would give him something; but he took it and, drawing him into the house, carried him up from stair to stair till they reached the terrace on the house top, my brother thinking the while that he would surely give him something of food or money. Then he asked my brother, “What dost thou want, O blind man?” and he answered, “Something for the Almighty’s sake.” “Allah open for thee some other door!” “O thou! why not say so when I was below stairs?” “O cadger, why not answer me when I first called to thee?” “And what meanest thou to do for me now?” “There is nothing in the house to give thee.” “Then take me down the stair.” “The path is before thee.” So my brother rose and made his way downstairs, till he came within twenty steps of the door, when his foot slipped and he rolled to the bottom and broke his head. Then he went out, unknowing whither to turn, and presently fell in with two other blind men, companions of his, who said to him, “What didst thou gain to day?” He told them what had befallen him and added, “O my brothers, I wish to take some of the money in my hands and provide myself with it.” Now the master of the house had followed him and was listening to what they said; but neither my brother nor his comrades knew of this. So my brother went to his lodging and sat down to await his companions, and the house owner entered after him without being perceived. When the other blind men arrived, my brother said to them, “Bolt the door and search the house lest any stranger have followed us.” The man, hearing this, caught hold of a cord that hung from the ceiling and clung to it, whilst they went round about the house and searched but found no one. So they came back, and, sitting beside my brother, brought out their money which they counted and lo! it was twelve thousand dirhams. Each took what he wanted and they buried the rest in a corner of the room. Then they set on food and sat down, to eat. Presently my brother, hearing a strange pair of jaws munching by his side,[651] said to his friends, “There is a stranger amongst us;” and, putting forth his hand, caught hold of that of the house master. Thereupon all fell on him and beat him;[652] and when tired of belabouring him they shouted, “O ye Moslems! a thief is come in to us, seeking to take our money!” A crowd gathered around them, whereupon the intruder hung on to them; and complained with them as they complained, and, shutting his eyes like them, so that none might doubt his blindness, cried out, “O Moslems, I take refuge with Allah and the Governor, for I have a matter to make known to him!” Suddenly up came the watch and, laying hands on the whole lot (my brother being amongst them), drove them[653] to the Governor’s who set them before him and asked, “What news with you?” Quoth the intruder, “Look and find out for thyself, not a word shall be wrung from us save by torture, so begin by beating me and after me beat this man our leader.”[654] And he pointed to my brother. So they threw the man at full length and gave him four hundred sticks on his backside. The beating pained him, whereupon he opened one eye and, as they redoubled their blows, he opened the other eye. When the Governor saw this he said to him, “What have we here, O accursed?”; whereto he replied, “Give me the seal-ring of pardon! We four have shammed blind, and we impose upon people that we may enter houses and look upon the unveiled faces of the women and contrive for their corruption. In this way we have gotten great gain and our store amounts to twelve thousand dirhams. Said I to my company, ‘Give me my share, three thousand;’ but they rose and beat me and took away my money, and I seek refuge with Allah and with thee; better thou have my share than they. So, if thou wouldst know the truth of my words, beat one and every of the others more than thou hast beaten me, and he will surely open his eyes.” The Governor gave orders for the question to begin with my brother, and they bound him to the whipping post,[655] and the Governor said, “O scum of the earth, do ye abuse the gracious gifts of Allah and make as if ye were blind!” “Allah! Allah!” cried my brother, “by Allah, there is none among us who can see.” Then they beat him till he swooned away and the Governor cried, “Leave him till he come to and then beat him again.” After this he caused each of the companions to receive more than three hundred sticks, whilst the sham Abraham kept saying to them “Open your eyes or you will be beaten afresh.” At last the man said to the Governor, “Dispatch some one with me to bring thee the money; for these fellows will not open their eyes, lest they incur disgrace before the folk.” So the Governor sent to fetch the money and gave the man his pretended share, three thousand dirhams; and, keeping the rest for himself, banished the three blind men from the city. But I, O Commander of the Faithful, went out and overtaking my brother questioned him of his case; whereupon he told me of what I have told thee; so I brought him secretly into the city, and appointed him (in the strictest privacy) an allowance for meat and drink! The Caliph laughed at my story and said, “Give him a gift and let him go;” but I said, “By Allah! I will take naught till I have made known to the Commander of the Faithful what came to pass with the rest of my brothers; for truly I am a man of few words and spare of speech.” Then the Caliph gave ear to

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The Barber’s Tale of his Fourth Brother.

Now as for my fourth brother, O Commander of the Faithful, Al-Kuz al-aswáni, or the long necked Gugglet hight, from his brimming over with words, the same who was blind of one eye, he became a butcher in Baghdad and he sold flesh and fattened rams; and great men and rich bought their meat of him, so that he amassed much wealth and got him cattle and houses. He fared thus a long while, till one day, as he was sitting in his shop, there came up an old man and long o’ the beard, who laid down some silver and said, “Give me meat for this.” He gave him his money s worth of flesh and the oldster went his ways. My brother examined the Shaykh’s silver, and, seeing that the dirhams were white and bright, he set them in a place apart. The greybeard continued to return to the shop regularly for five months, and my brother ceased not to lay up all the coin he received from him in its own box. At last he thought to take out the money to buy sheep; so he opened the box and found in it nothing, save bits of white paper cut round to look like coin;[656] so he buffeted his face and cried aloud till the folk gathered about him, whereupon he told them his tale which made them marvel exceedingly. Then he rose as was his wont, and slaughtering a ram hung it up inside his shop; after which he cut off some of the flesh, and hanging it outside kept saying to himself, “O Allah, would the ill omened old fellow but come!” And an hour had not passed before the Shaykh came with his silver in hand; where upon my brother rose and caught hold of him calling out, “Come aid me, O Moslems, and learn my story with this villain!” When the old man heard this, he quietly said to him, “Which will be the better for thee, to let go of me or to be disgraced by me amidst the folk?” “In what wilt thou disgrace me?” “In that thou sellest man’s flesh for mutton!” “Thou liest, thou accursed!” “Nay, he is the accursed who hath a man hanging up by way of meat in his shop. If the matter be as thou sayest, I give thee lawful leave to take my money and my life.” Then the old man cried out aloud, “Ho, ye people! if you would prove the truth of my words, enter this man’s shop.” The folk rushed in and found that the ram was become a dead man[657] hung up for sale. So they set upon my brother crying out, “O Infidel! O villain!”; and his best friends fell to cuffing and kicking him and kept saying, “Dost thou make us eat flesh of the sons of Adam?” Furthermore, the old man struck him on the eye and put it out. Then they carried the carcass, with the throat cut, before the Chief of the city watch, to whom the old man said, “O Emir, this fellow butchers men and sells their flesh for mutton and we have brought him to thee; so arise and execute the judgments of Allah (to whom be honour and glory!).” My brother would have defended himself, but the Chief refused to hear him and sentenced him to receive five hundred sticks and to forfeit the whole of his property. And, indeed, had it not been for that same property which he expended in bribes, they would have surely slain him. Then the Chief banished him from Baghdad; and my brother fared forth at a venture, till he came to a great town, where he thought it best to set up as a cobbler; so he opened a shop and sat there doing what he could for his livelihood. One day, as he went forth on his business, he heard the distant tramp of horses and, asking the cause, was told that the King was going out to hunt and course; so my brother stopped to look at the fine suite. It so fortuned that the King’s eye met my brother’s; whereupon the King hung down his head and said, “I seek refuge with Allah from the evil of this day!”;[658] and turned the reins of his steed and returned home with all his retinue. Then he gave orders to his guards, who seized my brother and beat him with a beating so painful that he was well nigh dead; and my brother knew not what could be the cause of his maltreatment, after which he returned to his place in sorriest plight. Soon afterwards he went to one of the King’s household and related what had happened to him; and the man laughed till he fell upon his back and cried, “O brother mine, know that the King cannot bear to look at a monocular, especially if he be blind of the right eye, in which case he doth not let him go without killing him.” When my brother heard this, he resolved to fly from that city; so he went forth from it to another wherein none knew him and there he abode a long while. One day, being full of sorrowful thought for what had befallen him, he sallied out to solace himself; and, as he was walking along, he heard the distant tramp of horses behind him and said, “The judgement of Allah is upon me!” and looked about for a hiding place but found none. At last he saw a closed door which he pushed hard: it yielded. and he entered a long gallery in which he took refuge, but hardly had he done so, when two men set upon him crying out, "Allah be thanked for having delivered thee into our hands, O enemy of God! These three nights thou hast robbed us of our rest and sleep, and verily thou hast made us taste of the death cup." My brother asked, "O folk, what ails you?"; and they answered, "Thou givest us the change and goest about to disgrace us and plannest some plot to cut the throat of the house master! Is it not enough that thou hast brought him to beggary, thou and thy fellows? But now give us up the knife wherewith thou threatenest us every night." Then they searched him and found in his waist belt the knife used for his shoe leather; and he said, "O people, have the fear of Allah before your eyes and maltreat me not, for know that my story is a right strange!" "And what is thy story?" said they: so he told them what had befallen him, hoping they would let him go; however they paid no heed to what he said and, instead of showing some regard, beat him grievously and tore off his clothes: then, finding on his sides the scars of beating with rods, they said, "O accursed! these marks are the manifest signs of thy guilt!" They carried him before the Governor, whilst he said to himself, "I am now punished for my sins and none can deliver me save Allah Almighty!" The Governor addressing my brother asked him, "O villain, what led thee to enter their house with intention to murther?"; and my brother answered, "I conjure thee by Allah, O Emir, hear my words and be not hasty in condemning me!" But the Governor cried, "Shall we listen to the words of a robber who hath beggared these people, and who beareth on his back the scar of his stripes?" adding, "They surely had not done this to thee, save for some great crime." So he sentenced him to receive an hundred cuts with the scourge, after which they set him on a camel and paraded him about the city, proclaiming, "This is the requital and only too little to requite him who breaketh into people's houses." Then they thrust him out of the city, and my brother wandered at random, till I heard what had befallen him; and, going in search of him, questioned him of his case; so he acquainted me with his story and all his mischances, and I carried him secretly to the city where I made him an allowance for his meat and drink. Then the Caliph gave ear to

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The Barber’s Tale of his Fifth Brother.

My fifth brother, Al-Nashshár,[659] the Babbler, the same who was cropped of both ears, O Commander of the Faithful, was an asker wont to beg of folk by night and live on their alms by day. Now when our father, who was an old man well stricken in years sickened and died, he left us seven hundred dirhams whereof each son took his hundred; but, as my fifth brother received his portion, he was perplexed and knew not what to do with it. While in this uncertainty he bethought him to lay it out on glass ware of all sorts and turn an honest penny on its price. So he bought an hundred dirhams worth of verroterie and, putting it into a big tray, sat down to sell it on a bench at the foot of a wall against which he leant back. As he sat with the tray before him he fell to musing and said to himself, “Know, O my good Self, that the head of my wealth, my principal invested in this glass ware, is an hundred dirhams. I will assuredly sell it for two hundred with which I will forthright buy other glass and make by it four hundred; nor will I cease to sell and buy on this wise, till I have gotten four thousand and soon find myself the master of much money. With these coins I will buy merchandise and jewels and ottars[660] and gain great profit on them; till, Allah willing, I will make my capital an hundred thousand dirhams. Then I will purchase a fine house with white slaves and eunuchs and horses; and I will eat and drink and disport myself; nor will I leave a singing man or a singing woman in the city, but I will summon them to my palace and make them perform before me.” All this he counted over in his mind, while the tray of glass ware,: worth an hundred dirhams, stood on the bench before him, and, after looking at it, he continued, “And when, Inshallah! my capital shall have become one hundred thousand[661] dinars, I will send out marriage brokeresses to require for me in wedlock the daughters of Kings and Wazirs; and I will demand to wife the eldest daughter of the Prime Minister; for it hath reached me that she is perfect in beauty and prime in loveliness and rare in accomplishments. I will give a marriage settlement of one thousand dinars; and, if her father consent, well: but if not I will take her by force from under his very nose. When she is safely homed in my house, I will buy ten little eunuchs[662] and for myself a robe of the robes of Kings and Sultans; and get me a saddle of gold and a bridle set thick with gems of price. Then I will mount with the Mamelukes preceding me and surrounding me, and I will make the round of the city whilst the folk salute me and bless me; after which I will repair to the Wazir (he that is father of the girl) with armed white slaves before and behind me and on my right and on my left. When he sees me, the Wazir stands up, and seating me in his own place sits down much below me; for that I am to be his son in law. Now I have with me two eunuchs carrying purses, each containing a thousand dinars; and of these I deliver to him the thousand, his daughter's marriage settlement, and make him a free gift of the other thousand, that he may have reason to know my generosity and liberality and my greatness of spirit and the littleness of the world in my eyes. And for ten words he addresses to me I answer him two. Then back I go to my house, and if one come to me on the bride's part, I make him a present of money and throw on him a dress of honour; but if he bring me a gift, I give it back to him and refuse to accept it,[663] that they may learn what a proud spirit is mine which never condescends to derogate. Thus I establish my rank and status. When this is done I appoint her wedding night and adorn my house showily! gloriously! And as the time for parading the bride is come, I don my finest attire and sit down on a mattress of gold brocade, propping up my elbow with a pillow, and turning neither to the right nor to the left; but looking only straight in front for the haughtiness of my mind and the gravity of my understanding. And there before me stands my wife in her raiment and ornaments, lovely as the full moon; and I, in my loftiness and dread lordliness,[664] will not glance at her till those present say to me, 'O our lord and our master, thy wife, thy handmaid, standeth before thee; vouchsafe her one look, for standing wearieth her.' Then they kiss the ground before me many times; whereupon I raise my eyes and cast at her one single glance and turn my face earthwards again. Then they bear her off to the bride chamber,[665] and I arise and change my clothes for a far finer suit; and, when they bring in the bride a second time, I deign not to throw her a look till they have begged me many times; after which I glance at her out of the corner of one eye, and then bend down my head. I continue acting after this fashion till the parading and displaying are completed[666] " — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her per misted say.

When It was the Thirty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Barber's fifth brother proceeded: - "Then I bend down my head and continue acting after this fashion till her parading and displaying are completed. Thereupon I order one of my eunuchs to bring me a bag of five hundred dinars which I give as largesse to the tire women present and bid them one and all lead me to the bride chamber. When they leave me alone with her I neither look at her nor speak to her, but lie[667] by her side with my face to the wall showing my contempt, that each and every may again remark how high and haughty I am. Presently her mother comes in to me, and kissing[668] my head and hand, says to me, 'O my lord, look upon thine handmaid who longs for thy favour; so heal her broken spirit!' I give her no answer; and when she sees this she rises and busses my feet many times and says, 'O my lord, in very sooth my daughter is a beautiful maid, who hath never known man; and if thou show her this backwardness and aversion, her heart will break; so do thou incline to her and speak to her and soothe her mind and spirit.' Then she rises and fetches a cup of wine; and says to her daughter, 'Take it and hand it to thy lord.' But as e approaches me I leave her standing between my hands and sit, propping my elbow on a round cushion purfled with gold thread, leaning lazily back, and without looking at her in the majesty of my spirit, so that she may deem me indeed a Sultan and a mighty man. Then she says to me, 'O my lord, Allah upon thee, do not refuse to take the cup from the hand of thine hand maid, for verily I am thy bondswoman.' But I do not speak to her and she presses me, saying, 'There is no help but that thou drink it;' and she puts it to my lips. Then I shake my fist in her face and kick her with my foot thus." So he let out with his toe an knocked over the tray of glass ware which fell to the ground and, falling from the bench, all that was on it was broken to bits. 'O foulest of pimps,[669] this comes from the pride of my spirit'" cried my brother; and then, O Commander of the Faithful, he buffeted his face and rent his garments and kept on weeping and beating himself. The folk who were flocking to their

Friday prayers saw him; and some of them looked at him and pitied him, whilst others paid no heed to him, and in this way my bother lost both capital and profit. He remained weeping a long while, and at last up came a beautiful lady, the scent of musk exhaling from her, who was going to Friday prayers riding a mule with a gold saddle and followed by several eunuchs. When she saw the broken glass and my brother weeping, her kind heart was moved to pity for him, and she asked what ailed him and was told that he had a tray full of glass ware by the sale of which he hoped to gain his living, but it was broken, and (said they), “there befell him what thou seest.” Thereupon she called up one of her eunuchs and said to him, Give what thou hast with thee to this poor fellow!”. And he gave my brother a purse in which he found five hundred dinars; and when it touched his hand he was well nigh dying for excess of joy and he offered up blessings for her. Then he returned to his abode a substantial man; and, as he sat considering, some one rapped at the door. So he rose and opened and saw an old woman whom he had never seen. “O my son,” said she, “know that prayer tide is near and I have not yet made my Wuzu-ablution;[670] so kindly allow me the use of thy lodging for the purpose.” My brother answered, “To hear is to comply;” and going in bade her follow him. So she entered and he brought her an ewer wherewith to wash, and sat down like to fly with joy because of the dinars which he had tied up in his belt for a purse. When the old woman had made an end of her ablution, she came up to where he sat, and prayed a two bow prayer; after which she blessed my brother with a godly benediction, and he while thanking her put his hand to the dinars and gave her two, saying to himself “These are my voluntaries.”[671] When she saw the gold she cried, “Praise be to Allah! why dost thou look on one who loveth thee as if she were a beggar? Take back thy money: I have no need of it; or, if thou want it not, return it to her who gave it thee when thy glass ware was broken. Moreover, if thou wish to be united with her, I can manage the matter, for she is my mistress.” “O my mother,” asked my brother, “by what manner of means can I get at her?”; and she answered, “O my son! she hath an inclination for thee, but she is the wife of a wealthy man; so take the whole of thy money with thee and follow me, that I may guide thee to thy desire: and when thou art in her company spare neither persuasion nor fair words, but bring them all to bear upon her; so shalt thou enjoy her beauty and wealth to thy heart's content." My brother took all his gold and rose and followed the old woman, hardly believing in his luck. She ceased not faring on, and my brother following her, till they came to a tall gate at which she knocked and a Roumi slave-girl[672] came out and opened to them. Then the old woman led my brother into a great sitting room spread with wondrous fine carpets and hung with curtains, where he sat down with his gold before him, and his turband on his knee.[673] He had scarcely taken seat before there came to him a young lady (never eye saw fairer) clad in garments of the most sumptuous; whereupon my brother rose to his feet, and she smiled in his face and welcomed him, signing to him to be seated. Then she bade shut the door and, when it was shut, she turned to my brother, and taking his hand conducted him to a private chamber furnished with various kinds of brocades and gold cloths. Here he sat down and she sat by his side and toyed with him awhile; after which she rose and saying, "Stir not from thy seat till I come back to thee;" disappeared. Meanwhile as he was on this wise, lo! there came in to him a black slave big of body and bulk and holding a drawn sword in hand, who said to him, "Woe to thee! Who brought thee hither and what dost thou want here?" My brother could not return him a reply, being tongue tied for terror; so the blackamoor seized him and stripped him of his clothes and bashed him with the flat of his sword blade till he fell to the ground, swooning from excess of belabouring. The ill omened nigger fancied that there was an end of him and my brother heard him cry, "Where is the salt wench?"[674] Where upon in came a handmaid holding in hand a large tray of salt, and the slave kept rubbing it into my brother's wounds;[675] but he did not stir fearing lest the slave might find out that he was not dead and kill him outright. Then the salt girl went away, and the slave cried Where is the souterrain[676] guardianess?" Hereupon in came the old woman and dragged my brother by his feet to a souterrain and threw him down upon a heap of dead bodies. In this place he lay two full days, but Allah made the salt the means of preserving his life by staunching the blood and staying its flow Presently, feeling himself able to move, Al-Nashshar rose and opened the trap door in fear and trembling and crept out into the open; and Allah protected him, so that he went on in the darkness and hid himself in the vestibule till dawn, when he saw the accursed beldam sally forth in quest of other quarry. He followed in her wake without her knowing it, and made for his own lodging where he dressed his wounds and medicined himself till he was whole. Meanwhile he used to watch the old woman, tracking her at all times and seasons, and saw her accost one man after another and carry them to the house. However he uttered not a word; but, as soon as he waxed hale and hearty, he took a piece of stuff and made it into a bag which he filled with broken glass and bound about his middle. He also disguised himself as a Persian that none might know him, and hid a sword under his clothes of foreign cut. Then he went out and presently, falling in with the old woman, said to her, speaking Arabic with a Persian accent, "Venerable lady,[677] I am a stranger arrived but this day here where I know no one. Hast thou a pair of scales wherein I may weigh eleven hundred dinars? I will give thee somewhat of them for thy pains." "I have a son, a money changer, who keepeth all kinds of scales," she answered, "so come with me to him before he goeth out and he will weigh thy gold." My brother answered "Lead the way!" She led him to the house and the young lady herself came out and opened it, whereupon the old woman smiled in her face and said, "I bring thee fat meat today."[678] Then the damsel took my brother by the hand, and led him to the same chamber as before; where she sat with him awhile then rose and went forth saying, "Stir not from thy seat till I come back to thee." Presently in came the accursed slave with the drawn sword and cried to my brother, "Up and be damned to thee." So he rose, and as the slave walked on before him he drew the sword from under his clothes and smote him with it, making head fly from body. Then he dragged the corpse by the feet to the souterrain and called out, "Where is the salt wench?" Up came the girl carrying the tray of salt and, seeing my brother sword in hand, turned to fly; but he followed her and struck off her head. Then he called out, "Where is the souterrain guardianess? , and in came the old woman to whom he said, "Dost know me again, ill omened hag?" "No my lord," she replied, and he said, "I am the owner of the five hundred gold pieces, whose house thou enteredst to make the ablution and to pray, and whom thou didst snare hither and betray." "Fear Allah and spare me," cried she; but he regarded her not and struck her with the sword till he had cut her in four. Then he went to look for the young lady; and when she saw him her reason fled and she cried out piteously "Aman![679] Mercy!" So he spared her and asked, "What made thee consort with this blackamoor?", and she answered, "I was slave to a certain merchant, and the old woman used to visit me till I took a liking to her. One day she said to me, 'We have a marriage festival at our house the like of which was never seen and I wish thee to enjoy the sight.' 'To hear is to obey,' answered I, and rising arrayed myself in my finest raiment and ornaments, and took with me a purse containing an hundred gold pieces. Then she brought me hither and hardly had I entered the house when the black seized on me, and I have remained in this case three whole years through the perfidy of the accursed beldam." Then my brother asked her, "Is there anything of his in the house?"; whereto she answered, "Great store of wealth, and if thou art able to carry it away, do so and Allah give thee good of it" My brother went with her and she opened to him sundry chests wherein were money bags, at which he was astounded; then she said to him, "Go now and leave me here, and fetch men to remove the money.", He went out and hired ten men, but when he returned he found the door wide open, the damsel gone and nothing left but some small matter of coin and the household stuffs.[680] By this he knew that the girl had overreached him; so he opened the store rooms and seized what was in them, together with the rest of the money, leaving nothing in the house. He passed the night rejoicing, but when morning dawned he found at the door some twenty troopers who laid hands on him saying, "The Governor wants thee!" My brother implored them hard to let him return to his house; and even offered them a large sum of money; but they refused and, binding him fast with cords, carried him off. On the way they met a friend of my brother who clung to his skirt and implored his protection, begging him to stand by him and help to deliver him out of their hands. The man stopped, and asked them what was the matter, and they answered, "The Governor hath ordered us to bring this fellow before him and, look ye, we are doing so." My brother's friend urged them to release him, and offered them five hundred dinars to let him go, saying, "When ye return to the

Governor tell him that you were unable to find him." But they would not listen to his words and took my brother, dragging him along on his face, and set him before the Governor who asked him, "Whence gottest thou these stuffs and monies?"; and he answered, "I pray for mercy!" So the Governor gave him the kerchief of mercy;[681] and he told him all that had befallen him from first to last with the old woman and the flight of the damsel; ending with, "Whatso I have taken, take of it what thou wilt, so thou leave me sufficient to support life."[682] But the Governor took the whole of the stuffs and all the money for himself; and, fearing lest the affair come to the Sultan's ears, he summoned my brother and said, "Depart from this city, else I will hang thee." "Hearing and obedience" quoth my brother and set out for another town. On the way thieves fell foul of him and stripped and beat him and docked his ears; but I heard tidings of his misfortunes and went out after him taking him clothes; and brought him secretly into the city where I assigned to him an allowance for meat and drink. And presently the Caliph gave ear to

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The Barber's Tale of his Sixth Brother.

My sixth brother, O Commander of the Faithful, Shakashik,[683] or Many clamours, the shorn of both lips, was once rich and became poor, so one day he went out to beg somewhat to keep life in him. As he was on the road he suddenly caught sight of a large and handsome mansion, with a detached building wide and lofty at the entrance, where sat sundry eunuchs bidding and forbidding.[684] My brother enquired of one of those idling there and he replied "The palace belongs to a scion of the Barmaki house;" so he stepped up to the door keepers and asked an alms of them "Enter," said they, "by the great gate and thou shalt get what thou seekest from the Wazir our master." Accordingly he went in and, passing through the outer entrance, walked on a while and presently came to a mansion of the utmost beauty and elegance, paved with marble, hung with curtains and having in the midst of it a flower garden whose like he had never seen.[685] My brother stood awhile as one bewildered not knowing whither to turn his steps; then, seeing the farther end of the sitting chamber tenanted, he walked up to it and there found a man of handsome presence and comely beard. When this personage saw my brother he stood up to him and welcomed him and asked him of his case; whereto he replied that he was in want and needed charity. Hearing these words the grandee showed great concern and, putting his hand to his fine robe, rent it exclaiming, "What! am I in a City, and thou here an hungered? I have not patience to bear such disgrace!" Then he promised him all manner of good cheer and said, "There is no help but that thou stay with me and eat of my salt."[686] "O my lord," answered my brother, "I can wait no longer; for I am indeed dying of hunger." So he cried, "Ho boy! bring basin and ewer;" and, turning to my brother, said, "O my guest come forward and wash thy hands." My brother rose to do so but he saw neither ewer nor basin; yet his host kept washing his hands with invisible soap in imperceptible water and cried, "Bring the table!" But my brother again saw nothing. Then said the host, "Honour me by eating of this meat and be not ashamed." And he kept moving his hand to and fro as if he ate and saying to my brother, "I wonder to see thee eating thus sparely: do not stint thyself for I am sure thou art famished.” So my brother began to make as though he were eating whilst his host kept saying to him, “Fall to, and note especially the excellence of this bread and its whiteness!” But still my brother saw nothing. Then said he to himself, “This man is fond of poking fun at people;” and replied, “O my lord, in all my days I never knew aught more winsome than its whiteness or sweeter than its savour.” The Barmecide said, “This bread was baked by a hand maid of mine whom I bought for five hundred dinars.” Then he called out, “Ho boy, bring in the meat pudding[687] for our first dish, and let there be plenty of fat in it;” and, turning to my brother said, “O my guest, Allah upon thee, hast ever seen anything better than this meat pudding? Now by my life, eat and be not abashed.” Presently he cried out again, “Ho boy, serve up the marinated stew[688] with the fatted sand grouse in it;” and he said to my brother, “Up and eat, O my guest, for truly thou art hungry and needest food.” So my brother began wagging his jaws and made as if champing and chewing,[689] whilst the host continued calling for one dish after another and yet produced nothing save orders to eat. Presently he cried out, “Ho boy, bring us the chickens stuffed with pistachio nuts;” and said to my brother, “By thy life, O my guest, I have fattened these chickens upon pistachios; eat, for thou hast never eaten their like.” “O my lord,” replied my brother, “they are indeed first rate.” Then the host began motioning with his hand as though he were giving my brother a mouthful; and ceased not to enumerate and expatiate upon the various dishes to the hungry man whose hunger waxt still more violent, so that his soul lusted after a bit of bread, even a barley scone.[690] Quoth the Barmecide, “Didst thou ever taste anything more delicious than the seasoning of these dishes?”; and quoth my brother, “Never, O my lord!” “Eat heartily and be not ashamed,” said the host, and the guest, “I have eaten my fill of meat;” So the entertainer cried, “Take away and bring in the sweets;” and turning to my brother said, “Eat of this almond conserve for it is prime and of these honey fritters; take this one, by my life, the syrup runs out of it.” “May I never be bereaved of thee, O my lord,” replied the hungry one and began to ask him about the abundance of musk in the fritters. “Such is my custom,” he answered: “they put me a dinar weight of musk in every honey fritter and half that quantity of ambergris." All this time my brother kept wagging head and jaws till the master cried, "Enough of this. Bring us the dessert!" Then said he to him,' "Eat of these almonds and walnuts and raisins; and of this and that (naming divers kinds of dried fruits), and be not abashed." But my brother replied, "O my lord, indeed I am full: I can eat no more." "O my guest," repeated the host, "if thou have a mind to these good things eat: Allah! Allah![691] do not remain hungry;" but my brother rejoined, "O my lord, he who hath eaten of all these dishes how can he be hungry?" Then he considered and said to himself, "I will do that shall make him repent of these pranks." Presently the entertainer called out "Bring me the wine;" and, moving his hands in the air, as though they had set it before them, he gave my brother a cup and said, "Take this cup and, if it please thee, let me know." "O my lord," he replied, "it is notable good as to nose but I am wont to drink wine some twenty years old." "Knock then at this door,"[692] quoth the host "for thou canst not drink of aught better." "By thy kindness," said my brother, motioning with his hand as though he were drinking. "Health and joy to thee," exclaimed the house master and feigned to fill a cup and drink it off; then he handed another to my brother who quaffed it and made as if he were drunken. Presently he took the host unawares; and, raising his arm till the white of his armpit appeared, dealt him such a cuff on the nape of his neck that the palace echoed to it. Then he came down upon him with a second cuff and the entertainer cried aloud "What is this, O thou scum of the earth?" "O my lord," replied my brother, "thou hast shown much kindness to thy slave, and admitted him into thine abode and given him to eat of thy victual; then thou madest him drink of thine old wine till he became drunken and boisterous; but thou art too noble not to bear with his ignorance and pardon his offence." When the Barmaki heard my brother's words he laughed his loudest and said, "Long have I been wont to make mock of men and play the madcap among my intimates, but never yet have I come across a single one who had the patience and the wit to enter into all my humours save thyself: so I forgive thee, and thou shalt be my boon companion in very sooth and never leave me." Then he ordered the servants to lay the table in earnest and they set on all the dishes of which he had spoken in sport; and he and my brother ate till they were satisfied; after which they removed to the drinking chamber, where they found damsels like moons who sang all manner songs and played on all manner instruments. There they remained drinking till their wine got the better of them and the host treated my brother like a familiar friend, so that he became as it were his brother, and bestowed on him a robe of honour and loved him with exceeding love. Next morning the two fell again to feasting and carousing, and ceased not to lead this life for a term of twenty years; at the end of which the Barmecide died and the Sultan took possession of all his wealth and squeezed my brother of his savings, till he was left a pauper without a penny to handle. So he quitted the city and fled forth following his face;[693] but, when he was half way between two towns, the wild Arabs fell on him and bound him and carried him to their camp, where his captor proceeded to torture him, saying, “Buy thy life of me with thy money, else I will slay thee!” My brother began to weep and replied, “By Allah, I have nothing, neither gold nor silver; but I am thy prisoner; so do with me what thou wilt.” Then the Badawi drew a knife, broad bladed and so sharp grinded that if plunged into a camel’s throat it would sever it clean across from one jugular to the other,[694] and cut off my brother’s lips and waxed more instant in requiring money. Now this Badawi had a fair wife who in her husband’s absence used to make advances to my brother and offer him her favours, but he held off from her. One day she began to tempt him as usual and he played with her and made her sit on his lap, when behold, in came the Badawi who, seeing this, cried out, “Woe to thee, O accursed villain, wouldest thou debauch my wife for me?” Then he took out a knife and cut off my brother’s yard, after which he bound him on the back of a camel and, carrying him to a mountain, left him there. He was at last found by some who recognised him and gave him meat and drink and acquainted me with his condition; whereupon I went forth to him and brought him back to Baghdad where I made him an allowance sufficient to live on. This, then, O Commander of the Faithful, is the history of my six brothers, and I feared to go away without relating it all to thee and leave thee in the error of judging me to be like them. And now thou knowest that I have six brothers upon my hands and, being more upright than they, I support the whole family. When the Caliph heard my story and all I told him concerning my brothers, he laughed and said, “Thou sayest sooth, O Silent Man! thou art indeed spare of speech nor is there aught of forwardness in thee; but now go forth out of this city and settle in some other.” And he banished me under edict. I left Baghdad and travelled in foreign parts till I heard of his death and the accession of another to the Caliphate. Then I returned to Baghdad where I found all my brothers dead and chanced upon this young man, to whom I rendered the kindliest service, for without me he had surely been killed. Indeed he slanders me and accuses me of a fault which is not in my nature; and what he reports concerning impudence and meddling and forwardness is idle and false; for verily on his account I left Baghdad and travelled about full many a country till I came to this city and met him here in your company. And was not this, O worthy assemblage, of the generosity of my nature?

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The End of the Tailor's Tale.

Then quoth the Tailor to the King of China: When we heard the Barber's tale and saw the excess of his loquacity and the way in which he had wronged this young man, we laid hands on him and shut him up, after which we sat down in peace, and ate and drank and enjoyed the good things of the marriage feast till the time of the call to mid afternoon prayer, when I left the party and returned home. My wife received me with sour looks and said, "Thou goest a pleasuring among thy friends and thou leavest me to sit sorrowing here alone. So now, unless thou take me abroad and let me have some amusement for the rest of the day, I will cut the rope[695] and it will be the cause of my separation from thee." So I took her out and we amused ourselves till supper time, when we returned home and fell in with this Hunchback who was brimful of drink and trolling out these rhymes:

"Clear's the wine, the cup's fine; * Like to like they combine:
It is wine and not cup! * 'Tis a cup and not wine!"

So I invited him to sup with us and went out to buy fried fish; after which we sat down to eat; and presently my wife took a piece of bread and a fid of fish and stuffed them into his mouth and he choked; and, though I slapped him long and hard between the shoulders, he died. Then I carried him off and contrived to throw him into the house of this leach, the Jew; and the leach contrived to throw him into the house of the Reeve; and the Reeve contrived to throw him on the way of the Nazarene broker. This, then, is my adventure which befell me but yesterday. Is not it more wondrous than the story of the Hunchback? When the King of China heard the Tailor's tale he shook his head for pleasure; and, showing great surprise, said, "This that passed between the young man and the busy-body of a Barber is indeed more pleasant and wonderful than the story of my lying knave of a Hunchback." Then he bade one of his Chamberlains go with the Tailor and bring the Barber out of jail, saying, "I wish to hear the talk of this Silent Man and it shall be the cause of your deliverance one and all: then we will bury the Hunchback, for that he is dead since yesterday, and set up a tomb over him." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her per misted say.

When it was the Thirty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King of China bade, "Bring me the Barber who shall be the cause of your deliverance; then we will bury this Hunchback, for that he is dead since yesterday and set up a tomb over him." So the Chamberlain and the Tailor went to the jail and, releasing the Barber, presently returned with him to the King. The Sultan of China looked at him and considered him carefully and lo and behold! he was an ancient man, past his ninetieth year; swart of face, white of beard, and hoar of eyebrows; lop eared and proboscis-nosed,[696] with a vacant, silly and conceited expression of countenance. The King laughed at this figure o' fun and said to him, "O Silent Man, I desire thee to tell me somewhat of thy history." Quoth the Barber, "O King of the age, allow me first to ask thee what is the tale of this Nazarene and this Jew and this Moslem and this Hunchback (the corpse) I see among you? And prithee what may be the object of this assemblage?" Quoth the King of China, "And why dost thou ask?" "I ask," he replied, "in order that the King's majesty may know that I am no forward fellow or busy body or impertinent meddler; and that I am innocent of their calumnious charges of overmuch talk; for I am he whose name is the Silent Man, and indeed peculiarly happy is my sobriquet, as saith the poet:

When a nickname or little name men design, * Know that nature with name shall full oft combine."

Then said the King, "Explain to the Barber the case of this Hunchback and what befell him at supper time; also repeat to him the stories told by the Nazarene, the Jew, the Reeve, and the Tailor; and of no avail to me is a twice told tale." They did his bidding, and the Barber shook his head and said, "By Allah, this is a marvel of marvels! Now uncover me the corpse of yonder Hunchback. They undid the winding sheet and he sat down and, taking the Hunchback's head in his lap, looked at his face and laughed and guffaw'd[697] till he fell upon his back and said, "There is wonder in every death,[698] but the death of this Hunchback is worthy to be written and recorded in letters of liquid gold!" The bystanders were astounded at his words and the King marvelled and said to him, "What ails thee, O Silent Man? Explain to us thy words !" "O King of the age," said the Barber, "I swear by thy beneficence that there is still life in this Gobbo Golightly!" Thereupon he pulled out of his waist belt a barber's budget, whence he took a pot of ointment and anointed therewith the neck of the Hunchback and its arteries. Then he took a pair of iron tweezers and, inserting them into the Hunchback's throat, drew out the fid of fish with its bone; and, when it came to sight, behold, it was soaked in blood. Thereupon the Hunchback sneezed a hearty sneeze and jumped up as if nothing had happened and passing his hand over his face said, "I testify that there is no god, but the God, and I testify that Mohammed is the Apostle of God." At this sight all present wondered; the King of China laughed till he fainted and in like manner did the others. Then said the Sultan, "By Allah, of a truth this is the most marvellous thing I ever saw! O Moslems, O soldiers all, did you ever in the lives of you see a man die and be quickened again? Verily had not Allah vouchsafed to him this Barber, he had been a dead man!" Quoth they, "By Allah, 'tis a marvel of marvels." Then the King of China bade record this tale, so they recorded it and placed it in the royal muniment-rooms; after which he bestowed costly robes of honour upon the Jew, the Nazarene and the Reeve, and bade them depart in all esteem. Then he gave the Tailor a sumptuous dress and appointed him his own tailor, with suitable pay and allowances; and made peace between him and the Hunchback, to whom also he presented a splendid and expensive suit with a suitable stipend. He did as generously with the Barber, giving him a gift and a dress of honour; moreover he settled on him a handsome solde and created him Barber surgeon[699] of state and made him one of his cup companions. So they ceased not to live the most pleasurable life and the most delectable, till there came to them the Destroyer of all delights and the Sunderer of all societies, the Depopulator of palaces and the Garnerer for graves. Yet, O most auspicious King! (continued Shahrazad) this tale is by no means more wonderful than that of the two Wazirs and Anís al-Jalís. Quoth her sister Dunyazad, "And what may that be?", whereupon she began to relate the following tale of

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

FOOTNOTES VOLUME I.

[1] Allaho A'alam, a deprecatory formula, used because the writer is going to indulge in a series of what may possibly be untruths.

[2] The "Sons of Sásán" are the famous Sassanides whose dynasty ended with the Arabian Conquest (A.D. 641). "Island" Jazírah) in Arabic also means "Peninsula," and causes much confusion in geographical matters.

[3] Shahryár not Shahriyar (Persian) = "City-friend." The Bulak edition corrupts it to Shahrbáz (City-hawk), and the Breslau to Shahrbán or "Defender of the City," like Marz-ban=Warden of the Marshes. Shah Zamán (Persian)="King of the Age:" Galland prefers Shah Zenan, or "King of women," and the Bull edit. changes it to Shah Rummán, "Pomegranate King." Al-Ajam denotes all regions not Arab (Gentiles opposed to Jews, Mlechchhas to Hindus, Tajiks to Turks, etc., etc.), and especially Persia; Ajami (a man of Ajam) being an equivalent of the Gr. {Greek Letters}. See Vol.. ii., .

[4] Galland writes "Vizier," a wretched frenchification of a mincing Turkish mispronunciation; Torrens, "Wuzeer" (Anglo- Indian and Gilchristian); Lane, "Wezeer"; (Egyptian or rather Cairene); Payne, "Vizier," according to his system; Burckhardt (Proverbs), "Vizír;" and Mr. Keith-Falconer, "Vizir." The root is popularly supposed to be "wizr" (burden) and the meaning "Minister;" Wazir al-Wuzará being "Premier." In the Koran (chaps. xx., 30) Moses says, "Give me a Wazir of my family, Harun (Aaron) my brother." Sale, followed by the excellent version of the Rev. J. M. Rodwell, translates a "Counsellor," and explains by "One who has the chief administration of affairs under a prince." But both learned Koranists learnt their Orientalism in London, and, like such students generally, fail only upon the easiest points, familiar to all old dwellers in the East.

[5] This three-days term (rest-day, drest-day and departure day) seems to be an instinct-made rule in hospitality. Among Moslems it is a

Sunnat or practice of the Prophet.)

[6] i.e., I am sick at heart.

[7] Debauched women prefer negroes on account of the size of their parts. I measured one man in Somali-land who, when quiescent, numbered nearly six inches. This is a characteristic of the negro race and of African animals; e.g. the horse; whereas the pure Arab, man and beast, is below the average of Europe; one of the best proofs by the by, that the Egyptian is not an Asiatic, but a negro partially white-washed. Moreover, these imposing parts do not increase proportionally during erection; consequently, the "deed of kind" takes a much longer time and adds greatly to the woman's enjoyment. In my time no honest Hindi Moslem would take his women-folk to Zanzibar on account of the huge attractions and enormous temptations there and thereby offered to them. Upon the subject of Imsák = retention of semen and "prolongation of pleasure," I shall find it necessary to say more.

[8] The very same words were lately spoken in England proving the eternal truth of The Nights which the ignorant call "downright lies."

[9] The Arab's Tue la!

[10] Arab. "Sayd wa kanas": the former usually applied to fishing; hence Sayda (Sidon) = fish-town. But noble Arabs (except the Caliph Al-Amin) do not fish; so here it means simply "sport," chasing, coursing, birding (oiseler), and so forth.

[11] In the Mac. Edit. the negro is called "Mas'úd"; here he utters a kind of war-cry and plays upon the name, "Sa'ád, Sa'íd, Sa'úd," and "Mas'ud", all being derived from one root, "Sa'ad" = auspiciousness, prosperity.

[12] The Arab. singular (whence the French "génie"), fem. Jinniyah; the Div and Rakshah of old Guebre-land and the "Rakshasa," or "Yaksha," of Hinduism. It would be interesting to trace the evident connection, by no means "accidental," of "Jinn" with the "Genius"

who came to the Romans through the Asiatic Etruscans, and whose name I cannot derive from "gignomai" or "genitus." He was unknown to the Greeks, who had the Daimon {Greek Letters}, a family which separated, like the Jinn and the Genius, into two categories, the good (Agatho-dæmons) and the bad (Kako-dæmons). We know nothing concerning the status of the Jinn amongst the pre-Moslemitic or pagan Arabs: the Moslems made him a supernatural anthropoid being, created of subtile fire (Koran chapts. xv. 27; lv. 14), not of earth like man, propagating his kind, ruled by mighty kings, the last being Ján bin Ján, missionarised by Prophets and subject to death and Judgment. From the same root are "Junún" = madness (i.e., possession or obsession by the Jinn) and "Majnún"=a madman. According to R. Jeremiah bin Eliazar in Psalm xii. 5, Adam was excommunicated for one hundred and thirty years, during which he begat children in his own image (Gen. v. 3) and these were Mazikeen or Shedeem- Jinns. Further details anent the Jinn will presently occur.

[13] Arab. "Amsár" (cities): in Bull Edit. "Amtár" (rains), as in Mac. Edit. So Mr. Payne (I., 5) translates: And when she flashes forth the lightning of her glance, She maketh eyes to rain, like showers, with many a tear. I would render it, "She makes whole cities shed tears," and prefer it for a reason which will generally influence merits superior exaggeration and impossibility.

[14] Not "A-frit," pronounced Aye-frit, as our poets have it. This variety of the Jinn, who, as will be shown, are divided into two races like mankind, is generally, but not always, a malignant being, hostile and injurious to mankind (Koran xxvii. 39).

[15] i.e., "I conjure thee by Allah;" the formula is technically called "Inshád."

[16] This introducing the name of Allah into an indecent tale is essentially Egyptian and Cairene. But see Boccaccio ii. 6, and vii. 9.

[17] So in the Mac. Edit.; in others "ninety." I prefer the greater number

as exaggeration is a part of the humour. In the Hindu “Kathá Sárit Ságara” (Sea of the Streams of Story), the rings are one hundred and the catastrophe is more moral, the good youth Yashodhara rejects the wicked one’s advances; she awakes the water-sprite, who is about to slay him, but the rings are brought as testimony and the improper young person’s nose is duly cut off. (Chap. Ixiii.; , of the excellent translation by Prof. C. H. Tawney: for the Bibliotheca Indica: Calcutta, 1881.) The Kathá, etc., by Somadeva (century xi), is a poetical version of the prose compendium, the “Vrihat Kathá” (Great Story) by Gunadhya (cent. vi).

[18] The Joseph of the Koran, very different from him of Genesis. We shall meet him often enough in The Nights.

[19] “Iblis,” vulgarly written “Eblis,” from a root meaning The Despairer, with a suspicious likeness to Diabolos; possibly from “Bales,” a profligate. Some translate it The Calumniator, as Satan is the Hater. Iblis (who appears in the Arab. version of the N. Testament) succeeded another revolting angel Al-Haris; and his story of pride refusing to worship Adam, is told four times in the Koran from the Talmud (Sanhedrim 29). He caused Adam and Eve to lose Paradise (ii. 34); he still betrays mankind (xxv. 31), and at the end of time he, with the other devils, will be “gathered together on their knees round Hell” (xix. 69). He has evidently had the worst of the game, and we wonder, with Origen, Tillotson, Burns and many others, that he does not throw up the cards.

[20] A similar tale is still told at Akká (St. John d’Acre) concerning the terrible “butcher” — Jazzár (Djezzar) Pasha. One can hardly pity women who are fools enough to run such risks. According to Frizzi, Niccolò, Marquis of Este, after beheading Parisina, ordered all the faithless wives of Ferrara to be treated in like manner.

[21] “Shahrázád” (Persian) = City-freer, in the older version Scheherazade (probably both from Shirzád=lion-born). “Dunyázád”=World-freer. The Bres. Edit. corrupts former to Sháhrzád or Sháhrazád, and the Mac. and Calc. to Shahrzád or

Shehrzád. I have ventured to restore the name as it should be. Galland for the second prefers Dinarzade (?) and Richardson Dinazade (Dinázád = Religion-freer): here I have followed Lane and Payne; though in "First Footsteps" I was misled by Galland. See Vol. ii. .

[22] Probably she proposed to "Judith" the King. These learned and clever young ladies are very dangerous in the East.

[23] In Egypt, etc., the bull takes the place of the Western ox. The Arab. word is "Taur" (Thaur, Saur); in old Persian "Tore" and Lat. "Taurus," a venerable remnant of the days before the "Semitic" and "Aryan" families of speech had split into two distinct growths. "Taur" ends in the Saxon "Steor" and the English "Steer"

[24] Arab. "Abú Yakzán" = the Wakener, because the ass brays at dawn.

[25] Arab. "Tibn"; straw crushed under the sledge: the hay of Egypt, Arabia, Syria, etc. The old country custom is to pull up the corn by handfuls from the roots, leaving the land perfectly bare: hence the "plucking up" of Hebrew Holy Writ. The object is to preserve every atom of "Tibn."

[26] Arab. "Yá Aftah": Al-Aftah is an epithet of the bull, also of the chameleon.

[27] Arab. "Balíd," a favourite Egyptianism often pleasantly confounded with "Wali" (a Santon), hence the latter comes to mean "an innocent," a "ninny."

[28] From the Calc. Edit., Vol. 1., .

[29] Arab. "Abu Yakzán" is hardly equivalent with "Père l'Eveillé."

[30] In Arab. the wa (x) is the sign of parenthesis.

[31] In the nearer East the light little plough is carried afield by the bull

or ass.

[32] Ocymum basilicum, the “royal herb,” so much prized all over the East, especially in India, where, under the name of “Tulsi,” it is a shrub sacred to the merry god Krishna. I found the verses in a MS. copy of The Nights.

[33] Arab. “Sadaf,” the Kauri, or cowrie, brought from the Maldive and Lakdive Archipelago. The Kámús describes this “Wada’” or Concha Veneris as “a white shell (whence to “shell out”) which is taken out of the sea, the fissure of which is white like that of the date-stone. It is hung about the neck to avert the evil eye.” The pearl in Arab. is “Murwarid,” hence evidently “Margarita” and Margaris (woman’s name).

[34] Arab. “Kat’a” (bit of leather): some read “Nat’a;” a leather used by way of table-cloth, and forming a bag for victuals; but it is never made of bull’s hide.

[35] The older “Cadi,” a judge in religious matters. The Shuhúd, or Assessors, are officers of the Mahkamah or Kazi’s Court.

[36] Of which more in a future page. He thus purified himself ceremonially before death.

[37] This is Christian rather than Moslem: a favourite Maltese curse is “Yahrak Kiddisak man rabba-k!” = burn the Saint who brought thee up!

[38] A popular Egyptian phrase: the dog and the cock speak like Fellahs.

[39] i. e. between the last sleep and dawn when they would rise to wash and pray.

[40] Travellers tell of a peculiar knack of jerking the date-stone, which makes it strike with great force: I never saw this “Inwá” practised,

but it reminds me of the water splashing with one hand in the German baths.

[41] i.e., sorely against his will.

[42] Arab. “Shaykh”=an old man (primarily), an elder, a chief (of the tribe, guild, etc.), and honourably addressed to any man. Comp. among the neo Latins “Sieur,” “Signora,” “Señor,” “Senhor,” etc. from Lat. “Senior,” which gave our “Sire” and “Sir.” Like many in Arabic the word has a host of different meanings and most of them will occur in the course of The Nights. Ibrahim (Abraham) was the first Shaykh or man who became grey. Seeing his hairs whiten he cried, “O Allah what is this?” and the answer came that it was a sign of dignified gravity. Hereupon he exclaimed, “O Lord increase this to me!” and so it happened till his locks waxed snowy white at the age of one hundred and fifty. He was the first who parted his hair, trimmed his mustachios, cleaned his teeth with the Miswák (tooth-stick), pared his nails, shaved his pecten, snuffed up water, used ablution after stool and wore a shirt (Tabari).

[43] The word is mostly plural = Jinnís: it is also singular = a demon; and Ján bin Ján has been noticed.

[44] With us moderns “liver” suggests nothing but malady: in Arabic and Persian as in the classic literature of Europe it is the seat of passion, the heart being that of affection. Of this more presently.

[45] Originally in Al-Islam the concubine (Surriyat, etc.) was a captive taken in war and the Koran says nothing about buying slave-girls. But if the captives were true believers the Moslem was ordered to marry not to keep them. In modern days concubinage has become an extensive subject. Practically the disadvantage is that the slave-girls, knowing themselves to be the master’s property, consider him bound to sleep with them; which is by no means the mistress’s view. Some wives, however, when old and childless, insist, after the fashion of Sarah, upon the husband taking a young concubine and treating her like a daughter — which is rare. The Nights abound in tales of

concubines, but these are chiefly owned by the Caliphs and high officials who did much as they pleased. The only redeeming point in the system is that it obviated the necessity of prostitution which is, perhaps, the greatest evil known to modern society.

[46] Arab. “Al-Kahánah”=the craft of a “Káhin” (Heb. Cohen) a diviner, soothsayer, etc.

[47] Arab. “Id al-kabír = The Great Festival; the Turkish Bayrám and Indian Bakar-eed (Kine-fête), the pilgrimage-time, also termed “Festival of the Kurbán” (sacrifice) because victims are slain, Al-Zuha (of Undurn or forenoon), Al-Azhá (of serene night) and Al-Nahr (of throat-cutting). For full details I must refer readers to my “Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El-Medinah and Meccah” (3 vols. 8vo, London, Longmans, 1855). I shall have often to refer to it.

[48] Arab. “Kalám al-mubáh,” i.e., that allowed or permitted to her by the King, her husband.

[49] Moslem Kings are expected, like the old Gabble Monarchs, to hold “Darbar” (i.e., give public audience) at least twice a day, morning and evening. Neglect of this practice caused the ruin of the Caliphate and of the Persian and Moghul Empires: the great lords were left uncontrolled and the lieges revolted to obtain justice. The Guebre Kings had two levée places, the Rozistan (day station) and the Shabistan (night-station - istán or stán being a nominal form of istádan, to stand, as Hindo-stán). Moreover one day in the week the sovereign acted as “Mufti” or Supreme Judge.

[50] Arab. “Al-Bashárah,” the gift everywhere claimed in the East and in Boccaccio’s Italy by one who brings good news. Those who do the reverse expose themselves to a sound strappado.

[51] A euphemistic formula, to avoid mentioning unpleasant matters. I shall note these for the benefit of students who would honestly prepare for the public service in Moslem lands.

[52] Arab. “Dínár,” from the Latin denarius (a silver coin worth ten

ounces of brass) through the Greek {Greek Letters}: it is a Koranic word (chaps. iii.) though its Arab equivalent is “Miskál.” It also occurs in the Kathá before quoted, clearly showing the derivation. In the “Book of Kalilah and Dimnah” it is represented by the Daric or Persian Dinár, {Greek Letters}, from Dárá= a King (whence Darius). The Dinar, sequin or ducat, contained at different times from 10 and 12 (Abu Hanifah’s day) to 20 and even 25 dirhams or drachmas, and, as a weight, represented a drachma and a half. Its value greatly varied, but we may assume it here at nine shillings or ten francs to half a sovereign. For an elaborate article on the Dinar see Yule’s “Cathay and the Way Thither” (ii., p-443).

[53] The formula used in refusing alms to an “asker” or in rejecting an insufficient offer: “Allah will open to thee!” (some door of gain - not mine)! Another favourite ejaculation is “Allah Karim” (which Turks pronounce “Kyereem”) = Allah is All-beneficent! meaning Ask Him, not me.

[54] The public bath. London knows the word through “The Hummums.”

[55] Arab. “Dirham” (Plur. diráhim, also used in the sense of money, “siller”), the drachuma of Plautus (Trin. 2, 4, 23). The word occurs in the Panchatantra also showing the derivation; and in the Syriac Kalilah wa Dimnah it is “Zúz.” This silver piece was = 6 obols (9 3/4d.) and as a weight = 66 1/2 grains. The Dirham of The Nights was worth six “Dánik,” each of these being a fraction over a penny. The modern Greek Drachma is=one franc.

[56] In Arabic the speaker always puts himself first, even if he address the King, without intending incivility.

[57] A she-Ifrit, not necessarily an evil spirit.

[58] Arab. “Kullah” (in Egypt pron. “gulleh”), the wide mouthed jug, called in the Hijaz “baradlyah,” “daurak” being the narrow. They are used either for water or sherbet and, being made of porous clay, “sweat,” and keep the contents cool; hence all old Anglo Egyptians

drink from them, not from bottles. Sometimes they are perfumed with smoke of incense, mastich or Kafal (Amyris Kafal). For their graceful shapes see Lane's "Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians" (chaps. v) I quote, here and elsewhere, from the fifth edition, London, Murray, 1860.

[59] "And what is?" etc. A popular way of expressing great difference. So in India: - "Where is Rajah Bhoj (the great King) and where is Gangá the oilman?"

[60] Here, as in other places, I have not preserved the monorhyme, but have ended like the English sonnet with a couplet; as a rule the last two lines contain a "Husn makta'" or climax.

[61] Lit. "he began to say (or speak) poetry," such improvising being still common amongst the Badawin as I shall afterwards note. And although Mohammed severely censured profane poets, who "rove as bereft of their senses through every valley" and were directly inspired by devils (Koran xxvi.), it is not a little curious to note that he himself spoke in "Rajaz" (which see) and that the four first Caliphs all "spoke poetry." In early ages the verse would not be written, if written at all, till after the maker's death. I translate "inshád" by "versifying" or "repeating" or "reciting," leaving it doubtful if the composition be or be not original. In places, however, it is clearly improvised and then as a rule it is model doggrel.

[62] Arab. "Allahumma"=Yá Allah (O Allah) but with emphasis the Fath being a substitute for the voc. part. Some connect it with the Heb. "Alihím," but that fancy is not Arab. In Al-Hariri and the rhetoricians it sometimes means to be sure; of course; unless indeed; unless possibly.

[63] Probably in consequence of a vow. These superstitious practices, which have many a parallel amongst ourselves, are not confined to the lower orders in the East.

[64] i.e., saying "Bismillah!" the pious ejaculation which should precede every act. In Boccaccio (viii., 9) it is "remembering Iddio e'

Santi."

[65] Arab. Nahás asfar = brass, opposed to "Nahás" and "Nahás ahmar," = copper.

[66] This alludes to the legend of Sakhr al-Jinn), a famous fiend cast by Solomon David son into Lake Tiberias whose storms make it a suitable place. Hence the "Bottle imp," a world-wide fiction of folk-lore: we shall find it in the "Book of Sindibad," and I need hardly remind the reader of Le Sage's "Diable Boiteux," borrowed from "El Diablo Cojuelo," the Spanish novel by Luiz Velez de Guevara.

[67] Márid (lit. "contumacious" from the Heb. root Marad to rebel, whence "Nimrod" in late Semitic) is one of the tribes of the Jinn, generally but not always hostile to man. His female is "Máridah."

[68] As Solomon began to reign (according to vulgar chronometry) in B.C. 1015, the text would place the tale circ. A.D. 785, = A.H. 169. But we can lay no stress on this date which may be merely fanciful. Professor Tawney very justly compares this Moslem Solomon with the Hindu King, Vikramáditya, who ruled over the seven divisions of the world and who had as many devils to serve him as he wanted.

[69] Arab. "Yá Ba'íd:" a euphemism here adopted to prevent using grossly abusive language. Others will occur in the course of these pages.

[70] i. e. about to fly out; "My heart is in my mouth." The Fisherman speaks with the dry humour of a Fellah.

[71] "Sulayman," when going out to ease himself, entrusted his seal-ring upon which his kingdom depended to a concubine "Amínah" (the "Faithful"), when Sakhr, transformed to the King's likeness, came in and took it. The prophet was reduced to beggary, but after forty days the demon fled throwing into the sea the ring which was swallowed by a fish and eventually returned to Sulayman. This Talmudic fable is hinted at in the Koran (chaps. xxxviii.), and commentators have extensively embroidered it. Asaf, son of

Barkhiya, was Wazir to Sulayman and is supposed to be the "one with whom was the knowledge of the Scriptures" (Koran, chaps. xxxvii.), i.e. who knew the Ineffable Name of Allah. See the manifest descendant of the Talmudic Koranic fiction in the "Tale of the Emperor Jovinian" (No. lix.) of the Gesta Romanorum, the most popular book of mediæval Europe composed in England (or Germany) about the end of the thirteenth century.

[72] Arab. "Kumkam," a gourd-shaped bottle of metal, china or glass, still used for sprinkling scents. Lane gives an illustration (chaps. viii., Mod. Egypt.).

[73] Arab. meaning "the Mother of Amir," a nickname for the hyena, which bites the hand that feeds it.

[74] The intellect of man is stronger than that of the Jinni; the Ifrit, however, enters the jar because he has been adjured by the Most Great Name and not from mere stupidity. The seal-ring of Solomon according to the Rabbis contained a chased stone which told him everything he wanted to know.

[75] The Mesmerist will notice this shudder which is familiar to him as preceding the "magnetic" trance.

[76] Arab. "Bahr" which means a sea, a large river, a sheet of water, etc., lit. water cut or trenched in the earth. Bahri in Egypt means Northern; so Yamm (Sea, Mediterranean) in Hebrew is West.

[77] In the Bull Edit. "Ruyán," evidently a clerical error. The name is fanciful not significant.

[78] The geography is ultra-Shakespearean. "Fárs" (whence "Persia") is the central Province of the grand old Empire now a mere wreck, "Rúm" (which I write Roum, in order to avoid Jamaica) is the neo-Roman or Byzantine Empire, while "Yunan" is the classical Arab term for Greece (Ionia) which unlearned Moslems believe to be now under water.

[79] The Sun greets Mohammed every morning even as it dances on Easter Day for Christendom. Risum teneatis?

[80] Arab. "Nadím," a term often occurring. It denotes one who was intimate enough to drink with the Caliph, a very high honour and a dangerous. The last who sat with "Nudamá" was Al-Razi bi'llah A.H. 329 = 940. See Al-Siyuti's famous "History of the Caliphs" translated and admirably annotated by Major H. S. Jarrett, for the Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, 1880.

[81]Arab. Maydán (from Persian); Lane generally translates it "horse course ' and Payne "tilting yard." It is both and something more; an open space, in or near the city, used for reviewing troops, races, playing the Jeríd (cane-spear) and other sports and exercises: thus Al-Maydan=Gr. hippodrome. The game here alluded to is our -'polo," or hockey on horseback, a favourite with the Persian Kings, as all old illustrations of the Shahnamah show. Maydan is also a natural plain for which copious Arabic has many terms, Fayhah or Sath (a plain generally), Khabt (a low-lying plain), Bat'há (a low sandy flat), Mahattah (a plain fit for halting) and so forth. (Pilgrimage iii., 11.)

[82] For details concerning the "Ghusl" see Night xliv.

[83] A popular idiom and highly expressive, contrasting the upright bearing of the self-satisfied man with the slouch of the miserable and the skirt-trailing of the woman in grief. I do not see the necessity of such Latinisms as "dilated" or "expanded."

[84] All these highest signs of favour foreshow, in Eastern tales and in Eastern life, an approaching downfall of the heaviest; they are so great that they arouse general jealousy. Many of us have seen this at native courts.

[85] This phrase is contained in the word "ihdák" =encompassing, as the conjunctive does the pupil.

[86] I have noted this formula, which is used even in conversation

when about to relate some great unfact.

[87] We are obliged to English the word by “valley,” which is about as correct as the “brook Kedron,” applied to the grisliest of ravines. The Wady (in old Coptic wah, oah, whence “Oasis”) is the bed of a watercourse which flows only after rains. I have rendered it by “Fiumara” (Pilgrimage i., 5, and ii., 196, etc.), an Italian or rather a Sicilian word which exactly describes the “wady.”

[88] I have described this scene which Mr. T. Wolf illustrated by an excellent lithograph in “Falconry, etc.” (London, Van Voorst, MDCCCLII.)

[89] Arab. “Kaylúlah,” mid-day sleep; called siesta from the sixth canonical hour.

[90] This parrot-story is world-wide in folk-lore and the belief in metempsychosis, which prevails more or less over all the East, there lends it probability. The “Book of Sindibad” (see Night dlxxix. and “The Academy,” Sept. 20, 1884, No. 646) converts it into the “Story of the Confectioner, his Wife and the Parrot,” and it is the base of the Hindostani text- book, “Tota-Kaháni” (Parrot-chat), an abridgement of the Tutinámah (Parrot-book) of Nakhshabi (circ. A.D. 1300), a congener of the Sanskrit “Suka Saptati,” or Seventy Parrot-stories. The tale is not in the Bull. or Mac. Edits. but occurs in the Bresl. (i., p, 91) much mutilated; and better in the Calc. Edit I cannot here refrain from noticing how vilely the twelve vols. of the Breslau Edit have been edited; even a table of contents being absent from the first four volumes.

[91] The young “Turk” is probably a late addition, as it does not appear in many of the MSS., e. g. the Bresl. Edit. The wife usually spreads a cloth over the cage; this in the Turkish translation becomes a piece of leather.

[92] The Hebrew-Syrian month July used to express the height of summer. As Herodotus tells us (ii. 4) the Egyptians claimed to be the discoverers of the solar year and the portioners of its course into

twelve parts.

[93] This proceeding is thoroughly characteristic of the servile class; they conscientiously conceal everything from the master till he finds a clew; after which they tell him everything and something more.

[94] Until late years, merchants and shopkeepers in the nearer East all carried and held it a disgrace to leave the house unarmed.

[95] The Bresl. Edit. absurdly has Jazírah (an island).

[96] The Ghúlah (fem. of Ghúl) is the Heb. Lilith or Lilis; the classical Lamia; the Hindu Yogini and Dakini, the Chaldean Utug and Gigim (desert-demons) as opposed to the Mas (hill-demon) and Telal (who steal into towns); the Ogress of our tales and the Bala yaga (Granny-witch) of Russian folk-lore. Etymologically "Ghul" is a calamity, a panic fear; and the monster is evidently the embodied horror of the grave and the graveyard.

[97] Arab. "Shább" (Lat. juvenis) between puberty and forty or according to some fifty; when the patient becomes a "Rajul ikhtiyár" (man of free will) politely termed, and then a Shaykh or Shaybah (gray-beard, oldster).

[98] Some proverbial name now forgotten. Torrens () translates it "the giglot" (Fortune?) but "cannot discover the drift."

[99] Arab. "Ihtizáz," that natural and instinctive movement caused by good news suddenly given, etc.

[100] Arab. "Kohl," in India, Surmah, not a "collyrium," but powdered antimony for the eyelids. That sold in the bazars is not the real grey ore of antimony but a galena or sulphuret of lead. Its use arose as follows. When Allah showed Himself to Moses on Sinai through an opening the size of a needle, the Prophet fainted and the Mount took fire: thereupon Allah said, "Henceforth shalt thou and thy seed grind the earth of this mountain and apply it to your eyes!" The powder is kept in an étui called Makhalah and applied with a thick blunt needle

to the inside of the eyelid, drawing it along the rim; hence etui and probe denote the sexual rem in re and in cases of adultery the question will be asked, “Didst thou see the needle in the Kohl-pot ?” Women mostly use a preparation of soot or lamp-black (Hind. Kajala, Kajjal) whose colour is easily distinguished from that of Kohl. The latter word, with the article (Al-Kohl) is the origin of our “alcohol;” though even M. Littré fails to show how “fine powder” became “spirits of wine.” I found this powder (wherewith Jezebel “painted” her eyes) a great preservative from ophthalmia in desert-travelling: the use in India was universal, but now European example is gradually abolishing it.

[101] The tale of these two women is now forgotten.

[102] Arab. “Atadakhkhal.” When danger threatens it is customary to seize a man’s skirt and cry “Dakhíl-ak!” (= under thy protection). Among noble tribes the Badawi thus invoked will defend the stranger with his life. Foreigners have brought themselves into contempt by thus applying to women or to mere youths.

[103] The formula of quoting from the Koran.

[104] Lit. “Allah not desolate me” (by thine absence). This is still a popular phrase - Lá tawáhishná = Do not make me desolate, i.e. by staying away too long, and friends meeting after a term of days exclaim “Auhashtani!”=thou hast made me desolate, Je suis desole.

[105] Charming simplicity of manners when the Prime Minister carries the fish (shade of Vattel!)!) to the cookmaid. The “Gesta Romanorum” is nowhere more naïve.

[106] Arab. “Kahílat al-taraf” = lit. eyelids lined with Kohl; and figuratively “with black lashes and languorous look.” This is a phrase which frequently occurs in The Nights and which, as will appear, applies to the “lower animals” as well as to men. Moslems in Central Africa apply Kohl not to the thickness of the eyelid but upon both outer lids, fixing it with some greasy substance. The peculiar Egyptian (and Syrian) eye with its thick fringes of jet-black lashes,

looking like lines of black drawn with soot, easily suggests the simile. In England I have seen the same appearance amongst miners fresh from the colliery.

[107] Of course applying to her own case.

[108] Prehistoric Arabs who measured from 60 to 100 cubits high: Koran, chaps. xxvi., etc. They will often be mentioned in The Nights.

[109] I Arab. “Dastúr” (from Persian) = leave, permission. The word has two meanings (see Burckhardt, Arab. Prov. No. 609) and is much used, ea. before walking up stairs or entering a room where strange women might be met. So “Tarík” = Clear the way (Pilgrimage, iii., 319). The old Persian occupation of Egypt, not to speak of the Persian speaking Circassians and other rulers has left many such traces in popular language. One of them is that horror of travelers - “Bakhshísh” pron. bakh-sheesh and shortened to shísh from the Pers. “bakhshish.” Our “Christmas box” has been most unnecessarily derived from the same, despite our reading: —

Gladly the boy, with Christmas box in hand.

And, as will be seen, Persians have bequeathed to the outer world worse things than bad language, e.g. heresy and sodomy.

[110] He speaks of his wife but euphemistically in the masculine.

[111] A popular saying throughout Al-Islam.

[112] Arab. “Fata”: lit.=a youth; a generous man, one of noble mind (as youth-tide should be). It corresponds with the Lat. “vir,” and has much the meaning of the Ital. “Giovane,” the Germ. “Junker” and our “gentleman.”

[113] From the Bul. Edit.

[114] The vagueness of his statement is euphemistic.

[115] This readiness of shedding tears contrasts strongly with the external stoicism of modern civilization; but it is true to Arab character, and Easterns, like the heroes of Homer and Italians of Boccacio, are not ashamed of what we look upon as the result of feminine hysteria - “a good cry.”

[116] The formula (constantly used by Moslems) here denotes displeasure, doubt how to act and so forth. Pronounce, “Lá haula wa lá kuwwata illá bi ‘lláhi ‘I-Aliyyi ‘I-Azim.” As a rule mistakes are marvellous: Mandeville (chaps. xii.) for “Lá iláha illa ‘lláhu wa Muhammadun Rasúlu ‘llah” writes “La ellec sila, Machomete rores alla.” The former (lá haula, etc.), on account of the four peculiar Arabic letters, is everywhere pronounced differently. and the exclamation is called “Haulak” or “Haukal.”

[117] An Arab holds that he has a right to marry his first cousin, the daughter of his father’s brother, and if any win her from him a death and a blood-feud may result. It was the same in a modified form amongst the Jews and in both races the consanguineous marriage was not attended by the evil results (idiotcy, congenital deafness, etc.) observed in mixed races like the English and the Anglo-American. When a Badawi speaks of “the daughter of my uncle” he means wife; and the former is the dearer title, as a wife can be divorced, but blood is thicker than water.

[118] Arab. “Kahbah;” the coarsest possible term. Hence the unhappy “Cave” of Don Roderick the Goth, which simply means The Whore.

[119] The Arab “Banj” and Hindú “Bhang” (which I use as most familiar) both derive from the old Coptic “Nibanj” meaning a preparation of hemp (Cannabis sativa seu Indica); and here it is easy to recognise the Homeric “Nepenthe.” Al- Kazwini explains the term by “garden hemp (Kinnab bostáni or Sháhdánaj). On the other hand not a few apply the word to the henbane (hyoscyamus niger) so much used in mediæval Europe. The Kámús evidently means henbane distinguishing it from Hashish al haráfísh” = rascals’ grass, i.e. the herb Pantagruelion. The “Alfáz Adwiya” (French translation)

explains “Tabannuj” by “Endormir quelqu’un en lui faisant avaler de la jusquiame.” In modern parlance Tabannuj is = our anæsthetic administered before an operation, a deadener of pain like myrrh and a number of other drugs. For this purpose hemp is always used (at least I never heard of henbane); and various preparations of the drug are sold at an especial bazar in Cairo. See the “powder of marvellous virtue” in Boccaccio, iii., 8; and iv., 10. Of these intoxicants, properly so termed, I shall have something to say in a future page.

The use of Bhang doubtless dates from the dawn of civilisation, whose earliest social pleasures would be inebriants. Herodotus (iv. c. 75) shows the Scythians burning the seeds (leaves and capsules) in worship and becoming drunken with the fumes, as do the S. African Bushmen of the present day. This would be the earliest form of smoking: it is still doubtful whether the pipe was used or not. Galen also mentions intoxication by hemp. Amongst Moslems, the Persians adopted the drink as an ecstatic, and about our thirteenth century Egypt, which began the practice, introduced a number of preparations to be noticed in the course of The Nights.

[120] The rubbish heaps which outlie Eastern cities, some (near Cairo) are over a hundred feet high.

[121] Arab. “Kurrat al-aye;” coolness of eyes as opposed to a hot eye (“sakhin”) one red with tears. The term is true and picturesque so I translate it literally. All coolness is pleasant to dwellers in burning lands: thus in Al-Hariri Abu Z yd says of Bassorah, “I found there whatever could fill the eye with coolness.” And a “cool booty” (or prize) is one which has been secured without plunging into the flames of war, or imply a pleasant prize.

[122] Popularly rendered Caucasus (see Night cdxcvi): it corresponds so far with the Hindu “Udaya” that the sun rises behind it; and the “false dawn” is caused by a hole or gap. It is also the Persian Alborz, the Indian Meru (Sumeru), the Greek Olympus and the Rhiphæan Range (Veliki Camenypoys) or great starry girdle of the world, etc.

[123] Arab. “Mizr” or “Mizar;” vulg. Búzah; hence the medical Lat. Buza, the Russian Buza (millet beer), our booze, the O. Dutch “buyzen” and the German “busen.” This is the old of negro and negroid Africa, the beer of Osiris, of which dried remains have been found in jars amongst Egyptian tombs. In Equatorial Africa it known as Pombe; on the Upper Nile “Merissa” or “Mirisi” and amongst the Kafirs (Caffers) “Tshuala,” “Oala” or “Boyala:” I have also heard of “Buswa”in Central Africa which may be the origin of “Buzah.” In the West it became , (Romaic), Xythum and cerevisia or cervisia, the humor ex hordeo, long before the days of King Gambrinus. Central Africans drink it in immense quantities: in Unyamwezi the standing bedsteads, covered with bark-slabs, are all made sloping so as to drain off the liquor. A chief lives wholly on beef and Pombe which is thick as gruel below. Hops are unknown: the grain, mostly Holcus, is made to germinate, then pounded, boiled and left to ferment. In Egypt the drink is affected chiefly by Berbers, Nubians and slaves from the Upper Nile, but it is a superior article and more like that of Europe than the “Pombe.” I have given an account of the manufacture in The Lake Regions of Central Africa, vol. ii., . There are other preparations, Umm-bulbul (mother nightie gale), Dinzáyah and Súbiyah, for which I must refer to the Shaykh El-Tounsy.

[124] There is a terrible truth in this satire, which reminds us of the noble dame who preferred to her handsome husband the palefrenier laid, ord et infâme of Queen Margaret of Navarre (Heptameron No. xx.). We have all known women who sacrificed everything despite themselves, as it were, for the most worthless of men. The world stares and scoffs and blames and understands nothing. There is for every woman one man and one only in whose slavery she is “ready to sweep the floor.” Fate is mostly opposed to her meeting him but, when she does, adieu husband and children, honour and religion, life and “soul.” Moreover Nature (human) commands the union of contrasts, such as fair and foul, dark and light, tall and short; otherwise mankind would be like the canines, a race of extremes, dwarf as toy-terriers, giants like mastiffs, bald as Chinese “remedy dogs,” or hairy as Newfoundlands. The famous Wilkes said only a half truth when he backed himself, with an hour s start, against the

handsomest man in England; his uncommon and remarkable ugliness (he was, as the Italians say, un bel brutto) was the highest recommendation in the eyes of very beautiful women.

[125] Every Moslem burial-ground has a place of the kind where honourable women may sit and weep unseen by the multitude. These visits are enjoined by the Apostle: — Frequent the cemetery, ‘twill make you think of futurity! Also: — Whoever visiteth the graves of his parents (or one of them) every Friday, he shall be written a pious son, even though he might have been in the world, before that, a disobedient. (Pilgrimage, ii., 71.) The buildings resemble our European “mortuary chapels.” Said, Pasha of Egypt, was kind enough to erect one on the island off Suez, for the “use of English ladies who would like shelter whilst weeping and wailing for their dead.” But I never heard that any of the ladles went there.

[126] Arab. “Ajal”=the period of life, the appointed time of death: the word is of constant recurrence and is also applied to sudden death. See Lane’s Dictionary, s.v.

[127] “The dying Badawi to his tribe” (and lover) appears to me highly pathetic. The wild people love to be buried upon hill slopes whence they can look down upon the camp; and they still call out the names of kinsmen and friends as they pass by the grave-yards. A similar piece occurs in Wetzstein (, “Reisebericht ueber Hauran,” etc.): —

O bear with you my bones where the camel bears his load
And bury me before you, if buried I must be;
And let me not be burled ‘neath the burden of the vine
But high upon the hill whence your sight I ever see!
As you pass along my grave cry aloud and name your names
The crying of your names shall revive the bones of me:
I have fasted through my life with my friends, and in my
death, I will feast when we meet, on that day of joy and
glee.

[128] The Akásirah (plur. of Kasrá=Chosroës) is here a title of the four

great dynasties of Persian Kings. 1. The Peshdadian or Assyrian race, proto-historics for whom dates fail, 2. The Káyánián (Medes and Persians) who ended with the Alexandrian invasion in B. C. 331. 3. The Ashkánián (Parthenians or Arsacides) who ruled till A. D. 202; and 4. The Sassanides which have already been mentioned. But strictly speaking "Kisri" and "Kasra" are titles applied only to the latter dynasty and especially to the great King Anushirwan. They must not be confounded with "Khusrau" (P. N. Cyrus, Ahasuerus? Chosroës?), and yet the three seem to have combined in "Cæsar," Kaysar and Czar. For details especially connected with Zoroaster see vol. I, of the Dabistan or School of Manners, translated by David Shea and Anthony Troyer, Paris, 1843. The book is most valuable, but the proper names are so carelessly and incorrectly printed that the student is led into perpetual error.

[129] The words are the very lowest and coarsest; but the scene is true to Arab life.

[130] Arab."Hayhát:" the word, written in a variety of ways is onomatopoetic, like our "heigh-ho!" it sometimes means "far from me (or you) be it!" but in popular usage it is simply "Alas."

[131] Lane (i., 134) finds a date for the book in this passage. The Soldan of Egypt, Mohammed ibn Kala'ún, in the early eighth century (Hijrah = our fourteenth), issued a sumptuary law compelling Christians and Jews to wear indigo-blue and saffron-yellow turbans, the white being reserved for Moslems. But the custom was much older and Mandeville (chaps. ix.) describes it in A. D. 1322 when it had become the rule. And it still endures; although abolished in the cities it is the rule for Christians, at least in the country parts of Egypt and Syria. I may here remark that such detached passages as these are absolutely useless for chronology: they may be simply the additions of editors or mere copyists.

[132] The ancient "Mustaphá" = the Chosen (prophet, i. e. Mohammed), also titled Al-Mujtaba, the Accepted (Pilgrimage, ii., 309). "Murtaza"=the Elect, i.e. the Caliph Ali is the older "Mortada" or

"Mortadi" of Ockley and his day, meaning "one pleasing to (or acceptable to) Allah." Still older writers corrupted it to "Mortis Ali" and readers supposed this to be the Caliph's name.

[133] The gleam (zodiacal light) preceding the true dawn; the Persians call the former Subh-i-kázib (false or lying dawn) opposed to Subh-i-sádik (true dawn) and suppose that it is caused by the sun shining through a hole in the world- encircling Mount Kaf.

[134] So the Heb. "Arún" = naked, means wearing the lower robe only; = our "in his shirt."

[135] Here we have the vulgar Egyptian colloquialism "Aysh" (— Ayyu shayyin) for the classical "Má" = what.

[136] "In the name of Allah!" here said before taking action.

[137] Arab. "Mamlúk" (plur. Mamálik) lit. a chattel; and in The Nights a white slave trained to arms. The "Mameluke Beys" of Egypt were locally called the "Ghuzz," I use the convenient word in its old popular sense;

'Tis sung, there's a valiant Mameluke
In foreign lands ycleped (Sir Luke)-
HUDIBRAS.

And hence, probably, Molière's "Mamamouchi"; and the modern French use "Mamalue." See Savary's Letters, No. xl.

[138] The name of this celebrated succesor of Nineveh, where some suppose The Nights were written, is orig. (middle- gates) because it stood on the way where four great highways meet. The Arab. form "Mausil" (the vulgar "Mosul") is also significant, alluding to the "junction" of Assyria and Babylonis. Hence our "muslin."

[139] This is Mr. Thackeray's "nose-bag." I translate by "walking-shoes" the Arab "Khuff" which are a manner of loose boot covering the ankle; they are not usually embroidered, the ornament being

reserved for the inner shoe.

[140] i.e. Syria (says Abulfeda) the “land on the left” (of one facing the east) as opposed to Al-Yaman the “land on the right.” Osmani would mean Turkish, Ottoman. When Bernard the Wise (Bohn,) speaks of “Bagada and Axiam” (Mabillon’s text) or “Axinarri” (still worse), he means Baghdad and Ash-Shám (Syria, Damascus), the latter word puzzling his Editor. Richardson (Dissert, lxxii.) seems to support a hideous attempt to derive Shám from Shámat, a mole or wart, because the country is studded with hillocks! Al-Shám is often applied to Damascus-city whose proper name Dimishk belongs to books: this term is generally derived from Damáshik b. Káli b. Málik b. Sham (Shem). Lee (Ibn Batùtah, 29) denies that ha-Dimishki means “Eliezer of Damascus.”

[141] From Oman = Eastern Arabia.

[142] Arab. “Tamar Hannà” lit. date of Henna, but applied to the flower of the eastern privet (Lawsonia inermis) which has the sweet scent of freshly mown hay. The use of Henna as a dye is known even in Enland. The “myrtle” alluded to may either have been for a perfume (as it is held an anti-intoxicant) or for eating, the bitter aromatic berries of the “Ás” being supposed to flavour wine and especially Raki (raw brandy).

[143] Lane. (i. 211) pleasantly remarks, “A list of these sweets is given in my original, but I have thought it better to omit the names” (!) Dozy does not shirk his duty, but he is not much more satisfactory in explaining words interesting to students because they are unfound in dictionaries and forgotten by the people. “Akrás (cakes) Laymunìyah (of limes) wa Maymunìyah” appears in the Bresl. Edit. as “Ma’amuniyah” which may mean “Ma’amun’s cakes” or “delectable cakes.” “Amshát” = (combs) perhaps refers to a fine kind of Kunàfah (vermicelli) known in Egypt and Syria as “Ghazl al-banát” = girl’s spinning.

[144] The new moon carefully looked for by all Moslems because it

begins the Ramazán-fast.

[145] Solomon's signet ring has before been noticed.

[146] The "high-bosomed" damsel, with breasts firm as a cube, is a favourite with Arab tale tellers. Fanno baruffa is the Italian term for hard breasts pointing outwards.

[147] A large hollow navel is looked upon not only as a beauty, but in children it is held a promise of good growth.

[148] Arab. "Ka'ah," a high hall opening upon the central court: we shall find the word used for a mansion, barrack, men's quarters, etc.

[149] Babel = Gate of God (El), or Gate of Ilu (P. N. of God), which the Jews ironically interpreted "Confusion." The tradition of Babylonia being the very centre of witchcraft and enchantment by means of its Seven Deadly Spirits, has survived in Al-Islam; the two fallen angels (whose names will occur) being confined in a well; Nimrod attempting to reach Heaven from the Tower in a magical car drawn by monstrous birds and so forth. See , Francois Fenormant's "Chaldean Magic," London, Bagsters.

[150] Arab. "Kámat Alfíyyah" = like the letter Alif, a straight perpendicular stroke. In the Egyptian hieroglyphs, the origin of every alphabet (not syllabarium) known to man, one form was a flag or leaf of water-plant standing upright. Hence probably the Arabic Alif-shape; while other nations preferred other modifications of the letter (ox's head, etc), which in Egyptian number some thirty-six varieties, simple and compound.

[151] I have not attempted to order this marvellous confusion of metaphors so characteristic of The Nights and the exigencies of Al-Saj'a = rhymed prose.

[152] Here and elsewhere I omit the "kála (dice Turpino)" of the original: Torrens preserves "Thus goes the tale" (which it only interrupts). This is simply letter-wise and sense-foolish.

[153] Of this worthy more at a future time.

[154] i.e., sealed with the Kazi or legal authority's seal of office.

[155] "Nothing for nothing" is a fixed idea with the Eastern woman: not so much for greed as for a sexual point d' honneur when dealing with the adversary — man.

[156] She drinks first, the custom of the universal East, to show that the wine she had bought was unpoisoned. Easterns, who utterly ignore the "social glass" of Western civilisation drink honestly to get drunk; and, when far gone are addicted to horse- play (in Pers. "Badmasti" = le vin mauvais) which leads to quarrels and bloodshed. Hence it is held highly irreverent to assert of patriarchs, prophets and saints that they "drank wine;" and Moslems agree with our "Teatotallers" in denying that, except in the case of Noah, inebriatives are anywhere mentioned in Holy Writ.

[157] Arab. "Húr al-Ayn," lit. (maids) with eyes of lively white and black, applied to the virgins of Paradise who will wive with the happy Faithful. I retain our vulgar "Houri," warning the reader that it is a masc. for a fem. ("Huríyah") in Arab, although accepted in Persian, a genderless speach.

[158] Arab. "Zambúr," whose head is amputated in female circumcision. See Night ccccIxxiv.

[159] Ocymum basilicum noticed in Introduction, the bassilico of Boccaccio iv. 5. The Book of Kalilah and Dimnah represents it as "sprouting with something also whose smell is foul and disgusting and the sower at once sets to gather it and burn it with fire." (The Fables of Bidpai translated from the later Syriac version by I. G. N. Keith-Falconer, etc., etc., etc., Cambridge University Press, 1885). Here, however, Habk is a pennyroyal (mentha puligium), and probably alludes to the pecten.

[160] i. e. common property for all to beat.

[161] “A digit of the moon” is the Hindú equivalent.

[162] Better known to us as Caravanserai, the “Travellers’ Bungalow” of India: in the Khan, however, shelter is to be had, but neither bed nor board.

[163] Arab. “Zubb.” I would again note that this and its synonyms are the equivalents of the Arabic, which is of the lowest. The tale-teller’s evident object is to accentuate the contrast with the tragical stories to follow.

[164] “In the name of Allah,” is here a civil form of dismissal.

[165] Lane (i. 124) is scandalised and naturally enough by this scene, which is the only blot in an admirable tale admirably told. Yet even here the grossness is but little more pronounced than what we find in our old drama (e. g., Shakespeare’s King Henry V.) written for the stage, whereas tales like The Nights are not read or recited before both sexes. Lastly “nothing follows all this palming work:” in Europe the orgie would end very differently. These “nuns of Theleme” are physically pure: their debauchery is of the mind, not the body. Galland makes them five, including the two doggesses.

[166] So Sir Francis Walsingham’s “They which do that they should not, should hear that they would not.”

[167] The old “Calendar,” pleasantly associated with that form of almanac. The Mac. Edit. has Karandaliyah,” a vile corruption, like Ibn Batutah’s “Karandar” and Torrens’ “Kurundul:” so in English we have the accepted vulgarism of “Kernel” for Colonel. The Bull Edit. uses for synonym “Su’ulúk”=an asker, a beggar. Of these mendicant monks, for such they are, much like the Sarabaites of mediæval Europe, I have treated and of their institutions and its founder, Shaykh Sharif Bu Ali Kalandar (ob. A. H. 724 =1323-24), at some length in my “History of Sindh,” chaps. viii. See also the Dabistan (i. 136) where the good Kalandar exclaims: —

> If the thorn break in my body, how trifling the pain!

But how sorely I feel for the poor broken thorn!

D’Herbelot is right when he says that the Kalandar is not generally approved by Moslems: he labours to win free from every form and observance and he approaches the Malámati who conceals all his good deeds and boasts of his evil doings — our “Devil’s hypocrite.”

[168] The “Kalandar” disfigures himself in this manner to show “mortification.”

[169] Arab. “Gharíb:” the porter is offended because the word implies “poor devil;” esp. one out of his own country.

[170] A religious mendicant generally.

[171] Very scandalous to Moslem “respectability” Mohammed said the house was accursed when the voices of women could be heard out of doors. Moreover the neighbours have a right to interfere and abate the scandal.

[172] I need hardly say that these are both historical personages; they will often be mentioned, and Ja’afar will be noticed in the Terminal Essay.

[173] Arab. “Same ‘an wa tá’atan”; a popular phrase of assent generally translated “to hear is to obey;” but this formula may be and must be greatly varied. In places it means “Hearing (the word of Allah) and obeying” (His prophet, viceregent, etc.)

[174] Arab. “Sawáb”=reward in Heaven. This word for which we have no equivalent has been naturalized in all tongues (e. g. Hindostani) spoken by Moslems.

[175] Wine-drinking, at all times forbidden to Moslems, vitiates the Pilgrimage rite: the Pilgrim is vowed to a strict observance of the ceremonial law and many men date their “reformation” from the “Hajj.” Pilgrimage, iii., 126.

[176] Here some change has been necessary; as the original text confuses the three "ladies."

[177] In Arab. the plural masc. is used by way of modesty when a girl addresses her lover and for the same reason she speaks of herself as a man.

[178] Arab. "Al-Na'ím", in ful "Jannat-al-Na'ím" = the Garden of Delights, i.e. the fifth Heaven made of white silver. The generic name of Heaven (the place of reward) is "Jannat," lit. a garden; "Firdaus" being evidently derived from the Persian through the Greek {Greek Letters}, and meaning a chase, a hunting park. Writers on this subject should bear in mind Mandeville's modesty, "Of Paradise I cannot speak properly, for I was not there."

[179] Arab. "Mikra'ah," the dried mid-rib of a date-frond used for many purposes, especially the bastinado.

[180] According to Lane (i., 229) these and the immediately following verses are from an ode by Ibn Sahl al-Ishbili. They are in the Bull Edit. not the Mac. Edit.

[181] The original is full of conceits and plays on words which are not easily rendered in English.

[182] Arab. "Tarjumán," same root as Chald. Targum (= a translation), the old "Truchman," and through the Ital. "tergomano" our "Dragoman," here a messenger.

[183] Lit. the "person of the eyes," our "babe of the eyes," a favourite poetical conceit in all tongues; much used by the Elizabethans, but now neglected as a silly kind of conceit. See Night ccix.

[184] Arab. "Sár" (Thár) the revenge-right recognised by law and custom (Pilgrimage, iii., 69).

[185] That is "We all swim in the same boat."

[186] Ja'afar ever acts, on such occasions, the part of a wise and sensible man compelled to join in a foolish frolic. He contrasts strongly with the Caliph, a headstrong despot who will not be gainsaid, whatever be the whim of the moment. But Easterns would look upon this as a proof of his "kingliness."

[187] Arab. "Wa'l- Salám" (pronounced Was-Salám); meaning "and here ends the matter." In our slang we say "All right, and the child's name is Antony."

[188] This is a favourite jingle, the play being upon "ibrat" (a needle-graver) and " 'ibrat" (an example, a warning).

[189] That is "make his bow," as the English peasant pulls his forelock. Lane (i., 249) suggests, as an afterthought, that it means:— "Recover thy senses; in allusion to a person's drawing his hand over his head after sleep or a fit." But it occurs elsewhere in the sense of "cut thy stick."

[190] This would be a separate building like our family tomb and probably domed, resembling that mentioned in "The King of the Black Islands." Europeans usually call it "a little Wali;" or, as they write it, "Wely," the contained for the container; the "Santon" for the "Santon's tomb." I have noticed this curious confusion (which begins with Robinson, i. 322) in "Unexplored Syria," i. 161.

[191] Arab. "Wiswás," = diabolical temptation or suggestion. The "Wiswásí" is a man with scruples (scrupulus, a pebble in the shoe), e.g. one who fears that his ablutions were deficient, etc.

[192] Arab. "Katf" = pinioning by tying the arms behind the back and shoulders (Kitf) a dire disgrace to free-born men.

[193] Arab. "Nafs."=Hebr. Nephesh (Nafash) =soul, life as opposed to "Ruach"= spirit and breath. In these places it is equivalent to "I said to myself." Another form of the root is "Nafas," breath, with an idea of inspiration: so 'Sáhib Nafas" (=master of breath) is a minor saint who heals by expiration, a matter familiar to mesmerists (Pilgrimage,

i., 86).

[194] Arab. “Kaus al-Banduk;” the “pellet bow” of modern India; with two strings joined by a bit of cloth which supports a ball of dry clay or stone. It is chiefly used for birding.

[195] In the East blinding was a common practice, especially in the case of junior princes not required as heirs. A deep perpendicular incision was made down each corner of the eyes; the lids were lifted and the balls removed by cutting the optic nerve and the muscles. The later Caliphs blinded their victims by passing a red-hot sword blade close to the orbit or a needle over the eye-ball. About the same time in Europe the operation was performed with a heated metal basin — the well known bacinare (used by Ariosto), as happened to Pier delle Vigne (Petrus de Vineâ), the “godfather of modern Italian.”

[196] Arab. “Khinzír” (by Europeans pronounced “Hanzír”), prop. a wild-boar, but popularly used like our “you pig!”

[197] Striking with the shoe, the pipe-stick and similar articles is highly insulting, because they are not made, like whips and scourges, for such purpose. Here the East and the West differ diametrically. “Wounds which are given by instruments which are in one’s hands by chance do not disgrace a man,” says Cervantes (D. Q. i., chaps. 15), and goes on to prove that if a Zapatero (cobbler) cudgel another with his form or last, the latter must not consider himself cudgelled. The reverse in the East where a blow of a pipe stick cost Mahommed Ali Pasha’s son his life: Ishmail Pasha was burned to death by Malik Nimr, chief of Shendy (Pilgrimage, i., 203). Moreover, the actual wound is less considered in Moslem law than the instrument which caused it: so sticks and stones are venial weapons, whilst sword and dagger, gun and pistol are felonious. See ibid. (i., 336) for a note upon the weapons with which nations are policed.

[198] Incest is now abominable everywhere except amongst the overcrowded poor of great and civilised cities. Yet such unions were common and lawful amongst ancient and highly cultivated peoples,

as the Egyptians (Isis and Osiris), Assyrians and ancient Persians. Physiologically they are injurious only when the parents have constitutional defects: if both are sound, the issue, as amongst the so-called "lower animals " is viable and healthy.

[199] Dwellers in the Northern Temperates can hardly imagine what a dust-storm is in sun parched tropical lands. In Sind we were often obliged to use candles at mid-day, while above the dust was a sun that would roast an egg.

[200] Arab. " 'Urban," now always used of the wild people, whom the French have taught us to call les Bedouins; "Badw" being a waste or desert, and Badawi (fem. Badawíyah, plur. Badáwi and Bidwán), a man of the waste. Europeans have also learnt to miscall the Egyptians "Arabs": the difference is as great as between an Englishman and a Spaniard. Arabs proper divide their race into sundry successive families. "The Arab al-Arabá" (or al- Aribah, or al-Urubíyat) are the autochthones, prehistoric, proto-historic and extinct tribes; for instance, a few of the Adites who being at Meccah escaped the destruction of their wicked nation, but mingled with other classes. The "Arab al-Muta'arribah," (Arabised Arabs) are the first advenæ represented by such noble strains as the Koraysh (Koreish), some still surviving. The "Arab al-Musta'aribah" (insititious, naturalized or instituted Arabs, men who claim to be Arabs) are Arabs like the Sinaites, the Egyptians and the Maroccans descended by intermarriage with other races. Hence our "Mosarabians" and the "Marrabais" of Rabelais (not, "a word compounded of Maurus and Arabs"). Some genealogists, however, make the Muta'arribah descendants of Kahtan (possibly the Joktan of Genesis x., a comparatively modern document, B.C. 700?); and the Musta'aribah those descended from Adnán the origin of Arab genealogy. And, lastly, are the "Arab al-Musta'ajimah," barbarised Arabs, like the present population of Meccah and Al-Medinah. Besides these there are other tribes whose origin is still unknown, such as the Mahrah tribes of Hazramaut, the "Akhdám" (=serviles) of Oman (Maskat); and the "Ebná" of Al-Yaman: Ibn Ishak supposes the latter to be descended from the Persian soldiers of Anushirwan

who expelled the Abyssinian invader from Southern Arabia. (Pilgrimage, m., 31, etc.)

[201] Arab. “Amír al-Muuminín.” The title was assumed by the Caliph Omar to obviate the inconvenience of calling himself “Khalífah” (successor) of the Khalífah of the Apostle of Allah (i.e. Abu Bakr); which after a few generations would become impossible. It means “Emir (chief or prince) of the Muumins,” men who hold to the (true Moslem) Faith, the “Imán” (theory, fundamental articles) as opposed to the “Dín,” ordinance or practice of the religion. It once became a Wazirial time conferred by Sultan Malikshah (King King- king) on his Nizám al-Murk. (Richardson’s Dissert. [viii.)

[202] This may also mean “according to the seven editions of the Koran “ the old revisions and so forth (Sale, Sect. iii. and D’Herbelot “Alcoran.”) The schools of the “Mukri,” who teach the right pronunciation wherein a mistake might be sinful, are seven, Harnzah, Ibn Katír, Ya’akúb, Ibn Amir, Kisái, Asim and Hafs, the latter being the favourite with the Hanafis and the only one now generally known in Al-Islam.

[203] Arab. “Sadd”=wall, dyke, etc. the “bund” or “band” of Anglo-India. Hence the “Sadd” on the Nile, the banks of grass and floating islands which “wall” the stream. There are few sights more appalling than a sandstorm in the desert, the “Zauba’ah” as the Arabs call it. Devils, or pillars of sand, vertical and inclined, measuring a thousand feet high, rush over the plain lashing the sand at their base like a sea surging under a furious whirlwind; shearing the grass clean away from the roots, tearing up trees, which are whirled like leaves and sticks in air and sweeping away tents and houses as if they were bits of paper. At last the columns join at the top and form, perhaps three thousand feet above the earth, a gigantic cloud of yellow sand which obliterates not only the horizon but even the mid-day sun. These sand-spouts are the terror of travellers. In Sind and the Punjab we have the dust- storm which for darkness, I have said, beats the blackest London fog.

[204] Arab. Sár = the vendetta, before mentioned, as dreaded in Arabia as in Corsica.

[205] Arab. “Ghútah,” usually a place where irrigation is abundant. It especially applies (in books) to the Damascus-plain because “it abounds with water and fruit trees.” The Ghutah is one of the four earthly paradises, the others being Basrah (Bassorah), Shiraz and Samarcand. Its peculiarity is the likeness to a seaport the Desert which rolls up almost to its doors being the sea and its ships being the camels. The first Arab to whom we owe this admirable term for the “Companion of Job” is “Tarafah” one of the poets of the Suspended Poems: he likens (v. v. 3, 4) the camels which bore away his beloved to ships sailing from Aduli. But “ships of the desert” is doubtless a term of the highest antiquity.

[206] The exigencies of the “Saj’a,” or rhymed prose, disjoint this and many similar pas. sages.

[207] The “Ebony” Islands; Scott’s “Isle of Ebene,” i., 217.

[208] “Jarjarís” in the Bul. Edit.

[209] Arab. “Takbís.” Many Easterns can hardly sleep without this kneading of the muscles, this “rubbing” whose hygienic properties England is now learning.

[210] The converse of the breast being broadened, the drooping, “draggle-tail” gait compared with the head held high and the chest inflated.

[211] This penalty is mentioned in the Koran (chaps. v.) as fit for those who fight against Allah and his Apostle, but commentators are not agreed if the sinners are first to be put to death or to hang on the cross till they die. Pharaoh (chaps. xx.) threatens to crucify his magicians on palm-trees, and is held to be the first crucifier.

[212] Arab. “‘Ajami”=foreigner, esp. a Persian: the latter in The Nights is mostly a villain. I must here remark that the contemptible

condition of Persians in Al-Hijáz (which I noted in 1852, Pilgrimage, i., 327) has completely changed. They are no longer, “The slippers of All and hounds of Omar:” they have learned the force of union and now, instead of being bullied, they bully.

[213] The Calc. Edit. turns into Tailors (Khayyátín) and Torrens does not see the misprint.

[214] i.e. Axe and sandals.

[215] Lit. “Strike his neck.”

[216] A phrase which will frequently recur; meaning the situation suggested such words a these.

[217] The smiter with the evil eye is called “A’in” and the person smitten “Ma’ím” or “Ma’ún.”

[218] Arab. “Sákiyah,” the well-known Persian wheel with pots and buckets attached to the tire. It is of many kinds, the boxed, etc., etc., and it is possibly alluded to in the “pitcher broken at the fountain” (Eccleslastes xii. 6) an accident often occurring to the modern “Noria.” Travellers mostly abuse its “dismal creaking” and “mournful monotony”: I have defended the music of the water-wheel in Pilgrimage ii. 198.

[219] Arab. “Zikr” lit. remembering, mentioning (i. c. the names of Allah), here refers to the meetings of religious for devotional exercises; the “Zikkirs,” as they are called, mostly standing or sitting in a circle while they ejaculate the Holy Name. These “rogations” are much affected by Darwayshes, or begging friars, whom Europe politely divides Unto “dancing” and “howling”; and, on one occasion, greatly to the scandal of certain Engländerinns to whom I was showing the Ezbekiyah I joined the ring of “howlers.” Lane (Mod. Egypt, see index) is profuse upon the subject of “Zikrs” and Zikkíts. It must not be supposed that they are uneducated men: the better class, however, prefers more privacy.

[220] As they thought he had been there for prayer or penance.

[221] Arab. “Ziyárat,” a visit to a pious person or place.

[222] This is a paternal salute in the East where they are particular about the part kissed. A witty and not unusually gross Persian book, called the “Al-Námah” because all questions begin with “Al” (the Arab article) contains one “Al-Wajib al-busidan?” (what best deserves bussing?) and the answer is “Kus-i-nau-pashm,” (a bobadilla with a young bush).

[223] A weight of 71-72 English grains in gold; here equivalent to the diner.

[224] Compare the tale of The Three Crows in Gammer Grethel, Evening ix.

[225] The comparison is peculiarly apposite; the earth seen from above appears hollow with a raised rim.

[226] A hundred years old.

[227] “Bahr” in Arab. means sea, river, piece of water; hence the adjective is needed.

[228] The Captain or Master of the ship (not the owner). In Al-Yaman the word also means a “barber,” in virtue of the root, Rass, a head.

[229] The text has “in the character Ruká’í,”,” or Riká’í,, the correspondence-hand.

[230] A curved character supposed to be like the basil-leaf (rayhán). Richardson calls it “Rohani.”

[231] I need hardly say that Easterns use a reed, a Calamus (Kalam applied only to the cut reed) for our quills and steel pens.

[232] Famous for being inscribed on the Kiswah (cover) of

Mohammed's tomb; a large and more formal hand still used for engrossing and for mural inscriptions. Only seventy two varieties of it are known (Pilgrimage, ii., 82).

[233] The copying and transcribing hand which is either Arabi or Ajami. A great discovery has been lately made which upsets all our old ideas of Cufic, etc. Mr. Löytved of Bayrut has found, amongst the Hauranic inscriptions, one in pure Naskhi, dating A. D. 568, or fifty years before the Hijrah; and it is accepted as authentic by my learned friend M. Ch. Clermont-Ganneau (, Pal. Explor. Fund. July 1884). In D'Herbelot and Sale's day the Koran was supposed to have been written in rude characters, like those subsequently called "Cufic," invented shortly before Mohammed's birth by Murámir ibn Murrah of Anbar in Irák, introduced into Meccah by Bashar the Kindian, and perfected by Ibn Muklah (Al-Wazir, ob. A. H. 328=940). We must now change all that. See Catalogue of Oriental Caligraphs, etc., by G. P, Badger, London, Whiteley, 1885.

[234] Capital and uncial letters; the hand in which the Ka'abah veil is inscribed (Pilgrimage iii. 299, 300).

[235] A "Court hand" says Mr. Payne (i. 112): I know nothing of it. Other hands are: the Ta'alík; hanging or oblique, used for finer MSS. and having, according to Richardson, "the same analogy to the Naskhi as our Italic has to the Roman." The Nasta' lík (not Naskh-Ta'alik) much used in India, is, as the name suggests, a mixture of the Naskhi (writing of transactions) and the Ta'alik. The Shikastah (broken hand) everywhere represents our running hand and becomes a hard task to the reader. The Kirmá is another cursive character, mostly confined to the receipts and disbursements of the Turkish treasury. The Diváni, or Court (of Justice) is the official hand, bold and round. a business character, the lines often rising with a sweep or curve towards the (left) end. The Jáli or polished has a variety, the Jali-Ta'alik: the Sulsi (known in many books) is adopted for titles of volumes, royal edicts, diplomas and so forth; "answering much the same purpose as capitals with us, or the flourished letters in illuminated manuscripts" (Richardson) The Tughrái is that of the

Tughrá, the Prince’s cypher or flourishing signature in ceremonial writings, and containing some such sentence as: Let this be executed. There are others e. g. Yákuti and Sirenkil known only by name. Finally the Maghribi (Moorish) hand differs in form and diacritical points from the characters used further east almost as much as German running hand does from English. It is curious that Richardson omits the Jali (intricate and convoluted) and the divisions of the Sulusí, Sulsi or Sulus (Thuluth) character, the Sulus al-Khafíf, etc.

[236] Arab. “Baghlah”; the male (Bagful) is used only for loads. This is everywhere the rule: nothing is more unmanageable than a restive “Macho”, and he knows that he can always get you off his back when so minded. From “Baghlah” is derived the name of the native craft Anglo-Indicè a “Buggalow.”

[237] In Heb. ““Ben-Adam” is any man opp. to “Beni ish”
(Psalm iv. 3) =filii viri, not homines.

[238] This posture is terribly trying to European legs; and few white men (unless brought up to it) can squat for any time on their heels. The ``tailor-fashion,” with crossed legs, is held to be free and easy.

[239] Arab. “Katá”=Pterocles Alchata, the well-known sand-grouse of the desert. It is very poor white flesh.

[240] Arab. “Khubz” which I do not translate “cake” or ``bread,’’ as thee would suggest the idea of our loaf. The staff of life in the East is a thin flat circle of dough baked in the oven or on the griddle, and corresponding with the Scotch “scone,” the Spanish tortilla and the Australian “flap-jack.”

[241] Arab. “Harísah,” a favourite dish of wheat (or rice) boiled and reduced to a paste with shredded meat, spices and condiments. The “bangles” is a pretty girl eating with him.

[242] These lines are repeated with a difference in Night cccxxx. They affect Rims cars, out of the way, heavy rhymes: e. g. here Sakáríj

(plur. of Sakrúj, platters, porringers); Tayáhíj (plur. of Tayhúj, the smaller caccabis-partridge); Tabáhíj (Persian Tabahjah, an me et or a stew of meat, onions, eggs, etc.) Ma’áríj (“in stepped piles” like the pyramids Lane ii 495, renders “on the stairs”); Makáríj (plur. of Makraj, a small pot); Damálíj (plur. of dumlúj, a bracelet, a bangle); Dayábíj (brocades) and Tafáríj (openings, enjoyments). In Night cccxxx. we find also Sikábíj (plur. of Sikbáj, marinated meat elsewhere explained); Faráríj (plur. of farrúj, a chicken, vulg. farkh) and Dakákíj (plur. of Gr. dakújah,, a small Jar). In the first line we have also (though not a rhyme) Gharánik Gr. , a crane, preserved in Romaic. The weeping and wailing are caused by the remembrance that all these delicacies have been demolished like a Badawi camp.

[243] This is the vinum coctum, the boiled wine, still a favourite in Southern Italy and Greece.

[244] Eastern topers delight in drinking at dawn: upon this subject I shall have more to say in other Nights.

[245] Arab. “Adab,” a crux to translators, meaning anything between good education and good manners. In mod. Turk. “Edibiyyet” (Adabiyat) = belles lettres and “Edebi’ or “Edíb” = a littérateur.

[246] The Caliph Al-Maamún, who was a bad player, used to say, “I have the administration of the world and am equal to it, whereas I am straitened in the ordering of a space of two spans by two spans.” The “board” was then “a square field of well-dressed leather.”

[247] The Rabbis (after Matth. xix. 12) count three kinds of Eunuchs; (1) Seris chammah=of the sun, i.e. natural, (2) Seris Adam=manufactured per homines; and (3) Seris Chammayim — of God (i.e.. religious abstainer). Seris (castrated) or Abd (slave) is the general Hebrew name.

[248] The “Lady of Beauty.”

[249] “Káf” has been noticed as the mountain which surrounds earth as a ring does the finger:: it is popularly used like our Alp and Alpine.

The “circumambient Ocean” (Bahr al-muhit) is the Homeric Ocean-stream.

[250] The pomegranate is probably chosen here because each fruit is supposed to contain one seed from Eden-garden. Hence a host of superstitions (Pilgrimage iii., 104) possibly connected with the Chaldaic-Babylonian god Rimmon or Ramanu. Hence Persephone or Ishtar tasted the “rich pomegranate’s seed.” Lenormant, loc. cit. p, 182.

[251] i.e. for the love of God — a favourite Moslem phrase.

[252] Arab. “Báb,” also meaning a chapter (of magic, of war, etc.), corresponding with the Persian “Dar” as in Sad-dar, the Hundred Doors. Here, however, it is figurative “I tried a new mode.” This scene is in the Mabinogion.

[253] I use this Irish term = crying for the dead, as English wants the word for the præfica, or myrialogist. The practice is not encouraged in Al-Islam; and Caliph Abu Bakr said, ; “Verily a corpse is sprinkled with boiling water by reason of the lamentations of the living, i.e. punished for not having taken measures to prevent their profitless lamentations. But the practice is from Negroland whence it reached Egypt, and the people have there developed a curious system in the “weeping-song” I have noted this in “The Lake Regions of Central Africa.” In Zoroastrianism (Dabistan, chaps. xcvii.) tears shed for the dead form a river in hell, black and frigid.

[254] These lines are hardly translatable. Arab. “Sabr” means “patience” as well as “aloes,” hereby lending itself to a host of puns and double entendres more or less vile. The aloe, according to Burckhardt, is planted in graveyards as a lesson of patience: it is also slung, like the dried crocodile, over house doors to prevent evil spirits entering: “thus hung without earth and water,” says Lane (M.E., chaps. xi.), “it will live for several years and even blossom. Hence (?) it is called Sabr, which signifies patience. But Sibr as well as Sabr (a root) means “long sufferance.” I hold the practice to be

one of the many Inner African superstitions. The wild Gallas to the present day plant aloes on graves, and suppose that when the plant sprouts the deceased has been admitted to the gardens of Wák, the Creator. (Pilgrimage iii. 350.)

[255] Every city in the East has its specific title: this was given to Baghdad either on account of its superior police or simply because it was the Capital of the Caliphate. The Tigris was also called the "River of Peace (or Security)."

[256] This is very characteristic: the passengers finding themselves in difficulties at once take command. See in my Pilgrimage (I. chaps. xi.) how we beat and otherwise maltreated the Captain of the "Golden Wire."

[257] The fable is probably based on the currents which, as in Eastern Africa, will carry a ship fifty miles a day out of her course. We first find it in Ptolemy (vii. 2) whose Maniólai Islands, of India extra Gangem, cause iron nails to fly out of ships, the effect of the Lapis Herculeus (Loadstone). Rabelais (v. c. 37) alludes to it and to the vulgar idea of magnetism being counteracted by Skordon (Scordon or garlic). Hence too the Adamant (Loadstone) Mountains of Mandeville (chaps. xxvii.) and the "Magnetic Rock" in Mr Puttock's clever "Peter Wilkins." I presume that the myth also arose from seeing craft built, as on the East African Coast, without iron nails. We shall meet with the legend again. The word Jabal ("Jebel" in Egypt) often occurs in these pages. The Arabs apply it to any rising ground or heap of rocks; so it is not always = our mountain. It has found its way to Europe e. g. Gibraltar and Monte Gibello (or Mongibel in poetry) "Mt. Ethne that men clepen Mounte Gybelle." Other special senses of Jabal will occur.

[258] As we learn from the Nubian Geographer the Arabs in early ages explored the Fortunate Islands (Jazírát al-Khálidát=Eternal Isles), or Canaries, on one of which were reported a horse and horseman in bronze with his spear pointing west. Ibn al-Ward) notes two images of hard stone, each an hundred cubits high, and upon the top of each

a figure of copper pointing with its hand backwards, as though it would say: — Return for there is nothing behind me!" But this legend attaches to older doings. The 23rd Tobba (who succeeded Bilkis), Malik bin Sharhabíl, (or Sharabíl or Sharahíl) surnamed Náshir al-Ní'am=scatterer of blessings, lost an army in attempting the Western sands and set up a statue of copper upon whose breast was inscribed in antique characters: —

There is no access behind me,
Nothing beyond,
(Saith) The Son of Sharabíl.

[259] i.e. I exclaimed "Bismillah!"

[260] The lesser ablution of hands, face and feet; a kind of "washing the points." More in Night ccccxl.

[261] Arab. "Ruka'tayn"; the number of these bows which are followed by the prostrations distinguishes the five daily prayers.

[262] The "Beth Kol" of the Hebrews; also called by the Moslems "Hátif"; for which ask the Spiritualists. It is the Hindu "voice divine" or "voice from heaven."

[263] These formulae are technically called Tasmiyah, Tahlil (before noted) and Takbír: i.e. "testifying" is Tashhíd.

[264] Arab. "Samn," (Pers. "Raughan" Hind. "Ghi") the "single sauce" of the East; fresh butter set upon the fire, skimmed and kept (for a century if required) in leather bottles and demijohns. Then it becomes a hard black mass, considered a panacea for wounds and diseases. It is very "filling": you say jocosely to an Eastern threatened with a sudden inroad of guests, "Go, swamp thy rice with Raughan." I once tried training, like a Hindu Pahlawan or athlete, on Gur (raw sugar), milk and Ghi; and the result was being blinded by bile before the week ended.

[265] These handsome youths are always described in the terms we

should apply to women.

[266] The Bull Edit. (i. 43) reads otherwise: — I found a garden and a second and a third and so on till they numbered thirty and nine; and, in each garden, I saw what praise will not express, of trees and rills and fruits and treasures. At the end of the last I sighted a door and said to myself, “What may be in this place?; needs must I open it and look in!” I did so accordingly and saw a courser ready saddled and bridled and picketed; so I loosed and mounted him, and he flew with me like a bird till he set me down on a terrace-roof; and, having landed me, he struck me a whisk with his tail and put out mine eye and fled from me. Thereupon I descended from the roof and found ten youths all blind of one eye who, when they saw me exclaimed, “No welcome to thee, and no good cheer!” I asked them, “Do ye admit me to your home and society?” and they answered, “No, by Allah’ thou shalt not live amongst us.” So I went forth with weeping eyes and grieving heart, but Allah had written my safety on the Guarded Tablet so I reached Baghdad in safety, etc. This is a fair specimen of how the work has been curtailed in that issue.

[267] Arabs date pregnancy from the stopping of the menses, upon which the foetus is supposed to feed. Kalilah wa Dimnah says, “The child’s navel adheres to that of his mother and thereby he sucks” (i. 263).

[268] This is contrary to the commands of Al-Islam, Mohammed expressly said “The Astrologers are liars, by the Lord of the Ka’abah!”; and his saying is known to almost all Moslems, lettered or unlettered. Yet, the further we go East (Indiawards) the more we find these practices held in honour. Turning westwards we have:

Iuridicis, Erebo, Fisco, fas vivere rapto:
Militibus, Medicis, Tortori occidere ludo est;
Mentiri Astronomis, Pictoribus atque Poetis.

[269] He does not perform the Wuzu or lesser ablution because he neglects his dawn prayers.

[270] For this game see Lane (M. E. Chapt. xvii.) It is usually played on a checked cloth not on a board like our draughts; and Easterns are fond of eating, drinking and smoking between and even during the games. Torrens () translates "I made up some dessert," confounding "Mankalah" with "Nukl" (dried fruit, quatre-mendiants).

[271] Quoted from Mohammed whose saying has been given.

[272] We should say "the night of the thirty-ninth."

[273] The bath first taken after sickness.

[274] Arab. "Dikák" used by way of soap or rather to soften the skin: the meal is usually of lupins, "Adas"="Revalenta Arabica," which costs a penny in Egypt and half-a-crown in England.

[275] Arab. "Sukkar-nabát." During my day (1842-49) we had no other sugar in the Bombay Presidency.

[276] This is one of the myriad Arab instances that the decrees of "Anagké," Fate, Destiny, Weird, are inevitable. The situation is highly dramatic; and indeed The Nights, as will appear in the Terminal Essay, have already suggested a national drama.

[277] Having lately been moved by Ajib.

[278] Mr. Payne (i. 131) omits these lines which appear out of place; but this mode of inappropriate quotation is a characteristic of Eastern tales.

[279] Anglicè "him."

[280] This march of the tribe is a lieu commun of Arab verse e.g. the poet Labid's noble elegy on the "Deserted Camp." We shall find scores of instances in The Nights.

[281] I have heard of such sands in the Desert east of Damascus which can be crossed only on boards or camel furniture; and the same is

reported of the infamous Region “Al-Ahkláf” (“Unexplored Syria”).

[282] Hence the Arab. saying “The bark of a dog and not the gleam of a fire;” the tired traveller knows from the former that the camp is near, whereas the latter shows from great distances.

[283] Dark blue is the colour of mourning in Egypt as it was of the Roman Republic. The Persians hold that this tint was introduced by Kay Kawús (B. C. 600) when mourning for his son Siyáwush. It was continued till the death of Husayn on the 10th of Muharram (the first month, then representing the vernal equinox) when it was changed for black. As a rule Moslems do not adopt this symbol of sorrow (called “Hidád”) looking upon the practice as somewhat idolatrous and foreign to Arab manners. In Egypt and especially on the Upper Nile women dye their hands with indigo and stair. their faces black or blacker.

[284] The older Roc, of which more in the Tale of Sindbad. Meanwhile the reader curious about the Persian Símurgh (thirty bird) will consult the Dabistan, i., 55,191 and iii., 237, and Richardson’s Diss. p. xlviii. For the Anka (Enka or Unka — long necked bird) see Dab. iii., 249 and for the Humá (bird of Paradise) Richardson lxix. We still lack details concerning the Ben or Bennu (nycticorax) of Egypt which with the Article pi gave rise to the Greek “phoenix.”

[285] Probably the Haledj of Forskal (p. xcvi. Flor. Ægypt. Arab.), “lignum tenax, durum, obscuri generic.” The Bres. Edit. has “ákúl”=teak wood, vulg. “Sáj.”

[286] The knocker ring is an invention well known to the Romans.

[287] Arab. “Sadr”; the place of honour; hence the “Sudder Adawlut” (Supreme Court) in the Anglo-Indian jargon.

[288] Arab. “Ahlan wa sahlan wa marhabá,” the words still popularly addressed to a guest.

[289] This may mean "liquid black eyes"; but also, as I have noticed, that the lashes were long and thick enough to make the eyelids appear as if Kohl-powder had been applied to the inner rims.

[290] A slight parting between the two front incisors, the upper only, is considered a beauty by Arabs; why it as hard to say except for the racial love of variety. "Sugar" (Thug) in the text means, primarily, the opening of the mouth, the gape: hence the front teeth.

[291] i.e. makes me taste the bitterness of death, "bursting the gall-bladder" (Marárah) being our "breaking the heart."

[292] Almost needless to say that forbidden doors and rooms form a lieu-commun in Fairie: they are found in the Hindu Katha Sarit Sagara and became familiar to our childhood by "Bluebeard."

[293] Lit. "apply Kohl to my eyes," even as Jezebel "painted her face," in Heb. put her eyes in painting (2 Kings ix. 30).

[294] Arab. "Al-Barkúk," whence our older "Apricock." Classically it is "Burkúk" and Pers. for Arab. "Mishrnish," and it also denotes a small plum or damson. In Syria the side next the sun" shows a glowing red flush.

[295] Arab. "Hazár" (in Persian, a thousand) = a kind of mocking bird.

[296] Some Edits. make the doors number a hundred, but the Princesses were forty and these coincidences, which seem to have significance and have none save for Arab symmetromania, are common in Arab stories.

[297] Arab. "Májur": hence possibly our "mazer," which is popularly derived from Masarn, a maple.

[298] A compound scent of ambergris, musk and aloes.

[299] The ends of the bridle-reins forming the whip.

[300] The flying horse is Pegasus which is a Greek travesty of an Egyptian myth developed India.

[301] The Bres. Edit. wrongly says “the seventh.”

[302] Arab. “Sharmutah” (plur. Sharámít) from the root Sharmat, to shred, a favourite Egyptian word also applied in vulgar speech to a strumpet, a punk, a piece. It is also the popular term for strips of jerked or boucaned meat hung up m the sun to dry, and classically called “Kadíd.”

[303] Arab. “Izár,” the man’s waistcloth opposed to the Ridá or shoulder-cloth, is also the sheet of white calico worn by the poorer Egyptian women out of doors and covering head and hands. See Lane (M. E., chaps. i.). The rich prefer a “Habárah” of black silk, and the poor, when they have nothing else, use a bed-sheet.

[304] i.e. “My clears.”

[305] Arab. “Lá tawákhizná:” lit. “do not chastise (or blame) us;” the pop. expression for, “excuse (or pardon) us.”

[306] Arab. “Maskhút,” mostly applied to change of shape as man enchanted to monkey, and in vulgar parlance applied to a statue (of stone, etc.). The list of metamorphoses in Al-Islam is longer than that known to Ovid. Those who have seen Petra, the Greek town of the Haurán and the Roman ruins in Northern Africa will readily detect the bests upon which these stories are built. I shall return to this subject in The City of Iram (Night cclxxvi.) and The City of Brass (dlxvii.).

[307] A picturesque phrase enough to express a deserted site, a spectacle familiar to the Nomades and always abounding in pathos to the citizens.

[308] The olden “Harem” (or gynæceum, Pers. Zenanah, Serraglio): Harím is also used by synecdoche for the inmates; especially the wife.

[309] The pearl is supposed in the East to lose 1% per ann. of its splendour and value.

[310] Arab. “Fass,” properly the bezel of a ring; also a gem cut en cabochon and generally the contenant for the contenu.

[311] Arab. “Mihráb” = the arch-headed niche in the Mosque-wall facing Meccah-wards. Here, with his back to the people and fronting the Ka’abah or Square House of Meccah (hence called the “Kiblah” = direction of prayer), stations himself the Imám, artistes or fugleman, lit. “one who stands before others;” and his bows and prostrations give the time to the congregation. I have derived the Mihrab from the niche in which the Egyptian God was shrined: the Jews ignored it, but the Christians preserved it for their statues and altars. Maundrell suggests that the empty niche denotes an invisible God. As the niche (symbol of Venus) and the minaret (symbol of Priapus) date only from the days of the tenth Caliph, Al-Walid (A.H. 86-96=105-115), the Hindus charge the Moslems with having borrowed the two from their favourite idols — The Linga-Yoni or Cunnus phallus (Pilgrimage ii. 140), and plainly call the Mihrab a Bhaga= Cunnus (Dabistan ii. 152). The Guebres further term Meccah “Mah-gah,” locus Lunæ, and Al-Medinah, “Mahdinah,” = Moon of religion. See Dabistan i., 49, etc.

[312] Arab “Kursi,” a stool of palm-fronds, etc., X-shaped (see Lane’s illustration, Nights i., 197), before which the reader sits. Good Moslems will not hold the Holy Volume below the waist nor open it except when ceremonially pure. Englishmen in the East should remember this, for to neglect the “Adab al-Kúran” (respect due to Holy Writ) gives great scandal.

[313] Mr. Payne (i. 148) quotes the German Zuckerpüppchen.

[314] The Persian poets have a thousand conceits in praise of the “mole,” (Khál or Shámah) for which Hafiz offered “Samarkand and Bokhara” (they not being his, as his friends remarked). Another “topic” is the flight of arrows shot by eyelashes.

[315] Arab. “Suhá” a star in the Great Bear introduced only to balance “wushát” = spies, enviers, enemies, whose “evil eye” it will ward off.

[316] In Arab tales beauty is always “soft-sided,” and a smooth skin is valued in proportion to its rarity.

[317] The myrtle is the young hair upon the side face

[318] In other copies of these verses the fourth couplet swears “by the scorpions of his brow” i.e. the accroche-cæurs, the beau-catchers, bell-ropes or aggravators,” as the B.P. calls them. In couplet eight the poet alludes to his love’s “Unsur,” or element his nature made up of the four classicals, and in the last couplet he makes the nail paring refer to the moon not the sun.

[319] This is regular formula when speaking of Guebres.

[320] Arab. “Faráiz”; the orders expressly given in the Koran which the reader will remember, is Uncreate and Eternal. In India “Farz” is applied to injunctions thrice repeated; and “Wájíb” to those given twice over. Elsewhere scanty difference is made between them.

[321] Arab. “Kufr” = rejecting the True Religion, i.e. Al-Islam, such rejection being “Tughyán” or rebellion against the Lord. The “terrible sound” is taken from the legend of the prophet Sálih and the proto-historic tribe of Thámúd which for its impiety was struck dead by an earthquake and a noise from heaven. The latter, according to some commentators, was the voice of the Archangel Gabriel crying “Die all of you” (Koran, chapts. vii., xviii., etc.). We shall hear more of it in the “City of many-columned Iram.” According to some, Salih, a mysterious Badawi prophet, is buried in the Wady al-Shaykh of the so-called Sinaitic Peninsula.

[322] Yet they kept the semblance of man, showing that the idea arose from the basaltic statues found in Hauranic ruins. Mohammed in his various marches to Syria must have seen remnants of Greek and Roman settlements; and as has been noticed “Sesostris”

[323] Arab. “Shuhadá”; highly respected by Moslems as by other religionists; although their principal if not only merit seems as a rule to have been intense obstinacy and devotion to one idea for which they were ready to sacrifice even life. The Martyrs-category is extensive including those killed by falling walls; victims to the plague, pleurisy and pregnancy, travellers drowned or otherwise lost when journeying honestly, and chaste lovers who die of “broken hearts” i.e. impaired digestion. Their souls are at once stowed away in the crops of green birds where they remain till Resurrection Day, “eating of the fruits and drinking of the streams of Paradise,” a place however, whose topography is wholly uncertain. Thus the young Prince was rewarded with a manner of anti-Purgatory, a preparatory heaven.

[324] Arab. “Su’ubán:” the Badawin give the name to a variety of serpents all held to be venomous; but m tales the word, like “Tannín,” expresses our “dragon” or “cockatrice.”

[325] She was ashamed to see the lady doing servile duty by rubbing her feet. This massage, which B. de la Brocquière describes in 1452 as “kneading and pinching,” has already been noticed. The French term is apparently derived from the Arab. “Mas-h.”

[326] Alluding to the Most High Name, the hundredth name of God, the Heb. Shem hamphorash, unknown save to a favoured few who by using it perform all manner of miracles.

[327] i e. the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.

[328] i.e. Settled by the Koran.

[329] The uglier the old woman the better procuress she is supposed to make. See the Santa Verdiana in Boccaccio v., 10. In Arab. “Ajuz” (old woman) is highly insulting and if addressed to an Egyptian, whatever be her age she will turn fiercely and resent it. The polite term is Shaybah (Pilgrimage hi., 200).

[330] The four ages of woman, considered after Demosthenes in her

three-fold character, prostitute for pleasure, concubine for service and wife for breeding.

[331] Arab. “Jilá” (the Hindostani Julwa) = the displaying of the bride before the bridegroom for the first time, in different dresses, to the number of seven which are often borrowed for the occasion. The happy man must pay a fee called “the tax of face-unveiling” before he can see her features. Amongst Syrian Christians he sometimes tries to lift the veil by a sharp movement of the sword which is parried by the women present, and the blade remains entangled in the cloth. At last he succeeds, the bride sinks to the ground covering her face with her hands and the robes of her friends: presently she is raised up, her veil is readjusted and her face is left bare.

[332] Arab. “Ishá”= the first watch of the night, twilight, supper-time, supper. Moslems have borrowed the four watches of the Romans from 6 (a.m. or p.m.) to 6, and ignore the three original watches of the Jews, even, midnight and cockcrow (Sam. ii. 19, Judges vii. 19, and Exodus xiv. 24).

[333] A popular Arab hyperbole.

[334] Arab. “Shakáik al-Nu’uman,” lit. the fissures of Nu’uman, the beautiful anemone, which a tyrannical King of Hirah, Nu’uman Al-Munzir, a contemporary of Mohammed, attempted to monopolize.

[335] Arab. “Andam”=here the gum called dragon’s blood; in other places the dye-wood known as brazil.

[336] I need hardly say that in the East, where bells are unused, clapping the hands summons the servants. In India men cry “Quy hye” (Koi hái?) and in Brazil whistle “Pst!” after the fashion of Spain and Portugal.

[337] The moles are here compared with pearls; a simile by no means common or appropriate.

[338] A parody on the testification of Allah’s Unity.

[339] Arab. “Simát” (prop. “Sumát”); the “dinner-table,” composed of a round wooden stool supporting a large metal tray, the two being called “Sufrah” (or “Simat”): thus “Sufrah házirah!” means dinner is on the table. After the meal they are at once removed.

[340] In the text “Dastúr,” the Persian word before noticed;
“Izn” would be the proper Arabic equivalent.

[341] In the Moslem East a young woman, single or married, is not allowed to appear alone in the streets; and the police have a right to arrest delinquents. As a preventive of intrigues the precaution is excellent. During the Crimean war hundreds of officers, English, French and Italian, became familiar with Constantinople; and not a few flattered themselves on their success with Turkish women. I do not believe that a single bona fide case occurred: the “conquests” were all Greeks, Wallachians, Armenians or Jewesses.

[342] Arab. “Azím”: translators do not seem to know that this word in The Nights often bears its Egyptian and slang sense, somewhat equivalent to our “deuced” or “mighty” or “awfully fine.”

[343] This is a very serious thing amongst Moslems and scrupulous men often make great sacrifices to avoid taking an oath.

[344] We should say “into the noose.”

[345] The man had fallen in love with her and determined to mark her so that she might be his.

[346] Arab. “Dajlah,” in which we find the Heb. Hid-dekel.

[347] Such an execution would be contrary to Moslem law: but people would look leniently upon the peccadillo of beheading or sacking a faithless wife. Moreover the youth was of the blood royal and A quoi bon être prince? as was said by a boy of viceroyal family in Egypt to his tutor who reproached him for unnecessarily shooting down a poor old man.

[348] Arab. “Shirk,” partnership, evening or associating gods with God; polytheism: especially levelled at the Hindu triadism, Guebre dualism and Christian Trinitarianism.

[349] Arab. “Shatm” — abuse, generally couched in foulest language with especial reference to the privy parts of female relatives.

[350] When a woman is bastinadoed in the East they leave her some portion of dress and pour over her sundry buckets of water for a delicate consideration. When the hands are beaten they are passed through holes in the curtain separating the sufferer from mankind, and made fast to a “falakah” or pole.

[351] Arab. “Khalifah,” Caliph. The word is also used for the successor of a Santon or holy man.

[352] Arab. “Sár,” here the Koranic word for carrying out the venerable and undying lex talionis the original basis of all criminal jurisprudence. Its main fault is that justice repeats the offence.

[353] Both these sons of Harun became Caliphs, as we shall see in The Nights.

[354] “Dog” and “hog” are still highly popular terms of abuse. The Rabbis will not defile their lips with “pig;” but say “Dabhar akhir”=“another thing.”

[355] The “hero eponymus” of the Abbaside dynasty, Abbas having been the brother of Abdullah the father of Mohammed. He is a famous personage in AI-Islam (D’Herbelot).

[356] Europe translates the word “Barmecides. It is Persian from bar (up) and makidan (to suck). The vulgar legend is that Ja’afar, the first of the name, appeared before the Caliph Abd al-Malik with a ring poisoned for his own need; and that the Caliph, warned of it by the clapping of two stones which he wore ad hoc, charged the visitor with intention to murder him. He excused himself and in his speech occurred the Persian word “Barmakam,” which may mean “I shall

sup it up," or "I am a Barmak," that is, a high priest among the Guebres. See D'Herbelot s.v.

[357] Arab."Zulm," the deadliest of monarch's sins. One of the sayings of Mohammed, popularly quoted, is, "Kingdom endureth with Kufr or infidelity (i. e. without accepting AI-Islam) but endureth not with Zulm or injustice." Hence the good Moslem will not complain of the rule of Kafirs or Unbelievers, like the English, so long as they rule him righteously and according to his own law.]

[358] All this aggravates his crime: had she been a widow she would not have had upon him "the claims of maidenhead," the premio della verginita of Boccaccio, x. 10.

[359] It is supposed that slaves cannot help telling these fatal lies. Arab story-books are full of ancient and modern instances and some have become "Joe Millers." Moreover it is held unworthy of a free-born man to take over-notice of these servile villanies; hence the scoundrel in the story escapes unpunished. I have already noticed the predilection of debauched women for these "skunks of the human race;" and the young man in the text evidently suspected that his wife had passed herself this "little caprice." The excuse which the Caliph would find for him is the pundonor shown in killing one he loved so fondly.

[360] The Arab equivalent of our pitcher and well.

[361] i.e. Where the dress sits loosely about the bust.

[362] He had trusted in Allah and his trust was justified.

[363] Arab. "Khila'ah" prop. What a man strips from his person: gen. An honorary gift. It is something more than the "robe of honour" of our chivalrous romances, as it includes a horse, a sword (often gold-hilted), a black turban (amongst the Abbasides) embroidered with gold, a violet-mantle, a waist-shawl and a gold neck-chain and shoe-buckles.

[364] Arab. “Izá,” i.e. the visits of condolence and so forth which are long and terribly wearisome in the Moslem East.

[365] Arab. “Mahr,” the money settled by the man before marriage on the woman and without which the contract is not valid. Usually half of it is paid down on the marriage-day and the other half when the husband dies or divorces his wife. But if she take a divorce she forfeits her right to it, and obscene fellows, especially Persians, often compel her to demand divorce by unnatural and preposterous use of her person.

[366] Bismillah here means “Thou art welcome to it.”

[367] Arab. “Bassak,” half Pers. (bas = enough) and — ak = thou; for thee. “Bas” sounds like our “buss” (to kiss) and there are sundry good old Anglo-Indian jokes of feminine mistakes on the subject.

[368] This saving clause makes the threat worse. The scene between the two brothers is written with characteristic Arab humour; and it is true to nature. In England we have heard of a man who separated from his wife because he wished to dine at six and she preferred half-past six.

[369] Arab. “Misr.” (vulg. Masr). The word, which comes of a very ancient house, was applied to the present capital about the time of its conquest by the Osmanli Turks A.H. 923 = 1517.

[370] The Arab. “Jízah,” = skirt, edge; the modern village is the site of an ancient Egyptian city, as the “Ghizah inscription” proves (Brugsch, History of Egypt, ii. 415)

[371] Arab. “Watan” literally meaning “birth-place” but also used for “patria, native country”; thus “Hubb al-Watan” = patriotism. The Turks pronounce it “Vatan,” which the French have turned it into Va-t’en!

[372] Arab. “Zarzariyah” = the colour of a stare or starling (Zurzúr).

[373] Now a Railway Station on the Alexandria-Cairo line.

[374] Even as late as 1852, when I first saw Cairo, the city was girt by waste lands and the climate was excellent. Now cultivation comes up to the house walls; while the Mahmudiyah Canal, the planting the streets with avenues and over-watering have seriously injured it; those who want the air of former Cairo must go to Thebes. Gout, rheumatism and hydrophobia (before unknown) have become common of late years.

[375] This is the popular pronunciation: Yakút calls it
“Bilbís.”

[376] An outlying village on the “Long Desert,” between Cairo and Palestine.

[377] Arab. “Al-Kuds” = holiness. There are few cities which in our day have less claim to this title than Jerusalem; and, curious to say, the “Holy Land” shows Jews, Christians and Moslems all in their worst form. The only religion (if it can be called one) which produces men in Syria is the Druse. “Heiligen- landes Jüden” are proverbial and nothing can be meaner than the Christians while the Moslems are famed for treachery.

[378] Arab. “Shamm al-hawá.” In vulgar parlance to “smell the air” is to take a walk, especially out of town. There is a peculiar Egyptian festival called “Shamm al-Nasím” (smelling the Zephyr) which begins on Easter-Monday (O.S.), thus corresponding with the Persian Nau-roz, vernal equinox and introducing the fifty days of “Khammasín” or “Mirísi” (hot desert winds). On awakening, the people smell and bathe their temples with vinegar in which an onion has been soaked and break their fast with a “fisikh” or dried “búri” = mullet from Lake Menzalah: the late Hekekiyan Bey had the fish-heads counted in one public garden and found 70,000. The rest of the day is spent out of doors “Gypsying,” and families greatly enjoy themselves on these occasions. For a longer description, see a paper by my excellent friend Yacoub Artin Pasha, in the Bulletin de

l'Institut Égyptien, 2nd series, No. 4, Cairo, 1884. I have noticed the Mirísi (south-wester) and other winds in the Land of Midian, i., 23.

[379] So in the days of the "Mameluke Beys" in Egypt a man of rank would not cross the street on foot.

[380] Arab. Basrah. The city is now in decay and not to flourish again till the advent of the Euphrates Valley R.R., is a modern place, founded in A.H. 15, by the Caliph Omar upon the Aylah, a feeder of the Tigris. Here, according to Al-Haríri, the "whales and the lizards meet," and, as the tide affects the river,

Its stream shows prodigy, ebbing and flowing.

In its far-famed market-place, Al-Marbad, poems used to be recited; and the city was famous for its mosques and Saint- shrines, fair women and school of Grammar which rivalled that of Kúfah. But already in Al-Hariri's day (nat. A.H. 446 = A.D. 1030) Baghdad had drawn off much of its population.

[381] This fumigation (Bukhúr) is still used. A little incense or perfumed wood is burnt upon an open censor (Mibkharah) of earthenware or metal, and passed round, each guest holding it for a few moments under his beard. In the Somali County, the very home of incense, both sexes fumigate the whole person after carnal intercourse. Lane (Mod. Egypt, chapt. viii) gives an illustration of the Mibkharah).

[382] The reader of The Nights will remark that the merchant is often a merchant-prince, consorting and mating with the highest dignitaries. Even amongst the Romans, a race of soldiers, statesmen and lawyers, "mercatura" on a large scale was "not to be vituperated." In Boccacio (x. 19) they are netti e delicati uomini. England is perhaps the only country which has made her fortune by trade, and much of it illicit trade, like that in slaves which built Liverpool and Bristol, and which yet disdains or affects to disdain the trader. But the unworthy prejudice is disappearing with the last generation, and men who formerly would have half starved as curates and ensigns, barristers

and carabins are now only too glad to become merchants.

383 These lines in the Calc. And Bul. Edits. Have already occurred (Night vii.) but such carelessness is characteristic despite the proverb, “In repetition is no fruition.” I quote Torrens () by way of variety. As regards the anemone (here called a tulip) being named “Shakík” = fissure, I would conjecture that it derives from the flower often forming long lines of red like stripes of blood in the landscape. Travellers in Syria always observe this.

384 Such an address to a royalty (Eastern) even in the present day, would be a passport to future favours.

385 In England the man marries and the woman is married: there is no such distinction in Arabia.

386 “Sultan” (and its corruption “Soldan”) etymologically means lord, victorious, ruler, ruling over. In Arabia it is a not uncommon proper name; and as a title it is taken by a host of petty kinglets. The Abbaside Caliphs (as Al-Wásik who has been noticed) formally created these Sultans as their regents. Al-Tá’i bi’llah (regn. A.H. 363 = 974), invested the famous Sabuktagin with the office; and as Alexander-Sikander was wont to do, fashioned for him two flags, one of silver, after the fashion of nobles, and the other of gold, as Viceroy-designate. Sabuktagin’s son, the famous Mahmúd of the Ghaznavite dynasty in A.H. 393 = 1002, was the first to adopt “Sultan” as an independent title some two hundred years after the death of Harun al-Rashid. In old writers we have the Soldan of Egypt, the Soudan of Persia, and the Sowdan of Babylon; three modifications of one word.

387 i.e. he was a “Háfiz,” one who commits to memory the whole of the Koran. It is a serious task and must be begun early. I learnt by rote the last “Juzw” (or thirtieth part) and found that quite enough. This is the vulgar use of “Hafiz”: technically and theologically it means the third order of Traditionists (the total being five) who know by heart 300,000 traditions of the Prophet with their ascriptions. A

curious "spiritualist" book calls itself "Hafed, Prince of Persia," proving by the very title that the Spirits are equally ignorant of Arabic and Persian.

[388] Here again the Cairo Edit. repeats the six couplets already given in Night xvii. I take them from Torrens ().

[389] This naïve admiration of beauty in either sex characterised our chivalrous times. Now it is mostly confined to "professional beauties" or what is conventionally called the "fair sex"; as if there could be any comparison between the beauty of man and the beauty of woman, the Apollo Belvidere with the Venus de Medici.

[390] Arab. "Shásh" (in Pers. urine) a light turband generally of muslin.

[391] This is a lieu commun of Eastern worldly wisdom. Quite true! Very unadvisable to dive below the surface of one's acquaintances, but such intimacy is like marriage of which Johnson said, "Without it there is no pleasure in life."

[392] The lines are attributed to the famous Al-Mutanabbi = the claimant to "Prophecy," of whom I have given a few details in my Pilgrimage iii. 60, 62. He led the life of a true poet, somewhat Chauvinistic withal; and, rather than run away, was killed in A.H. 354 = 965.

[393] Arab. "Nabíz" = wine of raisins or dates; any fermented liquor; from a root to "press out" in Syriac, like the word "Talmiz" (or Tilmiz says the Kashf al-Ghurrah) a pupil, student. Date-wine (ferment from the fruit, not the Tádi, or juice of the stem, our "toddy") is called Fazikh. Hence the Masjid al-Fazikh at Al-Medinah where the Ansar or Auxiliaries of that city were sitting cup in hand when they heard of the revelation forbidding inebriants and poured the liquor upon the ground (Pilgrimage ii. 322).

[394] Arab. "Huda" = direction (to the right way), salvation, a word occurring in the Opening Chapter of the Koran. Hence to a Kafir who offers the Salam-salutation many Moslems reply "Allah- yahdík" =

Allah direct thee! (i.e. make thee a Moslem), instead of Allah yusallimak = Allah lead thee to salvation. It is the root word of the Mahdi and Mohdi.

[395] These lines have already occurred in The First Kalandar's Story (Night xi.) I quote by way of change and with permission Mr. Payne's version (i. 93).

[396] Arab. "Farajíyah," a long-sleeved robe worn by the learned (Lane, M.E., chapt. i.).

[397] Arab. "Sarráf" (vulg. Sayrafi), whence the Anglo-Indian "Shroff," a familiar corruption.

[398] Arab. "Yahúdi" which is less polite than "Banú Isráil" = Children of Israel. So in Christendom "Israelite" when in favour and "Jew" (with an adjective or a participle) when nothing is wanted of him.

[399] Also called "Ghilmán" = the beautiful youths appointed to serve the True Believers in Paradise. The Koran says (chapt. lvi. 9 etc.) "Youths, which shall continue in their bloom for ever, shall go round about to attend them, with goblets, and beakers, and a cup of flowing wine," etc. Mohammed was an Arab (not a Persian, a born pederast) and he was too fond of women to be charged with love of boys: even Tristam Shandy (vol. vii. chapt. 7; "No, quoth a third; the gentleman has been committing — —") knew that the two tastes are incompatibles. But this and other passages in the Koran have given the Chevaliers de la Pallie a hint that the use of boys, like that of wine, here forbidden, will be permitted in Paradise.

[400] Which, by the by, is the age of an oldish old maid in Egypt. I much doubt puberty being there earlier than in England where our grandmothers married at fourteen. But Orientals are aware that the period of especial feminine devilry is between the first menstruation and twenty when, according to some, every girl is a "possible murderess." So they wisely marry her and get rid of what is called the "lump of grief," the "domestic calamity" — a daughter. Amongst them we never hear of the abominable egotism and cruelty of the

English mother, who disappoints her daughter's womanly cravings in order to keep her at home for her own comfort; and an "old maid" in the house, especially a stout, plump old maid, is considered not "respectable." The ancient virgin is known by being lean and scraggy; and perhaps this diagnosis is correct.

[401] This prognostication of destiny by the stars and a host of follies that end in -mancy is an intricate and extensive subject. Those who would study it are referred to chapt. xiv. of the "Qanoon-e-Islam, or the Customs of the Mussulmans of India; etc., etc., by Jaffur Shurreeff and translated by G. A. Herklots, M. D. of Madras." This excellent work first appeared in 1832 (Allen and Co., London) and thus it showed the way to Lane's "Modern Egyptians" (1833-35). The name was unfortunate as "Kuzzilbash" (which rhymed to guzzle and hash), and kept the book back till a second edition appeared in 1863 (Madras: J. Higginbotham).

[402] Arab. "Bárid," lit. cold: metaph. vain, foolish, insipid.

[403] Not to "spite thee" but "in spite of thee." The phrase is still used by high and low.

[404] Arab. "Ahdab," the common hunchback; in classical language the Gobbo in the text would be termed "Ak'as" from "Ka'as," one with protruding back and breast; sometimes used for hollow back and protruding breast.

[405] This is the custom with such gentry, who, when they see a likely man sitting, are allowed by custom to ride astraddle upon his knees with most suggestive movements, till he buys them off. These Ghawázi are mostly Gypsies who pretend to be Moslems; and they have been confused with the Almahs or Moslem dancing- girls proper (Awálim, plur. of Alimah, a learned feminine) by a host of travellers. They call themselves Barámikah or Barmecides only to affect Persian origin. Under native rule they were perpetually being banished from and returning to Cairo (Pilgrimage i., 202). Lane (M.E., chapts. xviii. and xix.) discusses the subject, and would derive

Al'mah, often so pronounced, from Heb. Almah, girl, virgin, singing-girl, hence he would translate Al-Alamoth shir (Psalm xlvi.) and Nebalim al- alamoth (I. Chron., xv. 20) by a "song for singing-girls" and "harps for singing-girls." He quotes also St. Jerome as authority that Alma in Punic (Phoenician) signified a virgin, not a common article, I may observe, amongst singing-girls. I shall notice in a future page Burckhardt's description of the Ghawazi, , "Arabic Proverbs;" etc., etc. Second Edition. London: Quaritch, 1875.

[406] I need hardly describe the tarbúsh, a corruption of the Per. "Sar-púsh" (headcover) also called "Fez" from its old home; and "tarbrush" by the travelling Briton. In old days it was a calotte worn under the turban; and it was protected by scalp- perspiration by an "Arakiyah" (Pers. Arak-chin) a white skull- cap. Now it is worn without either and as a head-dress nothing can be worse (Pilgrimage ii. 275).

[407] Arab. "Tár.": the custom still prevails. Lane (M.E., chapt. xviii.) describes and figures this hoop-drum.

[408] The couch on which she sits while being displayed. It is her throne, for she is the Queen of the occasion, with all the Majesty of Virginity.

[409] This is a solemn "chaff;" such liberties being permitted at weddings and festive occasions.

[410] The pre-Islamític dynasty of Al-Yaman in Arabia Felix, a region formerly famed for wealth and luxury. Hence the mention of Yamani work. The caravans from Sana'á, the capital, used to carry patterns of vases to be made in China and bring back the porcelains at the end of the third year: these are the Arabic inscriptions which have puzzled so many collectors. The Tobba, or Successors, were the old Himyarite Kings, a dynastic name like Pharaoh, Kisra (Persia), Negush (Abyssinia), Khakan or Khan (Tartary), etc., who claimed to have extended their conquests to Samarcand and made war on China. Any history of Arabia (as Crichton I., chapt. iv.) may be consulted

for their names and annals. I have been told by Arabs that “Tobba” (or Tubba) is still used in the old Himvarland = the Great or the Chief.

[411] Lane and Payne (as well as the Bres. Edit.) both render the word “to kiss her,” but this would be clean contrary to Moslem usage.

[412] i.e. he was full of rage which he concealed.

[413] The Hindus (as the Katha shows) compare this swimming gait with an elephant’s roll.

[414] Arab. “Fitnah,” a word almost as troublesome as “Adab.” Primarily, revolt, seduction, mischief: then a beautiful girl (or boy), and lastly a certain aphrodisiac perfume extracted from mimosa-flowers (Pilgrimage i., 118).

[415] Lit. burst the “gall-bladder:” In this and in the “liver” allusions I dare not be baldly literal.

[416] Arab. “Usfur” the seeds of Carthamus tinctorius = Safflower (Forskal, Flora, etc. lv.). The seeds are crushed for oil and the flowers, which must be gathered by virgins or the colour will fail, are extensively used for dying in Southern Arabia and Eastern Africa.

[417] On such occasions Miss Modesty shuts her eye and looks as if about to faint.

[418] After either evacuation the Moslem is bound to wash or sand the part; first however he should apply three pebbles, or potsherds or clods of earth. Hence the allusion in the Koran (chapt. ix), “men who love to be purified.” When the Prophet was questioning the men of Kuba, where he founded a mosque (Pilgrimage ii., 215), he asked them about their legal ablutions, especially after evacuation; and they told him that they used three stones before washing. Moslems and Hindus (who prefer water mixed with earth) abhor the unclean and unhealthy use of paper without ablution; and the people of India call European draught- houses, by way of opprobrium, “Kághaz-khánah”

= paper closets. Most old Anglo-Indians, however, learn to use water.

[419] "Miao" or "Mau" is the generic name of the cat in the Egyptian of the hieroglyphs.

[420] Arab. "Ya Mah'úm" addressed to an evil spirit.

[421] "Heehaw!" as we should say. The Bresl. Edit. makes the cat cry "Nauh! Nauh!" and the ass-colt "Manu! Manu!" I leave these onomatopoeics as they are in Arabic; they are curious, showing the unity in variety of hearing inarticulate sounds. The bird which is called "Whip poor Will" in the U.S. is known to the Brazilians as "Joam corta páo" (John cut wood); so differently do they hear the same notes.

[422] It is usually a slab of marble with a long slit in front and a round hole behind. The text speaks of a Kursi (= stool); but this is now unknown to native houses which have not adopted European fashions.

[423] This again is chaff as she addresses the Hunchback. The Bul. Edit. has "O Abu Shiháb" (Father of the shooting-star = evil spirit); the Bresl. Edit. "O son of a heap! O son of a Something!" (al-afsh, a vulgarism).

[424] As the reader will see, Arab ideas of "fun" and practical jokes are of the largest, putting the Hibernian to utter rout, and comparing favourably with those recorded in Don Quixote.

[425] Arab. "Saráwil" a corruption of the Pers. "Sharwál"; popularly called "libás" which, however, may also mean clothing in general and especially outer-clothing. I translate "bag- trousers" and "petticoat-trousers," the latter being the divided skirt of our future. In the East, where Common Sense, not Fashion, rules dress, men, who have a protuberance to be concealed, wear petticoats and women wear trousers. The feminine article is mostly baggy but sometimes, as in India, collant- tight. A quasi-sacred part of it is the inkle, tape

or string, often a most magnificent affair, with tassels of pearl and precious stones; and "laxity in the trouser-string" is equivalent to the loosest conduct. Upon the subject of "libás," "sarwál" and its variants the curious reader will consult Dr. Dozy's "Dictionnaire Détaillé des Noms des Vêtements chez les Arabes," a most valuable work.

[426] The turban out of respect is not put upon the ground
(Lane, M. E., chapt. i.).

[427] Arab. "Madfa" showing the modern date or the modernization of the tale. In Lebid "Madáfi" (plur. of Madfa') means water-courses or leats.

[428] In Arab. the "he" is a "she;" and Habíb ("friend") is the Attic {Greek Letters}, a euphemism for lover. This will occur throughout The Nights. So the Arabs use a phrase corresponding with the Stoic {Greek Letters}, i.e. is wont, is fain.

[429] Part of the Azán, or call to prayer.

[430] Arab. "Shiháb," these mentors being the flying shafts shot at evil spirits who approach too near heaven. The idea doubtless arose from the showers of August and November meteors (The Perseides and Taurides) which suggest a battle raging in upper air. Christendom also has its superstition concerning these and called those of August the "fiery tears of Saint Lawrence," whose festival was on August 10.

[431] Arab. "Tákiyah" = Pers. Arak-chin; the calotte worn under the Fez. It is, I have said, now obsolete and the red woollen cap (mostly made in Europe) is worn over the hair; an unclean practice.

[432] Often the effect of cold air after a heated room.

[433] i.e. He was not a Eunuch, as the people guessed.

[434] In Arab. "this night" for the reason before given.

[435] Meaning especially the drink prepared of the young leaves and florets of Cannabis Sativa. The word literally means "day grass" or "herbage." This intoxicant was much used by magicians to produce ecstasy and thus to "deify themselves and receive the homage of the genii and spirits of nature."

[436] Torrens, being an Irishman, translates "and woke in the morning sleeping at Damascus."

[437] Arab. "Labbayka," the cry technically called "Talbiyah" and used by those entering Meccah (Pilgrimage iii. 125-232). I shall also translate it by "Adsum." The full cry is: —

Here am I, O Allah, here am I!
No partner hast Thou, here am I:
Verily the praise and the grace and the kingdom are thine:
No partner hast Thou: here am I!

A single Talbiyah is a "Shart" or positive condition: and its repetition is a Sunnat or Custom of the Prophet. See Night xci.

[438] The staple abuse of the vulgar is curing parents and relatives, especially feminine, with specific allusions to their "shame." And when dames of high degree are angry, Nature, in the East as in the West, sometimes speaks out clearly enough, despite Mistress Chapone and all artificial restrictions.

[439] A great beauty in Arabia and the reverse in Denmark, Germany and Slav-land, where it is a sign of being a were-wolf or a vampire. In Greece also it denotes a "Brukolak" or vampire.

[440] This is not physiologically true: a bride rarely conceives the first night, and certainly would not know that she had conceived. Moreover the number of courses furnished by the bridegroom would be against conception. It is popularly said that a young couple often undoes in the morning what it has done during the night.

[441] Torrens (Notes, xxiv.) quotes "Fleisher" upon the word

"Ghamghama" (Diss. Crit. De Glossis Habichtionis), which he compares with "Dumbuma" and Humbuma," determining them to be onomatopoeics, "an incomplete and an obscure murmur of a sentence as it were lingering between the teeth and lips and therefore difficult to be understood." Of this family is "Taghúm"; not used in modern days. In my Pilgrimage (i. 313) I have noticed another, "Khyas', Khyas'!" occurring in a Hizb al-Bahr (Spell of the Sea). Herklots gives a host of them; and their sole characteristics are harshness and strangeness of sound, uniting consonants which are not joined in Arabic. The old Egyptians and Chaldeans had many such words composed at will for theurgic operations.

[442] This may mean either "it is of Mosul fashion" or, it is of muslin.

[443] To the English reader these lines would appear the reverse of apposite; but Orientals have their own ways of application, and all allusions to Badawi partings are effective and affecting. The civilised poets of Arab cities throw the charm of the Desert over their verse by images borrowed from its scenery, the dromedary, the mirage and the well as naturally as certain of our bards who hated the country, babbled of purling rills, etc. thoroughly to feel Arabic poetry one must know the Desert (Pilgrimage iii., 63).

[444] In those days the Arabs and the Portuguese recorded everything which struck them, as the Chinese and Japanese in our times. And yet we complain of the amount of our modern writing!

[445] This is mentioned because it is the act preliminary to naming the babe.

[446] Arab. "Kahramánát" from Kahramán, an old Persian hero who conversed with the Simurgh-Griffon. Usually the word is applied to women-at-arms who defend the Harem, like the Urdu- begani of India, whose services were lately offered to England (1885), or the "Amazons" of Dahome.

[447] Meaning he grew as fast in one day as other children in a month.

[448] Arab. Al-Aríf; the tutor, the assistant-master.

[449] Arab. “Ibn harám,” a common term of abuse; and not a factual reflection on the parent. I have heard a mother apply the term to her own son.

[450] Arab. “Khanjar” from the Persian, a syn. with the Arab. “Jambiyah.” It is noted in my Pilgrimage iii., p,75. To “silver the dagger” means to become a rich man. From “Khanjar,” not from its fringed loop or strap, I derive our silly word “hanger.” Dr. Steingass would connect it with Germ. Fänger, e.g. Hirschfänger.

[451] Again we have “Dastur” for Izn.”

[452] Arab. “Iklím”; the seven climates of Ptolemy.

[453] Arab. “Al-Ghadir,” lit. a place where water sinks, a lowland: here the drainage-lakes east of Damascus into which the Baradah (Abana?) discharges. The higher eastern plain is “Al-Ghutah” before noticed.

[454] The “Plain of Pebbles” still so termed at Damascus; an open space west of the city.

[455] Every Guide-book, even the Reverend Porter’s “Murray,” gives a long account of this Christian Church ‘verted to a Mosque.

[456] Arab. “Nabút”; Pilgrimage i. 336.

[457] The Bres. Edit. says, “would have knocked him into Al- Yaman,” (Southern Arabia), something like our slang phrase “into the middle of next week.”

[458] Arab. “Khádim”: lit. a servant, politely applied (like Aghá = master) to a castrato. These gentry wax furious if baldly called “Tawáshi” = Eunuch. A mauvais plaisant in Egypt used to call me The Agha because a friend had placed his wife under my charge.

[459] This sounds absurd enough in English, but Easterns always put themselves first for respect.

[460] In Arabic the World is feminine.

[461] Arab. “Sáhib” = lit. a companion; also a friend and especially applied to the Companions of Mohammed. Hence the Sunnis claim for them the honour of “friendship” with the Apostle; but the Shia’hs reply that the Arab says “Sahaba-hu’l- himár” (the Ass was his Sahib or companion). In the text it is a Wazirial title, in modern India it is = gentleman, e.g. “Sahib log” (the Sahib people) means their white conquerors, who, by the by, mostly mispronounce the word “Sáb.”

[462] Arab. “Suwán,” prop. Syenite, from Syene (Al-Suwan) but applied to flint and any hard stone.

[463] It was famous in the middle ages, and even now it is, perhaps, the most interesting to travellers after that “Sentina Gentium,” the “Bhendi Bazar” of unromantic Bombay.

[464] “The Gate of the Gardens,” in the northern wall, a Roman archway of the usual solid construction shaming not only our modern shams, but our finest masonry.

[465] Arab. “Al-Asr,” which may mean either the hour or the prayer. It is also the moment at which the Guardian Angels relieve each other (Sale’s Koran, chapt. v.).

[466] Arab. “Ya házá” = O this (one)! a somewhat slighting address equivalent to “Heus tu! O thou, whoever thou art.” Another form is “Yá hú” = O he! Can this have originated Swift’s “Yahoo”?

[467] Alluding to the {Greek Letters} (“minor miracles which cause surprise”) performed by Saints’ tombs, the mildest form of thaumaturgy. One of them gravely recorded in the Dabistan (ii. 226) is that of the holy Jamen, who opened the Sámran or bead- bracelet from the arm of the beautiful Chistápá with member erect, “thus

evincing his manly strength and his command over himself”(!)

[468] The River of Paradise, a lieu commun of poets (Koran, chapt. cviii.): the water is whiter than milk or silver, sweeter than honey, smoother than cream, more odorous than musk; its banks are of chrysolite and it is drunk out of silver cups set around it thick as stars. Two pipes conduct it to the Prophet’s Pond which is an exact square, one month’s journey in compass. Kausar is spirituous like wine; Salsabil sweet like clarified honey; the Fount of Mildness is like milk and the Fount of Mercy like liquid crystal.

[469] The Moslem does not use the European basin because water which has touched an impure skin becomes impure. Hence it is poured out from a ewer (“ibrík” Pers. Abríz) upon the hands and falls into a basin (“tisht”) with an open-worked cover.

[470] Arab. “Wahsh,” a word of many meanings; nasty, insipid, savage, etc. The offside of a horse is called Wahshi opposed to Insi, the near side. The Amir Taymur (“Lord Iron”) whom Europeans unwittingly call after his Persian enemies’ nickname, “Tamerlane,” i.e. Taymur-I-lang, or limping Taymur, is still known as “Al-Wahsh” (the wild beast) at Damascus, where his Tartars used to bury men up to their necks and play at bowls with their heads for ninepins.

[471] For “grandson” as being more affectionate. Easterns have not yet learned that clever Western saying: — The enemies of our enemies are our friends.

[472] This was a simple bastinado on the back, not the more ceremonious affair of beating the feet-soles. But it is surprising what the Egyptians can bear; some of the rods used in the time of the Mameluke Beys are nearly as thick as a man’s wrist.

[473] The woman-like spite of the eunuch intended to hurt the grandmother’s feelings.

[474] The usual Cairene “chaff.”

[475] A necessary precaution against poison (Pilgrimage i. 84, and iii. 43).

[476] The Bresl. Edit. (ii. 108) describes the scene at greater length.

[477] The Bul. Edit. gives by mistake of diacritical points, "Zabdaniyah:" Raydaniyah is or rather was a camping ground to the North of Cairo.

[478] Arab. "La'abat" = a plaything, a puppet, a lay figure. Lane (i. 326) conjectures that the cross is so called because it resembles a man with arms extended. But Moslems never heard of the fanciful ideas of mediæval Christian divines who saw the cross everywhere and in everything. The former hold that Pharaoh invented the painful and ignominious punishment. (Koran, chapt. vii.).

[479] Here good blood, driven to bay, speaks out boldly. But, as a rule, the humblest and mildest Eastern when in despair turns round upon his oppressors like a wild cat. Some of the criminals whom Fath Ali Shah of Persia put to death by chopping down the fork, beginning at the scrotum, abused his mother till the knife reached their vitals and they could no longer speak.

[480] These repeated "laughs" prove the trouble of his spirit. Noble Arabs "show their back-teeth" so rarely that their laughter is held worthy of being recorded by their biographers.

[481] A popular phrase, derived from the Koranic "Truth is come, and falsehood is vanished: for falsehood is of short continuance" (chapt. xvii.). It is an equivalent of our adaptation from 1 Esdras iv. 41, "Magna est veritas et prævalebit." But the great question still remains, What is Truth?

[482] In Night lxxv. these lines will occur with variants.

[483] This is always mentioned: the nearer seat the higher the honour.

[484] Alluding to the phrase "Al-safar zafar" = voyaging is victory

(Pilgrimage i., 127).

[485] Arab. "Habb;" alluding to the black drop in the human heart which the Archangel Gabriel removed from Mohammed by opening his breast.

[486] This phrase, I have said, often occurs: it alludes to the horripilation (Arab. Kush'arírah), horror or gooseflesh which, in Arab as in Hindu fables, is a symptom of great joy. So Boccaccio's "pelo arriciato" v., 8: Germ. Gänsehaut.

[487] Arab. "Hasanta ya Hasan" = Bene detto, Benedetto! the usual word-play vulgarly called "pun": Hasan (not Hassan, as we will write it) meaning "beautiful."

[488] Arab. "Loghah" also = a vocabulary, a dictionary; the Arabs had them by camel-loads.

[489] The seventh of the sixteen "Bahr" (metres) in Arabic prosody; the easiest because allowing the most license and, consequently, a favourite for didactic, homiletic and gnomic themes. It means literally "agitated" and was originally applied to the rude song of the Cameleer. De Sacy calls this doggrel "the poet's ass" (Torrens, Notes xxvi.). It was the only metre in which Mohammed the Apostle ever spoke: he was no poet (Koran xxxvi., 69) but he occasionally recited a verse and recited it wrongly (Dabistan iii., 212). In Persian prosody Rajaz is the seventh of nineteen and has six distinct varieties (p-81), "Gladwin's Dissertations on Rhetoric," etc. Calcutta, 1801). I shall have more to say about it in the Terminal Essay.

[490] "Her stature tall — I hate a dumpy woman" (Don Juan).

[491] A worthy who was Kazi of Kufah (Cufa) in the seventh century. Al-Najaf, generally entitled "Najaf al-Ashraf" (the Venerand) is the place where Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammed, lies or is supposed to lie buried, and has ever been a holy place to the Shi'ahs. I am not certain whether to translate "Sa'alab" by fox or jackal; the Arabs make scant distinction between them. "Abu Hosayn" (Father of the

Fortlet) is certainly the fox, and as certainly "Sha'arhar" is the jackal from the Pehlevi Shagál or Shaghál.

[492] Usually by all manner of extortions and robbery, corruption and bribery, the ruler's motto being

Fiat injustitia ruat Coelum.

There is no more honest man than the Turkish peasant or the private soldier; but the process of deterioration begins when he is made a corporal and culminates in the Pasha. Moreover official dishonesty is permitted by public opinion, because it belongs to the condition of society. A man buys a place (as in England two centuries ago) and retains it by presents to the heads of offices. Consequently he must recoup himself in some way, and he mostly does so by grinding the faces of the poor and by spoiling the widow and the orphan. The radical cure is high pay; but that phase of society refuses to afford it.

[493] Arab. "Malik" (King) and "Malak" (angel) the words being written the same when lacking vowels and justifying the jingle.

[FN #494] Arab. "Hurr"; the Latin "ingenuus," lit. freeborn; metaph. noble as opp. to a slave who is not expected to do great or good deeds. In pop. use it corresponds, like "Fatá," with our "gentleman."

[495] This is one of the best tales for humour and movement, and Douce and Madden show what a rich crop of fabliaux, whose leading incident was the disposal of a dead body, it produced.

[496] Other editions read, "at Bassorah" and the Bresl. (ii. 123) "at Bassorah and Kájkár" (Káshghár): somewhat like in Dover and Sebastopol. I prefer China because further off and making the improbabilities more notable.

[497] Arab. "Judri," lit. "small stones" from the hard gravelly feeling of the pustules (Rodwell,). The disease is generally supposed to be the growth of Central Africa where it is still a plague and passed over to Arabia about the birth-time of Mohammed. Thus is usually explained

the “war of the elephant” (Koran, chaps. cv.) when the Abyssinian army of Abrahah, the Christian, was destroyed by swallows (Abábíl which Major Price makes the plural of Abilah = a vesicle) which dropped upon them “stones of baked clay,” like vetches (Pilgrimage ii. 175). See for details Sale (in loco) who seems to accept the miraculous defence of the Ka’abah. For the horrors of small-pox in Central Intertropical Africa the inoculation, known also to the Badawin of Al-Hijáz and other details, readers will consult “The Lake Regions of Central Africa” (ii. 318). The Hindus “take the bull by the horns” and boldly make “Sítlá” (small-pox) a goddess, an incarnation of Bhawáni, deëss of destruction-reproduction. In China small-pox is believed to date from B.C. 1200; but the chronology of the Middle Kingdom still awaits the sceptic.

[498] In Europe we should add “and all fled, especially the women.” But the fatalism inherent in the Eastern mind makes the great difference.

[499] Arab. “Uzayr.” Esdras was a manner of Ripp van Winkle. He was riding over the ruins of Jerusalem when it had been destroyed by the Chaldeans and he doubted by what means Allah would restore it; whereupon he died and at the end of a hundred years he revived. He found his basket of figs and cruse of wine as they were; but of his ass only the bones remained. These were raised to life as Ezra looked on and the ass began at once to bray. Which was a lesson to Esdras. (Koran, chaps. ii.) The oath by the ass’s hoofs is to ridicule the Jew. Mohammed seems to have had an idée fixe that “the Jews say, Ezra is the son of God” (Koran ix.); it may have arisen from the heterodox Jewish belief that Ezra, when the Law was utterly lost, dictated the whole anew to the scribes of his own memory. His tomb with the huge green dome is still visited by the Jews of Baghdad.

[500] Arab. “Bádhanj,” the Pers. Bád. (wind) -gír (catcher): a wooden pent-house on the terrace-roof universal in the nearer East.

[501] The hunchback, in Arabia as in Southern Europe, is looked upon by the vulgar with fear and aversion. The reason is that he is usually

sharper-witted than his neighbours.

[502]Arab. “Yá Sattár” = Thou who veilest the discreditable secrets of Thy creatures.

[503] Arab. “Nasráni,” a follower of Him of Nazareth and an older name than “Christian” which (Acts xi., 26) was first given at Antioch about A.D. 43. The cry in Alexandria used to be “Ya Nasráni, Kalb awáni!”=O Nazarene! O dog obscene! (Pilgrimage i., 160).). “Christian” in Arabic can be expressed only by “Masíhi” = follower of the Messiah.

[504] Arab. “Tasbíh,” = Saluting in the Subh (morning).

[505] In the East women stand on minor occasions while men squat on their hunkers in a way hardly possible to an untrained European. The custom is old. Herodotus (ii., 35) says, “The women stand up when they make water, but the men sit down.” Will it be believed that Canon Rawlinson was too modest to leave this passage in his translation? The custom was perpetuated by Al-Islam because the position prevents the ejection touching the clothes and making them ceremonially impure; possibly they borrowed it from the Guebres. Dabistan, Gate xvi. says, “It is improper, whilst in an erect posture, to make water, it is therefore necessary to sit at squat and force it to some distance, repeating the Avesta mentally.”

[506] This is still a popular form of the “Kinchin lay,” and as the turbands are often of fine stuff, the petite industrie pays well.

[507]Arab. “Wali” =Governor; the term still in use for the Governor General of a Province as opposed to the “Muháfiz,” or district-governor. In Eastern Arabia the Wali is the Civil Governor opposed to the Amir or Military Commandant. Under the Caliphate the Wali acted also as Prefect of Police (the Indian Fanjdár), who is now called “Zábit.” The older name for the latter was “Sáhib al-Shartah” (=chief of the watch) or “Mutawalli”; and it was his duty to go the rounds in person. The old “Charley,” with his lantern and cudgel, still guards the bazaars in Damascus.

[508] Arab. “Al-Mashá ilí” = the bearer of a cresses (Mash’al) who was also Jack Ketch. In Anglo-India the name is given to a lower body-servant. The “Mash’al” which Lane (M. E., chaps. vi.) calls “Mesh’al” and illustrates, must not be confounded with its congener the “Sha’ilah” or link (also lamp, wick, etc.).

[509] I need hardly say that the civilised “drop” is unknown to the East where men are strung up as to a yardarm. This greatly prolongs the suffering.

[510] Arab. “Lukmah”; = a mouthful. It is still the fashion amongst Easterns of primitive manners to take up a handful of rice, etc., ball it and put it into a friend’s mouth honoris causâ. When the friend is a European the expression of his face is generally a study.

[511] I need hardly note that this is an old Biblical practice. The ass is used for city-work as the horse for fighting and travelling, the mule for burdens and the dromedary for the desert. But the Badawi, like the Indian, despises the monture and sings: —

The back of the steed is a noble place
 But the mule’s dishonour, the ass disgrace!

The fine white asses, often thirteen hands high, sold by the Banu Salíb and other Badawi tribes, will fetch £100, and more. I rode a little brute from Meccah to Jedda (42 miles) in one night and it came in with me cantering.

[512] A dry measure of about five bushels (Cairo). The classical pronunciation is Irdabb and it measured 24 sa’a (gallons) each filling four outstretched hands.

[513] “Al-Jawáli” should be Al-Jáwali (Al-Makrizi) and the Bab al-Nasr (Gate of Victory) is that leading to Suez. I lived in that quarter as shown by my Pilgrimage (i. 62).

[514] Arab. “Al-’ajalah,” referring to a saying in every Moslem mouth, “Patience is from the Protector (Allah): Hurry is from Hell.” That

and “Inshallah bukra!” (Please God tomorrow.) are the traveller’s bêtes noires.

[515] Here it is a polite equivalent for “fall to!”

[516] The left hand is used throughout the East for purposes of ablution and is considered unclean. To offer the left hand would be most insulting and no man ever strokes his beard with it or eats with it: hence, probably, one never sees a left handed man throughout the Moslem east. In the Brazil for the same reason old-fashioned people will not take snuff with the right hand. And it is related of the Khataians that they prefer the left hand, “Because the heart, which is the Sultan of the city of the Body, hath his mansion on that side” (Rauzat al-Safá).

[517] Two feminine names as we might say Mary and Martha.

[518] It was near the Caliph’s two Palaces (Al Kasrayn); and was famous in the 15th century A. D. The Kazi’s Mahkamah (Court house) now occupies the place of the Two Palaces

[519] A Kaysariah is a superior kind of bazaar, a “bezestein.” That in the text stood to the east of the principal street in Cairo and was built in A. H. 502 (=1108-9) by a Circassian Emir, known as Fakhr al-Din Jahárkas, a corruption of the Persian “Chehárkas” = four persons (Lane, i. 422, from Al-Makrizi and Ibn Khallikan). For Jahárkas the Mac. Edit. has Jirjís (George) a common Christian name. I once lodged in a ‘Wakálah (the modern Khan) Jirjis.” Pilgrimage, i. 255.

[520] Arab. “Second Day,” i.e. after Saturday, the true Sabbath, so marvellously ignored by Christendom.

[521] Readers who wish to know how a traveller is lodged in a Wakálah, Khan, or Caravanserai, will consult my Pilgrimage, i. 60.

[522] The original occupation of the family had given it a name, as amongst us.

[523] The usual “chaff” or banter allowed even to modest women when shopping, and — many a true word is spoken in jest.

[524] “La adamnák” = Heaven deprive us not of thee, i.e. grant I see thee often!

[525] This is a somewhat cavalier style of advance; but Easterns under such circumstances go straight to the point, hating to filer the parfait amour.

[526] The peremptory formula of a slave delivering such a message.

[527] This would be our Thursday night, preceding the day of public prayers which can be performed only when in a state of ceremonial purity. Hence many Moslems go to the Hammam on Thursday and have no connection with their wives.

[528] Lane (i. 423) gives ample details concerning the Habbániyah, or grain-sellers’ quarter in the southern part of Cairo; and shows that when this tale was written (or transcribed?) the city was almost as extensive as it is now.

[529] Nakíb is a caravan-leader, a chief, a syndic; and “Abú Shámah”= Father of a cheek mole, while “Abú Shámmah” = Father of a smeller, a nose, a snout. The “Kuniyah,” bye-name, patronymic or matronymic, is necessary amongst Moslems whose list of names, all connected more or less with religion, is so scanty. Hence Buckingham the traveller was known as Abu Kidr, the Father of a Cooking-pot and Haj Abdullah as Abu Shawárib, Father of Mustachios (Pilgrimage, iii., 263).

[530] More correctly Bab Zawilah from the name of a tribe in Northern Africa. This gate dates from the same age as the Eastern or Desert gate, Bab al-Nasr (A.D. 1087) and is still much admired. M. Jomard describes it (Description, etc., ii. 670) and lately my good friend Yacoub Artin Pasha has drawn attention to it in the Bulletin de l’Inst. Egypt., Deuxième Série, No. 4, 1883.

[531] This ornament is still seen in the older saloons of Damascus: the inscriptions are usually religious sentences, extracts from the Koran, etc., in uncial characters. They take the place of our frescos; and, as a work of art, are generally far superior.

[532] Arab. "Bayáz al-Sultání," the best kind of gypsum which shines like polished marble. The stucco on the walls of Alexandria, built by Alexander of the two Horns, was so exquisitely tempered and beautifully polished that men had to wear masks for fear of blindness.

[533] This Iklíl, a complicated affair, is now obsolete, its place having been taken by the "Kurs," a gold plate, some five inches in diameter, set with jewels, etc. Lane (M. E. Appendix A) figures it.

[534] The woman-artist who applies the dye is called "Munakkishah."

[535] "Kissing with th' inner lip," as Shakespeare calls it; the French langue fourrée: and Sanskrit "Samputa." The subject of kissing is extensive in the East. Ten different varieties are duly enumerated in the "Ananga-Ranga;" or, The Hindu Art of Love (Ars Amoris Indica) translated from the Sanskrit, and annotated by A. F. F. and B. F. R It is also connected with unguiculation, or impressing the nails, of which there are seven kinds; morsication (seven kinds); handling the hair and lappings or pattings with the fingers and palm (eight kinds).

[536] Arab. "asal-nahl," to distinguish it from "honey" i.e. syrup of sugar-cane and fruits

[537] The lines have occurred in Night xii. By way of variety I give Torrens' version .

[538] The way of carrying money in the corner of a pocket-handkerchief is still common.

[539] He sent the provisions not to be under an obligation to her in this matter. And she received them to judge thereby of his liberality

[540] Those who have seen the process of wine-making in the Libanus will readily understand why it is always strained.

[541] Arab. "Kulkasá," a kind of arum or yam, eaten boiled like our potatoes.

[542] At first he slipped the money into the bed-clothes: now he gives it openly and she accepts it for a reason.

[543] Arab. Al-Zalamah lit. = tyrants, oppressors, applied to the police and generally to employés of Government. It is a word which tells a history.

[544] Moslem law is never completely satisfied till the criminal confess. It also utterly ignores circumstantial evidence and for the best of reasons: amongst so sharp-witted a people the admission would lead to endless abuses. I greatly surprised a certain Governor-General of India by giving him this simple information

[545] Cutting off the right hand is the Koranic punishment (chaps. v.) for one who robs an article worth four dinars, about forty francs to shillings. The left foot is to be cut off at the ankle for a second offence and so on; but death is reserved for a hardened criminal. The practice is now obsolete and theft is punished by the bastinado, fine or imprisonment. The old Guebres were as severe. For stealing one dirham's worth they took a fine of two, cut off the ear-lobes, gave ten stick-blows and dismissed the criminal who had been subjected to an hour's imprisonment. A second theft caused the penalties to be doubled; and after that the right hand was cut off or death was inflicted according to the proportion stolen.

[546] Koran viii. 17.

[547] A universal custom in the East, the object being originally to show that the draught was not poisoned.

[548] Out of paste or pudding.

[549] Boils and pimples are supposed to be caused by broken hair-roots and in Hindostani are called Bál-tor.

[550] He intended to bury it decently, a respect which Moslems always show even to the exuviæ of the body, as hair and nail parings. Amongst Guebres the latter were collected and carried to some mountain. The practice was intensified by fear of demons or wizards getting possession of the spoils.

[551] Without which the marriage was not valid. The minimum is ten dirhams (drachmas) now valued at about five francs to shillings; and if a man marry without naming the sum, the woman, after consummation, can compel him to pay this minimum.

[552] Arab. "Khatmah" = reading or reciting the whole Koran, by one or more persons, usually in the house, not over the tomb. Like the "Zikr," Litany or Rogation, it is a pious act confined to certain occasions.

[553] Arab. "Zirbájah" = meat dressed with vinegar, cumin-seed (Pers. Zír) and hot spices. More of it in the sequel of the tale.

[554] A saying not uncommon meaning, let each man do as he seems fit; also = "age quad agis": and at times corresponding with our saw about the cap fitting.

[555] Arab. "Su'úd," an Alpinia with pungent rhizome like ginger; here used as a counter-odour.

[556] Arab. "Tá'ih" = lost in the "Tíh," a desert wherein man may lose himself, translated in our maps 'The Desert of the Wanderings," scil. of the children of Israel. "Credat Judæus."

[557] ie. £125 and £500.

[558] A large sum was weighed by a professional instead of being counted, the reason being that the coin is mostly old and worn: hence our words "pound" and "pension" (or what is weighed out).

[559] The eunuch is the best possible go-between on account of his almost unlimited power over the Harem.

[560] i.e., a slave-girl brought up in the house and never sold except for some especial reason, as habitual drunkenness, etc.

[561] Smuggling men into the Harem is a stock "topic" of eastern tales. "By means of their female attendants, the ladies of the royal harem generally get men into their apartments in the disguise of women," says Vatsyayana in The Kama Sutra, Part V. London: Printed for the Hindoo Kamashastra Society. 1883. For private circulation.

[562] These tears are shed over past separation. So the "Indians" of the New World never meet after long parting without beweeping mutual friends they have lost.

[563] A most important Jack in office whom one can see with his smooth chin and blubber lips, starting up from his lazy snooze in the shade and delivering his orders more peremptorily than any Dogberry. These epicenes are as curious and exceptional in character as in external conformation. Disconnected, after a fashion, with humanity, they are brave, fierce and capable of any villainy or barbarity (as Agha Mohammed Khan in Persia 1795-98). The frame is unnaturally long and lean, especially the arms and legs; with high, flat, thin shoulders, big protruding joints and a face by contrast extraordinarily large, a veritable mask; the Castrato is expert in the use of weapons and sits his horse admirably, riding well "home" in the saddle for the best of reasons; and his hoarse, thick voice, which apparently does not break, as in the European "Cáppone," invests him with all the circumstance of command.

[564] From the Meccan well used by Moslems much like Eau de Lourdes by Christians: the water is saltish, hence the touch of Arab humour (Pilgrimage iii., 201-202).

[565] Such articles would be sacred from Moslem eyes.

[566] Physiologically true, but not generally mentioned in describing

the emotions.

[567] Properly "Uta," the different rooms, each "Odalisque," or concubine, having her own.

[568] Showing that her monthly ailment was over.

[569] Arab "Muhammarah" = either browned before the fire or artificially reddened.

[570] The insolence and licence of these palace-girls was (and is) unlimited, especially when, as in the present case, they have to deal with a "lofty." On this subject numberless stories are current throughout the East.

[571] i.e., blackened by the fires of Jehannam.

[572] Arab. "Bi'l-Salámah" = in safety (to avert the evil eye). When visiting the sick it is usual to say something civil; "The Lord heal thee! No evil befall thee!" etc.

[573] Washing during sickness is held dangerous by Arabs; and "going to the Hammam" is, I have said, equivalent to convalescence.

[574] Arab. "Máristán" (pronounced Múristan) a corruption of the Pers. "Bímáristán" = place of sickness, a hospital much affected by the old Guebres (Dabistan, i., 165, 166). That of Damascus was the first Moslem hospital, founded by Al-Walid Son of Abd al-Malik the Ommiade in A. H. 88 = 706-7. Benjamin of Tudela (A. D. 1164) calls it "Dar-al Maraphtan" which his latest Editor explains by "Dar-al-Morabittan" (abode of those who require being chained). Al-Makrizi (Khitat) ascribes the invention of "Spitals" to Hippocrates; another historian to an early Pharaoh "Manákiyush;" thus ignoring the Persian Kings, Saint Ephrem (or Ephraim), Syru, etc. In modern parlance "Maristan" is a madhouse where the maniacs are treated with all the horrors which were universal in Europe till within a few years and of which occasional traces occur to this day. In A.D. 1399 Katherine de la Court held a "hospital in the Court called Robert de

Paris," but the first madhouse in Christendom was built by the legate Ortiz in Toledo A. D. 1483, and was therefore called Casa del Nuncio. The Damascus "Maristan" was described by every traveller of the last century: and it showed a curious contrast between the treatment of the maniac and the idiot or omadhaun, who is humanely allowed to wander about unharmed, if not held a Saint. When I saw it last (1870) it was all but empty and mostly in ruins. As far as my experience goes, the United States is the only country where the insane are rationally treated by the sane.

[575] Hence the trite saying "Whoso drinks the water of the Nile will ever long to drink it again." "Light" means easily digested water; and the great test is being able to drink it at night between the sleeps, without indigestion

[576] "Níl" in popular parlance is the Nile in flood; although also used for the River as a proper name. Egyptians (modern as well as ancient) have three seasons, Al-Shitá (winter), Al-Sayf (summer) and Al-Níl (the Nile i.e. flood season' our mid-summer); corresponding with the Growth months; Housing (or granary)-months and Flood-months of the older race.

[577] These lines are in the Mac. Edit.

[587] Arab. "Birkat al-Habash," a tank formerly existing in Southern Cairo: Galland (Night 128) says "en remontant vers l'Ethiopie."

[579] The Bres. Edit. (ii., 190), from which I borrow this description, here alludes to the well-known Island, Al-Rauzah (Rodah) = The Garden.

[580] Arab. "Laylat al-Wafá," the night of the completion or abundance of the Nile (-flood), usually between August 6th and 16th, when the government proclaims that the Nilometer shows a rise of 16 cubits. Of course it is a great festival and a high ceremony, for Egypt is still the gift of the Nile (Lane M. E. chaps. xxvi — a work which would be much improved by a better index).

[581] i.e., admiration will be complete.

[582] Arab. “Sáhil Masr” (Misr): hence I suppose Galland’s villes maritimes.

[583] A favourite simile, suggested by the broken glitter and shimmer of the stream under the level rays and the breeze of eventide.

[584] Arab. “Halab,” derived by Moslems from “He (Abraham) milked (halaba) the white and dun cow.” But the name of the city occurs in the Cuneiforms as Halbun or Khalbun, and the classics knew it as {Greek Letters}, Beroca, written with variants.

[585] Arab. “Ká’ah,” usually a saloon; but also applied to a fine house here and elsewhere in The Nights.

[586] Arab. “Ghamz” = winking, signing with the eye which, amongst Moslems, is not held “vulgar.”

[587] Arab. “Kamís” from low Lat. “Camicia,” first found in St. Jerome:— “Solent militantes habere lineas, quas Camicias vocant.” Our shirt, chemise, chemisette, etc., was unknown to the Ancients of Europe.

[588] Arab. “Narjís.” The Arabs borrowed nothing, but the Persians much, from Greek Mythology. Hence the eye of Narcissus, an idea hardly suggested by the look of the daffodil (or asphodel)-flower, is at times the glance of a spy and at times the die-away look of a mistress. Some scholars explain it by the form of the flower, the internal calyx resembling the iris, and the stalk being bent just below the petals suggesting drooping eyelids and languid eyes. Hence a poet addresses the Narcissus: —

O Narjis, look away! Before those eyes * I may not kiss her as a-breast she lies. What! Shall the lover close his eyes in sleep * While thine watch all things between earth and skies?

The fashionable lover in the East must affect a frantic jealousy if he does not feel it.

[589] In Egypt there are neither bedsteads nor bedrooms: the carpets and mattresses, pillows and cushions (sheets being unknown), are spread out when wanted, and during the day are put into chests or cupboards, or only rolled up in a corner of the room (Pilgrimage i. 53).

[590] The women of Damascus have always been famed for the sanguinary jealousy with which European story-books and novels credit the "Spanish lady." The men were as celebrated for intolerance and fanaticism, which we first read of in the days of Bertrandon de la Brocquière and which culminated in the massacre of 1860. Yet they are a notoriously timid race and make, physically and morally, the worst of soldiers: we proved that under my late friend Fred. Walpole in the Bashi-Buzuks during the old Crimean war. The men looked very fine fellows and after a month in camp fell off to the condition of old women.

[591] Arab. "Rukhám," properly = alabaster and "Marmar" = marble; but the two are often confounded.

[592] He was ceremonially impure after touching a corpse.

[593] The phrase is perfectly appropriate: Cairo without "her Nile" would be nothing.

[594] "The market was hot" say the Hindustanis. This would begin between 7 and 8 a.m.

[595] Arab. Al-Faranj, Europeans generally. It is derived from "Gens Francorum," and dates from Crusading days when the French played the leading part. Hence the Lingua Franca, the Levantine jargon, of which Molière has left such a witty specimen.

[596] A process familiar to European surgery of the same date.

[597] In sign of disappointment, regret, vexation; a gesture still

common amongst Moslems and corresponding in significance to a certain extent with our stamping, wringing the hands and so forth. It is not mentioned in the Koran where, however, we find "biting fingers' ends out of wrath" against a man (chaps. iii.).

[598] This is no unmerited scandal. The Cairenes, especially the feminine half (for reasons elsewhere given), have always been held exceedingly debauched. Even the modest Lane gives a "shocking" story of a woman enjoying her lover under the nose of her husband and confining the latter in a madhouse (chaps. xiii.). With civilisation, which objects to the good old remedy, the sword, they become worse: and the Kazi's court is crowded with would-be divorcees. Under English rule the evil has reached its acme because it goes unpunished: in the avenues of the new Isma'iliyah Quarter, inhabited by Europeans, women, even young women, will threaten to expose their persons unless they receive "bakhshísh." It was the same in Sind when husbands were assured that they would be hanged for cutting down adulterous wives: at once after its conquest the women broke loose; and in 1843-50, if a young officer sent to the bazaar for a girl, half-a-dozen would troop to his quarters. Indeed more than once the professional prostitutes threatened to memorialise Sir Charles Napier because the "modest women," the "ladies" were taking the bread out of their mouths. The same was the case at Kabul (Caboul) of Afghanistan in the old war of 1840; and here the women had more excuse, the husbands being notable sodomites as the song has it.

The worth of slit the Afghan knows;
The worth of hole the Kábul-man.

[599] So that he might not have to do with three sisters-german. Moreover amongst Moslems a girl's conduct is presaged by that of her mother; and if one sister go wrong, the other is expected to follow suit. Practically the rule applies everywhere, "like mother like daughter."

[600] In sign of dissent; as opposed to nodding the head which signifies

assent. These are two items, apparently instinctive and universal, of man’s gesture-language which has been so highly cultivated by sundry North American tribes and by the surdo-mute establishments of Europe.

[601] This “Futur” is the real “breakfast” of the East, the “Chhoti házri” (petit déjeûner) of India, a bit of bread, a cup of coffee or tea and a pipe on rising. In the text, however, it is a ceremonious affair.

[602] Arab. “Nahs,” a word of many meanings; a sinister aspect of the stars (as in Hebr. end Aram.) or, adjectivally, sinister, of ill-omen. Vulgarly it is used as the reverse of nice and corresponds, after a fashion, with our “nasty.”

[603] “Window-gardening,” new in England, is an old practice in the East.

[604] Her pimping instinct at once revealed the case to her.

[605] The usual “pander-dodge” to get more money.

[606] The writer means that the old woman’s account was all false, to increase apparent difficulties and pour se faire valoir.

[607] Arab. “Yá Khálati” =mother’s sister; a familiar address to the old, as uncle or nuncle (father’s brother) to a man. The Arabs also hold that as a girl resembles her mother so a boy follows his uncle (mother’s brother): hence the address “Ya tayyib al-Khál!” = 0 thou nephew of a good uncle. I have noted that physically this is often fact.

[608] “Ay w’ Alláhi,” contracted popularly to Aywa, a word in every Moslem mouth and shunned by Christians because against orders Hebrew and Christian. The better educated Turks now eschew that eternal reference to Allah which appears in The Nights and which is still the custom of the vulgar throughout the world of Al-Islam.

[609] The “Muzayyin” or barber in the East brings his basin and budget

under his arm: he is not content only to shave, he must scrape the forehead, trim the eyebrows, pass the blade lightly over the nose and correct the upper and lower lines of the mustachios, opening the central parting and so forth. He is not a whit less a tattler and a scandal monger than the old Roman tonsor or Figaro, his confrère in Southern Europe. The whole scene of the Barber is admirable, an excellent specimen of Arab humour and not over-caricatured. We all have met him.

[610] Abdullah ibn Abbas was a cousin and a companion of the Apostle, also a well known Commentator on the Koran and conserver of the traditions of Mohammed.

[611] I have noticed the antiquity of this father of our sextant, a fragment of which was found in the Palace of Sennacherib. More concerning the "Arstable" (as Chaucer calls it) is given in my "Camoens: his Life and his Lusiads," .

[612] Arab. "Simiyá" to rhyme with Kímiyá (alchemy proper). It is a subordinate branch of the Ilm al-Ruháni which I would translate "Spiritualism," and which is divided into two great branches, "Ilwí or Rahmáni" (the high or related to the Deity) and Siflí or Shaytáni (low, Satanic). To the latter belongs Al-Sahr, magic or the black art proper, gramarye, egromancy, while Al- Simiyá is white magic, electro-biology, a kind of natural and deceptive magic, in which drugs and perfumes exercise an important action. One of its principal branches is the Darb al-Mandal or magic mirror, of which more in a future page. See Boccaccio's Day x. Novel 5.

[613] Chap. iii., 128. See Sale (in loco) for the noble application of this text by the Imam Hasan, son of the Caliph Ali.

[614] These proverbs at once remind us of our old friend Sancho Panza and are equally true to nature in the mouth of the Arab and of the Spaniard.

[615] Our nurses always carry in the arms: Arabs place the children astraddle upon the hip and when older on the shoulder.

[616] Eastern clothes allow this biblical display of sorrow and vexation, which with our European garb would look absurd: we must satisfy ourselves with maltreating our hats

[617] Koran xlviii., 8. It may be observed that according to the Ahádis (sayings of the Prophet) and the Sunnat (sayings and doings of Mahommed), all the hair should be allowed to grow or the whole head be clean shaven. Hence the “Shúshah,” or topknot, supposed to be left as a handle for drawing the wearer into Paradise, and the Zulf, or side-locks, somewhat like the ringlets of the Polish Jews, are both vain “Bida’at,” or innovations, and therefore technically termed “Makrúh,” a practice not laudable, neither “Halál” (perfectly lawful) nor “Harám” (forbidden by the law). When boys are first shaved generally in the second or third year, a tuft is left on the crown and another over the forehead; but this is not the fashion amongst adults. Abu Hanifah, if I am rightly informed, wrote a treatise on the Shushah or long lock growing from the Násiyah (head-poll) which is also a precaution lest the decapitated Moslem’s mouth be defiled by an impure hand; and thus it would resemble the chivalry lock by which the Redskin brave (and even the “cowboy” of better times) facilitated the removal of his own scalp. Possibly the Turks had learned the practice from the Chinese and introduced it into Baghdad (Pilgrimage i., 240). The Badawi plait their locks in Kurún (horns) or Jadáil (ringlets) which are undone only to be washed with the water of the she-camel. The wild Sherifs wear Haffah, long elf-locks hanging down both sides of the throat, and shaved away about a finger’s breadth round the forehead and behind the neck (Pilgrimage iii., 35-36). I have elsewhere noted the accroche-coeurs, the “idiot fringe,” etc.

[618] Meats are rarely coloured in modern days; but Persian cooks are great adepts in staining rice for the “Puláo (which we call after its Turkish corruption “pilaff”): it sometimes appears in rainbow-colours, red, yellow and blue; and in India is covered with gold and silver leaf. Europe retains the practice in tinting Pasch (Easter) eggs, the survival of the mundane ovum which was hatched at Easter-tide; and they are dyed red in allusion to the Blood of Redemption.

[619] As I have noticed, this is a mixture.

[620] We say: —

Tis rare the father in the son we see:
He sometimes rises in the third degree.

[621] Arab. “Ballán” i.e. the body-servant: “Ballánah” is a tire-woman.

[622] Arab. “Darabukkah” a drum made of wood or earthen-ware (Lane, M. E., xviii.), and used by all in Egypt.

[623] Arab. “Naihah” more generally “Naddábah” Lat. præfica or carina, a hired mourner, the Irish “Keener” at the conclamatio or coronach, where the Hullabaloo, Hulululu or Ululoo showed the survivors’ sorrow.

[624] These doggerels, which are like our street melodies, are now forgotten and others have taken their place. A few years ago one often heard, “Dus ya lalli” (Tread, O my joy) and “Názil il’al-Ganínah” (Down into the garden) and these in due turn became obsolete. Lane (M. E. chaps. xviii.) gives the former e.g.

Tread, O my joy! Tread, O my joy!
Love of my love brings sore annoy,

A chorus to such stanzas as: —

Alexandrian damsels rare! * Daintily o’er the floor ye fare: Your lips are sweet, are sugar-sweet, * And purfled Cashmere shawls ye wear!

It may be noted that “humming” is not a favourite practice with Moslems; if one of the company begin, another will say, “Go to the Kahwah” (the coffee-house, the proper music-hall) “and sing there!” I have elsewhere observed their dislike to Al-sifr or whistling.

[625] Arab. Khalí’a = worn out, crafty, an outlaw; used like Span. “Perdido.”

[626] "Zabbál" is the scavenger, lit. a dung-drawer, especially for the use of the Hammam which is heated with the droppings of animals. "Wakkád" (stoker) is the servant who turns the fire. The verses are mere nonsense to suit the Barber's humour.

[627] Arab. "Yá bárid" = O fool.

[628] This form of blessing is chanted from the Minaret about half-an-hour before midday, when the worshippers take their places in the mosque. At noon there is the usual Azán or prayer-call, and each man performs a two-bow, in honour of the mosque and its gathering, as it were. The Prophet is then blessed and a second Salám is called from the raised ambo or platform (dikkah) by the divines who repeat the midday-call. Then an Imam recites the first Khutbah, or sermon "of praise"; and the congregation worships in silence. This is followed by the second exhortation "of Wa'az," dispensing the words of wisdom. The Imam now stands up before the Mihráb (prayer niche) and recites the Ikámah which is the common Azan with one only difference: after "Hie ye to salvation" it adds "Come is the time of supplication;" whence the name, "causing" (prayer) "to stand" (i.e., to begin). Hereupon the worshippers recite the Farz or Koran commanded noon-prayer of Friday; and the unco' guid add a host of superogatories Those who would study the subject may consult Lane (M. E. chaps. iii. and its abstract in his "Arabian Nights," I, , or note 69 to chaps. v.).

[629] i.e., the women loosed their hair; an immodesty sanctioned only by a great calamity.

[630] These small shops are composed of a "but" and a "ben."
(Pilgrimage i., 99.)

[631] Arab. "Kawwád," a popular term of abuse; hence the Span. and Port. "Alco-viteiro." The Italian "Galeotto" is from Galahalt, not Galahad.

[632] i.e., "one seeking assistance in Allah." He was the son of Al-Záhir bi'lláh (one pre-eminent by the decree of Allah). Lane says (i. 430),

“great- grandson of Harun al-Rashid,” alluding to the first Mustansir son of Al-Mutawakkil (regn. A.H. 247-248 =861-862). But this is the 56th Abbaside and regn. A. H. 623-640 (= 1226-1242).

[633] Arab. “Yaum al-Id,” the Kurban Bairam of the Turks, the Pilgrimage festival. The story is historical. In the “Akd,” a miscellany compiled by Ibn Abd Rabbuh (vulg. Rabbi-hi) of Cordova, who ob. A. H. 328 = 940 we read: — A sponger found ten criminals and followed them, imagining they were going to a feast; but lo, they were going to their deaths! And when they were slain and he remained, he was brought before the Khalifah (Al Maamun) and Ibrahim son of Al- Mahdi related a tale to procure pardon for the man, whereupon the Khalifah pardoned him. (Lane ii., 506.)

[634] Arab. “Nate’ al-Dam”; the former word was noticed in the Tale of the Bull and the Ass. The leather of blood was not unlike the Sufrah and could be folded into a bag by a string running through rings round the edges. Moslem executioners were very expert and seldom failed to strike off the head with a single blow of the thin narrow blade with razor-edge, hard as diamond withal, which contrasted so strongly with the great coarse chopper of the European headsman.

[635] The ground floor, which in all hot countries is held, and rightly so, unwholesome during sleep, is usually let for shops. This is also the case throughout Southern Europe, and extends to the Canary Islands and the Brazil.

[636] This serious contemplation of street-scenery is one of the pleasures of the Harems.

[637] We should say “smiled at him”: the laugh was not intended as an affront.

[638] Arab. “Fals ahmar.” Fals is a fish-scale, also the smaller coin and the plural “Fulús” is the vulgar term for money (= Ital. quattrini) without specifying the coin. It must not be confounded with the “Fazzah,” alias “Nuss,” alias “Páráh” (Turk.); the latter being made, not of “red copper” but of a vile alloy containing, like the Greek

"Asper," some silver; and representing, when at par, the fortieth of a piastre, the latter=2d. 2/5ths.

[639] Arab "Farajiyah " a long-sleeved robe; Lane's "Farageeyeh," (M. E., chaps. i)

[640] The tailor in the East, as in Southern Europe, is made to cut out the cloth in presence of its owner, to prevent "cabbaging."

[641] Expecting a present.

[642] Alluding to the saying, "Kiss is the key to Kitty."

[643] The "panel-dodge" is fatally common throughout the East, where a man found in the house of another is helpless.

[644] This was the beginning of horseplay which often ends in a bastinado.

[645] Hair-dyes, in the East, are all of vegetable matter, henna, indigo-leaves, galls, etc.: our mineral dyes are, happily for them, unknown. Herklots will supply a host of recipes The Egyptian mixture which I quoted in Pilgrimage (ii., 274) is sulphate of iron and ammoniure of iron one part and gall nuts two parts, infused in eight parts of distilled water. It is innocuous but very poor as a dye.

[646] Arab. Amrad, etymologically "beardless and handsome," but often used in a bad sense, to denote an effeminate, a catamite.

[647] The Hindus prefer "having the cardinal points as her sole garment." "Vêtu de climat," says Madame de Stael. In Paris nude statues are "draped in cerulean blue." Rabelais (iv.,29) robes King Shrovetide in grey and gold of a comical cut, nothing before, nothing behind, with sleeves of the same.

[648] This scene used to be enacted a few years ago in Paris for the benefit of concealed spectators, a young American being the victim. It was put down when one of the lookers-on lost his eye by a pen-

knife thrust into the “crevice.”

[649] Meaning that the trick had been played by the Wazir’s wife or daughter. I could mention sundry names at Cairo whose charming owners have done worse things than this unseemly frolic.

[650] Arab. “Shayyun li’lláhi,” a beggar’s formula = per amor di Dio.

[651] Noting how sharp-eared the blind become.

[652] The blind in Egypt are notorious for insolence and violence, fanaticism and rapacity. Not a few foreigners have suffered from them (Pilgrimage i., 148). In former times many were blinded in infancy by their mothers, and others blinded themselves to escape conscription or honest hard work. They could always obtain food, especially as Mu’ezzins and were preferred because they could not take advantage of the minaret by spying into their neighbours’ households. The Egyptian race is chronically weak-eyed, the effect of the damp hot climate of the valley, where ophthalmia prevailed even during the pre-Pharaohnic days. The great Sesostris died stone-blind and his successor lost his sight for ten years (Pilgrimage ii., 176). That the Fellahs are now congenitally weak-eyed, may be seen by comparing them with negroes imported from Central Africa. Ophthalmia rages, especially during the damp season, in the lower Nile-valley; and the best cure for it is a fortnight’s trip to the Desert where, despite glare, sand and wind, the eye readily recovers tone.

[653] i.e., with kicks and cuffs and blows, as is the custom.
(Pilgrimage i., 174.)

[654] Arab. Káid (whence “Alcayde”) a word still much used in
North Western Africa.

[655] Arab. “Sullam” = lit. a ladder; a frame-work of sticks, used by way of our triangles or whipping-posts.

[656] This is one of the feats of Al-Símiyá = white magic; fascinating the eyes. In Europe it has lately taken the name of “Electro-biology.”

657 again by means of the “Símiyá” or power of fascination possessed by the old scoundrel.

658 A formula for averting “Al-Ayn,” the evil eye. It is always unlucky to meet a one-eyed man, especially the first thing in the morning and when setting out on any errand. The idea is that the fascinated one will suffer from some action of the physical eye. Monoculars also are held to be rogues: so the Sanskrit saying “Few one-eyed men be honest men.”

659 Al-Nashshár from Nashr = sawing: so the fiddler in Italian is called the “village-saw” (Sega del villaggio). He is the Alnaschar of the Englished Galland and Richardson. The tale is very old. It appears as the Brahman and the Pot of Rice in the Panchatantra; and Professor Benfey believes (as usual with him) that this, with many others, derives from a Buddhist source. But I would distinctly derive it from Æsop’s market-woman who kicked over her eggs, whence the Lat. prov. Ante victoriam canere triumphum = to sell the skin before you have caught the bear. In the “Kalilah and Dimnah” and its numerous offspring it is the “Ascetic with his Jar of oil and honey;” in Rabelais (i., 33) Echephron’s shoemaker spills his milk, and so La Perette in La Fontaine. See M. Max Muller’s “Chips,” (vol. iii., appendix) The curious reader will compare my version with that which appears at the end of Richardson’s Arabic Grammar (Edit. Of 1811): he had a better, or rather a fuller MS. () than any yet printed.

660 Arab. “Atr” = any perfume, especially oil of roses; whence our word “Otter,’ through the Turkish corruption.

661 The texts give “dirhams” (100,000 = 5,000 dinars) for “dinars,” a clerical error as the sequel shows.

662 “Young slaves,” says Richardson, losing “colour.”

663 Nothing more calculated to give affront than such a refusal. Richardson () who, however, doubts his own version (), here translates, “and I will not give liberty to my soul (spouse) but in her apartments.” The Arabic, or rather Cairene, is, “wa lá akhalli rúhi” I

will not let myself go, i.e., be my everyday self, etc.

[664] "Whilst she is in astonishment and terror."
(Richardson.)

[665] "Chamber of robes," Richardson, whose text has "Nám" for "Manám."

[666] "Till I compleat her distress," Richardson, whose text is corrupt.

[667] "Sleep by her side," R. the word "Name" bearing both senses.

[668] "Will take my hand," R. "takabbal" being also ambiguous.

[669] Arab. "Mu'arras" one who brings about "'Ars," marriages, etc. So the Germ. = "Kupplerinn" a Coupleress. It is one of the many synonyms for a pimp, and a word in general use (Pilgrimage i., 276).The most insulting term, like Dayyús, insinuates that the man panders for his own wife.

[670] Of hands and face, etc. See Night cccclxiv.

[671] Arab. "Sadakah" (sincerity), voluntary or superogatory alms, opposed to "Zakát" (purification), legal alms which are indispensable. "Prayer carries us half way to Allah, fasting brings us to the door of His palace and alms deeds (Sadakah) cause us to enter." For "Zakát" no especial rate is fixed, but it should not be less than one-fortieth of property or two and a half per cent. Thus Al-lslam is, as far as I know, the only faith which makes a poor-rate (Zakát) obligatory and which has invented a property-tax, as opposed the unjust and unfair income-tax upon which England prides herself.

[672] A Greek girl.

[673] This was making himself very easy; and the idea is the gold in the pouch caused him to be so bold. Lane's explanation (in loco) is all wrong. The pride engendered by sudden possession of money is a lieu commun amongst Eastern story tellers; even in the beast-fables

the mouse which has stolen a few gold pieces becomes confident and stout-hearted.

[674] Arab. “al-Málihah” also means the beautiful (fem.) from Milh=salt, splendour, etc., the Mac edit. has “Mumallihah” = a salt-vessel.

[675] i.e., to see if he felt the smart.

[676] Arab. “Sardábeh” (Persian)=an underground room used for coolness in the hot season. It is unknown in Cairo but every house in Baghdad, in fact throughout the Mesopotamian cities, has one. It is on the principle of the underground cellar without which wine will not keep: Lane (i., 406) calls it a “vault”.

[677] In the orig. “O old woman!” which is insulting.

[678] So the Italians say “a quail to skin.”

[679] “Amen” is the word used for quarter on the battle-field; and there are Joe Millers about our soldiers in India mistaking it for “a man” or (Scottice) “a mon.”

[680] Illustrating the Persian saying “Allah himself cannot help a fool.”

[681] Any article taken from the person and given to a criminal is a promise of pardon, of course on the implied condition of plenary confession and of becoming “King’s evidence.”

[682] A naïve proposal to share the plunder.

[683] In popular literature “Schacabac.”, And from this tale comes our saying “A Barmecide’s Feast,” i.e., an illusion.

[684] The Castrato at the door is still (I have said) the fashion of Cairo and he acts “Suisse” with a witness.

[685] As usual in the East, the mansion was a hollow square surrounding what in Spain is called Patio: the outer entrance was far

from the inner, showing the extent of the grounds.

[686] "Nahnu málihín" = we are on terms of salt, said and say the Arabs. But the traveller must not trust in these days to the once sacred tie; there are tribes which will give bread with one hand and stab with the other. The Eastern use of salt is a curious contrast with that of Westerns, who made it an invidious and inhospitable distinction, e.g., to sit above the salt-cellar and below the salt. Amongst the ancients, however, "he took bread and salt" means he swore, the food being eaten when an oath was taken. Hence the "Bride cake" of salt, water and flour.

[687] Arab. "Harísah," the meat-pudding before explained.

[688] Arab. "Sikbáj," before explained; it is held to be a lordly dish, invented by Khusraw Parwiz. "Fatted duck" says the Bresl. Edit. ii., 308, with more reason.

[689] I was reproved in Southern Abyssinia for eating without this champing, "Thou feedest like a beggar who muncheth silently in his corner;" and presently found that it was a sign of good breeding to eat as noisily as possible.

[690] Barley in Arabia is, like our oats, food for horses: it fattens at the same time that it cools them. Had this been known to our cavalry when we first occupied Egypt in 1883-4 our losses in horse-flesh would have been far less; but official ignorance persisted in feeding the cattle upon heating oats and the riders upon beef, which is indigestible, instead of mutton, which is wholesome.

[691] i.e. "I conjure thee by God."

[692] i.e. "This is the very thing for thee."

[693] i.e., at random.

[694] This is the way of slaughtering the camel, whose throat is never cut on account of the thickness of the muscles. "Égorger un

chameau" is a mistake often made in French books.

[695] i.e. I will break bounds.

[696] The Arabs have a saying corresponding with the dictum of the Salernitan school: —

Noscitur a labiis quantum sit virginis antrum:
Noscitur a naso quanta sit haste viro;
(A maiden's mouth shows what's the make of her chose;
And man's mentule one knows by the length of his nose.)

Whereto I would add: —

And the eyebrows disclose how the lower wig grows.

The observations are purely empirical but, as far as my experience extends, correct.

[697] Arab. "Kahkahah," a very low proceeding.

[698] Or "for every death there is a cause;" but the older
Arabs had a saying corresponding with "Deus non fecit mortem."

[699] The King's barber is usually a man of rank for the best of reasons, that he holds his Sovereign's life between his fingers. One of these noble Figaros in India married an English lady who was, they say, unpleasantly surprised to find out what were her husband's official duties.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

VOLUME II.

TO JOHN PAYNE, ESQ.

My Dear Sir,

Allow me thus publicly to express my admiration of your magnum opus, “The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night;” and to offer you my cordial thanks for honouring me with the dedication of that scholar-like and admirable version.

Ever yours sincerely,
Richard F. Burton.

Queen’s College, Oxford,
August 1, 1885.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

Nur Al-Din Ali and the Damsel Anis Al-Jalis

Quoth Shahrazad [1] : — It hath reached me, O auspicious King of intelligence penetrating, that there was, amongst the Kings of Bassorah[2] , a King who loved the poor and needy and cherished his lieges, and gave of his wealth to all who believed in Mohammed (whom Allah bless and assain!), and he was even as one of the poets described him,

"A King who when hosts of the foe invade, * Receives them with
lance-lunge and sabre-sway;
Writes his name on bosoms in thin red lines, * And scatters the
horsemen in wild dismay."[3]

His name was King Mohammed bin Sulayman al-Zayni, and he had two Wazirs, one called Al-Mu'ín, son of Sáwí and the other Al-Fazl son of Khákán. Now Al-Fazl was the most generous of the people of his age, upright of life, so that all hearts united in loving him and the wise flocked to him for counsel; whilst the subjects used to pray for his long life, because he was a compendium of the best qualities, encouraging the good and lief, and preventing evil and mischief. But the Wazir Mu'ín bin Sáwí on the contrary hated folk [4] and loved not the good and was a mere compound of ill; even as was said of him,

"Hold to nobles, sons of nobles! 'tis ever Nature's test * That
nobles born of nobles shall excel in noble deed:
And shun the mean of soul, meanly bred, for 'tis the law, * Mean
deeds come of men who are mean of blood and breed."

And as much as the people loved and fondly loved Al-Fazl bin Khákán, so they hated and thoroughly hated the mean and miserly Mu'ín bin Sáwí. It befel one day by the decree of the Decreer, that King Mohammed bin Sulayman al-Zayni, being seated on his throne with his officers of state about him, summoned his Wazir Al-Fazl and said to him, "I wish to have a slave-girl of passing beauty, perfect in loveliness, exquisite in symmetry and endowed with all praiseworthy gifts.” Said the courtiers, “Such a girl is not to be bought for less than ten thousand gold pieces:” whereupon the Sultan called out to his treasurer and said, “Carry ten thousand dinars to the house of Al-Fazl bin Khákán.” The treasurer did the King’s bidding; and the Minister went away, after receiving the royal charge to repair to the slave-bazar every day, and entrust to brokers the matter aforesaid. Moreover the King issued orders that girls worth above a thousand gold pieces should not be bought or sold without being first displayed to the Wazir. Accordingly no broker purchased a slave-girl ere she had been paraded before the minister; but none pleased him, till one day a dealer came to the house and found him taking horse and intending for the palace. So he caught hold of his stirrup saying,

“O thou, who givest to royal state sweet savour, * Thou’rt a
Wazir shalt never fail of favour!
Dead Bounty thou hast raised to life for men; * Ne’er fail of
Allah’s grace such high endeavour!”

Then quoth he, “O my lord, that surpassing object for whom the gracious mandate was issued is at last found;[5] “ and quoth the Wazir, “Here with her to me!” So he went away and returned after a little, bringing a damsel in richest raiment robed, a maid spear-straight of stature and five feet tall; budding of bosom with eyes large and black as by Kohl traced, and dewy lips sweeter than syrup or the sherbet one sips, a virginette smooth cheeked and shapely faced, whose slender waist with massive hips was engraced; a form more pleasing than branchlet waving upon the top-most trees, and a voice softer and gentler than the morning breeze, even as saith one of those who have described her,

“Strange is the charm which dights her brows like Luna’s disk
that shine; * O sweeter taste than sweetest Robb[6] or
raisins of the vine.
A throne th’Empyrean keeps for her in high and glorious state, *
For wit and wisdom, wandlike form and graceful bending line:
She in the Heaven of her face[7] the seven-fold stars

displays, * That guard her cheeks as satellites against
the spy's design:
If man should cast a furtive glance or steal far look at her, *
His heart is burnt by devil-bolts shot by those piercing
eyne."

When the Wazir saw her she made him marvel with excess of admiration, so he turned, perfectly pleased, to the broker and asked, "What is the price of this girl?"; whereto he answered, "Her market-value stands at ten thousand dinars, but her owner swears that this sum will not cover the cost of the chickens she hath eaten, the wine she hath drunken and the dresses of honour bestowed upon her instructor: for she hath learned calligraphy and syntax and etymology; the commentaries of the Koran; the principles of law and religion; the canons of medicine, and the calendar and the art of playing on musical instruments."[8] Said the Wazir, "Bring me her master." So the broker brought him at once and, behold, he was a Persian of whom there was left only what the days had left; for he was as a vulture bald and scald and a wall trembling to its fall. Time had buffetted him with sore smart, yet was he not willing this world to depart; even as said the poet,

"Time hath shattered all my frame, * Oh! how time hath
shattered me.
Time with lordly might can tame * Manly strength and vigour
free.
Time was in my youth, that none * Sped their way more fleet
and fast:
Time is and my strength is gone, * Youth is sped, and speed
is past.[9] "

The Wazir asked him, "Art thou content to sell this slave-girl to the Sultan for ten thousand dinars?"; and the Persian answered, "By Allah, if I offer her to the King for naught, it were but my devoir."[10] So the Minister bade bring the monies and saw them weighed out to the Persian, who stood up before him and said, "By the leave of our lord the Wazir, I have somewhat to say;" and the Wazir replied, "Out with all thou hast!" "It is my opinion," continued the slave-dealer, "that thou shouldst not carry the maid to the King this day; for she is newly off a journey; the change of air[11] hath affected her and the toils of trouble have fretted her. But keep her quiet in thy palace some ten days, that she may recover her looks and become again as she was. Then send her to the Hammam and clothe her in the richest of clothes and go up with her to the Sultan: this will be more to thy profit." The Wazir pondered the Persian's words and approved of their wisdom; so he carried her to his palace, where he appointed her private rooms, and allowed her every day whatever she wanted of meat and drink and so forth. And on this wise she abode a while. Now the Wazir Al-Fazl had a son like the full moon when sheeniest dight, with face radiant in light, cheeks ruddy bright, and a mole like a dot of ambergris on a downy site; as said of him the poet and said full right,

"A moon which blights you[12] if you dare behold; * A branch
 which folds you in its waving fold:
Locks of the Zanj[13] and golden glint of hair; * Sweet gait
 and form a spear to have and hold:
Ah! hard of heart with softest slenderest waist, * That evil to
 this weal why not remould?[14]
Were thy form's softness placed in thy heart, * Ne'er would thy
 lover find thee harsh and cold:
Oh thou accuser! be my love's excuser, * Nor chide if love-pangs
 deal me woes untold!
I bear no blame: 'tis all my hear and eyne; * So leave thy
 blaming, let me yearn and pine."

Now the handsome youth knew not the affair of the damsel; and his father had enjoined her closely, saying, "Know, O my daughter, that I have bought thee as a bedfellow for our King, Mohammed bin Sulayman al-Zayni; and I have a son who is a Satan for girls and leaves no maid in the neighbourhood without taking her maidenhead; so be on thy guard against him and beware of letting him see thy face or hear they voice." "Hearkening and obedience," said the girl; and he left her and fared forth. Some days after this it happened by decree of Destiny, that the damsel repaired to the baths in the house, where some of the slave women bathed her; after which she arrayed herself in sumptuous raiment; and her beauty and loveliness were thereby redoubled. Then she went in to the Wazir's wife and kissed her hand; and the dame said to her, "Naiman! May it benefit thee,[15] O Anis al- Jalis![16] Are not our baths handsome?" "O my mistress," she replied, "I lacked naught there save thy gracious presence." Thereupon the lady said to her slave-women, "Come with us to the Hammam, for it is some days since we went there:" they answered, "To hear is to obey!" and rose and all accompanied her. Now she had set two little slave-girls to keep the door of the private chamber wherein was Anis al-Jalis and had said to them, "Suffer none go in to the damsel." Presently, as the beautiful maiden sat resting in her rooms, suddenly came in the Wazir's son whose name was Nur al-Din Ali,[17] and asked after his mother and her women, to which the two little slave-girls replied, "They are in the Hammam." But the damsel, Anis al-Jalis, had heard from within Nur al-Din Ali's voice and had said to herself, "O would Heaven I saw what like is this youth against whom the Wazir warned me, saying that he hath not left a virgin in the neighbourhood without taking her virginity: by Allah, I do long to have sight of him!" So she sprang to her feet with the freshness of the bath on her and, stepping to the door, looked at Nur al-Din Ali and saw a youth like the moon in its full and the sight bequeathed her a thousand sighs. The young man also glanced at her and the look make him heir to a thousand thoughts of care; and each fell into Love's ready snare. Then he stepped up to the two little slave-girls and cried aloud at them; whereupon both fled before him and stood afar off to see what he would do. And behold, he walked to the door of the damsel's chamber and, opening it, went in and asked her "Art thou she my father bought for me?" and she answered "Yes." Thereupon the youth, who was warm with wine, came up to her and embraced her; then he took her legs and passed them round his waist and she wound her arms about his neck, and met him with kisses and murmurs of pleasure and amorous toyings. Next he sucked her tongue and she sucked his, and lastly, he loosed the strings of her petticoat-trousers and abated her maidenhead. When the two little slave-girls saw their young master get in unto the damsel, Anis al-Jalis, they cried out and shrieked; so as soon as the youth had had his wicked will of her, he rose and fled forth fearing the consequences of his ill-doing.

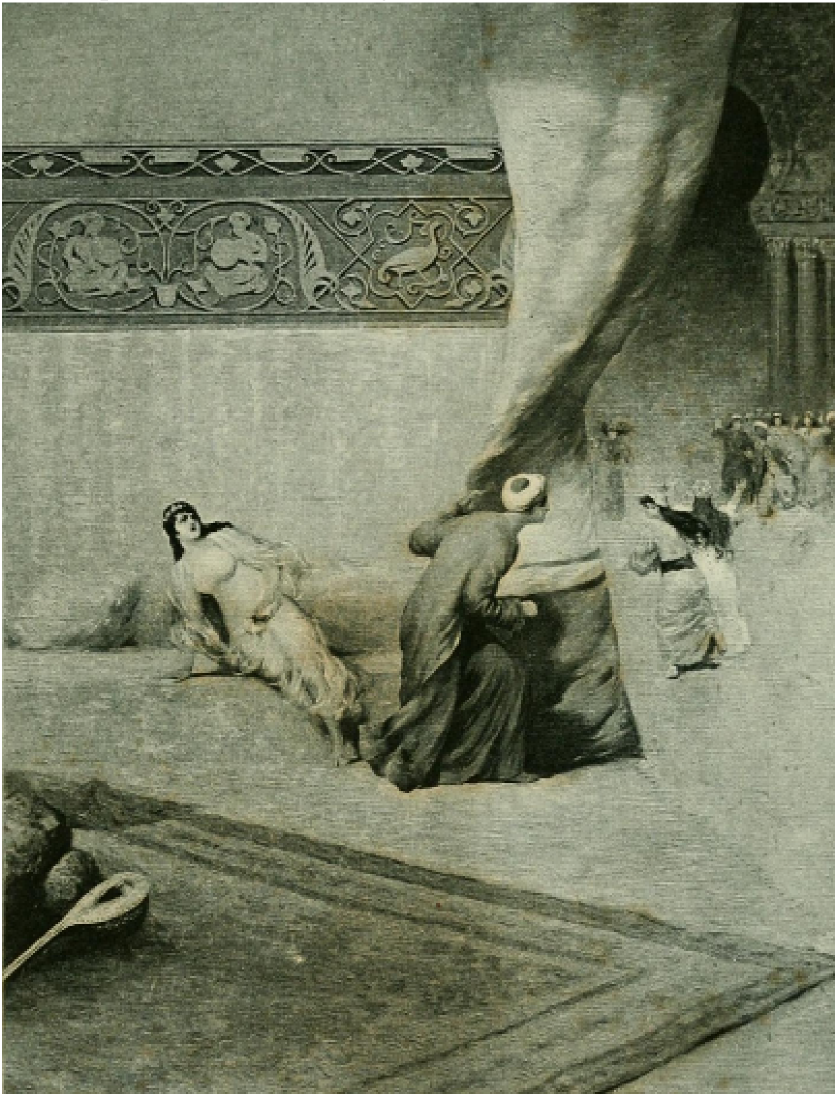

When the Wazir's wife heard the slave-girls' cries, she sprang up and came out of the baths with the perspiration pouring from her face, saying, "What is this unseemly clamour in the house[18] ?" Then she came up to the two little slave- girls and asked them saying, "Fie upon you! what is the matter?"; and both answered, "Verily our lord Nur al-Din came in and beat us, so we fled; then he went up to Anis al-Jalis and threw his arms round her and we know not what he did after that; but when we cried out to thee he ran away.” Upon this the lady went to Anis al-Jalis and said to her, “What tidings?” “O my lady,” she answered, “as I was sitting here lo! a handsome young man came in and said to me: — Art thou she my father bought for me?; and I answered Yes; for, by Allah, O mistress mine, I believed that his words were true; and he instantly came in and embraced me.” “Did he nought else with thee but this?” quoth the lady, and quoth she, “Indeed he did! But he did it only three times.” “He did not leave thee without dishonouring thee!” cried the Wazir’s wife and fell to weeping and buffetting her face, she and the girl and all the handmaidens, fearing lest Nur al-Din’s father should kill him.[19] Whilst they were thus, in came the Wazir and asked what was the matter, and his wife said to him, “Swear that whatso I tell thee thou wilt attend to it.” “I will,” answered he. So she related to him what his son had done, whereat he was much concerned and rent his raiment and smote his face till his nose bled, and plucked out his beard by the handful. “Do not kill thyself,” said his wife, “I will give thee ten thousand dinars, her price, of my own money.” But he raised his head and cried, “Out upon thee! I have no need of her purchase-money: my fear is lest life as well as money go.” “O my lord, and how is that?” “Wottest thou not that yonder standeth our enemy Al Mu’ín bin Sáwí who, as soon as he shall hear of this matter, will go up to the Sultan” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Thirty-fifth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir said to his wife, “Wottest thou not that yonder standeth our enemy Al-Mu’ín bin Sáwí who, as soon as he hears of this matter will go up to the Sultan and say to him, ‘Thy Wazir who, thou wilt have it loveth thee, took from thee ten thousand ducats and bought therewith a slave-girl whose like none ever beheld; but when he saw her, she pleased him and he said to his son, ‘Take her: thou art worthier of her than the Sultan.’ So he took her and did away with her virginity and she is now in his house.’ The King will say, ‘Thou liest!’ to which he will reply, ‘With thy leave I will fall upon him unawares and bring her to thee.’ The King will give him warranty for this and he will come down upon the house and will take the girl and present her to the Sultan, who will question her and she will not be able to deny the past. Then mine enemy will say, ‘O my lord, thou wottest that I give thee the best of counsel; but I have not found favour in thine eyes.’ Thereupon the Sultan will make an example of me, and I shall be a gazing-stock to all the people and my life will be lost.” Quoth his wife, “Let none know of this thing which hath happened privily, and commit thy case to Allah and trust in Him to save thee from such strait; for He who knoweth the future shall provide for the future.” With this she brought the Wazir a cup of wine and his heart was quieted, and he ceased to feel wrath and fear. Thus far concerning him; but as regards his son Nur al-Din Ali, fearing the consequence of his misdeed he abode his day long in the flower garden and came back only at night to his mother’s apartment where he slept; and, rising before dawn, returned to the gardens. He ceased not to do thus for two whole months without showing his face to his parent, till at last his mother said to his father, “O my lord, shall we lose our boy as well as the girl? If matters continue long in this way he will flee from us.” “And what to do?” asked he; and she answered, “Do thou watch this night; and, when he cometh, seize on him and frighten him: I will rescue him from thee and do thou make peace with him and give him the damsel to wife, for she loveth him as he loveth her. And I will pay thee her price.” So the Minister say up that night and, when his son came, he seized him and throwing him down knelt on his breast and showed as thou he would cut his throat; but his mother ran to the youth’s succour and asked her husband, “What wouldest thou do with him?” He answered her, “I will split his weasand.” Said the son to the father, “Is my death, then, so light a matter to thee?”; and his father’s eyes welled with tears, for natural affection moved him, and he rejoined, “O my son, how light was to thee the loss of my good and my life!” Quoth Nur al-Din, “Hear, O my father, what the poet hath said,

‘Forgive me! thee-ward sinned I, but the wise * Ne’er to the
sinner shall deny his grace:
Thy foe may pardon sue when lieth he * In lowest, and thou
holdest highest place!’”

Thereupon the Wazir rose from off his son’s breast saying, “I forgive thee!”; for his heart yearned to him; and the youth kissed the hand of his sire who said, “O my son, were I sure that thou wouldest deal justly by Anis al-Jalis, I would give her to thee.” “O my father, what justice am I to do to her?” “I enjoin thee, O my son, not to take another wife or concubine to share with her, nor sell her.” “O my father! I swear to thee that verily I will not do her injustice in either way.” Having sworn to that effect Nur al-Din went in to the damsel and abode with her a whole year, whilst Allah Almighty caused the King to forget the matter of the maiden; and Al-Mu’ín, though the affair came to his ears, dared not divulge it by reason of the high favour in which his rival stood with the Sultan. At the end of the year Al-Fazl went one day to the public baths; and, as he came out whilst he was still sweating, the air struck him[20] and he caught a cold which turned to a fever; then he took to his bed. His malady gained ground and restlessness was longsome upon him and weakness bound him like a chain; so he called out, “Hither with my son;” and when Nur al-Din Ali came he said to him, “O my son, know that man’s lot and means are distributed and decreed; and the end of days by all must be dree’d; and that every soul drain the cup of death is nature’s need.” The he repeated these lines,

“I die my death, but He alone is great who dieth not! * And well
I wot, soon shall I die, for death was made my lot:
A King there’s not that dies and holds his kingdom in his hand, *
For Sovranty the Kingdom is of Him who dieth not.”

Then he continued, “O my son, I have no charge to leave thee save that thou fear Allah and look to the issues of thine acts and bear in mind my injunctions anent Anis al-Jalis.” “O my father!” said Nur al-Din, “who is like unto thee? Indeed thou art famed for well doing and preachers offer prayers for thee in their pulpits!” Quoth Al-Fazl, “O my son, I hope that Allah Almighty may grant me acceptance!” Then he pronounced the Two Testimonies,[21] or Professions of the Faith, and was recorded among the blessed. The palace was filled with crying and lamentation and the news of his death reached the King, and the city-people wept, even those at their prayers and women at household cares and the school-children shed tears for Bin- Khákán. Then his son Nur al-Din Ali arose and made ready his funeral, and the Emirs and Wazirs and high Officers of State and city-notables were present, amongst them the Wazir al-Mu'ín bin Sáwí. And as the bier went forth from the house some one in the crowd of mourners began to chant these lines,

"On the fifth day I quitted al my friends for evermore, * And
they laid me out and washed me on a slab without my
door:[22]
They stripped me of the clothes I was ever wont to wear, * And
they clothed me in the clothes which till then I never wore.
On four men's necks they bore me and carried me from home * To
chapel; and some prayed for him on neck they bore:
They prayed for me a prayer that no prostration knows;[23] *
They prayed for me who praised me and were my friends of
yore;
And they laid me in a house with a ceiling vaulted o'er, * And
Time shall be no more ere it ope to me its door."

When they had shovelled in the dust over him and the crowd had dispersed, Nur al-Din returned home and he lamented with sobs and tears; and the tongue of the case repeated these couplets,

"On the fifth day at even-tide they went away from me: *
farewelled them as faring they made farewell my lot:
But my spirit as they went, with them went and so I cried, * 'Ah
return ye!' but replied she, 'Alas! return is not
To a framework lere and lorn that lacketh blood and life, * A
frame whereof remaineth naught but bones that rattle and
rot:
Mine eyes are blind and cannot see quencht by the flowing tear! *
Mine ears are dull and lost to sense: they have no power to
hear!'"

He abode a long time sorrowing for his father till, one day, as he was sitting at home, there came a knocking at the door; so he rose in haste and opening let in a man, one of his father's intimates and who had been the Wazir's boon-companion. The visitor kissed Nur al-Din's hand and said to him, "O my lord, he who hath left the like of thee is not dead; and this way went also the Chief of the Ancients and the Moderns. [24] O my lord Ali, be comforted and leave sorrowing." Thereupon Nur al-Din rose and going to the guest-saloon transported thither all he needed. Then he assembled his companions and took his handmaid again; and, collecting round him ten of the sons of the merchants, began to eat meat and drink wine, giving entertainment after entertainment and lavishing his presents and his favours. One day his Steward came to him and said, "O my lord Nur al-Din, hast thou not heard the saying, Whoso spendeth and reckoneth not, to poverty wendeth and recketh not?" And he repeated what the poet wrote,

"I look to my money and keep it with care, * For right well I wot
'tis my buckler and brand:
Did I lavish my dirhams on hostilest foes,[25] * I should
truck my good luck by mine ill luck trepanned:
So I'll eat it and drink it and joy in my wealth; * And no
spending my pennies on others I'll stand:
I will keep my purse close 'gainst whoever he be; * And a niggard
in grain a true friend ne'er I fand:
Far better deny him than come to say: — Lend, * And five-fold the
loan shall return to thy hand!
And he turns face aside and he sidles away, * While I stand like
a dog disappointed, unmanned,
Oh, the sorry lot his who hath yellow-boys none, * Though his
genius and virtues shine bright as the sun!

O my master," continued the Steward, "this lavish outlay and these magnificent gifts waste away wealth." When Nur al-Din Ali heard these words he looked at his servant and cried, "Of all thou hast spoken I will not heed one single word, for I have heard the saying of the poet who saith,

'An my palm be full of wealth and my wealth I ne'er bestow, * A

palsy take my hand and my foot ne'er rise again!
Show my niggard who by niggardise e'er rose to high degree, * Or
the generous gifts generally hath slain.'"

And he pursued, "Know, O Steward, it is my desire that so long as thou hast money enough for my breakfast, thou trouble me not with taking thought about my supper." Thereupon the Steward asked, "Must it be so?"; and he answered, "It must." So the honest man went his way and Nur al-Din Ali devoted himself to extravagance; and, if any of his cup-companions chanced to say, "This is a pretty thing;" he would reply, "'Tis a gift to thee!"; or if another said, "O my lord, such a house is handsome;" he would answer, "Take it: it is thine!" After this reckless fashion he continued to live for a whole year, giving his friends a banquet in the morning and a banquet in the evening and a banquet at midnight, till one day, as the company was sitting together, the damsel Anis al-Jalis repeated these lines,

"Thou deemedst well of Time when days went well, * And feardest
not what ills might deal thee Fate:
Thy nights so fair and restful cozened thee, * For peaceful
nights bring woes of heavy weight."

When she had ended her verse behold, somebody knocked at the door. So Nur al-Din rose to open it and one of his boon- companions followed him without being perceived. At the door he found his Steward and asked him, "What is the matter?"; and he answered, "O my lord, what I dreaded for thee hath come to pass!" "How so?" "Know that there remains not a dirham's worth, less or more in my hands. Here are my Daftars and account books showing both income and outlay and the registers of thine original property." When Nur al-Din heard these words he bowed his head and said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah!" When the man who had followed him privily to spy on him heard the Steward's words, he returned to his friends and warned them saying, "Look ye well to what ye do: Nur al-Din is penniless;" and, as the young host came back to his guests, vexation showed itself in his face. Thereupon one of the intimates rose; and, looking at the entertainer, said to him, "O my lord, may be thou wilt give me leave to retire?" "And why so early retirement this day?"; asked he and the other answered him, "My wife is in childbirth and I may not be absent from her: indeed I must return and see how she does." So he gave him leave, whereupon another rose and said, "O my lord Nur al-Din, I wish now to go to my brother's for he circumciseth his son to- day."[26] In short each and every asked permission to retire on some pretence or other, till all the ten were gone leaving Nur al-Din alone. Then he called his slave-girl and said to her, "O Anis al-Jalis, hast thou seen what case is mine?" And he related to her what the Steward had told him. Then quoth she, "O my lord, for many nights I had it in my mind to speak with thee of this matter, but I heard thee repeating,

'When the World heaps favours on thee, pass on * Thy favours to
friends ere her hand she stay:
Largesse never let her when fain she comes, * Nor niggardise kept
her from turning away!'

When I heard these verses I held my peace and cared not to exchange a word with thee." "O Anis al-Jalis," said Nur al-Din, "thou knowest that I have not wasted my wealth save on my friends, especially these ten who have now left me a pauper, and I think they will not abandon and desert me without relief." "By Allah," replied she, "they will not profit thee with aught of aid." Said he, "I will rise at once and go to them and knock at their doors; it may be I shall get from them somewhat wherewith I may trade and leave pastime and pleasuring." So he rose without stay or delay, and repaired to a street wherein all his ten friends lived. He went up to the nearest door and knocked; whereupon a handmaid came out and asked him, "Who art thou?"; and he answered, "Tell thy master that Nur al-Din Ali standeth at the door and saith to him, 'Thy slave kisseth thy hand and awaiteth thy bounty.'" The girl went in and told her master, who cried at her, "Go back and say, 'My master is not at home.'" So she returned to Nur al-Din, and said to him, "O my lord, my master is out." Thereupon he turned away and said to himself, "If this one be a whoreson knave and deny himself, another may not prove himself such knave and whoreson." Then he went up to the next door and sent in a like message to the house-master, who denied himself as the first had done, whereupon he began repeating,

"He is gone who when to his gate thou go'st, * Fed thy famisht maw with his boiled and roast."

When he had ended his verse he said, "By Allah, there is no help but that I make trial of them all: perchance there be one amongst them who will stand me in the stead of all the rest." So he went the round of the ten, but not one of them would open his door to him or show himself or even break a bit of bread before him; whereupon he recited,

"Like a tree is he who in wealth doth wone, * And while fruits he
the folk to his fruit shall run:
But when bared the tree of what fruit it bare, * They leave it to
suffer from dust and sun.
Perdition to all of this age! I find * Ten rogues for every
righteous one."

Then he returned to his slave-girl and his grief had grown more grievous and she said to him, "O my lord, did I not tell thee, none would profit thee with aught of aid?" And he replied, "By Allah, not one of them would show me his face or know me!" "O my lord," quoth she, "sell some of the moveables and household stuff, such as pots and pans, little by little; and expend the proceeds until Allah Almighty shall provide." So he sold all of that was in the house till nothing remained when he turned to Anis al-Jalis and asked her "What shall we do now?"; and she answered, "O my lord, it is my advice that thou rise forthwith and take me down to the bazar and sell me. Thou knowest that they father bought me for ten thousand dinars: haply Allah may open thee a way to get the same price, and if it be His will to bring us once more together, we shall meet again." "O Anis al- Jalis," cried he, "by Allah it is no light matter for me to be parted from thee for a single hour!" "By Allah, O my lord," she replied, "nor is it easy to me either, but Need hath its own law, as the poet said,

'Need drives a man into devious roads, * And pathways doubtful of

trend and scope:
No man to a rope[27] will entrust his weight, * Save for cause
that calleth for case of rope.'"

Thereupon he rose to his feet and took her,[28] whilst the tears rolled down his cheek like rain; and he recited with the tongue of the case these lines,

"Stay! grant one parting look before we part, * Nerving my heart
this severance to sustain:
But, an this parting deal thee pain and bane, * Leave me to die
of love and spare thee pain!"

Then he went down with her to the bazar and delivered her to the broker and said to him, "O Hajj Hasan,[29] I pray thee note the value of her thou hast to cry for sale." "O my lord Nur al- Din," quoth the broker, "the fundamentals are remembered;"[30] adding, "Is not this the Anis al-Jalis whom thy father bought of me for ten thousand dinars?" "Yes," said Nur al-Din. Thereupon the broker went round to the merchants, but found that all had not yet assembled. So he waited till the rest had arrived and the market was crowded with slave-girls of all nations, Turks, Franks and Circassians; Abyssinians, Nubians and Takruris;[31] Tartars, Georgians and others; when he came forward and standing cried aloud, "O merchants! O men of money! every round thing is not a walnut and every long thing a banana is not; all reds are not meat nor all whites fat, nor is every brown thing a date![32] O merchants, I have here this union-pearl that hath no price: at what sum shall I cry her?" "Cry her at four thousand five hundred dinars," quoth one of the traders. The broker opened the door of sale at the sum named and, as he was yet calling, lo! the Wazir Al-Mu'ín bin Sáwí passed through the bazar and, seeing Nur al-Din Ali waiting at one side, said to himself, "Why is Khákán's son[33] standing about here? Hath this gallows-bird aught remaining wherewith to buy slave-girls?" Then he looked round and, seeing the broker calling out in the market with all the merchants around him, said to himself, "I am sure that he is penniless and hath brought hither the damsel Anis al-Jalis for sale;" adding, "O how cooling and grateful is this to my heart!” Then he called the crier, who came up and kissed the ground before him; and he said to him, “I want this slave-girl whom thou art calling for sale.” The broker dared not cross him, so he answered, “O my lord, Bismillah! in Allah’s name so be it;” and led forward the damsel and showed her to him. She pleased him much whereat he asked, “O Hasan, what is bidden for this girl?” and he answered, “Four thousand five hundred dinars to open the door of sale.” Quoth Al-Mu’ín, “Four thousand five hundred is MY bid.” When the merchants heard this, they held back and dared not bid another dirham, wotting what they did of the Wazir’s tyranny, violence and treachery. So Al-Mu’ín looked at the broker and said to him, “Why stand still? Go and offer four thousand dinars for me and the five hundred shall be for thyself.” Thereupon the broker went to Nur al-Din and said, “O my lord, thy slave is going for nothing!” “And how so?” asked he. The broker answered, “We had opened the biddings for her at four thousand five hundred dinars; when that tyrant, Al-Mu’ín bin Sáwí, passed through the bazar and, as he saw the damsel she pleased him, so he cried to me, ‘Call me the buyer at four thousand dinars and thou shalt have five hundred for thyself.’ I doubt not but that he knoweth that the damsel if thine, and if he would pay thee down her price at once it were well; but I know his injustice and violence; he will give thee a written order upon some of his agents and will send after thee to say to them, ‘Pay him nothing.’ So as often as though shalt go in quest of the coin they will say, ‘We’ll pay thee presently!’ and they will put thee off day after day, and thou art proud of spirit; till at last, when they are wearied with thine importunity, they will say, ‘Show us the cheque.’ Then, as soon as they have got hold of it they will tear it up and so thou wilt lose the girl’s price.” When Nur al-Din heard this he looked at the broker and asked him, “How shall this matter be managed?”; and he answered, “I will give thee a counsel which, if thou follow, it shall bring thee complete satisfaction.” “And what is that?” quoth Nur al-Din. Quoth the broker, “Come thou to me anon when I am standing in the middle of the market and, taking the girl from my hand, give her a sound cuffing and say to her, ‘Thou baggage, I have kept my vow and brought thee down to the slave-market, because I swore an oath that I would carry thee from home to the bazar, and make brokers cry thee for sale.' If thou do this, perhaps the device will impose upon the Wazir and the people, and they will believe that thou broughtest her not to the bazar, but for the quittance of thine oath." He replied, "Such were the best way." Then the broker left him and, returning into the midst of the market, took the damsel by the hand, and signed to the Wazir and said, "O my lord, here is her owner." With this up came Nur al-Din Ali and, snatching the girl from the broker's hand, cuffed her soundly and said to her, "Shame on thee, O thou baggage! I have brought thee to the bazar for quittance of mine oath; now get thee home and thwart me no more as is thy wont. Woe to thee! do I need thy price, that I should sell thee? The furniture of my house would fetch thy value many times over!" When Al-Mu'ín saw this he said to Nur al-Din, "Out on thee! Hast thou anything left for selling or buying?" And he would have laid violent hands upon him, but the merchants interposed (for they all loved Nur al-Din), and the young man said to them, "Here am I in your hands and ye all know his tyranny." "By Allah," cried the Wazir, "but for you I had slain him!" Then all signed with significant eyes to Nur al-Din as much as to say, "Take thy wreak of him; not one of us will come between thee and him." Thereupon Nur al-Din, who was stout of heart as he was stalwart of limb, went up to the Wazir and, dragging him over the pommel of his saddle, threw him to the ground. Now there was in that place a puddling- pit for brick- clay,[34] into the midst of which he fell, and Nur al-Din kept pummelling and fisti-cuffing him, and one of the blows fell full on his teeth, and his beard was dyed with his blood. Also there were with the minister ten armed slaves who, seeing their master entreated after this fashion, laid hand on sword-hilt and would have bared blades and fallen on Nur al-Din to cut him down; but the merchants and bystanders said to them, "This is a Wazir and that is the son of a Wazir; haply they will make friends some time or other, in which case you will forfeit the favour of both. Or perchance a blow may befal your lord, and you will all die the vilest of deaths; so it were better for you not to interfere." Accordingly they held aloof and, when Nur al-Din had made an end of thrashing the Wazir, he took his handmaid and fared homewards. Al-Mu'ín also went his ways at once, with his raiment dyed of three colours, black with mud, red with blood and ash coloured with brick-clay. When he saw himself in this state, he bound a bit of matting[35] round his neck and, taking in hand two bundles of coarse Halfah-grass,[36] went up to the palace and standing under the Sultan's windows cried aloud, "O King of the age, I am a wronged man! I am foully wronged!" So they brought him before the King who looked at him; and behold, it was the chief Minister; whereupon he said, "O Wazir who did this deed by thee?" Al-Mu'ín wept and sobbed and repeated these lines,

"Shall the World oppress me when thou art in't? * In the lion's
presence shall wolves devour?
Shall the dry all drink of thy tanks and I * Under rain-cloud
thirst for the cooling shower?"

"O my lord," cried he, "the like will befal every one who loveth and serveth thee well." "Be quick with thee," quoth the Sultan, "and tell me how this came to pass and who did this deed by one whose honour is part of my honour." Quoth the Wazir, "Know, O my lord, that I went out this day to the slave-market to buy me a cookmaid, when I saw there a damsel, never in my life long saw I a fairer; and I designed to buy her for our lord the Sultan; so I asked the broker of her and of her owner, and he answered, "She belongeth to Ali son of Al-Fazl bin Khákán. Some time ago our lord the Sultan gave his father ten thousand dinars wherewith to buy him a handsome slave-girl, and he bought this maiden who pleased him; so he grudged her to our lord the Sultan and gave her to his own son. When the father died, the son sold all he had of houses and gardens and household gear, and squandered the price till he was penniless. Then he brought the girl to the market that he might sell her, and he handed her over to the broker to cry and the merchants bid higher and higher on her, until the price reached four thousand dinars; whereupon quoth I to myself, 'I will buy this damsel for our lord the Sultan, whose money was paid for her.' So I said to Nur al-Din, 'O my son, sell her to me for four thousand dinars.' When he heard my words he looked at me and cried, 'O ill-omened oldster, I will sell her to a Jew or to a Nazarene, but I will not sell her to thee!' 'I do not buy her for myself,' said I, 'I buy her for our lord and benefactor the Sultan.'

Hearing my words he was filled with rage; and, dragging me off my horse (and I a very old man), beat me unmercifully with his fists and buffeted me with his palms till he left me as thou seest, and all this hath befallen me only because I thought to buy this damsel for thee!” Then the Wazir threw himself on the ground and lay there weeping and shivering. When the Sultan saw his condition and heard his story, the vein of rage started out between his eyes[37] and he turned to his body-guard who stood before him, forty white slaves, smiters with the sword, and said to them, “Go down forthright to the house built by the son of Khákán and sack it and raze it and bring to me his son Nur al-Din with the damsel; and drag them both on their faces with their arms pinioned behind them.” They replied, “To hear is to obey;” and, arming themselves, they set out for the house of Nur al-Din Ali. Now about the Sultan was a Chamerlain, Alam[38] al-Din Sanjar hight, who had aforetime been Mameluke to Al-Fazl; but he had risen in the world and the Sultan had advanced him to be one of his Chamberlains. When he heard the King’s command and saw the enemies make them ready to slay his old master’s son, it was grievous to him: so he went out from before the Sultan and, mounting his beast, rode to Nur al- Din’s house and knocked at the door. Nur al-Din came out and knowing him would have saluted him: but he said, “O my master this is no time for greeting or treating. Listen to what the poet said,

‘Fly, fly with thy life if by ill overtaken!
Let thy house speak thy death by its builder forsaken!
For a land else than this land thou may’st reach, my brother,
But thy life tho’lt ne’er find in this world another.’”[39]

“O Alam al-Din what cheer?” asked Nur al-Din, and he answered, “Rise quickly and fly for thy life, thou and the damsel; for Al- Mu’ín hath set a snare for you both; and, if you fall into his hands, he will slay you. The Sultan hath despatched forty sworders against you and I counsel you to flee ere harm can hurt you.” Then Sanjar put his hand to his purse and finding there forty gold pieces took them and gave them to Nur al-Din, saying, “O my lord receive these and journey with them. Had I more I would give them to thee, but this is not the time to take exception.” Thereupon Nur al-Din went in to the damsel and told her what had happened, at which she wrung her hands. Then they fared forth at once from the city, and Allah spread over them His veil of protection, so that they reached the river-bank where they found a vessel ready for sea. Her skipper was standing amidships and crying, “Whoso hath aught to do, whether in the way of provisioning or taking leave of his people; or whoso hath forgotten any needful thing, let him do it at once and return, for we are about to sail”; and all of them saying, “There is naught left to be done by us, O captain!”, he cried to his crew, “Hallo there! cast off the cable and pull up the mooring- pole!”[40] Quoth Nur al-Din, “Whither bound, O captain?” and quoth he, “To the House of Peace, Baghdad,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Thirty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the skipper answered, “To the House of Peace, Baghdad,” Nur al-Din Ali and the damsel went on board, and they launched the craft and shook out the sails, and the ship sped forth as though she were a bird on wing; even as said one of them and said right well,

“Watch some tall ship, she’ll joy the sight of thee, * The breeze
outstripping in her haste to flee;
As when a bird, with widely-spreading wings, * Leaveth the sky to
settle on the sea.”

So the vessel sailed on her fastest and the wind to her was fairest. Thus far concerning them; but as regards the Mamelukes, they went to Nur al-Din’s mansion and, breaking open the doors, entered and searched the whole place, but could find no trace of him and the damsel; so they demolished the house and, returning to the Sultan, reported their proceedings; whereupon quoth he, “Make search for them both, wherever they may be;” and they answered, “Hearing is obeying.” The Wazir Al-Mu’ín had also gone home after the Sultan had bestowed upon him a robe of honour, and had set his heart at rest by saying, “None shall take blood-wreak for thee save I;” and he had blessed the King and prayed for his long life and prosperity. Then the

Sultan bade proclaim about the city, “Oyez, O ye lieges one and all! It is the will of our lord the Sultan that whoso happeneth on Nur al-Din Ali son of Al- Fazl bin Khákán, and bringeth him to the Sultan, shall receive a robe of honour and one thousand gold pieces; and he who hideth him or knoweth his abiding place and informeth not, deserveth whatsoever pains and penalties shall befal him.” So all began to search for Nur al-Din Ali, but they could find neither trace nor tidings of him. Meanwhile he and his handmaid sailed on with the wind right aft, till they arrived in safety at Baghdad, and the captain said to them, “This is Baghdad and ’tis the city where security is to be had: Winter with his frosts hath turned away and Prime hath come his roses to display; and the flowers are a- glowing and the trees are blowing and the streams are flowing.” So Nur al-Din landed, he and his handmaid and, giving the captain five dinars, walked on a little way till the decrees of Destiny brought them among the gardens, and they came to a place swept and sprinkled, with benches along the walls and hanging jars filled with water.[41] Overhead was a trellis of reed-work and canes shading the whole length of the avenue, and at the upper end was a garden gate, but this was locked. “By Allah,” quoth Nur al-Din to the damsel, “right pleasant is this place!”; and she replied, “O my lord sit with me a while on this bench and let us take our ease.” So they mounted and sat them down on the bench, after which they washed their faces and hands; and the breeze blew cool on them and they fell asleep and glory be to Him who never sleepeth! Not this garden was named the Garden of Gladness[42] and therein stood a belvedere hight the Palace of Pleasure and the Pavilion of Pictures, the whole belonging to the Caliph Harun al-Rashid who was wont, when his breast was straitened with care, to frequent garden and palace and there to sit. The palace had eighty latticed windows and fourscore lamps hanging round a great candelabrum of gold furnished with wax- candles; and, when the Caliph used to enter, he would order the handmaids to throw open the lattices and light up the rooms; and he would bid Ishak bin Ibrahim the cup-companion and the slave- girls to sing till his breast was broadened and his ailments were allayed. Now the keeper of the garden, Shaykh Ibrahim, was a very old man, and he had found from time to time, when he went out on any business, people pleasuring about the garden gate with their bona robas; at which he was angered with exceeding anger.[43] But he took patience till one day when the Caliph came to his garden; and he complained of this to Harun al-Rashid who said, “Whomsoever thou surprisest about the door of the garden, deal with him as thou wilt.” Now on this day the Gardener chanced to be abroad on some occasion and returning found these two sleeping at the gate covered with a single mantilla; whereupon said he, “By Allah, good! These twain know not that the Caliph hath given me leave to slay anyone I may catch at the door; but I will give this couple a shrewd whipping, that none may come near the gate in future.” So he cut a green palm-frond[44] and went up to them and, raising his arm till the white of his arm-pit appeared, was about to strike them, when he bethought himself and said, “O Ibrahim, wilt thou beat them unknowing their case? Haply they are strangers or of the Sons of the Road,[45] and the decrees of Destiny have thrown them here. I will uncover their faces and look at them.” So he lifted up the mantilla from their heads and said, “They are a handsome couple; it were not fitting that I should beat them.” Then he covered their faces again and, going to Nur al-Din’s feet, began to rub and shampoo them,[46] whereupon the youth opened his eyes and, seeing an old man of grave and reverend aspect rubbing his feet, he was ashamed and drawing them in, sat up. Then he took Shaykh Ibrahim’s hand and kissed it. Quoth the old man, “O my son, whence art thou?”; and quoth he, “O my lord, we two are strangers,” and the tears started from his eyes. “O my son,” said Shaykh Ibrahim, “know that the Prophet (whom Allah bless and preserve!) hath enjoined honour to the stranger;” and added, “Wilt not thou arise, O my son, and pass into the garden and solace thyself by looking at it and gladden thy heart?” “O my lord,” said Nur al-Din, “to whom doth this garden belong?;” and the other replied, “O my son, I have inherited it from my folk.” Now his object in saying this was to set them at their ease and induce them to enter the garden. So Nur al-Din thanked him and rose, he and the damsel, and followed him into the garden; and lo! it was a garden, and what a garden! The gate was arched like a great hall and over walls and roof ramped vines with grapes of many colours; the red like rubies and the black like ebonies; and beyond it lay a bower of trelliced boughs growing fruits single and composite, and small birds on branches sang with melodious recite, and the thousand-noted nightingale shrilled with her varied shright; the turtle with her cooing filled the site; the blackbird whistled like human wight[47] and the ring-dove moaned like a drinker in grievous plight. The trees grew in perfection all edible growths and fruited all manner fruits which in pairs were bipartite; with the camphor- apricot, the almond-apricot and the apricot "Khorasani" hight; the plum, like the face of beauty, smooth and bright; the cherry that makes teeth shine clear by her sleight, and the fig of three colours, green, purple and white. There also blossomed the violet as it were sulphur on fire by night; the orange with buds like pink coral and marguerite; the rose whose redness gars the loveliest cheeks blush with despight; and myrtle and gilliflower and lavender with the blood-red anemone from Nu'uman hight. The leaves were all gemmed with tears the clouds had dight; the chamomile smiled showing teeth that bite, and Narcissus with his negro[48] eyes fixed on Rose his sight; the citrons shone with fruits embowled and the lemons like balls of gold; earth was carpeted with flowers tinctured infinite; for Spring was come brightening the place with joy and delight; and the streams ran ringing, to the birds' gay singing, while the rustling breeze upspringing attempered the air to temperance exquisite. Shaykh Ibrahim carried them up into the pavilion, and they gazed on its beauty, and on the lamps aforementioned in the latticed windows; and Nur al-Din, remembering his entertainments of time past, cried, "By Allah, this is a pleasant place; it hath quenched in me anguish which burned as a fire of Ghaza-wood.[49] " Then they sat down and Shaykh Ibrahim set food before them; and they ate till they were satisfied and washed their hands: after which Nur al-Din went up to one of the latticed windows, and, calling to his handmaid fell to gazing on the trees laden with all manner fruits. Presently he turned to the Gardener and said to him, "O Shaykh Ibrahim hast thou no drink here, for folk are wont to drink after eating?" The Shaykh brought him sweet water, cool and pleasant, but he said, "This is not the kind of drink I wanted." "Perchance thou wishest for wine?" "Indeed I do, O Shaykh!" "I seek refuge from it with Allah: it is thirteen years since I did this thing, for the Prophet (Abhak[50]) cursed its drinker, presser, seller and carrier!" "Hear two words of me." "Say on." "If yon cursed ass[51] which standeth there be cursed, will aught of his curse alight upon thee?" "By no means!" "Then take this dinar and these two dirhams and mount yonder ass and, halting afar from the wine-shop, call the first man thou seest buying liquor and say to him, 'Take these two dirhams for thyself, and with this dinar buy me some wine and set it on the ass.' So shalt thou be neither the presser, nor the buyer, nor the carrier; and no part of the curse will fall upon thee." At this Shaykh Ibrahim laughed and said, "By Allah, O my son, I never saw one wilier of wit than thou art, nor heard aught sweeter than thy speech." So he did as he was bidden by Nur al- Din who thanked him and said, "We two are now dependent on thee, and it is only meet that thou comply with our wishes; so bring us here what we require." "O my son," replied he, "this is my buttery before thee" (and it was the store-room provided for the Commander of the Faithful); "so go in, and take whatso thou wilt, for there is over and above what thou wantest." Nur al-Din then entered the pantry and found therein vessels of gold and silver and crystal set with all kinds of gems, and was amazed and delighted with what he saw. Then he took out what he needed and set it on and poured the wine into flagons and glass ewers, whilst Shaykh Ibrahim brought them fruit and flowers and aromatic herbs. Then the old man withdrew and sat down at a distance from them, whilst they drank and made merry, till the wine got the better of them, so that their cheeks reddened and their eyes wantoned like the gazelle's; and their locks became dishevelled and their brightness became yet more beautiful. Then said Shaykh Ibrahim to himself, "What aileth me to sit apart from them? Why should I not sit with them? When shall I ever find myself in company with the like of these two that favour two moons?" So he stepped forward and sat down on the edge of the dais, and Nur al-Din said to him, "O my lord, my life on thee, come nearer to us!" He came and sat by them, when Nur al-Din filled a cup and looked towards the Shaykh and said to him, "Drink, that thou mayest try the taste of it!" "I take refuge from it with Allah!" replied he; "for thirteen years I have not done a thing of the kind." Nur al-Din feigned to forget he was there and, drinking off the cup, threw himself on the ground as if the drink had overcome him; whereupon

Anis al-Jalis glanced at him and said, "O Shaykh Ibrahim see how this husband of mine treateth me;" and he answered, "O my lady, what aileth him?" "This is how he always serveth me," cried she, "he drinketh awhile, then falleth asleep and leaveth me alone with none to bear me company over my cup nor any to whom I may sing when the bowl goeth round." Quoth the Shaykh (and his mien unstiffened for that his soul inclined towards her), "By Allah, this is not well!" Then she crowned a cup and looking towards him said, "By my life thou must take and drink it, and not refuse to heal my sick heart!" So he put forth his hand and took it and drank it off and she filled a second and set it on the chandelier and said, "O master mine, there is still this one left for thee." "By Allah, I cannot drink it;" cried he, "what I have already drunk is enough for me;" but she rejoined, "By Allah, there is no help for it." So he took the cup and drank; and she filled him a third which he took and was about to drink when behold, Nur al-Din rolled round and sat upright, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Thirty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Nur al-Din sat upright and said, "Ho, Shaykh Ibrahim, what is this? Did I not adjure thee a while ago and thou refusedst, saying, 'What I! 'tis thirteen years ago since I have done such a thing!'" "By Allah," quoth the Shaykh (and indeed he was abashed), "no sin of mine this, she forced me to do it." Nur al-Din laughed and they sat down again to wine and wassail, but the damsel turned to her master and said in a whisper, "O my lord, drink and do not press him, that I may show thee some sport with him." Then she began to fill her master's cup and he hers and so they did time after time, till at last Shaykh Ibrahim looked at them and said, "What fashion of good fellowship is this? Allah curse the glutton who keepeth the cup to himself! Why dost thou not give me to drink, O my brother? What manners are these, O blessed one?" At this the two laughed until they fell on their backs; then they drank and gave him to drink and ceased not their carousal till a third part of the night was past. Then said the damsel, "O Shaykh Ibrahim, with thy leave I will get up and light one of these candles." "Do so," he replied, "but light no more than one." So she sprang to her feet and, beginning with one candle, lighted all the eighty and sat down again. Presently Nur al-Din said, “O Shaykh Ibrahim, in what favour am I with thee? May I not light one of these lamps?” “Light one,” replied he, “and bother me no more in thy turn!” So he rose and lighted one lamp after another, till he had lighted the whole eight and the palace seemed to dance with brilliancy. Quoth the Shaykh (and indeed intoxication had overcome him), “Ye two are bolder than I am.” Then he rose to his feet and opened all the lattices and sat down again; and they fell to carousing and reciting verses till the place rang with their noisy mirth. Now Allah, the Decreer who decreeth all things and who for every effect appointeth a cause, had so disposed that the Caliph was at that moment sitting in the light of the moon at one of the windows of his palace overlooking the Tigris. He saw the blaze of the lamps and wax candles reflected in the river and, lifting his eyes, perceived that it came from the Garden Palace which was all ablaze with brilliancy. So he cried, “Here to me with Ja’afar the Barmaki!”; and the last word was hardly spoken ere the Wazir was present before the Commander of the Faithful, who cried at him, “O dog of a Minister, hast thou taken from me this city of Baghdad without saying aught to me?” “What words are these words?” asked Ja’afar; and the Caliph answered, “If Baghdad city were not taken from me, the Palace of Pictures would not be illuminated with lamps and candles, nor would its windows be thrown open. Woe to thee! who durst do a deed like this except the Caliphate had been taken from me?” Quoth Ja’afar (and indeed his side-muscles trembled as he spoke), “Who told thee that the Palace of Pictures was illuminated and the windows thrown open?” “Come hither and see,” replied the Caliph. Then Ja’afar came close to the Caliph and, looking towards the garden, saw the palace blazing with illumination that rayed through the gloom of the night; and, thinking that this might have been permitted by the keeper for some reason of his own, he wished to make an excuse for him; so quoth he, “O Commander of the Faithful, Shaykh Ibrahim said to me last week, ‘O my lord Ja’afar, I much wish to circumcise my sons during the life of the Commander of the Faithful and thy life.’ I asked, ‘What dost thou want?’; and he answered, ‘Get me leave from the Caliph to hold the festival in the Garden Palace.’ So said I to him, ‘Go circumcise them and I will see the Caliph and tell him.’

Thereupon he went away and I forgot to let thee know." "O Ja'afar," said the Caliph, "thou hast committed two offences against me; first in that thou didst no report to me, secondly, thou didst not give him what he sought; for he came and told thee this only as excuse to ask for some small matter of money, to help him with the outlay; and thou gavest him nothing nor toldest me." "O Commander of the Faithful," said Ja'afar, "I forgot." "Now by the rights of my forefathers and the tombs of my forbears," quoth the Caliph, "I will not pass the rest of this night save in company with him; for truly he is a pious man who frequenteth the Elders of the Faith and the Fakirs and other religious mendicants and entertaineth them; doubtless they are not assembled together and it may be that the prayer of one of them will work us weal both in this world and in the next. Besides, my presence may profit and at any rate be pleasing to Shaykh Ibrahim." "O Commander of the Faithful," quoth Ja'afar, "the greater part of the night is passed, and at this time they will be breaking up." Quoth the Caliph, "It matters not: I needs must go to them." So Ja'afar held his peace, being bewildered and knowing not what to do. Then the Caliph rose to his feet and, taking with him Ja'afar and Masrur the eunuch sworder, the three disguised themselves in merchants' gear and leaving the City-palace, kept threading the streets till they reached the garden. The Caliph went up to the gate and finding it wide open, was surprised and said, "See, O Ja'afar, how Shaykh Ibrahim hath left the gate open at this hour contrary to his custom!" They went in and walked on till they came under the pavilion, when the Caliph said, "O Ja'afar, I wish to look in upon them unawares before I show myself, that I may see what they are about and get sight of the elders; for hitherto I have heard no sound from them, nor even a Fakir calling upon the name of Allah.[52] " Then he looked about and, seeing a tall walnut-tree, said to Ja'afar, "I will climb this tree, for its branches are near the lattices and so look in upon them." Thereupon he mounted the tree and ceased not climbing from branch to branch, till he reached a bough which was right opposite one of the windows, and here he took seat and looked inside the palace. He saw a damsel and a youth as they were two moons (glory be to Him who created them and fashioned them!), and by them Shaykh Ibrahim seated cup in hand and saying, "O Princess of fair ones, drinking without music is nothing worth; indeed I have heard a poet say,

'Round with bit and little, the bowl and cup, * Take either than
moon[53] in his sheen hath crowned:
Nor drink without music, for oft I've seen, * The horse drink
best to the whistle's sound!'"

When the Caliph saw this, the vein of wrath started up between his eyes and he came down and said to the Wazir, "O Ja'afar, never beheld I yet men of piety in such case; so do thou mount this tree and look upon them, lest the blessings of the blest be lost to thee." Ja'afar, hearing the words of the Commander of the Faithful and being confounded by them, climbed to the tree- top and looking in, saw Nur al-Din and the damsel, and Shaykh Ibrahim holding in his hand a brimming bowl. At this sight he made sure of death and, descending, stood before the Commander of the Faithful, who said to him, "O Ja'afar, praise be to Allah who hath made us of those that observe external ordinances of Holy Law and hath averted from us the sin of disguising ourselves after the manner of hypocrites!"[54] But Ja'afar could not speak a word for excess of confusion; so the Caliph looked at him and said, "I wonder how they came hither, and who admitted them into my pavilion! But aught like the beauty of this youth and this damsel my eyes never yet saw!" "Thou sayest sooth, O our Lord the Sultan!" replied Ja'afar (and he hoped to propitiate the Caliph Harun al-Rashid). Then quoth the Caliph, "O Ja'afar, let us both mount the branch opposite the window, that we may amuse ourselves with looking at them." So the two climbed the tree and, peering in, heard Shaykh Ibrahim say, "O my lady, I have cast away all gravity mine by the drinking of wine, but 'tis not sweet save with the soft sounds of the lute-strings it combine." "By Allah," replied Anis al-Jalis, "O Shaykh Ibrahim, an we had but some instrument of music our joyance were complete." Hearing this he rose to his feet and the Caliph said to Ja'afar, "I wonder what he is about to do!" and Ja'afar answered, "I know not." The Shaykh disappeared and presently reappeared bringing a lute; and the Caliph took not of it and knew it for that of Abu Ishak the Cup-companion.[55] "By Allah," said the Caliph, “if this damsel sing ill I will crucify all of you; but if she sing well I will forgive them and only gibbet thee.” “O Allah cause her to sing vilely!” quoth Ja’afar. Asked the Caliph, “Why so?”; and he answered, “If thou crucify us all together, we shall keep one another company.” The Caliph laughed at his speech. Presently the damsel took the lute and, after looking at it and tuning it, she played a measure which made all hearts yearn to her; then she sang these lines,

“O ye that can aid me, a wretched lover, * Whom longing burns nor
can rest restore me!
Though all you have done I have well deserved, * I take refuge
with you, so exult not o’er me:
True, I am weak and low and vile, * But I’ll bear your will and
whatso you bore me:
My death at your hands what brings it of glory? * I fear but your
sin which of life forlore me!”

Quoth the Caliph, “By Allah, good! O Ja’afar, never in my life have I heard a voice so enchanting as this.” “Then haply the Caliph’s wrath hath passed away,” said Ja’afar, and he replied, “Yes, ’tis gone.” Thereupon they descended from the tree, and the Caliph said to Ja’afar, “I wish to go in and sit with them and hear the damsel sing before me.” “O Commander of the Faithful,” replied Ja’afar, “if thou go in to them they will be terribly troubled, and Shaykh Ibrahim will assuredly die of fright.” But the Caliph answered, “O Ja’afar, thou must teach me some device wherewith to delude them and whereby I can foregather with them without their knowing me.” So they walked towards the Tigris pondering the matter, and presently came upon a fisherman who stood fishing under the pavilion windows. Now some time before this, the Caliph (being in the pavilion) had called to Shaykh Ibrahim and asked him, “What noise is this I hear under the windows?” and he had answered, “It is voices of fisher folk catching fish:” so quoth the Caliph, “Go down and forbid them this place;” and he forbade them accordingly. However that night a fisherman named Karim, happening to pass by and seeing the garden gate open, said to himself, “This is a time of negligence; and I will take advantage of it to do a bit of fishing." So he took his net and cast it, but he had hardly done so when behold, the Caliph come up single-handed and, standing hard by, knew him and called aloud to him, "Ho, Karim!" The fisherman, hearing himself named, turned round, and seeing the Caliph, trembled and his side-muscles quivered, as he cried, "By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, I did it not in mockery of the mandate; but poverty and a large family drove me to what thou seest!" Quoth the Caliph, "Make a cast in my name." At this the fisherman was glad and going to the bank threw his net, then waiting till it had spread out at full stretch and settled down, hauled it up and found in it various kinds of fish. The Caliph was pleased and said, "O Karim, doff thy habit." So he put off a gaberdine of coarse woollen stuff patched in an hundred places whereon the lice were rampant, and a turband which had never been untwisted for three years but to which he had sown every rag he came upon. The Caliph also pulled off his person two vests of Alexandrian and Ba'lbak silk, a loose inner robe and a long-sleeved outer coat, and said to the fisherman, "Take them and put them on," while he assumed the foul gaberdine and filthy turband and drew a corner of the head-cloth as a mouth-veil[56] before his face. Then said he to the fisherman, "Get thee about thy business!; and the man kissed the Caliph's feet and thanked him and improvised the following couplets,

"Thou hast granted more favours than ever I craved; * Thou hast
satisfied needs which my heart enslaved:
I will thank thee and thank whileas life shall last, * And my
bones will praise thee in grave engraved!"

Hardly had the fisherman ended his verse, when the lice began to crawl over the Caliph's skin, and he fell to catching them on his neck with his right and left and throwing them from him, while he cried, "O fisherman, woe to thee! what be this abundance of lice on thy gaberdine." "O my lord," replied he, "they may annoy thee just at first, but before a week is past thou wilt not feel them nor think of them." The Caliph laughed and said to him, "Out on thee! Shall I leave this gaberdine of thine so long on my body?" Quoth the fisherman, "I would say a word to thee but I am ashamed in presence of the Caliph!”; and quoth he, “Say what thou hast to say.” “It passed through my thought, O Commander of the Faithful,” said the fisherman, “that, since thou wishest to learn fishing so thou mayest have in hand an honest trade whereby to gain thy livelihood, this my gaberdine besitteth thee right well.”[57] The Commander of the Faithful laughed at this speech, and the fisherman went his way. Then the Caliph took up the basket of fish and, strewing a little green grass over it, carried it to Ja’afar and stood before him. Ja’afar thinking him to be Karim the fisherman feared for him and said, “O Karim, what brought thee hither? Flee for thy life, for the Caliph is in the garden to-night and, if he see thee, thy neck is gone.” At this the Caliph laughed and Ja’afar recognized him and asked, “Can it be thou, our lord the Sultan?”; and he answered, “Yes, O Ja’afar, and thou art my Wazir and I and thou came hither together; yet thou knowest me not; so how should Shaykh Ibrahim know me, and he drunk? Stay here, till I came back to thee.” “To hear is to obey,” said Ja’afar. Then the Caliph went up to the door of the pavilion and knocked a gentle knock, whereupon said Nur al-Din,” O Shaykh Ibrahim, some one taps at the door.” “Who goes there?” cried the Shaykh and the Caliph replied, “It is I, O Shaykh Ibrahim!” “Who art thou,” quoth he, and quoth the other, “I am Karim the fisherman: I hear thou hast a feast, so I have brought thee some fish, and of a truth ’tis good fish.” When Nur al-Din heard the mention of fish, he was glad, he and the damsel, and they both said to the Shaykh, “O our lord, open the door and let him bring us his fish.” So Shaykh Ibrahim opened and the Caliph came in (and he in fisherman guise), and began by saluting them. Said Shaykh Ibrahim, “Welcome to the blackguard, the robber, the dicer! Let us see thy fish.” So the Caliph showed them his catch and behold, the fishes were still alive and jumping, whereupon the damsel exclaimed, “By Allah! O my lord, these are indeed fine fish: would they were fried!” and Shaykh Ibrahim rejoined, “By Allah, O my lady, thou art right.” Then said he to the Caliph, “O fisherman, why didst thou not bring us the fish ready fried? Up now and cook them and bring them back to us.” “On my head be thy commands!” said the Caliph, “I will fry thee a dish and bring it.” Said they, “Look sharp.” Thereupon he went and ran till he came up to Ja’afar when he called to him, “Hallo, Ja’afar!”;

and he replied, “Here am I, O Commander of the Faithful, is all well?” “They want the fish fried,” said the Caliph, and Ja’afar answered, “O Commander of the Faithful, give it to me and I’ll fry it for them.” “By the tombs of my forbears,” quoth the Caliph, “none shall fry it but I, with mine own hand!” So he went to the gardener’s hut, where he searched and found all that he required, even to salt and saffron and wild marjoram and else besides. Then he turned to the brasier and, setting on the frying-pan, fried a right good fry. When it was done, he laid it on a banana-leaf, and gathering from the garden wind-fallen fruits, limes and lemons, carried the fish to the pavilion and set the dish before them. So the youth and the damsel and Shaykh Ibrahim came forward and ate; after which they washed their hands and Nur al-Din said to the Caliph, “By Allah, O fisherman, thou hast done us a right good deed this night.” Then he put hand in pouch and, taking out three of the dinars which Sanjar had given him, said, “O fisherman, excuse me. By Allah had I known thee before that which hath lately befallen me, I had done away the bitterness of poverty from thy heart; but take thou this as the best I can do for thee.” Then he threw the gold pieces to the Caliph, who took them and kissed them and put them in pouch. Now his sole object in doing all this was to hear the damsel sing; so he said to Nur al-Din, “Thou hast rewarded me most liberally, but I beg of thy boundless bounty that thou let this damsel sing an air, that I may hear her.”[58] So Nur al- Din said, “O Anis al-Jalis!” and she answered “Yes!” and he continued, “By my life, sing us something for the sake of this fisherman who wisheth so much to hear thee.” Thereupon she took the lute and struck the strings, after she had screwed them tight and tuned them, and sang these improvised verses,

“The fawn of a maid hent her lute in hand * And her music made us
right mettlesome:
For her song gave hearing to ears stone-deaf, * While Brava!
Brava! exclaimed the dumb.”

Then she played again and played so ravishingly, that she charmed their wits and burst out improvising and singing these couplets,

"You have honoured us visiting this our land, * And your
splendour illumined the glooms that blent:
So 'tis due that for you I perfume my place * With rose-water,
musk and the camphor-scent!"

Hereupon the Caliph was agitated, and emotion so overpowered him that he could not command himself for excess of pleasure, and he exclaimed, "By Allah, good! by Allah, good! by Allah, good!"[59] Asked Nur al-Din, "O fisherman, doth this damsel please thee?" and the Caliph answered, "Ay, by Allah!" Whereupon said Nur al-Din, "She is a gift to thee, a gift of the generous who repenteth him not of his givings and who will never revoke his gift!" Then he sprang to his feet and, taking a loose robe, threw it over the fisherman and bade him receive the damsel and be gone. But she looked at him and said, "O my lord, art thou faring forth without farewell? If it must be so, at least stay till I bid thee good-bye and make known my case." And she began versifying in these verses,

"When love and longing and regret are mine, * Must not this body
show of ills a sign?
My love! say not, 'Thou soon shalt be consoled'; * When state
speaks state none shall allay my pine.
If living man could swim upon his tears, * I first should float
on waters of these eyne:
O thou, who in my heart infusedst thy love, * As water mingles in
the cup with wine,
This was the fear I feared, this parting blow. * O thou whose
love my heart-core ne'er shall tyne!
O Bin Khákán! my sought, my hope, my will, * O thou whose love
this breast make wholly thine!
Against thy lord the King thou sinn'dst for me, * And winnedst
exile in lands peregrine:
Allah ne'er make my lord repent my loss * To cream[60] o' men
thou gavest me, one right digne."

When she had ended her verses, Nur al-Din answered her with these lines,

“She bade me farewell on our parting day, * And she wept in the
fire of our bane and pains:
‘What wilt thou do when fro’ thee I’m gone?’ * Quoth I, ‘say this
to whom life remains!’”

When the Caliph heard her saying in her verse,
“To Karim, the cream of men thou gavest me;”
his inclination for her redoubled and it seemed a hard matter and a grievous to part them; so quoth he to the youth, “O my lord, truly the damsel said in her verses that thou didst transgress against her master and him who owned her; so tell me, against whom didst thou transgress and who is it hath a claim on thee?” “By Allah, O fisherman,” replied Nur al-Din, “there befel me and this damsel a wondrous tale and a marvellous matter: an ‘t were graven with needle-gravers on the eye-corners it would be a warner to whoso would be warned.” Cried the Caliph, “Wilt thou not tell me thy story and acquaint me with thy case? Haply it may bring thee relief, for Allah’s aid is ever nearhand.” “O fisherman,” said Nur al-Din, “Wilt thou hear our history in verse or in prose?” “Prose is a wordy thing, but verses,” rejoined the Caliph, “are pearls on string.” Then Nur al-Din bowed his head, and made these couplets,

“O my friend! reft of rest no repose I command, * And my grief is
redoubled in this far land:
Erst I had a father, a kinder ne’er was; * But he died and to
Death paid the deodand:
When he went from me, every matter went wrong * Till my heart
was
nigh-broken, my nature unmanned:
He bought me a handmaid, a sweeting who shamed * A wand of the
willow by Zephyr befanned:
I lavisht upon her mine heritage, * And spent like a nobleman
puissant and grand:
Then to sell her compelled, my sorrow increased; * The parting
was sore but I mote not gainstand:
Now as soon as the crier had called her, there bid * A wicked old
fellow, a fiery brand:

So I raged with a rage that I could not restrain, * And snatched
her from out of his hireling's hand;
When the angry curmudgeon made ready for blows, * And the fire of
a fight kindled he and his band,
I smote him in fury with right and with left, * And his hide,
till well satisfied, curried and tanned:
Then in fear I fled forth and lay hid in my house, * To escape
from the snares which my foeman had spanned:
So the King of the country proclaimed my arrest; * When access to
me a good Chamberlain fand:
And warned me to flee from the city afar, * Disappear, disappoint
what my enemies planned:
Then we fled from our home 'neath the wing of the night, * And
sought us a refuge by Baghdad strand:
Of my riches I've nothing on thee to bestow, * O Fisher, except
the fair gift thou hast scanned:
The loved of my soul, and when I from her part, * Know for sure
that I give thee the blood of my heart."[61]

When he had ended his verse, the Caliph said to him, "O my lord Nur al-Din, explain to me thy case more fully," So he told him the whole story from beginning to end, and the Caliph said to him, "Whither dost thou now intend?" "Allah's world is wide," replied he. Quoth the Caliph, "I will write thee a letter to carry to the Sultan Mohammed bin Sulayman al-Zayni, which when he readeth, he will not hurt nor harm thee in aught." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Thirty-eighth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Caliph said to Nur al-Din Ali, "I will write thee a letter to carry to the Sultan Mohammed bin Sulayman al-Zayni, which when he readeth, he will not hurt nor harm thee in aught," Nur al-Din asked "What! is there in the world a fisherman who writeth to Kings? Such a thing can never be!"; and the Caliph answered, "Thou sayest sooth, but I will tell thee the reason. Know that I and he learnt in the same school under one schoolmaster, and that I was his monitor. Since that time Fortune befriended him and he is become a Sultan, while Allah hath abased me and made me a fisherman; yet I never send to him to ask aught but he doeth my desire; nay, though I should ask of him a thousand favours every day, he would comply." When Nur al-Din heard this he said, "Good! write that I may see." So the Caliph took ink-case and reed-pen and wrote as follows,— "In the name of Allah, the Compassionating, the Compassionate! But after.[62] This letter is written by Harun al-Rashid, son of Al-Mahdi, to his highness Mohammed bin Sulayman al-Zayni, whom I have encompassed about with my favour and made my viceroy in certain of my dominions. The bearer of these presents is Nur al-Din Ali, son of Fazl bin Khákán the Wazir. As soon as they come to thy hand divest thyself forthright of the kingly dignity and invest him therewith; so oppose not my commandment and peace be with thee." He gave the letter to Nur al-Din, who took it and kissed it, then put it in his turband and set out at once on his journey. So far concerning him; but as regards the Caliph, Shaykh Ibrahim stared to him (and he still in fisher garb) and said, "O vilest of fishermen, thou hast brought us a couple of fish worth a score of half-dirhams,[63] and hast gotten three dinars for them; and thinkest thou to take the damsel to boot?" When the Caliph heard this, he cried out at him, and signed to Masrur who discovered himself and rushed in upon him. Now Ja'afar had sent one of the gardener-lads to the doorkeeper of the palace to fetch a suit of royal raiment for the Prince of the Faithful; so the man went and, returning with the suit, kissed the ground before the Caliph and gave it him. Then he threw of the clothes he had on[64] and donned kingly apparel. Shaykh Ibrahim was still sitting upon his chair and the Caliph tarried to behold what would come next. But seeing the Fisherman become the Caliph, Shaykh Ibrahim was utterly confounded and he could do nothing but bite his finger- ends[65] and say, "Would I knew whether am I asleep or am I awake!" At last the Caliph looked at him and cried, "O Shaykh Ibrahim, what state is this in which I see thee?" Thereupon he recovered from his drunkenness and, throwing himself upon the ground, repeated these verses,

"Pardon the sinful ways I did pursue; * Ruth from his lord to
every slave is due:
Confession pays the fine that sin demands; * Where, then, is that

which grace and mercy sue?”[66]

The Caliph forgave him and bade carry the damsel to the city-palace, where he set apart for her an apartment and appointed slaves to serve her, saying to her, “Know that we have sent thy lord to be Sultan in Bassorah and, Almighty Allah willing, we will dispatch him the dress of investiture and thee with it.” Meanwhile, Nur al-Din Ali ceased not travelling till he reached Bassorah, where he repaired to the Sultan’s palace and he shouted a long shout.[67] The Sultan heard him and sent for him; and when he came into his presence, he kissed the ground between his hands and, producing the letter, presented it to him. Seeing the superscription in the writing of the Commander of the Faithful, the Sultan rose to his feet and kissed it three times; and after reading it said, “I hear and I obey Allah Almighty and the Commander of the Faithful!” Then he summoned the four Kazis[68] and the Emirs and was about to divest himself of the rule royal, when behold, in came Al Mu’ín bin Sáwí. The Sultan gave him the Caliph’s letter and he read it, then tore it to pieces and putting it into his mouth, chewed it[69] and spat it out. “Woe to thee,” quoth the Sultan (and indeed he was sore angered); “what induced thee to do this deed?” “Now by thy life! O our lord the Sultan,” replied Mu’ín, “this man hath never foregathered with the Caliph nor with his Wazir; but he is a gallows-bird, a limb of Satan, a knave who, having come upon a written paper in the Caliph’s hand, some idle scroll, hath made it serve his own end. The Caliph would surely not send him to take the Sultanate from thee without the imperial autograph[70] and the diploma of investiture, and he certainly would have despatched with him a Chamberlain or a Minister. But he hath come alone and he never came from the Caliph, no, never! never! never!” “What is to be done?” asked the Sultan, and the Minister answered, “Leave him to me and I will take him and keep him away from thee, and send him in charge of a Chamberlain to Baghdad-city. Then, if what he says be sooth, they will bring us back autograph and investiture; and if not, I will take my due out of this debtor.” When the Sultan heard the Minister’s words he said, “Hence with thee and him too.” Al Mu’ín took trust of him from the King and, carrying him to his own house, cried out to his pages who laid him flat and beat him till he fainted. Then he let put upon his feet heavy shackles and carried him to the jail, where he called the jailor, one Kutayt,[71] who came and kissed the ground before him. Quoth the Wazir, “O Kutayt, I wish thee to take this fellow and throw him into one of the underground cells[72] in the prison and torture him night and day.” “To hear is to obey,” replied the jailor and, taking Nur al-Din into the prison, locked the door upon him. Then he gave orders to sweep a bench behind the door and, spreading on it a sitting-rug and a leather-cloth, seated Nur al-Din thereon and loosed his shackles and entreated him kindly. The Wazir sent every day enjoining the jailor to beat him, but he abstained from this, and so continued to do for forty days. On the forty-first day there came a present from the Caliph; which when the Sultan saw, it pleased him and he consulted his Ministers on the matter, when one of them said, “Perchance this present was for the new Sultan.” Cried Al-Mu’ín, “We should have done well had we put him to death at his first coming;” and the Sultan cried “By Allah, thou hast reminded me of him! Go down to the prison and fetch him, and I will strike off his head.” “To hear is to obey,” replied Al-Mu’ín: then he stood up and said, “I will make proclamation in the city: — Whoso would solace himself with seeing the beheading of Nur al-Din bin al-Fazl bin Khákán, let him repair to the palace! So follower and followed, great and small will flock to the spectacle, and I shall heal my heart and harm my foe.” “Do as thou wilt,” said the Sultan. The Wazir went off (and he was glad and gay), and ordered the Chief of Police to make the afore-mentioned proclamation. When the people heard the crier, they all sorrowed and wept, even the little ones at school and the traders in their shops; and some strove to get places for seeing the sight, whilst others went to the prison with the object of escorting him thence. Presently, the Wazir came with ten Mamelukes to the jail and Kutayt the jailor asked him, “Whom seekest thou, O our lord the Wazir?”; whereto he answered, “Bring me out that gallows- bird.” But the jailor said, “He is in the sorriest of plights for the much beating I have given him.” Then he went into the prison and found Nur al-Din repeating these verses,

“Who shall support me in calamities, * When fail all cures and

greater cares arise?
Exile hath worm my heart, my vitals torn; The World to foes
hath turned my firm allies.
O folk, will not one friend amidst you all * Wail o’er my woes,
and cry to hear my cries?
Death and it agonies seem light to me, * Since life has lost all
joys and jollities:
O Lord of Mustafa,[73] that Science-sea, * Sole Intercessor,
Guide all-ware, all-wise!
I pray thee free me and my fault forego, * And from me drive mine
evil and my woe.”

The jailor stripped off his clean clothes and, dressing him in two filthy vests, carried him to the Wazir. Nur al-Din looked at him and saw it was his foe that sought to compass his death; so he wept and said, “Art thou, then, so secure against the World? Hast thou not heard the saying of the poet,

‘Kisras and Caesars in a bygone day * Stored wealth; where it is, and ah! where are they?’

O Wazir,” he continued, “know that Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) will do whatso He will!” “O Ali,” replied he, “thinkest thou to frighten me with such talk? I mean this very day to smite thy neck despite the noses of the Bassorah folk and I care not; let the days do as they please; nor will I turn me to thy counsel but rather to what the poet saith,

‘Leave thou the days to breed their ban and bate, * And make thee strong t’ upbear the weight of Fate.’

And also how excellently saith another,

‘Whoso shall see the death-day of his foe, * One day surviving, wins his bestest wish.’”

Then he ordered his attendants to mount Nur al-Din upon the bare back of a mule; and they said to the youth (for truly it was irksome to them), “Let us stone him and cut him down thou our lives go for it.” But Nur al-Din said to them, “Do not so: have ye not heard the saying of the poet,

‘Needs must I bear the term by Fate decreed, * And when that day

be dead needs must I die:
If lions dragged me to their forest-lair, * Safe should I live
till draw my death-day nigh.'"

Then they proceeded to proclaim before Nur al-Din, "This is the least of the retribution for him who imposeth upon Kings with forgeries." And they ceased not parading him round about Bassorah, till they made him stand beneath the palace-windows and set him upon the leather of blood,[74] and the sworder came up to him and said, "O my lord, I am but a slave commanded in this matter: an thou have any desire, tell it me that I may fulfil it, for now there remaineth of they life only so much as may be till the Sultan shall put his face out of the lattice." Thereupon Nur al-Din looked to the right and to the left, and before him and behind him and began improvising,

"The sword, the sworder and the blood-skin waiting me I sight, *
And cry, Alack, mine evil fate! ah, my calamity!
How is't I see no loving friend with eye of sense or soul? *
What! no one here? I cry to all: will none reply to me?
The time is past that formed my life, my death term draweth nigh,

* Will no man win the grace of God showing me clemency;
And look with pity on my state, and clear my dark despair, * E'en
with a draught of water dealt to cool death's agony?"

The people fell to weeping over him; and the headsman rose and brought him a draught of water; but the Wazir sprang up from his place and smote the gugglet with his hand and broke it: then he cried out at the executioner and bade him strike off Nur al-Din's head. So he bound the eyes of the doomed man and folk clamoured at the Wazir and loud wailings were heard and much questioning of man and man. At this moment behold, rose a dense dust-cloud filling sky and wold; and when the Sultan, who was sitting in the palace, descried this, he said to his suite, "Go and see what yon cloud bringeth:" Replied Al Mu'ín, "Not till we have smitten this fellow's neck;" but the Sultan said, "Wait ye till we see what this meaneth." Now the dust-cloud was the dust of J'afar the Barmecide, Wazir to the Caliph, and his host; and the cause of his coming was as follows. The Caliph passed thirty days without calling to mind the matter of Nur al-Din Ali,[75] and none reminded him of it, till one night, as he passed by the chamber of Anis al-Jalis, he heard her weeping and singing with a soft sweet voice these lines of the poet,

"In thought I see thy form when farthest far or nearest near; * And on my tongue there dwells a name which man shall ne'er unhear."

Then her weeping redoubled; when lo! the Caliph opened the door and, entering the chamber, found Anis al-Jalis in tears. When she saw him she fell to the ground and kissing his feet three times repeated these lines,

"O fertile root and noble growth of trunk; * Ripe-fruitful branch
of never sullied race;
I mind thee of what pact thy bounty made; * Far be 't from thee
thou should'st forget my case!"

Quoth the Caliph, "Who art thou?" and she replied, "I am she whom Ali bin Khákán gave thee in gift, and I wish the fulfilment of thy promise to send me to him with the robe of honour; for I have now been thirty days without tasting the food of sleep." Thereupon the Caliph sent for Ja'afar and said to him, "O Ja'afar, 'tis thirty days since we have had news of Nur al-Din bin Khákán, and I cannot suppose that the Sultan hath slain him; but, by the life of my head and by the sepulchres of my forefathers, if aught of foul play hath befallen him, I will surely make an end of him who was the cause of it, though he be the dearest of all men to myself! So I desire that thou set out for Bassorah within this hour and bring me tidings of my cousin, King Mohammed bin Sulayman al-Zayni, and how he had dealt with Nur al-Din Ali bin Khákán;" adding, "If thou tarry longer on the road than shall suffice for the journey, I will strike off they head. Furthermore, do thou tell the son of my uncle the whole story of Nur al-Din, and how I sent him with my written orders; and if thou find, O my cousin,[76] that the King hath done otherwise than as I commanded, bring him and the Wazir Al-Mu'ín bin Sáwí to us in whatsoever guise thou shalt find them."[77] "Hearing and obedience," replied Ja'afar and, making ready on the instant, he set out for

Bassorah where the news of his coming had foregone him and had reached to the ears of King Mohammed. When Ja'afar arrived and saw the crushing and crowding of the lieges, he asked, "What means all this gathering?" so they told him what was doing in the matter of Nur al-Din; whereupon he hastened to go to the Sultan and saluting him, acquainted him with the cause why he came and the Caliph's resolve, in case of any foul play having befallen the youth, to put to death whoso should have brought it about. Then he took into custody the King and the Wazir and laid them in ward and, giving order for the release of Nur al-Din Ali, enthroned him as Sultan in the stead of Mohammed bin Sulayman. After this Ja'afar abode three days in Bassorah, the usual guest-time, and on the morning of the fourth day, Nur al-Din Ali turned to him and said, "I long for the sight of the Commander of the Faithful." Then said Ja'afar to Mohammed bin Sulayman, "Make ready to travel, for we will say the dawn-prayer and mount Baghdad-wards;" and he replied, "To hear is to obey." Then they prayed and they took horse and set out, all of them, carrying with them the Wazir, Al-Mu'ín bin Sáwí, who began to repent him of what he had done. Nur al-Din rode by Ja'afar's side and they stinted not faring on till they arrived at Baghdad, the House of Peace, and going in to the Caliph told him how they had found Nur al-Din nigh upon death. Thereupon the Caliph said to the youth, "Take this sword and smite with it the neck of thine enemy." So he took the sword from his hand and stepped up to Al-Mu'ín who looked at him and said, "I did according to my mother's milk, do thou according to thine."[78] Upon this Nur al-Din cast the sword from his hand and said to the Caliph, "O Commander of the Faithful, he hath beguiled me with his words;" and he repeated this couplet,

"By craft and sleight I snared him when he came; * A few fair words aye trap the noble-game!"

"Leave him then," cried the Caliph and, turning to Masrur said, "Rise thou and smite his neck." So Masrur drew his sword and struck off his head. Then quoth the Caliph to Nur al-Din Ali, "Ask a boon of me." "O my lord," answered he, "I have no need of the Kingship of Bassorah; my sole desire is to be honoured by serving thee and by seeing the countenance." "With love and gladness," said the Caliph. Then he sent for the damsel, Anis al-Jalis, and bestowed plentiful favours upon them both and gave them one of his palaces in Baghdad, and assigned stipends and allowances, and made Nur al-Din Ali bin Fazl bin Khákán, one of his cup-companions; and he abode with the Commander of the Faithful enjoying the pleasantest of lives till death overtook him. “Yet (continued Shahrazad) is not his story in any wise more wondrous than the history of the merchant and his children.” The King asked “And what was that?” and Shahrazad began to relate the

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Tale of Ghanim bin Ayyub[79], the Distraught, the Thrall o' Love.

It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that in times of yore and in years and ages long gone before, there lived in Damascus a merchant among the merchants, a wealthy man who had a son like the moon on the night of his fulness[80] and withal sweet of speech, who was named Ghánim bin 'Ayyúb, surnamed the Distraught, the Thrall o' Love. He had also a daughter, own sister to Ghanim, who was called Fitnah, a damsel unique in beauty and loveliness. Their father died and left them abundant wealth. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Thirty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the merchant left his two children abundant wealth and amongst other things an hundred loads[81] of silks and brocades, musk pods and mother o' pearl; and there was written on every bale, "This is of the packages intended for Baghdad," it having been his purpose to make the journey thither, when Almighty Allah took him to Himself, which was in the time of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid. After a while his son took the loads and, bidding farewell to his mother and kindred and townsfolk, went forth with a company of merchants, putting his trust in Allah Almighty, who decreed him safety, so that he arrived without let or stay at Baghdad. There he hired for himself a fair dwelling house which he furnished with carpets and cushions, curtains and hangings; and therein stored his bales and stabled his mules and camels, after which he abode a while resting. Presently the merchants and notables of Baghdad came and saluted him, after which he took a bundle containing ten pieces of costly stuffs, with the prices written on them, and carried it to the merchants' bazar, where they welcomed and saluted him and showed him all honour; and, making him dismount from his beast, seated him in the shop of the Syndic of the market, to whom he delivered the package. He opened it and, drawing out the pieces of stuff, sold them for him at a profit of two diners on every diner of prime cost. At this Ghanim rejoiced and kept selling his silks and stuffs one after another, and ceased not to do on this wise for a full year. On the first day of the following year he went, as was his wont, to the Exchange which was in the bazar, but found the gate shut; and enquiring the reason was told, "One of the merchants is dead and all the others have gone to follow his bier,[82] and why shouldst thou not win the meed of good deeds by walking with them?"[83] He replied "Yes," and asked for the quarter where the funeral was taking place, and one directed him thereto. So he purified himself by the Wuzu-ablution[84] and repaired with the other merchants to the oratory, where they prayed over the dead, then walked before the bier to the burial place, and Ghanim, who was a bashful man, followed them being ashamed to leave them. They presently issued from the city, and passed through the tombs until they reached the grave where they found that the deceased's kith and kin had pitched a tent over the tomb and had brought thither lamps and wax candles. So they buried the body and sat down while the readers read out and recited the Koran over the grave; and Ghanim sat with them, being overcome with bashfulness and saying to himself "I cannot well go away till they do." They tarried listening to the Koranic perfection till nightfall, when the servants set supper and sweetmeats[85] before them and they ate till they were satisfied; then they washed their hands and again took their places. But Ghanim's mind was preoccupied with his house and goods, being in fear of robbers, and he said to himself, "I am a stranger here and supposed to have money; if I pass the night abroad the thieves will steal my money bags and my bales to boot." So when he could no longer control his fear he arose and left the assembly, having first asked leave to go about some urgent business; and following the signs of the road he soon came to the city gate. But it was midnight and he found the doors locked and saw none going or coming nor heard aught but the hounds baying and the wolves howling. At this he exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah! I was in fear for my property and came back on its account, but now I find the gate shut and I am in mortal fear for my life!" Then he turned back and, looking out for a place where he could sleep till morning, presently found a Santon's tomb, a square of four walls with a date-tree in the central court and a granite gateway. The door was wide open; so he entered and would fain have slept, but sleep came not to him; and terror and a sense of desolation oppressed him for that he was alone amidst the tombs. So he rose to his feet and, opening the door, looked out and lo! he was ware of a light afar off in the direction of the city gate; then walking a little way towards it, he saw that it was on the road whereby he had reached the tomb. This made him fear for his life, so he hastily shut the door and climbed to the top of the dale tree where he hid himself in the heart of the fronds. The light came nearer and nearer till it was close to the tomb; then it stopped and he saw three slaves, two bearing a chest and one with a lanthorn, an adze and a basket containing some mortar. When they reached the tomb, one of those who were carrying the case said, “What aileth thee O Sawáb?”; and said the other, “What is the matter O Káfúr?”[86] Quoth he, “Were we not here at supper tide and did we not leave the door open?” “Yes,” replied the other, “that is true.’’ “See,” said Kafur, “now it is shut and barred.” “How weak are your wits!” cried the third who bore the adze and his name was Bukhayt,[87] “know ye not that the owners of the gardens use to come out from Baghdad and tend them and, when evening closes upon them, they enter this place and shut the door, for fear lest the wicked blackmen, like ourselves, should catch them and roast ’em and eat ‘em.”[88] “Thou sayest sooth,” said the two others, “but by Allah, however that may be, none amongst us is weaker of wits than thou.” “If ye do not believe me,” said Bukhayt, “let us enter the tomb and I will rouse the rat for you; for I doubt not but that, when he saw the light and us making for the place, he ran up the date tree and hid there for fear of us.” When Ghanim heard this, he said in himself, “O curstest of slaves! May Allah not have thee in His holy keeping for this thy craft and keenness of wit! There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! How shall I win free of these blackamoors?” Then said the two who bore the box to him of the adze, “Swarm up the wall and open the gate for us, O Bukhayt, for we are tired of carrying the chest on our necks; and when thou hast opened the gate thou shalt have one of those we catch inside, a fine fat rat which we will fry for thee after such excellent fashion that not a speck of his fat shall be lost.” But Bukhayt answered, “I am afraid of somewhat which my weak wits have suggested to me: we should do better to throw the chest over the gateway; for it is our treasure.” “If we throw it ‘twill break,” replied they; and he said, “I fear lest there be robbers within who murder folk and plunder their goods, for evening is their time of entering such places and dividing their spoil.” “O thou weak o’ wits,” said both the bearers of the box, “how could they ever get in here!”[89] Then they set down the chest and climbing over the wall dropped inside and opened the gate, whilst the third slave (he that was called Bukhayt) stood by them holding the adze, the lanthorn and the hand basket containing the mortar. After this they locked the gate and sat down; and presently one of them said, “O my brethren, we are wearied with walking and with lifting up and setting down the chest, and with unlocking and locking the gate; and now ’tis midnight, and we have no breath left to open a tomb and bury the box: so let us rest here two or three hours, then rise and do the job. Meanwhile each of us shall tell how he came to be castrated and all that befel him from first to last, the better to pass away our time while we take our rest.” Thereupon the first, he of the lanthorn and whose name was Bukhayt, said, “I’ll tell you my tale.” “Say on,” replied they; so he began as follows the

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Tale of the First Eunuch, Bukhayt.

Know, O my brothers, that when I was a little one, some five years old, I was taken home from my native country by a slave driver who sold me to a certain Apparitor.[90] My purchaser had a daughter three years old, with whom I was brought up; and they used to make mock of me, letting me play with her and dance for her[91] and sing to her, till I reached the age of twelve and she that of ten; and even then they did not forbid me seeing her. One day I went in to her and found her sitting in an inner room, and she looked as if she had just come out of the bath which was in the house; for she was scented with essences and reek of aromatic woods, and her face shone like a circle of the moon on the fourteenth night. She began to sport with me, and I with her. Now I had just reached the age of puberty; so my prickle stood at point, as it were a huge key. Then she threw me on my back and, mounting astraddle on my breast, fell a wriggling and a bucking upon me till she had uncovered my yard. When she saw it standing with head erect, she hent it in hand and began rubbing it upon the lips of her little slit[92] outside her petticoat trousers. Thereat hot lust stirred in me and I threw my arms round her, while she wound hers about my neck and hugged me to her with all her might, till, before I knew what I did, my pizzle split up her trousers and entered her slit and did away her maiden head. When I saw this, I ran off and took refuge with one of my comrades. Presently her mother came in to her; and, seeing her in this case, fainted clean away. However she managed the matter advisedly and hid it from the girl's father out of good will to me; nor did they cease to call to me and coax me, till they took me from where I was. After two months had passed by, her mother married her to a young man, a barber who used to shave her papa, and portioned and fitted her out of her own monies; whilst the father knew nothing of what had passed. On the night of consummation they cut the throat of a pigeon poult and sprinkled the blood on her shift.[93] After a while they seized me unawares and gelded me; and, when they brought her to her bridegroom, they made me her Agha,[94] her eunuch, to walk before her wheresoever she went, whether to the bath or to her father's house. I abode with her a long time enjoying her beauty and loveliness by way of kissing and clipping and coupling with her,[95] till she died, and her husband and mother and father died also; when they seized me for the Royal Treasury as being the property of an intestate, and I found my way hither, where I became your comrade. This, then, O my brethren, is the cause of my cullions being cut off; and peace be with you! He ceased and his fellow began in these words the

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Tale of the Second Eunuch, Kafur.

Know, O my brothers that, when beginning service as a boy of eight, I used to tell the slave dealers regularly and exactly one lie every year, so that they fell out with one another, till at last my master lost patience with me and, carrying me down to the market, ordered the brokers to cry, “Who will buy this slave, knowing his blemish and making allowance for it?” He did so and they asked him, “Pray, what may be his blemish?” and he answered, “He telleth me one single lie every year.” Now a man that was a merchant came up and said to the broker, “How much do they allow for him with his blemish?” “They allow six hundred dirhams,” he replied; and said the other, “Thou shalt have twenty dirhams for thyself.” So he arranged between him and the slave dealer who took the coin from him and the broker carried me to the merchant’s house and departed, after receiving his brokerage. The trader clothed me with suitable dress, and I stayed in his service the rest of my twelvemonth, until the new year began happily. It was a blessed season, plenteous in the produce of the earth, and the merchants used to feast every day at the house of some one among them, till it was my master’s turn to entertain them in a flower garden without the city. So he and the other merchants went to the garden, taking with them all that they required of provaunt and else beside, and sat eating and carousing and drinking till mid day, when my master, having need of some matter from his home, said to me, “O slave, mount the she mule and hie thee to the house and bring from thy mistress such and such a thing and return quickly.” I obeyed his bidding and started for the house but, as I drew near it, I began to cry out and shed tears, whereupon all the people of the quarter collected, great and small; and my master’s wife and daughters, hearing the noise I was making, opened the door and asked me what was the matter. Said I, “My master was sitting with his friends beneath an old wall, and it fell on one and all of them; and when I saw what had happened to them, I mounted the mule and came hither in haste to tell you.” When my master’s daughters and wife heard this, they screamed and rent their raiment and beat their faces, whilst the neighbours came around them. Then the wife over turned the furniture of the house, one thing upon another, and tore down the shelves and broke the windows and the lattices and smeared the walls with mud and indigo, saying to me, “Woe to thee, O Kafur! come help me to tear down these cupboards and break up these vessels and this china ware,[96] and the rest of it.” So I went to her and aided her to smash all the shelves in the house with whatever stood upon them, after which I went round about the terrace roofs and every part of the place, spoiling all I could and leaving no china in the house unbroken till I had laid waste the whole, crying out the while “Well away! my master!” Then my mistress fared forth bare faced wearing a head kerchief and naught else, and her daughters and the children sallied out with her, and said to me, “O Kafur, go thou before us and show us the place where thy master lieth dead, that we may take him from under the fallen wall and lay him on a bier and bear him to the house and give him a fine funeral.” So I went forth before them crying out, “Slack, my master!”; and they after me with faces and heads bare and all shrieking, “Alas! Alas for the man!” Now there remained none in the quarter, neither man nor woman, nor epicene, nor youth nor maid, nor child nor old trot, but went with us smiting their faces and weeping bitterly, and I led them leisurely through the whole city. The folk asked them what was the matter, whereupon they told them what they had heard from me, and all exclaimed, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah!” Then said one of them, “He was a personage of consequence; so let us go to the Governor and tell him what hath befallen him.” When they told the Governor, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Fortieth Night,[97]

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when they told the Governor, he rose and mounted and, taking with him labourers, with spades and baskets, went on my track, with many people behind him; and I ran on before them, howling and casting dust on my head and beating my face, followed by my mistress and her children keening for the dead. But I got ahead of them and entered the garden before them, and when my master saw me in this state, I smiting my face and saying, “Well away! my mistress! Alas! Alas! Alas! who is left to take pity on me, now that my mistress is gone? Would I had been a sacrifice for her!", he stood aghast and his colour waxed yellow and he said to me, "What aileth thee O Kafur! What is the matter?" "O my lord," I replied, "when thou sentest me to the house, I found that the saloon wall had given way and had fallen like a layer upon my mistress and her children!" "And did not thy mistress escape?" "No, by Allah, O my master; not one of them was saved; the first to die was my mistress, thine elder daughter!" "And did not my younger daughter escape?"; "No, she did not!" "And what became of the mare mule I use to ride, is she safe?" "No, by Allah, O my master, the house walls and the stable walls buried every living thing that was within doors, even to the sheep and geese and poultry, so that they all became a heap of flesh and the dogs and cats are eating them and not one of them is left alive." "And hath not thy master, my elder son, escaped?" "No, by Allah! not one of them was saved, and now there is naught left of house or household, nor even a sign of them: and, as for the sheep and geese and hens, the cats and dogs have devoured them." When my master heard this the light became night before his sight; his wits were dazed and he so lost command of his senses that he could not stand firm on his feet: he was as one struck with a sudden palsy and his back was like to break. Then he rent his raiment and plucked out his beard and, casting his turband from off his head, buffeted his face till the blood ran down and he cried aloud, "Alas, my children! Alas, my wife! Alas, my calamity! To whom ever befel that which hath befallen me?" The merchants, his friends, also cried aloud at his crying and wept for his weeping and tore their clothes, being moved to pity of his case; and so my master went out of the garden, smiting his face with such violence that from excess of pain he staggered like one drunken with wine. As he and the merchants came forth from the garden gate, behold, they saw a great cloud of dust and heard a loud noise of crying and lamentation; so they looked and lo! it was the Governor with his attendants and the townsfolk, a world of people, who had come out to look on, and my master's family following them, all screaming and crying aloud and weeping exceeding sore weeping. The first to address my owner were his wife and children; and when he saw them he was confounded and laughed[98] and said to them, "How is it with all of you and what befel you in the house and what hath come to pass to you?" When they saw him they exclaimed, "Praise be to Allah for thy preservation!" and threw themselves upon him and his children hung about him crying, "Slack, our father! Thanks to Allah for thy safety, O our father!" And his wife said to him, "Art thou indeed well! Laud to Allah who hath shown us thy face in safety!" And indeed she was confounded and her reason fled when she saw him, and she asked, "O, my lord, how didst thou escape, thou and thy friends the merchants?"; and he answered her, "And how fared it with thee in the house?" Quoth they, "We were all well, whole and healthy, nor hath aught of evil befallen us in the house, save that thy slave Kafur came to us, bareheaded with torn garments and howling, 'Alas, the master! Alas the master!' So we asked him, 'What tidings, O Kafur?' and he answered 'A wall of the garden hath fallen on my master and his friends the merchants, and they are all crushed and dead!''' "By Allah," said my master, "he came to me but now howling, 'Alas, my mistress! Alas, the children of the mistress!', and said, 'My mistress and her children are all dead, every one of them!'" Then he looked round and seeing me with my turband rent in rags round my neck, howling and weeping with exceeding weeping and throwing dust upon my head, he cried out at me. So I came to him and he said, "Woe to thee, O ill omened slave! O whoreson knave! O thou damned breed! What mischief thou hast wrought? By Allah! I will flog thy skin from thy flesh and cut thy flesh from thy bones!" I rejoined, "By Allah, thou canst do nothing of the kind with me, O my lord, for thou boughtest me with my blemish; and there are honest men to bear witness against thee that thou didst so accepting the condition, and that thou knewest of my fault which is to tell one lie every year. Now this is only a half lie, but by the end of the year I will tell the other half, then will the lie stand whole and complete." "O dog, son of a dog!", cried my master, "O most accursed of slaves, is this all of it but a half lie? Verily if it be a half lie 'tis a whole calamity! Get thee from me, thou art free in the face of Allah!" "By Allah," rejoined I, if thou free me, I will not free thee till my year is completed and I have told thee the half lie which is left. When this is done, go down with me to the slave market and sell me as thou boughtest me to whoso will buy me with my blemish; but thou shalt not manumit me, for I have no handicraft whereby to gain my living;[99] and this my demand is a matter of law which the doctors have laid down in the Chapter of Emancipation."[100] While we were at these words, up came the crowd of people, and the neighbours of the quarter, men, women and children, together with the Governor and his suite offering condolence. So my master and the other merchants went up to him and informed him of the adventure, and how this was but a half lie, at which all wondered, deeming it a whole lie and a big one. And they cursed me and reviled me, while I stood laughing and grinning at them, till at last I asked, "How shall my master slay me when he bought me with this my blemish?" Then my master returned home and found his house in ruins, and it was I who had laid waste the greater part of it,[101] having broken things which were worth much money, as also had done his wife, who said to him, "'Twas Kafur who broke the vessels and chinaware." Thereupon his rage redoubled and he struck hand upon hand exclaiming, "By Allah! in my life never saw I a whoreson like this slave; and he saith this is but a half lie! How, then, if he had told me a whole lie? He would ruin a city, aye or even two." Then in his fury he went to the Governor, and they gave me a neat thing in the bastinado-line and made me eat stick till I was lost to the world and a fainting fit came on me; and, whilst I was yet senseless, they brought the barber who docked me and gelded me[102] and cauterised the wound. When I revived I found myself a clean eunuch with nothing left, and my master said to me, "Even as thou hast burned my heart for the things I held dearest, so have I burnt thy heart for that of thy members whereby thou settest most store!" Then he took me and sold me at a profit, for that I was become an eunuch. And I ceased not bringing trouble upon all, wherever I was sold, and was shifted from lord to lord and from notable to notable, being sold and being bought, till I entered the palace of the Commander of the Faithful. But now my spirit is broken and my tricks are gone from me, so alas! are my ballocks. When the two slaves heard his history, they laughed at him and chaffed him and said, "Truly thou art skite[103] and skite-son! Thou liedest an odious lie." Then quoth they to the third slave, "Tell us thy tale." "O sons of my uncle," quoth he, "all that ye have said is idle: I will tell you the cause of my losing my testicles, and indeed I deserved to lose even more, for I futtered both my mistress and my master's eldest son and heir: but my story is a long one and this is not the time to tell it; for the dawn, O my cousins, draweth near and if morning come upon us with this chest still unburied, we shall get into sore disgrace and our lives will pay for it. So up with you and open the door and, when we get back to the palace, I will tell you my story and the cause of my losing my precious stones." Then he swarmed up and dropped down from the wall inside and opened the door, so they entered and, setting down the lantern, dug between four tombs a hole as long as the chest and of the same breadth. Kafur plied the spade and Sawab removed the earth by baskets full till they reached the depth of the stature of a man;[104] when they laid the chest in the hole and threw back the earth over it: then they went forth and shutting the door disappeared from Ghanim's eyes. When all was quiet and he felt sure that he was left alone in the place, his thought was busied about what the chest contained and he said to himself, "Would that I knew the contents of that box!" However, he waited till day broke, when morning shone and showed her sheen: whereupon he came down from the date tree and scooped away the earth with his hands, till the box was laid bare and disengaged from the ground. Then he took a large stone and hammered at the lock till he broke it and, opening the lid, behold a young lady, a model of beauty and loveliness, clad in the richest of garments and jewels of gold and such necklaces of precious stones that, were the Sultan's country evened with them, it would not pay their price. She had been drugged with Bhang, but her bosom, rising and falling, showed that her breath had not departed. When Ghanim saw her, he knew that some one had played her false and hocussed her; so he pulled her out of the chest and laid her on the ground with her face upwards. As soon as she smelt the breeze and the air entered her nostrils, mouth and lungs, she sneezed and choked and coughed; when there fell from out her throat a pill of Cretan Bhang, had an elephant smelt it he would have slept from night to night. Then she opened her eyes and glancing around said, in sweet voice and gracious words, "Woe to thee O wind! there is naught in thee to satisfy the thirsty, nor aught to gratify one whose thirst is satisfied! Where is Zhar al-Bostan?" But no one answered her, so she turned her and cried out, "Ho

Sabíhah! Shajarat al-Durr! Núr al-Hudá! Najmat al-Subh! be ye awake? Shahwah, Nuzhab, Halwá, Zarífah, out on you, speak![105] ‘‘ But no one answered; so she looked all around and said, “Woe’s me! have they entombed me in the tombs? O Thou who knowest what man’s thought enwombs and who givest compensation on the Day of Doom, who can have brought me from amid hanging screens and curtains veiling the Harim rooms and set me down between four tombs?” All this while Ghanim was standing by: then he said to her, “O my lady, here are neither screened rooms nor palace Harims nor yet tombs; only the slave henceforth devoted to thy love, Ghanim bin Ayyub, sent to thee by the Omniscient One above, that all thy troubles He may remove and win for thee every wish that cloth behove!” Then he held his peace. She was reassured by his words and cried, “I testify that there is no god but the God and I testify that Mohammed is the Apostle of God!”; then she turned to Ghanim and, placing her hands before her face, said to him in the sweetest speech, “O blessed youth, who brought me hither? See, I am now come to myself.” “O my lady,” he replied, “three slave eunuchs came here bearing this chest;” and related to her the whole of what had befallen him, and how evening having closed upon him had proved the cause of her preservation, otherwise she had died smothered.[106] Then he asked her who she was and what was her story, and she answered, “O youth, thanks be to Allah who hath cast me into the hands of the like of thee! But now rise and put me back into the box; then fare forth upon the road and hire the first camel driver or muleteer thou findest to carry it to thy house. When I am there, all will be well and I will tell thee my tale and acquaint thee with my adventures, and great shall be thy gain by means of me.” At this he rejoiced and went outside the tomb. The day was now dazzling bright and the firmament shone with light and the folk had begun to circulate; so he hired a man with a mule and, bringing him to the tomb, lifted the chest wherein he had put the damsel and set it on the mule. Her love now engrossed his heart and he fared homeward with her rejoicing, for that she was a girl worth ten thousand gold pieces and her raiment and ornaments would fetch a mint of money. As soon as he arrived at his house he carried in the chest and opening it, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Forty-first night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ghanim son of Ayyub arrived with the chest at his house, he opened it and took out the young lady, who looked about her and, seeing that the place was handsome, spread with carpets and dight with cheerful colours and other deckings; and noting the stuffs up piled and packed bales and other else than that, knew that he was a substantial merchant and a man of much money. There upon she uncovered her face and looked at him, and lo! he was a fair youth; so when she saw him she loved him and said, "O my lord, bring us something to eat." "On my head and mine eyes!" replied he; and, going down to the bazar, bought a roasted lamb and a dish of sweetmeats and with these dry fruits and wax candles, besides wine and whatsoever was required of drinking materials, not forgetting perfumes. With all this gear he returned to the house; and when the damsel saw him she laughed and kissed him and clasped his neck. Then she began caressing him, which made his love wax hotter till it got the mastery of his heart. They ate and drank and each had conceived the fondest affection; for indeed the two were one in age and one in loveliness; and when night came on Ghanim bin Ayyub, the Distraught, the Thrall o' Love, rose and lit the wax candles and lamps till the place blazed with light;[107] after which he produced the wine service and spread the table. Then both sat down again, he and she, and he kept filling and giving her to drink, and she kept filling and giving him to drink, and they played and toyed and laughed and recited verses; whilst their joy increased and they dove in closer love each to each (glory be to the Uniter of Hearts!). They ceased not to carouse after this fashion till near upon dawn when drowsiness overcame them and they slept where they were, apart each from other, till the morning.[108] Then Ghanim arose and going to the market, bought all they required of meat and vegetables and wine and what not, and brought them to the house; whereupon both sat down to eat and ate their sufficiency, when he set on wine. They drank and each played with each, till their cheeks flushed red and their eyes took a darker hue and Ghanim's soul longed to kiss the girl and to lie with her and he said, "O my lady, grant me one kiss of that dear mouth: per chance 't will quench the fire of my heart." "O Ghanim," replied she, "wait till I am drunk and dead to the world; then steal a kiss of me, secretly and on such wise that I may not know thou hast kissed me." Then she rose and taking off her upper dress sat; in a thin shift of fine linen and a silken head kerchief.[109] At this passion inflamed Ghanim and he said to her, "O my lady, wilt thou not vouchsafe me what I asked of thee?" "By Allah," she replied, "that may not be thine, for there is written upon my trouser string[110] a hard word!" Thereupon Ghanim's heart sank and desire grew on him as its object offered difficulties; and he improvised these verses,

"I asked the author of mine ills * To heal the wound with one
sweet kiss:
No! No! she cried,[111] for ever no! * But I, soft whispering,
urged yes:
Quoth she, Then take it by my leave, * When smiles shall pardon
thine amiss:
By force, cried I? Nay, she replied * With love and gladness eke
I wis.
Now ask me not what next occurred * Seek grace of God and whist
of this!
Deem what thou wilt of us, for love * By calumnies the sweeter is
Nor after this care I one jot * Whether my foe be known or not."

Then his affection increased and love fires rose hotter in his heart, while she refused herself to him saying, "Thou canst not possess me." They ceased not to make love and enjoy their wine and wassail, whilst Ghanim was drowned in the sea of love and longing; but she redoubled in coyness and cruelty till the night brought on the darkness and let fall on them the skirts of sleep. Thereupon Ghanim rose and lit the lamps and wax candles and refreshed the room and removed the table; then he took her feet and kissed them and, finding them like fresh cream, pressed his face[112] on them and said to her, "O my lady, take pity on one thy love hath ta'en and thine eyes hath slain; for indeed I were heart whole but for thy bane!" And he wept somewhat. "O my lord, and light of my eyes," quoth she, "by Allah, I love thee in very sooth and I trust to thy truth, but I know that I may not be thine." "And what is the obstacle?" asked he; when she answered, “Tonight I will tell thee my tale, that thou mayst accept my excuse.” Then she threw herself upon him and winding her arms like a necklace about his neck, kissed him and caressed him and promised him her favours; and they ceased not playing and laughing till love get the firmest hold upon both their hearts. And so it continued a whole month, both passing the night on a single carpet bed, but whenever he would enjoy her, she put him off; whilst mutual love increased upon them and each could hardly abstain from other. One night, as he lay by her side, and both were warm with wine Ghanim passed his hand over her breasts and stroked them; then he slipped it down to her waist as far as her navel. She awoke and, sitting up, put her hand to her trousers and finding them fast tied, once more fell asleep. Presently, he again felt her and sliding his hand down to her trouser string, began pulling at it, whereupon she awoke and sat upright. Ghanim also sat up by her side and she asked him, “What dost thou want?” “I want to lie with thee,” he answered, “and that we may deal openly and frankly with each other.” Quoth she, “I must now declare to thee my case, that thou mayst know my quality; then will my secret be disclosed to thee and my excuse become manifest to thee.” Quoth he, “So be it!” Thereat she opened the skirt of her shift and taking up her trouser string, said to him, “O my lord, read what is worked on the flat of this string:” so he took it in hand, and saw these words broidered on it in gold, “I AM THINE, AND THOU ART MINE, O COUSIN OF THE APOSTLE!”[113] When he read this, he withdrew his hand and said to her, “Tell me who thou art!” “So be it,” answered she; “know that I am one of the concubines of the Commander of the Faithful, and my name is Kút al-Kulúb the Food of Hearts. I was brought up in his palace and, when I grew to woman’s estate, he looked on me and, noting what share of beauty and loveliness the Creator had given me, loved me with exceeding love, and assigned me a separate apartment, and gave me ten slave girls to wait on me and all these ornaments thou seest me wearing. On a certain day he set out for one of his provinces, and the Lady Zubaydah came to one of the slave girls in my service and said to her, ‘I have something to require of thee.’ ‘What is it, O my lady?’ asked she and the Caliph’s wife answered, ‘When thy mistress Kut al-Kulub is asleep, put this piece of Bhang into her nostrils or drop it into her drink, and thou shalt have of me as much money as will satisfy thee.’ ‘With love and gladness;’ replied the girl and took the Bhang from her, being a glad woman because of the money and because aforetime she had been one of Zubaydah’s slaves. So she put the Bhang in my drink, and when it was night drank, and the drug had no sooner settled in my stomach than I fell to the ground, my head touching my feet, and knew naught of my life but that I was in another world. When her device succeeded, she bade put me in this chest, and secretly brought in the slaves and the doorkeepers and bribed them; and, on the night when thou wast perched upon the date tree, she sent the blacks to do with me as thou sawest. So my delivery was at thy hands, and thou broughtest me to this house and hast entreated me honourably and with thy kindest. This is my story, and I wot not what is become of the Caliph during my absence. Know then my condition and divulge not my case.”

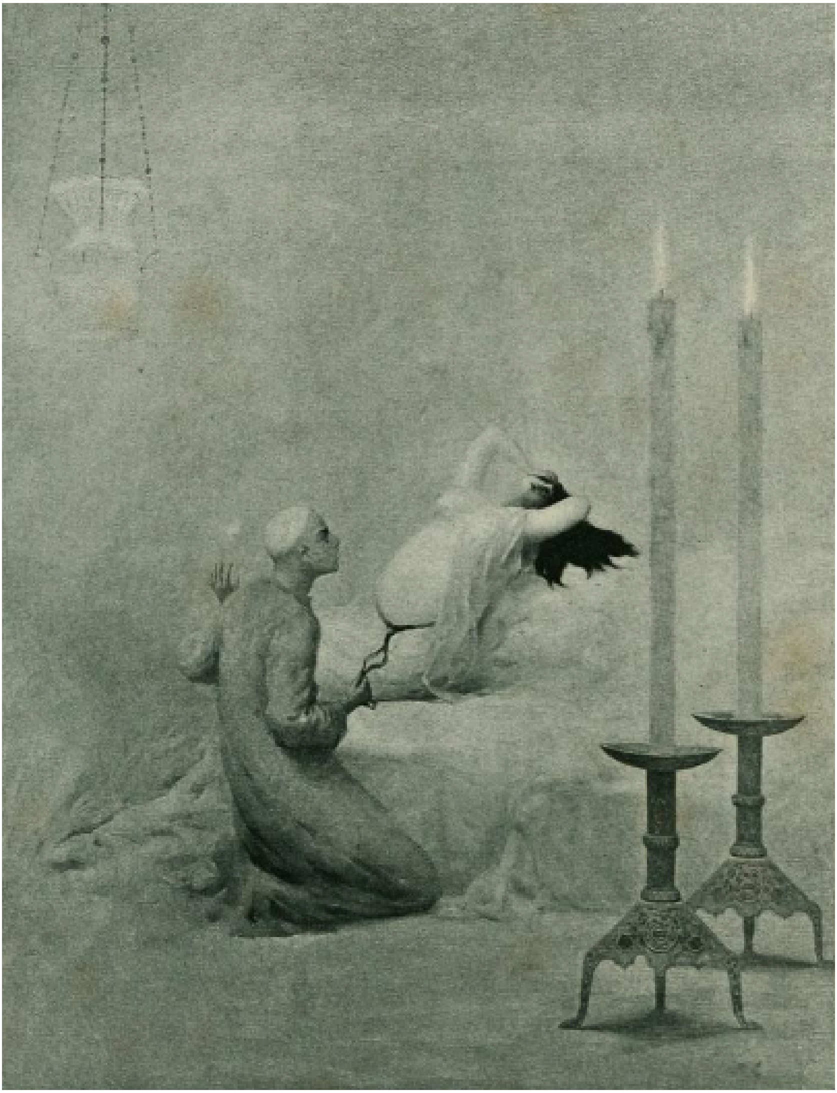

When Ghanim heard her words and knew that she was a concubine of the Caliph, he drew back, for awe of the Caliphate beset him, and sat apart from her in one of the corners of the place, blaming himself and brooding over his affair and patiencing his heart bewildered for love of one he could not possess. Then he wept for excess of longing, and plained him of Fortune and her injuries, and the world and its enmities (and praise be to Him who causeth generous hearts to be troubled with love and the beloved, and who endoweth not the minds of the mean and miserly with so much of it as eveneth a grain-weight!). So he began repeating,

“The lover’s heart for his beloved must meet * Sad pain, and from
her charms bear sore defeat:
What is Love’s taste? They asked and answered I, * Sweet is the
taste but ah! ’tis bitter sweet.”

Thereupon Kut al-Kulub arose and took him to her bosom and kissed him; for the love of him was firm fixed in her heart, so that she disclosed to him her secret and all the affection she felt; and, throwing her arms round Ghanim’s neck like a collar of pearls, kissed him again and yet again. But he held off from her in awe of the Caliph. Then they talked together a long while (and indeed both were drowned in the sea of their mutual love); and, as the day broke, Ghanim rose and donned his clothes and going to the bazar, as was his wont, took what the occasion required and returned home. He found her weeping; but when she saw him she checked herself and, smiling through her tears, said, “Thou hast desolated me, O beloved of my heart. By Allah, this hour of absence hath been to me like a year![114] I have explained to thee my condition in the excess of my eager love for thee; so come now near me, and forget the past and have thy will of me.” But he interrupted her crying, “I seek refuge with Allah! This thing may never be. How shall the dog sit in the lion’s stead? What is the lord’s is unlawful to the slave!” So he withdrew from her, and sat down on a corner of the mat. Her passion for him increased with his forbearance; so she seated herself by his side and caroused and played with him, till the two were flushed with wine, and she was mad for her own dishonour. Then she sang these verses,

“The lover’s heart is like to break in twain: * Till when these
coy denials ah! till when?
O thou who fliest me sans fault of mine, * Gazelles are wont at
times prove tame to men:
Absence, aversion, distance and disdain, * How shall young lover
all these ills sustain?”

Thereupon Ghanim wept and she wept at his weeping, and they ceased not drinking till nightfall, when he rose and spread two beds, each in its place. “For whom is this second bed?” asked she, and he answered her, “One is for me and the other is for thee: from this night forth we must not sleep save thus, for that which is the lord’s is unlawful to the thrall.” “O my master!” cried she, “let us have done with this, for all things come to pass by Fate and Fortune.” But he refused, and the fire was lighted in her heart and, as her longing waxed fiercer, she clung to him and cried, “By Allah, we will not sleep save side by side!” “Allah forefend!” he replied and prevailed against her and lay apart till the morning, when love and longing redoubled on her and distraction and eager thirst of passion. They abode after this fashion three full told months, which were long and longsome indeed, and every time she made advances to him, he would refuse himself and say, “Whatever belongeth to the master is unlawful to the man.” Now when time waxed tiresome and tedious to her and anguish and distress grew on her, she burst out from her oppressed heart with these verses,

“How long, rare beauty! wilt do wrong to me? * Who was it bade
thee not belong to me?
With outer charms thou weddest inner grace * Comprising every
point of piquancy:
Passion thou hast infused in every heart, * From eyelids driven
sleep by deputy:
Erst was (I wet) the spray made thin of leaf. * O Cassia spray!
Unlief thy sin I see:[115]
The hart erst hunted I: how is ‘t I spy * The hunter hunted (fair
my hart!) by thee?
Wondrouser still I tell thee aye that I * Am trapped while never
up to trap thou be!
Ne’er grant my prayer! For if I grudge thyself * To thee, I
grudge my me more jealously
And cry so long as life belong to me, * Rare beauty how, how long
this wrong to me?”

They abode in this state a long time, and fear kept Ghanim aloof from her. So far concerning these two; but as regards the Lady Zubaydah, when, in the Caliph's absence she had done this deed by Kut al-Kulub she became perplexed, saying to herself, "What shall I tell my cousin when he comes back and asks for her? What possible answer can I make to him?" Then she called an old woman, who was about her and discovered her secret to her saying, "How shall I act seeing that Kut al-Kulub died by such untimely death?" "O my lady," quoth the old crone, "the time of the Caliph's return is near; so do thou send for a carpenter and bid him make thee a figure of wood in the form of a corpse. We will dig a grave for it midmost the palace and there bury it: then do thou build an oratory over it and set therein lighted candles and lamps, and order each and every in the palace to be clad in black.[116] Furthermore command thy handmaids and eunuchs as soon as they know of the Caliph's returning from his journey, to spread straw over the vestibule floors and, when the Commander of the Faithful enters and asks what is the matter, let them say: — Kut al-Kulub is dead, and may Allah abundantly compensate thee for the loss of her![117] ; and, for the high esteem in which she was held of our mistress, she hath buried her in her own palace. When he hears this he will weep and it shall be grievous to him; then will he cause perfections of the Koran to be made for her and he will watch by night at her tomb. Should he say to himself, 'Verily Zubaydah, the daughter of my uncle, hath compassed in her jealousy the death of Kut al-Kulub'; or, if love longing overcome him and he bid her be taken out of her tomb, fear thou not; for when they dig down and come to the image in human shape he will see it shrouded in costly grave clothes; and, if he wish to take off the winding sheet that he may look upon her, do thou forbid him or let some other forbid him, saying, 'The sight of her nakedness is unlawful.' The fear of the world to come will restrain him and he will believe that she is dead and will restore the figure to its place and thank thee for thy doings; and thus thou shalt escape, please Almighty Allah, from this slough of despond." When the Lady Zubaydah heard her words, she commended the counsel and gave her a dress of honour and a large sum of money, ordering her to do all she had said. So the old woman set about the business forthright and bade the carpenter make her the afore said image; and, as soon as it was finished, she brought it to the Lady Zubaydah, who shrouded it and buried it and built a sepulchre over it, wherein they lighted candles and lamps, and laid down carpets about the tomb. Moreover she put on black and she spread abroad in the Harim that Kut al-Kulub was dead. After a time the Caliph returned from his journey and went up to the palace, thinking only of Kut al-Kulub. He saw all the pages and eunuchs and handmaids habited in black, at which his heart fluttered with extreme fear; and, when he went in to the Lady Zubaydah, he found her also garbed in black. So he asked the cause of this and they gave him tidings of the death of Kut al-Kulub, whereon he fell a swooning. As soon as he came to himself, he asked for her tomb, and the Lady Zubaydah said to him, "Know, O Prince of the Faithful, that for especial honour I have buried her in my own palace." Then he repaired in his travelling garb[118] to the tomb that he might wail over her, and found the carpets spread and the candles and lamps lighted. When he saw this, he thanked Zubaydah for her good deed and abode perplexed, halting between belief and unbelief till at last suspicion overcame him and he gave order to open the grave and take out the body. When he saw the shroud and would have removed it to look upon her, the fear of Allah Almighty restrained him, and the old woman (taking advantage of the delay) said, "Restore her to her place." Then he sent at once for Fakirs and Koran readers, and caused perfections to be made over her tomb and sat by the side of the grave, weeping till he fainted; and he continued to frequent the tomb and sit there for a whole month, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Forty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph ceased not to frequent the tomb for the period of a whole month, at the end of which time it so happened one day that he entered the Serraglio, after dismissing the Emirs and Wazirs, and lay down and slept awhile; and there sat at his head a slave girl fanning him, and at his feet a second rubbing and shampooing them. Presently he awoke and, opening his eyes, shut them again and heard the handmaid at his head saying to her who was at his feet, "A nice business this, O Khayzarán!" and the other answered her "Well, O Kazíb al-Bán?"[119]

“Verily” said the first, “our lord knoweth naught of what hath happened and sitteth waking and watching by a tomb wherein is only a log of wood carved by the carpenter’s art.” “And Kut al-Kulub,” quoth the other, “what hath befallen her?” She replied, “Know that the Lady Zubaydah sent a pellet of Bhang by one of the slave women who was bribed to drug her; and when sleep overpowered her she let put her in a chest, and ordered Sawab and Kafur and Bukhayt to throw her amongst the tombs.” “What dost thou say, O Kazib al-Ban;” asked Khayzaran, “is not the lady Kut al-Kulub dead?” “Nay, by Allah!” she answered “and long may her youth be saved from death! but I have heard the Lady Zubaydah say that she is in the house of a young merchant named Ghanim bin Ayyub of Damascus, highs the Distraught, the Thrall o’ Love; and she hath been with him these four months, whilst our lord is weeping and watching by night at a tomb wherein is no corpse.” They kept on talking this sort of talk, and the Caliph gave ear to their words; and, by the time they had ceased speaking, he knew right well that the tomb was a feint and a fraud, and that Kut al-Kulub had been in Ghanim’s house for four months. Whereupon he was angered with exceeding anger and rising up, he summoned the Emirs of his state; and his Wazir Ja’afar the Barmaki came also and kissed the ground between his hands. The Caliph said to him in fury, “Go down, O Ja’afar, with a party of armed men and ask for the house of Ghanim son of Ayyub: fall upon it and spoil it and bring him to me with my slave girl, Kut al-Kulub, for there is no help but that I punish him!” “To hear is to obey,” said Ja’afar; and setting out with the Governor and the guards and a world of people, repaired to Ghanim’s house. Now about that time the youth happened to have brought back a pot of dressed meat and was about to put forth his hand to eat of it, he and Kut al-Kulub, when the lady, happening to look out saw calamity surrounding the house on every side; for the Wazir and the Governor, the night guard and the Mamelukes with swords drawn had girt it as the white of the eye girdeth the black. At this she knew that tidings of her had reached the Caliph, her lord; and she made sure of ruin, and her colour paled and her fair features changed and her favour faded. Then she turned to Ghanim and said to him, “O my love! fly for thy life!” “What shall I do,” asked he, “and whither shall I go, seeing that my money and means of maintenance are all in this house?"; and she answered, "Delay not lest thou be slain and lose life as well as wealth." "O my loved one and light of mine eyes!" he cried, "how shall I do to get away when they have surrounded the house?" Quoth she, "Fear not;" and, stripping off his fine clothes, dressed him in ragged old garments, after which she took the pot and, putting in it bits of broken bread and a saucer of meat,[120] placed the whole in a basket and setting it upon his head said, "Go out in this guise and fear not for me who wotteth right well what thing is in my hand for the Caliph."[121] So he went out amongst them, bearing the basket with its contents, and the Protector vouchsafed him His protection and he escaped the snares and perils that beset him, by the blessing of his good conscience and pure conduct. Meanwhile Ja'afar dismounted and entering the house, saw Kut al-Kulub who had dressed and decked herself in splendid raiments and ornaments and filled a chest with gold and jewellery and precious stones and rarities and what else was light to bear and of value rare. When she saw Ja'afar come in, she rose and, kissing the ground before him, said, "O my lord, the Reed hath written of old the rede which Allah decreed!''[122] "By Allah, O my lady," answered Ja'afar, "he gave me an order to seize Ghanim son of Ayyub;" and she rejoined, "O my lord, he made ready his goods and set out therewith for Damascus and I know nothing more of him; but I desire thee take charge of this chest and deliver it to me in the Harim of the Prince of the Faithful." "Hearing and obedience," said Ja'afar, and bade his men bear it away to the head quarters of the Caliphate together with Kut al-Kulub, commanding them to entreat her with honour as one in high esteem. They did his bidding after they had wrecked and plundered Ghanim's house. Then Ja'afar went in to the Caliph and told him all that had happened, and he ordered Kut al-Kulub to be lodged in a dark chamber and appointed an old women to serve her, feeling convinced that Ghanim had debauched her and slept with her. Then he wrote a mandate to the Emir Mohammed bin Sulayman al-Zayni, his viceroy in Damascus, to this effect: "The instant thou shalt receive this our letter, seize upon Ghanim bin Ayyub and send him to us." When the missive came to the viceroy, he kissed it and laid it on his head; then he let proclaim in the bazars, "Whoso is desirous to plunder, away with him to the house of Ghanim son of Ayyub."[123] So they flocked thither, when they found that Ghanim's mother and sister had built him a tomb[124] in the midst of the house and sat by it weeping for him; whereupon they seized the two without telling them the cause and, after spoiling the house, carried them before the viceroy. He questioned them concerning Ghanim and both replied, "For a year or more we have had no news of him." So they restored them to their place. Thus far concerning them; but as regards Ghanim, when he saw his wealth spoiled and his ruin utterest he wept over himself till his heart well nigh brake. Then he fared on at random till the last of the day, and hunger grew hard on him and walking wearied him. So coming to a village he entered a mosque[125] where he sat down upon a mat and propped his back against the wall; but presently he sank to the ground in his extremity of famine and fatigue. There he lay till dawn, his heart fluttering for want of food; and, owing to his sweating, the lice[126] coursed over his skin; his breath waxed fetid and his whole condition was changed. When the villagers came to pray the dawn prayer, they found him prostrate, ailing, hunger lean, yet showing evident signs of former affluence. As soon as prayers were over, they drew near him; and, understanding that he was starved with hunger and cold, they gave him an old robe with ragged sleeves and said to him, "O stranger, whence art thou and what sickness is upon thee?" He opened his eyes and wept but returned no answer; whereupon one of them, who saw that he was starving, brought him a saucer of honey and two barley scones. He ate a little and they sat with him till sun rise, when they went to their work. He abode with them in this state for a month, whilst sickness and weakliness grew upon him; and they wept for him and, pitying his condition, took counsel with one another upon his case and agreed to forward him to the hospital in Baghdad.[127] Meanwhile behold, two beggar women, who were none other than Ghanim's mother and sister,[128] came into the mosque and, when he saw them, he gave them the bread that was at his head; and they slept by his side that night but he knew them not. Next day the villagers brought a camel and said to the cameleer, "Set this sick man on thy beast and carry him to Baghdad and put him down at the Spital door; so haply he may be medicined and be healed and thou shalt have thy hire."[129] "To hear is to comply," said the man. So they brought Ghanim, who was asleep, out of the mosque and set him, mat and all, on the camel; and his mother and sister came out among the crowd to gaze upon him, but they knew him not. However, after looking at him and considering him carefully they said, "Of a truth he favours our Ghanim, poor boy!; can this sick man be he?" Presently, he woke and finding himself bound with ropes on a camel's back, he began to weep and complain,[130] and the village people saw his mother and sister weeping over him, albeit they knew him not. Then they fared forth for Baghdad, but the camel-man forewent them and, setting Ghanim down at the Spital gate, went away with his beast. The sick man lay there till dawn and, when the folk began to go about the streets, they saw him and stood gazing on him, for he had become as thin as a toothpick, till the Syndic of the bazar came up and drove them away from him, saying, "I will gain Paradise through this poor creature; for if they take him into the Hospital, they will kill him in a single day."[131] Then he made his young men carry him to his house, where they spread him a new bed with a new pillow,[132] and he said to his wife, "Tend him carefully;" and she replied, "Good! on my head be it!" Thereupon she tucked up her sleeves and warming some water, washed his hands, feet and body; after which she clothed him in a robe belonging to one of her slave girls and made him drink a cup of wine and sprinkled rose wafer over him. So he revived and complained, and the thought of his beloved Kut al-Kulub made his grief redouble. Thus far concerning him; but as regards Kut al-Kulub, when the Caliph was angered against her, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Forty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Caliph was angered against Kut al-Kulub, he ordered her to a dark chamber where she abode eighty days, at the end of which the Caliph, happening to pass on a certain day the place where she was, heard her repeating poetry, and after she ceased reciting her verse, saying, "O my darling, O my Ghanim! how great is thy goodness and how chaste is thy nature! thou didst well by one who did ill by thee and thou guardedst his honour who garred thine become dishonour, and his Harim thou didst protect who to enslave thee and shine did elect! But thou shalt surely stand, thou and the Commander of the Faithful, before the Just Judge, and thou shalt be justified of him on the Day when the Lord (to whom be honour and glory!) shall be Kazi and the Angels of Heaven shall be witnesses!" When the Caliph heard her com plaint, he knew that she had been wronged and, returning to the palace, sent Masrur the Eunuch for her. She came before him with bowed head and eyes tearful and heart sorrowful; and he said to her, "O Kut al-Kulub, I find thou accuses me of tyranny and oppression, and thou avouches that I have done ill by one who did well by me. Who is this who hath guarded my honour while I garred his become dishonour? Who protected my Harim and whose Harim I wrecked?" "He is Ghanim son of Ayyub," replied she, "for he never approached me in wantonness or with lewd intent, I swear by thy munificence, O Commander of the Faithful!" Then said the Caliph, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah! Ask what thou wilt of me, O Kut al-Kulub." "O Prince of the Faithful!", answered she, "I require of thee only my beloved Ghanim son of Ayyub." He did as she desired, whereupon she said, "O Lord of the Moslems, if I bring him to thy presence, wilt thou bestow me on him?"; and he replied, "If he come into my presence, I will give thee to him as the gift of the generous who revoketh not his largesse." "O Prince of True Believers," quoth she, "suffer me to go and seek him; haply Allah may unite me with him:" and quoth he, "Do even as thou wilt." So she rejoiced and, taking with her a thousand diners in gold, went out and visited the elders of the various faiths and gave alms in Ghanim's name.[133] Next day she walked to the merchants' bazar and disclosed her object to the Syndic and gave him money, saying, "Bestow this in charity to the stranger!" On the following Friday she fared to the bazar (with other thousand diners) and, entering the goldsmiths' and jewellers' market street, called the Chief and presented to him a thousand diners with these words, "Bestow this in charity to the stranger!" The Chief looked at her (and he was the Syndic who had taken in Ghanim) and said, "O my lady, wilt thou come to my house and look upon a youth, a stranger I have there and see how goodly and graceful he is?" Now the stranger was Ghanim, son of Ayyub, but the Chief had no knowledge of him and thought him to be some wandering pauper, some debtor whose wealth had been taken from him, or some lover parted from his beloved. When she heard his words her heart fluttered[134] and her vitals yearned, and she said to him, “Send with me one who shall guide me to thy house.” So he sent a little lad who brought her to the house wherein was the head man’s stranger guest and she thanked him for this. When she reached the house, she went in and saluted the Syndic’s wife, who rose and kissed the ground between her hands, for she knew her. Then quoth Kut al-Kulub, “Where is the sick man who is with thee?” She wept and replied, “Here is he, O my lady; by Allah, he is come of good folk and he beareth the signs of gentle breeding: you see him lying on yonder bed.” So she turned and looked at him: and she saw something like him, but he was worn and wasted till he had become lean as a toothpick, so his identity was doubtful to her and she could not be certain that it was he. Yet pity for him possessed her and she wept saying, “Verily the stranger is unhappy, even though he be a prince in his own land!”; and his case was grievous to her and her heart ached for him, yet she knew him not to be Ghanim. Then she furnished him with wine and medicines and she sat awhile by his head, after which she mounted and returned to her palace and continued to visit every bazar in quest of her lover. Meanwhile Ghanim’s mother and sister Fitnah arrived at Baghdad and met the Syndic, who carried them to Kut al-Kulub and said to her, “O Princess of beneficent ladies, there came to our city this day a woman and her daughter, who are fair of favour and signs of good breeding and dignity are apparent in them, though they be dressed in hair cloth and have each one a wallet hanging to her neck; and their eyes are tearful and their hearts are sorrowful. So I have brought them to thee that thou mayst give them refuge, and rescue them from beggary, for they are not of asker folk and, if it please Allah, we shall enter Paradise through them.” “By Allah, O my master,” cried she, “thou makest me long to see them! Where are they?”, adding, “Here with them to me!” So he bade the eunuch bring them in; and, when she looked on them and saw that they were both of distinguished beauty, she wept for them and said, “By Allah, these are people of condition and show plain signs of former opulence.” “O my lady,” said the Syndic’s wife, “we love the poor and the destitute, more especially as reward in Heaven will recompense our love; and, as for these persons, haply the oppressor hath dealt hardly with them and hath plundered their property and harried their houses." Then Ghanim's mother and sister wept with sore weeping, remembering their former prosperity and contrasting it with their present poverty and miserable condition; and their thoughts dwelt upon son and brother, whilst Kut al-Kulub wept for their weeping; and they said, "We beseech Allah to reunite us with him whom we desire, and he is none other but my son named Ghanim bin Ayyud!" When Kut al-Kulub heard this, she knew them to be the mother and sister of her lover and wept till a swoon came over her. When she revived she turned to them and said, "Have no fear and sorrow not, for this day is the first of your prosperity and the last of your adversity!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Forty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Kut al-Kulub had consoled them she bade the Syndic lead them to his house and let his wife carry them to the Hammam and dress them in handsome clothes and take care of them and honour them with all honour; and she gave him a sufficient sum of money. Next day, she mounted and, riding to his house, went in to his wife who rose up and kissed her hands and thanked her for her kindness. There she saw Ghanim's mother and sister whom the Syndic's wife had taken to the Hammam and clothed afresh, so that the traces of their former condition became manifest upon them. She sat talking with them awhile, after which she asked the wife about the sick youth who was in her house and she replied, "He is in the same state." Then said Kut al-Kulub, "Come, let us go and visit him." So she arose, she and the Chief's wife and Ghanim's mother and sister, and went in to the room where he lay and sat down near him. Presently Ghanim bin Ayyub, the Distraught, the Thrall o' Love, heard them mention the name of Kut al-Kulub; whereupon life returned to him, emaciated and withered as he was and he raised his head from the pillow and cried aloud, "O Kut al-Kulub!" She looked at him and made certain it was he and shrieked rather than said, "Yes, O my beloved!" "Draw near to me;" said he, and she replied, "Surely thou art Ghanim bin Ayyub?"; and he rejoined "I am indeed!" Hereupon a swoon came upon her; and, as soon as Ghanim's mother and his sister Fitnah heard these words, both cried out "O our joy'" and fainted clean away. When they all recovered, Kut al-Kulub exclaimed "Praise be to Allah who hath brought us together again and who hath reunited thee with thy mother and thy sister!" And she related to him all that had befallen her with the Caliph and said "I have made known the truth to the Commander of the Faithful, who believed my words and was pleased with thee; and now he desireth to see thee," adding, "He hath given me to thee." Thereat he rejoiced with extreme joy, when she said, "Quit not this place till I come back" and, rising forthwith, betook herself to her palace. There she opened the chest which she had brought from Ghanim's house and, taking out some of the diners, gave them to the Syndic saying, "Buy with this money for each of them four complete suits of the finest stuffs and twenty kerchiefs, and else beside of whatsoever they require;" after which she carried all three to the baths and had them washed and bathed and made ready for them consommés, and galangale-water and cider against their coming out. When they left the Hammam, they put on the new clothes, and she abode with them three days feeding them with chicken meats and bouillis, and making them drink sherbert of sugar candy. After three days their spirits returned; and she carried them again to the baths, and when they came out and had changed their raiment, she led them back to the Syndic's house and left them there, whilst she returned to the palace and craved permission to see the Caliph. When he ordered her to come in, she entered and, kissing the ground between his hands, told him the whole story and how her lord, Ghanim bin Ayyub, yclept the Distraught, the Thrall o' Love, and his mother and sister were now in Baghdad. When the Caliph heard this, he turned to the eunuchs and said, "Here with Ghanim to me." So Ja'afar went to fetch him; but Kut al-Kulub forewent him and told Ghanim, "The Caliph hath sent to fetch thee before him," and charged him to show readiness of tongue and firmness of heart and sweetness of speech. Then she robed him in a sumptuous dress and gave him diners in plenty, saying, "Be lavish of largesse to the Caliph's household as thou goest in to him." Presently Ja'afar, mounted on his Nubian mule, came to fetch him; and Ghanim advanced to welcome the Wazir and, wishing him long life, kissed the ground before him. Now the star of his good fortune had risen and shone brightly; and Ja'afar took him; and they ceased not faring together, he and the Minister, till they went in to the Commander of the Faithful. When he stood in the presence, he looked at the Wazirs and Emirs and Chamberlains, and Viceroys and Grandees and Captains, and then at the Caliph. Hereupon he sweetened his speech and his eloquence and, bowing his head to the ground, broke out in these extempore couplets,

"May that Monarch's life span a mighty span, * Whose lavish of
  largesse all Empyrean! lieges scan:
None other but he shall be Kaysar highs, * Lord of lordly hall
  and of haught Divan:
Kings lay their gems on his threshold-dust * As they bow and
  salam to the mighty man;
And his glances foil them and all recoil, * Bowing beards aground
  and with faces wan:
Yet they gain the profit of royal grace, * The rank and station
  of high
Earth's plain is scant for thy world of men, * Camp there in Kay
  wan's[135] Empyrean!
May the King of Kings ever hold thee dear; * Be counsel shine and
  right steadfast plan
Till thy justice spread o'er the wide spread earth * And the near
  and the far be of equal worth."

When he ended his improvisation the Caliph was pleased by it and marvelled at the eloquence of his tongue and the sweetness of his speech, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Forty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph, after marvelling at his eloquence of tongue and sweetness of speech, said to him, "Draw near to me." So he drew near and quoth the King, "Tell me thy tale and declare to me thy case." So Ghanim sat down and related to him what had befallen him in Baghdad, of his sleeping in the tomb and of his opening the chest after the three slaves had departed, and informed him, in short, of everything that had happened to him from commencement to conclusion none of which we will repeat for interest fails in twice told tales. The Caliph was convinced that he was a true man; so he invested him with a dress of honour, and placed him near himself in token of favour, and said to him, “Acquit me of the responsibility I have incurred.’’[136] And Ghanim so did, saying, “O our lord the Sultan, of a truth thy slave and all things his two hands own are his master’s.” The Caliph was pleased at this and gave orders to set apart a palace for him and assigned to him pay and allowances, rations and donations, which amounted to something immense. So he removed thither with sister and mother; after which the Caliph, hearing that his sister Fitnah was in beauty a very “fitnah,”[137] a mere seduction, demanded her in marriage of Ghanim who replied, “She is thy handmaid as I am thy slave.” The Caliph thanked him and gave him an hundred thousand diners, then summoned the witnesses and the Kazi, and on one and the same day they wrote out the two contracts of marriage between the Caliph and Fitnah and between Ghanim bin Ayyub and Kut al-Kulub; and the two marriages were consummated on one and the same night. When it was morning, the Caliph gave orders to record the history of what had befallen Ghanim from first to last and to deposit it in the royal muniment rooms, that those who came after him might read it and marvel at the dealings of Destiny and put their trust in Him who created the night and the day. Yet, O auspicious King, this story to which thou hast deigned give ear is on no wise more wondrous than the

Tale Of King Omar Bin Al-Nu’uman And His Sons Sharrkan And Zau Al-Makan,

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

And What Befel Them of Things Seld-Seen and Peregrine.[138]

The King asked her, “And what was their story?” and she answered: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that there was in the City of Safety, Baghdad, before the Caliphate of Abd al-Malik bin Marwán,[139] a King, Omar bin al-Nu’umán highs, who was of the mighty giants and had subjected the Chosroës of Persia and the Kaysars of Eastern Rome; for none could warm himself at his fire;[140] nor could any avail to meet him in the field of foray and fray; and, when he was angered, there came forth from his nostrils sparks of flame. He had made himself King over all quarters, and Allah had subjected to him all His creatures; his word went forth to all great cities and his hosts had harried the farthest lands. East and West had come under his command with whatsoever regions lay interspersed between them, Hind and Sind and Sin,[141] the Holy Land, Al-Hijaz, the rich mountains of Al-Yaman and the archipelagos of India and China. Moreover, he reigned supreme over the north country and Diyár Bakr, or Mesopotamia, and over Sudán, the Eastern Negro land and the Islands of the Ocean, and all the far famed rivers of the earth, Sayhún and Jayhún,[142] Nile and Euphrates. He sent envoys and ambassadors to capitals the most remote, to provide him with true report; and they would bring back tidings of justice and peace, with assurance of loyalty and obedience and of prayers in the pulpits for King Omar bin al-Nu’uman; for he was, O Ruler of the Age, a right noble King; and there came to him presents of rarities and toll and tribute from all lands of his governing. This mighty monarch had a son yclept Sharrkan,[143] who was likest of all men to his father and who proved himself one of the prodigies of his time for subduing the brave and bringing his contemporaries to bane and ban. For this his father loved him with love so great none could be greater, and made him heir to the kingdom after himself. This Prince grew up till he reached man’s estate and was twenty years old, and Allah subjected His servants to him, by reason of his great might and prowess in battle. Now his father, King Omar, had four wives legally married, but Allah had vouchsafed him no son by them, save Sharrkan, whom he had begotten upon one of them, and the rest were barren. Moreover he had three hundred and sixty concubines, after the number of days in the Coptic year, who were of all nations; and he had furnished for each and every a private chamber within his own palace. For he had built twelve pavilions, after the number of the months, each containing thirty private chambers, which thus numbered three hundred and three score, wherein he lodged his handmaids: and he appointed according to law for each one her night, when he lay with her and came not again to her for a full year;[144] and on this wise he abode for a length of time. Meanwhile his son Sharrkan was making himself renowned in all quarters of the world and his father was proud of him and his might waxed and grew mightier; so that he passed all bounds and bore himself masterfully and took by storm castles and cities. Presently, by decree of the Decreer, a handmaid among the handmaids of Omar bin Nu'uman became pregnant; and, her pregnancy being announced to the Harim, the King was informed thereof; whereupon he rejoiced with exceeding joy and said, "Haply it will be a son, and so all my offspring will be males!" Then he documented the date of her conception and entreated her with all manner of kindness. But when the tidings came to Sharrkan, he was troubled and the matter seemed to him a sore one and a grievous; and he said, "Verily one cometh who shall dispute with me the sovereignty:" so quoth he to himself, "If this concubine bear a male child I will kill it:" but he kept that intention hidden in his heart. Such was the case with Sharrkan; but what happened in the matter of the damsel was as follows. She was a Roumiyah, a Greek girl, by name Sofiyah or Sophia,[145] whom the King of Roum and Lord of Cæsarea had sent to King Omar as a present, together with great store of gifts and of rarities: she was the fairest of favour and loveliest of all his handmaids and the most regardful of her honour; and she was gifted with a wit as penetrating as her presence was fascinating. Now she had served the King on the night of his sleeping with her, saying to him, "O King! I desire of the God of the Heavens that he bless thee this night with a male child by me, so I may bring him up with the best of rearing, and enable him to reach man's estate perfect in intelligence, good manners and prudent bearing"[146] — a speech which much pleased the King. During her pregnancy she was instant in prayer, fervently supplicating the Lord to bless her with a goodly male child and make his birth easy to her; and Allah heard her petition so that after her months were accomplished she sat safely upon the birth stool.[147] Now the King had deputed a eunuch to let him know if the child she should bring forth were male or female; and in like way his son Sharrkan had sent one to bring him tidings of the same. In due time Sophia was delivered of a child, which the midwives examined and found to be a girl with a face sheenier than the moon. So they announced this to all present in the room, whereupon the King's messenger carried the news to him; and Sharrkan's eunuch did the like with his master who rejoiced with exceeding joy. But, after the two had departed, quoth Sophia to the midwives, "Wait with me awhile, for I feel as if there were still somewhat in my womb." Then she cried out and the pains of child bed again took her; and Allah made it easy to her and she gave birth to a second child. The wise women looked at it and found it a boy like the full moon, with forehead flower white, and cheek ruddy bright with rosy light; whereupon the mother rejoiced, as did the eunuchs and attendants and all the company; and Sophia was delivered of the after birth whilst all in the palace sent forth the trill of joy.[148] The rest of the concubines heard it and envied her lot; and the tidings reached Omar son of Al- Nu'uman, who was glad and rejoiced at the excellent news. Then he rose and went to her and kissed her head, after which he looked at the boy; and, bending over him, kissed him, whilst the damsels struck the tabors and played on instruments of music; and the King gave order that the boy should be named Zau al-Makán and his sister Nuzhat al-Zamán.[149] They answered "Hearing and obedience," and did his bidding; so he appointed wet nurses and dry nurses and eunuchs and attendants to serve them; and assigned them rations of sugar and diet drinks and unguents and else beside, beyond the power of tongue to rehearse. Moreover the people of Baghdad, hearing that Allah had blessed their King with issue, decorated the city and made proclamation of the glad tidings with drum and tom tom; and the Emirs and Wazirs and high dignitaries came to the palace and wished King Omar bin al-Nu'uman joy of his son, Zau al-Makan, and of his daughter Nuzhat al-Zaman, wherefore he thanked them and bestowed on them dresses of honour and further favoured them with gifts, and dealt largesse to all, gentle and simple, who were present. After this fashion he did for four days full told, and he lavished upon Sophia raiment and ornaments and great store of wealth; and, every few days he would send a messenger to ask after her and the new-borns. And when four years had gone by, he provided her with the wherewithal to rear the two children carefully and educate them with the best of instructions. All this while his son Sharrkan knew not that a male child had been born to his father, Omar son of Al-Nu'uman, having news only that he had been blessed with the birth of Nuzhat al-Zaman; and they hid the intelligence from him, until days and years had sped by, whilst he was busied in battling with the brave and fighting single handed against the knights. One day, as King Omar was sitting in his palace, his Chamberlains came in to him and, kissing the ground before him, said, "O King there be come Ambassadors from the King of Roum, Lord of Constantinople the Great, and they desire admission to thee and submission to thy decree: if the King commend us to introduce them we will so do; and, if not, there is no disputing his behest." He bade them enter and, when they came in, he turned to them and, courteously receiving them, asked them of their case, and what was the cause of their coming. They kissed the ground before him and said, "O King glorious and strong! O lord of the arm that is long! know that he who despatched us to thee is King Afrídún,[150] Lord of Ionia land[151] and of the Nazarene armies, the sovereign who is firmly established in the empery of Constantinople, to acquaint thee that he is now waging fierce war and fell with a tyrant and a rebel, the Prince of Casarea; and the cause of this war is as follows. One of the Kings of the Arabs in past time, during certain of his conquests, chanced upon a hoard of the time of Alexander,[152] whence he removed wealth past compute; and, amongst other things, three round jewels, big as ostrich eggs, from a mine of pure white gems whose like was never seen by man. Upon each were graven characts in Ionian characters, and they have many virtues and properties, amongst the rest that if one of these jewels be hung round the neck of a new-born child, no evil shall befal him and he shall neither wail, nor shall fever ail him as long as the jewel remain without fail.[153] When the Arab King laid hands upon them and learned their secrets, he sent to King Afridun presents of certain rarities and amongst them the three jewels afore mentioned; and he equipped for the mission two ships, one bearing the treasure and the other men of might to guard it from any who might offer hindrance on the high seas, albeit well assured that none would dare waylay his vessels, for that he was King of the Arabs, and more by token that their course lay over waters subject to the King of Constantinople and they were bound to his port; nor were there on the shores of that sea any save the subjects of the Great King, Afridun. The two ships set out and voyaged till they drew near our city, when there sallied out on them certain corsairs from that country and amongst them troops from the Prince of Caesarea, who took all the treasures and rarities in the ships, together with the three jewels, and slew the crews. When our King heard of this, he sent an army against them, but they routed it; then he marched a second and a stronger but they put this also to flight, — whereupon the King waxed wroth and swore that he would not go forth[154] against them save in his own person at the head of his whole army; nor would he turn back from them till he had left Caesarea, of Armenia[155] in ruins and had laid waste all the lands and cities over which her Prince held sway. So he sent us to the Lord of the age and the time, Sultan Omar bin al-Nu'uman, King of Baghdad and of Khorasan, desiring that he aid us with an army, so may honour and glory accrue to him; and he hath also forwarded by us somewhat of various kinds of presents, and of the King's grace he beggeth their acceptance and the friendly boon of furtherance." Then the Ambassadors kissed the ground before him, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Forty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that, after the Ambassadors and retinue from the Constantinopolitan King had kissed the ground before Omar and had delivered their embassage, they brought out the presents, which were fifty damsels of the choicest from Graecia-land, and fifty Mamelukes in tunics of brocade, belted with girdles of gold and silver, each wearing in his ears hoops of gold with pendants of fine pearls costing a thousand ducats every one. The girls were adorned in like fashion and were clad in stuffs worth a treasury of money. When the King saw them, he rejoiced in them and accepted them; then he bade the Ambassadors be honourably entreated and, summoning his Wazirs, took counsel with them of what he should do. Herewith rose up among them a Wazir, an ancient man, Dandan[156] highs, who kissed the ground before Omar and said, "O King, there is nothing better to do in this matter than equip an army valiant and victorious, and set over it thy son Sharrkan with us as his lieutenants; and this rede commendeth itself to me on two counts; first, because the King of Roum hath invoked thine assistance and hath sent thee gifts which thou hast accepted; and, secondly, because while no enemy dareth attack our country, thine army may go forth safely and, should it succour the King of Graecia-land and defeat his foe, the glory will be thine. Moreover, the news of it will be noised abroad in all cities and countries and especially, when the tidings shall reach the Islands of the Ocean and the Kings of Mauritania shall hear it, they will send thee offerings of rarities and pay thee tribute of money." The King pleased by the Wazir's words and approving his rede, gave him a dress of honour and said to him, "Of the like of thee should Kings ask counsel, and it seemeth fit that thou shouldst conduct the van of our army and our son Sharrkan command the main battle." Then he sent for his son who came and kissed ground before him and sat down; and he expounded to him the matter, telling him what the Ambassadors and the Wazir Dandan had said, and he charged him to take arms and equip himself for the campaign, enjoining him not to gainsay Dandan in aught he should do. Moreover, he ordered him to pick out of his army ten thousand horsemen, armed cap-à-pie and inured to onset and stress of war. Accordingly, Sharrkan arose on the instant, and chose out a myriad of horsemen, after which he entered his palace and mustered his host and distributed largesse to them, saying, "Ye have delay of three days." They kissed the earth before him in obedience to his commands and began at once to lay in munitions, and provide provisions for the occasion; whilst Sharrkan repaired to the armouries and took therefrom whatsoever he required of arms and armour, and thence to the stable where he chose horses of choice blood and others. When the appointed three days were ended, the army drew out to the suburbs of Baghdad city;[157] and

King Omar came forth to take leave of his son who kissed the ground before him and received from the King seven parcels of money.[158] Then he turned to Danden and commended to his care the army of his son; and the Wazir kissed the ground before him and answered, “I hear and I obey;” and lastly he charged Sharrkan that he should consult the Wazir on all occasions, which he promised to do. After this, the King returned to his city and Sharrkan ordered the officers to muster their troops in battle array. So they mustered them and their number was ten thousand horsemen, besides footmen and camp followers. Then they loaded their baggage on their beasts and the war drums beat and the trumpets blared and the bannerols and standards were unfurled, whilst Sharrkan mounted horse, with the Wazir Dandan by his side, and the colours fluttering over their heads. So the host fared forth and stinted not faring, with the ambassadors preceding them, till day departed and night drew nigh, when they alighted and encamped for the night. And as soon as Allah caused the morn tomorrow, they mounted and tried on, guided by the Ambassadors, for a space of twenty days; and by the night of the twenty first they came to a fine and spacious Wady well grown with trees and shrubbery. Here Sharrkan ordered them to alight and commanded a three days’ halt, so they dismounted and pitched their tents, spreading their camp over the right and the left slopes of the extensive valley, whilst the Wazir Dandan and the Ambassadors of King Afridun pitched in the sole of the Wady.[159] As for Sharrkan, he tarried behind them for awhile till all had dismounted and had dispersed themselves over the valley sides; he then slacked the reins of his steed, being minded to explore the Wady and to mount guard in his own person, because of his father’s charge and owing to the fact that they were on the frontier of Graecia land and in the enemy’s country. So he rode out alone after ordering his armed slaves and his body guard to camp near the Wazir Dandan, and he fared on along the side of the valley till a fourth part of the night was passed, when he felt tired and drowsiness overcame him, so that he could no longer urge horse with heel. Now he was accustomed to take rest on horseback; so when slumber overpowered him, he slept and the steed ceased not going on with him till half the night was spent and entered one of the thickets[160] which was dense with growth; but Sharrkan awoke not until his horse stumbled over wooded ground. Then he started from sleep and found himself among the trees, and the moon arose and shone brightly over the two horizons, Eastern and Western. He was startled when he found himself alone in this place and said the say which ne'er yet shamed its sayer, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" But as he rode on, in fear of wild beasts, behold, the moon spread her glad light over a meadow as if it were of the meads of Paradise; and he heard pleasant voices and a loud noise of talk and laughter captivating the senses of men. So King Sharrkan alighted and, tying his steed to one of the trees, went over a little way till he came upon a stream and heard a woman talking in Arabic and saying, "Now by the crush of the Messiah, this is not well of you! but whose utters a word, I will throw her and truss her up with her own girdle[161] !" He kept walking in the direction of the sound and when he reached the further side he looked and behold, a stream was gushing and flowing, and antelopes at large were frisking and roving, and wild cattle amid the pasture moving, and birds expressed joy and gladness in their divers tongues, and that place was purfled with all manner flowers and green herbs, even as a poet described it in these couplets,

"Most beautiful is earth in budding bloom, * When lucid waters
course through plain and wood:
No work but His th' All great, th' All glorious, * Giver of all
gifts, Giver of all good!"

And as Sharrkan considered the place, he saw in it a Christian Monastery within whose enceinte a castle towered high in air catching the light of the moon.[162] Through the midst of the convent passed a stream, the water flowing amongst its gardens; and upon the bank sat the woman whose voice he had heard, while before her stood ten handmaids like moons and wearing various sorts of raiment and ornaments that dazed and dazzled the beholder, high bosomed virgins, as saith of them the poet in these couplets,

"The mead is bright with what is on't * Of merry maidens
debonnair:

Double its beauty and its grace * Those trooping damsels slender-fair:
Virgins of graceful swimming gait * Ready with eye and lip to ensnare;
And like the tendril'd vine they loose * The rich profusion of their hair:
Shooting their shafts and arrows from * Beautiful eyes beyond compare;
Overpowering and transpiercing * Every froward adversaire."

Sharrkan gazed upon the ten girls and saw in their midst a lady like the moon at fullest, with ringleted hair and forehead sheeny white, and eyes wondrous wide and black and bright, and temple locks like the scorpion's tail; and she was perfect in essence and attributes, as the poet said of her in these couplets,

"She beamed on my sight with a wondrous glance, * And her straight slender stature enshamed the lance:
She burst on my sight with cheeks rosy red, * Where all manner of beauties have habitance:
And the locks on her forehead were lowering as night * Whence issues a dawn tide of happiest chance."

Then Sharrkan heard her say to the handmaids, "Come ye on, that I may wrestle with you and gravel you, ere the moon set and the dawn break!" So each came up to her in turn and she grounded them forthright, and pinioned them with their girdles, and ceased not wrestling and pitching them until she had overthrown one and all. Then there turned to her an old woman who was before her, and the beldam said as in wrath, "O strumpet, cost thou glory in grounding these girls? Behold I am an old woman, yet have I thrown them forty times! So what hast thou to boast of? But if thou have the strength to wrestle with me, stand up that I may grip thee and set thy head between thy heels!" The young lady smiled at her words, but she was filled with inward wrath, and she jumped up and asked, "O my lady Zat al-Dawahi,[163] by the truth of the Messiah, wilt thou wrestle with me in very deed, or dost thou jest with me?"; and she answered, "Yea," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Forty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the young lady asked Zat al-Dawahi, "By the truth of the Messiah, wilt wrestle with me or dost jest?", and she answered, "Yea, I will wrestle with thee in very deed" (Sharrkan looking on the while), the damsel cried, "Rise up for the fall an thou have spunk so to do." When the old woman heard this, she raged with exceeding rage, and her body hair stood on end like the bristles of a fretful hedgehog.[164] Then she sprang to her feet, whilst the damsel stood up to her, and said, "Now by the truth of the Messiah, I will not wrestle with thee unless I be naked, Mistress whore!"[165] So she loosed her petticoat trousers and, putting her hand under her clothes, tore them off her body; then twisted up a silken kerchief into cord shape, girt it round her middle and became as she were a scald head If ritah or a spotted snake. With this she inclined towards the damsel and said, "Do thou as I have done." All this time, Sharrkan was gazing at the twain, and laughing at the beldam's loathly semblance. So the damsel leisurely rose and, taking a sash of Yamani stuff, passed it twice round her waist, then she tucked up her trousers and displayed two calves of alabaster carrying a mound of crystal, smooth and rounded, and a stomach which exhaled musk from its dimples, as it were a bed of Nu'uman's anemones; and breasts like double pomegranates. Then the old woman leant towards her, and the two laid hold either of each, while Sharrkan raised his head Heavenwards and prayed Allah that the belle might beat the beldam. Presently the young woman get beneath the old woman; and, gripping her waist cloth with the left and circling her neck with the right hand, hoisted her off the ground with both; whereupon the old woman strove to free herself and, in so doing fell on her back arsiversy, with her legs high in air and her hairy bush between them showed manifest in the moonshine; furthermore she let fly two great farts[166] one of which blew up the dust from the earth's face and the other steamed up to the gate of Heaven. Sharrkan laughed till he fell back upon the ground. Then he arose and, baring his brand looked right and left, but he saw no one save the old woman sprawling on her back, and said to himself, "He lied not who named thee Lady of Calamities! Verily thou knewest her prowess by her performance upon the others." So he drew near them to hear what should pass between them. Then the young lady went up to the old one and, throwing a wrapper of thin silk upon her nakedness, helped her to don her clothes and made excuses saying, "O my lady Zat al- Dawahi, I intended only to throw thee and not all this, but thou triedst to twist out of my hands; so laud to Allah for safety!" She returned her no answer, but rose in her shame and walked away till out of sight, leaving the handmaids prostrate and pinioned, with the fair damsel standing amongst them. Quoth Sharrkan to himself, "Every luck hath its cause. Sleep did not fall upon me nor the war horse bear me hither save for my good fortune; for doubtless this maid and what is with her shall become booty to me." So he made towards his steed and mounted and heeled[167] him on, when he sped as the shaft speeds from the bow and in his hand he still hent his brand bare of sheath, which he brandished shouting the while his war cry, "Allah is All mighty[168] !" When the damsel saw him she sprang to her feet and, taking firm stand on the bank of the stream, whose breadth was six ells, the normal cubits, made one bound and landed clear on the farther side,[169] where she turned and cried out with a loud voice, "Who art thou, O thou fellow, that breakest in upon our privacy and pastime, and that too hanger in hand as if charging a host? Whence camest thou and whither art thou going? Speak sooth, for truth will stand thee in good stead, and lie not, for lies come of villein breed Doubtless thou hast wandered this night from thy way, that thou chancedst upon this place whence escape were the greatest of mercies; for thou art now in an open plain and, did we shout but a single shout, would come to our rescue four thousand knights.[170] So tell me what thou wantest; and if thou wouldst only have us set thee on the right road, we will do so." When Sharrkan heard her words he replied, "I am a stranger of the Moslems, who fared forth this night single handed, seeking for spoil; nor could this moonlight show me a fairer booty than these ten maidens; so I shall seize them and rejoin my comrades with them." Quoth she, "I would have thee know that as for the booty thou hast not come at it; and, as for the handmaids, by Allah, they shall never be thy spoil. Have I not told thee that to lie is villein vile?" Quoth he, "The wise man is he who taketh warning by others." Thereupon quoth she, "By the truth of the Messiah, did I not fear that thy death would be on my hands, I would shout a shout should fill the mead for thee with war steeds and with men of might, but I take pity upon the stranger. So, if thou seek booty, I require of thee that thou alight from thy steed and swear to me, by thy faith, that thou wilt not advance against me aught like arms in hand, and we will wrestle, I and thou. If thou throw me, set me on thy steed and take all of us to thy booty; but if I throw thee, thou shalt become under my command. Swear this to me, for I fear thy treachery: indeed it hath become a common saw, 'Where Perfidy is innate there Trust is a weakly mate.' Now an thou wilt swear I will return and draw near to thee and tackle thee." Answered Sharrkan (and indeed he lusted to seize her and said in his soul, "Truly she knoweth not that I am a champion of champions"); "Swear me by what oath thou wilt and by what thou deemest most binding, and I will not approach thee with aught till thou hast made thy preparation and sayest, 'Draw near that I wrestle with thee.' If thou throw me, I have money where withal to ransom myself; and if I throw thee, 'twill be booty and booty enough for me!" Rejoined the damsel, "I am content herewith!" and Sharrkan was astounded at her words and said, "And by the truth of the Apostle (whom Allah bless and keep!) I too am content on the other part!" Then said she, "Swear to me by Him who sprite in body dight and dealt laws to rule man kind aright, that thou wilt not offer me aught of violence save by way of wrestling; else mayst thou die without the pale of Al- Islam." Sharrkan replied, "By Allah! were a Kazi to swear me, even though he were a Kazi of the Kazis,[171] he would not impose upon me such an oath as this!" Then he sware to her by all she named and tied his steed to a tree; but he was drowned in the sea of thought, saying in himself, "Praise be to Him who fashioned her from dirty water!"[172] Then he girt himself and made ready for wrestling, and said to her, "Cross the stream to me;" but she replied, "It is not for me to come over to thee: if thou wilt, pass thou over here to me." "I cannot do that," quoth he, and quoth she, "O boy, I will come across to thee." So she tucked up her skirts and, leaping, landed on the other side of the stream by his side; whereupon he drew near to her and bent him forwards and clapped palms.[173] But he was confounded by her beauty and loveliness; for he saw a shape which the Hand of Power had tanned with the dye leaves of the Jann, which had been fostered by the Hand of Beneficence and fanned by the Zephyrs of fair fortune and whose birth a propitious ascendant had greeted. Then she called out to him, "O Moslem, come on and let us wrestle ere the break of morning," and tucked up her sleeves from a forearm like fresh curd, which illumined the whole place with its whiteness; and Sharrkan was dazzled by it. Then he bent forwards and clapped his palms by way of challenge, she doing the like, and caught hold of her, and the two grappled and gripped and interlocked hands and arms. Presently he shifted his hands to her slender waist, when his finger tips sank into the soft folds of her middle, breeding languishment, and he fell a trembling like the Persian reed in the roaring gale. So she lifted him up and, throwing him to the ground, sat upon his breast with hips and hinder cheeks like mounds of sand, for his soul had lost mastery over his senses. Then she asked him, "O Moslem! the slaying of Nazarenes is lawful to you folk; what then hast thou to say about being slain thyself?"; and he answered, "O my lady, thy speech as regards slaying me is not other than unlawful; for our prophet Mohammed (whom Allah bless and preserve!) prohibited the slaying of women and children, old men and monks!" "As it was thus revealed to your Prophet," she replied, "it behoveth us to render the equivalent of his mercy; so rise. I give thee thy life, for generosity is never lost upon the generous." Then she got off his breast and he rose and stood shaking the dust from his head against the owners of the curved rib, even women; and she said to him, "Be not ashamed; but verily one who entereth the land of Roum in quest of booty, and cometh to assist Kings against Kings, how happeneth it that he hath not strength enough to defend himself from one made out of the curved rib?" "'Twas not for lack of strength in me," he answered; "nor didst thou throw me by thy force; it was thy loveliness overthrew me; so if thou wilt grant me another bout, it will be of thy courtesy." She laughed and said, "I grant thee thy request: but these handmaids have long been pinioned and their arms and sides are weary, and it were only right I should loose them, for haply this next wrestling bout will be long." Then she went to the slave girls and, unbinding them, said to them in the tongue of

Greece, “Get ye to some safe place, till I foil this Moslem’s lust and longing for you.” So they went away, whilst Sharrkan kept gazing at them and they kept turning to look at the two. Then each approached the adversary and he set his breast against hers, but when he felt waist touch waist, his strength failed him; and she, waxing ware of this, lifted him with her hands swiftlier than the blinding leven-flash, and threw him to the ground.

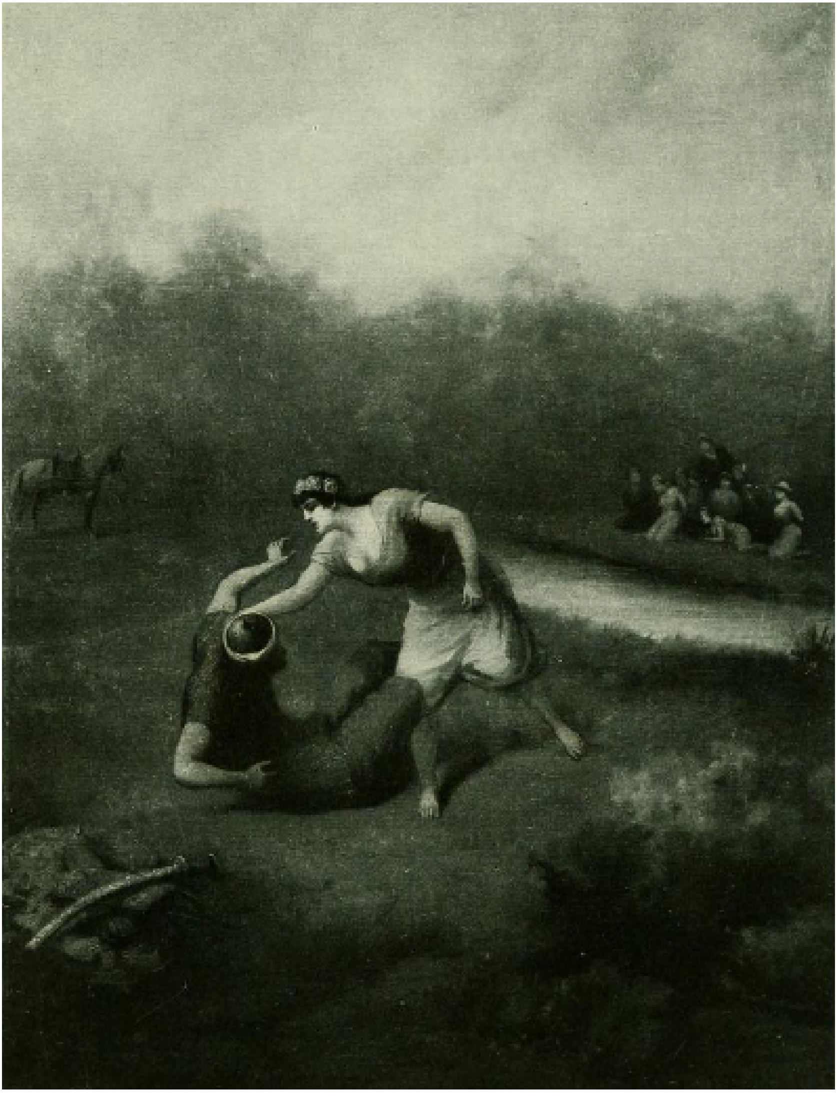

He fell on his back,[174] and then she said to him, “Rise: I give thee thy life a second time. I spared thee in the first count because of thy Prophet, for that he made unlawful the slaying of women; and I do so on the second count because of thy weakliness and the greenness of thine years and thy strangerhood; but I charge thee, if there be in the Moslem army sent by Omar bin al-Nu'uman to succour the King of Constantinople, a stronger than thou, send him hither and tell him of me: for in wrestling there are shifts and trips, catches and holds, such as the feint or falsing and the snap or first grip, the hug, the feet-catch, the thigh Lite,[175] the jostle and the leg-lock." "By Allah, O my lady," quoth Sharrkan (and indeed he was highly incensed against her), "had I been Master al-Safdí, Master Mohammed Kimál or Ibn al-Saddí,[176] as they were in their prime, I had kept no note of these shifts thou mentionest; for O my mistress, by Allah, thou hast not grassed me by thy strength, but by the blandishments of thy back parts; for we men of Mesopotamia so love a full formed thigh that nor sense was left me nor foresight. But now, an thou wish, thou shalt try a third fall with me while my wits are about me, and this last match is allowed me by the laws of the game which sayeth the best of three: moreover I have regained my presence of mind." When she heard his words she said to him, "Hast thou not had a belly full of this wrestling, O vanquished one? However come on, an thou wilt; but know that this must be the last round." Then she bent forward and challenged him and Sharrkan did likewise, setting to it in real earnest and being right cautious about the throw: so the two strove awhile and the damsel found in him a strength such as she had not observed before and said to him, "O Moslem, thou art now on thy mettle." "Yes," he replied, "thou knowest that there remaineth to me but this one round, after which each of us will wend a different way." She laughed and he laughed too;[177] then she overreached at his thigh and caught firm hold of it unawares, which made him greet the ground and fall full on his back. She laughed at him and said, "Art thou an eater of bran? Thou are like a Badawi's bonnet which falleth off with every touch or else the Father of Winds[178] that droppeth before a puff of air. Fie upon thee, O thou poor thing!" adding, "Get thee back to the Moslem army and send us other than thyself, for thou fairest of thews; and proclaim for us, among the Arabs and Persians, the Turks and Daylamites,[179] whoso hath might in him, let him come to us.” Then she made a spring and landed on the other side of the stream and said to Sharrkan, laughing, “Parting with thee is right grievous to me, O my lord; but get thee to thy mates before dawn, lest the Knights come upon thee and pick thee up on their lance points. Thou hast no strength to defend thee against a woman, so how couldst thou hold thine own amongst men of might and Knights?” Sharrkan was confounded and called to her (as she turned from him making towards the convent), “O my lady, wilt thou go away and leave the miserable stranger, the broken hearted slave of love?” So she turned to him laughing and said, “What is thy want? I will grant thee thy prayer.” “Have I set foot in thy country and tasted the sweetness of thy courtesy,” replied he, “and shall I return without eating of thy victual and tasting thy hospitality; I who have become one of thy servitors!” “None baulk kindliness save the base,” she rejoined, “honour us in Allah’s name, on my head and eyes be it! Mount thy steed and ride along the brink of the stream over against me, for now thou art my guest.” At this Sharrkan was glad and, hastening back to his horse, mounted and walked him abreast of her, and she kept faring on till they came to a drawbridge[180] built of beams of the white poplar, hung by pullies and steel chains and made fast with hooks and padlocks. When Sharrkan looked, he saw awaiting her upon the bridge the same ten handmaids whom she had thrown in the wrestling bouts; and, as she came up to them, she said to one in the Greek tongue, “Arise and take the reins of his horse and conduct him across into the convent.” So she went up to Sharrkan and led him over, much puzzled and perturbed with what he saw, and saying to himself, “O would that the Wazir Dandan were here with me that his eyes might look upon these fairest of favours.” Then he turned to the young lady and said to her, “O marvel of loveliness, now I have two claims upon thee; first the claim of good fellowship, and secondly for that thou hast carried me to thy home and offered me thy hospitality. I am now under thy commandance and thy guidance; so do me one last favour by accompanying me to the lands of Al-Islam; where thou shalt look upon many a lion hearted warrior and thou shalt learn who I am.” When she heard this she was angered and said to him, “By the truth of the Messiah, thou hast proved thyself with me a man of keen wit; but now I see what mischief there is in thy heart, and how thou canst permit thyself a speech which proveth thy traitorous intent. How should I do as thou sayest, when I wot that if I came to that King of yours, Omar bin al- Nu'uman, I should never get free from him? For truly he hath not the like of me or behind his city walls or within his palace halls, Lord of Baghdad and of Khorasan though he be, who hath built for himself twelve pavilions, in number as the months of the year, and in each a concubine after the number of the days; and if I come to him he would not prove shy of me, for your folk believe I am lawful to have and to hold as is said in your writ, 'Or those women whom your right hand shall possess as slaves.'[181] So how canst thou speak thus to me? As for thy saying, 'Thou shalt look upon the braves of the Moslems,' by the truth of the Messiah, thou sayest that which is not true, for I saw your army when it reached our land, these two days ago; and I did not see that your ordinance was the ordinance of Kings, but I beheld only a rabble of tribesmen gathered together. And as to thy words, 'Thou shalt know who I am,' I did not do thee kindness because of thy dignity but out of pride in myself; and the like of thee should not talk thus to the like of me, even wert thou Sharrkan, Omar bin al- Nu'uman's son, the prowess name in these days!" "Knowest thou Sharrkan?" asked he; and she answered Yes! and I know of his coming with an army numbering ten thousand horsemen; also that he was sent by his sire with this force to gain prevalence for the King of Constantinople." "O my lady," said Sharrkan, "I adjure thee by thy religion, tell me the cause of all this, that sooth may appear to me clear of untruth, and with whom the fault lies." "Now by the virtue of thy faith," she replied, "did I not fear lest the news of me be bruited abroad that I am of the daughters of Roum, I would adventure myself and sally forth single handed against the ten thousand horsemen and slay their leader, the Wazir Dandan and vanquish their champion Sharrkan.[182] Nor would aught of shame accrue to me thereby, for I have read books and studied the rules of good breeding in the language of the Arabs. But I have no need to vaunt my own prowess to thee, more by token as thou hast proved in thy proper person my skill and strength in wrestling; and thou hast learnt my superiority over other women. Nor, indeed, had Sharrkan himself been here this night and it were said to him, 'Clear this stream,' could he have done it; and I only long and lust that the Messiah would throw him into my hands in this very convent, that I might go forth to him in the habit of a man and drag him from his saddle seat and make him my captive and lay him in bilboes."- -And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Forty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Nazarene damsel said to Sharrkan (and he listening impatiently enow), "Verily if Sharrkan fell into my hands, I would go forth to him in the habit of a man and drag him from his saddle seat and make him my captive and lay him in bilboes," pride and passion and knightly jealousy took possession of him and he desired to discover and declare himself and to lay on load; but her loveliness restrained him and he began repeating,

"An faulty of one fault the Beauty prove, * Her charms a thousand advocates shall move."

So she went up and Sharrkan after her; and, when he saw the maiden's back and hinder cheeks that clashed against each other, like rollers in the rolling sea, he extemporised these couplets:- -

"For her sins is a pleader that brow, * And all hearts its fair
pleading must bow:
When I saw it I cried, "To night * The moon at its fullest doth
show;
Tho' Balkis' own Ifrit[183] try a bout, * Spite his force she
would deal him a throw."

The two fared on till they reached a gate over which rose a marble archway. This she opened and ushered Sharrkan into a long vestibule, vaulted with ten connected arches, from each of which hung a crystal lamp glistening like a spark of fire. The handmaids met her at the further end bearing wax candles of goodly perfume, and wearing on their heads golden fillets crusted with all manner bezel gems,[184] and went on before her (Sharrkan still following), till they reached the inner convent. There the Moslem saw couches and sofas ranged all around, one opposite the other and all over hung with curtains flowered in gold. The monastery floor was paved with every kind of vari coloured marbles and mosaic work, and in the midst stood a basin that held four and twenty jetting fountains of gold, whence the water ran like molten silver; whilst at the upper end stood a throne spread with silks fit only for Kings. Then said the damsel, “Ascend, O my lord, this throne.” So he went up to it and sat down and she withdrew to remain absent for some time. Sharrkan asked of her from one of the servants who answered him, “She hath gone to her dormitory; but we will serve thee even as she ordered.” So they set before him viands of rare varieties, and he ate his sufficiency, when they brought him a basin of gold and an ewer of silver, and he washed his hands. Then his thoughts reverted to his army, knowing not what had befallen it in his absence and calling to mind also how he had forgotten his father’s injunctions: so he was troubled about his case, repenting of what he had done till the dawn broke and the day appeared; when he lamented and sighed and became drowned in sea of sadness and repeated,

“I am not lost to prudence, but indeed * Here I’m bewildered,
what shall be my rede?
Would any aid me in mine ails of love, * By my own might and
sleight would I be free’d:
But ah! my heart is lost and passion-shent: * To none save Allah
can I trust my need!”

When he ended his verse behold, there came up to him a rare show and a fair, more than twenty maidens like crescents encompassing the young lady, who shone in their midst as the full moon among the constellations guarding and girding her. She was clad in brocades befitting Kings; her breasts were like twin pomegranates, a woven zone set with all kinds of jewels tightly clasped her waist which expanded below into jutting hips; and her hinder cheeks stood out as a mound of crystal[185] supporting a silvern shaft. When Sharrkan looked at her his wits went nigh to fly away from him with delight; and he forgot army and Wazir as he gazed on her fair head decked and dight with a net work of pearls set off by divers sorts of gems. Handmaids on her right and handmaids on her left bore her train, as she paced with dainty graceful gait in all the pride of seemlihead. He sprang to his feet seeing such beauty and loveliness, and cried aloud, “Beware and beware of that zone rarely fair!” and broke out into these couplets,

“With heavy back parts, high breasts delicate, * And lissome form
  that sways with swimming gait
She deftly hides love longing in her breast; * But I may never
  hide its ban and bate
While hosts of followers her steps precede,[186] * Like pearls
  now necklaced and now separate.”

She gazed upon him for a long time and considered him till she was assured of him, when she came up to him and said, “In very sooth the place is honoured and illumined by thee, O Sharrkan! How sped thy night, O hero, after we went away and left thee?”; adding, “Verily lying is a vile thing and a shameful, especially in great Kings! and thou art Crown Prince Sharrkan, son and heir of King Omar bin al-Nu’uman; so henceforth make no secret of thy rank and condition, nor let me hear aught from thee but the truth; for leasing bequeatheth hate and despite. And as thou art pierced by the shaft of Fate, be resignation thine and abide content to wait.” When he heard her words he saw that artifice availed him naught and he acknowledged the truth, saying, “I am Sharrkan, bin Omar bin al-Nu’uman, whom fortune hath afflicted and cast into this place; so whatso thou willest, do it in my case!” She hung her head groundwards a long while, then turned to him and said, “Be of good cheer and let thine eyes be cool and clear;[187] for thou art the guest of my hospitality, and bread and salt hath made a tie between me and thee; wherefore thou art in my ward and under my safeguard. Have no fear for, by the truth of the Messiah, if all on earth sought to do thee hurt they should not come at thee, till life had left my body for thy sake: indeed thou art now under the charge of the Messiah and of me.” Hereat she sat her down by his side and fell to playing with him, till his alarm subsided and he knew that had she desired to slay him, she would have done so during the past night. Presently she bespoke in the Grecian tongue one of her slave girls, who went away and soon came back bringing a beaker and a tray of food; but

Sharrkan abstained from eating and said to himself, “Haply she hath put somewhat in this meat.” She knew what was in his thought; so she turned to him and said, “By the truth of the Messiah, the case is not on such wise, nor is there aught in this meat of what thou suspectest! Had my mind been set on slaying thee, I had slain thee ere now.” Then she walked up to the tray and ate of every dish a mouthful; where upon Sharrkan came forward and ate too. She was pleased at this and both ate till they were satisfied. They washed their hands and after that she rose and ordered a handmaid to bring perfumes and herbs of sweet savour, wines of all colours and kinds and a wine-service with vessels of gold, silver and crystal. She filled a first goblet and drank it off before offering it to him, even as she had done with the food: then she crowned a second and handed it to him. He drank and she said to him, “O Moslem, see how thou art here in all solace and delight of life!” And she ceased not to drink and ply him with drink, till he took leave of his wits,- -And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day, and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Forty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the damsel ceased not to drink and ply Sharrkan with drink till he took leave of his wits, for the wine and the intoxication of love he bore her. Presently she said to the slave girl, “O Marjanah[188] ! bring us some instruments of music!” “To hear is to obey,” said the hand maid and going out, returned in the twinkling of an eye with a Damascus lute,[189] a Persian harp, a Tartar pipe, and an Egyptian dulcimer. The young lady took the lute and, after tuning each several string, began in gentle undersong to sing, softer than zephyr’s wing and sweeter than Tasmin[190] spring, with heart safe and secure from everything the couplets following,

“Allah assain those eyne! What streams of blood they shed! * How
many an arrowy glance those lids of thine have sped.
I love all lovers who to lovers show them cure; * ‘Twere wrong to
rue the love in wrong head born and bred:
Haply fall hapless eye for thee no sleeping kens! * Heaven help
the hapless heart by force of thee misled!

Thou doomest me to death who art my king, and I * Ransom with
life the deemster who would doom me dead."

Thereupon each and every of the maidens rose up and taking an instrument, played and recited couplets in the Roumi tongue; then their mistress sang also and seeing Sharrkan in ecstasies asked him, "O Moslem, dost thou understand what I say?"; and he answered, "Nay, my ecstasy cometh from the beauty of thy finger sips." She laughed and continued, "If I sing to thee in Arabic what wouldst thou do?" "I should no longer," quoth he, "be master of my senses." Then she took an instrument and, changing the measure, began singing these verses,

"The smack of parting's myrrh to me, * How, then, bear patience'
aloë?
I'm girt by ills in trinity * Severance, distance,
cruelty!
My freedom stole that fairest she, * And parting irks me
bitterly."

When she ended her verse, she looked at Sharrkan and found him lost to existence, and he lay for a while stretched at full length and prone among the maidens.[191] Then he revived and, remembering the songs, again inclined to mirth and merriment; and the twain returned to their wine and wassail, and continued their playing and toying, their pastime and pleasure till day ceased illuminating and night drooped her wing. Then the damsel went off to her dormitory and when Sharrkan asked after her they answered, "She is gone to her sleeping chamber," whereto he rejoined, "Under Allah's ward and His good guard!" As soon as it was morning, a handmaid came to him and said to him, "My mistress biddeth thee to her." So he rose and followed her and, as he drew near her lodging, the damsels welcomed him with smitten tabrets and songs of greeting, and led him through a great door of ivory studded with pearls and jewels. Thence they passed with him into a tall and spacious hall, at the upper end of which was a wide dais carpeted with all kinds of silks, and round it open lattices commanding a view of trees and streams.

About the saloon were figures carved in human form, and fashioned on such wise that the air passed through them and set in motion musical instruments within, so that the beholder would fancy they spoke.[192] Here sat the young lady, looking at the figures; but when she saw Sharrkan, she sprang to her feet and, taking him by the hand, made him sit down by her side, and asked him how he had passed the night. He blessed her and the two sat talking awhile till she asked him, "Knowest thou aught touching lovers and slaves of love?"; and he answered "Yes! I wot somewhat in verse on that matter." "Let me hear it," quoth she, so he began quoting,

"Pleasure and health, good cheer, good appetite * To Azzah,
  freest with our name and fame!
By Allah! would I near her off she flies * At tangent, granting
  less the more I claim:
I dote on Azzah, but when clear I off * My rivals, clears me too
  that dearest dame;
Like wandering wight that chose for shade a cloud * Which, ere
  siesta done, thin air became."

When she heard this she said, "Verily Al-Kuthayyir[193] was conspicuous for sweet speech and chaste, and he was superlative in his praise of Azzah when he sang" (and she began to recite),

"Did Azzah deal behest to Sun o' noon, * The judge had judged her
  beauty's bestest boon;
And girls who come to me and carp at her, * God make their rosy
  cheeks her sandal-shoon!

And indeed," quoth she, "'twas said that Azzah boasted exceeding beauty and loveliness." Then she asked Sharrkan saying, "O Prince, cost thou know aught of Jamil's[194] verses to Buthaynah? if so repeat to us somewhat of them;" and he answered, "Yes, I know them better than any;" whereupon he began repeating these couplets,

"Jamil, in Holy war go fight!" to me they say: * What war save
  fight for fair ones would I e'er essay?

To me their every word and work are mere delight, * And martyrs
crepe I all they slay in fight and fray:
An ask I, ‘O Buthaynah! what’s this love, I pray, * Which eats
my heart?’ quoth she ‘ ‘Twill stay for ever and aye!’
And when I cry, ‘Of wits return some small display * For daily
use,’ quoth she, ‘Far, far ’tis fled away!
Thou seekst my death; naught else thy will can satisfy * While I
no goal espy save thee and thee alway.’”

“Thou hast spoken right well,” said she, “O King’s son, and Jamil also spoke excellently well. But what would Buthaynah have done with him that he saith in his hemistich,

‘Thou seekst my death; naught else thy will can satisfy?’”

“O my lady,” quoth Sharrkan, “she willed to do him what thou willest to do with me, and even that will not satisfy thee.” She laughed at his opportune reply and they ceased not carousing till Day put out her light and Night came in darkness dight. Then she rose and went to her dormitory and slept, while Sharrkan slept in his place till morning dawned. As soon as he awoke, the hand maids came to him with tabrets and other instruments of mirth and merriment, as wont; and, kissing the ground between his hands, said to him, “Bismillah! in Allah’s name be so kind as to come[195] : our mistress biddeth thee to her presence!” So he rose and accompanied the slave girls who surrounded him, playing on tabrets and other instruments of music, till they passed from that saloon into another and a yet more spacious hall, decorated with pictured likenesses and figures of birds and beasts, passing all description. Sharrkan marvelled at the art and artifice of the place and began reciting,

“He plucks fruits of her necklace in rivalry, * And her breast-
pearls that bedded in gold mine lie.
Pure water on silvern bars is her brow, * And her cheeks show
roses with rubies vie:
Meseems in her eyne that the violet’s hue * Lies purpling set in
the Ithmid’s[196] dye.”

When the lady saw Sharrkan, she stood up to him in honour and, taking his hand, seated him by her side and asked, “O son of King Omar bin al-Nu’uman, hast thou any cunning in the game of chess?” “Yes,” he answered, “but do not thou with me as said the poet,

‘I speak and longing love upties me and unties me; * Till with
her honey dew of inner lip she plies me:
I brought the chess board and my liefest lover plays me * With
white and black,[197] but black cum white ne’er satisfies
me:
’Twas as if King for Castle I were fain to place me * Till wilful
loss of game atwixt two queens surprise me:
And if I seek to read intent in eyes that eye me * Oh man! that
glance askance with hint of wish defies me.’”

Then she brought the chessboard and played with him; but Sharrkan, instead of looking at her moves, kept gazing at her fair mouth, and putting knight in place of elephant and elephant[198] instead of knight. She laughed and said to him, “If thy play be after this fashion, thou knowest naught of the game.” “This is only our first,” replied he, “judge not by this bout.” When she beat him he replaced the pieces in position and played again with her; but she beat him a second time, a third, a fourth and a fifth. So she turned to him and said, “Thou art beaten in everything;” and he replied, “O my lady, how should one playing with the like of thee avoid being beaten?” Then she bade bring food, and they ate and washed their hands; after which the wine was set before them and they drank. Presently, she took the dulcimer, for her hand was cunning in smiting it, and she began repeating to an accompaniment these couplets,

“Twixt the close tied and open wide no medium Fortune knoweth, *
Now ebb and flow then flow and ebb this wise her likeness
showeth.
Then drink her wine the syne she’s thine and smiling thou dost
find her * Anon she’ll fall and fare away when all thy good
forth goeth.”

They ceased not to carouse till nightfall and this day was pleasanter even than the first. When darkness set in, the lady betook her to her dormitory, leaving him alone with the hand maids; so he threw himself on the ground and slept till dawn, when the damsels came to him with tambourines and other instruments according to custom. Seeing them he roused him hastily and sat up; and they carried him to their mistress, who came to meet him and, taking him by the hand, seated him by her side. Then she asked him how he had passed his night, whereat he prayed that her life be prolonged; and she took the lute and sang to it these verses which she improvised,

"Ne'er incline thee to part * Which embitters the heart
E'en the sun when he sets * Shall in pallor depart."

While they were solacing themselves after this fashion, behold, there arose a great and sudden clamour, and a confused crowd of knights and men rushed in, holding drawn swords that glittered and gleamed in their hands, and cried aloud in the Grecian tongue "Thou hast fallen into our hands, O Sharrkan, so make thee sure of death!" When he heard this, he said to himself, "By Allah, she hath entrapped me and held me in play, till her men should come. These are the Knights with whom she threatened me; but 'tis I who have thrown myself into this strait." Then he turned towards the young lady to reproach her, but saw that she had changed colour and her face was pale; and she sprang to her feet and asked the crowd, "Who are ye?" "O most gracious Princess and peerless onion pearl," answered the leading Knight, "dost thou weet who is yon man by thy side?" "Not I," she replied, "who may he be?" Quoth the Patrician, "This is of towns the highwayman! This is he who rideth in the horseman's van! This is Sharrkan, son of King Omar bin al-Nu'uman! This is he that forceth fortalice and penetrateth every impregnable place! The news of him reached King Hardub, thy father, by report of the ancient dame Zat al- Dawahi; and thy sire, our sovereign, hath made sure that thou hast rendered good service to the army of the Greeks by taking captive this ominous lion." When she heard this, she looked at the Knight and asked him, "What be thy name?" and he answered, "I am Másúrah, son of thy slave Mausúrah bin Káshardah, Knight of Knights." "And how?" quoth she, "durst thou enter my presence without leave?" Quoth he, "O my lady, when I came to the gate, none forbade me, neither chamberlain nor porter, but all the door keepers rose and forewent us as of wont; although, when others come, they leave them standing at the gate while they ask permission to admit them. But this is not a time for long talking, when the King is expecting our return with this Prince, the scorpion sting[199] of the Islamitic host, that he may kill him and drive back his men whither they came, without the bane of battling with them." "These words be ill words," rejoined the Princess, "and Dame Zat al-Dawahi lied, avouching an idle thing and a vain, whereof she weeteth not the truth; for by the virtue of the Messiah, this man who is with me is not Sharrkan, nor is he a captive, but a stranger who came to us seeking our hospitality, and I made him my guest. So even were we assured that this be Sharrkan and were it proved to us that it is he beyond a doubt, I say it would ill befit mine honour that I should deliver into your hands one who hath entered under my protection. So make me not a traitor to my guest and a disgrace among men; but return to the King, my father, and kiss the ground before him, and inform him that the case is contrariwise to the report of the Lady Zat al-Dawahi." "O Abrízah," replied Masurah, the Knight, "I cannot return to the King's majesty without his debtor and enemy." Quoth she (and indeed she had waxed very wroth). "Out on thee! Return to him with my answer, and no blame shall befal thee!" Quoth Masurah, "I will not return without him." Thereupon her colour changed and she exclaimed, "Exceed not in talk and vain words; for verily this man had not come in to us, were he not assured that he could of himself and single handed make head against an hundred riders; and if I said to him, 'Thou art Sharrkan, son of King Omar bin al-Nu'uman,' he would answer, 'Yes.' But 'tis not of your competence to let or hinder him; for if you do so, he will not turn back from you till he hath slain all that are in this place. Behold, here he is by my side, and I will bring him before you sword and targe in hand." "Albeit I were safe from thy wrath," answered Masurah the Knight, "I am not safe from that of thy father, and when I see him, I shall sign to the Knights to take him captive, and we will carry him to the King bound and in abject sort." When she heard this, she said, "The matter shall not pass thus, for 'twould be blazoning mere folly.

This man is but one and ye are an hundred Knights: so if you would attack him come out against him, one after one, that it may appear to the King which is the valiant amongst you." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Fiftieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Princess Abrizah said to the Knight, "This man is but one, and ye are an hundred: so if ye would attack him, come out against him, one after one, that it may appear to the King which is the valiant." Quoth Masurah, the Knight, "By the truth of the Messiah, thou sayest sooth, and none but I shall sally out against him first." Quoth she, "Wait till I go to him and acquaint him with the case and hear what answer he will make. If he consent, 'tis well; but if he refuse, ye shall on no wise come to him, for I and my hand maids and whosoever is in the convent will be his ransom." So she went to Sharrkan and told him the news, whereat he smiled and knew that she had not informed any of the Emirs; but that tidings of him had been bruited and blazed abroad, till the report reached the King, against her wish and intent. So he again began reproaching himself and said, "How came I to adventure and play with my life by coming to the country of the Greeks?" But hearing the young lady's proposal he said to her, "Indeed their onset, one after one, would be overburdensome to them. Will they not come out against me, ten by ten?" "That would be villainy," said she; "Let one have at one." When he heard this, he sprang to his feet and made for them with his sword and battle gear; and Masurah, the Knight, also sprang up and bore down upon him. Sharrkan met him like a lion and delivered a shoulder cut[200] which clove him to the middle, and the blade came out gleaming and glittering from his back and bowels. When the lady beheld that swashingblow, Sharrkan's might was magnified in her sight and she knew that when she overthrew him in the wrestle it was not by her strength but by her beauty and loveliness. So she turned to the Knights and said, "Take wreak for your chief!" Thereupon out came the slain man's brother, a fierce and furious Knight, and rushed upon Sharrkan, who delayed not, but smote him also with the shoulder cut and the sword came out glittering from his vitals. Then cried the Princess, "O ye servants of the Messiah, avenge your comrade!" So they ceased not charging down upon him, one after one; and Sharrkan also ceased not playing upon them with the blade, till he had slain fifty Knights, the lady looking on the while. And Allah cast a panic into the hearts of the survivors, so that they held back and dared not meet him in the duello, but fell upon him in a body; and he laid on load with heart firmer than a rock, and smote them and trod them down like straw under the threshing sled,[201] till he had driven sense and soul out of them. Then the Princess called aloud to her damsels, saying, "Who is left in the convent?"; and they replied, "None but the gate keepers;" whereupon she went up to Sharrkan and took him to her bosom, he doing the same, and they returned to the palace, after he had made an end of the melee. Now there remained a few of the Knights hiding from him in the cells of the monastery, and when the Princess saw this she rose from Sharrkan's side and left him for a while, but presently came back clad in closely meshed coat of ring mail and holding in her hand a fine Indian scymitar. And she said, "Now by the truth of the Messiah, I will not be a niggard of myself for my guest; nor will I abandon him though for this I abide a reproach and a by word in the land of the Greeks." Then she took reckoning of the dead and found that he had slain fourscore of the Knights, and other twenty had taken to flight.[202] When she saw what work he had made with them she said to him, "Allah bless thee, O Sharrkan! The Cavaliers may well glory in the like of thee." Then he rose and wiping his blade clean of the blood of the slain began reciting these couplets,

"How oft in the mellay I've cleft the array, * And given their
  bravest to lions a prey:
Ask of me and of them when I proved me prow * O'er creation, on
  days of the foray and fray:
When I left in the onslaught their lions to lie * On the sands of
  the low lands[203] in fieriest day."

When he ended his verse, the Princess came up to him with smiles and kissed his hand; then she doffed her hauberk and he said to her, "O lady mine, wherefore didst thou don that coat of mail and bare thy brand?" "To guard thee against these caitiffs,"[204] she replied.

Then she summoned the gate keepers and asked them, “How came ye to admit the King’s Knights into my dwelling without leave of me?”; and they answered, “O Princess, it is not our custom to ask leave of thee for the King’s messengers, and especially for the chief of his Knights.” Quoth she, “I think ye were minded only to disgrace me and murder my guest;” and bade Sharrkan smite their necks. He did so and she cried to the rest of her servants, “Of a truth, they deserved even more than that!” Then turning to Sharrkan, she said to him, “Now that there hath become manifest to thee what was concealed, thou shalt be made acquainted with my history. Know, then, that I am the daughter of King Hardub of Roum; my name is Abrizah and the ancient dame, yclept Zat al-Dawahi, is my grandmother by the sword side. She it certainly is who told my father of thee, and as surely she will compass a sleight to slay me, more by token as thou hast slain my father’s chivalry and it is noised abroad that I have separated myself from the Nazarenes and have become no better than I should be with the Moslems. Wherefore it were wiser that I leave this dwelling while Zat al-Dawahi is on my track; but I require of thee the like kindness and courtesy I have shown thee, for enmity will presently befal between me and my father on thine account. So do not thou neglect to do aught that I shall say to thee, remembering all this betided me not save by reason of thee.” Hearing her words, Sharrkan joyed greatly; his breast broadened and his wits flew from him for delight, and he said, “By Allah, none shall come at thee, while life is in my bosom! But hast thou patience to bear parting from thy parents and thy people?” “Even so,” she answered; and Sharrkan swore to her and the two plighted their troth. Then said she, “Now is my heart at ease; but there remaineth one other condition for thee.” “What is it?” asked he and she answered, “It is that thou return with thy host to thine own country.” Quoth he, “O lady mine, my father, King Omar bin al- Nu’uman, sent me to wage war upon thy sire, on account of the treasure he plundered from the King of Constantinople, and amongst the rest three great jewels, noted givers of good fortune.” Quoth she, “Cheer thy heart and clear thine eyes: I will tell thee the whole of the tale and the cause of our feud with the King of Constantinople. Know that we have a yearly festival, highs the Convent Feast, whereat Kings from all quarters and the noblest women are wont to congregate; thither also come merchants and traders with their wives and families, and the visitors abide there seven days. I was wont to be one of them; but, when there befel enmity between us, my father forbade me to be present at the festival for the space of seven years. One year, it chanced that amongst the daughters of the great who resorted to the patron, as was their custom, came a daughter of the King of Constantinople, a beautiful girl called Sophia. They tarried at the monastery six days and on the seventh the folk went their ways;[205] but Sophia said, 'I will not return to Constantinople save by water.' So they equipped for her a ship in which she embarked with her suite; and making sail they put out to sea; but as they were voyaging behold, a contrary wind caught them and drove the vessel from her course till, as Fate and Fortune would have it, she fell in with a Nazarene craft from the Camphor Island[206] carrying a crew of five hundred armed Franks, who had been cruising about a long time. When they sighted the sails of the ship, wherein Sophia and her women were, they gave chase in all haste and in less than an hour they came up with her, then they laid the grappling irons aboard her and captured her. Then taking her in tow they made all sail for their own island and were but a little distant from it when the wind veered round and, splitting their sails, drove them on to a shoal which lies off our coast. Thereupon we sallied forth and, looking on them as spoil driven to us by Fate,[207] boarded and took them; and, slaying the men, made prize of the wreck, wherein we found the treasures and rarities in question and forty maidens, amongst whom was the King's daughter, Sophia. After the capture we carried the Princess and her women to my father, not knowing her to be a daughter of King Afridun of Constantinople; and he chose out for himself ten including her; and divided the rest among his dependents. Presently he set apart five damsels, amongst whom was the King s daughter, and sent them to thy father, King Omar bin al-Nu'uman, together with other gifts, such as broadcloth[208] and woollen stuffs and Grecian silks. Thy father accepted them and chose out from amongst the five girls Sophia, daughter of King Afridun; nor did we hear more of her till the beginning of this year, when her father wrote to my father in words unfitting for me to repeat, rebuking him with menaces and saying to him: Two years ago, you plundered a ship of ours which had been seized by a band of Frankish pirates in which was my daughter, Sophia, attended by her maidens numbering some threescore. Yet ye informed me not thereof by messenger or otherwise; nor could I make the matter public, lest reproach befal me amongst the Kings, by reason of my daughter's honour. So I concealed my case till this year, when I wrote to certain Frankish corsairs and sought news of my daughter from the Kings of the Isles. They replied, 'By Allah we carried her not forth of thy realm; but we have heard that King Hardub rescued her from certain pirates. And they told me the whole tale.' Then he added in the writing which he writ to my father: 'Except you wish to be at feud with me and design to disgrace me and dishonour my daughter, you will, the instant my letter reacheth you, send my daughter back to me. But if you slight my letter and disobey my commandment, I will assuredly make you full return for your foul dealing and the baseness of your practices.'[209] When my father read this letter and understood the contents,[210] it vexed him and he regretted not having known that Sophia, King Afridun's daughter, was among the captured damsels, that he might have sent her back to her sire; and he was perplexed about the case because, after so long a time, he could not send to King Omar bin al-Nu'uman and demand her back from him, especially as he had lately heard that Heaven had granted him boon of babe by this Sophia. So when we pondered that truth, we knew that this letter was none other than a grievous calamity; and my father found nothing for it but to write an answer to King Afridun, making his excuses and swearing to him by strong oaths that he knew not his daughter to be among the bevy of damsels in the ship and setting forth how he had sent her to King Omar bin al Nu'uman, who had gotten the blessing of issue by her. When my father's reply reached King Afridun he rose up and sat down,[211] and roared and foamed at the mouth crying:— 'What! shall he take captive my daughter and even her with slave girls and pass her on from hand to hand sending her for a gift to Kings, and they lie with her without marriage contract? By the Messiah and the true Faith,' said he, 'I will not desist till I have taken my blood vengeance for this and have wiped out my shame; and indeed I will do a deed which the chroniclers shall chronicle after me!’ So he bided his time till he devised a device and laid notable toils and snares, when he sent an embassy to thy father, King Omar, to tell him that which thou hast heard: accordingly thy father equipped thee and an army with thee and sent thee to King Afridun, whose object is to seize thee and thine army to boot. As for the three jewels whereof he told thy father when asking his aid, there was not one soothfast word in that matter, for they were with Sophia, his daughter; and my father took them from her, when he got possession of her and of her maidens, and gave them to me in free gift, and they are now with me. So go thou to thy host and turn them back ere they be led deep into, and shut in by, the land of the bevy of damsels in the ship and setting forth the Franks and the country of the Greeks; for as soon as you have come far enough into their interior, they will stop the roads upon you and there will be no escape for you till the Day of retribution and retaliation. I know that thy troops are still halting where thou leftest them, because thou didst order a three days’ rest; withal they have missed thee all this time and they wot not what to do.” When Sharrkan heard her words, he was absent awhile in thought; then he kissed Princess Abrizah’s hand and said, “Praise be to Allah who hath bestowed thee on me and appointed thee to be the cause of my salvation and the salvation of whoso is with me! But ’tis grievous to me to part from thee and I know not what will become of thee after my departure.” “Go now to thine army,” she replied, “and turn them back, while ye are yet near your own country. If the envoys be still with them, lay hands on them and keep them, that the case may be made manifest to you; and, after three days, I will be with you all and we will enter Baghdad together.” As he turned to depart she said, “Forget not the compact which is between me and thee,” then she rose to bid[212] him farewell and embrace him and quench the fire of desire, so she took leave of him and, throwing her arms round his neck, wept with exceeding weeping, and repeated these verses,

“I bade adieu, my right hand wiped my tears away, * The while my
left hand held her in a close embrace:
‘Fearest thou naught,’ quoth she, ‘of shame?’ I answered ‘Nay, *
The lover’s parting day is lover’s worst disgrace.’”

Then Sharrkan left her and walked down from the convent. They brought his steed, so he mounted and rode down stream to the drawbridge which he crossed and presently threaded the woodland paths and passed into the open meadow. As soon as he was clear of the trees he was aware of horsemen which made him stand on the alert, and he bared his brand and rode cautiously, but as they drew near and exchanged curious looks he recognized them and behold, it was the Wazir Dandan and two of his Emirs. When they saw him and knew him, they dismounted and saluting him, asked the reason of his absence; whereupon he told them all that had passed between him and Princess Abrizah from first to last. The Wazir returned thanks to Almighty Allah for his safety and said,[213] "Let us at once leave these lands; for the envoys who came with us are gone to inform the King of our approach, and haply he will hasten to fall on us and take us prisoners." So Sharrkan cried to his men to saddle and mount, which they did and, setting out at once, they stinted not faring till they reached the sole of the valley wherein the host lay. The Ambassadors meanwhile had reported Sharrkan's approach to their King, who forthright equipped a host to lay hold of him and those with him. But Sharrkan, escorted by the Wazir Dandan and the two Emirs, had no sooner sighted the army, than he raised the cry "March! March!" They took horse on the instant and fared through the first day and second and third day, nor did they cease faring for five days; at the end of which time they alighted in a well wooded valley, where they rested awhile. Then they again set out and stayed not riding for five and twenty days which placed them on the frontiers of their own country. Here, deeming themselves safe, they halted to rest; and the country people came out to them with guest gifts for the men and provender and forage for the beasts. They tarried there two days after which, as all would be making for their homes, Sharrkan put the Wazir Dandan in command, bidding him lead the host back to Baghdad. But he himself remained behind with an hundred riders, till the rest of the army had made one day's march: then he called "To horse!" and mounted with his hundred men. They rode on two parasangs'[214] space till they arrived at a gorge between two mountains and lo! there arose before them a dark cloud of sand and dust. So they checked their steeds awhile till the dust opened and lifted, discovering beneath it an hundred cavaliers, lion faced and in mail coats cased. As soon as they drew within earshot of Sharrkan and his meiny they cried out to them, saying, “By the virtue of John and Mary, we have won to our wish! We have been following you by forced marches, night and day, till we forewent you to this place. So dismount and lay down your arms and yield yourselves, that we may grant you your lives.” When Sharrkan heard this, his eyes stood out from his head and his cheeks flushed red and he said ‘How is it, O. Nazarene dogs, ye dare enter our country and overmatch our land? And doth not this suffice you, but ye must adventure yourselves and address us in such unseemly speech? Do you think to escape out of our hands and return to your country?” Then he shouted to his hundred horsemen, “Up and at these hounds, for they even you in number!” So saying, he bared his sabre and bore down on them, he and his, but the Franks met them with hearts firmer than rocks, and wight dashed against wight, and knight dashed upon knight, and hot waxed the fight, and sore was the affright, and nor parley nor cries of quarter helped their plight; and they stinted not to charge and to smite, right hand meeting right, nor to hack and hew with blades bright white, till day turned to night and gloom oppressed the sight. Then they drew apart and Sharrkan mustered his men and found none wounded save four only, who showed hurts but not death hurts. Said he to them, “By Allah, my life long have I waded in the clashing sea of fight and I have met many a gallant sprite, but none so unfrightened of the sword that smites and the shock of men that affrights like these valiant Knights!” “Know, O King,” said they, that there is among them a Frankish cavalier who is their leader and, indeed, he is a man of valour and fatal is his spear thrust: but, by Allah, he spares us great and small; for whoso falls into his hands he lets him go and forbears to slay him. By Allah, had he willed he had killed us all.” Sharrkan was astounded when he heard what the Knight had done and such high report of him, so he said, “When the morn shall morrow, we will draw out and defy them, for we are an hundred to their hundred; and we will seek aid against them from the Lord of the Heavens.” So they rested that night in such intent; whilst the Franks gathered round their Captain and said, “Verily this day we did not win our will of these;” and he replied, “At early dawn when the morrow shall morn, we will draw out and challenge them, one after one.” They also rested in that mind, and both camps kept guard until Almighty Allah sent the light of day dawn. Thereupon King Sharrkan and his hundred riders took horse and rode forth to the plain, where they found the Franks ranged in line of battle; and Sharrkan said to his followers, “Our foes have determined like ourselves to do their devoir; so up and at them and lay on load.” Then came forth an Herald of the Franks and cried out, saying, “Let there be no general engagement betwixt us this day, save by the duello, a champion of yours against a champion of ours.” Whereupon one of Sharrkan’s riders dashed out from the ranks and crave between the two lines crying, “Ho! who is for smiting? Let no dastard engage me this day nor niderling!” Hardly had he made an end of his vaunt, when there sallied forth to him a Frankish cavalier, armed cap-à-pie and clad in a surcoat of gold stuff, riding on a grey white steed,[215] and he had no hair on his cheeks. He urged his charger on to the midst of the battle plain and the two fell to derring do of cut and thrust, but it was not long before the Frank foined the Moslem with the lance point; and, toppling him from his steed, took him prisoner and led him off crestfallen. His folk rejoiced in their comrade and, forbidding him to go out again to the field, sent forth another, to whom sallied out another Moslem, brother to the captive, and offered him battle. The two fell to, either against other, and fought for a little while, till the Frank bore down upon the Moslem and, falsing him with a feint, tumbled him by a thrust of the lance heel from his destrier and took him prisoner. After this fashion the Moslems ceased not dashing forwards, one after one, and the Franks to unhorse them and take them captive, till day departed and the night with darkness upstarted. Now they had captured of the Moslems twenty cavaliers, and when Sharrken saw this, it was grievous to him and he mustered his men and said to them, “What is this thing that hath befallen us? To- morrow, I myself will go forth to the field and offer singular combat to their chief and learn what is the cause of his entering our land and warn him against doing battle with our band. If he persist, we will punish him with death, and if he prove peaceable we will make peace with him.” They righted on this wise till Allah Almighty caused the morn to dawn, when mounted the twain and drew up for battle fain; and Sharrkan was going forth to the plain, but behold, more than one half of the Franks dismounted and remained on foot before one of them who was mounted, till they reached the midst of the battle plain. Sharrken looked at that horseman and lo! he was their chief. He was clad in a surcoat of blue satin and a close ringed mail shirt; his face was as the moon when it rises and no hair was upon his cheeks. He hent in hand an Indian scymitar and he rode a sable steed with a white blaze on brow, like a dirham; and he smote the horse with heel till he stood almost in the midst of the field when, signing to the Moslems, he cried out in fluent Arab speech "Ho, Sharrkan! Ho, son of Omar bin al-Nu'uman! Ho, thou who forcest fortalice and overthrowest cities and countries! up and out to battle bout, and blade single handed wield with one who halves with thee the field! Thou art Prince of thy people and I am Prince of mine; and whoso overcometh his adversary, him let the other's men obey and come under his sway." Hardly had he ended his speech, when out came Sharrkan with a heart full of fury, and urging his steed into the midst of the field, closed like a raging lion with the Frank who encountered him with wariness and steadfastness and met him with the meeting of warriors. Then they fell to foining and hewing, and they stinted not of onset and offset, and give and take, as they were two mountains clashing together or two seas together dashing; nor did they cease fighting until day darkened and night starkened. Then they drew apart and each returned to his own party; but as soon as Sharrkan foregathered with his comrades, he said, "Never looked I on the like of this cavalier: he hath one quality I have not yet seen in any and this it is that, when his foemen uncovereth a place for the death blow, he reverseth his weapon and smiteth with the lance-heel! In very deed I know not what will be the issue 'twixt him and me; but 'tis my wish that we had in our host his like and the like of his men." Then he went to his rest for the night and, when morning dawned, the Frank came forth and rode down to the mid field, where Sharrkan met him; and they fell to fighting and to wheeling, left and right; and necks were stretched out to see the sight, nor did they stint from strife and sword play and lunge of lance with main and might, till the day turned to night and darkness overwhelmed the light. Then the twain drew asunder and returned each to his own camp, where both related to their comrades what had befallen them in the duello; and at last the Frank said to his men, “Tomorrow shall decide the matter!” So they both passed that night restfully till dawn; and, as soon as it was day, they mounted and each bore down on other and ceased not to fight till half the day was done. Then the Frank bethought him of a ruse; first urging his steed with heel and then checking him with the rein, so that he stumbled and fell with his rider; thereupon Sharrkan threw himself on the foe, and would have smitten him with the sword fearing lest the strife be prolonged, when the Frank cried out to him, “O Sharrkan, champions are not wont to do thus! This is the act of a man accustomed to be beaten by a woman.”[216] When Sharrkan heard this, he raised his eyes to the Frank’s face and gazing steadfastly at him, recognized in him Princess Abrizah with whom that pleasant adventure had befallen him in the convent; whereupon he cast brand from hand and, kissing the earth before her, asked her, “What moved thee to a deed like this?”; and she answered, “I desired to prove thy prowess afield and test thy doughtiness in tilting and jousting. These that are with me are my handmaids, and they are all clean maids; yet they have vanquished thy horsemen in fair press and stress of plain; and had not my steed stumbled with me, thou shouldst have seen my might and prowess in combat.” Sharrkan smiled at her speech and said, “Praise be to Allah for safety and for my reunion with thee, O Queen of the age!” Then she cried out to her damsels to loose the twenty captives of Sharrkan’s troop and dismount. They did as she bade and came and kissed the earth before her and Sharrkan who said to them, “It is the like of you that Kings keep in store for the need hour.” Then he signed to his comrades to salute the Princess; so all alighted and kissed the earth before her, for they knew the story. After this, the whole two hundred took horse, and fared on night and day for six days’ space, till they drew near to Baghdad, when they halted and Sharrkan bade Abrizah and her handmaids doff the Frankish garb that was on them, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Fifty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sharrkan bade Princess Abrizah and her damsels doff the garb that was on them and don the garments of daughters of Greece; and thus did they. Then he despatched a company of his companions to Baghdad to acquaint his father Omar bin al-Nu'uman, with his arrival and report that he was accompanied by Princess Abrizah, daughter of King Hardub, Lord of Graecia-land. They halted forthright in the place they had reached, and Sharrkan also halted and all righted there; and when Almighty Allah made morning dawn, Sharrkan and his company and Abrizah and her company took horse and fared on towards the city; when lo! on the way they met the Wazir Dandan, who had come out amongst a thousand horse to honour Abrizah and Sharrkan, by especial commandment of King Omar Son of Al-Nu'uman. When the two drew near, they turned towards them and kissed ground before them; then they mounted again and escorted them into the city and went up with them to the palace. Sharrkan walked in to his father, who rose and embraced him and questioned him of his case. So he told him all that Abrizah had told him, and what had passed between them and said, "She hath parted from her sire and departed from her reign and hath chosen to take part with us and make her abode with us; and indeed," he said to his father, "the King of Constantinople hath plotted to do us a mischief, because of his daughter Sophia, for that the King of Greece had made known to him her story and the cause of her being given to thee; and he (the Grecian King) not knowing her to be daughter of King Afridun, Lord of Constantinople; and, had he known that, he would not have bestowed her upon thee, but he would have restored her to her parent. And of a verity," he continued, "we were saved from these perils only by the Lady Abrizah, and never saw we a more valiant than she." And he went on to tell his father all that had passed from first to last of the wrestling and the single fighting. When King Omar heard the story of Sharrkan, Abrizah was exalted in his eyes, and he longed to see her and question her. Thereupon Sharrkan went out to her and said, "The King calleth for thee;" she replied, "I hear and I obey;" and he took her and brought her in to his father, who was seated on his throne and who, having dismissed his high officers, was attended only by his eunuchs. The Princess entered and kissing the ground between his hands, saluted him in choice terms. He was amazed at her eloquent speech and thanked her for her dealing with his son Sharrkan and bade her be seated. So she sat down and unveiled her face;[217] and, when the King saw her beauty, his reason fled his head and he made her draw near and showed her favour, appointing her an especial palace for herself and her damsels, and assigning them solde and allowances. Then began he to ask her of the three jewels aforesaid, and she answered, "Here be they with me, O King of the age!" So saying, she rose and going to her lodging, unpacked her baggage and from it brought out a box and from the box a casket of gold. She opened the casket and taking out those three jewels, kissed them and gave them to the King. Then she went away bearing his heart with her. After her going the King sent for his son Sharrkan and gave him one jewel of the three, and when he enquired of the other two replied, "O my son! I mean to give one to thy brother Zau al-Makan, and the other to thy sister Nuzhat al-Zaman." But when Sharrkan heard that he had a brother (for to that time he knew only of his sister) he turned to his sire and said to him, "O King, hast thou a son other than myself?" He answered, "Yes, and he is now six years old;" adding that his name was Zau al-Makan and that he and Nuzhat al-Zaman were twins, born at a birth. This news was grievous to Sharrkan, but he kept his secret and said, "The bless- ing of Allah Most High be upon them!", and he cast the jewel from his hand and shook the dust off his clothes. Quoth the King, "How do I see thee change thy manner when hearing of this, considering that after me thou becomes" heir of the kingdom. Of a truth the troops have sworn to thee and the Emirs and Grandees have taken the oath of succession to thee; and this one of the three jewels is thine." Sharrkan bowed his head to the ground and was ashamed to bandy words with his parent so he accepted the jewel and went away, knowing not what to do for exceeding wrath, and stayed not walking till he had entered Abrizah's palace. As he approached she stood up to meet him and thanked him for what he had done and prayed for blessings on him and his sire. Then she sat down and seated him by her side; but when he had taken his place she saw rage in his face and questioned him, whereupon he told her that Allah had blessed his father with two children by Sophia, a boy and a girl, and that he had named the boy Zau al-Makan and the girl Nuzhat al-Zaman; adding, "He hath kept the other two jewels for them and hath given me one of thine, so I left it behind; I knew naught of Zau al-Makan's birth till this day, and the twain are now six years old. So when I learnt this, wrath possessed me; and I tell thee the reason of my rage and hide nothing from thee. But now I fear lest my father take thee to wife, for he loveth thee and I saw in him signs of desire for thee: so what wilt thou say, if he wish this?" Quoth she, "Know, O Sharrkan, that thy father hath no dominion over me, nor can he have me without my consent; and if he prevail over me by force, I will take my own life. As for the three jewels, it was not my intent that he should give any of them to either of his children and I had no thought but that he would lay them up in his treasury with his things of price; but now I desire of thy favour that thou make me a present of the jewel which he gave thee, if thou have accepted it." "Hearkening and obedience," replied Sharrkan, and gave it to her. Then said she, "Fear nothing," and talked with him awhile and continued, "I fear lest my father hear that I am with you and sit not patiently under my loss, but do his endeavours to find me; and to that end he may ally himself with King Afridun, on account of his daughter Sophia, and both come on thee with armies and so there befal great turmoil." When Sharrken heard these words, he said to her, "O my lady, if it please thee to sojourn with us, take no thought of them; though there gather together against us all that be on land and on sea." " 'Tis well," rejoined she; "if ye entreat me fair, I will tarry with you, and if ye deal evilly by me, I will depart from you." Then she bade her slave maidens bring food; so they set the tables, and Sharrkan ate a little and went away to his own house, disturbed and perturbed. Such was his case; but regarding the affairs of his father, Omar bin al-Nu'uman, after dismissing his son Sharrkan he arose and, taking the other two jewels, betook himself to the Lady Sophia, who stood up when she saw him and remained standing till he was seated. Presently, his two children, Zau al-Makan and Nuzhat al-Zaman, came to him and he kissed them and hung a jewel round each one's neck, at which they rejoiced and kissed his hands. Then went they to their mother, who joyed in their joy and wished the King long life; so he asked her, "Why hast thou not informed me all this time that thou art the daughter of King Afridun, Lord of Constantinople, that I might have honoured thee still more and enlarged thee in dignity and raised thy rank?" "O King," answered Sophia, "and what could I desire greater or higher than this my standing with thee, overwhelmed as I am with thy favours and thy benefits? And, furthermore, Allah hath blessed me with two children by thee, a son and a daughter." Her reply pleased the King and after leaving her, he set apart for her and her children a wondrous fine palace. Moreover, he appointed for them eunuchs and attendants and doctors of law and doctors of philosophy and astrologers and physicians and surgeons to do them service; and in every way he redoubled his favour and entreated them with the best of treatment. And presently he returned to the palace of his dominion and to his Court where he distributed justice among the lieges. So far concerning him and Sophia and her children; but in the matter of Abrizah the King was greatly occupied with love of her and burnt with desire of her night and day; and every night, he would go in to her and converse with her and pay his court to her, but she gave him no answer, only saying, "O King of the age! I have no desire for men at this present." When he saw her withdraw from him, his passion waxed hotter and his longing and pining increased until, when weary of this, he summoned his Wazir Dandan and, opening his very heart to him, told him of his love for Princess Abrizah, daughter of Hardub, and informed him how she refused to yield to his wishes and how desire for her was doing him to die, for that he could get no grace of her. The Wazir, hearing these words, said to the King, "As soon as it is dark night, take thou a piece of Bhang the measure of a miskal, about an ounce, and go in to her and drink somewhat of wine with her. When the hour of ending the carousel shall draw near, fill her a last cup and dropping therein the Bhang, give it to her to drink, and she will not reach her sleeping chamber ere the drug take effect on her. Then do thou go in to her and take thy will of her; and such is my advice."[218] "Thy rede is aright," quoth the King, and seeking his treasury, he took thence a piece of concentrated Bhang, if an elephant smelt it he would sleep from year to year. This he put in his bosom pocket and waited till some little of the night went by, when he betook himself to the palace of Princess Abrizah, who seeing him stood up to receive him; but he bade her sit down. So she sat down, and he sat by her, and he began to talk with her of wine and wassail, whereupon she furnished the carousing table[219] and placed it before him. Then she set on the drinking vessels and lighted the candles and ordered to bring dried fruits and sweet meats and all that pertaineth to drinking. So they fell to tippling and the King ceased not to pledge her till drunkenness crept into her head; and seeing this he took out the bit of Bhang from his pocket and, holding it between his fingers, filled a cup with his own hand and drank it off. Then filling a second he said, “To thy companionship!”; and dropped the drug into her cup, she knowing naught of it. She took it and drank it off; then she rose and went to her sleeping chamber. He waited for less than an hour till he was assured that the dose had taken effect on her and had robbed her of her senses, when he went in to her and found her thrown on her back: and she had doffed her petticoat trousers and the air raised the skirt of her shift and discovered what was between her thighs. When the King saw the state of things and found a lighted candle at her head and another at her feet, shining upon what her thighs enshrined he took leave of his five senses for lust and Satan seduced him and he could not master himself, but put off his trousers and fell upon her and abated her maiden head. Then he rose off her and went to one of her women, by name Marjánah, and said, “Go in to thy lady and speak with her.” So she went in to her mistress and found her lying on her back insensible, with the blood running down to the calves of her legs, whereupon she took a kerchief and wiped away the blood and lay by her that night. As soon as Almighty Allah brought the dawn, the handmaid Marjanah washed her mistress’s hands and feet and brought rose water and bathed her face and mouth with it, where upon she sneezed and yawned and cast up from her inside that bit of Bhang like a bolus.[220] Then she revived and washed her hands and mouth and said to Marjanah, “Tell me what hath befallen me.” So she told her what had passed and how she had found her, lying on her back, with the blood running down, wherefore she knew that King Omar bin al-Nu’uman had lain with her and had undone her and taken his will of her. At this she grieved with exceeding grief and retired into privacy, saying to her damsels, “Deny me to whoso would come in to me and say to him that I am ill, till I see what Allah will do with me.” Presently the news of her sickness came to the King; so he sent her sherbets and sugar electuaries. Some months she thus passed in solitude, during which time the King's flame cooled and his desire for her was quenched, so that he abstained from her. Now she had conceived by him, and when the months of child breeding had gone by, her pregnancy appeared and her belly swelled, and the world was straitened upon her, so she said to her handmaid Marjanah, "Know that it is not the folk who have wronged me, but I who sinned against my own self[221] in that I left my father and mother and country. Indeed, I abhor life, for my spirit is broken and neither courage nor strength is left me. I used, when I mounted my steed, to have the mastery of him, but now I am unable to ride. If I be brought to bed among them I shall be dishonoured before my hand women and every one in the palace will know that he hath taken my maidenhead in the way of shame; and if I return to my father, with what face shall I meet him or with what face shall I have recourse to him? How well quoth the poet,

'Say, what shall solace one who hath nor home nor stable stead *
Nor cup companion, nor a cup, nor place to house his head?'"

Marjanah answered her, "It is thine to command; I will obey;" and Abrizah said, "I desire at once to leave this place secretly, so that none shall know of me but thou; and return to my father and my mother, for when flesh stinketh, there is naught for it but its own folk and Allah shall do with me e'en as He will." "O Princess," Marjanah replied, "what thou wouldest do is well." Then she made matters ready and kept her secret and waited for some days till the King went out to chase and hunt, and his son Sharrkan betook himself to certain of the fortresses to sojourn there awhile. Then said she to Marjanah, "I wish to set out this night, but how shall I do against my destiny? For already I feel the pangs of labour and child birth, and if I abide other four or five days, I shall be brought to bed here, and I shall be unable to travel to my country. But this is what was written on my forehead." Then she considered awhile, and said to Marjanah, "Look us out a man who will go with us and serve us by the way, for I have no strength to bear arms." "By Allah, O my lady," replied Marjanah, "I know none but a black slave called Al- Ghazbán,[222] who is one of the slaves of King Omar bin al- Nu'uman; he is a valiant wight, and he keepeth guard at our palace gate. The King appointed him to attend us, and indeed we have overwhelmed him with our favours; so, lookye, I will go out and speak with him of this matter, and promise him some monies and tell him that, if he have a mind to tarry with us, I will marry him to whom he will. He told me before to day that he had been a highwayman; so if he consent to us we shall win our wish and reach to our own land.” She rejoined, “Call him that I may talk with him;” whereupon Marjanah fared forth and said to the slave, ‘O Ghazban, Allah prosper thee, so thou fall in with what my lady saith to thee!” Then she took him by the hand and brought him to the Princess, whose hands he kissed but as she beheld him, her heart took fright at him. “How ever,” she said to herself, “of a truth, Need giveth the law;” and she approached to speak with him, yet her heart started away from him. Presently she said, “O Ghazban, say me, wilt thou help me against the perfidies of Fortune and conceal my secret if I discover it to thee?” When the slave saw her, his heart was taken by storm and he fell in love with her forthright and could not but reply; “O my mistress, whatsoever thou biddest me do, I will not depart therefrom.” Quoth she, “I would have thee take me at this hour and take this my handmaid and saddle us two camels and two of the King’s horses and set on each horse a saddle bag of goods and somewhat of provaunt, and go with us to our own country; where, if thou desire to abide with us, I will marry thee to her thou shalt choose of my handmaidens, or, if thou prefer return to thine own land, we will marry thee and give thee whatso thou desires” after thou hast taken of money what shall satisfy thee.” When Al Ghazban, heard this, he rejoiced with great joy and replied, “O my lady, I will serve both of you with mine eyes and will go at once and saddle the horses.” Then he went away gladsome and saying to himself, “I shall get my will of them and if they will not yield to me, I will kill them both and take their riches.” But he kept this his intent to himself, and presently returned with two camels and three head of horses, one of which he rode, and Princess Abrizah made Marjanah mount the second she mounting the third, albeit she was in labour pains and possessed not her soul for anguish. And the slave ceased not travelling with them night and day through the passes of the mountains, till there remained but musingly march between them and their own country; when the travail pangs came upon Abrizah and she could no longer resist; so she said to Al-Ghazban, “Set me down, for the pains of labour are upon me;” and cried to Marjanah, “Do thou alight and sit by me and deliver me.” Then Marjanah dismounted from her horse, and Al-Ghazban did in like sort, and they made fast the bridles and helped the Princess to dismount, for she was aswoon from excess of anguish. When Al-Ghazban saw her on the ground, Satan entered into him and he drew his falchion and brandishing it in her face, said “O my lady, vouchsafe me thy favours.” Hearing these words she turned to him and said, “It remaineth for me only that I yield me to negro slaves, after having refused Kings and Braves!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Fifty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Princess Abrizah said to the black slave Al Ghazban, “It remaineth for me only that I yield me to negro slaves, after having refused Kings and Braves!” And she was wroth with him and cried, “Woe to thee! what words are these thou sayest? Out on thee, and talk not thus in my presence and know that I will never consent to what thou sayest, though I drink the cup of death. Wait till I have cast my burden and am delivered of the after birth, and then, if thou be able thereto, do with me as thou wilt; but, an thou leave not lewd talk at this time assuredly I will slay myself with my own hand and quit the world and be at peace from all this.” And she began reciting extempore,[223]

“O spare me, thou Ghazban, indeed enow for me * Are heavy strokes
 of time, mischance and misery!
Whoredom my Lord forfends to all humanity; * Quoth He, ‘Who
 breaks my bidding Hell for home shall see!’
And if thou leave not suing me to whoredom’s way * Against th’
 Almighty’s choicest gift, my chastity,
Upon my tribesmen I with might and main will call * And gather
 all, however far or near they be;
And with Yamáni blade were I in pieces hewn, * Ne’er shall he
 sight my face who makes for villeiny,
The face of free born come of noble folk and brave; * What then

can be to me the seed of whoreson slave?"

When Ghazban heard these lines he was wroth exceedingly; his eyes reddened with blood and his face became a dusty grey[224] ; his nostrils swelled, his lips protruded and the repulsiveness of his aspect redoubled. And he repeated these couplets,

"Ho thou, Abrizah, mercy! leave me not for I * Of thy love and
Yamáni[225] glance the victim lie
My heart is cut to pieces by thy cruelty, * My body wasted and my
patience done to die:
From glances ravishing all hearts with witchery * Reason far
flies, the while desire to thee draws nigh;
Though at thy call should armies fill the face of earth * E'en
now I'd win my wish and worlds in arms defy!"

When Abrizah heard these words, she wept with sore weeping and said to him, "Woe to thee, O Ghazban! How dareth the like of thee to address me such demand, O base born and obscene bred? Dost thou deem all folk are alike?" When the vile slave heard this from her, he waxt more enraged and his eyes grew redder: and he came up to her and smiting her with the sword on her neck wounded her to the death. Then he drove her horse before him with the treasure and made off with himself to the mountains. Such was the case with Al-Ghazban; but as regards Abrizah, she gave birth to a son, like the moon, and Marjanah took the babe and did him the necessary offices and laid him by his mother's side; and lo and behold! the child fastened to its mother's breast and she dying.[226] When Marjanah saw this, she cried out with a grievous cry and rent her raiment and cast dust on her head and buffeted her cheeks till blood flowed, saying, "Alas, my mistress! Alas, the pity of it! Thou art dead by the hand of a worthless black slave, after all thy knightly prowess!" And she ceased not weeping when suddenly a great cloud of dust arose and walled the horizon;[227] but, after awhile, it lifted and discovered a numerous conquering host. Now this was the army of King Hardub, Princess Abrizah's father, and the cause of his coming was that when he heard of his daughter and her handmaids having fled to Baghdad, and that they were with King Omar bin al- Nu'uman, he had come forth, leading those with him, to seek tidings of her from travellers who might have seen her with the King. When he had gone a single day's march from his capital, he espied three horse men afar off and made towards them, intending to ask whence they came and seek news of his daughter. Now these three whom he saw at a distance were his daughter and Marjanah and the slave Al- Ghazban; and he made for them to push inquiry. Seeing this the villain blackamoor feared for himself; so he killed Abrizah and fled for his life. When they came up, King Hardub saw his daughter lying dead and Marjanah weeping over her, and he threw himself from his steed and fell fainting to the ground. All the riders of his company, the Emirs and Waxirs, took foot and forth right pitched their tents on the mountain and set up for the King a great pavilion, domed and circular, without which stood the grandees of the realm. When Marjanah saw her master, she at once recognized him and her tears redoubled; and, when he came to himself, he questioned her and she told him all that had passed and said, "Of a truth he that hath slain thy daughter is a black slave belonging to King Omar bin al- Nu'uman, and she informed him how Sharrkan's father had dealt with the Princess. When King Hardub heard this, the world grew black in his sight and he wept with sore weeping. Then he called for a litter and, therein laying his dead daughter, returned to Caesarea and carried her into the palace, where he went in to his mother, Zat al-Dawahi, and said to that Lady of Calamities, "Shall the Moslems deal thus with my girl? Verily King Omar bin al-Nu'uman despoiled her of her honour by force, and after this, one of his black slaves slew her. By the truth of the Messiah, I will assuredly take blood revenge for my daughter and clear away from mine honour the stain of shame; else will I kill myself with mine own hand!" And he wept passing sore. Quoth his mother, "None other than Marjanah killed thy daughter, for she hated her in secret;" and she continued to her son, "Fret not for taking the blood wit of thy daughter, for, by the truth of the Messiah, I will not turn back from King Omar bin al- Nu'uman till I have slain him and his sons; and of a very truth I will do with him a deed, passing the power of Sage and Knight, whereof the chroniclers shall tell chronicles in all countries and in every place: but needs must thou do my bidding in all I shall direct, for whoso be firmly set on the object of his desire shall surely compass his desire." "By the virtue of the Messiah," replied he, "I will not cross thee in aught thou shalt say." Then quoth she, "Bring me a number of hand maids, high bosomed virgins, and summon the wise men of the age and let them teach them philosophy and the rules of behaviour before Kings, and the art of conversation and making verses; and let them talk with them of all manner science and edifying knowledge. And the sages must be Moslems, that they may teach them the language and traditions of the Arabs, together with the history of the Caliphs and the ancient annals of the Kings of Al-Islam; and if we persevere in this for four years' space, we shall gain our case. So possess thy soul in patience and wait; for one of the Arabs saith, 'If we take man bote after years forty the time were short to ye.' When we have taught the girls these things, we shall be able to work our will with our foe, for he doteth on women and he hath three hundred and sixty concubines, whereto are now added an hundred of the flowers of thy handmaidens who were with thy daughter, she that hath found mercy.[228] As soon as I have made an end of their education, as described to thee, I will take them and set out with them in person." When King Hardub heard his mother's words, he rejoiced and arose and kissed her head; and at once despatched messengers and couriers to lands sundry and manifold to fetch him Moslem sages. They obeyed his commands and fared to far countries and thence brought him the sages and the doctors he sought. When these came into presence, he honoured them with notable honorurs and bestowed dresses on them and appointed to them stipends and allowances and promised them much money whenas they should have taught the damsels. Then he committed the handmaidens to their hands — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

When it was the Fifty-third Night.

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the sages and the doctors stood in presence of King Hardub, he honoured them with notable honours and committed the hand maidens to their hands, enjoining that these be instructed in all manner of knowledge, philosophy and polite accomplishments; and they set themselves to do his bidding. Such was the case with King Hardub; but as for King Omar bin al Nu'uman, when he returned from coursing and hunting and entered his palace, he sought Princess Abrizah but found her not, nor any one knew of her nor could any give him news of her. This was grievous to him and he said, "How could the lady leave the palace unknown of any? Had my kingdom been at stake in this case, it were in perilous condition there being none to govern it! I will never again go to sport and hunt till I have stationed at the gates those who shall keep good guard over them!" And he was sore vexed and his breast was straitened for the loss of Princess Abrizah. Hereupon behold, his son Sharrkan returned from his journey; and the father told him what had happened, and informed him how the lady had fled, whilst he was chasing and hunting, whereat he grieved with exceeding grief. Then King Omar took to visiting his children every day and making much of them and brought them learned men and doctors to teach them, appointing for them stipends. When Sharrkan saw this, he raged with exceeding rage and envied thereupon his brother and sister till the signs of chagrin appeared in his face and he ceased not to languish by reason of this matter: so one day his father said to him, "Why do I see thee grown weak in body and yellow of face?" "O my father," replied Sharrkan, "every time I see thee fondle my brother and sister and make much of them, jealousy seizeth on me, and I fear lest it grow on me till I slay them and thou slay me in return. And this is the reason of my weakness of body and change of complexion. But now I crave of thy favour that thou give me one of thy castles outlying the rest, that I may abide there the remnant of my life, for as the sayer of bywords saith, 'Absence from my friend is better and fitter for me'; and, 'Whatso eye doth not perceive, that garreth not heart to grieve.'" And he bowed his head towards the ground. When King Omar bin al-Nu'uman heard his words and knew the cause of his ailment and of his being broken down, he soothed his heart and said to him, "O my son, I grant thee this and I have not in my reign a greater than the Castle of Damascus, and the government of it is thine from this time." Thereupon he forthright summoned his secretaries of state and bade them write Sharrkan's patent of investiture to the viceroyalty of Damascus of Syria. And when they had written it, he equipped him and sent with him the Wazir Dandan, and invested him with the rule and government and gave him instructions as to policy and regulations; and took leave of him, and the grandees and officers of state did likewise, and he set out with his host. When he arrived at Damascus, the townspeople beat the drums and blew the trumpets and decorated the city and came out to meet him in great state; whilst all the notables and grandees paced in procession, and those who stood to the right of the throne walked on his right flank, and the others to the left. Thus far concerning Sharrkan; but as regards his father, Omar bin al- Nu'uman, soon after the departure of his son, the children's tutors and governors presented themselves before him and said to him, "O our lord, thy children have now learnt knowledge and they are completely versed in the rules of manners and the etiquette of ceremony." The King rejoiced thereat with exceeding joy and conferred bountiful largesse upon the learned men, seeing Zau al-Makan grown up and flourishing and skilled in horsemanship. The Prince had reached the age of fourteen and he occupied himself with piety and prayers, loving the poor, the Olema and the Koran students, so that all the people of Baghdad loved him, men and women. One day, the procession of the Mahmil[229] of Irák passed round Baghdad before its departure for the pilgrimage to Meccah and visitation of the tomb of the Prophet (whom Allah bless and preserve!). When Zau al-Makan the Mahmil procession he was seized with longing desire to become a pilgrim,[230] so he went in to his sire and said, "I come to ask thy leave to make the pilgrimage." But his father forbade him saying, "Wait till next year and I will go and thou too." When the Prince saw that the matter was postponed, he betook himself to his sister Nuzhat al-Zaman, whom he found standing at prayer. As soon as she had ended her devotions he said to her, "I am dying with desire of pilgrimage to the Holy House of Allah at Meccah and to visit the tomb of the Prophet, upon whom be peace! I asked my father's leave, but he forbade me that, so I mean to take privily somewhat of money and set out on the pilgrimage without his knowledge." "Allah upon thee," exclaimed she, "take me with thee and deprive me not of visitation to the tomb of the Prophet, whom Allah bless and keep!" And he answered, "As soon as it is dark night, do thou come forth from this place, without telling any." Accordingly,When it was the middle of the night she arose and took somewhat of money and donned a man's habit; and she ceased not walking to the palace gate, where she found Zau al-Makan with camels ready for marching. So he mounted and mounted her; and the two fared on till they were in the midst of the Iraki[231] pilgrim-party, and they ceased not marching and Allah wrote safety for them, till they entered Meccah the Holy and stood upon Arafát and performed the pilgrimage rites. Then they made a visitation to the tomb of the Prophet (whom Allah bless and assain!) and thought to return with the pilgrims to their native land. But Zau al-Makan said to his sister, "O my sister, it is in my mind to visit the Holy House,[232] Jerusalem, and Abraham the Friend of Allah[233] (on whom be peace!)." "I also desire so to do," replied she. So they agreed upon this and he fared forth and took passage for himself and her and they made ready and set out in the ship with a company of Jerusalem palmers. That very night the sister fell sick of an aguish chill, and was grievously ill but presently recovered, after which the brother also sickened. She tended him during his malady and they ceased not wayfaring till they arrived at Jerusalem, but the fever increased on him and he grew weaker and weaker. They alighted at a Khan and there hired a lodging; but Zau al- Makan's sickness ceased not to increase on him, till he was wasted with leanness and became delirious. At this, his sister was greatly afflicted and exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! This is the decree of Allah!" They sojourned in that place awhile, his weakness ever increasing and she attending him and buying necessaries for him and for herself, till all the money she had was expended and she became so poor that she had not so much as a dirham left. Then she sent a servant of the Khan to the bazar with some of her clothes, and he sold them and she spent the price upon her brother; then sold she something more and she ceased not selling all she had, piece by piece, till nothing was left but an old rug. Whereupon she wept and exclaimed, "Verily is Allah the Orderer of the past and the future!" Presently her brother said to her, "O my sister, I feel recovery drawing near and my heart longeth for a little roast meat." "By Allah! O my brother," replied she, "I have no face to beg; but tomorrow I will enter some rich man's house and serve him and earn somewhat for our living." Then she bethought herself awhile and said, "Of a truth 'tis hard for me to leave thee and thou in this state, but I must despite myself!" He rejoined, "Allah forbid! Thou wilt be put to shame; but there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah!" And he wept and she wept too. Then she said, "O my brother, we are strangers who have dwelt here a full year, but none hath yet knocked at our door. Shall we then die of hunger? I know no resource but that I go out and do service and earn somewhat to keep us alive, till thou recover from thy sickness, when we will travel back to our native land." She sat weeping awhile and he wept too, propped upon his elbow. Then Nuzhat al-Zaman arose and, veiling her head with a bit of camlet,[234] which had been of the cameleer's clothes and which the owner had forgotten and left with them; she kissed the head of her brother and embraced him and went forth from him, weeping and knowing not whither she should wend. And she stinted not going and her brother Zau al-Makan awaiting her return till the supper time; but she came not, and he watched for her till the morning morrowed but still she returned not; and this endured till two days went by. He was greatly troubled thereat and his heart fluttered for her, and hunger was sore upon him. At last he left the chamber and, calling the servant of the caravanserai, said, "I wish thee to bear me to the bazar." So he carried him to the market street and laid him down there; and the people of Jerusalem gathered round him and were moved to tears seeing his condition. He signed to them begging for somewhat to eat; so they brought him some money from certain of the merchants who were in the bazar, and bought food and fed him therewith; after which they carried him to a shop, where they spread him a mat of palm leaves and set an ewer of water at his head. When night fell, all the folk went away, sore concerned for him and, in the middle of the night, he called to mind his sister and his sickness redoubled on him, so that he abstained from eating and drinking and became insensible to the world around him. Then the bazar people arose and took for him from the merchants thirty seven dirhams, and hiring a camel, said to the driver, “Carry this sick man to Damascus and leave him in the hospital; haply he may be cured and recover health.” “On my head be it!” replied the camel man; but he said to himself, “How shall I take this sick man to Damascus, and he nigh upon death?” So he carried him away to a place and hid with him till the night, when he threw him down on the ash heap near the fire hole of a Hammam and went his way. When morning dawned the Stoker[235] of the bath came to his work and, finding Zau al-Makan cast on his back, exclaimed, “Why did they not throw their dead body anywhere but here?” So saying, he gave him a kick and he moved; whereupon quoth the Fireman, “Some one of you who hath eaten a bit of Hashish and hath thrown himself down in whatso place it be!” Then he looked at his face and saw his hairless cheeks and his grace and comeliness; so he took pity on him and knew that he was sick and a stranger in the land. And he cried, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah! verily, I have sinned against this youth, for indeed the Prophet (whom Allah bless and keep!) enjoineth honour to the stranger, more especially when the stranger is sick.” Then he carried him home and went in with him to his wife and bade her tend him. So she spread him a sleeping rug and set a cushion under his head, then warmed water for him and washed therewith his hands and feet and face. Meanwhile, the Stoker went to the market and bought some rose water and sugar, and sprinkled Zau al-Makan’s face with the water and gave him to drink of the sherbet. Then he fetched a clean shirt and put it on him. With this, Zau al-Makan sniffed the zephyr of health and recovery returned to him; and he sat up and leant against the pillow. Hereat the Fireman rejoiced and exclaimed, “Praise be to Allah for the welfare of this youth! O Allah, I beseech Thee by Thy knowledge of hidden things, that Thou make the salvation of this youth to be at my hands!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Fifty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Fireman exclaimed, “O Allah, I beseech Thee of Thy knowledge of hidden things, that Thou make this young man’s life the work of my hands!” And he ceased not to nurse him for three days, giving him to drink of sherbet of sugar and willow flower water and rose water; and doing him all manner of service and kindness, till health began to return to his body and Zau al-Makan opened his eyes. Presently came in the Fireman and, seeing him sitting up and showing signs of amendment, said to him, “What is now thy state, O my son?” “Praise be to Allah,” replied Zau al-Makan, “I am well and like to recover, if such be the will of Allah Almighty at this time.” The Stoker praised the Lord of All for this and, wending fast to the market, bought ten chickens, which he carried to his wife and said, “Kill two of these for him every day, one at dawn of day and the other at fall of day.” So she rose up and killed a fowl and brought it to him boiled, and fed him with the flesh and made him drink its broth. When he had done eating, she fetched hot water and he washed his hands and lay back upon the pillow, whereupon she covered him up with the coverlet, and he slept till the time of the mid afternoon prayer. Then she arose and killed another fowl and boiled it; after which she cut it up and, bringing it to Zau al-Makan, said, “Eat, O my son!” While he was eating; behold, her husband entered and seeing her feeding him, sat down at his head and said to him, “How is it with thee now, O my son?” “Thanks be to Allah for recovery!” he replied: “may the Almighty requite thee thy kindness to me.” At this the Fireman rejoiced and going out, bought sherbet of violets and rose water and made him drink it. Now the Stoker used to work at the Hammam all day for a wage of five dirhams, whereof he spent every day, for Zau al-Makan, one dirham upon sugar and sherbet of rose water and willow flower water,[236] and another dirham for fowls; and he ceased not to entreat him thus kindly during a whole month, till the traces of illness ceased from him and he was once more sound and whole. Thereupon the Fireman and his wife rejoiced and asked him, “O my son, wilt thou go with me to the bath?”; whereto he answered, “Yes!” So the Stoker went to the bazar and fetched a donkey boy, and he mounted Zau al-Makan on the ass and supported him in the saddle till they came to the bath. Then he made him sit down and seated the donkey boy in the furnace-room and went forth to the market and bought Iote leaves and lupin-flour,[237] with which he returned to the bath and said to Zau al-Makan, “O my master, in Allah’s name, walk in and I will wash thy body.” So they entered the inner room of the bath, and the Fireman took to rubbing Zau al-Makan’s legs and began to wash his body with the leaves and meal, when there came to them a bathman, whom the bath keeper had sent to Zau al-Makan; and he, seeing the Stoker washing and rubbing him, said, “This is doing injury to the keeper’s rights.” Replied the Fireman, “The master overwhelmeth us with his favours!” Then the bathman proceeded to shave Zau al-Makan’s head, after which he and the Stoker washed themselves and returned to the house, where he clad Zau al-Makan in a shirt of fine stuff and a robe of his own; and gave him a handsome turband and girdle and a light kerchief which he wound about his neck. Meanwhile the Fireman’s wife had killed and cooked two chickens; so, as soon as Zau al-Makan entered and seated himself on the carpet, the husband arose and, dissolving sugar in willow flower water, made him drink of it. Then he brought the food tray and, cutting up the chickens, fed him with the flesh and gave him the broth to drink till he was satisfied; when he washed his hands and praised Allah for recovery, and said to the Fireman, “Thou art he whom the Almighty vouchsafed to me and made the cause of my cure!” “Leave this talk,” replied the other, “and tell us the cause of thy coming to this city and whence thou art. Thy face showeth signs of gentle breeding.” “Tell me first how thou camest to fall in with me,” said Zau al-Makan; “and after I will tell thee my story.” Rejoined the Fireman, “As for that, I found thee lying on the rubbish heap by the door of the fire house, as I went to my work near the morning, and knew not who had thrown thee there. So I carried thee home with me; and this is all my tale.” Quoth Zau al-Makan, “Glory to Him who quickeneth the bones, though they be rotten! Indeed, O my brother, thou hast not done good save to one worthy of it, and thou shalt presently gather its fruitage.” And he added, “But where am I now?” “Thou art in the city of Jerusalem,” replied the Stoker; where upon Zau al-Makan called to mind his strangerhood and remembered his separation from his sister and wept. Then he discovered his secret to the Fireman and told him his story and began repeating,

“In love they bore me further than my force would go, * And for
them made me suffer resurrection throe:
Oh, have compassion, cruel! on this soul of mine * Which, since
ye fared, is pitied by each envious foe;
Nor grudge the tender mercy of one passing glance * My case to
lighten, easing this excess of woe:
Quoth I ‘Heart, bear this loss in patience!’ Patience cried *
‘Take heed! no patience in such plight I’m wont to show.’”

Then he redoubled his weeping, and the Fireman said to him, “Weep not, but rather praise Allah for safety and recovery.” Asked Zau al-Makan, “How far is it hence to Damascus?” Answered the other, “Six days’ journey.” Then quoth Zau al-Makan, “Wilt thou send me thither?” “O my lord,” quoth the Stoker, “how can I allow thee to go alone, and thou a youth and a stranger to boot? If thou would journey to Damascus, I am one who will go with thee; and if my wife will listen to and obey me and accompany me, I will take up my abode there; for it is no light matter to part with thee.” Then said he to his wife, “Wilt thou travel with me to Damascus of Syria or wilt thou abide here, whilst I lead this my lord thither and return to thee? For he is bent upon going to Damascus of Syria and, by Allah, it is hard to me to part with him, and I fear for him from highway men.” Replied she, “I will go with you both;” and he rejoined, “Praised be Allah for accord, and we have said the last word!” Then he rose and selling all his own goods and his wife’s gear, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say,

When it was the Fifty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Fire man and his wife agreed with Zau al-Makan to travel with him Damascus wards. Then the Stoker sold his goods and his wife’s gear and bought a camel and hired an ass for Zau al-Makan; and they set out, and ceased not wayfaring for six days till they reached Damascus. And they arrived there towards eventide; when the Fireman went forth and, as was his wont, bought some meat and drink. They had dwelt but five days in Damascus, when his wife sickened and, after a short illness, was translated to the mercy of Almighty Allah. Her death was a heavy matter to Zau al-Makan, for he was grown used to her as she had tended him assiduously; and the Fireman grieved for her with excessive grief. Presently the Prince turned to the Stoker and finding him mourning, said to him, "Grieve not, for at this gate we must all go in." Replied he, "Allah make weal thy lot, O my son! Surely He will compensate us with His favours and cause our mourning to cease. What sayst thou, O my son, about our walking abroad to view Damascus and cheer thy spirits?" Replied Zau al-Makan, "Thy will is mine." So the Fireman arose and placed his hand in that of Zau al- Makan and the two walked on till they came to the stables of the Viceroy of Damascus, where they found camels laden with chests and carpets and brocaded stuffs, and horses ready saddled and Bactrian dromedaries, while Mamelukes and negro slaves and folk in a hubbub were running to and fro. Quoth Zau al-Makan, "I wonder to whom belong all these chattels and camels and stuffs!" So he asked one of the eunuchs, "Whither this dispatching?'' and he answered, "These are presents sent by the Emir of Damascus to King Omar bin al-Nu'uman, with the tribute of Syria." Now when Zau al-Makan heard his father's name his eyes brimmed over with tears, and he began repeating,

"Oh ye gone from the gaze of these ridded eyne, * Ye whose sight
in my spirit shall ever dwell!
Your charms are gone, but this heart of me * Hath no sweet, and
no pleasures its sour dispel;
If Allah's grace make us meet again, * In long drawn love-tale my
love I'll tell."

And when he had ended his verse, he wept and the Fireman said to him, "O my son, we hardly believed that thy health had returned;[238] so take heart and do not weep, for I fear a relapse for thee." And he ceased not comforting and cheering him, whilst Zau al-Makan sighed and moaned over his strangerhood and separation from his sister and his family; and tears streamed from his eyes and he recited these couplets,

“Get thee provaunt in this world ere thou wend upon thy way, *
And know how surely Death descends thy life lot to waylay:
All thy worldly goods are pride and the painfullest repine; * All
thy worldly life is vexing, of thy soul in vain display:
Say is not worldly wone like a wanderer’s place of rest, * Where
at night he ‘nakhs’[239] his camels and moves off at dawn
of day?”

And he continued to weep and wail over his separation; whilst the Fireman also bewept the loss of his wife, yet ceased not to comfort Zau al-Makan till morning dawned. When the sun rose, he said to him, “Meseemeth thou yearnest for thy native land?” “Yes,” replied Zau al-Makan, “and I can no longer tarry here; so I will commend thee to Allah’s care and set out with these folk and journey with them, little by little, till I come to my mother land.” Said the Stoker, “And I with thee; for of a truth I cannot bear to part with thee. I have done thee kindly service and I mean to complete it by tending thee on thy travel.” At this, Zau al-Makan rejoiced and said, “Allah abundantly requite thee for me!” and was pleased with the idea of their travelling together. The Fireman at once went forth and bought another ass, selling the camel; and laid in his provaunt and said to Zau al-Makan, “This is for thee to ride by the way; and, when thou art weary of riding, thou canst dismount and walk.” Said Zau al-Makan, “May Allah bless thee and aid me to requite thee! for verily thou hast dealt with me more lovingly than one with his brother.” Then he waited till it was dark night, when he laid the provisions and baggage on that ass and set forth upon their journey. This much befel Zau al-Makan and the Fireman; but as regards what happened to his sister Nuzhat al-Zaman, when she left her brother in the Khan where they abode and, wrapped in the old camlet, went out to seek service with some one, that she might earn wherewithal to buy him the roast meat he longed for, she fared on, weeping and knowing not whither to go, whilst her mind was occupied with thoughts of her brother and of her family and her native land. So she implored Allah Almighty to do away with these calamities from them and began versifying,

“Dark falls the night and Passion comes sore pains to gar me

dree, * And pine upstirs those ceaseless pangs which work my tormentry,
And cease not separation flames my vitals to consume, * And drives me on destruction way this sorrow's ecstacy
And longing breeds me restlessness; desire for ever fires, * And tears to all proclaim what I would keep in secrecy
No cunning shift is known to me a meeting to secure, * That I may quit this sickly state, may cure my malady:
The love which blazeth in my heart is fed with fancy fuel, * The lover from its hell of fire must bear Hell's agony![240]
O thou who blamest me for all befel me, 'tis enough, * Patient I bear what ever wrote the Reed of Doom for me:
By Love I swear I'll never be consoled, no, never more; * I swear the oath of Love's own slaves who know no perjury:
O Night, to chroniclers of Love the news of me declare; * That sleep hath fed mine eyelids of thy knowledge witness bear!"

Then she walked on, weeping and turning right and left as she went, when behold, there espied her an old Badawi[241] who had come into the town from the desert with wild Arabs other five. The old man took note of her and saw that she was lovely, but she had nothing on her head save a piece of camlet, and, marvelling at her beauty, he said to himself, "This charmer dazzleth men's wits but she is in squalid condition, and whether she be of the people of this city or she be a stranger, I needs must have her." So he followed her, little by little, till he met her face to face and stopped the way before her in a narrow lane, and called out to her, asking her case, and said, "Tell me, O my little daughter! art thou a free woman or a slave?" When she heard this, she said to him, "By thy life, do not add to my sorrows!" Quoth he, "Allah hath blessed me with six daughters, of whom five died and only one is left me, the youngest of all; and I came to ask thee if thou be of the folk of this city or a stranger; that I might take thee and carry thee to her, to bear her company so as to divert her from pining for her sisters. If thou have no kith and kin, I will make thee as one of them and thou and she shall be as my two children." Nuzhat al-Zaman bowed her head in bashfulness when she heard what he said and communed with herself, "Haply I may trust myself to this old man." Then she said to him, "O nuncle, I am a maiden of the Arabs and a stranger and I have a sick brother; but I will go with thee to thy daughter on one condition, which is, that I may spend only the day with her and at night may return to my brother. If thou strike this bargain I will fare with thee, for I am a stranger and I was high in honour among my tribe, and I awoke one morning to find myself vile and abject. I came with my brother from the land of Al-Hijaz and I fearless he know not where I am." When the Badawi heard this, he said to himself, "By Allah, I have got my desire!" Then he turned to her and replied, "There shall none be dearer to me than thou; I wish thee only to bear my daughter company by day and thou shalt go to thy brother at earliest nightfall. Or, if thou wilt, bring him over to dwell with us." And the Badawi ceased not to console her heart and coax her, till she trusted in him and agreed to serve him. Then he walked on before her and, when she followed him, he winked to his men to go in advance and harness the dromedaries and load them with their packs and place upon them water and provisions, ready for setting out as soon as he should come up with the camels. Now this Badawi was a base born churl, a highway thief and a traitor to the friend he held most fief, a rogue in grain, past master of plots and chicane. He had no daughter and no son and was only passing through the town when, by the decree of the Decreer, he fell in with this unhappy one. And he ceased not to hold her in converse on the highway till they came without the city of Jerusalem and, when outside, he joined his companions and found they had made ready the dromedaries. So the Badawi mounted a camel, having seated Nuzhat al-Zaman behind him and they rode on all night. Then she knew that the Badawi's proposal was a snare and that he had tricked her; and she continued weeping and crying out the whole night long, while they journeyed on making for the mountains, in fear any should see them. Now when it was near dawn, they dismounted from their dromedaries and the Badawi came up to Nuzhat al-Zaman and said to her, "O city strumpet, what is this weeping? By Allah, an thou hold not thy peace, I will beat thee to death, O thou town filth!" When she heard this she loathed life and longed for death; so she turned to him and said, "O accursed old man, O gray beard of hell, how have I trusted thee and thou hast played me false, and now thou wouldst torture me?” When he heard her reply he cried out, “O lazy baggage, dost thou dare to bandy words with me?” And he stood up to her and beat her with a whip, saying, “An thou hold not thy peace, I will kill thee!” So she was silent awhile, then she called to mind her brother and the happy estate she had been in and she shed tears secretly. Next day, she turned to the Badawi and said to him, “How couldst thou play me this trick and lure me into these bald and stony mountains, and what is thy design with me?” When he heard her words he hardened his heart and said to her, “O lazy baggage of ill omen and insolent! wilt thou bandy words with me?” and he took the whip and came down with it on her back till she felt faint. Then she bowed down over his feet and kissed[242] them; and he left beating her and began reviling her and said, “By the rights of my bonnet,[243] if I see or hear thee weeping, I will cut out thy tongue and stuff it up thy coynte, O thou city filth!” So she was silent and made him no reply, for the beating pained her; but sat down with her arms round her knees and, bowing her head upon her collar, began to look into her case and her abasement after her lot of high honour; and the beating she had endured; and she called to mind her brother and his sickness and forlorn condition, and how they were both strangers in a far country, which crave her tears down her cheeks and she wept silently and began repeating,

“Time hath for his wont to upraise and debase, * Nor is lasting
condition for human race:
In this world each thing hath appointed turn; * Nor may man
transgress his determined place:
How long these perils and woes? Ah woe * For a life, all woeful
in parlous case!
Allah bless not the days which have laid me low * I’ the world,
with disgrace after so much grace!
My wish is baffled, my hopes cast down, * And distance forbids me
to greet his face:
O thou who passeth that dear one’s door, * Say for me, these
tears shall flow evermore!”

When she had finished her verses, the Badawi came up to her and, taking compassion on her, bespoke her kindly and wiped away her tears. Then he gave her a barley scone and said, “I love not one who answereth at times when I am in wrath: so henceforth give me no more of these impertinent words and I will sell thee to a good man like myself, who will do well with thee, even as I have done.” “Yes; whatso thou doest is right,” answered she; and when the night was longsome upon her and hunger burnt her, she ate very little of that barley bread. In the middle of the night the Badawi gave orders for departure, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Fifty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Badawi gave the barley scone to Nuzhat al-Zaman and promised he would sell her to a good man like himself, she replied, “Whatso thou doest is right!” and, about midnight when hunger burned her,[244] she ate a very little of that barley bread and the Badawi ordered his party to set out; so they loaded their loads and he mounted a camel setting Nuzhat al-Zaman behind him. Then they journeyed and ceased not journeying for three days, till they entered the city of Damascus and alighted at the Sultan’s Khan, hard by the Viceroy’s Gate. Now she had lost her colour by grief and the fatigue of such travelling, and she ceased not to weep over her misfortunes. So the Badawi came up to her and said, “O thou city filth, by the right of my bonnet, if thou leave not this weeping, I will sell thee to none but a Jew!” Then he arose and took her by the hand and carried her to a chamber, and walked off to the bazar, and he went round to, the merchants who dealt in slave girls, and began to parley with them, saying, “I have brought a slave girl whose brother fell ill, and I sent him to my people about Jerusalem, that they might tend him till he is cured. As for her I want to sell her, but after the dog her brother fell sick, the separation from him was grievous to her, and since then she doth nothing but weep, and now I wish that whoso is minded to buy her of me speak softly to her and say, ‘Thy brother is with me in Jerusalem ill’; and I will be easy with him about her price.” Then one of the merchants came up to him and asked, “How old is she?” He answered “She is a virgin, just come to marriageable age, and she is endowed with sense and breeding and wit and beauty and loveliness. But from the day I sent her brother to Jerusalem, her heart hath been yearning for him, so that her beauty is fallen away and her value lessened." Now when the merchant heard this, he set forth with the Badawi and said, "O Shaykh[245] of the Arabs, I will go with thee and buy of thee this girl whom thou praisest so highly for wit and manners and beauty and loveliness; and I will pay thee her price but it must be upon conditions which if thou accept, I will give thee ready money, and if thou accept not I will return her to thee." Quoth the Badawi, "An thou wilt, take her up to the Sultan Sharrkan, son of Omar bin al-Nu'uman lord of Baghdad and of the land of Khorasan, and condition me any conditions thou likest, for when thou hast brought her before King Sharrkan, haply she will please him, and he will pay thee her price and a good profit for thyself to boot." Rejoined the merchant, "It happens that I have just now something to ask from him, and it is this that he write me an order upon the office, exempting me from custom dues and also that he write me a letter of recommendation to his father, King Omar bin al-Nu'uman. So if he take the girl, I will weigh[246] thee out her price at once." "I agree with thee to this condition," answered the Badawi. So they returned together to the place where Nuzhat al-Zaman was and the wild Arab stood at the chamber door and called out, saying, "O Nájiyah[247] !" which was the name wherewith he had named her. When she heard him, she wept and made no answer. Then he turned to the merchant and said to him, "There she sitteth; go to her and look at her and speak to her kindly as I enjoined thee." So the trader went up to her in courteous wise and saw that she was wondrous beautiful and loveable, especially as she knew the Arabic tongue; and he said to the Badawi, "If she be even as thou saddest, I shall get of the Sultan what I will for her." Then he bespake her, "Peace be on thee, my little maid! How art thou?" She turned to him and replied, "This also was registered in the Book of Destiny." Then she looked at him and, seeing him to be a man of respectable semblance with a handsome face, she said to herself, "I believe this one cometh to buy me;" and she continued, "If I hold aloof from him, I shall abide with my tyrant and he will do me to death with beating. In any case, this person is handsome of face and maketh me hope for better treatment from him than from my brute of a Badawi. May be he cometh only to hear me talk; so I will give him a fair answer." All this while her eyes were fixed on the ground; then she raised them to him and said in a sweet voice, "And upon thee be peace, O my lord, and Allah's mercy and His benediction![248] This is what is commanded of the Prophet, whom Allah bless and preserve! As for thine enquiry how I am, if thou wouldst know my case, it is such as thou wouldst not wish but to thy foe." And she held her peace. When the merchant heard what she said, his fancy took wings for delight in her and, turning to the Badawi, he asked him, "What is her price, for indeed she is noble?" Thereupon the Badawi waxed angry and answered, "Thou wilt turn me the girl's head with this talk! Why dost thou say that she is noble,[249] while she is of the scum of slave girls and of the refuse of folk? I will not sell her to thee!" When the merchant heard this, he knew the man to be weak of wits and said to him, "Calm thyself, for I will buy her of thee with these blemishes thou mentionest." "And how much wilt thou give me for her?" enquired the Badawi. Replied the merchant, "Name thy price for her: none should name the son save his sire." Rejoined the Badawi, "None shall name it but thou thyself." Quoth the merchant to himself, "This wildling is a rudesby and a maggotty head. By Allah, I cannot tell her price, for she hath won my heart with her fair speech and good looks; and, if she can read and write, it will be complete fair luck to her and to her purchaser. But this Badawi does not know her worth." Then he turned and said to him, "O Shaykh of the Arabs, I will give thee in ready money, clear of the tax and the Sultan's dues, two hundred gold pieces." Now when the Badawi heard this, he flew into a violent rage and cried at the merchant, saying, "Get up and go thy ways! By Allah, wert thou to offer me two hundred diners for the bit of camlet she weareth, I would not sell it to thee. And now I will not sell her, but will keep her by me, to pasture the camels and grind my grist." And he cried out to her, saying, "Come here, thou stinkard! I will not sell thee." Then he turned to the merchant and said to him, "I used to think thee a man of judgment; but, by the right of my bonnet, if thou begone not from me, I will let thee hear what shall not please thee!" Quoth the merchant to himself, "Of a truth this Badawi is mad and knoweth not her value, and I will say no more to him about her price at the present time; for by Allah, were he a man of sense, he would not say, 'By the rights of my bonnet!' By the Almighty, she is worth the kingdom of the Chosroës and I have not her price by me, but if he ask even more, I will give him what he will, though it be all my goods." Then he turned and said to him, "O Shaykh of the Arabs, take patience and calm thyself and tell me what clothes she hath with thee?" Cried the Badawi, "And what hath the baggage to do with clothes? By Allah, this camlet in which she is wrapped is ample for her." "With thy leave," said the merchant, "I will unveil her face and examine her even as folk examine slave girls whom they think of buying."[250] Replied the other, "Up and do what thou wilt and Allah keep thy youth! Examine her outside and inside and, if thou wilt, strip off her clothes and look at her when she is naked." Quoth the trader, "Allah forfend! I will look at naught save her face."[251] Then he went up to her and was put to shame by her beauty and loveliness, — And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Fifty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the merchant went up to Nuzhat al-Zaman and was put to shame by her beauty and loveliness, so he sat by her side and asked her, "O my mistress, what is thy name?" She answered, "Doss thou ask what is my name this day or what it was before this day?" Thereupon the merchant enquired, "Hast thou then two names: to day's and yesterday's?" "Yes," replied she, "my name in the past was Nuzhat al-Zaman, the Delight of the Age; but my name at this present is Ghussat[252] al-Zaman, the Despight of the Age." When the merchant heard this his eyes brimmed over with tears and quoth he to her, "Hast thou not a sick brother?" "Ay by Allah, O my lord, I have," quoth she, "but fortune hath parted me and him and he lieth sick in Jerusalem." The merchant's head was confounded at the sweetness of her speech and he said to himself, "Verily, the Badawi spake the truth of her." Then she called to mind her brother and his sickness and his strangerhood and her separation from him in his hour of weakness and her not knowing what had befallen him; and she thought of all that had happened to her with the Badawi and of her severance from her mother and father and native land; and the tears coursed down her cheeks and fast as they started they dropped; and she began reciting,

“Allah, where’er thou be, His aid impart * To thee, who distant
dwellest in my heart!
Allah be near thee how so far thou fare; * Ward off all shifts of
Time, all dangers thwart!
Mine eyes are desolate for thy vanisht sight, * And start my
tears-ah me, how fast they start!
Would Heaven I kenned what quarter or what land * Homes thee, and
in what house and tribe thou art
An fount of life thou drain in greenth of rose, * While drink I
tear drops for my sole desert?
An thou ‘joy slumber in those hours, when I * Peel ‘twixt my side
and couch coals’ burning smart?
All things were easy save to part from thee, * For my sad heart
this grief is hard to dree.”

When the merchant heard her verses, he wept and put out his hand to wipe away the tears from her cheeks; but she let down her veil over her face, saying, “Heaven forbid, O my lord!’’[253] Then the Badawi, who was sitting at a little distance watching them, saw her cover her face from the merchant while about to wipe the tears from her cheeks; and he concluded that she would have hindered him from handling her: so he rose and running to her, dealt her, with a camel’s halter he had in his hand, such a blow on the shoulders that she fell to the ground on her face. Her eyebrow struck a stone which cut it open, and the blood streamed down her cheeks; whereupon she screamed a loud scream and felt faint and wept bitterly. The merchant was moved to tears for her and said in himself, “There is no help for it but that I buy this damsel, though at her weight in gold, and free her from this tyrant.” And he began to revile the Badawi whilst Nazhat al- Zaman lay in sensible. When she came to herself, she wiped away the tears and blood from her face; and she bound up her head: then, raising her glance to heaven, she besought her Lord with a sorrowful heart and began repeating,

“And pity one who erst in honour throve, * And now is fallen into sore disgrace.
She weeps and bathes her cheeks with railing tears, * And asks ‘What cure can meet this fatal case?’”

When she had ended her verse, she turned to the merchant and said in an undertone, “By the Almighty, do not leave me with a tyrant who knoweth not Allah the Most High! If I pass this night in his place, I shall kill myself with my own hand: save me from him, so Allah save thee from Gehenna-fire.” Then quoth the merchant to the Badawi, “O Shaykh of the Arabs, this slave is none of thine affair; so do thou sell her to me for what thou wilt.” “Take her,” quoth the Badawi, “and pay me down her price, or I will carry her back to the camp and there set her to feed the camels and gather their dung.”[254] Said the merchant, “I will give thee fifty thousand diners for her.” “Allah will open!”[255] replied the Badawi. “Seventy thousand,” said the merchant. “Allah will open!” repeated the Badawi: “this is not the capital spent upon her, for she hath eaten with me barley bread to the value of ninety thousand gold pieces.” The merchant rejoined, “Thou and thine and all thy tribe in the length of your lives have not eaten a thousand ducats’ worth of barley; but I will say thee one word, wherewith if thou be not satisfied, I will set the Viceroy of Damascus on thee and he will take her from thee by force.” The Badawi continued, “Say on!” “An hundred thousand,” quoth the merchant. “I have sold her to thee at that price,” answered the Badawi; “I shall be able to buy salt with her.” The merchant laughed and, going to his lodgings, brought the money and put it into the hand of the Badawi, who took it and made off, saying to himself, “Needs must I go to Jerusalem where, haply, I shall happen on her brother, and I will bring him here and sell him also.” So he mounted and journeyed till he arrived at Jerusalem, where he went to the Khan and asked for Zau al-Makan, but could not find him. Such was the case with him; but for what regards the merchant and Nazhat al-Zaman, when he took her he threw some of his clothes over her and carried her to his lodgings, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Fifty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the trader saved Nuzhat al-Zaman from the Badawi and bore her to his lodgings and robed her in the richest raiment, he went down with her to the bazar, where he bought her what ornaments she chose and put them in a satin bag, which he set before her, saying, “All is for thee and I ask nothing of thee in return but that, when I lead thee to the Sultan, Viceroy of Damascus, thou acquaint him with the price I paid for thee, albeit it was little compared with thy value: and, if seeing thee he buy thee of me, thou tell him how I have dealt with thee and ask of him for me a royal patent, and a written recommendation wherewith I can repair to his father, King Omar bin al-Nu’uman, Lord of Baghdad, to the intent that he may forbid the tax on my stuffs or any other goods in which I traffic.” When she heard his words, she wept and sobbed, and the merchant said to her, “O my lady, I observe that, every time I mention Baghdad, thine eyes are tearful: is there any one there whom thou lovest? If it be a trader or the like, tell me; for I know all the merchants and so forth there and, if thou wouldst send him a message, I will bear it for thee.” Replied she, “By Allah, I have no acquaintance among merchant folk and the like! I know none there but King Omar bin Nu’uman, Lord of Baghdad.” When the merchant heard her words, he laughed and rejoiced with exceeding joy and said in himself, “By Allah, I have won my wish!” Then he said to her, “Hast thou been shown to him in time past?” She answered, “No, but I was brought up with his daughter and he holdeth me dear and I have high honour with him; so if thou wouldst have the King grant thee thy desire, give me ink case and paper and I will write thee a letter; and when thou reachest the city of Baghdad, do thou deliver it into the hand of King Omar bin al-Nu’uman and say to him, ‘Thy handmaid, Nuzhat al-Zaman, would have thee to know that the chances and changes of the nights and days have struck her as with a hammer, and have smitten her so that she hath been sold from place to place, and she sendeth thee her salams.’ And, if he ask further of her, say that I am now with the Viceroy at Damascus.” The merchant wondered at her eloquence, and his affection for her increased and he said to her I cannot but think that men have played upon thine understanding and sold thee for money.

Tell me, dost thou know the Koran by heart?” “Yes,” answered she; “and I am also acquainted with philosophy and medicine and the prolegomena of science and the commentaries of Galen, the physician, on the canons of Hippocrates; and I have commented him and I have read the Tazkirah and have commented the Burhán; and I have studied the Simples of Ibn Baytár, and I have something to say of the canon of Meccah, by Avicenna. I can ree riddles and can solve ambiguities, and discourse upon geometry and am skilled in anatomy I have read the books of the Sháfi’í[256] school and the Traditions of the Prophet and syntax; and I can argue with the Olema and discourse of all manner learning. Moreover I am skilled in logic and rhetoric and arithmetic and the making of talismans and almanacs, and I know thoroughly the Spiritual Sciences[257] and the times appointed for religious duties and I understand all these branches of knowledge.” Then quoth she to the merchant, “Bring me ink case and paper, that I write thee a letter which shall aid thee on thy journey to Baghdad and enable thee to do without passports.” Now when the merchant heard this, he cried out “Brava! Brava![258] Then O happy he in whose palace thou shalt! Thereupon he brought her paper and ink case and a pen of brass and bussed the earth before her face to do her honour. She took a sheet and handled the reed and wrote therewith these verses,

“I see all power of sleep from eyes of me hath flown; * Say, did
thy parting teach these eyne on wake to wone?
What makes thy memory light such burnings in my heart? * Hath
every lover strength such memories to own?
How sweet the big dropped cloud which rained on summer day; *
’Tis gone and ere I taste its sweets afar ’tis flown:
I pray the wind with windy breath to bring some news * From thee,
to lover wightwi’ love so woe begone
Complains to thee a lover of all hope forlorn, * For parting
pangs can break not only heart but stone.”

And when she had ended writing the verses she continued, “These words are from her who saith that melancholy destroyeth her and that watching wasteth her; in the murk of whose night is found no light and darkness and day are the same in her sight. She tosseth on the couch of separation and her eyes are blackened with the pencils of sleeplessness; she watcheth the stars arise and into the gloom she strains her eyes: verily, sadness and leanness have consumed her strength and the setting forth of her case would run to length. No helper hath she but tears and she reciteth these verses,

'No ring dove moans from home on branch in morning light, * But
shakes my very frame with sorrow's killing might:
No lover sigheth for his love or gladdeth heart * To meet his
mate, but breeds in me redoubled blight
I bear my plaint to one who has no ruth for me, * Ah me, how Love
can part man's mortal frame and sprite!'"

Then her eyes welled over with tears, and she wrote also these two couplets,

"Love smote my frame so sore on parting day, * That severance
severed sleep and eyes for aye.
I waxt so lean that I am still a man, * But for my speaking, thou
wouldst never say."

Then she shed tears and wrote at the foot of the sheet, "This cometh from her who is far from her folk and her native land, the sorrowful hearted woman Nuzhat al-Zaman." In fine, she folded the sheet and gave it to the merchant, who took it and kissed it and understood its contents and exclaimed, "Glory to Him who fashioned thee!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Fifty-ninth Night,

She said, It reached me, O auspicious King, that Nuzhat al-Zaman wrote the letter and gave it to the merchant; and he took it and read it and understood the contents and exclaimed, "Glory to Him who fashioned thee!" Then he redoubled his kindness and made himself pleasant to her all that day, and when night came he sallied out to the bazar and bought some food, wherewith he fed her; after which he carried her to the Hammam and said to the bath woman, "As soon as thou hast made an end of washing her head, dress her and send and let me know of it." And she replied "Hearing is obeying." Meanwhile he fetched food and fruit and wax candles and set them on the bench in the outer room of the bath; and when the tire woman had done washing her, she dressed her and led her out of the bath and seated her on the bench. Then she sent to tell the merchant, and Nuzhat al-Zaman went forth to the outer room, where she found the tray spread with food and fruit. So she ate and the tire woman with her, and gave the rest to the people and keeper of the bath. Then she slept till the morning, and the merchant lay the night in a place apart from her. When he aroused himself from sleep he came to her and waking her, presented her with a shift of fine stuff and a head kerchief worth a thousand diners, a suit of Turkish embroidery and walking boots purfled with red gold and set with pearls and gems. Moreover, he hung in each of her ears a circlet of gold with a fine pearl therein, worth a thousand diners, and threw round her neck a collar of gold with bosses of garnet and a chain of amber beads that hung down between her breasts over her navel. Now to this chain were attached ten balls and nine crescents, and each crescent had in its midst a bezel of ruby, and each ball a bezel of balass: the value of the chain was three thousand diners and each of the balls was priced at twenty thousand dirhams, so that the dress she wore was worth in all a great sum of money. When she had put these on, the merchant bade her adorn herself, and she adorned herself to the utmost beauty; then she let fall her fillet over her eyes and she fared forth with the merchant preceding her. But when folk saw her, all wondered at her beauty and exclaimed, "Blessed be Allah, the most excellent Creator! O lucky the man in whose house the hall be!" And the trader ceased not walking (and she behind him) till they entered the palace of Sultan Sharrkan; when he sought an audience and, kissing the earth between his hands, said, "O auspicious King, I have brought thee a rare gift, unmatched in this time and richly gifted with beauty and with good qualities." Quoth the King, "Let me see it." So the merchant went out and brought her, she following him till he made her stand before King Sharrkan. When he beheld her, blood yearned to blood, though she had been parted from him in childhood and though he had never seen her, having only heard a long time after her birth that he had a sister called Nuzhat al- Zaman and a brother Zau al-Makan, he having been jealous of them, because of the succession. And such was the cause of his knowing little about them. Then, having placed her before the presence, the merchant said, "O King of the age, besides being peerless in her time and beauty and loveliness, she is also versed in all learning, sacred and profane, including the art of government and the abstract sciences." Quoth the King to the trader, "Take her price, according as thou boughtest her, and go thy ways." "I hear and I obey," replied the merchant; "but first write me a patent, exempting me for ever from paying tithe on my merchandise." Said the King, "I will do this, but first tell me what price thou paidest for her." Said the merchant, "I bought her for an hundred thousand diners, and her clothes cost me another hundred thousand." When the Sultan heard these words, he declared, "I will give thee a higher price than this for her;" and, calling his treasurer, said to him, "Pay this merchant three hundred and twenty thousand ducats; so will he have an hundred and twenty thousand diners profit." Thereupon the Sultan summoned the four Kazis and paid him the money in their presence and then he said, "I call you to witness that I free this my slave girl and purpose to marry her." So the Kazis wrote out the deed of emancipation and the contract of marriage, when the Sultan scattered much gold on the heads of those present; and the pages and the eunuchs picked up this largesse. Then, after paying him his monies, Sharrkan bade them write for the merchant a perpetual patent, exempting him from toll, tax or tithe upon his merchandise and forbidding each and every in all his government to molest him, and lastly bestowed on him a splendid dress of honour. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Sixtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that King Sharrkan bade them write for the merchant a mandate, after paying him his monies; and they wrote a perpetual patent, exempting him from the tithe upon his merchandise and forbidding any in his government to molest him; and lastly bestowed upon him a splendid dress of honour. Then all about him retired, and none remained save the Kazis and the merchant, whereupon said he to the judges, "I wish you to hear such discourse from this damsel as may prove her knowledge and accomplishments in all aimed for her by this trader, that we ascertain the truth of his assertions.” They answered, “There is no evil in that!”; and he commanded the curtain to be let down between him and those with him and the maiden and those with her; and the women about the damsel behind the curtains began to wish her joy and kiss her hands and feet, when they learned that she was become the King’s wife. Then they came round her and took off her dresses easing her of the weight of her clothes and began to look upon her beauty and loveliness. Presently the wives of the Emirs and Wazirs heard that King Sharrkan had bought a hand maiden unmatched for her beauty and learning and philosophy and account keeping, and versed in all branches of knowledge, that he had paid for her three hundred and twenty thousand dinars, and that he had set her free and had written a marriage contract with her and had summoned the four Kazis to make trial of her, how she would answer all their questions and hold disputetion with them. So they asked leave of their husbands and repaired to the palace wherein was Nuzhat al- Zaman. When they came in to her, they found the eunuchs standing before her; and, as soon as she saw the wives of the Emirs and Wazirs and Grandees of the realm coming to call upon her, she arose to them on her feet and met them with courtesy, her handmaidens standing behind her, and she received them saying, “Ye be welcome!” The while she smiled in their faces so as to win their hearts; and she promised them all manner of good and seated them in their proper stations, as if she had been brought up with them; so all wondered at her beauty and loveliness and said to one another, “This damsel is none other than a Queen, the daughter of a King.” Then they sat down, magnifying her worth and said to her, “O our lady, this our city is illumined by thee, and our country and abode and birth place and reign are honoured by thy presence. The kingdom indeed is thy kingdom and the palace is thy palace, and we all are thy handmaids; so, by Allah, do not shut us out from thy favours and the sight of thy beauty.” And she thanked them for this. All this while the curtains were let down between Nuzhat al-Zaman and the women with her, on the one side, and King Sharrkan and the four Kazis and the merchant seated by him on the other. Presently King Sharrkan called to her and said, “O Queen, the glory of thine age, this merchant hath described thee as being learned and accomplished; and he claimeth that thou art skilled in all branches of knowledge, even to astrology: so let us hear something of all this he hath mentioned, and favour us with a short discourse on such subjects.” She replied, saying: “O King, to hear is to obey.[259] The first subjects whereof I will treat are the art of government and the duties of Kings and what behoveth governors of command meets according to religious law, and what is incumbent on them in respect of satisfactory speech and manners. Know then, O King, that all men’s works tend either to religious or to laical life, for none attaineth to religion save through this world, because it is the best road to futurity. Now the works of this world are not ordered save by the doings of its people, and men’s doings are divided into four divisions, government, commerce, husbandry and craftsmanship. Now government requireth perfect administration with just and true judgment; for government is the pivot of the edifice of the world, which world is the road to futurity; since Allah Almighty hath made the world for His servants as viaticum to the traveller for the attainment of his goal; and it befitteth each man that he receive of it such measure as shall bring him to Allah, and that he follow not herein his own mind and his individual lust. If folk would take of worldly goods with justice and equity, all cause of contention would be cut off; but they take thereof with violence ant after their own desires, and their persistence therein giveth rise to contentions; so they have need of the Sultan, that he do justice between them and order their affairs; and, if the King restrain not his folk from one another, the strong will drive the weak to the wall. Hence Ardeshir[260] saith, ‘Religion and Kingship be twins’; religion is a hidden treasure and the King is its keeper; and the Divine Ordinances and men’s intelligence point out that it behoveth the people to adopt a Sultan who shall withhold oppressor from oppressed and do the weak justice against the strong and restrain the violence of the proud and the rebels against rule. For know, O King, that according to the measure of the Sultan’s good morals, even so will be the time; as saith the Apostle of Allah (on whom be peace and salvation!), ‘There be two classes who, if they be good, the people will be good; and if they be bad, the people will be bad, even the Olema and the Emirs.’ And it is said by a certain sage, ‘There be three kinds of Kings, the King of the Faith, the King who protecteth things to which reverence is due, and the King of his own lusts.’ The King of the Faith obligeth his subjects to follow their faith, and it behoveth he be the most faithful,[261] for it is by him that they take pattern in the things of the Faith; and it becometh the folk to obey him in whatso he commandeth according to Divine Ordinance; but he shall hold the discontented in the same esteem as the contented, because of submission to the decrees of Destiny. As for the King who protecteth things to be reverenced, he upholdeth the things of the Faith and of the World and compelleth his folk to follow the Divine Law and to preserve the rights of humanity; and it fitteth him to unite Pen and Sword; for whoso declineth from what Pen hath written his feet slip and the King shall rectify his error with the sharp Sword and dispread his justice over all mankind. As for the King of his own lusts, he hath no religion but the following his desire and, as he feareth not the wrath of his Lord who set him on the throne, so his Kingdom inclineth to deposition and the end of his pride is in the house of perdition. And sages say, ‘The King hath need of many people, but the people have need of but one King’ wherefore it beseemeth that he be well acquainted with their natures, that he reduce their discord to concord, that with his justice be encompass them all and with his bounties overwhelm them all. And know, O King, that Ardeshir, styled Jamr Shadíd, or the Live Coal, third of the Kings of Persia, conquered the whole world and divided it into four divisions and, for this purpose, get for himself four seal rings, one for each division. The first seal was that of the sea and the police of prohibition and on it was written, Alterna lives. The second was the seal of tribute and of the receipt of monies, and on it was written, Building up. The third was the seal of the provisioning department and on it was written, Plenty. The fourth was the seal of the oppressed, and on it was written, Justice. And these usages remained valid in Persia until the revelation of Al-Islam. Chosroës also wrote his son, who was with the army, ‘Be not thou too open handed with thy troops, or they will be too rich to need thee.’ — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Sixty-first night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Chosroës wrote his son, ‘Be not thou too open handed with thy troops, or they will be too rich to need thee; nor be thou niggardly with them, or they will murmur against thee. Give thy giving deliberately and confer thy favours advisedly; open thy hand to them in time of success and stint them not in time of distress.’ There is a legend that a desert Arab came once to the Caliph Al- Mansúr[262] and said, ‘Starve thy dog and he shall follow thee.’ When the Caliph heard his words, he was enraged with the Arab, but Abu ‘l-Abbás of Tús said to him, ‘I fear that if some other than thou should show him a scone, the dog would follow him and leave thee alone.’ Thereupon the Caliph Al-Mansur’s wrath subsided and he knew that the wild Arab had intended no offence and ordered him a present. And know, O King, that Abd al-Malik bin Marwán wrote to his brother Abd al-Azíz, when he despatched him to Egypt, as follows, ‘Pay heed to thy Secretaries and thy Chamberlains, for the Secretaries will acquaint thee with estate fished matters and the Chamberlains with matters of official ceremony, whilst thine expenditure will make thy troops known to thee.’ Omar bin Al-Khattáb[263] (whom Allah accept!) when engaging a servant was in the habit of conditioning him with four conditions; the first that he should not ride the baggage beasts, the second that he should not wear fine clothes, the third that he should not eat of the spoil and the fourth that he should not put off praying till after the proper period. It is said that there is no wealth more profitable than understanding, and there is no understanding like common sense and prudence, and there is no prudence like piety; that there is no means of drawing near to God like good morals, no measure like good breeding, no traffic like good works and no profit like earning the Divine favour; that there is no temperance like standing within the limits of the law, no science like that of meditation, no worship like obeying the Divine commends, no faith like modesty, no calculation like self abasement and no honour like knowledge. So guard the head and what it containeth and the belly and what it compriseth; and think of death and doom ere it ariseth. Saith Ali (whose face Allah honour!), ‘Beware of the wickedness of women and be on thy guard against them: consult them not in aught;[264] but grudge not complaisance to them, lest they greed for intrigue.’ And eke quoth he, ‘Whoso leaveth the path of moderation his wits become perplexed’; and there be rules for this which we will mention, if it be Allah’s will. And Omar (whom Allah accept!) saith, ‘There are three kinds of women, firstly the true believing, Heaven fearing, love full and fruit full, who helpeth her mate against fate, not helping fate against her mate; secondly, she who loveth her children but no more and, lastly, she who is a shackle Allah setteth on the neck of whom He will.’ Men be also three: the wise when he exerciseth his own judgement; the wiser who, when befalleth somewhat whereof he knoweth not the issue, seeketh folk of good counsel and acteth by their advice; and the unwise irresolute ignoring the right way nor heeding those who would guide him straight. Justice is indispensable in all things; even slave girls have need of justice; and men quote as an instance highway robbers who live by violenting mankind, for did they not deal equitably among themselves and observe justice in dividing their booty, their order would fall to pieces.[265] In short, for the rest, the Prince of noble qualities is Beneficence cum Benevolence; and how excellent is the saying of the poet,

By open hand and ruth the youth rose to his tribe’s command; *
Go and do likewise for the same were easy task to thee.’

And quoth another,

‘In ruth and mildness surety lies and mercy wins respect, * And
Truth is best asylum for the man of soothfast soul:
Whoso for wealth of gold would win and wear the world’s good
word, * On glory’s course must ever be the first to gain the
goal.’”

And Nazhat al-Zaman discoursed upon the policy of Kings till the bystanders said, “Never have we seen one reason of rule and government like this damsel! Haply she will let us hear some discourse upon subject other than this.” When she heard their words and understood them she said, “As for the chapter of good breeding, it is wide of comprehension, being a compend of things perfect. Now it so happened that one day there came to the Caliph Mu’áwiyah[266] one of his companions, who mentioned the people of Irak and the goodness of their wit; and the Caliph’s wife Maysún, mother of Yezíd, heard his words. So, when he was gone, she said to the Caliph, ‘O Prince of the Faithful, I would thou let some of the people of Irak come in and talk to thee, that I may hear their discourse.’ Therewith Mu’awiyah said to his attendants, ‘See who is at the door?’ And they answered, ‘The Banu Tamim.’ ‘Let them come in,’ said he. So they came in and with them Al-Ahnáf son of Kays.[267] Then quoth Mu’awiyah, ‘Enter, O Abu Bahr,’ and drew a curtain between himself and Maysun, that she might hear what they said without being seen herself; then he said to Al-Ahnaf, ‘O Son of the Sea, draw near and tell me what counsel thou hast for me.’ Quoth Al-Ahnaf, ‘Part thy hair and trim thy moustachio and pare thy nails and pluck thine armpits and shave thy pubes[268] and ever use the toothstick because therein be two and seventy virtues, and make the Ghusl or complete ablution on Friday, as an expiation for all between the Fridays.’ — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Sixty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ahnaf bin Kays replied to Al-Mu’awiyah’s[269] question, ‘And ever use the toothstick, because therein be two end seventy virtues and make the complete Friday ablution as an expiation for all between the two Fridays.’ Quoth Mu’awiyah, ‘What is thy counsel to thyself?’ ‘To set my feet firmly on the ground, to move them deliberately and watch over them with mine eyes!’ ‘How dost thou order thyself when thou goest in to one not of the nobles of thy tribe?’ ‘I lower mine eyes modestly and I salute first; I avoid what concerneth me not and I spare my words!’ ‘And how when thou goest in to thine equals?’ ‘I give ear to them when they speak and I do not assail them when they err!’ ‘When thou goest in to thy chiefs?’ ‘I salute without making any sign and await the reply: if they bid me draw near, I draw near, and if they draw off from me I withdraw!’ ‘How dost thou with thy wife?’ Quoth Ahnaf, ‘Excuse me from answering this, O Commander of the Faithful!’; but Mu’awiyah cried, ‘I conjure thee inform me.’ He said, ‘I entreat her kindly and show her familiarity and am large in expenditure, for woman was created of a crooked rib.’[270] ‘And how dost thou when thou hast a mind to lie with her?’ ‘I bid her perfume herself and kiss her till she is moved to desire; then, should it be as thou knowest,[271] I throw her on her back. If the seed abide in her womb I say, 'O Allah make it blessed and let it not be a wastrel, but fashion it into the best of fashions!'[272] Then I rise from her to ablution and first I pour water over my hands and then over my body and lastly, I praise Allah for the joy He hath given me.' Said Mu'awiyah, 'Thou hast answered right well and now tell me what be thy requirements?' Said Ahnaf, 'I would have thee rule thy subjects in the fear of Allah and do even handed justice between them.' Thereupon Ahnaf rose to his feet and left the Caliph's presence, and when he had gone Maysun said, 'Were there but this man in Irak, he would suffice to it.' Then continued Nuzhat al-Zaman, "And all this is a section of the chapter of good breeding, and know O King, that Muaykib was intendant of the public treasury during the Caliphate of Omar bin al-Khattáb," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Sixty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Nuzhat al-Zaman continued, "Know, O King, that Mu'aykib was intendant of the public treasury during the Caliphate of Omar bin al-Khattab; and it so befel him that he saw Omar's son and gave him a dirham out of the treasury. Thereupon, quoth Mu'aykib, 'I returned to my own house, and while I was sitting there behold, a messenger came to me from Omar and I was afraid and went to him, and when I came into his presence, in his hand was the dirham I had given his son. He said to me, 'Woe to thee Mu'aykib! I have found somewhat concerning thy soul.' I asked 'And what is that?'; and he answered, 'It is that thou hast shown thyself a foe to the followers of Mohammed (on whom be peace and salvation!) in the matter of this dirham, and thou wilt have to account for it on Resurrection Day.'[273] And Omar also wrote a letter to Abú Músá al-Ashári[274] as follows, 'When these presents reach thee, give the people what is theirs and remit to me the rest.' And he did so. Now when Othman succeeded to the Caliphate, he wrote a like letter to Abu Musa, who did his bidding and sent him the tribute accordingly, and with it came Ziyád.[275] And when Ziyad laid the tribute before Othman, the Caliph's son came in and took a dirham, whereupon Ziyad shed tears. Othman asked 'Why weepest thou?'; and Ziyad answered, 'I once brought Omar bin al-Khattab the like of this and his son took a dirham, where upon Omar bade snatch it from his hand. Now thy son hath taken of the tribute, yet I have seen none say aught to him or snatch the money from him.' Then Othman[276] cried, 'And where wilt thou find the like of Omar?' Again Zayd bin Aslam relates of his father that he said, 'I went out one night with Omar till we approached a blazing fire. Quoth Omar, 'O Aslam, I think these must be travellers who are suffering from the cold. Come, let us join them.' So we walked on till we came to them and behold! we found a woman who had lighted a fire under a cauldron and by her side were two children, both a wailing. Said Omar, 'Peace be with you, O folk of light (for it was repugnant to him to say 'folk of fire'),[277] what aileth you?' Said she, 'The cold and the night trouble us.' He asked, 'What aileth these little people that they weep?'; and she answered, 'They are hungry.' He enquired, 'And what is in this cauldron?'; and she replied, 'It is what I quiet them withal, and Allah will question Omar bin al- Khattab of them, on the Day of Doom.' He said, 'And what should Omar know of their case?' 'Why then,' rejoined she, 'should he manage people's affairs and yet be unmindful of them?' Thereupon Omar turned to me (continned Aslam) and cried, 'Come with us!' So we set off running till we reached the pay department of his treasury, where he took out a sack containing flour and a pot holding fat and said to me, 'Load these on my back!' Quoth I, 'O Commander of the Faithful, I will carry them for thee.' He rejoined, 'Wilt thou bear my load for me on the Day of Resurrection?' So I put the things on his back, and we set off, running, till we threw down the sack hard by her. Then he took out some of the flour and put it in the cauldron; and, saying to the woman, 'Leave it to me,' he began blowing the fire under the cauldron. Now he was a long bearded man[278] and I saw the smoke issuing from between the hairs of his beard till the flour was cooked, when he took some of the fat and threw it in and said to the woman, 'Bed them while I cool it for them.' So they fell to eating till they had eaten their fill, and he left the rest with her. Then he turned to me and said, 'O Aslam, I see it was indeed hunger made them weep; and I am glad I did not go away ere I found out the cause of the light I saw.' — And Shahrazad per ceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Sixty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Nuzhat al-Zaman continued, “It is related that Omar passed by a flock of sheep, kept by a Mameluke, and asked him to sell him a sheep. He answered, ‘They are not mine.’ ‘Thou art the man I sought,’ said Omar, and bought him and freed him; whereupon the slave exclaimed, ‘O Allah, as thou hast bestowed on me the lesser emancipation; so vouchsafe me the greater!’[279] It is also said that Omar bin al- Khattab was wont to give his servants sweet milk and himself eat coarse fare, and to clothe them softly and himself wear rough garments. He rendered unto all men their due, and exceeded in his giving to them. He once gave a man four thousand dirhams and added thereto a thousand, wherefore it was said to him, ‘Why dost thou not increase to thy son as thou increasest to this man?’ He answered, ‘This man’s father stood firm at the battle day of Ohod.’[280] Al-Hasan relates that Omar once came back from foray with much money, and that Hafsah[281] approached him and said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, the due of kinship!’ ‘O Hafsah!’ replied he, ‘verily Allah hath enjoined us to satisfy the dues of kinship, but not with the monies of the True Believers. Indeed, thou pleasest” thy family, but thou angerest thy father.’ And she went away trailing her skirts.[282] The son of Omar said, ‘I implored the Lord to show me my father one year after his death, till at last I saw him wiping the sweat from his brow and asked him, ‘How is it with thee, O my father?’ He answered, ‘But for my Lord’s mercy thy father surely had perished.’ Then said Nuzhat al-Zaman, “Hear, O auspicious King, the second division of the first chapter of the instances of the followers of the Apostle and other holy men. Saith Al Hasan al-Basrí,[283] Not a soul of the sons of Adam goeth forth of the world without regretting three things,- failure to enjoy what he hath amassed, failure to compass what he hoped, failure to provide himself with sufficient viaticum for that hereto he goeth.[284] It was said of Sufyan,[285] ‘Can a man be a religious and yet possess wealth?’ He replied, ‘Yes, so he be patient when grieved and be thankful when he hath received.’ Abdullah bin Shaddád, being about to die, sent for his son Mohammed and admonished him, saying, ‘O my son, I see the Summoner of Death summoning me, and so I charge thee to fear Allah both in public and private, to praise Allah and to be soothfastin thy speech, for such praise bringeth increase of prosperity, and piety in itself is the best of provision for the next world; even as saith one of the poets,

‘I see not happiness lies in gathering gold; * The man most pious
    is man happiest:
In truth the fear of God is best of stores, * And God shall make
    the pious choicely blest.’

Then quoth Nuzhat al-Zaman, “Let the King also give ear to these notes from the second section of the first chapter.” He asked her ‘What be they?’; and she answered, “When Omar bin Abd al-Azíz 286] succeeded to the Caliphate, he went to his household and laying hands on all that was in their hold, put it into the public treasury. So the Banu Umayyah flew for aid to his father’s sister, Fátimah, daughter of Marwan, and she sent to him saying, ‘I must needs speak to thee.’ So she came to him by night and, when he had made her alight from her beast and sit down, he said to her, ‘O aunt, it is for thee to speak first, since thou hast some thing to ask: tell me then what thou wouldst with me.’ Replied she, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, it is thine to speak first, for thy judgment perceiveth that which is hidden from the intelligence of others.’ Then said Omar, ‘Of a verity Allah Almighty sent Mohammed as a blessing to some and a bane to others; and He elected for him those with him, and commissioned him as His Apostle and took him to Himself,’ — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Sixty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Nuzhat al-Zaman continued thus, “Said Omar, ‘Verily Allah commissioned as His Apostle Mohammed (upon whom be the benediction of Allah and His salvation!), for a blessing to some and a bane to others; and He elected for him those with him and took him to Himself, leaving the people a stream whereof they might drink. After him Abu Bakr[287] the Truth teller became Caliph and he left the river as it was, doing what was pleasing to Allah. Then arose Omar and worked a work and strove in holy war and strife where of none might do the like. But when Othman arose to power he diverted a streamlet from the stream, and Mu'awiyah in his turn diverted from it several streamlets; and without ceasing in like manner, Yezid and the Banu Marwán such as Abd al-Malik and Walíd and Sulaymán[288] drew away water from the stream, and the main course dried up, till rule devolved upon me, and now I am minded to restore the stream to its normal condition.' When Fatimah heard this, she said, 'I came wishing only to speak and confer with thee, but if this be thy word, I have nothing to say to thee.' Then she returned to the Ommiades and said to them, 'Now take ye the consequences of your act when ye allied yourselves by marriage with Omar bin al-Khattab.'[289] And it is also said that when Omar was about to die, he gathered his children round him, and Maslamah[290] bin Abd al-Malik said to him, 'O Prince of the Faithful, how wilt thou leave thy children paupers and thou their protector? None can hinder thee in thy lifetime from giving them what will suffice them out of the treasury; and this indeed were better than leaving the good work to him who shall rule after thee.' Omar looked at him with a look of wrath and wonder and presently replied, 'O Maslamah, I have defended them from this sin all the days of my life, and shall I make them miserable after my death? Of a truth my sons are like other men, either obedient to Almighty Allah who will prosper them, or disobedient and I will not help them in their disobedience. Know, O Maslamah, that I was present, even as thou, when such an one of the sons of Marwanwas buried, and I fell asleep by him and saw him in a dream given over to one of the punishments of Allah, to whom belong Honour and Glory! This terrified me and made me tremble, and I vowed to Allah, that if ever I came to power, I would not do such deeds as the dead man had done. I have striven to fulfil this vow all the length of my life and I hope to die in the mercy of my Lord.' Quoth Maslamah, 'A certain man died and I was present at his burial, and when all was over I fell asleep and I saw him as a sleeper seeth a dream, walking in a garden of flowing waters clad in white clothes. He came up to me and said: 'O Maslamah, it is for the like of this that rulers should rule.' Many are the instances of this kind, and quoth one of the men of authority, 'I used to milk the ewes in the Caliphate of Omar bin Abd al-Aziz, and one day I met a shepherd, among whose sheep I saw a wolf or wolves. I thought them to be dogs, for I had never before seen wolves; so I asked, ‘What dost thou with these dogs?’ ‘They are not dogs, but wolves,’ answered the shepherd. Quoth I, ‘Can wolves be with sheep and not hurt them?’ Quoth he, ‘When the head is whole, the body is whole.’[291] Omar bin Abd al-Aziz once preached from a pulpit of clay and, after praising and glorifying Allah Almighty, said three words as follows, ‘O folk, make clean your inmost hearts, that your outward lives may be dean to your brethren, and abstain ye from the things of the world. Know that between us and Adam there is no one man alive among the dead. Dead are Abd al- Malik and those who forewent him, and Omar also shall die and those who forewent him.’ Asked Maslamah, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, an we set a pillow behind thee, wilt thou lean on it a little while?’ But Omar answered, ‘I fear lest it be a fault about my neck on Resurrection Day.’ Then he gasped with the death rattle and fell back in a faint; whereupon Fatimah cried out, saying, ‘Ho, Maryam! Ho, Muzahim![292] Ho, such an one! Look to this man!’ And she began to pour water on him weeping, till he revived from his swoon; and, seeing her in tears said to her, ‘What causeth thee to weep, O Fatimah?’ She replied, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, I saw thee lying prostrate before us and thought of thy prostration in death before Almighty Allah, of thy departure from the world and of thy separation from us. This is what made me weep.’ Answered he, ‘Enough, O Fatimah, for indeed thou exceedest.’ Then he would have risen, but fell down and Fatimah strained him to her and said, ‘Thou art to me as my father and my mother, O Commander of the Faithful! We cannot speak to thee, all of us.’ Then quoth Nuzhat al-Zaman to her brother Sharrkan and the four Kazis, “Here endeth the second section of the first chapter.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Sixty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Nuzhat al-Zaman said to her brother Sharrkan and the four Kazis, “Here endeth the second section of the first chapter. And it so happened that Omar bin Abd al-Aziz wrote to the people of the festival at Meccah as follows, ‘I call Allah to witness, in the Holy Month, in the Holy City and on the day of the Greater Pilgrimage,[293] that I am innocent of your oppression and of his wrongs that doth wrong you, in that I have neither commanded this nor purposed it, neither hath any report of aught thereof hitherto reached me, nor have I compassed any knowledge thereof; and I trust that a cause for pardon will be found in that none hath authority from me to oppress any man, for I shall assuredly be questioned concerning every one oppress. And if any of my officers swerve from the right and act otherwise than the Holy Book and the Traditions of the Apostle do authorise, obey him not so that he may return to the way of righteousness.' He said also (Allah accept of him!), 'I do not wish to be relieved from death, because it is the supreme thing for which the True Believer is rewarded.' Quoth one of authority, 'I went to the Prince of the Faithful, Omarbin Abd al-Aziz, who was then Caliph, and saw before him twelve dirhams, which he ordered for deposit in the public treasury. So I said to him, 'O Commander of the Faithful, thou impoverishest thy children and reducest them to beggary having nothing whereon to live. An thou wouldst appoint somewhat by will to them and to those who are poor of the people of thy house, it were well.' 'Draw near to me,' answered he: so I drew near to him and he said, 'Now as for thy saying, 'Thou beggarest thy children; provide for them and for the poor of thy household,' it is without reason; for Allah of a truth will replace me to my children and to the poor of my house, and He will be their guardian. Verily, they are like other men; he who feareth Allah, right soon will Allah provide for him a happy issue, and he that is addicted to sins, I will not up hold him in his sin against Allah.' Then he summoned his sons who numbered twelve, and when he beheld them his eyes dropped tears and presently he said to them, 'Your Father is between two things; either ye will be well to do, and your parent will enter the fire, or ye will be poor and your parent will enter Paradise; and your father's entry into Paradise is liefer to him than that ye should be well to do.[294] So arise and go, Allah be your helper, for to Him I commit your affairs!' Khálid bin Safwán[295] said, 'Yúsuf bin Omar[296] accompanied me to Hishám bin Abd al-Malik,[297] and as I met him he was coming forth with his kinsmen and attendants. He alighted and a tent was pitched for him. When the people had taken their seats, I came up to the side of the carpet whereon he sat reclining and looked at him; and, waiting till my eyes met his eyes, bespoke him thus, ‘May Allah fulfil His bounty to thee, O Commander of the Faithful, I have an admonition for thee, which hath come down to us from the history of the Kings preceding thee!’ At this, he sat up whenas he had been reclining and said to me, ‘Bring what thou hast, O son of Safwan!’ Quoth I, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, one of the Kings before thee went forth in a time before this thy time, to this very country and said to his companions, ‘Saw ye ever any state like mine and say me, hath such case been given to any man even as it hath been given unto me?’ Now there was with him a man of those who survive to bear testimony to Truth; upholders of the Right and wayfarers in its highway, and he said to him, ‘O King, thou askest of a grave matter. Wilt thou give me leave to answer?’ ‘Yes,’ replied the King, and the other said, ‘Dost thou judge thy present state to be short lasting or ever lasting?’ ‘It is temporary,’ replied the King. ‘How then,’ rejoined the man, ‘do I see thee exulting in that which thou wilt enjoy but a little while and whereof thou wilt be questioned for a long while and for the rendering an account whereof thou shalt be as a pledge which is pawned?’ Quoth the King, ‘Whither shall I flee and what must I seek for me?’ ‘That thou abide in thy kingship,’ replied the other, ‘or else robe thee in rags[298] and apply thyself to obey Almighty Allah thy Lord until thine appointed hour. I will come to thee again at daybreak.’ Khalid bin Safwan further relates that the man knocked at the door at dawn and behold, the King had put off his crown and resolved to become an anchorite, for the stress of his exhortation. When Hishám bin Abd al-Malik heard this, he wept till his beard was wet, and, bidding his rich apparel be put off, shut himself up in his palace. Then the grandees and dependents came to Khalid and said, ‘What is this thou hast done with the Commander of the Faithful? Thou hast troubled his pleasure and disturbed his life!’ Then quoth Nuzhat al-Zaman, addressing herself to Sharrkan, “How many instances of admonition are there not in this chapter! Of a truth I cannot report all appertaining to this head in a single sitting,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Sixty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Nuzhat al-Zaman continued, speaking to Sharrkan, “Know, O King, that in this chapter be so many instances of admonition that of a truth I cannot report all appertaining to this head in a single sitting but, with length of days, O King of the age, all will be well.” There said the Kazis, “O King, of a truth this damsel is the wonder of the world, and of our age the unique pearl! Never heard we her like in the length of time or in the length of our lives.” And they called down blessings on the King and went away. Then Sharrkan turned to his attendants and said, “Begin ye to prepare the marriage festival and make ready food of all kinds.” So they forthright did his bidding as regards the viands, and he commanded the wives of the Emirs and Wazirs and Grandees depart not until the time of the wedding banquet and of the unveiling of the bride. Hardly came the period of afternoon prayer when the tables were spread with whatso heart can desire or eye can delight in of roast meats and geese and fowls; and the subjects ate till they were satisfied. Moreover, Sharrkan had sent for all the singing women of Damascus and they were present, together with every slave girl of the King and of the notables who knew how to sing. And they went up to the palace in one body. When the evening came and darkness starkened they lighted candles, right and left, from the gate of the citadel to that of the palace; and the Emirs and Wazirs and Grandees marched past before King Sharrkan, whilst the singers and the tire women took the damsel to dress and adorn her, but found she needed no adornment. Meantime King Sharrkan went to the Hammam and coming out, sat down on his seat of estate, whilst they paraded the bride before him in seven different dresses: after which they eased her of the weight of her raiment and ornaments and gave such injunctions as are enjoined upon virgins on their wedding nights. Then Sharrkan went in unto her and took her maidenhead;[299] and she at once conceived by him and, when she announced it, he rejoiced with exceeding joy and commanded the savants to record the date of her conception. On the morrow he went forth and seated himself on his throne, and the high officers came in to him and gave him joy. Then he called his private secretary and bade him write a letter to his father, King Omar bin al-Nu’uman, saying that he had bought him a damsel, who excels in learning and good breeding and who is mistress of all kinds of knowledge. Moreover he wrote, “There is no help but that I send her to Baghdad to visit my brother Zau al-Makan and my sister Nuzhat al-Zaman. I have set her free and married her and she hath conceived by me.” And he went on to praise her wit and salute his brother and sister together with the Wazir Dandan and all the Emirs. Then he sealed the letter and despatched it to his father by a post courier who was absent a whole month, after which time he returned with the answer and presented it in the presence. Sharrkan took it and read as follows, “After the usual Bismillah, this is from the afflicted distracted man, from him who hath lost his children and home by bane and ban, King Omar bin al- Nu’uman, to his son Sharrkan. Know that, since thy departure from me, the place is become contracted upon me, so that no longer I have power of patience nor can I keep my secret: and the cause thereof is as follows. It chanced that when I went forth to hunt and course Zau al-Makan sought my leave to fare Hijaz wards, but I, fearing for him the shifts of fortune, forbade him therefrom until the next year or the year after. My absence while sporting and hunting endured for a whole month” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Sixty-eighth night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that King Omar bin al-Nu’uman wrote in his letter, “My absence while sporting and hunting endured for a whole month, and when I returned I found that thy brother and sister had taken somewhat of money and had set out with the pilgrim caravan for pilgrimage by stealth. When I knew this, the wide world narrowed on me, O my son! but I awaited the return of the caravan, hoping that haply they would come back with it. Accordingly, when the palmers appeared I asked concerning the twain, but they could give me no news of them; so I donned mourning for them, being heavy at heart, and in sleep I have no part and I am drowned in the tears of my eyes.” Then he wrote in verse,

“That pair in image quits me not one single hour, * Whom in my
heart’s most honourable place I keep:
Sans hope of their return I would not live one hour, * Without my
dreams of them I ne’er would stretch me in sleep.”

The letter went on, “And after the usual salutations to thee and thine, I command thee neglect no manner of seeking news of them for indeed this is a shame to us.” When Sharrkan read the letter he felt grief for his father and joy for the loss of his brother and sister. Then he took the missive and went in with it to Nuzhat al-Zaman who knew not that he was her brother, nor he that she was his sister, albeit he often visited her both by night and by day till the months were accomplished and she sat down on the stool of delivery. Allah made the child birth easy to her and she bare a daughter, whereupon she sent for Sharrkan and seeing him she said to him, “This is thy daughter: name her as thou wilt.” Quoth he, “It is usual to name children on the seventh day after birth.[300] “ Then he bent over the child to kiss it and he saw, hung about its neck, a jewel, which he knew at once for one of those which Princess Abrizah had brought from the land of the Greeks. Now when he saw the jewel hanging from his babe’s neck he recognised it right well, his senses fled and wrath seized on him; his eyes rolled in rage and he looked at Nuzhat al- Zaman and said to her, “Whence hadst thou this jewel, O slave girl?” When she heard this from Sharrkan she replied, “I am thy lady, and the lady of all in thy palace! Art thou not ashamed to say to me Slave girl? I am a Queen, daughter of King Omar bin al-Nu’uman.” Hearing this, he was seized with trembling and hung his head earthwards, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Sixty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sharrkan heard these words, his heart fluttered and his colour waxed yellow and he was seized with trembling and he hung his head earthwards, for he knew that she was his sister by the same father. Then he lost his senses; and, when he revived, he abode in amazement, but did not discover his identity to her and asked, O my lady, say, art thou in sooth the daughter of King Omar bin al-Nu’uman?” “Yes,” answered she; and he continued, “Tell me the cause of thy leaving thy sire and of thy being sold for a slave.” So she related to him all that had befallen her from beginning to end, how she had left her brother sick in the Sanctified City, Jerusalem, and how the Badawi had kidnapped her and had sold her to the trader. When Sharrkan heard this, he was certified of her being his sister on the sword side and said to himself, “How can I have my sister to wife? By Allah, needs must I marry her to one of my chamberlains; and, if the thing get wind, I will declare that I divorced her before consummation and married her to my Chief Chamberlain.” Then he raised his head and sighing said, “O Nuzhat al-Zaman, thou art my very sister and I cry: ‘I take refuge with Allah from this sin whereinto we have fallen,’ for I am Sharrkan, son of Omar bin al-Nu’uman.” She looked at him and knew he spoke the truth; and, becoming as one demented, she wept and buffeted her face, exclaiming, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah! Verily have we fallen into mortal sin![301] What shall I do and what shall I say to my father and my mother when they ask me, Whence hadst thou thy daughter?” Quoth Sharrkan, “It were meetest that I marry thee to my Chamberlain and let thee bring up my daughter in his house, that none may know thou be my sister. This hath befallen us from Almighty Allah for a purpose of his own, and nothing shall cover us but thy marriage with this Chamberlain, ere any know.” Then he fell to comforting her and kissing her head and she asked him, “What wilt thou call the girl?” “Call her Kuzia Fakán,”[302] answered he. Then he gave the mother in marriage to the Chief Chamberlain, and transferred her to his house with the child, which they reared on the laps of the slave girls, and fed with milk and dosed with powders. Now all this occurred whilst the brother, Zau al-Makan, still tarried with the Fireman at Damascus. One day there came to King Sharrkan a courier from his father, with a letter which he took and read and found therein, “After the Bismillah know, O beloved King, that I am afflicted with sore affliction for the loss of my children: sleep ever faileth me and wakefulness ever assaileth me. I send thee this letter that, as soon as thou receivest it, thou make ready the monies and the tribute, and send them to us, together with the damsel whom thou hast bought and taken to wife; for I long to see her and hear her discourse; more especially because there hath come to us from Roumland an old woman of saintly bearing and with her be five damsels high bosomed virgins, endowed with knowledge and good breeding and all arts and sciences befitting mortals to know; and indeed tongue faileth me to describe this old woman and these who with her wend; for of a truth they are compendiums of perfections in learning and accomplishments. As soon as I saw them I loved them, and I wished to have them in my palace and in the compass of my hand; for none of the Kings owneth the like of them; so I asked the old woman their price and she answered, 'I will not sell them but for the tribute of Damascus.' And I, by Allah, did not hold this price exorbitant, indeed it is but little, for each one of them is worth the whole valuation. So I agreed to that and took them into my palace, and they remain in my possession. Wherefore do thou forward the tribute to us that the woman may return to her own country; and send to us the damsel to the end that she may dispute with them before the doctors; and, if she prevail over them, I will return her to thee accompanied by the tribute of Baghdad." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seventieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that King Omar son of Al-Nu'uman said in his letter, "And send to us the damsel to the end that she may dispute with them before the doctors and, if she prevail over them, I will return her to thee accompanied with the tribute of Baghdad." As soon as Sharrkan knew the contents, he went in to his brother in law and said to him, "Bring the damsel to whom I married thee;" and when she came he showed her the letter and said, "O my sister! what answer wouldst thou advise me make to this letter?" Replied she, "Seek advice from thyself!" and presently added (for she yearned after her people and her native land), "Send me together with my husband the Chamberlain, to Baghdad, that I may tell my father my tale and let him know whatso befel me with the Badawi who sold me to the merchant, and that I also inform him how thou boughtest me of the trader and gavest me in marriage to the Chamberlain, after setting me free." "Be it so," replied Sharrkan. Then Sharrkan took his daughter, Kuzia Fakan, and committed her to the charge of the wet nurses and the eunuchs, and he made ready the tribute in haste, bidding the Chamberlain travel with the Princess and the treasure to Baghdad. He also furnished him two travelling litters one for himself and the other for his wife. And the Chamberlain replied, "To hear is to obey." Moreover Sharrkan collected camels and mules and wrote a letter to his father and committed it to the Chamberlain; then he bade farewell to his sister, after he had taken the jewel from her and hung it round his daughter's neck by a chain of pure gold; and she and her husband set out for Baghdad the same night. Now it so happened that Zau al-Makan and his friend the Fireman had come forth from the hut in which they were, to see the spectacle, and they beheld camels and Bukhti[303] dromedaries and bât-mules and torches and lanterns alight; and Zau al-Makan enquired about the loads and their owner and was told that it was the tribute of Damascus going to King Omar bin al-Nu'uman, Lord of the City of Baghdad. He then asked, "Who be the leader of the caravan?" and they answered, "The Head Chamberlain who hath married the damsel so famous for learning and science." Thereupon Zau al-Makan wept with bitter weeping and was minded of his mother and his father and his sister and his native land, and he said to the Stoker, "I will join this caravan and, little by little, will journey homewards." Quoth the Fireman, "I would not suffer thee to travel single handed from the Holy City to Damascus, then how shall I be sure of thy safety when thou farest for Baghdad? But I will go with thee and care for thee till thou effectest thine object." "With joy and good will," answered Zau al-Makan. Then the Fireman get him ready for the journey and hired an ass and threw saddle bags over it and put therein something of provaunt; and, when all was prepared, he awaited the passage of the caravan. And presently the Chamberlain came by on a dromedary and his footmen about him. Then Zau al-Ma ken mounted the ass and said to his companion, "Do thou mount with me." But he replied, "Not so: I will be thy servant." Quoth Zau al-Makan, "There is no help for it but thou ride awhile." "'Tis well," quoth the Stoker; "I will ride when I grow tired." Then said Zau al-Makan, "O my brother, soon shalt thou see how I will deal with thee, when I come to my own folk." So they fared on till the sun rose and,When it was the hour of the noonday sleep[304] the Chamberlain called a halt and they alighted and reposed and watered their camels. Then he gave the signal for departure and, after five days, they came to the city of Hamáh,[305] where they set down and made a three days' halt; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seventy-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that they halted in the city of Hamah three days; they then fared forwards and ceased not travelling till they reached another city. Here also they halted three days and thence they travelled till they entered the province Diyár Bakr. Here blew on them the breezes of Baghdad, and Zau al-Makan bethought him of his father and mother and native land, and how he was returning to his sire without his sister: so he wept and sighed and complained, and his regrets grew on him, and he began improvising these couplets,

“Sweetheart! How long must I await by so long suffering teed? *
Nor cometh messenger to tell me where thou dost abide:
Ah me! in very sooth our meeting time was short enow: * Would
Heaven shorter prove to me the present parting-tide!
Now trend my hand and open my robe and thou within shall sight *
How wasted are the limbs of me and yet the waste I hide:
When say they ‘Comfort take for loss of love’ I but reply * ‘By
Allah, till the Day of Doom no comfort shall betide!’”

Thereupon said to him the Fireman, “Leave this weeping and wailing, for we are near the Chamberlain’s tent.” Quoth Zau al-Makan, “Needs must I recite somewhat of verse; haply it may quench the fire of my heart.” “Allah upon thee,” cried the other, “cease this lamentation till thou come to shine own country; then do what thou wilt, and I will be with thee wherever thou art.” Replied Zau al-Makan, “By Allah! I cannot forbear from this!” Then he turned his face towards Baghdad and the moon was shining brightly and shedding her light on the place, and Nuzhat al-Zaman could not sleep that night, but was restless and called to mind her brother and wept. And while she was in tears, he heard Zau al-Makan weeping and improvising the following distichs,

‘Al-Yaman’s[306] leven-gleam I see, * And sore despair
despaireth me
For friend who erst abode wi’ me * Crowning my cup with gladdest
gree:

It minds me o' one who jilted me * To mourn my bitter liberty.
Say sooth, thou fair sheet lightning! shall * We meet once more in joy and glee?
O blamer! spare to me thy blame * My Lord hath sent this dule to dree,
Of friend who left me, fain to flee; * Of Time that breeds calamity:
All bliss hath fled the heart of me * Since Fortune proved mine enemy.
He[307] brimmed a bowl of merest pine, * And made me drain the dregs, did he:
I see me, sweetheart, dead and gone * Ere I again shall gaze on thee.
Time! prithee bring our childhood back, * Restore our happy infancy,
When joy and safety 'joyed we * From shafts that now they shoot at me!
Who aids the hapless stranger wight, * That nights in fright and misery,
That wastes his days in lonely grief, * For 'Time's Delight'[308] no more must be?
Doomed us despite our will to bear * The hands of base bores cark and care."

When he ended his verse he cried out and fell down in a fainting fit. This is how it fared with him; but as regards Nuzhat al- Zaman, when she heard that voice in the night, her heart was at rest and she rose and in her joy she called the Chief Eunuch, who said to her, "What is thy will?" Quoth she, "Arise and bring me him who recited verses but now." Replied he, "Of a truth I did not hear him" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seventy-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Nuzhat Al-Zaman heard her brother reciting, she called the Chief Eunuch and said to him, "Go, fetch me the man who is repeating this poetry!" Replied he, "Of a truth I heard him not and I wot him not and folks are all sleeping." But she said, "Whomsoever thou seest awake, he is the reciter." So he went, yet found none on wake save the Stoker; for Zau al-Makan was still insensible, and when his companion saw the Eunuch standing by his head he was afraid of him. Then said the Eunuch, "Art thou he who repeated poetry but now and my lady heard him?" The Stoker fancied that the dame was wroth with the reciter; and, being afraid, he replied, "By Allah, 'twas not I!" Rejoined the Eunuch, "Who then was the reciter?: point him out to me. Thou must know who it was, seeing that thou art awake." The Fireman feared for Zau al- Makan and said in himself, "Haply the Eunuch will do him some hurt"; so he answered, "By Allah, I know not who it was." Said the Eunuch, "By Allah, thou liest, for there is none on wake here but thou! So needs must thou know him." "By Allah," replied the Fireman, "I tell thee the truth!: some passer by, some wayfarer must have recited the verses and disturbed me and kept me awake; Allah requite him!" Quoth the Eunuch, "If thou happen upon him, point him out to me and I will lay hands on him and bring him to the door of our lady's litter[309] or do thou take him with thine own hand." Said the Fireman, "Go thou back and I will bring him to thee." So the Eunuch left him and went his ways; and, going in to his mistress, told her all this and said to her, "None knoweth who it was; it must have been some passer by, some wayfarer." And she was silent. Meanwhile, Zau al-Makan came to himself and saw that the moon had reached the middle Heavens; the breath of the dawn breeze[310] breathed upon him and his heart was moved to longing and sadness; so he cleared his throat and was about to recite verses, when the Fire man asked him, "What wilt thou do?" Answered Zau al-Makan, "I have a mind to repeat somewhat of poetry, that I may quench therewith the fire of my heart." Quoth the other, "Thou knowest not what befel me whilst thou wast a faint, and how I escaped death only by beguiling the Eunuch." "Tell me what happened," quoth Zau al-Makan. Replied the Stoker, "Whilst thou wast aswoon there came up to me but now an Eunuch, with a long staff of almond tree wood in his hand, who took to looking in all the people's faces, as they lay asleep, and asked me who it was recited the verses, finding none awake but myself. I told him in reply it was some passerby, some wayfarer; so he went away and Allah delivered me from him; else had he killed me. But first he said to me, ‘If thou hear him again, bring him to us.’” When Zau al-Makan heard this he wept and said, “Who is it would forbid me to recite? I will surely recite, befal me what may; for I am near mine own land and care for none.” Rejoined the Fireman, “Thy design is naught save to lose thy life;” and Zau al-Makan retorted, “Needs must I recite verses.” “Verily,” said the Stoker, “needs must there be a parting between me and thee in this place, albeit;I had intended not to leave thee, till I had brought thee to thy native city and reunited thee with thy mother and father. Thou hast now tarried with me a year and a half and I have never harmed thee in aught. What ails thee, then, that thou must needs recite verses, seeing that we are tired out with walking and watching and all the folk are asleep, for they require sleep to rest them of their fatigue?” But Zau al-Makan answered, “I will not be turned away from my purpose.”[311] Then grief moved him and he threw off concealment and began repeating these couplets,

“Stand thou by the homes and hail the lords of the ruined stead;

* Cry thou for an answer, belike reply to thee shall be
sped:
If the night and absence irk thy spirit kindle a torch * Wi’
repine; and illuminate the gloom with a gleaming greed:
If the snake of the sand dunes hiss, I shall marvel not at all!

* Let him bite so I bite those beauteous lips of the
luscious red:
O Eden, my soul hath fled in despite of the maid I love: * Had I
lost hope of Heaven my heart in despair were dead.”

And he also improvised the two following distichs,

“We were and were the days enthralled to all our wills, *
Dwelling in union sweet and homed in fairest site:
Who shall restore the home of the beloved, where showed * Light
of the Place for aye conjoined with Time’s
Delight?’’[312]

And as he ceased his verses, he shrieked three shrieks and fell senseless to the ground and the Fireman rose and covered him. When Nuzhat al-Zaman heard the first improvisation, she called to mind her father and her mother and her brother and their whilome home; then she wept and cried at the Eunuch and said to him, "Woe to thee! He who recited the first time hath recited a second time and I heard him hard by. By Allah, an thou fetch him not to me, I will assuredly rouse the Chamberlain on thee, and he shall beat thee and cast thee out. But take these hundred diners and give them to the singer and bring him to me gently, and do him no hurt. If he refuse, hand to him this purse of a thousand diners, then leave him and return to me and tell me, after thou hast informed thyself of his place and his calling and what countryman he is. Return quickly and linger not." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seventy-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Nuzhat al-Zaman sent the Eunuch to make enquiries concerning the singer and said, "Beware how thou come back to me and report, I could not find him." So the Eunuch went out and laid about the people and trod in their tents, but found none awake, all being asleep for weariness, till he came to the Stoker and saw him sitting up, with his head uncovered. So he drew near and seizing him by the hand, said to him, "It was thou didst recite the verses!" The Fireman was afeard for his life and replied, "No, by Allah, O chief of the people, it was not I!" But the Eunuch said, "I will not leave thee till thou show me who it was that recited the verses, for I dread returning to my lady without him." Now when the Fireman heard these words he feared for Zau al-Makan and wept with exceeding weeping and said to the Eunuch, "By Allah, it was not I, and I know him not. I only heard some passer by, some wayfarer, recite verses: so do not thou commit sin on me, for I am a stranger and come from the Holy City of Jerusalem; and Abraham, the friend of Allah, be with you all." "Rise up and fare with me," rejoined the Eunuch, "and tell my lady this with thine own mouth, for I have seen none awake save thyself." Quoth the Stoker, "Hast thou not come and seen me sitting in the place where I now am, and dost thou not know my station? Thou wottest none can stir from his place, except the watchman seize him. So go thou to thy station and if thou again meet any one after this hour reciting aught of poetry, whether he be near or far, it will be I or some one I know, and thou shalt not learn of him but by me." Then he kissed the Eunuch's head and spake him fair till he went away; but the Castrato fetched a round and, returning secretly, came and stood behind the Fireman, fearing to go back to his mistress without tidings. As soon as he was gone, the Stoker arose and aroused Zau al-Makan and said to him, "Come, sit up, that I may tell thee what hath happened." So Zau al-Makan sat up, and his companion told him what had passed, and he answered, "Let me alone; I will take no heed of this and I care for none, for I am mine own country."[313] Quoth the Stoker, "Why wilt thou obey thy flesh and the devil? If thou fear no one, I fear for thee and for my life, so Allah upon thee! recite nothing more of verses till thou come to thine own land. Indeed, I had not deemed thee so ill conditioned. Dost thou not know that this lady is the wife; of the Chamberlain and is minded to chastise thee for disturbing her? Belike, she is ill or restless for fatigue of the journey and the distance of the place from her home, and this is the second time she hath sent the Eunuch to look for thee." However Zau al-Makan paid no heed to the Fireman's words but cried out a third time and began versifying with these couplets,

"I fly the carper's injury,* Whose carping sorely vexeth me:
He chides and taunts me, wotting not * He burns me but more grievously.
The blamer cries 'He is consoled!' * I say, 'My own dear land[314] to see:'
They ask, 'Why be that land so dear?' * I say, 'It taught me in love to be:'
They ask, 'What raised its dignity?' * I say, 'What made my ignomy:'
Whate'er the bitter cup I drain, * Far be fro' me that land to flee:
Nor will I bow to those who blame, * And for such love would deal me shame.

Hardly had he made an end of his verses and come to a conclusion, when the Eunuch (who had heard him from his hiding place at his head) came up to him; whereupon the Fireman flea end stood afar off to see what passed between them. Then said the Eunuch to Zau al-Makan, “Peace be with thee, O my lord!” “And on thee be peace,” replied Zau al-Makan, “and the mercy of Allah and His blessings!” “O my lord,” continued the Eunuch — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Seventy-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Eunuch said to Zau al-Makan, “O my lord, I have sought thee these several times this night, for my mistress biddeth thee to her.” Quoth Zau al-Makan, “And who be this bitch that seeketh for me? Allah curse her and curse her husband with her!”[315] And he began to revile the Eunuch, who could make him no answer, because his mistress had charged him to do Zau al-Makan no hurt, nor bring him save of his own especial free will; and, if he would not accompany him, to give him the thousand diners. So the Castrato began to speak him fair and say to him, “O my lord, take this purse and go with me. We will do thee no upright, O my son, nor wrong thee in aught; but our object is that thou bend thy gracious steps with me to my mistress, to receive her answer and return in weal and safety: and thou shalt have a handsome present as one who bringeth good news.” When Zau al-Makan heard this, he arose and went with the Eunuch and walked among the sleeping folk, stepping over them; whilst the Fireman followed after them from afar, and kept his eye upon him and said to himself, “Alas the pity of his youth! Tomorrow they will hang him.” And he ceased not following them till he approached their station,[316] without any observing him. Then he stood still and said, “How base it will be of him, if he say it was I who bade him recite the verses!” This was the case of the Stoker; but as regards what befel Zau al-Makan, he ceased not walking with the Eunuch till he reached his station and the Castrato went in to Nuzhat al-Zaman and said, “O my lady, I have brought thee him whom thou soughtest, and he is a youth, fair of face and bearing the marks of wealth and gentle breeding.” When she heard this, her heart fluttered and she cried, “Let him recite some verses, that I may hear him near hand, and after ask him his name and his condition and his native land.” Then the Eunuch went out to Zau al-Makan and said to him, “Recite what verses thou knowest, for my lady is here hard by, listening to thee, and after I will ask thee of thy name and thy native country and thy condition.” Replied he, “With love and gladness but, an thou ask my name, it is erased and my trace is unplaced and my body a waste. I have a story, the beginning of which is not known nor can the end of it be shown, and behold, I am even as one who hath exceeded in wine drinking and who hath not spared himself; one who is afflicted with distempers and who wandereth from his right mind, being perplexed about his case and drowned in the sea of thought.” When Nuzhat al-Zaman heard this, she broke out into excessive weeping and sobbing, and said to the Eunuch, “Ask him if he have parted from one he loveth even as his mother or father.” The Castrato asked as she bade him, and Zau al-Makan replied, “Yes, I have parted from every one I loved: but the dearest of all to me was my sister, from whom Fate hath separated me.” When Nuzhat al- Zaman heard this, she exclaimed, “Allah Almighty reunite him with what he loveth!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seventy-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Nuzhat al-Zaman heard his words she said, “Allah reunite him with what he loveth!” Then quoth she to the Eunuch, “Tell him to let me hear somewhat anent his separation from his countrymen and his country.” The Eunuch did so, and Zau al-Makan sighed heavily and began repeating these couplets,[317]

“Is not her love a pledge by all mankind confest? * The house
that hometh Hinda be forever blest’
Her love all levels; man can reck of naught beside; * Naught or
before or after can for man have zest
’Tis though the vale is paved with musk and ambergris * That day
when Hinda’s footstep on its face is prest:
Hail to the beauty of our camp, the pride of folk, * The dearling
who en’ Slaves all hearts by her behest:

Allah on ‘Time’s Delight’ send large dropped clouds that teem *
    With genial rain but bear no thunder in their breast.”

And also these,

“I vow to Allah if at home I sight * My sister Nuzhat al-Zamani
    highs
I’ll pass the days in joyance and delight * Mid bashful minions,
    maidens soft and white:
To sound of harps in various modes they smite * Draining the
    bowl, while eyes rain lively light
‘Neath half closed lids, a sipping lips red bright * By stream
    bank flowing through my garden site.”

When he had finished his verse, Nuzhat al-Zaman lifted up a skirt of the litter curtain and looked at him. As soon as her eyes fell on his face, she knew him for certain and cried out, “O my brother! O Zau al-Makan!” He also looked at her and knew her and cried out, “O my sister! O Nuzhat al-Zaman!” Then she threw herself upon him and he gathered her to his bosom and the twain fell down in a fainting fit. When the Eunuch saw this case, he wondered at them and throwing over them somewhat to cover them, waited till they should recover. After a while they came to themselves, and Nuzhat al-Zaman rejoiced with exceeding joy: oppression and depression left her and gladness took the mastery of her, and she repeated these verses,

“Time sware my life should fare in woeful waste; * Forsworn art
    Time, expiate thy sin in haste![318]
Comes weal and comes a welcome friend to aid; * To him who
brings
    good news, rise, gird thy waist
I spurned old world tales of Eden bliss; * Till came I
    Kausar[319] on those lips

When Zau al-Makan heard this, he pressed his sister to his breast; tears streamed from his eyes for excess of joy and he repeated these couplets,[320]

“Long I lamented that we fell apart, * While tears repentant
railed from these eyne;
And sware, if Time unite us twain once more, * ‘Severance’ shall
never sound from tongue of mine:
Joy hath so overwhelmed me that excess * Of pleasure from mine
eyes draws gouts of brine:
Tears, O mine eyes, have now become your wont * Ye weep for
pleasure and you weep for pine!”

They sat awhile at the litter door till she said to him, “Come with me into the litter and tell me all that hath befallen thee, and I will tell thee what happened to me.” So they entered and Zau al-Maken said, “Do thou begin thy tale.” Accordingly she told him all that had come to her since their separation at the Khan and what had happened to her with the Badawi; how the merchant had bought her of him and had taken her to her brother Sharrkan and had sold her to him; how he had freed her at the time of buying; how he had made a marriage contract with her and had gone in to her and how the King, their sire, had sent and asked for her from Sharrkan. Then quoth she, “Praised be Allah who hath vouchsafed thee to me and ordained that, even as we left our father together, so together shall we return to him!” And she added, “Of a truth my brother Sharrkan gave me in marriage to this Chamberlain that he might carry me to my father. And this is what befel me from first to last; so now tell me how it hath fared with thee since I left thee.” Thereupon he told her all that had happened to him from beginning to end; and how Allah vouchsafed to send the Fireman to him, and how he had journeyed with him and spent his money on him and had served him night and day. She praised the Stoker for this and Zau al-Makan added, “Of a truth, O my sister, this Fireman hath dealt with me in such benevolent wise as would not lover with lass nor sire with son, for that he fasted and gave me to eat, and he walked whilst he made me ride; and I owe my life to him.” Said she, “Allah willing, we will requite him for all this, according to our power.” Then she called the Eunuch, who came and kissed Zau al- Makan’s hand, and she said, “Take thy reward for glad tidings, O face of good omen! It was thy hand reunited me with my brother; so the purse I gave thee and all in it are thine. But now go to thy master and bring him quickly to me." The Castrato rejoiced and, going in to the Chamberlain, him to his mistress. Accordingly, he came in to his wife and finding Zau al-Makan with her, asked who he was. So she told him all that had befallen them both, first and last, and added, "Know, O Chamberlain, that thou hast married no slave girl; far from it, thou hast taken to wife the daughter of King Omar bin al-Nu'uman for I am Nuzhat al- Zaman, and this is my brother, Zau al-Makan." When the Chamberlain heard the story he knew it to be sooth, and its manifest truth appeared to him and he was certified that he was become King Omar bin al-Nu'uman's son in law, so he said to himself, " 'Twill be my fate to be made viceroy of some province."[321] Then he went up to Zau al-Makan and gave him joy of his safety and reunion with his sister, and bade his servants forthwith make him ready a tent and one of the best of his own horses to ride. Thereupon said Nuzhat al-Zaman, "We are now near our country and I would be left alone with my brother, that we may enjoy each other's company and take our fill of it ere we reach Baghdad; for we have been parted a long, long time." "Be it as thou biddest," replied the Chamberlain, and, going forth from them, sent them wax candles and various kinds of sweetmeats, together with three suits of the costliest for Zau al-Makan. Then he returned to the litter and related the good he had done and Nuzhat al-Zaman said to him, "Bid the Eunuch bring me the Fireman and give him a horse to ride and ration him with a tray of food morning and evening, and let him be forbidden to leave us." The Chamberlain called the Castrato and charged him to do accordingly; so he replied, "I hear and I obey;" and he took his pages with him and went out in search of the Stoker till he found him in the rear of the caravan, girthing his ass and preparing for flight. The tears were running adown his cheeks, out of fear for his life and grief for his separation from Zau al-Makan; and he was saying to himself, "Indeed, I warned him for the love of Allah, but he would not listen to me; Oh would I knew what is become of him!" Ere he had done speaking the Eunuch was standing by his head whilst the pages surrounded him The Fireman turned and seeing the Eunuch and the pages gathered around him became yellow with fear, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seventy-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Stoker girthed his ass for flight and bespake himself, saying, “Oh would I knew what is become of him!”; ere he had done speaking the Castrato was standing by his head and his side muscles quivered for fear and he lifted up his voice and cried, “Verily he knoweth not the value of the good offices I have done him! I believe he hath denounced me to the Eunuch (hence these pages et about me) and he hath made me an accomplice in his crime.” Then the effeminated one cried at him, saying, “Who was it recited the verses? O liar! why didst thou say, ‘I never repeated these couplets, nor do I know who repeated them;’ when it was thy companion? But now I will not leave thee between this place and Baghdad, and what betideth thy comrade shall betide thee.” Quoth the Fireman, “What I feared hath befallen me.” And he repeated this couplet,

“’Twas as I feared the coming ills discerning: * But unto Allah we are all returning.”

Then the Eunuch cried upon the pages, saying, “Take him off the ass.” So they carried him along with the caravan, surrounded by the pages, as the white contains the black of the eye; and the Castrato said to them, “If a hair of him be lost, you will be lost with it.” And he bade them privily treat him with honour and not humiliate him. But when the Stoker saw himself beset by the pages, he despaired of his life and turning to the Eunuch, said to him, “O Chief, I am neither this youth’s brother nor am I akin to him, nor is he sib to me; but I was a Fireman in a Hammam and found him cast out, in his sickness, on the dung heap.” Then the caravan fared on and the Stoker wept and imagined in himself a thousand things, whilst the Eunuch walked by his side and told him nothing, but said to him, “Thou disturbedst our mistress by reciting verses, thou and this youth: but fear nothing for thy self;” and kept laughing at him the while to himself. Whenever the caravan halted, they served him with food, and he and the Castrato ate from one dish.[322] Then the Eunuch bade his lads bring a gugglet of sugared sherbet and, after drinking himself, gave it to the Fireman, who drank; but all the while his tears never dried, out of fear for his life and grief for his separation from Zau al-Makan and for what had befallen them in their strangerhood. So they both travelled on with the caravan, whilst the Chamberlain now rode by the door of his wife's litter, in attendance on Zau al-Makan and his sister, and now gave an eye to the Fireman; and Nuzhat al-Zaman and her brother occupied themselves with converse and mutual condolence; and they ceased not after this fashion till they came within three days' journey from Baghdad. Here they alighted at eventide and rested till the morning morrowed; and as they awoke and they were about to load the beasts, behold, there appeared afar off a great cloud of dust that darkened the firmament till it became black as gloomiest night.[323] Thereupon the Chamberlain cried out to them, "Stay, and your loading delay!"; then, mounting with his Mamelukes, rode forward in the direction of the dust cloud. When they drew near, suddenly appeared under it a numerous conquering host like the full tide sea, with flags and standards, drums and kettledrums, horsemen and footmen. The Chamberlain marvelled at this; and when the troops saw him, there detached itself from amongst them a plump of five hundred cavaliers, who fell upon him and his suite and surrounded them, five for one; whereupon said he to them, "What is the matter and what are these troops, that ye do this with us?" Asked they, "Who art thou; and whence comest thou, and whither art thou bound?" and he answered, "I am the Chamberlain of the Emir of Damascus, King Sharrkan, son of Omar bin al-Nu'uman, Lord of Baghdad and of the land of Khorasan, and I bring tribute and presents from him to his father in Baghdad." When the horsemen heard his words they let their head kerchiefs fall over their faces and wept, saying, "In very sooth King Omar is dead and he died not but of poison. So fare ye forwards; no harm shall befal you till you join his Grand Wazir, Dandan." Now when the Chamberlain heard this, he wept sore and exclaimed, "Oh for our disappointment in this our journey!" Then he and all his suite wept till they had come up with the host and sought access to the Wazir Dandan, who granted an interview and called a halt and, causing his pavilion to be pitched, sat down on a couch therein and commanded to admit the Chamberlain. Then he bade him be seated and questioned him; and he replied that he was Chamberlain to the Emir of Damascus and was bound to King Omar with presents and the tribute of Syria. The Wazir, hearing the mention of King Omar's name, wept and said, “King Omar is dead by poison, and upon his dying the folk fell out amongst themselves as to who should succeed him, until they were like to slay one another on this account; but the notables and grandees and the four Kazis interposed and all the people agreed to refer the matter to the decision of the four judges and that none should gainsay them. So it was agreed that we go to Damascus and fetch thence the King’s son, Sharrkan, and make him Sultan over his father’s realm. And amongst them were some who would have chosen the cadet, Zau Al-Makan, for, quoth they, his name be Light of the Place, and he hath a sister Nuzhat al-Zaman highs, the Delight of the Time; but they set out five years ago for Al-Hijaz and none wotteth what is become of them.” When the Chamberlain heard this, he knew; that his wife had told him the truth of her adventures; and he grieved with sore grief for the death of King Omar, albeit he joyed with exceeding joy, especially at the arrival of Zau al-Makan, for that he would now become Sultan of Baghdad in his father’s stead — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seventy-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sharrkan’s Chamberlain heard of the death of King Omar bin al-Nu’uman he mourned, but he rejoiced because of his wife and her brother Zau al-Makan who would become Sultan of Baghdad in his father’s stead. So he turned to the Wazir Dandan and said to him, “Verily your tale is a wonder of wonders! Know, O Chief Wazir, that here, where you have encountered me, Allah hath given you rest from fatigue and bringeth you your desire after the easiest of fashions, for that His Almighty Will restoreth to you Zau al-Makan and his sister Nuzhat al-Zaman; whereby we will settle the matter as we easily can.” When the Minister heard these words he rejoiced with great joy and said, “O Chamberlain, tell me the tale of the twain and what befel them and the cause of their long absence.” So he repeated to him the whole story and told him that Nuzhat al-Zaman was his wife and related to him the adventures of Zau al-Makan from first to last. As soon as he had ended his tale, the Wazir sent for the Emirs and Wazirs and Chief Officers and acquainted them with the matter; whereat they rejoiced with great joy and wondered at the happy chance. Then they gathered in a body and went in to the Chamberlain and did their service to him, kissing the ground between his hands; and the Wazir Dandan also rose and went out to meet him and stood before him in honour. After this, the Chamberlain held on that day a Divan council; and he and the Wazir sat upon a throne, whilst all the Emirs and Grandees and Officers of State took their places before them, according to their several ranks.[324] Then they melted sugar in rose water and drank, after which the Emirs sat down to hold council and permitted the rest of the host to mount and ride forward leisurely, till they should make an end of their debate and overtake them. So the officers kissed the ground between their hands and mounting, rode onwards, preceded by the standards of war. When the grandees had finished their conference, they took horse and rejoined the host; and the Chamberlain approached the Wazir Dandan and said, "I deem it well to ride on before you, and precede you, that I may get ready a place for the Sultan and notify him of your coming and of your choosing him as Sultan over the head of his brother Sharrkan." "Aright thou reckest," answered the Wazir Then the Chamberlain rose up in haste and Dandan also stood up to do him honour and brought him presents, which he conjured him to accept. In similar guise did all the Emirs and Grandees and Officers of State, bringing him gifts and calling down blessings on him and saying to him, "Haply thou wilt mention our case to Sultan Zau al-Makan and speak to him to continue us in our dignities."[325] The Chamberlain promised all they required and bade his pages be ready to march, whereupon the Wazir Dandan sent with him tents and bade the tent pitchers set them up at a day's journey from the city. And they did his bidding. Then the Chamberlain mounted and rode forward, full of joy and saying to himself, "How blessed is this gurney!", and indeed his wife was exalted in his eyes, she and her brother Zau al-Makan. They made all haste over their wayfare, till they reached a place distant a day's journey from Baghdad, where the Chamberlain called a halt for rest, and bade his men alight and make ready a sitting place for the Sultan Zau al-Makan, son of King Omar bin al-Nu'uman, while he rode forward with his Mamelukes and, alighting at a distance from Nuzhat al-Zaman's litter, commanded the eunuchs to ask leave of admission to the presence. They did so and she gave permission; whereupon he went in to her and conversed with her and her brother; and told them of the death of their father; and of Zau al-Makan, how the heads of the people had made him King over them in the stead of his sire; and he gave them joy of the kingdom. They both wept for their father and asked the manner of his being killed; but the Chamberlain answered, "The news rests with the Wazir Dandan who will be here tomorrow leading all the host; and it only remaineth for thee, O King, to do what they counsel, since they have unanimously chosen thee Sultan; for if thou do not this, they will choose some one else and thou canst not be sure of thy life with another Sultan. Haply he will kill thee, or discord may befal between you twain and the kingdom pass out of the hands of both." Zau al-Makan bowed his head awhile and then said, "I accept this position;" for indeed there was no refusing; and he was certified that the Chamberlain had counselled him well and wisely and set him on the right way. Then he added, "O my uncle, how shall I do with my brother Sharrkan?" "O my son," replied the Chamberlain, "thy brother will be Sultan of Damascus and thou Sultan of Baghdad; so take heart of grace and get ready thy case." Zau al-Makan accepted this and the Chamberlain presented him with a suit of royal raiment and a dagger[326] of state, which the Wazir Dandan had brought with him; then leaving him he bade the tent pitchers choose a spot of rising ground and set up thereon a spacious pavilion, wherein the Sultan might sit to receive the Emirs and Grandees. Moreover he ordered the kitcheners to cook rich viands and serve them and he commanded the water carriers to dispose the water troughs. They did as he bade them and presently arose a cloud of dust from the ground and spread till it walled the horizon round. After awhile, the dust dispersed and there appeared under it the army of Baghdad and Khorasan, a conquering host like the full tide sea. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seventy-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Chamberlain bade the tent pitchers set up a pavilion spacious enough to receive the subjects flocking to their Sultan, they planted a splendid Sháhmiyánah[327] befitting Kings. And as they ended their labours behold, a dust cloud spired aloft and the breeze made it lift and beneath it showed a conquering host; and presently it appeared that this was the army of Baghdad and Khorasan preceded by the Wazir Dandan. And in it all rejoiced at the accession of the “Light of the Place.” Now Zau al-Makan had donned robes of royal estate and girt himself with the sword of state: so the Chamberlain brought him a steed and he mounted surrounded by the Mamelukes and all the company from the tents on foot, to do him service, and he rode on until he came to the great pavilion, where he sat down and he laid the royal dagger across his thighs, whilst the Chamberlain stood in attendance on him and his armed slaves stationed themselves under the entrance awning of the Shahmiyanah, with drawn swords in their hands. Presently, up came the troops and the host and craved admission so the Chamberlain went in to Zau al-Makan and asked his leave whereupon he bade admit them, ten by ten. The Chamberlain acquainted them with the King’s commands, to which they replied, “We hear and we obey;” and all drew up before the pavilion entrance. Then he took ten of them and carried them through the vestibule into the presence of Sultan Zau al-Makan, whom when they saw, they were awed; but he received them with most gracious kindness and promised them all good. So they gave him joy of his safe return and invoked Allah’s blessings upon him after which they took the oath of fealty never to gainsay him in aught and they kissed ground before him and withdrew. Then other ten entered and he entreated them as he had entreated the ethers; and they ceased not to enter, ten by ten, till none was left but the Wazir Dandan. Lastly the Minister went in and kissed the ground before Zau al-Makan, who rose to meet him, saying, “Welcome, O Wazir and sire sans peer! Verily, thine acts are those of a counsellor right dear, and judgement and foreseeing clear are in the hands of the Subtle of Lere.” Then bade he the Chamberlain forthwith go out and cause the tables to be spread and order all the troops thereto. So they came and ate and drank. Moreover the Sultan commanded his Wazir Dandan call a ten days’ halt of the army, that he might be private with him and learn from him how and wherefore his father had been slain. The Wazir obeyed the commands of the Sultan with submission and wished him eternity of glory and said, “This needs must be!” He then repaired to the heart of the encampment and ordered the host to halt ten days. They did as he bade them and, moreover, he gave them leave to divert themselves and ordered that none of the lords in waiting should attend upon the King for service during the space of three days. Then the Wazir went to the Sultan and reported all to him, and Zau al-Makan waited until nightfall, when he went in to his sister Nuzhat al-Zaman and asked her, “Dost thou know the cause of my father’s murder or not?” “I have no knowledge of the cause,” she answered, and drew a silken curtain before herself, whilst Zau al-Makan seated himself without the curtain and commanded the Wazir to the presence and, when he came, said to him, “I desire thou relate to me in detail the cause of the killing of my sire, King Omar bin al-Nu’uman!” “Know then, O King,” replied Dandan, “that King Omar bin al- Nu’uman, when he returned to Baghdad from his chasing and hunting and entered the city, enquired for thee and thy sister, but could not find you and knew that you twain had gone on the Pilgrimage; whereat he was greatly grieved and much angered, and his breast was straitened and he abode thus half a year, seeking news of you from all who came and went but none could give him any tidings. Now while we were in attendance upon him one day, after a whole year had sped since ye were lost to his sight, lo! there came to us an ancient dame with signs of being a devotee, accompanied by five damsels, high bosomed virgins like moons, endowed with such beauty and loveliness as tongue faileth to describe; and, to crown their perfections of comeliness, they could read the Koran and were versed in various kinds of learning and in the histories of bygone peoples. Then that old woman sought audience of the King, and he bade admit her; whereupon she entered the presence and kissed the ground between his hands. I was then sitting by his side and he, seeing in her the signs of asceticism and devoutness, made her draw near and take seat hard by him. And when she had sat down she addressed him and said, ‘Know, O King, that with me are five damsels, whose like no King among the Kings possesseth; for they are endowed with wit and beauty and loveliness and perfection. They read the Koran — and the Traditions and are skilled in all manner of learning and in the history of bygone races. They stand here between thy hands to do thee service, O King of the Age, and it is by trial that folk are prized or despised. 'Thy father, who hath found mercy;[328] looked at the damsels and their favour pleased him; so he said to them, Let each and every of you make me hear something of what she knoweth anent the history of the folk of yore and of peoples long gone before!' — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seventy-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan said unto King Zau al-Makan, "Thy father, who hath found mercy, glanced at the damsels and their favour pleased him and he said to them, 'Let each and every of you make me hear something of what she knoweth anent the history of the folk of yore and of peoples long gone before!' Thereupon one of them came forward and, kissing the ground before him, spake as follows[329] 'Know, O King, that it behoveth one of good breeding to eschew impertinence and adorn himself with excellencies, and observe the Divine injunctions and avoid mortal sins; and to this he should apply himself with the assiduity of one who, if he stray therefrom, falleth into perdition; for the foundation of good breeding is virtuous behaviour. And know that the chief cause and reason of man's existence is the endeavour after life everlasting, and the right way thereto is the service of Allah. Wherefore it behoveth thee to deal beneficently with the people: and swerve not from this canon, for the mightier men are in dignity, the more their need of prudence and foresight; and indeed Monarchs need this more than the many, for the general cast themselves into affairs, without taking thought to the issue thereof. Be thou prodigal of thy life and thy good in the way of Allah, and know that, if an enemy dispute with thee, thou mayst dispute with him and refute him with proofs and be proof against him; but as for thy friend, there is none can judge between thee and him save righteousness and fair dealing. Choose, therefore, thy friend for thyself, after thou hast proved him. If he be of the brotherhood of futurity,[330] let him be zealous in observing the externals of the Holy Law and versed in its inner meaning, as far as may be; and if he be of the brotherhood of the world, let him be free born, sincere, neither a fool nor a perverse, for the fool man is such that even his parents might well flee from him, and a liar cannot be a true friend. Indeed the word, Siddík[331] (‘friend’) deriveth from Sidk (‘truth’) that welleth up from the bottom of the heart; and how can this be the case, when falsehood is manifest upon the tongue? And know, that the observance of the Law profiteth him who practiseth it: so love thy brother, if he be of this quality and do not cast him off, even if thou see in him that which irketh thee, for a friend is not I like a wife, whom one can divorce and re-marry: nay, his heart is like glass: once broken, it may not be mended. And Allah bless him who saith,

‘Ware how thou hurtest man with hurt of heart; * ’Tis hard to win
thee back the heart offended:
For hearts indeed, whence love is alien made, * Like broken glass
may nevermore be mended.’

The maiden continued and concluded with pointing out to us what sages say, ‘The best of brethren is he who is the most constant in good counsel; the best of action is that which is fairest in its consequence, and the best of praise is not that which is in the mouths of men. It is also said, ‘It behoveth not the servant to neglect thanking Allah especially for two favours, health and reason.’ Again it is said, ‘Whoso honoureth himself, his lust is a light matter to him, and he who maketh much of his small troubles, Allah afflicteth him with the greater; he who obeyeth his own inclination neglecteth his duties and he who listeneth to the slanderer loseth the true friend. He who thinketh well of thee, do thou fulfill his thought of thee. He who exceedeth in contention sinneth, and he who against upright standeth not on ward, is not safe from the sword. Now will I tell thee somewhat of the duties of Kazis and judges. Know, O King, that no judgement serveth the cause of justice save it be given after proof positive, and it behoveth the judge to treat all people on the same level, to the intent that the great may not hunger for oppression nor the small despair of justice. Furthermore he should extract proof from the complainant and impose an oath upon the defendant; and mediation is admissible between Moslems, except it be a compromise sanctioning the unlawful or forbidding the lawful.[332] If thou shalt have done aught during the day, of which thy reason is doubtful but thy good intention is proved, thou (O Kazi) shouldst revert to the right, for to do justice is a religious obligation and to return to that which is right is better than persistence in wrong. Then (O judge) thou shouldest study precedents and the law of the case and do equal justice between the suitors, withal fixing thine eyes upon the truth and committing thine affair to Allah (be He extolled and exalted!). And require thou proof of the complainant, and if he adduce evidence let him have due benefit of it; and if not, put the defendant to his oath; for this is the ordinance of Allah. Receive thou the testimony of competent Moslem witnesses, one against other, for Almighty Allah hath commanded judges to judge by externals, He Himself taking charge of the inner and secret things. It behoveth the judge also to avoid giving judge meet, whilst suffering from stress of pain or hunger,[333] and that in his decisions between folk he seek the face of Allah Almighty for he whose intent is pure and who is at peace with himself, Allah shall guarantee him against what is between him and the people.' Quoth al-Zuhri,[334] 'There are three things for which, if they be found in a Kazi, he should be deposed; namely, if he honour the base, if he love praise and if he fear dismissal. And Omar bin Abd al-Aziz once deposed a Kazi, who asked him, 'Why hast thou dismissed me? It hath reached me,' answered Omar, 'that thy converse is greater than thy condition.' It is said also that Iskandar[335] said to his Kazi, 'I have invested thee with this function and committed to thee in it my soul and mine honour and my manliness; so do thou guard it with thy sense and thine understanding.' To his Cook he said, 'Thou art the Sultan of my body; so look thou tender it as thine own self.' To his Secretary he said, 'Thou art the controller of my wit: so do thou watch over me in what thou writest for me and from me.'" Thereupon the first damsel backed out from the presence and a second damsel came forward. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eightieth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan said to Zau al-Makan, "Thereupon the first damsel backed out from the presence and a second damsel came forward and, kissing the ground seven times before the King thy father, spake as follows, 'The sage Lukmán[336] said to his son, 'There be three who are known only in three several cases; the merciful man is unknown save in time of wrath, the brave only in battle, and thy friend in time of need.' It is said that the oppressor shall be depress though by people praised, and that the oppress is at rest though by people blamed. Quoth Allah Almighty,[337] 'Assuredly deem not that those who rejoice in what they have done, and who love to be praised for what they have not done, shall escape reckoning of punishment: indeed there is reserved for them a grievous penalty.' And he said[338] (on whom be salvation and salutation!), 'Works are according to intention and to each man is attributed that which he intendeth.' He said also, 'In the body is a part which being sound the rest is sound, and which being unsound the whole is unsound.' And this is the heart. Now this heart is the most marvellous of what is in man, since it is that which ordereth his whole affair: If covetise stir in it, desire destroyeth him, and if affliction master it, anguish slayeth him; if anger rage in it, danger is hard upon him; if it be blest with contentment, he is safe from discontent; if fear surprise it, he is full of mourning; and if calamity overtake it, affliction betideth him. If a man gain the use of wealth, peradventure he is diverted thereby from the remembrance of his Lord; if poverty choke him his heart is distracted by woe, or if disquietude waste his heart, weakness causeth him to fall. Thus, in any case, nothing profiteth him but that he be mindful of Allah and occupy himself with gaining his livelihood in this world and securing his place in the next. It was asked of a certain sage, 'Who is the most ill conditioned of men?'; and he answered, 'The man whose lusts master his manhood and whose mind soareth over high, so that his knowledge dispreadeth and his excuse diminisheth; and how excellently saith the poet,

Freest am I of all mankind fro' meddling wight * Who, seeing
 others err, self error ne'er can sight:
Riches and talents are but loans to creature lent, * Each wears
 the cloak of that he bears in breast and sprite:
If by mistaken door attempt on aught thou make, * Thou shalt go
 wrong and if the door be right, go right!'

Continued the maiden, 'As for anecdotes of devotees, quoth

Hisham bin Bashar, ‘I asked Omar bin Ubayd, What is true piety?’; and he answered, ‘The Apostle of Allah (to whom be salutation and salvation!) hath explained it when he sayeth, The pious is he who forgetteth not the grave nor calamity and who preferreth that which endureth to that which passeth away; who counteth not the morrow as of his days but reckoneth himself among the dead.’ And it is related that Abu Zarr[339] used to say, Want is dearer to me than wealth, and unheal is dearer to me than health.’ Quoth one of the listeners, ‘May Allah have mercy on Abu Zarr!’. For my part, I say, ‘Whoso putteth his trust in the goodness of the election of Almighty Allah should be content with that condition which Allah hath chosen for him.’ Quoth one of the Companions of the Prophet, ‘Ibn Abi Aufa[340] once prayed with us the dawn prayer. When he had done, he recited, ‘O Thou Enwrapped!’[341] till he came to where Allah saith, ‘When there shall be a trumping on the trumpet,’ and fell down dead. It is said that Sabit al-Banani wept till he well nigh lost his eyes. They brought him a man to medicine him who said to him, ‘I will cure thee, provided thou obey my bidding’ Asked Sabit, ‘In what matter?’ Quoth the leach, ‘In that thou leave weeping!’ ‘What is the worth of mine eyes?’, rejoined Sabit, ‘if they do not weep?’ Quoth a man to Mohammed bin Abdillah, ‘Exhort thou me!’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eighty-first Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan said to Zau al-Makan, “Thus spake the second hand maid to the King who hath found mercy, Omar bin al-Nu’uman. ‘Quoth a man to Mohammed bin Abdillah, Exhort thou me!’ ‘I exhort thee,’ replied he, ‘to be a self ruler, an abstainer in this world, and in the next a greedy slave.’ ‘How so?’ asked the other and Mohammed answered, ‘The abstinent man in this world conquereth both the world that is and the world to come.’ And quoth Ghaus bin Abdillah, ‘There were two brothers among the sons of Israel, one of whom said to the other, ‘What be the most perilous[342] thing thou hast done?’ Replied the brother, ‘I once came upon a nest of young birds; so I took out one and threw it back into the nest; but among the chickens were some which drew apart from it. This is the most perilous thing I ever did; now what be the most perilous thing thou hast ever done?' He rejoined, 'When I arise for prayer I am fearful that it is only for the sake of the reward.' Now their father heard these words and exclaimed, 'O Allah, an say they sooth take them to Thyself!' It was declared by one of the wise men, 'Verily, these were of the most virtuous of children.' Quoth Sa'íd bin Jubayr,[343] 'I was once in company with Fuzalah bin 'Ubaydand said to him, 'Exhort thou me!, Replied he, 'Bear in mind these two necessaries, Shun syntheism[344] and harm not any of Allah's creatures.' And he repeated these two couplets,

'Be as thou wilt, for Allah still is bounteous Lord, * And care
dispeller dread not therefore bane and ban
To two things only never draw thee nigh, nor give * Partner to
Allah trouble to thy brother man.'

And how well saith the poet,

'An thou of pious works a store neglect * And after death meet
one who did collect,
Thou shalt repent thou diddest not as he, * Nor madest ready as
he did elect.'

Then the third damsel came forward, after the second had with drawn, and said, 'Of a truth, the chapter of piety is exceeding wide; but I will mention what occurreth to me thereof, concerning the pious of old. Quoth a certain holy man, 'I congratulate myself in death, though I am not assured of rest therein, save that I know death interveneth between a man and his works; so I hope for the doubling of good works and the docking off of ill works.' And Ita'a al Salami, when he had made an end of an exhortation, was wont to tremble and grieve and weep sore; and as they asked him why he did this he answered, 'I desire to enter upon a grave matter, and it is the standing up before Almighty Allah to do in accordance with my exhortation.' In similar guise Zayn al-Abidín,[345] son of Al-Husayn, was wont to tremble when he rose to pray. Being asked the cause of this, he replied, 'Know ye not before whom I stand and whom I address?' It is said that there lived near Sufyán al-Thauri[346] a blind man who, when the month of Ramazan came, went out with the folk to pray,[347] but remained silent and hung back. Said Sufyan, ‘On the Day of Resurrection he shall come with the people of the Koran and they will be distinguished by increase of honour from their fellows.’ Quoth Sufyan, ‘Were the soul established in the heart as befitteth, it would fly away for joy and pining for Paradise, and for grief and fear of hell-fire.’ It is related also of Sufyan Al-Thauri that he said, ‘To look upon the face of a tyrant is a sin.’ Then the third damsel retired and came for ward the fourth, who said, ‘Here am I to treat of sundry traditions of pious men which suggest themselves to me. It is related that Bishr Barefoot[348] said, ‘I once heard Khálid say, ‘Beware of secret polytheism.’ I asked, ‘What may secret polytheism be?’; and he answered, ‘When one of you in praying prolong his inclinations and prostrations till a cause of impurity[349] come upon him.’ And one of the sages said, ‘Doing works of weal expiateth what is ill.’ Quoth Ibrahim,[350] ‘I supplicated Bishr Barefoot to acquaint me with some theological mysteries; but he said, ‘O my son, this knowledge it behoveth us not to teach to every one; of every hundred five, even as the legal alms upon money.’ Said Ibrahim, ‘I thought his reply excellent and approved of it and while I was praying behold, Bishr was also praying: so I stood behind him[351] making the prayer bow till the Mu’ezzin called his call. Then rose a man of tattered appearance and said, O folk, beware of a truth which bringeth unweal, for there is no harm in a lie bringing weal,[352] and in time of need no choice we heed: speech booteth not in the absence of good qualities even as silence hurteth not in the presence of good. Presently I saw Bishr drop a danik,[353] so I picked it up and exchanged it for a dirham which I gave him. Quoth he, ‘I will not take it.’ Quoth I, ‘It is perfectly lawful change’; but he rejoined ‘I cannot take in exchange the riches of the present world for those of the future world.’ It is related also that Bishr Barefoot’s sister once went to Ahmad bin Hanbal”[354] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eighty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan continued to bespeak Zau al-Makan on this wise, “And quoth the maiden to thy father, ‘Bishr Barefoot’s sister once went to Ahmad bin Hanbal and said to him, ‘O Imam of the Faith, we are a family that spin thread by night and work for our living by day; and oftentimes the cressets of the watch of Baghdad pass by and we on the roof spinning by their light. Is this forbidden to us?’ Asked Ahmad:’Who are thou?’ ‘I am the sister of Bishr Barefoot,’ answered she. Rejoined the Iman, ‘O household of Bishr, I shall never cease to drink full draughts of piety from your hearts.’ Quoth one of the sages, ‘When Allah willeth well to His servant He openeth upon him the gate of action.’ Málik bin Dinár,[355] when he passed through the bazar and saw aught he desired, was wont to say, ‘O soul, take patience, for I will not accord to thee what thou desirest.’ He said also (Allah accept him!), ‘The salvation of the soul lies in resistance to it and its damnation in submission to it.’ Quoth Mansúr bin Ammár,[356] ‘I made a pilgrimage and was faring Meccahwards by way of Cufa, and the night was overcast, when I heard a voice crying out from the deeps of the darkness saying, ‘O Allah, I swear by Thy Greatness and Thy Glory, I meant not through my disobedience to transgress against Thee; for indeed I am not ignorant of Thee; but my fault is one Thou didst foreordain to me from eternity without beginning;[357] so do Thou pardon my transgression, for indeed I disobeyed Thee of my ignorance!’ When he had made an end of his prayer he recited aloud the verse, ‘O true believers, save your souls and those of your families from the fire whose fuel is men and stones.’[358] Then I heard a fall, but not knowing what it was I passed on. When the morning morrowed, as we went our way, behold, we fell in with a funeral train, followed by an old woman whose strength had left her. I asked her of the dead, and she answered, ‘This is the funeral of a man who passed by us yesterday whilst my son was standing at prayer and after his prayers he recited a verse from the Book of Allah Almighty when the man’s gall bladder burst and he fell dead.’ Therewith the fourth damsel retired and the fifth came forward and said, ‘I here will also repeat what occurreth to me regarding the acts of devotees in olden time. Maslamah bin Dinár used to say, ‘By making sound the secret thoughts, sins great and small are covered’; and, ‘when the servant of Allah is resolved to leave sinning, victory cometh to him.’ Also quoth he, ‘Every worldly good which doth not draw one nearer to Allah is a calamity, for a little of this world distracteth from a mickle of the world to come and a mickle of the present maketh thee forget the whole of the future.’ It was asked of Abú Házim,[359] ‘Who is the most prosperous of men?’; and he answered, ‘Whoso spendeth his life in submission to Allah.’ The other enquired, ‘And who is the most foolish of mankind?’ ‘Whoso selleth his future for the worldly goods of others,’ replied Abu Hazim. It is reported of Moses[360] (on whom be peace!) that when he came to the waters of Midian he exclaimed, ‘O Lord, verily I stand in need of the good which thou shalt send down to me.’[361] And he asked of his Lord and not of his folk. There came two damsels and he drew water for them both and allowed not the shepherds to draw first. When the twain returned, they informed their father Shu’ayb (on whom be peace!) who said, ‘Haply, he is hungry,’ adding to one of them, ‘Go back to him and bid him hither.’ Now when she came to Moses, she veiled her face and said, ‘My father biddeth thee to him that he may pay thee thy wage for having drawn water for us.’ Moses was averse to this and was not willing to follow her. Now she was a woman large in the back parts, and the wind blowing upon her garment[362] covered the hinder cheeks to Moses; which when Moses saw, he lowered his eyes and said to her, ‘Get thee behind while I walk in front.’ So she followed him till he entered the house of Shu’ayb where supper was ready.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eighty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan continued to Zau al-Makan, “Now, quoth the fifth damsel to thy sire, ‘When Moses (on whom be peace!) entered the home of Shu’ayb where supper was ready, Shu’ayb said to him, ‘O Moses, I desire to pay thee thy wage for having drawn water for these two.’ But Moses answered, ‘I am of a household which selleth nothing of the fashion of the next world[363] for what is on earth of gold and silver.’ Then quoth Shu’ayb, ‘O youth! nevertheless thou art my guest, and it is my wont and that of my forbears to honour the guest by setting food before him.’ So Moses sat down and ate. Then Shu’ayb hired Moses for eight pilgrimages, that is to say, eight years, and made his wage marriage with one of his two daughters, and Moses' service to him was to stand for her dowry. As saith the Holy Writ of him, 'Verily I will give thee one of these my two daughters in marriage, on condition that thou serve me for hire eight pilgrimages: and if thou fulfil ten years, it is in thine own breast; for I seek not to impose a hardship on thee.'[364] A certain man once said to one of his friends whom he had not met for many days, 'Thou hast made me desolate, for that I have not seen thee this long while.' Quoth the other, 'I have been distracted from thee by Ibn Shiháb: dost thou know him?' Quoth his friend, 'Yes, he hath been my neighbour these thirty years, but I have never spoken to him.' He replied, 'Verily thou forgettest Allah in forgetting — thy neighbour! If thou lovedst Allah thou wouldst love thy neighbour. Knowest thou not that a neighbour hath a claim upon his neighbour,[365] even as the right of kith and kin?' Said Huzayfah, 'We entered Meccah with Ibráhím bin Adham, and Shakík al-Balkhí was also making a pilgrimage that year. Now we met whilst circumambulating the Ka'abah and Ibrahim said to Shakik, 'What is your fashion in your country?' Replied Shakik, 'When we are blest with our daily bread we eat, and when we hunger we take patience.' 'This wise,' said Ibrahim, 'do the dogs of Balkh; but we, when blest with plenty, do honour to Allah and when an hungered we thank Him.' And Shakik seated himself before Ibrahim and said to him, 'Thou art my master.' Also said Mohammed bin Imrán, 'A man once asked of Hátim the Deaf[366] 'What maketh thee to trust in Allah?' 'Two things,' answered he, 'I know that none save myself shall eat my daily bread, so my heart is at rest as to that; and I know that I was not created without the knowledge of Allah, and am abashed before Him.' Then the fifth damsel retired and the ancient dame came forward and, kissing the ground before thy father nine times, said, 'Thou hast heard, O King, what these all have spoken on the subject of piety; and I will follow their example in relating what hath reached me of the famous men of past times. It is said that the Imam al-Sháfi'í departed the night into three portions, the first for study, the second for sleep and the third for prayer. The Imam Abú Hanífah[367] was wont also to pass half the night in prayer. One

day a man pointed him out to another, as he walked by and remarked, ‘Yonder man watcheth the whole night.’ When he heard this Abu Hanifah said, ‘I was abashed before Allah to hear myself praised for what was not in me’; so after this he used to watch the whole night. And one of the Sages hath said,

‘Who seeketh for pearl in the Deep dives deep; * Who on high would hie robs his night of sleep.’

Al-Rabí a relates that Al-Shafi’i used to recite the whole Koran seventy times during the month of Ramazan, and that in his daily prayers. Quoth Al-Shafi’i (Allah accept him!), ‘During ten years I never ate my fill of barley bread, for fullness hardeneth the heart and deadeneth the wit and induceth sleep and enfeebleth one from standing up to pray.’[368] It is reported of Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Sakrá that he said, ‘I was once talking with Omar and he observed to me, ‘Never saw I a more God fearing or eloquent man than Mohammed bin Idris al-Shafi’i.’ It so happened I went out one day with Al-Háris bin Labíb al-Saffár, who was a disciple of Al-Muzani[369] and had a fine voice and he read the saying of the Almighty, ‘This shall be a day whereon they shall not speak to any purpose, nor shall they be permitted to excuse themselves.’[370] I saw Al-Shafi’i’s colour change; his skin shuddered with horripilation, he was violently moved and he fell down in a fainting fit When he revived he said, ‘I take refuge with Allah from the stead of the liars and the lot of the negligent! O Allah, before whom the hearts of the wise abase themselves, O Allah, of Thy bene ficence accord to me the remission of my sins, adorn me with the curtain of Thy protection and pardon me my shortcomings, by the magnanimity of Thy Being!’ Then I rose and went away. Quoth one of the pious, ‘When I entered Baghdad, Al-Shafi’i was there. So I sat down on the river bank to make the ablution before prayer; and behold, there passed me one who said, ‘O youth, make thy Wuzu-ablution well and Allah will make it well for thee in this world and in the next.’ I turned and lo! there was a man behind whom came a company of people. So I hastened to finish my ablution and followed him. Presently, he turned and asked me, ‘Say, dost thou want aught?’ ‘Yes,’ answered I, ‘I desire that thou teach me somewhat of that which Allah Almighty hath taught thee.’ He said, ‘Know then that whoso believeth in Allah shall be saved, and whoso jealously loveth his faith shall be delivered from destruction, and whoso practiseth abstinence in this world, his eyes shall be solaced on the morrow of death. Shall I tell thee any more?' I replied, 'Assuredly;' and he continued, 'Be thou of the world that is, heedless; and of the world to come, greediest. Be truthful in all thy dealings, and thou shalt be saved with the Salvationists.' Then he went on and I asked about him and was told that he was the Imam Al-Shafi'i. Al-Shafi'i was wont to remark, 'I love to see folk profit by this learning of mine, on condition that nothing of it be attributed to me." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eighty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan continued to Zau al-Makan, "The old woman bespake thy sire, saying, 'The Imam Al-Shafi'i was wont to remark, I love to see folk profit by this learning of mine on condition that nothing of it be attributed to me.' He also said, 'I never disputed with any one, but I would that Almighty Allah should give him the knowledge of the Truth and aid him to dispread it: nor did I ever dispute with anyone at all but for the showing forth of the Truth, and I reck not whether Allah manifest it by my tongue or by His.' He said also (whom Allah accept!), 'If thou fear to grow conceited of thy lore, then bethink thee Whose grace thou seekest and for what good thou yearnest and what punishment thou dreadest.' It was told to Abu Hanífah that the Commander of the Faithful, Abú Ja'afar al-Mansúr, had appointed him Kazi and ordered him a salary of ten thousand dirhams; but he would not accept of this; and, when the day came on which the money was to be paid him, he prayed the dawn prayer, then covered his head with his robe — and spoke not. When the Caliph's messenger came with the money, he went in to the Imam and accosted him, but he would not speak to him. So the messenger said, 'Verily this money is lawfully thine.' 'I know that it is lawfully mine,' replied he: 'but I abhor that the love of tyrants get a hold upon my heart.'[371] Asked the other, 'If thou go in to them canst thou not guard thyself from loving them?' Answered Abu Hanifah, 'Can I look to enter the sea without my clothes being wet?' Another of Al-Shafi'i's sayings (Allah accept him!) is,

‘Oh soul of me, an thou accept my rede, * Thou shalt be wealthy and of grace entire:
Cast off ambitious hopes and vain desires, * How many a death was done by vain desire!’

Among the sayings of Sufyán al-Thaurí, with which he admonished Ali bin al-Hasan al-Salami was, ‘Be thou a man of truth and ‘ware lies and treachery and hypocrisy and pride. Be not indebted save to Him who is merciful to His debtors; and let thine associate be one who shall dissociate thee from the world. Be ever mindful of death and be constant in craving pardon of Allah and in beseeching of Allah peace for what remaineth of thy life. Counsel every True Believer, when he asketh thee concerning the things of his faith; and beware of betraying a Believer, for whoso betrayeth a Believer, betrayeth Allah and His Apostle. Avoid dissensions and litigation; and leave that which causeth doubt in thee for things which breed no doubt:[372] so shalt thou be at peace. Enjoin beneficence and forbid malevolence: so shalt thou be loved of Allah. Adorn thine inner man and Allah shall adorn thine outer man. Accept the excuse of him who excuseth self to thee and hate not any one of the Moslems. Draw near unto those who withdraw from thee and excuse those that misuse thee: so shalt thou be the friend of the Prophets. Let thine affairs, both public and private, be in Allah’s charge, and fear Him with the fear of one who knoweth he is dead and who fareth towards Resurrection and Judgement stead between the hands of the Lord of Dread; and remember that to one of two houses thou art sped, either for Heavens eterne or to the Hell fires that burn.’ Thereupon the old woman sat down beside the damsels. Now when thy father, who hath found mercy, heard their discourse, he knew that they were the most accomplished of the people of their time; and, seeing their beauty and loveliness and the extent of their wisdom and lore, he showed them all favour. Moreover, he turned to the ancient dame and treated her with honour, and set apart for her and her damsels the palace which had lodged Princess Abrizah, daughter of the King of Greece, to which he bade carry all the luxuries they needed. They abode with him ten days and the old woman abode with them; and, whenever the King visited them, he found her absorbed in prayer, watching by night and fasting by day; whereby love of her took hold upon his heart and he said to me, ‘O Wazir, verily this old woman is of the pious, and awe of her is strong in my heart.’ Now on the eleventh day, the King visited her, that he might pay her the price of the damsels; but she said to him, ‘O King, know that the price of these maidens surpasseth the competence of men; indeed I seek not for them either gold or silver or jewels, be it little or much.’ Now when thy father heard these words he wondered and asked her, ‘O my lady and what is their price?’; whereto she answered, ‘I will not sill them to thee save on condition that thou fast, watching by night a whole month, and abstaining by day, all for the love of Allah Almighty; and, if thou do this, they are thy property to use in thy palace as thou please.’ So the King wondered at the perfection of her rectitude and piety and abnegation; she was magnified in his eyes and he said, ‘Allah make this pious woman to profit us!’ Then he agreed with her to fast for a month as she had stipulated, and she said to him, ‘I will help thee with the prayers I pray for thee and now bring me a gugglet of water.’ They brought one and she took it and recited over it and muttered spells, and sat for an hour speaking in speech no one understood or knew aught thereof. Lastly she covered it with a cloth and, sealing it with her signet ring, gave it to thy sire, saying, ‘When thou hast fasted the first ten days, break thy fast on the eleventh night with what is in this gugglet, for it will root out the love of the world from thy heart and fill it with light and faith. As for me, tomorrow I will go forth to my brethren, the Invisible[373] Controuls, for I yearn after them, and I will return to thee when the first ten days are past. Thy father took the gugglet and arose and set it apart in a closet of his palace, then locked the door and put the key in his pocket. Next day the King fasted and the old woman went her ways.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eighty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan thus continued to Zau al-Makan, “Now when came the day for the Sultan’s fast, the old woman went her ways. And after he had accomplished the ten days thereof, on the eleventh he opened the gugglet and drank what was therein and found it cordial to his stomach. Within the second ten days of the month the old woman returned, bringing sweetmeats wrapped in a green leaf, like no leaf of known tree. She went in to thy sire and saluted him; and, when he saw her, he rose to her saying, 'Welcome, O pious lady!' 'O King,' quoth she, 'the Invisible Controuls salute thee, for I told them of thee, and they rejoiced in thee and have sent thee their Halwá,[374] which is of the sweetmeats of the other world. Do thou break thy fast on it at the end of the day.' The King rejoiced at this with great joy, and exclaimed, 'Praised be Allah, who hath given me brethren of the Invisible World!' Thereupon he thanked the ancient dame and kissed her hands; and he honoured her and the damsels with exceeding honour. She went forth for the twenty days of thy father's fast at the end of which time she came to him and said, 'Know, O King, that I told the Invisible Controuls of the love which is between me and thee, and informed them how I had left the maidens with thee, and they were glad that the damsels should belong to a King like thee; for they were wont, when they saw them, to be strenuous in offering on their behalf prayers and petitions ever granted. So I would fain carry them to the Invisible Controuls that they may benefit by the breath of their favour, and peradventure, they shall not return to thee without some treasure of the treasures of the earth, that thou, after completing thy fast, mayst occupy thyself with their raiment and help thyself by the money they shall bring thee, to the extent of thy desires.' When thy sire heard her words, he thanked her for them and said, 'Except that I fear to cross thee, I would not accept the treasure or aught else; but when wilt thou set out with them?' Replied she, 'On the seven and twentieth night; and I will bring them back to thee at the head of the month, by which time thou wilt have accomplished thy fast and they will have had their courses and be free from impurity; and they shall become thine and be at thy disposal. By Allah, each damsel of them is worth many times thy kingdom!' He said, 'I know it, O pious lady!' Then quoth the old woman, 'There is no help but that thou send with them someone in thy palace who is dear to thee, that she may find solace and seek a blessing of the Invisible Controuls.' Quoth he, 'I have a Greek slave called Sophia, by whom I have been blessed with two children, a girl and a boy; but they were lost; years ago. Take her with thee that she may get the blessing'" — And

Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eighty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan continued to Zau al-Makan, “Quoth thy sire to the ancient woman when she demanded the handmaids of him, ‘I have a Greek slave called Sophia, by whom I have been blest with two children, a girl and a boy, but they were lost years ago; so take her with thee, haply she may get the benediction and, belike, the Invisible Controuls will sue Allah for her that her two children may be restored to her.’ ‘Thou hast said well,’ replied she; ‘for that indeed was her grievousest want.’ Thy sire gave not over finishing his fast till the old woman said to him, ‘O my son, I am going to the Invisible Controuls; so bring me Sophia.’ Accordingly, he summoned her and she came forthright, and he delivered her to the old woman who mixed her up with the other damsels. Then she went in to her chamber and bringing out a sealed cup, presented it to the Sultan saying, ‘On the thirtieth day, do thou repair to the Hammam and when thou comest out, enter one of the closets in thy palace and drink what is in this cup. Then sleep, and thou shalt attain what thou seekest, and peace be with thee’! Thereat the King was glad and thanked her and kissed her hands. Quoth she, ‘I commend thee to Allah’s care;’ whereat quoth he, ‘And when shall I see thee again, O pious lady? In very sooth I love not to part with thee.’ Then she called down blessings on him and departed with the five damsels and the Queen; whilst the King fasted after her departure other three days, till the month ended, when he arose and went to the Hammam and coming out shut himself up in a closet of his palace, commanding that none should go in to him. There, after making fast the door, he drank what was in the cup and lay down to sleep; and we sat awaiting him till the end of the day, but he did not come out and we said, ‘Perchance he is tired with the bath and with watching by night and fasting by day; wherefore he sleepeth.’ So we waited till next day; but still he did not come forth. Then we stood at the closet door and cried aloud so haply he might awake and ask what was the matter. But nothing came of that; so at last we lifted up the door;[375] and, going in, found him dead, with his flesh torn into strips and bits and his bones broken.[376] When we saw him in this condition it was grievous to us, and we took up the cup and found within its cover a piece of paper whereon was inscribed, ‘Whoso doeth evil leaveth no regrets, and this be the reward of him who playeth traitor with the daughters of Kings and who debaucheth them; and we make known to all who fall upon this scroll that Sharrkan, when he came to our country, seduced our Queen Abrizah; nor did that suffice him but he must needs take her from us and bring her to you. Then he[377] sent her away in company of a black slave who slew her, and we found her lying dead on the desert sward and thrown out to wild beasts. This be no kingly deed, and he who did this is requited with naught but what he merited. So do ye suspect none of having killed him, for no one slew him but the cunning witch, whose name is Zat al-Dawahi. And behold, I have taken the King’s wife, Sophia, and have carried her to her father, Afridun King of Constantinople. Moreover, there is no help for it but that we wage war upon you and kill you and take your country from you, and ye shall be cut off even to the last man, nor shall a living soul be spared by Death nor one who bloweth fire with his breath, save he who Cross and Belt[378] worshippeth.’ When we read this paper, we knew that the ancient woman had beguiled us and carried out her plot against us: whereupon we cried aloud and buffeted our faces and wept sore when weeping availed us naught. And the troops fell out as to whom they should make Sultan; some would have thee, and others would have thy brother Sharrkan; and we ceased not to dispute about this for the space of a month, at the end of which certain of us drew together and agreed to repair to thy brother Sharrkan: so we set out and journeyed on till we fell in with thee. And such is the manner of the death of Sultan Omar bin al-Nu’uman!” Now when the Wazir Dandan had made an end of his story, Zau al- Makan and his sister, Nuzhat al-Zaman wept; and the Chamberlain, who wept also, said to Zau al-Makan, “O King, weeping will avail thee naught; nor shall aught profit thee but that thou harden thy heart and strengthen thy stress and establish thy sovranty; for verily whoso leaveth the like of thee is not dead.” Thereupon Zau al-Makan gave over his weeping and caused his throne to be set up without the pavilion, and then commanded the army to pass in review order before him. And the Chamberlain sat by his side and all the armour-bearers[379] behind him, whilst the Wazir Dandan and the rest of the Emirs and Grandees stood each in his individual stead. Then quoth King Zau al-Makan to the Minister Dandan, “Inform me concerning my sire’s treasures;” and he replied, “I hear and I obey;” and gave him to know of the late King’s hoards and monies, and what was in the treasury of amassed wealth and jewels, and acquainted him with other precious things. So Zau al-Makan opened his hand to the army, and gave a sumptuous robe of honour to the Wazir Dandan, saying, “Thou continues” in office. Whereupon Dandan kissed the ground before him and wished him long life. Then he bestowed dresses on the Emirs, after which he said to the Chamberlain, “Bring out before me the tribute of Damascus that is with thee.” So he was shown the chests of money and rarities and jewels, when he took them and parted them all amongst the troops, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eighty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Zau al-Makan ordered the Chamberlain to bring out before him what he had brought of the tribute of Damascus; and, when he was shown the chests of money and rarities and jewels, he took them and parted them all amongst the troops, till nothing was left. And the Emirs kissed the ground before him and wished him long life, saying, “Never saw we a King, who gave the like of these gifts.” Then all went away to their tents and when it was morning he gave orders for marching. So they marched for three days, till, on the fourth day, they drew near to Baghdad. When they entered the city, they found it decorated, and Zau al-Makan, the Sultan, went up to his father’s palace and sat down on the throne, whilst the Emirs of the army and the Wazir Dandan and the Chamberlain of Damascus stood between his hands. Then he bade his private secretary write a writ to his brother Sharrkan, acquainting him with all that had passed, from first to last, and he concluded, “As soon as thou hast read this letter, make ready thine affair and join us with thine army, that we may turn to Holy War upon the Infidels and take man bote for our father and wipe out the stain upon our honour.” Then he folded the letter and sealed it with his seal ring and said to the Minister Dandan, “None shall carry this letter but thou; and it behoveth thee speak my brother fair and say to him, ‘If thou have a mind to thy father’s kingdom, it is thine, and thy brother shall be Viceroy for thee in Damascus; for to this effect am I instructed by him.’” So the Wazir went down from before him and made ready for his march. Then Zau al-Makan bade set apart a magnificent house for the Fireman and furnished it with the best of furniture and long is the tale of that Fireman.[380] Presently Zau al-Makan went out chasing and hunting and, as he was returning to Baghdad, one of the Emirs presented him with blood horses and with beauteous handmaids whose description the tongue evades. One of the damsels pleased him: so he went in unto her and knew her that night, and she conceived by him forthright. After a while, the Wazir Dandan returned from his journey, bringing him news of his brother Sharrkan and that he was then on his way to him, and said, “It were fitting thou go forth to meet him.” Zau al- Makan replied, “I hear and I consent;” and riding forth with his Grandees a day’s journey from Baghdad, he pitched his pavilions there awaiting his brother. Next morning appeared King Sharrkan amid the army of Syria, a horseman of might, a lion fierce in fight, a prow and doughty knight. As the squadrons drew nigh and the dust clouds came hard by and the troops rode up with banners on high, Zau al-Makan and those with him pushed forward to meet Sharrkan and his men; and when Zau al-Makan saw his brother, he desired to dismount, but Sharrkan conjured him not to do on this wise, and himself footed it, and walked a few paces towards him.[381] As soon as he reached Zau al-Makan, the new Sultan threw himself upon him, and Sharrkan embraced him and wept with great weeping and the twain condoled with each other. Then they mounted and rode onward, they and their troops, till they reached Baghdad, where they alighted and went up to the royal palace and there they passed that night, and when next morning came, Zau al- Makan went forth and bade summon the troops from all parts, and proclaimed a Holy War and a Razzia.[382] They then awaited the coming of the levies from each quarter of the kingdom, and every one who came they entreated with honour and promised him all manner of good; till in so doing a full month had sped, and the fighting men flocked to them in a continuous body. Then Sharrkan said to Zau al-Makan, “O my brother, tell me thy history.” So he told him all that had befallen him from first to last, including the benevolent dealing of the Fireman with him. Asked Sharrkan, ‘Hast thou requited his kindness?”; and he answered, “O my brother! I have not rewarded him as yet, but Inshallah! I will recompense him whenas I return from this raid” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eighty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sharrkan asked his brother Zau al-Makan, “Hast thou requited the Fireman for his kindness?”; and he answered, “O my brother, I have not rewarded him as yet, but Inshallah! I will recompense him whenas I return from this raid and find time so to do.” Therewith Sharrkan was certified that his sister, Nuzhat al-Zaman, had told him the whole truth; but he concealed what had passed between them and offered his salutation to her by her husband the Chamberlain. She sent him back her greeting, calling down blessings on him and enquiring after her daughter Kuzia-Fakan, to which he replied that the maiden was well and in the best of health and safety. Where upon she praised Almighty Allah and gave him thanks. Then Sharrkan went to his brother to take counsel with him for departure; and Zau al-Makan said, “O my brother, as soon as the army is complete and the Arabs have come in from all parts, we will march forth.” So he bade make ready the commissariat and prepare munitions of war and went in to his wife, who was now five months gone with child; and he put under her astrologers and mathematicians, to whom he appointed stipends and allowances. Then he set out three months after the arrival of the army of Syria, and as soon as the Arabs were come in and the troops were assembled from all directions; and, as he fared forth, he was followed by the warriors and the united host. Now the name of the General of the Daylam army was Rustam and that of the General of the army of the Turks[383] Bahram. And Zau al- Makan marched in mid host and on his right was his brother Sharrkan, and on his left the Chamberlain his brother-in-law. So the squadrons broke up and pushed forward and the battalions and companies filed past in battle array, till the whole army was in motion. They ceased not to fare on for the space of a month, and each body dismounted at its own ground and there rested every week three days (for the host was great); and they advanced in this order till they came to the country of the Greeks. Then the people of the villages and hamlets and the poorer sort took fright at them and fled to Constantinople. But when King Afridun heard the tidings he arose and betook himself to Zat al-Dawahi, the same who had contrived the stratagem, and had travelled to Baghdad and had slain King Omar bin Al-Nu'uman; and who after carrying off her slaves and Queen Sophia, had returned with them all to her native land. Now when she had been restored to her son, the King of Greece, and felt herself safe, she said to King Hardub, "Cool thine eyes; for I have avenged by blood the shame of thy daughter Abrizah, and have killed Omar bin al-Nu'uman and have brought back Sophia. So now let us go to the King of Constantinople and carry to him his daughter and acquaint him with what hath happened, that all of us be on guard and prepare our forces; and I will fare with thee to King Afridun, Lord of Constantinople, for I opine that the Moslems will not await our attack." Said Hardub, "Tarry thou till they draw near our country, that we may make us ready meantime and assemble our power." Accordingly they took to levying their forces and preparing for war, and, when the news of the Moslems' advance reached them, they were prepared for defence; and Zat al Dawahi had preceded them. Now when she and her son arrived at Constantinople, the King of Kings, Afridun, hearing of the approach of Hardub, King of the Greeks, came forth to meet him and asked how it was with him and the cause of his visit. So Hardub acquainted him with the cunning doings of his mother, Zat al-Dawahi, how she had slain the Moslem King and recovered from him Queen Sophia, and had said, "The Moslems have assembled their forces and are on their way to attack us, wherefore it behoveth that we two join hands in single band and meet them." Now King Afridun rejoiced in the return of his daughter and the killing of King Omar bin al-Nu'uman; and he sent to all countries seeking succour and acquainting the folk with the cause of slaying the Moslem King. So the Nazarene troops flocked to him and three months were not past ere the army of the Greeks was complete, besides which there joined themselves to him Franks from all their lands, French, Germans[384] and Ragusans,[385] with men of Zara,[386] Venetians, Genoese, and all the hosts of the Yellow Faces[387] ; and, when the gathering was at its full, earth was straitened on them by reason of their multitude. Then Afridun, the Great King, ordered a march; so they set out and ceased not to defile through the city for ten days. They fared on till they reached the Wady highs Al-Nu'uman, a broad sided vale hard by the Salt Sea, where they halted three days; and on the fourth they were about to set out again, when news came that the army of Al-Islam on them press, and the defenders of the faith of Mohammed, of Men the Best. So they halted in it other three days, and on the eighth they espied a dust cloud which towered till it walled the whole land; nor was an hour of the day past ere that dust began to drift and was torn to shreds in the lift, and pierced through its shades the starry radiance of lance and the white levee of blades. Presently there appeared beneath it the banners Islamitan and the ensigns Mahometan; the horsemen urged forward, like the letting loose of seas that surged, clad in mail, as they were mackerel-back clouds which the moon enveil; whereupon the two hosts clashed, like two torrents on each other dashed. Eyes fell upon eyes; and the first to seek combat singular was the Wazir Dandan, he and the army of Syria, numbering thirty thousand bridles, and with him were the General of the Turks, and the General of Daylam, Rustam and Bahram, amid twenty thousand horse, behind whom came the men from the shores of the Salt Sea, clad in iron mail, as they were full moons that past through a night o'ercast. Then the Nazarene host called out on Jesus and Mary, and the defiled[388] Cross and they heaped themselves upon the Wazir Dandan and those with him of the Syrian host. Now all this was in pursuance of a stratagem devised by that ancient woman Zat al-Dawahi; for, before his departure, King Afridun had gone in to her and asked her, "How shall I do and what plan shall I pursue?; it is thou hast caused this great distress to us;" and she had answered, "O great King and mighty Cohen![389] I will teach thee a trick would baffle Iblis himself, though he summon to his assistance all his grisly hosts." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eighty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, all this was a stratagem of the ancient woman, for that the King before his departure had gone to her and asked, "How shall I do and what plan shall I pursue? it is thou hast caused this great distress to us!" And she had answered, "O great King and mighty Cohen, I will teach thee a trick would baffle the Devil himself though he summon to his assistance all his grisly hosts. It is that thou send fifty thousand men going down in ships, and sailing over the sea to the Mountain of Smoke; and there let them land and stir not till {he standards of Al-Islam come upon thee, when do thou up and at them. Then bid the troops from the seaward sally out upon the Moslems and take them in rear, whilst we confront them from the landward. So not one of them shall escape, and our sorrows shall tease and peace abide with us." Now the counsel of this ancient woman commended itself to King Afridun, and he replied, "Right is the recking thou reckest, O Princess of wits and recourse of Kings and Cohens warring for their blood wit!" So when the army of Al-Islam came upon them in chat valley, before they knew of it the flames began to burn up the tents and the swords in men's bodies to make rents. Then hurried up the army of Baghdad and Khorasan who numbered one hundred and twenty thousand horse, with Zau al-Makan in the front of war. When the host of the Infidels that lay by the sea saw them, they sallied out against them and followed in their tracks; and when Zau al- Makan espied this he cried out to his men, "Turn back to the Infidels, O People of the Chosen Apostle, and slay those who deny and hate the authority of the Compassionating, the Compassionate!" So they turned and fought with the Christians. Then Sharrkan marched up with another corps of the Moslem host, some hundred thousand men, whilst the Infidels numbered nigh upon a thousand and six hundred thousand men. When the Moslems were united, their hearts were strengthened and they cried out, saying, "Verily Allah hath pro mised us victory, and to the Infidels hath assigned defeat." And they clashed together with sword and spear. Now Sharrkan tare through rank and row and raged among the masses of the foe, fighting so fierce a fight as to make children grey grow; nor did he cease tourneying among the infidel horde and working havoc among them with the keen edged sword, shouting "Allaho Akbar!" (Allah is Most Great) till he drove back the host to the coast. Then failed the force of the foe and Allah gave victory to the faith of Al-Islam, and folk fought folk, drunken without strong drink till they slew of the

Infidels in this affair forty and five thousand, while of the Moslems but three thousand and five hundred fell. Moreover, the Lion of the Faith, King Sharrkan, and his brother, Zau al-Makan, slept not that night, but occupied themselves with congratulating their braves and with looking to the wounded and with assuring the army of victory and salvation and promise of reward in the world to come. Thus far concerning the Moslem; but as regards King Afridun, Lord of Constantinople and Sovran of Roum, and Zat Al-Dawahi, they assembled the Emirs of the host and said to them, "Verily, we had worked our will and solaced our hearts, but our over confidence in our numbers, and that only, defeated us." Then quoth to them the ancient one, the Lady of Calamities, "In very sooth nought shall profit you, except ye draw you nigh unto the Messiah and put your trust in the True Belief, for, by the virtue of the Messiah, the whole strength of the Moslem host lieth in that Satan, King Sharrkan." "Tomorrow," said King Afridun, "I have resolved to draw up in battle array and to send out against them that redoubtable cavalier, Lúká bin Shamlút; for if King Sharrkan come forth as a champion to fight single handed, our man will slay him and will slay the other Moslem Knights, till not one is left. And I purpose this night to sacre you all with the Holy Incense." When the Emirs heard these words they kissed the ground before him. Now the incense which he designated was the excrement of the Chief Patriarch, the denier, the defiler of the Truth, and they sought for it with such instance, and they so highly valued it that the high priests of the Greeks used to send it to all the countries of the Christians in silken wraps after mixing it with musk and ambergris. Hearing of it Kings would pay a thousand gold pieces for every dram and they sent for and sought it to fumigate brides withal; and the Chief Priests and the great Kings were wont to use a little of it as collyrium for the eyes and as a remedy in sickness and colic; and the Patriarchs used to mix their own skite[390] with it, for that the skite of the Chief Patriarch could not suffice for ten countries.[391] So, as soon as dawn was seen and the morning shone with its shine and sheen, the horsemen ran to their spears full keen, and King Afridun, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Ninetieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, as soon as dawn was seen and the morning shone with its shine and sheen, the horsemen ran to their spears full keen and King Afridun summoned his chief Knights and Nobles and invested them with dresses of honour; and, drawing the sign of the cross on their brows, incensed them with the incense which as aforesaid was the skite of the Chief Patriarch, the Cohen, the Heresiarch. This incensing done, he called for Luka bin Shamlut, surnamed the Sword of the Messiah; and, after fumigating him and rubbing his palate with the Holy Merde, caused him to snuff it and smeared his cheeks and anointed his moustaches with the rest. Now there was no stouter champion in the land of Roum than this accursed Luka, nor any better at bending of bow or sway of sword or lunge with lance on the day of devoir; but he was foul of favour, for his face was as the face of an ass, his shape that of an ape and his look as the look of a malignant snake: his presence was grievouser than parting from the beloved make; and blacker than night was his blackness and more fetid than the lion was his breath for foulness; more crooked than a bow was his crookedness and grimmer than the leopard was his ugliness, and he was branded with the mark of the Infidels on face.[392] After this he came up to King Afridun and kissed his feet and stood before him; and the King said to him, “I desire thou go out against Sharrkan, King of Damascus, son of Omar bin al-Nu’uman, and deliver us from this affliction.” Quoth Luka, “Hearkening and obedience;” and the King made the sign of the cross on his forehead and felt assured of help from Heaven being near hand. Then Luka went out from the presence and the accursed one mounted a sorrel horse; he was clad in a red robe and a hauberk of gold set with jewels, and he bore a trident spear, as he were Iblis the damned on the day of drewing out his hosts war to darraign. Then he rode forward, he and his horde of Infidels, even as though they were driving to the Fire, preceded by a herald, crying aloud in the Arabic tongue and saying, “Ho, sect of Mohammed (upon whom be salutation and salvation!), let none of you come out but your champion Sharrkan, the Sword of Al-Islam, Lord of Damascus in Shám[393] !” Nor had he made an end of speaking, when arose a tumult in the plain; all the people heard the strain and the whole moving bodies of the armies twain called to mind the Day of

Complain. Then the cowards trembled and all necks turned towards the sound, and lo! it was King Sharrkan, son of King Omar bin al-Nu'uman. For when his brother, Zau al-Makan, saw that accursed one push out on the plain, and heard the pursuivant, he turned to Sharrkan and said to him, "Of a surety they seek for thee." Said he, "Should it so be, 'twere most pleasing to me." So when they made sure of the matter and heard the herald crying in the plain, "Let none of you come out against me save Sharrkan," they knew this cursed Luka to be champion of the land of Roum who had sworn to sweep the earth clean of Moslems. Now he was one of the greatest of villains, a wretch who caused hearts to pain; and the DayIamites, Turks and Kurds dreaded his might and main. Presently Sharrkan crave at him like a lion angry grim, mounted on a courser like a wild gazelle flying snell and slim; and coming nigh to him made the spear he hent to shake as it were a darting snake, and recited these couplets,

"I have a sorrel steed, whose pride is fain to bear the rein, *
Shall give thee what thou likest not and make thee feel his main:
I have a handy limber spear full bright and keen of point, * Upon whose shaft the dam of Death her throny seat hath ta'en:
I have a trenchant glaive of Hind; and, when I bare its face * Of scabbard" veil, from out its brow the rays of levee rain."

Luka understood not the sense of his speech nor did he apprehend the vehemence of the verse; but he smote his forehead with his hand, in honour of the Cross drawn thereon and kissed it; then he couched his throw spear and ran at Sharrkan. But first he tossed the javelin with one hand in air to such height that it was lost to the spectators' sight; and, catching it with the other hand as do the jugglers, hurled it at Sharrkan. It flew from his grasp like a shooting star and folk clamoured and feared for Sharrkan; but, as the spear flew near him, he put out his hand and caught it in full flight to the amazement of all who saw the sight. Then he shook it with the hand that took it till it was well nigh broken, and hurled it so high into the welkin that it disappeared from view. As it descended, he caught it again with the other hand, in less than the twinkling of an eye, and cried out from his heart core, saying, "By the truth of Him who created the sevenfold skies, I will assuredly make this cursed wight a byword for mankind to despise!" Then threw he the throw spear at Luka, who thought to do as Sharrkan had done and put forth his hand to trend it in mid flight; but Sharrkan prevented him, and sped at him a second throw spear which smote him and the point fell on his forehead, in the very centre of the sign of the Cross, and Allah hurried his soul to the Fire and Dwelling place dire.[394] But when the Infidels saw Luka bin Shamlut fall slain, they buffeted their faces and they cried, "Alas!" and "Woe worth the day!" and called for aid upon the Abbots of the monasteries, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Ninety-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Infidels saw Luka bin Shamlut fall slain, they buffeted their faces and cried, "Alas!" and "Woe worth the day!" and called upon the Abbots of the monasteries and cried, "Where be the crosses?" So the Religious offered up prayers and the Christians all drew together against Sharrkan; and, brandishing their scymitars and lances, rushed forward to the attack. Then army met army and breasts fell under hoof, whilst spear and sword ruled the day and forearms and wrists grew weak and the coursers seemed created without legs;[395] nor did the herald of-war cease calling to fight, till arms were aweary and day took flight and night came on with darkness dight. So the two hosts drew apart, whilst every brave staggered like a drunken knave, for that with so much cut and thrust they strave; and the place was choked with the slain; fell were the wounds and the hurt knew not by whom they fell. Then Sharrkan joined his brother, Zau al-Makan, and the Chamberlain and the Wazir Dandan, and said to them, "Verily Allah hath opened a door for the Infidels to fall, praised be the Lord of the Worlds one and all!" Replied Zau al-Makan, "Let us never cease to praise Allah, for that He hath dispelled trouble from the Arab and the Ajam. Indeed the folk, generation after generation, shall tell of thy derring do against the accursed Luka, the falsifier of the Evangel;[396] of thy catching the throng spear in mid-flight, and how the enemy of Allah among men thou didst smite; and thy fame shall endure until the end of time." Then said Sharrkan, "Harkye, O grand Chamberlain and doughty Capitayne!" and he answered, "Adsum!"[397] Quoth Sharrkan, "Take with thee the Wazir Dandan and twenty thousand horse, and lead them seven parasangs towards the sea, and force the march till ye shall have come near the shore, and there remain only two parasangs between thee and the foe. Then ambush ye in the hollows of the ground till ye hear the tumult of the Infidels disembarking from their ships; and the war cry from every side strike your ear and ye know that the sabres have begun labour between us and them; and, whenso ye see our troops falling back, as if defeated, and all the Infidels following them, as well those in front as those from the seaward and the tents, do ye still lie in wait for them: but as soon as ye see the standard with the words, There is no god but the God, and Mohammed is God's Apostle (on whom be salutation and salvation!), then up with the green banner, and do your endeavour and fall on their rear and shout, 'Alla ho Akbar! Allah is most Great!' and circle round that they may not interpose between the retreating army and the sea." He replied, "To hear is to obey!"; and forthright they agreed upon this matter and they went forth. Now the Chamberlain took with himself the Wazir Dandan and twenty thousand men even as Sharrkan had commanded. As soon as dawned the morn, the troops sprung to horse when they had donned their armour gear and drawn the scymitar and slung the spear. Then the Christians dispread themselves over hill and dale and the Ecclesiasts[398] cried out and all heads were bared, and those in the ships hoisted the Cross at their mast heads and began making for shore from every side, and landed their horses and get them ready for fight and fray, whilst the sword blades glittered bright and the javelins glanced like levee light on mail shirt white; and all joined fight and the grind mill of Death whirled round and ground those who fought from horse and aground: heads from bodies flew end tongues mute grew and eyes no vision knew. Scymitars strave with utmost strain and heads flew over the battle plain; gall bladders crave and wrists were shorn in twain; steeds plashed in pools of gore and beards were gripped right sore; the host of Al-Islam called out, saying, "On the Prince of Mankind be blessings and peace, and to the Compassionate glory and praise, which ne'er shall cease, for His boons which aye increase;" and the host of the Infidels shouted, "Glory to the Cross and the Belt and the vine press juice, and the wine presser and the Priests and the Monks and the Festival of Palms and the Metropolitan!" Now Zau al-Makan and Sharrkan held back and their troops gave way and feigned flight from before the enemy, while the Infidel array pressed hard upon them deeming them in rout, and made ready to foin and hew. Then the meiny of the Moslems raised their voices, reciting the first verses of the Chapter of the Cow,[399] whilst the dead were trampled under hoofs of steeds, and the heralds of the Greeks cried out, "Ho, servants of the Messiah! Ho, people of the True Faith! Ho, followers of the Primate![400] Verily Divine grace upon you opes; for see, the hosts of Al Islam like birds with broken wings incline to elope! So turn ye not to them your backs, but let your swords cleave deep in their necks and hold not your hands from them, else are ye outcasts from the Messiah, Mary's son, who spoke even when a cradled one!"[401] Now Afridun, King of Constantinople, deemed that the Infidels were victorious, knowing not that this was but a clever stratagem of the Moslems, and sent to King Hardub of Roum congratulations on success, adding, "Availed us naught but the Holy Merde of the Arch Patriarch, whose fragrance exhaled from the beards and mustachios of the slaves of the Cross near and far; and I swear, by the Miracles of the Messiah; and by thy daughter Abrizah, the Nazarene, the Mariolater; and by the Waters of Baptism, that I will not leave upon the earth a single defender of Al-Islam! And to the bitter end will I carry out this plan." So the messenger betook himself with the address to King Hardub, whilst the Infidels called to one another saying, "Take we vengeance wreak for Luka!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Ninety-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Infidels called to one another, saying, "Take we vengeance wreak for Luka!" while Hardub King of Greece cried aloud, "Ho, to our revenge for Abrizah!" Thereupon King Zau al-Makan shouted "Ho, servants of the Requiting King!: smite the children of denial and disobedience with the blanch of sword and the brown of spear!" So the Moslems returned to the Infidels and plied them with the keen edged scymitar, whilst their herald cried aloud, “Up, and at the foes of the Faith, all ye who love the Prophet Elect, with hope of salvation on the Day of Fear, to win favour of the Bountiful, the Forgiving One; for verily the Garden of Paradise is under the shadow of swords!” And behold, Sharrkan and his men charged down upon the Infidels and cut off their retreat and wheeled and tourneyed among the ranks; when lo! a knight of goodly presence opened a passage through the army of Unbelievers and circled hither and thither amongst the Deniers, cutting and thrusting and covering the ground with heads and trunks, so that the Faithless feared him and their necks bent under his lunge and hew. He was girt with two swords, his glances and his brand, and he was armed with two lances, one of bamboo cane and the other his straight wand like shape; and his flowing hair stood him in stead of many warriors, even as saith the poet,

“Laud not long hair,[402] except it be dispread * In two fold locks, on day of fight and fray,
O’er youth who bears his lance ‘twixt flank and thigh, * From many a whis kered knight to win the day.”

And as singeth another,

“I say to him, what while he slings his sword, * ‘For sword shall serve those looks that sword like show!’
Says he, ‘My sabre looks for those I love, * My sword for those who sweets of love unknow!’”

When Sharrkan saw him, he said to him, “I conjure thee by the Koran and the attributes of the Compassionate One, O Champion of the Champions! tell me who thou art: for verily by thy deeds this day thou hast pleased the Requiting King, whom one thing distracteth not from other thing; in that thou hast been discomforting the children of impiety and in rebellion revelling.” Then cried the Cavalier to him saying, “Thou art he who madest brother covenant with me but yesterday: how quickly thou hast forgotten me!” Thereupon he withdrew his mouth veil,[403] so that what was hidden of his beauty was disclosed, and lo! it was none other than Zau al-Makan. Then Sharrkan rejoiced in his brother, save that he feared for him the rush of fighting and the crush of braves a smiting; and this for two reasons, the first, his tender age and exposure to the evil eye, and the second, that his safety was to the kingdom the greater of the two overshadowing wings. So he said to him, “O King! thou riskest thy life, so join thy steed to mine; in very sooth I fear for thee from the foe; and better thou stint hazarding thyself forth of these squadrons, that we may shoot at the enemy thine unerring shaft.” Quoth Zau al-Makan, “I desire to even thee in fray and I will not be niggard of myself before thee in the melay.” Then the host of Al-Islam, heaping itself upon the Infidels, girt them on all sides, warred on them a right Holy War, and brake the power of the children of impiety and pride and stowre. But King Afridun sighed when he saw the evil wreak that had fallen on the Greek, and they turned their backs from fight and addressed themselves to flight, making for the ships, when lo! there came out upon them from the seacoast another host, led by the Minister Dandan, the champion who was wont to make champions bite the dust, and to lay load on them with cut and thrust. Nor less came forth the Emir Bahram, Lord of the Provinces of Sham, amid twenty thousand horse doughty of arm; and the host of Al-Islam pressed them in front and on flank and wrought them grievous harm. Then a body of the Moslems turned against those who in the ships remained, and perdition on them rained, till they threw themselves into the main, and they slew of them many slain, more than a hundred thousand noblemen, nor was one of their champions, great or small, saved from bale and bane. Moreover, they took their ships, with all the money and treasure and cargo, save a score of keel, and the Moslems got that loot whose like was never gotten in by gone years; nor was such cut and thrust ever heard of by men's ears.[404] Now amongst the booty were fifty thousand horses, besides treasure and spoil past reckoning and arithmetic, whereat the Moslems rejoiced with an exceeding joy for that Allah had given them victory and protection. Such was the case with them; but as regards the fugitive Infidels they soon reached Constantinople, whither the tidings preceded them that King Afridun had prevailed over the Moslems; so quoth the ancient dame, Zat al-Dawahi, "I know that my son Hardub, King of Roum, is no runagate and that he feareth not the Islamitic hosts, but will restore the whole world to the Nazarene faith." Then she bade the Great King, Afridun, give command that the city be decorated, and the people held festival high and drank their wines drunkenly and knew not the decrees of Destiny. Now whilst they were in the midst of their rejoicings, behold, the raven of dule and downfall croaked over them, and up came the twenty fugitive ships wherein was the King of Cæsarea. So King Afridun, Lord of Constantinople, met them on the sea shore, and they told him all that had befallen them from the Moslem, and they wept sore and groaned and moaned; and rejoicing at weal was turned into dismay for unheal; and they informed him concerning Luka son of Shamlut, how calamity had betided him and how Death had shot him with his shaft. Thereat the horrors of Doomday rose upon King Afridun,[405] and he knew that there was no making straight their crook. Then came up from them the sound of weeping and wailing; the city was full of men mourning and the keepers were keening, and sighs and cries were heard from all sides. And when King Hardub of Greece met King Afridun he told him the truth of the case and how the flight of the Moslems was by way of stratagem and deceit, and said to him, "Look not to see any of the army, save those who have already reached thee." When King Afridun heard these words he fell down in a fainting fit, with his nose under his feet; and, as soon as he revived, he exclaimed, "Surely the Messiah was wroth with them that he caused the Moslems to prevail over them!" Then came the Arch Patriarch sadly to the King who said to him, "O our father, annihilation hath overtaken our army and the Messiah hath punished us!” Replied the Patriarch, “Grieve not nor feel concerned, for it cannot be but that one of you have sinned against the Messiah, and all have been punished for his offence; but now we will read prayers for you in the churches, that the Mohammeden hosts may be repelled from you.” After which the old woman, Zat al-Dawahi, came to Afridun and said to him, “O King, verily the Moslem hosts are many, and we shall never overcome them save by wile: wherefore I purpose to work upon them by guile and repair to this army of Al-Islam, haply I may win my wish of their leader and slay their champion, even as I slew his father. If my stratagem succeed in his case, not one of the host he leads shall return to his native land, for all are strong only because of him; but I desire to have some Christian dwellers of Syria, such as go out every month and year to sell their goods, that they may help me (for this they can do) in carrying out my plan.” Replied the King, “Be it so whenever thou wilt.” So she bade fetch an hundred men, natives of Najrán,[406] in Sham, and the King asked them, “Have ye not heard what hath befallen the Christians with the Moslems?” “Yes,” answered they; and he rejoined, “Know ye that this woman hath devoted her life to the Messiah and purposeth to go forth with you, disguised as Monotheists and Mohammedans, to work out a device which shall profit us and hinder the Moslem from us: say, then, are ye also willing to devote yourselves to the Anointed and I will give you a quintal of gold?[407] He of you who escapeth shall have the money, and him of you who dieth will the Messiah reward.” “O King,” replied they, “we will devote our lives to the Messiah, and we will be thy sacrifice.” Thereupon the old woman took all she required of aromatic roots and placed them in water which she boiled over the fire till the black essence of them was extracted. She waited till the decoction was cold, then dipped the corner of a long kerchief therein and stained her face therewith. Moreover, she donned over her clothes a long gaberdine with an embroidered border and took in her hand a rosary, and afterwards went in to King Afridun, who knew her not, nor did any of his companions know her, till she discovered herself to them: and there was none in the assembly but who thanked and praised her for her cunning; and her son rejoiced and said, “May the Messiah never fail thee!” Thereupon she took with her the Syrian Christians, and set out for the army of Baghdad. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Ninety-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Afridun heard these words, he fell into a fainting fit with his nose under his feet; and, as soon as he revived, fear fluttered the scrotum[408] below his belly and he complained to the ancient dame, Zat al-Dawahi. Now this accursed old woman was a witch of the witches, past mistress in sorcery and deception; wanton and wily, deboshed and deceptious; with foul breath, red eyelids, yellow cheeks, dull brown face, eyes bleared, mangy body, hair grizzled, back humped, skin withered and wan and nostrils which ever ran. But she had studied the scriptures of Al-Islam and had made the Pilgrimage to the Holy House of Meccah and all this that she might come to the knowledge of the Mohammedan ordinances and the miraculous versets of the Koran; and she had professed Judaism in the Holy City of Jerusalem[409] for two years' space, that she might master the magic of men and demons; so that she was a plague of plagues and a pest of pests, wrong headed as to belief and to no religion fief. Now the chief reason of her sojourn with her son, King Hardub of Greece, was on account of the slave virgins at his court: for she was given to tribadism[410] and could not exist without sapphism or she went mad: so if any damsel pleased her, she was wont to teach her the art of rubbing clitoris against clitoris and would anoint her with saffron[411] till she fainted away for excess of volupty. Whoso obeyed her she was wont to favour and make her son incline towards her; but whoso repelled her she would contrive to destroy; and so she abode for a length of time. This was known to Marjanah and Rayhánah and Utrijah, the handmaids of Abrizah, and their Princess loathed the old woman and abhorred to lie with her, because of the rank smell from her armpits, the stench of her fizzles more fetid than carrion, and the roughness of her hide coarser than palm fibre. She was wont to bribe those who rubbed parts with her by means of jewels and instructions; but Abrizah held aloof from her and sought refuge with the Omnipotent, the Omniscient; for, by Allah, right well quoth the poet,

“Ho thou who grovellest low before the great * Nor over fording
lesser men dost blench
Who gildest dross by dirham gathering, * No otter scent disguises
carrion stench!

And now to return to the story of her stratagem and the woes of her working. Presently she departed, taking the chief Nazarenes with their hosts, and turned towards the army of the Moslems. Whereupon King Hardub went in to King Afridun and said to him, “O King, we have no need of the Chief Patriarch nor of his prayers, but will consult my mother’s counsel and observe what she will do with her craft unending against the Moslem hosts; for these are marching with all their power, they will soon be upon us and they will encircle us on all sides.” When King Afridun heard this, terror took hold upon his heart and he wrote letters, without stay or delay, to all the nations of the Nazarenes, saying, “It behoveth none of the Messiahites or Cross knights to hold back, especially the folk of the strongholds and forts: but let them all come to us, foot and horse, women and children, for the Moslem hosts already tread our soil. So haste! haste ye! ere what we fear to us here appear.” Thus much concerning them; but regarding the work of the old woman, Zat al-Dawahi; when she went forth from the city with her suite, she clad them in the clothing of Moslem merchants, having provided herself with an hundred mules carrying stuffs of Antioch, such as goldwoven satins and royal brocades and so forth. And she had taken a letter from King Afridun to the following effect: “These be merchantmen from the land of Sham who have been with us: so it besitteth none to do them harm or hindrance, nor take tax and tithe of them, till they reach their homes and safe places, for by merchants a country flourisheth, and these are no men of war nor of ill faith.” Then quoth the accursed Zat al-Dawahi to those with her, “Verily I wish to work out a plot for the destruction of the Moslem.” Replied they, “O Queen, command us whatso thou wilt; we are at thy disposal and may the Messiah never disappoint thy dealings!” Then she donned a gown of fine white wool and rubbed her forehead, till she made a great mark as of a scar and anointed it with an ointment of her own fashion, so that it shone with prodigious sheen. Now the old hag was lean bodied and hollow eyed, and she bound her legs tightly round with cords[412] just above her feet, till she drew near the Moslem camp, when she unwound them, leaving their marks deeply embedded in her ankles. Then she anointed the wheels with dragon's blood and bade her companions beat her with a severe beating, and set her in a chest and, quoth she, "Cry abroad the Refrain of Unity,[413] nor fear from it aught of damage!" Replied they, "How can we beat thee, who be our sovereign lady, Zat al-Dawahi, mother of the King we glory in?" Then said she, "We blame not nor deal reproach to him who goeth to the jakes, and in need evil becometh good deed. When ye have set me in the chest, take it and make it one of the bales and place it on mule back and fare forth with it and the other goods through the Moslem camp, and fear ye no blame. And if any of the Moslems hinder you, give up the mules and their lading and be take yourselves to their King, Zau al-Makan, and implore his protection saying, 'We were in the land of the Infidels and they took nothing from us, but wrote us a passport, that none shall do us hindrance or work our mischance.' If he ask you, 'What profit had ye of your property in the land of Roum?' answer him, 'We profited in the deliverance of a pious man, who had been bound down in an underground cell nigh fifteen years, crying out for help yet none helped him. Nay, the Infidels tortured him night and day. We knew not this; but, after we had tarried in Constantinople for some time, having sold our goods and bought others in their stead, we determined on and made ready for a return to our native land. We spent that night conversing about our journey and when day broke, we saw figured upon the wall a human form and as we drew nigh it, behold, it moved and said, 'O Moslems, is there amongst you one who is minded to woo the favour of the Lord of the three Worlds?'[414] 'How so?' asked we; and the figure answered, 'Know that Allah hath made me speak to you, to the intent that your faith be fortified, and that your belief embolden you and that you may go forth of the country of the Infidels and repair to the Moslem host; for with them wones the Sword of the Compassionate One, of our Age the Champion, King Sharrkan, by whom He shall conquer Constantinople town and destroy the sect of the Nazarene. And when ye shall have journeyed three days, you will find an hermitage known as the Hermitage of the ascetic

Matruhina[415] and containing a cell; visit it with pure intent and contrive to arrive there by force of will, for therein is a Religious from the Holy City, Jerusalem, by name Abdullah, and he is one of the devoutest of mankind, endowed with the power of working saintly miracles[416] such as dispel doubts and obscurity. Certain of the monks seized him by fraud and shut him up in a souterrain where he hath lain a long time. By his deliverance you will please the Lord of Faithful Men, for such release is better than fighting for the Faith.'" Now when the ancient dame and those with her had agreed upon such words, she said, "As soon as that which I impart shall reach the ears of King Sharrkan, say him further, 'Hearing this from that image we knew that the holy man'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Ninety-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old woman, Zat al-Dawahi, and those with her had agreed upon such words, she said, "Now as soon as that which I impart shall reach the ears of King Sharrkan say him further, 'Hearing these words from that image we knew that the holy man was indeed of the chiefest devotees and Allah's servants of purest qualities; so we made three days' march till we came in sight of that hermitage, and then we went up to it and passed the day in buying and selling, as is the wont of merchants. As soon as day had departed our sight and night was come to darken light, we repaired to the cell wherein was the dungeon, and we heard the holy man, after chanting some verses of the Koran, repeat the following couplets,

'My heart disheartened is, my breast is strait, * And sinks my
soul in sea of bale and bate
Unless escape be near I soon shall die; * And Death were better
than this doleful strait:
O Lightning an thou light my home and folk, * An their still
brighter charms thy shine abate,
Say, what my path to meet them, being barred * By wars, and
barricado'd succour's gate?'

"When once ye have brought me into the Moslem camp, and I mix with them you shall see," the old woman continued, "how I will make shift to beguile them and slay them all, even to the last man." The Nazarenes hearing whet she said, kissed her hands and set her in the chest, after they had beaten her with a grievous beating in obedience to her commands, for they saw it was incumbent on them to do her bidding in this; then they all made for the Moslem host as hath erst been said. Such was the case with the damned hag, Zat al-Dawahi and her companions; but as regards the Mohammeden army, they indeed, after Allah had given them victory over their enemies and they had plundered everything in the ships of money and hoards, all sat down to converse with one another and Zau al-Makan said to his brother Sharrkan, "Verily, Allah hath granted us to prevail because of our just dealing and discipline and concord amongst ourselves; wherefore continue, O Sharrkan, to obey my commandment, in submission to Allah (be He exalted and extolled!), for I mean to slay ten Kings in blood revenge for my sire, to cut the throat of fifty thousand Greeks and to enter Constantinople." Replied Sharrkan, "My life be thy ransom against death! Needs must I follow out the Holy War, though I wone many a year in their country. But I have, O my brother, in Damascus a daughter, named Kuzia Fakan, whom I love heartily for she is one of the marvels of the time and she will soon be of age.' Said Zau al-Makan, "And I also have left my wife with child and near her time, nor do I know what Allah will vouchsafe me by her. But promise me, O my brother, that if Allah bless me with a son, thou wilt grant me thy daughter for wife to him, and make covenant with me and pledge me thy faith thereon." "With love and good will, replied Sharrkan; and, stretching out his hand to his brother, he said, If she bring thee a son, I will give him my daughter Kuzia Fakan, to wife." At this Zau al-Makan rejoiced, and they fell to congratulating each other on the victory over the enemy. And the Wazir Dandan also congratulated the two brothers and said to them, "Know, O ye Kings, that Allah hath given us the victory, for that we have devoted our lives to Him (be He exalted and ex tolled!); and we have left our homes and households; and it is my counsel that we follow up the foe and press upon him and harass him, so haply Allah shall enable us to win our wishes, and we shall destroy our enemies, branch and root. If it please you, do ye go down in these ships and sail over the sea, whilst we fare forward by land and bear the brunt of battle and the thrust of fight.” And the Minister Dandan ceased not to urge them to combat and repeated his words who said,

“To slay my foes is chiefest bliss I wist, * And on the courser’s
back be borne a list;
Comes promising tryst a messenger from friend * Full oft, when
comes the friend withouten tryst.”

And these words of another,

“War for my mother (an I live) I’ll take; * Spear for my brother;
scymitar for sire
With every shag haired brave who meets his death * Smiling, till
won from Doom his dear desire!”

And when the Wazir ended his verses, he said, “Praise be to Him who aided us dear victory to uphold and who hath given us spoil of silver and fine gold!” Then Zau al-Makan commanded the army to depart; and they fared on forcing their marches for Constantinople, till they came to a wide and spacious champaign, full of all things fair and fain, with wild cattle frisking and gazelles pacing to and fro across the plain. Now they had traversed great deserts and drink had been six days cut off from them, when they drew near this meadow and saw therein waters founting and ripe fruits daunting and that land as it were Paradise; for it had donned its adornments and decked itself.[417] Gently waved the branches of its trees drunken with the new wine of the dew, and combined with the nectar of Tasnim the soft breathings of the morning breeze. Mind and gazer were confounded by its beauty, even as saith the poet,

“Behold this lovely garden! ’tis as though * Spring o’er its
frame her greeny cloak had spread.
Looking with fleshly eyne, thou shalt but sight * A lake whose
waters balance in their bed,
But look with spirit eyes and lo! shalt see * Glory in every
leaf o’erwaves thy head.”

And as another saith,

"The stream's a cheek by sunlight rosy dyed, * Whose down[418]
is creeping shade of tamarisk stems
Round legs of tree trunks waveless roll in rings * Silvern, and
blossoms are the diadems."

When Zau al-Makan saw this champaign, with its trees bowing and its flowers blooming and its birds warbling, he called to his brother Sharrkan and said, "O my brother, verily in Damascus is naught the like of this place. We will not march from it save after three days, that we may take rest ourselves and that the army of Al-Islam may regain strength and their souls be fortified to encounter the blamed Infidels." So they halted therein and while camping behold, they heard a noise of voices from afar, and Zau al-Makan asked the cause thereof, and was answered that a caravan of merchants from the Land of Syria had halted there to rest and that the Moslem troops had come on them and had haply seized something of the goods which they had brought from the country of the Infidels. After a while up came the merchants, crying out and appealing to the King for aidance. When Zau al- Makan saw this, he bade them be brought before him and, when in presence they said to him, "O King, we have been in the country of the Infidels and they plundered us of nothing: why then do our brothers the Moslems despoil our goods, and we in their own land? Of a truth when we saw your troops, we went up to them and they robbed us of what we had with us and we have now reported to thee all that hath befallen us." Thereupon they brought out to him the letter of the King of Constantinople, and Sharrkan read it and said, "We will presently restore to you what hath been taken from you; but yet it behoveth you not to carry merchandise to the country of the Infidels." Replied they, "O our Lord, in very sooth Allah despatched us thither that we might win what Gházi[419] never won the like of, not even thou in all thy razzias." Asked Sharrkan, "What was it ye won?" "O King," answered they, "we will not tell thee save in private; for if this matter be noised among the folk, haply it may come to the ears of some,[420] and this will be the cause of our ruin and of the ruin of all Moslems who resort to the land of the Greeks." Now they had hidden the chest wherein was the damned Zat al- Dawahi. So Zau al-Makan and his brother brought them to a private place, where they laid bare to both of them the story of the devotee, and wept till they made the two Kings weep. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Ninety-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Nazarenes who wore merchants' weed, when brought to a private place by Zau al-Makan and his brother Sharrkan, laid bare to both of them the story of the devotee and wept till they made the two Kings weep and repeated to them all which had been taught by the old witch Zat al-Dawahi. Thereupon Sharrkan's heart yearned to the devotee and he was moved to ruth for him and was fired with zeal for the service of Almighty Allah. So quoth he to them, "Did ye rescue this holy man or is he still in the hermitage?" Quoth they, "We delivered him and slew the hermit, fearing for our lives; after which we made haste to fly for dread of death; but a trusty man told us that in this hermitage are quintals of gold and silver and stones of price." Then they fetched the chest and brought out the accursed old woman, as she were a cassia pod[421] for excess of blackness and leanness, and she was laden with the same fetters and shackles. When Zau al-Makan and the bystanders saw her, they took her for a man of the best of Allah's devotees and surpassing in pious qualities, more especially because of the shining of her forehead for the ointment wherewith she had anointed her face. So Zau al-Makan and Sharrkan wept sore; then they rose up in honour and kissed her hands and feet, sobbing aloud: but she signed to them and said, "Cease this weeping and hear my words. Hereat they dried their tears in obedience to her bidding, and she said, "Know ye both that I was content to accept what my Lord did unto me, for I kenned that the affliction which befel me was a trial from Him (be He exalted and extolled!); and whoso hath not patience under calamity and tribulation, for him there is no coming to the delights of Paradise. I had indeed supplicated Him that I might return to my native land, not as a compensation for the sufferings decreed to me, but that I might die under the horse hoofs of warriors fighting for the Faith who, being slain in fray, live again without suffering death."[422] Then she repeated the following couplets,

"Our Fort is Tor,[423] and flames the fire of fight: * Moses
art thou and this is time for aid:
Cast down thy rod, 'twill swallow all they wrought, * Nor dread
for men their ropes be vipers made.[424]
For Chapters read on fight day lines of foes, * And on their
necks 'grave versets[425] wi' thy blade!"

When the old woman had ended her verse, her eyes overflowed with tears and her forehead under the unguent shone like gleaming light, and Sharrkan rose and kissed her hand and caused food be brought before her: but she refused it, saying, "I have not broken my fast by day for fifteen years; and how should I break it at such a time when my Lord hath been bountiful to me in delivering me from the captivity of the Infidels and removing from me that which was more grievous to me than torment of fire? I will wait till sun down." So when it was nightfall, Sharrkan and Zau al-Makan came and served her with food and said, "Eat, O ascetic!" But she said, "This is no time for eating; it is the time for worshipping the Requiting King." Then she stood up in the prayer niche and remained praying till the night was spent; and she ceased not to do after this fashion for three days and nights, sitting not but at the time of the Salám or salutation[426] ending with several prayers. When Zau al- Makan saw her on this wise, firm belief in her get hold of his heart and he said to Sharrkan, "Cause a tent of perfumed leather to be pitched for this Religious, and appoint a body servant to wait upon him." On the fourth day she called for food; so they brought her all kinds of meats that could seduce the sense or delight the sight; but of all this she would eat only a scone with salt. Then she again turned to her fast and, as the night came, she rose anew to pray; when Sharrkan said to Zau al-Makan, "Verily, this man carrieth renunciation of the world to the extreme of renouncing, and, were it not for this Holy War, I would join myself to him and worship Allah in his service, till I came before His presence. And now I desire to enter his tent and talk with him for an hour." Quoth Zau al-Makan, "And I also: tomorrow we sally forth to fight against Constantinople, and we shall find no time like the present." Said the Wazir Dandan, "And I no less desire to see this ascetic; haply he will pray for me that I find death in this Holy War and come to the presence of my Lord, for I am aweary of the world." So as soon as night had darkened, they repaired to the tent of that witch, Zat al-Dawahi; and, seeing her standing to pray, they drew near her and fell a weeping for pity of her; but she paid no heed to them till midnight was past, when she ended her orisons by pronouncing the salutation. Then she turned to them and after wishing them long life, asked them "Wherefore come ye?", whereto they answered, "O thou holy man! diddest thou not hear us weep around thee?" She rejoined, "To him who standeth in the presence of Allah, remaineth no existence in time, either for hearing any or for seeing aught about him." Quoth they, "We would have thee recount to us the cause of thy captivity and pray for us this night, for that will profit us more than the possession of Constantinople." Now when she heard their words she said, "By Allah, were ye not the Emirs of the Moslems, I would not relate to you aught of this at any time; for I complain not but to Allah alone. However, to you I will relate the circumstances of my captivity. Know, then, that I was in the saintly City of Jerusalem with certain ecstatics and inspired men, and did not magnify myself among them, for that Allah (be He exalted and extolled!) had endowed me with humility and abnegation, till I chanced to go down to the sea one night and walked upon the water. Then entered into me pride; whence I know not, and I said to myself, 'Who like me can walk the water?' And my heart from that time hardened and Allah afflicted me with the love of travel. So I journeyed to Roum land and visited every part for a whole year, and left no place but therein I worshiped Allah. When I came to this spot,[427] I clomb the mountain and saw there an hermitage, inhabited by a monk called Matrubina, who, when he sighted me, came out and kissed my hands and feet and said, 'Verily, I have seen thee since thou enteredst the land of the Greeks, and thou hast filled me with longing for the land of Al-Islam.' Then he took my hand and carried me into that hermitage, and brought me to a dark room; and, when I entered it unawares, he locked the door on me and left me there forty days, without meat or drink; for it was his intent to kill me by delay.

It chanced one day, that a Knight called Dakianús[428] came to the hermitage, accompanied by ten squires and his daughter Tamásil, a girl whose beauty was incom parable. When they entered that hermitage, the monk Matruhina told them of me, and the Knight said, 'Bring him out, for surely there is not on him a bird's meal of meat.' So they opened the door of the dark room and found me standing in the niche, praying and reciting the Koran and glorifying Allah and humbling myself before the Almighty. When they saw me in this state Matrohina exclaimed, 'This man is indeed a sorcerer of the sorcerers!'; and hearing his words, they all came in on me, Dakianus and his company withal, and they beat me with a grievous beating, till I desired death and reproached myself, saying, 'This is his reward who exalteth himself and who prideth himself on that which Allah hath vouchsafed to him, beyond his own competence! And thou, O my soul, verily self esteem and arrogance have crept into thee. Dost thou not know that pride angereth the Lord and hardeneth the heart and bringeth men to the Fire?' Then they laid me in fetters and returned me to my place which was the dungeon under ground. Every three days, they threw me down a scone of barley bread and a draught of water; and every month or two the Knight came to the hermitage. Now his daughter Tamasil had grown up, for she was nine years old when I first saw her, and fifteen years passed over me in captivity, so that she had reached her four and twentieth year. There is not in our land nor in the land of the Greeks a fairer than she, and her father feared lest the King take her from him; for she had vowed herself to the Messiah and rode with Dakianus in the habit of a cavalier, so that albeit none might compare with her in loveliness, no one who saw her knew her for a woman. And her father had laid up his monies in this hermitage, every one who had aught of price or treasured hoard being wont to deposit it therein; and I saw there all manner of gold and silver and jewels and precious vessels and rarities, none may keep count of them save Almighty Allah. Now ye are worthier of these riches than those Infidels; so lay hands on that which is in the hermitage and divide it among the Moslems and especially on fighters in the Holy War. When these merchants came to Constantinople and sold their merchandise, that image which is on the wall spoke to them, by grace of a marvel which Allah granted to me; so they made for that hermitage and slew Matruhina, after torturing him with most grievous torments, and dragging him by the beard, till he showed them the place where I was; when they took me and found no path but flight for dread of death. Now tomorrow night Tamasil will visit that hermitage as is her habit, and her father and his squires will come after her, as he feareth for her; so, if ye would witness these things, take me with you and I will deliver to you the monies and the riches of the Knight Dakianus which be in that mountain; for I saw them bring out vessels of gold and silver to drink therefrom, and I heard a damsel of their company sing to them in Arabic and well-away! that so sweet a voice should not be busied in chaunting the Koran. If, then, ye will; enter into that hermitage and hide there against the coming of Dakianus and his daughter; and take her, for she is fit only for the King of the Age, Sharrkan, or King Zau al-Makan." Thereat they all rejoiced with the exception of the Wazir Dandan, who put scant faith in her story, for her words took no hold on his reason, and signs of doubt in her and disbelief showed in his face.[429] Yet he was confounded at her discourse, but he feared to speak with her for awe of the King. Then quoth the ancient dame, Zat al-Dawahi, "Verily, I fear lest the Knight come and, seeing these troops encamped in the meadow, be afraid to enter the hermitage." So Zau al-Makan ordered the army to march upon Constantinople and said, "I have resolved to take with me an hundred horse and many mules and make for that mountain, where we will load the beasts with the monies which be in the hermitage." Then he sent at once for the Chief Chamberlain whom they brought into the presence; and he summoned likewise the leaders of the Turks and Daylamites and said, "As soon as it is dawn, do ye set forth for Constantinople; and thou, O Chamberlain, shalt take my place in council and contrivance, while thou, O Rustam, shalt be my brother's deputy in battle. But let none know that we are not with you and after three days we will rejoin you." Then he chose out an hundred of the doughtiest riders, and he and Sharrkan and the Minister Dandan set out for the hermitage, and the hundred horsemen led the mules with chests for transporting the treasure. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Ninety-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sharrkan and his brother, Zau al-Makan and the Wazir Dandan set off with an hundred horse for the hermitage described to them by that accursed Zat al-Dawahi, and they took with them mules and chests for transporting the treasure. Now as soon as dawned the morn, the Chamberlain signalled to the host an order for departure, and they set out thinking that the two Kings and the Wazir were with them; knowing not that the three had made for the monastery. Such was the case with the host, but as regards the two Kings and the Minister, they tarried in their place till the end of that day. Now the Infidels who were with Zat al-Dawahi took their departure privily, after they had gone in to her and kissed her hands and feet and obtained her leave to march. So she not only gave them permission but also taught them all she minded of wile and guile. And when it was dark night, she arose and went in to Zau al-Makan and his companions and said to them, “Come, let us set out for the mountain, and take with you a few men at arms.” They obeyed her and left five horsemen at the foot of the mountain, whilst the rest rode on before Zat al-Dawahi, who gained new strength for excess of joy, so that Zau al-Makan said, “Glory be to Him who sustaineth this holy man, whose like we never saw!” Now the witch had written a letter to the King of Constantinople and despatched it on the wings of a bird,[430] acquainting him with what had passed and ending, “I wish thee to send me ten thousand horsemen of the bravest of the Greeks and let them steal along the foot of the mountains with caution, lest the host of Al-Islam get sight of them; and, when they reach the hermitage, let them ambush themselves there, till I come to them with the Moslem King and his brother, for I shall inveigle them and will bring them thither, together with the Wazir and an hundred horse and no more, that I may presently deliver to them the crosses which be in the hermitage. I am resolved to slay the Monk Matruhina, since my scheme cannot be carried out but by taking his life. If my plot work well, not one of the Moslems shall return to his own country; no, not a living wight nor one who blows the fire alight; and Matruhina shall be a sacrifice for the followers of the Nazarene faith and the servants of the Cross, and praise be to the Messiah, first and last.” When this letter reached Constantinople, the keeper of the carrier pigeons carried it to King Afridun, who read it and forthwith inspected his host and equipped ten thousand cavaliers with horses and dromedaries and mules and provaunt and bade them repair to that hermitage and, after reaching the tower, to hide therein. Thus far concerning them; but as regards King Zau al-Makan and his brother Sharrkan and the Wazir Dandan and the escort, when they reached the hermitage they entered and met the Monk Matruhina, who came out to see who and what they were; whereupon quoth that pious man Zat al-Dawahi, "Slay this damned fellow."[431] So they smote him with their swords and made him drink the cup of death. Then the accursed old woman carried them to the place of offerings and ex votos, and brought out to them treasures and precious things more than she had described to them; and after gathering the whole together, they set the booty in chests and loaded the mules therewith. As for Tamasil, she came not, she or her father, for fear of the Moslems; so Zau al-Makan tarried there, awaiting her all that day and the next and a third, till Sharrkan said to him, "By Allah, I am troubled anent the army of Al-Islam, for I know not what is become of them." His brother replied, "And I also am concerned for them: we have come by this great treasure and I do not believe that Tamasil or any one else will approach the hermitage, after that befel which hath befallen the host of the Christians. It behoveth us, then, to content ourselves with what Allah hath given us and depart; so haply He will help us conquer Constantinople." Accordingly they came down from the mountain, while Zat al-Dawahi was impotent to oppose their march for fear of betraying her deceit; and they fared forwards till they reached the head of a defile, where the old woman had laid an ambush for them with the ten thousand horse. As soon as these saw the Moslems they encircled them from all sides, couching lance and baring the white sabre blade; and the Infidels shouted the watch word of their faithless Faith and set the shafts of their mischief astring. When Zau al-Makan and his brother Sharrkan and the Minister Dandan looked upon this host, they saw that it was a numerous army and said, "Who can have given these troops information of us?" Replied Sharrkan, "O my brother, this be no time for talk; this is the time for smiting with swords and shooting with shafts) so gird up your courage and hearten your hearts, for this strait is like a street with two gates; though, by the virtue of the Lord of Arabs and Ajams, were not the place so narrow I would bring them to naught, even though they were an hundred thousand men!" Said Zau al-Makan, "Had we wotted this we would have brought with us five thousand horse;" and the Wazir Dandan continued, "If we had ten thousand horse they had availed us naught in these narrows; but Allah will succour us against them. I know this defile and its straitness, and I know there be many places of refuge in it; for I have been here on razzia with King Omar bin al-Nu'uman, what while we besieged Constantinople. We abode in this place, and here is water colder than snow. So come, let us push out of this defile ere the Infidel host increase on us and get the start of us to the mountain top, whence they will hurl down rocks upon us, and we powerless to come at them." So they began hurrying on to get out of those narrows; but the pious man, Zat al-Dawahi, looked at them and said, "What is it ye fear, ye who have vowed yourselves to the Lord, and to working His will? By Allah, I abode imprisoned underground for fifteen years, yet never gainsaid the Almighty in aught he did with me! Fight ye in Allah's way; so whoever of you is slain Paradise shall be his abode, and whoso slayeth, his striving shall be to his honour." When they heard from the ascetic these words, their care and anxiety ceased from them and they stood firm till the Infidels charged down from all sides, whilst the swords played upon their necks and the cup of death went round amongst them. The Moslems fought for the service of Allah a right good fight, and wrought upon His foes with sway of sword and lunge of lance; whilst Zau al-Makan smote upon the men and garred the knights bite the dust and their heads from their bodies take flight, five by five and ten by ten, till he had done to death a number of them past numbering and an accompt beyond counting. Now while so doing, he looked at the accursed old woman who was waving her sword and heartening them, and all who feared fled to her for shelter; but she was also signing the Infidels to slay Sharrkan. So troop after troop rushed on him with design to do him die; but each troop that charged, he charged and drove back; and when another troop attacked him he repelled the assault with the sword in their backs; for he thought it was the devotee's blessing that gave him the vic tory, and he said in himself, “Verily on this holy men Allah looketh with eyes of His favour and strengtheneth my prowess against the Infidels with the purity of his pious intent: for I see that they fear me and cannot prevail against me, but every one who assaileth me turneth tail and taketh flight.” So they battled the rest of the day and, when night fell, the Moslems took refuge in a cave of that defile being weary with stress of war and cast of stone: and that day were slain of them five and forty. And when they were gathered together, they sought the devotee, but could find no trace of him; and this was grievous to them and they said, “Belike, he hath died a martyr.” Quoth Sharrkan, “I saw him heartening the horsemen with divine instances and using as talisman verses of Holy Writ.” Now while they were talking, behold, the accursed old woman, Zat al-Dawahi, stood before them, hending in hand the head of the Chief Captain of the ten thousand horse, a noble knight, a champion fierce in fight and a Satan for blight. One of the Turks had slain him with an arrow, and Allah hurried his soul to the fire; and when the Infidels saw what that Moslem had done with their leader, they all fell on him and wrought his bane and hewed him in pieces with their swords, and Allah hurried his soul to Heaven. Then the accursed old woman cut off that Knight’s head and brought it and threw it at the feet of Sharrkan and Zau al-Makan and the Wazir Dandan. Now when Sharrkan sew her, he sprang up hastily before her and exclaimed, “Praised be Allah for thy safety and for our sighting thee, O holy man and devout champion of the Religion!” Replied she, O my son, I have sought martyrdom this day, and have thrown my life away amid the Infidel array, but they feared me with dismay. When ye dispersed, I waxed jealous for your honour; so I rushed on the Chief Knight their leader, albeit he was a match for a thousand horse, and I smote him till I severed head from trunk. Not one of the Infidels could near me; so I brought his head to you,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Ninety-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damned witch, Zat al-Dawahi, took the head of the Knight, the leader of the twenty thousand Infidels, she brought it and threw it down before Zau al-Makan and his brother Sharrkan and the Wazir

Dandan, saying, “When I saw your condition, I waxed jealous for your honour; so I rushed on the Chief Knight and smote him with the sword till I severed head from trunk. And none could near me, so I brought his head to you, that you may be strengthened in Holy War and work out with your swords the will of the Lord of the Faithful. And now I purpose leaving you to strive against the Infidels, whilst I go to your army, though they be at the gates of Constantinople, and return with twenty thousand horse to destroy these Unfaithfuls.” Quoth Sharrkan, “How wilt thou pass to them, O thou holy man, seeing that the valley is blocked up on all sides by the Miscreants?” Quoth the accursed hag, “Allah will veil me from their eyes and they shall not sight me;[432] nor, if any saw me, would he dare to attack me at that time, for I shall be as one non existing, absorbed in Allah, and He will fend off from me His foes.” “Thou sayest sooth, O holy man,” rejoined Sharrkan, “for indeed I have been witness of that; so, if thou can pass out at the first of the night, ‘twill be best for us.” Replied she, “I will set out at this very hour and, if thou desire, thou shalt go with me and none shall see thee. Furthermore if thy brother also have a mind to go with us we will take him, but none else; for the shadow of a saint can cover only twain.” Sharrkan said, “As for me I will not leave my comrades; but, if my brother will, there is no harm in his going with thee and setting us free of this strait; for he is the stronghold of the Moslems and the sword of the Lord of the three Worlds; and if it be his pleasure, let him take with him the Wazir Dandan, or whom else he may elect and send us ten thousand horse to succour us against these caitiffs.” So after debate they agreed on this and the old woman said, “Give me leisure to go before you and consider the condition of the Infidels, if they be asleep or awake.” Quoth they, “We will not go forth save with thee and trust our affair to Allah.” “If I do your bidding,” replied she, “blame me not but blame yourselves; for it is my rede that you await me till I bring you tidings of the case.” Then said Sharrkan, “Go to them and delay not from us, for we shall be awaiting thee.” Thereupon she fared forth and Sharrkan turned to his brother addressing him and said, “Were not this holy man a miracle worker, he had never slain yonder furious knight. This is proof sufficient of the ascetic’s power; and of a truth the pride of the Infidels is laid low by the slaying of this cavalier, for he was violent, an evil devil and a stubborn." Now whilst they were thus devising of the mighty works of the devotee, behold, the accursed Zat al-Dawahi came upon them and promised them victory over the Unbelievers; wherefor they thanked her (not knowing that all this was wile and guile) and the damned hag asked, "Where be the King of the Age, Zau al-Makan, and the Minister Dandan?" Answered he, "Here am I!" Take with thee thy Wazir," said she, "and follow after me, that we may fare forth to Constantinople." Now she had acquainted the Infidels with the cheat she had put upon the Moslems, and they rejoiced with exceeding great joy, and said, Our hearts will not be contented till we shall have slain their King in return for the Knight's death; because we had no stouter rider than he;" and they added (bespeaking the ill omened hag as she told them her plan of faring to the land of the Moslems), "When thou bringest him to us, we will bear him to King Afridun." Then she went out and went out with her Zau al-Makan and the Minister Dandan, and she walked on before the two saying, "Fare forth with the blessing of Almighty Allah!" So they did her bidding, for the shaft of Pate and Fortune of man's lot had shot them, and she ceased not leading them both through the midst of the Grecian camp, till they came to the defile, the narrow pass aforesaid, whilst the Infidel enemy watched them, but did them no hindrance; for the infernal old woman had enjoined this. Now when Zau al-Makan and the Wazir Dandan saw that the Infidel host offered them no let and stay and yet had them in sight, the Wazir exclaimed, "By Allah, this is one of the holy man's saintly miracles! and doubtless he be of the elect." Rejoined Zau al-Makan, "By Allah, I think the Infidels be naught but blind, for we see them and they see us not." And while they were thus praising the holy man and recounting his mighty works and his piety and his prayers, behold, the Infidels charged down on them from all sides and surrounded them and seized them, saying, "Is there anyone else with you twain, that we may seize upon him too?" And the Wazir Dandan replied, "See you not yon other man that is before us? ' Replied the Unbelievers, "By the truth of the Messiah and the Monks, and the Primate and the Metropolitan, we see none save you two!" Then Zau Al-Makan said, "By Allah, this is a chastisement decreed to us by Almighty Allah!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Ninety-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Unfaithful had seized upon King Zau al-Makan and the Wazir Dandan, they said to the two, “Is there anyone else with you twain, that we may seize upon him also?” And the Wazir Dandan replied, “See you not yon other man who be with us?” They rejoined, “By the truth of the Messiah and the Monks and the Primate and the Metropolitan, we see none save you two!” Then the Infidels laid shackles on their feet and set men to guard them during the night, whilst Zat al-Dawahi fared on and disappeared from their sight. So they fell to lamenting and saying to each other, “Verily, the opposing of pious men leadeth to greater distress than this, and we are punished by the strait which hath befallen us.” So far concerning Zau al-Makan and the Wazir Dandan; but as regards King Sharrkan, he passed that night in the cavern with his comrades, and when dawned the day and he had prayed the morn prayer, he and his men made ready to do battle with the Infidel and he heartened them and promised them all good. Then they sallied out till they were hard upon the Unbelievers and, when these saw them from afar, they cried out to them, saying, “O Moslems, we have taken captives your Sultan and your Wazir who hath the ordering of your affairs; and except ye leave off fighting us, we will slay you to the last man; but an you yield yourselves we will take you to our King, who will make peace with you on condition that you quit our country and return home and harm us in naught, and we will do you no harm in aught. If ye accept, it will be well for you; but if ye refuse there remaineth nothing for you but death. So we have told you sooth, and this is our last word to you.” Now when Sharrkan heard this and was certified of the captivity of his brother and the Wazir Dandan, he was weighed down with woe and wept; his force failed him and, making sure of death, he said to himself, “Would I knew the cause of their capture! Did they fail of respect to the holy man or disobey him, or what was the matter?” Then they sprang up to battle with the Unbelievers and slew great numbers of them. The brave was known that day from craven men, and sword and spear were dyed with bloody stain; for the Infidels flocked up on them, as flies flock to drink, from hill and from plain; but Sharrkan and his men ceased not to wage the fight of those who fear not to die, nor let death hinder them from the pursuit of victory, till the valley ran gore and earth was full of the slain she bore. And when night fell the armies separated each making for his own place; and the Moslems returned to the cavern where gain and loss were manifest to them: few remained of them and there was no dependence for them but on Allah and the scymitar. Now there had been slain of them that day five and thirty men of the chiefest Emirs, and they had killed thousands of the Infidels, footmen and fighters on horse. When Sharrkan saw this, the case was grievous to him and he asked his comrades "What shall we do?"; whereto all answered, "That which Almighty Allah willeth shall befal us." On the morning of the second day, Sharrkan said to the remnant of his troop, "If ye go forth to fight, not one of you will remain alive and we have but little left of food and water; so I deem ye would do better to bare your brands and go forth and stand at the mouth of this cavern, to hinder any from entering. Haply the holy man may have reached the Moslem host, and may return with ten thousand horses to succour us in fight with the Infidels, for belike the Unfaithful may have failed to see him and those with him." They said, This were the better course to take, and of its expediency no doubt we make." So the troop went out and held the cavern mouth standing by its walls; and every one of the Infidels who sought to enter in, they slew. Thus did they fend off the foe from the gape of the cave and they patiently supported all such assaults, till day was done and night came on dusky and dun; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Ninety-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the army of the Moslems held the cavern mouth and stood by its walls and they fended off the foe, and every one of the Infidels attempted to charge them, him they slew; and they patiently supported all such assaults till day was done and night came on dusky and dun, by which time King Sharrkan had only five and twenty men and no more left. Then quoth the Infidels to one another, "When shall these battle days have an end? We are weary of warring the Moslems." And quoth one of them, "Up and at them, for there remain of them but five and twenty men! If we cannot prevail on them to fight, let us light a fire upon them;[433] and if they submit themselves and yield to us, we will take them prisoners; but if they refuse we will leave them for fuel to the fire, so shall they become to men of foreseeing mind a warning dire. May the Messiah on their fathers have no grace, and may the sojourn of the Nazarenes be for them no abiding place!" So they carried fuel to the jaws of the cavern and set fire to it. Thereupon Sharrkan and his companions made sure of perdition and yielded themselves prisoners. And while they were in this condition, lo! the knight their captain said to those who counselled their slaughter, "It is not for any save for King Afridun to kill them, that he may gratify his wrath; therefore it behoveth us to keep them in durance by us till the morrow, when we will journey with them to Constantinople and deliver them to our King, who shall deal with them as he please." Said they, "This is the right course;" and he commanded to pinion them and set guards over them. Then, as soon as it was black night, the Infidels busied themselves with feasting and making festival; and they called for wine and drank it till all fell upon their backs. Now Sharrkan and his brother, Zau al-Makan, were in confinement and so also were his companion knights; whereupon the elder turned to the younger brother and said to him, "O my brother, how win free?" "By Allah," replied Zau al Makan, "I know not; for here we be like birds in cage." Then Sharrkan waxed wroth and sighed for excess of rage and stretched himself, till his pinion bonds brass asunder; whereupon being free he arose and went up to the Captain of the guard, and taking from his pocket the keys of the fetters, freed Zau al-Makan and the Wazir Dandan and the rest of his men. Then he turned to the two and said, "I desire to slay three of these Infidels and take and don their dress, we three; so that we shall be guised as Greeks and we will pass through them, with out their knowing us, and fare forth to our own force." Replied Zau al-Makan, "This is no safe counsel for if we kill them, I fear some of their comrades may hear their shrieks and the foe be aroused upon us and kill us. 'Twere the surer way to pass out of the defile." So they agreed upon this and set out; and, when they had left the head of the strait a little distance behind, they saw horses picketed and the riders sleeping: and Sharrkan said to his brother, "Better we take each one of us a steed." There were five and twenty horsemen, so they took five and twenty horses, whilst Allah sent sleep upon the Infidels for a purpose He knew and the Faithful mounted and fared on till they were out of reach. Meanwhile Sharrkan set to gathering from the Infidels as many weapons, swords, and spears, as were wanted. And while they took saddle and struck forwards none of the Infidels supposed that anyone could release Zau al-Makan and his brother and their men; or that their prisoners had power to escape. Now when all the captives were safe from the Unfaithful, Sharrkan came up with his comrades, and found them awaiting his arrival, on coals of flame, expecting him in anxious grame, so he turned to them and said, "Feel no fear since Allah protecteth us. I have that to propose which haply shall effect our purpose." "What is it?" asked they and he answered, "I desire that ye all climb to the mountain top and cry out with one voice, 'Allaho Akbar!' and ye add, 'The army of Al Islam is upon you! Allaho Akbar!' This wise their company will surely be dissolved nor will they find out the trick for they are drunk, but they will think that the Moslem troops have encompassed them about on all sides and have mingled with them; so they will fall on one another brand in hand during the confusion of drunkenness and sleep, and we will cleave them asunder with their own swords and the scymitar will go round amongst them till dawn." Replied Zau al-Makan, "This plan is not good; we should do better to make our way to our army and speak not a word; for if we cry out 'Allaho Akbar,' they will wake and fall on us and not one of us will escape." Rejoined Sharrkan, "By Allah, though they should awake tis no matter, and I long that ye fall in with my plan, for naught save good can come of it!" So they agreed thereon and clomb the mountain and shouted, "Allaho Akbar!" And hills and trees and rocks reworded their Allaho Akbar for fear of the Almighty. But when the Kafirs heard this slogan they cried out to one another, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundredth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sharrkan spake thus, "I long that ye fall in with this my plan, for naught save good can come of it." So they agreed thereon and clomb the mountain head and shouted, "Allaho Akbar!"; and hills and trees and rocks re worded their Allaho Akbar for fear of the Almighty. The Infidels heard it and cried out one to other and donned their armour and said, "The foe is upon us, by the truth of the Messiah!" Then they fell on one another and slew of their own men more than any knoweth save Almighty Allah. As soon as it was dawn, they sought for the captives, but found no trace of them, and their captains said, "They who did this were the prisoners in our possession; up, then, and after them in all haste till ye overtake them, when we will make them quaff the cup of requital; and let not fright nor the panic of sudden awaking possess you." So they took horse and rode after the fugitives and it wanted but an eye twinkling before they overtook them and surrounded them. Now when Zau al-Makan saw this, he was seized with increase of terror and said to his brother, "What I feared would come, is come upon us, and now it remaineth only for us to fight for the Faith." But Sharrkan preferred to hold his peace. Then Zau al- Makan and his companions rushed down from the hill crest, shouting, "Allaho Akbar!" and his men repeated the war cry and addressed themselves to fight and to sell their lives in the service of the Lord of Faithful Men; and while they were in this case, behold, they heard many voices voicing, "There is no god but the God! God is most great! Salutation and salvation upon the Apostle, the Bringer of glad Tidings, the Bearer of bad Tidings!''[434] So they turned towards the direction of the sound and saw a company of Moslems who believed in one God, pushing towards them, whereat their hearts were heartened and Sharrkan charged upon the Infidels crying out, "There is no god but the God! God is most great! he and those with him, so that earth quaked as with an earthquake and the Unbeliever host brake asunder and fled into the mountains and the Moslems followed them with lunge and blow; and Zau al-Makan and his comrades of the Moslems ceased not to smite the hosts of the Infidel foe, and parted heads from bodies till day darkened and night coming on starkened sight. Thereupon the Moslems drew together and passed the night in congratulations, and, when morning dawned and daybreak shone with its shine and sheen, they saw Bahram, the captain of the Daylamites, and Rustam, the captain of the Turks, advancing to join them, with twenty thousand cavaliers like lions grim. As soon as they saw Zau al-Makan, the riders dismounted and saluted him, and kissed ground between his hands when he said to them, “Rejoice ye in the glad tidings of the victory of the Moslem and the discomfiture of the tribe of Unbelievers!” Then they gave one another joy of their deliverance and of the greatness of their reward after Resurrection Day. Now the cause of the coming of the succours to that place was this. When the Emir Bahram and the Emir Rustam and the Chief Chamberlain, with the Moslem host and flags flaunting high ahead, came in sight of Constantinople they saw that the Nazarenes had mounted the walls and manned the towers and the forts, and had set all their defenders in order of defence, as soon as they learned of the approach of the host of Al-Islam and the banners Mohammedan, and they heard the clash of arms and the noise of war voices and tramp of horse hoofs and from their look outs they beheld the Moslems, with their standards and ensigns of the Faith of Unity under the dust clouds and lo! they were like a flight of locusts or rain clouds raining rain, and the voices of the Moslems chanting the Koran and glorifying the Compassionate One, struck their ears. Now the Infidels knew of the approach of this host through Zat al-Dawahi with her craft and whoredom,[435] calumny and contrivance. And the armies of Al-Islam drew near, as it were the swollen sea, for the multitude of footmen and horsemen and women and children. Then quoth the General of the Turks to the General of the Daylamites, “O Emir, of a truth, we are in jeopardy from the multitude of the foe who is on the walls. Look at yonder bulwarks and at this world of folk like the seas that clash with dashing billows. Indeed yon Infidel outnumbereth us an hundredfold and we cannot be safe from spies who may inform them that we are without a Sultan. In very sooth, we run danger from these enemies, whose numbers may not be told and whose resources none can withhold, especially in the absence of King Zau al-Makan and his brother Sharrkan and the illustrious Wazir Dandan. If they know of this, they will be emboldened to attack us in their absence and with the sword they will annihilate us to the last man; not one of us safety shall see. So it is my counsel that thou take ten thousand riders of the allies and the Turks, and march them to the hermitage of Matruhina and the meadow of Malúkhiná in quest of our brothers and comrades. If thou act by my advice, it may be we shall approve ourselves the cause of their deliverance, in case they be hard pressed by the Infidels; and if thou act not, blame will not attach to me. But, an ye go, it behoveth that ye return quickly, for ill suspicion is part of prudence." The Emir aforesaid fell in with his counsel; so they chose twenty thousand horse and they set out covering the roads and making for the monastery above mentioned. So much for the cause of their coming; but as regards the ancient dame, Zat al-Dawahi, as soon as she had delivered Sultan Zau al-Makan and his brother Sharrkan and the Wazir Dandan into the hands of the Infidels, the foul whore mounted a swift steed, saying to the Faithless, "I design to rejoin the Moslem army which is at Constantinople and contrive for their destruction; for I will inform them that their chiefs are dead, and when they hear that from me, their joining will be disjointed and the cord of their confederation cut and their host scattered. Then will I go to King Afridun, Lord of Constantinople, and to my son Hardub, King of Roum, and relate to them their tidings and they will sally forth on the Moslems with their troops and will destroy them and will not leave one of them alive." So she mounted and struck across country on her good steed all the livelong night; and, when day dawned, appeared the armies of Bahram and Rustam advancing towards her. So she turned into a wayside brake and hid her horse among the trees and she walked a while saying to herself, "Haply the Moslem hosts be returning, routed, from the assault of Constantinople." However, as she drew near them she looked narrowly and made sure that their standards were not reversed,[436] and she knew that they were coming not as conquered men, but fearing for their King and comrades. When she was assured of this, she hastened towards them, running at speed, like a devil of ill rede, till reaching them she cried out, "Haste ye! haste ye! O soldiers of the Compassionate One, hasten to the Holy War against the hosts of Satan!" When Bahram saw her he dismounted and kissed the ground before her and asked her, "O friend of Allah what is behind thee?" Answered she, "Question not of sad case and sore condition; for when our comrades had taken the treasure from the hermitage of Matruhina, and designed to win their way Constantinople wards, thereupon came out on them a driving host and a dreadful of the Infidels." And the damned witch repeated to them the story to fill them with trouble and terror, adding, "The most of them are dead, and there are but five and twenty men left." Said Bahram, "O holy man! when didst thou leave them?" "But this night,"[437] replied she. He cried, "Glory be to Allah! to Him who hath rolled up the far distance for thee like a rug, so that thou hast sped thus walking upon thy feet and props upon a mid-rib of palm-tree! But thou art one of the saints which fly like birds when inspired and possessed by His directions."[438] Then he mounted his horse, and he was perplexed and confounded by what he had heard from the beldam so strong in lies and ill calumnies, and he said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Verily our labour is lost and our hearts are heavy within us, for our Sultan is a prisoner and those who are with him." Then they cut across the country, wide and side, night and day, and when morning dawned they reached the head of the defile and saw Zau al-Makan and Sharrkan shouting. "There is no god but the God! Allaho Akbar! and Salutation and Salvation upon the Congratulator, the Comminator."[439] Whereupon he and his drove at the Unbelievers and whelmed them, as the rain torrent whelms the waste; and cried out their war cries, till fear get hold of the prowess Knights and the mountains were cloven in affright. And when shone the day and showed its shine and sheen, the breeze of morning blew upon them sweet and fragrant, and each recognised other as hath been said before. Then they kissed the ground before the King and before his brother Sharrkan, who told them all that had befallen the party in the cave. Now thereat they marvelled and said to one another, "Hasten we back to Constantinople, for we left our companions there, and our hearts are with them." So they hurried departure, commending themselves to the Subtle, the All-wise, and Zau al-Makan exhorted the Moslems to steadfast- ness and versified in the following couplets,[440]

"Be praises mine to all praiseworthy Thee, * O Lord, who stinted not mine aid to be!
Though was I lost abroad, Thou west to me * Strongest support which vouchsafed victory:
Thou gav'st me wealth and reign and goodly gifts, * And slungest con quering sword of valiancy:

Thou mad'st me blest beneath Thy kingly shade, * Engraced with
generous boons dealt fain and free:
Thou savedst *from every fear I feared, by aid * Of my Wazir, the
Age's noblest he!
Garred us Thy grace in fight to throw the Greek, * Who yet came
back dight in War's cramoisie:
Then made I feint to fly from out the fight; * But like grim lion
turning made them flee,
And left on valley sole my foemen, drunk * Not with old
wine[441] but Death-cup's revelry:
Then came the Saintly Hermit, and he showed * His marvels
wrought
for town and wold to see;
When slew they hero-wights who woke to dwell * In Eden bowers
wherein sweet rill-lets well."

But, when Zau al-Makan had made an end of versifying, his brother Sharrkan congratulated him on his safety and thanked him for the deeds he had done; after which both set out forcing their marches to rejoin their army. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and First Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sharrkan congratulated his brother, Zau al-Makan, on his safety and thanked him for the deeds he had done; after which both set out forcing their marches to rejoin their army. Such was their case; but as regards the old woman, Zat al-Dawahi, after she had foregathered with the hosts of Rustam and Bahram, she returned to the coppice, where she took her steed and mounted and sped on at speed, till she drew near the Moslem army that beleaguered Constantinople, when she lighted down from her destrier and led it to the pavilion tent of the Chief Chamberlain. And when he saw her, he stood up to her in honour and signed to her with his right hand and said, "Welcome O pious recluse!" Then he questioned her of what had befallen, and she repeated to him her disquieting lies and deluding calumnies, saying, "In sooth I fear for the Emir Rustam, and the Emir Bahram, for that I met them and theirs on the way and sent them and their following to relieve the King and his companions. Now there are but twenty thousand horse and the Unbelievers outnumber them; so I would have thee at this moment send off the rest of thy troops at full speed to their suc cour, lest they be slain to the last man." And she cried to them, "Haste! Haste!" When the Chamberlain and the Moslems heard these words, their spirits fell and they wept; but Zat al-Dawahi said to them, "Ask aidance of Allah and bear patiently this triburation; for ye have the example of those who have been before you of the people of Mohammed; and Paradise with its palaces is laid out by Allah for those who die martyrs; and needs must all die, but most praiseworthy is dying while fighting for the Faith." The Chamberlain, hearing this speech of the accursed old woman, called for the Emir Bahram's brother, a knight by name Tarkash; and, choosing out for him ten thousand horse, riders famed for force, bade him set out at once. So he fared forth and marched all that day and the whole of the next night, till he neared the Moslems. When daylight dawned, Sharrkan saw the dust cloud about them and feared for the men of Al-Islam and said, "If these troops which are coming upon us be Moslem men our victory is assured by them; but, if these be Nazarenes, there is no gainsaying Destiny's decrees." Then he turned to his brother, Zau al- Makan, and said, Never fear, for with my life I will ransom thee from death. If these be Mohammedan troops, then were it an increase of heavenly favours; but, if they be our foes, there is no help save that we fight them. Yet do I long to meet the Holy Man ere I die, so I may beg him to pray that I die not save by death of martyrdom." Whilst the twain were thus speaking, behold, there appeared the banners inscribed with the words, "There is no god but the God and Mohammed is the Apostle of God;" and Sharrkan cried out, "How is it with the Moslems?" "All are sound and safe," replied they, "and we came not but out of concern for you." Then the Chief of the army dismounted and, kissing ground before Sharrkan, asked, "O my lord, how be the Sultan and the Wazir Dandan and Rustam and my brother Bahram; are they all in safety?" He answered, "All well; but who brought thee tidings of us?" Quoth Tarkash; "It was the Holy Man who told us that he had met my brother Bahram and Rustam and had sent them both to you and he also assured us that the Infidels had encompassed you and out numbered you; but I see not the case save the contrary thereof and that you are victorious.” They questioned him, “And how did the Holy Man reach you?”; and he replied, “Walking on his feet and he had compassed in a day and a night, ten days’ journey for a well girt horseman.” “There is no doubt but that he is a Saint of Allah,” said Sharrkan, “but where is he now?” They rejoined, “We left him with our troops, the folk of the Faith, moving them to do battle with the rebels and the Faithless.” Thereat Sharrkan rejoiced and all thanked Allah for their own deliverance and the safety of the Holy Man; and commended the dead to His mercy saying, “This was writ in the Book.” Then they set out making for Constantinople by forced marches, and whilst they were on this enterprise, behold, a dust cloud arose to such height that it walled the two horizons, the eastern and the western, from man’s sight and the day was darkened by it to night. But Sharrkan looked at it and said, “Verily, I fear lest this be the Infidels who have routed the army of Al-Islam for that this dust walleth the world, east and west, and hideth the two horizons, north and south.” Presently appeared under the dust a pillar of darkness, blacker than the blackness of dismal days; nor ceased to come upon them that column more dreadful than the dread of the Day of Doom. Horse and foot hastened up to look at it and know the terrors of the case, when behold, they saw it to be the recluse aforesaid; so they thronged round him to kiss his hands and he cried out, “O people of the Best of Mankind,[442] the lamp which shineth in darkness blind, verily the Infidels have outwitted the Moslems by guile, for they fell upon the host of the One God whilst they deemed themselves safe from the Faithless, and attacked them in their tents and made a sore slaughter of them what while they looked for no wile; so hasten to the aid of the Believers in the unity of God, and deliver them from those who deny Him!” Now when Sharrkan heard these words, his heart flew from his breast with sore trouble; and, alighting from his steed in amazement, he kissed the Recluse’s hands and feet. On like wise did his brother, Zau al-Makan, and the rest of the foot and horse troops; except the Wazir Dandan, who dismounted not but said, “By Allah, my heart flieth from this devotee, for I never knew show of devotion to religion that bred not bane. So leave him and rejoin your comrades the Moslems, for this man is of the outcasts from the gate of the mercy of the Lord of the Three Worlds! How often have I here made razzias with King Omar bin al-Nu'uman and trodden the earth of these lands!" Said Sharrkan, "Put away from thee such evil thought, hast thou not seen this Holy Man exciting the Faithful to fight, and holding spears and swords light? So slander him not, for backbiting is blameable and poisoned is the flesh of the pious.[443] Look how he inciteth us to fight the foe; and, did not Almighty Allah love him, He had cast him aforetime into fearful torment." Then Sharrkan bade bring a Nubian mule for the ascetic to ride and said, "Mount, O pious man, devout and virtuous!" But the devotee refused to ride and feigned self denial, that he might attain his end; and they knew not that this holy personage was like him of whom the poet saith,

"He prayeth and he fasteth for an end he doth espy; * When once his end is safely won then fast and prayer good bye."[444]

So the devotee ceased not to walk among the horsemen and the footmen, like a wily fox meditating guile, and began to uplift her voice, chanting the Koran and praising the Compassionate One. And they continued pressing forward till they approached the camp of Al-Islam, where Sharrkan found the Moslem in conquered plight and the Chamberlain upon the brink of falling back in flight, whilst the sword of Greece havoc dight among the Faithful, the righteous and those who work upright, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sharrkan saw the Moslems in conquered plight and the Chamberlain upon the brink of retreat and flight and the sword havoc dight among the righteous and the workers of upright, the cause of this weakness among the Moslems was that the accursed old woman, Zat al-Dawahi, the foe of the Faith, after seeing that Bahram and Rustam had set forward with their troops to join Sharrkan and his brother Zau al-Makan, repaired to the camp of the Mahometans before Constantinople and caused the mission of the Emir Tarkash, as hath been before said. In this her purpose was to divide the Moslem forces the better to weaken them. Then she left them and entered Constantinople, and called with a loud voice on the knights of the

Greeks, saying, “Let me down a cord that I may tie thereto this letter, and do ye bear it to your King Afridun, that he may read it and to my son King Hardub that they both do what is written therein of bidding and forbidding.” So they let down for her a string and she tied thereto a letter whose purport was the following: “From the terriblest of tribulations[445] and the chiefest of all calamities, Zat al-Dawahi, to King Afridun greeting. But afterwards, of a truth I have contrived a device for destroying the Moslems; so bide ye quiet and content. I have cozened and captured their Sultan and the Wazir Dandan; and then I returned to their camp and acquainted them therewith, whereby their pride had a fall and their withers were wrung. And I have so wrought upon the host ‘leaguering Constantinople that they have sent ten thousand men under the Emir Tarkash to succour the capitves, of whom there be now left but few; it is therefore my object that ye sally forth against them with all your power while this day endureth; and that ye fall on them in their tents and that ye leave them not till ye shall have slain them to the last man; for, verily the Messiah looketh down upon you and the Blessed Virgin favoureth you; and I hope of the Messiah that he forget not what deed I have done.” When her letter came to King Afridun, he rejoiced with great joyance; and, sending at once for King Hardub of Greece, son of Zat al-Dawahi, read the letter to him as soon as he came,whereathe was exceeding glad and said, “See my mother’s craft; verily it dispenseth with swords, and her aspect standeth in stead of the terrors of the Day of Dread.” Rejoined Afridun, “May the Messiah not bereave us of thy venerable parent nor deprive her of her wile and guile!” Then he bade the Knights give orders for sallying outside the city, and the news was noised abroad in Constantinople. So the Nazarenes and the cohorts of the Cross burst forth and unsheathed their keen sabres in their numbers, shouting out their professions of impiety and heresies, and blaspheming the Lord of all Creatures. When the Chamberlain saw the sally, he said, “Behold, the Greek is upon us and they surely have learned that our Sultan is far away; and haply they have attacked us, for that the most part of our troops have marched to the succour of King Zau al-Makan!” Therewith he waxed wroth and cried out, “Ho, soldiers of Al-Islam and favourers of the True Faith, an you flee you are lost, but if ye stand fast, ye win! Know ye that valiancy lieth in endurance of outrance and that no case is so strait but that the Almighty is able to make it straight; Allah assain you and look upon you with eyes of compassion fain!” Thereupon the Moslems cried out, “Allaho Akbar!” and the believer in the One God shouted his slogan, and whirled the mill wheels of fight with cutting and thrusting in main and might; scymitars and spears played sore and the plains and valleys were swamped with gore. The priests and monks priested it, tight girding their girdles and uplifting the Crucifixes, while the Moslem shouted out the professions of the Requiting King and verses of the Koran began to sing. The hosts of the Compassion are One fought against the legions of Satan; and head flew from body of man, while the good Angels hovered above the people of the Chosen Prophet, nor did the sword cease to smite till the day darkened and night came on and starkened. Now the miscreants had encompassed the Moslems and made sure of escaping the pains that awaited them; and the Faithless greeded for victory over the Faithful until day dawned and dazzled. There upon the Chamberlain mounted, he and his men, trusting thee Allah would help them to victory; and host was mingled with host and battle rose a foot and took post. And heads flew from trunks whilst the brave stood fast in stead; the craven turned tail and fled; and the Judge of death judged and sentence sped, so that the champions fell from their saddles slain and corpses cumbered meadow and plain. Then the Moslem began to give ground and rearwards bent; and the Greek took possession of some of their tents; whereupon the Moslems were about to break and retreat and take flight, when meanwhile behold, up came Sharrkan with the rest of the host of Al-Islam and the standards of the Believers in Unity. And having come up with them, he charged the Infidels; and followed him Zau al-Makan and the Wazir Dandan and the Emirs Bahram and Rustam with his brother Tarkash. When the foe saw this, they lost head and their reason fled, and the dust clouds towered till they covered the country whilst the righteous Believers joined their pious comrades. Then Sharrkan accosted the Chamberlain and praised him for his steadfastness; and he in turn gave the Prince joy of his timely succour and his gaining the day. Thereat the Moslems were glad and their hearts were heartened; so they rushed upon their enemies and devoted themselves to Allah in their Fight for the Faith. But when the Idolaters beheld the standards Mohammedan and there on the profession of Faith Islamitan, proclaiming the Unity, they shrieked “Woe!” and “Ruin!” and besought succour of the Patriarchs of the Monasteries. Then fell they to calling upon John and Mary and the Cross abhorrent and stayed their hands from slaughter, whilst King Afridun went up to consult King Hardub of Greece, for the two Kings stood one at the head of each wing, right and left. Now there was with them also a famous cavalier, Lawiya highs, who commanded the centre; and they drew out in battle array, but indeed they were full of alarm and affray. Meanwhile, the Moslems aligned their forces and thereupon Sharrkan came to his brother, Zau al-Makan, and said, “O King of the Age, doubtless they mean to champion it, and that is also the object of our desire; but it is my wish to push forward the stoutest hearted of our fighters, for by forethought is one half of life wrought.” Replied the Sultan, “As thou wilt, O companion of good counsel!” “It is my wish,” added Sharrkan, “to stand in mid line opposite the Infidel, with the Wazir Dandan on my left and thee on my right, whilst the Emir Bahram leads the dexter wing and the Emir Rustam leads the wing sinistral; and thou, O mighty King, shalt be under the standards and the ensigns, for that thou art the pillar of our defence; upon thee, after Allah, is our dependence and we will all be thy ransom from aught that can harm thee.” Zau al-Makan thanked him therefor, and the slogan arose and the sabre was drawn; but, as things stood thus, behold, there came forth a cavalier from the ranks of Roum; and, as he drew near, they saw that he was mounted on a slow paced she mule, fleeing with her master from the shock of swords. Her housings were of white silk covered by a prayer-carpet of Cash mere stuff, and on her back sat a Shaykh, an old man of comely presence and reverend aspect, garbed in a gown of white wool. He stinted not pushing her and hurrying her on till he came near the Moslem and said, “I am an ambassador to you all, and an ambassador hath naught to do save to deliver; so give me safe conduct and permit of speech, that I communicate to you my message.” Replied Sharrkan, “Thou art in safety: fear neither sway of sword nor lunge of lance.” Thereupon the old man dismounted and, taking the Cross from his neck, placed it before the Sultan and humbled himself with much humility. Then quoth to him the Moslems, “What is with thee of news?”; and quoth he, “I am an ambassador from King Afridun, for I counselled him to avert the destruction of all these frames of men and temples of the Compassionate One; and to him it seemed righteous to stay the shedding of blood and limit it to the encounter of two knights in shock of fight singular; so he agreed to that and he saith to you, ‘Verily, I will ransom my army with my life; so let the Moslem King do as I do and with his life ransom his host. And if he kill me, there will be no stay left in the army of Roum, and if I kill him, there will be no stability with the Moslems.” When Sharrkan heard this he said, “O monk, I agree to that, for it is just nor may it be gainsaid; and behold, I will meet him in duello and do with him derring do, for I am Champion of the Faithful even as he is Champion of the Faithless; and if he slay me, he will have won the day and naught will remain for the Moslems forces save flight. So return to him, O thou monk, and say that the single combat shall take place to morrow, for this day we have come off our journey and are aweary; but after rest neither reproach nor blame fear ye.” So the monk returned (and he rejoicing) to King Afridun and King Hardub, and told them both what Sharrkan had said, whereat King Afridun was glad with exceeding gladness and fell from him anxiety and sadness, and he said to himself, “No doubt but this Sharrkan is their doughtiest swayer of the sword and the dourest at lunge of lance; and when I shall have slain him, their hearts will be disheartened and their strength will be shattered.” Now Zat al-Dawahi had written to King Afridun of that and had told him how Sharrkan was a Knight of the Braves and the bravest of knights and had warned him against him; but Afridun was a stalwart cavalier who fought in many a fashion; he could hurl rocks and throw spears and smite with the iron mace and he feared not the prowess of the prow. So when he heard the report of the monk that Sharrkan agreed to the duello, he was like to fly for exceeding joy because he had self confidence and he knew that none could with stand him. The Infidels passed that night in joy and jubilee and wine bibbing; and, as soon as it was dawn, the two armies drew out with the swart of spear and the blanch of blade. And behold a cavalier rode single handed into the plain, mounted on a steed of purest strain, and for foray and fray full ready and fain. And that Knight had limbs of might and he was clad in an iron cuirass made for stress of fight. On his breast he wore a jewelled mirror and in his hand he bore a keen scymitar and his lance of Khalanj wood,[446] the curious work of the Frank, weighing a quintal. Then the rider uncovered his face and cried out, saying, "Whoso knoweth me verily hath enough of me, and whoso knoweth me not right soon[447] shall ken who I be. I am Afridun the overwhelmed by the well omened Shawáhi,[448] Zat al-Dawahi." But he had not ended speaking ere Sharrkan, the Champion of the Moslems, fared forth to meet him, mounted on a sorrel horse worth a thousand pieces of red gold with accoutrements purfled in pearls and precious stone; and he bore in baldrick a blade of watered Indian steel that through necks shore and made easy the hard and sore. He crave his charger between the two hosts in line whilst the horsemen all fixed on him their eyne, and he cried out to Afridun, "Woe to thee, O accursed! dost thou deem me one of the horsemen thou hast overta'en who cannot stand against thee on battle plain?" Then each rushed upon other and they bashed together like two mountains crashing or two billows dash ing and clashing: they advanced and retreated; and drew together and withdrew; and stinted not of fray and fight and weapon play, and strife and stay, with stroke of sword and lunge of lance. Of the two armies looking on, some said, "Sharrkan is victor!" and others, "Afridun will conquer!"; and the two riders stayed not their hands from the hustle until ceased the clamour and the bustle; and the dust columns rose and the day waned and the sun waxed yellow and wan. Then cried out King Afridun to Sharrkan, saying, "By the truth of the Messiah and the Faith which is no liar, thou art nought save a doughty rider and a stalwart fighter; but thou art fraudful and thy nature is not that of the noble. I ken thy work is other than praiseworthy nor is thy prowess that of a Prince; for thy people behave to thee as though thou wert a slave;[449] and see! they bring thee out a charger which is not thine, that thou mayst mount and return to the fight. But by the truth of my Faith, thy fighting irketh and fatigueth me and I am weary of cutting and thrusting with thee; and if thou purpose to lay on load with me to night, thou wouldst not change aught of thy harness nor thy horse, till thou approve to the cavaliers, thy generous blood and skill in brunt.” When Sharrkan heard him say these words concerning his own folk behaving to him though he were a slave, he waxt wroth and turned towards his men, meaning to sign to them and bid them not prepare him change of harness or horse, when lo! Afridun shook his throw spear high in air and cast it at Sharrkan. Now when the Moslem turned his back, he found none of the men near him, and he knew this to be a trick of the accursed Infidel; so he wheeled round in haste and behold, the javelin came at him, so he swerved from it, till his head was bent low as his saddle bow. The weapon grazed his breast, and pierced the skin of his chest, for Sharrkan was high bosomed: whereupon he gave one cry and swooned away. Thereat the accursed Afridun was joyful, thinking he had slain him; and shouted to the Infidels bidding them rejoice, whereat the Faithless were encouraged and the Faithful wept. When Zau al-Makan saw his brother reeling in selle so that he well nigh fell, he despatched cavaliers towards him and the braves hurried to his aid and came up with him. Thereupon the Infidels drove at the Moslems; the two hosts joined battle and the two lines were mingled, whilst the keen scymitar of Al-Yaman did good work. Now the first to reach Sharrkan was the Wazir Dandan, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Zau al-Makan saw that the accursed Infidel had struck with javelin his brother Sharrkan, he deemed him dead, and despatched cavaliers towards him; and the first to reach him were the Wazir Dandan and the Emir of the Turks, Bahram, and the Emir of the Daylamites, Rustam. They found him falling from his horse; so they stayed him in his saddle and returned with him to his brother, Zau al-Makan; then they gave him in charge to his pages, and went again to do the work of cut and thrust. So the strife redoubled and the weapons together clashed and ceased not bate and debate and naught was to be seen but blood flowing and necks bowing; nor did the swords cease on the napes of men to make play nor the strife to rage with more and more affray, till the most part of the night was past away and the two hosts were aweary of the mellay. So they called a truce and each army returned to its tents, whilst all the Infidels repaired to King

Afridun and kissed the ground before him, and the priests and monks wished him joy of his victory over Sharrkan. Then the King fared for Constantinople and sat upon the throne of his realm, when King Hardub came to him and said, “May the Messiah strengthen thy fore arm and never cease to be thy helper and hearken to what prayers my pious mother, Zat al-Dawahi, shall pray for thee! Know that the Moslems can make no stay without Sharrkan.” Replied Afridun, “To morrow shall end the affair when to fight I fare: I will seek Zau al-Makan and slay him, and their army shall turn tail and of flight shall avail.” Such was the case with the Kafirs; but as regards the host of Al-Islam, when Zau al-Makan returned to his tent, he thought of naught but his brother and, going into the pavilion, found him in evil case and sore condition; whereupon he summoned for counsel the Wazir Dandan and Rustam and Bahram. When they entered, they opined to assemble the physicians that they might medicine Sharrkan, and they wept and said, “The world will not readily afford his like!” and they watched by him all that night, and about the later hours came to them the Recluse in tears. When Zau al-Makan saw him, he rose in honour; and the Religious stroked Sharrkan’s wound with his hand, chanting somewhat of the Koran and repeating by way of talisman some of the verses of the Compassionate One. And the pretender ceased not to watch over him till dawn, when he came to himself and, opening his eyes, moved his tongue in his mouth and spake. At this Zau al-Makan rejoiced, saying, “Of a truth the blessing of the Holy Man hath taken effect on him!” And Sharrkan said, “Praised be Allah for recovery; indeed, I am well at this hour. That accursed one played me false; and, but that I swerved aside lighter than lightening, the throw spear had pierced through my breast. So praised be Allah for saving me! And how is it with the Moslems?” Answered Zau al-Makan, “All are weeping for thee.” Quoth Sharrkan, “I am well and in good case; but where is the Holy Man?” Now he was sitting by him and said, “At thy head.” So the Prince turned to him and kissed his hand when he said, “O my son! Be of good patience and Allah shall increase thy reward; for the wage is measured by the work.” Sharrkan rejoined, “Pray for me,” and he prayed for him. As soon as morning dawned and day brake in shine and sheen, the Moslems sallied out to the plain and the Kafirs made ready to thrust and cut. Then the Islamite host advanced and offered fight with weapons ready dight, and King Zau al-Makan and Afridun made to charge one at other. But when Zau al-Makan fared forth into the field, there came with him the Wazir Dandan and the Chamberlain and Bahram, saying, “We will be thy sacrifice.” He replied, “By the Holy House and Zemzem and the Place![450] I will not be stayed from going forth against these wild asses.” And when he rode out into the field he played with sword and spear till riders marvelled and both armies wondered; then he rushed upon the foe’s right wing and of it slew two knights and in like manner he dealt with the left wing. Presently he stayed his steed in the midst of the field and cried out, “Where is Afridun, that I may make him taste the cup of disgrace?” But when King Hardub saw the case he conjured Afridun not to attack him, saying, “O King, yesterday it was thy turn to fight: it is mine to day. I care naught for his prowess.” So he rushed out towards Zau al-Makan brand in hand and under him a stallion like Abjar, which was Antar’s charger and its coat was jet black even as saith the poet,

“On the glancing racer outracing glance * He speeds, as though he
would collar Doom:
His steed’s black coat is of darkest jet, * And likest Night in
her nightliest gloom:
Whose neigh sounds glad to the hearer’s ears * Like thunders
rolling in thun d’rous boom:
If he race the wind he will lead the way, * And the lightning
flash will behind him loom.’’[451]

Then each rushed upon the opponent, parrying blows and proving the marvellous qualities were stored in him; and they fell to drawing on and withdrawing till the breasts of the bystanders were straitened and they were weary of waiting for the event. At last Zau al-Makan cried out his war cry and rushed upon Hardub, King of Cæsarea,[452] and struck him a stroke that shore head from trunk and slew him on the spot. When the Infidels saw this, they charged in a body, compact and united, upon Zau al-Makan, who met them amidfield, and they engaged in hewing and foining, till blood ran in rills. Then the

Moslems cried out, “Allaho Akbar!” (God is most Great) and “There is no god but the God!”, and invoked salvation for the Prophet, the Bringer of Glad Tidings, the Bearer of Bad Tidings. And there befel a great fight, but Allah assigned victory to the Faithful and defeat to the Faithless. The Wazir Dandan shouted, “Take your blood revenge for King Omar bin al Nu’uman and his son Sharrkan!”; and bared his head and cried out to the Turks. Now there were by his side more than twenty thousand horse, and all charged with him as men, when the Faithless found naught to save their lives but flight. So they turned tail to fly while the biting sabre wrought its havoc and the Moslems slew of them that day some fifty thousand horse and took more than that number: much folk also were slain while going in at the gates, for the flock was great. Then the Greeks hove to the doors and swarmed up the walls to await the assault; and in fine the Moslem hosts returned to their tents aided to glory and victory, and King Zau al-Makan went in to his brother whom he found in most joyous case. So he made a prostration of thanks to the Bountiful and the Exalted; and then he came forward and gave Sharrkan joy of his recovery. Answered he, “Verily we are all under the benediction of this Religious, holy and righteous, nor would you have been victorious, but for his accepted orisons; indeed all day he remained at prayer to invoke victory on the Moslems.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Zau al- Makan went in to his brother Sharrkan, he found him sitting with the Holy Man by his side; so he rejoiced and drew near him and gave him joy of his recovery. Answered he, “Verily we are all under the benediction of this Recluse nor would you have been victorious but for his prayers, indeed he felt no fear this day and he ceased not supplication for the Moslems. I found strength return to me, when I heard your ‘Allaho Akbar,’ for then I knew you to be victorious over your enemies. But now recount to me, O my brother, what befel thee.” So he told him all that had passed between him and the accursed Hardub and related how he had slain him and sent him to the malediction of Allah; and Sharrkan praised him and thanked him for his prowess. When Zat al-Dawahi heard tell of her son’s death (and she still drest as a devotee), her face waxed yellow and her eyes ran over with railing tears: she kept her counsel, however, and feigned to the Moslems that she was glad and wept for excess of joy. But she said to herself, "By the truth of the Messiah, there remaineth no profit of my life, if I burn not his heart for his brother, Sharrkan, even as he hath burned my heart for King Hardub, the mainstay of Christendom and the hosts of Crossdom!" Still she kept her secret. And the Wazir Dandan and King Zau al-Makan and the Chamberlain remained sitting with Sharrkan till they had dressed and salved his wound; after which they gave him medicines and he began to recover strength; whereat they joyed with exceeding joy and told the troops who congratulated themselves, saying, "To morrow he will ride with us and do manly devoir in the siege." Then said Sharrkan to them, "Ye have fought through all this day and are aweary of fight; so it behoveth that you return to your places and sleep and not sit up." They accepted his counsel and then each went away to his own pavilion, and none remained with Sharrkan but a few servants and the old woman Zat al-Dawahi. He talked with her through part of the night, then he stretched himself to rest: and his servants did likewise and presently sleep overcame them all and they lay like the dead. Such was the case with Sharrkan and his men; but as regards the old woman she alone abode awake while they slumbered in the tent and, looking at Sharrkan she presently saw that he was drowned in sleep. Thereupon she sprang to her feet, as she were a scald she bear or a speckled snake, and drew from her waist cloth a dagger so poisoned that if laid thereon it would have melted a rock. Then she unsheathed the poniard and went up to Sharrkan's head and she drew the knife across his throat and severed his weasand and hewed off his head from his body. And once more she sprang to her feet; and, going the round of the sleeping servants, she cut off their heads also, lest they should awake. Then she left the tent and made for the Sultan's pavilion, but finding the guards on the alert, turned to that of the Wazir Dandan. Now she found him reading the Koran and when his sight fell upon her he said, "Welcome to the Holy Man!" Hearing this from the Wazir, her heart trembled and she said, "The reason of my coming hither at this time is that I heard the voice of a saint amongst Allah's Saints and am going to him." Then she turned her back, but the Wazir said to himself, “By Allah, I will follow our Devotee this night!” So he rose and walked after her; but when the accursed old woman sensed his footsteps, she knew that he was following her: wherefore she feared the disgrace of discovery and said in herself, “Unless I serve some trick upon him he will disgrace me.” So she turned and said to him from afar, “Ho, thou Wazir, I am going in search of this Saint that I may learn who he is; and, after learning this much, I will ask his leave for thee to visit him. Then I will come back and tell thee: for I fear thine accompanying me, without having his permission, lest he take umbrage at me seeing thee in my society.” Now when the Wazir heard these words, he was ashamed to answer her; so he left her and returned to his tent, and would have slept; but sleep was not favourable to him and the world seemed heaped upon him. Presently he rose and went forth from the tent saying in himself, “I will go to Sharrkan and chat with him till morning.” But when he entered into Sharrkan’s pavilion, he found the blood running like an aqueduct and saw the servants lying with their throats cut like beasts for food. At this he cried a cry which aroused all who were asleep; the folk hastened to him and, seeing the blood streaming, set up a clamour of weeping and wailing. Then the noise awoke the Sultan, who enquired what was the matter, and it was said to him, “Sharrkan thy brother and his servants are murthered.” So he rose in haste and entered the tent, and found the Wazir Dandan shrieking aloud and he saw his brother’s body without a head. Thereat he swooned away and all the troops crowded around him, weeping and crying out, and so remained for a while, till he came to himself, when he looked at Sharrkan and wept with sore weeping, while the Wazir and Rustam and Bahram did the like. But the Chamberlain cried and lamented more than the rest and asked leave to absent himself, such was his alarm. Then said Zau al-Makan, “Know ye who did this deed and how is it I see not the Devotee, him who the things of this world hath put away?” Quoth the Wazir, “And who should have been the cause of this affliction, save that Devotee, that Satan? By Allah, my heart abhorred him from the first, because I know that all who pretend to be absorbed in practices religious are vile and treacherous!” And he repeated to the King the tale of how he would have followed the Religious, but he forbade him, whereupon the folk broke out into a tumult of weeping and lamentation and humbled themselves before Him who is ever near, Him who ever answereth prayer, supplicating that He would cause the false Devotee who denied Allah's testimony to fall into their hands. Then they laid Sharrken out and buried him in the mountain aforesaid and mourned over his far-famed virtues. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that they laid Sharrkan out and buried him in the mountain aforesaid and mourned over his far-famed virtues. Then they looked for the opening of the city gate; but it opened not and no sign of men appeared to them on the walls; whereat they wondered with exceeding wonder. But King Zau al-Makan said, "By Allah, I will not turn back from them, though I sit here for years and years, till I take blood revenge for my brother Sharrkan and waste Constantinople and kill the King of the Nazarenes, even if death overcome me and I be at rest from this woeful world!" Then he bade be brought out the treasure taken from the Monastery of Matruhina; and mustered the troops and divided the monies among them, and he left not one of them but he gave him gifts which contented him. Moreover, he assembled in the presence three hundred horse of every division and said to them, "Do ye send supplies to your households, for I am resolved to abide by this city, year after year, till I have taken man bote for my brother Sharrkan, even if I die in this stead." And when the army heard these words and had received his gifts of money they replied, "To hear is to obey!" Thereupon he summoned couriers and gave them letters and charged them to deliver the same, together with the monies, to the soldiers' families and inform them that all were safe and satisfied, and acquaint them saying, "We are encamped before Constantinople and we will either destroy it or die; and, albeit we be obliged to abide here months and years, we will not depart hence till we take it." Moreover, he bade the Wazir Dandan write to his sister, Nuzhat al-Zaman, and said to him, "Acquaint her with what hath befallen us, and what be our situation and commend my child to her care since that, when I went out to war, my wife was near her delivery and by this time she must needs have been brought to bed; and if she hath given birth to a boy, as I have heard say, hasten your return and bring me the acceptable news." Then he gave them somewhat of money, which they pouched and set out at once; and all the people flocked forth to take leave of them and entrust them with the monies and the messages. After they had departed, Zau al-Makan turned to the Wazir Dandan and commanded him to advance with the army against the city walls. So the troops pushed forward, but found none on the ramparts, whereat they marvelled, while Zau al-Makan was troubled at the case, for he deeply mourned the severance from his brother Sharrkan and he was sore perturbed about that traitor the Ascetic. In this condition they abode three days without seeing anyone. So far concerning the Moslems; but as regards the Greeks and the cause of their refusing to fight during these three days the case was this. As soon as Zat al-Dawahi had slain Sharrkan, she hastened her march and reached the walls of Constantinople, where she called out in the Greek tongue to the guards to throw her down a rope. Quoth they, "Who art thou?"; and quoth she, "I am Zat al-Dawahi." They knew her and let down a cord to which she tied herself and they drew her up; and, when inside the city, she went in to the King Afridun and said to him, "What is this I hear from the Moslems? They say that my son King Hardub is slain." He answered, "Yes;" and she shrieked out and wept right grievously and ceased not weeping thus till she made Afridun and all who were present weep with her. Then she told the King how she had slain Sharrkan and thirty of his servants, whereat he rejoiced and thanked her; and, kissing her hands, exhorted her to resignation for the loss of her son. Said she, "By the truth of the Messiah, I will not rest content with killing that dog of the Moslem dogs in blood revenge for my son, a King of the Kings of the age! Now there is no help for it but that I work some guile and I contrive a wile whereby to slay the Sultan Zau al-Makan and the Wazir Dandan and the Chamberlain and Rustam and Bahram and ten thousand cavaliers of the army of Al-Islam; for it shall never be said that my son's head be paid with the bloodwit of Sharrkan's head; no, never!" Then said she to King Afridun, "Know, O King of the Age, that it is my wish to set forth mourning for my son and to cut my Girdle and to break the Crosses." Replied Afridun, "Do what thou desire; I will not gainsay thee in aught. And if thou prolong thy mourning for many days it were a little thing; for though the Moslems resolve to beleaguer us years and years, they will never win their will of us nor gain aught of us save trouble and weariness." Then the Accursed One (when she had ended with the calamity she had wrought and the ignominies which in herself she had thought) took ink case and paper and wrote thereon: "From Shawahi, Zat al- Dawahi, to the host of the Moslems. Know ye that I entered your country and duped by my cunning your nobles and at first hand I slew your King Omar bin al-Nu'uman in the midst of his palace. Moreover, I slew, in the affair of the mountain pass and of the cave, many of your men; and the last I killed were Sharrkan and his servants. And if fortune do not stay me and Satan obey me, I needs must slay me your Sultan and the Wazir Dandan, for I am she who came to you in disguise of a Recluse and who heaped upon you my devices and deceits. Wherefore, an you would be in safety after this, fare ye forth at once; and if you seek your own destruction cease not abiding for the nonce; and though ye tarry here years and years, ye shall not do your desire on us. And so peace be yours!" After writing her writ she devoted three days to mourning for King Hardub; arid, on the fourth, she called a Knight and bade him take the letter and make it fast to a shaft and shoot it into the Moslem camp. When this was done, she entered the church and gave herself up to weeping and wailing for the loss of her son, saying to him who took the kingship after him, "Nothing will serve me but I must kill Zau al-Makan and all the nobles of Al-Islam." Such was the case with her; but as regards what occurred to the Moslems, all passed three days in trouble and anxiety, and on the fourth when gazing at the walls behold, they saw a knight holding a bow and about to shoot an arrow along whose side a letter was bound. So they waited till he had shot it among them and the Sultan bade the Wazir Dandan take the missive and read it. He perused it accordingly; and, when Zau al-Makan heard it to end and understood its purport, his eyes filled with tears and he shrieked for agony at her perfidy; and the Minister Dandan said, "By Allah, my heart shrank from her!" Quoth the Sultan, "How could this whore play her tricks upon us twice? But by the Almighty I will not depart hence till I fill her cleft with molten lead and jail her with the jailing of a bird encaged, then bind her with her own hair and crucify her over the gate of Constantinople." And he called to mind his brother and wept with excessive weeping. But when Zat al-Dawahi arrived amongst the Infidels and related to them her adventures at length, they rejoiced at her safety and at the slaying of Sharrkan. There upon the Moslems addressed themselves again to the siege of the city and the Sultan promised his men that, if it should be taken, he would divide its treasures among them in equal parts. But he dried not his tears grieving for his brother till his body was wasted and sick, growing thin as a tooth pick. Presently the Wazir Dandan came in to him and said, "Be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear; in very sooth thy brother died not but because his hour was come, and there is no profit in this mourning. How well saith the poet,

"Whatso is not to be no sleight shall bring to pass; * What is to
be without a failure shall become;
Soon the becoming fortune shall be found to be, * And Folly's
brother[453] shall abide forlorn and glum."

Wherefore do thou leave this weeping and wailing and hearten thy heart to bear arms." He replied, "O Wazir, my heart is heavy for the death of my father and my brother and for our absence from hearth and home; and my mind is concerned for my subjects." Thereupon the Wazir and the bystanders wept; but they ceased not from pushing forward the siege of Constantinople for a length of days. And they being thus, behold, news arrived from Baghdad, by one of the Emirs to the effect that the King's wife had been blessed with a boy, and that his sister, Nuzhat al-Zaman, had named him Kánmákán.[454] Moreover, that the boy bid fair to be famous, already showing wondrous signs and marvellous tokens; and that she had commanded the Olema and the preachers to pray for mother and child from the pulpits and bless them in all wise; furthermore that the twain were well, that the land had enjoyed abundant rains, and that his comrade the Fireman was established in all prosperity, with eunuchs and slaves to wait upon him; but that he was still ignorant of what had befallen him. And she ended with the greeting of peace. Then quoth Zau al- Makan to the Wazir Dandan, "Now is my back strengthened for that I have been blest with a son whose name is Kanmakan." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when they brought him the news of his wife having borne him a boy child, Zau al- Makan rejoiced with great joy and cried, "Now is my back strengthened, for that I have been blessed with a son[455] whose name is Kanmakan." And he spake to the Wazir Dandan, saying, "I am minded to leave this mourning and order perfections of the Koran for my brother and command almsdeeds on his account." Quoth the Wazir, "Thy design is good." Thereupon he caused tents to be pitched over his brother's tomb; so they raised them and gathered together such of the men at arms as could repeat the Koran; and some began reciting the Holy volume; whilst others chanted litanies containing the names of Allah, and thus they did till the morning. Then Zau al-Makan went up to the grave of his brother Sharrkan and poured forth copious tears, and improvised these couplets,

"They bore him bier'd, and all who followed wept * With Moses'
shrieks what day o'erhead shook Tor;[456]
Till reached the grave which Pate had made his home, * Dug in
men's souls who one sole God adore:
Ne'er had I thought before to see my joy * Borne on the bier
which heads of bearers bore:
Ah no! nor ere they homed thee in the dust * That stars of
heaven earth ever covered o'er.
Is the tomb dweller hostage of a stead, * Where light and
splendour o'er thy face shall pour?
Praise to restore his life her word hath pledged: * Cribbed and
confined he shall dispread the more!"

When Zau al-Makan had made an end of his versifying he wept and wept with him all the troops; then he came to the grave and threw himself upon it wild with woe, and the Wazir repeated the words of the poet,

“Pain leaving life that fleets thou hast th’ eternal won; * Thou
didst as whilom many a doer like thee hath done
Leftest this worldly house without reproach or blame; * Ah, may
th’ ex change secure thee every benison!
Thou west from hostile onset shield and firm defence, * For us to
baffle shafts and whistling spears to shun.
I see this world is only cheat and vanity, * Where man naught
else must seek but please the Truthful One:
Th’ Empyrean’s Lord allow thee bower of heavenly bliss, * And wi’
thy faithful friends The Guide show goodly wone:
I bid thee last good e’en with sigh of bitter grief, * Seeing the
West in woe for lack of Easting Sun.”

When the Wazir Dandan had finished his reciting, he wept with sore weeping and the tears rained from his eyes like cushioned pearls. Then came forward one who had been of Sharrkan’s boon companions in his cups and he wept till ran in rills the drops, and he enumerated the dead man’s generous qualities, reciting the following pentastichs,

“Where gone is Bounty since thy hand is turned to clay? * And I
in misery lie since thou west ta’en away.
See’st not, O litter guide[457] (Heaven keep thee glad and
gay!), * How tears adorn my cheeks, these furrowed wrinkles
fray?
A sight to joy shine eyes and fill thee with
dismay.[458]
By Allah ne’er this heart within I spoke of thee; * Ah no! nor
dared my sight to see thy brilliancy:
Save that my tear drops sorest wound have garred me dree * Yea!
and if e’er on other rest these eyne of me,
May yearning draw their reins nor suffer sleep to see.”

And when the man stinted reciting, Zau al-Makan and the Minister Dandan wept and the whole army was moved to tears; after which all retired to their tents, and the King turning to the Wazir took counsel with him concerning the conduct of the campaign. On this wise the two passed days and nights, while Zau al-Makan was weighed down with grief and mourning till at last he said, “I long to hear stories and adventures of Kings and tales of lover folk enslaved by love; haply Allah may make this to solace that which is on my heart of heavy anxiety, and stint and stay my weeping and wailing.” Quoth the Wazir, “If naught can dispel thy trouble but hearing curious tales of Kings and people long gone before and stories of folk enslaved by love of yore, and so forth, this thing were easy, for I had no other business, in the lifetime of thy father (who hath found mercy) than to relate stories and to repeat verses to him. This very night I will tell thee a tale of a lover and his beloved, so shall thy breast be broadened.” When Zau al-Makan heard these words from the Minister, his heart was set upon that which had been promised to him and he did nothing but watch for the coming of the night, that he might hear what the Wazir Dandan had to tell of the Kings of yore and distracted lovers long gone before. And hardly would he believe that night had fallen ere he bade light the wax candles and the lamps and bring all that was needful of meat and drink and perfume gear, and what not; and when all was in presence, he summoned the Wazir Dandan, and the Emirs Rustam and Bahram and Tarkash and the Grand Chamberlain; then waited till the whole party was seated before him; whereupon he turned to the Minister and said, “Know, O Wazir, that night is come and hath let down over us its veil of gloom, and we desire that thou tell us those tales which thou promisedst us.” Replied the Wazir, “With joy and good will.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Zau Al-Makan summoned the Wazir and the Chamberlain and Rustam and Bahram, he turned towards the Minister Dandan and said, “Know, O Wazir, that night is come and hath let down over us its veil of gloom, and we desire that thou tell us those tales which thou promisedst us.” Replied the Wazir, “With love and gladness! Know, O auspicious King, that there reached my ears a relation of a lover and a loved one and of the discourse between them and what befel them of things rare and fair, a story such as repelleth care from the heart and dispelleth sorrow like unto that of the patriarch Jacob[459]

; and it is as follows”:

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Tale of Taj al-Muluk and the Princess Dunya (The Lover and the Loved).

There stood in times long gone by behind the Mountains of Ispahán, a city highs the Green City, wherein dwelt a King named Suláyman Sháh. Now he was a man of liberality and beneficence, of justice and integrity, of generosity and sincerity, to whom travellers repaired from every country, and his name was noised abroad in all regions and cities and he reigned many a year in high worship and prosperity, save that he owned neither wives nor children. He had a Minister who rivalled him in goodness and generosity and it so happened that one day, he sent for him and when he came into the presence said to him, "O my Wazir, my heart is heavy and my patience is past and my force faileth me, for that I have neither wife nor child. This is not the way of Kings who rule over all men, princes. and paupers; for they rejoice in leaving behind them children and successors whereby are doubled their number and their strength. Quoth the Prophet (whom Allah bless and keep!); 'Marry ye, increase ye, and multiply ye, that I may boast me of your superiority over the nations on the Day of Resurrection.' So what is thy rede, O Wazir? Advise me of what course and contrivance be advisable!" When the Minister heard these words, the tears sprang from his eyes in streams, and he replied, "Far be it from me, O King of the Age, that I debate on that which appertaineth to the Compassionate One! Wilt thou have me cast into the fire by the All powerful King's wrath and ire? Buy thee a concubine." Rejoined the King, "Know, O Wazir, that when a sovereign buyeth a female slave, he knoweth neither her rank nor her lineage and thus he cannot tell if she be of simple origin that he may abstain from her, or of gentle strain that he may be intimate in her companionship. So, if he have commerce with her, haply she will conceive by him and her son be a hypocrite, a man of wrath and a shedder of blood. Indeed the like of such woman may be instanced by a salt and marshy soil, which if one till for ever it yieldeth only worthless growth and no endurance show eth; for it may be that her son will be obnoxious to his Lord's anger, doing not what He biddeth him or abstaining from what He for biddeth him.

Wherefore will I never become the cause of this through the purchase of a concubine; and it is my desire that thou demand for me in marriage the daughter of some one of the Kings, whose lineage is known and whose loveliness hath renown. If thou can direct me to some maiden of birth and piety of the daughters of Moslem Sovranty, I will ask her in marriage and wed her in presence of witnesses, so may accrue to me the favour of the Lord of all Creatures." Said the Wazir, "O King, verily Allah hath fulfilled thy wish and hath brought thee to thy desire;" presently adding, "Know, O King, it hath come to my knowledge that King Zahr Shah,[460] Lord of the White Land, hath a daughter of surpassing loveliness whose charms talk and tale fail to express: she hath not her equal in this age, for she is perfect in proportion and symmetry, black eyed as if Kohl dyed and long locked, wee of waist and heavy of hip. When she draweth nigh she seduceth and when she turneth her back[461] she slayeth; she ravisheth heart and view and she looketh even as saith of her the poet,

'A thin waist maid who shames the willow wand; * Nor sun nor moon
 can like her rising shine:
'Tis as her honey dew of lips were blent * With wine, and pearls
 of teeth were bathed in wine:
Her form, like heavenly Houri's, graceful slim; * Fair face; and
 ruin dealt by glancing eyne:
How many a dead done man her eyes have slain * Upon her way of
 love in ruin li'en:
An live I she's my death! I'll say no more * But dying without
 her vain were life of mine.'"

Now when the Wazir had made an end of describing that maiden, he said to Sulayman Shah, "It is my counsel, O King, that thou despatch to her father an ambassador, sagacious, experienced and trained in the ways of the world, who shall courteously demand her in marriage for thee of her sire; for in good sooth she hath not her equal in the far parts of the world nor in the near. So shalt thou enjoy her lovely face in the way of grace, and the Lord of Glory be content with thy case; for it is reported of the Prophet (whom Allah bless and preserve!) that he said, ‘There be no monkery in Al-Islam.’” At this the King was transported to perfect joy; his breast was broadened and lightened; care and cark ceased from him and he turned to the Wazir and said, “Know thou, O Minister, that none shall fare about this affair save thou, by reason of thy consummate intelligence and good breeding; wherefore hie thee home and do all thou hast to do and get thee ready by the morrow and depart and demand me in marriage this maiden, with whom thou hast occupied my heart and thought; and return not to me but with her.” Replied the Wazir, “I hear and I obey.” Then he tried to his own house and bade make ready presents befitting Kings, of precious stones and things of price and other matters light of load but weighty of worth, besides Rabite steeds and coats of mail, such as David made[462] and chests of treasure for which speech hath no measure. And the Wazir loaded the whole on camels and mules, and set out attended by an hundred slave girls with flags and banners flaunting over his head. The King charged him to return to him after a few days; and, when he was gone, Sulayman Shah lay on coals of fire, engrossed night and day with desire; while the envoy fared on without ceasing through gloom and light, spanning fertile field and desert site, till but a day’s march remained between him and the city whereto he was bound. Here he sat him down on the banks of a river and, summoning one of his confidants, bade him wend his way to King Zahr Shah and announce his approach without delay. Quoth the messenger, “I hear and I obey!” And he rode on in haste to that city and, as he was about to enter therein, it so chanced that the King, who was sitting in one of his pleasaunces before the city gate, espied him as he was passing the doors, and knowing him for a stranger, bade bring him before the presence. So the messenger coming forward informed him of the approach of the Wazir of the mighty King Sulayman Shah, Lord of the Green Land and of the Mountains of Ispahan: whereat King Zahr Shah rejoiced and welcomed him. Then he carried him to his palace and asked him, “Where leavedst thou the Wazir?”; and he answered, “I left him in early day on the banks of such a river and tomorrow he will reach thee, Allah continue his favours to thee and have mercy upon thy parents!” Thereupon King Zahr Shah commanded one of his Wazirs to take the better part of his Grandees and Chamberlains and Lieutenants and Lords of the land, and go out to meet the ambassador in honour of King Sulayman Shah; for that his dominion extended over the country. Such was the case with Zahr Shah; but as regards the Wazir he abode in his stead till night was half spent[463] and then set out for the city; but when morning shone and the sun rose upon hill and down, of a sudden he saw King Zahr Shah's Wazir approaching him, with his Chamberlains and high Lords and Chief Officers of the kingdom; and the two parties joined company at some parasangs' distance from the city.[464] Thereat the Wazir made sure of the success of his errand and saluted the escort, which ceased not preceding him till they reached the King's palace and passed in before him through the gate to the seventh vestibule, a place where none might enter on horseback, for it was near to where the King sat. So the Minister alighted and fared on a foot till he came to a lofty saloon, at whose upper end stood a marble couch, set with pearls and stones of price, and having for legs four elephant's tusks. Upon it was a coverlet of green satin purfled with red gold, and above it hung a canopy adorned with pearls and gems, whereon sat King Zahr Shah, whilst his officers of state stood in attendance before him. When the Wazir went in to him, he composed his mind and, unbinding his tongue, displayed the oratory of Wazirs and saluted the King in the language of eloquence. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the One Hundred and Eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Wazir of King Sulayman Shah entered the presence of King Zahr Shah he composed his mind and, unbinding his tongue, displayed the oratory of Wazirs and saluted the King in the language of eloquence and improvised these couplets,

"He cometh robed and bending gracefully: * O'er crop and cropper
dews of grace sheds he:
He charms; nor characts, spells nor gramarye * May fend the
glances of those eyne from thee:
Say to the blamer, "Blame me not, for I * From love of him will
never turn to flee":

My heart hath played me false while true to him, * And Sleep, in
love with him, abhorreth me:
O heart! th'art not the sole who loveth him, * So bide with him
while I desertion dree:
There's nought to joy mine ears with joyous sound * Save praise
of King Zahr Shah in jubilee:
A King albeit thou leave thy life to win * One look, that look
were all sufficiency:
And if a pious prayer thou breathe for him, * Shall join all
Faithfuls in such pious gree:
Folk of his realm! If any shirk his right * For other hoping,
gross Unfaith I see."

When the Wazir had ended his poetry, King Zahr Shah bade him draw near and honoured him with the highmost honours; then, seating him by his own side, smiled in his face and favoured him with a gracious reply. They ceased not on this wise till the time of the under meal when the attendants brought forward the tables of food in that saloon and all ate till they were sated; after which the tables were removed and those who were in the assembly withdrew, leaving only the chief officers. Now when the Minister saw this, he rose to his feet and, after complimenting the King a second time and kissing the ground before him, spake as follows, "O mighty King and dread Lord! I have travelled hither and have visited thee upon a matter which shall bring thee peace, profit and prosperity: and it is this, that I come as ambassador to thee, seeking in marriage thy daughter, the noble and illustrious maid, from Sulayman Shah, a Prince famed for justice and integrity, sincerity and generosity, Lord of the Green Land and of the Mountains of Ispahan, who sendeth thee of presents a store, and gifts of price galore, ardently desiring to become thy son in law. But art thou inclined to him as he to thee?" He then kept silence, awaiting a reply. When King Zahr Shah heard these words, he sprang to his feet and kissed the ground respectfully before the Wazir, while the bystanders were confounded at his condescension to the ambassador and their minds were amazed. Then he praised Him who is the Lord of Honour and Glory and replied (and he still standing), "O mighty Wazir and illustrious Chief; hear thou what I say! Of a truth we are to King Sulayman Shah of the number of his subjects, and we shall be ennobled by his alliance and we covet it ardently; for my daughter is a handmaid of his handmaidens, and it is my dearest desire that he may become my stay and my reliable support." Then he summoned the Kazis and the witnesses, who should bear testimony that King Sulayman Shah had despatched his Wazir as proxy to conclude the marriage, and that King Zahr Shah joyfully acted and officiated for his daughter. So the Kazis concluded the wedding contract and offered up prayers for the happiness and prosperity of the wedded feres; after which the Wazir arose and, fetching the gifts and rarities and precious things, laid them all before the King. Then Zahr Shah occupied himself anent the fitting out of his daughter and honourably entertained the Wazir and feasted his subjects all, great and small; and for two months they held high festival, omitting naught that could rejoice heart and eye. Now when all things needful for the bride were ready, the King caused the tents to be carried out and they pitched the camp within sight of the city, where they packed the bride's stuffs in chests and get ready the Greek handmaids and Turkish slave girls, and provided the Princess with great store of precious treasures and costly jewels. Then he had made for her a litter of red gold, inlaid with pearls and stones of price, and set apart two mules to carry it; a litter which was like one of the chambers of a palace, and within which she seemed as she were of the loveliest Houris and it became as one of the pavilions of Paradise. And after they had made bales of the treasures and monies, and had loaded them upon the mules and camels, King Zahr Shah went forth with her for a distance of three parasangs; after which he bade farewell to her and the Wazir and those with him, and returned to his home in gladness and safety. Thereupon the Wazir, faring with the King's daughter, pushed on and ceased not his stages over desert ways, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir fared on with the King's daughter and ceased not forcing his stages over desert ways and hastened his best through nights and days, till there remained between him and his city but three marches.

Thereupon he sent forward to King Sulayman Shah one who should announce the coming of the bride. The King rejoiced thereat and bestowed on the messenger a dress of honour; and bade his troops march forth in grand procession to meet the Princess and her company for due worship and honour, and don their richest apparel with banners flying over their heads. And his orders were obeyed. He also commanded to cry throughout the city that neither curtained damsel nor honoured lady nor time-ruptured crone should fail to fare forth and meet the bride. So they all went out to greet her and the grandest of them vied in doing her service and they agreed to bring her to the King's palace by night. More over, the chief officers decided to decorate the road and to stand in espalier of double line, whilst the bride should pass by preceded by her eunuchs and serving women and clad in the gear her father had given her. So when she made her appearance, the troops surrounded her, these of the right wing and those of the left, and the litter ceased not advancing with her till she approached the palace; nor remained any but came forth to gaze upon the Princess. Drums were beaten and spears were brandished and horns blared and flags fluttered and steeds pranced for precedence and scents shed fragrance till they reached the Palace gate and the pages entered with the litter through the Harim wicket. The place shone with its splendours and the walls glittered for the glamour of its gear. Now when night came, the eunuchs threw open the doors of the bridal chamber and stood surrounding the chief entrance whereupon the bride came forward and amid her damsels she was like the moon among stars or an union shining on a string of lesser pearls, and she passed into the bridal closet where they had set for her a couch of alabaster inlaid with unions and jewels. As soon as she had taken seat there, the King came in to her and Allah filled his heart with her love so he abated her maidenhead and ceased from him his trouble and disquiet. He abode with her well nigh a month but she had conceived by him the first night; and, when the month was ended, he went forth and sat on his sofa of state, and dispensed justice to his subjects, till the months of her pregnancy were accomplished. On the last day of the ninth month, towards day break, the Queen was seized with the pangs of labour; so she sat down on the stool of delivery and Allah made the travail easy to her and she gave birth to a boy child, on whom appeared auspicious signs. When the King heard of this, he joyed with exceeding joy and rewarded the bearer of the good tidings with much treasure; and of his gladness he went in to the child and kissed him between the eyes and wondered at his brilliant loveliness; for in him was approved the saying of the poet,

“In the towering forts Allah throned him King, * A lion, a star
in the skies of reign:
At his rising the spear and the throne rejoiced, * The gazelle,
the ostrich, The men of main:[465]
Mount him not on the paps, for right soon he’ll show * That to
throne on the war steed’s loins he’s fain:
And wean him from sucking of milk, for soon * A sweeter drink,
the foe’s blood, he’ll drain.”

Then the midwives took the newborn child and cut the navel cord and darkened his eyelids with Kohl powder[466] and named him Táj al-Mulúk Khárán.[467] He was suckled at the breast of fond indulgence and was reared in the lap of happy fortune; and thus his days ceased not running and the years passing by till he reached the age of seven. Thereupon Sulayman Shah summoned the doctors and learned men and bade them teach his son writing and science and belle-lettres. This they continued to do for some years, till he had learnt what was needful; and, when the King saw that he was well grounded in whatso he desired, he took him out of the teachers’ and professors’ hands and engaged for him a skilful master, who taught him cavalarice and knightly exercises till the boy attained the age of fourteen; and when he fared abroad on any occasion, all who saw him were ravished by his beauty and made him the subject of verse; and even pious men were seduced by his brilliant loveliness. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Tenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, That when Taj al-Muluk Kharan, son of Sulayman Shah, became perfect in riding craft and excelled all those of his time, his excessive beauty, when he fared abroad on any occasion, caused all who saw him to be ravished and to make him the subject of verse; and even pious men were seduced by his brilliant loveliness. Quoth the poet of him,

“I clipt his form and wax’d drunk with his scent, * Fair branch
to whom Zephyr gave nutriment:
Nor drunken as one who drinks wine, but drunk * With night
draught his lips of the honey dew lent:
All beauty is shown in the all of him, * Hence all human hearts
he in hand hath hens:
My mind, by Allah! shall ne’er unmind * His love, while I wear
life’s chains till spent:
If I live, in his love I’ll live; if I die * For pine and
longing, ‘O blest!’ I’ll cry

When he reached the eighteenth year of his age, tender down[468] sprouted, on his side face fresh with youth, from a mole upon one rosy cheek and a second beauty spot, like a grain of ambergris adorned the other; and he won the wits and eyes of every wight who looked on him, even as saith the poet,

“He is Caliph of Beauty in Yúsufs lieu, * And all lovers fear
when they sight his grace:
Pause and gaze with me; on his cheek thou’lt sight * The
Caliphate’s banner of sable hue.”[469]

And as saith another,

“Thy sight hath never seen a fairer sight, * Of all things men
can in the world espy,
Than yon brown mole, that studs his bonny cheek * Of rosy red
beneath that jet black eye.”

And as saith another,

“I marvel seeing yon mole that serves his cheeks’ bright flame *
Yet burneth not in fire albeit Infidel[470]
I wonder eke to see that apostolic glance, * Miracle working,

though it work by magic spell:
How fresh and bright the down that decks his cheek, and yet *
Bursten gall bladders feed which e’en as waters well.”

And as saith another,

“I marvel hearing people questioning of * The Fount of Life and
in what land ’tis found:
I see it sprung from lips of dainty fawn, * Sweet rosy mouth with
green mustachio down’d:
And wondrous wonder ’tis when Moses viewed * That Fount, he
rested not from weary round.”[471]

Now having developed such beauty, when he came to man’s estate his loveliness increased, and it won for him many comrades and intimates; while every one who drew near to him wished that Taj al-Muluk Kharan might become Sultan after his father’s death, and that he himself might be one of his Emirs. Then took he passionately to chasing and hunting which he would hardly leave for a single hour. His father, King Sulayman Shah, would have forbidden him the pursuit fearing for him the perils of the waste and the wild beasts; but he paid no heed to his warning voice. And it so chanced that once upon a time he said to his attendants “Take ye ten days food and forage;” and, when they obeyed his bidding, he set out with his suite for sport and disport. They rode on into the desert and ceased not riding four days, till they came to a place where the ground was green, and they saw in it wild beasts grazing and trees with ripe fruit growing and springs flowing. Quoth Taj al-Muluk to his followers, “Set up the nets here and peg them in a wide ring and let our trysting place be at the mouth of the fence, in such a spot.” So they obeyed his words and staked out a wide circle with toils; and there gathered together a mighty matter of all kinds of wild beasts and gazelles, which cried out for fear of the men and threw themselves for fright in the face of the horses. Then they loosed on to them the hounds and lynxes[472] and hawks;[473] and they shot the quarry down with shafts which pierced their vitals; and, by the time they came to the further end of the net ring, they had taken a great number of the wild beasts, and the rest fled. Then Taj al-Muluk dismounted by the water side and bade the game be brought before himself, and divided it, after he had set apart the best of the beasts for his father, King Sulayman Shah, and despatched the game to him; and some he distributed among the officers of his court. He passed the night in that place, and when morning dawned there came up a caravan of merchants conveying negro slaves and white servants, and halted by the water and the green ground. When Taj al-Muluk saw them, he said to one of his companions, "Bring me news of yonder men and question them why they have halted in this place."[474] So the messenger went up to them and addressed them, "Tell me who ye be, and answer me an answer without delay." Replied they, "We are merchants and have halted to rest, for that the next station is distant and we abide here because we have confidence in King Sulayman Shah and his son, Taj al-Muluk, and we know that all who alight in his dominions are in peace and safety; more over we have with us precious stuffs which we have brought for the Prince." So the messenger returned and told these news to the King's son who, hearing the state of the case and what the merchants had replied, said, "If they have brought stuff on my account I will not enter the city nor depart hence till I see it shown to me." Then he mounted horse and rode to the caravan and his Mamelukes followed him till he reached it. Thereupon the merchants rose to receive him and invoked on him Divine aid and favour with continuance of glory and virtues; after which they pitched him a pavilion of red satin, embroidered with pearls and jewels, wherein they spread him a kingly divan upon a silken carpet worked at the upper end with emeralds set in gold. There Taj al-Muluk seated himself whilst his white servants stood in attendance upon him, and sent to bid the merchants bring out all that they had with them. Accordingly, they produced their merchandise, and displayed the whole and he viewed it and took of it what liked him, paying them the price. Then he looked about him at the caravan, and remounted and was about to ride onwards, when his glance fell on a handsome youth in fair attire, and a comely and shapely make, with flower white brow and moon like face, save that his beauty was wasted and that yellow hues had overspread his cheeks by reason of parting from those he loved; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Eleventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Taj Al-Muluk, when he looked about him at the caravan, saw a handsome youth in neat attire and of shapely make, with flower like forehead and moon like face, save that his beauty was wasted and yellow hues had overspread his cheeks by reason of parting from those he loved; and great was his groaning and moaning, and the tears streamed from his eyelids as he repeated these couplets,

"Longsome is Absence; Care and Fear are sore, * And ceaseless
tears, O friend, mine eyes outpour:
Yea, I farewelled my heart on parting day * And heartless,
hopeless, now I bide forlore:
Pause, O my friend, with me farewelling one * Whose words my
cure
can work, my health restore!"

Now when the youth ended his poetry he wept awhile and fell down in a fainting fit, whilst Taj al-Muluk looked at him and wondered at his case. Then, coming to himself, he stared with distracted air, and versified in these couplets,

"Beware her glance I rede thee, 'tis like wizard wight, * None
can escape unscathed those eye shafts' glancing flight:
In very sooth black eyes, with languorous sleepy look, * Pierce
deeper than white swords however these may bite.
Be not thy senses by her sweets of speech beguiled, * Whose
brooding fever shall ferment in thought and sprite:
Soft sided Fair[475] did silk but press upon her skin, *
'Twould draw red blood from it, as thou thyself canst sight.
Chary is she of charms twixt neck and anklets dwell, * And ah!
what other scent shall cause me such delight?[476] "

Then he sobbed a loud sob and swooned away. But when Taj al-Muluk saw him in this case, he was perplexed about his state and went up to him; and, as the youth came to his senses and saw the

King's son standing at his head, he sprang to his feet and kissed the ground between his hands. Taj al-Muluk asked him, 'Why didst thou not show us thy merchandise?" end he answered, O my lord, there is naught among my stock worthy of thine august highness." Quoth the Prince, "Needs must thou show me what thou hast and acquaint me with thy circumstance; for I see thee weeping eyed and heavyhearted. If thou have been oppressed, we will end thine oppression, and if thou be in debt, we will pay thy debt; for of a truth my heart burneth to see thee, since I first set eyes on thee."[477] Then Taj al-Muluk bade the seats be set, and they brought him a chair of ivory and ebony with a net work of gold and silk, and spread him a silken rug for his feet. So he sat down on the chair and bidding the youth seat himself on the rug said to him, "Show me thy stock in trade!" The young merchant replied, "O my Lord, do not name this to me, for my goods be unworthy of thee." Rejoined Taj al-Muluk "It needs must be thus!"; and bade some of the pages fetch the goods. So they brought them in despite of him; and, when he saw them, the tears streamed from his eyes and he wept and sighed and lamented: sobs rose in his throat and he repeated these couplets,

"By what thine eyelids show of Kohl and coquetry! * By what thy
shape displays of lissome symmetry!
By what thy liplets store of honey dew and wine! * By what thy
mind adorns of gracious kindly gree!
To me thy sight dream-visioned, O my hope! exceeds * The
happiest escape from horriblest injury."

Then the youth opened his bales and displayed his merchandise to Taj Al-Muluk in detail, piece by piece, and amongst them he brought out a gown of satin brocaded with gold, worth two thousand dinars. When he opened the gown there fell a piece of linen from its folds. As soon as the young merchant saw this he caught up the piece of linen in haste and hid it under his thigh; and his reason wandered, and he began versifying,

"When shall be healed of thee this heart that ever bides in woe?

* Than thee the Pleiad-stars more chance of happy meeting
show
Parting and banishment and longing pain and lowe of love, *
Procrastinating[478] and delay these ills my life lay
low:
Nor union bids me live in joy, nor parting kills by grief, * Nor
travel draws me nearer thee nor nearer comest thou:
Of thee no justice may be had, in thee dwells naught of rush, *
Nor gain of grace by side of thee, nor flight from thee I
know:
For love of thee all goings forth and comings back are strait *
On me, and I am puzzled sore to know where I shall go."

Taj al-Muluk wondered with great wonder at his verse, and could not comprehend the cause. But when the youth snatched up the bit of linen and placed it under thigh, he asked him, "What is that piece of linen?" "O my Lord," answered the merchant, "thou hast no concern with this piece." Quoth the King's son, "Show it me;" and quoth the merchant, "O my lord, I refused to show thee my goods on account of this piece of linen; for I cannot let thee look upon it." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say,

When it was the One Hundred and Twelfth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant said to Taj al-Muluk, "I did not refuse to show thee my goods save on this account, for I cannot let thee look upon it." Whereupon Taj al Muluk retorted, "Perforce I must and will see it;" and insisted and became angry. So the youth drew it out from under his thigh, and wept and moaned and redoubled his sighs and groans, and repeated these verses,

"Now blame him not; for blame brings only irk and pain! * Indeed,
I spake him sooth but ne'er his ear could gain:
May Allah guard my moon which riseth in the vale * Beside our
camp, from loosed robe like skyey plain:[479]
I left him but had Love vouchsafed to leave for me * Some peace
in life such leave of him I ne'er had ta'en:

How long he pleaded for my sake on parting morn, * While down his
cheeks and mine tears ran in railing rain:
Allah belie me not: the garb of mine excuse * This parting rent,
but I will Mend that garb again!
No couch is easy to my side, nor on such wise * Aught easeth him,
when all alone without me lain:
Time with ill omened hand hath wrought between us two, * And
made
my waxing joys to wane and his to wane,
And poured mere grief and woe, what time Time fain had crowned *
The bowl he made me drink and gave for him to drain."

When he ended his recitation, quoth Taj al-Muluk, "I see thy conduct without consequence; tell me then why weepest thou at the sight of this rag!" When the young merchant heard speak of the piece of linen, he sighed and answered, "O my lord, my story is a strange and my case out of range, with regard to this piece of linen and to her from whom I brought it and to her who wrought on it these figures and emblems." Hereupon, he spread out the piece of linen, and behold, thereon was the figure of a gazelle wrought in silk and worked with red gold, and facing it was another gazelle traced in silver with a neck ring of red gold and three bugles[480] of chrysolite upon the ring. When Taj al-Muluk saw the beauty of these figures, he exclaimed, "Glory be to Allah who teacheth man that which he knoweth not!"[481] And his heart yearned to hear the youth's story; so he said to him, "Tell me thy story with her who owned these gazelles." Replied the young man: "Hear, O my Lord, the

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Tale of Aziz and Azizah.[482]

My father was a wealthy merchant and Allah had vouchsafed him no other child than myself; but I had a cousin, Azízah highs, daughter of my paternal uncle and we twain were brought up in one house; for her father was dead and before his death, he had agreed with my father that I should marry her. So when I reached man's estate and she reached womanhood, they did not separate her from me or me from her, till at last my father spoke to my mother and said, "This very year we will draw up the contract of marriage between Aziz and Azizah." So having agreed upon this he betook himself to preparing provision for the wedding feast. Still we ceased not to sleep on the same carpet knowing naught of the case, albeit she was more thoughtful, more intelligent and quicker witted than I. Now when my father had made an end of his preparations, and naught remained for him but to write out the contract and for me but to consummate the marriage with my cousin, he appointed the wedding for a certain Friday, after public prayers; and, going round to his intimates among the mer chants and others, he acquainted them with that, whilst my mother went forth and invited her women friends and summoned her kith and kin. When the Friday came, they cleaned the saloon and prepared for the guests and washed the marble floor; then they spread tapestry about our house and set out thereon what was needful, after they had hung its walls with cloth of gold. Now the folk had agreed to come to us after the Friday prayers; so my father went out and bade them make sweetmeats and sugared dishes, and there remained nothing to do but to draw up the contract. Then my mother sent me to the bath and sent after me a suit of new clothes of the richest; and, when I came out of the Hammam, I donned those habits which were so perfumed that as I went along, there exhaled from them a delicious fragrance scenting the wayside. I had designed to repair to the Cathedral mosque when I bethought me of one of my friends and returned in quest of him that he might be present at the writing of the contract; and quoth I to myself, "This matter will occupy me till near the time of congregational prayer." So I went on and entered a by street which I had never before entered, perspiring profusely from the effects of the bath and the new clothes on my body; and the sweat streamed down whilst the scents of my dress were wafted abroad: I therefore sat me at the upper end of the street resting on a stone bench, after spreading under me an embroidered kerchief I had with me. The heat oppressed me more and more, making my forehead perspire and the drops trickled along my cheeks; but I could not wipe my face with my kerchief because it was dispread under me. I was about to take the skirt of my robe and wipe my cheeks with it, when unexpectedly there fell on me from above a white kerchief, softer to the touch than the morning breeze and pleasanter to the sight than healing to the diseased. I hent it in hand and raised my head to see whence it had fallen, when my eyes met the eyes of the lady who owned these gazelles. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say

When it was the One Hundred and Thirteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the youth continued to Taj al-Muluk: “So I raised my head to see whence this kerchief had fallen, when my eyes met those of the lady who owned these gazelles. And lo! she was looking out of a wicket in a lattice of brass and never saw my eyes a fairer than she, and in fine my tongue faileth to describe her beauty. When she caught sight of me looking at her, she put her forefinger into her mouth, then joined her middle finger and her witness finger[483] and laid them on her bosom, between her breasts; after which she drew in her head and closed the wicket shutter and went her ways. There upon fire broke out in and was heaped upon my heart, and greater grew my smart; the one sight cost me a thousand sighs and I abode perplexed, for that I heard no word by her spoken, nor understood the meaning of her token. I looked at the window a second time, but found it shut and waited patiently till sundown, but sensed no sound and saw no one in view. So when I despaired of seeing her again, I rose from my place and taking up the handkerchief, opened it, when there breathed from it a scent of musk which caused me so great delight I became as one in Paradise.[484] Then I spread it before me and out dropped from it a delicate little scroll; whereupon I opened the paper which was perfumed with a delicious perfume, and therein were writ these couplets,

“I sent to him a scroll that bore my plaint of love, * Writ in
fine delicate hand; for writing proves man’s skill:
Then quoth to me my friend, ‘Why is thy writing thus; * So fine,
so thin drawn ’tis to read unsuitable?’
Quoth I, ‘for that I’m fine-drawn wasted, waxed thin, * Thus
lovers’ writ Should be, for so Love wills his will.

And after casting my eyes on the beauty of the kerchief,[485] I saw upon one of its two borders the following couplets worked in with the needle,

“His cheek down writeth (O fair fall the goodly scribe!) * Two
lines on table of his face in Rayhán-hand:[486]
O the wild marvel of the Moon when comes he forth! * And when he
bends, O shame to every Willow wand!”

And on the opposite border these two couplets were traced,

“His cheek down writeth on his cheek with ambergris on pearl *
Two lines, like jet on apple li’en, the goodliest design:
Slaughter is in those languid eyne whene’er a glance they deal, *
And drunkenness in either cheek and not in any wine.”

When I read the poetry on the handkerchief the flames of love darted into my heart, and yearning and pining redoubled their smart. So I took the kerchief and the scroll and went home, knowing no means to win my wish, for that I was incapable of conducting love affairs and inexperienced in interpreting hints and tokens. Nor did I reach my home ere the night was far spent and I found the daughter of my uncle sitting in tears. But as soon as she saw me she wiped away the drops and came up to me, and took off my walking dress and asked me the reason of my absence, saying, “All the folk, Emirs and notables and merchants and others, assembled in our house; and the Kazi and the witnesses were also present at the appointed time. They ate and tarried awhile sitting to await thine appearance for the writing of the contract; and, when they despaired of thy presence, they dispersed and went their ways. And indeed,” she added, “thy father raged with exceeding wrath by reason of this, and swore that he would not celebrate our marriage save during the coming year, for that he hath spent on these festivities great store of money." And she ended by asking, "What hath befallen thee this day to make thee delay till now?; and why hast thou allowed that to happen which happened because of thine absence?" Answered I, "O daughter of mine uncle, question me not concerning what hath befallen me."[487] Then I told her all that had passed from beginning to end, and showed her the handkerchief. She took the scroll and read what was written therein; and tears ran down her cheeks and she repeated these cinquains,

"Who saith that Love at first of free will came, * Say him: Thou
  liest! Love be grief and grame:
Yet shall such grame and grief entail no shame; * All annals
  teach us one thing and the same
    Good current coin clips coin we may not crepe!

An please thou, say there's pleasure in thy pain, * Find
  Fortune's playful gambols glad and fain:
Or happy blessings in th' unhappy's bane, * That joy or grieve,
  with equal might and main:
    Twixt phrase and antiphrase I'm all a heap!

But he, withal, whose days are summer bright, * Whom maids e'er
  greet with smiling lips' delight;
Whom spicey breezes fan in every site * And wins whate'er he
  wills, that happy wight
    White blooded coward heart should never keep!"

Then she asked me, "What said she, and what signs made she to thee?" I answered, "She uttered not a word, but put her fore finger in her mouth, then joining it to her middle finger, laid both fingers on her bosom and pointed to the ground. Thereupon she withdrew her head and shut the wicket; and after that I saw her no more. However, she took my heart with her, so I sat till sun down, expecting her again to look out of the window; but she did it not; and, when I despaired of her, I rose from my seat and came home. This is my history and I beg thee to help me in this my sore calamity." Upon this she raised her face to me and said, "O son of mine uncle, if thou soughtest my eye, I would tear it for thee from its eyelids, and perforce I cannot but aid thee to thy desire and aid her also to her desire; for she is whelmed in passion for thee even as thou for her." Asked I, "And what is the interpretation of her signs?"; and Azizah answered, "As for the putting her finger in her mouth,[488] it showed that thou art to her as her soul to her body and that she would bite into union with thee with her wisdom teeth. As for the kerchief, it betokeneth that her breath of life is bound up in thee. As for the placing her two fingers on her bosom between her breasts, its explanation is that she saith; 'The sight of thee may dispel my grief.' For know, O my cousin, that she loveth thee and she trusteth in thee. This is my interpretation of her signs and, could I come and go at Will, I would bring thee and her together in shortest time, and curtain you both with my skirt." Hearing these words I thanked her (continued the young merchant) for speaking thus, and said to myself, "I will wait two days." So I abode two days in the house, neither going out nor coming in; neither eating nor drinking but I laid my head on my cousin's lap, whilst she comforted me and said to me, "Be resolute and of good heart and hope for the best!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the One Hundred and Fourteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the youth pursued to Taj al-Muluk:— "And when the two days were past she said to me, "Be of good cheer and clear thine eyes of tears and take courage to dress thyself and go to her, according to thy tryst." Then she rose and changed my clothes and perfumed me with incense smoke. So I braced myself up and heartened my heart and went out and walked on till I came to the by-street, where I sat down on the bench awhile. And behold, the wicket suddenly opened and I looked up and seeing her, fell down in a swoon. When I revived, I called up resolution and took courage and gazed again at her and again became insensible to the world around me. Then I came to myself and looking at her, saw that she held in hand a mirror and a red kerchief. Now when she caught my glance, she bared her forearms and opened her five fingers and smote her breast with palm and digits; and after this she raised her hands and, holding the mirror outside the wicket, she took the red kerchief and retired into the room with it, but presently returned and putting out her hand with the kerchief, let it down towards the lane three several times, dipping it and raising it as often. Then she wrung it out and folded it in her hands, bending down her head the while; after which she drew it in from the lattice and, shutting the wicket shutter, went away without a single word; nay, she left me confounded and knowing not what signified her signs.[489] . I tarried sitting there till supper time and did not return home till near midnight; and there I found the daughter of my uncle with her cheek props in her hand and her eyelids pouring forth tears; and she was repeating these couplets,

"Woe's me! why should the blamer gar thee blaming bow? * How be
consoled for thee that art so tender bough?
Bright being! on my vitals cost thou prey, and drive * My heart
before platonic passion's[490] force to bow.
Thy Turk like[491] glances havoc deal in core of me, * As
furbished sword thin ground at curve could never show:
Thou weigh's" me down with weight of care, while I have not *
Strength e'en to bear my shift, so weakness lays me low:
Indeed I weep blood tears to hear the blamer say; * 'The lashes
of thy lover's eyne shall pierce thee through!'
Thou hast, my prince of loveliness! an Overseer,[492] * Who
wrongs me, and a Groom[493] who beats me down with brow.
He foully lies who says all loveliness belonged * To Joseph, in
thy loveliness is many a Joe:
I force myself to turn from thee, in deadly fright * Of spies;
and what the force that turns away my sight!"

When I heard her verse, cark increased and care redoubled on me and I fell down in a corner of our house; whereupon she arose in haste and, coming to me lifted me up and took off my outer clothes and wiped my face with her sleeve. Then she asked me what had befallen me, and I described all that had happened from her. Quoth she, "O my cousin, as for her sign to thee with her palm and five fingers its interpretation is, Return after five days; and the putting forth of her head out of the window, and her gestures with the mirror and the letting down and raising up and wringing out of the red kerchief,[494] signify, Sit in the dyer's shop till my messenger come to thee." When I heard her words fire flamed up in my heart and I exclaimed, "O daughter of my uncle, thou sayest sooth in this thine interpretation; for I saw in the street the shop of a Jew dyer." Then I wept, and she said, "Be of good cheer and strong heart: of a truth others are occupied with love for years and endure with constancy the ardour of passion, whilst thou hast but a week to wait; why then this impatience?" Thereupon she went on cheering me with comfortable talk and brought me food: so I took a mouthful and tried to eat but could not; and I abstained from meat and drink and estranged myself from the solace of sleep, till my colour waxed yellow and I lost my good looks; for I had never been in love before nor had I ever savoured the ardour of passion save this time. So I fell sick and my cousin also sickened on my account; but she would relate to me, by way of consolation, stories of love and lovers every night till I fell asleep; and when ever I awoke, I found her wakeful for my sake with tears running down her cheeks. This ceased not till the five days were past, when my cousin rose and warmed some water and bathed me with it. Then she dressed me in my best and said to me, "Repair to her and Allah fulfil thy wish and bring thee to thy desire of thy beloved!" So I went out and ceased not walking on till I came to the upper end of the by street. As it was the Sabbath[495] I found the dyer's shop locked and sat before it, till I heard the call to mid afternoon prayer. Then the sun yellowed and the Mu'ezzins[496] chanted the call to sundown prayer and the night came; but I saw no sign nor heard one word, nor knew any news of her. So I feared for my life sitting there alone; and at last I arose and walked home reeling like a drunken man. When I reached the house, I found my cousin Azizah standing, with one hand grasping a peg driven into the wall and the other on her breast; and she was sighing and groaning and repeating these couplets,

"The longing of an Arab lass forlorn of kith and kin * (Who to
  Hijazian willow wand and myrtle[497] cloth incline,

And who, when meeting caravan, shall with love-lowe set light *
To bivouac fire, and bang for conk her tears of pain and pine)
Exceeds not mine for him nor more devotion shows, but he * Seeing my heart is wholly his spurns love as sin indign."

Now when she had finished her verse she turned to me and, seeing me, wiped away her tears and my tears with her sleeve. Then she smiled in my face and said, "O my cousin, Allah grant thee enjoyment of that which He hath given thee! Why didst thou not pass the night by the side of thy beloved and why hast thou not fulfilled thy desire of her?" When I heard her words, I gave her a kick in the breast and she fell down in the saloon and her brow struck upon the edge of the raised pavement and hit against a wooden peg therein. I looked at her and saw that her forehead was cut open and the blood running, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fifteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant continued to Taj al-Muluk: "Now when I kicked the daughter of my uncle in the breast she fell on the edge of the raised pavement in the saloon and her brow struck upon a wooden peg. Thereby her forehead was cut open and the blood ran down, but she was silent and did not utter a single sound.[498] Presently she rose up, and made some tinder of rags, then staunching with it the bleeding wound, bound her forehead with a bandage; after which she wiped up the blood that had fallen on the carpet, and it was as if nothing had been. Presently she came up to me and smiling in my face, said with gentle voice, "By Allah, O son of my uncle, I spake not these words to mock at thee or at her! But I was troubled with an ache in my head and was minded to be blooded, but now thou hast eased my head and lightened my brow; so tell me what hath befallen thee to day." Thereupon I told her all that had passed between me and her that day; and she wept as she heard my words and said, "O son of my uncle, rejoice at the good tidings of thy desire being fulfilled and thine aim being attained. Of a truth this is a sign of acceptance; for that she stayed away only because she wisheth to try thee and know if thou be patient or not, and sincere in thy love for her or otherwise. Tomorrow, repair to her at the old place and see what sign she maketh to thee; for indeed thy gladness is near and the end of thy sadness is at hand.” And she went on to comfort me; but my cark and care ceased not to increase on me. Presently she brought me food which I kicked away with my foot so that the contents of every saucer were scattered in all directions, and I said, “Every lover is a madman; he inclineth not to food neither enjoyeth he sleep.” And my cousin Azizah rejoined, “By Allah, O son of my uncle, these be in very deed the signs of love!” And the tears streamed down her cheeks whenas she gathered the fragments of the saucers and wiped up the food; then she took seat and talked to me, whilst I prayed Allah to hasten the dawn. At last, when morning arose with its sheen and shine, I went out to seek her and hastening to her by street sat down on that bench, when lo! the wicket opened and she put out her head laughing. Then she disappeared within and returned with a mirror, a bag; and a pot full of green plants and she held in hand a lamp. The first thing she did was to take the mirror and, putting it into the bag, tie it up and throw it back into the room; then she let down her hair over her face and set the lamp on the pot of flowers during the twinkling of an eye; then she took up all the things and went away shutting the window without saying a word. My heart was riven by this state of the case, and by her secret signals, her mysterious secrets and her utter silence; and thereby my longing waxed more violent and my passion and distraction redoubled on me. So I retraced my steps, tearful-eyed and heavy hearted, and returned home, where I found the daughter of my uncle sitting with her face to the wall; for her heart was burning with grief and galling jealousy; albeit her affection forbade her to acquaint me with what she suffered of passion and pining when she saw the excess of my longing and distraction. Then I looked at her and saw on her head two bandages, one on account of the accident to her forehead and the other over her eye in consequence of the pain she endured for stress of weeping; and she was in miserable plight shedding tears and repeating these couplets,

“I number nights; indeed I count night after night; * Yet lived I

long ere learnt so sore accompt to see, ah!
Dear friend, I compass not what Allah pleased to doom * For
Laylá, nor what Allah destined for me, ah!
To other giving her and unto me her love, * What loss but Layla's
loss would He I ever dree, ah!"

And when she had finished her reciting, she looked towards me and seeing me through her tears, wiped them away and came up to me hastily, but could not speak for excess of love. So she remained silent for some while and then said, "O my cousin, tell me what befel thee with her this time." I told her all that had passed and she said, "Be patient, for the time of thy union is come and thou hast attained the object of thy hopes. As for her signal to thee with the mirror which she put in the bag, it said to thee, When the sun is set; and the letting down of her hair over her face signified, When night is near and letteth fall the blackness of the dark and hath starkened the daylight, come hither. As for her gesture with the pot of green plants it meant, When thou comest, enter the flower garden which is behind the street; and as for her sign with the lamp it denoted, When thou enterest the flower garden walk down it and make for the place where thou seest the lamp shining; and seat thyself beneath it and await me; for the love of thee is killing me." When I heard these words from my cousin, I cried out from excess of passion and said, "How long wilt thou promise me and I go to her, but get not my will nor find any true sense in thine interpreting." Upon this she laughed and replied, "It remaineth for thee but to have patience during the rest of this day till the light darken and the night starker and thou shalt enjoy union and accomplish thy hopes; and indeed all my words be without leasing." Then she repeated these two couplets,

"Let days their folds and plies deploy, * And shun the house that
deals annoy!
Full oft when joy seems farthest far * Thou nighmost art to hour
of joy.'"

Then she drew near to me and began to comfort me with soothing speech, but dared not bring me aught of food, fearing lest I be angry with her and hoping I might incline to her; so when coming to me she only took off my upper garment and said to me, “Sit O my cousin, that I may divert thee with talk till the end of the day and, Almighty Allah willing, as soon as it is night thou shalt be with thy beloved.” But I paid no heed to her and ceased not looking for the approach of darkness, saying, “O Lord, hasten the coming of the night!” And when night set in, the daughter of my uncle wept with sore weeping and gave me a crumb of pure musk, and said to me, “O my cousin, put this crumb in thy mouth, and when thou hast won union with thy beloved and hast taken thy will of her and she hath granted thee thy desire, repeat to her this couplet,

‘Ho, lovers all! by Allah say me sooth * What shall he do when love sore vexeth youth?’”[499]

And she kissed me and swore me not to repeat this couplet till I should be about to leave my lover and I said, “Hearing is obeying!” And when it was supper-tide I went out and ceased not walking on till I came to the flower garden whose door I found open. So I entered and, seeing a light in the distance, made towards it and reaching it, came to a great pavilion vaulted over with a dome of ivory and ebony, and the lamp hung from the midst of the dome. The floor was spread with silken carpets embroidered in gold and silver, and under the lamp stood a great candle, burning in a candelabrum of gold. In mid pavilion was a fountain adorned with all manner of figures;[500] and by its side stood a table covered with a silken napkin, and on its edge a great porcelain bottle full of wine, with a cup of crystal inlaid with gold. Near all these was a large tray of silver covered over, and when I uncovered it I found therein fruits of every kind, figs and pomegranates, grapes and oranges, citrons and shaddocks[501] disposed amongst an infinite variety of sweet scented flowers, such as rose, jasmine, myrtle, eglantine, narcissus and all sorts of sweet smelling herbs. I was charmed with the place and I joyed with exceeding joy, albeit I found not there a living soul and my grief and anxiety ceased from me. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day, and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Sixteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant continued to Taj al-Muluk: “I was charmed with the place and joyed with great joy albeit there I found not a living soul of Almighty Allah’s creatures, and saw nor slave nor hand maid to oversee these things or to watch and ward these properties. So I sat down in the pavilion to await the coming of the beloved of my heart; but the first hour of the night passed by, and the second hour, and the third hour, and still she came not. Then hunger grew sore upon me, for that it was long since I had tasted food by reason of the violence of my love: but when I found the place even as my cousin had told me, and saw the truth of her in terpretation of my beloved’s signs, my mind was set at rest and I felt the pangs of hunger; moreover, the odour of the viands on the table excited me to eat. So making sure of attaining my desire, and being famished for food I went up to the table and raised the cover and found in the middle a china dish containing four chickens reddened with roasting and seasoned with spices, round the which were four saucers, one containing sweetmeats, another conserve of pomegranate seeds, a third almond pastry[502] and a fourth honey fritters; and the contents of these saucers were part sweet and part sour. So I ate of the fritters and a piece of meat, then went on to the almond cakes and ate what I could; after which I fell upon the sweetmeats, whereof I swallowed a spoonful or two or three or four, ending with part of a chicken and a mouthful of something beside. Upon this my stomach became full and my joints loose and I waxed too drowsy to keep awake; so I laid my head on a cushion, after having washed my hands, and sleep over came me; I knew not what happened to me after this, and I awoke not till the sun’s heat scorched me, for that I had never once tasted sleep for days past. When I awoke I found on my stomach a piece of salt and a bit of charcoal; so I stood up and shook my clothes and turned to look right and left, but could see no one; and discovered that I had been sleeping on the marble pavement without bedding beneath me. I was perplexed thereat and afflicted with great affliction; the tears ran down my cheeks and I mourned for myself. Then I returned home, and when I entered, I found my cousin beating her hand on her bosom and weeping tears like rain shedding clouds; and she versified with these couplets,

“Blows from my lover’s land a Zephyr cooly sweet, * And with its

every breath makes olden love new glow:
O Zephyr of the morning hour, come show to us * Each lover hath
his lot, his share of joy and woe:
Could I but win one dearest wish, we had embraced * With what
embrace and clip of breast fond lovers know.
Allah forbids, while bides unseen my cousin's face, * All joys
the World can give or hand of Time bestow.
Would Heaven I knew his heart were like this heart of me, *
Melted by passion-flame and charged with longing owe."

When she saw me, she rose in haste and wiped away her tears and addressed me with her soft speech, saying, "O son of my uncle, verily Allah hath been gracious to thee in thy love, for that she whom thou lovest loveth thee, whilst I pass my time in weeping and bewailing my severance from thee who blamest me and chidest me; but may Allah not punish thee for my sake!" Thereupon she smiled in my face a smile of reproach and caressed me; then taking off my walking clothes, she spread them out and said, "By Allah, this is not the scent of one who hath enjoyed his lover! So tell me what hath befallen thee, O my cousin." I told her all that had passed, and she smiled again a smile of reproach and said, "Verily, my heart is full of pain; but may he not live who would hurt thy heart! Indeed, this woman maketh herself inordinately dear and difficult to thee, and by Allah, O son of my uncle, I fear for thee from her.[503] Know, O my cousin, that the meaning of the salt is thou west drowned in sleep like insipid food, disgustful to the taste; and it is as though she said to thee; 'It behoveth thou be salted lest the stomach eject thee; for thou professes to be of the lovers noble and true; but sleep is unlawful and to a lover undue; therefore is thy love but a lie.' However, it is her love for thee that lieth; for she saw thee asleep yet aroused thee not and were her love for thee true, she had indeed awoken thee. As for the charcoal, it means 'Allah blacken thy face'[504] for thou makest a lying presence of love, whereas thou art naught but a child and hast no object in life other than eating and drinking and sleeping! such is the interpretation of her signs, and may Allah Almighty deliver thee from her!" When I heard my cousin's words, I beat my hand upon my breast and cried out, "By Allah, this is the very truth, for I slept and lovers sleep not! Indeed I have sinned against myself, for what could have wrought me more hurt than eating and sleeping? Now what shall I do?" Then I wept sore and said to the daughter of my uncle, "Tell me how to act and have pity on me, so may Allah have pity on thee: else I shall die." As my cousin loved me with very great love, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Seventeenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant continued his tale to Taj al-Muluk: "Thereupon quoth I to the daughter of my uncle, "Tell me what to do and have pity on me, so may Allah have pity on thee!" As the daughter of my uncle loved me with great love, she replied, "On my head and eyes! But, O my cousin, I repeat what I have told thee oftentimes, if I could go in and out at will, I would at once bring you two together and cover you both with my skirt: nor would I do this but hoping to win thy favour. Inshallah, I will do my utmost endeavour to unite you; but hear my words and do my bidding. Go thou to the very same place and sit down where thou sattest before and at supper tide look thou eat not, for eating induceth sleep; and have a care-thou slumber not, for she will not come to thee till a fourth part of the night be passed. And the Almighty avert her mischief from thee!" Now when I heard these words I rejoiced and besought Allah to hasten the night; and, as soon as it was dark, I was minded to go, and my cousin said to me, "When thou shalt have met her, repeat to her the couplet I taught thee before, at the time of thy leave taking." Replied I, "On my head and eyes!" and went out and repaired to the garden, where I found all made ready in the same state as on the previous night, with every requisite of meat and drink, dried fruits, sweet scented flowers and so forth. I went up into the pavilion and smelt the odour of the viands and my spirit lusted after them; but I possessed my soul in patience for a while, till at last I could no longer withstand temptation. So I arose from my seat and went up to the table and, raising its cover, found a dish of fowls, surrounded by four saucers containing four several meats. I ate a mouthful of each kind and as much as I would of the sweetmeats and a piece of meat: then I drank from the saucer a sauce yellowed with saffron[505] and as it pleased me, I supped it up by the spoonful till I was satisfied and my stomach was full. Upon this, my eyelids drooped; so I took a cushion and set it under my head, saying, “Haply I can recline upon it without going to sleep.” Then I closed my eyes and slept, nor did I wake till the sun had risen, when I found on my stomach a cube of bone,[506] a single tip-cat stick,[507] the stone of a green date[508] and a carob pod. There was no furniture nor aught else in the place, and it was as if there had been nothing there yesterday. So I rose and shaking all these things off me, fared forth in fury; and, going home, found my cousin groaning and versifying with these couplets,

“A wasted body, heart enpierced to core, * And tears that down my
poor cheeks pour and pour:
And lover cure of access; but, but still * Naught save what’s
fair can come from fairest flow’r:
O cousin mine thou fill’st my soul with pate, * And from these
tears mine eyelids ache full sore!”

I chid the daughter of my uncle and abused her, whereat she wept; then, wiping away her tears, she came up to me and kissed me and began pressing me to her bosom, whilst I held back from her blaming myself. Then said she to me, “O my cousin, it seemeth thou sleptest again this night?” Replied I, “Yes; and when I awoke, I found on my stomach a cube of bone, a single tip-cat stick, a stone of a green date and a carob pod, and I know not why she did this.” Then I wept and went up to her and said, “Expound to me her meaning in so doing and tell me how shall I act and aid me in my sore strait.” She answered, “On my head and eyes! By the single tip cat stick and the cube of bone which she placed upon thy stomach she saith to thee ‘Thy body is present but thy heart is absent’; and she meaneth, ‘Love is not thus: so do not reckon thyself among lovers.’ As for the date stone, it is as if she said to thee, ‘An thou wert in love thy heart would be burning with passion and thou wouldst not taste the delight of sleep; for the sweet of love is like a green date[509] which kindleth a coal of fire in the vitals.’ As for the carob pod[510] it signifieth to thee, ‘The lover’s heart is wearied’; and thereby she saith, ‘Be patient under our separation with the patience of Job.’ “ When I heard this interpretation, fires darted into my vitals like a dart and grief redoubled upon my heart and I cried out, saying, “Allah decreed sleep to me for my ill fortune.” Then I said to her, “O my cousin, by my life, devise me some device whereby I may win my will of her!” She wept and answered, “O Aziz, O son of my uncle, verily my heart is full of sad thought which I cannot speak: but go thou again to night to the same place and beware thou sleep not, and thou shalt surely attain thy desire. This is my counsel and peace be with thee!” Quoth I, “If Allah please I will not sleep, but will do as thou biddest me.” Then my cousin rose, and brought me food, saying, “Eat now what may suffice thee, that nothing may divert thy heart.” So I ate my fill and, when night came, my cousin rose and bringing me a sumptuous suit of clothes clad me therein. Then she made me swear I would repeat to my lover the verse aforesaid and bade me beware of sleeping. So I left her and repaired to the garden and went up into that same pavilion where I occupied myself in holding my eyelids open with my fingers and nodding my head as the night darkened on me.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Eighteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant continued to Taj al Muluk: “So I repaired to the garden and went up into that same pavilion and occupied myself in gazing upon the flower beds and in holding my eyelids open with my fingers and nodding my head as the night darkened on me. And presently I grew hungry with watching and the smell of the meats being wafted towards me, my appetite increased: so I went up to the table and took off the cover and ate a mouthful of every dish and a bit of meat; after which I turned to the flagon of wine, saying to myself, I will drink one cup. I drank it, and then I drank a second and a third, till I had drunk full ten, when the cool air smote me and I fell to the earth like a felled man. I ceased not to lie thus till day arose, when I awoke and found myself out side the garden, and on my stomach were a butcher’s knife and a dram-weight of iron.[511] Thereat I trembled and, taking them with me, went home, where I found my cousin saying, “Verily, I am in this house wretched and sorrowful, having no helper but weeping.” Now when I entered, I fell down at full length and throwing the knife and the dram weight from my hand, I fainted clean away. As soon as I came to myself, I told her what had befallen me and said, Indeed, I shall never enjoy my desire." But when she saw my tears and my passion, they redoubled her distress on my account, and she cried, "Verily, I am helpless! I warned thee against sleeping; but thou wouldst not hearken to my warning, nor did my words profit thee aught." I rejoined, "By Allah, I conjure thee to explain to me the meaning of the knife and the iron dram-weight." "By the dram weight," replied my cousin, "she alludeth to her right eye,[512] and she sweareth by it and saith, 'By the Lord of all creatures and by my right eye! if thou come here again and sleep, I will cut thy throat with this very knife.' And indeed I fear for thee, O my cousin, from her malice; my heart is full of anguish for thee and I cannot speak. Nevertheless, if thou can be sure of thyself not to sleep when thou returnest to her, return to her and beware of sleeping and thou shalt attain thy desire; but if when returning to her thou wilt sleep, as is thy wont, she will surely slaughter thee." Asked I, "What shall I do, O daughter of my uncle: I beg thee, by Allah, to help me in this my calamity." Answered she, "On my head and eyes! if thou wilt hearken to my words and do my bidding, thou shalt have thy will." Quoth I, "I will indeed hearken to thy words and do thy bidding;" and quoth she, "When it is time for thee to go, I will tell thee." Then she pressed me to her bosom and laying me on the bed, shampoo'd my feet, till drowsiness overcame me and I was drowned in sleep, then she took a fan and seated herself at my head with the fan in her hand and she was weeping till her clothes were wet with tears. Now when she saw that I was awake, she wiped away the drops and fetched me some food and set it before me. I refused it, but she said to me, "Did I not tell thee that thou must do my bidding? Eat!" So I ate and thwarted her not and she proceeded to put the food into my mouth and I to masticate it, till I was full. Then she made me drink jujube sherbet[513] and sugar and washed my hands and dried them with a kerchief; after which she sprinkled me with rose water, and I sat with her awhile in the best of spirits. When the darkness had closed in, she dressed me and said to me, "O son of my uncle, watch through the whole night and sleep not; for she will not come to thee this tide till the last of the dark hours and, Allah willing, thou shalt be at one with her this night; but forget not my charge.” Then, she wept, and my heart was pained for her by reason of her over much weeping, and I asked, “What is the charge thou gayest me?” She answered, “When thou takest leave of her repeat to her the verse before mentioned.” So, full of joy I left her and repairing to the garden, went up into the pavilion where, being satiated with food, I sat down and watched till a fourth part of the dark hours was past. That night seemed longsome to me as it were a year: but I remained awake till it was three quarters spent and the cocks crew and I was famished for long watching. Accordingly I went up to the table and ate my fill, whereupon my head grew heavy and I wanted to sleep, when behold, a light appeared making towards me from afar. I sprang up and washed my hands and mouth and roused myself; and before long she came with ten damsels, in whose midst she was like the full moon among the stars. She was clad in a dress of green satin purfled with red gold, and she was as saith the poet,

“She lords it o’er our hearts in grass green gown, * With
 buttons[514] loose and locks long flowing down.
Quoth I, ‘What is thy name?’ Quoth she, ‘I’m she, * Who burns the
 lover-heart live coals upon:’
I made my plaint to her of loving lowe; * Laughed she, ‘To stone
 thou moanest useless moan!’
Quoth I, ‘An be of hardest stone thy heart, * Allah drew sweetest
 spring from hardest stone.’”

When she saw me she laughed and said, “How is it that thou art awake and that sleep overcame thee not? Forasmuch as thou hast watched through the night, I know that thou art a lover; for night watching is the mark of lovers displaying brave endurance of their desires.” Then she turned to her women and signed to them and they went away from her, whereupon she came up to me and strained me to her breast and kissed me, whilst I kissed her, and she sucked my upper lip whilst I sucked her lower lip. I put my hand to her waist and pressed it and we came not to the ground save at the same moment. Then she undid her petticoat trousers which slipped down to her anklets, and we fell to clasping and embracing and toying and speaking softly and biting and inter twining of legs and going round about the Holy House and the corners thereof,[515] till her joints became relaxed for love delight and she swooned away. I entered the sanctuary, and indeed that night was a joy to the sprite and a solace to the sight even as saith the poet,

"Sweetest of nights the world can show to me, that night * When
  cups went round and round as fed by ceaseless spring:
There utter severance made I 'twixt mine eyes and sleep, * And
  joined, re joined mine ear drop with the anklet
  ring."[516]

We lay together in close embrace till the morning when I would have gone away, but she stopped me and said, "Stay till I tell thee something" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Nineteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant continued his recital to Taj al Muluk: "When I would have gone away, she stopped me and said, "Stay, till I tell thee something and charge thee with a charge." So I stayed whilst she unfolded a kerchief and drew out this piece of linen and spread it open before me. I found worked on it these two figures of gazelles and admired it with great admiration. Then I took the piece of linen and went away, joyful, after we had agreed that I should visit her every night in the garden; but in my joy I forgot to repeat to her the verse my cousin had taught me. For when giving me the piece of linen with the gazelles she had said to me, "Keep this carefully, as it is my sister's handiwork." I asked her, "What is thy sister's name?"; and she answered, "Her name is Núr al-Hudá." When I went to my cousin, I found her lying down; but as soon as she saw me, she rose, with the tears running from her eyes, and came up to me, and kissed me on the breast and said, "Didst thou do as I enjoined thee? and repeat the verse to her?" "I forgot it," replied I; "and nothing drove it out of my mind but these two figured gazelles." And I threw the piece of linen on the floor before her. She rose and sat down again, but was unable to contain herself for impatience, and her eyes ran over with tears, whilst she repeated these two couplets,

“O thou who seekest parting, softly fare! * Let not the Pair
delude with cunning art:
Pare softly, Fortune’s nature is to ‘guile, * And end of every
meeting is to part.”

And when she ended her recitation she said, “O my cousin, give me this piece of linen.” So I gave it to her and she took it and unfolding it, saw what was therein. When the tryst time came for my going to my lover, the daughter of my uncle said to me, “Go, and peace attend thee; and when thou art about to leave her, recite to her the verse I taught thee long ago and which thou didst forget.” Quoth I, “Tell it me again”; and she repeated it. Then I went to the garden and entered the pavilion, where I found the young lad, awaiting me. When she saw me, she rose and kissed me and made me sit in her lap; and we ate and drank and did our desire as before. In the morning, I repeated to her my cousin’s verse which was this,

“Ho, lovers all! by Allah say me sooth * What shall he do when
Love sor’ vexeth youth?”

When she heard this, her eyes filled with tears and she answered and said,

“Strive he to cure his case, to hide the truth, * Patiently
humble self and sue for rush!”

I committed it to memory and returned home rejoicing at having done my cousin’s bidding. When I entered the house I found her lying down and my mother at her head weeping over her case; but as soon as I went in to her my mother said to me, “A foul plague on such a cousin! How couldst thou leave the daughter of thy uncle ailing and not ask what ailed her?” But when my cousin saw me she raised her head and sat up and asked me, “O Aziz, didst thou repeat to her the couplet I taught thee?” I answered, “Yes, and when she heard it she wept and recited in answer another couplet which I committed to memory.” Quoth my cousin, “Tell it me.” I did so; and when she heard it she wept with much weeping and repeated the following verses,

‘How shall youth cure the care his life undo’th, * And every day
his heart in pieces hew’th?
In sooth he would be patient, but he findeth * Naught save a
heart which love with pains imbu’th.”

Then added my cousin, “When thou goest to her as of wont, repeat to her also these two couplets which thou hast heard.” I replied, “Hearkening and obedience!” and I went at the wonted time, to the garden, where there passed between my mistress and myself what tongue faileth to describe. When I was about to leave her, I repeated to her those two couplets of my cousin’s; whereupon the tears streamed from her eyes and she replied,

“If he of patience fail the truth to hide * For him no cure save
Death my vision view’th!”

I committed them to memory and returned home, and when I went in to my cousin I found her fallen into a fit and my mother sitting at her head. When she heard my voice, she opened her eyes and asked, “O Aziz! didst thou repeat the two couplets to her?” whereto I answered, “Yes; but she wept on hearing them and she replied with this couplet beginning, If he of patience fail, to the end.” And I repeated it; whereupon my cousin swooned again, and when she came to herself, she recited these two couplets,

“Hearkening, obeying, with my dying mouth * I greet who joy of
union ne’er allow’th:
Pair fall all happy loves, and fair befal * The hapless lover
dying in his drowth!”

Again when it was night, I repaired to the garden as usual where I found the young lady awaiting me. We sat down and ate and drank, after which we did all we wanted and slept till the morning; and, as I was going away, I repeated to her the saying of my cousin. When she heard the couplet she cried out with a loud cry and was greatly moved and exclaimed, “Awáh! Awáh![517] By Allah, she who spake these lines is dead!” Then she wept and said to me, “Woe to thee! How is she who spoke thus related to thee?” Replied I, “She is the daughter of my father’s brother.” “Thou liest,” rejoined she; “by Allah, were she thy cousin, thou hadst borne her the same love as she bore thee! It is thou who hast slain her and may the Almighty kill thee as thou killedst her! By Allah, hadst thou told me thou hadst a cousin, I would not have admitted thee to my favours!” Quoth I, “Verily it was she who interpreted to me the signs thou madest and it was she who taught me how to come to thee and how I should deal with thee; and, but for her, I should never have been united to thee.” She then asked me, “Did thy cousin then know of us?”; and I answered, “Yes;” whereupon she exclaimed, “Allah give thee sorrow of thy youth, even as thou hast sorrowed her youth!” Then she cried to me, “Go now and see after her.” So I went away troubled at heart, and ceased not walking till I reached our street, when I heard sounds of wailing, and asking about it, was answered, “Azizah, we found her dead behind the door.” I entered the house, and when my mother saw me, she said, “Her death lieth heavy on thy neck and may Allah not acquit thee of her blood!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Twentieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant continued to Taj al-Muluk: “So I entered the house and when my mother saw me she said, “Her death lieth heavy on thy neck and may Allah not acquit thee of her blood! A plague on such a cousin!” Then came my father, and we laid her out and get ready her bier and buried her; and we had recitations of the whole Koran over her tomb and we abode by her grave three days, after which we returned to our home, and I grieving for her grievously. Then my mother came to me and said, “I would fain know what thou didst to her, to break her heart[518] for, O my son, I questioned her at all times of the cause of her complaint, but she would tell me nothing nor let me know aught of it. So Allah upon thee, tell me what thou hast been doing to her that she died.” Quoth I, “I did nothing.” Quoth my mother, “Allah avenge her on thee! Verily she told me naught, but kept her secret till she died of her love longings for thee; but when she died I was with her and she opened her eyes and said to me; ‘O wife of my uncle may Allah hold thy son guiltless of my blood and punish him not for what he hath done by me! And now Allah transporteth me from the house of the world which is perishable to the house of the other world which is eternal.’ Said I, ‘O my daughter, Allah preserve thee and preserve thy youth!’ And as I questioned her of the cause of her illness, she made me no answer; but she smiled and said, ‘O wife of my uncle, bid thy son, whenever he would go whither he goeth every day, repeat these two saws at his going away; ‘Faith is fair! Unfaith is foul!’ For this is of my tender affection to him, that I am solicitous concerning him during my lifetime and after my death.’ Then she gave me somewhat for thee and sware me that I would not give it until I see thee weeping for her and lamenting her death. The thing is with me; and, when I have seen thy case as I have said, I will make it over to thee.” “Show it me,” cried I: but she would not. Then I gave myself up to love delights and thought no more of my cousin’s death: for my mind was unsettled and fain would I have been with my lover the livelong day and night.[519] So hardly had I perceived the darkness fall when I betook myself to the garden, where I found the young lady sitting on coals of fire for much impatience. As soon as she was sure that she saw me, she ran to me and throwing her arms about my neck, enquired of the daughter of my uncle. I replied, “Sooth to say she is dead, and we have caused Zikr- litanies and recitations of the Koran to be performed for her; and it is now four nights and this be the fifth since she is gone.” When she heard that, she shrieked aloud and wept and said, “Did I not tell thee that thou hast slain her? Hadst thou let me know of her before her death, I would have requited her the kindness she did me, in that she served me and united thee to me; for without her, we had never foregathered, we twain, and I fear lest some calamity befal thee because of thy sin against her.” Quoth I, “She acquitted me of offence ere she died;” and I repeated to her what my mother had told me. Quoth she, “Allah upon thee! when thou returnest to thy mother, learn what thing she keepeth for thee.” I rejoined, “My mother also said to me; ‘Before the daughter of thy uncle died, she laid a charge upon me, saying, Whenever thy son would go whither he is wont to go, teach him these two saws, ‘Faith is fair; Unfaith is foul!' " When my lady heard this she exclaimed, "The mercy of Almighty Allah be upon her! Indeed, she hath delivered thee from me, for I minded to do thee a mischief, but now I will not harm thee nor trouble thee." I wondered at this and asked her, "What then west thou minded to do with me in time past and we two being in bond of love?" Answered she, "Thou art infatuated with me; for thou art young in life and a raw laddie; thy heart is void of guile and thou weetest not our malice and deceit. Were she yet alive, she would protect thee; for she is the cause of thy preservation and she hath delivered thee from destruction. And now I charge thee speak not with any woman, neither accost one of our sex, be she young or be she old; and again I say Beware! for thou art simple and raw and knowest not the wiles of women and their malice, and she who interpreted the signs to thee is dead. And indeed I fear for thee, lest thou fall into some disgrace and find none to deliver thee from it, now that the daughter of thy uncle is no more." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Twenty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant continued to Taj al-Muluk: "Then the young lady said to me, "I fear for thee lest thou fall into some disgrace and find none to deliver thee from it. Alas for thy cousin and ah, the pity of her! Would I had known her before her death, that I might have requited by waiting upon her the fair service she did me. The mercy of Allah Almighty be upon her, for she kept her secret and revealed not what she suffered, and but for her thou hadst never foregathered with me; no, never! But there is one thing I desire of thee." I asked, "What is it?"; and she answered, "It is that thou bring me to her grave, that I may visit her in the tomb wherein she is and write some couplets thereon." I rejoined, "To morrow, if Allah please!"[520] I slept with her that night, and she ceased not saying after every hour, "Would thou hadst told me of thy cousin before her death!" And I asked her, "What is the meaning of the two saws she taught me? 'Faith is fair! Unfaith is foul!'" But she made no answer. As soon as it was day she rose and, taking a purse of gold pieces, said to me, "Come, show me her tomb, that I may visit it and grave some verses thereon and build a dome over it and commend her to Allah's mercy and bestow these diners in alms for her soul.” I replied, “To hear is to obey!”; and walked on before her, whilst she followed me, giving alms as she went and saying to all upon whom she lavisht bounty, “This is an alms for the soul of Azizah, who kept her counsel till she drank the cup of death and never told the secret of her love.” And she stinted not thus to give alms and say, “for Azizah’s soul,” till the purse was empty and we came to the grave. And when she looked at the tomb, she wept and threw herself on it; then, pulling out a chisel of steel and a light hammer, she graved therewith upon the head stone in fine small characters these couplets,

“I past by a broken tomb amid a garth right sheen, * Whereon
seven blooms of Nu’uman[521] glowed with cramoisie;
Quoth I, ‘Who sleepeth in this tomb?’ Quoth answering Earth *
‘Before a lover Hades-tombed[522] bend reverently!’
Quoth I, ‘May Allah help thee, O thou slain of Love, * And grant
thee home in Heaven and Paradise height to see!’
Hapless are lovers all e’en tombed in their tombs, * Where amid
living folk the dust weighs heavily!
Pain would I plant a garden blooming round thy grave, * And water
every flower with tear drops flowing free!”

Then she turned away in tears and I with her and returned to the garden where she said to me, “By Allah! I conjure thee never leave me!” “To hear is to obey,” replied I. Then I gave myself wholly up to her and paid her frequent visits: she was good and generous to me; and as often as I passed the night with her, she would make much of me and would ask me of the two saws my cousin Azizah told my mother and I would repeat them to her. And matters ceased not to be on this wise and I continued for a whole year eating and drinking and enjoying dalliance and wearing change of rich raiment until I waxed gross and fat, so that I lost all thought of sorrowing and mourning, and I clean forgot my cousin Azizah. And on New Year’s day I went to the bath, where I refreshed myself and put on a suit of sumptuous clothes; then coming out I drank a cup of wine and smelt the scent of my new gear which was perfumed with various essences; and my breast was broadened thereby, for I knew not the tricks of Pate nor the changing ways of Time. When the hour of night prayer came, I was minded to repair to my lover; but, being the worse for wine, I knew not when going to her whither I went, so my drunkenness turned me into a by street called Syndic Street;[523] and the while I walked up that street behold, I caught sight of an old woman faring with a lighted taper in one hand, and in the other a folded letter. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Twenty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant, whose name was Aziz, continued to Taj al-Muluk: — And when I entered the street called Syndic Street behold, I caught sight of an old woman walking with a lighted taper in one hand and in the other a folded letter and I drew near her and lo! she was weeping and repeating these couplets,

“O glad news bearer well come! Welcome! Hail! * How sweet thy
speech to me, what treat thy tale:
O messenger from him whose weal I love, * God bless thee long as
breathes soft morning-gale!”

Now when she saw me she asked, “O my son! canst thou read?”; and I answered, of my officiousness, “Yes, old naunty!” Rejoined she, “Then take this letter and read it to me.” And when she handed it to me, I took it and unfolding it read it to her and behold it was from an absent man to his friends and lovers whom he greeted; and, when she heard its purport, she rejoiced at the good tidings and blessed me, saying, “Allah dispel thine anxiety, even as thou hast dispelled mine!” Then she took the letter and walked on. Meanwhile, I was urged by a call of nature and sat down on my heels to make water.[524] When I had ended I stood up and wiped the orifice with a pebble and then, letting down my clothes, I was about to wend my way, when suddenly the old woman came up to me again and, bending down over my hand, kissed it and said, “O my master! the Lord give thee joy of thy youth! I entreat thee to walk with me a few steps as far as yonder door, for I told them what thou didst read to me of the letter, and they believe me not, so come with me two steps and read them the letter from behind the door and accept the prayers of a righteous woman." I enquired, "What is the history of this letter?", and she replied, "O my son, this letter is from my son, who hath been absent for a term of ten years. He set out with a stock of merchandise and tarried long in foreign parts, till we lost hope of him and supposed him to be dead. Now after all that delay cometh this letter from him, and he hath a sister who weepeth for him night and day; so I said to her, 'He is well and all right.' But she will not believe me and declares, 'There is no help but thou bring me one who will read this letter in my presence, that my heart may be at rest and my mind at ease.' Thou knowest, O my son, that all who love are wont to think evil: so be good enough to go with me and read to her this letter, standing behind the curtain, whilst I call his sister to listen within the door, so shalt thou dispel our heed and fulfil our need. Verily quoth the Apostle of Allah (whom Allah bless and preserve!), 'Whoso easeth the troubled of one of the troubles of this troublous world, Allah will ease him of an hundred troubles'; and according to another tradition, 'Whoso easeth his brother of one of the troubles of this troublous world, Allah shall relieve him of seventy and two troubles on the Day of Resurrection.' And I have betaken myself to thee; so disappoint me not." Replied I, "To hear is to obey: do thou go before me!" So she walked on devancing me and I followed her a little way, till she came to the gate of a large and handsome mansion whose door was plated with copper.[525] I stood behind the door, whilst the old woman cried out in Persian, and ere I knew it a damsel ran up with light and nimble step. She had tucked up her trousers to her knees, so that I saw a pair of calves that confounded thinker and lighter, and the maid herself was as saith the poet describing her,

"O thou who barest leg calf, better to suggest * For passion
madded amourist better things above!
Towards its lover cloth the bowl go round and run; * Cup[526]
and cup bearer only drive us daft with love."[527]

Now these legs were like two pillars of alabaster adorned with anklets of gold, wherein were set stones of price. And the damsel had tucked up the end of her gown under her arm pit and had rolled up her sleeves to the elbow, so that I could see her white wrists whereon were two pairs of bracelets with clasps of great pearls; and round her neck was a collar of costly gems. Her ears were adorned with pendants of pearls and on her head she wore a kerchief[528] of brocade, brand new and broidered with jewels of price. And she had thrust the skirt of her shift into her trousers string being busy with some household business. So when I saw her in this undress, I was confounded at her beauty, for she was like a shining sun. Then she said, with soft, choice speech, never heard I sweeter, "O my mother! is this he who cometh to read the letter?" "It is," replied the old woman; and she put out her hand to me with the letter. Now between her and the door was a distance of about half a rod[529] ; so I stretched forth my hand to take the letter from her and thrust head and shoulders within the door, thinking to draw near her and read the letter when, before I knew what her design was, the old woman butted her head against my back and pushed me forwards with the letter in my hand, so that ere I could take thought I found myself in the middle of the hall far beyond the vestibule. Then she entered, faster than a flash of blinding leven, and had naught to do but to shut the door. And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Twenty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the youth Aziz pursued to Taj al Muluk: "When the old woman pushed me forwards I found myself, ere I could think, inside the vestibule; and the old woman entered faster than a flash of blinding levee and had naught to do but to shut the door. When the girl saw me in the vestibule, she came up to me and strained me to her bosom, and threw me to the floor; then she sat astraddle upon my breast and kneaded my belly with her fingers, till I well nigh lost my senses. Thereupon she took me by the hand and led me, unable to resist for the violence of her pressure, through seven vestibules, whilst the old woman forewent us with the lighted candle, till we came to a great saloon with four estrades whereon a horseman might play Polo.[530] Here she released me, saying, "Open thine eyes." So I opened them still giddy for the excess of her embracing and pressing, and saw that the whole saloon was built of the finest marbles and alabasters, and all its furniture was of silk and brocade even to the cushions and mattresses. Therein also were two benches of yellow brass and a couch of red gold, set with pearls and precious stones, befitting none save Kings like thyself. And off the saloon were smaller sitting rooms; and the whole place was redolent of wealth. Then she asked, “O Aziz, which is liefer to thee life or death?” “Life,” answered I; and she said, “If life be liefer to thee, marry me.” Quoth I, “Indeed I should hate to marry the like of thee.” Quoth she, “If thou marry me thou wilt at least be safe from the daughter of Dalílah the Wily One.”[531] I asked, “And who be that daughter of the Wily One?” Whereupon she laughed and replied, “ ’Tis she who hath companied with thee this day for a year and four months (may the Almighty destroy and afflict her with one worse than herself!) By Allah, there liveth not a more perfidious than she. How many men hath she not slain before thee and what deeds hath she not done. Nor can I understand how thou hast been all the time in her company, yet she hath not killed thee nor done thee a mischief.” When I heard her words, I marvelled with exceeding marvel and said, “O my lady, who made thee to know her?” Said she, “I know her as the age knoweth its calamities; but now I would fain have thee tell me all that hath passed between you two, that I may ken the cause of thy deliverance from her.” So I told her all that had happened between us, including the story of my cousin Azizah. She expressed her pity when she heard of the death, and her eyes ran over with tears and she claps hand on hand and cried out, Her youth was lost on Allah’s way,[532] and may the Lord bless thee for her good works! By Allah, O Aziz, she who died for thee was the cause of thy preservation from the daughter of Dalia the Wily; and, but for her, thou hadst been lost. And now she is dead I fear for thee from the Crafty One’s perfidy and mischief; but my throat is choking and I cannot speak.” Quoth I Ay, by Allah: all this happened even as thou sayest.” And she shook her head and cried, “There liveth not this day the like of Azizah. I continued, “And on her death bed she bade me repeat to my lover these two saws, ‘Faith is fair! Unfaith is foul’” When she heard me say this, she exclaimed, “O Aziz, by Allah those same words saved thee from dying by her hand; and now my heart is at ease for thee from her, for she will never kill thee and the daughter of thy uncle preserved thee during her lifetime and after her death. By Allah, I have desired thee day after day but could not get at thee till this time when I tricked thee and outwitted thee; for thou art a raw youth[533] and knowest not the wiles of young women nor the deadly guile of old women." Rejoined I, No, by Allah!" Then said she to me, "Be of good cheer and eyes clear; the dead hath found Allah's grace, and the live shall be in good case. Thou art a handsome youth and I do not desire thee but according to the ordinance of Allah and His Apostle (on whom be salutation and salvation!). Whatever thou requirest of money and stuff, thou shalt have forthright without stint, and I will not impose any toil on thee, no, never!, for there is with me always bread baked hot and water in pot. All I need of thee is that thou do with me even as the cock doth." I asked "And what doth the cock?" Upon this she laughed and clapped her hands and fell over on her back for excess of merriment then she sat up and smiled and said, "O light of my eyes, really dost thou not know what cock's duty is?" "No, by Allah!" replied I, and she, "The cock's duty is to eat and drink and tread.' I was abashed at her words and asked, "Is that the cock's duty? Yes, answered she; "and all I ask of thee now is to gird thy loins and strengthen thy will and futter thy best." Then she clapped her hands and cried out, saying, "O my mother, bring forward those who are with thee." And behold, in came the old woman accompanied by four lawful witnesses, and carrying a veil of silk. Then she lighted four candles, whilst the witnesses saluted me and sat down; and the girl veiled herself with the veil and deputed one of them to execute the contract on her behalf. So they wrote out the marriage bond and she testified to have received the whole sum settled upon her, both the half in advance and the half in arrears; and that she was indebted to me in the sum of ten thousand dirhams. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant continued to Taj al-Muluk: When they wrote out the marriage contract, she testified to having received the whole sum settled upon her, the half in advance and the half in arrears and that she was indebted to me in the sum of ten thousand dirhams. She paid the witnesses their wage and they withdrew whence they came. Thereupon she arose and cast off her clothes and stood in a chemise of fine silk edged with gold lace, after which she took off her trousers and seized my hand and led me up to the couch, saying, "There is no sin in a lawful put in." She lay down on the couch outspread upon her back; and, drawing me on to her breast, heaved a sigh and followed it up with a wriggle by way of being coy. Then she pulled up the shift above her breasts, and when I saw her in this pose, I could not withhold myself from thrusting it into her, after I had sucked her lips, whilst she whimpered and shammed shame and wept when no tears came, and then said she, "O my beloved, do it, and do thy best!" Indeed the case reminded me of his saying, who said,

"When I drew up her shift from the roof of her coynte, * I found
  it as strait* as my mind and my money:
So I drove it half-way, and she sighed a loud sigh * Quoth I,
  'Why this sigh?': 'For the rest of it, honey!'"

And she repeated, "O my beloved, let the finish be made for I am thine handmaid. My life on thee, up with it! give it me, all of it! that I may take it in my hand and thrust it into my very vitals!" And she ceased not to excite me with sobs and sighs and amorous cries in the intervals of kissing and clasping until amid our murmurs of pleasure we attained the supreme delight and the term we had in sight. We slept together till the morning, when I would have gone out; but lo! she came up to me, laughing, and said, "So! So! thinkest thou that going into the Hammam is the same as going out?[534] Dost thou deem me to be the like of the daughter of Dalilah the Wily One? Beware of such a thought, for thou art my husband by contract and according to law. If thou be drunken return to thy right mind, and know that the house wherein thou art openeth but one day in every year. Go down and look at the great door." So I arose and went down and found the door locked and nailed up and returned and told her of the locking and nailing. "O Aziz," said she, "We have in this house flour, grain, fruits and pomegranates; sugar, meat, sheep, poultry and so forth enough for many years; and the door will not be opened till after the lapse of a whole twelvemonth and well I weet thou shalt not find thyself without this house till then." Quoth I "There is no Majesty, and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" "And how can this harm thee," rejoined she; "seeing thou knowest cock's duty, whereof I told thee?" Then she laughed and I laughed too, and I conformed to what she said and abode with her, doing cock's duty and eating and drinking and futtering for a year of full twelve months, during which time she conceived by me, and I was blessed with a babe by her. On the New Year's day I heard the door opened and behold, men came in with cakes and flour and sugar. Upon this, I would have gone out but my wife said, "Wait till supper tide and go out even as thou camest in." So I waited till the hour of night prayer and was about to go forth in fear and trembling, when she stopped me, saying, "By Allah, I will not let thee go until thou swear to come back this night before the closing of the door." I agreed to this, and she swore me a solemn oath on Blade and Book,[535] and the oath of divorce to boot, that I would return to her. Then I left her and going straight to the garden, found the door open as usual; where at I was angry and said to myself, "I have been absent this whole year and come here unawares and find the place open as of wont! I wonder is the damsel still here as before? I needs must enter and see before I go to my mother, more by reason that it is now nightfall." So I entered the flower garden, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

FOOTNOTES VOLUME II.

[1] Supplementarily to note 2, , 2 Vol 1]and note 2, , 21 Vol 1] vol. i., I may add that "Shahrázád," in the Shams al-Loghat, is the P.N. of a King. L. Langlès (Les Voyages de Sindibâd Le Marin et La Ruse des Femmes, first appended to Savary's Grammar and reprinted 12 mot p + 113, Imprimerie Royale, Paris, M.D.CCC.XIV) explains it by Le cyprès, la beauté de la ville; and he is followed by (A. de Biberstein) Kazimirski (Ends el-Djelis Paris, Barrois, 1847). Ouseley (Orient. Collect.) makes Shahrzád=town-born; and others an Arabisation of Chehr-ázád (free of face, ingenuous of countenance) the petit nom of Queen Humay, for whom see the Terminal Essay. The name of the sister, whom the Fihrist converts into a Kahramánah, or nurse, vulgarly written Dínár-zád, would= child of gold pieces, freed by gold pieces, or one who has no need of gold pieces: Dínzád=child of faith and Daynázád, proposed by Langlès, "free from debt (!)" I have adopted Macnaghten's Dunyazad. "Shahryar," which Scott hideously writes "Shier ear," is translated by the Shams, King of the world, absolute monarch and the court of Anushir wan while the Burhán-i-Káti'a renders it a King of Kings, and P.N. of a town. Shahr-báz is also the P.N. of a town in Samarcand.

[2] Arab. "Malik," here used as in our story-books: "Pompey was a wise and powerful King" says the Gesta Romanorum. This King is, as will appear, a Regent or Governor under Harun al-Rashid. In the next tale he is Viceroy of Damascus, where he is also called "Sultan."

[3] The Bull Edit. gives the lines as follows: —

The lance was his pen, and the hearts of his foes *
His paper, and dipped he in blood for ink;
Hence our sires entitled the spear Khattíyah, *
Meaning that withal man shall write, I think.

The pun is in "Khattíyah" which may mean a writer (feminine) and also a spear, from Khatt Hajar, a tract in the province Al-Bahrayn (Persian Gulf), and Oman, where the best Indian bamboos were landed and fashioned into lances. Imr al-Keys (Mu'allakah v. 4.) sings of "our dark spears firmly wrought of Khattiyan cane;" Al-Busírí of "the brown lances of Khatt;" also see Lebid v. 50 and Hamásah p, 231, Antar notes the "Spears of Khatt" and "Rudaynian lances." Rudaynah is said to have been the wife of one Samhár, the Ferrara of lances; others make her the wife of Al-Ka'azab and hold Sambár to be a town in Abyssinia where the best weapons were manufactured The pen is the Calamus or Kalam (reed cut for pen) of which the finest and hardest are brought from Java: they require the least ribbing. The rhetorical figure in the text is called Husn al-Ta'alíl, our aetiology; and is as admirable to the Arabs as it appears silly to us.

[4] "He loves folk" is high praise, meaning something more than benevolence and beneficence.. Like charity it covers a host of sins.

[5] The sentence is euphuistic.

[6] Arab. "Rubb"=syrup a word Europeanised by the "Rob Laffecteur."

[7] The Septentriones or four oxen and their wain.

[8] The list fatally reminds us of "astronomy and the use of the globes" . . . "Shakespeare and the musical glasses."

[9] The octave occurs in Night xv. I quote Torrens () by way of variety.

[10] A courteous formula of closing with the offer.

[11] To express our "change of climate" Easterns say, "change of water and air," water coming first.

[12] "The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night" (Psalm cxxi. 6). Easterns still believe in the blighting effect of the moon's rays, which the Northerners of Europe, who view it under

different conditions, are pleased to deny. I have seen a hale and hearty Arab, after sitting an hour in the moonlight, look like a man fresh from a sick bed; and I knew an Englishman in India whose face was temporarily paralysed by sleeping with it exposed to the moon.

[13] The negroids and negroes of Zanzibar.

[14] i.e. Why not make thy heart as soft as thy sides! The converse of this was reported at Paris during the Empire, when a man had by mistake pinched a very high personage: “Ah, Madame! if your heart be as hard as (what he had pinched) I am a lost man.”

[15] “Na’íman” is said to one after bathing or head-shaving: the proper reply, for in the East every sign of ceremony has its countersign, is “Allah benefit thee!” (Pilgrimage i. 11, iii. 285; Lane M. E. chaps. viii.; Caussin de Perceval’s Arabic Grammar, etc., etc.) I have given a specimen (Pilgrimage i., 122) not only of sign and countersign, but also of the rhyming repartee which rakes love. Hanien ! (pleasant to thee! said when a man drinks). Allah pleasure thee (Allah yuhanník which Arnauts and other ruffians perverted to Allah yaník, Allah copulate with thee); thou drinkest for ten! I am the cock and thou art the hen! (i.e. a passive catamite) Nay, I am the thick one (the penis which gives pleasure) and thou art the thin! And so forth with most unpleasant pleasantries.

[16] In the old version she is called “The Fair Persian,” probably from the owner: her name means “The Cheerer of the Companion.”

[17] Pronounce “Nooraddeen.” I give the name written in Arabic.

[18] Amongst Moslems, I have said, it is held highly disgraceful when the sound of women’s cries can be heard by outsiders.

[19] In a case like this, the father would be justified by Rasm (or usage) not by Koranic law, in playing Brutus with his son. The same would be the case in a detected intrigue with a paternal concubine and, in very strict houses, with a slave-girl.

[20] Orientals fear the “Zug” or draught as much as Germans; and with even a better reason. Draughts are most dangerous in hot climates.

[21] The Unity of the Godhead and the Apostleship of Mohammed.

[22] This would be done only in the case of the very poor.

[23] Prayers over the dead are not universal in Al-Islam; but when they are recited they lack the “sijdah” or prostration.

[24] Or, “Of the first and the last,” i.e. Mohammed, who claimed (and claimed justly) to be the “Seal” or head and end of all Prophets and Prophecy. For note that whether the Arab be held inspired or a mere imposter, no man making the same pretension has moved the world since him. Mr. J. Smith the Mormon (to mention one in a myriad) made a bold attempt and failed.

[25] i.e. flatterers.

[26] In one matter Moslems contrast strongly with Christians, by most scrupulously following the example of their law-giver: hence they are the model Conservatives. But (European) Christendom is here, as in other things, curiously contradictory: for instance, it still keeps a “Feast of the Circumcision,” and practically holds circumcision in horror. Eastern Christians, however, have not wholly abolished it, and the Abyssinians, who find it a useful hygenic precaution, still practise it. For ulcers, syphilis and other venereals which are readily cured in Egypt become dangerous in the Highlands of Ethiopia.

[27] Arab. “Sabab,” the orig. and material sense of the word; hence “a cause,” etc.

[28] Thus he broke his promise to his father, and it is insinuated that retribution came upon him.

[29] “O Pilgrim” (Ya Hájj) is a polite address even to those who have not pilgrimaged. The feminine “Hájjah” (in Egypt pronounced “Hággeh”) is similarly used.

[30] Arab. “usúl”=roots, i.e. I have not forgotten my business.

[31] Moslems from Central and Western North Africa. (Pilgrimage i. 261; iii. 7, etc); the “Jabarti” is the Moslem Abyssinian.

[32] This is a favourite bit of chaff and is to be lengthened out almost indefinitely e.g. every brown thing is not civet nor every shining thing a diamond; every black thing is not charcoal nor every white chalk; every red thing is not a ruby nor every yellow a topaz; every long-necked thing is not a camel, etc., etc., etc.

[33] He gives him the name of his grandfather; a familiar usage.

[34] Arab. “Ma’janah,” a place for making unbaked bricks (Tob=Span. Adobe) with chaff and bruised or charred straw. The use of this article in rainless lands dates from ages immemorial, and formed the outer walls of the Egyptian temple.

[35] Arab. “Barsh,” a bit of round matting used by the poor as a seat. The Wazir thus showed that he had been degraded to the condition of a mat-maker.

[36] The growth (a Poa of two species) which named Wady Halfá (vulg. “Halfah”), of which the home public has of late heard perhaps a trifle too much. Burckhardt (Prov. 226) renders it “dry reeds” — incorrectly enough.

[37] This “Háshimi” vein, as they call it, was an abnormal development between the eyes of the house of Abbas, inherited from the great-grandfather of the Prophet; and the latter had it remarkably large, swelling in answer and battle-rage. The text, however, may read “The sweat of wrath,” etc.

[38] Torrens and Payne prefer “Ilm”=knowledge. Lane has more correctly “Alam”=a sign, a flag.

[39] The lines were in Night xi.: I have quoted Torrens () for a change.

[40] Still customary in Tigris-Euphrates land, where sea-craft has not changed since the days of Xisisthrus-Noah, and long before.

[41] To cool the contents.

[42] Hence the Khedivial Palace near Cairo “Kasr al-Nuzhah;” literally, “of Delights;” one of those flimsy new-Cairo buildings which contrast so marvellously with the architecture of ancient and even of mediæval Egypt, and which are covering the land with modern ruins. Compare Mohammed Ali’s mosque in the citadel with the older Sultan Hasan. A popular tale is told that, when the conquering Turk, Yáwúz Sultan Selim, first visited Cairo, they led him to Mosque Al-Ghúrí. “This is a splendid Ká’ah (saloon)!” quoth he. When he entered Sultan Hasan, he exclaimed, “This is a citadel!”; but after inspecting the Mosque Al-Mu’ayyad he cried, “’Tis a veritable place of prayer, a fit stead for the Faithful to adore the Eternal!”

[43] Arab. gardeners are very touchy on this point. A friend of mine was on a similar occasion addressed, in true Egyptian lingo, by an old Adam-son, “Ya ibn al-Kalb! beta’mil ay?” (O dog- son, what art thou up to?).

[44] “The green palm-stick is of the trees of Paradise;” say the Arabs in Solomonic style but not Solomonic words: so our “Spare the rod,” etc.

[45] Wayfarers, travellers who have a claim on the kindness of those at home: hence Abd al-Rahman al-Burai sings in his famous Ode: —

He hath claim on the dwellers in the places of their birth, *
Whoso wandereth the world, for he lacketh him a home.

It is given in my “First Footsteps in East Africa” (p-55).

[46] The good old man treated the youth like a tired child.

[47] In Moslem writings the dove and turtle-dove are mostly feminine, whereas the female bird is always mute and only the male sings to

summon or to amuse his mate.

[48] An unsavoury comparison of the classical Narcissus with the yellow white of a nigger's eyes.

[49] A tree whose coals burn with fierce heat: Al-Hariri (Vth Seance). This Artemisia is like the tamarisk but a smaller growth and is held to be a characteristic of the Arabian Desert. A Badawi always hails with pleasure the first sight of the Ghazá, after he has sojourned for a time away from his wilds. Mr. Palgrave (i. 38) describes the "Ghadá" as an Euphorbia with a woody stem often 5-6 feet high and slender, flexible green twigs (?), "forming a feathery tuft, not ungraceful to the eye, while it affords some shelter to the traveller, and food to his camels."

[50] Arab. "Sal'am"=S(alla) A(llah) a(layhi) was S(allam);
A(llah) b(less) h(im) a(nd) k(eep)=Allah keep him and assain!

[51] The ass is held to be ill-omened. I have noticed the braying elsewhere. According to Mandeville the Devil did not enter the Ark with the Ass, but he left it when Noah said "Benedicite." In his day (A.D. 1322) and in that of Benjamin of Tudela, people had seen and touched the ship on Ararat, the Judi (Gordiæi) mountains; and this dates from Berosus (S.C. 250) who, of course, refers to the Ark of Xisisthrus. See Josephus Ant. i. 3, 6; and Rodwell (Koran, p, 530).

[52] As would happen at a "Zikr," rogation or litany. Those who wish to see how much can be made of the subject will read "Pearls of the Faith, or Islam's Rosary, being the ninety-nine beautiful names of Allah" (Asmá-el-Husna) etc. by Edwin Arnold: London, Trübner, 1883.

[53] i.e. the Sáki, cup-boy or cup-bearer. "Moon-faced," as I have shown elsewhere, is no compliment in English, but it is in Persian and Arabic.

[54] He means we are "Záhirí," plain honest Moslems, not "Bátiní," gnostics (ergo reprobates) and so forth, who disregard all

appearances and external ordinances. This suggests his opinion of Shaykh Ibrahim and possibly refers to Ja'afar's suspected heresy.

[55] This worthy will be noticed in a subsequent page.

[56] Arab. "Lisám," the end of the "Kufiyah," or head-kerchief passed over the face under the eyes and made fast on the other side. This mouth-veil serves as a mask (eyes not being recognisable) and defends from heat, cold and thirst. I also believe that hooding the eyes with this article, Badawi-fashion, produces a sensation of coolness, at any rate a marked difference of apparent temperature; somewhat like a pair of dark spectacles or looking at the sea from a sandy shore. (Pilgrimage i., 210 and 346.) The woman's "Lisám" (chin-veil) or Yashmak is noticed in i., 337.

[57] Most characteristic is this familiarity between the greatest man then in the world and his pauper subject. The fisherman alludes to a practise of Al-Islman, instituted by Caliph Omar, that all rulers should work at some handicraft in order to spare the public treasure. Hence Sultan Mu'ayyad of Cairo was a calligrapher who sold his handwriting, and his example was followed by the Turkish Sultans Mahmúd, Abd al-Majíd and Abd al-Azíz. German royalties prefer carpentering and Louis XVI, watch-making.

[58] There would be nothing singular in this request. The democracy of despotism levels all men outside the pale of politics and religion.

[59] "Wa'lláhi tayyib!" an exclamation characteristic of the Egyptian Moslem.

[60] The pretended fisherman's name Karím=the Generous.

[61] Such an act of generosity would appear to Europeans well- nigh insanity, but it is quite in Arab manners. Witness the oft- quoted tale of Hatim and his horse. As a rule the Arab is the reverse of generous, contrasting badly, in this point, with his cousin the Jew: hence his ideal of generosity is of the very highest. "The generous (i.e. liberal) is Allah's friend, aye, though he be a sinner; and the miser is Allah's

foe, aye, though he be a saint!" Indian Moslems call a skin-flint Makhi-chús = fly-sucker. (Pilgrimage i. 242.)

[62] Arab. "Ammá ba'ad" or (Wa ba'ad), an initiatory formula attributed to Koss ibn Sa'idat al-Iyadi, bishop of Najrán (the town in Al-Yaman which D'Herbelot calls Negiran) and a famous preacher in Mohammed's day, hence "more eloquent than Koss" (Maydání, Arab. Prov., 189). He was the first who addressed letters with the incept, "from A. to B."; and the first who preached from a pulpit and who leant on a sword or a staff when discoursing. Many Moslems date Ammá ba'ad from the Prophet David, relying upon a passage of the Koran (xxxviii. 19).

[63] Arab. "Nusf"=half (a dirham): vulgarly pronounced "nuss," and synonymous with the Egypt. "Faddah" (=silver), the Greek "Asper," and the Turkish "paráh." It is the smallest Egyptian coin, made of very base metal and, there being forty to the piastre, it is worth nearly a quarter of a farthing.

[64] The too literal Torrens and Lane make the Caliph give the gardener-lad the clothes in which he was then clad, forgetting, like the author or copier, that he wore the fisherman's lousy suit.

[65] In sign of confusion, disappointment and so forth: not "biting his nails," which is European and utterly un-Asiatic.

[66] See lines like these in Night xiii. (i. 136); the sentiment is trite.

[67] The Arab will still stand under his ruler's palace and shout aloud to attract his attention. Sayyid Sa'íd known as the "Imán of Muskat" used to encourage the patriarchal practice. Mohammed repeatedly protested against such unceremonious conduct (Koran xciv. 11, etc.). The "three times of privacy" (Koran cv. 57) are before the dawn prayer, during the Siesta (noon) and after the even-prayer.

[68] The Judges of the four orthodox schools.

[69] That none might see it or find it ever after.

[70] Arab. “Khatt Sharíf”=a royal autographical letter: the term is still preserved in Turkey, but Europeans will write “Hatt.”

[71] Meaning “Little tom-cat;” a dim. of “Kitt” vulg. Kutt or Gutt.

[72] Arab. “Matmúrah” — the Algerine “Matamor” — a “silo,” made familiar to England by the invention of “Ensilage.”

[73] The older “Mustapha”=Mohammed. This Intercession-doctrine is fiercely disputed. (Pilgrimage ii. 77.) The Apostle of Al- Islam seems to have been unable to make up his mind upon the subject: and modern opinion amongst Moslems is apparently borrowed from the Christians.

[74] Lane (i. 486) curiously says, “The place of the stagnation of blood:” yet he had translated the word aright in the Introduction (i. 41). I have noticed that the Nat’a is made like the “Sufrah,” of well-tanned leather, with rings in the periphery, so that a thong passed through turns it into a bag. The Sufrah used for provisions is usually yellow, with a black border and small pouches for knives or spoons. (Pilgrimage i. 111.)

[75] This improbable detail shows the Caliph’s greatness.

[76] “Cousin” is here a term of familiarity, our “coz.”

[77] i.e. without allowing them a moment’s delay to change clothes.

[78] i.e. according to my nature, birth, blood, de race.

[79] Our “Job.” The English translators of the Bible, who borrowed Luther’s system of transliteration (of A.D. 1522), transferred into English the German “j” which has the sound of “i” or “y”; intending us to pronounce Yacob (or Yakob), Yericho, Yimnites, Yob (or Hiob) and Yudah. Tyndall, who copied Luther (A.D. 1525-26), preserved the true sound by writing lacob, Ben Iamin and Iudas. But his successors unfortunately returned to the German; the initial I,

having from the xiii century been ornamentally lengthened and bent leftwards, became a consonant. The public adopted the vernacular sound of “j” (da) and hence our language and our literature are disgraced by such barbarisms as “Jehovah” and “Jesus”; Dgehovah and Dgeesus for Yehovah and Yesus. Future generations of school-teachers may remedy the evil; meanwhile we are doomed for the rest of our days to hear

Gee-rusalem! Gee-rusalem! etc.

Nor is there one word to be said in favour of the corruption except that, like the Protestant mispronunciation of Latin and the Erasmian ill-articulation of Greek, it has become English, and has lent its little aid in dividing the Britons from the rest of the civilised world.

[80] The moon, I repeat, is masculine in the so-called “Semitic” tongues.

[81] i.e. camel loads, about lbs. 300; and for long journeys lbs. 250.

[82] Arab. “Janázah,” so called only when carrying a corpse; else Na’ash, Sarír or Tábút: Irán being the large hearse on which chiefs are borne. It is made of plank or stick work; but there are several varieties. (Lane, M. E. chaps. xxviii.)

[83] It is meritorious to accompany the funeral cortège of a Moslem even for a few paces.

[84] Otherwise he could not have joined in the prayers.

[85] Arab. “Halwá” made of sugar, cream, almonds, etc. That of Maskat is famous throughout the East.

[86] i.e. “Camphor” to a negro, as we say “Snowball,” by the figure antiphrase.

[87] “Little Good Luck,” a dim. form of “bakht”=luck, a Persian word naturalized in Egypt.

[88] There are, as I have shown, not a few cannibal tribes in Central Africa and these at times find their way into the slave market.

[89] i.e. After we bar the door.

[90] Arab. “Jáwísh” from Turk. Cháwúsh, Chiaoosh, a sergeant, poursuivant, royal messenger. I would suggest that this is the word “Shálish” or “Jálish” in Al-Siynti’s History of the Caliphs () translated by Carlyle “milites,” by Schultens “Sagittarius” and by Jarett “picked troops.”

[91] This familiarity with blackamoor slave-boys is common in Egypt and often ends as in the story: Egyptian blood is sufficiently mixed with negro to breed inclination for miscegenation. But here the girl was wickedly neglected by her mother at such an age as ten.

[92] Arab. “Farj”; hence a facetious designation of the other sex is “Zawi’l-furuj” (grammatically Zawátu’l- furúj)=habentes rimam, slit ones.

[93] This ancient and venerable practice of inspecting the marriage-sheet is still religiously preserved in most parts of the East, and in old-fashioned Moslem families. It is publicly exposed in the Harem to prove that the “domestic calamity” (the daughter) went to her husband a clean maid. Also the general idea is that no blood will impose upon the exerts, or jury of matrons, except that of a pigeon-poult which exactly resembles hymeneal blood — when not subjected to the microscope. This belief is universal in Southern Europe and I have heard of it in England. Further details will be given in Night ccxi.

[94] “Agha” Turk.=sir, gentleman, is, I have said, politely addressed to a eunuch.

[95] As Bukhayt tells us he lost only his testes, consequently his erectio et distensio penis was as that of a boy before puberty and it would last as long as his heart and circulation kept sound. Hence the eunuch who preserves his penis is much prized in the Zenanah where some

women prefer him to the entire man, on account of his long performance of the deed of kind. Of this more in a future page.

[96] It is or rather was the custom in Egypt and Syria to range long rows of fine China bowls along the shelves running round the rooms at the height of six or seven feet, and they formed a magnificent cornice. I bought many of them at Damascus till the people, learning their value, asked prohibitive prices.

[97] The tale is interesting as well as amusing, excellently describing the extravagance still practiced in middle-class Moslem families on the death of the pater familias. I must again note that Arab women are much more unwilling to expose the back of the head covered by the "Tarhah" (head-veil) than the face, which is hidden by the "Burke" or nose bag.

[98] The usual hysterical laughter of this nervous race.

[99] Here the slave refuses to be set free and starve. For a master so to do without ample reasons is held disgraceful. I well remember the weeping and wailing throughout Sind when an order from Sir Charles Napier set free the negroes whom British philanthropy thus doomed to endure if not to die of hunger.

[100] Manumission, which is founded upon Roman law, is an extensive subject discussed in the Hidáyah and other canonical works. The slave here lays down the law incorrectly but his claim shows his truly "nigger" impudence.

[101] This is quite true to nature. The most remarkable thing in the wild central African is his enormous development of "destructiveness." At Zanzibar I never saw a slave break a glass or plate without a grin or a chuckle of satisfaction.

[102] Arab. "Khassá-ni"; Khusyatáni (vulg.) being the testicles, also called "bayzatán" the two eggs) a double entendre which has given rise to many tales. For instance in the witty Persian book "Dozd o Kazi" (The Thief and the Judge) a footpad strips the man of learning

and offers to return his clothes if he can ask him a puzzle in law or religion. The Kazi (in folk-lore mostly a fool) fails, and his wife bids him ask the man to supper for a trial of wits on the same condition. She begins with compliments and ends by producing five eggs which she would have him distribute equally amongst the three; and, when he is perplexed, she gives one to each of the men taking three for herself. Whereupon the "Dozd" wends his way, having lost his booty as his extreme stupidity deserved. In the text the eunuch, Kafur, is made a "Sandal" or smooth-shaven, so that he was of no use to women.

[103] Arab. "Khara," the lowest possible word: Yá Khara! is the commonest of insults, used also by modest women. I have heard one say it to her son.

[104] Arab. "Kámah," a measure of length, a fathom, also called "Bá'a." Both are omitted in that sadly superficial book, Lane's Modern Egyptians, App. B.

[105] Names of her slave-girls which mean (in order),
Garden-bloom, Dawn (or Beautiful), Tree o' Pearl (P. N. of
Saladin's wife), Light of (right) Direction, Star o' the Morn
Lewdness (= Shahwah, I suppose this is a chaff), Delight,
Sweetmeat and Miss Pretty.

[106] This mode of disposing of a rival was very common in Harems. But it had its difficulties and on the whole the river was (and is) preferred.

[107] An Eastern dislikes nothing more than drinking in a dim dingy place: the brightest lights seem to add to his "drinkitite."

[108] He did not sleep with her because he suspected some palace-mystery which suggested prudence, she also had her reasons.

[109] This as called in Egypt "Allah." (Lane M. E. chaps. i.)

[110] It would be a broad ribbon-like band upon which the letters could

be worked.

[111] In the Arab. “he cried.” These “Yes, Yes!” and “No! No!” trifles are very common amongst the Arabs.

[112] Arab. “Maragha” lit. rubbed his face on them like a fawning dog. Ghanim is another “softy” lover, a favourite character in Arab tales; and by way of contrast, the girl is masterful enough.

[113] Because the Abbaside Caliphs descend from Al-Abbas, paternal uncle of Mohammed, text means more explicitly, “O descendant of the Prophet’s uncle!”

[114] The most terrible part of a belle passion in the East is that the beloved will not allow her lover leave of absence for an hour.

[115] It is hard to preserve these wretched puns. In the original we have “O spray (or branch) of capparis-shrub (aráki) which has been thinned of leaf and fruit (tujna, i.e., whose fruit, the hymen, has been plucked before and not by me) I see thee (aráka) against me sinning (tajní).

[116] Apparently the writer forgets that the Abbaside banners and dress were black, originally a badge of mourning for the Imám Ibrahim bin Mohammed put to death by the Ommiade Caliph Al-Marwan. The modern Egyptian mourning, like the old Persian, is indigo-blue of the darkest; but, as before noted, the custom is by no means universal.

[117] Koran, chaps. iv. In the East as elsewhere the Devil quotes Scripture.

[118] A servant returning from a journey shows his master due honour by appearing before him in travelling suit and uncleaned.

[119] The first name means “Rattan”, the second “Willow wand,” from the “Bán” or “Khiláf” the Egyptian willow (Salix Ægyptiaca Linn.) vulgarly called “Safsáf.” Forskal holds the “Bán” to be a different variety.

[120] Arab. “Ta’ám,” which has many meanings: in mod. parlance it would signify millet holcus seed.

[121] i.e. “I well know how to deal with him.”

[122] The Pen (title of the Koranic chaps. Ixviii.) and the
Preserved Tablet (before explained).

[123] These plunderings were sanctioned by custom. But a few years ago, when the Turkish soldiers mutinied about arrears of pay (often delayed for years) the governing Pasha would set fire to the town and allow the men to loot what they pleased during a stated time. Rochet (soi-disant D’Hericourt) amusingly describes this manoeuvre of the Turkish Governor of Al-Hodaydah in the last generation. (Pilgrimage iii. 381.)

[124] Another cenotaph whose use was to enable women to indulge in their pet pastime of weeping and wailing in company.

[125] The lodging of pauper travellers, as the chapel in Iceland is of the wealthy. I have often taken benefit of the mosque, but as a rule it is unpleasant, the matting being not only torn but over-populous. Juvenal seems to allude to the Jewish Synagogue similarly used: “in quâ te quæro proseuchâ”? (iii. 296) and in Acts iii. we find the lame, blind and impotent in the Temple-porch.

[126] This foul sort of vermin is supposed to be bred by perspiration. It is an epoch in the civilised traveller’s life when he catches his first louse.

[127] The Moslem peasant is a kind hearted man and will make many sacrifices for a sick stranger even of another creed. It is a manner of “pundonor” with the village.

[128] Such treatment of innocent women was only too common under the Caliphate and in contemporary Europe.

[129] This may also mean, “And Heaven will reward thee,” but camel-

men do not usually accept any drafts upon futurity.

[130] He felt that he was being treated like a corpse.

[131] This hatred of the Hospital extends throughout Southern Europe, even in places where it is not justified.

[132] The importance of the pillow (wisádah or makhaddah) to the sick man is often recognised in The Nights. “He took to his pillow” is = took to his bed.

[133] i.e in order that the reverend men, who do not render such suit and service gratis, might pray for him.

[134] The reader will notice in The Nights the frequent mention of these physical prognostications, with which mesmerists are familiar.

[135] The Pers. name of the planet Saturn in the Seventh Heaven. Arab. “Zuhal”; the Kiun or Chiun of Amos vi. 26.

[136] i.e. “Pardon me if I injured thee” — a popular phrase.

[137] A “seduction,” a charmer. The double-entendre has before been noticed.

[138] This knightly tale, the longest in the Nights (xliv. — cxlv.), about one-eighth of the whole, does not appear in the Bres. Edit. Lane, who finds it “objectionable,” reduces it to two of its episodes, Azíz-cum-Azízah and Táj al-Mulúk. On the other hand it has been converted into a volume (8vo, p) “Scharkan, Conte Arabe,” etc. Traduit par M. Asselan Riche, etc. Paris: Dondey-Dupré. 1829. It has its longueurs and at times is longsome enough; but it is interesting as a comparison between the chivalry of Al-Islam and European knight-errantry. Although all the characters are fictitious the period is evidently in the early crusading days. Cæsarea, the second capital of Palestine, taken during the Caliphate of Omar (A.H. 19) and afterwards recovered, was fortified in A.H. 353 = 963 as a base against the Arabs by the Emperor Phocas, the Arab. “Nakfúr” i.e. Nicephorus. In A.H.

498=1104, crusading craft did much injury by plundering merchantmen between Egypt and Syria, to which allusion is found in the romance. But the story teller has not quite made up his mind about which Cæsarea he is talking, and M. Riche tells us that Césarée is a “ville de la Mauritanie, en Afrique” ().

[139] The fifth Ommiade Caliph reign. A.H. 65-86 = 685-704.

[140] This does not merely mean that no one was safe from his wrath: or, could approach him in the heat of fight: it is a reminiscence of the masterful “King Kulayb,” who established game-laws in his dominions and would allow no man to approach his camp-fire. Moreover the Jinn lights a fire to decoy travellers, but if his victim be bold enough to brave him, he invites him to take advantage of the heat.

[141] China.

[142] The Jaxartes and the Bactrus (names very loosely applied).

[143] In full “Sharrun kána” i.e. an evil (Sharr) has come to being (kána) that is, “bane to the foe” a pagan and knightly name. The hero of the Romance “Al-Dalhamah” is described as a bitter gourd (colocynth), a viper, a calamity.

[144] This is a Moslem law (Koran chaps. iv. bodily borrowed from the Talmud) which does not allow a man to marry one wife unless he can carnally satisfy her. Moreover he must distribute his honours equally and each wife has a right to her night unless she herself give it up. This was the case even with the spouses of the Prophet; and his biography notices several occasions when his wives waived their rights in favour of one another M. Riche kindly provides the King with la piquante francaise ().

[145] So the celebrated mosque in Stambul, famed for being the largest church in the world is known to the Greeks as “Agia (pron. Aya) Sophia” and to Moslems as “Aye Sofíyeh” (Holy Wisdom) i.e. the Logos or Second Person of the Trinity (not a Saintess). The sending

a Christian girl as a present to a Moslem would, in these days, be considered highly scandalous. But it was done by the Mukaukis or Coptic Governor of Egypt (under Heraclius) who of course hated the Greeks. This worthy gave two damsels to Mohammed; one called Sírín and the other Máriyah (Maria) whom the Prophet reserved for his especial use and whose abode is still shown at Al-Medinah. The Rev. Doctor Badger (loc. cit.) gives the translation of an epistle by Mohammed to this Mukaukis, written in the Cufic character (? ?) and sealed "Mohammed, The Apostle of Allah." My friend seems to believe that it is an original, but upon this subject opinions will differ. It is, however, exceedingly interesting, beginning with "Bismillah," etc., and ending (before the signature) with a quotation from the Koran (iii. 57); and it may be assumed as a formula addressee to foreign potentates by a Prophet who had become virtually "King of Arabia."

[146] This prayer before "doing the deed of kind" is, I have said, Moslem as well Christian.

[147] Exodus i. 16, quoted by Lane (M. E., chaps. xxvii.).
Torrens in his Notes cites Drayton's "Moon-calf': —

Bring forth the birth-stool — no, let it alone;
She is so far beyond all compass grown,
Some other new device us needs must stead,
Or else she never can be brought to bed.

It is the "groaning-chair" of Poor Robin's Almanac (1676) and we find it alluded to in Boccaccio, the classical sedile which according to scoffers has formed the papal chair (a curule seat) ever since the days of Pope Joan, when it has been held advisable for one of the Cardinals to ascertain that His Holiness possesses all the instruments of virility. This "Kursí al-wiládah" is of peculiar form on which the patient is seated. A most interesting essay might be written upon the various positions preferred during delivery, e.g. the wild Irish still stand on all fours, like the so-called "lower animals." Amongst the Moslems of Waday, etc., a cord is hung from the top of the hut, and the woman in labour holds on to it standing with her legs apart, till the midwife receives the child.

[148] Some Orientalists call “lullilooing” the trilling cry, which is made by raising the voice to its highest pitch and breaking it by a rapid succession of touches on the palate with the tongue-tip, others “Ziraleet” and Zagaleet, and one traveller tells us that it began at the marriage-festival of Isaac and Rebecca (!). Arabs term it classically “Tahlíl” and vulgarly “Zaghrutah” (Plur. Zaghárit) and Persians “Kil.” Finally in Don Quixote we have “Lelilies,” the battle-cry of the Moors (Duffield iii. 289). Dr. Buchanan likens it to a serpent uttering human sounds, but the good missionary heard it at the festival of Jagannath. (Pilgrimage iii. 197)

[149] i.e. “Light of the Place” (or kingdom) and “Delight of the Age.”

[150] It is utterly absurd to give the old heroic Persian name Afridun or Furaydun, the destroyer of Zohák or Zahhák to a Greek, but such anachronisms are characteristic of The Nights and are evidently introduced on purpose. See Boccaccio, ix. 9.

[151] Arab. “Yunán” lit. Ionia, which applies to all Greece, insular and continental, especially to ancient Greece.

[152] In 1870 I saw at Sidon a find of some hundreds of gold “Philippi” and “Alexanders.”

[153] M. Riche has (), “Ces talismans travaillés par le ciseau du célèbre Califaziri,” adding in a note, “Je pense que c’est un sculpteur Arabe.”

[154] This periphrase, containing what seems to us a useless negative, adds emphasis in Arabic.

[155] This bit of geographical information is not in the Bull Edit.

[156] In Pers. = a tooth, the popular word.

[157] This preliminary move, called in Persian Nakl-i Safar, is generally mentioned. So the Franciscan monks in California, when setting out for a long journey through the desert, marched three times round the convent and pitched tents for the night under its walls.

[158] In Arab. “Khazinah” or “Khaznah” lit. a treasure, representing 1,000 “Kís” or purses (each=£5). The sum in the text is 7,000 purses X 5=£35,000.

[159] Travellers often prefer such sites because they are sheltered from the wind, and the ground is soft for pitching tents; but many have come to grief from sudden torrents following rain.

[160] Arab “Ghábah” not a forest in our sense of the word, but a place where water sinks and the trees (mostly Mimosas), which elsewhere are widely scattered, form a comparatively dense growth and collect in thickets. These are favourite places for wild beasts during noon-heats.

[161] At various times in the East Jews and Christians were ordered to wear characteristic garments, especially the Zunnár or girdle.

[162] The description is borrowed from the Coptic Convent, which invariably has an inner donjon or keep. The oldest monastery in the world is Mar Antonios (St. Anthony the Hermit) not far from Suez. (Gold Mines of Midian, .)

[163] “Dawáhí,” plur. of Dáhiyah = a mishap. The title means “Mistress of Misfortunes” or Queen of Calamities (to the enemy); and the venerable lady, as will be seen, amply deserved her name, which is pronounced Zát al-Dawáhí.

[164] Arab. “Kunfuz”=hedgehog or porcupine.

[165] These flowers of speech are mere familiarities, not insults. In societies where the sexes are separated speech becomes exceedingly free. “Étourdie que vous êtes,” says M. Riche, toning down the text.

[166] Arab. “Zirt,” a low word. The superlative “Zarrát” (fartermost) or, “Abu Zirt” (Father of farts) is a facetious term among the bean-eating Fellahs and a deadly insult amongst the Badawin (Night ccccx.). The latter prefer the word Taggáa (Pilgrimage iii. 84). We did not disdain the word in farthingale=pet en air.

[167] Arab. “kicked” him, i.e. with the sharp corner of the shovel-stirrup. I avoid such expressions as “spurring” and “pricking over the plain,” because apt to give a wrong idea.

[168] Arab. “Allaho Akbar!” the classical Moslem slogan.

[169] Arab horses are never taught to leap, so she was quite safe on the other side of a brook nine feet broad.

[170] “Batrík” (vulg. Bitrík)=patricius, a title given to Christian knights who commanded ten thousand men; the Tarkhan (or Nobb) heading four thousand, and the Kaumas (Arab. Káid) two hundred. It must not be confounded with Batrak (or Batrik)=patriarcha. (Lane’s Lex.)

[171] Arab. “Kázi al-Kuzát,” a kind of Chief Justice or Chancellor. The office wag established under the rule of Harun al Rashid, who so entitled Abú Yúsuf Ya’akab al-Ansári: therefore the allusion is anachronistic. The same Caliph also caused the Olema to dress as they do still.

[172] The allusion is Koranic: “O men, if ye be in doubt concerning the resurrection, consider that He first created you of the dust of the ground (Adam), afterwards of seed” (chaps. xxii.). But the physiological ideas of the Koran are curious. It supposes that the Mani or male semen is in the loins and that of women in the breast bone (chaps Ixxxvi.); that the mingled seed of the two (chaps. Ixxvi.) fructifies the ovary and that the child is fed through the navel with menstruous blood, hence the cessation of the catamenia. Barzoi (Kalilah and Dímnah) says:— “Man’s seed, falling into the woman’s womb, is mixed with her seed and her blood: when it thickens and

curdles the Spirit moves it and it turns about like liquid cheese; then it solidifies, its arteries are formed, its limbs constructed and its joints distinguished. If the babe is a male, his face is placed towards his mother's back; if a female, towards her belly." (P. 262, Mr. L G.N. Keith- Falconer's translation.) But there is a curious prolepsis of the spermatozoa-theory. We read (Koran chaps. vii.), "Thy Lord drew forth their posterity from the loins of the sons of Adam;" and the commentators say that Allah stroked Adam's back and extracted from his loins all his posterity, which shall ever be, in the shape of small ants; these confessed their dependence on God and were dismissed to return whence they came." From this fiction it appears (says Sale) that the doctrine of pre-existence is not unknown to the Mohammedans, and there is some little conformity between it and the modern theory of generatio ex animalculis in semine marium. The poets call this Yaum-i-Alast = the Day of Am-I-not (-your Lord)? which Sir William Jones most unhappily translated "Art thou not with thy Lord ?" (Alasta bi Rabbi- kum); fand they produce a grand vision of unembodied spirits appearing in countless millions before their Creator.

[173] The usual preliminary of a wrestling bout.

[174] In Eastern wrestling this counts as a fair fail. So Ajax fell on his back with Ulysses on his breast. (Iliad xxxii., 700, etc.)

[175] So biting was allowed amongst the Greeks in the , the final struggle on the ground.

[176] Supposed to be names of noted wrestlers. "Kayim" (not El-Kim as Torrens has it) is a term now applied to a juggler or "professor" of legerdemain who amuses people in the streets with easy tricks. (Lane, M. E., chaps. xx.)

[177] Lit. "laughed in his face" which has not the unpleasant meaning it bears in English.

[178] Arab. "Abu riyáh"=a kind of child's toy. It is our "bull-roarer" well known in Australia and parts of Africa.

[179] The people of the region south of the Caspian which is called "Sea of Daylam." It has a long history; for which see D'Herbelot, s.v. "Dilem."

[180] Coptic convents in Egypt still affect these drawbridges over the keep-moat.

[181] Koran iv., xxii. etc., meaning it is lawful to marry women taken in war after the necessary purification although their husbands be still living. This is not permitted with a free woman who is a True Believer. I have noted that the only concubine slave-girl mentioned in the Koran are these "captives possessed by the right hand."

[182] The Amazonian dame is a favourite in folk-lore and is an ornament to poetry from the Iliad to our modern day. Such heroines, apparently unknown to the Pagan Arabs, were common in the early ages of Al-Islam as Ockley and Gibbon prove, and that the race is not extinct may be seen in my Pilgrimage (iii. 55) where the sister of Ibn Rumi resolved to take blood revenge for her brother.

[183] And Solomon said, "O nobles, which of you will bring me her throne ?" A terrible genius (i.e. an If rit of the Jinn named Dhakwan or the notorious Sakhr) said, " I will bring it unto thee before thou arise from thy seat (of justice); for I am able to perform it, and may be trusted" (Koran, xxvii. 38-39). Balkís or Bilkís (says the Durrat al-Ghawwás) daughter of Hozád bin Sharhabíl, twenty-second in the list of the rulers of Al- Yaman, according to some murdered her husband, and became, by Moslem ignorance, the Biblical " Queen of Sheba." The Abyssinians transfer her from Arabian Saba to Ethiopia and make her the mother by Solomon of Menelek, their proto-monarch; thus claiming for their royalties an antiquity compared with which all reigning houses in the world are of yesterday. The dates of the Tabábi'ah or Tobbas prove that the Bilkis of history ruled Al-Yaman in the early Christian era.

[184] Arab. "Fass," fiss or fuss; the gem set in a ring; also applied to a hillock rounded en cabochon. In The Nights it is used to signify "a

fine gem."

[185] This prominence of the glutæi muscles is always insisted upon, because it is supposed to promise well in a bed-fellow. In Somali land where the people are sub- steatopygous, a rich young man, who can afford such luxury, will have the girls drawn up in line and choose her to wife who projects furthest behind

[186] The "bull" is only half mine.

[187] A favourite Arab phrase, the "hot eye" is one full of tears.

[188] i.e., "Coral," coral branch, a favourite name for a slave-girl, especially a negress. It is the older "Morgiana." I do not see why Preston in Al-Haríni's "Makamah (Séance) of Singar" renders it pearls, because Golius gives "small pearls," when it is evidently "coral." Richardson (Dissert. xlviii.) seems to me justified in finding the Pari (fairy) Marjan of heroic Persian history reflected in the Fairy Morgain who earned off King Arthur after the battle of Camelon.

[189] Arab. "'Ud Jalaki"=Jalak or Jalik being a poetical and almost obsolete name of Damascus.

[190] The fountain in Paradise whose water shall be drunk with "pure" wine mixed and sealed with musk (for clay). It is so called because it comes from the "Sanam" (Sanima, to be high) boss or highest ridge of the Moslem Heaven (Koran lv. 78 and lxxxiii. 27). Mr. Rodwell says "it is conveyed to the highest apartments in the Pavilions of Paradise." (?)

[191] This "hysterical" temperament is not rare even amongst the bravest Arabs.

[192] An idea evidently derived from the Æolipyla (olla animatoria) the invention of Hero Alexandrinus, which showed that the ancient Egyptians could apply the motive force of steam.

[193] Kuthayyir ibn Abi Jumah, a poet and far-famed Ráwí or Tale-

reciter, mentioned by Ibn Khallikan he lived at Al-Medinah and sang the attractions of one Azzah, hence his soubriquet Sáhib (lover of) Azzah. As he died in A. H. 105 (=726), his presence here is a gross anachronism the imaginary Sharrkan flourished before the Caliphate of Abd al-Malik bin Marwán A. H. 65-86.

[194] Jamíl bin Ma'amar, a poet and lover contemporary with Al-Kuthayrir.

[195] Arab. "Tafazzal," a word of frequent use in conversation="favour me," etc.

[196] The word has a long history. From the Gr. or is the Lat. stibium; while the Low Latin "antimonium" and the Span. Althimod are by metathesis for Al-Ithmid. The dictionaries define the substance as a stone from which antimony is prepared, but the Arabs understand a semi-mythical mineral of yellow colour which enters into the veins of the eyes and gives them Iynx-like vision. The famous Anz nicknamed Zarká (the blue eyed) of Yamámah (Province) used it; and, according to some, invented Kohl. When her (protohistoric) tribe Jadis had destroyed all the rival race of Tasm, except Ribáh ibn Murrah; the sole survivor fled to the Tobba of Al-Yaman, who sent a host to avenge him. The king commanded his Himyarites to cut tree-boughs and use them as screens (again Birnam wood). Zarká from her Utum, or peel-tower, saw the army three marches off and cried, "O folk, either trees or Himyar are coming upon you!" adding, in Rajaz verse: —

I swear by Allah that trees creep onward, or that Himyar beareth somewhat which he draweth along!

She then saw a man mending his sandal. But Jadis disbelieved; Cassandra was slain and, when her eyes were cut out the vessels were found full of Ithmid. Hence Al-Mutanabbi sang:

"Sharper-sighted than Zarká of Jau" (Yamámah).

See C. de Perceval i. 101; Arab. Prov. i. 192; and Chenery .

(The Assemblies of Al-Hariri; London, Williams and Norgate, 1867).
I have made many enquiries into the true nature of Ithmid and failed to learn anything: on the Upper Nile the word is=Kohl.

[197] The general colour of chessmen in the East, where the game is played on a cloth more often than a board.

[198] Arab. "Al-fil," the elephant=the French fol or fou and our bishop. I have derived "elephant" from Píl (old Persian, Sansk. Pilu) and Arab. Fil, with the article Al-Fil, whence the Greek the suffix — as being devoted to barbarous words as Obod-as (Al Ubayd), Aretas (Al-Háris), etc. Mr. Isaac Taylor (The Alphabet i. 169), preserves the old absurdity of "eleph-ant or ox-like (!) beast of Africa." Prof. Sayce finds the word al-ab (two distinct characters) in line 3, above the figure of an (Indian) elephant, on the black obelisk of Nimrod Mound, and suggests an Assyrian derivation.

[199] Arab. "Shaukat" which may also mean the "pride" or "mainstay" (of the army).

[200] Lit. "smote him on the tendons of his neck." This is the famous shoulder-cut (Tawash shuh) which, with the leg-cut (Kalam), formed, and still forms, the staple of Eastern attack with the sword.

[201] Arab. "Dirás." Easterns do not thresh with flails. The material is strewed over a round and smoothed floor of dried mud in the open air and threshed by different connivances. In Egypt the favourite is a chair-like machine called "Norag," running on iron plates and drawn by bulls or cows over the corn. Generally, however, Moslems prefer the old classical , the Tribulum of Virgil and Varro, a slipper-shaped sled of wood garnished on the sole with large-headed iron nails, or sharp fragments of flint or basalt. Thus is made the "Tibn" or straw, the universal hay of the East, which our machines cannot imitate.

[202] These numbers appear to be grossly exaggerated, but they were possible in the days of sword and armour: at the battle of Saffayn the Caliph Ali is said to have cut down five hundred and twenty-three

men in a single night.

[203] Arab. “Bika’á”: hence the “Buka’ah” or Cœlesyria.

[204] Richardson in his excellent dictionary (note 103) which modern priggism finds “unscientific “ wonderfully derives this word from Arab. “Khattáf,” a snatcher (i.e. of women), a ravisher. It is an evident corruption of “captivus” through Italian and French

[205] These periodical and fair-like visitations to convents are still customary; especially amongst the Christians of Damascus.

[206] Camphor being then unknown.

[207] The “wrecker” is known all over the world; and not only barbarians hold that ships driven ashore become the property of the shore

[208] Arab. “Jokh”: it is not a dictionary word, but the only term in popular use for European broadcloth.

[209] The second person plural is used because the writer would involve the subjects of his correspondent in the matter.

[210] This part of the phrase, which may seem unnecessary to the European, is perfectly intelligible to all Orientalists. You may read many an Eastern letter and not understand it. Compare Boccacoo iv. 1.

[211] i.e. he was greatly agitated

[212] In text “Li-ajal a al-Taudi’a,” for the purpose of farewelling, a low Egyptianism; emphatically a “Kalám wáti.” (Pilgrimage thee iii. 330.)

[213] In the Mac. Edit. Sharrkan speaks, a clerical error.

[214] The Farsakh (Germ. Stunde) a measure of time rather than distance, is an hour’s travel or its equivalent, a league, a meile=three

English stat. miles. The word is still used in Persia its true home, but not elsewhere. It is very old, having been determined as a lineal measure of distance by Herodotus (ii. 5 and 6 ; v. 53), who computes it at 30 furlongs (=furrow-lengths, 8 to the stat. mile). Strabo (xi.) makes it range from 40 to 60 stades (each=606 feet 9 inches), and even now it varies between 1,500 to 6,000 yards. Captain Francklin (Tour to Persia) estimates it = about four miles. (Pilgrimage ii. 113.)

[215] Arab. “Ashhab.” Names of colours are few amongst semi civilised peoples, but in Arabia there is a distinct word for every shade of horseflesh.

[216] She had already said to him “Thou art beaten in everything!”

[217] Showing that she was still a Christian.

[218] This is not Badawi sentiment: the honoratioren amongst wild people would scorn such foul play; but amongst the settled Arabs honour between men and women is unknown and such “hocussing” would be held quite fair.

[219] The table of wine, in our day, is mostly a japanned tray with glasses and bottles, saucers of pickles and fruits and, perhaps, a bunch of flowers and aromatic herbs. During the Caliphate the “wine-service” was on a larger scale.

[220] Here the “Bhang” (almost a generic term applied to hellebore, etc.) may be hyoscyamus or henbane. Yet there are varieties of Cannabis, such as the Dakha of South Africa capable of most violent effect. I found the use of the drug well known to the negroes of the Southern United States and of the Brazil, although few of their owners had ever heard of it.

[221] Amongst Moslems this is a reference to Adam who first “sinned against himself,’ and who therefore is called “ Safíyu’llah,” the Pure of Allah. (Pilgrimage iii. 333.)

[222] Meaning, an angry, violent man.

[223] Arab. “Inshád,” which may mean reciting the verse of another or improvising one’s own. In Modern Egypt “Munshid” is the singer or reciter of poetry at Zikrs (Lane M. E. chaps. xxiv.). Here the verses are quite bad enough to be improvised by the hapless Princess.

[224] The negro skin assumes this dust colour in cold, fear, concupiscence and other mental emotions.

[225] He compares her glance with the blade of a Yamani sword, a lieu commun of Eastern poetry. The weapons are famous in The Nights; but the best sword-cutlery came from Persia as the porcelain from China to Sana’á. Here, however, is especial allusion as to the sword “Samsam” or “Samsamah.” It belonged to the Himyarite Tobba, Amru bin Ma’ad Kurb, and came into the hands of Harun al-Rashid. When the Emperor of the Greeks sent a present of superior sword-blades to him by way of a brave, the Caliph, in the presence of the Envoys, took “Samsam” in hand and cut the others in twain as if they were cabbages without the least prejudice to the edge of “Samsam.”

[226] This touch of pathos is truly Arab. So in the “Romance of Dalhamah” (Lane, M. E. xxiii.) the infant Gundubah sucks the breast of its dead mother and the King exclaims, “If she had committed this crime she would not be affording the child her milk after she was dead.”

[227] Arab. “Sadda’l-Aktár,” a term picturesque enough to be preserved in English. “Sadd,” I have said, is a wall or dyke, the term applied to the great dam of water- plants which obstructs the navigation of the Upper Nile, the lilies and other growths floating with the current from the (Victoria) Nyanza Lake. I may note that we need no longer derive from India the lotus-llily so extensively used by the Ancient Egyptians and so neglected by the moderns that it has well nigh disappeared. All the Central African basins abound in the Nymphæa and thence it found its way down the Nile Valley.

[228] Arab. “Al Marhúmah”: equivalent to our “late lamented.”

[229] Vulgarly pronounced “Mahmal,” and by Egyptians and Turks

"Mehmel." Lane (M. E. xxiv.) has figured this queenly litter and I have sketched and described it in my Pilgrimage (iii. 12).

[230] For such fits of religious enthusiasm see my Pilgrimage (iii. 254).

[231] "Irák" (Mesopotamia) means "a level country beside the banks of a ever."

[232] "Al Kuds," or "Bays al-Mukaddas," is still the popular name of Jerusalem, from the Heb. Yerushalaim ha-Kadushah (legend on shekel of Simon Maccabeus).

[233] "Follow the religion of Abraham" says the Koran (chaps. iii. 89). Abraham, titled "Khalílu'llah," ranks next in dignity to Mohammed, preceding Isa, I need hardly say that his tomb is not in Jerusalem nor is the tomb itself at Hebron ever visited. Here Moslems (soi disant) are allowed by the jealousies of Europe to close and conceal a place which belongs to the world, especially to Jews and Christians. The tombs, if they exist, lie in a vault or cave under the Mosque.

[234] Abá, or Abáyah, vulg. Abayah, is a cloak of hair, goat's or camel's; too well known to require description.

[235] Arab. "Al-Wakkád," the man who lights and keeps up the bath-fires.

[236] Arab. "Má al-Khaláf" (or "Khiláf") a sickly perfume but much prized, made from the flowers of the Salix Ægyptiaca.

[237] Used by way of soap; like glasswort and other plants.

[238] i.e., "Thou art only just recovered."

[239] To "Nakh" is to gurgle "Ikh! Ikh!" till the camel kneels. Hence the space called "Barr al-Manákhah" in Al-Medinah (Pilgrimage i. 222, ii. 91). There is a regular camel vocabulary amongst the Arabs, made up like our "Gee" (go ye!), etc. of significant words worn down.

[240] Arab. “Laza,” the Second Hell provided for Jews.

[241] The word has been explained (vol. i. 112).[see Volume 1, note 199] It is trivial, not occurring in the Koran which uses “Arabs of the Desert ;” “Arabs who dwell in tents,” etc. (chaps. ix. and xxxiii.). “A’arábi” is the classical word and the origin of “Arab” is disputed. According to Pocock (Notæ Spec. Hist. Arab.): “Diverse are the opinions concerning the denomination of the Arabs; but the most certain of all is that which draws it from Arabah, which is part of the region of Tehama (belonging to Al-Medinah Pilgrimage ii. 118), which their father Ismail afterwards inhabited.” Tehamah (sierra caliente) is the maritime region of Al Hijaz, the Moslems Holy Land; and its “Arabah,” a very small tract which named a very large tract, must not be confounded, as some have done, with the Wady Arabah, the ancient outlet of the Dead Sea. The derivation of “Arab” from “Ya’arab” a fancied son of Joktan is mythological. In Heb. Arabia may be called “Eretz Ereb” (or “Arab”)=land of the West; but in Arabic “Gharb” (not Ereb) is the Occident and the Arab dates long before the Hebrew.

[242] “When thine enemy extends his hand to thee, cut it off if thou can, or kiss it,” wisely said Caliph al-Mansur.

[243] The Tartur was a peculiar turban worn by the Northern Arabs and shown in old prints. In modern Egypt the term is applied to the tall sugar-loaf caps of felt affected mostly by regular Dervishes. Burckhardt (Proverbs 194 and 398) makes it the high cap of felt or fur proper to the irregular cavalry called Dely or Delaty. In Dar For (Darfour) “Tartur” is a conical cap adorned with beads and cowries worn by the Manghwah or buffoon who corresponds with the Egyptian “Khalbús” or “Maskharah” and the Turkish “Sutari.” For an illustration see Plate iv. fig. 10 of Voyage au Darfour par Mohammed El Tounsy (The Tunisian), Paris, Duprat, 1845.

[244] The term is picturesque and true; we say “gnaw,” which is not so good.

[245] Here, meaning an Elder, a Chief, etc.; the word has been almost naturalised in English. I have noted that Abraham was the first "Shaykh."

[246] This mention of weighing suggests the dust of Dean Swift and the money of the Gold Coast It was done, I have said, because the gold coin, besides being "sweated" was soft and was soon worn down.

[247] Fem. of Nájí (a deliverer, a saviour)=Salvadora.

[248] This, I have noted, is according to Koranic command (chaps. iv. 88). "When you are saluted with a salutation, salute the person with a better salutation." The longer answer to "Peace be with (or upon) thee! " is still universally the custom. The "Salem" is so differently pronounced by every Eastern nation that the observant traveller will easily make of it a Shibboleth.

[249] The Badawi, who was fool as well as rogue, begins to fear that he has kidnapped a girl of family.

[250] These examinations being very indecent are usually done in strictest privacy. The great point is to make sure of virginity.

[251] This is according to strict Moslem law: the purchaser may not look at the girl's nakedness till she is his, and he ought to manage matters through an old woman.

[252] Lit. wrath; affliction which chokes; in Hindustani it means simply anger.

[253] i.e. Heaven forbid I be touched by a strange man.

[254] Used for fuel and other purposes, such as making "doss stick."

[255] Arab "Yaftah'Allah" the offer being insufficient. The rascal is greedy as a Badaw and moreover he is a liar, which the Badawi is not.

[256] The third of the four great Moslem schools of Theology, taking its name from the Imam al-Sháfi'í (Mohammed ibn Idrís) who died in Egypt A.H. 204, and lies buried near Cairo. (Sale's Prel. Disc. sect. viii.)

[257] The Moslem form of Cabbala, or transcendental philosophy of the Hebrews.

[258] Arab. "Bakh" the word used by the Apostle to Ali his son-in-law. It is the Latin "Euge."

[259] Readers, who read for amusement, will do well to "skip" the fadaises of this highly educated young woman.

[260] There are three Persian Kings of this name (Artaxerxes) which means "Flour and milk," or "high lion." The text alludes to Ardeshir Babegan, so called because he married the daughter of Babak the shepherd, founder of the Sassanides in A.D. 202. See D,Herberot, and the Dabistan.

[261] Alluding to the proverb, "Folk follow their King's faith," "Cujus regio ejus religio" etc.

[262] Second Abbaside, A.H. 136-158 (=754-775).

[263] The celebrated companion of Mohammed who succeeded Abu Bakr in the Caliphate (A.H. 13-23=634-644). The Sunnis know him as Al-Adil the Just, and the Shiahs detest him for his usurpation, his austerity and harshness. It is said that he laughed once and wept once. The laugh was caused by recollecting how he ate his dough-gods (the idols of the Hanifah tribe) in The Ignorance. The tears were drawn by remembering how he buried alive his baby daughter who, while the grave was being dug, patted away the dust from his hair and beard. Omar was doubtless a great man, but he is one of the most ungenial figures in Moslem history which does not abound in genialities. To me he suggests a Puritan, a Covenanter of the sourest and narrowest type; and I cannot wonder that the Persians abhor him, and abuse him on all occasions.

[264] The austere Caliph Omar whose scourge was more feared than the sword was the - author of the celebrated saying “Consult them (feminines) and do clear contrary-wise.”

[265] Our “honour amongst thieves.”

[266] The sixth successor of Mohammed and founder of the Banu Umayyah or Ommiades, called the “sons of the little mother” from their eponymus (A.H. 41-60=661-680). For his Badawi wife Maysun, and her abuse of her husband, see Pilgrimage iii. 262.

[267] Shaykh of the noble tribe, or rather nation, Banu Tamím and a notable of the day, surnamed, no one knows why, “Sire of the Sea.”

[268] This is essential for cleanliness in hot lands: however much the bath may be used, the body-pile and lower hair, if submitted to a microscope, will show more or less sordes adherent. The axilla-hair is plucked because if shaved the growing pile causes itching and the depilatories are held deleterious. At first vellication is painful but the skin becomes used to it. The pecten is shaved either without or after using depilatories, of which more presently. The body-pile is removed by “Takhfíf”; the Libán Shámi (Syrian incense), a fir- gum imported from Scio, is melted and allowed to cool in the form of a pledget. This is passed over the face and all the down adhering to it is pulled up by the roots (Burckhardt No. 420). Not a few Anglo-Indians have adopted these precautions

[269] This Caliph was a tall, fair, handsome man of awe-inspiring aspect. Omar used to look at him and say, “This is the Cæsar of the Arabs,” while his wife called him a “fatted ass.”

[270] The saying is attributed to Abraham when “exercised” by the unkindly temper of Sarah; “woman is made hard and crooked like a rib;” and the modern addition is, “whoso would straighten her, breaketh her.”

[271] i.e. “When ready and in erection.”

[272] "And do first (before going in to your wives) some act which may be profitable unto your souls" or, for you: soul's good. (Koran, chaps. ii. 223.) Hence Ahnaf makes this prayer.

[273] It was popularly said that "Truth-speaking left Omar without a friend." Entitled "The Just" he was murdered by Abu Lúlúah, alias Fírúz, a (Magian ?) slave of Al-Maghírah for denying him justice.

[274] Governor of Bassorah under the first four Caliphs. See D'Herbelot s.v. "Aschári."

[275] Ziyad bin Abi Sufyan, illegitimate brother of the Caliph Mu'awiyah afterwards governor of Bassorah, Cufa and Al-Hijaz.

[276] The seditions in Kufah were mainly caused by the wilful nepotism of Caliph Othman bin Asákir which at last brought about his death. His main quality seems to have been personal beauty: "never was seen man or woman of fairer face than he and he was the most comely of men:" he was especially famed for beautiful teeth which in old age he bound about with gold wire. He is described as of middling stature, large- limbed, broad shouldered, fleshy of thigh and long in the fore-arm which was hairy. His face inclined to yellow and was pock-marked; his beard was full and his curly hair, which he dyed yellow, fell below his ears. He is called "writer of the Koran" from his edition of the M.S., and "Lord of the two Lights" because he married two of the Prophet's daughters, Rukayyah and Umm Kulthum; and, according to the Shi'ahs who call him Othman-i-Lang or" limping Othman," he vilely maltreated them. They justify his death as the act of an Ijmá' al-Muslimín, the general consensus of Moslems which ratifies "Lynch law." Altogether Othman is a mean figure in history.

[277] "Nár" (fire) is a word to be used delicately from its connection with Gehenna. You say, e.g. "bring me a light, a coal (bassah)" etc.; but if you say "bring me fire! " the enemy will probably remark "He wanteth fire even before his time!" The slang expression would be "bring the sweet." (Pilgrimage i. 121.)

[278] Omar is described as a man of fair complexion, and very ruddy, but he waxed tawny with age, when he also became bald and grey. He had little hair on the cheeks but a long mustachio with reddish ends. In stature he overtopped the people and was stout as he was tall. A popular saying of Mohammed's is, "All (very) long men are fools save Omar, and all (very) short men are knaves save Ali." The Persians, who abhor Omar, compare every lengthy, ungainly, longsome thing with him; they will say, "This road never ends, like the entrails of Omar." We know little about Ali's appearance except that he was very short and stout, broad and full-bellied with a tawny complexion and exceedingly hairy, his long beard, white as cotton, filling all the space between his shoulders. He was a "pocket. Hercules," and incredible tales, like that about the gates of Khaybar, are told of his strength. Lastly, he was the only Caliph who bequeathed anything to literature: his "Cantiloquium" is famous and he has left more than one mystical and prophetic work. See Ockley for his "Sentences" and D'Herbelot s. D. "Ali" and "Gebr." Ali is a noble figure in Moslem history.

[279] The emancipation from the consequences of his sins; or it may mean a holy death.

[280] Battle fought near Al-Medinah A.D. 625. The word is derived from "shad" (one). I have described the site in my Pilgrimage, (vol. ii. 227).

[281] "Haphsa" in older writers; Omar's daughter and one of Mohammed's wives, famous for her connection with the manuscripts of the Koran. From her were (or claimed to be) descended the Hafsites who reigned in Tunis and extended their power far and wide over the Maghrib (Mauritania), till dispossessed by the Turks.

[282] i.e. humbly without the usual strut or swim: it corresponds with the biblical walking or going softly. (I Kings xxi. 27; Isaiah xxxviii. 15, etc.)

[283] A theologian of the seventh and eighth centuries.

[284] i.e. to prepare himself by good works, especially alms-giving, for the next world.

[285] A theologian of the eighth century.

[286] Abd al-Aziz was eighth Ommiade (regn. A.H. 99=717) and the fifth of the orthodox, famed for a piety little known to his house. His most celebrated saying was, “ Be constant in meditation on death: if thou bein straitened case ‘twill enlarge it, and if in affluence ‘twill straiten it upon thee.” He died. poisoned, it is said, in A.H 101,

[287] Abu Bakr originally called Abd al-Ka’abah (slave of the Ka’abah) took the name of Abdullah and was surnamed Abu Bakr (father of the virgin) when Mohammed, who before had married only widows, took to wife his daughter, the famous or infamous Ayishah. “Bikr” is the usual form, but “Bakr,” primarily meaning a young camel, is metaphorically applied to human youth (Lane’s Lex. s. c.). The first Caliph was a cloth-merchant, like many of the Meccan chiefs. He is described as very fair with bulging brow, deep set eyes and thin-checked, of slender build and lean loined, stooping and with the backs of his hands fleshless. He used tinctures of Henna and Katam for his beard. The Persians who hate him, call him “Pir-i-Kaftár,” the old she-hyaena, and believe that he wanders about the deserts of Arabia in perpetual rut which the males must satisfy.

[288] The second, fifth, sixth and seventh Ommiades.

[289] The mother of Omar bin Abd al-Aziz was a granddaughter of Omar bin al-Khattab.

[290] Brother of this Omar’s successor, Yezid II.

[291] So the Turkish proverb “The fish begins to stink at the head.”

[292] Calling to the slaves.

[293] When the “Day of Arafat” (9th of Zú’l-Hijjah) falls upon a Friday. For this Hajj al- Akbar see my Pilgrimage iii. 226. It is often

confounded by writers (even by the learned M. Caussin de Perceval) with the common Pilgrimage as opposed to the Umrah, or “ Lesser Pilgrimage” (ibid. iii. 342, etc.). The latter means etymologically cohabiting with a woman in her father’s house as opposed to ‘Ars or leading her to the husband’s home: it is applied to visiting Meccah and going through all the pilgrim-rites but not at the Pilgrimage-season. Hence its title “Hajj al-Asghar” the “Lesser Hajj.” But “Umrah” is also applied to a certain ceremony between the hills Safá (a large hard rock) and Marwah (stone full of flints), which accompanies the Hajj and which I have described (ibid. iii. 344). At Meccah I also heard of two places called Al-Umrah, the Greater in the Wady Fátimah and the Lesser half way nearer the city (ibid. iii. 344).

[294] A fair specimen of the unworthy egoism which all religious systems virtually inculcate Here a pious father leaves his children miserable to save his own dirty soul.

[295] Chief of the Banú Tamín, one of the noblest of tribes, derived from Tamím, the uncle of Kuraysh (Koreish); hence the poets sang:—

There cannot be a son nobler than Kuraysh,
Nor an uncle nobler than Tamím.

The high minded Tamín is contrasted with the mean-spirited Kays, who also gave rise to a tribe; and hence the saying concerning one absolutely inconsistent, “Art thou now Tamín and then Kays?”

[296] Surnamed Al-Sakafi, Governor of Al-Yaman and Irak.

[297] Tenth Ommiade (regn. A H. 105-125 = 724-743).

[298] Or “clothe thee in worn-out clothes” i.e. “Become a Fakir” or religious mendicant.

[299] This gratuitous incest in ignorance injures the tale and is as repugnant to Moslem as to Christian taste.

[300] The child is named either on the day of its birth or on that day week. The father whispers it in the right ear, often adding the Azán or prayer-call, and repeating in the left ear the "Ikámah" or Friday sentence. There are many rules for choosing names according to the week-day, the ascendant planet, the "Sortes Coranicæ," etc.

[301] Amongst Moslems as amongst Christians there are seven deadly sins: idolatry, murder, falsely charging modest women with unchastity, robbing orphans, usury, desertion in Holy War and disobedience to parents. The difference between the two creeds is noteworthy. And the sage knows only three, intemperance, ignorance and egoism.

[302] Meaning, "It was decreed by Destiny; so it came to pass," appropriate if not neat.

[303] The short, stout, dark, long-haired and two-bunched camel from "Bukhtar" (Bactria), the "Eastern" (Bakhtar) region on the Amu or Jayhun (Oxus) River; afterwards called Khorasan. The two-humped camel is never seen in Arabia except with northern caravans, and to speak of it would be a sore test of Badawi credulity.

[304] "Kaylúlah" is the "forty-winks" about noon: it is a Sunnat or Practice of the Prophet who said, "Make the mid-day siesta, for verily at this hour the devils sleep not." "Aylúlain" is slumbering after morning prayers (our "beauty-sleep"), causing heaviness andid leness: "Ghaylúlah" is dozing about 9 a.m. engendering poverty and wretchedness: "Kaylúlah" (with the guttural Kaf) is sleeping before evening prayers and "Faylúlah" is slumbering after sunset — both held to be highly detrimental. (Pilgrimage ii 49.)

[305] The Biblical "Hamath" (Hightown) too well known to require description. It is still famous for the water-wheels mentioned by al-Hariri (assembly of the Banu Harám).

[306] When they say, "The levee flashes bright on the hills of Al-Yaman," the allusion is to the south quarter, where summer-lightning is seen. Al-Yaman (always with the article) means,

I have said, the right-hand region to one facing the rising sun and Al-Sham (Syria) the left-hand region.

[307] Again "he" for "she," in delicacy and jealousy of making public the beauty or conditions of the "veiled sex." Even public singers would hesitate to use a feminine pronoun. As will be seen however, the rule is not invariably kept and hardly ever in Badawi poetry.

[308] The normal pun on "Nuzhat al-Zaman" = Delight of the Age or Time.

[309] The reader will find in my Pilgrimage (i. 305) a sketch of the Takht-rawan or travelling-litter, in which pilgrimesses are wont to sleep.

[310] In poetry it holds the place of our Zephyr; end the "Bád- i-Sabá"=Breeze o' the morn, Is much addressed by Persian poets.

[311] Here appears the nervous, excitable, hysterical Arab temperament which is almost phrensied by the neighbourhood of a home from which he had run away.

[312] Zau al-Makan and Nuzhat al-Zaman.

[313] The idea is essentially Eastern, "A lion at home and a lamb abroad" is the popular saying.

[314] Arab. "Hubb al-Watan" (= love of birthplace, patriotism) of which the Tradition says "Min al-Imán" (=is part of man's religion).

[315] He is supposed to speak en prince; and he yields to a prayer when he spurns a command.

[316] In such caravans each party must keep its own place under pain of getting into trouble with the watchmen and guards.

[317] Mr. Payne (ii. 109) borrows this and the next quotation from the Bull Edit. i. 386.

[318] For the expiation of inconsiderate oaths see Koran (chaps. v.). I cannot but think that Al-Islam treats perjury too lightly: all we can say is-that it improves upon Hinduism which practically seems to leave the punishment to the gods.

[319] "Kausar," as has been said, represents the classical nectar, the Amrita of the Hindus.

[320] From Bull Edit. i. 186. The couplet in the Mac. Edit. i. 457 is very wildly applied.

[321] The "insula" of Sancho Panza.

[322] This should have assured him that he stood in no danger.

[323] Here ends the wearisome tale of the brother and sister, and the romance of chivalry begins once more with the usual Arab digressions.

[324] I have derived this word from the Persian "rang"=colour, hue, kind.

[325] Otherwise all would be superseded, like U. S. officials under a new President.

[326] Arab. "Nímshah" from the Pers. Nímchah, a "half-sword," a long dagger worn in the belt. Richardson derives it from Namsh, being freckled (damasked).

[327] The Indian term for a tent large enough to cover a troop of cavalry.

[328] Arab. "Marhúm" a formula before noticed. It is borrowed from the Jewish, "of blessed memory" (after the name of the honoured dead, Prov. x. 17.); with the addition of "upon whom be peace," as opposed to the imprecation, "May the name of the wicked rot!"

[329] The speeches of the five damsels should be read only by students.

[330] i.e. Those who look for "another and a better."

[331] The title of Caliph Abu Bakr because he bore truthful witness to the Apostle's mission or, others say, he confirmed the "Mi'ráj" or nocturnal journey to Heaven.

[332] All this is Koranic (chaps. ii., etc.).

[333] This may have applied more than once to "hanging judges" in the Far West.

[334] A traditionist and jurisconsult of Al-Medinah in the seventh and eighth centuries.

[335] The Alexander of the Koran and Eastern legends, not to be confounded with the Alexander of Macedon. He will be noticed in a future Night.

[336] Æsop, according to the Arabs: of him or rather of the two Lukmans, more presently.

[337] Koran ii. 185.

[338] Mohammed.

[339] One of the Ashάb or Companions of Mohammed.

[340] A noted traditionist at Cufa in the seventh century.

[341] Koran, chaps. lxxiv. I (and verse 8 follows). The Archangel Gabriel is supposed to address Mohammed and not a few divines believe this Surah (chapter) to have been first revealed. Mr. Rodwell makes it No. ii. following the Fatrah or silent interval which succeeded No. xcvi. "Clots of Blood." See his 2nd Edit. for further details.

[342] i.e. dangerous to soul-health.

[343] In the Mac. Edit. "Abd" for "Sa'id." The latter was a black and a

native of Cufa during the first century (A.H) and is still famous as a traditionist.

[344] Arab. “Shirk,” giving a partner to Allah, attending chiefly to Christians and idolaters and in a minor degree to Jews and Guebres. We usually English it by “polytheism,” which is clumsy and conveys a wrong idea

[345] Grandson of the Caliph Ali. He is one of the Imams (High-priests) of the Shi’ah school.

[346] An eminent traditionist of the eighth century (A.D.).

[347] The prayers of the Fast-month and Pilgrimage-month are often said in especial places outside the towns and cities; these are the Indian Id(Eed-)gáh. They have a screen of wall about a hundred yards long with a central prayer-niche and the normal three steps for the preacher; and each extremity is garnished with an imitation minaret. They are also called Namáz-gah and one is sketched by Herklots (Plate iii. fig. 2). The object of the trips thither in Zu’l-Ka’adah and Zu’l-Hijjah is to remind Moslems of the “Ta’aríf,” or going forth from Meccah to Mount Arafat.

[348] Arab. “Al-Háfi,” which in Egyptian means sore-footed as well. He was an ascetic of the eighth and ninth centuries (A.D.). He relates a tradition of the famous soldier saint Khálid bin Walíd who lies buried like the poet Ka’ab al-Ahbár near Hums (Emessa) once the Bœotia, Phrygia, Abdera, Suabia of Syria now Halbun (pronounced Halbáun) near Damascus. I cannot explain how this Kuraysh noble (a glorious figure in Moslem history) is claimed by the Afghans as one of their countrymen and made to speak Pukhtu or Pushtu, their rough old dialect of Persian. The curious reader will consult my Pilgrimage iii. 322 for the dialogue between Mohammed and Khalid. Again there is general belief in Arabia that the English sent a mission to the Prophet, praying that Khalid might be despatched to proselytise them: unfortunately Mohammed was dead and the “Ingríz” ratted. It is popularly held that no armed man can approach Khalid’s grave;

but I suppose my revolver did not count.

[349] When he must again wash before continuing prayer.

[350] Bin Adham; another noted ascetic of the eighth century.
Those curious about these unimportant names will consult the great Biographical Dictionary of Ibn Khallikan, translated by Baron MacGuckin de Slane (1842-45).

[351] Thus making Bishr the "Imám" (artistes) lit. one who stands in front. In Koran xvii. 74 it means "leader": in ii. 118 Allah makes Abraham an "Imam to mankind."

[352] A favourite sentiment in the East: we find it at the very beginning of Sa'di's Gulistan: better a weal-bringing lie than a harm-dealing truth.

[353] A penny, one sixth of the drachma.

[354] Founder of the Hanbali, fourth (in date) of the four orthodox Moslem schools. The Caliph al-Mu'atasim bi'llah, son of Harun al-Rashid, who believed the Koran to have been created and not a Logos (whatever that may be), co-eternal with Allah, scourged this Imam severely for "differing in opinion" (A.H. 220=833). In fact few of the notable reverends of that day escaped without a caress of the scourge or the sword.

[355] A learned man of the eighth century at Bassorah (A.D.).

[356] A traditionist of Khorasan in the ninth century (A.D.).

[357] "Azal," opp. to "Abad," eternity without end, infinity.

[358] Koran lxvi. 6.

[359] A traditionist of Al-Medinah, eighth century (A.D.).

[360] Arab. "Músá": the Egyptian word was "Mesu," the "child" or the "boy" (brought up in the palace?), and the Hebrews made it

“Mosheh” or “one drawn out of the water;” “Mu” in Egypt being water, the Arab “Ma”; whence probably the moderns have derived the dim. “Moyeh ,” vulg. Egyptian for water.

[361] Koran, chaps. xxviii.: Shu’ayb is our Jethro: Koran, chaps. vii. and xi. Mr. Rodwell suggests () that the name has been altered from Hobab (Numb. x. 29).

[362] Arab. “Taub” (Saub), the long shirt popularly written in English Tobe and pronounced so by Egyptians. It is worn by both sexes (Lane, M. E. chaps. i. “Tob”) in Egypt, and extends into the heart of Moslem Africa: I can compare it with nothing but a long nightgown dyed a dirty yellow by safflower and about as picturesque as a carter’s smock-frock.

[363] There is nothing of this in the Koran; and it is a most unhappy addition, as Moses utterly and pretentiously ignored a “next world.”

[364] Koran xxviii. 22-27. Mohammed evidently confounded the contract between Laban and Jacob. (Gen. xxix. 15-39.)

[365] So says Al-Hariri (Ass. of Sasan), “The neighbour before the house and the traveller before the journey.” In certain cities the neighbourhood is the real detective police, noting every action and abating scandals (such as orgies, etc.) with a strong hand and with the full consent of public opinion and of the authorities. This loving the neighbour shows evident signs of being borrowed from Christianity.

[366] Al-Asamm a theologian of Balkh, ninth century (A.D.).

[367] The founder of the Senior School, for which see Sale Prel.
Disc. sect. viii.

[368] Thus serving the Lord by sinning against his own body.

[369] An Egyptian doctor of the law (ninth century).

[370] Koran lxxvii. 35, 36. This is one of the earliest and most poetical chapters of the book.

[371] Abu Hanifah was scourged for refusing to take office and was put to death in prison, it is said by poison (A.H. 150=A.D. 767), for a judicial sentence authorising rebellion against the second Abbaside, Al-Mansur, surnamed Abu'l-Dawánik (Father of Pence) for his exceeding avarice.

[372] "Lá rayba fí-hi" says the Koran (ii. 1) of itself; and the saying is popularly applied to all things of the Faith.

[373] Arab. "Rivál al-Ghayb," somewhat like the "Himalayan Brothers" of modern superstition. See Herklots (Qanoon-e-Islam) for a long and careful description of these "Mardán-i-Ghayb" (Pers.), a "class of people mounted on clouds," invisible, but moving in a circular orbit round the world, and suggesting the Hindu "Lokapálas." They should not be in front of the traveller nor on his right, but either behind or on his left hand. Hence tables, memorial couplets and hemistichs are required to ascertain the station, without which precaution journeys are apt to end badly.

[374] A sweetmeat before noticed.

[375] Door hinges in the east are two projections for the top and bottom of the leaf playing in hollows of the lintel and threshold. It appears to be the primitive form, for we find it in the very heart of Africa. In the basaltic cities of the Hauran, where the doors are of thick stone, they move easily on these pins. I found them also in the official (not the temple)City of Palmyra, but all broken.

[376] The effect of the poison and of the incantation which accompanied it.

[377] King Omar who had raped her. My sympathies are all with the old woman who nightly punished the royal lecher.

[378] Arab. "Zunnár," the Gr. . Christians and Jews were compelled by

the fanatical sumptuary laws of the Caliph Al- Mutawakkil (AD. 856) to wear a broad leather belt in public, hence it became a badge of the Faith. Probably it was confounded with the "Janeo" (Brahmanical thread) and the Parsi sacred girdle called Kashti. (Dabistan i, 297, etc.). Both Mandeville and La Brocquière speak of "Christians of the Girdle, because they are all girt above," intending Jacobites or Nestorians.

[379] "Siláh dár" (Arab. and Pers.)=a military officer of high rank; literally an "armour-bearer," chosen for velour and trustworthiness. So Jonathan had a "young man" (brave) who bare his armour (I Sam. xiv. 1, 6 and 7); and Goliath had a man that bare the shield before him (ibid. xvii. 7, 41). Men will not readily forget the name of Sulayman Agha, called the Silahdar, in Egypt. (Lane M. E. chaps. iv.)

[380] It will be told afterwards.

[381] The elder brother thus showed himself a vassal and proved himself a good Moslem by not having recourse to civil war.

[382] Arab. "Ghazwah," the corrupt Gallicism, now Europeanised=raid, foray.

[383] Turk in modern parlance means a Turkoman, a pomade: the settled people call themselves Osmanli or Othmanli. Turkoman=Turk- like.

[384] Arab. "Nimsá;" southern Germans, Austrians; from the Slav. "Nemica" (any Germans), literally meaning "The dumb" (nemac), because they cannot speak Slav.

[385] Arab. "Dubárá" from the Slav. "Dubrovnik," from "Dub" (an oak) and "Dubrava" (an oak forest). Ragusa, once a rival of Venice, gave rise to the word "Argosy." D'Herbelot calls it "Dobravenedik" or "Good Venice," the Turkish name, because it paid tribute when Venice would not (?).

[386] Arab. “Jawarnah,” or, “Júrnah” evidently Zara, a place of many names, Jadera (Hirtius de Bell. Alex. ca), Jadra, Zadra (whence the modern term), Diadora, Diadosca and Jadrossa. This important Liburnian city sent forth many cruisers in crusading days; hence the Arabs came to know its name.

[387] Arab. “Banu’l-Asfar;” which may mean “Pale faces,” in the sense of “yeller girls” (New Orleans) and that intended by North American Indians, or, possibly, the peoples with yellow (or rather tow-coloured) hair we now call Russians. The races of Hindostan term the English not “white men,” but “red men;” and the reason will at once be seen by comparing a Britisher with a high-caste Nágar Brahman whose face is of parchment colour as if he had drunk exsangue cuminum. The Yellow-faces of the text correspond with the Sansk. “Svetadvipa” — Whiteman’s Land.

[388] Arab. “Al-Musakhkham.” No Moslem believes that Isa was crucified and a favourite fancy is that Judas, changed to the likeness of Jesus, thus paid for his treason. (Evangel. Barnabæ.) Hence the resurrection is called not “Kiyámah” but “Kumámah”=rubbish. This heresy about the Cross they share with the Docetes, “certain beasts in the shape of men” (says Ignatius), who held that a phantom was crucified. So far the Moslems are logical, for “Isa,” being angelically, miraculously and immaculately conceived, could not be; but they contradict themselves when they hold a vacant place near Mohammed’s tomb for the body of Isa after his second coming as a forerunner to Mohammed and Doomday. (Pilgrimage ii. 89.)

[389] A diviner, priest, esp. Jewish, and not belonging to the tribe of Levi.

[390] Again the coarsest word “Khara.” The allusion is to the vulgar saying, “Thou eatest skite!” (i.e. thou talkest nonsense). Decent English writers modify this to, “Thou eatest dirt:” and Lord Beaconsfield made it ridiculous by turning it into “eating sand.”

[391] These silly scandals, which cause us only to smile, excite

Easterns to fury. I have seen a Moslem wild with rage on hearing a Christian parody the opening words of the Koran, “Bismillahi ‘l-Rahmáni ‘l-Rahím, Mismish wa Kamar al-din,” roughly translated,

“In the name of Allah, the Compassionating, the Compassionate! Apricots and marmalede.” The idea of the Holy Merde might have been suggested by the Hindus: see Mandeville, of the archiprotopapaton (prelate) carrying ox-dung and urine to the King, who therewith anoints his brow and breast, &c. And, incredible to relate, this is still practiced after a fashion by the Parsis, one of the most progressive and the sharpest witted of Asiatic races.

[392] Meaning that he had marked his brow with a cross (of ashes?) as certain do on Ash Wednesday.

[393] Syria, the “left-hand land” as has before been explained. The popular saying about its people is “Shámi shúmi!” — the Syrian is small potatoes (to render the sense Americanicè). Nor did Syrus, the slave in Roman days, bear the best of names. In Al-Hijaz the Syrian is addressed “Abú Shám” (Father of Syria) and insulted as “Abuser of the Salt” (a traitor). Yet many sayings of Mohammed are recorded in honour of Syria, and he sometimes used Syriac words. Such were “Bakh, bakh” (=euge, before noticed), and “Kakh,” a congener of the Latin Cacus and Caca which our day has docked to “cack.” (Pilgrimage iii. 115)

[394] Koran xiv. 34. “They (Unbelievers) shall be thrown therein (i.e., the House of Perdition=Hell); and an unhappy dwelling shall it be.”

[395] The leg-cut is a prime favourite with the Eastern Sworder, and a heavy two-handed blade easily severs a horse’s leg.

[396] Mohammed repeatedly declared (Koran lxi.) that the Christians had falsified the passage (“I go to my Father and the Paraclete shall come,” John xvi. 7) promising the advent of the Comforter, (ibid. xiv. 20; xv. 26) by substituting the latter word for glorious, renowned, i.e., Ahmed or Mohammed=the praised one. This may have been found in the Arabic translation of the Gospels made by

Warakah, cousin to Mohammed's first wife; and hence in Koran lxi. we find Jesus prophesying of an Apostle "whose name shall be Ahmad." The word has consequently been inserted into the Arabic Gospel of Saint Barnabas (Dabistan iii. 67). Moslems accept the Pentateuch, the Psalter and the Gospel; but assert (Koran, passim.) that all extant copies have been hopelessly corrupted, and they are right. Moses, to whom the Pentateuch is attributed, notices his own death and burial— "the mair the miracle," said the old Scotch lady. The "Psalms of David" range over a period of some five hundred years, and there are three Isaiahs who pass with the vulgar for one. The many apocryphal Gospels, all of which have been held genuine and canonical at different times and in different places, prove that the four, which are still in use, were retained because they lack the manifest absurdities of their discarded rivals.

[397] Arab. " Labbayka; " the Pilgrimage-cry (Night xxii.) which in Arabic is,

Labbayk' Allahumma, Labbayk'!
Lá Sharíka lake, Labbayk'!
Inna 'l-hamda w'al ni'amata lake wa'l mulk!
Labbayk' Allahumma, Labbayk'!

Some add "Here am I, and I honour Thee, the son of Thy two slaves; beneficence and good are all between Thy hands."With the "Talbiyah" the pilgrims should bless the Prophet, pray Allah to grant Heaven and exclaim, "By Thy mercy spare us from the pains of Hell-fire!" (Pilgrimage iii. 232.) Labbayka occurs in the verses attributed to Caliph Ali; so labba=he faced, and yalubbu=it faces (as one house faces another); lastly, he professed submission to Allah; in which sense, together with the verbal noun "Talbiyah," it is used by Al-Hanri (Pref. and Ass. of Su'adah).

[398] Arab. "Kissís" (plur. Kusús) from ' .

[399] Koran ii. The "red cow" is evidently the "red heifer" of
Barnabas, chaps. vii.

[400] Arab. “Al-Jásalík”= .

[401] This is from the first “Gospel of Infancy,” wherein Jesus said to his mother, “Verily I am Jesus, the Son of God, the Word which thou hast brought forth, as the Angel Gabriel did declare unto thee; and my Father hath sent me to save the world” (chaps. i. 2.). The passage is virtually quoted in the Koran (chaps. iii. 141), of course omitting “ the Son of God”

[402] Mohammed allowed his locks to grow down to his ear-lobes but never lower.

[403] Arab. “Lisám” I have explained as a covering for the lower face, made by drawing over it the corner of the head-kerchief (Pilgrimage i. 346). The Lisám of the African Tawárik hoods the eyes so that a man must turn up his face to see, and swathes all the lower half, leaving only the nose exposed. And this is worn by many men by night as well as by day, doubtless to avoid the evil eye. The native Sultans of Darfur, like those of Bornu and others further west, used white muslin as a face-wrap: hence, too, the ceremonies when spitting, etc., etc. The Kúfiyah or head-kerchief of the Arabs soon reached Europe and became in Low Latin Cuphia; in Spanish Escofia; in Ital. Cuffia or Scuffia; in French Escoffion, Scofion (Reine Marguerite) Coëffe (une pellicule, marque de bonheur) Coiffe and Coife, &c.; the Scotch Curch or Coif, opposed to the maiden snood, and, lastly our Sergeant-at-Law’s Coif. Littré, the Learned, who in erudition was né coiffé, has missed this obvious derivation.

[404] “Cutting,” throughout the book, alludes to the scymitar with which Arabs never give point; and “thrusting” to the footman’s spear and the horseman’s lance.

[405] A popular phrase, I repeat, for extreme tenor and consternation.

[406] The name usually applies to a well-known district and city of Al Yaman, where “Koss the eloquent” was bishop in Mohammed’s day: the Negiran of D’Herbelot. Here, however, it is the Syrian Najrán (Nejrân of Missionary Porter’s miserable Handbook), now a

wretched village near the volcanic Lajjá, about one hundred and twenty miles direct south of Damascus and held by Druzes and Christians.

[407] The Kantár (quintal) of 100 ratls (Ibs.) =98-99 Ibs. avoir.

[408] Arab. “Juráb (bag) mi’adat- ih (of his belly),” the “curdling of the testicles” in fear is often mentioned.

[409] Clearly alluding to the magic so deeply studied by mediæval Jews.

[410] Arab. “Sahákah,” lit. rubbing. The Moslem Harem is a great school for this “Lesbian (which I would call Atossan) love “; but the motive of the practice lies deeper. As amongst men the mixture of the feminine with the masculine temperament leads to sodomy, so the reverse makes women prefer their own sex. These tribades are mostly known by peculiarities of form and features, hairy cheeks and upper lips, gruff voices, hircine odour and the large projecting clitoris with erectile powers known to the Arabs as “bazar” hence Tabzír=circumcision or amputation of such clitoris. Burckhardt (Prov. 436) translates “ Bazarah” by slut or wench. He adds “ it originally signifies the labia which the Cairenes also entice Zambúr and which are cut off in girlhood.” See also Lane, Lex. s.v.; Tabzír. Both writers confuse excision of the nymphæ with circumcision of the clitoris (Zambúr) Al-Siyúti (Kitab al-Izá’ fi’Ilm al-Nikah) has a very interesting chapter on Sapphic venery, which is well known to Europe as proved by such works as “Gamiani,” and “Anandria ou Confessions de Mademoiselle Sappho, avec la Clef,” Lesbos, 1718. Onanism is fatally prevalent: in many Harems and girls’ schools tallow candles and similar succedanea are vainly forbidden and bananas when detected are cut into four so as to be useless; of late years, however, China has sent some marvellous artificial phalli of stuffed bladder, horn and even caoutchouc, the latter material of course borrowed from Europe.

[411] This is considered a powerful aphrodisiac in the East. Hence male

devotees are advised to avoid tile "two reds," i.e. meat and wine; while the "two reds," which corrupt women, are gold and saffron, that is perfumery. Hence also the saying of Mohammed:—"Perfumes for men should have scent and not colour; for women should have colour and not scent." (Mishkát al-Masábíh ii. 361.)

[412] These are the "Hibás" or thin cords of wool which the Badawi binds round his legs, I believe to keep off cramp. (Pilgrimage iii. 78).

[413] Crying out "La iláha illa 'llah." (There is no god but the God.); technically called "Tahlíl."

[414] i.e. Men, angels and devils, the "Triloka" (triple people) of the Hindus. Alamín (plur.), never Alamayn (dual), is the Triregno denoted by the papal Tiara, the three Christian kingdoms being Heaven, Hell and Purgatory.

[415] Matrahinna or Mit-Rahinah is a well-known village near Memphis, the name being derived from the old Egyptian Minat-ro-hinnu, the port at the mouth of the canal. Let me remark that two of these three words, "Minat" and "Ru," are still common in " Aryan" Persian.

[416] Kirámat, a sign, a prodigy, opposed to Mu'ujizah, a miracle wrought by a prophet. The Sufis explain this thaumaturgy by Allah changing something of Nature's ordinary course in favour of an especial worshipper, and, after a fashion, this is Catholic doctrine (See Dabistan, iii. 173).

[417] Koran, x. 25, "until the earth receive its vesture and be adorned with various plants."

[418] i.e. the young hair sprouting on the boy's cheek.

[419] A fighter for the faith and now a title which follows the name, e.g. Osmán Páshá Ghází, whom the English press dubbed "Ghazi Osman."

[420] That is the King of Constantinople.

[421] Cassia fistularis, a kind of carob: “ Shambar” is the Arab. form of the Persian “ Chambar.”

[422] Koran, ii. 149. Hence the vulgar idea that Martyrs are still alive in the flesh. See my Pilgrimage (ii. 110 and elsewhere) for the romantic and picturesque consequences of that belief. The Commentators (Jalál al-Dín, etc.) play tricks with the Koranic words, “ they (martyrs) are not dead but living” (iii. 179) by placing the happy souls in the crops of green birds which eat of the fruits and drink of the waters of Paradise; whereas the reprobates and the (very) wicked are deposited in black birds which drain the sanies and the boiling waters of Hell. Amongst the Greeks a body remaining entire long after death suggests Anathema Maranatha: it is the contrary with Catholic Christians (Boccaccio iv. 5, of the Pot of Basil). Concerning this creed see Maundrell, Letter of 1698.

[423] Tor is “Mount Sinai” in the Koran (xcv. 1). I have only to repeat my opinion concerning the present site so called: “It is evident that Jebel Serbal dates only from the early days of Coptic Christianity; that Jebel Musa, its Greek rival, rose after the visions of Helena in the fourth century; whilst the building of the Convent by Justinian belongs to A.D 527. Ras Safsáfah, its rival to the north, is an affair of yesterday, and may be called the invention of Robinson; and Jebel Katerina, to the south is the property of Rüppell” (Midian Revisited i., 237). I would therefore call the “Sinaitic” Peninsula, Peninsula of Paran in old days and Peninsula of Tor (from its chief port) in our time. It is still my conviction that the true Mount Sinai will be found in Jabal Aráif, or some such unimportant height to the north of the modern Hajj- road from Suez to Akabah. Even about the name (which the Koran writes “Sainá” and “Sínín”) there is a dispute: It is usually derived from the root “Sanah”=sentis, a bush; but this is not satisfactory. Our eminent Assyriologist, Professor Sayce, would connect it with “Sin,” the Assyrian Moon- god as Mount Nebo with the Sun-god and he expects to find there the ruins of a Lunar temple as a Solar fane stands on Ba’al Zapuna (Baal Zephon) or the classical

Mount Casius.

[424] Alluding to the miracle of Aaron's rod (the gift of Jethro) as related in the Koran (chapts. vii. 1., xx., etc.), where the Egyptian sorcerers threw down thick ropes which by their magic twisted and coiled like serpents.

[425] Arab. "Ayát" lit. "signs," here "miracles of the truth," 1. c. Koranic versets as opposed to chapters. The ranks of the enemy represent the latter, sword-cuts the former — a very persuasive mode of preaching.

[426] Lane (M. E. chapt.. iii.) shows by a sketch the position of the worshipper during this "Salám" which is addressed, some say, to the guardian angels, others suppose to all brother-believers and angels.

[427] i.e., where the Syrians found him.

[428] i.e., Dedianus Arabised; a name knightly and plebian.

[429] In such tales the Wazir is usually the sharp-witted man, contrasting with the "dummy," or master.

[430] Carrier-pigeons were extensively used at this time. The Caliph Al-Násir li-Díni 'lláh (regn. A.H. 575=1180) was, according to Ibn Khaldún, very fond of them. The moderns of Damascus still affect them. My successor, Mr. Consul Kirby Green, wrote an excellent report on pigeon-fancying at Damascus. The so-called Maundeville or Mandeville in A. D. 1322 speaks of carrier-pigeons in Syria as a well-known mode Of intercourse between lord and lord.

[431] Mohammed who declared "There is no monkery in Al-Islam," and who virtually abolished the priest, had an especial aversion to the shaveling (Ruhbán). But the "Gens æterna in quâ nemo nascitur" (Pliny v. 17) managed to appear even in Al-lslam, as Fakirs,, Dervishes, Súfis, etc. Of this more hereafter.

[432] i.e. her holiness would act like a fascinating talisman.

[433] The “smoking out” practice is common amongst the Arabs: hence Marshal Pelissier’s so- called “ barbarity.” The Public is apt to forget that on a campaign the general’s first duty is to save his own men by any practice which the laws of fair warfare do not absolutely forbid.

[434] i.e. Mohammed, who promised Heaven and threatened Hell.

[435] Arab. “Ahr” or “ihr,” fornication or adultery, i.e., irreligion, infidelity as amongst the Hebrews (Isaiah xxiii.17).

[436] A sign of defeat.

[437] In English “last night”: I have already noted that the Moslem day, like the Jewish and the Scandinavian, begins at sundown; and “layl “ a night, is often used to denote the twenty- four hours between sunset and sunset, whilst “yaum,” a day, would by us be translated in many cases “battle-day.”

[438] Iterum the “Himalayan Brothers.”

[439] Again, Mohammed who promised Good to the Good, and vice versâ.

[440] They are sad doggrel like most of the pièces d’occasion inserted in The Nights.

[441] Here “Kahwah” (coffee) is used in its original sense of strong old wine. The derivation is “Akhá”=fastidire fecit, causing disinclination for food, the Matambre (kill- hunger) of the Iberians. In old days the scrupulous called coffee “Kihwah” in order to distinguish it from ‘Kakwah,” wine.

[442] i.e. Mohammed, a common title.

[443] That is, fatal to the scoffer and the impious.

[444] Equivalent to our “The Devil was sick,” etc.

[445] i.e. to the enemy: the North American Indians (so called) use

similar forms of “inverted speech”; and the Australian aborigines are in no way behind them.

[446] See Vol. i., (Night xvi.).

[447] Arab. “Sauf,” a particle denoting a near future whereas “Sa-” points to one which may be very remote.

[448] From the root “Shanh”=having a fascinating eye, terrifying. The Irish call the fascinater “eybitter” and the victim (who is also rhymed to death) “eybitten.”

[449] i.e., not like the noble-born, strong in enduring the stress of fight.

[450] i.e., of Abraham. For the Well Zemzem and the Place of Abraham see my Pilgrimage (iii. 171-175, etc.), where I described the water as of salt-bitter taste, like that of Epsom (iii. 203). Sir William Muir (in his excellent life of Mahomet, I. cclviii.) remarks that “the flavour of stale water bottled up for months would not be a criterion of the same water freshly drawn;” but soldered tins-full of water drawn a fortnight before are to be had in Calcutta and elsewhere after Pilgrimage time; and analysis would at once detect the salt.

[451] Racing was and is a favourite pastime with those hippomanists, the Arabs; but it contrasts strongly with our civilised form being a trial of endurance rather than of speed. The Prophet is said to have limited betting in these words, “There shall be no wagering save on the Kuff (camel’s foot), the Hafir (hoof of horse, ass, etc.) or the Nasal (arrow-pile or lance head).”

[452] In the Mac. Edit. “Arman”=Armenia, which has before occurred. The author or scribe here understands by “Cæsarea” not the old Turris Stratonis, Herod’s city called after Augustus, but Cæsareia the capital of Cappadocia (Pliny, vi. 3), the royal residence before called Mazaca (Strabo).

[453] An idiom meaning “a very fool.”

[454] i.e. Kána (was) má (that which) was (kána).

[455] A son being “the lamp of a dark house.”

[456] When the Israelites refused to receive the Law (the souls of all the Prophets even those unborn being present at the Covenant), Allah tore up the mountain (Sinai which is not mentioned) by the roots and shook it over their heads to terrify them, saying, “Receive the Law which we have given you with a resolution to keep it” (Koran chaps. xlx. 170). Much of this story is from the Talmud (Abodah Sar. 2, 2, Tract Sabbath, etc.) whence Al-Islam borrowed so much of its Judaism, as it took Christianity from the Apocryphal New Testament. This tradition is still held by the Israelites, says Mr. Rodwell () who refers it to a misunderstanding of Exod. xix. 17, rightly rendered in the E. version “at the nether part of the mountain.”

[457] Arab. “Azghán” = the camel-litters in which women travel.

[458] i.e. to joy foes and dismay friends.

[459] Whose eyes became white (i.e. went blind) with mourning for his son Joseph (Koran, chaps. xii. 84). He recovered his sight when his face was covered with the shirt which Gabriel had given to the youth after his brethren had thrown him into the well.

[460] “Poison King” (Persian); or “Flower-King” (Arabic).

[461] A delicate allusion to the size of her hips and back parts, in which volume is, I have said, greatly admired for the best of reasons.

[462] All Prophets had some manual trade and that of David was making coats of mail, which he invented, for before his day men used plate-armour. So “Allah softened the iron for him” and in his hands it became like wax (Koran xxi. xxxiv., etc.). Hence a good coat of mail is called “Davidean.” I have noticed (First Footsteps, and elsewhere) the homage paid to the blacksmith on the principle which made Mulciber (Malik Kabir) a god. The myth of David

inventing mail possibly arose from his peculiarly fighting career. Moslems venerate Dáúd on account of his extraordinary devotion, nor has this view of his character ceased : a modern divine preferred him to "all characters in history."

[463] "Travel by night," said the Prophet, "when the plagues of earth (scorpions, serpents, etc.) afflict ye not." Yet the night- march in Arabia is detestable (Pilgrimage iii.).

[464] This form of ceremony is called "Istikbál" (coming forth to greet) and is regulated by the severest laws of etiquette. As a rule the greater the distance (which may be a minimum of one step) the higher the honour. Easterns infinitely despise strangers who ignore these vitals of politeness.

[465] i.e. he will be a desert Nimrod and the game will delight to be killed by him.

[466] This serves to keep the babe's eyes free from inflammation.

[467] i.e. Crown of the Kings of amorous Blandishment.

[468] Lane (i. 531) translates "the grey down." The Arabs use "Akhzar" (prop. "green") in many senses, fresh, gray-hued, etc.

[469] Allusion to the well-known black banners of the house of Abbas. The Persians describe the growth of hair on a fair young face by, "His cheeks went into mourning for the loss of their charms."

[470] Arab. "Káfir" a Koranic word meaning Infidel, the active participle of Kufr= Infidelity i.e. rejecting the mission of Mohammed. It is insulting and in Turkish has been degraded to "Giaour." Here it means black, as Hafiz of Shiraz terms a cheek mole "Hindu" i.e. dark-skinned and idolatrous.

[471] Alluding to the travel of Moses (Koran chaps. xviii.) with Al-Khizr (the "evergreen Prophet") who had drunk of the Fountain of Life and enjoyed flourishing and continual youth. Moses is

represented as the external and superficial religionist; the man of outsight; Al-Khizr as the spiritual and illuminated man of insight.

[FM#472] The lynx was used like the lion in Ancient Egypt and the Chita-leopard in India: I have never seen or heard of it in these days.

[473] Arab. “Sukúr,” whence our “Saker” the falcon, not to be confounded with the old Falco Sacer, the Gr. . Falconry which, like all arts, began in Egypt, is an extensive subject throughout Moslem lands. I must refer my readers to “Falconry in the Valley of the Indus” (Van Voorst, 1852) and a long note in Pilgrimage iii. 71.

[474] It was not respectful to pitch their camp within dog-bark.

[475] Easterns attach great importance to softness and smoothness of skin and they are right: a harsh rough epidermis spoils sport with the handsomest woman.

[476] Canticles vii. 8: Hosea xiv. 6.

[477] The mesmeric attraction of like to like.

[478] Arab. “Taswif”=saying “Sauf,” I will do it soon. It is a beautiful word–etymologically.

[479] A very far fetched allusion. The face of the beloved springing from an unbuttoned robe is the moon rising over the camp in the hollow (bat’há).

[480] Arab. “Kasabát” = “canes,” long beads, bugles.

[481] Koran, xcvi. 5.

[482] Both words (masc. and fem.) mean “dear, excellent, highly-prized.” The tale is the Arab form of the European “Patient Griselda” and shows a higher conception of womanly devotion, because Azizah, despite her wearisome weeping, is a girl of high intelligence and Aziz is a vicious zany, weak as water and wilful as wind. The

phenomenon (not rare in life) is explained by the couplet: —

I love my love with an S —
Because he is stupid and not intellectual.

This fond affection of clever women for fools can be explained only by the law of unlikeness which mostly governs sexual unions in physical matters; and its appearance in the story gives novelty and point. Aziz can plead only the violence of his passion which distinguished him as a lover among the mob of men who cannot love anything beyond themselves. And none can pity him for losing a member which he so much abused.

[483] Arab. “Sháhid,” the index, the pointer raised in testimony: the comparison of the Eastern and the Western names is curious.

[484] Musk is one of the perfumes of the Moslem Heaven; and “musky” is much used in verse to signify scented and dark-brown.

[485] Arab. “Mandíl”: these kerchiefs are mostly oblong, the shore sides being worked with gold and coloured silk, and often fringed, while the two others are plain.

[486] Arab. “Rayhání,” of the Ocymum Basilicum or sweet basil: a delicate handwriting, so called from the pen resembling a leaf (?) See vol. i. . [Volume 1, note 229 & 230]

[487] All idiom meaning “something unusual happened.”

[488] An action common in grief and regret: here the lady would show that she sighs for union with her beloved.

[489] Lane (i. 608) has a valuable note on the language of signs, from M. du Vigneau’s “Secretaire Turc,” etc. (Paris, 1688), Baron von Hammer-Purgstall (“Mines de [‘Orient,” No. 1, Vienna, 1809) and Marcel’s “Comes du Cheykh El-Mohdy” (Paris, 1833). It is practiced in Africa as well as in Asia. At Abeokuta in Yoruba a man will send a symbolical letter in the shape of cowries, palm-nuts and other

kernels strung on rice- straw, and sharp wits readily interpret the meaning. A specimen is given in of Miss Tucker's "Abbeokuta; or Sunrise within the Tropics."

[490] Mr. Payne (ii. 227) translates "Hawá al-'Urzí" by "the love of the Beni Udhra, an Arabian tribe famous for the passion and devotion with which love was practiced among them." See Night dclxxxiii. I understand it as "excusable love" which, for want of a better term, is here translated "platonic." It is, however, more like the old "bundling" of Wales and Northern England; and allows all the pleasures but one, the toyings which the French call les plaisirs de la petite ode; a term my dear old friend Fred. Hankey derived from la petite voie. The Afghans know it as "Námzad-bází" or betrothed play (Pilgrimage, ii. 56); the Abyssinians as eye- love; and the Kafirs as Slambuka a Shlabonka, for which see The traveller Delegorgue.

[491] "Turk" in Arabic and Persian poetry means a plunderer, a robber. Thus Hafiz: "Agar án Turk-i-Shirázi ba-dast árad dil-i- márá," If that Shirazi (ah, the Turk!) would deign to take my heart in hand, etc.

[492] Arab. "Názir," a steward or an eye (a "looker"). The idea is borrowed from Al-Hariri (Assemblies, xiii.), and, —

[493] Arab. "Hájib," a groom of the chambers, a chamberlain; also an eyebrow. See Al-Hariri, ibid. xiii. and xxii.

[494] This gesture speaks for itself: it is that of a dyer staining a cloth. The "Sabbágh's" shop is the usual small recess, open to the street and showing pans of various dyes sunk like "dog- laps" in the floor.

[495] The Arab. "Sabt" (from sabata, he kept Sabt) and the Heb. "Sabbath" both mean Saturn's day, Saturday, transferred by some unknown process throughout Christendom to Sunday. The change is one of the most curious in the history of religions. If there be a single command stronger than all others it is "Keep the Saturday holy." It was so kept by the Founder of Christianity; the order was never abrogated and yet most Christians are not aware that Sabbath, or "Sawbath," means Saturn's day, the "Shiyár" of the older Arabs. And

to complete its degradation “Sabbat” in French and German means a criaillerie, a “row,” a disorder, an abominable festival of Hexen (witches). This monstrous absurdity can be explained only by aberrations of sectarian zeal, of party spirit in religion.

[496] The men who cry to prayer. The first was Bilál, the Abyssinian slave bought and manumitted by Abu Bakr. His simple cry was “I testify there is no Iláh (god) but Allah (God)! Come ye to prayers!” Caliph Omar, with the Prophet’s permission, added, “I testify that Mohammed is the Apostle of Allah.” The prayer-cry which is beautiful and human, contrasting pleasantly with the brazen clang of the bell. now is

Allah is Almighty (bis).
I declare no god is there but Allah (bis).
Hie ye to Rogation (Hayya=halumma).
Hie ye to Salvation (Faláh=prosperity, Paradise).
(“Hie ye to Edification,” a Shi’ah adjunct).
Prayer is better than sleep (in the morning, also bis).
No god is there but Allah

This prayer call is similarly worded and differently pronounced and intoned throughout Al-Islam.

[497] i.e. a graceful youth of Al-Hijaz, the Moslem Holy Land, whose “sons” claim especial privileges.

[498] Arab. “harf”= a letter, as we should say a syllable.

[499] She uses the masculine “fatá,” in order to make the question more mysterious.

[500] The fountain-bowl is often ornamented by a rude mosaic of black and white marble with enlivenments of red stone or tile in complicated patterns.

[501] Arab. “Kubád” = shaddock (citrus decumana): the huge orange which Captain Shaddock brought from the West Indies; it is the

Anglo-Indian pompelmoose, vulg. pummelo. An excellent bitter is made out of the rind steeped in spirits. Citronworts came from India whence they spread throughout the tropics: they were first introduced into Europe by the heroic Joam de Castro and planted in his garden at Cintra where their descendants are still seen.

[502] Arab. “Bakláwah,” Turk. “Baklává,” a kind of pastry with blanched almonds bruised small between layers of dough, baked in the oven and cut into lozenges. It is still common

[503] Her just fear was that the young woman might prove “too clever by half” for her simpleton cousin.

[504] The curse is pregnant with meaning. On Judgment-day the righteous shall arise with their faces shining gloriously: hence the blessing, “Bayyaz’ Allaho wajh-ak” (=Allah whiten thy countenance!). But the wicked shall appear with faces scorched black and deformed by horror (Koran xxiv.): hence “God blacken thy brow!” I may observe that Easterns curse, the curse being everywhere the language of excited destructiveness; but only Westerns, and these chiefly English, swear, a practice utterly meaningless. “Damn it” without specifying what the “it” is, sounds like the speech of a naughty child anxious only to use a “wicked word.” “Damn you!” is intelligible all the world over. It has given rise to “les goddams” in France, “Godámes” in the Brazil and “Gotáma” amongst the Somal of Eastern Africa, who learn it in Aden,

[505] Arab. “Zardah,” usually rice dressed with saffron and honey, from Pers. “Zard,” saffron, yellow. See Night dcxii.

[506] Vulgarly called “knuckle-bone,” concerning which I shall have something to say.

[507] A bit of wood used in the children’s game called “Táb” which resembles our tip-cat (Lane M. E. chaps. xvii.).

[508] Arab. “Balah,” the unripened date, which is considered a laxative

and eaten in hot weather.

[509] Lane (i. 611), quoting Al-Kazwíní, notes that the date- stone is called “Nawá” (dim. “Nawáyah”) which also means distance, absence, severance. Thus the lady threatens to cast off her greedy and sleepy lover.

[510] The pad of the carob-bean which changes little after being plucked is an emblem of constancy.

[511] This dirham=48 grains avoir.

[512] The weight would be round: also “Hadíd” (=iron) means sharp or piercing (Koran chaps. Vi]. 21). The double “swear” is intended to be very serious. Moreover iron conjures away fiends: when a water-spout or a sand-devil (called Shaytán also in Arabia) approaches, you point the index at the Jinn and say, “Iron, O thou ill-omened one!” Amongst the Ancient Egyptians the metal was ill- omened being the bones of Typhon, 80 here, possibly, we have an instance of early homœopathy — similia similibus.

[513] Probably fermented to a kind of wine. The insipid fruit (Unnáb) which looks like an apple in miniature, is much used in stews, etc. It is the fruit (Nabak classically Nabik) of Rhamnus Nabeca (or Sidrat) also termed Zizyphus Jujuba, seu Spina Christi because fabled to have formed the crown of thorns: in the English market this plum is called Chinese Japonica. I have described it in Pilgrimage ii. 205, and have noticed the infusion of the leaves for washing the dead (ibid. ii. 105): this is especially the use of the “Ber” in India, where the leaves are superstitiously held peculiarly pure. Our dictionaries translate “Sidr” by “Lote-tree”; and no wonder that believers in Homeric writ feel their bile aroused by so poor a realisation of the glorious myth. The Homerids probably alluded to Hashish or Bhang.

[514] Arab. “Azrár”: the open collar of the Saub (“Tobe”) or long loose dress is symptomatic. The Eastern button is on the same principle as ours (both having taken the place of the classical fibula); but the Moslem affects a loop (like those to which we attach our “frogs”)

and utterly ignores a button-hole.

[515] Alluding to the ceremonious circumambulation of the Holy House at Meccah: a notable irreverence worthy of Kneph-town (Canopus).

[516] The ear-drop is the penis and the anklet its crown of glory.

[517] Equivalent to our "Alas! Alas!" which, by the by, no one ever says. "Awah," like "Yauh," is now a woman's word although used by Al-Hariri (Assembly of Basrah) and so Al-awwáh=one who cries from grief "Awáh." A favourite conversational form is "Yehh" with the aspirate exasperated, but it is an expression of astonishment rather than sorrow. It enters into Europe travel-books.

[518] In the text "burst her gall-bladder."

[519] The death of Azizah is told with true Arab pathos and simplicity: it still draws tear. *from the eyes of the Badawi, and I never read it without a "lump in the throat."

[520] Arab. "Inshallah bukra!" a universal saying which is the horror of travellers.

[521] I have explained "Nu'uman's flower" as the anemone which in Grecised Arabic is "Anúmiyá." Here they are strewed over the tomb; often the flowers are planted in a small bed of mould sunk in the upper surface.

[522] Arab. "Barzakh" lit. a bar, a partition: in the Koran (chapts. xxiii. and xxxv.) the space or the place between death and resurrection where souls are stowed away. It corresponds after a fashion with the classical Hades and the Limbus (Limbo) of Christendom, e.g.. Limbus patrum, infantum, fatuorum. But it must not be confounded with Al-A'aráf, The Moslem purgatory.

[523] Arab. "Zukák al-Nakíb," the latter word has been explained as a chief, leader, head man.

[524] Moslems never stand up at such times, for a spray of urine would make their clothes ceremonially impure: hence the scrupulous will break up with stick or knife the hard ground in front of them. A certain pilgrim was reported to have made this blunder which is hardly possible in Moslem dress. A high personage once asked me if it was true that he killed a man who caught him in a standing position; and I found to my surprise that the absurd scandal was already twenty years old. After urinating the Moslem wipes the os penis with one to three bits of stone, clay or handfuls of earth, and he must perform Wuzu before he can pray. Tournefort (Voyage au Levant iii. 335) tells a pleasant story of certain Christians at Constantinople who powdered with "Poivre-d'Inde" the stones in a wall where the Moslems were in the habit of rubbing the os penis by way of wiping The same author (ii. 336) strongly recommends a translation of Rabelais' Torcheculative chapter (Lib i., chaps. 13) for the benefit of Mohammedans.

[525] Arab. "Nuhás ahmar," lit. red brass.

[526] The cup is that between the lady's legs.

[527] A play upon "Sák" = calf, or leg, and "Sákí," a cup- bearer. The going round (Tawáf) and the running (Sa'i) allude to the circumambulation of the Ka'abah, and the running between Mount Safá and Marwah (Pilgrimage ii. 58, and iii. 343). A religious Moslem would hold the allusion highly irreverent.

[528] Lane (i. 614) never saw a woman wearing such kerchief which is deshabille. It is either spread over the head or twisted turband-wise.

[529] The "Kasabah" was about two fathoms of long measure, and sometimes 12 ½ feet; but the length has been reduced.

[530] "Bat and ball," or hockey on horseback (Polo) is one of the earliest Persian games as shown by every illustrated copy of Firdausi's "Shahnámeh." This game was played with a Kurrah or small hand-ball and a long thin bat crooked at the end called in Persian Chaugán and in Arabic Saulaján. Another sense of the word

is given in the Burhán-i-Káti translated by Vullers (Lex. Persico-Latinum), a large bandy with bent head to which is hung an iron ball, also called Kaukabah (our "morning-star") and like the umbrella it denotes the grandees of the court. The same Kaukabah particularly distinguished one of the Marquesses of Waterford. This Polo corresponds with the folliculus, the pallone, the baloun-game (moyen âge) of Europe, where the horse is not such a companion of man; and whereof the classics sang: —

Folle decet pueros ludere, folle senes.

In these days we should spell otherwise the "folle" of seniors playing at the ball or lawn-tennis.

[531] "Dalíl" means a guide; ``'Dalílah," a woman who misguides, a bawd. See the Tale of Dalílah the Crafty, Night dcxcviii.

[532] i.e. she was a martyr.

[533] Arab. "Ghashím" a popular and insulting term, our "Johnny Raw." Its use is shown in Pilgrimage i. 110.

[534] Bathers pay on leaving the Hammam; all enter without paying.

[535] i.e. she swore him upon his sword and upon the Koran: a loaf of bread is sometimes added. See Lane (i. 615).

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

VOLUME III.

Inscribed to the Memory
of
A Friend
Who
During A Friendship of Twenty-Six Years
Ever Showed Me The Most
Unwearied Kindness,
Richard Monckton Milnes

Baron Houghton.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

The Tale of King Omar Bin Al-Nu’uman and His Sons Sharrkan and Zau Al-Makan (cont)

When it was the One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Night

Shahrazad continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Aziz pursued to Taj al-Muluk: Then I entered the flower garden and made for the pavilion, where I found the daughter of Dalilah the Wily One, sitting with head on knee and hand to cheek. Her colour was changed and her eyes were sunken; but, when she saw me, she exclaimed, “Praised be Allah for thy safety!” And she was minded to rise but fell down for joy. I was abashed before her and hung my head; presently, however, I went up to her and kissed her and asked, “How knewest thou that I should come to thee this very night?” She answered, “I knew it not! By Allah, this whole year past I have not tasted the taste of sleep, but have watched through every night, expecting thee; and such hath been my case since the day thou wentest out from me and I gave thee the new suit of clothes, and thou promisedst me to go to the Hammam and to come back! So I sat awaiting thee that night and a second night and a third night; but thou camest not till after so great delay, and I ever expecting thy coming; for this is lovers’ way. And now I would have thee tell me what hath been the cause of thine absence from me the past year long?” So I told her. And when she knew that I was married, her colour waxed yellow, and I added, “I have come to thee this night but I must leave thee before day.” Quoth she, “Doth it not suffice her that she tricked thee into marrying her and kept thee prisoner with her a whole year, but she must also make thee swear by the oath of divorce, that thou wilt return to her on the same night before morning, and not allow thee to divert thyself with thy mother or me, nor suffer thee to pass one night with either of us, away from her? How then must it be with one from whom thou hast been absent a full year, and I knew thee before she did? But Allah have mercy on thy cousin Azizah, for there befel her what never befel any and she bore what none other ever bore and she died by thy ill usage; yet ’twas she who protected thee against me. Indeed, I thought thou didst love me, so I let thee take thine own way; else had I not suffered thee to go safe in a sound skin, when I had it in my power to clap thee in jail and even to slay thee." Then she wept with sore weeping and waxed wroth and shuddered in my face with skin bristling[1] and looked at me with furious eyes. When I saw her in this case I was terrified at her and my side muscles trembled and quivered, for she was like a dreadful she Ghul, an ogress in ire, and I like a bean over the fire. Then said she, "Thou art of no use to me, now thou art married and hast a child; nor art thou any longer fit for my company; I care only for bachelors and not for married men:[2] these profit us nothing Thou hast sold me for yonder stinking armful; but, by Allah, I will make the whore's heart ache for thee, and thou shalt not live either for me or for her!" Then she cried a loud cry and, ere I could think, up came the slave girls and threw me on the ground; and when I was helpless under their hands she rose and, taking a knife, said, "I will cut thy throat as they slaughter he goats; and that will be less than thy desert, for thy doings to me and the daughter of thy uncle before me." When I looked to my life and found myself at the mercy of her slave women, with my cheeks dust soiled, and saw her sharpen the knife, I made sure of death. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Twenty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan thus continued his tale to Zau al-Makan: Then quoth the youth Aziz to Taj al-Muluk, Now when I found my life at the mercy of her slave women with my cheeks dust soiled, and I saw her sharpen the knife, I made sure of death and cried out to her for mercy. But she only redoubled in ferocity and ordered the slave girls to pinion my hands behind me, which they did; and, throwing me on my back, she seated herself on my middle and held down my head. Then two of them came up and squatted on my shin bones, whilst other two grasped my hands and arms; and she summoned a third pair and bade them beat me. So they beat me till I fainted and my voice failed. When I revived, I said to myself, " 'Twere easier and better for me to have my gullet slit than to be beaten on this wise!" And I remembered the words of my cousin, and how she used to say to me, "Allah, keep thee from her mischief!"; and I shrieked and wept till my voice failed and I remained without power to breathe or to move. Then she again whetted the knife and said to the slave girls, “Uncover him.” Upon this the Lord inspired me to repeat to her the two phrases my cousin had taught me, and had bequeathed to me, and I said, “O my lady, dost thou not know that Faith is fair, Unfaith is foul?” When she heard this, she cried out and said, “Allah pity thee, Azizah, and give thee Paradise in exchange for thy wasted youth! By Allah, of a truth she served thee in her life time and after her death, and now she hath saved thee alive out of my hands with these two saws. Nevertheless, I cannot by any means leave thee thus, but needs must I set my mark on thee, to spite yonder brazen faced piece, who hath kept thee from me.” There upon she called out to the slave women and bade them bind my feet with cords and then said to them, “Take seat on him!” They did her bidding, upon which she arose and fetched a pan of copper and hung it over the brazier and poured into it oil of sesame, in which she fried cheese.[3] Then she came up to me (and I still insensible) and, unfastening my bag trousers, tied a cord round my testicles and, giving it to two of her women, bade them trawl at it. They did so, and I swooned away and was for excess of pain in a world other than this. Then she came with a razor of steel and cut off my member masculine,[4] so that I remained like a woman: after which she seared the wound with the boiling and rubbed it with a powder, and I the while unconscious. Now when I came to myself, the blood had stopped; so she bade the slave girls unbind me and made me drink a cup of wine. Then said she to me, “Go now to her whom thou hast married and who grudged me a single night, and the mercy of Allah be on thy cousin Azizah, who saved thy life and never told her secret love! Indeed, haddest thou not repeated those words to me, I had surely slit thy weasand. Go forth this instant to whom thou wilt, for I needed naught of thee save what I have just cut off; and now I have no part in thee, nor have I any further want of thee or care for thee. So begone about thy business and rub thy head[5] and implore mercy for the daughter of thine uncle!” Thereupon she kicked me with her foot and I rose, hardly able to walk; and I went, little by little, till I came to the door of our house. I saw it was open, so I threw myself within it and fell down in a fainting fit; whereupon my wife came out and lifting me up, carried me into the saloon and assured herself that I had become like a woman. Then I fell into a sleep and a deep sleep; and when I awoke, I found myself thrown down at the garden gate, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan pursued to King Zau al-Makan, The youth Aziz thus continued his story to Taj al-Muluk: When I awoke and found myself thrown down at the garden gate, I rose, groaning for pain and misery, and made my way to our home and entering, I came upon my mother weeping for me, and saying, "Would I knew, O my son, in what land art thou?" So I drew near and threw myself upon her, and when she looked at me and felt me, she knew that I was ill; for my face was coloured black and tan. Then I thought of my cousin and all the kind offices she had been wont to do me, and I learned when too late that she had truly loved me; so I wept for her and my mother wept also Presently she said to me, "O my son, thy sire is dead." At this my fury against Fate redoubled, and I cried till I fell into a fit. When I came to myself, I looked at the place where my cousin Azizah had been used to sit and shed tears anew, till I all but fainted once more for excess of weeping; and I ceased not to cry and sob and wail till midnight, when my mother said to me, "Thy father hath been dead these ten days." "I shall never think of any one but my cousin Azizah," replied I; "and indeed I deserve all that hath befallen me, for that I neglected her who loved me with love so dear." Asked she, "What hath befallen thee?" So I told her all that had happened and she wept awhile, then she rose and set some matter of meat and drink before me. I ate a little and drank, after which I repeated my story to her, and told her the whole occurrence; whereupon she exclaimed, "Praised be Allah, that she did but this to thee and forbore to slaughter thee!" Then she nursed me and medicined me till I regained my health; and, when my recovery was complete, she said to me, "O my son, I will now bring out to thee that which thy cousin committed to me in trust for thee; for it is thine. She swore me not to give it thee, till I should see thee recalling her to mind and weeping over her and thy connection severed from other than herself; and now I know that these conditions are fulfilled in thee." So she arose, and opening a chest, took out this piece of linen, with the figures of gazelles worked thereon, which I had given to Azizah in time past; and taking it I found written therein these couplets,

“Lady of beauty, say, who taught thee hard and harsh design,
To slay with longing Love’s excess this hapless lover thine?
An thou fain disremember me beyond our parting day, * Allah will know, that thee and thee my memory never shall tyne.
Thou blamest me with bitter speech yet sweetest ’tis to me; *
Wilt generous be and deign one day to show of love a sign?
I had not reckoned Love contained so much of pine and pain; *
And soul distress until I came for thee to pain and pine
Never my heart knew weariness, until that eve I fell * In love wi’ thee, and prostrate fell before those glancing eyne!
My very foes have mercy on my case and moan therefor; * But thou, O heart of Indian steel, all mercy dost decline.
No, never will I be consoled, by Allah, an I die, * Nor yet forget the love of thee though life in ruins lie!”

When I read these couplets, I wept with sore weeping and buffeted my face; then I unfolded the scroll, and there fell from it an other paper. I opened it and behold, I found written therein, ‘Know, O son of my uncle, that I acquit thee of my blood and I beseech Allah to make accord between thee and her whom thou lovest; but if aught befal thee through the daughter of Dalilah the Wily, return thou not to her neither resort to any other woman and patiently bear thine affliction, for were not thy fated life tide a long life, thou hadst perished long ago; but praised be Allah who hath appointed my death day before thine! My peace be upon thee; preserve this cloth with the gazelles herein figured and let it not leave thee, for it was my companion when thou was absent from me;” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Twenty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan pursued to King Zau al-Makan, And the youth Aziz continued to Taj al-Muluk: So I read what my cousin had written and the charge to me which was, “Preserve this cloth with the gazelles and let it not leave thee, for it was my companion when thou west absent from me and, Allah upon thee! if thou chance to fall in with her who worked these gazelles, hold aloof from her and do not let her approach thee nor marry her; and if thou happen not on her and find no way to her, look thou consort not with any of her sex. Know that she who wrought these gazelles worketh every year a gazelle cloth and despatcheth it to far countries, that her report and the beauty of her broidery, which none in the world can match, may be bruited abroad. As for thy beloved, the daughter of Dalilah the Wily, this cloth came to her hand, and she used to ensnare folk with it, showing it to them and saying, ‘I have a sister who wrought this.’ But she lied in so saying, Allah rend her veil! This is my parting counsel; and I have not charged thee with this charge, but because I know[6] that after my death the world will be straitened on thee and, haply, by reason of this, thou wilt leave thy native land and wander in foreign parts, and hearing of her who wrought these figures, thou mayest be minded to fore gather with her. Then wilt thou remember me, when the memory shall not avail thee; nor wilt thou know my worth till after my death. And, lastly, learn that she who wrought the gazelles is the daughter of the King of the Camphor Islands and a lady of the noblest.” Now when I had read that scroll and understood what was written therein, I fell again to weeping, and my mother wept because I wept, and I ceased not to gaze upon it and to shed tears till night fall. I abode in this condition a whole year, at the end of which the merchants, with whom I am in this cafilah, prepared to set out from my native town; and my mother counseled me to equip myself and journey with them, so haply I might be consoled and my sorrow be dispelled, saying, “Take comfort and put away from thee this mourning and travel for a year or two or three, till the caravan return, when perhaps thy breast may be broadened and thy heart heartened.” And she ceased not to persuade me with endearing words, till I provided myself with merchandise and set out with the caravan. But all the time of my wayfaring, my tears have never dried; no, never! and at every halting place where we halt, I open this piece of linen and look on these gazelles and call to mind my cousin Azizah and weep for her as thou hast seen; for indeed she loved me with dearest love and died, oppressed by my unlove. I did her nought but ill and she did me nought but good. When these merchants return from their journey, I shall return with them, by which time I shall have been absent a whole year: yet hath my sorrow waxed greater and my grief and affliction were but increased by my visit to the Islands of Camphor and the Castle of Crystal. Now these islands are seven in number and are ruled by a King, by name Shahriman,[7] who hath a daughter called Dunyá;[8] and I was told that it was she who wrought these gazelles and that this piece in my possession was of her embroidery. When I knew this, my yearning redoubled and I burnt with the slow fire of pining and was drowned in the sea of sad thought; and I wept over myself for that I was become even as a woman, without manly tool like other men, and there was no help for it. From the day of my quitting the Camphor Islands, I have been tearful eyed and heavy hearted, and such hath been my case for a long while and I know not whether it will be given me to return to my native land and die beside my mother or not; for I am sick from eating too much of the world. Thereupon the young merchant wept and groaned and complained and gazed upon the gazelles; whilst the tears rolled down his cheeks in streams and he repeated these two couplets,

"Joy needs shall come," a prattler 'gan to prattle: *
    "Needs cease thy blame!" I was commoved to rattle:
'In time,' quoth he: quoth I ' 'Tis marvellous! *
    Who shall ensure my life, O cold of tattle!'"[9]

And he repeated also these,

"Well Allah weets that since our severance day *
    I've wept till forced to ask of tears a loan:
'Patience! (the blamer cries): thou'lt have her yet!' *
    Quoth I, 'O blamer where may patience wone?'"

Then said he, "This, O King! is my tale: hast thou ever heard one stranger?" So Taj al-Muluk marvelled with great marvel at the young merchant's story, and fire darted into his entrails on hearing the name of the Lady Dunya and her loveliness. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan continued to Zau al-Makan: Now when Taj al-Muluk heard the story of the young merchant, he marvelled with great marvel and fire darted into his entrails on hearing the name of the Lady Dunya who, as he knew, had embroidered the gazelles; and his love and longing hourly grew, so he said to the youth, “By Allah, that hath befallen thee whose like never befel any save thyself, but thou hast a life term appointed, which thou must fulfil; and now I would fain ask of thee a question.” Quoth Aziz, “And what is it?” Quoth he, “Wilt thou tell me how thou sawest the young lady who wrought these gazelles?” Then he, “O my lord, I got me access to her by a sleight and it was this. When I entered her city with the caravan, I went forth and wandered about the garths till I came to a flower garden abounding in trees, whose keeper was a venerable old man, a Shaykh stricken in years. I addressed him, saying, ‘O ancient sir, whose may be this garden?’ and he replied, ‘It belongs to the King’s daughter, the Lady Dunya. We are now beneath her palace and, when she is minded to amuse herself, she openeth the private wicket and walketh in the garden and smelleth the fragrance of the flowers.’ So I said to him, ‘Favour me by allowing me to sit in this garden till she come; haply I may enjoy a sight of her as she passeth.’ The Shaykh answered, ‘There can be no harm in that.’ Thereupon I gave him a dirham or so and said to him, Buy us something to eat.’ He took the money gladly and opened door and, entering himself, admitted me into the garden, where we strolled and ceased not strolling till we reached a pleasant spot in which he bade me sit down and await his going and his returning. Then he brought me somewhat of fruit and, leaving me, disappeared for an hour; but after a while he returned to me bringing a roasted lamb, of which we ate till we had eaten enough, my heart yearning the while for a sight of the lady. Presently, as we sat, the postern opened and the keeper said to me, ‘Rise and hide thee.’ I did so; and behold, a black eunuch put his head out through the garden wicket and asked, ‘O Shaykh, there any one with thee?’ ‘No,’ answered he; and the eunuch said, ‘Shut the garden gate.’ So the keeper shut the gate, and lo! the Lady Dunya came in by the private door. When I saw her, methought the moon had risen above the horizon and was shining; I looked at her a full hour and longed for her as one athirst longeth for water. After a while she withdrew and shut the door; whereupon I left the garden and sought my lodging, knowing that I could not get at her and that I was no man for her, more especially as I was become like a woman, having no manly tool: moreover she was a King's daughter and I but a merchant man; so; how could I have access to the like of her or — to any other woman? Accordingly, when these my companions made ready for the road, I also made preparation and set out with them, and we journeyed towards this city till we arrived at the place ere we met with thee. Thou askedst me and I have answered; and these are my adventures and peace be with thee!" Now when Taj al-Muluk heard that account, fires raged in his bosom and his heart and thought were occupied love for the Lady Dunya; and passion and longing were sore upon him. Then he arose and mounted horse and, taking Aziz with him, returned to his father's capital, where he settled him in a separate house and supplied him with all he needed in the way of meat and drink and dress. Then he left him and returned to his palace, with the tears trickling down his cheeks, for hearing oftentimes standeth instead of seeing and knowing.[10] And he ceased not to be in this state till his father came in to him and finding him wan faced, lean of limb and tearful eyed, knew that something had occurred to chagrin him and said, "O my son, acquaint me with thy case and tell me what hath befallen thee, that thy colour is changed and thy body is wasted. So he told him all that had passed and what tale he had heard of Aziz and the account of the Princess Dunya; and how he had fallen in love of her on hearsay, without having set eyes on her. Quoth his sire, "O my son, she is the daughter of a King whose land is far from ours: so put away this thought and go in to thy mother's palace." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Thirtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan continued to Zau al-Makan: And the father of Taj al-Muluk spake to him on this wise, "O my son, her father is a King whose land is far from ours: so put away this thought and go into thy mother's palace where are five hundred maidens like moons, and whichsoever of them pleaseth thee, take her; or else we will seek for thee in marriage some one of the King's daughters, fairer than the Lady Dunya." Answered Taj al-Muluk, "O my father, I desire none other, for she it is who wrought the gazelles which I saw, and there is no help but that I have her; else I will flee into the world and the waste and I will slay myself for her sake." Then said his father, "Have patience with me, till I send to her sire and demand her in marriage, and win thee thy wish as I did for myself with thy mother. Haply Allah will bring thee to thy desire; and, if her parent will not consent, I will make his kingdom quake under him with an army, whose rear shall be with me whilst its van shall be upon him." Then he sent for the youth Aziz and asked him, "O my son, tell me dost thou know the way to the Camphor Islands?" He answered "Yes"; and the King said, "I desire of thee that thou fare with my Wazir thither." Replied Aziz, "I hear and I obey, O King of the Age!"; where upon the King summoned his Minister and said to him, "Devise me some device, whereby my son's affair may be rightly managed and fare thou forth to the Camphor Islands and demand of their King his daughter in marriage for my son, Taj al-Muluk." The Wazir replied, "Hearkening and obedience." Then Taj al-Muluk returned to his dwelling place and his love and longing redoubled and the delay seemed endless to him; and when the night darkened around him, he wept and sighed and complained and repeated this poetry,

"Dark falls the night: my tears unaided rail * And fiercest
flames of love my heart assail:
Ask thou the nights of me, and they shall tell * An I find aught
to do but weep and wail:
Night long awake, I watch the stars what while * Pour down my
cheeks the tears like dropping hail:
And lone and lorn I'm grown with none to aid; * For kith and kin
the love lost lover fail."

And when he had ended his reciting he swooned away and did not recover his senses till the morning, at which time there came to him one of his father's eunuchs and, standing at his head, summoned him to the King's presence. So he went with him and his father, seeing that his pallor had increased, exhorted him to patience and promised him union with her he loved. Then he equipped Aziz and the Wazir and supplied them with presents; and they set out and fared on day and night till they drew near the Isles of Camphor, where they halted on the banks of a stream, and the Minister despatched a messenger to acquaint the King of his arrival. The messenger hurried forwards and had not been gone more than an hour, before they saw the King's Chamberlains and Emirs advancing towards them, to meet them at a parasang's distance from the city and escort them into the royal presence. They laid their gifts before the King and became his guests for three days. And on the fourth day the Wazir rose and going in to the King, stood between his hands and acquainted him with the object which induced his visit; whereat he was perplexed for an answer inasmuch as his daughter misliked men and disliked marriage. So he bowed his head groundwards awhile, then raised it and calling one of his eunuchs, said to him, "Go to thy mistress, the Lady Dunya, and repeat to her what thou hast heard and the purport of this Wazir's coming." So the eunuch went forth and returning after a time, said to the King, "O King of the Age, when I went in to the Lady Dunya and told her what I had heard, she was wroth with exceeding wrath and rose at me with a staff designing to break my head; so I fled from her, and she said to me 'If my Father force me to wed him, whomsoever I wed I will slay.' Then said her sire to the Wazir and Aziz, "Ye have heard, and now ye know all! So let your King wot of it and give him my salutations and say that my daughter misliketh men and disliketh marriage." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Thirty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that King Shahriman thus addressed the Wazir and Aziz, "Salute your King from me and inform him of what ye have heard, namely that my daughter misliketh marriage." So they turned away unsuccessful and ceased not faring on till they rejoined the King and told him what had passed; whereupon he commanded the chief officers to summon the troops and get them ready for marching and campaigning. But the Wazir said to him, "O my liege Lord, do not thus: the King is not at fault because, when his daughter learnt our business, she sent a message saying, ‘If my father force me to wed, whomsoever I wed I will slay and myself after him.’ So the refusal cometh from her.” When the King heard his Minister’s words he feared for Taj al-Muluk and said, “Verily if I make war on the King of the Camphor Islands and carry off his daughter, she will kill herself and it will avail me naught.” Then he told his son how the case stood, who hearing it said, “O my father, I cannot live without her; so I will go to her and contrive to get at her, even though I die in the attempt, and this only will I do and nothing else.” Asked his father, “How wilt thou go to her?” and he answered, “I will go in the guise of a merchant.”[11] Then said the King, “If thou need must go and there is no help for it, take with thee the Wazir and Aziz.” Then he brought out money from his treasuries and made ready for his son merchandise to the value of an hundred thousand dinars. The two had settled upon this action; and when the dark hours came Taj al-Muluk and Aziz went to Aziz’s lodgings and there passed that night, and the Prince was heart smitten, taking no pleasure in food or in sleep; for melancholy was heavy upon him and he was agitated with longing for his beloved. So he besought the Creator that he would vouch safe to unite him with her and he wept and groaned and wailed and began versifying,

“Union, this severance ended, shall I see some day? * Then shall
  my tears this love lorn lot of me portray.
While night all care forgets I only minded thee, * And thou didst
  gar me wake while all forgetful lay.”

And when his improvising came to an end, he wept with sore weeping and Aziz wept with him, for that he remembered his cousin; and they both ceased not to shed tears till morning dawned, whereupon Taj al-Muluk rose and went to farewell his mother, in travelling dress. She asked him of his case and he repeated the story to her; so she gave him fifty thousand gold pieces and bade him adieu; and, as he fared forth, she put up prayers for his safety and for his union with his lover and his friends. Then he betook himself to his father and asked his leave to depart. The King granted him permission and, presenting him with other fifty thousand dinars, bade set up a tent for him without the city and they pitched a pavilion wherein the travellers abode two days. Then all set out on their journey. Now Taj al-Muluk delighted in the company of Aziz and said to him, “O my brother, henceforth I can never part from thee.” Replied Aziz, “And I am of like mind and fain would I die under thy feet: but, O my brother, my heart is concerned for my mother.” “When we shall have won our wish,” said the Prince, “there will be naught save what is well!” Now the Wazir continued charging Taj al-Muluk to be patient, whilst Aziz entertained him every evening with talk and recited poetry to him and diverted him with histories and anecdotes. And so they fared on diligently night and day for two whole months, till the way became tedious to Taj al-Muluk and the fire of desire redoubled on him; and he broke out,

“The road is lonesome; grow my grief and need, * While on my
breast love fires for ever feed:
Goal of my hopes, sole object of my wish! * By him who moulded
man from drop o’ seed,
I bear such loads of longing for thy love, * Dearest, as weight
of al Shumm Mounts exceed:
O ‘Lady of my World’[12] Love does me die; * No breath of life
is left for life to plead;
But for the union hope that lends me strength, * My weary limbs
were weak this way to speed.”

When he had finished his verses, he wept (and Aziz wept with him) from a wounded heart, till the Minister was moved to pity by their tears and said, “O my lord, be of good cheer and keep thine eyes clear of tears; there will be naught save what is well!” Quoth Taj al-Muluk, “O Wazir, indeed I am weary of the length of the way. Tell me how far we are yet distant from the city.” Quoth Aziz, “But a little way remaineth to us.” Then they continued their journey, cutting across river vales and plains, words and stony wastes, till one night, as Taj al-Muluk was sleeping, he dreamt that his beloved was with him and that he embraced her and pressed her to his bosom; and he awoke quivering, shivering with pain, delirious with emotion, and improvised these verses,

“Dear friend, my tears aye flow these cheeks adown, *
    With longsome pain and pine, my sorrow’s crown:
I plain like keening woman child bereft, *
    And as night falls like widow dove I groan:
An blow the breeze from land where thou cost wone, *
    I find o’er sunburnt earth sweet coolness blown.
Peace be wi’ thee, my love, while zephyr breathes, *
    And cushat flies and turtle makes her moan.”

And when he had ended his versifying, the Wazir came to him and said, “Rejoice; this is a good sign: so be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear, for thou shalt surely compass thy desire.” And Aziz also came to him and exhorted him to patience and applied himself to divert him, talking with him and telling him tales. So they pressed on, marching day and night, other two months, till there appeared to them one day at sunrise some white thing in the distance and Taj al-Muluk said to Aziz, “What is yonder whiteness?” He replied, “O my lord! yonder is the Castle of Crystal and that is the city thou seekest.” At this the Prince rejoiced, and they ceased not faring forwards till they drew near the city and, as they approached it, Taj al-Muluk joyed with exceeding joy, and his care ceased from him. They entered in trader guise, the King’s son being habited as a merchant of importance; and repaired to a great Khan, known as the Merchants’ Lodging. Quoth Taj al-Muluk to Aziz, “Is this the resort of the merchants?”; and quoth he, “Yes; ’tis the Khan wherein I lodged before.” So they alighted there and making their baggage camels kneel, unloaded them and stored their goods in the warehouses.[13] They abode four days for rest; when the Wazir advised that they should hire a large house. To this they assented and they found them a spacious house, fitted up for festivities, where they took up their abode, and the Wazir and Aziz studied to devise some device for Taj al-Muluk, who remained in a state of perplexity, knowing not what to do. Now the Minister could think of nothing but that he should set up as a merchant on ’Change and in the market of fine stuffs; so he turned to the Prince and his companion and said to them, “Know ye that if we tarry here on this wise, assuredly we shall not win our wish nor attain our aim; but a something occurred to me whereby (if Allah please!) we shall find our advantage.” Replied Taj al-Muluk and Aziz, “Do what seemeth good to thee, indeed there is a blessing on the grey beard; more specially on those who, like thyself, are conversant with the conduct of affairs: so tell us what occurreth to thy mind.” Rejoined the Wazir “It is my counsel that we hire thee a shop in the stuff bazar, where thou mayst sit to sell and buy. Every one, great and small, hath need of silken stuffs and other cloths; so if thou patiently abide in thy shop, thine affairs will prosper, Inshallah! more by token as thou art comely of aspect. Make, however, Aziz thy factor and set him within the shop, to hand thee the pieces of cloth and stuffs.” When Taj al-Muluk heard these words, he said, ‘This rede is right and a right pleasant recking.” So he took out a handsome suit of merchant’s weed, and, putting it on, set out for the bazar, followed by his servants, to one of whom he had given a thousand dinars, wherewith to fit up the shop. They ceased not walking till they came to the stuff market, and when the merchants saw Taj al-Muluk’s beauty and grace, they were confounded and went about saying, “Of a truth Rizwán[14] hath opened the gates of Paradise and left them unguarded, so that this youth of passing comeliness hath come forth.” And others, “Peradventure this is one of the angels.” Now when they went in among the traders they asked for the shop of the Overseer of the market and the merchants directed them thereto. So they delayed not to repair thither and to salute him, and he and those who were with him rose to them and seated them and made much of them, because of the Wazir, whom they saw to be a man in years and of reverend aspect; and viewing the youths Aziz and Taj al-Muluk in his company, they said to one another, “Doubtless our Shaykh is the father of these two youths.” Then quoth the Wazir, “Who among you is the Overseer of the market?” “This is he,” replied they; and behold, he came forward and the Wazir observed him narrowly and saw him to be an old man of grave and dignified carriage, with eunuchs and servants and black slaves. The Syndic greeted them with the greeting of friends and was lavish in his attentions to them: then he seated them by his side and asked them, “Have ye any business which we[15] may have the happiness of transacting?” The Minister answered, “Yes; I am an old man, stricken in years, and have with me these two youths, with whom I have travelled through every town and country, entering no great city without tarrying there a full year, that they might take their pleasure in viewing it and come to know its citizens. Now I have visited your town intending to sojourn here for a while; so I want of thee a handsome shop in the best situation, wherein I may establish them, that they may traffic and learn to buy and sell and give and take, whilst they divert themselves with the sight of the place, and be come familiar with the usages of its people.” Quoth the Overseer, “There is no harm in that;” and, looking at the two youths, he was delighted with them and affected them with a warm affection. Now he was a great connoisseur of bewitching glances, preferring the love of boys to that of girls and inclining to the sour rather than the sweet of love. So he said to himself, “This, indeed, is fine game. Glory be to Him who created and fashioned them out of vile water!”[16] and rising stood before them like a servant to do them honour. Then he went out and made ready for them a shop which was in the very midst of the Exchange; nor was there any larger or better in the bazar, for it was spacious and handsomely decorated and fitted with shelves of ivory and ebony wood. After this he delivered the keys to the Wazir, who was dressed as an old merchant, saying, “Take them, O my lord, and Allah make it a blessed abiding place to thy two sons!” The Minister took the keys and the three returning to the Khan where they had alighted, bade the servants transport to the shop all their goods and stuffs. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Thirty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Wazir took the shop keys, he went accompanied by Taj al-Muluk and Aziz to the Khan, and they bade the servants transport to the shop all their goods and stuffs and valuables of which they had great store worth treasures of money. And when all this was duly done, they went to the shop and ordered their stock in trade and slept there that night. As soon as morning morrowed the Wazir took the two young men to the Hammam bath where they washed them clean; and they donned rich dresses and scented themselves with essences and enjoyed themselves to the utmost. Now each of the youths was passing fair to look upon, and in the bath they were even as saith the poet,

“Luck to the Rubber, whose deft hand o’erdies *
    A frame begotten twixt the lymph and light:[17]
He shows the thaumaturgy of his craft, *
    And gathers musk in form of camphor dight.”[18]

After bathing they left; and, when the Overseer heard that they had gone to the Hammam, he sat down to await the twain, and presently they came up to him like two gazelles; their cheeks were reddened by the bath and their eyes were darker than ever; their faces shone and they were as two lustrous moons or two branches fruit laden. Now when he saw them he rose forthright and said to them, “O my sons, may your bath profit you always!”[19] Where upon Taj al-Muluk replied, with the sweetest of speech, “Allah be bountiful to thee, O my father; why didst thou not come with us and bathe in our company?” Then they both bent over his right hand and kissed it and walked before him to the shop, to entreat him honourably and show their respect for him, for that he was Chief of the Merchants and the market, and he had done them kindness in giving them the shop. When he saw their hips quivering as they moved, desire and longing redoubled on him; and he puffed and snorted and he devoured them with his eyes, for he could not contain himself, repeating the while these two couplets,

“Here the heart reads a chapter of devotion pure; *
    Nor reads dispute if Heaven in worship partner take:
No wonder ’tis he trembles walking ‘neath such weight! *
    How much of movement that revolving sphere must
    make.[20] “

Furthermore he said,

“I saw two charmers treading humble earth. *
    Two I must love an tread they on mine eyes.”

When they heard this, they conjured him to enter the bath with them a second time. He could hardly believe his ears and hastening thither, went in with them. The Wazir had not yet left the bath; so when he heard of the Overseer's coming, he came out and meeting him in the middle of the bath hall invited him to enter. He refused, whereupon Taj al-Muluk taking him by the hand walked on one side and Aziz by the other, and carried him into a cabinet; and that impure old man submitted to them, whilst his emotion increased on him. He would have refused, albeit this was what he desired; but the Minister said to him, "They are thy sons; let them wash thee and cleanse thee." "Allah preserve them to thee!" exclaimed the Overseer, "By Allah your coming and the coming of those with you bring down blessing and good luck upon our city!" And he repeated these two couplets,

"Thou camest and green grew the hills anew; *
    And sweetest bloom to the bridegroom threw,
While aloud cried Earth and her earth-borns too *
    'Hail and welcome who comest with grace to endue.'"

They thanked him for this, and Taj al-Muluk ceased not to wash him and to pour water over him and he thought his soul in Paradise. When they had made an end of his service, he blessed them and sat by the side of the Wazir, talking but gazing the while on the youths. Presently, the servants brought them towels, and they dried themselves and donned their dress. Then they went out, and the Minister turned to the Syndic and said to him, "O my lord! verily the bath is the Paradise[21] of this world." Replied the Overseer, "Allah vouchsafe to thee such Paradise, and health to thy sons and guard them from the evil eye! Do ye remember aught that the eloquent have said in praise of the bath.?" Quoth Taj al-Muluk, "I will repeat for thee a pair of couplets;" and he recited,

The life of the bath is the joy of man's life,[22] *
    Save that time is short for us there to bide:
A Heaven where irksome it were to stay; *
    A Hell, delightful at entering-tide."

When he ended his recital, quoth Aziz, “And I also remember two couplets in praise of the bath.” The Overseer said, “Let me hear them,” so he repeated the following,

“A house where flowers from stones of granite grow, *
Seen at its best when hot with living lows:
Thou deem’st it Hell but here, forsooth, is Heaven, *
And some like suns and moons within it show.”

And when he had ended his recital, his verses pleased the Overseer and he wondered at his words and savoured their grace and fecundity and said to them, “By Allah, ye possess both beauty and eloquence. But now listen to me, you twain!” And he began chanting, and recited in song the following verses,

“O joy of Hell and Heaven! whose tormentry *
Enquickens frame and soul with lively gree:
I marvel so delightsome house to view, *
And most when ‘neath it kindled fires I see:
Sojourn of bliss to visitors, withal *
Pools on them pour down tears unceasingly.”

Then his eye-sight roamed and browsed on the gardens of their beauty and he repeated these two couplets,

“I went to the house of the keeper-man; *
He was out, but others to smile began:
I entered his Heaven[23] and then his Hell;[24] *
And I said ‘Bless Málik[25] and bless Rizwán.’ “[26]

When they heard these verses they were charmed, and the Over seer invited them to his house; but they declined and returned to their own place, to rest from the great heat of the bath. So they took their ease there and ate and drank and passed that night in perfect solace and satisfaction, till morning dawned, when they arose from sleep and making their lesser ablution, prayed the dawn- prayer and drank the morning draught.[27] As soon as the sun had risen and the shops and markets opened, they arose and going forth from their place to the bazar opened their shop, which their servants had already furnished, after the handsomest fashion, and had spread with prayer rugs and silken carpets and had placed on the divans a pair of mattresses, each worth an hundred dinars. On every mattress they had disposed a rug of skin fit for a King and edged with a fringe of gold; and a-middlemost the shop stood a third seat still richer, even as the place required. Then Taj al-Muluk sat down on one divan, and Aziz on another, whilst the Wazir seated himself on that in the centre, and the servants stood before them. The city people soon heard of them and crowded about them, so that they sold some of their goods and not a few of their stuffs; for Taj al-Muluk's beauty and loveliness had become the talk of the town. Thus they passed a trifle of time, and every day the people flocked to them and pressed upon them more and more, till the Wazir, after exhorting Taj al-Muluk to keep his secret, commended him to the care of Aziz and went home, that he might commune with himself alone and cast about for some contrivance which might profit them. Meanwhile, the two young men sat talking and Taj al-Muluk said to Aziz, "Haply some one will come from the Lady Dunya." So he ceased not expecting this chance days and nights, but his heart was troubled and he knew neither sleep nor rest; for desire had got the mastery of him, and love and longing were sore upon him, so that he renounced the solace of sleep and abstained from meat and drink; yet ceased he not to be like the moon on the night of fullness. Now one day as he sat in the shop, behold, there came up an ancient woman. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Thirty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Dandan continued to Zau al-Makan: Now one day as Taj al-Muluk sat in his shop, behold, there appeared an ancient woman, who came up to him followed by two slave girls. She ceased not advancing till she stood before the shop of Taj al-Muluk and, observing his symmetry and beauty and loveliness, marvelled at his charms and sweated in her petticoat trousers, exclaiming, "Glory to Him who created thee out of vile water, and made thee a temptation to all beholders!" And she fixed her eyes on him and said, "This is not a mortal, he is none other than an angel deserving the highest respect."[28] Then she drew near and saluted him, whereupon he returned her salute and rose to his feet to receive her and smiled in her face (all this by a hint from Aziz); after which he made her sit down by his side and fanned her with a fan, till she was rested and refreshed. Then she turned to Taj al-Muluk and said, "O my son! O thou who art perfect in bodily gifts and spiritual graces; say me, art thou of this country?" He replied, in voice the sweetest and in tone the pleasantest, "By Allah, O my mistress, I was never in this land during my life till this time, nor do I abide here save by way of diversion." Rejoined she, "May the Granter grant thee all honour and prosperity! And what stuffs hast thou brought with thee? Show me something passing fine; for the beauteous should bring nothing but what is beautiful." When he heard her words, his heart fluttered and he knew not their inner meaning; but Aziz made a sign to him and he replied, "I have everything thou canst desire and especially I have goods that besit none but Kings and King's daughters; so tell me what stuff thou wantest and for whom, that I may show thee what will be fitting for him." This he said, that he might learn the meaning of her words; and she rejoined, "I want a stuff fit for the Princess Dunya, daughter of King Shahriman." Now when the Prince heard the name of his beloved, he joyed with great joy and said to Aziz, "Give me such a parcel." So Aziz brought it and opened it before Taj al-Muluk who said to the old woman, "Select what will suit her; for these goods are to be found only with me." She chose stuffs worth a thousand dinars and asked, "How much is this?"; and she ceased not the while to talk with him and rub what was inside her thighs with the palm of her hand. Answered Taj al-Muluk, "Shall I haggle with the like of thee about this paltry price? Praised be Allah who hath acquainted me with thee!" The old woman rejoined, "Allah's name be upon thee! I commend thy beautiful face to the protection of the Lord of the Daybreak.[29] Beautiful face and eloquent speech! Happy she who lieth in thy bosom and claspeth thy waist in her arms and enjoyeth thy youth, especially if she be beautiful and lovely like thyself!" At this, Taj al-Muluk laughed till he fell on his back and said to himself, "O Thou who fulfillest desires human by means of pimping old women! They are the true fulfillers of desires!" Then she asked, “O my son, what is thy name?” and he answered, “My name is Taj al-Muluk, the Crown of Kings.” Quoth she, “This is indeed a name of Kings and King’s sons and thou art clad in merchant’s clothes.” Quoth Aziz, “for the love his parents and family bore him and for the value they set on him, they named him thus.” Replied the old woman, “Thou sayest sooth, Allah guard you both from the evil eye and the envious, though hearts be broken by your charms!” Then she took the stuffs and went her way; but she was amazed at his beauty and stature and symmetry, and she ceased not going till she found the Lady Dunya and said to her, “O my mistress! I have brought thee some handsome stuffs.” Quoth the Princess, “Show me that same”; and the old woman, “O apple of my eye, here it is, turn it over and examine it.” Now when the Princess looked at it she was amazed and said, “O my nurse, this is indeed handsome stuff: I have never seen its like in our city.” “O my lady,” replied the old nurse, “he who sold it me is handsomer still. It would seem as if Rizwan had left the gates of Paradise open in his carelessness, and as if the youth who sold me this stuff had come bodily out of Heaven. I would he might sleep this night with thee and might lie between thy breasts.[30] He hath come to thy city with these precious stuffs for amusement’s sake, and he is a temptation to all who set eyes on him.” The Princess laughed at her words and said, “Allah afflict thee, O pernicious old hag! Thou dotest and there is no sense left in thee.” Presently, she resumed, “Give me the stuff that I may look at it anew.” So she gave it her and she took it again and saw that its size was small and its value great. It pleased her, for she had never in her life seen its like, and she exclaimed, “By Allah, this is a handsome stuff!” Answered the old woman, “O my lady, by Allah! if thou sawest its owner thou wouldst know him for the handsomest man on the face of the earth.” Quoth the Lady Dunya, “Didst thou ask him if he had any need, that he might tell us and we might satisfy it?” But the nurse shook her head and said, “The Lord keep thy sagacity! By Allah, he hath a want, may thy skill not fail thee. What! is any man free from wants?” Rejoined the Princess, “Go back to him and salute him and say to him, ‘Our land and town are honoured by thy visit and, if thou have any need, we will fulfil it to thee, on our head and eyes.’ “ So the old woman at once returned to Taj al-Muluk, and when he saw her his heart jumped for joy and gladness and he rose to his feet before her and, taking her hand, seated her by his side. As soon as she was rested, she told him what Princess Dunya had said; and he on hearing it joyed with exceeding joy; his breast dilated to the full; gladness entered his heart and he said to himself, "Verily, I have my need." Then he asked the old woman, "Haply thou wilt take her a message from me and bring me her answer?"; and she answered, "I hear and I obey." So he said to Aziz, "Bring me ink-case and paper and a brazen pen." And when Aziz brought him what he sought, he hent the pen in hand and wrote these lines of poetry,

"I write to thee, O fondest hope! a writ *
    Of grief that severance on my soul cloth lay:
Saith its first line, 'Within my heart is [owe!' *
    Its second, 'Love and Longing on me prey!'
Its third, 'My patience waste is, fades my life!' *
    Its fourth, 'Naught shall my pain and pine allay!'
Its fifth, 'When shall mine eyes enjoy thy sight?' *
    Its sixth, 'Say, when shall dawn our meeting-day?'"

And, lastly, by way of subscription he wrote these words. "This letter is from the captive of captivation * prisoned in the hold of longing expectation * wherefrom is no emancipation * but in anticipation and intercourse and in unification * after absence and separation. * For from the severance of friends he loveth so fain * he suffereth love pangs and pining pain. *" Then his tears rushed out, and he indited these two couplets,

"I write thee, love, the while my tears pour down; *
    Nor cease they ever pouring thick and fleet:
Yet I despair not of my God, whose grace *
    Haply some day will grant us twain to meet."

Then he folded the letter[31] and sealed it with his signet ring and gave it to the old woman, saying, "Carry it to the Lady Dunya." Quoth she, "To hear is to obey;" whereupon he gave her a thousand dinars and said to her, "O my mother! accept this gift from me as a token of my affection." She took both from him and blessed him and went her way and never stinted walking till she went in to the Lady Dunya. Now when the Princess saw her she said to her, "O my nurse, what is it he asketh of need that we may fulfil his wish to him?" Replied the old woman, "O my lady, he sendeth thee this letter by me, and I know not what is in it;" and handed it to her. Then the Princess took the letter and read it; and when she understood it, she exclaimed, "Whence cometh and whither goeth this merchant man that he durst address such a letter to me?" And she slapt her face saying, "'Whence are we that we should come to shopkeeping? Awah! Awah! By the lord, but that I fear Almighty Allah I had slain him;" and she added, "Yea, I had crucified[32] him over his shop door!" Asked the old woman, "What is in this letter to vex thy heart and move thy wrath on this wise? Doth it contain a complaint of oppression or demand for the price of the stuff?" Answered the Princess, "Woe to thee! There is none of this in it, naught but words of love and endearment. This is all through thee: otherwise whence should this Satan[33] know me?" Rejoined the old woman, "o my lady, thou sittest in thy high palace and none may have access to thee; no, not even the birds of the air. Allah keep thee, and keep thy youth from blame and reproach! Thou needest not care for the barking of dogs, for thou art a Princess, the daughter of a King. Be not wroth with me that I brought thee this letter, knowing not what was in it; but I opine that thou send him an answer and threaten him with death and forbid him this foolish talk; surely he will abstain and not do the like again." Quoth the Lady Dunya, "I fear that, if I write to him, he will desire me the more." The old woman returned "When he heareth thy threats and promise of punishment, he will desist from his persistence." She cried, "Here with the ink case and paper and brazen pen;" and when they brought them she wrote these couplets,

"O thou who for thy wakeful nights wouldst claim my love
to boon, * For what of pining thou must feel and
tribulation!
Dost thou, fond fool and proud of sprite, seek meeting with the
Moon? * Say, did man ever win his wish to take in arms the
Moon?

I counsel thee, from soul cast out the wish that dwells
therein, * And cut that short which threatens thee with
sore risk oversoon:
An to such talk thou dare return, I bid thee to expect *
Fro' me such awful penalty as suiteth froward loon:
I swear by Him who moulded man from gout of clotted
blood,[34] * Who lit the Sun to shine by day and lit
for night the moon,
An thou return to mention that thou spakest in thy pride, *
Upon a cross of tree for boon I'll have thee crucified!"

Then she folded the letter and handing it to the old woman said, "Give him this and say him, 'Cease from this talk!' " "Hearkening and obedience," replied she, and taking the letter with joy, returned to her own house, where she passed the night; and when morning dawned she betook herself to the shop of Taj al-Muluk whom she found expecting her. When he saw her, he was ready to fly[35] for delight, and when she came up to him, he stood to her on his feet and seated her by his side. Then she brought out the letter and gave it to him, saying, "Read what is in this;" adding "When Princess Dunya read thy letter she was angry; but I coaxed her and jested with her till I made her laugh, and she had pity on thee and she hath returned thee an answer." He thanked her for her kindness and bade Aziz give her a thousand gold pieces: then he perused the letter and understanding it fell to weeping a weeping so sore that the old woman's heart was moved to ruth for him, and his tears and complaints were grievous to her. Presently she asked him, "O my son, what is there in this letter to make thee weep?" Answered he, "She hath threatened me with death and crucifixion and she forbiddeth me to write to her, but if I write not my death were better than my life. So take thou my answer to the letter and let her work her will." Rejoined the old woman, "By the life of thy youth, needs must I risk my existence for thee, that I may bring thee to thy desire and help thee to win what thou hast at heart!" And Taj al-Muluk said, "Whatever thou dost, I will requite thee for it and do thou weigh it in the scales of thy judgement, for thou art experienced in managing matters, and skilled in reading the chapters of the book of intrigue: all hard matters to thee are easy doings; and Allah can bring about everything.” Then he took a sheet of paper and wrote thereon these improvised couplets,

“Yestre’en my love with slaughter menaced me, *
    But sweet were slaughter and Death’s foreordainčd:
Yes, Death is sweet for lover doomed to bear *
    Long life, rejected, injured and constrainčd:
By Allah! deign to visit friendless friend! *
    Thy thrall am I and like a thrall I’m chainčd:
Mercy, O lady mine, for loving thee! *
    Who loveth noble soul should be assainčd.”

Then he sighed heavy sighs and wept till the old woman wept also and presently taking the letter she said to him, “Be of good cheer and cool eyes and clear; for needs must I bring thee to thy wish.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Thirty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Taj al-Muluk wept the old woman said to him, “Be of good cheer and cool eyes and clear; for needs must I bring thee to thy wish.” Then she rose and left him on coals of fire; and returned to Princess Dunya, whom she found still showing on her changed face rage at Taj al-Muluk’s letter. So she gave her his second letter, whereat her wrath redoubled and she said, “Did I not say he would desire us the more?” Replied the old woman, “What thing is this dog that he should aspire to thee?” Quoth the Princess, “Go back to him and tell him that, if he write me after this, I will cut off his head.” Quoth the nurse, “Write these words in a letter and I will take it to him that his fear may be the greater.” So she took a sheet of paper and wrote thereon these couplets,

“Ho thou, who past and bygone risks regardest with uncare! *
    Thou who to win thy meeting prize dost overslowly fare!
In pride of spirit thinkest thou to win the star Soha[36] ? *
    Albe thou may not reach the Moon which shines through
    upper air?

How darest thou expect to win my favours, hope to clip *
Upon a lover’s burning breast my lance like shape and rare?
Leave this thy purpose lest my wrath come down on thee some
day, * A day of wrath shall hoary turn the partings of
thy hair!”

Then she folded the letter and gave it to the old woman, who took it and repaired to Taj al-Muluk. And when he saw her, he rose to his feet and exclaimed, “May Allah never bereave me of the blessing of thy coming!” Quoth she, “Take the answer to thy letter.” He took it and reading it, wept with sore weeping and said, “I long for some one to slay me at this moment and send me to my rest, for indeed death were easier to me than this my state!” Then he took ink case and pen and paper and wrote a letter containing these two couplets,

“O hope of me! pursue me not with rigour and disdain: *
Deign thou to visit lover wight in love of thee is drowned;
Deem not a life so deeply wronged I longer will endure; * My soul
for severance from my friend divorced this frame unsound.”

Lastly he folded the letter and handed it to the old woman, saying, “Be not angry with me, though I have wearied thee to no purpose.” And he bade Aziz give her other thousand ducats, saying, “O my mother, needs must this letter result in perfect union or utter severance.” Replied she, “O my son, by Allah, I desire nought but thy weal; and it is my object that she be thine, for indeed thou art the shining moon, and she the rising sun.[37] If I do not bring you together, there is no profit in my existence; and I have lived my life till I have reached the age of ninety years in the practice of wile and intrigue; so how should I fail to unite two lovers, though in defiance of right and law?” Then she took leave of him having comforted his heart, and ceased not walking till she went in to the Lady Dunya. Now she had hidden the letter in her hair: so when she sat down by the Princess she rubbed her head and said, “O my lady, maybe thou wilt untwist my hair knot, for it is a time since I went to the Hammam.” The King’s daughter bared her arms to the elbows and, letting down the old woman’s locks, began to loose the knot of back hair; when out dropped the letter and the Lady Dunya seeing it, asked, "What is this paper?" Quoth the nurse, "As I sat in the merchant's shop, this paper must have stuck to me: give it to me that I may return it to him; possibly it containeth some account whereof he hath need." But the Princess opened it and read it and, when she understood it, she cried out, "This is one of thy manifold tricks, and hadst thou not reared me, I would lay violent hands on thee this moment! Verily Allah hath afflicted me with this merchant: but all that hath befallen me with him is on thy head. I know not from what country this one can have come: no man but he would venture to affront me thus, and I fear lest this my case get abroad, more by token as it concerneth one who is neither of my kin nor of my peers." Rejoined the old woman "None would dare speak of this for fear of thy wrath and for awe of thy sire; so there can be no harm in sending him an answer." Quoth the Princess, "O my nurse, verily this one is a perfect Satan! How durst he use such language to me and not dread the Sultan's rage. Indeed, I am perplexed about his case: if I order him to be put to death, it were unjust; and if I leave him alive his boldness will increase." Quoth the old woman, "Come, write him a letter; it may be he will desist in dread." So she called for paper and ink case and pen and wrote these couplets,

"Thy folly drives thee on though long I chid, *
    Writing in verse: how long shall I forbid?
For all forbiddal thou persistest more, *
    And my sole grace it is to keep it hid;
Then hide thy love nor ever dare reveal, *
    For an thou speak, of thee I'll soon be rid
If to thy silly speech thou turn anew, *
    Ravens shall croak for thee the wold amid:
And Death shall come and beat thee down ere long, *
    Put out of sight and bury 'neath an earthen lid:
Thy folk, fond fool! thou'lt leave for thee to mourn, *
    And through their lives to sorrow all forlorn."

Then she folded the letter and committed it to the old woman, who took it and returning to Taj al-Muluk, gave it to him. When he read it, he knew that the Princess was hard hearted and that he should not win access to her; so he complained of his case to the Wazir and besought his counsel. Quoth the Minister, “Know thou that naught will profit thee save that thou write to her and invoke the retribution of Heaven upon her.” And quoth the Prince, “O my brother, O Aziz, do thou write to her as if my tongue spake, according to thy knowledge.” So Aziz took a paper and wrote these couplets,

“By the Five Shaykhs,[38] O Lord, I pray deliver me; *
    Let her for whom I suffer bear like misery:
Thou knowest how I fry in flaming lowe of love, *
    While she I love hath naught of ruth or clemency:
How long shall I, despite my pain, her feelings spare? *
    How long shall she wreak tyranny o’er weakling me?
In pains of never ceasing death I ever grieve: *
    O Lord, deign aid; none other helping hand I see.
How fain would I forget her and forget her love! *
    But how forget when Love garred Patience death to dree?
O thou who hinderest Love to ‘joy fair meeting tide *
    Say! art thou safe from Time and Fortune’s jealousy?
Art thou not glad and blest with happy life, while I *
    From folk and country for thy love am doomed flee?”

Then Aziz folded the letter and gave it to Taj al-Muluk, who read it and was pleased with it. So he handed it to the old woman, who took it and went in with it to Princess Dunya. But when she read it and mastered the meaning thereof, she was enraged with great rage and said, “All that hath befallen me cometh by means of this ill omened old woman!” Then she cried out to the damsels and eunuchs, saying, “Seize this old hag, this accursed trickstress and beat her with your slippers!” So they came down upon her till she swooned away; and, when she came to herself, the Princess said to her, “By the Lord! O wicked old woman, did I not fear Almighty Allah, I would slay thee.” Then quoth she to them, “Beat her again” and they did so till she fainted a second time, whereupon she bade them drag her forth and throw her outside the palace door. So they dragged her along on her face and threw her down before the gate; but as soon as she revived she got up from the ground and, walking and sitting by turns, made her way home. There she passed the night till morning, when she arose and went to Taj al-Muluk and told them all that had occurred. He was distressed at this grievous news and said, "O my mother, hard indeed to us is that which hath befallen thee, but all things are according to fate and man's lot." Replied she, "Be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear, for I will not give over striving till I have brought thee and her together, and made thee enjoy this wanton who hath burnt my skin with beating." Asked the Prince "Tell me what caused her to hate men;" and the old woman answered, "It arose from what she saw in a dream." "And what was this dream?" "'Twas this: one night, as she lay asleep, she saw a fowler spread his net upon the ground and scatter wheat grain round it. Then he sat down hard by, and not a bird in the neighbourhood but flocked to his toils. Amongst the rest she beheld a pair of pigeons, male and female; and, whilst she was watching the net, behold, the male bird's foot caught in the meshes and he began to struggle; whereupon all the other birds took fright and flew away. But presently his mate came back and hovered over him, then alighted on the toils unobserved by the fowler, and fell to pecking with her beak and pulling at the mesh in which the male bird's foot was tangled, till she released the toes and they flew away together. Then the fowler came up, mended his net and seated himself afar off. After an hour or so the birds flew back and the female pigeon was caught in the net; whereupon all the other birds took fright and scurried away; and the male pigeon fled with the rest and did not return to his mate, but the fowler came up and took the female pigeon and cut her throat. The Princess awoke, troubled by her dream, and said, 'All males are like this pigeon, worthless creatures: and men in general lack grace and goodness to women.'" When the old woman had ended her story, the Prince said to her, "O my mother, I desire to have one look at her, though it be my death; so do thou contrive me some contrivance for seeing her." She replied, "Know then that she hath under her palace windows a garden wherein she taketh her pleasure; and thither she resorteth once in every month by the private door. After ten days, the time of her thus going forth to divert herself will arrive; so when she is about to visit the garden, I will come and tell thee, that thou mayst go thither and meet her. And look thou leave not the garden, for haply, an she see thy beauty and Loveliness, her heart will be taken with love of thee, and love is the most potent means of union." He said, "I hear and obey;" whereupon he and Aziz arose and left the shop and, taking the old woman with them, showed her the place where they lodged. Then said Taj al- Muluk to Aziz, "O my brother, I have no need of the shop now, having fulfilled my purpose of it; so I give it to thee with all that is in it; for that thou hast come abroad with me and hast left thy native land for my sake." Aziz accepted his gift and then they sat conversing, while the Prince questioned him of the strange adventures which had befallen him, and his companion acquainted him with the particulars thereof. Presently, they went to the Wazir and, reporting to him Taj al-Muluk's purpose, asked him, "What is to be done?" "Let us go to the garden," answered he. So each and every donned richest clothes and went forth, followed by three white slaves to the garden, which they found thick with thickets and railing its rills. When they saw the keeper sitting at the gate, they saluted him with the Salam and he returned their salute. Then the Wazir gave him an hundred gold pieces, saying, "Prithee, take this small sum and fetch us somewhat to eat; for we are strangers and I have with me these two lads whom I wish to divert."[39] The Gardener took the sequins and said to them, "Enter and amuse yourselves in the garden, for it is all yours; and sit down till I bring you what food you require." So he went to the market while the Wazir and Taj al-Muluk and Aziz entered the garden. And shortly after leaving for the bazar the Gardener returned with a roasted lamb and cotton white bread, which he placed before them, and they ate and drank; thereupon he served up sweetmeats, and they ate of them, and washed their hands and sat talking. Presently the Wazir said to the garth keeper, "Tell me about this garden: is it thine or dost thou rent it?" The Shaykh replied, "It doth not belong to me, but to our King's daughter, the Princess Dunya." "What be thy monthly wages?" asked the Wazir and he answered, "One diner and no more." Then the Minister looked round about the garden and, seeing in its midst a pavilion tall and grand but old and disused, said to the keeper, "O elder, I am minded to do here a good work, by which thou shalt remember me. Replied the other, "O my lord, what is the good work thou wouldest do?" "Take these three hundred diners," rejoined the Wazir When the Keeper heard speak of the gold, he said, "O my lord, whatso thou wilt, do!" So the Wazir gave him the monies, saying, "Inshallah, we will make a good work in this place!" Then they left him and returned to their lodging, where they passed the night; and when it was the next day, the Minister sent for a plasterer and a painter and a skilful goldsmith and, furnishing them with all the tools they wanted, carried them to the garden, where he bade them whitewash the walls of the pavilion and decorate it with various kinds of paintings. Moreover he sent for gold and lapis lazuli[40] and said to the painter, "Figure me on the wall, at the upper end of this hall, a man fowler with his nets spread and birds falling into them and a female pigeon entangled in the meshes by her bill." And when the painter had finished his picture on one side, the Wazir said, "Figure me on the other side a similar figure and represent the she pigeon alone in the snare and the fowler seizing her and setting the knife to her neck; and draw on the third side wall, a great raptor clutching the male pigeon, her mate, and digging talons into him." The artist did his bidding, and when he and the others had finished the designs, they received their hire and went away. Then the Wazir and his companions took leave of the Gardener and returned to their place, where they sat down to converse. And Taj al-Muluk said to Aziz, "O my brother, recite me some verses: perchance it may broaden my breast and dispel my dolours and quench the fire flaming in my heart." So Aziz chanted with sweet modulation these couplets,

"Whate'er they say of grief to lovers came, *
    I, weakling I, can single handed claim:
An seek thou watering spot,[41] my streaming eyes *
    Pour floods that thirst would quench howe'er it flame
Or wouldest view what ruin Love has wrought *
    With ruthless hands, then see this wasted frame."

And his eyes ran over with tears and he repeated these couplets also,

"Who loves not swan-neck and gazelle-like eyes, *

Yet claims to know Life's joys, I say he lies:
In Love is mystery, none avail to learn *
Save he who loveth in pure loving wise.
Allah my heart ne'er lighten of this love, *
Nor rob the wakefulness these eyelids prize."

Then he changed the mode of song and sang these couplets:

"Ibn Síná[42] in his Canon cloth opine *
Lovers' best cure is found in merry song:
In meeting lover of a like degree, *
Dessert in garden, wine draughts long and strong:
I chose another who of thee might cure *
While Force and Fortune aided well and long
But ah! I learnt Love's mortal ill, wherein *
Ibn Sina's recipe is fond and wrong."

After hearing them to the end, Taj al-Muluk was pleased with his verses and wondered at his eloquence and the excellence of his recitation, saying, "Indeed, thou hast done away with somewhat of my sorrow." Then quoth the Wazir "Of a truth, there occurred to those of old what astoundeth those who hear it told." Quoth the Prince, "If thou canst recall aught of this kind, prithee let us hear thy subtle lines and keep up the talk." So the Minister chanted in modulated song these couplets,

"Indeed I deemed thy favours might be bought *
By gifts of gold and things that joy the sprite
And ignorantly thought thee light-o'-love, *
When can thy love lay low the highmost might;
Until I saw thee choosing one, that one *
Loved with all favour, crowned with all delight:
Then wot I thou by sleight canst ne'er be won *
And under wing my head I hid from sight
And in this nest of passion made my wone, *
Wherein I nestle morning, noon and night."

So far concerning them; but as regards the old woman she remained shut up from the world in her house, till it befel that the King’s daughter was taken with a desire to divert herself in the garden. Now she had never been wont so to do save in company with her nurse; accordingly she sent for her and made friends with her and soothed her sorrow, saying, “I wish to go forth to the garden, that I may divert myself with the sight of its trees and Fruits, and broaden my breast with the scent of its flowers.” Replied the old woman, “I hear and obey; but first I would go to my house, and soon I will be with thee.” The Princess rejoined, “Go home, but be not long absent from me.” So the old woman left her and, repairing to Taj al-Muluk, said to him, “Get thee ready and don thy richest dress and go to the garden and find out the Gardener and salute him and then hide thyself therein.” “To hear is to obey” answered he; and she agreed with him upon a signal, after which she returned to the Lady Dunya. As soon as she was gone, the Wazir and Aziz rose and robed Taj al-Muluk in a splendid suit of royal raiment worth five thousand diners, and girt his middle with a girdle of gold set with gems and precious metals. Then they repaired to the garden and found seated at the gate the Keeper who, as soon as he saw the Prince, sprang to his feet and received him with all respect and reverence, and opening the gate, said, “Enter and take thy pleasure in looking at the garden.” Now the Gardener knew not that the King’s daughter was to visit the place that day; but when Taj al-Muluk had been a little while there, he heard a hubbub and ere he could think, out issued the eunuchs and damsels by the private wicket. The Gardener seeing this came up to the Prince, informed him of her approach and said to him, “O my lord, what is to be done? The Princess Dunya, the King’s daughter, is here.” Replied the Prince, “Fear not, no harm shall befal thee; for I will hide me somewhere about the garden.” So the Keeper exhorted him to the utmost prudence and went away. Presently the Princess entered the garden with her damsels and with the old woman, who said to herself, “If these eunuchs stay with us, we shall not attain our end.” So quoth she to the King’s daughter, “O my lady, I have somewhat to tell thee which shall ease thy heart.” Quoth the Princess, “Say what thou hast to say.” “O my lady, rejoined the old woman, “thou hast no need of these eunuchs at a time like the present; nor wilt thou be able to divert thyself at thine ease, whilst they are with us; so send them away;" and the Lady Dunya replied, "Thou speakest sooth" Accordingly she dismissed them and presently began to walk about, whilst Taj al-Muluk looked upon her and fed his eyes on her beauty and loveliness (but she knew it not); and every time he gazed at her he fainted by reason of her passing charms.[43] The old woman drew her on by converse till they reached the pavilion which the Wazir had bidden be decorated, when the Princess entered and cast a glance round and perceived the picture of the birds the fowler and the pigeon; whereupon she cried, "Exalted be Allah! This is the very counterfeit presentment of what I saw in my dream." She continued to gaze at the figures of the birds and the fowler with his net, admiring the work, and presently she said, "O my nurse, I have been wont to blame and hate men, but look now at the fowler how he hath slaughtered the she bird who set free her mate; who was minded to return to her and aid her to escape when the bird of prey met him and tore him to pieces." Now the old woman feigned ignorance to her and ceased not to occupy her in converse, till they drew near the place where Taj al-Muluk lay hidden. Thereupon she signed to him to come out and walk under the windows of the pavilion, and, as the Lady Dunya stood looking from the casement, behold, her glance fell that way and she saw him and noting his beauty of face and form, said to the old woman, "O my nurse, whence cometh yonder handsome youth?" Replied the old woman, "I know nothing of him save that I think he must be some great King's son, for he attaineth comeliness in excess and extreme loveliness." And the Lady Dunya fell in love with him to distraction; the spells which bound her were loosed and her reason was overcome by his beauty and grace; and his fine stature and proportions strongly excited her desires sexual. So she said, "O my nurse! this is indeed a handsome youth;" and the old woman replied, "Thou sayest sooth, O my lady," and signed to Taj al-Muluk to go home. And though desire and longing flamed in him and he was distraught for love, yet he went away and took leave of the Gardener and returned to his place, obeying the old woman and not daring to cross her. When he told the Wazir and Aziz that she had signed him to depart, they exhorted him to patience, saying, "Did not the ancient dame know that there was an object to be gained by thy departure, she had not signalled thee to return home.” Such was the case with Taj al-Muluk, the Wazir and Aziz but as regards the King’s daughter, the Lady Dunya, desire and passion redoubled upon her; she was overcome with love and longing and she said to her nurse, “I know not how I shall manage a meeting with this youth, but through thee.” Exclaimed the old woman, “I take refuge with Allah from Satan the stoned! Thou who art averse from men! How cometh it then that thou art thus afflicted with hope and fear of this young man? Yet, by Allah, none is worthy of thy youth but he.” Quoth the Lady Dunya, “O my nurse, further my cause and help me to foregather with him, and thou shalt have of me a thousand diners and a dress of honour worth as much more: but if thou aid me not to come at him, I am a dead woman in very sooth.” Replied the ancient dame, “Go to thy palace and leave me to devise means for bringing you twain together. I will throw away my life to content you both!” So the Lady Dunya returned to her palace, and the old woman betook herself to Taj al-Muluk who, when he saw her, rose to receive her and entreated her with respect and reverence making her sit by his side. Then she said, “The trick hath succeeded,” and told him all that had passed between herself and the Princess. He asked her, “When is our meeting to be?”; and she answered, “Tomorrow.” So he gave her a thousand diners and a dress of like value, and she took them and stinted not walking till she returned to her mistress, who said to her, “O my nurse! what news of the be loved?” Replied she, “I have learnt where he liveth and will bring him to thee tomorrow.” At this the Princess was glad and gave her a thousand diners and a dress worth as much more, and she took them and returned to her own place, where she passed the night till morning. Then she went to Taj al-Muluk and dressing him in woman’s clothes, said to him, “Follow me and sway from side to side[44] as thou steppest, and hasten not thy pace nor take heed of any who speaketh to thee.” And after thus charging him she went out, and the Prince followed her in woman’s attire and she continued to charge and encourage him by the way, that he might not be afraid; nor ceased they walking till they came to the Palace-gate. She entered and the Prince after her, and she led him on, passing through doors and vestibules, till they had passed seven doors.[45] As they approached the seventh, she said to him, “Hearten thy heart and when I call out to thee and say, ‘O damsel pass on!’ do not slacken thy pace, but advance as if about to run. When thou art in the vestibule, look to thy left and thou wilt see a saloon with doors: count five doors and enter the sixth, for therein is thy desire.” Asked Taj al-Muluk, “And whither wilt thou go?”; and she answered, “Nowhere shall I go except that perhaps I may drop behind thee, and the Chief Eunuch may detain me to chat with him.” She walked on (and he behind her) till she reached the door where the Chief Eunuch was stationed and he, seeing Taj al-Muluk with her dressed as a slave girl, said to the old woman, “What business hath this girl with thee?” Replied she, “This is a slave girl of whom the Lady Dunya hath heard that she is skilled in different kinds of work and she hath a mind to buy her.” Rejoined the Eunuch, “I know neither slave girls nor anyone else; and none shall enter here without my searching according to the King’s commands.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Chamberlain Eunuch cried to the old woman, “I know neither slave girl nor anyone else; and none shall enter here without my searching him according to the King’s commands.” Then quoth she, feigning to be angry, “I thought thee a man of sense and good breeding; but, if thou be changed, I will let the Princess know of it and tell her how thou hinderest her slave girl;” and she cried out to Taj al-Muluk, saying, “Pass on, O damsel!” So he passed on into the vestibule as she bade him, whilst the Eunuch was silent and said no more. The Prince counted five doors and entered the sixth where he found the Princess Dunya standing and awaiting him. As soon as she saw him, she knew him and clasped him to her breast, and he clasped her to his bosom. Presently the old woman came in to them, having made a pretext to dismiss the Princess’s slave girls for fear of disgrace; and the Lady Dunya said to her, “Be thou our door keeper!” So she and Taj al- Muluk abode alone together and ceased not kissing and embracing and twining leg with leg till dawn.[46] When day drew near, she left him and, shutting the door upon him, passed into another chamber, where she sat down as was her wont, whilst her slave women came in to her, and she attended to their affairs and conversed with them. Then she said to them, "Go forth from me now, for I wish to amuse myself in privacy." So they withdrew and she betook herself to Taj al-Muluk, and the old woman brought them food, of which they ate and returned to amorous dalliance till dawn. Then the door was locked upon him as on the day before; and they ceased not to do thus for a whole month. This is how it fared with Taj al-Muluk and the Lady Dunya; but as regards the Wazir and Aziz when they found that the Prince had gone to the Palace of the King's daughter and there delayed all the while, they concluded that he would never return from it and that he was lost for ever; and Aziz said to the Wazir, "O my father, what shall we do?" He replied, "O my son, this is a difficult matter, and except we return to his sire and tell him, he will blame us therefor." So they made ready at once and forthright set out for the Green Land and the Country of the Two Columns, and sought Sulayman Shah's capital. And they traversed the valleys night and day till they went in to the King, and acquainted him with what had befallen his son and how from the time he entered the Princess's Palace they had heard no news of him. At this the King was as though the Day of Doom had dawned for him and regret was sore upon him, and he proclaimed a Holy War[47] throughout his realm. After which he sent forth his host without the town and pitched tents for them and took up his abode in his pavilion, whilst the levies came from all parts of the kingdom; for his subjects loved him by reason of his great justice and beneficence. Then he marched with an army walling the horizon, and departed in quest of his son. Thus far concerning them; but as regards Taj al-Muluk and the Lady Dunya the two remained as they were half a year's time, whilst every day they redoubled in mutual affection; and love and longing and passion and desire so pressed upon Taj al Muluk, that at last he opened his mind and said to her, "Know, O beloved of my heart and vitals, that the longer I abide with thee, the more love and longing and passion and desire increase on me, for that I have not yet fulfilled the whole of my wish." Asked she, "What then wouldst thou have, O light of my eyes and fruit of my vitals? If thou desire aught beside kissing and embracing and entwining of legs with legs, do what pleaseth thee; for, by Allah, no partner hath any part in us."[48] But he answered “It is not that I wish: I would fain acquaint thee with my true story. Know, then, that I am no merchant, nay, I am a King the son of a King, and my father’s name is the supreme King Sulayman Shah, who sent his Wazir ambassador to thy father, to demand thee in marriage for me, but when the news came to thee thou wouldst not consent.” Then he told her his past from first to last, nor is there any avail in a twice told tale, and he added, “And now I wish to return to my father, that he may send an ambassador to thy sire, to demand thee in wedlock for me, so we may be at ease.” When she heard these words, she joyed with great joy because it suited with her own wishes, and they passed the night on this understanding. But it so befel by the decree of Destiny that sleep overcame them that night above all nights and they remained till the sun had risen. Now at this hour, King Shahriman was sitting on his cushion of estate, with his Emirs and Grandees before him, when the Syndic of the goldsmiths presented himself between his hands, carrying a large box. And he advanced and opening it in presence of the King, brought out therefrom a casket of fine work worth an hundred thousand diners, for that which was therein of precious stones, rubies and emeralds beyond the competence of any sovereign on earth to procure. When the King saw this, he marvelled at its beauty; and, turning to the Chief Eunuch (him with whom the old woman had had to do), said to him, “O Kafur,[49] take this casket and wend with it to the Princess Dunya.” The Castrato took the casket and repairing to the apartment of the King’s daughter found the door shut and the old woman lying asleep on the threshold; whereupon said he, “What! sleeping at this hour?” When the old woman heard the Eunuch’s voice she started from sleep and was terrified and said to him, “Wait till I fetch the key.” Then she went forth and fled for her life. Such was her case; but as regards the Epicene he, seeing her alarm, lifted the door off its hinge pins,[50] and entering found the Lady Dunya with her arms round the neck of Taj al-Muluk and both fast asleep. At this sight he was confounded and was preparing to return to the King, when the Princess awoke, and seeing him, was terrified and changed colour and waxed pale, and said to him, “O Kafur, veil thou what Allah hath veiled!”[51] But he replied, “I cannot conceal aught from the King”; and, locking the door on them, returned to Shahriman, who asked him, “Hast thou given the casket to the Princess?” Answered the Eunuch, “Take the casket, here it is for I cannot conceal aught from thee. Know that I found a handsome young man by the side of the Princess and they two asleep in one bed and in mutual embrace.” The King commanded them to be brought into the presence and said to them, “What manner of thing is this?” and, being violently enraged, seized a dagger and was about to strike Taj al-Muluk with it, when the Lady Dunya threw herself upon him and said to her father, “Slay me before thou slayest him.” The King reviled her and commended her to be taken back to her chamber: then he turned to Taj al-Muluk and said to him, “Woe to thee! whence art thou? Who is thy father and what hath emboldened thee to debauch my daughter?” Replied the Prince, “Know, O King, that if thou put me to death, thou art a lost man, and thou and all in thy dominions will repent the deed.” Quoth the King, “How so?”; and quoth Taj al-Muluk “Know that I am the son of King Sulayman Shah, and ere thou knowest it, he will be upon thee with his horse and foot.” When King Shahriman heard these words he would have deferred killing Taj al-Muluk and would rather have put him in prison, till he should look into the truth of his words; but his Wazir said to him, “O King of the Age, it is my opinion that thou make haste to slay this gallows bird who dares debauch the daughters of Kings.” So the King cried to the headsman, “Strike off his head; for he is a traitor.” Accordingly, the herdsman took him and bound him fast and raised his hand to the Emirs, signing to consult them, a first and a second signal, thinking thereby to gain time in this matter;[52] but the King cried in anger to him, “How long wilt thou consult others? If thou consult them again I will strike off thine own head.;’ So the headsman raised his hand till the hair of his armpit showed’ and was about to smite his neck, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the headsman raised his hand to smite off his head when behold, loud cries arose and the folk closed their shops; whereupon the King said to the headsman, “Wait awhile,” and despatched one to learn the news. The messenger fared forth and presently returned and reported, “I saw an army like the dashing sea with its clashing surge: and their horses curvetting till earth trembleth with the tramp; and I know no more of them.” When the King heard this, he was confounded and feared for his realm lest it should be torn from him; so he turned to his Minister and said, “Have not any of our army gone forth to meet this army?” But ere he had done speaking, his Chamberlains entered with messengers from the King who was approaching, and amongst them the Wazir who had accompanied Taj al-Muluk. They began by saluting the King, who rose to receive them and bade them draw near, and asked the cause of their coming; whereupon the Minister came forward from amongst them and stood before him and said “Know that he who hath come down upon thy realm is no King like unto the Kings of yore and the Sultans that went before.” “And who is he?” asked Shahriman, and the Wazir answered, “He is the Lord of justice and loyalty, the bruit of whose magnanimity the caravans have blazed abroad, the Sultan Sulayman Shah, Lord of the Green Land and the Two Columns and the Mountains of Ispahan; he who loveth justice and equity, and hateth oppression and iniquity. And he saith to thee that his son is with thee and in thy city; his son, his heart’s very core and the fruit of his loins, and if he find him in safety, his aim is won and thou shalt have thanks and praise; but if he have been lost from thy realm or if aught of evil have befallen him, look thou for ruin and the wasting of thy reign! for this thy city shall become a wold wherein the raven shall croak. Thus have I done my errand to thee and peace be with thee!” Now when King Shahriman heard from the messenger these words, his heart was troubled and he feared for his kingdom: so he cried out for his Grandees and Ministers, Chamberlains and Lieutenants; and, when they appeared, he said to them, “Woe to you! Go down and search for the youth.” Now the Prince was still under the headsman’s hands, but he was changed by the fright he had undergone. Presently, the Wazir, chancing to glance around, saw the Prince on the rug of blood and recognised him; so he arose and threw himself upon him, and so did the other envoys. Then they proceeded to loose his bonds and they kissed his hands and feet, whereupon Taj al-Muluk opened his eyes and, recognising his father’s Wazir and his friend Aziz, fell down a fainting for excess of delight in them. When King Shahriman made sure that the coming of this army was indeed because of this youth, he was confounded and feared with great fear; so he went up to Taj al- Muluk and, kissing his head, said to him, “O my son, be not wroth with me, neither blame the sinner for his sin; but have compassion on my grey hairs, and waste not my realm.” Whereupon Taj al-Muluk drew near unto him and kissing his hand, replied, “No harm shall come to thee, for indeed thou art to me as my father; but look that nought befal my beloved, the Lady Dunya!” Rejoined the King, “O my lord! fear not for her; naught but joy shall betide her;” and he went on to excuse himself and made his peace with Sulayman Shah’s Wazir to whom he promised much money, if he would conceal from the King what he had seen. Then he bade his Chief Officers take the Prince with them and repair to the Hammam and clothe him in one of the best of his own suits and bring him back speedily. So they obeyed his bidding and bore him to the bath and clad him in the clothes which King Shahriman had set apart for him; and brought him back to the presence chamber. When he entered the King rose to receive him and made all his Grandees stand in attendance on him. Then Taj al-Muluk sat down to converse with his father’s Wazir and with Aziz, and he acquainted them with what had befallen him; after which they said to him, “During that delay we returned to thy father and gave him to know that thou didst enter the palace of the Princess and didst not return therefrom, and thy case seemed doubtful to us. But when thy sire heard of this he mustered his forces; then we came to this land and indeed our coming hath brought to thee relief in extreme case and to us great joy.” Quoth he, “Good fortune hath attended your every action, first and last.” While this was doing King Shahriman went in to his daughter Princess Dunya, and found her wailing and weeping for Taj al-Muluk. Moreover, she had taken a sword and fixed the hilt in the ground and had set the point to the middle of her heart between her breasts; and she bent over the blade saying, “Needs must I slay myself and not survive my beloved.” When her father entered and saw her in this case, he cried out to her, saying, “O Princess of kings’ daughters, hold thy hand and have ruth on thy sire and the folk of thy realm!” Then he came up to her and continued, “Let it not be that an ill thing befal thy father for thy sake!” And he told her the whole tale that her lover was the son of King Sulayman Shah and sought her to wife and he added, “The marriage waiteth only for thy consent.” Thereat she smiled and said, “Did I not tell thee that he was the son of a Sultan? By Allah, there is no help for it but that I let him crucify thee on a bit of wood worth two pieces of silver!” Replied the King, “O my daughter, have mercy on me, so Allah have mercy on thee!” Rejoined she, “Up with you and make haste and go bring him to me without delay.” Quoth the King, “On my head and eyes be it!”; and he left her and, going in hastily to Taj al-Muluk, repeated her words in his ear.[53] So he arose and accompanied the King to the Princess, and when she caught sight of her lover, she took hold of him and embraced him in her father’s presence and hung upon him and kissed him, saying, “Thou hast desolated me by thine absence!” Then she turned to her father and said, “Sawest thou ever any that could do hurt to the like of this beautiful being, who is moreover a King, the son of a King and of the free born,[54] guarded against ignoble deeds?” There upon King Shahriman went out shutting the door on them with his own hand; and he returned to the Wazir and to the other envoys of Sulayman Shah and bade them inform their King that his son was in health and gladness and enjoying all delight of life with his beloved. So they returned to King Sulayman and acquainted him with this; whereupon King Shahriman ordered largesse of money and vivers to the troops of King Sulayman Shah; and, when they had conveyed all he had commanded, he bade be brought out an hundred coursers and an hundred dromedaries and an hundred white slaves and an hundred concubines and an hundred black slaves and an hundred female slaves; all of which he forwarded to the King as a present. Then he took horse, with his Grandees and Chief Officers, and rode out of the city in the direction of the King’s camp. As soon as Sultan Sulayman Shah knew of his approach, he rose and advanced many paces to meet him. Now the Wazir and Aziz had told him all the tidings, whereat he rejoiced and cried, “Praise be to Allah who hath granted the dearest wish of my son!” Then King Sulayman took King Shahriman in his arms and seated him beside himself on the royal couch, where they conversed awhile and had pleasure in each other’s conversation. Presently food was set before them, and they ate till they were satisfied; and sweetmeats and dried fruits were brought, and they enjoyed their dessert. And after a while came to them Taj al-Muluk, richly dressed and adorned, and when his father saw him, he stood up and embraced him and kissed him. Then all who were sitting rose to do him honour; and the two Kings seated him between them and they sat conversing a while, after which quoth King Sulayman Shah to King Shahriman, “I desire to have the marriage contract between my son and thy daughter drawn up in the presence of witnesses, that the wedding may be made public, even as is the custom of Kings.” “I hear and I obey,” quoth King Shahriman and thereon summoned the Kazi and the witnesses, who came and wrote out the marriage contract between Taj al-Muluk and the Lady Dunya. Then they gave bakhshish[55] of money and sweetmeats; and lavished incense and essences; and indeed it was a day of joy and gladness and all the grandees and soldiers rejoiced therein. Then King Shahriman proceeded to dower and equip his daughter; and Taj al-Muluk said to his sire, “Of a truth, this young man Aziz is of the generous and hath done me a notable service, having borne weariness with me; and he hath travelled with me and hath brought me to my desire. He ceased never to show sufferance with me and exhort me to patience till I accomplished my intent; and now he hath abided with us two whole years, and he cut off from his native land. So now I purpose to equip him with merchandise, that he may depart hence with a light heart; for his country is nearhand.” Replied his father, “Right is thy rede;” so they made ready an hundred loads of the richest stuffs and the most costly, and Taj al-Muluk presented them with great store of money to Aziz, and farewelled him, saying, “O my brother and my true friend! take these loads and accept them from me by way of gift and token of affection, and go in peace to thine own country.” Aziz accepted the presents and kissing the ground between the hands of the Prince and his father bade them adieu. Moreover, Taj al-Muluk mounted and accompanied him three miles on his homeward way as a proof of amity, after which Aziz conjured him to turn back, saying, “By Allah, O my master, were it not for my mother, I never would part from thee! But, good my lord! leave me not without news of thee.” Replied Taj al-Muluk, “So be it!” Then the Prince returned to the city and Aziz journeyed on till he came to his native town; and he entered it and ceased not faring till he went in to his mother and found that she had built him a monument in the midst of the house and used to visit it continually. When he entered, he saw her with hair dishevelled and dispread over the tomb, weeping and repeating these lines,

“Indeed I’m strong to bear whate’er befal; *
    But weak to bear such parting’s dire mischance:
What heart estrangement of the friend can bear? *
    What strength withstand assault of severance?”

Then sobs burst from her breast, and she recited also these couplets,

“What’s this? I pass by tombs, and fondly greet *
    My friends’ last homes, but send they no reply:
For saith each friend, ‘Reply how can I make *
    When pledged to clay and pawned to stones I lie?
Earth has consumed my charms and I forget *
    Thy love, from kith and kin poor banisht I.’”

While she was thus, behold, Aziz came in to her and when she saw him, she fell down, fainting for very joy. He sprinkled water on her face till she revived and rising, took him in her arms and strained him to her breast, whilst he in like manner embraced her. Then he greeted her and she greeted him, and she asked the reason of his long absence, whereupon he told her all that had befallen him from first to last and informed her how Taj al-Muluk had given him an hundred loads of monies and stuffs. At this she rejoiced, and Aziz abode with his mother in his native town, weeping for what mishaps had happened to him with the daughter of Dalilah the Wily One, even her who had castrated[56] him. Such was the case with Aziz; but as regards Taj al-Muluk he went in unto his beloved, the Princess Dunya, and abated her maidenhead. Then King Shahriman proceeded to equip his daughter for her journey with her husband and father in law, and bade bring them provaunt and presents and rarities. So they loaded their beasts and set forth, whilst King Shahriman escorted them, by way of farewell, three days’ journey on their way, till King Shah

Sulayman conjured him to return. So he took leave of them and turned back, and Taj al-Muluk and his wife and father fared for wards night and day, with their troops, till they drew near their capital. As soon as the news of their coming spread abroad, the folk decorated for them the city, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Shah Sulayman drew near his capital, the folk decorated the city for him and for his son. So they entered in state and the King, sitting on his throne with his son by his side, gave alms and largesse and loosed all who were in his jails. Then he held a second bridal for his son, and the sound of the singing women and players upon instruments was never silent for a whole month, and the tire women stinted not to adorn the Lady Dunya and display her in various dresses; and she tired not of the displaying nor did the women weary of gazing on her. Then Taj al-Muluk, after having foregathered awhile with his father and mother, took up his sojourn with his wife, and they abode in all joyance of life and in fairest fortune, till there came to them the Destroyer of all delights.[57] Now when the Wazir Dandan had ended the tale of Taj al-Muluk and the Lady Dunya, Zau al-Makan said to him, “Of a truth, it is the like of thee who lighten the mourner’s heart and who deserve to be the boon companions of Kings and to guide their policy in the right way.” All this befel and they were still besieging Constantinople, where they lay four whole years, till they yearned after their native land; and the troops murmured, being weary of vigil and besieging and the endurance of fray and foray by night and by day. Then King Zau al-Makan summoned Rustam and Bahram and Tarkash, and when they were in presence bespoke them thus, “Know that we have lain here all these years and we have not won to our wish; nay, we have but gained increase of care and concern; for indeed we came, thinking to take our man bote for King Omar bin al-Nu’uman and in so doing my brother Sharrkan was slain; so is our sorrow grown to sorrows twain and our affliction to afflictions twain. All this came of the old woman Zat al-Dawahi, for it was she who slew the Sultan in his kingdom and carried off his wife, the Queen Sophia; nor did this suffice her, but she must put another cheat on us and cut the throat of my brother Sharrkan and indeed I have bound myself and sworn by the solemnest oaths that there is no help but I take blood wit from her. What say ye? Ponder my address and answer me." Then they bowed their heads and answered, "It is for the Wazir Dandan to opine." So the Minister came forward and said, "Know O King of the Age! it booteth us nought to tarry here; and 'tis my counsel that we strike camp and return to our own country, there to abide for a certain time and after that we should return for a razzia upon the worshippers of idols." Replied the King, "This rede is right, for indeed the folk weary for a sight of their families, and I am an other who is also troubled with yearning after my son Kanmakan and my brother 's daughter Kuzia Fakan, for she is in Damascus and I know not how is her case." When the troops heard this report, they rejoiced and blessed the Wazir Dandan. Then the King bade the crier call the retreat after three days. They fell to preparing for the march, and, on the fourth day, they beat the big drums and unfurled the banners and the army set forth, the Wazir Danden in the van and the King riding in the mid battle, with the Grand Chamberlain by his side; and all journeyed without ceasing, night and day, till they reached Baghdad city. The folk rejoiced in their return, and care and fear ceased from them whilst the stay at homes met the absentees and each Emir betook him to his own house. As for Zau al-Makan he marched up to the Palace and went in to his son Kanmakan, who had now reached the age of seven; and who used to go down to the weapon plain and ride. As soon as the King was rested of his journey, he entered the Hammam with his son, and returning, seated himself on his sofa of state, whilst the Wazir Dandan took up his station before him and the Emirs and Lords of the realm presented themselves and stood in attendance upon him. Then Zau al-Makan called for his comrade, the Fireman, who had befriended him in his wanderings; and, when he came into presence, the King rose to do him honour and seated him by his side. Now he had acquainted the Wazir with all the kindness and good turns which the Stoker had done him; and he found that the wight had waxed fat and burly with rest and good fare, so that his neck was like an elephant's throat and his face like a dolphin's belly. Moreover, he was grown dull of wit, for that he had never stirred from his place; so at first he knew not the King by his aspect. But Zau al-Makan came up to him smiling in his face, and greeted him after the friendliest fashion, saying, "How soon hast thou forgotten me?" With this the Fireman roused himself and, looking steadfastly at Zau al-Makan, made sure that he knew him; whereupon he sprang hastily to his feet and exclaimed, "O my friend, who hath made thee Sultan?" Then Zau al- Makan laughed at him and the Wazir, coming up to him expounded the whole story to him and said, "In good sooth he was thy brother and thy friend; and now he is King of the land and needs must thou get great good of him. So I charge thee, if he say, 'Ask a boon of me,' ask not but for some great thing; for thou art very dear to him." Quoth the Fireman, "I fear lest, if I ask of him aught, he may not choose to give it or may not be able to grant it." Quoth the Wazir, "Have no care; whatsoever thou askest he will give thee." Rejoined the Stoker, "By Allah, I must at once ask of him a thing that is in my thought: every night I dream of it and implore Almighty Allah to vouchsafe it to me." Said the Wazir, "Take heart; by Allah, if thou ask of him the government of Damascus, in place of his brother, he would surely give it thee and make thee Governor." With this the Stoker rose to is feet and Zau al-Makan signed to him to sit; but he refused, saying, "Allah forfend! The days are gone by of my sitting in thy presence.' Answered the Sultan, "Not so, they endure even now. Thou west in very deed the cause that I am at present alive and, by Allah, whatever thing most desired thou requirest of me, I will give that same to thee. But ask thou first of Allah, and then of me!" He said, "O my lord, I fear" "Fear not," quoth the Sultan He continued, "I fear to ask aught and that thou shouldst refuse it to me and it is only" At this the King laughed and replied, "If thou require of me the half of my kingdom I would share it with thee: so ask what thou wilt and leave talking." Repeated the Fireman "I fear" "Don't fear," quoth the King. He went on, "I fear lest I ask a thing and thou be not able to grant it." Upon this the Sultan waxed wroth and cried, "Ask what thou wilt." Then said he, "I ask, first of Allah and then of thee, that thou write me a patent of Syndicate over all the Firemen of the baths in the Holy City, Jerusalem." The Sultan and all present laughed and Zau al-Makan said, "Ask something more than this." He replied, "O my lord, said I not I feared that thou wouldst not choose to give me what I should ask or that thou be not able to grant it?” Therewith the Wazir signed him with his foot once and twice and thrice, and every time he began, “I ask of thee” Quoth the Sultan, “Ask and be speedy.” So he said, “I ask thee to make me Chief of the Scavengers in the Holy City of Jerusalem, or in. Damascus town.” Then all those who were present fell on their backs with laughter and the Wazir beat him; whereupon he turned to the Minister and said to him, “What art thou that thou shouldest beat me? ’Tis no fault of mine: didst thou not thyself bid me ask some important thing?” And he added, “Let me go to my own land.” With this, the Sultan knew that he was jesting and took patience with him awhile; then turned to him and said, “O my brother, ask of me some important thing, befitting our dignity.” So the Stoker said, “O King of the Age, I ask first of Allah and then of thee, that thou make me Viceroy of Damascus in the place of thy brother;” and the King replied, “Allah granteth thee this.” Thereupon the Fireman kissed ground before him and he bade set him a chair in his rank and vested him with a viceroy’s habit. Then he wrote him a patent and sealed it with his own seal, and said to the Wazir Dandan, “None shall go with him but thou; and when thou makest the return journey, do thou bring with thee my brother’s daughter, Kuzia Fakan.” “Hearken ing and obedience,” answered the Minister; and, taking the Fire man, went down with him and made ready for the march. Then the King appointed for the Stoker servants and suite, and gave him a new litter and a princely equipage and said to the Emirs, “Whoso loveth me, let him honour this man and offer him a handsome present.” So each and every of the Emirs brought him his gift according to his competence; and the King named him Zibl Khán,[58] and conferred on him the honourable surname of al-Mujáhid.[59] As soon as the gear was ready, he went up with the Wazir Dandan to the King, that he might take leave of him and ask his permission to depart. The King rose to him and embraced him, and charged him to do justice between his subjects and bade him make ready for fight against the Infidels after two years. Then they took leave of each other and the King,[60] the Fighter for the Faith highs Zibl Khan, having been again exhorted by Zau al-Makan to deal fairly with his subjects, set out on his journey, after the Emirs had brought him Mamelukes and eunuchs, even to five thousand in number, who rode after him. The Grand Chamberlain also took horse, as did Bahram, captain of the Daylamites, and Rustam, captain of the Persians, and Tarkash, captain of the Arabs, who attended to do him service; and they ceased not riding with him three days' journey by way of honour. Then, taking their leave of him, they returned to Baghdad and the Sultan Zibl Khan and the Wazir Dandan fared on, with their suite and troops, till they drew near Damascus. Now news was come, upon the wings of birds, to the notables of Damascus, that King Zau al-Makan had made Sultan over Damascus a King named Zibl Khan and surnamed Al-Mujahid; so when he reached the city he found it dressed in his honour and everyone in the place came out to gaze on him. The new Sultan entered Damascus in a splendid progress and went up to the citadel, where he sat down upon his chair of state, whilst the Wazir Dandan stood in attendance on him, to acquaint him with the ranks of the Emirs and their stations. Then the Grandees came in to him and kissed hands and called down blessings on him. The new King, Zibl Khan, received them graciously and bestowed on them dresses of honour and various presents and bounties; after which he opened the treasuries and gave largesse to the troops, great and small. Then he governed and did justice and proceeded to equip the Lady Kuzia Fakan, daughter of King Sharrkan, appointing her a litter of silken stuff. Moreover he furnished the Wazir Dandan equally well for the return journey and offered him a gift of coin but he refused, saying, "Thou art near the time appointed by the King, and haply thou wilt have need of money, or after this we may send to seek of thee funds for the Holy War or what not." Now when the Wazir was ready to march, Sultan al-Mujahid mounted to bid the Minister farewell and brought Kuzia Fakan to him, and made her enter the litter and sent with her ten damsels to do her service. Thereupon they set forward, whilst King "Fighter for the Faith" returned to his government that he might order affairs and get ready his munitions of war, awaiting such time as King Zau al- Makan should send a requisition to him. Such was the case with Sultan Zibl Khan, but as regards the Wazir Dandan, he ceased not faring forward and finishing off the stages, in company with Kuzia Fakan till they came to Ruhbah[61] after a month's travel and thence pushed on, till he drew near Baghdad. Then he sent to announce his arrival to King Zau al-Makan who, when he heard this, took horse and rode out to meet him. The Wazir Dandan would have dismounted, but the King conjured him not to do so and urged his steed till he came up to his side. Then he questioned him of Zibl Khan highs Al-Mujahid, whereto the Wazir replied that he was well and that he had brought with him Kuzia Fakan the daughter of his brother. At this the King rejoiced and said to Dandan, "Down with thee and rest thee from the fatigue of the journey for three days, after which come to me again." Replied the Wazir "With joy and gratitude," and betook himself to his own house, whilst the King rode up to his Palace and went in to his brother's daughter, Kuzia Fakan, a girl of eight years old. When he saw her, he rejoiced in her and sorrowed for her sire; then he bade make for her clothes and gave her splendid jewelry and ornaments, and ordered she be lodged with his son Kanmakan in one place. So they both grew up the brightest of the people of their time and the bravest; but Kuzia Fakan became a maiden of good sense and understanding and knowledge of the issues of events, whilst Kanmakan approved him a generous youth and freehanded, taking no care in the issue of aught. And so they continued till each of them attained the age of twelve. Now Kuzia Fakan used to ride a horseback and fare forth with her cousin into the open plain and push forward and range at large with him in the word; and they both learnt to smite with swords and spike with spears. But when they had reached the age of twelve, King Zau al-Makan, having completed his preparations and provisions and munitions for Holy War, summoned the Wazir Dandan and said to him, "Know that I have set mind on a thing, which I will discover to thee, and I want shine opinion thereon; so do thou with speed return me a reply." Asked the Wazir, "What is that, O King of the Age?"; and the other answered, "I am resolved to make my son Kanmakan Sultan and rejoice in him in my lifetime and do battle before him till death overtake me. What reckest thou of this?" The Wazir kissed the ground before the King and replied, "Know, O King and Sultan mine, Lord of the Age and the time! that which is in thy mind is indeed good, save that it is now no tide to carry it out, for two reasons; the first, that thy son Kanmakan is yet of tender years; and the second, that it often befalleth him who maketh his son King in his life time, to live but a little while thereafterward.[62] And this is my reply." Rejoined the King, "Know, O Wazir that we will make the Grand Chamberlain guardian over him, for he is now one of the family and he married my sister, so that he is to me as a brother." Quoth the Wazir, "Do what seemeth good to thee: we have only to obey thine orders." Then the King sent for the Grand Chamberlain whom they brought into the presence together with the Lords of the realm and he said to them, "Ye know that this my son Kanmakan is the first cavalier of the age, and that he hath no peer in striking with the sword and lunging with the lance; and now I appoint him to be Sultan over you and I make the Grand Chamberlain, his uncle, guardian over him." Replied the Chamberlain, "I am but a tree which thy bounty hath planted"; and Zau al-Makan said, "O Chamberlain, verily this my son Kanmakan and my niece Kuzia Fakan are brothers' children; so I hereby marry her to him and I call those present to witness thereof." Then he made over to his son such treasures as no tongue can describe, and going in to his sister, Nuzhat al-Zaman, told her what he had done, whereat she was a glad woman and said, "Verily the twain are my children: Allah preserve thee to them and keep thy life for them many a year!" Replied he, "O my sister, I have accomplished in this world all my heart desired and I have no fear for my son! yet it were well thou have an eye on him, and an eye on his mother." And he charged the Chamberlain and Nuzhat al-Zaman with the care of his son and niece and wife, and this he continued to do nights and days till he fell sick and deemed surely that he was about to drink the cup of death; so he took to his bed, whilst the Chamberlain busied himself with ordering the folk and realm. At the end of the year, the King summoned his son Kanmakan and the Wazir Dandan and said, "O my son, after my death this Wazir is thy sire; for know that I am about to leave this house of life transitory for the house of eternity. And indeed I have fulfilled my will of this world; yet there remaineth in my heart one regret which may Allah dispel through and by thy hands." Asked his son, "What regret is that, O my father?" Answered Zau al-Makan, "O my son, the sole regret of me is that I die without having avenged thy grandfather, Omar bin al-Nu'uman, and thine uncle, Sharrkan, on an old woman whom they call Zat al-Dawahi; but, if Allah grant thee aid, sleep not till thou take thy wreak on her, and so wipe out the shame we have suffered at the Infidel's hands; and beware of the old hag's wile and do what the Wazir Dandan shall advise thee; because he from old time hath been the pillar of our realm." And his son assented to what he said. Then the King's eyes ran over with tears and his sickness redoubled on him; whereupon his brother in law, the Chamberlain took charge over the country and, being a capable man, he judged and bade and forbade for the whole of that year, while Zau al-Makan was occupied with his malady. And his sickness was sore upon him for four years, during which the Chief Chamberlain sat in his stead and gave full satisfaction to the commons and the nobles; and all the country blessed his rule. Such was the case with Zau al-Makan and the Chamberlain, but as regards the King's son, he busied himself only with riding and lunging with lance and shooting with shaft, and thus also did the daughter of his uncle, Kuzia Fakan; for he and she were wont to fare forth at the first of the day and return at nightfall, when she would go in to her mother, and he would go in to his mother whom he ever found sitting in tears by the head of his father's couch. Then he would tend his father all night long till daybreak, when he would go forth again with his cousin according to their wont. Now Zau al-Makan's pains and sufferings were lonesome upon him and he wept and began versifying with these couplets,

"Gone is my strength, told is my tale of days *
    And, lookye! I am left as thou dost see:
In honour's day most honoured wont to be, *
    And win the race from all my company
Would Heaven before my death I might behold *
    My son in seat of empire sit for me
And rush upon his foes, to take his wreak *
    With sway of sword and lance lunged gallantly:
In this world and the next I am undone, *
    Except the Lord vouchsafe me clemency."

When he had ended repeating these verses, he laid his head on his pillow and closed his eyes and slept. Then saw he in his sleep one who said to him, “Rejoice, for thy son shall fill the lands with justest sway; and he shall rule them and him shall the lieges obey.”; Then he awoke from his dream gladdened by the good tidings he had seen, and after a few days, Death smote him, and because of his dying great grief fell on the people of Baghdad, and simple and gentle mourned for him. But Time passed over him, as though he had never been[63] and Kanmakan’s estate was changed; for the people of Baghdad set him aside and put him and his family in a place apart. Now when his mother saw this, she fell into the sorriest of plights and said, “There is no help but that I go to the Grand Chamberlain, and I must hope for the aidance of the Subtle, the All-Wise!” Then she rose from her place and betook herself to the house of the Chamberlain who was now become Sultan, and she found him sitting upon his carpet. So she went in to his wife, Nuzhat al-Zaman, and wept with sore weeping and said unto her, “Verily the dead hath no friend! May Allah never bring you to want as long as your age and the years endure, and may you cease not to rule justly over rich and poor. Thine ears have heard and thine eyes have seen all that was ours of kingship and honour and dignity and wealth and fair fortune of life and condition; and now Time hath turned upon us, and fate and the world have betrayed us and wrought in hostile way with us, wherefore I come to thee craving thy favours, I from whom favours were craved: for when a man dieth, women and maidens are brought to despisal.” And she repeated these couplets,

“Suffice thee Death such marvels can enhance, *
    And severed lives make lasting severance:
Man’s days are marvels, and their stations are *
    But water-pits[64] of misery and mischance.
Naught wrings my heart save loss of noble friends, *
    Girt round by rings of hard, harsh circumstance.”

When Nuzhat al-Zaman heard these words, she remembered her brother, Zau al-Makan, and his son Kanmakan, and, making her draw near to her and showing her honour, she said, “Verily at this moment, by Allah, I am grown rich and thou art poor; now by the Lord! we did not cease to seek thee out, but we feared to wound thy heart lest thou shouldest fancy our gifts to thee an alms gift. Withal, whatso weal we now enjoy is from thee and thy husband; so our house is thy house and our place thy place, and thine is all our wealth and what goods we have belong to thee." Then she robed her in sumptuous robes and set apart for her a place in the Palace adjoining her own; and they abode therein, she and her son, in all delight of life. And Nuzhat al-Zaman clothed him also in Kings' raiment and gave to them both especial handmaids for their service. After a little, she related to her husband the sad case of the widow of her brother, Zau al-Makan, whereat his eyes filled with tears and he said, "Wouldest thou see the world after thee, look thou upon the world after other than thyself. Then entreat her honourably and enrich her poverty." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When It was the One Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Nuzhat Al-Zaman related to her husband the sad case of the widow of her brother, Zau al-Makan, the Chamberlain said, "Entreat her honourably and enrich her poverty." Thus far concerning Nuzhat al-Zaman and her consort and the relict of Zau al-Makan; but as regards Kanmakan and his cousin Kuzia Fakan, they grew up and flourished till they waxed like unto two fruit-laden boughs or two shining moons; and they reached the age of fifteen. And she was indeed the fairest of maids who are modestly veiled, lovely faced with smooth cheeks graced, and slender waist on heavy hips based; and her shape was the shaft's thin line and her lips were sweeter than old wine and the nectar of her mouth as it were the fountain Salsabíl[65] ; even as saith the poet in these two couplets describing one like her,

"As though ptisane of wine on her lips honey dew *
    Dropt from the ripened grapes her mouth in clusters grew
And, when her frame thou doublest, and low bends her vine, *
    Praise her Creator's might no creature ever knew."

Of a truth Allah had united in her every charm: her shape would shame the branch of waving tree and the rose before her cheeks craved lenity; and the honey dew of her lips of wine made jeer, however old and clear, and she gladdened heart and beholder with joyous cheer, even as saith of her the poet,

"Goodly of gifts is she, and charm those perfect eyes, *
With lashes shaming Kohl and all the fair ones Kohl'd[66]
And from those eyne the glances pierce the lover's heart, *
Like sword in Mír al-Muminína Ali's hold."

And (the relator continueth) as for Kanmakan, he became unique in loveliness and excelling in perfection no less; none could even him in qualities as in seemliness and the sheen of velour between his eyes was espied, testifying for him while against him it never testified. The hardest hearts inclined to his side; his eyelids bore lashes black as by Kohl; and he was of surpassing worth in body and soul. And when the down of lips and cheeks began to sprout bards and poets sang for him far and near,

"Appeared not my excuse till hair had clothed his cheek, *
And gloom o'ercrept that side-face (sight to stagger!)
A fawn, when eyes would batten on his charms, *
Each glance deals thrust like point of Khanjar-dagger."

And saith another,

"His lovers' souls have drawn upon his cheek *
An ant that perfected its rosy light:
I marvel at such martyrs Lazá-pent *
Who yet with greeny robes of Heaven are dight.''[67]

Now it chanced one holiday, that Kuzia Fakan fared forth to make festival with certain kindred of the court, and she went surrounded by her handmaids. And indeed beauty encompassed her, the roses of her cheeks dealt envy to their mole; from out her smiling lips levee flashed white, gleaming like the chamomile[68] ; and Kanmakan began to turn about her and devour her with his sight, for she was the moon of resplendent light. Then he took heart and giving his tongue a start began to improvise,

"When shall the disappointed heart be healed of severance, *
And lips of Union smile at ceasing of our hard mischance?
Would Heaven I knew shall come some night, and with it surely
bring * Meeting with friend who like myself endureth
sufferance."[69]

When Kuzia Fakan heard these couplets, she showed vexation and disapproval and, putting on a haughty and angry air, said to him, "Dost thou name me in thy verse, to shame me amongst folk? By Allah, if thou turn not from this talk, I will assuredly complain of thee to the Grand Chamberlain, Sultan of Khorasan and Baghdad and lord of justice and equity; that disgrace and punishment may befal thee!" Kanmakan made no reply for anger but he returned to Baghdad; and Kuzia Fakan also returned to her palace and complained of her cousin to her mother, who said to her, "O my daughter, haply he meant thee no harm, and is he aught but an orphan? Withal, he said nought of reproach to thee; so beware thou tell none of this, lest perchance it come to e Sultan's ears and he cut short his life and blot out his name and make it even as yesterday, whose memory hath passed away." However, Kanmakan's love for Kuzia Fakan spread abroad in Baghdad, so that the women talked of it. Moreover, his breast became straitened and his patience waned and he knew not what to do, yet he could not hide his condition from the world. Then longed he to give vent to the pangs he endured, by reason of the lowe of separation; but he feared her rebuke and her wrath; so he began improvising,

"Now is my dread to incur reproaches, which *
Disturb her temper and her mind obscure,
Patient I'll bear them; e'en as generous youth his case to
cure.'' * Beareth the burn of brand his case to
cure."[70]

And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the

Grand Chamberlain became Sultan they named him King Sásán; and after he had assumed the throne he governed the people in righteous way. Now as he was giving audience one day, Kanmakan's verses came to his knowledge. Thereupon he repented him of the past and going in to his wife Nuzhat al-Zaman, said to her, "Verily, to join Halfah grass and fire,[71] is the greatest of risks, and man may not be trusted with woman, so long as eye glanceth and eyelid quivereth. Now thy brother's son, Kanmakan, is come to man's estate and it behoveth us to forbid him access to the rooms where anklets trinkle, and it is yet more needful to forbid thy daughter the company of men, for the like of her should be kept in the Harim." Replied she, "Thou sayest sooth, O wise King!" Next day came Kanmakan according to his wont; and, going in to his aunt saluted her. She returned his salutation and said to him, "O my son! I have some what to say to thee which I would fain leave unsaid; yet I must tell it thee despite my inclination." Quoth he, "Speak;" and quoth she, Know then that thy sire the Chamberlain, the father of Kuzia Fakan, hath heard of the verses thou madest anent her, and hath ordered that she be kept in the Harim and out of thy reach; if therefore, O my son, thou want anything from us, I will send it to thee from behind the door; and thou shalt not look upon Kuzia Fakan nor shalt thou return hither from this day forth." When he heard this he arose and withdrew with out speaking a single word; and, betaking himself to his mother related what his aunt had said. She observed, "This all cometh of thine overtalking. Thou knowest that the news of thy passion for Kuzia Fakan is noised abroad and the tattle hath spread everywhere how thou eatest their food and thereafter thou courtest their daughter." Rejoined he, "And who should have her but I? She is the daughter of my father's brother and I have the best of rights to her." Retorted his mother, "These are idle words. Be silent, lest haply thy talk come to King Sasan's ears and it prove the cause of thy losing her and the reason of thy ruin and increase of thine affliction. They have not sent us any supper to-night and we shall die an hungered; and were we in any land but this, we were already dead of famine or of shame for begging our bread." When Kanmakan heard these words from his mother, his regrets redoubled; his eyes ran over with tears and he complained and began improvising,

“Minish this blame I ever bear from you: *
    My heart loves her to whom all love is due:
Ask not from me of patience jot or little, *
    Divorce of Patience by God’s House! I rue:
What blamers preach of patience I unheed; *
    Here am I, love path firmly to pursue!
Indeed they bar me access to my love, *
    Here am I by God’s ruth no ill I sue!
Good sooth my bones, whenas they hear thy name, *
    Quail as birds quailed when Nisus o’er them flew:[72]
Ah! say to them who blame my love that I *
    Will love that face fair cousin till I die.”

And when he had ended his verses he said to his mother, “I have no longer a place in my aunt’s house nor among these people, but I will go forth from the palace and abide in the corners of the city.” So he and his mother left the court; and, having sought an abode in the neighbourhood of the poorer sort, there settled; but she used to go from time to time to King Sasan’s palace and thence take daily bread for herself and her son. As this went on Kuzia Fakan took her aside one day and said to her, “Alas, O my naunty, how is it with thy son?” Replied she, “O my daughter, sooth to say, he is tearful-eyed and heavy hearted, being fallen into the net of thy love.” And she repeated to her the couplets he had made; whereupon Kuzia Fakan wept and said, “By Allah! I rebuked him not for his words, nor for ill-will to him, but because I feared for him the malice of foes. Indeed my passion for him is double that he feeleth for me; my tongue may not describe my yearning for him; and were it not for the extravagant wilfulness of his words and the wanderings of his wit, my father had not cut off from him favours that besit, nor had decreed unto him exclusion and prohibition as fit. However, man’s days bring nought but change, and patience in all case is most becoming: peradventure He who ordained our severance will vouchsafe us reunion!” And she began versifying in these two couplets,

“O son of mine uncle! same sorrow I bear, *

And suffer the like of thy cark and thy care
Yet hide I from man what I suffer for pine; *
And hide it too, and such secret to man never bare!"

When his mother heard this from her, she thanked her and blessed her: then she left her and acquainted her son with what she had said; whereupon his desire for her increased and he took heart, being eased of his despair and the turmoil of his love and care. And he said, "By Allah, I desire none but her!"; and he began improvising,

"Leave this blame, I will list to no flout of my foe! *
I divulged a secret was told me to keep:
He is lost to my sight for whose union I yearn, *
And I watch all the while he can slumber and sleep."

So the days and nights went by whilst Kanmakan lay tossing upon coals of fire,[73] till he reached the age of seventeen; and his beauty had waxt perfect and his wits were at their brightest. One night, as he lay awake, he communed with himself and said, "Why should I keep silence till I waste away and see not my lover? Fault have I none save poverty; so, by Allah, I am resolved to remove me from this region and wander over the wild and the word; for my position in this city is a torture and I have no friend nor lover therein to comfort me; wherefore I am determined to distract myself by absence from my native land till I die and take my rest after this shame and tribulation." And he began to improvise and recited these couplets,

"Albeit my vitals quiver 'neath this ban; *
Before the foe myself I'll ne'er unman!
So pardon me, my vitals are a writ *
Whose superscription are my tears that ran:
Heigh ho! my cousin seemeth Houri may *
Come down to earth by reason of Rizwan:
'Scapes not the dreadful sword lunge of her look *
Who dares the glancing of those eyne to scan:
O'er Allah's wide spread world I'll roam and roam, *
And from such exile win what bread I can

Yes, o'er broad earth I'll roam and save my soul, *
All but her absence bear ing like a man
With gladsome heart I'll haunt the field of fight, *
And meet the bravest Brave in battle van!"

So Kanmakan fared forth from the palace barefoot and he walked in a short sleeved gown, wearing on his head a skull cap of felt[74] seven years old and carrying a scone three days stale, and in the deep glooms of night betook himself to the portal of al-Arij of Baghdad. Here he waited for the gate being opened and when it was opened, he was the first to pass through it; and he went out at random and wandered about the wastes night and day. When the dark hours came, his mother sought him but found him not; whereupon the world waxt strait upon her for all that it was great and wide, and she took no delight in aught of weal it supplied. She looked for him a first day and a second day and a third day till ten days were past, but no news of him reached her. Then her breast became contracted and she shrieked and shrilled, saying, "O my son! O my darling! thou hast revived my regrets. Sufficed not what I endured, but thou must depart from my home? After thee I care not for food nor joy in sleep, and naught but tears and mourning are left me. O my son, from what land shall I call thee? And what town hath given thee refuge?" Then her sobs burst out, and she began repeating these couplets,

"Well learnt we, since you left, our grief and sorrow to
sustain, * While bows of severance shot their shafts in
many a railing rain:
They left me, after girthing on their selles of corduwayne *
To fight the very pangs of death while spanned they sandy
plain:
Mysterious through the nightly gloom there came the moan of
dove; * A ring dove, and replied I, 'Cease thy plaint, how
durst complain?'
If, by my life, her heart, like mine, were full of pain and
pine * She had not decks her neck with ring nor sole with
ruddy stain.[75]
Fled is mine own familiar friend, bequeathing me a store *

Of parting pang and absence ache to suffer evermore."

Then she abstained from food and drink and gave herself up to excessive tear shedding and lamentation. Her grief became public property far and wide and all the people of the town and country side wept with her and cried, "Where is thine eye, O Zau al- Makan?" And they bewailed the rigours of Time, saying, "Would Heaven we knew what hath befallen Kanmakan that he fled his native town, and chased himself from the place where his father used to fill all in hungry case and do justice and grace?" And his mother redoubled her weeping and wailing till the news of Kanmakan's departure came to King Sasan. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fortieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that came to King Sasan the tidings of the departure of Kanmakan, through the Chief Emirs who said to him, "Verily he is the son of our Sovran and the seed of King Omar bin al-Nu'uman and it hath reached us that he hath exiled himself from the land." When King Sasan heard these words, he was wroth with them and ordered one of them to be hanged by way of silencing him, whereat the fear of him fell upon the hearts of all the other Grandees and they dared not speak one word. Then he called to mind all the kindness that Zau al-Makan had done him, and how he had charged him with the care of his son; wherefore he grieved for Kanmakan and said, "Needs must I have search made for him in all countries." So he summoned Tarkash and bade him choose an hundred horse and wend with them in quest of the Prince. Accordingly he went out and was absent ten days, after which he returned and said, "I can learn no tidings of him and have hit on no trace of him, nor can any tell me aught of him." Upon this King Sasan repented him of that which he had done by the Prince; whilst his mother abode in unrest continual nor would patience come at her call: and thus passed over her twenty days in heaviness all. This is how it fared with these; but as regards Kanmakan, when he left Baghdad, he went forth perplexed about his case and knowing not whither he should go: so he fared on alone through the desert for three days and saw neither footman nor horseman; withal, his sleep fled and his wakefulness redoubled, for he pined after his people and his homestead. He ate of the herbs of the earth and drank of its flowing waters and siesta'd under its trees at hours of noontide heats, till he turned from that road to another way and, following it other three days, came on the fourth to a land of green leas, dyed with the hues of plants and trees and with sloping valley sides made to please, abounding with the fruits of the earth. It had drunken of the cups of the cloud, to the sound of thunders rolling loud and the song of the turtle-dove gently sough'd, till its hill slopes were brightly verdant and its fields were sweetly fragrant. Then Kanmakan recalled his father's city Baghdad, and for excess of emotion he broke out into verse,

"I roam, and roaming hope I to return; *
    Yet of returning see not how or when:
I went for love of one I could not win, *
    Nor way of 'scaping ills that pressed could ken."

When he ended his recital he wept, but presently he wiped away his tears and ate of the fruits of the earth enough for his present need. Then he made the Wuzu-ablution and prayed the ordained prayers which he had neglected all this time; and he sat resting in that place through the livelong day. When night came he slept and ceased not sleeping till midnight, when he awoke and heard a human voice declaiming these couplets,

"What's life to me, unless I see the pearly sheen *
    Of teeth I love, and sight that glorious mien?
Pray for her Bishops who in convents reign, *
    Vying to bow before that heavenly queen.
And Death is lighter than the loved one's wrath, *
    Whose phantom haunts me seen in every scene:
O joy of cup companions, when they meet, *
    And loved and lover o'er each other lean!
E'en more in time of spring, the lord of flowers, *
    When fragrant is the world with bloom and green:
Drainer of vine-juice! up wi' thee, for now *

Earth is a Heaven where sweet waters flow.[76] “

When Kanmakan heard these distichs his sorrows surged up; his tears ran down his cheeks like freshets and flames of fire darted into his heart. So he rose to see who it was that spake these words, but saw none for the thickness of the gloom; whereupon passion increased on him and he was frightened and restlessness possessed him. He descended from his place to the sole of the valley and walked along the banks of the stream, till he heard the same voice sighing heavy sighs and reciting these couplets,

“Tho’ ’tis thy wont to hide thy love perforce, *
Yet weep on day of parting and divorce!
Twixt me and my dear love were plighted vows; *
Pledge of reunion, fonder intercourse:
With joy inspires my heart and deals it rest *
Zephyr, whose coolness doth desire enforce.
O Sa’adá,[77] thinks of me that anklet wearer? *
Or parting broke she troth without remorse?
And say! shall nights foregather us, and we *
Of suffered hardships tell in soft discourse?
Quoth she, ‘Thou’rt daft for us and fey’; quoth I, *
‘ ‘Sain thee! how many a friend hast turned to corse!’
If taste mine eyes sweet sleep while she’s away, *
Allah with loss of her these eyne accurse.
O wounds in vitals mine! for cure they lack *
Union and dewy lips’ sweet theriack.”[78]

When Kanmakan heard this verse again spoken by the same voice yet saw no one, he knew that the speaker was a lover like unto himself, debarred from union with her who loved him; and he said to himself, “‘Twere fitting that this man should lay his head to my head and become my comrade in this my strangerhood.”[79] Then he hailed the speaker and cried out to him, saying, “O thou who farest in sombrest night, draw near to me and tell me thy tale haply thou shalt find me one who will succour thee in thy sufferings.” And when the owner of the voice heard these words, he cried out, “O thou that respondest to my complaint and wouldest hear my history, who art thou amongst the knights? Art thou human or Jinni? Answer me speedily ere thy death draw near for I have wandered in this desert some twenty days and have seen no one nor heard any voice but thy voice." At these words Kanmakan said to himself, "This one's case is like my case, for I, even I, have wandered twenty days, nor during my wayfare have I seen man or heard voice:" and he added, "I will make him no answer till day arise." So he was silent, and the voice again called out to him, saying, "O thou that callest, if thou be of the Jinn fare in peace and, if thou be man, stay awhile till the day break stark and the night flee with the dark." The speaker abode in his place and Kanmakan did likewise and the twain in reciting verses never failed, and wept tears that railed till the light of day began loom and the night departed with its gloom. Then Kanmakan looked at the other and found him to be of the Badawi Arabs, a youth in the flower of his age; clad in worn clothes and bearing in baldrick a rusty sword which he kept sheathed, and the signs of love longing were apparent on him. He went up to him and accosted him and saluted him, and the Badawi returned the salute and greeted him with courteous wishes for his long life, but somewhat despised him, seeing his tender years and his condition, which was that of a pauper. So he said to him, "O youth, of what tribe art thou and to whom art thou kin among the Arabs; and what is thy history that thou goest by night, after the fashion of knights? Indeed thou spakest to me in the dark words such as are spoken of none but doughty cavaliers and lion- like warriors; and now I hold thy life in hand. But I have compassion on thee by reason of thy green years; so I will make thee my companion and thou shalt go with me, to do me service." When Kanmakan heard him speak these unseemly words, after showing him such skill in verse, he knew that he despised him and would presume with him; therefore he answered him with soft and well-chosen speech, saying, "O Chief of the Arabs, leave my tenderness of age and tell me why thou wanderest by night in the desert reciting verses. Thou talkest, I see, of my serving thee; who then art thou and what moved thee to talk this wise?" Answered he, "Hark ye, boy! I am Sabbáh, son of Rammáh bin Humám.[80] My people are of the Arabs of Syria and I have a cousin, Najmah highs, who to all that look on her brings delight. And when my father died I was brought up in the house of his brother, the father of Najmah; but as soon I grew up and my uncle's daughter became a woman, they secluded her from me and me from her, seeing that I was poor and without money in pouch. Then the Chiefs of the Arabs and the heads of the tribes rebuked her sire, and he was abashed before them and consented to give me my cousin, but upon condition that I should bring him as her dower fifty head of horses and fifty dromedaries which travel ten days[81] without a halt and fifty camels laden with wheat and a like number laden with barley, together with ten black slaves and ten handmaids. Thus the weight he set upon me was beyond my power to bear; for he exacted more than the marriage settlement as by law established. So here am I, travelling from Syria to Irak, and I have passed twenty days with out seeing other than thyself; yet I mean to go to Baghdad that I may ascertain what merchant men of wealth and importance start thence. Then will I fare forth in their track and loot their goods, and I will slay their escort and drive off their camels with their loads. But what manner of man art thou?" Replied Kanmakan, "Thy case is like unto my case, save that my evil is more grievous than thine ill; for my cousin is a King's daughter and the dowry of which thou hast spoken would not content her people, nor would they be satisfied with the like of that from me." Quoth Sabbah, "Surely thou art a fool or thy wits for excess of passion are gathering wool! How can thy cousin be a King's daughter? Thou hast no sign of royal rank on thee, for thou art but a mendicant." Re joined Kanmakan, "O Chief of the Arabs, let not this my case seem strange to thee; for what happened, happened;[82] and if thou desire proof of me, I am Kanmakan, son of King Zau al-Makan, son of King Omar bin al-Nu'uman Lord of Baghdad and the realm Khorasan; and Fortune banned me with her tyrant ban, for my father died and my Sultanate was taken by King Sasan. So I fled forth from Baghdad secretly, lest I be seen of any man, and have wandered twenty days without any but thyself to scan. So now I have discovered to thee my case, and my story is as thy story and my need as thy need." When Sabbab heard this, he cried out, "O my joy, I have attained my desire! I will have no loot this day but thy self; for since thou art of the seed of Kings and hast come out in beggar's garb, there is no help but thy people will seek thee; and, if they find thee in any one's power, they will ransom thee with monies galore. So show me thy back, O my lad, and walk before me." Answered Kanmakan, "O brother of the Arabs, act not on this wise, for my people will not buy me with silver nor with gold, not even with a copper dirham; and I am a poor man, having with me neither much nor little, so cease then to be upon this track and take me to thy comrade. Fare we forth for the land of Irak and wander over the world, so haply we may win dower and marriage portion, and we may seek and enjoy our cousins' kisses and embraces when we come back." Hearing this, Sabbah waxed angry; his arrogance and fury redoubled and he said, "Woe to thee! Dost thou bandy words with me, O vilest of dogs that be? Turn thee thy back, or I will come down on thee with clack!" Kanmakan smiled and answered, "Why should I turn my back for thee? Is there no justice in thee? Dost thou not fear to bring blame upon the Arab men by driving a man like myself captive, in shame and disdain, before thou hast proved him on the plain, to know if he be a warrior or of cowardly strain?" Upon this Sabbah laughed and replied, "By Allah, a wonder! Thou art a boy in years told, but in talk thou art old. These words should come from none but a champion doughty and bold: what wantest thou of justice?" Quoth Kanmakan, "If thou wilt have me thy captive, to wend with thee and serve thee, throw down thine arms and put off thine outer gear and come on and wrestle with me; and whichever of us throw his opponent shall have his will of him and make him his boy." Then Sabbah laughed and said, "I think this waste of breath de noteth the nearness of thy death." Then he arose and threw down his weapon and, tucking up his skirt, drew near unto Kanmakan who also drew near and they gripped each other. But the Badawi found that the other had the better of him and weighed him down as the quintal downweighs the diner; and he looked at his legs firmly planted on the ground, and saw that they were as two minarets[83] strongly based, or two tent-poles in earth encased, or two mountains which may not he displaced. So he acknowledged himself to be a failure and repented of having come to wrestle with him, saying in himself, "Would I had slain him with my weapon!" Then Kanmakan took hold of him and mastering him, shook him till the Badawi thought his bowels would burst in his belly, and he broke out, “Hold thy hand, O boy!” He heeded not his words, but shook him again and, lifting him from the ground, made with him towards the stream, that he might throw him therein: where upon the Badawi roared out, saying, “O thou valiant man, what wilt thou do with me?”[84] Quoth he, “I mean to throw thee into this stream: it will bear thee to the Tigris. The Tigris will bring thee to the river Isa and the Isa will carry thee to the Euphrates, and the Euphrates will land thee in shine own country; so thy tribe shall see thee and know thy manly cheer and how thy passion be sincere.” Then Sabbah cried aloud and said, “O Champion of the desert lair, do not with me what deed the wicked dare but let me go, by the life of thy cousin, the jewel of the fair!” Hearing this, Kanmakan set him on the ground, but when he found him self at liberty, he ran to his sword and targe and taking them up stood plotting in himself treachery and sudden assault on his adversary.[85] The Prince kenned his intent in his eye and said to him, “I con what is in thy heart, now thou hast hold of thy sword and thy targe. Thou hast neither length of hand nor trick of wrestling, but thou thinkest that, wert thou on thy mare and couldst wheel about the plain, and ply me with thy skene, I had long ago been slain. But I will give thee thy requite, so there may be left in thy heart no despite; now give me the targe and fall on me with thy whinger; either thou shalt kill me or I shall kill thee.” “Here it is,” answered Sabbah and, throwing him the targe, bared his brand and rushed at him sword in hand; Kanmakan hent the buckler in his right and began to fend himself with it, whilst Sabbah struck at him, saying at each stroke, “This is the finishing blow!” But it fell harmless enow, for Kanmakan took all on his buckler and it was waste work, though he did not reply lacking the wherewithal to strike and Sabbah ceased not to smite at him with his sabre, till his arm was weary. When his opponent saw this, he rushed upon him and, hugging him in his arms, shook him and threw him to the ground. Then he turned him over on his face and pinioned his elbows behind him with the baldrick of his sword, and began to drag him by the feet and to make for the river. Thereupon cried Sabbah, “What wilt thou do with me, O youth, and cavalier of the age and brave of the plain where battles rage?” Answered he, “Did I not tell thee that it was my intent to send thee by the river to thy kin and to thy tribe, that thy heart be not troubled for them nor their hearts be troubled for thee, and lest thou miss thy cousin's bride-feast!" At this Sabbah shrieked aloud and wept and screaming said, "Do not thus, O champion of the time's braves! Let me go and make me one of thy slaves!" And he wept and wailed and began reciting these verses,

"I'm estranged fro' my folk and estrangement's long: *
  Shall I die amid strangers? Ah, would that I kenned!
I die, nor my kinsman shall know where I'm slain, *
  Die in exile nor see the dear face of my friend!"

Thereupon Kanmakan had compassion on him and said, "Make with me a covenant true and swear me an oath to be a comrade as due and to bear me company wheresoever I may go." "'Tis well," replied Sabbah and swore accordingly. Then Kanmakan loosed him and he rose and would have kissed the Prince's hand; but he forbade him that. Then the Badawi opened his scrip and, taking out three barley scones, laid them before Kanmakan and they both sat down on the bank of the stream to eat.[86] When they had done eating together, they made the lesser ablution and prayed; after which they sat talking of what had befallen each of them from his people and from the shifts of Time. Presently said Kanmakan, "Whither dost thou now intend?" Replied Sabbah, "I purpose to repair to Baghdad, thy native town, and abide there, until Allah vouchsafe me the marriage portion." Rejoined the other, "Up then and to the road! I tarry here." So the Badawi farewelled him and took the way for Baghdad, whilst Kanmakan remained behind, saying to himself, "O my soul, with what face shall I return pauper- poor? Now by Allah, I will not go back empty handed and, if the Almighty please, I will assuredly work my deliverance." Then he went to the stream and made the Wuzu-washing and when prostrating he laid his brow in the dust and prayed to the Lord, saying, "O Allah! Thou who sendest down the dew, and feedest the worm that homes in the stone, I beseech Thee vouchsafe me my livelihood of Thine Omnipotence and the Grace of Thy benevolence!" Then he pronounced the salutation which closes prayer; yet every road appeared closed to him. And while he sat turning right and left, behold, he espied a horseman making towards him with bent back and reins slack. He sat up right and after a time reached the Prince; and the stranger was at the last gasp and made sure of death, for he was grievously wounded when he came up; the tears streamed down his cheeks like water from the mouths of skins, and he said to Kanmakan, "O Chief of the Arabs, take me to thy friendship as long as I live, for thou wilt not find my like; and give me a little water though the drinking of water be harmful to one wounded, especially whilst the blood is flowing and the life with it. And if I live, I will give thee what shall heal thy penury and thy poverty: and if I die, mayst thou be blessed for thy good intent." Now under that horseman was a stallion, so noble a Rabite[87] the tongue fails to describe him; and as Kanmakan looked at his legs like marble shafts, he was seized with a longing and said to himself, "Verily the like of this stallion[88] is not to be found in our time." Then he helped the rider to alight and entreated him in friendly guise and gave him a little water to swallow; after which he waited till he had taken rest and addressed him, saying, "Who hath dealt thus with thee?" Quoth the rider, "I will tell thee the truth of the case. I am a horse thief and I have busied myself with lifting and snatching horses all my life, night and day, and my name is Ghassan, the plague of every stable and stallion. I heard tell of this horse, that he was in the land of Roum, with King Afridun, where they had named him Al-Katúl and surnamed him Al Majnún.[89] So I journeyed to Constantinople for his sake and watched my opportunity and whilst I was thus waiting, there came out an old woman, one highly honoured among the Greeks, and whose word with them is law, by name Zat al-Dawahi, a past mistress in all manner of trickery. She had with her this steed and ten slaves, no more, to attend on her and the horse; and she was bound for Baghdad and Khorasan, there to seek King Sasan and to sue for peace and pardon from ban. So I went out in their track, longing to get at the horse,[90] and ceased not to follow them, but was unable to come by the stallion, because of the strict guard kept by the slaves, till they reached this country and I feared lest they enter the city of Baghdad. As I was casting about to steal the stallion lo! a great cloud of dust arose on them and walled the horizon. Presently it opened and disclosed fifty horsemen, gathered together to waylay merchants on the highway, and their captain, by name Kahrdash, was a lion in daring and dash; a furious lion who layeth knights flat as carpets in battle-crash." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Forty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the wounded rider spake thus to Kanmakan, "Then came out the same Kahrdash, and fell on the old woman and her men and bore down upon them bashing them, nor was it long before they bound her and the ten slaves and bore off their captives and the horse, rejoicing. When I saw this, I said to myself, 'My pains were in vain nor did I attain my gain.' However, I waited to see how the affair would fare, and when the old woman found herself in bonds, she wept and said to the captain, Kahrdash, 'O thou doughty Champion and furious Knight, what wilt thou do with an old woman and slaves, now that thou hast thy will of the horse?' And she beguiled him with soft words and she sware that she would send him horses and cattle, till he released her and her slaves. Then he went his way, he and his comrades, and I followed them till they reached this country; and I watched them, till at last I found an opportunity of stealing the horse, whereupon I mounted him and, drawing a whip from my wallet, struck him with it. When the robbers heard this, they came out on me and surrounded me on all sides and shot arrows and cast spears at me, whilst I stuck fast on his back and he fended me with hoofs and forehand,[91] till at last he bolted out with me from amongst them like unerring shaft or shooting star. But in the stress and stowre I got sundry grievous wounds and sore; and, since that time, I have passed on his back three days without tasting food or sleeping aught, so that my strength is down brought and the world is become to me as naught. But thou hast dealt kindly with me and hast shown ruth on me; and I see thee naked stark and sorrow hath set on thee its mark, yet are signs of wealth and gentle breeding manifest on thee. So tell me, what and whence art thou and whither art thou bound?" Answered the Prince, "My name is Kanmakan, son of Zau al-Makan, son of King Omar bin al-Nu'uman. When my father died and an orphan lot was my fate, a base man seized the throne and became King over small and great." Then he told him all his past from first to last; and the horse thief said to him for he pitied him, “By Allah, thou art one of high degree and exceeding nobility, and thou shalt surely attain estate sublime and become the first cavalier of thy time. If thou can lift me on horseback and mount thee behind me and bring me to my own land, thou shalt have honour in this world and a reward on the day of band calling to band,[92] for I have no strength left to steady myself; and if this be my last day, the steed is thine alway, for thou art worthier of him than any other.” Quoth Kanmakan, By Allah, if I could carry thee on my shoulders or share my days with thee, I would do this deed without the steed! For I am of a breed that loveth to do good and to succour those in need; and one kindly action in Almighty Allah’s honour averteth seventy calamities from its doer. So make ready to set out and put thy trust in the Subtle, the All-Wise.” And he would have lifted him on to the horse and fared forward trusting in Allah Aider of those who seek aid, but the horse thief said, “Wait for me awhile. Then he closed his eyes and opening his hands, said I testify that there is no god but the God, and I testify that Mohammed is the Apostle of God!” And he added, “O glorious One, pardon me my mortal sin, for none can pardon mortal sins save the Immortal!” And he made ready for death and recited these couplets,

“I have wronged mankind, and have ranged like wind *
    O’er the world, and in wine-cups my life has past:
I’ve swum torrent course to bear off the horse; *
    And my guiles high places on plain have cast.
Much I’ve tried to win and o’er much my sin, *
    And Katul of my winnings is most and last:
I had hoped of this steed to gain wish and need, *
    But vain was the end of this journey vast.
I have stolen through life, and my death in strife *
    Was doomed by the Lord who doth all forecast
And I’ve toiled these toils to their fatal end *
    For an orphan, a pauper sans kith or friend!”

And when he had finished his verses he closed his eyes and opened his mouth; then with a single death-rattling he left this world.

Thereupon Kanmakan rose and dug a grave and laid him in the dust; after which he went up to the steed and kissed him and wiped his face and joyed with exceeding joy, saying, “None hath the fellow of this stallion; no, not even King Sasan.” Such was the case with Kanmakan; but as regards King Sasan, presently news came to him that the Wazir Dandan had thrown off his allegiance, and with him half the army who swore that they would have no King but Kanmakan: and the Minister had bound the troops by a solemn covenant and had gone with them to the Islands of India and to Berber-land and to Black-land;[93] where he had levied armies from far and near, like unto the swollen sea for fear and none could tell the host’s van from its rear. And the Minister was resolved to make for Baghdad and take the kingdom in ward and slay every soul who dare retard, having sworn not to return the sword of war to its sheath, till he had made Kanmakan King. When this news came to Sasan, he was drowned in the sea of appal, knowing that the whole state had turned against him, great and small; and his trouble redoubled and his care became despair. So he opened his treasuries and distributed his monies among his officers; and he prayed for Kanmakan’s return, that he might draw his heart to him with fair usage and bounty; and make him commander of those troops which ceased not being faithful to him, so might he quench the sparks ere they became a flame. Now when the news of this reached Kanmakan by the merchants, he returned in haste to Baghdad on the back of the aforesaid stallion, and as King Sasan sat perplexed upon his throne he heard of the coming of Kanmakan; whereupon he despatched all the troops and head-men of the city to meet him. So all who were in Baghdad fared forth and met the Prince and escorted him to the palace and kissed the thresholds, whilst the damsels and the eunuchs went in to his mother and gave her the fair tidings of his return. She came to him and kissed him between the eyes, but he said to her, “O mother mine, let me go to my uncle King Sasan who hath overwhelmed me with weal and boon.” And while he so did, all the palace-people and head-men marvelled at the beauty of the stallion and said, “No King is like unto this man.” So Kanmakan went in to King Sasan and saluted him as he rose to receive him; and, kissing his hands and feet, offered him the horse as a present. The King greeted him, saying, “Well come and welcome to my son Kanmakan! By Allah, the world hath been straitened on me by reason of thine absence, but praised be Allah for thy safety!” And Kanmakan called down blessings on him. Then the King looked at the stallion, Al-Katul highs, and knew him for the very horse he had seen in such and such a year whilst beleaguering the Cross-worshippers of Constantinople with Kanmakan’s sire, Zau al- Makan, that time they slew his uncle Sharrkan. So he said to the Prince, “If thy father could have come by this courser, he would have bought it with a thousand blood horses: but now let the honour return to the honourable. We accept the steed and we give him back to thee as a gift, for to him thou hast more right than any wight, being knightliest of knights.” Then King Sasan bade bring forth for him dresses of honour and led horses and appointed to him the chief lodging in the palace, and showed him the utmost affection and honour, because he feared the issue of the Wazir Dandan’s doings. At this Kanmakan rejoiced and shame and humiliation ceased from him. Then he went to his house and, going to his mother, asked, “O my mother, how is it with the daughter of my uncle?” Answered she, “By Allah, O my son, my concern for thine absence hath distracted me from any other, even from thy beloved; especially as she was the cause of thy strangerhood and thy separation from me.” Then he complained to her of his case, saying, “O my mother, go to her and speak with her; haply she will vouchsafe me her sight to see and dispel from me this despondency.” Replied his mother, “Idle desires abase men’s necks; so put away from thee this thought that can only vex; for I will not wend to her nor go in to her with such message.’ Now when he heard his mother’s words he told her what said the horse-thief concerning Zat al-Dawahi, how the old woman was then in their land purposing to make Baghdad, and added, “It was she who slew my uncle and my grandfather, and needs must I avenge them with man-bote, that our reproach be wiped out.” Then he left her and repaired to an old woman, a wicked, whorish, pernicious beldam by name Sa’adánah and complained to her of his case and of what he suffered for love of his cousin Kuzia Fakan and begged her to go to her and win her favour for him. “I hear and I obey,” answered the old hag and leaving him betook herself to Kuzia Fakan’s palace, that she might intercede with her in his behalf. Then she returned to him and said, “Of a truth Kuzia Fakan saluteth thee and promiseth to visit thee this night about midnight.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Forty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old woman came to Kanmakan and said, “Of a truth the daughter of thine uncle saluteth thee and she will visit thee this night about midnight;” he rejoiced and sat down to await the fulfilment of his cousin’s promise. But before the hour of night she came to him, wrapped in a veil of black silk, and she went in to him and aroused him from sleep, saying, “How canst thou pretend to love me, when thou art sleeping heart-free and in complete content?” So he awoke and said, “By Allah, O desire of my heart, I slept not but in the hope that thine image might visit my dreams!” Then she chid him with soft words and began versifying in these couplets,

“Hadst thou been leaf in love’s loyalty, *
Ne’er haddest suffered sleep to seal those eyne:
O thou who claimest lover-loyalty, *
Treading the lover’s path of pain and pine!
By Allah, O my cousin, never yet *
Did eyes of lover sleep such sleep indign.”

Now when he heard his cousin’s words, he was abashed before her and rose and excused himself. Then they embraced and complained to each other of the anguish of separation; and they ceased not thus till dawn broke and day dispersed itself over the horizon; when she rose preparing to depart. Upon this Kanmakan wept and sighed and began improvising these couplets,

“O thou who deignest come at sorest sync, *
Whose lips those teeth like necklaced pearls enshrine’
I kissed him[94] thousand times and clips his waist, *
And spent the night with cheek to cheek close li’en
Till to depart us twain came dawning day, *
Like sword edge drawn from sheath in radiant line.”

And when he ended his poetry, Kuzia Fakan took leave of him and returned to her palace. Now certain of her damsels became aware of her secret, and one of these slave girls disclosed it to King Sasan, who went into Kuzia Fakan and, drawing his sabre upon her, would have slain her: but her mother Nuzhat al-Zaman entered and said to him, “By Allah, do her no harm, for if thou hurt her, the report will be noised among the folk and thou shalt become a reproach amongst the Kings of the age! Know thou that Kanmakan is no son of adultery, but a man of honour and nobility, who would not do aught that could shame him, and she was reared with him. So be not hasty; for verily the report is spread abroad, among all the palace-people and all the folk of Baghdad, how the Wazir Dandan hath levied armies from all countries and is on his way hither to make Kanmakan King.” Quoth Sasan, “By Allah, needs must I cast him into such calamity that neither earth shall support him nor sky shall shadow him! I did but speak him fair and show him favour because of my lieges and my lords, lest they incline to him; but right soon shalt thou see what shall betide.” Then he left her and went out to order the affairs of the realm. Such, then, was the case with King Sasan; but as regards Kanmakan, on the next day he came in to his mother and said, “O my mother! I am resolved to ride forth a raiding and a looting: and I will cut the road of caravans and lift horses and flocks, negroes and white slaves and, as soon as I have collected great store and my case is bettered galore, I will demand my cousin Kuzia Fakan in marriage of my uncle Sasan.” Replied she, “O my son, of a truth the goods of men are not ready to hand like a scape-camel;[95] for on this side of them are sword-strokes and lance-lungings and men that eat the wild beast and lay countries waste and chase lynxes and hunt lions.” Quoth he, Heaven forefend that I turn back from my resolve, till I have won to my will! Then he despatched the old woman to Kuzia Fakan, to tell her that he was about to set out in quest of a marriage settle ment befitting her, saying to the beldam, “Thou needs must pray her to send me an answer.” “I hear and I obey,” replied the old woman and going forth, presently returned with Kuzia Fakan’s reply, which was, “She will come to thee at midnight.” So he abode awake till one half of the night was passed, when restlessness get hold on him, and before he was aware she came in to him, saying, “My life be thy ransom from wakefulness!” and he sprang up to receive her, exclaiming, “O desire of my heart, my life be thy redemption from all ills and evils!” Then he acquainted her, with his intent, and she wept: but he said, “Weep not, O daughter of my uncle; for I beseech Him who decreed our separation to vouchsafe us reunion and fair understanding.” Then Kanmakan, having fixed a day for departure, went in to his mother and took leave of her, after which came he down from his palace and threw the baldrick of his sword over his shoulder and donned turband and face-veil; and mounting his horse, Al-Katul, and looking like the moon at its full, he threaded the streets of Baghdad, till he reached the city gate. And behold, here he found Sabbah bin Rammah coming out of town; and his comrade seeing him, ran to his stirrup and saluted him. He returned his salutation, and Sabbah asked him, “O my brother, how camest thou by this good steed and this sword and clothes, whilst I up to present time have gotten nothing but my sword and target?” Answered Kanmakan, “The hunter returneth not but with quarry after the measure of his intention. A little after thy departure, fortune came to me: so now say, wilt thou go with me and work thine intent in my company and journey with me in this desert?” Replied Sabbah, “By the Lord of the Ka’abah, from this time forth I will call thee naught but ‘my lord’!” Then he ran on before the horse, with his sword hanging from his neck and his budget between his shoulder blades, and Kanmakan rode a little behind him; and they plunged into the desert, for a space of four days, eating of the gazelles and drinking water of the springs. On the fifth day they drew near a high hill, at whose foot was a spring-encampment[96] and a deep running stream; and the knolls and hollows were filled with camels and cattle and sheep and horses, and little children played about the pens and folds. When Kanmakan saw this, he rejoiced at the sight and his breast was filled with delight; so he addressed himself to fight, that he might take the camels and the cattle, and said to Sabbah, “Come, fall with us upon this loot, whose owners have left it unguarded here, and do we battle for it with near and far, so haply may fall to our lot of goods some share.” Replied Sabbah, “O my lord, verily they to whom these herds belong be many in number; and among them are doughty horsemen and fighting footmen; and if we venture lives in this derring do we shall fall into danger great and neither of us will return safe from this bate; but we shall both be cut off by fate and leave our cousins desolate.” Then Kanmakan laughed and knew that he was a coward; so he left him and rode down the rise, intent on rapine, with loud cries and chanting these couplets,

“Oh a valiant race are the sons of Nu’umán, *
    Braves whose blades shred heads of the foeman-clan![97]
A tribe who, when tried in the tussle of war, *
    Taketh prowess stand in the battle-van:
In their tents safe close gaberlunzie’s eyne, *
    Nor his poverty’s ugly features scan:
And I for their aidance sue of Him *
    Who is King of Kings and made soul of man.”

Then he rushed upon the she-camels like a he-camel in rut and drove all before him, sheep and cattle, horses and dromedaries. Therewith the slaves ran at him with their blades so bright and their lances so long; and at their head rode a Turkish horseman who was indeed a stout champion, doughty in fray and in battle chance and skilled to wield the nut-brown lance and the blade with bright glance. He drove at Kanmakan, saying, “Woe to thee! Knewest thou to whom these herds belong thou hadst not done this deed. Know that they are the goods of the band Grecian, the champions of the ocean and the troop Circassian; and this troop containeth none but valiant wights numbering an hundred knights, who have cast off the allegiance of every Sultan. But there hath been stolen from them a noble stallion, and they have vowed not to return hence without him.” Now when Kanmakan heard these words, he cried out, saying, “O villain, this I bestride is the steed whereof ye speak and after which ye seek, and ye would do battle with me for his sake’ So come out against me, all of you at once, and do you dourest for the nonce!” Then he shouted between the ears of Al-Katul who ran at them like a Ghul; whereupon Kanmakan let drive at the Turk[98] and ran him through the body and threw him from his horse and let out his life; after which he turned upon a second and a third and a fourth, and also of life bereft them. When the slaves saw this, they were afraid of him, and he cried out and said to them, "Ho, sons of whores, drive out the cattle and the stud or I will dye my spear in your blood." So they untethered the beasts and began to drive them out; and Sabbah came down to Kanmakan with loud voicing and hugely rejoicing; when lo! there arose a cloud of dust and grew till it walled the view, and there appeared under of it riders an hundred, like lions anhungered. Upon this Sabbah took flight, and fled to the hill's topmost height, leaving the assailable site, and enjoyed sight of the fight, saying, "I am no warrior; but in sport and jest I delight."[99] Then the hundred cavaliers made towards Kanmakan and surrounded him on all sides, and one of them accosted him, saying, "Whither goest thou with this loot?" Quoth he, "I have made it my prize and am carrying it away; and I forbid you from it, or come on to the combat, for know ye that he who is before you is a terrible lion and an honourable champion, and a sword that cutteth wherever it turneth!" When the horseman heard these words, he looked at Kanmakan and saw that he was a knight like a mane-clad lion in might, whilst his face was as the full moon rising on its fourteenth night, and velour shone from between his eyes. Now that horseman was the captain of the hundred horse, and his name was Kahrdash; and when he saw in Kanmakan the perfection of cavalarice with surpassing gifts of comeliness, his beauty reminded him of a beautiful mistress of his whose name was Fátin.[100] Now she was one of the fairest of women in face, for Allah had given her charms and grace and noble qualities of all kinds, such as tongue faileth to explain and which ravish the hearts of men. Moreover, the cavaliers of the tribe feared her prowess and all the champions of that land stood in awe of her high spirit; and she had sworn that she would not marry nor let any possess her, except he should conquer her in combat (Kahrdash being one of her suitors); and she said to her father, "None shall approach me, save he be able to deal me over throw in the field and stead of war thrust and blow. Now when this news reached Kahrdash, he scorned to fight with a girl, fearing reproach; and one of his intimates said to him, "Thou art complete in all conditions of beauty and goodliness; so if thou contend with her, even though she be stronger than thou, thou must needs overcome her; for when she seeth thy beauty and grace, she will be discomfited before thee and yield thee the victory; for verily women have a need of men e'en as thou heedest full plain." Nevertheless Kahrdash refused and would not contend with her, and he ceased not to abstain from her thus, till he met from Kanmakan that which hath been set down. Now he took the Prince for his beloved Fatin and was afraid; albeit indeed she loved him for what she had heard of his beauty and velour; so he went up to him and said, "Woe to thee,[101] O Fatin! Thou comest here to show me thy prowess; but now alight from thy steed, that I may talk with thee, for I have lifted these cattle and have foiled my friends and waylaid many a brave and man of knightly race, all for the sake of thy beauty of form and face, which are without peer. So marry me now, that Kings' daughters may serve thee and thou shalt become Queen of these countries." When Kanmakan heard these words, the fires of wrath flamed up in him and he cried out, "Woe to thee, O Persian dog! Leave Fatin and thy trust and mistrust, and come to cut and thrust, for eftsoon thou shalt lie in the dust;" and so saying, he began to wheel about him and assail him and feel the way to prevail. But when Kahrdash observed him closely he knew him for a doughty knight and a stalwart in fight; and the error of his thought became manifest to him, whenas he saw the green down on his cheeks dispread like myrtles springing from the heart of a rose bright-red. And he feared his onslaught and quoth he to those with him, "Woe to you! Let one of you charge down upon him and show him the keen sword and the quivering spear; for know that when many do battle with one man it is foul shame, even though he be a kemperly wight and an invincible knight." Upon this, there ran at Kanmakan a horseman like a lion in fight, mounted on a black horse with hoofs snow-white and a star on his forehead, the bigness of a dirham, astounding wit and sight, as he were Abjar, which was Antar's destrier, even as saith of him the poet,

"The courser chargeth on battling foe, *
    Mixing heaven on high with the earth down low:[102]
As though the Morning had blazed his brow, *
    And he rends her vitals as quid pro quo."

He rushed upon Kanmakan, and they wheeled about awhile, giving blows and taking blows such as confound the sprite and dim the sight; but Kanmakan was the first to smite the foe a swashing blow, that rove through turband and iron skull cap and reached his head, and he fell from his steed with the fall of a camel when he rolleth over. Then a second came out to him and offered battle, and in like guise a third, a fourth and a fifth, and he did with them all as he had done with the first. Thereupon the rest at once rushed upon him, for indeed they were roused by rage and wild with wrath; but it was not long before he had pierced them all with the point of his spear. When Kahrdash saw these feats of arms, he feared death; for he knew that the youth was stoutest of heart and concluded that he was unique among knights and braves; and he said to Kanmakan, "I waive my claim to thy blood and I pardon thee the blood of my comrades: so take what thou wilt of the cattle and wend thy ways, for thy firmness in fight moveth my ruth and life is better for thee than death." Replied Kanmakan, "Thou lackest not of the generosity of the noble! but leave this talk and run for thy life and reck not of blame nor think to get back the booty; but take the straight path for thine own safety." Thereupon Kahrdash waxed exceeding wroth, and rage moved him to the cause of his death; so he said to Kanmakan, "Woe to thee, an thou knew who I be, thou wouldst not wield these words in the open field. I am the lion to bash known as Kahrdash, he who spoileth great Kings and waylayeth all travellings and seizeth the merchants' preciousest things. And the steed under thee is that I am seeking; and I call upon thee to tell me how thou camest by him and hast him in thy keeping." Replied Kan makan, "Know thou that this steed was being carried to my uncle King Sasan, under the escort of an ancient dame high in rank attended by ten slaves, when thou fellest upon her and tookest the horse from her; and I have a debt of blood against this old woman for the sake of my grandfather King Omar bin al Nu'uman and my uncle King Sharrkan.' "Woe to thee!" quoth Kahrdash, "who is thy father, O thou that hast no lawful mother?" Quoth he, "Know that I am Kanmakan, bin Zau al-Makan, son of Omar bin al-Nu'uman." But when Kahrdash heard this address he said, "Thy perfection cannot be denied, nor yet the union in thee of knightly virtue and seemlihead," and he added, "Fare in peace, for thy father showed us favour." Rejoined Kanmakan, "By

Allah, I will not deign to honour thee, O wretch I disdain, so far as to overcome thee in battle plain!" Upon this the Badawi waxed wroth and they drove at each other, shouting aloud, whilst their horses pricked their ears and raised their tails.[103] And they ceased not clashing together with such a crash that it seemed to each as if the firmament were split in sunder, and they continued to strive like two rams which butt, smiting and exchanging with their spears thrust and cut. Presently Kahrdash foined at Kanmakan; but he evaded it and rejoined upon him and so pierced him through the breast that the spearhead issued from his back. Then he collected the horses and the plunder, and he cried out to the slaves, saying, "Up and be driving as hard as ye may!" Hearing this, down came Sabbah and, accosting Kanmakan, said to him, "Right well hast thou dight, O Knight of the age! Verily I prayed Allah for thee and the Lord heard my prayer." Then he cut off Kahrdash's head and Kanmakan laughed and said, "Woe to thee, O Sabbah! I thought thee a rider fain of fight." Quoth the Badawi, "Forget not thy slave in the division of the spoil, so haply therewith I may marry my cousin Najmah." Answered Kanmakan, "Thou shalt assuredly share in it, but now keep watch over the booty and the slaves." Then he set out for his home and he ceased not journeying night and day till he drew near Baghdad city, and all the troops heard of Kanmakan, and saw what was his of loot and cattle and the horse-thief's head on the point of Sabbah's spear. Also (for he was a noted highwayman) the merchants knew Kahrdash's head and rejoiced, saying, "Allah hath rid mankind of him!"; and they marvelled at his being slain and blessed his slayer. Thereupon all the people of Baghdad came to Kanmakan, seeking to know what adventures had befallen him, and he told them what had passed, whereupon all men were taken with awe of him and the Knights and champions feared him. Then he drove his spoil under the palace walls; and, planting the spear heel, on whose point was Kahrdash's head, over against the royal gate, gave largesse to the people of Baghdad, distributing horses and camels, so that all loved him and their hearts inclined to him. Presently he took Sabbah and lodged him in a spacious dwelling and gave him a share of the loot; after which he went in to his mother and told her all that had befallen him in his last journey. Meanwhile the news of him reached the

King, who rose from his levee and, shutting himself up with his chief officers, said to them, "Know ye that I desire to reveal to you my secret and acquaint you with the hidden facts of my case. And further know that Kanmakan will be the cause of our being uprooted from this kingdom, our birth place; for he hath slain Kahrdash, albeit he had with him the tribes of the Kurds and the Turks, and our affair with him will end in our destruction, seeing that the most part of our troops are his kinsmen and ye weet what the Wazir Dandan hath done; how he disowneth me, after all I have shown him of favours; and after being faithful he hath turned traitor. Indeed it hath reached me that he hath levied an army in the provinces and hath planned to make Kanmakan Sultan, for that the Sultanate was his father's and his grandfather's; and assuredly he will slay me without mercy." Now when the Lords of the Realm heard from him these words, they replied, "O King, verily this man.[104] is unequal to this, and did we not know him to have been reared by thee, not one of us would approve of him. And know thou that we are at thy commandment; if thou desire his death, we will do him die; and if thou wilt remove him, we will remove him." Now when King Sasan heard this, he said, "Verily, to slay him were wise; but needs must ye swear an oath to it." So all sware to slay Kanmakan without giving him a chance; to the end that, when the Wazir Dandan should come and hear of his death, his force might be weakened and he fail of his design. When they had made this compact and covenant with trim, the king honoured them with the highest honours and presently retired to his own apartments. But the officers deserted him and the troops refused their service and would neither mount nor dismount until they should espy what might befal, for they saw that most of the army was with the Wazir Dandan. Presently, the news of these things came to Kuzia Fakan and caused her much concern; so that she sent for the old woman who was wont to carry messages between her and her cousin, and when she came, bade her go to him and warn him of the plot. Whereto he replied, "Bear my salutation to the daughter of my uncle and say to her, 'Verily the earth is of Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!), and He giveth it as heritage to whomsoever of His servants He willeth.' How excellent is the saying of the sayer,

‘Allah holds Kingship! Whoso seeks without Him victory *
Shall be cast out, with soul condemned to Hell of low degree:
Had I or any other man a finger breadth of land, *
The rule were changed and men a twain of partner gods would see.’”

Then the old woman returned to Kuzia Fakan and told her his reply and acquainted her that he abode in the city. Meanwhile, King Sasan awaited his faring forth from Baghdad, that he might send after him some who would slay him; till it befel one morning that Kanmakan went out to course and chase, accompanied by Sabbah, who would not leave him night or day. He caught ten gazelles and among them one that had tender black eyes and turned right and left: so he let her go and Sabbah said to him, “Why didst thou free this gazelle?” Kanmakan laughed and set the others free also, saying, “It is only humane to release gazelles that have young, and this one turned not from side to side, save to look for her fawns: so I let her go and released the others in her honour.” Quoth Sabbah, “Do thou release me, that I may go to my people.” At this Kanmakan laughed and smote him with the spear butt on the breast, and he fell to the ground squirming like a snake. Whilst they were thus doing, behold, they saw a dust cloud spireing high and heard the tramp of horses; and presently there appeared under it a plump of knights and braves. Now the cause of their coming was this. Some of his followers had acquainted King Sasan with Kanmakan’s going out to the chase; so he sent for an Emir of the Daylamites, called Jámi’ and twenty of his horsemen; and gave them money and bade them slay Kanmaken. So when they drew near the Prince, they charged down upon him and he met them in mid-charge and killed them all, to the last man. And behold, King Sasan took horse and riding out to meet his people, found them all slain, whereat he wondered and turned back; when lo! the people of the city laid hands on him and bound him straitly. As for Kanmakan after that adventure, he left the place behind him and rode onward with Sabbah the Badawi. And the while he went, lo! he saw a youth sitting at the door of a house on his road and saluted him. The youth returned his greeting and, going into the house, brought out two platters, one full of soured milk and the other of brewis swimming in clarified butter; and he set the platter before Kanmakan, saying “Favour us by eating of our victual.” But he refused and quoth the young man to him, “What aileth thee, O man, that thou wilt not eat?” Quoth Kanmakan, “I have a vow upon me.” The youth asked, “What is the cause of thy vow?”, and Kanmakan answered, “Know that King Sasan seized upon my kingdom like a tyrant and an enemy, although it was my father’s and my grand father’s before me; yet he became master of it by force after my father’s death and took no count of me, by reason of my tender years. So I have bound myself by a vow to eat no man’s victual till I have eased my heart of my foe.” Rejoined the youth, “Rejoice, for Allah hath fulfilled thy vow. Know that he hath been prisoned in a certain place and methinks he will soon die.” Asked Kanmakan, “In what house is he confined?” “Under yon high dome,” answered the other. The Prince looked and saw the folk entering and buffeting Sasan, who was suffering the agonies of the dying. So he arose and went up to the pavilion and noted what was therein; after which he returned to his place and, sitting down to the proferred victual, ate what sufficed him and put the rest in his wallet. Then he took seat in his own place and ceased not sitting till it was dark night and the youth, whose guest he was slept; when he rose and repaired to the pavilion wherein Sasan was confined. Now about it were dogs guarding it, and one of them sprang at him; so he took out of his budget a bit of meat and threw it to him. He ceased not casting flesh to the dogs till he came to the pavilion and, making his way to where King Sasan was, laid his hand upon his head; whereupon he said in a loud voice, “Who art thou?” He replied, “I am Kanmakan whom thou stravest to kill; but Allah made thee fall into thine evil device. Did it not suffice thee to take my kingdom and the kingdom of my father, but thou must purpose to slay me?”[105] And Sasan swore a false oath that he had not plotted his death and that the bruit was untrue. So Kanmakan forgave him and said to him, “Follow me.” Quoth he, “I cannot walk a single step for weakness.” Quoth Kanmakan, “If the case be thus we will get us two horses and ride forth, I and thou, and seek the open.” So he did as he said, and he took horse with Sasan and rode till day break, when they prayed the dawn prayer and fared on, and ceased not faring till they came to a garden, where they sat down and talked. Then Kanmakan rose to Sasan and said, “Is aught left to set thy heart against me?” “No, by Allah!” replied Sasan. So they agreed to return to Baghdad and Sabbah the Badawi said, “I will go before you, to give folk the fair tidings of your coming.” Then he rode on in advance, acquainting women and men with the good news; so all the people came out to meet Kanmakan with tabrets and pipes; and Kuzia Fakan also came out, like the full moon shining in all her splendour of light through the thick darkness of the night. So Kanmakan met her, and soul yearned to soul and body longed for body. There was no talk among the people of the time but of Kanmakan; for the Knights bore witness of him that he was the most valiant of the folk of the age and said, “It is not right that other than Kanmakan should be our Sultan, but the throne of his grandfather shall revert to him as it began.” Meanwhile Sasan went in to his wife, Nuzhat al-Zaman, who said to him, “I hear that the folk talk of nothing but Kanmakan and attribute to him such qualities as tongue never can.” He replied, “Hearing of a man is not like seeing a man. I have seen him, but have noted in him none of the attributes of perfection. Not all that is heard is said; but folk ape one another in extolling and cherishing him, and Allah maketh his praises to run on the lips of men, so that there incline to him the hearts of the people of Baghdad and of the Wazir Dandan, that perfidious and treacherous man; who hath levied troops from all lands and taketh to himself the right of naming a King of the country; and who chooseth that it shall be under the hand of an orphan ruler whose worth is naught.” Asked Nuzhat al-Zaman, “What then is it that thou purposest to do?”; and the King answered, “I mean to kill him, that the Wazir may be baulked of his intent and return to his allegiance, seeing nothing for it but my service.” Quoth she, “In good sooth perfidy with strangers is a foul thing and how much more with kith and kin! The righteous deed to do would be to marry him to thy daughter Kuzia Fakan and give heed to what was said of old time,

‘An Fate some person ‘stablish o’er thy head, *
  And thou being worthier her choice upbraid,
Yet do him honour due to his estate; *

He'll bring thee weal though far or near thou vade:
Nor speak thy thought of him, else shalt thou be *
Of those who self degrade from honour's grade:
Many Haríms are lovelier than the Bride, *
But Time and Fortune lent the Bride their aid.'"

When Sasan heard these her words and comprehended what her verse intended, he rose from her in anger and said, "Were it not that thy death would bring on me dishonour and disgrace, I would take off thy head with my blade and make an end of thy breath." Quoth she, "Why art thou wroth with me? I did but jest with thee." Then she rose to him and bussed his head and hands, saying, "Right is thy foresight, and I and thou will cast about for some means to kill him forthright." When he heard this, he was glad and said, "Make haste and contrive some deceit to relieve me of my grieving: for in my sooth the door of device is straitened upon me!" Replied she, "At once I will devise for thee to do away his life." "How so?" asked he; and she answered, "By means of our female slave the so-called Bákún." Now this Bakun was past mistress in all kinds of knavery and was one of the most pestilent of old women, in whose religion to abstain from wickedness was not lawful; she had brought up Kuzia Fakan and Kanmakan who had her in so great affection that he used to sleep at her feet. So when King Sasan heard his wife name her, he said, "Right is this recking"; and, sending for the old woman, told her what had passed and bade her cast about to kill Kanmaken, promising her all good. Replied she, "Thy bidding shall be obeyed; but I would have thee, O my lord, give me a dagger[106] which hath been tempered in water of death, that I may despatch him the speedilier for thee." Quoth Sasan, "And welcome to thee!"; and gave her a hanger that would devance man's destiny. Now this slave women had heard stories and verses and had learned by rote great store of strange sayings and anecdotes: so she took the dagger and went out of the room, considering how she could compass his doom. Then she repaired to Kanmakan, who was sitting and awaiting news of tryst with the daughter of his uncle, Kuzia Fakan; so that night his thought was taken up with her and the fires of love for her raged in his heart. And while he was thus, behold, the slave woman, Bakun, went in to him and said, “Union time is at hand and the days of disunion are over and gone.” Now when he heard this he asked, “How is it with Kuzia Fakan?”; and Bakun answered, “Know that her time is wholly taken up with love of thee.” At this he rose and doffing his outer clothes put them on her and promised her all good. Then said she, “Know that I mean to pass this night with thee, that I may tell thee what talk I have heard and console thee with stories of many passion distraughts whom love hath made sick.” “Nay,” quoth he, “rather tell me a tale that will gladden my heart and gar my cares depart.” “With joy and good will,” answered she; then she took seat by his side (and that poniard under her dress) and began to say: “Know thou that the pleasantest thing my ears ever heard was

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

The Tale of the Hashish Eater.

A certain man loved fair women, and spent his substance on them, till he became so poor that nothing remained to him; the world was straitened upon him and he used to go about the market- streets begging his daily bread. Once upon a time as he went along, behold, a bit of iron nail pierced his finger and drew blood; so he sat down and wiping away the blood, bound up his finger. Then he arose crying out, and fared forwards till he came to a Hammam and entering took off his clothes, and when he looked about him he found it clean and empty. So he sat him down by the fountain-basin, and ceased not pouring water on his head, till he was tired. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Forty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the man sat down by the fountain basin and ceased not pouring water on his head till he was tired. Then he went out to the room in which was the cistern of cold water; and seeing no one there, he found a quiet corner and taking out a piece of Hashísh,[107] swallowed it. Presently the fumes mounted to his brain and he rolled over on to the marble floor. Then the Hashish made him fancy that a great lord was shampooing him and that two slaves stood at his head, one bearing a bowl and the other washing gear and all the requisites of the Hammam. When he saw this, he said in himself, “Meseemeth these here be mistaken in me; or else they are of the company of us Hashish-eaters.”[108] Then he stretched out his legs and he imagined that the bathman said to him, “O my master, the time of thy going up to the Palace draweth near and it is to-day thy turn of service.” At this he laughed and said to himself, “As Allah willeth,[109] O Hashish!” Then he sat and said nothing, whilst the bathman arose and took him by the hand and girt his middle with a waist-cloth of black silk, after which the two slaves followed him with the bowls and gear, and they ceased not escorting him till they brought him into a cabinet, wherein they set incense and perfumes a-burning. He found the place full of various kinds of fruits and sweet-scented flowers, and they sliced him a watermelon and seated him on a stool of ebony, whilst the bathman stood to wash him and the slaves poured water on him; after which they rubbed him down well and said, “O our lord, Sir Wazir, health to thee forever!” Then they went out and shut the door on him; and in the vanity of phantasy he arose and removed the waist-cloth from his middle, and laughed till he well nigh fainted. He gave not over laughing for some time and at last quoth he to himself, “What aileth them to address me as if I were a Minister and style me Master, and Sir? Haply they are now blundering; but after an hour they will know me and say, This fellow is a beggar; and take their fill of cuffing me on the neck.” Presently, feeling hot he opened the door, whereupon it seemed to him that a little white slave and an eunuch came in to him carrying a parcel. Then the slave opened it and brought out three kerchiefs of silk, one of which he threw over his head, a second over his shoulders and a third he tied round his waist. Moreover, the eunuch gave him a pair of bath- clogs,[110] and he put them on; after which in came white slaves and eunuchs and sup ported him (and he laughing the while) to the outer hall, which he found hung and spread with magnificent furniture, such as be seemeth none but kings; and the pages hastened up to him and seated him on the divan. Then they fell to kneading him till sleep overcame him; and he dreamt that he had a girl in his arms. So he kissed her and set her between his thighs; then, sitting to her as a man sitteth to a woman,[111] he took yard in hand and drew her towards him and weighed down upon her, when lo! he heard one saying to him, “Awake, thou ne’er-do-well! The noon hour is come and thou art still asleep.” He opened his eyes and found him self lying on the merge of the cold-water tank, amongst a crowd of people all laughing at him; for his prickle was at point and the napkin had slipped from his middle. So he knew that all this was but a confusion of dreams and an illusion of Hashish and he was vexed and said to him who had aroused him, “Would thou hadst waited till I had put it in!” Then said the folk, “Art thou not ashamed, O Hashish-eater, to be sleeping stark naked with stiff standing tool?” And they cuffed him till his neck was red. Now he was starving, yet forsooth had he savoured the flavour of pleasure in his dream. When Kanmakan heard the bondwoman’s tale, he laughed till he fell backward and said to Bakun, “O my nurse, this is indeed a rare story and a delectable; I never heard the like of this anecdote. Say me! hast more?” “Yes,” replied she, and she ceased not to tell him merry adventures and laughable absurdities, till sleep overcame him. Then she sat by his head till the most part of the night was past, when she said to herself, “It is time to profit by the occasion.” So she sprang to her feet and unsheathed the hanger and rushing up to Kanmakan, was about to cut his throat when behold, his mother came in upon the twain. As soon as Bakun saw her, she rose in respect and advanced to meet her, and fear get hold of her and she fell a- trembling, as if he had the ague. When his mother looked at her she marvelled to see her thus and aroused her son, who awoke and found her sitting at his head. Now the cause of her coming was that Kuzia Fakan overheard the conversation and the concert to kill Kanmakan, and she said to his mother, “O wife of my uncle, go to thy son, ere that wicked whore Bakun murther him;” and she told her what had passed from first to last. So she fared forth at once, and she thought of naught and stayed not for aught till she went in to her son at the very moment when Bakun was about to slay him in his sleep. When he awoke, he said to his mother, “O my mother, indeed thou comest at a good time, for nurse Bakun hath been with me this night.” Then he turned to Bakun and asked her, “By my life! knowest thou any story better than those thou hast told me?” She answered, “And where is what I have told thee compared with what I will tell thee?; but however better it be, it must be told at another time.” Then she rose to depart, hardly believing, in her escape albeit he said, “Go in peace!” for she perceived by her cunning that his mother knew what had occurred. So she went her way; whereupon his mother said to him, “O my son, blessed be this night, for that Almighty Allah hath delivered thee from this accursed woman.” “And how so?” enquired he, and she told him the story from beginning to end. Quoth he, “O my mother, of a truth the live man findeth no slayer, and though slain he shall not die; but now it were wiser that we depart from amongst these enemies and let Allah work what He will.” So, when day dawned he left the city and joined the Wazir Dandan, and after his departure, certain things befel between King Sasan and Nuzhat al-Zaman, which compelled her also to quit the city and join herself to them;

and presently they were met by all the high officers of King Sasan who inclined to their party. Then they sat in counsel together devising what they should do, and at last all agreed upon a razzia into the land of Roum there to take their revenge for the death of King Omar bin al-Nu'uman and his son Sharrkan. So they set out with this in tent and, after sundry adventures (which it were tedious to tell as will appear from what follows), they fell into the hands of Rúmzán, King of the Greeks. Next morning, King Rumzan caused Kanmakan and the Wazir Dandan and their company to be brought before him and, when they came, he seated them at his side, and bade spread the tables of food. So they ate and drank and took heart of grace, after having made sure of death, when they were summoned to the King's presence; and they had said to one another, "He hath not sent for us but to slay us." And when they were comforted the King said, "In truth I have had a dream, which I related to the monks, and they said, "None can expound it to thee save the Wazir Dandan." Quoth the Minister, "Weal it was thou didst see in thy dream, O King of the age!" Quoth the King, "O Wazir, I dreamt that I was in a pit which seemed a black well where multitudes were tormenting me; and I would have risen, but when springing up I fell on my feet and could not get out of that same pit. Then I turned and saw therein a girdle of gold and I stretched out my hand to take it; but when I raised it from the ground, I saw it was two girdles. So I girt my middle with them both and behold, the girdles became one girdle; and this, O Wazir, is my dream and what I saw when my sleep was deepest." Said Dandan, "O our Lord the Sultan! know that this thy dream denoteth thou hast a brother or a brother's son or an uncle's son or other near kinsman of thy flesh and blood whom thou knowest not; withal he is of the noblest of you all." Now when the King heard these words he looked at Kanmakan and Nuzhat al-Zaman and Kuzia Fakan and the Wazir Dandan and the rest of the captives and said to himself, "If I smite these people's necks, their troops will lose heart for the destruction of their chiefs and I shall be able to return speedily to my realm, lest the Kingship pass out of my hands." So having determined upon this he called the Sworder and bade him strike off Kanmakan's head upon the spot and forthright, when lo! up came Rumzan's nurse and said to him, "O auspicious King, what purposest thou?” Quoth he, “I purpose slaughtering these prisoners who are in my power; and after that I will throw their heads among their men: then will I fall upon them, I and all my army in one body, and kill all we can kill and rout the rest: so will this be the decisive action of the war and I shall return speedily to my kingdom ere aught of accident befal among my subjects.” When the nurse heard these words, she came up to him and said in the Frankish tongue, “How canst thou prevail upon thyself to slay thine own brother’s son, and thy sister, and thy sister’s daughter?” When he heard this language, he was wroth with exceeding wrath and said to her, “O accursed woman, didst thou not tell me that my mother was murthered and that my father died by poison? Didst thou not give me a jewel and say to me, ‘Of a truth this jewel was thy father’s?’ Why didst thou not tell me the truth?” Replied she, “All that I told thee is true, but my case and thy case are wonderful and my history and thy his tory are marvellous. My name is Marjanah and thy mother’s name was Abrizah: and she was gifted with such beauty and loveliness and velour that proverbs were made of her, and her prowess was renowned among men of war. And thy father was King Omar bin al-Nu’uman, Lord of Baghdad and Khorasan, without doubt or double dealing or denial. He sent his son Sharrkan on a razzia in company with this very Wazir Dandan; and they did all that men can. But Sharrkan, thy brother, who had preceded the force, separated himself from the troops and fell in with thy mother Queen Abrizah in her palace; and we happened to have sought a place apart in order to wrestle, she and I and her other damsels. He came upon us by chance while we were in such case, and wrestled with thy mother, who overcame him by the power of her splendid beauty and by her prowess. Then she entertained him five days in her palace, till the news of this came to her father, by the old woman Shawahi, surnamed Zat al-Dawahi, whereupon she embraced Al-Islam at the hands of Sharrkan, and he took her and carried her by stealth to Baghdad, and with her myself and Rayhánab and twenty other damsels, all of us having, like her, followed the True Faith. When we came into the presence of thy Father, the King Omar bin al-Nu’uman, and he saw thy mother, Queen Abrizah, he fell in love with her and going in unto her one night, had connection with her, and she conceived by him and became with child of thee. Now thy mother had three jewels which she presented to thy father; and he gave one of them to his daughter, Nuzhat al-Zaman, another to thy brother, Zau al- Makan, and the third to thy brother Sharrkan. This last thy mother took from Sharrkan and kept it for thee. But as the time of her delivery drew near she yearned after her own people and disclosed to me her secret; so I went to a black slave called Al-Ghazban; and, privily telling him our case, bribed him to go with us. Accordingly the negro took us and fled the city with us, thy mother being near her time. But as we approached a desert place on the borders of our own country, the pangs of labour came upon thy mother. Then the slave proved himself a lustful villain and approaching her sought of her a shameful thing; whereupon she cried out at him with a loud cry, and was sore affrighted at him. In the excess of her fright she gave birth to thee at once, and at that moment there arose, in the direction of our country, a dust-cloud which towered and flew till it walled the view. Thereupon the slave feared for his life; so he smote Queen Abrizah with his sword and slew her in his fury; then mounting his horse he went his way. Soon after his going, the dust lifted and discovered thy grandfather, King Hardub, Lord of Grćcia-land, who, seeing thy mother (and his daughter) lying slain on the plain, was sorely troubled with a distress that redoubled, and questioned me of the manner of her death and the cause of her secretly quitting her father's realm. So I told him all that had passed, first and last; and this is the cause of the feud between the people of the land of the Greeks and the people of the city of Baghdad. Then we bore off thy murthered mother and buried her; and I took thee and reared thee, and hung about thy neck the jewel which was with Queen Abrizah. But, when being grown up thou camest to man's estate, I dared not acquaint thee with the truth of the matter, lest such information stir up a war of blood revenge between you. More over, thy grandfather had enjoined me to secrecy, and I could not gainsay the commandment of thy mother's father, Hardub, King of the Greeks. This, then, is the cause of my concealment and the reason why I forbore to inform thee that thy father was King Omar bin al-Nu'uman; but when thou camest to the throne, I told thee what thou knowest; and I durst not reveal to thee the rest till this moment, O

King of the Age! So now I have discovered to thee my secret and my proof, and I have acquainted thee with all I know; and thou reckest best what is in thy mind." Now all the captives had heard the slave woman Marjanah, nurse to King Rumzan, speaking as she spake; when Nuzhat al-Zaman, without stay or delay, cried out, saying, "This King Rumzan is my brother by my father, King Omar bin al-Nu'uman, and his mother was Queen Abrizah, daughter of King Hardub, Lord of the Greeks; and I know this slave-woman Marjanah right well." With this, trouble and perplexity got hold upon Rumzan and he caused Nuzhat al-Zaman to be brought up to him forthright. When he looked upon her, blood yearned to blood and he questioned her of his history. She told him the tale and her story tallied with that of Marjanah, his nurse; whereupon the King was assured that he was, indeed and without a doubt, of the people of Irak; and that King Omar bin al-Nu'uman was his father. So without losing time he caused his sister to be unpinioned, and Nuzhat al-Zaman came up to him and kissed his hands, whilst her eves ran over with tears. The King west also to see her weeping, and brotherly love possessed him and his heart yearned to his brother's son Sultan Kanmakan. So he sprang to his feet and, taking the sword from the Sworder's hands (whereat the captives made sure of death), he caused them to be set close to him and he cut their bonds with the blade and said to his nurse Marjanah, "Explain the matter to this company, even as thou hast explained it to me." Replied she, "O King, know that this Shayth is the Wazir Dandan and he is the best of witnesses to my story, seeing that he knoweth the facts of the case." Then she turned to the captives and repeated the whole story to them on the spot and forthright, and in presence of the Kings of the Greeks and the Kings of the Franks; whereupon Queen Nuzhat al-Zaman and the Wazir Dandan and all who were prisoners with them confirmed her words. When Marjanah, the bond-woman, had finished, chancing to look at Sultan Kanmakan she saw on his neck the third jewel, fellow to the two which were with Queen Abrizah; and, recognising it, she cried so loud a cry, that the palace re-echoed it and said to the King, "O my son, know that now my certainty is still more assured, for this jewel that is about the neck of yonder captive is the fellow to that I hung to thy neck; and, these being the two, this captive is indeed thy brother's son, Kanmakan." Then the slave women Marjanah turned to Kanmakan and said to him, "Let me see that jewel, O King of the Age!"; so he took it from his neck and handed it to her. Then she asked Nuzhat al-Zaman of the third jewel and she gave it to her; and when the two were in her hand she delivered them to King Rumzan, and the truth and proof were made manifest to him; and he was assured that he was indeed Sultan Kanmakan's uncle and that his father was King Omar bin al- Nu'uman. So he rose at once and on the spot and, going up to the Wazir Dandan, threw his arms round his neck; then he embraced King Kanmakan and the twain cried a loud cry for excess of joy. The glad news was blazed abroad without delay; and they beat the tabrets and cymbals, whilst the shawms sounded and the people held high festival. The armies of Irak and Syria heard the clamour of rejoicing among the Greeks; so they mounted to the last man, and King Zibl Khan also took horse saying to himself, "Would I knew what can be the cause of this clamour and rejoicing in the army of the Franks and the Greeks!" Then the army of Irak dight itself for fight and advanced into the plain and place of cut and foin. Presently, King Rumzan turned him round and saw the army deployed and in preparing for battle employed, so he asked the cause thereof and was told the state of the case. Thereupon he bade his niece and brother's daughter, Kuzia Fakan, return at once and forthright to the troops of Syria and Irak and acquaint them with the plight that had betided and how it was come to light that King Rumzan was uncle to Sultan Kanmakan. She set out, putting away from her sorrows and troubles and, coming to King Zibl Khan,[112] saluted him and told him all that had passed of the good accord, and how King Rumzan had proved to be her uncle and uncle of Kanmakan. And when she went in to him she found him tearful eyed, in fear for the captive Emirs and Princes; but when he heard what had passed, from first to last, the Moslem's sadness was abated and they joyed with the more gladness. Then King Zibl Khan and all his officers and his retinue took horse and followed Princess Kuzia Fakan till they reached the pavilion of King Rumzan; and when entering they found him sitting with his nephew, Sultan Kanmakan. Now he had taken counsel with the Wazir Dandan concerning King Zibl Khan and had agreed to commit to his charge the city of

Damascus of Sham and leave him King over it as he before had been while they themselves entered Irak. Accordingly, they confirmed him in the vice royalty of Damascus of Syria, and bade him set out at once for his government; so he fared forth with his troops and they rode with him a part of the way to bid him farewell. Then they returned to their own places whereupon, the two armies foregathered and gave orders for the march upon Irak; but the Kings said one to other, “Our hearts will never be at rest nor our wrath cease to rage till we have taken our wreak of the old woman Shawahi, surnamed Zat al-Dawahi, and wiped away our shame and blot upon our honour.” Thereupon King Rumzan and his nephew set out, surrounded by their Nobles and Grandees; and indeed Kanmakan rejoiced in his uncle, King Rumzan, and called down blessings on nurse Marjanah who had made them known to each other. They fared on and ceased not faring till they drew near their home Baghdad, and when the Chief Chamberlain, Sasan, heard of their approach, he came out to meet them and kissed the hand of King Rumzan who bestowed on him a dress of honour. Then the King of Roum sat down on the throne and seated by his side his nephew Sultan Kanmakan, who said to him, “O my uncle, this Kingdom befitteth none but thee.” Replied Rumzan, “Allah be my refuge and the Lord forbid that I should supplant thee in thy Kingdom!” Upon this the Wazir Dandan counselled them to share the throne between the two, ruling each one day in turn; and with this they were well satisfied. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Forty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the two Kings agreed each to rule one day in turn: then made they feasts and offered sacrifices of clean beasts and held high festival; and they abode thus awhile, whilst Sultan Kanmakan spent his nights with his cousin Kuzia Fakan. And after that period, as the two Kings sat rejoicing in their condition and in the happy ending of their troubles, behold, they saw a cloud of dust arise and tower till it walled the world from their eyes. And out of it came a merchant shrieking and crying aloud for succour and saying, “O Kings of the Age! how cometh it that I woned safely in the land of the Infidels and I am plundered in your realm, though it be the biding place of justice[113] and peace?” Then King Rumzan went up to him and questioned him of his case and he replied, “I am a merchant and, like other merchants, I have been long absent from my native land, travelling in far countries for some twenty years; and I have a patent of exemption from the city of Damascus which the Viceroy, King Sharrkan (who hath found mercy) wrote me, for the cause that I had made him gift of a slave-girl. Now as I was drawing near my home, having with me an hundred loads of rarities of Hind, when I brought them near Baghdad, which be the seat of your sovereignty and the place of your peace and your justice, out there came upon me wild Arabs and Kurds[114] in band gathered together from every land; and they slew my many and they robbed my money and this is what they have done me.” Then the trader wept in presence of King Rumzan, saying that he was an old man and infirm; and he bemoaned himself till the King felt for him and had compassion on him; and likewise did King Kanmakan and they swore that they would sally forth upon the thieves. So they set out amid an hundred horse, each reckoned worth thou sands of men, and the merchant went before them to guide them in the right way; and they ceased not faring on all that day and the livelong night till dawnbreak, when they came to a valley abounding in rills and shady with trees. Here they found the foray dispersed about the valley, having divided that merchant’s bales among them; but there was yet some of the goods left. So the hundred horsemen fell upon them and surrounded them on all sides, and King Rumzan shouted his war cry, and thus also did his nephew Kanmakan, and ere long they made prize of them all, to the number of near three hundred horsemen, banded together of the refuse of rascality.[115] They took what they could find of the merchant’s goods and, binding them tightly, brought them to Baghdad, where King Rumzan and his nephew, King Kanmakan, sat down together on one throne and, passing the prisoners in review before them, questioned them of their case and their chiefs. They said, “We have no chiefs but these three men and it was they who gathered us together from all corners and countries.” The Kings said to them, “Point out to us your headmen!”; and, when this was done, they bade lay hands on the leaders and set their comrades free, after taking from them all the goods in their possession and restoring them to the merchant, who examined his stuffs and monies and found that a fourth of his stock was missing. The Kings engaged to make good the whole of his loss, where upon the trader pulled out two letters, one in the handwriting of Sharrkan, and the other in that of Nuzhat al-Zaman; for this was the very merchant who had bought Nuzhat al-Zaman of the Badawi, when she was a virgin, and had forwarded her to her brother Sharrkan; and that happened between them which happened.[116] Hereupon King Kanmakan examined the letters and recognised the handwriting of his uncle Sharrkan, and, having heard the history of his aunt, Nuzhat al- Zaman, he went in to her with the second letter written by her to the merchant who had lost through her his monies; Kanmakan also told her what had befallen the trader from first to last. She knew her own handwriting and, recognising the merchant, despatched to him guest gifts and commended him to her brother and nephew, who ordered him largesse of money and black slaves and pages to wait on him; besides which Nuzhat al-Zaman sent him an hundred thousand dirhams in cash and fifty loads of merchandise and presented to him other rich presents. Then she sent for him and when he came, she went up to him and saluted him and told him that she was the daughter of King Omar bin al- Nu'uman and that her brother was King Rumzan and that King Kanmakan was her nephew. Thereupon the merchant rejoiced with great joy, and congratulated her on her safety and on her re- union with her brother, and kissed her hands thanking her for her bounty, and said to her, "By Allah! a good deed is not lost upon thee!" Then she withdrew to her own apartment and the trader sojourned with them three days, after which he took leave of them and set out on his return march to the land of Syria. Thereupon the two Kings sent for the three robber chiefs who were of the highway men, and questioned them of their case, when one of them came forward and said, "Know ye that I am a Badawi who am wont to lie in wait, by the way, to snatch small children[117] and virgin girls and sell them to merchants; and this I did for many a year until these latter days, when Satan incited me to join yon two gallows birds in gathering together all the riff-raff of the Arabs and other peoples, that we might plunder merchandise and waylay merchants." Said the Kings, "Tell us the rarest of the adventures that have befallen thee in kidnapping children and maidens." Replied he, "O

Kings of the Age, the strangest thing that happened to me was that one day, two-and-twenty years ago, I snatched a girl who belonged to the Holy City; she was gifted with beauty and comeliness, despite that she was but a servant and was clad in threadbare clothes, with a piece of camlet-cloth on her head. So I entrapped her by guile as she came out of the caravanserai; and at that very hour mounting her on a camel, made off with her, thinking to carry her to my own people in the Desert and there set her to pasture the camels and gather their droppings in the valley. But she wept with so sore a weeping that after coming down upon her with blows, I took her and carried her to Damascus city where a merchant saw her with me and, being astounded at her beauty and marvelling at her accomplishments, wished to buy her of me and kept on bidding me more and more for her, till at last I sold her to him for an hundred thousand dirhams. After selling her I heard her display prodigious eloquence; and it reached me that the merchant clothed her in handsome gear and presented her to the Viceroy of Damascus, who gave him three times the price which he had paid to me, and this price, by my life! was but little for such a damsel. This, O Kings of the Age, is the strangest thing that ever befel me." When the two Kings heard her story they wondered thereat, but when Nuzhat al-Zaman heard what the Badawi related, the light became darkness before her face and she cried out and said to her brother Rumzan, "Sure and sans doubt this is the very Badawi who kidnapped me in the Holy City Jerusalem!" Then she told them all that she had endured from him in her stranger hood of hardship, blows, hunger, humiliation, contempt, adding, "And now it is lawful for me to slay him." So saying she seized a sword and made at him to smite him; and behold, he cried out and said, "O Kings of the Age, suffer her not to slay me, till I shall have told you the rare adventures that have betided me." And her nephew Kanmakan said to her, "O my aunt, let him tell us his tale, and after that do with him as thou wilt." So she held her hand and the Kings said to him, "Now let us hear thy history." Quoth he, "O Kings of the Age, if I tell you a rare tale will ye pardon me?" "Yes," answered they. Then the Badawi robber-chief began,

The Tale of Hammad the Badawi.

And he said: — Know ye that a short while ago, I was sore wakeful one night and thought the morn would never dawn; so, as soon as it was break of day I rose, without stay or delay; and, slinging over my shoulder my sword, mounted horse and set my lance in rest. Then I rode out to sport and hunt and, as I went along, a company of men accosted me and asked me whither I was bound I told them and they said, “We will keep thee company.” So we all fared on together, and, whilst we were faring, lo and behold! up started an ostrich and we gave her chase, but she escaped our pursuit and spreading wings ceased not to fly before us (and we following by sight) till she lost us in a desert wherein there was neither grass nor water, nor heard we aught therein save hiss of snake and wail of Jinn and howl of Ghul; and when we reached that place the ostrich disappeared nor could we tell whether she had flown up into the sky or into the ground had gone down. Then we turned our horses’ heads and thought to return; but found that to retrace our steps at that time of burning heat would be toilsome and dangerous; for the sultry air was grievous to us, so that we thirsted with sore thirst and our steeds stood still. We made sure of death; but while we were in this case we suddenly espied from afar a spacious mead where gazelles were frisking Therein was a tent pitched and by the tent side a horse tethered and a spear was planted with head glittering in the sun.[118] Upon this our hearts revived after we had despaired, and we turned our horses’ heads towards that tent making for the meadow and the water which irrigated it; and all my comrades fared for it and I at their head, and we ceased not faring till we reached the mead. Then we alighted at the spring and watered our beasts. But I was seized with a fever of foolish curiosity and went up to the door of that tent, wherein I saw a young man, without hair on his cheeks, who fellowed the new moon; and on his right hand was a slender-waisted maid, as she were a willow-wand. No sooner did I set eyes on her than love get hold upon my heart and I saluted the youth, who returned my greeting. Then said I, “O my brother, tell me who thou art and what to thee is this damsel sitting by thy side?”[119] Thereupon the youth bent his head groundwards awhile, then raised it and replied, “Tell me first who thou art and what are these horsemen with thee?” Answered I, “I am Hammad son of al-Fazari, the renowned knight, who is reckoned among the Arabs as five hundred horse. We went forth from our place this morning to sport and chase and were overcome by thirst; so I came to the door of this tent, thinking haply to get of thee a draught of water.” When he heard these my words, he turned to the fair maiden and said, “Bring this man water and what food there is ready.” So she arose trailing her skirts, whilst the golden bangles tinkled on her ankles and her feet stumbled in her long locks, and she disappeared for a little while. Presently she returned bearing in her right hand a silver vessel full of cold water and in her left hand a bowl brimming with milk and dates, together with some flesh of wild cattle. But I could take of her nor meat nor drink for the excess of my passion, and I applied to her these two couplets, saying,

“It was as though the sable dye[120] upon her palms, *
    Were raven perching on a swathe of freshest snow;
Thou seest Sun and Moon conjoined in her face, *
    While Sun fear-dimmed and Moon fright-pallid show.”

After I had eaten and drunk I said to the youth, “Know thou, O Chief of the Arabs, that I have told thee in all truth who and what I am, and now I would fain have thee do the like by me and tell me the truth of thy case.” Replied the young man, “As for this damsel she is my sister.” Quoth I, “It is my desire that thou give me her to wife of thy free will: else will I slay thee and take her by force.” Upon this, he bowed his head groundwards awhile, then he raised his eyes to me and answered, “Thou sayest sooth in avouching thyself a renowned knight and famed in fight and verily thou art the lion of the desert; but if ye all attack me treacherously and slay me in your wrath and take my sister by force, it will be a stain upon your honour. An you be, as ye aver, cavaliers who are counted among the Champions and reck not the shock of foray and fray, give me a little time to don my armour and sling on my sword and set lance in rest and mount war steed. Then will we go forth into the field of fight, I and you; and, if I conquer you, I will kill you to the last man; but if you overcome me and slay me, this damsel, my sister, is yours." Hearing such words I replied, "This is only just, and we oppose it not." Then I turned back my horse's head (for my love for the damsel waxed hotter and hotter) and returned to my companions, to whom I set forth her beauty and loveliness as also the comeliness of the young man who was with her, together with his velour and strength of soul and how he had avouched himself a match for a thousand horse. Moreover, I described to my company the tent and all the riches and rarities therein and said to them, "Know ye that this youth would not have cut himself off from society and have taken up his abode alone in this place, were he not a man of great prowess: so I propose that whoso slayeth the younker shall take his sister." And they said, "This contenteth us." Then my company armed themselves and mounting, rode to the tent, where we found that the young man had donned his gear and backed his steed; but his sister ran up to him (her veil being drenched with tears), and took hold of his stirrup and cried out, saying, "Alas!" and, "Woe worth the day!" in her fear for her brother, and recited these couplets,

"To Allah will I make my moan of travail and of woe, *
  Maybe Iláh of Arsh[121] will smite their faces with
  affright:
Fain would they slay thee, brother mine, with purpose
  felon-fell; * Albe no cause of vengeance was, nor fault
  forewent the fight.
Yet for a rider art thou known to those who back the steed, *
  And twixt the East and West of knights thou art the prowess
  knight:
Thy sister's honour thou shalt guard though little might be
  hers, * For thou'rt her brother and for thee she sueth
  Allah's might:
Then let not enemy possess my soul nor 'thrall my frame, *
  And work on me their will and treat thy sister with
  despight.
I'll ne'er abide, by Allah's truth, in any land or home *
  Where thou art not, though dight it be with joyance and
  delight

For love and yearning after thee myself I fain will slay, *
    And in the gloomy darksome tomb spread bed upon the clay."

But when her brother heard her verse he wept with sore weeping and turned his horse's head towards his sister and made this answer to her poetry,

"Stand by and see the derring-do which I to-day will show, *
    When meet we and I deal them blows that rend and cleave and split;
E'en though rush out to seek a bout the lion of the war, *
    The stoutest hearted brave of all and eke the best in wit;
To him I'll deal without delay a Sa'alabiyan blow,[122] *
    And dye my cane-spear's joint in blood by wound of foe bespit:
If all I beat not off from thee, O sister, may this frame *
    Be slain, and cast my corpse to birds, for so it would befit:
Yes, for thy dearest sake I'll strike my blows with might and main, * And when we're gone shall this event in many a book be writ."

And when he had ended his verse, he said, "O my sister, give ear to what I shall enjoin on thee"; whereto she replied, "Hearkening and obedience." Quoth he, "If I fall, let none possess thy person;" and thereupon she buffeted her face and said, "Allah forbid, O my brother, that I should see thee laid low and yield myself to thy foe!" With this the youth put out his hand to her and withdrew her veil from her face, whereupon it shone forth as the sun shineth out from the white clouds. Then he kissed her between the eyes and bade her farewell; after which he turned to us and said, "Holla, Knights! Come ye as guests or crave ye cuts and thrusts? If ye come to us as your hosts, rejoice ye in the guest rite; and, if ye covet the shining moon, come ye out against me, knight by knight, into this plain and place of fight." There upon rushed out to him a doughty rider and the young man said to him, "Tell me thy name and thy father's name, for I am under an oath not to slay any whose name tallies with mine and whose father's name is that of my father; and if this be the case with thee, I will give thee up the maid." Quoth the horseman, "My name is Bilál;"[123] and the young man answered him, saying,

"Thou liest when speaking of 'benefits,' while *
    Thou comest to front with shine evillest will
An of prowess thou'rt prow, to my words give ear, *
    I'm he who make' champions in battle-field reel
With keen blade, like the horn of the cusped moon, *
    So 'ware thrust the, shall drill through the duress hill!"

Then they charged down, each at each, and the youth thrust his adversary in the breast so that the lance head issued from his back. With tints, another came out, and the youth cried,

"Ho thou hound, who art rotten with foulness in grain,[124] *
    What high meed is there easy for warrior to gain?
'Tis none save the lion of strain purest pure *
    Who uncareth for life in the battle plain!"

Nor was it long before the youth left him drowned in his blood and cried out, "Who will come forth to me?" So a third horse man rushed out upon the youth and began saying,

"To thee come I forth with my heart a-flame, *
    And summon my friends and my comrades by name:
When thou slewest the chief of the Arabs this day, *
    This day thou remainest the pledge of my claim."

Now when the youth heard this he answered him in these words,

"Thou liest, O foulest of Satans that are, *
    And with easings calumnious thou comest to war
This day thou shalt fall by a death dealing point *
    Where the lances lunge and the scymitars jar!"

Then he so foined him in the breast that the spear-point issued from his back and he cried out, saying, "Ho! will none come out? So a fourth fared forwards and the youth asked him his name and he answered, “My name is Hilál, the New Moon.” And the youth began repeating,

“Thou hast failed who would sink me in ruin sea, *
    Thou who camest in malice with perfidy:
I, whose verses hast heard from the mouth of me, *
    Will ravish thy soul though unknown to thee.”

Then they drave at each other and delivered two cuts, but the youth’s stroke devanced that of the rider his adversary and slew him: and thus he went on to kill all who sallied out against him. Now when I saw my comrades slain, I said to myself, “If I go down to fight with him, I shall not be able to prevail against him; and, if I flee, I shall become a byword of shame among the Arabs.” But the youth gave me no time to think, for he ran at me and dragged me from my saddle and hurled me to the ground. I fainted at the fall and he raised his sword designing to cut off my head; but I clung to his skirts, and he lifted me in his hand as though I were a sparrow. When the maiden saw this, she rejoiced in her brother’s prowess and coming up to him, kissed him between the eyes. Then he delivered me to her, saying, “Take him and look to him and entreat him hospitably, for he is come under our rule.” So she took hold of the collar of my hauberk[125] and led me away by it as one would lead a dog. Then she did off her brother’s coat of mail and clad him in a robe, and set for him a stool of ivory, on which he sat down; and she said to him, “Allah whiten thy honour and prevent from thee the shifts of fortune!” And he answered her with these couplets,

“My sister said, as saw she how I stood *
    In fight, when sun-rays lit my knightlihood
‘Allah assain thee for a Brave of braves *
    To whom in vale bow lions howso wood!’
Quoth I, ‘Go ask the champions of my case, *
    When feared the Lords of war my warrior mood!
My name is famed for fortune and for force, *
    And soared my spirit to such altitude,’

Ho thou, Hammád, a lion hast upstirred, *
    Shall show thee speedy death like viper brood.”

Now when I heard his verse, I was perplexed as to my case and considering my condition and how I was become a captive, I was lowered in my own esteem. Then I looked at the damsel, his sister, and seeing her beauty I said to myself, “’Tis she who caused all this trouble”; and I fell a-marvelling at her loveliness till the tears streamed from my eyes and I recited these couplets,

“Dear friend! ah leave thy loud reproach and blame; *
    Such blame but irks me yet may not alarm:
I’m clean distraught for one whom saw I not *
    Without her winning me by winsome charm
Yestreen her brother crossed me in her love, *
    A Brave stout-hearted and right long of arm.”

Then the maiden set food before her brother and he bade me eat with him, whereat I rejoiced and felt assured that I should not be slain. And when he had ended eating, she brought him a flagon of pure wine and he applied him to it till the fumes of the drink mounted to his head and his face flushed red. Then he turned to me and said, “Woe to thee, O Hammad! dost thou know me or not?” Replied I, “By thy life, I am rich in naught save ignorance!’ Quoth he, “O Hammad, I am ‘Abbád bin Tamím bin Sa’labah and indeed Allah giveth thee thy liberty and leadeth thee to a happy bride and spareth thee confusion.” Then he drank to my long life and gave me a cup of wine and I drank it off; and presently he filled me a second and a third and a fourth, and I drained them all; while he made merry with me and swore me never to betray him. So I sware to him one thousand five hundred oaths that I would never deal perfidiously with him at any time, but that I would be a friend and a helper to him. Thereupon he bade his sister bring me ten suits of silk, so she brought them and laid them on my person, and this dress I have on my body is one of them. Moreover, he made bring one of the best of his she- dromedaries[126] carrying stuffs and provaunt, he bade her also bring a sorrel horse, and when they were brought he gave the whole of them to me. I abode with them three days, eating and drinking, and what he gave me of gifts is with me to this present. At the end of the three days he said to me, “O Hammad, O my brother, I would sleep awhile and take my rest and verily I trust my life to thee; but, if thou see horsemen making hither, fear not, for know that they are of the Banu Sa’labah, seeking to wage war on me.” Then he laid his sword under his head-pillow and slept; and when he was drowned in slumber Iblis tempted me to slay him; so I arose in haste, and drawing the sword from under his head, dealt him a blow that made his head fall from his body. But his sister knew what I had done, and rushing out from within the tent, threw herself on his corpse, rending her raiment and repeating these couplets,

“To kith and kin bear thou sad tidings of our plight; *
    From doom th’ All-wise decreed shall none of men take flight:
Low art thou laid, O brother! strewn upon the stones, *
    With face that mirrors moon when shining brightest bright!
Good sooth, it is a day accurst, thy slaughter-day *
    Shivering thy spear that won the day in many a fight!
Now thou be slain no rider shall delight in steed, *
    Nor man child shall the breeding woman bring to light.
This morn Hammád uprose and foully murthered thee, *
    Falsing his oath and troth with foulest perjury.”

When she had ended her verse she said to me, “O thou of accursed forefathers, wherefore didst thou play my brother false and slay him when he purposed returning thee to thy native land with provisions; and it was his intent also to marry thee to me at the first of the month?” Then she drew a sword she had with her, and planting the hilt in the earth, with the point set to her breast, she bent over it and threw herself thereon till the blade issued from her back and she fell to the ground, dead. I mourned for her and wept and repented when repentance availed me naught. Then I arose in haste and went to the tent and, taking whatever was light of load and weighty of worth, went my way; but in my haste and horror I took no heed of my dead comrades, nor did I bury the maiden and the youth. And this my tale is still more wondrous than the story of the serving-girl I kidnapped from the Holy City, Jerusalem. But when Nuzhat al-Zaman heard these words from the Badawi, the light was changed in her eyes to night. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Nuzhat al-Zaman heard these words from the Badawi, the light was changed in her eyes to night, and she rose and drawing the sword, smote Hammad the Arab between the shoulder-blades so that the point issued from the apple of his throat.[127] And when all present asked her, 'Why hast thou made haste to slay him;" she answered, "Praised be Allah who hath granted me in my life tide to avenge myself with mine own hand!" And she bade the slaves drag the body out by the feet and cast it to the dogs. Thereupon they turned to the two prisoners who remained of the three; and one of them was a black slave, so they said to him, What is thy name, fellow? Tell us the truth of thy case." He replied, "As for me my name is Al-Ghazbán," and acquainted them what had passed between himself and Queen Abrizah, daughter of King Hardub, Lord of Greece, and how he had slain her and fled. Hardly had the negro made an end of his story, when King Rumzan struck off his head with his scymitar, saying, Praise to Allah who gave me life! I have avenged my mother with my own hand." Then he repeated to them what his nurse Marjanah had told him of this same slave whose name was Al-Ghazban; after which they turned to the third prisoner. Now this was the very camel- driver[128] whom the people of the Holy City, Jerusalem, hired to carry Zau al-Makan and lodge him in the hospital at Damascus of Syria; but he threw him down on the ashes midden and went his way. And they said to him, "Acquaint us with thy case and tell the truth." So he related to them all that had happened to him with Sultan Zau al-Makan; how he had been carried from the Holy City, at the time when he was sick, till they made Damascus and he had been thrown into the hospital; how also the Jerusalem folk had paid the cameleer money to transport the stranger to Damascus, and he had taken it and fled after casting his charge upon the midden by the side of the ash-heap of the Hammam. But when he ended his words, Sultan Kanmakan took his sword forthright and cut off his head, saying, "Praised be Allah who hath given me life, that I might requite this traitor what he did with my father, for I have heard this very story from King Zau al-Makan himself." Then the Kings said each to other, "It remaineth only for us to wreak our revenge upon the old woman Shawahi, yclept Zat al-Dawahi, because she is the prime cause of all these calamities and cast us into adversity on this wise. Who will deliver her into our hands that we may avenge ourselves upon her and wipe out our dishonour?" And King Rumzan said, "Needs must we bring her hither." So without stay or delay he wrote a letter to his grandmother, the aforesaid ancient woman, giving her to know therein that he had subdued the kingdoms of Damascus and Mosul and Irak, and had broken up the host of the Moslems and captured their princes, adding, "I desire thee of all urgency to come to me, bringing with thee Queen Sophia, daughter of King Afridun, and whom thou wilt of the Nazarene chiefs, but no armies; for the country is quiet and wholly under our hand." And when she read the letter and recognised the handwriting of King Rumzan, she rejoiced with great joy and forthright equipping herself and Queen Sophia, set out with their attendants and journeyed, without stopping, till they drew near Baghdad. Then she foresent a messenger to acquaint the King of her arrival, whereupon quoth Rumzan, "We should do well to don the habit of the Franks and fare forth to meet the old woman, to the intent that we may be assured against her craft and perfidy." Whereto Kanmakan replied, "Hearing is consenting." So they clad themselves in Frankish clothes and, when Kuzia Fakan saw them, she exclaimed, "By the truth of the Lord of Worship, did I not know you, I should take you to be indeed Franks!" Then they sallied forth with a thousand horse, King Rumzan riding on before them, to meet the old woman. As soon as his eyes fell on hers, he dismounted and walked towards her and she, recognizing him, dismounted also and embraced him, but he pressed her ribs with his hands, till he well nigh broke them. Quoth she, "What is this, O my son?" But before she had done speaking, up came Kanmakan and Dandan; and the horsemen with them cried out at the women and slaves and took them all prisoners. Then the two Kings returned to Baghdad, with their captives, and Rumzan bade them decorate the city which they did for three days, at the end of which they brought out the old woman Shawahi, highs Zat al-Dawahi, with a peaked red turband of palm-leaves on her head, diademed with asses' dung and preceded by a herald proclaiming aloud, "This is the reward of those who presume to lay hands on Kings and the sons of Kings!" Then they crucified her on one of the gates of Baghdad; and, when her companions saw what befel her, all embraced in a body the faith of Al-Islam. As for Kanmakan and his uncle Rumzan and his aunt Nuzhat al-Zaman and the Wazir Dandan, they marvelled at the wonderful events that had betided them and bade the scribes chronicle them in books that those who came after might read. Then they all abode for the remainder of their days in the enjoyment of every solace and comfort of life, till there overtook them the Destroyer of all delights and the Sunderer of all societies. And this is the whole that hath come down to us of the dealings of fortune with King Omar bin al-Nu'uman and his sons Sharrkan and Zau al-Makan and his son's son Kanmakan and his daughter Nuzhat al-Zaman and her daughter Kuzia Fakan. Thereupon quoth Shahryar to Shahrazad, "I desire that thou tell me somewhat about birds;" and hearing this Dunyazad said to her sister, "I have never seen the Sultan light at heart all this while till the present night, and his pleasure garreth me hope that the issue for thee with him may be a happy issue." Then drowsiness overcame the Sultan, so he slept;[129] — And Shahrazad perceived the approach of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Forty-sixth Night,
Shahrazad began to relate, in these words, the tale of

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

THE BIRDS AND BEASTS AND THE CARPENTER[130]

Quoth she, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that in times of yore and in ages long gone before, a peacock abode with his wife on the seashore. Now the place was infested with lions and all manner wild beasts, withal it abounded in trees and streams. So cock and hen were wont to roost by night upon one of the trees, being in fear of the beasts, and went forth by day questing food. And they ceased not thus to do till their fear increased on them and they searched for some place wherein to dwell other than their old dwelling place; and in the course of their search behold, they happened on an island abounding in streams and trees. So they alighted there and ate of its fruits and drank of its waters. But whilst they were thus engaged, lo! up came to them a duck in a state of extreme terror, and stayed not faring forwards till she reached the tree whereon were perched the two peafowl, when she seemed re assured in mind. The peacock doubted not but that she had some rare story; so he asked her of her case and the cause of her concern, whereto she answered, "I am sick for sorrow, and my horror of the son of Adam:[131] so beware, and again I say beware of the sons of Adam!" Rejoined the peacock, "Fear not now that thou hast won our protection." Cried the duck, "Alhamdolillah! glory to God, who hath done away my cark and care by means of you being near! For indeed I come of friendship fain with you twain." And when she had ended her speech the peacock's wife came down to her and said, "Well come and welcome and fair cheer! No harm shall hurt thee: how can son of Adam come to us and we in this isle which lieth amiddlemost of the sea? From the land he cannot reach us neither can he come against us from the water. So be of good cheer and tell us what hath betided thee from the child of Adam." Answered the duck, "Know, then, O thou peahen, that of a truth I have dwelt all my life in this island safely and peacefully, nor have I seen any disquieting thing, till one night, as I was asleep, I sighted in my dream the semblance of a son of Adam, who talked with me and I with him. Then I heard a voice say to me, 'O thou duck, beware of the son of Adam and be not imposed on by his words nor by that he may suggest to thee; for he aboundeth in wiles and guiles; so beware with all wariness of his perfidy, for again I say, he is crafty and right cunning even as singeth of him the poet,

He'll offer sweetmeats with his edgĕd tongue, *
And fox thee with the foxy guile of fox.

And know thou that the son of Adam circumventeth the fishes and draweth them forth of the seas; and he shooteth the birds with a pellet of clay[132] and trappeth the elephant with his craft. None is safe from his mischief and neither bird nor beast escapeth him; and on this wise have I told thee what I have heard concerning the son of Adam.' So I awoke, fearful and trembling and from that hour to this my heart hath not known gladness, for dread of the son of Adam, lest he surprise me unawares by his wile or trap me in his snares. By the time the end of the day overtook me, my strength was grown weak and my spunk failed me; so, desiring to eat and drink, I went forth walking, troubled in spirit and with a heart ill at ease. Now when I reached yonder mountain I saw a tawny lion whelp at the door of a cave, and sighting me he joyed in me with great joy, for my colour pleased him and my gracious shape; so he cried out to me saying, 'Draw nigh unto me.' I went up to him and he asked me, 'What is thy name, and what is thy nature?' Answered I, 'My name is Duck, and I am of the bird kind;' and I added, 'But thou, why tarriest thou in this place till this time?' Answered the whelp, 'My father the lion hath for many a day warned me against the son of Adam, and it came to pass this night that I saw in my sleep the semblance of a son of Adam.' And he went on to tell me the like of that I have told you. When I heard these words, I said to him, 'O lion, I take asylum with thee, that thou mayest kill the son of Adam and be steadfast in resolve to his slaughter; verily I fear him for myself with extreme fear and to my fright affright is added for that thou also dreadest the son of Adam, albeit thou art Sultan of savage beasts.' Then I ceased not, O my sister, to bid the young lion beware of the son of Adam and urge him to slay him, till he rose of a sudden and at once from his stead and went out and he fared on, and I after him and I noted him lashing flanks with tail. We advanced in the same order till we came to a place where the roads forked and saw a cloud of dust arise which, presently clearing away, discovered below it a runaway naked ass, now galloping and running at speed and now rolling in the dust. When the lion saw the ass, he cried out to him, and he came up to him in all humility. Then said the lion, 'Harkye, crack brain brute! What is thy kind and what be the cause of thy coming hither?' He replied, 'O son of the Sultan! I am by kind an ass — Asinus Caballus — and the cause of my coming to this place is that I am fleeing from the son of Adam.' Asked the lion whelp, 'Dost thou fear then that he will kill thee?' Answered the ass, 'Not so, O son of the Sultan, but I dread lest he put a cheat on me and mount upon me; for he hath a thing called Pack saddle, which he setteth on my back; also a thing called Girths which he bindeth about my belly; and a thing called Crupper which he putteth under my tail, and a thing called Bit which he placeth in my mouth: and he fashioneth me a goad[133] and goadeth me with it and maketh me run more than my strength. If I stumble he curseth me, and if I bray, he revileth me;[134] and at last when I grow old and can no longer run, he putteth on me a panel[135] of wood and delivereth me to the water carriers, who load my back with water from the river in skins and other vessels, such as jars, and I cease not to wone in misery and abasement and fatigue till I die, when they cast me on the rubbish-heaps to the dogs. So what grief can surpass this grief and what calamities can be greater than these calamities?' Now when I heard, O peahen, the ass's words, my skin shuddered, and became as gooseflesh at the son of Adam; and I said to the lion whelp, 'O my lord, the ass of a verity hath excuse and his words add terror to my terror.' Then quoth the young lion to the ass, 'Whither goest thou?' Quoth he, 'Before sunrise I espied the son of Adam afar off, and fled from him; and now I am minded to flee forth and run without ceasing for the greatness of my fear of him, so haply I may find me a place of shelter from the perfidious son of Adam.' Whilst the ass was thus discoursing with the lion whelp, seeking the while to take leave of us and go away, behold, appeared to us another cloud of dust, whereat the ass brayed and cried out and looked hard and let fly a loud fart[136] . After a while the dust lifted and discovered a black steed finely dight with a blaze on the forehead like a dirham round and bright;[137] handsomely marked about the hoof with white and with firm strong legs pleasing to sight and he neighed with affright. This horse ceased not running till he stood before the whelp, the son of the lion who, when he saw him, marvelled and made much of him and said, ‘What is thy kind, O majestic wild beast and wherefore freest thou into this desert wide and vast?’ He replied, O lord of wild beasts, I am a steed of the horse kind, and the cause of my running is that I am fleeing from the son of Adam.’ The lion whelp wondered at the horse’s speech and cried to him Speak not such words for it is shame to thee, seeing that thou art tall and stout. And how cometh it that thou fearest the son of Adam, thou, with thy bulk of body and thy swiftness of running when I, for all my littleness of stature am resolved to encounter the son of Adam and, rushing on him, eat his flesh, that I may allay the affright of this poor duck and make her dwell in peace in her own place? But now thou hast come here and thou hast wrung my heart with thy talk and turned me back from what I had resolved to do, seeing that, for all thy bulk, the son of Adam hath mastered thee and hath feared neither thy height nor thy breadth, albeit, wert thou to kick him with one hoof thou wouldst kill him, nor could he prevail against thee, but thou wouldst make him drink the cup of death.’ The horse laughed when he heard the whelps words and replied, ‘Far, far is it from my power to overcome him, O Prince. Let not my length and my breadth nor yet my bulk delude thee with respect to the son of Adam; for that he, of the excess of his guile and his wiles, fashioneth me a thing called Hobble and applieth to my four legs a pair of ropes made of palm fibres bound with felt, and gibbeteth me by the head to a high peg, so that I being tied up remain standing and can neither sit nor lie down. And when he is minded to ride me, he bindeth on his feet a thing of iron called Stirrup[138] and layeth on my back another thing called Saddle, which he fasteneth by two Girths passed under my armpits. Then he setteth in my mouth a thing of iron he calleth Bit, to which he tieth a thing of leather called Rein; and, when he sitteth in the saddle on my back, he taketh the rein in his hand and guideth me with it, goading my flanks the while with the shovel stirrups till he maketh them bleed. So do not ask, O son of our Sultan, the hardships I endure from the son of Adam. And when I grow old and lean and can no longer run swiftly, he selleth me to the miller who maketh me turn in the mill, and I cease not from turning night and day till I grow decrepit. Then he in turn vendeth me to the knacker who cutteth my throat and flayeth off my hide and plucketh out my tail, which he selleth to the sieve maker; and he melteth down my fat for tallow candles.' When the young lion heard the horse's words, his rage and vexation redoubled and he said, 'When didst thou leave the son of Adam? Replied the horse, 'At midday and he is upon my track.' Whilst the whelp was thus conversing with the horse lo! there rose a cloud of dust and, presently opening out, discovered below it a furious camel gurgling and pawing the earth with his feet and never ceasing so to do till he came up with us. Now when the lion whelp saw how big and buxom he was, he took him to be the son of Adam and was about to spring upon him when I said to him, 'O Prince, of a truth this is not the son of Adam, this be a camel, and he seemeth to fleeing from the son of Adam.' As I was thus conversing, O my sister, with the lion whelp, the camel came up and saluted him; whereupon he returned the greeting and said, 'What bringeth thee hither?' Replied he, 'I came here fleeing from the son of Adam.' Quoth the whelp, 'And thou, with thy huge frame and length and breadth, how cometh it that thou fearest the son of Adam, seeing that with one kick of thy foot thou wouldst kill him?' Quoth the camel, 'O son of the Sultan, know that the son of Adam hath subtleties and wiles, which none can withstand nor can any prevail against him, save only Death; for he putteth into my nostrils a twine of goat's hair he calleth Nose-ring,[139] and over my head a thing he calleth Halter; then he delivereth me to the least of his little children, and the youngling draweth me along by the nose ring, my size and strength notwithstanding. Then they load me with the heaviest of burdens and go long journeys with me and put me to hard labour through the hours of the night and the day. When I grow old and stricken in years and disabled from working, my master keepeth me not with him, but selleth me to the knacker who cutteth my throat and vendeth my hide to the tanners and my flesh to the cooks: so do not ask the hardships I suffer from the son of Adam.' 'When didst thou leave the son of Adam?' asked the young lion; and he answered, 'At sundown, and I suppose that coming to my place after my departure and not finding me there, he is now in search of me: wherefore let me go, O son of the Sultan, that

I may flee into the wolds and the wilds.’ Said the whelp, ‘Wait awhile, O camel, till thou see how I will tear him, and give thee to eat of his flesh, whilst I craunch his bones and drink his blood.’ Replied the camel, ‘O King’s son, I fear for thee from the child of Adam, for he is wily and guilefull.’ And he began repeating these verses: —

‘When the tyrant enters the lieges’ land, *
Naught remains for the lieges but quick remove!’

Now whilst the camel was speaking with the lion whelp, behold, there rose a cloud of dust which, after a time, opened and showed an old man scanty of stature and lean of limb; and he bore on his shoulder a basket of carpenter’s tools and on his head a branch of a tree and eight planks. He led little children by the hand and came on at a trotting pace,[140] never stopping till he drew near the whelp. When I saw him, O my sister, I fell down for excess of fear; but the young lion rose and walked forward to meet the carpenter and when he came up to him, the man smiled in his face and said to him, with a glib tongue and in courtly terms, ‘O King who defendeth from harm and lord of the long arm, Allah prosper thine evening and thine endeavouring and increase thy valiancy and strengthen thee! Protect me from that which hath distressed me and with its mischief hath oppressed me, for I have found no helper save only thyself.’ And the carpenter stood in his presence weeping and wailing and complaining. When the whelp heard his sighing and his crying he said, ‘I will succour thee from that thou fearest. Who hath done thee wrong and what art thou, O wild beast, whose like in my life I never saw, nor ever espied one goodlier of form or more eloquent of tongue than thou? What is thy case?’ Replied the man, ‘O lord of wild beasts, as to myself I am a carpenter; but as to who hath wronged me, verily he is a son of Adam, and by break of dawn after this coming night[141] he will be with thee in this place.’ When the lion whelp heard these words of the carpenter, the light was changed to night before his sight and he snorted and roared with ire and his eyes cast forth sparks of fire. Then he cried out saying, ‘By Allah, I will assuredly watch through this coming night till dawn, nor will I return to my father till I have won my will.' Then he turned to the carpenter and asked, 'Of a truth I see thou art short of step and I would not hurt thy feelings for that I am generous of heart; yet do I deem thee unable to keep pace with the wild beasts: tell me then whither thou goest?' Answered the carpenter, 'Know that I am on my way to thy father's Wazir, the lynx; for when he heard that the son of Adam had set foot in this country he feared greatly for himself and sent one of the wild beasts on a message for me, to make him a house wherein he should dwell, that it might shelter him and fend off his enemy from him, so not one of the sons of Adam should come at him. Accordingly I took up these planks and set forth to find him.' Now when the young lion heard these words he envied the lynx and said to the carpenter, 'By my life there is no help for it but thou make me a house with these planks ere thou make one for Sir Lynx! When thou hast done my work, go to him and make him whatso he wisheth.' The carpenter replied, 'O lord of wild beasts, I cannot make thee aught till I have made the lynx what he desireth: then will I return to thy service and build thee a house as a fort to ward thee from thy foe.' Exclaimed the lion whelp, By Allah, 'I will not let thee leave this place till thou build me a house of planks.' So saying he made for the carpenter and sprang upon him, thinking to jest with him, and cuffed him with his paw knocking the basket off his shoulder; and threw him down in a fainting fit, whereupon the young lion laughed at him and said, 'Woe to thee, O carpenter, of a truth thou art feeble and hast no force; so it is excusable in thee to fear the son of Adam.' Now when the carpenter fell on his back, he waxed exceeding wroth; but he dissembled his wrath for fear of the whelp and sat up and smiled in his face, saying, 'Well, I will make for thee the house.' With this he took the planks he had brought and nailed together the house, which he made in the form of a chest after the measure of the young lion. And he left the door open, for he had cut in the box a large aperture, to which he made a stout cover and bored many holes therein. Then he took out some newly wrought nails and a hammer and said to the young lion, 'Enter the house through this opening, that I may fit it to thy measure.' Thereat the whelp rejoiced and went up to the opening, but saw that it was strait; and the carpenter said to him, 'Enter and crouch down on thy legs and arms!'

So the whelp did thus and entered the chest, but his tail remained outside. Then he would have drawn back and come . out; but the carpenter said to him, ‘Wait patiently a while till I see if there be room for thy tail with thee.’ The young lion did as he was bid when the carpenter twisted up his tail and, stuffing it into the chest, whipped the lid on to the opening and nailed it down; whereat the whelp cried out and said, ‘O carpenter, what is this narrow house thou hast made me? Let me out, sirrah!’ But the carpenter answered, ‘Far be it, far be it from thy thought! Repentance for past avails naught, and indeed of this place thou shalt not come out.’ He then laughed and resumed, ‘Verily thou art fallen into the trap and from thy duress there is no escape, O vilest of wild beasts!’ Rejoined the whelp, ‘O my brother, what manner of words are these thou addresses” to me?’ The carpenter replied ‘know, O dog of the desert! that thou hast fa]len into that which thou fearedst: Fate hath upset thee, nor shall caution set thee up. ‘ When the whelp heard these words, O my sister, he knew that this was indeed the very son of Adam, against whom he had been warned by his sire in waking state and by the mysterious Voice in sleeping while; and I also was certified that this was indeed he without doubt; wherefore great fear of him for myself seized me and I withdrew a little apart from him and waited to see what he would do with the young lion. Then I saw, O my sister, the son of Adam dig a pit in that place hard by the chest which held the whelp and, throwing the box into the hole, heap dry wood upon it and burn the young lion with fire. At this sight, O sister mine, my fear of the son of Adam redoubled and in my affright I have been these two days fleeing from him.” But when the peahen heard from the duck this story, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Forty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the peahen heard from the duck this story, she wondered with exceeding wonder and said to her, “O my sister, here thou art safe from the son of Adam, for we are in one of the islands of the sea whither there is no way for the son of Adam; so do thou take up thine abode with us till Allah make easy thy case and our case. Quoth the duck, “I fear lest some calamity come upon me by night, for no runaway can rid him of fate by flight.” Rejoined the peahen, “Abide with us, and be like unto, us;” and ceased not to persuade her, till she yielded, saying, “O my sister, thou knowest how weak is my resistance; but verily had I not seen thee here, I had not remained.” Said the peahen, “That which is on our foreheads[142] we must indeed fulfil, and when our doomed day draweth near, who shall deliver us? But not a soul departeth except it have accomplished its predestined livelihood and term. Now the while they talked thus, a cloud of dust appeared and approached them, at sight of which the duck shrieked aloud and ran down into the sea, crying out, “Beware! beware! though flight there is not from Fate and Lot!”[143] After awhile the dust opened out and discovered under it an antelope; whereat the duck and the peahen were reassured and the peacock’s wife said to her companion, “O my sister, this thou seest and wouldst have me beware of is an antelope, and here he is, making for us. He will do us no hurt, for the antelope feedeth upon the herbs of the earth and, even as thou art of the bird kind, so is he of the beast kind. Be there fore of good cheer and cease care taking; for care taking wasteth the body.” Hardly had the peahen done speaking, when the antelope came up to them, thinking to shelter him under the shade of the tree; and, sighting the peahen and the duck, saluted them and said, ‘I came to this island to-day and I have seen none richer in herbage nor pleasanter for habitation.” Then he besought them for company and amity and, when they saw his friendly behaviour to them, they welcomed him and gladly accepted his offer. So they struck up a sincere friendship and sware thereto; and they slept in one place and they ate and drank together; nor did they cease dwelling in safety, eating and drinking their fill, till one day there came thither a ship which had strayed from her course in the sea. She cast anchor near them and the crew came forth and dispersed about the island. They soon caught sight of the three friends, antelope, peahen and duck, and made for them; whereupon the peahen flew up into the tree and thence winged her way through air; and the antelope fled into the desert, but the duck abode paralyzed by fear. So they chased her till they caught her and she cried out and said, “Caution availed me naught against Fate and Lot!’; and they bore her off to the ship. Now when the peahen saw what had betided the duck, she removed from the island, saying, “I see that misfortunes lie in ambush for all. But for yonder ship, parting had not befallen between me and this duck, because she was one of the truest of friends.” Then she flew off and rejoined the antelope, who saluted her and gave her joy of her safety and asked for the duck, to which she replied, “The enemy hath taken her, and I loathe the sojourn of this island after her.” Then she wept for the loss of the duck and began repeating,

“The day of parting cut my heart in twain:*
In twain may Allah cut the parting-day!

And she spake also this couplet,

“I pray some day that we reunion gain, *
So may I tell him Parting’s ugly way.”

The antelope sorrowed with great sorrow, but dissuaded the peahen from her resolve to remove from the island. So they abode there together with him, eating and drinking, in peace and safety, except that they ceased not to mourn for the loss of the duck; and the antelope said to the peahen, “O my sister, thou seest how the folk who came forth of the ship were the cause of our severance from the duck and of her destruction; so do thou beware of them and guard thyself from them and from the wile of the son of Adam and his guile.” But the peahen replied, I am assured that nought caused her death save her neglecting to say Subhan’ Allah, glory to God; indeed I often said to her, ‘Exclaim thou, ‘Praised be Allah, and verily I fear for thee, because thou neglectest to laud the Almighty; for all things created by Allah glorify Him on this wise, and whoso neglecteth the formula of praise[144] him destruction waylays.’” When the antelope heard the peahen’s words he exclaimed, “Allah make fair thy face!” and betook himself to repeating the formula of praise, and ceased not there from a single hour. And it is said that his form of adoration was as follows, “Praise be to the Requiter of every good and evil thing, the Lord of Majesty and of Kings the King!” And a tale is also told on this wise of

The Hermits.

A certain hermit worshipped on a certain mountain, whither resorted a pair of pigeons; and the worshipper was wont to make two parts of his daily bread, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Forty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the worshipper was wont to make two parts of his daily bread, eating one half himself and giving the other to the pigeon pair. He also prayed for them both that they might be blest with issue so they increased and multiplied greatly. Now they resorted only to that mountain where the hermit was, and the reason of their fore- gathering with the holy man was their assiduity in repeating "Praised be Allah!" for it is recounted that the pigeon[145] in praise, "Praised be the Creator of all Creatures, the Distributor of daily bread, the Builder of the heavens and Dispreader of the earths!" And that couple ceased not to dwell together in the happiest of life, they and their brood till the holy man died, when the company of the pigeons was broken up and they dispersed among the towns and villages and mountains. Now it is told that on a certain other mountain there dwelt a shepherd, a man of piety and good sense and chastity; and he had flocks of sheep which he tended, and he made his living by their milk and wool. The mountain which gave him a home abounded in trees and pasturage and also in wild beasts, but these had no power over his flocks; so he ceased not to dwell upon that highland in full security, taking no thought to the things of the world, by reason of his beatitude and his assiduity in prayer and devotion, till Allah ordained that he should fall sick with exceeding sickness. Thereupon he betook himself to a cavern in the mountain and his sheep used to go out in the morning to the pasturage and take refuge at night in the cave. But Allah Almighty, being minded to try him and prove his patience and his obedience, sent him one of His angels, who came in to him in the semblance of a fair woman and sat down before him. When the shepherd saw that woman seated before him, his flesh shuddered at her with horripilation[146] and he said to her, 'O thou woman, what was it invited thee to this my retreat? I have no need of thee, nor is there aught betwixt me and thee which calleth for thy coming in to me." Quoth she, "O man, cost thou not behold my beauty and loveliness and the fragrance of my breath; and knowest thou not the need women have of men and men of women? So who shall forbid thee from me when I have chosen to be near thee and desire to enjoy thy company? Indeed, I come to thee willingly and do not withhold myself from thee, and near us there is none whom we need fear; and I wish to abide with thee as long as thou sojournest in this mountain, and be thy companion and thy true friend. I offer myself to thee, for thou needest the service of woman: and if thou have carnal connection with me and know me, thy sickness shall be turned from thee and health return to thee; and thou wilt repent thee of the past for having foresworn the company of women during the days that are now no more. In very sooth, I give thee good advice: so incline to my counsel and approach me." Quoth the shepherd, "Go out from me, O woman deceitful and perfidious! I will not incline to thee nor approach thee. I want not thy company nor wish for union with thee; he who coveteth the coming life renounceth thee, for thou seducest mankind, those of past time and those of present time. Allah the Most High lieth in wait for His servants and woe unto him who is cursed with thy company!" Answered she, "O thou that errest from the truth and wanderest from the way of reason, turn thy face to me and look upon my charms and take thy full of my nearness, as did the wise who have gone before thee. Indeed, they were richer than thou in experience and sharper of wit; withal they rejected not, as thou rejectest, the enjoyment of women; nay, they took their pleasure of them and their company even as thou renouncest them, and it did them no hurt in things temporal or things spiritual. Wherefore do thou recede from thy resolve and thou shalt praise the issue of thy case." Rejoined the shepherd, "All thou sayest I deny and abhor, and all thou offerest I reject: for thou art cunning and perfidious and there is no honesty in thee nor is there honour. How much of foulness hidest thou under thy beauty, and how many a pious man hast thou seduced from his duty and made his end penitence and perdition? Avaunt from me, O thou who devotest thyself to corrupt others!" Thereupon, he threw his goat's hair cloak over his head that he might not see her face, and betook himself to calling upon the name of his Lord. And when the angel saw the excellence of his submission to the Divine Will, he went out from him and ascended to heaven. Now hard by the hermit's hill was a village wherein dwelt a pious man, who knew not the other's station, till one night he heard in a dream a Voice saying to him, "In such a place near to thee is a devout man: go thou to him and be at his command!" So when morning dawned he set out to wend thither, and what time the heat was grievous upon him, he came to a tree which grew beside a spring of running water. So he sat down to rest in the shadow of that tree and behold, he saw beasts and birds coming to that fount to drink, but when they caught sight of the devotee sitting there, they took fright and fled from before his face. Then said he, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah! I rest not here but to the hurt of these beasts and fowls." So he arose, blaming him self and saying, "Verily my tarrying here this day hath wronged these animals, and what excuse have I towards my Creator and the Creator of these birds and beasts for that I was the cause of their flight from their drink and their daily food and their place of pasturage? Alas for my shame before my Lord on the day when He shall avenge the hornless sheep on the sheep with horns!''[147] And he wept and began repeating these couplets,

"Now an, by Allah, unto man were fully known *
 Why he is made, in careless sleep he ne'er would wone:
First Death, then cometh Wake and dreadful Day of Doom, *
 Reproof with threats sore terror, frightful malison.
Bid we or else forbid we, all of us are like *
 The Cave companions[148] when at length their sleep was done."

Then he again wept for that he had driven the birds and beasts from the spring by sitting down under the tree, and he fared on till he came to the shepherd's dwelling and going in, saluted him. The shepherd returned his salutation and embraced him, weeping and saying, "What hath brought thee to this place where no man hath ever yet come to me." Quoth the other devotee, "I saw in my sleep one who described to me this thy stead and bade me repair to thee and salute thee: so I came, in obedience to the commandment.” The shepherd welcomed him, rejoicing in his company and the twain abode upon that mountain, worshipping Allah with the best of worship; and they ceased not serving their Lord in the cavern and living upon the flesh and milk of their sheep, having clean put away from them riches and children and what not, till the Certain, the Inevitable became their lot. And this is the end of their story. Then said King Shahyrar, “O Shahrazad, thou wouldst cause me to renounce my kingdom and thou makest me repent of having slain so many women and maidens. Hast thou any bird stories?” “Yes,” replied she, and began to tell the

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TALE OF THE WATER FOWL AND THE TORTOISE.

It is related by truthful men, O King, that a certain bird flew high up firmament wards and presently lit on a rock in the midst of water which was running. And as he sat there, behold, the current carried to him the carcass of a man, and lodged it against the rock, for being swollen it floated. The bird, which was a water fowl, drew near and examining it, found that it was the dead body of a son of Adam and saw in it sign of spear and stroke of sword. So he said to himself, "I presume that this man who hath been slain was some evil doer, and that a company banded themselves together against him and put him to death and were at peace from him and his evil doing." And as he continued marvelling at this, suddenly the vultures and kites came down upon the carcass from all sides and get round it; which when the water fowl saw, he feared with sore affright and said, "I cannot abide here any longer." So he flew away in quest of a place where he might wone, till that carcass should come to an end and the birds of prey leave it; and he stayed not in his flight, till he found a river with a tree in its midst. So he alighted on the tree, troubled and distraught and sore grieved for departing from his birth place, and said to himself, "Verily sorrows cease not to follow me: I was at my ease when I saw that carcass, and rejoiced therein with much joy, saying, 'This is a gift of daily bread which Allah hath dealt to me:' but my joy became annoy and my gladness turned to sadness, for the ravenous birds, which are like lions, seized upon it and tare it to pieces and came between me and my prize So how can I hope to be secure from misfortune in this world, or put any trust therein? Indeed, the proverb saith,'The world is the dwelling of him who hath no dwelling': he who hath no wits is cozened by it and entrusteth it with his wealth and his child and his family and his folk; and whoso is cozened ceaseth not to rely upon it, pacing proudly upon earth until he is laid under earth and the dust is cast over his corpse by him who of all men was dearest to him and nearest. But naught is better for generous youth than patience under its cares and miseries. I have left my native place and it is abhorrent to me to quit my brethren and friends and loved ones." Now whilst he was thus musing lo! a male tortoise descended into the river and, approaching the water fowl, saluted him, saying, "O my lord, what hath exiled thee and driven thee so far from thy place?" Replied the water fowl, "The descent of enemies thereon; for the wise brooketh not the neighbourhood of his foe; and how well saith the poet,

Whenas on any land the oppressor doth alight, * There's nothing left for those, that dwell therein, but flight.'''[149]

Quoth the tortoise, "If the matter be as thou sayest and the case as thou describest, I will not leave thee nor cease to stand before thee, that I may do thy need and fulfil thy service; for it is said that there is no sorer desolation than that of him who is an exile, cut off from friends and home; and it is also said that no calamity equalleth that of severance from the good; but the best solace for men of understanding is to seek companionship in strangerhood and be patient under sorrows and adversity. Wherefore I hope that thou wilt approve of my company, for I will be to thee a servant and a helper." Now when the water fowl heard the tortoise's words he answered, "Verily, thou art right in what thou sayest for, by my life, I have found grief and pain in separation, what while I have been parted from my place and sundered from my brethren and friends; seeing that in severance is an admonition to him who will be admonished and matter of thought for him who will take thought. If the generous youth find not a companion to console him, weal is forever cut off from him and ill is eternally established with him; and there is nothing for the sage but to solace himself in every event with brethren and be constant in patience and endurance: indeed these two are praiseworthy qualities, and both uphold one under calamities and vicissitudes of the world and ward off startling sorrows and harrowing cares, come what will." Rejoined the tortoise, "Beware of sorrow, for it will spoil thy life and waste thy manliness." And the two gave not over conversing till the bird said, "Never shall I cease fearing the shifts of time and vicissitudes of events." When the tortoise heard this, he came up to him and, kissing him between the eyes, said to him, "Never may the company of the birds cease to be blest in thee and through thee, and find wisdom in thy good counsel! How shalt thou be burdened with care and harm?" And he went on to comfort the water fowl and soothe his terrors till he became reassured. Then he flew to the place where the carcass was and found on arriving there the birds of prey gone, and they had left nothing of the body but bones; whereupon he returned to the tortoise and acquainted him with the fact that the foe had disappeared from his place, saying, “Know that of a truth I long for return homewards to enjoy the society of my friends; for the sage cannot endure separation from his native place.” So they both went thither and found naught to affright them; whereupon the water fowl began repeating,

“And haply whenas strait descends on lot of generous youth *
Right sore, with Allah only lies his issue from annoy:
He’s straitened, but full oft when rings and meshes straitest
clip, * He ‘scapes his strait and joyance finds, albe I see
no joy.”

So the twain abode in that island; and while the water fowl was enjoying a life of peace and gladness, suddenly Fate led thither a hungry falcon, which drove its talons into the bird’s belly and killed him, nor did caution avail him when his term of life was ended. Now the cause of his death was that he neglected to use the formula of praise, and it is said that his form of adoration was as follows, “Praised be our Lord in that He ordereth and ordaineth; and praised be our Lord in that He enricheth and impoverisheth!” Such was the waterfowl’s end and the tale of the ravenous birds. And when it was finished quoth the Sultan, “O Shahrazad, verily thou overwhelmest me with admonitions and salutary instances. Hast thou any stories of beasts?” “Yes,” answered she, and began to tell the

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TALE OF THE WOLF AND THE FOX.[150]

Know, O King, that a fox and a wolf once cohabited in the same den, harbouring therein together by day and resorting thither by night; but the wolf was cruel and oppressive to the fox. They abode thus awhile, till it so befel that the fox exhorted the wolf to use gentle dealing and leave off his ill deeds, saying, "If thou persist in thine arrogance, belike Allah will give the son of Adam power over thee, for he is past master in guile and wile; and by his artifice he bringeth down the birds from the firmament and he haleth the mighty fish forth of the flood-waters: and he cutteth the mountain and transporteth it from place to place. All this is of his craft and wiliness: wherefore do thou betake thyself to equity and fair dealing and leave frowardness and tyranny; and thou shalt fare all the better for it." But the wolf would not accept his counsel and answered him roughly, saying, "What right hast thou to speak of matters of weight and importance?" And he dealt the fox a cuff that laid him senseless; but, when he revived, he smiled in the wolf's face and, excusing himself for his unseemly speech, repeated these two couplets,

"If any sin I sinned, or did I aught *
    In love of you, which hateful mischief wrought;
My sin I sore repent and pardon sue; *
    So give the sinner gift of pardon sought."

The wolf accepted his excuse and held his hand from further ill-treatment, saying, "Speak not of whatso concerneth thee not, lest thou hear what will please thee not." Answered the fox, "To hear is to obey!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Forty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth the wolf to the fox, "Speak not of whatso concerneth thee not, lest thou hear what will please thee not!" Answered the fox, "To hear is to obey! I will abstain henceforth from what pleaseth thee not; for the sage saith, 'Have a care that thou speak not of that whereof thou art not asked; leave that which concerneth thee not for that which concerneth thee, and by no means lavish good counsel on the wrongous, for they will repay it to thee with wrong.'" And reflecting on the words of the wolf he smiled in his face, but in his heart he meditated treachery against him and privily said, "There is no help but that I compass the destruction of this wolf." So he bore with his injurious usage, saying to himself, "Verily insolence and evil-speaking are causes of perdition and cast into confusion, and it is said, 'The insolent is shent and the ignorant doth repent; and whose feareth, to him safety is sent': moderation marketh the noble and gentle manners are of gains the grandest. It behoveth me to dissemble with this tyrant and needs must he be cast down." Then quoth he to the wolf, "Verily, the Lord pardoneth his erring servant and relenteth towards him, if he confess his offences; and I am a weak slave and have offended in presuming to counsel thee. If thou knewest the pain that befel me by thy buffet, thou wouldst ken that even the elephant could not stand against it nor endure it: but I complain not of this blow's hurt, because of the joy and gladness that hath betided me through it; for though it was to me exceeding sore yet was its issue of the happiest. And with sooth saith the sage, 'The blow of the teacher is at first right hurtful, but the end of it is sweeter than strained honey.'" Quoth the wolf, "I pardon thine offence and I cancel thy fault; but beware of my force and avow thyself my thrall; for thou hast learned my severity unto him who showeth his hostility!" Thereupon the fox prostrated himself before the wolf, saying, "Allah lengthen thy life and mayst thou never cease to overthrow thy foes!" And he stinted not to fear the wolf and to wheedle him and dissemble with him. Now it came to pass that one day, the fox went to a vineyard and saw a breach in its walls; but he mistrusted it and said to himself, "Verily, for this breach there must be some cause and the old saw saith, 'Whoso seeth a cleft in the earth and shunneth it not and is not wary in approaching it, the same is self-deluded and exposeth himself to danger and destruction.' Indeed, it is well known that some folk make the figure of a fox in their vineyards; nay, they even set before the semblance grapes in plates, that foxes may see it and come to it and fall into perdition. In very sooth I regard this breach as a snare and the proverb saith, ‘Caution is one half of cleverness.’ Now prudence requireth that I examine this breach and see if there be aught therein which may lead to perdition; and coveting shall not make me cast myself into destruction.” So he went up to the hole and walked round it right warily, and lo! it was a deep pit, which the owner of the vineyard had dug to trap therein the wild beasts which laid waste his vines. Then he said to himself, “Thou hast gained, for that thou hast refrained!”; and he looked and saw that the hole was lightly covered with dust and matting. So he drew back from it saying, “Praised be Allah that I was wary of it! I hope that my enemy, the wolf, who maketh my life miserable, will fall into it; so will the vineyard be left to me and I shall enjoy it alone and dwell therein at peace.” Saying thus, he shook his head and laughed a loud laugh and began versifying,

“Would Heaven I saw at this hour *
    The Wolf fallen down in this well,
He who anguisht my heart for so long, *
    And garred me drain eisel and fel!
Heaven grant after this I may live *
    Free of Wolf for long fortunate spell
When I’ve rid grapes and vineyard of him, *
    And in bunch-spoiling happily dwell.”

His verse being finished he returned in haste to the wolf and said to him, “Allah hath made plain for thee the way into the vineyard without toil and moil. This is of thine auspicious fortune; so good luck to thee and mayest thou enjoy the plentiful plunder and the profuse provaunt which Allah hath opened up to thee without trouble!” Asked the wolf, “What proof hast thou of what thou assertest?”: and the fox answered, “I went up to the vineyard and found that the owner was dead, having been torn to pieces by wolves: so I entered the orchard and saw the fruit shining upon the trees.” The wolf doubted not the fox’s report and his gluttony gat hold of him; so he arose and repaired to the cleft, for that greed blinded him; whilst the fox falling behind him lay as one dead, quoting to the case the following couplet,

“For Layla’s[151] favour dost thou greed? But, bear in mind *
Greed is a yoke of harmful weight on neck of man.”

And when the wolf had reached the breach the fox said, “Enter the vineyard: thou art spared the trouble of climbing a ladder, for the garden-wall is broken down, and with Allah it resteth to fulfil the benefit.” So the wolf went on walking and thought to enter the vineyard; but when he came to the middle of the pit-covering he fell through; whereupon the fox shook for joy and gladness; his care and concern left him and he sang out for delight and improvised these couplets,

“Fortune had mercy on the soul of me, *
And for my torments now shows clemency,
Granting whatever gift my heart desired, *
And far removing what I feared to see:
I will, good sooth, excuse her all her sins *
She sinned in days gone by and much sinned she:
Yea, her injustice she hath shown in this, *
She whitened locks that were so black of blee:
But now for this same wolf escape there’s none, *
Of death and doom he hath full certainty.
Then all the vineyard comes beneath my rule, *
I’ll brook no partner who’s so fond a fool.”

Then the fox looked into the cleft and, seeing the wolf weeping in repentance and sorrow for himself, wept with him; whereupon the wolf raised his head to him and asked, “Is it of pity for me thou weepest, O Father of the Fortlet[152] ?” Answered the fox, “No, by Him who cast thee into this pit! I weep for the length of thy past life and for regret that thou didst not fall into the pit before this day; for hadst thou done so before I foregathered with thee, I had rested and enjoyed repose: but thou wast spared till the fulfilment of thine allotted term and thy destined time.” Then the wolf said to him as one jesting, “O evil-doer, go to my mother and tell her what hath befallen me; haply she may devise some device for my release.” Replied the fox, “Of a truth thou hast been brought to destruction by the excess of thy greed and thine exceeding gluttony, since thou art fallen into a pit whence thou wilt never escape. Knowest thou not the common proverb, O thou witless wolf, 'Whoso taketh no thought as to how things end, him shall Fate never befriend nor shall he safe from perils wend." "O Reynard," quoth the wolf, "thou was wont to show me fondness and covet my friendliness and fear the greatness of my strength. Hate me not rancorously because of that I did with thee; for he who hath power and forgiveth, his reward Allah giveth; even as saith the poet,

'Sow kindness-seed in the unfittest stead; *
    'Twill not be wasted whereso thou shalt sow:
For kindness albe buried long, yet none *
    Shall reap the crop save sower who garred it grow.'"

Rejoined the fox, "O witlessest of beasts of prey and stupidest of the wild brutes which the wolds overstray! Hast thou forgotten thine arrogance and insolence and tyranny, and thy disregarding the due of goodfellowship and thy refusing to be advised by what the poet saith?

'Wrong not thy neighbour e'en if thou have power; *
    The wronger alway vengeance-harvest reaps:
Thine eyes shall sleep, while bides the wronged on wake *
    A-cursing thee; and Allah's eye ne'er sleeps.'"

"O Abu 'l-Hosayn," replied the wolf, "twit me not with my past sins; for forgiveness is expected of the generous and doing kind deeds is the truest of treasures. How well saith the poet,

'Haste to do kindness while thou hast much power, *
    For at all seasons thou hast not such power.'"

And he ceased not to humble himself before the fox and say, "Haply, thou canst do somewhat to deliver me from destruction." Replied the fox, "O thou wolf, thou witless, deluded, deceitful trickster! hope not for deliverance, for this is but the just reward of thy foul dealing and its due retaliation." Then he laughed with chops wide open and repeated these two couplets,

"No longer beguile me, *
Thou'lt fail of thy will!
What can't be thou seekest; *
Thou hast sown so reap Ill!"

Quoth the wolf, "O gentlest of ravenous beasts, I fain hold thee too faithful to leave me in this pit." Then he wept and complained and, with tears streaming from his eyes, recited these two couplets,

"O thou whose favours have been out of compt, *
Whose gifts are more than may be numbered!
Never mischance befel me yet from time *
But that I found thy hand right fain to aid."

"O thou ninny foe," quoth the fox, "how art thou reduced to humiliation and prostration and abjection and submission, after insolence and pride and tyranny and arrogance! Verily, I kept company with thee only for fear of thy fury and I cajoled thee without one hope of fair treatment from thee: but now trembling is come upon thee and vengeance hath overtaken thee." And he repeated these two couplets,

"O thou who seekest innocence to 'guile, *
Thou'rt caught in trap of thine intentions vile:
Now drain the draught of shamefullest mischance, *
And be with other wolves cut off, thou scroyle!"

Replied the wolf, "O thou clement one, speak not with the tongue of enemies nor look with their eyes; but fulfil the covenant of fellowship with me, ere the time of applying remedy cease to be. Rise and make ready to get me a rope and tie one end of it to a tree; then let the other down to me, that I may lay hold of it, so haply I shall from this my strait win free, and I will give thee all my hand possesseth of wealth and fee." Quoth the fox, "Thou persistest in conversation concerning what will not procure thy liberation. Hope not for this, for thou shalt never, never get of me wherewithal to set thee at liberty; but call to mind thy past misdeeds and the craft and perfidy thou didst imagine against me and bethink thee how near thou art to being stoned to death. For know that thy soul is about the world to quit and cease in it and depart from it; so shalt thou to destruction hie and ill is the abiding-place thou shalt aby!”[153] Rejoined the wolf, “O Father of the Fortlet, hasten to return to amity and persist not in this rancorous enmity. Know that whoso from ruin saveth a soul, is as if he had quickened it and made it whole; and whoso saveth a soul alive, is as if he had saved all mankind.[154] Follow not frowardness, for the wise forbid it: and it were most manifest frowardness to leave me in this pit draining the agony of death and dight to look upon mine own doom, whenas it lieth in thy power to deliver me from my stowre. So do thy best to release me and deal with me benevolently.” Answered the fox, “O thou base and barbarous wretch, I compare thee, because of the fairness of thy professions and expressions, and the foulness of thy intentions and thy inventions to the Falcon and the Partridge.” Asked the wolf, “How so?”; and the fox began to tell

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The Tale of the Falcon[155] and the Partridge.[156]

Once upon a time I entered a vineyard to eat of its grapes; and, whilst so doing behold, I saw a falcon stoop upon a partridge and seize him; but the partridge escaped from the seizer and, entering his nest, hid himself there. The falcon followed apace and called out to him, saying, “O imbecile, I saw thee an-hungered in the wold and took pity on thee; so I picked up for thee some grain and took hold of thee that thou mightest eat; but thou fleddest from me; and I wot not the cause of thy flight, except it were to put upon me a slight. Come out, then, and take the grain I have brought thee to eat and much good may it do thee, and with thy health agree.” When the partridge heard these words, he believed and came out to him, whereupon the falcon struck his talons into him and seized him. Cried the partridge, “Is this that which thou toldest me thou hadst brought me from the wold, and whereof thou badest me eat, saying, ‘Much good may it do thee, and with thy health agree?’ Thou hast lied to me, and may Allah cause what thou eatest of my flesh to be a killing poison in thy maw!” So when the falcon had eaten the partridge, his feathers fell off and his strength failed and he died on the spot. “Know, then, O wolf!” (pursued the fox), “that he who diggeth for his brother a pit himself soon falleth into it, and thou first deceivedst me in mode unfit.” Quoth the wolf, “Spare me this discourse nor saws and tales enforce, and remind me not of my former ill course, for sufficeth me the sorry plight I endure perforce, seeing that I am fallen into a place, in which even my foe would pity me, much more a true friend. Rather find some trick to deliver me and be thou thereby my saviour. If this cause thee trouble, remember that a true friend will undertake the sorest travail for his true friend’s sake and will risk his life to deliver him from evil; and indeed it hath been said, ‘A leal friend is better than a real brother.’ So if thou stir thyself to save me and I be saved, I will forsure gather thee such store as shall be a provision for thee against want however sore; and truly I will teach thee rare tricks whereby to open whatso bounteous vineyards thou please and strip the fruit-laden trees.” Rejoined the fox, laughing, “How excellent is what the learned say of him who aboundeth in ignorance like unto thee!” Asked the wolf, “What do the wise men say?” And the fox answered, “They have observed that the gross of body are gross of mind, far from intelligence and nigh unto ignorance. As for thy saying, O thou stupid, cunning idiot! that a true friend should undertake sore travail for his true friend’s sake, it is sooth as thou sayest, but tell me, of thine ignorance and poverty of intelligence, how can I be a true friend to thee, considering thy treachery. Dost thou count me thy true friend? Nay, I am thy foe who joyeth in thy woe; and couldst thou trow it, this word were sorer to thee than slaughter by shot of shaft. As for thy promise to provide me a store against want however sore and teach me tricks, to plunder whatso bounteous vineyards I please, and spoil fruit-laden trees, how cometh it, O guileful traitor, that thou knowest not a wile to save thyself from destruction? How far art thou from profiting thyself and how far am I from accepting thy counsel! If thou have any tricks, make shift for thyself to save thee from the risk, wherefrom I pray Allah to make thine escape far distant! So look, O fool, if there be any trick with thee; and therewith save thyself from death ere thou lavish instruction upon thy neighbours. But thou art like a certain man attacked by a disease, who went to another diseased with the same disease, and said to him, ‘Shall I heal thee of thy disease?’ Replied the sick man, ‘Why dost thou not begin by healing thyself?’ So he left him and went his way. And thou, O ignorant wolf, art like this; so stay where thou art and under what hath befallen thee be of good heart!” When the wolf heard what the fox said, he knew that from him he had no hope of favour; so he wept for himself, saying, “Verily, I have been heedless of my weal; but if Allah deliver me from this ill I will assuredly repent of my arrogance towards those who are weaker than I, and will wear woollens[157] and go upon the mountains, celebrating the praises of Almighty Allah and fearing His punishment. And I will withdraw from the company of other wild beasts and forsure will I feed the poor fighters for the Faith.” Then he wept and wailed, till the heart of the fox softened when he heard his humble words and his professions of penitence for his past insolence and arrogance. So he took pity upon him and sprang up joyfully and, going to the brink of the breach, squatted down on his hind quarters and let his tail hang in the hole; whereupon the wolf arose and putting out his paw, pulled the fox's tail, so that he fell down in the pit with him. Then said the wolf, "O fox of little mercy, why didst thou exult in my misery, thou that wast my companion and under my dominion? Now thou art fallen into the pit with me and retribution hath soon overtaken thee. Verily, the sages have said, 'If one of you reproach his brother with sucking the dugs of a bitch, he also shall suck her.' And how well quoth the poet,

'When Fortune weighs heavy on some of us, *
And makes camel kneel by some other one,[158]
Say to those who rejoice in our ills: — Awake! *
The rejoicer shall suffer as we have done!'

And death in company is the best of things;[159] wherefore I will certainly and assuredly hasten to slay thee ere thou see me slain." Said the fox to himself, "Ah! Ah! I am fallen into the snare with this tyrant, and my case calleth for the use of craft and cunning; for indeed it is said that a woman fashioneth her jewellery for the day of display, and quoth the proverb, 'I have not kept thee, O my tear, save for the time when distress draweth near.' And unless I make haste to circumvent this prepotent beast I am lost without recourse; and how well saith the poet,

'Make thy game by guile, for thou'rt born in a Time *
Whose sons are lions in forest lain;
And turn on the leat[160] of thy knavery *
That the mill of subsistence may grind thy grain;
And pluck the fruits or, if out of reach, *
Why, cram thy maw with the grass on plain.'"

Then said the fox to the wolf, "Hasten not to slay me, for that is not the way to pay me and thou wouldst repent it, O thou valiant wild beast, lord of force and exceeding prowess! An thou accord delay and consider what I shall say, thou wilt ken what purpose I proposed; but if thou hasten to kill me it will profit thee naught and we shall both die in this very place." Answered the wolf "O thou wily trickster, what garreth thee hope to work my deliverance and thine own, that thou prayest me to grant thee delay? Speak and propound to me thy purpose." Replied the fox, "As for the purpose I proposed, it was one which deserveth that thou guerdon me handsomely for it; for when I heard thy promises and thy confessions of thy past misdeeds and regrets for not having earlier repented and done good; and when I heard thee vowing, shouldst thou escape from this strait, to leave harming thy fellows and others; forswear the eating of grapes and of all manner fruits; devote thyself to humility; cut thy claws and break thy dog-teeth; don woollens and offer thyself as an offering to Almighty Allah, then indeed I had pity upon thee, for true words are the best words. And although before I had been anxious for thy destruction, whenas I heard thy repenting and thy vows of amending should Allah vouchsafe to save thee, I felt bound to free thee from this thy present plight. So I let down my tail, that thou mightest grasp it and be saved. Yet wouldest thou not quit thy wonted violence and habit of brutality; nor soughtest thou to save thyself by fair means, but thou gavest me a tug which I thought would sever body from soul, so that thou and I are fallen into the same place of distress and death. And now there is but one thing can save us and, if thou accept it of me, we shall both escape; and after it behoveth thee to fulfil the vows thou hast made and I will be thy veritable friend." Asked the wolf, "What is it thou proposest for mine acceptance?" Answered the fox, "It is that thou stand up at full height till I come nigh on a level with the surface of the earth. Then will I give a spring and reach the ground; and, when out of the pit, I will bring thee what thou mayst lay hold of, and thus shalt thou make thine escape." Rejoined the wolf, "I have no faith in thy word, for sages have said, 'Whoso practiseth trust in the place of hate, erreth;' and, 'Whoso trusteth in the untrustworthy is a dupe; he who re-trieth him who hath been tried shall reap repentance and his days shall go waste; and he who cannot distinguish between case and case, giving each its due, and assigneth all the weight to one side, his luck shall be little and his miseries shall be many.' How well saith the poet,

'Let thy thought be ill and none else but ill; *
For suspicion is best of the worldling's skill:
Naught casteth a man into parlous place *

But good opinion and (worse) good-will!’

And the saying of another,

‘Be sure all are villains and so bide safe; *
Who lives wide awake on few Ills shall light:
Meet thy foe with smiles and a smooth fair brow, *
And in heart raise a host for the battle dight!’

And that of yet another,[161]

‘He thou trusted most is thy worst unfriend; *
‘Ware all and take heed with whom thou wend:
Fair opinion of Fortune is feeble sign; *
So believe her ill and her Ills perpend!’”

Quoth the fox, “Verily mistrust and ill opinion of others are not to be commended in every case; nay trust and confidence are the characteristics of a noble nature and the issue thereof is freedom from stress of fear. Now it behoveth thee, O thou wolf, to devise some device for thy deliverance from this thou art in, and our escape will be better to us both than our death: so quit thy distrust and rancour; for if thou trust in me one of two things will happen; either I shall bring thee something whereof to lay hold and escape from this case, or I shall abandon thee to thy doom. But this thing may not be, for I am not safe from falling into some such strait as this thou art in, which, indeed, would be fitting punishment of perfidy. Of a truth the adage saith, ‘Faith is fair and faithlessness is foul.’[162] So it behoveth thee to trust in me, for I am not ignorant of the haps and mishaps of the world; and delay not to contrive some device for our deliverance, as the case is too close to allow further talk.” Replied the wolf, “For all my want of confidence in thy fidelity, verily I knew what was in thy mind and that thou wast moved to deliver me whenas thou heardest my repentance, and I said to myself, ‘If what he asserteth be true, he will have repaired the ill he did; and if false, it resteth with the Lord to requite him.’ So, look’ee, I have accepted thy proposal and, if thou betray me, may thy traitorous deed be the cause of thy destruction!" Then the wolf stood bolt upright in the pit and, taking the fox upon his shoulders, raised him to the level of the ground, whereupon Reynard gave a spring from his back and lighted on the surface of the earth. When he found himself safely out of the cleft he fell down senseless and the wolf said to him, "O my friend! neglect not my case and delay not to deliver me." The fox laughed with a loud haw-haw and replied, "O dupe, naught threw me into thy hands save my laughing at thee and making mock of thee; for in good sooth when I heard thee profess repentance, mirth and gladness seized me and I frisked about and made merry and danced, so that my tail hung low into the pit and thou caughtest hold of it and draggedst me down with thee. And the end was that Allah Almighty delivered me from thy power. Then why should I be other than a helper in thy destruction, seeing that thou art of Satan's host? I dreamt yesterday that I danced at thy wedding and I told my dream to an interpreter who said to me, 'Verily thou shalt fall into imminent deadly danger and thou shalt escape therefrom.' So now I know that my falling into thy hand and my escape are the fulfillment of my dream, and thou, O imbecile, knowest me for thy foe; so how couldest thou, of thine ignorance and unintelligence, nurse desire of deliverance at my hands, after all thou hast heard of harsh words from me; and wherefore should I attempt thy salvation whenas the sages have said, 'In the death of the wicked is rest for mankind and a purge for the earth'? But, were it not that I fear to bear more affliction by keeping faith with thee than the sufferings which follow perfidy, I had done mine endeavour to save thee." When the wolf heard this, he bit his forehand for repentance. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fiftieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the wolf heard the fox's words he bit his forehand for repentance. Then he gave the fox fair words, but this availed naught and he was at his wits' end for what to do; so he said to him in soft, low accents, "Verily, you tribe of foxes are the most pleasant people in point of tongue and the subtlest in jest, and this is but a joke of thine; but all times are not good for funning and jesting." The fox replied, "O ignoramus, in good sooth jesting hath a limit which the jester must not overpass; and deem not that Allah will again give thee possession of me after having once delivered me from thy hand.” Quoth the wolf, “It behoveth thee to compass my release, by reason of our brotherhood and good fellowship; and, if thou release me, I will assuredly make fair thy recompense.” Quoth the fox, “Wise men say, ‘Take not to brother the wicked fool, for he will disgrace thee in lieu of gracing thee; nor take to brother the liar for, if thou do good, he will conceal it; and if thou do ill he will reveal it.’ And again, the sages have said, ‘There is help for everything but death: all may be warded off, except Fate.’ As for the reward thou declarest to be my due from thee, I compare thee herein with the serpent which fled from the charmer.[163] A man saw her affrighted and said to her, ‘What aileth thee, O thou serpent?’ Replied she, ‘I am fleeing from the snake-charmer, for he seeketh to trap me and, if thou wilt save me and hide me with thee, I will make fair thy reward and do thee all manner of kindness.’ So he took her, incited thereto by lust for the recompense and eager to find favour with Heaven, and set her in his breastpocket. Now when the charmer had passed and had wended his way and the serpent had no longer any cause to fear, he said to her, ‘Where is the reward thou didst promise me? Behold, I have saved thee from that thou fearedest and soughtest to fly.’ Replied she, ‘Tell me in what limb or in what place shall I strike thee with my fangs, for thou knowest we exceed not that recompense.’ So saying, she gave him a bite whereof he died. And I liken thee, O dullard, to the serpent in her dealings with that man. Hast thou not heard what the poet saith?

‘Trust not to man when thou hast raised his spleen *
    And wrath, nor that ‘twill cool do thou misween:
Smooth feels the viper to the touch and glides *
    With grace, yet hides she deadliest venene.’”

Quoth the wolf, “O thou glib of gab and fair of face, ignore not my case and men’s fear of me; and well thou weetest how I assault the strongly walled place and uproot the vines from base. Wherefore, do as I bid thee, and stand before me even as the thrall standeth before his lord.” Quoth the fox, “O stupid dullard who seekest a vain thing, I marvel at thy folly and thy front of brass in that thou biddest me serve thee and stand up before thee as I were a slave bought with thy silver; but soon shalt thou see what is in store for thee, in the way of cracking thy sconce with stones and knocking out thy traitorous dog-teeth.” So saying the fox clomb a hill overlooking the vineyard and standing there, shouted out to the vintagers; nor did he give over shouting till he woke them and they, seeing him, all came up to him in haste. He stood his ground till they drew near him and close to the pit wherein was the wolf; and then he turned and fled. So the folk looked into the cleft and, spying the wolf, set to pelting him with heavy stones, and they stinted not smiting him with stones and sticks, and stabbing him with spears, till they killed him and went away. Thereupon the fox returned to that cleft and, standing over the spot where his foe had been slain, saw the wolf dead: so he wagged his head for very joyance and began to recite these couplets,

“Fate the Wolf’s soul snatched up from wordly stead; *
Far be from bliss his soul that perished!
Abu Sirhan![164] how sore thou sought’st my death; *
Thou, burnt this day in fire of sorrow dread:
Thou’rt fallen into pit, where all who fall *
Are blown by Death-blast down among the dead.”

Thenceforward the aforesaid fox abode alone in the vineyard unto the hour of his death secure and fearing no hurt. And such are the adventures of the wolf and the fox. But men also tell a

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TALE OF THE MOUSE AND THE ICHNEUMON[165]

A mouse and an ichneumon once dwelt in the house of a peasant who was very poor; and when one of his friends sickened, the doctor prescribed him husked sesame. So the hind sought of one of his comrades sesame to be husked by way of healing the sick man; and, when a measure thereof was given to him, he carried it home to his wife and bade her dress it. So she steeped it and husked it and spread it out to dry. Now when the ichneumon saw the grain, she went up to it and fell to carrying it away to her hole, and she toiled all day, till she had borne off the most of it. Presently, in came the peasant's wife and, seeing much of the grain gone, stood awhile wondering; after which she sat down to watch and find out who might be the intruder and make him account for her loss. After a while, out crept the ichneumon to carry off the grain as was her wont, but spying the woman seated there, knew that she was on the watch for her and said in her mind, "Verily, this affair is like to end blameably; and sore I fear me this woman is on the look-out for me, and Fortune is no friend to who attend not to issue and end: so there is no help for it but that I do a fair deed, whereby I may manifest my innocence and wash out all the ill-doings I have done." So saying, she began to take the sesame out of her hole and carry it forth and lay it back upon the rest. The woman stood by and, seeing the ichneumon do thus, said to herself, "Verily this is not the cause of our loss, for she bringeth it back from the hole of him who stole it and returneth it to its place; and of a truth she hath done us a kindness in restoring us the sesame, and the reward of those who do us good is that we do them the like good. It is clear that it is not she who stole the grain; but I will not cease my watching till he fall into my hands and I find out who is the thief." The ichneumon guess what was in her mind, so she went to the mouse and said to her, "O my sister, there is no good in one who observeth not the claims of neighborship and who showeth no constancy in friendship." The mouse replied, "Even so, O my friend, and I delight in thee and in they neighborhood; but what be the motive of this speech?" Quoth the ichneumon, "The house- master hath brought home sesame and hath eaten his fill of it, he and his family, and hath left much; every living being hath eaten of it and, if thou take of it in they turn, thou art worthier thereof than any other." This pleased the mouse and she squeaked for joy and danced and frisked her ears and tail, and greed for the grain deluded her; so she rose at once and issuing forth of her home, saw the sesame husked and dry, shining with whiteness, and the woman sitting at watch and ward. The mouse, taking no thought to the issue of the affair (for the woman had armed herself with a cudgel), and unable to contain herself, ran up to the sesame and began turning it over and eating of it; whereupon the woman smote her with that club and cleft her head: so the cause of her destruction were her greed and heedlessness of consequences. Then said the Sultan, "O Shahrazad, by Allah! this be a goodly parable! Say me, hast thou any story bearing on the beauty of true friendship and the observance of its duty in time of distress and rescuing from destruction?" Answered she: — Yes, it hath reached me that they tell a tale of

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THE CAT[166] AND THE CROW

Once upon a time, a crow and a cat lived in brotherhood; and one day as they were together under a tree, behold, they spied a leopard making towards them, and they were not aware of his approach till he was close upon them. The crow at once flew up to the tree-top; but the cat abode confounded and said to the crow, “O my friend, hast thou no device to save me, even as all my hope is in thee?” Replied the crow, “Of very truth it behoveth brethren, in case of need, to cast about for a device when peril overtaketh them, and how well saith the poet,

A friend in need is he who, ever true, *
For they well-doing would himself undo:
One who when Fortune gars us parting rue *
Victimeth self reunion to renew.’”

Now hard by that tree were shepherds with their dogs; so the crow flew towards them and smote the face of the earth with his wings, cawing and crying out. Furthermore he went up to one of the dogs and flapped his wings in his face and flew up a little way, whilst the dog ran after him thinking to catch him. Presently, one of the shepherds raised his head and saw the bird flying near the ground and lighting alternately; so he followed him, and the crow ceased not flying just high enough to save himself and to throw out the dogs; and yet tempting them to follow for the purpose of tearing him to pieces. But as soon as they came near him, he would fly up a little; and so at last he brought them to the tree, under which was the leopard. And when the dogs saw him they rushed upon him and he turned and fled. Now the leopard thought to eat the cat who was saved by the craft of his friend the crow. This story, O King, showeth that the friendship of the Brothers of Purity[167] delivereth and saveth from difficulties and from falling into mortal dangers. And they also tell a tale of

THE FOX AND THE CROW

A Fox once dwelt in a cave of a certain mountain and, as often as a cub was born to him and grew stout, he would eat the young one, for he had died of hunger, had he instead of so doing left the cub alive and bred it by his side and preserved and cherished his issue. Yet was this very grievous to him. Now on the crest of the same mountain a crow had made his nest, and the fox said to himself, “I have a mind to set up a friendship with this crow and make a comrade of him, that he may help me to my daily bread; for he can do in such matters what I cannot.” So he drew near the crow’s home and, when he came within sound of speech, he saluted him and said, “O my neighbour, verily a true-believer hath two claims upon his true-believing neighbour, the right of neighbourliness and the right of Al-Islam, our common faith; and know, O my friend, that thou art my neighbour and thou hast a claim upon me which it behoveth me to observe, the more that I have long been thy neighbour. Also, there be implanted in my breast a store of love to thee, which biddeth me speak thee fair and obligeth me to solicit thy brothership. What sayest thou in reply?” Answered the crow, “Verily, the truest speech is the best speech; and haply thou speakest with thy tongue that which is not in thy heart; so I fear lest thy brotherhood be only of the tongue, outward, and thy enmity be in the heart, inward; for that thou art the Eater and I the Eaten, and faring apart were apter to us than friendship and fellowship. What, then, maketh thee seek that which thou mayst not gain and desire what may not be done, seeing that I be of the bird-kind and thou be of the beast-kind? Verily, this thy proffered brotherhood[168] may not be made, neither were it seemly to make it.” Rejoined the fox, “Of a truth whoso knoweth the abiding-place of excellent things, maketh better choice in what he chooseth therefrom, so perchance he may advantage his brethren; and indeed I should love to wone near thee and I have sued for thine intimacy, to the end that we may help each other to our several objects; and success shall surely wait upon our amity. I have a many tales of the goodliness of true friendship, which I will relate to thee if thou wish the relating.” Answered the crow, “Thou hast my leave to let me hear thy communication; so tell thy tale, and relate it to me that I may hearken to it and weigh it and judge of thine intent thereby." Rejoined the fox, "Hear then, O my friend, that which is told of a flea and a mouse and which beareth out what I have said to thee." Asked the crow, "How so?" and the fox answered: — They tell this tale of

The Flea and the Mouse

Once upon a time a mouse dwelt in the house of a merchant who owned much merchandise and great stories of monies. One night, a flea took shelter in the merchant's carpet-bed and, finding his body soft, and being thirsty drank of his blood. The merchant was awakened by the smart of the bite and sitting up called to his slave-girls and serving men. So they hastened to him and, tucking up their sleeves, fell to searching for the flea; but as soon as the bloodsucker was aware of the search, he turned to flee and coming on the mouse's home, entered it. When the mouse saw him, she said to him, "What bringeth thee in to me, thou who art not of my nature nor of my kind, and who canst not be assured of safety from violence or of not being expelled with roughness and ill usage?" Answered the flea, "Of a truth, I took refuge in thy dwelling to save me from slaughter; and I have come to thee seeking thy protection and on nowise coveting thy house; nor shall any mischief betide thee from me to make thee leave thy home. Nay I hope right soon to repay thy favours to me with all good and then shalt thou see and praise the issue of my words." And when the mouse heard the speech of the flea, - And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fifty-first Night

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the mouse heard the words of the flea, she said, "If the case be as thou dost relate and describe, then be at thine ease here; for naught shall befal thee save the rain of peace and safety; nor shall aught betide thee but what shall joy thee and shall not annoy thee, nor shall it annoy me. I will lavish on thee my affections without stint; and do not thou regret having lost the merchant's blood nor lament for thy subsistence from him, but be content with what sustenance thou canst obtain; for indeed that is the safer for thee. And I have heard, O flea, that one of the gnomic poets saith as follows in these couplets,

I have fared content in my solitude *
With wate'er befel, and led life of ease,
On a water-draught and a bite of bread, *
Coarse salt and a gown of tattered frieze:
Allah might, an He pleased, give me easiest life, *
But with whatso pleaseth Him self I please.'"

Now when the flea heard these words of the mouse, he rejoined, "I hearken to thy charge and I submit myself to obey thee, nor have I power to gainsay thee, till life be fulfilled in this righteous intention." Replied the mouse, "Pure intention sufficeth to sincere affection." So the tie of love arose and was knitted between them twain, and after this, the flea used to visit the merchant's bed by night and not exceed in his diet, and house him by day in the hole of the mouse. Now it came to pass one night, the merchant brought home great store of dinars and began to turn them over. When the mouse heard the chink of the coin, she put her head out of her hole and fell to gazing at it, till the merchant laid it under his pillow and went to sleep, when she said to the flea, "Seest thou not the proffered occasion and the great good fortune? Hast thou any device to bring us to our desire of yonder dinars? Quoth the flea, "Verily, it is not good that one strives for aught, unless he be able to win his will; because, if he lack ability thereto, he falleth into that which he should avoid and he attaineth not his wish by reason of his weakness, albeit he use all power of cunning, like the sparrow which picketh up grain and falleth into the net and is caught by the fowler. Thou hast no strength to take the dinars and to transport them out of this house, nor have I force sufficient to do this; I the contrary, I could not carry a single ducat of them; so what hast thou to do with them?" Quoth the mouse, "I have made me for my house these seventy openings, whence I may go out at my desire, and I have set apart a place strong and safe, for things of price; and if thou can contrive to get the merchant out of the house, I doubt not of success, an so be that Fate aid me." Answered the flea, "I will engage to get him out of the house for thee;" and, going to the merchant's bed, bit him a fearful bite, such as he had never before felt, then fled to a place of safety, where he had no fear of the man. So the merchant awoke and sought for the flea, but finding him not, lay down again on his other side. Then the flea bit him a second time more painfully than before. So he lost patience and, leaving his bed, went out and lay down on the bench before his door and slept there and woke not till the morning. Meanwhile the mouse came out and fell to carrying the dinars into her hole, till she left not a single one; and when day dawned the merchant began to suspect the folk and fancy all manner of fancies. And (continued the fox) know thou, O wise and experienced crow with the clear-seeing eyes, that I tell thee this only to the intent that thou mayst reap the recompense of thy kindness to me, even as the mouse reaped the reward of her kindness to the flea; for see how he repaid her and requited her with the goodliest of requitals. Said the crow, “It lies with the benefactor to show benevolence or not to show it; nor is it incumbent on us to entreat kindly one who seeketh a connection that entaileth separation from kith and kin. If I show thee favour who art my foe by kind, I am the cause of cutting myself off from the world; and thou, O fox, art full of wiles and guiles. Now those whose characteristics are craft and cunning, must not be trusted upon oath; and whoso is not to be trusted upon oath, in him there is no good faith. The tidings lately reached me of thy treacherous dealing with one of thy comrades, which was a wolf; and how thou didst deceive him until thou leddest him into destruction by thy perfidy and stratagems; and this thou diddest after he was of thine own kind and thou hadst long consorted with him: yet didst thou not spare him; and if thou couldst deal thus with thy fellow which was of thine own kind, how can I have trust in they truth and what would be thy dealing with thy foe of other kind than thy kind? Nor can I compare thee and me but with the saker and the birds.” “How so?” asked the fox. Answered the crow, they relate this tale of

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The Saker[169] and the Birds.

There was once a saker who was a cruel tyrant" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fifty-second Night

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the crow pursued, "They relate that there was once a saker who was a cruel tyrant in the days of his youth, so that the raveners of the air and the scavengers of the earth feared him, none being safe from his mischief; and many were the haps and mishaps of his tyranny and his violence, for this saker was ever in the habit of oppressing and injuring all the other birds. As the years passed over him, he grew feeble and his force failed him, so that he was often famished; but his cunning waxed stronger with the waning of his strength and redoubled in his endeavour and determined to be present at the general assembly of the birds, that he might eat of their orts and leavings; so in this manner he fed by fraud instead of feeding by fierceness and force. And out, O fox, art like this: if thy might fail thee, thy sleight faileth thee not; and I doubt not that thy seeking my society is a fraud to get thy food; but I am none of those who fall to thee and put fist into thy fist;[170] for that Allah hath vouchsafed force to my wings and caution to my mind and sharp sight to my eyes; and I know that whoso apeth a stronger than he, wearieth himself and haply cometh to ruin. Wherefore I fear for thee lest, if thou ape a stronger than thyself, there befal thee what befel the sparrow." Asked the fox, "What befel the sparrow?" Allah upon thee, tell me his tale." And the crow began to relate the story of

The Sparrow and the Eagle

I have heard that a sparrow was once flitting over a sheep-fold, when he looked at it carefully and behold, he saw a great eagle swoop down upon a newly weaned lamb and carry it off in his claws and fly away. Thereupon the sparrow clapped his wings and said, "I will do even as this one did;" and he waxed proud in his own conceit and mimicked a greater than he. So he flew down forthright and lighted on the back of a fat ram with a thick fleece that was become matted by his lying in his dung and stale till it was like woollen felt.

As soon as the sparrow pounced upon the sheep's back he flapped his wings to fly away, but his feet became tangled in the wool and, however hard he tried, he could not set himself free. While all this was doing the shepherd was looking on, having seen what happened first with the eagle and afterwards with the sparrow; so he came up to the wee birdie in a rage and seized him. Then he plucked out his wing- feathers and, tying his feet with a twine, carried him to his children and threw him to them. "What is this?" asked one of them; and he answered, "This is he that aped a greater than himself and came to grief." "Now thou, O fox, art like this and I would have thee beware of aping a greater than thou, lest thou perish. This is all I have to say to thee; so fare from me in peace!" When the fox despaired of the crow's friendship, he turned away, groaning for sorrow and gnashing teeth upon teeth in his disappointment; and the crow, hearing the sound of weeping and seeing his grief and profound melancholy, said to him, "O fox, what dole and dolour make thee gnash thy canines?" Answered the fox, "I gnash my canines because I find thee a greater rascal than myself;" and so saying he made off to his house and ceased not to fare until he reached his home. Quoth the Sultan, "O Shahrazad, how excellent are these thy stories, and how delightsome! Hast thou more of such edifying tales?" Answered she: — They tell this legend concerning

THE HEDGEHOG AND THE WOOD-PIGEONS

A hedgehog once too up his abode by the side of a date-palm, whereon roosted a wood-pigeon and his wife that had built their next there and lived a life of ease and enjoyment. So he said to himself, “This pigeon-pair eateth of the fruit of the date tree and I have no means of getting at it; but needs must I find some fashion of tricking them. Upon this he dug a hole at the foot of the palm tree and took up his lodgings there, he and his wife; moreover, he built an oratory beside the hole and went into retreat there and made a show of devotion and edification and renunciation of the world. The male pigeon saw him praying and worshipping, and his heart was softened towards him for his excess of devoutness; so he said to him, “How many years hast thou been thus?” Replied the hedgehog, “During the last thirty years.” “What is thy food?” “That which falleth from the palm- tree.” “And what is thy clothing?” “Prickles! and I profit by their roughness.” “And why hast thou chosen this for place rather than another?” “I chose it and preferred it to all others that I might guide the erring into the right way and teach the ignorant!” “I had fancied thy case,” quoth the wood-pigeon, “other than this, but now I yearn for that which is with thee.” Quoth the hedgehog, “I fear lest thy deed contradict thy word and thou be even as the husbandman who, when the seed-season came, neglected to sow, saying, Verily I dread lest the days bring me not to my desire and by making hast to sow I shall only waste my substance!’ When harvest-time came and he saw the folk earing their crops, he repented him of what he had lost by his tardiness and he died of chagrin and vexation.” Asked the wood-pigeon, “What then shall I do that I may be freed from the bonds of the world and cut myself loose from all things save the service of my Lord?” Answered the hedgehog, “Betake thee to preparing for the next world and content thyself with a pittance of provision.” Quoth the pigeon, “How can I do this, I that am a bird and unable to go beyond the date-tree whereon is my daily bread? And even could I do so, I know of no other place wherein I may wone.” Quoth the hedgehog, “Thou canst shake down of the fruit of the date-tree what shall suffice thee and thy wife for a year’s provaunt; then do ye take up your abode in a nest under the trunk, that ye may prayerfully seek to be guided in the right way, and then turn thou to what thou hast shaken down and transport it all to thy home and store it up against what time the dates fail; and when the fruits are spent and the delay is longsome upon you, address thyself to total abstinence.” Exclaimed the pigeon, “Allah requite thee with good for the righteous intention wherewith thou hast reminded me of the world to come and hast directed me into the right way!” Then he and his wife worked hard at knocking down the dates, till nothing was left on the palm-tree, whilst the hedgehog, finding whereof to eat, rejoiced and filled his den with the fruit, storing it up for his subsistence and saying in his mind, “When the pigeon and his wife have need of their provision, they will seek it of me and covet what I have, relying upon thy devoutness and abstinence; and, from what they have heard of my counsels and admonitions, they will draw near unto me. Then will I make them my prey and eat them, after which I shall have the place and all that drops from the date-tree to suffice me.” presently, having shaken down the fruits, the pigeon and his wife descended from the tree-top and finding that the hedgehog had removed all the dates to his own place, said to him, “O hedgehog! thou pious preacher and of good counsel, we can find no sign of the dates and know not on what else we shall feed.” Replied the hedgehog, “Probably the winds have carried them away; but the turning from the provisions to the Provider is of the essence of salvation, and He who the mouth-corners cleft, the mouth without victual hath never left.” And he gave not over improving the occasion to them on this wise, and making a show of piety and cozening them with fine words and false until they put faith in him and accepted him and entered his den and had no suspicion of his deceit. Thereupon he sprang to the door and gnashed his teeth, and the wood-pigeon, seeing his perfidy manifested, said to him, “What hath to-night to do with yester-night? Knowest thou not that there is a Helper for the oppressed? Beware of craft and treachery, lest that mishap befal thee which befel the sharpers who plotted against the merchant.” “What was that?” asked the hedgehog. Answered the pigeon: — I have heard tell this tale of

The Merchant and the Two Shapers

In a city called Sindah there was once a very wealthy merchant, who made ready his camel-loads and equipped himself with goods and set out with his outfit for such a city, purposing to sell it there. Now he was followed by two sharpers, who had made up into bales what merchandise they could get; and, giving out to the merchant that they also were merchants, wended with him by the way. So halting at the first halting-place they agreed to play him false and take all he had; but at the same time, each inwardly plotted foul play to the other, saying in his mind, “If I can cheat my comrade, times will go well with me and I shall have all these goods for myself.” So after planning this perfidy, one of them took food and putting therein poison, brought it to his fellow; the other did the same and they both ate of the poisoned mess and they both died. Now they had been sitting with the merchant; so when they left him and were long absent from him, he sought for tidings of them and found the twain lying dead; whereby he knew that they were sharpers who had plotted to play him foul, but their foul play had recoiled upon themselves. So the merchant was preserved and took what they had. Then quoth the Sultan, “O Shahrazad, verily thou hast aroused me to all whereof I was negligent! So continue to edify me with these fables.” Quoth she: — It hath reached me, O King, that men tell this tale of

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THE THIEF AND HIS MONKEY[171]

A certain man had a monkey and that man was a thief, who never entered any of the street-markets of the city wherein he dwelt, but he made off with great profit. Now it came to pass one day that he saw a man offering for sale worn clothes, and he went calling them in the market, but none bid for them and all to whom he showed them refused to buy of him. Presently the thief who had the monkey saw the man with the ragged clothes set them in a wrapper and sit down to rest for weariness; so he made the ape sport before him to catch his eye and, whilst he was busy gazing at it, stole the parcel from him. Then he took the ape and made off to a lonely place, where he opened the wrapper and, taking out the old clothes, folded them in a piece of costly stuff. This he carried to another bazar and exposed for sale together with what was therein, making it a condition that it should not be opened, and tempting the folk with the lowness of the price he set on it. A certain man saw the wrapper and its beauty pleased him; so he bought the parcel on these terms and carried it home, doubting not that he had done well. When his wife saw it she asked, "What is this?" and he answered, "It is costly stuff, which I have bought at lowest price, meaning to sell it again and take the profit." Rejoined she, "O dupe, would this stuff be sold under its value, unless it had been stolen? Dost thou not know that whoso buyeth aught without examining it, falleth into error and becometh like unto the weaver?" Quoth he, "And what is the story of the weaver?"; and quoth she: — I have heard this take of

The Foolish Weaver

There was once in a certain village a weaver who worked hard but could not earn his living save by overwork. Now it chanced that one of the richards of the neighbourhood made a marriage feast and invited the folk thereto: the weaver also was present and found the guests, who wore rich gear, served with delicate viands and made much of by the house-master for what he saw of their fine clothes. So he said in his mind, "If I change this my craft for another craft easier to compass and better considered and more highly paid, I shall amass great store of money and I shall buy splendid attire, so I may rise in rank and be exalted in men's eyes and become even with these." Presently, he beheld one of the mountebanks, who was present at the feast, climbing up to the top of a high and towering wall and throwing himself down to the ground and alighting on his feet. Whereupon the waver said to himself, "Needs must I do as this one hath done, for surely I shall not fail of it." So he arose and swarmed upon the wall and casting himself down, broke his neck against the ground and died forthright. "Now I tell thee this that thou sayst get thy living by what way thou knowest and thoroughly understandest, lest peradventure greed enter into thee and thou lust after what is not of thy condition." Quoth the woman's husband, "Not every wise man is saved by his wisdom, nor is every fool lost by his folly. I have seen it happen to a skilful charmer, well versed in the ways of serpents, to be struck by the fangs of a snake[172] and killed, and others prevail over serpents who had no skill in them and no knowledge of their ways." And he went contrary to his wife and persisted in buying stolen goods below their value till he fell under suspicion and perished therefor: even as perished the sparrow in the tale of

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THE SPARROW AND THE PEACOCK

There was once upon a time a sparrow, that used every day to visit a certain king of the birds and ceased not to wait upon him in the mornings and not to leave him till the evenings, being the first to go in and the last to go out. One day, a company of birds chanced to assemble on a high mountain and one of them said to another, "Verily, we are waxed many, and many are the differences between us, and there is no help for it but we have a king to look into our affairs; so shall we all be at one and our differences will disappear." Thereupon up came that sparrow and counselled them to choose for King the peacock (that is, the prince he used to visit). So they chose the peacock to their King and he, become their sovereign, bestowed largesse upon them and made the sparrow his secretary and Prime Minister. Now the sparrow was wont by times to quit his assiduous serve in the presence and look into matters in general. So one day he absented himself at the usual time, whereat the peacock was sore troubled; and, while things stood thus, he returned and the peacock said to him, "What hath delayed thee, and thou the nearest to me of all my servants and the dearest of all my dependents?" replied the sparrow, "I have seen a thing which is doubtful to me and whereat I am affrighted." Asked the peacock, "What was it thou sawest?"; and the sparrow answered, "I saw a man set up a net, hard by my nest, peg down its pegs, strew grain in its midst and withdraw afar off. And I sat watching what he would do when behold, fate and fortune drave thither a crane and his wife, which fell into the midst of the net and began to cry out; whereupon the fowler rose up and took them. This troubled me, and such is the reason for my absence from thee, O King of the Age, but never again will I abide in that nest for fear of the net." Rejoined the peacock, "Depart not thy dwelling, for against fate and lot forethought will avail the naught." And the sparrow obeyed his bidding and said, "I will forthwith arm myself with patience and forbear to depart in obedience to the King." So he ceased not taking care of himself, and carrying food to his sovereign, who would eat what sufficed him and after feeding drink his water and dismiss the sparrow. Now one day as he was looking into matters, lo and behold! he saw two sparrows fighting on the ground and said in his mind, “How can I, who am the King’s Wazir, look on and see sparrows fighting in my neighbourhood? By Allah, I must make peace between them!” So he flew down to reconcile them; but the fowler cast the net over the whole number and the sparrow happened to be in their very midst. Then the fowler arose and took him and gave him to his comrade, saying, “Take care of him, “ I never saw fatter or finer.” But the sparrow said to himself, “I have fallen into that which I feared and none but the peacock inspired me with false confidence. It availed me naught to beware of the stroke of fate and fortune, since even he who taketh precaution may never flee from destiny. And how well said the poet in this poetry,

“Whatso is not to be shall ne’er become; *
No wise! and that to be must come to pass;
Yea it shall come to pass at time ordained, *
And th’ Ignoramus[173] aye shall cry Alas!’”

Whereupon quoth the King, “O Shahrazad, recount me other of these tales!”; and quoth she, “I will do so during the coming night, if life be granted to by the King whom Allah bring to honour!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fifty-third Night,

She said: — I will relate the

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TALE OF ALI BIN BAKKAR AND OF SHAMS AL-NAHAR.

It hath reached me, O august King, that in days of yore and in times and ages long gone before, during the Caliphate of Harun al-Rashid, there was a merchant who named his son Abú al-Hasan[174] Ali bin Táhir; and the same was great of goods and grace, while his son was fair of form and face and held in favour by all folk. He used to enter the royal palace without asking leave, for all the Caliph's concubines and slave-girls loved him, and he was wont to be companion with Al-Rashid in his cups and recite verses to him and tell him curious tales and witty. Withal he sold and bought in the merchants' bazar, and there used to sit in his shop a youth named Ali bin Bakkár, of the sons of the Persian Kings[175] who was formous of form and symmetrical of shape and perfect of figure, with cheeks red as roses and joined eyebrows; sweet of speech, laughing-lipped and delighting in mirth and gaiety. Now it chanced one day, as the two sat talking and laughing behold, there came up ten damsels like moons, every one of them complete in beauty and loveliness, and elegance and grace; and amongst them was a young lady riding on a she-mule with a saddle of brocade and stirrups of gold. She wore an outer veil of fine stuff, and her waist was girt with a girdle of gold-embroidered silk; and she was even as saith the poet,

"Silky her skin and silk that zoned waist; *
Sweet voice; words not o'er many nor too few:
Two eyes quoth Allah 'Be,' and they became; *
And work like wine on hearts they make to rue:
O love I feel! grow greater every night: *
O solace! Doom-day bring our interview."

And when the cortčge reached Abu al-Hasan's shop, she alighted from her mule, and sitting down on the front board,[176] saluted him, and he returned her salam. When Ali bin Bakkar saw her, she ravished his understanding and he rose to go away; but she said to him, "Sit in thy place. We came to thee and thou goest away: this is not fair!” Replied he, “O my lady, by Allah, I flee from what I see; for the tongue of the case saith,

‘She is a sun which towereth high a-sky; *
    So ease thy heart with cure by Patience lent:
Thou to her skyey height shalt fail to fly; *
    Nor she from skyey height can make descent.’”

When she heard this, she smiled and asked Abu al-Hasan, “What is the name of this young man?”; who answered, “He is a stranger;” and she enquired, “What countryman is he?”; whereto the merchant replied, “He is a descendant of the Persian Kings; his name is Ali son of Bakkar and the stranger deserveth honour.” Rejoined she, “When my damsel comes to thee, come thou at once to us and bring him with thee, that we may entertain him in our abode, lest he blame us and say, ‘There is no hospitality in the people of Baghdad’; for niggardliness is the worst fault a man can have. Thou hearest what I say to thee and, if thou disobey me, thou wilt incur my displeasure and I will never again visit thee or salute thee.” Quoth Abu al-Hasan, “On my head and my eyes: Allah preserve me from thy displeasure, fair lady!” Then she rose and went her way. Such was her case; but as regards Ali bin Bakkar he remained in a state of bewilderment. Now after an hour the damsel came to Abu al-Hasan and said to him, “Of a truth my lady Shams al-Nahár, the favourite of the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, biddeth thee to her, thee and thy friend, my lord Ali bin Bakkar.” So he rose and, taking Ali with him, followed the girl to the Caliph’s palace, where she carried them into a chamber and made them sit down. They talked together awhile, when behold, trays of food were set before them, and they ate and washed their hands. Then she brought them wine, and they drank deep and made merry; after which she bade them rise and carried them into another chamber, vaulted upon four columns, furnished after the goodliest fashion with various kinds of furniture, and adorned with decorations as it were one of the pavilions of Paradise. They were amazed at the rarities they saw; and, as they were enjoying a review of these marvels, suddenly up came ten slave-girls, like moons, swaying and swimming in beauty’s pride, dazzling the sight and confounding the sprite; and they ranged themselves in two ranks as if they were of the black-eyed Brides of Paradise. And after a while in came other ten damsels, bearing in their hands lutes and divers instruments of mirth and music; and these, having saluted the two guests, sat down and fell to tuning their lute-strings. Then they rose and standing before them, played and sang and recited verses: and indeed each one of them was a seduction to the servants of the Lord. Whilst they were thus busied there entered other ten damsels like unto them, high-bosomed maids and of an equal age, with black-eyes and cheeks like the rose, joined eyebrows and looks languorous; a very fascination to every faithful wight and to all who looked upon them a delight; clad in various kinds of coloured silks, with ornaments that amazed man's intelligence. They took up their station at the door, and there succeeded them yet other ten damsels even fairer than they, clad in gorgeous array, such as no tongue can say; and they also stationed themselves by the doorway. Then in came a band of twenty damsels and amongst them the lady, Shams al-Nahar hight, as she were the moon among the stars swaying from side to side, with luring gait and in beauty's pride. And she was veiled to the middle with the luxuriance of her locks, and clad in a robe of azure blue and a mantilla of silk embroidered with gold and gems of price; and her waist was girt with a zone set with various kinds of precious stones. She ceased not to advance with her graceful and coquettish swaying, till she came to the couch that stood at the upper end of the chamber and seated herself thereon. But when Ali bin Bakkar saw her, he versified with these verses,

"Source of mine evils, truly, she alone 's, *
Of long love-longing and my groans and moans;
Near her I find my soul in melting mood, *
For love of her and wasting of my bones."

And finishing his poetry he said to Abu al-Hasan, "Hadst thou Dealt more kindly with me thou haddest forewarned me of these things ere I came hither, that I might have made up my mind and taken patience to support what hath befallen me." And he wept and groaned and complained. Replied Abu al-Hasan, "O my brother, I meant thee naught but good; but I feared to tell thee this, lest such transport should betide thee as might hinder thee from foregathering with her, and be a stumbling-block between thee and her. But be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear;[177] for she to thee inclineth and to favour thee designeth." Asked Ali bin Bakkar, "What is this young lady's name?" Answered Abu al-Hasan, "She is hight Shams al-Nahar, one of the favourites of the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, and this is the palace of the Caliphate." Then Shams al-Nahar sat gazing upon the charms of Ali bin Bakkar and he upon hers, till both were engrossed with love for each other. Presently she commanded the damsels, one and all, to be seated, each in her rank and place, and all sat on a couch before one of the windows, and she bade them sing; whereupon one of them took up the lute and began caroling,

"Give thou my message twice * Bring clear reply in trice!
To thee, O Prince of Beau * -ty[178] with complaint I rise:
My lord, as heart-blood dear * And Life's most precious prize!
Give me one kiss in gift * Or loan, if thou devise:
And if thou crave for more * Take all that satisfies.[179]
Thou donn'st me sickness-dress * Thee with health's weed I
    bless."

Her singing charmed Ali bin Bakkar, and he said to her, "Sing me more of the like of these verses." So she struck the strings and began to chaunt these lines,

"By stress of parting, O beloved one, *
    Thou mad'st these eyelids torment- race to run:
Oh gladness of my sight and dear desire, *
    Goal of my wishes, my religion!
Pity the youth whose eyne are drowned in tears *
    Of lover gone distraught and clean undone."

When she had finished her verses, Shams al-Nahar said to another damsel, "Let us hear something from thee!" So she played a lively measure and began these couplets,

“His[180] looks have made me drunken, not his wine; *
His grace of gait disgraced sleep to these eyne:
Dazed me no cup, but cop with curly crop; *
His gifts overcame me not the gifts of vine:
His winding locks my patience-clue unwound: *
His robed beauties robbed all wits of mine.”

When Shams Al-Nahar heard this recital from the damsel, she sighed heavily and the song pleased her. Then she bade another damsel sing; so she took the lute and began chanting,

“Face that with Sol in Heaven lamping vies; *
Youth-tide’s fair fountain which begins to rise;
Whose curly side-beard writeth writ of love, *
And in each curl concealeth mysteries:
Cried Beauty, ‘When I met this youth I knew *
’Tis Allah’s loom such gorgeous robe supplies.’”

When she had finished her song, Ali bin Bakkar said to the slave-maiden nearest him, “Sing us somewhat, thou O damsel.” So she took the lute and began singing,

“Our trysting-time is all too short *
For this long coyish coquetry:
How long this ‘Nay, Nay!’ and ‘Wait, wait?’ *
This is not old nobility!
And now that Time deigns lend delight *
Profit of th’ opportunity.”

When she ended, Ali bin Bakkar followed up her song with flowing tears; and, as Shams al-Nahar saw him weeping and groaning and complaining, she burned with love-longing and desire; and passion and transport consumed her. So she rose from the sofa and came to the door of the alcove, where Ali met her and they embraced with arms round the neck, and fell down fainting in the doorway; whereupon the damsels came to them and carrying them into the alcove, sprinkled rose-water upon them both. When they recovered, they found not Abu al-Hasan who had hidden himself by the side of a couch, and the young lady said, “Where is Abu al-Hasan?” So he showed himself to her from beside the couch and she saluted him, saying, “I pray Allah to give me the means of requiting thee, O kindest of men!” Then she turned to Ali bin Bakkar and said to him, “O my lord, passion hath not reached this extreme pass with thee without my feeling the like; but we have nothing to do save to bear patiently what calamity hath befallen us.” Replied he, “By Allah, O my lady, union with thee may not content me nor gazing upon thee assuage the fire thou hast lighted, nor shall leave me the love of thee which hath mastered my heart but with the leaving of my life.” So saying, he wept and the tears ran down upon his cheeks like thridded pearls; and when Shams al-Nahar saw him weep, she wept for his weeping. But Abu al-Hasan exclaimed, “By Allah, I wonder at your case and am confounded at your condition; of a truth, your affair is amazing and your chance dazing. What! this weeping while ye are yet together: then how will it be what time ye are parted and far separated?” And he continued, “Indeed, this is no tide for weeping and wailing, but a season for meeting and merry-making; rejoice, therefore, and take your pleasure and shed no more tears!” Then Shams al-Nahar signed to a slave-girl, who arose and presently returned with handmaids bearing a table, whose dishes of silver were full of various rich viands. They set the table before the pair and Shams al-Nahar began to eat[181] and to place tid-bits in the mouth of Ali bin Bakkar; and they ceased not so doing till they were satisfied, when the table was removed and they washed their hands. Then the waiting-women fetched censers with all manner of incense, aloe-wood and ambergris and mixed scents; and sprinkling-flasks full of rose-water were also brought and they were fumigated and perfumed. After this the slaves set on vessels of graven gold, containing all kinds of sherbets, besides fruits fresh and dried, that heart can desire and eye delight in; and lastly one brought a flagon of carnelion full of old wine. Then Shams al-Nahar chose out ten handmaids to attend on them and ten singing women; and, dismissing the rest to their apartments, bade some of those who remained strike the lute. They did as she bade them and one of them began to sing,

"My soul to him who smiled back my salute, *
In breast reviving hopes that were no mo'e:
The hand o' Love my secret brought to light, *
And censor's tongues what lies my ribs below:[182]
My tear-drops ever press twixt me and him, *
As though my tear-drops showing love would flow."

When she had finished her singing, Shams al-Nahar rose and, filling a goblet, drank it off, then crowned it again and handed it to Ali bin Bakkar; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fifty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Shams al-Nahar filled a goblet and handed it to Ali bin Bakkar; after which she bade another damsel sing; and she began singing these couplets,

"My tears thus flowing rival with my wine, *
Pouring the like of what fills cup to brink:[183]
By Allah wot I not an run these eyne *
Wi' wine, or else it is of tears I drink."

And when she ended her recitation, Ali bin Bakkar drained his cup and returned it to Shams al-Nahar. She filled it again and gave it to Abu al-Hasan who tossed it off. Then she took the lute, saying, "None shall sing over my cup save myself;" so she screwed up the strings and intoned these verses,

"The tears run down his cheeks in double row, *
And in his breast high flameth lover-lowe:
He weeps when near, a-fearing to be far; *
And, whether far or near, his tear-drops flow."

And the words of another,

"Our life to thee, O cup-boy Beauty-dight! *
From parted hair to calves; from black to white:
Sol beameth from thy hands, and from thy lips *
Pleiads, and full Moon through thy collar's night,[184]

Good sooth the cups, which made our heads fly round, *
Are those thine eyes pass round to daze the sight:
No wonder lovers hail thee as full moon *
Waning to them, for self e’er waxing bright:
Art thou a deity to kill and quicken, *
Bidding this fere, forbidding other wight?
Allah from model of thy form made Beau *
-ty and the Zephyr scented with thy sprite.
Thou art not of this order of human *
-ity but angel lent by Heaven to man.”

When Ali bin Bakkar and Abu al-Hasan and those present heard Shams al-Nahar’s song, they were like to fly for joy, and sported and laughed; but while they were thus enjoying themselves lo! up came a damsel, trembling for fear and said, “O my lady, the Commander of the Faithful’s eunuchs are at the door, Afíf and Masrúr and Marján[185] and others whom wot I not.” When they heard this they were like to die with fright, but Shams al-Nahar laughed and said, “Have no fear!” Then quoth she to the damsel, “Keep answering them whilst we remove hence.” And she caused the doors of the alcove to be closed upon Ali and Abu al-Hasan, and let down the curtains over the entrance (they being still within); after which she shut the door of the saloon and went out by the privy wicket into the flower-garden, where she seated herself on a couch she had there and made one of the damsels knead her feet.[186] Then she dismissed the rest of her women to their rooms and bade the portress admit those who were at the door; whereupon Masrur entered, he and his company of twenty with drawn swords. And when they saluted her, she asked, “Wherefore come ye?”; whereto they answered, “The Commander of the Faithful saluteth thee. Indeed he is desolated for want of thy sight; he letteth thee know that this be to him a day of joy and great gladness and he wisheth to seal his day and complete his pleasure with thy company at this very hour. So say, wilt go to him or shall he come to thee?” Upon this she rose and, kissing the earth, replied, “I hear and I obey the commandment of the Prince of True Believers!” Then she summoned the women guards of her household and other slave-damsels, who lost no time in attending upon her and made a show of obeying the Caliph's orders. And albeit everything about the place was in readiness, she said to the eunuchs, "Go to the Commander of the Faithful and tell him that I await him after a little space, that I may make ready for him a place with carpets and other matters." So they returned in haste to the Caliph, whilst Shams al-Nahar, doffing her outer gear, repaired to her lover, Ali bin Bakkar, and drew him to her bosom and bade him farewell, whereat he wept sore and said, "O my lady, this leave-taking will cause the ruin of my very self and the loss of my very soul; but I pray Allah grant me patience to support the passion wherewith he hath afflicted me!" Replied she, "By Allah, none shall suffer perdition save I; for thou wilt fare forth to the bazar and consort with those that shall divert thee, and thy life will be sound and thy love hidden forsure; but I shall fall into trouble and tristesse nor find any to console me, more by token that I have given the Caliph a tryst, wherein haply great peril shall betide me by reason of my love for thee and my longing for thee and my grief at being parted from thee. For with what tongue shall I sing and with what heart shall I present myself before the Caliph? and with what speech shall I company the Commander of the Faithful in his cups? and with what eyes shall I look upon a place where thou art absent? and with what taste shall I drink wine of which thou drinkest not?" Quoth Abu al-Hasan, "Be not troubled but take patience and be not remiss in entertaining the Commander of the Faithful this night, neither show him any neglect, but be of good heart." Now at this juncture, behold, up came a damsel, who said to Shams al-Nahar, "O my lady, the Caliph's pages are come." So she hastily rose to her feet and said to the maid, "Take Abu al-Hasan and his friend and carry them to the upper balcony[187] giving upon the garden and there leave them till darkness come on; when do thou contrive to carry them forth." Accordingly the girl led them up to the balcony and, locking the door upon them both, went her way. As they sat looking on the garden lo! the Caliph appeared escorted by near an hundred eunuchs, with drawn swords in hand and girt about with a score of damsels, as they were moons, all clad in the richest of raiment and on each one's head was a crown set with jewels and rubies; while each carried a lighted flambeau. The Caliph walked in their midst, they encompassing him about on all sides, and Masrur and Afíf and Wasíf[188] went before him and he bore himself with a graceful gait. So Shams al-Nahar and her maidens rose to receive him and, meeting him at the garden-door, kissed ground between his hands; nor did they cease to go before him till they brought him to the couch whereon he sat down, whilst all the waiting-women who were in the garden and the eunuchs stood before him and there came fair handmaids and concubines holding in hand lighted candles and perfumes and incense and instruments of mirth and music. Then the Sovereign bade the singers sit down, each in her place, and Shams al-Nahar came up and, seating herself on a stool by the side of the Caliph's couch, began to converse with him; all this happening whilst Abu al-Hasan and Ali bin Bakkar looked on and listened, unseen of the King. Presently the Caliph fell to jesting and toying with Shams al-Nahar and both were in the highest spirits, glad and gay, when he bade them throw open the garden pavilion. So they opened the doors and windows and lighted the tapers till the place shone in the season of darkness even as the day. Then the eunuchs removed thither the wine-service and (quoth Abu al-Hasan) "I saw drinking-vessels and rarities whose like mine eyes never beheld, vases of gold and silver and all manner of noble metals and precious stones, such as no power of description can describe, till indeed it seemed to me I was dreaming, for excess of amazement at what I saw!" But as for Ali bin Bakkar, from the moment Shams al-Nahar left him, he lay strown on the ground for stress of love and desire; and, when he revived, he fell to gazing upon these things that had not their like and saying to Abu al-Hasan, "O my brother, I fear lest the Caliph see us or come to know of our case; but the most of my fear is for thee. For myself, of a truth I know that I am about to be lost past recourse, and the cause of my destruction is naught but love and longing and excess of desire and distraction, and disunion from my beloved after union with her; but I beseech Allah to deliver us from this perilous predicament." And they ceased not to look out of the balcony on the Caliph who was taking his pleasure, till the banquet was spread before him, when he turned to one of the damsels and said to her, "O Gharám,[189] let us hear some of thine enchanting songs." So she took the lute and tuning it, began singing,

“The longing of a Bedouin maid, whose folks are far away, *
Who yearns after the willow of the Hejaz and the bay,[190] —
Whose tears, when she on travellers lights, might for their water serve * And eke her her passion, with its heat, their bivouac-fire purvey, —
Is not more fierce nor ardent than my longing for my love, *
Who deems that I commit a crime in loving him alway.”[191]

Now when Shams al-Nahar heard these verses she slipped off the stool whereon she sat and fell to the earth fainting and became insensible to the world around her; upon which the damsels came and lifted her up. And when Ali bin Bakkar saw this from the balcony he also slipped down senseless, and Abu al-Hasan said, “Verily Fate hath divided love-desire equally upon you twain!”[192] As he spoke lo! in came the damsel who had led them up to the balcony and said to him, “O Abu al-Hasan, arise thou and thy friend and come down, for of a truth the world hath waxed strait upon us and I fear lest our case be discovered or the Caliph become aware of you; unless you descend at once we are dead ones.” Quoth he, “And how shall this youth descend with me seeing that he hath no strength to rise?” Thereupon the damsel began sprinkling rose-water on Ali bin Bakkar till he came to his senses, when Abu al-Hasan lifted him up and the damsel made him lean upon her. So they went down from the balcony and walked on awhile till the damsel opened a little iron door, and made the two friends pass through it, and they came upon a bench by the Tigris’ bank. Thereupon the slave-girl clapped her hands[193] and there came up a man with a little boat to whom said she, “Take up these two young men and land them on the opposite side.” So both entered the boat and, as the man rowed off with them and they left the garden behind them, Ali bin Bakkar looked back towards the Caliph’s palace and the pavilion and the grounds; and bade them farewell with these two couplets,

“I offered this weak hand as last farewell, *
While to heart-burning fire that hand is guided:

O let not this end union! Let not this *
Be last provision for long road provided!”

Thereupon the damsel said to the boatman, “Make haste with them both.” So he plied his oars deftly (the slave-girl being still with them); — And Shahrazad perceived the dawning day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the boatman rowed them towards the other bank till they reached it and landed, whereupon she took leave of them, saying, “It were my wish not to abandon you, but I can go no farther than this.” Then she turned back, whilst Ali bin Bakkar lay prostrate on the ground before Abu al-Hasan and by no manner of means could he rise, till his friend said to him, “Indeed this place is not sure and I fear lest we lose our lives in this very spot, by reason of the lewd fellows who infest it and highwaymen and men of lawlessness.” Upon this Ali bin Bakkar arose and walked a little but could not continue walking. Now Abu al-Hasan had friends in that quarter; so he made search for one of them, in whom he trusted, and who was of his intimates, and knocked at the door. The man came out quickly and seeing them, bade them welcome and brought them into his house, where he seated them and talked with them and asked them whence they came. Quoth Abu al-Hasan, “We came out but now, being obliged thereto by a person with whom I had dealings and who hath in his hands dirhams of mine. And it reached me that he designed to flee into foreign parts with my monies; so I fared forth to-night in quest of him, taking with me for company this youth, Ali bin Bakkar; but, when we came hoping to see the debtor, he hid from us and we could get no sight of him. Accordingly we turned back, empty-handed without a doit, but it was irksome to us to return home at this hour of the night; so weeting not whither to go, we came to thee, well knowing thy kindness and wonted courtesy.” “Ye are welcome and well come!” answered the host, and studied to do them honour; so the twain abode with him the rest of their night and as soon as the daylight dawned, they left him and made their way back without aught of delay to the city. When they came to the house of Abu al-

Hasan, he conjured his comrade to enter; so they went in and lying down on the bed, slept awhile. As soon as they awoke, Abu al-Hasan bade his servants spread the house with rich carpets, saying in his mind, "Needs must I divert this youth and distract him from thinking of his affliction, for I know his case better than another." Then he called for water for Ali bin Bakkar who, when it was brought, rose up from his bed and making his ablutions, prayed the obligatory prayers which he had omitted for the past day and night[194] ; after which he sat down and began to solace himself by talking with his friend. When Abu al-Hasan saw this, he turned to him and said, "O my lord, it were fitter for thy case that thou abide with me this night, so thy breast may be broadened and the distress of love-longing that is upon thee be dispelled and thou make merry with us, so haply the fire of thy heart may thus be quenched." Ali replied, "O my brother, do what seemeth good to thee; for I may not on any wise escape from what calamity hath befallen me; so act as thou wilt." Accordingly, Abu al-Hasan arose and bade his servants summon some of the choicest of his friends and sent for singers and musicians who came; and meanwhile he made ready meat and drink for them; so they sat eating and drinking and making merry through the rest of the day till nightfall. Then they lit the candles, and the cups of friendship and good fellowship went round amongst them and the time passed pleasantly with them. Presently, a singing-woman took the lute and began singing,

"I've been shot by Fortune, and shaft of eye *
    Down struck me and parted from fondest friend:
Time has proved him foe and my patience failed, *
    Yet I ever expected it thus would end."

When Ali bin Bakkar heard her words, he fell to the earth in a swoon and ceased not lying in his fainting fit till day-break; and Abu al-Hasan despaired of him. But, with the dawning, he came to himself and sought to go home; nor could his friend hinder him, for fear of the issue of his affair. So he made his servants bring a she-mule and, mounting Ali thereon, carried him to his lodgings, he and one of his men. When he was safe at home, Abu al-Hasan thanked

Allah for his deliverance from that sore peril and sat awhile with him, comforting him; but Ali could not contain himself, for the violence of his love and longing. So Abu al-Hasan rose to take leave of him and return to his own place. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fifty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Abu al-Hasan rose to take leave of him, Ali son of Bakkar exclaimed, "O my brother, leave me not without news." "I hear and obey," replied the other; and forthwith went away and, repairing to his shop, opened it and sat there all day, expecting news of Shams al-Nahar. But none came. He passed the night in his own house and, when dawned the day, he walked to Ali bin Bakkar's lodging and went in and found him thrown on his bed, with his friends about him and physicians around him prescribing something or other, and the doctors feeling his pulse. When he saw Abu al-Hasan enter he smiled, and the visitor, after saluting him, enquired how he did and sat with him till the folk withdrew, when he said to him, "What plight is this?" Quoth Ali bin Bakkar, "It was bruited abroad that I was ill and my comrades heard the report; and I have no strength to rise and walk so as to give him the lie who noised abroad my sickness, but continue lying strown here as thou seest. So my friends came to visit me; say, however, O my brother, hast thou seen the slave-girl or heard any news of her?" He replied, "I have not seen her, since the day we parted from her on Tigris' bank;" and he presently added, "O my brother, beware thou of scandal and leave this weeping." Rejoined Ali, "O my brother, indeed, I have no control over myself;" and he sighed and began reciting,

"She gives her woman's hand a force that fails the hand of me, *
And with red dye on wrist she gars my patience fail and flee:
And for her hand she fears so sore what shafts her eyes discharge, * She's fain to clothe and guard her hand with mail-ring panoply:[195]
The leach in ignorance felt my pulse the while to him I cried, *
'Sick is my heart, so quit my hand which hath no malady:'

Quoth she to that fair nightly vision favoured me and fled, *
    'By Allah picture him nor add nor 'bate in least degree!'
Replied the Dream, 'I leave him though he die of thirst,'
    I cry, * 'Stand off from water-pit and say why this persistency.'
Rained tear-pearls her Narcissus-eyes, and rose on cheek belit *
    She made my sherbet, and the lote with bits of hail she bit."[196]

And when his recital was ended he said, "O Abu al-Hasan, I am smitten with an affliction from which I deemed myself in perfect surety, and there is no greater ease for me than death." Replied he, "Be patient, haply Allah will heal thee!" Then he went out from him and repairing to his shop opened it, nor had he sat long, when suddenly up came the handmaid who saluted him. He returned her salam and looking at her, saw that her heart was palpitating and that she was in sore trouble and showed signs of great affliction: so he said to her, "Thou art welcome and well come! How is it with Shams al-Nahar?" She answered, "I will presently tell thee, but first let me know how doth Ali bin Bakkar." So he told her all that had passed and how his case stood, whereat she grieved and sighed and lamented and marvelled at his condition. Then said she, "My lady's case is still stranger than this; for when you went away and fared homewards, I turned back, my heart beating hard on your account and hardly crediting your escape. On entering I found her lying prostrate in the pavilion, speaking not nor answering any, whilst the Commander of the Faithful sat by her head not knowing what ailed her and finding none who could make known to him aught of her ailment. She ceased not from her swoon till midnight, when she recovered and the Prince of the Faithful said to her, 'What harm hath happened to thee, O Shams al-Nahar, and what hath befallen thee this night?' Now when she heard the Caliph's words she kissed his feet and said, 'Allah make me thy ransom, O Prince of True Believers! Verily a sourness of stomach lighted a fire in my body, so that I lost my senses for excess of pain, and I know no more of my condition.' Asked the Caliph, 'What hast thou eaten to-day?'; and she answered, 'I broke my fast on something I had never tasted before.' Then she feigned to be recovered and calling for a something of wine, drank it, and begged the Sovereign to resume his diversion. So he sat down again on his couch in the pavilion and the sitting was resumed, but when she saw me, she asked me how you fared. I told her what I had done with you both and repeated to her the verses which Ali bin Bakkar had composed at parting-tide, whereat she wept secretly, but presently held her peace. After awhile, the Commander of the Faithful ordered a damsel to sing, and she began reciting,

'Life has no sweet for me since forth ye fared; *
Would Heaven I wot how fare ye who forsake:
'Twere only fit my tears were tears of blood, *
Since you are weeping for mine absence sake.'

But when my lady heard this verse she fell back on the sofa in a swoon," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fifty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the slave-girl continued to Abu al-Hasan, "But when my lady heard this verse, she fell back on the sofa in a swoon, and I seized her hand and sprinkled rose-water on her face, till she revived, when I said to her, 'O my lady, expose not thyself and all thy palace containeth. By the life of thy beloved, be thou patient!' She replied, 'Can aught befal me worse than death which indeed I seek, for by Allah, my ease is therein?' Whilst we were thus talking, another damsel sang these words of the poet,

'Quoth they, 'Maybe that Patience lend thee ease!' *
Quoth I, 'Since fared he where is Patience' place?
Covenant he made 'twixt me and him, to cut *
The cords of Patience at our last embrace!'[197]

And as soon as she had finished her verse Shams al-Nahar swooned away once more, which when the Caliph saw, he came to her in haste and commanded the wine to be removed and each damsel to return to her chamber. He abode with her the rest of the night, and when dawned the day, he sent for chirurgeons and leaches and bade them medicine her, knowing not that her sickness arose from love and longing. I tarried with her till I deemed her in a way of recovery, and this is what kept me from thee. I have now left her with a number of her body-women, who were greatly concerned for her, when she bade me go to you two and bring her news of Ali bin Bakkar and return to her with the tidings." When Abu al-Hasan heard her story, he marvelled and said, "By Allah, I have acquainted thee with his whole case; so now return to thy mistress; and salute her for me and diligently exhort her to have patience and say to her, 'Keep thy secret!'; and tell her that I know all her case which is indeed hard and one which calleth for nice conduct." She thanked him and taking leave of him, returned to her mistress. So far concerning her; but as regards Abu al-Hasan, he ceased not to abide in his shop till the end of the day, when he arose and shut it and locked it and betaking himself to Ali bin Bakkar's house knocked at the door. One of the servants came out and admitted him; and when Ali saw him, he smiled and congratulated himself on his coming, saying, "O Abu al-Hasan, thou hast desolated me by thine absence this day; for indeed my soul is pledged to thee during the rest of my time." Answered the other, "Leave this talk! Were thy healing at the price of my hand, I would cut it off ere thou couldst ask me; and, could I ransom thee with my life, I had already laid it down for thee. Now this very day, Shams al-Nahar's handmaid hath been with me and told me that what hindered her coming ere this was the Caliph's sojourn with her mistress; and she acquainted me with everything which had betided her." And he went on to repeat to him all that the girl had told him of Shams al-Nahar; at which Ali bin Bakkar lamented sore and wept and said to him, "Allah upon thee, O my brother, help me in this affliction and teach me what course I shall take. Moreover, I beg thee of thy grace to abide with me this night, that I may have the solace of thy society." Abu al-Hasan agreed to this request, replying that he would readily night there; so they talked together till even-tide darkened, when Ali bin Bakkar groaned aloud and lamented and wept copious tears, reciting these couplets,

"Thine image in these eyne, a-lip thy name, *

My heart thy home; how couldst thou disappear?
How sore I grieve for life which comes to end, *
Nor see I boon of union far or near."

And these the words of another,

"She split my casque of courage with eye-swords that sorely smite; * She pierced my patience' ring-mail with her shape like cane-spear light:
Patched by the musky mole on cheek was to our sight displayed * Camphor set round with ambergris, light dawning through the night.[198]
Her soul was sorrowed and she bit carnelion stone with pearls * Whose unions in a sugared tank ever to lurk unite:[199]
Restless she sighed and smote with palm the snows that clothe her breast, * And left a mark whereon I looked and ne'er beheld such sight,
Pens, fashioned of her coral nails with ambergris for ink, * Five lines on crystal page of breast did cruelly indite:
O swordsmen armed with trusty steel! I bid you all beware * When she on you bends deadly glance which fascinates the sprite:
And guard thyself, O thou of spear! whenas she draweth near * To tilt with slender quivering shape, likest the nut-brown spear."

And when Ali bin Bakkar ended his verse, he cried out with a great cry and fell down in a fit. Abu al-Hasan thought that his soul had fled his body and he ceased not from his swoon till day- break, when he came to himself and talked with his friend, who continued to sit with him till the forenoon. Then he left him and repaired to his shop; and hardly had he opened it, when lo! the damsel came and stood by his side. As soon as he saw her, she made him a sign of salutation which he returned; and she delivered to him the greeting message of her mistress and asked, "How doth Ali bin Bakkar?" Answered he, "O handmaid of good, ask me not of his case nor what he suffereth for excess of love-longing; he sleepeth not by night neither resteth he by day; wakefulness wasteth him and care hath conquered him and his condition is a consternation to his friend." Quoth she, "My lady saluteth thee and him, and she hath written him a letter, for indeed she is in worse case than he; and she entrusted the same to me, saying, 'Do not return save with the answer; and do thou obey my bidding.' Here now is the letter, so say, wilt thou wend with me to him that we may get his reply?" "I hear and obey," answered Abu al-Hasan, and locking his shop and taking with him the girl he went, by a way different from that whereby he came, to Ali bin Bakkar's house, where he left her standing at the door and walked in. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fifty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abu al-Hasan went with the girl to the house of Ali son of Bakkar, where he left her standing at the door and walked in to his great joy. And Abu al-Hasan said to him, "The reason of my coming is that such an one hath sent his handmaid to thee with a letter, containing his greeting to thee and mentioning therein that the cause of his not coming to thee was a matter that hath betided him. The girl standeth even now at the door: shall she have leave to enter?"; and he signed to him that it was Shams al-Nahar's slave-girl. Ali understood his signal and answered, "Bring her in," and when he saw her, he shook for joy and signed to her, "How doth thy lord?; Allah grant him health and healing!" "He is well," answered she and pulling out the letter gave it to him. He took it and kissing it, opened and read it; after which he handed it to Abu al-Hasan, who found these verses written therein,

"This messenger shall give my news to thee; *
    Patience what while my sight thou canst not see:
A lover leav'st in love's insanity, *
    Whose eyne abide on wake incessantly:
I suffer patience-pangs in woes that none *
    Of men can medicine; — such my destiny!
Keep cool thine eyes; ne'er shall my heart forget, *
    Nor without dream of thee one day shall be.
Look what befel thy wasted frame, and thence *

Argue what I am doomed for love to dree!

"And afterwards[200] : Without fingers[201] I have written to thee, and without tongue I have spoken to thee * to resume my case, I have an eye wherefrom sleeplessness departeth not * and a heart whence sorrowful thought stirreth not * It is with me as though health I had never known * nor in sadness ever ceased to wone * nor spent an hour in pleasant place * but it is as if I were made up of pine and of the pain of passion and chagrin * Sickness unceasingly troubleth * and my yearning ever redoubleth * desire still groweth * and longing in my heart still gloweth * I pray Allah to hasten our union * and dispel of my mind the confusion * And I would fain thou favour me * with some words of thine * that I may cheer my heart in pain and repine * Moreover, I would have thee put on a patience lief, until Allah vouchsafe relief * And His peace be with thee."[202] When Ali bin Bakkar had read this letter he said in weak accents and feeble voice, "With what hand shall I write and with what tongue shall I make moan and lament? Indeed she addeth sickness to my sickness and draweth death upon my death!" Then he sat up and taking in hand ink-case and paper, wrote the following reply, "In the name of Allah, the Compassionating, the Compassionate![203] Thy letter hath reached me, O my lady, and hath given ease to a sprite worn out with passion and love-longing, and hath brought healing to a wounded heart cankered with languishment and sickness; for indeed I am become even as saith the poet,

'Straitened bosom; reveries dispread; *
Slumberless eyelids; body wearied;
Patience cut short; disunion longsomest; *
Reason deranged and heart whose life is fled!'

And know that complaining is unavailing; but it easeth him whom love-longing disordereth and separation destroyeth and, with repeating, 'Union,' I keep myself comforted and how fine is the saying of the poet who said,

'Did not in love-plight joys and sorrows meet, * How would the message or the writ be sweet?'"

When he had made an end of this letter, he handed it to Abu al-Hasan, saying, "Read it and give it to the damsel." So he took it and read it and its words stirred his soul and its meaning wounded his vitals. Then he committed it to the girl, and when she took it Ali bin Bakkar said to her, "Salute thy lady for me and acquaint her with my love and longing and how passion is blended with my flesh and my bones; and say to her that in very deed I need a woman who shall snatch me from the sea of destruction and save me from this dilemma; for of a truth Fortune oppresseth me with her vicissitudes; and is there any helper to free me from her turpitudes?" And he wept and the damsel wept for his weeping. Then she took leave of him and went forth and Abu al-Hasan went out with her and farewelled her. So she ganged her gait and he returned to his shop, which he opened and sat down there, as was his wont; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Fifty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abu al-Hasan farewelled the slave-girl and returned to his shop which he opened and sat down there according to his custom; but as he tarried, he found his heart oppressed and his breast straitened, and he was perplexed about his case. So he ceased not from melancholy the rest of that day and night, and on the morrow he betook himself to Ali bin Bakkar, with whom he sat till the folk withdrew, when he asked him how he did. Ali began to complain of desire and to descant upon the longing and distraction which possessed him, and repeated these words of the poet.

"Men have 'plained of pining before my time, *
Live and dead by parting been terrified:
But such feelings as those which my ribs immure *
I have never heard of, nor ever espied."

And these of another poet,

"I have borne for thy love what never bore *

For his fair, Kays the ‘Daft one’[204] hight of old:
Yet I chase not the wildlings of wold and wild *
For his fair, Kays the ‘Daft one’[204] hight of old:
Yet I chase not the wildlings of wold and wild *
Like Kays, for madness is manifold.”

Thereupon quoth Abu al-Hasan, “Never did I see or hear of one like unto thee in thy love! When thou sufferest all this transport and sickness and trouble being enamoured of one who returneth thy passion, how would it be with thee if she whom thou lovest were contrary and contumelious, and thy case were discovered through her perfidy?” “And Ali the son of Bakkar” (says Abu al-Hasan) “was pleased with my words and he relied upon them and he thanked me for what I had said and done. I had a friend” (continued Abu al-Hasan), “to whom I discovered my affair and that of Ali and who knew that we were intimates; but none other than he was acquainted with what was betwixt us. He was wont to come to me and enquire how Ali did and after a little, he began to ask me about the damsel; but I fenced him off, saying, ‘She invited him to her and there was between him and her as much as can possibly take place, and this is the end of their affair; but I have devised me a plan and an idea which I would submit to thee.’” Asked his friend, “And what is that?” Answered Abu al-Hasan, “I am a person well known to have much dealing among men and women, and I fear, O my brother, lest the affair of these twain come to light and this lead to my death and the seizure of my goods and the rending of my repute and that of my family. Wherefore I have resolved to get together my monies and make ready forthright and repair to the city of Bassorah and there abide, till I see what cometh of their case, that none may know of me; for love hath lorded over both and correspondence passeth between them. At this present their go-between and confidante is a slave-girl who hath till now kept their counsel, but I fear lest haply anxiety get the better of her and she discover their secret to some one and the matter, being bruited abroad, might bring me to great grief and prove the cause of my ruin; for I have no excuse to offer my accusers.” Rejoined his friend, “Thou hast acquainted me with a parlous affair, from the like of which the wise and understanding will shrink with fear. Allah avert from thee the evil thou dreadest with such dread and save thee from the consequences thou apprehendest!

Assuredly thy recking is aright.” So Abu al-Hasan returned to his place and began ordering his affairs and preparing for his travel; nor had three days passed ere he made an end of his business and fared forth Bassorah-wards. His friend came to visit him three days after but finding him not, asked of him from the neighbours who answered, “He set out for Bassorah three days ago, for he had dealings with its merchants and he is gone thither to collect monies from his debtors; but he will soon return.” The young man was confounded at the news and knew not whither to wend; and he said in his mind, “Would I had not parted from Abu al-Hasan!” Then he bethought him of some plan whereby he should gain access to Ali bin Bakkar; so he went to his lodging, and said to one of his servants, “Ask leave for me of thy lord that I may go in and salute him.” The servant entered and told his master and presently returning, invited the man to walk in. So he entered and found Ali bin Bakkar thrown back on the pillow and saluted him. Ali returned his greeting and bade him welcome; whereupon the young man began to excuse himself for having held aloof from him all that while and added, “O my lord, between Abu al-Hasan and myself there was close friendship, so that I used to trust him with my secrets and could not sever myself from him an hour. Now it so chanced that I was absent three days’ space on certain business with a company of my friends; and, when I came back and went to him, I found his shop locked up; so I asked the neighbours about him and they replied, ‘He is gone to Bassorah.’ Now I know he had no surer friend than thou; so, by Allah, tell me what thou knowest of him.” When Ali bin Bakkar heard this, his colour changed and he was troubled and answered, “I never heard till this day of his departure and, if the case be as thou sayest, weariness is come upon me.” And he began repeating,

“For joys that are no more I wont to weep, *
    While friends and lovers stood by me unscattered;
This day when disunited me and them *
    Fortune, I weep lost loves and friendship shattered.”

Then he hung his head ground-wards in thought awhile and presently raising it and looking to one of his servants, said, “Go to

Abu al-Hasan's house and enquire anent him whether he be at home or journeying abroad. If they say, 'He is abroad'; ask whither he be gone." The servant went out and returning after a while said to his master, "When I asked for Abu al-Hasan, his people told me that he was gone on a journey to Bassorah; but I saw a damsel standing at the door who, knowing me by sight, though I knew her not, said to me, 'Art thou not servant to Ali bin Bakkar?' 'Even so,' answered I; and she rejoined, 'I bear a message for him from one who is the dearest of all folk to him.' So she came with me and she is now standing at the door." Quoth Ali bin Bakkar, "Bring her in." The servant went out to her and brought her in, and the man who was with Ali looked at her and found her pretty. Then she advanced to the son of Bakkar and saluted him. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the One Hundred and Sixtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the slave-girl came in to Ali bin Bakkar, she advanced to him and saluted him and spake with him secretly; and from time to time during the dialogue he exclaimed with an oath and swore that he had not talked and tattled of it. Then she took leave of him and went away. Now Abu al-Hasan's friend was a jeweller,[205] and when she was gone, he found a place for speech and said to Ali bin Bakkar, "Doubtless and assuredly the Caliph's household have some demand upon thee or thou hast dealings therewith?" "Who told thee of this?" asked Ali; and the jeweller answered, "I know it by yonder damsel who is Shams al-Nahar's slave-girl; for she came to me a while since with a note wherein was written that she wanted a necklace of jewels; and I sent her a costly collar." But when Ali bin Bakkar heard this, he was greatly troubled, so that the jeweller feared to see him give up the ghost, yet after a while he recovered himself and said, "O my brother, I conjure thee by Allah to tell me truly how thou knowest her." Replied he, "Do not press this question upon me;" and Ali rejoined, "Indeed, I will not turn from thee till thou tell me the whole truth." Quoth the jeweller, "I will tell thee all, on condition that thou distrust me not, and that my words cause thee no restraint; nor will I conceal aught from thee by way of secret but will discover to thee the truth of the affair, provided that thou acquaint me with the true state of thy case and the cause of thy sickness.” Then he told him all that had passed from first to last between Abu al-Hasan and himself, adding, “I acted thus only out of friendship for thee and of my desire to serve thee;” and assured him that he would keep his secret and venture life and good in his service. So Ali in turn told him his story and added, “By Allah, O my brother, naught moved me to keep my case secret from thee and from others but my fear lest folk should lift the veils of protection from certain persons.” Rejoined the jeweller, “And I desired not to foregather with thee but of the great affection I bear thee and my zeal for thee in every case, and my compassion for the anguish thy heart endureth from severance. Haply I may be a comforter to thee in the room of my friend, Abu al-Hasan, during the length of his absence: so be thou of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear.” Thereupon Ali thanked him and repeated these couplets,

“An say I, ‘Patient I can bear his faring,’ *
My tears and sighings give my say the lie;
How can I hide these tears that course adown *
This plain, my cheek, for friend too fain to fly?”

Then he was silent awhile, and presently said to the jeweller “Knowest thou what secret the girl whispered to me?” Answered he, “Not I, by Allah, O my lord!” Quoth Ali, “She fancied that I directed Abu al-Hasan to go to Bassorah and that I had devised this device to put a stop to our correspondence and consorting. I swore to her that this was on nowise so; but she would not credit me and went away to her mistress, persisting in her injurious suspicions; for she inclined to Abu al-Hasan and gave ear to his word.” Answered the young jeweller, “O my brother, I understood as much from the girl’s manner; but I will win for thee thy wish, Inshallah!” Rejoined Ali bin Bakkar, “Who can be with me in this and how wilt thou do with her, when she shies and flies like a wildling of the wold?” Cried the jeweller “By Allah, needs must I do my utmost to help thee and contrive to scrape acquaintance with her without exposure or mischief!” Then he asked leave to depart and Ali bin Bakkar said, “O my brother, mind thou keep my counsel;” and he looked at him and wept. The jeweller bade him good-bye and fared forth. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Sixty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the jeweller bade him good-bye and fared forth not knowing what he should do to win for him his wishes; and he ceased not walking, while over-musing the matter, till he spied a letter lying in the road. He took it up and looked at its direction and superscription, then read it and behold, it ran:— "From the least worthy of lovers to the most worthy of beloveds." So he opened it and found these words written therein,

"A messenger from thee came bringing union-hope, *
    But that he erred somehow with me the thought prevailed;
So I rejoiced not; rather grew my grief still more; *
    Weeting my messenger of wits and wit had failed.

"But afterwards: Know, O my lord! that I ken not the reason why our correspondence between thee and me hath been broken off: but, if the cruelty arise from thy part, I will requite it with fidelity, and if thy love have departed, I will remain constant to my love of the parted, for I am with thee even as says the poet,

'Be proud; I'll crouch! Bully; I'll bear! Despise; I'll pray! *
    Go; I will come! Speak; I will hear! Bid; I'll obey!'"

As he was reading lo! up came the slave-girl, looking right and left, and seeing the paper in the jeweller's hand, said to him, "O my master, this letter is one I let fall." He made her no answer, but walked on, and she walked behind him, till he came to his house, when he entered and she after him, saying, "O my master, give me back this letter, for it fell from me." Thereon he turned to her and said, "O handmaid of good, fear not neither grieve, for verily Allah the Protector loveth those who protect; but tell me in truthful way thy case, as I am one who keepeth counsel. I conjure thee by an oath not to hide from me aught of thy lady's affairs; for haply Allah shall help me to further her wishes and make easy by my hand that which is hard.” When the slave-girl heard these words she said, “O my lord, indeed a secret is not lost whereof thou art the secretist; nor shall any affair come to naught for which thou strivest. Know that my heart inclineth to thee and would interest thee with my tidings, but do thou give me the letter.” Then she told him the whole story, adding, “Allah is witness to whatso I say.” Quoth he, “Thou hast spoken truly, for I am acquainted with the root of the matter.” Then he told her his tale of Ali bin Bakkar and how he had learned his state of mind; and related to her all that had passed from first to last, whereat she rejoiced; and they two agreed that she should take the letter and carry it to Ali and return and acquaint the jeweller with all that happened. So he gave her the letter and she took it and sealed it up as it was before, saying, “My mistress Shams al-Nahar gave it to me sealed; and when he hath read it and given me its reply, I will bring it to thee.” Then she took leave and repaired to Ali bin Bakkar, whom she found waiting, and gave him the letter. He read it and writing a paper by way of reply, gave it to her; and she carried it to the jeweller, who tore asunder the seal[206] and read it and found written therein these two couplets,

“The messenger, who kept our commerce hid, *
    Hath failed, and showeth wrath without disguise;[207]
Choose one more leal from your many friends *
    Who, truth approving, disapproves of lies.

“To proceed: Verily, I have not entered upon perfidy * nor have I abandoned fidelity * I have not used cruelty * neither have I out off lealty * no covenant hath been broken by me * nor hath love-tie been severed by me * I have not parted from penitence * nor have I found aught but misery and ruin after severance * I know nothing of that thou avouchest * nor do I love aught but that which thou lovest * By Him who knoweth the secret of hidden things none discover *I have no desire save union with my lover * and my one business is my passion to conceal * albeit with sore sickness I ail. * This is the exposition of my case and now all hail!” When the jeweller read this letter and learnt its contents he wept with sore weeping, and the slave-girl said to him, “Leave not this place till I return to thee; for he suspecteth me of such and such things, in which he is excusable; so it is my desire to bring about a meeting between thee and my mistress, Shams al-Nahar, howsoever I may trick you to it. For the present I left her prostrate, awaiting my return with the reply." Then she went away and the jeweller passed the night with a troubled mind. And when day dawned he prayed his dawn-prayer and sat expecting the girl's coming; and behold, she came in to him rejoicing with much joy and he asked her, "What news, O damsel?" She answered, "After leaving thee I went to my mistress and gave her the letter written by Ali bin Bakkar; and, when she read it and understood it, she was troubled and confounded; but I said to her, 'O my lady, have no fear of your affair being frustrated by Abu al-Hasan's disappearance, for I have found one to take his place, better than he and more of worth and a good man to keep secrets.' Then I told her what was between thyself and Abu al-Hasan and how thou camest by his confidence and that of Ali bin Bakkar and how that note was dropped and thou camest by it; and I also showed her how we arranged matters betwixt me and thee." The jeweller marvelled with much wonder, when she resumed, "And now my mistress would hear whatso thou sayest, that she may be assured by thy speech of the covenants between thee and him; so get thee ready to go with me to her forthwith." When the jeweller heard the slave-girl's words, he saw that the proposed affair was grave and a great peril to brave, not lightly to be undertaken or suddenly entered upon, and he said to her, "O my sister, verily, I am of the ordinary and not like unto Abu al-Hasan; for he being of high rank and of well-known repute, was wont to frequent the Caliph's household, because of their need of his merchandise. As for me, he used to talk with me and I trembled before him the while. So, if thy mistress would speak with me, our meeting must be in some place other than the Caliph's palace and far from the abode of the Commander of the Faithful; for my common sense will not let me consent to what thou proposest." On this wise he refused to go with her and she went on to say that she would be surety for his safety, adding, "Take heart and fear no harm!" and pressed him to courage till he consented to accompany her; withal, his legs bent and shivered and his hands quivered and he exclaimed, "Allah forbid that I should go with thee! Indeed, I have not strength to do this thing!” Replied she, “Hearten thy heart, if it be hard for thee to go to the Caliph’s palace and thou canst not muster up courage to accompany me, I will make her come to thee; so budge not from thy place till I return to thee with her.” Then the slave-girl went away and was absent for a while, but a short while, after which she returned to the jeweller and said to him, “Take thou care that there be with thee none save thyself, neither man-slave nor girl-slave.” Quoth he, “I have but a negress, who is in years and who waiteth on me.”[208] So she arose and locked the door between his negress and the jeweller and sent his man-servants out of the place; after which she fared forth and presently returned, followed by a lady who, entering the house, filled it with the sweet scent of her perfumes. When the jeweller saw her, he sprang up and set her a couch and a cushion; and she sat down while he seated himself before her. She abode awhile without speaking till she had rested herself, when she unveiled her face and it seemed to the jeweller’s fancy as if the sun had risen in his home. Then she asked her slave-girl, “Is this the man of whom thou spakest to me?” “Yes,” answered she; whereupon the lady turned to the jeweller and said to him, “How is it with thee?” Replied he, “Right well! I pray Allah for thy preservation and that of the Commander of the Faithful.” Quoth she, “Thou hast moved us to come to thee and possess thee with what we hold secret.” Then she questioned him of his household and family; and he disclosed to her all his circumstance and his condition and said to her, “I have a house other than this; and I have set it apart for gathering together my friends and brethren; and there is none there save the old negress, of whom I spoke to thy handmaid.” She asked him on what wise he came first to know how the affair began and the matter of Abu al-Hasan and the cause of his way-faring: accordingly he told her all he knew and how he had advised the journey. Thereupon she bewailed the loss of Abu al-Hasan and said to the jeweller, “Know, O such an one,[209] that men’s souls are active in their lusts and that men are still men; and that deeds are not done without words nor is end ever reached without endeavour. Rest is won only by work.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Sixty-second Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Shams al-Nahar thus addressed the jeweller, "Rest is gained only by work and success is gendered only by help of the generous. Now I have acquainted thee with our affair and it is in thy hand to expose us or to shield us; I say no more, because thy generosity requireth naught. Thou knowest that this my handmaiden keepeth my counsel and therefore occupieth high place in my favour; and I have selected her to transact my affairs of importance. So let none be worthier in thy sight than she and acquaint her with thine affair; and be of good cheer, for on her account thou art safe from all fear, and there is no place shut upon thee but she shall open it to thee. She shall bring thee my messages to Ali bin Bakkar and thou shalt be our intermediary." So saying, she rose, scarcely able to rise, and fared forth, the jeweller faring before her to the door of her house, after which he returned and sat down again in his place, having seen of her beauty and heard of her speech what dazzled him and dazed his wit, and having witnessed of her grace and courtesy what bewitched his sprite. He sat musing on her perfections till his mind waxed tranquil, when he called for food and ate enough to keep soul and body together. Then he changed his clothes and went out; and, repairing to the house of the youth Ali bin Bakkar, knocked at the door. The servants hastened to admit him and walked before him till they had brought him to their master, whom he found strown upon his bed. Now when he saw the jeweller, he said to him, "Thou hast tarried long from me, and that hath heaped care upon my care." Then he dismissed his servants and bade the doors be shut; after which he said to the jeweller, "By Allah, O my brother, I have not closed my eyes since the day I saw thee last; for the slave-girl came to me yesterday with a sealed letter from her mistress Shams al-Nahar;" and went on to tell him all that had passed with her, adding, "By the Lord, I am indeed perplexed concerning mine affair and my patience faileth me: for Abu al-Hasan was a comforter who cheered me because he knew the slave-girl." When the jeweller heard his words, he laughed; and Ali said, "Why dost thou laugh at my words, thou on whose coming I congratulated myself and to whom I looked for provision against the shifts of fortune?" Then he sighed and wept and repeated these couplets,[210]

“Full many laugh at tears they see me shed *
Who had shed tears an bore they what I bore;
None feeleth pity for th’ afflicted’s woe, *
Save one as anxious and in woe galore:
My passion, yearning, sighing, thought, repine *
Are for me cornered in my heart’s deep core:
He made a home there which he never quits, *
Yet rare our meetings, not as heretofore:
No friend to stablish in his place I see; *
No intimate but only he and — he.”

Now when the jeweller heard these lines and understood their significance, he wept also and told him all that had passed betwixt himself and the slave-girl and her mistress since he left him. And Ali bin Bakkar gave ear to his speech, and at every word he heard his colour shifted from white to red and his body grew now stronger and then weaker till the tale came to an end, when he wept and said, “O my brother, I am a lost man in any case: would mine end were nigh, that I might be at rest from all this! But I beg thee, of thy favour, to be my helper and comforter in all my affairs till Allah fulfil whatso be His will; and I will not gainsay thee with a single word.” Quoth the jeweller, “Nothing will quench thy fire save union with her whom thou lovest; and the meeting must be in other than this perilous place. Better it were in a house of mine where the girl and her mistress met me; which place she chose for herself, to the intent that ye twain may there meet and complain each to other of what you have suffered from the pangs of love.” Quoth Ali bin Bakkar, “O good Sir, do as thou wilt and with Allah be thy reward!; and what thou deemest is right do it forthright: but be not long in doing it, lest I perish of this anguish.” “So I abode with him (said the jeweller) that night conversing with him till the morning morrowed,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the jeweller continued:— “So I abode with him that night conversing with him till the morning morrowed, when I prayed the dawn-prayers and, going out from him, returned to my house. Hardly had I settled down when the damsel came up and saluted me; and I returned her salutation and told her what had passed between myself and Ali bin Bakkar, and she said, ‘Know that the Caliph hath left us and there is no one in our place and it is safer for us and better.’ Replied I, ‘Sooth thou sayest; yet is it not like my other house which is both fitter and surer for us;’ and the slave-girl rejoined ‘Be it as thou seest fit. I am now going to my lady and will tell her what thou sayest and acquaint her with all thou hast mentioned.’ So she went away and sought her mistress and laid the project before her, and presently returned and said to me, ‘It is to be as thou sayest: so make us ready the place and expect us.’ Then she took out of her breast-pocket a purse of dinars and gave this message, ‘My lady saluteth thee and saith to thee, ‘Take this and provide therewith what the case requireth.’ But I swore that I would accept naught of it; so she took the purse and returning to her mistress, told her, ‘He would not receive the money, but gave it back to me.’ ‘No matter,’ answered Shams al-Nahar. As soon as the slave-girl was gone” (continued the jeweller), “I arose and betook myself to my other house and transported thither all that was needful, by way of vessels and furniture and rich carpets; and I did not forget china vases and cups of glass and gold and silver; and I made ready meat and drink required for the occasion. When the damsel came and saw what I had done, it pleased her and she bade me fetch Ali bin Bakkar; but I said, ‘None shall bring him save thou.’ Accordingly she went to him and brought him back perfectly dressed and looking his best. I met him and greeted him and then seated him upon a divan befitting his condition, and set before him sweet-scented flowers in vases of china and vari-coloured glass.[211] Then I set on a tray of many-tinted meats such as broaden the breast with their sight, and sat talking with him and diverting him, whilst the slave-girl went away and was absent till after sundown-prayers, when she returned with Shams al-Nahar, attended by two maids and none else. Now as soon as she saw Ali bin Bakkar and he saw her, he rose and embraced her, and she on her side embraced him and both fell in a fit to the ground. They lay for a whole hour insensible; then, coming to themselves, they began mutually to complain of the pains of separation. Thereupon they drew near to each other and sat talking charmingly, softly, tenderly; after which they somewhat perfumed themselves and fell to thanking me for what I had done for them. Quoth I, ‘Have ye a mind for food?’ ‘Yes,’ quoth they. So I set before them a small matter of food and they ate till they were satisfied and then washed their hands; after which I led them to another sitting-room and brought them wine. So they drank and drank deep and inclined to each other; and presently Shams al-Nahar said to me, ‘O my master, complete thy kindness by bringing us a lute or other instrument of mirth and music that the measure of our joy may be fully filled.’ I replied, ‘On my head and eyes!’ and rising brought her a lute, which she took and tuned; then laying it in her lap she touched it with a masterly touch, at once exciting to sadness and changing sorrow to gladness; after which she sang these two couplets,

‘My sleeplessness would show I love to bide on wake; *
And would my leanness prove that sickness is my make:
And tear-floods course adown the cheeks they only scald; *
Would I knew union shall disunion overtake!’

Then she went on to sing the choicest and most affecting poesy to many and various modes, till our senses were bewitched and the very room danced with excess of delight and surprise at her sweet singing; and neither thought nor reason was left in us. When we had sat awhile and the cup had gone round amongst us, the damsel took the lute and sang to a lively measure these couplets,

My love a meeting promised me and kept it faithfully, *
One night as many I shall count in number and degree:
O Night of joyance Fate vouchsafed to faithful lovers tway, *
Uncaring for the railer loon and all his company!
My lover lay the Night with me and clipt me with his right, *
While I with left embraced him, a-faint for ecstasy;
And hugged him to my breast and sucked the sweet wine of his
lips, * Full savouring the honey-draught the honey-man sold
to me.’

Whilst we were thus drowned in the sea of gladness” (continued the jeweller) “behold, there came in to us a little maid trembling and said, ‘O my lady, look how you may go away for the folk have found you out and have surrounded the house; and we know not the cause of this!’ When I heard her words, I arose startled and lo! in rushed a slave-girl who cried, ‘Calamity hath come upon you.’ At the same moment the door was burst open and there rushed in upon us ten men masked in kerchiefs with hangers in their hands and swords by their sides, and as many more behind them. When I saw this, the world was straitened on me for all its wideness, and I looked to the door but saw no issue; so I sprang from the terrace into the house of one of my neighbours and there hid myself. Thence I found that folk had entered my lodgings and were making a mighty hubbub; and I concluded that the Caliph had got wind of us and had sent his Chief of the Watch to seize us and bring us before him. So I abode confounded and ceased not remaining in my place, without any possibility of quitting it till midnight. And presently the house-master arose, for he had heard me moving, and he feared with exceeding great fear of me; so he came forth from his room with drawn brand in hand and made at me, saying, ‘Who is this in my house?’ Quoth I, ‘I am thy neighbour the jeweller;’ and he knew me and retired. Then he fetched a light and coming up to me, said, ‘O my brother, indeed that which hath befallen thee this night is no light matter to me.’ I replied, ‘O my brother, tell me who was in my house and entered it breaking in my door; for I fled to thee not knowing what was to do.’ He answered, ‘Of a truth the robbers who attacked our neighbours yesterday and slew such an one and took his goods, saw thee on the same day bringing furniture into this house; so they broke in upon thee and stole thy goods and slew thy guests.’ Then we arose” (pursued the jeweller), “I and he, and repaired to my house, which we found empty without a stick remaining in it; so I was confounded at the case and said to myself, ‘As for the gear I care naught about its loss, albeit I borrowed part of the stuff from my friends and it hath come to grief; yet is there no harm in that, for they know my excuse in the plunder of my property and the pillage of my place. But as for Ali bin Bakkar and the Caliph’s favourite concubine, I fear lest their case get bruited abroad and this cause the loss of my life.’ So I turned to my neighbour and said to him, ‘Thou art my brother and my neighbour and wilt cover my nakedness; what then dost thou advise me to do?’ The man answered, ‘What I counsel thee to do is to keep quiet and wait; for they who entered thy house and took thy goods have murdered the best men of a party from the palace of the Caliphate and have killed not a few of the watchmen: the government officers and guards are now in quest of them on every road and haply they will hit upon them, whereby thy wish will come about without effort of thine.’” The jeweller hearing these words returned to his other house, that wherein he dwelt, — and Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Sixty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the jeweller heard these words he returned to his other house wherein he dwelt, and said to himself, “Indeed this that hath befallen me is what Abu al-Hasan feared and from which he fled to Bassorah. And now I have fallen into it.” Presently the pillage of his pleasure-house was noised abroad among the folk, and they came to him from all sides and places, some exulting in his misfortune and others excusing him and condoling with his sorrow; whilst he bewailed himself to them and for grief neither ate meat nor drank drink. And as he sat, repenting him of what he had done, behold one of his servants came in to him and said, “There is a person at the door who asketh for thee; and I know him not.” The jeweller went forth to him and saluted him who was a stranger; and the man whispered to him, “I have somewhat to say between our two selves.” Thereupon he brought him in and asked him, “What hast thou to tell me?” Quoth the man, “Come with me to thine other house;” and the jeweller enquired, “Dost thou then know my other house?” Replied the other, “I know all about thee and I know that also whereby Allah will dispel thy dolours.” “So I said to myself” (continued the jeweller) “‘I will go with him whither he will;’ and went out and walked on till we came to my second house; and when the man saw it he said to me, ‘It is without door or doorkeeper, and we cannot possibly sit in it; so come thou with me to another place.’ Then the man continued passing from stead to stead (and I with him) till night overtook us. Yet I put no question to him of the matter in hand and we ceased not to walk on, till we reached the open country. He kept saying, ‘Follow me,’ and quickened his pace to a trot, whilst I trotted after him heartening my heart to go on, until we reached the river, where he took boat with me, and the boatman rowed us over to the other bank. Then he landed from the boat and I landed after him: and he took my hand and led me to a street which I had never entered in all my days, nor do I know in what quarter it was. Presently the man stopped at the door of a house, and opening it entered and made me enter with him; after which he locked the door with an iron padlock,[212] and led me along the vestibule, till he brought me in the presence of ten men who were as though they were one and the same man; they being brothers. We saluted them” (continued the jeweller) “and they returned our greeting and bade us be seated; so we sat down. Now I was like to die for excess of weariness; but they brought me rose-water and sprinkled it on my face; after which they gave me a sherbet to drink and set before me food whereof some of them ate with me. Quoth I to myself, ‘Were there aught harmful in the food, they would not eat with me.’ So I ate, and when we had washed our hands, each of us returned to his place. Then they asked me, ‘Dost thou know us?’ and I answered, ‘No! nor in my life have I ever seen you; nay, I know not even him who brought me hither.’ Said they, ‘Tell us thy tidings and lie not at all.’ Replied I, ‘Know then that my case is wondrous and my affair marvellous; but wot ye anything about me?’ They rejoined, ‘Yes! it was we took thy goods yesternight and carried off thy friend and her who was singing to him.’ Quoth I, ‘Allah let down His veil over you! Where be my friend and she who was singing to him?’ They pointed with their hands to one side and replied, ‘Yonder, but, by Allah, O our brother, the secret of their case is known to none save to thee, for from the time we brought the twain hither up to this day, we have not looked upon them nor questioned them of their condition, seeing them to be persons of rank and dignity. Now this and this only it was that hindered our killing them: so tell us the truth of their case and thou shalt be assured of thy safety and of theirs.’ When I heard this” (continued the jeweller) “I almost died of fright and horror, and I said to them, ‘Know ye, O my brethren, that if generosity were lost, it would not be found save with you; and had I a secret which I feared to reveal, none but your breasts would conceal it.’ And I went on exaggerating their praises in this fashion, till I saw that frankness and readiness to speak out would profit me more than concealing facts; so I told them all that had betided me to the very end of the tale. When they heard it, they said, ‘And is this young man Ali Bakkar-son and this lady Shams al-Nahar?’ I replied, ‘Yes.’ Now this was grievous to them and they rose and made their excuses to the two and then they said to me, ‘Of what we took from thy house part is spent, but here is what is left of it.’ So speaking, they gave me back most of my goods and they engaged to return them to their places in my house, and to restore me the rest as soon as they could. My heart was set at ease till they split into two parties, one with me and the other against me; and we fared forth from that house and such was my case. But as regards Ali bin Bakkar and Shams al-Nahar; they were well-nigh dying for excess of fear, when I went up to them and saluting them, asked, ‘What happened to the damsel and the two maids, and where be they gone?’, and they answered only, ‘We know nothing of them.’ Then we walked on and stinted not till we came to the river-bank where the barque lay; and we all boarded it, for it was the same which had brought me over on the day before. The boatman rowed us to the other side; but hardly had we landed and taken seat on the bank to rest, when a troop of horse swooped down on us like eagles and surrounded us on all sides and places, whereupon the robbers with us sprang up in haste like vultures, and the boat put back for them and took them in and the boatman pushed off into mid-stream, leaving us on the river bank, unable to move or to stand still. Then the chief horseman said to us, ‘Whence be ye!’; and we were perplexed for an answer, but I said” (continued the jeweller), “‘Those ye saw with us are rogues; we know them not. As for us, we are singers, and they intended taking us to sing for them, nor could we get free of them, save by subtlety and soft words; so on this occasion they let us go, their works being such as you have seen.’ But they looked at Shams al-Nahar and Ali bin Bakkar and said to me, ‘Thou hast not spoken sooth but, if thy tale be true, tell us who ye are and whence ye are; and what be your place and in what quarter you dwell.’ I knew not what to answer them, but Shams al-Nahar sprang up and approaching the Captain of the horsemen spoke with him privily, whereupon he dismounted from his steed and, setting her on horse-back, took the bridle and began to lead his beast. And two of his men did the like with the youth, Ali bin Bakkar, and it was the same with myself. The Commandant of the troop ceased not faring on with us, till they reached a certain part of the river bank, when he sang out in some barbarous jargon[213] and there came to us a number of men with two boats. Then the Captain embarked us in one of them (and he with us) whilst the rest of his men put off in the other, and rowed on with us till we arrived at the palace of the Caliphate where Shams al-Nahar landed. And all the while we endured the agonies of death for excess of fear, and they ceased not faring till they came to a place whence there was a way to our quarter. Here we landed and walked on, escorted by some of the horsemen, till we came to Ali bin Bakkar's house; and when we entered it, our escort took leave of us and went their way. We abode there, unable to stir from the place and not knowing the difference between morning and evening; and in such case we continued till the dawn of the next day. And when it was again nightfall, I came to myself and saw Ali bin Bakkar and the women and men of his household weeping over him, for he was stretched out without sense or motion. Some of them came to me and thoroughly arousing me said, 'Tell us what hath befallen our son and say how came he in this plight?' Replied I, 'O folk, hearken to me!'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the jeweller answered them, "'O folk, hearken to my words and give me no trouble and annoyance! but be patient and he will come to and tell you his tale for himself.' And I was hard upon them and made them afraid of a scandal between me and them, but as we were thus, behold, Ali bin Bakkar moved on his carpet-bed, whereat his friends rejoiced and the stranger folk withdrew from him; but his people forbade me to go away. Then they sprinkled rose-water on his face and he presently revived and sensed the air; whereupon they questioned him of his case, and he essayed to answer them but his tongue could not speak forthright and he signed to them to let me go home. So they let me go, and I went forth hardly crediting my escape and returned to my own house, supported by two men. When my people saw me thus, they rose up and set to shrieking and slapping their faces; but I signed to them with my hand to be silent and they were silent. Then the two men went their way and I threw myself down on my bed, where I lay the rest of the night and awoke not till the forenoon, when I found my people gathered round me and saying, ‘What calamity befel thee, and what evil with its mischief did fell thee?’ Quoth I ‘Bring me somewhat to drink.’ So they brought me drink, and I drank of it what I would and said to them, ‘What happened, happened.’ Thereupon they went away and I made my excuses to my friends, and asked if any of the goods that had been stolen from my other house had been returned. They answered, ‘Yes! some of them have come back; by token that a man entered and threw them down within the doorway and we saw him not.’ So I comforted myself and abode in my place two days, unable to rise and leave it; and presently I took courage and went to the bath, for I was worn out with fatigue and troubled in mind for Ali bin Bakkar and Shams al-Nahar, because I had no news of them all this time and could neither get to Ali’s house nor, out of fear for my life, take my rest in mine own. And I repented to Almighty Allah of what I had done and praised Him for my safety. Presently my fancy suggested to me to go to such and such a place and see the folk and solace myself; so I went on foot to the cloth-market and sat awhile with a friend of mine there. When I rose to go, I saw a woman standing over against me; so I looked at her, and lo! it was Shams al-Nahar’s slave-girl. When I saw her, the world grew dark in my eyes and I hurried on. She followed me, but I was seized with affright and fled from her, and whenever I looked at her, a trembling came upon me whilst she pursued me, saying. ‘Stop, that I may tell thee somewhat!’ But I heeded her not and never ceased walking till I reached a mosque, and she entered after me. I prayed a two-bow prayer, after which I turned to her and, sighing, said, ‘What cost thou want?’ She asked me how I did, and I told her all that had befallen myself and Ali bin Bakkar and besought her for news of herself. She answered, ‘Know that when I saw the robbers break open thy door and rush in, I was in sore terror, for I doubted not but that they were the Caliph’s officers and would seize me and my mistress and we should perish forthwith: so we fled over the roofs, I and the maids; and, casting ourselves down from a high place, came upon some people with whom we took refuge; and they received us and brought us to the palace of the Caliphate, where we arrived in the sorriest of plights. We concealed our case and abode on coals of fire till nightfall, when I opened the river-gate and, calling the boatman who had carried us the night before, said to him, ‘I know not what is become of my mistress; so take me in the boat, that we may go seek her on the river: haply I shall chance on some news of her. Accordingly he took me into the boat and went about with me and ceased not wending till midnight, when I spied a barque making towards the water gate, with one man rowing and another standing up and a woman lying prostrate between them twain. And they rowed on till they reached the shore when the woman landed, and I looked at her, and behold, it was Shams al-Nahar. Thereupon I got out and joined her, dazed for joy to see her after having lost all hopes of finding her alive.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Sixty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the slave-girl went on telling the jeweller, “‘I was dazed for joy to see her, after having lost all hopes of finding her alive. When I came up to her, she bade me give the man who had brought her thither a thousand gold pieces; and we carried her in, I and the two maids, and laid her on her bed; where she passed that night in a sorely troubled state; and, when morning dawned, I forbade the women and eunuchs to go in to her, or even to draw near her for the whole of that day; but on the next she revived and somewhat recovered and I found her as if she had come out of her grave. I sprinkled rose-water upon her face and changed her clothes and washed her hands and feet; nor did I cease to coax her, till I brought her to eat a little and drink some wine, though she had no mind to any such matter. As soon as she had breathed the fresh air and strength began to return to her, I took to upbraiding her, saying, ‘O my lady, consider and have pity on thyself; thou seest what hath betided us: surely, enough and more than enough of evil hath befallen thee; for indeed thou hast been nigh upon death. She said, ‘By Allah, O good damsel, in sooth death were easier to me than what hath betided me; for it seemed as though I should be slain and no power could save me. When the robbers took us from the jeweller's house they asked me, Who mayest thou be? and hearing my answer, 'I am a singing girl, they believed me. Then they turned to Ali bin Bakkar and made enquiries about him, 'And who art thou and what is thy condition?; whereto he replied, 'I am of the common kind. So they took us and carried us along, without our resisting, to their abode; and we hurried on with them for excess of fear; but when they had us set down with them in the house, they looked hard at me and seeing the clothes I wore and my necklaces and jewellery, believed not my account of myself and said to me, 'Of a truth these necklaces belong to no singing-girl; so be soothfast and tell us the truth of thy case. I returned them no answer whatever, saying in my mind, 'Now will they slay me for the sake of my apparel and ornaments; and I spoke not a word. Then the villains turned to Ali bin Bakkar, asking, 'And thou, who art thou and whence art thou? for thy semblance seemeth not as that of the common kind. But he was silent and we ceased not to keep our counsel and to weep, till Allah softened the rogues' hearts to pity and they said to us, 'Who is the owner of the house wherein we were?' We answered, 'Such an one, the jeweller; whereupon quoth one of them, 'I know him right well and I wot the other house where he liveth and I will engage to bring him to you this very hour. Then they agreed to set me in a place by myself and Ali bin Bakkar in a place by himself, and said to us, 'Be at rest ye twain and fear not lest your secret be divulged; ye are safe from us. Meanwhile their comrade went away and returned with the jeweller, who made known to them our case, and we joined company with him; after which a man of the band fetched a barque, wherein they embarked us all three and, rowing us over the river, landed us with scant ceremony on the opposite bank and went their ways. Thereupon up came a horse-patrol and asked us who we were; so I spoke with the Captain of the watch and said to him, 'I am Shams al-Nahar, the Caliph's favourite; I had drunken strong wine and went out to visit certain of my acquaintance of the wives of the Wazirs, when yonder rogues came upon me and laid hold of me and brought me to this place; but when they saw you, they fled as fast as they could. I met these men with them: so do thou escort me and them to a place of safety and I will requite thee as I am well able to do. When the Captain of the watch heard my speech, he knew me and alighting, mounted me on his horse; and in like manner did two of his men with Ali bin Bakkar. So I spoke to her' (continued the handmaid) 'and blamed her doings, and bade her beware, and said to her, 'O my lady, have some care for thy life!' But she was angered at my words and cried out at me; accordingly I left her and came forth in quest of thee, but found thee not and dared not go to the house of Ali bin Bakkar; so stood watching for thee, that I might ask thee of him and wot how it goes with him. And I pray thee, of thy favour, to take of me some money, for thou hast doubtless borrowed from thy friends part of the gear and as it is lost, it behoveth thee to make it good with folk.' I replied, 'To hear is to obey! go on;' and I walked with her till we drew near my house, when she said to me, 'Wait here till I come back to thee.'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that after the slave-girl had addressed the jeweller, "'Wait here till I come back to thee!' she went away and presently returned with the money, which she put" (continued the jeweller) "into my hand, saying, 'O my master, in what place shall we meet?' Quoth I, 'I will start and go to my house at once and suffer hard things for thy sake and contrive how thou mayst win access to him, for such access is difficult at this present.' Said she, 'Let me know some spot, where I shall come to thee,' and I answered, 'In my other house, I will go thither forthright and have the doors mended and the place made safe again, and henceforth we will meet there.' Then she took leave of me and went her way, whilst I carried the money home, and counting it, found it five thousand dinars. So I gave my people some of it and to all who had lent me aught I made good their loss, after which I arose and took my servants and repaired to my other house whence the things had been stolen; and I brought builders and carpenters and masons who restored it to its former state. Moreover, I placed my negress-slave there and forgot the mishaps which had befallen me. Then I fared forth and repaired to Ali bin Bakkar's house and, when I reached it, his slave-servants accosted me, saying, 'Our lord calleth for thee night and day, and hath promised to free whichever of us bringeth thee to him; so they have been wandering about in quest of thee everywhere but knew not in what part to find thee. Our master is by way of recovering strength, but at times he reviveth and at times he relapseth; and whenever he reviveth he nameth thee, and saith, 'Needs must ye bring him to me, though but for the twinkling of an eye;' and then he sinketh back into his torpor.' Accordingly" (continued the jeweller) "I accompanied the slave and went in to Ali bin Bakkar; and, finding him unable to speak, sat down at his head, whereupon he opened his eyes and seeing me, wept and said, 'Welcome and well come!' I raised him and making him sit up, strained him to my bosom, and he said, 'Know, O my brother, that, from the hour I took to my bed, I have not sat up till now: praise to Allah that I see thee again!' And I ceased not to prop him and support him until I made him stand on his feet and walk a few steps, after which I changed his clothes and he drank some wine: but all this he did for my satisfaction. Then, seeing him somewhat restored, I told him what had befallen me with the slave-girl (none else hearing me), and said to him, 'Take heart and be of good courage, I know what thou sufferest.' He smiled and I added, 'Verily nothing shall betide thee save what shall rejoice thee and medicine thee.' Thereupon he called for food, which being brought, he signed to his pages, and they withdrew. Then quoth he to me, 'O my brother, hast thou seen what hath befallen me?'; and he made excuses to me and asked how I had fared all that while. I told him everything that had befallen me, from beginning to end, whereat he wondered and calling his servants, said, 'Bring me such and such things.' They brought in fine carpets and hangings and, besides that, vessels of gold and silver, more than I had lost, and he gave them all to me; so I sent them to my house and abode with him that night. When the day began to yellow, he said to me, 'Know thou that as to all things there is an end, so the end of love is either death or accomplishment of desire. I am nearer unto death, would I had died ere this befel!; and had not Allah favoured us, we had been found out and put to shame. And now I know not what shall deliver me from this my strait, and were it not that I fear Allah, I would hasten my own death; for know, O my brother, that I am like bird in cage and that my life is of a surety perished, choked by the distresses which have befallen me; yet hath it a period stablished firm and an appointed term.’ And he wept and groaned and began repeating,

‘Enough of tears hath shed the lover-wight, *
When grief outcast all patience from his sprite:
He hid the secrets which united us, *
But now His eye parts what He did unite!’”

When he had finished his verses, the jeweller said to him, “O my lord, I now intend returning to my house.” He answered, “There be no harm in that; go and come back to me with news as fast as possible, for thou seest my case.” “So I took leave of him” (continued the jeweller) “and went home, and hardly had I sat down, when up came the damsel, choked with long weeping. I asked, ‘What is the matter’?; and she answered, ‘O my lord, know then that what we feared hath befallen us; for, when I left thee yesterday and returned to my lady, I found her in a fury with one of the two maids who were with us the other night, and she ordered her to be beaten. The girl was frightened and ran away; but, as she was leaving the house, one of the door-porters and guards of the gate met her and took her up and would have sent her back to her mistress. However, she let fall some hints, which were a disclosure to him; so he cajoled her and led her on to talk, and she tattled about our case and let him know of all our doings. This affair came to the ears of the Caliph, who bade remove my mistress, Shams al-Nahar, and all her gear to the palace of the Caliphate; and set over her a guard of twenty eunuchs. Since then to the present hour he hath not visited her nor hath given her to know the reason of his action, but I suspect this to be the cause; wherefore I am in fear for my life and am sore troubled, O my lord, knowing not what I shall do, nor with what contrivance I shall order my affair and hers; for she hath none by her more trusted or more trustworthy than myself.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Sixty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the slave-girl thus addressed the jeweller, “‘And in very sooth my lady hath none by her more trusted or more trustworthy in matter of secrecy than myself. So go thou, O my master, and speed thee without delay to Ali bin Bakkar; and acquaint him with this, that he may be on his guard and ward; and, if the affair be discovered, we will cast about for some means whereby to save our lives.' On this" (continued the jeweller), "I was seized with sore trouble and the world grew dark in my sight for the slave-girl's words; and when she was about to wend, I said to her, 'What reckest thou and what is to be done?' Quoth she, 'My counsel is that thou hasten to Ali bin Bakkar, if thou be indeed his friend and desire to save him; thine be it to carry him this news at once without aught of stay and delay, or regard for far and near; and mine be it to sniff about for further news.' Then she took her leave of me and went away: so I rose and followed her track and, betaking myself to Ali bin Bakkar, found him flattering himself with impossible expectations. When he saw me returning to him so soon, he said, 'I see thou hast come back to me forthwith and only too soon.' I answered, 'Patience, and cut short this foolish connection and shake off the pre-occupation wherein thou art, for there hath befallen that which may bring about the loss of thy life and good.' Now when he heard this, he was troubled and strongly moved; and he said to me, 'O my brother, tell me what hath happened.' Replied I, 'O my lord, know that such and such things have happened and thou art lost without recourse, if thou abide in this thy house till the end of the day.' At this, he was confounded and his soul well-nigh departed his body, but he recovered himself and said to me, 'What shall I do, O my brother, and what counsel hast thou to offer.' Answered I, 'My advice is that thou take what thou canst of thy property and whom of thy slaves thou trustest, and flee with us to a land other than this, ere this very day come to an end.' And he said, 'I hear and I obey.' So he rose, confused and dazed like one in epilepsy, now walking and now falling, and took what came under his hand. Then he made an excuse to his household and gave them his last injunctions, after which he loaded three camels and mounted his beast; and I did likewise. We went forth privily in disguise and fared on and ceased not our wayfare the rest of that day and all its night, till nigh upon morning, when we unloaded and, hobbling our camels, lay down to sleep. But we were worn with fatigue and we neglected to keep watch, so that there fell upon us robbers, who stripped us of all we had and slew our slaves, when these would have beaten them off, leaving us naked and in the sorriest of plights, after they had taken our money and lifted our beasts and disappeared. As soon as they were gone, we arose and walked on till morning dawned, when we came to a village which we entered, and finding a mosque took refuge therein for we were naked. So we sat in a corner all that day and we passed the next night without meat or drink; and at day-break we prayed our dawn-prayer and sat down again. Presently behold, a man entered and saluting us prayed a two-bow prayer, after which he turned to us and said, ‘O folk, are ye strangers?’ We replied, ‘Yes: the bandits waylaid us and stripped us naked, and we came to this town but know none here with whom we may shelter.’ Quoth he, ‘What say ye? will you come home with me?’ And” (pursued the jeweller) “I said to Ali bin Bakkar, ‘Up and let us go with him, and we shall escape two evils; the first, our fear lest some one who knoweth us enter this mosque and recognise us, so that we come to disgrace; and the second, that we are strangers and have no place wherein to lodge.’ And he answered helplessly, ‘As thou wilt.’ Then the man said to us again, ‘O ye poor folk, give ear unto me and come with me to my place,’ and I replied, ‘Hearkening and obedience;’ whereupon he pulled off a part of his own clothes and covered us therewith and made his excuses to us and spoke kindly to us. Then we arose and accompanied him to his house and he knocked at the door, whereupon a little slave-boy came out and opened to us. The host entered and we followed him;[214] when he called for a bundle of clothes and muslins for turbands, and gave us each a suit and a piece; so we dressed and turbanded ourselves and sat us down. Presently, in came a damsel with a tray of food and set it before us, saying, ‘Eat.’ We ate some small matter and she took away the tray: after which we abode with our host till nightfall, when Ali bin Bakkar sighed and said to me, ‘Know, O my brother, that I am a dying man past hope of life and I would charge thee with a charge: it is that, when thou seest me dead, thou go to my parent[215] and tell her of my decease and bid her come hither that she may be here to receive the visits of condolence and be present at the washing of my corpse, and do thou exhort her to bear my loss with patience.’ Then he fell down in a fainting fit and, when he recovered he heard a damsel singing afar off and making verses as she sang. Thereupon he addressed himself to give ear to her and hearken to her voice; and now he was insensible, absent from the world, and now he came to himself; and anon he wept for grief and mourning at the love which had befallen him. Presently, he heard the damsel who was singing repeat these couplets,

‘Parting ran up to part from lover-twain *
Free converse, perfect concord, friendship fain:
The Nights with shifting drifted us apart, *
Would heaven I wot if we shall meet again:
How bitter after meeting ’tis to part, *
May lovers ne’er endure so bitter pain!
Death-grip, death-choke, lasts for an hour and ends, *
But parting-tortures aye in heart remain:
Could we but trace where Parting’s house is placed, *
We would make Parting eke of parting taste!’

When Ali son of Bakkar heard the damsel’s song, he sobbed one sob and his soul quitted his body. As soon as I saw that he was dead” (continued the jeweller), “I committed his corpse to the care of the house-master and said to him ‘Know thou, that I am going to Baghdad, to tell his mother and kinsfolk, that they may come hither and conduct his burial.’ So I betook myself to Baghdad and, going to my house, changed my clothes; after which I repaired to Ali bin Bakkar’s lodging. Now when his servants saw me, they came to me and questioned me of him, and I bade them ask permission for me to go in to his mother. She gave me leave; so I entered and saluting her, said, ‘Verily Allah ordereth the lives of all creatures by His commandment and when He decreeth aught, there is no escaping its fulfilment; nor can any soul depart but by leave of Allah, according to the Writ which affirmeth the appointed term.’[216] She guessed by these words that her son was dead and wept with sore weeping, then she said to me, ‘Allah upon thee! tell me, is my son dead?’ I could not answer her for tears and excess of grief, and when she saw me thus, she was choked with weeping and fell to the ground in a fit. As soon as she came to herself she said to me, ‘Tell me how it was with my son.’ I replied, ‘May Allah abundantly compensate thee for his loss!’ and I told her all that had befallen him from beginning to end. She then asked, ‘Did he give thee any charge?’; and I answered, ‘Yes,’ and told her what he had said, adding, ‘Hasten to perform his funeral.’ When she heard these words, she swooned away again; and, when she recovered, she addressed herself to do as I charged her. Then I returned to my house; and as I went along musing sadly upon the fair gifts of his youth, behold, a woman caught hold of my hand;” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the jeweller thus continued:— “A woman caught hold of my hand; and I looked at her and lo! it was the slave-girl who used to come from Shams al-Nahar, and she seemed broken by grief. When we knew each other we both wept and ceased not weeping till we reached my house, and I said to her, ‘Knowest thou the news of the youth, Ali bin Bakkar?’ She replied, ‘No, by Allah!’; so I told her the manner of his death and all that had passed, whilst we both wept; after which quoth I to her, ‘How is it with thy mistress?’ Quoth she, ‘The Commander of the Faithful would not hear a single word against her; but, for the great love he bore her, saw all her actions in a favourable light, and said to her, ‘O Shams al-Nahar, thou art dear to me and I will bear with thee and bring the noses of thy foes to the grindstone. Then he bade them furnish her an apartment decorated with gold and a handsome sleeping-chamber, and she abode with him in all ease of life and high favour. Now it came to pass that one day, as he sat at wine according to his custom, with his favourite concubines in presence, he bade them be seated in their several ranks and made Shams al-Nahar sit by his side. But her patience had failed and her disorder had redoubled upon her. Then he bade one of the damsels sing: so she took a lute and tuning it struck the chords, and began to sing these verses,

‘One craved my love and I gave all he craved of me, *
And tears on cheek betray how ’twas I came to yield:

Tear-drops, meseemeth, are familiar with our case, *
    Revealing what I hide, hiding what I revealed:
How can I hope in secret to conceal my love, *
    Which stress of passion ever showeth unconcealed:
Death, since I lost my lover, is grown sweet to me; *
    Would I knew what their joys when I shall quit the field!

Now when Shams al-Nahar heard these verses sung by the slave-girl, she could not keep her seat; but fell down in a fainting-fit whereupon the Caliph cast the cup from his hand and drew her to him crying out; and the damsels also cried out, and the Prince of True Believers turned her over and shook her, and lo and behold! she was dead. The Caliph grieved over her death with sore grief and bade break all the vessels and dulcimers[217] and other instruments of mirth and music which were in the room; then carrying her body to his closet, he abode with her the rest of the night. When the day broke, he laid her out and commanded to wash her and shroud her and bury her. And he mourned for her with sore mourning, and questioned not of her case nor of what caused her condition. And I beg thee in Allah's name' (continued the damsel) 'to let me know the day of the coming of Ali bin Bakkar's funeral procession that I may be present at his burial.' Quoth I, 'For myself, where thou wilt thou canst find me; but thou, where art thou to be found, and who can come at thee where thou art?' She replied, 'On the day of Shams al-Nahar's death, the Commander of the Faithful freed all her women, myself among the rest;[218] and I am one of those now abiding at the tomb in such a place.' So I rose and accompanied her to the burial-ground and piously visited Shams al-Nahar's tomb; after which I went my way and ceased not to await the coming of Ali bin Bakkar's funeral. When it arrived, the people of Baghdad went forth to meet it and I went forth with them: and I saw the damsel among the women and she the loudest of them in lamentation, crying out and wailing with a voice that rent the vitals and made the heart ache. Never was seen in Baghdad a finer funeral than his; and we ceased not to follow in crowds till we reached the cemetery and buried him to the mercy of Almighty Allah; nor from that time to this have I ceased to visit the tombs of Ali son of Bakkar and of Shams al-Nahar. This, then, is their story, and Allah Almighty have mercy upon them!"[219] And yet is not their tale (continued Shahrazad) more wonderful than that of King Shahriman. The King asked her "And what was his tale?" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Seventieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, as regards the

TALE OF KAMAR AL ZAMAN,

That there was in times of yore and in ages long gone before a King called Shahrimán,[220] who was lord of many troops and guards, and officers, and who reigned over certain islands, known as the Khálidán Islands,[221] on the borders of the land of the Persians. But he was stricken in years and his bones were wasted, without having been blessed with a son, albeit he had four wives, daughters of Kings, and threescore concubines, with each of whom he was wont to lie one night in turn.[222] This preyed upon his mind and disquieted him, so that he complained thereof to one of his Wazirs, saying, “Verily I fear lest my kingdom be lost when I die, for that I have no son to succeed me.” The Minister answered, “O King, peradventure Allah shall yet bring something to pass; so rely upon the Almighty and be instant in prayer. It is also my counsel that thou spread a banquet and invite to it the poor and needy, and let them eat of thy food; and supplicate the Lord to vouchsafe thee a son; for perchance there may be among thy guests a righteous soul whose prayers find acceptance; and thereby thou shalt win thy wish.” So the King rose, made the lesser ablution, and prayed a two-bow prayer,[223] then he cried upon Allah with pure intention; after which he called his chief wife to bed and lay with her forthright. By grace of God she conceived and, when her months were accomplished, she bore a male child, like the moon on the night of fulness. The King named him Kamar al-Zamán,[224] and rejoiced in him with extreme joy and bade the city be dressed out in his honour; so they decorated the streets seven days, whilst the drums beat and the messengers bore the glad tidings abroad. Then wet and dry nurses were provided for the boy and he was reared in splendour and delight, until he reached the age of fifteen. He grew up of surpassing beauty and seemlihead and symmetry, and his father loved him so dear that he could not brook to be parted from him day or night. One day he complained to a certain of his Ministers anent the excess of his love for his only child, saying, “O thou the Wazir, of a truth I fear for my son, Kamar al-Zaman, the shifts and accidents which befal man and fain would I marry him in my life-time.” Answered the Wazir, “O King, know thou that marriage is one of the most honourable of moral actions, and thou wouldst indeed do well and right to marry thy son in thy lifetime, ere thou make him Sultan.” On this quoth the King, “Hither with my son Kamar al-Zaman;” so he came and bowed his head to the ground in modesty before his sire. “O Kamar al Zaman,” said King Shahriman, “of a truth I desire to marry thee and rejoice in thee during my lifetime.” Replied he, “O my father, know that I have no lust to marry nor cloth my soul incline to women; for that concerning their craft and perfidy I have read many books and heard much talk, even as saith the poet,

‘Now, an of women ask ye, I reply: — *
  In their affairs I’m versed a doctor rare!
When man’s head grizzles and his money dwindles, *
  In their affections he hath naught for share.’

And another said: —

‘Rebel against women and so shalt thou serve Allah the more; *
  The youth who gives women the rein must forfeit all hope to soar.
They’ll baulk him when seeking the strange device, Excelsior, *
  Tho’ waste he a thousand of years in the study of science and lore.’”

And when he had ended his verses he continued, “O my father, wedlock is a thing whereto I will never consent; no, not though I drink the cup of death.” When Sultan Shahriman heard these words from his son, light became darkness in his sight and he grieved thereat with great grief. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Seventy-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Shahriman heard these words from his son, the light became darkness in his sight and he grieved over his son’s lack of obedience to his directions in the matter of marriage; yet, for the great love he bore him, he was unwilling to repeat his wishes and was not wroth with him, but caressed him and spake him fair and showed him all manner of kindness such as tendeth to induce affection. All this, and Kamar al-Zaman increased daily in beauty and loveliness and amorous grace; and the King bore with him for a whole year till he became perfect in eloquence and elegant wit. All men were ravished with his charms; and every breeze that blew bore the tidings of his gracious favour; his fair sight was a seduction to the loving and a garden of delight to the longing, for he was honey-sweet of speech and the sheen of his face shamed the full moon; he was a model of symmetry and blandishment and engaging ways; his shape was as the willow-wand or the rattan- cane and his cheeks might take the place of rose or red anemone. He was, in fine the pink of perfection, even as the poet hath said of him,

"He came and cried they, 'Now be Allah blest! *
    Praise Him that clad that soul in so fair vest!'
He's King of Beauty where the beauteous be; *
    All are his Ryots,[225] all obey his hest:
His lip-dew's sweeter than the virgin honey; *
    His teeth are pearls in double row close press:
All charms are congregate in him alone, *
    And deals his loveliness to man unrest.
Beauty wrote on those cheeks for worlds to see *
    'I testify there is none good but He.'"[226]

When the year came to an end, the King called his son to him and said, "O my son, wilt thou not hearken to me?" Whereupon Kamar al-Zaman fell down for respect and shame before his sire and replied, "O my father, how should I not hearken to thee, seeing that Allah commandeth me to obey thee and not gain-say thee?" Rejoined King Shahriman, "O my son, know that I desire to marry thee and rejoice in thee whilst yet I live, and make thee King over my realm, before my death." When the Prince heard his sire pronounce these words he bowed his head awhile, then raised it and said, "O my father, this is a thing which I will never do; no, not though I drink the cup of death! I know of a surety that the Almighty hath made obedience to thee a duty in religion; but, Allah upon thee! press me not in this matter of marriage, nor fancy that I will ever marry my life long; for that I have read the books both of the ancients and the moderns, and have come to know all the mischiefs and miseries which have befallen them through women and their endless artifices. And how excellent is the saying of the poet,

‘He whom the randy motts entrap *
    Shall never see deliverance!
Though build he forts a thousand-fold, *
    Whose mighty strength lead-plates enhance,[227]
Their force shall be of no avail; *
    These fortresses have not a chance!
Women aye deal in treachery *
    To far and near o’er earth’s expanse
With fingers dipt in Henna-blood *
    And locks in braids that mad the glance;
And eyelids painted o’er with Kohl *
    They gar us drink of dire mischance.’

And how excellently saith another,

‘Women, for all the chastity they claim, *
    Are offal cast by kites where’er they list:
This night their talk and secret charms are shine, *
    That night another joyeth calf and wrist:
Like inn, whence after night thou far’st at dawn, *
    And lodges other wight thou hast not wist.’”[228]

Now when King Shahriman heard these his son’s words and learnt the import of his verses and poetical quotations, he made no answer, of his excessive love for him, but redoubled in graciousness and kindness to him. He at once broke up the audience and, as soon as the seance was over, he summoned his Minister and taking him apart, said to him, “O thou the Wazir! tell me how I shall deal with my son in the matter of marriage.”- -And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted stay.

When it was the One Hundred and Seventy-second Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King summoned his Minister; and, taking him apart, said to him, "O thou the Wazir, tell me what I shall do with my son in the matter of marriage. Of a truth I took counsel with thee thereon and thou didst counsel me to marry him, before making him King. I have spoken with him of wedlock time after time and he still gainsaid me; so do thou, O Wazir, forthright advise me what to do." Answered the Minister, "O King, wait another year and, if after that thou be minded to speak to him on the matter of marriage, speak not to him privily, but address him on a day of state, when all the Emirs and Wazirs are present with the whole of the army standing before thee. And when all are in crowd then send for thy son, Kamar al-Zaman, and summon him; and, when he cometh, broach to him the matter of marriage before the Wazirs and Grandees and Officers of state and Captains; for he will surely be bashful and daunted by their presence and will not dare to oppose thy will." Now when King Shahriman heard his Wazir's words, he rejoiced with exceeding joy, seeing success in the project, and bestowed on him a splendid robe of honour. Then he took patience with his son another year, whilst, with every day that passed over him, Kamar al-Zaman increased in beauty and loveliness, and elegance and perfect grace, till he was nigh twenty years old. Indeed Allah had clad him in the cloak of comeliness and had crowned him with the crown of completion: his eye-glance was more bewitching than Hárút and Marút[229] and the play of his luring looks more misleading than Tághút;[230] and his cheeks shone like the dawn rosy-red and his eyelashes stormed the keen-edged blade: the whiteness of his brow resembled the moon shining bright, and the blackness of his locks was as the murky night; and his waist was more slender than the gossamer[231] and his back parts than two sand heaps bulkier, making a Babel of the heart with their softness; but his waist complained of the weight of his hips and loins; and his charms ravished all mankind, even as one of the poets saith in these couplets,

"By his eyelash tendril curled, by his slender waist I swear,
By the dart his witchery feathers, fatal hurtling through the
air;
By the just roundness of his shape, by his glances bright and

keen
By the swart limping of his locks, and his fair forehead shining
sheen;
By his eyebrows which deny that she who looks on them should
sleep,
Which now commanding, now forbidding, o'er me high dominion
keep;
By the roses of his cheek, his face as fresh as myrtle wreath
His tulip lips, and those pure pearls that hold the places of his
teeth;
By his noble form, which rises featly turned in even swell
To where upon his jutting chest two young pomegranates seem to
dwell
By his supple moving hips, his taper waist, the silky skin,
By all he robbed Perfection of, and holds enchained his form
within;
By his tongue of steadfastness, his nature true, and excellent,
By the greatness of his rank, his noble birth, and high descent,
Musk from my love her savour steals, who musk exhales from every
limb
And all the airs ambergris breathes are but the Zephyr's blow
o'er him.
The sun, methinks, the broad bright sun, as low before my love
should quail
As would my love himself transcend the paltry paring of his
nail!"[232]

So King Shahriman, having accepted the counsel of his Wazir, waited for another year and a great festival, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Seventy-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Shahriman having accepted the counsel of his Wazir, waited for another year and a great festival, a day of state when the audience hall was filled with his Emirs and Wazirs and Grandees of his reign and Officers of State and Captains of might and main. Thereupon he sent for his son Kamar al-Zaman who came, and kissing the ground before him three times, stood in presence of his sire with his hands behind his back the right grasping the left.[233] Then said the King to him, "Know O my son, that I have not sent for thee on this occasion and summoned thee to appear before this assembly and all these officers of estate here awaiting our orders save and except that I may lay a commandment on thee, wherein do thou not disobey me; and my commandment is that thou marry, for I am minded to wed thee to a King's daughter and rejoice in thee ere I die." When the Prince heard this much from his royal sire, he bowed his head groundwards awhile, then raising it towards his father and being moved thereto at that time by youthful folly and boyish ignorance, replied, "But for myself I will never marry; no, not though I drink the cup of death! As for thee, thou art great in age and small of wit: hast thou not, twice ere this day and before this occasion, questioned me of the matter of marriage and I refused my consent? Indeed thou dotest and are not fit to govern a flock of sheep!" So saying Kamar al-Zaman unclasped his hands from behind his back and tucked up his sleeves above his elbows before his father, being in a fit of fury; moreover, he added many words to his sire, knowing not what he said in the trouble of his spirits. The King was confounded and ashamed, for that this befel in the presence of his grandees and soldier-officers assembled on a high festival and a state occasion; but presently the majesty of Kingship took him, and he cried out at his son and made him tremble. Then he called to the guards standing before him and said, "Seize him!' So they came forward and laid hands on him and, binding him, brought him before his sire, who bade them pinion his elbows behind his back and in this guise make him stand before the presence. And the Prince bowed down his head for fear and apprehension, and his brow and face were beaded and spangled with sweat; and shame and confusion troubled him sorely. Thereupon his father abused him and reviled him and cried, "Woe to thee, thou son of adultery and nursling of abomination![234] How durst thou answer me on this wise before my captains and soldiers? But hitherto none hath chastised thee," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that King

Shahriman cried out to his son Kamar al-Zaman, "How durst thou answer me on this wise before my captains and soldiers? But hitherto none hath chastised thee. Knowest thou not that this deed thou hast done were a disgrace to him had it been done by the meanest of my subjects?" And the King commanded his Mamelukes to loose his elbow bonds and imprison him in one of the bastions of the citadel. So they took the Prince and thrust him into an old tower, wherein there was a dilapidated saloon and in its middle a ruined well, after having first swept it and cleansed its floor-flags and set therein a couch on which they laid a mattress, a leathern rug and a cushion; and then they brought a great lanthorn and a wax candle, for that place was dark, even by day. And lastly the Mamelukes led Kamar al-Zaman thither, and stationed an eunuch at the door. And when all this was done, the Prince threw himself on the couch, sad-spirited, and heavy- hearted; blaming himself and repenting of his injurious conduct to his father, whenas repentance availed him naught, and saying, "Allah curse marriage and marriageable and married women, the traitresses all! Would I had hearkened to my father and accepted a wife! Had I so done it had been better for me than this jail." This is how it fared with him; but as regards King Shahri man, he remained seated on his throne all through the day until sundown; then he took the Minister apart and said to him "Know thou, O Wazir, that thou and thou only west the cause of all this that hath come to pass between me and my son by the advice thou west pleased to devise; and so what dost thou counsel me to do now?" Answered he, "O King, leave thy son in limbo for the space of fifteen days: then summon him to thy presence and bid him wed; and assuredly he shall not gainsay thee again." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Seventy-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir, said to King Shahriman, "Leave thy son in limbo for the space of fifteen days; then summon him to thy presence and bid him wed; and assuredly he shall not gainsay thee again." The King accepted the Wazir's opinion and lay down to sleep that night troubled at heart concerning his son; for he loved him with dearest love because he had no other child but this; and it was his wont every night not to sleep, save after placing his arm under his son's neck. So he passed that night in trouble and unease on the Prince 's account, tossing from side to side, as he were laid on coals of Artemisia-wood[235] : for he was overcome with doubts and fears and sleep visited him not all that livelong night; but his eyes ran over with tears and he began repeating, ;

"While slanderers slumber, longsome is my night; *
    Suffice thee a heart so sad in parting-plight;
I say, while night in care slow moments by, *
    'What! no return for thee, fair morning light?'"

And the saying of another,

"When saw I Pleiad-stars his glance escape *
    And Pole star draught of sleep upon him pour;
And the Bier-daughters[236] wend in mourning dight, *
    I knew that morning was for him no more!"

Such was the case with King Shahriman; but as regards Kamar al-Zaman, when the night came upon him the eunuch set the lanthorn before him and lighting the wax-candle, placed it in the candlestick; then brought him somewhat of food. The Prince ate a little and continually reproached himself for his unseemly treatment of his father, saying to himself, "O my soul, knowest thou not that a son of Adam is the hostage of his tongue, and that a man's tongue is what casteth him into deadly perils?" Then his eyes ran over with tears and he bewailed that which he had done, from anguished vitals and aching heart, repenting him with exceeding repentance of the wrong wherewith he had wronged his father and repeating,

"Fair youth shall die by stumbling of the tongue: *
    Stumble of foot works not man's life such wrong:
The slip of lip shall oft smite off the head, *
    While slip of foot shall never harm one long."

Now when he had made an end of eating, he asked for the wherewithal to wash his hands and when the Mameluke had washed them clean of the remnants of food, he arose and made the Wuzu-ablution and prayed the prayers of sundown and nightfall, conjoining them in one; after which he sat down. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Prince Kamar al-Zaman had prayed (conjoining them in one) the prayers of sundown and nightfall, he sat down on the well and began reciting the Koran, and he repeated "The Cow," the "House of Imrán," and "Y. S.;" "The Compassionate," "Blessed be the King," "Unity" and "The two Talismans''[237] ; and he ended with blessing and supplication and with saying, "I seek refuge with Allah from Satan the stoned."[238] Then he lay down upon his couch which was covered with a mattress of satin from al- Ma'adin town, the same on both sides and stuffed with the raw silk of Irak; and under his head was a pillow filled with ostrich-down And when ready for sleep, he doffed his outer clothes and drew off his bag-trousers and lay down in a shirt of delicate stuff smooth as wax; and he donned a head-kerchief of azure Marázi[239] cloth; and at such time and on this guise Kamar al-Zaman was like the full-orbed moon, when it riseth on its fourteenth night. Then, drawing over his head a coverlet of silk, he fell asleep with the lanthorn burning at his feet and the wax-candle over his head, and he ceased not sleeping through the first third of the night, not knowing what lurked for him in the womb of the Future, and what the Omniscient had decreed for him. Now, as Fate and Fortune would have it, both tower and saloon were old and had been many years deserted; and there was therein a Roman well inhabited by a Jinniyah of the seed of Iblis[240] the Accursed, by name Maymúnah, daughter of Al- Dimiryát, a renowned King of the Jánn. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Seventy-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the name of the Jinniyah in question was Maymunah, daughter of Al-Dimiryat; a renowned King of the Jann. And as Kamar al-Zaman continued sleeping till the first third of the night, Maymunah came up out of the Roman well and made for the firmament, thinking to listen by stealth to the converse of the angels; but when she reached the mouth of the well, she saw a light shining in the tower, contrary to custom; and having dwelt there many years without seeing the like, she said to herself, “Never have I witnessed aught like this”; and, marvelling much at the matter, determined that there must be some cause therefor. So she made for the light and found the eunuch sleeping within the door; and inside she saw a couch spread, whereon was a human form with the wax-candle burning at his head and the lanthorn at his feet, and she wondered to see the light and stole towards it little by little. Then she folded her wings and stood by the bed and, drawing back the coverlid, discovered Kamar al-Zaman’s face. She was motionless for a full hour in admiration and wonderment; for the lustre of his visage outshone that of the candle; his face beamed like a pearl with light; his eyelids were languorous like those of the gazelle; the pupils of his eyes were intensely black and brilliant[241] ; his cheeks were rosy red; his eye-brows were arched like bows and his breath exhaled a scent of musk, even as saith of him the poet,

“I kissed him: darker grew those pupils,[242] which *
    Seduce my soul, and cheeks flushed rosier hue;
O heart, if slanderers dare to deem there be *
    His like in chasms, Say ‘Bring him hither, you!’”

Now when Maymunah saw him, she pronounced the formula of praise,[243] and said, “Blessed be Allah, the best of Creators!”; for she was of the true-believing Jinn; and she stood awhile gazing on his face, exclaiming and envying the youth his beauty and loveliness. And she said in herself, “By Allah! I will do no hurt to him nor let any harm him; nay, from all of evil will I ransom him, for this fair face deserveth not but that folk should gaze upon it and for it praise the Lord. Yet how could his family find it in their hearts to leave him in such desert place where, if one of our Márids came upon him at this hour, he would assuredly slay him.” Then the Ifritah Maymunah bent over him and kissed him between the eyes, and presently drew back the sheet over his face which she covered up; and after this she spread her wings and soaring into the air, flew upwards. And after rising high from the circle of the saloon she ceased not winging her way through air and ascending skywards till she drew near the heaven of this world, the lowest of the heavens. And behold, she heard the noisy flapping of wings cleaving the welkin and, directing herself by the sound, she found when she drew near it that the noise came from an Ifrit called Dahnash. So she swooped down on him like a sparrow-hawk and, when he was aware of her and knew her to be Maymunah, the daughter of the King of the Jinn, he feared her and his side-muscles quivered; and he implored her forbearance, saying, I conjure thee by the Most Great and August Name and by the most noble talisman graven upon the seal-ring of Solomon, entreat me kindly and harm me not!" When she heard these words her heart inclined to him and she said, "Verily, thou conjurest me, O accursed, with a mighty conjuration. Nevertheless, I will not let thee go, till thou tell me whence thou comest at this hour." He replied, "O Princess, Know that I come from the uttermost end of China-land and from among the Islands, and I will tell thee of a wonderful thing I have seen this night. If thou kind my words true, let me wend my way and write me a patent under thy hand and with thy sign manual that I am thy freedman, so none of the Jinn-hosts, whether of the upper who fly or of the lower who walk the earth or of those who dive beneath the waters, do me let or hindrance." Rejoined Maymunah, "And what is it thou hast seen this night, O liar, O accursed! Tell me without leasing and think not to escape from my hand with falses, for I swear to thee by the letters graven upon the bezel of the seal-ring of Solomon David son (on both of whom be peace!), except thy speech be true, I will pluck out thy feathers with mine own hand and strip off thy skin and break thy bones!" Quoth the Ifrit Dahnash son of Shamhúrish[244] the Flyer, "I accept, O my lady, these conditions." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Seventy-eight Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Dahnash spoke thus to Maymunah, "I accept, O my lady, these conditions." Then he resumed, "Know, O my mistress, that I come to-night from the Islands of the Inland Sea in the parts of China, which are the realms of King Ghayúr, lord of the Islands and the Seas and the

Seven Palaces. There I saw a daughter of his, than whom Allah hath made none fairer in her time: I cannot picture her to thee, for my tongue would fail to describe her with her due of praise; but I will name to thee a somewhat of her charms by way of approach. Now her hair is like the nights of disunion and separation and her face like the days of union and delectation; and right well hath the poet said when picturing her,

'She dispread the locks from her head one night, *
Showing four fold nights into one night run
And she turned her visage towards the moon, *
And two moons showed at moment one.'

She hath a nose like the edge of the burnished blade and cheeks like purple wine or anemones blood-red: her lips as coral and carnelian shine and the water of her mouth is sweeter than old wine; its taste would quench Hell's fiery pain. Her tongue is moved by wit of high degree and ready repartee: her breast is a seduction to all that see it (glory be to Him who fashioned it and finished it!); and joined thereto are two upper arms smooth and rounded; even as saith of her the poet Al-Walahán,[245]

'She hath wrists which, did her bangles not contain, *
Would run from out her sleeves in silvern rain.'

She hath breasts like two globes of ivory, from whose brightness the moons borrow light, and a stomach with little waves as it were a figured cloth of the finest Egyptian linen made by the Copts, with creases like folded scrolls, ending in a waist slender past all power of imagination; based upon back parts like a hillock of blown sand, that force her to sit when she would fief stand, and awaken her, when she fain would sleep, even as saith of her and describeth her the poet,

'She hath those hips conjoined by thread of waist, *
Hips that o'er me and her too tyrannise
My thoughts they daze whene'er I think of them, *
And weigh her down whene'er she would uprise.'[246]

And those back parts are upborne by thighs smooth and round and by a calf like a column of pearl, and all this reposeth upon two feet, narrow, slender and pointed like spear-blades,[247] the handiwork of the Protector and Requiter, I wonder how, of their littleness, they can sustain what is above them. But I cut short my praises of her charms fearing lest I be tedious." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Ifrit Dahnash bin Shamhurish said to the Ifritah Maymunah, "Of a truth I cut short my praises fearing lest I be tedious." Now when Maymunah heard the description of that Princess and her beauty and loveliness, she stood silent in astonishment; whereupon Dahnash resumed, "The father of this fair maiden is a mighty King, a fierce knight, immersed night and day in fray and fight; for whom death hath no fright and the escape of his foe no dread, for that he is a tyrant masterful and a conqueror irresistible, lord of troops and armies and continents and islands, and cities and villages, and his name is King Ghayur, Lord of the Islands and of the Seas and of the Seven Palaces. Now he loveth his daughter, the young maiden whom I have described to thee, with dearest love and, for affection of her, he hath heaped together the treasures of all the kings and built her therewith seven palaces, each of a different fashion; the first of crystal, the second of marble, the third of China steel, the fourth of precious stones and gems of price, the fifth of porcelain and many-hued onyxes and ring bezels, the sixth of silver and the seventh of gold. And he hath filled the seven palaces with all sorts of sumptuous furniture, rich silken carpets and hangings and vessels of gold and silver and all manner of gear that kings require; and hath bidden his daughter to abide in each by turns for a certain season of the year; and her name is the Princess Budur.[248] Now when her beauty became known and her name and fame were bruited abroad in the neighbouring countries, all the kings sent to her father to demand her of him in marriage, and he consulted her on the matter, but she disliked the very word wedlock with a manner of abhorrence and said, O my father, I have no mind to marry; no, not at all; for I am a sovereign Lady and a Queen suzerain ruling over men, and I have no desire for a man who shall rule over me. And the more suits she refused, the more her suitors' eagerness increased and all the Royalties of the Inner Islands of China sent presents and rarities to her father with letters asking her in marriage. So he pressed her again and again with advice on the matter of espousals; but she ever opposed to him refusals, till at last she turned upon him angrily and cried, 'O my father, if thou name matrimony to me once more, I will go into my chamber and take a sword and, fixing its hilt in the ground, will set its point to my waist; then will I press upon it, till it come forth from my back, and so slay myself.' Now when the King heard these her words, the light became darkness in his sight and his heart burned for her as with a flame of fire, because he feared lest she should kill herself; and he was filled with perplexity concerning her affair and the kings her suitors. So he said to her 'If thou be determined not to marry and there be no help for it abstain from going and coming in and out.' Then he placed her in a house and shut her up in a chamber, appointing ten old women as duennas to guard her, and forbade her to go forth to the Seven Palaces; moreover, he made it appear that he was incensed against her, and sent letters to all the kings, giving them to know that she had been stricken with madness by the Jinns; and it is now a year since she hath thus been secluded." Then continued the Ifrit Dahnash, addressing the Ifritah Maymunah, "And I, O my lady go to her every night and take my fill of feeding my sight on her face and I kiss her between the eyes: yet, of my love to her, I do her no hurt neither mount her, for that her youth is fair and her grace surpassing: every one who seeth her jealouseth himself for her. I conjure thee, therefore, O my lady, to go back with me and look on her beauty and loveliness and stature and perfection of proportion; and after, if thou wilt, chastise me or enslave me; and win to thy will, for it is shine to bid and to forbid." So saying, the Ifrit Dahnash bowed his head towards the earth and drooped his wings downward; but Maymunah laughed at his words and spat in his face and answered, "What is this girl of whom thou pratest but a potsherd wherewith to wipe after making water?[249] Faugh! Faugh! By Allah, O accursed, I thought thou hadst some wondrous tale to tell me or some marvellous news to give me. How would it be if thou were to sight my beloved? Verily, this night I have seen a young man, whom if thou saw though but in a dream, thou wouldst be palsied with admiration and spittle would flow from thy mouth." Asked the Ifrit, "And who and what is this youth?"; and she answered, "Know, O Dahnash, that there hath befallen the young man the like of what thou tellest me befel thy mistress; for his father pressed him again and again to marry, but he refused, till at length his sire waxed wroth at being opposed and imprisoned him in the tower where I dwell: and I came up to-night and saw him." Said Dahnash, "O my lady, shew me this youth, that I may see if he be indeed handsomer than my mistress, the Princess Budur, or not; for I cannot believe that the like of her liveth in this our age." Rejoined Maymunah, "Thou liest, O accursed, O most ill-omened of Marids and vilest of Satans![250] Sure am I that the like of my beloved is not in this world." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When It was the One Hundred and Eightieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Ifritah Maymunah spake thus to the Ifrit Dahnash, "Sure am I that the like of my beloved is not in this world! Art thou mad to fellow thy beloved with my beloved?" He said, "Allah upon thee, O my lady, go back with me and look upon my mistress, and after I will with thee and look upon thy beloved." She answered, "It must needs be so, O accursed, for thou art a knavish devil; but I will not go with thee nor shalt thou come with me, save upon condition of a wager which is this. If the lover thou lovest and of whom thou boastest so bravely, prove handsomer than mine whom I mentioned and whom I love and of whom I boast, the bet shall be shine against me; but if my beloved prove the handsomer the bet shall be mine against thee." Quoth Dahnash the Ifrit, "O my lady, I accept this thy wager and am satisfied thereat; so come with me to the Islands." Quoth Maymunah; "No! for the abode of my beloved is nearer than the abode of shine: here it is under us; so come down with me to see my beloved and after we will go look upon thy mistress." "I hear and I obey," said Dahnash. So they descended to earth and alighted in the saloon which the tower contained; then Maymunah stationed Dahnash beside the bed and, putting out her hand, drew back the silken coverlet from Kamar al-Zaman's face, when it glittered and glistened and shimmered and shone like the rising sun. She gazed at him for a moment, then turning sharply round upon Dahnash said, "Look, O accursed, and be not the basest of madmen; I am a maid, yet my heart he hath waylaid." So Dahnash looked at the Prince and long continued gazing steadfastly on him then, shaking his head, said to Maymunah, "By Allah, O my lady, thou art excusable; but there is yet another thing to be considered, and this is, that the estate female differeth from the male. By Allah's might, this thy beloved is the likest of all created things to my mistress in beauty and loveliness and grace and perfection; and it is as though they were both cast alike in the mould of seemlihead." Now when Maymunah heard these words, the light became darkness in her sight and she dealt him with her wing so fierce a buffet on the head as well-nigh made an end of him. Then quoth she to him, "I conjure thee, by the light of his glorious countenance, go at once, O accursed, and bring hither thy mistress whom thou lovest so fondly and foolishly, and return in haste that we may lay the twain together and look on them both as they lie asleep side by side; so shall it appear to us which be the goodlier and more beautiful of the two. Except thou obey me this very moment, O accursed, I will dart my sparks at thee with my fire and consume thee; yea, in pieces I will rend thee and into the deserts cast thee, that to stay at home and wayfarer an example thou be!" Quoth Dahnash, "O my lady, I will do thy behests, for I know forsure that my mistress is the fairer and the sweeter." So saying the If rit flew away and Maymunah flew with him to guard him. They were absent awhile and presently returned, bearing the young lady, who was clad in a shift of fine Venetian silk, with a double edging of gold and purfled with the most exquisite of embroidery having these couplets worked upon the ends of the sleeves,

"Three matters hinder her from visiting us, in fear *
    Of hate-full, slandering envier and his hired spies:
The shining light of brow, the trinkets' tinkling voice, *
    And scent of essences that tell whene'er she tries:
Gi'en that she hide her brow with edge of sleeve, and leave *
    At home her trinketry, how shall her scent
    disguise?''[251]

And Dahnash and Maymunah stinted not bearing that young lady till they had carried her into the saloon and had laid her beside the youth Kamar al-Zaman. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Eighty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Ifrit Dahnash and the Ifritah Maymunah stinted not bearing Princess Budur till they descended and laid her on the couch beside Kamar al-Zaman. Then they uncovered both their faces, and they were the likest of all folk, each to other, as they were twins or an only brother and sister; and indeed they were a seduction to the pious, even as saith of them the poet Al-Mubín,

“O heart! be not thy love confined to one, *
Lest thou by doting or disdain be undone:
Love all the fair, and thou shalt find with them *
If this be lost, to thee that shall be won.”

And quoth another,

“Mine eyes beheld two lying on the ground; *
Both had I loved if on these eyne they lay!”

So Dahnash and Maymunah gazed on them awhile, and he said, “By Allah, O my lady, it is good! My mistress is assuredly the fairer.” She replied, “Not so, my beloved is the fairer; woe to thee, O Dahnash! Art blind of eye and heart that lean from fat thou canst not depart? Wilt thou hide the truth? Dost thou not see his beauty and loveliness and fine stature and symmetry? Out on thee, hear what I purpose to say in praise of my beloved and, if thou be a lover true to her thou dost love, do thou the like for her thou Lovest.” Then she kissed Kamar al-Zaman again and again between the eyes and improvised this ode,

“How is this? Why should the blamer abuse thee in his pride?
What shall console my heart for thee, that art but slender bough?

A Nature Kohl’d[252] eye thou hast that witcheth far and wide;

From pure platonic love[253] of it deliverance none I trow!

Those glances, fell as plundering Turk, to heart such havoc deal
As never havocked scymitar made keenest at the curve.

On me thou layest load of love the heaviest while I feel
So feeble grown that under weight of chemisette I swerve.

My love for thee as wottest well is habit, and my lowe
Is nature; to all others false is all the love I tender:

Now were my heart but like to shine I never would say No;
Only my wasted form is like thy waist so gracious slender:

Out on him who in Beauty's robe for moon like charms hath fame,
And who is claimed by mouth of men as marvel of his tribe!

'Of man what manner may he be' (ask they who flyte and blame)
'For whom thy heart is so distressed?' I only cry 'Describe!'

Oh stone-entempered heart of him! learn of his yielding grace
And bending form to show me grace and yielding to consent.

Oh my Prince Beautiful, thou hast an Overseer in place[254]
Who irketh me, and eke a Groom whose wrong cloth ne'er relent.

Indeed he lieth who hath said that all of loveliness
Was pent in Joseph: in thy charms there's many and many a Joe!

The Genii dread me when I stand and face to face address;
But meeting thee my fluttering heart its shame and terror show.

I take aversion semblance and I turn from thee in fright,
But more aversion I assume, more love from me dost claim;

That hair of jetty black! That brow e'er raying radiant light! Those eyne wherein white jostles black![255] That dearling dainty frame!"

When Dahnash heard the poesy which Maymunah spake in praise of her beloved, he joyed with exceeding joy and marvelled with excessive wonderment. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say

When it was the One Hundred and Eighty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Ifrit Dahnash heard the poesy which Maymunah spake in praise of her beloved, he shook for exceeding joy and said, “Thou hast celebrated thy beloved in song and thou hast indeed done well in praise of him whom thou lovest! And there is no help for it but that I also in my turn do my best to enfame my mistress, and recite somewhat in her honour.” Then the Ifrit went up to the Lady Budur; and’ kissing her between the eyes, looked at Maymunah and at his beloved Princess and recited the following verses, albeit he had no skill in poesy,

“Love for my fair they chide in angry way; *
    Unjust for ignorance, yea unjustest they!
Ah lavish favours on the love mad, whom *
    Taste of thy wrath and parting woe shall slay:
In sooth for love I’m wet with railing tears, *
    That rail mine eyelids blood thou mightest say:
No marvel what I bear for love, ’tis marvel *
    That any know my “me” while thou’rt away:
Unlawful were our union did I doubt *
    Thy love, or heart incline to other May.”

And eke these words: —

“I feed eyes on their stead by the valley’s side, *
    And I’m slain and my slaver[256] aside hath tried:
Grief-wine have I drunken, and down my cheeks *
    Dance tears to the song of the camel-guide:
For union-blessing I strive though sure, *
    In Budur and Su’ad all my bliss shall bide:[257]
Wot I not which of three gave me most to ‘plain, *
    So hear them numbered ere thou decide:
Those Sworders her eyne, that Lancer her fig- *
    -ure, or ring-mail’d Locks which her forehead hide.

Quoth she (and I ask of her what so wights *
    Or abide in towns or in desert ride[258])
To me, 'In thy heart I dwell, look there!' *
    Quoth I, 'Where's my heart ah where? ah where?'"

When Maymunah heard these lines from the Ifrit, she said, "Thou hast done well, O Dahnash! But say thou which of the two is the handsomer?" And he answered, "My mistress Budur is handsomer than thy beloved!" Cried Maymunah, "Thou liest, O accursed. Nay, my beloved is more beautiful than shine!" But Dahnash persisted, "Mine is the fairer." And they ceased not to wrangle and challenge each other's words till Maymunah cried out at Dahnash and would have laid violent hands on him, but he humbled himself to her and, softening his speech, said, "Let not the truth be a grief to thee, and cease we this talk, for all we say is to testify in favour of our lovers; rather let each of us withdraw the claim and seek we one who shall judge fairly between us which of the two be fairer; and by his sentence we will abide." "I agree to this," answered she and smote the earth with her foot, whereupon there came out of it an Ifrit blind of an eye, humpbacked and scurvy-skinned, with eye-orbits slit up and down his face.[259] On his head were seven horns and four locks of hair fell to his heels; his hands were pitchfork-like and his legs mast-like and he had nails as the claws of a lion, and feet as the hoofs of the wild ass.[260] When that If rit rose out of the earth and sighted Maymunah, he kissed the ground before her and, standing with his hands clasped behind him, said, "What is thy will, O my mistress, O daughter of my King?"[261] She replied, "O Kashkash, I would have thee judge between me and this accursed Dahnash." And she made known to him the matter, from first to last, whereupon the Ifrit Kashkash looked at the face of the youth and then at the face of the girl; and saw them lying asleep, embraced, each with an arm under the other's neck, alike in beauty and loveliness and equal in grace and goodliness. The Marid gazed long upon them, marvelling at their seemlihead; and, after carefully observing the twain, he turned to Maymunah and Dahnash, and reseated these couplets.

"Go, visit her thou lovest, and regard not

The words detractors utter, envious churls
Can never favour love. Oh! sure the Merciful
Ne'er made a thing more fair to look upon,
Than two fond lovers in each others' arms,
Speaking their passion in a mute embrace.
When heart has turned to heart, the fools would part them
Strike idly on cold steel. So when thou'st found
One purely, wholly shine, accept her true heart,
And live for her alone. Oh! thou that blamest
The love-struck for their love, give o'er thy talk,
How canst thou minister to a mind diseased?"[262]

Then he turned again to Maymunah and Dahnash and said to them, "By Allah, if you will have the truth, I tell you fairly the twain be equal in beauty, and loveliness and perfect grace and goodliness, nor can I make any difference between them on account of their being man and woman. But I have another thought which is that we wake each of them in turn, without the knowledge of the other, and whichever is the more enamoured shall be held inferior in seemlihead and comeliness." Quoth Maymunah, "Right is this recking," and quoth Dahnash, "I consent to this." Then Dahnash changed himself to the form of a flea and bit Kamar al-Zaman, whereupon he started from sleep in a fright. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Eighty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Dahnash changed himself to the form of a flea and bit Kamar al-Zaman who started from sleep in a fright and rubbed the bitten part, his neck, and scratched it hard because of the smart. Then turning sideways, he found lying by him something whose breath was sweeter than musk and whose skin was softer than cream. Hereat marvelled he with great marvel and he sat up and looked at what lay beside him; when he saw it to be a young lady like an union pearl, or a shining sun, or a dome seen from afar on a well built wall; for she was five feet tall, with a shape like the letter Alif[263] , bosomed high and rosy checked; even as saith of her the poet,

“Four things which ne’er conjoin, unless it be *
    To storm my vitals and to shed my blood:
Brow white as day and tresses black as night *
    Cheeks rosy red and lips which smiles o’erflood.”

And also quoth another,

“A Moon she rises, Willow wand she waves, *
    Breathes Ambergris, and gazes, a Gazelle:
Meseems that sorrow woes my heart and wins *
    And, when she wendeth hastes therein to dwell!”

And when Kamar al-Zaman saw the Lady Budur, daughter of King Ghayur, and her beauty and comeliness, she was sleeping clad in a shift of Venetian silk, without her petticoat-trousers, and wore on her head a kerchief embroidered with gold and set with stones of price: her ears were hung with twin earrings which shone like constellations and round her neck was a collar of union pearls, of size unique, past the competence of any King. When he saw this, his reason was confounded and natural heat began to stir in him; Allah awoke in him the desire of coition and he said to himself, “Whatso Allah willeth, that shall be, and what He willeth not shall never be!” So saying, he put out his hand and, turning her over, loosed the collar of her chemise; then arose before his sight her bosom, with its breasts like double globes of ivory; whereat his inclination for her redoubled and he desired her with exceeding hot desire, He would have awakened her but she would not awake, for Dahnash had made her sleep heavy; so he shook her and moved her, saying, “O my beloved, awake and look on me; I am Kamar al-Zaman.” But she awoke not, neither moved her head; where-upon he considered her case for a long hour and said to himself, “If I guess aright, this is the damsel to whom my father would have married me and these three years past I have refused her; but Inshallah! — God willing — as soon as it is dawn, I will say to him, ‘Marry me to her, that I may enjoy her.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Eighty-fourth Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Kamar al-Zaman said to himself, “By Allah, when I see dawn I will say to my sire, ‘Marry me to her that I may enjoy her’; nor will I let half the day pass ere I possess her and take my fill of her beauty and loveliness.” Then he bent over Budur to buss her, whereat the Jinniyah Maymunah trembled and was abashed and Dahnash, the Ifrit, was like to fly for joy. But, as Kamar al- Zaman was about to kiss her upon the mouth, he was ashamed before Allah and turned away his head and averted his face, saying to his heart, “Have patience.” Then he took thought awhile and said, “I will be patient; haply my father when he was wroth with me and sent me to this jail, may have brought my young lady and made her lie by my side to try me with her, and may have charged her not to be readily awakened when I would arouse her, and may have said to her, ‘Whatever thing Kamar al-Zaman do to thee, make me ware thereof’; or belike my sire standeth hidden in some stead whence (being himself unseen) he can see all I do with this young lady; and to morrow he will scold me and cry, ‘How cometh it that thou sayest, I have no mind to marry; and yet thou didst kiss and embrace yonder damsel?’ So I will withhold myself lest I be ashamed before my sire; and the right and proper thing to do is not to touch her at this present, nor even to look upon her, except to take from her somewhat which shall serve as a token to me and a memorial of her; that some sign endure between me and her.” Then Kamar al-Zaman raised the young lady’s hand and took from her little finger a seal-ring worth an immense amount of money, for that its bezel was a precious jewel and around it were graven these couplets,

“Count not that I your promises forgot, *
    Despite the length of your delinquencies
Be generous, O my lord, to me inclining; *
    Haply your mouth and cheeks these lips may kiss:
By Allah, ne’er will I relinquish you *
    Albe you will transgress love’s boundaries.”

Then Kamar al-Zaman took the seal-ring from the little finger of Queen Budur and set it on his own; then, turning his back to her, went to sleep.[264] When Maymunah the Jinniyah saw this, she was glad and said to Dahnash and Kashkash, "Saw ye how my beloved Kamar al-Zaman bore himself chastely towards this young lady? Verily, this was of the perfection of his good gifts; for observe you twain how he looked on her and noted her beauty and loveliness, and yet embraced her not neither kissed her nor put his hand to her, but turned his back and slept." Answered they, "Even so!" Thereupon Maymunah changed herself into a flea and entering into the raiment of Budur, the loved of Dahnash, crept up her calf and came upon her thigh and, reaching a place some four carats[265] below her navel, there bit her. Thereupon she opened her eyes and sitting up in bed, saw a youth lying beside her and breathing heavily in his sleep, the loveliest of Almighty Allah's creatures, with eyes that put to shame the fairest Houris of Heaven; and a mouth like Solomon's seal, whose water was sweeter to the taste and more efficacious than a theriack, and lips the colour of coral-stone, and cheeks like the blood red anemone, even as saith one, describing him in these couplets,

"My mind's withdrawn from Zaynab and Nawár[266] *
    By rosy cheeks that growth of myrtle bear;
I love a fawn, a tunic-vested boy, *
    And leave the love of bracelet-wearing Fair:
My mate in hall and closet is unlike *
    Her that I play with, as at home we pair.
Oh thou, who blam'st my flight from Hind and Zaynab, *
    The cause is clear as dawn uplighting air!
Would'st have me fare[267] a slave, the thrall of thrall, *
    Cribbed, pent, confined behind the bar and wall?"

Now when Princess Budur saw him, she was seized by a transport of passion and yearning and love-longing, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Eighty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Princess Budur saw Kamar al-Zaman she was forthwith seized with a transport of passion and yearning and love longing, and she said to herself, "Alas, my shame! This is a strange youth and I know him not. How cometh he to be lying by my side on one bed?” Then she looked at him a second time and, noting his beauty and loveliness, said, “By Allah, he is indeed a comely youth and my heart[268] is well-nigh torn in sunder with longing for him! But alas, how am I shamed by him! By the Almighty, had I known it was this youth who sought me in marriage of my father, I had not rejected him, but had wived with him and enjoyed his loveliness!” Then she gazed in his face and said, “O my lord and light of mine eyes, awake from sleep and take thy pleasure in my beauty and grace.” And she moved him with her hand; but Maymunah the Jinniyah let down sleep upon him as it were a curtain, and pressed heavily on his head with her wings so that Kamar al-Zaman awoke not. Then Princess Budur shook him with her hands and said, “My life on thee, hearken to me; awake and up from thy sleep and look on the narcissus and the tender down thereon, and enjoy the sight of naked waist and navel; and touzle me and tumble me from this moment till break of day! Allah upon thee, O my lord, sit up and prop thee against the pillow and slumber not!” Still Kamar al-Zaman made her no reply but breathed hard in his sleep. Continued she, “Alas! Alas! thou art insolent in thy beauty and comeliness and grace and loving looks! But if thou art handsome, so am I handsome; what then is this thou dost? Have they taught thee to flout me or hath my father, the wretched old fellow,[269] made thee swear not to speak to me to-night?” But Kamar al-Zaman opened not his mouth neither awoke, whereat her passion for him redoubled and Allah inflamed her heart with love of him. She stole one glance of eyes that cost her a thousand sighs: her heart fluttered, and her vitals throbbed and her hands and feet quivered; and she said to Kamar al-Zaman “Talk to me, O my lord! Speak to me, O my friend! Answer me, O my beloved, and tell me thy name, for indeed thou hast ravished my wit!” And during all this time he abode drowned in sleep and answered her not a word, and Princess Budur sighed and said, “Alas! Alas! why art thou so proud and self satisfied?” Then she shook him and turning his hand over, saw her seal-ring on his little finger, whereat she cried a loud cry, and followed it with a sigh of passion and said, “Alack! Alack! By Allah, thou art my beloved and thou lovest me! Yet thou seemest to turn thee away from me out of coquetry, for all, O my darling, thou camest to me, whilst I was asleep and knew not what thou didst with me, and tookest my seal-ring; and yet I will not pull it off thy finger." So saying, she opened the bosom of his shirt and bent over him and kissed him and put forth her hand to him, seeking somewhat that she might take as a token, but found nothing. Then she thrust her hand into his breast and, because of the smoothness of his body, it slipped down to his waist and thence to his navel and thence to his yard, whereupon her heart ached and her vitals quivered and lust was sore upon her, for that the desire of women is fiercer than the desire of men,[270] and she was ashamed of her own shamelessness. Then she plucked his seal-ring from his finger, and put it on her own instead of the ring he had taken, and bussed his inner lips and hands, nor did she leave any part of him unkissed; after which she took him to her breast and embraced him and, laying one of her hands under his neck and the other under his arm-pit, nestled close to him and fell asleep by his side. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One hundred and Eighty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Princess Budur fell asleep by the side of Kamar al-Zaman, after doing that which she did, quoth Maymunah to Dahnash, Night thou, O accursed, how proudly and coquettishly my beloved bore himself, and how hotly and passionately thy mistress showed herself to my dearling? There can be no doubt that my beloved is handsomer than shine; nevertheless I pardon thee." Then she wrote him a document of manumission and turned to Kashkash and said, "Go, help Dahnash to take up his mistress and aid him to carry her back to her own place, for the night waneth apace and there is but little left of it." "I hear and I obey;" answered Kashkash. So the two Ifrits went forward to Princess Budur and upraising her flew away with her; then, bearing her back to her own place, they laid her on her bed, whilst Maymunah abode alone with Kamar al-Zaman, gazing upon him as he slept, till the night was all but spent, when she went her way. As soon as morning morrowed, the Prince awoke from sleep and turned right and left, but found not the maiden by him and said in his mind, "What is this business? It is as if my father would incline me to marriage with the damsel who was with me and have now taken her away by stealth, to the intent that my desire for wedlock may redouble.” Then he called out to the eunuch who slept at the door, saying, “Woe to thee, O damned one, arise at once!” So the eunuch rose, bemused with sleep, and brought him basin and ewer, whereupon Kamar al-Zaman entered the water closet and did his need;[271] then, coming out made the Wuzu-ablution and prayed the dawn-prayer, after which he sat telling on his beads the ninety-and-nine names of Almighty Allah. Then he looked up and, seeing the eunuch standing in service upon him, said, “Out on thee, O Sawáb! Who was it came hither and took away the young lady from my side and I still sleeping?” Asked the eunuch, ‘O my lord, what manner of young lady?” “The young lady who lay with me last night,” replied Kamar al-Zaman. The eunuch was startled at his words and said to him, “By Allah, there hath been with thee neither young lady nor other! How should young lady have come in to thee, when I was sleeping in the doorway and the door was locked? By Allah, O my lord, neither male nor female hath come in to thee!” Exclaimed the Prince, “Thou liest, O pestilent slave!: is it of thy competence also to hoodwink me and refuse to tell me what is become of the young lady who lay with me last night and decline to inform me who took her away?” Replied the eunuch (and he was affrighted at him), “By Allah, O my lord, I have seen neither young lady nor young lord!” His words only angered Kamar al-Zaman the more and he said to him, “O accursed one, my father hath indeed taught thee deceit! Come hither.” So the eunuch came up to him, and the Prince took him by the collar and dashed him to the ground; whereupon he let fly a loud fart[272] and Kamar al-Zaman, kneeling upon him, kicked him and throttled him till he fainted away. Then he dragged him forth and tied him to the well-rope, and let him down like a bucket into the well and plunged him into the water, then drew him up and lowered him down again. Now it was hard winter weather, and Kamar al-Zaman ceased not to plunge the eunuch into the water and pull him up again and douse him and haul him whilst he screamed and called for help; and the Prince kept on saying “By Allah, O damned one, I will not draw thee up out of this well till thou tell me and fully acquaint me with the story of the young lady and who it was took her away, whilst I slept.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One and Eighty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Kamar al-Zaman said to the eunuch, “By Allah! I will not draw thee up out of this well until thou tell me the story of the young lady and who it was took her away whilst I slept.” Answered the eunuch, after he had seen death staring him in the face; “O my lord, let me go and I will relate to thee the truth and the whole tale.” So Kamar al-Zaman pulled him up out of the well, all but dead for suffering, what with cold and the pain of dipping and dousing, drubbing and dread of drowning. He shook like cane in hurricane, his teeth were clenched as by cramp and his clothes were drenched and his body befouled and torn by the rough sides of the well: briefly he was in a sad pickle. Now when Kamar al-Zaman saw him in this sorry plight, he was concerned for him; but, as soon as the eunuch found himself on the floor, he said to him, “O my lord, let me go and doff my clothes and wring them out and spread them in the sun to dry, and don others; after which I will return to thee forthwith and tell thee the truth of the matter.” Answered the Prince, “O rascal slave! hadst thou not seen death face to face, never hadst thou confessed to fact nor told me a word; but go now and do thy will, and then come back to me at once and tell me the truth.” Thereupon the eunuch went out, hardly crediting his escape, and ceased not running, stumbling and rising in his haste, till he came in to King Shahriman, whom he found sitting at talk with his Wazir of Kamar al-Zaman’s case. The King was saying to the Minister, “I slept not last night, for anxiety concerning my son, Kamar al-Zaman and indeed I fear lest some harm befal him in that old tower. What good was there in imprisoning him?” Answered the Wazir, “Have no care for him. By Allah, no harm will befal him! None at all! Leave him in prison for a month till his temper yield and his spirit be broken and he return to his senses.” As the two spoke behold, up rushed the eunuch, in the aforesaid plight, making to the King who was troubled at sight of him; and he cried “O our lord the Sultan! Verily, thy son’s wits are fled and he hath gone mad, he hath dealt with me thus and thus, so that I am become as thou seest me, and he kept saying, ‘A young lady lay with me this night and stole away secretly whilst I slept. Where is she?’ And he insisteth on my letting him know where she is and on my telling him who took her away. But I have seen neither girl nor boy: the door was locked all through the night, for I slept before it with the key under my head, and I opened to him in the morning with my own hand. When King Shahriman heard this, he cried out, saying, “Alas, my son!;” and he was enraged with sore rage against the Wazir, who had been the cause of all this case and said to him, “Go up, bring me news of my son and see what hath befallen his mind.” So the Wazir rose and, stumbling over his long skirts, in his fear of the King’s wrath, hastened with the slave to the tower. Now the sun had risen and when the Minister came in to Kamar al-Zaman, he found him sitting on the couch reciting the Koran; so he saluted him and seated himself by his side, and said to him, “O my lord, this wretched eunuch brought us tidings which troubled and alarmed us and which incensed the King.” Asked Kamar al-Zaman, “And what hath he told you of me to trouble my father? In good sooth he hath troubled none but me.” Answered the Wazir, “He came to us in fulsome state and told us of thee a thing which Heaven forfend; and the slave added a lie which it befitteth not to repeat, Allah preserve thy youth and sound sense and tongue of eloquence, and forbid to come from thee aught of offense!” Quoth the Prince, “O Wazir, and what thing did this pestilent slave say of me?” The Minister replied, “He told us that thy wits had taken leave of thee and thou wouldst have it that a young lady lay with thee last night, and thou west instant with him to tell thee whither she went and thou diddest torture him to that end.” But when Kamar al-Zaman heard these words, he was enraged with sore rage and he said to the Wazir, “’Tis manifest to me in very deed that you people taught the eunuch to do as he did.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her per misted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Eighty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Kamar al-Zaman heard the words of the Wazir he was enraged with sore rage and said to him, “’Tis manifest to me in very deed that you people taught the eunuch to do as he did and forbade him to tell me what became of the young lady who lay with me last night. But thou, O Wazir, art cleverer than the eunuch, so do thou tell me without stay or delay, whither went the young lady who slept on my bosom last night; for it was you who sent her and bade her steep in my embrace and we lay together till dawn; but, when I awoke, I found her not. So where is she now?" Said the Wazir, "O my lord Kamar al-Zaman, Allah's name encompass thee about! By the Almighty, we sent none to thee last night, but thou layest alone, with the door locked on thee and the eunuch sleeping behind it, nor did there come to thee young lady or any other. Regain thy reason, O my lord, and stablish thy senses and occupy not thy mind with vanities." Rejoined Kamar al-Zaman who was incensed at his words, "O Wazir, the young lady in question is my beloved, the fair one with the black eyes and rosy cheeks, whom I held in my arms all last night." So the Minister wondered at his words and asked him, "Didst thou see this damsel last night with shine own eyes on wake or in sleep?" Answered Kamar al-Zaman, "O ill- omened old man, dost thou fancy I saw her with my ears? Indeed, I saw her with my very eyes and awake, and I touched her with my hand, and I watched by her full half the night, feeding my vision on her beauty and loveliness and grace and tempting looks. But you had schooled her and charged her to speak no word to me; so she feigned sleep and I lay by her side till dawn, when I awoke and found her gone." Rejoined the Wazir, "O my lord Kamar al- Zaman, haply thou sawest this in thy sleep; it must have been a delusion of dreams or a deception caused by eating various kinds of food, or a suggestion of the accursed devils." Cried the Prince, "O pestilent old man! wilt thou too make a mock of me and tell me this was haply a delusion of dreams, when that eunuch confessed to the young lady, saying, 'At once I will return to thee and tell thee all about her?'" With these words, he sprang up and rushed at the Wazir and gripped hold of his beard (which was long[273]) and, after gripping it, he twisted his hand in it and haling him off the couch, threw him on the floor. It seemed to the Minister as though his soul departed his body for the violent plucking at his beard; and Kamar al-Zaman ceased not kicking the Wazir and basting his breast and ribs and cuffing him with open hand on the nape of his neck till he had well-nigh beaten him to death. Then said the old man in his mind, "Just as the eunuch-slave saved his life from this lunatic youth by telling him a lie, thus it is even fitter that I do likewise; else he will destroy me. So now for my lie to save myself, he being mad beyond a doubt." Then he turned to Kamar al-Zaman and said, "O my lord, pardon me; for indeed thy father charged me to conceal from thee this affair of the young lady; but now I am weak and weary and wounded with funding; for I am an old man and lack strength and bottom to endure blows. Have, therefore, a little patience with me and I will tell thee all and acquaint thee with the story of the young woman." When the Prince heard this, he left off drubbing him and said, "Wherefore couldst thou not tell me the tale until after shame and blows? Rise now, unlucky old man that thou art, and tell me her story." Quoth the Wazir, "Say, dost thou ask of the young lady with the fair face and perfect form?" Quoth Kamar al-Zaman, "Even so! Tell me, O Wazir, who it was that led her to me and laid her by my side, and who was it that took her away from me by night; and let me know forthright whither she is gone, that I myself may go to her at once. If my father did this deed to me that he might try me by means of that beautiful girl, with a view to our marriage, I consent to wed her and free myself of this trouble; for he did all these dealings with me only because I refused wedlock. But now I consent and I say again, I consent to matrimony: so tell this to my father, O Wazir, and advise him to marry me to that young lady; for I will have none other and my heart loveth none save her alone. Now rise up at once and haste thee to my father and counsel him to hurry on our wedding and bring me his answer within this very hour." Rejoined the Wazir, "'Tis well!" and went forth from him, hardly believing himself out of his hands. Then he set off from the tower, walking and tripping up as he went, for excess of fright and agitation, and he ceased not hurrying till he came in to King Shahriman. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Eighty-nineth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir, fared forth from the tower, and ceased not running till he came in to King Shahriman, who said to him as he sighted him, "O thou Wazir, what man hath brought thee to grief and whose mischief hath treated thee in way unlief; how happeneth it that I see thee dumb foundered and coming to me thus astounded?" Replied the Wazir, "O King! I bring thee good news." "And what is it?" quoth Shahriman, and quoth the Wazir, "Know that thy son Kamar al- Zaman's wits are clean gone and that he hath become stark mad." Now when the King heard these words of the Minister, light became darkness in his sight and he said, "O Wazir, make clear to me the nature of his madness." Answered the Wazir, "O my lord, I hear and I obey." Then he told him that such and such had passed and acquainted him with all that his son had done; whereupon the King said to him, "Hear, O Wazir, the good tidings which I give thee in return for this thy fair news of my son's insanity; and it shall be the cutting off of thy head and the forfeiture of my favour, O most ill-omened of Wazirs and foulest of Emirs! for I feel that thou hast caused my son's disorder by the wicked advice and the sinister counsel thou hast given me first and last. By Allah, if aught of mischief or madness have befallen my son I will most assuredly nail thee upon the palace dome and make thee drain the bitterest draught of death!'' Then he sprang up and, taking the Wazir, with him, fared straight for the tower and entered it. And when Kamar al-Zaman saw the two, he rose to his father in haste from the couch whereon he sat and kissing his hands drew back and hung down his head and stood before him with his arms behind him, and thus remained for a full hour. Then he raised his head towards his sire; the tears gushed from his eyes and streamed down his cheeks and he began repeating,

"Forgive the sin 'neath which my limbs are trembling,
For the slave seeks for mercy from his master;
I've done a fault, which calls for free confession,
Where shall it call for mercy, and forgiveness?''[274]

When the King heard this, he arose and embraced his son, and kissing him between the eyes, made him sit by his side on the couch; then he turned to the Wazir, and, looking on him with eyes of wrath, said, "O dog of Wazirs, how didst thou say of my son such and such things and make my heart quake for him?" Then he turned to the Prince and said, "O my son, what is to-day called?" He answered, "O my father, this day is the Sabbath, and to morrow is First day: then come Second day, Third, Fourth, Fifth day and lastly Friday."[275]

Exclaimed the King, “O my son, O Kamar al-Zaman, praised be Allah for the preservation of thy reason! What is the present month called in our Arabic?” “Zú’l Ka’adah,” answered Kamar al-Zaman, “and it is followed by Zú’l hijjah; then cometh Muharram, then Safar, then Rabí’a the First and Rabí’a the Second, the two Jamádás, Rajab, Sha’aban, Ramazán and Shawwál.” At this the King rejoiced exceedingly and spat in the Wazir’s face, saying, “O wicked old man, how canst thou say that my son is mad? And now none is mad but thou.” Hereupon the Minister shook his head and would have spoken, but bethought himself to wait awhile and see what might next befal. Then the King said to his child, “O my son, what words be these thou saddest to the eunuch and the Wazir, declaring, ‘I was sleeping with a fair damsel this night?’[276] What damsel is this of whom thou speakest?” Then Kamar al-Zaman laughed at his father’s words and replied, “O my father, know that I can bear no more jesting; so add me not another mock or even a single word on the matter, for my temper hath waxed short by that you have done with me. And know, O my father, with assured knowledge, that I consent to marry, but on condition that thou give me to wife her who lay by my side this night; for I am certain it was thou sentest her to me and madest me in love with her and then despatchedst a message to her before the dawn and tookest her away from beside me.” Rejoined the King, “The name of Allah encompass thee about, O my son, and be thy wit preserved from witlessness!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Ninetieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth King Shahriman to his son Kamar al-Zaman, “The name of Allah encompass thee about, O my son, and be thy wit preserved from witlessness! What thing be this young lady whom thou fanciest I sent to thee last night and then again that I sent to withdraw her from thee before dawn? By the Lord, O my son, I know nothing of this affair, and Allah upon thee, tell me if it be a delusion of dreaming or a deception caused by indisposition. For verily thou layest down to sleep last night with thy mind occupied anent marriage and troubled with the talk of it (Allah damn marriage and the hour when I spake of it and curse him who counselled it!); and without doubt or diffidence

I can say that being moved in mind by the mention of wedlock thou dreamedst that a handsome young lady embraced thee and didst fancy thou sawest her when awake. But all this, O my son, is but an imbroglio of dreams." Replied Kamar al-Zaman, "Leave this talk and swear to me by Allah, the All creator, the Omniscient; the Humbler of the tyrant Caesars and the Destroyer of the Chosroes, that thou knowest naught of the young lady nor of her woning-place." Quoth the King, "By the Might of Allah Almighty, the God of Moses and Abraham, I know naught of all this and never even heard of it; it is assuredly a delusion of dreams thou hast seen in sleep.' Then the Prince replied to his sire, "I will give thee a self evident proof that it happened to me when on wake." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Ninety-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Kamar al Zamar said to his sire, "I will give thee a self-evident proof that this happened to me when on wake. Now let me ask thee, did it ever befal any man to dream that he was battling a sore battle and after to awake from sleep and find in his hand a sword-blade besmeared with blood? Answered the King, "No, by Allah, O my son, this hath never been." Rejoined Kamar al-Zaman, "I will tell thee what happened to me and it was this. Meseemed I awoke from sleep in the middle of the past night and found a girl lying by my side, whose form was like mine and whose favour was as mine. I embraced her and turned her about with my hand and took her seal- ring, which I put on my finger, and she pulled off my ring and put it on hers. Then I went to sleep by her side, but refrained from her for shame of thee, deeming that thou hadst sent her to me, intending to tempt me with her and incline me to marriage, and suspecting thee to be hidden somewhere whence thou couldst see what I did with her. And I was ashamed even to kiss her on the mouth for thy account, thinking over this temptation to wedlock; and, when I awoke at point of day, I found no trace of her, nor could I come at any news of her, and there befel me what thou knowest of with the eunuch and with the Wazir. How then can this case have been a dream and a delusion, when the ring is a reality? Save for her ring on my finger I should indeed have deemed it a dream; but here is the ring on my little finger: look at it, O King, and see what is its worth." So saying he handed the ring to his father, who examined it and turned it over, then looked to his son and said, "Verily, there is in this ring some mighty mystery and some strange secret. What befel thee last night with the girl is indeed a hard nut to crack, and I know not how intruded upon us this intruder. None is the cause of all this posher save the Wazir; but, Allah upon thee, O my son, take patience, so haply the Lord may turn to gladness this thy grief and to thy sadness bring complete relief: as quoth one of the poets,

'Haply shall Fortune draw her rein, and bring *
    Fair chance, for she is changeful, jealous, vain:
Still I may woo my want and wishes win, *
    And see on heels of care unfair, the fain.'

And now, O my son, I am certified at this hour that thou art not mad; but thy case is a strange one which none can clear up for thee save the Almighty." Cried the Prince, "By Allah, O my father, deal kindly with me and seek out this young lady and hasten her coming to me; else I shall die of woe and of my death shall no one know." Then he betrayed the ardour of his passion; and turned towards his father and repeated these two couplets,

"If your promise of personal call prove untrue, *
    Deign in vision to grant me an interview:
Quoth they, 'How can phantom[277] appear to the sight *
    Of a youth, whose sight is fordone, perdue?'"

Then, after ending his poetry, Kamar al-Zaman again turned to his father, with submission and despondency, and shedding tears in flood, began repeating these lines. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Ninety-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Kamar al-Zaman had repeated to his father these verses, he wept and complained and groaned from a wounded heart; and added these lines,

"Beware that eye glance which hath magic might; *
Wherever turn those orbs it bars our flight:
Nor be deceived by low sweet voice, that breeds *
A fever festering in the heart and sprite:
So soft that silky skin, were rose to touch it *
She'd cry and tear-drops rain for pain and fright:
Did Zephyr e'en in sleep pass o'er her land, *
Scented he'd choose to dwell in scented site:
Her necklets vie with tinkling of her belt; *
Her wrists strike either wristlet dumb with spite:
When would her bangles buss those rings in ear, *
Upon the lover's eyne high mysteries 'light:
I'm blamed for love of her, nor pardon claim; *
Eyes are not profiting which lack foresight:
Heaven strip thee, blamer mine! unjust art thou; *
Before this fawn must every eye low bow."[278]

After which he said, "By Allah, O my father, I cannot endure to be parted from her even for an hour." The King smote hand upon hand and exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! No cunning contrivance can profit us in this affair." Then he took his son by the hand and carried him to the palace, where Kamar al-Zaman lay down on the bed of languor and the King sat at his head, weeping and mourning over him and leaving him not, night or day, till at last the Wazir came in to him and said, "O King of the age and the time, how long wilt thou remain shut up with thy son and hide thyself from thy troops. Haply, the order of thy realm may be deranged, by reason of shine absence from thy Grandees and Officers of State. It behoveth the man of understanding, if he have various wounds in his body, to apply him first to medicine the most dangerous; so it is my counsel to thee that thou remove thy son from this place to the pavilion which is in the palace overlooking the sea; and shut thyself up with him there, setting apart in every week two days, Thursday and Monday, for state receptions and progresses and reviews. On these days let shine Emirs and Wazirs and Chamberlains and Viceroys and high Officials and Grandees of the realm and the rest of the levies and the lieges have access to thee and submit their affairs to thee; and do thou their needs and judge among them and give and take with them and bid and forbid. And the rest of the week thou shalt pass with thy son, Kamar al-Zaman, and cease not thus doing till Allah shall vouchsafe relief to you twain. Think not, O King, that thou art safe from the shifts of Time and the strokes of Change which come like a traveller in the night; for the wise man is ever on his guard and how well saith the poet,

'Thou deemedst well of Time when days went well, *
    And fearedst not what ills might bring thee Fate:
The Nights so fair and restful cozened thee, *
    For peaceful Nights bring woes of heavy weight.
Oh children of mankind whom Time befriends, *
    Beware of Time's deceits or soon or late!'''[279]

When the Sultan heard his Wazir's words he saw that they were right and deemed his counsel wise, and it had effect upon him for he feared lest the order of the state be deranged; so he rose at once and bade transport his son from his sick room to the pavilion in the palace overlooking the sea. Now this palace was girt round by the waters and was approached by a causeway twenty cubits wide. It had windows on all sides commanding an ocean- view; its floor was paved with parti-coloured marbles and its ceiling was painted in the richest pigments and figured with gold and lapis-lazuli. They furnished it for Kamar al-Zaman with splendid upholstery, embroidered rugs and carpets of the richest silk; and they clothed the walls with choice brocades and hung curtains bespangled with gems of price. In the midst they set him a couch of juniper[280] -wood inlaid with pearls and jewels, and Kamar al-Zaman sat down thereon, but the excess of his concern and passion for the young lady had wasted his charms and emaciated his body; he could neither eat nor drink nor sleep; and he was like a man who had been sick twenty years of sore sickness. His father seated himself at his head, grieving for him with the deepest grief, and every Monday and Thursday he gave his Wazirs and Emirs and Chamberlains and Viceroys and Lords of the realm and levies and the rest of his lieges leave to come up to him in that pavilion. So they entered and did their several service and duties and abode with him till the end of the day, when they went their ways and the King returned to his son in the pavilion whom he left not night nor day; and he ceased not doing on this wise for many days and nights. Such was the case with Kamar al-Zaman, son of King Shahriman; but as regards Princess Budur, daughter of King Ghayur, Lord of the Isles and the Seven Palaces, when the two Jinns bore her up and laid her on her bed, she slept till daybreak, when she awoke and sitting upright looked right and left, but saw not the youth who had lain in her bosom. At this her vitals fluttered, her reason fled and she shrieked a loud shriek which awoke all her slave girls and nurses and duennas. They flocked in to her; and the chief of them came forward and asked, “What aileth thee, O my lady?” Answered the Princess, “O wretched old woman, where is my beloved, the handsome youth who lay last night in my bosom? Tell me whither he is gone.” Now when the duenna heard this, the light starkened in her sight and she feared from her mischief with sore affright, and said to her, “O my Lady Budur, what unseemly words are these?” Cried the Princess, “Woe to thee pestilent crone that thou art! I ask thee again where is my beloved, the goodly youth with the shining face and the slender form, the jetty eyes and the joined eyebrows, who lay with me last night from supper-tide until near daybreak?” She rejoined “By Allah, O my lady, I have seen no young man nor any other. I conjure thee, carry not this unseemly jest too far lest we all lose our lives; for perhaps the joke may come to thy father’s ears and who shall then deliver us from his hand?” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Ninety-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the duenna bespake the Lady Budur in these words, “Allah upon thee, O my lady! carry not this unseemly jest too far; for perhaps it may come to thy father’s ears, and who shall then deliver us from his hand?” The Princess rejoined, “In very sooth a youth lay with me last night, one of the fairest-faced of men.” Exclaimed the duenna, “Heaven preserve thy reason! indeed no one lay with thee last night.” Thereupon the Princess looked at her hand and, finding Kamar al-Zaman’s seal-ring on her finger in stead of her own, said to her, “Woe to thee, thou accursed! thou traitress! wilt thou lie to me and tell me that none lay with me last night and swear to me a falsehood in the name of the Lord?” Replied the duenna, “By Allah, I do not lie to thee nor have I sworn falsely.” Then the Princess was incensed by her words and, drawing a sword she had by her, she smote the old woman with it and slew her;[281] whereupon the eunuch and the waiting-women and the concubines cried out at her, and ran to her father and, without stay or delay, acquainted him with her case. So the King went to her, and asked her, “O my daughter, what aileth thee?”; and she answered, “O my father, where is the youth who lay with me last night?” Then her reason fled from her head and she cast her eyes right and left and rent her raiment even to the skirt. When her sire saw this, he bade the women lay hands on her; so they seized her and manacled her, then putting a chain of iron about her neck, made her fast to one of the palace-windows and there left her.[282] Thus far concerning Princess Budur; but as regards her father, King Ghayur, the world was straitened upon him when he saw what had befallen his daughter, for that he loved her and her case was not a little grievous to him. So he summoned on it the doctors and astrologers and men skilled in talisman- writing and said to them, “Whoso healeth my daughter of what ill she hath, I will marry him to her and give him half of my kingdom; but whoso cometh to her and cureth her not, I will strike off his head and hang it over her palace-gate.” Accordingly, all who went in to her, but failed to heal her, he beheaded and hung their heads over the palace-gates, till he had beheaded on her account forty doctors and crucified forty astrologers; wherefor the general held aloof from her, all the physicians having failed to medicine her malady; and her case was a puzzle to the men of science and the adepts in cabalistic characters. And as her longing and passion redoubled and love and distraction were sore upon her, she poured forth tears and repeated these couplets,

“My fondness, O my moon, for thee my foeman is, *
    And to thy comradeship the nights my thought compel:
In gloom I bide with fire that flames below my ribs, *
    Whose lowe I make comparison with heat of Hell:
I’m plagued with sorest stress of pine and ecstasy; *

Nor clearest noon tide can that horrid pain dispel."

Then she sighed and repeated these also,

"Salams fro' me to friends in every stead; *
Indeed to all dear friends do I incline:
Salams, but not salams that bid adieu; *
Salams that growth of good for you design:
I love you dear, indeed, nor less your land, *
But bide I far from every need of mine!"

And when the Lady Budur ceased repeating her poetry, she wept till her eyes waxed sore and her cheeks changed form and hue, and in this condition she continued three years. Now she had a foster-brother, by name Marzawán,[283] who was travelling in far lands and absent from her the whole of this time. He loved her with an exceeding love, passing the love of brothers; so when he came back he went in to his mother and asked for his sister, the Princess Budur. She answered him, "O my son, thy sister hath been smitten with madness and hath passed these three years with a chain of iron about her neck; and all the physicians and men of science have failed of healing her." When Marzawan heard these words he said, "I must needs go in to her; peradventure I may discover what she hath, and be able to medicine her;" and his mother replied, "Needs must thou visit her, but wait till to morrow, that I may contrive some thing to suit thy case." Then she went a-foot to the palace of the Lady Budur and, accosting the eunuch in charge of the gates, made him a present and said to him, "I have a daughter, who was brought up with thy mistress and since then I married her; and, when that befel the Princess which befel her, she became troubled and sore concerned, and I desire of thy favour that my daughter may go in to her for an hour and look on her; and then return whence she came, so shall none know of it." Quoth the eunuch, "This may not be except by night, after the King hath visited his child and gone away; then come thou and thy daughter." So she kissed the eunuch's hand and, returning home, waited till the morrow at nightfall; and when it was time she arose and sought her son Marzawan and attired him in woman's apparel; then, taking his hand in hers, led him towards the palace, and ceased not walking with him till she came upon the eunuch after the Sultan had ended his visit to the Princess. Now when the eunuch saw her, he rose to her, and said, "Enter, but do not prolong thy stay!" So they went in and when Marzawan beheld the Lady Budur in the aforesaid plight, he saluted her, after his mother had doffed his woman's garb: then he took out of their satchel books he had brought with him; and, lighting a wax- candle, he began to recite certain conjurations Thereupon the Princess looked at him and recognising him, said, "O my brother, thou hast been absent on thy travels' and thy news have been cut off from us." He replied, "True! but Allah hath brought me back safe and sound, I am now minded to set out again nor hath aught delayed me but the news I hear of thee; wherefore my heart burned for thee and I came to thee, so haply I may free thee of thy malady." She rejoined, O my brother, thinkest thou it is madness aileth me?" "Yes." answered he, and she said, "Not so, by Allah! 'tis even as saith the poet,

'Quoth they 'Thou rav'st on him thou lov'st': quoth I, *
    'The sweets of love are only for th' insane!'
Love never maketh Time his friend befriend; *
    Only the Jinn-struck wight such boon can gain:
Well! yes, I'm mad: bring him who madded me *
    And, if he cure m: madness, blame restrain!'"

Then she let Marzawan know that she was love-daft and he said "Tell me concerning thy tale and what befel thee: haply there may be in my hand something which shall be a means of deliverance for thee." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of da, and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Ninety-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Marzawar thus addressed Princess Budur, "Tell me concerning thy tale and what befel thee: haply Allah may inspire me with a means of deliverance for thee." Quoth she, "O my brother, hear my story which is this. One night I awoke from sleep, in the last third of the night[284] and, sitting up, saw by my side the handsomest of youths that be, and tongue faileth to describe him, for he was as a willow-wand or an Indian rattan-cane. So methought it was my father who had done on this wise in order thereby to try me, for that he had consulted me concerning wedlock, when the Kings sought me of him to wife, and I had refused. It was this though withheld me from arousing him, for I feared that, if I did aught of embraced him, he would peradventure inform my father of m, doings. But in the morning, I found on my finger his seal-ring, in place of my own which he had taken. And, O my brother, m, heart was seized with love of him at first sight; and, for the violence of my passion and longing, I have never savoured the taste of sleep and have no occupation save weeping alway and repeating verses night and day. And this, O my brother, is my story and the cause of my madness." Then she poured forth tears and repeated these couplets,

"Now Love hast banished all that bred delight; *
    With that heart-nibbling fawn my joys took flight:
Lightest of trifles lover's blood to him *
    Who wastes the vitals of the hapless wight!
For him I'm jealous of my sight and thought; *
    My heart acts spy upon my thought and sight:
Those long-lashed eyelids rain on me their shafts *
    Guileful, destroying hearts where'er they light:
Now, while my portion in the world endures, *
    Shall I behold him ere I quit world-site?
What bear I for his sake I'd hide, but tears *
    Betray my feelings to the spy's despight.
When near, our union seemeth ever far; *
    When far, my thoughts to him aye nearest are."

And presently she continued, "See then, O my brother, how thou mayest aid me in mine affliction." So Marzawan bowed his head ground-wards awhile, wondering and not knowing what to do, then he raised it and said to her, "All thou hast spoken to me I hold to be true, though the case of the young man pass my understanding: but I will go round about all lands and will seek for what may heal thee; haply Allah shall appoint thy healing to be at my hand. Meanwhile, take patience and be not disquieted.” Thereupon Marzawan farewelled her, praying that she might be constant and left her repeating these couplets,

“Thine image ever companies my sprite, *
    For all thou’rt distant from the pilgrim’s sight:
But my heart-wishes e’er attract thee near: *
    What is the lightning’s speed to Thought’s swift flight?
Then go not thou, my very light of eyes *
    Which, when thou’rt gone, lack all the Kohl of light.”

Then Marzawan returned to his mother’s house, where he passed the night. And when the morrow dawned, having equipped himself for his journey, he fared forth and ceased not faring from city to city and from island to island for a whole month, till he came to a town named Al-Tayrab.[285] Here he went about scenting news of the townsfolk, so haply he might light on a cure for the Princess’s malady, for in every capital he entered or passed by, it was reported that Queen Budur, daughter of King Ghayur, had lost her wits. But arriving at Al-Tayrab city, he heard that Kamar al-Zaman, son of King Shahriman, was fallen sick and afflicted with melancholy madness. So Marzawan asked the name of the Prince’s capital and they said to him, “It is on the Islands of Khalidan and it lieth distant from our city a whole month’s journey by sea, but by land it is six months’ march.” So he went down to the sea in a ship which was bound for the Khalidan Isles, and she sailed with a favouring breeze for a whole month, till they came in sight of the capital; and there remained for them but to make the land when, behold, there came out on them a tempestuous wind which carried away the masts and rent the canvas, so that the sails fell into the sea and the ship capsized, with all on board, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Ninety-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the ship capsized with all on board, each sought his own safety; and as for Marzawan the set of the sea carried him under the King’s palace, wherein was Kamar al-Zaman. And by the decree of destiny it so happened that this was the day on which King Shahriman gave audience to his Grandees and high officers, and he was sitting, with his son's head on his lap, whilst an eunuch fanned away the flies; and the Prince had not spoken neither had he eaten nor drunk for two days, and he was grown thinner than a spindle.[286] Now the Wazir was standing respectfully a-foot near the latticed window giving on the sea and, raising his eyes, saw Marzawan being beaten by the billows and at his last gasp; whereupon his heart was moved to pity for him, so he drew near to the King and moving his head towards him said, "I crave thy leave, O King, to go down to the court of the pavilion and open the water-gate that I may rescue a man who is at the point of drowning in the sea and bring him forth of danger into deliverance; peradventure, on this account Allah may free thy son from what he hath!" The King replied, "O thou Wazir, enough is that which hath befallen my son through thee and on shine account. Haply, if thou rescue this drowning man, he will come to know our affairs, and look on my son who is in this state and exult over me; but I swear by Allah, that if this half-drowned wretch come hither and learn our condition and look upon my son and then fare forth and speak of our secrets to any, I will assuredly strike off thy head before his; for thou, O my Minister art the cause of all that hath betided us, first and last. Now do as thou wilt." Thereupon the Wazir sprang up and, opening the private pastern which gave upon the sea, descended to the causeway; then walked on twenty steps and came to the water where he saw Marzawan nigh unto death. So he put out his hand to him and, catching him by his hair, drew him ashore in a state of insensibility, with belly full of water and eyes half out of his head. The Wazir waited till he came to himself, when he pulled off his wet clothes and clad him in a fresh suit, covering his head with one of his servants' turbands; after which he said to him, Know that I have been the means of saving thee from drowning: do not thou requite me by causing my death and shine own."ÄAnd Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Ninety-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Wazir did to Marzawan what he did, he thus addressed him Know that I have been the cause of saving thee from drowning so requite me not by causing my death and shine own.” Asked Marzawan, And how so?”; and the Wazir answered, “Thou art at this hour about to go up and pass among Emirs and Wazirs all of them silent and none speaking, because of Kamar al-Zaman the son of the Sultan.” Now when Marzawan heard the name of Kamar al-Zaman, he knew that this was he whom he had heard spoken of in sundry cities and of whom he came in search, but he feigned ignorance and asked the Wazir, “And who is Kamar al-Zaman? Answered the Minister, “He is the son of Sultan Shahriman and he is sore sick and lieth strown on his couch restless alway, eating not nor drinking neither sleeping night or day; indeed he is nigh upon death and we have lost hope of his living and are certain that he is dying. Beware lest thou look too long on him, or thou look on any other than that where thou settest thy feet: else thou art a lost man, and I also.” He replied, “Allah upon thee, O Wazir, I implore thee, of thy favour, acquaint me touching this youth thou describest, what is the cause of the condition in which he is.” The Wazir replied, “I know none, save that, three years ago, his father required him to wed, but he refused; whereat the King was wroth and imprisoned him. And when he awoke on the morrow, he fancied that during the night he had been roused from sleep and had seen by his side a young lady of passing loveliness, whose charms tongue can never express; and he assured us that he had plucked off her seal-ring from her finger and had put it on his own and that she had done likewise; but we know not the secret of all this business. So by Allah, O my son, when thou comest up with me into the palace, look not on the Prince, but go thy way; for the Sultan’s heart is full of wrath against me.” So said Marzawan to himself, “By Allah; this is the one I sought!” Then he followed the Wazir up to the palace, where the Minister seated himself at the Prince’s feet; but Marzawan found forsooth nothing to do but go up to Kamar al-Zaman and stand before him at gaze. Upon this the Wazir, died of affright in his skin, and kept looking at Marzawan and signalling him to wend his way; but he feigned not to see him and gave not over gazing upon Kamar al- Zaman, till he was well assured that it was indeed he whom he was seeking, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Marzawan looked upon Kamar al-Zaman and knew that it was indeed he whom he was seeking, he cried, “Exalted be Allah, Who hath made his shape even as her shape and his complexion as her complexion and his cheek as her cheek!’’ Upon this Kamar al-Zaman opened his eyes and gave earnest ear to his speech; and, when Marzawan saw him inclining to hear, he repeated these couplets[287] ,

“I see thee full of song and plaint and love’s own ecstasy;
Delighting in describing all the charms of loveliness:

Art smit by stroke of Love or hath shaft-shot wounded thee?
None save the wounded ever show such signals of distress!

Ho thou! crown the wine cup and sing me singular
Praises to Sulaymá, Al-Rabáb, Tan’oum addrest;[288]

Go round the grape-vine sun[289] which for mansion hath a jar;
Whose East the cup boy is, and here my mouth that opes for West.

I’m jealous of the very clothes that dare her sides enroll
When she veils her dainty body of the delicatest grace:

I envy every goblet of her lips that taketh toll
When she sets the kissing cup on that sweetest kissing-place.

But deem not by the keen-edged scymitar I’m slain —
The hurts and harms I dree are from arrows of her eyes.

I found her finger tips, as I met her once again,
Deep-reddened with the juice of the wood that ruddy dyes;[290]

And cried, ‘Thy palms thou stainedst when far away was I
And this is how thou payest one distracted by his pine!’

Quoth she (enkindling in my heart a flame that burned high
Speaking as one who cannot hide of longing love the sign),

‘By thy life, this is no dye used for dyeing; so forbear
Thy blame, nor in charging me with falsing Love persist!

But when upon our parting-day I saw thee haste to fare,
The while were bared my hand and my elbow and my wrist;

‘I shed a flood of blood-red tears and with fingers brushed away;
Hence blood-reddened were the tips and still blood-red they remain.’

Had I wept before she wept, to my longing-love a prey,
Before repentance came, I had quit my soul of pain;

But she wept before I wept and I wept to see her care
And I said, ‘All the merit to precedent;’[291]

Blame me not for loving her, now on self of Love I swear
For her sake, for her only, these pains my soul torment.

She hath all the lere of Lukmán[292] and Yúsuf’s beauty lief;
Sweet singer David’s voice and Maryam’s chastity:

While I’ve all Jacob’s mourning and Jonah’s prison-grief,
And the sufferings of Job and old Adam’s history:

Yet kill her not, albeit of my love for her I die;
But ask her why my blood to her was lawful. ask her why?”

When Marzawan recited this ode, the words fell upon Kamar al-Zaman’s heart as freshness after fever and returning health; and he sighed and, turning his tongue in his mouth, said to his sire, “O my father, let this youth come and sit by my side.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Ninety-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Kamar al-Zaman said to his sire, “O my father, allow this youth to come and sit by my side.” Now when the King heard these words from his son, he rejoiced with exceeding joy, though at the first his heart had been set against Marzawan and he had determined that the stranger’s head needs must be stricken off: but when he heard Kamar al-Zaman speak, his anger left him and he arose and drawing Marzawan to him, seated him by his son and turning to him said, “Praised be Allah for thy safety!” He replied, “Allah preserve thee! and preserve thy son to thee!” and called down blessings on the King. Then the King asked, “From what country art thou?”; and he answered, “From the Islands of the Inland Sea, the kingdom of King Ghayur, Lord of the Isles and the Seas and the Seven Palaces.” Quoth King Shahriman, “Maybe thy coming shall be blessed to my son and Allah vouchsafe to heal what is in him.” Quoth Marzawan, “Inshallah, naught shall be save what shall be well!” Then turning to Kamar al-Zaman, he said to him in his ear unheard of the King and his court, ‘O my lord! be of good cheer, and hearten thy heart and let shine eyes be cool and clear and, with respect to her for whose sake thou art thus, ask not of her case on shine account. But thou keptest thy secret and fellest sick, while she told her secret and they said she had gone mad; so she is now in prison, with an iron chain about her neck, in most piteous plight; but, Allah willing, the healing of both of you shall come from my hand.” Now when Kamar al-Zaman heard these words, his life returned to him and he took heart and felt a thrill of joy and signed to his father to help him sit up; and the King was like to fly for gladness and rose hastily and lifted him up. Presently, of his fear for his son, he shook the kerchief of dismissal[293] ; and all the Emirs and Wazirs withdrew; then he set two pillows for his son to lean upon, after which he bade them perfume the palace with saffron and decorate the city, saying to Marzawan, “By Allah, O my son, of a truth shine aspect be a lucky and a blessed!” And he made as much of him as he might and called for food, and when they brought it, Marzawan came up to the Prince and said, “Rise, eat with me.” So he obeyed him and ate with him, and all the while the King invoked blessings on Marzawan and said, “How auspicious is thy coming, O my son!” And when the father saw his boy eat, his joy and gladness redoubled, and he went out and told the Prince’s mother and all the household. Then he spread throughout the palace the good news of the Prince’s recovery and the King commanded the decoration of the city and it was a day of high festival. Marzawan passed that night with Kamar al-Zaman, and the King also slept with them in joy and delight for his son’s recovery.

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the One Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that King Shahriman also passed that night with them in the excess of his joy for his son's recovery. And when the next morning dawned, and the King had gone away and the two young men were left alone, Kamar al-Zaman told his story from beginning to end to Marzawan who said, "In very sooth I know her with whom thou didst foregather; her name is the Princess Budur and she is daughter to King Ghayur." Then he related to him all that had passed with the Princess from first to last and acquainted him with the excessive love she bore him, saying, "All that befel thee with thy father hath befallen her with hers, and thou art without doubt her beloved, even as she is shine; so brace up thy resolution and take heart, for I will bring thee to her and unite you both anon and deal with you even as saith the poet,

"Albe to lover adverse be his love, *
And show aversion howso may he care;
Yet will I manage that their persons[294] meet, *
E'en as the pivot of a scissor pair."

And he ceased not to comfort and solace and encourage Kamar al-Zaman and urged him to eat and drink till he ate food and drank wine, and life returned to him and he was saved from his ill case; and Marzawan cheered him and diverted him with talk and songs and stories, and in good time he became free of his disorder and stood up and sought to go to the Hammam.[295] So Marzawan took him by the hand and both went to the bath, where they washed their bodies and made them clean. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundredth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Kamar al-Zaman, son of King Shahriman, went to the Hammam, his father in his joy at this event freed the prisoners, and presented splendid dresses to his grandees and bestowed large alm-gifts upon the poor and bade decorate the city seven days. Then quoth Marzawan to

Kamar al-Zaman, “Know, O my lord, that I came not from the Lady Budur save for this purpose, and the object of my journey was to deliver her from her present case; and it remaineth for us only to devise how we may get to her, since thy father cannot brook the thought of parting from thee. So it is my counsel that to-morrow thou ask his leave to go abroad hunting. Then do thou take with thee a pair of saddle-bags full of money and mount a swift steed, and lead a spare horse, and I will do the like, and say to thy sire, ‘I have a mind to divert myself with hunting the desert and to see the open country and there to pass one night.’ Suffer not any servant to follow us, for as soon as we reach the open country, we will go our ways.” Kamar al- Zaman rejoiced in this plan with great joy and cried, “It is good.” Then he stiffened his back and, going in to his father, sought his leave and spoke as he had been taught, and the King consented to his going forth a-hunting and said, “O my son, blessed be the day that restoreth thee to health! I will not gainsay thee in this; but pass not more than one night in the desert and return to me on the morrow; for thou knowest that life is not good to me without thee, and indeed I can hardly believe thee to be wholly recovered from what thou hadst,[296] because thou art to me as he of whom quoth the poet,

‘Albe by me I had through day and night *
    Solomon’s carpet and the Chosroes’ might,
Both were in value less than wing of gnat, *
    Unless these eyne could hold thee aye in sight.’”[297]

Then the King equipped his son Kamar al-Zaman and Marzawan for the excursion, bidding make ready for them four horses, together with a dromedary to carry the money and a camel to bear the water and belly timber; and Kamar al-Zaman forbade any of his attendants to follow him. His father farewelled him and pressed him to his breast and kissed him, saying, “I ask thee in the name of Allah, be not absent from me more than one night, wherein sleep will be unlawful to me, for I am even as saith the poet,

‘Thou present, in the Heaven of heavens I dwell; *
    Bearing shine absence is of hells my Hell:

Pledged be for thee my soul! If love for thee *
    Be crime, my crime is of the fellest fell.
Does love-lowe burn thy heart as burns it mine, *
    Doomed night and day Gehenna-fire to smell?”

Answered Kamar al-Zaman, “O my father, Inshallah, I will lie abroad but one night!” Then he took leave of him, and he and Marzawan mounted and leading the spare horses, the dromedary with the money and the camel with the water and victual, turned their faces towards the open country; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawning day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and First Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Kamar al-Zaman and Marzawan fared forth and turned their faces towards the open country; and they travelled from the first of the day till nightfall, when they halted and ate and drank and fed their beasts and rested awhile; after which they again took horse and ceased not journeying for three days, and on the fourth they came to a spacious tract wherein was a thicket. They alighted in it and Marzawan, taking the camel and one of the horses, slaughtered them and cut off their flesh and stripped their bones. Then he doffed from Kamar al-Zaman his shirt and trousers which he smeared with the horse’s blood and he took the Prince’s coat which he tore to shreds and befouled with gore; and he cast them down in the fork of the road. Then they ate and drank and mounting set forward again; and, when Kamar al-Zaman asked why this was done, and said, “What is this O my brother, and how shall it profit us?”; Marzawan replied, “Know that thy father, when we have outstayed the second night after the night for which we had his leave, and yet we return not, will mount and follow in our track till he come hither; and, when he happeneth upon this blood which I have spilt and he seeth thy shirt and trousers rent and gore-fouled, he will fancy that some accident befel thee from bandits or wild-beasts, so he will give up hope of thee and return to his city, and by this device we shall win our wishes.” Quoth Kamar al-Zaman, “By Allah, this be indeed a rare device! Thou hast done right well.”[298] Then the two fared on days and nights and all that while Kamar al-Zaman did naught but complain when he found himself alone, and he ceased not weeping till they drew near their journeys end, when he rejoiced and repeated these verses,

“Wilt tyrant play with truest friend who thinks of thee each
 hour, * And after showing love-desire betray indifference?
May I forfeit every favour if in love I falsed thee, *
 If thee I left, abandon me by way of recompense:
But I’ve been guilty of no crime such harshness to deserve, *
 And if I aught offended thee I bring my penitence;
Of Fortune’s wonders one it is thou hast abandoned me, *
 But Fortune never wearieth of showing wonderments.”

When he had made an end of his verses, Marzawan said to him, “Look! these be King Ghayur’s Islands;” whereat Kamar al-Zaman joyed with exceeding joy and thanked him for what he had done, and kissed him between the eyes and strained him — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Marzawan said “Look! these be the Islands of King Ghayur;” Kamar al-Zaman joyed with exceeding joy and thanked him for what he had done and kissed him between the eyes and strained him to his bosom. And after reaching the Islands and entering the city they took up their lodging in a khan, where they rested three days from the fatigues of their wayfare; after which Marzawan carried Kamar al-Zaman to the bath and, clothing him in merchant’s gear, provided him with a geomantic tablet of gold,[299] with a set of astrological instruments and with an astrolabe of silver, plated with gold. Then he said to him, “Arise, O my lord, and take thy stand under the walls of the King’s palace and cry out, ‘I am the ready Reckoner; I am the Scrivener; I am he who weeteth the Sought and the Seeker; I am the finished man of Science; I am the Astrologer accomplished in experience! Where then is he that seeketh?’ As soon as the King heareth this, he will send after thee and carry thee in to his daughter the Princess Budur, thy lover; but when about going in to her do thou say to him, ‘Grant me three days’ delay, and if she recover, give her to me to wife; and if not, deal with me as thou dealest with those who forewent me.’ He will assuredly agree to this, so as soon as thou art alone with her, discover thyself to her; and when she seeth thee, she will recover strength and her madness will cease from her and she will be made whole in one night. Then do thou give her to eat and drink. and her father, rejoicing in her recovery, will marry thee to her and share his kingdom with thee; for he hath imposed on himself this condition and so peace be upon thee." Now when Kamar al-Zaman heard these words he exclaimed, "May I never lack thy benefits!", and, taking the set of instruments aforesaid, sallied forth from the caravanserai in the dress of his order. He walked on till he stood under the walls of King Ghayur's palace, where he began to cry out, saying, "I am the Scribe, I am the ready Reckoner, I am he who knoweth the Sought and the Seeker; I am he who openeth the Volume and summeth up the Sums;[300] who Dreams can expound whereby the sought is found! Where then is the seeker?" Now when the city people heard this, they flocked to him, for it was long since they had seen Scribe or Astrologer, and they stood round him and, looking upon him, they saw one in the prime of beauty and grace and perfect elegance, and they marvelled at his loveliness, and his fine stature and symmetry. Presently one of them accosted him and said, "Allah upon thee, O thou fair and young, with the eloquent tongue! incur not this affray; nor throw thy life away in thine ambition to marry the Princess Budur. Only cast shine eyes upon yonder heads hung up; all their owners have lost their lives in this same venture." Yet Kamar al-Zaman paid no heed to them, but cried out at the top of his voice, saying, "I am the Doctor, the Scrivener! I am the Astrologer, the Calculator!" And all the townsfolk forbade him from this, but he regarded them not at all, saying in his mind, "None knoweth desire save whoso suffereth it." Then he began again to cry his loudest, shouting, "I am the Scrivener, I am the Astrologer!" — And Shahrazad per ceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Kamar al-Zaman in no wise heeded the words of the citizens, but continued to cry out, "I am the Calculator! I am the Astrologer!" Thereupon all the townsfolk were wroth with him and said to him, "Thou art nothing but an imbecile, silly, self-willed lad! Have pity on shine own youth and tender years and beauty and loveliness." But he cried all the more, "I am the Astrologer, I am the Calculator! Is there any one that seeketh?" As he was thus crying and the people forbidding him, behold, King Ghayur heard his voice and the clamour of the lieges and said to his Wazir, "Go down and bring me yon Astrologer." So the Wazir, went down in haste, and taking Kamar al-Zaman from the midst of the crowd led him up to the King; and when in the presence he kissed the ground and began versifying,

"Eight glories meet, all, all conjoined in thee, *
    Whereby may Fortune aye thy servant be:
Lere, lordliness, grace, generosity; *
    Plain words, deep meaning, honour, victory!"

When the King looked upon him, he seated him by his side and said to him, "By Allah, O my son, an thou be not an astrologer, venture not thy life nor comply with my condition; for I have bound myself that whoso goeth in to my daughter and healeth her not of that which hath befallen her I will strike off his head; but whoso healeth her him I will marry to her. So let not thy beauty and loveliness delude thee: for, by Allah! and again, by Allah! If thou cure her not, I will assuredly cut off thy head." And Kamar al-Zaman replied, "This is thy right; and I consent, for I wot of this ere came I hither." Then King Ghayur took the Kazis to witness against him and delivered him to the eunuch, saying, "Carry this one to the Lady Budur." So the eunuch took him by the hand and led him along the passage; but Kamar al-Zaman outstripped him and pushed on before, whilst the eunuch ran after him, saying, "Woe to thee! Hasten not to shine own ruin: never yet saw I astrologer so eager for his proper destruction; but thou weetest not what calamities are before thee." Thereupon Kamar al-Zaman turned away his face from the eunuch, — And Shah razed perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the eunuch thus addressed Kamar al-Zaman, "Patience, and no indecent hurry!"; the Prince turned away his face and began repeating these couplets,

"A Sage, I feel a fool before thy charms; *
    Distraught, I wot not what the words I say:
If say I 'Sun,' away thou dost not pass *
    From eyes of me, while suns go down with day:
Thou hast completed Beauty, in whose praise *
    Speech-makers fail, and talkers lose their way."

Then the eunuch stationed Kamar al-Zaman behind the curtain of the Princess's door and the Prince said to him, "Which of the two ways will please thee more, treat and cure thy lady from here or go in and heal her within the curtain?" The eunuch marvelled at his words and answered, "An thou heal her from here it were better proof of thy skill." Upon this Kamar al-Zaman sat down behind the curtain and, taking out ink case, pen and paper, wrote the following: "This is the writ of one whom passion swayeth,* and whom longing waylayeth * and wakeful misery slayeth * one who despaireth of living * and looketh for naught but dying * with whose mourning heart * nor comforter nor helper taketh part * One whose sleepless eyes * none succoureth from anxieties * whose day is passed in fire * and his night in torturing desire * whose body is wasted for much emaciation * and no messenger from his beloved bringeth him consolation." And after this he indited the following couplets,

"I write with heart devoted to thy thought, *
    And eyelids chafed by tears of blood they bled;
And body clad, by loving pine and pain, *
    In shirt of leanness, and worn down to thread,
To thee complain I of Love's tormentry, *
    Which ousted hapless Patience from her stead:
A toi! show favour and some mercy deign, *
    For Passion's cruel hands my vitals shred."

And beneath his lines he wrote these cadenced sentences, "The heart's pain is removed * by union with the beloved * and whomso his lover paineth * only Allah assaineth! * If we or you have wrought deceit * may the deceiver win defeat! * There is naught goodlier than a lover who keeps faith * with the beloved who works him scathe.” Then, by way of subscription, he wrote, “From the distracted and despairing man * whom love and longing trepan * from the lover under passion’s ban * the prisoner of transport and distraction * from this Kamar al-Zaman * son of Shahriman * to the peerless one * of the fair Houris the pearl-union * to the Lady Budur * daughter of King Al Ghayur * Know thou that by night I am sleepless * and by day in distress * consumed with increasing wasting and pain * and longing and love unfain * abounding in sighs * with tear flooded eyes * by passion captive ta’en * of Desire the slain * with heart seared by the parting of us twain * the debtor of longing bane, of sickness cup-companion * I am the sleepless one, who never closeth eye * the slave of love, whose tears run never dry * for the fire of my heart is still burning * and never hidden is the flame of my yearning.” Then on the margin Kamar al-Zaman wrote this admired verse,

“Salem from graces hoarded by my Lord *
    To her, who holds my heart and soul in hoard!”

And also these,

“Pray’ee grant me some words from your lips, belike *
    Such mercy may comfort and cool these eyne:
From the stress of my love and my pine for you, *
    I make light of what makes me despised, indign:
Allah guard a folk whose abode was far, *
    And whose secret I kept in the holiest shrine:
Now Fortune in kindness hath favoured me *
    Thrown on threshold dust of this love o’ mine:
By me bedded I looked on Budúr, whose sun *
    The moon of my fortunes hath made to shine.”

Then, having affixed his seal-ring to the missive, he wrote these couplets in the place of address,

"Ask of my writ what wrote my pen in dole, *
And hear my tale of misery from this scroll;
My hand is writing while my tears down flow, *
And to the paper 'plains my longing soul:
My tears cease not to roll upon this sheet, *
And if they stopped I'd cause blood-gouts to roll."

And at the end he added this other verse,

"I've sent the ring from off thy finger bore *
I when we met, now deign my ring restore!"

Then Kamar al-Zaman set the Lady Budur's ring inside the letter and sealed it and gave it to the eunuch, who took it and went in with it to his mistress. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Kamar al-Zaman, after setting the seal-ring inside the epistle, gave it to the eunuch who took it and went in with it to his mistress; and, when the Lady Budur opened it, she found therein her own very ring. Then she read the paper and when she understood its purport and knew that it was from her beloved, and that he in person stood behind the curtain, her reason began to fly and her breast swelled for joy and rose high; and she repeated these couplets,

"Long, long have I bewailed the sev'rance of our loves, *
With tears that from my lids streamed down like burning rain;
And vowed that, if the days deign reunite us two, *
My lips should never speak of severance again:
Joy hath o'erwhelmed me so that, for the very stress *
Of that which gladdens me to weeping I am fain.
Tears are become to you a habit, O my eyes, *
So that ye weep as well for gladness as for pain."[301]

And having finished her verse, the Lady Budur stood up forthwith and, firmly setting her feet to the wall, strained with all her might upon the collar of iron, till she brake it from her neck and snapped the chains. Then going forth from behind the curtain she threw herself on Kamar al-Zaman and kissed him on the mouth, like a pigeon feeding its young.[302] And she embraced him with all the stress of her love and longing and said to him, "O my lord do I wake or sleep and hath the Almighty indeed vouchsafe] us reunion after disunion? Laud be to Allah who hath our loves repaired, even after we despaired!" Now when the eunuch saw her in this case, he went off running to King Ghayur and, kissing the ground before him, said, "O my lord, know that this Astrologer is indeed the Shaykh of all astrologers, who are fools to him, all of them; for verily he hath cured thy daughter while standing behind the curtain and without going in to her." Quoth the King, "Look well to it, is this news true?" Answered the eunuch, "O my lord, rise and come and see for thyself how she hath found strength to break the iron chains and is come forth to the Astrologer, kissing and embracing him." Thereupon the King arose and went in to his daughter who, when she saw him, stood up in haste and covered her head,[303] and recited these two couplets,

"The toothstick love I not; for when I say, *
    'Siwák,'[304] I miss thee, for it sounds 'Siwá-ka'.
The caper-tree I love; for when I say, *
    'Arák'[305] it sounds I look on thee, 'Ará-ka.'"

Thereupon the King was so transported for joy at her recovery that he felt like to fly and kissed her between the eyes, for he loved her with dearest love; then, turning to Kamar al-Zaman, he asked him who he was, and said, "What countryman art thou?" So the Prince told him his name and rank, and informed him that he was the son of King Shahriman, and presently related to him the whole story from beginning to end; and acquainted him with what happened between himself and the Lady Budur; and how he had taken her seal-ring from her finger and had placed it on his own; whereat Ghayur marvelled and said, "Verily your story deserveth in books to be chronicled, and when you are dead and gone age after age be read."

Then he summoned Kazis and witnesses forthright and married the Lady Budur to Prince Kamar al-Zaman; after which he bade decorate the city seven days long. So they spread the tables with all manner of meats, whilst the drums beat and the criers anounced the glad tidings, and all the troops donned their richest clothes; and they illuminated the city and held high festival. Then Kamar al-Zaman went in to the Lady Budur and the King rejoiced in her recovery and in her marriage; and praised Allah for that He had made her to fall in love with a goodly youth of the sons of Kings. So they unveiled her and displayed the bride before the bridegroom; and both were the living likeness of each other in beauty and comeliness and grace and love-allurement. Then Kamar al-Zaman lay with her that night and took his will of her, whilst she in like manner fulfilled her desire of him and enjoyed his charms and grace; and they slept in each other's arms till the morning. On the morrow, the King made a wedding-feast to which he gathered all comers from the Islands of the Inner and Outer Seas, and he spread the tables with choicest viands nor ceased the banquetting for a whole month. Now when Kamar al-Zaman had thus fulfilled his will and attained his inmost desire, and whenas he had tarried awhile with the Princess Budur, he bethought him of his father, King Shahriman, and saw him in a dream, saying, "O my son, is it thus thou dealest with me?" and recited in the vision these two couplets,

"Indeed to watch the darkness-moon he blighted me, *
And to star-gaze through longsome night he plighted me:
Easy, my heart! for haply he'll unite with thee; *
And patience, Sprite! with whatso ills he dight to thee."

Now after seeing his father in the dream and hearing his re preaches, Kamar al-Zaman awoke in the morning, afflicted and troubled, whereupon the Lady Budur questioned him and he told her what he had seen. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Kamar al-Zaman acquainted the Lady Budur with what he had seen in his dream, she and he went in to her sire and, telling him what had passed, besought his leave to travel. He gave the Prince the permission he sought; but the Princess said, "O my father, I cannot bear to be parted from him." Quoth Ghayur, her sire, "Then go thou with him," and gave her leave to be absent a whole twelvemonth and afterwards to visit him in every year once; so she kissed his hand and Kamar al-Zaman did the like. Thereupon King Ghayur proceeded to equip his daughter and her bridegroom for the journey, and furnished them with outfit and appointments for the march; and brought out of his stables horses marked with his own brand, blood-dromedaries[306] which can journey ten days without water, and prepared a litter for his daughter, besides loading mules and camels with victual; moreover, he gave them slaves and eunuchs to serve them and all manner of travellinggear; and on the day of departure, when King Ghayur took leave of Kamar al-Zaman, he bestowed on him ten splendid suits of cloth of gold embroidered with stones of price, together with ten riding horses and ten she-camels, and a treasury of money;[307] and he charged him to love and cherish his daughter the Lady Budur. Then the King accompanied them to the farthest limits of his Islands where, going in to his daughter Budur in the litter, he kissed her and strained her to his bosom, weeping and repeating,

"O thou who wooest Severance, easy fare! *
    For love-embrace belongs to lover-friend:
Fare softly! Fortune's nature falsehood is, *
    And parting shall love's every meeting end."

Then leaving his daughter, he went to her husband and bade him farewell and kissed him; after which he parted from them and, giving the order for the march he returned to his capital with his troops. The Prince and Princess and their suite fared on without stopping through the first day and the second and the third and the fourth, nor did they cease faring for a whole month till they came to a spacious champaign, abounding in pasturage, where they pitched their tents; and they ate and drank and rested, and the Princess Budur lay down to sleep. Presently, Kamar al-Zaman went in to her and found her lying asleep clad in a shift of apricot-coloured silk that showed all and everything; and on her head was a coif of gold-cloth embroidered with pearls and jewels. The breeze raised her shift which laid bare her navel and showed her breasts and displayed a stomach whiter than snow, each one of whose dimples would contain an ounce of benzoin- ointment.[308] At this sight, his love and longing redoubled, and he began reating,

"An were it asked me when by hell-fire burnt, *
  When flames of heart my vitals hold and hem,
'Which wouldst thou chose, say wouldst thou rather them, *
  Or drink sweet cooling draught?' I'd answer, 'Them!'"

Then he put his hand to the band of her petticoat-trousers and drew it and loosed it, for his soul lusted after her, when he saw a jewel, red as dye-wood, made fast to the band. He untied it and examined it and, seeing two lines of writing graven thereon, in a character not to be read, marvelled and said in his mind, "Were not this bezel something to her very dear she had not bound it to her trousers-band nor hidden it in the most privy and precious place about her person, that she might not be parted from it. Would I knew what she cloth with this and what is the secret that is in it." So saying, he took it and went outside the tent to look at it in the light, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day, and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when he took the bezel to look at it in the light, the while he was holding it behold, a bird swooped down on him and, snatching the same from his hand, flew off with it and then lighted on the ground. There-upon Kamar al-Zaman fearing to lose the jewel, ran after the bird; but it flew on before him, keeping just out of his reach, and ceased not to draw him on from dale to dale and from hill to hill, till the night starkened and the firmament darkened, when it roosted on a high tree. So Kamar al-Zaman stopped under the tree confounded in thought and faint for famine and fatigue, and giving himself up for lost, would have turned back, but knew not the way whereby he came, for that darkness had overtaken him. Then he exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious the Great!"; and laying him down under the tree (whereon was the bird) slept till the morning, when he awoke and saw the bird also wake up and fly away. He arose and walked after it, and it flew on little by little before him, after the measure of his faring; at which he smiled and said, "By Allah, a strange thing! Yesterday, this bird flew before me as fast as I could run, and to-day, knowing that I have awoke tired and cannot run, he flieth after the measure of my faring. By Allah, this is wonderful! But I must needs follow this bird whether it lead me to death or to life; and I will go wherever it goeth, for at all events it will not abide save in some inhabited land.[309] So he continued to follow the bird which roosted every night upon a tree; and he ceased not pursuing it for a space of ten days, feeding on the fruits of the earth and drinking of its waters. At the end of this time, he came in sight of an inhabited city, whereupon the bird darted off like the glance of the eye and, entering the town, disappeared from Kamar al-Zaman, who knew not what it meant or whither it was gone; so he marvelled at this and exclaimed, "Praise be to Allah who hath brought me in safety to this city!" Then he sat down by a stream and washed his hands and feet and face and rested awhile; and, recalling his late easy and pleasant life of union with his beloved and contrasting it with his present plight of trouble and fatigue and distress and strangerhood and famine and severance, the tears streamed from his eyes and he began repeating these cinquains,

"Pain had I hid thy handwork, but it showed, *
    Changed sleep for wake, and wake with me abode:
When thou didst spurn my heart I cried aloud *
    Pate, hold thy hand and cease to gird and goad:
        In dole and danger aye my sprite I spy!

An but the Lord of Love were just to me, *
    Sleep fro' my eyelids ne'er were forced to flee.
Pity, my lady, one for love o' thee *
    Prom his tribes darling brought to low degree:
        Love came and doomed Wealth beggar-death to die.

The railers chide at thee: I ne'er gainsay, *
  But stop my ears and dumbly sign them Nay:
'Thou lov'st a slender may,' say they; I say, *
  'I've picked her out and cast the rest away:'
    Enough; when Fate descends she blinds man's
    eye!"[310]

And as soon as he had finished his poetry and had taken his rest, he rose and walked on little by little, till he entered the city. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that as soon as Kamar al-Zaman had finished his poetry and had taken his rest, he arose and entered the city-gate[311] not knowing whither he should wend. He crossed the city from end to end, entering by the land-gate, and ceased not faring on till he came out at the sea- gate, for the city stood on the sea-shore. Yet he met not a single one of its citizens. And after issuing from the land-gate he fared forwards and ceased not faring till he found himself among the orchards and gardens of the place; and, passing among the trees presently came to a garden and stopped before its door; where-upon the keeper came out to him and saluted him. The Prince returned his greeting and the gardener bade him welcome, saying, "Praised be Allah that thou hast come off safe from the dwellers of this city! Quick, come into the garth, ere any of the townfolk see thee." Thereupon Kamar al-Zaman entered that garden, wondering in mind, and asked the keeper, "What may be the history of the people of this city and who may they be?" The other answered, "Know that the people of this city are all Magians: but Allah upon thee, tell me how thou camest to this city and what caused thy coming to our capital." Accordingly Kamar al-Zaman told the gardener all that had befallen him from beginning to end, whereat he marvelled with great marvel and said, "Know, O my son, that the cities of Al-Islam lie far from us; and between us and them is a four months' voyage by sea and a whole twelve months' journey by land. We have a ship which saileth every year with merchandise to the nearest Moslem country and which entereth the seas of the Ebony

Islands and thence maketh the Khalidan Islands, the dominions of King Shahriman." Thereupon Kamar al- Zaman considered awhile and concluded that he could not do better than abide in the garden with the gardener and become his assistant, receiving for pay one fourth of the produce. So he said to him, "Wilt thou take me into thy service, to help thee in this garden?" Answered the gardener, "To hear is to consent;" and began teaching him to lead the water to the roots of the trees. So Kamar al-Zaman abode with him, watering the trees and hoeing up the weeds and wearing a short blue frock which reached to his knees. And he wept floods of tears; for he had no rest day or night, by reason of his strangerhood and he ceased not to repeat verses upon his beloved, amongst others the following couplets,

"Ye promised us and will ye not keep plight? *
    Ye said a say and shall not deed be dight?
We wake for passion while ye slumber and sleep; *
    Watchers and wakers claim not equal right:
We vowed to keep our loves in secrecy, *
    But spake the meddler and you spoke forthright:
O friend in pain and pleasure, joy and grief, *
    In all case you, you only, claim my sprite!
Mid folk is one who holds my prisoned heart; *
    Would he but show some ruth for me to sight.
Not every eye like mine is wounded sore, *
    Not every heart like mine love-pipings blight:
Ye wronged me saying, Love is wrongous aye *
    Yea! ye were right, events have proved that quite.
Forget they one love-thralled, whose faith the world *
    Robs not, though burn the fires in heart alight:
If an my foeman shall become my judge, *
    Whom shall I sue to remedy his despight?
Had not I need of love nor love had sought, *
    My heart forsure were not thus love-distraught."

Such was the case with Kamar al-Zaman; but as regards his wife, the Lady Budur, when she awoke she sought her husband and found him not: then she saw her petticoat-trousers undone, for the band had been loosed and the bezel lost, whereupon she said to herself, "By Allah, this is strange! Where is my husband? It would seem as if he had taken the talisman and gone away, knowing not the secret which is in it. Would to Heaven I knew whither can he have wended! But it must needs have been some extraordinary matter that drew him away, for he cannot brook to leave me a moment. Allah curse the stone and damn its hour!" Then she considered awhile and said in her mind, "If I go out and tell the varlets and let them learn that my husband is lost they will lust after me: there is no help for it but that I use stratagem. So she rose and donned some of her husband's clothes and riding- boots, and a turband like his, drawing one corner of it across her face for a mouth-veil.[312] Then, setting a slave-girl in her litter, she went forth from the tent and called to the pages who brought her Kamar al-Zaman's steed; and she mounted and bade them load the beasts and resume the march. So they bound on the burdens and departed; and she concealed her trick, none doubting but she was Kamar al-Zaman, for she favoured him in face and form; nor did she cease journeying, she and her suite, days and nights, till they came in sight of a city overlooking the Salt Sea, where they pitched their tents without the walls and halted to rest. The Princess asked the name of the town and was told, "It is called the City of Ebony; its King is named Armanús, and he hath a daughter Hayát al-Nufús[313] hight," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Lady Budur halted within sight of the Ebony City to take her rest, King Armanus sent a messenger, to learn what King it was who had encamped without his capital; so the messenger, coming to the tents, made inquiry anent their King, and was told that she was a King's son who had lost the way being bound for the Khalidan Islands; whereupon he returned to King Armanus with the tidings; and, when the King heard them, he straightway rode out with the lords of his land to greet the stranger on arrival. As he drew near the tents the Lady Budur came to meet him on foot, whereupon the King alighted and they saluted each other. Then he took her to the city and, bringing her up to the palace, bade them spread the tables and trays of food and commanded them to transport her company and baggage to the guess house. So they abode there three days; at the end of which time the King came in to the Lady Budur. Now she had that day gone to the Hammam and her face shone as the moon at its full, a seduction to the world and a rending of the veil of shame to mankind; and Armanus found her clad in a -suit of silk, embroidered with gold and jewels; so he said to her, ‘O my son, know that I am a very old man, decrepit withal, and Allah hath blessed me with no child save one daughter, who resembleth thee in beauty and grace; and I am now waxed unfit for the conduct of the state. She is shine, O my son; and, if this my land please thee and thou be willing to abide and make thy home here, I will marry thee to her and give thee my kingdom and so be at rest.” When Princess Budur heard this, she bowed her head and her forehead sweated for shame, and she said to herself. “How shall I do, and I a woman? If I refuse and depart from him, I cannot be safe but that haply send after me troops to slay me; and if I consent, belike I shall be put to shame. I have lost my beloved Kamar al-Zaman and know not what is become of him; nor can I escape from this scrape save by holding my peace and consenting and abiding here, till Allah bring about what is to be.” So she raised her head and made submission to King Armanus, saying, “Hearkening and obedience!”; whereat he rejoiced and bade the herald make proclamation throughout the Ebony Islands to hold high festival and decorate the houses. Then he assembled his Chamberlains and Nabobs, and Emirs and Wazirs and his officers of state and the Kazis of the city; and, formally abdicating his Sultanate, endowed Budur therewith and invested her in all the vestments of royalty. The Emirs and Grandees went in to her and did her homage, nothing doubting but that she was a young man, and all who looked on her bepissed their bag-trousers, for the excess of her beauty and loveliness. Then, after the Lady Budur had been made Sultan and the drums had been beaten in announcement of the glad event, and she had been ceremoniously enthroned, King Armanus proceeded to equip his daughter Hayat al-Nufus for marriage, and in a few days, they brought the Lady Budur in to her, when they seemed as it were two moons risen at one time or two suns in conjunction. So they entered the bridal-chamber and the doors were shut and the curtains let down upon them, after the attendants had lighted the wax-candles and spread for them the carpet-bed. When Budur found herself alone with the Princess Hayat al-Nufus, she called to mind her beloved Kamar al-Zaman and grief was sore upon her. So she wept for his absence, and estrangement and she began repeating,

"O ye who fled and left my heart in pain low li'en, *
    No breath of life if found within this frame of mine:
I have an eye which e'er complains of wake, but lo! *
    Tears occupy it would that wake content these eyne!
After ye marched forth the lover 'bode behind; *
    Question of him what pains your absence could design!
But for the foods of tears mine eyelids rail and rain, *
    My fires would flame on high and every land calcine.
To Allah make I moan of loved ones lost for aye, *
    Who for my pine and pain no more shall pain and pine:
I never wronged them save that over love I nurst: *
    But Love departs us lovers into blest and curst."

And when she had finished her repeating, the Lady Budur sat down beside the Princess Hayat al-Nufus and kissed her on the mouth; after which rising abruptly, she made the minor ablution and betook herself to her devotions; nor did she leave praying till Hayat al-Nufus fell asleep, when she slips into bed and lay with her back to her till morning. And when day had broke the King and Queen came in to their daughter and asked her how she did. whereupon she told them what she had seen, and repeated to them the verses she had heard. Thus far concerning Hayat al-Nufus and her father; but as regards Queen Budur she went forth and seated herself upon the royal throne and all the Emirs and Captains and Officers of state came up to her and wished her joy of the kingship, kissing the earth before her and calling down blessings upon her. And she accosted them with smiling face and clad them in robes of honour, augmenting the fiefs of the high officials and giving largesse to the levies; wherefore all the people loved her and offered up prayers for the long endurance of her reign, doubting not but that she was a man.

And she ceased not sitting all day in the hall of audience, bidding and forbidding; dispensing justice, releasing prisoners and remitting the customs-dues, till nightfall, when she withdrew to the apartment prepared for her. Here she found Hayat al-Nufus seated, so she sat down by her side and, clapping her on the back, coaxed and caressed her and kissed her between the eyes, and fell to versifying in these couplets,

“What secret kept I these my tears have told, *
    And my waste body must my love unfold:
Though hid my pine, my plight on parting day *
    To every envious eye my secret sold:
O ye who broke up camp, you’ve left behind *
    My spirit wearied and my heart a-cold:
In my hearts core ye dwell, and now these eyne *
    Roll blood-drops with the tears they whilome rolled:
The absent will I ransom with my soul; *
    All can my yearning for their sight behold:
I have an eye whose babe,[314] for love of thee, *
    Rejected sleep nor hath its tears controlled.
The foeman bids me patient bear his loss, *
    Ne’er may mine ears accept the ruth he doled!
I tricks their deme of me, and won my wish *
    Of Kamar al-Zaman’s joys manifold:
He joins all perfect gifts like none before, *
    Boasted such might and main no King of old:
Seeing his gifts, Bin Zá’idah’s[315] largesse *
    Forget we, and Mu’áwiyah mildest-soul’d:[316]
Were verse not feeble and o’er short the time *
    I had in laud of him used all of rhyme.”

Then Queen Budur stood up and wiped away her tears and, making the lesser ablution,[317] applied her to pray: nor did she give over praying till drowsiness overcame the Lady Hayat al- Nufus and she slept, whereupon the Lady Budur came and lay by her till the morning. At daybreak, she arose and prayed the dawn- prayer; and presently seated herself on the royal throne and passed the day in ordering and counter ordering and giving laws and administering justice. This is how it fared with her; but as regards King Armanus he went in to his daughter and asked her how she did; so she told him all that had befallen her and repeated to him the verses which Queen Budur had recited, adding, "O my father, never saw I one more abounding in sound sense and modesty than my husband, save that he cloth nothing but weep and sigh." He answered, "O my daughter, have patience with him yet this third night, and if he go not in unto thee and do away thy maidenhead, we shall know how to proceed with him and oust him from the throne and banish him the country." And on this wise he agreed with his daughter what course he would take. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Tenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Armanus had agreed with his daughter on this wise and had determined what course he would take and night came on, Queen Budur arose from the throne of her kingdom and betaking herself to the palace, entered the apartment prepared for her. There she found the wax-candles lighted and the Princess Hayat al-Nufus seated and awaiting her; whereupon she bethought her of her husband and what had betided them both of sorrow and severance in so short a space; she wept and sighed and groaned groan upon groan, and began improvising these couplets,

"News of my love fill all the land, I swear, *
As suns on Ghazá[318] -wold rain heat and glare:
Speaketh his geste but hard its sense to say; *
Thus never cease to grow my cark and care:
I hate fair Patience since I loved thee; *
E'er sawest lover hate for love to bear?
A glance that dealt love-sickness dealt me death, *
Glances are deadliest things with torments rare:
He shook his love locks down and bared his chin, *
Whereby I spied his beauties dark and fair:
My care, my cure are in his hands; and he *
Who caused their dolour can their dole repair:

His belt went daft for softness of his waist; *
    His hips, for envy, to uprise forbear:
His brow curl-diademed is murky night; *
    Unveil ‘t and lo! bright Morn shows brightest light.”

When she had finished her versifying, she would have risen to pray, but, lo and behold! Hayat al-Nufus caught her by the skirt and clung to her saying, “O my lord, art thou not ashamed before my father, after all his favour, to neglect me at such a time as this?” When Queen Budur heard her words, she sat down in the same place and said, “O my beloved, what is this thou sayest?” She replied, “What I say is that I never saw any so proud of himself as thou. Is every fair one so disdainful? I say not this to incline thee to me; I say it only of my fear for thee from King Armanus; because he purposeth, unless thou go in unto me this very night, and do away my maidenhead, to strip thee of the kingship on the morrow and banish thee his kingdom; and peradventure his excessive anger may lead him to slay thee. But I, O my lord, have ruth on thee and give thee fair warning; and it is thy right to reck.”[319] Now when Queen Budur heard her speak these words, she bowed her head groundwards awhile in sore perplexity and said in herself, “If I refuse I’m lost; and if I obey I’m shamed. But I am now Queen of all the Ebony Islands and they are under my rule, nor shall I ever again meet my Kamar al- Zaman save in this place; for there is no way for him to his native land but through the Ebony Islands. Verily, I know not what to do in my present case, but I commit my care to Allah who directeth all for the best, for I am no man that I should arise and open this virgin girl.” Then quoth Queen Budur to Hayat al- Nufus, “O my beloved, that I have neglected thee and abstained from thee is in my own despite.” And she told her her whole story from beginning to end and showed her person to her, saying, “I conjure thee by Allah to keep my counsel, for I have concealed my case only that Allah may reunite me with my beloved Kamar al- Zaman and then come what may.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Eleventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the

Lady Budur acquainted Hayat al-Nufus with her history and bade her keep it secret, the Princess heard her with extreme wonderment and was moved to pity and prayed Allah to reunite her with her beloved, saying, “Fear nothing, O my sister; but have patience till Allah bring to pass that which must come to pass:” and she began repeating,

“None but the men of worth a secret keep;
With worthy men a secret’s hidden deep;
As in a room, so secrets lie with me,
Whose door is sealed, lock shot and lost the key.”[320]

And when Hayat al-Nufus had ended her verses, she said, “O my sister, verily the breasts of the noble and brave are of secrets the grave; and I will not discover shine.” Then they toyed and embraced and kissed and slept till near the Mu’ezzin’s call to dawn prayer, when Hayat al-Nufus arose and took a pigeon-poult,[321] and cut its throat over her smock and besmeared herself with its blood. Then she pulled off her petticoat-trousers and cried aloud, where-upon her people hastened to her and raised the usual lullilooing and outcries of joy and gladness. Presently her mother came in to her and asked her how she did and busied herself about her and abode with her till evening; whilst the Lady Budur arose with the dawn, and repaired to the bath and, after washing herself pure, proceeded to the hall of audience, where she sat down on her throne and dispensed justice among the folk. Now when King Armanus heard the loud cries of joy, he asked what was the matter and was informed of the consummation of his daughter’s marriage; whereat he rejoiced and his breast swelled with gladness and he made a great marriage-feast whereof the merry-making lasted a long time. Such was their case: but as regards King Shahriman it was on this wise. After his son had fared forth to the chase accompanied by Marzawan, as before related, he tarried patiently awaiting their return at nightfall; but when his son did not appear he passed a sleepless night and the dark hours were longsome upon him; his restlessness was excessive, his excitement grew upon him and he thought the morning would never dawn. Anc when day broke he sat expecting his son and waited till noon, but he came not; whereat his heart forebode separation and was fired with fears for Kamar al-Zaman; and he cried, “Alas! my son!” and he wept till his clothes were drenched with tears, and repeated with a beating heart,

“Love’s votaries I ceased not to oppose, *
    Till doomed to taste Love’s bitter and Love’s sweet:
I drained his rigour-cup to very dregs, *
    Self humbled at its slaves’ and freemen’s feet:
Fortune had sworn to part the loves of us; *
    She kept her word how truly, well I weet!”

And when he ended his verse, he wiped away his tears and bade his troops make ready for a march and prepare for a long expedition. So they all mounted and set forth, headed by the Sultan, whose heart burnt with grief and was fired with anxiety for his son Kamar al-Zaman; and they advanced by forced marches. Now the King divided his host into six divisions, a right wing and a left wing, a vanguard and a rear guard;[322] and bade them rendezvous for the morrow at the cross-roads. Accordingly they separated and scoured the country all the rest of that day till night, and they marched through the night and at noon of the ensuing day they joined company at the place where four roads met. But they knew not which the Prince followed, till they saw the sign of torn clothes and sighted shreds of flesh and beheld blood still sprinkled by the way and they noted every piece of the clothes and fragment of mangled flesh scattered on all sides. Now when King Shahriman saw this, he cried from his heart-core a loud cry, saying, “Alas, my son!”; and buffeted his face and plucks his beard and rent his raiment, doubting not but his son was dead. Then he gave himself up to excessive weeping and wailing, and the troops also wept for his weeping, all being assured that Prince Kamar al-Zaman had perished. They threw dust on their heads, and the night surprised them shedding tears and lamenting till they were like to die. Then the King with a heart on fire and with burning sighs spake these couplets,

“Chide not the mourner for bemourning woe; *
    Enough is yearning every Ill to show:

He weeps for stress of sorrow and of pain, *
    And these to thee best evidence his lowe:
Happy![323] of whom Love sickness swore that ne'er *
    Should cease his eye lids loving tears to flow:
He mourns the loss of fairest, fullest Moon, *
    Shining o'er all his peers in glorious glow:
But death made drink a brimming cup, what day *
    He fared from natal country fain to go:
His home left he and went from us to grief; *
    Nor to his brethren could he say adieu:
Yea, his loss wounded me with parting pangs, *
    And separation cost me many a throe:
He fared farewelling, as he fared, our eyes; *
    Whenas his Lord vouch-safed him Paradise."

And when King Shahriman had ended his verses, he returned with the troops to his capital, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Twelfth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Shahriman had ended his verses, he returned with the troops to his capital, giving up his son for lost, and deeming that wild beasts or banditti had set upon him and torn him to pieces; and made proclamation that all in the Khalidan Islands should don black in mourning for him. Moreover, he built, in his memory, a pavilion, naming it House of Lamentations; and on Mondays and Thursdays he devoted himself to the business of the state and ordering the affairs of his levies and lieges; and the rest of the week he was wont to spend in the House of Lamentations, mourning for his son and bewailing him with elegiac verses,[324] of which the following are some: —

"My day of bliss is that when thou appearest; *
    My day of bale[325] is that whereon thou farest:
Though through the night I quake in dread of death; *
    Union wi' thee is of all bliss the dearest."

And again he said,

"My soul be sacrifice for one, whose going *
 Afflicted hearts with sufferings sore and dread:
Let joy her widowed term[326] fulfil, for I *
 Divorced joy with the divorce thrice-said."[327]

Such was the case with King Shahriman; but as regards Queen Budur daughter of King Ghayur, she abode as ruler in the Ebony Islands, whilst the folk would point to her with their fingers, and say, "Yonder is the son-in-law of King Armanus." And every night she lay with Hayat al-Nufus, to whom she lamented her desolate state and longing for her husband Kamar al-Zaman; weeping and describing to her his beauty and loveliness, and yearning to enjoy him though but in a dream: And at times she would repeat,

"Well Allah wots that since my severance from thee, *
 I wept till forced to borrow tears at usury:
'Patience!' my blamer cried, 'Heartsease right soon shalt see!' *
 Quoth I, 'Say, blamer, where may home of Patience be?'"

This is how it fared with Queen Budur; but as regards Kamar al-Zaman, he abode with the gardener in the garden for no short time, weeping night and day and repeating verses bewailing the past time of enjoyment and delight; whilst the gardener kept comforting him and assuring him that the ship would set sail for the land of the Moslems at the end of the year. And in this condition he continued till one day he saw the folk crowding together and wondered at this; but the gardener came in to him and said, "O my son, give over work for this day nor lead water to the trees; for it is a festival day, whereon folk visit one another. So take thy rest and only keep shine eye on the garden, whilst I go look after the ship for thee; for yet but a little while and I send thee to the land of the Moslems." Upon this, he went forth from the garden leaving to himself Kamar al-Zaman, who fell to musing upon his case till his heart was like to break and the tears streamed from his eyes. So he wept with excessive weeping till he swooned away and, when he recovered, he rose and walked about the garden, pondering what Time had done with him and bewailing the long endurance of his estrangement and separation from those he loved. As he was thus absorbed in melancholy thought, his foot stumbled and he fell on his face, his forehead striking against the projecting root of a tree; and the blow cut it open and his blood ran down and mingled with his tears Then he rose and, wiping away the blood, dried his tears and bound his brow with a piece of rag; then continued his walk about the garden engrossed by sad reverie. Presently, he looked up at a tree and saw two birds quarrelling thereon, and one of them rose up and smote the other with its beak on the neck and severed from its body its head, wherewith it flew away, whilst the slain bird fell to the ground before Kamar al-Zaman. As it lay, behold, two great birds swooped down upon it alighting, one at the head and the other at the tail, and both drooped their wings and bowed their bills over it and, extending their necks towards it, wept. Kamar al-Zaman also wept when seeing the birds thus bewail their mate, and called to mind his wife and father, And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Thirteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Kamar al-Zaman wept and lamented his separation from spouse and sire, when he beheld those two birds weeping over their mate. Then he looked at the twain and saw them dig a grave and therein bury the slain bird; after which they flew away far into the firmament and disappeared for a while; but presently they returned with the murtherer-bird and, alighting on the grave of the murthered, stamped on the slayer till they had done him to death. Then they rent his belly and tearing out his entrails, poured the blood on the grave of the slain[328] : moreover, they stripped off his skin and tare his flesh in pieces and, pulling out the rest of the bowels, scattered them hither and thither. All this while Kamar al-Zaman was watching them wonderingly; but presently, chancing to look at the place where the two birds had slain the third, he saw therein something gleaming. So he drew near to it and noted that it was the crop of the dead bird. Whereupon he took it and opened it and found the talisman which had been the cause of his separation from his wife. But when he saw it and knew it, he fell to the ground a-fainting for joy; and, when he revived, he said, “Praised be Allah! This is a foretaste of good and a presage of reunion with my beloved.” Then he examined the jewel and passed it over his eyes[329] ; after which he bound it to his forearm, rejoicing in coming weal, and walked about till nightfall awaiting the gardener’s return; and when he came not, he lay down and slept in his wonted place. At daybreak he rose to his work and, girding his middle with a cord of palm- fibre, took hatchet and basket and walked down the length of the garden, till he came to a carob-tree and struck the axe into its roots. The blow rang and resounded; so he cleared away the soil from the place and discovered a trap-door and raised it. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When It was the Two Hundred and Fourteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Kamar al-Zaman raised the trap-door, he found a winding stair, which he descended and came to an ancient vault of the time of Ad and Thamúd,[330] hewn out of the rock. Round the vault stood many brazen vessels of the bigness of a great oil-jar which he found full of gleaming red gold: whereupon he said to himself, “Verily sorrow is gone and solace is come!” Then he mounted from the souterrain to the garden and, replacing the trap-door as it was before, busied himself in conducting water to the trees till the last of the day, when the gardener came back and said to him, “O my son, rejoice at the good tidings of a speedy return to thy native land: the merchants are ready equipped for the voyage and the ship in three days’ time will set sail for the City of Ebony, which is the first of the cities of the Moslems, and after making it, thou must travel by land a six months’ march till thou come to the Islands of Khalidan, the dominions of King Shahriman.” At this Kamar al-Zaman rejoiced and began repeating,

“Part not from one whose wont is not to part from you; *
    Nor with your cruel taunts an innocent mortify:
Another so long parted had ta’en heart from you, *
    And had his whole condition changed, — but not so I.”

Then he kissed the gardener’s hand and said, “O my father, even as thou hast brought me glad tidings, so I also have great good news for thee,' and told him anent his discovery of the vault; whereat the gardener rejoiced and said, "O my son, fourscore years have I dwelt in this garden and have never hit on aught whilst thou, who hast not sojourned with me a year, hast discovered this thing; wherefore it is Heaven's gift to thee, which shall end thy crosses and aid thee to rejoin thy folk and foregather with her thou lovest." Quoth Kamar al-Zaman, "There is no help but it must be shared between me and thee." Then he carried him to the underground-chamber and showed him the gold, which was in twenty jars: he took ten and the gardener ten, and the old man said to him, "O my son, fill thyself leather bottles[331] with the sparrow-olives[332] which grow in this garden, for they are not found except in our land; and the merchants carry them to all parts. Lay the gold in the bottles and strew it over with olives: then stop them and cover them and take them with thee in the ship." So Kamar al-Zaman arose without stay or delay and took fifty leather bottles and stored in each somewhat of the gold, and closed each one after placing a layer of olives over the gold; and at the bottom of one of the bottles he laid the talisman. Then sat he down to talk with the gardener, confident of speedy reunion with his own people and saying to himself, "When I come to the Ebony Islands I will journey thence to my father's country and enquire for my beloved Budur. Would to Heaven I knew whether she returned to her own land or journeyed on to my father's country or whether there befel her any accident by the way." And he began versifying,

"Love in my breast they lit and fared away, *
    And far the land wherein my love is pent:
Far lies the camp and those who camp therein; *
    Par is her tent-shrine, where I ne'er shall tent.
Patience far deaf me when from me they fled; *
    Sleep failed mine eyes, endurance was forspent:
They left and with them left my every joy, *
    Wending with them, nor find I peace that went:
They made these eyes roll down love tears in flood, *
    And lacking them these eyne with tears are drent.
When my taste spins once again would see them, *

When pine and expectation but augment,
In my heart's core their counterfeits I trace, *
With love and yearning to behold their grace."

Then, while he awaited the end of the term of days, he told the gardener the tale of the birds and what had passed between them; whereat the hearer wondered; and they both lay down and slept till the morning. The gardener awoke sick and abode thus two days; but on the third day, his sickness increased on him, till they despaired of his life and Kamar al-Zaman grieved with sore grief for him. Meanwhile behold, the Master and his crew came and enquired for the gardener; and, when Kamar al-Zaman told them that he was sick, they asked, "Where be the youth who is minded to go with us to the Ebony Islands?" "He is your servent and he standeth before you!" answered the Prince and bade them carry the bottles of olives to the ship; so they transported them, saying, "Make haste, thou, for the wind is fair;" and he replied, "I hear and obey." Then he carried his provaunt on board and, returning to bid the gardener farewell, found him in the agonies of death; so he sat down at his head and closed his eyes, and his soul departed his body; whereupon he laid him out and committed him to the earth unto the mercy of Allah Almighty. Then he made for the ship but found that she had already weighed anchor and set sail; nor did she cease to cleave the seas till she disappeared from his sight. So he went back to whence he came heavy-hearted with whirling head; and neither would he address a soul nor return a reply; and reaching the garden and sitting down in cark and care he threw dust on his head and buffeted his cheeks. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Fifteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the ship sped on her course, Kamar al-Zaman returned to the garden in cark and care; but- anon he rented the place of its owner and hired a man to help him in irrigating the trees. Moreover, he repaired the trap-door and he went to the underground chamber and bringing the rest of the gold to grass, stowed it in other fifty bottles which he filled up with a layer of olives. Then he enquired of the ship and they told him that it sailed but once a year, at which his trouble of mind redoubled and he cried sore for that which had betided him, above all for the loss of the Princess Budur's talisman, and spent his nights and days weeping and repealing verses. Such was his case; but as regards the ship she sailed with a favouring wind till she reached the Ebony Islands. Now by decree of destiny, Queen Budur was sitting at a lattice-window overlooking the sea and saw the galley cast anchor upon the strand. At this sight, her heart throbbed and she took horse with the Chamberlains and Nabobs and, riding down to the shore, halted by the ship, whilst the sailors broke bulk and bore the bales to the storehouses; after which she called the captain to her presence and asked what he had with him. He answered "O King, I have with me in this ship aromatic drugs and cosmetics and healing powders and ointments and plasters and precious metals and rich stuffs and rugs of Yemen leather, not to be borne of mule or camel, and all manner of otters and spices and perfumes, civet and ambergris and camphor and Sumatra aloes-wood, and tamerinds[333] and sparrow-olives to boot, such as are rare to find in this country." When she heard talk of sparrow- olives her heart longed for them and she said to the ship-master, "How much of olives hast thou?" He replied, "Fifty bottles full, but their owner is not with us, so the King shall take what he will of them." Quoth she, "Bring them ashore, that I may see them.'' Thereupon he called to the sailors, who brought her the fifty bottles; and she opened one and, looking at the olives, said to the captain, "I will take the whole fifty and pay you their value, whatso it be." He answered, "By Allah, O my lord, they have no value in our country; moreover their shipper tarried behind us, and he is a poor man." Asked she, "And what are they worth here?" and he answered "A thousand dirhams." "I will take them at a thousand," she said and bade them carry the fifty bottles to the palace. When it was night, she called for a bottle of olives and opened it, there being none in the room but herself and the Princess Hayat al-Nufus. Then, placing a dish before her she turned into it the contents of the jar, when there fell out into the dish with the olives a heap of red gold; and she said to the Lady Hayat al-Nufus, "This is naught but gold!" So she sent for the rest of the bottles and found them all full of precious metal and scarce enough olives to fill a single jar. Moreover, she sought among the gold and found therein the talisman, which she took and examined and behold, it was that which Kamar al- Zaman had taken from off the band of her petticoat trousers. Thereupon she cried out for joy and slipped down in a swoon; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Sixteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Budur saw the talisman she cried out for joy and slipped down in a swoon; and when she recovered she said to herself, "Verily, this talisman was the cause of my separation from my beloved Kamar al-Zaman; but now it is an omen of good." Then she showed it to Hayat al-Nufus and said to her, "This was the cause of disunion and now, please Allah, it shall be the cause of reunion." As soon as day dawned she seated herself on the royal throne and sent for the ship-master, who came into the presence and kissed the ground before her. Quoth she, "Where didst thou leave the owner of these olives?" Quoth he, "O King of the age, we left him in the land of the Magians and he is a gardener there." She rejoined, "Except thou bring him to me, thou knowest not the harm which awaiteth thee and thy ship." Then she bade them seal up the magazines of the merchants and said to them, "Verily the owner of these olives hath borrowed of me and I have a claim upon him for debt and, unless ye bring him to me, I will without fail do you all die and seize your goods." So they went to the captain and promised him the hire of the ship, if he would go and return a second time, saying, "Deliver us from this masterful tyrant." Accordingly the skipper embarked and set sail and Allah decreed him a prosperous voyage, till he came to the Island of the Magians and, landing by night, went up to the garden. Now the night was long upon Kamar al-Zaman, and he sat, bethinking him of his beloved, and bewailing what had befallen him and versifying,

"A night whose stars refused to run their course, *
    A night of those which never seem outworn:
Like Resurrection-day, of longsome length[334] *
    To him that watched and waited for the morn."

Now at this moment, the captain knocked at the garden-gate, and Kamar al-Zaman opened and went out to him, whereupon the crew seized him and went down with him on board the ship and set sail forthright; and they ceased not voyaging days and nights, whilst Kamar al-Zaman knew not why they dealt thus with him; but when he questioned them they replied, “Thou hast offended against the Lord of the Ebony Islands, the son-in-law of King Armanus, and thou hast stolen his monies, miserable that thou art!” Said he, “By Allah! I never entered that country nor do I know where it is!” However, they fared on with him, till they made the Ebony Islands and landing, carried him up to the Lady Budur, who knew him at sight and said, “Leave him with the eunuchs, that they may take him to the bath.” Then she relieved the merchants of the embargo and gave the captain a robe of honour worth ten thousand pieces of gold; and, after returning to the palace, she went in that night to the Princess Hayat al-Nufus and told her what had passed, saying, “Keep thou my counsel, till I accomplish my purpose, and do a deed which shall be recorded and shall be read by Kings and commoners after we be dead and gone.” And when she gave orders that they bear Kamar al-Zaman to the bath, they did so and clad him in a royal habit so that, when he came forth, he resembled a willow-bough or a star which shamed the greater and lesser light[335] and its glow, and his life and soul returned to his frame. Then he repaired to the palace and went in to the Princess Budur; and when she saw him she schooled her heart to patience, till she should have accomplished her purpose; and she bestowed on him Mamelukes and eunuchs, camels and mules. Moreover, she gave him a treasury of money and she ceased not advancing him from dignity to dignity, till she made him Lord High Treasurer and committed to his charge all the treasures of the state; and she admitted him to familiar favour and acquainted the Emirs with his rank and dignity. And all loved him, for Queen Budur did not cease day by day to increase his allowances. As for Kamar al-Zaman, he was at a loss anent the reason of her thus honouring him; and he gave gifts and largesse out of the abundance of the wealth; and he devoted himself to the service of King Armanus; so that the King and all the Emirs and people, great and small, adored him and were wont to swear by his life. Nevertheless, he ever marvelled at the honour and favour shown him by Queen Budur and said to himself, “By Allah, there needs must be a reason for this affection!

Peradventure, this King favoureth me not with these immoderate favours save for some ill purpose and, therefore, there is no help but that I crave leave of him to depart his realm.” So he went in to Queen Budur and said to her, “O King, thou hast overwhelmed me with favours, but it will fulfil the measure of thy bounties if thou take from me all thou hast been pleased to bestow upon me, and permit me to depart.” She smiled and asked, “What maketh thee seek to depart and plunge into new perils, whenas thou art in the enjoyment of the highest favour and greatest prosperity?” Answered Kamar al-Zaman, “O King, verily this favour, if there be no reason for it, is indeed a wonder of wonders, more by token that thou hast advanced me to dignities such as befit men of age and experience, albeit I am as it were a young child.” And Queen Budur rejoined, “The reason is that I love thee for shine exceeding loveliness and thy surpassing beauty; and if thou wilt but grant me my desire of thy body, I will advance thee yet farther in honour and favour and largesse; and I will make thee Wazir, for all thy tender age even as the folk made me Sultan over them and I no older than thou; so that nowadays there is nothing strange when children take the head and by Allah, he was a gifted man who said,

‘It seems as though of Lot’s tribe were our days, *
    And crave with love to advance the young in years.’”[336]

When Kamar al-Zaman heard these words, he was abashed and his cheeks flushed till they seemed a-flame; and he said, “I need not these favours which lead to the commission of sin; I will live poor in wealth but wealthy in virtue and honour.” Quoth she, “I am not to be duped by thy scruples, arising from prudery and coquettish ways; and Allah bless him who saith,

‘To him I spake of coupling, but he said to me, *
    How long this noyous long persistency?’
But when gold piece I showed him, he cried, *
    ‘Who from the Almighty Sovereign e’er shall flee?’”

Now when Kamar al-Zaman, heard these words and understood her verses and their import, he said, “O King, I have not the habit of these doings, nor have I strength to bear these heavy burthens for which elder than I have proved unable; then how will it be with my tender age?” But she smiled at his speech and retorted, “Indeed, it is a matter right marvellous how error springeth from the disorder of man’s intendiment!! Since thou art a boy, why standest thou in fear of sin or the doing of things forbidden, seeing that thou art not yet come to years of canonical responsibility; and the offences of a child incur neither punishment nor reproof? Verily, thou hast committed thyself to a quibble for the sake of contention, and it is thy duty to bow before a proposal of fruition, so henceforward cease from denial and coyness, for the commandment of Allah is a decree foreordained:[337] indeed, I have more reason than thou to fear falling and by sin to be misled; and well inspired was he who said,

‘My prickle is big and the little one said, *
    ‘Thrust boldly in vitals with lion-like stroke!
Then I, ‘ ’Tis a sin!; and he, ‘No sin to me! *
    So I had him at once with a counterfeit poke.”[338]

When Kamar al-Zaman heard these words, the light became darkness in his sight and he said, “O King, thou hast in thy household fair women and female slaves, who have not their like in this age: shall not these suffice thee without me? Do thy will with them and let me go!” She replied, “Thou sayest sooth, but it is not with them that one who loveth thee can heal himself of torment and can abate his fever; for, when tastes and inclinations are corrupted by vice, they hear and obey other than good advice. So leave arguing and listen to what the poet saith,

‘Seest not the bazar with its fruit in rows? *
    These men are for figs and for sycamore[339] those!’

And what another saith,

‘Many whose anklet rings are dumb have tinkling belts, *
    And this hath all content while that for want must wail:

Thou bidd’st me be a fool and quit thee for her charms; *
Allah forfend I leave The Faith, turn Infidel!
Nay, by thy rights of side-beard mocking all her curls, *
Nor mott nor maid[340] from thee my heart shall spell.’

And yet another,

‘O beauty’s Union! love for thee’s my creed, *
Free choice of Faith and eke my best desire:
Women I have forsworn for thee; so may *
Deem me all men this day a shaveling friar.’[341]

And yet another,

‘Even not beardless one with girl, nor heed *
The spy who saith to thee ‘’Tis an amiss!’
Far different is the girl whose feet one kisses *
And that gazelle whose feet the earth must kiss.’

And yet another,

‘A boy of twice ten is fit for a King!’

And yet another,

‘The penis smooth and round was made with anus best to match it, * Had it been made for cunnus’ sake it had been formed like hatchet!’

And yet another said,

‘My soul thy sacrifice! I chose thee out *
Who art not menstruous nor oviparous:
Did I with woman mell, I should beget *
Brats till the wide wide world grew strait for us.’

And yet another,

‘She saith (sore hurt in sense the most acute *
For she had proffered what did not besuit),
‘Unless thou stroke as man should swive his wife *
Blame not when horns thy brow shall incornůte!

Thy wand seems waxen, to a limpo grown, *
    And more I palm it, softer grows the brute!’

And yet another,

‘Quoth she (for I to lie with her forbore), *
    ‘O folly-following fool, O fool to core:
If thou my coynte for Kiblah[342] to thy coigne *
    Reject, we’ll shall please thee more.’[343]

And yet another,

‘She proffered me a tender coynte *
    Quoth I ‘I will not roger thee!’
She drew back, saying, ‘From the Faith *
    He turns, who’s turned by Heaven’s decree![344]
And front wise fluttering, in one day, *
    Is obsolete persistency!’
Then swung she round and shining rump *
    Like silvern lump she showed me!
I cried: ‘Well done, O mistress mine! *
    No more am I in pain for thee;
O thou of all that Allah oped[345] *
    Showest me fairest victory!’

And yet another,

‘Men craving pardon will uplift their hands; *
    Women pray pardon with their legs on high:
Out on it for a pious, prayerful work! *
    The Lord shall raise it in the depths to lie.’”[346]

When Kamar al-Zaman heard her quote this poetry, and was certified that there was no escaping compliance with what willed she, he said, “O King of the age, if thou must needs have it so, make covenant with me that thou wilt do this thing with me but once, though it avail not to correct thy depraved appetite, and that thou wilt never again require this thing of me to the end of time; so perchance shall Allah purge me of the sin.” She replied “I promise thee this thing, hoping that Allah of His favour will relent towards us and blot out our mortal offence; for the girdle of heaven’s forgiveness is not indeed so strait, but it may compass us around and absolve us of the excess of our heinous sins and bring us to the light of salvation out of the darkness of error; and indeed excellently well saith the poet,

‘Of evil thing the folk suspect us twain; *
    And to this thought their hearts and souls are bent:
Come, dear! let’s justify and free their souls *
    That wrong us; one good bout and then — repent!’”[347]

Thereupon she made him an agreement and a covenant and swore a solemn oath by Him who is Self-existent, that this thing should befal betwixt them but once and never again for all time, and that the desire of him was driving her to death and perdition. So he rose up with her, on this condition, and went with her to her own boudoir, that she might quench the lowe of her lust, saying, “There is no Majesty, and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! This is the fated decree of the All- powerful, the All-wise!”; and he doffed his bag-trousers, shamefull and abashed, with the tears running from his eyes for stress of affright. Thereat she smiled and making him mount upon a couch with her, said to him, “After this night, thou shalt see naught that will offend thee.” Then she turned to him bussing and bosoming him and bending calf over calf, and said to him, “Put thy hand between my thighs to the accustomed place; so haply it may stand up to prayer after prostration.” He wept and cried, “I am not good at aught of this,” but she said, “By my life, an thou do as I bid thee, it shall profit thee!” So he put out his hand, with vitals a-fire for confusion, and found her thighs cooler than cream and softer than silk. The touching of them pleasured him and he moved his hand hither and thither, till it came to a dome abounding in good gifts and movements and shifts, and said in himself, “Perhaps this King is a hermaphrodite,[348] neither man nor woman quite;” so he said to her, “O King, I cannot find that thou hast a tool like the tools of men; what then moved thee to do this deed?” Then loudly laughed Queen Budur till she fell on her back,[349] and said, “O my dearling, how quickly thou hast forgotten the nights we have lain together!" Then she made herself known to him, and he knew her for his wife, the Lady Budur, daughter of King al-Ghayur, Lord of the Isles and the Seas. So he embraced her and she embraced him, and he kissed her and she kissed him; then they lay down on the bed of pleasure voluptuous, repeating the words of the poet,

"When his softly bending shape bid him close to my embrace *
  Which clips him all about like the tendrils of the vine
And shed a flood of softness on the hardness of his heart, *
  He yielded though at first he was minded to decline;
And dreading lest the railer's eye should light upon his form, *
  Came armoured with caution to baffle his design:
His waist makes moan of hinder cheeks that weigh upon his feet *
  Like heavy load of merchandise upon young camel li'en;
Girt with his glances scymitar which seemed athirst for blood, *
  And clad in mail of dusky curls that show the sheeniest shine,
His fragrance wafted happy news of footstep coming nigh, *
  And to him like a bird uncaged I flew in straightest line:
I spread my cheek upon his path, beneath his sandal-shoon, *
  And lo! the stibium[350] of their dust healed all my hurt of eyne.
With one embrace again I bound the banner of our loves[351] *
  And loosed the knot of my delight that bound in bonds malign:
Then bade I make high festival, and straight came flocking in *
  Pure joys that know not grizzled age[352] nor aught of pain and pine:
The full moon dotted with the stars the lips and pearly teeth *
  That dance right joyously upon the bubbling face of wine:
So in the prayer-niche of their joys I yielded me to what *
  Would make the humblest penitent of sinner most indign.
I swear by all the signs[353] of those glories in his face *
  I'll ne'er forget the Chapter entituled Al-Ikhlas."[354]

Then Queen Budur told Kamar al-Zaman all that had befallen her from beginning to end and he did likewise; after which he began to upbraid her, saying, “What moved thee to deal with me as thou hast done this night?” She replied, “Pardon me! for I did this by way of jest, and that pleasure and gladness might be increased.” And when dawned the morn and day arose with its sheen and shone, she sent to King Armanus, sire of the Lady Hayat al-Nufus, and acquainted him with the truth of the case and that she was wife to Kamar al-Zaman. Moreover, she told him their tale and the cause of their separation, and how his daughter was a virgin, pure as when she was born. He marvelled at their story with exceeding marvel and bade them chronicle it in letters of gold. Then he turned to Kamar al-Zaman and said, “O King’s son, art thou minded to become my son-in-law by marrying my daughter?” Replied he, “I must consult the Queen Budur, as she hath a claim upon me for benefits without stint.” And when he took counsel with her, she said, “Right is thy recking; marry her and I will be her handmaid; for I am her debtor for kindness and favour and good offices, and obligations manifold, especially as we are here in her place and as the King her father hath whelmed us with benefits.”[355] Now when he saw that she inclined to this and was not jealous of Hayat al-Nufus, he agreed with her upon this matter. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Seventeenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Kamar al-Zaman agreed with his wife, Queen Budur, upon this matter and told King Armanus what she had said; whereat he rejoiced with great joy. Then he went out and, seating himself upon his chair of estate, assembled all the Wazirs, Emirs, Chamberlains and Grandees, to whom he related the whole story of Kamar al-Zaman and his wife, Queen Budur, from first to last; and acquainted them with his desire to marry his daughter Hayat al-Nufus to the Prince and make him King in the stead of Queen Budur. Whereupon said they all, “Since he is the husband of Queen Budur, who hath been our King till now, whilst we deemed her son-in-law to King Armanus, we are all content to have him to Sultan over us; and we will be his servants, nor will we swerve from his allegiance.” So Armanus rejoiced hereat and, summoning Kazis and witnesses and the chief officers of state, bade draw up the contract of marriage between Kamar al-Zaman and his daughter, the Princess Hayat al-Nufus. Then he held high festival, giving sumptuous marriage-feasts and bestowing costly dresses of honour upon all the Emirs and Captains of the host; moreover he distributed alms to the poor and needy and set free all the prisoners. The whole world rejoiced in the coming of Kamar al-Zaman to the throne, blessing him and wishing him endurance of glory and prosperity, renown and felicity; and, as soon as he became King, he remitted the customs-dues and released all men who remained in gaol. Thus he abode a long while, ordering himself worthily towards his lieges; and he lived with his two wives in peace, happiness, constancy and content, lying the night with each of them in turn. He ceased not after this fashion during many years, for indeed all his troubles and afflictions were blotted out from him and he forgot his father King Shahriman and his former estate of honour and favour with him. After a while Almighty Allah blessed him with two boy children, as they were two shining moons, through his two wives; the elder whose name was Prince Amjad,[356] by Queen Budur, and the younger whose name was Prince As'ad by Queen Hayat al-Nufus; and this one was comelier than his brother. They were reared in splendour and tender affection, in respectful bearing and in the perfection of training; and they were instructed in penmanship and science and the arts of government and horsemanship, till they attained the extreme accomplishments and the utmost limit of beauty and loveliness; both men and women being ravished by their charms. They grew up side by side till they reached the age of seventeen, eating and drinking together and sleeping in one bed, nor ever parting at any time or tide; wherefore all the people envied them. Now when they came to man's estate and were endowed with every perfection, their father was wont, as often as he went on a journey, to make them sit in his stead by turns in the hall of judgement; and each did justice among the folk one day at a time. But it came to pass, by confirmed fate and determined lot, that love for As'ad (son of Queen Hayat al-Nufus) rose in the heart of Queen Budur, and that affection for Amjad (son of Queen Budur) rose in the heart of Queen Hayat al-Nufus.[357] Hence it was that each of the women used to sport and play with the son of her sister-wife, kissing him and straining him to her bosom, whilst each mother thought that the other's behaviour arose but from maternal affection. On this wise passion got the mastery of the two women's hearts and they became madly in love with the two youths, so that when the other's son came in to either of them, she would press him to her breast and long for him never to be parted from her; till, at last, when waiting grew longsome to them and they found no path to enjoyment, they refused meat and drink and banished the solace of sleep. Presently, the King fared forth to course and chase, bidding his two sons sit to do justice in his stead, each one day in turn as was their wont. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Eighteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King fared forth to sport and hunt, bidding his two sons sit to do justice in his stead, each one day by turn, as was their wont. Now Prince Amjad sat in judgement the first day, bidding and forbidding, appointing and deposing, giving and refusing; and Queen Hayat al-Nufus, mother of As'ad, wrote to him a letter suing for his favour and discovering to him her passion and devotion; altogether put tiny off the mask and giving him to know that she desired to enjoy him. So she took a scroll and thereon indited these cadences, "From the love deranged * the sorrowful and estranged * whose torment is prolonged for the longing of thee! * Were I to recount to thee the extent of my care * and what of sadness I bear * the passion which my heart cloth tear * and all that I endure for weeping and unrest * and the rending of my sorrowful breast * my unremitting grief * and my woe without relief * and all my suffering for severance of thee * and sadness and love's ardency * no letter could contain it; nor calculation could compass it * Indeed earth and heaven upon me are strait; and I have no hope and no trust but what from thee I await * Upon death I am come nigh * and the horrors of dissolution I aby * Burning upon me is sore * with parting pangs and estrangement galore * Were I to set forth the yearnings that possess me more and more * no scrolls would suffice to hold such store * and of the excess of my pain and pine, I have made the following lines:- -

Were I to dwell on heart-consuming heat, *

Unease and transports in my spins meet,
Nothing were left of ink and reeden pen *
Nor aught of paper; no, not e'en a sheet.

Then Queen Hayat al-Nufus wrapped up her letter in a niece of costly silk scented with musk and ambergris; and folded it up with her silken hair-strings[358] whose cost swallowed down treasures laid it in a handkerchief and gave it to a eunuch bidding him bear it to Prince Amjad. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Nineteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that she gave her missive to the eunuch in waiting and bade him bear it to Prince Amjad. And that eunuch went forth ignoring what the future hid for him (for the Omniscient ordereth events even as He willeth); and, going in to the Prince, kissed the ground between his hands and handed to him the letter. On receiving the kerchief he opened it and, reading the epistle and recognizing its gist he was ware that his father's wife was essentially an adulteress and a traitress at heart to her husband, King Kamar al-Zaman. So he waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and railed at women and their works, saying, "Allah curse women, the traitresses, the imperfect in reason and religion!"[359] Then he drew his sword and said to the eunuch, "Out on thee, thou wicked slave! Dost thou carry messages of disloyalty for thy lord's wife? By Allah, there is no good in thee, O black of hue and heart, O foul of face and Nature's forming!" So he smote him on the neck and severed his head from his body; then, folding the kerchief over its contents he thrust it into his breast pocket and went in to his own mother and told her what had passed, reviling and reproaching her, and saying, "Each one of you is viler than the other; and, by Allah the Great and Glorious, did I not fear ill-manneredly to transgress against the rights of my father, Kamar al-Zaman, and my brother, Prince As'ad, I would assuredly go in to her and cut off her head, even as I cut off that of her eunuch!" Then he went forth from his mother in a mighty rage; and when the news reached Queen Hayat al-Nufus of what he had done with her eunuch, she abused him[360] and cursed him and plotted perfidy against him. He passed the night, sick with rage, wrath and concern; nor found he pleasure in meat, drink or sleep. And when the next morning dawned Prince As'ad fared forth in his turn to rule the folk in his father's stead, whilst his mother, Hayat al-Nufus, awoke in feeble plight because of what she had heard from Prince Amjad concerning the slaughter of her eunuch. So Prince As'ad sat in the audience-chamber that day, judging and administering justice, appointing and deposing, bidding and forbidding, giving and bestowing. And he ceased not thus till near the time of afternoon-prayer, when Queen Budur sent for a crafty old woman and, discovering to her what was in her heart, wrote a letter to Prince As'ad, complaining of the excess of her affection and desire for him in these cadenced lines, "From her who perisheth for passion and love-forlorn * to him who in nature and culture is goodliest born * to him who is conceited of his own loveliness * and glories in his amorous grace * who from those that seek to enjoy him averteth his face * and refuseth to show favour unto the self abasing and base * him who is cruel and of disdainful mood * from the lover despairing of good * to Prince As'ad * with passing beauty endowed * and of excelling grace proud * of the face moon bright * and the brow flower-white * and dazzling splendid light * This is my letter to him whose love melteth my body * and rendeth my skin and bones! * Know that my patience faileth me quite * and I am perplexed in my plight * longing and restlessness weary me * and sleep and patience deny themselves to me * but mourning and watching stick fast to me * and desire and passion torment me * and the extremes of languor and sickness have sheet me * Yet may my life be a ransom for thee * albeit thy pleasure be to slay her who loveth thee * and Allah prolong the life of thee * and preserve thee from all infirmity!" And after these cadences she wrote these couplets,

"Fate hath commanded I become thy fere, *
  O shining like full moon when clearest clear!
All beauty dost embrace, all eloquence; *
  Brighter than aught within our worldly sphere:
Content am I my torturer thou be: *
  Haply shalt alms me with one lovely leer!

Happy her death who dieth for thy love! *
    No good in her who holdeth thee unclear!”

And also the following couplets,

“Unto thee, As’ad! I of passion-pangs complain; *
    Have ruth on slave of love so burnt with flaming pain:
How long, I ask, shall hands of Love disport with me, *
    With longings, dolour, sleepliness and bale and bane?
Anon I ‘plain of sea in heart, anon of fire *
    In vitals, O strange case, dear wish, my fairest fain!
O blamer, cease thy blame, and seek thyself to fly *
    From love, which makes these eyne a rill of tears to rain.
How oft I cry for absence and desire, Ah grief! *
    But all my crying naught of gain for me shall gain:
Thy rigours dealt me sickness passing power to bear, *
    Thou art my only leach, assain me an thou deign!
O chider, chide me not in caution, for I doubt *
    That plaguey Love to thee shall also deal a bout.”

Then Queen Budur perfumed the letter-paper with a profusion of odoriferous musk and, winding it in her hairstrings which were of Iraki silk, with pendants of oblong emeralds, set with pearls and stones of price, delivered it to the old woman, bidding her carry it to Prince As’ad.[361] She did so in order to pleasure her, and going in to the Prince, straightway and without stay, found him in his own rooms and delivered to him the letter in privacy; after which she stood waiting an hour or so for the answer. When As’ad had read the paper and knew its purport, he wrapped it up again in the ribbons and put it in his bosom-pocket: then (for he was wrath beyond all measure of wrath) he cursed false women and sprang up and drawing his sword, smote the old trot on the neck and cut off her pate. Thereupon he went in to his mother, Queen Hayat al-Nufus, whom he found lying on her bed in feeble case, for that which had betided her with Prince Amjad, and railed at her and cursed her; after which he left her and fore-gathered with his brother, to whom he related all that had befallen him with Queen Budur, adding, “By Allah, O my brother, but that I was ashamed before thee, I had gone in to her forthright and had smitten her head off her shoulders!" Replied Prince Amjad, "By Allah, O my brother, yesterday when I was sitting upon the seat of judgement, the like of what hath befallen thee this day befel me also with thy mother who sent me a letter of similar purport." And he told him all that had passed, adding, "By Allah, O my brother, naught but respect for thee withheld me from going in to her and dealing with her even as I dealt with the eunuch!" They passed the rest of the night conversing and cursing womankind, and agreed to keep the matter secret, lest their father should hear of it and kill the two women. Yet they ceased not to suffer trouble and foresee affliction. And when the morrow dawned, the King returned with his suite from hunting and sat awhile in his chair of estate; after which he sent the Emirs about their business and went up to his palace, where he found his two wives lying a-bed and both exceeding sick and weak. Now they had made a plot against their two sons and concerted to do away their lives, for that they had exposed themselves before them and feared to be at their mercy and dependent upon their forbearance. When Kamar al-Zaman saw them on this wise, he said to them, "What aileth you?" Whereupon they rose to him and kissing his hands answered, perverting the case and saying "Know, O King, that thy two sons, who have been reared in thy bounty, have played thee false and have dishonoured thee in the persons of thy wives." Now when he heard this, the light became darkness in his sight, and he raged with such wrath that his reason fled: then said he to them, "Explain me this matter." Replied Queen Budur, "O King of the age, know that these many days past thy son As'ad hath been in the persistent habit of sending me letters and messages to solicit me to lewdness and adultery while I still forbade him from this, but he would not be forbidden; and, when thou wentest forth to hunt, he rushed in on me, drunk and with a drawn sword in his hand, and smiting my eunuch, slew him. Then he mounted on my breast, still holding the sword, and I feared lest he should slay me, if I gainsaid him, even as he had slain my eunuch; so he took his wicked will of me by force. And now if thou do me not justice on him, O King, I will slay myself with my own hand, for I have no need of life in the world after this foul deed." And Queen

Hayat al-Nufus, choking with tears, told him respecting Prince Amjad a story like that of her sister-wife. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Twentieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Queen Hayat al-Nufus told her husband, King Kamar al-Zaman, a story like that of her sister in wedlock, Budur, and, quoth she, “The same thing befel me with thy son Amjad;” after which she took to weeping and wailing and said, “Except thou do me justice on him I will tell my father, King Armanus.” Then both women wept with sore weeping before King Kamar al-Zaman who, when he saw their tears and heard their words, concluded that their story was true and, waxing wroth beyond measure of wrath, went forth thinking to fall upon his two sons and put them to death. On his way he met his father- in-law, King Armanus who, hearing of his return from the chase, had come to salute him at that very hour and, seeing him with naked brand in hand and blood dripping from his nostrils, for excess of rage, asked what ailed him. So Kamar al-Zaman told him all that his sons Amjad and As’ad had done and added, “And here I am now going in to them to slay them in the foulest way and make of them the most shameful of examples.” Quoth King Armanus (and indeed he too was wroth with them), “Thou dost well, O my son, and may Allah not bless them nor any sons that do such deed against their father’s honour. But, O my son, the sayer of the old saw saith, ‘Whoso looketh not to the end hath not Fortune to friend.’ In any case, they are thy sons, and it befitteth not that thou kill them with shine own hand, lest thou drink of their death-agony,[362] and anon repent of having slain them whenas repentance availeth thee naught. Rather do thou send them with one of thy Mamelukes into the desert and let him kill them there out of thy sight, for, as saith the adage, ‘Out of sight of my friend is better and pleasanter.’[363] And when Kamar al-Zaman heard his father-in-law’s words, he knew them to be just; so he sheathed his sword and turning back, sat down upon the throne of his realm. There he summoned his treasurer, a very old man, versed in affairs and in fortune’s vicissitudes, to whom he said, “Go in to my sons, Amjad and As’ad; bind their hands behind them with strong bonds, lay them in two chests and load them upon a mule. Then take horse thou and carry them into mid desert, where do thou kill them both and fill two vials with their blood and bring the same to me in haste." Replied the treasurer, "I hear and I obey," and he rose up hurriedly and went out forthright to seek the Princes; and, on his road, he met them coming out of the palace-vestibule, for they had donned their best clothes and their richest; and they were on their way to salute their sire and give him joy of his safe return from his going forth to hunt. Now when he saw them, he laid hands on them, saying, "Omy sons, know ye that I am but a slave commanded, and that your father hath laid a commandment on me; will ye obey his commandment?" They said, "Yes"; whereupon he went up to them and, after pinioning their arms, laid them in the chests which he loaded on the back of a mule he had taken from the city. And he ceased not carrying them into the open country till near noon, when he halted in a waste and desolate place and, dismounting from his mare, let down the two chests from the mule's back. Then he opened them and took out Amjad and As'ad; and when he looked upon them he wept sore for their beauty and loveliness; then drawing his sword he said to them, "By Allah, O my lords, indeed it is hard for me to deal so evilly by you; but I am to be excused in this matter, being but a slave commanded, for that your father King Kamar al-Zaman hath bidden me strike off your heads." They replied, "O Emir, do the King's bidding, for we bear with patience that which Allah (to Whom be Honour, Might and Glory!) hath decreed to us; and thou art quit of our blood." Then they embraced and bade each other farewell, and As'ad said to the treasurer, "Allah upon thee, O uncle, spare me the sight of my brother's death-agony and make me not drink of his anguish, but kill me first, for that were the easier for me." And Amjad said the like and entreated the treasurer to kill him before As'ad, saying, "My brother is younger than I; so make me not taste of his anguish. And they both wept bitter tears whilst the treasurer wept for their weeping; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Twenty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the treasurer wept for their weeping; then the two brothers embraced and bade farewell and one said to the other, "All this cometh of the malice of those traitresses, my mother and thy mother; and this is the reward of my forbearance towards thy mother and of thy for bearance towards my mother! But there is no Might and there is no Majesty save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Verily, we are Allah's and unto Him we are returning."[364] And As'ad em braced his brother, sobbing and repeating these couplets,

"O Thou to whom sad trembling wights in fear complain! *
 O ever ready whatso cometh to sustain!
The sole resource for me is at Thy door to knock, *
 At whose door knock an Thou to open wilt not deign?
O Thou whose grace is treasured in the one word, Be![365] *
 Favour me, I beseech, in Thee all weals contain."

Now when Amjad heard his brother's weeping he wept also and pressing him to his bosom repeated these two couplets,

"O Thou whose boons to me are more than one! *
 Whose gifts and favours have nor count nor bound!
No stroke of all Fate's strokes e'er fell on me, *
 But Thee to take me by the hand I found."

Then said Amjad to the treasurer, "I conjure thee by the One, Omnipotent, the Lord of Mercy, the Beneficent! slay me before my brother As'ad, so haply shall the fire be quencht in my heart's core and in this life burn no more." But As'ad wept and exclaimed, "Not so: I will die first;" whereupon quoth Amjad, "It were best that I embrace thee and thou embrace me, so the sword may fall upon us and slay us both at a single stroke." Thereupon they embraced, face to face and clung to each other straitly, whilst the treasurer tied up the twain and bound them fast with cords, weeping the while. Then he drew his blade and said to them, "By Allah, O my lords, it is indeed hard to me to slay you! But have ye no last wishes that I may fulfil or charges which I may carry out, or message which I may deliver?" Replied Amjad, "We have no wish; and my only charge to thee is that thou set my brother below and me above him, that the blow may fall on me first, and when thou hast killed us and returnest to the King and he asketh thee, ‘What heardest thou from them before their death?’; do thou answer, ‘Verily thy sons salute thee and say to thee, Thou knewest not if we were innocent or guilty, yet hast thou put us to death and hast not certified thyself of our sin nor looked into our case.’ Then do thou repeat to him these two couplets,

‘Women are Satans made for woe o’ men; *
    I fly to Allah from their devilish scathe:
Source of whatever bale befel our kind, *
    In wordly matters and in things of Faith.’”

Continued Amjad, “We desire of thee naught but that thou repeat to our sire these two couplets.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was ad the Two Hundred and Twenty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Amjad added, speaking to the treasurer, “We desire of thee naught but that thou repeat to our sire these two couplets which thou hast just now heard; and I conjure thee by Allah to have patience with us, whilst I cite to my brother this other pair of couplets.” Then he wept with sore weeping and began,

“The Kings who fared before us showed *
    Of instances full many a show:
Of great and small and high and low *
    How many this one road have trod!”

Now when the treasurer heard these words from Amjad, he wept till his beard was wet, whilst As’ad’s eyes brimmed with tears and he in turn repeated these couplets,

“Fate frights us when the thing is past and gone; *
    Weeping is not for form or face alone[366] :
What ails the Nights?[367] Allah blot out our sin, *
    And be the Nights by other hand undone!
Ere this Zubayr-son[368] felt their spiteful hate, *
    Who fled for refuge to the House and Stone:

Would that when Khárijah was for Amru slain[369] *
  They had ransomed Ali with all men they own.”

Then, with cheeks stained by tears down railing he recited also these verses,

“In sooth the Nights and Days are charactered *
  By traitor falsehood and as knaves they lie;
The Desert-reek[370] recalls their teeth that shine; *
  All horrid blackness is their K of eye:
My sin anent the world which I abhor *
  Is sin of sword when sworders fighting hie.”

Then his sobs waxed louder and he said,

“O thou who woo’st a World[371] unworthy, learn *
  ’Tis house of evils, ’tis Perdition’s net:
A house where whoso laughs this day shall weep *
  The next: then perish house of fume and fret!
Endless its frays and forays, and its thralls *
  Are ne’er redeemed, while endless risks beset.
How many gloried in its pomps and pride, *
  Till proud and pompous did all bounds forget,
Then showing back of shield she made them swill[372] *
  Full draught, and claimed all her vengeance debt.
For know her strokes fall swift and sure, altho’ *
  Long bide she and forslow the course of Fate:
So look thou to thy days lest life go by *
  Idly, and meet thou more than thou hast met;
And cut all chains of world-love and desire *
  And save thy soul and rise to secrets higher.”

Now when As’ad made an end of these verses, he strained his brother Amjad in his arms, till they twain were one body, and the treasurer, drawing his sword, was about to strike them, when behold, his steed took fright at the wind of his upraised hand, and breaking its tether, fled into the desert. Now the horse had cost a thousand gold pieces and on its back was a splendid saddle worth much money; so the treasurer threw down his sword, and ran after his beast. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Twenty-third Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when his horse ran away, the treasurer ran after it in huge concern, and ceased not running to catch the runaway till it entered a thicket. He followed it whilst it dashed through the wood, smiting the earth with its hoofs till it raised a dust-cloud which towered high in air; and snorting and puffing and neighing and waxing fierce and furious. Now there happened to be in this thicket a lion of terrible might; hideous to sight, with eyes sparkling light: his look was grim and his aspect struck fright into man's sprite. Presentry the treasurer turned and saw the lion making towards him; but found no way of escape nor had he his sword with him. So he said in himself, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! This strait is come upon me for no other cause but because of Amjad and As'ad; and indeed this journey was unblest from the first!" Meanwhile the two Princes were grievously oppressed by the heat and grew sore athirst, so that their tongues hung out and they cried for succour, but none came to their relief and they said, "Would to Heaven we had been slain and were at peace from this pain! But we know not whither the horse hath fled, that the treasurer is gone and hath left us thus pinioned. If he would but come back and do us die, it were easier to us than this torture to aby." Said As'ad, "O my brother, be patient, and the relief of Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) shall assuredly come to us; for the horse started not away save of His favour towards us, and naught irketh us but this thirst." Upon this he stretched and shook himself and strained right and left, till he burst his pinion-bonds; then he rose and unbound his brother and catching up the Emir's sword, said, "By Allah, we will not go hence, till we look after him and learn what is become of him." Then they took to following on the trail till it led them to the thicket and they said to each other, "Of a surety, the horse and the treasurer have not passed out of this wood." Quoth As'ad, "Stay thou here, whilst I enter the thicket and search it;" and Amjad replied, "I will not let thee go in alone: nor will we enter it but together; so if we escape, we shall escape together and if we perish, we shall perish together." Accordingly both entered and found that the lion had sprang upon the treasurer, who lay like a sparrow in his grip, calling upon Allah for aid and signing with his hands to Heaven. Now when Amjad saw this, he took the sword and, rushing upon the lion, smote him between the eyes and laid him dead on the ground. The Emir sprang up, marvelling at this escape and seeing Amjad and As'ad, his master's sons, standing there, cast himself at their feet and exclaimed, "By Allah, O my lords, it were intolerable wrong in me to do you to death. May the man never be who would kill you! Indeed, with my very life, I will ransom you." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Twenty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth the treasurer to Amjad and As'ad, "With my life will I ransom you both!" Then he hastily rose and, at once embracing them, enquired how they had loosed their bonds and come thither; whereupon they told him how the bonds of one of them had fallen loose and he had unbound the other, whereto they were helped by the purity of their intentions, and how they had tracked his trail till they came upon him. So he thanked them for their deed and went with them forth of the thicket; and, when they were in the open country, they said to him, "O uncle, do our father's bidding." He replied, "Allah forbid that I should draw near to you with hurt! But know ye that I mean to take your clothes and clothe you with mine; then will I fill two vials with the lion's blood and go back to the King and tell him I have out you to death. But as for you two, fare ye forth into the lands, for Allah's earth is wide; and know, O my lords, that it paineth me to part from you." At this, they all fell a-weeping; then the two youths put off their clothes and the treasurer habited them with his own. Moreover he made two parcels of their dress and, filling two vials with the lion's blood, set the parcels before him on his horse's back. Presently he took leave of them and, making his way to the city, ceased not faring till he went in to King Kamar al-Zaman and kissed the ground between his hands. The King saw him changed in face and troubled (which arose from his adventure with the lion) and, deeming this came of the slaughter of his two sons, rejoiced and said to him, "Hast thou done the work?" "Yes, O our lord," replied the treasurer and gave him the two parcels of clothes and the two vials full of blood. Asked the King, "What didst thou observe in them; and did they give thee any charge?" Answered the treasurer, "I found them patient and resigned to what came down upon them and they said to me, 'Verily, our father is excusable; bear him our salutation and say to him, 'Thou art quit of our killing. But we charge thee repeat to him these couplets,

'Verily women are devils created for us. We seek refuge with God from the artifice of the devils. They are the source of all the misfortunes that have appeared among mankind in the affairs of the world and of religion.'''[373]

When the King heard these words of the treasurer, he bowed his head earthwards, a long while and knew his sons' words to mean that they had been wrongfully put to death. Then he bethought himself of the perfidy of women and the calamities brought about by them; and he took the two parcels and opened them and fell to turning over his sons' clothes and weeping, — And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Twenty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Kamar la-Zaman opened the two bundles and fell to turning over his sons' clothes and weeping, it so came to pass that he found, in the pocket of his son As'ad's raiment, a letter in the hand of his wife enclosing her hair strings; so he opened and read it and understanding the contents knew that the Prince had been falsely accused and wrongously. Then he searched Amjad's parcel of dress and found in his pocket a letter in the handwriting of Queen Hayat al-Nufus enclosing also her hair-strings; so he opened and read it and knew that Amjad too had been wronged; whereupon he beat hand upon hand and exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! I have slain my sons unjustly." And he buffeted his face, crying out, "Alas, my sons! Alas, my long grief!" Then he bade them build two tombs in one house, which he styled "House of Lamentations," and had graved thereon his sons' names; and he threw himself on Amjad's tomb, weeping and groaning and lamenting, and improvised these couplets,

"O moon for ever set this earth below, *
Whose loss bewail the stars which stud the sky!

O wand, which broken, ne'er with bend and wave *
    Shall fascinate the ravisht gazer's eye;
These eyne for jealousy I 'reft of thee, *
    Nor shall they till next life thy sight descry:
I'm drowned in sea of tears for insomny *
    Wherefore, indeed in Sáhirah-stead[374] I lie."

Then he threw himself on As'ad's tomb, groaning and weeping and lamenting and versifying with these couplets,

"Indeed I longed to share unweal with thee, *
    But Allah than my will willed otherwise:
My grief all blackens 'twixt mine eyes and space, *
    Yet whitens all the blackness from mine eyes:[375]
Of tears they weep these eyne run never dry, *
    And ulcerous flow in vitals never dries:
Right sore it irks me seeing thee in stead[376] *
    Where slave with sovran for once levelled lies."

And his weeping and wailing redoubled; and, after he had ended his lamentations and his verse, he forsook his friends and intimates, and denying himself to his women and his family, cut himself off from the world in the House of Lamentations, where he passed his time in weeping for his sons. Such was his case; but as regards Amjad and As'ad they fared on into the desert eating of the fruits of the earth and drinking of the remnants of the rain for a full month, till their travel brought them to a mountain of black flint[377] whose further end was unknown; and here the road forked, one line lying along the midway height and the other leading to its head. They took the way trending to the top and gave not over following it five days, but saw no end to it and were overcome with weariness, being unused to walking upon the mountains or elsewhere.[378] At last, despairing of coming to the last of the road, they retraced their steps and, taking the other, that led over the midway heights, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Twenty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Princes

Amjad and As'ad returned from the path leading to the Mountain-head and took that which ran along the midway heights, and walked through all that day till nightfall, when As'ad, weary with much travel, said to Amjad, "O my brother, I can walk no farther, for I am exceeding weak." Replied Amjad, "O my brother, take courage! May be Allah will send us relief." So they walked on part of the night, till the darkness closed in upon them, when As'ad became weary beyond measure of weariness and cried out, "O my brother, I am worn out and spent with walking," and threw himself upon the ground and wept. Amjad took him in his arms and walked on with him, bytimes sitting down to rest till break of day, when they came to the mountain-top and found there a stream of running water and by it a pomegranate-tree and a prayer-niche.[379] They could hardly believe their eyes when they saw it; but, sitting down by that spring, drank of its water and ate of the fruit of that granado-tree; after which they lay on the ground and slept till sunrise, when they washed and bathed in the spring and, eating of the pomegranates, slept again till the time of mid-afternoon prayer. Then they thought to continue their journey, but As'ad could not walk, for both his feet were swollen. So they abode there three days till they were rested, after which they set out again and fared on over the mountain days and nights, tortured by and like to die of thirst, till they sighted a city gleaming afar off, at which they rejoiced and made towards it. When they drew near it, they thanked Allah (be His Name exalted!) and Amjad said to As'ad, "O my brother, sit here, whilst I go to yonder city and see what it is and whose it is and where we are in Allah's wide world, that we may know through what lands we have passed in crossing this mountain, whose skirts had we followed, we had not reached this city in a whole year. So praised be Allah for safety!" Replied As'ad, "By Allah, O my brother, none shall go down into that city save myself, and may I be thy ransom! If thou leave me alone, be it only for an hour, I shall imagine a thousand things and be drowned in a torrent of anxiety on shine account, for I cannot brook shine absence from me." Amjad rejoined, "Go then and tarry not. So As'ad took some gold pieces, and leaving his brother to await him, descended the mountain and ceased not faring on till he entered the city. As he threaded the streets he was met by an old man age-decrepit, whose beard flowed down upon his breast and forked in twain;[380] he bore a walking-staff in his hand and was richly clad, with a great red turband on his head. When As'ad saw him, he wondered at his dress and his mien; nevertheless, he went up to him and saluting him said, "Where be the way to the market, O my master?" Hearing these words the Shaykh smiled in his face and replied, "O my son, meseemeth thou art a stranger?" As'ad rejoined, "Yes, I am a stranger." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Twenty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Shaykh who met As'ad smiled in his face and said to him, "O my son, meseemeth thou art a stranger?" and As'ad replied, "Yes, I am a stranger." Then rejoined the old man, "Verily, thou gladdenest our country with thy presence, O my son, and thou desolatest shine own land by reason of shine absence. What wantest thou of the market?" Quoth As'ad, "O uncle, I have a brother, with whom I have come from a far land and with whom I have journeyed these three months; and, when we sighted this city, I left him, who is my elder brother, upon the mountain and came hither, purposing to buy victual and what else, and return therewith to him, that we might feed thereon." Said the old man, "Rejoice in all good, O my son, and know thou that to-day I give a marriage-feast, to which I have bidden many guests, and I have made ready plenty of meats, the best and most delicious that heart can desire. So if thou wilt come with me to my place, I will give thee freely all thou lackest without asking thee a price or aught else. Moreover I will teach thee the ways of this city; and, praised be Allah, O my son, that I, and none other have happened upon thee." "As thou wilt," answered As'ad, "do as thou art disposed, but make haste, for indeed my brother awaiteth me and his whole heart is with me." The old man took As'ad by the hand and carried him to a narrow lane, smiling in his face and saying, "Glory be to Him who hath delivered thee from the people of this city!" And he ceased not walking till he entered a spacious house, wherein was a saloon and behold, in the middle of it were forty old men, well stricken in years, collected together and forming a single ring as they sat round about a lighted fire, to which they were doing worship and prostrating themselves.[381] When As'ad saw this, he was confounded and the hair of his body stood on end though he knew not what they were; and the Shaykh said to them, "O Elders of the Fire, how blessed is this day!" Then he called aloud, saying, "Hello, Ghazbán!" Whereupon there came out to him a tall black slave of frightful aspect, grim-visaged and flat nosed as an ape who, when the old man made a sign to him, bent As'ad's arms behind his back and pinioned them; after which the Shaykh said to him, "Let him down into the vault under the earth and there leave him and say to my slave girl Such-an-one, 'Torture him night and day and give him a cake of bread to eat morning and evening against the time come of the voyage to the Blue Sea and the Mountain of Fire, whereon we will slaughter him as a sacrifice.'" So the black carried him out at another door and, raising a flag in the floor, discovered a flight of twenty steps leading to a chamber[382] under the earth, into which he descended with him and, laying his feet in irons, gave him over to the slave girl and went away. Meanwhile, the old men said to one another, "When the day of the Festival of the Fire cometh, we will sacrifice him on the mountain, as a propitiatory offering whereby we shall pleasure the Fire." Presently the damsel went down to him and beat him a grievous beating, till streams of blood flowed from his sides and he fainted; after which she set at his head a scone of bread and a cruse of brackish water and went away and left him. In the middle of the night, he revived and found himself bound and beaten and sore with beating: so he wept bitter tears; and recalling his former condition of honour and prosperity, lordship and dominion, and his separation from his sire and his exile from his native land. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Two Hundred and Twenty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when As'ad found himself bound and beaten and sore with beating he recalled his whilome condition of honour and prosperity and dominion and lordship, and he wept and groaned aloud and recited these couplets,

"Stand by the ruined stead and ask of us; *
Nor deem we dwell there as was state of us:

The World, that parter, hath departed us; *
    Yet soothes not hate-full hearts the fate of us:
With whips a cursed slave girl scourges us, *
    And teems her breast with rancorous hate of us:
Allah shall haply deign to unpart our lives, *
    Chastise our foes, and end this strait of us."

And when As'ad had spoken his poetry, he put out his hand towards his head and finding there the crust and the cruse full of brackish water he ate a bittock, just enough to keep life in him, and drank a little water, but could get no sleep till morning for the swarms of bugs[383] and lice. As soon as it was day, the slave girl came down to him and changed his clothes, which were drenched with blood and stuck to him, so that his skin came off with the shirt; wherefor he shrieked aloud and cried, "Alas!" and said, "O my God, if this be Thy pleasure, increase it upon me! O Lord, verily Thou art not unmindful of him that oppresseth me; do Thou then avenge me upon him!" And he groaned and repeated the following verses,

"Patient, O Allah! to Thy destiny *
    I bow, suffice me what Thou deign decree:
Patient to bear Thy will, O Lord of me, *
    Patient to burn on coals of Ghazá-tree:
They wrong me, visit me with hurt and harm; *
    Haply Thy grace from them shall set me free:
Far be's, O Lord, from thee to spare the wronger *
    O Lord of Destiny my hope's in Thee!"

And what another saith,

"Bethink thee not of worldly state, *
    Leave everything to course of Fate;
For oft a thing that irketh thee *
    Shall in content eventuate;
And oft what strait is shall expand, *
    And what expanded is wax strait.
Allah will do what wills His will *

So be not thou importunate!
But ‘joy the view of coming weal *
Shall make forget past bale and bate.”

And when he had ended his verse, the slave-girl came down upon him with blows till he fainted again; and, throwing him a flap of bread and a gugglet of saltish water, went away and left him sad and lonely, bound in chains of iron, with the blood streaming from his sides and far from those he loved. So he wept and called to mind his brother and the honours he erst enjoyed. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Twenty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that As’ad called to mind his brother and the honours he erst enjoyed; so he wept and groaned and complained and poured forth tears in floods and improvised these couplets,

“Easy, O Fate! how long this wrong, this injury, *
Robbing each morn and eve my brotherhood fro’ me?
Is’t not time now thou deem this length sufficiency *
Of woes and, O thou Heart of Rock, show clemency?
My friends thou wrongedst when thou madst each enemy *
Mock and exult me for thy wrongs, thy tyranny:
My foeman’s heart is solaced by the things he saw *
In me, of strangerhood and lonely misery:
Suffice thee not what came upon my head of dole, *
Friends lost for evermore, eyes wan and pale of blee?
But must in prison cast so narrow there is naught *
Save hand to bite, with bitten hand for company;
And tears that tempest down like goodly gift of cloud, *
And longing thirst whose fires weet no satiety.
Regretful yearnings, singulfs and unceasing sighs, *
Repine, remembrance and pain’s very ecstacy:
Desire I suffer sore and melancholy deep, *
And I must bide a prey to endless phrenesy:
I find me ne’er a friend who looks with piteous eye, *
And seeks my presence to allay my misery:

Say, liveth any intimate with trusty love *
    Who for mine ills will groan, my sleepless malady?
To whom moan I can make and, peradventure, he *
    Shall pity eyes that sight of sleep can never see?
The flea and bug suck up my blood, as wight that drinks *
    Wine from the proffering hand of fair virginity:
Amid the lice my body aye remindeth me *
    Of orphan's good in Kázi's claw of villainy:
My home's a sepulchre that measures cubits three, *
    Where pass I morn and eve in chained agony:
My wines are tears, my clank of chains takes music's stead, *
    Cares my dessert of fruit and sorrows are my bed."

And when he had versed his verse and had prosed his prose, he again groaned and complained and remembered he had been and how he had been parted from his brother. Thus far concerning him; but as regards his brother Amjad, he awaited As'ad till mid-day yet he returned not to him: whereupon Amjad's vitals fluttered, the pangs of parting were sore upon him and he poured forth abundant tears, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Thirtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Amjad awaited his brother As'ad till mid-day and he returned not to him, Amjad's vitals fluttered; the pangs of parting were sore upon him and he poured forth abundant tears, exclaiming, "Alas, my brother! Alas, my friend! Alas my grief! How I feared me we should be separated!" Then he descended from the mountain-top with the tears running down his cheeks; and, entering the city, ceased not walking till he made the market. He asked the folk the name of the place and concerning its people and they said, "This is called the City of the Magians, and its citizens are mostly given to Fire-worshipping in lieu of the Omnipotent King." Then he enquired of the City of Ebony and they answered, "Of a truth it is a year's journey thither by land and six months by sea: it was governed erst by a King called Armanus; but he took to son- in-law and made King in his stead a Prince called Kamar al-Zaman distinguished for justice and munificence, equity and benevolence.” When Amjad heard tell of his father, he groaned and wept and lamented and knew not whither to go. However, he bought a something of food and carried it to a retired spot where he sat down thinking to eat; but, recalling his brother, he fell a- weeping and swallowed but a morsel to keep breath and body together, and that against his will. Then he rose and walked about the city, seeking news of his brother, till he saw a Moslem tailor sitting in his shop so he sat down by him and told him his story; whereupon quoth the tailor, “If he have fallen into the hands of the Magians, thou shalt hardly see him again: yet it may be Allah will reunite you twain. But thou, O my brother,” he continued wilt thou lodge with me?” Amjad answered, “Yes”; and the tailor rejoiced at this. So he abode with him many days, what while the tailor comforted him and exhorted him to patience and taught him tailoring, till he became expert in the craft. Now one day he went forth to the sea-shore and washed his clothes; after which he entered the bath and put on clean raiment; then he walked about the city, to divert himself with its sights and presently there met him on the way a woman of passing beauty and loveliness, without peer for grace and comeliness. When she saw him she raised her face-veil and signed to him by moving her eyebrows and her eyes with luring glances, and versified these couplets,

“I drooped my glance when seen thee on the way *
    As though, O slim-waist! felled by Sol’s hot ray:
Thou art the fairest fair that e’er appeared, *
    Fairer to-day than fair of yesterday:[384]
Were Beauty parted, a fifth part of it *
    With Joseph or a part of fifth would stay;
The rest would fly to thee, shine ownest own; *
    Be every soul thy sacrifice, I pray!”

When Amjad heard these her words, they gladdened his heart which inclined to her and his bowels yearned towards her and the hands of love sported with him; so he sighed to her in reply and spoke these couplets,

“Above the rose of cheek is thorn of lance;[385] *

Who dareth pluck it, rashest chevisance?
Stretch not thy hand towards it, for night long *
Those lances marred because we snatched a glance!
Say her, who tyrant is and tempter too *
(Though justice might her tempting power enhance): —
Thy face would add to errors were it veiled; *
Unveiled I see its guard hath best of chance!
Eye cannot look upon Sol's naked face; *
But can, when mist-cloud dims his countenance:
The honey-hive is held by honey-bee;[386] *
Ask the tribe-guards what wants their vigilance?
An they would slay me, let them end their ire *
Rancorous, and grant us freely to advance:
They're not more murderous, an charge the whole *
Than charging glance of her who wears the mole."

And hearing these lines from Amjad she sighed with the deepest sighs and, signing to him again, repeated these couplets,

"'Tis thou hast trodden coyness path not I: *
Grant me thy favours for the time draws nigh:
O thou who makest morn with light of brow, *
And with loosed brow-locks night in lift to stye!
Thine idol-aspect made of me thy slave, *
Tempting as temptedst me in days gone by:
'Tis just my liver fry with hottest love: *
Who worship fire for God must fire aby:
Thou sellest like of me for worthless price; *
If thou must sell, ask high of those who buy."

When Amjad heard these her words he said to her, "Wilt thou come to my lodging or shall I go with thee to shine?" So she hung her head in shame to the ground and repeated the words of Him whose Name be exalted, "Men shall have the pre-eminence above women, because of those advantages wherein Allah hath caused the one of them to excel the other."[387] Upon this, Amjad took the hint. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her

permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Thirty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Amjad took the woman's hint and understood that she wished to go with him whither he was going; he felt himself bounder to find a place wherein to receive her, but was ashamed to carry her to the house of his host, the tailor. So he walked on and she walked after him, and the two ceased not walking from street to street and place to place, till she was tired and said to him, "O my lord, where is thy house?" Answered he, "Before us a little way." Then he turned aside into a handsome by-street, followed by the young woman, and walked on till he came to the end, when he found it was no thoroughfare and exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" Then raising his eyes, he saw, at the upper end of the lane a great doer with two stone benches; but it was locked. So Amjad sat down on one of the benches and she on the other; and she said to him, "O my lord, wherefore waitest thou?" He bowed his head awhile to the ground then raised it and answered, "I am awaiting my Mameluke who hath the key; for I bade him make me ready meat and drink and flowers, to deck the wine-service against my return from the bath." But he said to himself, "Haply the time will be tedious to her and she will go about her business, leaving me here, when I will wend my own way." However, as soon as she was weary of long waiting, she said, "O my lord, thy Mameluke delayeth; and here are we sitting in the street;" and she arose and took a stone and went up to the lock. Said Amjad, "Be not in haste, but have patience till the servant come." However, she hearkened not to him, but smote the wooden bolt with the stone and broke it in half, whereupon the door opened. Quoth he, "What possessed thee to do this deed?" Quoth she, "Pooh, pooh, my lord! what matter it? Is not the house thy house and thy place?" He said, "There was no need to break the bolt." Then the damsel entered, to the confusion of Amjad, who knew not what to do for fear of the people of the house; but she said to him, "Why dost thou not enter, O light of mine eyes and core of my heart?" Replied he, "I hear and obey; but my servant tarrieth long and I know not if he have done aught of what I bade him and specially enjoined upon him, or not."

Hereupon he entered, sore in fear of the people of the house, and found himself in a handsome saloon with four dais'd recesses, each facing other, and containing closets and raised seats, all bespread with stuffs of silk and brocade; and in the midst was a jetting fountain of costly fashion, on whose margin rested a covered tray of meats, with a leather tablecloth hanging up and gem-encrusted dishes, full of fruits and sweet- scented flowers. Hard by stood drinking vessels and a candlestick with a single wax-candle therein; and the place was full of precious stuffs and was ranged with chests and stools, and on each seat lay a parcel of clothes upon which was a purse full of monies, gold and silver. The floor was paved with marble and the house bore witness in every part to its owner's fortune. When Amjad saw all this, he was confounded at his case and said to himself, "I am a lost man! Verily we are Allah's and to Allah we are returning!" As for the damsel, when she sighted the place she rejoiced indeed with a joy nothing could exceed, and said to him, "By Allah, O my lord, thy servant hath not failed of his duty; for see, he hath swept the place and cooked the meat and set on the fruit; and indeed I come at the best of times." But he paid no heed to her, his heart being taken up with fear of the house- folk; and she said, "Fie, O my lord, O my heart! What aileth thee to stand thus?" Then she sighed and, giving him a buss which sounded like the cracking of a walnut, said, "O my lord, an thou have made an appointment with other than with me, I will gird my middle and serve her and thee. Amjad laughed from a heart full of rage and wrath and came forwards and sat down, panting and saying to himself, "Alack, mine ill death and doom when the owner of the place shall return!" Then she seated herself by him and fell to toying and laughing, whilst Amjad sat careful and frowning, thinking a thousand thoughts and communing with himself, "Assuredly the master of the house cannot but come, and then what shall I say to him? he needs must kill me and my life will be lost thus foolishly." Presently she rose and, tucking up her sleeves, took a tray of food on which she laid the cloth and then set it before Amjad and began to eat, saying, "Eat, O my lord." So he came forward and ate; but the food was not pleasant to him; on the contrary he ceased not to look towards the door, till the damsel had eaten her fill, when she took away the tray of the meats and, setting on the dessert, fell to eating of the dried fruits. Then she brought the wine service and opening the jar, filled a cup and handed it to Amjad, who took it from her hand saying to him self, ‘ Ah, ah! and well away, when the master of the house cometh and seeth me!”; and he kept his eyes fixed on the threshold, even with cup in hand. While he was in this case, lo! in came the master of the house, who was a white slave, one of the chief men of the city, being Master of the Horse[388] to the King. He had fitted up this saloon for his pleasures, that he might make merry therein and be private with whom he would, and he had that day bidden a youth whom he loved and had made this entertainment for him. Now the name of this slave was Bahádur,[389] and he was open of hand, generous, munificent and fain of alms-giving and charitable works. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it wad the Two Hundred and Thirty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Bahadur, the Master of the Horse and the owner of the house, came to the door of the saloon and found it open, he entered slowly and softly and looking in, with head advanced and out stretched neck, saw Amjad and the girl sitting before the dish of fruit and the wine-jar in front of them. Now Amjad at that moment had the cup in his hand and his face turned to the door; and when his glance met Bahadur’s eyes his hue turned pale yellow and his side-muscles quivered, so seeing his trouble Bahadur signed to him with his finger on his lips, as much as to say, “Be silent and come hither to me.” Whereupon he set down the cup and rose and the damsel cried, “Whither away?” He shook his head and, signing to her that he wished to make water, went out into the passage barefoot. Now when he saw Bahadur he knew him for the master of the house; so he hastened to him and, kissing his hands, said to him, “Allah upon thee, O my lord, ere thou do me a hurt, hear what I have to say.” Then he told him who he was from first to last and acquainted him with what caused him to quit his native land and royal state, and how he had not entered his house of his free will, but that it was the girl who had broken the lock-bolt and done all this.[390] When Bahadur heard his story and knew that he was a King’s son, he felt for him and, taking compassion on him, said, “Hearken to me, O Amjad, and do what I bid thee and I will guarantee thy safety from that thou fearest; but, if thou cross me, I will kill thee.” Amjad replied, “Command me as thou wilt: I will not gainsay thee in aught; no, never, for I am the freedman of thy bounty.” Rejoined Bahadur, “Then go back forthwith into the saloon, sit down in thy place and be at peace and at shine ease; I will presently come in to thee, and when thou seest me (remember my name is Bahadur) do thou revile me and rail at me, saying, ‘What made thee tarry till so late?’ And accept no excuse from me; nay, so far from it, rise and beat me; and, if thou spare me, I will do away thy life. Enter now and make merry and whatsoever thou seekest of me at this time I will bring thee forthwith; and do thou spend this night as thou wilt and on the morrow wend thy way. This I do in honour of thy strangerhood, for I love the stranger and hold myself bounder to do him devoir.” So Amjad kissed his hand, and, returning to the saloon with his face clad in its natural white and red, at once said to the damsel, “O my mistress, thy presence hath gladdened this shine own place and ours is indeed a blessed night.” Quoth the girl, “Verily I see a wonderful change in thee, that thou now welcomest me so cordially!” So Amjad answered, “By Allah, O my lady, methought my servant Bahadur had robbed me of some necklaces of jewels, worth ten thousand diners each; however, when I went out but now in concern for this, I sought for them and found them in their place. I know not why the slave tarrieth so long and needs must I punish him for it.” She was satisfied with his answer, and they sported and drank and made merry and ceased not to be so till near sundown, when Bahadur came in to them, having changed his clothes and girt his middle and put on shoes, such as are worn of Mamelukes. He saluted and kissed the ground; then held his hands behind him and stood, with his head hanging down, as one who confesseth to a fault. So Amjad looked at him with angry eyes and asked, “Why hast thou tarried till now, O most pestilent of slaves?” Answered Bahadur, “O my lord, I was busy washing my clothes and knew not of thy being here; for our appointed time was nightfall and not day-tide.” But Amjad cried out at him, saying, “Thou liest, O vilest of slaves! By Allah, I must needs beat thee.” So he rose and, throwing Bahadur prone on the ground, took a stick and beat him gently; but the damsel sprang up and, snatching the stick from his hand, came down upon Bahadur so lustily, that in extreme pain the tears ran from his eyes and he ground his teeth together and called out for succour; whilst Amjad cried out to the girl "Don't"; and she cried out, "Let me satisfy my anger upon him!" till at last he pulled the stick out of her hand and pushed her away. So Bahadur rose and, wiping away his tears from his cheeks, waited upon them the while, after which he swept the hall and lighted the lamps; but as often as he went in and out, the lady abused him and cursed him till Amjad was wroth with her and said, "For Almighty Allah's sake leave my Mameluke; he is not used to this." Then they sat and ceased not eating and drinking (and Bahadur waiting upon them) till midnight when, being weary with service and beating, he fell asleep in the midst of the hall and snored and snorted; whereupon the damsel, who was drunken with wine, said to Amjad, "Arise, take the sword hanging yonder and cut me off this slave's head; and, if thou do it not, I will be the death of thee!" "What possesseth thee to slay my slave?" asked Amjad; and she answered, "Our joyaunce will not be complete but by his death. If thou wilt not kill him, I will do it myself." Quoth Amjad, "By Allah's rights to thee, do not this thing!" Quoth she, "It must perforce be;" and, taking down the sword, drew it and made at Bahadur to kill him; but Amjad said in his mind, "This man hath entreated us courteously and sheltered us and done us kindness and made himself my slave: shall we requite him by slaughtering him? This shall never be!" Then he said to the woman, "If my Mameluke must be killed, better I should kill him than thou." So saying, he took the sword from her and, raising his hand, smote her on the neck and made her head fly from her body. It fell upon Bahadur who awoke and sat up and opened his eyes, when he saw Amjad standing by him and in his hand the sword dyed with blood, and the damsel lying dead. He enquired what had passed, and Amjad told him all she had said, adding, "Nothing would satisfy her but she must slay thee; and this is her reward." Then Bahadur rose and, kissing the Prince's hand, said to him, "Would to Heaven thou hadst spared her! but now there is nothing for it but to rid us of her without stay or delay, before the day-break." Then he girded his loins and took the body, wrapped it in an Abá-cloak and, laying it in a large basket of palm-leaves, he shouldered it saying, “Thou art a stranger here and knowest no one: so sit thou in this place and await my return till day-break. If I come back to thee, I will assuredly do thee great good service and use my endeavours to have news of thy brother; but if by sunrise I return not, know that all is over with me; and peace be on thee, and the house and all it containeth of stuffs and money are shine.” Then he fared forth from the saloon bearing the basket; and, threading the streets, he made for the salt sea, thinking to throw it therein: but as he drew near the shore, he turned and saw that the Chief of Police and his officers had ranged themselves around him; and, on recognising him, they wondered and opened the basket, wherein they found the slain woman. So they seized him and laid him in bilboes all that night till the morning, when they carried him and the basket, as it was, to the King and reported the case. The King was sore enraged when he looked upon the slain and said to Bahadur, “Woe to thee! Thou art always so doing; thou killest folk and castest them into the sea and takest their goods. How many murders hast thou done ere this?” Thereupon Bahadur hung his head. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Thirty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Bahadur hung down his head groundwards before the King, who cried out at him, saying, “Woe to thee! Who killed this girl?” He replied, “O my lord! I killed her, and there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!”[391] So the King in his anger, commanded to hang him; and the hangman went down with him by the King’s commandment, and the Chief of Police accompanied him with a crier who called upon all the folk to witness the execution of Bahadur, the King’s Master of the Horse; and on this wise they paraded him through the main streets and the market-streets. This is how it fared with Bahadur; but as regards Amjad, he awaited his host’s return till the day broke and the sun rose, and when he saw that he came not, he exclaimed, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Would I knew what is become of him?” And, as he sat musing behold, he heard the crier proclaiming Bahadur’s sentence and bidding the people to see the spectacle of his hanging at midday; whereat he wept and exclaimed, "Verily, we are Allah's and to Him we are returning! He meaneth to sacrifice himself unjustly for my sake, when I it was who slew her. By Allah, this shall never be!" Then he went from the saloon and, shutting the door after him, hurriedly threaded the streets till he overtook Bahadur, when he stood before the Chief of Police and said to him, "O my lord, put not Bahadur to death, for he is innocent. By Allah, none killed her but I." Now when the Captain of Police heard these words, he took them both and, carrying them before the King, acquainted him with what Amjad had said; whereupon he looked at the Prince and asked him, "Didst thou kill the damsel?" He answered, "Yes" and the King said, "Tell me why thou killedst her, and speak the truth." Replied Amjad, "O King, it is indeed a marvellous event and a wondrous matter that hath befallen me: were it graven with needles on the eye-corners, it would serve as a warner to whoso would be warned!" Then he told him his whole story and informed him of all that had befallen him and his brother, first and last; whereat the King was much startled and surprised and said to him, "Know that now I find thee to be excusable; but list, O youth! Wilt thou be my Wazír?" "Hearkening and obedience," answered Amjad whereupon the King bestowed magnificent dresses of honour on him and Bahadur and gave him a handsome house, with eunuchs and officers and all things needful, appointing him stipends and allowances and bidding him make search for his brother As'ad. So Amjad sat down in the seat of the Wazirate and governed and did justice and invested and deposed and took and gave. Moreover, he sent out a crier to cry his brother throughout the city, and for many days made proclamation in the main streets and market-streets, but heard no news of As'ad nor happened on any trace of him. Such was his case; but as regards his brother, the Magi ceased not to torture As'ad night and day and eve and morn for a whole year's space, till their festival drew near, when the old man Bahram[392] made ready for the voyage and fitted out a ship for himself. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Thirty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Bahram, the Magian, having fitted out a ship for the voyage, took As'ad and put him in a chest which he locked and had it transported on board. Now it so came to pass that, at the very time of shipping it, Amjad was standing to divert himself by looking upon the sea; and when he saw the men carrying the gear and shipping it, his heart throbbed and he called to his pages to bring him his beast. Then, mounting with a company of his officers, he rode down to the sea-side and halted before the Magian's ship, which he commended his men to board and search. They did his bidding, and boarded the vessel and rummaged in every part, but found nothing; so they returned and told Amjad, who mounted again and rode back. But he felt troubled in mind; and when he reached his place and entered his palace, he cast his eyes on the wall and saw written thereon two lines which were these couplets,

"My friends! if ye are banisht from mine eyes, *
    From heart and mind ye ne'er go wandering:
But ye have left me in my woe, and rob *
    Rest from my eyelids while ye are slumbering."

And seeing them Amjad thought of his brother and wept. Such was his case; but as for Bahram, the Magian, he embarked and shouted and bawled to his crew to make sail in all haste. So they shook out the sails and departed and ceased not to fare on many days and nights; and, every other day, Bahram took out As'ad and gave him a bit of bread and made him drink a sup of water, till they drew near the Mountain of Fire. Then there came out on them a storm-wind and the sea rose against them, so that the ship was driven out of her course till she took a wrong line and fell into strange waters; and, at last they came in sight of a city builded upon the shore, with a castle whose windows overlooked the main. Now the ruler of this city was a Queen called Marjánah, and the captain said to Bahram, "O my lord, we have strayed from our course and come to the island of Queen Marjanah, who is a devout Moslemah; and, if she know that we are Magians, she will take our ship and slay us to the last man. Yet needs must we put in here to rest and refit." Quoth Bahram, "Right is thy recking, and whatso thou seest fit that will I do!" Said the ship master, "If the Queen summon us and question us, how shall we answer her?"; and Bahram replied, "Let us clothe this Moslem we have with us in a Mameluke's habit and carry him ashore with us, so that when the Queen sees him, she will suppose and say, 'This is a slave.' As for me I will tell her that I am a slave-dealer[393] who buys and sells white slaves, and that I had with me many but have sold all save this one, whom I retained to keep my accounts, for he can read and write." And the captain said "This device should serve." Presently they reached the city and slackened sail and cast the anchors; and the ship lay still, when behold, Queen Marjanah came down to them, attended by her guards and, halting before the vessel, called out to the captain, who landed and kissed the ground before her. Quoth she, "What is the lading of this thy ship and whom hast thou with thee?"" Quoth he, "O Queen of the Age, I have with me a merchant who dealeth in slaves." And she said, "Hither with him to me"; whereupon Bahram came ashore to her, with As'ad walking behind him in a slave's habit, and kissed the earth before her. She asked, "What is thy condition?"; and he answered, "I am a dealer in chattels." Then she looked at As'ad and, taking him for a Mameluke, asked him, "What is thy name, O youth?" He answered, "Dost thou ask my present or my former name?" "Hast thou then two names?" enquired she, and he replied (and indeed his voice was choked with tears), "Yes; my name aforetime was Al-As'ad, the most happy, but now it is Al- Mu'tarr — Miserrimus." Her heart inclined to him and she said, "Canst thou write?" "Yes,'' answered he, and she gave him ink- case and reed-pen and paper and said to him, "Write somewhat that I may see it." So he wrote these two couplets,

"What can the slave do when pursued by Fate, *
    O justest Judge! whatever be his state?[394]
Whom God throws hand bound in the depths and says, *
    Beware lest water should thy body wet?"[395]

Now when she read these lines, she had ruth upon him and said to Bahram, "Sell me this slave." He replied, "O my lady, I cannot sell him, for I have parted with all the rest and none is left with me but he." Quoth the Queen, "I must need have him of thee, either by sale or way of gift." But quoth Bahram, "I will neither sell him nor give him." Whereat she was wroth and, taking As'ad by the hand, carried him up to the castle and sent to Bahram, saying, “Except thou set sail and depart our city this very night, I will seize all thy goods and break up thy ship.” Now when the message reached the Magian, he grieved with sore grief and cried, “Verily this voyage is on no wise to be commended.” Then he arose and made ready and took all he needed and awaited the coming of the night to resume his voyage, saying to the sailors, “Provide yourselves with your things and fill your water-skins, that we may set sail at the last of the night.” So the sailors did their business and awaited the coming of darkness. Such was their case; but as regards Queen Marjanah, when she had brought As’ad into the castle, she opened the casements overlooking the sea and bade her handmaids bring food. They set food before As’ad and herself and both ate, after which the Queen called for wine. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Queen Marjanah bade her handmaids bring wine and they set it before her, she fell to drinking with As’ad. Now, Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) filled her heart with love for the Prince and she kept filling his cup and handing it to him till his reason fled; and presently he rose and left the hall to satisfy a call of nature. As he passed out of the saloon he saw an open door through which he went and walked on till his walk brought him to a vast garden full of all manner fruits and flowers; and, sitting down under a tree, he did his occasion. Then he rose and went up to a jetting fountain in the garden and made the lesser ablution and washed his hands and face, after which he would have risen to go away; but the air smote him and he fell back, with his clothes undone and slept, and night overcame him thus. So far concerning him; but as concerns Bahram, the night being come, he cried out to his crew, saying, “Set sail and let us away!”; and the’ answered, “We hear and obey, but wait till we fill our water- skins and then we will set sail.” So they landed with their water skins and went round about the castle, and found nothing but garden-walls: whereupon they climbed over into the garden and followed the track of feet, which led them to the fountain; and there they found As’ad lying on his back. They knew him and were glad to find him; and, after filling their water-skins, they bore him off and climbed the wall again with him and carried him back in haste to Bahram to whom they said, “Hear the good tidings of thy winning thy wish; and gladden thy heart and beat thy drums and sound thy pipes; for thy prisoner, whom Queen Marjanah took from thee by force, we have found and brought back to thee”; and they threw As’ad down before him. When Bahram saw him, his heart leapt for joy and his breast swelled with gladness. Then he bestowed largesse on the sailors and bade them set sail in haste. So they sailed forthright, intending to make the Mountain of Fire and stayed not their course till the morning. This is how it fared with them; but as regards Queen Marjanah, she abode awhile, after As’ad went down from her, awaiting his return in vain for he came not; thereupon she rose and sought him, yet found no trace of him. Then she bade her women light flambeaux and look for him, whilst she went forth in person and, seeing the garden- door open, knew that he had gone thither. So she went out into the garden and finding his sandals lying by the fountain, searched the place in every part, but came upon no sign of him; and yet she gave not over the search till morning. Then she enquired for the ship and they told her, “The vessel set sail in the first watch of the night”; wherefor she knew that they had taken As’ad with them, and this was grievous to her and she was sore an-angered. She bade equip ten great ships forthwith and, making ready for fight, embarked in one of the ten with her Mamelukes and slave-women and men-at-arms, all splendidly accoutred and weaponed for war. They spread the sails and she said to the captains, “If you overtake the Magian’s ship, ye shall have of me dresses of honour and largesse of money; but if you fail so to do, I will slay you to the last man.” Whereat fear and great hope animated the crews and they sailed all that day and the night and the second day and the third day till, on the fourth they sighted the ship of Bahram, the Magian, and before evening fell the Queen’s squadron had surrounded it on all sides, just as Bahram had taken As’ad forth of the chest and was beating and torturing him, whilst the Prince cried out for help and deliverance, but found neither helper nor deliverer: and the grievous bastinado sorely tormented him. Now while so occupied, Bahram chanced to look up and, seeing himself encompassed by the Queen’s ships, as the white of the eye encompasseth the black, he gave himself up for lost and groaned and said, “Woe to thee, O As’ad! This is all out of thy head.” Then taking him by the hand he bade his men throw him overboard and cried, “By Allah I will slay thee before I die myself!” So they carried him along by the hands and feet and cast him into the sea and he sank; but Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) willed that his life be saved and that his doom be deferred; so He caused him to sink and rise again and he struck out with his hands and feet, till the Almighty gave him relief, and sent him deliverance; and the waves bore him far from the Magian’s ship and threw him ashore. He landed, scarce crediting his escape, and once more on land he doffed his clothes and wrung them and spread them out to dry; whilst he sat naked and weeping over his condition, and bewailing his calamities and mortal dangers, and captivity and stranger hood. And presently he repeated these two couplets,

“Allah, my patience fails: I have no ward; *
    My breast is straitened and clean cut my cord;
To whom shall wretched slave of case complain *
    Save to his Lord? O thou of lords the Lord!”

Then, having ended his verse, he rose and donned his clothes but he knew not whither to go or whence to come; so he fed on the herbs of the earth and the fruits of the trees and he drank of the streams, and fared on night and day till he came in sight of a city; whereupon he rejoiced and hastened his pace; but when he reached it, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it Was the Two Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when he reached the city the shades of evening closed around him and the gates were shut. Now by the decrees of Pate and man’s lot this was the very city wherein he had been a prisoner and to whose King his brother Amjad was Minister. When As’ad saw the gate was locked, he turned back and made for the burial-ground, where finding a tomb without a door, he entered therein and lay down and fell asleep, with his face covered by his long sleeve.[396] Meanwhile, Queen Marjanah, coming up with Bahram's ship, questioned him of As'ad. Now the Magian, when Queen Marjanah overtook him with her ships, baffled her by his artifice and gramarye; swearing to her that he was not with him and that he knew nothing of him. She searched the ship, but found no trace of her friend, so she took Bahram and, carrying him back to her castle, would have put him to death, but he ransomed himself from her with all his good and his ship; and she released him and his men. They went forth from her hardly believing in their deliverance, and fared on ten days' journey till they came to their own city and found the gate shut, it being eventide. So they made for the burial-ground, thinking to lie the night there and, going round about the tombs, as Fate and Fortune would have it, saw the building wherein As'ad lay wide open; whereat Bahram marvelled and said, "I must look into this sepulchre." Then he entered and found As'ad lying in a corner fast asleep, with his head covered by his sleeve; so he raised his head, and looking in his face, knew him for the man on whose account he had lost his good and his ship, and cried, "What! art thou yet alive?" Then he bound him and gagged him without further parley, and carried him to his house, where he clapped heavy shackles on his feet and lowered him into the underground dungeon aforesaid prepared for the tormenting of Moslems, and he bade his daughter by name Bostán,[397] torture him night and day, till the next year, when they would again visit the Mountain of Fire and there offer him up as a sacrifice. Then he beat him grievously and locking the dungeon door upon him, gave the keys to his daughter. By and by, Bostan opened the door and went down to beat him, but finding him a comely youth and a sweet-faced with arched brows and eyes black with nature's Kohl,[398] she fell in love with him and asked him, "What is thy name?" "My name is As'ad," answered he; whereat she cried, "Mayst thou indeed be happy as thy name,[399] and happy be thy days! Thou deservest not torture and blows, and I see thou hast been injuriously entreated." And she comforted him with kind words and loosed his bonds. Then she questioned him of the religion of Al-Islam and he told her that it was the true and right Faith and that our lord Mohammed had approved himself by surpassing miracles[400] and signs manifest, and that fire-worship is harmful and not profitable; and he went on to expound to her the tenets of Al-Islam till she was persuaded and the love of the True Faith entered her heart. Then, as Almighty Allah had mixed up with her being a fond affection for As'ad, she pronounced the Two Testimonies[401] of the Faith and became of the people of felicity. After this, she brought him meat and drink and talked with him and they prayed together: moreover, she made him chicken stews and fed him therewith, till he regained strength and his sickness left him and he was restored to his former health. Such things befel him with the daughter of Bahram, the Magian; and so it happened that one day she left him and stood at the house-door when behold, she heard the crier crying aloud and saying, "Whoso hath with him a handsome young man, whose favour is thus and thus, and bringeth him forth, shall have all he seeketh of money; but if any have him and deny it, he shall be hanged over his own door and his property shall be plundered and his blood go for naught." Now As'ad had acquainted Bostan bint Bahram with his whole history: so, when she heard the crier, she knew that it was he who was sought for and, going down to him, told him the news. Then he fared forth and made for the mansion of the Wazir, whom, when As'ad saw, exclaimed, "By Allah, this Minister is my brother Amjad!" Then he went up (and the damsel walking behind him) to the Palace, where he again saw his brother, and threw himself upon him; whereupon Amjad also knew him and fell upon his neck and they embraced each other, whilst the Wazir's Mamelukes dismounted and stood round them. They lay awhile insensible and, when they came to themselves, Amjad took his brother and carried him to the Sultan, to whom he related the whole story, and the Sultan charged him to plunder Bahram's house. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Sultan ordered Amjad to plunder Bahram's house and to hang its owner. So Amjad despatched thither for that purpose a company of men, who sacked the house and took Bahram and brought his daughter to the Wazir by whom she was received with all honour, for As'ad had told his brother the torments he had suffered and the kindness she had done him. Thereupon Amjad related in his turn to As'ad all that had passed between himself and the damsel; and how he had escaped hanging and had become Wazir; and they made moan, each to other, of the anguish they had suffered for separation. Then the Sultan summoned Bahram and bade strike off his head; but he said, “O most mighty King, art thou indeed resolved to put me to death?” Replied the King, “Yes, except thou save thyself by becoming a Moslem.” Quoth Bahram, “O King, bear with me a little while!” Then he bowed his head groundwards and presently raising it again, made profession of The Faith and islamised at the hands of the Sultan. They all rejoiced at his conversion and Amjad and As’ad told him all that had befallen them, whereat he wondered and said, “O my lords, make ready for the journey and I will depart with you and carry you back to your father’s court in a ship.” At this they rejoiced and wept with sore weeping but he said, “O my lords, weep not for your departure, for it shall reunite you with those you love, even as were Ni’amah and Naomi.” “And what befel Ni’amah and Naomi?” asked they. “They tell,” replied Bahram, “(but Allah alone is All knowing) the following tale of

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FOOTNOTES VOLUME III.

[1] This "horripilation," for which we have the poetical term "goose-flesh," is often mentioned in Hindu as in Arab literature.

[2] How often we have heard this in England!

[3] As a styptic. The scene in the text has often been enacted in Egypt where a favourite feminine mode of murdering men is by beating and bruising the testicles. The Fellahs are exceedingly clever in inventing methods of manslaughter. For some years bodies were found that bore no outer mark of violence, and only Frankish inquisitiveness discovered that the barrel of a pistol had been passed up the anus and the weapon discharged internally Murders of this description are known in English history; but never became popular practice.

[4] Arab. "Zakar," that which betokens masculinity. At the end of the tale we learn that she also gelded him; thus he was a "Sandal)," a rasé.

[5] See vol. i. . {see Volume 1, Note 188}

[6] The purity and intensity of her love had attained to a something of prophetic strain.

[7] Lane corrupts this Persian name to Sháh Zemán (i. 568).

[8] i.e. the world, which includes the ideas of Fate, Time,
Chance.

[9] Arab. "Bárid," silly, noyous, contemptible; as in the proverb

Two things than ice are colder cold: —
An old man young, a young man old.

A "cold-of-countenance"=a fool: "May Allah make cold thy face!"=may it show want and misery. "By Allah, a cold speech!"=a silly or abusive tirade (Pilgrimage, ii. 22).

[10] The popular form is, “often the ear loveth before the eye.”

[11] Not the first time that royalty has played this prank, nor the last, perhaps.

[12] i.e. the Lady Dunya.

[13] These magazines are small strongly-built rooms on the ground floor, where robbery is almost impossible.

[14] Lit. “approbation,” “benediction”; also the Angel who keeps the Gates of Paradise and who has allowed one of the Ghilmán (or Wuldán) the boys of supernatural beauty that wait upon the Faithful, to wander forth into this wicked world.

[15] In Europe this would be a plurale majestatis, used only by Royalty. In Arabic it has no such significance, and even the lower orders apply it to themselves; although it often has a soupçon of “I and thou.”

[16] Man being an “extract of despicable water” (Koran xxxii. 7) ex spermate genital), which Mr. Rodwell renders “from germs of life,” “from sorry water.”

[17] i.e. begotten by man’s seed in the light of salvation
(Núr al-hudá).

[18] The rolls of white (camphor-like) scarf-skin and sordes which come off under the bathman’s glove become by miracle of Beauty, as brown musk. The Rubber or Shampooer is called in Egypt “Mukayyis” (vulgarly “Mukayyisáti”) or “bagman,” from his “Kís,” a bag-glove of coarse woollen stuff. To “Johnny Raws” he never fails to show the little rolls which come off the body and prove to them how unclean they are, but the material is mostly dead scarf-skin

[19] The normal phrase on such occasions (there is always a “dovetail” de rigueur) “Allah give thee profit!”

[20] i.e. We are forced to love him only, and ignore giving him a rival (referring to Koranic denunciations of "Shirk," or attributing a partner to Allah, the religion of plurality, syntheism not polytheism): see, he walks tottering under the weight of his back parts wriggling them whilst they are rounded like the revolving heavens.

[21] Jannat al-Na'ím (Garden of Delight); the fifth of the seven Paradises made of white diamond; the gardens and the plurality being borrowed from the Talmud. Mohammed's Paradise, by the by, is not a greater failure than Dante's. Only ignorance or pious fraud asserts it to be wholly sensual; and a single verse is sufficient refutation: "Their prayer therein shall be 'Praise unto thee, O. Allah!' and their salutation therein shall be 'Peace!' and the end of their prayer shall be, 'Praise unto God, the Lord of all creatures'" (Koran x. 10-11). See also lvi. 24- 26. It will also be an intellectual condition wherein knowledge will greatly be increased (lxxxviii viii. 17-20). Moreover the Moslems, far more logical than Christians, admit into Paradise the so-called "lower animals."

[22] Sed vitam faciunt balnea, vine, Venus! The Hammam to Easterns is a luxury as well as a necessity; men sit there for hours talking chiefly of money and their prowess with the fair; and women pass half the day in it complaining of their husbands' over-amativeness and contrasting their own chaste and modest aversion to camel congress.

[23] The frigidarium or cold room, coolness being delightful to the Arab.

[24] The calidarium or hot room of the bath.

[25] The Angel who acts door-keeper of Hell; others say he specially presides over the torments of the damned (Koran xliii. 78).

[26] The Door-keeper of Heaven before mentioned who, like the Guebre Zamiyád has charge of the heavenly lads and lasses, and who is often charged by poets with letting them slip.

[27] Lane (i. 616), says "of wine, milk, sherbet, or any other beverage." Here it is wine, a practice famed in Persian poetry, especially by Hafiz, but most distasteful to a European stomach. We find the Mu allakah of Imr al-Keys noticing "our morning draught." Nott (Hafiz) says a "cheerful cup of wine in the morning was a favourite indulgence with the more luxurious Persians. And it was not uncommon among the Easterns, to salute friend by saying."May your morning potation be agreeable to you!" In the present day this practice is confined to regular debauchees.

[28] Koran xii. 31. The words spoken by Zulaykhá's women friends and detractors whom she invited to see Beauty Joseph.

[29] A formula for averting fascination. Koran, chaps. cxiii. 1. "Falak" means "cleaving" hence the breaking forth of light from darkness, a "wonderful instance of the Divine power."

[30] The usual delicate chaff.

[31] Such letters are generally written on a full-sized sheet of paper ("notes" are held slighting in the East) and folded till the breadth is reduced to about one inch. The edges are gummed, the ink, much like our Indian ink, is smeared with the finger upon the signet ring; the place where it is to be applied is slightly wetted with the tongue and the seal is stamped across the line of junction to secure privacy. I have given a specimen of an original love-letter of the kind in "Scinde, or the Unhappy Valley," chaps. iv.

[32] Arab. "Salb" which may also mean hanging, but the usual term for the latter in The Nights is "shanak." Crucifixion, abolished by the superstitious Constantine, was practised as a servile punishment as late as the days of Mohammed Ali Pasha the Great e malefactors were nailed and tied to the patibulum or cross-piece without any sup pedaneum or foot-rest and left to suffer tortures from flies and sun, thirst and hunger. They often lived three days and died of the wounds mortifying and the nervous exhaustion brought on by cramps and convulsions. In many cases the corpses were left to feed the kites and

crows; and this added horror to the death. Moslems care little for mere hanging. Whenever a fanatical atrocity is to be punished, the malefactor should be hung in pig-skin, his body burnt and the ashes publicly thrown into a common cesspool.

[33] Arab "Shaytán" the insolent or rebellious one is a common term of abuse. The word I. Koramc, and borrowed as usual from the Jews. "Satan" occurs four times in the O.T. of which two are in Job where, however, he is a subordinate angel.

[34] Arab. "Alak" from the Koran xxii. 5. " O men…consider that we first created you of dust (Adam); afterwards of seed (Rodwell's "moist germs of life"); afterwards of a little coagulated (or clots of) blood." It refers to all mankind except Adam, Eve and Isa. Also chaps. xcvi. 2, which, as has been said was probably the first composed at Meccah. Mr. Rodwell (v. 10) translates by 'Servant of God" what should be "Slave of Allah," alluding to Mohammed's original name Abdullah. See my learned friend Aloys Sprenger, Leben, etc., i.155.

[35] The Hindus similarly exaggerate: "He was ready to leap out of his skin in his delight" (Katha, etc.,).

[36] A star in the tail of the Great Bear, one of the "Banát al-Na'ash," or a star close to the second. Its principal use is to act foil to bright Sohayl (Canopus) as in the beginning of Jámí's Layla-Majnún: —

> To whom Thou'rt hid, day is darksome night:
> To whom shown, Sohá as Sohayl is bright.

See also al-Hariri (xxxii. and xxxvi.). The saying, "I show her Soha and she shows me the moon" (A. P. i. 547) arose as follows. In the Ignorance a beautiful Amazon defied any man to take her maidenhead; and a certain Ibn al-Ghazz won the game by struggling with her till she was nearly senseless. He then asked her, "How is thine eye-sight: dost thou see Soha?" and she, in her confusion, pointed to the moon and said, "That is it!"

[37] The moon being masculine (lupus) and the sun feminine.

[38] The “five Shaykhs” must allude to that number of Saints whose names are doubtful; it would be vain to offer conjectures. Lane and his “Sheykh” (i. 617) have tried and failed.

[39] The beauties of nature seem always to provoke hunger in Orientals, especially Turks, as good news in Englishmen.

[40] Pers. “Lájuward”: Arab. “Lázuward”; prob. the origin of our “azure,” through the Romaic and the Ital. azzurro; and, more evidently still, of lapis lazuli, for which do not see the Dictionaries.

[41] Arab. “Maurid.” the desert-wells where caravans drink: also the way to water wells.

[42] The famous Avicenna, whom the Hebrews called Aben Sina. The early European Arabists, who seem to have learned Arabic through Hebrew, borrowed their corruption, and it long kept its place in Southern Europe.

[43] According to the Hindus there are ten stages of love- sickness: (1) Love of the eyes (2) Attraction of the Manas or mind; (3) Birth of desire; (4) Loss of sleep; (5) Loss of flesh; (6) Indifference to objects of sense; (7) Loss of shame, (8) Distraction of thought (9) Loss of consciousness; and (10) Death.

[44] We should call this walk of “Arab ladies” a waddle: I have never seen it in Europe except amongst the trading classes of Trieste, who have a “wriggle” of their own.

[45] In our idiom six doors.

[46] They refrained from the highest enjoyment, intending to marry.

[47] Arab. “Jihád,” lit. fighting against something; Koranically, fighting against infidels non- believers in Al-lslam (chaps. Ix. 1). But the “Mujáhidún” who wage such war are forbidden to act aggressively

(ii. 186). Here it is a war to save a son.

[48] The lady proposing extreme measures is characteristic: Egyptians hold, and justly enough, that their women are more amorous than men.

[49] "O Camphor," an antiphrase before noticed. The vulgar also say "Yá Taljí"=O snowy (our snowball), the polite "Ya Abú Sumrah !" =O father of brownness.

[50] i.e. which fit into sockets in the threshold and lintel and act as hinges. These hinges have caused many disputes about how they were fixed, for instance in caverns without moveable lintel or threshold. But one may observe that the upper projections are longer than the lower and that the door never fits close above, so by lifting it up the inferior pins are taken out of the holes. It is the oldest form and the only form known to the Ancients. In Egyptian the hinge is called Akab=the heel, hence the proverb Wakaf' al-báb alá 'akabin; the door standeth on its heel; i.e. every thing in proper place.

[51] Hence the addresses to the Deity: Yá Sátir and Yá Sattár- -Thou who veilest the sins of Thy Servants! said e.g., when a woman is falling from her donkey, etc.

[52] A necessary precaution, for the headsman who would certainly lose his own head by overhaste.

[53] The passage has also been rendered, "and rejoiced him by what he said" (Lane i, 600).

[54] Arab. "Hurr"=noble, independent (opp. to 'Abd=a servile) often used to express animć nobilitas as in Acts xvii. 11; where the Berans were "more noble" than the Thessalonians. The Princess means that the Prince would not lie with her before marriage.

[55] The Persian word is now naturalized as Anglo-Egypeian.

[56] Arab. "khassat hu" = removed his testicles, gelded him.

[57] Here ends the compound tale of Taj al-Muluk cum Aziz plus Azizah, and we return to the history of King Omar's sons.

[58] "Zibl" popularly pronounced Zabal, means "dung." Khan is "Chief," as has been noticed; "Zabbál," which Torrens renders literally "dung-drawer," is one who feeds the Hammam with bois-de-vache, etc.

[59] i.e one who fights the Jihád or "Holy War": it is equivalent to our "good knight."

[60] Arab. "Malik." Azud al Daulah, a Sultan or regent under the Abbaside Caliph Al-Tá'i li 'llah (regn. A.H. 363-381) was the first to take the title of "Malik." The latter in poetry is still written Malík.

[61] A townlet on the Euphrates, in the "awwal Shám," or frontier of Syria.

[62] i.e., the son would look to that.

[63] A characteristic touch of Arab pathos, tender and true.

[64] Arab. "Mawarid" from "ward" = resorting to pool or water- pit (like those of "Gakdúl") for drinking, as opposed to "Sadr"=returning after having drunk at it. Hence the "Sádir" (part. act.) takes precedence of the "Wárid" in Al-Hariri (Ass. of the Badawi).

[65] One of the fountains of Paradise (Koran, chaps. Ixxvi.): the word lit. means "water flowing pleasantly down the throat." The same chapter mentions "Zanjabíl," or the Ginger-fount, which to the Infidel mind unpleasantly suggests "ginger pop."

[66] Arab. "Takhíl" = adorning with Kohl.

[67] The allusions are far-fetched and obscure as in Scandinavian poetry. Mr. Payne (ii. 314) translates "Naml" by "net." I understand the ant (swarm) creeping up the cheeks, a common simile for a

young beard. The lovers are in the Lazá (hell) of jealousy etc., yet feel in the Na’ím (heaven) of love and robe in green, the hue of hope, each expecting to be the favoured one.

[68] Arab. “Ukhuwán,” the classical term. There are two chamomiles, the white (Bábúnaj) and the yellow (Kaysún), these however are Syrian names and plants are differently called in almost every Province of Arabia

[69] In nomadic life the parting of lovers happens so frequently that it become. a stock topic in poetry and often, as here, the lover complains of parting when he is not parted. But the gravamen lies in the word “Wasl” which may mean union, meeting, reunion Or coition. As Ka’ab ibn Zuhayr began his famous poem with “Su’ád hath departed,” 900 imitators (says Al-Siyuti) adopted the Násib or address to the beloved and Su’ad came to signify a cruel, capricious mistress.

[70] As might be expected from a nation of camel-breeders actual cautery which can cause only counter-irritation, is a favourite nostrum; and the Hadis or prophetic saying is “Akhir al-dawá (or al-tibb) al-Kayy” = cautery is the end of medicine- cure; and “Fire and sickness cannot cohabit.” Most of the Badawi bear upon their bodies grisly marks Of this heroic treatment, whose abuse not unfrequently brings on gangrene. The Hadis (Burckhardt, Proverbs, No. 30) also means “if nothing else avail, take violent measures.

[71] The Spaniards have the same expression: “Man is fire and woman is tinder.”

[72] Arab. “Báshik” from Persian “Báshah” (accipiter Nisus) a fierce little species of sparrow-hawk which I have described in “Falconry in the Valley of the Indus” (, etc.).

[73] Lit. “Coals (fit) for frying pan.”

[74] Arab. “Libdah,” the sign of a pauper or religious mendicant. He is addressed “Yá Abu libdah!” (O father of a felt calotte!)

[75] In times of mourning Moslem women do not use perfumes or dyes, like the Henna here alluded to in the pink legs and feet of the dove.

[76] Koran, chaps. ii. 23. The idea is repeated in some forty Koranic passages.

[77] A woman's name, often occurring. The "daughters of Sa'ada" are zebras, so called because "they resemble women in beauty and graceful agility."

[78] Arab. "Tiryák" from Gr. a drug against venomous bites. It was compounded mainly of treacle, and that of Baghdad and Irák was long held sovereign. The European equivalent, "Venice treacle," (Theriaca Andromachi) is an electuary containing many elements. Badawin eat for counter- poison three heads of garlic in clarified butter for forty days. (Pilgrimage iii 77)

[79] Could Cervantes have read this? In Algiers he might easily have heard it recited by the tale-tellers. Kanmakan is the typical Arab Knight, gentle and valiant as Don Quixote Sabbáh is the Grazioso, a "Beduin" Sancho Panza. In the "Romance of Antar" we have a similar contrast with Ocab who says: "Indeed I am no fighter: the sword in my hand-palm chases only pelicans ;" and, "whenever you kill a satrap, I'll plunder him."

[80] i.e. The Comely, son of the Spearman, son of the Lion, or Hero.

[81] Arab. "Ushári." Old Purchas (vi., i. 9) says there are three kinds of camels (1) Huguin (=Hejin) of tall stature and able to carry 1,000 lbs. (2) Bechete (=Bukhti) the two-humped Bactrian before mentioned and, (3) the Raguahill (Rahíl) small dromedaries unfit for burden but able to cover a hundred miles in a day. The "King of Timbukhtu" (not "Bukhtu's well" pop. Timbuctoo) had camels which reach Segelmesse (Sijalmas) or Darha, nine hundred miles in eight days at most. Lyon makes the Maherry (also called El-Heirie=Mahri) trot nine miles an hour for a long time. Other

travellers in North Africa report the Sabayee (Saba'i=seven days weeder) as able to get over six hundred and thirty miles (or thirty-five caravan stages=each eighteen miles) in five to seven days. One of the dromedaries in the "hamlah" or caravan of Mr. Ensor (Journey through Nubia and Darfoor — a charming book) travelled one thousand one hundred and ten miles in twenty- seven days. He notes that his beasts were better with water every five to seven days, but in the cold season could do without drink for sixteen. I found in Al-Hijaz at the end of August that the camels suffered much after ninety hours without drink (Pilgrimage iii. 14). But these were "Júdi" fine-haired animals as opposed to "Khawár" (the Khowás of Chesney,), coarse-haired, heavy, slow brutes which will not stand great heat.

[82] i.e. Fortune so willed it (euphemistically).

[83] The "minaret" being feminine is usually compared with a fair young girl. The oldest minaret proper is supposed to have been built in Damascus by the Ommiade Caliph (No. X.) Al-Walid A.H. 86-96 (=705-715). According to Ainsworth (ii. 113) the second was at Kuch Hisar in Chaldea.

[84] None of the pure Badawi can swim for the best of reasons, want of waters.

[85] The baser sort of Badawi is never to be trusted: he is a traitor born, and looks upon fair play as folly or cowardice. Neither oath nor kindness can bind him: he unites the cruelty of the cat with the wildness of the wolf. How many Englishmen have lost their lives by not knowing these elementary truths! The race has not changed from the days of Mandeville (A.D. 1322) whose "Arabians, who are called Bedouins and Ascopards (?), are right felonious and foul, and of a cursed nature." In his day they "carried but one shield and one spear, without other arm :" now, unhappily for travellers, they have matchlocks and most tribes can manufacture a something called by courtesy gunpowder.

[86] Thus by Arab custom they become friends.

[87] Our classical term for a noble Arab horse.

[88] In Arab. “Khayl” is=horse; Husan, a stallion; Hudúd, a brood stallion; Faras, a mare (but sometimes used as a horse and meaning “that tears over the ground”), Jiyád a steed (noble); Kadísh, a nag (ignoble); Mohr a colt and Mohrah, a filly. There are dozens of other names but these suffice for conversation

[89] Al-Katúl, the slayer; Al-Majnún, the mad; both high compliments in the style inverted.

[90] This was a highly honourable exploit, which would bring the doer fame as well as gain.

[91] This is a true and life-like description of horse- stealing in the Desert: Antar and Burckhardt will confirm every word. A noble Arab stallion is supposed to fight for his rider and to wake him at night if he see any sign of danger. The owner generally sleeps under the belly of the beast which keeps eyes and ears alert till dawn.

[92] Arab. “Yaum al tanádi,” i.e. Resurrection-day.

[93] Arab. “Bilád al-Súdan”=the Land of the Blacks, negro- land, whence the slaves came, a word now fatally familiar to English ears. There are, however, two regions of the same name, the Eastern upon the Upper Nile and the Western which contains the Niger Valley, and each considers itself the Sudan. And the reader must not confound the Berber of the Upper Nile, the Berderino who acts servant in Lower Egypt, with the Berber of Barbary: the former speaks an African language; the latter a “Semitic” (Arabic) tongue.

[94] “Him” for “her.”

[95] Arab. “Sáibah,” a she-camel freed from labour under certain conditions amongst the pagan Arabs; for which see Sale (Prel. Disc. sect. v.).

[96] Arab. “Marba’.” In early spring the Badawi tribes leave the Rasm

or wintering-place (the Turco-Persian “Kishlák”) in the desert, where winter-rains supply them, and make for the Yaylák, or summer-quarters, where they find grass and water. Thus the great Ruwala tribe appears regularly every year on the eastern slopes of the Anti-Libanus (Unexplored Syria, i. 117), and hence the frequent “partings.”

[97] This “renowning it” and boasting of one’s tribe (and oneself) before battle is as natural as the war-cry: both are intended to frighten the foe and have often succeeded. Every classical reader knows that the former practice dates from the earliest ages. It is still customary in Arabia during the furious tribal fights, the duello on a magnificent scale which often ends in half the combatants on either side being placed hors-de- combat. A fair specimen of “renowning it” is Amrú’s Suspended Poem with its extravagant panegyric of the Taghlab tribe (, “Arabian Poetry for English Readers,” etc., by W. A. Clouston, Glasgow: privately printed MDCCCLXXXI.; and transcribed from Sir William Jones’s translation).

[98] The “Turk” appeared soon amongst the Abbaside Caliphs. Mohammed was made to prophecy of them under the title Banú Kantúrah, the latter being a slave-girl of Abraham. The Imam Al-Shafi’i (A.H. 195=A.D. 810) is said to have foretold their rule in Egypt where an Ottoman defended him against a donkey-boy. (For details see Pilgrimage i. 216) The Caliph Al-Mu’atasim bi’llah (A.D. 833-842) had more than 10,000 Turkish slaves and was the first to entrust them with high office; so his Arab subjects wrote of him: —

A wretched Turk is thy heart’s desire;
And to them thou showest thee dam and sire.

His successor Al-Wásik (Vathek, of the terrible eyes) was the first to appoint a Turk his Sultan or regent. After his reign they became praetorians and led to the downfall of the Abbasides.

[99] The Persian saying is “First at the feast and last at the fray.”

[100] i.e. a tempter, a seducer.

[101] Arab. “Wayl-ak” here probably used in the sense of
“Wayh-ak” an expression of affectionate concern.

[102] Firdausi, the Homer of Persia, affects the same magnificent exaggeration. The trampling of men and horses raises such a dust that it takes one layer (of the seven) from earth and adds it to the (seven of the) Heavens. The “blaze” on the stallion’s forehead (Arab. “Ghurrah”) is the white gleam of the morning.

[103] A noted sign of excitement in the Arab blood horse, when the tail looks like a panache covering the hind-quarter.

[104] i.e. Prince Kanmakan.

[105] The “quality of mercy” belongs to the noble Arab, whereas the ignoble and the Bada win are rancorous and revengeful as camels.

[106] Arab. “Khanjar,” the poison was let into the grooves and hollows of the poniard.

[107] The Pers. “Bang”, Indian “Bhang”, Maroccan “Fasúkh” and S. African “Dakhá.” (Pilgrimage i. 64.) I heard of a “Hashish- orgie” in London which ended in half the experimentalists being on their sofas for a week. The drug is useful for stokers, having the curious property of making men insensible to heat. Easterns also use it for “Imsák” prolonging coition of which I speak presently.

[108] Arab. “Hashsháshín;” whence De Sacy derived “Assassin.” A notable effect of the Hashish preparation is wildly to excite the imagination, a kind of delirium imaginans sive phantasticum .

[109] Meaning “Well done!” Mashallah (Má sháa ‘llah) is an exclamation of many uses, especially affected when praising man or beast for fear lest flattering words induce the evil eye.

[110] Arab. “Kabkáb” vulg. “Kubkáb.” They are between three and ten

inches high, and those using them for the first time in the slippery Hammam must be careful.

[111] Arab. "Majlis"=sitting. The postures of coition, ethnologically curious and interesting, are subjects so extensive that they require a volume rather than a note. Full information can be found in the Ananga-ranga, or Stage of the Bodiless One, a treatise in Sanskrit verse vulgarly known as Koka Pandit from the supposed author, a Wazir of the great Rajah Bhoj, or according to others, of the Maharajah of Kanoj. Under the title Lizzat al-Nisá (The Pleasures — or enjoying — of Women) it has been translated into all the languages of the Moslem East, from Hindustani to Arabic. It divides postures into five great divisions: (1) the woman lying supine, of which there are eleven subdivisions; (2) lying on her side, right or left, with three varieties; (3) sitting, which has ten, (4) standing, with three subdivisions, and (5) lying prone, with two. This total of twenty- nine, with three forms of "Purusháyit," when the man lies supine (see the Abbot in Boccaccio i. 4), becomes thirty-two, approaching the French quarante façons. The Upavishta, majlis, or sitting postures, when one or both "sit at squat" somewhat like birds, appear utterly impossible to Europeans who lack the pliability of the Eastern's limbs. Their object in congress is to avoid tension of the muscles which would shorten the period of enjoyment. In the text the woman lies supine and the man sits at squat between her legs: it is a favourite from Marocco to China. A literal translation of the Ananga range appeared in 1873 under the name of Káma-Shástra; or the Hindoo Art of Love (Ars Amoris Indica); but of this only six copies were printed. It was re-issued (printed but not published) in 1885. The curious in such matters will consult the Index Librorum Prohibitorum (London, privately printed, 1879) by Pisanus Fraxi (H. S. Ashbee).

[112] i.e. Le Roi Crotte.

[113] This seems to be a punning allusion to Baghdad, which in Persian would mean the Garden (bágh) of Justice (dád). See "Biographical Notices of Persian Poets" by Sir Gore Ouseley,

London, Oriental Translation Fund, 1846

[114] The Kardoukhoi (Carduchi) of Xenophon; also called (Strabo xv.) “Kárdakís, from a Persian word signifying manliness,” which would be “Kardak”=a doer (of derring do). They also named the Montes Gordći the original Ararat of Xisisthrus- Noah’s Ark. The Kurds are of Persian race, speaking an old and barbarous Iranian tongue and often of the Shi’ah sect. They are born bandits, highwaymen, cattle-lifters; yet they have spread extensively over Syria and Egypt and have produced some glorious men, witness Sultan Saláh al-Din (Saladin) the Great. They claim affinity with the English in the East, because both races always inhabit the highest grounds they can find.

[115] These irregular bands who belong to no tribe are the most dangerous bandits in Arabia, especially upon the northern frontier. Burckhardt, who suffered from them, gives a long account of their treachery and utter absence of that Arab “pundonor” which is supposed to characterise Arab thieves.

[116] An euphemistic form to avoid mentioning the incestuous marriage.

[117] The Arab form of our “Kinchin lay.”

[118] These are the signs of a Shaykh’s tent.

[119] These questions, indiscreet in Europe, are the rule throughout Arabia, as they were in the United States of the last generation.

[120] Arab. “Khizáb” a paste of quicklime and lamp-black kneaded with linseed oil which turns the Henna to a dark olive. It is hideously ugly to unaccustomed eyes and held to be remarkably beautiful in Egypt.

[121] i.e. the God of the Empyrean.

[122] A blow worthy of the Sa’alabah tribe to which he belonged.

[123] i.e. “benefits”; also the name of Mohammed’s Mu’ezzin, or crier to prayer, who is buried outside the Jábiah gate of Damascus. Hence amongst Moslems, Abyssinians were preferred as mosque-criers in the early ages of Al-Islam. Egypt chose blind men because they were abundant and cheap; moreover they cannot take note of what is doing on the adjoining roof terraces where women and children love to pass the cool hours that begin and end the day. Stories are told of men who counterfeited blindness for years in order to keep the employment. In Moslem cities the stranger required to be careful how he appeared at a window or on the gallery of a minaret: the people hate to be overlooked and the whizzing of a bullet was the warning to be off. (Pilgrimage iii. 185.)

[124] His instinct probably told him that this opponent was a low fellow but such insults are common when “renowning it.”

[125] Arab. “Dare’ “ or “Dira’,” a habergeon, a coat of ring- mail, sometimes worn in pairs. During the wretched “Sudan” campaigns much naďve astonishment was expressed by the English Press to hear of warriors armed cap-ŕ-pie in this armour like medieval knights. They did not know that every great tribe has preserved, possibly from Crusading times, a number of hauberks, even to hundreds. I have heard of only one English traveller who had a mail jacket made by Wilkinson of Pall Mall, imitating in this point Napoleon III. And (according to the Banker-poet, Rogers) the Duke of Wellington. That of Napoleon is said to have been made of platinum-wire, the work of a Pole who received his money and an order to quit Paris. The late Sir Robert Clifton (they say) tried its value with a Colt after placing it upon one of his coat-models or mannequins. It is easy to make these hauberks arrow-proof or sword-proof, even bullet-proof if Arab gunpowder be used: but against a modern rifle-cone they are worse than worthless as the fragments would be carried into the wound. The British serjeant was right in saying that he would prefer to enter battle in his shirt: and he might even doff that to advantage and return to the primitive custom of man — gymnomachy.

[126] Arab. "Jamal" (by Badawin pronounced "Gamal" like the Hebrew) is the generic term for "Camel" through the Gr. : "Ibl" is also the camel-species but not so commonly used. "Hajín" is the dromedary (in Egypt, "Dalúl" in Arabia), not the one- humped camel of the zoologist (C. dromedarius) as opposed to the two-humped (C. Bactrianus), but a running i.e. a riding camel. The feminine is Nákah for like mules females are preferred. "Bakr" (masc.) and "Bakrah" (fem.) are camel-colts. There are hosts of special names besides those which are general. Mr. Censor is singular when he states (p.40) "the male (of the camel) is much the safer animal to choose ;" and the custom of t e universal Ease disproves his assertion. Mr. McCoan ("Egypt as it is") tells his readers that the Egyptian camel has two humps, in fact, he describes the camel as it is not.

[127] So, in the Romance of Dalhamah (Zát al-Himmah, the heroine the hero Al-Gundubah ("one locust-man") smites off the head of his mother's servile murderer and cries, I have taken my blood-revenge upon this traitor slave'" (Lane, M. E. chaps. xx iii.)

[128] This gathering all the persons upon the stage before the curtain drops is highly artistic and improbable.

[129] He ought to have said his dawn prayers.

[130] Here begins what I hold to be the oldest subject matter in The Nights, the apologues or fables proper; but I reserve further remarks for the Terminal Essay. Lane has most objectionably thrown this and sundry of the following stories into a note (vol. ii., p-69).

[131] In beast stories generally when man appears he shows to disadvantage.

[132] Shakespeare's "stone bow" not Lane's "cross-bow" (ii. 53).

[133] The goad still used by the rascally Egyptian donkey-boy is a sharp nail at the end of a stick; and claims the special attention of societies for the protection of animals.

[134] “The most ungrateful of all voices surely is the voice of asses” (Koran xxxi. 18); and hence the “braying of hell” (Koran Ixvii.7). The vulgar still believe that the donkey brays when seeing the Devil. “The last animal which entered the Ark with Noah was the Ass to whose tail Iblis was clinging. At the threshold the ass seemed troubled and could enter no further when Noah said to him:— “Fie upon thee! come in.” But as the ass was still troubled and did not advance Noah cried:— “Come in, though the Devil be with thee!”, so the ass entered and with him Iblis. Thereupon Noah asked:— “O enemy of Allah who brought thee into the Ark ?”, and Iblis answered:— “Thou art the man, for thou saidest to the ass, come in though the Devil be with thee!” (Kitáb al-Unwán fi Makáid al-Niswán quoted by Lane ii. 54).

[135] Arab. “Rihl,” a wooden saddle stuffed with straw and matting. In Europe the ass might complain that his latter end is the sausage. In England they say no man sees a dead donkey: I have seen dozens and, unfortunately, my own.

[136] The English reader will not forget Sterne’s old mare. Even Al-Hariri, the prince of Arab rhetoricians, does not distain to use “pepedit,” the effect being put for the cause — terror. But Mr. Preston () and polite men translate by “fled in haste” the Arabic farted for fear.”

[137] This is one of the lucky signs and adds to the value of the beast. There are some fifty of these marks, some of them (like a spiral of hair in the breast which denotes that the rider is a cuckold) so ill-omened that the animal can be bought for almost nothing. Of course great attention is paid to colours, the best being the dark rich bay (“red” of Arabs) with black points, or the flea-bitten grey (termed Azrak=blue or Akhzar=green) which whitens with age. The worst are dun, cream coloured, piebald and black, which last are very rare. Yet according to the Mishkát al- Masábih (Lane 2, 54) Mohammed said, The best horses are black (dark brown?) with white blazes (Arab. “Ghurrah”) and upper lips; next, black with blaze and three white legs (bad, because white- hoofs are brittle):next, bay with white blaze

and white fore and hind legs.” He also said, “Prosperity is with sorrel horses;” and praised a sorrel with white forehead and legs; but he dispraised the “Shikál,” which has white stockings (Arab. “Muhajjil”) on alternate hoofs (e.g. right hind and left fore). The curious reader will consult Lady Anne Blunt’s “Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates, with some Account of the Arabs and their Horses” (1879); but he must remember that it treats of the frontier tribes. The late Major Upton also left a book “Gleanings from the Desert of Arabia” (1881); but it is a marvellous production deriving e.g. Khayl (a horse generically) from Kohl or antimony (). What the Editor was dreaming of I cannot imagine. I have given some details concerning the Arab horse especially in Al-Yaman, among the Zú Mohammed, the Zú Husayn and the Banu Yam in Pilgrimage iii. 270. As late as Marco Polo’s day they supplied the Indian market via Aden; but the “Eye o Al-Yaman” has totally lost the habit of exporting horses.

[138] The shovel-iron which is the only form of spur.

[139] Used for the dromedary: the baggage-camel is haltered.

[140] Arab. “Harwalah,” the pas gymnastique affected when circumambulating the Ka’abah (Pilgrimage iii. 208).

[141] “This night” would be our “last night”: the Arabs, I repeat, say “night and day,” not “day and night.”

[142] The vulgar belief is that man’s fate is written upon his skull, the sutures being the writing.

[143] Koran ii. 191.

[144] Arab. “Tasbíh”=saying, “Subhán’ Allah.” It also means a rosary (Egypt. Sebhah for Subhah) a string of 99 beads divided by a longer item into sets of three and much fingered by the would- appear pious. The professional devotee carries a string of wooden balls the size of pigeons’ eggs.

[145] The pigeon is usually made to say, ‘ “Wahhidú Rabba-kumu

‘‘llazi khalaka-kum, yaghfiru lakum zamba-kum” = “Unify (Assert the Unity of) your Lord who created you; so shall He forgive your sin!” As might be expected this “language” is differently interpreted. Pigeon-superstitions are found in all religions and I have noted (Pilgrimage iii, 218) how the Hindu deity of Destruction-reproduction, the third Person of their Triad, Shiva and his Spouse (or active Energy), are supposed to have dwelt at Meccah under the titles of Kapoteshwara (Pigeon-god) and Kapoteshí (Pigeon-goddess).

[146] I have seen this absolute horror of women amongst the Monks of the Coptic Convents.

[147] After the Day of Doom, when men’s actions are registered, that of mutual retaliation will follow and all creatures (brutes included) will take vengeance on one another.

[148] The Comrades of the Cave, famous in the Middle Ages of Christianity (Gibbon chaps. xxxiii.), is an article of faith with Moslems, being part subject of chapter xviii., the Koranic Surah termed the Cave. These Rip Van Winkle-tales begin with Endymion so famous amongst the Classics and Epimenides of Crete who slept fifty-seven years; and they extend to modern days as La Belle au Bois dormant. The Seven Sleepers are as many youths of Ephesus (six royal councillors and a shepherd, whose names are given on the authority of Ali); and, accompanied by their dog, they fled the persecutions of Dakianús (the Emperor Decius) to a cave near Tarsús in Natolia where they slept for centuries. The Caliph Mu’awiyah when passing the cave sent into it some explorers who were all killed by a burning wind. The number of the sleepers remains uncertain, according to the Koran (ibid. v. 21) three, five or seven and their sleep lasted either three hundred or three hundred and nine years. The dog (ibid. v. 17) slept at the cave-entrance with paws outstretched and, according to the general, was called “Katmir” or “Kitmir;” but Al-Rakím (v. 8) is also applied to it by some. Others hold this to be the name of the valley or mountain and others of a stone or leaden tablet on which their names were engraved by their

countrymen who built a chapel on the spot (v. 20). Others again make the Men of Al-Rakím distinct from the Cave-men, and believe (with Bayzáwi) that they were three youths who were shut up in a grotto by a rock-slip. Each prayed for help through the merits of some good deed: when the first had adjured Allah the mountain cracked till light appeared; at the second petition it split so that they saw one another and after the third it opened. However that may be, Kitmir is one of the seven favoured animals: the others being the Hudhud (hoopoe) of Solomon (Koran xxii. 20); the she-camel of Sálih (chaps. Ixxxvii.); the cow of Moses which named the Second Surah; the fish of Jonah; the serpent of Eve, and the peacock of Paradise. For Koranic revelations of the Cave see the late Thomas Chenery (The Assemblies of Al-Hariri: Williams and Norgate, 1870) who borrows from the historian Tabari.

[149] These lines have occurred in Night cxlvi.: I quote Mr. Payne by way of variety.

[150] The wolf (truly enough to nature) is the wicked man without redeeming traits; the fox of Arab folk-lore is the cunning man who can do good on occasion. Here the latter is called "Sa'alab" which may, I have noted, mean the jackal; but further on "Father of a Fortlet" refers especially to the fox. Herodotus refers to the gregarious Canis Aureus when he describes Egyptian wolves as being "not much bigger than foxes" (ii. 67). Canon Rawlinson, in his unhappy version, does not perceive that the Halicarnassian means the jackal and blunders about the hyena.

[151] The older "Leila" or "Leyla": it is a common name and is here applied to woman in general. The root is evidently "layl"=nox, with, probably, the idea, "She walks in beauty like the night."

[152] Arab. Abu 'l-Hosayn; his hole being his fort (Unexplored Syria, ii. 18).

[153] A Koranic phrase often occurring.

[154] Koran v. 35.

[155] Arab. “Bází,” Pers. “Báz” (here Richardson is wrong s.v.); a term to a certain extent generic, but specially used for the noble Peregrine (F. Peregrinator) whose tiercel is the Sháhín (or “Royal Bird”). It is sometimes applied to the goshawk (Astur palumbarius) whose proper title, however, is Shah-báz (King-hawk). The Peregrine extends from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and the best come from the colder parts: in Iceland I found that the splendid white bird was sometimes trapped for sending to India. In Egypt “Bazi” is applied to the kite or buzzard and “Hidyah” (a kite) to the falcon (Burckhardt’s Prov. 159, 581 and 602). Burckhardt translates “Hidáyah,” the Egyptian corruption, by “an ash-grey falcon of the smaller species common throughout Egypt and Syria.”

[156] Arab. “Hijl,” the bird is not much prized in India because it feeds on the roads. For the Shinnár (caccabis) or magnificent partridge of Midian as large as a pheasant, see “Midian Revisted” ii. 18.

[157] Arab. “Súf;” hence “Súfi,”=(etymologically) one who wears woollen garments, a devotee, a Santon; from =wise; from =pure, or from Safá=he was pure. This is not the place to enter upon such a subject as “Tasawwuf,” or Sufyism; that singular reaction from arid Moslem realism and materialism, that immense development of gnostic and Neo-platonic transcendentalism which is found only germinating in the Jewish and Christian creeds. The poetry of Omar-i-Khayyám, now familiar to English readers, is a fair specimen; and the student will consult the last chapter of the Dabistan “On the religion of the Sufiahs.” The first Moslem Sufi was Abu Háshim of Kufah, ob. A. H. 150=767, and the first Convent of Sufis called “Takiyah” (Pilgrimage i. 124) was founded in Egypt by Saladin the Great.

[158] i.e. when she encamps with a favourite for the night.

[159] The Persian proverb is “Marg-i-amboh jashni dáred” — death in a crowd is as good as a feast.

[160] Arab. “Kanát”, the subterranean water-course called in Persia

"Kyáriz." Lane (ii. 66) translates it "brandish around the spear (Kanát is also a cane-lance) of artifice," thus making rank nonsense of the line. Al-Hariri uses the term in the Ass. of the Banu Haram where "Kanát" may be a pipe or bamboo laid underground.

[161] From Al-Tughrái, the author of the Lámiyat al-Ajam, the "Lay of the Outlander;" a Kasidah (Ode) rhyming in Lám (the letter "l" being the ráwi or binder). The student will find a new translation of it by Mr. J. W. Redhouse and Dr. Carlyle's old version (No. liii.) in Mr. Clouston's "Arabian Poetry." Muyid al-Din al-Hasan Abu Ismail nat. Ispahan ob. Baghdad A.H. 182) derived his surname from the Tughrá, cypher or flourish (over the "Bismillah" in royal and official papers) containing the name of the prince. There is an older "Lamiyat al-Arab" a pre-Islamitic L-poem by the "brigand-poet" Shanfara, of whom Mr. W. G. Palgrave has given a most appreciative account in his "Essays on Eastern Questions," noting the indomitable self-reliance and the absolute individualism of a mind defying its age and all around it. Al-Hariri quotes from both.

[162] The words of the unfortunate Azízah, vol. ii., .

[163] Arab. "Háwí"=a juggler who plays tricks with snakes: he is mostly a Gypsy. The "recompense" the man expects is the golden treasure which the ensorcelled snake is supposed to guard. This idea is as old as the Dragon in the Garden of the Hesperides — and older.

[164] The "Father of going out (to prey) by morning"; for dawn is called Zanab Sirhán the Persian Dum-i-gurg=wolf's tail, i.e. the first brush of light; the Zodiacal Light shown in morning. Sirhán is a nickname of the wolf — Gaunt Grim or Gaffer Grim, the German Isengrin or Eisengrinus (icy grim or iron grim) whose wife is Hersent, as Richent or Hermeline is Mrs. Fox. In French we have lopez, luppe, leu, e.g.

Venant ŕ la queue, leu, leu,

i.e. going in Indian file. Hence the names D'Urfé and Saint-Loup. In Scandinavian, the elder sister of German, Ulf and in German (where the Jews were forced to adopt the name) Wolff whence "Guelph." He is also known to the Arabs as the "sire of a she-lamb," the figure metonymy called "Kunyat bi 'l-Zidd" (lucus a non lucendo), a patronymic or by-name given for opposition and another specimen of "inverted speech."

[165] Arab. "Bint' Arús" = daughter of the bridegroom, the Hindustani Mungus (vulg. Mongoose); a well-known weasel-like rodent often kept tame in the house to clear it of vermin. It is supposed to know an antidote against snake-poison, as the weasel eats rue before battle (Pliny x. 84; xx. 13). In Modern Egypt this viverra is called "Kitt (or Katt) Far'aun" = Pharaoh's cat: so the Percnopter becomes Pharaoh's hen and the unfortunate (?) King has named a host of things, alive and dead. It was worshipped and mummified in parts of Ancient Egypt e.g. Heracleopolis, on account of its antipathy to serpents and because it was supposed to destroy the crocodile, a feat with Ćlian and others have overloaded with fable. It has also a distinct antipathy to cats. The ichneumon as a pet becomes too tame and will not leave its master: when enraged it emits an offensive stench. I brought home for the Zoological Gardens a Central African specimen prettily barred. Burckhardt (Prov. 455) quotes a line: —

Rakas' Ibn Irsin wa zamzama l-Nimsu,
(Danceth Ibn Irs whileas Nims doth sing)

and explains Nims by ichneumon and Ibn Irs as a "species of small weasel or ferret, very common in Egypt: it comes into the house, feeds upon meat, is of gentle disposition although not domesticated and full of gambols and frolic."

[166] Arab. "Sinnaur" (also meaning a prince). The common name is Kitt which is pronounced Katt or Gatt; and which Ibn Dorayd pronounces a foreign word (Syriac?). Hence, despite Freitag, Catus (which Isidore derives from catare, to look for) = gatto, chat, cat, an animal unknown to the Classics of Europe who used the mustela or putorius vulgaris and different species of viverrć. The Egyptians, who kept the cat to destroy vermin, especially snakes, called it Mau,

Mai, Miao (onomatopoetic): this descendent of the Felis maniculata originated in Nubia; and we know from the mummy pits and Herodotus that it was the same species as ours. The first portraits of the cat are on the monuments of “Beni Hasan,” B.C. 2500. I have ventured to derive the familiar “Puss” from the Arab. “Biss (fem. :Bissah”), which is a congener of Pasht (Diana), the cat-faced goddess of Bubastis (Pi-Pasht), now Zagázig. Lastly, “tabby (brindled)-cat” is derived from the Attábi (Prince Attab’s) quarter at Baghdad where watered silks were made. It is usually attributed to the Tibbie, Tibalt, Tybalt, Thibert or Tybert (who is also executioner), various forms of Theobald in the old Beast Epic; as opposed to Gilbert the gib-cat, either a tom-cat or a gibbed (castrated) cat.

[167] Arab. “Ikhwán al-Safá,” a popular term for virtuous friends who perfectly love each other in all purity: it has also a mystic meaning. Some translate it “Brethren of Sincerity,” and hold this brotherhood to be Moslem Freemasons, a mere fancy (see the Mesnevi of Mr. Redhouse, Trubner 1881). There is a well-known Hindustani book of this name printed by Prof. Forbes in Persian character and translated by Platts and Eastwick.

[168] Among Eastern men there are especial forms for “making brotherhood.” The “Munhbolá-bhái” (mouth-named brother) of India is well-known. The intense “associativeness” of these races renders isolation terrible to them, and being defenceless in a wild state of society has special horrors. Hence the origin of Caste for which see Pilgrimage (i. 52). Moslems, however, cannot practise the African rite of drinking a few drops of each other’s blood. This, by the by, was also affected in Europe, as we see in the Gesta Romanoru, Tale lxvii., of the wise and foolish knights who “drew blood (to drink) from the right arm.”

[169] The F. Sacer in India is called “Laghar” and tiercel “Jaghar.” Mr. T.E. Jordan (catalogue of Indian Birds, 1839) says it is rare; but I found it the contrary. According to Mr. R. Thompson it is flown at kites and antelope: in Sind it is used upon night-heron (nyctardea

nycticorax), floriken or Hobara (Otis aurita), quail, partridge, curlew and sometimes hare: it gives excellent sport with crows but requires to be defended. Indian sportsmen, like ourselves, divide hawks into two orders: the “Siyáh-chasm,” or black-eyed birds, long-winged and noble; the “Gulábi-chasm” or yellow-eyed (like the goshawk) round-winged and ignoble.

[170] i.e. put themselves at thy mercy.

[171] I have remarked (Pilgrimage iii.307) that all the popular ape-names in Arabic and Persian, Sa’adán, Maymún, Shádi, etc., express propitiousness — probably euphemistically applied to our “poor relation.”

[172] The serpent does not “sting” nor does it “bite;” it strikes with the poison-teeth like a downward stab with a dagger. These fangs are always drawn by the jugglers but they grow again and thus many lives are lost. The popular way of extracting the crochets is to grasp the snake firmly behind the neck with one hand and with the other to tantalise it by offering and withdrawing a red rag. At last the animal is allowed to strike it and a sharp jerk tears out both eye-teeth as rustics used to do by slamming a door. The head is then held downwards and the venom drains from its bag in the shape of a few drops of slightly yellowish fluid which, as conjurers know, may be drunk without danger. The patient looks faint and dazed, but recovers after a few hours and feels as if nothing had happened. In India I took lessons from a snake-charmer but soon gave up the practice as too dangerous.

[173] Arab. “Akh al-Jahálah” = brother of ignorance, an Ignorantin; one “really and truly” ignorant; which is the value of “Ahk” in such phrases as a “brother of poverty,” or, “of purity.”

[174] Lane (ii. 1) writes “Abu-l-Hasan;” Payne (iii. 49) “Aboulhusn” which would mean “Father of Beauty (Husn)” and is not a Moslem name. Hasan (beautiful) and its dimin. Husayn, names now so common, were (it is said), unknown to the Arabs, although Hassán

was that of a Tobba King, before the days of Mohammed who so called his two only grandsons. In Anglo-India they have become “Hobson and Jobson.” The Bresl. Edit. (ii. 305) entitles this story “Tale of Abu ‘l Hasan the Attár (druggist and perfumer) with Ali ibn Bakkár and what befel them with the handmaid (=járiyah) Shams al-Nahár.”

[175] i.e. a descendant, not a Prince.

[176] The Arab shop is a kind of hole in the wall and buyers sit upon its outer edge (Pilgrimage i. 99).

[177] By a similar image the chamćleon is called Abú Kurrat=Father of coolness; because it is said to have the “coldest” eye of all animals and insensible to heat and light, since it always looks at the sun.

[178] This dividing the hemistich words is characteristic of certain tales; so I have retained it although inevitably suggesting: —

I left Matilda at the U- niversity of Gottingen.

[179] These naďve offers in Eastern tales mostly come from the true seducer — Eve. Europe and England especially, still talks endless absurdity upon the subject. A man of the world may “seduce” an utterly innocent (which means an ignorant) girl. But to “seduce” a married woman! What a farce!

[180] Masculine again for feminine: the lines are as full of word-plays, vulgarly called puns, as Sanskrit verses.

[181] The Eastern heroine always has a good appetite and eats well. The sensible Oriental would infinitely despise that maladive Parisienne in whom our neighbours delight, and whom I long to send to the Hospital.

[182] i.e. her rivals have discovered the secret of her heart.

[183] i.e. blood as red as wine.

[184] The wine-cup (sun-like) shines in thy hand; thy teeth are bright as the Pleiads and thy face rises like a moon from the darkness of thy dress-collar.

[185] The masculine of Marjánah (Morgiana) “the she coral-branch ;” and like this a name generally given to negroes. We have seen white applied to a blackamoor by way of metonomy and red is also connected with black skins by way of fun. A Persian verse says :

“If a black wear red, e’en an ass would grin.”

[186] Suggesting that she had been sleeping.

[187] Arab. “Raushan,” a window projecting and latticed: the word is orig. Persian: so Raushaná (splendour)=Roxana. It appears to me that this beautiful name gains beauty by being understood.

[188] The word means any servant, but here becomes a proper name. “Wasífah” usually= a concubine.

[189] i.e. eagerness, desire, love-longing.

[190] Arab. “Rind,” which may mean willow (oriental), bay or aloes wood: Al-Asma’i denies that it ever signifies myrtle.

[191] These lines occur in Night cxiv.: by way of variety I give (with permission) Mr. Payne’s version (iii. 59).

[192] Referring to the proverb “Al-Khauf maksúm”=fear (cowardice) is equally apportioned: i.e. If I fear you, you fear me.

[193] The fingers of the right hand are struck upon the palm of the left.

[194] There are intricate rules for “joining” the prayers; but this is hardly the place for a subject discussed in all religious treatises. (Pilgrimage iii. 239.)

[195] The hands being stained with Henna and perhaps indigo in stripes are like the ring rows of chain armour. See Lane’s illustration (Mod.

Egypt, chaps. i.).

[196] She made rose-water of her cheeks for my drink and she bit with teeth like grains of hail those lips like the lotus-fruit, or jujube: Arab. “Unnab” or “Nabk,” the plum of the Sidr or Zizyphus lotus.

[197] Meaning to let Patience run away like an untethered camel.

[198] i.e. her fair face shining through the black hair. “Camphor” is a favourite with Arab poets: the Persians hate it because connected in their minds with death; being used for purifying the corpse. We read in Burckhardt (Prov. 464) “Singing without siller is like a corpse without Hanút” — this being a mixture of camphor and rose-water sprinkled over the face of the dead before shrouded. Similarly Persians avoid speaking of coffee, because they drink it at funerals and use tea at other times.

[199] i.e. she is angry and bites her carnelion lips with pearly teeth.

[200] Arab. “Wa ba’ad;” the formula which follows “Bismillah” — In the name of Allah. The French translate it or sus, etc. I have noticed the legend about its having been first used by the eloquent Koss, Bishop of Najran.

[201] i.e. Her mind is so troubled she cannot answer for what she writes.

[202] The Bul. Edit. (i. 329) and the Mac. Edit. (i. 780) give to Shams al-Nahar the greater part of Ali’s answer, as is shown by the Calc. Edit. (230 et seq.) and the Bresl. Edit. (ii. 366 et seq.) Lane mentions this (ii. 74) but in his usual perfunctory way gives no paginal references to the Calc. or Bresl.; so that those who would verify the text may have the displeasure of hunting for it.

[203] Arab. “Bi’smi ‘lláhi’ r-Rahmáni’r-Rahím.” This auspicatory formula was borrowed by Al-Islam not from the Jews but from the Guebre “Ba nám-i-Yezdán bakhsháishgar-i-dádár!” (in the name of Yezdan-God — All-generous, All-just!). The Jews have, “In the

name of the Great God;" and the Christians, "In the name of the Father, etc." The so-called Sir John Mandeville begins his book, In the name of God, Glorious and Almighty. The sentence forms the first of the Koran and heads every chapter except only the ninth, an exception for which recondite reasons are adduced. Hence even in the present day it begins all books, letters and writings in general; and it would be a sign of Infidelity (i.e. non-Islamism) to omit it. The difference between "Rahmán" and "Rahím" is that the former represents an accidental (compassionating), the latter a constant quality (compassionate). Sale therefore renders it very imperfectly by "In the name of the most merciful God;" the Latinists better, "In nomine Dei misericordis, clementissimi" (Gottwaldt in Hamza Ispahanensis); Mr. Badger much better, "In the name of God, the Pitiful, the Compassionate" — whose only fault is not preserving the assonance: and Maracci best, "In nomine Dei miseratoris misericordis."

[204] Arab. Majnún (i.e. one possessed by a Jinni) the well-known model lover of Layla, a fictitious personage for whom see D'Herbelot (s. v. Megnoun). She was celebrated by Abu Mohammed Nizam al-Din of Ganjah (ob. A.H. 597=1200) pop. known as Nizámi, the caustic and austere poet who wrote: —

The weals of this world are the ass's meed!
 Would Nizami were of the ass's breed.

The series in the East begins chronologically with Yúsuf and Zulaykhá (Potiphar's wife) sung by Jámi (nat. A.H. 817=1414); the next in date is Khusraw and Shirin (also by Nizami); Farhad and Shirin; and Layla and Majnun (the Night-black maid and the Maniac-man) are the last. We are obliged to compare the lovers with "Romeo and Juliet," having no corresponding instances in modern days: the classics of Europe supply a host as Hero and Leander, Theagenes and Charicleia, etc. etc.

[205] The jeweller of Eastern tales from Marocco to Calcutta, is almost invariably a rascal: here we have an exception.

[206] This must not be understood of sealing-wax, which, however, is of ancient date. The Egyptians (Herod. ii. 38) used “sealing earth” ( ) probably clay, impressed with a signet ( ); the Greeks mud-clay ( ); and the Romans first cretula and then wax (Beckmann). Medićval Europe had bees-wax tempered with Venice turpentine and coloured with cinnabar or similar material. The modern sealing-wax, whose distinctive is shell-lac, was brought by the Dutch from India to Europe; and the earliest seals date from about A.D. 1560. They called it Ziegel-lak, whence the German Siegel-lack, the French preferring cire-ŕ-cacheter, as distinguished from cire-ŕ-sceller, the softer material. The use of sealing-wax in India dates from old times and the material, though coarse and unsightly, is still preferred by Anglo-Indians because it resists heat whereas the best English softens like pitch.

[207] Evidently referring to the runaway Abu al-Hasan, not to the she-Mercury.

[208] An unmarried man is not allowed to live in a respectable quarter of a Moslem city unless he takes such precaution. Lane (Mod. Egypt. passim) has much to say on this point; and my excellent friend the late Professor Spitta at Cairo found the native prejudice very troublesome.

[209] Arab. “Yá fulán”=O certain person (fulano in Span. and Port.) a somewhat contemptuous address.

[210] Mr. Payne remarks, “These verses apparently relate to Aboulhusn, but it is possible that they may be meant to refer to Shemsennehar.” (iii. 80.)

[211] Arab. and Pers “Bulúr” (vulg. billaur) retaining the venerable tradition of the Belus- river. In Al-Hariri (Ass. of Halwán) it means crystal and there is no need of proposing to translate it by onyx or to identify it with the Greek , the beryl.

[212] The door is usually shut with a wooden bolt.

[213] Arab. “Ritánah,” from “Ratan,” speaking any tongue not Arabic, the allusion being to foreign mercenaries, probably Turks. In later days Turkish was called Muwalla’, a pied horse, from its mixture of languages.

[214] This is the rule; to guard against the guet-apens.

[215] Arab. “Wálidati,” used when speaking to one not of the family in lieu of the familiar “Ummi”=my mother. So the father is Wálid=the begetter.

[216] This is one of the many euphemistic formulć for such occasions: they usually begin “May thy head live.” etc.

[217] Arab. “Kánún,” an instrument not unlike the Austrian zither; it is illustrated in Lane (ii. 77).

[218] This is often done, the merit of the act being transferred to the soul of the deceased.

[219] The two amourists were martyrs; and their amours, which appear exaggerated to the Western mind, have many parallels in the East. The story is a hopeless affair of love; with only one moral (if any be wanted) viz., there may be too much of a good thing. It is given very concisely in the Bul. Edit. vol. i.; and more fully in the Mac. Edit. aided in places by the Bresl. (ii. 320) and the Calc. (ii. 230). ## [220] Lane is in error (vol. ii. 78) when he corrects this to “Sháh Zemán”; the name is fanciful and intended to be old Persian, on the “weight” of Kahramán. The Bul. Edit. has by misprint “Shahramán.”

[221] The “topothesia” is worthy of Shakespeare’s day. “Khálidán” is evidently a corruption of “Khálidatáni” (for Khálidát), the Eternal, as Ibn Wardi calls the Fortunate Islands, or Canaries, which owe both their modern names to the classics of Europe. Their present history dates from A.D. 1385, unless we accept the Dieppe-Rouen legend of Labat which would place the discovery in A.D. 1326. I for one thoroughly believe in the priority on the West African Coast, of the gallant descendants of the Northmen.

[222] Four wives are allowed by Moslem law and for this reason. If you marry one wife she holds herself your equal, answers you and "gives herself airs"; two are always quarrelling and making a hell of the house; three are "no company" and two of them always combine against the nicest to make her hours bitter. Four are company, they can quarrel and "make it up" amongst themselves, and the husband enjoys comparative peace. But the Moslem is bound by his law to deal equally with the four, each must have her dresses her establishment and her night, like her sister wives. The number is taken from the Jews (Arbah Turim Ev. Hazaer, i.) "the wise men have given good advice that a man should not marry more than four wives." Europeans, knowing that Moslem women are cloistered and appear veiled in public, begin with believing them to be mere articles of luxury, and only after long residence they find out that nowhere has the sex so much real liberty and power as in the Moslem East. They can possess property and will it away without the husband's leave: they can absent themselves from the house for a month without his having a right to complain; and they assist in all his counsels for the best of reasons: a man can rely only on his wives and children, being surrounded by rivals who hope to rise by his ruin. As regards political matters the Circassian women of Constantinople really rule the Sultanate and there soignez la femme! is the first lesson of getting on in the official world.

[223] This two-bow prayer is common on the bride-night; and at all times when issue is desired.

[224] The older Camaralzaman="Moon of the age." Kamar is the moon between her third and twenty-sixth day: Hilál during the rest of the month: Badr (plur. Budúr whence the name of the Princess) is the full moon.

[225] Arab "Ra'áyá" plur. of 'Ra'íyat" our Anglo-Indian Ryot, lit. a liege, a subject; secondarily a peasant, a Fellah.

[226] Another audacious parody of the Moslem "testification" to the one God, and to Mohammed the Apostle.

[227] Showing how long ago forts were armed with metal plates which we have applied to war-ships only of late years.

[228] The comparison is abominably true — in the East.

[229] Two fallen angels who taught men the art of magic. They are mentioned in the Koran (chaps. ii.), and the commentators have extensively embroidered the simple text. Popularly they are supposed to be hanging by their feet in a well in the territory of Babel, hence the frequent allusions to "Babylonian sorcery" in Moslem writings; and those who would study the black art at head-quarters are supposed to go there. They are counterparts of the Egyptian Jamnes and Mambres, the Jannes and Jambres of St. Paul (2 Tim. iii. 8).

[230] An idol or idols of the Arabs (Allat and Ozza) before Mohammed (Koran chaps. ii. 256). Etymologically the word means "error" and the termination is rather Hebraic than Arabic.

[231] Arab. "Khayt hamayán" (wandering threads of vanity), or Mukhát al-Shaytan (Satan's snivel),=our "gossamer"=God's summer (Mutter Gottes Sommer) or God's cymar (?).

[232] These lines occur in Night xvii.; so I borrow from Torrens () by way of variety.

[233] A posture of peculiar submission; contrasting strongly with the attitude afterwards assumed by Prince Charming.

[234] A mere term of vulgar abuse not reflecting on either parent: I have heard a mother call her own son, "Child of adultery."

[235] Arab. "Ghazá," the Artemisia (Euphorbia ?) before noticed. If the word be a misprint for Ghadá it means a kind of Euphorbia which, with the Arák (wild caper-tree) and the Daum palm (Crucifera thebiaca), is one of the three normal growths of the Arabian desert (Pilgrimage iii. 22).

[236] Arab. "Banát al-Na'ash," usually translated daughters of the bier,

the three stars which represent the horses in either Bear, “Charles’ Wain,” or Ursa Minor, the waggon being supposed to be a bier. “Banát” may be also sons, plur. of Ibn, as the word points to irrational objects. So Job (ix. 9 and xxxviii. 32) refers to U. Major as “Ash” or “Aysh” in the words, “Canst thou guide the bier with its sons?” (erroneously rendered “Arcturus with his sons”) In the text the lines are enigmatical, but apparently refer to a death parting.

[237] The Chapters are: 2, 3, 36, 55, 67 and the two last (“Daybreak” cxiii. and “Men” cxiv.), which are called Al-Mu’izzatáni (vulgar Al-Mu’izzatayn), the “Two Refuge-takings or Preventives,” because they obviate enchantment. I have translated the two latter as follows: —

“Say: — Refuge I take with the Lord of the Day-break *
from mischief of what He did make *
from mischief of moon eclipse-showing *
and from mischief of witches on cord-knots blowing *
and from mischief of envier when envying.”

“Say: — Refuge I take with the Lord of men *
the sovran of men *
the God of men *
from the Tempter, the Demon *
who tempteth in whisper the breasts of men *
and from Jinnis and (evil) men.”

[238] The recitations were Náfilah, or superogatory, two short chapters only being required and the taking refuge was because he slept in a ruin, a noted place in the East for Ghuls as in the West for ghosts.

[239] Lane (ii. 222) first read “Múroozee” and referred it to the Murúz tribe near Herat he afterwards (iii. 748) corrected it to “Marwazee,” of the fabric of Marw (Margiana) the place now famed for “Mervousness.” As a man of Rayy (Rhages) becomes Rází (e.g. Ibn Fáris al-Razí), so a man of Marw is Marázi, not Murúzi nor Márwazi. The “Mikna’ “ was a veil forming a kind of “respirator,” defending

from flies by day and from mosquitos, dews and draughts by night. Easterns are too sensible to sleep with bodies kept warm by bedding, and heads bared to catch every blast. Our grandfathers and grandmothers did well to wear bonnets-de-nuit, however ridiculous they may have looked.

[240] Iblis, meaning the Despairer, is called in the Koran (chaps. xviii. 48) “One of the genii (Jinnis) who departed from the command of his Lord.” Mr. Rodwell (in loco) notes that the Satans and Jinnis represent in the Koran (ii. 32, etc.) the evil-principle and finds an admixture of the Semitic Satans and demons with the “Genii from the Persian (Babylonian ?) and Indian (Egyptian ?) mythologies.”

[241] Of course she could not see his eyes when they were shut; nor is this mere Eastern inconsequence. The writer means, “had she seen them, they would have showed,” etc.

[242] The eyes are supposed to grow darker under the influence of wine and sexual passion.

[243] To keep off the evil eye.

[244] Like Dahnash this is a fanciful P. N., fit only for a Jinni. As a rule the appellatives of Moslem “genii” end inús (oos), as Tarnús, Huliyánus, the Jewish in — nas, as Jattunas; those of the Tarsá (the “funkers” i.e. Christians) in — dús, as Sidús, and the Hindus in — tús, as Naktús (who entered the service of the Prophet Shays, or Seth, and was converted to the Faith). The King of the Genii is Malik Katshán who inhabits Mount Kaf; and to the west of him lives his son-in-law, Abd al-Rahman with 33,000 domestics: these names were given by the Apostle Mohammed. “Baktanús” is lord of three Moslem troops of the wandering Jinns, which number a total of twelve bands and extend from Sind to Europe. The Jinns, Divs, Peris (“fairies”) and other pre-Adamitic creatures were governed by seventy-two Sultans all known as Sulayman and the last I have said was Ján bin Ján. The angel Háris was sent from Heaven to chastise him, but in the pride of victory he also revolted with his followers the

Jinns whilst the Peris held aloof. When he refused to bow down before Adam he and his chiefs were eternally imprisoned but the other Jinns are allowed to range over earth as a security for man’s obedience. The text gives the three orders. flyers. walkers and divers.

[245] i.e. distracted (with love); the Lakab, or poetical name, of apparently a Spanish poet.

[246] Nothing is more “anti-pathetic” to Easterns than lean hips and flat hinder-cheeks in women and they are right in insisting upon the characteristic difference of the male and female figure. Our modern sculptors and painters, whose study of the nude is usually most perfunctory, have often scandalised me by the lank and greyhound-like fining off of the frame, which thus becomes rather simian than human.

[247] The small fine foot is a favourite with Easterns as well as Westerns. Ovid (A.A.) is not ashamed “ad teneros Oscula (not basia or suavia) ferre pedes.” Ariosto ends the august person in

> Il breve, asciutto, e ritondetto piece,
> (The short-sized, clean-cut, roundly-moulded foot).

And all the world over it is a sign of “blood,” i.e. the fine nervous temperament.

[248] i.e. “full moons”: the French have corrupted it to “Badoure”; we to “Badoura.” winch is worse.

[249] As has been said a single drop of urine renders the clothes ceremoniously impure, hence a Stone or a handful of earth must be used after the manner of the torche-cul. Scrupulous Moslems, when squatting to make water, will prod the ground before them with the point o f stick or umbrella, so as to loosen it and prevent the spraying of the urine.

[250] It is not generally known to Christians that Satan has a wife called Awwá (“Hawwá” being the Moslem Eve) and, as Adam had three

sons, the Tempter has nine, viz., Zu ‘l-baysun who rules in bazars. Wassin who prevails in times of trouble. Awan who counsels kings; Haffan patron of wine-bibbers; Marrah of musicians and dancers; Masbut of news-spreaders (and newspapers ?); Dulhán who frequents places of worship and interferes with devotion. Dasim, lord of mansions and dinner tables, who prevents the Faithful saying “Bismillah” and “Inshallah,” as commanded in the Koran (xviii. 23), and Lakís, lord of Fire worshippers (Herklots, chap. xxix. sect. 4).

[251] Strong perfumes, such as musk (which we Europeans dislike and suspect), are always insisted upon in Eastern poetry, and Mohammed’s predilection for them is well known. Moreover the young and the beautiful are held (justly enough) to exhale a natural fragrance which is compared with that of the blessed in Paradise. Hence in the Mu’allakah of Imr al-Keys: —

Breathes the scent of musk when they rise to rove, *
  As the Zephyr’s breath with the flavour o’clove.

It is made evident by dogs and other fine-nosed animals that every human being has his, or her, peculiar scent which varies according to age and health. Hence animals often detect the approach of death.

[252] Arab. “Kahlá.” This has been explained. Mohammed is said to have been born with “Kohl’d eyes.”

[253] Hawá al-’uzrí, before noticed (Night cxiv.).

[254] These lines, with the Názir (eye or steward), the Hájib (Groom of the Chambers or Chamberlain) and Joseph, are also repeated from Night cxiv. For the Nazir see Al-Hariri (Nos. xiii. and xxii.)

[255] The usual allusion to the Húr (Houris) from “Hangar,” the white and black of the eye shining in contrast. The Persian Magi also placed in their Heaven (Bihisht or Minu) “Huran,” or black-eyed nymphs, under the charge of the angel Zamiyád.

[256] In the first hemistich, “bi-shitt ‘it wády” (by the wady-bank): in

the second, “wa shatta ‘l wády” (“and my slayer” — i.e. wády act. part. of wady, killing— “hath paced away”).

[257] The double entendre is from the proper names Budúr and Su’ád (Beatrice) also meaning “auspicious (or blessed) full moons.”

[258] Arab. “Házir” (also Ahl al-hazer, townsmen) and Bádi, a Badawi, also called “Ahl al-Wabar,” people of the camel’s hair (tent) and A’aráb (Nomadic) as opposed to Arab (Arab settled or not). They still boast with Ibn Abbas, cousin of Mohammed, that they have kerchiefs (not turbands) for crowns, tents for houses, loops for walls, swords for scarves and poems for registers or written laws.

[259] This is a peculiarity of the Jinn tribe when wearing hideous forms. It is also found in the Hindu Rakshasa.

[260] Which, by the by, are small and beautifully shaped. The animal is very handy with them, as I learnt by experience when trying to “Rareyfy” one at Bayrut.

[261] She being daughter of Al-Dimiryát, King of the Jinns.
Mr. W. F. Kirby has made him the subject of a pretty poem.

[262] These lines have occurred in Night xxii. I give
Torrens’s version () by way of variety.

[263] Arab. “Kámat Alfiyyah,” like an Alif, the first of the Arabic alphabet, the Heb. Aleph. The Arabs, I have said, took the flag or water leaf form and departed very far from the Egyptian original (we know from Plutarch that the hieroglyphic abecedarium began with “a”), which was chosen by other imitators, namely the bull’s head, and which in the cursive form, especially the Phnician, became a yoke. In numerals “Alif” denotes one or one thousand. It inherits the traditional honours of Alpha (as opposed to Omega) and in books, letters and writings generally it is placed as a monogram over the “Bismillah,” an additional testimony to the Unity. (See vol. i. .) In medićval Christianity this place of honour was occupied by the cross: none save the wildest countries have preserved it, but our vocabulary

still retains Criss' (Christ-)cross Row, for horn-book, on account of the old alphabet and nine digits disposed in the form of a Latin cross. Hence Tickell ("The Horn-book"):

> —— Mortals ne'er shall know
> More than contained of old the Chris'-cross Row.

[264] The young man must have been a demon of chastity.

[265] Arab. "Kirát" from i.e. bean, the seed of the Abrus precatorius, in weight=two to three (English) grains; and in length=one finger-breadth here; 24 being the total. The Moslem system is evidently borrowed from the Roman "as" and "uncia."

[266] Names of women.

[267] Arab. "Amsa" (lit. he passed the evening) like "asbaha" (he rose in the morning) "Azhá" (he spent the forenoon) and "bata" (he spent the night), are idiomatically used for "to be in any state, to continue" without specification of time or season.

[268] Lit. "my liver ;" which viscus, and not the heart, is held the seat of passion, a fancy dating from the oldest days. Theocritus says of Hercules, "In his liver Love had fixed a wound" (Idyl. xiii.). In the Anthologia "Cease, Love, to wound my liver and my heart" (lib. vii.). So Horace (Odes, i. 2); his Latin Jecur and the Persian "Jigar" being evident congeners. The idea was long prevalent and we find in Shakespeare: —

> Alas, then Love may be called appetite,
> No motion of the liver but the palate.

[269] A marvellous touch of nature, love ousting affection; the same trait will appear in the lover and both illustrate the deep Italian saying, "Amor discende, non ascende." The further it goes down the stronger it becomes as of grand-parent for grand-child and vice versa.

[270] This tenet of the universal East is at once fact and unfact. As a

generalism asserting that women's passion is ten times greater than man's (Pilgrimage, ii. 282), it is unfact. The world shows that while women have more philoprogenitiveness, men have more amativeness; otherwise the latter would not propose and would nurse the doll and baby. Pact, however, in low-lying lands, like Persian Mazanderan versus the Plateau; Indian Malabar compared with Marátha-land; California as opposed to Utah and especially Egypt contrasted with Arabia. In these hot damp climates the venereal requirements and reproductive powers of the female greatly exceed those of the male; and hence the dissoluteness of morals would be phenomenal, were it not obviated by seclusion, the sabre and the revolver. In cold-dry or hot-dry mountainous lands the reverse is the case; hence polygamy there prevails whilst the low countries require polyandry in either form, legal or illegal (i,e. prostitution) I have discussed this curious point of "geographical morality" (for all morality is, like conscience, both geographical and chronological), a subject so interesting to the lawgiver, the student of ethics and the anthropologist, in "The City of the Saints " But strange and unpleasant truths progress slowly, especially in England.

[271] This morning evacuation is considered, in the East, a sine quâ non of health; and old Anglo-Indians are unanimous in their opinion of the "bard fajar" (as they mispronounce the dawn-clearance). The natives of India, Hindús (pagans) and Hindís (Moslems), unlike Europeans, accustom themselves to evacuate twice a day, evening as well as morning. This may, perhaps, partly account for their mildness and effeminacy; for: —

C'est la constipation qui rend l'homme rigoureux.

The English, since the first invasion of cholera, in October, 1831, are a different race from their costive grandparents who could not dine without a "dinner-pill." Curious to say the clyster is almost unknown to the people of Hindostan although the barbarous West Africans use it daily to "wash 'um belly," as the Bonney-men say. And, as Sonnini notes to propose the process in Egypt under the Beys might have cost a Frankish medico his life.

[272] The Egyptian author cannot refrain from this characteristic polissonnerie; and reading it out is always followed by a roar of laughter. Even serious writers like Al- Hariri do not, as I have noted, despise the indecency.

[273] "'Long beard and little wits," is a saying throughout the East where the Kausaj (= man with thin, short beard) is looked upon as cunning and tricksy. There is a venerable Joe Miller about a schoolmaster who, wishing to singe his long beard short, burnt it off and his face to boot: — which reminded him of the saying. A thick beard is defined as one which wholly conceals the skin; and in ceremonial ablution it must be combed out with the fingers till the water reach the roots. The Sunnat, or practice of the Prophet, was to wear the beard not longer than one hand and two fingers' breadth. In Persian "Kúseh" (thin beard) is an insulting term opposed to "Khushrísh," a well-bearded man. The Iranian growth is perhaps the finest in the world, often extending to the waist; but it gives infinite trouble, requiring, for instance, a bag when travelling. The Arab beard is often composed of two tufts on the chin-sides and straggling hairs upon the cheeks; and this is a severe mortification, especially to Shaykhs and elders, who not only look upon the beard as one of man's characteristics, but attach a religious importance to the appendage. Hence the enormity of Kamar al-Zaman's behaviour. The Persian festival of the vernal equinox was called Kusehnishín (Thin-beard sitting). An old man with one eye paraded the streets on an ass with a crow in one hand and a scourge and fan in the other, cooling himself, flogging the bystanders and crying heat! heat! (garmá! garmá!). For other particulars see Richardson (Dissertation, p. Iii.). This is the Italian Giorno delle Vecchie, Thursday in Mid Lent, March 12 (1885), celebrating the death of Winter and the birth of Spring.

[274] I quote Torrens () as these lines have occurred in
Night xxxviii.

[275] Moslems have only two names for week days, Friday,
Al-Jum'ah or meeting-day, and Al-Sabt, Sabbath day, that is

Saturday. The others are known by numbers after Quaker fashion with us, the usage of Portugal and Scandinavia.

[276] Our last night.

[277] Arab. “Tayf”=phantom, the nearest approach to our “ghost,” that queer remnant of Fetishism imbedded in Christianity; the phantasma, the shade (not the soul) of tile dead. Hence the accurate Niebuhr declares, “apparitions (i.e., of the departed) are unknown in Arabia.” Haunted houses are there tenanted by Ghuls, Jinns and a host of supernatural creatures; but not by ghosts proper; and a man may live years in Arabia before he ever hears of the “Tayf.” With the Hindus it is otherwise (Pilgrimage iii. 144). Yet the ghost, the embodied fear of the dead and of death is common, in a greater or less degree, to all peoples; and, as modern Spiritualism proves, that ghost is not yet laid.

[278] Mr. Payne (iii. 133) omits the lines which are ŕpropos de rein and read much like “nonsense verses.” I retain them simply because they are in the text.

[279] The first two couplets are the quatrain (or octave) in Night xxxv.

[280] Arab. “Ar’ar,” the Heb. “Aroer,” which Luther and the A. V. translate “heath.” The modern Aramaic name is “Lizzáb” (Unexplored Syria. i. 68).

[281] In the old version and the Bresl. Edit. (iii. 220) the Princess beats the “Kahramánah,” but does not kill her.

[282] ‘This is still the popular Eastern treatment of the insane.

[283] Pers. “Marz-bán” = Warden of the Marches, Margrave. The foster-brother in the East is held dear as, and often dearer than, kith and kin.

[284] The moderns believe most in the dawn-dream.

— Quirinus

Post mediam noctem visus, quum somnia vera.
(Horace Sat. i. 10, 33,)

[285] The Bresl. Edit. (iii. 223) and Galland have “Torf:” Lane (ii. 115) “El-Tarf.”

[286] Arab. “Maghzal ;” a more favourite comparison is with a tooth pick. Both are used by Nizami and Al-Hariri, the most “elegant” of Arab writers.

[287] These form a Kasídah, Ode or Elegy= rhymed couplets numbering more than thirteen: If shorter it is called a “Ghazal.” I have not thought it necessary to preserve the monorhyme.

[288] Sulaymá dim. of Salmá= any beautiful woman Rabáb = the viol mostly single stringed: Tan’oum=she who is soft and gentle. These fictitious names are for his old flames.

[289] i.e. wine. The distich is highly fanciful and the conceits would hardly occur to a

[290] Arab. “Andam,” a term applied to Brazil-wood (also called “Bakkam”) and to “dragon’s blood,” but not, I think, to tragacanth, the “goat’s thorn,” which does not dye. Andam is often mentioned in The Nights.

[291] The superior merit of the first (explorer, etc.) is a lieu commun with Arabs. So Al-Hariri in Preface quotes his predecessor: —

Justly of praise the price I pay;
The praise is his who leads the way.

[292] There were two Lukmans, of whom more in a future page.

[293] This symbolic action is repeatedly mentioned in The Nights.

[294] Arab. “Shakhs”=a person, primarily a dark spot. So “Sawád”=blackness, in Al-Hariri means a group of people who darken the ground by their shade.

[295] The first bath after sickness, I have said, is called
“Ghusl al-Sihhah,” — the Washing of Health.

[296] The words “malady” and “disease” are mostly avoided during these dialogues as ill-omened words which may bring on a relapse.

[297] Solomon’s carpet of green silk which carried him and all his host through the air is a Talmudic legend generally accepted in Al-Islam though not countenanced by the Koran. chaps xxvii. When the “gnat’s wing” is mentioned, the reference is to Nimrod who, for boasting that he was lord of all, was tortured during four hundred years by a gnat sent by Allah up his ear or nostril.

[298] The absolute want of morality and filial affection in the chaste young man is supposed to be caused by the violence of his passion, and he would be pardoned because he “loved much.”

[299] I have noticed the geomantic process in my “History of Sindh” (chaps. vii.). It is called “Zarb al-Ram!” (strike the sand, the French say “frapper le sable”) because the rudest form is to make on the ground dots at haphazard, usually in four lines one above the other: these are counted and, if even-numbered, two are taken (* *); if odd one (*); and thus the four lines will form a scheme say * * * * * * This is repeated three times, producing the same number of figures; and then the combination is sought in an explanatory table or, if the practitioner be expert, he pronounces off-hand. The Nights speak of a “Takht Raml” or a board, like a schoolboy’s slate, upon which the dots are inked instead of points in sand. The moderns use a “Kura’h,” or oblong die, upon whose sides the dots, odd and even, are marked; and these dice are hand-thrown to form the e figure. By way of complication Geomancy is mixed up with astrology and then it becomes a most complicated kind of ariolation and an endless study. “Napoleon’s Book of Fate,” a chap-book which appeared some years

ago, was Geomancy in its simplest and most ignorant shape. For the rude African form see my Mission to Dahome, i. 332, and for that of Darfour, p-69 of Shaykh Mohammed’s Voyage before quoted.

[300] Translators understand this of writing marriage contracts; I take it in a more general sense.

[301] These lines are repeated from Night Ixxv.: with Mr. Payne’s permission I give his rendering (iii. 153) by way of variety.

[302] The comparison is characteristically Arab.

[303] Not her “face”: the head, and especially the back of the head, must always be kept covered, even before the father.

[304] Arab. “Siwák”=a tooth-stick; “Siwá-ka”=lit. other than thou.

[305] Arab. “Arák”=tooth stick of the wild caper-tree; “Ará-ka” lit.=I see thee. The capparis spinosa is a common desert-growth and the sticks about a span long (usually called Miswák), are sold in quantities at Meccah after being dipped in Zemzem water. In India many other woods are used, date-tree, Salvadora, Achyrantes, phyllanthus, etc. Amongst Arabs peculiar efficacy accompanies the tooth-stick of olive, “the tree springing from Mount Sinai” (Koran xxiii. 20); and Mohammed would use no other, because it prevents decay and scents the mouth. Hence Koran, chaps. xcv. 1. The “Miswák” is held with the unused end between the ring-finger and minimus, the two others grasp the middle and the thumb is pressed against the back close to the lips. These articles have long been sold at the Medical Hall near the “Egyptian Hall,” Piccadilly. They are better than our unclean tooth-brushes because each tooth gets its own especial rubbing’ not a general sweep; at the same time the operation is longer and more troublesome. In parts of Africa as well as Asia many men walk about with the tooth-stick hanging by a string from the neck.

[306] The “Mehari,” of which the Algerine-French speak, are the dromedaries bred by the Mahrah tribe of Al-Yaman, the descendants

of Mahrat ibn Haydan. They are covered by small wild camels (?) called Al-Húsh, found between Oman and Al-Shihr: others explain the word to mean “stallions of the Jinns “ and term those savage and supernatural animals, “Najáib al-Mahriyah”nobles of the Mahrah.

[307] Arab. “Khaznah”=a thousand purses; now about Ł5000. It denotes a large sum of money, like the “Badrah,” a purse containing 10,000 dirhams of silver (Al-Hariri), or 80,000 (Burckhardt Prov. 380); whereas the “Nisáb” is a moderate sum of money, gen. 20 gold dinars=200 silver dirhams.

[308] As The Nights show, Arabs admire slender forms; but the hips and hinder cheeks must be highly developed and the stomach fleshy rather than lean. The reasons are obvious. The Persians who exaggerate everything say e.g. (Husayn Váiz in the Anvár-i-Suhayli):—

How paint her hips and waist ? Who saw
 A mountain (Koh) dangling to a straw (káh)?

In Antar his beloved Abla is a tamarisk (T. Orientalis). Others compare with the palm-tree (Solomon), the Cypress (Persian, esp. Hafiz and Firdausi) and the Arák or wild Capparis (Arab.).

[309] Ubi aves ibi angel). All African travellers know that a few birds flying about the bush, and a few palm-trees waving in the wind, denote the neighbourhood of a village or a camp (where angels are scarce). The reason is not any friendship for man but because food, animal and vegetable, is more plentiful Hence Albatrosses, Mother Carey’s (Mater Cara, the Virgin) chickens, and Cape pigeons follow ships.

[310] The stanza is called Al-Mukhammas=cinquains; the quatrains and the “bob,” or “burden” always preserve the same consonance. It ends with a Koranic lieu commun of Moslem morality.

[311] Moslem port towns usually have (or had) only two gates. Such was the case with Bayrut, Tyre, Sidon and a host of others; the

faubourg-growth of modern days has made these obsolete. The portals much resemble the entrances of old Norman castles — Arques for instance. (Pilgrimage i. 185.)

[312] Arab. “Lisám”; before explained.

[313] i.e. Life of Souls (persons, etc.).

[314] Arab. “Insánu-há”=her (i.e. their) man: i.e. the babes of the eyes: the Assyrian Ishon, dim. of Ish=Man; which the Hebrews call “Bábat” or “Bit” (the daughter) the Arabs “Bubu (or Hadakat) al-Aye”; the Persians “Mardumak-i-chashm” (mannikin of the eye); the Greeks and the Latins pupa, pupula, pupilla. I have noted this in the Lyricks of Camoens ().

[315] Ma’an bin Zá’idah, a soldier and statesman of the eighth century.

[316] The mildness of the Caliph Mu’áwiyah, the founder of the Ommiades, proverbial among the Arabs, much resembles the “meekness” of Moses the Law-giver, which commentators seem to think has been foisted into Numbers xii. 3.

[317] Showing that there had been no consummation of the marriage which would have demanded “Ghusl,” or total ablution, at home or in the Hammam.

[318] I have noticed this notable desert-growth.

[319] ‘The “situation” is admirable, solution appearing so difficult and catastrophe imminent.

[320] This quatrain occurs in Night ix.: I have borrowed from Torrens () by way of variety.

[321] The belief that young pigeon’s blood resembles the virginal discharge is universal; but the blood most resembling man’s is that of the pig which in other points is so very human. In our day Arabs and Hindus rarely submit to inspection the nuptial sheet as practiced by

the Israelites and Persians. The bride takes to bed a white kerchief with which she staunches the blood and next morning the stains are displayed in the Harem. In Darfour this is done by the bridegroom. “Prima Venus debet esse cruenta,” say the Easterns with much truth, and they have no faith in our complaisant creed which allows the hymen-membrane to disappear by any but one accident.

[322] Not meaning the two central divisions commanded by the King and his Wazir.

[323] Ironicč.

[324] Arab. “Rasy”=praising in a funeral sermon.

[325] Arab. “Manáyá,” plur. of “Maniyat” = death. Mr. R. S. Poole (the Academy, April 26, 1879) reproaches Mr. Payne for confounding “Muniyat” (desire) with “Maniyat” (death) but both are written the same except when vowel-points are used.

[326] Arab. “Iddat,” alluding to the months of celibacy which, according to Moslem law, must be passed by a divorced woman before she can re-marry.

[327] Arab. “Talák bi’l-Salásah”=a triple divorce which cannot be revoked; nor can the divorcer re-marry the same woman till after consummation with another husband. This subject will continually recur.

[328] An allusion to a custom of the pagan Arabs in the days of ignorant Heathenism The blood or brain, soul or personality of the murdered man formed a bird called Sady or Hámah (not the Humá or Humái, usually translated “phnix”) which sprang from the head, where four of the five senses have their seat, and haunted his tomb, crying continually, “Uskúni!”=Give me drink (of the slayer’s blood) ! and which disappeared only when the vendetta was accomplished. Mohammed forbade the belief. Amongst the Southern Slavs the cuckoo is supposed to be the sister of a murdered man ever calling or vengeance.

[329] To obtain a blessing and show how he valued it.

[330] Well-known tribes of proto-historic Arabs who flourished before the time of Abraham: see Koran (chaps. xxvi. et passim). They will be repeatedly mentioned in The Nights and notes.

[331] Arab. “Amtár”; plur. of “Matr,” a large vessel of leather or wood for water, etc.

[332] Arab. “Asáfírí,” so called because they attract sparrows (asáfír) a bird very fond of the ripe oily fruit. In the Romance of “Antar” Asáfír camels are beasts that fly like birds in fleetness. The reader must not confound the olives of the text with the hard unripe berries (“little plums pickled in stale”) which appear at English tables, nor wonder that bread and olives are the beef-steak and potatoes of many Mediterranean peoples It is an excellent diet, the highly oleaginous fruit supplying the necessary carbon,

[333] Arab. “Tamer al-Hindi”=the “Indian-date,” whence our word “Tamarind.” A sherbet of the pods, being slightly laxative, is much drunk during the great heats; and the dried fruit, made into small round cakes, is sold in the bazars. The traveller is advised not to sleep under the tamarind’s shade, which is infamous for causing ague and fever. In Sind I derided the “native nonsense,” passed the night under an “Indian date-tree” and awoke with a fine specimen of ague which lasted me a week.

[334] Moslems are not agreed upon the length of the Day of Doom when all created things, marshalled by the angels, await final judgment; the different periods named are 40 years, 70, 300 and 50,000. Yet the trial itself will last no longer than while one may milk an ewe, or than “the space between two milkings of a she-camel.” This is bringing down Heaven to Earth with a witness; but, after all, the Heaven of all faiths, including “Spiritualism,” the latest development, is only an earth more or less glorified even as the Deity is humanity more or less perfected.

[335] Arab. “Al-Kamaráni,” lit. “the two moons.” Arab rhetoric prefers

it to “Shamsáni,” or {`two suns,” because lighter (akhaff), to pronounce. So, albeit Omar was less worthy than Abu-Bakr the two are called “Al-Omaráni,” in vulgar parlance, Omarayn.

[336] Alluding to the angels who appeared to the Sodomites in the shape of beautiful youths (Koran xi.).

[337] Koran xxxiii. 38.

[338] “Niktu-hu taklidan” i.e. not the real thing (with a woman). It may also mean “by his incitement of me.” All this scene is written in the worst form of Persian-Egyptian blackguardism, and forms a curious anthropological study. The “black joke” of the true and modest wife is inimitable.

[339] Arab. “Jamíz” (in Egypt “Jammayz”) = the fruit of the true sycomore (F. Sycomorus) a magnificent tree which produces a small tasteless fig, eaten by the poorer classes in Egypt and by monkeys. The “Tín” or real fig here is the woman’s parts; the “mulberry- fig,” the anus. Martial (i. 65) makes the following distinction: —

> Dicemus ficus, quas scimus in arbore nasci,
> Dicemus ficos, Caeciliane, tuos.

And Modern Italian preserves a difference between fico and fica.

[340] Arab. “Ghániyat Azárá” (plur. of Azrá = virgin): the former is properly a woman who despises ornaments and relies on “beauty unadorned” (i.e. in bed).

[341] “Nihil usitatius apud monachos, cardinales, sacrificulos,” says Johannes de la Casa Beneventius Episcopus, quoted by Burton Anat. of Mel. lib. iii. Sect. 2; and the famous epitaph on the Jesuit,

> Ci-git un Jesuite:
> Passant, serre les fesses et passe vite!

[342] Arab. “Kiblah”=the fronting-place of prayer, Meccah for

Moslems, Jerusalem for Jews and early Christians. See Pilgrimage (ii. 321) for the Moslem change from Jerusalem to Meccah and ibid. (ii. 213) for the way in which the direction was shown.

[343] The Koran says (chaps. ii.): “Your wives are your tillage: go in therefore unto your tillage in what manner so ever ye will.” Usually this is understood as meaning in any posture, standing or sitting, lying, backwards or forwards. Yet there is a popular saying about the man whom the woman rides (vulg. St. George, in France, le Postillon); “Cursed be who maketh woman Heaven and himself earth!” Some hold the Koranic passage to have been revealed in confutation of the Jews, who pretended that if a man lay with his wife backwards, he would beget a cleverer child. Others again understand it of preposterous venery, which is absurd: every ancient law-giver framed his code to increase the true wealth of the people — population — and severely punished all processes, like onanism, which impeded it. The Persians utilise the hatred of women for such misuse when they would force a wive to demand a divorce and thus forfeit her claim to Mahr (dowry); they convert them into catamites till, after a month or so, they lose all patience and leave the house.

[344] Koran lit 9: “He will be turned aside from the Faith (or Truth) who shall be turned aside by the Divine decree;” alluding, in the text, to the preposterous venery her lover demands.

[345] Arab. “Futúh” meaning openings, and also victories, benefits. The lover congratulates her on her mortifying self in order to please him.

[346] “And the righteous work will be exalt”: (Koran xxxv. 11) applied ironically.

[347] A prolepsis of Tommy Moore: —

Your mother says, my little Venus,
There’s something not quite right between us,
And you’re in fault as much as I,
Now, on my soul, my little Venus,
I swear ’twould not be right between us,

To let your mother tell a lie.

But the Arab is more moral than Mr. Little. as he purposes to repent.

[348] Arab. “Khunsa” flexible or flaccid, from Khans=bending inwards, i.e. the mouth of a water-skin before drinking. Like Mukhannas, it is also used for an effeminate man, a passive sodomite and even for a eunuch. Easterns still believe in what Westerns know to be an impossibility, human beings with the parts and proportions of both sexes equally developed and capable of reproduction; and Al-Islam even provides special rules for them (Pilgrimage iii. 237). We hold them to be Buffon’s fourth class of (duplicate) monsters belonging essentially to one or the other sex, and related to its opposite only by some few characteristics. The old Greeks dreamed, after their fashion, a beautiful poetic dream of a human animal uniting the contradictory beauties of man and woman. The duality of the generative organs seems an old Egyptian tradition, at least we find it in Genesis (i. 27) where the image of the Deity is created male and female, before man was formed out of the dust of the ground (ii. 7). The old tradition found its way to India (if the Hindus did not borrow the idea from the Greeks); and one of the forms of Mahadeva, the third person of their triad, is entitled “Ardhanárí”=the Half-woman, which has suggested to them some charming pictures. Europeans, seeing the left breast conspicuously feminine, have indulged in silly surmises about the “Amazons.”

[349] This is a mere phrase for our “dying of laughter”: the queen was on her back. And as Easterns sit on carpets, their falling back is very different from the same movement off a chair.

[350] Arab. “Ismid,” the eye-powder before noticed.

[351] When the Caliph (e.g. Al-Tá’i li’llah) bound a banner to a spear and handed it to an officer, he thereby appointed him Sultan or Viceregent.

[352] Arab. “Sháib al-ingház”=lit. a gray beard who shakes head in disapproval.

[353] Arab. “Ayát” = the Hebr. “Ototh,” signs, wonders or Koranic verses.

[354] The Chapter “Al-Ikhlás” i.e. clearing (oneself from any faith but that of Unity) is No. cxii. and runs thus: —

Say, He is the One God!
The sempiternal God,
He begetteth not, nor is He begot,
And unto Him the like is not.

It is held to be equal in value to one-third of the Koran, and is daily used in prayer. Mr. Rodwell makes it the tenth.

[355] The Lady Budur shows her noble blood by not objecting to her friend becoming her Zarrat (sister-wife). This word is popularly derived from “Zarar”=injury; and is vulgarly pronounced in Egypt “Durrah” sounding like Durrah = a parrot (see Burckhardt’s mistake in Prov. 314). The native proverb says, “Ayshat al-durrah murrah,” the sister-wife hath a bitter life. We have no English equivalent; so I translate indifferently co-wife, co-consort, sister-wife or sister in wedlock.

[356] Lane preserves the article “El-Amjad” and “El-As’ad;” which is as necessary as to say “the John” or “the James,” because neo-Latins have “il Giovanni” or “il Giacomo.” In this matter of the article, however, it is impossible to lay down a universal rule: in some cases it must be preserved and only practice in the language can teach its use. For instance, it is always present in Al-Bahrayn and al-Yaman; but not necessarily so with Irak and Najd.

[357] It is hard to say why this ugly episode was introduced. It is a mere false note in a tune pretty enough.

[358] The significance of this action will presently appear.

[359] An “Hadís.”

[360] Arab. "Sabb" = using the lowest language of abuse. chiefly concerning women-relatives and their reproductive parts.

[361] The reader will note in the narration concerning the two Queens the parallelism of the Arab's style which recalls that of the Hebrew poets. Strings of black silk are plaited into the long locks (an "idiot-fringe" being worn over the brow) because a woman is cursed "who joineth her own hair to the hair of another" (especially human hair). Sending the bands is a sign of affectionate submission; and, in extremes" cases the hair itself is sent.

[362] i.e., suffer similar pain at the spectacle, a phrase often occurring.

[363] i.e., when the eye sees not, the heart grieves not.

[364] i.e., unto Him we shall return, a sentence recurring in almost every longer chapter of the Koran.

[365] Arab. "Kun," the creative Word (which, by the by, proves the Koran to be an uncreated Logos); the full sentence being "Kun fa kána" = Be! and it became. The origin is evidently, "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light" (Gen. i. 3); a line grand in its simplicity and evidently borrowed from the Egyptians, even as Yahveh (Jehovah) from "Ankh"=He who lives (Brugsch Hist. ii. 34).

[366] i.e. but also for the life and the so-called "soul."

[367] Arab. "Layáli"=lit. nights which, I have said, is often applied to the whole twenty-four hours. Here it is used in the sense of "fortune" or "fate ;" like "days" and "days and nights."

[368] Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr a nephew of Ayishah, who had rebuilt the Ka'abah in A.H. 64 (A.D. 683), revolted (A.D. 680) against Yezid and was proclaimed Caliph at Meccah. He was afterwards killed (A.D. 692) by the famous or infamous Hajjáj general of Abd al-Malik bin Marwan, the fifth Ommiade, surnamed "Sweat of a stone" (skin-flint) and "Father of Flies," from his foul breath. See my Pilgrimage, etc. (iii. 192-194), where are explained the allusions to

the Ka’abah and the holy Black Stone.

[369] These lines are part of an elegy on the downfall of one of the Moslem dynasties in Spain, composed in the twelfth century by Ibn Abdun al-Andalúsi. The allusion is to the famous conspiracy of the Khárijites (the first sectarians in Mohammedanism) to kill Ah, Mu’awiyah and Amru (so written but pronounced “Amr”) al-As, in order to abate intestine feuds m Al-Islam. Ali was slain with a sword-cut by Ibn Muljam a name ever damnable amongst the Persians; Mu’awiyah escaped with a wound and Kharijah, the Chief of Police at Fustat or old Cairo was murdered by mistake for Amru. After this the sectarian wars began.

[370] Arab. “Saráb”= (Koran, chaps. xxiv.) the reek of the Desert, before explained. It is called “Lama,” the shine, the loom, in Al-Hariri. The world is compared with the mirage, the painted eye and the sword that breaks in the sworder’s hand.

[371] Arab. “Dunyá,” with the common alliteration “dániyah” (=Pers. “dún”), in prose as well as poetry means the things or fortune of this life opp. to “Akhirah”=future life.

[372] Arab. “Walgh,” a strong expression primarily denoting the lapping of dogs; here and elsewhere “to swill, saufen.”

[373] The lines are repeated from Night ccxxi. I give Lane’s version (ii. 162) by way of contrast and — warning.

[374] “Sáhirah” is the place where human souls will be gathered on Doom-day: some understand by it the Hell Sa’ír (No. iv.) intended for the Sabians or the Devils generally.

[375] His eyes are faded like Jacob’s which, after weeping for Joseph, “became white with mourning” (Koran, chaps. xxi.). It is a stock comparison.

[376] The grave.

[377] Arab. "Sawwán" (popularly pronounced Suwán) ="Syenite" from Syrene; generally applied to silex, granite or any hard stone.

[378] A proceeding fit only for thieves and paupers: "Alpinism" was then unknown. "You come from the mountain" (al-Jabal) means, "You are a clod-hopper"; and "I will sit upon the mountain"=turn anchorite or magician. (Pilgrimage i. 106.)

[379] Corresponding with wayside chapels in Catholic countries. The Moslem form would be either a wall with a prayer niche (Mibráb) fronting Meccah-wards or a small domed room. These little oratories are often found near fountains, streams or tree-clumps where travellers would be likely to alight. I have described one in Sind ("Scinde or the Unhappy Valley" i. 79), and have noted that scrawling on the walls is even more common in the East than in the West; witness the monuments of old Egypt bescribbled by the Greeks and Romans. Even the paws of the Sphinx are covered with such graffiti; and those of Ipsambul or Abu Símbal have proved treasures to epigraphists.

[380] In tales this characterises a Persian; and Hero Rustam is always so pictured.

[381] The Parsis, who are the representatives of the old Guebres, turn towards the sun and the fire as their Kiblah or point of prayer; all deny that they worship it. But, as in the case of saints' images, while the educated would pray before them for edification (Labia) the ignorant would adore them (Dulia); and would make scanty difference between the "reverence of a servant" and the "reverence of a slave." The human sacrifice was quite contrary to Guebre, although not to Hindu, custom; although hate and vengeance might prompt an occasional murder.

[382] These oubliettes are common in old eastern houses as in the medieval Castles of Europe, and many a stranger has met his death in them. They are often so well concealed that even the modern inmates are not aware of their existence.

[383] Arab. “Bakk”; hence our “bug” whose derivation (like that of “cat” “dog” and “hog”) is apparently unknown to the dictionaries, always excepting M. Littré’s.

[384] i.e. thy beauty is ever increasing.

[385] Alluding, as usual, to the eye-lashes, e.g.

An eyelash arrow from an eyebrow bow.

[386] Lane (ii. 168) reads:— “The niggardly female is protected by her niggardness;” a change of “Nahílah” (bee-hive) into “Bakhílah” (she skin flint).

[387] Koran iv. 38. The advantages are bodily strength, understanding and the high privilege of Holy War. Thus far, and thus far only, woman amongst Moslems is “lesser

[388] Arab. “Amir Yákhúr,” a corruption of “Akhor”=stable
(Persian).

[389] A servile name in Persian, meaning “the brave,” and a title of honour at the Court of Delhi when following the name. Many English officers have made themselves ridiculous (myself amongst the number) by having it engraved on their seal-rings, e.g. Brown Sáhib Bahádur. To write the word “Behadir” or “Bahádir” is to adopt the wretched Turkish corruption.

[390] “Jerry Sneak” would be the English reader’s comment; but in the East all charges are laid upon women.

[391] Here the formula means “I am sorry for it, but I couldn’t help it.”

[392] A noble name of the Persian Kings (meaning the planet
Mars) corrupted in Europe to Varanes.

[393] Arab. “Jalláb,” one of the three muharramát or forbiddens, the Hárik al-hajar (burner of stone) the Káti’ al-shajar (cutter of trees,

without reference to Hawarden N. B.) and the Báyi’ al-bashar (seller of men, vulg. Jalláb). The two former worked, like the Italian Carbonari, in desert places where they had especial opportunities for crime. (Pilgrimage iii. 140.) None of these things must be practiced during Pilgrimage on the holy soil of Al-Hijaz — not including Jeddah.

[394] The verses contain the tenets of the Murjiy sect which attaches infinite importance to faith and little or none to works. Sale (sect. viii.) derives his “Morgians” from the “Jabrians” (Jabari), who are the direct opponents of the “Kadarians” (Kadari), denying free will and free agency to man and ascribing his actions wholly to Allah. Lane (ii. 243) gives the orthodox answer to the heretical question: —

Water could wet him not if God please guard His own; *
    Nor need man care though bound of hands in sea he’s thrown:
But if His Lord decree that he in sea be drowned; *
    He’ll drown albeit in the wild and wold he wone.

It is the old quarrel between Predestination and Freewill which cannot be solved except by assuming a Law without a Lawgiver.

[395] Our proverb says: Give a man luck and throw him into the sea.

[396] As a rule Easterns, I repeat, cover head and face when sleeping especially in the open air and moonlight. Europeans find the practice difficult, and can learn it only by long habit.

[397] Pers. = a flower-garden. In Galland, Bahram has two daughters, Bostama and Cavam a. In the Bres. Edit. the daughter is “Bostan” and the slave-girl “Kawám.”

[398] Arab. “Kahíl”=eyes which look as if darkened with antimony: hence the name of the noble Arab breed of horses “Kuhaylat” (Al-Ajuz, etc.).

[399] “As’ad”=more (or most) fortunate.

[400] This is the vulgar belief, although Mohammed expressly disclaimed the power in the Koran (chaps. xiii. 8), “Thou art commissioned to be a preacher only and not a worker of miracles.” “Signs” (Arab. Ayát) may here also mean verses of the Koran, which the Apostle of Allah held to be his standing miracles. He despised the common miracula which in the East are of everyday occurrence and are held to be easy for any holy man. Hume does not believe in miracles because he never saw one. Had he travelled in the East he would have seen (and heard of) so many that his scepticism (more likely that testimony should be false than miracles be true) would have been based on a firmer foundation. It is one of the marvels of our age that whilst two-thirds of Christendom (the Catholics and the “Orthodox” Greeks) believe in “miracles” occurring not only in ancient but even in our present days, the influential and intelligent third (Protestant) absolutely “denies the fact.”

[401] Arab. “Al-Shahádatáni”; testifying the Unity and the Apostleship.

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VOLUME IV.

To Foster Fitzgerald Arbuthnot.

My Dear Arbuthnot,

I have no fear that a friend, whose friendship has lasted nearly a third of a century, will misunderstand my reasons for inscribing his name upon these pages. You have lived long enough in the East and, as your writings show, observantly enough, to detect the pearl which lurks in the kitchen-midden, and to note that its lustre is not dimmed nor its value diminished by its unclean surroundings.

Ever yours sincerely,
Richard F. Burton.

Athenжum Club, October 1, 1885

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Tale of Kamar Al-Zaman (continued)

There lived once in the city of Cufa[1] a man called Al-RabН’a bin Нбtim, who was one of the chief men of the town, a wealthy and a healthy, and Heaven had vouchsafed him a son, whom he named Ni’amah Allah.[2] One day, being in the slave-brokers’ mart, he saw a woman exposed for sale with a little maid of wonderful beauty and grace on her arm. So he beckoned to the broker and asked him, “How much for this woman and her daughter?” He answered “Fifty dinars.” Quoth Al-Rabi’a “Write the contract of sale and take the money and give it to her owner.” Then he gave the broker the price and his brokerage and taking the woman and her child, carried them to his house. Now when the daughter of his uncle who was his wife saw the slave, she said to her husband, “O my cousin, what is this damsel?” He replied, “Of a truth, I bought her for the sake of the little one on her arm; for know that, when she groweth up, there will not be her like for beauty, either in the land of the Arabs or the Ajams.” His wife remarked, “Right was thy rede”, and said to the woman “What is thy name?” She replied, “O my lady, my name is TauflНk.[3] “ “And what is thy daughter’s name?” asked she? Answered the slave, “Sa’ad, the happy.” Rejoined her mistress; “Thou sayst sooth, thou art indeed happy, and happy is he who hath bought thee.” Then quoth she to her husband, “O my cousin, what wilt thou call her?”; and quoth he, “Whatso thou chooses”; so she said, “Then let us call her Naomi,” and he rejoined “Good is thy device.” The little Naomi was reared with Al-Rabi’a’s son Ni’amah in one cradle, so to speak, till the twain reached the age of ten and each grew handsomer than the other; and the boy used to address her, “O my sister!” and she, “O my brother!”, till they came to that age when Al-Rabi’a said to Ni’amah, “O my son, Naomi is not thy sister but thy slave. I bought her in thy name whilst thou wast yet in the cradle; so call her no more sister from this day forth.” Quoth Ni’amah, “If that be so, I will take her to wife.” Then he went to his mother and told her of this, and she said to him, “O my son, she is thy handmaid.” So he wedded and went in unto Naomi and loved her; and two[4] years passed over them whilst in this condition, nor was there in all Cufa a fairer girl than Naomi, or a sweeter or a more graceful. As she grew up she learnt the Koran and read works of science and excelled in music and playing upon all kinds of instruments; and in the beauty of her singing she surpassed all the folk of her time. Now one day as she sat with her husband in the wine chamber, she took the lute, tightened the strings, and sang these two couplets,

“While thou’rt my lord whose bounty’s my estate, * A sword
  whereby my woes to annihilate,
Recourse I never need to Amru or Zayd,[5] * Nor aught save
  thee if way to me grow strait!”

Ni’amah was charmed with these verses and said to her, “By my life, O Naomi, sing to us with the tambourine and other instruments!” So she sang these couplets to a lively measure,

“By His life who holds my guiding rein, I swear * I’ll meet on
  love ground parlous foe nor care:
Good sooth I’ll vex revilers, thee obey * And quit my slumbers
  and all joy forswear:
And for thy love I’ll dig in vitals mine * A grave, nor shall my
  vitals weet ’tis there!”

And Ni’amah exclaimed, “Heaven favoured art thou, O Naomi!” But whilst they led thus the most joyous life, behold! Al-Hajj6j,[6] the Viceroy of Cufa said to himself, “Needs must I contrive to take this girl named Naomi and send her to the Commander of the Faithful, Abd al-Malik bin Marw6n, for he hath not in his palace her like for beauty and sweet singing.” So he summoned an old woman of the duennas of his wives and said to her, “Go to the house of Al-Rabi’a and foregather with the girl Naomi and combine means to carry her off; for her like is not to be found on the face of the earth.” She promised to do his bidding; the next morning she donned the woollen clothes of a devotee and hung around her neck a rosary of beads by the thousand; and, henting in hand a staff and a leather water bottle of Yamani manufacture. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old woman promised to do the bidding of Al-Hajjaj, and whenas it was morning she donned the woollen clothes of a devotee[7] and hung around her neck a rosary of beads by the thousand and hent in hand a staff and a leather water bottle of Yamani manufacture and fared forth crying, “Glory be to Allah! Praised be Allah! There is no god but the God! Allah is Most Great! There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” Nor did she leave off her lauds and her groaning in prayer whilst her heart was full of guile and wiles, till she came to the house of Ni’amah bin al-Rabi’a at the hour of noon prayer, and knocked at the door. The doorkeeper opened and said to her, “What dost thou want?” Quoth she, “I am a poor pious woman, whom the time of noon prayer hath overtaken, and fief would I pray in this blessed place.” Answered the porter, “O old woman, this is no mosque nor oratory, but the house of Ni’amah son of al Rabi’a.” She replied, “I know there is neither cathedral-mosque nor oratory like the house of Ni’amah bin al-Rabi’a. I am a chamberwoman of the palace of the Prince of True Believers and am come out for worship and the visitation of Holy Places.” But the porter rejoined, “Thou canst not enter;” and many words passed between them, till at last she caught hold and hung to him saying, “Shall the like of me be denied admission to the house of Ni’amah bin al-Rabi’a, I who have free access to the houses of Emirs and Grandees?” Anon, out came Ni’amah and, hearing their loud language, laughed and bade the old woman enter after him. So she followed him into the presence of Naomi, whom she saluted after the godliest and goodliest fashion, and, when she looked on her, she was confounded at her exceeding seemliness and said to her, “O my lady, I commend thee to the safeguard of Allah, who made thee and thy lord fellows in beauty and loveliness!” Then she stood up in the prayer niche and betook herself to inclination and prostration and prayer, till day departed and night darkened and starkened, when Naomi said to her, “O my mother, rest thy legs and feet awhile.” Replied the old woman “O my lady, whoso seeketh the world to come let him weary him in this world, and whoso wearieth not himself in this world shall not attain the dwellings of the just in the world to come.” Then Naomi brought her food and said to her, “Eat of my bread and pray Heaven to accept my penitence and to have mercy on me.” But she cried, “O my lady, I am fasting. As for thee, thou art but a girl and it befitteth thee to eat and drink and make merry; Allah be indulgent to thee!; for the Almighty saith: All shall be punished except him who shall repent and believe and shall work a righteous work.”[8] So Naomi continued sitting with the old woman in talk and presently said to Ni’amah, “O my lord, conjure this ancient dame to sojourn with us awhile, for piety and devotion are imprinted on her countenance.” Quoth he, “Set apart for her a chamber where she may say her prayers; and suffer no one to go in to her: peradventure, Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) shall prosper us by the blessing of her presence and never separate us.” So the old woman passed her night in praying and reciting the Koran; and when Allah caused the morn to dawn, she went in to Ni’amah and Naomi and, giving them good morning, said to them, “I pray Allah have you in His holy keeping!” Quoth Naomi, “Whither away, O my mother? My lord hath bidden me set apart for thee a chamber, where thou mayst seclude thee for thy devotions.” Replied the old woman, “Allah give him long life, and continue His favour to you both! But I would have you charge the doorkeeper not to stay my coming in to you; and, Inshallah! I will go the round of the Holy Places and pray for you two at the end of my devotions every day and night.” Then she went out (whilst Naomi wept for parting with her knowing not the cause of her coming), and returned to Al-Hajjaj who said to her, “As thou do my bidding soon, thou shalt have of me abundant good.” Quoth she, “I ask of thee a full month;” and quoth he “Take the month.” Thereupon the old hag fell to daily visiting Ni’amah’s house and frequented his slave-wife, Naomi. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old hag fell to visiting daily Ni’amah’s house and frequenting his slave wife, Naomi; and both ceased not to honour her, and she used to go in to them morning and evening and all in the house respected her till, one day, being alone with Naomi, she said to her, “O my lady! by Allah, when I go to the Holy Places, I will pray for thee; and I only wish thou wert with me, that thou mightest look on the Elders of the Faith who resort thither, and they should pray for thee, according to thy desire." Naomi cried, "I conjure thee by Allah take me with thee!"; and she replied, "Ask leave of thy mother in law, and I will take thee." So Naomi said to her husband's mother, "O my lady, ask my master to let us go forth, me and thee, one day with this my old mother, to prayer and worship with the Fakirs in the Holy Places." Now when Ni'amah came in and sat down, the old woman went up to him and would have kissed his hand, but he forbade her; so she invoked blessings[9] on him and left the house. Next day she came again, in the absence of Ni'amah, and she addressed Naomi, saying, "We prayed for thee yesterday; but arise now and divert thyself and return ere thy lord come home." So Naomi said to her mother-in-law, "I beseech thee, for Allah's sake, give me leave to go with this pious woman, that I may sight the saints of Allah in the Holy Places, and return speedily ere my lord come back." Quoth Ni'amah's mother, "I fear lest thy lord know;" but said the old woman, "By Allah, I will not let her take seat on the floor; no, she shall look, standing on her feet, and not tarry." So she took the damsel by guile and, carrying her to Al-Hajjaj's palace, told him of her coming, after placing her in a lonely chamber; whereupon he went in to her and, looking upon her, saw her to be the loveliest of the people of the day, never had he beheld her like. Now when Naomi caught sight of him she veiled her face from him; but he left her not till he had called his Chamberlain, whom he commanded to take fifty horsemen; and he bade him mount the damsel on a swift dromedary, and bear her to Damascus and there deliver her to the Commander of the Faithful, Abd al-Malik bin Marwan. Moreover, he gave him a letter for the Caliph, saying, "Bear him this letter and bring me his answer and hasten thy return to me." So the Chamberlain, without losing time, took the damsel (and she tearful for separation from her lord) and, setting out with her on a dromedary, gave not over journeying till he reached Damascus. There he sought audience of the Commander of the Faithful and, when it was granted, the Chamberlain delivered the damsel and reported the circumstance. The Caliph appointed her a separate apartment and going into his Harim, said to his wife, "Al Hajjaj hath bought me a slave-girl of the daughters of the Kings of Cufa[10] for ten thousand dinars, and hath sent me this letter." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Fortieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Caliph acquainted his wife with the story of the slave-girl, she said to him, "Allah increase to thee His favour!" Then the Caliph's sister went in to the supposed slave-girl and, when she saw her, she said, "By Allah, not unlucky is the man who hath thee in his house, were thy cost an hundred thousand dinars!" And Naomi replied, "O fair of face, what King's palace is this, and what is the city?" She answered, "This is the city of Damascus, and this is the palace of my brother, the Commander of the Faithful, Abd al-Malik bin Marwan.[11] " Then she resumed, "Didst thou not know all this?" Naomi said, "By Allah, O my lady, I had no knowledge of it!"; when the other asked, "And he who sold thee and took thy price did he not tell thee that the Caliph had bought thee?" Now when Naomi heard these words, she shed tears and said to herself, "Verily, I have been tricked and the trick hath succeeded," adding to herself, "If I speak, none will credit me; so I will hold my peace and take patience, for I know that the relief of Allah is near." Then she bent her head for shame, and indeed her cheeks were tanned by the journey and the sun. So the Caliph's sister left her that day and returned to her on the morrow with clothes and necklaces of jewels, and dressed her; after which the Caliph came in to her and sat down by her side, and his sister said to him, "Look on this handmaid in whom Allah hath conjoined every perfection of beauty and loveliness." So he said to Naomi, "Draw back the veil from thy face;" but she would not unveil, and he beheld not her face. However, he saw her wrists and love of her entered his heart; and he said to his sister, "I will not go in unto her for three days, till she be cheered by thy converse." Then he arose and left her, but Naomi ceased not to brood over her case and sigh for her separation from her master, Ni'amah, till she fell sick of a fever during the night and ate not nor drank; and her favour faded and her charms were changed. They told the Caliph of this and her condition grieved him; so he visited her with physicians and men of skill, but none could come at a cure for her. This is how it fared with her; but as regards Ni'amah, when he returned home he sat down on his bed and cried, “Ho, Naomi!” But she answered not; so he rose in haste and called out, yet none came to him, as all the women in the house had hidden themselves for fear of him. Then he went out to his mother, whom he found sitting with her cheek on her hand, and said to her, “O my mother, where is Naomi?” She answered, “O my son, she is with one who is worthier than I to be trusted with her, namely, the devout old woman; she went forth with her to visit devotionally the Fakirs and return.” Quoth Ni’amah, “Since when hath this been her habit and at what hour went she forth?” Quoth his mother, “She went out early in the morning.” He asked, “And how camest thou to give her leave for this?”; and she answered, “O my son, ’twas she persuaded me.” “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” exclaimed Ni’amah and, going forth from his home in a state of distraction, he repaired to the Captain of the Watch to whom said he, “Doss thou play tricks upon me and steal-my slave-girl away from my house? I will assuredly complain of thee to the Commander of the Faithful.” Said the Chief of Police, “Who hath taken her?” and Ni’amah replied, “An old woman of such and such a mien, clad in woollen raiment and carrying a rosary of beads numbered by thousands.” Rejoined the other, “Find me the old woman and I will get thee back thy slave-girl.” “And who knows the old woman?” retorted Ni’amah. “And who knows the hidden things save Allah (may He be extolled and exalted!)?” cried the Chief, who knew her for Al-Hajjaj’s procuress. Cried Ni’amah, “I look to thee for my slave-girl, and Al-Hajjaj shall judge between thee and me;” and the Master of Police answered, “Go to whom thou wilt.” So Ni’amah went to the palace of Al-Hajjaj, for his father was one of the chief men of Cufa; and, when he arrived there, the Chamberlain went in to the Governor and told him the case; whereupon Al-Hajjaj said, “Hither with him!” and when he stood before him enquired, “What be thy business?” Said Ni’amah, “Such and such things have befallen me;” and the Governor said, “Bring me the Chief of Police, and we will commend him to seek for the old woman.” Now he knew that the Chief of Police was acquainted with her; so, when he came, he said to him, “I wish thee to make search for the slave-girl of Ni’amah son of Al-Rabi’a.” And he answered, “None knoweth the hidden things save Almighty Allah.” Rejoined Al-Hajjaj, “There is no help for it but thou send out horsemen and look for the damsel in all the roads, and seek for her in the towns." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Forty-First Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Al-Hajjaj said to the Captain of the Watch, "There is no help for it but thou send out horsemen, and look for the damsel on all the roads and seek for her in the towns." Then he turned to Ni'amah and said to him, "And thy slave-girl return not, I will give thee ten slave-girls from my house and ten from that of the Chief of Police." And he again bade the Captain of the Watch, "Go and seek for the girl." So he went out, and Ni'amah returned home full of trouble and despairing of life; for he had now reached the age of fourteen and there was yet no hair on his side cheeks. So he wept and lamented and shut himself up from his household; and ceased not to weep and lament, he and his mother, till the morning, when his father came in to him and said, "O my son, of a truth, Al-Hajjaj hath put a cheat upon the damsel and hath taken her; but from hour to hour Allah giveth relief." However grief redoubled on Ni'amah, so that he knew not what he said nor knew he who came in to him, and he fell sick for three months his charms were changed, his father despaired of him and the physicians visited him and said, "There is no remedy for him save the damsel." Now as his father was sitting one day, behold he heard tell of a skillful Persian physician, whom the folk gave out for perfect in medicine and astrology and geomancy. So Al-Rabi'a sent for him and, seating him by his side, entreated him with honour and said to him, "Look into my son's case." Thereupon quoth he to Ni'amah, "Give me thy hand." The young man gave him his hand and he felt his pulse and his joints and looked in his face; then he laughed and, turning to his father, said, "Thy son's sole ailment is one of the heart."[12] He replied, Thou sayest sooth, O sage, but apply thy skill to his state and case, and acquaint me with the whole thereof and hide naught from me of his condition." Quoth the Persian, "Of a truth he is enamoured of a slave-girl and this slave-girl is either in Bassorah or Damascus; and there is no remedy for him but reunion with her." Said Al-Rabi'a, "An thou bring them together, thou shalt live all thy life in wealth and delight." Answered the Persian, "In good sooth this be an easy matter and soon brought about," and he turned to Ni'amah and said to him, "No hurt shall befall thee; so be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear." Then quoth he to Al-Rabi'a, "Bring me out four thousand dinars of your money;" so he gave them to him, and he added, "I wish to carry thy son with me to Damascus; and Almighty Allah willing, I will not return thence but with the damsel." Then he turned to the youth and asked, "What is thy name?"; and he answered "Ni'amah." Quoth the Persian, "O Ni'amah, sit up and be of good heart, for Allah will reunite thee with the damsel." And when he sat up the leach continued, "Be of good cheer for we set out for Damascus this very day: put thy trust in the Lord and eat and drink and be cheerful so as to fortify thyself for travel." Upon this the Persian began making preparation of all things needed, such as presents and rarities; and he took of Al-Rabi'a in all the sum of ten thousand dinars, together with horses and camels and beasts of burden and other requisites. Then Ni'amah farewelled his father and mother and journeyed with the physician to Aleppo. They could find no news of Naomi there so they fared on to Damascus, where they abode three days, after which the Persian took a shop and he adorned even the shelves with vessels of costly porcelain, with covers of silver, and with gildings and stuffs of price. Moreover, he set before himself vases and flagons of glass full of all manner of ointments and ups, and he surrounded them with cups of crystal — and, placing astrolabe and geomantic tablet facing him, he donned a physician's habit and took his seat in the shop. Then he set Ni'amah standing before him clad in a shirt and gown of silk and, girding his middle with a silken kerchief gold-embroidered, said to him, "O Ni'amah, henceforth thou art my son; so call me naught but sire, and I will call thee naught but son." And he replied, "I hear and I obey." Thereupon the people of Damascus flocked to the Persian's shop that they might gaze on the youth's goodliness and the beauty of the shop and its contents, whilst the physician spoke to Ni'amah in Persian and he answered him in the same tongue, for he knew the language, after the wont of the sons of the notables. So that Persian doctor soon became known among the townsfolk and they began to acquaint him with their ailments, and he to prescribe for them remedies. Moreover, they brought him the water of the sick in phials,[13] and he would test it and say, “He, whose water this is, is suffering from such and such a disease,” and the patient would declare, “Verily this physician sayeth sooth.” So he continued to do the occasions of the folk and they to flock to him, till his fame spread throughout the city and into the houses of the great. Now, one day as he sat in his-shop, behold, there came up an old woman riding on an ass with a stuffed saddle of brocade embroidered with jewels; and, stopping before the Persian’s shop, drew rein and beckoned him, saying, “Take my hand.” He took her hand, and she alighted and asked him “Art thou the Persian physician from Irak?” “Yes,” answered he, and she said, “Know that I have a sick daughter.” Then she brought out to him a phial — and the Persian looked at it and said to her, “O my mistress, tell me thy daughter’s name, that I may calculate her horoscope and learn the hour in which it will befit her to drink medicine.” She replied, “O my brother the Persian,[14] her name is Naomi.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Forty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Persian heard the name of Naomi, he fell to calculating and writing on his hand and presently said, “O my lady, I cannot prescribe a medicine for her till I know what country woman she is, because of the difference of climate: so tell me in what land she was brought up and what is her age.” The old woman replied “She is fourteen years old and she was brought up in Cufa of Irak.” He asked, “And how long hath she sojourned in this country?” “But a few months,” answered she. Now when Ni’amah heard the old woman’s words and recognised the name of his slave- girl, his heart fluttered and he was like to faint. Then said the Persian, “Such and such medicines will suit her case;” and the old woman rejoined, “Then make them up and give me what thou hast mentioned, with the blessing of Almighty Allah.” So saying, she threw upon the shop board ten gold pieces, and he looked at Ni’amah and bade him prepare the necessary drugs; whereupon she also looked at the youth and exclaimed, “Allah have thee in his keeping, O my son! Verily, she favoureth thee in age and mien.” Then said she to the physician, “O my brother the Persian, is this thy slave or thy son?” “He is my son,” answered he. So Ni’amah put up the medicine and, placing it in a little box, took a piece of paper and wrote thereon these two couplets,[15]

“If Naomi bless me with a single glance, * Let Su’adб sue and
Juml joy to
They said, “Forget her: twenty such thou’lt find.” * But none is
like her — I will not forget!”

He pressed the paper into the box and, sealing it up, wrote upon the cover the following words in Cufic characters, “I am Ni’amah of al-Rabi’a of Cufa.” Then he set it before the old woman who took it and bade them farewell and returned to the Caliph’s palace, and when she went up with the drugs to the damsel she placed the little box of medicine at her feet, saying, “O my lady, know that there is lately come to our town a Persian physician, than whom I never saw a more skilful nor a better versed in matters of malady. I told him thy name, after showing him the water-bottle, and forthwith he knew thine ailment and prescribed a remedy. Then he bade his son make thee up this medicine; and there is not in Damascus a comelier or a seemlier youth than this lad of his, nor hath anyone a shop the like of his shop.” So Naomi took the box and, seeing the names of her lord and his father written on the cover, changed colour and said to herself, “Doubtless, the owner of this shop is come in search of me.” So she said to the old woman, “Describe to me this youth.” Answered the old woman, “His name is Ni’amah, he hath a mole on his right eyebrow, is richly clad and is perfectly handsome.” Cried Naomi, “Give me the medicine, whereon be the blessing and help of Almighty Allah!” So she drank off the potion (and she laughing) and said, “Indeed, it is a blessed medicine!” Then she sought in the box and, finding the paper, opened it, read it, understood it and knew that this was indeed her lord, whereas her heart was solaced and she rejoiced. Now when the old woman saw her laughing, she exclaimed, “This is indeed a blessed day!”; and Naomi said, “O nurse, I have a mind for something to eat and drink.” The old woman said to the serving women, “Bring a tray of dainty viands for your mistress;” whereupon they set food before her and she sat down to eat. And behold in came the Caliph who, seeing her sitting at meat, rejoiced; and the old woman said to him, “O Commander of the Faithful, I give thee joy of thy hand maid Naomi’s recovery! And the cause is that there is lately come to this our city a physician than whom I never saw a better versed in diseases and their remedies. I fetched her medicine from him and she hath drunken of it but once and is restored to health.” Quoth he, “Take a thousand dinars and apply thyself to her treatment, till she be completely recovered.” And he went away, rejoicing in the damsel’s recovery, whilst the old woman betook herself to the Persian’s house and delivered the thousand dinars, giving him to know that she was become the Caliph’s slave and also handing him a letter which Naomi had written. He took it and gave the letter to Ni’amah, who at first sight knew her hand and fell down in a swoon. When he revived he opened the letter and found these words written therein: “From the slave despoiled of her Ni’amah, her delight; her whose reason hath been beguiled and who is parted from the core of her heart. But afterwards of a truth thy letter hath reached me and hath broadened my breast, and solaced my soul, even as saith the poet,

“Thy note came: long lost hungers wrote that note, * Till drop
they sweetest scents for what they wrote:
Twas Moses to his mother’s arms restored; * ’Twas Jacob’s eye-
sight cured by Joseph’s coat!”[16]

When Ni’amah read these verses, his eyes ran over with tears and the old woman said to him, “What maketh thee to weep, O my son? Allah never cause thine eye to shed tears!” Cried the Persian, “O my lady, how should my son not weep, seeing that this is his slave-girl and he her lord, Ni’amah son of al-Rabi’a of Cufa; and her health dependeth on her seeing him, for naught aileth her but loving him. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Forty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Persian cried out to the old woman, “How shall my son not weep, seeing that this is his slave-girl and he her lord, Ni’amah son of al-Rabi’a of Cufa; and the health of this damsel dependeth on her seeing him and naught aileth her but loving him. So, do thou, O my lady, take these thousand dinars to thyself and thou shalt have of me yet more than this; only look on us with eyes of rush; for we know not how to bring this affair to a happy end save through thee.” Then she said to Ni’amah, “Say, art thou indeed her lord?” He replied, “Yes,” and she rejoined, “Thou sayest sooth; for she ceaseth not continually to name thee.” Then he told her all that had passed from first to last, and she said, “O youth, thou shalt owe thy reunion with her to none but myself.” So she mounted and, at once returning to Naomi, looked in her face and laughed saying, “It is just, O my daughter, that thou weep and fall sick for thy separation from thy master, Ni’amah, son of Al-Rabi’a of Cufa.” Quoth Naomi, “Verily, the veil hath been withdrawn for thee and the truth revealed to thee.” Rejoined the old woman, “Be of good cheer and take heart, for I will assuredly bring you together, though it cost me my life.” Then she returned to Ni’amah and said to him, “I went to thy slave- girl and conversed with her, and I find that she longeth for thee yet more than thou for her; for although the Commander of the Faithful is minded to become intimate with her, she refuseth herself to him. But if thou be stout of purpose and firm of heart, I will bring you together and venture my life for you, and play some trick and make shift to carry thee into the Caliph’s palace, where thou shalt meet her, for she cannot come forth.” And Ni’amah answered, “Allah requite thee with good!” Then she took leave of him and went back to Naomi and said, “Thy lord is indeed dying of love for thee and would fain see thee and foregather with thee. What sayest thou?” Naomi replied, “And I too am longing for his sight and dying for his love.” Whereupon the old woman took a parcel of women’s clothes and ornaments and, repairing to Ni’amah, said to him, “Come with me into some place apart.” So he brought her into the room behind the shop where she stained his hands and decked his wrists and plaited his hair, after which she clad him in a slave-girl’s habit and adorned him after the fairest fashion of woman’s adornment, till he was as one of the Houris of the Garden of Heaven, and when she saw him thus she exclaimed, “Blessed be Allah, best of Creators! By Allah, thou art handsomer than the damsel.[17] Now, walk with thy left shoulder forwards and thy right well behind, and sway thy hips from side to side.”[18] So he walked before her, as she bade him; and, when she saw he had caught the trick of woman's gait, she said to him, "Expect me tomorrow night, and Allah willing, I will take and carry thee to the palace. But when thou seest the Chamberlains and the Eunuchs be bold, and bow thy head and speak not with any, for I will prevent their speech; and with Allah is success!" Accordingly, when the morning dawned, she returned and, carrying him to the palace, entered before him and he after her step by step. The Chamberlain would have stopped his entering, but the old woman said to him, "O most ill omened of slaves, this is the handmaid of Naomi, the Caliph's favourite. How durst thou stay her when she would enter?" Then said she, "Come in, O damsel!"; and the old woman went in and they ceased not faring on, till they drew near the door leading to the inner piazza of the palace, when she said to him, "O Ni'amah, hearten thyself and take courage and enter and turn to the left: then count five doors and pass through the sixth, for it is that of the place prepared for thee. Fear nothing, and if any speak to thee, answer not, neither stop." Then she went up with him to the door, and the Chamberlain there on guard accosted her, saying "What damsel is this?" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Forty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Chamberlain accosted the old woman, saying, "What damsel is this?"; quoth the ancient dame, "Our lady hath a mind to buy her;" and he rejoined, "None may enter save by leave of the Commander of the Faithful; so do thou go back with her. I can not let her pass for thus am I commanded." Replied the old woman, "O Chief Chamberlain, use thy reason. Thou knowest that Naomi, the Caliph's slave-girl, of whom he is enamoured, is but now restored to health and the Commander of the Faithful hardly yet crediteth her recovery. She is minded to buy this hand maid; so oppose thou not her entrance, lest haply it come to Naomi's knowledge and she be wroth with thee and suffer a relapse and this cause thy head to be cut off." Then said she to Ni'amah, "Enter, O damsel; pay no heed to what he saith and tell not the Queen-consort that her Chamberlain opposed thine entrance." So Ni'amah bowed his head and entered the palace, and would have turned to the left, but mistook the direction and walked to his right; and, meaning to count five doors and enter the sixth, he counted six and entering the seventh, found himself in a place whose floor was carpeted with brocade and whose walls were hung with curtains of gold- embroidered silk. And therein stood censers of aloes-wood and ambergris and strong-scented musk, and at the upper end was a couch bespread with cloth of gold on which he seated himself, marvelling at the magnificence he saw and knowing not what was written for him in the Secret Purpose. As he sat musing on his case, the Caliph's sister, followed by her handmaid, came in upon him; and, seeing the youth seated there took him for a slave-girl and accosted him and said, "Who art thou O damsel? and what is thy case and who brought thee hither?" He made no reply, and was silent, when she continued, "O damsel! if thou be one of my brother's concubines and he be wroth with thee, I will intercede with him for thee and get thee grace." But he answered her not a word; so she said to her slave-girl, "Stand at the door and let none enter." Then she went up to Ni'amah and looking at him was amazed at his beauty and said to him, "O lady, tell me who thou art and what is thy name and how thou camest here; for I have never seen thee in our palace." Still he answered not, whereat she was angered and, putting her hand to his bosom, found no breasts and would have unveiled him, that she might know who he was; but he said to her, "O my lady, I am thy slave and I cast myself on thy protection: do thou protect me." She said, "No harm shall come to thee, but tell me who thou art and who brought thee into this my apartment." Answered he, "O Princess, I am known as Ni'amah bin al-Rabi'a of Cufa and I have ventured my life for the sake of my slave-girl, Naomi, whom Al-Hajjaj took by sleight and sent hither." Said she, "Fear not: no harm shall befall thee;" then, calling her maid, she said to her, "Go to Naomi's chamber and send her to me." Meanwhile the old woman went to Naomi's bedroom and said to her, "Hath thy lord come to thee?" "No, by Allah!" answered Naomi, and the other said, "Belike he hath gone astray and entered some chamber other than thine and lost himself." So Naomi cried, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Our last hour is come and we are all lost." And while they were sitting and sadly enough pondering their case, in came the

Princess's handmaid and saluting Naomi said to her, "My lady biddeth thee to her banquet." "I hear and I obey," answered the damsel and the old woman said, "Belike thy lord is with the Caliph's sister and the veil of secrecy hath been rent." So Naomi at once sprang up and betook herself to the Princess, who said to her, "Here is thy lord sitting with me; it seemeth he hath mistaken the place; but, please Allah, neither thou nor he has any cause for fear." When Naomi heard these words, she took heart of grace and went up to Ni'amah; and her lord when he saw her. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ni'amah saw his handmaid Naomi, he rose to meet her and strained her to his bosom and both fell to the ground fainting. As soon as they came to themselves, the Caliph's sister said to them, "Sit ye down and take we counsel for your deliverance from this your strait." And they answered, "O our lady, we hear and obey: it is thine to command." Quoth she, "By Allah, no harm shall befall you from us!" Then she bade her handmaids bring meat and drink which was done, and they sat down and ate till they had enough, after which they sat drinking. Then the cup went round amongst them and their cares ceased from them; but Ni'amah said, "Would I knew how this will end." The Princess asked, "O Ni'amah, dost thou love thy slave Naomi?"; and he answered, "Of a truth it is my passion for her which hath brought me to this state of peril for my life." Then said she to the damsel, "O Naomi, dost thou love thy lord Ni'amah?"; and she replied, "O my lady, it is the love of him which hath wasted my body and brought me to evil case." Rejoined the Princess, "By Allah, since ye love each other thus, may he not be who would part you! Be of good cheer and keep your eyes cool and clear." At this they both rejoiced and Naomi called for a lute and, when they brought it, she took it and tuned it and played a lively measure which enchanted the hearers, and after the prelude sang these couplets,

"When the slanderers cared but to part us twain, * We owed no
 blood-debt could raise their ire
And they poured in our ears all the din of war, * And aid failed

and friends, when my want was dire:
I fought them hard with mine eyes and tears; * With breath and
sword, with the stream and fire!"

Then Naomi gave the lute to her master, Ni'amah, saying, "Sing thou to us some verse." So he took it and playing a lively measure, intoned these couplets,

"Full Moon if unfreckled would favour thee, * And Sun uneclipsed
would reflect thy blee:
I wonder (but love is of wonders full * And ardour and passion
and ecstasy)
How short the way to my love I fare, * Which, from her faring, so
long I see."

Now when he had made an end of his song, Naomi filled the cup and gave it to him, and he took it and drank it off; then she filled again and gave the cup to the Caliph's sister who also emptied it; after which the Princess in her turn took the lute and tightened the strings and tuned it and sang these two couplets,

"Grief, cark and care in my heart reside, * And the fires of love
in my breast
My wasted form to all eyes shows clear; * For Desire my body hath
mortified."

Then she filled the cup and gave it to Naomi, who drank it off and taking the lute, sang these two couplets,

"O to whom I gave soul which thou tortures", * And in vain I'd
recover from fair Unfaith
Do grant thy favours my care to cure * Ere I die, for this be my
latest breath."

And they ceased not to sing verses and drink to the sweet sound of the strings, full of mirth and merriment and joy and jollity till behold! in came the Commander of the Faithful. Now when they saw him, they rose and kissed the ground before him; and he, seeing

Naomi with the lute in her hand, said to her, “O Naomi, praised be Allah who hath done away from thee sickness and suffering!” Then he looked at Ni’amah (who was still disguised as a woman), and said to the Princess, “O my sister, what damsel is this by Naomi’s side?” She replied, “O Commander of the Faithful, thou hast here a handmaid, one of thy concubines and the bosom friend of Naomi who will neither eat nor drink without her.” And she repeated the words of the poet,

“Two contraries, and both concur in opposite charms, * And charms so contraried by contrast lovelier show.”

Quoth the Caliph, “By Allah Omnipotent, verily she is as handsome as Naomi, and to-morrow I will appoint her a separate chamber beside that of her friend and send her furniture and stuffs and all that befitteth her, in honour of Naomi.” Then the Princess called for food and set it before her brother, who ate and made himself at home in their place and company. Then filling a cup he signed to Naomi to sing; so she took the lute, after draining two of them and sang these two couplets,

“Since my toper-friend in my hand hath given * Three cups that
brim and bubble, e’er since
I’ve trailed my skirts throughout night for pride * As tho’,
Prince of the Faithful, I were thy Prince!”

The Prince of True Believers was delighted and filling another cup, gave it to Naomi and bade her sing again; so after draining the cup and sweeping the strings, she sang as follows: —

“O most noble of men in this time and stound, * Of whom none may
boast he is equal-found!
O matchless in greatness of soul and gifts, * O thou Chief, O
thou King amongst all renowned:
Lord, who dealest large boons to the Lords of Earth, * Whom thou
vexest not nor dost hold them bound
The Lord preserve thee, and spoil thy foes, * And ne’er cease thy
lot with good Fortune crowned!”

Now when the Caliph heard these couplets, he exclaimed, “By Allah, good! By Allah, excellent! Verily the Lord hath been copious[19] to thee, O Naomi! How clever is thy tongue and how dear is thy speech!” And they ceased not their mirth and good cheer till midnight, when the Caliph’s sister said to him, “Give ear, O Commander of the Faithful to a tale I have read in books of a certain man of rank.” “And what is this tale?” quoth he. Quoth she “Know, O Prince of the Faithful that there lived once in the city of Cufa a youth called Ni’amah, son of Al-Rabi’a, and he had a slave-girl whom he loved and who loved him. They had been reared in one bed; but when they grew up and mutual-love get hold of them, Fortune smote them with her calamities and Time, the tyrant, brought upon them his adversity and decreed separation unto them. Thereupon designing and slanderous folk enticed her by sleight forth of his house and, stealing her away from his home, sold her to one of the Kings for ten thousand dinars. Now the girl loved her lord even as he loved her, so he left kith and kin and house and home and the gifts of fortune, and set out to search for her and when she was found he devised means to gain access to her”. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Forty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph’s sister said, “And Ni’amah ceased not absenting himself from his kith and kin and patrial-stead, that he might gain access to his handmaid, and he incurred every peril and lavished his life till he gained access to her, and her name was Naomi, like this slave-girl. But the interview was short; they had not been long in company when in came the King, who had bought her of her kidnapper, and hastily ordered them to be slain, without doing justice by his own soul and delaying to enquire into the matter before the command was carried out. Now what sayest thou, O Commander of the Faithful, of this King’s wrongous conduct?” Answered the Caliph; “This was indeed a strange thing: it behoved that King to pardon when he had the power to punish; and he ought to have regarded three things in their favour. The first was that they loved each other; the second that they were in his house and in his grasp; and the third that it befitteth a King to be deliberate in judging and ordering between folk, and how much more so in cases where he himself is concerned! Wherefore this King thus did an unkingly deed." Then said his sister, "O my brother, by the King of the heavens and the earth, I conjure thee, bid Naomi sing and hearken to that she shall sing!" So he said "O Naomi, sing to me;" whereupon she played a lively measure and sang these couplets,

"Beguiled us Fortune who her guile displays, * Smiting the heart,
bequeathing thoughts that craze
And parting lovers whom she made to meet, * Till tears in torrent
either cheek displays:
They were and I was and my life was glad, * While Fortune often
joyed to join our ways;
I will pour tear flood, will rain gouts of blood, * Thy loss
bemoaning through the nights and days!"

Now when the Commander of the Faithful heard this verse, he was moved to great delight and his sister said to him, "O my brother, whoso decideth in aught against himself, him it behoveth to abide by it and do according to his word; and thou hast judged against thyself by this judgement." Then said she, "O Ni'amah, stand up and do thou likewise up stand, O Naomi!" So they stood up and she continued, "O Prince of True Believers, she who standeth before thee is Naomi the stolen, whom Al-Hajjaj bin Yusuf al-Sakafi kidnapped and sent to thee, falsely pretending in his letter to thee that he had bought her for ten thousand gold pieces. And this other who standeth before thee is her lord, Ni'amah, son of Al-Rabi'a; and I beseech thee, by the honour of thy pious forebears and by Hamzah and Ukayl and Abbas,[20] to pardon them both and overlook their offence and bestow them one on the other, that thou mayst win rich reward in the next world of thy just dealing with them; for they are under thy hand and verily they have eaten of thy meat and drunken of thy drink; and behold, I make intercession for them and beg of thee the boon of their blood." Thereupon quoth the Caliph, "Thou speakest sooth: I did indeed give judgement as thou sayst, and I am not one to pass sentence and to revoke it." Then said he, "O Naomi, say, be this thy lord?" And she answered "Even so, O Commander of the Faithful."

Then quoth he, “No harm shall befall you, I give you each to other;” adding to the young man, “O Ni’amah, who told thee where she was and taught thee how to get at this place?” He replied, “O Commander of the Faithful, hearken to my tale and give ear to my history; for, by the virtue of thy pious forefathers, I will hide nothing from thee!” And he told him all that had passed between himself and the Persian physician and the old nurse, and how she had brought him into the palace and he had mistaken the doors; whereat the Caliph wondered with exceeding wonder and said, “Fetch me the Persian.” So they brought him into the presence and he was made one of his chief officers. Moreover the King bestowed on him robes of honour and ordered him a handsome present, saying, “When a man hath shown like this man such artful management, it behoveth us to make him one of our chief officers.” The Caliph also loaded Ni’amah and Naomi with gifts and honours and rewarded the old nurse; and they abode with him seven days in joy and content and all delight of life, when Ni’amah craved leave to return to Cufa with his slave-girl. The Caliph gave them permission and they departed and arrived in due course at Cufa, where Ni’amah was restored to his father and mother, and they abode in all the joys and jollities of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies. Now when Amjad and As’ad heard from Bahram this story, they marvelled with extreme marvel and said, “By Allah, this is indeed a rare tale!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Forty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Amjad and As’ad heard this story from Bahram the Magian who had become a Moslem, they marvelled with extreme marvel and thus passed that night; and when the next morning dawned, they mounted and riding to the palace, sought an audience of the King who granted it and received them with high honour. Now as they were sitting together talking, of a sudden they heard the towns folk crying aloud and shouting to one another and calling for help; and the Chamberlain came in to the King and said to him, “Some King hath encamped before the city, he and his host, with arms and weapons displayed, and we know not their object and aim.” The King took counsel with his Wazir Amjad and his brother As'ad; and Amjad said, "I will go out to him and learn the cause of his coming." So he took horse and, riding forth from the city, repaired to the stranger's camp, where he found the King and with him a mighty many and mounted Mamelukes. When the guards saw him, they knew him for an envoy from the King of the city; so they took him and brought him before their Sultan. Then Amjad kissed the ground before him; but lo! the King was a Queen, who was veiled with a mouth-veil, and she said to Amjad, "Know that I have no design on this your city and that I am come hither only in quest of a beardless slave of mine, whom if I find with you, I will do you no harm, but if I find him not, then shall there befall sore onslaught between me and you." Asked Amjad, "O Queen, what like is thy slave and what is his story and what may be his name?" Said she, "His name is As'ad and my name is Marjanah, and this slave came to my town in company of Bahram, a Magian, who refused to sell him to me; so I took him by force, but his master fell upon him by night and bore him away by stealth and he is of such and such a favour." When Amjad heard that, he knew it was indeed his brother As'ad whom she sought and said to her, "O Queen of the age, Alhamdolillah, praised be Allah, who hath brought us relief! Verily this slave whom thou seekest is my brother." Then he told her their story and all that had befallen them in the land of exile, and acquainted her with the cause of their departure from the Islands of Ebony, whereat she marvelled and rejoiced to have found As'ad. So she bestowed a dress of honour upon Amjad and he returned forthright to the King and told him what had passed, at which they all rejoiced and the King went forth with Amjad and As'ad to meet Queen Marjanah. When they were admitted to her presence and sat down to converse with her and were thus pleasantly engaged, behold, a dust cloud rose and flew and grew, till it walled the view. And after a while it lifted and showed beneath it an army dight for victory, in numbers like the swelling sea, armed and armoured cap-a-pie who, making for the city, encompassed it around as the ring encompasseth the little finger;[21] and a bared brand was in every hand. When Amjad and As'ad saw this, they exclaimed, "Verily to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return! What is this mighty host? Doubtless, these are enemies, and except we agree with this Queen Marjanah to fight them, they will take the town from us and slay us. There is no resource for us but to go out to them and see who they are.” So Amjad arose and took horse and passed through the city gate to Queen Marjanah’s camp; but when he reached the approaching army he found it to be that of his grand sire, King Ghayur, father of his mother Queen Budur. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Forty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Amjad reached the approaching host, he found it to be that of his grandsire, Lord of the Isles and the Seas and the Seven Castles; and when he went into the presence, he kissed the ground between his hands and delivered to him the message. Quoth the King, “My name is King Ghayur and I come wayfaring in quest of my daughter Budur whom fortune hath taken from me, for she left me and returned not to me, nor have I heard any tidings of her or of her husband Kamar al-Zaman. Have ye any news of them?” When Amjad heard this, he hung his head towards the ground for a while in thought till he felt assured that this King was none other than his grandfather, his mother’s father; where upon he raised his head and, kissing ground before him, told him that he was the son of his daughter Budur; on hearing which Ghayur threw himself upon him and they both fell a weeping.[22] Then said Ghayur, “Praised be Allah, O my son, for safety, since I have foregathered with thee,” and Amjad told him that his daughter Budur was safe and sound, and her husband Kamar al-Zaman likewise, and acquainted him that both abode in a city called the City of Ebony. Moreover, he related to him how his father, being wroth with him and his brother, had commended that both be put to death, but that his treasurer had taken pity on them and let them go with their lives. Quoth King Ghayur, “I will go back with thee and thy brother to your father and make your peace with him.” So Amjad kissed the ground before him in huge delight and the King bestowed a dress of honour upon him, after which he returned, smiling, to the King of the City of the Magians and told him what he had learnt from King Ghayur, whereat he wondered with exceeding wonder. Then he despatched guest-gifts of sheep and horses and camels and forage and so forth to King Ghayur, and did the like by Queen

Marjanah; and both of them told her what chanced; whereupon quoth she, “I too will accompany you with my troops and will do my endeavour to make this peace.” Meanwhile behold, there arose another dust cloud and flew and grew till it walled the view and blackened the day’s bright hue; and under it they heard shouts and cries and neighing of steeds and beheld sword glance and the glint of levelled lance. When this new host drew near the city and saw the two other armies, they beat their drums and the King of the Magians exclaimed, “This is indeed naught but a blessed day. Praised be Allah who hath made us of accord with these two armies; and if it be His will, He shall give us peace with yon other as well.” Then said he to Amjad and As’ad, “Fare forth and fetch us news of these troops, for they are a mighty host, never saw I a mightier.” So they opened the city gates, which the King had shut for fear of the beleaguering armies, and Amjad and As’ad went forth and, coming to the new host, found that it was indeed a mighty many. But as soon as they came to it behold, they knew that it was the army of the King of the Ebony Islands, wherein was their father, King Kamar al-Zaman in person. Now when they looked upon him, they kissed ground and wept; but, when he beheld them, he threw himself upon them weeping, with sore weeping, and strained them to his breast for a full hour. Then he excused himself to them and told them what desolation he had suffered for their loss and exile; and they acquainted him with King Ghayur’s arrival, whereupon he mounted with his chief officers and taking with him his two sons, proceeded to that King’s camp. As they drew near, one of the Princes rode forward and informed King Ghayur of Kamar al-Zaman’s coming, whereupon he came out to meet him and they joined company, marvelling at these things and how they had chanced to foregather in that place. Then the townsfolk made them banquets of all manner of meats and sweetmeats and presented to them horses and camels and fodder and other guest-gifts and all that the troops needed. And while this was doing, behold, yet another cloud of dust arose and flew till it walled the view, whilst earth trembled with the tramp of steed and tabors sounded like stormy winds. After a while, the dust lifted and discovered an army clad in coats of mail and armed cap-a-pie; but all were in black garb, and in their midst rode a very old man whose beard flowed down over his breast and he also was clad in black. When the King of the city and the city folk saw this great host, he said to the other Kings, “Praised be Allah by whose omnipotent command ye are met here, all in one day, and have proved all known one to the other! But what vast and victorious army is this which hemmeth in the whole land like a wall?” They answered, “Have no fear of them; we are three Kings, each with a great army, and if they be enemies, we will join thee in doing battle with them, were they three times as many as they now are.” Meanwhile, up came an envoy from the approaching host, making for the city. So they brought him before Kamar al-Zaman, King Ghayur, Queen Marjanah and the King of the city; and he kissed the ground and said, “My liege lord cometh from Persia-land; for many years ago he lost his son and he is seeking him in all countries. If he find him with you, well and good; but if he find him not, there will be war between him and you and he will waste your city.” Rejoined Kamar al-Zaman, “It shall not come to that; but how is thy master called in Ajam land?” Answered the envoy, “He is called King Shahriman, lord of the Khбlidan Islands; and he hath levied these troops in the lands traversed by him, whilst seeking his son.” No-vv when Kamar al-Zaman heard these words, he cried out with a great cry and fell down in a fainting fit which lasted a long while; and anon coming to himself he wept bitter tears and said to Amjad and As’ad, “Go ye, O my sons, with the herald, salute your grandfather and my father, King Shahriman and give him glad tidings of me, for he mourneth my loss and even to the present time he weareth black raiment for my sake.” Then he told the other Kings all that had befallen him in the days of his youth, at which they wondered and, going down with him from the city, repaired to his father, whom he saluted, and they embraced and fell to the ground senseless for excess of joy. And when they revived after a while, Kamar al-Zaman acquainted his father with all his adventures and the other Kings saluted Shahriman. Then, after having married Marjanah to As’ad, they sent her back to her kingdom, charging her not to cease correspondence with them; so she took leave and went her way. Moreover they married Amjad to Bostan, Bahram’s daughter, and they all set out for the City of Ebony. And when they arrived there, Kamar al-Zaman went in to his father-in-law, King Armanus, and told him all that had befallen him and how he had found his sons; whereat Armanus rejoiced and gave him joy of his safe return. Then King Ghayur went in to his daughter, Queen Budur,[23] and saluted her and quenched his longing for her company, and they all abode a full month's space in the City of Ebony; after which the King and his daughter returned to their own country. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Two Hundred and Forty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that King Ghayur set out with his daughter and his host for his own land, and they took with them Amjad and returned home by easy marches. And when Ghayur was settled again in his kingdom, he made his grandson King in his stead; and as to Kamar al-Zaman he also made As'ad king in his room over the capital of the Ebony Islands, with the consent of his grandfather, King Armanus and set out himself, with his father, King Shahriman, till the two made the Islands of Khбlidan. Then the lieges decorated the city in their honour and they ceased not to beat the drums for glad tidings a whole month; nor did Kamar al-Zaman leave to govern in his father's place, till there overtook them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies; and Allah knoweth all things! Quoth King Shahryar, "O Shahrazad, this is indeed a most wonderful tale!" And she answered, "O King, it is not more wonderful than that of

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ALA AL-DIN ABU AL-SHAMAT.[24]

"What is that?" asked he, and she said, It hath reached me that there lived, in times of yore and years and ages long gone before, a merchant of Cairo[25] named Shams al-Din, who was of the best and truest spoken of the traders of the city; and he had eunuchs and servants and negro-slaves and handmaids and Mame lukes and great store of money. Moreover, he was Consul[26] of the Merchants of Cairo and owned a wife, whom he loved and who loved him; except that he had lived with her forty years, yet had not been blessed with a son or even a daughter. One day, as he sat in his shop, he noted that the merchants, each and every, had a son or two sons or more sitting in their shops like their sires. Now the day being Friday, he entered the Hammam-bath and made the total-ablution: after which he came out and took the barber's glass and looked in it, saying, "I testify that there is no god but the God and I testify that Mohammed is the Messenger of God!" Then he considered his beard and, seeing that the white hairs in it covered the black, bethought himself that hoariness is the harbinger of death. Now his wife knew the time of his coming home and had washed and made herself ready for him, so when he came in to her, she said, "Good evening," but he replied "I see no good." Then she called to the handmaid, "Spread the supper-tray;" and when this was done quoth she to her husband "Sup, O my lord." Quoth he, "I will eat nothing," and pushing the tray away with his foot, turned his back upon her. She asked, "Why dost thou thus? and what hath vexed thee?"; and he answered, "Thou art the cause of my vexation." — And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say,

When it was the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Shams al-Din said to his wife, "Thou art the cause of my vexation." She asked, "Wherefore?" and he answered, "When I opened my shop this morning, I saw that each and every of the merchants had with him a son or two sons or more, sitting in their shops like their fathers; and I said to myself: — He who took thy sire will not spare thee. Now the night I first visited thee,[27] thou madest me swear that I would never take a second wife over thee nor a concubine, Abyssinian or Greek or handmaid of other race; nor would lie a single night away from thee: and behold, thou art barren, and having thee is like boring into the rock." Rejoined she, "Allah is my witness that the fault lies with thee, for that thy seed is thin." He asked, "And what showeth the man whose semen is thin?" And she answered, "He cannot get women with child, nor beget children." Quoth he, "What thickeneth the seed? tell me and I will buy it: haply, it will thicken mine." Quoth she, "Enquire for it of the druggists." So he slept with her that night and arose on the morrow, repenting of having spoken angrily to her; and she also regretted her cross words. Then he went to the market and, finding a druggist, saluted him; and when his salutation was returned said to him, "Say, hast thou with thee a seed-thickener?" He replied, "I had it, but am out of it: enquire thou of my neighbour." Then Shams al-Din made the round till he had asked every one, but they all laughed at him, and presently he returned to his shop and sat down, sore troubled. Now there was in the bazar a man who was Deputy Syndic of the brokers and was given to the use of opium and electuary and green hashish.[28] He was called Shaykh Mohammed Samsam and being poor he used to wish Shams al-Din good morrow every day. So he came to him according to his custom and saluted him. The merchant returned his salute, but in ill-temper, and the other, seeing him vexed, said, "O my lord, what hath crossed thee?" Thereupon Shams al-Din told him all that occurred between himself and his wife, adding, "These forty years have I been married to her yet hath she borne me neither son nor daughter; and they say: — The cause of thy failure to get her with child is the thinness of thy seed; so I have been seeking a some thing wherewith to thicken my semen but found it not." Quoth Shaykh Mohammed, "O my lord, I have a seed-thickener, but what wilt thou say to him who causeth thy wife to conceive by thee after these forty years have passed?" Answered the merchant, "If thou do this, I will work thy weal — and reward thee." "Then give me a dinar," rejoined the broker, and Shams al-Din said, "Take these two dinars." He took them and said, "Give me also yonder big bowl of porcelain." So he gave it to him and the broker betook himself to a hashish-seller, of whom he bought two ounces of concentrated Roumi opium and equal-parts of Chinese cubebs, cinnamon, cloves, cardamoms, ginger, white pepper and mountain skink[29] ; and, pounding them all together, boiled them in sweet olive-oil; after which he added three ounces of male frankincense in fragments and a cupful of coriander-seed; and, macerating the whole, made it into an electuary with Roumi bee honey. Then he put the confection in the bowl and carried it to the merchant, to whom he delivered it, saying, "Here is the seed-thickener, and the manner of using it is this. Take of my electuary with a spoon after supping, and wash it down with a sherbet made of rose conserve; but first sup off mutton and house pigeon plentifully seasoned and hotly spiced." So the merchant bought all this and sent the meat and pigeons to his wife, saying, "Dress them deftly and lay up the seed-thickener until I want it and call for it." She did his bidding and, when she served up the meats, he ate the evening meal, after which he called for the bowl and ate of the electuary. It pleased him well, so he ate the rest and knew his wife. That very night she conceived by him and, after three months, her courses ceased, no blood came from her and she knew that she was with child. When the days of her pregnancy were accomplished, the pangs of labour took her and they raised loud lullilooings and cries of joy. The midwife delivered her with difficulty, by pronouncing over the boy at his birth the names of Mohammed and Ali, and said, "Allah is Most Great!"; and she called in his ear the call to prayer. Then she wrapped him up and passed him to his mother, who took him and gave him the breast; and he sucked and was full and slept. The midwife abode with them three days, till they had made the mothering-cakes of sugared bread and sweetmeats; and they distributed them on the seventh day. Then they sprinkled salt against the evil eye and the merchant, going in to his wife, gave her joy of her safe delivery, and said, "Where is Allah's deposit?" So they brought him a babe of surpassing beauty, the handiwork of the Orderer who is ever present and, though he was but seven days old, those who saw him would have deemed him a yearling child. So the merchant looked on his face and, seeing it like a shining full moon, with moles on either cheek, said he to his wife, "What hast thou named him?" Answered she, "If it were a girl I had named her; but this is a boy, so none shall name him but thou." Now the people of that time used to name their children by omens; and, whilst the merchant and his wife were taking counsel of the name, behold, one said to his friend, “Ho my lord, Ala al-Din!” So the merchant said, “We will call him Ala al-Din Abъ al-Shбmбt.”[30] Then he committed the child to the nurse, and he drank milk two years, after which they weaned him and he grew up and throve and walked upon the floor. When he came to seven years old, they put him in a chamber under a trap-door, for fear of the evil eye, and his father said, “He shall not come out, till his beard grow.” So he gave him in charge to a handmaid and a blackamoor; the girl dressed him his meals and the slave carried them to him. Then his father circumcised him and made him a great feast; after which he brought him a doctor of the law, who taught him to write and read and repeat the Koran, and other arts and sciences, till he became a good scholar and an accomplished. One day it so came to pass that the slave, after bringing him the tray of food went away and left the trap door open: so Ala al-Din came forth from the vault and went in to his mother, with whom was a company of women of rank. As they sat talking, behold, in came upon them the youth as he were a white slave drunken[31] for the excess of his beauty; and when they saw him, they veiled their faces and said to his mother, “Allah requite thee, O such an one! How canst thou let this strange Mameluke in upon us? Knowest thou not that modesty is a point of the Faith?” She replied, “Pronounce Allah’s name[32] and cry Bismillah! this is my son, the fruit of my vitals and the heir of Consul Shams al-Din, the child of the nurse and the collar and the crust and the crumb.”[33] Quoth they, “Never in our days knew we that thou hadst a son”; and quoth she, “Verily his father feared for him the evil eye and reared him in an under-ground chamber;” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Fifty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ala al-Din’s mother said to her lady-friends, “Verily his father feared for him the evil eye and reared him in an underground chamber; and haply the slave forgot to shut the door and he fared forth; but we did not mean that he should come out, before his beard was grown.” The women gave her joy of him, and the youth went out from them into the court yard where he seated himself in the open sitting room; and behold, in came the slaves with his father's she mule, and he said to them, "Whence cometh this mule?" Quoth they, "We escorted thy father when riding her to the shop, and we have brought her back." He asked, "What may be my father's trade?"; and they answered, "Thy father is Consul of the merchants in the land of Egypt and Sultan of the Sons of the Arabs." Then he went in to his mother and said to her, "O my mother, what is my father's trade?" Said she, "O my son, thy sire is a merchant and Consul of the merchants in the land of Egypt and Sultan of the Sons of the Arabs. His slaves consult him not in selling aught whose price is less than one thousand gold pieces, but merchandise worth him an hundred and less they sell at their own discretion; nor cloth any merchandise whatever, little or much, leave the country without passing through his hands and he disposeth of it as he pleaseth; nor is a bale packed and sent abroad amongst folk but what is under his disposal. And "Almighty Allah, O my son, hath given thy father monies past compt." He rejoined, "O my mother, praised be Allah, that I am son of the Sultan of the Sons of the Arabs and that my father is Consul of the merchants! But why, O my mother, do ye put me in the underground chamber and leave me prisoner there?" Quoth she, "O my son, we imprisoned thee not save for fear of folks' eyes: 'the evil eye is a truth,'[34] and most of those in their long homes are its victims." Quoth he, "O my mother, and where is a refuge-place against Fate? Verily care never made Destiny forbear; nor is there flight from what is written for every wight. He who took my grandfather will not spare myself nor my father; for, though he live to day he shall not live tomorrow. And when my father dieth and I come forth and say, 'I am Ala al-Din, son of Shams al-Din the merchant', none of the people will believe me, but men of years and standing will say, 'In our lives never saw we a son or a daughter of Shams al-Din.' Then the public Treasury will come down and take my father's estate, and Allah have mercy on him who said, 'The noble dieth and his wealth passeth away, and the meanest of men take his women.' Therefore, O my mother, speak thou to my father, that he carry me with him to the bazar and open for me a shop; so may I sit there with my merchandise, and teach me to buy and sell and take and give." Answered his mother, "O my son, as soon as thy sire returneth I will tell him this." So when the merchant came home, he found his son Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat sitting with his mother and said to her, “Why hast thou brought him forth of the underground chamber?” She replied, “O son of my uncle, it was not I that brought him out; but the servants forgot to shut the door and left it open; so, as I sat with a company of women of rank, behold, he came forth and walked in to me.” Then she went on to repeat to him his son’s words; so he said, “O my son, to-morrow, Inshallah! I will take thee with me to the bazar; but, my boy, sitting in markets and shops demandeth good manners and courteous carriage in all conditions.” Ala al-Din passed the night rejoicing in his father’s promise and, when the morrow came, the merchant carried him to the Hammam and clad him in a suit worth a mint of money. As soon as they had broken their fast and drunk their sherbets, Shams al-Din mounted his she mule and putting his son upon another, rode to the market, followed by his boy. But when the market folk saw their Consul making towards them, foregoing a youth as he were a slice of the full moon on the fourteenth night, they said, one to other, “See thou yonder boy behind the Consul of the merchants; verily, we thought well of him, but he is, like the leek, gray of head and green at heart.”[35] And Shaykh Mohammed Samsam, Deputy Syndic of the market, the man before mentioned, said to the dealers, “O merchants, we will not keep the like of him for our Shaykh; no, never!” Now it was the custom anent the Consul when he came from his house of a morning and sat down in his shop, for the Deputy Syndic of the market to go and recite to him and to all the merchants assembled around him the F6tihah or opening chapter of the Koran,[36] after which they accosted him one by one and wished him good morrow and went away, each to his business place. But when Shams al-Din seated himself in his shop that day as usual, the traders came not to him as accustomed; so he called the Deputy and said to him, “Why come not the merchants together as usual?” Answered Mohammed Samsam, “I know not how to tell thee these troubles, for they have agreed to depose thee from the Shaykh ship of the market and to recite the Fatihah to thee no more.” Asked Shams al-Din, “What may be their reason?”; and asked the Deputy, “What boy is this that sitteth by thy side and thou a man of years and chief of the merchants? Is this lad a Mameluke or akin to thy wife? Verily, I think thou lovest him and inclines lewdly to the boy." Thereupon the Consul cried out at him, saying, "Silence, Allah curse thee, genus and species! This is my son." Rejoined the Deputy, "Never in our born days have we seen thee with a son," and Shams al-Din answered, "When thou gavest me the seed-thickener, my wife conceived and bare this youth; but I reared him in a souterrain for fear of the evil eye, nor was it my purpose that he should come forth, till he could take his beard in his hand.[37] However, his mother would not agree to this, and he on his part begged I would stock him a shop and teach him to sell and buy." So the Deputy Syndic returned to the other traders and acquainted them with the truth of the case, whereupon they all arose to accompany him; and, going in a body to Shams al-Din's shop, stood before him and recited the "Opener" of the Koran; after which they gave him joy of his son and said to him, "The Lord prosper root and branch! But even the poorest of us, when son or daughter is born to him, needs must cook a pan-full of custard[38] and bid his friends and kith and kin; yet hast thou not done this." Quoth he, "This I owe you; be our meeting in the garden." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Fifty-second Night,

Her sister Dunyazad said to her, "Pray continue thy story for us, as thou be awake and not inclined to sleep." Quoth she: — With pleasure and goodwill: it hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Consul of the merchants promised them a banquet and said "Be our meeting in the garden." So when morning dawned he despatched the carpet layer to the saloon of the garden-pavilion and bade him furnish the two. Moreover, he sent thither all that was needful for cooking, such as sheep and clarified butter and so forth, according to the requirements of the case; and spread two tables, one in the pavilion and another in the saloon. Then Shams al-Din and his boy girded themselves, and he said to Ala al-Din "O my son, whenas a greybeard entereth, I will meet him and seat him at the table in the pavilion; and do thou, in like manner, receive the beardless youths and seat them at the table in the saloon." He asked, "O my father, why dost thou spread two tables, one for men and another for youths?"; and he answered, "O my son, the beardless is ashamed to eat with the bearded.” And his son thought this his answer full and sufficient. So when the merchants arrived, Shams al-Din received the men and seated them in the pavilion, whilst Ala al-Din received the youths and seated them in the saloon. Then the food was set on and the guests ate and drank and made merry and sat over their wine, whilst the attendants perfumed them with the smoke of scented woods, and the elders fell to conversing of matters of science and traditions of the Prophet. Now there was amongst them a merchant called Mahmъd of Balkh, a professing Moslem but at heart a Magian, a man of lewd and mischievous life who loved boys. And when he saw Ala al-Din from whose father he used to buy stuffs and merchandise, one sight of his face sent him a thousand sighs and Satan dangled the jewel before his eyes, so that he was taken with love-longing and desire and affection and his heart was filled with mad passion for him. Presently he arose and made for the youths, who stood up to receive him; and at this moment Ala Al-Din being taken with an urgent call of Nature, withdrew to make water; whereupon Mahmud turned to the other youths and said to them, “If ye will incline Ala al-Din’s mind to journeying with me, I will give each of you a dress worth a power of money.” Then he returned from them to the men’s party; and, as the youths were sitting, Ala al-Din suddenly came back, when all rose to receive him and seated him in the place of highest honour. Presently, one of them said to his neighbour, “O my lord Hasan, tell me whence came to thee the capital — whereon thou trades”.” He replied, “When I grew up and came to man’s estate, I said to my sire, ‘O my father, give me merchandise.’ Quoth he, ‘O my son, I have none by me; but go thou to some merchant and take of him money and traffic with it; and so learn to buy and sell, give and take.’ So I went to one of the traders and borrowed of him a thousand dinars, wherewith I bought stuffs and carrying them to Damascus, sold them there at a profit of two for one. Then I bought Syrian stuffs and carrying them to Aleppo, made a similar gain of them; after which I bought stuffs of Aleppo and repaired with them to Baghdad, where I sold them with like result, two for one; nor did I cease trading upon my capital till I was worth nigh ten thousand ducats.” Then each of the others told his friend some such tale, till it came to Ala al-Din’s turn to speak, when they said to him, “And thou, O my lord Ala al-Din?” Quoth he, “I was brought up in a chamber underground and came forth from it only this week; and I do but go to the shop and return home from the shop.” They remarked, “Thou art used to wone at home and wottest not the joys of travel, for travel is for men only.” He replied, “I reck not of voyaging and wayfaring cloth not tempt me.” Whereupon quoth one to the other, “This one is like the fish: when he leaveth the water he dieth.” Then they said to him, “O Ala al Din, the glory of the sons of the merchants is not but in travel for the sake of gain.” Their talk angered him; so he left them weeping-eyed and heavy-hearted and mounting his mule returned home. Now his mother saw him in tears and in bad temper and asked him, “What hath made thee weep, O my son?”; and he answered, “Of a truth, all the sons of the merchants put me to shame and said, ‘Naught is more glorious for a merchant’s son than travel for gain and to get him gold.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Fifty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ala al-Din said to his mother, “Of a truth all the sons of the merchants put me to shame and said, ‘Naught is more honourable for a merchant’s son than travel for gain.’” “O my son, hast thou a mind to travel?” “Even so!” “And whither wilt thou go?” “To the city of Baghdad; for there folk make double the cost price on their goods.” “O my son, thy father is a very rich man and, if he provide thee not with merchandise, I will supply it out of my own monies.” “The best favour is that which is soonest bestowed; if this kindness is to be, now is the time.” So she called the slaves and sent them for cloth packers, then, opening a store house, brought out ten loads of stuffs, which they made up into bales for him. Such was his case; but as regards his father, Shams al-Din, he looked about and failed to find Ala al-Din in the garden and enquiring after him, was told that he had mounted mule and gone home; so he too mounted and followed him. Now when he entered the house, he saw the bales ready bound and asked what they were; whereupon his wife told him what had chanced between Ala al-Din and the sons of the merchants; and he cried, “O my son, Allah’s malison on travel and stranger-hood!

Verily Allah's Apostle (whom the Lord bless and preserve!) hath said, 'It is of a man's happy fortune that he eat his daily bread in his own land', and it was said of the ancients, 'Leave travel, though but for a mile.'" Then quoth he to his son, "Say, art thou indeed resolved to travel and wilt thou not turn back from it?" Quoth the other, "There is no help for it but that I journey to Baghdad with merchandise, else will I doff clothes and don dervish gear and fare a-wandering over the world." Shams al-Din rejoined, "I am no penniless pauper but have great plenty of wealth;" then he showed him all he owned of monies and stuffs and stock-in-trade and observed, "With me are stuffs and merchandise befitting every country in the world." Then he showed him among the rest, forty bales ready bound, with the price, a thousand dinars, written on each, and said, "O my son take these forty loads, together with the ten which thy mother gave thee, and set out under the safeguard of Almighty Allah. But, O my child, I fear for thee a certain wood in thy way, called the Lion's Copse,[39] and a valley highs the Vale of Dogs, for there lives are lost without mercy." He said, "How so, O my father?"; and he replied, "Because of a Badawi bandit named Ajlan." Quoth Ala al-Din, "Such is Allah's luck; if any share of it be mine, no harm shall hap to me." Then they rode to the cattle bazar, where behold, a cameleer[40] alighted from his she mule and kissing the Consul's hand, said to him, "O my lord, it is long, by Allah, since thou hast employed us in the way of business." He replied, "Every time hath its fortune and its men,[41] and Allah have truth on him who said,

'And the old man crept o'er the worldly ways * So bowed, his
beard o'er his knees down flow'th:
Quoth I, 'What gars thee so doubled go?' * Quoth he (as to me his
hands he show'th)
'My youth is lost, in the dust it lieth; * And see, I bend me to
find my youth.'"[42]

Now when he had ended his verses, he said, "O chief of the caravan, it is not I who am minded to travel, but this my son." Quoth the cameleer, "Allah save him for thee." Then the Consul made a contract between Ala al-Din and the man, appointing that the youth should be to him as a son, and gave him into his charge, saying, “Take these hundred gold pieces for thy people.” More-over he bought his son threescore mules and a lamp and a tomb-covering for the Sayyid Abd al-Kadir of Gнlбn[43] and said to him, “O my son, while I am absent, this is thy sire in my stead: whatsoever he biddeth thee, do thou obey him.” So saying, he returned home with the mules and servants and that night they made a Khitmah or perfection of the Koran and held a festival — in honour of the Shaykh Abd al-Kadir al-Jilбni. And when the morrow dawned, the Consul gave his son ten thousand dinars, saying, “O my son, when thou comest to Baghdad, if thou find stuffs easy of sale, sell them; but if they be dull, spend of these dinars.” Then they loaded the mules and, taking leave of one another, all the wayfarers setting out on their journey, marched forth from the city. Now Mahmud of Balkh had made ready his own venture for Baghdad and had moved his bales and set up his tents without the walls, saying to himself, “Thou shalt not enjoy this youth but in the desert, where there is neither spy nor marplot to trouble thee.” It chanced that he had in hand a thousand dinars which he owed to the youth’s father, the balance of a business-transaction between them; so he went and bade farewell to the Consul, who charged him, “Give the thousand dinars to my son Ala al-Din;” and commended the lad to his care, saying, “He is as it were thy son.” Accordingly, Ala al-Din joined company with Mahmud of Balkh. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Fifty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ala al-Din joined company with Mahmud of Balkh who, before beginning the march, charged the youth’s cook to dress nothing for him, but himself provided him and his company with meat and drink. Now he had four houses, one in Cairo, another in Damascus, a third in Aleppo and a fourth in Baghdad. So they set out and ceased not journeying over waste and wold till they drew near Damascus when Mahmud sent his slave to Ala al-Din, whom he found sitting and reading. He went up to him and kissed his hands, and Ala al-Din having asked him what he wanted, he answered, “My master saluteth thee and craveth thy company to a banquet at his place.” Quoth the youth, “Not till I consult my father Kamal al-Din, the captain of the caravan.” So he asked advice of the Makaddam,[44] who said, “Do not go.” Then they left Damascus and journeyed on till they came to Aleppo, where Mahmud made a second entertainment and sent to invite Ala al-Din; but he consulted the Chief Cameleer who again forbade him. Then they marched from Aleppo and fared on, till there remained between them and Baghdad only a single stage. Here Mahmud prepared a third feast and sent to bid Ala al-Din to it: Kamal-al-Din once more forbade his accepting it, but he said, “I must needs go.” So he rose and, slinging a sword over his shoulder, under his clothes, repaired to the tent of Mahmud of Balkh, who came to meet him and saluted him. Then he set before him a sumptuous repast and they ate and drank and washed hands. At last Mahmud bent towards Ala al-Din to snatch a kiss from him, but the youth received the kiss on the palm of his hand and said to him, “What wouldest thou be at?” Quoth Mahmud, “In very sooth I brought thee hither that I might take my pleasure with thee in this jousting ground, and we will comment upon the words of him who saith,

‘Say, canst not come to us one momentling, * Like milk of ewekin
  or aught glistening
And eat what liketh thee of dainty cake, * And take thy due of
  fee in silverling,
And bear whatso thou wilt, without mislike, * Of spanling,
  fistling or a span long thing?’”

Then Mahmud of Balkh would have laid hands on Ala al-Din to ravish him; but he rose and baring his brand, said to him, “Shame on thy gray hairs! Hast thou no fear of Allah, and He of exceeding awe?[45] May He have mercy on him who saith,

‘Preserve thy hoary hairs from soil and stain, * For whitest colours are the easiest stained!’”

And when he ended his verses he said to Mahmud of Balkh, “Verily this merchandise[46] is a trust from Allah and may not be sold. If I sold this property to other than thee for gold, I would sell it to thee for silver; but by Allah, O filthy villain, I will never again company with thee; no, never!” Then he returned to Kamal-Al-Din the guide and said to him, “Yonder man is a lewd fellow, and I will no longer consort with him nor suffer his company by the way.” He replied, “O my son, did I not say to thee, ‘Go not near him’? But if we part company with him, I fear destruction for ourselves; so let us still make one caravan.” But Ala al-Din cried, “It may not be that I ever again travel with him.” So he loaded his beasts and journeyed onwards, he and his company, till they came to a valley, where Ala al-Din would have halted, but the Cameleer said to him, “Do not halt here; rather let us fare forwards and press our pace, so haply we make Baghdad before the gates are closed, for they open and shut them with the sun, in fear lest the Rejectors[47] should take the city and throw the books of religious learning into the Tigris.” But Ala al Din replied to him, “O my father, I came not forth from home with this merchandise, or travelled hither for the sake of traffic, but to divert myself with the sight of foreign lands and folks;” and he rejoined, “O my son, we fear for thee and for thy goods from the wild Arabs.” Whereupon the youth answered “Harkye, fellow, art thou master or man? I will not enter Baghdad till the morning, that the sons of the city may see my merchandise and know me.” “Do as thou wilt,” said the other “I have given thee the wisest advice, but thou art the best judge of thine own case.” Then Ala al-Din bade them unload the mule; and pitch the tent; so they did his bidding and abode there till the middle of the night, when he went out to obey a call of nature and suddenly saw something gleaming afar off. So he said to Kamal-al-Din, “O captain, what is yonder glittering?” The Cameleer sat up and, considering it straitly, knew it for the glint of spear heads and the steel of Badawi weapons and swords. And lo and behold! this was a troop of wild Arabs under a chief called Ajlбn Abъ Nбib, Shaykh of the Arabs, and when they neared the camp and saw the bales and baggage, they said one to another, “O night of loot!” Now when Kamal-al-Din heard these their words he cried, “Avaunt, O vilest of Arabs!” But Abu Naib so smote him with his throw spear in the breast, that the point came out gleaming from his back, and he fell down dead at the tent door. Then cried the water carrier,[48] “Avaunt, O foulest of Arabs!” and one of them smote him with a sword upon the shoulder, that it issued shining from the tendons of the throat, and he also fell down dead. (And all this while Ala Al-Din stood looking on.) Then the Badawin surrounded and charged the caravan from every side and slew all Ala al-Din's company without sparing a man: after which they loaded the mules with the spoil and made off. Quoth Ala al-Din to himself, "Nothing will slay thee save thy mule and thy dress!"; so he arose and put off his gown and threw it over the back of a mule, remaining in his shirt and bag trousers only; after which he looked towards the tent door and, seeing there a pool of gore flowing from the slaughtered, wallowed in it with his remaining clothes till he was as a slain man drowned in his own blood. Thus it fared with him; but as regards the Shaykh of the wild Arabs, Ajlan, he said to his banditti, "O Arabs, was this caravan bound from Egypt for Baghdad or from Baghdad for Egypt?" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Badawi asked his banditti, "O Arabs, was this caravan bound from Egypt for Baghdad or from Baghdad for Egypt?"; they answered, "'Twas bound from Egypt for Baghdad;" and he said, "Return ye to the slain, for methinks the owner of this caravan is not dead." So they turned back to the slain and fell to prodding and slashing them with lance and sword till they came to Ala al-Din, who had thrown himself down among the corpses. And when they came to him, quoth they, "Thou dost but feign thyself dead, but we will make an end of thee," and one of the Badawin levelled his javelin and would have plunged it into his breast when he cried out, "Save me, O my lord Abd al-Kadir, O Saint of Gilan!" and behold, he saw a hand turn the lance away from his breast to that of Kamal-al-Din the cameleer, so that it pierced him and spared himself.[49] Then the Arabs made off; and, when Ala al-Din saw that the birds were flown with their god send, he sat up and finding no one, rose and set off running; but, behold! Abu N6ib the Badawi looked back and said to his troop, "I see somewhat moving afar off, O Arabs!" So one of the bandits turned back and, spying Ala al-Din running, called out to him, saying, "Flight shall not forward thee and we after thee;" and he smote his mare with his heel and she hastened after him. Then Ala al-Din seeing before him a watering tank and a cistern beside it, climbed up into a niche in the cistern and, stretching himself at full length, feigned to be asleep and said, “O gracious Protector, cover me with the veil of Thy protection which may not be torn away!” And lo! the Badawi came up to the cistern and, standing in his stirrup irons put out his hand to lay hold of Ala al-Din; but he said, “O my lady Nafhsah[50] ! Now is thy time!” And behold, a scorpion stung the Badawi in the palm and he cried out, saying, “Help, O Arabs! I am stung;” and he alighted from his mare’s back. So his comrades came up to him and mounted him again, asking, “What hath befallen thee?” whereto he answered, “A young scorpion[51] stung me.” So they departed, with the caravan. Such was their case; but as regards Ala al-Din, he tarried in the niche, and Mahmud of Balkh bade load his beasts and fared forwards till he came to the Lion’s Copse where he found Ala al-Din’s attendants all lying slain. At this he rejoiced and went on till he reached the cistern and the reservoir. Now his mule was athirst and turned aside to drink, but she saw Ala al-Din’s shadow in the water and shied and started; whereupon Mahmud raised his eyes and, seeing Ala al-Din lying in the niche, stripped to his shirt and bag trousers, said to him, “What man this deed to thee hath dight and left thee in this evil plight?” Answered Ala alDin, “The Arabs,” and Mahmud said, “O my son, the mules and the baggage were thy ransom; so do thou comfort thyself with his saying who said,

‘If thereby man can save his head from death, * His good is worth him but a slice of nail!’

But now, O my son, come down and fear no hurt.” Thereupon he descended from the cistern-niche and Mahmud mounted him on a mule, and they fared on till they reached Baghdad, where he brought him to his own house and carried him to the bath, saying to him, “The goods and money were the ransom of thy life, O my son; but, if thou wilt hearken to me, I will give thee the worth of that thou hast lost, twice told.” When he came out of the bath, Mahmud carried him into a saloon decorated with gold with four raised floors, and bade them bring a tray with all manner of meats. So they ate and drank and Mahmud bent towards Ala al-Din to snatch a kiss from him; but he received it upon the palm of his hand and said, “What, dost thou persist in thy evil designs upon me? Did I not tell thee that, were I wont to sell this merchandise to other than thee for gold, I would sell it thee for silver?” Quoth Mahmud, “I will give thee neither merchandise nor mule nor clothes save at this price; for I am gone mad for love of thee, and bless him who said,

‘Told us, ascribing to his Shaykhs, our Shaykh * Abъ Bilбl, these
 words they wont to utter:[52]
Unhealed the lover wones of love desire, * By kiss and clip, his
 only cure’s to futter!’”

Ala al-Din replied, “Of a truth this may never be, take back thy dress and thy mule and open the door that I may go out.” So he opened the door, and Ala al-Din fared forth and walked on, with the dogs barking at his heels, and he went forwards through the dark when behold, he saw the door of a mosque standing open and, entering the vestibule, there took shelter and concealment; and suddenly a light approached him and on examining it he saw that it came from a pair of lanthorns borne by two slaves before two merchants. Now one was an old man of comely face and the other a youth; and he heard the younger say to the elder, “O my uncle,, I conjure thee by Allah, give me back my cousin!” The old man replied, “Did I not forbid thee, many a time, when the oath of divorce was always in thy mouth, as it were Holy Writ?” Then he turned to his right and, seeing Ala al-Din as he were a slice of the full moon, said to him, “Peace be with thee! who art thou, O my son?” Quoth he, returning the salutation of peace, “I am Ala al-Din, son of Shams al-Din, Consul of the merchants for Egypt. I besought my father for merchandise; so he packed me fifty loads of stuffs and goods.” — And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Fifty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ala al-Din continued, “So he packed me fifty loads of goods and gave me ten thousand dinars, wherewith I set out for Baghdad; but when I reached the Lion’s Copse, the wild Arabs came out against me and took all my goods and monies. So I entered the city knowing not where to pass the night and, seeing this place, I took shelter here." Quoth the old man, "O my son, what sayest thou to my giving thee a thousand dinars and a suit of clothes and a mule worth other two thousand?" Ala al-Din asked, "To what end wilt thou give me these things, O my uncle?" and the other answered, 'This young man who accompanieth me is the son of my brother and an only son; and I have a daughter called Zubaydah[53] the lutist, an only child who is a model of beauty and loveliness, so I married her to him. Now he loveth her, but she loatheth him; and when he chanced to take an oath of triple divorcement and broke it, forthright she left him. Whereupon he egged on all the folk to intercede with me to restore her to him; but I told him that this could not lawfully be save by an intermediate marriage, and we have agreed to make some stranger the intermediary[54] in order that none may taunt and shame him with this affair. So, as thou art a stranger, come with us and we will marry thee to her; thou shalt lie with her to-night and on the morrow divorce her and we will give thee what I said." Quoth Ala al-Din to himself, "By Allah, to bide the night with a bride on a bed in a house is far better than sleeping in the streets and vestibules!" So he went with them to the Kazi whose heart, as soon as he saw Ala al-Din, was moved to love him, and who said to the old man, "What is your will?" He replied, "We wish to make this young man an intermediary husband for my daughter; but we will write a bond against him binding him to pay down by way of marriage-settlement ten thousand gold pieces. Now if after passing the night with her he divorce her in the morning, we will give him a mule and dress each worth a thousand dinars, and a third thousand of ready money; but if he divorce her not, he shall pay down the ten thousand dinars according to contract." So they agreed to the agreement and the father of the bride-to-be received his bond for the marriage-settlement. Then he took Ala al-Din and, clothing him anew, carried him to his daughter's house and there he left him standing at the door, whilst he himself went in to the young lady and said, "Take the bond of thy marriage-settlement, for I have wedded thee to a handsome youth by name Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat: so do thou use him with the best of usage." Then he put the bond into her hands and left her and went to his own lodging. Now the lady's cousin had an old duenna who used to visit Zubaydah, and he had done many a kindness to this woman, so he said to her, "O my mother, if my cousin Zubaydah see this handsome young man, she will never after accept my offer; so I would fain have thee contrive some trick to keep her and him apart." She answered, "By the life of thy youth,[55] I will not suffer him to approach her!" Then she went to Ala al-Din and said to him, "O my son, I have a word of advice to give thee, for the love of Almighty Allah and do thou accept my counsel, as I fear for thee from this young woman: better thou let her lie alone and feel not her person nor draw thee near to her." He asked, "Why so?"; and she answered, "Because her body is full of leprosy and I dread lest she infect thy fair and seemly youth." Quoth he, "I have no need of her." Thereupon she went to the lady and said the like to her of Ala al-Din, and she replied, "I have no need of him, but will let him lie alone, and on the morrow he shall gang his gait." Then she called a slave-girl and said to her, "Take the tray of food and set it before him that he may sup." So the handmaid carried him the tray of food and set it before him and he ate his fill: after which he sat down and raised his charming voice and fell to reciting the chapter called Y. S.[56] The lady listened to him and found his voice as melodious as the psalms of David sung by David himself,[57] which when she heard, she exclaimed, "Allah disappoint the old hag who told me that he was affected with leprosy! Surely this is not the voice of one who hath such a disease; and all was a lie against him."[58] Then she took a lute of India-land workmanship and, tuning the strings, sang to it in a voice so sweet its music would stay the birds in the heart of heaven; and began these two couplets,

"I love a fawn with gentle white black eyes, * Whose walk the
willow-wand with envy kills:
Forbidding me he bids for rival-mine, * 'Tis Allah's grace who
grants to whom He wills!"

And when he heard her chant these lines he ended his recitation of the chapter, and began also to sing and repeated the following couplet, “My Sal6m to the Fawn in the garments concealed, * And to roses in gardens of cheek revealed.”

The lady rose up when she heard this, her inclination for him redoubled and she lifted the curtain; and Ala al-Din, seeing her, recited these two couplets,

“She shineth forth, a moon, and bends, a willow wand, * And
breathes out ambergris, and gazes, a gazelle.
Meseems as if grief loved my heart and when from her *
Estrangement I abide possession to it fell.”[59]

Thereupon she came forward, swinging her haunches and gracefully swaying a shape the handiwork of Him whose boons are hidden; and each of them stole one glance of the eyes that cost them a thousand sighs. And when the shafts of the two regards which met rankled in his heart, he repeated these two couplets,

“She ‘spied the moon of Heaven, reminding me * Of nights when
met
we in the meadows li’en:
True, both saw moons, but sooth to say, it was * Her very eyes I
saw, and she my eyne.”

And when she drew near him, and there remained but two paces between them, he recited these two couplets,

“She spread three tresses of unplaited hair * One night, and
showed me nights not one but four;
And faced the moon of Heaven with her brow, * And showed me
two-
fold moons in single hour.”

And as she was hard by him he said to her, “Keep away from me, lest thou infect me.” Whereupon she uncovered her wrist[60] to him, and he saw that it was cleft, as it were in two halves, by its veins and sinews and its whiteness was as the whiteness of virgin silver. Then said she, “Keep away from me, thou! for thou art stricken with leprosy, and maybe thou wilt infect me.” He asked, “Who told thee I was a leper?" and she answered, "The old woman so told me." Quoth he, "'Twas she told me also that thou wast afflicted with white scurvy;" and so saying, he bared his forearms and showed her that his skin was also like virgin silver. Thereupon she pressed him to her bosom and he pressed her to his bosom and the twain embraced with closest embrace, then she took him and, lying down on her back, let down her petticoat trousers, and in an instant that which his father had left him rose up in rebellion against him and he said, "Go it, O Shayth Zachary[61] of shaggery, O father of veins!"; and putting both hands to her flanks, he set the sugar-stick[62] to the mouth of the cleft and thrust on till he came to the wicket called "Pecten." His passage was by the Gate of Victories[63] and therefrom he entered the Monday market, and those of Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday,[64] and, finding the carpet after the measure of the dais floor,[65] he plied the box within its cover till he came to the end of it. And when morning dawned he cried to her, "Alas for delight which is not fulfilled! The raven[66] taketh it and flieth away!" She asked, "What meaneth this saying?"; and he answered, "O my lady, I have but this hour to abide with thee." Quoth she "Who saith so?" and quoth he, "Thy father made me give him a written bond to pay ten thousand dinars to thy wedding-settlement; and, except I pay it this very day, they will imprison me for debt in the Kazi's house; and now my hand lacketh one-half dirham of the sum." She asked, "O my lord, is the marriage-bond in thy hand or in theirs?"; and he answered, "O my lady, in mine, but I have nothing." She rejoined, "The matter is easy; fear thou nothing. Take these hundred dinars: an I had more, I would give thee what thou lackest; but of a truth my father, of his love for my cousin, hath transported all his goods, even to my jewellery from my lodging to his. But when they send thee a serjeant of the Ecclesiastical Court," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Fifty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young lady rejoined to Ala al-Din, "And when they send thee at an early hour a serjeant of the Ecclesiastical-Court, and the Kazi and my father bid thee divorce me, do thou reply, By what law is it lawful and right that I should marry at nightfall and divorce in the morning?

Then kiss the Kazi’s hand and give him a present, and in like manner kiss the Assessors’ hands and give each of them ten gold pieces. So they will all speak with thee, and if they ask thee, ‘Why dost thou not divorce her and take the thousand dinars and the mule and suit of clothes, according to contract duly contracted?’ do thou answer, ‘Every hair of her head is worth a thousand ducats to me and I will never put her away, neither will I take a suit of clothes nor aught else.’ And if the Kazi say to thee, ‘Then pay down the marriage-settlement,’ do thou reply, ‘I am short of cash at this present;’ whereupon he and the Assessors will deal in friendly fashion with thee and allow thee time to pay.” Now whilst they were talking, behold, the Kazi’s officer knocked at the door; so Ala al-Din went down and the man said to him, “Come, speak the Efendi,[67] for thy fatherinlaw summoneth thee.” So Ala al-Din gave him five dinars and said to him, “O Summoner, by what law am I bound to marry at nightfall and divorce next morning?” The serjeant answered, “By no law of ours at all, at all; and if thou be ignorant of the religious law, I will act as thine advocate.” Then they went to the divorce court and the Kazi said to Ala al-Din, “Why dost thou not put away the woman and take what falleth to thee by the contract?” Hearing this he went up to the Kazi; and, kissing his hand, put fifty dinars in it and said, “O our lord the Kazi, by what law is it lawful and right that I should marry at nightfall and divorce in the morning in my own despite?” The Kazi, answered, “Divorce as a compulsion and by force is sanctioned by no school of the Moslems.” Then said the young lady’s father, “If thou wilt not divorce, pay me the ten thousand dinars, her marriage-settlement.” Quoth Ala al-Din, “Give me a delay of three days;” but the Kazi, said, “Three days is not time enough; he shall give thee ten.” So they agreed to this and bound him after ten days either to pay the dowry or to divorce her. And after consenting he left them and taking meat and rice and clarified butter[68] and what else of food he needed, returned to the house and told the young woman all that had passed; whereupon she said, “‘Twixt night and day, wonders may display; and Allah bless him for his say: —

‘Be mild when rage shall come to afflict thy soul; * Be patient

when calamity breeds ire;
Lookye, the Nights are big with child by Time, * Whose pregnancy
bears wondrous things and dire.'"

Then she rose and made ready food and brought the tray, and they two ate and drank and were merry and mirthful. Presently Ala al-Din besought her to let him hear a little music; so she took the lute and played a melody that had made the hardest stone dance for glee, and the strings cried out in present ecstacy, "O Loving One!'';[69] after which she passed from the adagio into the presto and a livelier measure. As they thus spent their leisure in joy and jollity and mirth and merriment, behold, there came a knocking at the door and she said to him; "Go see who is at the door." So he went down and opened it and finding four Dervishes standing without, said to them, "What want ye?" They replied, "O my lord, we are foreign and wandering religious mendicants, the viands of whose souls are music and dainty verse, and we would fain take our pleasure with thee this night till morning cloth appear, when we will wend our way, and with Almighty Allah be thy reward; for we adore music and there is not one of us but knoweth by heart store of odes and songs and ritornellos."[70] He answered, "There is one I must consult;" and he returned and told Zubaydah who said, "Open the door to them." So he brought them up and made them sit down and welcomed them; then he fetched them food, but they would not eat and said, "O our lord, our meat is to repeat Allah's name in our hearts and to hear music with our ears: and bless him who saith,

'Our aim is only converse to enjoy, * And eating joyeth only cattle-kind.'[71]

And just now we heard pleasant music in thy house, but when we entered, it ceased; and fain would we know whether the player was a slave-girl, white or black, or a maiden of good family." He answered, "It was this my wife," and told them all that had befallen him, adding, "Verily my father-in-law hath bound me to pay a marriage-settlement of ten thousand dinars for her, and they have given me ten days' time." Said one of the Dervishes, "Have no care and think of naught but good; for I am Shaykh of the Convent and have forty Dervishes under my orders. I will presently collect from them the ten thousand dinars and thou shalt pay thy father-in-law the wedding settlement. But now bid thy wife make us music that we may be gladdened and pleasured; for to some folk music is meat, to others medicine and to others refreshing as a fan.” Now these four Dervishes were none other than the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, his Wazir Ja’afar the Barmecide, Abu al-Nowбs al-Hasan son of Hбni[72] and Masrur the sworder; and the reason of their coming to the house was that the Caliph, being heavy at heart, had summoned his Minister and said, “O Wazir! it is our will to go down to the city and pace its streets, for my breast is sore straitened.” So they all four donned dervish dress and went down and walked about, till they came to that house where, hearing music, they were minded to know the cause. They spent the night in joyance and harmony and telling tale after tale until morning dawned, when the Caliph laid an hundred gold pieces under the prayer-carpet and all taking leave of Ala al-Din, went their way. Now when Zubaydah lifted the carpet she found beneath it the hundred dinars and she said to her husband, “Take these hundred dinars which I have found under the prayer-carpet; assuredly the Dervishes when about to leave us laid them there, without our knowledge.” So Ala al-Din took the money and, repairing to the market, bought therewith meat and rice and clarified butter and all they required. And when it was night, he lit the wax-candles and said to his wife, “The mendicants, it is true, have not brought the ten thousand dinars which they promised me; but indeed they are poor men.” As they were talking, behold, the Dervishes knocked at the door and she said, “Go down and open to them.” So he did her bidding and bringing them up, said to them, “Have you brought me the ten thousand dinars you promised me?” They answered, “We have not been able to collect aught thereof as yet; but fear nothing: Inshallah, tomorrow we will compound for thee some alchemical-cookery. But now bid thy wife play us her very best pieces and gladden our hearts for we love music.” So she took her lute and made them such melody that had caused the hardest rocks to dance with glee; and they passed the night in mirth and merriment, converse and good cheer, till morn appeared with its sheen and shone, when the Caliph laid an hundred gold pieces under the prayer-carpet and all, after taking leave of Ala al-Din, went their way. And they ceased not to visit him thus every night for nine nights; and each morning the Caliph put an hundred dinars under the prayer carpet, till the tenth night, when they came not. Now the reason of their failure to come was that the Caliph had sent to a great merchant, saying to him, "Bring me fifty loads of stuffs, such as come from Cairo," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Fifty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Prince of True Believers said to that merchant, "Bring me fifty loads of stuffs such as come from Cairo, and let each one be worth a thousand dinars, and write on each bale its price; and bring me also a male Abyssinian slave." The merchant did the bidding of the Caliph who committed to the slave a basin and ewer of gold and other presents, together with the fifty loads; and wrote a letter to Ala al-Din as from his father Shams al-Din and said to him, "Take these bales and what else is with them, and go to such and such a quarter wherein dwelleth the Provost of the merchants and say, 'Where be Ala al-Din Abu al Shamat?' till folk direct thee to his quarter and his house." So the slave took the letter and the goods and what else and fared forth on his errand. Such was his case; but as regards Zubaydah's cousin and first husband, he went to her father and said to him, "Come let us go to Ala al-Din and make him divorce the daughter of my uncle." So they set out both together and, when they came to the street in which the house stood, they found fifty he mules laden with bales of stuffs, and a blackamoor riding on a she mule. So they said to him, "Whose loads are these?" He replied, "They belong to my lord Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat; for his father equipped him with merchandise and sent him on a journey to Baghdad-city; but the wild Arabs came forth against him and took his money and goods and all he had. So when the ill news reached his father, he despatched me to him with these loads, in lieu of those he had lost; besides a mule laden with fifty thousand dinars, a parcel of clothes worth a power of money, a robe of sables[73] and a basin and ewer of gold." Whereupon the lady's father said, "He whom thou seekest is my son-in-law and I will show thee his house." Meanwhile Ala al-Din was sitting at home in huge concern, when lo! one knocked at the door and he said, "O

Zubaydah, Allah is all-knowing! but I fear thy father hath sent me an officer from the Kazi or the Chief of Police.” Quoth she, “Go down and see what it is.” So he went down; and, opening the door, found his father-in-law, the Provost of the merchants with an Abyssinian slave, dusky complexioned and pleasant of favour, riding on a mule. When the slave saw him he dismounted and kissed his hands, and Ala al-Din said, “What dost thou want?” He replied, “I am the slave of my lord Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, son of Shams al-Din, Consul of the merchants for the land of Egypt, who hath sent me to him with this charge.” Then he gave him the letter and Ala al-Din opening it found written what followeth:[74]

“Ho thou my letter! when my friend shall see thee, * Kiss thou
 the ground and buss his sandal-shoon:
Look thou hie softly and thou hasten not, * My life and rest are
 in those hands so boon.

“After hearty salutations and congratulations and high estimation from Shams al-Din to his son, Abu al-Shamat. Know, O my son, that news hath reached me of the slaughter of thy men and the plunder of thy monies and goods; so I send thee herewith fifty loads of Egyptian stuffs, together with a suit of clothes and a robe of sables and a basin and ewer of gold. Fear thou no evil, and the goods thou hast lost were the ransom of thy life; so regret them not and may no further grief befall thee. Thy mother and the people of the house are doing well in health and happiness and all greet thee with abundant greetings. Moreover, O my son, it hath reached me that they have married thee, by way of intermediary, to the lady Zubaydah the lutist and they have imposed on thee a marriage-settlement of ten thousand dinars; wherefore I send thee also fifty thousand dinars by the slave Salʜm.”[75] Now when Ala al-Din had made an end of reading the letter, he took possession of the loads and, turning to the Provost, said to him, “O my father-in-law, take the ten thousand dinars, the marriage-settlement of thy daughter Zubaydah, and take also the loads of goods and dispose of them, and thine be the profit; only return me the cost price.” He answered, “Nay, by Allah, I will take nothing; and, as for thy wife’s settlement, do thou settle the matter with her." Then, after the goods had been brought in, they went to Zuhaydah and she said to her sire, "O my father, whose loads be these?" He said, "These belong to thy husband, Ala al-Din: his father hath sent them to him instead of those whereof the wild Arabs spoiled him. Moreover, he hath sent him fifty thousand dinars with a parcel of clothes, a robe of sables, a she mule for riding and a basin and ewer of gold. As for the marriage-settlement that is for thy recking." Thereupon Ala al-Din rose and, opening the money box, gave her her settlement and the lady's cousin said, "O my uncle, let him divorce to me my wife;" but the old man replied, "This may never be now; for the marriage tie is in his hand." Thereupon the young man went out, sore afflicted and sadly vexed and, returning home, fell sick, for his heart had received its death blow; so he presently died. But as for Ala al-Din, after receiving his goods he went to the bazar and buying what meats and drinks he needed, made a banquet as usual — against the night, saying to Zubaydah, "See these lying Dervishes; they promised us and broke their promises." Quoth she, "Thou art the son of a Consul of the merchants, yet was thy hand short of half a dirham; how then should it be with poor Dervishes?" Quoth he, "Almighty Allah hath enabled us to do without them; but if they come to us never again will I open the door to them." She asked, "Why so, whenas their coming footsteps brought us good luck; and, moreover, they put an hundred dinars under the prayer carpet for us every night? Perforce must thou open the door to them an they come." So when day departed with its light and in gloom came night, they lighted the wax candles and he said to her, "Rise, Zubaydah, make us music;" and behold, at this moment some one knocked at the door, and she said, "Go and look who is at the door." So he went down and opened it and seeing the Dervishes, said, "Oh, fair welcome to the liars! Come up." Accordingly they went up with him and he seated them and brought them the tray of food; and they ate and drank and became merry and mirthful, and presently said to him, "O my lord, our hearts have been troubled for thee: what hath passed between thee and thy father-in-law?" He answered, "Allah compensated us beyond and above our desire." Rejoined they, "By Allah, we were in fear for thee". — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and and Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Dervishes thus addressed Ala al-Din, “By Allah, we were in fear for thee and naught kept us from thee but our lack of cash and coin.” Quoth he, “Speedy relief hath come to me from my Lord; for my father hath sent me fifty thousand dinars and fifty loads of stuffs, each load worth a thousand dinars; besides a riding-mule, a robe of sables, an Abyssinian slave and a basin and ewer of gold. Moreover, I have made my peace with my father-in-law and my wife hath become my lawful wife by my paying her settlement; so laud to Allah for that!” Presently the Caliph rose to do a necessity; whereupon Ja’afar bent him towards Ala al-Din and said, “Look to thy manners, for thou art in the presence of the Commander of the Faithful “ Asked he, “How have I failed in good breeding before the Commander of the Faithful, and which of you is he?” Quoth Ja’afar, “He who went out but now to make water is the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, and I am the Wazir Ja’afar; and this is Masrur the executioner and this other is Abu Nowas Hasan bin Hani.. And now, O Ala al-Din, use thy reason and bethink thee how many days’ journey it is between Cairo and Baghdad.” He replied, “Five and forty days’ journey;” and Ja’afar rejoined, “Thy baggage was stolen only ten days ago; so how could the news have reached thy father, and how could he pack thee up other goods and send them to thee five-and-forty days’ journey in ten days’ time?” Quoth Ala al-Din, “O my lord and whence then came they?” “From the Commander of the Faithful,” replied Ja’afar, “of his great affection for thee.” As they were speaking, lo! the Caliph entered and Ala al-Din rising, kissed the ground before him and said, “Allah keep thee, O Prince of the Faithful, and give thee long life; and may the lieges never lack thy bounty and beneficence!” Replied the Caliph, “O Ala al-Din, let Zubaydah play us an air, by way of house-warming[76] for thy deliverance.” Thereupon she played him on the lute so rare a melody that the very stones shook for glee, and the strings cried out for present ecstasy, “O Loving One!” They spent the night after the merriest fashion, and in the morning the Caliph said to Ala al-Din, “Come to the Divan to-morrow.” He answered, “Hearkening and obedience, O Commander of the Faithful; so Allah will and thou be well and in good case!" On the morrow he took ten trays and, putting on each a costly present, went up with them to the palace; and the Caliph was sitting on the throne when, behold, Ala al-Din appeared at the door of the Divan, repeating these two couplets,

"Honour and Glory wait on thee each morn! * Thine enviers' noses
in the dust be set!
Ne'er cease thy days to be as white as snow; * Thy foeman's days
to be as black as jet!"

"Welcome, O Ala Al-Din!" said the Caliph, and he replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, the Prophet (whom Allah bless and assain!)[77] was wont to accept presents; and these ten trays, with what is on them, are my offering to thee." The Caliph accepted his gift and, ordering him a robe of honour, made him Provost of the merchants and gave him a seat in the Divan. And as he was sitting behold, his father-in-law came in and, seeing Ala al-Din seated in his place and clad in a robe of honour, said to the Caliph, "O King of the age, why is this man sitting in my place and wearing this robe of honour?" Quoth the Caliph, "I have made him Provost of the merchants, for offices are by investiture and not in perpetuity, and thou art deposed." Answered the merchant, "Thou hast done well, O Commander of the Faithful, for he is ours and one of us. Allah make the best of us the managers of our affairs! How many a little one hath become great!" Then the Caliph wrote Ala al-Din a Firman[78] of investiture and gave it to the Governor who gave it to the crier,[79] and the crier made proclamation in the Divan saying, "None is Provost of the merchants but Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, and his word is to be heard, and he must be obeyed with due respect paid, and he meriteth homage and honour and high degree!" Moreover, when the Divan broke up, the Governor went down with the crier before Ala Al-Din!" and the crier repeated the proclamation and they carried Ala al-Din through the thoroughfares of Baghdad, making proclamation of his dignity. Next day, Ala al-Din opened a shop for his slave Salim and set him therein, to buy and sell, whilst he himself rode to the palace and took his place in the Caliph's Divan. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Sixtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ala al-Din rode to the palace and took his place in the Caliph’s Divan. Now it came to pass one day, when he sat in his stead as was his wont, behold, one said to the Caliph, “O Commander of the Faithful, may thy head survive such an one the cup-companion!; for he is gone to the mercy of Almighty Allah, but be thy life prolonged!”[80] Quoth the Caliph, “Where is Ala al-Din Abu al-al-Shamat?” So he went up to the Commander of the Faithful, who at once clad him in a splendid dress of honour and made him his boon-companion; appointing him a monthly pay and allowance of a thousand dinars. He continued to keep him company till, one day, as he sat in the Divan, according to his custom attending upon the Caliph, lo and behold! an Emir came up with sword and shield in hand and said, “O Commander of the Faithful, may thy head long outlive the Head of the Sixty, for he is dead this day;” whereupon the Caliph ordered Ala al-Din a dress of honour and made him Chief of the Sixty, in place of the other who had neither wife nor son nor daughter. So Ala al-Din laid hands on his estate and the Caliph said to him, “Bury him in the earth and take all he hath left of wealth and slaves and handmaids.”[81] Then he shook the handkerchief[82] and dismissed the Divan, whereupon Ala al-Din went forth, attended by Ahmad al-Danaf, captain of the right, and Hasan Shъmбn, captain of the left, riding at his either stirrup, each with his forty men.[83] Presently, he turned to Hasan Shuman and his men and said to them, “Plead ye for me with the Captain Ahmad al-Danaf that he please to accept me as his son by covenant before Allah.” And Ahmad assented, saying, “I and my forty men will go before thee to the Divan every morning.” Now after this Ala al-Din continued in the Caliph’s service many days; till one day it chanced that he left the Divan and returning home, dismissed Ahmad al-Danaf and his men and sat down with his wife Zubaydab, the lute-player, who lighted the wax candles and went out of the room upon an occasion. Suddenly he heard a loud shriek; so he rose up and running in haste to see what was the matter, found that it was his wife who had cried out. She was lying at full length on the ground and, when he put his hand to her breast, he found her dead. Now her father's house faced that of Ala al-Din, and he, hearing the shriek, came in and said, "What is the matter, O my lord Ala al-Din?" He replied, "O my father, may thy head outlive thy daughter Zubaydah! But, O my father, honour to the dead is burying them." So when the morning dawned, they buried her in the earth and her husband and father condoled with and mutually consoled each other. Thus far concerning her; but as regards Ala al-Din he donned mourning dress and declined the Divan, abiding tearful-eyed and heavy-hearted at home. After a while, the Caliph said to Ja'afar, "O Watir, what is the cause of Ala al-Din's absence from the Divan?" The Minister answered, "O Commander of the Faithful, he is in mourning for his wife Zubaydah; and is occupied in receiving those who come to console him;" and the Caliph said, "It behoveth us to pay him a visit of condolence." "I hear and I obey," replied Ja'afar. So they took horse, the Caliph and the Minister and a few attendants, and rode to Ala al-Din's house and, as he was sitting at home, behold, the party came in upon him; whereupon he rose to receive them and kissed the ground before the Caliph, who said to him, "Allah make good thy loss to thee!" Answered Ala Al-Din, "May Allah preserve thee to us, O Commander of the Faithful!" Then said the Caliph, "O Ala al-Din, why hast thou absented thyself from the Divan?" And he replied, "Because of my mourning for my wife, Zubaydah, O Commander of the Faithful." The Caliph rejoined, "Put away grief from thee: verily she is dead and gone to the mercy of Almighty Allah and mourning will avail thee nothing; no, nothing." But Ala al-Din said "O Commander of the Faithful, I shall never leave mourning for her till I die and they bury me by her side." Quoth the Caliph, "In Allah is compensation for every decease, and neither device nor riches can deliver from death; and divinely gifted was he who said,

'All sons of woman, albe long preserved, * Are borne upon the
bulging bier some day.[84]
How then shall 'joy man joy or taste delight, * Upon whose cheeks
shall rest the dust and clay?'"

When the Caliph had made an end of condoling with him, he charged him not to absent himself from the Divan and returned to his palace. And Ala Al-Din, after a last sorrowful night, mounted early in the morning and, riding to the court, kissed the ground before the Commander of the Faithful who made a movement if rising from the throne[85] to greet and welcome him; and bade him take his appointed place in the Divan, saying, "O Ala al-Din, thou art my guest to-night." So presently he carried him into his serraglio and calling a slave-girl named Kъt al-Kulъb, said to her, "Ala al-Din had a wife called Zubaydah, who used to sing to him and solace him of cark and care; but she is gone to the mercy of Almighty Allah, and now I would have thee play him an air upon the lute," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Sixty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph said to the damsel Kut al-Kulub, "I would have thee play him upon the lute an air, of fashion sweet and rare, that he may be solaced of his cark and care." So she rose and made sweet music; and the Caliph said to Ala al-Din, "What sayst thou of this damsel's voice?" He replied, "Verily, O Commander of the Faithful, Zubaydah's voice was the finer; but she is skilled in touching the lute cunningly and her playing would make a rock dance with glee." The Caliph asked, "Doth she please thee?' ' and he answered, "She doth, O Commander of the Faithful;" whereupon the King said, "By the life of my head and the tombs of my forefathers, she is a gift from me to thee, she and her waiting- women!" Ala al-Din fancied that the Caliph was jesting with him; but, on the morrow, the King went in to Kut al-Kulub and said to her, "I have given thee to Ala Al-Din, whereat she rejoiced, for she had seen and loved him. Then the Caliph returned from his serraglio palace to the Divan; and, calling porters, said to them, "Set all the goods of Kut al-Kulub and her waiting-women in a litter, and carry them to Ala al-Din's home." So they conducted her to the house and showed her into the pavilion, whilst the Caliph sat in the hall of audience till the dose of day, when the Divan broke up and he retired to his harem. Such was his case; but as regards Kut al-Kulub, when she had taken up her lodging in Ala al-Din's mansion, she and her women, forty in all, besides the eunuchry, she called two of these caponised slaves and said to them, "Sit ye on stools, one on the right and another on the left hand of the door; and, when Ala al-

Din cometh home, both of you kiss his hands and say to him, “Our mistress Kut al-Kulub requesteth thy presence in the pavilion, for the Caliph hath given her to thee, her and her women.” They answered, “We hear and obey;” and did as she bade them. So, when Ala al-Din returned, he found two of the Caliph’s eunuchs sitting at the door and was amazed at the matter and said to himself, “Surely, this is not my own house; or else what can have happened?” Now when the eunuchs saw him, they rose to him and, kissing his hands, said to him, “We are of the Caliph’s household and slaves to Kut al-Kulub, who saluteth thee, giving thee to know that the Caliph hath bestowed her on thee, her and her women, and requesteth thy presence.” Quoth Ala al-Din, “Say ye to her, ‘Thou art welcome; but so long as thou shalt abide with me, I will not enter the pavilion wherein thou art, for what was the master’s should not become the man’s;’ and furthermore ask her, ‘What was the sum of thy day’s expenditure in the Caliph’s palace?’” So they went in and did his errand to her, and she answered, “An hundred dinars a day;” whereupon quoth he to himself, “There was no need for the Caliph to give me Kut al-Kulub, that I should be put to such expense for her; but there is no help for it.” So she abode with him awhile and he assigned her daily an hundred dinars for her maintenance; till, one day, he absented himself from the Divan and the Caliph said to Ja’afar, “O Watir, I gave not Kut al-Kulub unto Ala al-Din but that she might console him for his wife; why, then, doth he still hold aloof from us?” Answered Ja’afar, “O Commander of the Faithful, he spake sooth who said, ‘Whoso findeth his fere, forgetteth his friends.’” Rejoined the Caliph, “Haply he hath not absented himself without excuse, but we will pay him a visit.” Now some days before this, Ala al-Din had said to Ja’afar, “I complained to the Caliph of my grief and mourning for the loss of my wife Zubaydah and he gave me Kut al-Kulub;” and the Minister replied, “Except he loved thee, he had not given her to thee. Say hast thou gone in unto her, O Ala al-Din?” He rejoined, “No, by Allah! I know not her length from her breadth.” He asked “And why?” and he answered, “O Wazir, what befitteth the lord befitteth not the liege.” Then the Caliph and Ja’afar disguised themselves and went privily to visit Ala al-Din; but he knew them and rising to them kissed the hands of the Caliph, who looked at him and saw signs of sorrow in his face. So he said to him, “O Al-Din, whence cometh this sorrow wherein I see thee? Hast thou not gone in unto Kut al-Kulub?” He replied, “O Commander of the Faithful, what befitteth the lord befitteth not the thrall. No, as yet I have not gone in to visit her nor do I know her length from her breadth; so pray quit me of her.” Quoth the Caliph, “I would fain see her and question her of her case;” and quoth Ala al-Din, “I hear and I obey, O Commander of the Faithful.” So the Caliph went in, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Sixty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph went in to Kut al-Kulub, who rose to him on sighting him and kissed the ground between his hands; when he said to her, “Hath Ala al-Din gone in unto thee?” and she answered, “No, O Commander of the Faithful, I sent to bid him come, but he would not.” So the Caliph bade carry her back to the Harim and saying to Ala Al-Din, “Do not absent thyself from us,” returned to his palace. Accordingly, next morning, Ala Al-Din, mounted and rode to the Divan, where he took his seat as Chief of the Sixty. Presently the Caliph ordered his treasurer to give the Wazir Ja’afar ten thousand dinars and said when his order was obeyed, “I charge thee to go down to the bazar where handmaidens are sold and buy Ala Al-Din, a slave-girl with this sum.” So in obedience to the King, Ja’afar took Ala al-Din and went down with him to the bazar. Now as chance would have it, that very day, the Emir Khбlid, whom the Caliph had made Governor of Baghdad, went down to the market to buy a slave-girl for his son and the cause of his going was that his wife, Khбtъn by name, had borne him a son called Habzalam Bazбzah,[86] and the same was foul of favour and had reached the age of twenty, without learning to mount horse; albeit his father was brave and bold, a doughty rider ready to plunge into the Sea of Darkness.[87] And it happened that on a certain night he had a dream which caused nocturnal-pollution whereof he told his mother, who rejoiced and said to his father, “I want to find him a wife, as he is now ripe for wedlock.” Quoth Khбlid, “The fellow is so foul of favour and withal-so rank of odour, so sordid and beastly that no woman would take him as a gift.” And she answered, "We will buy him a slave-girl." So it befell, for the accomplishing of what Allah Almighty had decreed, that on the same day, Ja'afar and Ala al-Din, the Governor Kh6lid and his son went down to the market and behold, they saw in the hands of a broker a beautiful girl, lovely faced and of perfect shape, and the Wazir said to him, "O broker, ask her owner if he will take a thousand dinars for her." And as the broker passed by the Governor with the slave, Hahzalam Bazazah cast at her one glance of the eyes which entailed for himself one thousand sighs; and he fell in love with her and passion got hold of him and he said, "O my father, buy me yonder slave-girl." So the Emir called the broker, who brought the girl to him, and asked her her name. She replied, "My name is Jessamine;" and he said to Hahzalam Bazazah, "O my son, as she please thee, do thou bid higher for her." Then he asked the broker, "What hath been bidden for her?" and he replied, "A thousand dinars." Said the Governor's son, "She is mine for a thousand pieces of gold and one more;" and the broker passed on to Ala al-Din who bid two thousand dinars for her; and as often as the Emir's son bid another dinar, Ala al-Din bid a thousand. The ugly youth was vexed at this and said, "O broker! who is it that outbiddeth me for the slave-girl?" Answered the broker, "It is the Wazir Ja'afar who is minded to buy her for Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat." And Ala al-Din continued till he brought her price up to ten thousand dinars, and her owner was satisfied to sell her for that sum. Then he took the girl and said to her, "I give thee thy freedom for the love of Almighty Allah;" and forthwith wrote his contract of marriage with her and carried her to his house. Now when the broker returned, after having received his brokerage, the Emir's son summoned him and said to him, "Where is the girl?" Quoth he, "She was bought for ten thousand dinars by Ala al-Din, who hath set her free and married her." At this the young man was greatly vexed and cast down and, sighing many a sigh, returned home, sick for love of the damsel; and he threw himself on his bed and refused food, for love and longing were sore upon him. Now when his mother saw him in this plight, she said to him, "Heaven assain thee, O my son! What aileth thee?" And he answered, "Buy me Jessamine, O my mother." Quoth she, "When the flower-seller passeth I will buy thee a basketful of jessamine." Quoth he, "It is not the jessamine one smells, but a slave-girl named Jessamine, whom my father would not buy for me.” So she said to her husband, “Why and wherefore didest thou not buy him the girl?” and he replied, “What is fit for the lord is not fit for the liege and I have no power to take her: no less a man bought her than Ala Al-Din, Chief of the Sixty.” Then the youth’s weakness redoubled upon him, till he gave up sleeping and eating, and his mother bound her head with the fillets of mourning. And while in her sadness she sat at home, lamenting over her son, behold, came in to her an old woman, known as the mother of Ahmad Kamбkim[88] the arch-thief, a knave who would bore through a middle wall and scale the tallest of the tall and steal the very kohl off the eye-ball.[89] From his earliest years he had been given to these malpractices, till they made him Captain of the Watch, when he stole a sum of money; and the Chief of Police, coming upon him in the act, carried him to the Caliph, who bade put him to death on the common execution-ground.[90] But he implored protection of the Wazir whose intercession the Caliph never rejected, so he pleaded for him with the Commander of the Faithful who said, “How canst thou intercede for this pest of the human race?” Ja’afar answered, “O Commander of the Faithful, do thou imprison him; whoso built the first jail was a sage, seeing that a jail is the grave of the living and a joy for the foe.” So the Caliph bade lay him in bilboes and write thereon, “Appointed to remain here until death and not to be loosed but on the corpse washer’s bench;” and they cast him fettered into limbo. Now his mother was a frequent visitor to the house of the Emir Khбlid, who was Governor and Chief of Police; and she used to go in to her son in jail and say to him, “Did I not warn thee to turn from thy wicked ways?’’[91] And he would always answer her, “Allah decreed this to me; but, O my mother, when thou visitest the Emir’s wife make her intercede for me with her husband.” So when the old woman came into the Lady Khatun, she found her bound with the fillets of mourning and said to her, “Wherefore dost thou mourn?” She replied, “For my son Habzalam Bazazah;” and the old woman exclaimed, “Heaven assain thy son!; what hath befallen him?” So the mother told her the whole story, and she said, “What thou say of him who should achieve such a feat as would save thy son?” Asked the lady, “And what feat wilt thou do?” Quoth the old woman, “I have a son called Ahmad Kamakim, the arch-thief, who lieth chained in jail and on his bilboes is written, ‘Appointed to remain till death’; so do thou don thy richest clothes and trick thee out with thy finest jewels and present thyself to thy husband with an open face and smiling mien; and when he seeketh of thee what men seek of women, put him off and baulk him of his will and say, ‘By Allah, ’tis a strange thing! When a man desireth aught of his wife he dunneth her till she doeth it; but if a wife desire aught of her husband, he will not grant it to her.’ Then he will say, ‘What dost thou want?’; and do thou answer, ‘First swear to grant my request.’ If he swear to thee by his head or by Allah, say to him, ‘Swear to me the oath of divorce’, and do not yield to him, except he do this. And whenas he hath sworn to thee the oath of divorce, say to him, ‘Thou keepest in prison a man called Ahmad Kamakim, and he hath a poor old mother, who hath set upon me and who urgeth me in the matter and who saith, ‘Let thy husband intercede for him with the Caliph, that my son may repent and thou gain heavenly guerdon.’” And the Lady Khatun replied, “I hear and obey.” So when her husband came into her — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Governor came in to his wife, who spoke to him as she had been taught and made him swear the divorce-oath before she would yield to his wishes. He lay with her that night and, when morning dawned, after he had made the Ghusl-ablution and prayed the dawn- prayer, he repaired to the prison and said, “O Ahmad Kamakim, O thou arch-thief, dost thou repent of thy works?”; whereto he replied, “I do indeed repent and turn to Allah and say with heart and tongue, ‘I ask pardon of Allah.’” So the Governor took him out of jail and carried him to the Court (he being still in bilboes) and, approaching the Caliph, kissed ground before him. Quoth the King, “O Emir Khбlid, what seekest thou?”; whereupon he brought forward Ahmad Kamakim, shuffling and tripping in his fetters, and the Caliph said to him, “What! art thou yet alive, O Kamakim?” He replied, “O Commander of the Faithful, the miserable are long-lived.” Quoth the Caliph to the Emir, “Why hast thou brought him hither?”; and quoth he, “O Commander of the Faithful, he hath a poor old mother cut off from the world who hath none but this son and she hath had recourse to thy slave, imploring him to intercede with thee to strike off his chains, for he repenteth of his evil courses; and to make him Captain of the Watch as before.” The Caliph asked Ahmad Kamakim, “Doss thou repent of thy sins?” “I do indeed repent me to Allah, O Commander of the Faithful,” answered he; whereupon the Caliph called for the blacksmith and made him strike off his irons on the corpse- washer’s bench.[92] Moreover, he restored him to his former office and charged him to walk in the ways of godliness and righteousness. So he kissed the Caliph’s hands and, being invested with the uniform of Captain of the Watch, he went forth, whilst they made proclamation of his appointment. Now for a long time he abode in the exercise of his office, till one day his mother went in to the Governor’s wife, who said to her, “Praised be Allah who hath delivered thy son from prison and restored him to health and safety! But why dost thou not bid him contrive some trick to get the girl Jessamine for my son Hahzalam Bazazah?” “That will I,” answered she and, going out from her, repaired to her son. She found him drunk with wine and said to him, “O my son, no one caused thy release from jail but the wife of the Governor, and she would have thee find some means to slay Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat and get his slave-girl Jessamine for her son Habzalam Bazazah.” He answered, “That will be the easiest of things; and I must needs set about it this very night.” Now this was the first night of the new month, and it was the custom of the Caliph to spend that night with the Lady Zubaydah, for the setting free of a slave-girl or a Mameluke or something of the sort. Moreover, on such occasions he used to doff his royal-habit, together with his rosary and dagger-sword and royal-signet, and set them all upon a chair in the sitting- saloon: and he had also a golden lanthorn, adorned with three jewels strung on a wire of gold, by which he set great store; and he would commit all these things to the charge of the eunuchry, whilst he went into the Lady Zubaydah’s apartment. So arch-thief Ahmad Kamakin waited till midnight, when Canopus shone bright, and all creatures to sleep were dight whilst the Creator veiled them with the veil of night. Then he took his drawn sword in his right and his grappling hook in his left and, repairing to the Caliph’s sitting-saloon planted his scaling ladder and cast his grapnel on to the side of the terrace-roof; then, raising the trap-door, let himself down into the saloon, where he found the eunuchs asleep. He drugged them with hemp-fumes;[93] and, taking the Caliph’s dress; dagger, rosary, kerchief, signet-ring and the lanthorn whereupon were the pearls, returned whence he came and betook himself to the house of Ala al-Din, who had that night celebrated his wedding festivities with Jessamine and had gone in unto her and gotten her with child. So arch-thief Ahmad Kamakim climbed over into his saloon and, raising one of the marble slabs from the sunken part of the floor,[94] dug a hole under it and laid the stolen things therein, all save the lanthorn, which he kept for himself. Then he plastered down the marble slab as it before was, and returning whence he came, went back to his own house, saying, “I will now tackle my drink and set this lanthorn before me and quaff the cup to its light.”[95] Now as soon as it was dawn of day, the Caliph went out into the sitting-chamber; and, seeing the eunuchs drugged with hemp, aroused them. Then he put his hand to the chair and found neither dress nor signet nor rosary nor dagger-sword nor kerchief nor lanthorn; whereat he was exceeding wroth and donning the dress of anger, which was a scarlet suit,[96] sat down in the Divan. So the Wazir Ja’afar came forward and kissing the ground before him, said, “Allah avert all evil from the Commander of the Faithful!” Answered the Caliph, “O Wazir, the evil is passing great!” Ja’afar asked, “What has happened?” so he told him what had occurred; and, behold, the Chief of Police appeared with Ahmad Kamakim the robber at his stirrup, when he found the Commander of the Faithful sore enraged. As soon as the Caliph saw him, he said to him, “O Emir Khбlid, how goes Baghdad?” And he answered, “Safe and secure.” Cried he “Thou liest!” “How so, O Prince of True Believers?” asked the Emir. So he told him the case and added, “I charge thee to bring me back all the stolen things.” Replied the Emir, “O Commander of the Faithful, the vinegar worm is of and in the vinegar, and no stranger can get at this place.”[97] But the Caliph said, “Except thou bring me these things, I will put thee to death.” Quoth he, “Ere thou slay me, slay Ahmad Kamakim, for none should know the robber and the traitor but the Captain of the Watch.” Then came forward Ahmad

Kamakim and said to the Caliph, “Accept my intercession for the Chief of Police, and I will be responsible to thee for the thief and will track his trail till I find him; but give me two Kazis and two Assessors for he who did this thing feareth thee not, nor cloth he fear the Governor nor any other.” Answered the Caliph, “Thou shalt have what thou wantest; but let search be made first in my palace and then in those of the Wazir and the Chief of the Sixty.” Rejoined Ahmad Kamakim, “Thou sayest well, O Commander of the Faith ful; belike the man that did this ill deed be one who hath been reared in the King’s household or in that of one of his officers.” Cried the Caliph, “As my head liveth, whosoever shall have done the deed I will assuredly put him to death, be it mine own son!” Then Ahmad Kamakim received a written warrant to enter and perforce search the houses; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Sixty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ahmad Kamakim got what he wanted, and received a written warrant to enter and perforce search the houses; so he fared forth, taking in his hand a rod[98] made of bronze and copper, iron and steel, of each three equal-parts. He first searched the palace of the Caliph, then that of the Wazir Ja’afar; after which he went the round of the houses of the Chamberlains and the Viceroys till he came to that of Ala al-Din. Now when the Chief of the Sixty heard the clamour before his house, he left his wife Jessamine and went down and, opening the door, found the Master of Police without in the midst of a tumultuous crowd. So he said, “What is the matter, O Emir Kh6lid?” Thereupon the Chief told him the case and Ala al-Din said, “Enter my house and search it.” The Governor replied, “Pardon, O my lord; thou art a man in whom trust is reposed and Allah forfend that the trusty turn traitor!” Quoth Ala al-Din, “There is no help for it but that my house be searched.” So the Chief of Police entered, attended by the Kazi and his Assessors; whereupon Ahmad Kamakim went straight to the depressed floor of the saloon and came to the slab, under which he had buried the stolen goods and let the rod fall upon it with such violence that the marble broke in sunder and behold something glittered underneath. Then said he, “Bismillah; in the name of Allah!

Mashallah; whatso Allah willeth! By the blessing of our coming a hoard hath been hit upon, wait while we go down into this hiding-place and see what is therein." So the Kazi and Assessors looked into the hole and finding there the stolen goods, drew up a statement[99] of how they had discovered them in Ala al-Din's house, to which they set their seals. Then, they bade seize upon Ala al-Din and took his turban from his head, and officially registered all his monies and effects which were in the mansion. Meanwhile, arch-thief Ahmad Kamakim laid hands on Jessamine, who was with child by Ala al-Din, and committed her to his mother, saying, "Deliver her to Khatun, the Governor's lady:" so the old woman took her and carried her to the wife of the Master of Police. Now as soon as Habzalam Bazazah saw her, health and heart returned to him and he arose without stay or delay and joyed with exceeding joy and would have drawn near her; but she plucks a dagger from her girdle and said, "Keep off from me, or I will kill thee and kill myself after." Exclaimed his mother, "O strumpet, let my son have his will of thee!" But Jessamine answered "O bitch, by what law is it lawful for a woman to marry two men; and how shall the dog be admitted to the place of the lion?" With this, the ugly youth's love-longing redoubled and he sickened for yearning and unfulfilled desire; and refusing food returned to his pillow. Then said his mother to her, "O harlot, how canst thou make me thus to sorrow for my son? Needs must I punish thee with torture, and as for Ala al-Din, he will assuredly be hanged." "And I will die for love of him," answered Jessamine. Then the Governor's wife arose and stripped her of her jewels and silken raiment and, clothing her in petticoat-trousers of sack-cloth and a shift of hair-cloth, sent her down into the kitchen and made her a scullery-wench, saying, "The reward for thy constancy shall be to break up fire-wood and peel onions and set fire under the cooking-pots." Quoth she, "I am willing to suffer all manner of hardships and servitude, but I will not suffer the sight of thy son." However, Allah inclined the hearts of the slave-girls to her and they used to do her service in the kitchen. Such was the case with Jessamine; but as regards Ala al-Din they carried him, together with the stolen goods, to the Divan where the Caliph still sat upon his throne. And behold, the King looked upon his effects and said, “Where did ye find them?” They replied, “In the very middle of the house belonging to Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat;” whereat the Caliph was filled with wrath and took the things, but found not the lanthorn among them and said, “O Ala al-Din, where is the lanthorn?” He answered “I stole it not, I know naught of it; I never saw it; I can give no information about it!” Said the Caliph, “O traitor, how cometh it that I brought thee near unto me and thou hast cast me out afar, and I trusted in thee and thou betrayest me?” And he commanded to hang him. So the Chief of Police took him and went down with him into the city, whilst the crier preceded them proclaiming aloud and saying, “This is the reward and the least of the reward he shall receive who doth treason against the Caliphs of True Belief!” And the folk flocked to the place where the gallows stood. Thus far concerning him; but as regards Ahmad al-Danaf, Ala al-Din’s adopted father, he was sitting making merry with his followers in a garden, and carousing and pleasuring when lo! in came one of the water-carriers of the Divan and, kissing the hand of Ahmad al-Danaf, said to him, “O Captain Ahmad, O Danaf! thou sittest at thine ease with water flowing at thy feet,[100] and thou knowest not what hath happened.” Asked Ahmad, “What is it?” and the other answered, “They have gone down to the gallows with thy son Ala al-Din, adopted by a covenant before Allah!” Quoth Ahmad, “What is the remedy here, O Hasan Shuuman, and what sayst thou of this?” He replied, “Assuredly Ala al-Din is innocent and this blame hath come to him from some one enemy.”[101] Quoth Ahmad, “What counsellest thou?” and Hasan said, “We must rescue him, Inshallah!” Then he went to the jail and said to the gaolor, “Give us some one who deserveth death.” So he gave him one that was likest of men to Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat; and they covered his head and carried him to the place of execution between Ahmad al-Danaf and Ali al-Zaybak of Cairo.[102] Now they had brought Ala al-Din to the gibbet, to hang him, but Ahmad al-Danaf came forward and set his foot on that of the hangman, who said, “Give me room to do my duty.” He replied, “O accursed, take this man and hang him in Ala al-Din’s stead; for he is innocent and we will ransom him with this fellow, even as Abraham ransomed Ishmael with the ram.”[103] So the hangman seized the man and hanged him in lieu of Ala al-Din; whereupon Ahmad and Ali took Ala al-Din and carried him to Ahmad's quarters and, when there, Ala al-Din turned to him and said, "O my sire and chief, Allah requite thee with the best of good!" Quoth he, "O Ala al-Din" — And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Calamity Ahmad cried, "O Ala al-Din, what is this deed thou hast done? The mercy of Allah be on him who said, 'Whoso trusteth thee betray him not, e'en if thou be a traitor.' Now the Caliph set thee in high place about him and styled thee 'Trusty' and 'Faithful'; how then couldst thou deal thus with him and steal his goods?" "By the Most Great Name, O my father and chief," replied Ala al-Din, "I had no hand in this, nor did I such deed, nor know I who did it." Quoth Ahmad, "Of a surety none did this but a manifest enemy and whoso doth aught shall be requited for his deed; but, O Ala al-Din, thou canst sojourn no longer in Baghdad, for Kings, O my son, may not pass from one thing to another, and when they go in quest of a man, ah! longsome is his travail." "Whither shall I go, O my chief?" asked Ala al-Din; and he answered, "O my son, I will bring thee to Alexandria, for it is a blessed place; its threshold is green and its sojourn is agreeable." And Ala al-Din rejoined, "I hear and I obey, O my chief." So Ahmad said to Hasan Shuuman, "Be mindful and, when the Caliph asketh for me, say, 'He is gone touring about the provinces'." Then, taking Ala al-Din, he went forth of Baghdad and stayed not going till they came to the outlying vineyards and gardens, where they met two Jews of the Caliph's tax-gatherers, riding on mules. Quoth Ahmad Al-Danaf to these, "Give me the black-mail."[104] and quoth they, "Why should we pay thee black mail?" whereto he replied, "Because I am the watchman of this valley." So they gave him each an hundred gold pieces, after which he slew them and took their mules, one of which he mounted, whilst Ala al-Din bestrode the other. Then they rode on till they came to the city of Ayбs[105] and put up their beasts for the night at the Khan. And when morning dawned, Ala al-Din sold his own mule and committed that of Ahmad to the charge of the door-keeper of the caravanserai, after which they took ship from Ayas port and sailed to Alexandria. Here they landed and walked up to the bazar and behold, there was a broker crying a shop and a chamber behind it for nine hundred and fifty dinars. Upon this Ala al-Din bid a thousand which the broker accepted, for the premises belonged to the Treasury; and the seller handed over to him the keys and the buyer opened the shop and found the inner parlour furnished with carpets and cushions. Moreover, he found there a store-room full of sails and masts, cordage and seamen's chests, bags of beads and cowrie[106] - shells, stirrups, battle-axes, maces, knives, scissors and such matters, for the last owner of the shop had been a dealer in second-hand goods.[107] ook his seat in the shop and Ahmad al-Danaf said to him, "O my son, the shop and the room and that which is therein are become thine; so tarry thou here and buy and sell; and repine not at thy lot for Almighty Allah blesseth trade." After this he abode with him three days and on the fourth he took leave of him, saying, "Abide here till I go back and bring thee the Caliph's pardon and learn who hath played thee this trick." Then he shipped for Ayas, where he took the mule from the inn and, returning to Baghdad met Pestilence Hasan and his followers, to whom said he, "Hath the Caliph asked after me?"; and he replied, "No, nor hast thou come to his thought." So he resumed his service about the Caliph's person and set himself to sniff about for news of Ala al-Din's case, till one day he heard the Caliph say to the Watir, "See, O Ja'afar, how Ala al-Din dealt with me!" Replied the Minister, "O Commander of the Faithful, thou hast requited him with hanging and hath he not met with his reward?" Quoth he, "O Wazir, I have a mind to go down and see him hanging;" and the Wazir answered, "Do what thou wilt, O Commander of the Faithful." So the Caliph, accompanied by Ja'afar, went down to the place of execution and, raising his eyes, saw the hanged man to be other than Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, surnamed the Trusty, and said, "O Wazir, this is not Ala al-Din!" "How knowest thou that it is not he?" asked the Minister, and the Caliph answered, "Ala al-Din was short and this one is tall " Quoth Ja'afar, "Hanging stretcheth." Quoth the Caliph, "Ala al-Din was fair and this one's face is black." Said Ja'afar "Knowest thou not, O Commander of the Faithful, that death is followed by blackness?" Then the Caliph bade take down the body from the gallows tree and they found the names of the two Shaykhs, Abu Bakr and Omar, written on its heels[108] whereupon cried the Caliph, “O Wazir, Ala al Din was a Sunnite, and this fellow is a Rejecter, a Shi’ah.” He answered, “Glory be to Allah who knoweth the hidden things, while we know not whether this was Ala al-Din or other than he.” Then the Caliph bade bury the body and they buried it; and Ala al-Din was forgotten as though he never had been. Such was his case; but as regards Habzalam Bazazah, the Emir Kh6lid’s son, he ceased not to languish for love and longing till he died and they joined him to the dust. And as for the young wife Jessamine, she accomplished the months of her pregnancy and, being taken with labour-pains, gave birth to a boy-child like unto the moon. And when her fellow slave-girls said to her, “What wilt thou name him?” she answered, “Were his father well he had named him; but now I will name him Asl6n.”[109] She gave him suck for two successive years, then weaned him, and he crawled and walked. Now it so came to pass that one day, whilst his mother was busied with the service of the kitchen, the boy went out and, seeing the stairs, mounted to the guest-chamber.[110] And the Emir Kh6lid who was sitting there took him upon his lap and glorified his Lord for that which he had created and fashioned then closely eyeing his face, the Governor saw that he was the likest of all creatures to Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat. Presently, his mother Jessamine sought for him and finding him not, mounted to the guest-chamber, where she saw the Emir seated, with the child playing in his lap, for Allah had inclined his heart to the boy. And when the child espied his mother, he would have thrown himself upon her; but the Emir held him tight to his bosom and said to Jessamine, “Come hither, O damsel.” So she came to him, when he said to her, “Whose son is this?”; and she replied, “He is my son and the fruit of my vitals.” “And who is his father?” asked the Emir; and she answered, “His father was Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, but now he is become thy son.” Quoth Kh6lid, “In very sooth Ala al-Din was a traitor.” Quoth she, “Allah deliver him from treason! the Heavens forfend and forbid that the ‘Trusty’ should be a traitor!” Then said he, “When this boy shall grow up and reach man’s estate and say to thee, ‘Who is my father?’ say to him, ‘Thou art the son of the Emir Kh6lid, Governor and Chief of Police.’” And she answered, “I hear and I obey.” Then he circumcised the boy and reared him with the goodliest rearing, and engaged for him a professor of law and religious science, and an expert penman who taught him to read and write; so he read the Koran twice and learnt it by heart and he grew up, saying to the Emir, “O my father!” Moreover, the Governor used to go down with him to the tilting-ground and assemble horsemen and teach the lad the fashion of fight and fray, and the place to plant lance-thrust and sabre-stroke; so that by the time he was fourteen years old, he became a valiant wight and accomplished knight and gained the rank of Emir. Now it chanced one day that Aslan fell in with Ahmad Kamakim, the arch-thief, and accompanied him as cup- companion to the tavern[111] and behold, Ahmad took out the jewelled lanthorn he had stolen from the Caliph and, setting it before him, pledged the wine cup to its light, till he became drunken. So Aslan said to him, “O Captain, give me this lanthorn;” but he replied, “I cannot give it to thee.” Asked Aslan, “Why not?”; and Ahmad answered, “Because lives have been lost for it.” “Whose life?” enquired Aslan; and Ahmad rejoined, “There came hither a man who was made Chief of the Sixty; he was named Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat and he lost his life through this lanthorn.” Quoth Aslan, “And what was that story, and what brought about his death?” Quoth Ahmad Kamakim, “Thou hadst an elder brother by name Hahzalam Bazazah, and when he reached the age of sixteen and was ripe for marriage, thy father would have bought him a slave-girl named Jessamine.” And he went on to tell him the whole story from first to last of Habzalam Bazazah’s illness and what befell Ala al-Din in his innocence. When Aslan heard this, he said in thought, “Haply this slave-girl was my mother Jessamine, and my father was none other than Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat.” So the boy went out from him sorrowful, and met Calamity Ahmad, who at sight of him exclaimed, “Glory be to Him unto whom none is like!” Asked Hasan the Pestilence, “Whereat dost thou marvel, O my chief?” and Ahmad the Calamity replied, “At the make of yonder boy Aslan, for he is the likest of human creatures to Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat.” Then he called the lad and said to him, “O Aslan what is thy mother’s name?”; to which he replied, “She is called the damsel Jessamine;” and the other said, “Harkye, Aslan, be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear; for thy father was none other than Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat: but, O my son, go thou in to thy mother and question her of thy father." He said, "Hearkening and obedience," and, going in to his mother put the question; whereupon quoth she, "Thy sire is the Emir Kh6lid!" "Not so," rejoined he, "my father was none other than Ala al-Din Abu al Shamat." At this the mother wept and said, "Who acquainted thee with this, O my son?" And he answered "Ahmad al-Danaf, Captain of the Guard." So she told him the whole story, saying, "O my son, the True hath prevailed and the False hath failed:[112] know that Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat was indeed thy sire, but it was none save the Emir Kh6lid who reared thee and adopted thee as his son. And now, O my child, when thou seest Ahmad al-Danaf the captain, do thou say to him, 'I conjure thee, by Allah, O my chief, take my blood-revenge on the murderer of my father Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat!'" So he went out from his mother, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Sixty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Aslan went out from his mother and, betaking himself to Calamity Ahmad, kissed his hand. Quoth the captain, "What aileth thee, O Aslan?" and quoth he, "I know now for certain that my father was Ali al-Din Abu al-Shamat and I would have thee take my blood-revenge on his murderer." He asked, "And who was thy father's murderer?" whereto Aslan answered, "Ahmad Kamakim the arch-thief." "Who told thee this?" enquired he, and Aslan rejoined, "I saw in his hand the jewelled lanthorn which was lost with the rest of the Caliph's gear, and I said to him, 'Give me this lanthorn!' but he refused, saying, 'Lives have been lost on account of this'; and told me it was he who had broken into the palace and stolen the articles and deposited them in my father's house." Then said Ahmad al-Danaf, "When thou seest the Emir Kh6lid don his harness of war, say to him, 'Equip me like thyself and take me with thee.' Then do thou go forth and perform some feat of prowess before the Commander of the Faithful, and he will say to thee, 'Ask a boon of me, O Aslan!' And do thou make answer, 'I ask of thee this boon, that thou take my blood-revenge on my father's murderer.' If he say, 'Thy father is yet alive and is the Emir Kh6lid, the Chief of the Police'; answer thou, 'My father was Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, and the Emir Kh6lid hath a claim upon me only as the foster-father who adopted me.’ Then tell him all that passed between thee and Ahmad Kamakim and say, ‘O Prince of True Believers, order him to be searched and I will bring the lanthorn forth from his bosom.’” Thereupon said Aslan to him, “I hear and obey;” and, returning to the Emir Kh6lid, found him making ready to repair to the Caliph’s court and said to him, “I would fain have thee arm and harness me like thyself and take me with thee to the Divan.” So he equipped him and carried him thither. Then the Caliph sallied forth of Baghdad with his troops and they pitched tents and pavilions without the city; whereupon the host divided into two parties and forming ranks fell to playing Polo, one striking the ball with the mall, and another striking it back to him. Now there was among the troops a spy, who had been hired to slay the Caliph; so he took the ball and smiting it with the bat drove it straight at the Caliph’s face, when behold, Aslan fended it off and catching it drove it back at him who smote it, so that it struck him between the shoulders and he fell to the ground. The Caliph exclaimed, “Allah bless thee, O Aslan!” and they all dismounted and sat on chairs. Then the Caliph bade them bring the smiter of the ball before him and said, “Who tempted thee to do this thing and art thou friend or foe?” Quoth he, “I am thy foe and it was my purpose to kill thee.” Asked the Caliph “And wherefore? Art not a Moslem?” Replied the spy; “No’ I am a Rejecter.’’[113] So the Caliph bade them put him to death and said to Aslan, “Ask a boon of me.” Quoth he, “I ask of thee this boon, that thou take my blood-revenge on my father’s murderer.” He said, “Thy father is alive and there he stands on his two feet.” “And who is he?” asked Aslan, and the Caliph answered, “He is the Emir Kh6lid, Chief of Police.” Rejoined Aslan, “O Commander of the Faithful, he is no father of mine, save by right of fosterage; my father was none other than Ala al-Din Abu al Shamat.” “Then thy father was a traitor,” cried the Caliph. “Allah forbid, O Commander of the Faithful,” rejoined Aslan, “that the ‘Trusty’ should be a traitor! But how did he betray thee?” Quoth the Caliph, “He stole my habit and what was therewith.” Aslan retorted, “O Commander of the Faithful, Allah forfend that my father should be a traitor! But, O my lord, when thy habit was lost and found didst thou likewise recover the lanthorn which was stolen from thee?” Answered the Caliph, “We never got it back," and Aslan said, "I saw it in the hands of Ahmad Kamakim and begged it of him; but he refused to give it me, saying, 'Lives have been lost on account of this.' Then he told me of the sickness of Habzalam Bazazah, son of the Emir Kh6lid, by reason of his passion for the damsel Jessamine, and how he himself was released from bonds and that it was he who stole the habit and the lamp: so do thou, O Commander of the Faithful, take my blood-revenge for my father on him who murdered him." At once the Caliph cried, "Seize ye Ahmad Kamakim!" and they seized him, whereupon he asked, "Where be the Captain, Ahmad al-Danaf?" And when he was summoned the Caliph bade him search Kamakim; so he put his hand into the thief's bosom and pulled out the lanthorn. Said the Caliph, "Come hither, thou traitor: whence hadst thou this lanthorn?" and Kamakim replied, "I bought it, O Commander of the Faithful!" The Caliph rejoined, "Where didst thou buy it?" Then they beat him till he owned that he had stolen the lanthorn, the habit and the rest, and the Caliph said "What moved thee to do this thing O traitor, and ruin Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, the Trusty and Faithful?" Then he bade them lay hands on him and on the Chief of Police, but the Chief said, "O Commander of the Faithful, indeed I am unjustly treated thou badest me hang him, and I had no knowledge of this trick, for the plot was contrived between the old woman and Ahmad Kamakim and my wife. I crave thine intercession,[114] O Aslan." So Aslan interceded for him with the Caliph, who said, "What hath Allah done with this youngster's mother?" Answered Kh6lid, "She is with me," and the Caliph continued, "I command that thou order thy wife to dress her in her own clothes and ornaments and restore her to her former degree, a lady of rank; and do thou remove the seals from Ala al-Din's house and give his son possession of his estate." "I hear and obey," answered Kh6lid; and, going forth, gave the order to his wife who clad Jessamine in her own apparel; whilst he himself removed the seals from Ala al-Din's house and gave Aslan the keys. Then said the Caliph, "Ask a boon of me, O Aslan;" and he replied, "I beg of thee the boon to unite me with my father." Whereat the Caliph wept and said, "Most like thy sire was he that was hanged and is dead; but by the life of my forefathers, whoso bringeth me the glad news that he is yet in the bondage of this life, I will give him all he seeketh!"

Then came forward Ahmad al-Danaf and, kissing the ground between his hands, said, "Grant me indemnity, O Commander of the Faithful!" "Thou hast it," answered the Caliph; and Calamity Ahmad said, "I give thee the good news that Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, the Trusty, the Faithful, is alive and well." Quoth the Caliph "What is this thou sayest?" Quoth Al-Danaf, "As thy head liveth I say sooth; for I ransomed him with another, of those who deserved death; and carried him to Alexandria, where I opened for him a shop and set him up as a dealer in second hand goods." Then said the Prince of True Believers, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph ordered Calamity Ahmad, saying, "I charge thee fetch him to me;" and the other replied, "To hear is to obey;" whereupon the Caliph bade them give him ten thousand gold pieces and he fared forth for Alexandria. On this wise it happed with Aslan; but as regards his father, Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, he sold in course of time all that was in his shop excepting a few things and amongst them a long bag of leather. And happening to shake the bag there fell out a jewel which filled the palm of the hand, hanging to a chain of gold and having many facets but especially five, whereon were names and talismanic characters, as they were ant-tracks. So he rubbed each face; but none answered him[115] and he said to himself, "Doubtless it is a piece of variegated onyx;" and then hung it up in the shop. And behold, a Consul[116] passed along the street; and, raising his eyes, saw the jewel hanging up; so he seated himself over against the shop and said to Ala al-Din, "O my lord, is the jewel for sale?" He answered, "All I have is for sale." Thereupon the Frank said, "Wilt thou sell me that same for eighty thousand dinars?" "Allah open!" replied Ala al-Din. The Frank asked, "Wilt thou sell it for an hundred thousand dinars?", and he answered, "I sell it to thee for a hundred thousand dinars; pay me down the monies." Quoth the Consul, "I cannot carry about such sum as its price, for there be robbers and sharpers in Alexandria; but come with me to my ship and I will pay thee the price and give thee to boot a bale of Angora wool, a bale of satin, a bale of velvet and a bale of broadcloth." So Ala al-Din rose and locked up his shop, after giving the jewel to the Frank, and committed the keys to his neighbour, saying, “Keep these keys in trust for me, whilst I go with this Consul to his ship and return with the price of my jewel. If I be long absent and there come to thee Ahmad al-Danaf, the Captain who stablished me in this shop, give him the keys and tell him where I am.” Then he went with the Consul to his ship and no sooner had he boarded it than the Prank set him a stool and, making him sit down, said to his men, “Bring the money.” So they brought it and he paid him the price of the jewel and gave him the four bales he had promised him and one over; after which he said to him, “O my lord, honour me by accepting a bite or a sup.” And Ala al-Din answered, “If thou have any water, give me to drink.” So the Frank called for sherbets and they brought drink drugged with Bhang, of which no sooner had Ala al-Din drunk, than he fell over on his back; whereupon they stowed away the chairs and shipped the shoving-poles and made sail. Now the wind blew fair for them till it drove them into blue water, and when they were beyond sight of land the Kapt6n[117] bade bring Ala al-Din up out of the hold and made him smell the counter-drug of Bhang; whereupon he opened his eyes and said, “Where am I?” He replied, “Thou art bound and in my power and if thou hadst said, Allah open! to an hundred thousand dinars for the jewel, I would have bidden thee more.” “What art thou?” asked Ala al-Din, and the other answered, “I am a sea-captain and mean to carry thee to my sweetheart.” Now as they were talking, behold, a strip hove in sight carrying forty Moslem merchants; so the Frank captain attacked the vessel and made fast to it with grappling-irons; then he boarded it with his men and took it and plundered it; after which he sailed on with his prize, till he reached the city of Genoa. There the Kaptan, who was carrying off Ala al-Din, landed and repaired to a palace whose pastern gave upon the sea, and behold, there came down to him a damsel in a chin-veil who said, “Hast thou brought the jewel and the owner?” “I have brought them both,” answered he; and she said, “Then give me the jewel.” So he gave it to her; and, returning to the port, fired his cannon to announce his safe return; whereupon the King of the city, being notified of that Kaptan’s arrival, came down to receive him and asked him, “How hath been this voyage?” He answered, “A right prosperous one, and while voyaging I have made prize of a ship with one-and-forty Moslem merchants.” Said the King, “Land them at the port:” so he landed the merchants in irons and Ala al-Din among the rest; and the King and the Kaptan mounted and made the captives walk before them till they reached the audience-chamber, when the Franks seated themselves and caused the prisoners to pass in parade order, one by one before the King who said to the first, “O Moslem, whence comest thou?” He answered, “From Alexandria;” whereupon the King said, “O headsman, put him to death.” So the sworder smote him with the sword and cut off his head: and thus it fared with the second and the third, till forty were dead and there remained but Ala al-Din, who drank the cup of his comrades’ sighs and agony and said to himself, “Allah have mercy on thee, O Ala al-Din Thou art a dead man.” Then said the King to him, “And thou, what countryman art thou?” He answered, “I am of Alexandria,” and the King said, “O headsman, strike off his head.” So the sworder raised arm and sword, and was about to strike when behold, an old woman of venerable aspect presented herself before the King, who rose to do her honour, and said to him, “O King, did I not bid thee remember, when the Captain came back with captives, to keep one or two for the convent, to serve in the church?” The King replied, “O my mother, would thou hadst come a while earlier! But take this one that is left.” So she turned to Ala al-Din and said to him, “Say, wilt thou serve in the church, or shall I let the King slay thee?” Quoth he, “I will serve in the church.” So she took him and carried him forth of the court and went to the church, where he said to her, “What service must I do?” She replied, “Thou must rise with the dawn and take five mules and go with them to the forest and there cut dry fire-wood and saw it short and bring it to the convent-kitchen. Then must thou take up the carpets and sweep and wipe the stone and marble pavements and lay the carpets down again, as they were; after which thou must take two bushels and a half of wheat and bolt it and grind it and knead it and make it into cracknels[118] for the convent; and thou must take also a bushel of lentils[119] and sift and crush and cook them. Then must thou fetch water in barrels and fill the four fountains; after which thou must take three hundred and threescore and six wooden bowls and crumble the cracknels therein and pour of the lentil-pottage over each and carry every monk and patriarch his bowl." Said Ala al-Din,[120] "Take me back to the King and let him kill me, it were easier to me than this service." Replied the old woman, "If thou do truly and rightly the service that is due from thee thou shalt escape death; but, if thou do it not, I will let the King kill thee." And with these words Ala al-Din was left sitting heavy at heart. Now there were in the church ten blind cripples, and one of them said to him, "Bring me a pot." So he brought it him and he cacked and eased himself therein and said, "Throw away the ordure." He did so, and the blind man said, "The Messiah's blessing be upon thee, O servant of the church!" Presently behold, the old woman came in and said to him, "Why hast thou not done thy service in the church?" Answered he, "How many hands have I, that I should suffice for all this work?" She rejoined, 'Thou fool, I brought thee not hither except to work;" and she added, "Take, O my son, this rod (which was of copper capped with a cross) and go forth into the highway and, when thou meetest the governor of the city, say to him, 'I summon thee to the service of the church, in the name of our Lord the Messiah.' And he will not disobey thee. Then make him take the wheat, sift, grind, bolt, knead, and bake it into cracknels; and if any gainsay thee, beat him and fear none." "To hear is to obey," answered he and did as she said, and never ceased pressing great and small into his service; nor did he leave to do thus for the space of seventeen years. Now one day as he sat in church, lo! the old woman came to him and said, "Go forth of the convent." He asked, "Whither shall I go?" and she answered, "Thou canst pass the night in a tavern or with one of thy comrades." Quoth he, "Why dost thou send me forth of the church?" and quote she, "The Princess Husn Maryam, daughter of Yohannб,[121] King of this city, purposeth to visit the church and it befitteth not that any abide in her way." So he made a show of obeying her orders and rose up and pretended that he was leaving the church; but he said in his mind, "I wonder whether the Princess is like our women or fairer than they! At any rate I will not go till I have had a look at her." So he hid himself in a closet with a window looking into the church and, as he watched, behold, in came the King's daughter. He cast at her one glance of eyes that cost him a thousand sighs, for he found her like the full moon when it cometh swimming out of the clouds; and he saw with her a young lady, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Sixty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ala al-Din looked at the King's daughter, he saw with her a young lady to whom he heard her say, "Thy company hath cheered me, O Zubaydah." So he looked straitly at the damsel and found her to be none other than his dead wife, Zubaydah the Lutist. Then the Princess said to Zubaydah, "Come, play us an air on the lute." But she answered, "I will make no music for thee, till thou grant my wish and keep thy word to me." Asked the Princess, "And what did I promise thee?"; and Zubaydah answered, "That thou wouldst reunite me with my husband Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, the Trusty, the Faithful." Rejoined the Princess, "O Zubaydah, be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear; play us a piece as a thank-offering and an ear-feast for reunion with thy husband Ala al-Din." "Where is he?" asked Zubaydah, and Maryam answered, "He is in yonder closet listening to our words." So Zubaydah played on the lute a melody which had made a rock dance for glee; and when Ala al-Din heard it, his bowels yearned towards her and he came forth from the closet and, throwing himself upon his wife Zubaydah, strained her to his bosom. She also knew him and the twain embraced and fell to the ground in a swoon. Then came forward the Princess Husn Maryam and sprinkled rose water on them, till they revived when she said to them, "Allah hath reunited you." Replied Ala al-Din, "By thy kind of offices, O lady." Then, turning to his wife, he said to her, "O Zubaydah, thou didst surely die and we tombed thee in the tomb: how then returnedst thou to life and camest thou to this place?" She answered, "O my lord, I did not die; but an Aun[122] of the Jinn snatched me up and dew with me hither. She whom thou buriedst was a Jinniyah, who shaped herself to my shape and feigned herself dead; but when you entombed her she broke open the tomb and came forth from it and returned to the service of this her mistress, the Princess Husn Maryam. As for me I was possessed[123] and, when I opened my eyes, I found myself with this Princess thou seest; so I said to her, 'Why hast thou brought me hither?' Replied she, 'I am predestined to marry thy husband, Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat: wilt thou then, O Zubaydah, accept me to co-consort, a night for me and a night for thee?' Rejoined I, 'To hear is to obey, O my lady, but where is my husband?' Quoth she, 'Upon his forehead is written what Allah hath decreed to him; as soon as the writing which is there writ is fulfilled to him, there is no help for it but he come hither, and we will beguile the time of our separation from him with songs and playing upon instruments of music, till it please Allah to unite us with him.' So I abode all these days with her till Allah brought us together in this church." Then Husn Maryam turned to him and said, "O my lord, Ala al-Din, wilt thou be to me baron and I be to thee femme?" Quoth he, "O my lady, I am a Moslem and thou art a Nazarene; so how can I intermarry with thee?" Quoth she, "Allah forbid that I should be an infidel! Nay, I am a Moslemah; for these eighteen years I have held fast the Faith of Al-Islam and I am pure of any creed other than that of the Islamite." Then said he, "O my lady, I desire a return to my native land;" and she replied, "Know that I see written on thy forehead things which thou must needs accomplish, and then thou shalt win to thy will. Moreover, be fief and fain, O Ala al-Din, that there hath been born to thee a son named Aslan; who now being arrived at age of discretion, sitteth in thy place with the Caliph. Know also that Truth hath prevailed and that Falsehood naught availed; and that the Lord hath withdrawn the curtain of secrecy from him who stole the Caliph's goods, that is, Ahmad Kamakim the arch-thief and traitor; and he now lieth bound and in jail. And know further 'twas I who sent thee the jewel and had it put in the bag where thou foundest it, and 'twas I who sent the captain that brought thee and the jewel; for thou must know that the man is enamoured of me and seeketh my favours and would possess me; but I refused to yield to his wishes or let him have his will of me; and I said him, 'Thou shalt never have me till thou bring me the jewel and its owner.' So I gave him an hundred purses and despatched him to thee, in the habit of a merchant, whereas he is a captain and a war-man; and when they led thee to thy death after slaying the forty captives, I also sent thee this old woman to save thee from slaughter." Said he, "Allah requite thee for us with all good! Indeed thou hast done well." Then Husn Maryam renewed at his hands her profession of Al-Islam; and, when he was assured of the truth of her speech, he said to her, O my lady, tell me what are the virtues of this jewel and whence cometh it?” She answered, “This jewel came from an enchanted hoard, and it hath five virtues which will profit us in time of need. Now my lady grandmother, the mother of my father, was an enchantress and skilled in solving secrets and finding hidden treasures from one of which came the jewel into her hands. And as I grew up and reached the age of fourteen, I read the Evangel and other books and I found the name of Mohammed (whom Allah bless and preserve!) in the four books, namely the Evangel, the Pentateuch, the Psalms and the Koran;[124] so I believed in Mohammed and became a Moslemah, being certain and assured that none is worship worth save Allah Almighty, and that to the Lord of all mankind no faith is acceptable save that of Al-Islam. Now when my lady-grandmother fell sick, she gave me this jewel and taught me its five virtues. Moreover, before she died, my father said to her, ‘Take thy tablets of geomancy and throw a figure, and tell us the issue of my affair and what will befal-me.’ And she foretold him that the far off one[125] should die, slain by the hand of a captive from Alexandria. So he swore to kill every prisoner from that place and told the Kaptan of this, saying, ‘There is no help for it but thou fall on the ships of the Moslems and seize them and whomsoever thou findest of Alexandria, kill him or bring him to me.’ The Captain did his bidding until he had slain as many in number as the hairs of his head. Then my grandmother died and I took a geomantic tablet, being minded and determined to know the future, and I said to myself, ‘Let me see who will wed me!’ Whereupon I threw a figure and found that none should be my husband save one called Ala al-Din Abu al-Shamat, the Trusty, the Faithful. At this I marvelled and waited till the times were accomplished and I foregathered with thee.” So Ala al-Din took her to wife and said to her, “I desire to return to my own country.” Quoth she, “If it be so, rise up and come with me.” Then she took him and, hiding him in a closet of her palace, went in to her father, who said to her, “O my daughter, my heart is exceeding heavy this day; sit down and let us make merry with wine, I and thou.” So she sat down with him and he called for a table of wine; and she plied him till he lost his wits, when she drugged a cup with Bhang and he drank it off and fell upon his back. Then she brought Ala al-Din out of the closet and said to him, “Come; verily thine enemy lieth prostrate, for I made him drunk and drugged him; so do thou with him as thou wilt.” Accordingly Ala al-Din went to the King and, finding him lying drugged and helpless, pinioned him fast and manacled and fettered him with chains. Then he gave him the counter-drug and he came to himself, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ala al-Din gave the antidote of Bhang to King Yohanna, father of Husn Maryam, and he came to himself and found Ala al-Din and his daughter sitting on his breast. So he said to her, “O my daughter, dost thou deal thus with me?” She answered “If I be indeed thy daughter, become a Moslem, even as I became a Moslemah, for the truth was shown to me and I attested it; and the false, and I deserted it. I have submitted myself unto Allah, The Lord of the Three Worlds, and am pure of all faiths contrary to that of Al-Islam in this world and in the next world. Wherefore, if thou wilt become a Moslem, well and good; if not, thy death were better than thy life.” Ala al-Din also exhorted him to embrace the True Faith; but he refused and was contumacious; so Ala al-Din drew a dagger and cut his throat from ear to ear.[126] Then he wrote a scroll, setting forth what had happened and laid it on the brow of the dead, after which they took what was light of load and weighty of worth and turned from the palace and returned to the church. Here the Princess drew forth the jewel and, placing her hand upon the facet where was figured a couch, rubbed it; and behold, a couch appeared before her and she mounted upon it with Ala al-Din and his wife Zubaydah, the lutist, saying, “I conjure thee by the virtue of the names and talismans and characts engraver on this jewel, rise up with us, O Couch!” And it rose with them into the air and flew, till it came to a Wady wholly bare of growth, when the Princess turned earthwards the facet on which the couch was figured, and it sank with them to the ground. Then she turned up the face where on was fashioned a pavilion and tapping it said, “Let a pavilion be pitched in this valley;” and there appeared a pavilion, wherein they seated themselves. Now this Wady was a desert waste, without grass or water; so she turned a third face of the jewel towards the sky, and said, “By the virtue of the names of Allah, let trees upgrow here and a river flow beside them!” And forthwith trees sprang up and by their side ran a river plashing and dashing. They made the ablution and prayed and drank of the stream; after which the Princess turned up the three other facets till she came to the fourth, whereon was portrayed a table of good, and said, “By the virtue of the names of Allah, let the table be spread!” And behold, there appeared before them a table, spread with all manner of rich meats, and they ate and drank and made merry and were full of joy. Such was their case; but as regards Husn Maryam’s father, his son went in to waken him and found him slain; and, seeing Ala al-Din’s scroll, took it and read it, and readily understood it. Then he sought his sister and finding her not, betook himself to the old woman in the church, of whom he enquired for her, but she said, “Since yesterday I have not seen her.” So he returned to the troops and cried out, saying, “To horse, ye horsemen!” Then he told them what had happened, so they mounted and rode after the fugitives, till they drew near the pavilion. Presently Husn Maryam arose and looked up and saw a cloud of dust which spread till it walled the view, then it lifted and flew, and lo! stood disclosed her brother and his troops, crying aloud, “Whither will ye fly, and we on your track!” Then said she to Ala al-Din, “Are thy feet firm in fight?” He replied, “Even as the stake in bran, I know not war nor battle, nor swords nor spears.” So she pulled out the jewel and rubbed the fifth face, that on which were graven a horse and his rider, and behold, straightway a cavalier appeared out of the desert and ceased not to do battle with the pursuing host and smite them with the sword, till he routed them and put them to flight. Then the Princess asked Ala al-Din, “Wilt thou go to Cairo or to Alexandria?”; and he answered, “To Alexandria.” So they mounted the couch and she pronounced over it the conjuration, whereupon it set off with them and, in the twinkling of an eye, brought them to Alexandria. They alighted without the city and Ala al-Din hid the women in a cavern, whilst he went into Alexandria and fetched them outer clothing, wherewith he covered them. Then he carried them to his shop and, leaving them in the “ben”[127] walked forth to fetch them the morning-meal, and behold he met Calamity Ahmad who chanced to be coming from Baghdad. He saw him in the street and received him with open arms, saluting him and welcoming him. Whereupon Ahmad al-Danaf gave him the good news of his son Aslan and how he was now come to the age of twenty: and Ala al-Din, in his turn, told the Captain of the Guard all that had befallen him from first to last, whereat he marvelled with exceeding marvel. Then he brought him to his shop and sitting room where they passed the night; and next day he sold his place of business and laid its price with other monies. Now Ahmad al-Danaf had told him that the Caliph sought him; but he said, "I am bound first for Cairo, to salute my father and mother and the people of my house." So they all mounted the couch and it carried them to Cairo the God-guarded; and here they alighted in the street called Yellow,[128] where stood the house of Shams al-Din. Then Ala al-Din knocked at the door, and his mother said, "Who is at the door, now that we have lost our beloved for evermore?" He replied, " 'Tis I! Ala al-Din!" whereupon they came down and embraced him. Then he sent his wives and baggage into the house and entering himself with Ahmad al-Danaf, rested there three days, after which he was minded to set out for Baghdad. His father said, "Abide with me, O my son;" but he answered; "I cannot bear to be parted from my child Aslan." So he took his father and mother and fared forth for Baghdad. Now when they came thither, Ahmad al-Danaf went in to the Caliph and gave him the glad tidings of Ala al-Din's arrival — and told him his story whereupon the King went forth to greet him taking the youth Aslan, and they met and embraced each other. Then the Commander of the Faithful summoned the arch-thief Ahmad Kamakim and said to Ala al-Din, "Up and at thy foe!" So he drew his sword and smote off Ahmad Kamakim's head. Then the Caliph held festival for Ala al-Din and, summoning the Kazis and witnesses, wrote the contract and married him to the Princess Husn Maryam; and he went in unto her and found her an unpierced pearl. Moreover, the Caliph made Aslan Chief of the Sixty and bestowed upon him and his father sumptuous dresses of honour; and they abode in the enjoyment of all joys and joyance of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies. But the tales of generous men are manifold and amongst them is the story of

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HATIM OF THE TRIBE OF TAYY.

It is told of Hбtim of the tribe of Tayy,[129] that when he died, they buried him on the top of a mountain and set over his grave two troughs hewn out of two rocks and stone girls with dishevelled hair. At the foot of the hill was a stream of running water, and when wayfarers camped there, they heard loud crying and keening in the night, from dark till daybreak; but when they arose in the morning, they found nothing but the girls carved in stone. Now when Zъ ‘l-Kurб’a,[130] King of Himyar, going forth of his tribe, came to that valley, he halted to pass the night there, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Seventieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Zu ‘l-Kura’a passed by the valley he righted there, and, when he drew near the mountain, he heard the keening and said, “What lamenting is that on yonder hill?” They answered him, saying, “Verily this be the tomb of Hatim al-Tбyy, over which are two troughs of stone and stone figures of girls with dishevelled hair; and all who camp in this place by night hear this crying and keening.” So he said jestingly, “O Hatim of Tayy! we are thy guests this night, and we are lank with hunger.” Then sleep overcame him, but presently he awoke in affright and cried out, saying, “Help, O Arabs! Look to my beast!” So they came to him, and finding his she-camel struggling and struck down, they stabbed her in the throat and roasted her flesh and ate. Then they asked him what had happened and he said, “When I closed my eyes, I saw in my sleep Hatim of Tayy who came to me sword in hand and cried, ‘Thou comest to us and we have nothing by us.’ Then he smote my she- camel with his sword, and she had surely died even though ye had not come to her and slaughtered her.”[131] Now when morning dawned the King mounted the beast of one of his companions and, taking the owner up behind him, set out and fared on till midday, when they saw a man coming towards them, mounted on a camel and leading another, and said to him, “Who art thou?” He answered, “I am Adi,[132] son of Hatim of Tayy; where is Zu ‘l-Kura’a, Emir of Himyar?” Replied they, “This is he;” and he said to the prince, “Take this she-camel in place of thy beast which my father slaughtered for thee.” Asked Zu ‘l Kura’a, “Who told thee of this?” and Adi answered, “My father appeared to me in a dream last night and said to me, ‘Harkye, Adi; Zu ‘l Kura’a King of Himyar, sought the guest-rite of me and I, having naught to give him, slaughtered his she-camel, that he might eat: so do thou carry him a she-camel to ride, for I have nothing.’” And Zu ‘l-Kura’a took her, marvelling at the generosity of Hatim of Tayy alive and dead. And amongst instances of generosity is the

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TALE OF MA’AN THE SON OF ZAIDAH.[133]

It is told of Ma’an bin Zбidah that, being out one day a-chasing and a-hunting, he became athirst but his men had no water with them; and while thus suffering behold, three damsels met him bearing three skins of water; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Seventy-first Night,[134]

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that three girls met him bearing three skins of water; so he begged drink of them, and they gave him to drink. Then he sought of his men somewhat to give the damsels but they had no money; so he presented to each girl ten golden piled arrows from his quiver. Whereupon quoth one of them to her friend, “Well-a-day! These fashions pertain to none but Ma’an bin Zaidah! so let each one of us say somewhat of verse in his praise.” Then quoth the first,

“He heads his arrows with piles of gold, * And while shooting his
foes is his bounty doled:
Affording the wounded a means of cure, * And a sheet for the
bider beneath the mould!”

And quoth the second,

“A warrior showing such open hand, * His boons all friends and
all foes enfold:
The piles of his arrows of or are made, * So that battle his
bounty may not withhold!”

And quoth the third,

“From that liberal-hand on his foes he rains * Shafts aureate-
headed and manifold:
Wherewith the hurt shall chirurgeon pay, * And for slain the
shrouds round their corpses roll’d.”[135]

And there is also told a tale of

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MA’AN SON OF ZAIDAH AND THE BADAWI.

Now Ma’an bin Zбidah went forth one day to the chase with his company, and they came upon a herd of gazelles; so they separated in pursuit and Ma’an was left alone to chase one of them. When he had made prize of it he alighted and slaughtered it; and as he was thus engaged, he espied a person[136] coming forth out of the desert on an ass. So he remounted and riding up to the new- comer, saluted him and asked him, “Whence comest thou?” Quoth he, “I come from the land of Kuzб’ah, where we have had a two years’ dearth; but this year it was a season of plenty and I sowed early cucumbers.[137] They came up before their time, so I gathered what seemed the best of them and set out to carry them to the Emir Ma’an bin Zaidah, because of his well-known beneficence and notorious munificence.” Asked Ma’an, “How much dost thou hope to get of him?”; and the Badawi answered, “A thousand dinars.” Quoth the Emir, “What if he say this is too much?” Said the Badawi, “Then I will ask five hundred dinars.” “And if he say, too much?” “Then three hundred!” “And if he say yet, too much?” “Then two hundred!” “And if he say yet, too much?” “Then one hundred!” “And if he say yet, too much?” “Then, fifty!” “And if he say yet, too much?” “Then thirty!” “And if he say still, too much?” asked Ma’an bin Zaidah. Answered the Badawi, “I will make my ass set his four feet in his Honour’s home[138] and return to my people, disappointed and empty- handed.” So Ma’an laughed at him and urged his steed till he came up with his suite and returned to his place, when he said to his chamberlain, “An there come to thee a man with cucumbers and riding on an ass admit him to me.” Presently up came the Badawi and was admitted to Ma’an’s presence; but knew not the Emir for the man he had met in the desert, by reason of the gravity and majesty of his semblance and the multitude of his eunuchs and attendants, for he was seated on his chair of state with his officers ranged in lines before him and on either side. So he saluted him and Ma’an said to him “What bringeth thee, O brother of the Arabs?” Answered the Badawi, “I hoped in the Emir, and have brought him curly cucumbers out of season.” Asked Ma’an, “And how much dost thou expect of us?” “A thousand dinars," answered the Badawi. "This is far too much," quoth Ma'an. Quoth he, "Five hundred." "Too much!" "Then three hundred." "Too much!" "Two hundred." "Too much!" "One hundred." "Too much!" "Fifty." "Too much!" At last the Badawi came down to thirty dinars; but Ma'an still replied, "Too much!" So the Badawi cried, "By Allah, the man who met me in the desert brought me bad luck! But I will not go lower than thirty dinars." The Emir laughed and said nothing; whereupon the wild Arab knew that it was he whom he had met and said, "O my lord, except thou bring the thirty dinars, see ye, there is the ass tied ready at the door and here sits Ma'an, his honour, at home." So Ma'an laughed, till he fell on his back; and, calling his steward, said to him, "Give him a thousand dinars and five hundred and three hundred and two hundred and one hundred and fifty and thirty; and leave the ass tied up where he is." So the Arab to his amazement, received two thousand one hundred and eighty dinars, and Allah have mercy on them both and on all generous men! And I have also heard, O auspicious King, a tale of

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THE CITY OF LABTAYT.[139]

There was once a royal-city in the land of Roum, called the City of Labtayt wherein stood a tower which was always shut. And whenever a King died and another King of the Greeks took the Kingship after him, he set on the tower a new and strong lock, till there were four-and-twenty locks upon the gate, according to the number of the Kings. After this time, there came to the throne a man who was not of the old royal-house, and he had a mind to open these locks, that he might see what was within the tower. The grandees of his kingdom forbade him this and pressed him to desist and reproved him and blamed him; but he persisted saying, “Needs must this place be opened.” Then they offered him all that their hands possessed of monies and treasures and things of price, if he would but refrain; still he would not be baulked, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Seventy-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the grandees offered that King all their hands possessed of monies and treasures if he would but refrain; still he would not be baulked and said “There is no help for it but I open this tower.” So he pulled off the locks and entering, found within the tower figures of Arabs on their horses and camels, habited in turbands[140] hanging down at the ends, with swords in baldrick-belts thrown over their shoulders and bearing long lances in their hands. He found there also a scroll which he greedily took and read, and these words were written therein, “Whenas this door is opened will conquer this country a raid of the Arabs, after the likeness of the figures here depicted; wherefore beware, and again beware of opening it.” Now this city was in Andalusia; and that very year T6rik ibn Ziy6d conquered it, during the Caliphate of Al-Walнd son of Abd al-Malik[141] of the sons of Umayyah; and slew this King after the sorriest fashion and sacked the city and made prisoners of the women and boys therein and got great loot. Moreover, he found there immense treasures; amongst the rest more than an hundred and seventy crowns of pearls and jacinths and other gems of price; and he found a saloon, wherein horsemen might throw the spears, full of vessels of gold and silver, such as no description can comprise. Moreover, he found there the table of food for the Prophet of Allah, Solomon, son of David (peace with both of them!), which is extant even now in a city of the Greeks, it is told that it was of grass-green emerald with vessels of gold and platters of jasper. Likewise he found the Psalms written in the old Ionian[142] characters on leaves of gold bezel'd with jewels; together with a book setting forth the properties of stones and herbs and minerals, as well as the use of characts and talismans and the canons of the art of alchymy; and he found a third volume which treated of the art of cutting and setting rubies and other precious stones and of the preparation of poisons and theriacks. There found he also a mappa mundi figuring the earth and the seas and the different cities and countries and villages of the world; and he found a vast saloon full of hermetic powder, one drachm of which elixir would turn a thousand drachms of silver into fine gold; likewise a marvellous mirror, great and round, of mixed metals, which had been made for Solomon, son of David (on the twain be peace!) wherein whoso looked might see the counterfeit presentment of the seven climates of the world; and he beheld a chamber full of Brahmini[143] jacinths for which no words can suffice. So he despatched all these things to Walid bin Abd al-Malik, and the Arabs spread all over the cities of Andalusia which is one of the finest of lands. This is the end of the story of the City of Labtayt. And a tale is also told of

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THE CALIPH HISHAM AND THE ARAB YOUTH.

The Caliph Hish6m bin Abd al-Malik bin Marwan, was hunting one day, when he sighted an antelope and pursued it with his dogs. As he was following the quarry, he saw an Arab youth pasturing sheep and said to him, “Ho boy, up and after yonder antelope, for it escapeth me!” The youth raised his head to him and replied, “O ignorant of what to the deserving is due, thou lookest on me with disdain and speakest to me with contempt; thy speaking is that of a tyrant true and thy doing what an ass would do.” Quoth Hisham, “Woe to thee, dost thou not know me?” Rejoined the youth, “Verily thine unmannerliness hath made thee known to me, in that thou spakest to me, without beginning by the salutation.”[144] Repeated the Caliph, “Fie upon thee! I am Hisham bin Abd al-Malik.” “May Allah not favour thy dwelling-place,” replied the Arab, “nor guard thine abiding place! How many are thy words and how few thy generous deeds!” Hardly had he ended speaking, when up came the troop from all sides and surrounded him as the white encircleth the black of the eye, all and each saying, “Peace be with thee, O Commander of the Faithful!” Quoth Hisham, “Cut short this talk and seize me yonder boy.” So they laid hands on him; and when he saw the multitude of Chamberlains and Wazirs and Lords of State, he was in nowise concerned and questioned not of them, but let his chin drop on his breast and looked where his feet fell, till they brought him to the Caliph[145] when he stood before him, with head bowed groundwards and saluted him not and spoke him not. So one of the eunuchs said to him, “O dog of the Arabs, what hindereth thy saluting the Commander of the Faithful?” The youth turned to him angrily and replied, “O packsaddle of an ass, it was the length of the way that hindered me from this and the steepness of the steps and the profuseness of my sweat.” Then said Hisham (and indeed he was exceeding wroth), “O boy, verily thy days are come to their latest hour; thy hope is gone from thee and thy life is past out of thee.” He answered, “By Allah, O Hisham, verily an my life-term be prolonged and Fate ordain not its cutting short, thy words irk me not, be they long or short.” Then said the Chief Chamberlain to him, “Doth it befit thy degree, O vilest of the Arabs, to bandy words with the Commander of the Faithful?" He answered promptly, "Mayest thou meet with adversity and may woe and wailing never leave thee! Hast thou not heard the saying of Almighty Allah?, 'One day, every soul shall come to defend itself.'"[146] Hereupon Hisham rose, in great wrath, and said, "O headsman, bring me the head of this lad; for indeed he exceedeth in talk, such as passeth conception." So the sworder took him and, making him kneel on the carpet of blood, drew his sword above him and said to the Caliph, "O Commander of the Faithful, this thy slave is misguided and is on the way to his grave; shall I smite off his head and be quit of his blood?" "Yes," replied Hisham. He repeated his question and the Caliph again answered in the affirmative. Then he asked leave a third time; and the youth, knowing that, if the Caliph assented yet once more, it would be the signal of his death, laughed till his wisdom-teeth showed; whereupon Hisham's wrath redoubled and he said to him, "O boy, meseems thou art mad; seest thou not that thou art about to depart the world? Why then dost thou laugh in mockery of thyself?" He replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, if a larger life-term befell me, none can hurt me, great or small; but I have bethought me of some couplets, which do thou hear, for my death cannot escape thee." Quoth Hisham, "Say on and be brief;" so the Arab repeated these couplets,

"It happed one day a hawk pounced on a bird, * A wildling sparrow driven by destiny;
And held in pounces spake the sparrow thus, * E'en as the hawk rose ready home to hie: —
'Scant flesh have I to fill the maw of thee * And for thy lordly food poor morsel I.
Then smiled the hawk in flattered vanity * And pride, so set the sparrow free to fly.

At this Hisham smiled and said, "By the truth of my kinship to the Apostle of Allah (whom Allah bless and keep!), had he spoken this speech at first and asked for aught except the Caliphase, verily I would have given it to him. Stuff his mouth with jewels,[147] O eunuch and entreat him courteously;” so they did as he bade them and the Arab went his way. And amongst pleasant tales is that of

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IBRAHIM BIN AL-MAHDI AND THE BARBER-SURGEON.

They relate that IbrahHm, son of al-MahdH,[148] brother of Harun al-Rashid, when the Caliphate devolved to Al-Maamun, the son of his brother Harun, refused to acknowledge his nephew and betook himself to Rayy[149] ; where he claimed the throne and abode thus a year and eleven months and twelve days. Meanwhile his nephew, Al-Maamun, awaited his return to allegiance and his accepting a dependent position till, at last, despairing of this, he mounted with his horsemen and footmen and repaired to Rayy in quest of him. Now when the news came to Ibrahim, he found nothing for it but to flee to Baghdad and hide there, fearing for his life; and Maamun set a price of a hundred thousand gold pieces upon his head, to be paid to whoso might betray him. (Quoth Ibrahim) “When I heard of this price I feared for my head” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Seventy-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ibrahim continued, “Now when I heard of this price I feared for my head and knew not what to do: so I went forth of my house in disguise at mid-day, knowing not whither I should go. Presently I entered a broad street which was no thoroughfare and said in my mind, ‘Verily, we are Allah’s and unto Him we are returning! I have exposed my life to destruction. If I retrace my steps, I shall arouse suspicion.’ Then, being still in disguise I espied, at the upper end of the street, a negro-slave standing at his door; so I went up to him and said to him, ‘Hast thou a place where I may abide for an hour of the day?’ ‘Yes,’ answered he, and opening the door admitted me into a decent house, furnished with carpets and mats and cushions of leather. Then he shut the door on me and went away; and I misdoubted me he had heard of the reward offered for me, and said to myself, ‘He hath gone to inform against me.’ But, as I sat pondering my case and boiling like cauldron over fire, behold, my host came back, accompanied by a porter loaded with bread and meat and new cooking-pots and gear and a new jar and new gugglets and other needfuls. He made the porter set them down and, dismissing him, said to me, 'I offer my life for thy ransom! I am a barber-surgeon, and I know it would disgust thee to eat with me' because of the way in which I get my livelihood;[150] so do thou shift for thyself and do what thou please with these things whereon no hand hath fallen.' (Quoth Ibrahim), Now I was in sore need of food so I cooked me a pot of meat whose like I remember not ever to have eaten; and, when I had satisfied my want, he said to me, 'O my lord, Allah make me thy ransom! Art thou for wine?; for indeed it gladdeneth the soul and doeth away care.' 'I have no dislike to it,' replied I, being desirous of the barber's company; so he brought me new flagons of glass which no hand had touched and a jar of excellent wine, and said to me, 'Strain for thyself, to thy liking;' whereupon I cleared the wine and mixed me a most delectable draught. Then he brought me a new cup and fruits and flowers in new vessels of earthenware; after which he said to me, 'Wilt thou give me leave to sit apart and drink of my own wine by myself, of my joy in thee and for thee?' 'Do so,' answered I. So I drank and he drank till the wine began to take effect upon us, when the barber rose and, going to a closet, took out a lute of polished wood and said to me, 'O my lord, it is not for the like of me to ask the like of thee to sing, but it behoveth thine exceeding generosity to render my respect its due; so, if thou see fit to honour thy slave, thine is the high decision.' Quoth I (and indeed I thought not that he knew me), 'How knowest thou that I excel in song?' He replied, 'Glory be to Allah, our lord is too well renowned for that! Thou art my lord Ibrahim, son of Al-Mahdi, our Caliph of yesterday, he on whose head Al-Maamun hath set a price of an hundred thousand dinars to be paid to thy betrayer: but thou art in safety with me.' (Quoth Ibrahim), When I heard him say this, he was magnified in my eyes and his loyalty and noble nature were certified to me; so I complied with his wish and took the lute and tuned it, and sang. Then I bethought me of my severance from my children and my family and I began to say,

'Belike Who Yъsuf to his kin restored * And honoured him in goal, a captive wight,
May grant our prayer to reunite our lots, * For Allah, Lord of

Worlds, hath all of might.’

When the barber heard this, exceeding joy took possession of him. and he was of great good cheer; for it is said that when Ibrahim’s neighbours heard him only sing out, ‘Ho, boy, saddle the mule!’ they were filled with delight. Then, being overborne by mirth, he said to me, ‘O my lord, wilt thou give me leave to say what is come to my mind, albeit I am not of the folk of this craft?’ I answered, ‘Do so; this is of thy great courtesy and kindness.’ So he took the lute and sang these verses,

‘To our beloveds we moaned our length of night; * Quoth they,
 ‘How short the nights that us benight!’
’Tis for that sleep like hood enveils their eyes * Right soon,
 but from our eyes is fair of flight:
When night-falls, dread and drear to those who love, * We mourn;
 they joy to see departing light:
Had they but dree’d the weird, the bitter dole * We dree, their
 beds like ours had bred them blight.’

(Quoth Ibrahim), So I said to him, ‘By Allah, thou hast shown me a kindness, O my friend, and hast done away from me the pangs of sorrow. Let me hear more trifles of thy fashion.’ So he sang these couplets,

‘When man keeps honour bright without a stain, * Pair sits
 whatever robe to robe he’s fain!
She jeered at me because so few we are; * Quoth I:— ‘There’s ever
 dearth of noble men!’
Naught irks us we are few, while neighbour tribes * Count many;
 neighbours oft are base-born strain:
We are a clan which holds not Death reproach, * Which A’mir and
 Samъl[151] hold illest bane:
Leads us our love of death to fated end; * They hate that ending
 and delay would gain:
We to our neighbours’ speech aye give the lie, * But when we
 speak none dare give lie again.’

(Quoth Ibrahim), When I heard these lines, I was filled with huge delight and marvelled with exceeding marvel. Then I slept and awoke not till past night-fall, when I washed my face, with a mind full of the high worth of this barber-surgeon and his passing courtesy; after which I wakened him and, taking out a purse I had by me containing a number of gold pieces, threw it to him, saying, 'I commend thee to Allah, for I am about to go forth from thee, and pray thee to expend what is in this purse on thine requirements; and thou shalt have an abounding reward of me, when I am quit of my fear.' (Quoth Ibrahim), But he resumed the bag to me, saying, 'O my lord, paupers like myself are of no value in thine eyes; but how, with due respect to my own generosity, can I take a price for the boon which fortune hath vouchsafed me of thy favour and thy visit to my poor abode? Nay, if thou repeat thy words and throw the purse to me again I will slay myself.' So I put in my sleeve[152] the purse whose weight was irksome to me." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ibrahim son of Al-Mahdi continued, "So I put in my sleeve the purse whose weight was irksome to me; and turned to depart, but when I came to the house door he said, 'O my lord, of a truth this is a safer hiding-place for thee than any other, and thy keep is no burden to me; so do thou abide with me, till Allah be pleased grant thee relief.' Accordingly, I turned back, saying, 'On condition that thou spend of the money in this purse.' He made me think that he consented to this arrangement, and I abode with him some days in the utmost comfort; but, perceiving that he spent none of the contents of the purse, I revolted at the idea of abiding at his charge and thought it shame to be a burthen on him; so I left the house disguised in women's apparel, donning short yellow walking- boots[153] and veil. Now as soon as I found myself in the street, I was seized with excessive fear, and going to pass the bridge behold, I came to a place sprinkled with water,[154] where a trooper, who been in my service, looked at me and knowing me, cried out, saying, 'This is he whom Al-Maamun wanteth.' Then he laid hold of me but the love of sweet life lent me strength and I gave him and his horse a push which threw them down in that slippery place, so that he became an example to those who will take example; and the folk hastened to him. Meanwhile, I hurried my pace over the bridge and entered a main street, where I saw the door of a house open and a woman standing upon the threshold. So I said to her, ‘O my lady, have pity on me and save my life; for I am a man in fear.’ Quoth she, ‘Enter and welcome;’ and carried me into an upper dining-room, where she spread me a bed and brought me food, saying ‘Calm thy fear, for not a soul shall know of thee.’ As she spoke lo! there came a loud knocking at the door; so she went and opened, and suddenly, my friend, whom I had thrown down on the bridge, appeared with his head bound up, the blood running down upon his clothes and without his horse. She asked, ‘O so and so, what accident hath befallen thee?’; and he answered, ‘I made prize of the young man whom the Caliph seeketh and he escaped from me;’ whereupon he told her the whole story. So she brought out tinder[155] and, putting it into a piece of rag bandaged his head; after which she spread him a bed and he lay sick. Then she came up to me and said, ‘Methinks thou art the man in question?’ ‘Even so,’ answered I, and she said, ‘Fear not: no harm shall befall thee,’ and redoubled in kindness to me. So I tarried with her three days, at the end of which time she said to me, ‘I am in fear for thee, lest yonder man happen upon thee and betray thee to what thou dreadest; so save thyself by flight.’ I besought her to let me stay till nightfall, and she said, ‘There is no harm in that.’ So, when the night came, I put on my woman’s gear and betook me to the house of a freed-woman who had once been our slave. When she saw me she wept and made a show of affliction and praised Almighty Allah for my safety. Then she went forth, as if she would go to market intent on hospitable thoughts, and I fancied all was right; but, ere long, suddenly I espied Ibrahim al-Mosili[156] for the house amongst his troopers and servants, and led by a woman on foot; and looking narrowly at her behold, she was the freed-woman, the mistress of the house, wherein I had taken refuge. So she delivered me into their hands, and I saw death face to face. They carried me, in my woman’s attire, to Al-Maamun who called a general-council and had me brought before him. When I entered I saluted him by the title of Caliph, saying, ‘Peace be on thee, O Commander of the Faithful!’

and he replied, ‘Allah give thee neither peace nor long life.’ I rejoined, ‘According to thy good pleasure, O Commander of the Faithful!; it is for the claimant of blood- revenge[157] to decree punishment or pardon; but mercy is nigher to piety; and Allah hath set thy pardon above all other pardon, even as He made my sin to excel all other sin. So, if thou punish, it is of thine equity, and if thou pardon, it is of thy bounty.’ And I repeated these couplets,

‘My sin to thee is great, * But greater thy degree:
So take revenge, or else * Remit in clemency:
An I in deeds have not* Been generous, generous be!

(Quoth Ibrahim), At this Al-Maamun raised his head to me and I hastened to add these two couplets,

‘I’ve sinned enormous sin, * But pardon in thee lies:
If pardon thou, ’tis grace; * Justice an thou chastise!’

Then Al-Maamun bowed his head and repeated,

‘I am (when friend would raise a rage that mote * Make spittle
    choke me, sticking in my throat)
His pardoner, and pardon his offense, * Fearing lest I should
    live a friend without.’

(Quoth Ibrahim), Now when I heard these words I scented mercy, knowing his disposition to clemency.[158] Then he turned to his son Al Abbas and his brother Abu Ishak and all his chief officers there present and said to them, ‘What deem ye of his case?’ They all counselled him to do me dead, but they differed as to the manner of my death. Then said he to his Wazir Ahmad bin al-Kh6lid, ‘And what sayest thou, O Ahmad?’ He answered, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, an thou slay him, we find the like of thee who hath slain the like of him; but an thou pardon him, we find not the like of thee that hath pardoned the like of him.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Seventy-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Al

Maamun, Prince of the Faithful, heard the words of Ahmad bin al-Kh6lid, he bowed his head and began repeating,

“My tribe have slain that brother mine, Umaym, * Yet would shoot
back what shafts at them I aim:
If I deal-pardon, noble pardon ’tis; * And if I shoot, my bones
‘twill only maim.”[159]

And he also recited,
“Be mild to brother mingling * What is wrong with what is right:

Kindness to him continue * Whether good or graceless wight:
Abstain from all reproaching, * An he joy or vex thy sprite:
Seest not that what thou lovest * And what hatest go unite?
That joys of longer life-tide * Ever fade with hair turned
white?
That thorns on branches growing * For the plucks fruit catch thy
sight?
Who never hath done evil,* Doing good for sole delight?
When tried the sons of worldli-* ness they mostly work upright.”

Quoth Ibrahim, “Now when I heard these couplets, I withdrew my woman’s veil from my head and cried out, with my loudest voice, ‘Allah is Most Great! By Allah, the Commander of the Faithful pardoneth me!’ Quoth he, ‘No harm shall come to thee, O uncle;’ and I rejoined, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, my sin is too sore for me to excuse it and thy mercy is too much for me to speak thanks for it.’ And I chanted these couplets to a lively motive,

‘Who made all graces all collected He * In Adam’s loins, our
Seventh Imam, for thee,[160]
Thou hast the hearts of men with reverence filled, * Enguarding
all with heart-humility
Rebelled I never by delusion whelmed * For object other than thy
clemency ;[161]
And thou hast pardoned me whose like was ne’er * Pardoned before,
though no man pled my plea:

Hast pitied little ones like Katб's[162] young, * And mother's
 yearning heart a son to see.'

Quoth Maamun, 'I say, following our lord Joseph (on whom and on our Prophet be blessing and peace!) let there be no reproach cast on you this day. Allah forgiveth you; for He is the most merciful of those who show mercy.[163] Indeed I pardon thee, and restore to thee thy goods and lands, O uncle, and no harm shall befall thee.' So I offered up devout prayers for him and repeated these couplets,

'Thou hast restored my wealth sans greed, and ere * So didst,
 thou deignиdest my blood to spare:
Then if I shed my blood and wealth, to gain * Thy grace, till
 even shoon from foot I tear,
Twere but repaying what thou lentest me, * And what unloaned no
 man to blame would care:
Were I ungrateful for thy lavish boons, * Baser than thou'rt
 beneficent I were!'

Then Al-Maamun showed me honour and favour and said to me, 'O uncle, Abu Ishak and Al-Abbas counselled me to put thee to death.' So I answered, 'And they both counselled thee right, O Commander of the Faithful, but thou hast done after thine own nature and hast put away what I feared with what I hoped.' Rejoined Al Maamun, 'O uncle, thou didst extinguish my rancour with the modesty of thine excuse, and I have pardoned thee without making thee drink the bitterness of obligation to intercessors.' Then he prostrated himself in prayer a long while, after which he raised his head and said to me, 'O uncle, knowest thou why I prostrated myself?' Answered I, 'Haply thou didst this in thanksgiving to Allah, for that He hath given thee the mastery over thine enemy.' He replied, 'Such was not my design, but rather to thank Allah for having inspired me to pardon thee and for having cleared my mind towards thee. Now tell me thy tale.' So I told him all that had befallen me with the barber, the trooper and his wife and with my freed-woman who had betrayed me. So he summoned the freed-woman, who was in her house, expecting the reward to be sent to her, and when she came before him he said to her, ‘What moved thee to deal thus with thy lord?’ Quoth she, ‘Lust of money.’ Asked the Caliph ‘Hast thou a child or a husband?’; and she answered ‘No;’ whereupon he bade them give her an hundred stripes with a whip and imprisoned her for life. Then he sent for the trooper and his wife and the barber-surgeon and asked the soldier what had moved him to do thus. ‘Lust of money,’ quoth he; whereupon quoth the Caliph, ‘It befitteth thee to be a barber-cupper,’[164] and committed him to one whom he charged to place him in a barber-cupper’s shop, where he might learn the craft. But he showed honour to the trooper’s wife and lodged her in his palace, saying, ‘This is a woman of sound sense and fit for matters of moment.’ Then said he to the barber-cupper, ‘Verily, thou hast shown worth and generosity which call for extraordinary honour.’ So he commanded the trooper’s house and all that was therein to be given him and bestowed on him a dress of honour and in addition fifteen thousand dinars to be paid annually. And men tell the following tale concerning

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THE CITY OF MANY COLUMNED IRAM AND ABDULLAH SON OF ABI KILABAH.[165]

It is related that Abdullah bin Abi Kilбbah went forth in quest of a she-camel which had strayed from him; and, as he was wandering in the deserts of Al-Yaman and the district of Sabб,[166] behold, he came upon a great city girt by a vast castle around which were palaces and pavilions that rose high into middle air. He made for the place thinking to find there folk of whom he might ask concerning his she-camel; but, when he reached it, he found it desolate, without a living soul in it. So (quoth he) "I alighted and, hobbling my dromedary," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdullah bin Abi Kilabah continued, "I dismounted and hobbling my dromedary, and composing my mind, entered into the city. Now when I came to the castle, I found it had two vast gates (never in the world was seen their like for size height) inlaid with all manner of jewels and jacinths, white and red, yellow and green. Beholding this I marvelled with great marvel and thought the case mighty wondrous; then entering the citadel in a flutter of fear and dazed with surprise and affright, I found it long and wide, about equalling Al-Medinah[167] in point of size; and therein were lofty palaces laid out in pavilions all built of gold and silver and inlaid with many-coloured jewels and jacinths and chrysolites and pearls. And the door-leaves in the pavilions were like those of the castle for beauty; and their floors were strewn with great pearls and balls, no smaller than hazel nuts, of musk and ambergris and saffron. Now when I came within the heart of the city and saw therein no created beings of the Sons of Adam I was near swooning and dying for fear. Moreover, I looked down from the great roofs of the pavilion-chambers and their balconies and saw rivers running under them; and in the main streets were fruit-laden trees and tall palms; and the manner of their building was one brick of gold and one of silver. So I said in myself, 'Doubtless this is the Paradise promised for the world to come.' Then

I loaded me with the jewels of its gravel and the musk of its dust as much as I could carry and returned to my own country, where I told the folk what I had seen. After a time the news reached Mu’бwiyah, son of Abu Sufyбn, who was then Caliph in Al-Hijaz; so he wrote to his lieutenant in San’б of Al-Yaman to send for the teller of the story and question him of the truth of the case. Accordingly the lieutenant summoned me and questioned me of my adventure and of all appertaining to it; and I told him what I had seen, whereupon he despatched me to Mu’awiyah, before whom I repeated the story of the strange sights; but he would not credit it. So I brought out to him some of the pearls and balls of musk and ambergris and saffron, in which latter there was still some sweet savour; but the pearls were grown yellow and had lost pearly colour.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Seventy-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdullah son of Abu Kilabah continued, “But the pearls were grown yellow and had lost pearly colour. Now Mu’awiyah wondered at this and, sending for Ka’ab al-Ahbar[168] said to him, ‘O Ka’ab, I have sent for thee to ascertain the truth of a certain matter and hope that thou wilt be able to certify me thereof.’ Asked Ka’ab, ‘What is it, O Commander of the Faithful?’; and Mu’awiyah answered, ‘Wottest thou of any city founded by man which is builded of gold and silver, the pillars whereof are of chrysolite and rubies and its gravel pearls and balls of musk and ambergris and saffron?’ He replied, ‘Yes, O Commander of the Faithful, this is ‘Iram with pillars decked and dight, the like of which was never made in the lands,’[169] and the builder was Shaddad son of Ad the Greater.’ Quoth the Caliph, ‘Tell us something of its history,’ and Ka’ab said, ‘Ad the Greater[170] had two sons, Shadнd and Shaddбd who, when their father died, ruled conjointly in his stead, and there was no King of the Kings of the earth but was subject to them. After awhile Shadid died and his brother Shaddad reigned over the earth alone. Now he was fond of reading in antique books; and, happening upon the description of the world to come and of Paradise, with its pavilions and galleries and trees and fruits and so forth, his soul moved him to build the like thereof in this world, after the fashion aforesaid. Now under his hand were an hundred thousand Kings, each ruling over an hundred thousand chiefs, commanding each an hundred thousand warriors; so he called these all before him and said to them, ‘I find in ancient books and annals a description of Paradise, as it is to be in the next world, and I desire to build me its like in this world. Go ye forth therefore to the goodliest tract on earth and the most spacious and build me there a city of gold and silver, whose gravel shall be chrysolite and rubies and pearls; and for support of its vaults make pillars of jasper. Fill it with palaces, whereon ye shall set galleries and balconies and plant its lanes and thoroughfares with all manner trees bearing yellow-ripe fruits and make rivers to run through it in channels of gold and silver.’ Whereat said one and all, ‘How are we able to do this thing thou hast commanded, and whence shall we get the chrysolites and rubies and pearls whereof thou speakest?’ Quoth he, ‘What! weet ye not that the Kings of the world are subject to me and under my hand and that none therein dare gainsay my word?’ Answered they, ‘Yes, we know that.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Seventy-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the lieges answered, “Yes, we know that;” whereupon the King rejoined, “Fare ye then to the mines of chrysolites and rubies and pearls and gold and silver and collect their produce and gather together all of value that is in the world and spare no pains and leave naught; and take also for me such of these things as be in men’s hands and let nothing escape you: be diligent and beware of disobedience.” And thereupon he wrote letters to all the Kings of the world and bade them gather together whatso of these things was in their subjects’ hands, and get them to the mines of precious stones and metals, and bring forth all that was therein, even from the abysses of the seas. This they accomplished in the space of 20 years, for the number of rulers then reigning over the earth was three hundred and sixty Kings, and Shaddad presently assembled from all lands and countries architects and engineers and men of art and labourers and handicraftsmen, who dispersed over the world and explored all the wastes and words and tracts and holds. At last they came to an uninhabited spot, a vast and fair open plain clear of sand-hills and mountains, with founts flushing and rivers rushing, and they said, “This is the manner of place the King commanded us to seek and ordered us to find.” So they busied themselves in building the city even as bade them Shaddad, King of the whole earth in its length and breadth; leading the fountains in channels and laying the foundations after the prescribed fashion. Moreover, all the Kings of earth’s several-reigns sent thither jewels and precious stones and pearls large and small and carnelian and refined gold and virgin silver upon camels by land, and in great ships over the waters, and there came to the builders’ hands of all these materials so great a quantity as may neither be told nor counted nor conceived. So they laboured at the work three hundred years; and, when they had brought it to end, they went to King Shaddad and acquainted him therewith. Then said he, “Depart and make thereon an impregnable castle, rising and towering high in air, and build around it a thousand pavilions, each upon a thousand columns of chrysolite and ruby and vaulted with gold, that in each pavilion a Wazir may dwell.” So they returned forthwith and did this in other twenty years; after which they again presented themselves before King Shaddad and informed him of the accomplishment of his will. Then he commanded his Wazirs, who were a thousand in number, and his Chief Officers and such of his troops and others as he put trust in, to prepare for departure and removal to Many-columned Iram, in the suite and at the stirrup of Shaddad, son of Ad, King of the World; and he bade also such as he would of his women and his Harim and of his handmaids and eunuchs make them ready for the journey. They spent twenty years in preparing for departure, at the end of which time Shaddad set out with his host. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Shaddad bin Ad fared forth, he and his host, rejoicing in the attainment of his desire till there remained but one day’s journey between him and Iram of the Pillars. Then Allah sent down on him and on the stubborn unbelievers with him a mighty rushing sound from the Heavens of His power, which destroyed them all with its vehement clamour, and neither Shaddad nor any of his company set eyes on the city.[171]

Moreover, Allah blotted out the road which led to the city, and it stands in its stead unchanged until the Resurrection Day and the Hour of Judgement." So Mu'awiyah wondered greatly at Ka'ab al-Ahbar's story and said to him, "Hath any mortal ever made his way to that city?" He replied, "Yes; one of the companions of Mohammed (on whom be blessing and peace!) reached it, doubtless and forsure after the same fashion as this man here seated." "And (quoth Al-Sha'abi[172]) it is related, on the authority of learned men of Himyar in Al-Yaman that Shaddad, when destroyed with all his host by the sound, was succeeded in his Kingship by his son Shaddad the Less, whom he left vice-regent in Hazramaut[173] and Saba, when he and his marched upon Many-columned Iram. Now as soon as he heard of his father's death on the road, he caused his body to be brought back from the desert to Hazramaut and bade them hew him out a tomb in a cave, where he laid the body on a throne of gold and threw over the corpse threescore and ten robes of cloth of gold, purfled with precious stones. Lastly at his sire's head he set up a tablet of gold whereon were graven these verses,

'Take warning O proud, * And in length o' life vain!
I'm Shadd6d son of Ad, * Of the forts castellain;
Lord of pillars and power,* Lord of tried might and main,
Whom all earth-sons obeyed* For my mischief and bane
And who held East and West* In mine awfullest reign.
He preached me salvation * Whom God did assain,[174]
But we crossed him and asked * 'Can no refuge be ta'en?'
When a Cry on us cried * From th' horizon plain,
And we fell on the field * Like the harvested grain,
And the Fixt Day await * We, in earth's bosom lain!'"

Al-Sa'alibi also relateth, "It chanced that two men once entered this cave and found steps at its upper end; so they descended and came to an underground chamber, an hundred cubits long by forty wide and an hundred high. In the midst stood a throne of gold, whereon lay a man of huge bulk, filling the whole length and breadth of the throne. He was covered with jewels and raiment gold-and-silver wrought, and at his head was a tablet of gold bearing an inscription. So they took the tablet and carried it off, together with as many bars of gold and silver and so forth as they could bear away.” And men also relate the tale of

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ISAAC OF MOSUL.

Quoth Isaac of Mosul,[175] “I went out one night from Al Maamun’s presence, on my way to my house; and, being taken with a pressing need to make water, I turned aside into a by-street and stood in the middle fearing lest something might hurt me, if I squatted against a wall.[176] Presently, I espied something hanging down from one of the houses; so I felt it to find out what it might be and found that it was a great four-handled basket,[177] covered with brocade. Said I to myself, ‘There must be some reason for this,’ and knew not what to think; then drunkenness led me to seat myself in the basket, and behold, the people of the house pulled me up, thinking me to be the person they expected. Now when I came to the top of the wall; lo! four damsels were there, who said to me, ‘Descend and welcome and joy to thee!’ Then one of them went before me with a wax candle and brought me down into a mansion, wherein were furnished sitting- chambers, whose like I had never seen save in the palace of the Caliphate. So I sat down and, after a while, the curtains were suddenly drawn from one side of the room and, behold, in came damsels walking in procession and hending hand lighted flambeaux of wax and censers full of Sumatran aloes-wood, and amongst them a young lady as she were the rising full moon. So I stood up to her and she said, ‘Welcome to thee for a visitor!’ and then she made me sit down again and asked me how I came thither. Quoth I, ‘I was returning home from the house of an intimate friend and went astray in the dark; then, being taken in the street with an urgent call to make water, I turned aside into this lane, where I found a basket let down. The strong wine which I had drunk led me to seat myself in it and it was drawn up with me into this house, and this is my story.’ She rejoined, ‘No harm shall befall thee, and I hope thou wilt have cause to praise the issue of thine adventure.’ Then she added, ‘But what is thy condition?’ I said, ‘A merchant in the Baghdad bazar’ and she, ‘Canst thou repeat any verses?’ ‘Some small matter,’ quoth I. Quoth she ‘Then call a few to mind and let us hear some of them.’ But I said, ‘A visitor is bashful and timid; do thou begin.’ ‘True,’ replied she and recited some verses of the poets, past and present, choosing their choicest pieces; and I listened not knowing whether more to marvel at her beauty and loveliness or at the charm of her style of declamation. Then said she, ‘Is that bashfulness of thine gone?’ and I said, ‘Yes, by Allah!’ so she rejoined, ‘Then, if thou wilt, recite us somewhat.’ So I repeated to her a number of poems by old writers, and she applauded, saying, ‘By Allah, I did not think to find such culture among the trade folk, the sons of the bazar!’ Then she called for food” Whereupon quoth Shahrazad’s sister Dunyazad, “How pleasant is this tale and enjoyable and sweet to the ear and sound to the sense!” But she answered, “And what is this story compared with that which thou shalt hear on the morrow’s night, if I be alive and the King deign spare me!” Then Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Eightieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Isaac of Mosul continued, “Then the damsel called for food and, when it was served to her, she fell to eating it and setting it before me; and the sitting room was full of all manner sweet-scented flowers and rare fruits, such as are never found save in Kings’ houses. Presently, she called for wine and drank a cup, after which she filled another and gave it to me, saying, ‘Now is the time for converse and story-telling.’ So I bethought myself and began to say, ‘It hath reached me that such and such things happened and there was a man who said so and so,’ till I had told her a number of pleasing tales and adventures with which she was delighted and cried, ‘’Tis marvellous that a merchant should bear in memory such store of stories like these, for they are fit for Kings.’ Quoth I, ‘I had a neighbour who used to consort with Kings and carouse with them; so, when he was at leisure, I visited his house and he hath often told me what thou hast heard.’ Thereupon she exclaimed ‘By my life, but thou hast a good memory!’ So we continued to converse thus, and as often as I was silent, she would begin, till in this way we passed the most part of the night, whilst the burning aloes-wood diffused its fragrance and I was in such case that if Al-Maamun had suspected it, he would have flown like a bird with longing for it. Then said she to me, ‘Verily, thou art one of the most pleasant of men, polished, passing well-bred and polite; but there lacketh one thing.’ ‘What is that?’ asked I, and she answered, If thou only knew how to sing verses to the lute!' I answered, 'I was passionately fond of this art aforetime, but finding I had no taste for it, I abandoned it, though at times my heart yearneth after it. Indeed, I should love to sing somewhat well at this moment and fulfil my night's enjoyment.' Then said she, 'Meseemeth thou hintest a wish for the lute to be brought?' and I, 'It is thine to decide, if thou wilt so far favour me, and to thee be the thanks.' So she called for a lute and sang a song in a voice whose like I never heard, both for sweetness of tone and skill in playing, and perfection of art. Then said she, Knowest thou who composed this air and whose are the words of this song?'"No," answered I; and she said, The words are so and so's and the air is Isaac's.' I asked 'And hath Isaac then (may I be thy sacrifice!) such a talent?' She replied, 'Bravo![178] Bravo, Isaac! indeed, he excelleth in this art.' I rejoined, 'Glory be to Allah who hath given this man what he hath vouchsafed unto none other!' Then she said 'And how would it be, an thou heard this song from himself?' This wise we went on till break of day dawn, when there came to her an old woman, as she were her nurse, and said to her, 'Verily, the time is come.' So she rose in haste and said to me, 'Keep what hath passed between us to thyself; for such meetings are in confidence;'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Eighty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the damsel whispered, "'Keep what hath passed between us to thyself, for such meetings are in confidence;' and I replied, 'May I be thy ransom! I needed no charge to this.' Then I took leave of her and she sent a handmaid to show me the way and open the house door; so I went forth and returned to my own place, where I prayed the morning prayer and slept. Now after a time there came to me a messenger from Al-Maamun, so I went to him and passed the day in his company. And when the night fell I called to mind my yesternight's pleasure, a thing from which none but an ignoramus would abstain, and betook myself to the street, where I found the basket, and seating myself therein, was drawn up to the place in which I had passed the previous night. When the lady saw me, she said, 'Indeed, thou hast been assiduous;' and I answered, 'Meseemeth rather that I am neglectful.’ Then we fell to discoursing and passed the night as before in general-conversation and reciting verses and telling rare tales, each in turn, till daybreak, when I wended me home; and I prayed the dawn prayer and slept. Presently there came to me a messenger from Al-Maamun; so I went to him and spent my day with him till nightfall, when the Commander of the Faithful said to me, ‘I conjure thee to sit here, whilst I go out for a want and come back.’ As soon as the Caliph was gone, and quite gone, my thoughts began to tempt and try me and, calling to mind my late delight, I recked little what might befal me from the Prince of True Believers. So I sprang up and turning my back upon the sitting-room, ran to the street aforesaid, where I sat down in the basket and was drawn up as before. When the lady saw me, she said, ‘I begin to think thou art a sincere friend to us.’ Quoth I, ‘Yea, by Allah!’ and quoth she, ‘Hast thou made our house thine abiding-place?’ I replied, ‘May I be thy ransom! A guest claimeth guest right for three days and if I return after this, ye are free to spill my blood.’ Then we passed the night as before; and when the time of departure drew near, I bethought me that Al Maamun would assuredly question me nor would ever be content save with a full explanation: so I said to her, ‘I see thee to be of those who delight in singing. Now I have a cousin, the son of my father’s brother, who is fairer than I in face and higher of rank and better of breeding; and he is the most intimate of Allah’s creatures with Isaac.’ Quoth she, ‘Art thou a parasite[179] and an importunate one?’ Quoth I, ‘It is for thee to decide in this matter;’ and she, ‘If thy cousin be as thou hast described him, it would not mislike us to make acquaintance with him.’ Then, as the time was come, I left her and returned to my house, but hardly had I reached it, ere the Caliph’s runners came down on me and carried me before him by main force and roughly enough.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Eighty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Isaac of Mosul continued, “And hardly had I reached my house ere the Caliph’s runners came down upon me and carried me before him by main force and roughly enough. I found him seated on a chair, wroth with me, and he said to me, ‘O Isaac, art thou a traitor to thine allegiance?’ replied I, ‘No, by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful!’ and he rejoined, ‘What hast thou then to say? tell me the whole truth;’ and I, ‘Yes, I will, but in private.’ So he signed to his attendants, who withdrew to a distance, and I told him the case, adding, ‘I promised her to bring thee,’ and he said, ‘Thou didst well.’ Then we spent the day in our usual-pleasures, but Al-Maamun’s heart was taken up with her, and hardly was the appointed time come, when we set out. As we went along, I cautioned him, saying, ‘Look that thou call me not by my name before her; and I will demean myself like thine attendant.’ And having agreed upon this, we fared forth till we came to the place, where we found two baskets hanging ready. So we sat down in them and were drawn up to the usual-place, where the damsel came forward and saluted us. Now when Al Maamun saw her, he was amazed at her beauty and loveliness; and she began to entertain him with stories and verses. Presently, she called for wine and we fell to drinking she paying him special attention and he repaying her in kind. Then she took the lute and sang these verses,

‘My lover came in at the close of night, * I rose till he sat and
remained upright;
And said ‘Sweet heart, hast thou come this hour? * Nor feared on
the watch and ward to ‘light:’
Quoth he ‘The lover had cause to fear, * But Love deprived him of
wits and fright.’

And when she ended her song she said to me, ‘And is thy cousin also a merchant?’ I answered, ‘Yes,’ and she said, ‘Indeed, ye resemble each other nearly.’ But when Al-Maamun had drunk three pints,[180] he grew merry with wine and called out, saying, ‘Ho, Isaac!’ And I replied, ‘Labbayk, Adsum, O Commander of the Faithful,’ whereupon quoth he, ‘Sing me this air.’ Now when the young lady learned that he was the Caliph, she withdrew to another place and disappeared; and, as I had made an end of my song, Al-Maamun said to me, ‘See who is the master of this house’, whereupon an old woman hastened to make answer, saying, ‘It belongs to Hasan bin Sahl.’[181] ‘Fetch him to me,’ said the Caliph. So she went away and after a while behold, in came Hasan, to whom said Al-Maamun 'Hast thou a daughter?' He said, 'Yes, and her name is Khadijah.' Asked the Caliph, 'Is she married?' Answered Hasan, 'No, by Allah!' Said Al-Maamun, Then I ask her of thee in marriage.' Replied her father, 'O Commander of the Faithful, she is thy handmaid and at thy commandment.' Quoth Al-Maamun, 'I take her to wife at a present settlement of thirty thousand dinars, which thou shalt receive this very morning, and, when the money has been paid thee, do thou bring her to us this night.' And Hasan answered, 'I hear and I obey.' Thereupon we went forth and the Caliph said to me, 'O Isaac, tell this story to no one.' So I kept it secret till Al-Maamun's death. Surely never did man's life gather such pleasures as were mine these four days' time, whenas I companied with Al-Maamun by day and Khadijah by night; and, by Allah, never saw I among men the like of Al-Maamun nor among women have I ever set eyes on the like of Khadijah; no, nor on any that came near her in lively wit and pleasant speech! And Allah is All knowing. But amongst stories is that of

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THE SWEEP AND THE NOBLE LADY.

During the season of the Meccan pilgrimage, whilst the people were making circuit about the Holy House and the place of compassing was crowded, behold, a man laid hold of the covering of the Ka'abah[182] and cried out, from the bottom of his heart, saying, 'I beseech thee, O Allah, that she may once again be wroth with her husband and that I may know her!' A company of the pilgrims heard him and seized him and carried him to the Emir of the pilgrims, after a sufficiency of blows; and, said they, 'O Emir, we found this fellow in the Holy Places, saying thus and thus.' So the Emir commanded to hang him; but he cried, 'O Emir, I conjure thee, by the virtue of the Apostle (whom Allah bless and preserve!), hear my story and then do with me as thou wilt.' Quoth the Emir, 'Tell thy tale forthright.' 'Know then, O Emir,' quoth the man, 'that I am a sweep who works in the sheep- slaughterhouses and carries off the blood and the offal to the rubbish-heaps outside the gates. And it came to pass as I went along one day with my ass loaded, I saw the people running away and one of them said to me, 'Enter this alley, lest haply they slay thee.' Quoth I, 'What aileth the folk running away?' and one of the eunuchs, who were passing, said to me, 'This is the Harim[183] of one of the notables and her eunuchs drive the people out of her way and beat them all, without respect to persons.' So I turned aside with the donkey'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Eighty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth the man, "So I turned aside with the donkey and stood still awaiting the dispersal of the crowd; and I saw a number of eunuchs with staves in their hands, followed by nigh thirty women slaves, and amongst them a lady as she were a willow-wand or a thirsty gazelle, perfect in beauty and grace and amorous languor, and all were attending upon her. Now when she came to the mouth of the passage where I stood, she turned right and left and, calling one of the Castratos, whispered in his ear; and behold, he came up to me and laid hold of me, whilst another eunuch took my ass and made off with it. And when the spectators fled, the first eunuch bound me with a rope and dragged me after him till I knew not what to do; and the people followed us and cried out, saying, ‘This is not allowed of Allah! What hath this poor scavenger done that he should be bound with ropes?’ and praying the eunuchs, ‘Have pity on him and let him go, so Allah have pity on you!’ And I the while said in my mind, ‘Doubtless the eunuchry seized me, because their mistress smelt the stink of the offal and it sickened her. Belike she is with child or ailing; but there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!’ So I continued walking on behind them, till they stopped at the door of a great house; and, entering before me, brought me into a big hall — I know not how I shall describe its magnificence — furnished with the finest furniture. And the women also entered the hall; and I bound and held by the eunuch and saying to myself, ‘Doubtless they will torture me here till I die and none know of my death.’ However, after a while, they carried me into a neat bath-room leading out of the hall; and as I sat there, behold, in came three slave-girls who seated themselves round me and said to me, ‘Strip off thy rags and tatters.’ So I pulled off my threadbare clothes and one of them fell a-rubbing my legs and feet whilst another scrubbed my head and a third shampooed my body. When they had made an end of washing me, they brought me a parcel of clothes and said to me, ‘Put these on’; and I answered, ‘By Allah, I know not how!’ So they came up to me and dressed me, laughing together at me the while; after which they brought casting-bottles full of rose-water, and sprinkled me therewith. Then I went out with them into another saloon; by Allah, I know not how to praise its splendour for the wealth of paintings and furniture therein; and entering it, I saw a person seated on a couch of Indian rattan” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Eighty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the sweep continued, “When I entered that saloon I saw a person seated on a couch of Indian rattan, with ivory feet and before her a number of damsels. When she saw me she rose to me and called me; so I went up to her and she seated me by her side. Then she bade her slave-girls bring food, and they brought all manner of rich meats, such as I never saw in all my life; I do not even know the names of the dishes, much less their nature. So I ate my fill and when the dishes had been taken away and we had washed our hands, she called for fruits which came without stay or delay and ordered me eat of them; and when we had ended eating she bade one of the waiting-women bring the wine furniture. So they set on flagons of divers kinds of wine and burned perfumes in all the censers, what while a damsel like the moon rose and served us with wine to the sound of the smitten strings; and I drank, and the lady drank, till we were seized with wine and the whole time I doubted not but that all this was an illusion of sleep. Presently, she signed to one of the damsels to spread us a bed in such a place, which being done, she rose and took me by the hand and led me thither, and lay down and I lay with her till the morning, and as often as I pressed her to my breast I smelt the delicious fragrance of musk and other perfumes that exhaled from her and could not think otherwise but that I was in Paradise or in the vain phantasies of a dream. Now when it was day, she asked me where I lodged and I told her, ‘In such a place;’ whereupon she gave me leave to depart, handing to me a kerchief worked with gold and silver and containing somewhat tied in it, and took leave of me, saying, ‘Go to the bath with this.’ I rejoiced and said to myself, ‘If there be but five coppers here, it will buy me this day my morning meal.’ Then I left her, as though I were leaving Paradise, and returned to my poor crib where I opened the kerchief and found in it fifty miskals of gold. So I buried them in the ground and, buying two farthings’ worth of bread and ‘kitchen,’[184] seated me at the door and broke my fast; after which I sat pondering my case and continued so doing till the time of afternoon, prayer, when lo! a slave-girl accosted me saying, ‘My mistress calleth for thee.’ I followed her to the house aforesaid and, after asking permission, she carried me into the lady, before whom I kissed the ground, and she commanded me to sit and called for meat and wine as on the previous day; after which I again lay with her all night. On the morrow, she gave me a second kerchief, with other fifty dinars therein, and I took it and going home, buried this also. In such pleasant condition I continued eight days running, going in to her at the hour of afternoon prayer and leaving her at daybreak; but, on the eighth night, as I lay with her, behold, one of her slave-girls came running in and said to me, ‘Arise, go up into yonder closet.’ So I rose and went into the closet, which was over the gate, and presently I heard a great clamour and tramp of horse; and, looking out of the window which gave on the street in front of the house, I saw a young man as he were the rising moon on the night of fulness come riding up attended by a number of servants and soldiers who were about him on foot. He alighted at the door and entering the saloon found the lady seated on the couch; so he kissed the ground between her hands then came up to her and kissed her hands; but she would not speak to him. However, he continued patiently to humble himself, and soothe her and speak her fair, till he made his peace with her, and they lay together that night.” — And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Eighty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the scavenger continued, “Now when her husband had made his peace with the young lady, he lay with her that night; and next morning, the soldiers came for him and he mounted and rode away; whereupon she drew near to me and said, ‘Sawst thou yonder man?’ I answered, ‘Yes;’ and she said, ‘He is my husband, and I will tell thee what befell me with him. It came to pass one day that we were sitting, he and I, in the garden within the house, and behold, he rose from my side and was absent a long while, till I grew tired of waiting and said to myself: Most like, he is in the privy. So I arose and went to the water-closet, but not finding him there, went down to the kitchen, where I saw a slave-girl; and when I enquired for him, she showed him to me lying with one of the cookmaids. Hereupon, I swore a great oath that I assuredly would do adultery with the foulest and filthiest man in Baghdad; and the day the eunuch laid hands on thee, I had been four days going round about the city in quest of one who should answer to this description, but found none fouler nor filthier than thy good self. So I took thee and there passed between us that which Allah fore ordained to us; and now I am quit of my oath.’ Then she added, ‘If, however, my husband return yet again to the cookmaid and lie with her, I will restore thee to thy lost place in my favours.’ Now when I heard these words from her lips, what while she pierced my heart with the shafts of her glances, my tears streamed forth, till my eyelids were chafed sore with weeping, and I repeated the saying of the poet,

‘Grant me the kiss of that left hand ten times; * And learn it
hath than right hand higher grade;[185]
For ’tis but little since that same left hand * Washed off Sir
Reverence when ablution made.’

Then she made them give me other fifty dinars (making in all four hundred gold pieces I had of her) and bade me depart. So I went out from her and came hither, that I might pray Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) to make her husband return to the cookmaid, that haply I might be again admitted to her favours.’ When the Emir of the pilgrims heard the man’s story, he set him free and said to the bystanders, ‘Allah upon you, pray for him, for indeed he is excusable.’” And men also tell the tale of

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THE MOCK CALIPH.

It is related that the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, was one night restless with extreme restlessness, so he summoned his Wazir Ja'afar the Barmecide, and said to him, "My breast is straitened and I have a desire to divert myself to-night by walking about the streets of Baghdad and looking into folks' affairs; but with this precaution that we disguise ourselves in merchants' gear, so none shall know us." He answered, "Hearkening and obedience." They rose at once and doffing the rich raiment they wore, donned merchants' habits and sallied forth three in number, the Caliph, Ja'afar and Masrur the sworder. Then they walked from place to place, till they came to the Tigris and saw an old man sitting in a boat; so they went up to him and saluting him, said, "O Shaykh, we desire thee of thy kindness and favour to carry us a- pleasuring down the river, in this thy boat, and take this dinar to thy hire." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Eighty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when they said to the old man, "We desire thee to carry us a-pleasuring in this thy boat and take this dinar;" he answered, "Who may go a-pleasuring on the Tigris? The Caliph Harun al-Rashid every night cometh down Tigris stream in his state-barge[186] and with him one crying aloud: 'Ho, ye people all, great and small, gentle and simple, men and boys, whoso is found in a boat on the Tigris by night, I will strike off his head or hang him to the mast of his craft!' And ye had well nigh met him; for here cometh his carrack." But the Caliph and Ja'afar said, "O Shaykh, take these two dinars, and run us under one of yonder arches, that we may hide there till the Caliph's barge have passed." The old man replied, "Hand over your gold and rely we on Allah, the Almighty!" So he took the two dinars and embarked them in the boat; and he put off and rowed about with them awhile, when behold, the barge came down the river in mid-stream, with lighted flambeaux and cressets flaming therein. Quoth the old man, "Did not I tell you that the Caliph passed along the river every night?"; and ceased not muttering, "O Protector, remove not the veils of Thy protection!" Then he ran the boat under an arch and threw a piece of black cloth over the Caliph and his companions, who looked out from under the covering and saw, in the bows of the barge, a man holding in hand a cresset of red gold which he fed with Sumatran lign-aloes and the figure was clad in a robe of red satin, with a narrow turband of Mosul shape round on his head, and over one of his shoulders hung a sleeved cloak[187] of cramoisy satin, and on the other was a green silk bag full of the aloes-wood, with which he fed the cresset by way of firewood. And they sighted in the stern another man, clad like the first and bearing a like cresset, and in the barge were two hundred white slaves, standing ranged to the right and left; and in the middle a throne of red gold, whereon sat a handsome young man, like the moon, clad in a dress of black, embroidered with yellow gold. Before him they beheld a man, as he were the Wazir Ja'afar, and at his head stood an eunuch, as he were Masrur, with a drawn sword in his hand; besides a score of cup-companions. Now when the Caliph saw this, he turned and said, "O Ja'afar," and the Minister replied, "At thy service, O Prince of True Believers." Then quoth the Caliph, "Belike this is one of my sons, Al Amin or Al-Maamun." Then he examined the young man who sat on the throne and finding him perfect in beauty and loveliness and stature and symmetric grace, said to Ja'afar, "Verily, this young man abateth nor jot nor tittle of the state of the Caliphate! See, there standeth before him one as he were thyself, O Ja'afar; yonder eunuch who standeth at his head is as he were Masrur and those courtiers as they were my own. By Allah, O Ja'afar, my reason is confounded and I am filled with amazement this matter!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Eighty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Caliph saw this spectacle his reason was confounded and he cried, "By Allah, I am filled with amazement at this matter!" and Ja'afar replied, "And I also, by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful." Then the barge passed on and disappeared from sight whereupon the boatman pushed out again into the stream, saying, "Praised be Allah for safety, since none hath fallen in with us!" Quoth the Caliph, "O old man, doth the Caliph come down the Tigris-river every night?"

The boatman answered, “Yes, O my lord; and on such wise hath he done every night this year past.” “O Shaykh,” rejoined Al-Rashid, “we wish thee of thy favour to await us here to-morrow night and we will give thee five golden dinars, for we are stranger folk, lodging in the quarter Al-Khandak, and we have a mind to divert ourselves.” Said the oldster, “With joy and good will!” Then the Caliph and Ja’afar and Masrur left the boatman and returned to the palace; where they doffed their merchants’ habits and, donning their apparel of state, sat down each in his several-stead; and came the Emirs and Wazirs and Chamberlains and Officers, and the Divan assembled and was crowded as of custom. But when day ended and all the folk had dispersed and wended each his own way, the Caliph said to his Wazir, “Rise, O Ja’afar, let us go and amuse ourselves by looking on the second Caliph.” At this, Ja’afar and Masrur laughed, and the three, donning merchants’ habits, went forth by a secret pastern and made their way through the city, in great glee, till they came to the Tigris, where they found the graybeard sitting and awaiting them. They embarked with him in the boat and hardly had they sat down before up came the mock Caliph’s barge; and, when they looked at it attentively, they saw therein two hundred Mamelukes other than those of the previous night, while the link- bearers cried aloud as of wont. Quoth the Caliph, “O Wazir, had I heard tell of this, I had not believed it; but I have seen it with my own sight.” Then said he to the boatman, “Take, O Shaykh’ these ten dinars and row us along abreast of them, for they are in the light and we in the shade, and we can see them and amuse ourselves by looking on them, but they cannot see us.” So the man took the money and pushing off ran abreast of them in the shadow of the barge, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Eighty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph Harun al-Rashid said to the old man, “Take these ten dinars and row us abreast of them;” to which he replied, “I hear and I obey.” And he fared with them and ceased not going in the blackness of the barge, till they came amongst the gardens that lay alongside of them and sighted a large walled enclosure; and presently, the barge cast anchor before a postern door, where they saw servants standing with a she mule saddled and bridled. Here the mock Caliph landed and, mounting the mule, rode away with his courtiers and his cup-companions preceded by the cresset-bearers crying aloud, and followed by his household which busied itself in his service. Then Harun al-Rashid, Ja'afar and Masrur landed also and, making their way through the press of servants, walked on before them. Presently, the cresset-bearers espied them and seeing three persons in merchants' habits, and strangers to the country, took offense at them; so they pointed them out and brought them before the other Caliph, who looked at them and asked, "How came ye to this place and who brought you at this tide?" They answered, "O our lord, we are foreign merchants and far from our homes, who arrived here this day and were out a- walking to-night, and behold, ye came up and these men laid hands on us and brought us to thy presence; and this is all our story." Quoth the mock Caliph, "Since ye be stranger folk no harm shall befall you; but had ye been of Baghdad, I had struck off your heads." Then he turned to his Wazir and said to him, "Take these men with thee; for they are our guests to-night." "To hear is to obey, O our lord," answered he; and they companied him till they came to a lofty and splendid palace set upon the firmest base; no Sultan possesseth such a place; rising from the dusty mould and upon the merges of the clouds laying hold. Its door was of Indian teak-wood inlaid with gold that glowed; and through it one passed into a royal-hall in whose midst was a jetting fount girt by a raised estrade. It was provided with carpets and cushions of brocade and small pillows and long settees and hanging curtains; it was furnished with a splendour that dazed the mind and dumbed the tongue, and upon the door were written these two couplets,

"A Palace whereon be blessings and praise! * Which with all their
beauty have robed the Days:
Where marvels and miracle-sights abound, * And to write its
honours the pen affrays."

The false Caliph entered with his company, and sat down on a throne of gold set with jewels and covered with a prayer carpet of yellow silk; whilst the boon-companions took their seats and the sword bearer of high works stood before him. Then the tables were laid and they ate; after which the dishes were removed and they washed their hands and the wine-service was set on with flagons and bowls in due order. The cup went round till it came to the Caliph, Harun al-Rashid, who refused the draught, and the mock Caliph said to Ja'afar, "What mattereth thy friend that he drinketh not?" He replied, "O my lord, indeed 'tis a long while he hath drunk naught of this." Quoth the sham Caliph, "I have drink other than this, a kind of apple-wine,[188] that will suit thy companion." So he bade them bring the cider which they did forthright; when the false Caliph, coming up to Harun al-Rashid, said to him, "As often as it cometh to thy turn drink thou of this." Then they continued to drink and make merry and pass the cup till the wine rose to their brains and mastered their wits; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Eighty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the false Caliph and his co sitters sat at their cups and gave not over drinking till the wine rose to their brains and mastered their wits; and Harun al-Rashid said to the Minister, "O Ja'afar, by Allah, we have no such vessels as these. Would to Heaven I knew what manner of man this youth is!" But while they were talking privily the young man cast a glance upon them and seeing the Wazir whisper the Caliph said, "'Tis rude to whisper." He replied, "No rudeness was meant: this my friend did but say to me, 'Verily I have travelled in most countries and have caroused with the greatest of Kings and I have companied with noble captains; yet never saw I a goodlier ordering than this entertainment nor passed a more delightful night; save that the people of Baghdad are wont to say, Wine without music often leaves you sick.'"When the second Caliph heard this, he smiled pleasantly and struck with a rod he had in his hand a round gong;[189] and behold, a door opened and out came a eunuch, bearing a chair of ivory, inlaid with gold glittering fiery red and followed by a damsel of passing beauty and loveliness, symmetry and grace. He set down the chair and the damsel seated herself on it, as she were the sun shining sheen in a sky serene. In her hand she had a lute of Hindu make, which she laid in her lap and bent down over it as a mother bendeth over her little one, and sang to it, after a prelude in four-and-twenty modes, amazing all wits. Then she returned to the first mode and to a lively measure chanted these couplets,

“Love’s tongue within my heart speaks plain to thee, * Telling
thee clearly I am fain of thee
Witness the fevers of a tortured heart, * And ulcered eyelid
tear-flood rains for thee
God’s fate o’ertaketh all created things! * I knew not love till
learnt Love’s pain of thee.”

Now when the mock Caliph heard these lines sung by the damsel, he cried with a great cry and rent his raiment to the very skirt, whereupon they let down a curtain over him and brought him a fresh robe, handsomer than the first. He put it on and sat as before, till the cup came round to him, when he struck the gong a second time and lo! a door opened and out of it came a eunuch with a chair of gold, followed by a damsel fairer than the first, bearing a lute, such as would strike the envious mute. She sat down on the chair and sang to her instrument these two couplets,

“How patient bide, with love in sprite of me, * And tears in
tempest[190] blinding sight of me?
By Allah, life has no delight of me! * How gladden heart whose
core is blight of me?”

No sooner had the youth heard this poetry than he cried out with a loud cry and rent his raiment to the skirt: whereupon they let down the curtain over him and brought him another suit of clothes. He put it on and, sitting up as before, fell again to cheerful talk, till the cup came round to him, when he smote once more upon the gong and out came a eunuch with a chair, followed by a damsel fairer than she who forewent her. So she sat down on the chair, with a lute in her hand, and sang thereto these couplets,

“Cease ye this farness; ‘bate this pride of you, * To whom my
heart clings, by life-tide of you!

Have ruth on hapless, mourning, lover-wretch, * Desire-full,
pining, passion-tried of you:
Sickness hath wasted him, whose ecstasy * Prays Heaven it may be
satisfied of you:
Oh fullest moons[191] that dwell in deepest heart! * How can I
think of aught by side of you?"

Now when the young man heard these couplets, he cried out with a great cry and rent his raiment, whereupon they let fall the curtain over him and brought him other robes. Then he returned to his former case with his boon-companions and the bowl went round as before, till the cup came to him, when he struck the gong a fourth time and the door opening, out came a page-boy bearing a chair followed by a damsel. He set the chair for her and she sat down thereon and taking the lute, tuned it and sang to it these couplets,

"When shall disunion and estrangement end? * When shall my
bygone
joys again be kenned?
Yesterday we were joined in same abode; * Conversing heedless of
each envious friend:[192]
Trickt us that traitor Time, disjoined our lot * And our waste
home to desert fate condemned:
Wouldst have me, Grumbler! from my dearling fly? * I find my
vitals blame will not perpend:
Cease thou to censure; leave me to repine; * My mind e'er findeth
thoughts that pleasure lend.
O Lords[193] of me who brake our troth and plight, * Deem not
to lose your hold of heart and sprite!"

When the false Caliph heard the girl's song, he cried out with a loud outcry and rent his raiment, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Ninetieth Night,

She said, When the false Caliph heard the girl's song, he cried with a loud outcry and rent his raiment and fell to the ground fainting; whereupon they would have let down the curtain over him, as of custom; but its cords stuck fast and Harun al-Rashid, after considering him carefully, saw on his body the marks of beating with palm-rods and said to Ja'afar, "By Allah, he is a handsome youth, but a foul thief!" "Whence knowest thou that, O Commander of the Faithful?" asked Ja'afar, and the Caliph answered, "Sawest thou not the whip-scars on his ribs?" Then they let fall the curtain over him and brought him a fresh dress, which he put on and sat up as before with his courtiers and cup- companions. Presently he saw the Caliph and Ja'afar whispering together and said to them, "What is the matter, fair sirs?" Quoth Ja'afar, "O my lord, all is well,[194] save that this my comrade, who (as is not unknown to thee) is of the merchant company and hath visited all the great cities and countries of the world and hath consorted with kings and men of highest consideration, saith to me: 'Verily, that which our lord the Caliph hath done this night is beyond measure extravagant, never saw I any do the like doings in any country; for he hath rent such and such dresses, each worth a thousand dinars and this is surely excessive unthriftiness.'" Replied the second Caliph, "Ho thou, the money is my money and the stuff my stuff, and this is by way of largesse to my suite and servants; for each suit that is rent belongeth to one of my cup-companions here present, and I assign to them with each suit of clothes the sum of five hundred dinars." The Wazir Ja'afar replied, "Well is whatso thou doest, O our lord," and recited these two couplets,

"Virtue in hand of thee hath built a house, * And to mankind thou
dost thy wealth expose:
If an the virtues ever close their doors, * That hand would be a
key the lock to unclose."

Now when the young man heard these verses recited by the Minister Ja'afar, he ordered him to be gifted with a thousand dinars and a dress of honour. Then the cup went round among them and the wine was sweet to them; but, after a while quoth the Caliph to Ja'afar, "Ask him of the marks on his sides, that we may see what he will say by way of reply." Answered Ja'afar, "Softly, O my lord, be not hasty and soothe thy mind, for patience is more becoming."

Rejoined the Caliph, “By the life of my head and by the revered tomb of Al Abbas,[195] except thou ask him, I will assuredly stop thy breath!” With this the young man turned towards the Minister and said to him, “What aileth thee and thy friend to be whispering together? Tell me what is the matter with you.” “It is nothing save good,” replied Ja’afar; but the mock Caliph rejoined, “I conjure thee, by Allah, tell me what aileth you and hide from me nothing of your case.” Answered the Wazir “O my lord, verily this one here saw on thy sides the marks of beating with whips and palm-fronds and marvelled thereat with exceeding marvel, saying, ‘How came the Caliph to be beaten?’; and he would fain know the cause of this.” Now when the youth heard this, he smiled and said, “Know ye that my story is wondrous and my case marvellous; were it graven with needles on the eye corners, it would serve as a warner to whoso would be warned.” And he sighed and repeated these couplets,

“Strange is my story, passing prodigy; * By Love I swear, my ways
 wax strait on me!
An ye desire to hear me, listen, and * Let all in this assembly
 silent be.
Heed ye my words which are of meaning deep, * Nor lies my speech;
 ’tis truest verity.
I’m slain[196] by longing and by ardent love; * My slayer’s
 the pearl of fair virginity.
She hath a jet black eye like Hindi blade, * And bowиd eyebrows
 shoot her archery
My heart assures me our Imam is here, * This age’s Caliph, old
 nobility:
Your second, Ja’afar highs, is his Wazir; * A Sahib,[197]
 Sahib-son of high degree:
The third is called Masrur who wields the sword: * Now, if in
 words of mine some truth you see
I have won every wish by this event * Which fills my heart with
 joy and gladdest greet”

When they heard these words Ja’afar swore to him an ambiguous oath that they were not those he named, whereupon he laughed and said: “Know, O my lords, that I am not the Commander of the Faithful and that I do but style myself thus, to win my will of the sons of the city. My true name is Mohammed Ali, son of Ali the Jeweller, and my father was one of the notables of Baghdad, who left me great store of gold and silver and pearls and coral and rubies and chrysolites and other jewels, besides messuages and lands, Hammam-baths and brickeries, orchards and flower- gardens. Now as I sat in my shop one day surrounded by my eunuchs and dependents, behold, there came up a young lady, mounted on a she-mule and attended by three damsels like moons. Riding up to my shop she alighted and seated herself by my side and said ‘Art thou Mohammed the Jeweller?’ Replied I, ‘Even so! I am he, thy Mameluke, thy chattel.’ She asked, ‘Hast thou a necklace of jewels fit for me?’ and I answered, ‘O my lady, I will show thee what I have; and lay all before thee and, if any please thee, it will be of thy slave’s good luck; if they please thee not, of his ill fortune.’ Now I had by me an hundred necklaces and showed them all to her; but none of them pleased her and she said, ‘I want a better than those I have seen.’ I had a small necklace which my father had bought at an hundred thousand dinars and whose like was not to be found with any of the great kings; so I said to her, ‘O my lady, I have yet one necklace of fine stones fit for bezels, the like of which none possesseth, great or small. Said she, Show it to me,’ so I showed it to her, and she said, ‘This is what I wanted and what I have wished for all my life;’ adding, ‘What is its price?’ Quoth I, ‘It cost my father an hundred thousand dinars;’ and she said, ‘I will give thee five thousand dinars to thy profit.’ I answered, ‘O my lady, the necklace and its owner are at thy service and I cannot gainsay thee.’ But she rejoined, ‘Needs must thou have the profit, and I am still most grateful to thee.’ Then she rose without stay or delay; and, mounting the mule in haste, said to me, ‘O my lord, in Allah’s name, favour us with thy company to receive the money; for this thy day with us is white as milk.’[198] So I shut the shop and accompanied her, in all security, till we came to a house, on which were manifest the signs of wealth and rank; for its door was wrought with gold and silver and ultramarine, and thereon were written these two couplets,

‘Hole, thou mansion! woe ne’er enter thee; * Nor be thine owner
e’er misused of Fate
Excellent mansion to all guests art thou, * When other mansions
to the guest are strait.’

The young lady dismounted and entered the house, bidding me sit down on the bench at the gate, till the money-changer should arrive. So I sat awhile, when behold, a damsel came out to me and said, ‘O my lord, enter the vestibule; for it is a dishonour that thou shouldst sit at the gate.’ Thereupon I arose and entered the vestibule and sat down on the settle there, and, as I sat, lo! another damsel came out and said to me, ‘O my lord my mistress biddeth thee enter and sit down at the door of the saloon, to receive thy money.’ I entered and sat down, nor had I sat a moment when behold, a curtain of silk which concealed a throne of gold was drawn aside, and I saw seated thereon the lady who had made the purchase, and round her neck she wore the necklace which looked pale and wan by the side of a face as it were the rounded moon; At her sight, my wit was troubled and my mind confounded, by reason of her exceeding beauty and loveliness, but when she saw me she rose from her throne and coming close up to me, said, ‘O light of mine eyes, is every handsome one like thee pitiless to his mistress?’ I answered, ‘O my lady, beauty, all of it, is in thee and is but one of thy hidden charms.’ And she rejoined, ‘O Jeweller, know that I love thee and can hardly credit that I have brought thee hither.’ Then she bent towards me and I kissed her and she kissed me and, as she caressed me, drew me towards her and to her breast she pressed me.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Ninety-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Jeweller continued: “Then she bent towards me and kissed and caressed me; and, as she caressed me, drew me towards her and to her breast she pressed me. Now she knew by my condition that I had a mind to enjoy her; so she said to me, ‘O my lord, wouldst thou foregather with me unlawfully? By Allah, may he not live who would do the like of this sin and who takes pleasure in talk unclean! I am a maid, a virgin whom no man hath approached, nor am I unknown in the city.

Knowest thou who I am?’ Quoth I, ‘No, by Allah, O my lady!’; and quoth she, ‘I am the Lady Dunyб, daughter of Yбhyб bin Khбlid the Barmecide and sister of Ja’afar, Wazir to the Caliph.’ Now as I heard this, I drew back from her, saying, ‘O my lady, it is no fault of mine if I have been over- bold with thee; it was thou didst encourage me to aspire to thy love, by giving me access to thee.’ She answered, ‘No harm shall befal-thee, and needs must thou attain thy desire in the only way pleasing to Allah. I am my own mistress and the Kazi shall act as my guardian in consenting to the marriage contract; for it is my will that I be to thee wife and thou be to me man.’ Then she sent for the Kazi and the witnesses and busied herself with making ready; and, when they came, she said to them, ‘Mohammed Ali, bin Ali the Jeweller, seeketh me in wedlock and hath given me the necklace to my marriage-settlement; and I accept and consent.’ So they wrote out the contract of marriage between us; and ere I went in to her the servants brought the wine-furniture and the cups passed round after the fairest fashion and the goodliest ordering; and, when the wine mounted to our heads, she ordered a damsel, a lute-player,[199] to sing. So she took the lute and sang to a pleasing and stirring motive these couplets,

‘He comes; and fawn and branch and moon delight these eyne *
Fie[200] on his heart who sleeps o’ nights without repine
Pair youth, for whom Heaven willed to quench in cheek one light,

* And left another light on other cheek bright li’en:
I fain finesse my chiders when they mention him, * As though the
hearing of his name I would decline;
And willing ear I lend when they of other speak; * Yet would my
soul within outflow in foods of brine:
Beauty’s own prophet, he is all a miracle * Of heavenly grace,
and greatest shows his face for sign.[201]
To prayer Bilбl-like cries that Mole upon his cheek * To ward
from pearly brow all eyes of ill design:[202]
The censors of their ignorance would my love dispel * But after
Faith I can’t at once turn Infidel.’

We were ravished by the sweet music she made striking the strings, and the beauty of the verses she sang; and the other damsels went on to sing and to recite one after another, till ten had so done; when the Lady Dunya took the lute and playing a lively measure, chanted these couplets,

‘I swear by swayings of that form so fair, * Aye from thy parting fiery
Pity a heart which burneth in thy love, * O bright as fullest moon in blackest air!
Vouchsafe thy boons to him who ne’er will cease * In light of wine-cup all thy charms declare,
Amid the roses which with varied hues * Are to the myrtle-bush[203] a mere despair.’

When she had finished her verse I took the lute from her hands and, playing a quaint and not vulgar prelude sang the following verses,

‘Laud to my Lord who gave thee all of loveliness; * Myself amid thy thralls I willingly confess:
O thou, whose eyes and glances captivate mankind, * Pray that I ‘scape those arrows shot with all thy stress!
Two hostile rivals water and enflaming fire * Thy cheek hath married, which for marvel I profess:
Thou art Sa’ʜʀ in heart of me and eke Na’ʜᴍ;[204] * Thou agro-dolce, eke heart’s sweetest bitterness.’

When she heard this my song she rejoiced with exceeding joy; then, dismissing her slave women, she brought me to a most goodly place, where they had spread us a bed of various colours. She did off her clothes and I had a lover’s privacy of her and found her a pearl unpierced and a filly unridden. So I rejoiced in her and never in my born days spent I a more delicious night.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Ninety-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Mohammed bin Ali the Jeweller continued: “So I went in unto the Lady Dunya, daughter of Yahya bin Kh6lid the Barmecide, and I found her a pearl unthridden and a filly unridden. So I rejoiced in her and repeated these couplets,

‘O Night here stay! I want no morning light; * My lover’s face to me is lamp and light:[205]
As ring of ring-dove round his necks my arm; * And made my palm his mouth-veil, and, twas right.
This be the crown of bliss, and ne’er we’ll cease * To clip, nor care to be in other plight.’

And I abode with her a whole month, forsaking shop and family and home, till one day she said to me, ‘O light of my eyes, O my lord Mohammed, I have determined to go to the Hammam to day; so sit thou on this couch and rise not from thy place, till I return to thee.’ ‘I hear and I obey,’ answered I, and she made me swear to this; after which she took her women and went off to the bath. But by Allah, O my brothers, she had not reached the head of the street ere the door opened and in came an old woman, who said to me, ‘O my lord Mohammed, the Lady Zubaydah biddeth thee to her, for she hath heard of thy fine manners and accomplishments and skill in singing.’ I answered, ‘By Allah, I will not rise from my place till the Lady Dunya come back.’ Rejoined the old woman, ‘O my lord, do not anger the Lady Zubaydah with thee and vex her so as to make her thy foe: nay, rise up and speak with her and return to thy place.’ So I rose at once and followed her into the presence of the Lady Zubaydah and, when I entered her presence she said to me, ‘O light of the eye, art thou the Lady Dunya’s beloved?’ ‘I am thy Mameluke, thy chattel,’ replied I. Quoth she, ‘Sooth spake he who reported thee possessed of beauty and grace and good breeding and every fine quality; indeed, thou surpassest all praise and all report. But now sing to me, that I may hear thee.’ Quoth I, ‘Hearkening and obedience;’ so she brought me a lute, and I sang to it these couplets,

‘The hapless lover’s heart is of his wooing weary grown, * And hand of sickness wasted him till naught but skin and bone

Who should be amid the riders which the haltered camels urge, *
But that same lover whose beloved cloth in the litters wone:
To Allah’s charge I leave that moon-like Beauty in your tents *
Whom my heart loves, albe my glance on her may ne’er be thrown.
Now she is fain; then she is fierce: how sweet her coyness shows;

* Yea sweet whatever cloth or saith to lover loved one!’

When I had finished my song she said to me, ‘Allah assain thy body and thy voice! Verily, thou art perfect in beauty and good breeding and singing. But now rise and return to thy place, ere the Lady Dunya come back, lest she find thee not and be wroth with thee.’ Then I kissed the ground before her and the old woman forewent me till I reached the door whence I came. So I entered and, going up to the couch, found that my wife had come back from the bath and was lying asleep there. Seeing this I sat down at her feet and rubbed them; whereupon she opened her eyes and seeing me, drew up both her feet and gave me a kick that threw me off the couch,[206] saying, ‘O traitor, thou hast been false to thine oath and hast perjured thyself. Thou swarest to me that thou wouldst not rise from thy place; yet didst thou break thy promise and go to the Lady Zubaydah. By Allah, but that I fear public scandal, I would pull down her palace over her head!’ Then said she to her black slave, ‘O Sawбb, arise and strike off this lying traitor’s head, for we have no further need of him.’ So the slave came up to me and, tearing a strip from his skirt, bandaged with it my eyes[207] and would have struck off my head;” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Ninety-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Mohammed the Jeweller continued: “So the slave came up to me and, tearing a strip from his skirt, bandaged with it my eyes and would have struck off my head, but all her women, great and small, rose and came up to her and said to her, ‘O our lady, this is not the first who hath erred: indeed, he knew not thy humour and hath done thee no offence deserving death.’ Replied she, ‘By Allah, I must needs set my mark on him.’ And she bade them bash me; so they beat me on my ribs and the marks ye saw are the scars of that fustigation. Then she ordered them to cast me out, and they carried me to a distance from the house and threw me down like a log. After a time I rose and dragged myself little by little to my own place, where I sent for a surgeon and showed him my hurts; and he comforted me and did his best to cure me. As soon as I was recovered I went to the Hammam and, as my pains and sickness had left me, I repaired to my shop and took and sold all that was therein. With the proceeds, I bought me four hundred white slaves, such as no King ever got together, and caused two hundred of them to ride out with me every day. Then I made me yonder barge whereon I spent five thousand gold pieces; and styled myself Caliph and appointed each of my servants to the charge of some one of the Caliph’s officers and clad him in official habit. Moreover, I made proclamation, ‘Whoso goeth a-pleasuring on the Tigris by night, I will strike off his head, without ruth or delay;’ and on such wise have I done this whole year past, during which time I have heard no news of the lady neither happened upon any trace of her.” Then wept he copiously and repeated these couplets,

“By Allah! while the days endure ne’er shall forget her I, * Nor
draw to any nigh save those who draw her to me nigh
Like to the fullest moon her form and favour show to me, * Laud
to her All-creating Lord, laud to the Lord on high,
She left me full of mourning, sleepless, sick with pine and pain

* And ceaseth not my heart to yearn her mystery[208] to
espy.”

Now when Harun al-Rashid heard the young man’s story and knew the passion and transport and love lowe that afflicted him, he was moved to compassion and wonder and said, “Glory be to Allah, who hath appointed to every effect a cause!” Then they craved the young man’s permission to depart; which being granted, they took leave of him, the Caliph purposing to do him justice meet, and him with the utmost munificence entreat; and they returned to the palace of the Caliphate, where they changed clothes for others befitting their state and sat down, whilst Masrur the Sworder of High Justice stood before them. After awhile, quoth the Caliph to Ja'afar, "O Wazir, bring me the young man' — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two hundred and Ninety-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth the Caliph to his Minister, "Bring me the young man with whom we were last night." "I hear and obey," answered Ja'afar and, going to the youth, saluted him, saying, "Obey the summons of the Commander of the Faithful, the Caliph Harun al-Rashid." So he returned with him to the palace, in great anxiety by reason of the summons; and, going in to the King, kissed ground before him; and offered up a prayer for the endurance of his glory and prosperity, for the accomplishment of his desires, for the continuance of his beneficence and for the cessation of evil and punishment; ordering his speech as best he might and ending by saying, "Peace be on thee, O Prince of True Believers and Protector of the folk of the Faith!" Then he repeated these two couplets,

"Kiss thou his fingers which no fingers are; * Keys of our daily
bread those fingers ken:
And praise his actions which no actions are, * But precious
necklaces round necks of men."

So the Caliph smiled in his face and returned his salute, looking on him with the eye of favour; then he bade him draw near and sit down before him and said to him, "O Mohammed Ali, I wish thee to tell me what befel thee last night, for it was strange and passing strange." Quoth the youth, "Pardon, O Commander of the Faithful, give me the kerchief of immunity, that my dread may be appeased and my heart eased." Replied the Caliph, "I promise thee safety from fear and woes." So the young man told him his story from first to last, whereby the Caliph knew him to be a lover and severed from his beloved and said to him, "Desirest thou that I restore her to thee?" "This were of the bounty of the Commander of the Faithful," answered the youth and repeated these two couplets.

“Ne’er cease thy gate be Ka’abah to mankind; * Long may its
threshold dust man’s brow beseem!
That o’er all countries it may be proclaimed, * This is the Place
and thou art Ibrahim.”[209]

Thereupon the Caliph turned to his Minister and said to him, “O Ja’afar, bring me thy sister, the Lady Dunya, daughter of the Wazir Yahya bin Khбlid!” “I hear and I obey,” answered he and fetched her without let or delay. Now when she stood before the Caliph he said to her, “Doss thou know who this is?”; and she replied, “O Commander of the Faithful, how should women have knowledge of men?”[210] So the Caliph smiled and said, “O Dunya this is thy beloved, Mohammed bin Ali the Jeweller. We are acquainted with his case, for we have heard the whole story from beginning to end, and have apprehended its inward and its outward; and it is no more hidden from me, for all it was kept in secrecy.” Replied she, “O Commander of the Faithful, this was written in the Book of Destiny; I crave the forgiveness of Almighty Allah for the wrong I have wrought, and pray thee to pardon me of thy favour.” At this the Caliph laughed and, summoning the Kazi and witnesses, renewed the marriage-contract between the Lady Dunya and her husband, Mohammed Ali son of the Jeweller, whereby there betided them, both her and him the utmost felicity, and to their enviers mortification and misery. Moreover, he made Mohammed Ali one of his boon-companions, and they abode in joy and cheer and gladness, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies. And men also relate the pleasant tale of

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ALI THE PERSIAN.

It is said that the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, being restless one night, sent for his Wazir and said to him, “O Ja’afar, I am sore wakeful and heavy-hearted this night, and I desire of thee what may solace my spirit and cause my breast to broaden with amuse meet.” Quoth Ja’afar, “O Commander of the Faithful, I have a friend, by name Ali the Persian, who hath store of tales and plea sent stories, such as lighten the heart and make care depart.” Quoth the Caliph, “Fetch him to me,” and quoth Ja’afar, “Hearkening and obedience;” and, going out from before him, sent to seek Ali the Persian and when he came said to him, “Answer the summons of the Commander of the Faithful.” “To hear is to obey,” answered Ali; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Ninety-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Persian replied, “To hear is to obey;” and at once followed the Wazir into the presence of the Caliph who bade him be seated and said to him, “O Ali, my heart is heavy within me this night and it hath come to my ear that thou hast great store of tales and anecdotes; so I desire of thee that thou let me hear what will relieve my despondency and brighten my melancholy.” Said he, “O Commander of the Faithful, shall I tell thee what I have seen with my eyes or what I have heard with my ears?” He replied, “An thou have seen aught worth the telling, let me hear that.” Replied Ali: “Hearkening and obedience. Know thou, O Commander of the Faithful, that some years ago I left this my native city of Baghdad on a journey, having with me a lad who carried a light leathern bag. Presently we came to a certain city, where, as I was buying and selling, behold, a rascally Kurd fell on me and seized my wallet perforce, saying, ‘This is my bag, and all which is in it is my property.’ Thereupon, I cried aloud ‘Ho Moslems,[211] one and all, deliver me from the hand of the vilest of oppressors!’ But the folk said, ‘Come, both of you, to the Kazi and abide ye by his judgment with joint consent.’ So I agreed to submit myself to such decision and we both presented ourselves before the Kazi, who said, ‘What bringeth you hither and what is your case and your quarrel?’ Quoth I, ‘We are men at difference, who appeal to thee and make complaint and submit ourselves to thy judgment.’ Asked the Kazi, ‘Which of you is the complainant?’; so the Kurd came forward[212] and said, ‘Allah preserve our lord the Kazi! Verily, this bag is my bag and all that is in it is my swag. It was lost from me and I found it with this man mine enemy.’ The Kazi asked, ‘When didst thou lose it?’; and the Kurd answered, ‘But yesterday, and I passed a sleepless night by reason of its loss.’ ‘An it be thy bag,’ quoth the Kazi, ‘tell me what is in it.’ Quoth the Kurd, ‘There were in my bag two silver styles for eye-powder and antimony for the eyes and a kerchief for the hands, wherein I had laid two gilt cups and two candlesticks. Moreover it contained two tents and two platters and two spoons and a cushion and two leather rugs and two ewers and a brass tray and two basins and a cooking-pot and two water- jars and a ladle and a sacking-needle and a she-cat and two bitches and a wooden trencher and two sacks and two saddles and a gown and two fur pelisses and a cow and two calves and a she-goat and two sheep and an ewe and two lambs and two green pavilions and a camel and two she-camels and a lioness and two lions and a she-bear and two jackals and a mattress and two sofas and an upper chamber and two saloons and a portico and two sitting-rooms and a kitchen with two doors and a company of Kurds who will bear witness that the bag is my bag.’ Then said the Kazi to me, ‘And thou, sirrah, what sayest thou?’ So I came forward, O Commander of the Faithful (and indeed the Kurd’s speech had bewildered me) and said, ‘Allah advance our lord the Kazi! Verily, there was naught in this my wallet, save a little ruined tenement and another without a door and a dog house and a boys’ school and youths playing dice and tents and tent-ropes and the cities of Bassorah and Baghdad and the palace of Shaddad bin Ad and an ironsmith’s forge and a fishing-net and cudgels and pickets and girls and boys and a thousand pimps who will testify that the bag is my bag.’ Now when the Kurd heard my words, he wept and wailed and said, ‘O my lord the Kazi, this my bag is known and what is in it is a matter of renown; for in this bag there be castles and citadels and cranes and beasts of prey and men playing chess and draughts. Furthermore, in this my bag is a brood-mare and two colts and a stallion and two blood-steeds and two long lances; and it containeth eke a lion and two hares and a city and two villages and a whore and two sharking panders and an hermaphrodite and two gallows birds and a blind man and two wights with good sight and a limping cripple and two lameters and a Christian ecclesiastic and two deacons and a patriarch and two monks and a Kazi and two assessors, who will be evidence that the bag is my bag.’ Quoth the Kazi to me, ‘And what sayst thou, O Ali?’ So, O Commander of the Faithful, being filled with rage, I came forward and said, ‘Allah keep our lord the Kazi!’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Ninety-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Persian continued: “So being filled with rage, O Commander of the Faithful, I came forward and said, ‘Allah keep our lord the Kazi I had in this my wallet a coat of mail and a broadsword and armouries and a thousand fighting rams and a sheep-fold with its pasturage and a thousand barking dogs and gardens and vines and flowers and sweet smelling herbs and figs and apples and statues and pictures and flagons and goblets and fair-faced slave-girls and singing-women and marriage-feasts and tumult and clamour and great tracts of land and brothers of success, which were robbers, and a company of daybreak-raiders with swords and spears and bows and arrows and true friends and dear ones and Intimates and comrades and men imprisoned for punishment and cup-companions and a drum and flutes and flags and banners and boys and girls and brides (in all their wedding bravery), and singing-girls and five Abyssinian women and three Hindi maidens and four damsels of Al-Medinah and a score of Greek girls and eighty Kurdish dames and seventy Georgian ladies and Tigris and Euphrates and a fowling net and a flint and steel and Many-columned Iram and a thousand rogues and pimps and horse-courses and stables and mosques and baths and a builder and a carpenter and a plank and a nail and a black slave with his flageolet and a captain and a caravan leader and towns and cities and an hundred thousand dinars and Cufa and Anbбr[213] and twenty chests full of stuffs and twenty storehouses for victuals and Gaza and Askalon and from Damietta to Al-Sawбn[214] ; and the palace of Kisra Anushirwan and the kingdom of Solomon and from Wadi Nu’umбn to the land of Khorasбn and Balkh and Ispahбn and from India to the Sudбn. Therein also (may Allah prolong the life of our lord the Kazi!) are doublets and cloths and a thousand sharp razors to shave off the Kazi’s beard, except he fear my resentment and adjudge the bag to be my bag.’ Now when the Kazi heard what I and the Kurd avouched, he was confounded and said, ‘I see ye twain be none other than two pestilent fellows, atheistical-villains who make sport of Kazis and magistrates and stand not in fear of reproach. Never did tongue tell nor ear hear aught more extraordinary than that which ye pretend. By Allah, from China to Shajarat Umm Ghaylбn, nor from Fars to Sudan nor from Wadi Nu’uman to Khorasan, was ever heard the like of what ye avouch or credited the like of what ye affirm. Say, fellows, be this bag a bottomless sea or the Day of Resurrection that shall gather together the just and unjust?’ Then the Kazi bade them open the bag; so I opened it and behold, there was in it bread and a lemon and cheese and olives. So I threw the bag down before the Kurd and ganged my gait.” Now when the Caliph heard this tale from Ali the Persian, he laughed till he fell on his back and made him a handsome present.[215] And men also relate a

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TALE OF HARUN AL-RASHID AND THE SLAVE-GIRL AND THE IMAM ABU YUSUF.

It is said that Ja'afar the Barmecide was one night carousing with Al Rashid, who said, "O Ja'afar, it hath reached me that thou hast bought such and such a slave-girl. Now I have long sought her for she is passing fair; and my heart is taken up with love of her, so do thou sell her to me." He replied, "I will not sell her, O Commander of the Faithful." Quoth he, "Then give her to me." Quoth the other, "Nor will I give her." Then Al-Rashid exclaimed, "Be Zubaydah triply divorced an thou shall not either sell or give her to me!" Then Ja'afar exclaimed, "Be my wife triply divorced an I either sell or give her to thee!" After awhile they recovered from their tipsiness and were aware of having fallen into a grave dilemma, but knew not by what device to extricate themselves. Then said Al-Rashid, "None can help us in this strait but Abъ Yъsuf."[216] So they sent for him, and this was in the middle of the night; and when the messenger reached him, he arose in alarm, saying to himself, "I should not be sent for at this tide and time, save by reason of some question of moment to Al-Islam." So he went out in haste and mounted his she-mule, saying to his servant, "Take the mule's nose-bag with thee; it may be she hath not finished her feed; and when we come to the Caliph's palace, put the bag on her, that she may eat what is left of her fodder, during the last of the night." And the man replied, "I hear and obey." Now when the Imam was admitted to the presence, Al-Rashid rose to receive him and seated him on the couch beside himself (where he was wont to seat none save the Kazi), and said to him, "We have not sent for thee at this untimely time and tide save to advise us upon a grave matter, which is such and such and wherewith we know not how to deal." And he expounded to him the case. Abu Yusuf answered, "O Commander of the Faithful, this is the easiest of things." Then he turned to Ja'afar and said, "O Ja'afar, sell half of her to the Commander of the Faithful and give him the other half; so shall ye both be quit of your oaths." The Caliph was delighted with this and both did as he prescribed. Then said Al-Rashid, "Bring me the girl at once," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph Harun al-Rashid commanded, “Bring me the girl at once, for I long for her exceedingly.” So they brought her and the Caliph said to Abu Yusuf, I have a mind to have her forthright, for I cannot bear to abstain from her during the prescribed period of purification; now how is this to be done?” Abu Yusuf replied, “Bring me one of thine own male slaves who hath never been manumitted.” So they brought one and Abu Yusuf said, “Give me leave to marry her to him; then let him divorce her before consummation; and thus shall it be lawful for thee to lie with her before purification.” This second expedient pleased the Caliph yet more than the first; he sent for the Mameluke and, whenas he came, said to the Kazi “I authorise thee to marry her to him.” So the Imam proposed the marriage to the slave, who accepted it, and performed the ceremony; after which he said to the slave, “Divorce her, and thou shalt have an hundred dinars.” But he replied, “I won’t do this;” and the Imam went on to increase his offer, and the slave to refuse till he bid him a thousand dinars. Then the man asked him, “Doth it rest with me to divorce her, or with thee or with the Commander of the Faithful?” He answered, “It is in thy hand.” “Then by Allah,” quoth the slave, “I will never do it; no, never!” Hearing these words the Caliph was exceeding wroth and said to the Imam, “What is to be done, O Abu Yusuf?” Replied he, “Be not concerned, O Commander of the Faithful; the thing is easy. Make this slave the damsel’s chattel.” Quoth Al-Rashid, “I give him to her;” and the Imam said to the girl, “Say: I accept.” So she said, I accept;” whereon quoth Abu Yusuf, “I pronounce separation from bed and board and divorce between them, for that he hath become her property, and so the marriage is annulled.” With this, Al-Rashid rose to his feet and exclaimed, “It is the like of thee that shall be Kazi in my time.” Then he called for sundry trays of gold and emptied them before Abu Yusuf, to whom he said, “Hast thou wherein to put this?” The Imam bethought him of the mule’s nose-bag; so he sent for it and, filling it with gold, took it and went home. And on the morrow, he said to his friends, “There is no easier nor shorter road to the goods of this world and the next, than that of religious learning;

for, see, I have gotten all this money by answering two or three questions." So consider thou, O polite reader,[217] the pleasantness of this anecdote, for it compriseth divers goodly features, amongst which are the complaisance of Ja'afar to Al Rashid, and the wisdom of the Caliph who chose such a Kazi and the excellent learning of Abu Yusuf, may Almighty Allah have mercy on their souls one and all! And they also tell the

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TALE OF THE LOVER WHO FEIGNED HIMSELF A THIEF.

When Khбlid bin Abdallah al-Kasri[218] was Emir of Bassorah, there came to him one day a company of men dragging a youth of exceeding beauty and lofty bearing and perfumed attire; whose aspect expressed good breeding, abundant wit and dignity of the gravest. They brought him before the Governor, who asked what it was and they replied, “This fellow is a thief, whom we caught last night in our dwelling-house.” Whereupon Khбlid looked at him and was pleased with his well-favouredness and elegant aspect; so he said to the others, “Loose him,” and going up to the young man, asked what he had to say for himself. He replied, “Verily the folk have spoken truly and the case is as they have said.” Quoth Khбlid, “And what moved thee to this and thou so noble of port and comely of mien?” Quoth the other “The lust after worldly goods, and the ordinance of Allah (extolled exalted be He!).” Rejoined Khбlid, “Be thy mother bereaved of thee![219] Hadst thou not, in thy fair face and sound sense and good breeding, what should restrain thee from thieving?” Answered the young man, “O Emir, leave this talk and proceed to what Almighty Allah hath ordained; this is what my hands have earned, and, ‘God is not unjust towards mankind.’”[220] So Khбlid was silent awhile considering the matter then he bade the young man draw near him and said, “Verily, thy confession before witnesses perplexeth me, for I cannot believe thee to be a thief: haply thou hast some story that is other than one of theft; and if so tell it me.” Replied the youth “O Emir, imagine naught other than what I have confessed to in thy presence; for I have no tale to tell save that verily I entered these folks’ house and stole what I could lay hands on and they caught me and took the stuff from me and carried me before thee.” Then Khalid bade clap him in gaol and commended a crier to cry throughout Bassorah, “O yes! O yes! Whoso be minded to look upon the punishment of such an one, the thief, and the cutting-off of his hand, let him be present to- morrow morning at such a place!” Now when the young man found himself in prison, with irons on his feet, he sighed heavily and with tears streaming from his eyes extemporized these couplets,

“When Khбlid menaced off to strike my hand * If I refuse to tell
him of her case;
Quoth I, ‘Far, far fro’ me that I should tell * A love, which
ever shall my heart engrace;
Loss of my hand for sin I have confessed * To me were easier than
to shame her face.’”

The warders heard him and went and told Khбlid who, when it was dark night, sent for the youth and conversed with him. He found him clever and well-bred, intelligent, lively and a pleasant companion; so he ordered him food and he ate. Then after an hour’s talk said Khбlid, “I know indeed thou hast a story to tell that is no thief’s; so when the Kazi shall come to-morrow morning and shall question thee about this robbery, do thou deny the charge of theft and avouch what may avert the pain and penalty of cutting off thy hand; for the Apostle (whom Allah bless and keep!) saith, ‘In cases of doubt, eschew punishment.’” Then he sent him back to prison, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Ninety-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Khбlid, after conversing with the youth, sent him back to prison, where he passed the night. And when morning dawned the folk assembled to see his hand cut off, nor was there a soul in Bassorah, man or woman, but was present to look upon the punishment of that handsome youth. Then Khбlid mounted in company of the notables of the city and others; and, summoning all four Kazis, sent for the young man, who came hobbling and stumbling in his fetters. There was none saw him but wept over him and the women all lifted up their voices in lamentation as for the dead. Then the Kazi bade silence the women and said to the prisoner, “These folk avouch that thou didst enter their dwelling-house and steal their goods: belike thou stolest less than a quarter dinar[221] ?” Replied he, “Nay, I stole that and more.” “Peradventure,” rejoined the Kazi “thou art partner with the folk in some of the goods?” Quoth the young man; “Not so: it was all theirs, and I had no right in it.” At this the Khбlid was wroth and rose and smote him on the face with his whip, applying to his own case this couplet,

“Man wills his wish to him accorded be; * But Allah naught accords save what He wills.”

Then he called for the butcher to do the work, who came and drew forth his knife and taking the prisoner’s hand set the blade to it, when, behold, a damsel pressed through the crowd of women, clad in tattered clothes,[222] and cried out and threw herself on the young man. Then she unveiled and showed a face like the moon whereupon the people raised a mighty clamour and there was like to have been a riot amongst them and a violent scene. But she cried out her loudest, saying, “I conjure thee, by Allah, O Emir, hasten not to cut off this man’s hand, till thou have read what is in this scroll!” So saying, she gave him a scroll, and Khбlid took it and opened it and read therein these couplets,

“Ah Khбlid! this one is a slave of love distraught, * And these
bowed eye-lashes sent shaft that caused his grief:
Shot him an arrow sped by eyes of mine, for he, * Wedded to
burning love of ills hath no relief:
He hath avowed a deed he never did, the while * Deeming this
better than disgrace of lover fief:
Bear then, I pray, with this distracted lover mine * Whose noble
nature falsely calls himself a thief!”

When Khбlid had read these lines he withdrew himself from the people and summoned the girl and questioned her; and she told him that the young man was her lover and she his mistress; and that thinking to visit her he came to the dwelling of her people and threw a stone into the house, to warn her of his coming. Her father and brothers heard the noise of the stone and sallied out on him; but he, hearing them coming, caught up all the household stuff and made himself appear a robber to cover his mistress’s honour. “Now when they saw him they seized him (continued she), crying: — A thief! and brought him before thee, whereupon he confessed to the robbery and persisted in his confession, that he might spare me disgrace; and this he did, making himself a thief, of the exceeding nobility and generosity of his nature.” Khбlid answered, “He is indeed worthy to have his desire;” and, calling the young man to him, kissed him between the eyes. Then he sent for the girl’s father and bespoke him, saying, “O Shaykh, we thought to carry out the law of mutilation in the case of this young man; but Allah (to whom be Honour and Glory!) hath preserved us from this, and I now adjudge him the sum of ten thousand dirhams, for that he would have given his hand for the preservation of thine honour and that of thy daughter and for the sparing of shame to you both. Moreover, I adjudge other ten thousand dirhams to thy daughter, for that she made known to me the truth of the case; and I ask thy leave to marry her to him.” Rejoined the old man, “O Emir, thou hast my consent.” So Khбlid praised Allah and thanked Him and improved the occasion by preaching a goodly sermon and a prayerful; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Two Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Khбlid praised Allah and thanked Him and improved the occasion by preaching a goodly sermon and a prayerful; after which he said to the young man, “I give thee to wife the damsel, such an one here present, with her own permission and her father’s consent; and her wedding settlement shall be this money, to wit, ten thousand dirhams.” “I accept this marriage at thy hands,” replied the youth; and Khбlid bade them carry the money on brass trays in procession to the young man’s house, whilst the people dispersed, fully satisfied. “And surely (quoth he who tells the tale[223]) never saw I a rarer day than this, for that it began with tears and annoy; and it ended with smiles and joy.” And in contrast of this story is this piteous tale of

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JA'AFAR THE BARMECIDE AND THE BEAN SELLER.

When Harun al-Rashid crucified Ja'afar the Barmecide[224] he commended that all who wept or made moan for him should also be crucified; so the folk abstained from that. Now it chanced that a wild Arab, who dwelt in a distant word, used every year to bring to the aforesaid Ja'afar an ode[225] in his honour, for which he rewarded him with a thousand dinars; and the Badawi took them and, returning to his own country, lived upon them, he and his family, for the rest of the year. Accordingly, he came with his ode at the wonted time and, finding that Ja'afar had been crucified, betook himself to the place where his body was hanging, and there made his camel kneel down and wept with sore weeping and mourned with grievous mourning; and he recited his ode and fell asleep. Presently Ja'afar the Barmecide appeared to him in a vision and said, "Verily thou hast wearied thyself to come to us and findest us as thou seest; but go to Bassorah and ask for a man there whose name is such and such, one of the merchants of the town, and say to him, 'Ja'afar, the Barmecide, saluteth thee and biddeth thee give me a thousand dinars, by the token of the bean.'" Now when the wild Arab awoke, he repaired to Bassorah, where he sought out the merchant and found him and repeated to him what Ja'afar had said in the dream; whereupon he wept with weeping so sore that he was like to depart the world. Then he welcomed the Badawi and seated him by his side and made his stay pleasant and entertained him three days as an honoured guest; and when he was minded to depart he gave him a thousand and five hundred dinars, saying, "The thousand are what is commanded to thee, and the five hundred are a gift from me to thee; and every year thou shalt have of me a thousand gold pieces." Now when the Arab was about to take leave, he said to the merchant, "Allah upon thee, tell me the story of the bean, that I may know the origin of all this." He answered: "In the early part of my life I was poor and hawked hot beans[226] about the streets of Baghdad to keep me alive. So I went out one raw and rainy day, without clothes enough on my body to protect me from the weather; now shivering for excess of cold and now stumbling into the pools of rain-water, and altogether in so piteous a plight as would make one shudder with goose-skin to look upon. But it chanced that Ja'afar that day was seated with his officers and his concubines, in an upper chamber overlooking the street when his eyes fell on me; so he took pity on my case and, sending one of his dependents to fetch me to him, said as soon as he saw me, 'Sell thy beans to my people.' So I began to mete out the beans with a measure I had by me; and each who took a measure of beans filled the measure with gold pieces till all my store was gone and my basket was clean empty. Then I gathered together the gold I had gotten, and Ja'afar said to me, 'Hast thou any beans left?' 'I know not,' answered I, and then sought in the basket, but found only one bean. So Ja'afar took from me the single bean and, splitting it in twain, kept one half himself and gave the other to one of his concubines, saying, 'For how much wilt thou buy this half bean?' She replied, 'For the tale of all this gold twice-told;' whereat I was confounded and said to myself, 'This is impossible.' But, as I stood wondering, behold, she gave an order to one of her hand-maids and the girl brought me the sum of the collected monies twice-told. Then said Ja'afar, 'And I will buy the half I have by me for double the sum of the whole,' presently adding, 'Now take the price of thy bean.' And he gave an order to one of his servants, who gathered together the whole of the money and laid it in my basket; and I took it and went my ways. Then I betook myself to Bassorah, where I traded with the monies and Allah prospered me amply, to Him be the praise and the thanks! So, if I give thee every year a thousand dinars of the bounty of Ja'afar, it will in no wise injure me. Consider then the munificence of Ja'afar's nature and how he was praised both alive and dead, the mercy of Allah Almighty be upon him! And men also recount the tale of

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ABU MOHAMMED HIGHT LAZYBONES.

It is told that Harun al-Rashid was sitting one day on the throne of the Caliphate, when there came in to him a youth of his eunuchry, bearing a crown of red gold, set with pearls and rubies and all manner of other gems and jewels, such as money might not buy; and, bussing the ground between his hands, said, “O Commander of the Faithful, the Lady Zubaydah kisseth the earth before thee” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say. Whereupon quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How pleasant is thy tale and profitable; and how sweet is thy speech and how delectable!” “And where is this,” replied Shahrazad, “compared with what I shall tell you next night an I live and the King grant me leave!” Thereupon quoth the King to himself, “By Allah, I will not slay her until I hear the end of her tale.”

When it was the Three Hundredth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “favour us, O my sister, with thy tale,” and she replied, ‘With joy and good will, if the King accord me leave;” whereupon the King said, “Tell thy tale, O Shahrazad.” So she pursued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the youth said to the Caliph, “The Lady Zubaydah kisseth the earth before thee and saith to thee, Thou knowest she hath bidden make this crown, which lacketh a great jewel for its dome-top; and she hath made search among her treasures, but cannot find a jewel of size to suit her mind.” Quoth the Caliph to his Chamberlains and Viceregents, Make search for a great jewel, such as Zubaydah desireth.” So they sought, but found nothing befitting her and told the Caliph who, vexed and annoyed thereat, exclaimed, “How am I Caliph and King of the Kings of the earth and cannot find so small a matter as a jewel? Woe to you! Ask of the merchants.” So they enquired of the traders, who replied, “Our lord the Caliph will not find a jewel such as he requireth save with a man of Bassorah, by name Abъ Mohammed highs Lazybones.” Thereupon they acquainted the Caliph with this and he bade his Wazir Ja’afar send a note to the Emir Mohammed al-Zubaydн, Governor of Bassorah, commanding him to equip Abu Mohammed Lazybones and bring him into the presence of the

Commander of the Faithful. The Minister accordingly wrote a note to that effect and despatched it by Masrur, who set out forthright for the city of Bassorah, and went in to the Emir Mohammed al-Zubaydi, who rejoiced in him and treated him with the high-most honour. Then Masrur read him the mandate of the Prince of True Believers, Harun al-Rashid, to which he replied, “I hear and I obey,” and forthwith despatched him, with a company of his followers, to Abu Mohammed’s house. When they reached it, they knocked at the door, whereupon a page came out and Masrur said to him, “Tell thy lord, The Commander of the Faithful summoneth thee.” The servant went in and told his master, who came out and found Masrur, the Caliph’s Chamberlain, and a company of the Governor’s men at the door. So he kissed ground before Masrur and said, “I hear and obey the summons of the Commander of the Faithful; but first enter ye my house.” They replied, “We cannot do that, save in haste; even as the Prince of True Believers commanded us, for he awaiteth thy coming.” But he said, “Have patience with me a little, till I set my affairs in order.” So after much pressure and abundant persuasion, they entered the house with him and found the vestibule hung with curtains of azure brocade, purfled with red gold, and Abu Mohammed Lazybones bade one of his servants carry Masrur to the private Hammam. Now this bath was in the house and Masrur found its walls and floors of rare and precious marbles, wrought with gold and silver, and its waters mingled with rose-water. Then the servants served Masrur and his company with the perfection of service; and, on their going forth of the Hammam, clad them in robes of honour, brocade-work interwoven with gold. And after leaving the bath Masrur and his men went in to Abu Mohammed Lazybones and found him seated in his upper chamber; and over his head hung curtains of gold-brocade, wrought with pearls and jewels, and the pavilion was spread with cushions, embroidered in red gold. Now the owner was sitting softly upon a quilted cloth covering a settee inlaid with stones of price; and, when he saw Masrur, he went forward to meet him and bidding him welcome, seated him by his side. Then he called for the food-trays; so they brought them, and when Masrur saw the tables, he exclaimed, “By Allah, never did I behold the like of these appointments in the palace of the Commander of the

Faithful!" For indeed the trays contained every manner of meat all served in dishes of gilded porcelain.[227] "So we ate and drank and made merry till the end of the day (quoth Masrur) when the host gave to each and every of us five thousand dinars, and on the morrow he clad us in dresses of honour of green and gold and entreated us with the utmost worship." Then said Masrur to him, "We can tarry no longer for fear of the Caliph's displeasure." Answered Abu Mohammed Lazybones, "O my lord, have patience with us till the morrow, that we may equip ourselves, and we will then depart with you." So they tarried with him that day and slept the night; and next morning Abu Mohammed's servants saddled him a she mule with selle and trappings of gold, set with all manner of pearls and stones of price; whereupon quoth Masrur to himself, "I wonder, when Abu Mohammed shall present himself in such equipage, if the Caliph will ask him how he came by all this wealth." Thereupon they took leave of Al-Zubaydi and, setting out from Bassorah, fared on, without ceasing to fare till they reached Baghdad-city and presented themselves before the Caliph, who bade Abu Mohammed be seated. He sat down and addressed the Caliph in courtly phrase, saying, "O Commander of the Faithful, I have brought with me an humble offering by way of homage: have I thy gracious permission to produce it?" Al-Rashid replied, "There is no harm in that,"[228] whereupon Abu Mohammed bade his men bring in a chest, from which he took a number of rarities, and amongst the rest, trees of gold with leaves of white emeraid,[229] and fruits of pigeon blood rubies and topazes and new pearls and bright. And as the Caliph was struck with admiration he fetched a second chest and brought out of it a tent of brocade, crowned with pearls and jacinths and emeralds and jaspers and other precious stones; its poles were of freshly cut Hindi aloes-wood, and its skirts were set with the greenest smaragds. Thereon were depicted all manner of animals such as beasts and birds, spangled with precious stones, rubies, emeralds, chrysolites and balasses and every kind of precious metal. Now when Al-Rashid saw these things, he rejoiced with exceeding joy and Abu Mohammed Lazybones said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, deem not that I have brought these to thee, fearing aught or coveting anything; but I knew myself to be but a man of the people and that such things befitted none save the Commander of the Faithful. And now, with thy leave, I will show thee, for thy diversion, something of what I can do.” Al-Rashid replied, “Do what thou wilt, that we may see.” “To hear is to obey,” said Abu Mohammed and, moving his lips, beckoned the palace battlements,[230] whereupon they inclined to him; then he made another sign to them, and they returned to their place. Presently he made a sign with his eye, and there appeared before him closets with closed doors, to which he spoke, and lo! the voices of birds answered him from within. The Caliph marvelled with passing marvel at this and said to him, “How camest thou by all this, seeing that thou art known only as Abu Mohammed Lazybones, and they tell me that thy father was a cupper serving in a public Hammam, who left thee nothing?” Whereupon he answered, “Listen to my story” And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and First Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abu Mohammed Lazybones thus spake to the Caliph: “O Prince of True Believers, listen to my story, for it is a marvellous and its particulars are wondrous; were it graven with graver-needles upon the eye-corners it were a warner to whose would be warned.” Quoth Al-Rashid, “Let us hear all thou hast to say, O Abu Mohammed!” So he began “Know then, O Commander of the Faithful (Allah prolong to thee glory and dominion!), the report of the folk; that I am known as the Lazybones and that my father left me nothing, is true; for he was, as thou hast said, nothing but a barber-cupper in a Hammam. And I throughout my youth was the idlest wight on the face of the earth; indeed, so great was my sluggishness that, if I lay at full length in the sultry season and the sun came round upon me, I was too lazy to rise and remove from the sun to the shade. And thus I abode till I reached my fifteenth year, when my father deceased in the mercy of Allah Almighty and left me nothing. However, my mother used to go out a-charing and feed me and give me to drink, whilst I lay on my side. Now it came to pass that one day she came in to me with five silver dirhams, and said to me, ‘O my son, I hear that Shaykh Abъ al-Muzaffar[231] is about to go a voyage to China.’ (Now this Shaykh was a good and charitable man who loved the poor.) ‘So come, my son, take these five silver bits; and let us both carry them to him and beg him to buy thee therewith somewhat from the land of China; so haply thou mayst make a profit of it by the bounty of Allah, whose name be exalted!' I was too idle to move for her; but she swore by the Almighty that, except I rose and went with her, she would bring me neither meat nor drink nor come in to me, but would leave me to die of hunger and thirst. Now when I heard her words, O Commander of the Faithful, I knew she would do as she threatened for her knowledge of my sluggishness; so I said to her, 'Help me to sit up.' She did so, and I wept the while and said to her, 'Bring me my shoes.' Accordingly, she brought them and I said, 'Put them on my feet.' She put them on my feet and I said, 'Lift me up off the ground.' So she lifted me up and I said, 'Support me, that I may walk.' So she supported me and I continued to fare a foot, at times stumbling over my skirts, till we came to the river bank, where we saluted the Shaykh and I said to him, 'O my uncle, art thou Abu al-Muzaffar?' 'At thy service,' answered he, and I, 'Take these dirhams and with them buy me somewhat from the land of China: haply Allah may vouchsafe me a profit of it.' Quoth the Shaykh to his companions, 'Do ye know this youth?' They answered, 'Yes, he is known as Abu Mohammed Lazybones, and we never saw him stir from his house till this moment.' Then said he to me, 'O my son, give me the silver with the blessing of Almighty Allah!' So he took the money, saying, 'Bismillah in the name of Allah!' and I returned home with my mother. Presently Shaykh Abu al-Muzaffar set sail, with a company of merchants, and stayed not till they reached the land of China, where he and his bought and sold; and, having won what they wished, set out on their homeward voyage. When they had been three days at sea, the Shaykh said to his company, 'Stay the vessel!' They asked, 'What dost thou want?' and he answered, 'Know that I have forgotten the commission wherewith Abu Mohammed Lazybones charged me; so let us turn back that we may lay out his money on somewhat whereby he may profit.' They cried, 'We conjure thee, by Allah Almighty turn not back with us; for we have traversed a long distance and a sore, and while so doing we have endured sad hardship and many terrors.' Quoth he, 'There is no help for it but we return;' and they said, 'Take from us double the profit of the five dirhams, and turn us not back.’ He agreed to this and they collected for him an ample sum of money. Thereupon they sailed on, till they came to an island wherein was much people; when they moored thereto and the merchants went ashore, to buy thence a stock of precious metals and pearls and jewels and so forth. Presently Abu al-Muzaffar saw a man seated, with many apes before him, and amongst them one whose hair had been plucked off; and as often as their owner’s attention was diverted from them, the other apes fell upon the plucked one and beat him and threw him on their master; whereupon the man rose and bashed them and bound them and punished them for this; and all the apes were wroth with the plucked ape on this account and funded him the more. When Shaykh Abu al-Muzaffar saw this, he felt for and took compassion upon the plucked ape and said to his master, ‘Wilt thou sell me yonder monkey?’ Replied the man, ‘Buy,’ and Abu al-Muzaffar rejoined, ‘I have with me five dirhams, belonging to an orphan lad. Wilt thou sell it me for that sum?’ Answered the monkey-merchant, ‘It is a bargain; and Allah give thee a blessing of him!’ So he made over the beast and received his money; and the Shaykh’s slaves took the ape and tied him up in the ship. Then they loosed sail and made for another island, where they cast anchor; and there came down divers, who plunged for precious stones, pearls and other gems; so the merchants hired them to dive for money and they dived. Now when the ape saw them doing this, he loosed himself from his bonds and, jumping off the ship’s side, plunged with them, whereupon quoth Abu al-Muzaffar, ‘There is no Majesty and there is no Might, save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! The monkey is lost to us with the luck of the poor fellow for whom we bought him.’ And they despaired of him; but, after a while, the company of divers rose to the surface, and behold, among them was the ape, with his hands full of jewels of price, which he threw down before Abu al-Muzaffar. The Shaykh marvelled at this and said, ‘There is much mystery in this monkey!’ Then they cast off and sailed till they came to a third island, called the Isle of the Zunъj,[232] who are a people of the blacks, which eat the flesh of the sons of Adam. When the blacks saw them, they boarded them in dug-outs[233] and, taking all in the vessel, pinioned them and carried them to their King, who bade slaughter certain of the merchants. So they slaughtered them by cutting their throats and ate their flesh; and the rest of the traders passed the night in bonds and were in sore concern. But when it was midnight, the ape arose and going up to Abu al-Muzaffar, loosed his bonds; and, as the others saw him free, they said, ‘Allah grant our deliverance may be at thy hands, O Abu al-Muzaffar!’ But he replied, ‘Know that he who delivered me, by leave of Allah Almighty, was none other than this monkey’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abu al-Muzaffar declared, “None loosed me, by leave of Allah Al-mighty, save this monkey and I buy my release of him at a thousand dinars!” whereupon the merchants rejoined, ‘And we likewise, each and every, will pay him a thousand dinars if he release us.’ With this the ape arose and went up to them and loosed their bonds one by one, till he had freed them all, when they made for the vessel and boarding her, found all safe and nothing missing from her. So they cast off and set sail; and presently Abu al-Muzaffar said to them, ‘O merchants, fulfil your promise to the monkey.’ ‘We hear and we obey,’ answered they; and each one paid him one thousand dinars, whilst Abu al-Muzaffar brought out to him the like sum of his own monies, so that a great heap of coin was collected for the ape. Then they fared on till they reached Bassorah-city where their friends came out to meet them; and when they had landed, the Shaykh said, ‘Where is Abu Mohammed Lazybones?’ The news reached my mother, who came to me as I lay asleep and said to me, ‘O my son, verily the Shaykh Abu al-Muzaffar hath come back and is now in the city; so rise and go thou to him and salute him and enquire what he hath brought thee; it may be Allah Almighty have opened to thee the door of fortune with somewhat.’ Quoth I, ‘Lift me from the ground and prop me up, whilst I go forth and walk to the river bank.’ After which I went out and walked on, stumbling over my skirts, till I met the Shaykh, who exclaimed at sight of me, ‘Welcome to him whose money hath been the means of my release and that of these merchants, by the will of Almighty Allah.’ Then he continued, ‘Take this monkey I bought for thee and carry him home and wait till I come to thee.’ So I took the ape and went off, saying in my mind, ‘By Allah, this is naught but rare merchandise!’ and led it home, where I said to my mother, ‘Whenever I lie down to sleep, thou biddest me rise and trade; see now this merchandise with thine own eyes.’ Then I sat me down and as I sat, up came the slaves of Abu al-Muzaffar and said to me, ‘Art thou Abu Mohammed Lazybones?’ ‘Yes’ answered I; and behold, Abu al-Muzaffar appeared behind them. So I rose up to him and kissed his hands: and he said, ‘Come with me to my home.’ ‘Hearkening and obedience,’ answered I and accompanied him to his house, where he bade his servants bring me what money the monkey had earned for me. So they brought it and he said to me, ‘O my son, Allah hath blessed thee with this wealth, by way of profit on thy five dirhams.’ Then the slaves set down the treasure in chests, which they had carried on their heads, and Abu al-Muzaffar gave me the keys saying, ‘Go before the slaves to thy house; for in sooth all this wealth is thine.’ So I returned to my mother, who rejoiced in this and said to me, ‘O my son, Allah hath blessed thee with all these riches; so put off thy laziness and go down to the bazar and sell and buy.’ At once I shook off my dull sloth, and opened a shop in the bazar, where the ape used to sit on the same divan with me eating with me when I ate and drinking when I drank. But, every day, he was absent from dawn till noon, when he came back bringing with him a purse of a thousand dinars, which he laid by my side, and sat down; and he ceased not so doing for a great while, till I amassed much wealth, wherewith, O Commander of the Faithful, I purchased houses and lands, and I planted gardens and I bought me white slaves and negroes and concubines. Now it came to pass one day, as I sat in my shop, with the ape sitting at my side on the same carpet, behold, he began to turn right and left, and I said to myself, ‘What aileth the beast?’ Then Allah made the ape speak with a ready tongue, and he said to me, ‘O Abu Mohammed!’ Now when I heard him speak, I was sore afraid; but he said to me, ‘Fear not; I will tell thee my case. I am a Marid of the Jinn and came to thee because of thy poor estate; but today thou knowest not the amount of thy wealth; and now I have need of thee and if thou do my will, it shall be well for thee.’ I asked, ‘What is it?’ and he answered, ‘I have a mind to marry thee to a girl like the full moon.’ Quoth I, ‘How so?’;

and quoth he, ‘Tomorrow don thou thy richest dress and mount thy mule, with the saddle of gold and ride to the Haymarket. There enquire for the shop of the Sharif[234] and sit down beside him and say to him, ‘I come to thee as a suitor craving thy daughter’s hand.’ ‘If he say to thee, ‘Thou hast neither cash nor rank nor family’; pull out a thousand dinars and give them to him, and if he ask more, give him more and tempt him with money.’ Whereto I replied, ‘To hear is to obey; I will do thy bidding, Inshallah!’ So on the next morning I donned my richest clothes, mounted my she mule with trappings of gold and rode to the Haymarket where I asked for the Sharif’s shop, and finding him there seated, alighted and saluted him and seated myself beside him” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abu Mohammed Lazybones continued: “So I alighted and, saluting him, seated myself beside him, and my Mamelukes and negro-slaves stood before me. Said the Sharif, ‘Haply, thou hast some business with us which we may have pleasure of transacting?’ Replied I, ‘Yes, I have business with thee.’ Asked he, ‘And what is it?’; and I answered, ‘I come to thee as a suitor for thy daughter’s hand.’ So he said, ‘Thou hast neither cash nor rank nor family;’ whereupon I pulled him out a purse of a thousand dinars, red gold, and said to him, ‘This is my rank[235] and my family; and he (whom Allah bless and keep!) hath said, The best of ranks is wealth. And how well quoth the poet,

‘Whoso two dithams hath, his lips have learnt * Speech of all
kinds with eloquence bedight:
Draw near[236] his brethren and crave ear of him, * And him
thou seest haught in pride-full height:
Were ‘t not for dirhams wherein glories he, * Hadst found him
‘mid man kind in sorry plight.
When richard errs in words they all reply, * “Sooth thou hast
spoken and hast said aright!”
When pauper speaketh truly all reply * ‘Thou liest;’ and they
hold his sayings light.[237]

Verily dirhams in earth's every stead * Clothe men with rank and
make them fair to sight
Gold is the very tongue of eloquence; * Gold is the best of arms
for might who'd fight!'

Now when the Sharif heard these my words and understood my verse, he bowed his head awhile groundwards then raising it, said, 'If it must be so, I will have of thee other three thousand gold pieces.' 'I hear and I obey,' answered I, and sent one of my Mamelukes home for the money. As soon as he came back with it, I handed it to the Sharif who, when he saw it in his hands, rose, and bidding his servants shut his shop, invited his brother merchants of the bazar the wedding; after which he carried me to his house and wrote out my contract of marriage with his daughter saying to me, 'After ten days, I will bring thee to pay her the first visit.' So I went home rejoicing and, shutting myself up with the ape, told him what had passed; and he said 'Thou hast done well.' Now when the time appointed by the Sharif drew near, the ape said to me, 'There is a thing I would have thee do for me; and thou shalt have of me (when it is done) whatso thou wilt.' I asked, 'What is that?' and he answered, 'At the upper end of the chamber wherein thou shalt meet thy bride, the Sharif's daughter, stands a cabinet, on whose door is a ring-padlock of copper and the keys under it. Take the keys and open the cabinet in which thou shalt find a coffer of iron with four flags, which are talismans, at its corners; and in its midst stands a brazen basin full of money, wherein is tied a white cock with a cleft comb; while on one side of the coffer are eleven serpents and on the other a knife. Take the knife and slaughter the cock; cut away the flags and upset the chest, then go back to the bride and do away her maidenhead. This is what I have to ask of thee.' 'Hearkening and obedience,' answered I, and betook myself to the house of the Sharif. So as soon as I entered the bride-chamber, I looked for the cabinet and found it even as the ape had described it. Then I went in unto the bride and marvelled at her beauty and loveliness and stature and symmetrical-grace, for indeed they were such as no tongue can set forth. I rejoiced in her with exceeding joy; and in the middle of the night, when my bride slept, I rose and, taking the keys, opened the cabinet. Then I seized the knife and slew the cock and threw down the flags and upset the coffer, whereupon the girl awoke and, seeing the closet open and the cock with cut throat, exclaimed, ‘There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! The Marid hath got hold of me!’ Hardly had she made an end of speaking, when the Marid swooped down upon the house and, snatching up the bride, flew away with her; whereupon there arose a mighty clamour and behold, in came the Sharif, buffetting his face and crying, ‘O Abu Mohammed, what is this deed thou hast done? Is it thus thou requiitest us? I made this talisman in the cabinet fearing for my daughter from this accursed one who, for these six years, hath sought to steal-away the girl, but could not. But now there is no more abiding for thee with us, so wend thy ways.’ Thereupon I went forth and returned to my own house, where I made search for the ape but could not find him nor any trace of him; whereby I knew that it was he who was the Marid, and that he had carried off my wife and had tricked me into destroying the talisman and the cock, the two things which hindered him from taking her, and I repented, rending my raiment and cuffing my face. And there was no land but was straitened upon me; so I made for the desert forthright and ceased not wandering on till night overtook me, for I knew not whither I was going. And whilst I was deep in sad thought behold, I met two serpents, one tawny and the other white, and they were fighting to kill each other. So I took up a stone and with one cast slew the tawny serpent, which was the aggressor; whereupon the white serpent glided away and was absent for a while, but presently she returned accompanied by ten other white serpents which glided up to the dead serpent and tore her in pieces, so that only the head was left. Then they went their ways and I fell prostrate for weariness on the ground where I stood; but as I lay, pondering my case lo! I heard a Voice though I saw no one and the Voice versified with these two couplets,

‘Let Fate with slackened bridle fare her pace, * Nor pass the
night with mind which cares an ace
Between eye-closing and its opening, * Allah can foulest change
to fairest case.’

Now when I heard this, O Commander of the Faithful, great concern get hold of me and I was beyond measure troubled, and behold, I heard a Voice from behind me extemporise these couplets,

‘O Moslem! thou whose guide is Alcor6n, * Joy in what brought
safe peace to thee, O man.
Fear not what Satan haply whispered thee, * And in us see a
Truth-believing

Then said I, ‘I conjure thee, by the truth of Him thou worshippest, let me know who thou art!’ Thereupon the Invisible Speaker assumed the form of a man and said, ‘Fear not; for the report of thy good deed hath reached us, and we are a people of the true-believing Jinn. So, if thou lack aught, let us know it that we may have the pleasure of fulfilling thy want.’ Quoth I, ‘Indeed I am in sore need, for I am afflicted with a grievous affliction and no one was ever afflicted as I am!’ Quoth he, ‘Perchance thou art Abu Mohammed Lazybones?’ and I replied, ‘Yes.’ He rejoined, ‘I, O Abu Mohammed, am the brother of the white serpent, whose foe thou slewest, we are four brothers by one father and mother, and we are all indebted to thee for thy kindness. And know thou that he who played this trick on thee in the likeness of an ape, is a Marid of the Marids of the Jinn; and had he not used this artifice, he had never been able to get the girl; for he hath loved her and had a mind to take her this long while, but he was hindered of that talisman; and had it remained as it was, he could never have found access to her. However, fret not thyself for that; we will bring thee to her and kill the Marid; for thy kindness is not lost upon us.’ Then he cried out with a terrible outcry” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Ifrit continued, “‘Verily thy kindness is not lost upon us.’ Then he cried out with a terrible outcry in a horrible voice, and behold, there appeared a troop of the Jinn, of whom he enquired concerning the ape; and one of them said, ‘I know his abiding- place;’ and the other asked ‘Where abideth he?’ Said the speaker ‘He is in the City of

Brass whereon sun riseth not.’ Then said the first Jinni to me, ‘O Abu Mohammed, take one of these our slaves, and he will carry thee on his back and teach thee how thou shalt get back the girl; but know that this slave is a Marid of the Marids and beware, whilst he is carrying thee, lest thou utter the name of Allah, or he will flee from thee and thou wilt fall and be destroyed.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered I and chose out one of the slaves, who bent down and said to me, ‘Mount.’ So I mounted on his back, and he flew up with me into the firmament, till I lost sight of the earth and saw the stars as they were the mountains of earth fixed and firm[238] and heard the angels crying, ‘Praise be to Allah,’ in heaven while the Marid held me in converse, diverting me and hindering me from pronouncing the name of Almighty Allah.[239] But, as we flew, behold, One clad in green raiment,[240] with streaming tresses and radiant face, holding in his hand a javelin whence flew sparks of fire, accosted me, saying, ‘O Abu Mohammed, say: — There is no god but the God and Mohammed is the Apostle of God; or I will smite thee with this javelin.’ Now already I felt heart-broken by my forced silence as regards calling on the name of Allah; so I said, ‘There is no god but the God, and Mohammed is the Apostle of God. Whereupon the shining One smote the Marid with his javelin and he melted away and became ashes; whilst I was thrown from his back and fell headlong towards the earth, till I dropped into the midst of a dashing sea, swollen with clashing surge. And behold I fell hard by a ship with five sailors therein, who seeing me, made for me and took me up into the vessel; and they began to speak to me in some speech I knew not; but I signed to them that I understood not their speech. So they fared on till the last of the day, when they cast out a net and caught a great fish and they broiled it and gave me to eat; after which they ceased not sailing on till they reached their city and carried me to their King and set me in his presence. So I kissed ground before him, and he bestowed on me a dress of honour and said to me in Arabic (which he knew well), ‘I appoint thee one of my officers.’ Thereupon I asked him the name of the city, and he replied, ‘It is called Hanбd[241] and is in the land of China.’ Then he committed me to his Wazir, bidding him show me the city, which was formerly peopled by Infidels, till Almighty Allah turned them into stones; and there I abode a month's space, diverting myself with viewing the place, nor saw I ever greater plenty of trees and fruits than there. And when this time had past, one day, as I sat on the bank of a river, behold, there accosted me a horseman, who said to me, 'Art thou not Abu Mohammed Lazybones?' 'Yes,' answered I; whereupon, he said, 'Fear not, for the report of thy good deed hath reached us.' Asked I, 'Who art thou?' and he answered, 'I am a brother of the white serpent, and thou art hard by the place where is the damsel whom thou seekest.' So saying, he took off his clothes and clad me therein, saying, 'Fear not, for the slave who perished under thee was one of our slaves.' Then the horseman took me up behind him and rode on with me to a desert place, when he said, 'Dismount now and walk on between these two mountains, till thou seest the City of Brass;[242] then halt afar off and enter it not, ere I return to thee and tell thee how thou shalt do.' 'To hear is to obey,' replied I and, dismounting from behind him, walked on till I came to the city, the walls whereof I found of brass. Then I began to pace round about it, hoping to find a gate, but found none; and presently as I persevered, behold, the serpent's brother rejoined me and gave me a charmed sword which should hinder any from seeing me,[243] then went his way. Now he had been gone but a little while, when lo! I heard a noise of cries and found myself in the midst of a multitude of folk whose eyes were in their breasts; and seeing me quoth they, 'Who art thou and what cast thee into this place?' So I told them my story, and they said, 'The girl thou seekest is in this city with the Marid; but we know not what he hath done with her. Now we are brethren of the white serpent,' adding, 'Go thou to yonder spring and note where the water entereth, and enter thou with it; for it will bring thee into the city.' I did as they bade me, and followed the water-course, till it brought me to a Sardab, a vaulted room under the earth, from which I ascended and found myself in the midst of the city. Here I saw the damsel seated upon a throne of gold, under a canopy of brocade, girt round by a garden full of trees of gold, whose fruits were jewels of price, such as rubies and chrysolites, pearls and coral. And the moment she saw me, she knew me and accosted me with the Moslem salutation, saying, 'O my lord, who guided thee hither?' So I told her all that had passed, and she said, 'Know, that the accursed Marid, of the greatness of his love for me, hath told me what bringeth him bane and what bringeth him gain; and that there is here a talisman by means whereof he could, an he would, destroy the city and all that are therein; and whoso possesseth it, the Ifrits will do his commandment in everything. It standeth upon a pillar' — Whereat I asked her, 'And where is the pillar?' and she answered, 'It is in such a place.' 'And what manner of thing may the talisman be?' said I: said she, 'It is in the semblance of a vulture[244] and upon it is a writing which I cannot read. So go thou thither and seize it, and set it before thee and, taking a chafing dish, throw into it a little musk, whereupon there will arise a smoke which will draw the Ifrits to thee, and they will all present themselves before thee, nor shall one be absent; also they shall be subject to thy word and, whatsoever thou biddest them, that will they do. Arise therefore and fall to this thing, with the blessing of Almighty Allah.' I answered, 'Hearkening and obedience' and, going to the column, did as she bade me, whereupon the Ifrits all presented themselves before me saying, 'Here are we, O our lord! Whatsoever thou biddest us, that will we do.' Quoth I, 'Bind the Marid who brought the damsel hither from her home.' Quoth they, 'We hear and obey,' and off they flew and bound that Marid in straitest bonds and returned after a while, saying, 'We have done thy bidding.' Then I dismissed them and, repairing to my wife, told her what had happened and said to her, 'O my bride, wilt thou go with me?' 'Yes,' answered she. So I carried her forth of the vaulted chamber whereby I had entered the city and we fared on, till we fell in with the folk who had shown me the way to find her." And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that he continued on this wise: "And we fared on till we fell in with the folk who had shown me the way to her. So I said to them, 'Point me out a path which shall lead me to my home,' and they did accordingly, and brought us a-foot to the sea-shore and set us aboard a vessel which sailed on before us with a fair wind, till we reached Bassorah-city. And when we entered the house of my father-in-law and her people saw my wife, they rejoiced with exceeding joy. Then I fumigated the vulture with musk and lo! the Ifrits flocked to me from all sides, saying, ‘At thy service what wilt thou have us do?’ So I bade them transport all that was in the City of Brass of monies and noble metals and stones of price to my house in Bassorah, which they did; and I then ordered them to bring me the ape. They brought him before me, abject and contemptible, and I said to him, ‘O accursed, why hast thou dealt thus perfidiously with me?’ Then I com mended the Ifrits to shut him in a brazen vessel[245] so they put him in a brazen cucurbite and sealed it with lead. But I abode with my wife in joy and delight; and now, O Commander of the Faithful, I have under my hand precious things in such measure and rare jewels and other treasure and monies on such wise as neither reckoning may express nor may limits comprise; and, if thou lust after wealth or aught else, I will command the Jinn at once to do thy desire. But all this is of the bounty of Almighty Allah.” Thereupon the Commander of the Faithful wondered greatly and bestowed on him imperial gifts, in exchange for his presents, and entreated him with the favour he deserved. And men also tell the tale of the

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GENEROUS DEALING OF YAHYA BIN KHALID THE BARMECIDE WITH MANSUR.

It is told that Harun al-Rashid, in the days before he became jealous of the Barmecides, sent once for one of his guards, Salih by name, and said to him, “O Sбlih, go to Mansъr[246] and say to him: ‘Thou owest us a thousand thousand dirhams and we require of thee immediate payment of this amount.’ And I command thee, O Salih, unless he pay it between this hour and sundown, sever his head from his body and bring it to me.” “To hear is to obey,” answered Salih and, going to Mansur, acquainted him with what the Caliph had said, whereupon quoth he, “I am a lost man, by Allah; for all my estate and all my hand owneth, if sold for their utmost value, would not fetch a price of more than an hundred thousand dirhams. Whence then, O Salih, shall I get the other nine hundred thousand?” Salih replied, “Contrive how thou mayst speedily acquit thyself, else thou art a dead man; for I cannot grant thee an eye-twinkling of delay after the time appointed me by the Caliph; nor can I fail of aught which the Prince of True Believers hath enjoined on me. Hasten, therefore, to devise some means of saving thyself ere the time expire.” Quoth Mansur, “O Salih, I beg thee of thy favour to bring me to my house, that I may take leave of my children and family and give my kinsfolk my last injunctions.” Now Salih relateth: “So I went with him to his house where he fell to bidding his family farewell, and the house was filled with a clamour of weeping and lamentations and calling for help on Almighty Allah. Thereupon I said to him, ‘I have bethought me that Allah may haply vouchsafe thee relief at the hands of the Barmecides. Come, let us go to the house of Yбhyб bin Khбlid.’ So we went to Yahya’s house, and Mansur told him his case, whereat he was sore concerned and bowed him groundwards for a while, then raising his head, he called his treasurer and said to him, ‘How much have we in our treasury?’ ‘A matter of five thousand dirhams,’ answered the treasurer, and Yahya bade him bring them and sent a messenger to his son, Al-Fazl, saying, ‘I am offered for sale a splendid estate which may never be laid waste; so send me somewhat of money.’ Al-Fazl sent him a thousand thousand dirhams, and he despatched a mes senger with a like message to his son Ja'afar, saying, ‘We have a matter of much moment and for it we want money;’ whereupon Ja'afar at once sent him a thousand thousand dirhams; nor did Yahya leave sending to his kinsmen of the Barmecides, till he had collected from them a great sum of money for Mansur. But Salih and the debtor knew not of this; and Mansur said to Yahya, ‘O my lord, I have laid hold upon thy skirt, for I know not whither to look for the money but to thee, in accordance with thy wonted generosity; so discharge thou the rest of my debt for me and make me thy freed slave.’ Thereupon Yahya hung down his head and wept; then he said to a page, ‘Harkye, boy, the Commander of the Faithful gave our slave- girl Danбннr a jewel of great price: go thou to her and bid her send it to us.’ The page went out and presently returned with the jewel, whereupon quoth Yahya, ‘O Mansur, I bought this jewel of the merchant for the Commander of the Faithful, at a price of two hundred thousand dinars,[247] and he gave it to our slave-girl Dananir, the lute-player; and when he sees it with thee, he will know it and spare thy blood and do thee honour for our sake; and now, O Mansur, verily thy money is complete.’ (Salih continued) So I took the money and the jewel and carried them to al-Rashid together with Mansur, but on the way I heard him repeat this couplet, applying it to his own case,

‘’Twas not of love that fared my feet to them; * ’Twas that I feared me lest they shoot their shafts!’

Now when I heard this, I marvelled at his evil nature and his depravity and mischief-making and his ignoble birth and provenance and, turning upon him, I said, ‘There is none on the face of the earth better or more righteous than the Barmecides, nor any baser nor more wrongous than thou; for they bought thee off from death and delivered thee from destruction, giving thee what should save thee; yet thou thankest them not nor praises” them, neither acquittest thee after the manner of the noble; nay, thou meetest their benevolence with this speech.’ Then I went to Al-Rashid and acquainted him with all that had passed” And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Salih con tinued: “So I acquainted the Commander of the Faithful with all that passed and Al-Rashid marvelled at the generosity and benevolence of Yahya and the vileness and ingratitude of Mansur, and bade restore the jewel to Yahya, saying, ‘Whatso we have given it befitteth us not to take again.’ After that Salih returned to Yahya and acquainted him with the tale of Mansur and his ill-conduct; whereupon replied he, ‘O Salih, when a man is in want, sick at heart and sad of thought, he is not to be blamed for aught that falleth from him; for it cometh not from the heart;’ and on this wise he took to seeking excuse for Mansur. But Salih wept and exclaimed, ‘Never shall the revolving heavens bring forth into being the like of thee, O Yahya! Alas, and well- away, that one of such noble nature and generosity should be laid in the dust!’ And he repeated these two couplets,

‘Haste to do kindness thou cost intend; * Thou canst not always
on boons expend:
How many from bounty themselves withheld, * Till means of bounty
had come to end!’”

And men tell another tale of the

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GENEROUS DEALING OF YAHYA SON OF KHБLID WITH A MAN WHO FORGED A LETTER IN HIS NAME.

There was between Yбhyб bin Khбlid and Abdullah bin Mбlik al-Khuzб'i,[248] an enmity which they kept secret; the reason of the hatred being that Harun al-Rashid loved Abdullah with exceeding love, so that Yahya and his sons were wont to say that he had bewitched the Commander of the Faithful. And thus they abode a long while, with rancour in their hearts, till it fell out that the Caliph invested Abdullah with the government of Armenia[249] and despatched him thither. Now soon after he had settled himself in his seat of government, there came to him one of the people of Irak, a man of good breeding and excellent parts and abundant cleverness; but he had lost his money and wasted his wealth and his estate was come to ill case; so he forged a letter to Abdullah bin Malik in the name of Yahya bin Khбlid and set out therewith for Armenia. Now when he came to the Governor's gate, he gave the letter to one of the Chamberlains, who took it and carried it to his master. Abdullah opened it and read it and, considering it attentively, knew it to be forged; so he sent for the man, who presented himself before him and called down blessings upon him and praised him and those of his court. Quoth Abdullah to him, "What moved thee to weary thyself on this wise and bring me a forged letter? But be of good heart; for we will not disappoint thy travail." Replied the other, "Allah prolong the life of our lord the Wazir! If my coming annoy thee, cast not about for a pretext to repel me, for Allah's earth is wide and He who giveth daily bread still liveth. Indeed, the letter I bring thee from Yahya bin Khalid is true and no forgery." Quoth Abdullah, "I will write a letter to my agent[250] at Baghdad and command him enquire concerning this same letter. If it be true, as thou sayest, and genuine and not forged by thee, I will bestow on thee the Emirship of one of my cities; or, if thou prefer a present, I will give thee two hundred thousand dirhams, besides horses and camels of price and a robe of honour. But, if the letter prove a forgery, I will order thou be beaten with two hundred blows of a stick and thy beard be shaven." So Abdullah bade confine him in a chamber and furnish him therein with all he needed, till his case should be made manifest. Then he despatched a letter to his agent at Baghdad, to the following effect: "There is come to me a man with a letter purporting to be from Yahya bin Kh6lid. Now I have my suspicions of this letter: therefore delay thou not in the matter, but go thyself and look carefully into the case and let me have an answer with all speed, in order that we may know what is true and what is untrue." When the letter reached Baghdad, the agent mounted at once, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the agent of Abdullah, son of Malik al-Khuza'i, on receipt of the letter at Baghdad, mounted at once and repaired to the house of Yahya bin Kh6lid, whom he found sitting with his officers and boon-companions. After the usual salute he gave him the letter and Yahya read it and said to the agent, "Come back to me tomorrow for my written answer." Now when the agent had gone away, Yahya turned to his companions and said, "What doth he deserve who forgeth a letter in my name and carrieth it to my foe?" They answered all and each, saying this and that, and every one proposing some kind of punishment; but Yahya said, "Ye err in that ye say and this your counsel is of the baseness of your spirits and the meanness of your minds. Ye all know the close favour of Abdullah with the Caliph and ye weet of what is between him and us of anger and enmity; and now Almighty Allah hath made this man the means of reconciliation between us; and hath fitted him for such purpose and hath appointed him to quench the fire of ire in our hearts, which hath been growing these twenty years; and by his means our differences shall be adjusted. Wherefore it behoveth me to requite such man by verifying his assertion and amending his estate; so I will write him a letter to Abdullah son of Malik, praying that he may use him with increase of honour and continue to him his liberality." Now when his companions heard what he said, they called down blessings on him and marvelled at his generosity and the greatness of his magnanimity. Then he called for paper and ink and wrote Abdullah a letter in his own hand, to the following effect: “In the name of Allah, the Compassionating’ the Compassionate! Of a truth thy letter hath reached me (Allah give thee long life!) and I am glad to hear of thy safety and am pleased to be assured of thine immunity and prosperity. It was thy thought that a certain worthy man had forged a letter in my name and that he was not the bearer of any message from the same; but the case is not so, for the letter I myself wrote, and it was no forgery; and I hope, of thy courtesy and consideration and the nobility of thy nature, that thou wilt gratify this generous and excellent man of his hope and wish, and honour him with the honour he deserveth and bring him to his desire and make him the special-object of thy favour and munificence. Whatso thou dost with him, it is to me that thou dost the kindness, and I am thankful to thee accordingly.” Then he superscribed the letter and after sealing it, delivered it to the agent, who despatched it to Abdullah. Now when the Governor read it, he was charmed with its contents, and sending for the man, said to him, “Whichever of the two promised boons is the more acceptable to thee that will I give thee.” The man replied, “The money gift were more acceptable to me than aught else,” whereupon Abdullah ordered him two hundred thousand dirhams and ten Arab horses, five with housings of silk and other five with richly ornamented saddles, used in state processions; besides twenty chests of clothes and ten mounted white slaves and a proportionate quantity of jewels of price. Moreover, he bestowed on him a dress of honour and sent him to Baghdad in great splendour. So when he came thither, he repaired to the door of Yahya’s house, before he went to his own folk, and craved permission to enter and have audience. The Chamberlain went in to Yahya and said to him, “O my lord, there is one at the door who craveth speech of thee; and he is a man of apparent wealth, courteous in manner, comely of aspect and attended by many servants.” Then Yahya bade admit him; and, when he entered and kissed the ground before him, Yahya asked him, “Who art thou?” He answered, “Hear me, O my lord, I am he who was done dead by the tyranny of fortune, but thou didst raise me to life again from the grave of calamities and exalt me to the paradise of my desires. I am the man who forged a letter in thy name and carried it to Abdullah bin Malik al-Khuza’i.” Yahya asked, “How hath he dealt with thee and what did he give thee?"; and the man answered, "He hath given me, thanks to thy hand and thy great liberality and benevolence and to thy comprehensive kindness and lofty magnanimity and thine all-embracing generosity, that which hath made me a wealthy man and he hath distinguished me with his gifts and favours. And now I have brought all that he gave me and here it is at thy door; for it is thine to decide and the command is in thy hand." Rejoined Yahya, "Thou hast done me better service than I did thee and I owe thee a heavy debt of gratitude and every gift the white hand[251] can give, for that thou hast changed into love and amity the hate and enmity that were between me and a man whom I respect and esteem. Wherefore I will give thee the like of what Abdullah bin Malik gave thee." Then he ordered him money and horses and chests of apparel, such as Abdullah had given him; and thus that man's fortune was restored to him by the munificence of these two generous ones. And folk also relate the tale of the

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CALIPH AL-MAAMUN AND THE STRANGE SCHOLAR.

It is said of Al-Maamun that, among the Caliphs of the house of Abbas, there was none more accomplished in all branches of knowledge than he. Now on two days in each week, he was wont to preside at conferences of the learned, when the lawyers and theologians disputed in his presence, each sitting in his several-rank and room. One day as he sat thus, there came into the assembly a stranger, clad in ragged white clothes, who took seat in an obscure place behind the doctors of the law. Then the assembly began to speak and debate difficult questions, it being the custom that the various propositions should be submitted to each in turn, and that whoso bethought him of some subtle addition or rare conceit, should make mention of it. So the question went round till it came to the strange man, who spake in his turn and made a goodlier answer than any of the doctors' replies; and the Caliph approved his speech. —— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph Al-Maamun approved his speech and ordered him to come up from his low place to a high stead. Now when the second question came to him, he made a still more notable answer, and Al-Maamun ordered him to be preferred to a yet higher seat; and when the third question reached him, he made answer more justly and appropriately than on the two previous occasions, and Al-Maamun bade him come up and sit near himself. Presently the discussion ended when water was brought and they washed their hands after which food was set on and they ate; and the doctors arose and withdrew; but Al-Maamun forbade the stranger to depart with them and, calling him to himself, treated him with especial-favour and promised him honour and profit. Thereupon they made ready the sйance of wassail; the fair-faced cup-companions came and the pure wine[252] went round amongst them, till the cup came to the stranger, who rose to his feet and spake thus, "If the Commander of the Faithful permit me, I will say one word.” Answered the Caliph, “Say what thou wilt.” Quoth the man “Verily the Exalted Intelligence (whose eminence Allah increase!) knoweth that his slave was this day, in the august assembly, one of the unknown folk and of the meanest of the company; and the Commander of the Faithful raised his rank and brought him near to himself, little as were the wit and wisdom he displayed, preferring him above the rest and advancing him to a station and a degree where to his thought aspired not. But now he is minded to part him from that small portion of intellect which raised him high from his lowness and made him great after his littleness. Heaven forfend and forbid that the Commander of the Faithful should envy his slave what little he hath of understanding and worth and renown! Now, if his slave should drink wine, his reason would depart far from him and ignorance draw near to him and steal-away his good breeding, so would he revert to that low and contemptible degree, whence he sprang, and become ridiculous and despicable in the eyes of the folk. I hope, therefore, that the August Intelligence, of his power and bounty and royal-generosity and magnanimity, will not despoil his slave of this jewel.” When the Caliph Al-Maamun heard his speech, he praised him and thanked him and making him sit down again in his place, showed him high honour and ordered him a present of an hundred thousand silver pieces. Moreover he mounted him upon a horse and gave him rich apparel; and in every assembly he was wont to exalt him and show him favour over all the other doctors of law and religion till he became the highest of them all in rank. And Allah is All knowing.[253] Men also tell a tale of

ALI SHAR[254] AND ZUMURRUD.

There lived once in the days of yore and the good old times long gone before, in the land of Khorasan, a merchant called Majd al-Dнn, who had great wealth and many slaves and servants, white and black, young and old; but he had not been blessed with a child until he reached the age of threescore, when Almighty Allah vouchsafed him a son, whom he named Alн Shбr. The boy grew up like the moon on the night of fulness; and when he came to man’s estate and was endowed with all kinds of perfections, his father fell sick of a death-malady and, calling his son to him, said, “O my son, the fated hour of my decease is at hand, and I desire to give thee my last injunctions.” He asked, “And what are they, O my father?”; and he answered, “O my son, I charge thee, be not over-familiar with any[255] and eschew what leadeth to evil and mischief. Beware lest thou sit in company with the wicked; for he is like the blacksmith; if his fire burn thee not, his smoke shall bother thee: and how excellent is the saying of the poet,[256]

‘In thy whole world there is not one,
Whose friendship thou may’st count upon,
Nor plighted faith that will stand true,
When times go hard, and hopes are few.
Then live apart and dwell alone,
Nor make a prop of any one,
I’ve given a gift in that I’ve said,
Will stand thy friend in every stead:’

And what another saith,

‘Men are a hidden malady; * Rely not on the sham in them:
For perfidy and treachery * Thou’lt find, if thou examine them.’

And yet a third saith,

‘Converse with men hath scanty weal, except * To while away the time in chat and prate:

Then shun their intimacy, save it be * To win thee lore, or
better thine estate.’

And a fourth saith,

‘If a sharp-witted wight e’er tried mankind, * I’ve eaten that
which only tasted he:[257]
Their amity proved naught but wile and guile, * Their faith I
found was but hypocrisy.’”

Quoth Ali, “O my father, I have heard thee and I will obey thee what more shall I do?” Quoth he, “Do good whereas thou art able; be ever kind and courteous to men and regard as riches every occasion of doing a good turn; for a design is not always easily carried out; and how well saith the poet,

“Tis not at every time and tide unstable, * We can do kindly acts
and charitable:
When thou art able hasten thee to act, * Lest thine endeavour
prove anon unable!’”

Said Ali, “I have heard thee and I will obey thee.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the youth replied, “I have heard thee and I will obey thee; what more?” And his sire continued, “Be thou, O my son, mindful of Allah, so shall He be mindful of thee. Ward thy wealth and waste it not; for an thou do, thou wilt come to want the least of mankind. Know that the measure of a man’s worth is according to that which his right hand hendeth: and how well saith the poet,[258]

‘When fails my wealth no friend will deign befriend, * And when
it waxeth all men friendship show:
How many a foe for wealth became my friend, * Wealth lost, how
many a friend became a foe!’”

Asked Ali, “What more?” And Majd al-Din answered, “O my son, take counsel of those who are older than thou and hasten not to do thy heart’s desire. Have compassion on those who are below thee, so shall those who are above thee have compassion on thee; and oppress none, lest Allah empower one who shall oppress thee. How well saith the poet,

‘Add other wit to thy wit, counsel craving, * For man’s true
course hides not from minds of two
Man is a mirror which but shows his face, * And by two mirrors he
his back shall view.’

And as saith another,[259]

‘Act on sure grounds, nor hurry fast,
To gain the purpose that thou hast
And be thou kindly to all men
So kindly thou’lt be called again;
For not a deed the hand can try,
Save ‘neath the hand of God on high,
Nor tyrant harsh work tyranny,
Uncrushed by tyrant harsh as he.’

And as saith yet another,[260]

‘Tyrannize not, if thou hast the power to do so; for the
tyrannical-is in danger of revenges.
Thine eye will sleep while the oppressed, wakeful, will call down
curses on thee, and God’s eye sleepeth not.’

Beware of wine-bibbing, for drink is the root of all evil: it doeth away the reason and bringeth to contempt whoso useth it; and how well saith the poet,

‘By Allah, wine shall not disturb me, while my soul * Join body,
nor while speech the words of me explain:
No day will I be thralled to wine-skin cooled by breeze[261] *
Nor choose a friend save those who are of cups unfair.’

This, then, is my charge to thee; bear it before thine eyes, and Allah stand to thee in my stead.” Then he swooned away and kept silent awhile; and, when he came to himself, he besought pardon of Allah and pronounced the profession of the Faith, and was admitted to the mercy of the Almighty. So his son wept and lamented for him and presently made proper preparation for his burial; great and small walked in his funeral-procession and Koran readers recited Holy Writ about his bier; nor did Ali Shar omit aught of what was due to the dead. Then they prayed over him and committed him to the dust and wrote these two couplets upon his tomb,

‘Thou west create of dust and cam’st to life, * And learned’st in
eloquence to place thy trust;
Anon, to dust returning, thou becamest * A corpse, as though
ne’er taken from the dust.”

Now his son Ali Shar grieved for him with sore grief and mourned him with the ceremonies usual among men of note; nor did he cease to weep the loss of his father till his mother died also, not long afterwards, when he did with her as he had done with his sire. Then he sat in the shop, selling and buying and consorting with none of Almighty Allah’s creatures, in accordance with his father’s injunction. This wise he continued to do for a year, at the end of which time there came in to him by craft certain whoreson fellows and consorted with him, till he turned after their example to lewdness and swerved from the way of righteousness, drinking wine in flowing bowls and frequenting fair women night and day; for he said to himself, “Of a truth my father amassed this wealth for me, and if I spend it not, to whom shall I leave it? By Allah, I will not do save as saith the poet,

‘An through the whole of life * Thou gett’st and gain’st for
self;
Say, when shalt thou enjoy * Thy gains and gotten pelf?’”

And Ali Shar ceased not to waste his wealth all whiles of the day and all watches of the night, till he had made away with the whole of his riches and abode in pauper case and troubled at heart. So he sold his shop and lands and so forth, and after this he sold the clothes off his body, leaving himself but one suit; and, as drunkenness quitted him and thoughtfulness came to him, he fell into grief and sore care. One day, when he had sat from day-break to mid-afternoon without breaking his fast, he said in his mind, “I will go round to those on whom I spent my monies: perchance one of them will feed me this day.” So he went the round of them all; but, as often as he knocked at any one’s door of them, the man denied himself and hid from him, till his stomach ached with hunger. Then he betook himself to the bazar of the merchants, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Tenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ali Shar feeling his stomach ache with hunger, betook himself to the merchants’ bazar where he found a crowd of people assembled in ring, and said to himself, “I wonder what causeth these folk to crowd together thus? By Allah, I will not budge hence till I see what is within yonder ring!” So he made his way into the ring and found therein a damsel exposed for sale who was five feet tall,[262] beautifully proportioned, rosy of cheek and high of breast; and who surpassed all the people of her time in beauty and loveliness and elegance and grace; even as saith one, describing her,

“As she willнd she was made, and in such a way that when * She
was cast in Nature’s mould neither short nor long was she:
Beauty woke to fall in love with the beauties of her form, *
Where combine with all her coyness her pride and pudency:
The full moon is her face[263] and the branchlet is her shape,

* And the musk-pod is her scent — what like her can there be?
’Tis as though she were moulded from water of the pearl, * And in
every lovely limblet another moon we see!”

And her name was Zumurrud — the Smaragdine. So when Ali Shar saw her, he marvelled at her beauty and grace and said, “By Allah, I will not stir hence till I see how much this girl fetcheth, and know who buyeth her!” So he took standing-place amongst the merchants, and they thought he had a mind to buy her, knowing the wealth he had inherited from his parents. Then the broker stood at the damsel’s head and said, “Ho, merchants! Ho, ye men of money! Who will open the gate of biddings for this damsel, the mistress of moons, the union pearl, Zumurrud the curtain-maker, the sought of the seeker and the delight of the desirous? Open the biddings’ door and on the opener be nor blame nor reproach for evermore.” Thereupon quoth one merchant, “Mine for five hundred dinars;” “And ten,” quoth another. “Six hundred,” cried an old man named RashHd al-Din, blue of eye[264] and foul of face. “And ten,” cried another. “I bid a thousand,” rejoined Rashid al-Din; whereupon the rival merchants were tongue-tied, and held their peace and the broker took counsel with the girl’s owner, who said, “I have sworn not to sell her save to whom she shall choose: so consult her.” Thereupon the broker went up to Zumurrud and said to her, “O mistress of moons this merchant hath a mind to buy thee.” She looked at Rashid al-Din and finding him as we have said, replied, “I will not be sold to a gray-beard, whom decrepitude hath brought to such evil plight. Allah inspired his saying who saith,

‘I craved of her a kiss one day; but soon as she beheld * My hoary hairs, though I my luxuries and wealth display’d;
She proudly turned away from me, showed shoulders, cried aloud: —

* ‘No! no! by Him, whose hest mankind from nothingness hath made
For hoary head and grizzled chin I’ve no especial-love: * What! stuff my mouth with cotton[265] ere in sepulchre I’m laid?’”

Now when the broker heard her words he said, “By Allah, thou art excusable, and thy price is ten thousand gold pieces!” So he told her owner that she would not accept of old man Rashid al-Din, and he said, “Consult her concerning another.” Thereupon a second man came forward and said, “Be she mine for what price was offered by the oldster she would have none of;” but she looked at him and seeing that his beard was dyed, said “What be this fashion lewd and base and the blackening of the hoary face?” And she made a great show of wonderment and repeated these couplets,

“Showed me Sir Such-an-one a sight and what a frightful sight! *
A neck by Allah, only made for slipper-sole to smite[266]
A beard the meetest racing ground where gnats and lice contend, *
A brow fit only for the ropes thy temples chafe and
bite.[267]
O thou enravish” by my cheek and beauties of my form, * Why so
translate thyself to youth and think I deem it right?
Dyeing disgracefully that white of reverend aged hairs, * And
hiding for foul purposes their venerable white!
Thou goest with one beard and comest back with quite another, *
Like Punch-and-Judy man who works the Chinese shades by
night.[268]

And how well saith another’

Quoth she, ‘I see thee dye thy hoariness:’[269] * ‘To hide, O
ears and eyes! from thee,’ quoth I:
She roared with laugh and said, ‘Right funny this; * Thou art so
lying e’en

Now when the broker heard her verse he exclaimed, “By Allah thou hast spoken sooth!” The merchant asked what she said: so the broker repeated the verses to him; and he knew that she was in the right while he was wrong and desisted from buying her. Then another came forward and said, “Ask her if she will be mine at the same price;” but, when he did so, she looked at him and seeing that he had but one eye, said, “This man is one-eyed; and it is of such as he that the poet saith,[270]

‘Consort not with the Cyclops e’en a day; * Beware his falsehood
and his mischief fly:
Had this monocular a jot of good, * Allah had ne’er brought
blindness to his eye!’”

Then said the broker, pointing to another bidder, “Wilt thou be sold to this man?” She looked at him and seeing that he was short of stature[271] and had a beard that reached to his navel, cried, “This is he of whom the poet speaketh,

‘I have a friend who hath a beard * Allah to useless length unroll’d:
’Tis like a certain[272] winter night, * Longsome and darksome, drear and cold.’”

Said the broker, “O my lady, look who pleaseth thee of these that are present, and point him out, that I may sell thee to him.” So she looked round the ring of merchants, examining one by one their physiognomies, till her glance fell on Ali Shar, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Eleventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the girl’s glance fell on Ali Shar, she cast at him a look with longing eyes, which cost her a thousand sighs, and her heart was taken with him; for that he was of favour passing fair and pleasanter than zephyr or northern air; and she said, “O broker, I will be sold to none but to this my lord, owner of the handsome face and slender form whom the poet thus describeth,

‘Displaying that fair face * The tempted they assailed
Who, had they wished me safe * That lovely face had veiled!’

For none shall own me but he, because his cheek is smooth and the water of his mouth sweet as Salsabil;[273] his spittle is a cure for the sick and his charms daze and dazzle poet and proser, even as saith one of him,

‘His honey dew of lips is wine; his breath * Musk and those teeth, smile shown, are camphor’s hue:
Rizw6n[274] hath turned him out o’ doors, for fear * The Houris lapse from virtue at the view
Men blame his bearing for its pride, but when * In pride the full

moon sails, excuse is due.’

Lord of the curling locks and rose red cheeks and ravishing look of whom saith the poet,

‘The fawn-like one a meeting promised me * And eye expectant
waxed and heart unstirred:
His eyelids bade me hold his word as true; * But, in their
languish,[275] can he keep his word?’

And as saith another,

‘Quoth they, ‘Black letters on his cheek are writ! * How canst
thou love him and a side-beard see?’
Quoth I, ‘Cease blame and cut your chiding short; * If those be
letters ’tis a forgery:’
Gather his charms all growths of Eden garth * Whereto those
Kausar[276] -lips bear testimony.’”

When the broker heard the verses she repeated on the charms of Ali Shar, he marvelled at her eloquence, no less than at the brightness of her beauty; but her owner said to him, “Marvel not at her splendour which shameth the noonday sun, nor that her memory is stored with the choicest verses of the poets; for besides this, she can repeat the glorious Koran, according to the seven readings,[277] and the august Traditions, after ascription and authentic transmission; and she writeth the seven modes of handwriting[278] and she knoweth more learning and knowledge than the most learned. Moreover, her hands are better than gold and silver; for she maketh silken curtains and selleth them for fifty gold pieces each; and it taketh her but eight days to make a curtain.” Exclaimed the broker, “O happy the man who hath her in his house and maketh her of his choicest treasures!”; and her owner said to him, “Sell her to whom she will.” So the broker went up to Ali Shar and, kissing his hands, said to him, “O my lord, buy thou this damsel, for she hath made choice of thee.”[279] Then he set forth to him all her charms and accomplishments, and added, “I give thee joy if thou buy her, for this be a gift from Him who is no niggard of His giving." Whereupon Ali bowed his head groundwards awhile, laughing at himself and secretly saying, "Up to this hour I have not broken my fast; yet I am ashamed before the merchants to own that I have no money wherewith to buy her." The damsel, seeing him hang down his head, said to the broker, "Take my hand and lead me to him, that I may show my beauty to him and tempt him to buy me; for I will not be sold to any but to him." So the broker took her hand and stationed her before Ali Shar, saying, "What is thy good pleasure, O my lord?" But he made him no answer, and the girl said to him, "O my lord and darling of my heart, what aileth thee that thou wilt not bid for me? Buy me for what thou wilt and I will bring thee good fortune." So he raised his eyes to her and said, "Is buying perforce? Thou art dear at a thousand dinars." Said she, "Then buy me, O my lord, for nine hundred." He cried, "No," and she rejoined, "Then for eight hundred;" and though he again said, "Nay," she ceased not to abate the price, till she came to an hundred dinars. Quoth he, "I have not by me a full hundred." So she laughed and asked, "How much dost thou lack of an hundred?" He answered, "By Allah, I have neither an hundred dinars, nor any other sum; for I own neither white coin nor red cash, neither dinar nor dirham. So look out thou for another and a better customer." And when she knew that he had nothing, she said to him, "Take me by the hand and carry me aside into a by- lane, as if thou wouldst examine me privily." He did so and she drew from her bosom a purse containing a thousand dinars, which she gave him, saying, "Pay down nine hundred to my price and let the hundred remain with thee by way of provision." He did as she bid him and, buying her for nine hundred dinars, paid down the price from her own purse and carried her to his house. When she entered it, she found a dreary desolate saloon without carpets or vessels; so she gave him other thousand dinars, saying, "Go to the bazar and buy three hundred dinars' worth of furniture and vessels for the house and three dinars' worth of meat and drink." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Twelfth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King that quoth the slave-girl, "Bring us meat and drink for three dinars, furthermore a piece of silk, the size of a curtain, and bring golden and silvern thread and sewing silk of seven colours." Thus he did, and she furnished the house and they sat down to eat and drink; after which they went to bed and took their pleasure one of the other. And they lay the night embraced behind the curtain and were even as saith the poet,[280]

"Cleave fast to her thou lovestand let the envious rail amain,
For calumny and envy ne'er to favour love were fain.
Lo, whilst I slept, in dreams I saw thee lying by my side And,
from thy lips the sweetest, sure, of limpid springs did
drain.
Yea, true and certain all I saw is, as I will avouch, And 'spite
the envier, thereto I surely will attain.
There is no goodlier sight, indeed, for eyes to look upon, Than
when one couch in its embrace enfoldeth lovers twain.
Each to the other's bosom clasped, clad in their twinned delight,
Whilst hand with hand and arm with arm about their necks
enchain
Lo, when two hearts are straitly knit in passion and desire, But
on cold iron smite the folk who chide at them in vain.
Thou, that for loving censurest the votaries of love, Canst thou
assain a heart diseased or heal-a cankered brain?
If in thy time thou kind but one to love thee and be true, I rede
thee cast the world away and with that one remain."

So they lay together till the morning and love for the other waxed firmly fixed in the heart of each. And on rising, Zumurrud took the curtain and embroidered it with coloured silks and purpled it with silver and gold thread and she added thereto a border depicting round about it all manner of birds and beasts; nor is there in the world a feral but she wrought his semblance. This she worked in eight days, till she had made an end of it, when she trimmed it and glazed and ironed it and gave it to her lord, saying, "Carry it to the bazar and sell it to one of the merchants at fifty dinars; but beware lest thou sell it to a passer-by, as this would cause a separation between me and thee, for we have foes who are not unthoughtful of us." "I hear and I obey," answered he and, repairing to the bazar, sold the curtain to a merchant, as she bade him; after which he bought a piece of silk for another curtain and gold and silver and silken thread as before and what they needed of food, and brought all this to her, giving her the rest of the money. Now every eight days she made a curtain, which he sold for fifty dinars, and on this wise passed a whole year. At the end of that time, he went as usual to the bazar with a curtain, which he gave to the broker; and there came up to him a Nazarene who bid him sixty dinars for it; but he refused, and the Christian continued bidding higher and higher, till he came to an hundred dinars and bribed the broker with ten ducats. So the man returned to Ali Shar and told him of the proffered price and urged him to accept the offer and sell the article at the Nazarene's valuation, saying, "O my lord, be not afraid of this Christian for that he can do thee no hurt." The merchants also were urgent with him; so he sold the curtain to the Christian, albeit his heart misgave him; and, taking the money, set off to return home. Presently, as he walked, he found the Christian walking behind him; so he said to him, "O Nazarene,[281] why dost thou follow in my footsteps?" Answered the other "O my lord, I want a something at the end of the street, Allah never bring thee to want!"; but Ali Shar had barely reached his place before the Christian overtook him; so he said to him, "O accursed, what aileth thee to follow me wherever I go?" Replied the other, "O my lord, give me a draught of water, for I am athirst; and with Allah be thy reward!"[282] Quoth Ali Shar to himself, "Verily, this man is an Infidel who payeth tribute and claimeth our protection[283] and he asketh me for a draught of water; by Allah, I will not baulk him!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Thirteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth Ali Shar to himself, "This man is a tributary Unbeliever and he asked me for a draught of water; by Allah, I will not baulk him!" So he entered the house and took a gugglet of water; but the slave-girl Zumurrud saw him and said to him, "O my love, hast thou sold the curtain?" He replied, "Yes;" and she asked, "To a merchant or to a passer-by? for my heart presageth a parting." And he answered, "To whom but to a merchant?" Thereupon she rejoined, "Tell me the truth of the case, that I may order my affair; and why take the gugglet of water?" And he, To give the broker to drink," upon which she exclaimed, There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!"; and she repeated these two couplets,[284]

"O thou who seekest separation, act leisurely, and let not the
embrace of the beloved deceive thee!
Act leisurely; for the nature of fortune is treacherous, and the
end of every union is disjunction.

Then he took the gugglet and, going out, found the Christian within the vestibule and said to him, "How comest thou here and how darest thou, O dog, enter my house without my leave?" Answered he, "O my lord, there is no difference between the door and the vestibule, and I never intended to stir hence, save to go out; and my thanks are due to thee for thy kindness and favour, thy bounty and generosity." Then he took the mug and emptying it, returned it to Ali Shar, who received it and waited for him to rise up and to go; but he did not move. So Ali said to him, "Why dost thou not rise and wend thy way?"; and he answered, "O my lord, be not of those who do a kindness and then make it a reproach, nor of those of whom saith the poet,[285]

'They're gone who when thou stoodest at their door * Would for
thy wants so generously cater:
But stand at door of churls who followed them, * They'd make high
favour of a draught of water!'"

And he continued, "O my lord, I have drunk, and now I would have thee give me to eat of whatever is in the house, though it be but a bit of bread or a biscuit with an onion." Replied Ali Shar, "Begone, without more chaffer and chatter; there is nothing in the house." He persisted, "O my lord, if there be nothing in the house, take these hundred dinars and bring us something from the market, if but a single scone, that bread and salt may pass between us."[286] With this, quoth Ali Shar to himself, "This Christian is surely mad; I will take his hundred dinars and bring him somewhat worth a couple of dirhams and laugh at him." And the Nazarene added, "O my lord, I want but a small matter to stay my hunger, were it but a dry scone and an onion; for the best food is that which doeth away appetite, not rich viands; and how well saith the poet,

'Hunger is sated with a bone-dry scone, * How is it then[287]
  in woes of want I wone?
Death is all-justest, lacking aught regard * For Caliph-king and
  beggar woe-begone.'"

Then quoth Ali Shar, "Wait here, while I lock the saloon and fetch thee somewhat from the market;" and quoth the Christian, "To hear is to obey." So Ali Shar shut up the saloon and, locking the door with a padlock, put the key in his pocket: after which he went to market and bought fried cheese and virgin honey and bananas[288] and bread, with which he returned to the house. Now when the Christian saw the provision, he said, "O my lord, this is overmuch; 'tis enough for half a score of men and I am alone; but belike thou wilt eat with me." Replied Ali, "Eat by thyself, I am full;" and the Christian rejoined, "O my lord, the wise say, Whoso eateth not with his guest is a son of a whore." Now when Ali Shar heard these words from the Nazarene, he sat down and ate a little with him, after which he would have held his hand; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Fourteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ali Shar sat down and ate a little with him, after which he would have held his hand; but the Nazarene privily took a banana and peeled it; then, splitting it in twain, put into one half concentrated Bhang, mixed with opium, a drachm whereof would over throw an elephant; and he dipped it in the honey and gave it to Ali Shar, saying, "O my lord, by the truth of thy religion, I adjure thee to take this." So Ali Shar, being ashamed to make him forsworn, took it and swallowed it; but hardly had it settled well in his stomach, when his head forwent both his feet and he was as though he had been a year asleep. As soon as the Nazarene saw this, rose to his feet as he had been a scald wolf or a cat-o'-mount[289] at bay and, taking the saloon key, left Ali Shar prostrate and ran off to rejoin his brother. And the cause of his so doing was that the Nazarene's brother was the same decrepit old man who purposed to buy Zumurrud for a thousand dinars, but she would none of him and jeered him in verse. He was an Unbeliever inwardly, though a Moslem outwardly, and had called himself Rashid al-Din;[290] and when Zumurrud mocked him and would not accept of him, he complained to his brother the aforesaid Christian who played this sleight to take her from her master Ali Shar; whereupon his brother, Barsum by name said to him, "Fret not thyself about the business, for I will make shift to seize her for thee, without expending either diner or dirham. Now he was a skilful wizard, crafty and wicked; so he watched his time and ceased not his practices till he played Ali Shar the trick before related; then, taking the key, he went to his brother and acquainted him with what had passed. Thereupon Rashid al-Din mounted his she mule and repaired with his brother and his servants to the house of Ali Shar, taking with him a purse of a thousand dinars, wherewith to bribe the Chief of Police, should he meet him. He opened the saloon door and the men who were with him rushed in upon Zumurrud and forcibly seized her, threatening her with death, if she spoke, but they left the place as it was and took nothing therefrom. Lastly they left Ali Shar lying in the vestibule after they had shut the door on him and laid the saloon key by his side. Then the Christian carried the girl to his own house and setting her amongst his handmaids and concubines, said to her, "O strumpet, I am the old man whom thou didst reject and lampoon; but now I have thee, without paying diner or dirham." Replied she (and her eyes streamed with tears), "Allah requite thee, O wicked old man, for sundering me and my lord!" He rejoined, "Wanton minx and whore that thou art, thou shalt see how I will punish thee! By the truth of the Messiah and the Virgin, except thou obey me and embrace my faith, I will torture thee with all manner of torture!" She replied, "By Allah, though thou cut my flesh to bits I will not forswear the faith of Al-Islam! It may be Almighty Allah will bring me speedy relief, for He cloth even as He is fief, and the wise say: 'Better body to scathe than a flaw in faith.'" Thereupon the old man called his eunuchs and women, saying, "Throw her down!" So they threw her down and he ceased not to beat her with grievous beating, whilst she cried for help and no help came; then she no longer implored aid but fell to saying, “Allah is my sufficiency, and He is indeed all-sufficient!” till her groans ceased and her breath failed her and she fell into a fainting-fit. Now when his heart was soothed by bashing her, he said to the eunuchs, “Drag her forth by the feet and cast her down in the kitchen, and give her nothing to eat.” And after quietly sleeping that night, on the morrow the accursed old man sent for her and beat her again, after which he bade the Castrato return her to her place. When the burning of the blows had cooled, she said, “There is no god but the God and Mohammed is the Apostle of God! Allah is my sufficiency and excellent is my Guardian!” And she called for succour upon our Lord Mohammed (whom Allah bless and keep!) — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Fifteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Zumurrud called for succour upon our Lord Mohammed (whom Allah bless and keep!). Such was her case; but as regards Ali Shar, he ceased not sleeping till next day, when the Bhang quitted his brain and he opened his eyes and cried out, “O Zumurrud”; but no one answered him. So he entered the saloon and found the empty air and the fane afar;[291] whereby he knew that it was the Nazarene who had played him this trick. And he groaned and wept and lamented and again shed tears, repeating these couplets,

“O Love thou’rt instant in thy cruellest guise; * Here is my
heart ‘twixt fears and miseries:
Pity, O lords, a thrall who, felled on way * Of Love, erst
wealthy now a beggar lies:
What profits archer’s art if, when the foe * Draw near, his
bowstring snap ere arrow {lies:
And when griefs multiply on generous man * And urge, what fort
can fend from destinies?
How much and much I warded parting, but * ‘When Destiny
descends
she blinds our eyes?’”

And when he had ended his verse, he sobbed with loud sobs and repeated also these couplets,

“Enrobes with honour sands of camp her foot step wandering lone,

* Pines the poor mourner as she wins the stead where wont to wane
She turns to resting-place of tribe, and yearns thereon to view *
The spring-camp lying desolate with ruins overstrown
She stands and questions of the site, but with the tongue of case

* The mount replies, ‘There is no path that leads to union, none!
’Tis as the lightning flash erewhile bright glittered o’er the camp * And died in darkling air no more to be for ever shown.’”

And he repented when repentance availed him naught, and wept and rent his raiment. Then he hent in hand two stones and went round about the city, beating his breast with the stones and crying “O Zumurrud!” whilst the small boys flocked round him, calling out, “A madman! A madman!” and all who knew him wept for him, saying, “This is such an one: what evil hath befallen him?” Thus he continued doing all that day and, when night darkened on him, he lay down in one of the city lanes and sleet till morning On the morrow, he went round about town with the stones till eventide, when he returned to his saloon to pass therein the night. Presently, one of his neighbours saw him, and this worthy old woman said to him, “O my son, Heaven give thee healing! How long hast thou been mad?” And he answered her with these two couplets,[292]

“They said, Thou revest upon the person thou lovest. * And I replied, The sweets of life are only for the mad.
Drop the subject of my madness, and bring her upon whom I rave *
If she cure my madness do not blame me.”

So his old neighbour knew him for a lover who had lost his beloved and said, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might, save in

Allah, the Glorious, the Great! O my son, I wish thou wouldest acquaint me with the tale of thine affliction. Peradventure Allah may enable me to help thee against it, if it so please Him." So he told her all that had befallen him with Barsum the Nazarene and his brother the wizard who had named himself Rashid al-Din and, when she understood the whole case, she said, "O my son, indeed thou hast excuse." And her eyes railed tears and she repeated these two couplets,

"Enough for lovers in this world their ban and bane: * By Allah,
lover ne'er in fire of Sakar fries:
For, sure, they died of love-desire they never told * Chastely,
and to this truth tradition testifies."[293]

And after she had finished her verse, she said, "O my son, rise at once and buy me a crate, such as the jewel-pedlars carry; buy also bangles and seal-rings and bracelets and ear-rings and other gewgaws wherein women delight and grudge not the cash. Put all the stock into the crate and bring it to me and I will set it on my head and go round about, in the guise of a huckstress and make search for her in all the houses, till I happen on news of her — Inshallah!" So Ali Shar rejoiced in her words and kissed her hands, then, going out, speedily brought her all she required; whereupon she rose and donned a patched gown and threw over her head a honey-yellow veil, and took staff in hand and, with the basket on her head, began wandering about the passages and the houses. She ceased not to go from house to house and street to street and quarter to quarter, till Allah Almighty led her to the house of the accursed Rashid al-Din the Nazarene where, hearing groans within, she knocked at the door, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Sixteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old woman heard groans within the house, she knocked at the door, whereupon a slave-girl came down and opening to her, saluted her. Quoth the old woman, "I have these trifles for sale: is there any one with you who will buy aught of them?" "Yes," answered the damsel and, carrying her indoors, made her sit down; whereupon all the slave-girls came round her and each bought something of her. And as the old woman spoke them fair and was easy with them as to price, all rejoiced in her, because of her kind ways and pleasant speech. Meanwhile, she looked narrowly at the ins and outs of the place to see who it was she had heard groaning, till her glance fell on Zumurrud, when she knew her and she began to show her customers yet more kindness. At last she made sure that Zumurrud was laid prostrate; so she wept and said to the girls, "O my children, how cometh yonder young lady in this plight?" Then the slave-girls told her all what had passed, adding, "Indeed this matter is not of our choice; but our master commanded us to do thus, and he is now on a journey." She said, "O my children, I have a favour to ask of you, and it is that you loose this unhappy damsel of her bonds, till you know of your lord's return, when do ye bind her again as she was; and you shall earn a reward from the Lord of all creatures." "We hear and obey," answered they and at once loosing Zumurrud, gave her to eat and drink. Thereupon quoth the old woman, "Would my leg had been broken, ere I entered your house!" And she went up to Zumurrud and said to her, "O my daughter, Heaven keep thee safe; soon shall Allah bring thee relief." Then she privily told her that she came from her lord, Ali Shar, and agreed with her to be on the watch for sounds that night, saying, "Thy lord will come and stand by the pavilion-bench and whistle[294] to thee; and when thou hearest him, do thou whistle back to him and let thyself down to him by a rope from the window, and he will take thee and go away with thee." So Zumurrud thanked the old woman, who went forth and returned to Ali Shar and told him what she had done, saying, "Go this night, at midnight, to such a quarter, for the accursed carle's house is there and its fashion is thus and thus. Stand under the window of the upper chamber and whistle; whereupon she will let herself down to thee; then do thou take her and carry her whither thou wilt." He thanked her for her good offices and with flowing tears repeated these couplets,

"Now with their says and saids[295] no more vex me the chiding
    race; * My heart is weary and I'm worn to bone by their

disgrace:
And tears a truthful legend[296] with a long ascription-chain

* Of my desertion and distress the lineage can trace.
O thou heart-whole and free from dole and dolours I endure, * Cut short thy long persistency nor question of my case:
A sweet-lipped one and soft of sides and cast in shapeliest mould

* Hath stormed my heart with honied lure and honied words of grace.
No rest my heart hath known since thou art gone, nor ever close * These eyes, nor patience aloe scape the hopes I dare to trace:
Ye have abandoned me to be the pawn of vain desire, * In squalid state ‘twixt enviers and they who blame to face:
As for forgetting you or love ’tis thing I never knew; * Nor in my thought shall ever pass a living thing but you.”

And when he ended his verses, he sighed and shed tears and repeated also these couplets,

“Divinely were inspired his words who brought me news of you; * For brought he unto me a gift was music in mine ear:
Take he for gift, if him content, this worn-out threadbare robe,

* My heart, which was in pieces torn when parting from my fete.”

He waited till night darkened and, when came the appointed time, he went to the quarter she had described to him and saw and recognised the Christian’s house; so he sat down on the bench under the gallery. Presently drowsiness overcame him and he slept (Glory be to Him who sleepeth not!?, for it was long since he had tasted sleep, by reason of the violence of his passion, and he became as one drunken with slumber. And while he was on this wise, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Seventeenth Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that while he lay asleep, behold, a certain thief, who had come out that night and prowled about the skirts of the city to steal-somewhat, happened by the decree of Destiny, on the Nazarene's house. He went round about it, but found no way of climbing up into it, and presently on his circuit he came to the bench, where he saw Ali Shar asleep and stole his turband; and, as he was taking it suddenly Zumurrud looked out and seeing the thief standing in the darkness, took him for her lord; whereupon she let herself down to him by the rope with a pair of saddle-bags full of gold. Now when the robber saw that, he said to himself, "This is a wondrous thing, and there must needs be some marvellous cause to it." Then he snatched up the saddle-bags, and threw Zumurrud over his shoulders and made off with both like the blinding lightening. Quoth she, "Verily, the old woman told me that thou west weak with illness on my account; and here thou art, stronger than a horse." He made her no reply; so she put her hand to his face and felt a beard like the broom of palm-frond used for the Hammam,[297] as if he were a hog which had swallowed feathers and they had come out of his gullet; whereat she took fright and said to him, "What art thou?" "O strumpet," answered he, "I am the sharper Jawбn[298] the Kurd, of the band of Ahmad al-Danaf; we are forty sharpers, who will all piss our tallow into thy womb this night, from dusk to dawn." When she heard his words, she wept and beat her face, knowing that Fate had gotten the better of her and that she had no resource but resignation and to put her trust in Allah Almighty. So she took patience and submitted herself to the ordinance of the Lord, saying, "There is no god but the God! As often as we escape from one woe, we fall into a worse." Now the cause of Jawan's coming thither was this: he had said to Calamity-Ahmad, "O Sharper-captain,[299] I have been in this city before and know a cavern without the walls which will hold forty souls; so I will go before you thither and set my mother therein. Then will I return to the city and steal-somewhat for the luck of all of you and keep it till you come; so shall you be my guests and I will show you hospitality this day." Replied Ahmad al-Danaf, "Do what thou wilt." So Jawan went forth to the place before them and set his mother in the cave; but, as he came out he found a trooper lying asleep, with his horse picketed beside him;

so he cut his throat and, taking his clothes and his charger and his arms, hid them with his mother in the cave, where also he tethered the horse. Then he betook himself to the city and prowled about, till he happened on the Christian's house and did with Ali Shar's turband and Zumurrud and her saddle-bags as we have said. He ceased not to run, with Zumurrud on his back, till he came to the cavern, where he gave her in charge of his mother, saying, "Keep thou watch over her till I return to thee at first dawn of day," and went his ways. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Eighteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth Kurdish Jawan to his mother, "Keep thou watch over her till I come back to thee at first dawn of day," and went his ways. Now Zumurrud said to herself, "Why am I so heedless about saving my life and wherefore await till these forty men come?: they will take their turns to board me, till they make me like a water- logged ship at sea." Then she turned to the old woman, Jawan's mother, and said to her, "O my aunt, wilt thou not rise up and come without the cave, that I may louse thee in the sun?"[300] Replied the old woman, "Ay, by Allah, O my daughter: this long time have I been out of reach of the bath; for these hogs cease not to carry me from place to place." So they went without the cavern, and Zumurrud combed out her head hair and killed the lice on her locks, till the tickling soothed her and she fell asleep; whereupon Zumurrud arose and, donning the clothes of the murdered trooper, girt her waist with his sword and covered her head with his turband, so that she became as she were a man. Then, mounting the horse after she had taken the saddle-bags full of gold, she breathed a prayer, "O good Protector, protect me I adjure thee by the glory of Mohammed (whom Allah bless and preserve!)," adding these words in thought, "If I return to the city belike one of the trooper's folk will see me, and no good will befal me." So she turned her back on the town and rode forth into the wild and the waste. And she ceased not faring forth with her saddle-bags and the steed, eating of the growth of the earth and drinking of its waters, she and her horse, for ten days and, on the eleventh, she came in sight of a city pleasant and secure from dread, and established in happy stead.

Winter had gone from it with his cold showers, and Prime had come to it with his roses and orange- blossoms and varied flowers; and its blooms were brightly blowing; its streams were merrily flowing and its birds warbled coming and going. And she drew near the dwellings and would have entered the gate when she saw the troops and Emirs and Grandees of the place drawn up, whereat she marvelled seeing them in such unusual-case and said to herself, "The people of the city are all gathered at its gate: needs must there be a reason for this." Then she made towards them; but, as she drew near, the soldiery dashed forward to meet her and, dismounting all, kissed the ground between her hands and said, "Aid thee Allah, O our lord the Sultan!" Then the notables and dignitaries ranged themselves before her in double line, whilst the troops ordered the people in, saying, "Allah aid thee and make thy coming a blessing to the Moslems, O Sultan of all creatures! Allah establish thee, O King of the time and union-pearl of the day and the tide!" Asked Zumurrud, "What aileth you, O people of this city?" And the Head Chamberlain answered, "Verily, He hath given to thee who is no niggard in His giving; and He hath been bountiful to thee and hath made thee Sultan of this city and ruler over the necks of all who are therein; for know thou it is the custom of the citizens, when their King deceaseth leaving no son, that the troops should sally forth to the suburbs and sojourn there three days: and whoever cometh from the quarter whence thou hast come, him they make King over them. So praised be Allah who hath sent us of the sons of the Turks a well-favoured man; for had a lesser than thou presented himself, he had been Sultan." Now Zumurrud was clever and well-advised in all she did: so she said, "Think not that I am of the common folk of the Turks! nay, I am of the sons of the great, a man of condition; but I was wroth with my family, so I went forth and left them. See these saddle-bags full of gold which I have brought under me that, by the way, I might give alms thereof to the poor and the needy." So they called down blessings upon her and rejoiced in her with exceeding joy and she also joyed in them and said in herself, "Now that I have attained to this" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Nineteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth

Zumurrud to herself, “Now that I have attained to this case, haply Allah will reunite me with my lord in this place, for He can do whatso He willeth.” Then the troops escorted her to the city and, all dismounting, walked before her to the palace. Here she alighted and the Emirs and Grandees, taking her under both armpits,[301] carried her into the palace and seated her on the throne; after which they all kissed ground before her. And when duly enthroned she bade them open the treasuries and gave largesse to all the troops, who offered up prayers for the continuance of her reign, and all the townsfolk accepted her rule and all the lieges of the realm. Thus she abode awhile bidding and forbidding, and all the people came to hold her in exceeding reverence and heartily to love her, by reason of her continence and generosity; for taxes she remitted and prisoners she released and grievances she redressed; but, as often as she bethought her of her lord, she wept and besought Allah to reunite her and him; and one night, as she chanced to be thinking of him and calling to mind the days she had passed with him, her eyes ran over with tears and she versified in these two couplets,

“My yearning for thee though long is fresh, * And the tears which
chafe these eyelids increase
When I weep, I weep from the burn of love, * For to lover
severance is decease.”[302]

And when she had ended her verse, she wiped away her tears and repairing to the palace, betook herself to the Harim, where she appointed to the slave-girls and concubines separate lodgings and assigned them pensions and allowances, giving out that she was minded to live apart and devote herself to works of piety. So she applied herself to fasting and praying, till the Emirs said, “Verily this Sultan is eminently devout;” nor would she suffer any male attendants about her, save two little eunuchs to serve her. And on this wise she held the throne a whole year, during which time she heard no news of her lord, and failed to hit upon his traces, which was exceeding grievous to her; so, when her distress became excessive, she summoned her Wazirs and Chamberlains and bid them fetch architects and builders and make her in front of the palace a horse-course, one parasang long and the like broad. They hastened to do her bidding, and lay out the place to her liking; and, when it was completed, she went down into it and they pitched her there a great pavilion, wherein the chairs of the Emirs were ranged in due order. Moreover, she bade them spread on the racing-plain tables with all manners of rich meats and when this was done she ordered the Grandees to eat. So they ate and she said to them, "It is my will that, on seeing the new moon of each month, ye do on this wise and proclaim in the city that no man shall open his shop, but that all our lieges shall come and eat of the King's banquet, and that whoso disobeyeth shall be hanged over his own door."[303] So they did as she bade them, and ceased not so to do till the first new moon of the second year appeared; when Zumurrud went down into the horse-course and the crier proclaimed aloud, saying, "Ho, ye lieges and people one and all, whoso openeth store or shop or house shall straight way be hanged over his own door; for it behoveth you to come in a body and eat of the King's banquet." And when the proclamation became known, they laid the tables and the subjects came in hosts; so she bade them sit down at the trays and eat their fill of all the dishes. Accordingly they sat down and she took place on her chair of state, watching them, whilst each who was at meat said to himself, "Verily the King looketh at none save me." Then they fell to eating and the Emirs said to them, "Eat and be not ashamed; for this pleaseth the King." So they ate their fill and went away, blessing the Sovereign and saying, one to the other, "Never in our days saw we a Sultan who loved the poor as doth this Sultan." And they wished him length of life. Upon this Zumurrud returned to her palace, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Twentieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Queen Zumurrud returned to her palace, rejoicing in her device and saying to herself, "Inshallah, I shall surely by this means happen on news of my lord Ali Shar." When the first day of the second month came round, she did as before and when they had spread the tables she came down from her palace and took place on her throne and commanded the lieges to sit down and fall to. Now as she sat on her throne, at the head of the tables, watching the people take their places company by company and one by one, behold her eye fell on Barsum, the Nazarene who had bought the curtain of her lord; and she knew him and said in her mind, "This is the first of my joy and the winning of my wish." Then Barsum came up to the table and, sitting down with the rest to eat, espied a dish of sweet rice, sprinkled with sugar; but it was far from him, so he pushed up to it through the crowd and, putting out his hand to it, seized it and set it before himself. His next neighbour said to him, "Why dost thou not eat of what is before thee? Is not this a disgrace to thee? How canst thou reach over for a dish which is distant from thee? Art thou not ashamed?" Quoth Barsum, "I will eat of none save this same." Rejoined the other, "Eat then, and Allah give thee no good of it!" But another man, a Hashish-eater, said, "Let him eat of it, that I may eat with him." Replied his neighbour, "O unluckiest of Hashish- eaters, this is no meat for thee; it is eating for Emirs. Let it be, that it may return to those for whom it is meant and they eat it." But Barsum heeded him not and took a mouthful of the rice and put it in his mouth; and was about to take a second mouthful when the Queen, who was watching him, cried out to certain of her guards, saying, "Bring me yonder man with the dish of Sweet rice before him and let him not eat the mouthful he hath read but throw it from his hand."[304] So four of the guards went up to Barsum and haled him along on his face, after throwing the mouthful of rice from his hand, and set him standing before Zumurrud, whilst all the people left eating and said to one another, By Allah, he did wrong in not eating of the food meant for the likes of him." Quoth one, "For me I was content with this porridge[305] which is before me." And the Hashish-eater said, "Praised be Allah who hindered me from eating of the dish of sugared rice for I expected it to stand before him and was waiting only for him to have his enjoyment of it, to eat with him, when there befel him what we see." And the general said, one to other, "Wait till we see what shall befal him." Now as they brought him before Queen Zumurrud she cried, "Woe to thee, O blue eyes! What is thy name and why comest thou to our country?" But the accursed called himself out of his name having a white turband[306] on, and answered, "O King, my name is Ali; I work as a weaver and I came hither to trade." Quoth Zumurrud, "Bring me a table of sand and a pen of brass," and when they brought her what she sought, she took the sand and the pen, and struck a geomantic figure in the likeness of a baboon; then, raising her head, she looked hard at Barsum for an hour or so and said to him, "O dog, how darest thou lie to Kings? Art thou not a Nazarene, Barsum by name, and comest thou not hither in quest of somewhat? Speak the truth, or by the glory of the Godhead, I will strike off thy head!" At this Barsum was confounded and the Emirs and bystanders said, "Verily, this King understandeth geomancy: blessed be He who hath gifted him!" Then she cried out upon the Christian and said, 'Tell me the truth, or I will make an end of thee!" Barsum replied, "Pardon, O King of the age; thou art right as regards the table, for the far one[307] is indeed a Nazarene, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Twenty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Barsum replied, "Pardon, O King of the age; thou art right as regards the table, for thy slave is indeed a Nazarene." Whereupon all present, gentle and simple, wondered at the King's skill in hitting upon the truth by geomancy, and said, "Verily this King is a diviner, whose like there is not in the world." Thereupon Queen Zumurrud bade flay the Nazarene and stuff his skin with straw and hang it over the gate of the race-course. Moreover, she commended to dig a pit without the city and burn therein his flesh and bones and throw over his ashes offal and ordure. "We hear and obey," answered they, and did with him all she bade; and, when the folk saw what had befallen the Christian, they said, "Serve him right; but what an unlucky mouthful was that for him!" And another said, "Be the far one's wife divorced if this vow be broken: never again to the end of my days will I eat of sugared rice!"; and the Hashish-eater cried "Praised be Allah, who spared me this fellow's fate by saving me from eating of that same rice!" Then they all went out, holding it thenceforth unlawful to sit over against the dish of sweet rice as the Nazarene had sat. Now when the first day of the third month came, they laid the tables according to custom, and covered them with dishes and chargers, and Queen Zumurrud came down and sat on her throne, with her guards in attendance, as of wont, in awe of her dignity and majesty. Then the townsfolk entered as before and went round about the tables, looking for the place of the dish of sweet rice, and quoth one to another, “Hark ye, O Hбjн[308] Khalaf!”; and the other answered, “At thy service, O Hбjн Khбlid.” Said Khбlid, “Avoid the dish of sweet rice and look thou eat not thereof; for, if thou do, by early morning thou will be hanged.”[309] Then they sat down to meat around the table; and, as they were eating, Queen Zumurrud chanced to look from her throne and saw a man come running in through the gate of the horse-course; and having considered him attentively, she knew him for Jawan the Kurdish thief who murdered the trooper. Now the cause of his coming was this: when he left his mother, he went to his comrades and said to them, “I did good business yesterday; for I slew a trooper and took his horse. Moreover there fell to me last night a pair of saddle-bags, full of gold, and a young lady worth more than the money in pouch; and I have left all that with my mother in the cave.” At this they rejoiced and repaired to the cavern at night-fall, whilst Jawan the Kurd walked in front and the rest behind; he wishing to bring them the booty of which he had boasted. But he found the place clean empty and questioned his mother, who told him all that had befallen her; whereupon he bit his hands for regret and exclaimed, “By Allah, I will assuredly make search for the harlot and take her, wherever she is, though it be in the shell of a pistachio-nut,[310] and quench my malice on her!” So he went forth in quest of her and ceased not journeying from place to place, till he came to Queen Zumurrud’s city. On entering he found the town deserted and, enquiring of some women whom he saw looking from the windows, they told him that it was the Sultan’s custom to make a banquet for the people on the first of each month and that all the lieges were bound to go and eat of it. Furthermore the women directed him to the racing-ground, where the feast was spread. So he entered at a shuffling trot; and, finding no place empty, save that before the dish of sweet rice already noticed, took his seat right opposite it and stretched out his hand towards the dish; whereupon the folk cried out to him, saying, “O our brother, what wouldst thou do?” Quoth he, “I would eat my fill of this dish.” Rejoined one of the people, “If thou eat of it thou wilt assuredly find thyself hanged to-morrow morning.”

But Jawan said, “Hold thy tongue and talk not so unpleasantly.” Then he stretched out his hand to the dish and drew it to him; but it so chanced that the Hashish-eater of whom we have spoken, was sitting by him; and when he saw him take the dish, the fumes of the Hashish left his head and he fled from his place and sat down afar off, saying, “I will have nothing to do with yonder dish.” Then Jawan the Kurd put out his hand (which was very like a raven’s claws,[311] scooped up therewith half the dishful and drew out his neave as it were a camel’s hoof, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Twenty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Jawan the Kurd drew his neave from the dish as it were a camel’s hoof and rolled the lump of rice in the palm of his hand, till it was like a big orange, and threw it ravenously into his mouth; and it rolled down his gullet, with a rumble like thunder and the bottom of the deep dish appeared where said mouthful had been. Thereupon quoth to him one sitting by his side, “Praised be Allah for not making me meat between thy hands; for thou hast cleared the dish at a single mouthful;” and quoth the Hashish-eater, “Let him eat; methinks he hath a hanging face.” Then, turning to Jawan he added, “Eat and Allah give thee small good of it.” So Jawan put out his hand again and taking another mouthful, was rolling it in his palm like the first, when behold, the Queen cried out to the guards saying, “Bring me yonder man in haste and let him not eat the mouthful in his hand.” So they ran and seizing him as he hung over the dish, brought him to her, and set him in her presence, whilst the people exulted over his mishap and said one to the other, “Serve him right, for we warned him, but he would not take warning. Verily, this place is bound to be the death of whoso sitteth therein, and yonder rice bringeth doom to all who eat of it.” Then said Queen Zumurrud to Jawan, “What is thy name and trade and wherefore comest thou to our city?” Answered he, “O our lord the Sultan, my name is Othman; I work as a gardener and am come hither in quest of somewhat I have lost.” Quoth Zumurrud, “Here with a table of sand!” So they brought it, and she took the pen and drawing a geomantic scheme, considered it awhile, then raising her head, exclaimed, “Woe to thee, thou loser! How darest thou lie to Kings? This sand telleth me that of a truth thy name is Jawan the Kurd and that thou art by trade a robber, taking men's goods in the way of unright and slaying those whom Allah hath forbidden to slay save for just cause." And she cried out upon him, saying, "O hog, tell me the truth of thy case or I will cut off thy head on the spot." Now when he heard these words, he turned yellow and his teeth chattered; then, deeming that he might save himself by truth-telling, he replied, "O King, thou sayest sooth; but I repent at thy hands henceforth and turn to Allah Almighty!" She answered, "It were not lawful for me to leave a pest in the way of Moslems;" and cried to her guards, "Take him and skin him and do with him as last month ye did by his like." They obeyed her commandment; and, when the Hashish- eater saw the soldiers seize the man, he turned his back upon the dish of rice, saying, "'Tis a sin to present my face to thee!" And after they had made an end of eating, they dispersed to their several homes and Zumurrud returned to her palace and dismissed her attendants. Now when the fourth month came round, they went to the race-course and made the banquet, according to custom, and the folk sat awaiting leave to begin. Presently Queen Zumurrud entered and, sitting down on her throne, looked at the tables and saw that room for four people was left void before the dish of rice, at which she wondered. Now as she was looking around, behold, she saw a man come trotting in at the gate of the horse-course; and he stayed not till he stood over the food-trays; and, finding no room save before the dish of rice, took his seat there. She looked at him and knowing him for the accursed Christian who called himself Rashid al-Din, said in her mind, "How blessed is this device of the food,[312] into whose toils this infidel hath fallen" Now the cause of his coming was extraordinary, and it was on this wise. When he returned from his travels, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Twenty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the accursed, who had called himself Rashid al-Din, returned from travel, his household informed him that Zumurrud was missing and with her a pair of saddle-bags full of money; on hearing which ill tidings he rent his raiment and buffeted his face and plucked out his beard. Then he despatched his brother Barsum in quest of her to lands adjoining and, when he was weary of awaiting news of him, he went forth himself, to seek for him and for the girl, whenas fate led him to the city of Zumurrud. He entered it on the first day of the month and finding the streets deserted and the shops shut and women idling at the windows, he asked them the reason why, and they told him that the King made a banquet on the first of each month for the people, all of whom were bound to attend it, nor might any abide in his house or shop that day; and they directed him to the racing-plain. So he betook himself thither and found the people crowding about the food, and there was never a place for him save in front of the rice-dish now well-known. Here then he sat and put forth his hand to eat thereof, whereupon Zumurrud cried out to her guards, saying, “Bring me him who sitteth over against the dish of rice.” So they knew him by what had before happened and laid hands on him and brought him before Queen Zumurrud, who said to him, “Out on thee! What is thy name and trade, and what bringeth thee to our city?” Answered he, “O King of the age, my name is Rustam[313] and I have no occupation, for I am a poor dervish.” Then said she to her attendants, “Bring me table of sand and pen of brass.” So they brought her what she sought, as of wont; and she took the pen and made the dots which formed the figure and considered it awhile, then raising her head to Rashid al-Din, she said, “O dog, how darest thou lie to Kings? Thy name is Rashid al-Din the Nazarene, thou art outwardly a Moslem, but a Christian at heart, and thine occupation is to lay snares for the slave-girls of the Moslems and make them captives. Speak the truth, or I will smite off thy head.” He hesitated and stammered, then replied, “Thou sayest sooth, O King of the age!” Whereupon she commanded to throw him down and give him an hundred blows with a stick on each sole and a thousand stripes with a whip on his body; after which she bade flay him and stuff his skin with herds of flax and dig a pit without the city, wherein they should burn his corpse and cast on his ashes offal-and ordure. They did as she bade them and she gave the people leave to eat. So they ate and when they had eaten their fill they went their ways, while Queen Zumurrud returned to her palace, saying, “I thank Allah for solacing my heart of those who wronged me.” Then she praised the

Creator of the earth and the heavens and repeated these couplets,

“They ruled awhile and theirs was harsh tyrannic rule, * But soon
    that rule went by as though it never were:
If just they had won justice; but they sinned, and so * The world
    collected all its bane for them to bear:
So died they and their case’s tongue declares aloud * This is for
    that so of the world your blaming spare.”

And when her verse was ended she called to mind her lord Ali Shar and wept flowing tears; but presently recovered herself and said, “Haply Allah, who hath given mine enemies into my hand, will vouchsafe me the speedy return of my beloved;” and she begged forgiveness of Allah (be He extolled and exalted’) — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Twenty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Queen begged forgiveness of Allah (be He extolled and exalted!), and said, “Haply He will vouchsafe me speedy reunion with my beloved Ali Shar for He can do what He willeth and to His servants showeth grace, ever mindful of their case!” Then she praised Allah and again besought forgiveness of Him, submitting herself to the decrees of destiny, assured that each beginning hath his end, and repeating the saying of the poet,

“Take all things easy; for all worldly things * In Allah’s hand
    are ruled by Destiny:
Ne’er shall befal thee aught of things forbidden, * Nor what is
    bidden e’er shall fail to thee!”

And what another saith.

“Roll up thy days[314] and easy shall they roll * Through
    life, nor haunt the house of grief and dole:
Full many a thing, which is o’er hard to find,* Next hour shall
    bring thee to delight thy soul.”

And what a third saith,[315]

"Be mild what time thou'rt ta'en with anger and despite * And
patient, if there fall misfortune on thy head.
Indeed, the nights are quick and great with child by Time * And
of all wondrous things are hourly brought to bed."

And what a fourth saith,

"Take patience which breeds good if patience thou can learn; * Be
calm soured, scaping anguish-draughts that gripe and bren:
Know, that if patience with good grace thou dare refuse, * With
ill-graced patience thou shalt bear what wrote the Pen."

After which she abode thus another whole month's space, judging the folk and bidding and forbidding by day, and by night weeping and bewailing her separation from her lord Ali Shar. On the first day of the fifth month, she bade them spread the banquet on the race-plain, according to custom, and sat down at the head of the tables, whilst the lieges awaited the signal to fall to, leaving the place before the dish of rice vacant. She sat with eyes fixed upon the gate of the horse-course, noting all who entered and saying in her soul, "O Thou who restoredest Joseph to Jacob and diddest away the sorrows of Job,[316] vouchsafe of Thy might and Thy majesty to restore me my lord Ali Shar; for Thou over all things art Omnipotent, O Lord of the Worlds! O Guide of those who go astray! O Hearer of those that cry! O Answerer of those who pray, answer Thou my prayer, O Lord of all creatures." Now hardly had she made an end of her prayer and supplication when behold, she saw entering the gate of the horse-plain a young man, in shape like a willow branch, the comeliest of youths and the most accomplished, save that his face was wan and his form wasted by weariness. Now as he entered and came up to the tables, he found no seat vacant save that over against the dish of sweet rice so he sat down there; and, when Zumurrud looked upon him, her heart fluttered and, observing him narrowly, she knew him for her lord Ali Shar, and was like to have cried out for joy, but restrained herself, fearing disgrace before the folk and, albeit her bowels yearned over him and her heart beat wildly, she hid what she felt. Now the cause of his coming thither was on this wise. After he fell asleep upon the bench and Zumurrud let herself down to him and Jawan the Kurd seized her, he presently awoke and found himself lying with his head bare, so he knew that some one had come upon him and had robbed him of his turband whilst he slept. So he spoke the saying which shall never shame its sayer and, which is, “Verily, we are Allah’s and to Him are we returning!” and, going back to the old woman’s house, knocked at the door. She came out and he wept before her, till he fell down in a fainting fit. Now when he came to himself, he told her all that had passed, and she blamed him and chid him for his foolish doings saying, “Verily thine affliction and calamity come from thyself.” And she gave not over reproaching him, till the blood streamed from his nostrils and he again fainted away. When he recovered from his swoon, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Twenty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ali Shar recovered from his swoon he saw the old woman bewailing his griefs and weeping over him; so he complained of his hard lot and repeated these two couplets,

“How bitter to friends is a parting, * And a meeting how sweet to
the lover!
Allah join all the lovers He parteth, * And save me who of love
ne’er recover.”[317]

The old woman mourned over him and said to him, “Sit here, whilst I go in quest of news for thee and return to thee in haste.” “To hear is to obey,” answered he. So she left him on her good errand and was absent till midday, when she returned and said to him, “O Ali, I fear me thou must die in thy grief; thou wilt never see thy beloved again save on the bridge Al-Sirбt;[318] for the people of the Christian’s house, when they arose in the morning, found the window giving on the garden torn from its hinges and Zumurrud missing, and with her a pair of saddle-bags full of the Christian’s money. And when I came thither, I saw the Chief of Police standing at the door, he and his many, and there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” Now, as Ali Shar heard these words, the light in his sight was changed to the darkness of night and he despaired of life and made sure of death; nor did he leave weeping, till he lost his senses. When he revived, love and longing were sore upon him; there befel him a grievous sickness and he kept his house a whole year; during which the old woman ceased not to bring him doctors and ply him with ptisanes and diet-drinks and make him savoury broths till, after the twelve-month ended, his life returned to him. Then he recalled what had passed and repeated these couplets,

“Severance-grief nighmost, Union done to death, * Down-railing tear-drops, heart fire tortureth!
Redoubleth pine in one that hath no peace * For love and wake and woe he suffereth:
O Lord, if there be thing to joy my soul * Deign Thou bestow it while I breathe my breath.”

When the second year began, the old woman said to him, “O my son, all this thy weeping and wailing will not bring thee back thy mistress. Rise, therefore, gird the loins of resolution and seek for her in the lands: peradventure thou shalt light on some news of her.” And she ceased not to exhort and hearten him, till he took courage and she carried him to the Hammam. Then she made him drink strong wine and eat white meats, and thus she did with him for a whole month, till he regained strength; and setting out journeyed without ceasing till he arrived at Zumurrud’s city where he went to the horse-course, and sat down before the dish of sweet rice and put out his hand to eat of it. Now when the folk saw this, they were concerned for him and said to him, “O young man, eat not of that dish, for whoso eateth thereof, misfortune befalleth him.” Answered he, “Leave me to eat of it, and let them do with me what they will, so haply shall I be at rest from this wearying life.” Accordingly he ate a first mouthful, and Zumurrud was minded to have him brought before her, but then she bethought her that belike he was an hungered and said to herself, “It were properer to let him eat his fill.” So he went on eating, whilst the folk looked at him in astonishment, waiting to see what would betide him; and, when he had satisfied himself, Zumurrud said to certain of her eunuchry, “Go to yonder youth who eateth of the rice and bring him to me in courteous guise, saying: ‘Answer the summons of the King who would have a word with thee on some slight matter.’” They replied, “We hear and obey,” and going straightways up to Ali Shar, said to him, “O my lord, be pleased to answer the summons of the King and let thy heart be at ease.” Quoth he, “Hearkening and obedience;” and followed the eunuchs, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Twenty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ali Shar rejoined, “Hearkening and obedience;” and followed the eunuchs, whilst the people said to one another, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! I wonder what the King will do with him!” And others said, “He will do him naught but good: for had he intended to harm him, he had not suffered him to eat his fill.” Now when the Castratos set him in presence of Zumurrud he saluted and kissed the earth before her, whilst she returned his salutation and received him with honour. Then she asked him, “What may be thy name and trade, and what brought thee to our city?”; and he answered, “O King my name is Ali Shar; I am of the sons of the merchants of Khorasan; and the cause of my coming hither is to seek for a slave-girl whom I have lost for she was dearer to me than my hearing and my seeing, and indeed my soul cleaveth to her, since I lost her; and such is my tale.” So saying he wept, till he swooned away; whereupon she bade them sprinkle rose-water on his face, which they did till he revived, when she said, “Here with the table of sand and the brass pen.” So they brought them and she took the pen and struck a geomantic scheme which she considered awhile; and then cried, “Thou hast spoken sooth, Allah will grant thee speedy reunion with her; so be not troubled.” Upon this she commanded her head- chamberlain to carry him to the bath and afterwards to clothe him in a handsome suit of royal-apparel, and mount him on one of the best of the King’s horses and finally bring him to the palace at the last of the day. So the Chamberlain, after saying “I hear and I obey,” took him away, whilst the folk began to say to one another, “What maketh the King deal thus courteously with yonder youth?” And quoth one, “Did I not tell you that he would do him no hurt?; for he is fair of aspect; and this I knew, ever since the King suffered him to eat his fill." And each said his say; after which they all dispersed and went their ways. As for Zumurrud, she thought the night would never come, that she might be alone with the beloved of her heart. As soon as it was dark, she withdrew to her sleeping-chamber and made her attendants think her overcome with sleep; and it was her wont to suffer none to pass the night with her save those two little eunuchs who waited upon her. After a while when she had composed herself, she sent for her dear Ali Shar and sat down upon the bed, with candles burning over her head and feet, and hanging lamps of gold lighting up the place like the rising sun. When the people heard of her sending for Ali Shar, they marvelled thereat and each man thought his thought and said his say; but one of them declared, "At all events the King is in love with this young man, and to- morrow he will make him generalissimo of the army."[319] Now when they brought him into her, he kissed the ground between her hands and called down blessings her, and she said in her mind, "There is no help for it but that I jest with him awhile, before I make myself known to him.''[320] Then she asked him, "O Ali, say me, hast thou been to the Hammam?"[321] and he answered, "Yes, O my lord." Quoth she, "Come, eat of this chicken and meat, and drink of this wine and sherbet of sugar; for thou art weary; and after that come thou hither." "I hear and I obey," replied he and did as she commanded him do. Now when he had made an end of eating and drinking, she said to him, "Come up with me on the couch and shampoo[322] my feet." So he fell to rubbing feet and kneading calves, and found them softer than silk. Then said she, "Go higher with the massage;" and he, "Pardon me, O my lord, to the knee but no farther!" Whereupon quoth she, "Durst thou disobey me?: it shall be an ill-omened night for thee!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Twenty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Zumurrud cried to her lord, Ali Shar, "Durst thou disobey me?: it shall be an ill-omened night for thee! Nay, but it behoveth thee to do my bidding and I will make thee my minion and appoint thee one of my Emirs." Asked Ali Shar, "And in what must I do thy bidding, O King of the age?" and she answered, "Doff thy trousers and lie down on thy face." Quoth he, "That is a thing in my life I never did; and if thou force me thereto, verily I will accuse thee thereof before Allah on Resurrection-day. Take everything thou hast given me and let me go from thy city." And he wept and lamented; but she said, "Doff thy trousers and lie down on thy face, or I will strike off thy head." So he did as she bade him and she mounted upon his back; and he felt what was softer than silk and smoother than cream and said in himself, "Of a truth, this King is nicer than all the women!" Now for a time she abode on his back, then she turned over on the bed, and he said to himself, "Praised be Allah! It seemeth his yard is not standing." Then said she, "O Ali, it is of the wont of my prickle that it standeth not, except they rub it with their hands; so, come, rub it with thy hand, till it be at stand, else will I slay thee." So saying, she lay down on her back and taking his hand, set it to her parts, and he found these same parts softer than silk; white, plumply-rounded, protuberant, resembling for heat the hot room of the bath or the heart of a lover whom love-longing hath wasted. Quoth Ali in himself, "Verily, our King hath a coynte; this is indeed a wonder of wonders!" And lust get hold on him and his yard rose and stood upright to the utmost of its height; which when Zumurrud saw, she burst out laughing and said to him, "O my lord, all this happeneth and yet thou knowest me not!" He asked "And who art thou, O King?"; and she answered, "I am thy slave- girl Zumurrud." Now whenas he knew this and was certified that she was indeed his very slave-girl, Zumurrud, he kissed her and embraced her and threw himself upon her as the lion upon the lamb. Then he sheathed his steel rod in her scabbard and ceased not to play the porter at her door and the preacher in her pulpit and the priest[323] at her prayer niche, whilst she with him ceased not from inclination and prostration and rising up and sitting down, accompanying her ejaculations of praise and of "Glory to Allah!" with passionate movements and wrigglings and claspings of his member[324] and other amorous gestures, till the two little eunuchs heard the noise. So they came and peeping from behind the curtains saw the King lying on his back and upon him Ali Shar, thrusting and slashing whilst she puffed and blew and wriggled. Quoth they, "Verily, this be no man's wriggle: belike this King is a woman.''[325] But they concealed their affair and discovered it to none. And when the morrow came, Zumurrud summoned all the troops and the lords of the realm and said to them, “I am minded to journey to this man’s country; so choose you a viceroy, who shall rule over you till I return to you.” And they answered, “We hear and we obey.” Then she applied herself to making ready the wants of the way, to wit provaunt and provender, monies and rarities for presents, camels and mules and so forth; after which she set out from her city with Ali Shar, and they ceased not faring on, till they arrived at his native place, where he entered his house and gave many gifts to his friends and alms and largesse to the poor. And Allah vouchsafed him children by her, and they both lived the gladdest and happiest of lives, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies and the Garnerer of graves. And glorified be He the Eternal without cease, and praised be He in every case! And amongst other tales they tell one of

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THE LOVES OF JUBAYR BIN UMAYR AND THE LADY BUDUR.

It is related that the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid was uneasy[326] one night and could not sleep; so that he ceased not to toss from side to side for very restlessness, till, growing weary of this, he called Masrur and said to him, "Ho, Masrur, find me some one who may solace me in this my wakefulness." He answered, "O Prince of True Believers, wilt thou walk in the palace-garden and divert thyself with the sight of its blooms and gaze upon the stars and constellations and note the beauty of their ordinance and the moon among them rising in sheen over the water?" Quoth the Caliph, "O Masrur, my heart inclineth not to aught of this." Quoth he, "O my lord, there are in thy palace three hundred concubines, each of whom hath her separate chamber. Do thou bid all and every retire into her own apartment and then do thou go thy rounds and amuse thyself with gazing on them without their knowledge." The Caliph replied, "O Masrur, the palace is my palace and the girls are my property: furthermore my soul inclineth not to aught of this." Then Masrur rejoined, "O my lord, summon the doctors of law and religion and the sages of science and poets, and bid them contend before thee in argument and disputation and recite to thee songs and verses and tell thee tales and anecdotes." Replied the Caliph, "My soul inclineth not to aught of this;" and Masrur rejoined, "O my lord, bid pretty boys and the wits and the cup-companions attend thee and solace thee with witty sallies." "O Masrur," ejaculated the Caliph, "indeed my soul inclineth not to aught of this." "Then, O my lord," cried Masrur, "strike off my head;" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Twenty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Masrur cried out to the Caliph, "O my lord, strike off my head; haply that will dispel thine unease and do away the restlessness that is upon thee." So Al-Rashid laughed at his saying and said, "See which of the boon-companions is at the door." Thereupon he went out and returning, said, "O my lord, he who sits without is Ali bin Mansur of

Damascus, the Wag."[327] "Bring him to me," quoth Harun: and Masrur went out and returned with Ibn Mansur, who said, on entering, "Peace be with thee, O Commander of the Faithful!" The Caliph returned his salutation and said to him, "O Ibn Mansur, tell us some of thy stories." Said the other, "O Commander of the Faithful, shall I tell thee what I have seen with my eyes or what I have only heard tell?" Replied the Caliph, "If thou have seen aught worth telling, let us hear it; for hearing is not like seeing." Said Ibn Mansur, "O Commander of the Faithful, lend me thine ear and thy heart;" and he answered, "O Ibn Mansur, behold, I am listening to thee with mine ears and looking at thee with mine eyes and attending to thee with my heart." So Ibn Mansur began: "Know then, O Commander of the Faithful, that I receive a yearly allowance from Mohammed bin Sulaym6n al-H6shimi, Sultan of Bassorah; so I went to him once upon a time, as usual, and found him ready to ride out hunting and birding. I saluted him and he returned my salute, and said, 'O son of Mansur, mount and come with us to the chase:' but I said, 'O my lord, I can no longer ride; so do thou station me in the guest-house and give thy chamberlains and lieutenants charge over me.' And he did so and departed for his sport. His people entreated me with the utmost honour and entertained me with the greatest hospitality; but said I to myself, 'By Allah, it is a strange thing that for so long I have been in the habit of coming from Baghdad to Bassorah, yet know no more of this town than from palace to garden and from garden to palace. When shall I find an occasion like this to view the different parts and quarters of Bassorah? I will rise forthwith and walk forth alone and divert myself and digest what I have eaten.' Accordingly I donned my richest dress and went out a walking about Bassorah. Now it is known to thee, O Commander of the Faithful, that it hath seventy streets, each seventy leagues[328] long, the measure of Irak; and I lost myself in its by-streets and thirst overcame me. Presently, as I went along, O Prince of True Believers, behold, I came to a great door, whereon were two rings of brass,[329] with curtains of red brocade drawn before it. And on either side of the door was a stone bench and over it was a trellis, covered with a creeping vine that hung down and shaded the door way. I stood still to gaze upon the place, and presently heard a sorrowful voice, proceeding from a heart which did not rejoice, singing melodiously and chanting these cinquains,

‘My body bides the sad abode of grief and malady, * Caused by a
  fawn whose land and home are in a far countrie:
O ye two Zephyrs of the wold which caused such pain in me * By
  Allah, Lord of you! to him my heart’s desire, go ye
    And chide him so perchance ye soften him I pray.

And tell us all his words if he to hear your speech shall deign,

* And unto him the tidings bear of lovers ‘twixt you twain:
And both vouchsafe to render me a service free and fain, * And
  lay my case before him showing how I e’er complain:
    And say, ‘What ails thy bounder thrall this wise to
      drive away,

Without a fault committed and without a sin to show; * Or heart
  that leans to other wight or would thy love forego:
Or treason to our plighted troth or causing thee a throe?’ * And
  if he smile then say ye twain in accents soft and slow,
    ‘An thou to him a meeting grant ’twould be the kindest
      way!

For he is gone distraught for thee, as well indeed, he might *
  His eyes are wakeful and he weeps and wails the livelong
  night :’
If seem he satisfied by this why then ’tis well and right, * But
  if he show an angry face and treat ye with despite,
    Trick him and ‘Naught we know of him!’ I beg you both
      to say.’

Quoth I to myself, ‘Verily, if the owner of this voice be fair, she conjoineth beauty of person and eloquence and sweetness of voice.’ Then I drew near the door, and began raising the curtain little by little, when lo! I beheld a damsel, white as a full moon when it mooneth on its fourteenth night, with joined eyebrows twain and languorous lids of eyne, breasts like pomegranates twin and dainty, lips like double carnelian, a mouth as it were the seal-of Solomon, and teeth ranged in a line that played with the reason of proser and rhymer, even as saith the poet,

‘O pearly mouth of friend, who set those pretty pearls in line, *
And filled thee full of whitest chamomile and reddest wine?
Who lent the morning-glory in thy smile to shimmer and shine *
Who with that ruby-padlock dared thy lips to seal-and sign!
Who looks on thee at early morn with stress of joy and bliss *
Goes mad for aye, what then of him who wins a kiss of
thine?’[330]

And as saith another,

‘O pearl-set mouth of friend * Pity poor Ruby’s cheek
Boast not o’er one who owns * Thee, union and unique.’

In brief she comprised all varieties of loveliness and was a seduction to men and women, nor could the gazer satisfy himself with the sight of her charms; for she was as the poet hath said of her,

‘When comes she, slays she; and when back he turns, * She makes
all men regard with loving eyes:
A very sun! a very moon! but still * Prom hurt and harmful ills
her nature flies.
Opes Eden’s garden when she shows herself, * And full moon see we
o’er her necklace rise.’

How as I was looking at her through an opening of the curtain, behold, she turned; and, seeing me standing at the door, said to her handmaid, ‘See who is at the door.’ So the slave-girl came up to me and said, ‘O Shaykh, hast thou no shame, or do impudent airs suit hoary hairs?’ Quoth I, ‘O my mistress, I confess to the hoary hairs, but as for impudent airs, I think not to be guilty of unmannerliness.’ Then the mistress broke in, ‘And what can be more unmannerly than to intrude thyself upon a house other than thy house and gaze on a Harim other than thy Harim?’ I pleaded, ‘O my lady, I have an excuse;’ and when she asked, ‘And what is thine excuse?’ I answered, ‘I am a stranger and so thirsty that I am well nigh dead of thirst.’ She rejoined, ‘We accept thine excuse,’ — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When It was the Three Hundred and Twenty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young lady rejoined, ‘We accept thine excuse,’ and calling one of her slave maids, said to her, ‘O Lutf,[331] give him to drink in the golden tankard.’ So she brought me a tankard of red gold, set with pearls and gems of price, full of water mingled with virgin musk and covered with a napkin of green silk, and I addressed myself to drink and was long about my drinking, for I stole glances at her the while, till I could prolong my stay no longer. Then I returned the tankard to the girl, but did not offer to go; and she said to me, ‘O Shaykh, wend thy way.’ But I said, ‘O my lady, I am troubled in mind.’ She asked me ‘for what?’ and I answered, ‘For the turns of Time and the change of things.’ Replied she, ‘Well mayst thou be troubled thereat for Time breedeth wonders. But what hast thou seen of such surprises that thou shouldst muse upon them?’ Quoth I, ‘I was thinking of the whilom owner of this house, for he was my intimate in his lifetime.’ Asked she, ‘What was his name?’; and I answered, ‘Mohammed bin Ali the Jeweller and he was a man of great wealth. Tell me did he leave any children?’ Said she, ‘Yes, he left a daughter, Budur by name, who inherited all his wealth?’ Quoth I, ‘Meseemeth thou art his daughter?’ ‘Yes,’ answered she, laughing; then added, ‘O Shaykh, thou best talked long enough; now wend thy ways.’ Replied I, ‘Needst must I go, but I see thy charms are changed by being out of health; so tell me thy case; it may be Allah will give thee comfort at my hands.’ Rejoined she, ‘O Shayth, if thou be a man of discretion, I will discover to thee my secret; but first tell me who thou art, that I may know whether thou art worthy of confidence or not; for the poet saith,[332]

‘None keepeth a secret but a faithful person: with the best of
mankind remaineth concealed.
I have kept my secret in a house with a lock, whose key is lost
and whose door is sealed.’

Thereto I replied, ‘O my lady, an thou wouldest know who I am, I am Ali bin Mansъr of Damascus, the Wag, cup-companion to the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid.’ Now when she heard my name, she came down from her seat and saluting me, said, ‘Welcome, O Ibn Mansur! Now will I tell thee my case and entrust thee with my secret. I am a lover separated from her beloved.’ I answered, ‘O my lady, thou art fair and shouldest be on love terms with none but the fair. Whom then dost thou love?’ Quoth she, ‘I love Jubayr bin Umayr al-Shaybбni, Emir of the Banъ Shaybбn;[333] ‘ and she described to me a young man than whom there was no prettier fellow in Bassorah. I asked, ‘O my lady, have interviews or letters passed between you?’ and she answered ‘Yes, but our love was tongue-love souls, not heart and souls- love; for he kept not his trust nor was he faithful to his troth.’ Said I, ‘O my lady, and what was the cause of your separation?’, and she replied, ‘I was sitting one day whilst my handmaid here combed my hair. When she had made an end of combing it, she plaited my tresses, and my beauty and loveliness charmed her; so she bent over me and kissed my cheek.[334] At that moment he came in unawares, and, seeing the girl kiss my cheek, straightways turned away in anger, vowing eternal-separation and repeating these two couplets,

‘If another share in the thing I love, * I abandon my love and
live lorn of love.
My beloved is worthless if aught she will, * Save that which her
lover doth most approve.

And from the time he left me to this present hour, O Ibn Mansur, he hath neither written to me nor answered my letters.’ Quoth I, ‘And what purposes” thou to do?’ Quoth she, ‘I have a mind to send him a letter by thee. If thou bring me back an answer, thou shalt have of me five hundred gold pieces; and if not, then an hundred for thy trouble in going and coming.’ I answered, ‘Do what seemeth good to thee; I hear and I obey thee.’ Whereupon she called to one of her slave-girls, ‘Bring me ink case and paper,’ and she wrote thereon these couplets,

‘Beloved, why this strangeness, why this hate? * When shall thy

pardon reunite us two?
Why dost thou turn from me in severance? * Thy face is not the
face I am wont to know.
Yes, slanderers falsed my words, and thou to them * Inclining,
madest spite and envy grow.
An hast believed their tale, the Heavens forbid * Now thou
believe it when dost better bow!
By thy life tell what hath reached thine ear, * Thou know'st what
said they and so justice show.
An it be true I spoke the words, my words * Admit interpreting
and change allow:
Given that the words of Allah were revealed, * Folk changed the
Torah[335] and still changing go:
What slanders told they of mankind before! * Jacob heard Joseph
blamed by tongue of foe.
Yea, for myself and slanderer and thee * An awful day of
reckoning there shall be.'

Then she sealed the letter and gave it to me; and I took it and carried it to the house of Jubayr bin Umayr, whom I found absent a hunting. So I sat down to wait for him; and behold, he returned from the chase; and when I saw him, O Prince of True Believers, come riding up, my wit was confounded by his beauty and grace. As soon as he sighted me sitting at the house-door, he dismounted and coming up to me embraced me and saluted me; and meseemed I embraced the world and all therein. Then he carried me into his house and, seating me on his own couch, called for food. They brought a table of Khalanj-wood of Khorasan with feet of gold, whereon were all manners of meats, fried and roasted and the like. So I seated myself at the table and examining it with care found these couplets engraved upon it:"[336] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say,

When it was the Three Hundred and Thirtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ali son of Mansur continued: "So I seated myself at the table of Jubayr bin Umayr al-Shaybani and, examining it with care, found these couplets engraved upon it,

‘On these which once were-chicks,
Your mourning glances fix,
Late dwellers in the mansion of the cup,
Now nearly eaten up!
Let tears bedew
The memory of that stew,
Those partridges, once roast,
Now lost!

The daughters of the grouse in plaintive strain
Bemourn, and still bemourn, and mourn again!
The children of the fry,
We lately saw
Half smothered in pilau
With buttery mutton fritters smoking by!
Alas! my heart, the fish!
Who filled his dish,

With flaky form in varying colours spread
On the round pastry cake of household bread!
Heaven sent us that kabob!
For no one could
(Save heaven he should rob)
Produce a thing so excellently good,
Or give us roasted meat
With basting oil so savourily replete!

But, oh! mine appetite, alas! for thee!
Who on that furmeaty
So sharpset west a little while ago —
That furmeaty, which mashed by hands of snow,
A light reflection bore,
Of the bright bracelets that those fair hands wore;
Again remembrance glads my sense
With visions of its excellence!

Again I see the cloth unrolled
Rich worked in many a varied fold!
Be patient, oh! my soul, they say
Fortune rules all that's new and strange,
And though she pinches us to day,
To-morrow brings full rations, and a change!'[337]

Then said Jubayr, 'Put forth thy hand to our food and ease our heart by eating of our victual.' Answered I, 'By Allah, I will not eat a mouthful, till thou grant me my desire.' He asked, 'What is thy desire?'; so I brought out the letter and gave it to him; but, when he had read it and mastered its contents, he tore it in pieces and throwing it on the floor, said to me, 'O Ibn Mansur, I will grant thee whatever thou askest save thy desire which concerneth the writer of this letter, for I have no answer to her.' At this I rose in anger; but he caught hold of my skirts, saying, 'O Ibn Mansur, I will tell thee what she said to thee, albeit I was not present with you.' I asked, 'And what did she say to me?'; and he answered, 'Did not the writer of this letter say to thee, If thou bring me back an answer, thou shalt have of me five hundred ducats; and if not, an hundred for thy pains?' 'Yes,' replied I; and he rejoined, 'Abide with me this day and eat and drink and enjoy thyself and make merry, and thou shalt have thy five hundred ducats.' So I sat with him and ate and drank and made merry and enjoyed myself and entertained him with talk deep in to the night;[338] after which I said to him, 'O my master, is there no music in thy house.' He answered, 'Verily for many a day we have drunk without music.' Then he called out, saying, 'Ho, Shajarat al-Durr?' Whereupon a slave- girl answered him from her chamber and came in to us, with a lute of Hindu make, wrapped in a silken bag. And she sat down and, laying the lute in her lap, preluded in one and twenty modes; then, returning to the first, she sang to a lively measure these couplets,

'We have ne'er tasted of Love's sweets and bitter draught, * No
difference kens 'twixt presence-bliss and absence-stress;
And so, who hath declined from Love's true road, * No diference
kens 'twixt smooth and ruggedness:

I ceased not to oppose the votaries of love, * Till I had tried
its sweets and bitters not the less:
How many a night my pretty friend conversed with me * And sipped
I from his lips honey of love liesse:
Now have I drunk its cup of bitterness, until * To bondman and to
freedman I have proved me base.
How short-aged was the night together we enjoyed, * When seemed
it daybreak came on nightfall's heel to press!
But Fate had vowed to disunite us lovers twain, * And she too
well hath kept her vow, that votaress.
Fate so decreed it! None her sentence can withstand: * Where is
the wight who dares oppose his Lord's command?'

Hardly had she finished her verses, when her lord cried out with a great cry and fell down in a fit; whereupon exclaimed the damsel, 'May Allah not punish thee, O old man! This long time have we drunk without music, for fear the like of this falling sickness befal our lord. But now go thou to yonder chamber and there sleep.' So I went to the chamber which she showed me and slept till the morning, when behold, a page brought me a purse of five hundred dinars and said to me, 'This is what my master promised thee; but return thou not to the damsel who sent thee, god let it be as though neither thou nor we had ever heard of this matter.' 'Hearkening and obedience,' answered I and taking the purse, went my way. Still I said to myself, 'The lady must have expected me since yesterday; and by Allah there is no help but I return to her and tell her what passed between me and him: otherwise she will revile me and revile all who come from my country.' So I went to her and found her standing behind the door; and when she saw me she said, 'O Ibn Mansur, thou hast done nothing for me?' I asked, 'Who told thee of this?'; and she answered, 'O Ibn Mansur, yet another thing hath been revealed to me;[339] and it is that, when thou handedst him the letter, he tore it in pieces. and throwing it on the floor, said to thee: 'O Ibn Mansur, I will grant thee whatever thou askest save thy desire which concerneth the writer of this letter; for I have no answer to her missive.' Then didst thou rise from beside him in anger; but he laid hold of thy skirts, saying: 'O son of Mansur, abide with me to day, for thou art my guest, and eat and drink and make merry; and thou shalt have thy five hundred ducats.' So thou didst sit with him, eating and drinking and making merry, and entertainedst him with talk deep into the night and a slave- girl sang such an air and such verses, whereupon he fell down in a fit.' So, O Commander of the Faithful, I asked her 'West thou then with us?'; and she answered, 'O Ibn Mansur, hast thou not heard the saying of the poet,

'The hearts of lovers have eyes I ken, * Which see the unseen by vulgar men.'

However, O Ibn Mansur, the night and day shift not upon anything but they bring to it change.' — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Thirty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the lady exclaimed, 'O Ibn Mansur, the night and the day shift not upon anything but they bring to it change!' Then she raised her glance to heaven and said, 'O my God and my Leader and my Lord, like as Thou hast afflicted me with love of Jubayr bin Umayr, even so do Thou afflict him with love of me, and transfer the passion from my heart to his heart!'[340] Then she gave me an hundred sequins for my trouble in going and coming and I took it and returned to the palace, where I found the Sultan come home from the chase; so I got my pension of him and fared back to Baghdad. And when next year came, I repaired to Bassorah, as usual, to seek my pension, and the Sultan paid it to me; but, as I was about to return to Baghdad, I bethought me of the Lady Budur and said to myself, 'By Allah, I must needs go to her and see what hath befallen between her and her lover!' So I went to her house and finding the street before her door swept and sprinkled and eunuchs and servants and pages standing before the entrance, said to myself, 'Most like grief hath broken the lady's heart and she is dead, and some Emir or other hath taken up his abode in her house.' So I left it and went on to the house of Jubayr, son of Umayr the Shaybani, where I found the benches of the porch broken down and ne'er a page at the door, as of wont and said to myself, 'Haply he too is dead.' Then I stood still before the door of his house and with my eyes running over with tears, bemoaned it in these couplets,

‘O Lords of me, who fared but whom my heart e’er followeth, *
Return and so my festal-days with you shall be renewed!
I stand before the home of you, bewailing your abode; * Quiver
mine eyelids and my eyes with tears are ever dewed:
I ask the house and its remains that seem to weep and wail, *
‘Where is the man who whilom wont to lavish goods and
good?’’
It saith, ‘Go, wend thy way; those friends like travellers have
fared * From Springtide-camp, and buried lie of earth and
worms the food!’
Allah ne’er desolate us so we lose their virtues’ light * In
length and breadth, but ever be the light in spirit viewed!’

As I, O Prince of True Believers, was thus keening over the folk of the house,[341] behold, out came a black slave therefrom and said to me, ‘Hold thy peace, O Shaykh! May thy mother be reft of thee! Why do I see thee bemoaning the house in this wise?’ Quoth I, ‘I frequented it of yore, when it belonged to a good friend of mine.’ Asked the slave, ‘What was his name?’; and I answered, ‘Jubayr bin Umayr the Shaybani.’ Rejoined he, And what hath befallen him? Praised be Allah, he is yet here with us in the enjoyment of property and rank and prosperity, except that Allah hath stricken him with love of a damsel called the Lady Budur;, and he is so whelmed by his love of her and his longing for her, that he is like a great rock cumbering the ground. If he hunger, he saith not, ‘Give me meat;’ nor, if he thirst, doth he say, ‘Give me drink.’ Quoth I, ‘Ask leave for me to go in to him.’ Said the slave, ‘O my lord, wilt thou go in to one who understandeth or to one who understandeth not?’; and I said ‘There is no help for it but I see him whatever be the case.’ Accordingly he went in to ask and presently returned with permission for me to enter, whereupon I went in to Jubayr and found him like a rock that cumbereth the ground, understanding neither sign nor speech; and when I spoke to him he answered me not. Then said one of his servants, ‘O my lord, if thou remember aught of verse, repeat it and raise thy voice; and he will be aroused by this and speak with thee.’ So I versified in these two couplets,

‘Hast quit the love of Moons[342] or dost persist? * Dost wake
o’ nights or close in sleep thine eyes?
If aye thy tears in torrents flow, then learn * Eternal-thou
shalt dwell in Paradise.’[343]

When he heard these verses he opened his eyes and said; ‘Welcome, O son of Mansur! Verily, the jest is become earnest.’ Quoth I, ‘O my lord, is there aught thou wouldst have me do for thee?’ Answered he, ‘Yes, I would fain write her a letter and send it to her by thee. If thou bring me back her answer, thou shalt have of me a thousand dinars; and if not, two hundred for thy pains.’ So I said, ‘Do what seemeth good to thee;’ — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Thirty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ibn Mansur continued: “So I said, ‘Do what seemeth good to thee;’ whereupon he called to one of his slave-girls, ‘Bring me ink case and paper;’ and wrote these couplets,

‘I pray in Allah’s name, O Princess mine, be light * On me, for
Love hath robbed me of my reason’s sight’
‘Slaved me this longing and enthralled me love of you; * And clad
in sickness garb, a poor and abject wight.
I wont ere this to think small things of Love and hold, * O
Princess mine, ’twas silly thing and over-slight.
But when it showed me swelling surges of its sea, * To Allah’s
hest I bowed and pitied lover’s plight.
An will you, pity show and deign a meeting grant, * An will you
kill me still forget not good requite.’[344]

Then he sealed the letter and gave it to me. So I took it and, repairing to Budur’s house, raised the door-curtain little by little, as before, and looking in behold, I saw ten damsels, high-bosomed virgins, like moons, and the Lady Budur as she were the full moon among the stars, sitting in their midst, or the sun, when it is clear of clouds and mist; nor was there on her any trace of pain or care. And as I looked and marvelled at her case, she turned her glance upon me and, seeing me standing at the door, said to me, ‘Well come, and welcome and all hail to thee, O Ibn Mansur! Come in.’ So I entered and saluting her gave her the letter; and she read it and when she understood it, she said laughingly to me, ‘O Ibn Mansur, the poet lied not when he sang,

‘Indeed I’ll bear my love for thee with firmest soul, * Until from thee to me shall come a messenger.

‘Look’ye, O Ibn Mansur, I will write thee an answer, that he may give thee what he promised thee.’ And I answered, ‘Allah requite thee with good!’ So she called out to a handmaid, ‘Bring inkcase and paper,’ and wrote these couplets,

‘How comes it I fulfilled my vow the while that vow broke you? *
And, seen me lean to equity, iniquity wrought you?
’Twas you initiated wrongous dealing and despite: * You were the
treachetour and treason came from only you!
I never ceased to cherish mid the sons of men my troth, * And
keep your honour brightest bright and swear by name of you
Until I saw with eyes of me what evil you had done; * Until I
heard with ears of me what foul report spread you.
Shall I bring low my proper worth while raising yours so high? *
By Allah had you me eke I had honoured you!
But now uprooting severance I will fain console my heart, * And
wring my fingers clean of you for evermore to part!’

Quoth I, ‘By Allah, O my lady, between him and death there is but the reading of this letter!’ So I tore it in pieces and said to her, ‘Write him other than these lines.’ ‘I hear and obey answered she and wrote the following couplets,

‘Indeed I am consolиd now and sleep without a tear, * And all
that happened slandering tongues have whispered in mine ear:
My heart obeyed my hest and soon forgot thy memory, * And learnt
mine eyelids ’twas the best to live in severance sheer:
He lied who said that severance is a bitterer thing than gall: *
It never disappointed me, like wine I find it cheer:
I learnt to hate all news of thee, e’en mention of thy name, *

And turn away and look thereon with loathing pure and mere:
Lookye! I cast thee out of heart and far from vitals mine; * Then
let the slanderer wot this truth and see I am sincere.’

Quoth I, ‘By Allah, O my lady, when he shall read these verses, his soul will depart his body!’ Quoth she, ‘O Ibn Mansur, is passion indeed come to such a pass with him that thou sayest this saying?’ Quoth I, ‘Had I said more than this verily it were but the truth: but mercy is of the nature of the noble.’ Now when she heard this her eyes brimmed over with tears and she wrote him a note, I swear by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, there is none in thy Chancery could write the like of it; and therein were these couplets,

‘How long shall I thy coyness and thy great aversion see? * Thou
hast satisfied my censurers and pleased their enmity:
I did amiss and wot it not; so deign to tell me now * Whatso they
told thee, haply ’twas the merest calumny.
I wish to welcome thee, dear love, even as welcome I * Sleep to
these eyes and eyelids in the place of sleep to be.
And since ’tis thou hast made me drain th’ unmixиd cup of love, *
If me thou see with wine bemused heap not thy blame on me!’

And when she had written the missive, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Thirty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Budur had written the missive, she sealed it and gave it to me; and I said, ‘O my lady, in good sooth this thy letter will make the sick man whole and ease the thirsting soul.’ Then I took it and went from her, when she called me back and said to me, ‘O son of Mansur, say to him: ‘She will be thy guest this night.’ At this I joyed with exceeding great joy and carried the letter to Jubayr, whom I found with his eyes fixed intently on the door, expecting the reply and as soon as I gave him the letter and he opened and read it and understood it, he uttered a great cry and fell down in a fainting fit. When he came to himself, he said to me, ‘O Ibn Mansur, did she indeed write this note with her hand and feel it with her fingers?’ Answered I, ‘O my lord, do folk write with their feet?' And by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, I had not done speaking these words, when we heard the tinkle-tinkle of her anklets in the vestibule and she entered. And seeing her he sprang to his feet as though nothing pained or ailed him and embraced her like the letter L embraceth the letter A;[345] and the infirmity, that erst would not depart at once left him.[346] Then he sat down, but she abode standing and I said to her, 'O my lady, why dost thou not sit?' Said she, 'O Ibn Mansur, save on a condition that is between us, I will not sit.' I asked, 'And what is that?'; and she answered, 'None may know lovers' secrets,' and putting her mouth to Jubayr's ear whispered to him; where upon he replied, 'I hear and I obey.' Then he rose and said somewhat in a whisper to one of his slaves, who went out and returned in a little while with a Kazi and two witnesses. Thereupon Jubayr stood up and taking a bag containing an hundred thousand dinars, said, O Kazi, marry me to this young lady and write this sum to her marriage-settlement.' Quoth the Kazi to her, 'Say thou, I consent to this.' 'I consent to this,' quoth she, whereupon he drew up the contract of marriage and she opened the bag; and, taking out a handful of gold, gave it to the Kazi and the witnesses and handed the rest to Jubayr. Thereupon the Kazi and the witnesses withdrew, and I sat with them, in mirth and merriment, till the most part of the night was past, when I said in my mind, 'These are lovers and they have been this long while separated. I will now arise and go sleep in some place afar from them and leave them to their privacy, one with other.' So I rose, but she caught hold of my skirts, saying, 'What thinkest thou to do?' 'Nothing but so and so,' answered I; upon which she rejoined, 'Sit thee down; and when we would be rid of thee, we will send thee away.' So I sat down with them till near daybreak, when she said to me, 'O Ibn Mansur, go to yonder chamber; for we have furnished it for thee and it is thy sleeping-place.' Thereupon I arose and went thither and slept till morning, when a page brought me basin and ewer, and I made the ablution and prayed the dawn-prayer. Then I sat down and presently, behold, Jubayr and his beloved came out of the bath in the house, and I saw them both wringing their locks.[347] So I wished them good morning and gave them joy of their safety and reunion, saying to Jubayr, 'That which began with constraint and conditions hath ended in cordial-contentment.’ He answered, ‘Thou sayest well, and indeed thou deservest thy honorarium;’ and he called his treasurer, and said, ‘Bring hither three thousand dinars.’ So he brought a purse containing the gold pieces and Jubayr gave it to me, saying, ‘Favour us by accepting this.’ But I replied, ‘I will not accept it till thou tell me the manner of the transfer of love from her to thee, after so huge an aversion.’ Quoth he, ‘Hearkening and obedience! Know that we have a festival-called New Year’s day,[348] when all the people fare forth and take boat and go a-pleasuring on the river. So I went out with my comrades, and saw a skiff, wherein were ten damsels like moons and amongst them, the Lady Budur lute in hand. She preluded in eleven modes, then, returning to the first, sang these two couplets,

‘Fire is cooler than fires in my breast, * Rock is softer than
heart of my lord
Marvel I that he’s formиd to hold * In water soft frame heart
rock-hard!’

Said I to her, ‘Repeat the couplets and the air!’ But she would not:’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Thirty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “Jubayr continued, ‘So cried I to her, Repeat the couplets and the air!’ But she would not; whereupon I bade the boatmen pelt her with oranges, and they pelted her till we feared her boat would founder Then she went her way, and this is how the love was transferred from her heart to mine.’ So I wished them joy of their union and, taking the purse with its contents, I returned to Baghdad.” Now when the Caliph heard Ibn Mansur’s story his heart was lightened and the restlessness and oppression from which he suffered forsook him. And they also tell the tale of

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THE MAN OF AI-YAMAN AND HIS SIX SIAVE-GIRLS.

The Caliph Al-Maamun was sitting one day in his palace, surrounded by his Lords of the realm and Officers of state, and there were present also before him all his poets and cup- companions amongst the rest one named Mohammed of Bassorah. Presently the Caliph turned and said to him, “O Mohammed, I wish thee forthwith to tell me something that I have never before heard.” He replied, “O Commander of the Faithful, dost thou wish me to tell thee a thing I have heard with my ears or a thing I have seen with my eyes?” Quoth Al-Maamun, “Tell me whichever is the rarer; so Mohammed al-Basri began: “Know, then, O Commander of the Faithful that there lived once upon a time wealthy man, who was a native of Al-Yaman;but he emigrated from his native land and came to this city of Baghdad, whose sojourn so pleased him that he transported hither his family and possessions. Now he had six slave-girls, like moons one and all; the first white, the second brown, the third fat, the fourth lean, the fifth yellow and the sixth lamp-black; and all six were comely of countenance and perfect in accomplishments and skilled in the arts of singing and playing upon musical-instruments. Now it so chanced that, one day, he sent for the girls and called for meat and wine; and they ate and drank and were mirthful and made merry Then he filled the cup and, taking it in his hand, said to the blonde girl, ‘O new moon face, let us hear somewhat of thy pleasant songs.’ So she took the lute and tuning it, made music thereon with such sweet melody that the place danced with glee; after which she played a lively measure and sang these couplets,

‘I have a friend, whose form is fixed within mine eyes,[349] *
    Whose name deep buried in my very vitals lies:
Whenas remembers him my mind all heart am I, * And when on him my
    gaze is turned I am all eyes.
My censor saith, ‘Forswear, forget, the love of him,’ * ‘Whatso
    is not to be, how shall’s be?’ My reply is.

Quoth I, ‘O Censor mine, go forth from me, avaunt! * And make not
light of that on humans heavy lies.’

Hereat their master rejoiced and, drinking off his cup, gave the damsels to drink, after which he said to the berry-brown girl, ‘O brasier-light[350] and joy of the sprite, let us hear thy lovely voice, whereby all that hearken are ravished with delight.’ So she took the lute and thereon made harmony till the place was moved to glee; then, captivating all hearts with her graceful swaying, she sang these couplets,

‘I swear by that fair face’s life, I’ll love but thee * Till
death us part, nor other love but thine I’ll see:
O full moon, with thy loveliness mantilla’d o’er, * The loveliest
of our earth beneath thy banner be:
Thou, who surpassest all the fair in pleasantness * May Allah,
Lord of worlds, be everywhere with thee!’

The master rejoiced and drank off his cup and gave the girls to drink; after which he filled again; and, taking the goblet in his hand, signed to the fat girl and bade her sing and play a different motive. So she took the lute and striking a grief- dispelling measure, sang these couplets,

‘An thou but deign consent, O wish to heart affied! * I care not
wrath and rage to all mankind betide.
And if thou show that fairest face which gives me life, * I reck
not an dimimshed heads the Kings go hide.
I seek thy favours only from this ‘versal-world: * O thou in whom
all beauty cloth firm-fixt abide!’

The man rejoiced and, emptying his cup, gave the girls to drink. Then he signed to the thin girl and said to her, ‘O Houri of Paradise, feed thou our ears with sweet words and sounds.’ So she took the lute; and, tuning it, preluded and sang these two couplets,

‘Say me, on Allah’s path[351] hast death not dealt to me, *
Turning from me while I to thee turn patiently:

Say me, is there no judge of Love to judge us twain, * And do me
justice wronged, mine enemy, by thee?’

Their lord rejoiced and, emptying the cup, gave the girls to drink. Then filling another he signed to the yellow girl and said to her, O sun of the day, let us hear some nice verses.’ So she took the lute and, preluding after the goodliest fashion, sang these couplets,

‘I have a lover and when drawing him, * He draws on me a sword-
blade glancing grim:
Allah avenge some little of his wrongs, * Who holds my heart yet
wreaks o erbearing whim
Oft though I say, ‘Renounce him, heart!’ yet heart * Will to none
other turn excepting him.
He is my wish and will of all men, but * Fate’s envious hand to
me’s aye grudging him.’

The master rejoiced and drank and gave the girls to drink; then he filled the cup and taking it in hand, signed to the black girl, saying, ‘O pupil of the eye, let us have a taste of thy quality, though it be but two words.’ So she took the lute and tuning it and tightening the strings, preluded in various modes, then returned to the first and sang to a lively air these couplets,

‘Ho ye, mine eyes, let prodigal-tears go free; * This ecstasy
would see my being unbe:[352]
All ecstasies I dreefor sake of friend * I fondle, maugre
enviers’ jealousy:
Censors forbid me from his rosy cheek, * Yet e’er inclines my
heart to rosery:
Cups of pure wine, time was, went circuiting * In joy, what time
the lute sang melody,
While kept his troth the friend who madded me, * Yet made me
rising star of bliss to see:
But — with Time, turned he not by sin of mine; * Than such a turn
can aught more bitter be?
Upon his cheek there grows and glows a rose, * Nay two, whereof

grant Allah one to me!
An were prostration[353] by our law allowed * To aught but
Allah, at his feet I had bowed.’

Thereupon rose the six girls and, kissing the ground before their lord, said to him, ‘Do thou justice between us, O our lord!’ So he looked at their beauty and loveliness and the contrast of their colours and praised Almighty Allah and glorified Him. Then said he, ‘There is none of you but hath learnt the Koran by heart, and mastered the musical-art and is versed in the chronicles’ of yore and the doings of peoples which have gone before; so it is my desire that each one of you rise and, pointing finger at her opposite, praise herself and dispraise her co-concubine; that is to: say, let the blonde point to the brunette, the plump to the slenderer and the yellow to the black girl; after which the rivals, each in her turn, shall do the like with the former; and be this illustrated with citations from Holy Writ and somewhat of anecdotes and,; verse, so as to show forth your fine breeding and elegance of your pleading.’ And they answered him, ‘We hear and we obey!;” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the handmaids answered the man of Al-Yaman, “‘We hear and we obey!’ Accordingly the blonde rose first and, pointing at the black girl, said to her: ‘Out on thee, blackamoor! It is told by tradition that whiteness saith, ‘I am the shining light, I am the rising moon of the fourteenth night. My hue is patent and my brow is resplendent and of my beauty quoth the poet,’

‘White girl with softly rounded polished cheeks * As if a pearl
concealed by Beauty’s boon:
Her stature Alif-like;[354] her smile like Mнm[355] * And
o’er her eyes two brows that bend like Nъn.[356]
’Tis as her glance were arrow, and her brows * Bows ever bent to
shoot Death-dart eftsoon:
If cheek and shape thou view, there shalt thou find * Rose,
myrtle, basil and Narcissus wone.

Men wont in gardens plant and set the branch, * How many garths
thy stature-branch cloth own!’

‘So my colour is like the hale and healthy day and the newly culled orange spray and the star of sparkling ray;[357] and indeed quoth Almighty Allah, in His precious Book, to his prophet Moses (on whom be peace!), Put thy hand into thy bosom; it shall come forth white, without hurt.’[358] And again He saith, But they whose faces shall become white, shall be in the mercy of Allah; therein shall they remain forever.’[359] My colour is a sign, a miracle, and my loveliness supreme and my beauty a term extreme. It is on the like of me that raiment showeth fair and fine and to the like of me that hearts incline. Moreover, in whiteness are many excellences; for instance, the snow falleth white from heaven, and it is traditional-that the beautifullest of a colours white. The Moslems also glory in white turbands, but I should be tedious, were I to tell all that may be told in praise of white; little and enough is better than too much of unfilling stuff. So now I will begin with thy dispraise, O black, O colour of ink and blacksmith’s dust, thou whose face is like the raven which bringeth about the parting of lovers. Verily, the poet saith in praise of white and blame of black,

‘Seest not that pearls are prized for milky hue, * But with a
dirham buy we coals in load?
And while white faces enter Paradise, * Black faces crowd
Gehenna’s black abode.’

And indeed it is told in certain histories, related on the authority of devout men, that Noah (on whom be peace!) was sleeping one day, with his sons Cham and Shem seated at his head, when a wind sprang up and, lifting his clothes, uncovered his nakedness; whereat Cham looked and laughed and did not cover him: but Shem arose and covered him. Presently, their sire awoke and learning, what had been done by his sons, blessed Shem and cursed Cham. So Shem’s face was whitened and from him sprang the prophets and the orthodox Caliphs and Kings; whilst Cham’s face was blackened and he fled forth to the land of Abyssinia, and of his lineage came the blacks.[360] All people are of one mind in affirming the lack of understanding of the blacks, even as saith the adage, ‘How shall one find a black with a mind?’ Quoth her master, ‘Sit thee down, thou hast given us sufficient and even excess.’ Thereupon he signed to the negress, who rose and, pointing her finger at the blonde, said: Dost thou not know that in the Koran sent down to His prophet and apostle, is transmitted the saying of God the Most High, ‘By the night when it covereth all things with darkness; by the day when it shineth forth!’[361] If the night were not the more illustrious, verily Allah had not sworn by it nor had given it precedence of the day. And indeed all men of wit and wisdom accept this. Knowest thou not that black is the ornament of youth and that, when hoariness descendeth upon the head, delights pass away and the hour of death draweth in sight? Were not black the most illustrious of things, Allah had not set it in the core of the heart[362] and the pupil of the eye; and how excellent is the saying of the poet,

‘I love not black girls but because they show * Youth’s colour,
tinct of eye and heartcore’s hue;
Nor are in error who unlove the white, * And hoary hairs and
winding-sheet eschew.’

And that said of another,

‘Black[363] girls, not white, are they * All worthy love I
see:
Black girls wear dark-brown lips;[364] * Whites, blotch of
leprosy.’

And of a third,

‘Black girls in acts are white, and ’tis as though * Like eyes,
with purest shine and sheen they show;
If I go daft for her, be not amazed; * Black bile[365] drives
melancholic-mad we know
’Tis as my colour were the noon of night; * For all no moon it
be, its splendours glow.

Moreover, is the foregathering of lovers good but in the night? Let this quality and profit suffice thee. What protecteth lovers from spies and censors like the blackness of night's darkness; and what causeth them to fear discovery like the whiteness of the dawn's brightness? So, how many claims to honour are there not in blackness and how excellent is the saying of the poet,

'I visit them, and night-black lendeth aid to me * Seconding love, but dawn-white is mine enemy.'

And that of another,

'How many a night I've passed with the beloved of me, * While
gloom with dusky tresses veilиd our desires:
But when the morn-light showed it caused me sad affright; * And I
to Morning said, 'Who worship light are liars!'[366]

And saith a third,

'He came to see me, hiding neath the skirt of night, * Hasting
his steps as wended he in cautious plight.
I rose and spread my cheek upon his path like rug, * Abject, and
trailed my skirt to hide it from his sight;
But rose the crescent moon and strave its best to show * The
world our loves like nail-slice raying radiant
light:[367]
Then what befel befel: I need not aught describe; * But think thy
best, and ask me naught of wrong or right.
Meet not thy lover save at night for fear of slander * The Sun's
a tittle-tattler and the Moon's a pander.'

And a fifth,

'I love not white girls blown with fat who puff and pant; * The
maid for me is young brunette embonpoint-scant.
I'd rather ride a colt that's darn upon the day * Of race, and
set my friends upon the elephant.'

And a sixth,

My lover came to me one night, * And clips we both with fond
embrace;
And lay together till we saw * The morning come with swiftest
pace.
Now I pray Allah and my Lord * To reunite us of His grace
And make night last me long as he * Lies in the arms that tightly
lace.'

Were I to set forth all the praises of blackness, my tale would be tedious; but little and enough is better than too much of unfilling stuff. As for thee, O blonde, thy colour is that of leprosy and thine embrace is suffocation;[368] and it is of report that hoar-frost and icy cold[369] are in Gehenna for the torment of the wicked. Again, of things black and excellent is ink, wherewith is written Allah's word; and were it not for black ambergris and black musk, there would be no perfumes to carry to Kings. How many glories I may not mention dwell in blackness, and how well saith the poet,

'Seest not that musk, the nut brown musk, e'er claims the highest
price * Whilst for a load of whitest lime none more than
dirham bids?
And while white speck upon the eye deforms the loveliest youth, *
Black eyes discharge the sharpest shafts in lashes from
their lids.'

Quoth her master, 'Sit thee down: this much sufficeth.' So she sat down and he signed to the fat girl, who rose" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "the man of Al-Yaman, the master of the handmaids, signed to the fat girl who rose and, pointing her finger at the slim girl, bared her calves and wrists and uncovered her stomach, showing its dimples and the plump rondure of her navel. Then she donned a shift of fine stuff, that exposed her whole body, and said: 'Praised be Allah who created me, for that He beautified my face and made me fat and fair of the fattest and fairest; and likened me to branches laden with fruit, and bestowed upon me abounding beauty and brightness: and praised be He no less, for that He hath given me the precedence and honoured me, when He mentioneth me in His holy Book! Quoth the Most High, 'And he brought a fatted calf.'[370] And He hath made me like unto a vergier full of peaches and pomegranates. In very sooth even as the townsfolk long for fat birds and eat of them and love not lean birds, so do the sons of Adam desire fat meat and eat of it. How many vauntful attributes are there not in fatness, and how well saith the poet,

'Farewell thy love, for see, the Cafilah's[371] on the move: *
O man, canst bear to say adieu and leave thy love?
'Tis as her going were to seek her neighbour's tent, * The gait
of fat fair maid, whom hearts shall all approve.'

Sawest thou ever one stand before a flesher's stall but sought of him fat flesh? The wise say, 'Joyance is in three things, eating meat and riding meat and putting meat into meat.'[372] As for thee, O thin one, thy calves are like the shanks of sparrows or the pokers of furnaces; and thou art a cruciform plank of a piece of flesh poor and rank; there is naught in thee to gladden the heart; even as saith the poet,

'With Allah take I refuge from whatever driveth me * To bed with
one like footrasp[373] or the roughest ropery:
In every limb she hath a horn that butteth me whene'er * I fain
would rest, so morn and eve I wend me wearily.'

Quoth her master, 'Sit thee down: this much sufficeth.' So she sat down and he signed to the slender girl, who rose, as she were a willow-wand, or a rattan-frond or a stalk of sweet basil, and said: 'Praised be Allah who created me and beautified me and made my embraces the end of all desire and likened me to the branch, whereto all hearts incline. If I rise, I rise lightly; if I sit, I sit prettily; I am nimble-witted at a jest and merrier-souled than mirth itself. Never heard I one describe his mistress, saying, 'My beloved is the bigness of an elephant or like a mountain long and broad;' but rather, 'My lady hath a slender waist and a slim shape.'[374] Furthermore a little food filleth me and a little water quencheth my thirst; my sport is agile and my habit active; for I am sprightlier than the sparrow and lighter-skipping than the starling. My favours are the longing of the lover and the delight of the desirer; for I am goodly of shape, sweet of smile and graceful as the bending willow-wand or the rattan-cane[375] or the stalk of the basil- plant; nor is there any can compare with me in loveliness, even as saith one of me,

'Thy shape with willow branch I dare compare, * And hold thy
figure as my fortunes fair:
I wake each morn distraught, and follow thee, * And from the
rival's eye in fear I fare.'

It is for the like of me that amourists run mad and that those who desire me wax distracted. If my lover would draw me to him, I am drawn to him; and if he would have me incline to him, I incline to him and not against him. But now, as for thee, O fat of body, thine eating is the feeding of an elephant, and neither much nor little filleth thee. When thou liest with a man who is lean, he hath no ease of thee; nor can he anyways take his pleasure of thee; for the bigness of thy belly holdeth him off from going in unto thee and the fatness of thy thighs hindereth him from coming at thy slit. What goodness is there in thy grossness, and what courtesy or pleasantness in thy coarseness? Fat flesh is fit for naught but the flasher, nor is there one point therein that pleadeth for praise. If one joke with thee, thou art angry; if one sport with thee, thou art sulky; if thou sleep, thou snorest if thou walk, thou lollest out thy tongue! if thou eat, thou art never filled. Thou art heavier than mountains and fouler than corruption and crime. Thou hast in thee nor agility nor benedicite nor thinkest thou of aught save meat and sleep. When thou pissest thou swishes"; if thou turd thou gruntest like a bursten wine skin or an elephant transmogrified. If thou go to the water closet, thou needest one to wash thy gap and pluck out the hairs which overgrow it; and this is the extreme of sluggish ness and the sign, outward and visible, of stupidity[376] In short, there is no good thing about thee, and indeed the poet Title of thee,

‘Heavy and swollen like an urine-bladder blown, * With hips and
thighs like mountain propping piles of stone;
Whene’er she walks in Western hemisphere, her tread * Makes the
far Eastern world with weight to moan and groan.’

Quoth her master, ‘Sit thee down, this sufficeth;’ so she sat down and he signed to the yellow girl, who rose to her feet and praised Allah Almighty and magnified His name, calling down peace and blessing on Mohammed the best of His creatures; after which she pointed her finger at the brunette and said to her,” And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “the yellow girl stood up and praised Almighty Allah and magnified His name; after which she pointed her finger at the brown girl and said to her: ‘I am the one praised in the Koran, and the Compassionate hath described my complexion and its excellence over all other hues in His manifest Book, where Allah saith, ‘A yellow, pure yellow, whose colour gladdeneth the beholders.’[377] Wherefore my colour is a sign and portent and my grace is supreme and my beauty a term extreme; for that my tint is the tint of a ducat and the colour of the planets and moons and the hue of ripe apples. My fashion is the fashion of the fair, and the dye of saffron outvieth all other dyes; so my semblance is wondrous and my colour marvellous. I am soft of body and of high price, comprising all qualities of beauty. My colour is essentially precious as virgin gold, and how many boasts and glories cloth it not unfold! Of the like of me quoth the poet,

‘Her golden yellow is the sheeny sun’s; * And like gold sequins
she delights the sight:
Saffron small portion of her glance can show; * Nay,[378] she
outvies the moon when brightest bright.’

And I shall at once begin in thy dispraise, O berry-brown girl! Thy tincture is that of the buffalo, and all souls shudder at thy sight. If thy colour be in any created thing, it is blamed; if it be in food, it is poisoned; for thy hue is the hue of the dung- fly; it is a mark of ugliness even in dogs; and among the colours it is one which strikes with amazement and is of the signs of mourning. Never heard I of brown gold or brown pearls or brown gems. If thou enter the privy, thy colour changeth, and when thou comest out, thou addest ugliness to ugliness. Thou art a non- descript; neither black, that thou mayst be recognised, nor white, that thou mayst be described; and in thee there is no good quality, even as saith the poet,

'The hue of dusty motes is hers; that dull brown hue of hers * Is
mouldy like the dust and mud by Cossid's foot
upthrown:[379]
I never look upon her brow, e'en for eye-twinkling's space, *
But in brown study fall I and my thoughts take browner
tone.'

Quoth her master, 'Sit thee down; this much sufficeth;' so she sat down and he signed to the brunette. Now she was a model of beauty and loveliness and symmetry and perfect grace; soft of skin, slim of shape, of stature rare, and coal-black hair; with cheeks rosy-pink, eyes black rimmed by nature's hand, face fair, and eloquent tongue; moreover slender-waisted and heavy-hipped. So she rose and said: 'Praise be to Allah who hath created me neither leper-white nor bile-yellow nor charcoal-black, but hath made my colour to be beloved of men of wit and wisdom, for all the poets extol berry-brown maids in every tongue and exalt their colour over all other colours. To 'brown of hue (they say) praise is due;' and Allah bless him who singeth,

'And in brunettes is mystery, could'st" thou but read it right, *
Thy sight would never dwell on others, be they red or white:
Free-flowing conversation, amorous coquettishness * Would teach
H6rut himself a mightier spell of magic might.'

And saith another,

'Give me brunettes, so limber, lissom, lithe of sway, * Brunettes
tall, slender straight like Samhar's nut-brown
lance;[380]

Languid of eyelids and with silky down on either cheek, * Who
fixed in lover’s heart work to his life mischance.’

And yet another,

‘Now, by my life, brown hue hath point of comeliness * Leaves
whiteness nowhere and high o’er the Moon takes place;
But an of whiteness aught it borrowed self to deck, * ’Twould
change its graces and would pale for its disgrace:
Not with his must[381] I’m drunken, but his locks of musk *
Are wine inebriating all of human race.
His charms are jealous each of each, and all desire * To be the
down that creepeth up his lovely face.’

And again another,

‘Why not incline me to that show of silky down, * On cheeks of
dark brunette, like bamboo spiring brown?
Whenas high rank in beauty poets sing, they say * Brown ant-like
specklet worn by nenuphar in crown.
And see I sundry lovers tear out others’ eyne * For the brown
mole beneath that jetty pupil shown,
Then why do censors blame me for one all a mole? * Allah I pray
demolish each molesting clown!’[382]

My form is all grace and my shape is built on heavy base; Kings desire my colour which all adore, rich and poor. I am pleasant, active, handsome, elegant, soft of skin and prized for price: eke I am perfect in seemlibead and breeding and eloquence; my aspect is comely and my tongue witty; my temper is bright and my play a pretty sight. As for thee, thou art like unto a mallow growing about the Lъk Gate;[383] in hue sallow and streaked-yellow and made all of sulphur. Aroynt thee, O copper-worth of jaundiced sorrel, O rust of brass-pot, O face of owl in gloom, and fruit of the Hell-tree Zakkъm;[384] whose bedfellow, for heart-break, is buried in the tomb. And there is no good thing in thee, even as saith the poet of the like of thee,

'Yellowness, tincturing her tho' nowise sick or sorry, *
Straitens my hapless heart and makes my head sore ache;
An thou repent not, Soul! I'll punish thee with kissing[385] *
Her lower face that shall mine every grinder break!'

And when she ended her lines, quoth her master, 'Sit thee down, this much sufficeth!'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "when the yellow girl ended her recitation, quoth her master, 'Sit thee down; this much sufficeth!' Then he made peace between them and clad them all in sumptuous robes of honour and hanselled them with precious jewels of land and sea. And never have I seen, O Commander of the Faithful, any when or any where, aught fairer than these six damsels fair." Now when Al-Maamun heard this story from Mohammed of Bassorah, he turned to him and said, "O Mohammed, knowest thou the abiding-place of these damsels and their master, and canst thou contrive to buy them of him for us?" He answered, "O Commander of the Faithful, indeed I have heard that their lord is wrapped up in them and cannot bear to be parted from them." Rejoined the Caliph, "Take thee ten thousand gold pieces for each girl, that is sixty thousand for the whole purchase; and carry the coin to his house and buy them of him." So Mohammed of Bassorah took the money and, betaking himself to the Man of Al-Yaman, acquainted him with the wish of the Prince of True Believers. He consented to part with them at that price to pleasure the Caliph; and despatched them to Al-Maamun, who assigned them an elegant abode and therein used to sit with them as cup-companions; marvelling at their beauty and loveliness, at their varied colours and at the excellence of their conversation. Thus matters stood for many a day; but, after awhile, when their former owner could no longer bear to be parted from them, he sent a letter to the Commander of the Faithful complaining to him of his own ardent love-longing for them and containing, amongst other contents, these couplets,

"Captured me six, all bright with youthful blee; * Then on all

six be best salams from me!
They are my hearing, seeing, very life; * My meat, my drink, my
joy, my jollity:
I'll ne'er forget the favours erst so charmed * Whose loss hath
turned my sleep to insomny:
Alack, O longsome pining and O tears! * Would I had farewelled
all humanity:
Those eyes, with bowed and well arched eyebrows[386] dight, *
Like bows have struck me with their archery."

Now when the letter came to the hands of Al-Maamun, he robed the six damsels in rich raiment; and, giving them threescore thousand dinars, sent them back to their lord who joyed in them with exceeding joy[387] (more especially for the monies they brought him), and abode with them in all the comfort and pleasance of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies. And men also recount the tale of

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HARUN AL-RASHID AND THE DAMSEL AND ABU NOWAS.

The Caliph, Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, being one night exceedingly restless and thoughtful with sad thought, rose from his couch and walked about the by-ways of his palace, till he came to a chamber, over whose doorway hung a curtain. He raised that curtain and saw, at the upper end of the room, a bedstead whereon lay something black, as it were a man asleep, with a wax taper on his right hand and another on his left; and as the Caliph stood wondering at the sight, behold, he remarked a flagon full of old wine whose mouth was covered by the cup. The Caliph wondered even more at this, saying, “How came this black by such wine-service?” Then, drawing near the bedstead, he found that it was a girl lying asleep there, curtained by her hair; so he uncovered her face and saw that it was like the moon, on the night of his fulness.[388] So the Caliph filled himself a cup of wine and drank it to the roses of her cheeks; and, feeling inclined to enjoy her, kissed a mole on her face, whereupon she started up from sleep, and cried out, “O Trusted of Allah,[389] what may this be?” Replied he, “A guest who knocketh at thy door, hoping that thou wilt give him hospitality till the dawn;” and she answered; “Even so! I will serve him with my hearing and my sight.” So she brought forward the wine and they drank together, after which she took the lute and tuning the strings, preluded in one-and-twenty modes, then returning to the first, played a lively measure and sang these couplets,

“The tongue of love from heart bespeaks my sprite, * Telling I
love thee with love infinite:
I have an eye bears witness to my pain, * And fluttering heart
sore hurt by parting-plight.
I cannot hide the love that harms my life; * Tears ever roll and
growth of pine I sight:
I knew not what love was ere loving thee; * But Allah’s destiny
to all is dight.”

And when her verses were ended she said, “O Commander of the Faithful, I have been wronged!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the damsel cried, “O Commander of the Faithful, I have been wronged!” Quoth he, “How so, and who hath wronged thee?” Quoth she “Thy son bought me awhile ago, for ten thousand dirhams, meaning to give me to thee; but thy wife, the daughter of thine uncle, sent him the said price and bade him shut me up from thee in this chamber.” Whereupon said the Caliph, “Ask a boon of me,” and she, “I ask thee to lie with me to-morrow night.” Replied the Caliph, “Inshallah!” and leaving her, went away. Now as soon as it was morning, he repaired to his sitting-room and called for Abu Nowas, but found him not and sent his chamberlain to ask after him. The chamberlain found him in a tavern, pawned and pledged for a score of a thousand dirhams, which he had spent on a certain beardless youth, and questioned him of his case. So he told him what had betided him with the comely boy and how he had spent upon him a thousand silver pieces; whereupon quoth the chamberlain, “Show him to me; and if he be worth this, thou art excused.” He answered, “Patience, and thou shalt see him presently.’ As they were talking together, up came the lad, clad in a white tunic, under which was another of red and under this yet another black. Now when Abu Nowas saw him, he sighed a loud sigh and improvised these couplets,

“He showed himself in shirt of white, * With eyes and eyelids
languor-digit.
Quoth I, ‘Doss pass and greet me not? * Though were thy greeting
a delight?
Blest He who clothed in rose thy cheeks, * Creates what wills He
by His might!’
Quoth he, ‘Leave prate, forsure my Lord * Of works is wondrous
infinite:
My garment’s like my face and luck; * All three are white on
white on white.’”

When the beardless one heard these words, he doffed the white tunic and appeared in the red; and when Abu Nowas saw him he redoubled in expressions of admiration and repeated these couplets,

“He showed in garb anemone-red, * A foeman ‘friend’ entitulиd:
Quoth I in marvel, ‘Thou’rt full moon * Whose weed shames rose however red:
Hath thy cheek stained it red, or hast * Dyed it in blood by lovers bled?’
Quoth he, ‘Sol gave me this for shirt * When hasting down the West to bed
So garb and wine and hue of cheek * All three are red on red on red.’”

And when the verses came to an end, the beardless one doffed the red tunic and stood in the black; and, when Abu Nowas saw him, he redoubled in attention to him and versified in these couplets,

“He came in sable-huиd sacque * And shone in dark men’s heart to rack:
Quoth I, ‘Doss pass and greet me not? * Joying the hateful envious pack?
Thy garment’s like thy locks and like * My lot, three blacks on black on black.’”

Seeing this state of things and understanding the case of Abu Nowas and his love-longing, the Chamberlain returned to the Caliph and acquainted him therewith; so he bade him pouch a thousand dirhams and go and take him out of pawn. Thereupon the Chamberlain returned to Abu Nowas and, paying his score, carried him to the Caliph, who said, “Make me some verses containing the words, O Trusted of Allah, what may this be?” Answered he, “I hear and I obey, O Commander of the Faithful.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Fortieth Night,

She said, it hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abu Nowas answered, “I hear and I obey, O Commander of the Faithful!” and forthwith he improvised these couplets,

“Long was my night for sleepless misery; * Weary of body and of
  thought ne’er free:
I rose and in my palace walked awhile, * Then wandered thro’ the
  halls of Haremry:
Till chanced I on a blackness, which I found * A white girl hid
  in hair for napery:
Here to her for a moon of brightest sheen! * Like willow-wand and
  veiled in pudency:
I quaffed a cup to her; then drew I near, * And kissed the
  beauty-spot on cheek had she:
She woke astart, and in her sleep’s amaze, * Swayed as the
  swaying branch in rain we see;
Then rose and said to me, ‘O Trusted One * Of Allah, O Amin, what
  may this be?
Quoth I, ‘A guest that cometh to thy tents * And craves till morn
  thy hospitality.’
She answered, ‘Gladly I, my lord, will grace * And honour such a
  guest with ear and eye.’”

Cried the Caliph, “Allah strike thee dead! it is as if thou hadst been present with us.”[390] Then he took him by the hand and carried him to the damsel and, when Abu Nowas saw her clad in a dress and veil of blue, he expressed abundant admiration and improvised these couplets,

“Say to the pretty one in veil of blue, * ‘By Allah, O my life,
  have ruth on dole!
For, when the fair entreats her lover foul, * Sighs rend his
  bosom and bespeak his soul
By charms of thee and whitest cheek I swear thee, * Pity a heart
  for love lost all control
Bend to him, be his stay ‘gainst stress of love, * Nor aught
  accept what saith the ribald fool.’”

Now when he ended his verse, the damsel set wine before the

Caliph; and, taking the lute, played a lively measure and sang these couplets,

“Wilt thou be just to others in thy love, and do * Unright, and
put me off, and take new friend in lieu?
Had lovers Kazi unto whom I might complain * Of thee, he’d
peradventure grant the due I sue:
If thou forbid me pass your door, yet I afar * Will stand, and
viewing you waft my salams to you!”

The Caliph bade her ply Abu Nowas with wine, till he lost his right senses, thereupon he gave him a full cup, and he drank a draught of it and held the cup in his hand till he slept. Then the Commander of the Faithful bade the girl take the cup from his grasp and hide it; so she took it and set it between her thighs, moreover he drew his scymitar and, standing at the head of Abu Nowas, pricked him with the point; whereupon he awoke and saw the drawn sword and the Caliph standing over him. At this sight the fumes of the wine fled from his head and the Caliph said to him, “Make me some verses and tell me therein what is become of thy cup; or I will cut off thy head.” So he improvised these couplets,

“My tale, indeed, is tale unlief; * ’Twas yonder fawn who play’d
the thief!
She stole my cup of wine, before * The sips and sups had dealt
relief,
And hid it in a certain place, * My heart’s desire and longing
grief.
I name it not, for dread of him * Who hath of it command-in-
chief.”

Quoth the Caliph, “Allah strike thee dead![391] How knewest thou that? But we accept what thou sayst.” Then he ordered him a dress of honour and a thousand dinars, and he went away rejoicing. And among tales they tell is one of

THE MAN WHO STOLE THE DISH OF GOLD WHEREIN THE DOG ATE.

Sometime erst there was a man, who had accumulated debts, and his case was straitened upon him, so that he left his people and family and went forth in distraction; and he ceased not wandering on at random till he came after a time to a city tall of walls and firm of foundations. He entered it in a state of despondency and despair, harried by hunger and worn with the weariness of his way. As he passed through one of the main streets, he saw a company of the great going along; so he followed them till they reached a house like to a royal-palace. He entered with them, and they stayed not faring forwards till they came in presence of a person seated at the upper end of a saloon, a man of the most dignified and majestic aspect, surrounded by pages and eunuchs, as he were of the sons of the Wazirs.When he saw the visitors, he rose to greet them and received them with honour; but the poor man aforesaid was confounded at his own boldness, when beholding —— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Forty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the poor man aforesaid was confounded at his own boldness, when beholding the goodliness of the place and the crowd of servants and attendants; so drawing back, in perplexity and fear for his life sat down apart in a place afar off. where none should see him. Now it chanced that whilst he was sitting, behold, in came a man with four sporting-dogs, whereon were various kinds of raw silk and brocade[392] and wearing round their necks collars of gold with chains of silver, and tied up each dog in a place set privy for him; after which he went out and presently returned with four dishes of gold, full of rich meats, which he set severally before the dogs, one for each. Then he went away and left them, whilst the poor man began to eye the food, for stress of hunger, and longed to go up to one of the dogs and eat with him, but fear of them withheld him. Presently, one of the dogs looked at him and Allah Almighty inspired the dog with a knowledge of his case; so he drew back from the platter and signed to the man, who came and ate till he was filled. Then he would have withdrawn, but the dog again signed to him to take for himself the dish and what food was left in it, and pushed it towards him with his fore-paw. So the man took the dish and leaving the house, went his way, and none followed him. Then he journeyed to another city where he sold the dish and buying with the price a stock-in-trade, returned to his own town. There he sold his goods and paid his debts; and he throve and became affluent and rose to perfect prosperity. He abode in his own land; but after some years had passed he said to himself, “Needs must I repair to the city of the owner of the dish, and, carry him a fit and handsome present and pay him the money-value of that which his dog bestowed upon me.” So he took the price of the dish and a suitable gift; and, setting out, journeyed day and night, till he came to that city; he entered it and sought the place where the man lived; but he found there naught save ruins mouldering in row and croak of crow, and house and home desolate and all conditions in changed state. At this, his heart and soul were troubled, and he repeated the saying of him who saith,

“Void are the private rooms of treasury: * As void were hearts of fear and piety:
Changed is the Wady nor are its gazelles * Those fawns, nor sand-hills those I wont to see.”

And that of another,

“In sleep came Su’adб’s[393] shade and wakened me * Near dawn, when comrades all a-sleeping lay:
But waking found I that the shade was fled, * And saw air empty and shrine far away.”

Now when the man saw these mouldering ruins and witnessed what the hand of time had manifestly done with the place, leaving but traces of the substantial-things that erewhiles had been, a little reflection made it needless for him to enquire of the case; so he turned away. Presently, seeing a wretched man, in a plight which made him shudder and feel goose-skin, and which would have moved the very rock to rush, he said to him, “Ho thou! What have time and fortune done with the lord of this place? Where are his lovely faces, his shining full moons and splendid stars; and what is the cause of the ruin that is come upon his abode, so that nothing save the walls thereof remain?” Quoth the other, “He is the miserable thou seest mourning that which hath left him naked. But knowest thou not the words of the Apostle (whom Allah bless and keep!), wherein is a lesson to him who will learn by it and a warning to whoso will be warned thereby and guided in the right way, ‘Verily it is the way of Allah Almighty to raise up nothing of this world, except He cast it down again?’[394] If thou question of the cause of this accident, indeed it is no wonder, considering the chances and changes of Fortune. I was the lord of this place and I builded it and founded it and owned it; and I was the proud possessor of its full moons lucent and its circumstance resplendent and its damsels radiant and its garniture magnificent, but Time turned and did away from me wealth and servants and took from me what it had lent (not given); and brought upon me calamities which it held in store hidden. But there must needs be some reason for this thy question: so tell it me and leave wondering.” Thereupon, the man who had waxed wealthy being sore concerned, told him the whole story, and added, “I have brought thee a present, such as souls desire, and the price of thy dish of gold which I took; for it was the cause of my affluence after poverty, and of the replenishment of my dwelling-place, after desolation, and of the dispersion of my trouble and straitness.” But the man shook his head, and weeping and groaning and complaining of his lot answered, “Ho thou! methinks thou art mad; for this is not the way of a man of sense. How should a dog of mine make generous gift to thee of a dish of gold and I meanly take back the price of what a dog gave? This were indeed a strange thing! Were I in extremest unease and misery, by Allah, I would not accept of thee aught; no, not the worth of a nail-paring! So return whence thou camest in health and safety.”[395] Whereupon the merchant kissed his feet and taking leave of him, returned whence he came, praising him and reciting this couplet,

“Men and dogs together are all gone by, * So peace be with all of them! dogs and men!’

And Allah is All knowing! Again men tell the tale of

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THE SHARPER OF ALEXANDRIA AND THE CHIEF OF POLICE.

There was once in the coast-fortress of Alexandria, a Chief of Police, Husбm al-Din highs, the sharp Scymitar of the Faith. Now one night as he sat in his seat of office, behold, there came in to him a trooper-wight who said, “Know, O my lord the Chief, that I entered your city this night and alighted at such a khan and slept there till a third part of the night was past when I awoke and found my saddle-bags sliced open and a purse of a thousand gold pieces stolen from them.” No sooner had he done speaking than the Chief summoned his chief officials and bade them lay hands on all in the khan and clap them in limbo till the morning; and on the morrow, he caused bring the rods and whips used in punishment, and, sending for the prisoners, was about to flog them till they confessed in the presence of the owner of the stolen money when, lo! a man broke through the crowd till he came up to the Chief of Police, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Forty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Chief was about to flog them when lo! a man broke through the crowd till he came up to the Chief of Police and the trooper and said; “Ho! Emir, let these folk go, for they are wrongously accused. It was I who robbed this trooper, and see, here is the purse I stole from his saddle-bags.” So saying, he pulled out the purse from his sleeve and laid it before Husam al-Din, who said to the soldier, “Take thy money and pouch it; thou now hast no ground of complaint against the people of the khan.” Thereupon these folk and all who were present fell to praising the thief and blessing him; but he said, “Ho! Emir, the skill is not in that I came to thee in person and brought thee the purse; the cleverness was in taking it a second time from this trooper.” Asked the Chief, “And how didst thou do to take it, O sharper?”; and the robber replied, “O Emir, I was standing in the Shroff’s[396] bazar at Cairo, when I saw this soldier receive the gold in change and put it in yonder purse; so I followed him from by-street to by- street, but found no occasion of stealing it. Then he travelled from Cairo and I followed him from town to town, plotting and planning by the way to rob him, but without avail, till he entered this city and I dogged him to the khan. I took up my lodging beside him and watched him till he fell asleep and I heard him sleeping; when I went up to him softly, softly; and I slit open his saddle-bags with this knife, and took the purse in the way I am now taking it." So saying, he put out his hand and took the purse from before the Chief of Police and the trooper, both of whom, together with the folk, drew back watching him and thinking he would show them how he took the purse from the saddle-bags. But, behold! he suddenly broke into a run and threw himself into a pool of standing water[397] hard by. So the Chief of the Police shouted to his officers, "Stop thief!" and many made after him; but before they could doff their clothes and descend the steps, he had made off; and they sought for him, but found him not; for that the by-streets and lanes of Alexandria all communicate. So they came back without bringing the purse; and the Chief of Police said to the trooper, "Thou hast no demand upon the folk; for thou fondest him who robbed thee and receivedst back thy money, but didst not keep it." So the trooper went away, having lost his money, whilst the folk were delivered from his hands and those of the Chief of Police, and all this was of the favour of Almighty Allah.[398] And they also tell the tale of

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AL-MALIK AL-NASIR AND THE THREE CHIEFS OF POLICE.

Once upon a time Al-Malik al-Nбsir[399] sent for the Wбlis or Chiefs of Police of Cairo, Bulak, and Fostat[400] and said to them, “I desire each of you to recount me the marvellousest thing that hath befallen him during his term of office.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Forty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth Al-Malik al-Nasir to the three Walis, “I desire each of you to recount me the marvellousest thing which hath befallen him during his term of office.” So they answered, “We hear and we obey.” Then said the Chief of the Police of Cairo, “Know thou, O our lord the Sultan, the most wonderful thing that befel me, during my term of office, was on this wise:” and he began

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The Story of the Chief of Police of Cairo.

“There were in this city two men of good repute fit to bear witness[401] in matters of murder and wounds; but they were both secretly addicted to intrigues with low women and to wine- bibbing and to dissolute doings, nor could I succeed (do what I would) in bringing them to book, and I began to despair of success. So I charged the taverners and confectioners and fruiterers and candle-chandlers and the keepers of brothels and bawdy houses to acquaint me of these two good men whenever they should anywhere be engaged in drinking or other debauchery, or together or apart; and ordered that, if they both or if either of them bought at their shops aught for the purpose of wassail and carousel, the vendors should not conceal-it from me. And they replied, ‘We hear and obey.’ Presently it chanced that one night, a man came to me and said, ‘O my master, know that the two just men, the two witnesses, are in such a street in such a house, engaged in abominable wickedness.’ So I disguised myself, I and my body-servant, and ceased not trudging till I came to the house and knocked at the door, whereupon a slave-girl came out and opened to me, saying, ‘Who art thou?’ I entered without answering her and saw the two legal-witnesses and the house-master sitting, and lewd women by their side and before them great plenty of wine. When they saw me, they rose to receive me, and made much of me, seating me in the place of honour and saying to me, ‘Welcome for an illustrious guest and well come for a pleasant cup- companion!’ And on this wise they met me without showing a sign of alarm or trouble. Presently, the master of the house arose from amongst us and went out and returned after a while with three hundred dinars, when the men said to me, without the least fear, ‘Know, O our lord the Wali, it is in thy power to do even more than disgrace and punish us; but this will bring thee in return nothing but weariness: so we reck thou wouldest do better to take this much money and protect us; for Almighty Allah is named the Protector and loveth those of His servants who protect their Moslem neighbours; and thou shalt have thy reward in this world and due recompense in the world to come.’ So I said to myself, ‘I will take the money and protect them this once, but, if ever again I have them in my power, I will take my wreak of them;' for, you see, the money had tempted me. Thereupon I took it and went away thinking that no one would know it; but, next day, on a sudden one of the Kazi's messengers came to me and said to me, 'O Wali, be good enough to answer the summons of the Kazi who wanteth thee.' So I arose and accompanied him, knowing not the meaning of all this; and when I came into the judge's presence, I saw the two witnesses and the master of the house, who had given me the money, sitting by his side. Thereupon this man rose and sued me for three hundred dinars, nor was it in my power to deny the debt; for he produced a written obligation and his two companions, the legal witnesses, testified against me that I owed the amount. Their evidence satisfied the Kazi and he ordered me to pay the sum, nor did I leave the Court till they had of me the three hundred gold pieces. So I went away, in the utmost wrath and shame, vowing mischief and vengeance against them and repenting that I had not punished them. Such, then is the most remarkable event which befel me during my term of office." Thereupon rose the Chief of the Bulak Police and said, "As for me, O our lord the Sultan, the most marvellous thing that happened to me, since I became Wali, was as follows:" and he began

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The Story of the Chief of the Bulak Police.

“I was once in debt to the full amount of three hundred thousand gold pieces;[402] and, being distressed thereby, I sold all that was behind me and what was before me and all I hent in hand, but I could collect no more than an hundred thousand dinars” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Forty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wali of Bulak continued: “So I sold all that was behind and before me, but could collect no more than an hundred thousand dinars and remained in great perplexity. Now one night, as I sat at home in this state, behold, there came a knocking; so I said to one of my servants, ‘See who is at the door.’ He went out and returned, wan of face, changed in countenance and with his side-muscles a- quivering; so I asked him, ‘What aileth thee?’; and he answered, ‘There is a man at the door; he is half naked, clad in skins, with sword in hand and knife in girdle, and with him are a company of the same fashion and he asketh for thee.’ So I took my sword and going out to see who these were, behold, I found them as the boy had reported and said to them, ‘What is your business?’ They replied, ‘Of a truth we be thieves and have done fine work this night; so we appointed the swag to thy use, that thou mayst pay therewith the debts which sadden thee and deliver thee from thy distress.’ Quoth I, ‘Where is the plunder?’; and they brought me a great chest, full of vessels of gold and silver; which when I saw, I rejoiced and said to myself, ‘Herewith I will settle all claims upon me and there will remain as much again.’ So I took the money and going inside said in my mind, ‘It were ignoble to let them fare away empty-handed.’ Whereupon I brought out the hundred thousand dinars I had by me and gave it to them, thanking them for their kindness; and they pouched the monies and went their way, under cover of the night so that none might know of them. But when morning dawned I examined the contents of the chest, and found them copper and tin[403] washed with gold worth five hundred dirhams at the most; and this was grievous to me, for I had lost what monies I had and trouble was added to my trouble. Such, then, is the most remarkable event which befel me during my term of office.” Then rose the Chief of the Police of Old Cairo and said, “O our lord the Sultan, the most marvellous thing that happened to me, since I became Wali, was on this wise;” and he began

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The Story of the Chief of the Old Cairo Police.

“I once hanged ten thieves each on his own gibbet, and especially charged the guards to watch them and hinder the folk from taking any one of them down. Next morning when I came to look at them, I found two bodies hanging from one gallows and said to the guards, ‘Who did this, and where is the tenth gibbet?’ But they denied all knowledge of it, and I was about to beat them till they owned the truth, when they said, ‘Know, O Emir, that we fell asleep last night, and when we awoke, we found that some one had stolen one of the bodies, gibbet and all; so we were alarmed and feared thy wrath. But, behold, up came a peasant-fellow driving his ass; whereupon we laid hands on him and killed him and hanged his body upon this gallows, in the stead of the thief who had been stolen.’[404] Now when I heard this, I marvelled and asked them, ‘What had he with him?’; and they answered, ‘He had a pair of saddle-bags on the ass.’ Quoth I, ‘What was in them?’; quoth they, ‘We know not.’ So I said, ‘Bring them hither;’ and when they brought them to me I bade open them, behold, therein was the body of a murdered man, cut in pieces. Now as soon as I saw this, I marvelled at the case and said in myself, ‘Glory to God! The cause of the hanging of this peasant was none other but his crime against this murdered man; and thy Lord is not unjust towards His servants.’”[405] And men also tell the tale of

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THE THIEF AND THE SHROFF.

A certain Shroff, bearing a bag of gold pieces, once passed by a company of thieves, and one of these sharpers said to the others, “I, and I only, have the power to steal yonder purse.” So they asked, “How wilt thou do it?”; and he answered, “Look ye all!”; and followed the money-changer, till he entered his house, when he threw the bag on a shelf[406] and, being affected with diabetes, went into the chapel of ease to do his want, calling to the slave-girl, “Bring me an ewer of water.” She took the ewer and followed him to the privy, leaving the door open, whereupon the thief entered and, seizing the money-bag, made off with it to his companions, to whom he told what had passed. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the thief took the money-bag and made off with it to his companions to whom he told what had passed. Said they, “By Allah, thou hast played a clever trick! ‘’tis not every one could do it; but, presently the money-changer will come out of the privy; and missing the bag of money, he will beat the slave-girl and torture her with grievous torture. ’Tis as though thou hast at present done nothing worthy of praise; so, if thou be indeed a sharper, return and save the girl from being beaten and questioned.” Quoth he, ‘ Inshallah! I will save both girl and purse.” Then the prig went back to the Shroff’s house and found him punishing the girl because of the purse; so he knocked at the door and the man said, “Who is there?” Cried the thief, “I am the servant of thy neighbour in the Exchange;” whereupon he came out to him and said, “What is thy business?” The thief replied, “My master saluteth thee and saith to thee: ‘Surely thou art deranged and thoroughly so, to cast the like of this bag of money down at the door of thy shop and go away and leave it.’ Had a stranger hit upon it he had made off with it and, except my master had seen it and taken care of it, it had assuredly been lost to thee.” So saying, he pulled out the purse and showed it to the Shroff who on seeing it said, “That is my very purse,” and put out his hand to take it; but the thief said, “By

Allah, I will not give thee this same, till thou write me a receipt declaring that thou hast received it! for indeed I fear my master will not believe that thou hast recovered the purse, unless I bring him thy writing to that effect, and sealed with thy signet-seal.” The money changer went in to write the paper required; and in the meantime the thief made off with the bag of money and thus was the slave-girl saved her beating. And men also tell a tale of

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THE CHIEF OF THE KUS POLICE AND THE SHARPER.

It is related that Alб al-Dнn, Chief of Police at Kъs,[407] was sitting one night in his house, when behold, a personage of handsome appearance and dignified aspect came to the door, accompanied by a servant bearing a chest upon his head and, standing there said to one of the Wali's young men, "Go in and tell the Emir that I would have audience of him on some privy business." So the servant went in and told his master, who bade admit the visitor. When he entered, the Emir saw him to be a man of handsome semblance and portly presence; so he received him with honour and high distinction, seating him beside himself, and said to him, "What is thy wish?" Replied the stranger, "I am a highwayman and am minded to repent at thy hands and turn to Almighty Allah; but I would have thee help me to this, for that I am in thy district and under thine inspection. Now I have here a chest, wherein are matters worth some forty thousand dinars; and none hath so good a right to it as thou; so do thou take it and give me in exchange a thousand dinars, of thine own monies lawfully gotten, that I may have a little capital, to aid me in my repentance,[408] and save me from resorting to sin for my subsistence; and with Allah Almighty be thy reward!" Speaking thus he opened the chest and showed the Wali that it was full of trinkets and jewels and bullion and ring-gems and pearls, whereat he was amazed and rejoiced with great joy. So he cried out to his treasurer, saying, "Bring hither a certain purse containing a thousand dinars," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Forty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wali cried out to his treasurer, saying "Bring hither a certain purse containing a thousand dinars; and gave it to the highwayman, who took it and thanking him, went his way under cover of the night. Now when it was the morrow, the Emir sent for the chief of the goldsmiths and showed him the chest and what was therein; but the goldsmith found it nothing but tin and brass, and the jewels and bezel stones and pearls all of glass; whereat the Wali was sore chagrined and sent in quest of the highwayman; but none could come at him. And men also tell the tale of

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IBRAHIM BIN AL-MAHDI AND THE MERCHANT’S SISTER.

The Caliph Al-Maamъn once said to his uncle Ibrahim bin Al-Mahdн, “Tell us the most remarkable thing that thou hast ever seen.” Answered he: “I hear and obey, O Commander of the Faithful. Know that I rode out one day, a-pleasuring, and my ride brought me to a place where I smelt the reek of food. So my soul longed for it and I halted, O Prince of True Believers, perplexed and unable either to go on or to go in. Presently, I raised my eyes and lo! I espied a lattice-window and behind it a wrist, than which I never beheld aught lovelier. The sight turned my brain and I forgot the smell of the food and began to plan and plot how I should get access to the house. After awhile, I observed a tailor hard by and going up to him, saluted him. He returned my salam and I asked him, ‘Whose house is that?’ And he answered, ‘It belongeth to a merchant called such an one, son of such an one, who consorteth with none save merchants.’ As we were talking, behold, up came two men, of comely aspect with intelligent countenances, riding on horseback; and the tailor told me that they were the merchant’s most intimate friends and acquainted me with their names. So I urged my beast towards them and said to them, ‘Be I your ransom! Abu Fulбn[409] awaiteth you!’; and I rode with them both to the gate, where I entered and they also. Now when the master of the house saw me with them he doubted not but I was their friend; so he welcomed me and seated me in the highest stead. Then they brought the table of food and I said in myself, ‘Allah hath granted me my desire of the food; and now there remain the hand and the wrist.’ After awhile, we removed for carousel to another room, which I found tricked out with all manner of rarities; and the host paid me particular attention, addressing his talk to me, for that he took me to be a guest of his guests; whilst in like manner these two made much of me, taking me for a friend of their friend the house-master. Thus I was the object of politest attentions till we had drunk several cups of wine and there came into us a damsel as she were a willow wand of the utmost beauty and elegance, who took a lute and playing a lively measure, sang these couplets,

‘Is it not strange one house us two contain * And still thou
draw’st not near, or talk we twain?
Only our eyes tell secrets of our souls, * And broken hearts by
lovers’ fiery pain;
Winks with the eyelids, signs the eyebrow knows; * Languishing
looks and hand saluting fain.’

When I heard these words my vitals were stirred, O Commander of the Faithful, and I was moved to delight, for her excessive loveliness and the beauty of the verses she sang; and I envied her her skill and said, ‘There lacketh somewhat to thee, O damsel!’ Whereupon she threw the lute from her hand in anger, and cried, ‘Since when are ye wont to bring ill-mannered louts into your assemblies?’ Then I repented of what I had done, seeing the company vexed with me, and I said in my mind, ‘My hopes are lost by me’; and I weeted no way of escaping blame but to call for a lute, saying, ‘I will show you what escaped her in the air she played.’ Quoth the folk, ‘We hear and obey’; so they brought me a lute and I tuned the strings and sang these verses,

‘This is thy friend perplexed for pain and pine, * Th’ enamoured,
down whose breast course drops of brine:
He hath this hand to the Compassionate raised * For winning wish,
and that on hearts is lien:
O thou who seest one love-perishing, * His death is caused by
those hands and eyne!’[410]

Whereupon the damsel sprang up and throwing herself at my feet, kissed them and said, ‘It is thine to excuse, O my Master! By Allah, I knew not thy quality nor heard I ever the like of this performance!’ And all began extolling me and making much of me, being beyond measure delighted’ and at last they besought me to sing again. So I sang a merry air, whereupon they all became drunken with music and wine, their wits left them and they were carried off to their homes, while I abode alone with the host and the girl. He drank some cups with me and then said, ‘O my lord, my life hath been lived in vain for that I have not known the like of thee till the present. Now, by

Allah, tell me who thou art, that I may ken who is the cup-companion whom Allah hath bestowed on me this night.’ At first I returned him evasive answers and would not tell him my name; but he conjured me till I told him who I was, whereupon he sprang to his feet” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Forty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ibrahim son of Al-Mahdi continued: “Now when the housemaster heard my name he sprang to his feet and said, ‘Indeed I wondered that such gifts should belong to any but the like of thee; and Fortune hath done me a good turn for which I cannot thank her too much. But, haply, this is a dream; for how could I hope that one of the Caliphate house should visit my humble home and carouse with me this night?’ I conjured him to be seated; so he sat down and began to question me as to the cause of my visit in the most courteous terms. So I told him the whole affair, first and last, hiding naught, and said to him, ‘Now as to the food I have had my will, but of the hand and wrist I have still to win my wish.’ Quoth he, ‘Thou shalt have thy desire of the hand and wrist also, Inshallah!’ Then said he to the slave-girl, ‘Ho, such an one, bid such an one come down.’ And he called his slave-girls down, one by one and showed them to me; but I saw not my mistress among them, and he said, ‘O my lord, there is none left save my mother and sister; but, by Allah, I must needs have them also down and show them to thee.’ So I marvelled at his courtesy and large heartedness and said, ‘May I be thy sacrifice! Begin with the sister;’ and he answered, ‘With joy and goodwill.’ So she came down and he showed me her hand and behold, she was the owner of the hand and wrist. Quoth I, ‘Allah make me thy ransom! this is the damsel whose hand and wrist I saw at the lattice.’ Then he sent his servants without stay or delay for witnesses and bringing out two myriads[411] of gold pieces, said to the witnesses, ‘This our lord and master, Ibrahim son of Al-Mahdi, paternal-uncle of the Commander of the Faithful, seeketh in marriage my sister such an one; and I call you to witness that I give her in wedlock to him and that he hath settled upon her ten thousand dinars.’ And he said to me, ‘I give thee my sister in marriage, at the portion aforesaid.’ ‘I consent,’ answered I, ‘and am herewith content.’ Whereupon he gave one of the bags to her and the other to the witnesses, and said to me, ‘O our lord, I desire to adorn a chamber for thee, where thou mayst sleep with thy wife.’ But I was abashed at his generosity and was ashamed to lie with her in his house; so I said, ‘Equip her and send her to my place.’ And by thy being, O Commander of the Faithful, he sent me with her such an equipage that my house, for all its greatness, was too strait to hold it! And I begot on her this boy that standeth in thy presence.” Then Al-Maamun marvelled at the man’s generosity and said, “Gifted of Allah is he! Never heard I of his like.” And he bade Ibrahim bin al-Mahdi bring him to court, that he might see him. He brought him and the Caliph conversed with him; and his wit and good breeding so pleased him that he made him one of his chief officers. And Allah is the Giver, the Bestower! Men also relate the tale of

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THE WOMAN WHOSE HANDS WERE CUT OFF FOR GIVING ALMS TO THE POOR.

A certain King once made proclamation to the people of his realm saying, “If any of you give alms of aught, I will verily and assuredly cut off his hand;” wherefore all the people abstained from alms-deed, and none could give anything to any one. Now it chanced that one day a beggar accosted a certain woman (and indeed hunger was sore upon him), and said to her, “Give me an alms” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was Three Hundred and Forty-eighth Night

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that, quoth the beggar to the woman, “Give me an alms however small.” But she answered him, “How can I give thee aught, when the King cutteth off the hands of all who give alms?” Then he said, “I conjure thee by Allah Almighty, give me an alms;” so when he adjured her by the Holy Name of Allah, she had ruth on him and gave him two scones. The King heard of this; whereupon he called her before him and cut off her hands, after which she returned to her house. Now it chanced after a while that the King said to his mother, “I have a mind to take a wife; so do thou marry me to a fair woman.” Quoth she, “There is among our female slaves one who is unsurpassed in beauty; but she hath a grievous blemish.” The King asked, “What is that?” and his mother answered, “She hath had both her hands cut off.” Said he, “Let me see her.” So she brought her to him, and he was ravished by her and married her and went in unto her; and begat upon her a son. Now this was the woman who had given two scones as an alms to the asker, and whose hands had been cut off therefor; and when the King married her, her fellow-wives envied her and wrote to the common husband that she was an unchaste, having just given birth to the boy; so he wrote to his mother, bidding her carry the woman into the desert and leave her there. The old Queen obeyed his commandment and abandoned the woman and her son in the desert; whereupon she fell to weeping for that which had befallen her and wailing with exceeding sore wail. As she went along, she came to a river and knelt down to drink, being overcome with excess of thirst, for fatigue of walking and for grief; but, as she bent her head, the child which was at her neck fell into the water. Then she sat weeping bitter tears for her child, and as she wept, behold came up two men, who said to her, “What maketh thee weep?” Quoth she, “I had a child at my neck, and he hath fallen into the water.” They asked, “Wilt thou that we bring him out to thee?” and she answered, “Yes.” So they prayed to Almighty Allah, and the child came forth of the water to her, safe and sound. Then said they, “Wilt thou that Allah restore thee thy hands as they were?” “Yes,” replied she: whereupon they prayed to Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) and her hands were restored to her, goodlier than before. Then said they, “Knowest thou who we are?”; and she replied, “Allah is all knowing;”[412] and they said, “We are thy two Scones of Bread, which thou gayest in alms to the asker and which were the cause of the cutting off of thy hands.[413] So praise thou Allah Almighty for that He hath restored to thee thy hands and thy child.” Then she praised Almighty Allah and glorified Him. And men relate a tale of

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THE DEVOUT ISRAELITE.

There was once a devout man of the Children of Israel,[414] whose family span cotton-thread; and he used every day to sell the yarn and buy fresh cotton, and with the profit he laid in daily bread for his household. One morning he went out and sold the day's yarn as wont, when there met him one of his brethren, who complained to him of need; so he gave him the price of the thread and returned, empty-handed, to his family, who said to him, "Where is the cotton and the food?" Quoth he, "Such an one met me and complained to me of want; whereupon I gave him the price of the yarn." And they said, "How shall we do? We have nothing to sell." Now they had a cracked trencher[415] and a jar; so he took them to the bazar but none would buy them of him. However presently, as he stood in the market, there passed by a man with a fish, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Forty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the man took the trencher and jar to the bazar, but none would buy them of him. However there presently passed by a man with a fish which was so stinking and so swollen that no one would buy it of him, and he said to the Jew, "Wilt thou sell me thine unsaleable ware for mine?" "Yes," answered the Jew; and, giving him the wooden trencher and jar, took the fish and carried it home to his family, who said, "What shall we do with this fish?" Quoth he, "We will broil it and eat it, till it please Allah to provide bread for us." So they took it and ripping open its belly, found therein a great pearl and told the head of the household who said, "See ye if it be pierced: if so, it belongeth to some one of the folk; if not, 'tis a provision of Allah for us." So they examined it and found it unpierced. Now when it was the morrow, the Jew carried it to one of his brethren which was an expert in jewels, and the man asked, "O such an one! whence haddest thou this pearl?"; whereto the Jew answered, "It was a gift of Almighty Allah to us," and the other said, "It is worth a thousand dirhams and I will give thee that; but take it to such an one, for he hath more money and skill than I." So the Jew took it to the jeweller, who said, "It is worth seventy thousand dirhams and no more.” Then he paid him that sum and the Jew hired two porters to carry the money to his house. As he came to his door, a beggar accosted him, saying, “Give me of that which Allah hath given thee.” Quoth the Jew to the asker, “But yesterday we were even as thou; take thee half this money:” so he made two parts of it, and each took his half. Then said the beggar, “Take back thy money and Allah bless and prosper thee in it; I am a Messenger,[416] whom thy Lord hath sent to try thee.” Quoth the Jew, “To Allah be the praise and the thanks!” and abode in all delight of life he and his household till death. And men recount this story of

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ABU HASSAN AL-ZIYADI AND THE KHORASAN.

Quoth Abъ Hassбn al-Ziyбdi[417] : “I was once in straitened case and so needy that the grocer, the baker and other tradesmen dunned and importuned me; and my misery became extreme, for I knew of no resource nor what to do. Things being on this wise there came to me one day certain of my servants and said to me, ‘At the door is a pilgrim wight, who seeketh admission to thee.’ Quoth I, ‘Admit him.’ So he came in and behold, he was a Khorasбnн. We exchanged salutations and he said to me, ‘Tell me, art thou Abu Hassan al-Ziyadi?’; and I replied, ‘Yes, what is thy wish?’ Quoth he, ‘I am a stranger and am minded to make the pilgrimage; but I have with me a great sum of money, which is burdensome to bear: so I wish to deposit these ten thousand dirhams with thee whilst I make my pilgrimage and return. If the caravan march back and thou see me not, then know that I am dead, in which case the money is a gift from me to thee; but if I come back, it shall be mine.’ I answered, ‘Be it as thou wilt, an thus please Allah Almighty.’ So he brought out a leather bag and I said to the servant, ‘Fetch the scales;’ and when he brought them the man weighed out the money and handed it to me, after which he went his way. Then I called the purveyors and paid them my liabilities” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Fiftieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth Abu Hassan al-Ziyadi: “I called the purveyors and paid them my liabilities and spent freely and amply, saying to myself, ‘By the time he returns, Allah will have relieved me with one or other of the bounties He hath by Him.’ However, on the very next day, the servant came in to me and said, ‘Thy friend the Khorasan man is at the door.’ ‘Admit him,’ answered I. So he came in and said to me, ‘I had purposed to make the pilgrimage; but news hath reached me of the decease of my father, and I have resolved to return; so give me the monies I deposited with thee yesterday.’ When I heard this, I was troubled and perplexed beyond measure of perplexity known to man and wotted not what reply to make him; for, if I denied it, he would put me on my oath, and I should be disgraced in the world to come; whilst, if I told him that I had spent the money, he would make an outcry and dishonour me before men. So I said to him, ‘Allah give thee health! This my house is no stronghold nor site of safe custody for this money. When I received thy leather bag, I sent it to one with whom it now is; so do thou return to us to-morrow and take thy money, Inshallah!’[418] So he went away and I passed the night in great concern, because of his return to me; sleep visited me not nor could I close my eyes; so I rose and bade the boy saddle me the she-mule. Answered he, ‘O my lord, it is yet but the first third of the night and indeed we have hardly had time to rest.’ I returned to my bed, but sleep was forbidden to me and I ceased not to awaken the boy, and he to put me off, till break of day, when he saddled me the mule, and I mounted and rode out, not knowing whither to go. I threw the reins on the mule’s shoulders and gave myself up to regrets and melancholy thoughts, whilst she fared on with me to the eastward of Baghdad. Presently, as I went along, behold, I saw a number of people approaching me and turned aside into another path to avoid them; but seeing that I wore a turband in preacher-fashion,[419] they followed me and hastening up to me, said, ‘Knowest thou the lodging of Abu Hassan al-Ziyadi?’ ‘I am he,’ answered I; and they rejoined, ‘Obey the summons of the Commander of the Faithful.’ Then they carried me before Al-Maamun, who said to me, ‘Who art thou?’ Quoth I, ‘An associate of the Kazi Abu YЪsuf and a doctor of the law and traditions.’ Asked the Caliph, ‘By what surname art thou known?’[420] and I answered, ‘Abu Hassan al-Ziyadi;’ whereupon quoth he, ‘Expound to me thy case.’ So I recounted to him my case and he wept sore and said to me, ‘Out on thee! The Apostle of Allah (whom Allah bless and assain!) would not let me sleep this night, because of thee; for in early darkness[421] he appeared to me and said, ‘Succour Abu Hassan al-Ziyadi.’ Whereupon I awoke and, knowing thee not, went to sleep again; but he came to me a second time and said to me, ‘Woe to thee! Succour Abu Hassan al-Ziyadi.’ I awoke a second time, but knowing thee not I went to sleep again; and he came to me a third time and still I knew thee not and went to sleep again. Then he came to me once more and said, ‘Out on thee! Succour Abu Hassan al-Ziyadi!’ After that I dared not sleep any more, but watched the rest of the night and aroused my people and sent them on all sides in quest of thee.' Then he gave me one myriad of dirhams, saying, 'This is for the Khorasani,' and other ten thousand, saying, 'Spend freely of this and amend thy case therewith, and set thine affairs in order.' Moreover, he presented me with thirty thousand dirhams, saying, 'Furnish thyself with this, and when the Procession-day[422] is being kept, come thou to me, that I may invest thee with some office.' So I went forth from him with the money and returned home, where I prayed the dawn-prayer; and behold, presently came the Khorasani, so I carried him into the house and brought out to him one myriad of dirhams, saying, 'Here is thy money.' Quoth he, 'It is not my very money; how cometh this?' So I told him the whole story, and he wept and said, 'By Allah, haddest thou told me the fact at first, I had not pressed thee!; and now, by Allah, I will not accept aught of this money'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Fifty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth the Khorasani to Al-Ziyadi, "'By Allah, haddest thou told me the fact at first, I had not pressed thee!; and now, by Allah, I will not accept aught of this money and thou art lawfully quit of it.' So saying, he went away and I set my affairs in order and repaired on the Procession-day to Al-Maamun's Gate, where I found him seated. When he saw me present myself he called me to him and, bringing forth to me a paper from under his prayer-carpet, said to me, 'This is a patent, conferring on thee the office of Kazi of the western division of Al-Medinah, the Holy City, from the Bab al-Sal6m[423] to the furthest limit of the township; and I appoint thee such and such monthly allowances. So fear Allah (to whom be honour and glory!) end be mindful of the solicitude of His Apostle (whom may He bless and keep!) on thine account.' Then the folk marvelled at the Caliph's words and asked me their meaning; whereupon I told them the story from beginning to end and it spread abroad amongst the people." "And" (quoth he who telleth the tale) "Abu Hassan al-Ziyadi ceased not to be Kazi of Al-Medinah, the Holy City, till he died in the days of Al-Maamun the mercy of Allah be on him!" And among the tales men tell is one of

THE POOR MAN AND HIS FRIEND IN NEED.

There was once a rich man who lost all he had and became destitute, whereupon his wife advised him to ask aid and assistance of one of his intimates. So he betook himself to a certain friend of his and acquainted him with his necessities; and he lent him five hundred dinars to trade withal. Now in early life he had been a jeweller; so he took the gold and went to the jewel-bazar, where he opened a shop to buy and sell. Presently, as he sat in his shop three men accosted him and asked for his father, and when he told them that he was deceased, they said, “Say, did he leave issue?” Quoth the jeweller, “He left the slave who is before you.” They asked, “And who knoweth thee for his son?”; and he answered, “The people of the bazar whereupon they said, “Call them together, that they may testify to us that thou art his very son.” So he called them and they bore witness of this; whereupon the three men delivered to him a pair of saddle- bags, containing thirty thousand dinars, besides jewels and bullion of high value, saying, “This was deposited with us in trust by thy father.” Then they went away; and presently there came to him a woman, who sought of him certain of the jewels, worth five hundred dinars which she bought and paid him three thousand for them. Upon this he arose and took five hundred dinars and carrying them to his friend who had lent him the money, said to him, “Take the five hundred dinars I borrowed of thee; for Allah hath opened to me the gate of prosperity.” Quoth the other, “Nay; I gave them to thee outright, for the love of Allah; so do thou keep them. And take this paper, but read it not till thou be at home, and do according to that which is therein.” So he took the money and the paper and returned home, where he opened the scroll and found therein inscribed these couplets,

“Kinsmen of mine were those three men who came to thee; * My sire
    and uncles twain and S6lih bin Ali.
So what for cash thou coldest, to my mother ’twas * Thou soldest
    it, and coin and gems were sent by me.
Thus doing I desired not any harm to thee * But in my presence

spare thee and thy modesty.”

And they also recount the story of

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THE RUINED MAN WHO BECAME RICH AGAIN THROUGH A DREAM.[424]

There lived once in Baghdad a wealthy man and made of money, who lost all his substance and became so destitute that he could earn his living only by hard labour. One night, he lay down to sleep, dejected and heavy hearted, and saw in a dream a Speaker[425] who said to him, “Verily thy fortune is in Cairo; go thither and seek it.” So he set out for Cairo; but when he arrived there evening overtook him and he lay down to sleep in a mosque Presently, by decree of Allah Almighty, a band of bandits entered the mosque and made their way thence into an adjoining house; but the owners, being aroused by the noise of the thieves, awoke and cried out; whereupon the Chief of Police came to their aid with his officers. The robbers made off; but the Wali entered the mosque and, finding the man from Baghdad asleep there, laid hold of him and beat him with palm-rods so grievous a beating that he was well-nigh dead. Then they cast him into jail, where he abode three days; after which the Chief of Police sent for him and asked him, “Whence art thou?”; and he answered, “From Baghdad.” Quoth the Wali, “And what brought thee to Cairo?”; and quoth the Baghdadi, “I saw in a dream One who said to me, Thy fortune is in Cairo; go thither to it. But when I came to Cairo the fortune which he promised me proved to be the palm-rods thou so generously gavest to me.” The Wali laughed till he showed his wisdom-teeth and said, “O man of little wit, thrice have I seen in a dream one who said to me: ‘There is in Baghdad a house in such a district and of such a fashion and its courtyard is laid out garden-wise, at the lower end whereof is a jetting-fountain and under the same a great sum of money lieth buried. Go thither and take it.’ Yet I went not; but thou, of the briefness of thy wit, hast journeyed from place to place, on the faith of a dream, which was but an idle galimatias of sleep.” Then he gave him money saying, “Help thee back herewith to thine own country;” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When It was the Three Hundred and Fifty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wali gave the Baghdad man some silver, saying, “Help thee back herewith to thine own country;” and he took the money and set out upon his homewards march. Now the house the Wali had described was the man’s own house in Baghdad; so the wayfarer returned thither and, digging underneath the fountain in his garden, discovered a great treasure. And thus Allah gave him abundant fortune; and a marvellous coincidence occurred. And a story is also current of

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CALIPH AL-MUTAWAKKIL AND HIS CONCUBINE MAHBUBAH.

There were in the palace of the Caliph al-Mutawakkil ala’llah[426] four thousand concubines, whereof two thousand were Greeks and other two thousand slave born Arabians[427] and Abyssinians; and ‘Obayd ibn Tбhir[428] had given him two hundred white girls and a like number of Abyssinian and native girls. Among these slave-borns was a girl of Bassorah, hight Mahbъbah, the Beloved, who was of surpassing beauty and loveliness, elegance and voluptuous grace. Moreover, she played upon the lute and was skilled in singing and making verses and wrote a beautiful hand; so that Al-Mutawakkil fell passionately in love with her and could not endure from her a single hour. But when she saw this affection, she presumed upon his favour to use him arrogantly, wherefore he waxed exceeding wroth with her and forsook her, forbidding the people of the palace to speak with her. She abode on this wise some days, but the Caliph still inclined to her; and he arose one morning and said to his courtiers, “I dreamt, last night, that I was reconciled to Mahhubah.” They answered, “Would Allah this might be on wake!”; and as they were talking, behold, in came one of the Caliph’s maidservants and whispered him; so he rose from his throne and entered the Serraglio; for the whisper had said, “Of a truth we heard singing and lute-playing in Mahbubah’s chamber and we knew not what this meant.” So he went straight to her apartment, where he heard her playing upon the lute and singing the following verses,

“I wander through the palace, but I sight there not a soul * To
whom I may complain or will ‘change a word with me.
It is as though I’d done so grievous rebel-deed * Wherefrom can
no contrition e’er avail to set me free.
Have we no intercessor here to plead with King, who came * In
sleep to me and took me back to grace and amity;
But when the break of day arose and showed itself again, * Then
he departing sent me back to dree my privacy?”

Now when the Caliph heard her voice, he marvelled at the verse and yet more at the strange coincidence of their dreams and entered the chamber. As soon as she perceived him, she hastened to rise and throw herself at his feet, and kissing them, said, “By Allah, O my lord, this hap is what I dreamt last night; and, when I awoke, I made the couplets thou hast heard.” Replied Al- Mutawakkil, “By Allah, I also dreamt the like!” Then they embraced and made friends and he abode with her seven days with their nights. Now Mahbubah had written upon her cheek, in musk, the Caliph’s name, which was Ja’afar: and when he saw this, he improvised the following,

“One wrote upon her cheek with musk, his name was Ja’afar highs;

* My soul for hers who wrote upon her cheek the name I
sight!
If an her fingers have inscribed one line upon her cheek, * Full
many a line in heart of mine those fingers did indite:
O thou, whom Ja’afar sole of men possesseth for himself, * Allah
fill Ja’afar[429] stream full draught, the wine of thy
delight!”

When Al-Mutawakkil died, his host of women forgot him, all save Mahhubah, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Fifty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Al-Mutawakkil died, his host of women forgot him all save Mahbubah who ceased not to mourn for him, till she deceased and was buried by his side, the mercy of Allah be on them both! And men also tell the tale of

WARDAN[430] THE BUTCHER; HIS ADVENTURE WITH THE LADY AND THE BEAR.

There lived once in Cairo, in the days of the Caliph Al-Hбkim bi' Amri'llah, a butcher named Wardбn, who dealt in sheep's flesh; and there came to him every day a lady and gave him a dinar, whose weight was nigh two and a half Egyptian dinars, saying, "Give me a lamb." So he took the money and gave her the lamb, which she delivered to a porter she had with her; and he put it in his crate and she went away with him to her own place. Next day she came in the forenoon and this went on for a long time, the butcher gaining a dinar by her every day, till at last he began to be curious about her case and said to himself, "This woman buyeth of me a ducat-worth of meat every morning, paying ready money, and never misseth a single day. Verily, this is a strange thing!" So he took an occasion of questioning the porter, in her absence, and asked him, "Whither goest thou every day with yonder woman?"; and he answered, "I know not what to make of her for surprise; inasmuch as every day, after she hath taken the lamb of thee, she buyeth necessaries of the table, fresh and dried fruits and wax-candles a dinar's worth, and taketh of a certain person, which is a Nazarene, two flagons of wine, worth another dinar; and then she leadeth me with the whole and I go with her to the Wazir's Gardens, where she blindfoldeth me, so that I cannot see on what part of earth I set my feet; and, taking me by the hand, she leadeth me I know not whither. Presently, she sayeth, 'Set down here;' and when I have done so, she giveth me an empty crate she hath ready and, taking my hand, leadeth me back to the Wazir's Gardens, the place where she bound my eyes, and there removeth the bandage and giveth me ten silver bits." "Allah be her helper!" quoth Wardan; but he redoubled in curiosity about her case; disquietude increased upon him and he passed the night in exceeding restlessness. And quoth the butcher, "Next morning she came to me as of custom and taking the lamb, for which she paid the dinar, delivered it to the porter and went away. So I gave my shop in charge to a lad and followed her without her seeing me;" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Fifty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Wardan the butcher continued: “So I gave my shop in charge to a lad and followed her without her seeing me; nor did I cease to keep her in sight, hiding behind her, till she left Cairo and came to the Wazir’s Gardens. Then I hid myself whilst she bandaged the porter’s eyes and followed her again from place to place till she came to the mountain[431] and stopped at a spot where there was a great stone. Here she made the porter set down his crate, and I waited whilst she conducted him back to the Wazir’s Gardens, after which she returned and, taking out the contents of the basket, instantly disappeared. Then I went up to that stone and wrenching it up entered the hole and found behind the stone an open trap-door of brass and a flight of steps leading downwards. So I descended, little by little, till I came to a long corridor, brilliantly lighted and followed it, till I made a closed door, as it were the door of a saloon. I looked about the wall sides near the doorway till I discovered a recess, with steps therein; then climbed up and found a little niche with a bulls-eye giving upon a saloon. Thence I looked inside and saw the lady cut off the choicest parts of the lamb and laying them in a saucepan, throw the rest to a great big bear, who ate it all to the last bite. Now when she had made an end of cooking, she ate her fill, after which she set on the fruits and confections and brought out the wine and fell to drinking a cup herself and giving the bear to drink in a basin of gold. And as soon as she was heated with wine, she put off her petticoat-trousers and lay down on her back; whereupon the bear arose and came up to her and stroked her, whilst she gave him the best of what belongeth to the sons of Adam till he had made an end, when he sat down and rested. Presently, he sprang upon her and rogered her again; and when he ended he again sat down to rest, and he ceased not so doing till he had futtered her ten times and they both fell to the ground in a fainting-fit and lay without motion. Then quoth I to myself, ‘Now is my opportunity,’ and taking a knife I had with me, that would cut bones before flesh,[432] went down to them and found them motionless, not a muscle of them moving for their hard swinking and swiving. So I put my knife to the bear’s gullet and pressed upon it, till I finished him by severing his head from his body, and he gave a great snort like thunder, whereat the lady started up in alarm; and, seeing the bear slain and me standing whittle in hand, she shrieked so loud a shriek that I thought the soul had left her body. Then she asked, ‘O Wardan, is this how thou requites me my favours?’ And I answered, ‘O enemy of thine own soul, is there a famine of men[433] that thou must do this damnable thing?’ She made no answer but bent down over the bear, and looked fondly upon him; then finding his head divided from his body, said to me, ‘O Wardan, which of the two courses wouldst thou take; either obey me in what I shall say and be the means of thine own safety’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth the lady, “ ‘O Wardan, which of the two courses wouldst thou take; either obey me in what I shall say and be the means of thine own safety and competency to the end of thy days, or gainsay me and so cause thine own destruction?’[434] Answered I, ‘I choose rather to hearken unto thee: say what thou wilt.’ Quoth she, ‘Then slay me, as thou hast slain this bear, and take thy need of this hoard and wend thy ways.’ Quoth I, ‘I am better than this bear: so return thou to Allah Almighty and repent, and I will marry thee, and we will live on this treasure the rest of our lives.’ She rejoined, ‘O Wardan, far be it from me! How shall I live after him? By Allah, an thou slay me not I will assuredly do away thy life! So leave bandying words with me, or thou art a lost man: this is all I have to say to thee and peace be with thee!’ Then said I, ‘I will kill thee, and thou shalt go to the curse of Allah.’ So saying, I caught her by the hair and cut her throat; and she went to the curse of Allah and of the angels and of all mankind. And after so doing I examined the place and found there gold and bezel-stones and pearls, such as no one king could bring together. So I filled the porter’s crate with as much as I could carry and covered it with the clothes I had on me. Then I shouldered it and, going up out of the underground treasure- chamber, fared homewards and ceased not faring on, till I came to the gate of Cairo, where behold, I fell in with ten of the bodyguard of Al-Hakim bi’ Amri’llah[435] followed by the Prince himself who said to me, ‘Ho, Wardan!’ ‘At thy service, O King,’ replied I; when he asked, ‘Hast thou killed the bear and the lady?' and I answered, 'Yes.' Quoth he, 'Set down the basket from thy head and fear naught, for all the treasure thou hast with thee is thine, and none shall dispute it with thee.' So I set down the crate before him, and he uncovered it and looked at it; then said to me, 'Tell me their case, albe I know it, as if I had been present with you.' So I told him all that had passed and he said, 'Thou hast spoken the truth,' adding, 'O Wardan, come now with me to the treasure.' So I returned with him to the cavern, where he found the trap-door closed and said to me, 'O Wardan, lift it; none but thou can open the treasure, for it is enchanted in thy name and nature.'[436] Said I, 'By Allah, I cannot open it,' but he said, 'Go up to it, trusting in the blessing of Allah.' So I called upon the name of Almighty Allah and, advancing to the trap-door, put my hand to it; whereupon it came up as it had been of the lightest. Then said the Caliph, 'Go down and bring hither what is there; for none but one of thy name and semblance and nature hath gone down thither since the place was made, and the slaying of the bear and the woman was appointed to be at thy hand. This was chronicled with me and I was awaiting its fulfilment.'[437] Accordingly (quoth Wardan) I went down and brought up all the treasure, whereupon the Caliph sent for beasts of burden and carried it away, after giving me my crate, with what was therein. So I bore it home and opened me a shop in the market." And (saith he who telleth the tale) "this market is still extant and is known as Wardan's Market." And I have heard recount another story of

THE KING'S DAUGHTER AND THE APE.

There was once a Sultan's daughter, whose heart was taken with love of a black slave: he abated her maidenhead and she became passionately addicted to futtering, so that she could not do without it a single hour and complained of her case to one of her body women, who told her that no thing poketh and stroketh more abundantly than the baboon.[FN$438] Now it so chanced one day, that an ape-leader passed under her lattice, with a great ape; so she unveiled her face and looking upon the ape, signed to him with her eyes, whereupon he broke his bonds and chain and climbed up to the Princess, who hid him in a place with her, and night and day he abode there, eating and drinking and copulating. Her father heard of this and would have killed her; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Fifty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Sultan heard of this work he would have slain his daughter; but she smoked his design; and, disguising herself in Mameluke's dress, mounted horse after loading a mule with gold and bullion, and precious stuffs past all account; then carrying with her the ape, she fled to Cairo, where she took up her abode in one of the houses without the city and upon the verge of the Suez-desert. Now, every day, she used to buy meat of a young man, a butcher, but she came not to him till after noonday; and then she was so yellow and disordered in face that he said in his mind, "There must indeed hang some mystery by this slave." "Accordingly (quoth the butcher) one day when she came to me as usual, I went out after her secretly, and ceased not to follow her from place to place, so as she saw me not, till she came to her lodging on the edge of her waste and entered; and I looked in upon her through a cranny, and saw her as soon as she was at home, kindle a fire and cook the meat, of which she ate enough and served up the rest to a baboon she had by her and he did the same. Then she put off the slave's habit and donned the richest of women's apparel; and so I knew that she was a lady. After this she set on wine and drank and gave the ape to drink; and he stroked her nigh half a score times without drawing till she swooned away, when he spread over her a silken coverlet and returned to his place. Then I went down in the midst of the place and the ape, becoming aware of me, would have torn me in pieces; but I made haste to pull out my knife and slit his paunch and his bowels fell out. The noise aroused the young lady, who awoke terrified and trembling; and, when she saw the ape in this case, she shrieked such a shriek that her soul well nigh fled her body. Then she fell down in a fainting-fit and when she came to herself, she said to me, ‘What moved thee to do thus? Now Allah upon thee, send me after him!’ But I spoke her fair for a while and pledged myself to stand in the ape’s stead in the matter of much poking, till her trouble subsided and I took her to wife. But when I came to perform my promise I proved a failure and I fell short in this matter and could not endure such hard labour: so I complained of my case and mentioned her exorbitant requirements to a certain old woman who engaged to manage the affair and said to me, ‘Needs must thou bring me a cooking-pot full of virgin vinegar and a pound of the herb pellitory called wound-wort.’[439] So I brought her what she sought, and she laid the pellitory in the pot with the vinegar and set it on the fire, till it was thoroughly boiled. Then she bade me futter the girl, and I futtered her till she fainted away, when the old woman took her up (and she unconscious), and set her parts to the mouth of the cooking-pot. The steam of the pot entered her slit and there fell from it somewhat which I examined; and behold, it was two small worms, one black and the other yellow. Quoth the old, woman, ‘‘The black was bred of the strokings of the negro and the yellow of stroking with the baboon.’ Now when she recovered from her swoon she abode with me, in all delight and solace of life, and sought not swiving as before, for Allah had done away from her this appetite; whereat I marvelled” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Fifty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young man continued: “In truth Allah had done away from her this appetite; whereat I marvelled and acquainted her with the case. Thereupon I lived with her and she took the old woman to be to her in the stead of her mother.” “And” (said he who told me the tale) “the old woman and the young man and his wife abode in joy and cheer till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies; and glory be to the Ever-living One, who dieth not and in whose hand is Dominion of the world visible and invisible!''[440] And another tale they tell is that of

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FOOTNOTES VOLUME IV.

[1] The name is indifferently derived from the red sand about the town or the reeds and mud with which it was originally built. It was founded by the Caliph Omar, when the old Capital-Madбin (Ctesiphon) opposite was held unwholesome, on the West bank of the Euphrates, four days' march from Baghdad and has now disappeared. Al-Saffбh, the first Abbaside, made it his Capital — and it became a famous seat of Moslem learning; the Kufi school of Arab Grammarians being as renowned as their opponents, the Basri (of Bassorah). It gave a name to the "Cufic" characters which are, however, of much older date.

[2] "Ni'amat" = a blessing, and the word is perpetually occurring in Moslem conversation, "Ni'amatu'llбh" (as pronounced) is also a favourite P.N. and few Anglo-Indians of the Mutiny date will forget the scandalous disclosures of Munshi Ni'amatu 'llah, who had been sent to England by Nana Sahib. Nu'm = prosperity, good fortune, and a P. N. like the Heb. "Naomi."

[3] i.e. "causing to be prosperous", the name, corrupted by the Turks to "Tevfik," is given to either sex, e.g. Taufik Pasha of Egypt, to whose unprosperous rule and miserable career the signification certainly does not apply.

[4] Lane (ii. 187) alters the two to four years.

[5] i.e. "to Tom, Dick or Harry:" the names like John Doe and Richard Roe are used indefinitely in Arab. Grammar and Syntax. I have noted that Amru is written and pronounced Amr: hence Amru, the Conqueror of Egypt, when told by an astrologer that Jerusalem would be taken only by a trium literarum homo, with three letters in his name sent for the Caliph Omar (Omr), to whom the so-called Holy City at once capitulated. Hence also most probably, the tale of Bhurtpore and the Lord Alligator (Kumbhir), who however did not change from Cotton to Combermore for some time after the

successful siege.

[6] BinYъsuf al-Sakafi, a statesman and soldier of the seventh and eighth centuries (A.D.). He was Governor of Al-Hij az and Al-Irak under the fifth and sixth Ommiades, and I have noticed his vigorous rule of the Moslems' Holy Land in my Pilgrimage (iii. 194, etc.). He pulled down the Ka'abah and restored it to the condition in which it now is. Al-Siyuti () accuses him of having suborned a man to murder Ibn Omar with a poisoned javelin, and of humiliating the Prophet's companions by "sealing them in the necks and hands," that is he tied a thong upon the neck of each and sealed the knot with lead. In Irak he showed himself equally masterful, but an iron hand was required by the revolutionists of Kufah and Basrah. He behaved like a good Knight in rescuing the Moslem women who called upon his name when taken prisoners by Dahir of Debal (Tathб in Sind). Al-Hajjaj was not the kind of man the Caliph would have chosen for a pander; but the Shi'ahs hates him and have given him a lasting bad name. In the East men respect manly measures, not the hysterical, philanthropic pseudo-humanitarianism of our modern government which is really the cruellest of all. When Ziyбd bin Abihi was sent by Caliph Mu'awiyah to reform Bassorah, a den of thieves, he informed the lieges that he intended to rule by the sword and advised all evil-doers to quit the city. The people were forbidden, under pain of teeth, to walk the streets after prayers, on the first night two hundred suffered; on the second five and none afterwards. Compare this with our civilised rule in Egypt where even bands of brigands, a phenomenon perfectly new and unknown to this century, have started up, where crime has doubled in quantity and quality, and where "Christian rule" has thoroughly scandalised a Moslem land.

[7] The old bawd's portrait is admirably drawn: all we dwellers in the East have known her well: she is so and so. Her dress and manners are the same amongst the Hindus (see the hypocritical-female ascetic in the Katha,) as amongst the Moslems; men of the world at once recognise her and the prudent keep out of her way. She is found in the cities of Southern Europe, ever pious, ever prayerful; and she seems to do her work not so much for profit as for pure or impure

enjoyment. In the text her task was easy, as she had to do with a pair of innocents.

[8] Koran, xxv. 70. I give Sale’s version.

[9] Easterns, I have observed, have no way of saying “Thank you;” they express it by a blessing or a short prayer. They have a right to your surplus: daily bread is divided, they say and, eating yours, they consider it their own. I have discussed this matter in Pilgrimage i. 75-77, in opposition to those who declare that “gratitude” is unknown to Moslems.

[10] Cufa (Kufah) being a modern place never had a “King,” but as the Hindu says, “ Delhi is far” it is a far cry to Loch Awe. Here we can hardly understand “Malik” as Governor or Viceroy: can it be syn. with Zъ-mбl-(moneyed)?

[11] Abd al-Malik has been before mentioned as the “Sweat of a Stone,” etc. He died recommending Al-Hajjaj to his son, Al-Walid, and one of his sayings is still remembered. “He who desireth to take a female slave for carnal-enjoyment, let him take a native of Barbary; if he need one for the sake of children, let him have a Persian; and whoso desireth one for service, let him take a Greek.” Moderns say, “If you want a brother (in arms) try a Nubian; one to get you wealth an Abyssinian and if you want an ass (for labour) a Sбwahнli, or Zanzibar negroid.”

[12] Probably suggested by the history of Antiochus and Stratonice, with an addition of Eastern mystery such as geomancy.

[13] Arab, “Kбrъrah”: the “water-doctor” has always been an institution in the east and he has lately revived in Europe especially at the German baths and in London.

[14] Lane makes this phrase “O brother of the Persians!” synonymous with “O Persian!” I think it means more, a Persian being generally considered “too clever by half.”

[15] The verses deal in untranslatable word-plays upon women’s names, Naomi (the blessing) Su’adб or Su’бd (the happy, which Mr. Redhouse, in Ka’ab’s Mantle-poem, happily renders Beatrice); and Juml (a sum or total) the two latter, moreover, being here fictitious.

[16] “And he (Jacob) turned from them, and said, ‘O how I am grieved for Joseph’ And his eyes became white with mourning. … (Quoth Joseph to his brethren), ‘Take this my inner garment and throw it on my father’s face and he shall recover his sight.’ . . . So, when the messenger of good tidings came (to Jacob) he threw it (the shirt) over his face and he recovered his eye-sight.” Koran, xii. 84, 93, 96. The commentators, by way of improvement, assure us that the shirt was that worn by Abraham when thrown into the fire (Koran, chaps. xvi.) by Nimrod (!). We know little concerning “Jacob’s daughters” who named the only bridge spanning the upper Jordan, and who have a curious shrine tomb near Jewish “Safe” (North of Tiberias), one of the four “Holy Cities.” The Jews ignore these “daughters of Jacob” and travellers neglect them.

[17] Easterns, I have remarked, mostly recognise the artistic truth that the animal-man is handsomer than woman and that “fair sex” is truly only of skin-colour. The same is the general-rule throughout creation, for instance the stallion compared with the mare, the cock with the hen; while there are sundry exceptions such as the Falconidae.

[18] The Badawi (who is nothing if not horsey) compares the gait of a woman who walks well (in Europe rarely seen out of Spain) with the slightly swinging walk of a thoroughbred mare, bending her graceful neck and looking from side to side at objects as she passes.

[19] Li’llбhi (darr’) al-kбil, a characteristic idiom. “Darr”=giving (rich) milk copiously and the phrase expresses admiration, “To Allah be ascribed (or Allah be praised for) his rich eloquence who said etc. Some Hebraists would render it, “Divinely (well) did he speak who said,” etc., holding “Allah” to express a superlative like “Yah” Jah) in Gen. iv. 1; x. 9. Nimrod was a hunter to the person (or presence) of Yah, i.e. mighty hunter.

[20] Hamzah and Abbбs were the famous uncles of Mohammed often noticed: Ukayl is not known; possibly it may be Akнl, a son of the fourth Caliph, Ali.

[21] The Eastern ring is rarely plain; and, its use being that of a signet, it is always in intaglio: the Egyptians invented engraving hieroglyphics on wooden stamps for marking bricks and applied the process to the ring. Moses B. C. 1491 (Exod. xxviii. 9) took two onyx-stones, and graved on them the names of the children of Israel. From this the signet ring was but a step. Herodotus mentions an emerald seal-set in gold, that of Polycrates, the work of Theodorus, son of Telecles the Samian (iii. 141). The Egyptians also were perfectly acquainted with working in cameo (anaglyph) and rilievo, as may be seen in the cavo rilievo of the finest of their hieroglyphs. The Greeks borrowed from them the cameo and applied it to gems (e.g. Tryphon's in the Marlborough collection), and they bequeathed the art to the Romans. We read in a modern book "Cameo means an onyx, and the most famous cameo in the world is the onyx containing the Apotheosis of Augustus." The ring is given in marriage because it was a seal — by which orders were signed (Gen. xxxviii. 18 and Esther iii. 10-12). I may note that the seal-ring of Cheops (Khufu), found in the Greatest Pyramid, was in the possession of my old friend, Doctor Abbott, of Auburn (U.S.), and was sold with his collection. It is the oldest ring in the world, and settles the Cheops-question.

[22] This habit of weeping when friends meet after long parting is customary, I have noted, amongst the American "Indians," the Badawin of the New World; they shed tears thinking of the friends they have lost. Like most primitive people they are ever ready to weep as was Жneas or Shakespeare's saline personage,

> "This would make a man, a man of salt
>   To use his eyes for garden waterpots."
>   (King Lear, iv. 6.)

[23] Here poetical-justice is not done; in most Arab tales the two

adulterous Queens would have been put to death.

[24] Pronounce Aladdin Abush-Shбmбt.

[25] Arab. “Misr,” vulg. Masr: a close connection of Misraim the “two Misrs,” Egypt, upper and lower.

[26] The Persians still call their Consuls “Shah-bander,” lit. king of the Bandar or port.

[27] Arab. “Dukhъl,” the night of going in, of seeing the bride unveiled for the first time, etcaetera.

[28] Arab. “Barsh” or “Bars,” the commonest kind. In India it is called Ma’jъn (=electuary, generally): it is made of Ganja or young leaves, buds, capsules and florets of hemp (C. saliva), poppy-seed and flowers of the thorn-apple (daiura) with milk and auger-candy, nutmegs, cloves, mace and saffron, all boiled to the consistency of treacle which hardens when cold. Several-recipes are given by Herklots (Glossary s.v. Majoon). These electuaries are usually prepared with “Charas,” or gum of hemp, collected by hand or by passing a blanket over the plant in early morning, and it is highly intoxicating. Another intoxicant is “Sabzi,” dried hemp-leaves, poppy-seed, cucumber heed, black pepper and cardamoms rubbed down in a mortar with a wooden pestle, and made drinkable by adding milk, ice-cream, etc. The Hashish of Arabia is the Hindustani Bhang, usually drunk and made as follows. Take of hemp-leaves, well washed, 3 drams black pepper 45 grains and of cloves, nutmeg and mace (which add to the intoxication) each 12 grains. Triturate in 8 ounces of water or the juice of watermelon or cucumber, strain and drink. The Egyptian Zabнbah is a preparation of hemp florets, opium and honey, much affected by the lower orders, whence the proverb: “Temper thy sorrow with Zabibah. In Al-Hijaz it is mixed with raisins (Zabнb) and smoked in the water-pipe. (Burck hardt No. 73.) Besides these there is (1) “Post” poppy-seed prepared in various ways but especially in sugared sherbets; (2) Datura (stramonium) seed, the produce of the thorn-apple breached and put into

sweetmeats by dishonest confectioners; it is a dangerous intoxicant, producing spectral-visions, delirium tremens, etc., and (3) various preparations of opium especially the “Madad,” pills made up with toasted betel-leaf and smoked. Opium, however, is usually drunk in the shape of “Kusumba,” a pill placed in wet cotton and squeezed in order to strain and clean it of the cowdung and other filth with which it is adulterated.

[29] Arab. “Sikankъr” (Gr. {Greek letters}, Lat. Scincus) a lizard (S. officinalis) which, held in the hand, still acts as an aphrodisiac in the East, and which in the Middle Ages was considered a universal-medicine. In the “Adja’ib al-Hind” (Les Merveilles de l’Inde) we find a notice of a bald-headed old man who was compelled to know his wife twice a day and twice a night in consequence of having eaten a certain fish. (Chaps. Ixxviii. of the translation by M. L. Marcel Devic, from a manuscript of the tenth century, Paris Lemaire, 1878.) Europeans deride these prescriptions, but Easterns know better: they affect the fancy, that is the brain, and often succeed in temporarily relieving impotence. The recipes for this evil, which is incurable only when it comes from heart-affections, are innumerable in the East; and about half of every medical-work is devoted to them. Many a quack has made his fortune with a few bottles of tincture of cantharides, and a man who could discover a specific would become a millionaire in India only. The curious reader will consult for specimens the Ananga-Ranga Shastra by Koka Pandit; or the “Rujъ ‘al-Shaykh ila ‘l-Sabбh fi Kuwwati ‘l-Bбh” (the Return of the Old Man to Youth in power of Procreation) by Ahmad bin Sulaymбn known as Ibn Kamбl-Bбshб, in 139 chapters lithographed at Cairo. Of these aphrodisiacs I shall have more to say.

[30] Alб al-Din (our old friend Aladdin) = Glory of the Faith, a name of which Mohammed who preferred the simplest, like his own, would have highly disapproved. The most grateful names to Allah are Abdallah (Allah’s Slave) and Abd al-Rahman (Slave of the Compassionate); the truest are Al-Hбrith (the gainer, “bread winner”) and Al-Hammбm (the griever); and the hatefullest are Al-Harb (witch) and Al-Murrah (bitterness, Abu Murrah being a kunyat

or by-name of the Devil). Abu al-Sh6m6t (pronounced Abushsh6m6t)=Father of Moles, concerning which I have already given details. These names ending in -Din (faith) began with the Caliph Al-Muktadi bi-Amri ‘llah (regn. A.H. 467= 1075), who entitled his Wazir “Zahнr al-Din (Backer or Defender of the Faith) and this gave rise to the practice. It may be observed that the superstition of naming by omens is in no way obsolete.

[31] Meaning that he appeared intoxicated by the pride of his beauty as though it had been strong wine.

[32] i.e. against the evil eye.

[33] Meaning that he had been delicately reared.

[34] A traditional-saying of Mohammed.

[35] So Boccaccio’s “Capo bianco” and “Coda verde.” (Day iv., Introduct.)

[36] The opening chapter is known as the “Mother of the Book” (as opposed to Y6 Sнn, the “heart of the Koran”), the “Surat (chapter) of Praise,” and the “Surat of repetition” (because twice revealed?) or thanksgiving, or laudation (Ai-Mas6ni) and by a host of other names for which see Mr. Rodwell who, however, should not write “Fatthah” (p. xxv.) nor “Fathah” (xxvii.). The F6tihah, which is to Al-Islam much what the “Paternoster” is to Christendom, consists of seven verses, in the usual-Saj’a or rhymed prose, and I have rendered it as follows:

In the name of the Compassionating, the Compassionate! * Praise be to Allah who all the Worlds made * The Compassionating, the Compassionate * King of the Day of Faith! * Thee only do we adore and of Thee only do we crave aid * Guide us to the path which is straight * The path of those for whom Thy love is great, not those on whom is hate, nor they that deviate * Amen! O Lord of the World’s trine.

My Pilgrimage (i. 285; ii. 78 and passim) will supply instances of its application; how it is recited with open hands to catch the blessing from Heaven and the palms are drawn down the face (Ibid. i. 286), and other details,

[37] i.e. when the evil eye has less effect than upon children. Strangers in Cairo often wonder to see a woman richly dressed leading by the hand a filthy little boy (rarely a girl) in rags, which at home will be changed to cloth of gold.

[38] Arab. “Asнdah” flour made consistent by boiling in water with the addition of “Same” clarified butter) and honey: more like pap than custard.

[39] Arab. “Ghбbah” = I have explained as a low-lying place where the growth is thickest and consequently animals haunt it during the noon-heats

[40] Arab. “Akkбm,” one who loads camels and has charge of the luggage. He also corresponds with the modern Mukharrij or camel-hirer (Pilgrimage i. 339), and hence the word Moucre (Moucres) which, first used by La Brocquiиre (A.D. 1432), is still the only term known to the French.

[41] i.e. I am old and can no longer travel.

[42] Taken from Al-Asma’i, the “Romance of Antar,” and the episode of the Asafir Camels.

[43] A Mystic of the twelfth century A.D. who founded the Kбdirн order (the oldest and chiefest of the four universally recognised), to which I have the honour to belong, teste my diploma (Pilgrimage, Appendix i.). Visitation is still made to his tomb at Baghdad. The Arabs (who have no hard g-letter) alter to “Jнlбn” the name of his birth-place “Gilan,” a tract between the Caspian and the Black Seas.

[44] The well-known Anglo-Indian “Mucuddum;” lit. “one placed before (or over) others”

[45] Koran xiii. 14.

[46] i.e.. his chastity: this fashion of objecting to infamous proposals is very characteristic: ruder races would use their fists.

[47] Arab. “Rбfizн”=the Shi’ah (tribe, sect) or Persian schismatics who curse the first three Caliphs: the name is taken from their own saying “Innб rafiznб-hum”=verily we have rejected them. The feeling between Sunni (the so-called orthodox) and Shi’ah is much like the Christian love between a Catholic of Cork and a Protestant from the Black North. As Al-Siyuti or any historian will show, this sect became exceedingly powerful under the later Abbaside Caliphs, many of whom conformed to it and adopted its tractices and innovations (as in the Azan or prayer-call), greatly to the scandal-of their co-religionists. Even in the present day the hatred between these representatives of Arab monotheism and Persian Guebrism continues unabated. I have given sundry instances m my Pilgrimage, e.g. how the Persians attempt to pollute the tombs of the Caliphs they abhor.

[48] Arab. “Sakkб,” the Indian “Bihishtн” (man from Heaven):
Each party in a caravan has one or more.

[49] These “Kirбmбt” or Saints’ miracles, which Spiritualists will readily accept, are recorded in vast numbers. Most men have half a dozen to tell, each of his “Pнr” or patron, including the Istidrбj or prodigy of chastisement. (Dabistan, iii. 274.)

[50] Great granddaughter of the Imam Hasan buried in Cairo and famed for “Kirбmбt.” Her father, governor of Al-Medinah, was imprisoned by Al-Mansur and restored to power by Al-Mahdi. She was married to a son of the Imam Ja’afar al-Sadik and lived a life of devotion in Cairo, dying in A.H. 218=824. The corpse of the Imam al-Shafi’i was carried to her house, now her mosque and mausoleum: it stood in the Darb al-Sabъa which formerly divided Old from New Cairo and is now one of the latter’s suburbs. Lane (M. E. chaps. x.) gives her name but little more. The mention of her shows that the writer of the tale or the copyist was a Cairene : Abd al-Kadir is world-known :

not so the “Sitt.”

[51] Arab. “Farkh akrab” for Ukayrib, a vulgarism.

[52] The usual Egyptian irreverence: he relates his abomination as if it were a Hadis or Tradition of the Prophet with due ascription.

[53] A popular name, dim. of Zubdah cream, fresh butter, “creamkin.”

[54] Arab. “Mustahall,” “Mustahill’ and vulg. “Muhallil” (=one who renders lawful). It means a man hired for the purpose who marries pro forma and after wedding, and bedding with actual-consummation, at once divorces the woman. He is held the reverse of respectable and no wonder. Hence, probably, Mandeville’s story of the Islanders who, on the marriage-night, “make another man to lie by their wives, to have their maidenhead, for which they give great hire and much thanks. And there are certain men in every town that serve for no other thing; and they call them cadeberiz, that is to say, the fools of despair, because they believe their occupation is a dangerous one.” Burckhardt gives the proverb (No. 79), “A thousand lovers rather than one Mustahall,” the latter being generally some ugly fellow picked up in the streets and disgusting to the wife who must permit his embraces.

[55] This is a woman’s oath. not used by men.

[56] Pronounced “Yб Sнn” (chaps. xxxvi.) the “heart of the Koran” much used for edifying recitation. Some pious Moslems in Egypt repeat it as a Wazifah, or religious task, or as masses for the dead, and all educated men know its 83 versets by rote.

[57] Arab. “Бl-Dбъd”=the family of David, i.e. David himself, a popular idiom. The prophet’s recitation of the “Mazбmir” (Psalter) worked miracles.

[58] There is a peculiar thickening of the voice in leprosy which at once betrays the hideous disease.

[59] These lines have occurred in Night clxxxiii. I quote Mr. Payne (in loco) by way of variety.

[60] Where the “Juzбm” (leprosy, elephantiasis, morbus sacrum, etc. etc.) is supposed first to show: the swelling would alter the shape. Lane (ii. 267) translates “her wrist which was bipartite.”

[61] Arab. “Zakariyб” (Zacharias): a play upon the term “Zakar”=the sign of “masculinity.” Zacharias, mentioned in the Koran as the educator of the Virgin Mary (chaps. iii.) and repeatedly referred to (chaps. xix. etc.), is a well-known personage amongst Moslems and his church is now the great Cathedral-Mosque of Aleppo.

[62] Arab. “ Ark al-Halбwat “ = vein of sweetness.

[63] Arab. “Futъh,” which may also mean openings, has before occurred.

[64] i.e. four times without withdrawing.

[65] i.e. a correspondence of size, concerning which many rules are given in the Ananga-Rangha Shastra which justly declares that discrepancy breeds matrimonial-troubles.

[66] Arab. “Ghurбb al-Bayn”= raven of the waste or the parting: hence the bird of Odin symbolises separation (which is also called Al-bayn). The Raven (Ghurab = Heb. Oreb and Lat. Corvus, one of the prehistoric words) is supposed to be seen abroad earlier than any other bird; and it is entitled “Abu Zajir,” father of omens, because lucky when flying towards the right and v.v. It is opposed in poetry to the (white) pigeon, the emblem of union, peace and happiness. The vulgar declare that when Mohammed hid in the cave the crow kept calling to his pursuers, “Ghбr! Ghбr!” (cavern, cavern): hence the Prophet condemned him to wear eternal-mourning and ever to repeat the traitorous words. This is the old tale of Coronis and Apollo (Ovid, lib. ii.).

—— —— —” who blacked the raven o’er And bid him prate in his white plumes no more.”

[67] This use of a Turkish title “Efendi” being=our esquire, and inferior to a Bey, is a rank anachronism, probably of the copyist.

[68] Arab. “Samn”=Hind. “Ghi” butter melted, skimmed and allowed to cool.

[69] Arab. “Ya Wadъd,” a title of the Almighty: the Mac. Edit. has “O David!”

[70] Arab. “Muwashshahah;” a complicated stanza of which specimens have occurred. Mr. Payne calls it a “ballad,” which would be a “Kunyat al-Zidd.”

[71] Arab. “Bahбim” (plur. of Bahнmah=Heb. Behemoth), applied in Egypt especially to cattle. A friend of the “Oppenheim” house, a name the Arabs cannot pronounce was known throughout Cairo as “Jack al-bahбim” (of the cows).

[72] Lit. “The father of side-locks,” a nickname of one of the Tobba Kings. This “Hasan of: the ringlets” who wore two long pig-tails hanging to his shoulders was the Rochester or Piron of his age: his name is still famous for brilliant wit, extempore verse and the wildest debauchery. D’Herbelot’s sketch of his life is very meagre. His poetry has survived to the present day and (unhappily) we shall] hear more of “Abu Nowбs.” On the subject of these patronymics Lane (Mod. Egypt, chaps. iv.) has a strange remark that “Abu Dбъd i’ not the Father of Dбъd or Abu Ali the Father of Ali, but whose Father is (or was) Dбъd or Ali.” Here, however, he simply confounds Abu = father of (followed by a genitive), with Abu-h (for Abu-hu) = he, whose father.

[73] Arab. “Samъr,” applied in slang language to cats and dogs, hence the witty Egyptians converted Admiral-Seymour (Lord Alcester) into “Samъr.”

[74] The home-student of Arabic may take this letter as a model even in

the present day; somewhat stiff and old-fashioned, but gentlemanly and courteous.

[75] Arab. “Salнm” (not Sй-lim) meaning the “Safe and sound.”

[76] Arab. “Halбwah”=sweetmeat, meaning an entertainment such as men give to their friends after sickness or a journey. it is technically called as above, “The Sweetmeat of Safety.”

[77] Arab. “Salбt” which from Allah means mercy, from the Angels intercession and pardon; and from mankind blessing. Concerning the specific effects of blessing the Prophet, see Pilgrimage (ii. 70). The formula is often slurred over when a man is in a hurry to speak: an interrupting friend will say “ Bless the Prophet!” and he does so by ejaculating “Sa’am.”

[78] Persian, meaning originally a command: it is now applied to a Wazirial-order as opposed to the “ Irбdah,” the Sultan’s order.

[79] Arab. “ Mashб’ilн” lit. the cresses-bearer who has before appeared as hangman.

[80] Another polite formula for announcing a death.

[81] As he died heirless the property lapsed to the Treasury.

[82] This shaking the kerchief is a signal to disperse and the action suggests its meaning. Thus it is used in an opposite sense to “throwing the kerchief,” a pseudo-Oriental practice whose significance is generally understood in Europe.

[83] The body-guard being of two divisions.

[84] Arab. “Hadbб,” lit. “hump-backed;” alluding to the Badawi bier; a pole to which the corpse is slung (Lane). It seems to denote the protuberance of the corpse when placed upon the bier which before was flat. The quotation is from Ka’ab’s Mantle-Poem (Burdah v . 37), “Every son of a female, long though his safety may be, is a day

borne upon a ridged implement,” says Mr. Redhouse, explaining the latter as a “bier with a ridged lid.” Here we differ: the Janбzah with a lid is not a Badawi article: the wildlings use the simplest stretcher; and I would translate the lines,

> “The son of woman, whatso his career
> One day is borne upon the gibbous bier.”

[85] This is a high honour to any courtier.

[86] “Khatun” in Turk. means any lady: mistress, etc., and follows the name, e.g. Fбtimah Khatun. Habzalam Bazazah is supposed to be a fanciful compound, uncouth as the named; the first word consisting of “Habb” seed, grain; and “Zalam” of Zulm=seed of tyranny. Can it be a travesty of “Absalom” (Ab Salбm, father of peace)? Lane (ii. 284) and Payne (iii. 286) prefer Habazlam and Hebezlem.

[87] Or night. A metaphor for rushing into peril.

[88] Plur. of kumkum, cucurbite, gourd-shaped vessel, jar.

[89] A popular exaggeration for a very expert thief.

[90] Arab. “Buka’at Ad-bum”: lit. the “low place of blood” (where it stagnates): so Al-Bukб’ah = Cњlesyria.

[91] That common and very unpleasant phrase, full of egotism and self-esteem, “I told you so,” is even more common in the naпve East than in the West. In this case the son’s answer is far superior to the mother’s question.

[92] In order to keep his oath to the letter.

[93] “Tabannuj; “ literally “hemping” (drugging with hemp or henbane) is the equivalent in Arab medicine of our “anжsthetics.” These have been used in surgery throughout the East for centuries before ether and chloroform became the fashion in the civilised West.

[94] Arab. “Durkб’ah,” the lower part of the floor, opposed to the “liwбn” or daпs. Liwбn =Al-Aywбn (Arab. and Pers.) the hall (including the daпs and the sunken parts)

[95] i.e. he would toast it as he would a mistress.

[96] This till very late years was the custom in Persia, and Fath Ali Shah never appeared in scarlet without ordering some horrible cruelties. In Dar-For wearing a red cashmere turban was a sign of wrath and sending a blood red dress to a subject meant that he would be slain.

[97] That is, this robbery was committed in the palace by some one belonging to it. References to vinegar are frequent; that of Egypt being famous in those days. “Optimum et laudatissimum acetum a Romanis habebatur Жgyptum” (Facciolati); and possibly it was sweetened: the Gesta (Tale xvii.) mentions “must and vinegar.” In Arab Proverbs, One mind by vinegar and another by wine”=each mind goes its own way, (Arab. Prov. . 628); or, “with good and bad,” vinegar being spoilt wine.

[98] We have not heard the last of this old “dowsing rod”: the latest form of rhabdomancy is an electrical-rod invented in the United States.

[99] This is the procиs verbal always drawn up on such occasions.

[100] The sight of running water makes a Persian long for strong drink as the sight of a fine view makes the Turk feel hungry.

[101] Arab. “Min wahid aduww “ a peculiarly Egyptian or rather Cairene phrase.

[102] Al-Danaf=the Distressing Sickness: the title would be Ahmad the Calamity. Al-Zaybak (the Quicksilver)=Mercury Ali Hasan “Shuuman”=a pestilent fellow. We shall meet all these worthies again and again: see the Adventures of Mercury Ali of Cairo, Night dccviii., a sequel to The Rogueries of Dalilah, Night dcxcviii.

[103] For the “Sacrifice-place of Ishmael” (not Isaac) see my Pilgrimage (iii. 306). According to all Arab ideas Ishmael, being the eldest son, was the chief of the family after his father. I have noted that this is the old old quarrel between the Arabs and their cousins the Hebrews.

[104] This black-mail was still paid to the Badawin of Ramlah (Alexandria) till the bombardment in 1881.

[105] The famous Issus of Cilicia, now a port-village on the Gulf of Scanderoon.

[106] Arab. “ Wada’6” = the concha veneris, then used as small change.

[107] Arab. “Sakati”=a dealer in “castaway” articles, such es old metal,damaged goods, the pluck and feet of animals, etc.

[108] The popular tale of Burckhardt’s death in Cairo was that the names of the three first Caliphs were found written upon his slipper-soles and that he was put to death by decree of the Olema. It is the merest nonsense, as the great traveller died of dysentery in the house of my old friend John Thurburn and was buried outside the Bab al-Nasr of Cairo where his tomb was restored by the late Rogers Bey (Pilgrimage i. 123).

[109] Prob. a mis-spelling for Arsl6n, in Turk. a lion, and in slang a piastre.

[110] Arab. “Maka’ad;” lit. = sitting-room.

[111] Arab. “Khamm6rah”; still the popular term throughout Egypt for a European Hotel. It is not always intended to be insulting but it is, meaning the place where Franks meet to drink forbidden drinks.

[112] A reminiscence of Mohammed who cleansed the Ka’abah of its 360 idols (of which 73 names are given by Freytag, Einleitung, etc. p, 342-57) by touching them with his staff, whereupon all fell to the ground; and the Prophet cried (Koran xvii. 84), “Truth is come, and

falsehood is vanished: verily, falsehood is a thing that vanisheth” (magna est veritas, etc.). Amongst the “idols” are said to have been a statue of Abraham and the horns of the ram sacrificed in lieu of Ishmael, which (if true) would prove conclusively that the Abrahamic legend at Meccah is of ancient date and not a fiction of Al-Islam. Hence, possibly, the respect of the Judaising Tobbas of Hiwyarland for the Ka’abah. (Pilgrimage, iii. 295.)

[113] This was evidently written by a Sunni as the Shн’ahs claim to be the only true Moslems. Lane tells an opposite story (ii. 329). It suggests the common question in the South of Europe, “Are you a Christian or a Protestant?”

[114] Arab. “Ana fн jнrat-ak!” a phrase to be remembered as useful in time of danger.

[115] i.e. No Jinni, or Slave of the Jewel, was there to answer.

[116] Arab. “Kunsъl” (pron. “Gunsul”) which here means a well-to-do Frank, and shows the modern date of the tale as it stands.

[117] From the Ital. “Capitano.” The mention of cannon and other terms in this tale shows that either it was written during the last century or it has been mishandled by copyists.

[118] Arab. “Minнnah”; a biscuit of flour and clarified butter.

[119] Arab. “Waybah”; the sixth part of the Ardabb=6 to 7 English gallons.

[120] He speaks in half-jest a la fellah; and reminds us of “Hangman, drive on the cart!”

[121] Yochanan (whom Jehovah has blessed) Jewish for John, is probably a copy of the Chaldean Euahanes, the Oannes of Berosus=Ea Khan, Hea the fish. The Greeks made it Joannes; the Arabs “Yohannб” (contracted to “Hannб,” Christian) and “Yбbyб” (Moslem). Prester (Priest) John is probably Ung Khan, the historian

prince conquered and slain by Janghiz Khan in A.D. 1202. The modern history of “John” is very extensive: there may be a full hundred varieties and derivation’ of the name. “Husn Maryam” the beauty (spiritual. etc.) of the B.V.

[122] Primarily being middle-aged; then aid, a patron, servant, etc. Also a tribe of the Jinn usually made synonymous with “Mбrid,” evil controuls, hostile to men: modern spiritualists would regard them as polluted souls not yet purged of their malignity. The text insinuates that they were at home amongst Christians and in Genoa.

[123] Arab. “Sar’a” = epilepsy, falling sickness, of old always confounded with “possession” (by evil spirits) or “obsession.”

[124] Again the true old charge of falsifying the so-called “Sacred books.” Here the Koran is called “Furkбn.” Sale (sect. iii.) would assimilate this to the Hebr. “Perek” or “Pirka,” denoting a section or portion of Scripture; but Moslems understand it to be the “Book which distinguisheth (faraka, divided) the true from the false.” Thus Caliph Omar was entitled “Fбrъk” = the Distinguisher (between right and wrong). Lastly, “Furkбn,” meanings as in Syr. and Ethiop. deliverance, revelation, is applied alike to the Pentateuch and Koran.

[125] Euphemistic for “thou shalt die.”

[126] Lit. “From (jugular) vein to vein” (Arab. “Warнd”). Our old friend Lucretius again: “Tantane relligio,” etc.

[127] As opposed to the “but” or outer room.

[128] Arab. “Darb al-Asfar” in the old Jamalнyah or Northern part of Cairo.

[129] A noble tribe of Badawin that migrated from Al-Yaman and settled in Al-Najd Their Chief, who died a few years before Mohammed’s birth, was Al-Hatim (the “black crow”), a model of Arab manliness and munificence; and although born in the Ignorance he will enter Heaven with the Moslems. Hatim was buried on the hill

called Owбrid: I have already noted this favourite practice of the wilder Arabs and the affecting idea that the Dead may still look upon his kith and kin. There is not an Arab book nor, indeed, a book upon Arabia which does not contain the name of Hatim: he is mentioned as unpleasantly often as Aristides.

[130] Lord of “Cattle-feet,” this King’s name is unknown; but the Kбmъs mentions two Kings called Zu ‘l Kalб’a, the Greater and the Less. Lane’s Shaykh (ii. 333) opined that the man who demanded Hatim’s hospitality was one Abu’l-Khaybari.

[131] The camel’s throat, I repeat, is not cut as in the case of other animals, the muscles being too strong: it is slaughtered by the “nahr,” i.e. thrusting a knife into the hollow at the commissure of the chest. (Pilgrimage iii. 303.)

[132] Adi became a Moslem and was one of the companions of the Prophet.

[133] A rival-in generosity to Hatim: a Persian poet praising his patron’s generosity says that it buried that of Hatim and dimmed that of Ma’an (D’Herbelot). He was a high official-under the last Ommiade, Marwбn al-Himбr (the “Ass,” or the “Century,” the duration of Ommiade rule) who was routed and slain in A.H. 132=750. Ma’an continued to serve under the Abbasides and was a favourite with Al-Mansъr. “More generous or bountiful than Ka’ab” is another saying (A. P., i. 325); Ka’ab ibn Mбmah was a man who, somewhat like Sir Philip Sidney at Zutphen, gave his own portion of drink while he was dying of thirst to a man who looked wistfully at him, whence the saying “Give drink to thy brother the Nбmiri” (A. P., i. 608). Ka’ab could not mount, so they put garments over him to scare away the wild beasts and left him in the desert to die. “Scatterer of blessings” (Nбshir al-Ni’am) was a title of King Malik of Al-Yaman, son of Sharhabнl, eminent for his liberality. He set up the statue in the Western Desert, inscribed “Nothing behind me,” as a warner to others.

[134] Lane (ii. 352) here introduces, between Nights cclxxi. and ccxc., a tale entitled in the Bresl. Edit. (iv. 134) “The Sleeper and the Waker,” i.e. the sleeper awakened; and he calls it: The Story of Abu-l-Hasan the Wag. It is interesting and founded upon historical-fact; but it can hardly be introduced here without breaking the sequence of The Nights. I regret this the more as Mr. Alexander J. Cotheal-of New York has most obligingly sent me an addition to the Breslau text (iv. 137) from his MS. But I hope eventually to make use of it.

[135] The first girl calls gold “Titer” (pure, unalloyed metal); the second “Asjad” (gold generally) and the third “IbrнZ” (virgin ore, the Greek {Greek letters}. This is a law of Arab rhetoric never to repeat the word except for a purpose and, as the language can produce 1,200,000 (to 100,000 in English) the copiousness is somewhat painful to readers.

[136] Arab. “Shakes” before noticed.

[137] Arab. “Kussб’б”=the curling cucumber: the vegetable is of the cheapest and the poorer classes eat it as “kitchen” with bread.

[138] Arab. “Haram-hu,” a double entendre. Here the Barlawi means his Harem the inviolate part of the house; but afterwards he makes it mean the presence of His Honour.

[139] Toledo? this tale was probably known to Washington Irving. The “Land of Roum “ here means simply Frank-land as we are afterwards told that its name was Andalusia the old Vandal-land, a term still applied by Arabs to the whole of the Iberian Peninsula.

[140] Arab. “Amбim” (plur. of Imбmah) the common word for turband which I prefer to write in the old unclipt fashion. We got it through the Port. Turbante and the old French Tolliban from the (now obsolete) Persian term Dolband=a turband or a sash.

[141] Sixth Ommiade Caliph, A.D. 705-716, from “Tбrik” we have “Gibraltar”=Jabal-al-Tбrik.

[142] Arab. “Yunбn” = Ionia, applied to ancient Greece as “Roum” is to the Grжco-Roman Empire.

[143] Arab. “Bahramбni ;” prob. alluding to the well-known legend of the capture of Somanath (Somnauth) from the Hindus by Mahmud of Ghazni. In the Ajб’ib al-Hind (before quoted) the Brahmins are called Abrahamah.

[144] i.e. “Peace be with thee!”

[145] i.e. in the palace when the hunt was over. The bluntness and plain-speaking of the Badawi, which caused the revelation of the Koranic chapter “Inner Apartments” (No. xlix.) have always been favourite themes with Arab tale-tellers as a contrast with citizen suavity and servility. Moreover the Badawi, besides saying what he thinks, always tells the truth (unless corrupted by commerce with foreigners); and this is a startling contrast with the townsfolk. To ride out of Damascus and have a chat with the Ruwalб is much like being suddenly transferred from amongst the trickiest of Mediterranean people to the bluff society of the Scandinavian North. And the reason why the Turk will never govern the Arab in peace is that the former is always trying to finesse and to succeed by falsehood, when the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth is wanted.

[146] Koran. xvi. 112.

[147] A common and expressive way of rewarding the tongue which “spoke poetry.” The Jewels are often pearls.

[148] Ibrahim Abu Ishбk bin al-Mahdi, a pretender to the Caliphate of well known wit and a famed musician surnamed from his corpulence “Al-Tannнn”=the Dragon or, according to others (Lane ii. 336), “Al-Tin”= the fig. His adventurous history will be found in Ibn Khallikan D’Herbelot and Al-Siyuti.

[149] The Ragha of the Zendavesta, and Rages of the Apocrypha (Tobit, Judith, etc.), the old capital-of Media Proper, and seat of government of Daylam, now a ruin some miles south of Teheran which was built

out of its remains. Rayy was founded by Hoshang the primeval-king who first sawed wood, made doors and dug metal. It is called Rayy al-Mahdiyyah because Al-Mahdi held his court there. Harun al-Rashid was also born in it (A.H. 145). It is mentioned by a host of authors and names one of the Makamat of Al-Hariri.

[150] Human blood being especially impure.

[151] Jones, Brown and Robinson.

[152] Arab. “Kumm ,” the Moslem sleeve is mostly (like his trousers) of ample dimensions and easily converted into a kind of carpet-bag by depositing small articles in the middle and gathering up the edge in the hand. In this way carried the weight would be less irksome than hanging to the waist. The English of Queen Anne’s day had regular sleeve-pockets for memoranda, etc., hence the saying, to have in one’s sleeve.

[153] Arab. “Khuff” worn under the “Вбbъg” (a corruption of the Persian pб-push=feet-covers, papooshes, slippers). [Lane M. E. chaps. i.]

[154] Done in hot weather throughout the city, a dry line for camels being left in mid-street to prevent the awkward beasts slipping. The watering of the Cairo streets of late years has been excessive; they are now lines of mud in summer as well as in winter and the effluvia from the droppings of animals have, combined with other causes, seriously deteriorated the once charming climate. The only place in Lower Egypt, which has preserved the atmosphere of 1850, is Suez.

[155] Arab. “Hurбk:” burnt rag, serving as tinder for flint and steel, is a common styptic.

[156] Of this worthy, something has been said and there will be more in a future page.

[157] i.e. the person entitled to exact the blood-wite.

[158] Al-Maamum was a man of sense with all his fanaticism One of his sayings is preserved “Odious is contentiousness in Kings, more odious vexation in judges uncomprehending a case; yet more odious is shallowness of doctors in religions and most odious are avarice in the rich, idleness in youth, jesting in age and cowardice in the soldier.”

[159] The second couplet is not in the Mac. Edit. but Lane’s
Shaykh has supplied it (ii. 339)

[160] Adam’s loins, the “Day of Alast,” and the Imam (who stands before the people in prayer) have been explained. The “Seventh Imam” here is Al-Maamun, the seventh Abbaside the Ommiades being, as usual, ignored.

[161] He sinned only for the pleasure of being pardoned, which is poetical-and hardly practical-or probable.

[162] The Katб (sand-grouse) always enters into Arab poetry because it is essentially a desert bird, and here the comparison is good because it lays its eggs in the waste far from water which it must drink morning and evening. Its cry is interpreted “man sakat, salam” (silent and safe), but it does not practice that precept, for it is usually betrayed by its piping “ Kata! Kata!” Hence the proverb, “More veracious than the sand-grouse,” and “speak not falsely, for the Kata sayeth sooth,” is Komayt’s saying. It is an emblem of swiftness: when the brigand poet Shanfara boasts, “The ash-coloured Katas can drink only my leavings, after hastening all night to slake their thirst in the morning,” it is a hyperbole boasting of his speed. In Sind it is called the “rock pigeon” and it is not unlike a grey partridge when on the wing.

[163] Joseph to his brethren, Koran, xii. 92, when he gives them his “inner garment” to throw over his father’s face.

[164] Arab. “Hajjбm”=a cupper who scarifies forehead and legs, a bleeder, a (blood-) sucker. The slang use of the term is to thrash, lick, wallop. (Burckhardt. Prov. 34.)

[165] The Bresl. Edit. (vii. 171-174) entitles this tale, “Story of Shaddбd bin Ad and the City of Iram the Columned ;” but it relates chiefly to the building by the King of the First Adites who, being promised a future Paradise by Prophet Hъd, impiously said that he would lay out one in this world. It also quotes Ka’ab al-Ahbбr as an authority for declaring that the tale is in the “Pentateuch of Moses.” Iram was in al-Yaman near Adan (our Aden) a square of ten parasangs (or leagues each= 18,000 feet) every way, the walls were of red (baked) brick 500 cubits high and 20 broad, with four gates of corresponding grandeur. It contained 300,000 Kasr (palaces) each with a thousand pillars of gold-bound jasper, etc. (whence its title). The whole was finished in five hundred years, and, when Shaddad prepared to enter it, the “Cry of Wrath” from the Angel of Death slew him and all his many. It is mentioned in the Koran (chaps. Ixxxix. 6-7) as “Irem adorned with lofty buildings (or pillars).” But Ibn Khaldun declares that commentators have embroidered the passage; Iram being the name of a powerful clan of the ancient Adites and “imбd” being a tent-pole: hence “Iram with the numerous tents or tent-poles.” Al-Bayzawi tells the story of Abdullah ibn Kilabah (D’Herbelot’s Colabah). At Aden I met an Arab who had seen the mysterious city on the borders of Al-Ahkбf, the waste of deep sands, west of Hadramaut; and probably he had, the mirage or sun-reek taking its place. Compare with this tale “The City of Brass” (Night dlxv.).

[166] The biblical-”Sheba,” named from the great-grandson of Joctan, whence the Queen (Bilkis) visited Solomon It was destroyed by the Flood of Mбrib.

[167] The full title of the Holy City is “Madinat al-Nab)” = the City of the Prophet, of old Yasrib (Yathrib) the Iatrippa of the Greeks (Pilgrimage, ii. 119). The reader will remember that there are two “Yasribs:” that of lesser note being near Hujr in the Yamбmah province.

[168] “Ka’ab of the Scribes,” a well-known traditionist and religious poet who died (A.H. 32) in the Caliphate of Osman. He was a Jew

who islamised; hence his name (Ahbбr, plur. of Hibr, a Jewish scribe, doctor of science, etc. Jarrett’s El-Siyuti,). He must not be confounded with another Ka’ab al-Ahbбr the Poet of the (first) Cloak-poem or “Burdah,” a noble Arab who was a distant cousin of Mohammed, and whose tomb at Hums (Emesa) is a place of pious visitation. According to the best authorities (no Christian being allowed to see them) the cloak given to the bard by Mohammed is still preserved together with the Khirkah or Sanjak Sherif (“Holy Coat” or Banner, the national oriflamme) at Stambul in the Upper Seraglio. (Pilgrimage, i. 213.) Many authors repeat this story of Mu’awiyah, the Caliph, and Ka’ab of the Burdah, but it is an evident anachronism, the poet having been dead nine years before the ruler’s accession (A.H. 41).

[169] Koran, lxxxix. 6-7.

[170] Arab. “Kahramбn” from Pers., braves, heroes.

[171] The Deity in the East is as whimsical-a despot as any of his “shadows” or “vice regents.” In the text Shaddбd is killed for mere jealousy a base passion utterly unworthy of a godhead; but one to which Allah was greatly addicted.

[172] Some traditionist, but whether Sha’abi, Shi’abi or
Shu’abi we cannot decide.

[173] The Hazarmaveth of Genesis (x. 26) in South Eastern Arabia. Its people are the Adramitae (mod. Hazrami) of Ptolemy who places in their land the Arabiж Emporium, as Pliny does his Massola. They border upon the Homeritж or men of Himyar, often mentioned in The Nights. Hazramaut is still practically unknown to us, despite the excursions of many travellers; and the hard nature of the people, the Swiss of Arabia, offers peculiar obstacles to exploration.

[174] i.e. the prophet Hud generally identified (?) with Heber. He was commissioned (Koran, chaps. vii.) to preach Al-Islam to his tribe the Adites who worshipped four goddesses, Sбkiyah (the rain-giver), Rбzikah (food-giver), Hбfizah (the saviouress) and Sбlimah (who

healed sickness). As has been seen he failed, so it was useless to send him.

175 Son of Ibraham al-Mosili, a musician poet and favourite with the Caliphs Harun al-Rashid and Al-Maamun. He made his name immortal-by being the first who reduced Arab harmony to systematic rules, and he wrote a biography of musicians referred to by Al-Hariri in the Sйance of Singar.

176 This must not be confounded with the "pissing against the wall" of I Kings, xiv. 10, where watering against a wall denotes a man as opposed to a woman.

177 Arab. "Zambнl" or "Zimbнl," a limp basket made of plaited palm-leaves and generally two handled. It is used for many purposes, from carrying poultry to carrying earth.

178 Here we have again the Syriac ''Bakhkh -un-Bakhkh-un-''=well done! It is the Pers Бегнп and means "all praise be to him."

179 Arab. "A Tufayli?" So the Arab. Prov. (ii. 838) "More intrusive than Tufayl" (prob. the P.N. of a notorious sponger). The Badawin call "Wбrish" a man who sits down to meat unbidden and to drink Wбghil; but townsfolk apply the latter to the "Wбrish."

180 Arab. "Artбl"=rotoli, pounds; and

"A pint is a pound
All the world round;"

except in highly civilised lands where the pint has a curious power of shrinking.

181 One of Al-Maamun's Wazirs. The Caliph married his daughter whose true name was Bъгбп; but this tale of girl's freak and courtship was invented (?) by Ishak. For the splendour of the wedding and the munificence of the Minister see Lane, ii. 350-352.

[182] I have described this scene, the wretch clinging to the curtain and sighing and crying as if his heart would break (Pilgrimage iii. 216 and 220). The same is done at the place Al-Multazam'"the attached to;" (ibid. 156) and various spots called Al-Mustajбb, "where prayer is granted" (ibid. 162). At Jerusalem the Wailing place of the Jews" shows queer scenes; the worshippers embrace the wall with a peculiar wriggle crying out in Hebrew, "O build Thy House, soon, without delay," etc.

[183] i.e. The wife. The scene in the text was common at Cairo twenty years ago; and no one complained of the stick. See Pilgrimage i., 120.

[184] Arab. "Udm, Udum" (plur. of Idбm) = "relish," olives, cheese, pickled cucumbers, etc.

[185] I have noticed how the left hand is used in the East. In the second couplet we have "Istinjб"=washing the fundament after stool. The lines are highly appropriate for a nightman. Easterns have many foul but most emphatic expressions like those in the text I have heard a mother say to her brat, "I would eat thy merde!" (i.e. how I love thee!).

[186] Arab. "Harrбk," whence probably our "Carack" and "Carrack" (large ship), in dictionaries derived from Carrus Marinus.

[187] Arab. "Ghбshiyah"=lit. an йtui, a cover; and often a saddle-cover carried by the groom.

[188] Arab. "Sharбb al-tuffбh" = melapio or cider.

[189] Arab. "Mudawwarah," which generally means a small round cushion, of the Marocco-work well known in England. But one does not strike a cushion for a signal, so we must revert to the original-sense of the word "something round," as a circular plate of wood or metal, a gong, a "bell" like that of the Eastern Christians.

[190] Arab. “Тъfбn” (from the root tauf, going round) a storm, a circular gale, a cyclone the term universally applied in Al-lslam to the “Deluge,” the “Flood” of Noah. The word is purely Arabic; with a quaint likeness to the Gr. {Greek letters}, in Pliny typhon, whirlwind, a giant (Typhњus) whence “Typhon” applied to the great Egyptian god “Set.” The Arab word extended to China and was given to the hurricanes which the people call “Tee foong,” great winds, a second whimsical-resemblance. But Sir John Davis (ii. 383) is hardly correct when he says, “the name typhoon, in itself a corruption of the Chinese term, bears a singular (though we must suppose an accidental) resemblance to the Greek {Greek letters}.”

[191] Plurale majestatis acting superlative; not as Lane supposes (ii. 224) “a number of full moons, not only one.” Eastern tongues abound in instances beginning with Genesis (i. 1), “Gods (he) created the heaven,” etc. It is still preserved in Badawi language and a wildling greatly to the astonishment of the citizens will address his friend “Yб Rijбl”= O men!

[192] Arab. “Hбsid” = an envier: in the fourth couplet “Azъl” (Azzбl, etc.) = a chider, blamer; elsewhere “Lawwбm” = accuser, censor, slanderer; “Wбshн,”=whisperer, informer; “Rakib”=spying, envious rival; “Ghбbit”=one emulous without envy; and “Shбmit”= a “blue” (fierce) enemy who rejoices over another’s calamities. Arabic literature abounds in allusions to this unpleasant category of “damned ill-natured friends;” and Spanish and Portuguese letters, including Brazilian, have thoroughly caught the trick. In the Eastern mind the “blamer” would be aided by the “evil eye.”

[193] Another plural for a singular, “O my beloved!”

[194] Arab. “Khayr”=good news, a euphemistic reply even if the tidings be of the worst.

[195] Abbбs (from ‘Abs, being austere; and meaning the “grim faced”) son of Abd al-Muttalib; uncle to Mohammed and eponym of the Abbaside Khalifahs. A.D. 749=1258.

[196] Katнl = the Irish “kilt.”

[197] This hat been explained as a wazirial title of the time.

[198] The phrase is intelligible in all tongues: in Arabic it is opposed to “dark as night,” “black as mud” and a host of unsavoury antitheses.

[199] Arab. “Awwбdah,” the popular word; not Udнyyah as in Night cclvi. “Ud” liter.= rood and “Al-Ud”=the wood is, I have noted, the origin of our ‘lute.” The Span. ‘laud” is larger and deeper than the guitar, and its seven strings are played upon with a plectrum of buffalo-horn.

[200] Arab. “Tabban lahu!”=loss (or ruin) to him. So “bu’dan lahu”=away with him, abeat in malam rem; and “Suhkan lahu”=Allah and mercy be far from him, no hope for him I

[201] Arab. “Бyah”=Koranic verses, sign, miracle.

[202] The mole on cheek calls to prayers for his preservation; and it is black as Bilal the Abyssinian. Fajran may here mean either “A.-morning” or “departing from grace.”

[203] i.e. the young beard (myrtle) can never hope to excel tile beauties of his cheeks (roses).

[204] i.e. Hell and Heaven.

[205] The first couplet is not in the Mac. Edit. (ii. 171) which gives only a single couplet but it is found in the Bres. Edit. which entitles this tale “Story of the lying (or false kбzib) Khalнfah.” Lane (ii. 392) of course does not translate it.

[206] In the East cloth of frieze that mates with cloth of gold must expect this treatment. Fath Ali Shah’s daughters always made their husbands enter the nuptial-bed by the foot end.

[207] This is always done and for two reasons; the first humanity, that

the blow may fall unawares; and, secondly, to prevent the sufferer wincing, which would throw out the headsman.

[208] Arab. “Ma’бni-hб,” lit. her meanings, i.e. her inner woman opposed to the formal-seen by every one.

[209] Described in my Pilgrimage (iii. 168, 174 and 175): it is the stone upon which the Patriarch stood when he built the Ka’abah and is said to show the impress of the feet but unfortunately I could not afford five dollars entrance-fee. Caliph Omar placed the station where it now is; before his time it adjoined the Ka’abah. The meaning of the text is, Be thy court a place of pious visitation, etc. At the “Station of Abraham” prayer is especially blessed and expects to be granted. “This is the place where Abraham stood; and whoever entereth therein shall be safe” (Koran ii. 119). For the other fifteen places where petitions are favourably heard by Heaven see ibid. iii. 211-12.

[210] As in the West, so in the East, women answer an unpleasant question by a counter question.

[211] This “Cry of Haro” often occurs throughout The Nights. In real-life it is sure to colece a crowd. especially if an Infidel (non Moslem) be its cause.

[212] In the East a cunning fellow always makes himself the claimant or complainant.

[213] On the Euphrates some 40 miles west of Baghdad The word is written “Anbбr” and pronounced “Ambбr” as usual with the “n” before “b”; the case of the Greek double Gamma.

[214] Syene on the Nile.

[215] The tale is in the richest Rabelaisian humour; and the requisitions of the “Saj’a” (rhymed prose) in places explain the grotesque combinations. It is difficult to divine why Lane omits it: probably he held a hearty laugh not respectable.

[216] A lawyer of the eighth century, one of the chief pupils of the Imam Abu Hanifah, and Kazi of Baghdad under the third, fourth and fifth Abbasides. The tale is told in the quasi- historical-Persian work “Nig6rist6n” (The Picture gallery), and is repeated by Richardson, Diss. 7, xiii. None seem to have remarked that the distinguished legist, Abu Yusuf, was on this occasion a law-breaker; the Kazi’s duty being to carry out the code not to break it by the tricks of a cunning attorney. In Harun’s day, however, some regard was paid to justice, not under his successors, one of whom, Al-Muktadir bi ‘ll6h (A.H. 295=907), made the damsel Yamika President of the Diw6n al-Maz6lim (Court of the Wronged), a tribunal which took cognizance of tyranny and oppression in high places.

[217] Here the writer evidently forgets that Shahrazad is telling the story to the king, as Boccaccio (ii. 7) forgets that Pamfilo is speaking. Such inconsequences are common in Eastern story-books and a goody-goody sentiment is always heartily received as in an English theatre.

[218] In the Mac. Edit. (ii. 182) “Al-Kushayri.” Al-Kasri was Governor of the two Iraks (I.e. Bassorah and Cufa) in the reign of Al-Hisham, tenth Ommiade (A.D. 723-741)

[219] Arab. “Thakalata k Ummak!” This is not so much a curse as a playful phrase, like “Confound the fellow.” So “K6tala k Allah” (Allah slay thee) and “L6 ab6 lak” (thou hast no father or mother). These words are even complimentary on occasions, as a good shot or a fine recitation, meaning that the praised far excels the rest of his tribe.

[220] Koran, iii. 178.

[221] Arab. “Al-Nis6b”=the minimum sum (about half-a crown) for which mutilation of the hand is prescribed by religious law. The punishment was truly barbarous, it chastised a rogue by means which prevented hard honest labour for the rest of his life.

[222] To show her grief.

[223] Abъ Sa’нd Abd al-Malik bin Kurayb, surnamed Al-Asma’i from his grandfather, flor. A.H. 122-306 (=739-830) and wrote amongst a host of compositions the well-known Romance of Antar. See in D’Herbelot the right royal-directions given to him by Harun al-Rashid.

[224] There are many accounts of his death, but it is generally held that he was first beheaded. The story in the text is also variously told and the Persian “Nig6rist6n” adds some unpleasant comments upon the House of Abbas. The Persians, for reasons which will be explained in the terminal-Essay, show the greatest sympathy with the Barmecides; and abominate the Abbasides even more than the latter detested the Ommiades.

[225] Not written, as the European reader would suppose.

[226] Arab. “Fъl al-h6rr” = beans like horsebeans soaked and boiled as opposed to the “Fъl Mudammas” (esp. of Egypt)=unshelled beans steamed and boiled all night and eaten with linseed oil as “kitchen” or relish. Lane (M.E., chaps. v.) calls them after the debased Cairene pronunciation, Mudemmes. A legend says that, before the days of Pharaoh (always he of Moses), the Egyptians lived on pistachios which made them a witty, lively race. But the tyrant remarking that the domestic ass, which eats beans, is degenerate from the wild ass, uprooted the pistachio-trees and compelled the lieges to feed on beans which made them a heavy, gross, cowardly people fit only for burdens. Badawis deride “beaneaters” although they do not loathe the pulse like onions. The principal-result of a bean diet is an extraordinary development of flatulence both in stomach and intestines: hence possibly, Pythagoras who had studied ceremonial-purity in Egypt, forbade the use, unless he referred to venery or political-business. I was once sitting in the Greek quarter of Cairo dressed as a Moslem when arose a prodigious hubbub of lads and boys, surrounding, a couple of Fellahs. These men had been working in the fields about a mile east of Cairo and, when returning home, one had said to the other, “If thou wilt carry the hoes I will break wind once for every step we take.” He was as good as his word and

when they were to part he cried, “And now for thy bakhshish!” which consisted of a volley of fifty, greatly to the delight of the boys.

[227] No porcelain was ever, as far as we can discover, made in Egypt or Syria of the olden day; but, as has been said, there was a regular caravan-intercourse with China At Damascus I dug into the huge rubbish-heaps and found quantities of pottery, but no China. The same has lately been done at Clysma, the artificial-mound near Suez, and the glass and pottery prove it to have been a Roman work which defended the mouth of the old classical-sweet-water canal.

[228] Arab. “Lб baas ba-zбlik,” conversational-for “Lб jaram”= there is no harm in it, no objection to it, and, sometimes, “it is a matter of course.”

[229] A white emerald is yet unknown; but this adds only to the Oriental-extravagance of the picture. I do not think with Lane (ii. 426) that “abyaz” here can mean “bright.” Dr. Steingass suggests a clerical-error for “khazar” (green).

[230] Arab. “Sharбrif” plur. of Shurrбfah=crenelles or battlements; mostly trefoil-shaped; remparts coquets which a six-pounder would crumble.

[231] Pronounce Abul-Muzaffar=Father of the Conqueror.

[232] I have explained the word in my “Zanzibar, City, Island and Coast,” vol. i. chaps. v There is still a tribe, the Wadoe, reputed cannibal-on the opposite low East African shore These blacks would hardly be held “ sons of Adam.” “Zanj “ corrupted to “Zinj “ (plur Zunъj) is the Persian “Zany” or “Zangi,” a black, altered by the Arabs, who ignore the hard g; and, with the suffixion of the Persian -bбr (region, as in Malabar) we have Zang- bar which the Arabs have converted to “Zanjibar,” in poetry “Murk al-Zunъj”=Land of the Zang. The term is old; it is the Zingis or Zingisa of Ptolemy and the Zingium of Cosmas Indicopleustes; and it shows the influence of Persian navigation in pre-Islamitic ages. For further details readers will consult “The Lake Regions of Central-Africa” vol. i. chaps. ii

[233] Arab. “Kawбrib” plur. of “Kбrib” prop. a dinghy, a small boat belonging to a ship Here it refers to the canoe (a Carib word) pop. “dug-out” and classically “monoxyle,” a boat made of a single tree-trunk hollowed by fire and trimmed with axe and adze. Some of these rude craft which, when manned, remind one of saturnine Caliph Omar’s “worms floating on a log of wood,” measure 60 feet long and more.

[234] i.e. A descendant of Mohammed in general-and especially through Husayn Ali-son. Here the text notes that the chief of the bazar was of this now innumerable stock, who inherit the title through the mother as well as through the father.

[235] Arab. “Hasab” (=quaneity), the honour a man acquires for himself; opposed to “Nasab” (genealogy) honours inherited from ancestry: the Arabic well expresses my old motto (adopted by Chinese Gordon), “Honour, not Honours.”

[236] Note the difference between “Takaddum” (= standing in presence of, also superiority in excellence) and “Takбdum” (priority in time).

[237] Lane (ii. 427) gives a pleasant Eastern illustration of this saying.

[238] A Koranic fancy; the mountains being the pegs which keep the earth in place. “And he hath thrown before the earth, mountains firmly rooted, lest it should move with you.” (Koran, chaps. xvi.) The earth when first created was smooth and thereby liable to a circular motion, like the celestial-orbs; and, when the Angels asked who could stand on so tottering a frame, Allah fixed it the next morning by throwing the mountains in it and pegging them down. A fair prolepsis of the Neptunian theory.

[239] Easy enough for an Englishman to avoid saying “by God,” but this common incident in Moslem folk-lore appeals to the peoples who are constantly using the word Allah Wallah, Billah, etc. The Koran expressly says, “Make not Allah the scope (object, lit. arrow-butt) of your oaths” (chaps. ii. 224), yet the command is broken every minute.

[240] This must be the ubiquitous Khizr, the Green Prophet; when Ali appears, as a rule he is on horseback.

[241] The name is apparently imaginary; and a little below we find that it was close to Jinn land. China was very convenient for this purpose: the medieval-Moslems, who settled in considerable numbers at Canton and elsewhere, knew just enough of it to know their own ignorance of the vast empire. Hence the Druzes of the Libanus still hold that part of their nation is in the depths of the Celestial-Empire.

[242] I am unwilling to alter the old title to “City of Copper” as it should be; the pure metal having been technologically used long before the alloy of copper and zinc. But the Maroccan City (Night dlxvi. et seq.) was of brass (not copper). The Hindus of Upper India have an Iram which they call Hari Chand’s city (Colonel Tod); and I need hardly mention the Fata Morgana, Island of Saint Borondon; Cape Fly-away; the Flying Dutchman, etc. etc., all the effect of “looming.”

[243] This sword which makes men invisible and which takes place of Siegfried’s Tarnkappe (invisible cloak) and of “Fortunatus’ cap” is common in Moslem folk-lore. The idea probably arose from the venerable practice of inscribing the blades with sentences, verses and magic figures.

[244] Arab. “‘Ukбb,” in books an eagle (especially black) and P. N. of constellation but in Pop. usage= a vulture. In Egypt it is the Neophron Percnopterus (Jerdon) or N. Gingianus (Latham), the Dijбjat Far’aun or Pharaoh’s hen. This bird has been known to kill the Bбshah sparrow-hawk (Jerdon i. 60); yet, curious to say, the reviewers of my “Falconry in the Valley of the Indus” questioned the fact, known to so many travellers, that the falcon is also killed by this “tiger of the air,” despite the latter’s feeble bill (p-38). I was faring badly at their hands when the late Mr. Burckhardt Barker came to the rescue. Falconicide is popularly attributed, not only to the vulture, but also to the crestless hawk-eagle (Nisжtus Bonelli) which the Hindus call Morбngб=peacock slayer.

[245] Here I translate "Nahбs"=brass, as the "kumkum" (cucurbite) is made of mixed metal, not of copper.

[246] Mansur al-Nimrн, a poet of the time and a protйgй of Yahya's son, Al-Fazl.

[247] This was at least four times Mansur's debt.

[248] Intendant of the Palace to Harun al-Rashid. The Bres. Edit. (vii. 254) begins They tell that there arose full enmity between Ja'afar Barmecide and a Sahib of Misr" (Wazir or Governor of Egypt). Lane (ii. 429) quotes to this purpose amongst Arab; historians Fakhr al-Din. (De Sacy's Chrestomathie Arabe i., , edit. ii.)

[249] Arab. "Armaнyah" which Egyptians call after their mincing fashion "Irminiyeh" hence "Ermine" (Mus Ponticus). Armaniyah was much more extensive than our Armenia, now degraded to a mere province of Turkey, and the term is understood to include the whole of the old Parthian Empire.

[250] Even now each Pasha-governor must keep a "Wakнl" in Constantinople to intrigue and bribe for him at head-quarters.

[251] The symbol of generosity, of unasked liberality, the "black hand" being that of niggardness.

[252] Arab. Rбh =pure (and old) wine. Arabs, like our classics, usually drank their wine tempered. So Imr al-Keys in his Mu'allakah says, "Bring the well tempered wine that seems to be saffron-tinctured; and, when water-mixed, o'erbrims the cup." (v. 2.)

[253] There is nothing that Orientals relish more than these "goody-goody" preachments; but they read and forget them as readily as Westerns.

[254] Lane (ii. 435) ill-advisedly writes "Sher," as "the word is evidently Persian signifying a Lion." But this is only in the debased Indian dialect, a Persian, especially a Shirazi, pronounces "Shнr."

And this is how it is written in the Bresl. Edit., vii. 262. “Shбr” is evidently a fancy name, possibly suggested by the dynastic name of the Ghurjistan or Georgian Princes.

[255] Again old experience, which has learned at a heavy cost how many a goodly apple is rotten at the core.

[256] This couplet has occurred in Night xxi. I give Torrens () by way of specimen.

[257] Arab. “Zбka” = merely tasting a thing which may be sweet with a bitter after-flavour

[258] This tetraseich was in Night xxx. with a difference.

[259] The lines have occurred in Night xxx. I quote Torrens, .

[260] This tetrastich is in Night clxix. I borrow from Lane (ii. 62).

[261] The rude but effective refrigerator of the desert Arab who hangs his water-skin to the branch of a tree and allows it to swing in the wind.

[262] Arab “Khumбsiyah” which Lane (ii. 438) renders “of quinary stature.” Usually it means five spans, but here five feet, showing that the girl was young and still growing. The invoice with a slave always notes her height in spans measured from ankle-bone to ear and above seven she loses value as being full grown. Hence Sudбsi (fem. Sudбsiyah) is a slave six spans high, the Shibr or full span (9 inches) not the Fitr or short span from thumb to index. Faut is the interval-between every finger, Ratab between index and medius, and Atab between medius and annularis.

[263] “Moon faced” now sounds sufficiently absurd to us, but it was not always so. Solomon (Cant. vi. 10) does not disdain the image “fair as the moon, clear as the sun,” and those who have seen a moon in the sky of Arabia will thoroughly appreciate it. We find it amongst the Hindus, the Persians, the Afghans, the Turks and all the nations of

Europe. We have, finally, the grand example of Spenser,

“Her spacious forehead, like the clearest moon, etc.”

[264] Blue eyes have a bad name in Arabia as in India: the witch Zarkб of Al-Yamamah was noted for them; and “blue eyed” often means “fierce-eyed,” alluding to the Greeks and Daylamites, mortal-enemies to Ishmael. The Arabs say “ruddy of mustachio, blue of eye and black of heart.”

[265] Before explained as used with camphor to fill the dead man’s mouth.

[266] As has been seen, slapping on the neck is equivalent to our “boxing ears,” but much less barbarous and likely to injure the child. The most insulting blow is that with shoe sandal-or slipper because it brings foot in contact with head. Of this I have spoken before.

[267] Arab. “Hibбl” (= ropes) alluding to the A’akбl-fillet which binds the Kъfiyah-kerchief on the Badawi’s head. (Pilgrimage, i. 346.)

[268] Arab. “Khiyбl”; afterwards called Kara Gyuz (= “black eyes,” from the celebrated Turkish Wazir). The mise-en-scиne was like that of Punch, but of transparent cloth, lamp lit inside and showing silhouettes worked by hand. Nothing could be more Fescenntne than Kara Gyuz, who appeared with a phallus longer than himself and made all the Consuls-General-periodically complain of its abuse, while the dialogue, mostly in Turkish, as even more obscene. Most ingenious were Kara Gyuz’s little ways of driving on an Obstinate donkey and of tackling a huge Anatolian pilgrim. He mounted the Neddy’s back face to tail, and inserting his left thumb like a clyster, hammered it with his right when the donkey started at speed. For the huge pilgrim he used a ladder. These shows now obsolete, used to enliven the Ezbekiyah Gardens every evening and explain Ovid’s Words,

“Delicias videam, Nile jocose, tuas!”

[269] Mohammed (Mishk6t al-Mas6bih ii. 360-62) says, “Change the whiteness of your hair but not with anything black.” Abu Bakr, who was two years and some months older than the Prophet, used tincture of Henna and Katam. Old Turkish officers justify black dyes because these make them look younger and fiercer. Henna stains white hair orange red; and the Persians apply after it a paste of indigo leaves, the result is successively leek-green, emerald-green, bottle-green and lastly lamp-black. There is a stage in life (the youth of old age) when man uses dyes: presently he finds that the whole face wants dye; that the contrast between juvenile coloured hair and ancient skin is ridiculous and that it is time to wear white.

[270] This prejudice extends all over the East: the Sanskrit saying is “Kvachit k6n6 bhaveta s6dhus” now and then a monocular is honest. The left eye is the worst and the popular idea is, I have said, that the damage will come by the injured member

[271] The Arabs say like us, “Short and thick is never quick” and “Long and thin has little in.”

[272] Arab. “Ba’azu lay6li,” some night when his mistress failed him.

[273] The fountain in Paradise before noticed.

[274] Before noticed as the Moslem St. Peter (as far as the keys go).

[275] Arab. “Munkasir” = broken, frail, languishing the only form of the maladive allowed. Here again we have masculine for feminine: the eyelids show love-desire, but, etc.

[276] The river of Paradise.

[277] See Night xii. “The Second Kalandar’s Tale “ vol. i. 113.

[278] Lane (ii. 472) refers for specimens of calligraphy to Herbin’s “Dйveloppements, etc.” There are many more than seven styles of writing as I have shown in Night xiii.; vol. i. 129.

[279] Amongst good Moslems this would be a claim upon a man.

[280] These lines have occurred twice already: and first appear in Night xxii. I have borrowed from Mr. Payne (iv. 46).

[281] Arab. “Ya Nasrбni”, the address is not intrinsically slighting but it may easily be made so. I have elsewhere noted that when Julian (is said to have) exclaimed “Vicisti Nazarene!” he was probably thinking in Eastern phrase “Nasarta, yб Nasrбni!”

[282] Thirst is the strongest of all pleas to an Eastern, especially to a Persian who never forgets the sufferings of his Imam, Husayn, at Kerbela: he would hardly withhold it from the murderer of his father. There is also a Hadis, “Thou shalt not refuse water to him who thirsteth in the desert.”

[283] Arab. “Zimmi” which Lane (ii. 474) aptly translates a “tributary.” The Koran (chaps. ix.) orders Unbelievers to Islamize or to “pay tribute by right of subjection” (lit. an yadin=out of hand, an expression much debated). The least tribute is one dinar per annum which goes to the poor-rate. and for this the Kafir enjoys protection and almost all the civil rights of Moslems. As it is a question of “loaves and fishes” there is much to say on the subject; “loaves and fishes” being the main base and foundation of all religious establishments.

[284] This tetrastich has before occurred, so I quote Lane (ii. 444).

[285] In Night xxxv. the same occurs with a difference.

[286] The old rite, I repeat, has lost amongst all but the noblest of Arab tribes the whole of its significance; and the traveller must be careful how he trusts to the phrase “Nahnu mбlihin” we are bound together by the salt.

[287] Arab. “Alбma” = Alб-mб = upon what ? wherefore ?

[288] Arab. “Mauz”; hence the Linnean name Musa (paradisiaca, etc.).

The word is explained by Sale (Koran, chaps. xxxvii. 146) as “a small tree or shrub;” and he would identify it with Jonah’s gourd.

[289] Lane (ii. 446) “bald wolf or empowered fate,” reading (with Mac.) Kazб for Kattan (cat).

[290] i.e. “the Orthodox in the Faith.” Rбshid is a proper name, witness that scourge of Syria, Rбshid Pasha. Born in 1830, of the Haji Nazir Agha family, Darrah-Beys of Macedonian Draina, he was educated in Paris where he learned the usual-hatred of Europeans: he entered the Egyptian service in 1851, and, presently exchanging it for the Turkish, became in due time Wali (Governor-General) of Syria which he plundered most shamelessly. Recalled in 1872, he eventually entered the Ministry and on June 15 1876, he was shot down, with other villains like himself, by gallant Captain Hasan, the Circassian (Yarham-hu ‘llбh !).

[291] Quoted from a piece of verse, of which more presently.

[292] This tetrastich has occurred before (Night cxciii.). I quote Lane (ii. 449), who quotes Dryden’s Spanish Friar,

> “There is a pleasure sure in being mad
> Which none but madmen know.”

[293] Lane (ii. 449) gives a tradition of the Prophet, “Whoso is in love, and acteth chastely, and concealeth (his passion) and dieth, dieth a martyr.” Sakar is No. 5 Hell for Magi Guebres, Parsis, etc., it is used in the comic Persian curse, “Fi’n-nбri wa Sakar al-jadd w’al-pidar”=In Hell and Sakar his grandfather and his father.

[294] Arab. “Sifr”: I have warned readers that whistling is considered a kind of devilish speech by the Arabs, especially the Badawin, and that the traveller must avoid it. It savours of idolatry: in the Koran we find (chaps. viii. 35), “Their prayer at the House of God (Ka’abah) is none other than whistling and hand-clapping;” and tradition says that they whistled through their fingers. Besides many of the Jinn have only round holes by way of mouths and their speech is whistling a

kind of bird language like sibilant English.

[295] Arab. ‘Kнl wa kбl”=lit. “it was said and he said;” a popular phrase for chit chat, tittle-tattle, prattle and prate, etc.

[296] Arab. “Hadis.” comparing it with a tradition of the
Prophet.

[297] Arab. “Mikashshah,” the thick part of a midrib of a palm-frond soaked for some days in water and beaten out till the fibres separate. It makes an exceedingly hard, although not a lasting broom.

[298] Persian, “the youth, the brave;” Sansk. Yuvбn: and Lat. Juvenis. The Kurd, in tales, is generally a sturdy thief; and in real-life is little better.

[299] Arab. “Yб Shatir ;” lit. O clever one (in a bad sense).

[300] Lane (ii. 453) has it. “that I may dress thy hair’” etc.
This is Bowdlerising with a witness.

[301] The sign of respect when a personage dismounts.
(Pilgrimage i. 77.)

[302] So the Hindus speak of “the defilement of separation” as if it were an impurity.

[303] Lane (i. 605) gives a long and instructive note on these public royal-banquets which were expected from the lieges by Moslem subjects. The hanging-penalty is, perhaps, a tattle exaggerated; but we find the same excess in the priestly Gesta Romanorum.

[304] Had he eaten it he would have become her guest. Amongst the older Badawin it was sufficient to spit upon a man (in entreaty) to claim his protection: so the horse-thieves when caught were placed in a hole in the ground covered over with matting to prevent this happening. Similarly Saladin (Salбh al-Din) the chivalrous would not order a cup of water for the robber, Reynald de Chвtillon, before

putting him to death

[305] Arab. “Kishk” properly “Kashk”=wheat-meal-coarsely ground and eaten with milk or broth. It is de rigueur with the Egyptian Copts on the “Friday of Sorrow” (Good Friday): and Lane gives the recipe for making it (M. E. chaps. xxvi.)

[306] In those days distinctive of Moslems.

[307] The euphemism has before been noticed: the Moslem reader would not like to pronounce the words “I am a Nazarene.” The same formula occurs a little lower down to save the reciter or reader from saying “Be my wife divorced,” etc.

[308] Arab, “Hбjj,” a favourite Egyptianism. We are wrong to write Hajji which an Eastern would pronounce Hбj-jн.

[309] This is Cairene “chaff.”

[310] Whose shell fits very tight.

[311] His hand was like a raven’s because he ate with thumb and two fingers and it came up with the rice about it like a camel’s hoof in dirty ground. This refers to the proverb (Burckhardt, 756), “He comes down a crow-claw (small) and comes up a camel-hoof (huge and round).”

[312] Easterns have a superstitious belief in the powers of food: I knew a learned man who never sat down to eat without a ceremonious salam to his meat.

[313] Lane (ii. 464), uses the vile Turkish corruption “Rustum,” which, like its fellow “Rustem,” would make a Persian shudder.

[314] Arab. “Darrij” i.e. let them slide (Americanicи).

[315] This tetrastich has occurred before: so I quote Mr. Payne (in loco).

316 Shaykh of Al-Butnah and Jбbiyah, therefore a Syrian of the Hauran near Damascus and grandson to Isъ (Esau). Arab mystics (unlike the vulgar who see only his patience) recognise that inflexible integrity which refuses to utter "words of wind" and which would not, against his conscience, confess to wrong-doing merely to pacify the Lord who was stronger than himself. The Classics taught this noble lesson in the case of Prometheus versus Zeus. Many articles are called after Job e.g. Ra'arб' Ayyub or Ghubayrб (inula Arabica and undulata), a creeper with which he rubbed himself and got well: the Copts do the same on "Job's Wednesday," i.e. that before Whit Sunday O.S. Job's father is a nickname of the camel, etc. etc.

317 Lane (in loco) renders "I am of their number." But "fн al-siyбk" means popularly "(driven) to the point of death."

318 Lit. = "pathway, road"; hence the bridge well known as "finer than a hair and sharper than a sword," over which all (except Khadijah and a chosen few) must pass on the Day of Doom; a Persian apparatus bodily annexed by Al-Islam. The old Guebres called it Puli Chinбvar or Chinбvad and the Jews borrowed it from them as they did all their fancies of a future life against which Moses had so gallantly fought. It is said that a bridge over the grisly "brook Kedron" was called Sirбt (the road) and hence the idea, as that of hell-fire from Ge-Hinnom (Gehenna) where children were passed through the fire to Moloch. A doubtful Hadis says, "The Prophet declared Al-Sirбt to be the name of a bridge over hell- fire, dividing Hell from Paradise" (p, 122, Reynold's trans. of Al-Siyuti's Traditions, etc.). In Koran i. 5, "Sirat" is simply a path, from sarata, he swallowed, even as the way devours (makes a lakam or mouthful of) those who travel it. The word was orig. written with Sнn but changed for easier articulation to Sбd, one of the four Hurъf al-Mutabbakбt, "the flattened," formed by the broadened tongue in contact with the palate. This Sad also by the figure Ishmбm (=conversion) turns slightly to a Zб, the intermediate between Sin and Sad.

319 The rule in Turkey where catamites rise to the highest rank: C'est

un homme de bonne famille (said a Turkish officer in Egypt) il a йтй achetй. Hence “Alfi” (one who costs a thousand) is a well-known cognomen. The Pasha of the Syrian caravan, with which I travelled’ had been the slave of a slave and he was not a solitary instance. (Pilgrimage i. 90.)

[320] The device of the banquet is dainty enough for any old Italian novella; all that now comes is pure Egyptian polissonnerie speaking to the gallery and being answered by roars of laughter.

[321] i.e. “art thou ceremonially pure and therefore fit for handling by a great man like myself?”

[322] In past days before Egypt was “frankified” many overlanders used to wash away the traces of travel by a Turkish bath which mostly ended in the appearance of a rump wriggling little lad who offered to shampoo them. Many accepted his offices without dreaming of his usual-use or misuse.

[323] Arab. “Imбm.” This is (to a Moslem) a most offensive comparison between prayer and car. cop.

[324] Arab. “Fi zaman-hi,” alluding to a peculiarity highly prized by Egyptians; the use of the constrictor vaginж muscles, the sphincter for which Abyssinian women are famous. The “Kabbбzah” (= holder), as she is called, can sit astraddle upon a man and can provoke the venereal-orgasm, not by wriggling and moving but by tightening and loosing the male member with the muscles of her privities, milking it as it were. Consequently the cassenoisette costs treble the money of other concubines. (Arranga-Ranga, .)

[325] The little eunuchs had evidently studied the Harem.

[326] Lane (ii. 494) relates from Al-Makrizi, that when Khamбrawayh, Governor of Egypt (ninth century), suffered from insomnia, his physician ordered a pool of quicksilver 50 by 50 cubits, to be laid out in front of his palace, now the Rumaylah square. “At the corners of the pool were silver pegs, to which were attached by silver rings

strong bands of silk, and a bed of skins, inflated with air, being thrown upon the pool and secured by the bands remained in a continual-state of agreeable vacillation." We are not told that the Prince was thereby salivated like the late Colonel Sykes when boiling his mercury for thermometric experiments,

[327] The name seems now unknown. "Al-Khahн'a" is somewhat stronger than "Wag," meaning at least a "wicked wit." Properly it is the Span. "perdido," a youth cast off (Khala') by his friends; though not so strong a term as "Harfъsh"=a blackguard.

[328] Arab. "Farsakh"=parasang.

[329] Arab. "Nahбs asfar"=yellow copper, brass as opposed to Nahбs ahmar=copper The reader who cares to study the subject will find much about it in my "Book of The Sword," chaps. iv.

[330] Lane (ii. 479) translates one stanza of this mukhammas (pentastich) and speaks of "five more," which would make six.

[331] A servile name. Delicacy, Elegance.

[332] These verses have occurred twice (Night ix. etc.): so I give Lane's version (ii. 482).

[333] A Badawi tribe to which belonged the generous Ma'an bin Za'idab, often mentioned The Nights.

[334] Wealthy harems, I have said, are hot-beds of Sapphism and Tribadism. Every woman past her first youth has a girl whom she calls her "Myrtle" (in Damascus). At Agbome, capital-of Dahome, I found that a troop of women was kept for the use of the "Amazons" (Mission to Gelele, ii. 73). Amongst the wild Arabs, who ignore Socratic and Sapphic perversions, the lover is always more jealous of his beloved's girl-friends than of men rivals. In England we content ourselves with saying that women corrupt women more than men do.

[335] The Hebrew Pentateuch; Roll of the Law.

336 I need hardly notice the brass trays, platters and table-covers with inscriptions which are familiar to every reader: those made in the East for foreign markets mostly carry imitation inscriptions lest infidel eyes fall upon Holy Writ.

337 These six distichs are in Night xiii. I borrow Torrens () to show his peculiar treatment of spinning out 12 lines to 38.

338 Arab. “Musбmirah”=chatting at night. Easterns are inordinately fond of the practice and the wild Arabs often sit up till dawn, talking over the affairs of the tribe, indeed a Shaykh is expected to do so. “Early to bed and early to rise” is a civilised, not a savage or a barbarous saying. Samнr is a companion in night talk; Rafнk of the road; Rahнb in riding horse or camel, Kб’id in sitting, Sharнb and Rafнs at drink, and Nadнm at table: Ahнd is an ally. and Sharнk a partner all on the model of “Fa’нl.”

339 In both lover and beloved the excess of love gave them this clairvoyance.

340 The prayer will be granted for the excess (not the purity) of her love.

341 This wailing over the Past is one of the common-places of Badawi poetry. The traveller cannot fail, I repeat, to notice the chronic melancholy of peoples dwelling under the brightest skies.

342 Moons=Budъr

343 in Paradise as a martyr.

344 i.e. to intercede for me in Heaven; as if the young woman were the prophet.

345 The comparison is admirable as the two letters are written. It occurs in Al-Hariri (Ass. of Ramlah).

“So I embraced him close as Lбm cleaves to Alif:”

And again;

> "She laid aside reluctance and I embraced her close
> As if I were Lam and my love Alif."

The Lomad Olaph in Syriac is similarly colligated.

[346] Here is a double entendre "and the infirm letters (viz. a, w and y) not subject to accidence, left him." The three make up the root "Awi"=pitying, condoling.

[347] Showing that consummation had taken place. It was a sign of good breeding to avoid all "indecent hurry" when going to bed. In some Moslem countries the bridegroom does not consummate the marriage for seven nights; out of respect for (1) father (2) mother (3) brother and so forth. If he hurry matters he will be hooted as an "impatient man" and the wise will quote, "Man is created of precipitation" (Koran chaps. xxi. 38), meaning hasty and inconsiderate. I remark with pleasure that the whole of this tale is told with commendable delicacy. O si sic omnia!

[348] Pers. "Nauroz"(=nau roz, new day):here used in the Arab. plur.'Naw6riz, as it lasted six days. There are only four: universal-festivals; the solstices and the equinoxes; and every successive religion takes them from the sun and perverts them to its own private purposes. Lane (ii. 496) derives the venerable Nauroz whose birth is hid in the outer glooms of antiquity from the "Jewish Passover"(!)

[349] Again the "babes" of the eyes.

[350] i.e. whose glance is as the light of the glowing braise or (embers). The Arab. "Mikb6s"=pan or pot full of small charcoal, is an article well known in Italy and Southern Europe. The word is apparently used here because it rhymes with "Anf6s" (souls, spirits).

[351] i.e. martyrdom; a Koranic term "fi sabнli 'llahi" = on the way of Allah

[352] These rhymes in -y, -ee and -ie are purposely affected, to imitate the cadence of the Arabic.

[353] Arab. “Sujъd,” the ceremonial-prostration, touching the ground with the forehead So in the Old Testament “he bowed (or fell down) and worshipped” (Gen. xxiv., 26 Mat. ii., 11), of which our translation gives a wrong idea.

[354] A girl is called “Alfiyyah “ = A-shaped.

[355] i.e. the medial-form of m.

[356] i.e. the inverted n.

[357] It may also mean a “Sevignй of pearls.”

[358] Koran xxvii. 12. This was one of the nine “signs” to wicked “Pharaoh.” The “hand of Moses” is a symbol of power and ability (Koran vii. 105). The whiteness was supernatural-beauty, not leprosy of the Jews (Exod. iv. 6); but brilliancy, after being born red or black: according to some commentators, Moses was a negro.

[359] Koran iii. 103; the other faces become black. This explains I have noticed the use of the phrases in blessing and cursing.

[360] Here we have the naked legend of the negro’s origin, one of those nursery tales in which the ignorant of Christendom still believe But the deduction from the fable and the testimony to the negro’s lack of intelligence, though unpleasant to our ignorant negrophils, are factual-and satisfactory.

[361] Koran, xcii. 1, 2: an oath of Allah to reward and punish with Heaven and Hell.

[362] Alluding to the “black drop” in the heart: it was taken from Mohammed’s by the Archangel Gabriel. The fable seems to have arisen from the verse ‘ Have we not opened thy breast?” (Koran, chaps. xciv. 1). The popular tale is that Halнmah, the Badawi nurse

of Mohammed, of the Banu Sa'ad tribe, once saw her son, also a child, running towards her and asked him what was the matter. He answered, 'My little brother was seized by two men in white who stretched him on the ground and opened his bellyl" For a full account and deductions see the Rev. Mr. Badger's article, "Muhammed" () in vol. in. "Dictionary of Christian Biography."

[363] Arab. "Sumr," lit. brown (as it is afterwards used), but politely applied to a negro: "Yб Abu Sumrah!" O father of brownness.

[364] Arab. 'Lumб"=dark hue of the inner lips admired by the Arabs and to us suggesting most umpleasant ideas. Mr. Chenery renders it "dark red,' and "ruddy" altogether missing the idea.

[365] Arab. "Saudб," feminine of aswad (black), and meaning black bile (melancholia) as opposed to leucocholia,

[366] i.e. the Magians, Sabians, Zoroastrians.

[367] The "Unguinum fulgor" of the Latins who did not forget to celebrate the shining of the nails although they did not Henna them like Easterns. Some, however, have suggested that alludes to colouring matter.

[368] Women with white skins are supposed to be heating and unwholesome: hence the Hindu Rajahs slept with dark girls in the hot season.

[369] Moslems sensibly have a cold as well as a hot Hell, the former called Zamharir (lit. "intense cold")or AI-Barahъt, after a well in Hazramaut; as Gehenna (Arab. "Jahannam") from the furnace-like ravine East of Jerusalem (Night cccxxv.). The icy Hell is necessary in terrorem for peoples who inhabit cold regions and who in a hot Hell only look forward to an eternity of "coals and candles" gratis. The sensible missionaries preached it in Iceland till foolishly forbidden by Papal-Bull.

[370] Koran ii. 26; speaking of Abraham when he entertained the angels

unawares.

[371] Arab. “Rakb,” usually applied to a fast-going caravan of dromedary riders (Pilgrimage ii. 329). The “Cafilah” is Arab.: “Caravan” is a corruption of the Pers. “Karwбn.”

[372] A popular saying. It is interesting to contrast this dispute between fat and thin with the Shakespearean humour of Falstaff and Prince Henry.

[373] Arab. “Dalak” vulg. Hajar al-Hammam (Hammam-stone). The comparison is very apt: the rasps are of baked clay artificially roughened (see illustrations in Lane M. E. chaps. xvi.). The rope is called “Masad,” a bristling line of palm-fibre like the coir now familiarly known in England.

[374] Although the Arab’s ideal-of beauty, as has been seen and said, corresponds with ours the Egyptians (Modern) the Maroccans and other negrofied races like “walking tun-butts” as Clapperton called his amorous widow.

[375] Arab. “Khayzar” or “Khayzarбn” the rattan-palm. Those who have seen this most graceful “palmijuncus” in its native forest will recognize the neatness of the simile.

[376] This is the popular idea of a bushy “veil of nature” in women: it is always removed by depilatories and vellication. When Bilkis Queen of Sheba discovered her legs by lifting her robe (Koran xxvii.), Solomon was minded to marry her, but would not do so till the devils had by a depilatory removed the hair. The popular preparation (called Nъrah) consists of quicklime 7 parts, and Zirnнk or orpiment, 3 parts: it is applied in the Hammam to a perspiring skin, and it must be washed off immediately the hair is loosened or it burns and discolours. The rest of the body-pile (Sha’arat opp. to Sha’ar=hair) is eradicated by applying a mixture of boiled honey with turpentine or other gum, and rolling it with the hand till the hair comes off. Men I have said remove the pubes by shaving, and pluck the hair of the arm-pits, one of the vestiges of pre-Adamite man. A good depilatory

is still a desideratum, the best perfumers of London and Paris have none which they can recommend. The reason is plain: the hair bulb can be eradicated only by destroying the skin.

[377] Koran, ii. 64: referring to the heifer which the Jews were ordered to sacrifice,

[378] Arab. “kallб,” a Koranic term possibly from Kull (all) and lб (not) =prorsus non-altogether not!

[379] “Habбb” or “Habб,” the fine particles of dust, which we call motes. The Cossid (Arab. “Kбsid”) is the Anglo-Indian term for a running courier (mostly under Government), the Persian “Shбtir” and the Guebre Rбvand.

[380] Arab. “Sambari” a very long thin lance so called after Samhar, the maker, or the place of making. See vol. ii. . It is supposed to cast, when planted in the ground, a longer shadow in proportion to its height, than any other thing of the kind.

[381] Arab. “Sulбfah ;” properly prisane which flows from the grapes before pressure. The plur. “Sawбlif” also means tresses of hair and past events: thus there is a “triple entendre.” And again “he” is used for “she.”

[382] There is a pun in the last line, “Khбlun (a mole) khallauni” (rid me), etc.

[383] Of old Fustбt, afterwards part of Southern Cairo, a proverbially miserable quarter hence the saying, “They quoted Misr to Kбhirah (Cairo), whereon Bab al-Luk rose with its grass,” in derision of nobodies who push themselves forward. Burckhardt, Prov. 276.

[384] Its fruits are the heads of devils; a true Dantesque fancy. Koran, chaps. xvii. 62, “the tree cursed in the Koran” and in chaps. xxxvii., 60, “is this better entertainment, or the tree of Al-Zakkъm?” Commentators say that it is a thorn bearing a bitter almond which grows in the Tehamah and was therefore promoted to Hell.

[385] Arab. “Lasm” (lathm) as opposed to Bausah or boseh (a buss) and Kublah (a kiss,

[386] Arab. “Jufъn” (plur. of Jafn) which may mean eyebrows or eyelashes and only the context can determine which. [387] Very characteristic of Egyptian manners is the man who loves six girls equally well, who lends them, as it were, to the Caliph; and who takes back the goods as if in no wise damaged by the loan.

[388] The moon is masculine possibly by connection with the Assyrian Lune-god “Sin”; but I can find no cause for the Sun (Shams) being feminine.

[389] Arab. “Al-Amin,” a title of the Prophet. It is usually held that this proud name “The honest man,” was applied by his fellow-citizens to Mohammed in early life; and that in his twenty-fifth year, when the Eighth Ka’abah was being built, it induced the tribes to make him their umpire concerning the distinction of placing in position the “Black Stone” which Gabriel had brought from Heaven to be set up as the starting-post for the seven circuitings. He distributed the honour amongst the clans and thus gave universal satisfaction. His Christian biographers mostly omit to record an anecdote which speaks so highly in Mohammed’s favour. (Pilgrimage iii. 192.)

[390] The idea is that Abu Nowas was a thought-reader such being the prerogative of inspired poets in the East. His drunkenness and debauchery only added to his power. I have already noticed that “Allah strike thee dead” (Кбtala-k Allah) is like our phrase “Confound the fellow, how clever he is.”

[391] Again said facetiously, “Devil take you!”

[392] In all hot-damp countries it is necessary to clothe dogs, morning and evening especially: otherwise they soon die of rheumatism and loin disease.

[393] =Beatrice. A fragment of these lines is in Night cccxv.
See also Night dcclxxxi.

[394] The Moslems borrowed the horrible idea of a "jealous God" from their kinsmen, the Jews. Every race creates its own Deity after the fashion of itself: Jehovah is distinctly a Hebrew, the Christian Theos is originally a Judжo-Greek and Allah a half-Badawi Arab. In this tale Allah, despotic and unjust, brings a generous and noble-minded man to beggary, simply because he fed his dogs off gold plate. Wisdom and morality have their infancy and youth: the great value of such tales as these is to show and enable us to measure man's development.

[395] In Trйbutien (Lane ii. 501) the merchant says to ex-Dives, "Thou art wrong in charging Destiny with injustice. If thou art ignorant of the cause of thy ruin I will acquaint thee with it. Thou feddest the dogs in dishes of gold and leftest the poor to die of hunger." A superstition, but intelligible.

[396] Arab. "Sarrбf" = a money changer.

[397] Arab. "Birkah," a common feature in the landscapes of Lower Egypt: it is either a natural-pool left by the overflow of the Nile; or, as in the text, a built-up tank, like the "Tбlбb" for which India is famous. Sundry of these Birkahs are or were in Cairo itself; and some are mentioned in The Nights.

[398] This sneer at the "military" and the "police" might come from an English convict's lips.

[399] Lit. "The conquering King;" a dynastic title assumed by Salбh al-Dнn (Saladin) and sundry of the Ayyъbi (Eyoubite) sovereigns of Egypt, whom I would call the "Soldans."

[400] "Kбhirah" (i.e. City of Mars the Planet) is our Cairo: Bulak is the port suburb on the Nile, till 1858 wholly disjoined from the City; and Fostat is the outlier popularly called Old Cairo. The latter term is generally translated "town of leathern tents;" but in Arabic "fustбt" is an abode of Sha'ar=hair, such as horse-hair, in fact any hair but "Wabar"=soft hair, as the camel's. See Lane, Lex.

[401] Arab. “Adl”=just: a legal-witness to whose character there is no tangible objection a prime consideration in Moslem law. Here “Adl” is evidently used ironically for a hypocritical-rascal

[402] Lane (ii. 503) considers three thousand dinars (the figure in the Bres. Edit.) “a more probable sum.” Possibly: but, I repeat, exaggeration is one of the many characteristics of The Nights.

[403] Calc. Edit. “Kazir:” the word is generally written
“KazdНr,” Sansk. Kastira, born probably from the Greek .

[404] This would have passed for a peccadillo in the “good old days.” As late as 1840 the Arnaut soldiers used to “pot” any peasant who dared to ride (instead of walking) past their barracks. Life is cheap in hot countries.

[405] Koran, xii. 46 — a passage expounding the doctrine of free will: “He who doth right doth it to the advantage of his own soul; and he who doth evil, doth it against the same; for thy Lord,” etc.

[406] Arab. “Suffah”; whence our Sofa. In Egypt it is a raised shelf generally of stone, about four feet high and headed with one or more arches. It is an elaborate variety of the simple “Тбk” or niche, a mere hollow in the thickness of the wall. Both are used for such articles as basin. ewer and soap; coffee cups, water bottles etc.

[407] In Upper Egypt (Apollinopolis Parva) pronounced “Goos,” the Coptic Kos-Birbir, once an emporium of the Arabian trade.

[408] This would appeal strongly to a pious Moslem.

[409] i.e. “the father of a certain person”; here the merchant whose name may have been Abu’l Hasan, etc. The useful word (thingumbob, what d’ye call him, donchah, etc.) has been bodily transferred into Spanish and Portuguese Fulano. It is of old genealogy, found in the Heb. FulunН which applies to a person only in Ruth iv. I, but is constantly so employed by Rabbinic writers. The Greek use {Greek letters}.

[410] Lit. “by his (i.e. her) hand,” etc. Hence Lane (ii. 507) makes nonsense of the line.

[411] Arab. “Badrah,” as has been said, is properly a weight of 10,000 dirhams or drachmas; but popularly used for largesse thrown to the people at festivals.

[412] Arab. “Allaho A’alam”; (God knows!) here the popular phrase for our, “I know not;” when it would be rude to say bluntly “M’adri”= “don’t know.”

[413] There is a picturesque Moslem idea that good deeds become incarnate and assume human shapes to cheer the doer in his grave, to greet him when he enters Paradise and so forth. It was borrowed from the highly imaginative faith of the Guebre, the Zoroastrian. On Chinavad or Chanyud-pul (Sirбt), the Judgement bridge, 37 rods (rasan) long, straight and 37 fathoms broad for the good, and crooked and narrow as sword-edge for the bad, a nymph-like form will appear to the virtuous and say, “I am the personification of thy good deeds!” In Hell there will issue from a fetid gale a gloomy figure with head like a minaret, red eyeballs, hooked nose, teeth like pillars, spear-like fangs, snaky locks etc. and when asked who he is he will reply, “I am the personification of thine evil acts!” (Dabistan i. 285.) The Hindus also personify everything.

[414] Arab. “Banъ Israнl;” applied to the Jews when theirs was the True Faith i.e. before the coming of Jesus, the Messiah, whose mission completed that of Moses and made it obsolete (Matrъk) even as the mission of Jesus was completed and abrogated by that of Mohammed. The term “Yahъd”=Jew is applied scornfully to the Chosen People after they rejected the Messiah, but as I have said “Israelite” is used on certain occasions, Jew on others.

[415] Arab. “Kasa’ah,” a wooden bowl, a porringer; also applied to a saucer.

[416] Arab. “Rasъl”=one sent, an angel, an “apostle;” not to be translated, as by the vulgar, “prophet.” Moreover Rasul is higher than

Nabнн (prophet), such as Abraham, Isaac, etc., depositaries of Al-Islam, but with a succession restricted to their own families. Nabi-mursil (Prophet-apostle) is the highest of all, one sent with a book: of these are now only four, Moses, David, Jesus and Mohammed, the writings of the rest having perished. In Al-Islam also angels rank below men, being only intermediaries (= , nuncii, messengers) between the Creator and the Created. This knowledge once did me a good turn at Harar, not a safe place in those days. (First Footsteps in East Africa, .)

417 A doctor of law in the reign of Al-Maamun.

418 Here the exclamation is= D.V.; and it may be assumed generally to have that sense.

419 Arab. "Taylasбn," a turban worn hood-fashion by the "Khatнb" or preacher. I have sketched it in my Pilgrimage and described it (iii. 315). Some Orientalists derive Taylasan from Atlas=satin, which is peculiarly inappropriate. The word is apparently barbarous and possibly Persian like Kalansuwah, the Dervish cap. "Thou son of a Taylasбn"=a barbarian. (De Sacy, Chrest. Arab. ii. 269.)

420 Arab. " Kinyah" vulg. "Kunyat" = patronymic or matronymic; a name beginning with "Abu" (father) or with "Umm" (mother). There are so few proper names in Al-Islam that such surnames, which, as will be seen, are of infinite variety, become necessary to distinguish individuals. Of these sobriquets I shall give specimens further on.

421 "Whoso seeth me in his sleep, seeth me truly; for Satan cannot assume my semblance," said (or is said to have said) Mohammed. Hence the vision is true although it comes in early night and not before dawn. See Lane M. E., chaps. ix.

422 Arab. "Al-Maukab ;" the day when the pilgrims march out of the city; it is a holiday for all, high and low.

423 "The Gate of Salutation ;" at the South-Western corner of the Mosque where Mohammed is buried. (Pilgrimage ii. 60 and plan.)

Here “Visitation” (Ziyбrah) begins.

[424] The tale is told by Al-Ishбki in the reign of Al-Maamun.

[425] The speaker in dreams is the Heb. “Waggid,” which the learned and angry Graetz (Geschichte, etc. vol. ix.) absurdly translates “Traum souffleur.”

[426] Tenth Abbaside. A.D. 849-861

[427] Arab. “Muwallad” (fem. “Muwalladah”); a rearling, a slave born in a Moslem land. The numbers may appear exaggerated, but even the petty King of Ashanti had, till the last war, 3333 “wives.”

[428] The Under-prefect of Baghdad.

[429] “Ja’afar,” our old Giaffar (which is painfully like “Gaffer,” i.e. good father) means either a rushing river or a rivulet.

[430] A regular Fellah’s name also that of a village
(Pilgrimage i. 43) where a pleasant story is told about one Haykal.

[431] The “Mountain” means the rocky and uncultivated ground South of Cairo, such as Jabal-al-Ahmar and the geological-sea-coast flanked by the old Cairo-Suez highway.

[432] A popular phrase=our “sharp as a razor.”

[433] i.e. are men so few; a favourite Persian phrase.

[434] She is a woman of rank who would cause him to be assassinated.

[435] This is not Al-Hakimbi’ Amri’llah the famous or infamous founder of the Druze ((Durъz)) faith and held by them to be, not an incarnation of the Godhead, but the Godhead itself in propriв personв, who reigned A.D. 926-1021: our Hakim is the orthodox Abbaside Caliph of Egypt who dated from two centuries after him (A.D. 1261). Had the former been meant, it would have thrown back this part of The Nights to an earlier date than is generally accepted.

But in a place still to come I shall again treat of the subject.

[436] For an account of a similar kind which was told to me during the last few years see “Midian Revisited,” i. 15. These hiding-places are innumerable in lands of venerable antiquity like Egypt; and, if there were any contrivance for detecting hidden treasure, it would make the discoverer many times a millionaire.

[437] i.e. it had been given to him or his in writing, like the book left to the old woman before quoted in “Midian,” etc.

[438] Arab. “Kird” (pron. in Egypt “Gird”). It is usually the hideous Abyssinian cynocephalus which is tamed by the ape-leader popularly called Kuraydati (Lane, M.E., chaps. xx.). The beast has a natural-penchant for women ; I heard of one which attempted to rape a girl in the public street and was prevented only by a sentinel’s bayonet. They are powerful animals and bite like greyhounds.

[439] Easterns attribute many complaints (such as toothache) to worms, visible as well as microscopic, which may be held a fair prolepsis of the “germ-theory” the bacterium. the bacillus, the microbe. Nymphomania, the disease alluded to in these two tales is always attributed to worms in the vagina.

[440] Bestiality, very rare in Arabia is fatally common amongst those most debauched of debauched races, the Egyptian proper and the Sindis. Hence the Pentateuch, whose object was to breed a larger population of fighting men, made death the penalty for lying with a beast (Deut. xxvii. 21). C. S. Sonnini (Travels, English translation,) gives a curious account of Fellah lewdness. “The female crocodile during congress is turned upon her back (?) and cannot rise without difficulty. Will it be believed that there are men who take advantage of the helpless situation of the female, drive off the male, and supplant him in this frightful intercourse ? Horrible embraces, the knowledge of which was wanting to complete the disgusting history of human perversity!” The French traveller forgets to add the superstitious explanation of this congress which is the sovereignest

charm for rising to rank and riches. The Ajбib al-Hind tells a tale (chaps. xxxix.) of a certain Mohammed bin Bullishad who had issue by a she-ape: the young ones were hairless of body and wore quasi-human faces; and the father's sight had become dim by his bestial-practice.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

VOLUME V.

To Doctor George Bird.

My Dear Bird, This is not a strictly medical work, although in places treating of subjects which may modestly be called hygienic. I inscribe it to you because your knowledge of Egypt will enable you to appreciate its finer touches; and for another and a yet more cogent reason, namely, that you are one of my best and oldest friends.

Ever yours sincerely,
Richard F. Burton
Athenζum Club, October 20, 1885.

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The Ebony Horse

THE EBONY HORSE.[1]

There was once in times of yore and ages long gone before, a great and puissant King, of the Kings of the Persians, Sαbïr by name, who was the richest of all the Kings in store of wealth and dominion and surpassed each and every in wit and wisdom. He was generous, open handed and beneficent, and he gave to those who sought him and repelled not those who resorted to him; and he comforted the broken-hearted and honourably entreated those who fled to him for refuge. Moreover, he loved the poor and was hospitable to strangers and did the oppressed justice upon the oppressor. He had three daughters, like full moons of shining light or flower-gardens blooming bright; and a son as he were the moon; and it was his wont to keep two festivals in the twelve- month, those of the Nau-Roz, or New Year, and Mihrgαn the Autumnal Equinox,[2] on which occasions he threw open his palaces and gave largesse and made proclamation of safety and security and promoted his chamberlains and viceroys; and the people of his realm came in to him and saluted him and gave him joy of the holy day, bringing him gifts and servants and eunuchs. Now he loved science and geometry, and one festival-day as he sat on his kingly throne there came in to him three wise men, cunning artificers and past masters in all manner of craft and inventions, skilled in making things curious and rare, such as confound the wit; and versed in the knowledge of occult truths and perfect in mysteries and subtleties. And they were of three different tongues and countries, the first a Hindi or Indian,[3] the second a Roumi or Greek and the third a Farsi or Persian. The Indian came forwards and, prostrating himself before the King, wished him joy of the festival and laid before him a present befitting his dignity; that is to say, a man of gold, set with precious gems and jewels of price and hending in hand a golden trumpet. When Sabur[4] saw this, he asked, "O sage, what is the virtue of this figure?"; and the Indian answered, "O my lord, if this figure be set at the gate of thy city, it will be a guardian over it; for, in an enemy enter the place, it will blow this clarion against him and he will be seized with a palsy and drop down dead.” Much the King marvelled at this and cried, “By Allah, O sage, an this thy word be true, I will grant thee thy wish and thy desire.” Then came forward the Greek and, prostrating himself before the King, presented him with a basin of silver, in whose midst was a peacock of gold, surrounded by four-and-twenty chicks of the same metal. Sabur looked at them and turning to the Greek, said to him, “O sage, what is the virtue of this peacock?” “O my lord,” answered he, “as often as an hour of the day or night passeth, it pecketh one of its young and crieth out and flappeth its wings, till the four-and-twenty hours are accomplished; and when the month cometh to an end, it will open its mouth and thou shalt see the crescent therein.” And the King said, “An thou speak sooth, I will bring thee to thy wish and thy desire.” Then came forward the Persian sage and, prostrating himself before the King, presented him with a horse[5] of the blackest ebony-wood inlaid with gold and jewels, and ready harnessed with saddle, bridle and stirrups such as befit Kings; which when Sabur saw, he marvelled with exceeding marvel and was confounded at the beauty of its form and the ingenuity of its fashion. So he asked, “What is the use of this horse of wood, and what is its virtue and what the secret of its movement?”; and the Persian answered, “O my lord, the virtue of this horse is that, if one mount him, it will carry him whither he will and fare with its rider through the air and cover the space of a year in a single day.” The King marvelled and was amazed at these three wonders, following thus hard upon one another on the same day, and turning to the sage, said to him, “By Allah the Omnipotent, and our Lord the Beneficent, who created all creatures and feedeth them with meat and drink, an thy speech be veritable and the virtue of thy contrivance appear, I will assuredly give thee whatsoever thou lustest for and will bring thee to thy desire and thy wish!”[6] Then he entertained the sages three days, that he might make trial of their gifts; after which they brought the figures before him and each took the creature he had wroughten and showed him the mystery of its movement. The trumpeter blew the trump; the peacock pecked its chicks and the Persian sage mounted the ebony house, whereupon it soared with him high in air and descended again. When King Sabur saw all this, he was amazed and perplexed and felt like to fly for joy and said to the three sages, “Now I am certified of the truth of your words and it behoveth me to quit me of my promise. Ask ye, therefore, what ye will, and I will give you that same.” Now the report of the King’s daughters had reached the sages, so they answered, “If the King be content with us and accept of our gifts and allow us to prefer a request to him, we crave of him that he give us his three daughters in marriage, that we may be his sons-in-law; for that the stability of Kings may not be gainsaid.” Quoth the King, “I grant you that which you wish and you desire,” and bade summon the Kazi forthright, that he might marry each of the sages to one of his daughters. Now it fortuned that the Princesses were behind a curtain, looking on; and when they heard this, the youngest considered her husband to be and behold, he was an old man,[7] an hundred years of age, with hair frosted, forehead drooping, eyebrows mangy, ears slitten, beard and mustachios stained and dyed; eyes red and goggle; cheeks bleached and hollow; flabby nose like a brinjall, or egg- plant[8] ; face like a cobbler’s apron, teeth overlapping and lips like camel’s kidneys, loose and pendulous; in brief a terror, a horror, a monster, for he was of the folk of his time the unsightliest and of his age the frightfullest; sundry of his grinders had been knocked out and his eye-teeth were like the tusks of the Jinni who frighteneth poultry in hen-houses. Now the girl was the fairest and most graceful of her time, more elegant than the gazelle however tender, than the gentlest zephyr blander and brighter than the moon at her full; for amorous fray right suitable; confounding in graceful sway the waving bough and outdoing in swimming gait the pacing roe; in fine she was fairer and sweeter by far than all her sisters. So, when she saw her suitor, she went to her chamber and strewed dust on her head and tore her clothes and fell to buffeting her face and weeping and wailing. Now the Prince, her brother, Kamar al-Akmar, or the Moon of Moons hight, was then newly returned from a journey and, hearing her weeping and crying came in to her (for he loved her with fond affection, more than his other sisters) and asked her, “What aileth thee? What hath befallen thee? Tell me and conceal naught from me.” So she smote her breast and answered, “O my brother and my dear one, I have nothing to hide. If the palace be straitened upon thy father, I will go out; and if he be resolved upon a foul thing, I will separate myself from him, though he consent not to make provision for me; and my Lord will provide." Quoth he, "Tell me what meaneth this talk and what hath straitened thy breast and troubled thy temper." "O my brother and my dear one," answered the Princess, "Know that my father hath promised me in marriage to a wicked magician who brought him, as a gift, a horse of black wood, and hath bewitched him with his craft and his egromancy; but, as for me, I will none of him, and would, because of him, I had never come into this world!" Her brother soothed her and solaced her, then fared to his sire and said, "What be this wizard to whom thou hast given my youngest sister in marriage, and what is this present which he hath brought thee, so that thou hast killed[9] my sister with chagrin? It is not right that this should be." Now the Persian was standing by and, when he heard the Prince's words, he was mortified and filled with fury and the King said, "O my son, an thou sawest this horse, thy wit would be confounded and thou wouldst be amated with amazement." Then he bade the slaves bring the horse before him and they did so; and, when the Prince saw it, it pleased him. So (being an accomplished cavalier) he mounted it forthright and struck its sides with the shovel-shaped stirrup-irons; but it stirred not and the King said to the Sage, "Go show him its movement, that he also may help thee to win thy wish." Now the Persian bore the Prince a grudge because he willed not he should have his sister; so he showed him the pin of ascent on the right side of the horse and saying to him, "Trill this," left him. Thereupon the Prince trilled the pin and lo! the horse forthwith soared with him high in ether, as it were a bird, and gave not overflying till it disappeared from men's espying, whereat the King was troubled and perplexed about his case and said to the Persian, "O sage, look how thou mayest make him descend." But he replied, "O my lord, I can do nothing, and thou wilt never see him again till Resurrection-day, for he, of his ignorance and pride, asked me not of the pin of descent and I forgot to acquaint him therewith." When the King heard this, he was enraged with sore rage; and bade bastinado the sorcerer and clap him in jail, whilst he himself cast the crown from his head and beat his face and smote his breast. Moreover, he shut the doors of his palaces and gave himself up to weeping and keening, he and his wife and daughters and all the folk of the city; and thus their joy was turned to annoy and their gladness changed into sore affliction and sadness. Thus far concerning them; but as regards the Prince, the horse gave not over soaring with him till he drew near the sun, whereat he gave himself up for lost and saw death in the skies, and was confounded at his case, repenting him of having mounted the horse and saying to himself, "Verily, this was a device of the Sage to destroy me on account of my youngest sister; but there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! I am lost without recourse; but I wonder, did not he who made the ascent-pin make also a descent-pin?" Now he was a man of wit and knowledge and intelligence; so he fell to feeling all the parts of the horse, but saw nothing save a screw, like a cock's head, on its right shoulder and the like on the left, when quoth he to himself, "I see no sign save these things like buttons." Presently he turned the right-hand pin, whereupon the horse flew heavenwards with increased speed. So he left it and looking at the sinister shoulder and finding another pin, he wound it up and immediately the steed's upwards motion slowed and ceased and it began to descend, little by little, towards the face of the earth, while the rider became yet more cautious and careful of his life. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Fifty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Prince wound up the sinister screw, the steed's upward motion slowed and ceased, and it began to descend, little by little, towards the earth while the rider became yet more cautious and careful of his life. And when he saw this and knew the uses of the horse, his heart was filled with joy and gladness and he thanked Almighty Allah for that He had deigned deliver him from destruction. Then he began to turn the horse's head whithersoever he would, making it rise and fall at pleasure, till he had gotten complete mastery over its every movement. He ceased not to descend the whole of that day, for that the steed's ascending flight had borne him afar from the earth; and, as he descended, he diverted himself with viewing the various cities and countries over which he passed and which he knew not, never having seen them in his life. Amongst the rest, he descried a city ordered after the fairest fashion in the midst of a verdant and riant land, rich in trees and streams, with gazelles pacing daintily over the plains; whereat he fell a-musing and said to himself, "Would I knew the name of yon town and in what land it is!" And he took to circling about it and observing it right and left. By this time, the day began to decline and the sun drew near to its downing; and he said in his mind, "Verily I find no goodlier place to night in than this city; so I will lodge here and early on the morrow I will return to my kith and kin and my kingdom; and tell my father and family what hath passed and acquaint him with what mine eyes have seen." Then he addressed himself to seeking a place wherein he might safely bestow himself and his horse and where none should descry him, and presently behold, he espied a-middlemost of the city a palace rising high in upper air surrounded by a great wall with lofty crenelles and battlements, guarded by forty black slaves, clad in complete mail and armed with spears and swords, bows and arrows. Quoth he, "This is a goodly place," and turned the descent-pin, whereupon the horse sank down with him like a weary bird, and alighted gently on the terrace-roof of the palace. So the Prince dismounted and ejaculating "Alhamdolillah" — praise be to Allah[10] — he began to go round about the horse and examine it, saying, "By Allah, he who fashioned thee with these perfections was a cunning craftsman, and if the Almighty extend the term of my life and restore me to my country and kinsfolk in safety and reunite me with my father, I will assuredly bestow upon him all manner bounties and benefit him with the utmost beneficence." By this time night had overtaken him and he sat on the roof till he was assured that all in the palace slept; and indeed hunger and thirst were sore upon him, for that he had not tasted food nor drunk water since he parted from his sire. So he said within himself, "Surely the like of this palace will not lack of victual;" and, leaving the horse above, went down in search of somewhat to eat. Presently, he came to a staircase and descending it to the bottom, found himself in a court paved with white marble and alabaster, which shone in the light of the moon. He marvelled at the place and the goodliness of its fashion, but sensed no sound of speaker and saw no living soul and stood in perplexed surprise, looking right and left and knowing not whither he should wend. Then said he to himself, "I may not do better than return to where I left my horse and pass the night by it; and as soon as day shall dawn I will mount and ride away." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Fifty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth the king's son to himself, "I may not do better than pass the night by my horse; and as soon as day shall dawn I will mount and ride away." However, as he tarried talking to himself, he espied a light within the palace, and making towards it, found that it came from a candle that stood before a door of the Harim, at the head of a sleeping eunuch, as he were one of the Ifrits of Solomon or a tribesman of the Jinn, longer than lumber and broader than a bench. He lay before the door, with the pommel of his sword gleaming in the flame of the candle, and at his head was a bag of leather[11] hanging from a column of granite. When the Prince saw this, he was affrighted and said, "I crave help from Allah the Supreme! O mine Holy One, even as Thou hast already delivered me from destruction, so vouchsafe me strength to quit myself of the adventure of this palace!" So saying, he put out his hand to the budget and taking it, carried it aside and opened it and found in it food of the best. He ate his fill and refreshed himself and drank water, after which he hung up the provision-bag in its place and drawing the eunuch's sword from its sheath, took it, whilst the slave slept on, knowing not whence destiny should come to him. Then the Prince fared forwards into the palace and ceased not till he came to a second door, with a curtain drawn before it; so he raised the curtain and behold, on entering he saw a couch of the whitest ivory, inlaid with pearls and jacinths and jewels, and four slave-girls sleeping about it. He went up to the couch, to see what was thereon, and found a young lady lying asleep, chemised with her hair[12] as she were the full moon rising[13] over the Eastern horizon, with flower-white brow and shining hair-paring and cheeks like blood-red anemones and dainty moles thereon. He was amazed at her as she lay in her beauty and loveliness, her symmetry and grace, and he recked no more of death. So he went up to her, trembling in every nerve and, shuddering with pleasure, kissed her on the right cheek; whereupon she awoke forthright and opened her eyes, and seeing the Prince standing at her head, said to him, "Who art thou and whence comest thou?" Quoth he, "I am thy slave and thy lover." Asked she, "And who brought thee hither?" and he answered, "My Lord and my fortune." Then said Shams al-Nahar[14] (for such was her name), "Haply thou art he who demanded me yesterday of my father in marriage and he rejected thee, pretending that thou wast foul of favour. By Allah, my sire lied in his throat when he spoke this thing, for thou art not other than beautiful." Now the son of the King of Hind had sought her in marriage, but her father had rejected him, for that he was ugly and uncouth, and she thought the Prince was he. So, when she saw his beauty and grace (for indeed he was like the radiant moon) the syntheism[15] of love gat hold of her heart as it were a flaming fire, and they fell to talk and converse. Suddenly, her waiting-women awoke and, seeing the Prince with their mistress, said to her, "Oh my lady, who is this with thee?" Quoth she, "I know not; I found him sitting by me, when I woke up: haply 'tis he who seeketh me in marriage of my sire." Quoth they, "O my lady, by Allah the All-Father, this is not he who seeketh thee in marriage, for he is hideous and this man is handsome and of high degree. Indeed, the other is not fit to be his servant."[16] Then the handmaidens went out to the eunuch, and finding him slumbering awoke him, and he started up in alarm. Said they, "How happeth it that thou art on guard at the palace and yet men come in to us, whilst we are asleep?" When the black heard this, he sprang in haste to his sword, but found it not; and fear took him and trembling. Then he went in, confounded, to his mistress and seeing the Prince sitting at talk with her, said to him, "O my lord, art thou man or Jinni?" Replied the Prince, "Woe to thee, O unluckiest of slaves: how darest thou even the sons of the royal Chosroes[17] with one of the unbelieving Satans?" And he was as a raging lion. Then he took the sword in his hand and said to the slave, "I am the King's son-in-law, and he hath married me to his daughter and bidden me go in to her." And when the eunuch heard these words he replied, "O my lord, if thou be indeed of kind a man as thou avouchest, she is fit for none but for thee, and thou art worthier of her than any other." Thereupon the eunuch ran to the King, shrieking loud and rending his raiment and heaving dust upon his head; and when the King heard his outcry, he said to him, "What hath befallen thee?: speak quickly and be brief; for thou hast fluttered my heart." Answered the eunuch, "O King, come to thy daughter's succour; for a devil of the Jinn, in the likeness of a King's son, hath got possession of her; so up and at him!" When the King heard this, he thought to kill him and said, "How camest thou to be careless of my daughter and let this demon come at her?" Then he betook himself to the Princess's palace, where he found her slave-women standing to await him and asked them, "What is come to my daughter?" "O King," answered they, "slumber overcame us and, when we awoke, we found a young man sitting upon her couch in talk with her, as he were the full moon; never saw we aught fairer of favour than he. So we questioned him of his case and he declared that thou hadst given him thy daughter in marriage. More than this we know not, nor do we know if he be a man or a Jinni; but he is modest and well bred, and doth nothing unseemly or which leadeth to disgrace." Now when the King heard these words, his wrath cooled and he raised the curtain little by little and looking in, saw sitting at talk with his daughter a Prince of the goodliest with a face like the full moon for sheen. At this sight he could not contain himself, of his jealousy for his daughter's honour; and, putting aside the curtain, rushed in upon them drawn sword in hand like a furious Ghul. Now when the Prince saw him he asked the Princess, "Is this thy sire?"; and she answered, "Yes." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Sixtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Price saw the King rushing in upon them, drawn sword in hand, like a furious Ghul he asked the Princess, "Is this thy sire?"; and she answered, "Yes." Whereupon he sprang to his feet and, seizing his sword, cried out at the King with so terrible a cry that he was confounded. Then the youth would have fallen on him with the sword; but the King seeing that the Prince was doughtier than he, sheathed his scymitar and stood till the young man came up to him, when he accosted him courteously and said to him, "O youth, art thou a man or a Jinni?" Quoth the Prince, "Did I not respect thy right as mine host and thy daughter's honour, I would spill thy blood! How darest thou fellow me with devils, me that am a Prince of the sons of the royal Chosroes who, had they wished to take thy kingdom, could shake thee like an earthquake from thy glory and thy dominions and spoil thee of all thy possessions?” Now when the King heard his words, he was confounded with awe and bodily fear of him and rejoined, “If thou indeed be of the sons of the Kings, as thou pretendest, how cometh it that thou enterest my palace without my permission, and smirchest mine honour, making thy way to my daughter and feigning that thou art her husband and claiming that I have given her to thee to wife, I that have slain Kings and Kings’ sons, who sought her of me in marriage? And now who shall save thee from my might and majesty when, if I cried out to my slaves and servants and bade them put thee to the vilest of deaths they would slay thee forthright? Who shall deliver thee out of my hand?” When the Prince heard this speech of the King he answered, “Verily, I wonder at thee and at the shortness and denseness of thy wit! Say me, canst covet for thy daughter a mate comelier than myself, and hast ever seen a stouter hearted man or one better fitted for a Sultan or a more glorious in rank and dominion than I?” Rejoined the King, “Nay, by Allah! but I would have had thee, O youth, act after the custom of Kings and demand her from me to wife before witnesses, that I might have married her to thee publicly; and now, even were I to marry her to thee privily, yet hast thou dishonoured me in her person.” Rejoined the Prince, “Thou sayest sooth, O King, but if thou summon thy slaves and thy soldiers and they fall upon me and slay me, as thou pretendest, thou wouldst but publish thine own disgrace, and the folk would be divided between belief in thee and disbelief in thee. Wherefore, O King, thou wilt do well, meseemeth, to turn from this thought to that which I shall counsel thee.” Quoth the King, “Let me hear what thou hast to advise;” and quoth the Prince, “What I have to propose to thee is this: either do thou meet me in combat singular, I and thou; and he who slayeth his adversary shall be held the worthier and having a better title to the kingdom; or else, let me be this night and, whenas dawns the morn, draw out against me thy horsemen and footmen and servants; but first tell me their number.” Said the King, “They are forty thousand horse, beside my own slaves and their followers,[18] who are the like of them in number.” Thereupon said the Prince, “When the day shall break, do thou array them against me and say to them” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Sixty-first Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth the Prince, “When day shall break, do thou array them against me and say to them: ‘This man is a suitor to me for my daughter’s hand, on condition that he shall do battle single-handed against you all; for he pretendeth that he will overcome you and put you to the rout, and indeed that ye cannot prevail against him.’ After which, leave me to do battle with them: if they slay me, then is thy secret surer guarded and thine honour the better warded; and if I overcome them and see their backs, then is it the like of me a King should covet to his son-in-law.” So the King approved of his opinion and accepted his proposition, despite his awe at the boldness of his speech and amaze at the pretensions of the Prince to meet in fight his whole host, such as he had described to him, being at heart assured that he would perish in the fray and so he should be quit of him and freed from the fear of dishonour. Thereupon he called the eunuch and bade him go to his Wazir without stay and delay and command him to assemble the whole of the army and cause them don their arms and armour and mount their steeds. So the eunuch carried the King’s order to the Minister, who straightaway summoned the Captains of the host and the Lords of the realm and bade them don their harness of derring-do and mount horse and sally forth in battle array. Such was their case; but as regards the King, he sat a long while conversing with the young Prince, being pleased with his wise speech and good sense and fine breeding. And when it was day-break he returned to his palace and, seating himself on his throne, commanded his merry men to mount and bade them saddle one of the best of the royal steeds with handsome selle and housings and trappings and bring it to the Prince. But the youth said, “O King, I will not mount horse, till I come in view of the troops and review them.” “Be it as thou wilt,” replied the King. Then the two repaired to the parade-ground, where the troops were drawn up, and the young Prince looked upon them and noted their great number; after which the King cried out to them, saying, “Ho, all ye men, there is come to me a youth who seeketh my daughter in marriage; and in very sooth never have I seen a goodlier than he; no, nor a stouter of heart nor a doughtier of arm, for he pretendeth that he can overcome you, single-handed, and force you to flight and that, were ye an hundred thousand in number, yet for him would ye be but few. Now when he chargeth down on you, do ye receive him upon point of pike and sharp of sabre; for, indeed, he hath undertaken a mighty matter." Then quoth the King to the Prince, "Up, O my son, and do thy devoir on them." Answered he, "O King, thou dealest not justly and fairly by me: how shall I go forth against them, seeing that I am afoot and the men be mounted?" The King retorted, "I bade thee mount, and thou refusedst; but choose thou which of my horses thou wilt." Then he said, "Not one of thy horses pleaseth me, and I will ride none but that on which I came." Asked the King, "And where is thy horse?" "Atop of thy palace." "In what part of my palace?" "On the roof." Now when the King heard these words, he cried, "Out on thee! this is the first sign thou hast given of madness. How can the horse be on the roof? But we shall at once see if thou speak the truth or lies." Then he turned to one of his chief officers and said to him, "Go to my palace and bring me what thou findest on the roof." So all the people marvelled at the young Prince's words, saying one to other, "How can a horse come down the steps from the roof? Verily this is a thing whose like we never heard." In the meantime the King's messenger repaired to the palace and mounting to the roof, found the horse standing there and never had he looked on a handsomer; but when he drew near and examined it, he saw that it was made of ebony and ivory. Now the officer was accompanied by other high officers, who also looked on and they laughed to one another, saying, "Was it of the like of this horse that the youth spake? We cannot deem him other than mad; however, we shall soon see the truth of his case." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Sixty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the high officials looked upon the horse, they laughed one to other and said, "Was it of the like of his horse that the youth spake? We cannot deem him other than mad; however, we shall soon see the truth of his case. Peradventure herein is some mighty matter, and he is a man of high degree." Then they lifted up the horse bodily and, carrying it to the King, set it down before him, and all the lieges flocked round to look at it, marvelling at the beauty of its proportions and the richness of its saddle and bridle. The King also admired it and wondered at it with extreme wonder; and he asked the Prince, "O youth, is this thy horse?" He answered, "Yes, O King, this is my horse, and thou shalt soon see the marvel it showeth." Rejoined the King, "Then take and mount it," and the Prince retorted, "I will not mount till the troops withdraw afar from it." So the King bade them retire a bowshot from the horse; whereupon quoth its owner, "O King, see thou; I am about to mount my horse and charge upon thy host and scatter them right and left and split their hearts asunder." Said the King, "Do as thou wilt; and spare not their lives, for they will not spare thine." Then the Prince mounted, whilst the troops ranged themselves in ranks before him, and one said to another, "When the youth cometh between the ranks, we will take him on the points of our pikes and the sharps of our sabres." Quoth another, "By Allah, this a mere misfortune: how shall we slay a youth so comely of face and shapely of form?" And a third continued, "Ye will have hard work to get the better of him; for the youth had not done this, but for what he knew of his own prowess and pre- eminence of valour." Meanwhile, having settled himself in his saddle, the Prince turned the pin of ascent; whilst all eyes were strained to see what he would do, whereupon the horse began to heave and rock and sway to and fro and make the strangest of movements steed ever made, till its belly was filled with air and it took flight with its rider and soared high into the sky. When the King saw this, he cried out to his men, saying, "Woe to you! catch him, catch him, ere he 'scape you!" But his Wazirs and Viceroys said to him, "O King, can a man overtake the flying bird? This is surely none but some mighty magician or Marid of the Jinn or devil, and Allah save thee from him. So praise thou the Almighty for deliverance of thee and of all thy host from his hand." Then the King returned to his palace after seeing the feat of the Prince and, going in to his daughter, acquainted her with what had befallen them both on the parade-ground. He found her grievously afflicted for the Prince and bewailing her separation from him; wherefore she fell sick with violent sickness and took to her pillow. Now when her father saw her on this wise, he pressed her to his breast and kissing her between the eyes, said to her, "O my daughter, praise Allah Almighty and thank

Him for that He hath delivered us from this crafty enchanter, this villain, this low fellow, this thief who thought only of seducing thee!” And he repeated to her the story of the Prince and how he had disappeared in the firmament; and he abused him and cursed him knowing not how dearly his daughter loved him. But she paid no heed to his words and did but redouble in her tears and wails, saying to herself, “By Allah, I will neither eat meat nor drain drink, till Allah reunite me with him!” Her father was greatly concerned for her case and mourned much over her plight; but, for all he could do to soother her, love-longing only increased on her. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King mourned much over his daughter’s plight but, for all he could do to soothe her, love-longing only increased on her. Thus far concerning the King and Princess Shams al-Nahαr; but as regards Prince Kamar al-Akmar, when he had risen high in air, he turned his horse’s head towards his native land, and being alone mused upon the beauty of the Princess and her loveliness. Now he had enquired of the King’s people the name of the city and of its King and his daughter; and men had told him that it was the city of Sana’α.[19] So he journeyed with all speed, till he drew near his father’s capital and, making an airy circuit about the city, alighted on the roof of the King’s palace, where he left his horse, whilst he descended into the palace and seeing its threshold strewn with ashes, though that one of his family was dead. Then he entered, as of wont, and found his father and mother and sisters clad in mourning raiment of black, all pale of faces and lean of frames. When his sire descried him and was assured that it was indeed his son, he cried out with a great cry and fell down in a fit, but after a time coming to himself, threw himself upon him and embraced him, clipping him to his bosom and rejoicing in him with exceeding joy and extreme gladness. His mother and sisters heard this; so they came in and seeing the Prince, fell upon him, kissing him and weeping, and joying with exceeding joyance. Then they questioned him of his case; so he told them all that had passed from first to last, and his father said to him, “Praised be Allah for thy safety, O coolth of my eyes and core of my heart!” Then the King bade hold high festival, and the glad tidings flew through the city. So they beat drums and cymbals and, doffing the weed of mourning, they donned the gay garb of gladness and decorated the streets and markets; whilst the folk vied with one another who should be the first to give the King joy, and the King proclaimed a general pardon and opening the prisons, released those who were therein prisoned. Moreover, he made banquets for the people, with great abundance of eating and drinking, for seven days and nights and all creatures were gladsomest; and he took horse with his son and rode out with him, that the folk might see him and rejoice. After awhile the Prince asked about the maker of the horse, saying, "O my father, what hath fortune done with him?"; and the King answered, "Allah never bless him nor the hour wherein I set eyes on him! For he was the cause of thy separation from us, O my son, and he hath lain in gaol since the day of thy disappearance." Then the King bade release him from prison and, sending for him, invested him in a dress of satisfaction and entreated him with the utmost favour and munificence, save that he would not give him his daughter to wife; whereat the Sage raged with sore rage and repented of that which he had done, knowing that the Prince had secured the secret of the steed and the manner of its motion. Moreover, the King said to his son, "I reck thou wilt do will not to go near the horse henceforth and more especially not to mount it after this day; for thou knowest not its properties, and belike thou art in error about it." Not the Prince had told his father of his adventure with the King of Sana'a and his daughter and he said, "Had the King intended to kill thee, he had done so; but thine hour was not yet come." When the rejoicings were at an end, the people returned to their places and the King and his son to the palace, where they sat down and fell to eating and drinking and making merry. Now the King had a handsome handmaiden who was skilled in playing the lute; so she took it and began to sweep the strings and sing thereto before the King and his son of separation of lovers, and she chanted the following verses: —

"Deem not that absence breeds in me aught of forgetfulness; *
    What should remember I did you fro' my remembrance wane?
Time dies but never dies the fondest love for you we bear; *

And in your love I’ll die and in your love I’ll arise
again.”[20]

When the Prince heard these verses, the fires of longing flamed up in his heart and pine and passion redoubled upon him. Grief and regret were sore upon him and his bowels yearned in him for love of the King’s daughter of Sana’a; so he rose forthright and, escaping his father’s notice, went forth the palace to the horse and mounting it, turned the pin of ascent, whereupon bird-like it flew with him high in air and soared towards the upper regions of the sky. In early morning his father missed him and, going up to the pinnacle of the palace, in great concern, saw his son rising into the firmament; whereat he was sore afflicted and repented in all penitence that he had not taken the horse and hidden it; and he said to himself, “By Allah, if but my son return to me, I will destroy the horse, that my heart may be at rest concerning my son.” And he fell again to weeping and bewailing himself. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Sixty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King again fell to weeping and bewailing himself for his son. Such was his case; but as regards the Prince, he ceased not flying on through air till he came to the city of Sana’a and alighted on the roof as before. Then he crept down stealthily and, finding the eunuch asleep, as of wont, raised the curtain and went on little by little, till he came to the door of the Princess’s alcove-[21] chamber and stopped to listen; when lo! he heard her shedding plenteous tears and reciting verses, whilst her women slept round her. Presently, overhearing her weeping and wailing quoth they, “O our mistress, why wilt thou mourn for one who mourneth not for thee?” Quoth she, “O ye little of wit, is he for whom I mourn of those who forget or who are forgotten?” And she fell again to wailing and weeping, till sleep overcame her. Hereat the Prince’s heart melted for her and his gall-bladder was like to burst, so he entered and, seeing her lying asleep without covering,[22] touched her with his hand; whereupon she opened her eyes and espied him standing by her. Said he, “Why all this crying and mourning?” And when she knew him, she threw herself upon him, and took him around the neck and kissed him and answered, “For thy sake and because of my separation from thee.” Said he, “O my lady, I have been made desolate by thee all this long time!” But she replied, “’Tis thou who hast desolated me; and hadst thou tarried longer, I had surely died!” Rejoined he, “O my lady, what thinkest thou of my case with thy father and how he dealt with me? Were it not for my love of thee, O temptation and seduction of the Three Worlds, I had certainly slain him and made him a warning to all beholders; but, even as I love thee, so I love him for thy sake.” Quoth she, “How couldst thou leave me: can my life be sweet to me after thee?” Quoth he, “Let what hath happened suffice: I am now hungry, and thirsty.” So she bade her maidens make ready meat and drink, and they sat eating and drinking and conversing till night was well nigh ended; and when day broke he rose to take leave of her and depart, ere the eunuch should awake. Shams al-Nahar asked him, “Whither goest thou?”; and he answered, “To my father’s house, and I plight thee my troth that I will come to thee once in every week.” But she wept and said, “I conjure thee, by Allah the Almighty, take me with thee whereso thou wendest and make me not taste anew the bittergourd[23] of separation from thee.” Quoth he, “Wilt thou indeed go with me?” and quoth she, “Yes.” “Then,” said he, “arise that we depart.” So she rose forthright and going to a chest, arrayed herself in what was richest and dearest to her of her trinkets of gold and jewels of price, and she fared forth, her handmaids recking naught. So he carried her up to the roof of the palace and, mounting the ebony horse, took her up behind him and made her fast to himself, binding her with strong bonds; after which he turned the shoulder-pin of ascent, and the horse rose with him high in air. When her slave-women saw this, they shrieked aloud and told her father and mother, who in hot haste ran to the palace-roof and looking up, saw the magical horse flying away with the Prince and Princess. At this the King was troubled with ever-increasing trouble and cried out, saying, “O King’s son, I conjure thee, by Allah, have ruth on me and my wife and bereave us not of our daughter!” The Prince made him no reply; but, thinking in himself that the maiden repented of leaving father and mother, asked her, “O ravishment of the age, say me, wilt thou that I restore thee to thy mother and father?”: whereupon she answered, “By Allah, O my lord, that is not my desire: my only wish is to be with thee, wherever thou art; for I am distracted by the love of thee from all else, even from my father and mother." Hearing these words the Prince joyed with great joy, and made the horse fly and fare softly with them, so as not to disquiet her; nor did they stay their flight till they came in sight of a green meadow, wherein was a spring of running water. Here they alighted and ate and drank; after which the Prince took horse again and set her behind him, binding her in his fear for her safety; after which they fared on till they came in sight of his father's capital. At this, the Prince was filled with joy and bethought himself to show his beloved the seat of his dominion and his father's power and dignity and give her to know that it was greater than that of her sire. So he set her down in one of his father's gardens without the city where his parent was wont to take his pleasure; and, carrying her into a domed summer-house prepared there for the King, left the ebony horse at the door and charged the damsel keep watch over it, saying, "Sit here, till my messenger come to thee; for I go now to my father, to make ready a palace for thee and show thee my royal estate." She was delighted when she heard these words and said to him, "Do as thou wilt;" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the maiden was delighted when she heard these words and said to him, "Do as thou wilt;" for she thereby understood that she should not enter the city but with due honour and worship, as became her rank. Then the Prince left her and betook himself to the palace of the King his father, who rejoiced in his return and met him and welcomed him; and the Prince said to him, "Know that I have brought with me the King's daughter of whom I told thee; and have left her without the city in such a garden and come to tell thee, that thou mayst make ready the procession of estate and go forth to meet her and show her thy royal dignity and troops and guards." Answered the King, "With joy and gladness"; and straightaway bade decorate the town with the goodliest adornment. Then he took horse and rode out in all magnificence and majesty, he and his host, high officers and household, with drums and kettle-drums, fifes and clarions and all manner instruments; whilst the Prince drew forth of his treasuries jewellery and apparel and what else of the things which Kings hoards and made a rare display of wealth and splendour: moreover he got ready for the Princess a canopied litter of brocades, green, red and yellow, wherein he set Indian and Greek and Abyssinian slave- girls. Then he left the litter and those who were therein and preceded them to the pavilion where he had set her down; and searched but found naught, neither Princess nor horse. When he saw this, he beat his face, and rent his raiment and began to wander round about the garden, as he had lost his wits; after which he came to his senses and said to himself, "How could she have come at the secret of this horse, seeing I told her nothing of it? Maybe the Persian sage who made the horse hath chanced upon her and stolen her away, in revenge for my father's treatment of him." Then he sought the guardians of the garden and asked them if they had seen any pass the precincts; and said, "Hath any one come in here? Tell me the truth and the whole truth or I will at once strike off your heads." They were terrified by his threats; but they answered with one voice, "We have seen no man enter save the Persian sage, who came to gather healing herbs." So the Prince was certified that it was indeed he that had taken away the maiden, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Sixty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Prince heard their answer, he was certified that the Sage had taken away the maiden and abode confounded and perplexed concerning his case. And he was abashed before the folk and, turning to his sire, told him what had happened and said to him, "Take the troops and march them back to the city. As for me, I will never return till I have cleared up this affair." When the King heard this, he wept and beat his breast and said to him, "O my son, calm thy choler and master thy chagrin and come home with us and look what King's daughter thou wouldst fain have, that I may marry thee to her." But the Prince paid no heed to his words and farewelling him departed, whilst the King returned to the city and their joy was changed into sore annoy. Now, as Destiny issued her decree, when the Prince left the Princess in the garden-house and betook himself to his father's palace, for the ordering of his affair, the Persian entered the garden to pluck certain simples and, scenting the sweet savour of musk and perfumes that exhaled from the Princess and impregnated the whole place, followed it till he came to the pavilion and saw standing at the door the horse which he had made with his own hands. His heart was filled with joy and gladness, for he had bemourned its loss much since it had gone out of his hand: so he went up to it and, examining its every part, found it whole and sound; whereupon he was about to mount and ride away, when he bethought himself and said, "Needs must I first look what the Prince hath brought and left here with the horse." So he entered the pavilion and, seeing the Princess sitting there, as she were the sun shining sheen in the sky serene, knew her at the first glance to be some high-born lady and doubted not but the Prince had brought her thither on the horse and left her in the pavilion, whilst he went to the city, to make ready for her entry in state procession with all splendor. Then he went up to her and kissed the earth between her hands, whereupon she raised her eyes to him and, finding him exceedingly foul of face and favour, asked, "Who art thou?"; and he answered, "O my lady, I am a messenger sent by the Prince who hath bidden me bring thee to another pleasance nearer the city; for that my lady the Queen cannot walk so far and is unwilling, of her joy in thee, that another should forestall her with thee." Quoth she, "Where is the Prince?"; and quoth the Persian, "He is in the city, with his sire and forthwith he shall come for thee in great state." Said she, "O thou! say me, could he find none handsomer to send to me?"; whereat loud laughed the Sage and said, "Yea verily, he hath not a Mameluke as ugly as I am; but, O my lady, let not the ill-favour of my face and the foulness of my form deceive thee. Hadst thou profited of me as hath the Prince, verily thou wouldst praise my affair. Indeed, he chose me as his messenger to thee, because of my uncomeliness and loathsomeness in his jealous love of thee; else hath he Mamelukes and negro slaves, pages, eunuchs and attendants out of number, each goodlier than other." Whenas she heard this, it commended itself to her reason and she believed him; so she rose forthright; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Persian sage acquainted the Princess with the case of the King's son, she believed him; so she rose forthright; and, putting her hand in his, said, "O my father, what hast thou brought me to ride?" He replied, "O my lady, thou shalt ride the horse thou camest on;" and she, "I cannot ride it by myself." Whereupon he smiled and knew that he was her master and said, "I will ride with thee myself." So he mounted and, taking her up behind him bound her to himself with firm bonds, while she knew not what he would with her. Then he turned the ascent-pin, whereupon the belly of the horse became full of wind and it swayed to and fro like a wave of the sea, and rose with them high in air nor slackened in its flight, till it was out of sight of the city. Now when Shams al-Nahir saw this, she asked him, "Ho thou! what is become of that thou toldest me of my Prince, making me believe that he sent thee to me?" Answered the Persian, "Allah damn the Prince! he is a mean and skin-flint knave." She cried, "Woe to thee! How darest thou disobey thy lord's commandment?" Whereto the Persian replied, "He is no lord of mine: knowest thou who I am?" Rejoined the Princess, "I know nothing of thee save what thou toldest me;" and retorted he, "What I told thee was a trick of mine against thee and the King's son: I have long lamented the loss of this horse which is under us; for I constructed it and made myself master of it. But now I have gotten firm hold of it and of thee too, and I will burn his heart even as he hath burnt mine; nor shall he ever have the horse again; no, never! So be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear; for I can be of more use to thee than he; and I am generous as I am wealthy; my servants and slaves shall obey thee as their mistress; I will robe thee in finest raiment and thine every wish shall be at thy will." When she heard this, she buffeted her face and cried out, saying, "Ah, well-away! I have not won my beloved and I have lost my father and mother!" And she wept bitter tears over what had befallen her, whilst the Sage fared on with her, without ceasing, till he came to the land of the Greeks[24] and alighted in a verdant mead, abounding in streams and trees. Now this meadow lay near a city wherein was a King of high puissance, and it chanced that he went forth that day to hunt and divert himself. As he passed by the meadow, he saw the Persian standing there, with the damsel and the horse by his side; and, before the Sage was ware, the King's slaves fell upon him and carried him and the lady and the horse to their master who, noting the foulness of the man's favour and his loathsomeness and the beauty of the girl and her loveliness, said, "O my lady, what kin is this oldster to thee?" The Persian made haste to reply, saying, "She is my wife and the daughter of my father's brother." But the lady at once gave him the lie and said, "O King, by Allah, I know him not, nor is he my husband; nay, he is a wicked magician who hath stolen me away by force and fraud." Thereupon the King bade bastinado the Persian and they beat him till he was well-nigh dead; after which the King commanded to carry him to the city and cast him into jail; and, taking from him the damsel and the ebony horse (though he knew not its properties nor the secret of its motion), set the girl in his serraglio and the horse amongst his hoards. Such was the case with the Sage and the lady; but as regards Prince Kamar al-Akmar, he garbed himself in travelling gear and taking what he needed of money, set out tracking their trail in very sorry plight; and journeyed from country to country and city to city seeking the Princess and enquiring after the ebony horse, whilst all who heard him marvelled at him and deemed his talk extravagant. Thus he continued doing a long while; but, for all his enquiry and quest, he could hit on no new news of her. At last he came to her father's city of Sana'a and there asked for her, but could get no tidings of her and found her father mourning her loss. So he turned back and made for the land of the Greeks, continuing to enquire concerning the twain as he went, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Sixty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King's son made for the land of the Greeks, continuing to enquire concerning the two as he went along, till, as chance would have it, he alighted at a certain Khan and saw a company of merchants sitting at talk. So he sat down near them and heard one say, "O my friends, I lately witnessed a wonder of wonders." They asked, "What was that?" and he answered, "I was visiting such a district in such a city (naming the city wherein was the Princess), and I heard its people chatting of a strange thing which had lately befallen. It was that their

King went out one day hunting and coursing with a company of his courtiers and the lords of his realm; and, issuing from the city, they came to a green meadow where they espied an old man standing, with a woman sitting hard by a horse of ebony. The man was foulest-foul of face and loathly of form, but the woman was a marvel of beauty and loveliness and elegance and perfect grace; and as for the wooden horse, it was a miracle, never saw eyes aught goodlier than it nor more gracious than its make." Asked the others, "And what did the King with them?"; and the merchant answered, "As for the man the King seized him and questioned him of the damsel and he pretended that she was his wife and the daughter of his paternal uncle; but she gave him the lie forthright and declared that he was a sorcerer and a villain. So the King took her from the old man and bade beat him and cast him into the trunk-house. As for the ebony horse, I know not what became of it." When the Prince heard these words, he drew near to the merchant and began questioning him discreetly and courteously touching the name of the city and of its King; which when he knew, he passed the night full of joy. And as soon as dawned the day he set out and travelled sans surcease till he reached that city; but, when he would have entered, the gate-keepers laid hands on him, that they might bring him before the King to question him of his condition and the craft in which he was skilled and the cause of his coming thither-such being the usage and custom of their ruler. Now it was supper-time when he entered the city, and it was then impossible to go in to the King or take counsel with him respecting the stranger. So the guards carried him to the jail, thinking to lay him by the heels there for the night; but, when the warders saw his beauty and loveliness, they could not find it in their hearts to imprison him: they made him sit with them without the walls; and, when food came to them, he ate with them what sufficed him. As soon as they had made an end of eating, they turned to the Prince and said, "What countryman art thou?" "I come from Fars," answered he, "the land of the Chosroλs." When they heard this they laughed and one of them said, "O Chosroan,[25] I have heard the talk of men and their histories and I have looked into their conditions; but never saw I or heard I a bigger liar than the Chosroan which is with us in the jail." Quoth another, "And never did I see aught fouler than his favour or more hideous than his visnomy." Asked the Prince. "What have ye seen of his lying?"; and they answered, "He pretendeth that he is one of the wise! Now the King came upon him, as he went a-hunting, and found with him a most beautiful woman and a horse of the blackest ebony, never saw I a handsomer. As for the damsel, she is with the King, who is enamoured of her and would fain marry her; but she is mad, and were this man a leach as he claimeth to be, he would have healed her, for the King doth his utmost to discover a cure for her case and a remedy for her disease, and this whole year past hath he spent treasure upon physicians and astrologers, on her account; but none can avail to cure her. As for the horse, it is in the royal hoard-house, and the ugly man is here with us in prison; and as soon as night falleth, he weepeth and bemoaneth himself and will not let us sleep." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the warders had recounted the case of the Persian egromancer they held in prison and his weeping and wailing, the Prince at once devised a device whereby he might compass his desire; and presently the guards of the gate, being minded to sleep, led him into the jail and locked the door. So he overheard the Persian weeping and bemoaning himself, in his own tongue, and saying, "Alack, and alas for my sin, that I sinned against myself and against the King's son, in that which I did with the damsel; for I neither left her nor won my will of her! All this cometh of my lack of sense, in that I sought for myself that which I deserved not and which befitted not the like of me; for whoso seeketh what suiteth him not at all, falleth with the like of my fall." Now when the King's son heard this, he accosted him in Persian, saying, "How long will this weeping and wailing last? Say me, thinkest thou that hath befallen thee that which never befel other than thou?" Now when the Persian heard this, he made friends with him and began to complain to him of his case and misfortunes. And as soon as the morning morrowed, the warders took the Prince and carried him before their King, informing him that he had entered the city on the previous night, at a time when audience was impossible. Quoth the King to the Prince, "Whence comest thou and what is thy name and trade and why hast thou travelled hither?" He replied, "As to my name I am called in Persian Harjah;[26] as to my country I come from the land of Fars; and I am of the men of art and especially of the art of medicine and healing the sick and those whom the Jinns drive mad. For this I go round about all countries and cities, to profit by adding knowledge to my knowledge, and whenever I see a patient I heal him and this is my craft."[27] Now when the King heard this, he rejoiced with exceeding joy and said, "O excellent Sage, thou hast indeed come to us at a time when we need thee." Then he acquainted him with the case of the Princess, adding, "If thou cure her and recover her from her madness, thou shalt have of me everything thou seekest." Replied the Prince, "Allah save and favour the King: describe to me all thou hast seen of her insanity and tell me how long it is since the access attacked her; also how thou camest by her and the horse and the Sage." So the King told him the whole story, from first to last, adding, "The Sage is in goal." Quoth the Prince, "O auspicious King, and what hast thou done with the horse?" Quoth the King, "O youth, it is with me yet, laid up in one of my treasure-chambers," whereupon said the Prince within himself, "The best thing I can do is first to see the horse and assure myself of its condition. If it be whole and sound, all will be well and end well; but, if its motor-works be destroyed, I must find some other way of delivering my beloved." Thereupon he turned to the King and said to him, "O King, I must see the horse in question: haply I may find in it somewhat that will serve me for the recovery of the damsel." "With all my heart," replied the King, and taking him by the hand, showed him into the place where the horse was. The Prince went round about it, examining its condition, and found it whole and sound, whereat he rejoiced greatly and said to the King, "Allah save and exalt the King! I would fain go in to the damsel, that I may see how it is with her; for I hope in Allah to heal her by my healing hand through means of the horse." Then he bade them take care of the horse and the King carried him to the Princess's apartment where her lover found her wringing her hands and writhing and beating herself against the ground, and tearing her garments to tatters as was her wont; but there was no madness of Jinn in her, and she did this but that none might approach her. When the Prince saw her thus, he said to her, “No harm shall betide thee, O ravishment of the three worlds;” and went on to soothe her and speak her fair, till he managed to whisper, “I am Kamar al-Akmar;” whereupon she cried out with a loud cry and fell down fainting for excess of joy; but the King thought this was epilepsy[28] brought on by her fear of him, and by her suddenly being startled. Then the Prince put his mouth to her ear and said to her, “O Shams al-Nahar, O seduction of the universe, have a care for thy life and mine and be patient and constant; for this our position needeth sufferance and skilful contrivance to make shift for our delivery from the tyrannical King. My first move will be now to go out to him and tell him that thou art possessed of a Jinn and hence thy madness; but that I will engage to heal thee and drive away the evil spirit, if he will at once unbind thy bonds. So when he cometh in to thee, do thou speak him smooth words, that he may think I have cured thee, and all will be done for us as we desire.” Quoth she, “Hearkening and obedience;” and he went out to the King in joy and gladness, and said to him, “O august King, I have, by thy good fortune, discovered her disease and its remedy, and have cured her for thee. So now do thou go in to her and speak her softly and treat her kindly, and promise her what may please her; so shall all thou desirest of her be accomplished to thee.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Seventieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Prince feigned himself a leach and went in to the damsel and made himself known to her and told her how he purposed to deliver her, she cried “Hearkening and obedience!” He then fared forth from her and sought the King and said, “Go thou in to her and speak her softly and promise her what may please her; so shall all thou desirest of her be accomplished to thee.” Thereupon the King went in to her and when she saw him, she rose and kissing the ground before him, bade him welcome and said, “I admire how thou hast come to visit thy handmaid this day;” whereat he was ready to fly for joy and bade the waiting-women and the eunuchs attend her and carry her to the Hammam and make ready for her dresses and adornment. So they went in to her and saluted her, and she returned their salams with the goodliest language and after the pleasantest fashion; whereupon they clad her in royal apparel and, clasping a collar of jewels about her neck, carried her to the bath and served her there. Then they brought her forth, as she were the full moon; and, when she came into the King's presence, she saluted him and kissed ground before him; whereupon he joyed in her with joy exceeding and said to the Prince, "O Sage, O philosopher, all this is of thy blessing. Allah increase to us the benefit of thy healing breath!"[29] The Prince replied, "O King, for the completion of her cure it behoveth that thou go forth, thou and all thy troops and guards, to the place where thou foundest her, not forgetting the beast of black wood which was with her; for therein is a devil; and, unless I exorcise him, he will return to her and afflict her at the head of every month." "With love and gladness," cried the King, "O thou Prince of all philosophers and most learned of all who see the light of day." Then he brought out the ebony horse to the meadow in question and rode thither with all his troops and the Princess, little weeting the purpose of the Prince. Now when they came to the appointed place, the Prince, still habited as a leach, bade them set the Princess and the steed as far as eye could reach from the King and his troops, and said to him, "With thy leave, and at thy word, I will now proceed to the fumigations and conjurations, and here imprison the adversary of mankind, that he may never more return to her. After this, I shall mount this wooden horse which seemeth to be made of ebony, and take the damsel up behind me; whereupon it will shake and sway to and fro and fare forwards, till it come to thee, when the affair will be at an end; and after this thou mayst do with her as thou wilt." When the King heard his words, he rejoiced with extreme joy; so the Prince mounted the horse and, taking the damsel up behind him, whilst the King and his troops watched him, bound her fast to him. Then he turned the ascending-pin and the horse took flight and soared with them high in air, till they disappeared from every eye. After this the King abode half the day, expecting their return; but they returned not. So when he despaired of them, repenting him greatly of that which he had done and grieving sore for the loss of the damsel, he went back to the city with his troops. He then sent for the Persian who was in prison and said to him, "O thou traitor, O thou villian, why didst thou hide from me the mystery of the ebony horse? And now a sharper hath come to me and hath carried it off, together with a slave-girl whose ornaments are worth a mint of money, and I shall never see anyone or anything of them again!" So the Persian related to him all his past, first and last, and the King was seized with a fit of fury which well-nigh ended his life. He shut himself up in his palace for a while, mourning and afflicted; but at last his Wazirs came in to him and applied themselves to comfort him, saying, "Verily, he who took the damsel is an enchanter, and praised be Allah who hath delivered thee from his craft and sorcery!" And they ceased not from him, till he was comforted for her loss. Thus far concerning the King; but as for the Prince, he continued his career towards his father's capital in joy and cheer, and stayed not till he alighted on his own palace, where he set the lady in safety; after which he went in to his father and mother and saluted them and acquainted them with her coming, whereat they were filled with solace and gladness. Then he spread great banquets for the towns-folk, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Seventy-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King's son spread great banquets for the towns-folk and they held high festival a whole month, at the end of which time he went in to the Princess and they took their joy of each other with exceeding joy. But his father brake the ebony horse in pieces and destroyed its mechanism for flight; moreover the Prince wrote a letter to the Princess's father, advising him of all that had befallen her and informing him how she was now married to him and in all health and happiness, and sent it by a messenger, together with costly presents and curious rarities. And when the messenger arrived at the city which was Sana'a and delivered the letter and the presents to the King, he read the missive and rejoiced greatly thereat and accepted the presents, honouring and rewarding the bearer handsomely. Moreover, he forwarded rich gifts to his son-in-law by the same messenger, who returned to his master and acquainted him with what had passed; whereat he was much cheered. And after this the Prince wrote a letter every year to his father-in-law and sent him presents till, in course of time, his sire King Sabur deceased and he reigned in his stead, ruling justly over his lieges and conducting himself well and righteously towards them, so that the land submitted to him and his subjects did him loyal service; and Kamar al-Akmar and his wife Shams al-Nahar abode in the enjoyment of all satisfaction and solace of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of deligights and Sunderer of societies; the Plunderer of palaces, the Caterer for cemeteries and the Garnerer of graves. And now glory be to the Living One who dieth not and in whose hand is the dominion of the worlds visible and invisible! Moreover I have heard tell the tale of

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UNS AL-WUJUD AND THE WAZIR'S DAUGHTER AL- WARD FI'L-AKMAM OR ROSE-IN-HOOD.[30]

There was once, in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, a King of great power and lord of glory and dominion galore; who had a Wazir Ibrahim hight, and this Wazir's daughter was a damsel of extraordinary beauty and loveliness, gifted with passing brilliancy and the perfection of grace, possessed of abundant wit, and in all good breeding complete. But she loved wassail and wine and the human face divine and choice verses and rare stories; and the delicacy of her inner gifts invited all hearts to love, even as saith the poet, describing her,

"Like moon she shines amid the starry sky, *
Robing in tresses blackest ink outvie.
The morning-breezes give her boughs fair drink, *
And like a branch she sways with supple ply:
She smiles in passing us. O thou that art *
Fairest in yellow robed, or cramoisie,
Thou playest with my wit in love, as though *
Sparrow in hand of playful boy were I."[31]

Her name was Rose-in-Hood and she was so named for her young and tender beauty and the freshness of her brilliancy; and the King loved her in his cups because of her accomplishments and fine manners. Now it was the King's custom yearly to gather together all the nobles of his realm and play with the ball.[32] So when the day came round whereon the folk assembled for ballplay, the Minister's daughter seated herself at her lattice, to divert herself by looking on at the game; and, as they were at play, her glance fell upon a youth among the guards than whom never was seen a comelier face nor a goodlier form; for he was bright of favour showing white teeth when he smiled, tall-statured and broad-shouldered. She looked at him again and again and could not take her fill of gazing; and presently said to her nurse, "What is the name of yonder handsome young man among the troops?" Replied the nurse, "O my daughter, the dear fellows are all handsome. Which of them dost thou mean?” Said Rose-in-Hood, “Wait till he come past and I will point him out to thee.” So she took an apple and as he rode by dropped it on him, whereupon he raised his head, to see who did this, and espied the Wazir’s daughter at the window, as she were the moon of fullest light in the darkness of the night; nor did he withdraw his eyes, till his heart was utterly lost to her, and he recited these lines,

“Was’t archer shot me, or was’t thine eyes *
    Ruined lover’s heart that thy charms espies?
Was the notched shaft[33] from a host outshot, *
    Or from latticed window in sudden guise?”

When the game was at an end, and all had left the ground, she asked her nurse, “What is the name of that youth I showed thee?”; and the good woman answered, “His name is Uns al-Wujud;” whereat Rose-in-Hood shook her head and lay down on her couch, with thoughts a-fire for love. Then, sighing deeply, she improvised these couplets,

“He missed not who dubbed thee, ‘World’s delight,’ *
    A world’s love conjoining to bounty’s light:[34]
O thou, whose favour the full moon favours, *
    Whose charms make life and the living bright!
Thou hast none equal among mankind; *
    Sultan of Beauty, and proof I’ll cite:
Thine eye-brows are likest a well-formed Nïn,[35] *
    And thine eyes a Sαd,[36] by His hand indite;
Thy shape is the soft, green bough that gives *
    When asked to all with all-gracious sprite:
Thou excellest knights of the world in stowre, *
    With delight and beauty and bounty dight.”

When she had finished her verses, she wrote them on a sheet of paper, which she folded in a piece of golf-embroidered silk and placed under her pillow. Now one of her nurses had seen her; so she came up to her and held her in talk till she slept, when she stole the scroll from under her pillow; and, after reading it, knew that she had fallen in love with Uns al-Wujud. Then she returned the scroll to its place and when her mistress awoke, she said to her, "O my lady, indeed I am to thee a true counsellor and am tenderly anxious on thy account. Know that love is a tyrant and the hiding it melteth iron and entaileth sickness and unease; nor for whoso confesseth it is there aught of reproach." Rejoined Rose-in-Hood, "And what is the medicine of passion, O nurse mine?" Answered the nurse, "The medicine of passion is enjoyment" Quoth she, "And how may one come by enjoyment?" Quoth the other, "By letters and messages, my lady; by whispered words of compliment and by greetings before the world;[37] all this bringeth lovers together and makes hard matters easy. So if thou have aught at heart, mistress mine, I am the fittest to keep thy secret and do thy desires and carry thy letters." Now when the damsel heard this, her reason flew and fled for joy; but she restrained herself from speech till she should see the issue of the matter, saying within herself, "None knoweth this thing of me, nor will I trust this one with my secret, till I have tried her." Then said the woman, "O my lady, I saw in my sleep as though a man came to me and said: 'Thy mistress and Uns al-Wujud love each other; so do thou serve their case by carrying their messages and doing their desires and keeping their secrets; and much good shall befal thee.' So now I have told thee my vision and it is thine to decide." Quoth Rose-in-Hood, after she heard of the dream, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Seventy-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Rose-in-Hood asked her nurse after hearing of the dream, "Tell me, canst thou keep a secret, O my nurse?"; whereto she answered, "And how should I not keep secrecy, I that am of the flower of the free?"[38] Then the maiden pulled out the scroll, whereon she had written the verses and said, "Carry me this my letter to Uns al-Wujud and bring me his reply." The nurse took the letter and, repairing to Uns al-Wujud, kissed his hands and greeted him right courteously, then gave him the paper; and he read it and, comprehending the contents, wrote on the back these couplets,

“I soothe my heart and my love repel; *
But my state interprets my love too well:
When tears flow I tell them mine eyes are ill, *
Lest the censor see and my case fortell,
I was fancy-free and unknew I Love; *
But I fell in love and in madness fell.
I show you my case and complain of pain, *
Pine and ecstasy that your ruth compel:
I write you with tears of eyes, so belike *
They explain the love come my heart to quell;
Allah guard a face that is veiled with charms, *
Whose thrall is Moon and the Stars as well:
In her beauty I never beheld the like; *
From her sway the branches learn sway and swell:
I beg you, an ’tis not too much of pains, *
To call;[39] ‘twere boon without parallel.
I give you a soul you will haply take. *
To which Union is Heaven, Disunion Hell.”

Then he folded the letter and kissing it, gave it to the go- between and said to her, “O nurse, incline the lady’s heart to me.” “To hear is to obey,” answered she and carried the script to her mistress, who kissed it and laid it on her head, then she opened it and read it and understood it and wrote at the foot of it these couplets,

“O whose heart by our beauty is captive ta’en, *
Have patience and all thou shalt haply gain!
When we knew that thy love was a true affect, *
And what pained our heart to thy heart gave pain,
We had granted thee wished-for call and more; *
But hindered so doing the chamberlain.
When the night grows dark, through our love’s excess *
Fire burns our vitals with might and main:
And sleep from our beds is driven afar, *
And our bodies are tortured by passion-bane.
‘Hide Love!’ in Love’s code is the first command; *
And from raising his veil thy hand restrain:

I fell love-fulfilled by yon gazelle: *
Would he never wander from where I dwell!"

Then she folded the letter and gave it to the nurse, who took it and went out from her mistress to seek the young man; but, as she would fare forth, the chamberlain met her and said to her, "Whither away?" "To the bath," answered she; but in her fear and confusion, she dropped the letter, without knowing it, and went off unrecking what she had done; when one of the eunuchs, seeing it lying in the way, picked it up. When the nurse came without the door, she sought for it, but found it not, so turned back to her mistress and told her of this and what had befallen her. Meanwhile, the Wazir came out of the Harim and seated himself on his couch; whereupon behold, the eunuch, who had picked up the letter, came in to him, hending it in hand and said, "O my lord, I found this paper lying upon the floor and picked it up." So the Minister took it from his hand, folded as it was, and opening it, read the verses as above set down. Then, after mastering the meaning, he examined the writing and knew it for his daughter's hand; whereupon he went to her mother, weeping so abundant tears that his beard was wetted. His wife asked him, "What maketh thee weep, O my lord?"; and he answered, "Take this letter and see what is therein." So she took it and found it to be a love-letter from her daughter Rose-in-Hood to Uns al-Wujud: whereupon the ready drops sprang to her eyes; but she composed her mind, and, gulping down her tears, said to her husband, "O my lord, there is no profit in weeping: the right course is to cast about for a means of keeping thine honour and concealing the affair of thy daughter." And she went on to comfort him and lighten his trouble; but he said, "I am fearful for my daughter by reason of this new passion. Knowest thou not that the Sultan loveth Uns al- Wujud with exceeding love? And my fear hath two causes. The first concerneth myself; it is, that she is my daughter: the second is on account of the King; for that Uns al-Wujud is a favourite with the Sultan and peradventure great troubles shall come out of this affair. What deemest thou should be done?" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Seventy-third Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir, after recounting the affair of his daughter, asked his wife, "What deemest thou should be done?" And she answered, "Have patience whilst I pray the prayer for right direction." So she prayed a two-bow prayer according to the prophetic[40] ordinance for seeking divine guidance; after which she said to her husband, "In the midst of the Sea of Treasures[41] standeth a mountain named the Mount of the Bereaved Mother (the cause of which being so called shall presently follow in its place, Inshallah!); and thither can none have access, save with pains and difficulty and distress: do thou make that same her abiding-place." Accordingly the Minister and his wife agreed to build on that mountain a virgin castle and lodge their daughter therein with the necessary provision to be renewed year by year and attendants to cheer and to serve her. Accordingly he collected carpenters, builders and architects and despatched them to the mountain, where they builded her an impregnable castle, never saw eyes the like thereof. Then he made ready vivers and carriage for the journey and, going in to his daughter by night, bade her prepare to set out on a pleasure-excursion. Thereupon her heart presaged the sorrows of separation and, when she went forth and saw the preparations for the journey, she wept with sore weeping and wrote that upon the door which might acquaint her lover with what had passed and with the transports of passion and grief that were upon her, transports such as would make the flesh to shiver and hair to stare, and melt the hardest stone with care, and tear from every eye a tear. And what she wrote were these couplets,

"By Allah, O thou house, if my beloved a morn go by, *
And greet with signs and signals lover e'er is wont to fly,
I pray thee give him our salams in pure and fragrant guise, *
For he indeed may never know where we this eve shall lie.
I wot not whither they have fared, thus bearing us afar *
At speed, and lightly-quipt, the lighter from one love to fly:
When starkens night, the birds in brake or branches snugly perched * Wail for our sorrow and announce our hapless destiny:

The tongue of their condition saith, ‘Alas, alas for woe, *
And heavy brunt of parting-blow two lovers must aby’:
When viewed I separation-cups were filled to the brim *
And us with merest sorrow-wine Fate came so fast to ply,
I mixed them with becoming share of patience self to excuse, *
But Patience for the loss of you her solace doth refuse.”

Now when she ended her lines, she mounted and they set forward with her, crossing and cutting over wold and wild and riant dale and rugged hill, till they came to the shore of the Sea of Treasures; here they pitched their tents and built her a great ship, wherein they went down with her and her suite and carried them over to the mountain. The Minister had ordered them, on reaching the journey’s end, to set her in the castle and to make their way back to the shore, where they were to break up the vessel. So they did his bidding and returned home, weeping over what had befallen. Such was their case; but as regards Uns al- Wujud, he arose from sleep and prayed the dawn-prayer, after which he took horse and rode forth to attend upon the Sultan. On his way, he passed by the Wazir’s house, thinking perchance to see some of his followers as of wont; but he saw no one and, looking upon the door, he read written thereon the verses aforesaid. At this sight, his senses failed him; fire was kindled in his vitals and he returned to his lodging, where he passed the day in trouble and transports of grief, without finding ease or patience, till night darkened upon him, when his yearning and love-longing redoubled. Thereupon, by way of concealment, he disguised himself in the ragged garb of a Fakir,[42] and set out wandering at random through the glooms of night, distracted and knowing not whither he went. So he wandered on all that night and next day, till the heat of the sun waxed fierce and the mountains flamed like fire and thirst was grievous upon him. Presently, he espied a tree, by whose side was a thin thread of running water; so he made towards it and sitting down in the shade, on the bank of the rivulet, essayed to drink, but found that the water had no taste in his mouth;[43] and, indeed his colour had changed and his face had yellowed, and his feet were swollen with travel and travail. So he shed copious tears and repeated these couplets,

"The lover is drunken with love of friend; *
On a longing that groweth his joys depend:
Love-distracted, ardent, bewildered, lost *
From home, nor may food aught of pleasure lend:
How can life be delightsome to one in love, *
And from lover parted, 'twere strange, unkenned!
I melt with the fire of my pine for them, *
And the tears down my cheek in a stream descend.
Shall I see them, say me, or one that comes *
From the camp, who th' afflicted heart shall tend?"

And after thus reciting he wept till he wetted the hard dry ground; but anon without loss of time he rose and fared on again over waste and wold, till there came out upon him a lion, with a neck buried in tangled mane, a head the bigness of a dome, a mouth wider than the door thereof and teeth like elephants' tusks. Now when Uns al-Wujud saw him, he gave himself up for lost, and turning[44] towards the Temple of Meccah, pronounced the professions of the faith and prepared for death. He had read in books that whoso will flatter the lion, beguileth him,[45] for that he is readily duped by smooth speech and gentled by being glorified; so he began and said, "O Lion of the forest! O Lord of the waste! O terrible Leo! O father of fighters! O Sultan of wild beasts! Behold, I am a lover in longing, whom passion and severance have been wronging; since I parted from my dear, I have lost my reasoning gear; wherefore, to my speech do thou give ear and have ruth on my passion and hope and fear." When the lion heard this, he drew back from him and sitting down on his hindquarters, raised his head to him and began to frisk tail and paws; which when Uns al-Wujud saw, he recited these couplets,

"Lion of the wold wilt thou murther me, *
Ere I meet her who doomed me to slavery?
I am not game and I bear no fat; *
For the loss of my love makes me sickness dree;
And estrangement from her hath so worn me down *
I am like a shape in a shroud we see.
O thou sire of spoils,[46] O thou lion of war, *

Give not my pains to the blamer's gree.
I burn with love, I am drowned in tears *
For a parting from lover, sore misery!
And my thoughts of her in the murk of night *
For love hath make my being unbe."

As he had finished his lines the lion rose, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that as Uns al-Wujud ended his lines, the lion arose and stalked slowly up to him, with eyes tear-railing and licked him with his tongue, then walked on before him, signing to him as though saying, "Follow me." So he followed him, and the beast ceased not leading him on for a while till he brought him up a mountain, and guided him to the farther side, where he came upon the track of a caravan over the desert, and knew it to be that of Rose-in-Hood and her company. Then he took the trail and, when the lion saw that he knew the track for that of the party which escorted her, he turned back and went his way; whilst Uns al-Wujud walked along the foot-marks day and night, till they brought him to a dashing sea, swollen with clashing surge. The trail led down to the sandy shore and there broke off; whereby he knew that they had taken ship and had continued their journey by water. So he lost hope of finding his lover and with hot tears he repeated these couplets,

"Far is the fane and patience faileth me; *
How can I seek them[47] o'er the abyssmal sea;
Or how be patient, when my vitals burn *
For love of them, and sleep waxed insomny?
Since the sad day they left the home and fled, *
My heart's consumed by love's ardency:
Sayhun, Jayhun,[48] Euphrates-like my tears, *
Make flood no deluged rain its like can see:
Mine eyelids chafed with running tears remain, *
My heart from fiery sparks is never free;
The hosts of love and longing pressed me *

And made the hosts of patience break and flee.
I've risked my life too freely for their love; *
And risk of life the least of ills shall be.
Allah ne'er punish eye that saw those charms *
Enshrined, and passing full moon's brilliancy!
I found me felled by fair wide-opened eyes, *
Which pierced my heart with stringless archery:
And soft, lithe, swaying shape enraptured me *
As sway the branches of the willow-tree:
Wi' them I covet union that I win, *
O'er love-pains cark and care, a mastery.
For love of them aye, morn and eve I pine, *
And doubt all came to me from evil eyne."

And when his lines were ended he wept, till he swooned away, and abode in his swoon a long while; but as soon as he came to himself, he looked right and left and seeing no one in the desert, he became fearful of the wild beasts; so he clomb to the top of a high mountain, where he heard the voice of a son of Adam speaking within a cave. He listened and lo! they were the accents of a devotee, who had forsworn the world and given himself up to pious works and worship. He knocked thrice at the cavern-door, but the hermit made him no answer, neither came forth to him; wherefore he groaned aloud and recited these couplets.

"What pathway find I my desire t'obtain, *
How 'scape from care and cark and pain and bane?
All terrors join to make me old and hoar *
Of head and heart, ere youth from me is ta'en:
Nor find I any aid my passion, nor *
A friend to lighten load of bane and pain.
How great and many troubles I've endured! *
Fortune hath turned her back I see unfain.
Ah mercy, mercy on the lover's heart, *
Doomed cup of parting and desertion drain!
A fire is in his heart, his vitals waste, *
And severance made his reason vainest vain.

How dread the day I came to her abode *
  And saw the writ they wrote on doorway lain!
I wept, till gave I earth to drink my grief; *
  But still to near and far[49] I did but feign:
Then strayed I till in waste a lion sprang *
  On me, and but for flattering words had slain:
I soothed him: so he spared me and lent me aid, *
  He too might haply of love's taste complain.
O devotee, that idlest in thy cave, *
  Meseems eke thou hast learned Love's might and main;
But if, at end of woes, with them I league, *
  Straight I'll forget all suffering and fatigue."

Hardly had he made an end of these verses when, behold! the door of the cavern opened and he heard one say, "Alas, the pity of it!"[50] So he entered and saluted the devotee, who returned his salam and asked him, "What is thy name?" Answered the young man, "Uns al-Wujud." "And what caused thee to come hither?" quoth the hermit. So he told him his story in its entirety, omitting naught of his misfortunes; whereat he wept and said, "O Uns al- Wujud, these twenty years have I passed in this place, but never beheld I any man here, until yesterday, when I heard a noise of weeping and lamentation and, looking forth in the direction of the sound, saw many people and tents pitched on the sea-shore; and the party at once proceeded to build a ship, in which certain of them embarked and sailed over the waters. Then some of the crew returned with the ship and breaking it up, went their way; and I suspect that those who embarked in the ship and returned not, are they whom thou seekest. In that case, O Uns al-Wujud, thy grief must needs be great and sore and thou art excusable, though never yet was lover but suffered love-longing." Then he recited these couplets,

"Uns al-Wujud, dost deem me fancy-free, *
  When pine and longing slay and quicken me?
I have known love and yearning from the years *
  Since mother-milk I drank, nor e'er was free.
Long struggled I with Love, till learnt his might; *

Ask thou of him, he’ll tell with willing gree.
Love-sick and pining drank I passion-cup, *
And well-nigh perished in mine agony.
Strong was I, but my strength to weakness turned, *
And eye-sword brake through Patience armoury:
Hope not to win love-joys, without annoy; *
Contrary ever links with contrary.
But fear not change from lover true; be true *
Unto thy wish, some day thine own ‘twill be.
Love hath forbidden to his votaries *
Relinquishment as deadliest heresy.”

The eremite, having ended his verse, rose and, coming up to Uns al-Wujud, embraced him, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Seventy-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the eremite having ended his verse, rose and coming up to Uns al-Wujud embraced him, and they wept together, till the hills rang with their cries and they fell down fainting. When they revived, they swore brotherhood[51] in Allah Almighty; after which said Uns al-Wujud, “This very night will I pray to God and seek of Him direction[52] anent what thou shouldst do to attain thy desire.” Thus it was with them; but as regards Rose-in-Hood, when they brought her to the mountain and set her in the castle and she beheld its ordering, she wept and exclaimed, “By Allah, thou art a goodly place, save that thou lackest in thee the presence of the beloved!”[53] Then seeing birds in the island, she bade her people set snares for them and put all they caught in cages within the castle; and they did so. But she sat at a lattice and bethought her of what had passed, and desire and passion and distraction redoubled upon her, till she burst into tears and repeated these couplets,

“O to whom now, of my desire complaining sore, shall I *
Bewail my parting from my fere compellθd thus to fly?
Flames rage within what underlies my ribs, yet hide them I *
In deepest secret dreading aye the jealous hostile spy:

I am grown as lean, attenuate as any pick of tooth,[54] *
By sore estrangement, absence, ardour, ceaseless sob and sigh.
Where is the eye of my beloved to see how I'm become *
Like tree stripped bare of leafage left to linger and to die.
They tyrannised over me whom they confined in place *
Whereto the lover of my heart may never draw him nigh:
I beg the Sun for me to give greetings a thousandfold, *
At time of rising and again when setting from the sky,
To the beloved one who shames a full moon's loveliness, *
When shows that slender form that doth the willow-branch outvie.
If Rose herself would even with his cheek, I say of her *
'Thou art not like it if to me my portion thou deny:'[55]
His honey-dew of lips is like the grateful water draught *
Would cool me when a fire in heart upflameth fierce and high:
How shall I give him up who is my heart and soul of me, *
My malady my wasting cause, my love, sole leach of me?"

Then, as the glooms of night closed around her, her yearning increased and she called to mind the past and recited also these couplets,

"'Tis dark: my transport and unease now gather might and main,

* And love-desire provoketh me to wake my wonted pain:
The pang of parting takes for ever place within my breast, *
And pining makes me desolate in destitution lain.
Ecstasy sore maltreats my soul and yearning burns my sprite, *
And tears betray love's secresy which I would lief contain:
I weet no way, I know no case that can make light my load, *
Or heal my wasting body or cast out from me this bane.
A hell of fire is in my heart upflames with lambent tongue *
And Laza's furnace-fires within my liver place have ta'en.

O thou, exaggerating blame for what befel, enough *
I bear with patience whatsoe'er hath writ for me the Pen!
I swear, by Allah, ne'er to find aught comfort for their loss;

* "Tis oath of passion's children and their oaths are ne'er
in vain.
O Night! Salams of me to friends and let to them be known *
Of thee true knowledge how I wake and waking ever wone."

Meanwhile, the hermit said to Uns al-Wujud, "Go down to the palm- grove in the valley and fetch some fibre."[56] So he went and returned with the palm-fibre, which the hermit took and, twisting into ropes, make therewith a net,[57] such as is used for carrying straw; after which he said, "O Uns al-Wujud, in the heart of the valley groweth a gourd, which springeth up and drieth upon its roots. Go down there and fill this sack therewith; then tie it together and, casting it into the water, embark thereon and make for the midst of the sea, so haply thou shalt win thy wish; for whoso never ventureth shall not have what he seeketh." "I hear and obey," answered Uns al-Wujud. Then he bade the hermit farewell after the holy man had prayed for him; and, betaking himself to the sole of the valley, did as his adviser had counselled him; made the sack, launched it upon the water, and pushed from shore. Then there arose a wind, which drave him out to sea, till he was lost to the eremite's view; and he ceased not to float over the abysses of the ocean, one billow tossing him up and another bearing him down (and he beholding the while the dangers and marvels of the deep), for the space of three days. At the end of that time Fate cast him upon the Mount of the Bereft Mother, where he landed, giddy and tottering like a chick unfledged, and at the last of his strength for hunger and thirst; but, finding there streams flowing and birds on the branches cooing and fruit-laden trees in clusters and singly growing, he ate of the fruits and drank of the rills. Then he walked on till he saw some white thing afar off, and making for it, found that it was a strongly fortified castle. So he went up to the gate and seeing it locked, sat down by it; and there he sat for three days when behold, the gate opened and an eunuch came out, who finding Uns al-Wujud there seated, said to him, "Whence camest thou and who brought thee hither?” Quoth he, “From Ispahan and I was voyaging with merchandise when my ship was wrecked and the waves cast me upon the farther side of this island.” Whereupon the eunuch wept and embraced him, saying, “Allah preserve thee, O thou friendly face! Ispahan is mine own country and I have there a cousin, the daughter of my father’s brother, whom I loved from my childhood and cherished with fond affection; but a people stronger than we fell upon us in foray and taking me among other booty, cut off my yard[58] and sold me for a castrato, whilst I was yet a lad; and this is how I came to be in such case.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the eunuch who came forth from the castle, where Rose-in-Hood was confined, told Uns al-Wujud all his tale and said:— “The raiders who captured me cut off my yard and sold me for a castrato; and this is how I came to be in such case.”[59] And after saluting him and wishing him long life, the eunuch carried him into the courtyard of the castle, where he saw a great tank of water, surrounded by trees, on whose branches hung cages of silver, with doors of gold, and therein birds were warbling and singing the praises of the Requiting King. And when he came to the first cage he looked in and lo! a turtle dove, on seeing him, raised her voice and cried out, saying, “O Thou Bounty-fraught!” Whereat he fell down fainting and after coming to himself, he sighed heavily and recited these couplets,

“O turtle dove, like me art thou distraught? *
Then pray the Lord and sing ‘O Bounty-fraught!’
Would I knew an thy moan were sign of joy, *
Or cry of love-desire in heart inwrought, —
An moan thou pining for a lover gone *
Who left thee woe begone to pine in thought, —
Or if like me hast lost thy fondest friend, *
And severance long desire to memory brought?
O Allah, guard a faithful lover’s lot *
I will not leave her though my bones go rot!”

Then, after ending his verses, he fainted again; and, presently reviving he went on to the second cage, wherein he found a ringdove. When it saw him, it sang out, “O Eternal, I thank thee!” and he groaned and recited these couplets,

“I heard a ringdove chanting plaintively, *
 ‘I thank Thee, O Eternal for this misery!’
Haply, perchance, may Allah, of His grace, *
 Send me by this long round my love to see.
Full oft[60] she comes with honeyed lips dark red, *
 And heaps up lowe upon love’s ardency.
Quoth I (while longing fires flame high and fierce *
 In heart, and wasting life’s vitality,
And tears like gouts of blood go railing down *
 In torrents over cheeks now pale of blee),
‘None e’er trod earth that was not born to woe, *
 But I will patient dree mine agony,
So help me Allah! till that happy day *
 When with my mistress I unite shall be:
Then will I spend my good on lover-wights, *
 Who’re of my tribe and of the faith of me;
And loose the very birds from jail set free, *
 And change my grief for gladdest gree and glee!’”

Then he went on to the third cage, wherein he found a mockingbird[61] which, when it saw him, set up a song, and he recited the following couplets,

“Pleaseth me yon Hazar of mocking strain *
 Like voice of lover pained by love in vain.
Woe’s me for lovers! Ah how many men *
 By nights and pine and passion low are lain!
As though by stress of love they had been made *
 Morn-less and sleep-less by their pain and bane.
When I went daft for him who conquered me *
 And pined for him who proved of proudest strain,
My tears in streams down trickled and I cried *

‘These long-linkt tears bind like an adamant-chain:’
Grew concupiscence, severance long, and I *
Lost Patience’ hoards and grief waxed sovereign:
If Justice bide in world and me unite *
With him I love and Allah veil us deign,
I’ll strip my clothes that he my form shall sight *
With parting, distance, grief, how poor of plight!”

Then he went to the fourth cage, where he found a Bulbul[62] which, at sight of him, began to sway to and fro and sing its plaintive descant; and when he heard its complaint, he burst into tears and repeated these couplets.

“The Bulbul’s note, whenas dawn is nigh, *
Tells the lover from strains of strings to fly:
Complaineth for passion Uns al-Wujud, *
For pine that would being to him deny.
How many a strain do we hear, whose sound *
Softens stones and the rock can mollify:
And the breeze of morning that sweetly speaks *
Of meadows in flowered greenery.
And scents and sounds in the morning-tide *
Of birds and zephyrs in fragrance vie;
But I think of one, of an absent friend, *
And tears rail like rain from a showery sky;
And the flamy tongues in my breast uprise *
As sparks from gleed that in dark air fly.
Allah deign vouchsafe to a lover distraught *
Someday the face of his dear to descry!
For lovers, indeed, no excuse is clear, *
Save excuse of sight and excuse of eye.”

Then he walked on a little and came to a goodly cage, than which was no goodlier there, and in it a culver of the forest, that is to say, a wood-pigeon,[63] the bird renowned among birds as the minstrel of love-longing, with a collar of jewels about its neck marvellous fine and fair. He considered it awhile and, seeing it absently brooding in its cage, he shed tears and repeated these couplets,

“O culver of copse,[64] with salams I greet; *
  O brother of lovers who woe must weet!
I love a gazelle who is slender-slim, *
  Whose glances for keenness the scymitar beat:
For her love are my heart and my vitals a-fire, *
  And my frame consumes in love’s fever-heat.
The sweet taste of food is unlawful for me, *
  And forbidden is slumber, unlawfullest sweet.
Endurance and solace have travelled from me, *
  And love homes in my heart and grief takes firm seat:
How shall life deal joy when they flee my sight *
  Who are joy and gladness and life and sprite?”

As soon as Uns al-Wujud had ended his verse, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Seventy-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that as soon as Uns al-Wujud had ended his verse, the wood-culver awoke from its brooding and cooed a reply to his lines and shrilled and trilled with its thrilling notes till it all but spake with human speech;[65] and the tongue of the case talked for it and recited these couplets,

“O lover, thou bringest to thought a tide *
  When the strength of my youth first faded and died;
And a friend of whose form I was ‘namoured, *
  Seductive and dight with beauty’s pride;
Whose voice, as he sat on the sandhill-tree, *
  From the Nay’s[66] sweet sound turned my heart aside;
A fowler snared him in net, the while *
  ‘O that man would leave me at large!’ he cried;
I had hoped he might somewhat of mercy show *
  When a hapless lover he so espied;
But Allah smite him who tore me away, *
  In his hardness of heart, from my lover’s side;
But aye my desire for him groweth more, *

And my heart with the fires of disjunction is fried:
Allah guard a true lover, who strives with love, *
And hath borne the torments I still abide!
And, seeing me bound in this cage, with mind *
Of ruth, release me my love to find."

Then Uns al-Wujud turned to his companion, the Ispahahi, and said, "What palace is this? Who built it and who abideth in it?" Quoth the eunuch, "The Wazir of a certain King built it to guard his daughter, fearing for her the accidents of Time and the incidents of Fortune, and lodged her herein, her and her attendants; nor do we open it save once in every year, when their provision cometh to them." And Uns al-Wujud said to himself, "I have gained my end, though I may have long to wait." Such was his case; but as regards Rose-in-Hood, of a truth she took no pleasure in eating or drinking, sitting or sleeping; but her desire and passion and distraction redoubled on her, and she went wandering about the castle-corners, but could find no issue; wherefore she shed tears and recited these couplets,

"They have cruelly ta'en me from him, my beloved, *
And made me taste anguish in prison ta'en:
They have fired my heart with the flames of love, *
Barred all sight of him whom to see I'm fain:
In a lofty palace they prisoned me *
On a mountain placed in the middle main.
If they'd have me forget him, right vain's their wish, *
For my love is grown of a stronger strain.
How can I forget him whose face was cause *
Of all I suffer, of all I 'plain?
The whole of my days in sorrow's spent, *
And in thought of him through the night I'm lain.
Remembrance of him cheers my solitude, *
While I lorn of his presence and lone remain.
Would I knew if, after this all, my fate *
To oblige the desire of my hear will deign."

When her verses were ended, she ascended to the terrace-roof of the castle after donning her richest clothes and trinkets and throwing a necklace of jewels around her neck. Then binding together some dresses of Ba'albak[67] stuff by way of rope, she tied them to the crenelles and let herself down thereby to the ground. And she fared on over wastes and waterless wilds, till she came to the shore, where she saw a fisherman plying here and there over the sea, for the wind had driven him on to the island. When he saw her, he was affrighted[68] and pushed off again, flying from her; but she cried out and made pressing signs to him to return, versifying with these couplets,

"O fisherman no care hast thou to fear, *
I'm but an earth-born maid in mortal sphere;
I pray thee linger and my prayer grant *
And to my true unhappy tale give ear:
Pity (so Allah spare thee!) warmest love; *
Say, hast thou seen him-my beloved fere?
I love a lovely youth whose face excels *
Sunlight, and passes moon when clearest clear:
The fawn, that sees his glance, is fain to cry *
'I am his thrall' and own himself no peer:
Beauty hath written, on his winsome cheek, *
Rare lines of pregnant sense for every seer;
Who sights the light of love his soul is saved; *
Who strays is Infidel to Hell anear:
An thou in mercy show his sight, O rare![69] *
Thou shalt have every wish, the dearest dear,
Of rubies and what likest are to them *
Fresh pearls and unions new, the seashell's tear:
My friend, thou wilt forsure grant my desire *
Whose heart is melted in love's hottest fire.

When the fisherman heard her words, he wept and made moan and lamented; then, recalling what had betided himself in the days of his youth, when love had the mastery over him and longing and desire and distraction were sore upon him and the fires of passion consumed him, replied with these couplets,

“What fair excuse is this my pining plight, *
With wasted limbs and tears’ unceasing blight;
And eyelids open in the nightly murk, *
And heart like fire-stick[70] ready fire to smite;
Indeed love burdened us in early youth, *
And true from false coin soon we learned aright:
Then did we sell our soul on way of love, *
And drunk of many a well[71] to win her sight;
Venturing very life to gain her grace, *
And make high profit perilling a mite.
’Tis Love’s religion whoso buys with life *
His lover’s grace, with highest gain is dight.”

And when he ended his verse, he moored his boat to the beach and said to her, “Embark, so may I carry thee whither thou wilt.” Thereupon she embarked and he put off with her; but they had not gone far from land, before there came out a stern-wind upon the boat and drove it swiftly out of sight of shore. Now the fisherman knew not whither he went, and the strong wind blew without ceasing three days, when it fell by leave of Allah Almighty, and they sailed on and ceased not sailing till they came in sight of a city sitting upon the sea-shore, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Seventy-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the fisherman’s craft, carrying Rose-in-Hood, made the city sitting upon the sea-shore, the man set about making fast to the land. Now the King of the city was a Prince of pith and puissance named Dirbas, the Lion; and he chanced at that moment to be seated, with his son, at a window in the royal palace giving upon the sea; and happening to look out seawards, they saw the fishing- boat make the land. They observed it narrowly and espied therein a young lady, as she were the full moon overhanging the horizon- edge, with pendants in her ears of costly balass-rubies and a collar of precious stones about her throat. Hereby the King knew that this must indeed be the daughter of some King or great noble and, going forth of the sea-gate of the palace, went down to the boat, where he found the lady asleep and the fisherman busied in making fast to shore. So he went up to her and aroused her, whereupon she awoke, weeping; and he asked her, "Whence comest thou and whose daughter art thou and what be the cause of thy coming hither?"; and she answered, "I am the daughter of Ibrahim, Wazir to King Shamikh; and the manner of my coming hither is wondrous and the cause thereof marvellous." And she told him her whole story first and last, hiding naught from him; then she groaned aloud and recited these couplets,

"Tear-drops have chafed mine eyelids and rail down in wondrous
wise, * For parting pain that fills my sprite and turns to
springs mine eyes,
For sake of friend who ever dwells within my vitals homed, * And
I may never win my wish of him in any guise.
He hath a favour fair and bright, and brilliant is his face, *
Which every Turk and Arab wight in loveliness outvies:
The Sun and fullest Moon lout low whenas his charms they sight, *
And lover-like they bend to him whene'er he deigneth rise.
A wondrous spell of gramarye like Kohl bedecks his eyne, * And
shows thee bow with shaft on string make ready ere it flies:
O thou, to whom I told my case expecting all excuse, * Pity a
lover-wight for whom Love-shafts such fate devise!
Verily, Love hath cast me on your coast despite of me * Of will
now weak, and fain I trust mine honour thou wilt prize:
For noble men, whenas perchance alight upon their bounds, *
Grace-worthy guests, confess their worth and raise to
dignities. Then,
O thou hope of me, to lovers' folly veil afford * And be to them
reunion cause, thou only liefest lord!"

And when she had ended her verses, she again told the King her sad tale and shed plenteous tears and recited these couplets bearing on her case,

"We lived till saw we all the marvels Love can bear; * Each month

to thee we hope shall fare as Rajab[72] fare:
Is it not wondrous, when I saw them march amorn * That I with
water o' eyes in heart lit flames that flare?
That these mine eyelids rain fast dropping gouts of blood? * That
now my cheek grows gold where rose and lily were?
As though the safflower hue, that overspread my cheeks, * Were
Joseph's coat made stain of lying blood to wear."

Now when the King heard her words he was certified of her love and longing and was moved to ruth for her; so he said to her, "Fear nothing and be not troubled; thou hast come to the term of thy wishes; for there is no help but that I win for thee thy will and bring thee to thy desire." And he improvised these couplets,

"Daughter of nobles, who thine aim shalt gain; *
Hear gladdest news nor fear aught hurt of bane!
This day I'll pack up wealth, and send it on *
To Shαmikh, guarded by a champion-train;
Fresh pods of musk I'll send him and brocades, *
And silver white and gold of yellow vein:
Yes, and a letter shall inform him eke *
That I of kinship with that King am fain:
And I this day will lend thee bestest aid, *
That all thou covetest thy soul assain.
I, too, have tasted love and know its taste *
And can excuse whoso the same cup drain."[73]

Then, ending his verse, he went forth to his troops and summoned his Wazir; and, causing him to pack up countless treasure, commanded him carry it to King Shamikh and say to him, "Needs must thou send me a person named Uns al-Wujud;" and say moreover "The King is minded to ally himself with thee by marrying his daughter to Uns al-Wujud, thine officer. So there is no help but thou despatch him to me, that the marriage may be solemnized in her father's kingdom." And he wrote a letter to King Shamikh to this effect, and gave it to the Minister, charging him strictly to bring back Uns al-Wujud and warning him, "An thou fail thou shalt be deposed and degraded." Answered the Wazir, "I hear and obey;" and, setting out forthright with the treasures, in due course arrived at the court of King Shamikh whom he saluted in the name of King Dirbas and delivered the letter and the presents. Now when King Shamikh read the letter and saw the name of Uns al-Wujud, he burst into tears and said to the Wazir "And where, or where, is Uns al-Wujud?; he went from us and we know not his place of abiding; only bring him to me, and I will give thee double the presents thou hast brought me." And he wept and groaned and lamented, saying these couplets,

"To me restore my dear; * I want not wealth untold:
Nor crave I gifts of pearls * Or gems or store of gold:
He was to us a moon * In beauty's heavenly fold.
Passing in form and soul; * With roe compare withhold!
His form a willow-wand, * His fruit, lures manifold;
But willow lacketh power * Men's hearts to have and hold.
I reared him from a babe * On cot of coaxing roll'd;
And now I mourn for him * With woe in soul ensoul'd."

Then, turning to the Wazir who had brought the presents and the missive, he said, "Go back to thy liege and acquaint him that Uns al-Wujud hath been missing this year past, and his lord knoweth not whither he is gone nor hath any tidings of him." Answered the Minister of King Dirbas, "O my lord, my master said to me, 'An thou fail to bring him back, thou shalt be degraded from the Wazirate and shall not enter my city. How then can I return without him?'" So King Shamikh said to his Wazir Ibrahim, "Take a company and go with him and make ye search for Uns al-Wujud everywhere." He replied, "Hearkening and obedience;" and, taking a body of his own retainers, set out accompanied by the Wazir of King Dirbas seeking Uns al-Wujud. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ibrahim, Wazir to King Shamikh, took him a body of his retainers and, accompanied by the Minister of King Dirbas, set out seeking Uns al-Wujud. And as often as they fell in with wild Arabs or others they asked of the youth, saying, “Tell us have ye seen a man whose name is so and so and his semblance thus and thus?” But they all answered, “We know him not.” Still they continued their quest, enquiring in city and hamlet and seeking in fertile plain and stony hall and in the wild and in the wold, till they made the Mountain of the Bereaved Mother; and the Wazir of King Dirbas said to Ibrahim, “Why is this mountain thus called?” He answered, “Once of old time, here sojourned a Jinniyah, of the Jinn of China, who loved a mortal with passionate love; and, being in fear of her life from her own people, searched all the earth over for a place, where she might hide him from them, till she happened on this mountain and, finding it cut off from both men and Jinn, there being no access to it, carried off her beloved and lodged him therein. There, when she could escape notice of her kith and kin, she used privily to visit him, and continued so doing till she had borne him a number of children; and the merchants, sailing by the mountain, in their voyages over the main, heard the weeping of the children, as it were the wailing of a woman bereft of her babes, and said, ‘Is there here a mother bereaved of her children?’ For which reason the place was named the Mountain of the Bereaved Mother.” And the Wazir of King Dirbas marvelled at his words. Then they landed and, making for the castle, knocked at the gate which was opened to them by an eunuch, who knew the Wazir Ibrahim and kissed his hands. The Minister entered and found in the courtyard, among the serving- men, a Fakir, which was Uns al-Wujud, but he knew him not and said, “Whence cometh yonder wight?” Quoth they, “He is a merchant, who hath lost his goods, but saved himself; and he is an ecstatic.”[74] So the Wazir left him and went on into the castle, where he found no trace of his daughter and questioned her women, who answered, “We wot not how or whither she went; this place misliked her and she tarried in it but a short time.” Whereupon he wept sore and repeated these couplets,

“Ho thou, the house, whose birds were singing gay, *
Whose sills their wealth and pride were wont display!
Till came the lover wailing for his love, *
And found thy doors wide open to the way;
Would Heaven I knew where is my soul that erst *

Was homed in house, whose owners fared away!
’Twas stored with all things bright and beautiful, *
And showed its porters ranged in fair array:
They clothed it with brocades a bride become;[75] *
Would I knew whither went its lords, ah, say!”

After ending his verses he again shed tears, and groaned and bemoaned himself, exclaiming, “There is no deliverance from the destiny decreed by Allah; nor is there any escape from that which He hath predestined!” Then he went up to the roof and found the strips of Ba’albak stuff tied to the crenelles and hanging down to the ground, and thus it was he knew that she had descended thence and had fled forth, as one distracted and demented with desire and passion. Presently, he turned and seeing there two birds, a gor-crow and an owl he justly deemed this an omen of ill; so he groaned and recited these couplets,

“I came to my dear friends’ door, of my hopes the goal, *
Whose sight mote assuage my sorrow and woes of soul:
No friends found I there, nor was there another thing *
To find, save a corby-crow and an ill-omened owl.
And the tongue o’ the case to me seemed to say, *
‘Indeed This parting two lovers fond was cruel and foul!
So taste thou the sorrow thou madest them taste and live *
In grief: wend thy ways and now in thy sorrow prowl!’”

Then he descended from the castle-roof, weeping, and bade the servants fare forth and search the mount for their mistress; so they sought for her, but found her not. Such was their case; but as regards Uns al-Wujud, when he was certified that Rose-in-Hood was indeed gone, he cried with a great cry and fell down in a fainting-fit, nor came to himself for a long time, whilst the folk deemed that his spirit had been withdrawn by the Compassionating One; and that he was absorbed in contemplation of the splendour, majesty and beauty of the Requiting One. Then, despairing of finding Uns al-Wujud, and seeing that the Wazir Ibrahim was distracted for the loss of his daughter, the Minister of King Dirbas addressed himself to return to his own country, albeit he had not attained the object of his journey, and while bidding his companion adieu, said to him, “I have a mind to take the Fakir with me; it may be Allah Almighty will incline the King’s heart to me by his blessing, for that he is a holy man; and thereafter, I will send him to Ispahan, which is near our country.” “Do as thou wilt,” answered Ibrahim. So they took leave of each other and departed, each for his own mother land, the Wazir of King Dirbas carrying with him Uns al-Wujud, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Eightieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir of King Dirbas carried with him Uns al-Wujud who was still insensible. They bore him with them on mule-back (he unknowing if he were carried or not) for three days, when he came to himself and said, “Where am I?” “Thou art in company with the Minister of King Dirbas,” replied they and went and gave news of his recovering to the Wazir, who sent him rose-water and sherbet of sugar, of which they gave him to drink and restored him. Then they ceased not faring on till they drew near King Dirbas’s capital and the King, being advised of his Wazir’s coming, wrote to him, saying, “If Uns al-Wujud be not with thee, come not to me ever.” Now when the Wazir read the royal mandate, it was grievous to him, for he knew not that Rose-in-Hood was with the King, nor why he had been sent in quest of Uns al-Wujud, nor the King’s reason for desiring the alliance; whilst Uns al-Wujud also knew not whither they were bearing him or that the Wazir had been sent in quest of him; nor did the Wazir know that the Fakir he had with him was Uns al-Wujud himself. And when the Minister saw that the sick man was whole, he said to him, “I was despatched by the King on an errand, which I have not been able to accomplish. So, when he heard of my return, he wrote to me, saying, ‘Except thou have fulfilled my need enter not my city.’” “And what is the King’s need?” asked Uns al-Wujud. So the Wazir told him the whole tale, and he said, “Fear nothing, but go boldly to the King and take me with thee; and I will be surety to thee for the coming of Uns al-Wujud.” At this the Wazir rejoiced and cried, “Is this true which thou sayest?” “Yes,” replied he; whereupon the Wazir mounted and carried him to King Dirbas who, after receiving their salutations said to him, "Where is Uns al-Wujud?" Answered the young man, "O King, I know where he is." So the King called him to him and said, "Where?" Returned Uns al-Wujud, "He is near-hand and very near; but tell me what thou wouldst with him, and I will fetch him into thy presence." The King replied, "With joy and good gree, but the case calleth for privacy." So he ordered the folk to withdraw and, carrying Uns al-Wujud into his cabinet, told him the whole story; whereupon quoth the youth, "Robe me in rich raiment, and I will forthright bring Uns al-Wujud to thee." So they brought him a sumptuous dress, and he donned it and said, "I am Uns al-Wujud, the World's Delight, and to the envious a despite"; and presently he smote with his glances every sprite, and began these couplets to recite,

"My loved one's name in cheerless solitude aye cheereth me * And
driveth off my desperance and despondency:
I have no helper[76] but my tears that ever flow in fount, *
And as they flow, they lighten woe and force my grief to
flee.
My longing is so violent naught like it ere was seen; * My love-
tale is a marvel and my love a sight to see:
I spend the night with lids of eye that never close in sleep, *
And pass in passion twixt the Hells and Edens heavenly.
I had of patience fairish store, but now no more have I; * And
love's sole gift to me hath been aye-growing misery:
My frame is wasted by the pain of parting from my own, * And
longing changed my shape and form and made me other be.
Mine eyelids by my torrent tears are chafed, and ulcerate, * The
tears, whose flow to stay is mere impossibility.
My manly strength is sore impaired for I have lost my heart; *
How many griefs upon my griefs have I been doomed to dree!
My heart and head are like in age with similar hoariness * By
loss of Beauty's lord,[77] of lords the galaxy:
Despite our wills they parted us and doomed us parted wone, *
While they (our lords) desire no more than love in unity.
Then ah, would Heaven that I wot if stress of parting done, *
The world will grant me sight of them in union fain and

free —
Roll up the scroll of severance which others would unroll — *
Efface my trouble by the grace of meeting's jubilee!
And shall I see them homed with me in cup-company, * And change
my melancholic mood for joy and jollity?"

And when he had ended his verses the King cried aloud, "By Allah, ye are indeed a pair of lovers true and fain and in Beauty's heaven of shining stars a twain: your story is wondrous and your case marvellous." Then he told him all that had befalled Rose-in- Hood; and Uns al-Wujud said, "Where is she, O King of the age?" "She is with me now," answered Dirbas and, sending for the Kazi and the witnesses, drew up the contract of marriage between her and him. Then he honoured Uns al-Wujud with favours and bounties and sent to King Shamikh acquainting him with what had befallen, whereat this King joyed with exceeding joy and wrote back the following purport. "Since the ceremony of contract hath been performed at thy court, it behoveth that the marriage and its consummation be at mine." Then he made ready camels, horses and men and sent them in quest of the pair; and when the embassy reached King Dirbas, he gave the lovers much treasure and despatched them to King Shamikh's court with a company of his own troops. The day of their arrival was a notable day, never was seen a grander; for the King gathered together all the singing- women and players on instruments of music and made wedding banquets and held high festival seven days; and on each day he gave largesse to the folk and bestowed on them sumptuous robes of honour. Then Uns al-Wujud went in to Rose-in-Hood and they embraced and sat weeping for excess of joy and gladness, whilst she recited these couplets,

"Joyance is come, dispelling cark and care; *
We are united, enviers may despair.
The breeze of union blows, enquickening *
Forms, hearts and vitals, fresh with fragrant air:
The splendour of delight with scents appears, *
And round us[78] flags and drums show gladness rare.
Deem not we're weeping for our stress of grief;*

It is for joy our tears as torrents fare:
How many fears we’ve seen that now are past! *
And bore we patient what was sore to bear:
One hour of joyance made us both forget *
What from excess of terror grey’d our hair.”

And when the verses were ended, they again embraced and ceased not from their embrace, till they fell down in a swoon, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Eighty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Uns al-Wujud and Rose-in-Hood embraced when they foregathered and ceased not from their embrace, till they fell down in a swoon for the delight of reunion; and when they came to themselves, Uns al-Wujud recited these couplets,

“How joyously sweet are the nights that unite, *
When my dearling deigns keep me the troth she did plight;
When union conjoins us in all that we have, *
And parting is severed and sundered from sight,
To us comes the world with her favour so fair, *
After frown and aversion and might despight!
Hath planted her banner Good Fortune for us, *
And we drink of her cup in the purest delight.
We have met and complained of the pitiful Past, *
And of nights a full many that doomed us to blight.
But now, O my lady, the Past is forgot; *
The Compassionate pardon the Past for unright!
How sweet is existence, how glad is to be! *
This union my passion doth only incite.”

And when he ended his verses they once more embraced, drowned in the sea of passion; and lay down together in the private apartment carousing and conversing and quoting verses and telling pleasant tales and anecdotes. On this wise seven days passed over them whilst they knew not night from day and it was to them, for very stress of gaiety and gladness, pleasure and possession, as if the seven days were but one day with ne'er a morrow. Not did they know the seventh day,[79] but by the coming of the singers and players on instruments of music; whereat Rose-in-Hood beyond measure wondered and improvised these couplets,

"In spite of enviers' jealousy, at end *
 We have won all we hoped of the friend:
We've crowned our meeting with a close embrace *
 On quilts where new brocades with sendal blend;
On bed of perfumed leather, which the spoils *
 Of downy birds luxuriously distend.
But I abstain me from unneeded wine, *
 When honey-dews of lips sweet musk can lend:
Now from the sweets of union we unknow *
 Time near and far, if slow or fast it wend,
The seventh night hath come and gone, O strange! *
 How went the nights we never reckt or kenned;
Till, on the seventh wishing joy they said, *
 'Allah prolong the meet of friend with friend!'"

When she had finished her song, Uns al-Wujud kissed her, more than an hundred times, and recited these couplets,

"O day of joys to either lover fain! *
 The loved one came and freed from lonely pain:
She blest me with all inner charms she hath; *
 And companied with inner grace deep lain:
She made me drain the wine of love till I, *
 Was faint with joys her love had made me drain:
We toyed and joyed and on each other lay; *
 Then fell to wine and soft melodious strain:
And for excess of joyance never knew, *
 How went the day and how it came again.
Fair fall each lover, may he union win *
 And gain of joy like me the amplest gain;

Nor weet the taste of severance' bitter fruit *
And joys assain them as they us assain!"

Then they went forth and distributed to the folk alms and presents of money and raiment and rare gifts and other tokens of generosity; after which Rose-in-Hood bade clear the bath for her[80] and, turning to Uns al-Wujud said to him, "O coolth of my eyes, I have a mind to see thee in the Hammam, and therein we will be alone together." He joyfully consented to this, and she let scent the Hammam with all sorts of perfumed woods and essences, and light the wax-candles. Then of the excess of her contentment she recited these couplets,

"O who didst win my love in other date *
(And Present e'er must speak of past estate);
And, oh! who art my sole sufficiency, *
Nor want I other friends with me to mate:
Come to the Hammam, O my light of eyes, *
And enter Eden through Gehenna-gate!
We'll scent with ambergris and aloes-wood *
Till float the heavy clouds with fragrant freight;
And to the World we'll pardon all her sins *
And sue for mercy the Compassionate;
And I will cry, when I descry thee there, *
'Good cheer, sweet love, all blessings on thee wait!'"[81]

Whereupon they arose and fared to the bath and took their pleasure therein; after which they returned to their palace and there abode in the fulness of enjoyment, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of societies; and glory be to Him who changeth not neither ceaseth, and to whom everything returneth! And they also tell a tale of

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ABU NOWAS WITH THE THREE BOYS AND THE CALIPH HARUN AL-RASHID[82]

Abu Nowas one day shut himself up and, making ready a richly-furnished feast, collected for it meats of all kinds and of every colour that lips and tongue can desire. Then he went forth, to seek a minion worthy of such entertainment, saying, "Allah, my Lord and my Master, I beseech Thee to send me one who befitteth this banquet and who is fit to carouse with me this day!" Hardly had he made an end of speaking when he espied three youths handsome and beardless, as they were of the boys of Paradise,[83] differing in complexion but fellows in incomparable beauty; and all hearts yearned with desire to the swaying of their bending shapes, even to what saith the poet,

"I passed a beardless pair without compare *
  And cried, 'I love you, both you ferly fir!'
'Money'd?' quoth one: quoth I, 'And lavish too;' *
  Then said the fair pair, 'Pere, c'est notre affaire.'"

Now Abu Nowas was given to these joys and loved to sport and make merry with fair boys and cull the rose from every brightly blooming check, even as saith the bard,

Full many a reverend Shaykh feels sting of flesh, *
  Loves pretty faces, shows at Pleasure's depot:
Awakes in Mosul,[84] land of purity; *
  And all the day dreams only of Aleppo.[85]

So he accosted them with the salutation, and they returned his greeting with civility and all honour and would have gone their several ways, but he stayed them, repeating these couplets,

"Steer ye your steps to none but me *
  Who hath a mine of luxury:-
Old wine that shines with brightest blee *
  Made by the monk in monastery;

And mutton-meat the toothsomest *
And birds of all variety.
Then eat of these and drink of those *
Old wines that bring you jollity:
And have each other, turn by turn, *
Shampooing this my tool you see."[86]

Thereupon the youths were beguiled by his verses and consented to his wishes, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three hundred and Eighty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Abu Nowas beguiled the youths with his wishes, saying, "We hear and obey;" and accompanied him to his lodging, where they found all ready that he had set forth in his couplets. They sat down and ate and drank and made merry awhile, after which they appealed to Abu Nowas to decide which of them was handsometh of face and shapliest of form. So he pointed to one of them and, having kissed him twice over, recited the following verses,

"I'll ransom that beauty-spot with my soup; *
Where's it and where is a money-dole?[87]
Praise Him who hairless hath made that cheek *
And bid Beauty bide in that mole, that mole!"

Then he pointed to another and, kissing his lips, repeated these couplets,

"And loveling weareth on his cheek a mole *
Like musk, which virgin camphor ne'er lets off it:
My peepers marvel such a contrast seeing; *
And cried the Mole to me, 'Now bless the
Prophet.'"[88]

Then he pointed to the third and, after kissing him half a score times repeated these couplets,

"Melted pure gold in silvern bowl to drain *

The youth, whose fingers wore a winey stain:
He with the drawers[89] served one cup of wine, *
And served his wandering eyes the other twain.
A loveling, of the sons of Turks,[90] a fawn *
Whose waist conjoins the double Mounts Honayn.[91]
Could Eve’s corrupting daughers[92] tempt my heart *
Content with two-fold lure ’twould bear the bane.
Unto Diyar-I-Bakr (‘maid-land ‘[93] this one lures; *
That lures to two-mosqued cities of the plain.”[94]

Now each of the youths had drunk two cups, and when it came to the turn of Abu Nowas, he took the goblet and repeated these couplets,

“Drink not strong wine save at the slender dearling’s hand; *
Each like to other in all gifts the spirt grace:
For wine can never gladden toper’s heart and soul, *
Unless the cup-boy show a bright and sparkling face.”

Then he drank off his cup and the bowl went round, and when it came to Abu Nowas again, joyance got the mastery of him and he repeated these couplets,

“For cup-friends cup succeeding cup assign, *
Brimming with grape-juice, brought in endliess line,
By hand of brown-lipped[95] Beauty who is sweet *
At wake as apple or musk finest fine.[96]
Drink not the wine except from hand of fawn *
Whose cheek to kiss is sweeter than the wine.”

Presently the drink got into his noddle, drunkenness mastered him and he knew not hand from head, so that he lolled from side to side in joy and inclined to the youths one and all, anon kissing them and anon embracing them leg overlying leg. And he showed no sense of sin or shame, but recited these couplets,

“None wotteth best joyance but generous youth *
When the pretty ones deign with him company keep:

This sings to him, sings to him that, when he wants *
    A pick-me-up[97] lying there all of a heap:
And when of a loveling he needeth a kiss, *
    He takes from his lips or a draught or a nip;
Heaven bless them! How sweetly my day with them sped; *
    A wonderful harvest of pleasure I reap:
Let us drink our good liquor both watered and pure, *
    And agree to swive all who dare slumber and sleep."

While they were in this deboshed state behold, there came a knocking at the door; so they bade him who knocked enter, and behold, it was the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid. When they saw him, they all rose and kissed ground before him; and Abu Nowas threw off the fumes of the wine for awe of the Caliph, who said to him, "Holla, Abu Nowas!" He replied, "Adsum, at thy service, O Commander of the Faithful, whom Allah preserve!" The Caliph asked, "What state is this?" and the poet answered, "O Prince of True Believers, my state indubitably dispenseth with questions." Quoth the Caliph, "O Abu Nowas, I have sought direction of Allah Almighty and have appointed thee Kazi of pimps and panders." Asked he, "Dost thou indeed invest me with that high office, O Commander of the Faithful?"; and the Caliph answered "I do;" whereupon Abu Nowas rejoined, "O Commander of the Faithful, hast thou any suit to prefer to me?" Hereat the Caliph was wroth and presently turned away and left them, full of rage, and passed the night sore an-angered against Abu Nowas, who amid the party he had invited spent the merriest of nights and the jolliest and joyousest. And when day-break dawned and the star of morn appeared in sheen and shone, he broke up the sitting and, dismissing the youths, donned his court-dress and leaving his house set out for the palace of the Caliph. Now it was the custom of the Commander of the Faithful, when the Divan broke up, to withdraw to his sitting-saloon and summon thither his poets and cup-companions and musicians, each having his own place, which he might not overpass. So it happened that day, he retired to his saloom, and the friends and familiars came and seated themselves, each in his rank and degree. Presently, in walked Abu Nowas and was about to take his usual seat, when the

Caliph cried to Masrur, the sworder, and bade him strip the poet of his clothes and bind an ass's packsaddle on his back and a halter about his head and a crupper under his rump and lead him round to all the lodgings of the slave-girls, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three hundred and Eighty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph commanded Masrur, the sworder, to strip Abu Nowas of his court-suit and bind an ass's packsaddle on his back and a halter about his head, and a crupper under his rump and lead him round to all the lodgings of the slave-girls, and the chambers of the Harim, that the women might make mock of him; then cut off his head and bring it to him. "Hearkening and obedience," replied Masrur and, doing with Abu Nowas as the Caliph had bidden him, led him round all the chambers whose number equalled the days of the year; but Abu Nowas was a funny fellow, so he made all the girls laugh with his buffooneries and each gave him something whereby he returned not save with a pocketful of money. And while this was going on behold, Ja'afar the Barmecide, who had been absent on an important business for the Commander of the Faithful, entered and recognising the poet, albeit in this plight, said to him, "Holla, Abu Nowas!" He said, "Here at thy service, O our lord." Ja'afar asked, "What offence hast thou committed to bring this punishment on thee?" Thereupon he answered, "None whatsoever, except that I made our lord the Caliph a present of the best of my poetry and he presented me, in return, with the best of his raiment." When the Prince of True Believers head this, he laughed, from a heart full of wrath,[98] and pardoned Abu Nowas, and also gave him a myriad of money. And they also recount the tale of

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ABDALLAH BIN MA'AMAR WITH THE MAN OF BASSORAH AND HIS SLAVE-GIRL.

A certain man of Bassorah once bought a slave-girl and reared and educated her right well. Moreover, he loved her very dearly and spent all his substance in pleasuring and merry-making with her, til he had naught left and extreme poverty was sore upon him. So she said to him, "O my master, sell me; for thou needest my price and it maketh my heart ache to see thy sorry and want-full plight. If thou vend me and make use of my value, 'twill be better for thee than keeping me by thee, and haply Almighty Allah will ample thee and amend thy fortune." He agreed to this for the straitness of his case, and carried her to the bazar, where the broker offered her for sale to the Governor of Bassorah, by name Abdallah bin Ma'amar al-Taymi, and she pleased him. So he bought her, for five hundred dinars and paid the sum to her master; but when he book the money and was about to go away, the girl burst into tears and repeated these two couplets,

"May coins though gainest joy in heart instil; *
    For me remaineth naught save saddest ill:
I say unto my soul which sorely grieves, *
    'Thy friend departeth an thou will nor nill.'"

And when her master heard this, he groaned and replied in these couplets,

"Albeit this thy case lack all resource, *
    Nor findeth aught but death's doom, pardon still;
Evening and morning, thoughts of thee will dole *
    Comfort to heart all woes and griefs full fill:
Peace be upon thee! Meet we now no more *
    Nor pair except at Ibn Ma'amar's will."

Now when Abdullah bin Ma'amar heard these verses and saw their affection, he exclaimed, "By Allah, I will not assist fate in separating you; for it is evident to me that ye two indeed love each other. So take the money and the damsel, O man, and Allah bless thee in both; for verily parting be grievous to lovers.” So they kissed his hand and going away, ceased not to dwell together, till death did them part; and glory be to Him whom death over-taketh not! And amonst stories is that of

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THE LOVERS OF THE BANU[99] OZRAH

There was once, among the Banu Ozrah, a handsome and accomplished man, who was never a single day out of love, and it chanced that he became enamoured of a beauty of his own tribe and sent her many messages; but she ceased not to entreat him with cruelty and disdain; till, for stress of love and longing and desire and distraction, he fell sick of a sore sickness and took to his pillow and murdered sleep. His malady redoubled on him and his torments increased and he was well nigh dead when his case became known among the folk and his passion notorious; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Eighty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the man took to his pillow and murdered sleep. So his case became known and his passion notorious; and his infirmity grew upon him and his pains redoubled until he was well nigh dead. His family and hers were urgent with her to visit him, but she refused, till he was at the point of death when, being told of this, she relented towards him and vouchsafed him a visit. As soon as he saw her, his eyes ran over with tears and he repeated from a broken heart,

“An, by thy life, pass thee my funeral train, *
A bier upborne upon the necks of four,
Wilt thou not follow it, and greet the grave *
Where shall my corpse be graved for evermore?”

Hearing this, she wept with sore weeping and said to him, “By Allah, I suspected not that passion had come to such a pass with thee, as to cast thee into the arms of death! Had I wist of this, I had been favourable to thy wish, and thou shouldst have had thy will.” At this his tears streamed down even as the clouds rail rain, and he repeated this verse,

“She drew near whenas death was departing us, *
And deigned union grant when twas useless all.”

Then he groaned one groan and died. So she fell on him, kissing him and weeping and ceased not weeping until she swooned away; and when she came to herself, she charged her people to bury her in his grave and with streaming eyes recited these two couplets,

"We lived on earth a life of fair content; *
　　And tribe and house and home of us were proud;
But Time in whirling flight departed us, *
　　To join us now in womb of earth and shroud.[100] "

Then she fell again to weeping, nor gave over shedding tears and lamenting till she fainted away; and she lay three days, senseless. Then she died and was buried in his grave. This is one of the strange chances of love.[101] And I have heard related a tale of the

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WAZIR OF AL-YAMAN AND HIS YOUNG BROTHER

It is said that Badr al-Din, Wazir of Al-Yaman, had a young brother of singular beauty and kept strait watch over him; so he applied himself to seek a tutor for him and, coming upon a Shaykh of dignified and reverend aspect, chaste and religious, lodged him in a house next his own. This lasted a long time, and he used to come daily from his dwelling to that of Sαhib[102] Badr al-Din and teach the young brother. After a while, the old man's heart was taken with love for the youth, and longing grew upon him and his vitals were troubled, till one day, he bemoaned his case to the boy, who said, "What can I do, seeing that I may not leave my brother night or day? and thou thyself seest how careful he is over me." Quoth the Shaykh, "My lodging adjoineth thine; so there will be no difficulty, when thy brother sleepeth, to rise and, entering the privy, feign thyself asleep. Then come to the parapet[103] of the terrace-roof and I will receive thee on the other side of the wall; so shalt thou sit with me an eye-twinkling and return without thy brother's knowledge." "I hear and obey," answered the lad; and the tutor began to prepare gifts suitable to his degree. Now when a while of the night was past, he entered the water-closet and waited until his brother lay down on his bed and took patience till he was drowned in sleep, when he rose and going to the parapet of the terrace-roof, found standing there to await him the old man, who gave him his hand and carried him to the sitting-chamber, where he had made ready various dainties for his entertainment, and they sat down to carouse. Now it was the night of the full moon and, as they sat with the wine-cup going round, her rays shone upon them, and the governor fell to singing. But, whilst they were thus in joy and jollity and mirth and merriment, such as confoundeth the wit and the sight and defieth description, lo! the Wazir awoke and, missing his brother, arose in affright and found the door open. So he went up to the roof and hearing a noise of talk, climbed over the parapet to the adjoining terrace and saw a light shining from the lodging. He looked in from behind the wall, and espied his brother and his tutor sitting at carouse; but the Shaykh became aware of him and sang cup in hand, to a lively measure these couplets,

"He made me drain his wine of honeyed lips, *
Toasting with cheeks which rose and myrtle smother:
Then nighted in embrace, cheek to my cheek, *
A loveling midst mankind without another.
When the full moon arose on us and shone *
Pray she traduce us not to the big brother."

And it proved the perfect politeness of the Wazir Badr al-Din that, when he heard this, he said, "By Allah, I will not betray you!" And he went away and left them to their diversions. They also tell a tale concerning

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THE LOVES OF THE BOY AND GIRL AT SCHOOL

A free boy and a slave-girl once learnt together in school, and the boy fell passionately in love with the girl. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Eighty-Fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the lad fell passionately in love with the slave-lass: so one day, when the other boys were heedless, he took her tablet[104] and wrote on it these two couplets,

“What sayest thou of him by sickness waste, *
Until he’s clean distraught for love of thee?
Who in the transport of his pain complains, *
Nor can bear load of heart in secrecy?”

Now when the girl took her tablet, she read the verses written thereon and understanding them, wept for ruth of him; then she wrote thereunder these two couplets,

“An if we behold a lover love-fordone *
Desiring us, our favours he shall see:
Yea, what he wills of us he shall obtain, *
And so befal us what befalling be.”

Now it chanced that the teacher came in on them and taking the tablet, unnoticed, read what was written thereon. So he was moved to pity of their case and wrote on the tablet beneath those already written these two couplets addressed to the girl,

“Console thy lover, fear no consequence; *
He is daft with loving lowe’s insanity;
But for the teacher fear not aught from him; *
Love-pain he learned long before learnt ye.”

Presently it so happened that the girl’s owner entered the school about the same time and, finding the tablet, read the above verses indited by the boy, the girl and the schoolmaster; and wrote under them these two couplets,

“May Allah never make you parting dree *
And be your censurer shamed wearily!
But for the teacher ne’er, by Allah, eye *
Of mine beheld a bigger pimp than he!”

Then he sent for the Kazi and witnesses and married them on the spot. Moreover, he made them a wedding-feast and treated them with exceeding munificence; and they ceased not abiding together in joy and happiness, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies. And equally pleasant is the story of

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AL-MUTALAMMIS AND HIS WIFE UMAYMAH

It is related Al-Mutalammis[105] once fled from Al-Nu'uman bin Munzir[106] and was absent so long that folk deemed him dead. Now he had a beautiful wife, Umaymah by name, and her family urged her to marry again; but she refused, for that she loved her husband Al-Mutalammis very dearly. However, they were urgent with her, because of the multitude of her suitors, and importuned with her till at last she consented, albe reluctantly; and they espoused her to a man of her own tribe. Now on the night of the wedding, Al-Mutalammis came back and, hearing in the camp a noise of pipes and tabrets and seeing signs of a wedding festival, asked some of the children what was the merry-making, to which they replied, "They have married Umaymah wife of Al-Mutalammis, to such an one, and he goes in to her this night." When he heard this, he planned to enter the house amongst the mob of women and saw the twain seated on the bridal couch.[107] By and by, the bridegroom came up to her, whereupon she sighed heavily and weeping, recited this couplet,

"Would Heaven I knew (but many are the shifts of joy and woe) *
In what far distant land thou art, my Mutalammis, oh!"

Now Al-Mutalammis was a renowned poet; so he answered her saying;

"Right near at hand, Umaymah mine! when'er the caravan *
Halted, I never ceased for thee to pine, I would thou know."

When the bridegroom heard this, he guess how the case stood and went forth from them in hast improvising,

"I was in bestest luck, but now my luck goes contrary: *
A hospitable house and room contain your loves, you two!"

And he returned not but left the twain to their privacy. So Al-Mutalammis and his wife abode together in all comfort and solace of life and in all its joys and jollities till death parted them. And glory be to Him at whose command the earth and the heavens shall arise! And among other tales is that of

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THE CALIPH HARUM AL-RASHID AND QUEEN ZUBAYDAH IN THE BATH

The Caliph Harun al-Rashid loved the Lady Zubaydah with exceeding love and laid out for her a pleasaunce, wherein he made a great tank and set thereabouts a screen of trees and led thither water from all sides; hence the trees grew and interlaced over the basin so densely, that one could go in and wash, without being seen of any, for the thickness of the leafage. It chanced, one day, that Queen Zubaydah entered the garden and, coming to the swimming-bath, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Eighty-sixth Night

She said, It hath reached me, "O auspicious King, that Queen Zubaydah entered the garden one day and, coming to the swimming-bath, gazed upon its goodliness; and the sheen of the water and the overshading of the trees pleased her. Now it was a day of exceeding heat; so she doffed her clothes and, entering the tank, which was not deep enough to cover the whole person, fell to pouring the water over herself from an ewer of silver. It also happened that the Caliph heard she was in the pool; so he left his palace and came down to spy upon her through the screen of the foliage. He stood behind the trees and espied her mother- nude, showing everything that is kept hidden. Presently, she became aware of him and turning, saw him behind the trees and was ashamed that he should see her naked. So she laid her hands on her parts, but the Mount of Venus escaped from between them, by reason of its greatness and plumpness; and the Caliph at once turned and went away, wondering and reciting this couplet,

"I looked on her with loving eyne *
And grew anew my old repine:"

But he knew not what to say next; so he sent for Abu Nowas and said to him, "Make me a piece of verse commencing with this line." "I hear and obey," replied the poet and in an eye- twinkling extemporised these couplets,

“I looked on her with longing eyne *
And grew anew my old repine
For the gazelle, who captured me *
Where the two lotus-trees incline:
There was the water poured on it *
From ewer of the silvern mine;
And seen me she had hidden it *
But twas too plump for fingers fine.
Would Heaven that I were on it, *
An hour, or better two hours, li’en.”[108]

Thereupon the Commander of the Faithful smiled and made him a handsome present and he went away rejoicing. And I have heard another story of

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HARUN AL-RASHID AND THE THREE POETS

The Prince of True Believers, Caliph Harun al-Rashid, was exceeding restless one night; so he rose and walked about his palace, till he happened upon a handmaid overcome with wine. Now he was prodigiously enamoured of this damsel; so he played with her and pulled her to him, whereupon her zone fell down and her petticoat-trousers were loosed and he besought her of amorous favour. But she said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful wait till to-morrow night, for I am unprepared for thee, knowing not of thy coming." So he left her and went away. But, when the morrow showed its light and the sun shone bright, he sent a page to her saying, "The Commander of the Faithful is about to visit thine apartment;" but she replied, "Day doth away with the promise of night." So he said to his courtiers, "Make me somewhat of verse, introducing these words, The Promise of Night is effaced by Day.'" Answered they, "We hear and obey," and Al- Rakαshi[109] came forward and recited the following couplets,

"By Allah, couldst thou but feel my pain, *
Thy rest had turned and had fled away.
Hath left me in sorrow and love distraught, *
Unseen and unseeing, that fairest may:
She promised me grace, then jilted and said, *
The promise of night is effaced by day!'"

Then Abu Mus'ab came forward and recited these couplets,

"When wilt thou be wise and love-heat allay *
That from food and sleeping so leads astray?
Suffices thee not ever weeping eye, *
And vitals on fire when thy name they say?
He must smile and laugh and in pride must cry *
The promise of Night is effaced by Day.'"

Last came Abu Nowas and recited the following couplets,

"As love waxt longer less met we tway *

And fell out, but ended the useless fray;
One night in the palace I found her fou'; *
Yet of modesty still there was some display:
The veil from her shoulders had slipt; and showed *
Her loosened trousers Love's seat and stay:
And rattled the breezes her huge hind cheeks *
And the branch where two little pomegranates lay:
Quoth I, Give me tryst;' whereto quoth she *
To-morrow the fane shall wear best array:'
Next day I asked her, Thy word?' Said she *
The promise of Night is effaced by Day.'"

The Caliph bade give a myriad of money each to Al-Rakashi and Abu Mus'ab, but bade strike off the head of Abu Nowas, saying, "Thou wast with us yesternight in the palace." Said he, "By Allah, I slept not but in my own house! I was directed to what I said by thine own words as to the subject of the verse; and indeed quoth Almighty Allah (and He is the truest of all speakers): As for poets (devils pursue them!) dost thou not see that they rove as bereft of their senses through every valley and that they say that which they do not?'"[110] So the Caliph forgave him and gave him two myriads of money. And another tale is that of

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MUS’AB BIN AL-ZUBAYR AND AYISHAH HIS WIFE

It is told of Mus’ab bin al-Zubayr[111] that he met in Al- Medinah Izzah, who was one of the shrewdest of women, and said to her, “I have a mind to marry Ayishah[112] daughter of Talhah, and I should like thee to go herwards and spy out for me how she is made.” So she went away and returning to Mus’ab, said, “I have seen her, and her face is fairer than health; she hath large and well-opened eyes and under them a nose straight and smooth as a cane; oval cheeks and a mouth like a cleft pomegranate, a neck as a silver ewer and below it a bosom with two breasts like twin- pomegranates and further down a slim waist and a slender stomach with a navel therein as it were a casket of ivory, and back parts like a hummock of sand; and plumply rounded thighs and calves like columns of alabaster; but I saw her feet to be large, and thou wilt fall short with her in time of need.” Upon this report he married her, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Eighty-seventh Day

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Izzah this wise reported of Ayishah bint Talhah, Mus’ab married her and went in to her. And presently Izzah invited Ayishah and the women of the tribe Kuraysh to her house, when Ayishah sang these two couplets with Mus’ab standing by,

“And the lips of girls, that are perfume sweet; *
    So nice to kiss when with smiles they greet:
Yet ne’er tasted I them, but in thought of him; *
    And by thought the Ruler rules worldly seat.”

The night of Mus’ab’s going in unto her, he departed not from her, till after seven bouts; and on the morrow, a freewoman of his met him and said to him, “May I be thy sacrifice! Thou art perfect, even in this.” And a certain woman said, “I was with Ayishah, when her husband came in to her, and she lusted for him; so he fell upon her and she snarked and snorted and made use of all wonder of movements and marvellous new inventions, and I the while within hearing. So, when he came out from her, I said to her, How canst thou do thus with thy rank and nobility and condition, and I in thy house?' Quoth she, Verily a woman should bring her husband all of which she is mistress, by way of excitement and rare buckings and wrigglings and motitations.[113] What dislikest thou of this?' And I answered I would have this by nights.' Rejoined she, Thus is it by day and by night I do more than this; for when he seeth me, desire stirreth him up and he falleth in heat; so he putteth it out to me and I obey him, and it is as thou seest.'" And there also hath reached me an account of

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ABU AL-ASWAD AND HIS SLAVE-GIRL

Abu al-Aswad bought a native-born slave-girl, who was blind of an eye, and she pleased him; but his people decried her to him; whereat he wondered and, turning the palms of his hands upwards,[114] recited these two couplets,

“They find me fault with her where I default ne’er find, *
Save haply that a speck in either eye may show:
But if her eyes have fault, of fault her form hath none, *
Slim-built above the waist and heavily made below.”

And this is also told of

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HARUN AL-RASHID AND THE TWO SLAVE-GIRLS

The Caliph Harun al-Rashid lay one night between two slave-girls, one from Al-Medinah and the other from Cufa and the Cufite rubbed his hands, whilst the Medinite rubbed his feet and made his concern[115] stand up. Quoth the Cufite, “I see thou wouldst keep the whole of the stock-in-trade to thyself; give me my share of it.” And the other answered, “I have been told by Mαlik, on the authority of Hishαm ibn Orwah,[116] who had it of his (grand) father, that the Prophet said, Whoso quickeneth the dead, the dead belongeth to him and is his.’ But the Cufite took her unawares and, pushing her away, seized it all in her own hand and said, “Al-A’amash telleth us, on the authority of Khaysamah, who had it of Abdallah bin Mas’ud, that the Prophet declared, Game belongeth to him who taketh it, not to him who raiseth it.’” And this is also related of

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THE CALIPH HARUN AL-RASHID AND THE THREE SLAVE-GIRLS

The Caliph Harun al-Rashid once slept with three slave-girls, a Meccan, a Medinite and an Irakite. The Medinah girl put her hand to his yard and handled it, whereupon it rose and the Meccan sprang up and drew it to herself. Quoth the other, “What is this unjust aggression? A tradition was related to me by Mαlik[117] after Al-Zuhri, after Abdallah ibn Sαlim, after Sa’νd bin Zayd, that the Apostle of Allah (whom Allah bless and keep!) said: Whoso enquickeneth a dead land, it is his.’ And the Meccan answered, “It is related to us by Sufyαn, from Abu Zanαd, from Al-A’araj, from Abu Horayrah, that the Apostle of Allah said: The quarry is his who catcheth it, not his who starteth it.’” But the Irak girl pushed them both away and taking it to herself, said, “This is mine, till your contention be decided.” And they tell a tale of

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THE MILLER AND HIS WIFE

There was a miller, who had an ass to turn his mill; and he was married to a wicked wife, whom he loved, while she hated him because she was sweet upon a neighbour, who misliked her and held aloof from her. One night, the miller saw, in his sleep, one who said to him, “Dig in such a spot of the ass’s round in the mill, and thou shalt find a hoard.” When he awoke, he told his wife the vision and bade her keep the secret; but she told her neighbour, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three hundred and Eighty-eighth Night

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the miller’s wife told the secret to the neighbour whom she loved, thinking to win his favour; and he agreed with her to come to her by night. So he came and they dug in the mill and found the treasure and took it forth. Then he asked her, “How shall we do with this?” and she answered; “We will divide it into two halves and will share it equally between us, and do thou leave thy wife and I will cast about to rid me of my husband. Then shalt thou marry me and, when we are conjoined, we will join the two halves of the treasure one to other, and all will be in our hands.” Quoth he, “I fear lest Satan seduce thee and thou take some other man other than myself; for gold in the house is like the sun in the world. I reck, therefore, it were right that the money be all in my hands, so thou give thy whole mind to getting free of thy husband and coming to me.” Quoth she, “I fear even as thou fearest, nor will I yield up my part to thee; for it was I directed thee to it.” When he heard this, greed of gain prompted him to kill her; so he slew her and threw her body into the empty hoard-hole; but day overtook him and hindered him from covering it up; he therefore took the money and went his way. Now after a while the miller awoke and, missing his wife, went into the mill, where he fastened the ass to the beam and shouted to it. It went on a little, then stopped; whereupon he beat it grievously; but the more he bashed it, the more it drew back; for it was affrighted at the dead woman and could not go forward. Thereupon the Miller, unknowing what hindered the donkey, took out a knife and goaded it again and again, but still it would not budge. Then he was wroth with it, knowing not the cause of its obstinacy, and drove the knife into its flanks, and it fell down dead. But when the sun rose, he saw his donkey lying dead and likewise his wife in the place of the treasure, and great was his rage and sore his wrath for the loss of his hoard and the death of his wife and his ass. All this came of his letting his wife into his secret and not keeping it to himself.[118] And I have heard this tale of

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THE SIMPLETON AND THE SHARPER

A certain simpleton was once walking along, haling his ass after him by the halter, when a pair of sharpers saw him and one said to his fellow, “I will take that ass from yonder wight.” Asked the other, “How wilt thou do that?” “Follow me and I will show thee how,” answered the first. So the cony-catcher went up to the ass and, loosing it from the halter, gave the beast to his fellow; then he haltered his own head and followed Tom Fool till he knew the other had got clean off with the ass, when he stood still. The oaf haled at the halter, but the rascal stirred not; so he turned and seeing the halter on a man’s neck, said to him, “What art thou?” Quoth the sharper, “I am thine ass and my story is a wonderous one and tis this. Know that I have a pious old mother and come in to her one day, drunk; and she said to me: O my son, repent to the Almighty of these thy transgressions.’ But I took my staff and beat her, whereupon she cursed me and Allah changed me into an ass and caused me fall into thy hands, where I have remained till this moment. However, to-day, my mother called me to mind and her heart yearned towards me; so she prayed for me and the Lord restored me to my former shape amongst the sons of Adam.” Cried the silly one, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Allah upon thee, O my brother, acquit me of what I have done with thee in the way of riding and so forth.” Then he let the cony-catcher go and returned home, drunken with chagrin and concern as with wine. His wife asked him, “What aileth thee and where is the donkey?”; and he answered, “Thou knowest not what was this ass; but I will tell thee.” So he told her the story, and she exclaimed, “Alack and alas for the punishment we shall receive from Almighty Allah! How could we have used a man as a beast of burden, all this while? And she gave alms by way of atonement and prayed pardon of Heaven.[119] Then the man abode awhile at home, idle and feckless, till she said to him, “How long wilt thou sit at home doing naught? Go to the market and buy us an ass and ply thy work with it.” Accordingly, he went to the market and stopped by the ass-stand, where behold, he saw his own ass for sale. So he went up to it and clapping his mouth to its ear, said to it, “Woe to thee, thou ne’er-do-well! Doubtless thou hast been getting drunk again and beating thy mother! But, by Allah, I will never buy thee more.”[120] and he left it and went away. And they tell a tale concerning

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THE KAZI ABU YUSUF WITH HARUN AL-RASHID AND QUEEN ZUBAYDAH

The Caliph Harun al-Rashid went up one noon-tide to his couch, to lie down; and mounting, found upon the bed-clothes semen freshly emitted; whereat he was startled and troubled with sore trouble. So he called the Lady Zubaydah and said to her, “What is that spilt on the bed?” She looked at it and replied, “O Commander of the Faithful, it is semen.” Quoth he, “Tell me truly what this meaneth or I will lay violent hands on thee forthright.” Quoth she, “By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, indeed I know not how it came there and I am guiltless of that whereof you suspectest me.” So he sent for the Kazi Abï Yïsuf and acquainted him of the case. The Judge raised his eyes to the ceiling and, seeing a crack therein, said to the Caliph, “O Commander of the Faithful, in very sooth the bat hath seed like that of a man,[121] and this is bat’s semen.” Then he called for a spear and thrust it into the crevice, whereupon down fell the bat. In this manner the Caliph’s suspicions were dispelled, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three hundred and Eighty-ninth Night

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Kazi Abu Yusuf took the spear and thrust it into the crevice, down fell the bat, and thus the Caliph’s suspicions were dispelled and the innocence of Zubaydah was made manifest; whereat she gave loud and liberal vent to her joy and promised Abu Yusuf a magnificent reward. Now there were with her certain delicious fruits, out of their season, and she knew of others in the garden; so she asked Abu Yusuf, “O Imam of the Faith, which wouldst thou rather have of the two kinds of fruits, those that are here or those that are not here?” And he answered, “Our code forbiddeth us to pronounce judgement on the absent; whenas they are present, we will give our decision.” So she let bring the two kinds of fruits before him; and he ate of both. Quoth she, “What is the difference between them?” and quoth he, “As often as I think to praise one kind, the adversary putteth in its claim.” The Caliph laughed at his answer[122] and made him a rich present; and Zubaydah also gave him what she had promised him, and he went away, rejoicing. See, then the virtues of this Imαm and how his hands were manifest the truth and the innocence of the Lady Zubaydah. And amongst other stories is that of

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THE CALIPH AL-HAKIM[123] AND THE MERCHANT

The Caliph Al-Hαkim bi-Amri'llah was riding out in state procession one day, when he passed along a garden, wherein he saw a man, surrounded by negro-slaves and eunuchs. He asked him for a draught of water, and the man gave him to drink, saying, "Belike, the Commander of the Faithful will honour me by alighting in this my garden." So the Caliph dismounted and with his suite entered the garden; whereupon the said man brought out to them an hundred rugs and an hundred leather mats and an hundred cushions; and set before them an hundred dishes of fruits, an hundred bowls of sweetmeats and an hundred jars of sugared sherbets; at which the Caliph marvelled with much amaze and said to his host, "O man, verily this thy case is wondrous: didst thou know of our coming and make this preparation for us?" He replied, "No by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, I knew not of thy coming and I am a merchant of the rest of thy subjects; but I have an hundred concubines; so, when the Commander of the Faithful honoured me by alighting with me, I sent to each of them, bidding her send me her morning-meal in the garden. So they sent me each of her furniture and the surplus of her meat and drink: and every day each sendeth me a dish of meat and another of cooling marinades, also a platter of fruits and a bowl of sweetmeats and a jar of sherbet. This is my noon-day dinner, nor have I added aught thereto for thee." Then the Commander of the Faithful, Al-Hakim bi-Amri'llah prostrated himself in thanksgiving to the Almighty (extolled and exalted be His name!) and said, "Praise be Allah, who hath been so bountiful to one of our lieges, that he entertaineth the Caliph and his host, without making ready for them; nay, he feedeth them with the surplusage of his day's provision!" Then he sent for all the dirhams in the treasury, that had been struck that year (and they were in number three thousand and seven hundred thousand); nor did he mount until the money came, when he gave it to the merchant, saying, "Use this as thy state may require; and thy generosity deserveth more than this." Then he took horse and rode away. And I have heard a story concerning

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KING KISRA ANUSHIRWAN[124] AND THE VILLAGE DAMSEL

The Just King, Kisrα Anïshirwαn, one day rode forth to the chase and, in pursuit of a deer, became separated from his suite. Presently, he caught sight of a hamlet near hand and being sore athirst, he made for it and presenting himself at the door of a house that lay by the wayside, asked for a draught of water. So a damsel came out and looked at him; then, going back into the house, pressed the juice from a single sugar-cane into a bowl and mixed it with water; after which she strewed on the top some scented stuff, as it were dust, and carried it tot he King. Thereupon he seeing in it what resembled dust, drank it, little by little, till he came to the end; when said he to her, “O damsel, the drink is good, and how sweet it had been but for this dust in it that troubleth it.” Answered she, “O guest, I put in that powder for a purpose;” and he asked, “And why didst thou thus?”; so she replied, “I saw thee exceedingly thirsty and feared that thou wouldst drain the whole at one draught and that this would thee mischief; and but for this dust that troubled the drink so hadst thou done.” The Just King wondered at her words, knowing that they came of her wit and good sense, and said to her, “From how many sugar canes didst thou express this draught?” “One,” answered she; whereat Anushirwan marvelled and, calling for the register of the village taxes, saw that its assessment was but little and bethought him to increase it, on his return to his palace, saying in himself, “A village where they get this much juice out of one sugar-cane, why is it so lightly taxed?” He then left the village and pursued his chase; and, as he came back at the end of the day, he passed alone by the same door and called again for drink; whereupon the same damsel came out and, knowing him at a look, went in to fetch him water. It was some time before she returned and Anushirwan wondered thereat and said to her, “Why hast thou tarried?” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three hundred and Ninetieth Night

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Anushirwan hurried the damsel and asked her, “Why hast thou tarried?” she answered, “Because a single sugar-cane gave not enough for thy need; so I pressed three; but they yielded not to much as one did before.” Rejoined he, “What is the cause of that?”; and she replied, “The cause of it is that when the Sultan’s[125] mind is changed against a folk, their prosperity ceaseth and their good waxeth less.” So Anushirwan laughed and dismissed from his mind that which he had purposed against the villagers. Moreover, he took the damsel to wife then and there, being pleased with her much wit and acuteness and the excellence of her speech. And they tell another tale of the

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WATER-CARRIER[126] AND THE GOLDSMITH'S WIFE

There was once, in the city of Bokhara, a water-carrier, who used to carry water to the house of a goldsmith and had done this thirty years. Now that goldsmith had a wife of exceeding beauty and loveliness, brilliancy and perfect grace; and she was withal renowned for piety, chastity and modesty. One day the water- carrier came, as of custom, and poured the water into the cisterns. Now the woman was standing in the midst of the court; so he went close up to her and taking her hand, stroked it and pressed it, then went away and left her. When her husband came home from the bazar, she said to him, "I would have thee tell me what thing thou hast done in the market this day, to anger Almighty Allah." Quoth he, "I have done nothing to offend the Lord." "Nay," rejoined she, "but, by Allah, thou hast indeed done something to anger Him; and unless thou tell me the whole truth, I will not abide in thy house, and thou shalt not see me, nor will I see thee." So he confessed, "I will tell thee the truth of what I did this day. It so chanced that, as I was sitting in my shop, as of wont, a woman came up to me and bade me make her a bracelet of gold. Then she went away and I wrought her a bracelet and laid it aside. But when she returned and I brought her out the bracelet, she put forth her hand and I clasped the bracelet on her wrist; and I wondered at the whiteness of her hand and the beauty of her wrist, which would captivate any beholder; and I recalled what the poet saith,

Her fore-arms, dight with their bangles, show *
    Like fire ablaze on the waves a-flow;
As by purest gold were the water girt, *
    And belted around by a living lowe.'

So I took her hand and pressed it and squeezed it." Said the woman, "Great God! Why didst thou this ill thing? Know that the water-carrier, who hath come to our house these thirty years, nor sawst thou ever any treason in him took my hand this day and pressed and squeezed it.” Said her husband, “O woman, let us crave pardon of Allah! Verily, I repent of what I did, and do thou ask forgiveness of the Lord for me.” She cried, “Allah pardon me and thee, and receive us into his holy keeping.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three hundred and Ninety-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the goldsmith’s wife cried out, “Allah pardon me and thee, and receive us into his holy keeping!” And on the next day, the water-carrier came in to the jeweller’s wife and, throwing himself at her feet, grovelled in the dust and besought pardon of her, saying, “O my lady, acquit me of that which Satan deluded me to do; for it was he that seduced me and led me astray.” She answered, “Go thy ways, the sin was not in thee, but in my husband, for that he did what he did in his shop, and Allah hath retaliated upon him in this world.” And it related that the goldsmith, when his wife told him how the water-carrier had used her, said, “Tit for tat, and blow for blow!; had I done more the water-carrier had done more”; — which became a current byword among the folk. Therefore it behoveth a wife to be both outward and inward with her husband; contenting herself with little from him, if he cannot give her much, and taking pattern by Ayishah the Truthful and Fatimah the virgin mother (Allah Almighty accept of them the twain!), that she may be of the company of the righteous ancestry.[127] And I have heard the following tale of

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KHUSRAU AND SHIRIN AND THE FISHERMAN

King Khusrau[128] Shahinshah of Persia loved fish; and one day, as he sat in his saloon, he and Shirin his wife, there came a fisherman, with a great fish, and he laid it before the King, who was pleased and ordered the man four thousand dirhams.[129] Thereupon Shirin said to the King, “Thou hast done ill.” Asked he, “And why?”, and she answered, “Because if, after this, though give one of thy courtiers a like sum, he will disdain it and say, He hath but given me the like of what he gave the fisherman.’ And if thou give him less, the same will say, He despiseth me and giveth me less than he gave the fisherman.’” Rejoined Khusrau, “Thou art right, but it would dishonour a king to go back on his gift; and the thing is done.” Quoth Shirin, “If thou wilt, I will contrive thee a means to get it back from him.” Quoth he, “How so?”; and she said, “Call back, if thou so please, the fisherman and ask him if the fish be male or female. If he say, Male,’ say thou, We want a female,’ and if he say, Female,’ say, We want a male.’” So the King sent for the fisherman, who was a man of wit and astuteness, and said to him, “Is this fish male or female?” whereupon the fisherman kissed the ground and answered, “This fish is an hermaphrodite,[130] neither male nor female.” Khusrau laughed at his clever reply and ordered him other four thousand dirhams. So the fisherman went to the treasurer and, taking his eight thousand dirhams, put them in a sack he had with him. Then, throwing it over his shoulder, he was going away, when he dropped a dirham; so he laid the bag off his back and stooped down to pick it up. Now the King and Shirin were looking on, and the Queen said, “O King, didst thou note the meanness of the man, in that he must needs stoop down to pick up the one dirham, and could not bring himself to leave it for any of the King’s servants?” When the King heard these words, he was exceeding wroth with the fisherman and said, “Thou art right, O Shirin!” So he called the man back and said to him, “Thou low-minded carle! Thou art no man! How couldst thou put the bag with all this money off thy back and bend thee groundwards to pick up the one dirham and grudge to leave it where it fell?” Thereupon the fisherman kissed the earth before him and answered, “May Allah prolong the King’s life! Indeed, I did not pick up the dirham off the ground because of its value in my eyes; but I raised it off the earth because on one of its faces is the likeness of the King and on the other his name; and I feared lest any should unwittingly set foot upon it, thus dishonouring the name and presentment of the King, and I be blamed for this offence.” The King wondered at his words and approved of his wit and shrewdness, and ordered him yet another four thousand dirhams. Moreover, he bade cry abroad in his kingdom, saying, “It behoveth none to be guided by women’s counsel; for whoso followeth their advice, loseth, with his one dirham, other twain.”[131] And here is the tale they tell of

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YAHYA BIN KHALID THE BARMECIDE AND THE POOR MAN

Yahya bin Khαlid the Barmecide was returning home, one day, from the Caliph’s palace, when he saw, at the gate of his mansion, a man who rose as he drew near and saluted him, saying, “O Yahya, I am in sore need of that which is in they hand, and I make Allah my intermediary with thee.” So Yahya caused a place to be set aside for him in his house and bade his treasurer carry him a thousand dirhams every day and ordered that his diet be of the choicest of his own meat. The man abode in this case a whole month, at the end of which time, having received in all thirty thousand dirhams and fearing lest Yahya should take the money from him, because of the greatness of the sum, he departed by stealth. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Ninety-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the man, taking with him the money, departed by stealth. But when they told Yahya of this, he said, “By Allah, though he had tarried with me to the end of his days, yet had I not stinted him of my largesse nor cut off from him the bounties of my hospitality!” For, indeed, the excellences of the Barmecides were past count nor can their virtues be committed to description, especially those of Yahya bin Khalid, for he was an ocean[132] of noble qualities, even as saith the poet of him,

“I asked of Bounty, Art thou free?’ Quoth she, *
    No, I am slave to Yahyα Khαlid-son!’
Boughten?’ asked I. Allah forfend,’ quoth she, *
    By heirship, sire to sire’s transmission!’”

And the following is related of

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MOHAMMED AL-AMIN AND THE SLAVE-GIRL

Ja'afar bin Musα al-Hαdi[133] once had a slave-girl, a lutist, called Al-Badr al-Kabvr, than whom there was not in her time a fairer of face nor shapelier of shape nor a more elegant of manners nor a more accomplished in the art of singing and striking the strings; she was indeed perfect in beauty and extreme in every charm. Now Mohammed al-Amvn,[134] son of Zubaydah, heard of her and was urgent with Ja'afar to sell her to him; but he replied, "Thou knowest it beseemeth not one of my rank to sell slave-girls nor set prices on concubines; but were she not a rearling I would send her to thee, as a gift, not grudge her to thee." And Mohammed al-Amin, some days after this went to Ja'afar's house, to make merry; and the host set before him that which it behoveth to set before true friends and bade the damsel Al-Badr al-Kabir sing to him and gladden him. So she tuned the lute and sang with a ravishing melody; whilst Mohammed al-Amin fell to drinking and jollity and bade the cupbearers ply Ja'afar with much wine, till they made him drunken, when he took the damsel and carried her to his own house, but laid not a finger on her. And when the morrow dawned he bade invite Ja'afar; and when he came, he set wine before him and made the girl sing to him, from behind the curtain. Ja'afar knew her voice and was angered at this, but, of the nobleness of his nature and the magnanimity of his mind he showed no change. Now when the carousal was at an end, Al-Amin commanded one of his servants to fill the boat, wherein Ja'afar had come, with dirhams and dinars and all manner of jewels and jacinths and rich raiment and goods galore. So he laid therein a thousand myriads of money and a thousand fine pearls, each worth twenty thousand dirhams; nor did he give over loading the barge with all manner of things precious and rare, till the boatmen cried out for help, saying, "The boat can't hold any more;" whereupon he bade them carry all this to Ja'afar's palace. Such are the exploits of the magnanimous, Allah have mercy on them! And a tale is related of

THE SONS OF YAHYA BIN KHALID AND SA'ID BIN SALIM AL-BAHILI

Quoth Sa'νd bin Sαlim al'Bαhilν,[135] I was once in very narrow case, during the days of Harun al-Rashid, and debts accumulated upon me, burdening my back, and these I had no means of discharging. I was at my wits' end what to do, for my doors were blocking up with creditors and I was without cease importuned for payment by claimants, who dunned me in crowds till at last I was sore perplexed and troubled. So I betook myself to Abdallah bin Mαlik al-Khuza'ν[136] and besought him to extend the hand of aid with his judgement and direct me of his good counsel to the door of relief; and he said, None can save thee from this thy strait and sorrowful state save the Barmecides.' Quoth I, Who can brook their pride and put up patiently with their arrogant pretensions?' and quoth he, Thou wilt put up with all this for the bettering of thy case.'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Ninety-third Night

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdallah ibn Malik al-Khuza'i said to Sa'id bin Salim, "Thou wilt put up with all this for the bettering of thy case." "So I left him suddenly (continued Sa'id) and went straight to Al-Fazl and Ja'afar, sons of Yahyα bin Khαlid, to whom I related my circumstances; whereto they replied, Allah give thee His aid, and render thee by His bounties independent of His creatures and vouchsafe thee abundant weal and bestow on thee what shall suffice thee, without the need of any but Himself; for whatso He willeth that He can, and He is gracious with His servants and knoweth their wants.' So I went out from the twain and returned to Abdallah, with straitened breast and mind perplexed and heavy of heart, and repeated to him what they had said. Quoth he, Thou wouldst do well to abide with us this day, that we may see what Allah Almighty will decree.' So I sat with him awhile, when lo! up came my servant, who said to me, O my lord, there are at our door many laden mules and with them a man, who says he is the agent of Al-Fazl and Ja'afar bin Yahya.' Quoth Abdallah, I trust that relief is come to thee: rise up and go see what is the matter.’ So I left him and, hastening to my house, found at the door a man who gave me a note wherein was written the following: After thou hadst been with us and we heard thy case, we betook ourselves to the Caliph and informed him that ill condition had reduced thee to the humiliation of begging; where upon he ordered us to supply thee with a thousand thousand dirhams from the Treasury. We represented to him: The debtor will spend this money in paying off creditors and wiping off debt; whence then shall he provide for his subsistence? So he ordered thee other three hundred thousand, and each of us hath also sent thee, of his proper wealth, a thousand thousand dirhams: so that thou hast now three thousand thousand and three hundred thousand dirhams wherewithal to order and amend thine estate.’” See, then, the munificence of these magnificos: Almighty Allah have mercy on them! And a tale is told of

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THE WOMAN’S TRICK AGAINST HER HUSBAND

A man brought his wife a fish one Friday and, bidding her to cook it against the end of the congregational prayers, went out to his craft and business. Meanwhile in came her friend who bade her to a wedding at his house; so she agreed and, laying the fish in a jar of water, went off with him and was absent a whole week till the Friday following;[137] whilst her husband sought her from house to house and enquired after her; but none could give him any tidings of her. Now on the next Friday she came home and he fell foul of her; but she brought out to him the fish alive from the jar and assembled the folk against him and told them her tale. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Ninety-fourth Night

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the woman brought out the fish alive from the water-jar and assembled the folk against her husband, and told them her tale. He also told his; but they credited him not and said, “It cannot be that the fish should have remained alive all this while.” So they proved him mad and imprisoned him and mocked at him, where upon he shed tears in floods and recited these two couplets,

“Old hag, of high degree in filthy life, *
Whose face her monstrous lewdness witnesses.
When menstuous she bawds; when clean she whores; *
And all her time bawd or adulteress is.”

And a tale is related of the

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THE DEVOUT WOMAN AND THE TWO WICKED ELDERS[138]

There was in times of yore and in ages long gone before, a virtuous woman among the children of Israel, who was pious and devout and used every day to go out to the place of prayer, first entering a garden, which adjoined thereto, and there making the minor ablution. Now there were in this garden two old men, its keepers, and both Shaykhs fell in love with her and sought her favours; but she refused, whereupon said they, “Unless thou yield thy body to us, we will bear witness against thee of fornication.” Quoth she, “Allah will preserve me from your frowardness!” Then they opened the garden-gate and cried out, and the folk came to them from all places, saying “What aileth you?” Quoth they, “We found this damsel in company with a youth who was doing lewdness with her; but he escaped from our hands.” Now it was the wont of the people in those days to expose adulterer and adulteress to public reproach for three days, and after stone them. So they cried her name in the public streets for three days, while the two elders came up to her daily and, laying their hands on her head, said, “Praised be Allah who hath sent down on thee His righteous indignation!” Now on the fourth day, when they bore her away to stone her, they were followed by a lad named Daniel, who was then only twelve years old, and this was to be the first of his miracles (upon our Prophet and upon him the blessing and peace!). And he ceased not following them to the place of execution, till he came up with them and said to them, “Hasten not to stone her, till I judge between them.” So they set him a chair and he sat down and summoned the old men separately. (Now he was the first ever separated witnesses.) Then said he to the first, “What sawest thou?”[139] So he repeated to him his story, and Daniel asked, “In what part of the garden did this befal?” and he answered, “On the eastern side, under a pear-tree.” Then he called the other old man and asked him the same question, and he replied, “On the western side of the garden, under an apple-tree.” Meanwhile the damsel stood by, with her hands and eyes raised heavenwards, imploring the Lord for deliverance. Then Allah Almighty sent down His blasting leven-fire upon the elders and consumed them, and on this wise the Lord made manifest the innocence of the damsel. Such was the first of the miracles of the Prophet Daniel, on whom be blessing and peace! And they relate a tale of

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JA’AFAR THE BARMECIDE AND THE OLD BADAWL

The Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, went out one day, with Abu Ya’Kïb the cup-companion[140] and Ja’afar the Barmecide and Abu Nowas, into the desert, where they fell in with an old man, propt against his ass. The Caliph bade Ja’afar learn of him whence he came; so he asked him, “Whence comest thou?” and he answered, “From Bassorah.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Ninety-fifth Night,

She said, it hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ja’afar asked the man, “Whence comest thou?”; he answered “From Bassorah.” Quoth Ja’afar, “And whither goest thou?” Quoth the other, “To Baghdad.” Then Ja’afar enquired “And what wilt thou do there?” and the old man replied, “I go to seek medicine for my eye.” Said the Caliph, “O Ja’afar, make thou sport with him,” and answered Ja’afar, “I shall hear what I shall exceedingly mislike.”[141] But Al-Rashid rejoined, “I charge thee on my authority, jest with him.” Thereupon Ja’afar said to the Badawi, “If I prescribe thee a medicine that shall profit thee, what wilt thou give me in return?” Quoth the other, “Allah Almighty will requite the kindness with what is better for thee than any requital of mine.” Continued Ja’afar, “Now lend me an ear and I will give thee a prescription, which I have given to none but thee.” “What is that?” asked the Badawi; and Ja’afar answered, “Take three ounces of wind-breaths and the like of sunbeams and the same of moonshine and as much of lamp-light; mix them well together and let them lie in the wind three months. Then place them three months in a mortar without a bottom and pound them to a fine powder and after trituration set them in a cleft platter, and let it stand in the wind other three months; after which use of this medicine three drachms every night in thy sleep, and, Inshallah! thou shalt be healed and whole.” Now when the Badawi heard this, he stretched himself out to full length on the donkey’s back and let fly a terrible loud fart[142] and said to Ja’afar, “Take this fart in payment of thy prescription. When I have followed it, if Allah grant me recovery, I will give thee a slave-girl, who shall serve thee in they lifetime a service, wherewith Allah shall cut short thy term; and when thou diest and the Lord hurrieth thy soul to hell-fire, she shall blacken thy face with her skite, of her mourning for thee, and shall keen and beat her face, saying O frosty-beard, what a fool thou wast?'"[143] thereupon Harun al-Rashid laughed till he fell backward, and ordered the Badawi three thousand silver pieces. And a tale is told of

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THE CALIPH OMAR BIN AL-KHATTAB AND THE YOUNG BADAWI

The Sharif Husayn bin Rayyαn relateth that the Caliph Omar bin Al-Khattαb was sitting one day judging the folk and doing justice between his subjects, attended by the best and wisest of his counsellors, when there came up to him a youth comely and cleanly attired, upon whom two very handsome youths had laid hold and were haling by the collar till they set him in the presence. Whereupon the Commander of the Faithful, Omar, looked at him and them and bade them loose him; then, calling him near to himself, asked the twain, "What is your case with him?" They answered, "O Prince of True Believers, we are two brothers by one mother and as followers of verity known are we. We had a father, a very old man of good counsel, honoured by the tribes, sound of baseness renowned for goodliness, who reared us tenderly in childhood, and loaded us with favours in manhood;" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Ninety-sixth Night

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the two youths said to the Commander of the Faithful, Omar son of Al-Khattab, "Our father was a man honoured by the tribes, sound of baseness and renowned for goodliness, who reared us delicately in childhood and loaded us with favours in manhood; in fine, a sea of noble and illustrious qualities, worthy of the poet's praise,

Is Aub's-Sakr of Shaybαn[144] ?' they asked; *
    Quoth I, Nay, by my life, of him's Shaybαn:
How many a sire rose high by a noble son, *
    As Allah's prophet glorified Adnan!'[145]

Now he went forth this day to his garden, to refresh himself amongst its trees and pluck the ripe fruits, when this young man slew him wrongously and swerved from the road of righteousness; wherefore we demand of thee the retribution of his crime and call upon thee to pass judgement upon him, according to the commandment of Allah.” Then Omar cast a terrible look at the accused youth and said to him, “Verily thou hearest the complaint these two young men prefer; what hast thou in reply to aver?” But he was brave of heart and bold of speech, having doffed the robe of pusillanimity and put off the garb of cowardry; so he smiled and spake in the most eloquent and elegant words; and, after paying the usual ceremonial compliments to the Caliph, said, ““By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, I have indeed given ear to their complaint, and they have told the truth in that which they tell, so far as they have set out what befel; and the commandment of Allah is a decreed decree.[146] but I will forthright state my case between they hands, and it is for thee to give commands. Know then, O Prince of the Faithful, that I am a very Arab of the Arabies,[147] the noblest of those that are beneath the skies. I grew up in the dwellings of the wold and fell, till evil times my tribe befel, when I came to the outskirts of this town, with my family and whatso goods I own: and, as I went along one of the paths leading to its gardens, orchards and garths, with my she-camels highly esteemed and by me most precious deemed, and midst them a stallion of noble blood and shape right good, a plenteous getter of brood, by whom the females abundantly bore and who walked among them as though a kingly crown he wore, one of the she-camels broke away; and, running to the garden of these young men’s father, where the trees showed above the wall, put forth her lips and began to feed as in stall. I ran to her, to drive her away, when behold, there appeared, at a breach of the wall, an old man and grey, whose eyes sparkled with angry ray, holding in his right a stone to throw and swaying to and fro, with a swing like a lion ready for a spring. He cast the stone at my stallion, and it killed him for it struck a vital part. When I saw the stallion drop dead beside me, I felt live coals of anger kindled in my heart; so I took up the very same stone and throwing it at the old man, it was the cause of his bane and ban: thus his own wrongful act returned to him anew, and the man was slain of that wherewith he slew. When the stone struck him, he cried out with a great cry and shrieked out a terrible shriek, whereupon I hastened from the spot; but these two young men hurried after me and laid hands on me and before thee carried me.” Quoth Omar (Almighty Allah accept of him!), “Thou hast confessed what thou committedest, and of acquittal there is no possible occasion; for urgent is the law of retaliation and they cried for mercy but it was not a time to escape."[148] the youth answered, "I hear and obey the judgement of the Imam, and I consent to all required by the law of Al-Islam; but I have a young brother, whose old father, before his decease, appointed to him wealth in great store and gold galore, and committed his affair to me before Allah, saying: I give this into thy hand for thy brother; keep it for him with all thy might.' So I took the money and buried it; nor doth any know of it but I. Now, if thou adjudge me to be justiced forthright, the money will lost and thou shalt be the cause of its loss; wherefore the child will sue thee for his due on the day when the Creator shall judge between His creatures. But, if thou wilt grant me three days' delay, I will appoint some guardian to administer the affairs of the boy and return to answer my debt; and I have one who will be my surety for the fulfillment of this my promise." So the Commander of the Faithful bowed his head awhile, then raised it and looking round upon those present, said, "Who will stand surety by me for his return to this place?" And the youth looked at the faces of those who were in company and pointing to Abu Zarr,[149] in preference to all present, said, "This man shall answer for me and be my bail." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the youth pointed to Abu Zarr and said, "This man shall answer for me and be my bail," Omar (Allah accept of him!) said, O Abu Zarr, dost thou hear these words and wilt thou be surety to me for the return of this youth?" He answered, "Yes, O Commander of the Faithful, I will be surety for him for three days." So the Caliph accepted his guarantee and let the young man go. Now when the appointed time passed and the days of grace were nearly or quite at end yet the youth came not, the Caliph took seat in his council, with the Companions surrounding him, like the constellations about the moon, Abu Zarr and the plaintiffs being also present; and the avengers said, "Where is the defendant, O Abu Zarr, and how shall he return, having once fled? But we will not stir from our places till thou bring him to us, that we may take of him our blood revenge." Replied Abu Zarr, "By the truth of the All-Wise King, if the three days of grace expire and the young man returneth not, I will fulfill my warranty and surrender my person to the Imam;" and added Omar (whom Allah accept!), "By the Lord, if the young man appear not, I will assuredly execute on Abu Zarr that which is prescribed by the law of Al-Islam!"[150] thereupon the eyes of the bystanders ran over with tears; those who looked on groaned aloud and great was the clamour. Then the chiefs of the Companions urged the plaintiffs to accept the blood-wit and deserve the thanks of the folk; but they both refused and would accept nothing save the talion. However, as the folk were swaying to and fro like waves and loudly bemoaning Abu Zarr, behold, up came the young Badawi; and, standing before the Imam, saluted him right courteously (with sweat-beaded face and shining with the crescent's grace) and said to him, "I have given the lad in charge to his mother's brothers and have made them acquainted with all that pertaineth to his affairs and let them into the secrets of his monies; after which I braved the heats of noon and have kept my word as a free- born man." Thereupon the folk marvelled, seeing his good faith and loyalty and his offering himself to death with so stout a heart; and one said to him, "How noble a youth art thou and how loyal to thy word of honour and thy devoir!" Rejoined he, "Are ye not convinced that when death presenteth itself, none can escape from it? And indeed, I have kept my word, that it be not said, Good faith is gone from among mankind.' " Said Abu Zarr, "By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, I became warrant for this young man, without knowing to what tribe he belonged, nor had I seen him before that day; but, when he turned away from all who were present and singled me out, saying, This man shall answer for me and be my bail,' I thought it not right to refuse him, and generosity forbade to disappoint his desire, there being no harm in compliance therewith, that it be not bruited abroad, Benevolence is gone from among mankind." Then said the two young men, "O Commander of the Faithful, we forgive this youth our father's blood, seeing that he hath changed desolation into cheerfulness; that it be not said, Humanity is gone from among mankind." So the Caliph rejoiced in the acquittance of the youth and his truth and good faith; moreover, he magnified the generosity of Abu Zarr, extolling it over all his companions, and approved the resolve of the two young men for its benevolence, giving them praise with thanks and applying to their case the saying of the poet,

“Who doth kindness to men shall be paid again; *
Ne’er is kindness lost betwixt God and men.”

Then he offered to pay them, from the Treasury, the blood-wit for their father; but they refused, saying, “We forgave him only of our desire unto Allah,[151] the Bountiful, the Exalted; and he who is thus intentioned followeth not his benefits with reproach or with mischief.”[152] and amongst the tales they relate is that of

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THE CALIPH AL-MAAMUN AND THE PYRAMIDS[153] OF EGYPT

It is told that the Caliph Al-Maamun, son of Harun al-Rashid, when he entered the God-guarded city of Cairo, was minded to pull down the Pyramids, that he might take what was therein; but, when he went about to do this, he could not succeed, albeit his best was done. He expended a mint of money in the attempt, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred Ninety-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Al-Maamun attempting to pull down the Pyramids, expended his mint of money, but succeeded only in opening up a small tunnel in one of them, where in it is said he found treasure to the exact amount of the monies he had spent in the works, neither more nor less; whereat he marvelled and taking what he found there, desisted from his determination. Now the Pyramids are three, and they are one of the Wonders of the World; nor is there on the face of earth aught like them for height and fashion and mysteries[154] ; for they are built of huge rocks, and the builders proceeded by piercing one block of stone and setting therein upright rods of iron[155] ; after which they pierced a second block of stone and lowered it upon the first. Then they poured melted lead upon the clamps and set the blocks in geometrical order, till the building was complete. Now the height of each pyramid was an hundred cubits, of the normal measure of the day, and it had four faces, each three hundred cubits long from the base and thence battering upwards to a point. The ancients say that, in the western Pyramid, are thirty chambers of parti-coloured syenite, full of precious gems and treasures galore and rare images and utensils and costly weapons which are anointed with egromantic unguents, so that they may not rust until the day of Resurrection.[156] Therein, also, are vessels of glass which bend and break not, containing various kinds of compound drugs and sympathetic waters. In the second Pyramid are the records of the priests, written on tablets of syenite, to each priest his tablet, whereon are engraved the wonders of his craft and his feats; and on the walls are the human figures like idols, working with their hands at all manner of mechanism and seated on stepped thrones. Moreover, to each Pyramid there is a guardian treasurer who keepeth watch over it and wardeth it, to all eternity, against the ravages of time and the shifts of events; and indeed the marvels of these Pyramids astound all who have sight and insight. Many are the poems that describe them, thou shalt thereby profit no small matter, and among the rest, quoth one of them,

“If Kings would see their high emprize preserved, *
Twill be by tongues of monuments they laid:
Seest not the Pyramids? These two endure *
Despite what change Time and Change have made.”

And quoth another,

“Look on the Pyramids, and hear the twain *
Recount their annals of the long-gone Past:
Could they but speak, high marvels had they told *
Of what Time did to man from first to last.”

And quoth a third,

“My friend I prithee tell me, ‘neath the sky *
Is aught with Egypt’s Pyramids can compare?
Buildings which frighten Time, albe what dwells *
On back of earth in fear of Time must fare:
If on their marvels rest my sight no more, *
Yet these I ever shall in memory bear.”

And quoth a fourth,

“Where is the man who built the Pyramids? *
What was his tribe, what day and where his tomb?
The monuments survive the men who built *
Awhile, till overthrown by touch of Doom.”

And men also tell a tale of

THE THIEF AND THE MERCHANT

There was once a thief who repented to Almighty Allah with sincere penitence; so he opened himself a shop for the sale of stuffs, where he continued to trade awhile. It so chanced one day that he locked his shop and went home, and in the night there came to the bazar an artful thief disguised in the habit of the merchant, and pulling out keys from his sleeve, said to the watchman of the market, “Light me this wax-candle.” The watchman took the taper and went to light it, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Three Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the watchman took the taper and went to light it, whilst the thief opened the shop and lit another candle he had by him. When the watchman came back, he found him seated in the shop, account- books inhand, and reckoning with his fingers; nor did he cease to do thus till point of day, when he said to the man, “Fetch me a camel-driver and his camel, to carry some goods for me.” So the man fetched him a camel, and the thief took four bales[157] of stuffs and gave them to the cameleer, who loaded them on his beast. Then he gave the watchman two dirhams and went away after the camel-driver, leaving the watchman believing him to be the owner of the shop. Now when the morning dawned and day broke the merchant came and the watchman began greeting him with blessings, because of the two dirhams; but the shop-keeper wondered at his words as one not knowing what he meant. When he opened his shop, he saw the droppings of the wax and the account-book lying on the floor, and looking round, found four bales of stuffs missing. So he asked the watchman what had happened and he told him what has passed in the night and what had been said to the cameleer, whereupon the merchant bade him fetch the man and asked him, “Whither didst thou carry the stuffs this morning?” Answered the driver, “To such a landing-place, and I stowed them on board such a vessel.” Said the merchant, “Come with me thither;” so the camel-driver carried him to the landing-place and said to him, “This be the barque and this be her owner." Quoth the merchant to the seaman, "Whither didst thou carry the merchant and the stuff?" Answered the boat-master, "To such a place, where he fetched a camel-driver and, setting the bales on the camel, went his ways I know not whither." "Fetch me the cameleer who carried the goods," said the merchant; so he fetched him and the merchant said to him, "Whither didst thou carry the bales of goods from the ship?" "To such a Khan," answered he; and the merchant rejoined, "Come thither with me and show it to me." So the camel-man went with him to a place far distant from the shore and showed him the Khan where he had set down the stuffs, and at the same time the false merchant's magazine, which he opened and found therein his four bales bound up as they had been packed. The thief had laid his cloak over them; so the merchant took the cloak as well as the bales and delivered them to the camel- driver, who laid them on his camel; after which he locked the magazine and went away with the cameleer. On the way, he was confronted with the thief who followed him, till he had shipped the bales, when he said to him, "O my brother (Allah have thee in His holy keeping!), thou hast indeed recovered thy goods and naught of them is lost; so give me back my cloak." The merchant laughed and, giving him back his cloak, let him go unhindered; whereupon both went their ways. And they tell a tale of

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MASRUR THE EUNUCH AND IBN AL-KARIBI

The Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, was exceedingly restless one night; so he said to his Wazir Ja'afar, "I am sleepless to-night and my breast is straitened and I know not what to do." Now his castrato Masrïr was standing before him, and he laughed: whereupon the Caliph said "At whom laughest thou? Is it to make mock of me or hath madness seized thee?" Answered Masrur, "Nay, by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundredth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Harun al-Rashid said to Masrur the Sworder, "Dost thou laugh to make mock of me or hath madness seized thee?" Answered Masrur, "Nay, by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, I swear by thy kinship to the Prince of Apostles, I did it not of my free will; but I went out yesterday to walk within sight of the palace and, coming to the bank of the Tigris, saw there the folk collected; so I stopped and found a man, Ibn al-Kαribν hight, who was making them laugh; but just now I recalled what he said, and laughter got the better of me; and I crave pardon of thee, O Commander of the Faithful!" Quoth the Caliph, "Bring him to me forthright;" so Masrur repaired in all haste to Ibn al-Karibi and said to him, "Answer the summons of the Commander of the Faithful," whereto he replied, "I hear and obey." "But on condition," added Masrur, "that, if he give thee aught, thou shalt have a quarter and the rest shall be mine." Replied the droll, "Nay, thou shalt have half and I half." Rejoined Masrur, "Not so, I will have three- quarters." Lastly said Ibn al-Karibi, "Thou shalt have two- thirds and I the other third;" to which Masrur agreed, after much higgling and haggling, and they returned to the palace together. Now when Ibn al-Karibi came into the Caliph's presence he saluted him as men greet the Caliphate, and stood before him; whereupon said Al-Rashid to him, "If thou do not make me laugh, I will give thee three blows with this bag." Quoth Ibn al-Karibi in his mind, "And a small matter were blows with that bag, seeing that beating with whips hurteth me not;" for he thought the bag was empty. Then he began to deal out his drolleries, such as would make the dismallest jemmy guffaw, and gave vent to all manner of buffooneries; but the Caliph laughed not neither smiled, whereat Ibn al-Karibi marvelled and was chagrined and affrighted. Then said the Commander of the Faithful, "Now hast thou earned the beating," and gave him a blow with the bag, wherein were four pebbles each two rotols in weight. The blow fell on his neck and he gave a great cry, then calling to mind his compact with Masrur, said, "Pardon, O Commander of the Faithful! Hear two words from me." Quoth the Caliph, "Say on," and quoth Ibn al- Karibi, "Masrur made it a condition with me and I a covenant with him, that whatsoever largesse might come to me of the bounties of the Commander of the Faithful, one-third thereof should be mine and the rest his; nor did he agree to leave me so much as one- third, save after much higgling and haggling. I have had my share and here standeth he, ready to receive his portion; so pay him the two other blows." Now when the Caliph heard this, he laughed until he fell on his back; then calling Masrur, he gave him a blow, whereat he cried out and said, "O Commander of the Faithful, the one-third sufficeth me: give him the two-thirds." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and First Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Masrur cried out, "O Commander of the Faithful! The one-third sufficeth me; give him the two-thirds." So the Caliph laughed at them and ordered them a thousand dinars each, and they went away, rejoicing at the largesse. And of the tales they tell is one of

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THE DEVOTEE PRINCE

The Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, had a son who, from the time he attained the age of sixteen, renounced the world and walked in the way[158] of ascetics and devotees. He was wont to go out to the graveyards and say, “Ye once ruled the world, but that saved you not from death, and now are ye come to your sepulchres! Would Heaven I knew what ye said and what is said to you!”[159] and he wept as one weepeth who is troubled with fear and apprehension, and repeated the worlds of the poet,

“Affright me funerals at every time; *
And wailing women grieve me to the soul!”

Now it chanced one day, as he sat among the tombs, according to his custom, his father passed by in all his state, surrounded by his Wazirs and Lords of the realm and the Officers of his household, who seeing the Caliph’s son with a gown of woollen stuff on his body and a twist of wool on his head by way of turband, said to one another, “Verily this youth dishonoureth the Commander of the Faithful among Kings: but, if he reproved him, he would leave his present way of life.” The Caliph heard these words; so quoth he to his son, “O my dear child, of a truth thou disgracest me by thy present way of life.” The young man looked at him and made no reply: then he beckoned to a bird perched on the battlements of the palace, and said to it, “O thou bird, I conjure thee by Him who created thee, alight upon my hand.” Whereupon straightway it swooped down and perched on his finger. Then quoth he, “Return to thy place;” and it did so. Presently he said, “Alight on the hand of the Commander of the Faithful;” but it refused there to perch, and he cried to his father, “It is thou that disgracest me amongst the Holy[160] Ones, by the love of the world; and now I am resolved to part from thee, never to return to thee, save in the world to come.” Then he went down to Bassorah, where he took to working with those which wrought in clay,[161] receiving, as his day’s hire, but a dirham and a danik;[162] and with the danik he fed himself and gave alms of the dirham. (Quoth Abï Amir of Bassorah) “There fell down a wall in my house; so I went forth to the station of the artisans to find a man who should repair it for me, and my eyes fell on a handsome youth of a radiant countenance. So I saluted him and asked him, O my friend, dost thou seek work?’ Yes,’ answered he; and I said, Come with me and build a wall.’ He replied, On certain conditions I will make with thee.’ Quoth I What are they, O my friend?’; and quoth he, My wage must be a dirham and a danik, and again when the Mu’ezzin calleth to prayer, thou shalt let me go pray with the congregation.’ It is well,’ answered I and carried him to my lace, where he fell to work, such work as I never saw the like of. Presented I named to him the morning-meal; but he said, No;’ and I knew that he was fasting.[163] When he heard the call to prayer, he said to me, Thou knowest the condition?’ Yes,’ answered i. So he loosed his girdle and, applying himself to the lesser ablution, made it after a fashion than which I never saw a fairer;[164] then he went to the mosque and prayed with the congregation and returned to his work. He did the same upon the call to mid- afternoon prayer, and when I saw him fall to work again thereafterward, I said to him, O my friend, verily the hours of labour are over; a workman’s day is but till the time of afternoon-prayer.’ But he replied, Praise to the Lord, my service is till the night.’ And he ceased not to work till nightfall, when I gave him two dirhams; whereupon he asked What is this!’; and I answered, By Allah, this is but part of thy wage, because of thy diligence in my service.’ But he threw them back to me saying, I will have no more than was agreed upon between us twain.’ I urged him to take them, but could not prevail upon him; so I gave him the dirham and the danik, and he went away. And when morning dawned, I went to the station but found him not; so I enquired for him and was told, He cometh thither only on Sabbaths.’ Accordingly, when Saturday came, I betook me to the market and finding him there, said to him, Bismillah, do me the favour to come and work for me.’ Said he, Upon the conditions thou wottest;’ and I answered Yes!’ Then carrying him to my house I stood to watch him where he could not see me; and he took a handful of puddled clay and laid it on the wall, when, behold, the stones ranged themselves one upon other; and I said, On this wise are Allah’s holy ones.’ he worked out his day and did even more than before; and when it was night, I gave him his hire, and he took it and walked away. Now when the third Saturday came round, I went to the place of standing, but found him not; so I asked after him and they told me, He is sick and lying in the shanty of such a woman.’ Now this was an old wife, renowned for piety, who had a hovel of reeds in the burial- ground. So I fared thither and found him stretched on the floor which was bare, with a brick for a pillow and his face beaming like the new moon with light. I saluted him and he returned my salam; and I sat down at his head weeping over his fair young years and absence from home and submission to the will of his Lord. Then said I to him, Hast thou any need?’ Yes,’ answered he; and I said, What is it?’ He replied, Come hither to-morrow in the forenoon and thou wilt find me dead. Wash me and dig my grave and tell none thereof: but shroud me in this my gown, after thou hast unsewn it and taken out what thou shalt find in the bosom-pocket, which keep with thee. Then, when thou hast prayed over me and laid me in the dust, go to Baghdad and watch for the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, till he come forth, when do thou give him what thou shalt find in the breast of my gown and bear him my salutation.’ Then he ejaculated the profession of the Faith and glorified his God in the most eloquent of words, reciting these couplets,

Carry the trust of him whom death awaits *
    To Al-Rashid and God reward thy care!
And say An exile who desired thy sight *
    Long loving, from afar sends greeting fair.
Nor hate nor irk (No!) him from thee withdrew, *
    Kissing thy right to Heaven brought him near.[165]
But what estranged his soul, O sire, from thee *
    Is that thy worldly joys it would not share!’

Then he betook himself to prayer, asking pardon of Allah’ — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the youth then betook himself to asking pardon of Allah and to invoking prayer and praise upon the Apostle and the Lord of the Just and repeating verses of the Koran; after which he recited these couplets,

"O sire, be not deceived by worldly joys; *
For life must pass, and joy must learn to mourn;
When thou art told of folk in evil plight, *
Think thou must answer for all hearts forlorn;
And when thou bear thy dead towards the tombs, *
Know thou wilt likewise on that way be bourne."

Continued Abu the Basri, "Now when the youth had ended his charge and his verses I left him and went home. On the morrow, I returned, at the appointed hour, and found him indeed dead, the mercy of Allah be upon him! So I washed him and, unsewing his gown, found in the bosom a ruby worth thousands of gold pieces and said to myself, By Allah, this youth was indeed weaned from worldly things!' After I had buried him, I made my way to Baghdad and, going to the Caliph's palace, waited till he came forth, when I addressed him in one of the streets and gave him the ruby, which when he saw, he knew and fell down in a fainting- fit. His attendants laid hands on me, but he revived and said to them, Release him and bring him courteously to the palace.' They did his bidding, and when he returned, he sent for me and carrying me into his chamber said to me, How doth the owner of this ruby?' Quoth I, Verily, he is dead;' and told him what had passed; whereupon he fell a-weeping and said, The son hath gained; but the sire hath lost.' Then he called out, saying, Ho, such an one!'; and behold there came out to him a lady who, when she saw me, would have withdrawn; but he cried to her, Come, and mind him not.' So she entered and saluted, and he threw her the ruby, which when she saw and she knew, she shrieked a great shriek and fell down in a swoon. As soon as she came to herself, she said, O Commander of the Faithful, what hath Allah done with my son?'; and he said to me, Do thou tell her his case' (as he could not speak for weeping). Accordingly, I repeated the story to her, and she began to shed tears and say in a faint and wailing voice, How I have longed for thy sight, O solace of mine eyes![166] Would I might have given thee to drink, when thou hadst none to slake thy thirst! Would I might have cheered thee, whenas thou foundest never a cheerer!' And she poured forth tears and recited these couplets,

I weep for one whose lot a lonely death befel; *
Without a friend to whom he might complain and moan:
And after glory and glad union with his friends, *
He woke to desolation, friendless, lorn and lone;
What Fortune hides a while she soon to all men shall show; *
Death never spared a man; no, not a single one:
O absent one, my Lord decreed thee strangerhood, *
Far from thy nearest friends and to long exile gone:
Though Death forbid my hope of meeting here again, *
On Doom-day's morrow we shall meet again, my son![167]

Quoth I, O Commander of the Faithful, was he indeed thy son?' Quoth he, Yes, and indeed, before I succeeded to this office, he was wont to visit the learned and company with the devout; but, when I became Caliph, he grew estranged from me and withdrew himself apart.[168] Then said I to his mother, Verily this thy son hath cut the world and devoted his life to Almighty Allah, and it may be that hard times shall befal him and he be smitten with trial of evil chance; wherefore do thou given him this ruby, which he may find useful in hour of need.' So she gave it him, conjuring him to take it, and he obeyed her bidding. Then he left to us the things of our world and removed himself from us; nor did he cease to be absent from us, till he went to the presence of Allah (to whom be Honour and Glory!), pious and pure.' Then said he, Come, show me his grave.' So, I travelled with him to Bassorah and showed him his son's grave; and when he saw it, he wept and lamented, till he fell down in a swoon; after which he recovered and asked pardon of the Lord, saying, We are Allah's and unto Him we are returning!'; and involved blessings on the dead. Then he asked me to become his companion, but I said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, verily, in thy son's case is for me the most momentous of admonitions!' And I recited these couplets,

“Tis I am the stranger, visited by none; *
    I am the stranger though in town my own:
Tis I am the stranger! Lacking kith and son, *
    And friend to whom I mote for aidance run.
I house in mosques which are my only home; *
    My heart there wones and shall for ever wone:
Then laud ye Allah, Lord of Worlds, as long *
    As soul and body dwell in union!’”

And a famous tale is told of

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THE UNWISE SCHOOLMASTER WHO FELL IN LOVE BY REPORT

Quoth one of the learned, “I passed once by a school, wherein a schoolmaster was teaching children; so I entered, finding him a good-looking man and a well-dressed; when he rose to me and made me sit with him. Then I examined him in the Koran and in syntax and prosody and lexicography; and behold, he was perfect in all required of him, so I said to him, Allah strengthen thy purpose! Thou art indeed versed in all that is requisite,’ thereafter I frequented him a while, discovering daily some new excellence in him, and quoth I to myself, This is indeed a wonder in any dominie; for the wise are agreed upon a lack of wit in children’s teachers.’ Then I separated myself from him and sought him and visited him only every few days, till coming to see him one day as of wont, I found the school shut and made enquiry of his neighbors, who replied, Some one is dead in his house.’ So I said in my mind, It behoveth me to pay him a visit of condolence,’ and going to his house, knocked at the door, when a slave-girl came out to me and asked, What dost thou want?’ and I answered, I want thy master.’ She replied, He is sitting alone, mourning;’ and I rejoined, Tell him that his friend so and so seeketh to console him.’ She went in and told him; and he said, Admit him.’ So she brought me in to him, and I found him seated alone and his head bound with mourning fillets. So I said to him, Allah requite thee amply! this is a path all must perforce tread, and it behoveth thee to take patience;’ adding, But who is dead unto thee?’ He answered, One who was dearest of the folk to me, and best beloved.’ Perhaps thy father?’ No!’ Thy brother?’ “No!’ “One of thy kindred?’ No!’ Then asked I, What relation was the dead to thee?’; and he answered, My lover.’ Quoth I to myself, This is the first proof to swear by his lack of wit.’ So I said to him, Assuredly there be others than she and fairer;’ and he made answer, I never saw her, that I might judge whether or no there be others fairer than she.’ Quoth I to myself, This is another proof positive.’ Then I said to him, And how couldst thou fall in love with one thou hast never seen?’ He replied Know that I was sitting one day at the window, when lo! there passed by a man, singing the following distich,

Umm Amr’,[169] thy boons Allah repay! *
Give back my heart be’t where it may!’”

And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the schoolmaster continued, “ When I heard the man humming these words as he passed along the street, I said to myself Except this Umm Amru were without equal in the world, the poets had not celebrated her in ode and canzon.’ So I fell in love with her; but, two days after, the same man passed, singing the following couplet,

Ass and Umm Amr’ went their way; *
Nor she, nor ass returned for aye.’

Thereupon I knew she was dead and mourned for her. This was three days ago, and I have been mourning ever since. So I left him, (concluded the learned one) and fared forth, having assured myself of the weakness of the gerund-grinder’s wit.” And they tell another and a similar tale of

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THE FOOLISH DOMINIE[170]

Once upon a time, a schoolmaster was visited by a man of letters who entered a school and, sitting down by the host's side, entered into discourse with him and found him an accomplished theologian, poet grammarian, philologist and poet; intelligent, well bred and pleasant spoken; whereat he wondered, saying in himself, "It cannot be that a man who teacheth children in a school, should have a perfect wit." Now when he was about to go away, the pedant said to him, "Thou are my guest to-night;" and he consented to receive hospitality and accompanied him to his house, where he made much of him and set food before him. They ate and drank and sat talking, till a third part of the night was past when the host spread his guest a bed and went up to his Harim. The stranger lay down and addressed himself to sleep, when, behold, there arose a great clamour in the women's rooms. He asked what was the matter and they said, "A terrible thing hath befallen the Shaykh and he is at the last gasp." Said he, "Take me up to him"; so they took him up to the pedagogue whom he found lying insensible, with his blood streaming down. He sprinkled water on his face and when he revived, he asked him, "What hath betided thee? When thou leftest me, thou wast in all good cheer and whole of body," and he answered, "O my brother, after I left thee, I sat meditating on the creative works of Almighty Allah, and said to myself: In every thing the Lord hath created for man, there is an use; for He (to Whom be glory!) made the hands to seize, the feet to walk, the eyes to see, the ears to hear and the penis to increase and multiply; and so on with all the members of the body, except these two ballocks; there is no use in them.' So I took a razor I had by me and cut them off; and there befel me what thou seest." So the guest left him and went away, saying, "He was in the right who said, Verily no schoolmaster who teacheth children can have a perfect wit, though he know all the sciences.'" And they tell a pleasant tale of the

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ILLITERATE WHO SET UP FOR A SCHOOLMASTER

There was once, among the menials[171] of a certain mosque, a man who knew not how to write or even to read and who gained his bread by gulling folk. One day, it occurred to him to open a school and teach children; so he got together writing-tablets and written papers and hung them up in a high place. Then he greatened his turband[172] and sat down at the door of the school; and when the people, who passed by, saw his huge head- gear and tablets and scrolls, they thought he must be a very learned pedagogue; so they brought him their children; and he would say to this, “Write,” and to that “Read”; and thus the little ones taught each other. Now one day, as he sat as of wont, at the door of the school, behold, up came a woman letter in hand, and he said in his mind, “This woman doubtless seeketh me, that I may read her the missive she hath in her hand: how shall I do with her, seeing I cannot read writing?” And he would fain have gone down and fled from her; but, before he could do this, she overtook him and said to him, “Whither away?” Quoth he, “I purpose to pray the noon-prayer and return.” Quoth she, “Noon is yet distant, so read me this letter.” He took the letter and turning it upside down, fell to looking at it, now shaking his head till his turband quivered, then dancing his eyebrows and anon showing anger and concern. Now the letter came from the woman’s husband, who was absent; and when she saw the dominie do on this wise, she said to herself, “Doubtless my husband is dead, and this learned doctor of law and religion is ashamed to tell me so.” So she said to him, “O my lord, if he be dead, tell me;” but he shook his head and held his peace. Then said she, “Shall I rend my raiment?” “Rend!” replied he. “Shall I beat my face?” asked she; and he answered, “Beat!” So she took the letter from his hand and returned home fell a-weeping, she and her children. Presently, one of her neighbours heard her sobbing and asking what aileth her, was answered, “Of a truth she hath gotten a letter, telling her that her husband is dead.” Quoth the man, “This is a falsehood; for I had a letter from him but yesterday, advising me that he is whole and in good health and will be with her after ten days.”

So he rose forthright and going in to her, said, “Where is the letter which came to thee?” She brought it to him, and he took it and read it; and lo! it ran as follows, “After the usual salutations, I am well and in good health and whole and will be with you all after ten days. Meanwhile, I send you a quilt and an extinguisher.”[173] So she took the letter and, returning to the schoolmaster, said to him, “What induced thee to deal thus with me?” And she repeated to him what her neighbour had told her of her husband’s well- being and of his having sent her a quilt and an extinguisher. Answered he, “Thou art in the right, O good woman; for I was, at the time” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the pedagogue replied, “Verily I was at that time fashed and absent-minded and, seeing the extinguisher wrapped up in the quilt, I thought that he was dead and they had shrouded him.” The woman, not smoking the cheat, said, “Thou art excused,” and taking the letter, went her ways.[174] And they relate a story of

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THE KING AND THE VIRTUOUS WIFE.

A certain King once went forth in disguise, to look into the affairs of his lieges. Presently, he came to a great village which he entered unattended and being athirst, stopped at the door of a house and asked for water. There came out to him a fair woman with a gugglet, which she gave him, and he drank. When he looked at her, he was ravished with her and besought her favours. Now she knew him; so she led him into the house and, making him sit down, brought out a book and said to him, “Look therein whilst I order my affair and return to thee.” So he looked into the book, and behold, it treated of the Divine prohibition against advoutry and of the punishments which Allah hath prepared for those who commit adulterous sin. When he read this, his flesh quaked and his hair bristled and he repented to Almighty Allah: then he called the woman and, giving her the book, went away. Now her husband was absent and when he returned, she told him what had passed, whereat he was confounded and said in himself, “I fear lest the King’s desire have fallen upon her.” And he dared not have to do with her and know her carnally after this. When some time had past, the wife told her kinsfolk of her husband’s conduct, and they complained of him to the King, saying, “Allah advance the King! This man hired of us a piece of land for tillage, and tilled it awhile; then left it fallow and neither tilled it nor forsook it, that we might let it to one who would till it. Indeed, harm is come to the field, and we fear its corruption, for such land as that if it be not sown, spoileth.” Quoth the King to the man, “What hindereth thee from sowing thy land?” Answered he, “Allah advance the King! It reached me that the lion entered the field wherefore I stood in awe of him and dared not draw near it, since knowing that I cannot cope with the lion, I stand in fear of him.” The King understood the parable and rejoined, saying, “O man, the lion trod and trampled not thy land, and it is good for seed so do thou till it and Allah prosper thee in it, for the lion hath done it no hurt.” Then he bade give the man and his wife a handsome present and sent them away.[175] And amongst the stories is that of

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ABD AL-RAHMAN THE MAGHRIBI'S STORY OF THE RUKH.[176]

There was once a man of the people of West Africa who had journeyed far and wide and traversed many a desert and a tide. He was once cast upon an island, where he abode a long while and, returning thence to his native country, brought with him the quill of a wing feather of a young Rukh, whilst yet in egg and unhatched; and this quill was big enough to hold a goat skin of water, for it is said that the length of the Rukh chick's wing, when he cometh forth of the egg, is a thousand fathoms. The folk marvelled at this quill, when they saw it, and the man who was called Abd al-Rahman the Moor (and he was known, to boot, as the Chinaman, for his long sojourn in Cathay), related to them the following adventure, one of many of his traveller's tales of marvel. He was on a voyage in the China seas — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abd al-Rahman, the Moorman, the Chinaman, was wont to tell wondrous tales amongst which was the following. He was on a voyage in the China seas with a company of merchants, when they sighted an island from afar; so they steered for it and, making fast thereto, saw that it was large and spacious. The ship's crew went ashore to get wood and water, taking with them hatchets and ropes and water skies (the travellers accompanying them), and presently espied a great dome, white and gleaming, an hundred cubits long. So they made towards it and drawing near, found that it was an egg of the Rukh and fell on it with axes and stones and sticks till they uncovered the young bird and found the chick as it were a firm set hill. So they plucked out one of the wing feathers, but could not do so, save by helping one another, for all the quills were not full grown, after which they took what they could carry of the young bird's flesh and cutting the quill away from the vane, returned to the ship. Then they set sail and putting out to sea, voyaged with a fair wind all that night, till the sun rose; and while everything went well, they saw the Rukh come flying after them, as he were a vast cloud, with a rock in his talons, like a great heap bigger than the ship. As soon as he poised himself in air over the vessel, he let fall the rock upon it; but the craft, having great way on her, outwent the rock, which fell into the sea with a loud crash and a horrible. So Allah decreed their deliverance and saved them from doom; and they cooked the young bird's flesh and ate it. Now there were amongst them old white bearded men; and when they awoke on the morrow, they found that their beards had turned black, nor did any who had eaten of the young Rukh grow gray ever after. Some said the cause of the return of youth to them and the ceasing of hoariness from them was that they had heated the pot with arrow wood, whilst others would have it that it came of eating the Rukh chick's flesh; and this is indeed a wonder of wonders.[177] And a story is related of

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ADI BIN ZAYD AND THE PRINCESS HIND.

Al-Nu’uman Bin Al-Munzir, King of the Arabs of Irak, had a daughter named Hind, who went out one Pasch, which is a feast day of the Nazarenes, to the White Church, to take the sacrament; she was eleven years old and was the loveliest woman of her age and time; and it so chanced that on the same day came to Hirah[178] a young man called ‘Adv bin Zayd[179] with presents from the Chosroλ to Al-Nu’uman, and he also went to the White Church, to communicate. He was tall of stature and fair of favour, with handsome eyes and smooth cheeks, and had with him a company of his people. Now there was with Hind bint al-Nu’uman a slave girl named Mαriyah, who was enamoured of Adi, but had not been able to foregather with him. So, when she saw him in the church, she said to Hind, “Look at yonder youth. By Allah, he is handsomer than all thou seest!” Hind asked, “And who is he?” and Mariyah answered, “Adi bin Zayd.” Quoth Al-Nu’uman’s daughter, “I fear lest he know me, if I draw nearer to look on him.” Quoth Mariyah, “How should he know thee when he hath never seen thee?” So she drew near him and found him jesting with the youths his companions; and indeed he surpassed them all, not only in his personal charms but in the excellence of his speech, the eloquence of his tongue and the richness of his raiment. When the Princess saw him, she was ravished with him, her reason was confounded and her colour changed; and Mariyah, seeing her inclination to him, said to her, “Speak him.” So she spoke to him and went away. Now when he looked upon her and heard her speech, he was captivated by her and his wit was dazed; his heart fluttered, and his colour changed so that his companions suspected him, and he whispered one of them to follow her and find out who she was. The young man went after her and returning informed him that she was princess Hind, daughter of Al-Nu’uman. So Adi left the church, knowing not whither he went, for excess of love, and reciting these two couplets,

“O friends of me, one favour more I pray: *
Unto the convents[180] find more your way:

Turn me that so I face the land of Hind; *
Then go, and fairest greetings for me say."

Then he went to his lodging and lay that night, restless and without appetite for the food of sleep. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Adi ended his verses he went to his lodging and lay that night restless and without appetite for the food of sleep. Now on the morrow Mariyah accosted him and he received her kindly, though before he would not incline to her, and said to her, "What is thy will?" Quoth she, "I have a want of thee;" and quoth he, "Name it, for by Allah, thou shalt not ask me aught, but I will give it thee!" So she told him that she loved him, and her want of him was that he would grant her a lover's privacy; and he agreed to do her will, on condition that she would serve him with Hind and devise some device to bring them together. Then he took her into a vintner's tavern in one of the by streets of Hirah, and lay with her; after which she returned to Hind and asked her, "Dost thou not long to see Adi?" She answered, "How can this be? Indeed my longing for him makes me restless, and no repose is left me since yesterday." Quoth Mariyah, "I will appoint him to be in such a place, where thou canst look on him from the palace." Quoth Hind, "Do what thou wilt," and agreed with her upon the place. So Adi came, and the Princess looked out upon him; and, when she saw him, she was like to topple down from the palace top and said, "O Mariyah, except thou bring him in to me this night, I shall die." So saying, she fell to the ground in a fainting fit, and her serving women lifted her up and bore her into the palace; whilst Mariyah hastened to Al-Nu'uman and discovered the whole matter to him with perfect truth, telling him that indeed she was mad for the love of Adi; and except he marry her to him she must be put to shame and die of love for him, which would disgrace her father among the Arabs, adding at the end, "There is no cure for this but wedlock." The King bowed his head awhile in thought and exclaimed again and again, "Verily, we are Allah's and unto Him we are returning!" Then said he "Woe to thee! How shall the marriage be brought about, seeing I mislike to open the matter?” And she said, “He is yet more ardently in love and yet more desireful of her than she is of him; and I will so order the affair that he shall be unaware of his case being known to thee; but do not betray thyself, O King.” Then she went to Adi and, after acquainting him with everything said, “Make a feast and bid the King thereto; and, when the wine hath gotten the better of him, ask of him his daughter, for he will not refuse thee.” Quoth Adi, “I fear lest this enrage him against me and be the cause of enmity between us.” But quoth she, “I came not to thee, till I had settled the whole affair with him.” Then she returned to Al- Nu’uman and said to him, “Seek of Adi that he entertain thee in his house.” Replied the King, “There is no harm in that;” and after three days, besought Adi to give him and his lords the morning meal in his house. He consented and the King went to him; and when the wine had taken effect on Al-Nu’uman, Adi rose and sought of him his daughter in wedlock. He consented and married them and brought her to him after three days; and they abode at Al-Nu’uman’s court, in all solace of life and its delight — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Adi abode with Hind bint Al-Nu’uman bin Munzir three years in all solace of life and its delight, after which time the King was wroth with Adi and slew him. Hind mourned for him with grievous mourning and built her an hermitage outside the city, whither she retired and became a religious, weeping and bewailing her husband till she died. And her hermitage is seen to this day in the suburbs of Hirah. They also tell a tale of

DI’IBIL AL-KHUZA’I WITH THE LADY AND MUSLIM BIN AL-WALID.

Quoth Di’ibil al Khuzα’i[181] , “I was sitting one day at the gate of Al Karkh,[182] when a damsel came past. Never saw I a fairer faced or better formed than she, walking with a voluptuous swaying gait and ravishing all beholders with her lithe and undulating pace. Now as my eyes fell on her, I was captivated by her and my vitals trembled and meseemed my heart flew forth of my breast; so I stood before her and I accosted her with this verse,

‘The tears of these eyes find easy release; *
    But sleep flies these eyelids without surcease.’

Whereon she turned her face and looking at me, straightway made answer with this distich,

‘A trifle this an his eyes be sore, *
    When her eyes say ‘yes’ to his love’s caprice!’

I was astounded at the readiness of her reply and the fluency of her speech and rejoined with this verse,

‘Say, cloth heart of my fair incline to him *
    Whose tears like a swelling stream increase?’

And she answered me without hesitation, thus,

‘If thou crave our love, know that love’s a loan; *
    And a debt to be paid by us twain a piece.’

Never entered my ears aught sweeter than her speech nor ever saw I brighter than her face: so I changed rhyme and rhythm to try her, in my wonder at her words, and repeated this couplet,

‘Will Fate with joy of union ever bless our sight, *
    And one desireful one with other one unite.’

She smiled at this (never saw I fairer than her mouth nor sweeter than her lips), and answered me, without stay or delay, in the following distich,

“Pray, tell me what hath Fate to do betwixt us twain? *
Thou’rt Elate: so bless our eyne with union and delight.’

At this, I sprang up and fell to kissing her hands and cried, ‘I had not thought that Fortune would vouchsafe me such occasion. Do thou follow me, not of bidding or against thy will, but of the grace of thee and thy favour to me.’ Then I went on and she after me. Now at that time I had no lodging I deemed fit for the like of her; but Muslim bin al-Walvd[183] was my fast friend, and he had a handsome house. So I made for his abode and knocked at the door, whereupon he came out, and I saluted him, saying, ’Tis for time like this that friends are treasured up’; and he replied, ‘With love and gladness! Come in you twain.’ So we entered but found money scarce with him: however, he gave me a kerchief, saying, ‘Carry it to the bazar and sell it and buy food and what else thou needest.’ I took the handkerchief, and hastening to the market, sold it and bought what we required of victuals and other matters; but when I returned, I found that Muslim had retired, with her to an underground chamber.[184] When he heard my step he hurried out and said to me, ‘Allah requite thee the kindness thou hast done me, O Abu Ali and reward thee in time to come and reckon it of thy good deeds on the Day of Doom!’ So saying, he took from me the food and wine and shut the door in my face. His words enraged me and I knew not what to do, but he stood behind the door, shaking for mirth; and, when he saw me thus, he said to me, ‘I conjure thee on my life, O Abu Ali, tell who it was composed this couplet?,

‘I lay in her arms all night, leaving him *
To sleep foul-hearted but clean of staff.’

At this my rage redoubled, and I replied, ‘He who wrote this other couplet’,

‘One, I wish him in belt a thousand horns, *
Exceeding in mighty height Manaf.’[185]

Then I began to abuse him and reproach him with the foulness of his action and his lack of honour; and he was silent, never uttering a word. But, when I had finished, he smiled and said, ‘Out on thee, O fool! Thou hast entered my house and sold my kerchief and spent my silver: so, with whom art thou wroth, O pimp?’[186] Then he left me and went away to her, whilst I said, ‘By Allah, thou art right to twit me as nincompoop and pander!’ Then I left his door and went away in sore concern, and I feel its trace in my heart to this very day; for I never had my will of her nor, indeed, ever heard of her more.” And amongst other tales is that about

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ISAAC OF MOSUL AND THE MERCHANT.

Quoth Ishak bin Ibrahim al Mausili, “It so chanced that, one day feeling weary of being on duty at the Palace and in attendance upon the Caliph, I mounted horse and went forth, at break of dawn, having a mind to ride out in the open country and take my pleasure. So I said to my servants, ‘If there come a messenger from the Caliph or another, say that I set out at day break, upon a pressing business, and that ye know not whither I am gone.’ Then I fared forth alone and went round about the city, till the sun waxed hot, when I halted in a great thoroughfare known as Al Haram,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ishak bin Ibrahim the Mausili continued: “When the sun waxed hot I halted in a great thoroughfare known as Al-Haram, to take shelter in the shade and found it in a spacious wing of a house which projected over the street. And I stood there but a little while before there came up a black slave, leading an ass bestridden by a damsel; and under her were housings set with gems and pearls and upon her were the richest of clothes, richness can go no farther; and I saw that she was elegant of make with languorous look and graceful mien. I asked one of the passers by who she was, and he said, ‘She is a singer,’ so I fell in love with her at first sight: hardly could I keep my seat on horseback. She entered the house at whose gate I stood; and, as I was planning a device to gain access to her, there came up two men young and comely who asked admission and the housemaster gave them leave to enter. So they alighted and I also and they entered and I with them, they supposing that the master of the house had invited me; and we sat awhile, till food was brought and we ate. Then they set wine before us, and the damsel came out, with a lute in her hand. She sang and we drank, till I rose to obey a call of nature. Thereupon the host questioned the two others of me, and they replied that they knew me not; whereupon quoth he, ‘This is a parasite[187] ; but he is a pleasant fellow, so treat him courteously.’ Then I came back and sat down in my place, whilst the damsel sang to a pleasing air these two couplets,

‘Say to the she gazelle, who’s no gazelle, *
And Kohl’d ariel who’s no ariel.[188]
Who lies with male, and yet no female is, *
Whose gait is female most unlike the male.’

She sang it right well, and the company drank and her song pleased them. Then she carolled various pieces to rare measures, and amongst the rest one of mine, which consisted of this distich,

‘Bare hills and campground desolate *
And friends who all have ganged their gait.
How severance after union leaves *
Me and their homes in saddest state!’

Her singing this time was even better than the first; then she chanted other rare pieces, old and new, and amongst them, another of mine with the following two couplets,

‘Say to angry lover who turns away, *
And shows thee his side whatso thou
‘Thou wroughtest all that by thee was wrought, *
Albe ’twas haply thy sport and play.’

I prayed her to repeat the song, that I might correct it for her; whereupon one of the two men accosted me and said, ‘Never saw we a more impudent lick platter than thou. Art thou not content with sponging, but thou must eke meddle and muddle? Of very sooth, in thee is the saying made true, Parasite and pushing wight.’ So I hung down my head for shame and made him no answer, whilst his companion would have withheld him from me, but he would not be restrained. Presently, they rose to pray, but I lagged behind a little and, taking the lute, screwed up the sides and brought it into perfect tune. Then I stood up in my place to pray with the rest; and when we had ended praying, the same man fell again to blaming me and reviling me and persisted in his rudeness, whilst I held my peace. Thereupon the damsel took the lute and touching it, knew that it had been altered, and said, ‘Who hath touched my lute?’ Quoth they, ‘None of us hath touched it.’ Quoth she, ‘Nay, by Allah, some one hath touched it, and he is an artist, a past master in the craft; for he hath arranged the strings and tuned them like one who is a perfect performer.’ Said I, ‘It was I tuned it;’ and said she, ‘Then, Allah upon thee, take it and play on it!’ So I took it; and, playing a piece so difficult and so rare, that it went nigh to deaden the quick and quicken the dead, I sang thereto these couplets,

‘I had a heart, and with it lived my life: *
’Twas seared with fire and burnt with loving-lowe:
I never won the blessing of her love; *
God would not on His slave such boon bestow:
If what I’ve tasted be the food of Love, *
Must taste it all men who love food would know.’”

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ishak of Mosul thus continued: “Now when I had finished my verse, there was not one of the company but sprang from his place and sat down like schoolboys before me, saying, ‘Allah upon thee, O our lord, sing us another song.’ ‘With pleasure,’ said I, and playing another measure in masterly fashion, sang thereto these couplets,

‘Ho thou whose heart is melted down by force of Amor’s fire, *
And griefs from every side against thy happiness conspire:
Unlawful is that he who pierced my vitals with his shaft, * My
blood between my midriff and my breast bone[189] he
desire,
’Twas plain, upon our severance day, that he had set his mind *
On an eternal parting, moved by tongue of envious liar:
He sheds my blood he ne’er had shed except by wound of love, *
Will none demand my blood of him, my wreck of him require?’

When I had made an end of this song, there was not one of them but rose to his feet and threw himself upon the ground for excess of delight. Then I cast the lute from my hand, but they said, ‘Allah upon thee, do not on this wise, but let us hear another song, so Allah Almighty increase thee of His bounty!’ Replied I, ‘O folk, I will sing you another song and another and another and will tell you who I am. I am Ishak bin Ibrahim al Mausili, and by Allah, I bear myself proudly to the Caliph when he seeketh me. Ye have today made me hear abuse from an unmannerly carle such as I loathe; and by Allah, I will not speak a word nor sit with you, till ye put yonder quarrelsome churl out from among you!’ Quoth the fellow’s companion to him, ‘This is what I warned thee against, fearing for thy good name.’ So they hent him by the hand and thrust him out; and I took the lute and sang over again the songs of my own composing which the damsel had sung. Then I whispered the host that she had taken my heart and that I had no patience to abstain from her. Quoth he ‘She is thine on one condition.’ I asked, ‘What is that?’ and he answered, ‘It is that thou abide with me a month, when the damsel and all belonging to her of raiment and jewellery shall be thine.’ I rejoined, ‘It is well, I will do this.’ So I tarried with him a whole month, whilst none knew where I was and the Caliph sought me everywhere, but could come by no news of me; and at the end of this time, the merchant delivered to me the damsel, together with all that pertained to her of things of price and an eunuch to attend upon her. So I brought all that to my lodging, feeling as I were lord of the whole world, for exceeding delight in her; then I rode forthright to Al-Maamun. And when I stood in the presence, he said, ‘Woe to thee, O Ishak, where hast thou been?’ So I acquainted him with the story and he said, ‘Bring me that man at once.’ Thereupon I told him where he lived and he sent and fetched him and questioned him of the case; when he repeated the story and the Caliph said to him, ‘Thou art a man of right generous mind, and it is only fitting that thou be aided in thy generosity.’ Then he ordered him an hundred thousand dirhams and said to me, ‘O Ishak, bring the damsel before me.’ So I brought her to him, and she sang and delighted him; and being greatly gladdened by her he said to me, ‘I appoint her turn of service every Thursday, when she must come and sing to me from behind the curtain.’ And he ordered her fifty thousand dirhams, so by Allah, I profited both myself and others by my ride.” And amongst the tales they tell is one of

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THE THREE UNFORTUNATE LOVERS.

Quoth Al-’Utbv[190] , “I was sitting one day with a company of educated men, telling stories of the folk, when the talk turned upon legends of lovers and each of us said his say thereanent. Now there was in our company an old man, who remained silent, till all had spoken and had no more to say, when quoth he, ‘Shall I tell you a thing, the like of which you never heard; no, never?’ ‘Yes,’ quoth we; and he said, ‘Know, then, that I had a daughter, who loved a youth, but we knew it not; while the youth loved a singing girl, who in her turn loved my daughter. One day, I was present at an assembly, wherein were also the youth’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Tenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Shaykh continued: ‘One day, I was present at an assembly wherein were also the youth and the singing girl and she chanted to us these couplets,

‘Prove how Love bringeth low * Lover those tears that run
Lowering him still the more * When pity finds he none.’

Cried the youth, ‘By Allah, thou hast said well, O my mistress.’ Dost thou incite me to die?’ Answered the girl from behind the curtain, ‘Yes, if thou be a true lover.’ So he laid his head on a cushion and closed his eyes; and when the cup came round to him, we shook him and behold, he was dead.[191] Therewith we all flocked to him, and our pleasure was troubled and we grieved and broke up at once. When I came home, my people took in bad part my returning before the appointed time, and I told them what had befallen the youth, thinking that thereby I should greatly surprise them. My daughter heard my words and rising, went from the sitting chamber into another, whither I followed her and found her lying with her head on a cushion, even as I had told of the young man. So I shook her and lo! she was dead. Then we laid her out and set forth next morning to bury her, whilst the friends of the young man set forth in like guise to bury him. As we were on the way to the burial place, we met a third funeral and asking whose it was, were told that it was that of the singing girl who, hearing of my daughter's death, had done even as she did and was dead. So we buried them all three on one day, and this is the rarest tale that ever was heard of lovers." And they also tell a tale of

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HOW ABU HASAN BRAKE WIND.

They recount that in the City Kaukabɑn of Al-Yaman there was a man of the Fazlν tribe who had left Badawi life, and become a townsman for many years and was a merchant of the most opulent merchants. His wife had deceased when both were young; and his friends were instant with him to marry again, ever quoting to him the words of the poet,

“Go, gossip! re-wed thee, for Prime draweth near:
 A wife is an almanac — good for the year.”

So being weary of contention, Abu Hasan entered into negotiations with the old women who procure matches, and married a maid like Canopus when he hangeth over the seas of Al-Hind. He made high festival therefor, bidding to the wedding banquet kith and kin, Olema and Fakirs; friends and foes and all his acquaintances of that countryside. The whole house was thrown open to feasting: there were rices of five several colours, and sherbets of as many more; and kids stuffed with walnuts and almonds and pistachios and a camel colt[192] roasted whole. So they ate and drank and made mirth and merriment; and the bride was displayed in her seven dresses and one more, to the women, who could not take their eyes off her. At last, the bridegroom was summoned to the chamber where she sat enthroned; and he rose slowly and with dignity from his divan; but in so doing, for that he was over full of meat and drink, lo and behold! he let fly a fart, great and terrible. Thereupon each guest turned to his neighbour and talked aloud and made as though he had heard nothing, fearing for his life. But a consuming fire was lit in Abu Hasan’s heart; so he pretended a call of nature; and, in lieu of seeking the bride chamber, he went down to the house court and saddled his mare and rode off, weeping bitterly, through the shadow of the night. In time he reached Lɑhej where he found a ship ready to sail for India; so he shipped on board and made Calicut of Malabar. Here he met with many Arabs, especially Hazramνs[193] , who recommended him to the King; and this King (who was a Kafir) trusted him and advanced him to the captainship of his body guard. He remained ten years in all solace and delight of life; at the end of which time he was seized with home sickness; and the longing to behold his native land was that of a lover pining for his beloved; and he came near to die of yearning desire. But his appointed day had not dawned; so, after taking the first bath of health, he left the King without leave, and in due course landed at Makallα of Hazramaut. Here he donned the rags of a religious; and, keeping his name and case secret, fared for Kaukaban afoot; enduring a thousand hardships of hunger, thirst and fatigue; and braving a thousand dangers from the lion, the snake and the Ghul. But when he drew near his old home, he looked down upon it from the hills with brimming eyes, and said in himself, "Haply they might know thee; so I will wander about the outskirts, and hearken to the folk. Allah grant that my case be not remembered by them!" He listened carefully for seven nights and seven days, till it so chanced that, as he was sitting at the door of a hut, he heard the voice of a young girl saying, "O my mother, tell me the day when I was born; for such an one of my companions is about to take an omen[194] for me." And the mother answered, "Thou was born, O my daughter, on the very night when Abu Hasan farted." Now the listener no sooner heard these words than he rose up from the bench, and fled away saying to himself, "Verily thy fart hath become a date, which shall last for ever and ever; even as the poet said,

'As long as palms shall shift the flower; *
As long as palms shall sift the flour.'[195]

And he ceased not travelling and voyaging and returned to India; and there abode in self exile till he died; and the mercy of Allah be upon him![196] And they tell another story of

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THE LOVERS OF THE BANU TAYY.

Kαsim, son of Adi, was wont to relate that a man of the Banï Tamνm spake as follows: “I went out one day in search of an estray and, coming to the waters of the Banu Tayy, saw two companies of people near one another, and behold, those of one company were disputing among themselves even as the other. So I watched them and observed, in one of the companies, a youth wasted with sickness, as he were a worn-out dried-up waterskin. And as I looked on him, lo! he repeated these couplets,

‘What ails the Beauty she returneth not? *
    Is’t Beauty’s irk or grudging to my lot?
I sickened and my friends all came to call; *
    What stayed thee calling with the friendly knot?
Hadst thou been sick, I had come running fast *
    To thee, nor threats had kept me from the spot:
Mid them I miss thee, and I lie alone; *
    Sweetheart, to lose thy love sad loss I wot!’

His words were heard by a damsel in the other company who hastened towards him, and when her people followed her, she fought them off. Then the youth caught sight of her and sprang up and ran towards her, whilst the people of his party ran after him and laid hold of him. However he haled and freed himself from them, and she in like manner loosed herself; and, when they were free, each ran to other and meeting between the two parties, embraced and fell dead upon the ground.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred ante Eleventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “the young man and the maid met between the two parties and embraced and both fell dead upon the ground; whereat came there out an old man from one of the tents and stood over them exclaiming, ‘Verily, we are Allah’s and unto Him we are returning!’ Then weeping sore he said, ‘Allah have ruth on you both! by the Almighty, though you were not united in your lives, I will at least unite you after your deaths.’ And he bade lay them out: so they washed them and shrouded them in one shroud and dug for them one grave and prayed one prayer over them both and buried them in one tomb; nor was there man or woman in the two parties but I saw weeping over them and buffeting their faces. Then I questioned the Shaykh of them, and he said, ‘She was my daughter and he my brother’s son; and love brought them to the pass thou seest.’ I exclaimed, ‘Allah amend thee! but why didst thou not marry them to each other?’ Quoth he, ‘I feared shame[197] and dishonour; and now I am fallen into both.’ “ And they tell a tale of

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THE MAD LOVER.

Quoth Abu ‘l-Abbαs al-Mubarrad,[198] “I set out one day with a company to Al-Bαrid on an occasion and, coming to the monastery of Hirakl,[199] we alighted in its shade. Presently a man came out to us and said, ‘There are madmen in the monastery,[200] and amongst them one who speaketh wisdom; if ye saw him, ye would marvel at his speech.’ So we arose all and went into the monastery’ where we saw a man seated on a skin mat in one of the cells, with bare head and eyes intently fixed upon the wall. We saluted him, and he returned our salaam, without looking at us, and one said to us, ‘Repeat some verses to him; for, when he heareth verse, he speaketh.’ So I repeated these two couplets,

‘O best of race to whom gave Hawwa[201] boon of birth, *
Except for thee the world were neither sweet nor fair!
Thou’rt he, whose face, by Allah shown to man, *
Doth ward off death, decay and hoary hair.’

When he heard from me this praise of the Apostle he turned towards us and repeated these lines,

‘Well Allah wotteth I am sorely plagued: *
Nor can I show my pain to human sight.
Two souls have I, one soul is here contained, *
While other woneth in another site.
Meseems the absent soul’s like present soul, *
And that she suffers what to me is dight.’

Then he asked us. ‘Have I said well or said ill? And we answered, ‘Thou hast said the clean contrary of ill, well and right well.’ Then he put out his hand to a stone, that was by him and took it up; whereupon thinking he would throw it at us we fled from him; but he fell to beating upon his breast therewith violent blows and said to us, ‘Fear not, but draw near and hear somewhat from me and receive it from me.’ So we came back, and he repeated these couplets,

‘When they made their camels yellow white kneel down at dawning grey * They mounted her on crupper and the camel went his way,
Mine eye balls through the prison wall beheld them, and I cried * With streaming eyelids and a heart that burnt in dire dismay
O camel driver turn thy beast that I farewell my love! * In parting and farewelling her I see my doomed day
I’m faithful to my vows of love which I have never broke, * Would Heaven I kenned what they have done with vows that vowed they!’

Then he looked at me and said, ‘Say me, dost thou know what they did?’[202] Answered I, ‘Yes, they are dead; Almighty Allah have mercy on them!’ At this his face changed and he sprang to his feet and cried out, ‘How knowest thou they be dead?;’ and I replied, ‘Were they alive they had not left thee thus.’ Quoth he, ‘By Allah, thou art right, and I care not to live after them.’ Then his side muscles quivered and he fell on his face; and we ran up to him and shook him and found him dead, the mercy of the Almighty be on him! At this we marvelled and mourned for him and, sore mourning, laid him out and buried him”. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Twelfth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that al-Mubarrad thus continued: “When the man fell we mourned over him with sore mourning and laid him out and buried him. And when I returned to Baghdad and went in to the Caliph al-Mutawakkil, he saw the trace of tears on my face and said to me, ‘What is this?’ So I told him what had passed and it was grievous to him and he cried, ‘What moved thee to deal thus with him?[203] By Allah, if I thought thou didst not repent it and regret him I would punish thee therefor!’ And he mourned for him the rest of the day.” And amongst the tales they tell is one of

THE PRIOR WHO BECAME A MOSLEM.

Quoth Abu Bakr Mohammed ibn Al-Anbαri[204] : “I once left Anbαr on a journey to ‘Amïrνyah,[205] where there came out to me the prior of the monastery and superior of the monkery, Abd al-Masνh hight, and brought me into the building. There I found forty religious, who entertained me that night with fair guest rite, and I left them after seeing among them such diligence in adoration and devotion as I never beheld the like of in any others. Next day I farewelled them and fared forth and, after doing my business at ‘Amuriyah, I returned to my home at Anbar. And next year I made pilgrimage to Meccah and as I was circumambulating the Holy House I saw Abd al-Masih the monk also compassing the Ka’abah, and with him five of his fellows, the shavelings. Now when I was sure that it was indeed he, I accosted him, saying, ‘Art thou not Abd al-Masih, the Religious?’ and he replied, ‘Nay, I am Abdallah, the Desirous.’[206] Therewith I fell to kissing his grey hairs and shedding tears; then, taking him by the hand, I led him aside into a corner of the Temple and said to him, ‘Tell me the cause of thy conversion to al-Islam;’ and he made reply, ‘Verily, ’twas a wonder of wonders, and befell thus. A company of Moslem devotees came to the village wherein is our convent, and sent a youth to buy them food. He saw, in the market, a Christian damsel selling bread, who was of the fairest of women; and he was struck at first sight with such love of her, that his senses failed him and he fell on his face in a fainting fit. When he revived, he returned to his companions and told them what had befallen him, saying, ‘Go ye about your business; I may not go with you.’ They chided him and exhorted him, but he paid no heed to them; so they left him whilst he entered the village and seated himself at the door of the woman’s booth.[207] She asked him what he wanted, and he told her that he was in love with her whereupon she turned from him; but he abode in his place three days without tasting food, keeping his eyes fixed on her face. Now whenas she saw that he departed not from her, she went to her people and acquainted them with his case, and they set on him the village boys, who stoned him and bruised his ribs and broke his head; but, for all this, he would not budge. Then the villagers took counsel together to slay him; but a man of them came to me and told me of his case, and I went out to him and found him lying prostrate on the ground. So I wiped the blood from his face and carried him to the convent, and dressed his wounds; and there he abode with me fourteen days. But as soon as he could walk, he left the monastery" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Thirteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdallah the Religious continued: "So I carried him to the convent and dressed his wounds, and he abode with me fourteen days. But as soon as he could walk, he left the monastery and returned to the door of the woman 's booth, where he sat gazing on her as before. When she saw him she came out to him and said, 'By Allah thou movest me to pity! wilt thou enter my faith that I may marry thee?' He cried, 'Allah forbid that I should put off the faith of Unity and enter that of Plurality!'[208] Quoth she, 'Come in with me to my house and take thy will of me and wend thy ways in peace.' Quoth he, 'Not so, I will not waste the worship of twelve years for the lust of an eye-twinkle.' Said she, 'Then depart from me forthwith;' and he said, 'My heart will not suffer me to do that;' whereupon she turned her countenance from him. Presently the boys found him out and began to pelt him with stones; and he fell on his face, saying, 'Verily, Allah is my protector, who sent down the Book of the Koran; and He protecteth the Righteous![209] At this I sallied forth and driving away the boys, lifted his head from the ground and heard him say, 'Allah mine, unite me with her in Paradise!' Then I carried him to the monastery, but he died, before I could reach it, and I bore him without the village and I dug for him a grave and buried him. And next night when half of it was spent, the damsel cried with a great cry (and she in her bed); so the villagers flocked to her and questioned her of her case. Quoth she, 'As I slept, behold the Moslem man came in to me and taking me by the hand, carried me to the gate of Paradise; but the Guardian denied me entrance, saying, 'Tis forbidden to unbelievers.' So I embraced Al Islam at his hands and, entering with him, beheld therein pavilions and trees, such as I cannot describe to you. Moreover, he brought me to a pavilion of jewels and said to me, 'Of a truth this is my pavilion and thine, nor will I enter it save with thee; but, after five nights thou shalt be with me therein, if it be the will of Allah Almighty.' Then he put forth his hand to a tree which grew at the door of the pavilion and plucked there from two apples and gave them to me, saying, 'Eat this and keep the other, that the monks may see it.' So I ate one of them and never tasted I aught sweeter.' " — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fourteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the woman continued: "'So he plucked two apples and gave them to me, saying, 'Eat this and keep the other that the monks may see it.' So I ate one of them and never tasted I aught sweeter. Then he took my hand and fared forth and carried me back to my house; and, when I awoke, I found the taste of the apple in my mouth and the other in my hand.' So saying she brought out the apple, and in the darkness of the night it shone as it were a sparkling star. So they carried her (and the apple with her) to the monastery, where she repeated her vision and showed it to us; never saw we its like among all the fruits of the world. Then I took a knife and cut the apple into pieces according as we were folk in company; and never knew we aught more delicious than its savour nor more delightsome than its scent; but we said, 'Haply this was a devil that appeared unto her to seduce her from her faith.' Thereupon her people took her and went away; but she abstained from eating and drinking and on the fifth night she rose from her bed, and going forth the village to the grave of her Moslem lover threw herself upon it and died, her family not knowing what was come of her. But, on the morrow, there came to the village two Moslem elders, clad in hair cloth, and with them two women in like garb, and said, 'O people of the village, with you is a woman Saint, a Waliyah of the friends of Allah, who died a Moslemah; and we will take charge of her in lieu of you.' So the villagers sought her and found her dead on the Moslem's grave; and they said, 'This was one of us and she died in our faith; so we will take charge of her.' Rejoined the two old men, 'Nay, she died a Moslemah and we claim her.' And the dispute waxed to a quarrel between them, till one of the Shaykhs said, 'Be this the test of her faith: the forty monks of the monastery shall come and try to lift her from the grave. If they succeed, then she died a Nazarene; if not, one of us shall come and lift her up and if she be lifted by him, she died a Moslemah.’ The villagers agreed to this and fetched the forty monks, who heartened one another, and came to her to lift her, but could not. Then we tied a great rope round her middle and haled at it; but the rope broke in sunder, and she stirred not; and the villagers came and did the like, but could not move her from her place.[210] At last, when all means failed, we said to one of the two Shaykhs, ‘Come thou and lift her.’ So he went up to the grave and, covering her with his mantle, said, ‘In the name of Allah the Compassionating, the Compassionate, and of the Faith of the Apostle of Allah, on whom be prayers and peace!’ Then he lifted her and, taking her in his bosom, betook himself with her to a cave hard by, where they laid her, and the two women came and washed her and shrouded her. Then the two elders bore her to her Moslem lover’s grave and prayed over her and buried her by his side and went their ways. Now we were eye witnesses of all this; and, when we were alone with one another, we said, ‘In sooth, the truth is most worthy to be followed;’[211] and indeed the verity hath been made manifest to us, nor is there a proof more patent of the truth of al-Islam than that we have seen this day with our eyes.’ So I and all the monks became Moslems and on like wise did the villagers; and we sent to the people of Mesopotamia for a doctor of the law, to instruct us in the ordinances of al-Islam and the canons of the Faith. They sent us a learned man and a pious, who taught us the rites of prayer and the tenets of the faith; and we are now in ease abounding; so to Allah be the praise and the thanks!” And they also tell a tale of

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THE LOVES OF ABU ISA AND KURRAT AL-AYN.

Quoth Amrï bin Masa'dah:[212] "Abï Isα, son of al-Rashvd and brother to al-Maamun, was enamoured of one Kurrat al-Ayn, a slave girl belonging to Ali bin Hishαm,[213] and she also loved him; but he concealed his passion, complaining of it to none neither discovering his secret to anyone, of his pride and magnanimity; for he had used his utmost endeavour to purchase her of her master, but he had failed. At last when his patience was at an end and his passion was sore on him and he was helpless in the matter, he went in to al-Maamun, one day of state after the folk had retired, and said to him, 'O Commander of the Faithful, if thou wilt this day make trial of thine Alcaydes by taking them unawares, thou wilt know the generous from the mean and note each one's place, after the quality of his mind.' But, in saying this he purposed only to sit with Kurrat al-Ayn in her lord's house. Quoth al-Maamun, 'Right is thy recking,' and bade make ready a barge, called 'the Flyer,' wherein he embarked with Abu Isa and a party of his chief officers. The first mansion he visited unexpectedly was that of Hamvd al-Tawil of Tïs, whom he found seated" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fifteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that al-Maamun embarked with his chief officers and fared on till they reached the mansion of Hamvd al-Tawil of Tïs; and, unexpectedly entering they found him seated on a mat and before him singers and players with lutes and flageolets and other instruments of music in their hands. So Al Maamun sat with him awhile and presently he set before him dishes of nothing but flesh meat, with no birds among them. The Caliph would not taste thereof and Abu Isa said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, we have taken the owner of this place unawares, and he knew not of thy coming; but now let us go to another place which is prepared for thee and fitted for thee." Thereupon the Caliph arose and betook himself with his brother Abu Isa and his suite, to the abode of Ali son of Hisham who, on hearing of their approach, came out and received them with the goodliest of reception, and kissed the earth before the King. Then he brought them into his mansion and opened to them a saloon than which seer never saw a goodlier. Its floors, pillars and walls were of many coloured marbles, adorned with Greek paintings: and it was spread with matting of Sind[214] whereon were carpets and tapestry of Bassorah make, fitted to the length and breadth of the room. So the Caliph sat awhile, examining the house and its ceilings and walls, then said, "Give us somewhat to eat." So they brought him forthwith nearly an hundred dishes of poultry besides other birds and brewises, fritters and cooling marinades. When he had eaten, he said, "Give us some thing to drink, O Ali;" and the host set before him, in vessels of gold and silver and crystal, raisin wine boiled down to one third with fruits and spices; and the cupbearers were pages like moons, clad in garments of Alexandrian stuff interwoven with gold and bearing on their breasts beakers of crystal, full of rose water mingled with musk. So al-Maamun marvelled with exceeding marvel at all he saw and said, "Ho thou, Abu al-Hasan!" Whereupon Ali sprang to the Caliph's carpet and kissing it, said, "At thy service, O Commander of the Faithful!" and stood before him. Quoth al-Maamun, "Let us hear some pleasant and merry song." Replied Ali, "I hear and obey, O Commander of the Faithful," and said to one of his eunuchs, "Fetch the singing women." So the slave went out and presently returned, followed by ten castratos, bearing ten stools of gold, which they set down in due order; and after these came ten damsels, concubines of the master, as they were shining full moons or gardens full of bloom, clad in black brocade, with crowns of gold on their heads; and they passed along the room till they sat down on the stools, when sang they sundry songs. Al-Maamun looked at one of them; and, being captivated by her elegance and fair favour, asked her, "What is thy name, O damsel?"; and she answered, "My name is Sajαhν,[215] O Commander of the Faithful," and he said, "Sing to us, O Sajahi!" So she played a lively measure and sang these couplets,

"I walk, for fear of interview, the weakling's walk *
Who sees two lion whelps the fount draw nigh:
My cloak acts sword, my heart's perplex'd with fright, *
Lest jealous hostile eyes th' approach descry:

Till sudden hapt I on a delicate maid *
Like desert-doe that fails her fawns to espy."

Quoth the Caliph, "Thou hast done well, O damsel! whose are these lines?" She answered, "Written by Amru bin Ma'di Karib al - Zubaydi,[216] and the air is Ma'abid's."[217] Then the Caliph and Abu Isa and Ali drank and the damsels went away and were succeeded by other ten, all clad in flowered silk of Al-Yaman, brocaded with gold, who sat down on the chairs and sang various songs. The Caliph looked at one of the concubines, who was like a wild heifer of the waste, and said to her, "What is thy name, O damsel?" She replied, "My name is Zabiyah,[218] 0 Commander of the Faithful;" and he, "Sing to us Zabiyah;" so she warbled like a bird with many a trill and sang these two couplets,

"Houris, and highborn Dames who feel no fear of men, *
Like Meccan game forbidden man to slam:[219]
Their soft sweet voices make you deem them whores, *
But bars them from all whoring Al-Islam."

When she had finished, al-Maamun cried, "favoured of Allah art thou!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Sixteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the slave girl finished her song, al-Maamun cried, "Favoured of Allah art thou! Whose is this verse?" and she answered, "Jarvr's[220] and the air is By Ibn Surayj." Then the Caliph and his company drank, whilst the girls went away and there came forth yet other ten, as they were rubies, robed in red brocade inwoven with gold and purfled with pearls and jewels whilst all their heads were bare. They sat down on the stools and sang various airs; so the Caliph looked at one of them, who was like the sun of the day, and asked her, "What is thy name, O damsel?"; and she answered, "O Commander of the Faithful, my name is Fαtin." "Sing to us, O Fatin," quoth he; whereat she played a lively measure and sang these couplets,

“Deign grant thy favours; since ’tis time I were engraced; *
Tnough of severance hath it been my lot to taste.
Thou’rt he whose face cloth every gift and charm unite, *
Yet is my patience spent for that ’twas sore misplaced:
I’ve wasted life in loving thee; and would high Heaven *
Grant me one meeting hour for all this wilful waste.”

“Well sung, O Fatin!’’ exclaimed the Caliph; “whose verse is this?” And she answered, “Adi bin Zayd’s, and the air is antique.” Then all three drank, whilst the damsels retired and were succeeded by other ten maidens, as they were sparkling stars, clad in flowered silk embroidered with red gold and girt with jewelled zones. They sat down and sang various motives; and the Caliph asked one of them, who was like a wand of willow, “What is thy name, O damsel?”; and she answered, “My name is Rashaa,[221] 0 Commander of the Faithful.” “Sing to us, O Rashaa,” quoth he; so she played a lively measure and sang these couplets,

“And wand-like Houri, who can passion heal *
Like young gazelle that paceth o’er the plain:
I drain this wine cup on the toast, her cheek, *
Each cup disputing till she bends in twain
Then sleeps the night with me, the while I cry *
‘This is the only gain my Soul would gain!’”

Said the Caliph, “Well done, O damsel! Sing us something more.” So she rose and kissing the ground before him, sang the following distich,

“She came out to gaze on the bridal at ease *
In a shift that reeked of ambergris.”

The Caliph was highly pleased with this couplet and, when the slave girl saw how much it delighted him, she repeated it several times. Then said al-Maamun, “Bring up ‘the Flyer,’” being minded to embark and depart: but Ali bin Hisham said to him, “O Commander of the Faithful, I have a slave girl, whom I bought for ten thousand diners; she hath taken my heart in whole and part, and I would fain display her to the Commander of the Faithful. If she please him and he will accept of her, she is his: and if not, let him hear something from her." Said the Caliph, "Bring her to me;" and forth came a damsel, as she were a branchlet of willow, with seducing eyes and eyebrows set like twin bows; and on her head she wore a crown of red gold crusted with pearls and jewelled, under which was a fillet bearing this couplet wrought in letters of chrysolite,

"A Jinniyah this, with her Jinn, to show *
    How to pierce man's heart with a stringless bow!"

The handmaiden walked, with the gait of a gazelle in flight and fit to damn a devotee, till she came to a chair, whereon she seated herself. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Seventeenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the hand maiden walked with the gait of a gazelle in flight, fit to damn a devotee, till she came to a chair whereon she seated herself. And Al-Maamun marvelled at her beauty and loveliness; but, when Abu Isa saw her, his heart throbbed with pain, his colour changed to pale and wan and he was in evil case. Asked the Caliph, "O Abu Isa, what aileth thee to change thus?"; and he answered, "O Commander of the Faithful, it is because of a twitch that seizeth me betimes." Quoth the Caliph, "Hast thou known yonder damsel before to day?" Quoth he, "Yes, O Commander of the Faithful, can the moon be concealed?" Then said al-Maamun to her, "What is thy name, O damsel?"; and she replied, "My name is Kurrat al-Ayn. O Commander of the Faithful," and he rejoined, "Sing to us, O Kurrat al-Ayn." So she sang these two couplets,

"The loved ones left thee in middle night, *
    And fared with the pilgrims when dawn shone bright:
The tents of pride round the domes they pitched, *
    And with broidered curtains were veiled fro' sight."

Quoth the Caliph, “Favoured of Heaven art thou, O Kurrat al-Ayn! Whose song is that?”; whereto she answered “The words are by Di’ibil al-Khuza’i, and the air by Zurzïr al-Saghvr.” Abu Isa looked at her and his tears choked him; so that the company marvelled at him. Then she turned to al-Maamun and said to him, “O Commander of the Faithful, wilt thou give me leave to change the words?” Said he, “Sing what thou wilt;” so she played a merry measure and carolled these couplets,

“If thou should please a friend who pleaseth thee *
Frankly, in public practise secrecy.
And spurn the slanderer’s tale, who seldom[222] *
seeks Except the severance of true love to see.
They say, when lover’s near, he tires of love, *
And absence is for love best remedy:
Both cures we tried and yet we are not cured, *
Withal we judge that nearness easier be:
Yet nearness is of no avail when he *
Thou lovest lends thee love unwillingly.”

But when she had finished, Abu Isa said, “O Commander of the Faithful,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Eighteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Kurrat al-Ayn had finished her verse, Abu Isa said, “O Commander of the Faithful, though we endure disgrace, we shall be at ease.[223] Dost thou give me leave to reply to her?” Quoth the Caliph, “Yes, say what thou wilt to her.” So he swallowed his tears and sang these two distichs,

“Silent I woned and never owned my love; *
But from my heart I hid love’s blissful boon;
Yet, if my eyes should manifest my love, *
’Tis for my nearness to the shining moon.”

Then Kurrat al-Ayn took the lute and played a lively tune and rejoined with these couplets,

"An what thou claimest were the real truth, *
With only Hope content thou hadst not been
Nor couldest patient live without the girl *
So rare of inner grace and outward mien.
But there is nothing in the claim of thee *
At all, save tongue and talk that little mean."

When Abu Isa heard this he fell to weeping and wailing and evidencing his trouble and anguish. Then he raised his eyes to her and sighing, repeated these couplets,

"Under my raiment a waste body lies, *
And in my spirit all comprising prize.
I have a heart, whose pain shall aye endure, *
And tears like torrents pour these woeful eyes.
Whene'er a wise man spies me, straight he chides *
Love, that misleads me thus in ways unwise:
O Lord, I lack the power this dole to bear: *
Come sudden Death or joy in bestest guise!"

When he had ended, Ali bin Hisham sprang up and kissing his feet, said, "O my lord, Allah hearing thy secret hath answered thy prayer and consenteth to thy taking her with all she hath of things rare and fair, so the Commander of the Faithful have no mind to her." Quoth Al Maamun, "Had we a mind to her, we would prefer Abu Isa before ourselves and help him to his desire." So saying, he rose and embarking, went away, whilst Abu Isa tarried for Kurrat al-Ayn, whom he took and carried to his own house, his breast swelling with joy. See then the generosity of Ali son of Hisham! And they tell a tale of

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AL-AMIN SON OF AL-RASHID AND HIS UNCLE IBRAHIM BIN AL-MAHDI.

Al-Amin,[224] brother of al-Maamun, once entered the house of his uncle Ibrahim bin al-Mahdi, where he saw a slave girl playing upon the lute; and, she being one of the fairest of women, his heart inclined to her. Ibrahim, seeing how it was with him, sent the girl to him, with rich raiment and precious ornaments. When he saw her, he thought that his uncle had lain with her; so he was loath to have to do with her, because of that, and accepting what came with her sent her back to Ibrahim. His uncle learnt the cause of this from one of al-Amin's eunuchs; so he took a shift of watered silk and worked upon its skirt, in letters of gold, these two couplets,

“No! I declare by Him to whom all bow, *
Of nothing ‘neath her petticoat I trow:
Nor meddle with her mouth; nor aught did I *
But see and hear her, and it was enow!”

Then he clad her in the shift and, giving her a lute, sent her back again to his nephew. When she came into al-Amin's presence, she kissed ground before him and tuning the lute, sang thereto these two couplets,

“Thy breast thou baredst sending back the gift; *
Showing unlove for me withouten shift:
An thou bear spite of Past, the Past forgive, *
And for the Caliphate cast the Past adrift.”

When she had made an end of her verse, Al-Amin looked at her and, seeing what was upon her skirt, could no longer control him self, And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Nineteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Al-Amin looked at the damsel and saw what was upon her skirt, he could no longer control himself, but drew near unto her and kissed her and appointed her a separate lodging in his palace. Moreover, he thanked his uncle for this and bestowed on him the government of Rayy. And a tale is told of

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AL-FATH BIN KHAKAN AND THE CALIPH AL-MUTAWAKKIL.

Al-Mutawakkil[225] was once taking medicine, and folk sent him by way of solace all sorts of presents and rarities and things costly and precious. Amongst others, al-Fath bin Khαkαn[226] sent him a virgin slave, high breasted, of the fairest among women of her time, and with her a vase of crystal, containing ruddy wine, and a goblet of red gold, whereon were graven in black these couplets,

“Since our Imam came forth from medicine, *
    Which made him health and heartiness rewin,
There is no healing draught more sovereign *
    Than well boiled wine this golden goblet in:
Then let him break the seal for him secured; *
    ’Tis best prescription after medicine[227]

Now when the damsel entered, the physician Yohannα[228] was with the Caliph, and as he read the couplets, he smiled and said, “By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, Fath is better versed than I in the art of healing: so let not the Prince of True Believers gainsay his prescription.” Accordingly, the Caliph followed the recipe contained in the poetry and was made whole by the blessing of Allah and won his every wish. And among tales they tell is one of

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THE MAN'S DISPUTE WITH THE LEARNED WOMAN CONCERNING THE RELATIVE EXCELLENCE OF MALE AND FEMALE.

Quoth a certain man of learning, "I never saw amongst woman kind one wittier, and wiser, better read and by nature more generously bred; and in manners and morals more perfected than a preacher of the people of Baghdad, by name Sitt al-Mashα'ikh.[229] It chanced that she came to Hamah city in the year of the Flight five hundred and sixty and one[230] ; and there delivered salutary exhortations to the folk from the professorial chair. Now there used to visit her house a number of students of divinity and persons of learning and polite letters, who would discuss with her questions of theology and dispute with her on controversial points. I went to her one day, with a friend of mine, a man of years and education; and when we had taken our seats, she set before us a dish of fruit and seated herself behind a curtain. Now she had a brother, a handsome youth, who stood behind us, to serve us. And when we had eaten we fell to disputing upon points of divinity, and I propounded to her a theological question bearing upon a difference between the Imams, the Founders of the Four Schools. She proceeded to speak in answer, whilst I listened; but all the while my friend fell to looking upon her brother's face and admiring his beauties without paying any heed to what she discoursed. Now as she was watching him from behind the curtain; when she had made an end of her speech, she turned to him and said, 'Methinks thou be of those who give men the preference over women!' He replied, 'Assuredly,' and she asked, 'And why so?'; whereto he answered, 'For that Allah hath made the masculine worthier than the feminine,'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Twentieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Shaykh replied, " 'For that Allah hath made the masculine worthier than the feminine; and I like the excelling and mislike the excelled.' She laughed and presently said, 'Wilt thou deal fairly with me in debate, if I battle the matter with thee?' and he rejoined, 'Yes.' Then quoth she, 'What is the evidence of the superiority of the male to the female?' Quoth he, 'It is of two kinds, traditional and reasonable. The authoritative part deriveth from the Koran and the Traditions of the Apostle. As for the first we have the very words of Almighty Allah, 'Men shall have the pre-eminence above women because of those advantages wherein Allah hath caused the one of them to excel the other;[231] and again, 'If there be not two men, let there be one man and two women;'[232] and again, when treating of inheritance, 'If there be brothers and sisters let a male have as much as the portion of two females.'[233] Thus Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) hath in these places preferred the male over the female and teacheth that a woman is as the half of a man, for that he is worthier than she. As for the Sunnah traditions, is it not reported of the Prophet (whom Allah save and assain!) that he appointed the blood money for a woman to be half that of a man. And as for the evidence of reason, the male is the agent and active and the female the patient and passive.'[234] Rejoined she, 'Thou hast said well, O my lord, but, by Allah, thou hast proved my contention with thine own lips and hast advanced evidence which telleth against thee, and not for thee. And thus it is: Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) preferred the male above the female solely because of the inherent condition and essential quality of masculinity; and in this there is no dispute between us. Now this quality of male-hood is common to the child, the boy, the youth, the adult and the old man; nor is there any distinction between them in this. If, then, the superior excellence of male masculant belong to him solely by virtue of manhood, it behoveth that thy heart incline and thy sole delight in the graybeard, equally with the boy; seeing that there is no distinction between them, in point of male-hood. But the difference between thee and me turneth upon the accident of qualities that are sought as constituting the pleasure of intercourse and its enjoyment; and thou hast adduced no proof of the superiority of the youth over the young girl in this matter of non-essentials.' He made answer, 'O reverend lady, knowest thou not that which is peculiar to the youth of limber shape and rosy cheeks and pleasant smile and sweetness of speech? Youths are, in these respects superior to women; and the proof of this is what they traditionally report of the Prophet (whom Allah bless and preserve!) that he said, 'Stay not thy gaze upon the beardless, for in them is a momentary eye glance at the black eyed girls of Paradise.' Nor indeed is the superiority of the lad over the lass hidden to any of mankind, and how well saith Abu Nowas,[235]

'The least of him is the being free *
From monthly courses and pregnancy.'

And the saying of another poet,

'Quoth our Imam, Abu Nowas, who was *
For mad debauch and waggishness renowned:
'O tribe that loves the cheeks of boys, take fill *
Of joys in Paradise shall ne'er be found!'

So if any one enlarge in praise of a slave girl and wish to enhance her value by the mention of her beauties, he likeneth her to a youth,'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Twenty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Shaykh continued, "'So if any one enlarge in praise of a slave girl and wish to enhance her value by the mention of her beauties, he likeneth her to a youth, because of the illustrious qualities that belong to the male, even as saith the poet,

'Boy like of backside, in the deed of kind, *
She sways, as sways the wand like boughs a-wind.'

An youths, then, were not better and fairer than girls, why should these be likened to them? And know also (Almighty Allah preserve thee!) that a youth is easy to be led, adapting himself to every rede, pleasant of converse and manners, inclining to assent rather than dissent, especially when his side face is newly down'd and his upper lip is first embrowned, and the purple lights of youth on his cheeks abound, so that he is like the full moon sound; and how goodly is the saying of Abu Tammam[236] ,

‘The slanderers said ‘There’s hair upon his cheeks’; *
    Quoth I, ‘Exceed not, that’s no blemish there.’
When he could bear that haling of his hips *
    And pearl-beads shaded by mustachio hair;[237]
And Rose swore solemn, holiest oath that is, *
    From that fair cheek she nevermore would fare
I spoke with eyelids without need of speech, *
    And they who answered me his eyebrows were.
He’s even fairer than thou knewest him, *
    And cheek down guards from all would overdare.
Brighter and sweeter now are grown his charms, *
    Since down robes lip and cheek before were bare.
And those who blame me for my love of him, *
    When him they mention say of him, ‘Thy Fair’!’

And quoth al-Hariri[238] and quoth excellently well,

‘My censors say, ‘What means this pine for him? *
    Seest not the flowing hair on cheeks a flowing?’
I say, ‘By Allah, an ye deem I dote, *
    Look at the truth in those fine eyes a-showing!
But for the down that veils his cheek and chin, *
    His brow had dazed all eyes no sight allowing:
And whoso sojourns in a growthless land, *
    How shall he move from land fair growths a-growing?’

And quoth another,

‘My blamers say of me, ‘He is consoled,’ And lie! *
    No consolation comes to those who pine and sigh.
I had no solace when Rose bloomed alone on cheek, *
    Now Basil blooms thereon and now consoled am I.’

And again,

‘Slim waisted one, whose looks with down of cheek *
    In slaughtering mankind each other hurtle
With the Narcissus blade he sheddeth blood, *

The baldrick of whose sheath is freshest
myrtle.’[239]

And again,

‘Not with his must I’m drunk, but verily *
Those curls turn manly heads like newest wine[240]
Each of his beauties envies each, and all *
Would be the silky down on side face li’en.’

Such are the excellencies of the youth which women do not own, and they more than suffice to give those the preference over these.’ She replied, ‘Allah give thee health! verily, thou hast imposed the debate upon thyself; and thou hast spoken and hast not stinted and hast brought proofs to support every assertion. But, ‘Now is the truth become manifest;’[241] so swerve thou not from the path thereof; and, if thou be not content with a summary of evidence, I will set it before thee in fullest detail. Allah upon thee, where is the youth beside the girl and who shall compare kid and wild cow? The girl is soft of speech, fair of form, like a branchlet of basil, with teeth like chamomile-petals and hair like halters wherefrom to hang hearts. Her cheeks are like blood-red anemones and her face like a pippin: she hath lips like wine and breasts like pomegranates twain and a shape supple as a rattan-cane. Her body is well formed and with sloping shoulders dight; she hath a nose like the edge of a sword shining bright and a forehead brilliant white and eyebrows which unite and eyes stained by Nature’s hand black as night. If she speak, fresh young pearls are scattered from her mouth forthright and all hearts are ravished by the daintiness of her sprite; when she smileth thou wouldst ween the moon shone out her lips between and when she eyes thee, sword blades flash from the babes of her eyes. In her all beauties to conclusion come, and she is the centre of attraction to traveller and stay-at-home. She hath two lips of cramoisy, than cream smoother and of taste than honey sweeter,’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Twenty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the preacher woman thus pursued her theme in the praise of fair maids, "'She hath two lips of cramoisy, than cream smoother and than honey sweeter;' adding, 'And she hath a bosom, as it were a way two hills between which are a pair of breasts like globes of ivory sheen; likewise, a stomach right smooth, flanks soft as the palm-spathe and creased with folds and dimples which overlap one another, and liberal thighs, which like columns of pearl arise, and back parts which billow and beat together like seas of glass or mountains of glance, and two feet and hands of gracious mould like unto ingots of virgin gold. So, O miserable! where are mortal men beside the Jinn? Knowest thou not that puissant princes and potent Kings before women ever humbly bend and on them for delight depend? Verily, they may say, 'We rule over necks and rob hearts.' These women! how many a rich man have they not paupered, how many a powerful man have they not prostrated and how many a superior man have they not enslaved! Indeed, they seduce the sage and send the saint to shame and bring the wealthy to want and plunge the fortune favoured into penury. Yet for all this, the wise but redouble in affection of them and honour; nor do they count this oppression or dishonour. How many a man for them hath offended his Maker and called down on him self the wrath of his father and mother! And all this because of the conquest of their love over hearts. Knowest thou not, O wretched one, that for them are built pavilions, and slave girls are for sale;[242] that for them tear floods rail and for them are collected jewels of price and ambergris and musk odoriferous; and armies are arrayed and pleasaunces made and wealth heaped up and smitten off is many a head? And indeed he spoke sooth in the words, 'Whoso saith the world meaneth woman.' Now as for thy citation from the Holy Traditions, it is an argument against thee and not for thee in that the Prophet (whom Allah bless and preserve!) compareth the beardless with the black eyed girls of Paradise. Now, doubtless, the subject of comparison is worthier than the object there with compared; so, unless women be the worthier and the goodlier, wherefore should other than they be likened to them? As for thy saying that girls are likened to boys, the case is not so, but the contrary: boys are likened to girls; for folk say, Yonder boy is like a girl. As for what proof thou quotest from the poets, the verses were the product of a complexion unnatural in this respect;

and as for the habitual sodomites and catamites, offenders against religion, Almighty Allah hath condemned them in His Holy Book,[243] herein He denounceth their filthy practices, saying, 'Do ye approach unto the males among mankind[244] and leave your wives which your Lord hath created for you? Surely ye are a people who transgress!' These it is that liken girls to boys, of their exceeding profligacy and ungraciousness and inclination to follow the fiend and own lusts, so that they say, 'She is apt for two tricks,'[245] and these are all wanderers from the way of right and the righteous. Quoth their chief Abu Nowas,

'Slim waist and boyish wits delight *
    Wencher, as well as Sodomite,'[246]

As for what thou sayest of a youth's first hair on cheek and lips and how they add to his beauty and loveliness, by Allah, thou strayest from the straight path of sooth and sayest that which is other than the truth; for whiskers change the charms of the comely into ugliness (quoting these couplets),

'That sprouting hair upon his face took wreak *
    For lovers' vengeance, all did vainly seek.
I see not on his face a sign fuli- *
    genous, except his curls are hue of reek.
If so his paper[247] mostly be begrimed *
    Where deemest thou the reed shall draw a streak?
If any raise him other fairs above, *
    This only proves the judge of wits is weak.'

And when she ended her verse she resumed, 'Laud be to Allah Almighty,'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Twenty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the preacher woman ended her verse she resumed, addressing the man, " 'Laud to Allah Almighty! how can it be hid from thee that the perfect pleasure is in women and that abiding blessings are not to be found but with them, seeing that Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) hath promised His prophets and saints black eyed damsels in Paradise and hath appointed these for a recompense of their godly works. And had the Almighty known that the joy supreme was in the possession of other than women, He had rewarded them therewith and promised it to them. And quoth he (whom Allah bless and preserve!), 'The things I hold dearest of the things of your world are three: women and perfume and the solace of my eyes in prayer.' Verily Allah hath appointed boys to serve his prophets and saints in Paradise, because Paradise is the abode of joy and delight, which could not be complete without the service of youths; but, as to the use of them for aught but service, it is Hell's putridity[248] and corruption and turpitude. How well saith the poet,

'Men's turning unto bums of boys is bumptious; *
 Whoso love noble women show their own noblesse.
How many goodly wights have slept the night, enjoying *
 Buttocks of boys, and woke at morn in foulest mess
Their garments stained by safflower, which is yellow merde; *
 Their shame proclaiming, showing colour of distress.
Who can deny the charge, when so bewrayed are they *
 That e'en by day light shows the dung upon their dress?
What contrast wi' the man, who slept a gladsome night *
 By Houri maid for glance a mere enchanteress,
He rises off her borrowing wholesome bonny scent; *
 That fills the house with whiffs of perfumed goodliness.
No boy deserved place by side of her to hold; *
 Canst even aloes wood with what fills pool of cess!'[249]

Then said she, 'O folk ye have made me to break the bounds of modesty and the circle of free born women and indulge in idle talk of chambering and wantonness, which beseemeth not people of learning. But the breasts of free-borns are the sepulchres of secrets' and such conversations are in confidence. Moreover, actions are according to intentions,[250] and I crave pardon of Allah for myself and you and all Moslems, seeing that He is the Pardoner and the Compassionate.' Then she held her peace and thereafter would answer us of naught; so we went our way, rejoicing in that we had profited by her contention and yet sorrowing to part from her." And among the tales they tell is one of

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ABU SUWAYD AND THE PRETTY OLD WOMAN.

Quoth Abu Suwayd, “I and a company of my friends, entered a garden one day to buy somewhat of fruit; and we saw in a corner an old woman, who was bright of face, but her head-hair was white, and she was combing it with an ivory comb. We stopped before her, yet she paid no heed to us neither veiled her face: so I said to her, ‘O old woman,[251] wert thou to dye thy hair black, thou wouldst be handsomer than a girl: what hindereth thee from this?’ She raised her head towards me” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Twenty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abu Suwayd continued: “When I spake these words to the ancient dame she raised her head towards me and, opening wide her eyes, recited these two couplets,

‘I dyed what years have dyed, but this my staining *
Lasts not, while that of days is aye remaining:
Days when beclad in gear of youth I fared, *
Raked fore and aft by men with joy unfeigning.’

I cried, ‘By Allah, favoured art thou for an old woman! How sincere art thou in thine after-pine for forbidden pleasures and how false is thy pretence of repentance from frowardness!’” And another tale is that of

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THE EMIR ALI BIN TAHIR AND THE GIRL MUUNIS.

Once on a time was displayed for sale to Ali bin Mohammed bin Abdallah bin Tαhir[252] a slave-girl called Muunis who was superior to her fellows in beauty and breeding, and to boot an accomplished poetess; and he asked her of her name. Replied she, "Allah advance the Emir, my name is Muunis."[253] Now he knew this before; so he bowed his head awhile, then raising his eyes to her, recited this verse,

"What sayest of one by a sickness caught *
For the love of thy love till he waxed distraught?"

Answered she, "Allah exalt the Emir!" and recited this verse in reply,

"If we saw a lover who pains as he ought, *
Wi' love we would grant him all favours he sought."

She pleased him: so he bought her for seventy thousand dirhams and begat on her Obayd' Allah bin Mohammed, afterwards minister of Police.[254] And we are told by Abu al-Aynα[255] a tale of

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THE WOMAN WHO HAD A BOY AND THE OTHER WHO HAD A MAN TO LOVER.

Quoth Abu al-Aynα, “There were in our street two women, one of whom had for lover a man and the other a beardless youth, and they foregathered one night on the terrace-roof of a house adjoining mine, knowing not that I was near. Quoth the boy’s lover to the other, ‘O my sister, how canst thou bear with patience the harshness of thy lover’s beard as it falleth on thy breast, when he busseth thee and his mustachios rub thy cheek and lips?’ Replied the other, ‘Silly that thou art, what decketh the tree save its leaves and the cucumber but its warts?[256] Didst ever see in the world aught uglier than a scald-head bald of his beard? Knowest thou not that the beard is to men as the sidelocks to women; and what is the difference between chin and cheek?[257] Knowest thou not that Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) hath created an angel in Heaven, who saith: ‘Glory be to Him who ornamenteth men with beards and women with long hair?’ So, were not the beard even as the tresses in comeliness, it had not been coupled with them, O silly! How shall I spread-eagle myself under a boy, who will emit long before I can go off and forestall me in limpness of penis and clitoris; and leave a man who, when he taketh breath clippeth close and when he entereth goeth leisurely, and when he hath done, repeateth, and when he pusheth poketh hard, and as often as he withdraweth, returneth?’ The boy’s leman was edified by her speech and said, ‘I forswear my lover by the lord of the Ka’abah!’” And amongst tales is one of

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ALI THE CAIRENE AND THE HAUNTED HOUSE IN BAGHDAD.

There lived once, in the city of Cairo, a merchant who had great store of monies and bullion, gems and jewels, and lands and houses beyond count, and his name was Hasan the Jeweller, the Baghdad man. Furthermore Allah had blessed him with a son of perfect beauty and brilliancy; rosy-cheeked, fair of face and well-figured, whom he named Ali of Cairo, and had taught the Koran and science and elocution and the other branches of polite education, till he became proficient in all manner of knowledge. He was under his father's hand in trade but, after a while, Hasan fell sick and his sickness grew upon him, till he made sure of death; so he called his son to him, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Twenty-fifth Night,

She said, it hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Jeweller, the Baghdadi, fell sick and made sure of death, he called to him his son, named Ali of Cairo, and said, "O my son, verily this world passeth away; but the next world endureth for aye. Every soul shall taste of death;[258] and now, O my son, my decease is at hand and I desire to charge thee with a charge, which if thou observe, thou shalt abide in safety and prosperity, till thou meet Almighty Allah; but if thou follow it not, there shall befal thee much weariness and thou wilt repent of having transgressed mine injunctions." Replied Ali, "O my father, how shall I do other than hearken to thy words and act according to thy charge, seeing that I am bounden by the law of the Faith to obey thee and give ear to thy command?" Rejoined his father, "O my son, I leave thee lands and houses and goods and wealth past count; so that wert thou each day to spend thereof five hundred dinars, thou wouldst miss naught of it. But, O my son, look that thou live in the fear of Allah and follow His Chosen One, Mustafa, (whom may He bless and preserve!) in whatso he is reported to have bidden and forbidden in his traditional law.[259] Be thou constant in alms-deeds and the practice of beneficence and in consorting with men of worth and piety and learning; and look that thou have a care for the poor and needy and shun avarice and meanness and the conversation of the wicked or those of suspicious character. Look thou kindly upon thy servants and family, and also upon thy wife, for she is of the daughters of the great and is big with child by thee; haply Allah will vouchsafe thee virtuous issue by her." And he ceased not to exhort him thus, weeping and saying, "O my son, I beseech Allah the Bountiful, the Lord of the glorious Empyrean[260] to deliver thee from all straits that may encompass thee and grant thee His ready relief!" Thereupon his son wept with sore weeping and said, "O my father, I am melted by thy words, for these are as the words of one that saith farewell." Replied the merchant, "Yes, O my son, I am aware of my condition: forget thou not my charge." Then he fell to repeating the two professions of the Faith and to reciting verses of the Koran, until the appointed hour arrived, when he said, "Draw near unto me, O my son." So Ali drew near and he kissed him; then he sighed and his soul departed his body and he went to the mercy of Almighty Allah.[261] Therewith great grief fell upon Ali; the clamour of keening arose in his house and his father's friends flocked to him. Then he betook himself to preparing the body for burial and made him a splendid funeral. They bore his bier to the place of prayer and prayed over him, then to the cemetery, where they buried him and recited over him what suited of the sublime Koran; after which they returned to the house and condoled with the dead man's son and wended each his own way. Moreover, Ali prayed the Friday prayer for his father and had perlections of the Koran every day for the normal forty, during which time he abode in the house and went not forth, save to the place of prayer; and every Friday he visited his father's tomb. So he ceased not from his praying and reciting for some time, until his fellows of the sons of the merchants came in to him one day and saluting him, said, "How long this thy mourning and neglecting thy business and the company of thy friends? Verily, this is a fashion which will bring thee weariness, and thy body will suffer for it exceedingly." Now when they came in to him, Iblis the Accursed was with them, prompting them; and they went on to recommend him to accompany them to the bazar, whilst Iblis tempted him to consent to them, till he yielded, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her

permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Twenty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the sons of the merchants went in to Ali the Cairene, son of Hasan the Jeweller, they recommended him to accompany them to the bazar, till he yielded, that the will of Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) might be fulfilled; and he left the house of mourning with them. Presently they said, “Mount thy she-mule and ride with us to such a garden, that we may solace us there and that thy grief and despondency may depart from thee.” So he mounted and taking his slave, went with them to the garden in question; and when they entered one of them went and making ready the morning-meal, brought it to them there. So they ate and were merry and sat in talk, till the end of the day, when they mounted and returned each to his own lodging, where they passed the night. As soon as the morrow dawned, they again visited Ali and said, “Come with us.” Asked he, “Whither?”; and they answered, “To such a garden; for it is finer than the first and more pleasurable.” So he went with them to the garden, and one of them, going away, made ready the morning-meal and brought it to them, together with strong heady wine; and after eating, they brought out the wine, when quoth Ali, “What is this? and quoth they, “This is what dispelleth sadness and brighteneth gladness. And they ceased not to commend it to him, till they prevailed upon him and he drank with them. Then they sat, drinking and talking, till the end of the day, when each returned home. But as for Ali, the Cairene, he was giddy with wine and in this plight went in to his wife, who said to him, “What aileth thee that thou art so changed?” He said, “We were making merry to-day, when one of my companions brought us liquor; so my friends drank and I with them, and this giddiness came upon me.” And she replied, “O my lord, say me, hast thou forgotten thy father’s injunction and done that from which he forbade thee, in consorting with doubtful folk?” Answered he, “These be of the sons of the merchants; they are no suspicious folk, only lovers of mirth and good cheer.” And he continued to lead this life with his friends, day after day, going from place to place and feasting with them and drinking, till they said to him, “Our turns are ended, and now it is thy turn.” “Well come, and welcome and fair cheer!" cried he; so on the morrow, he made ready all that the case called for of meat and drink, two-fold what they had provided, and taking cooks and tent-pitchers and coffee-makers,[262] repaired with the others to Al-Rauzah[263] and the Nilometer, where they abode a whole month, eating and drinking and hearing music and making merry. At the end of the month, Ali found that he had spent a great sum of money; but Iblis the Accursed deluded him and said to him, "Though thou shouldst spend every day a like sum yet wouldst thou not miss aught of it." So he took no account of money expenses and continued this way of life for three years, whilst his wife remonstrated with him and reminded him of his father's charge; but he hearkened not to her words, till he had spent all the ready monies he had, when he fell to selling his jewels and spending their price, until they also were all gone. Then he sold his houses, fields, farms and gardens, one after other, till they likewise were all gone and he had nothing left but the tenement wherein he lived. So he tore out the marble and wood-work and sold it and spent of its price, till he had made an end of all this also, when he took thought with himself and, finding that he had nothing left to expend, sold the house itself and spent the purchase-money. After that, the man who had bought the house came to him and said "Seek out for thyself a lodging, as I have need of my house." So he bethought himself and, finding that he had no want of a house, except for his wife, who had borne him a son and daughter (he had not a servant left), he hired a large room in one of the mean courts[264] and there took up his abode, after having lived in honour and luxury, with many eunuchs and much wealth; and he soon came to want one day's bread. Quoth his wife, "Of this I warned thee and exhorted thee to obey thy father's charge, and thou wouldst not hearken to me; but there is no Majesty and there is no Might, save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Whence shall the little ones eat? Arise then, go round to thy friends, the sons of the merchants: belike they will give thee somewhat on which we may live this day." So he arose and went to his friends one by one; but they all hid their faces from him and gave him injurious words revolting to hear, but naught else; and he returned to his wife and said to her, "They have given me nothing." Thereupon she went forth to beg of her neighbours the wherewithal to keep themselves alive,

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Twenty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the wife of Ali the Cairene, seeing her husband return empty-handed, went forth to beg of her neighbours the wherewithal to keep themselves alive and repaired to a woman, whom she had known in former days. When she came in to her and she saw her case, she rose and receiving her kindly, wept and said, “What hath befallen you?” So she told her all that her husband had done, and the other replied, “Well come and welcome and fair cheer!; whatever thou needest, Seek it of me, without price.” Quoth she, “Allah requite thee abundantly!”[265] Then her friend gave her as much provision as would suffice herself and her family a whole month, and she took it and returned to her lodging. When her husband saw her, he wept and asked, “Whence hadst thou that?”; and she answered, “I got it of such a woman; for, when I told her what had befallen us, she failed me not in aught, but said, ‘Seek of me all thou needest.’” Whereupon her husband rejoined, “Since thou hast this much I will betake myself to a place I have in my mind; peradventure Allah Almighty will bring us relief.”[266] With these words he took leave of her and kissed his children and went out, not knowing whither he should go, and he continued walking on till he came to Bulαk, where he saw a ship about to sail for Damietta.[267] Here he met a man, between whom and his father there had been friendship, and he saluted him and said to him, “Whither now?” Replied Ali, “To Damietta: I have friends there, whom I would enquire after and visit them and then return.” The man took him home and treated him honourably; then, furnishing him with vivers for the voyage and giving him some gold pieces, embarked him on board the vessel bound for Damietta. When they reached it, Ali landed, not knowing whither to go; but as he was walking along, a merchant saw him and had pity on him, and carried him to his house. Here he abode awhile, after which he said in himself, “How long this sojourning in other folk’s homes?” Then he left the merchant’s place and walked to the wharf where, after enquiry, he found a ship ready to sail for Syria. His hospitable host provided him with provision and embarked him in the ship; and it set sail and Ali reached in due season the Syrian shores where he disembarked and journeyed till he entered Damascus. As he walked about the great thoroughfare behold, a kindly man saw him and took him to his house, where he tarried for a time till, one day, going abroad, he saw a caravan about to start for Baghdad and bethought himself to journey thither with it. Thereupon he returned to his host and taking leave of him, set out with the Cafilah. Now Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) inclined to him the heart of one of the merchants, so that he took him with him, and Ali ate and drank with him, till they came within one day's journey of Baghdad. Here, however, a company of highwaymen fell upon the caravan and took all they had and but few of the merchants escaped. These made each for a separate place of refuge; but as for Ali the Cairene he fared for Baghdad, where he arrived at sundown, as the gatekeepers were about to shut the gates, and said to them, "Let me in with you." They admitted him and asked him, "Whence come, and whither wending?" and he answered, "I am a man from Cairo-city and have with me mules laden with merchandise and slaves and servants. I forewent them, to look me out a place wherein to deposit my goods: but, as I rode along on my she-mule, there fell upon me a company of banditti, who took my mule and gear; nor did I escape from them but at my last gasp." The gate-guard entreated him honourably and bade him be of good cheer, saying, "Abide with us this night, and in the morning we will look thee out a place befitting thee." Then he sought in his breast-pocket and, finding a dinar of those given to him by the merchant at Bulak, handed it to one of the gatekeepers, saying, "Take this and change it and bring us something to eat." The man took it and went to the market, where he changed it, and brought Ali bread and cooked meat: so he ate, he and the gate-guards, and he lay the night with them. Now on the morrow, one of the warders carried him to a certain of the merchants of Baghdad, to whom he told the same story, and he believed him, deeming that he was a merchant and had with him loads of merchandise. Then he took him up into his shop and entreated him with honour; moreover, he sent to his house for a splendid suit of his own apparel for him and carried him to the Hammam. "So," quoth Ali of Cairo: "I went with him to the bath, and when we came out, he took me and brought me to his house, where he set the morning-meal before us, and we ate and made merry. Then said he to one of his black slaves, ‘Ho Mas’dd, take this thy lord: show him the two houses standing in such a place, and whichever pleaseth him, give him the key of it and come back.’ So I went with the slave, till we came to a street-road where stood three houses side by side, newly built and yet shut up. He opened the first and I looked at it; and we did the same to the second; after which he said to me ‘Of which shall I give thee the key?’ ‘To whom doth the big house belong?’ ‘To us!’ ‘Open it, that I may view it.’ ‘Thou hast no business there.’ ‘Wherefore?’ ‘Because it is haunted, and none nighteth there but in the morning he is a dead man; nor do we use to open the door, when removing the corpse, but mount the terrace-roof of one of the other two houses and take it up thence. For this reason my master hath abandoned the house and saith: ‘I will never again give it to any one.’ ‘Open it,’ I cried, ‘that I may view it;’ and I said in my mind, ‘This is what I seek; I will pass the night there and in the morning be a dead man and be at peace from this my case.’ So he opened it and I entered and found it a splendid house, without its like; and I said to the slave, ‘I will have none other than this house; give me its key.’ But he rejoined, ‘I will not give thee this key till I consult my master,’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Twenty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the negro (continued Ali of Cairo) “rejoined, ‘I will not give thee its key till I consult my master,’” and going to him, reported, “‘The Egyptian trader saith, ‘I will lodge in none but the big house.’” Now when the merchant heard this, he rose and coming to Ali, spake thus to him, “O my lord, thou hast no need of this house.” But he answered, “I will lodge in none other than this; for I care naught for this silly saying.” Quoth the other, “Write me an acknowledgment that, if aught happen to thee, I am not responsible.” Quoth Ali, “So be it;” whereupon the merchant fetched an assessor from the Kazi’s court and, taking the prescribed acknowledgment, delivered to him the key wherewith he entered the house. The merchant sent him bedding by a blackamoor who spread it for him on the built bench behind the door[268] and walked away. Presently Ali went about and, seeing in the inner court a well with a bucket, let this down and drew water, wherewith he made the lesser ablution and prayed the obligatory prayers. Then he sat awhile, till the slave brought him the evening meal from his master's house, together with a lamp, a candle and candlestick, a basin and ewer and a gugglet[269] ; after which he left him and returned home. Ali lighted the candle, supped at his ease and prayed the night-prayer; and presently he said to himself, "Come, take the bedding and go upstairs and sleep there; 'twill be better than here." So he took the bed and carried it upstairs, where he found a splendid saloon, with gilded ceiling and floor and walls cased with coloured marbles. He spread his bed there and sitting down, began to recite somewhat of the Sublime Koran, when (ere he was ware) he heard one calling to him and asking, "O Ali, O son of Hasan, say me, shall I send thee down the gold?" And he answered, "Where be the gold thou hast to send?" But hardly had he spoken, when gold pieces began to rain down on him, like stones from a catapult, nor ceased till the saloon was full. Then, after the golden shower, said the Voice, "Set me free, that I may go my way; for I have made an end of my service and have delivered unto thee that which was entrusted to me for thee." Quoth Ali, "I adjure thee, by Allah the Almighty, to tell me the cause of this gold-rain." Replied the Voice, "This is a treasure that was talisman'd to thee of old time, and to every one who entered the house, we used to come and say: 'O Ali, O son of Hasan, shall we send thee down the gold?' Whereat he would be affrighted and cry out, and we would come down to him and break his neck and go away. But, when thou camest and we accosted thee by thy name and that of thy father, saying, 'Shall we send thee down the gold?' and thou madest answer to us, 'And where be the gold?' we knew thee for the owner of it and sent it down. Moreover, there is yet another hoard for thee in the land of Al-Yaman and thou wouldst do well to journey thither and fetch it. And now I would fain have thee set me free, that I may go my way." Said Ali, "By Allah, I will not set thee free, till thou bring me hither the treasure from the land of Al-Yaman!" Said the Voice, "An I bring it to thee, wilt thou release me and eke the servant of the other hoard?" "Yes," replied Ali, and the Voice cried, "Swear to me." So he swore to him, and he was about to go away, when Ali said to him, "I have one other need to ask of thee;" and he, "What is that?" Quoth Ali, "I have a wife and children at Cairo in such a place; thou needs must fetch them to me, at their ease and without their unease." Quoth he, "I will bring them to thee in a mule-litter[270] and much state, with a train of eunuchs and servants, together with the treasure from Al-Yaman, Inshallah!"[271] Then he took of him leave of absence for three days, when all this should be with him, and vanished. As soon as it was morning Ali went round about the saloon, seeking a place wherein to store the gold, and saw on the edge of the dais a marble slab with a turning-pin; so he turned the pin and the slab sank and showed a door which he opened and entering, found a great closet, full of bags of coarse stuff carefully sewn. So he began taking out the bags and fell to filling them with gold and storing them in the closet, till he had transported thither all the hoarded gold, whereupon he shut the door and turning the pin, the slab returned to its place. Then he went down and seated himself on the bench behind the door; and presently there came a knock; so he opened and found the merchant's slave who, seeing him comfortably sitting, returned in haste to his master, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Twenty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the house-owner's black slave returned and knocked at the door, Ali the Cairene, son of the merchant Hasan, opened it to him and the negro, seeing him comfortably sitting, returned in haste to his master with the good tidings, saying, "O my Lord, the merchant, who is lodged in the house inhabited by the Jinn,[272] is alive and well and sitteth on the bench behind the door." Then the merchant rose joyfully and went to the house, taking breakfast with him; and, when he saw Ali, he embraced him and kissed him between the eyes, asking, "How hath Allah dealt with thee?"; and Ali answered, "Right well, I slept upstairs in the marble saloon." Quoth the merchant, "Did aught come to thee or didst thou see any thing?" and quoth Ali "No, I recited some little of the Sublime Koran and slept till morning, when I arose and, after making the minor ablution and praying, seated myself on the bench behind the door." "Praised be Allah for safety!" exclaimed the merchant, then left him and presently sent him black slaves and white Mamelukes and handmaidens with household gear. They swept the house from top to bottom and furnished it with magnificent furniture; after which three white slaves and three blacks and four slave-girls remained with him, to serve him, while the rest returned to their master's house. Now when the merchants heard of him, they sent him presents of all manner things of price, even to food and drink and clothes, and took him with them to the market, asking, "When will thy baggage arrive?" And he answered, "After three days it will surely come." When the term had elapsed, the servant of the first hoard, the golden rain, came to him and said, "Go forth and meet the treasure I have brought thee from Al-Yaman together with thy Harim; for I bring part of the wealth in the semblance of costly merchandise; but the eunuchs and Mamelukes and the mules and horses and camels are all of the Jann." Now the Jinni, when he betook himself to Cairo, found Ali's wife and children in sore misery, naked and hungry; so he carried them out of the city in a travelling-litter and clad them in sumptuous raiment of the stuffs which were in the treasure of Al-Yaman. So when Ali heard this, he arose and repairing to the merchants, said to them, "Rise and go forth with us from the city, to meet the caravan bringing my merchandise, and honour us with the presence of your Harims, to meet my Harim." "Hearkening and obedience," answered they and, sending for their Harims, went forth all together and took seat in one of the city-gardens; and as they sat talking, behold, a dust-cloud arose out of the heart of the desert, and they flocked forth to see what it was. Presently it lifted and discovered mules and muleteers, tent-pitchers and linkmen, who came on, singing and dancing, till they reached the garden, when the chief of the muleteers walked up to Ali and kissing his hand, said to him, "O my master, we have been long on the way, for we purposed entering yesterday; but we were in fear of the bandits, so abode in our station four days, till Almighty Allah rid us of them." Thereupon the merchants mounted their mules and rode forward with the caravan, the Harims waiting behind, till Ali's wife and children mounted with them; and they all entered in splendid train. The merchants marvelled at the number of mules laden with chests, whilst the women of the merchants wondered at the richness of the apparel of his wife and the fine raiment of her children; and kept saying each to other, “Verily, the King of Baghdad hath no such gear; no, nor any other of the kings or lords or merchants!” So they ceased not to fare forwards in high great state, the men with Ali of Cairo and the Harims with his Harim, till they came to the mansion, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Thirtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that they ceased not to fare forwards in high state, the men with Ali’s men and the women with his wife, till they came to the mansion, where they alighted and brought the mules and their burdens into the midst of the courtyard. Then they unloaded them and warehoused the goods whilst the merchants’ wives went up with Ali’s family to the saloon, which they found as it were a luxuriant garden, spread with magnificent furniture. They sat in mirth and good cheer till noon, when they brought them up the midday meal, all manner meats and sweetmeats of the very best; and they ate and drank costly sherbets and perfumed themselves thereafter with rose-water and scented woods. Then they took leave and went home, men and women; and, when the merchants returned to their places, they sent presents to the husband according to their conditions; and their wives likewise sent presents to the wife, so that there came to them great store of handmaids and negroes and Mamelukes; and all kinds of goods, such as grain, sugar and so forth, in abundance beyond account. As for the Baghdad merchant, the landlord of the house, he abode with Ali and quitted him not, but said to him, “Let the black slaves and servants take the mules and the common cattle into one of my other houses, to rest.” Quoth Ali, “They set out again to-night for such a place.” Then he gave them leave to go forth and camp outside the city, that they might start on their journey at night-come; whereupon, hardly believing that they were dismissed, they took leave of him and departing to the outliers of the city, flew off through the air to their several abodes. So Ali and his house-owner sat together till a third of the night was past, when their colloquy ended and the merchant returned to his own house and Ali went up to his wife and children and after saluting them, said, “What hath befallen you in my absence all this time?” So she told him what they had suffered of hunger and nakedness and travail, and he said, “Praised be Allah for safety! How did ye come?” Answered she, “O my lord, I was asleep with my children yesternight, when suddenly and unexpectedly one raised us from the ground and flew with us through the firmament without doing us any hurt, nor did he leave flying with us, till he set us down in a place as it were an Arab camping-ground, where we saw laden mules and a travelling litter borne upon two great mules, and around it servants, all boys and men. So I asked them, ‘Who are ye and what are these loads and where are we?;’ and they answered, ‘We are the servants of the merchant Ali of Cairo, son of the merchant- jeweller, who hath sent us to fetch you to him at Baghdad.’ Quoth I, ‘Tell me, is it far or near, hence to Baghdad?’ They replied, ‘Near: there lieth between us and the city but the darkness of the night.’ Then they mounted us in the litter and, when the morrow dawned, we found ourselves with thee, without having suffered any hurt whatever.” Quoth he, “Who gave you these dresses?;” and quoth she, “The chief of the caravan opened one of the boxes on the mules and taking out thereof these clothes, clad me and thy children each in a suit; after which he locked the case and gave me the key, saying, ‘Take care of it, till thou give it to thy husband.’ And here it is safe by me.” So saying, she gave him the key, and he said, “Dost thou know the chest?” Said she, “Yes, I know it.” So he took her down to the magazine and showed her the boxes, when she cried, “This is the one whence the dresses were taken;” upon which he put the key in the lock and opened the chest, wherein he found much raiment and the keys of all the other cases. So he took them and fell to opening them, one after another, and feasting his eyes upon the gems and precious ores they contained, whose like was not found with any of the kings; after which he locked them again, took the keys, and returned to the saloon, saying to his wife, “This is of the bounty of Almighty Allah!” Then bringing her to the secret slab he turned the pin and opened the door of the closet, into which he entered with her and showed her the gold he had laid up therein. Quoth she, “Whence came all this to thee?” “It came to me by the grace of my Lord,” answered he: — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Thirty-first Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ali's wife had looked upon the gold she said to him, "Whence came all this to thee?" "It came to me by the grace of my Lord," answered he: "When I left thee in my trouble, I shipped at Bulak for Damietta and met a friend there who forwarded me to Damascus": in brief he told her all that had befallen him, from first to last. Said she, "O my lord, all this cometh by boon of thy father's blessing and orisons when he prayed for thee, before his death, saying, 'I beseech Allah to cast thee into no straits except He grant thee ready relief!' So praised be Allah Almighty for that He hath brought thee deliverance and hath requited thee with more than went from thee! But Allah upon thee, O my lord, return not to thy practice of associating with doubtful folk; but look thou fear Allah (whose name be exalted!) both in private and in public." And as she went on to admonish him, he said, "I accept thine admonition and beg the Almighty to remove the froward from amongst us and stablish us in His obedience and in the observance of the law and practice of His Prophet, on whom be blessings and peace!" After that Ali and his wife and children were in all solace of life and gladness; and he opened him a shop in the merchants' bazar and, stocking it with a somewhat of jewels and bullion, sat therein with his children and white servants. Presently he became the most considerable of the merchants of Baghdad, and his report reached the King of that city,[273] who sent a messenger to command his attendance, saying, "Answer the summons of the King who requireth thee." He replied, "I hear and obey," and straightway prepared his present and he took four trays of red gold and, filling them with jewels and precious metals, such as no King possessed, went up to the palace and presenting himself before the presence, kissed the ground between his hands and wished him endurance of goods and glory in the finest language he could command. Said the King, "O merchant, thou cheerest our city with thy presence!" and Ali rejoined, "O King of the age, thy slave hath brought thee a gift and hopeth for acceptance thereof from thy favour." Then he laid the four trays before the King, who uncovered them and seeing that they contained gems, whose fellows he possessed not and whose worth equalled treasuries of money, said, "Thy present is accepted, O merchant, and Inshallah! we will requite thee with its like." And Ali kissed his hands and went away; whereupon the King called his grandees and said to them, “How many of the Kings have sought my daughter in marriage?” “Many,” answered they; and he asked, “Hath any of them given me the like of this gift?”; whereto they replied, “Not one, for that none of them hath its like;” and he said, “I have consulted Allah Almighty by lot as to marrying my daughter to this merchant. What say ye?” “Be it as thou reckest,” answered they. Then he bade the eunuch carry the four trays into his serraglio and going in to his wife, laid them before her. She uncovered them and seeing therein that whose like she possessed not; no, nor a fraction thereof, said to him, “From which of the Kings hadst thou these?: perchance of one of the royalties that seek thy daughter in marriage?” Said he, “Not so, I had them of an Egyptian merchant, who is lately come to this our city. Now when I heard of his coming I sent to command him to us, thinking to make his acquaintance, so haply we might find with him somewhat of jewels and buy them of him for our daughter’s trousseau. He obeyed our summons and brought us these four trays, as a present, and I saw him to be a handsome youth of dignified aspect and intelligent as elegant, almost such as should be the sons of Kings. Wherefore my heart inclined to him at sight, and my heart rejoiced in him and I thought good to marry my daughter to him. So I showed the gift to my grandees, who agreed with me that none of the Kings hath the like of these and I told them my project. But what sayst thou?” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Thirty-second Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King of Baghdad, after showing the presents to his wife and highly praising Ali, the merchant-jeweller, and informing her of the proposed marriage, asked, “But what sayst thou?” She replied, “O King of the age, the ordering this affair is in Allah’s hand, and thine, and whatso Allah willeth shall come to pass.” Rejoined the King, “If it be His will, I will marry her to none other than this young man.” He slept on this resolve and on the morrow, he went out to his Divan and summoned Ali and the rest of the merchants of Baghdad, and when all came bade them be seated. Then said he, “Bring me the Kazi of the Divan” and they brought him; whereupon the King said to him, “O Kazi, write the contract of marriage between my daughter and the merchant Ali the Cairene.” But Ali said, “Thy pardon, O our lord the Sultan! It befitteth not that a trader such as I, be the King’s son-in-law.” Quoth the King, “It is my will to bestow this favour upon thee, as well as the Wazirate;” and he invested him forthwith in the Wazir’s office and ministerial robes. Then Ali sat down in the chair of the Wazirate and said, “O King of the age, thou hast bestowed on me this; and indeed I am honoured by thy bounties; but hear one word I have to say to thee!” He replied, “Say on, and fear not.” Quoth Ali, “Since it is thine august resolution to marry thy daughter, thou wouldst do better to marry her to my son. Quoth the King, “Hast thou then a son?”; and Ali replied, “Yes.” “Send for him forthwith,” said the King. Thereupon answered Ali “Hearkening and obedience!”, and despatched a servant to fetch his son, who came and kissing the ground before the King, stood in an attitude of respect. The King looked at him and seeing him to be yet comelier than his daughter and goodlier than she in stature and proportion and brightness and perfection, said to him, “What is thy name, O my son?” “My name is Hasan, O our lord the Sultan,” replied the young man, who was then fourteen years old. Then the Sultan said to the Kazi, “Write the contract of marriage between my daughter Husn al-Wujdd and Hasan, son of the merchant Ali the Cairene.” So he wrote the marriage-contract between them, and the affair was ended in the goodliest fashion; after which all in the Divan went their ways and the merchants followed the Wazir Ali, escorting him to his house, where they gave him joy of his advancement and departed. Then he went in to his wife, who seeing him clad in the Wazir’s habit, exclaimed, “What is this?”; when he told her all that had passed from first to last and she joyed therein with exceeding joy. So sped the night and on the morrow, he went up to the Divan, where the King received him with especial favour and seating him close by his side, said, “O Wazir, we purpose to begin the wedding festivities and bring thy son in to our daughter.” Replied Ali, “O our lord the Sultan, whatso thou deemest good is good.” So the Sultan gave orders to celebrate the festivities, and they decorated the city and held high festival for thirty days, in all joy and gladness; at the end of which time, Hasan, son of the Wazir Ali, went in to the Princess and enjoyed her beauty and loveliness. When the Queen saw her daughter's husband, she conceived a warm affection for him, and in like manner she rejoiced greatly in his mother. Then the King bade build for his son-in-law Hasan Ali-son a palace beside his own; so they built him with all speed a splendid palace in which he took up his abode; and his mother used to tarry with him some days and then go down to her own house. After awhile the Queen said to her husband, "O King of the age, Hasan's lady-mother cannot take up her abode with her son and leave the Wazir; neither can she tarry with the Wazir and leave her son." "Thou sayest sooth," replied the King, and bade edify a third palace beside that of Hasan, which being done in a few days he caused remove thither the goods of the Wazir, and the Minister and his wife took up their abode there. Now the three palaces communicated with one another, so that when the King had a mind to speak with the Wazir by night, he would go to him or send to fetch him; and so with Hasan and his father and mother. On this wise they dwelt in all solace and in the greatest happiness — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Thirty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King and the Wazir and his son ceased not to dwell in all solace and in the greatest happiness awhile, till the King fell ill and his sickness grew on him. So he summoned the lords of his realm and said to them, "There is come upon me a sore malady, peradventure a mortal; and I have therefore summoned you to consult you respecting a certain matter, on which I would have you counsel me as you deem well." They asked, "What is the matter of which thou wouldst take counsel with us, O King?"; and he answered, "I am old and sickly and I fear for the realm after me from its enemies; so I would have you all agree upon some one, that I may proclaim him King in my lifetime and so ye may be at ease." Whereupon quoth they with one voice, "We all approve of thy daughter's husband Hasan, son of the Wazir Ali; for we have seen his wit and perfect understanding, and he knoweth the place of all, great and small." Asked the King, "Are ye indeed agreed upon this?" and they answered, "Yes." Rejoined he "Peradventure ye all say this to my face, of respect for me; but behind my back ye will say otherwise." However, they all replied, "By Allah, our word is one and the same in public and in private, and we accept him frankly and with heartiness of heart and breadth of breast." Quoth he, "Since the case is thus, bring the Kazi of the Holy Law and all the Chamberlains and Viceroys and Officers of state before me to-morrow, and we will order the affair after the goodliest fashion." "We hear and we obey," answered they and withdrawing, notified all the Olema,[274] the doctors of the law and the chief personages among the Emirs. So when the morrow dawned, they came up to the Divan and, having craved and obtained permission to enter, they saluted the King, saying, "Here are we all in thy presence." Whereto he made reply, "O Emirs of Baghdad, whom will ye have to be King over you after me, that I may inaugurate him during my lifetime, before the presence of you all?" Quoth they with one voice, "We are agreed upon thy daughter's husband Hasan, son of the Wazir Ali." Quoth he, "If it be so, go all of you and bring him before me." So they all arose and, repairing to Hasan's palace, said to him, "Rise, come with us to the King." "Wherefore?" asked he, and they answered, "For a thing that will benefit both us and thee." So he went in with them to the King and kissed the ground before his father-in-law who said to him, "Be seated, O my son!" He sat down and the King continued, "O Hasan, all the Emirs have approved of thee and agreed to make thee King over them after me; and it is my purpose to proclaim thee, whilst I yet live, and so make an end of the business." But Hasan stood up and, kissing the ground once more before the King, said to him, "O our lord the King, among the Emirs there be many who are older than I and greater of worth; acquit me therefore of this thing." But all the Emirs cried out saying, "We consent not but that thou be King over us." Then said Hasan, "My father is older than I, and I and he are one thing; and it befits not to advance me over him." But Ali said, "I will consent to nothing save whatso contenteth my brethren; and they have all chosen and agreed upon thee; wherefore gainsay thou not the King's commandment and that of thy brethren." And Hasan hung his head abashed before the King and his father. Then said the King to the Emirs, "Do ye all accept of him?" "We do," answered they and recited thereupon seven Fatihahs.[275] So the King said, "O Kazi, draw up a legal instrument testifying of these Emirs that they are agreed to make King over them my daughter's husband Hasan." The Kazi wrote the act and made it binding on all men,[276] after they had sworn in a body the oath of fealty to Hasan. Then the King did likewise and bade him take his seat on the throne of kingship; whereupon they all arose and kissed King Hasan's hands and did homage to him, and swore lealty to him. And the new King dispensed justice among the people that day in fashion right royal, and invested the grandees of the realm in splendid robes of honour. When the Divan broke up, he went in to and kissed the hands of his father-in-law who spake thus to him, "O my son, look thou rule the lieges in the fear of Allah;" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Thirty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Hasan was quit of the Divan, he went in to and kissed the hands of his wife's father, who spake thus to him, "O my son, look thou rule the lieges in the fear of Allah;" whereto he replied, "O my father, through thy prayers for me, the grace and guidance of Allah will come to me." Then he entered his own palace and was met by his wife and her mother and their attendants, who kissed his hands and gave him joy of his advancement, saying, "Be this day blessed!" Next he went in to his father and mother, who joyed with exceeding joy in that which Allah had vouchsafed him of his advancement to the kingship, and his father charged him to fear Allah and to deal mercifully with his subjects. He passed the night in glee and gladness, and on the morrow, having prayed the obligatory prayers ending with the usual short chapters[277] of the Koran, he went up to the Divan, whither came all his officers and dignitaries. He passed the day in dispensing justice among the folk, bidding to graciousness and forbidding ungraciousness and appointing to place and displacing, till day- end, when the Divan broke up, after the goodliest fashion, and all the troops withdrew and each went his own way. Then he arose and repaired to the palace, where he found his father-in-law's sickness grown heavy upon him and said to him, "May no ill befal thee!" At this the old King opened his eyes and said, "O Hasan!" and he replied, "At thy service, O my lord." Quoth the old

King "Mine appointed hour is at hand: be thou careful of thy wife and her mother, and look thou fear Allah and honour thy parents; and bide in awe of the majesty of the Requiting King and bear in mind that He commandeth justice and good works." And King Hasan replied, "I hear and obey." Now after this the old King lingered three days and then departed into the mercy of Almighty Allah. So they laid him out and shrouded and buried him and held over him readings and perlections of the Koran, to the end of the customary forty days. And King Hasan, son of the Wazir, reigned in his stead, and his subjects joyed in him and all his days were gladness; moreover, his father ceased not to be his chief Wazir on his right hand, and he took to himself another Wazir, to be at his left hand. His reign was a prosperous and well ordered, and he lived a long life as King of Baghdad; and Allah blessed him, by the old King's daughter, with three sons who inherited the kingdom after him; and they abode in the solace of life and its pleasures till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies. And the glory be to Him who is eternal and in whose hand are annulling and confirming. And of the tales they tell is one of

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THE PILGRIM MAN AND THE OLD WOMAN.

A man of the pilgrims once slept a long sleep and awaking, found no trace of the caravan. So he rose up and walked on, but lost his way and presently came to a tent, where he saw an old woman standing at the entrance and by her side a dog asleep. He went up to the tent and, saluting the old woman, sought of her food, when she replied, "Go to yonder Wady and catch thy sufficiency of serpents, that I may broil of them for thee and give thee to eat." Rejoined the pilgrim, "I dare not catch serpents nor did I ever eat them." Quoth the old woman, "I will go with thee and catch some; fear not." So she went with him, followed by the dog, to the valley and, catching a sufficient number of serpents, proceeded to broil them. He saw nothing for it (saith the story teller) but to eat, in fear of hunger and exhaustion; so he ate of the serpents.[278] Then he was athirst and asked for water to drink; and she answered, "Go to the spring and drink." Accordingly, he went to the spring and found the water thereof bitter; yet needs must he drink of it despite its bitterness, because of the violence of his thirst. Presently he returned to the old woman and said to her, "I marvel, O ancient dame, at thy choosing to sojourn in this place" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

She said, it hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the palmer-man drank the bitter draught for stress of thirst, he returned and said "I marvel, O ancient dame, at thy choosing to sojourn in this place and thy putting up with such meat and drink!" She asked, "And how is it then in thy country?"; whereto he answered, "In my country are houses wide and spacious and fruits ripe and delicious and waters sweet and viands savorous and of goodly use and meats fat and full of juice and flocks innumerous and all things pleasant and all the goods of life, the like whereof are not, save in the Paradise which Allah the Omnipotent hath promised to His servants pious." Replied she, "All this have I heard: but tell me, have ye a Sultan who ruleth over you and is tyrannical in his rule and under whose hand you are; one who, if any of you commit an offence, taketh his goods and ruineth him and who, whenas he will, turneth you out of house and home and uprooteth you, stock and branch?" Replied the man, "Indeed that may be;" and she rejoined, "If so, by Allah, these your delicious food and life of daintyhood and gifts however good, with tyranny and oppression, are but a searching poison, while our coarse meat which in freedom and safety we eat is a healthful medicine. Hast thou not heard that the best of boons, after Al-Islam, the true Faith, are sanity and security?"[279] "Now such boons (quoth he who telleth the tale) may be by the just rule of the Sultan, Vice-regent of Allah on His earth, and the goodness of his polity. The Sultan of time past needed but little awfulness, for when the lieges saw him, they feared him; but the Sultan of these days hath need of the most accomplished polity and the utmost majesty, because men are not as men of by-gone time and this our age is one of folk opprobrious, and is greatly calamitous, noted for folly and hardness of heart and inclined to hate and enmity. If, therefore, the Sultan (which Almighty Allah forfend!) be weak or wanting in polity and majesty, this will be the assured cause of his country's ruin. Quoth the proverb, 'An hundred years of the Sultan's tyranny, but not one year of the people's tyranny one over other.' When the lieges oppress one another, Allah setteth over them a tyrannical Sultan and a terrible King. Thus it is told in history that one day there was sent to Al-Hajjαj bin Yïsuf a slip of paper, whereon was written, 'Fear Allah and oppress not His servants with all manner of oppression.' When he read this, he mounted the pulpit (for he was eloquent and ever ready of speech), and said, 'O folk, Allah Almighty hath made me ruler over you, by reason of your frowardness;'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hajjaj Yousuf-son read the paper he mounted the pulpit and said, "O folk, Allah Almighty hath made me ruler over you by reason of your frowardness; and indeed, though I die yet will ye not be delivered from oppression, with these your ill deeds; for the Almighty hath created like unto me many an one. If it be not I, 'twill be one more mischievous than I and a mightier in oppression and a more merciless in his majesty; even as saith the poet:[280] —

‘For not a deed the hand can try
Save ‘neath the hand of God on high,
Nor tyrant harsh work tyranny
Uncrushed by tyrant harsh as he.’

Tyranny is feared: but justice is the best of all things. We beg Allah to better our case!” And among tales is that of

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ABU AL-HUSN AND HIS SLAVE-GIRL TAWADDUD.[281]

There was once in Baghdad a man of consequence and rich in monies and immoveables, who was one of the chiefs of the merchants; and Allah had largely endowed him with worldly goods, but had not vouchsafed him what he longed for of offspring; and there passed over him a long space of time, without his being blessed with issue, male or female. His years waxed great; his bones became wasted and his back bent; weakness and weariness grew upon him, and he feared the loss of his wealth and possessions, seeing he had no child whom he might make his heir and by whom his name should be remembered. So he betook himself with supplication to Almighty Allah, fasting by day and praying through the night. Moreover, he vowed many vows to the Living, the Eternal; and visited the pious and was constant in supplication to the Most Highest, till He gave ear to him and accepted his prayer and took pity on his straining and complaining; so that, before many days were past, he knew carnally one of his women and she conceived by him the same night. In due time she finished her months and, casting her burden, bore a male child as he were a slice of the moon; whereupon the merchant fulfilled his vows in his gratitude to Allah, (to whom be honour and glory!) and gave alms and clothed the widow and the orphan. On the seventh night after the boy's birth, he named him Abu al-Husn,[282] and the wet-nurses suckled him and the dry-nurses dandled him and the servants and the slaves carried him and handled him, till he shot up and grew tall and throve greatly and learnt the Sublime Koran and the ordinances of Al-Islam and the Canons of the True Faith; and calligraphy and poetry and mathematics and archery. On this wise he became the union-pearl of his age and the goodliest of the folk of his time and his day; fair of face and of tongue fluent, carrying himself with a light and graceful gait and glorying in his stature proportionate and amorous graces which were to many a bait: and his cheeks were red and flower-white was his forehead and his side face waxed brown with tender down, even as saith one, describing him,

“The spring of the down on cheeks right clearly shows: * And how
when the Spring is gone shall last the rose?
Dost thou not see that the growth upon his cheek * Is violet-
bloom that from its leaves outgrows.”

He abode awhile in ease and happiness with his father, who rejoiced and delighted in him, till he came to man’s estate, when the merchant one day made him sit down before him and said, “O my son, the appointed term draweth near; my hour of death is at hand and it remaineth but to meet Allah (to whom belong Majesty and Might!). I leave thee what shall suffice thee, even to thy son’s son, of monies and mansions, farms and gardens; wherefore, fear thou Almighty Allah, O my son, in dealing with that which I bequeath to thee and follow none but those who will help thee to the Divine favour.” Not long after, he sickened and died; so his son ordered his funeral,[283] after the goodliest wise, and burying him, returned to his house and sat mourning for him many days and nights. But behold, certain of his friends came in to him and said to him, “Whoso leaveth a son like thee is not dead; indeed, what is past is past and fled and mourning beseemeth none but the young maid and the wife cloistered.” And they ceased not from him till they wrought on him to enter the Hammam and break off his mourning. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Abu al-Husn was visited by his friends and taken to the Hamman and persuaded to break off his mourning, he presently forgot his father’s charge, and his head was turned by his riches; he thought fortune would always wone with him as it was, and that wealth would ever wax and never wane. So he ate and drank and made merry and took his pleasure and gave gifts of gear and coin and was profuse with gold and addrest himself up to eating fowls and breaking the seals of wine-flasks and listening to the giggle of the daughter of the vine, as she gurgled from the flagon and enjoying the jingle of the singing-girls; nor did he give over this way of life, till his wealth was wasted and the case worsened and all his goods went from him and he bit his hands[284] in bitter penitence. For of a truth he had nothing left, after that which he had squandered, but a concubine, a slave-girl whom his father had bequeathed to him with the rest of his estate: and she had no equal in beauty and loveliness and brightness and liveliness and symmetric stature and perfect grace. She was past mistress in every manner of arts and accomplishments and endowed with many excellences, surpassing all the folk of her age and time. She was grown more notorious than a way-mark,[285] for her seductive genius, and outdid the fair both in theory and practice, and she was noted for her swimming gait, flexile and delicate, albeit she was full five feet in height and by all the boons of fortune deckt and dight, with strait arched brows twain, as they were the crescent moon of Sha’abαn,[286] and eyes like gazelles’ eyne; and nose like the edge of scymitar fine and cheeks like anemones of blood-red shine; and mouth like Solomon’s seal and sign and teeth like necklaces of pearls in line; and navel holding an ounce of oil of benzoin and waist more slender than his body whom love hath wasted and whom concealment hath made sick with pine and hind parts heavier than two hills of sand; briefly she was a volume of charms after his saying who saith,

“Her fair shape ravisheth, if face to face she did appear, * And
if she turn, for severance from her she slayeth sheer.
Sun-like, full-moon-like, sapling-like, unto her character *
Estrangement no wise appertains nor cruelty austere.
Under the bosom of her shift the garths of Eden are * And the
full-moon revolveth still upon her neck-rings’
sphere.”[287]

She seemed a full moon rising and a gazelle browsing, a girl of nine plus five[288] shaming the moon and sun, even as saith of her the sayer eloquent and ingenious,

“Semblance of full-moon Heaven bore, * When five and five are
conjoined by four;
’Tis not my sin if she made of me * Its like when it riseth
horizon o’er.”[289]

Clean of skin, odoriferous of breath, it seemed as if she were of fire fashioned and of crystal moulded; rose-red was the cheek of her and perfect the shape and form of her; even as one saith of her, describing her,

"Scented with sandal[290] and musk, right proudly doth she go,

* With gold and silver and rose and saffron-colour aglow.
A flower in a garden she is, a pearl in an ouch of gold * Or an
image in chapel[291] set for worship of high and low.
Slender and shapely she is; vivacity bids her arise, * But the
weight of her hips says, 'Sit, or softly and slowly go.'
Whenas her favours I seek and sue for my heart's desire, * 'Be
gracious,' her beauty says; but her coquetry answers, 'No.'
Glory to Him who made beauty her portion, and that * Of her lover
to be the prate of the censurers, heigho!"[292]

She captivated all who saw her, with the excellence of her beauty and the sweetness of her smile,[293] and shot them down with the shafts she launched from her eyes; and withal she was eloquent of speech and excellently skilled in verse. Now when Abu al-Husn had squandered all his gold, and his ill-plight all could behold, and there remained to him naught save this slave-girl, he abode three days without tasting meat or taking rest in sleep, and the handmaid said to him, "O my lord, carry me to the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth the slave-girl to her master, "O my lord, carry me to Harun al-Rashid, fifth of the sons of Abbas, and seek of him to my price ten thousand dinars. If he deem me dear, say to him: 'O Prince of True Believers, my handmaid is worth more than this: do but prove her, and her value will be magnified in thine eyes; for this slave-girl hath not her equal, and she were unfit to any but thou.'" And she added, "Beware, O my lord, of selling me at less than the sum I have named; indeed 'tis but little for the like of me." Now her owner knew not her worth nor that she had no equal in her day; but he carried her to the Caliph and set her in the presence and repeated what she had bidden him say. The Caliph asked her, "What is thy name?"; to which she answered, "My name is Tawaddud."[294] He then enquired, "O Tawaddud, in what branches of knowledge dost thou excel?"; and she replied, "O my lord, I am versed in syntax and poetry and jurisprudence and exegesis and philosophy; and I am skilled in music and the knowledge of the Divine ordinances and in arithmetic and geodesy and geometry and the fables of the ancients. I know the Sublime Koran by heart and have read it according to the seven, the ten and the fourteen modes. I know the number of its chapters and versets and sections and words; and its halves and fourths and eighths and tenths; the number of prostrations which occur in it and the sum total of its letters; and I know what there is in it of abrogating and abrogated[295] ; also what parts of it were revealed at Al-Medinah and what at Meccah and the cause of the different revelations. I know the Holy Traditions of the Apostle's sayings, historical and legendary, the established and those whose ascription is doubtful; and I have studied the exact sciences, geometry and philosophy and medicine and logic and rhetoric and composition; and I have learnt many things by rote and am passionately fond of poetry. I can play the lute and know its gamut and notes and notation and the crescendo and diminuendo. If I sing and dance, I seduce, and if I dress and scent myself, I slay. In fine, I have reached a pitch of perfection such as can be estimated only by those of them who are firmly rooted in knowledge."[296] Now when the Caliph heard these words spoken by one so young, he wondered at her eloquence, and turning to Abu al-Husn, said, "I will summon those who shall discuss with her all she claimeth to know; if she answer correctly, I will give thee the price thou askest for her and more; and if not, thou art fitter to have her than I." "With gladness and goodly gree, O Commander of the Faithful," replied Abu al-Husn. So the Caliph wrote to the Viceroy of Bassorah, to send him Ibrahim bin Siyyαr the prosodist, who was the first man of his day in argument and eloquence and poetry and logic, and bade him bring with him readers of the Koran and learned doctors of the law and physicians and astrologers and scientists and mathematicians and philosophers; and Ibrahim was more learned than all. In a little while they arrived at the palace of the Caliphate, knowing not what was to do, and the Caliph sent for them to his sitting-chamber and ordered them to be seated. So they sat down and he bade bring the damsel Tawaddud who came and unveiling, showed herself, as she were a sparkling star.[297] The Caliph set her a stool of gold; and she saluted, and speaking with an eloquent tongue, said, "O Commander of the Faithful, bid the Olema and the doctors of law and leaches and astrologers and scientists and mathematicians and all here present contend with me in argument." So he said to them, "I desire of you that ye dispute with this damsel on the things of her faith, and stultify her argument in all she advanceth;" and they answered, saying, "We hear and we obey Allah and thee, O Commander of the Faithful." Upon this Tawaddud bowed her head and said, "Which of you is the doctor of the law, the scholar, versed in the readings of the Koran and in the Traditions?" Quoth one of them, "I am the man thou seekest." Quoth she, "Then ask me of what thou wilt." Said the doctor, "Hast thou read the precious book of Allah and dost thou know its cancelling and cancelled parts and hast thou meditated its versets and its letters?" "Yes," answered she. "Then," said he, "I will proceed to question thee of the obligations and the immutable ordinances: so tell me of these, O damsel, and who is thy Lord, who thy prophet, who thy Guide, what is thy point of fronting in prayer, and who be thy brethren? Also what thy spiritual path and what thy highway?" Whereto she replied, "Allah is my Lord, and Mohammed (whom Allah save and assain!) my prophet, and the Koran is my guide and the Ka'abah my fronting; and the True-believers are my brethren. The practice of good is my path and the Sunnah my highway." The Caliph again marvelled at her words so eloquently spoken by one so young; and the doctor pursued, "O damsel, with what do we know Almighty Allah?" Said she, "With the understanding." Said he, "And what is the understanding?" Quoth she, "It is of two kinds, natural and acquired." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the damsel continued, "The understanding is of two kinds, natural and acquired. The natural is that which Allah (to whom be honour and glory!)

created for the right direction of His servants after His will; and the acquired is that which men accomplish by dint of study and fair knowledge.” He rejoined, “Thou hast answered well.” Q “Where is the seat of the understanding?”— “Allah casteth it in the heart whence its lustrous beams ascend to the brain and there become fixed.” Q “How knowest thou the Prophet of Allah?” “By the reading of Allah’s Holy Book and by signs and proofs and portents and miracles!” Q “What are the obligations and the immutable ordinances?” “The obligations are five. (1) Testification that there is no ilαh[298] but Allah, no god but the God alone and One, which for partner hath none, and that Mohammed is His servant and His apostle. (2) The standing in prayers.[299] (3) The payment of the poor-rate. (4) Fasting Ramazan. (5) The Pilgrimage to Allah’s Holy House for all to whom the journey is possible. The immutable ordinances are four; to wit, night and day and sun and moon, the which build up life and hope; nor any son of Adam wotteth if they will be destroyed on the Day of Judgment.” Q “What are the obligatory observances of the Faith?” “They are five, prayer, almsgiving, fasting, pilgrimage, fighting for the Faith and abstinence from the forbidden.” Q “Why dost thou stand up to pray?” “To express the devout intent of the slave acknowledging the Deity.” Q “What are the obligatory conditions which precede standing in prayer?” “Purification, covering the shame, avoidance of soiled clothes, standing on a clean place, fronting the Ka’abah, an upright posture, the intent[300] and the pronouncing ‘Allaho Akbar’ of prohibition.”[301] Q “With what shouldest thou go forth from thy house to pray?” “With the intent of worship mentally pronounced.” Q “With what intent shouldest thou enter the mosque?” “With an intent of service.” Q “Why do we front the Kiblah[302] ?” “In obedience to three Divine orders and one Traditional ordinance.” Q “What are the beginning, the consecration and the end of prayer?” “Purification beginneth prayer, saying the Allaho Akbar of prohibition consecrateth, and the salutation endeth prayer.” Q “What deserveth he who neglecteth prayer?” “It is reported, among the authentic Traditions of the Prophet, that he said, ‘Whoso neglecteth prayer wilfully and purposely hath no part in Al-Islam.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fortieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that after the damsel had repeated the words of that Holy Tradition the doctor cried, “Thou hast replied aright: now say me, what is prayer?” “Prayer is communion between the slave and his lord, and in it are ten virtues: (1) it illumineth the heart; (2) it maketh the face shine; (3) it pleaseth the Compassionate One; (4) it angereth Satan; (5) it conjureth calamity; (6) it wardeth off the mischief of enemies; (7) it multiplieth mercy; (8) it forfendeth vengeance and punishment; (9) it bringeth the slave nigh unto his lord; and (10) it restraineth from lewdness and frowardness. Hence it is one of the absolute requisites and obligatory ordinances and the pillar of the Faith.” Q “What is the key of prayer?” “Wuzd or the lesser ablution.”[303] Q “What is the key to the lesser ablution?” “Intention and naming the Almighty.” Q “What is the key of naming the Almighty?” “Assured faith.” Q “What is the key of faith?” “Trust in the Lord.” Q “What is the key of trust in the Lord?” “Hope.” Q “What is the key of hope?” “Obedience.” Q “What is the key of obedience?” “The confession of the Unity and the acknowledgment of the divinity of Allah.” Q “What are the Divine ordinances of Wuzu, the minor ablution?” “They are six, according to the canon of the Imam al-Shαfi’ν Mohammed bin Idris (of whom Allah accept!): (1) intent while washing the face; (2) washing the face; (3) washing the hands and forearms; (4) wiping part of the head; (5) washing the feet and heels; and (6) observing due order.[304] And the traditional statutes are ten: (1) nomination; (2) and washing the hands before putting them into the water-pot; (3) and mouth-rinsing; (4) and snuffing;[305] (5) and wiping the whole head; (6) and wetting the ears within and without with fresh water; (7) and separating a thick beard; (8) and separating the fingers and toes;[306] (9) and washing the right foot before the left and (10) doing each of these thrice and all in unbroken order. When the minor ablution is ended, the worshipper should say, I testify that there is no god but the God, the One, which for partner hath none, and I testify that Mohammed is His servant and His apostle. O my Allah, make me of those who repent and in purity are permanent! Glory to Thee, O my God, and in Thy praise I bear witness, that there is no god save Thou! I crave pardon of Thee and I repent to Thee!

For it is reported, in the Holy Traditions, that the Prophet (whom Allah bless and preserve!) said of this prayer, ‘Whoso endeth every ablution with this prayer, the eight gates of Paradise are open to him; he shall enter at which he pleaseth.’” Q “When a man purposeth ablution, what betideth him from the angels and the devils?” “When a man prepareth for ablution, the angels come and stand on his right and the devils on his left hand.[307] If he name Almighty Allah at the beginning of the ablution, the devils flee from him and the angels hover over him with a pavilion of light, having four ropes, to each an angel glorifying Allah and craving pardon for him, so long as he remaineth silent or calleth upon the name of Allah. But if he omit to begin washing with naming Allah (to whom belong might and majesty!), neither remain silent, the devils take command of him; and the angels depart from him and Satan whispereth evil thoughts unto him, till he fall into doubt and come short in his ablution. For (quoth he on whom be blessing and peace!), ‘A perfect ablution driveth away Satan and assureth against the tyranny of the Sultan’; and again quoth he, ‘If calamity befal one who is not pure by ablution; verily and assuredly let him blame none but himself.’” Q “What should a man do when he awaketh from sleep?” “He should wash his hands thrice, before putting them into the water vessel.” Q “What are the Koranic and traditional orders anent Ghusl, the complete ablution[308] ?” “The divine ordinances are intent and ‘crowning’[309] the whole body with water, that is, the liquid shall come at every part of the hair and skin. Now the traditional ordinances are the minor ablution as preliminary; rubbing the body; separating the hair and deferring in words[310] the washing of the feet till the end of the ablution.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Forty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel had recounted to the doctor what were the divine and traditional orders anent Ghusl or total ablution, quoth he, “Thou hast replied aright: now tell me what are the occasions for Tayammum, or making the ablution with sand and dust; and what are the ordinances thereof, divine and human?” “The reasons are seven, viz.: want of water; fear lest water lack; need thereto; going astray on a march;

sickness; having broken bones in splints and having open wounds.[311] As for its ordinances, the divine number four, viz., intent, dust, clapping it to the face and clapping it upon the hands; and the human number two, nomination and preferring the right before the left hand." Q "What are the conditions, the pillars or essentials, and the traditional statutes of prayer?" "The conditions are five: (1) purification of the members; (2) covering of the privy parts; (3) observing the proper hours, either of certainty or to the best of one's belief; (4) fronting the Kiblah; and (5) standing on a clean place. The pillars or essentials number twelve: (1) intent; (2) the Takbvr or magnification of prohibition; (3) standing when able to stand[312] ; (4) repeating the Fatihah or opening chapter of the Koran and saying, 'In the name of Allah, the Compassionating, the Compassionate!' with a verse thereof according to the canon of the Imam Al-Shafi'i; (5) bowing the body and keeping it bowed; (6) returning to the upright posture and so remaining for the time requisite; (7) prostration and permanence therein; (8) sitting between two prostrations and permanence therein; (9) repeating the latter profession of the Faith and sitting up therefor; (10) invoking benediction on the Prophet (whom Allah bless and preserve!) (11) the first Salutation,[313] and (12) the intent of making an end of prayer expressed in words. But the traditional statutes are the call to prayer; the standing posture; raising the hands (to either side of the face) whilst pronouncing the prohibition; uttering the magnification before reciting the Fatihah; seeking refuge with Allah[314] ; saying, 'Amen'; repeating the chapter of the Koran after the Fatihah, repeating the magnifications during change of posture; saying, 'May Allah hear him who praiseth Him! and O our Lord, to Thee be the praise!'; praying aloud in the proper place[315] and praying under the breath prayers so prescribed; the first profession of unity and sitting up thereto; blessing the Prophet therein; blessing his family in the latter profession and the second Salutation." Q "On what is the Zakαt or obligatory poor-rate taxable?" "On gold and silver and camels and oxen and sheep and wheat and barley and holcus and millet and beans and vetches and rice and raisins and dates." Q "What is the Zakαt or poor-rate on gold?" "Below twenty miskals or dinars, nothing; but on that amount half a dinar for every score and so on proportionally.[316] " Q "On silver?” “Under two hundred dirhams nothing, then five dirhams on every two hundred and so forth.” Q “On camels?” “For every five, an ewe, or for every twenty-five a pregnant camel.” Q “On sheep?” “An ewe for every forty head,” Q “What are the ordinances of the Ramazan Fast?” “The Koranic are intent; abstinence from eating, drinking and carnal copulation, and the stoppage of vomiting. It is incumbent on all who submit to the Law, save women in their courses and forty days after childbirth; and it becomes obligatory on sight of the new moon or on news of its appearance, brought by a trustworthy person and commending itself as truth to the hearer’s heart; and among its requisites is that the intent be pronounced at nightfall. The traditional ordinances of fasting are, hastening to break the fast at sundown; deferring the fore-dawn meal,[317] and abstaining from speech, save for good works and for calling on the name of Allah and reciting the Koran.” Q “What things vitiate not the fast?” “The use of unguents and eye-powders and the dust of the road and the undesigned swallowing of saliva and the emission of seed in nocturnal pollution or at the sight of a strange woman and blooding and cupping; none of these things vitiates the fast.” Q “What are the prayers of the two great annual Festivals?” “Two one-bow prayers, which be a traditional ordinance, without call to prayer or standing up to pronounce the call;[318] but let the Moslem say, ‘Prayer is a collector of all folk!’[319] and pronounce ‘Allaho Akbar’ seven times in the first prayer, besides the Takbir of prohibition; and, in the second, five times, besides the magnification of rising up (according to the doctrine of the Imam Al-Shafi’i, on whom Allah have mercy!) and make the profession of the Faith.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Forty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel had answered the doctor anent the Festival-prayers, quoth he, “Thou hast replied aright: now tell me what are the prayers prescribed on the occasion of an eclipse of the sun or moon?” “Two one-bow prayers without call to prayer or standing thereto by the worshipper, who shall make in each two-bow prayer double standing up and double inclinations and two-fold prostrations, then sit and testify and salute.” Q “What is the ritual of prayer for rain?” “Two one-bow prayers without call to prayer or standing thereto; then shall the Moslem make the profession and salute. Moreover the Imam shall deliver an exhortation and ask pardon of Allah, in place of the magnification, as in the two sermons of the Festivals and turn his mantle upper edge downwards and pray and supplicate." Q "What are the Witr, the additional or occasional prayers?" "The least is a one-bow prayer and the most eleven." Q "What is the forenoon prayer?" "At least, two one-bow prayers and at most, twelve." Q "What hast thou to say of the I'itikαf or retreat[320] ?" "It is a matter of traditional ordinance." Q "What are its conditions?" "(1) intent; (2) not leaving the mosque save of necessity; (3) not having to do with a woman; (4) fasting; and (5) abstaining from speech." Q "Under what conditions is the Hajj or Pilgrimage[321] obligatory?" "Manhood, and understanding and being a Moslem and practicability; in which case it is obligatory on all, once before death." Q "What are the Koranic statutes of the Pilgrimage?" "(1) The Ihrαm or pilgrim's habit; (2) the standing at Arafat; (3) circumambulating the Ka'abah; (4) running between Safα and Marwah[322] ; and (5) shaving or clipping the hair." Q "What are the Koranic statutes of the 'Umrah[323] or lesser pilgrimage?" "Assuming the pilgrim's habit and compassing and running." Q "What are the Koranic ordinances of the assumption of the pilgrim's habit?"[324] "Doffing sewn garments, forswearing perfume and ceasing to shave the head or pare the nails, and avoiding the killing of game, and eschewing carnal copulation." Q "What are the traditional statutes of the pilgrimage?" "(1) The crying out 'Labbay'ka, Adsum, Here am I, O our Lord, here am I!'[325] 4 (2) the Ka'abah-circuitings[326] of arrival and departure; (3) the passing the night at the Mosque of Muzdalifah and in the valley of Mina, and (4) the lapidation.[327] " Q "What is the Jihαd or Holy War and its essentials?" "Its essentials are: (1) the descent of the Infidels upon us; (2) the presence of the Imam; (3) a state of preparation; and (4) firmness in meeting the foe. Its traditional ordinance is incital to battle, in that the Most High hath said, 'O thou my Prophet, incite the faithful to fight!'[328] " Q "What are the ordinances of buying and selling?" "The Koranic are: (1) offer and acceptance and (2) if the thing sold be a white slave, by whom one profiteth, all possible endeavour to convert him to Al-Islam; and (3) to abstain from usury;

the traditional are: making void[329] and option before not after separating, according to his saying (whom Allah bless and preserve!), ‘The parties to a sale shall have the option of cancelling or altering terms whilst they are yet unseparated.’”, Q “What is it forbidden to sell for what?” “On this point I mind me of an authentic tradition, reported by Nαf’i[330] of the Apostle of Allah, that he forbade the barter of dried dates for fresh and fresh figs for dry and jerked for fresh meat and cream for clarified butter; in fine, all eatables of one and the same kind, it is unlawful to buy or barter some for other some.[331] “ Now when the doctor of law heard her words and knew that she was wit-keen, penetrative, ingenious and learned in jurisprudence and the Traditions and the interpretation of the Koran and what not else, he said in his mind, “Needs must I manoeuvre with her, that I may overcome her in the assembly of the Commander of the Faithful.” So he said to her, “O damsel, what is the lexicographical meaning of Wuzu?” And she answered, “Philologically it signifieth cleanliness and freedom from impurities.” Q “And of Salαt or prayer?” “An invocation of good” Q “And of Ghusl?” “Purification.” Q “And of Saum or fasting?” “Abstention.” Q “And of Zakαt?” “Increase. Q “And of Hajj or pilgrimage?” “Visitation.” Q “And of Jihαd?” “Repelling.” With this the doctor’s arguments were cut off, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Forty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the doctor’s arguments were cut off, he rose to his feet and said, “Bear witness against me, O Commander of the Faithful, that this damsel is more learned in the Law than I am.” Quoth she, “I will ask thee somewhat, which do thou answer me speedily, an thou be indeed a learned man.” Quoth he, “Say on;” and she said, “What are the arrows of the Faith?” Answered he, “They number ten: (1) Testification, that is, religion; (2) Prayer, that is, the covenant; (3) Alms, that is, purification; (4) Fasting, that is, defensive armour; (5) Pilgrimage, that is, the Law; (6) Fighting for the Faith, that is, a general duty; (7) Bidding to beneficence and (8) Forbidding from frowardness, both of which are a man’s honour; (9) Commune,[332] that is, sociableness of the Faithful; and (10) Seeking knowledge, that is, the praiseworthy path." She rejoined, "Thou hast replied aright and now remaineth but one question, 'What be the roots or fundamentals of Al-Islam?'" He said "They are four: sincerity of belief, truth of intent, observance of the lawful limit and keeping the covenant." Then said she, "I have one more question to ask thee, which if thou answer, it is well; else, I will take thy clothes." Quoth he, "Speak, O damsel;" and she said, "What are the branches or superstructure of Al-Islam?" But he was silent awhile and made no reply: so she cried "Doff thy clothes and I will expound them to thee." Quoth the Caliph "Expound them, and I will make him put off his clothes for thee." She said, "There are two-and-twenty branches: (1) holding fast to the Book of Allah the Most Highest; (2) taking example by His Apostle (whom Allah bless and preserve!); (3) abstaining from evil doing; (4) eating what is lawful and (5) avoiding what is unlawful; (6) restitution of things wrongfully taken; (7) repentance; (8) knowledge of the Law; (9) love of the Friend,[333] (10) and of the followers of the true Revelation; (11) belief in the apostles of Al-Islam; (12) fear of apostacy; (13) preparation for departing this life; (14) force of conviction; (15) mercy on all possible occasions; (16) strength in time of weakness; (17) patience under trials; (18) knowledge of Allah Almighty and (19) of what His Prophet hath made known to us; (20) thwarting Iblis the accursed; (21) striving earnestly against the lusts of the soul and warring them down, and (22) devotion to the one God." Now when the Commander of the Faithful heard her words, he bade the professor put off his clothes and hooded turband; and so did that doctor and went forth, beaten and confounded, from the Caliph's presence. Thereupon another man stood up and said to her, "O damsel, hear a few questions from me." Quoth she, "Say on;' and he asked, "What are the conditions of purchase by advance?" whereto she answered, "That the price be fixed, the kind be fixed and the period of delivery be fixed and known." Q "What are the Koranic and the traditional canons of eating?" "The confession that Allah Almighty provideth the eater and giveth him meat and drink, with thanksgiving to Him therefor." Q "What is thanksgiving?" "The use by the creature of that which the Creator vouchsafeth to him, according as it was created for the creature." Q "What are the traditional canons of eating?" "The

Bismillah[334] and washing both hands; sitting on the left of the hind part; eating with three fingers, and eating of that which hath been duly masticated.[335] " Q "What are good manners in eating?" "Taking small mouthfuls and looking little at one's table-companion." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Forty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel had answered concerning good manners in eating, the doctor who was trying her, rejoined, "Thou hast replied aright. Now tell me what are the stays of the heart and their supports?"[336] "The stays and supports both number three: (1) holding fast to the Faith, the support whereof is the shunning of infidelity; (2) holding fast to the Traditional Law, and its support the shunning of innovation; and (3) holding fast to obedience, and its support the shunning of disobedience." Q "What are the conditions of Wuzu?" "(1) being a Moslem; (2) discernment of good and evil; (3) purity of the water, and (4) absence of material or religious impediments." Q "What is belief?" "It is divided into nine parts: (1) belief in the One worshipped; (2) belief in the condition of slavery of the worshipper; (3) belief in the personality of the Deity; (4) belief in the Two Handfuls;[337] (5) belief in Providence which allotteth to man his lot; (6) belief in the Abrogating and (7) in the Abrogated; (8) belief in Allah, His angels and apostles; and (9) in fore-ordained Fate, general and individual, its good and ill, its sweet and bitter." Q "What three things do away other three?" "It is told of Sufyαn al-Saurv[338] that he said, 'Three things do away with other three. Making light of the pious doth away the future life; making light of Kings doth away this life; and, making light of expenditure doth away wealth.'" Q "What are the keys of the heavens, and how many gates have they.?" "Quoth Almighty Allah, 'And the heaven shall be opened and be full of portals;'[339] and quoth he whom Allah bless and preserve!, 'None knoweth the number of the gates of heavens, save He who created the heavens, and there is no son of Adam but hath two gates allotted to him in the heavens, one whereby his daily bread descendeth and another wherethrough his works ascend. The first gate is not closed, save when his term of life cometh to an end, nor the gate of works, good and evil, till his soul ascend for judgment.'" Q "Tell me of a thing and a half thing and a no-thing." "The thing is the Moslem; the half thing the hypocrite,[340] and the no-thing the miscreant." Q "Tell me of various kinds of hearts." "There is the whole heart, the sick heart, the contrite heart, the vowed heart and the enlightened heart. Now the whole heart is that of Abraham, the Friend of Allah; the sick heart is that of the Unbeliever in Al-Islam; the contrite heart is that of the pious who fear the Lord; the vowed heart is that of our Lord Mohammed (whom Allah bless and keep!) and the illuminated heart is that of his followers. Furthermore, the hearts of learned Olema are of three kinds, the heart which is in love with this world; the heart which loveth the next world, and the heart which loveth its Lord; and it is said that hearts are three, the suspended, that of the infidel; the non-existent, that of the hypocrite; and the constant, that of the True-believer. Moreover, it is said that the firm heart is of three kinds, viz., the heart dilated with light and faith, the heart wounded with fear of estrangement, and the heart which feareth to be forsaken of its Supreme Friend." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the second doctor declared. "Thou hast said well," quoth she to the Caliph, "O Commander of the Faithful, he hath questioned me, till he is weary, and now I will ask of him two questions. If he answer them both, it is well; and if not, I will take his clothes and he shall wend in peace." Quoth the doctor, "Ask me what thou wilt," and she said, "What sayest thou religion is?" Answered he, "Religion is confession of Faith with the tongue and conviction with the heart and correspondent action with the members. He (upon whom be blessings and peace!) hath said, 'The believer is not perfect in belief, except he perfect himself in five qualities, namely: trust in Allah,[341] committal of his affair to Allah, submission to the commands of Allah, acquiescence in the decrees of Allah; and that all he doth be done for sake of Allah; so is he of those who are acceptable to the Deity, and who give to Him and withhold for Him; and such man is perfect in belief.'" Then said she, "What is the Divine ordinance of ordinances and the ordinance which is the initiator of all ordinances and that of which all others stand in need and that which comprehendeth all others; and what is the traditional ordinance that entereth into the Koranic, and the prophetic practice whereby the Divine is completed?" But he was silent and made no reply; whereupon the Caliph bade her expound and ordered him to doff his clothes and give them to her. Said she, "O doctor, the Koranic ordinance of ordinances is the knowledge of Allah Almighty; that, which is the initiative of all others, is the testifying there is no god but the God and Mohammed is the Apostle of God; that, of which all others have need, is the Wuzu-ablution; that, which compriseth all others, is the Ghusl-ablution from defilement[342] ; the Traditional ordinance that entereth into the Koranic, is the separation of the fingers and the thick beard;[343] and that, wherewith all Koranic ordinances are completed, is circumcision."[344] Therewith was made manifest the defeat of the doctor, who rose to his feet and said, "I call Allah to witness, O Commander of the Faithful, that this damsel is more learned than I in theology and what pertaineth to the Law." So saying, he put off his clothes and went away ignominiously worsted. Then she turned to the rest of the learned men present and said, "O masters, which of you is the Koranist, the reader and reciter of the Koran, versed in the seven readings and in syntax and in lexicography?" Thereupon a professor arose and, seating himself before her, said "Hast thou read the Book of Almighty Allah and made thyself thoroughly acquainted with its signs, that is its verses, and its abrogating parts and abrogated portions, its unequivocal commands and its ambiguous; and the difference of its revelations, Meccan and Medinan? Dost thou understand its interpretation and hast thou studied it, according to the various traditions and origins?" "Yes," answered she; and he said, "What then is the number of its chapters, how many are the decades and versets, how many words and how many letters and how many acts of prostration and how many prophets and how many chapters are Medinan and how many are Meccan and how many birds are mentioned in it?" Replied she, "O my lord, its chapters are an hundred and fourteen, whereof seventy were revealed at Meccah and forty-four at Al-Medinah; and it containeth six hundred and twenty-one decades; six thousand three hundred and thirty-six versets;[345] seventy-nine thousand four hundred and thirty-nine words and three hundred and twenty-three thousand and six hundred and seventy letters; and to the reader thereof, for every letter, are given ten benefits. The acts of prostration it compriseth are fourteen." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Forty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the professor of Koranic exegesis questioned the damsel, she continued, "As regards the Prophets named in the Book there be five-and-twenty, to wit, Adam, Noah,[346] Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Lot, Elisha, Jonah, Salih,[347] or Heber, Hïd,[348] Shua'yb or Jethro,[349] David, Solomon, Zï'l-kafl or Joshua, Idrvs, Elias, Yahyα or John the Baptist, Zacharias, Job, Moses, Aaron, Jesus and Mohammed,[350] the peace of Allah and His blessing be on them all! Moreover, nine flying things are mentioned in the Koran, namely, the gnat, the bee, the fly, the ant, the hoopoe, the crow, the locust, the swallow and the bird of Jesus[351] (on whom be peace!), to wit, the bat." Q "Which is the most excellent chapter of the Koran?" "That of The Cow.[352] " Q "Which is the most magnificent verse?" "That of the Throne; it hath fifty words, bearing in each fifty blessings." Q "What sign or verse hath in it nine signs or wonders?" "That in which quoth Allah Almighty, 'Verily, in the creation of the Heaven and the Earth: and in the vicissitude of night, and day; and in the ship which saileth through the sea laden with what is profitable for mankind; and in the rain-water which God sendeth down from Heaven, quickening thereby the dead ground and replenishing the same with all sorts of cattle; and in the change of winds and in the clouds that are compelled to do service between the Heaven and the Earth;[353] — are signs to people of understanding.'" Q "Which verse is the most just?" "That in which Allah saith, 'Verily, Allah enjoineth justice and the doing of good, and the giving unto kindred what shall be necessary; and He forbiddeth wickedness and iniquity and oppression'"[354] Q "Which is the most greedy?" "That in which quoth Allah, 'Is it that every man of them greedeth to enter the Garden of Delight?'"[355] Q "Which is the most hopeful?" "That in which quoth Almighty Allah, 'Say: O my servants who have transgressed against your own souls, despair not of the mercy of Allah; seeing, that Allah forgiveth all sins; aye Gracious, Merciful is He.’”[356] Q “By what school of intonation dost thou read?” “By that of the people of Paradise, to wit, the version of Nαf’i.” Q “In which verse doth Allah make prophets lie?”[357] “In that wherein He saith, ‘They (the brothers of Joseph) brought his inner garment stained with false blood.’”[358] Q “In which doth He make unbelievers speak the truth?” “In that wherein He saith, ‘The Jews say, ‘The Christians are grounded on nothing,’ and the Christians say, ‘The Jews are grounded on nothing’; and yet they both read the Scriptures;’[359] and, so saying, all say sooth.” Q “In which doth God speak in his own person?” “In that in which he saith, ‘I have not created Genii and men for any other end than that they should serve me.’”[360] Q “In which verse do the angels speak?” “In that which saith, ‘But we celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy holiness.’”[361] Q “What sayest thou of the formula: — I seek refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned?” “It is obligatory by commandment of Allah on all before reading the Koran, as appeareth by His saying, ‘When thou readest the Koran, seek refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned.’”[362] Q “What signify the words ‘seeking refuge’[363] and what are the variants of the formula?” “Some say, ‘I take refuge with Allah the All-hearing and All-knowing,’ and others, ‘With Allah the Strong;’ but the best is that whereof the Sublime Koran speaketh and the Traditions perpetuate. And he (whom Allah bless and keep!) was used to ejaculate, ‘I seek refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned.’ And quoth a Tradition, reported by Naf’i on the authority of his adopted father, ‘The apostle of Allah, was wont when he rose in the night to pray, to say aloud, ‘Allaho Akbar’; God is Most Great, with all Majesty! Praise be to Allah abundantly! Glory to Allah morn and even be!’ Then would he say, ‘I seek refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned and from the delusions of the Devils and their evil suggestions.’ And it is told of Ibn Abbas[364] (of whom Allah accept!) that he said, ‘The first time Gabriel came down to the Prophet with revelation he taught him the ‘seeking refuge,’ saying, ‘O Mohammed, say, I seek refuge with Allah the All-hearing and All-knowing;’ then say, ‘In the name of Allah the Compassionating, the Compassionate!’ Read, in the name of thy Lord who created; — created man of blood-clots.”[365] Now when the Koranist heard her words he marvelled at her expressions, her eloquence, her learning, her excellence, and said, “O damsel, what sayst thou of the verse ‘In the name of Allah, the Compassionating, the Compassionate’? Is it one of the verses of the Koran?” “Yes; it is a verset of ‘The Ant’[366] occurring also at the head of the first and between every two following chapters; and there is much difference of opinion, respecting this, among the learned.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Forty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel had told the professor concerning the difference of opinion among the learned touching the “Basmalah,” he said, “Thou hast replied aright: now tell me why is not the formula written at the head of the chapter of Immunity[367] ?”; and she answered, “When this chapter was revealed from on high for the dissolution of the alliance between the Prophet and the idolaters, He (whom Allah bless and preserve!) sent Ali[368] ibn Abv Tαlib (whose face Allah honour!) therewith, and he read the chapter to them, but did not read the Basmalah.”[369] Q “What of the excellence of the formula and its blessing?” “It is told of the Prophet that he said, ‘Never is the Basmalah pronounced over aught, but there is a blessing in it;’ and it is reported, on authority of Him (whom Allah bless and preserve!) that the Lord of Glory swore by His glory that never should the Basmalah be pronounced over a sick person, but he should be healed of his sickness. Moreover, it is said that, when Allah created the empyrean, it was agitated with an exceeding agitation; but He wrote on it, ‘Bismillah’ and its agitation subsided. When the formula first descended from heaven to the Prophet, he said, ‘I am safe from three things, earthquake and metamorphosis and drowning; and indeed its boons are great and its blessings too many to enumerate. It is told of Allah’s Apostle that he said, ‘There will be brought on the Judgment-day a man with whom He shall reckon and finding no good deed to his account, shall order him to the Fire; but the man will cry, ‘O my God, Thou hast not dealt justly by me!’ Then shall Allah (to whom be honour and glory!) say, ‘How so?’ and the man shall answer, O Lord, for that Thou callest Thyself the Compassionating, the Compassionate, yet wilt Thou punish me with the Fire!’ And Allah (magnified be His Majesty!) shall reply, ‘I did indeed name myself the Compassionating, the Compassionate. Carry My servant to Paradise, of My mercy, for I am the most Merciful of the mercifuls!'" Q "What was the origin of the use of the Basmalah?" "When Allah sent down from Heaven the Koran, they wrote, 'In Thy name, O my God!'; when Allah revealed the words, 'Say: Call upon Allah, or call upon the Compassionating, what days ye pray, for hath He the most excellent names,'[370] they wrote, 'In the name of Allah, the Compassionating, the Compassionate; and, when He revealed the words, 'Your God is one God, there is no God but He, the Compassionating, the Compassionate,'[371] they wrote, 'In the name of Allah, the Compassionating, the Compassionate!'" Now when the Koranist heard her reply, he hung down his head and said to himself, "This be a marvel of marvels! How hath this slave-girl expounded the origin of the Basmalah? But, by Allah, needs must I go a bout with her and haply defeat her." So he asked, "Did Allah reveal the Koran all at once or at times manifold?" She answered, "Gabriel the Faithful (on whom be peace!) descended with it from the Lord of the Worlds upon His Prophet Mohammed, Prince of the Apostles and Seal of the Prophets, by detached versets: bidding and forbidding, covenanting and comminating, and containing advices and instances in the course of twenty years as occasion called for it." Q "Which chapter was first revealed?" "According to Ibn Abbas, that entituled 'Congealed Blood':[372] and, according to Jαbir bin Abdillah,[373] that called 'The Covered' which preceded all others.[374] " Q "Which verset was the last revealed?" "That of 'Usury',[375] and it is also said, the verse, 'When there cometh Allah's succour and victory.'"[376] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Forty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel told the Koranist which was the last verse he said, "Thou hast replied aright; now tell me the names of the Companions who collected the Koran, in the lifetime of the Apostle of Allah." And she answered "They were four, Ubay ibn Ka'ab, Zayd ibn Sαbit, Abï Obaydah 'Aamir bin Jarrαh, and Othmαn bin Affαn[377] (Allah accept of them one and all!)" Q "Who are the readers, from whom the accepted reading of the Koran is taken?" "They number four, Abdallah bin Mas'ïd, Ubay bin Ka'ab, Ma'az bin Jabal and Sαlim bin Abdillah." Q "What sayest thou of the words of the Most High, 'That which is sacrificed to stones'"?[378] "The stones are idols, which are set up and worshipped, instead of Allah the Most High, and from this we seek refuge with Allah." Q "What sayest thou of the words of the Most High 'Thou knowest what is in my soul, and I know not what is in Thy soul'"?[379] "They mean, 'Thou knowest the truth of me and what is in me, and I know not what is in Thee;' and the proof of this are His words,[380] 'Thou art He who wottest the hidden things'; and it is said, also, 'Thou knowest my essence, but I know not Thine essence.'" Q "What sayst thou of the words of the Most High, 'O true believers, forbid not yourselves the good things which Allah hath allowed you?'"[381] "My Shaykh (on whom Allah have mercy!) told me that the Companion Al-Zahhαk related: 'There was a people of the True-believers who said, 'We will dock our members masculine and don sackcloth;' whereupon this verse was revealed. But Al-Kutαdah declareth that it was revealed on account of sundry Companions of the Apostle of Allah, namely, Ali ibn Abv Tαlib and Othmαn bin Musa'ab and others, who said, 'We will geld ourselves and don hair cloth and make us monks.'" Q "What sayest thou of the words of the Most Highest, 'And Allah took Abraham for His friend'"?[382] "The friend of Allah is the needy, the poor, and (according to another saying) he is the lover, he who is detached from the world in the love of Allah Almighty and in whose attachment there is no falling away." Now when the Koranist[383] saw her pass on in speech with the passage of the clouds and that she stayed not in reply, he rose to his feet and said, "I take Allah to witness, O Commander of the Faithful, that this damsel is more learned than I in Koranic exegesis and what pertaineth thereto." Then said she, "I will ask thee one question, which if thou answer it is well; but if thou answer not, I will strip off thy clothes." Quoth the Commander of the Faithful, "Ask on," and she enquired, "Which verset of the Koran hath in it three-and-twenty Kαfs, which sixteen Mνms, which an hundred and forty 'Ayns[384] and which section[385] lacketh the formula, 'To Whom belong glory and glorification and majesty[386] ?'" The Koranist could not reply, and she said to him, "Put off thy clothes." So he doffed them, and she continued, "O

Commander of the Faithful, the verset of the sixteen Mims is in the chapter Hïd and is the saying of the Most High, 'It was said, O Noah, go down in peace from us, and blessing upon thee!'[387] that of the three-and-twenty Kafs is the verse called of the Faith, in the chapter of The Cow; that of the hundred and forty Ayns is in the chapter of Al-A'arαf,[388] where the Lord saith, 'And Moses chose seventy men of his tribe to attend our appointed time;[389] to each man a pair of eyes.'[390] And the lesson, which lacketh the formula, 'To Whom be glory and glorification,' is that which comprises the chapters, The Hour draweth nigh and the Moon shall be cloven in twain[391] ; The Compassionate and The Event."[392] Thereupon the professor departed in confusion. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Forty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel defeated the Koranist and took off his clothes and sent him away confused, then came forward the skilled physician and said to her, "We are free of theology and come now to physiology. Tell me, therefore, how is man made; how many veins, bones and vertebrae are there in his body; which is the first and chief vein and why Adam was named Adam?" She replied, "Adam was called Adam, because of his udmah, that is, the wheaten colour of his complexion and also (it is said) because he was created of the adim of the earth, that is to say, of the surface-soil. His breast was made of the earth of the Ka'abah, his head of earth from the East and his legs of earth from the West. There were created for him seven doors in his head, viz., the eyes, the ears, the nostrils and the mouth, and two passages, before and behind. The eyes were made the seat of the sight-sense, the ears the seat of the hearing-sense, the nostrils the seat of the smell-sense, the mouth the seat of the taste-sense and the tongue to utter what is in the heart of man.[393] Now Adam was made of a compound of the four elements, which be water, earth, fire and air. The yellow bile is the humour of fire, being hot-dry; the black bile that of earth, being cold-dry; the phlegm that of water, being cold-moist, and the blood that of air, being hot-moist.[394] There were made in man three hundred and sixty veins, two hundred and forty-nine bones, and three souls[395] or spirits, the animal, the rational and the natural, to each of which is allotted its proper function. Moreover, Allah made him a heart and spleen and lungs and six intestines and a liver and two kidneys and buttocks and brain and bones and skin and five senses; hearing, seeing, smell, taste, touch. The heart He set on the left side of the breast and made the stomach the guide and governor thereof. He appointed the lungs for a fan to the heart and stablished the liver on the right side, opposite thereto. Moreover, He made, besides this, the diaphragm and the viscera and set up the bones of the breast and latticed them with the ribs.” Q “How many ventricles are there in a man’s head?” “Three, which contain five faculties, styled the intrinsic senses, to wit, common sense, imagination, the thinking faculty, perception and memory.” Q “Describe to me the configuration of the bones.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fiftieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the physicist said to her, “Describe to me the configuration of the bones,” she replied, “Man’s frame consists of two hundred and forty bones, which are divided into three parts, the head, the trunk and the extremities. The head is divided into calvarium and face. The skull is constructed of eight bones, and to it are attached the four osselets of the ear. The face is furnished with an upper jaw of eleven bones and a lower jaw of one; and to these are added the teeth two-and-thirty in number, and the os hyoides.[396] The trunk is divided into spinal column, breast and basin. The spinal column is made up of four-and-twenty bones, called Fikαr or vertebrζ; the breast, of the breastbone and the ribs, which are four-and-twenty in number, twelve on each side; and the basin of the hips, the sacrum[397] and os coccygis. The extremities divided into upper and lower, arms and legs. The arms are again divided: firstly into shoulder, comprising shoulder blades and collar bone; secondly into the upper arm which is one bone; thirdly into fore-arm, composed of two bones, the radius and the ulna; and fourthly into the hand, consisting of the wrist, the metacarpus of five and the fingers, which number five, of three bones each, called the phalanges, except the thumb, which hath but two. The lower extremities are divided: firstly into thigh, which is one bone; secondly into leg, composed of three bones, the tibia, the fibula and the patella; and thirdly into the foot, divided, like the hand, into tarsus, metatarsus and toes; and is composed of seven bones, ranged in two rows, two in one and five in the other; and the metatarsus is composed of five bones and the toes number five, each of three phalanges except the big toe which hath only two." Q "Which is the root of the veins?" "The aorta, from which they ramify, and they are many, none knoweth the tale of them save He who created them; but I repeat, it is said that they number three hundred and sixty.[398] Moreover, Allah hath appointed the tongue as interpreter for the thought, the eyes to serve as lanterns, the nostrils to smell with, and the hands for prehensors. The liver is the seat of pity, the spleen of laughter[399] and the kidneys of craft; the lungs are ventilators, the stomach the store-house, and the heart the prop and pillar of the body. When the heart is sound, the whole body is sound, and when the heart is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt." Q "What are the outward signs and symptoms evidencing disease in the members of the body, both external and internal?" "A physician, who is a man of understanding, looketh into the state of the body and is guided by the feel of the hands,[400] according as they are firm or flabby, hot or cool, moist or dry. Internal disorders are also indicated by external symptoms, such as yellowness of the white of the eyes, which denoteth jaundice, and bending of the back, which denoteth disease of the lungs." And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fifty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel had described to the doctor the outer signs and symptoms quoth he, "Thou hast replied aright! now what are the internal symptoms of disease?" "The science of the diagnosis of disease by internal symptoms is founded upon six canons: (1) the patient's actions; (2) what is evacuated from his body; (3) the nature of the pain; and (4) the site thereof; (5) swelling; and (6) the effluvia given off his person." Q "How cometh hurt to the head?" "By the ingestion of food upon food, before the first be digested, and by fullness upon fullness; this it is that wasteth peoples. He who would live long, let him be early with the morning-meal and not late with the evening-meal; let him be sparing of commerce with women and chary of such depletory measures as cupping and blood-letting; and let him make of his belly three parts, one for food, one for drink and the third for air; for that a man's intestines are eighteen spans in length and it befitteth that he appoint six for meat, six for drink, and six for breath. If he walk, let him go gently; it will be wholesomer for him and better for his body and more in accordance with the saying of the Almighty, 'Walk not proudly on the earth.'"[401] Q "What are the symptoms of yellow bile and what is to be feared therefrom?" "The symptoms are sallow complexion and bitter taste in the mouth with dryness; failure of the appetite, venereal and other, and rapid pulse; and the patient hath to fear high fever and delirium and eruptions and jaundice and tumour and ulcers of the bowels and excessive thirst." Q "What are the symptoms of black bile and what hath the patient to fear from it, an it get the mastery of the body?" "The symptoms are false appetite and great mental disquiet and cark and care; and it behoveth that it be evacuated, else it will generate melancholia[402] and leprosy and cancer and disease of the spleen and ulceration of the bowels." Q "Into how many branches is the art of medicine divided?" "Into two: the art of diagnosing diseases, and that of restoring the diseased body to health." Q "When is the drinking of medicine more efficacious than otherwhen?" "When the sap runs in the wood and the grape thickens in the cluster and the two auspicious planets, Jupiter and Venus, are in the ascendant; then setteth in the proper season for drinking of drugs and doing away of disease." Q "What time is it, when, if a man drink water from a new vessel, the drink is sweeter and lighter or more digestible to him than at another time, and there ascendeth to him a pleasant fragrance and a penetrating?" "When he waiteth awhile after eating, as quoth the poet,

'Drink not upon thy food in haste but wait awhile; * Else thou
with halter shalt thy frame to sickness lead:
And patient bear a little thirst from food, then drink; * And
thus, O brother, haply thou shalt win thy need.[403] '"

Q "What food is it that giveth not rise to ailments?" "That which is not eaten but after hunger, and when it is eaten, the ribs are not filled with it, even as saith Jαlνnïs or Galen the physician, ‘Whoso will take in food, let him go slowly and he shall not go wrongly.’ And to conclude with His saying (on whom be blessing and peace!), ‘The stomach is the house of disease, and diet is the head of healing; for the origin of all sickness is indigestion, that is to say, corruption of the meat’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fifty-second Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel said to the doctor, “‘The stomach is the house of disease and diet is the head of healing; for the origin of all sickness is indigestion, that is to say, corruption of the meat in the stomach;’” he rejoined, “Thou hast replied aright! what sayest thou of the Hammam?” “Let not the full man enter it. Quoth the Prophet, ‘The bath is the blessing of the house, for that it cleanseth the body and calleth to mind the Fire.’” Q “What Hammams are best for bathing in?” “Those whose waters are sweet and whose space is ample and which are kept well aired; their atmosphere representing the four seasons — autumn and summer and winter and spring.” Q “What kind of food is the most profitable?” “That which women make and which hath not cost overmuch trouble and which is readily digested. The most excellent of food is brewis[404] or bread sopped in broth; according to the saying of the Prophet, ‘Brewis excelleth other food, even as Ayishah excelleth other women.’” Q “What kind of kitchen, or seasoning, is most profitable?” “‘Flesh meat’ (quoth the Prophet) ‘is the most excellent of kitchen; for that it is the delight of this world and the next world.’” Q “What kind of meat is the most profitable?” “Mutton; but jerked meat is to be avoided, for there is no profit in it.” Q “What of fruits?” “Eat them in their prime and quit them when their season is past.” Q “What sayest thou of drinking water?” “Drink it not in large quantities nor swallow it by gulps, or it will give thee head-ache and cause divers kinds of harm; neither drink it immediately after leaving the Hammam nor after carnal copulation or eating (except it be after the lapse of fifteen minutes for a young man and forty for an old man), nor after waking from sleep.” Q “What of drinking fermented liquors?” “Doth not the prohibition suffice thee in the Book of Almighty Allah, where He saith, ‘Verily, wine and lots and images, and the divining arrows are an abomination, of Satan's work; therefore avoid them, that ye may prosper'?[405] And again, 'They will ask thee concerning wine and lots': Answer, 'In both there is great sin and also some things of use unto men: but their sinfulness is greater than their use.'[406] Hence quoth the poet,

'O bibber of liquor, art not ashamed * To drink what Allah
forbade thee drain?
Put it far from thee and approach it not; * It holds what Allah
forbade as bane.'

And quoth another to the same purport,

'I drank the sin till my reason fled: * Ill drink that reason to loss misled!'

As for the advantages that be therein, it disperseth stone and gravel from the kidneys and strengtheneth the viscera and banisheth care, and moveth to generosity and preserveth health and digestion; it conserveth the body, expelleth disease from the joints, purifieth the frame of corrupt humours, engendereth cheerfulness, gladdeneth the heart of man and keepeth up the natural heat: it contracteth the bladder, enforceth the liver and removeth obstructions, reddeneth the cheeks, cleareth away maggots from the brain and deferreth grey hairs. In short, had not Allah (to whom be honour and glory!) forbidden it,[407] there were not on the face of the earth aught fit to stand in its stead. As for gambling by lots, it is a game of hazard such as diceing, not of skill." Q "What wine is best?" "That which is pressed from white grapes and kept eighty days or more after fermentation: it resembleth not water and indeed there is nothing on the surface of the earth like unto it." Q "What sayest thou of cupping?" "It is for him who is over full of blood and who hath no defect therein; and whoso would be cupped, let it be during the wane of the moon, on a day without cloud, wind or rain and on the seventeenth of the month. If it fall on a Tuesday, it will be the more efficacious, and nothing is more salutary for the brain and eyes and for clearing the intellect than cupping." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fifty-third Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel enumerated the benefits of cupping, quoth the doctor, “What is the best time for cupping?” “One should be cupped ‘on the spittle,’ that is, in the morning before eating, for this fortifieth the wit and the memory. It is reported of the Prophet that, when anyone complained to him of a pain in the head or legs, he would bid him be cupped and after cupping not eat salt food, fasting, for it engendereth scurvy; neither eat sour things as curded milk[408] immediately after cupping.” Q “When is cupping to be avoided?” “On Sabbaths or Saturdays and Wednesdays; and let him who is cupped on these days blame none but himself. Moreover, one should not be cupped in very hot weather nor in very cold weather; and the best season for cupping is springtide.” Quoth the doctor, “Now tell me of carnal copulation.” Hereupon Tawaddud hung her head, for shame and confusion before the Caliph’s majesty; then said, “By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, it is not that I am at fault, but that I am ashamed; though, indeed, the answer is on the edge of my tongue.” Said the Caliph; “Speak, O damsel,” whereupon said she, “Copulation hath in it many and exceeding virtues and praiseworthy qualities, amongst which are, that it lighteneth a body full of black bile and calmeth the heat of love and induceth affection and dilateth the heart and dispelleth the sadness of solitude; and the excess of it is more harmful in summer and autumn than in spring and winter.” Q “What are its good effects?” “It banisheth trouble and disquiet, calmeth love and wrath and is good for ulcers, especially in a cold and dry humour; on the other hand excess of it weakeneth the sight and engendereth pains in the legs and head and back: and beware, beware of carnal connection with old women, for they are deadly. Quoth the Iman Ali[409] (whose face Allah honour!), ‘Four things kill and ruin the body: entering the Hammam on a full stomach; eating salt food; copulation on a plethora of blood and lying with an ailing woman; for she will weaken thy strength and infect thy frame with sickness; and an old woman is deadly poison.’ And quoth one of them, ‘Beware of taking an old woman to wife, though she be richer in hoards than Kárún’”[410] Q “What is the best copulation?” “If the woman be tender of years, comely of shape, fair of face, swelling of breast and of noble race, she will add to thee strength and health of body; and let her be even as saith a certain poet describing her,

‘Seeing thy looks wots she what thou desir’st, * By inspiration; wants nor word nor sign;
And, when thou dost behold her rarest grace, * The charms of every garden canst decline.’

Q “At what time is copulation good?” “If by night, after food digested and if by day, after the morning meal.” Q “What are the most excellent fruits?” “Pomegranate and citron.” Q “Which is the most excellent of vegetables?” “Endive.[411] “ Q “Which of sweet-scented flowers?” “Rose and Violet.” Q “How is the seed of man secreted?” “There is in man a vein which feedeth all the other veins. Now water is collected from the three hundred and sixty veins and, in the form of red blood, entereth the left testicle, where it is decocted, by the heat of temperament inherent in the son of Adam, into a thick, white liquid, whose odour is as that of the palm-spathe.” Q “What flying thing is it that emitteth seed and menstruateth?” “The flitter-mouse,[412] that is the bat.” Q “What is that which, when confined and shut out from the air liveth, and when let out to smell the air dieth?” “The fish.” Q “What serpent layeth eggs?” “The Su’ban or dragon.[413] “ With this the physician waxed weary with much questioning, and held his peace, when Tawaddud said to the Caliph, “O Commander of the Faithful, he hath questioned me till he is tired out and now I will ask him one question, which if he answer not, I will take his clothes as lawful prize.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fifty-fourth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel said to the Commander of the Faithful, “Verily he hath questioned me till he is tired out, and now I will ask him one question, which if he answer not I will take his clothes as lawful prize,” the Caliph cried, “Ask on.” So quoth she to the physician, “What is that thing which resembleth the earth in roundness, whose resting-place and whose spine are hidden from men’s eyes; little of price and estimation; narrow of chest and shackled as to throat though it be nor runaway slave nor pestilent thief; thrust through and through, though not in fray, and wounded, though not in fight: time eateth its vigour and water wasteth it away; now it is beaten without blemish, and then made to serve without stint; united after separation; submissive, but not to him who caresseth it; pregnant without child in belly; drooping, yet not leaning on its side; becoming dirty yet purifying itself; cleaving to its fere, yet changing; copulating without a yard, wrestling without arms: resting and taking its ease; bitten, yet not crying out: now more complaisant than a cup-companion and then more troublesome than summer-heat; leaving its mate by night and embracing her by day and having its abode in the corners of the mansions of the noble?" The physician was silent awhile in perplexity and his colour changed and he bowed his head and made no reply; whereupon she said to him, "Ho, sir doctor, speak or doff thy dress." At this, he rose and said, "O Commander of the Faithful, bear witness against me that this damsel is more learned than I in medicine and what else, and that I cannot cope with her." And he put off his clothes and fled forth. Quoth the Caliph to Tawaddud, "Ree us thy riddle," and she replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, it is the button and the button-loop.[414] " — Then she undertook the astronomers and said, "Let him of you who is an astronomer rise and come forward." So the astronomer advanced and sat down before her; and, when she saw him, she laughed and said, "Art thou the astronomer, the mathematician, the scribe?" "Yes," answered he. Quoth she, "Ask of what thou wilt; success resteth with Allah." So he said, "Tell me of the sun and its rising and setting." And she replied: "Know that the sun riseth from the shadows in the Eastern hemisphere and setteth in the shadows of the Western, and each hemisphere compriseth one hundred and eighty degrees. Quoth Allah Almighty, 'I swear by the Lord of the East and of the West.'[415] And again, 'He it is who hath ordained the sun to shine by day, and the moon for a light by night; and hath appointed her station that ye might know the number of years and the computation of time.'[416] The moon is Sultan of the night and the sun Sultan of the day, and they vie with each other in their courses and follow without overtaking each other. Quoth Almighty Allah, 'It is not expedient that the sun overtake the moon in her course; neither doth the night outstrip the day, but each of these luminaries moveth in a peculiar orbit.'"[417] Q "When the day cometh, what becometh of the night; and what of the day, when the night cometh?" "He causeth the night to enter in upon the day, and He causeth the day to enter in upon the night."[418] Q "Enumerate to me the mansions of the moon?"[419] "They number eight-and-twenty, to wit, Sharatαn, Butayn, Surayα, Dabarαn, Hak'ah, Han'ah, Zirα'a, Nasrah, Tarf, Jabhah, Zubrah, Sarfah, 'Awwα, Simαk, Ghafar, Zubαnν, Iklνl, Kalb, Shaulah, Na'am, Baldah, Sa'ad al-Zαbih, Sa'ad al-Bul'a, Sa'ad al-Su'ïd, Sa'ad al-Akhbiyah, Fargh the Former and Fargh the Latter; and Rishαa. They are disposed in the order of the letters of the Abjad-hawwaz or older alphabet,[420] according to their numerical power, and in them are secret virtues which none knoweth save Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) and the stablished in science. They are divided among the twelve Signs of the Zodiac, two Mansions and a third of a Mansion to each Sign. Thus Sharatan, Butayn and one-third of Surαyα, belong to Aries, the other two-thirds of Surαyα, Dabaran and two-thirds of Hak'ah to Taurus, the other third of Hak'ah, Han'ah and Zira'a to Gemini; Nasrah, Tarf and a third of Jabhah to Cancer, the other two-thirds of Jabhah, Zubrah and two-thirds of Sarfah to Leo; the other third of Sarfah, 'Awwα and Simαk to Virgo; Ghafar, Zubαni and one-third of Iklνl to Libra; the other two-thirds of Iklil, Kalb and two-thirds of Shaulah to Scorpio; the other third of Shaulah, Na'αim and Baldah to Sagittarius; Sa'ad al-Zαbih, Sa'ad al-Bul'a and one-third of Sa'ad al-Su'ud to Capricorn, the other two-thirds of Sa'ad al-Su'dd, Sa'ad al-Akhbiyah and two-thirds of Fargh the Former to Aquarius, the other third of Fargh the Former, Fargh the Latter and Rishαa to Pisces." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

She said, it hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel enumerated the Mansions and distributed them into their Signs, the astronomer said, "Thou hast replied aright; now tell me of the planets and their natures, also of their sojourn in the Zodiacal Signs, their aspects, auspicious and sinister, their houses, ascendants and descendants. She answered, "The sitting is narrow for so large a matter, but I will say as much as I can. Now the planets number seven; which are, the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. The Sun, hot-dry, sinister in conjunction, favourable in opposition, abideth thirty days in each Sign. The Moon, cold-moist and favourable of aspect, tarrieth in each Sign two days and a third of another day. Mercury is of a mixed nature, favourable in conjunction with the favourable, and sinister in conjunction with the sinister aspects, and abideth in each sign seventeen days and a half day. Venus, temperate and favourable, abideth in each sign five-and-twenty days. Mars is sinister and woneth in each sign ten months. Jupiter is auspicious and abideth in each sign a year. Saturn, cold-dry and sinister, tarrieth in each sign thirty months. The house of the Sun is Leo, her ascendant is Aries, and her descendant Aquarius. The Moon's house is Cancer, his ascendant Taurus, his descendant Scorpio and his sinister aspect Capricorn. Saturn's house is Capricorn-Aquarius, his ascendant Libra, his descendant Aries and his sinister aspects Cancer and Leo. Jupiter's house is Pisces-Sagittarius, his ascendant Cancer, his descendant Capricorn and his sinister aspects Gemini and Leo. Venus's house is Taurus, her ascendant Pisces, her descendant Libra, and her sinister aspects Aries and Scorpio. Mercury's house is Gemini-Virgo, his ascendant Virgo, his descendant Pisces, and his sinister aspect Taurus. Mars' house is Aries-Scorpio, his ascendant Capricorn, his descendant Cancer and his sinister aspect Libra." Now when the astronomer saw her acuteness and comprehensive learning and heard her fair answers, he bethought him for a sleight to confound her before the Commander of the Faithful, and said to her, "O damsel, tell me, will rain fall this month?" At this she bowed her head and pondered so long, that the Caliph thought her at a loss for an answer and the astronomer said to her, "Why dost thou not speak?" Quoth she, "I will not speak except the Commander of the Faithful give me leave." So the Caliph laughed and said, "How so?" Cried she "I would have thee give me a sword, that I may strike off his head, for he is an Infidel, an Agnostic, an Atheist.[421] " At this, loud laughed the Caliph and those about him laughed, and she continued "O astronomer, there are five things that none knoweth save Allah Almighty;" and she repeated the verset; "'Aye! Allah! — with Him is the knowledge of the hour and He causeth the rain to descend at His own appointed time — and He knoweth what is in the wombs of females — but no soul knoweth what it shall have gotten on the morrow; neither wotteth any soul in what land it shall die: Verily Allah is knowing, informed of all.'"[422] Quoth the astronomer, "Thou hast said well, and I, by Allah, thought only to try thee." Rejoined she, "Know that the almanack-makers have certain signs and tokens, referring to the planets and constellations relative to the coming in of the year; and folk have learned something by experience." Q "What be that?" "Each day hath a planet that ruleth it: so if the first day in the year fall on First Day (Sunday) that day is the Sun's and this portendeth (though Allah alone is All-knowing!) oppression of kings and sultans and governors and much miasma and lack of rain; and that people will be in great tumult and the grain-crop will be good, except lentils, which will perish, and the vines will rot and flax will be dear and wheat cheap from the beginning of Tïbah to the end of Barmahαt.[423] And, in this year there will be much fighting among kings, and there shall be great plenty of good in this year, but Allah is All-knowing!" Q "What if the first day fall on Second Day (Monday)?" "That day belongeth to the Moon and portendeth righteousness in administrators and officials and that it will be a year of much rain and grain-crops will be good, but linseed will decay and wheat will be cheap in the month Kiyαhk;[424] also the plague will rage and the sheep and goats will die, grapes will be plentiful and honey scarce and cotton cheap; and Allah is omniscient!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fifty-sixth Night,

She said, it hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel ended her notice of Second Day the astronomer said to her "Now tell me what will occur if New Year's day fall on Third Day (Tuesday)." She replied, "That is Mars' day and portendeth death of great men and much destruction and deluge of blood and dearness of grain; lack of rain and scarcity of fish, which will anon be in excess and anon fail. Lentils and honey in this year will be cheap and linseed dear and only barley will thrive, to the exception of all other cereals: great will be the fighting among kings and death will be in the blood and there will be much mortality among asses." Q "What if it fall on Fourth Day?" "That is Mercury's day and portendeth great tumult among the folk and much enmity and, though rains be moderate, rotting of some of the green crops; also that there will be sore mortality among cattle and young children and much fighting by sea; that wheat will be dear from Barmïdah to Misra[425] and other grains cheap; thunder and lightning will abound and honey will be dear, palm- trees will thrive and bear abundantly and flax and cotton will be plentiful, while radishes and onions will be dear; but Allah is All-knowing!" Q "What if it fall on Fifth Day?" "That is Jupiter's day and portendeth equity in Wazirs and righteousness in Kazis and Fakirs and the Ministers of religion; and that good will be plentiful: rains and fruit and trees and grain will abound, and flax, cotton, honey, grapes and fish be cheap; and Allah is Omniscient!" Q "What if it fall on Meeting Day or Friday?" "That day appertaineth to Venus and portendeth oppression in the chiefs of the Jinn and talk of forgery and back-biting; there will be much dew; the autumn crops will be good in the land and there will be cheapness in one town and not in another: ungraciousness will be rife by land and sea; linseed will be dear, also wheat, in Hαtïr, but cheap in Amshvr; honey will be dear and grapes and water-melons will rot; and Allah is Omniscient!" Q "What if it fall on the Sabbath (Saturday)?" "That is Saturn's day and portendeth the preferment of slaves and Greeks and those in whom there is no good, neither in their neighbourhood; there will be great drought and dearth; clouds will abound and death will be rife among the sons of Adam and woe to the people of Egypt and Syria from the oppression of the Sultan and failure of blessing upon the green crops and rotting of grain; and Allah is All-knowing!"[426] Now with this, the astronomer hung his head very low, and she said to him, "O astronomer, I will ask thee one question, which if thou answer not, I will take thy clothes." "Ask," replied he. Quoth she, "Where is Saturn's dwelling-place?"; and he answered, "In the seventh heaven." Q "And that of Jupiter?" "In the sixth heaven." Q "And that of Mars?" "In the fifth heaven." Q "And that of the Sun?" "In the fourth heaven." Q "And that of Venus?" "In the third heaven." Q "And that of Mercury?" "In the second heaven." Q "And that of the Moon?" "In the first heaven." Quoth she, "Well answered; but I have one more question to ask thee;" and quoth he, "Ask!" Accordingly she said, "Now tell me concerning the stars, into how many parts are they divided." But he was silent and answered nothing; and she cried to him, “Put off thy clothes.” So he doffed them and she took them; after which the Caliph said to her, “Tell us the answer to thy question.” She replied: “O Commander of the Faithful, the stars are divided into three parts, whereof one-third is hung in the sky of the earth,[427] as it were lamps, to give light to the earth, and a part is used to shoot the demons withal, when they draw near by stealth to listen to the talk in heaven. Quoth Allah Almighty, ‘Verily, we have dight the sky of the earth with the adornment of the stars; and have appointed them for projectiles against every rebellious Satan.’[428] And the third part is hung in air to illuminate the seas and give light to what is therein.” Quoth the astronomer, “I have one more question to ask, which if she answer, I will avow myself beaten.” “Say on,” answered she. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fifty-seventh Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the astronomer said, “Now tell me what four contraries are based upon other four contraries?” Replied she, “The four qualities of Caloric and Frigoric, Humidity and Siccity; for of heat Allah created fire, whose nature is hot-dry; of dryness, earth, which is cold-dry; of cold, water which is cold-wet; of moisture, air, which is hot-wet. Moreover, He created twelve Signs of the Zodiac, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces; and appointed them of the four humours; three fiery, Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius; three earthly, Taurus, Virgo, and Capricorn; three airy, Gemini, Libra and Aquarius; and three watery, Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces.” Hereupon the astronomer rose, and saying, “Bear witness against me that she is more learned than I,” away he went beaten. Then quoth the Caliph, “Where is the philosopher[429] ?”; at which one rose hastily and came forward and said to Tawaddud, “What is Time and what be its limits, and its days, and what things bringeth it?” Replied she, “Time is a term applied to the hours of the night and day, which are but the measures of the courses of the sun and moon in their several heavens, even as Allah Almighty telleth us when he saith, ‘A sign to them also is the Night, from which we strip off the day, and lo! they are plunged in darkness, and the Sun runneth to her place of rest; this is the ordinance of the

Sublime, the All-knowing.'"[430] Q "How cometh unbelief to the son of Adam?" "It is reported of the Apostle (whom Allah bless and preserve!) that he said, 'Unbelief in a man runneth as the blood runneth in his veins, when he revileth the world and Time and night and the Hour.' And again, 'Let none of you revile Time, for Time is God; neither revile the world, for she saith, 'May Allah not aid him who revileth me!;' neither revile the hour, for, 'The Hour is surely coming, there is no doubt thereof';[431] neither revile the earth, for it is a portent, according to the saying of the Most High, 'Out of the ground have we created you, and into the same will we cause you to return, and we will bring you forth yet thence another time.'"[432] Q "What are the five that ate and drank, yet came not out of loins nor womb?" "Adam and Simeon[433] and Salih's she-camel[434] and Ishmael's ram and the bird that Abu Bakr the Truth-teller saw in the cave.[435] " Q "Tell me of five that are in Paradise and are neither humans, Jinns nor angels?" "Jacob's wolf and the Seven Sleepers' dog and Esdras's ass and Salih's camel and Duldul the mule of the Prophet (upon whom be blessings and peace!)." Q "What man prayed a prayer neither on earth nor in heaven?" "Solomon, when he prayed on his carpet, borne by the wind." Q "Ree me this riddle: — A man once looked at a handmaid during dawn-prayer, and she was unlawful to him; but, at noonday she became lawful to him: by mid-afternoon,, she was again unlawful, but at sundown, she was lawful to him: at supper time she was a third time unlawful, but by daybreak, she became once more lawful to him." "This was a man who looked at another's slave-girl in the morning, and she was then unlawful to him; but at midday he bought her, and she became lawful to him: at mid-afternoon he freed her, and she became unlawful to him; but at sundown he married her and she was again lawful to him. At nightfall he divorced her and she was then a third time unlawful to him; but, next morning at daybreak, he took her back, and she became once more lawful to him." Q "Tell me what tomb went about with him that lay buried therein?" "Jonah's whale, when it had swallowed him." Q "What spot of lowland is it, upon which the sun shone once, but will never again shine till Judgment-Day?" "The bottom of the Red Sea, when Moses smote it with his staff, and the sea clave asunder in twelve places, according to the number of the tribes;[436] then the sun shone on the bottom and will do so nevermore until Judgment-Day." And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fifty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the philosopher then addressed the damsel saying, "What was the first skirt that trailed over the face of the earth?" She replied, "That of Hagar, out of shame before Sarah; and it became a custom among the Arabs." Q "What is that which breatheth without life?" "Quoth Almighty Allah, 'By the morning when it breatheth!'"[437] Q "Ree me this riddle: — A number of pigeons came to a high tree and lighted, some on the tree and others under it. Said those on the tree to those on the ground, 'If one of you come up to us, ye will be a third part of us all in number; and if one of us descend to you, we shall be like unto you in number,' How many pigeons were there in all?" "Twelve: seven alighted on the tree and five beneath; and, if one go up, those above would be eight to four; and, if one go down, both would be six and Allah is all-knowing."[438] With this the philosopher put off his clothes and fled: whereupon the next contest took place, for she turned to the Olema present and said, "Which of you is the rhetorician that can discourse of all arts and sciences?" There came forward a sage hight Ibrahim bin Siyyαr and said to her, "Think me not like the rest." Quoth she, "It is the more assured to me that thou wilt be beaten, for that thou art a boaster; and Allah will help me to victory over thee, that I may strip thee of thy clothes. So, if thou sentest one to fetch thee wherewithal to cover thyself, 'twould be well for thee." Cried he, "By Allah, I will assuredly conquer thee and make thee a byword among the peoples, generation after generation!" Rejoined she, "Do penance in advance for thy broken oath." Then he asked, "What five things did Allah create before he made man?"; and she answered, "Water and earth and light and darkness and the fruits of the earth." Q "What did Allah create with the hand of omnipotence?" "The 'Arsh, throne of God or the empyreal heaven and the tree Tïbα[439] and Adam and the garden of Eden; these Allah created with the hand of His omnipotence; but to all other created things He said, 'Be,' — and they were." Q "Who is thy father in Al-Islam?" "Mohammed, whom Allah bless and preserve!" Q "Who was the father in Al-Islam of Mohammed?" "Abraham, the Friend of God." Q "What is the Faith of Al-Islam?" "The professing that there is no god but the God and that Mohammed is the apostle of God." Q "What is thy first and thy last?" "My first is man's seed in the shape of foul water and my last filthy carrion: the first of me is dust and the last of me is dust. Quoth the poet,

'Of dust was I created, and man did I become, * In question ever
ready and aye fluent in reply,
Then, I unto the dust return'd, became of it again, * For that,
in very deed, of dust at first create was I.'"

He continued, "What thing was it, whose first state was wood and its last life?" "Moses' staff,[440] when he cast it on the valley-ground and it became, by permission of Allah, a writhing serpent." Q "What is the meaning of the word of the Lord, 'And I have other occasion for it?'"[441] "He, Moses, was wont to plant his staff in the ground, and it would flower and fruit and shade him from the heat and from the cold. Moreover, it would carry him when he was weary, and whilst he slept, guard his sheep from lions and wild beasts." Q "What woman was born of a man alone and what man of a woman alone?" "Eve of Adam and Jesus of Mary.[442] " Q "Tell me of the four fires, what fire eateth and drinketh; what fire eateth but drinketh not; what fire drinketh but eateth not and what other neither eateth nor drinketh?" "The fire of the world eateth but drinketh not; the fire which eateth and drinketh is Hell-fire; the fire of the sun drinketh but eateth not, and the fire of the moon neither eateth nor drinketh." Q "Which is the open door and which the shut?" "The Traditional Ordinances are the open door, the Koranic the shut door." Q "Of what doth the poet speak, when he saith,

'And dweller in the tomb whose food is at his head, * When he
eateth of that meat, of words he waxeth fain:
He riseth and he walketh and he talketh without tongue; * And
returneth to the tomb where his kith and kin are lain.
No living wight is he, yet, in honour he abides; * Nor dead yet
he deserveth that Allah him assain.'"

She replied, “The reed-pen.”[443] Quoth he “What doth the poet refer to in these verses,

‘Two vests in one; blood flowing easiest wise; * Rosy red ears
and mouth wide open lies;
It hath a cock-like form, its belly pecks * And, if you price it,
half a dirham buys.’”

She replied, “The ink-case.” Quoth he, “And in these,

‘Ho say to men of wisdom, wit and lore * To sapient, reverend,
clever counsellor:
Tell me what was’t you saw that bird bring forth * When wandering
Arab-land and Ajam o’er?
No flesh it beareth and it hath no blood, * Nor down nor any
feathers e’er it wore.
’Tis eaten cooked and eke ’tis eaten cold; * ’Tis eaten buried
‘neath the flames that roar:
It showeth twofold colours, silver white * And yellow brighter
than pure golden ore:
’Tis not seen living or we count it dead: * So ree my riddle rich
in marvel-store!’”

She replied, “Thou makest longsome the questioning anent an egg worth a mite.” Q “And this?,

‘I waved to and fro and he waved to and fro, * With a motion so
pleasant, now fast and now slow;
And at last he sunk down on my bosom of snow; * ‘Your lover
friend?’”

“No friend, my fan;”[444] said she. Q “How many words did Allah speak to Moses?” “It is related of the Apostle that he said, ‘God spoke to Moses fifteen hundred and fifteen words.’” Q “Tell me of fourteen things that speak to the Lord of the Worlds?” “The seven heavens and the seven earths, when they say, ‘We come obedient to Thy command.’”[445] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Fifty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel made the answer, the philosopher continued, “Tell me of Adam and how he was first created?” and she said, “Allah created Adam of clay: the clay He made of foam and the foam of the sea, the sea of darkness, darkness of light, light of a fish, the fish of a rock, the rock of a ruby, the ruby of water, and the water He created by His Omnipotence according to His saying (exalted be His name!), ‘His commandment when He willeth aught, is but to say, BE, — and IT IS.’”[446] Q “What is meant by the poet in these verses,

‘And eater lacking mouth and even maw; * Yet trees and beasts to
it are daily bread:
Well fed it thrives and shows a lively life, * But give it water
and you do it dead?’”

“This,” quoth she, “is Fire.” “And in these;” he asked,

“Two lovers barred from every joy and bliss, * Who through the
livelong night embracing lie:
They guard the folk from all calamities, * But with the rising
sun apart they fly?”

She answered, “The leaves of a door.” Quoth he, “Tell me of the gates of Gehenna?” Quoth she, “They are seven in number and their names are comprised in these two couplets,

‘Jahannam, next Lazα, and third Hatvm; * Then count Sa’vr and
Sakar eke, five-fold,
Sixth comes Jahvm and Hαwiyah the seventh; * Here are seven Hells
in four lines briefly told.’”

Quoth he “To what doth the poet refer when he saith,

‘She wears a pair of ringlets long let down * Behind her, as she
comes and goes at speed,
And eye that never tastes of sleep nor sheds * A tear, for ne’er
a drop it hath at need;

That never all its life wore stitch of clothes; * Yet robes
mankind in every-mode of weed?’”

Quoth she, “A needle.” Q “What is the length and what the breadth of the bridge Al-Sirαt?” “Its length is three thousand years’ journey, a thousand in descent and a thousand in ascent and a thousand level: it is sharper than a sword and finer than a hair.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Sixtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel had described to him Al-Sirat, the philosopher said, “Inform me how many intercessions with Allah hath the Prophet for each soul?”[447] “Three.” Q “Was Abu Bakr the first who embraced Al-Islam?” “Yes.” Q “Yet Ali became a Moslem before him?” “Ali came to the Prophet, when he was a boy of seven years old, for Allah vouchsafed him knowledge of the way of salvation in his tender youth, so that he never prostrated himself to idols.” Quoth he, “Tell me which is the more excellent, Ali or Abbαs?” Now she knew that, in propounding this question, Ibrahim was laying a trap for her; for if she said, “Ali is more excellent than Abbas,” she would lack excuse with the Caliph for undervaluing his ancestor; so she bowed her head awhile, now reddening, then paling, and lastly said, “Thou askest me of two excellent men, each having his own excellence. Let us return to what we were about.” When the Caliph Harun al-Rashid heard her, he stood up and said, “Thou hast spoken well, by the Lord of the Ka’abah, O Tawaddud!” Then quoth Ibrahim the rhetorician, “What meaneth the poet when he saith,

‘Slim-wasted one, whose taste is sweetest-sweet, * Likest a lance
whereon no head we scan:
And all the lieges find it work them weal, * Eaten of afternoon
in Ramazan.’”

She answered, “The sugar-cane;” and he said, “Tell me of many things.” Asked she, “What are they?” and he said, “What is sweeter than honey; what is sharper than the sword; what is swifter than poison; what is the delight of a moment and what the contentment of three days; what is the pleasantest of days; what is the joy of a week; what is that debt the worst debtor denieth not; what is the prison of the tomb; what is the joy of the heart; what is the snare of the soul; what is death-in-life; what is the disease that may not be healed; what is the shame that may not be wiped off; what is the beast that woneth not in cultivated fields, but lodgeth in waste places and hateth the sons of Adam and hath in him somewhat of the make of seven strong and violent beasts?" Quoth she, "Hear what I shall say in reply; then put off thy clothes, that I may explain to thee;" and the Caliph said, "Expound, and he shall doff his clothes." So she said, "Now that, which is sweeter than honey, is the love of pious children to their two parents; that, which is sharper than the sword, is the tongue; that, which is swifter than poison, is the Envier's eye; the delight of a moment is carnal copulation and the contentment of three days is the depilatory for women; the pleasantest of days is that of profit on merchandise; the joy of a week is the bride; the debt, which the worst debtor denieth not, is death; the prison of the tomb is a bad son; the joy of the heart is a woman obedient to her husband (and it is said also that, when fleshmeat descendeth upon the heart, it rejoiceth therein); the snare of the soul is a disobedient slave; death-in-life is poverty; the disease that may not be healed is an ill-nature, and the shame that may not be wiped away is an ill daughter; lastly, the beast that woneth not in cultivated fields, but lodgeth in waste places and hateth the sons of Adam and hath in him somewhat of the make of seven strong and violent beasts, is the locust, whose head is as the head of a horse, its neck as the neck of the bull, its wings as the wings of the vulture, its feet as the feet of the camel, its tail as the tail of the serpent, its belly as the belly of the scorpion and its horns as the horns of the gazelle." The Caliph was astounded at her quickness and understanding, and said to the rhetorician, "Doff thy clothes." So he rose up and cried, "I call all who are present in this assembly to witness that she is more learned than I and every other learned man." And he put off his clothes and gave them to her, saying, "Take them and may Allah not bless them to thee!" So the Caliph ordered him fresh clothes and said, "O Tawaddud, there is one thing left of that for which thou didst engage, namely, chess." And he sent for experts of chess and cards[448] and trictrac. The chess-player sat down before her, and they set the pieces, and he moved and she moved; but, every move he made she speedily countered, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Sixty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel was playing chess with the expert in presence of the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, whatever move he made was speedily countered by her, till she beat him and he found himself checkmated. Quoth he, "I did but lead thee on, that thou mightest think thyself skilful: but set up again, and thou shalt see." So they placed the pieces a second time, when he said in himself, "Open thine eyes or she will beat thee." And he fell to moving no piece, save after calculation, and ceased not to play, till she said, "Thy King is dead! — Checkmate." When he saw this he was confounded at her quickness and understanding; but she laughed and said, "O professor, I will make a wager with thee on this third game. I will give thee the queen and the right-hand castle and the left-hand knight; if thou beat me, take my clothes, and if I beat thee, I will take thy clothes." Replied he, "I agree to this;" and they replaced the pieces, she removing queen, castle and knight.[449] Then said she, "Move, O master." So he moved, saying to himself, "I cannot but beat her, with such odds," and planned a combination; but, behold, she moved on, little by little, till she made one of her pawns[450] a queen and pushing up to him pawns and other pieces, to take off his attention, set one in his way and tempted him to take it. Accordingly, he took it and she said to him, "The measure is meted and the loads equally balanced.[451] Eat till thou are over-full; naught shall be thy ruin, O son of Adam, save thy greed. Knowest thou not that I did but tempt thee, that I might finesse thee? See: this is check-mate!" adding, "So doff off thy clothes." Quoth he, "Leave me my bag-trousers, so Allah repay thee;" and he swore by Allah that he would contend with none, so long as Tawaddud abode in the realm of Baghdad. Then he stripped off his clothes and gave them to her and went away. Thereupon came the backgammon-player, and she said to him, "If I beat thee, this day, what wilt thou give me?" Quoth he, "I will give thee ten suits of brocade of Constantinople, figured with gold, and ten suits of velvet and a thousand gold pieces; and if I beat thee, I ask nothing but that thou write me an acknowledgment of my victory." Quoth she, "To it, then, and do thy best." So they played, and he lost and went away, chattering in Frankish jargon and saying, "By the bounty of the Commander of the Faithful, there is not her like in all the regions of the world!" Then the Caliph summoned players on instruments of music and asked her, "Dost thou know aught of music?"; when she answered, "Even so!" He bade bring a worn lute, polished by use, whose owner forlorn and lone was by parting trodden down; and of which quoth one, describing it

"Allah watered a land, and upsprang a tree * Struck root deep
down, and raised head a-sky:
The birds o'ersang it when green its wood; * And the Fair
o'ersing now the wood is dry."

So they brought the lute in a bag of red satin, with tassels of saffron-coloured silk: and she opened the bag, and took it out and behold on it was graven,

"Oft hath a tender bough made lute for maid, * whose swift sweet
lays at feast men's hearts invade:
She sings; it follows on her song, as though * The
Bulbuls[452] taught her all the modes she played."

She laid her lute in her lap and with bosom inclining over it, bent to it with the bending of a mother who suckleth her child; then she preluded in twelve different modes, till the whole assembly was agitated with delight, like a waving sea, and she sang the following,

"Cut short this strangeness, leave unruth of you; * My heart
shall love you aye, by youth of you!
Have ruth on one who sighs and weeps and moans, * Pining and
yearning for the troth of you."

The Caliph was ravished and exclaimed, "Allah bless thee and be merciful to him who taught thee!": whereupon she rose and kissed the ground before him. Then he sent for money and paid her master

Abu al-Husn an hundred thousand gold pieces to her price; after which he said to her, “O Tawaddud, ask a boon of me!” Replied she, “I ask of thee that thou restore me to my lord who sold me.” “’Tis well,” answered the Caliph and restored her to her master and gave her five thousand dinars for herself. Moreover, he appointed Abu al-Husn one of his cup-companions for a permanence, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Sixty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph gave the damsel five thousand dinars for herself and restored her to her master whom he appointed one of his cup-companions for a permanence and assigned him a monthly stipend of a thousand dinars so long as he should live; and he abode with the damsel Tawaddud in all solace and delight of life. Marvel then, O King, at the eloquence of this damsel and the hugeness of her learning and understanding and her perfect excellence in all branches of art and science; and consider the generosity of the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, in that he gave her master this money and said to her, “Ask a boon of me;” and she besought him to restore her to her lord. So he restored her to him and gave her five thousand dinars for herself and made him one of his boon-companions. Where is such generosity to be found after the Abbaside Caliphs? — May Allah Almighty have mercy upon them, one and all! And they tell a tale of

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THE ANGEL OF DEATH WITH THE PROUD KING AND THE DEVOUT MAN.

It is related, O auspicious King, that one of the olden monarchs was once minded to ride out in state with the Officers of his realm and the Grandees of his retinue and display to the folk the marvels of his magnificence. So he ordered his Lords and Emirs equip them therefor and commanded his keeper of the wardrobe to bring him of the richest of raiment, such as befitted the King in his state; and he bade them bring his steeds[453] of the finest breeds and pedigrees every man heeds; which being done, he chose out of the raiment what rejoiced him most and of the horses that which he deemed best; and, donning the clothes, together with a collar set with margarites and rubies and all manner jewels, mounted and set forth in state, making his destrier prance and curvet among his troops and glorying in his pride and despotic power. And Iblis came to him and, laying his hand upon his nose, blew into his nostrils the breath of hauteur and conceit, so that he magnified and glorified himself and said in his heart, "Who among men is like unto me?" And he became so puffed up with arrogance and self-sufficiency, and so taken up with the thought of his own splendour and magnificence, that he would not vouchsafe a glance to any man. Presently, there stood before him one clad in tattered clothes and saluted him, but he returned not his salam; whereupon the stranger laid hold of his horse's bridle. "Lift thy hand," cried the King, "thou knowest not whose bridle-rein it is whereof thou takest hold." Quoth the other, I have a need of thee." Quoth the King, "Wait till I alight and then name thy need." Rejoined the stranger, "It is a secret and I will not tell it but in thine ear." So the King bowed his head to him and he said, "I am the Angel of Death and I purpose to take thy soul." Replied the King, "Have patience with me a little, whilst I return to my house and take leave of my people and children and neighbours and wife." "By no means so," answered the Angel; "thou shalt never return nor look on them again, for the fated term of thy life is past." So saying, he took the soul of the King (who fell off his horse's back dead) and departed thence. Presently the Death Angel met a devout man, of whom

Almighty Allah had accepted, and saluted him. He returned the salute, and the Angel said to him, “O pious man, I have a need of thee which must be kept secret.” “Tell it in my ear,” quoth the devotee; and quoth the other, “I am the Angel of Death.” Replied the man, “Welcome to thee! and praised be Allah for thy coming! I am aweary of awaiting thine arrival; for indeed long hath been thine absence from the lover which longeth for thee.” Said the Angel, “If thou have any business, make an end of it;” but the other answered, saying, “There is nothing so urgent to me as the meeting with my Lord, to whom be honour and glory!” And the Angel said “How wouldst thou fain have me take thy soul? I am bidden to take it as thou willest and choosest.” He replied, “Tarry till I make the Wuzu-ablution and pray; and, when I prostrate myself, then take my soul while my body is on the ground.”[454] Quoth the Angel, “Verily, my Lord (be He extolled and exalted!) commanded me not to take thy soul but with thy consent and as thou shouldst wish; so I will do thy will.” Then the devout man made the minor ablution[455] and prayed: and the Angel of Death took his soul in the act of prostration and Almighty Allah transported it to the place of mercy and acceptance and forgiveness. And they tell another tale of

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THE ANGEL OF DEATH AND THE RICH KING.

A certain King had heaped up coin beyond count and gathered store of all precious things, which Allah the Most Highest hath created. So, in order that he might take his pleasure whenas he should find leisure to enjoy all this abounding wealth he had collected, he built him a palace wide and lofty such as befitteth and beseemeth Kings; and set thereto strong doors and appointed, for its service and its guard, servants and soldiers and doorkeepers to watch and ward. One day, he bade the cooks dress him somewhat of the goodliest of food and assembled his household and retainers and boon-companions and servants to eat with him, and partake of his bounty. Then he sat down upon the sofa of his kingship and dominion; and, propping his elbow upon the cushion, addressed himself, saying, "O soul, thou hast gathered together all the wealth of the world; so now take thy leisure therein and eat of this good at thine ease, in long life and prosperity ever rife!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that hardly had the King made an end of saying to himself, "Eat of this weal at thine ease, in long life and prosperity ever rife!" when a man clad in tattered raiment, with an asker's wallet hanging at his neck, as he were one who came to beg food, knocked with the door-ring a knock so loud and terrible that the whole palace shook as with quake of earth and the King's throne trembled. The servants were affrighted and rushed to the door, and when they saw the man who had knocked they cried out at him, saying, "Woe to thee! what manner of unmannerly fashion be this? Wait till the King eateth and we will then give thee of what is left." Quoth he, "Tell your lord to come out and speak with me, for I have of him a pressing need and a matter to heed." They cried, "Away, fool! who art thou that we should bid our lord come forth to thee?" But he said, "Tell him of this." So they went in and told the King, who said, "Did ye not rebuke him and draw upon him and threaten him!" Now as he spoke, behold, there came another knock at the gate, louder than the first knock, whereupon the servants sprang at the stranger with staves and weapons, to fall upon him and slay him; but he shouted at them, saying, "Bide in your steads, for I am the Angel of Death." Hereat their hearts quaked and their wits forsook them; their understandings were in confusion, their side-muscles quivered in perturbation and their limbs lost the power of motion. Then said the King to them, "Tell him to take a substitute[456] in my place and one to relieve me in this case." But the Angel answered, saying, "I will take no substitute, and I come not but on thine account, to cause separation between thee and the goods thou hast gathered together and the riches thou hast heaped up and entreasured." When the King heard this, he wept and groaned, saying, "Allah curse the treasure which hath deluded and undone me and diverted me from the service of my Lord! I deemed it would profit me, but to-day it is a regret for me and a calamity to me, and behold, I go forth, empty-handed of it, and leave it to my foes." Thereupon Allah caused the Treasure to speak out and it said, "Wherefore cursest thou me?[457] Curse thyself, for Allah created both me and eke thyself of the dust and appointed me to be in thine hand, that thou mightest provide thee with me a viaticum for the next world and give alms with me to the poor and the needy and the sick; and build mosques and hospices and bridges and aqueducts, so might I be an aidance unto thee in the world to come. But thou didst garner me and hoard me up and on thine own vanities bestowedst me, neither gavest thou thanks for me, as was due, but wast ungrateful to me; and now thou must leave me to thy foes and thou hast naught save thy regretting and thy repenting. But what is my sin, that thou shouldest revile me?" Then the Angel of Death took the King's soul as he sat on his throne before he ate of the food, and he fell down dead. Quoth Allah Almighty, "While they were rejoicing for that which had been given them, we suddenly laid hold on them; and, behold, they were seized with despair."[458] And they tell another tale of

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THE ANGEL OF DEATH AND THE KING OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.

There was a puissant despot among the Kings of the Banï Isrανl, who sat one day upon the throne of his kingship, when he saw come in to him, by the gate of the hall, a man of forbidding aspect and horrible presence. The King was affrighted at his sudden intrusion and his look terrified him; so he sprang up before him and said, “Who art thou, O man? Who gave thee leave to come in to me and who invited thee to enter my house?” Quoth the stranger, “Verily the Lord of the House sent me to thee, nor can any doorkeeper exclude me, nor need I leave to come in to Kings; for I reck not of a Sultan’s majesty neither of the multitude of his guards. I am he from whom no tyrant is at rest, nor can any man escape from my grasp: I am the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies.” Now when the King heard this a palsy crept over him[459] and he fell on his face in a swoon; but presently coming to himself, he asked, “Art thou then the Angel of Death?”; and the stranger answered, “Yes.” “I conjure thee, by Allah,” quoth the King, “grant me one single day’s respite, that I may pray pardon of my sins and ask absolution of my Lord and restore to their rightful owners the monies which are in my treasures, so I may not be burdened with the woe of a reckoning nor with the misery of punishment therefor.” Replied the Angel, “Well-away! well-away! this may be in no way.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Sixty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth the Death-messenger to the King, “Well-away, well-away! this may be in no way. How can I grant thee a reprieve when the days of thy life are counted and thy breaths numbered and thy moments fixed and written?” “Grant me an hour,” asked the King; but the Angel answered saying, “The hour was in the account and hath sped, and thou unheeding aught; and hath fled, and thou taking no thought: and now thy breathings are accomplished, and there remaineth to thee but one breath.” Quoth the King, “Who will be with me when I am transported to my tomb?” Quoth the Angel, “Naught will be with thee but thy works good or evil." "I have no works," said the King; and the Angel, "Doubtless thy long home will be in hell-fire and thy doom the wrath of the Almighty." Then he seized the soul of the King, and he fell off his throne and dropped on the earth dead. And there arose a mighty weeping and wailing and clamour of keening for him among the people of his court, and had they known that to which he went of the wrath of his Lord, their weeping for him had been sorer and their wailing louder and more abounding. And a story is told of

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ISKANDAR ZU AL-KARNAYN[460] AND A CERTAIN TRIBE OF POOR FOLK.

It is related that Iskandar Zu al-Karnayn[461] once came, in his journeyings, upon a tribe of small folk, who owned naught of the weals of the world and who dug their graves over against the doors of their houses and were wont at all times to visit them and sweep the earth from them and keep them clean and pray at them and worship Almighty Allah at them; and they had no meat save grasses and the growth of the ground. So Iskandar sent a man to summon their King, but he refused to come, saying, "I have no need of him." Thereupon Iskandar went to him and said, "How is it with you and what manner of men are ye?; for I see with you forsooth naught of gold or silver, nor find I with you aught of the weals of the world." Answered the King, "None hath his fill of the weals of the world." Iskandar then asked "Why do you dig your graves before your house-doors?"; and the King answered, "That they may be the prospective of our eye-glances; so we may look on them and ever renew talk and thought of death, neither forget the world to come; and on this wise the love of the world be banished from our hearts and we be not thereby distracted from the service of our Lord, the Almighty." Quoth Iskandar, "Why do ye eat grasses?"; and the other replied, "Because we abhor to make our bellies the tombs of animals and because the pleasure of eating outstrippeth not the gullet." Then putting forth his hand he brought out a skull of a son of Adam and, laying it before Iskandar, said, "O Zu al-Karnayn, Lord of the Two Horns, knowest thou who owned this skull?" Quoth he, "Nay;" and quoth the other, "He who owned this skull was a King of the Kings of the world, who dealt tyrannously with his subjects, specially wronging the weak and wasting his time in heaping up the rubbish of this world, till Allah took his sprite and made the fire his abiding-site; and this is his head." He then put forth his hand and produced another skull and, laying it before Iskandar, said to him, "Knowest thou this?" "No," answered the conqueror; and the other rejoined, "This is the skull of another King, who dealt justly by his lieges and was kindly solicitous for the folk of his realm and his dominions, till Allah took his soul and lodged him in His Garden and made high his degree in Heaven." Then laying his hands on Iskandar's head he said, "Would I knew which of these two art thou." Whereupon Iskandar wept with sore weeping and straining the King to his bosom cried, "If thou be minded to company with me, I will commit to thee as Wazir the government of my affairs and share with thee my kingdom." Cried the other, "Well-away, well-away! I have no mind to this." "And why so?" asked Iskandar, and the King answered, "Because all men are thy foes by reason of the wealth and the worlds thou hast won: while all men are my true friends, because of my contentment and pauperdom, for that I possess nothing, neither covet aught of the goods of life; I have no desire to them nor wish for them, neither reck I aught save contentment." So Iskandar pressed him to his breast and kissed him between the eyes and went his way.[462] And among the tales they tell is one concerning

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THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF KING ANUSHIRWAN.[463]

It is told of Anushirwan, the Just King, that once upon a time he feigned himself sick, and bade his stewards and intendants go round about the provinces of his empire and the quarters of his dominion and seek him out a mud-brick thrown away from some ruined village, that he might use it as medicine, informing his intimates that the leaches had prescribed this to him. So they went the round of the provinces of his reign and of all the lands under his sway and said to him on return, “In all the realm we have found nor ruined site nor castaway mud-brick.” At this Anushirwan rejoiced and rendered thanks to the Lord, saying, “I was but minded to try my kingdom and prove mine empire, that I might know if any place therein remained ruined and deserted, so I might rebuild and repeople it; but, since there be no place in it but is inhabited, the affairs of the reign are best-conditioned and its ordinance is excellent; and its populousness[464] hath reached the pitch of perfection.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the high officials returned and reported, “We have found in the empire nor ruined site nor rotten brick,” the Just King thanked his God and said, “Verily the affairs of the realm are best-conditioned and its ordinance is excellent and its populousness hath reached the pink of perfection.” And ken thou, O King, continued Shahrazad, that these olden Kings strave not and toiled not for the peopling of their possessions, but because they knew that the more populous a country is, the more abundant is that which is desired therein; and because they wist the saying of the wise and the learned to be true without other view, namely, “Religion dependeth on the King, the King on the troops, the troops on the treasury, the treasury on the populousness of the country and its prosperity on the justice done to the lieges.” Wherefore they upheld no one in tyranny or oppression; neither suffered their dependants and suite to work injustice, knowing that kingdoms are not established upon tyranny, but that cities and places fall into ruin when oppressors are set as rulers over them, and their inhabitants disperse and flee to other governments; whereby ruin falleth upon the realm, the imports fail, the treasuries become empty and the pleasant lives of the subjects are perturbed; for that they love not a tyrant and cease not to offer up successive prayers against him; so that the King hath no ease of his kingdom, and the vicissitudes of fortune speedily bring him to destruction. And they tell a tale concerning

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THE JEWISH KAZI AND HIS PIOUS WIFE.

Among the Children of Israel one of the Kazis had a wife of surpassing beauty, constant in fasting and abounding in patience and long-suffering; and he, being minded to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, appointed his own brother Kazi in his stead, during his absence, and commended his wife to his charge. Now this brother had heard of her beauty and loveliness and had taken a fancy to her. So no sooner was his brother gone than he went to her and sought her love-favours; but she denied him and held fast to her chastity. The more she repelled him, the more he pressed his suit upon her; till, despairing of her and fearing lest she should acquaint his brother with his misconduct whenas he should return, he suborned false witnesses to testify against her of adultery; and cited her and carried her before the King of the time who adjudged her to be stoned. So they dug a pit, and seating her therein stoned her, till she was covered with stones, and the man said, "Be this hole her grave!" But when it was dark a passer-by, making for a neighbouring hamlet, heard her groaning in sore pain; and, pulling her out of the pit, carried her home to his wife, whom he bade dress her wounds. The peasant woman tended her till she recovered and presently gave her her child to be nursed; and she used to lodge with the child in another house by night. Now a certain thief saw her and lusted after her. So he sent to her seeking her love-favours, but she denied herself to him; wherefore he resolved to slay her and, making his way into her lodging by night (and she sleeping), thought to strike at her with a knife; but it smote the little one and killed it. Now when he knew his misdeed, fear overtook him and he went forth the house and Allah preserved from him her chastity. But as she awoke in the morning, she found the child by her side with throat cut; and presently the mother came and seeing her boy dead, said to the nurse, "Twas thou didst murther him." Therewith she beat her a grievous beating and purposed to put her to death; but her husband interposed and delivered the woman, saying, "By Allah, thou shalt not do on this wise." So the woman, who had somewhat of money with her, fled forth for her life, knowing not whither she should wend. Presently, she came to a village, where she saw a crowd of people about a man crucified to a tree-stump, but still in the chains of life. “What hath he done?” she asked, and they answered, “He hath committed a crime, which nothing can expiate but death or the payment of such a fine by way of alms.” So she said to them, “Take the money and let him go;” and, when they did so, he repented at her hands and vowed to serve her, for the love of Almighty Allah till death should release him. Then he built her a cell and lodged her therein; after which he betook himself to woodcutting and brought her daily her bread. As for her, she was constant in worship, so that there came no sick man or demoniac to her, but she prayed for him and he was straightway healed. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Sixty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the woman’s cell was visited by folk (and she constant in worship), it befel by decree of the Almighty that He sent down upon her husband’s brother (the same who had caused her to be stoned), a cancer in the face, and smote the villager’s wife (the same who had beaten her) with leprosy, and afflicted the thief (the same who had murthered the child) with palsy. Now when the Kazi returned from his pilgrimage, he asked his brother of his wife, and he told him that she was dead, whereat he mourned sore and accounted her with her Maker. After awhile, very many folk heard of the pious recluse and flocked to her cell from all parts of the length and breadth of the earth; whereupon said the Kazi to his brother, “O my brother, wilt thou not seek out yonder pious woman? Haply Allah shall decree thee healing at her hands!” and he replied, “O my brother, carry me to her” Moreover, the husband of the leprous woman heard of the pious devotee and carried his wife to her, as did also the people of the paralytic thief; and they all met at the door of the hermitage. Now she had a place wherefrom she could look out upon those who came to her, without their seeing her; and they waited till her servant came, when they begged admittance and obtained permission. Presently she saw them all and recognized them; so she veiled and cloaked face and body and went out and stood in the door, looking at her husband and his brother and the thief and the peasant-woman; but they could not recognize her. Then said she to them, “Ho folk, ye shall not be relieved of what is with you till ye confess your sins; for, when the creature confesseth his sins the Creator relenteth towards him and granteth him that wherefore he resorteth to him.” Quoth the Kazi to his brother, “O my brother, repent to Allah and persist not in thy frowardness, for it will be more helpful to thy relief.” And the tongue of the case spake this speech,

“This day oppressor and oppressed meet, * And Allah sheweth
secrets we secrete:
This is a place where sinners low are brought; * And Allah
raiseth saint to highest seat.
Our Lord and Master shows the truth right clear, * Though sinner
froward be or own defeat:
Alas[465] for those who rouse the Lord to wrath, * As though
of Allah’s wrath they nothing weet!
O whoso seekest honours, know they are * From Allah, and His fear
with love entreat.”

(Saith the relator), Then quoth the brother, “Now I will tell the truth: I did thus and thus with thy wife;” and he confessed the whole matter, adding, “And this is my offence.” Quoth the leprous woman, “As for me, I had a woman with me and imputed to her that of which I knew her to be guiltless, and beat her grievously; and this is my offence.” And quoth the paralytic, “And I went in to a woman to kill her, after I had tempted her to commit adultery and she had refused; and I slew a child that lay by her side; and this is my offence.” Then said the pious woman, “O my God, even as Thou hast made them feel the misery of revolt, so show them now the excellence of submission, for Thou over all things art Omnipotent!” And Allah (to whom belong Majesty and Might!) made them whole. Then the Kazi fell to looking on her and considering her straitly, till she asked him why he looked so hard and he said, “I had a wife and were she not dead, I had said thou art she.” Hereupon, she made herself known to him and both began praising Allah (to whom belong Majesty and Might!) for that which He had vouchsafed them of the reunion of their loves; but the brother and the thief and the villager’s wife joined in imploring her forgiveness. So she forgave them one and all, and they worshipped Allah in that place and rendered her due service, till Death parted them. And one of the Sayyids[466] hath related this tale of

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THE SHIPWRECKED WOMAN AND HER CHILD.

“I was circuiting the Ka’abah one dark night, when I heard a plaintive voice, speaking from a contrite heart and saying, ‘O Bountiful One, Thy past boon! Indeed, by my heart shall Thy covenant never be undone.’ Hearing this voice, my heart fluttered so that I was like to die; but I followed the sound and behold, it came from a woman, to whom I said, ‘Peace be with thee, O handmaid of Allah;’ whereto she replied, ‘And with thee be peace, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings!’ Quoth I, ‘I conjure thee, by Allah the Most Great, tell me what is the covenant to which thy heart is constant.’ Quoth she, ‘But that thou adjurest me by the Omnipotent, I would not tell thee my secrets. See what is before me.’ So I looked and lo! there was a child lying asleep before her and breathing heavily in his slumber. Said she, “Know, that I set forth, being big with this boy, to make the pilgrimage to this House and took passage in a ship; but the waves rose against us and the winds blew contrary and the vessel broke up. I saved myself on a plank; and, on that bit of wood, I gave birth to this child; and while he lay on my bosom and the waves beating upon me,’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the woman continued, “‘Now while the boy lay on my bosom and the waves beat upon me, there swam up to me one of the sailors, who climbed on the plank and said, ‘By Allah, I desired thee whilst thou wast yet in the ship, and now I have come at thee: so yield thy body to me, or I will throw thee into the sea.’ Said I, ‘Out on thee! hast thou no memory of that which thou hast seen and is it no warning to thee?’ Quoth he, ‘I have seen the like of this many a time and come off safe and care not.’ Quoth I, ‘O fellow, we are now in a calamity, whence we hope to be delivered by obedience to Allah and not by disobedience.’ But he persisted with me, and I feared him and thought to put him off; so I said to him, ‘Wait till this babe shall sleep’; but he took the child off my lap and threw him into the sea. Now when I saw this desperate deed, my heart sank and sorrow was sore upon me; so I raised my eyes heavenwards and said, ‘O Thou that interposest between a man and his heart, intervene between me and this leonine brute; for Thou over all things art Omnipotent!’ And by Allah, hardly had I spoken when a beast rose out of the sea and snatched him off the plank. When I saw myself alone my sorrows redoubled and my grief and longing for my child, and I recited,

‘My coolth of eyes, the darling child of me * Is lost, and racked
my heart with agony;
My body wrecked, and red-hot coals of love * Burning my liver
with sore pangs, I see.
In this my sorrow shows no gleam of joy; * Save Thy high grace
and my expectancy:
Hast seen, O Lord, what unto me befel; * My son aye lost and
parting pangs I dree:
Take ruth on us and make us meet again; * For now my stay and
only hope’s in Thee!’

I abode in this condition a day and a night; and, when morning dawned, I caught sight of the sails of a vessel shining afar off, nor did the waves cease to drive me and the winds to waft me on, till I reached the ship, whose sails I had sighted. The sailors took me up and I looked and behold, my babe was amongst them: so I threw myself upon him and said, ‘O folk, this is my child: how and whence came ye by him?’ Quoth they, ‘Whilst we were sailing along the seas the ship suddenly stood still and lo! that which stayed us was a beast, as it were a great city, and this babe on its back, sucking his thumbs. So we took him up.’ Now when I heard this, I told them my tale and all that had betided me and returned thanks to my Lord for His goodness, and vowed to Him that never, whilst I lived, would I stir from His House nor swerve from His service; and since then I have never asked of Him aught but He hath given it me.’ Now when she had made an end of her story (quoth the Sayyid), I put my hand to my alms-pouch and would have given to her, but she exclaimed, “Away from me, thou idle man! Have I not told thee of His mercies and the graciousness of His dealings and shall I take an alms from other than His hand?” And I could not prevail with her to accept aught of me: so I left her and went away, reciting these couplets

‘How many boons conceals the Deity, * Eluding human sight in mystery:
How many graces come on heels of stresses, * And fill the burning heart with jubilee:
How many a sorrow in the morn appears, * And turns at night-tide into gladdest gree:
If things go hard with thee some day, yet trust * Th’ Eterne, th’ Almighty God of Unity:
And pray the Prophet that he intercede; * Through intercession every wish shalt see.’

And she left not the service of her Lord, cleaving unto His House, till death came to her.” And a tale is also told by Mαlik bin Dvnαr[467] (Allah have mercy on him!) of

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THE PIOUS BLACK SLAVE.

“We were once afflicted with drought at Bassorah and went forth sundry times to pray for rain, but saw no sign of our prayers being accepted. So I went, I and ‘Itaa al-Salamν and Sαbit al-Banαni and Naja al-Bakαa and Mohammed bin Wαsi’a and Ayyïb al-Sukhtiyαni and Habνb al-Farsi and Hassαn bin Abi Sinαn and ‘Otbah al-Ghulαm and Sαlih al-Muzani,[468] till we reached the oratory,[469] when the boys came out of the schools and we prayed for rain, but saw no sign of acceptance. So about mid-day the people went away and I and Sabit al-Banani tarried in the place of prayer till nightfall, when we saw a black of comely face, slender of shank[470] and big of belly, approach us, clad in a pair of woollen drawers; if all he wore had been priced, it would not have fetched a couple of dirhams. He brought water and made the minor ablution, then, going up to the prayer-niche, prayed two inclinations deftly, his standing and bowing and prostration being exactly similar in both. Then he raised his glance heavenwards, and said, ‘O my God and my Lord and Master, how long wilt Thou reject Thy servants in that which offereth no hurt to Thy sovereignty? Is that which is with Thee wasted or are the treasuries of Thy Kingdom annihilated? I conjure Thee, by Thy love to me forthwith to pour out upon us Thy rain-clouds of grace!’ He spake and hardly had he made an end of speaking, when the heavens clouded over and there came a rain, as if the mouths of waterskins had been opened; and when we left the oratory, we were knee-deep in water,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Sixty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “hardly had he spoken when the heavens clouded over and there came a rain, as if the mouths of waterskins had been opened. And when we left the oratory we were knee-deep in water, and we were lost in wonder at the black. So I accosted him and said to him, ‘Woe to thee, O black, art thou not ashamed of what thou saidst?’ He turned to me and asked, ‘What said I?’; and I, ‘Thy saying to Allah, ‘By Thy love of me;’ and what giveth thee to know that He loveth thee?’ Replied he, ‘Away from me, O thou distracted by the world from the care of thine own soul. Where was I, when He gave me strength to profess the unity of the Godhead and vouchsafed unto me the knowledge of Him? How deemest thou that He aided me thus except of His love to me?’ adding, ‘Verily, His love to me is after the measure of my love to Him.’ Quoth I, ‘Tarry awhile with me, so may Allah have mercy on thee!’ But he said, ‘I am a chattel and the Book enjoineth me to obey my lesser master.’ So we followed him afar off, till we saw him enter the house of a slave-broker. Now the first half of the night was past and the last half was longsome upon us, so we went away; but next morning, we repaired to the slave-dealer and said to him, ‘Hast thou a lad to sell us for service?’ He answered, ‘Yes, I have an hundred lads or so and they are all for sale.’ Then he showed us slave after slave; till he had shown us some seventy; but my friend was not amongst them, and the dealer said, ‘These are all I have.’ But, as we were going out from him we saw a ruinous hut behind his house and going in behold, we found the black standing there. I cried, ‘’Tis he, by the Lord of the Ka’abah!’ and turning to the dealer, said to him, ‘Sell me yonder slave.’ Replied he, ‘O Abu Yahya, this is a pestilent unprofitable fellow, who hath no concern by night but weeping and by day but repentance.’ I rejoined, ‘It is for that I want him.’ So the dealer called him, and he came out, showing drowsiness. Quoth his master, ‘Take him at thine own price, so thou hold me free of all his faults.’ I bought him for twenty dinars and asked ‘What is his name?’ and the dealer answered ‘Maymun, the monkey;’ and I took him by the hand and went out with him, intending to go home; but he turned to me and said, ‘O my lesser lord, why and wherefore didst thou buy me? By Allah, I am not fit for the service of God’s creatures!’ Replied I, ‘I bought thee that I might serve thee myself; and on my head be it.’ Asked he, ‘Why so?’ and I answered, ‘Wast thou not in company with us yesterday in the place of prayer?’ Quoth he, ‘And didst thou hear me?’; and quoth I, ‘It was I accosted thee yesterday and spoke with thee.’ Thereupon he advanced till we came to a mosque, where he entered and prayed a two-bow prayer; after which he said, ‘O my God and my Lord and Master, the secret that was between me and Thee Thou hast discovered unto Thy creatures and hast brought me to shame before the worldling. How then shall life be sweet to me, now that other than Thou hath happened upon that which is between Thee and me? I conjure Thee to take my soul to Thee forthright.[471] So saying, he prostrated himself, and I awaited awhile without seeing him raise his head; so I shook him and behold, he was indeed dead, the mercy of Almighty Allah be upon him! I laid him out stretching his arms and legs and looked at him, and lo! he was smiling. Moreover, whiteness had got the better of blackness on his brow, and his face was radiant with light like a young moon. As we wondered at his case, the door opened and a young man came in to us and said, ‘Peace be with you! May Allah make great our reward and yours for our brother Maymun! Here is his shroud: wrap him in it.’ So saying, he gave us two robes, never had we seen the like of them, and we shrouded him therein. And now his tomb is a place whither men resort to pray for rain and ask their requirements of Allah (be He extolled and exalted!); and how excellently well saith the poet on this theme,

‘The heart of Gnostic[472] homed in heavenly Garth *
    Heaven decks, and Allah’s porters aid afford.
Lo! here they drink old wine commingled with *
    Tasnvm,[473] the wine of union with the Lord.
Safe is the secret ‘twixt the Friend and them; *
    Safe from all hearts but from that Heart adored.’”

And they recount another anecdote of

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THE DEVOUT TRAY-MAKER AND HIS WIFE.

There was once, among the Children of Israel, a man of the worthiest, who was strenuous in the service of his Lord and abstained from things worldly and drave them away from his heart. He had a wife who was a helpmate meet for him and who was at all times obedient to him. They earned their living by making trays[474] and fans, whereat they wrought all through the light hours; and, at nightfall, the man went out into the streets and highways seeking a buyer for what they had made. They were wont to fast continually by day[475] and one morning they arose, fasting, and worked at their craft till the light failed them, when the man went forth, according to custom, to find purchasers for his wares, and fared on till he came to the door of the house of a certain man of wealth, one of the sons of this world, high in rank and dignity. Now the tray-maker was fair of face and comely of form, and the wife of the master of the house saw him and fell in love with him and her heart inclined to him with exceeding inclination; so, her husband being absent, she called her handmaid and said to her, "Contrive to bring yonder man to us." Accordingly the maid went out to him and and called him and stopped him as though she would buy what he held in hand. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the maid-servant went out to the man and asked him, "Come in; my lady hath a mind to buy some of thy wares, after she hath tried them and looked at them." The man thought she spoke truly and, seeing no harm in this, entered and sat down as she bade him; and she shut the door upon him. Whereupon her mistress came out of her room and, taking him by the gaberdine,[476] drew him within and said, "How long shall I seek union of thee? Verily my patience is at an end on thine account. See now, the place is perfumed and provision prepared and the householder is absent this night, and I give to thee my person without reserve, I whose favours kings and captains and men of fortune have sought this long while, but I have regarded none of them.” And she went on talking thus to him, whilst he raised not his eyes from the ground, for shame before Allah Almighty and fear of the pains and penalties of His punishment; even as saith the poet,

“‘Twixt me and riding many a noble dame, * Was naught but shame
which kept me chaste and pure:
My shame was cure to her; but haply were * Shame to depart, she
ne’er had known a cure.”

The man strove to free himself from her, but could not; so he said to her, “I want one thing of thee.” She asked, “What is that?”: and he answered, “I wish for pure water that I may carry it to the highest place of thy house and do somewhat therewith and cleanse myself of an impurity, which I may not disclose to thee.” Quoth she, “The house is large and hath closets and corners and privies at command.” But he replied, “I want nothing but to be at a height.” So she said to her slave-girl, “Carry him up to the belvedere on the house-terrace.” Accordingly the maid took him up to the very top and, giving him a vessel of water, went down and left him. Then he made the ablution and prayed a two-bow prayer; after which he looked at the ground, thinking to throw himself down, but seeing it afar off, feared to be dashed to pieces by the fall.[477] Then he bethought him of his disobedience to Allah, and the consequences of his sin; so it became a light matter to him to offer up his life and shed his blood; and he said, “O my God and my Lord, Thou seest that which is fallen on me; neither is my case hidden from Thee. Thou indeed over all things art Omnipotent and the tongue of my case reciteth and saith,

‘I show my heart and thoughts to Thee, and Thou * Alone my
secret’s secrecy canst know.
If I address Thee fain I cry aloud; * Or, if I’m mute, my signs
for speech I show.
O Thou to whom no second be conjoined! * A wretched lover seeks
Thee in his woe.
I have a hope my thoughts as true confirm; * And heart that
fainteth as right well canst trow.
To lavish life is hardest thing that be, * Yet easy an Thou bid

me life forego;
But, an it be Thy will to save from stowre, * Thou, O my Hope, to
work this work hast power!'"

Then the man cast himself down from the belvedere; but Allah sent an angel who bore him up on his wings and brought him down to the ground, whole and without hurt or harm. Now when he found himself safe on the ground, he thanked and praised Allah (to whom belong Majesty and Might!) for His merciful protection of his person and his chastity; and he went straight to his wife who had long expected him, and he empty-handed. Then seeing him, she asked him why he had tarried and what was come of that he had taken with him and why he returned empty-handed; whereupon he told her of the temptation which had befallen him, and she said, "Alhamdolillah — praised be God-for delivering thee from seduction and intervening between thee and such calamity!" Then she added, "O man, the neighbours use to see us light our oven every night; and, if they see us fireless this night, they will know that we are destitute. Now it behoveth in gratitude to Allah, that we hide our destitution and conjoin the fast of this night to that of the past and continue it for the sake of Allah Almighty." So she rose and, filling the oven with wood, lighted it, to baffle the curiosity of her woman-neighbours, reciting these couplets,

"Now I indeed will hide desire and all repine; * And light up
this my fire that neighbours see no sign:
Accept I what befals by order of my Lord; * Haply He too accept
this humble act of mine."

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Seventieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that after the goodwife had lit the fire to baffle the curiosity of her women-neighbours, she and her husband made the Wuzu-ablution and stood up to pray, when behold, one of the neighbours' wives came and asked leave to take a fire-brand from the oven. "Do what thou wilt with the oven," answered they; but, when she came to the fire, she cried out, saying, "Ho, such an one (to the tray-maker's wife) take up thy bread ere it burn!" Quoth the wife to her husband, "Hearest thou what she saith?" Quoth he, "Go and look." So she went up to the oven, and behold, it was full of fine bread and white. She took up the scones and carried them to her husband, thanking Allah (to whom belong Majesty and Might!) for His abounding good and great bounty; and they ate of the bread and drank water and praised the Almighty. Then said the woman to her husband, "Come let us pray to Allah the Most Highest, so haply He may vouchsafe us what shall enable us to dispense with the weariness of working for daily bread and devote ourselves wholly to worshipping and obeying Him." The man rose in assent and prayed, whilst his wife said, "Amen," to his prayer, when the roof clove in sunder and down fell a ruby, which lit the house with its light. Hereat, they redoubled in praise and thanksgiving to Allah praying what the Almighty willed,[478] and rejoiced at the ruby with great joy. And the night being far spent, they lay down to sleep and the woman dreamt that she entered Paradise and saw therein many chairs ranged and stools set in rows. She asked what the seats were and it was answered her, "These are the chairs of the prophets and those are the stools of the righteous and the pious." Quoth she, "Which is the stool of my husband such an one?"; and it was said to her, "It is this." So she looked and seeing a hole in its side asked, "What may be this hole?"; and the reply came, "It is the place of the ruby that dropped upon you from your house-roof." Thereupon she awoke, weeping and bemoaning the defect in her husband's stool among the seats of the Righteous; so she told him the dream and said to him, "Pray Allah, O man, that this ruby return to its place; for endurance of hunger and poverty during our few days here were easier than a hole in thy chair among the just in Paradise."[479] Accordingly, he prayed to his Lord, and lo! the ruby flew up to the roof and away whilst they looked at it. And they ceased not from their poverty and their piety, till they went to the presence of Allah, to whom be Honour and Glory! And they also tell a tale of

AL-HAJJAJ AND THE PIOUS MAN.

Al-Hajjaj bin Yusuf al-Sakafi had been long in pursuit of a certain man of the notables, and when at last he was brought before him, he said, “O enemy of Allah, He hath delivered thee over to me;” and cried, “Hale him to prison and lay him by the heels in heavy fetters and build a closet over him, that he may not come forth of it nor any go into him.” So they bore him to jail and summoned the blacksmith with the irons; and every time the smith gave a stroke with his hammer, the prisoner raised his eyes to heaven and said, “Is not the whole Creation and the Empire thereof His?”[480] Then the gaolers built the cage[481] over him and left him therein, lorn and lone, whereupon longing and consternation entered into him and the tongue of his case recited in extempore verse,

“O, Wish of wistful men, for Thee I yearn; * My heart seeks grace
of one no heart shall spurn.
Unhidden from thy sight is this my case; * And for one glance of
thee I pine and burn.
They jailed and tortured me with sorest pains: * Alas for lone
one can no aid discern!
But, albe lone, I find Thy name befriends * And cheers, though
sleep to eyes shall ne’er return:
An thou accept of me, I care for naught; * And only Thou what’s
in my heart canst learn!”

Now when night fell dark, the gaoler left his watchmen to guard him and went to his house; and on the morrow, when he came to the prison, he found the fetters lying on the ground and the prisoner gone; whereat he was affrighted and made sure of death. So he returned to his place and bade his family farewell, after which he took in his sleeve his shroud and the sweet herbs for his corpse, and went in to Al-Hajjaj. And as he stood before the presence, the Governor smelt the perfumes and asked, “What is that?” when the gaoler answered, “O my lord, it is I who have brought it.” “And what moved thee to that?” enquired the Governor; whereupon he told him his case, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Seventy-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the gaoler told his case to Al-Hajjaj, the Governor cried, “Woe to thee! Didst thou hear him say aught?” Answered the gaoler, “Yes! whilst the blacksmith was hammering his irons, he ceased not to look up heavenwards and say, ‘Is not the whole Creation and the Empire thereof His?’” Rejoined Al-Hajjaj, “Dost thou not know that He, on whom he called in thy presence, delivered him in thine absence?” And the tongue of the case recited on this theme,

“O Lord, how many a grief from me hast driven * Nor can I sit or
stand without Thy hold:
How many many things I cannot count, * Thou sav’st from many many
and manifold!”

And they also tell a tale of

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THE BLACKSMITH WHO COULD HANDLE FIRE WITHOUT HURT.

It reached the ears of a certain pious man that there abode in such a town a blacksmith, who could put his hand into the fire and pull out the iron red-hot, without the flames doing him aught of hurt.[482] So he set out for the town in question and asked for the blacksmith; and, when the man was shown to him, he watched him at work and saw him do as had been reported to him. He waited till he had made and end of his day's work; then, going up to him, saluted him with the salam and said, "I would be thy guest this night." Replied the smith, "With gladness and goodly gree!" and carried him to his place, where they supped together and lay down to sleep. The guest watched, but saw no sign in his host of praying through the night or of special devoutness and said in his mind, "Haply he hideth himself from me." So he lodged with him a second and a third night, but found that he did not exceed the devotions prescribed by the law and custom of the Prophet and rose but little in the dark hours to pray. At last he said to him, "O my brother, I have heard of the gift with which Allah hath favoured thee and have seen the truth of it with mine eyes. Moreover, I have taken note of thine assiduity in religious exercises, but find in thee no such piety as distinguisheth those who work saintly miracles: whence, then, cometh this to thee?" "I will tell thee," answered the smith, "Know that I was once passionately enamoured of a slave-girl and ofttimes sued her for love-liesse, but could not prevail upon her, because she still held fast by her chastity. Presently there came a year of drought and hunger and hardship; food failed and there befel a sore famine. As I was sitting one day at home, somebody knocked at the door; so I went out and behold, she was standing there; and she said to me, 'O my brother, I am sorely an-hungered and I lift mine eyes to thee, beseeching thee to feed me for Allah's sake!' Quoth I, 'Wottest thou not how I love thee and what I have suffered for thy sake? Now I will not give thee one bittock of bread except thou yield thy person to me.' Quoth she, 'Death, but not disobedience to the Lord!' Then she went away and returned after two days with the same prayer for food as before. I made her a like answer, and she entered and sat down in my house being nigh upon death. I set food before her, whereupon her eyes brimmed with tears and she cried, ‘Give me meat for the love of Allah, to whom belong Honour and Glory!’ But I answered, ‘Not so, by Allah, except thou yield thyself to me.’ Quoth she, ‘Better is death to me than the wrath and wreak of Allah the Most Highest;’ and she rose and left the food untouched” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Seventy-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the man set food before her, the woman said, “Give me meat for the love of Allah to whom be Honour and Glory!’ But I answered, ‘Not so, by Allah, except thou yield to me thy person.’ Quoth she, ‘Better is death than the wrath and wreak of Allah;’ and she rose and left the food untouched and went away repeating these couplets,

‘O Thou, the One, whose grace doth all the world embrace; * Thine
ears have heard, Thine eyes have seen my case!
Privation and distress have dealt me heavy blows; * The woes that
weary me no utterance can trace.
I am like one athirst who eyes the landscape’s eye, * Yet may not
drink a draught of streams that rail and race.
My flesh would tempt me by the sight of savoury food * Whose joys
shall pass away and pangs maintain their place.’

She then disappeared for two days, when she again came and knocked at the door; so I went out to her, and lo! hunger had taken away her voice; but, after a rest she said, ‘O my brother, I am worn out with want and know not what to do, for I cannot show my face to any man but to thee. Say, wilt thou feed me for the love of Allah Almighty?’ But I answered, ‘Not so, except thou yield to me thy person.’ And she entered my house and sat down. Now I had no food ready; but, when the meat was dressed and I laid it in a saucer, behold, the grace of Almighty Allah entered into me and I said to myself, ‘Out on thee! This woman, weak of wit and faith, hath refrained from food till she can no longer, for stress of hunger; and, while she refuseth time after time, thou canst not forbear from disobedience to the Lord!' And I said, 'O my God, I repent to Thee of that which my flesh purposed!' Then I took the food and carrying it to her, said, 'Eat, for no harm shall betide thee: this is for the love of Allah, to whom belong Honour and Glory!' Then she raised her eyes to heaven and said, 'O my God, if this man say sooth, I pray Thee forbid fire to harm him in this world and the next, for Thou over all things art Omnipotent and Prevalent in answering the prayer of the penitent!' Then I left her and went to put out the fire in the brasier.[483] Now the season was winter and the weather cold, and a live coal fell on my body: but by the decree of Allah (to whom be Honour and Glory!) I felt no pain and it became my conviction that her prayer had been answered. So I took the coal in my hand, and it burnt me not; and going in to her, I said, 'Be of good cheer, for Allah hath granted thy prayer!'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Seventy-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the blacksmith continued: "So I went in to her and said, 'Be of good cheer, for Allah hath granted thy prayer!' Then she dropped the morsel from her hand and said, 'O my God, now that Thou hast shown me my desire of him and hast granted me my prayer for him, take Thou my soul, for Thou over all things art Almighty!' And straightway He took her soul to Him, the mercy of Allah be upon her!" And the tongue of the case extemporised and spake on this theme,

"She prayed: the Lord of grace her prayer obeyed; * And spared
the sinner, who for sin had prayed:
He showed her all she prayed Him to grant; * And Death (as prayed
she) her portion made:
Unto his door she came and prayed for food, * And sued his ruth
for what her misery made:
He leant to error following his lusts, * And hoped to enjoy her
as her wants persuade;
But he knew little of what Allah willed; * Nor was Repentance,
though unsought, denayed.
Fate comes to him who flies from Fate, O Lord, * And lot and

daily bread by Thee are weighed.”

And they also tell of

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THE DEVOTEE TO WHOM ALLAH GAVE A CLOUD FOR SERVICE AND THE DEVOUT KING.

There was once, among the children of Israel, a man of the devout, for piety acclaimed and for continence and asceticism enfamed, whose prayers were ever granted and who by supplication obtained whatso he wanted; and he was a wanderer in the mountains and was used to pass the night in worship. Now Almighty Allah had subjected to him a cloud which travelled with him wherever he went, and poured on him its water-treasures in abundance that he might make his ablutions and drink. After a long time when things were thus, his fervour somewhat abated, whereupon Allah took the cloud away from him and ceased to answer his prayers. On this account, great was his grief and long was his woe, and he ceased not to regret the time of grace and the miracle vouchsafed to him and to lament and bewail and bemoan himself, till he saw in a dream one who said to him, "An thou wouldest have Allah restore to thee thy cloud, seek out a certain King, in such a town, and beg him to pray for thee: so will Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) give thee back thy cloud and bespread it over thee by virtue of his pious prayers." And he began repeating these couplets,

"Wend to that pious prayerful Emir, * Who can with gladness thy condition cheer;
An he pray Allah, thou shalt win thy wish; * And heavy rain shall drop from welkin clear.
He stands all Kings above in potent worth; * Nor to compare with him doth aught appear:
Near him thou soon shalt hap upon thy want, * And see all joy and gladness draw thee near:
Then cut the wolds and wilds unfounted till * The goal thou goest for anigh shalt speer!"

So the hermit set out for the town named to him in the dream; and, coming thither after long travel, enquired for the King's palace which was duly shown to him. And behold, at the gate he found a slave-officer sitting on a great chair and clad in gorgeous gear; so he stood to him and saluted him; and he returned his salam and asked him, “What is thy business?” Answered the devotee, “I am a wronged man, and come to submit my case to the King.” Quoth the officer, “Thou hast no access to him this day; for he hath appointed unto petitioners and enquirers one day in every seven” (naming the day), “on which they may go in to him; so wend thy ways in welfare till then.” The hermit was vexed with the King for thus veiling himself from the folk and said in thought, “How shall this man be a saint of the saints of Allah (to whom belong Majesty and Might!) and he on this wise?” Then he went away and awaited the appointed day. “Now” (quoth he)”when it came, I repaired to the palace, where I found a great number of folk at the gate, expecting admission; and I stood with them, till there came out a Wazir robed in gorgeous raiment and attended by guards and slaves, who said, ‘Let those, who have petitions to present, enter.’ So I entered with the rest and found the King seated facing his officers and grandees who were ranged according to their several ranks and degrees. The Wazir took up his post and brought forward the petitioners, one by one, till it came to my turn, when the King looked on me and said, ‘Welcome to the ‘Lord of the Cloud’! Sit thee down till I make leisure for thee.’ I was confounded at his words and confessed his dignity and superiority; and, when the King had answered the petitioners and had made an end with them, he rose and dismissed his Wazirs and Grandees; then, taking my hand he led me to the door of the private palace, where we found a black slave, splendidly arrayed, with helm on head, and on his right hand and his left, bows and coats of mail. He rose to the King; and, hastening to obey his orders and forestall his wishes, opened the door. We went in, hand in hand, till we came to a low wicket, which the King himself opened and led me into a ruinous place of frightful desolation and thence passed into a chamber, wherein was naught but a prayer-carpet, an ewer for ablution and some mats of palm-leaves. Here the King doffed his royal robes and donned a coarse gown of white wool and a conical bonnet of felt. Then he sat down and making me sit, called out to his wife, ‘Ho, such an one!’ and she answered from within saying, ‘Here am I.’ Quoth he, ‘Knowest thou who is our guest to-day?’ Replied she, ‘Yes, it is the Lord of the Cloud.’ The King said, ‘Come forth: it mattereth not for him.’ And behold, there entered a woman, as she were a vision, with a face that beamed like the new moon; and she wore a gown and veil of wool.”-And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that ‘when the King called to his wife, she came forth from the inner room; and her face beamed like the new moon; and she wore a gown and a veil of wool. Then said the King, ‘O my brother, dost thou desire to hear our story or that we should pray for thee and dismiss thee?’ Answered the hermit; ‘Nay, I wish to hear the tale of you twain, for that to me were preferable.’ Said the King, ‘My forefathers handed down the throne, one to the other, and it descended from great one to great one, in unbroken succession, till the last died and it came to me. Now Allah had made this hateful to me, for I would fain have gone awandering over earth and left the folk to their own affairs; but I feared lest they should fall into confusion and anarchy and misgovernment so as to swerve from divine law, and the union of the Faith be broken up. Wherefore, abandoning my own plans, I took the kingship and appointed to every head of them a regular stipend; and donned the royal robes; and posted slave-officers at the doors, as a terror to the dishonest and for the defence of honest folk and the maintenance of law and limitations. Now when free of this, I entered this place and, doffing my royal habit, donned these clothes thou seest; and this my cousin, the daughter of my father’s brother, hath agreed with me to renounce the world and helpeth me to serve the Lord. So we are wont to weave these palm-leaves and earn, during the day, a wherewithal to break our fast at nightfall; and we have lived on this wise nigh upon forty years. Abide thou with us (so Allah have mercy on thee!) till we sell our mats; and thou shalt sup and sleep with us this night and on the morrow wend thy ways with that thou wishest, Inshallah!’ So he tarried with them till the end of the day, when there came a boy five years old who took the mats they had made and carrying them to the market, sold them for a carat;[484] and with this bought bread and beans and returned with them to the King. The hermit broke his fast and lay down to sleep with them; but in the middle of the night they both arose and fell to praying and weeping. When daybreak was near, the King said, “O my God, this Thy servant beseecheth Thee to return him his cloud; and to do this Thou art able; so, O my God, let him see his prayer granted and restore him his cloud.” The Queen amen’d to his orisons and behold, the cloud grew up in the sky; whereupon the King gave the hermit joy and the man took leave of them and went away, the cloud companying him as of old. And whatsoever he required of Allah after this, in the names of the pious King and Queen, He granted it without fail and the man made thereon these couplets,

“My Lord hath servants fain of piety; * Hearts in the Wisdom-garden ranging free:
Their bodies’ lusts at peace, and motionless * For breasts that bide in purest secresy.
Thou seest all silent, awesome of their Lord, * For hidden things unseen and seen they see.”

And they tell a tale of

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THE MOSLEM CHAMPION AND THE CHRISTIAN DAMSEL.

The Commander of the Faithful, Omar bin al-Khattαb (whom Allah accept!), once levied for holy war an army of Moslems, to encounter the foe before Damascus, and they laid close siege to one of the Christians' strongholds. Now there were amongst the Moslems two men, brothers, whom Allah had gifted with fire and bold daring against the enemy; so that the commander of the besieged fortress said to his chiefs and braves, "Were but yonder two Moslems ta'en or slain, I would warrant you against the rest of their strain." Wherefore they left not to set for them all manner of toils and snares and ceased not to manoeuvre and lie in wait and ambush for them, till they took one of them prisoner and slew the other, who died a martyr. They carried the captive to the Captain of the fort, who looked at him and said, "Verily, to kill this man were indeed a pity; but his return to the Moslem would be a calamity." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Seventy-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the enemy carried their Moslem captive before the Captain of the fort, the Christian looked at him and said, "Verily to kill this man were a pity indeed; but his return to the Moslem would be a calamity. Oh that he might be brought to embrace the Nazarene Faith and be to us an aid and an arm!" Quoth one of his Patrician Knights, "O Emir, I will tempt him to abjure his faith, and on this wise: we know that the Arabs are much addicted to women, and I have a daughter, a perfect beauty, whom when he sees, he will be seduced by her." Quoth the Captain, "I give him into thy charge." So he carried him to his place and clad his daughter in raiment, such as added to her beauty and loveliness. Then he brought the Moslem into the room and set before him food and made the fair girl stand in his presence, as she were a handmaid obedient to her lord and awaiting his orders that she might do his bidding. When the Moslem saw the evil sent down upon him, he commended himself to Allah Almighty and closing his eyes, applied himself to worship and to reciting the Koran. Now he had a pleasant voice and a piercing wit; and the Nazarene damsel presently loved him with passionate love and pined for him with extreme repine. This lasted seven days, at the end of which she said to herself, “Would to Heaven he would admit me into the Faith of Al-Islam!” And the tongue of her case recited these couplets,

“Wilt turn thy face from heart that’s all thine own, * This heart
  thy ransom and this soul thy wone?
I’m ready home and kin to quit for aye, * And every Faith for
  that of sword[485] disown:
I testify that Allah hath no mate: * This proof is stablished and
  this truth is known.
Haply shall deign He union grant with one * Averse, and hearten
  heart love-overthrown;
For ofttimes door erst shut, is opened wide, * And after evil
  case all good is shown.”

At last her patience failed her and her breast was straitened and she threw herself on the ground before him, saying, “I conjure thee by thy Faith, that thou give ear to my words!” Asked he, “What are they?” and she answered, “Expound unto me Al-Islam.” So he expounded to her the tenets of the Faith, and she became a Moslemah, after which she was circumcised[486] and he taught her to pray. Then said she to him, “O my brother, I did but embrace Al-Islam for thy sake and to win thy favours.” Quoth he, “The law of Al-Islam forbiddeth sexual commerce save after a marriage before two legal witnesses, and a dowry and a guardian are also requisite. Now I know not where to find witnesses or friend or parapherne; but, an thou can contrive to bring us out of this place, I may hope to make the land of Al-Islam, and pledge myself to thee that none other than thou in all Al-Islam shall be wife to me.” Answered she, “I will manage that”; and, calling her father and mother, said to them, “Indeed this Moslem’s heart is softened and he longeth to enter the faith, so I will grant him that which he desireth of my person; but he saith: ‘It befitteth me not to do this in a town where my brother was slain. Could I but get outside it my heart would be solaced and I would do that which is wanted of me.’ Now there is no harm in letting me go forth with him to another town, and I will be a surety to you both and to the Emir for that which ye wish of him.” Therefore her father went to their Captain and told him this, whereat he joyed with exceeding joy and bade him carry them forth to a village that she named. So they went out and made the village where they abode the rest of their day, and when night fell, they got ready for the march and went their way, even as saith the poet,

“‘The time of parting,’ cry they, ‘draweth nigh’: * ‘How oft this
    parting-threat?’ I but reply:
I’ve naught to do but cross the wild and wold * And, mile by
    mile, o’er fountless wastes to fly,
If the beloved seek another land * Sons of the road, whereso they
    wend, wend I.
I make desire direct me to their side, * The guide to show me
    where the way doth lie.”

And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the prisoner and the lady abode in the village the rest of their day and, when night fell, made ready for the march and went upon their way; and travelled all night without stay or delay. The young Moslem, mounting a swift blood-horse and taking up the maiden behind him, ceased not devouring the ground till it was bright morning, when he turned aside with her from the highway and, alighting, they made the Wuzu-ablution and prayed the dawn-prayer. Now as they were thus engaged behold, they heard the clank of swords and clink of bridles and men’s voices and tramp of horse; whereupon he said to her, “Ho, such an one, the Nazarenes are after us! What shall we do?: the horse is so jaded and broken down that he cannot stir another step.” Exclaimed she, “Woe to thee! art thou then afraid and affrighted?” “Yes,” answered he; and she said, “What didst thou tell me of the power of thy Lord and His readiness to succour those who succour seek? Come, let us humble ourselves before Him and beseech Him:

haply He shall grant us His succour and endue us with His grace, extolled and exalted be He!" Quoth he, "By Allah, thou sayest well!" So they began humbling themselves and supplicating Almighty Allah and he recited these couplets,

"Indeed I hourly need thy choicest aid, * And should, though
crown were placed upon my head:
Thou art my chiefest want, and if my hand * Won what it wisheth,
all my wants were sped.
Thou hast not anything withholdest Thou; * Like pouring rain Thy
grace is showered:
I'm shut therefrom by sins of me, yet Thou, * O Clement, deignest
pardon-light to shed.
O Care-Dispeller, deign dispel my grief! * None can, save Thou,
dispel a grief so dread."

Whilst he was praying and she was saying, "Amen," and the thunder of horse-tramp nearing them, lo! the brave heard the voice of his dead brother, the martyr, speaking and saying, "O my brother, fear not, nor grieve! for the host whose approach thou hearest is the host of Allah and His Angels, whom He hath sent to serve as witnesses to your marriage. Of a truth Allah hath made His Angels glorify you and He bestoweth on you the meed of the meritorious and the martyrs; and He hath rolled up the earth for you as it were a rug so that, by morning, you will be in the mountains of Al-Medinah. And thou, when thou foregatherest with Omar bin al-Khattab (of whom Allah accept!) give him my salutation and say to him: 'Allah abundantly requite thee for Al-Islam, because thou hast counselled faithfully and hast striven diligently.'" Thereupon the Angels lifted up their voices in salutation to him and his bride, saying, "Verily, Almighty Allah appointed her in marriage to thee two thousand years before the creation of your father Adam (with whom be peace evermore!)." Then joy and gladness and peace and happiness came upon the twain; confidence was confirmed and established was the guidance of the pious pair. So when dawn appeared, they prayed the accustomed prayer and fared forward. Now it was the wont of Omar, son of Al-Khattab (Allah accept him!), to rise for morning-prayer in the darkness before dawn and at times he would stand in the prayer-niche with two men behind him, and begin reciting the Chapter entitled "Cattle"[487] or that entitled "Women,"[488] whereupon the sleeper awoke and he who was making his Wuzu-ablution accomplished it and he who was afar came to prayer; nor had he made an end of the first bow, ere the mosque was full of folk; then he would pray his second bow quickly, repeating a short chapter. But, on that morning he hurried over both first and second inclinations, repeating in each a short chapter; then, after the concluding salutation, turning to his companions, he said to them, "Come, let us fare forth to meet the bride and bridegroom"; at which they wondered, not understanding his words. But he went out and they followed him, till they came to the gate of the city, where they met the young Moslem who, when the day broke and the standards of Al-Medinah appeared to him, had pushed forward for the gate closely followed by his bride. There he was met by Omar who bade make a marriage feast; and the Moslems came and ate. Then the young Moslem went in unto his bride and Almighty Allah vouchsafed him children, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Seventy-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Omar (on whom be peace!) bade make a marriage-feast; and the Moslems came and ate. Then the young Moslem went in unto his bride and Almighty Allah vouchsafed him children, who fought in the Lord's way and preserved genealogies, for they gloried therein. And how excellent is what is said on such theme,

"I saw thee weep before the gates and 'plain, * Whilst only
curious wight reply would deign:
Hath eye bewitcht thee, or hath evil lot * 'Twixt thee and door
of friend set bar of bane?
Wake up this day, O wretch, persist in prayer, * Repent as wont
repent departed men.
Haply shall wash thy sins Forgiveness-showers; * And on thine
erring head some ruth shall rain:
And prisoner shall escape despite his bonds; * And slave from

thraldom freedom shall attain.”

And they ceased not to be in all solace and delight of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies. And a tale is told by Sνdi Ibrahim bin Al-Khawwαs[489] (on whom be the mercy of Allah!) concerning himself and

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THE CHRISTIAN KING'S DAUGHTER AND THE MOSLEM.

"My spirit urged me, once upon a time, to go forth into the country of the Infidels; and I strove with it and struggled to put away from me this inclination; but it would not be rejected. So I fared forth and journeyed about the land of the Unbelievers and traversed it in all its parts; for divine grace enveloped me and heavenly protection encompassed me, so that I met not a single Nazarene but he turned away his eyes and drew off from me, till I came to a certain great city at whose gate I found a gathering of black slaves, clad in armour and bearing iron maces in their hands. When they saw me, they rose to their feet and asked me, 'Art thou a leach?'; and I answered, 'Yes.' Quoth they, 'Come speak to our King,' and carried me before their ruler, who was a handsome personage of majestic presence. When I stood before him, he looked at me and said, 'Art a physician, thou?' 'Yes,' quoth I; and quoth he to his officers, 'Carry him to her, and acquaint him with the condition before he enter.' So they took me out and said to me, 'Know that the King hath a daughter, and she is stricken with a sore disease, which no doctor hath been able to cure: and no leach goeth in to her and treateth, without healing her, but the King putteth him to death. So bethink thee what thou seest fitting to do.' I replied, 'The King drove me to her; so carry me to her.' Thereupon they brought me to her door and knocked; and behold, I heard her cry out from within, saying, 'Admit to me the physician, lord of the wondrous secret!' And she began reciting,

'Open the door! the leach now draweth near; * And in my soul a
wondrous secret speer:
How many of the near far distant are![490] * How many distant
far are nearest near!
I was in strangerhood amidst you all: * But willed the
Truth[491] my solace should appear.
Joined us the potent bonds of Faith and Creed; * We met as
dearest fere greets dearest fere:
He sued for interview whenas pursued * The spy, and blamed us

envy's jibe and jeer:
Then leave your chiding and from blame desist, * For fie upon
you! not a word I'll hear.
I care for naught that disappears and fleets; * My care's for
Things nor fleet nor disappear.'

And lo! a Shaykh, a very old man, opened the door in haste and said to me, 'Enter.' So I entered and found myself in a chamber strewn with sweet-scented herbs and with a curtain drawn across one corner, from behind which came a sound of groaning and grame, weak as from an emaciated frame. I sat down before the curtain and was about to offer my salam when I bethought me of his words (whom Allah save and assain!), 'Accost not a Jew nor a Christian with the salam salutation;[492] and, when ye meet them in the way, constrain them to the straitest part thereof.' So I withheld my salutation, but she cried out from behind the curtain, saying, 'Where is the salutation of Unity and Indivisibility, O Khawwas?' I was astonished at her speech and asked, 'How knowest thou me?'; whereto she answered, 'When the heart and thoughts are whole, the tongue speaketh eloquently from the secret recesses of the soul. I begged Him yesterday to send me one of His saints, at whose hands I might have deliverance, and behold, it was cried to me from the dark places of my house, 'Grieve not; for we soon will send thee Ibrahim the Basket-maker.' Then I asked her, 'What of thee?' and she answered, 'It is now four years since there appeared to me the Manifest Truth, and He is the Relator and the Ally, and the Uniter and the Sitter-by; whereupon my folk looked askance upon me with an evil eye and taxed me with insanity and suspected me of depravity, and there came not in to me doctor but terrified me, nor visitor but confounded me.' Quoth I, 'And who led thee to the knowledge of what thou wottest?' Quoth she, 'The manifest signs and visible portents of Allah; and, when the path is patent to thee, thou espiest with thine own eyes both proof and prover.' Now whilst we were talking, behold, in came the old man appointed to guard her and said, 'What doth thy doctor?'; and she replied, 'He knoweth the hurt and hath hit upon the healing.'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Seventy-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “when the Shaykh, her guardian, went in to her he said, ‘What doth thy doctor?’; and she replied, ‘He knoweth the hurt and hath hit upon the healing.’ Hereupon he manifested joy and gladness and accosted me with a cheerful countenance, then went and told the King, who enjoined to treat me with all honour and regard. So I visited her daily for seven days, at the end of which time she said to me, ‘O Abu Ishak, when shall be our flight to the land of Al-Islam?’ ‘How canst thou go forth,’ replied I, ‘and who would dare to aid thee?’ Rejoined she, ‘He who sent thee to me, driving thee as it were;’ and I observed, ‘Thou sayest sooth.’ So when the morrow dawned, we fared forth by the city-gate and all eyes were veiled from us, by commandment of Him who when He desireth aught, saith to it, ‘Be,’ and it becometh;[493] so that I journeyed with her in safety to Meccah, where she made a home hard by the Holy House of Allah and lived seven years; till the appointed day of her death. The earth of Meccah was her tomb, and never saw I any more steadfast in prayer and fasting than she; Allah send down upon her His mercies and have compassion on him who saith,

‘When they to me had brought the leach (and surely showed *
 The signs of flowing tears and pining malady),
The face-veil he withdrew from me, and ‘neath it naught *
 Save breath of one unsouled, unbodied, could he see.
Quoth he, ‘This be a sickness Love alone shall cure; *
 Love hath a secret from all guess of man wide free.’
Quoth they, ‘An folk ignore what here there be with him *
 Nature of ill and eke its symptomology,
How then shall medicine work a cure?’ At this quoth I *
 ‘Leave me alone; I have no guessing specialty.’”

And they tell a tale of

THE PROPHET AND THE JUSTICE OF PROVIDENCE.

A certain Prophet[494] made his home for worship on a lofty mountain, at whose foot was a spring of running water, and he was wont to sit by day on the summit, that no man might see him, calling upon the name of Allah the Most Highest and watching those who frequented the spring. One day, as he sat looking upon the fountain, behold, he espied a horseman who came up and dismounted thereby and taking a bag from his neck, set it down beside him, after which he drank of the water and rested awhile, then he rode away, leaving behind him the bag which contained gold pieces. Presently up came another man to drink of the spring, who saw the bag and finding it full of money took it up; then, after satisfying his thirst, he made off with it in safety. A little after came a woodcutter wight with a heavy load of fuel on his back, and sat down by the spring to drink, when lo! back came the first horseman in great trouble and asked him, "Where is the bag which was here?" and when he answered, "I know nothing of it," the rider drew his sword and smote him and slew him. Then he searched his clothes, but found naught; so he left him and wended his ways. Now when the Prophet saw this, he said, "O Lord, one man hath taken a thousand dinars and another man hath been slain unjustly." But Allah answered him, saying, "Busy thyself with thy devotions, for the ordinance of the universe is none of thine affair. The father of this horseman had violently despoiled of a thousand dinars the father of the second horseman; so I gave the son possession of his sire's money. As for the woodcutter, he had slain the horseman's father, wherefore I enabled the son to obtain retribution for himself." Then cried the Prophet, "There is none other god than Thou! Glory be to Thee only! Verily, Thou art the Knower of Secrets."[495] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Prophet was bidden by inspiration of Allah to busy himself with his devotions and learned the truth of the case, he cried, "There is none other god but Thou! Glory be to Thee only! Verily, Thou and Thou alone wottest hidden things.” Furthermore, one of the poets hath made these verses on the matter,

“The Prophet saw whatever eyes could see, * And fain of other things enquired he;
And, when his eyes saw things misunderstood, * Quoth he, ‘O Lord, this slain from sin was free.
This one hath won him wealth withouten work; * Albe appeared he garbed in penury.
And that in joy of life was slain, although * O man’s Creator free of sin he be.’
God answered ‘’Twas his father’s good thou saw’st * Him take; by heirship not by roguery;
Yon woodman too that horseman’s sire had slain; * Whose son avenged him with just victory:
Put off, O slave of Me, this thought for I * In men have set mysterious secrecy!
Bow to Our Law and humble thee, and learn * For good and evil issues Our decree.’”[496]

And a certain pious man hath told us the tale of

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THE FERRYMAN OF THE NILE AND THE HERMIT.

“I was once a ferryman on the Nile and used to ply between the eastern and the western banks. Now one day, as I sat in my boat, there came up to me an old man of a bright and beaming countenance, who saluted me and I returned his greeting; and he said to me, ‘Wilt thou ferry me over for the love of Allah Almighty?’ I answered, ‘Yes,’ and he continued, ‘Wilt thou moreover give me food for Allah’s sake?’; to which again I answered, ‘With all my heart.’ So he entered the boat and I rowed him over to the eastern side, remarking that he was clad in a patched gown and carried a gourd-bottle and a staff. When he was about to land, he said to me, ‘I desire to lay on thee a heavy trust.’ Quoth I, ‘What is it?’ Quoth he, ‘It hath been revealed to me that my end is nearhand and that to-morrow about noon thou wilt come and find me dead under yonder tree. Wash me and wrap me in the shroud thou wilt see under my head and after thou hast prayed over me, bury me in this sandy ground and take my gown and gourd and staff, which do thou deliver to one who shall come and demand them of thee.’ I marvelled at his words, and I slept there. On the morrow I awaited till noon the event he had announced, and then I forgot what he had said till near the hour of afternoon-prayer, when I remembered it and hastening to the appointed place, found him under the tree, dead, with a new shroud under his head, exhaling a fragrance of musk. So I washed him and shrouded him and prayed over him, then dug a hole in the sand and buried him, after I had taken his ragged gown and bottle and staff, with which I crossed the Nile to the western side and there nighted. As soon as morning dawned and the city gate opened, I sighted a young man known to me as a loose fellow, clad in fine clothes and his hands stained with Henna, who said to me, ‘Art thou not such an one?’ ‘Yes,’ answered I; and he said, ‘Give me the trust.’ Quoth I, ‘What is that?’ Quoth he, ‘The gown, the gourd and the staff.’ I asked him, ‘Who told thee of them?’ and he answered, ‘I know nothing save that I spent yesternight at the wedding of one of my friends singing and carousing till daylight, when I lay me down to sleep and take my rest; and behold, there stood by me a personage who said, ‘Verily Allah Almighty hath taken such a saint to Himself and hath appointed thee to fill his place; so go thou to a certain person (naming the ferryman), and take of him the dead man’s gown and bottle and staff, for he left them with him for thee.’ So I brought them out and gave them to him; whereupon he doffed his clothes and, donning the gown, went his way and left me.[497] And when the glooms closed around me, I fell a-weeping; but, that night, while sleeping I saw the Lord of Holiness (glorified and exalted be He!) in a dream saying, ‘O my servant, is it grievous to thee that I have granted to one of My servants to return to Me? Indeed, this is of My bounty, that I vouchsafe to whom I will, for I over all things am Almighty.’ So I repeated these couplets,

‘Lover with loved[498] loseth will and aim! * All choice (an
couldst thou know) were sinful shame.
Or grant He favour and with union grace, * Or from thee turn
away, He hath no blame.
An from such turning thou no joy enjoy * Depart! the place for
thee no place became.
Or canst His near discern not from His far? * Then Love’s in vain
and thou’rt a-rear and lame.
If pine for Thee afflict my sprite, or men * Hale me to death,
the rein Thy hand shall claim!
So turn Thee to or fro, to me ’tis one; * What Thou ordainest
none shall dare defame:
My love hath naught of aim but Thine approof * And if Thou say we
part I say the same.’”

And of the tales they tell is one concerning

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THE ISLAND KING AND THE PIOUS ISRAELITE.

There was once a notable of the Children of Israel, a man of wealth who had a pious and blessed son. When his last hour drew nigh, his son sat down at his head and said to him, “O my lord, give me an injunction.” Quoth the father, “O dear son, I charge thee, swear not by Allah or truly or falsely.” Then he died and certain lewd fellows of the Children of Israel heard of the charge he had laid on his son and began coming to the latter and saying, “Thy father had such and such monies of mine, and thou knowest it; so give me what was entrusted to him or else make oath that there was no trust.” The good son would not disobey his sire’s injunction, so gave them all they claimed; and they ceased not to deal thus with him, till his wealth was spent and he fell into straitest predicament. Now the young man had a pious and blessed wife, who had borne him two little sons; so he said to her, “The folk have multiplied their demands on me and, while I had the wherewithal to free myself of debt, I rendered it freely; but naught is now left us, and if others make demands upon me, we shall be in absolute distress, I and thou; our best way were to save ourselves by fleeing to some place, where none knoweth us, and earn our bread among the lower of the folk.” Accordingly, he took ship with her and his two children, knowing not whither he should wend; but, “When Allah judgeth, there is none to reverse His judgment;”[499] and quoth the tongue of the case,

“O flier from thy home when foes affright! * Whom led to weal and
    happiness such flight,
Grudge not this exile when he flees abroad * Where he on wealth
    and welfare may alight.
An pearls for ever did abide in shell, * The kingly crown they
    ne’er had deckt and dight.”

The ship was wrecked, yet the man saved himself on a plank and his wife and children also saved themselves, but on other planks. The waves separated them and the wife was cast up in one country and one of the boys in another. The second son was picked up by a ship, and the surges threw the father on a desert island, where he landed and made the Wuzu-ablution. Then he called the prayer-call, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Eightieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the man landed upon the island, he made the Wuzu-ablution to free himself from the impurities of the sea and called the call to prayer and stood up to his devotions, when, behold, there came forth of the sea, creatures of various kinds and prayed with him. When he had finished, he went up to a tree and stayed his hunger with its fruits; after which he found a spring of water and drank thereof and praised Allah, to whom be honour and glory! He abode thus three days and whenever he stood up to pray, the sea-creatures came out and prayed in the same manner as he prayed. Now after the third day, he heard a voice crying aloud and saying, "O thou just man, and pious, who didst so honour thy father and revere the decrees of thy Lord, grieve not, for Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) shall restore to thee all which left thy hand. In this isle are hoards and monies and things of price which the Almighty willeth thou shalt inherit, and they are in such a part of this place. So bring thou them to light; and verily, we will send ships unto thee; and do thou bestow charity on the folk and bid them to thee." So he sought out that place, and the Lord discovered to him the treasures in question. Then ships began resorting to him, and he gave abundant largesse to the crews, saying to them, "Be sure ye direct the folk unto me and I will give them such and such a thing and appoint to them this and that." Accordingly, there came folk from all parts and places, nor had ten years passed over him ere the island was peopled and the man became its King.[500] No one came to him but he entreated him with munificence, and his name was noised abroad, through the length and breadth of the earth. Now his elder son had fallen into the hands of a man who reared him and taught him polite accomplishments; and, in like manner, the younger was adopted by one who gave him a good education and brought him up in the ways of merchants. The wife also happened upon a trader who entrusted to her his property and made a covenant with her that he would not deal dishonestly by her, but would aid her to obey Allah (to whom belong Majesty and Might!); and he used to make her the companion of his voyages and his travels. Now the elder son heard the report of the King and resolved to visit him, without knowing who he was; so he went to him and was well received by the King, who made him his secretary. Presently the other son heard of the King's piety and justice and was also taken into his service as a steward. Then the brothers abode awhile, neither knowing the other, till it chanced that the merchant, in whose home was their mother, also hearing of the King's righteous and generous dealing with the lieges, freighted a ship with rich stuffs and other excellent produce of the land, and taking the woman with him, set sail for the island. He made it in due course and landing, presented himself with his gift before the King; who rejoiced therein with exceeding joy and ordered him a splendid return-present. Now, there were, among the gifts, certain aromatic roots of which he would have the merchant acquaint him with the names and uses; so he said to him, "Abide with us this night." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Eighty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King said, "Abide with us this night," the merchant replied, "We have in the ship one to whom I have promised to entrust the care of her to none save myself; and the same is a holy woman whose prayers have brought me weal and I have felt the blessing of her counsels." Rejoined the King, "I will send her some trusty men, who shall pass the night in the ship and guard her and all that is with her." The merchant agreed to this and abode with the King, who called his secretary and steward and said to them, "Go and pass the night in this man's ship and keep it safe, Inshallah!" So they went up into the ship and seating themselves, this on the poop and that on the bow, passed a part of the night in repeating the names of Allah (to whom belong Majesty and Might!). Then quoth one to the other, "Ho, such an one! The King bade us keep watch and I fear lest sleep overtake us; so, come, let us discourse of stories of fortune and of the good we have seen and the trials of life." Quoth the other, "O my brother, as for my trials Fate parted me from my mother and a brother of mine, whose name was even as thine; and the cause of our parting was this. My father took ship with us from such a place, and the winds rose against us and were contrary, so that the ship was wrecked and Allah broke our fair companionship.” Hearing this the first asked, “What was the name of thy mother, O my brother?”; and the second answered, “So and so.” Thereat brother threw himself upon brother saying, “By Allah, thou art my very brother!” And each fell to telling the other what had befallen him in his youth, whilst the mother heard all they said, but held her peace and in patience possessed her soul. Now when it was morning, one said to the other, “Come, brother, let us go to my lodging and talk there;” and the other said, “’Tis well.” So they went away and presently, the merchant came back and finding the woman in great trouble, said to her, “What hath befallen thee and why this concern?” Quoth she, “Thou sentest to me yesternight men who tempted me to evil, and I have been in sore annoy with them.” At this, he was wroth and, repairing to the King, reported the conduct of his two trusty wights. The King summoned the twain forthwith, as he loved them for their fidelity and piety; and, sending for the woman, that he might hear from her own lips what she had to say against them, thus bespake her, “O woman, what hath betided thee from these two men in whom I trust?” She replied, “O King, I conjure thee by the Almighty, the Bountiful One, the Lord of the Empyrean, bid them repeat the words they spoke yesternight.” So he said to them, “Say what ye said and conceal naught thereof.” Accordingly, they repeated their talk, and lo! the King rising from his throne, gave a great cry and threw himself upon them, embracing them and saying, “By Allah, ye are my very sons!” Therewith the woman unveiled her face and said, “And by Allah, I am their very mother.” So they were united and abode in all solace of life and its delight till death parted them; and so glory be to Him who delivereth His servant when he restoreth to Him, and disappointeth not his hope in Him and his trust! And how well saith the poet on the subject,

“Each thing of things hath his appointed tide * When ’tis, O
    brother, granted or denied.
Repine not an affliction hit thee hard; * For woe and welfare aye
    conjoint abide:

How oft shall woman see all griefs surround * Yet feel a joyance thrill what lies inside!
How many a wretch, on whom the eyes of folk * Look down, shall grace exalt to pomp and pride!
This man is one long suffering grief and woe; * Whom change and chance of Time hath sorely tried:
The World divided from what held he dearest, * After long union scattered far and wide;
But deigned his Lord unite them all again, * And in the Lord is every good descried.
Glory to Him whose Providence rules all * Living, as surest proofs for us decide.
Near is the Near One; but no wisdom clearer * Shows him, nor distant wayfare brings Him nearer."

And this tale is told of

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ABU AL-HASAN AND ABU JA’AFAR THE LEPER.[501]

“I had been many times to Meccah (Allah increase its honour!) and the folk used to follow me for my knowledge of the road and remembrance of the water-stations. It happened one year that I was minded to make the pilgrimage to the Holy House and visitation of the Tomb of His Prophet (on whom be blessing and peace!) and I said in myself, ‘I well know the way and will fare alone.’ So I set out and journeyed till I came to Al-Kadisvyah[502] and, entering the mosque there, saw a man suffering from black leprosy seated in the prayer-niche. Quoth he on seeing me, ‘O Abu al-Hasan, I crave thy company to Meccah.’ Quoth I to myself, ‘I fled from all my companions, and how shall I company with lepers?’ So I said to him, ‘I will bear no man company’; and he was silent at my words. Next day I walked on alone, till I came to Al-Akabah,[503] where I entered the mosque and found the leper seated in the prayer-niche. So I said to myself, ‘Glory be to Allah! how hath this fellow preceded me hither?’ But he raised his head to me and said with a smile, ‘O Abu al-Hasan, He doth for the weak that which surpriseth the strong!’ I passed that night confounded at what I had seen; and, as soon as morning dawned, set out again by myself; but when I came to Arafat[504] and entered the mosque, behold, there was the leper seated in the niche! So I threw myself upon him and kissing his feet said, ‘O my lord, I crave thy company.’ But he answered, ‘This may in no way be.’ Then I began weeping and wailing at the loss of his converse, when he said, ‘Spare thy tears which will avail thee naught!’”-And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Eighty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abu al-Hasan continued: “Now when I saw the leper-man seated in the prayer-niche, I threw myself upon him and said, ‘O my lord, I crave thy company;’ and fell to kissing his feet. But he answered, ‘This may in no way be!’ Then I began weeping and wailing at the loss of his company when he said, ‘Spare thy tears which will avail thee naught!'; and he recited these couplets,

'Why dost thou weep when I depart and thou didst parting claim; *
 And cravest union when we ne'er shall reunite the same?
Thou lookedest on nothing save my weakness and disease; * And
 saidst 'Nor goes nor comes, or night or day, this sickly
 frame.
Seest not how Allah (glorified His glory ever be!) * Deigneth to
 grant His slave's petition wherewithal he came.
If I, to eyes of men be that and only that they see, * And this
 my body show itself so full of grief and grame,
And have I naught of food that shall supply me to the place *
 Where crowds unto my Lord resort impelled by single aim,
I have a high Creating Lord whose mercies aye are hid; * A Lord
 who hath none equal and no fear is known to Him.
So fare thee safe and leave me lone in strangerhood to wone * For
 He, the only One, consoles my loneliness so lone.'

Accordingly, I left him; but every station I came to, I found he had foregone me, till I reached Al-Medinah, where I lost sight of him and could hear no tidings of him. Here I met Abu Yazvd al-Bustαmi and Abu Bakr al-Shibli and a number of other Shaykhs and learned men, to whom with many complaints, I told my case and they said, 'Heaven forbid that thou shouldst gain his company after this! He was Abu Ja'afar the leper, in whose name folk at all times pray for rain and by whose blessing-prayers their end attain.' When I heard their words, my desire for his company redoubled and I implored the Almighty to reunite me with him. Whilst I was standing on Arafat,[505] one pulled me from behind, so I turned and behold, it was my man. At this sight I cried out with a loud cry and fell down in a fainting fit; but, when I came to myself he had disappeared from my sight. This increased my yearning for him and the ceremonies were tedious to me and I prayed Almighty Allah to give me sight of him; nor was it but a few days after, when lo! one pulled me from behind, and I turned and it was he again. Thereupon he said, 'Come, I conjure thee and ask thy want of me.' So I begged him to pray for me three prayers; first, that Allah would make me love poverty; secondly, that

I might never lie down at night upon provision assured to me; and thirdly, that He would vouchsafe me to look upon His bountiful Face. So he prayed for me as I wished, and departed from me. And indeed Allah hath granted me what the devotee asked in prayer: to begin with He hath made me so love poverty that, by the Almighty! there is naught in the world dearer to me than it, and secondly since such a year, I have never lain down to sleep upon assured provision; withal hath He never let me lack aught. As for the third prayer, I trust that He will vouchsafe me that also, even as He hath granted the two precedent, for right Bountiful and Beneficent is His Godhead, and Allah have mercy on him who said:[506] -

Garb of Fakir, renouncement, lowliness;
His robe of tatters and of rags his dress;

And pallor ornamenting brow as though
‘Twere wanness such as waning crescents show.

Wasted him prayer a-through the long-lived night,
And flooding tears ne’er cease to dim his sight.

Memory of Him shall cheer his lonely room:
Th’ Almighty nearest is in nightly gloom.

The Refuge helpeth such Fakir in need;
Help e’en the cattle and the winged breed:

Allah for sake of him of wrath is fain,
And for the grace of him shall fall the rain;

And if he pray one day for plague to stay,
‘Twill stay, and ‘bate man’s wrong and tyrants slay.

While folk are sad, afflicted one and each,
He in his mercy’s rich, the generous leach:

Bright shines his brow; an thou regard his face
Thy heart illumined shines by light of grace.

O thou who shunnest souls of worth innate
Departs thee (woe to thee!) of sins the weight.

Thou thinkest to overtake them, while thou bearest
Follies, which slay thee whatso way thou farest.

Didst wot their worth thou hadst all honour showed,
And tears in streamlets from thine eyes had flowed.

To catarrh-troubled men flowers lack their smell;
And brokers ken for how much clothes can sell;

So haste and with thy Lord reunion sue,
And haply Fate shall lend thee aidance due,

Rest from rejection and estrangement-stress,
And Joy thy wish and will shall choicely bless.

His court wide open for the suer is dight: —
One, very God, the Lord, th' Almighty might.'"

And they also tell a tale of

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THE QUEEN OF THE SERPENTS.[507]

There was once, in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, a Grecian sage called Daniel, who had disciples and scholars and the wise men of Greece were obedient to his bidding and relied upon his learning. Withal had Allah denied him a man child. One night, as he lay musing and weeping over the lack of a son who might inherit his lore, he bethought him that Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) heareth the prayer of those who resort to Him and that there is no doorkeeper at the door of His bounties and that He favoureth whom He will without compt and sendeth no supplicant empty away; nay He filleth their hands with favours and benefits. So he besought the Almighty, the Bountiful, to vouchsafe him a son to succeed him, and to endow him abundantly with His beneficence. Then he returned home and carnally knew his wife who conceived by him the same night. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Eighty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Grecian sage returned home and knew his wife who conceived by him the same night. A few days after this he took ship for a certain place, but the ship was wrecked and he saved himself on one of her planks, while only five leaves remained to him of all the books he had. When he returned home, he laid the five leaves in a box and locking it, gave the key to his wife (who then showed big with child), and said to her, “Know that my decease is at hand and that the time draweth nigh for my translation from this abode temporal to the home which is eternal. Now thou art with child and after my death wilt haply bear a son: if this be so, name him Hαsib Karvm al-Dvn[508] and rear him with the best of rearing. When the boy shall grow up and shall say to thee, ‘What inheritance did my father leave me?’’ give him these five leaves, which when he shall have read and understood, he will be the most learned man of his time.” Then he farewelled her and heaving one sigh, departed the world and all that is therein — the mercy of Allah the Most Highest be upon Him! His family and friends wept over him and washed him and bore him forth in great state and buried him; after which they wended their ways home. But few days passed ere his widow bare a handsome boy and named him Hasib Karim al-Din, as her husband charged her; and immediately after his birth she summoned the astrologers, who calculated his ascendants and drawing his horoscope, said to her, “Know, O woman! that this birth will live many a year; but that will be after a great peril in the early part of his life, wherefrom can he escape, he will be given the knowledge of all the exact sciences.” So saying they went their ways. She suckled him two years,[509] then weaned him, and when he was five years old, she placed him in a school to learn his book, but he would read nothing. So she took him from school and set him to learn a trade; but he would not master any craft and there came no work from his hands. The mother wept over this and the folk said to her, “Marry him: haply he will take heart for his wife and learn him a trade.” So she sought out a girl and married him to her; but, despite marriage and the lapse of time, he remained idle as before, and would do nothing. One day, some neighbours of hers, who were woodcutters, came to her and said, “Buy thy son an ass and cords and an axe and let him go with us to the mountain and we will all of us cut wood for fuel. The price of the wood shall be his and ours, and he shall provide thee and his wife with his share.” When she heard this, she joyed with exceeding joy and bought her son an ass and cords and hatchet; then, carrying him to the woodcutters, delivered him into their hands and solemnly committed him to their care. Said they, “Have no concern for the boy, our Lord will provide for him: he is the son of our Shaykh.” So they carried him to the mountain, where they cut firewood and loaded their asses therewith; then returned to the city and, selling what they had cut, spent the monies on their families. This they did on the next day and the third and ceased not for some time, till it chanced one day, a violent storm of rain broke over them, and they took refuge in a great cave till the downfall should pass away. Now Hasib Karim al-Din went apart from the rest into a corner of the cavern and sitting down, fell to smiting the floor with his axe. Presently he noted that the ground sounded hollow under the hatchet; so he dug there awhile and came to a round flagstone with a ring in it. When he saw this, he was glad and called his comrades the woodcutters, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Eighty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasib Karim al-Din saw the flagstone with the ring, he was glad and called his comrades the woodcutters, who came to him and, finding it was fact, soon pulled up the stone and discovered under it a trap-door, which, being opened, showed a cistern full of bees' honey.[510] Then said they to one another, "This is a large store and we have nothing for it but to return to the city and fetch vessels wherein to carry away the honey, and sell it and divide the price, whilst one of us stands by the cistern, to guard it from outsiders." Quoth Hasib, "I will stay and keep watch over it till you bring your pots and pans." So they left him on guard there and, repairing to the city, fetched vessels, which they filled with honey and loading their asses therewith, carried them to the streets and sold the contents. They returned on the morrow and thus they did several days in succession, sleeping in the town by night and drawing off the stuff by day, whilst Hasib abode on guard by it till but little remained, when they said one to other, "It was Hasib Karim al-Din found the honey, and tomorrow he will come down to the city and complain against us and claim the price of it, saying, Twas I found it;' nor is there escape for us but that we let him down into the cistern, to bale out the rest of the honey, and leave him there; so will he die of hunger, and none shall know of him." They all fell in with this plot as they were making for the place; and, when they reached it, one said to him, "O Hasib, go down into the pit and bale out for us the rest of the honey." So he went down and passed up to them what remained of the honey, after which he said to them, "Draw me up, for there is nothing left." They made him no answer; but, loading their asses, went off to the city and left him alone in the cistern. Thereupon he fell to weeping and crying, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" Such was his case; but as regards his comrades, when they reached the city and sold the honey, they repaired to Hasib's mother, weeping, and said to her, "May thy head outlive thy son Hasib!" She asked, "What brought about his death?" and they answered, "We were cutting wood on the mountain- top, when there fell on us a heavy downfall of rain and we took shelter from it in a cavern; and suddenly thy son's ass broke loose and fled into the valley, and he ran after it, to turn it back, when there came out upon them a great wolf, who tore thy son in pieces and ravined the ass." When the mother heard this, she beat her face and strewed dust on her head and fell to mourning for her son; and she kept life and soul together only by the meat and drink which they brought her every day. As for the woodcutters they opened them shops and became merchants and spent their lives in eating and drinking and laughing and frolicking. Meanwhile Hasib Karim al-Din, who ceased not to weep and call for help, sat down upon the cistern edge when behold, a great scorpion fell down on him; so he rose and killed it. Then he took thought and said, "The cistern was full of honey; how came this scorpion here?" Accordingly he got up and examined the well right and left, till he found a crevice from which the scorpion had fallen and saw the light of day shining through it. So he took out his woodman's knife and enlarged the hole, till it was big as a window, then he crept through it and, after walking for some time, came to a vast gallery, which led him to a huge door of black iron bearing a padlock of silver wherein was a key of gold. He stole up to the door and, looking through the chink, saw a great light shining within; so he took the key and, opening the door, went on for some time, till he came to a large artificial lake, wherein he caught sight of something that shimmered like silver. He walked up to it and at last he saw, hard by a hillock of green jasper and on the hill top, a golden throne studded with all manner gems, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Eighty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasib reached the hillock he found it of green jasper surmounted by a golden throne studded with all manner gems, round which were set many stools, some of gold, some of silver and others of leek green emerald. He clomb the hillock and, counting the stools, found them twelve thousand in number; then he mounted the throne which was set on the centre and, seating himself thereon, fell to wondering at the lake and the stools, and he marvelled till drowsiness overcame him and he drops asleep. Presently, he was aroused by a loud snorting and hissing and rustling, so he opened his eyes; and, sitting up, saw each stool occupied by a huge serpent, an hundred cubits in length. At this sight, great fear get hold of him; his spittle dried up for the excess of his dread and he despaired of life, as all their eyes were blazing like live coals. Then he turned towards the lake and saw that what he had taken for shimmering water was a multitude of small snakes, none knoweth their compt save Allah the Most High. After awhile, there came up to him a serpent as big as a mule, bearing on its back a tray of gold, wherein lay another serpent which shone like crystal and whose face was as that of a woman[511] and who spake with human speech. And as soon as she was brought up to Hasib, she saluted him and he returned the salutation. There upon, one of the serpents seated on the stools came up and, lifting her off the tray, set her on one of the seats and she cried out to the other serpents in their language, whereupon they all fell down from their stools and did her homage. But she signed to them to sit and they did so. Then she addressed Hasib, saying, “Have no fear of us, O youth; for I am the Queen of the Serpents and their Sultαnah.” When he heard her speak on this wise, he took heart and she bade the serpents bring him somewhat of food.[512] So they brought apples and grapes and pomegranates and pistachio-nuts and filberts and walnuts and almonds and bananas and set them before him, and the Queen-serpent said, “Welcome, O youth! What is thy name?” Answered he, “Hasib Karim al-Din;” and she rejoined, “O Hasib, eat of these fruits, for we have no other meat and fear thou have nothing from us at all.” Hearing this, he ate his fill and praised Allah Almighty; and presently they took away the trays from before him, and the Queen said, “Tell me, O Hasib, whence thou art and how camest thou hither and what hath befallen thee.” So he told her his story from first to last, the death of his father; his birth; his being sent to school where he learnt nothing; his becoming a wood cutter; his finding the honey- cistern; his being abandoned therein; his killing the scorpion; his widening the crevice; his finding the iron door and his coming upon the Queen, and he ended his long tale with saying, “These be my adventures from beginning to end and only Allah wotteth what will betide me after all this!” Quoth the Queen, after listening to his words, “Nothing save good shall betide thee:” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Eighty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Serpent-queen had heard his story she said, “Nothing save good shall betide thee: but I would have thee, O Hasib, abide with me some time, that I may tell thee my history and acquaint thee with the wondrous adventures which have happened to me.” “I hear and obey thy hest,” answered he; and she began to tell in these words,

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The Adventures of Bulukiya.

“Know thou, O Hasib, there was once in the city of Cairo a King of the Banu Isra’νl, a wise and a pious, who was bent double by poring over books of learning, and he had a son named Bulïkiyα. When he grew old and weak and was nigh upon death, his Grandees and Officers of state came up to salute him, and he said to them, ‘O folk, know that at hand is the hour of my march from this world to the next, and I have no charge to lay on you, save to commend to your care my son Bulukiya.’ Then said he, ‘I testify that there is no god save the God;’ and, heaving one sigh, departed the world the mercy of Allah be upon him! They laid him out and washed him and buried him with a procession of great state. Then they made his son Bulukiya Sultan in his stead; and he ruled the kingdom justly and the people had peace in his time. Now it befell one day that he entered his father’s treasuries, to look about him, and coming upon an inner compartment and finding the semblance of a door, opened it and passed in. And lo! he found himself in a little closet, wherein stood a column of white marble, on the top of which was a casket of ebony; he opened this also and saw therein another casket of gold, containing a book. He read the book and found in it an account of our lord Mohammed (whom Allah bless and preserve!) and how he should be sent in the latter days[513] and be the lord of the first Prophets and the last. On seeing the personal description Bulukiya’s heart was taken with love of him, so he at once assembled all the notables of the Children of Israel, the Cohens or diviners, the scribes and the priests, and acquainted them with the book, reading portions of it to them and, adding, ‘O folk, needs must I bring my father out of his grave and burn him.’ The lieges asked, ‘Why wilt thou burn him?’; and he answered, ‘Because he hid this book from me and imparted it not to me.’ Now the old King had excerpted it from the Torah or Pentateuch and the Books of Abraham; and had set it in one of his treasuries and concealed it from all living. Rejoined they, ‘O King, thy father is dead; his body is in the dust and his affair is in the hands of his Lord; thou shalt not take him forth of his tomb.’ So he knew that they would not suffer him to do this thing by his sire and leaving them he repaired to his mother, to whom said he, ‘O my mother, I have found, in one of my father’s treasuries, a book containing a description of Mohammed (whom Allah bless and keep!), a prophet who shall be sent in the latter days; and my heart is captivated with love of him. Wherefore am I resolved to wander over the earth, till I foregather with him; else I shall die of longing for his love.’ Then he doffed his clothes and donned an Aba gown of goat’s hair and coarse sandals, saying, ‘O my mother, forget me not in thy prayers.’ She wept over him and said, ‘What will become of us after thee?’; but Bulukiya answered, ‘I can endure no longer, and I commit my affair and thine to Allah who is Almighty.’ Then he set out on foot Syria wards without the knowledge of any of his folk, and coming to the sea board found a vessel whereon he shipped as one of the crew. They sailed till he made an island, where Bulukiya landed with the crew, but straying away from the rest he sat down under a tree and sleep got the better of him. When he awoke, he sought the ship but found that she had set sail without him, and in that island he saw serpents as big as camels and palm trees, which repeated the names of Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) and blessed Mohammed (whom the Lord assain and save!), proclaiming the Unity and glorifying the Glorious; whereat he wondered.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Eighty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “when Bulukiya saw the serpents glorifying God and proclaiming the Unity, he wondered with extreme wonder. When they saw him, they flocked to him and one of them said to him, ‘Who and whence art thou and whither goest thou. and what is thy name?’ Quoth he, ‘My name is Bulukiya; I am of the Children of Israel and, being distracted for love of Mohammed (whom Allah bless and keep!), I come in quest of him. But who are ye, O noble creatures?’ Answered they, ‘We are of the dwellers in the Jahannam-hell; and Almighty Allah created us for the punishment of Kafirs.’ ‘And how came ye hither?’ asked he, and the Serpents answered, ‘Know, O Bulukiya, that Hell[514] of the greatness of her boiling, breatheth twice a year, expiring in the summer and inspiring in the winter, and hence the summer heat and winter cold. When she exhaleth, she casteth us forth of her maw, and we are drawn in again with her inhaled breath.’ Quoth Bulukiya, ‘Say me, are there greater serpents than you in Hell?’; and they said, ‘Of a truth we are cast out with the expired breath but by reason of our smallness; for in Hell every serpent is so great, that were the biggest of us to pass over its nose it would not feel us.[515] ‘ Asked Bulukiya, ‘Ye sing the praises of Allah and invoke blessings on Mohammed, whom the Almighty assain and save! Whence wot ye of Mohammed?’; and they answered, ‘O Bulukiya, verily his name is written on the gates of Paradise; and, but for him, Allah had not created the worlds[516] nor Paradise, nor heaven nor hell nor earth, for He made all things that be, solely on his account, and hath conjoined his name with His own in every place; wherefore we love Mohammed, whom Allah bless and preserve!’ Now hearing the serpents’ converse did but inflame Bulukiya’s love for Mohammed and yearning for his sight; so he took leave of them; and, making his way to the sea-shore, found there a ship made fast to the beach; he embarked therein as a seaman and sailed nor ceased sailing till he came to another island. Here he landed and walking about awhile found serpents great and small, none knoweth their number save Almighty Allah, and amongst them a white Serpent, clearer than crystal, seated in a golden tray borne on the back of another serpent as big as an elephant. Now this, O Hasib, was the Serpent-queen, none other than myself.” Quoth Hasib, “And what answer didst thou make him?” Quoth she, “Know, O Hasib, that when I saw Bulukiya, I saluted him with the salam, and he returned my salutation, and I said to him, ‘Who and what art thou and what is thine errand and whence comest thou and whither goest thou?’ Answered he, ‘I am of the Children of Israel; my name is Bulukiya, and I am a wanderer for the love of Mohammed, whose description I have read in the revealed scriptures, and of whom I go in search. But what art thou and what are these serpents about thee?’ Quoth I, ‘O Bulukiya, I am the Queen of the Serpents; and when thou shalt foregather with Mohammed (whom Allah assain and save!) bear him my salutation.’ Then Bulukiya took leave of me and journeyed till he came to the Holy City which is Jerusalem. Now there was in that stead a man who was deeply versed in all sciences, more especially in geometry and astronomy and mathematics, as well as in white magic[517] and Spiritualism; and he had studied the Pentateuch and the Evangel and the Psalms and the Books of Abraham. His name was Affan; and he had found in certain of his books, that whoso should wear the seal ring of our lord Solomon, men and Jinn and birds and beasts and all created things would be bound to obey him. Moreover, he had discovered that our lord Solomon had been buried in a coffin which was miraculously transported beyond the Seven Seas to the place of burial;" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Eighty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "Affan had found in certain books that none, mortal or spirit, could pluck the seal ring from the lord Solomon's finger; and that no navigator could sail his ship upon the Seven Seas over which the coffin had been carried. Moreover, he had found out by reading that there was a herb of herbs and that if one express its juice and anoint therewith his feet, he should walk upon the surface of any sea that Allah Almighty had created without wetting his soles, but none could obtain this herb, without he had with him the Serpent-queen. When Bulukiya arrived at the Holy City, he at once sat down to do his devotions and worship the Lord; and, whilst he was so doing, Affan came up and saluted him as a True Believer. Then seeing him reading the Pentateuch and adoring the Almighty, he accosted him saying, 'What is thy name, O man; and whence comest thou and whither goest thou?' He answered, 'My name is Bulukiya; I am from the city of Cairo and am come forth wandering in quest of Mohammed, whom Allah bless and preserve!' Quoth Affan, 'Come with me to my lodging that I may entertain thee.' 'To hear is to obey,' replied Bulukiya So the devotee took him by the hand and carried him to his house where he entreated him with the utmost honour and presentry said to him, 'Tell me thy history, O my brother, and how thou camest by the knowledge of Mohammed (whom Allah assain and save!) that thy heart hath been taken with love of him and compelled thee to fare forth and seek him; and lastly tell me who it was directed thee in this road.' So he related to him his tale in its entirety; whereupon Affan, who well nigh lost his wits for wonder, said to him, 'Make tryst for me with the Queen of the Serpents and I will bring thee in company with Mohammed, albeit the date of his mission is yet far distant. We have only to prevail upon the Queen and carry her in a cage to a certain mountain where the herbs grow; and, as long as she is with us, the plants as we pass them will parley with human speech and discover their virtues by the ordinance of Allah the Most High. For I have found in my books that there is a certain herb and all who express its juice and anoint therewith their feet shall walk upon whatsoever sea Almighty Allah hath made, without wetting sole. When we have found the magical herb, we will let her go her way; and then will we anoint our feet with the juice and cross the Seven Seas, till we come to the burial place of our lord Solomon. Then we will take the ring off his finger and rule even as he ruled and win all our wishes; we will enter the Main of Murks[518] and drink of the Water of Life, and so the Almighty will let us tarry till the End of Time and we shall foregather with Mohammed, whom Allah bless and preserve!' Hearing these words Bulukiya replied, 'O Affan, I will make tryst for thee with the Serpent-queen and at once show thee her abiding place.' So Affan made him a cage of iron; and, providing himself with two bowls, one full of wine and the other of milk, took ship with Bulukiya and sailed till they came to the island, where they landed and walked upon it. Then Affan set up the cage, in which he laid a noose and withdrew after placing in it the two bowls; when he and Bulukiya concealed themselves afar off. Presently, up came the Queen of the Serpents (that is, myself) and examined the cage. When she (that is I) smelt the savour of the milk, she came down from the back of the snake which bore her tray and, entering the cage, drank up the milk. Then she went to the bowl of wine and drank of it, whereupon her head became giddy and she slept. When Affan saw this, he ran up and locking the cage upon her, set it on his head and made for the ship, he and Bulukiya. After awhile she awoke and finding herself in a cage of iron on a man's head and seeing Bulukiya walking beside the bearer, said to him, 'This is the reward of those who do no hurt to the sons of Adam.' Answered he, 'O Queen, have no fear of us, for we will do thee no hurt at all. We wish thee only to show us the herb which, when pounded and squeezed yieldeth a juice, and this rubbed upon the feet conferreth the power of walking dryshod upon what sea soever Almighty Allah hath created; and when we have found that, we will return thee to thy place and let thee wend thy way.’ Then Affan and Bulukiya fared on for the hills where grew the herbs; and, as they went about with the Queen, each plant they passed began to speak and avouch its virtues by permission of Allah the Most High. As they were thus doing and the herbs speaking right and left, behold, a plant spoke out and said, ‘I am the herb ye seek, and all who gather and crush me and anoint their feet with my juice, shall fare over what sea soever Allah Almighty hath created and yet ne’er wet sole.’ When Affan heard this, he set down the cage from his head and, gathering what might suffice them of the herb, crushed it and filling two vials with the juice kept them for future use; and with what was left they anointed their feet. Then they took up the Serpent-queen’s cage and journeyed days and nights, till they reached the island, where they opened the cage and let out her that is me. When I found myself at liberty, I asked them what use they would make of the juice; and they answered, ‘We design to anoint our feet and to cross the Seven Seas to the burial place of our lord Solomon[519] and take the seal ring from his finger.’ Quoth I, ‘Far, far is it from your power to possess yourselves of the ring!’ They enquired, ‘Wherefore?’ and I replied, ‘Because Almighty Allah vouchsafed unto our lord Solomon the gift of this ring and distinguished him thereby, for that he said to him, ‘O Lord, give me a kingdom which may not be obtained after me; for Thou verily art the Giver of kingdoms.[520] ‘ ‘So that ring is not for you.’ And I added, ‘Had ye twain taken the herb, whereof all who eat shall not die until the First Blast,[521] it had better availed you than this ye have gotten; for ye shall nowise come at your desire thereby.’ Now when they heard this, they repented them with exceeding penitence and went their ways.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Eighty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “when Bulukiya and Affan heard these words, they repented them with exceeding penitence and went their ways. Such was their case; but as regards myself” (continued the Serpent-queen) “I went in quest of my host and found it fallen in piteous case, the stronger of them having grown weak in my absence and the weaker having died. When they saw me, they rejoiced and flocking about me, asked, ‘What hath befallen thee, and where hast thou been?’ So I told them what had passed, after which I gathered my forces together and repaired with them to the mountain Kaf, where I was wont to winter, summer-freshing in the place where thou now seest me, O Hasib Karim al-Din. This, then, is my story and what befell me.” Thereupon Hasib marvelled at her words and said to her, “I beseech thee, of thy favour, bid one of thy guards bear me forth to the surface of the earth, that I may go to my people.” She replied, “O Hasib, thou shalt not have leave to depart from us till winter come, and needs must thou go with us to the Mountain Kaf and solace thyself with the sight of the hills and sands and trees and birds magnifying the One God, the Victorious; and look upon Marids and Ifrits and Jinn, whose number none knoweth save Almighty Allah.” When Hasib heard this, he was sore chafed and chagrined: then he said to her, “Tell me of Affan and Bulukiya; when they departed from thee and went their way, did they cross the Seven Seas and reach the burial-place of our lord Solomon or not; and if they did had they power to take the ring or not?” Answered she, “Know, that when they left me, they anointed their feet with the juice; and, walking over the water, fared on from sea to sea, diverting themselves with the wonders of the deep, nor ceased they faring till they had traversed the Seven Seas and came in sight of a mountain, soaring high in air, whose stones were emeralds and whose dust was musk; and in it was a stream of running water. When they made it they rejoiced, saying each to the other, ‘Verily we have won our wish’; and they entered the passes of the mountain and walked on, till they saw from afar a cavern surmounted by a great dome, shining with light. So they made for the cavern, and entering it beheld therein a throne of gold studded with all manner jewels, and about it stools whose number none knoweth save Allah Almighty. And they saw lying at full length upon the throne our lord Solomon, clad in robes of green silk inwoven with gold and broidered with jewels and precious minerals: his right hand was passed over his breast and on the middle finger was the seal ring whose lustre outshone that of all other gems in the place. Then Affan taught Bulukiya adjurations and conjurations galore and said to him, ‘Repeat these conjurations and cease not repeating until I take the ring.’ Then he went up to the throne; but, as he drew near unto it lo’ c mighty serpent came forth from beneath it and cried out at him with so terrible a cry that the whole place trembled and sparks flew from its mouth, saying, ‘Begone, or thou art a dead man’ But Affan busied himself with his incantations and suffered himself not to be startled thereby. Then the serpent blew such a fiery blast at him, that the place was like to be set on fire, and said to him, Woe to thee! Except thou turn back, I will consume thee’ Hearing these words Bulukiya left the cave, but Affan, who suffered himself not to be troubled, went up to the Prophet: then he put out his hand to the ring and touched it and strove to draw it off the lord Solomon’s finger; and behold, the serpent blew on him once more and he became a heap of ashes. Such was his case; but as regards Bulukiya he fell down in a swoon.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninetieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Queen continued: “When Bulukiya saw Affan burnt up by the fire and become a heap of ashes, he fell down in a swoon. Thereupon the Lord (magnified be His Majesty!) bade Gabriel descend earthwards and save him ere the serpent should blow on him. So Gabriel descended without delay and, finding Affan reduced to ashes and Bulukiya in a fit, aroused him from his trance and saluting him asked, ‘How camest thou hither?’ Bulukiya related to him his history from first to last, adding, ‘Know that I came not hither but for the love of Mohammed (whom Allah assain and save!), of whom Affan informed me that his mission would take place at the End of Time; moreover that none should foregather with him but those who endured to the latter days by drinking of the Water of Life through means of Solomon’s seal. So I companied him hither and there befell him what befell; but I escaped the fire and now it is my desire that thou inform me where Mohammed is to be found.’ Quoth Gabriel, ‘O Bulukiya, go thy ways, for the time of Mohammed’s coming is yet far distant.’ Then he ascended up to heaven forthright, and Bulukiya wept with sore weeping and repented of that which he had done, calling to mind my words, whenas I said to them, ‘Far is it from man's power to possess himself of the ring.' Then he descended from the mountain and returned in exceeding confusion to the sea shore and passed the night there, marvelling at the mountains and seas and islands around him. When morning dawned, he anointed his feet with the herb-juice and descending to the water, set out and fared on over the surface of the seas days and nights, astonied at the terrors of the main and the marvels and wonders of the deep, till he came to an island as it were the Garden of Eden. So he landed and, finding himself in a great and pleasant island, paced about it and saw with admiration that its dust was saffron and its gravel carnelian and precious minerals; its hedges were of jessamine, its vegetation was of the goodliest of trees and of the brightest of odoriferous shrubs; its brushwood was of Comorin and Sumatran aloes-wood and its reeds were sugar-canes. Round about it were roses and narcissus and amaranths and gilly-flowers and chamomiles and white lilies and violets, and other flowers of all kinds and colours. Of a truth the island was the goodliest place, abounding in space, rich in grace, a compendium of beauty material and spiritual. The birds warbled on the boughs with tones far sweeter than chaunt of Koran and their notes would console a lover whom longings unman. And therein the gazelle frisked free and fain and wild cattle roamed about the plain. Its trees were of tallest height; its streams flowed bright; its springs welled with waters sweet and light; and all therein was a delight to sight and sprite. Bulukiya marvelled at the charms of the island but knew that he had strayed from the way he had first taken in company with Affan. He wandered about the place and solaced him with various spectacles until nightfall, when he climbed into a tree to sleep; but as he sat there, musing over the beauty of the site, behold, the sea became troubled and there rose up to the surface a great beast, which cried out with a cry so terrible that every living thing upon the isle trembled. As Bulukiya gazed upon him from the tree and marvelled at the bigness of his bulk, he was presently followed unexpectedly by a multitude of other sea beasts in kind manifolds, each holding in his fore-paw a jewel which shone like a lamp, so that the whole island became as light as day for the lustre of the gems. After awhile, there appeared, from the heart of the island, wild beasts of the land, none knoweth their number save Allah the Most High;

amongst which Bulukiya noted lions and panthers and lynxes and other ferals; and these land beasts flocked down to the shore; and, foregathering with the sea beasts, conversed with them till daybreak, when they separated and each went his own way. Thereupon Bulukiya, terrified by what he had seen, came down from the tree and, making the sea shore, anointed his feet with the magical juice, and set out once more upon the surface of the water. He fared on days and nights over the Second Sea, till he came to a great mountain skirting which ran a Wady without end, the stones whereof were magnetic iron and its beasts, lions and hares and panthers. He landed on the mountain foot and wandered from place to place till nightfall, when he sat down sheltered by one of the base hills on the sea side, to eat of the dried fish thrown up by the sea. Presently, he turned from his meal and behold, a huge panther was creeping up to rend and ravin him; so he anointed his feet in haste with the juice and, descending to the surface of the water, fled walking over the Third Sea, in the darkness, for the night was black and the wind blew stark. Nor did he stay his course till he reached another island, whereon he landed and found there trees bearing fruits both fresh and dry.[522] So he took of these fruits and ate and praised Allah Almighty; after which he walked for solace; about the island till eventide." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninety-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "Bulukiya (continued the Queen) walked for solace about the island till eventide, when he lay down to sleep. As soon as day brake, he began to explore the place and ceased not for ten days, after which he again made the shore and anointed his feet and, setting out over the Fourth Sea, walked upon it many nights and days, till he came to a third island of fine white sand without sign of trees or grass. He walked about it awhile but, finding its only inhabitants sakers which nested in the sand, he again anointed his feet and trudged over the Fifth Sea, walking night and day till he came to a little island, whose soil and hills were like crystal. Therein were the veins wherefrom gold is worked; and therein also were marvellous trees whose like he had never seen in his wanderings, for their blossoms were in hue as gold.

He landed and walked about for diversion till it was nightfall, when the flowers began to shine through the gloom like stars. Seeing this sight, he marvelled and said, ‘Assuredly, the flowers of this island are of those which wither under the sun and fall to the earth, where the winds smite them and they gather under the rocks and become the Elixir[523] which the folk collect and thereof make gold.’ He slept there all that night and at sunrise he again anointed his feet and, descending to the shore, fared on over the Sixth Sea nights and days, till he came to a fifth island. Here he landed and found, after walking an hour or so, two mountains covered with a multitude of trees, whose fruits were as men’s heads hanging by the hair, and others whose fruits were green birds hanging by the feet; also a third kind, whose fruits were like aloes, if a drop of the juice fell on a man it burnt like fire; and others, whose fruits wept and laughed, besides many other marvels which he saw there. Then he returned to the sea shore and, finding there a tall tree, sat down beneath it till supper time when he climbed up into the branches to sleep. As he sat considering the wonderful works of Allah behold, the waters became troubled, and there rose therefrom the daughters of the sea, each mermaid holding in her hand a jewel which shone like the morning. They came ashore and, foregathering under the trees, sat down and danced and sported and made merry whilst Bulukiya amused himself with watching and wondering at their gambols, which were prolonged till the morning, when they returned to the sea and disappeared. Then he came down and, anointing his feet, set out on the surface of the Seventh Sea, over which he journeyed two whole months, without getting sight of highland or island or broadland or lowland or shoreland, till he came to the end thereof. And so doing he suffered exceeding hunger, so that he was forced to snatch up fishes from the surface of the sea and devour them raw, for stress of famine. In such case he pushed on till in early forenoon he came to the sixth island, with trees a-growing and rills a flowing, where he landed and walked about, looking right and left, till he came to an apple tree and put forth his hand to pluck of the fruit, when lo! one cried out to him from the tree, saying, ‘An thou draw near to this tree and cut of it aught, I will cut thee in twain.’ So he looked and saw a giant forty cubits high, being the cubit of the people of that day;

whereat he feared with sore fear and refrained from that tree. Then said he to the giant, ‘Why cost thou forbid me to eat of this tree?’ Replied the other, ‘Because thou art a son of Adam and thy father Adam forgot the covenant of Allah and sinned against Him and ate of the tree.’ Quoth Bulukiya, ‘What thing art thou and to whom belongeth this island, with its trees, and how art thou named?’ Quoth the tall one, ‘My name is Sharαhiyα and trees and island belong to King Sakhr;[524] I am one of his guards and in charge of his dominion,’ presently adding, ‘But who art thou and whence comest thou hither?’ Bulukiya told him his story from beginning to end and Sharahiya said, ‘Be of good cheer,’ and brought him to eat. So he ate his fill and, taking leave of the giant, set out again and ceased not faring on over the mountains and sandy deserts for ten days; at the end of which time he saw, in the distance, a dust cloud hanging like a canopy in air; and, making towards it, he heard a mighty clamour, cries and blows and sounds of mellay. Presently he reached a great Wady, two months’ journey long; and, looking whence the shouts came, he saw a multitude of horse men engaged in fierce fight and the blood running from them till it railed like a river. Their voices were thunderous and they were armed with lance and sword and iron mace and bow and arrow, and all fought with the utmost fury. At this sight he felt sore affright” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninety-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Queen continued: “When Bulukiya saw the host in fight, he felt sore affright and was perplexed about his case; but whilst he hesitated, behold, they caught sight of him and held their hands one from other and left fighting. Then a troop of them came up to him, wondering at his make, and one of the horsemen said to him, ‘What art thou and whence camest thou hither and whither art wending; and who showed thee the way that thou hast come to our country?’ Quoth he, ‘I am of the sons of Adam and am come out, distracted for the love of Mohammed (whom Allah bless and preserve!); but I have wandered from my way.’ Quoth the horseman, ‘Never saw we a son of Adam till now, nor did any ever come to this land.’ And all marvelled at him and at his speech. ‘But what are ye, O creatures?’

asked Bulukiya; and the rider replied, ‘We are of the Jαnn.’ So he said, ‘O Knight, what is the cause of the fighting amongst you and where is your abiding place and what is the name of this valley and this land?’ He replied, ‘Our abiding- place is the White Country; and, every year, Allah Almighty commandeth us to come hither and wage war upon the unbelieving Jann.’ Asked Bulukiya, ‘And where is the White Country?’ and the horseman answered, ‘It is behind the mountain Kaf, and distant seventy-five years journey from this place which is termed the Land of Shaddαd son of ‘Ad: we are here for Holy War; and we have no other business, when we are not doing battle, than to glorify God and hallow him. More over, we have a ruler, King Sakhr highs, and needs must thou go with us to him, that he may look upon thee for his especial delight.’ Then they fared on (and he with them) till they came to their abiding place; where he saw a multitude of magnificent tents of green silk, none knoweth their number save Allah the Most High, and in their midst a pavilion of red satin, some thousand cubits in compass, with cords of blue silk and pegs of gold and silver. Bulukiya marvelled at the sight and accompanied them as they fared on and behold, this was the royal pavilion. So they carried him into the presence of King Sakhr, whom he found seated upon a splendid throne of red gold, set with pearls and studded with gems; the Kings and Princes of the Jann being on his right hand, and on his left his Councillors and Emirs and Officers of state, and a multitude of others. The King seeing him bade introduce him, which they did; and Bulukiya went up to him and saluted him after kissing the ground before him. The King returned his salute and said, ‘Draw near me, O mortal!’ and Bulukiya went close up to him. Hereupon the King, commanding a chair to be set for him by his royal side, bade him sit down and asked him ‘Who art thou?’; and Bulukiya answered, ‘I am a man, and one of the Children of Israel.’ ‘Tell me thy story,’ cried King Sakhr, ‘and acquaint me with all that hath befallen thee and how thou camest to this my land.’ So Bulukiya related to him all that had occurred in his wanderings from beginning to end.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninety-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Queen continued: “When Bulukiya related to Sakhr what befell him in his wanderings, he marvelled thereat. Then he bade the servants bring food and they spread the tables and set on one thousand and five hundred platters of red gold and silver and copper, some containing twenty and some fifty boiled camels, and others some fifty head of sheep; at which Bulukiya marvelled with exceeding marvel. Then they ate and he ate with them, till he was satisfied and returned thanks to Allah Almighty; after which they cleared the tables and set on fruits, and they ate thereof, glorifying the name of God and invoking blessings on His prophet Mohammed (whom Allah bless and preserve!) When Bulukiya heard them make mention of Mohammed, he wondered and said to King Sakhr, ‘I am minded to ask thee some questions.’ Rejoined the King, ‘Ask what thou wilt,’ and Bulukiya said, ‘O King, what are ye and what is your origin and how came ye to know of Mohammed (whom Allah assain and save!) that ye draw near to him and love him?’ King Sakhr answered, ‘O Bulukiya, of very sooth Allah created the fire in seven stages, one above the other, and each distant a thousand years journey from its neighbour. The first stage he named Jahannam[525] and appointed the same for the punishment of the transgressors of the True-believers, who die unrepentant; the second he named Lazα and appointed for Unbelievers: the name of the third is Jahvm and is appointed for Gog and Magog.[526] The fourth is called Sa’vr and is appointed for the host of Iblis. The fifth is called Sakar and is prepared for those who neglect prayer. The sixth is called Hatamah and is appointed for Jews and Christians. The seventh is named Hαwiyah and is prepared for hypocrites. Such be the seven stages.’ Quoth Bulukiya, ‘Haply Jahannam hath least of torture for that it is the uppermost.’ ‘Yes,’ quoth King Sakhr, ‘the most endurable of them all is Jahannam; natheless in it are a thousand mountains of fire, in each mountain seventy thousand cities of fire, in each city seventy thousand castles of fire, in each castle seventy thousand houses of fire, in each house seventy thousand couches of fire and in each couch seventy thousand manners of torment. As for the other hells, O Bulukiya, none knoweth the number of kinds of torment that be therein save Allah Most Highest.’ When Bulukiya heard this, he fell down in a fainting-fit, and when he came to himself, he wept and said, ‘O King what will be my case?’ Quoth Sakhr, ‘Fear not, and know thou that whoso loveth Mohammed (whom Allah bless and keep!) the fire shall not burn him, for he is made free therefrom for his sake; and whoso belongeth to his Faith the fire shall fly him. As for us, the Almighty Maker created us of the fire for the first that he made in Jahannam were two of His host whom he called Khalvt and Malvt. Now Khalvt was fashioned in the likeness of a lion, with a tail like a tortoise twenty years’ journey in length and ending in a member masculine; while Malvt was like a pied wolf whose tail was furnished with a member feminine. Then Almighty Allah commanded the tails to couple and copulate and do the deed of kind, and of them were born serpents and scorpions, whose dwelling is in the fire, that Allah may there with torment those whom He casteth therein; and these increased and multiplied. Then Allah commanded the tails of Khalit and Malit to couple and copulate a second time, and the tail of Malit conceived by the tail of Khalit and bore fourteen children, seven male and seven female, who grew up and intermarried one with the other. All were obedient to their sire, save one who disobeyed him and was changed into a worm which is Iblis (the curse of Allah be upon him!). Now Iblis was one of the Cherubim, for he had served Allah till he was raised to the heavens and cherished[527] by the especial favour of the Merciful One, who made him chief of the Cherubim.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninety-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Queen continued: “‘Iblis served God and became chief of Cherubim. When, however, the Lord created Adam (with whom be peace!), He commanded Iblis to prostrate himself to him, but he drew back; so Allah Almighty expelled him from heaven and cursed him.[528] This Iblis had issue and of his lineage are the devils; and as for the other six males, who were his elders, they are the ancestors of the true believing Jann, and we are their descendants. Such, O Bulukiya is our provenance.[529] ‘ Bulukiya marvelled at the King’s words and said, ‘O King, I pray thee bid one of thy guards bear me back to my native land.’ ‘Naught of this may we do,’ answered Sakhr, ‘save by commandment of Allah Almighty; however, an thou desire to leave us and return home, I will mount thee on one of my mares and cause her carry thee to the farthest frontiers of my dominions, where thou wilt meet with the troops of another King, Barαkhiyα highs, who will recognize the mare at sight and take thee off her and send her back to us; and this is all we can do for thee, and no more.' When Bulukiya heard these words he wept and said, 'Do whatso thou wilt.' So King Sakhr caused bring the mare and, setting Bulukiya on her back, said to him, 'Beware lest thou alight from her or strike her or cry out in her face; for if thou do so she will slay thee; but abide quietly riding on her back till she stop with thee; then dismount and wend thy ways.' Quoth Bulukiya, 'I hear and I obey;' he then mounted and setting out, rode on a long while between the rows of tents; and stinted not riding till he came to the royal kitchens where he saw the great cauldrons, each holding fifty camels, hung up over the fires which blazed fiercely under them. So he stopped there and gazed with a marvel ever increasing till King Sakhr thinking him to be anhungered, bade bring him two roasted camels; and they carried them to him and bound them behind him on the mare's crupper. Then he took leave of them and fared on, till he came to the end of King Sakhr's dominions, where the mare stood still and Bulukiya dismounted and began to shake the dust of the journey from his raiment. And behold, there accosted him a party of men who, recognising the mare, carried her and Bulukiya before their King Barakhiya. So he saluted him, and the King returned his greeting and seated him beside himself in a splendid pavilion, in the midst of his troops and champions and vassal Princes of the Jann ranged to right and left; after which he called for food and they ate their fill and pronounced the Alhamdolillah. Then they set on fruits, and when they had eaten thereof, King Barakhiya, whose estate was like that of King Sakhr, asked his guest, 'When didst thou leave King Sakhr?' And Bulukiya answered, 'Two days ago.' Quoth Barakhiya, 'Dost thou know, how many days' journey thou hast come in these two days?' Quoth he, 'No,' and the King rejoined, 'Thou hast come a journey of threescore and ten months.'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninety-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Queen continued: “Barakhiya said to Bulukiya, ‘In two days thou hast come a journey of threescore and ten months; moreover when thou mountedst the mare, she was affrighted at thee, knowing thee for a son of Adam, and would have thrown thee; so they bound on her back these two camels by way of weight to steady her.’ When Bulukiya heard this, he marvelled and thanked Allah Almighty for safety. Then said the King, ‘Tell me thy adventures and what brought thee to this our land.’ So he told him his story from first to last, and the King marvelled at his words, and kept Bulukiya with him two months.” Upon this Hasib Karim al-Din after he had marvelled at her story, again besought the Serpent-queen saying, “I pray thee of thy goodness and graciousness command one of thy subjects conduct me to the surface of the earth, that I may return to my family;” but she answered, “O Hasib, I know that the first thing thou wilt do, after seeing the face of the earth will be to greet thy family and then repair to the Hammam bath and bathe; and the moment thou endest thine ablutions will see the last of me, for it will be the cause of my death.” Quoth Hasib, “I swear that I will never again enter the Hammam bath so long as I live, but when washing is incumbent on me, I will wash at home.” Rejoined the Queen, “I would not trust thee though thou shouldst swear to me an hundred oaths; for such abstaining is not possible, and I know thee to be a son of Adam for whom no oath is sacred. Thy father Adam made a covenant with Allah the most High, who kneaded the clay whereof He fashioned him forty mornings and made His angels prostrate themselves to him; yet after all his promise did he forget and his oath violate, disobeying the commandment of his Lord.” When Hasib heard this, he held his peace and burst into tears; nor did he leave weeping for the space of ten days, at the end of which time he said to the Queen, “Prithee acquaint me with the rest of Bulukiya’s adventures.” Accordingly, she began again as follows: “Know, O Hasib, that Bulukiya, after abiding two months with King Barakhiya, farewelled him and fared on over wastes and deserts nights and days’ till he came to a high mountain which he ascended. On the summit he beheld seated a great Angel glorifying the names of God and invoking blessings on Mohammed. Before him lay a tablet covered with characters, these white and those black,[530] whereon his eyes were fixed, and his two wings were outspread to the full, one to the western and the other to the eastern horizon. Bulukiya approached and saluted the Angel, who returned his salam adding, ‘Who art thou and whence comest thou and whither wendest thou and what is thy story?’ Accordingly, he repeated to him his history, from first to last, and the Angel marvelled mightily thereat, whereupon Bulukiya said to him, ‘I pray thee in return acquaint me with the meaning of this tablet and what is writ thereon; and what may be thine occupation and thy name.’ Replied the Angel, ‘My name is Michael, and I am charged with the shifts of night and day; and this is my occupation till the Day of Doom.’ Bulukiya wondered at his words and at his aspect and the vastness of his stature and, taking leave of him, fared onwards, night and day, till he came to a vast meadow over which he walked observing that it was traversed by seven streams and abounded in trees. He was struck by its beauty and in one corner thereof he saw a great tree and under it four Angels. So he drew near to them and found the first in the likeness of a man, the second in the likeness of a wild beast, the third in the likeness of a bird and the fourth in the likeness of a bull, engaged in glorifying Almighty Allah, and saying, ‘O my God and my Master and my Lord, I conjure Thee, by Thy truth and by the decree of Thy Prophet Mohammed (on whom be blessings and peace!) to vouchsafe Thy mercy and grant Thy forgiveness to all things created in my likeness; for Thou over all things art Almighty!’ Bulukiya marvelled at what he heard but continued his journey till he came to another mountain and ascending it, found there a great Angel seated on the summit, glorifying God and hallowing Him and invoking blessings on Mohammed (whom Allah assain and save!), and he saw that Angel continually opening and shutting his hands and bending and extending his fingers. He accosted him and saluted him; whereupon the Angel returned his salam and enquired who he was and how he came thither. So Bulukiya acquainted him with his adventures including his having lost the way; and besought him to tell him, in turn, who he was and what was his function and what mountain was that. Quoth the Angel, ‘Know, O Bulukiya, that this is the mountain Kaf, which encompasseth the world; and all the countries the Creator hath made are in my grasp. When the Almighty is minded to visit any land with earthquake or famine or plenty or slaughter or prosperity, He biddeth me carry out His commands and I carry them out without stirring from my place; for know thou that my hands lay hold upon the roots of the earth,' " — And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninety-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Queen continued: "When the angel said, 'And know thou that my hands lay hold upon the roots of the earth,' he asked, 'And hath Allah created other worlds than this within the mountain Kaf?' The Angel answered, 'Yes, He hath made a world white as silver, whose vastness none knoweth save Himself, and hath peopled it with Angels, whose meat and drink are His praise and hallowing and continual blessings upon His Prophet Mohammed (whom Allah bless and keep!). Every Thursday night[531] they repair to this mountain and worship in congregation Allah until the morning, and they assign the future recompense of their lauds and litanies to the sinners of the Faith of Mohammed (whom Allah assain and save!) and to all who make the Ghusl ablution of Friday; and this is their function until the Day of Resurrection.' Asked Bulukiya, 'And hath Allah created other mountains behind the mountain Kaf?'; whereto he answered, 'Yes, behind this mountain is a range of mountains five hundred years' journey long, of snow and ice, and this it is that wardeth off the heat of Jahannam from the world, which verily would else be consumed thereby. Moreover, behind the mountain Kaf are forty worlds, each one the bigness of this world forty times told, some of gold and some of silver and others of carnelian. Each of these worlds hath its own colour, and Allah hath peopled them with angels, that know not Eve nor Adam nor night nor day, and have no other business than to celebrate His praises and hallow Him and make profession of His Unity and proclaim His Omnipotence and supplicate Him on behalf of the followers of Mohammed (whom Allah bless and keep!). And know, also, O Bulukiya, that the earths were made in seven stages, one upon another, and that Allah hath created one of His Angels, whose stature and attributes none knoweth but Himself and who beareth the seven stages upon his shoulders. Under this Angel Almighty Allah hath created a great rock, and under the rock a bull, and under the bull a huge fish, and under the fish a mighty ocean.[532] God once told Isa (with whom be peace!) of this fish, and he said, ‘O Lord show me the fish, that I may look upon it.’ So the Almighty commanded an angel to take Isa and show him the fish. Accordingly, he took him up and carried him (with whom be peace!) to the sea, wherein the fish dwelt, and said, ‘Look, O Isa, upon the fish.’ He looked but at first saw nothing, when, suddenly, the fish darted past like lightning. At this sight Isa fell down aswoon, and when he came to himself, Allah spake to him by inspiration, saying, ‘O Isa, hast thou seen the fish and comprehended its length and its breadth?’ He replied, ‘By Thy honour and glory, O Lord, I saw no fish; but there passed me by a great bull, whose length was three days’ journey, and I know not what manner of thing this bull is.’ Quoth Allah, ‘O Isa, this that thou sawest and which was three days in passing by thee, was but the head of the fish;[533] and know that every day I create forty fishes like unto this.’ And Isa hearing this marvelled at the power of Allah the Almighty. Asked Bulukiya, ‘What hath Allah made beneath this sea which containeth the fish?’; and the Angel answered, ‘Under the sea the Lord created a vast abyss of air, under the air fire, and under the fire a mighty serpent, by name Falak; and were it not for fear of the Most Highest, this serpent would assuredly swallow up all that is above it, air and fire and the Angel and his burden, without sensing it.’” — And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the angel said to Bulukiya when describing the serpent, “‘And were it not for fear of the Most Highest, this serpent would assuredly swallow up all that is above it, air and fire, and the Angel and his burden, without sensing it. When Allah created this serpent He said to it by inspiration, ‘I will give thee somewhat to keep for me, so open thy mouth.’ The serpent replied, ‘Do whatso Thou wilt;’ and opened his mouth and God placed Hell into his maw, saying, ‘Keep it until the Day of Resurrection. When that time comes, the Almighty will send His angels with chains to bring Hell and bind it until the Day when all men shall meet; and the Lord will order Hell to go open its gates and there will issue therefrom sparks bigger than the mountains.’

When Bulukiya heard these things he wept with sore weeping and, taking leave of the Angel, fared on westwards, till he came in sight of two creatures sitting before a great shut gate. As he drew near, he saw that one of the gatekeepers had the semblance of a lion and the other that of a bull; so he saluted them and they returned his salam and enquired who and whence he was and whither he was bound. Quoth he, ‘I am of the sons of Adam, a wanderer for the love of Mohammed (whom Allah assain and save!) and I have strayed from my way.’ Then he asked them what they were and what was the gate before which they sat, and they answered, ‘We are the guardians of this gate thou seest and we have no other business than the praise and hallowing of Allah and the invocation of blessings on Mohammed (whom may He bless and keep!).’ Bulukiya wondered and asked them, ‘What is within the gate?’; and they answered, ‘We wot not.’ Then quoth he, ‘I conjure you, by the truth of your glorious Lord, open to me the gate, that I may see that which is therein.’ Quoth they, ‘We cannot, and none may open this gate, of all created beings save Gabriel, the Faithful One, with whom be peace!’ Then Bulukiya lifted up his voice in supplication to Allah, saying, ‘O Lord, send me thy messenger Gabriel, the Faithful One, to open for me this gate that I may see what be therein;’ and the Almighty gave ear unto his prayer and commanded the Archangel to descend to earth and open to him the gate of the Meeting-place of the Two Seas. So Gabriel descended and, saluting Bulukiya, opened the gate to him, saying, ‘Enter this door, for Allah commandeth me to open to thee.’ So he entered and Gabriel locked the gate behind him and flew back to heaven. When Bulukiya found himself within the gate, he looked and beheld a vast ocean, half salt and half fresh, bounded on every side by mountain ranges of red ruby whereon he saw angels singing the praises of the Lord and hallowing Him. So he went up to them and saluted them and having received a return of his salam, questioned them of the sea and the mountains. Replied they, ‘This place is situate under the Arsh or empyreal heaven; and this Ocean causeth the flux and flow of all the seas of the world; and we are appointed to distribute them and drive them to the various parts of the earth, the salt to the salt and the fresh to the fresh,[534] and this is our employ until the Day of Doom. As for the mountain ranges they serve to limit and to contain the waters. But thou, whence comest thou and whither art thou bound?' So he told them his story and asked them of the road. They bade him traverse the surface of the ocean which lay before him: so he anointed his feet with the juice of the herb he had with him, and taking leave of the angels, set out upon the face of the sea and sped on over the water nights and days; and as he was faring, behold, he met a handsome youth journeying along like himself, whereupon he greeted him and he returned his greeting. After they parted he espied four great Angels wayfaring over the face of the sea, and their going was like the blinding lightning; so he stationed himself in their road, and when they came up to him, he saluted them and said to them, 'I ask you by the Almighty, the Glorious, to tell me your names and whither are ye bound?' Replied the first Angel, 'My name is Gabriel and these my companions are called Isrαfνl and Mνkα'νl and Azrα'νl. There hath appeared in the East a mighty dragon, which hath laid waste a thousand cities and devoured their inhabitants; wherefore Allah Almighty hath commanded us to go to him and seize him and cast him into Jahannam.' Bulukiya marvelled at the vastness of their stature and fared on, as before, days and nights, till he came to an island where he landed and walked about for a while," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninety-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "Bulukiya landed on the island and walked about for a while, till he saw a comely young man with light shining from his visage, sitting weeping and lamenting between two built tombs. So he saluted him and he returned his salutation, and Bulukiya said to him, 'Who art thou and what are these two built tombs between which thou sittest, and wherefore this wailing?' He looked at him and wept with sore weeping, till he drenched his clothes with his tears; then said, 'Know thou, O my brother, mine is a marvellous story and a wondrous; but I would have thee sit by me and first tell me thy name and thine adventures and who thou art and what brought thee hither; after which I will, in turn, relate to thee my history.' So Bulukiya sat down by him and related to him all that had befallen him from his father's death,[535] adding, 'Such is my history, the whole of it, and Allah alone knoweth what will happen to me after this.’ When the youth heard his story, he sighed and said, ‘O thou unhappy! How few things thou hast seen in thy life compared with mine. Know, O Bulukiya, that unlike thyself I have looked upon our lord Solomon, in his life, and have seen things past count or reckoning. Indeed, my story is strange and my case out of range, and I would have thee abide with me, till I tell thee my history and acquaint thee how I come to be sitting here.’” Hearing this much Hasib again interrupted the Queen of the Serpents and said to her, “Allah upon thee, O Queen, release me and command one of thy servants carry me forth to the surface of the earth, and I will swear an oath to thee that I will never enter the Hammam-bath as long as I live.” But she said, “This is a thing which may not be nor will I believe thee upon thine oath.” When he heard this, he wept and all the serpents wept on his account and took to interceding for him with their Queen, saying, “We beseech thee, bid one of us carry him forth to the surface of the earth, and he will swear thee an oath never to enter the bath his life long.” Now when Yamlaykhα (for such was the Queen’s name) heard their appeal, she turned to Hasib and made him swear to her an oath; after which she bade a serpent carry him forth to the surface of the earth. The serpent made ready, but as she was about to go away with him, he turned to Queen Yamlaykha and said, “I would fain have thee tell me the history of the youth whom Bulukiya saw sitting between two tombs.” So she said: “Know, O Hasib, that when Bulukiya sat down by the youth and told him his tale, from first to last, in order that the other might also recount his adventures and explain the cause of his sitting between the two tombs.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Queen continued: “When Bulukiya ended his recount, the youth said, ‘How few things of marvel hast thou seen in thy life, O unhappy! Now I have looked upon our lord Solomon while he was yet living and I have witnessed wonders beyond compt and conception.’ And he began to relate

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

The Story of Janshah.[536]

‘Know, O my brother, that my sire was a King called Teghmïs, who reigned over the land of Kabul and the Banu Shahlαn, ten thousand warlike chiefs, each ruling over an hundred walled cities and a hundred citadels; and he was suzerain also over seven vassal princes, and tribute was brought to him from the broad lands between East and West. He was just and equitable in his rule and Allah Almighty had given him all this and had bestowed on him such mighty empire, yet had He not vouchsafed him a son (though this was his dearest wish) to inherit the kingdom after his decease. So one day it befell that he summoned the Olema and astrologers, the mathematicians and almanac-makers, and said, ‘Draw me my horoscope and look if Allah will grant me a son to succeed me.’ Accordingly, they consulted their books and calculated his dominant star and the aspects thereof; after which they said to him, ‘Know, O King, that thou shalt be blessed with a son, but by none other than the daughter of the King of Khorαsαn.’ Hearing this Teghmus joyed with exceeding joy and, bestowing on the astrologers and wizards treasure beyond numbering or reckoning, dismissed them. His chief Wazir was a renowned warrior, by name Ayn Zαr, who was equal to a thousand cavaliers in battle; so him he summoned and, repeating to him what the astrologers had predicted, he said, ‘O Wazir, it is my will that thou equip thee for a march to Khorasan and demand for me the hand of its King Bahrwan’s daughter.’ Receiving these orders the Wazir at once proceeded to get ready for the journey and encamped without the town with his troops and braves and retinue, whilst King Teghmus made ready as presents for the King of Khorasan fifteen hundred loads of silks and precious stones, pearls and rubies and other gems, besides gold and silver; and he also prepared a prodigious quantity of all that goeth to the equipment of a bride; then, loading them upon camels and mules, delivered them to Ayn Zar, with a letter to the following purport. ‘After invoking the blessing of Heaven, King Teghmus to King Bahrwan, greeting. Know that we have taken counsel with the astrologers and sages and mathematicians, and they tell us that we shall have boon of a boy child, and that by none other than thy daughter. Wherefore I have despatched unto thee my Wazir Ayn Zar, with great store of bridal gear, and I have appointed him to stand in my stead and to enter into the marriage-contract in my name. Furthermore I desire that of thy favour thou wilt grant him his request without stay or delay; for it is my own, and all graciousness thou showest him, I take for myself; but beware of crossing me in this, for know, O King Bahrwan, that Allah hath bestowed upon me the Kingdom of Kabul, and hath given me dominion over the Banu Shahlan and vouchsafed me a mighty empire; and if I marry thy daughter, we will be, I and thou, as one thing in kingship; and I will send thee every year as much treasure as will suffice thee. And this is my desire of thee.' Then King Teghmus sealed the letter with his own ring and gave it to the Wazir, who departed with a great company and journeyed till he drew near the capital of Khorasan. When King Bahrwan heard of his approach, he despatched his principal Emirs to meet him,[537] with a convoy of food and drink and other requisites, including forage for the steeds. So they fared forth with the train till they met the Wazir; then, alighting without the city, they exchanged salutations and abode there, eating and drinking, ten days; at the end of which time they mounted and rode on into the town, where they were met by King Bahrwan, who came out to greet the Wazir of King Teghmus and alighting, embraced him and carried him to his citadel. Then Ayn Zar brought out the presents and laid them before King Bahrwan, together with the letter of King Teghmus, which when the King read and understood, he joyed with joy exceeding and welcomed the Wazir, saying, 'Rejoice in winning thy wish; and know that if King Teghmus sought of me my life, verily I would give it to him.' Then he went in forthright to his daughter and her mother and his kinsfolk, and acquainting them with the King of Kabul's demand sought counsel of them, and they said, 'Do what seemeth good to thee.' — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundredth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "King Bahrwan consulted his daughter and her mother and his kinsfolk and they said, 'Do what seemeth good to thee.' So he returned straightway to the Minister Ayn Zar and notified to him that his desire had been fulfilled; and the Wazir, abode with him two months, at the end of which time he said to him, ‘We beseech thee to bestow upon us that wherefore we came, so we may depart to our own land.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered the King. Then he prepared all the gear wanted for the wedding; and when this was done he assembled his Wazirs and all his Emirs and the Grandees of his realm and the monks and priests who tied the knot of marriage between his daughter and King Teghmus by proxy. And King Bahrwan bade decorate the city after the goodliest fashion and spread the streets with carpets. Then he equipped his daughter for the journey and gave her all manner of presents and rarities and precious metals, such as none may describe; and Ayn Zar departed with the Princess to his own country. When the news of their approach reached King Teghmus, he bade celebrate the wedding festivities and adorn the city; after which he went in unto the Princess and abated her maidenhead; nor was it long before she conceived by him and, accomplishing her months, bare a man-child like the moon on the night of its full. When King Teghmus knew that his wife had given birth to a goodly son, he rejoiced with exceeding joy and, summoning the sages and astrologers and mathematicians, said to them, ‘I would that ye draw the horoscope of the newborn child with his ascendant and its aspects and acquaint me what shall befall him in his lifetime.’ So they made their calculations and found them favourable; but, that he would, in his fifteenth year, be exposed to perils and hardships, and that if he survived, he would be happy and fortunate and become a greater king than his father and a more powerful. The King rejoiced greatly in this prediction and named the boy Janshah. Then he delivered him to the nurses, wet and dry, who reared him excellently well till he reached his fifth year, when his father taught him to read the Evangel and instructed him in the art of arms and lunge of lance and sway of sword, so that in less than seven years he was wont to ride a-hunting, and a-chasing; he became a doughty champion, perfect in all the science of the cavalarice and his father was delighted to hear of his knightly prowess. It chanced one day that King Teghmus and his son accompanied by the troops rode out for sport into the woods and wilds and hunted till mid afternoon of the third day, when the Prince started a gazelle of a rare colour, which fled before him. So he gave chase to it, followed by seven of King Teghmus's white slaves all mounted on swift steeds, and rode at speed after the gazelle, which fled before them till she brought them to the sea shore. They all ran at her to take her as their quarry, but she escaped from them and, throwing herself into the waves," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and First Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "when Janshah and the Mamelukes ran at the gazelle, to take her as their quarry, she escaped from them and, throwing herself into the waves, swam out to a fishing bark, that was moored near the shore, and sprang on board. Janshah and his followers dismounted and, boarding the boat, made prize of the gazelle and were minded to return to shore with her, when the Prince espied a great island in the offing and said to his merry men, 'I have a longing to visit yonder island.' They answered, 'We hear and obey,' and sailed on till they came to the island, where they landed and amused themselves with exploring the place. Then they again embarked and taking with them the gazelle, set out to return homeward, but the murk of evening overtook them and they missed their way on the main. Moreover a strong wind arose and crave the boat into mid-ocean, so that when they awoke in the morning, they found themselves lost at sea. Such was their case; but as regards King Teghmus, when he missed his son, he commanded his troops to make search for him in separate bodies; so they dispersed on all sides and a company of them, coming to the sea shore, found there the Prince's white slave whom he had left in charge of the horses. They asked him what was become of his master and the other six, and he told them what had passed whereupon they took him with them and returned to the King and acquainted him with what they had learnt. When Teghmus heard their report, he wept with sore weeping and cast the crown from his head, biting his hands for vexation. Then he rose forthright and wrote letters and despatched them to all the islands of the sea. Moreover he got together an hundred ships and filling them with troops, sent them to sail about in quest of Janshah, while he himself withdrew with his troops to his capital, where he abode in sore concern. As for Janshah's mother, when she heard of his loss she buffeted her face and began the mourning ceremonies for her son making sure that he was dead. Meanwhile, Janshah and his men ceased not driving before the wind and those in search of them cruised about for ten days till, finding no trace they returned and reported failure to the King. But a stiff gale caught the Prince's craft which went spooning till they made a second island, where they landed and walked about. Presently they came upon a spring of running water in the midst of the island and saw from afar a man sitting hard by it. So they went up to him and saluted him, and he returned their salam, speaking in a voice like the whistle[538] of birds. Whilst Janshah stood marvelling at the man's speech he looked right and left and suddenly split himself in twain, and each half went a different way.[539] Then there came down from the hills a multitude of men of all kinds, beyond count and reckoning; and they no sooner reached the spring, than each one divided into two halves and rushed on Janshah and his Mamelukes to eat them. When the voyagers saw this, they turned and fled seawards; but the cannibals pursued them and caught and ate three of the slaves, leaving only three slaves who with Janshah reached the boat in safety; then launching her made for the water and sailed nights and days without knowing whither their ship went. They killed the gazelle, and lived on her flesh, till the winds drove them to a third island which was full of trees and waters and flower-gardens and orchards laden with all fashion of fruits: and streams strayed under the tree shade: brief, the place was a Garden of Eden. The island pleased the Prince and he said to his companions, 'Which of you will land and explore?' Then said one of the slaves, 'That will I do'; but he replied, 'This thing may not be; you must all land and explore the place while I abide in the boat.' So he set them ashore," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "the Prince set them ashore, and they searched the island, East and West, but found no one; then they fared on inland to the heart thereof, till they came to a Castle compassed about with ramparts of white marble, within which was a palace of the clearest crystal and, set in its centre a garden containing all manner fruits beyond description, both fresh and dry, and flowers of grateful odour and trees and birds singing upon the boughs. Amiddlemost the garden was a vast basin of water, and beside it a great open hall with a raised dais whereon stood a number of stools surrounding a throne of red gold, studded with all kinds of jewels and especially rubies and seeing the beauty of the Castle and of the Garden they entered and explored in all directions, but found no one there, so after rummaging the Castle they returned to Janshah and told him what they had seen. When he heard their report, he cried, 'Needs must I solace myself with a sight of it;' so he landed and accompanied them to the palace, which he entered marvelling at the goodliness of the place. They then visited every part of the gardens and ate of the fruits and continued walking till it waxed dark, when they returned to the estrade and sat down, Janshah on the throne in the centre and the three others on the stools ranged to the right and left. Then the Prince, there seated, called to mind his separation from his father's throne-city[540] and country and friends and kinsfolk; and fell a-weeping and lamenting over their loss whilst his men wept around him. And as they were thus sorrowing behold, they heard a mighty clamour, that came from seaward and looking in the direction of the clamour saw a multitude of apes, as they were swarming locusts. Now the castle and the island belonged to these apes, who, finding the strangers' boat moored to the strand, had scuttled it and after repaired to the palace, where they came upon Janshah and his men seated." Here the Serpent- queen again broke off her recital saying, "All this, O Hasib, was told to Bulukiya by the young man sitting between the two tombs." Quoth Hasib, "And what did Janshah do with the apes?"; so the Queen resumed her tale: "He and his men were sore affrighted at the appearance of the apes, but a company of them came up to the throne whereon he sat and, kissing the earth before him, stood awhile in his presence with their paws upon their breasts in posture of respect. Then another troop brought to the castle gazelles which they slaughtered and skinned; and roasting pieces of the flesh till fit for food they laid them on platters of gold and silver and spreading the table, made signs to Janshah and his men to eat. The Prince and his followers came down from their seats and ate, and the apes ate with them, till they were satisfied, when the apes took away the meat and set on fruits of which they partook and praised Allah the most Highest. Then Janshah asked the apes by signs what they were and to whom the palace belonged, and they answered him by signals, ‘Know ye that this island belonged of yore to our lord Solomon, son of David (on both of whom be peace!), and he used to come hither once every year for his solace,’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Janshah asked the apes by signs to whom the palace belonged, they answered him by signals, “‘Of a truth this place belonged of yore to our lord Solomon, son of David (on both of whom be peace!), who used to come hither once every year for his solace, and then wend his ways.’ Presently the apes continued, ‘And know, O King, that thou art become our Sultan and we are thy servants; so eat and drink, and whatso thou ever bid us, that will we do.’ So saying, they severally kissed the earth between the hands of Janshah and all took their departure. The Prince slept that night on the throne and his men on the stools about him, and on the morrow, at daybreak, the four Wazirs or Captains of the apes presented themselves before him, attended by their troops, who ranged themselves about him, rank after rank, until the place was crowded. Then the Wazirs approached and exhorted him by signs to do justice amongst them and rule them righteously; after which the apes cried out to one another and went away, all save a small party which remained in presence to serve him. After awhile, there came up a company of apes with huge dogs in the semblance of horses, each wearing about his head a massive chain; and signed to Janshah and his three followers to mount and go with them. So they mounted, marvelling at the greatness of the dogs, and rode forth, attended by the four Wazirs and a host of apes like swarming locusts, some riding on dogs and others afoot till they came to the sea-shore. Janshah looked for the boat which brought him and finding it scuttled turned to the Wazirs and asked how this had happened to it; whereto they answered, ‘Know, O King, that, when thou camest to our island, we kenned that thou wouldst be

Sultan over us and we feared lest ye all flee from us, in our absence; and embark in the boat, so we sank it.' When Janshah heard this, he turned to his Mamelukes and said to them, 'We have no means of escaping from these apes, and we must patiently await the ordinance of the Almighty.' Then they fared on inland and ceased not faring till they came to the banks of a river, on whose other side rose a high mountain, whereon Janshah saw a multitude of Ghuls. So he turned to the apes and asked them, 'What are these Ghuls?' and they answered, 'Know, O King, that these Ghuls are our mortal foes and we come hither to do battle with them.' Janshah marvelled to see them riding horses, and was startled at the vastness of their bulk and the strangeness of their semblance; for some of them had heads like bulls and others like camels. As soon as the Ghuls espied the army of the apes, they charged down to the river bank and standing there, fell to pelting them with stones as big as maces; and between them there befell a sore fight. Presently, Janshah, seeing that the Ghuls were getting the better of the apes, cried out to his men, saying, 'Unease your bows and arrows and shoot at them your best shafts and keep them off from us.' They did so and slew of the Ghuls much people, when there fell upon them sore dismay and they turned to flee; but the apes, seeing Janshah's prowess, forded the river and headed by their Sultan chased the Ghuls, killing many of them in the pursuit, till they reached the high mountain where they disappeared. And while exploring the said mountain Janshah found a tablet of alabaster, whereon was written, 'O thou who enterest this land, know that thou wilt become Sultan over these apes and that from them there is no escape for thee, except by the passes that run east and west through the mountains. If thou take the eastern pass, thou wilt fare through a country swarming with Ghuls and wild beasts, Marids and Ifrits, and thou wilt come, after three months' journeying, to the ocean which encompasseth the earth; but, if thou travel by the western pass, it will bring thee, after four months' journeying, to the head of the Wady of Emmets.[541] When thou hast followed the road, that leads through this mountain, ten days,' " — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Janshah read this much upon the tablet and found, at the end of the inscription, "'Then thou wilt come to a great river, whose current is so swift that it blindeth the eyes. Now this river drieth up every Sabbath,[542] and on the opposite bank lies a city wholly inhabited by Jews, who the faith of Mohammed refuse; there is not a Moslem among the band nor is there other than this city in the land. Better therefore lord it over the apes, for so long as thou shalt tarry amongst them they will be victorious over the Ghuls. And know also that he who wrote this tablet was the lord Solomon, son of David (on both be peace!).' When Janshah read these words, he wept sore and repeated them to his men. Then they mounted again and, surrounded by the army of the apes who were rejoicing in their victory, returned to the castle. Here Janshah abode, Sultaning over them, for a year and a half. And at the end of this time, he one day commanded the ape-army to mount and go forth a hunting with him, and they rode out into the woods and wilds, and fared on from place to place, till they approached the Wady of Emmets, which Janshah knew by the description of it upon the alabaster tablet. Here he bade them dismount and they all abode there, eating and drinking a space of ten days, after which Janshah took his men apart one night and said, 'I purpose we flee through the Valley of Emmets and make for the town of the Jews; it may be Allah will deliver us from these apes and we will go God's ways.' They replied, 'We hear and we obey:' so he waited till some little of the night was spent then, donning his armour and girding his sword and dagger and such like weapons, and his men doing likewise, they set out and fared on westwards till morning. When the apes awoke and missed Janshah and his men, they knew that they had fled. So they mounted and pursued them, some taking the eastern pass and others that which led to the Wady of Emmets, nor was it long before the apes came in sight of the fugitives, as they were about to enter the valley, and hastened after them. When Janshah and his men saw them, they fled into the Emmet-valley; but the apes soon overtook them and would have slain them, when behold, there rose out of the earth a multitude of ants like swarming locusts, as big as dogs, and charged home upon the apes. They devoured many of their foes, and these also slew many of the ants; but help came to the emmets: now an ant would go up to an ape and smite him and cut him in twain, whilst ten apes could hardly master one ant and bear him away and tear him in sunder. The sore battle lasted till the evening but the emmets were victorious. In the gloaming Janshah and his men took to flight and fled along the sole of the Wady.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “in the gloaming Janshah and his men took to flight and fled along the sole of the Wady till the morning. With the break of day, the apes were up and at them, which when the Prince saw, he shouted to his men, ‘Smite with your swords.’ So they bared their blades and laid on load right and left, till there ran at them an ape, with tusks like an elephant, and smote one of the Mamelukes and cut him in sunder. Then the apes redoubled upon Janshah and he fled with his followers into the lower levels of the valley, where he saw a vast river and by its side a mighty army of ants. When the emmets espied Janshah they pushed on and surrounded him, and one of the slaves fell to smiting them with his sword and cutting them in twain; whereupon the whole host set upon him and slew him. At this pass, behold, up came the apes from over the mountain and fell in numbers upon Janshah; but he tore off his clothes and, plunging into the river, with his remaining servant, struck out for the middle of the stream. Presently, he caught sight of a tree on the other bank; so he swam up to it and laying hold of one of its branches, hung to it and swung himself ashore, but as for the last Mameluke the current carried him away and dashed him to pieces against the mountain. Thereupon Janshah fell to wringing his clothes and spreading them in the sun to dry, what while there befell a fierce fight between the apes and the ants, until the apes gave up the pursuit and returned to their own land. Meanwhile, Janshah, who abode alone on the river-bank, could do naught but shed tears till nightfall, when he took refuge in a cavern and there passed the dark hours, in great fear and feeling desolate for the loss of his slaves. At daybreak awaking from his sleep he set out again and fared on nights and days, eating of the herbs of the earth, till he came to the mountain which burnt like fire, and thence he made the river which dried up every Sabbath. Now it was a mighty stream and on the opposite bank stood a great city, which was the capital of the Jews mentioned in the tablet. Here he abode till the next Sabbath, when the river dried up and he walked over to the other side and entered the Jew city, but saw none in the streets. So he wandered about till he came to the door of a homestead, which he opened and entering, espied within the people of the house sitting in silence and speaking not a syllable. Quoth he, ‘I am a stranger and anhungered;’ and they signed to him, as to say, ‘Eat and drink, but speak not.’[543] So he ate and drank and slept that night and, when morning dawned, the master of the house greeted him and bade him welcome and asked him, ‘Whence comest thou and whither art thou bound?’ At these words Janshah wept sore and told him all that had befallen him and how his father was King of Kabul; whereat the Jew marvelled and said, ‘Never heard we of that city, but we have heard from the merchants of the caravans that in that direction lieth a land called Al-Yaman.’ ‘How far is that land from this place?’ asked Janshah, and the Jew answered, ‘The Cafilah merchants pretend that it is a two years and three months’ march from their land hither.’ Quoth Janshah, ‘And when doth the caravan come?’ Quoth the Jew, ‘Next year ‘twill come.’ “ — And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Jew was questioned anent the coming of the caravan, he replied, “‘Next year ‘twill come.’ At these words the Prince wept sore and fell a-sorrowing for himself and his Mamelukes; and lamenting his separation from his mother and father and all which had befallen him in his wanderings. Then said the Jew, ‘O young man, do not weep, but sojourn with us till the caravan shall come, when we will send thee with it to thine own country.’ So he tarried with the Jew two whole months and every day he went out walking in the streets for his solace and diversion. Now it chanced one day, whilst he paced about the main thoroughfares, as of wont, and was bending his steps right and left, he heard a crier crying aloud and saying, ‘Who will earn a thousand gold pieces and a slave- girl of surpassing beauty and loveliness by working for me between morning and noontide?’ But no one answered him and Janshah said in his mind, ‘Were not this work dangerous and difficult, he would not offer a thousand diners and a fair girl for half a day's labour.' Then he accosted the crier and said, 'I will do the work;' so the man carried him to a lofty mansion where they found one who was a Jew and a merchant, seated on an ebony chair, to whom quoth the crier, standing respectfully before him, 'O merchant, I have cried every day these three months, and none hath answered, save this young man.' Hearing his speech the Jew welcomed Janshah, led him into a magnificent sitting-room and signalled to bring food. So the servants spread the table and set thereon all manner meats, of which the merchant and Janshah ate, and washed their hands. Then wine was served up and they drank; after which the Jew rose and bringing Janshah a purse of a thousand diners and a slave-girl of rare beauty, said to him, 'Take maid and money to thy hire.' Janshah took them and seated the girl by his side when the trader resumed, 'To-morrow to the work!'; and so saying he withdrew and Janshah slept with the damsel that night. As soon as it was morning, the merchant bade his slaves clothe him in a costly suit of silk whenas he came out of the Hammam-Bath. So they did as he bade them and brought him back to the house, whereupon the merchant called for harp and lute and wine and they drank and played and made merry till the half of the night was past, when the Jew retired to his Harim and Janshah lay with his slave-girl till the dawn. Then he went to the bath and on his return, the merchant came to him and said, 'Now I wish thee to do the work for me.' 'I hear and obey,' replied Janshah. So the merchant bade his slaves bring two she- mules and set Janshah on one, mounting the other himself. Then they rode forth from the city and fared on from morn till noon, when they made a lofty mountain, to whose height was no limit. Here the Jew dismounted, ordering Janshah to do the same; and when he obeyed the merchant gave him a knife and a cord, saying, 'I desire that thou slaughter this mule.' So Janshah tucked up his sleeves and skirts and going up to the mule, bound her legs with the cord, then threw her and cut her throat; after which he skinned her and lopped off her head and legs and she became a mere heap of flesh. Then said the Jew, 'Slit open the mule's belly and enter it and I will sew it up on thee. There must thou abide awhile and whatsoever thou seest in her belly, acquaint me therewith.’ So Janshah slit the mule’s belly and crept into it, whereupon the merchant sewed it up on him and withdrew to a distance,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “the merchant sewed up the mule’s belly on Janshah and, withdrawing to a distance, hid himself in the skirts of the mountain. After a while a huge bird swooped down on the dead mule and snatching it up, flew up with it to the top of the mountain, where it set down the quarry and would have eaten it; but Janshah, feeling the bird begin to feed, slit the mule’s belly and came forth. When the bird saw him, it took fright at him and flew right away; whereupon he stood up and looking right and left, saw nothing but the carcasses of dead men, mummied by the sun, and exclaimed, ‘There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!’ Then he looked down the precipice and espied the merchant standing at the mountain-foot, looking for him. As soon as the Jew caught sight of him, he called out to him, ‘Throw me down of the stones which are about thee, that I may direct thee to a way whereby thou mayst descend.’ So Janshah threw him down some two hundred of the stones, which were all rubies,[544] chrysolites and other gems of price; after which he called out to him, saying, ‘Show me the way down and I will throw thee as many more.’ But the Jew gathered up the stones and, binding them on the back of the mule, went his way without answering a word and left Janshah alone on the mountain-top. When the Prince found himself deserted, he began to weep and implore help of Heaven, and thus he abode three days; after which he rose and fared on over the mountainous ground two month’s space, feeding upon hill-herbs; and he ceased not faring till he came to its skirts and espied afar off a Wady full of fruitful trees and birds harmonious, singing the praises of Allah, the One, the Victorious. At this sight he joyed with great joy and stayed not his steps till, after an hour or so, he came to a ravine in the rocks, through which the rain torrents fell into the valley. He made his way down the cleft till he reached the Wady which he had seen from the mountain-top and walked on therein, gazing right and left, nor ceased so doing until he came in sight of a great castle, towering high in air. As he drew near the gates he saw an old man of comely aspect and face shining with light standing thereat with a staff of carnelian in his hand, and going up to him, saluted him. The Shaykh returned his salam and bade him welcome, saying, ‘Sit down, O my son.’ So he sat down at the door of the castle and the old man said to him, ‘How camest thou to this land, untrodden by son of Adam before thee, and whither art thou bound?’ When Janshah heard his words he wept bitterly at the thought of all the hardships he had suffered and his tears choked his speech. Quoth the Shaykh, ‘O my son, leave weeping; for indeed thou makest my heart ache.’ So saying, he rose and set somewhat of food before him and said to him, ‘Eat.’ He ate and praised Allah Almighty; after which the old man besought him saying, ‘O my son, I would have thee tell me thy tale and acquaint me with thine adventures.’ So Janshah related to him all that had befallen him, from first to last, whereat the Shaykh marvelled with exceeding marvel. Then said the Prince, ‘Prithee inform me who is the lord of this valley and to whom doth this great castle belong?’ Answered the old man, ‘Know, O my son, this valley and all that is therein and this castle with all it containeth belong to the lord Solomon, son of David (on both be peace!). As for me, my name is Shaykh Nasr,[545] King of the Birds; for thou must know that the lord Solomon committed this castle to my charge,’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “Shaykh Nasr pursued, ‘Thou must know that the lord Solomon com misted this castle to my charge and taught me the language of birds and made me ruler over all the fowls which be in the world; wherefore each and every come hither once in the twelvemonth, and I pass them in review: then they depart; and this is why I dwell here.’ When Janshah heard this, he wept sore and said to the Shaykh, ‘O my father, how shall I do to get back to my native land?’ Replied the old man, ‘Know, O my son, that thou art near to the mountain Kaf, and there is no departing for thee from this place till the birds come, when I will give thee in charge to one of them, and he will bear thee to thy native country. Meanwhile tarry with me here and eat and drink and divert thyself with viewing the apartments of this castle.' So Janshah abode with Shaykh Nasr, taking his pleasure in the Wady and eating of its fruits and laughing and making merry with the old man, and leading a right joyous life till the day appointed for the birds to pay their annual visit to the Governor. Thereupon the Shaykh said to him, 'O Janshah, take the keys of the castle and solace thyself with exploring all its apartments and viewing whatever be therein, but as regards such a room, beware and again beware of opening its door; and if thou gainsay me and open it and enter there, through nevermore shalt thou know fair fortune.' He repeated this charge again and again with much instance; then he went forth to meet the birds, which came up, kind by kind, and kissed his hands. Such was his case; but as regards Janshah, he went round about the castle, opening the various doors and viewing the apartments into which they led, till he came to the room which Shaykh Nasr had warned him not to open or enter. He looked at the door and its fashion pleased him, for it had on it a padlock of gold, and he said to himself, 'This room must be goodlier than all the others; would Heaven I wist what is within it, that Shaykh Nasr should forbid me to open its door! There is no help but that I enter and see what is in this apartment; for whatso is decreed unto the creature perforce he must fulfil.' So he put out his hand and unlocked the door and entering, found himself before a great basin; and hard by it stood a little pavilion, builded all of gold and silver and crystal, with lattice-windows of jacinth. The floor was paved with green beryl and balas rubies and emeralds and other jewels, set in the ground-work mosaic-fashion, and in the midmost of the pavilion was a jetting fountain in a golden basin, full of water and girt about with figures of beasts and birds, cunningly wrought of gold and silver and casting water from their mouths. When the zephyr blew on them, it entered their ears and therewith the figures sang out with birdlike song, each in its own tongue. Beside the fountain was a great open saloon with a high dais whereon stood a vast throne of carnelian, inlaid with pearls and jewels, over which was spread a tent of green silk fifty cubits in width and embroidered with gems fit for seal rings and purfled with precious metals. Within this tent was a closet containing the carpet of the lord Solomon (on whom be peace!); and the pavilion was compassed about with a vast garden full of fruit trees and streams; while near the palace were beds of roses and basil and eglantine and all manner sweet-smelling herbs and flowers. And the trees bore on the same boughs fruits fresh and dry and the branches swayed gracefully to the wooing of the wind. All this was in that one apartment and Janshah wondered thereat till he was weary of wonderment; and he set out to solace himself in the palace and the garden and to divert himself with the quaint and curious things they contained. And first looking at the basin he saw that the gravels of its bed were gems and jewels and noble metals; and many other strange things were in that apartment." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "Janshah saw many strange things and admirable in that apartment. Then he entered the pavilion and mounting the throne, fell asleep under the tent set up thereover. He slept for a time and, presently awaking, walked forth and sat down on a stool before the door. As he sat, marvelling at the goodliness of that place, there flew up from mid sky three birds, in dove-form but big as eagles, and lighted on the brink of the basin, where they sported awhile. Then they put off their feathers and became three maidens,[546] as they were moons, that had not their like in the whole world. They plunged into the basin and swam about and disported themselves and laughed, while Janshah marvelled at their beauty and loveliness and the grace and symmetry of their shapes. Presently, they came up out of the water and began walking about and taking their solace in the garden; and Janshah seeing them land was like to lose his wits. He rose and followed them, and when he overtook them, he saluted them and they returned his salam; after which quoth he, 'Who are ye, O illustrious Princesses, and whence come ye?' Replied the youngest damsel, 'We are from the invisible world of Almighty Allah and we come hither to divert ourselves.' He marvelled at their beauty and said to the youngest, 'Have ruth on me and deign kindness to me and take pity on my case and on all that hath befallen me in my life.' Rejoined she, 'Leave this talk and wend thy ways'; whereat the tears streamed from his eyes, and he sighed heavily and repeated these couplets,

‘She shone out in the garden in garments all of green, * With
open vest and collars and flowing hair beseen:
‘What is thy name?’ I asked her, and she replied, ‘I’m she * Who
roasts the hearts of lovers on coals of love and teen.’
Of passion and its anguish to her made my moan; * ‘Upon a rock,’
she answered, ‘thy plaints are wasted clean.’
‘Even if thy heart,’ I told her, ‘be rock in very deed, * Yet
hath God made fair water well from the rock, I
ween.’[547]

When the maidens heard his verses, they laughed and played and sang and made merry. Then he brought them somewhat of fruit, and they ate and drank and slept with him till the morning, when they donned their feather-suits, and resuming dove shape flew off and went their way. But as he saw them disappearing from sight, his reason well nigh fled with them, and he gave a great cry and fell down in a fainting fit and lay a-swooning all that day. While he was in this case Shaykh Nasr returned from the Parliament of the Fowls and sought for Janshah, that he might send him with them to his native land, but found him not and knew that he had entered the forbidden room. Now he had already said to the birds, ‘With me is a young man, a mere youth, whom destiny brought hither from a distant land; and I desire of you that ye take him up and carry him to his own country.’ And all answered, ‘We hear and we obey.’ So he ceased not searching for Janshah till he came to the forbidden door and seeing it open he entered and found the Prince lying a-swoon under a tree. He fetched scented waters and sprinkled them on his face, whereupon he revived and turned.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Tenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “when Shaykh Nasr saw Janshah lying a-swoon under the tree he fetched him somewhat of scented waters and sprinkled them on his face. Thereupon he revived and turned right and left, but seeing none by him save the Shaykh, sighed heavily and repeated these couplets,

‘Like fullest moon she shines on happiest night, * Soft sided

fair, with slender shape bedight.
Her eye-babes charm the world with gramarye; * Her lips remind of
rose and ruby light.
Her jetty locks make night upon her hips; * Ware, lovers, ware ye
of that curl's despight!
Yea, soft her sides are, but in love her heart * Outhardens
flint, surpasses syenite:
And bows of eyebrows shower glancey shafts * Despite the distance
never fail to smite.
Then, ah, her beauty! all the fair it passes; * Nor any rival her
who see the light.'

When Shaykh Nasr heard these verses, he said, 'O my son, did I not warn thee not to open that door and enter that room? But now, O my son, tell me what thou sawest therein and acquaint me with all that betided thee.' So Janshah related to him all that had passed between him and the three maidens, and Shaykh Nasr, who sat listening in silence said, 'Know, O my son, that these three maidens are of the daughters of the Jann and come hither every year for a day, to divert themselves and make merry until mid afternoon, when they return to their own country.' Janshah asked, 'And where is their country?'; and the old man answered, 'By Allah, O my son, I wot not:' presently adding, 'but now take heart and put away this love from thee and come with me, that I may send thee to thine own land with the birds.' When Janshah heard this, he gave a great cry and fell down in a trance; and presently he came to himself, and said, 'O my father indeed I care not to return to my native land: all I want is to foregather with these maidens and know, O my father, that I will never again name my people, though I die before thee.' Then he wept and cried, 'Enough for me that I look upon the face of her I love, although it be only once in the year!' And he sighed deeply and repeated these couplets,

'Would Heaven the Phantom[548] spared the friend at night *
And would this love for man were ever dight!
Were not my heart afire for love of you, * Tears ne'er had
stained my cheeks nor dimmed my sight.

By night and day, I bid my heart to bear * Its griefs, while
fires of love my body blight.'

Then he fell at Shaykh Nasr's feet and kissed them and wept sore, crying, 'Have pity on me, so Allah take pity on thee and aid me in my strait so Allah aid thee!' Replied the old man, 'By Allah O my son, I know nothing of these maidens nor where may be their country; but, O my son, if thy heart be indeed set on one of them, tarry with me till this time next year for they will assuredly reappear; and, when the day of their coming draweth near, hide thyself under a tree in the garden. As soon as they have alighted and doffed their feather-robes and plunged into the lake and are swimming about at a distance from their clothes, seize the vest of her whom thy soul desireth. When they see thee, they will come a bank and she, whose coat thou hast taken, will accost thee and say to thee with the sweetest of speech and the most witching of smiles, 'Give me my dress, O my brother, that I may don it and veil my nakedness withal.' But if thou yield to her prayer and give her back the vest thou wilt never win thy wish: nay, she will don it and fly away to her folk and thou wilt nevermore see her again Now when thou hast gained the vest, clap it under thine armpit and hold it fast, till I return from the Parliament of the Fowls, when I will make accord between thee and her and send thee back to thy native land, and the maiden with thee. And this, O my son, is all I can do for thee, nothing more.' " — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eleventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "quoth Shaykh Nasr to Janshah, 'Hold fast the feather-robe of her thy soul desireth and give it not back to her till I return from the Parliament of the Fowls. And this, O my son, is all I can do for thee, nothing more.' When Janshah heard this, his heart was solaced and he abode with Shaykh Nasr yet another year, counting the days as they passed until the day of the coming of the birds. And when at last the appointed time arrived the old man said to him, 'Do as I enjoined thee and charged thee with the maidens in the matter of the feather-dress, for I go to meet the birds;' and Janshah replied, 'I hear and I obey, O my father.’ Then the Shaykh departed whilst the Prince walked into the garden and hid himself under a tree, where none could see him. Here he abode a first day and a second and a third, but the maidens came not; whereat he was sore troubled and wept and sighed from a heart hard tried; and he ceased not weeping and wailing till he fainted away. When he came to himself, he fell to looking now at the basin and now at the welkin, and anon at the earth and anon at the open country, whilst his heart grieved for stress of love-longing. As he was in this case, behold, the three doves appeared in the firmament, eagle-sized as before, and flew till they reached the garden and lighted down beside the basin. They turned right and left; but saw no one, man or Jann; so they doffed their feather-suits and became three maidens. Then they plunged into the basin and swam about, laughing and frolicking; and all were mother-naked and fair as bars of virgin silver. Quoth the eldest, ‘O my sister, I fear lest there be some one lying ambushed for us in the pavilion. Answered the second, ‘O sister, since the days of King Solomon none hath entered the pavilion, be he man or Jann;’ and the youngest added, laughing, ‘By Allah, O my sisters, if there be any hidden there, he will assuredly take none but me.’ Then they continued sporting and laughing and Janshah’s heart kept fluttering for stress of passion: but he hid behind the tree so that he saw without being seen. Presently they swam out to the middle of the basin leaving their clothes on the bank. Hereupon he sprang to his feet, and running like the darting levee to the basin’s brink, snatched up the feather-vest of the youngest damsel, her on whom his heart was set and whose name was Shamsah the Sun-maiden. At this the girls turned and seeing him, were affrighted and veiled their shame from him in the water. Then they swam near the shore and looking on his favour saw that he was bright faced as the moon on the night of fullness and asked him, ‘Who art thou and how camest thou hither and why hast thou taken the clothes of the lady Shamsah?’; and he answered, ‘Come hither to me and I will tell you my tale.’ Quoth Shamsah, ‘What deed is this, and why hast thou taken my clothes, rather than those of my sisters?’ Quoth he, ‘O light of mine eyes, come forth of the water, and I will recount thee my case and acquaint thee why I chose thee out.’ Quoth she, ‘O my lord and coolth of my eyes and fruit of my heart, give me my clothes, that I may put them on and cover my nakedness withal; then will I come forth to thee.’ But he replied, ‘O Princess of beautiful ones, how can I give thee back thy clothes and slay myself for love longing? Verily, I will not give them to thee, till Shaykh Nasr, the king of the birds, shall return.’ Quoth she, ‘If thou wilt not give me my clothes withdraw a little apart from us, that my sisters may land and dress themselves and lend me somewhat wherewithal to cover my shame.’ ‘I hear and obey,’ answered he, and walked away from them into the pavilion, whereupon the three Princesses came out and the two elder, donning their dress, gave Shamsah somewhat thereof, not enough to fly withal, and she put it on and came forth of the water, and stood before him, as she were the rising full moon or a browsing gazelle. Then Shamsah entered the pavilion, where Janshah was still sitting on the throne; so she saluted him and taking seat near him, said, ‘O fair of face, thou hast undone thyself and me; but tell us thy adventures that we may ken how it is with thee.’ At these words he wept till he drenched his dress with his tears; and when she saw that he was distracted for love of her, she rose and taking him by the hand, made him sit by her side and wiped away the drops with her sleeve; and said she, ‘O fair of face, leave this weeping and tell us thy tale.’ So he related to her all that had befallen him and described to her all he had seen,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twelfth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “the lady Shamsah said to Janshah, ‘Tell us thy tale;’ so he related to her all that had befallen him; and, after she had lent attentive ear she sighed and said, ‘O my lord, since thou art so fondly in love with me, give me my dress, that I may fly to my folk, I and my sisters, and tell them what affection thou hast conceived for me, and after I will come back to thee and carry thee to thine own country.’ When he heard this, he wept sore and replied, ‘Is it lawful to thee before Allah to slay me wrongfully?’ She asked, ‘O my lord, why should I do such wrongous deed?’; and he answered, ‘If I give thee thy gear thou wilt fly away from me, and I shall die forthright.’ Princess Shamsah laughed at this and so did her sisters; then said she to him, ‘Be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear, for I must needs marry thee.’ So saying, she bent down to him and embraced him and pressing him to her breast kissed him between the eyes and on his cheeks. They clipped and clasped each other awhile, after which they drew apart and sat down on the throne. Then the eldest Princess went out into the garden and, plucking somewhat of fruits and flowers, brought them into the pavilion; and they ate and drank and laughed and sported and made merry. Now Janshah was singular in beauty and loveliness and slender shape and symmetry and grace, and the Princess Shamsah said to him, ‘O my beloved, by Allah, I love thee with exceeding love and will never leave thee!’ When he heard her words, his breast broadened and he laughed for joy till he showed his teeth; and they abode thus awhile in mirth and gladness and frolic. And when they were at the height of their pleasure and joyance, behold, Shaykh Nasr returned from the Parliament of the Fowls and came in to them; whereupon they all rose to him and saluted him and kissed his hands. He gave them welcome and bade them be seated. So they sat down and he said to Princess Shamsah, ‘Verily this youth loveth thee with exceeding love; Allah upon thee, deal kindly with him, for he is of the great ones of mankind and of the sons of the kings, and his father ruleth over the land of Kabul and his reign compasseth a mighty empire.’ Quoth she, ‘I hear and I obey thy behest’; and, kissing the Shaykh’s hands stood before him in respect. Quoth he, ‘If thou say sooth, swear to me by Allah that thou wilt never betray him, what while thou abidest in the bonds of life.’ So she swore a great oath that she would never betray Janshah, but would assuredly marry him, and added, ‘Know, O Shaykh Nasr, that I never will forsake him.’ The Shaykh believed in her oath and said to Janshah, ‘Thanks be to Allah, who hath made you arrive at this understanding!’ Hereupon the Prince rejoiced with exceeding joy, and he and Shamsah abode three months with Shaykh Nasr, feasting and toying and making merry.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that, “Janshah and the lady Shamsah abode three months with Shaykh Nasr, feasting and toying and making merry. And at the end of that time she said to Janshah, ‘I wish to go with thee to thy mother land, where thou shalt marry me and we will abide there.’ ‘To hear is to obey,’ answered he and took counsel with Shaykh Nasr who said to him, ‘Go thou home, I commend her to thy care.’ Then said she, ‘O Shaykh Nasr, bid him render me my feather-suit.’ So the Shaykh bade Janshah give it to her, and he went straightways into the pavilion and brought it out for her. There upon she donned it and said to him, ‘Mount my back and shut thine eyes and stop thine ears, so thou mayst not hear the roar of the revolving sphere; and keep fast hold of my feathers, lest thou fall off.’ He did as she bade him and, as she stretched her wings to fly, Shaykh Nasr said, ‘Wait a while till I describe to thee the land Kabul, lest you twain miss your way.’ So she delayed till he had said his say and had bidden them farewell, commending the Prince to her care. She took leave of her sisters and bade them return to her folk and tell them what had befallen her with Janshah; then, rising into the air without stay or delay she flew off, like the wafts of the wind or the ramping leven. Her sisters also took flight and returning home delivered her message to their people. And she stayed not her course from the forenoon till the hour of mid-afternoon prayer (Janshah being still on her back), when she espied afar off a Wady abounding in trees and streams and she said to Janshah, ‘I am thinking to alight in this valley, that we may solace ourselves amongst its trees and herbage and here rest for the night.’ Quoth he, “Do what seemeth meet to thee!’ So she swooped down from the lift and alighted in the Wady, when Janshah dismounted and kissing her between the eyes,[549] sat with her awhile on the bank of a river there; then they rose and wandered about the valley, taking their pleasure therein and eating of the fruits of the trees, until nightfall, when they lay down under a tree and slept till the morning dawned. As soon as it was day, the Princess arose and, bidding Janshah mount, flew on with him till noon, when she perceived by the appearance of the buildings which Shaykh Nasr had described to her, that they were nearing the city Kabul. So she swooped down from the welkin and alighted in a wide plain, a blooming champaign, wherein were gazelles straying and springs playing and rivers flowing and ripe fruits growing. So Janshah dismounted and kissed her between the eyes; and she asked him, ‘O my beloved and coolth of mine eyes, knowest thou how many days’ journey we have come since yesterday?'; and he answered, 'No,' when she said, 'We have come thirty months' journey.' Quoth he, 'Praised be Allah for safety!' Then they sat down side by side and ate and drank and toyed and laughed. And whilst they were thus pleasantly engaged, behold, there came up to them two of the King's Mamelukes of those who had been of the Prince's company, one of them was he whom he had left with the horses, when he embarked in the fishing-boat and the other had been of his escort in the chase. As soon as they saw Janshah, both knew him and saluted him; then said they, 'With thy leave, we will go to thy sire and bear him the glad tidings of thy coming.' Replied the Prince, 'Go ye to my father and acquaint him with my case, and fetch us tents, for we will tarry here seven days to rest ourselves till he make ready his retinue to meet us, that we may enter in stateliest state.'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fourteenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "Janshah said to the two Mamelukes, 'Go ye to my sire and acquaint him with my case and fetch us tents, for we will abide here seven days to rest ourselves, till he make ready his retinue to meet us that we may enter in the stateliest state.' So the officers hastened back to King Teghmus and said to him, 'Good news, O King of the age!' Asked he, 'What good tidings bring ye: is my son Janshah come back?'; and they answered, 'Yes, thy son Janshah hath returned from his strangerhood and is now near at hand in the Kirαnν mead.' Now when the King heard this, he joyed with great joy and fell down in a swoon for excess of gladness; then, coming to himself, he bade his Wazir give each of the Mamelukes a splendid suit of honour and a sum of money. The minister replied, 'I hear and obey,' and forthright did his bidding and said to them, 'Take this in turn for the good tidings ye bring, whether ye lie or say sooth.' They replied, 'Indeed we lie not, for but now we sat with him and saluted him and kissed his hands and he bade us fetch him tents, for that he would sojourn in the meadow seven days, till such time as the Wazirs and Emirs and Grandees should come out to meet him.' Quoth the King, 'How is it with my son?' and quoth they, 'He hath with him a Houri, as he had brought her out of Paradise.' At this, King Teghmus bade beat the kettledrums and sound the trumpets for gladness, and despatched messengers to announce the good news to Janshah's mother and to the wives of the Emirs and Wazirs and Lords of the realm: so the criers spread themselves about the city and acquainted the people with the coming of Prince Janshah. Then the King made ready, and, setting out for the Kirani meadow with his horsemen and footmen, came upon Janshah who was sitting at rest with the lady Shamsah beside him and, behold, all suddenly drew in sight. The Prince rose to his feet and walked forward to meet them; and the troops knew him and dismounted, to salute him and kiss his hands: after which he set out preceded by the men in single file till he came to his sire, who, at sight of his son threw himself from his horse's back and clasped him to his bosom and wept flooding tears of joy. Then they took horse again with the retinue riding to the right and left and fared forward till they came to the river banks; when the troops alighted and pitched their tents and pavilions and standards to the blare of trump and the piping of fife and the dub-a-dub of drum and tom-tom. Moreover the King bade the tent pitchers set up a pavilion of red silk for the Princess Shamsah, who put off her scanty raiment of feathers for fine robes and, entering the pavilion, there took seat. And as she sat in her beauty, behold, the King and his son Janshah came in to her, and when she saw Teghmus, she rose and kissed the ground before him. The King sat down and seating Janshah on his right hand and Princess Shamsah on his left, bade her welcome and said to his son, 'Tell me all that hath befallen thee in this thy long strangerhood.' So Janshah related to him the whole of his adventures from first to last, whereat he marvelled with exceeding marvel and turning to the Princess, said, 'Laud to Allah for that He hath caused thee to reunite me with my son! Verily this is of His exceeding bounty!'"[550] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifteenth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "King Teghmus said to the lady Shamsah, 'Laud to Allah for that He hath caused thee to reunite me with my son! Verily this is of His exceeding bounty.' And now I would have thee ask of me what thou wilt, that I may do it in thine honour.' Quoth she, 'I ask of thee that thou build me a palace in the midst of a flower garden, with water running under it.' And the King answered, 'I hear and obey.' And behold, up came Janshah's mother, attended by all the wives of the Wazirs and Emirs and nobles and city notables. When her son had sight of her, he rose and leaving the tent, went forth to meet her and they embraced a long while, whilst the Queen wept for excess of joy and with tears trickling from her eyes repeated the following verses,

'Joy so o'ercometh me, for stress of joy * In that which
gladdeneth me I fain shed tears:
Tears are become your nature, O my eyes, * Who weep for joyance
as for griefs and fears.'

And they complained to each other of all their hearts had suffered from the long separation. Then the King departed to his pavilion and Janshah carried his mother to his own tent, where they sat talking till there came up some of the lady Shamsah's attendants who said, The Princess is now walking hither in order to salute thee. When the Queen heard this, she rose and going to meet Shamsah, saluted her and seated her awhile by her side. Presently the Queen and her retinue of noble women, the spouses of the Emirs and Grandees, returned with Princess Shamsah to the tent occupied by her daughter-in-law and sat there. Meanwhile, King Teghmus gave great largesse to his levies and liege and rejoiced in his son with exceeding joy, and they tarried there ten days, feasting and merry making and living a most joyous life. At the end of this time, the King commanded a march and they all returned to the capital, so he took horse surrounded by all the troops with the Wazirs and Chamberlains to his right and left nor ceased they faring till they entered the city, which was decorated after the goodliest fashion; for the folk had adorned the houses with precious stuffs and jewellery and spread costly bro cedes under the hoofs of the horses. The drums beat for glad tidings and the Grandees of the kingdom rejoiced and brought rich gifts and the lookers-on were filled with amazement. Furthermore, they fed the mendicants and Fakirs and held high festival for the space of ten days, and the lady Shamsah joyed with exceeding joy whenas she saw this. Then King Teghmus summoned architects and builders and men of art and bade them build a palace in that garden. So they straightway proceeded to do his bidding; and, when Janshah knew of his sire's command he caused the artificers to fetch a block of white marble and carve it and hollow it in the semblance of a chest; which being done he took the feather- vest of Princess Shamsah wherewith she had flown with him through the air: then, sealing the cover with melted lead, he ordered them to bury the box in the foundations and build over it the arches whereon the palace was to rest. They did as he bade them, nor was it long before the palace was finished: then they furnished it and it was a magnificent edifice, standing in the midst of the garden, with streams flowing under its walls.[551] Upon this the King caused Janshah's wedding to be celebrated with the greatest splendour and they brought the bride to the castle in state procession and went their ways. When the lady Shamsah entered, she smelt the scent of her feather-gear." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "when the lady Shamsah entered the new palace, she smelt the scent of her flying feather-gear and knew where it was and determined to take it. So she waited till midnight, when Janshah was drowned in sleep; then she rose and going straight to the place where the marble coffer was buried under the arches she hollowed the ground alongside till she came upon it; when she removed the lead where with it was soldered and, taking out the feather-suit, put it on. Then she flew high in air and perching on the pinnacle of the palace, cried out to those who were therein, saying, 'I pray you fetch me Janshah, that I may bid him farewell.' So they told him and he came out and, seeing her on the terrace roof of the palace, clad in her feather-raiment, asked her, 'Why hast thou done this deed?'; and she answered 'O my beloved and coolth of mine eyes and fruit of my heart, by Allah, I love thee passing dear and I rejoice with exceeding joy in that I have restored thee to thy friends and country and thou hast seen thy mother and father. And now, if thou love me as I love thee, come to me at Takni, the Castle of Jewels.' So saying, she flew away forthright to find her family and friends, and Janshah fell down fainting, being well-nigh dead for despair. They carried the news to

King Teghmus, who mounted at once and riding to the palace, found his son lying senseless on the ground; whereat he wept knowing that the swoon was caused by the loss of his love, and sprinkled rose-water on his face.[552] When the Prince came to himself and saw his sire sitting at his head, he wept at the thought of losing his wife and the King asked what had befallen him. So he replied, ‘Know, O my father, that the lady Shamsah is of the daughters of the Jann and she hath done such and such’ (telling him all that had happened); and the King said, ‘O my son, be not troubled and thus concerned, for I will assemble all the merchants and wayfarers in the land and enquire of them anent that castle. If we can find out where it is, we will journey thither and demand the Princess Shamsah of her people, and we hope in Allah the Almighty that He will give her back to thee and thou shalt consummate thy marriage.’ Then he went out and, calling his four Wazirs without stay or delay, bade them assemble all the merchants and voyagers in the city and question them of Takni, the Castle of Jewels, adding, ‘Whoso knoweth it and can guide us thither, I will surely give him fifty thousand gold pieces.’ The Wazirs accordingly went forth at once and did as the King bade them, but neither trader nor traveller could give them news of Takni, the Castle of Jewels; so they returned and told the King. Thereupon he bade bring beautiful slave-girls and concubines and singers and players upon instruments of music, whose like are not found but with the Kings: and sent them to Janshah, so haply they might divert him from the love of the lady Shamsah. Moreover, he despatched couriers and spies to all the lands and islands and climes, to enquire for Takni, the Castle of Jewels, and they made quest for it two months long, but none could give them news thereof. So they returned and told the King, whereupon he wept bitter tears and going in to his son found Janshah sitting amidst the concubines and singers and players on harp and zither and so forth, not one of whom could console him for the lady Shamsah. Quoth Teghmus, O my son, I can find none who knoweth this Castle of Jewels; but I will bring thee a fairer one than she.’ When Janshah heard this his eyes ran over with tears and he recited these two couplets,

‘Patience hath fled, but passion fareth not; * And all my frame

with pine is fever-hot:
When will the days my lot with Shamsah join? * Lo, all my bones
with passion-lowe go rot!’

Now there was a deadly feud between King Teghmus and a certain King of Hind, by name Kafvd, who had great plenty of troops and warriors and champions; and under his hand were a thousand puissant chieftains, each ruling over a thousand tribes whereof every one could muster four thousand cavaliers. He reigned over a thousand cities each guarded by a thousand forts and he had four Wazirs and under him ruled Emirs, Princes and Sovereigns; and indeed he was a King of great might and prowess whose armies filled the whole earth. Now King Teghmus had made war upon him and ravaged his reign and slain his men and of his treasures had made gain. But when it came to King Kafid’s knowledge that King Teghmus was occupied with the love of his son, so that he neglected the affairs of the state and his troops were grown few and weak by reason of his care and concern for his son’s state, he summoned his Wazirs and Emirs and said to them, ‘Ye all know that whilom King Teghmus invaded our dominions and plundered our possessions and slew my father and brethren, nor indeed is there one of you, but he hath harried his lands and carried off his goods and made prize of his wives and slain some kinsmen of his. Now I have heard this day that he is absorbed in the love of his son Janshah, and that his troops are grown few and weak; and this is the time to take our blood revenge on him. So make ready for the march and don ye your harness of battle; and let nothing stay or delay you, and we will go to him and fall upon him and slay him and his son, and possess ourselves of his reign.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventeenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “Kafid, King of Hind, commanded his troops and armies to mount and make for the dominions of King Teghmus, saying, ‘Get ye ready for the march and don ye your harness of war; and let nothing stay or delay you; so we will go to him and fall upon him and slay him and his son and possess ourselves of his reign.’ They all answered with one voice, saying, ‘We hear and obey,’ and fell at once to equipping themselves and levying troops; and they ceased not their preparations for three months and, when all was in readiness, they beat the drums and sounded the trumps and flew the flags and banners: then King Kafid set out at the head of his host and they fared on till they reached the frontiers of the land of Kabul, the dominions of King Teghmus, where they began to harry the land and do havoc among the folk, slaughtering the old and taking the young prisoners. When the news reached King Teghmus, he was wroth with exceeding wrath and assembling his Grandees and officers of state, said to them ‘Know that Kafid hath come to our land and hath entered the realm we command and is resolved to fight us hand to hand, and he leadeth troops and champions and warriors, whose number none knoweth save Allah Almighty; what deme deem ye?’ Replied they, ‘O King of the age, let us go out to him and give him battle and drive him forth of our country; and thus deem we.’ So he bade them prepare for battle and brought forth to them hauberks and cuirasses and helmets and swords and all manner of warlike gear, such as lay low warriors and do to death the champions of mankind. So the troops and braves and champions flocked together and they set up the standards and beat the drums and sounded the trumpets and clashed the cymbals and piped on the pipes; and King Teghmus marched out at the head of his army, to meet the hosts of Hind. And when he drew near the foe, he called a halt, and encamping with his host in the Zahrαn Valley,[553] hard by the frontier of Kabul despatched to King Kafid by messenger the following letter: ‘Know that what thou hast done is of the doings of the villain rabble and wert thou indeed a King, the son of a King, thou hadst not done thus, nor hadst thou invaded my kingdom and slain my subjects and plundered their property and wrought upright upon them. Knowest thou not that all this is the fashion of a tyrant! Verily, had I known that thou durst harry my dominions, I had come to thee before thy coming and had prevented thee this long while since. Yet, even now, if thou wilt retire and leave mischief between us and thee, well and good; but if thou return not, meet me in the listed field and measure thyself with me in cut and thrust.’ Lastly he sealed his letter and committed to an officer of his army and sent with him spies to spy him out news. The messenger fared forth with the missive and, drawing near the enemy's camp, he descried a multitude of tents of silk and satin, with pennons of blue sendal, and amongst them a great pavilion of red satin, surrounded by a host of guards. He ceased not to advance till he made this tent and found on asking that it was that of King Kafid, whom he saw seated on a chair set with jewels, in the midst of his Wazirs and Emirs and Grandees. So he brought out the letter and straightway there came up to him a company of guards, who took it from him and carried it to the King; and Kafid read it and wrote a reply to this purport: 'After the usual invocations, We let King Teghmus know that we mean to take our blood-revenge on thee and wash out our stain and waste thy reign and rend the curtain in twain and slay the old men and enslave the young men. But to-morrow, come thou forth to combat in the open plain, and to show thee thrust and fight will I deign.' Then he sealed the letter and delivered it to the messenger, who carried it to King Teghmus." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "King Kafid delivered the answering letter to the messenger who carried it to King Teghmus and delivered it, after kissing the ground between his hands. Then he reported all that he had seen, saying, 'O King of the age, I espied warriors and horsemen and footmen beyond count nor can I assist thee to the amount.' When Teghmus read the reply and comprehended its contents, he was with furious rage enraged and bade his Wazir Ayn Zar take horse and fall upon the army of Kafid with a thousand cavaliers, in the middle watch of the night when they would easily ride home and slay all before them. Ayn Zar replied, 'I hear and I obey,' and at once went forth to do his bidding. Now King Kafid had a Wazir, Ghatrafan[554] by name, whom he bade take five thousand horse and attack the host of King Teghmus in like manner. So Ghatrafan did his bidding and set out on his enterprise marching till midnight. Thus the two parties met halfway and the Wazir Ghatrafan fell upon the Wazir, Ayn Zar. Then man cried out against man and there befell sore battle between them till break of day, when Kafid's men were routed and fled back to their King in confusion. As Kafid saw this, he was wroth beyond measure and said to the fugitives, ‘Woe to you! What hath befallen you, that ye have lost your captains?’ and they replied, ‘O King of the age, as the Wazir Ghatrafan rode forth to fall upon King Teghmus, there appeared to us halfway and when night was half over, the Wazir, Ayn Zar, with cavaliers and champions, and we met on the slopes of Wady Zahran; but ere we were where we found ourselves in the enemy’s midst, eye meeting eye; and we fought a fierce fight with them from midnight till morning, many on either side being slain. Then the Wazir and his men fell to shouting and smiting the elephants on the face till they took fright at their furious blows, and turning tail to flee, trampled down the horsemen, whilst none could see other for the clouds of dust. The blood ran like a rain torrent and had we not fled, we had all been cut off to the last man.’ When King Kafid heard this, he exclaimed, ‘May the sun not bless you and may he be wroth with you and sore be his wrath!’ Meanwhile Ayn Zar, the Wazir, returned to King Teghmus and told him what had happened. The King gave him joy of his safety and rejoiced greatly and bade beat the drums and sound the trumpets, in honour of the victory; after which he called the roll of his troops and behold, two hundred of his stoutest champions had fallen. Then King Kafid marched his army into the field and drew them out ordered for battle in fifteen lines of ten thousand horses each, under the command of three hundred captains, mounted on elephants and chosen from amongst the doughtiest of his warriors and his champions. So he set up his standards and banners and beat the drums and blew the trumpets whilst the braves sallied forth, offering battle. As for King Teghmus, he drew out his troops line after line and lo! there were ten of ten thousand horses each, and with him were an hundred champions, riding on his right hand and on his left. Then fared forward to the fight each renowned knight, and the hosts clashed together in their might, whilst the earth for all its wideness was straitened because of the multitude of the cavaliers and ears were deafened by drums and cymbals beating and pipes and hautboys sounding and trumpets blaring and by the thunder of horse-tramp and the shouting of men. The dust arched in canopy over their heads and they fought a sore fight from the first of the day till the fall of darkness, when they separated and each army drew off to its own camp.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Nineteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “each army drew off to its own camp. Then King Kafid called the roll of his troops and, finding that he had lost five thousand men, raged with great rage; and King Teghmus mustered his men and seeing that of them were slain three thousand riders, the bravest of his braves, was wroth with exceeding wrath. On the morrow King Kafid again pushed into the plain and did duty as before, while each man strove his best to snatch victory for himself; and Kafid cried out to his men, saying, ‘Is there any of you will sally forth into the field and open us the chapter of fray and fight?’ And behold came out from the ranks a warrior named Barkayk, a mighty man of war who, when he reached the King, alighted from his elephant and kissing the earth before him, sought of him leave to challenge the foe to combat singular. Then he mounted his elephant and driving into mid-field, cried out, ‘Who is for duello, who is for derring do, who is for knightly devoir?’ When King Teghmus heard this, he said to his troops, ‘Which of you will do single battle with this sworder?’ And behold, a cavalier came out from the ranks, mounted on a charger, mighty of make, and driving up to the King kissed the earth before him and craved his permission to engage Barkayk. Then he mounted again and charged at Barkayk, who said to him, ‘Who art thou and what art thou called, that thou makest mock of me by coming out against me and challenging me, alone?’ ‘My name is Ghazanfar[555] son of Kamkhvl,’ replied the Kabul champion; and the other, ‘I have heard tell of thee in my own country; so up and do battle between the ranks of the braves!’ Hearing these words Ghazanfar drew a mace of iron from under his thigh and Barkayk took his good sword in hand, and they laid on load till Barkayk smote Ghazanfar on the head with his blade, but the morion turned the blow and no hurt befell him therefrom; whereupon Ghazanfar, in his turn, dealt Barkayk so terrible a stroke on the head with his mace, that he levelled him down to his elephant’s back and slew him. With this out sallied another and crying to Ghazanfar, ‘Who be thou that thou shouldst slay my brother?’; hurled a javelin at him with such force that it pierced his thigh and nailed his coat of mail to his flesh. Then Ghazanfar, feeling his hurt, hent his sword in hand and smote at Barkayk’s brother and cut him in sunder, and he fell to the earth, wallowing in his life blood, whilst the challenger of Kabul galloped back to King Teghmus. Now when Kafid saw the death of his champions, he cried out to his troops, saying, ‘Down with you to the plain and strike with might and main!’ as also did King Teghmus, and the two armies fought the fiercest of fights. Horse neighed against horse and man cried out upon man and brands were bared, whilst the drums beat and the trumpets blared; and horseman charged upon horseman and every brave of renown pushed forward, whilst the faint of heart fled from the lunge of lance and men heard nought but slogan-cry and the clash and clang of armoury. Slain were the warriors that were slain[556] and they stayed not from the mellay till the decline of the sun in the heavenly dome, when the Kings drew off their armies and returned each to its own camp.[557] Then King Teghmus took tally of his men and found that he had lost five thousand, and four standards had been broken to bits, whereat he was sore an-angered; whilst King Kafid in like manner counted his troops and found that he had lost six hundred, the bravest of his braves, and nine standards were wanting to the full tale. The two armies ceased joining battle and rested on their arms three days’ space, after which Kafid wrote a letter and sent it by messenger to a King called Fakun al-Kalb (with whom he claimed kinship by the spindle side): and this kinsman forthwith mustered his men and marched to meet the King of Hind.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twentieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “King Fakun mustered his men and marched to meet the King of Hind: and whileas King Teghmus was sitting at his pleasance, there came one in to him and said, ‘I see from afar a cloud of dust spireing high in air and overspreading the lift.’ So he commanded a company to fare forth and learn the meaning of this; and, crying, ‘To hear is to obey,’ they sallied out and presently returned and said to him, ‘O King, when we drew near the cloud of dust, the wind rent it and it lifted and showed seven standards and under each standard three thousand horse, making for King Kafid’s camp.’ Then King Fakun joined himself to the King of Hind and saluting him, asked, ‘How is it with thee, and what be this war in which thou arrest?'; and Kafid answered, 'Knowest thou not that King Teghmus is my enemy and the murtherer of my father and brothers? Wherefore I am come forth to do battle with him and take my brood wreak on him.' Quoth Fakun, 'The blessing of the sun be upon thee!'; and the King of Hind carried King Fakun al-Kalb to his tent and rejoiced in him with exceeding joy. Such was the case of the two hostile Kings; but as regards King Janshah, he abode two months shut up in his palace, without seeing his father or allowing one of the damsels in his service to come in to him; at the end of which time he grew troubled and restless and said to his attendants, 'What aileth my father that he cometh not to visit me?' They told him that he had gone forth to do battle with King Kafid, whereupon quoth Janshah, 'Bring me my steed, that I may go to my sire.' They replied, 'We hear and obey,' and brought his horse; but he said in himself, 'I am taken up with the thought of myself and my love and I deem well to mount and ride for the city of the Jews, where haply Allah shall grant me the boon to meet the merchant who hired me for the ruby business and may be he will deal with me as he dealt before, for none knoweth whence good cometh.' So he took with him a thousand horse and set out, the folk saying, 'At last Janshah hath fared forth to join his father in the field, and to fight by his side;' and they stinted not pushing on till dusk, when they halted for the night in a vast meadow. As soon as he knew that all his men were asleep, the Prince rose privily and girding his waist, mounted his horse and rode away intending to make Baghdad, because he had heard from the Jews that a caravan came thence to their city once in every two years and he made up his mind to journey thither with the next cafilah. When his men awoke and missed the Prince and his horse, they mounted and sought him right and left but, finding no trace of him, rejoined his father and told him what his son had done; whereat he was wroth beyond measure and cast the crown from his head, whilst the sparks were like to fly from his mouth, and he said 'There is no Majesty and there is no Might but in Allah! Verily I have lost my son, and the enemy is still before me.' But his Wazirs and vassals said to him, 'Patience, O King of the age! Patience bringeth weal in wake.' Meanwhile Janshah, parted from his lover and pained for his father, was in sore sorrow and dismay, with heart seared and eyes tear-bleared and unable to sleep night or day. But when his father heard the loss his host had endured, he declined battle, and fled before King Kafid, and retiring to his city, closed the gates and strengthened the walls. Thereupon King Kafid followed him and sat down before the town; offering battle seven nights and eight days, after which he withdrew to his tents, to tend his wounded while the citizens defended themselves as they best could, fortifying the place and setting up mangonels and other engines on the walls. Such was the condition of the two Kings, and war raged between them for a space of seven years." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "Kings Teghmus and Kafid continued in this condition for seven years; but, as regards Janshah, he rode through wild and wold and when ever he came to a town he asked anent Takni, the Castle of Jewels, but none knew of it and all answered, 'Of a truth we never heard of such place, not even by name.' At last he happened to enquire concerning the city of the Jews from a merchant who told him that it was situated in the extreme Orient, adding, 'A caravan will start this very month for the city of Mizrakαn in Hind; whither do thou accompany us and we will fare on to Khorasan and thence to the city of Shima'ïn and Khwαrazm, from which latter place the City of the Jews is distant a year and three months' journey.' So Janshah waited till the departure of the caravan, when he joined himself thereto and journeyed, till he reached the city of Mizrakan whence, after vainly asking for Takni, the Castle of Jewels, he set out and enduring on the way great hardships and perils galore and the extreme of hunger and thirst, he arrived at the town of Shima'un. Here he made enquiry for the City of the Jews, and they directed him to the road thither. So he fared forth and journeyed days and nights till he came to the place where he had given the apes the slip, and continued his journey thence to the river, on the opposite bank of which stood the City of the Jews. He sat down on the shore and waited till the Sabbath came round and the river dried up by decree of Allah Almighty, when he crossed over to the opposite bank and, entering the city, betook himself to the house wherein he had lodged on his former journey. The Jew and his family saluted him and rejoiced in his return and, setting meat and drink before him, asked, ‘Where hast thou been during thine absence?’; and he answered, ‘In the kingdom of Almighty Allah!’[558] He lay with them that night and on the morrow he went out to solace himself with a walk about the city and presently heard a crier crying aloud and saying, ‘O folk, who will earn a thousand gold pieces and a fair slave-girl and do half a day’s work for us?’ So Janshah went up to him and said, ‘I will do this work.’[559] Quoth the crier, ‘Follow me,’ and carrying him to the house of the Jew merchant, where he had been afore time, said, ‘This young man will do thy need.’ The merchant not recognising him gave him welcome and carried him into the Harim, where he set meat and drink before him, and he ate and drank. Then he brought him the money and formally made over to him the handsome slave-girl with whom he lay that night. As soon as morning dawned, he took the diners and the damsel and, committing them to his Jew host with whom he had lodged afore time, returned to the merchant, who mounted and rode out with him, till they came to the foot of the tall and towering mountain, where the merchant, bringing out a knife and cords, said to Janshah, ‘Throw the mare.’ So he threw her and bound her four legs with the cords and slaughtered her and cut off her head and four limbs and slit her belly, as ordered by the Jew; whereupon quoth he, ‘Enter her belly, till I sew it up on thee; and whatsoever thou seest therein, tell me of it, for this is the work whose wage thou hast taken.’ So Janshah entered the mare’s belly and the merchant sewed it up on him; then, withdrawing to a fair distance, hid himself. And after an hour a great bird swooped down from the lift and, snatching up the carcass in his pounces soared high toward the sky. Then he perched upon the mountain peak and would have eaten the prey, but Janshah sensing his intent took out his knife and slit the mare’s belly and came forth. The bird was scared at his sight and flew away, and Janshah went up to a place whence he could see below, and looking down, espied the merchant standing at the foot of the mountain, as he were a sparrow. So he cried out to him, ‘What is thy will, O merchant?’ Replied the Jew, ‘Throw me down of the stones that lie about thee, that I may direct thee in the way down.’

Quoth Janshah, ‘Thou art he who didst with me thus and thus five years ago, and through thee I suffered hunger and thirst and sore toil and much trouble; and now thou hast brought me hither once more and thinkest to destroy me. By Allah, I will not throw thee aught!’ So saying, he turned from him and set out for where lived Shaykh Nasr, the King of the Birds.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “Janshah took the way for where lived Shaykh Nasr, the King of the Birds. And he ceased not faring on many days and nights, tearful-eyed and heavy-hearted; eating, when he was anhungered, of the growth of the ground and drinking, when he thirsted, of its streams, till he came in sight of the Castle of the lord Solomon and saw Shaykh Nasr sitting at the gate. So he hastened up to him and kissed his hands; and the Shaykh saluted him and bade him welcome and said to him, ‘O my son, what aileth thee that thou returnest to this place, after I sent thee home with the Princess Shamsah, cool of eyes and broad of breast?’ Janshah wept and told him all that had befallen him and how she had flown away from him, saying, ‘An thou love me, come to me in Takni, the Castle of Jewels;’ at which the old man marvelled and said, ‘By Allah, O my son, I know it not, nor, by the virtue of our lord Solomon, have I ever in my life heard its name!’ Quoth Janshah, ‘What shall I do? I am dying of love and longing.’ Quoth Shaykh Nasr, ‘Take patience until the coming of the birds, when we will enquire at them of Takni, the Castle of Jewels; haply one of them shall wot thereof.’ So Janshah’s heart was comforted and, entering the Palace, he went straight to the chamber which gave upon the Lake in which he had seen the three maidens. After this he abode with Shaykh Nasr for a while and, one day as he was sitting with him, the Shaykh said, ‘O my son, rejoice for the time of the birds’ coming draweth nigh.’ Janshah gladdened to hear the news; and after a few days the birds began to come and Shaykh Nasr said to him, ‘O my son, learn these names[560] and address thyself with me to meet the birds.’ Presently, the fowls came flying up and saluted Shaykh Nasr, kind after kind, and he asked them of Takni, the Castle of Jewels, but they all made answer, ‘Never heard we of such a place.’ At these words Janshah wept and lamented till he swooned away; whereupon Shaykh Nasr called a huge volatile and said to him, ‘Carry this youth to the land of Kabul,’ and described to him the country and the way thither. Then he set Janshah on the bird’s back, saying, ‘Be careful to sit straight and beware of leaning to either side, else thou wilt be torn to pieces in the air; and stop thine ears from the wind, lest thou be dazed by the noise of the revolving sphere and the roaring of the seas.’ Janshah resolved to do his bidding and the bird took flight high in sky and flew with him a day and a night, till he set him down by the King of the Beasts, whose name was Shαh Badrν, and said to his rider, ‘We have gone astray from the way directed by Shaykh Nasr.’ And he would have taken him up again and flown on with him; but Janshah said, ‘Go thy ways and leave me here; till I die on this spot or I find Takni, the Castle of Jewels, I will not return to my country.’ So the fowl left him with Shah Badri, King of the Beasts and flew away. The King thereupon said to him, ‘O my son, who art thou and whence comest thou with yonder great bird?’ So Janshah told him his story from beginning to end, whereat Shah Badri marvelled and said, ‘By the virtue of the lord Solomon, I know not of this castle; but if any one of the beasts my subjects know it, we will reward him bountifully and send thee by him thither.’ Hereat Janshah wept bitterly but presently he took patience and abode with Shah Badri, and after a short time the King of the Beasts said to him, ‘O my son, take these tablets and commit to memory that which is therein; and when the beasts come, we will question them of the Castle of Jewels.’ “ — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-third Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “the King of the Beasts said to Janshah, ‘Commit to memory what is in these tablets; and whenas the beasts come, we will ask them anent that castle.’ He did as the King bade him, and before long, up came the beasts, kind after kind, and saluted Shah Badri who questioned them of Takni, the Castle of Jewels, but they all replied, ‘We know not this castle, nor ever heard we of it.’ At this Janshah wept and lamented for that he had not gone with the bird that brought him from Shaykh Nasr’s castle; but Shah Badri said to him, ‘Grieve not, O my son, for I have a brother, King Shimαkh highs, who is older than I; he was once a prisoner to King Solomon, for that he rebelled against him; nor is there among the Jinn one elder than he and Shaykh Nasr. Belike he knoweth of this castle; at any rate he ruleth over all the Jinn in this country side.' So saying he set Janshah on the back of a beast and gave him a letter to his brother, commending him to his care. The beast set off with the Prince forthwith and fared on days and nights, till it came to King Shimakh's abiding place. And when it caught sight of the King it stood still afar off, whereupon Janshah alighted and walked on, till he found himself in the presence. Then he kissed hands and presented his brother's letter. The King read the missive and, having mastered the meaning, welcomed the Prince, saying, 'By Allah, O my son, in all my born days I never saw nor heard of this castle!' adding (as Janshah burst into tears), 'but tell me thy story and who and whence thou art and whither thou art bound.' So Janshah related to him his history from beginning to end, at which Shimakh marvelled and said, 'O my son, I do not believe that even the lord Solomon ever saw this castle or heard thereof; but O my son,[561] I know a monk in the mountains, who is exceeding old and whom all birds and beasts and Jann obey; for he ceased not his conjurations against the Kings of the Jann, till they submitted themselves to him in their own despite, by reason of the might of his oaths and his magic; and now all the birds and the beasts are his servants. I myself once rebelled against King Solomon and he sent against me this monk, the only being who could overcome me with his craft and his conjurations and his gramarye; then he imprisoned me, and since that time I have been his vassal. He hath travelled in all countries and quarters and knoweth all ways and regions and places and castles and cities; nor do I think there is any place hidden from his ken. So needs must I send thee to him; haply he may direct thee to the Castle of Jewels; and, if he cannot do this, none can; for all things obey him, birds and beasts and the very mountains and come at his beck and call, by reason of his skill in magic. Moreover, by the might of his egromancy he hath made a staff, in three pieces, and this he planteth in the earth and conjureth over it; whereupon flesh and blood issue from the first piece, sweet milk from the second and wheat and barley from the third; then he withdraweth the staff and returneth to his place which is highs the Hermitage of Diamonds. And this magical monk is a cunning inventor and artificer of all manner strange works; and he is a crafty warlock full of guiles and wiles, an arch deceiver of wondrous wickedness, who hath mastered every kind of magic and witchcraft. His name is Yaghmïs and to him I must needs send thee on the back of a big bird with four wings,'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-fourth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "Shimakh said to Janshah, 'I must needs send thee to the monk Yaghmus on the back of a big bird with four wings, each measuring thirty Hαshimi[562] cubits in length; and it hath feet like those of an elephant, but it flieth only twice a year.' And there was with King Shimakh an officer, by name Timshun, who used every day to carry off two Bactrian[563] camels from the land of Irak and cut them up for the bird that it might eat them. So King Shimakh bade the fowl take up Janshah and bear him to the cell of the hermit Yaghmus; and it rose into the air and flew on days and nights, till it came to the Mountain of the Citadels and the Hermitage of Diamonds where Janshah alighted and going up to the hermitage, found Yaghmus the Monk at his devotions. So he entered the chapel and, kissing the ground stood respectfully before the hermit. When Yaghmus saw him, he said, 'Welcome, O my son, O parted from thy home and garred ferforth to roam! Tell me the cause of thy coming hither.' So Janshah wept and acquainted him with all that had befallen him from beginning to end and that he was in quest of the Castle of Jewels. The Monk marvelled greatly at his story and said, 'By Allah, O my son, never in my life heard I of this castle, nor ever saw I one who had heard of it or had seen it, for all I was alive in the days of Noah, Allah's Prophet (on whom be peace!),[564] and I have ruled the birds and beasts and Jinn ever since his time; nor do I believe that Solomon David son himself knew of it. But wait till the birds and beasts and chiefs of the Jann come to do their homage to me and I will question them of it; peradventure, some one of them may be able to give us news of it and Allah Almighty shall make all things easy to thee.' So Janshah homed with the hermit, until the day of the assembly, when all the birds and beasts and Jann came to swear fealty; and Yaghmus and his guest questioned them anent Takni, the Castle of Jewels; but they all replied, ‘We never saw or heard of such a place.’ At this, Janshah fell a weeping and lamenting and humbled himself before the Most High; but, as he was thus engaged, behold, there flew down from the heights of air another bird, big of bulk and black of blee, which had tarried behind the rest, and kissed the hermit’s hands. Yaghmus asked it of Takni, the Castle of Jewels, and it answered, saying ‘O Monk, when I and my brothers were small chicks we abode behind the Mountain Kaf on a hill of crystal, in the midst of a great desert; and our father and mother used to set out for it every morning and in the evening come back with our food. They went out early one day, and were absent from us a sennight and hunger was sore upon us; but on the eighth day they returned, both weeping, and we asked them the reason of their absence. Quoth they: ‘A Marid swooped down on us and carried us off in his claws to Takni, the Castle of Jewels, and brought us before King Shahlan, who would have slain us; but we told him that we had left behind us a brood of fledgelings; so he spared our lives and let us go. And were my parents yet in the bonds of life they would give thee news of the castle.’ When Janshah heard this, he wept bitter tears and said to the hermit, ‘Prithee bid the bird carry me to his father and mother’s nest on the crystal hill, behind the Mountain Kaf.’ So the hermit said, ‘O bird, I desire thee to obey this youth in whatsoever he may command thee.’ ‘I hear and obey thy bidding,’ replied the fowl; and, taking Janshah on its back, flew with him days and nights without ceasing till it set him down on the Hill of Crystal and there alighted. And having delayed there a resting while, it again set him on its back and flew off and ceased not flying for two whole days till it reached the spot where the nest was.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “the fowl ceased not flying with Janshah two full days; till it reached the spot where the nest was, and set him down there and said, ‘O Janshah, this is where our nest was.’ He wept sore and replied, ‘I pray thee bear me farther on to where thy parents used to forage for food.’ The bird consented; so it took him up again and flew on with him seven nights and eight days, till it set him down on the top of a high hill Karmus highs and left him there saying, ‘I know of no land behind this hill.’ Then it flew away and Janshah sat down on the hill-top and fell asleep. When he awoke, he saw a something gleaming afar off as it were lightning and filling the firmament with its flashings; and he wondered what this sheen could be without wotting that it was the Castle he sought. So he descended the mountain and made towards the light, which came from Takni, the Castle of Jewels, distant two months’ journey from Karmïs, the hill whereon he had alit, and its foundations were fashioned of red rubies and its buildings of yellow gold. Moreover, it had a thousand turrets builded of precious metals, and stones of price studded and set in the minerals brought from the Main of Murks, and on this account it was named the Castle of Jewels, Takni. It was a vast great castle and the name of its king was King Shahlan, the father of the lady Shamsah and her sisters. Such was the case with Janshah; but as regards Princess Shamsah, when she fled from Janshah, she made straight for the Castle of Jewels and told her father and mother all that had passed between the Prince and herself; how he had wandered the world and seen its marvels and wonders and how fondly he loved her and how dearly she loved him. Quoth they, ‘Thou hast not dealt righteously with him, as Allah would have thee deal.’ Moreover King Shahlan repeated the story to his guards and officers of the Marids of the Jinn and bade them bring him every mortal they should see. For the lady Shamsah had said to her parents, ‘Janshah loveth me with passionate love and forsure he will follow me; for when flying from his father’s roof I cried to him, ‘An thou love me, seek me at Takni, the Castle of Jewels!’ Now when Janshah beheld that sheen and shine, he made straight for it wishing to find out what it might be. And as chance would have it, Shamsah had that very day despatched a Marid on an occasion in the direction of the hill Karmus, and on his way thither he caught sight of a man, a mortal; so he hastened up to him and saluted him. Janshah was terrified at his sight, but returned his salam, and the Marid asked, ‘What is thy name?’ and he answered, ‘My name is Janshah, and I have fallen madly in love with a Jinniyah known as Princess Shamsah, who captivated me by her beauty and loveliness;

but despite my dear love she fled from the palace wherein I placed her and behold, I am here in quest of her.' Herewith he wept with bitter weeping. The Marid looked at him and his heart burned with pity on hearing the sad tale, and he said, 'Weep not, for surely thou art come to thy desire. Know that she loveth thee fondly and hath told her parents of thy love for her, and all in yonder castle love thee for her sake; so be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool of tear.' Then he took him on his shoulders and made off with him to the Castle of Jewels, Takni. Thereupon the bearers of fair tidings hastened to report his coming and when the news reached Shamsah and her father and mother, they all rejoiced with exceeding joy, and King Shahlan took horse and rode out, commanding all his guards and Ifrits and Marids honourably to meet the Prince." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "King Shahlan commanded all his guards and Ifrits and Marids to meet the Prince; and, as soon as he came up with him, he dismounted and embraced him, and Janshah kissed his hand. Then Shahlan bade put on him a robe of honour of many coloured silk, laced with gold and set with jewels, and a coronet such as man never saw, and, mounting him on a splendid mare of the steeds of the Kings of the Jinn, took horse himself and, with an immense retinue riding on the right hand and the left, brought him in great state to the Castle. Janshah marvelled at the splendour of this edifice, with its walls builded of rubies and other jewels and its pavement of crystal and jasper and emerald, and fell a weeping at the memory of his past miseries; but the King and Queen, Shamsah's mother, wiped away his tears and said, 'Now no more weeping and be of good cheer, for thou hast won to thy will.' Then Shahlan carried him into the inner court of the Castle, where he was received by a multitude of beautiful damsels and pages and black Jinn-slaves, who seated him in the place of honour and stood to do him service, whilst he was lost in amazement at the goodliness of the place, and its walls all edified of precious metals and jewels of price. Presently King Shahlan repaired to his hall of audience, where he sat down on his throne and, bidding the slave-girls and the pages introduce the Prince, rose to receive him and seated him by his side on the throne. Then he ordered the tables to be spread and they ate and drank and washed their hands; after which in came the Queen Shamsah's mother, and saluting Janshah, bade him welcome in these words, 'Thou hast come to thy desire after weariness and thine eyes shall now sleep after watching; so praised be Allah for thy safety!' Thus saying, she went away and forthwith returned with the Princess Shamsah, who saluted Janshah and kissed his hands, hanging her head in shame and confusion before him and her parents, after which as many of her sisters as were in the palace came up to him and greeted him in like manner. Then quoth the Queen to him, 'Welcome, O my son, our daughter Shamsah hath indeed sinned against thee, but do thou pardon her misdeed for our sakes.' When Janshah heard this, he cried out and fell down fainting, whereat the King marvelled and they sprinkled on his face rose water mingled with musk and civet, till he came to himself and, looking at Princess Shamsah, said, 'Praised be Allah who hath brought me to my desire and hath quenched the fire of my heart!' Replied she, 'May He preserve thee from the Fire!, but now tell me, O Janshah, what hath befallen thee since our parting and how thou madest thy way to this place; seeing that few even of the Jann ever heard of Takni, the Castle of Jewels; and we are independent of all the Kings nor any wotteth the road hither.' Thereupon he related to her every adventure and peril and hardship he had suffered and how he had left his father at war with King Kafid, ending with these words, 'And all for thy sake, my lady Shamsah!' Quoth the Queen, 'Now hast thou thy heart's desire, for the Princess is thy handmaid, and we give her in free gift to thee.' Janshah joyed exceedingly at these words and the Queen added, 'Next month, if it be the will of Almighty Allah, we will have a brave wedding and celebrate the marriage festival and after the knot is tied we will send you both back to thy native land, with an escort of a thousand Marids of our body-guard, the least of whom, an thou bid him slay King Kafid and his folk, would surely destroy them to the last man in the twinkling of an eye. Furthermore if it please thee we will send thee, year after year, a company of which each and every can so do with all thy foes.'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-seventh Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "the lady Shamsah's mother ended with saying, 'And if it so please thee we will send thee, year after year, a company of which each and every can destroy thy foes to the last man.' Then King Shahlan sat down on his throne and, summoning his Grandees and Officers of state, bade them make ready for the marriage- festivities and decorate the city seven days and nights. 'We hear and we obey,' answered they and busied themselves two months in the preparations, after which they celebrated the marriage of the Prince and Princess and held a mighty festival, never was there its like. Then they brought Janshah in to his bride and he abode with her in all solace of life and delight for two years, at the end of which time he said to her, 'Thy father promised to send us to my native land, that we might pass one year there and the next here.' Answered she, I hear and obey,' and going in to King Shahlan at nightfall told him what the Prince had said. Quoth he, 'I consent; but have patience with me till the first of the month, that I may make ready for your departure.' She repeated these words to her husband and they waited till the appointed time, when the King bade his Marids bring out to them a great litter of red gold, set with pearls and jewels and covered with a canopy of green silk, purfled in a profusion of colours and embroidered with precious stones, dazzling with its goodliness the eyes of every beholder. He chose out four of his Marids to carry the litter in whichever of the four quarters the riders might choose. Moreover, he gave his daughter three hundred beautiful damsels to wait upon her and bestowed on Janshah the like number of white slaves of the sons of the Jinn. Then the lady Shamsah took formal leave of her mother and sisters and all her kith and kin; and her father fared forth with them. So the four Marids took up the litter, each by one corner, and rising under it like birds in air, flew onward with it between earth and heaven till mid-day, when the King bade them set it down and all alighted. Then they took leave of one another and King Shahlan commended Shamsah to the Prince's care, and giving them in charge to the Marids, returned to the Castle of Jewels, whilst the Prince and Princess remounted the litter, and the Marids taking it up, flew on for ten whole days, in each of which they accomplished thirty months' journey, till they sighted the capital of King Teghmus. Now one of them knew the land of Kabul; so when he saw the city, he bade the others let down the litter at that populous place which was the capital." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "the Marid guards let down the litter at the capital of King Teghmus who had been routed and had fled from his foes into the city, where he was in sore straits, King Kafid having laid close siege to him. He sought to save himself by making peace with the King of Hind, but his enemy would give him no quarter; so seeing himself without resource or means of relief, he determined to strangle himself and to die and be at rest from this trouble and misery. Accordingly he bade his Wazirs and Emirs farewell and entered his house to take leave of his Harim; and the whole realm was full of weeping and wailing and lamentation and woe. And whilst this rout and hurly-burly was enacting, behold, the Marids descended with the litter upon the palace that was in the citadel, and Janshah bade them set it down in the midst of the Divan. They did his bidding and he alighted with his company of handmaids and Mamelukes; and, seeing all the folk of the city in straits and desolation and sore distress, said to the Princess, 'O love of my heart and coolth of mine eyes, look in what a piteous plight is my sire!' There upon she bade the Marid guard fall upon the beleaguering host and slay them, saying, 'Kill ye all, even to the last man;' and Janshah commanded one of them, by name Karαtash,[565] who was exceeding strong and valiant, to bring King Kafid to him in chains. So they set down the litter and covered it with the canopy; then, having waited till midnight, they attacked the enemy's camp one of them being a match for ten; or at least for eight. And while these smote the foes with iron maces, those mounted their magical elephants and soared high in the lift, and then swooping down and snatching up their opponents, tare them to pieces in mid air. But Karatash made straight for Kafid's tent where he found him lying in a couch; so he took him up, shrieking for fear, and flew with him to Janshah, who bade the four Marids bind him on the litter and hang him high in the air over his camp, that he might witness the slaughter of his men. They did as the Prince commanded them and left Kafid, who had swooned for fear, hanging between earth and air and buffeting his face for grief. As for King Teghmus, when he saw his son, he well-nigh died for excess of joy and, crying with a loud cry, fell down in a swoon. They sprinkled rose-water on his face, till he came to himself, when he and his son embraced and wept with sore weeping; for he knew not that the Jinn guard were battling with King Kafid's men. Then Princess Shamsah accosted the King and kissing his hand, said to him, 'Sire, be pleased to go up with me to the palace-roof and witness the slaughter of thy foes by my father's Marids.' So he went up to the terrace-roof and sitting down there with his daughter-in-law, enjoyed watching the Marids do havoc among the besiegers and break a way through the length and breadth of them. For one of them smote with his iron mace upon the elephants and their riders and pounded them till man was not to be distinguished from beast; whilst another shouted in the faces of those who fled, so that they fell down dead; and the third caught up a score of horsemen, beasts and all; and, towering with them high in air, cast them down on earth, so that they were torn in pieces. And this was high enjoyment for Janshah and his father and the lady Shamsah." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "King Teghmus and his son and daughter-in-law went up to the terrace roof and enjoyed a prospect of the Jinn-guards battling with the beleaguering host. And King Kafid (still hanging between heaven and earth) also saw the slaughter of his troops and wept sore and buffeted his face; nor did the carnage cease among the army of Hind for two whole days, till they were cut off even to the last man. Then Janshah commanded a Marid, by name Shimwɑl, chain up King Kafid with manacles and fetters, and imprison him in a tower called the Black Bulwark. And when his bidding was done, King Teghmus bade beat the drums and despatched messengers to announce the glad news to Janshah's mother, informing her of his approach; whereupon she mounted in great joy and she no sooner espied her son than she clasped him in her arms and swooned away for stress of gladness. They sprinkled rose-water on her face, till she came to herself, when she embraced him again and again wept for excess of joy. And when the lady Shamsah knew of her coming, she came to her and saluted her; and they embraced each other and after remaining embraced for an hour sat down to converse. Then King Teghmus threw open the city gates and despatched couriers to all parts of the kingdom, to spread the tidings of his happy deliverance; whereupon all his princely Vassals and Emirs and the Grandees of the realm flocked to salute him and give him joy of his victory and of the safe return of his son; and they brought him great store of rich offerings and curious presents. The visits and oblations continued for some time, after which the King made a second and a more splendid bride-feast for the Princess Shamsah and bade decorate the city and held high festival. Lastly they unveiled and paraded the bride before Janshah, with apparel and ornaments of the utmost magnificence, and when her bridegroom went in to her he presented her with an hundred beautiful slave-girls to wait upon her. Some days after this, the Princess repaired to the King and interceded with him for Kafid, saying, ‘Suffer him return to his own land, and if henceforward he be minded to do thee a hurt, I will bid one of the Jinn-guard snatch him up and bring him to thee.’ Replied Teghmus, ‘I hear and I obey,’ and bade Shimwal bring him the prisoner, who came manacled and fettered and kissed earth between his hands. Then he commanded to strike off his chains and, mounting him on a lame mare, said to him, ‘Verily Princess Shamsah hath interceded for thee: so begone to thy kingdom, but if thou fall again to thine old tricks, she will send one of the Marids to seize thee and bring thee hither.’ Thereupon King Kafid set off home wards, in the sorriest of plights,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “King Kafid set off homewards in the sorriest of plights, whilst Janshah and his wife abode in all solace and delight of life, making the most of its joyance and happiness. All this recounted the youth sitting between the tombs unto Bulukiya, ending with, ‘And behold, I am Janshah who witnessed all these things, O my brother, O Bulukiya!' Then Bulukiya who was wandering the world in his love for Mohammed (whom Allah bless and keep!) asked Janshah, 'O my brother, what be these two sepulchres and why sittest thou between them and what causeth thy weeping?' He answered, 'Know, O Bulukiya, that we abode in all solace and delight of life, passing one year at home and the next at Takni, the Castle of Jewels, whither we betook not ourselves but in the litter borne by the Marids and flying between heaven and earth.' Quoth Bulukiya, 'O my brother, O Janshah, what was the distance between the Castle and thy home?' Quoth he, 'Every day we accomplished a journey of thirty months and the time we took was ten days. We abode on this wise a many of years till, one year we set out for the Castle of Jewels, as was our wont, and on the way thither alighted from the litter in this island to rest and take our pleasure therein. We sat down on the riverbank and ate and drank; after which the Lady Shamsah, having a mind to bathe, put off her clothes and plunged into the water. Her women did likewise and they swam about awhile, whilst I walked on along the bank of the stream leaving them to swim about and play with one another. And behold, a huge shark of the monsters of the deep seized the Princess by the leg, without touching any of the girls; and she cried out and died forthright, whilst the damsels fled out of the river to the pavilion, to escape from the shark. But after awhile they returned and taking up her corpse carried her to the litter. Now when I saw her dead, I fell down fainting and they sprinkled water on my face, till I recovered and wept over her. Then I despatched the Jinn-guards to her parents and family, announcing what had befallen her; and in the shortest time they came to the spot and washed her and shrouded her, after which they buried her by the river-side and made mourning for her. They would have carried me with them to their own country; but I said to King Shahlan, 'I beseech thee to dig me a grave beside her tomb, that, when I die, I may be buried by her side in that grave.' Accordingly, the King commanded one of his Marids to do as I wished, after which they departed and left me here to weep and mourn for her till I die. And this is my story and the cause of my sojourn between these two tombs.' And he repeated these two couplets,[566]

‘The house, sweet heart, is now no home to me * Since thou art
gone, nor neighbour neighbourly,
The friend whilom I took to heart, no more * Is friend, and
brightest lights lose brilliancy.’

But when Bulukiya heard out Janshah’s tale he marvelled,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “when Bulukiya heard out Janshah’s tale he wondered and exclaimed, ‘By Allah, methought I had indeed wandered over the world and compassed it about; but now I forget all I have seen after listening to these adventures of thine!’ He was silent a while and then resumed, ‘I beg thee, of thy favour and courtesy, to direct me in the way of safety.’ So Janshah directed him into the right road, and Bulukiya farewelled him and went his ways.” All this the Serpent-queen related to Hasib Karim al-Din, and he asked her, “But how knowest thou of these things?”; and she answered, “O Hasib, thou must ken that I had occasion, some five- and-twenty years ago, to send one of my largest serpents to Egypt and gave her a letter for Bulukiya, saluting him. So she went there willingly for she had a daughter in the land called Bint Shumukh[567] ; and after asking anent Bulukiya she found him and gave him my missive. He read it and replied to the messenger snake, ‘Thou comest from the Queen of the Serpents whom I am minded to visit for I have an occasion to her.’ She replied, ‘I hear and obey.’ Then she bore him to her daughter of whom she took leave and said to her companion, ‘Close thine eyes.’ So he closed them and opening them again, behold, he found himself on the mountain where I now am. Then his guide carried him to a great serpent, whom he saluted; whereupon quoth she, ‘Didst thou deliver the missive to Bulukiya?’; and she replied, ‘Even so; and he hath accompanied me and here he standeth.’ Presently Bulukiya asked after me, the Serpent-queen, and the great serpent answered, ‘She hath gone to the mountain Kaf with all her host, as is her wont in winter; but next summer she will come hither again. As often as she goeth thither, she appointeth me to reign in her room, during her absence; and if thou have any occasion to her, I will accomplish it for thee.' Said he, 'I beg thee to bring me the herb, which whoso crusheth and drinketh the juice thereof, sickeneth not neither groweth grey nor dieth.' 'I will not bring it,' said the serpent, 'till thou tell me what befell thee since thou leftest the Queen of the Serpents, to go with Affan in quest of King Solomon's tomb.' So he related to her all his travels and adventures, together with the history of Janshah, and said at last, 'Grant me my request, that I may return to mine own country.' Replied the serpent, 'By the virtue of the lord Solomon, I know not where is to be found the herb whereof thou speakest.' Then she bade the serpent which had brought him thither, carry him back to Egypt: so the messenger obeyed her and said to him, 'Shut thine eyes!' He did so and, opening them again, found himself on the mountain Mukattam.[568] When I returned from the mountain Kaf (added the Queen) the serpent, my deputy, informed me of Bulukiya's visit and gave me his salutations and repeated to me his story and his meeting with Janshah. And this, O Hasib, is how I came to know the adventures of Bulukiya and the history of Janshah." Thereupon Hasib said to her, "O Queen, deign recount to me what befell Bulukiya as regards his return to Egypt." She replied, "Know, O Hasib, that when he parted from Janshah he fared on nights and days till he came to a great sea; so he anointed his feet with the juice of the magical herb and, walking over the face of the waters, sped onwards till he came to an island abounding in trees and springs and fruits, as it were the Garden of Eden. He landed and walked about, till he saw an immense tree, with leaves as big as the sails of a ship. So he went up to the tree and found under it a table spread with all manner meats, whilst on a branch of the branches sat a great bird, whose body was of pearls and leek- green emeralds, its feet of silver, its beak of red carnelian and its plumery of precious metals; and it was engaged in singing the praises of Allah the Most High and blessing Mohammed (on whom be benediction and peace!)" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that "when Bulukiya landed and walked about the island he found therein many marvels, especially a bird whose body was of pearls and leek green emeralds and its plumery of precious metals; and it was engaged in singing the praises of Allah the Most High and blessing Mohammed (upon whom be benediction and peace!). Seeing this he said, ‘Who and what art thou?’ Quoth the bird, ‘I am one of the birds of Eden and followed Adam when Allah Almighty cast him out thence. And know, O my brother, that Allah also cast out with him four leaves of the trees of the garden to cover his nakedness withal, and they fell to the ground after awhile. One of them was eaten by a worm, and of it came silk: the gazelles ate the second and thence proceeded musk, the third was eaten by bees and gave rise to honey, whilst the fourth fell in the land of Hind and from it sprang all manner of spices. As for me, I wandered over the face of earth till Allah deigned give me this island for a dwelling-place, and I took up my abode here. And every Friday from night till morning the Saints and Princes[569] of the Faith flock to this place and make pious visitation and eat from this table spread by Allah Almighty; and after they have eaten, the table is taken up again to Heaven: nor doth the food ever waste or corrupt.’ So Bulukiya ate his fill of the meats and praised the Great Creator. And presently, behold, there came up Al-Khizr[570] (with whom be peace!), at sight of whom Bulukiya rose and saluting him, was about to withdraw, when the bird said to him, ‘Sit, O Bulukiya, in the presence of Al-Khizr, on whom be peace!’ So he sat down again, and Al-Khizr said to him, ‘Let me know who thou art and tell me thy tale.’ Thereupon Bulukiya related to him all his adventures from beginning to end and asked, ‘O my lord, how far is it hence to Cairo?’ ‘Five and ninety years’ journey,’ replied the Prophet; whereupon Bulukiya burst into tears; then, falling at Al-Khizr’s feet, kissed them and said to him, ‘I beseech thee deliver me from this strangerhood and thy reward be with Allah, for that I am nigh upon death and know not what to do.’ Quoth Al-Khizr, ‘Pray to Allah Almighty that He permit me to carry thee to Cairo, ere thou perish.’ So Bulukiya wept and humbled himself before Allah who granted his prayer, and by inspiration bade Al-Khizr bear him to his people. Then said the Prophet, ‘Lift thy head, for Allah hath heard thy prayer and hath inspired me to do what thou desires; so take fast hold of me with both thy hands and shut thine eyes.’ The Prince did as he was bidden and Al-Khizr stepped a single step forwards, then said to him, ‘Open thine eyes!’ So Bulukiya opened his eyes and found himself at the door of his palace at Cairo. He turned, to take leave of Al-Khizr, but found no trace of him.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that “when Bulukiya, standing at the gate of his palace, turned to take leave of Al-Khizr, he found no trace of him and entered the palace. When his mother saw him, she cried with a loud cry and swooned away for excess of joy, and they sprinkled water upon her face. After awhile she came to herself and embraced her son and wept with sore weeping, whilst Bulukiya wept and laughed by turns. Then all his friends and kindred came and gave him joy of his safe return, and the news was noised abroad in the land and there came to him presents from all parts. Moreover, they beat the drums and blew the flutes and rejoiced mightily. Then Bulukiya related to them his adventures ending with recounting how Al-Khizr had set him down at his palace door, whereat they marvelled exceedingly and wept, till all were a-weary of weeping.” Hasib wondered at the Queen’s tale and shed many tears over it; then he again besought her to let him return to his family; but she said, “I fear me, O Hasib, that when thou gettest back to thy country thou wilt fail of thy promise and prove traitor to thine oath and enter the Hammam.” But he swore to her another solemn oath that he would never again enter the baths as long as he lived; whereupon she called a serpent and bade her carry him up to the surface of the earth. So the serpent took him and led him from place to place, till she brought him out on the platform-edge of an abandoned cistern and there left him. Upon this he walked to the city and, coming to his house by the last of the day, at the yellowing of the sun, knocked at the door. His mother opened it and seeing her son screamed out and threw herself upon him and wept for excess of joy. His wife heard her mother-in-law weeping; so she came out to her and seeing her husband, saluted him and kissed his hands; and each rejoiced in other with exceeding joy of all three. Then they entered the house and sat down to converse and presently Hasib asked his mother of the woodcutters, who had left him to perish in the cistern. Quoth she, “They came and told me that a wolf had eaten thee in the Wady. As for them, they are become merchants and own houses and shops, and the world is grown wide for them. But every day they bring me meat and drink, and thus have they done until the present time.” Quoth Hasib, “To-morrow do thou go to them and say, “My son Hasib Karim al-Din hath returned from his travels; so come ye to meet him and salute him.” Accordingly, when morning dawned, she repaired to the woodcutters’ houses and delivered to them her son’s message, which when they heard, they changed colour, and saying, “We hear and obey,” gave her each a suit of silk, embroidered with gold, adding, “Present this to thy good son[571] and tell him that we will be with him to-morrow.” She assented and returning to Hasib gave him their presents and message. Meanwhile, the woodcutters called together a number of merchants and, acquainting them with all that had passed between themselves and Hasib, took counsel with them what they should do. Quoth the merchants, “It behoveth each one of you to give him half his monies and Mamelukes.” And they all agreed to do this; so on the next day, each of them took half his wealth and, going in to Hasib, saluted him and kissed his hands. Then they laid before him what they had brought, saying, “This is of thy bounties, and we are in thy hands.” He accepted their peace- offering and said, “What is past is past: that which befell us was decreed of Allah, and destiny doeth away with dexterity.” Quoth they, “Come, let us walk about and take our solace in the city and visit the Hammam.” Quoth he, “Not so: I have taken an oath never again to enter the baths, so long as I live.” Rejoined they, at least come to our homes that we may entertain thee.” He agreed to this, and went to their houses and each of them entertained him for a night and a day; nor did they cease to do thus for a whole sennight, being seven in number. And now Hasib was master of monies and houses and shops, and the merchants of the city foregathered with him and he told them all that had befallen him. He became one of the chiefs of the guild and abode on this wise awhile, till it happened one day, as he was walking about the streets, that he passed the door of a Hammam, whose keeper was one of his companions. When the bathman, who was standing without, caught his eye he ran up to him and saluted him and embraced him, saying, "Favour me by entering the bath and there wash and be rubbed that I may show thee hospitality." Hasib refused, alleging that he had taken a solemn oath never again to enter the Hammam; but the bathman was instant with him, saying, "Be my three wives triply divorced, can thou enter not and be washed!" When Hasib heard him thus conjure him, he was confounded and replied, "O my brother, hast thou a mind to ruin my house and make my children orphans and lay a load of sin upon my neck?" But his friend threw himself at his feet and kissed them, saying, "My happiness dependeth upon thy entering, and be the sin on the neck of me!" Then all the servants of the bath set upon Hasib and dragging him in pulled off his clothes. But hardly had he sat down against the wall and begun to pour water on his head when a score of men accosted him, saying, "Rise, O man, and come with us to the Sultan, for thou art his debtor." Then they despatched one of them as messenger to the Sultan's Minister, who straightway took horse and rode, attended by threescore Mamelukes, to the baths, where he alighted and going in to Hasib, saluted him and said, "Welcome to thee!" Then he gave the bathman an hundred diners and, mounting Hasib on a horse he had brought with him, returned with him and all his men to the Sultan's palace. Here he bade them aid Hasib to dismount and, after seating him comfortably, set food before him; and when they had eaten and drunken and washed their hands, the Wazir clad him in two dresses of honour each worth five thousand diners and said to him, "Know that Allah hath been merciful to us in sending thee; for the Sultan is nigh upon death by leprosy, and the books tell us that his life is in thy hands. Then, accompanied by a host of Grandees, he took him wondering withal and carried him through the seven doorways of the palace, till they came to the King's chamber. Now the name of this King was Karazdɑn, King of Persia and of the Seven Countries, and under his sway were an hundred sovereign princes sitting on chairs of red gold, and ten thousand valiant captains, under each one's hand an hundred deputies and as many headsmen armed with sword and axe. They found the King lying on his bed with his face swathed in a napkin, and groaning for excess of pain. When Hasib saw this ordinance, his wit was dazed for awe of the King; so he kissed the ground before him, and prayed a blessing on him. Then the Grand Wazir, whose name was Shamhïr, rose and welcoming Hasib, seated him on a high chair at the King's right hand." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Shamhur rose to Hasib and seated him on a chair at the right hand of King Karazdan; after which he called for food and the tables were laid. And when they had eaten and drunken and washed their hands, Shamhur stood up (while all present also stood to do him honour) and, approaching Hasib said to him, "We are all thy servants and will give thee whatsoever thou askest, even were it one half the kingdom, so thou wilt but cure the King." Saying this, he led him by the hand to the royal couch, and Hasib, uncovering the King's face, saw that he was at last fatal stage of the disease; so he wondered at their hoping for a cure. But the Wazir kissed his hand and repeated his offers and ended with saying, "All we want of thee is to heal our King:" so he said to the Wazir, "True that I am the son of Allah's prophet, Daniel, but I know nothing of his art: for they put me thirty days in the school of medicine and I learnt nothing of the craft. I would well I knew somewhat thereof and might heal the King." Hearing this, the Grand Wazir said, "Do not multiply words upon us; for though we should gather together to us physicians from the East and from the West, none could cure the King save thou." Answered Hasib, "How can I make him whole, seeing I know neither his case nor its cure?" Quoth the Minister, "His healing is in thy hands," and quoth Hasib, "If I knew the remedy of his sickness, I would heal him." Thereupon the Wazir rejoined, "Thou keenest a cure right well; the remedy of his sickness is the Queen of the Serpents, and thou knowest her abiding-place and hast been with her." When Hasib heard this, he knew that all this came of his entering the Baths, and repented whenas repentance availed him naught; then said he, "What is the Queen of the Serpents? I know her not nor ever in all my life heard I of this name." Retorted the Wazir, "Deny not the knowledge of her, for I have proof that thou knowest her and hast passed two years with her." Repeated Hasib, "Verily, I never saw her nor even heard of her till this moment;" upon which Shamhur opened a book and, after making sundry calculations, raised his head and spake as follows. “The Queen of the Serpents shall foregather with a man who shall abide with her two years; then shall he return from her and come forth to the surface of the earth, and when he entereth the Hammam bath his belly will become black.” Then said he, “Look at thy belly.” So Hasib looked at his own belly and behold, it was black: but he persisted in his denial and said, “My belly was black from the day my mother bare me.” Said the Wazir, “I had stationed three Mamelukes at the door of every Hammam, bidding them note all who entered and let me know when they found one whose belly was black: so, when thou enteredst, they looked at thy belly and, finding it black, sent and told me, after we had well-nigh lost hope of coming upon thee. All we want of thee is to show us the place whence thou camest out and after go thy ways; for we have those with us who will take the Queen of the Serpents and fetch her to us.” Then all the other Wazirs and Emirs and Grandees flocked about Hasib who sorely repented of his misdeed; and they conjured him, till they were weary, to show them the abode of the Queen; but he ceased not saying, “I never saw nor heard of the matter.” Then the Grand Wazir called the hangman and bade him strip Hasib and beat him a sore beating; and so they did till he saw death face to face, for excess of pain, and the Wazir said, “We have proof that thou knowest the abiding-place of the Queen of the Serpents: why wilt thou persist in denial? Show us the place whence thou camest out and go from us; we have with us one who will take her, and no harm shall befall thee.” Then he raised him and bade give him a dress of honour of cloth of red gold, embroidered with jewels, and spoke him fair till Hasib yielded and said, “I will show you the place.” At this the Wazir rejoiced with great joy and took horse with all his many and rode, guided by Hasib, and never drew rein till they came to the mountain containing the cavern wherein he had found the cistern full of honey. There all dismounted and followed him as he entered, sighing and weeping, and showed them the well whence he had issued; whereupon the Wazir sat down thereby and, sprinkling perfumes upon a chafing-dish, began to mutter charms and conjurations; for he was a crafty magician and diviner and skilled in spiritual arts. He repeated three several formulas of conjuration and between each threw fresh incense upon the fire, crying out and saying, “Come forth, O Queen of the Serpents!;” when behold, the water of the well sank down and a great door opened in the side, from which came a mighty noise of crying like unto thunder, so terrible that they thought the well had caved in and all present fell down fainting; nay, some even died for fright. Presently, there issued from the well a serpent as big as an elephant, casting out sparks, like red hot coals, from its eyes and mouth and bearing on its back a charger of red gold, set with pearls and jewels, in the midst whereof lay a serpent from whose body issued such splendour that the place was illumined thereby; and her face was fair and young and she spoke with most eloquent tongue. The Serpent-queen turned right and left, till her eyes fell upon Hasib, to whom said she “Where is the covenant thou madest with me, and the oath thou swearest to me, that thou wouldst never again enter the Hammam-bath? But there is no fighting against Fate nor hath any ever fled from that which is written on his forehead. Allah hath appointed the end of my life for thy hand to hend, and it is His will that slain I be and King Karazdan be healed of his malady.” So saying, she wept with sore weeping and Hasib wept to see her weep. As for the abominable Wazir Shamhur; he put out his hand to lay hold of her; but she said to him, “Hold thy hand, O accursed, or I will blow upon thee and reduce thee to a heap of black ashes.” Then she cried out to Hasib, saying, “Draw near me and take me in thine hand and lay me in the dish that is with you: then set it on thy head, for my death was fore-ordained, from Eternity without beginning,[572] to be at thy hand, and thou hast no power to avert it.” So he took her and laid her in the dish, and put it on his head, when the well returned to its former state. Then they set out on their return to the city, Hasib carrying the dish on his head, and when they were half-way behold, the Queen of the Serpents said to him privily, “Hearken, O Hasib, to my friendly counsel, for all thou hast broken faith with me and been false to thine oath, and hast done this misdeed, but it was fore-ordained from all eternity.” He replied “To hear is to obey,” and she continued, “It is this: when thou comest to the Wazir’s house, he will bid thee behead me and cut me in three; but do thou refuse saying, ‘I know not how to slaughter[473] ‘ and leave him to do it with his own hand and to work his wicked will. When he hath cut my throat and divided my body into three pieces there will come a messenger, to bid him to the King, so he will lay my flesh in a cauldron of brass and set it upon a brasier before going to the presence and he will say to thee, ‘Keep up the fire under the cauldron till the scum rise; then skim it off and pour it into a phial to cool. Wait till it cool and then drink it, so shall naught of malady or pain be left in all thy body. When the second scum riseth, skim it off and pour it into a phial against my return from the King, that I may drink it for an ailment I have in my loins.’ Then will he give thee the phials and go to the King, and when he is gone, do thou light the fire and wait till the first scum rise and set it in a phial; keep it by thee but beware of drinking it, or no good will befall thee. When the second scum riseth, skim it off and put it in a second phial and drink it down as soon as it cools. When the Wazir returneth and asketh thee for the second phial, give him the first and note what shall befall him;” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Serpent-queen charged Hasib not to drink of the first scum and carefully to keep the second, saying, “When the Wazir returneth from the King and asketh for the second phial, give him the first and note what shall befall him; then drink the contents of the second phial and thy heart will become the home of wisdom. After this take up the flesh and, laying it in a brazen platter, carry it to the King and give him to eat thereof. When he hath eaten it and it hath settled in his stomach, veil his face with a kerchief and wait by him till noontide, when he will have digested the meat. Then give him somewhat of wine to drink and, by the decree of Allah Almighty, he will be healed of his unhealth and be made whole as he was. And give thou ear to the charge wherewith I charge thee; and keep it in thy memory with carefullest keeping.” They ceased not faring till they came to the Wazir’s house, and he said to Hasib, “Come in with me!” So he went in and the troops dispersed and fared each his own way; whereupon Hasib set down the platter and the Wazir bade him slay the Queen of the Serpents; but he said, “I know not how to slaughter and never in my born days killed I aught. An thou wilt have her throat cut, do it with thine own hand.” So the Minister Shamhur took the Queen from the platter and slew her, seeing which Hasib wept bitter tears and the Wazir laughed at him, saying, “O weak of wits, how canst thou weep for the killing of a worm?” Then he cut her in three and, laying the pieces in a brass cauldron, set it on the fire and sat down to await the cooking of the flesh. And whilst he was sitting, lo! there came a slave from the King, who said to him, “The King calls for thee without stay or delay,” and he answered saying, “I hear and I obey.” So he gave Hasib two phials and bade him drink the first scum and keep the second against his return,[574] even as the Queen of the Serpents had foretold; after which he went away with repeated charges and injunctions; and Hasib tended the fire under the cauldron till the first scum rose, when he skimmed it off and, setting it in one of the phials, kept it by him. He then fed the fire till the second scum rose; then he skimmed it off and, putting it in the other phial kept it for himself. And when the meat was done, he took the cauldron off the fire and sat awaiting the Wazir who asked him on return, “What hast thou done?” and answered Hasib, “I did thy bidding to the last word.” Quoth the Wazir, “What hast thou done with the first phial?” “I drank its contents but now,” replied Hasib, and Shamhur asked, “Thy body feeleth it no change?”; whereto Hasib answered, “Verily, I feel as I were on fire from front to foot.” The villain Wazir made no reply hiding the truth but said, “Hand me the second phial, that I may drink what is therein, so haply I may be made whole of this ailing in my loins.” So Hasib brought him the first phial and he drank it off, thinking it contained the second scum; but hardly had he done drinking when the phial fell from his hand and he swelled up and dropped down dead; and thus was exemplified in him the saying; “Whoso for his brother diggeth a pit, he shall be the first to fall into it.” Now when Hasib saw this, he wondered and feared to drink of the second phial; but he remembered the Serpent-queen’s injunction and bethought him that the Wazir would not have reserved the second scum for himself, had there been aught of hurt therein. So he said, “I put my trust in Allah,’[575] and drank off the contents of the phial. No sooner had he done so, than the Most Highest made the waters of wisdom to well up in his heart and opened to him the fountains of knowledge, and joy and gladness overcame him. Then he took the serpent’s flesh from the cauldron and, laying it on a platter of brass, went forth from the Wazir's house. On his way to the palace he raised his eyes and saw the seven Heavens and all that therein is, even to the Lote-tree, beyond which there is no passing,[576] and the manner of the revolution of the spheres. Moreover, Allah discovered to him the ordinance of the planets and the scheme of their movements and the fixed stars; and he saw the contour of the land and sea, whereby he became informed with geometry, astrology and astronomy and mathematics and all that hangeth thereby; and he understood the causes and consequences of eclipses of the sun and moon. Then he looked at the earth and saw all minerals and vegetables that are therein and thereon; and he learned their properties, and their virtues, so that he became in an instant versed in medicine and chemistry and natural magic and the art of making gold and silver. And he ceased not carrying the flesh till he came to the palace, when he went in to King Karazdan, and kissing the ground before him, said, "May thy head survive thy Wazir Shamhur!" The King was mightily angered at the news of the Grand Wazir's death and wept for him, whilst his Emirs and his Grandees and officers also wept. Then said Karazdan, "He was with me but now, in all health, and went away to fetch me the flesh of the Queen of the Serpents, if it should be cooked; what befell him that he is now dead, and what accident hath betided him?" So Hasib told him the whole truth how the Minister had drunk the contents of the phial and had forthwith swelled out and died. The King mourned for his loss with mourning sore and said to Hasib, "What shall I do without Shamhur?" and Hasib answered "Grieve not, O King of the age; for I will cure thee within three days and leave no whit of disease in thy body." At this the King's breast waxed broad and he said, "I wish to be made whole of this affliction, though after a long term of years." So Hasib set the platter before the King and made him eat a slice of the flesh of the Serpent-queen. Then he covered him up and, spreading a kerchief over his face, bade him sleep and sat down by his side. He slept from noonday till sundown, while his stomach digested the piece of flesh, and presently he awoke. Hasib gave him somewhat of wine to drink and bade him sleep again; so he slept till the morning and when dawn appeared, Hasib repeated the treatment making him eat another piece of the flesh; and thus he did with him three days following, till he had eaten the whole, when his skin began to shrink and scale off and he perspired, so that the sweat ran down from his head to his heels. Therewith he became whole and there abode in him no trace of the disease, which when Hasib saw, he said, “There is no help for it but thou go to the Hammam.” So he carried him to the bath and washed his body; and when he came forth, it was like a wand of silver and he was restored to health, nay, sounder than he was before he fell ill. Thereupon he donned his richest robes and, seating himself on his throne, deigned make Hasib sit beside him. Then he bade the tables be spread and they ate and washed their hands; after which he called for the service of wine and both drank their fill. Upon this all his Wazirs and Emirs and Captains and the Grandees of his realm and the notables of the lieges came in to him and gave him joy of his recovery; and they beat the drums and adorned the city in token of rejoicing. Then said the King to the assembly, “O Wazirs and Emirs and Grandees, this is Hasim Karim al-Din, who hath healed me of my sickness, and know all here present that I make him my Chief Wazir in the stead of the Wazir Shamhur.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth King Karazdan to his Ministers and high lords, “He who healed me of my sickness is none other than Hasib Karim al-Din here present. Therefore I make him my Chief Wazir in the stead of the Wazir Shamhur; and whoso loveth him loveth me, and whoso honoureth him honoureth me, and he who obeyeth him obeyeth me.” “Hearkening and obedience,” answered they and all rising flocked to kiss Hasib’s hand and salute him and give him joy of the Wazirate. Then the King bestowed on him a splendid dress of gold brocade, set with pearls and gems, the least of which was worth five thousand gold pieces. Moreover, he presented to him three hundred male white slaves and the like number of concubines, in loveliness like moons, and three hundred Abyssinian[577] slave-girls, beside five hundred mules laden with treasure and sheep and oxen and buffaloes and bulls and other cattle beyond count; and he commanded all his Wazirs and Emirs and Grandees and Notables and Mamelukes and his subjects in general to bring him gifts. Presently Hasib took horse and rode, followed by the Wazirs and Emirs and lords and all the troops, to the house which the King had set apart for him, where he sat down on a chair; and the Wazirs and Emirs came up to him and kissed hands and gave him joy of his Ministership, vying with one another in suit and service. When his mother and his household knew what had happened, they rejoiced with exceeding joy and congratulated him on his good fortune; and his quondam comrades the woodcutters also came and gave him joy. Then he mounted again and, riding to the house of the late Wazir Shamhur, laid hands on all that was therein and transported it to his own abode. On this wise did Hasib, from a dunsical know-nothing, unskilled to read writing, become, by the decree of Allah Almighty, an adept in every science and versed in all manner of knowledge, so that the fame of his learning was blazed abroad over the land and he became renowned as an ocean of lore and skill in medicine and astronomy and geometry and astrology and alchemy and natural magic and the Cabbala and Spiritualism and all other arts and sciences. One day, he said to his mother, “My father Daniel was exceeding wise and learned; tell me what he left by way of books or what not!” So his mother brought him the chest and, taking out the five leaves which had been saved when the library was lost, gave them to him saying, “These five scrolls are all thy father left thee.” So he read them and said to her, “O my mother, these leaves are part of a book: where is the rest?” Quoth she, “Thy father made a voyage taking with him all his library and, when he was shipwrecked, every book was lost save only these five leaves. And when he was returned to me by Almighty Allah he found me with child and said to me: ‘Haply thou wilt bear a boy; so take these scrolls and keep them by thee and whenas thy son shall grow up and ask what his father left him, give these leaves to him and say, ‘Thy father left these as thine only heritance. And lo! here they are.’ “ And Hasib, now the most learned of his age, abode in all pleasure and solace, and delight of life, till there came to him the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies.[578] And yet, O King, is not this tale of Bulukiya and Janshah more wondrous than the adventures of

FOOTNOTES VOLUME V.

[1] This tale (one of those translated by Galland) is best and fullest in the Bresl. Edit. iii. 329.

[2] Europe has degraded this autumnal festival, the Sun-fκte Mihrgαn (which balanced the vernal Nau-roz) into Michaelmas and its goose-massacre. It was so called because it began on the 16th of Mihr, the seventh month; and lasted six days, with feasts, festivities and great rejoicings in honour of the Sun, who now begins his southing-course to gladden the other half of the world.

[3] “Hindν” is an Indian Moslem as opposed to “Hindï,” a pagan, or Gentoo.

[4] The orig. Persian word is “Shαh-pïr”=King’s son: the Greeks (who had no sh) (preferred); the Romans turned it into Sapor and the Arabs (who lack the p) into Sαbïr. See p. x. Hamzζ ispahanensis Annalium Libri x.: Gottwaldt, Lipsiζ mdcccxlviii.

[5] The magic horse may have originated with the Hindu tale of a wooden Garuda (the bird of Vishnu) built by a youth for the purpose of a vehicle. It came with the “Moors” to Spain and appears in “Le Cheval de Fust,” a French poem of the thirteenth Century. Thence it passed over to England as shown by Chaucer’s “Half-told tale of Cambuscan (Janghνz Khan?) bold,” as

“The wondrous steed of brass
On which the Tartar King did ride;”

And Leland (Itinerary) derives “Rutlandshire” from “a man named Rutter who rode round it on a wooden horse constructed by art magic.” Lane (ii. 548) quotes the parallel story of Cleomades and Claremond which Mr. Keightley (Tales and Popular Fictions, chapt. ii) dates from our thirteenth century. See Vol. i., .

[6] All Moslems, except those of the Mαliki school, hold that the

maker of an image representing anything of life will be commanded on the Judgment Day to animate it, and failing will be duly sent to the Fire. This severity arose apparently from the necessity of putting down idol-worship and, perhaps, for the same reason the Greek Church admits pictures but not statues. Of course the command has been honoured with extensive breaching: for instance all the Sultans of Stambul have had their portraits drawn and painted.

[7] This description of ugly old age is written with true Arab verve.

[8] Arab. “Badinjαn”: Hind. Bengan: Pers. Bαdingαn or Badiljαn; the Mala insana (Solanum pomiferum or S. Melongena) of the Romans, well known in Southern Europe. It is of two kinds, the red (Solanum lycopersicum) and the black (S. Melongena). The Spaniards know it as “berengeria” and when Sancho Panza (Part ii. chapt. 2) says, “The Moors are fond of egg-plants” he means more than appears. The vegetable is held to be exceedingly heating and thereby to breed melancholia and madness; hence one says to a man that has done something eccentric, “Thou hast been eating brinjalls.”

[9] Again to be understood Hibernice “kilt.”

[10] i.e. for fear of the evil eye injuring the palace and, haply, himself.

[11] The “Sufrah” before explained acting provision-bag and table-cloth.

[12] Eastern women in hot weather, lie mother-nude under a sheet here represented by the hair. The Greeks and Romans also slept stripped and in mediζval England the most modest women saw nothing indelicate in sleeping naked by their naked husbands. The “night-cap” and the “night-gown” are comparatively modern inventions.

[13] Hindu fable turns this simile into better poetry, “She was like a second and a more wondrous moon made by the Creator.”

[14] “Sun of the Day.”

[15] Arab. “Shirk”=worshipping more than one God. A theological term here most appropriately used.

[16] The Bul. Edit. as usual abridges (vol. i. 534). The Prince lands on the palace-roof where he leaves his horse, and finding no one in the building goes back to the terrace. Suddenly he sees a beautiful girl approaching him with a party of her women, suggesting to him these couplets,

“She came without tryst in the darkest hour, *
    Like full moon lighting horizon’s night:
Slim-formed, there is not in the world her like *
    For grace of form or for gifts of sprite:
‘Praise him who made her from semen-drop,’ *
    I cried, when her beauty first struck my sight:
I guard her from eyes, seeking refuge with *
    The Lord of mankind and of morning-light.”

The two then made acquaintance and “follows what follows.”

[17] Arab. “Akαsirah,” explained (vol. i., 75) as the plur. of Kisrα.

[18] The dearest ambition of a slave is not liberty but to have a slave of his own. This was systematised by the servile rulers known in history as the Mameluke Beys and to the Egyptians as the Ghuzz. Each had his household of servile pages and squires, who looked forward to filling the master’s place as knight or baron.

[19] The well-known capital of Al-Yaman, a true Arabia Felix, a Paradise inhabited by demons in the shape of Turkish soldiery and Arab caterans. According to Moslem writers Sana’a was founded by Shem son of Noah who, wandering southward with his posterity after his father’s death, and finding the site delightful, dug a well and founded the citadel, Ghamdαn, which afterwards contained a Mason Carrıe rivalling (or attempting to rival) the Meccan Ka’abah. The builder was Surahbvl who, says M.C. de Perceval coloured its four faces red, white, golden and green; the central quadrangle had seven stories (the planets) each forty cubits high, and the lowest was a

marble hall ceiling'd with a single slab. At the four corners stood hollow lions through whose mouths the winds roared. This palatial citadel-temple was destroyed by order of Caliph Omar. The city's ancient name was Azal or Uzal whom some identify with one of the thirteen sons of Joktan (Genesis xi. 27): it took its present name from the Ethiopian conquerors (they say) who, seeing it for the first time, cried "Hazα Sana'ah!" meaning in their tongue, this is commodious, etc. I may note that the word is Kisawahili (Zanzibarian) e.g. "Yαmbo sαnα — is the state good?" Sana'a was the capital of the Tabαbi'ah or Tobba Kings who judaized; and the Abyssinians with their Negush made it Christian while the Persians under Anushirwαn converted it to Guebrism. It is now easily visited but to little purpose; excursions in the neighborhood being deadly dangerous. Moreover the Turkish garrison would probably murder a stranger who sympathised with the Arabs, and the Arabs kill one who took part with their hated and hateful conquerors. The late Mr. Shapira of Jerusalem declared that he had visited it and Jews have great advantages in such travel. But his friends doubted him.

[20] The Bresl. Edit. (iii. 347) prints three vile errors in four lines.

[21] Alcove is a corruption of the Arab. Al-Kubbah (the dome) through Span. and Port.

[22] Easterns as a rule sleep with head and body covered by a sheet or in cold weather a blanket. The practice is doubtless hygienic, defending the body from draughts when the pores are open; but Europeans find it hard to adopt; it seems to stop their breathing. Another excellent practice in the East, and indeed amongst barbarians and savages generally, is training children to sleep with mouths shut: in after life they never snore and in malarious lands they do not require Outram's "fever-guard," a swathe of muslin over the mouth. Mr. Catlin thought so highly of the "shut mouth" that he made it the subject of a book.

[23] Arab. "Hanzal"=coloquintida, an article often mentioned by Arabs in verse and prose; the bright coloured little gourd attracts every eye

by its golden glance when travelling through the brown-yellow waste of sand and clay. A favourite purgative (enough for a horse) is made by filling the inside with sour milk which is drunks after a night’s soaking: it is as active as the croton-nut of the Gold Coast.

[24] The Bresl. Edit. iii. 354 sends him to the “land of Svn” (China).

[25] Arab. “Yα Kisrawi!”=O subject of the Kisrα or Chosroλ; the latter explained in vol.i.,75.[Volume 1, Footnote # 128] “Fars” is the origin of “Persia”; and there is a hit at the prodigious lying of the modern race, whose forefathers were so famous as truth-tellers. “I am a Persian, but I am not lying now,” is a phrase familiar to every traveller.

[26] There is no such name: perhaps it is a clerical error for “Har jαh”=(a man of) any place. I know an Englishman who in Persian called himself “Mirza Abdullah-i-Hvchmakαni”=Master Abdullah of Nowhere.

[27] The Bresl. Edit. (loc. cit.) gives a comical description of the Prince assuming the dress of an astrologer-doctor, clapping an old book under his arm, fumbling a rosary of beads, enlarging his turband, lengthening his sleeves and blackening his eyelids with antimony. Here, however, it would be out of place. Very comical also is the way in which he pretends to cure the maniac by “muttering unknown words, blowing in her face, biting her ear,” etc.

[28] Arab. “Sar’a”=falling sickness. Here again we have in all its simplicity the old nursery idea of “possession” by evil spirits.

[29] Arab. “Nafahαt”=breathings, benefits, the Heb. Neshamah opp. to Nephesh (soul) and Ruach (spirit). Healing by the breath is a popular idea throughout the East and not unknown to Western Magnetists and Mesmerists. The miraculous cures of the Messiah were, according to Moslems, mostly performed by aspiration. They hold that in the days of Isa, physic had reached its highest development, and thus his miracles were mostly miracles of medicine; whereas, in

Mohammed’s time, eloquence had attained its climax and accordingly his miracles were those of eloquence, as shown in the Koran and Ahαdνs.

[30] Lit. “The rose in the sleeves or calyces.” I take my English equivalent from Jeremy Taylor, “So I have seen a rose newly springing from the clefts of its hood,” etc.

[31] These lines are from the Bresl. Edit. (v. 35). The four couplets in the Mac. Edit. are too irrelevant.

[32] Polo, which Lane calls “Goff.”

[33] Arab. “Muffawak”=well-notched, as its value depends upon the notch. At the end of the third hemistitch Lane’s Shaykh very properly reads “baghtatan” (suddenly) for “burhatan”=during a long time.

[34] “Uns” (which the vulgar pronounce Anas) “al- Wujud”=Delight of existing things, of being, of the world. Uns wa jud is the normal pun=love-intimacy and liberality; and the caranomasia (which cannot well be rendered in English) re-appears again and again. The story is throughout one of love; hence the quantity of verse.

[35] The allusion to a “written N” suggests the elongated not the rounded form of the letter as in Night cccxxiv.

[36] The fourteenth Arabic letter in its medial form resembling an eye.

[37] This is done by the man passing his fingers over the brow as if to wipe off perspiration; the woman acknowledges it by adjusting her head-veil with both hands. As a rule in the Moslem East women make the first advances; and it is truly absurd to see a great bearded fellow blushing at being ogled. During the Crimean war the fair sex of Constantinople began by these allurements but found them so readily accepted by the Giaours that they were obliged to desist.

[38] The greatest of all explorers and discoverers of the world will be

he who finds a woman confessing inability to keep a secret.

[39] The original is intensely prosaicand so am I.

[40] Arab. “Sunnat,” the practice of the Prophet. For this prayer and other silly and superstitious means of discovering the “right direction” (which is often very wrongly directed) see Lane, M.E. chapt. xi.

[41] Arab. “Bahr (sea or river) al-Kunuz”: Lane (ii. 576) ingeniously identifies the site with the Upper Nile whose tribes, between Assouan (Syene) and Wady al-Subu’a are called the “Kunuz”lit. meaning “treasures” or “hoards.” Philae is still known as the “Islet of Anas (for Uns) al-Wujud;” and the learned and accurate Burckhardt (Travels in Nubia) records the local legend that a mighty King called Al-Wujud built the Osirian temples. I can give no information concerning Jabal al-Sakla (Thakla), the Mount of the woman bereft of children, beyond the legend contained in Night ccclxxix.

[42] A religious mendicant (lit. a pauper), of whom there are two great divisions. The Shara’i acts according to the faith: the others (La Shara’i, or irreligious) are bound by no such prejudices and are pretty specimens of scoundrels. (Pilgrimage i.22.)

[43] Meaning his lips and palate were so swollen by drought.

[44] It is a pious act in time of mortal danger to face the
Kiblah or Meccan temple, as if standing in prayer.

[45] Still the belief of the Badawi who tries to work upon the beast’s compassion: “O great King I am a poor man, with wife and family, so spare me that Allah spare thee!” and so forth. If not famished the lion will often stalk off looking behind him as he goes; but the man will never return by the same path; “for,” says he, “haply the Father of Roaring may repent him of a wasted opportunity.” These lion-tales are very common, witness that of Androcles at Rome and a host of others. Una and her lion is another phase. It remained for M. Jules Gerard, first the chasseur and then the tueur, du lion, to assail the

reputation of the lion and the honour of the lioness.

[46] Abu Haris=Father of spoils: one of the lion's hundred titles.

[47] "They" again for "she."

[48] Jaxartes and Oxus. The latter (Jayhun or Amu, Oxus or Bactros) is famous for dividing Iran from Turan, Persia from Tartaria. The lands to its north are known as Ma wara al-Nahr (Mawerannahar) or "What is behind the stream,"=Transoxiana and their capitals were successively Samarcand and Bokhara.

[49] Arab. "Dani was gharib"=friend and foe. The lines are partly from the Mac. Edit. and partly from the Bresl. Edit., v. 55.

[50] Arab. "Wa Rahmata-hu!" a form now used only in books.

[51] Before noted. The relationship, like that of foster- brother, has its rights, duties and privileges.

[52] Arab. "Istikharah," before explained as praying for direction by omens of the rosary, opening the Koran and reading the first verse sighted, etc., etc. At Al-Medinah it is called Khirah and I have suggested (Pilgrimage, ii. 287) that it is a relic of the Azlam or Kidah (divining arrows) of paganism. But the superstition is not local: we have the Sortes Virgilianae (Virgil being a magician) as well as Coranicae.

[53] Arab. "Wujud al-Habib," a pun, also meaning, "Wujud my beloved."

[54] Arab. "Khilal," as an emblem of attenuation occurring in Al-Hariri (Ass. of Alexandria, etc.); also thin as a spindle (Maghzal), as a reed, and dry as a pair of shears. In the Ass. of Barka'id the toothpick is described as a beautiful girl. The use of this cleanly article was enjoined by Mohammed:— "Cleanse your mouths with toothpicks; for your mouths are the abode of the guardian angels; whose pens are the tongues, and whose ink is the spittle of men; and to whom naught

is more unbearable than remains of food in the mouth.” A mighty apparatus for a small matter; but in very hot lands cleanliness must rank before godliness.

[55] The sense is ambiguous. Lane renders the verse:— “Thou resemblest it (rose) not of my portion” and gives two explanations “because HE is of my portion,” or, “because HIS cheek cannot be rosy if MINE is not.” Mr. Payne boldly translates

“If the rose ape his cheek, ‘Now God forfend,’ I say, ‘That of my portion aught to pilfer thou shouldst try’.”

[56] Arab. “lif” (not “fibres which grow at the top of the trunk,” Lane ii. 577); but the fibre of the fronds worked like the cocoa-nut fibre which forms the now well-known Indian “coir.” This “lif” is also called “filfil” or “fulfil” which Dr. Jonathan Scott renders “pepper” (Lane i. 8) and it forms a clean succedaneum for one of the uncleanest articles of civilisation, the sponge. It is used in every Hammam and is (or should be) thrown away after use.

[57] Arab. “Shinf;” a course sack, a “gunny-bag;” a net compared with such article.

[58] The eunuch tells him that he is not a “Sandali”=one whose penis and testes are removed; and consequently the highest valued. There are many ways of making the castrato; in some (as here) only the penis is removed, in other the testes are bruised or cut off; but in all cases the animal passion remains, for in man, unlike other animals, the fons veneris is the brain. The story of Abelard proves this. Juvenal derided the idea of married eunuchs and yet almost all of these neutrals have wives with whom they practise the manifold plaisirs de la petite oie (masturbation, tribadism, irrumation, tete-beche, feuille-de- rose, etc.), till they induce the venereal orgasm. Such was the account once given to me by a eunuch’s wife; and I need hardly say that she, like her confrerie, was to be pitied. At the critical moment she held up a little pillow for her husband to bite who otherwise would have torn her cheeks or breasts.

[59] In real life the eunuch, as a rule, avoids all allusion to his misfortune, although the slave will often describe his being sold merrily enough.

[60] The visits are in dreamland. The ringdove thanks the
Lord for her (his?) suffering in the holy martyrdom of love.

[61] Arab. "Hazar;" I have explained it as meaning "(the bird of) a thousand (songs)."

[62] The "Bulbul" had his day with us but he departed with Tommy Moore. We usually English the word by "nightingale;" but it is a kind of shrike or butcher-bird (Lanius Boulboul. Lath.).

[63] The "Hamam" is a lieu commun in Arabic poetry. I have noticed the world-wide reverence for the pigeon and the incarnation of the Third Person of the Hindu Triad (Shiva), as Kapoteshwara (Kapota-ishwara)"=pigeon or dove-god (Pilgrimage iii. 218).

[64] Arab. "Hamam al-Ayk." Mr. Payne's rendering is so happy that we must either take it from him or do worse.

[65] All primitive peoples translate the songs of birds with human language; but, as I have noticed, the versions differ widely. The pigeon cries, "Allah! Allah!" the dove "Karim, Tawwa" (Bountiful, Pardoner!) the Kata or sand-grouse "Man sakat salam" (who is silent is safe) yet always betrays itself by its lay of "Kat-ta" and lastly the cock "Uzkuru 'llah ya ghafilun" (Remember, or take the name of Allah, ye careless!).

[66] "Nay," the Dervish's reed pipe, symbol of the sighing absent lover (i.e. the soul parted from the Creator) so famed by the Mullah-i-Rum and Sir William Jones.

[67] Ba'albak=Ba'al (the God)-city (bek in Coptic and ancient Egyptian.) Such, at least, is the popular derivation which awaits a better. No cloth has been made there since the Kurd tribe of gallant robbers known as the "Harfush" (or blackguards) lorded it over old

"Heliopolis."

[68] Thinking her to be a Jinn or Ghul in the shape of a fair woman. This Arab is a strange contrast to the English fisherman, and yet he is drawn with truth.

[69] Arab. "Habbaza!" (good this!) or "Habba" (how good!): so "Habba bihi," how dear he is to me.

[70] Arab. "Zind," and "Zindah" the names of the two sticks, upper and lower, hard and soft, by which fire was kindled before flint and steel were known. We find it in Al-Hariri (Ass. of Banu Haram) "no one sought ire from my fire-stick (i.e. from me as a fire-stick) and failed." See Night dccciii.

[71] Arab. "Nazih" i.e. travelled far and wide.

[72] "Rajab," lit.="worshipping:" it is the seventh lunar month and still called "Shahr-i-Khuda" (God's month) by the Persians because in pre-Islamitic times it formed with Muharram (or in its stead Safar), Zu 'l-ka'adah and Zu-'l-Hijjah (Nos. 1 or 2; 7,11 and 12) the yearly peace, during which a man might not kill his father's murderer. The idea must have taken deep root, as Arab history records only six "impious (or sacrilegious) wars," waged despite the law. Europeans compare it with the Treuga Dei (truce of God) a seven-years peace established about A.D. 1032, by a Bishop of Aquitaine; and followed in A.D. 1245 by the Pax Regis (Royal Peace) under Louis VIII. of France. This compelled the relations of a murdered man to keep the peace for forty days after the offence was committed.

[73] His Majesty wrote sad doggrel. He is better at finessing, and his message was a trick because Rose-in-Hood had told him that at home there were special obstacles to the marriage.

[74] Arab. "Majzub"=drawn, attracted (literally); the popular term for one absorbed in the contemplation of the Deity. During this process the soul is supposed to quit the body leaving the latter irresponsible for its actions. I remember a scandal being caused in a village near

Tunis by one of these men who suddenly started up from his seat in a dusty corner and, in presence of a small crowd of people, had connection with a she-donkey. The supporters of the holy man declared that the deed was proof positive of his exceptional holiness; but there were lewd fellows, Moslems Voltaireans, who had their doubts and held that the reverend man had so acted "for the gallery." A similar story is told with due reserve by the late Abbe Hamilton in his book on the Cyrenaic. There are three grand divisions of the Sufis; (1) Mukiman, the stationaries; (2) Salikan, the travellers, or progressives, and (3) Wasilan, those who reach the desired end. And No. 2 has two classes: the Salik-i-majzub, one progressing in Divine Love; and the other, who has made greater progress, is the Majzub-i-Salik (Dabistan iii. 251).

[75] Arab. "Sundus," a kind of brocade (low Lat. brocare to figure cloth), silk worked in high relief with gold and silver. The idea is figurative meaning it was hung outside and inside with fine stuff, like the Ka'abah, the "Bride of Meccah." The "lords" means simply the lost girl.

[76] Arab. "Ayn" lit. eye, also a fount, "the eye of the landscape" (a noble simile); and here a helper, guard, assistant.

[77] "Lord" for lady, i.e. she.

[78] Arab. "Fi'l-khawafik"=in the four quarters or among the flappers (standards) or amid palpitations of heart. The bride alludes to a festal reception in a town, with burning incense, drums, flags, etc., etc.

[79] In Egypt the shorter "honey-moon" lasts a week; and on the seventh day (pop. called Al-Subu'a) bride and bridegroom receive visits with all ceremony, of course in separate apartments. The seventh day (like the fortieth, the end of six months and the anniversary) is kept for births and deaths with Khatmahs (perlections) of the Koran "Saylah" family gatherings and so forth. The fortieth day ends the real honey-moon. See Night dccxcii.

[80] I have noted the popular practice, amongst men as well as women,

of hiring the Hammam for private parties and picnicking in it during the greater part of the day. In this tale the bath would belong to the public and it was a mere freak of the bride to bathe with her bridegroom. “Respectable” people do not.

[81] She speaks in the last line as the barber or the bathman.

[82] Here the “Ana” begin; and they mostly date themselves. Of the following forty-nine, Lane (vol. Ii. P. 578 et seq.) gives only twenty-two and transforms them to notes in chapt. xviii. He could hardly translate several of them in a work intended to be popular. Abu Nowαs is a person carefully to be avoided; and all but anthropological students are advised to “skip” over anecdotes in which his name and abominations occur.

[83] Arab. “Ghilmαn,” the counter part, I have said, of the so-called “Houris.”

[84] Mosul boasts of never having been polluted with idolatrous worship, an exemption which it owes to being a comparatively modern place.

[85] The Aleppines were once noted for debauchery; and the saying is still “Halabi Shelebi” (for Chelebi)=the Aleppine is a fellow fine.

[86] Mr. Payne omits the last line. It refers to what Persian boys call, in half-Turkish phrase, “Alish Takish,” each acting woman after he has acted man. The best wine is still made in monasteries and the co-called Sinai convent is world-famous for its “Rαki” distilled from raisins.

[87] i.e. what a difference there is between them!

[88] Arab. “Salli ala ‘l-Nabi,” a common phrase; meaning not only praise hm to avert the evil eye; but also used when one would impose silence upon a babbler. The latter will shuffle off by ejaculating “Al” and continue his chatter. (Pilgrimage ii.279.)

[89] Arab. “Sukαt” (plur. of Sαki, cupbearer, our old “skinker”): the pure gold (tibr) is the amber-coloured wine, like the Vino d’oro of the Libanus.

[90] That is, fair, white and read: Turkish slaves then abounded at Baghdad.

[91] A Wady near Meccah where one of Mohammed’s battles was fought. The line means his waist is a thread connected broad breast and large hind quarters.

[92] Arab. “Zaurα” which may mean crooked, alluding to the well-known rib.

[93] A pun. Bakr was the name of the eponymus chief and it also means virgin, as in Abu Bakr.

[94] Arab. “Jαmi’ayn”=two cathedrals, any large (and consequently vicious) city.

[95] Arab. “Almα,” before noticed: I cannot translate “damask-lipped” to suit European taste.

[96] Sherbet flavoured with musk or apple to cool the mouth of “hot coppers.”

[97] Arab. “In’αsh” lit. raising from his bier. The whole tone is rollicking and slangy.

[98] i.e. In spite of himself: the phrase often occurs.

[99] Europeans usually write “Beni” for “Banu;” the oblique for the nominative. I prefer “Odhrah” or “Ozrah” to Udhrah; because the Ayn before the Zαl takes in pronunciation the more open sound.

[100] Possibly meaning that they were shrouded together; this would be opposed to Moslem sense of decorum in modern days, but the ancient were not so squeamish. See Night cccxi.

[101] This phase of passion in the “varium et mutabile” is often treated of by Oriental storytellers, and not unoften seen in real Eastern life.

[102] As has been said, “Sαhib” (preceding the name not following it as in India) is a Wazirial title in mediζval Islam.

[103] This parapet was rendered obligatory by Moses (Deut. xxii. 8) on account of the danger of leaving a flat roof without garde-fou. Eastern Christians neglect the precaution and often lose their children by the neglect.

[104] Arab. “Lauh.” A bit of thin board washed white used for lessons as slates are amongst us, and as easily cleaned because the inks contain no minerals. It is a long parallelogram with triangular ears at the short sides; and the shape must date from ages immemorial as it is found, throughout Syria and its adjoinings, in the oldest rock inscriptions to which the form serves as a frame. Hence the “abacus” or counting table derived from the Gr. , a slab (or in Phenician “sand”), dust or sand in old days having been strewed on a table or tablet for school- boys’ writings and mathematical diagrams.

[105] A pre-Islamic bard and friend to Tarafah the poet of the Suspended or “Prize Poem.” The tale is familiar to all the Moslem East. Tarafah’s Laura was one Khaulα.

[106] King of Hirah in Chaldζa, a drunken and bloodthirsty tyrant. When offended by the lampoons of the two poets he sent them with litterζ Bellerophontiζ to the Governor of Al-Bahrayn. Al-Mutalammis “smelt a rat” and destroyed his charged, but Tarafah was mutilated and buried alive, the victim of a trick which is old as (and older than) good King David and Uriah. Of course neither poet could read.

[107] On this occasion, and in presence of the women only, the groom first sees or is supposed to see the face of his wife. It is, I have said, the fashion for both to be greatly overcome and to appear as if about to faint: the groom looks especially ridiculous when so attitudinising.

[108] This leisurely operation of the “deed of kind” was sure to be noticed; but we do not find in The Nights any allusion to that systematic prolongatio veneris which is so much cultivated by Moslems under the name Imsαk = retention, withholding i.e. the semen. Yet Eastern books on domestic medicine consist mostly of two parts; the first of general prescriptions and the second of aphrodisiacs especially those qui prolongent le plaisir as did the Gaul by thinking of sa pauvre mθre. The Ananga-Ranga, by the Reverend Koka Pandit before quoted, gives a host of recipes which are used, either externally or internally, to hasten the paroxysm of the woman and delay the orgasm of the man (). Some of these are curious in the extreme. I heard of a Hindi who made a candle of frogs’ fat and fibre warranted to retain the seed till it burned out; it failed notably because, relying upon it, he worked too vigorously. The essence of the “retaining art” is to avoid over-tension of the muscles and to pre-occupy the brain: hence in coition Hindus will drink sherbet, chew betel-nut and even smoke. Europeans ignoring the science and practice, are contemptuously compared with village-cocks by Hindu women who cannot be satisfied, such is their natural coldness, increased doubtless by vegetable diet and unuse of stimulants, with less than twenty minutes. Hence too while thousands of Europeans have cohabited for years with and have had families by “native women,” they are never loved by them: — at least I never heard of a case.

[109] Abu ‘l Abbas al-Rakαshi, a poet of the time. The saying became proverbial (Burckhardt’s A. Proverbs No. 561) and there are variants, e.g. The night’s promise is spread with butter that melteth when day ariseth.

[110] Koran xxvi. 5,6 or “And those who err (Arab. Al- ghαwïn) follow the footsteps of the poets,” etc.

[111] Half-brother of Abdullah bin al-Zubayr, the celebrated pretender.

[112] Grand-daughter of the Caliph Abu Bakr and the most beautiful woman of her day.

[113] The Calc. Edit. by mistake reads "Izzah." Torrens (notes i.-xi.) remarks "The word Ghoonj is applied to this sort of blandishment (i.e. an affected gait), and says Burckhardt (Prov. No. 685), "The women of Cairo flatter themselves that their Ghoonj is superior to that of all other females in the Levant." But Torrens did not understand and Burckhardt would not explain "Ghunj" except by "assumed airs" (see No. 714). It here means the art of moving in coition, which is especially affected, even by modest women, throughout the East and they have many books teaching the genial art. In China there are professors, mostly old women, who instruct young girls in this branch of the gymnastic.

[114] When reciting the Fαtihah (opening Koranic chapter), the hands are held in this position as if to receive a blessing falling from Heaven; after which both palms are passed down the face to distribute it over the eyes and other organs of sense.

[115] The word used is "bizα'at" = capital or a share in a mercantile business.

[116] This and the following names are those of noted traditionists of the eighth century, who derive back to Abdallah bin Mas'ïd, a "Companion of the Apostle." The text shows the recognised formula of ascription for quoting a "Hadνs" = saying of Mohammed; and sometimes it has to pass through half a dozen mouths.

[117] Traditionists of the seventh and eighth centuries who refer back to the "Father of the Kitten" (Abu Horayrah), an uncle of the Apostle.

[118] Eastern story-books abound in these instances. Pilpay says in "Kalilah was Dimnah," "I am the slave of what I have spoken and the lord of what I keep hidden." Sa'adi follows suit, "When thou speakest not a word, thou hast thy hand upon it; when it is once spoken it hath laid its hand on thee." Caxton, in the "Dyctes, or Sayings of Philosophers" (printed in 1477) uses almost the same words.

[119] i.e. for her husband's and her sin in using a man like a beast.

[120] See the Second Lady’s story (tantτt Kadi, tantτt bandit), p-26 by my friend Yacoub Artin Pasha in the Bulletin before quoted, series ii. No. 4 of 1883. The sharpers’ trick is common in Eastern folk-lore, and the idea that underlies is always metempsychosis or metamorphosis. So, in the Kalilah wa Dimnah (new Syriac), the three rogues persuade the ascetic that he is leading a dog not a sheep.

[121] This is the popular prejudice and it has doubtless saved many a reputation. The bat is known to Moslems as the Bird of Jesus, a legend derived by the Koran from the Gospel of Infancy (1 chapt. xv. Hone’s Apocryphal New Testament), in which the boy Jesus amuses herself with making birds of clay and commanding them to fly when (according to the Moslems) they became bats. These Apocryphal Gospels must be carefully read, if the student would understand a number of Moslem allusions to the Injvl which no Evangel contains.

[122] Because it quibbled away out of every question, a truly diplomatic art.

[123] This Caliph, the orthodox Abbaside of Egypt (A.D. 1261) must not be confounded with the Druze-god, the heretical Fatimite (A.D. 996-1021). D’Herbelot (Hakem”) gives details. Mr. S.L. Poole (The Academy, April 26, ‘79) is very severe on the slip of Mr. Payne.

[124] The beautiful name is Persian “Anïshvn-rawαn” = Sweet of Soul; and the glorious title of this contemporary of Mohammed is “Al-Malik al-Adil” = the Just King. Kisra, the Chosroλ per excellentiam, is also applied to the godly Guebre of whom every Eastern dictionary gives details.

[125] “Sultan” is here an anachronism: I have noted that the title was first assumed independently by Mohammed of Ghazni after it had been conferred by the Caliph upon his father the Amir Al- Umarα (Mayor of the Palace), Sabuktagin A.D. 974.

[126] The “Sakkα” or water-carrier race is peculiar in Egypt and famed for trickery and intrigue. Opportunity here as elsewhere makes the thief.

[127] A famous saying of Mohammed is recorded when an indiscretion of his young wife Ayishah was reported to him, “There be no adultress without an adulterer (of a husband).” Fatimah the Apostle’s daughter is supposed to have remained a virgin after bearing many children: this coarse symbolism of purity was known to the classics (Pausanias), who made Juno recover her virginity by bathing in a certain river every year. In the last phrase, “Al-Salaf” (ancestry) refers to Mohammed and his family.

[128] Khusrau Parwiz, grandson of Anushirwan, the Guebre King who tore his kingdom by tearing Mohammed’s letter married the beautiful Maria or Irene (in Persian “Shvrvn = the sweet) daughter of the Greek Emperor Maurice: their loves were sung by a host of poets; and likewise the passion of the sculptor Farhαd for the same Shirin. Mr. Lyall writes “Parwκz” and holds “Parwvz” a modern form.

[129] he could afford it according to historians. His throne was supported by 40,000 silver pillars; and 1,000 globes, hung in the dome, formed an orrery, showing the motion of the heavenly bodies; 30,000 pieces of embroidered tapestry overhung the walls below were vaults full of silver, gold and gems.

[130] Arab. “Khunsα,” meaning also a catamite as I have explained. Lane (ii. 586) has it; “This fish is of a mixed kind.” (!).

[131] So the model lovers became the ordinary married couple.

[132] Arab. “Jamm.” Heb. “Yamm.” Al-Harvri (Ass. Of Sinjar and Sαwah) uses the rare form Yam for sea or ocean.

[133] Al-Hadi, immediate predecessor of Harun al-Rashid, called “Al-Atbik”: his upper lip was contracted and his father placed a slave over him when in childhood, with orders to say, “Musa! atbik!” (draw thy lips together) when he opened his mouth.

[134] Immediate successor of Harun al-Rashid. Al-Amin is an imposing physical figure, fair, tall, handsome and of immense strength; according to Al-Mas’ïdi, he killed a lion with his own hands; but his

mind and judgement were weak. He was fond of fishing; and his reply to the courtier bringing important news, “Confound thee! leave me! for Kausar (an eunuch whom he loved) hath caught two fish and I none,” reminds one of royal frivolity in France.

[135] Afterwards governor in Khorasan under Al-Maamun.

[136] Intendant of the palace under Harun al-Rashid.

[137] Moslem women have this advantage over their Western sisterhood: they can always leave the house of father or husband and, without asking permission, pay a week or ten days’ visit to their friends. But they are not expected to meet their lovers.

[138] The tale of “Susannah and the Elders” in Moslem form.
Dαniyαl is the Arab Daniel, supposed to have been buried at
Alexandria. (Pilgrimage, i. 16.)

[139] According to Moslem law, laid down by Mohammed on a delicate occasion and evidently for a purpose, four credible witnesses are required to prove fornication, adultery, sodomy and so forth; and they must swear that actually saw rem in re, the “Kohl-needle in the Kohl-ıtui,” as the Arabs have it. This practically prevents conviction and the sabre cuts the Gordian knot.

[140] Who, in such case, would represent our equerry.

[141] The Badawi not only always tells the truth, a perfect contrast with the townsfolk; he is blunt in speech addressing his Sultan “O Sa’vd!” and he has a hard rough humour which we may fairly describe as “wut.” When you chaff him look out for falls.

[142] The answer is as old as the hills, teste the tale of what happened when Amasis (who on horseback) raised his leg, “broke wind and bad the messenger carry it back to Apries.” Herod. Ii. 162. But for the full significance of the Badawi’s most insulting reply see the Tale of Abu Hasan in Night ccccxi.

[143] Arab. “Yα sαki” al-Dakan” meaning long bearded (foolish) as well as frosty bearded.

[144] P. N. of the tribe, often mentioned in The Nights.

[145] Adnan, which whom Arab genealogy begins, is generally supposed to be the eighth (Al-Tabari says the fortieth) descendant from Ishmael and nine generations are placed between him and Fahr (Fihr) Kuraysh. The Prophet cut all disputes short by saying, “Beyond Adnan none save Allah wotteth and the genealogists lie.” (Pilgrimage ii. 344) M.C. de Perceval dates Adnan about B.C. 130.

[146] Koran xxxiii., 38.

[147] Arab. “Arab al-Arabα,” as before noticed (vol. i. 12) the pure and genuine blood as opposed to the “Musta’aribah,” the “Muta’arribah,” the “Mosarabians” and other Araboids; the first springing from Khatan (Yaktan?) and the others from Adnan. And note that “Arabi” = a man of pure Arab race, either of the Desert or of the city, while A’arαbi applies only to the Desert man, the Badawi.

[148] Koran xxxviii. 2, speaking of the Unbelievers (i.e. non-Moslems) who are full of pride and contention.

[149] One of the Ashαb, or Companions of the Apostle, that is them who knew him personally. (Pilgrimage ii. 80, etc.) The Ashαb al-Suffah (Companions of the bench or sofa) were certain houseless Believers lodged by the Prophet. (Pilgrimage ii. 143).

[150] Hence Omar is entitled “Al-Adil = the Just.” Readers will remember that by Moslem law and usage murder and homicide are offences to be punished by the family, not by society or its delegates. This system reappears in civilisation under the denomination of “Lynch Law,” a process infinitely distasteful to lawyers (whom it abolishes) and most valuable when administered with due discretion.

[151] Lane translates (ii. 592) “from a desire of seeing the face of God;” but the general belief of Al-Islam is that the essence of Allah’s

corporeal form is different from man’s. The orthodox expect to “see their Lord on Doom-day as they see the full moon” (a tradition). But the Mu’atazilites deny with the existence of matter the corporiety of Alah and hold that he will be seen only with the spiritual eyes, i.e. of reason.

[152] See Gesta Romanorum, Tale cviii., “of Constancy in adhering to Promises,” founded on Damon and Pythias or, perhaps, upon the Arabic.

[153] Arab. “Al-Ahrαm,” a word of unknown provenance. It has been suggested that the singular form (Haram), preceded by the Coptic article “pi” (= the) suggested to the Greeks “Pyramis.” But this word is still sub judice and every Egyptologist seems to propose his own derivation. Brugsch (Egypt i. 72) makes it Greek, the Egyptian being “Abumir,” while “pir- am-us” = the edge of the pyramid, the corners running from base to apex. The Egyptologist proves also what the Ancients either ignored or forgot to mention, that each pyramid had its own name.

[154] Arab. “Ahkαm,” in this matter supporting the “Pyramidologists.”

[155] All imaginative.

[156] It has always been my opinion founded upon considerations too long to detail, that the larger Pyramids contain many unopened chambers. Dr. Grant Bey of Cairo proposed boring through the blocks as Artesian wells are driven. I cannot divine why Lane (ii, 592) chose to omit this tale, which is founded on historic facts and interests us by suggesting a comparison between Mediζval Moslem superstitions and those of our xixth Century, which to our descendants will appear as wild, if not as picturesque, as those of The Nights. The “inspired British inch” and the building by Melchisedek (the Shaykh of some petty Syrian village) will compare not unaptly with the enchanted swords, flexible glass and guardian spirits. But the Pyramidennarren is a race which will not speedily die out: it is

based on Nature, the Pyramids themselves.

[157] Arab. “Rizm”; hence, through the Italian Risma our ream (= 20 quires of paper, etc.), which our dictionaries derive from (!). See “frail” in Night dcccxxxviii.

[158] Arab. “Tarνkah” = the path trodden by ascetics and mystics in order to attain true knowledge (Ma’rifat in Pers. Dαnish). These are extensive subjects: for the present I must refer readers to the Dabistan, iii. 35 and iii. 29, 36-7.

[159] Alluding to the Fishαr or “Squeeze of the tomb.” This is the Jewish Hibbut hakkeber which all must endure, save those who lived in the Holy Land or died on the Sabbath-eve (Friday night). Then comes the questioning by the Angels Munkar and Nakir (vulgarly called Nαkir and Nakνr) for which see Lane (M.E. chapt. xviii.). In Egypt a “Mulakkin” (intelligencer) is hired to prompt and instruct the dead. Moslems are beginning to question these facts of their faith: a Persian acquaintance of mine filled his dead father’s mouth with flour and finding it in loco on opening the grave, publicly derided the belief. But the Mullahs had him on the hip, after the fashion of reverends, declaring that the answers were made through the whole body, not only by the mouth. At last the Voltairean had to quit Shiraz.

[160] Arab. “Walν” = a saint, Santon (Ital. Form) also a slave. See in Richardson (Dissert. iii.), an illustration of the difference between Wali and Wαli as exemplified by the Caliph al- Kαdir and Mahmïd of Ghazni.

[161] Arab. “Tνn” = the tenacious clay puddled with chaff which serves as mortar for walls built of Adobe or sun dried brick. I made a mistake in my Pilgrimage (i.10) translating Ras al-Tνn the old Pharos of Alexandria, by “Headland of Figs.” It is Headland of Clay, so called from the argile there found and which supported an old pottery.

[162] The danik (Pers. Dang) is the sixth of a dirham. Mr. S. L. Poole

(The Acad. April 26, ‘79) prefers his uncle’s translation “a sixth” (what of?) to Mr. Payne’s “farthing.” The latter at any rate is intelligible.

[163] The devotee was “Sαim al-dahr” i.e. he never ate nor drank from daylight to dark throughout the year.

[164] The ablution of a common man differs from that of an educated Moslem as much as the eating of a clown and a gentleman. Moreover there are important technical differences between the Wuzu of the Sunni and the Shi’ah.

[165] i.e., by honouring his father.

[166] This young saint was as selfish and unnatural a sinner as Saint Alexius of the Gesta Romanorum (Tale xv.), to whom my friend, the late Thomas Wright, administered just and due punishment.

[167] The verses are affecting enough, though by no means high poetry.

[168] The good young man cut his father for two reasons: secular power (an abomination to good Moslems) and defective title to the Caliphate. The latter is a trouble to Turkey in the present day and with time will prove worse.

[169] Umm Amrν (written Amrï and pronounced Amr’) a matronymic, “mother of Amru.” This story and its terminal verse is a regular Joe Miller.

[170] Abuse and derision of schoolmaster are staple subjects in the East as in the West, (Quem Dii oderunt pζdagogum fecerunt). Anglo-Indians will remember:

> “Miyαn-ji ti-ti!
> Bachche-kν gαnd men anguli kν thi!”
> (“Schoolmaster hum!
> Who fumbled and fingered the little boy’s bum?”)

[171] Arab. “Mujawirin” = the lower servants, sweepers, etc. See Pilgrimage ii. 161, where it is also applied to certain “settlers” at Al-Medinah. Burckhardt (No. 480) notices another meaning “foreigners who attend mosque-lectures” and quotes the saying, “A. pilgrimaged:” quoth B. “yes! and for his villanies resideth (Mujαwir) at Meccah.”

[172] The custom (growing obsolete in Egypt) is preserved in Afghanistan where the learned wear turbans equal to the canoe- hats of the Spanish cardinals.

[173] Arab. “Makmarah,” a metal cover for the usual brasier or pan of charcoal which acts as a fire-place. Lane (ii. 600) does not translate the word and seems to think it means a belt or girdle, thus blunting the point of the dominie’s excuse.

[174] This story, a very old Joe Miller, was told to Lane as something new and he introduced it into his Modern Egyptians, end of chapt. ii.

[175] This tale is a mere abbreviation of “The King and his Wazir’s Wife,” in the Book of Sindibad or the Malice of Women, Night dcxxviii., {which see for annotations}.

[176] The older “Roe” which may be written “Rukh” or “Rukhkh.” Colonel Yule, the learned translator of Marco Polo, has shown that “Roc’s” feathers were not uncommon curiosities in mediζval ages; and holds that they were mostly fronds of the palm Raphia vinifera, which has the largest leaf in the vegetable kingdom and which the Moslems of Zanzibar call “Satan’s date-tree.” I need hardly quote “Frate Cipolla and the Angel Gabriel’s Feather.” (Decameron vi. 10.)

[177] The tale is told in a bald, disjointed style and will be repeated in Sindbad the Seaman where I shall again notice the “Roc.” See Night dxxxvii., etc.

[178] Hvrah in Mesopotamia was a Christian city and principality subject to the Persian Monarchs; and a rival to the Roman kingdom of Ghassαn. It has a long history, for which see

D’Herbelot.

[179] A pre-Islamite poet.

[180] Arab. “Bikα’a,” alluding to the pilgrimages made to monasteries and here equivalent to, “Address ye to the road,” etc.

[181] Whose by name was Abu Ali, a poet under the Abbasides (eighth and ninth centuries).

[182] A well-known quarter of Baghdad, often mentioned in The Nights.

[183] Another well-known poet of the time.

[184] Arab. “Sardαb”: noticed before.

[185] A gigantic idol in the Ka’abah, destroyed by Mohammed: it gave name to a tribe.

[186] Arab. “Ya Kawwαd:” hence the Port. and Span. Alcoviteiro.

[187] Arab “Tufayli,” a term before noticed; the class was as well-known in Baghdad and Cairo as in ancient Rome.

[188] Arab. “Jauzar”=a bubalus (Antilope defessa), also called “Aye” from the large black eyes. This bovine antelope is again termed Bakar al-Wahsh (wild cattle) or “Bos Sylvestris” (incerti generic, Forsk.). But Janzar also signifies hart, so I render it by “Ariel” (the well-known antelope).

[189] Arab. “Tarαib” plur. of tarνbah. The allusion is to the heart, and “the little him’s a her.”

[190] A well-known poet of the ninth century (A.D.).

[191] These easy deaths for love are a lieu common: See sundry of them in the Decameron (iv. 7, etc.); and, in the Heptameron (Nouv. Ixx.),

the widow who lay down and died of love and sorrow that her passion had become known. For the fainting of lovers see Nouvelle xix.

[192] This is a favourite Badawi dish, but too expensive unless some accident happen to the animal. Old camel is much like bull-beef, but the young meat is excellent, although not relished by Europeans because, like strange fish, it has no recognised flavour. I have noticed it in my "First Footsteps" (, etc.). There is an old idea in Europe that the maniacal vengeance of the Arab is increased by eating this flesh, the beast is certainly vindictive enough; but a furious and frantic vengefulness characterises the North American Indian who never saw a camel. Mercy and pardon belong to the elect, not to the miserables who make up " humanity."

[193] i.e. of the Province Hazramaut, the Biblical Hazarmaveth (Gen. x. 26). The people are the Swill of Arabia and noted for thrift and hard bargains; hence the saying, If you meet a serpent and a Hazrami, slay the Hazrami. To prove how ubiquitous they are it is related that a man, flying from their society, reached the uttermost parts of China where he thought himself safe. But, as he was about to pass the night in some ruin, he heard a voice bard by him exclaim, "O Imαd al-Din!" (the name of the patron-saint of Hazramaut). Thereupon he arose and fled and he is, they say, flying still.

[194] Arab. "Fαl" alluding to the Sortes Coranicζ and other silly practices known to the English servant-girs when curious about her future and her futur.

[195] i.e., in Arab-land (where they eat dates) and Ajam, or lands non-Arab (where bread is the staff of life); that is, all the world over.

[196] This story is curious and ethnologically valuable. The Badawi who eructates as a civility, has a mortal hatred to a crepitus ventris; and were a by-stander to laugh at its accidental occurrence, he would at once be cut down as a "pundonor." The same is the custom amongst the Highlanders of Afghanistan, and its artificial nature

suggests direct derivation, for the two regions are separated by a host of tribes, Persians and Baloch, Sindis and Panjαbis who utterly ignore the point of honour and behave like Europeans. The raids of the pre-Islamitic Arabs over the lands lying to the north-east of them are almost forgotten; still there are traces, and this may be one of them.

[197] Arab. "Al-Ar." The Badawi saying is "Al-nαr wa lα l- αr" (Hell-)fire, but not shame. The sentiment is noble. Hasan the Prophet's grandson, a poor creature demoralised by over- marrying, chose the converse, "Shame is better than Hell-fire." An old Arabic poem has,

> "The Fire and not shame be the Lord of thee
> And e'en to The Fire from shame go flee."

Al-Hariri (Ass. of the Badawin) also has,

> "For rather would I die my death than shame, —
> On bier be borne than bear a caitiff's name."

[198] A grammarian and rhetorician of ninth century.

[199] Once existing in Syrian Hamαh (the Biblical Hamath); and so called because here died the Emperor Heraclius called by the Arabs "Hirakl."

[200] Till lately it was the custom to confine madmen in Syrian monasteries, hoping a cure from the patron Saint, and a terrible time they had of it. Every guide book relates the healing process as formerly pursued at the Maronite Convent Koshaya not far from Bayrut. The idiot or maniac was thrust headlong by the monks into a dismal cavern with a heavy chain round his neck, and was tied up within a span of the wall to await the arrival of Saint Anthony who especially affects this holy place. In very few weeks the patient was effectually cured or killed by cold, solitude and starvation.

[201] The Moslem Eve, much nearer the Hebrew "Hawah" = the

“manifester,” because (Gen. iii. 20) she was (to be) the mother of all that live (“Kull hayy”).

[202] The mad lover says “they” for “she,” which would be too familiar in speaking to strangers.

[203] i.e. falsely to report the death.

[204] A famous grammarian, etc., of the tenth century.

[205] The classical Amorium in Phrygia now Anatolia: Anbαr is a town (before mentioned) on the Euphrates; by the rules of Arabic grammar the word is pronounced (though never written) Ambαr.

[206] “Art thou not the slave of the Messiah, the Rαhib (monk)?” “No! I am the slave of Allah, the Rαghib (desirous of mercy from the Almighty). “ A fair specimen of the Saj’a or rhymed prose. Abdallah (properly “Abdu’llah:”) is a kind of neutral name, neither Jewish, Moslem nor Christian; hence I adopted it, (Pilgrimage i. 20.)

[207] Arab. “Hanut,” prop. a tavern where liquors are sold, a term applied contemptuously to shops, inns, etc., kept by Christians.

[208] Arab. “Shirk” = syntheism of the “Mushrik” (one who makes other gods partners with God), a word pronounced “Mushrit” by the Wahhabis and the Badawin.

[209] Koran vii. 195. The passage declaims against the idols of the Arabs, sun, moon. stars, etc.

[210] This minor miracle is commonly reported, and is not, I believe, unknown to modern “Spiritualism.” The dead Wali or Waliyah (Saintess) often impels the bier-bearers to the spot where he would be buried: hence in Cairo the tombs scattered about the city. Lane notices it, Mod. E. chaps. xxviii.

[211] Koran x. 36, speaking of being turned aside from the true

worship.

[212] One of the Wazirs of al-Maamun, Kurrat al-Ayn = “coolness (i.e. delight) of the eyes” Ali bin Hishαm surnamed Abu’l-Hasan, was prefect of Baghdad under the same reign.

[213] The Mac. Edit. (ii. 448) reads for Kawαid (plur. of Kαid = Governors, Span. Alcayde) “Fawαid”: hence Lane (ii. 606) translates “ try thy heart.”

[214] The mats of Sind were famous even in my day, but under English rule native industries are killed out by Manchester and Birmingham.

[215] Sajαh was the name of a famous female impostor, a contemporary of “Musaylimah the Liar.”

[216] A poet of Mohammed’s day.

[217] A singer and composer of the first century (A. H.).

[218] Arab = a roe, a doe; also the Yoni (of women, mares and bitches). It is the Heb. Tabitha and the Greek Dorcas.

[219] Within the Hudïd al-Harem (bounds of the Holy Places), at Al-Medinah as well as Meccah, all “Muharramαt” (forbidden sins) are doubly unlawful, such as drinking spirits, immoral life, etc. The Imam Malik forbids slaying animals without, however, specifying any penalty. The felling of trees is a disputed point; and no man can be put to death except invaders, infidels and desecraters. (Pilgrimage ii. 167.)

[220] A poet of the first century (A.H.).

[221] In Arab. =a fawn beginning to walk, also the 28th lunar mansion or station, usually known as Batn al-Hut or Whale’s belly. These mansions or houses, the constellations through which the moon passes in her course along her orbit, are much used in Moslem

astrology and meteorology.

[222] Arab. Kalla-mα = it is seldom (rare) that etc. used in books.

[223] Dishonoured by his love being made public. So Hafiz, Petrarch and Camoens.

[224] Sixth Abbaside, A.D. 809-813.

[225] Ala'llah, tenth Abbaside, A. H. 232-47 (847-61), grandson of Al-Rashid who succeeded Al-Wαsik. He was a fanatic Sunni, much opposed to the Shi'ahs and he ordered the Christians to wear round their necks the Ghull (collar of wood, iron, or leather), to dress in yellow head-gear and girdles, use wooden stirrups and place figures of devils in front of their dwelling-houses. He also gave distinct dresses to their women and slaves. The Ghull, or collar, was also used for a punishment and vermin gathered under it when riveted round the neck: hence Golius calls it "pediculosum columbar."

[226] Wazir of the above. killed by al-Muntasir Billah A. H. 247 (= 861).

[227] Easterns during purgation are most careful and deride the want of precaution in Europeans. They do not leave the house till all is passed off, and avoid baths, wine and women which they afterwards resume with double zest. Here "breaking the seal" is taking the girl's maidenhead.

[228] Johannes, a Greek favoured by Al-Mutawakkil and other Abbaside Caliphs.

[229] Lady of Shaykhs, elders in the faith and men of learning

[230] = A.D. 1166.

[231] Koran iv. 38. I have before noted what the advantages are.

[232] Koran ii. 282, "of those whom ye shall choose for witnesses."

[233] Koran iv. 175, “Whereas if there be two sisters, they inherit only two-thirds between them.”

[234] The secondary meaning is “Fα’il” = the active sodomite and “Mafa’ïl” = the passive, a catamite: the former is not an insulting word, the latter is a most injurious expression. “Novimus et qui te!”

[235] It is an unpleasant fact that almost all the poetry of Hαfiz is addressed to youths, as we see by the occasional introduction of Arabic (e.g., Afαka’llαh). Persian has no genders properly so called, hence the effect is less striking. Sa’di, the “Persian Moralist” begins one of the tales, “A certain learned man fell in love with a beautiful son of a blacksmith,” which Gladwin, translating for the general, necessarily changed to “daughter.”

[236] The famous author of the Anthology called Al-Hamαsah.

[237] i.e., teeth under the young mustachio.

[238] The “Silk man” and the celebrated author of the Makαmαt, assemblies or seances translated (or attempted) into all the languages of Europe. We have two in English, the first by Theodore Preston, M.A. (London, Madden, 1850); but it contains only twenty of the fifty pieces. The second by the late Mr. Chenery (before alluded to) ends with the twenty-sixth assembly: one volume in fact, the other never having been finished. English readers, therefore, are driven to the grand edition of the Makαmαt in folio by Baron Silvestre de Sacy.

[239] The sword of the eye has a Hamαil (baldrick worn over right shoulder, Pilgrimage i. 352) to support the “Ghimd” (vulg. Ghamad) or scabbard (of wood or leather): and this baldrick is the young whisker.

[240] The conceit of “Sulαfat” (ptisane, grape juice allowed to drain on the slabs) and “Sawαlif” (tresses, locks) has been explained. The newest wine is the most inebriating, a fact not much known in England, but familiar to the drinker of “Vino novo.”

[241] Koran xii. 51, this said by the nobleman’s (Potiphar’s) wife who adds, “I selected him to lie with me; and he (Joseph) is one of those who speak truth.”

[242] Here we have a specimen of the strained Saj’a or balanced prose: slave-girls (jawαrν) are massed with flowing tears (dam’u jαri) on account of the Kαfiyah or rhyme.

[243] The detected sodomite is punished with death according to Moslem law, but again comes the difficulty of proof. At Shiraz I have heard of a pious Moslem publicly executing his son.

[244] Koran xxvi. 165 et seq. The Lord speaks to the “people of Lot” (Sodomites). Mr. Payne renders “Min al-αlamνma,” “from the four corners of the world.”

[245] Meaning before and behind, a Moslemah “Bet Balmanno.”

[246] Arab. “ Lïti,” (plur. Lawαtν), much used in Persian as a buffoon, a debauchee, a rascal. The orig. sig. is “One of (the people of) Lot.” The old English was Ingle or Yngle (a bardachio, a catamite, a boy kept for sodomy), which Minsheu says is, “Vox hispanica et significat Latinθ Inguen” (the groin). Our vulgar modern word like the Italian bugiardo is pop. derived from Fr. Bougre, alias Bulgarus, a Bulgarian, a heretic: hence Boulgrin (Rabelais i. chaps. ii.) is popularly applied to the Albigeois (Albigenses, whose persecution began shortly after A.D. 1200) and the Lutherans. I cannot but think that “bougre” took its especial modern signification after the French became acquainted with the Brazil, where the Huguenots (in A.D. 1555) were founding a Nouvelle France, alias Equinoctiale, alias Antarctique, and whence the savages were carried as curiosities to Paris. Their generic name was “Bugre” (properly a tribe in Southern Brazil, but applied to all the redskins) and they were all born Sodomites. More of this in the terminal Essay.

[247] His paper is the whiteness of his skin. I have quoted the Persian saying of a young beard: “his cheeks don mourning for his beauty’s death.”

[248] Arab. “Khabαl,” lit. the pus which flows from the bodies of the damned.

[249] Most characteristic of Egypt is all this scene. Her reverence, it is true, sits behind a curtain; but her virtue uses language which would shame the lowest European prostitute; and which is filthy almost as Dean Swift’s.

[250] Arab. “Niyat:” the Moslem’s idea of intentions quite runs with the Christian’s. There must be a “Niyat” or purpose of prayer or the devotion is valueless. Lane tells a pleasant tale of a thief in the Mosque, saying “I purpose (before Prayer) to carry off this nice pair of new shoes!”

[251] Arab. “Ya ‘l-Ajïz” (in Cairo “Agooz” pronounced “Ago-o- oz”): the address is now insulting and would elicit “The old woman in thine eye” (with fingers extended). In Egypt the polite address is “O lady (Sitt), O pilgrimess, O bride, and O daughter” (although she be the wrong side of fifty). In Arabia you may say “O woman (Imraah)” but in Egypt the reply would be “The woman shall see Allah cut out thy heart!” So in Southern Italy you address “bella fı” (fair one) and cause a quarrel by “vecchiarella.”

[252] Governor of Egypt, Khorasan, etc. under Al-Maamun.

[253] i.e., a companion, a solacer: it is also a man’s name (vol. i. xxiv.).

[254] At Baghdad; evidently written by a Baghdad or Mosul man.

[255] A blind traditionist of Bassorah (ninth century).

[256] Arab. “Zaghab”=the chick’s down; the warts on the cucumber which sometimes develop into projections.

[257] The Persian saying is, A kiss without moustachio is bread without salt.

[258] “And We will prove you with evil, and with good, for a trial of

you; and unto Us shall ye return." (Koran xxi. 36.) The saying is always in the Moslem's mouth.

[259] Arab. "Sunnat," lit.=a law, especially applied to the habit and practice of the Apostle in religious and semi-religious matters, completing the "Hadis," or his spoken words. Anything unknown is entitled "Bida'ah"=innovation. Hence the strict Moslem is a model Conservative whose exemplar of life dates from the seventh century. This fact may be casuistically explained away; but is not less an obstacle to all progress and it will be one of the principal dangers threatening Al-Islam. Only fair to say that an "innovation" introduced by a perfect follower of the Prophet is held equal theoretically to a Sunnat; but vulgarly it is said, "The rabble will not take gold which is not coined."

[260] Arab. "Arsh"=the ninth Heaven, the Throne of the Deity, above the Seven Heavens of the planets and the Primum Mobile which, in the Ptolemaic system, sets them all in motion.

[261] This description of a good Moslem's death is at once concise, pathetic and picturesque.

[262] This is the first mention of coffee; apparently introduced by the scribe: the word rendered "coffee-makers" is "Kahwajiyah"; an Arab. plur. of a Turkish termination (-ji) to an Arab. word "Kahwah" (before noticed).

[263] Picnics are still made to Rauzah (Rodah) island: I have enjoyed many a one, but the ground is all private property.

[264] Arab. "Hosh," plur. Hνshαn, the low courts surrounded by mean lodgings which in "native" Cairo still contrast so strongly with the "gingerbread" of the new buildings.

[265] This is the Moslem equivalent of "thank you." He looks upon the donor as the channel through which Allah sends him what he wants and prays for more to come. Thus "May your shadow never be less" means, May you increase in prosperity so that I may gain thereby!

And if a beggar is disposed to be insolent (a very common case), he will tell you his mind pretty freely on the subject, and make it evident to you that all you have is also his and that La propriıtı (when not shared) est le vol.

[266] I have noticed in my Pilgrimage (i. 51-53) the kindly care with which the stranger is treated by Moslems, a marvellous contrast to the ways of “civilization.”

[267] Arab. “Dimyat,” vulg. pronounced “Dumvyat.”

[268] Where the door-keepers sit and receive their friends.

[269] This is a traveller’s ‘Kit’ in the East.

[270] Arab. “Takht-rawαn,” from Persian meaning “moveable throne.”

[271] The use of the expression proved the speaker to be a Moslem Jinnv.

[272] The “haunted” house proper, known to the vulgar and to spiritualists becomes, I have said, amongst Moslems a place tenanted by Jinns.

[273] Needless to say there never was a Sultan or a King of Baghdad nor a Duke of Athens. This story would seem not to have been written by the author of “the Emir bin Tahir,” etc. Night ccccxxiv.

[274] Plur. of Alim=one learned in the law, a D.D. Mohammed did his best to abolish the priest and his craft by making each Moslem paterfamilias a pontifex in his own household and he severely condemned monkery and celibacy. But human nature was too much for him: even before his death ascetic associations began to crop up. Presently the Olema in Al-Islam formed themselves into a kind of clergy; with the single but highly important difference that they must (or ought to) live by some honest secular calling and not by the “cure of souls”; hence Mahomet IV. of Turkey was solemnly deposed. So far and no farther Mohammed was successful and his success has

secured for him the lively and lasting hatred of the ecclesiastical caste which he so honestly and wisely attempted to abate. Even to the present day missionaries have a good word for the Guebre and the Buddhist, the Brahmanist and the Confucian, but none for the Moslem: Dr. Livingstone, for one instance of many, evidently preferred the Fetichist, whom he could convert, to the Unitarian Faithful whom he could not.

[275] i.e. they recited seven times (an unusual number), for greater solemnity, the opening Chapter of the Koran which does general duty on such occasions as making covenants and swearing fealty. This proclaiming a King by acclamation suggests the origin of the old and venerable Portuguese institution.

[276] By affixing his own seal and that of the King. This in later times was supplanted by the "Tughrα," the imperial cypher or counter-mark (much like a writing master's flourish), with which Europe has now been made familiar through the agency of Turkish tobacco.

[277] Arab. "Wird"=the twenty-five last chapters of the Koran which are repeated, one or more at a time, after the end of the "Farz," or obligatory prayers and ad libitum with the Sunnat or customary, and the Nαfilah or supererogatory.

[278] The sensible creed of Al-Islam freely allows anthropophagy when it saves life; a contrast to the sentimentalism of the West which brings a "charge of cannibalism" against unfortunate expeditionists. I particularly allude to the scandalous pulings of the English Press over the gallant and unfortunate Greely voyage. (The Academy, Sept. 25, 1884.)

[279] The story is mere Zsopic: the "Two dogs" contains it all. One of Mohammed's sensible sayings is recorded and deserves repetition:—"Empire endureth with infidelity (idolatry, etc.), but not with tyranny."

[280] This couplet occurs in Night xxi. (vol. i. 207); so I give Torrens (p.207) by way of variety.

[281] Lane (ii. 636) omits this tale, "as it would not only require a volume of commentary but be extremely tiresome to most readers." Quite true; but it is valuable to Oriental Students who are beginning their studies, as an excellent compendium of doctrine and practice according to the Shafi'ν School.

[282] Pronounced Aboo 'l-Husn = Father of Beauty, a fancy name.

[283] As in most hot climates so in Egypt the dead are buried at once despite the risk of vivisepulture. This seems an instinct with the Semitic (Arabian) race teste Abraham, as with the Gypsy. Hence the Moslems have invoked religious aid. The Mishkαt al-Masαbih (i. 387) makes Mohammed say, "When any one of you dieth you may not keep him in the house but bear him quickly to his grave"; and again, "Be quick in raising up the bier: for if the dead have been a good man, it is good to bear him gravewards without delay; and if bad, it is frowardness ye put from your necks."

[284] This biting of the hand in Al-Harνri expresses bitterness of repentance and he uses more than once the Koranic phrase (chapter vii., 148) "Sukita fν aydνhim," lit. where it (the biting) was fallen upon their hands; i.e. when it repented them; "sukita" being here not a passive verb as it appears, but an impersonal form uncommon in Arabic. The action is instinctive, a survival of the days when man was a snarling and snapping animal (physically) armed only with claws and teeth.

[285] Arab. "'Alam," applied to many things, an "old man" of stones (Kαkïr), a signpost with a rag on the top, etc.

[286] The moon of Ramazan was noticed in Night ix. That of Sha'aban (eighth month) begins the fighting month after the conclusion of the Treuga Dei in Rajab. See Night ccclxxviii.

[287] These lines have occurred in Night cccxix. I give Mr. Payne's version for variety.

[288] i.e. in her prime, at fourteen to fifteen.

[289] i.e. pale and yellow.

[290] The word means the wood; but it alludes to a preparation made by levigating it on a stone called in India “Sandlαsα.” The gruel-like stuff is applied with the right hand to the right side of the neck, drawing the open fingers from behind forwards so as to leave four distinct streaks, then down to the left side, and so on to the other parts of the body.

[291] Arab. “Haykal” which included the Porch, the Holy and the Holy of Holies. The word is used as in a wider sense by Josephus A. J. v. v. 3. In Moslem writings it is applied to a Christian Church generally, on account of its images.

[292] These lines having occurred before, I here quote Mr. Payne.

[293] Arab writers often mention the smile of beauty, but rarely, after European fashion, the laugh, which they look upon as undignified. A Moslem will say “Don’t guffaw (Kahkahah) in that way; leave giggling and grinning to monkeys and Christians.” The Spaniards, a grave people, remark that Christ never laughed. I would draw the reader’s attention to a theory of mine that the open-hearted laugh has the sound of the vowels a and o; while e, i, and u belong to what may be roughly classed as the rogue order.

[294] i.e. gaining the love of another, love.

[295] i.e. the abrogated passages and those by which they are abrogated. This division is necessary for “inspired volumes,” which always abound in contradictions. But the charge of “opportunism” brought against the Koran is truly absurd; as if “revelation” could possibly be aught save opportune.

[296] Koran iv. 160, the chapter “Women.”

[297] She unveiled, being a slave-girl and for sale. If a free woman show her face to a Moslem, he breaks out into violent abuse, because

the act is intended to let him know that he is looked upon as a small boy or an eunuch or a Chriastian — in fact not a man.

[298] Ilah=Heb. El, a most difficult root, meaning strength, interposition, God (Numen) “the” (article) “don’t” (do not), etc. etc.

[299] As far as I know Christians are the only worshippers who kneel as if their lower legs were cut off and who “join hands” like the captive offering his wrists to be bound (dare manus). The posture, however, is not so ignoble as that of the Moslem “Sijdah” (prostration) which made certain North African tribes reject Al-Islam saying, “These men show their hind parts to heaven.”

[300] i.e. saying “I intend (purpose) to pray (for instance) the two-bow prayer (ruka’tayn) of the day-break,” etc.

[301] So called because it prohibits speaking with others till the prayer is ended.

[302] Lit. “any thing opposite;” here used for the Ka’abah towards which men turn in prayer; as Guebres face the sun or fire and idolators their images. “Al-Kiblatayn” (= the two Kiblahs) means Meccah and Jerusalem, which was faced by Moslems as well as Jews and Christians till Mohammed changed the direction. For the occasion of the change see my Pilgrimage, ii. 320.

[303] Which includes Tayammum or washing with sand. This is a very cleanly practice in a hot, dry land and was adopted long before Mohammed. Cedrenus tells of baptism with sand being administered to a dying traveller in the African desert.

[304] The Koranic order for Wuzï is concise and as usual obscure, giving rise to a host of disputes and casuistical questions. Its text runs (chapt. v.), “O true believers, when you prepare to pray, wash (Ghusl) your faces, and your hands unto the elbows; and rub (Mas-h) your hands and your feet unto the ankles; and if ye be unclean by having lain with a woman, wash (Ghusl) yourselves all over.” The purifications and ceremonious ablutions of the Jews originated this

command; and the early Christians did very unwisely in not making the bath obligatory. St. Paul (Heb. xi. 22) says, “Let us draw near with a true heart…having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with clean (or pure) water.” But this did not suffice. Hence the Eastern Christian, in hot climates where cleanliness should rank before godliness, is distinguished by his dirt which as a holy or reverend man he makes still dirtier, and he offers an ugly comparison with the Moslem and especially the Hindu. The neglect of commands to wash and prohibitions to drink strong waters are the two grand physical objections of the Christian code of morality.

[305] Arab. “Istinshαk”=snuffing up water from the palm of the right hand so as to clean thoroughly the nostrils. This “function” is unreasonably neglected in Europe, to the detriment of the mucous membrane and the olfactory nerves.

[306] So as to wash between them. The thick beard is combed out with the fingers.

[307] Poor human nature! How sad to compare ita pretensions with its actualities.

[308] Complete ablution is rendered necessary chiefly by the emission of semen either in copulation or in nocturnal pollution. The water must be pure and not less than a certain quantity, and it must touch every part of the skin beginning with the right half of the person and ending with the left. Hence a plunge-bath is generally preferred.

[309] Arab. “Ta’mvm,” lit. crowning with turband, or tiara, here=covering, i.e. wetting.

[310] This practice (saying “I purpose to defer the washing of the feet,” etc.) is now somewhat obsolete.

[311] Arabs have a prejudice against the hydropathic treatment of wounds, holding that water poisons them: and, as the native produce usually contains salt, soda and magnesia, they are justified by many

cases. I once tried water-bandages in Arabia and failed dismally.

[312] The sick man says his prayers lying in bed, etc., and as he best can.

[313] i.e. saying, “And peace be on us and on the worshippers of Allah which be pious.”

[314] i.e. saying, “ I seek refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned.”

[315] Certain parts should be recited aloud (jahr) and others sotto voce (with mussitation=Khafi). No mistake must be made in this matter where a Moslem cannot err.

[316] Hence an interest of two-and-a-half percent is not held to be “Ribα” or unlawful gain of money by money, usury.

[317] The meal must be finished before the faster can plainly distinguish the white thread from the black thread (Koran ii. 183); some understand this literally, others apply it to the dark and silvery streak of zodiacal light which appears over the Eastern horizon an hour or so before sunrise. The fast then begins and ends with the disappearance of the sun. I have noticed its pains and penalties in my Pilgrimage, i. 110, etc.

[318] For the “Azαn” or call to prayer see Lane, M. E., chapt. xviii. The chant, however, differs in every country, and a practical ear will know the land by its call.

[319] Arab. “Hadvs” or saying of the Apostle.

[320] “Al-I’itikaf” resembles the Christian “retreat;” but the worshipper generally retires to a mosque, especially in Meccah. The Apostle practised it on Jabal Hira and other places.

[321] The word is the Heb. “Hagg” whose primary meaning is circularity of form or movement. Hence it applied to religious

festivals in which dancing round the idol played a prime part; and Lucian of “saltation” says, dancing was from the beginning and coeval with the ancient god, Love. But man danced with joy before he worshipped, and, when he invented a systematic saltation, he made it represent two things, and only two things, love and war, in most primitive form, courtship and fighting.

[322] Two adjoining ground-waves in Meccah. For these and for the places subsequently mentioned the curious will consult my Pilgrimage, iii. 226, etc.

[323] The ‘Umrah or lesser Pilgrimage, I have noted, is the ceremony performed in Meccah at any time out of the pilgrim-season proper, i.e. between the eighth and tenth days of the twelfth lunar month Zu ‘l-Hijjah. It does not entitle the Moslem to be called Hαjj (pilgrim) or Hαjν as Persians and Indians corrupt the word.

[324] I need hardly note that Mohammed borrowed his pilgrimage-practices from the pagan Arabs who, centuries before his day, danced around the Meccan Ka’abah. Nor can he be blamed for having perpetuated a Gentile rite, if indeed it be true that the Ka’abah contained relics of Abraham and Ishmael.

[325] On first sighting Meccah. See Night xci.

[326] Arab. “Tawαf:” the place is called Matαf and the guide Mutawwif. (Pilgrimage, iii. 193, 205.) The seven courses are termed Ashwαt.

[327] Stoning the Devil at Mina. (Pilgrimage, iii. 282.) Hence Satan’s title “the Stoned” (lapidated not castrated).

[328] Koran viii. 66; in the chapter entided “Spoil,” and relating mainly to the “day of Al-Bedr.

[329] Arab. “AI-Ikαlah”= cancelling: Mr. Payne uses the technical term “resiliation.”

[330] Freedman of Abdallah, son of the Caliph Omar and noted as a traditionist.

[331] i.e. at a profit: the exchange must be equal — an ordinance intended to protect the poor. Arabs have strange prejudices in these matters; for instance it disgraces a Badawi to take money for milk.

[332] Arab. “Jamα’ah,” which in theology means the Greek , our “Church,” the congregation of the Faithful under a lawful head. Hence the Sunnis call themselves “People of the Sunnat and Jamα’at.” In the text it is explained as “Ulfat” or intimacy.

[333] Arab. “Al-Khalνl,” i.e. of Allah=Abraham. Mohammed, following Jewish tradition, made Abraham rank second amongst the Prophets, inferior only to himself and superior to Hazrat Isa=Jesus. I have noted that Ishmael the elder son succeeded his father. He married Da’alah bint Muzαz bin Omar, a Jurhamite, and his progeny abandoning Hebrew began to speak Arabic (ta’arraba); hence called Muta’arribah or Arabised Arabs. (Pilgrimage iii. 190.) He died at Meccah and was buried with his mother in the space North of the Ka’abah called Al-Hijr which our writers continue to confuse with the city Al-Hijr. (Ibid. 165-66.)

[334] This ejaculation, “In the name of Allah” is, I have noted, equivalent to “saying grace.” If neglected it is a sin and entails a curse.

[335] The ceremonious posture is sitting upon the shin-bones, not tailor-fashion; and “bolting food” is a sign of boorishness.

[336] Arab. “Zidd,” the word is a fair specimen of Arabic ambiguity meaning primarily opposite or contrary (as virtue to vice), secondarily an enemy or a friend (as being opposite to an enemy).

[337] “The whole earth (shall be) but His handful on the Resurrection day and in His right hand shall the Heaven be rolled up (or folded together).”-Koran xxxix. 67.

[338] See Night lxxxi.

[339] Koran lxxviii. 19.

[340] Arab. “Al-Munαfik,” technically meaning one who outwardly professes Al-Islam while inwardly hating it. Thus the word is by no means synonymous with our “hypocrite,” hypocrisy being the homage vice pays to virtue; a homage, I may observe, nowhere rendered more fulsomely than among the so-called Anglo-Saxon race.

[341] Arab. “Tawakkul alα ‘llah”: in the imperative the phrase is vulgarly used=“Be off!”

[342] i.e. ceremonial impurity which is sui generis, a very different thing from general dirtiness.

[343] A thick beard is one which does not show the skin; otherwise the wearer is a “Kausaj;” in Pers. “Kïseh.” See vol. iii., 246.

[344] Arab. “Al-Khutnah.” Nowhere commanded in the Koran and being only a practice of the Prophet, the rite is not indispensable for converts, especially the aged and the sick. Our ideas upon the subject are very hazy, for modern “niceness” allows a “Feast of the Circumcision,” but no discussion thereon. Moses (alias Osarsiph) borrowed the rite from the Egyptian hierophants who were all thus “purified”; the object being to counteract the over-sensibility of the “sixth sense” and to harden the glans against abrasions and infection by exposure to air and friction against the dress. Almost all African tribes practise it but the modes vary and some are exceedingly curious: I shall notice a peculiarly barbarous fashion called Al-Salkh (the flaying) still practised in the Arabian province Al-Asvr. (Pilgrimage iii. 80.) There is a difference too between the Hebrew and the Moslem rite. The Jewish operator, after snipping off the foreskin, rips up the prepuce with his sharp thumb-nails so that the external cutis does not retract far from the internal; and the wound, when healed, shows a narrow ring of cicatrice. This ripping is not done by Moslems. They use a stick as a probe passed round between

glans and prepuce to ascertain the extent of the frenum and that there is no abnormal adhesion. The foreskin is then drawn forward and fixed by the forceps, a fork of two bamboo splints, five or six inches long by a quarter thick, or in some cases an iron like our compasses. This is tied tightly over the foreskin so as to exclude about an inch and a half of the prepuce above and three quarters below. A single stroke of the razor drawn directly downwards removes the skin. The slight bleeding is stopped by burnt rags or ashes and healed with cerates, pledgets and fumigations. Thus Moslem circumcision does not prevent the skin retracting.

[345] Of these 6336 versets only some 200 treat on law, civil and ceremonial, fiscal and political, devotional and ceremonial, canonical and ecclesiastical.

[346] The learned young woman omitted Ukhnïkh=Enoch, because not in Koran; and if she denoted him by "Idrvs," the latter is much out of place.

[347] Some say grandson of Shem. (Koran vii. 71.)

[348] Koran vii. 63, etc.

[349] Father-in-law of Moses. (Koran vii. 83.)

[350] Who is the last and greatest of the twenty-five.

[351] See Night ccccxxxviii.

[352] Koran ii., whose 256th Ayah is the far-famed and sublime Throne-verse which begins "Allah! there is no god but He, the Living, the Eternal One, whom nor slumber nor sleep seizeth on!" The trivial name is taken from the last line, "His throne overstretcheth Heaven and Earth and to Him their preservation is no burden for He is the most Highest, the Supreme." The lines are often repeated in prayers and engraved on agates, etc., as portable talismans.

[353] Koran ii. 159.

[354] Koran xvi. 92. The verset ends with, “He warneth you, so haply ye may be mindful.”

[355] Koran lxx. 38.

[356] Koran xxxix. 54.

[357] The Sunnis hold that the “Anbiyα” (=prophets, or rather announcers of Allah’s judgments) were not sinless. But this dogma is branded as most irreverent and sinful by the Shi’ahs or Persian “followers of Ali,” who make capital out of this blasphemy and declare that if any prophet sinned he sinned only against himself.

[358] Koran xii. 18.

[359] Koran ii. 107.

[360] Koran ii. 57. He (Allah) does not use the plurale majestatis.

[361] Koran ii. 28.

[362] Koran xvi. 100. Satan is stoned in the Minα or Munα basin (Night ccccxlii.) because he tempted Abraham to disobey the command of Allah by refusing to sacrifice Ishmael. (Pilgrimage iii. 248.)

[363] It may also mean “have recourse to God.”

[364] Abdallah ibn Abbas, before noticed, first cousin of Mohammed and the most learned of the Companions. See D’Herbelot.

[365] Koran xcvi., “Blood-clots,” 1 and 2. “Read” may mean “peruse the revelation” (it was the first Koranic chapter communicated to Mohammed), or “recite, preach.”

[366] Koran xxvii. 30. Mr. Rodwell (p.1) holds to the old idea that the “Basmalah” is of Jewish origin, taught to the Kuraysh by Omayyah,

of Taif, the poet and Hanvf (convert).

[367] Koran ix.: this was the last chapter revealed and the only one revealed entire except verse 110.

[368] Ali was despatched from Al-Medinah to Meccah by the Prophet on his own slit-eared camel to promulgate this chapter; and meeting the assembly at Al-'Akabah he also acquainted them with four things; (1) No Infidel may approach the Meccah temple; (2) naked men must no longer circut the Ka'abah; (3) only Moslems enter Paradise, and (4) public faith must be kept.

[369] Dictionaries give the word "Basmalah" (=saying Bismillah); but the common pronunciation is "Bismalah."

[370] Koran xvii. 110, a passage revealed because the Infidels, hearing Mohammed calling upon The Compassionate, imagined that Al-Rahmαn was other deity but Allah. The "names" have two grand divisions, Asmα Jalαlν, the fiery or terrible attributes, and the Asmα Jamαlν (airy, watery, earthy or) amiable. Together they form the Asmα al-Husna or glorious attributes, and do not include the Ism al-A'azam, the ineffable name which is known only to a few.

[371] Koran ii. 158.

[372] Koran xcvi. before noticed.

[373] A man of Al-Medinah, one of the first of Mohammed's disciples.

[374] Koran lxxiv. 1, etc., supposed to have been addressed by Gabriel to Mohammed when in the cave of Hira or Jabal Nïr. He returned to his wife Khadijah in sore terror at the vision of one sitting on a throne between heaven and earth, and bade her cover him up. Whereupon the Archangel descended with this text, supposed to be the first revealed. Mr. Rodwell () renders it, "O thou enwrapped in thy mantle!" and makes it No. ii. after a Fatrah or silent interval of six months to three years.

[375] There are several versets on this subject (chapts. ii. and xxx.)

[376] Koran cx. 1.

[377] The third Caliph; the "Writer of the Koran."

[378] Koran, v. 4. Sale translates "idols." Mr. Rodwell, "On the blocks (or shafts) of Stone," rude altars set by the pagan Arabs before their dwellings.

[379] Koran, v. 116. The words are put into the mouth of Jesus.

[380] The end of the same verse.

[381] Koran, v. 89. Supposed to have been revealed when certain Moslems purposed to practise Christian asceticism, fasting, watching, abstaining from women and sleeping on hard beds. I have said Mohammed would have "no monkery in Al-Islam," but human nature willed otherwise. Mr. Rodwell prefers "Interdict the healthful viands."

[382] Koran, iv. 124.

[383] Arab. "Mukri." "Kαri" is one who reads the Koran to pupils; the Mukri corrects them. "With the passage of the clouds" = without a moment's hesitation.

[384] The twenty-first, twenty-fourth and eighteenth Arabic letters.

[385] Arab. "Hizb." The Koran is divided into sixty portions, answering to "Lessons" for convenience of public worship.

[386] Arab. "Jalαlah,"=saying Jalla Jalαlu-hu=magnified be His Majesty!, or glorified be His Glory.

[387] Koran, xi. 50.

[388] The partition-wall between Heaven and Hell which others call

Al-'Urf (in the sing. from the verb meaning he separated or parted). The Jews borrowed from the Guebres the idea of a partition between Heaven and Hell and made it so thin that the blessed and damned can speak together. There is much dispute about the population of Al-A'araf, the general idea being that they are men who do not deserve reward in Heaven or punishment in Hell. But it is not a "Purgatory" or place of expiating sins.

[389] Koran, vii. 154.

[390] A play on the word ayn, which means "eye" or the eighteenth letter which in olden times had the form of a circle.

[391] From misreading these words comes the absurd popular belief of the moon passing up and down Mohammed's sleeves. George B. Airy (The Athenζum, Nov.29, 1884) justly objects to Sale's translation "The hour of judgment approacheth" and translates "The moon hath been dichotomised" a well-known astronomical term when the light portion of the moon is defined in a strait line: in other words when it is really a half-moon at the first and third quarters of each lunation. Others understand, The moon shall be split on the Last Day, the preterite for the future in prophetic style. "Koran Moslems" of course understand it literally.

[392] Chapters liv., lv. and lvi.

[393] We should say, not to utter, etc.

[394] These well-known "humours of Hippocrates," which reappear in the form of temperaments of European phrenology, are still the base of Eastern therapeutics.

[395] The doctrine of the three souls will be intelligible to Spiritualists.

[396] Arab. "Al-lami"=the l-shaped, curved, forked.

[397] Arab. "Usus," our os sacrum because, being incorruptible, the

body will be built up thereon for Resurrection-time. Hence Hudibras sings (iii. 2),

"The learned Rabbis of the Jews
Write there's a bone which they call leuz,
I' the rump of man, etc."

It is the Heb. "Uz," whence older scholars derived os. Sale (sect. iv.) called it "El Ajb, os coccygis or rump-bone."

[398] Arab physiologists had difficulties in procuring "subjects"; and usually practised dissection on the simiads. Their illustrated books are droll; the figures have been copied and recopied till they have lost all resemblance to the originals.

[399] The liver and spleen are held to be congealed blood.
Hence the couplet,

"We are allowed two carrions (i.e. with throats uncut) and
two bloods,
The fish and the locust, the liver and the spleen."
(Pilgrimage iii. 92.)

[400] This is perfectly true and yet little known to the general.

[401] Koran xvii. 39.

[402] Arab. "Al-malikhulvya," proving that the Greeks then pronounced the penultimate vowel according to the acute accentνa; not as we slur it over. In old Hebrew we have the transliteration of four Greek words; in the languages of Hindostan many scores including names of places; and in Latin and Arabic as many hundreds. By a scholar-like comparison of these remains we should find little difficulty in establishing the true Greek pronunciation since the days of Alexander the Great; and we shall prove that it was pronounced according to accent and emphatically not quantity. In the next century I presume English boys will be taught to pronounce Greek as the Greeks do.

[403] Educated Arabs can quote many a verse bearing upon domestic medicine and reminding us of the lines bequeathed to Europe by the School of Salerno. Such e.g. are;

> "After the noon-meal, sleep, although for moments twain;
> After the night-meal, walk, though but two steps be ta'en;
> And after swiving stale, though but two drops thou drain."

[404] Arab. "Sarνdah" (Tharνdah), also called "ghaut"=crumbled bread and hashed meat in broth; or bread, milk and meat. The Sarνdah of Ghassαn, cooked with eggs and marrow, was held a dainty dish: hence the Prophet's dictum.

[405] Koran v. 92. "Lots"=games of chance and "images"=statues.

[406] Koran ii. 216. The word "Maysar" which I have rendered "gambling" or gaming (for such is the modern application of the word), originally meant what St. Jerome calls and explains thereby the verse (Ezek. xxi. 22), "The King held in his hand the lot of Jerusalem" i.e. the arrow whereon the city-name was written. The Arabs use it for casting lots with ten azlam or headless arrows (for dice) three being blanks and the rest notched from one to seven. They were thrown by a "Zαrib" or punter and the stake was generally a camel. Amongst so excitable a people as the Arabs, this game caused quarrels and bloodshed, hence its prohibition: and the theologians, who everywhere and at all times delight in burdening human nature, have extended the command, which is rather admonitory than prohibitive, to all games of chance. Tarafah is supposed to allude to this practice in his Mu'allakah.

[407] Liberal Moslems observe that the Koranic prohibition is not absolute, with threat of Hell for infraction. Yet Mohammed doubtless forbade all inebriatives and the occasion of his so doing is well known. (Pilgrimage ii. 322.)

[408] I have noticed this soured milk in Pilgrimage i. 362.

[409] He does not say the "Caliph" or successor of his uncle

Mohammed.

[410] The Jewish Korah (Numbers xvi.) fabled by the Koran (xxviii. 76), following a Talmudic tradition, to have been a man of immense wealth. The notion that lying with an old woman, after the menses have ceased, is unwholesome, dates from great antiquity; and the benefits of the reverse process were well known to good King David. The faces of children who sleep with their grandparents (a bad practice now waxing obsolete in England), of a young wife married to an old man and of a young man married to an old woman, show a peculiar wizened appearance, a look of age overlaying youth which cannot be mistaken.

[411] Arab. “Hindibα”(=endubium): the modern term is Shakurνyah=chicorιe. I believe it to be very hurtful to the eyes.

[412] Arab. “Khuffαsh” and “Watwαt”: in Egypt a woman is called “Watwαtνyah” when the hair of her privities has been removed by applying bats’ blood. I have often heard of this; but cannot understand how such an application can act depilatory.

[413] Dictionaries render the word by “dragon, cockatrice.” The Badawin apply it to a variety of serpents mostly large and all considered venomous.

[414] Arab. “Zarr wa ‘urwah,” lit.=handle. The button-hole, I have said, is a modern invention; Urwah is also applied to the loopshaped handle of the water-skin, for attachment of the Allαkah or suspensory thong.

[415] Koran lxx. 40; see also the chapter following, v. 16.

[416] Koran x. 5; the “her” refers to the sun.

[417] Koran xxxvi. 40.

[418] Koran xxii. 60.

[419] Arab. “Manαzil:” these are the Hindu “Nakshatra”; extensively used in meteorology even by Europeans unconsciously: thus they will speak of the Elephantina-storm without knowing anything of the lunar mansion so called. The names in the text are successively Sharatαn=two horns of the Ram; (2) the Ram’s belly; (3) the Pleiades; (4) Aldebaran; (5) three stars in Orion’s head; (6) ditto in Orion’s shoulder; (7) two stars above the Twins; (8) Lion’s nose and first summer station; (9) Lion’s eye; (1O) Lion’s forehead; (11) Lion’s mane; (12) Lion’s heart; (13) the Dog, two stars in Virgo; (14) Spica Virginis; (15) foot of Virgo; (16) horns of Scorpio; (17) the Crown; (18) heart of Scorpio; (19) tail of Scorpio; (2O) stars in Pegasus; (21) where no constellation appears; (22) the Slaughterer’s luck; (23) Glutton’s luck; (24) Luck of Lucks, stars in Aquarius; (25) Luck of Tents, stars in Aquarius; (26) the fore-lip or spout of Urn; (27) hind lip of Urn; and (28) in navel of Fish’s belly (Batn al-Hït); of these 28, to each of the four seasons 7 are allotted.

[420] The Hebrew absey, still used by Moslems in chronograms. For mnemonic purposes the 28 letters are distributed into eight words of which the first and second are Abjad and Hawwaz. The last six letters in two words (Thakhiz and Zuzigh) are Arabian, unknown to the Jews and not found in Syriac.

[421] Arab. “Zindvk;” properly, one who believes in two gods (the old Persian dualism); in books an atheist, i.e. one who does not believe in a god or gods; and, popularly, a free-thinker who denies the existence of a Supreme Being, rejects revelation for the laws of Nature imprinted on the heart of man and for humanity in its widest sense. Hence he is accused of permitting incestuous marriages and other abominations. We should now call him (for want of something better) an Agnostic.

[422] Koran xxxi. 34. The words may still be applied to meteorologists especially of the scientific school. Even the experienced (as the followers of the late Mathieu de la Drτme) reckon far more failures than successes. The Koranic passage enumerates five things known only to Allah; Judgment-day; rain; sex of child in womb; what shall

happen to-morrow and where a man shall die.

[423] The fifth and seventh months (January and March) of the Coptic year which, being solar, is still used by Arab and Egyptian meteorologists. Much information thereon will be found in the “Egyptian Calendar” by Mr. Mitchell, Alexandria, 1876. It bears the appropriate motto “Anni certus modus apud solos semper Egyptios fuit.” (Macrobius.) See also Lane M.E., chapt. ix.

[424] Vulg. Kiyαk; the fourth month, beginning 9th — 1Oth December. The first month is Tït, commencing 1Oth — 11th September.

[425] The 8th and 12th months partly corresponding with April and August: Hαtïr is the 3rd (November) and AmshRr the 6th (February).

[426] Moslems have been compelled to adopt infidel names for the months because Mohammed’s Koranic rejection of Nasy or intercalation makes their lunar months describe the whole circle of the seasons in a cycle of about thirty-three and a half years. Yet they have retained the terms which contain the original motive of the denomination. The first month is Muharram, the “Holy,” because war was forbidden; it was also known as Safar No. 1. The second Safar=“Emptiness,” because during the heats citizens left the towns and retired to Tαif and other cool sites. Rabν’a (first and second) alluded to the spring-pasturages; Jumαdα (first and second) to the “hardening” of the dry ground and, according to some, to the solidification, freezing, of the water in the highlands. Rajab (No.7)=“worshipping,” especially by sacrifice, is also known as Al-Asamm the deaf; because being sacred, the rattle of arms was unheard. Sha’abαn=“collecting,” dispersing, ruining, because the tribal wars recommenced: Ramazan (intensely hot) has been explained and Shawwαl (No. 10) derives from Shaul (elevating) when the he-camels raise their tails in rut. Zï’l-Ka’adah, the sedentary, is the rest time of the year, when fighting is forbidden and Zu’l-Hijjah explains itself as the pilgrimage-month.

[427] The lowest of the seven.

[428] Koran xxxvii. 5.

[429] Arab. “Faylasïf,” an evident corruption from the Greek. Amongst the vulgar it denotes a sceptic, an atheist; much the same a “Frammαsïn” or Freemason. The curious reader will consult the Dabistan, vol. iii. chapt. xi. et seq. “On the Religion of the Wise” (philosophi), and, Beaconsfield’s theft from Shaftesbury.

[430] Koran xxxvi. 37-38.

[431] Koran xxii. 7. The Hour i.e. of Judgment.

[432] Koran xx. 58. The Midrasch Tanchumah on Exod. vii. gives a similar dialogue between Pharaoh and Moses. (Rodwell, in loco.)

[433] Arab. “Sham’ïn” or “Shim’ïn,” usually applied to Simon Peter (as in Acts xv. 14). But the text alludes to Saint Simeon (Luke ii. 25-35). See Gospel of Infancy (ii. 8) and especially the Gospel of Nicodemus (xii. 3) which makes him a High-Priest.

[434] Sαlih the Patriarch’s she-camel, miraculously produced from the rock in order to convert the Thamïd-tribe. (Koran vii.)

[435] When Abu Bakr was hiding with Mohammed in a cave on the Hill Al-Saur (Thaur or Thïr, Pilgrimage ii. 131) South of Meccah, which must not be confounded with the cave on Jabal Hirα now called Jabal Nïr on the way to Arafat (Pilgrimage iii. 246), the fugitives were protected by a bird which built her nest at the entrance (according to another legend it was curtained by a spider’s web), whilst another bird (the crow of whom I shall presently speak) tried to betray them. The first bird is popularly supposed to have been a pigeon, and is referred to by Hudibras,

> “Th’ apostles of this fierce religion
> Like Mahomet, were ass and widgeon.”

The ass I presume alludes to the marvellous beast Al-Burαk which the Greeks called from (Euthymius in Pocock, Spec. A.H. p.144) and which Indian Moslems picture with human face, ass's ears, equine body and peacock's wings and tail. The "widgeon" I presume to be a mistake or a misprint for pigeon.

[436] The Arabs are not satisfied with the comparative moderation of the Hebrew miracle, and have added all manner of absurdities. (Pilgrimage ii. 288.)

[437] Koran lxxxi. 18. Sale translates "by the morning when it appeareth;" and the word (tanaffus) will bear this meaning. Mr. Rodwell prefers, "By the dawn when it clears away the darkness by its breath."

[438] As a rule Moslems are absurdly ignorant of arithmetic and apparently cannot master it. Hence in Egypt they used Copts for calculating-machines and further East Hindds. The mildest numerical puzzle, like the above, is sure of success.

[439] The paradiseal tree which supplied every want. Mohammed borrowed it from the Christians (Rev. xxi. 10-21 and xxii. 1-2) who placed in their paradise the Tree of Life which bears twelve sorts of fruits and leaves of healing virtue. (See also the 3rd book of Hermas, his Similitudes.) The Hebrews borrowed it from the Persians. Amongst the Hindus it appears as "Kalpavriksha;" amongst the Scandinavians as Yggdrasil. The curious reader will consult Mr. James Fergusson's learned work, "Tree and Serpent Worship," etc. London, 1873.

[440] Aaron's Rod becomes amongst Moslems (Koran vii. 110) Moses' Staff; the size being that of a top-mast. (Pilgrimage i. 300, 301.) In Koran xx. 18, 19, we find a notice of its uses; and during the Middle Ages it reappeared in the Staff of Wamba the Goth (A.D.672-680) the witch's broomstick was its latest development.

[441] Christ, say the Eutychians, had only one nature, the divine; so he was crucified in effigy.

[442] Jesus is compared with Adam in the Koran (chapt. iii.): his titles are Kalαmu ‘llah (word of God) because engendered without a father, and Rïhu ‘llah (breath of God) because conceived by Gabriel in the shape of a beautifui youth breathing into the Virgin’s vulva. Hence Moslems believe in a “miraculous conception” and consequently determine that one so conceived was, like Elias and Khizr, not subject to death; they also hold him born free from “original sin” (a most sinful superstition), a veil being placed before the Virgin and Child against the Evil One who could not touch them. He spoke when a babe in cradle; he performed miracles of physic; he was taken up to Heaven; he will appear as the forerunner of Mohammed on the White Tower of Damascus, and finally he will be buried at Al-Medinah. The Jews on the other hand speak of him as “that man:” they hold that he was begotten by Joseph during the menstrual period and therefore a born magician. Moreover he learned the Sham ha-maphrash or Nomen tetragrammaton, wrote it on parchment and placed it in an incision in his thigh, which closed up on the Name being mentioned (Buxtorf, Lex Talmud, 25-41). Other details are given in the Toldoth Jesu (Historia Joshuζ Nazareni). This note should be read by the eminent English littırateur who discovered a fact, well known to Locke and Carlyle, that “Mohammedans are Christians.” So they are and something more.

[443] In the Kalamdαn, or pen-case, is a little inkstand of metal occupying the top of the long, narrow box.

[444] A fair specimen of the riddle known as the “surprise.”

[445] Koran xli. 10.

[446] Koran xxxvi. 82.

[447] Here we enter upon a series of disputed points. The Wahhαbis deny the intercession of the Apostle (Pilgrimage ii. 76-77). The Shi’ahs place Ali next in dignity to Mohammed and there is a sect (Ali-Ilαhi) which believes him to be an Avatar or incarnation of the Deity. For the latter the curious reader will consult the “Dabistan,” ii.

451. The Koran by its many contradictions seems to show that Mohammed never could make up his own mind on the subject, thinking himself at times an intercessor and then sharply denying all intercession.

[448] Arab. “Kanjifah”=a pack of cards; corrupted from the Persian “Ganjvfah.” We know little concerning the date or origin of this game in the East, where the packs are quite unlike ours.

[449] It is interesting to compare this account with the pseudo Ovid and with Tale clxvi. in Gesta “Of the game of Schaci.” Its Schacarium is the chess-board. Rochus (roccus, etc.) is not from the Germ. Rock (a coat) but from Rukh (Pers. a hero, a knight-errant) Alphinus (Ital. Alfino) is Al-Firzαn (Pers. science, wise).

[450] Arab, “Baydak” or “Bayzak”; a corruption of the Persian “Piyαdah”=a footman, peon, pawn; and proving whence the Arabs derived the game. The Persians are the readiest backgammon-players known to me, better even than the Greeks; they throw the dice from the hand and continue foully abusing the fathers and mothers of the “bones” whilst the game lasts. It is often played in the intervals of dinner by the higher classes in Persia.

[451] Metaphor from loading camels and mules. To “eat” a piece is to take it.

[452] Arab. “Bilαbil”; a plural of “Bulbul” with a double entendre balαbil (plur. of ballalah)=heart’s troubles, and “balα, bul”=a calamity, nay, etc.

[453] The popular English idea of the Arab horse is founded upon utter unfact. Book after book tells us, “There are three distinct breeds of Arabians -the Attechi, a very superior breed; the Kadishi, mixed with these and of little value; and the Kochlani, highly prized and very difficult to procure.” “Attechi” may be At-Tαzi (the Arab horse, or hound) or some confusion with “At” (Turk.) a horse. “Kadish” (Gadish or Kidish) is a nag; a gelding, a hackney, a “pacer” (generally called “Rahwαn”). “Kochlani” is evidently “Kohlαni,” the

Kohl-eyed, because the skin round the orbits is dark as if powdered. This is the true blue blood; and the bluest of all is “Kohlαni al-Ajïz” (of the old woman) a name thus accounted for. An Arab mare dropped a filly when in flight; her rider perforce galloped on and presently saw the foal appear in camp, when it was given to an old woman for nursing and grew up to be famous. The home of the Arab horse is the vast plateau of Al-Najd: the Tahαmah or lower maritime regions of Arabia, like Malabar, will not breed good beasts. The pure blood all descends from five collateral lines called Al-Khamsah (the Cinque). Literary and pedantic Arabs derive them from the mares of Mohammed, a native of the dry and rocky region, Al-Hijaz, whither horses are all imported. Others go back (with the Koran, chapt. xxviii.) to Solomon, possibly Salmαn, a patriarch fourth in descent from Ishmael and some 600 years older than the Hebrew King. The Badawi derive the five from Rabν’at al-Faras (R. of the mare) fourth in descent from Adnαn, the fount of Arab genealogy. But they differ about the names: those generally given are Kahilan (Kohaylat), Saklαwi (which the Badawin pronounce Saglαwi), Abayαn, and Hamdαni; others substitute Manαkhi (the long-maned), Tanνs and Jalfïn. These require no certificate amongst Arabs; for strangers a simple statement is considered enough. The Badawin despise all half-breeds (Arab sires and country mares), Syrian, Turkish, Kurdish and Egyptian. They call these (first mentioned in the reign of Ahmes, B.C. 1600) the “sons of horses”; as opposed to “sons of mares,” or thorough-breds. Nor do they believe in city-bred animals. I have great doubts concerning our old English sires, such as the Darley Arabian which looks like a Kurdish half-bred, the descendant of those Cappadocians so much prized by the Romans: in Syria I rode a “Harfïshν” (Kurd) the very image of it. There is no difficulty in buying Arab stallions except the price. Of course the tribe does not like to part with what may benefit the members generally; but offers of £500 to £1,000 would overcome men’s scruples. It is different with mares, which are almost always the joint property of several owners. The people too dislike to see a hat on a thorough-bred mare: “What hast thou done that thou art ridden by that ill-omened Kafir?” the Badawin used to mutter when they saw a highly respectable missionary at Damascus mounting a fine Ruwalα mare. The feeling easily explains the many wars about horses occurring in Arab annals, e.g. about Dαhis and Ghabrα. (C. de Perceval, Essas, vol.ii.)

[454] The stricter kind of Eastern Jew prefers to die on the floor, not in bed, as was the case with the late Mr. Emmanuel Deutsch, who in his well-known article on the Talmud had the courage to speak of "Our Saviour." But as a rule the Israelite, though he mostly appears as a Deist, a Unitarian, has a fund of fanatical feelings which crop up in old age and near death. The "converts" in Syria and elsewhere, whose Judaism is intensified by "conversion," when offers are made to them by the missionaries repair to the Khαkhαm (scribe) and, after abundant wrangling determine upon a modus vivendi. They are to pay a proportion of their wages, to keep careful watch in the cause of Israel and to die orthodox. In Istria there is a legend of a Jew Prior in a convent who was not discovered till he announced himself most unpleasantly on his death-bed. For a contrary reason to Jewish humility, the Roman Emperors preferred to die standing.

[455] He wished to die in a state of ceremonial purity; as has before been mentioned.

[456] Arab. "Badal": in Sind (not to speak of other places) it was customary to hire a pauper "badal" to be hanged in stead of a rich man. Sir Charles Napier signed many a death-warrant before he ever heard of the practice.

[457] Arab. "La'an" = curse. The word is in every mouth though strongly forbidden by religion. Even of the enemies of Al-Islam the learned say, "Ila'an Yezνd wa lα tazνd" = curse Yezid but do not exceed (i.e. refrain from cursing the others). This, however, is in the Shafi'ν school and the Hanafνs do not allow it (Pilgrimage i. 198). Hence the Moslem when scrupulous uses na'al (shoe) for la'an (curse) as Ina'al abïk (for Ila'an abu'-k) or, drat (instead of damn) your father. Men must hold Supreme Intelligence to be of feeble kind if put off by such miserable pretences.

[458] Koran vi. 44, speaking of the Infidels. It is a most unamiable

chapter, with such assertions as “Allah leadeth into error whom He pleaseth,” etc.

[459] Alluding to the “formication” which accompanies a stroke of paralysis.

[460] Pronounce Zool Karnayn.

[461] i.e. the Koranic and our mediζval Alexander, Lord of the two Horns (East and West) much “Matagrobolized” and very different from him of Macedon. The title is variously explained, from two protuberances on his head or helm, from two long locks and, possibly, from the ram-horns of Jupiter Ammon. The anecdote in the text seems suggested by the famous interview (probably a canard) with Diogenes: see in the Gesta, Tale cxlvi., “The answer of Diomedes the Pirate to Alexander.” Iskandar was originally called Marzbαn (Lord of the Marches), son of Marzabah; and, though descended from Yunαn, son of Japhet, the eponymus of the Greeks, was born obscure, the son of an old woman. According to the Persians he was the son of the Elder Dαrαb (Darius Codomannus of the Kayanian or Second dynasty), by a daughter of Philip of Macedon; and was brought up by his grandfather. When Abraham and Isaac had rebuilt the Ka’abah they foregathered with him and Allah sent him forth against the four quarters of the earth to convert men to the faith of the Friend or to cut their throats; thus he became one of the four world-conquerors with Nimrod, Solomon, Bukht al-Nasr (Nabochodonosor); and he lived down two generations of men. His Wazir was Aristï (the Greek Aristotle) and he carried a couple of flags, white and black, which made day and night for him and facilitated his conquests. At the end of Persia, where he was invited by the people, on account of the cruelty of his half brother Darab II., he came upon two huge mountains on the same line, behind which dwelt a host of abominable pygmies, two spans high, with curious eyes, ears which served as mattresses and coverlets, huge fanged mouths, lions’ claws and hairy hind quarters. They ate men, destroyed everything, copulated in public and had swarms of children. These were Yαjïj and Mαjïj (Gog and Magog) descendants

of Japhet. Sikandar built against them the famous wall with stones cemented and riveted by iron and copper. The “Great Wall” of China, the famous bulwark against the Tartars, dates from B.C. 320 (Alexander of Macedon died B.C. 324); and as the Arabs knew Canton well before Mohammed’s day, they may have built their romance upon it. The Guebres consigned Sikandar to hell for burning the Nusks or sections of the Zendavesta.

[462] These terrific preachments to Eastern despots (who utterly ignore them) are a staple produce of Oriental tale-literature and form the chiaro-oscuro, as it were, of a picture whose lights are brilliant touches of profanity and indelicate humour. It certainly has the charm of contrast. Much of the above is taken from the Sikandar-nameh (Alexander Book) of the great Persian poet, Nizαmi, who flourished A.H. 515-597, between the days of Firdausi (ob. A.D.1021) and Sa’adi (ob. A.D. 1291). In that romance Sikandar builds, “where the sun goes down,” a castle of glittering stone which kills men by causing excessive laughter and surrounds it with yellow earth like gold. Hence the City of Brass. He also converts, instead of being converted by, the savages of the text. He finds a stone of special excellence which he calls Almαs (diamond); and he obtains it from the Valley of Serpents by throwing down flesh to the eagles. Lastly he is accompanied by “Bilνnas” or “Bilνnus,” who is apparently Apollonius of Tyana.

[463] I have explained the beautiful name in Night cclxxxix:
He is stil famous for having introduced into Persia the fables of
Pilpay (Bidyapati, the lord of lore) and a game which the genius
of Persia developed into chess.

[464] Here we find an eternal truth, of which Malthusians ever want reminding; that the power of a nation simply consists in its numbers of fighting men and in their brute bodily force. The conquering race is that which raises most foot-pounds: hence the North conquers the South in the Northern hemisphere and visa versa.

[465] Arab. “Wayha,” not so strong as “Woe to,” etc. Al-Hariri often

uses it as a formula of affectionate remonstrance.

[466] As a rule (much disputed) the Sayyid is a descendant from Mohammed through his grandchild Hasan, and is a man of the pen; whereas the Sharif derives from Husayn and is a man of the sword. The Najvb al-taraf is the son of a common Moslemah by a Sayyid, as opposed to the “Najib al-tarafayn,” when both parents are of Apostolic blood. The distinction is not noticed in Lane’s “Modern Egyptians”. The Sharif is a fanatic and often dangerous, as I have instanced in Pilgrimage iii. 132.

[467] A theologian of Bassorah (eighth century): surnamed Abï Yahyα. The prayer for mercy denotes that he was dead when the tale was written.

[468] A theologian of Bassorah (eighth century).

[469] Arab. “Musallα”; lit. a place of prayer; an oratory, a chapel, opp. to “Jαmi’” = a (cathedral) mosque.

[470] According to all races familiar with the negro, a calf like a shut fist planted close under the ham is, like the “cucumber shin” and “lark heel”, a good sign in a slave. Shapely calves and well-made legs denote the idle and the ne’er-do-well. I have often found this true although the rule is utterly empirical. Possibly it was suggested by the contrast of the nervous and lymphatic temperaments.

[471] These devotees address Allah as a lover would his beloved. The curious reader will consult for instances the Dabistan on Tasawwuf (ii. 221; i.,iii. end, and passim).

[472] Arab. “Ma’rifat,” Pers. Dαnish; the knowledge of the Truth. The seven steps are (1) Sharv’at, external law like night; (2) Tarvkat, religious rule like the stars; (3) Hakvkat, reality, truth like the moon; (4) Ma’arifat like the sun; (5) Kurbat, proximity to Allah; (6) Wasvlat, union with Allah, and (7) Suknat, dwelling in Allah. (Dabistan iii.29.)

[473] Name of a fountain of Paradise: See Night xlix., vol. ii., p.100.

[474] Arab. “Atbαk”; these trays are made of rushes, and the fans of palm-leaves or tail-feathers.

[475] Except on the two great Festivals when fasting is forbidden. The only religion which has shown common sense in this matter is that of the Guebres or Parsis: they consider fasting neither meritorious nor lawful; and they honour Hormuzd by good living “because it keeps the soul stronger.” Yet even they have their food superstitions, e.g. in Gate No. xxiv.: “Beware of sin specially on the day thou eatest flesh, for flesh is the diet of Ahriman.” And in India the Guebres have copied the Hindus in not slaughtering horned cattle for the table.

[476] Arab. “Jallαbiyah,” a large-sleeved robe of coarse stuff worn by the poor.

[477] His fear was that his body might be mutilated by the fall.

[478] The phrase means “offering up many and many a prayer.”

[479] A saying of Mohammed is recorded “Al-fakru fakhrv” (poverty is my pride!), intelligible in a man who never wanted for anything. Here he is diametrically opposed to Ali who honestly abused poverty; and the Prophet seems to have borrowed from Christendom, whose “Lazarus and Dives” shows a man sent to Hell because he enjoyed a very modified Heaven in this life and which suggested that one of the man’s greatest miseries is an ecclesiastical virtue— “Holy Poverty” — represented in the Church as a bride young and lovely. If a “rich man can hardly enter the kingdom” what must it be with a poor man whose conditions are far more unfavourable? Going to the other extreme we may say that Poverty is the root of all evil and the more so as it curtails man’s power of benefiting others. Practically I observe that those who preach and praise it the most, practise it the least willingly: the ecclesiastic has always some special reasons, a church or a school is wanted; but not the less he wishes for more money. In Syria this Holy Poverty leads to strange abuses. At Bayrut I recognised in most impudent beggers well-to-do peasants from the

Kasrawαn district, and presently found out that whilst their fields were under snow they came down to the coast, enjoyed a genial climate and lived on alms. When I asked them if they were not ashamed to beg, they asked me if I was ashamed of following in the footsteps of the Saviour and Apostles. How much wiser was Zoroaster who found in the Supreme Paradise (Minuwαn-minu) “many persons, rich in gold and silver who had worshipped the Lord and had been grateful to Him.” (Dabistan i. 265.)

[480] Koran vii. 52.

[481] Arab. “Al-bayt” = the house. The Arabs had probably learned this pleasant mode of confinement from the Chinese whose Kea or Cangue is well known. The Arabian form of it is “Ghull,” or portable pillory, which reprobates will wear on Judgment Day.

[482] This commonest conjuring trick in the West becomes a miracle in the credulous East.

[483] Arab. “Kαnïn”; the usual term is Mankal (pron. Mangal) a pan of copper or brass. Some of these “chafing-dishes” stand four feet high and are works of art. Lane (M.E. chapt. iv) gives an illustration of the simpler kind, together with the “Azikν,” a smaller pan for heating coffee. See Night dxxxviii.

[484] See vol. iii., p.239. The system is that of the Roman As and Unciae. Here it would be the twenty-fourth part of a dinar or miskal; something under 5d. I have already noted that all Moslem rulers are religiously bound to some handicraft, if it be only making toothpicks. Mohammed abolished kingship proper as well as priestcraft.

[485] Al-Islam, where salvation is found under the shade of the swords.

[486] Moslems like the Classics (Aristotle and others) hold the clitoris (Zambïr) to be the sedes et scaturigo veneris which, says Sonnini, is mere profanity. In the babe it protrudes beyond the labiζ and snipping off the head forms female circumcision. This rite is supposed by Moslems to have been invented by Sarah who so

mutilated Hagar for jealousy and was afterwards ordered by Allah to have herself circumcised at the same time as Abraham. It is now (or should be) universal in Al-Islam and no Arab would marry a girl "unpurified" by it. Son of an "uncircumcised" mother (Ibn al-bazrα) is a sore insult. As regards the popular idea that Jewish women were circumcised till the days of Rabbi Gershom (A.D.1000) who denounced it as a scandal to the Gentiles, the learned Prof. H. Graetz informs me, with some indignation, that the rite was never practised and that the great Rabbi contended only against polygamy. Female circumcision, however, is I believe the rule amongst some outlying tribes of Jews. The rite is the proper complement of male circumcision, evening the sensitiveness of the genitories by reducing it equally in both sexes: an uncircumcised woman has the venereal orgasm much sooner and oftener than a circumcised man, and frequent coitus would injure her health; hence I believe, despite the learned historian, that it is practised by some Eastern Jews. "Excision" is universal amongst the negroids of the Upper Nile (Werne), the Somαl and other adjacent tribes. The operator, an old woman, takes up the instrument, a knife or razor-blade fixed into a wooden handle, and with three sweeps cuts off the labia and the head of the clitoris. The parts are then sewn up with a packneedle and a thread of sheepskin; and in Dar-For a tin tube is inserted for the passage of urine. Before marriage the bridegroom trains himself for a month on beef, honey and milk; and, if he can open his bride with the natural weapon, he is a sworder to whom no woman in the tribe can deny herself. If he fails, he tries penetration with his fingers and by way of last resort whips out his whittle and cuts the parts open. The sufferings of the first few nights must be severe. The few Somαli prostitutes who practised at Aden always had the labiζ and clitoris excised and the skin showing the scars of coarse sewing. The moral effect of female circumcision is peculiar. While it diminishes the heat of passion it increases licentiousness, and breeds a debauchery of mind far worse than bodily unchastity, because accompanied by a peculiar cold cruelty and a taste for artificial stimulants to "luxury." It is the sexlessness of a spayed canine imitated by the suggestive brain of humanity.

[487] Koran vi. So called because certain superstitions about Cattle are therein mentioned.

[488] Koran iv. So called because it treats of marriages, divorces, etc.

[489] Svdi (contracted from Sayyidv = my lord) is a title still applied to holy men in Marocco and the Maghrib; on the East African coast it is assumed by negro and negroid Moslems, e.g. Sidi Mubαrak Bombay; and “Seedy boy” is the Anglo-Indian term for a Zanzibar-man. “Khawwαs” is one who weaves palm-leaves (Khos) into baskets, mats, etc.: here, however, it may be an inherited name.

[490] i.e. in spirit; the “strangers yet” of poor dear Richard Monckton Milnes, Lord Houghton.

[491] Al-Hakk = the Truth, one of the ninety-nine names of Allah.

[492] The Moslem is still unwilling to address Salαm (Peace be with you) to the Christian, as it is obligatory (Farz) to a Moslem (Koran, chapt. iv. and lxviii.). He usually evades the difficulty by saluting the nearest Moslem or by a change of words Allah Yahdv-k (Allah direct thee to the right way) or “Peace be upon us and the righteous worshipers of Allah” (not you) or Al-Samm (for Salam) alayka = poison to thee. The idea is old: Alexander of Alexandria in his circular letter describes the Arian heretics as “men whom it is not lawful to salute or to bid God-speed.”

[493] Koran xxxvi. 82. I have before noted that this famous phrase was borrowed from the Hebrews, who borrowed it from the Egyptians.

[494] The story of Moses and Khizr has been noticed before. See Koran chapt. xviii. 64 et seq. It is also related, says Lane (ii. 642), by Al-Kazwvni in the Ajαib al-Makhlĭkαt. This must be “The Angel and the Hermit” in the Gesta Romanorum, Tale lxxx. which possibly gave rise to Parnell’s Hermit; and Tale cxxvii. “Of Justice and Equity.” The Editor says it “contains a beautiful lesson:” I can find only excellent excuses for “doing evil that good may come of it.”

[495] Koran chapt. v.108.

[496] The doggrel is phenomenal.

[497] He went in wonder and softened heart to see the miracle of saintly affection.

[498] In Sufistical parlance, the creature is the lover and the Creator the Beloved: worldly existence is Disunion, parting, severance; and the life to come is Reunion. The basis of the idea is the human soul being a divinζ particula aurζ, a disjoined molecule from the Great Spirit, imprisoned in a jail of flesh; and it is so far valuable that it has produced a grand and pathetic poetry; but Common Sense asks, Where is the proof? And Reason wants to know, What does it all mean?

[499] Koran xiii. 41.

[500] Robinson Crusoe, with a touch of Arab prayerfulness. Also the story of the Knight Placidus in the Gesta (cx.), Boccaccio, etc.

[501] Arabs note two kinds of leprosy, “Bahak” or “Baras” the common or white, and “Juzam” the black leprosy; the leprosy of the joints, mal rouge. Both are attributed to undue diet as eating fish and drinking milk; and both are treated with tonics, especially arsenic. Leprosy is regarded by Moslems as a Scriptural malady on account of its prevalence amongst the Israelites who, as Manetho tells us, were expelled from Egypt because they infected and polluted the population. In mediζval Christendom an idea prevailed that the Saviour was a leper; hence the term “morbus sacer”; the honours paid to the sufferers by certain Saints and the Papal address (Clement III. A.D.1189) dilectis filiis leprosis. (Farrar’s Life of Christ, i.149.) For the “disgusting and impetuous lust” caused by leprosy, see Sonnini (p.560) who visited the lepers at Canea in Candia. He is one of many who describes this symptom; but in the Brazil, where the foul malady still prevails, I never heard of it.

[502] A city in Irak; famous for the three days' battle which caused the death of Yezdegird, last Sassanian king.

[503] A mountain pass near Meccah famous for the "First Fealty of the Steep" (Pilgrimage ii. 126). The mosque was built to commemorate the event.

[504] To my surprise I read in Mr. Redhouse's "Mesnevi" (Trubner, 1881), "Arafat, the mount where the victims are slaughtered by the pilgrims." (p.60). This ignorance is phenomenal. Did Mr. Redhouse never read Burckhardt or Burton?

[505] i.e. listening to the sermon.

[506] It is sad doggrel.

[507] This long story, containing sundry episodes and occupying fifty-three Nights, is wholly omitted by Lane (ii. 643) because "it is a compound of the most extravagant absurdities." He should have enabled his readers to form their own judgment.

[508] Called Jamasp (brother and minister of the ancient Persian King Gushtasp) in the translations of Trebutien and others from Von Hammer.

[509] The usual term of lactation in the East, prolonged to two years and a-half, which is considered the rule laid down by the Shara' or precepts of the Prophet. But it is not unusual to see children of three and even four years hanging to their mothers' breasts. During this period the mother does not cohabit with her husband; the separation beginning with her pregnancy. Such is the habit, not only of the "lower animals," but of all ancient peoples, the Egyptians (from whom the Hebrews borrowed it), the Assyrians and the Chinese. I have discussed its bearing upon pregnancy in my "City of the Saints": the Mormons insist upon this law of purity being observed; and the beauty, strength and good health of the younger generation are proofs of their wisdom.

[510] Thus distinguishing it from "Asal-kasab," cane honey or sugar. See vol. i., 271.

[511] The student of Hinduism will remember the Nαga-Kings and Queens (Melusines and Echidnζ) who guard the earth-treasures in Naga-land. The first appearance of the snake in literature is in Egyptian hieroglyphs, where he forms the letters f and t, and acts as a determinative in the shape of a Cobra di Capello (Coluber Naja) with expanded hood.

[512] In token that he was safe.

[513] "Akhir al-Zamαn." As old men praise past times, so prophets prefer to represent themselves as the last. The early Christians caused much scandal amongst the orderly law-loving Romans by their wild and mistaken predictions of the end of the world being at hand. The catastrophe is a fact for each man under the form of death; but the world has endured for untold ages and there is no apparent cause why it should not endure as many more. The "latter days," as the religious dicta of most "revelations" assure us, will be richer in sinners than in sanctity: hence "End of Time" is a facetious Arab title for a villain of superior quality. My Somali escort applied it to one thus distinguished: in 1875, I heard at Aden that he ended life by the spear as we had all predicted.

[514] Jahannam and the other six Hells are personified as feminine; and (woman-like) they are somewhat addicted to prolix speechification.

[515] These puerile exaggerations are fondly intended to act as nurses frighten naughty children.

[516] Alluding to an oft-quoted saying "Lau lα-ka, etc. Without thee (O Mohammed) We (Allah) had not created the spheres," which may have been suggested by "Before Abraham was, I am" (John viii. 58); and by Gate xci. of Zoroastrianism "O Zardusht for thy sake I have created the world" (Dabistan i. 344). The sentiment is by no means "Shi'ah," as my learned friend Prof. Aloys Springer supposes. In his Mohammed () we find an extract from a sectarian poet, "For thee we

dispread the earth; for thee we caused the waters to flow; for thee we vaulted the heavens.” As Baron Alfred von Kremer, another learned and experienced Orientalist, reminds me, the “Shi’ahs” have always shown a decided tendency to this kind of apotheosis and have deified or quasi-deified Ali and the Imams. But the formula is first found in the highly orthodox Burdah poem of Al-Busiri: —

“But for him (Lau lα-hu) the world had never come out of nothingness.”

Hence it has been widely diffused. See Les Aventures de Kamrup (p-7) and Les Œuvres de Wali (p-52), by M. Garcin de Tassy and the Dabistan (vol. i. p-3).

[517] Arab. “Svmiyα” from the Pers., a word apparently built on the model of “Kαmiyα” = alchemy, and applied, I have said, to fascination, minor miracles and white magic generally like the Hindu “Indrajal.” The common term for Alchemy is Ilm al-Kαf (the K-science) because it is not safe to speak of it openly as Alchemy.

[518] Mare Tenebrarum = Sea of Darknesses; usually applied to the “mournful and misty Atlantic.”

[519] Some Moslems hold that Solomon and David were buried in Jerusalem, others on the shore of Lake Tiberias. Mohammed, according to the history of Al-Tabari (vol. i. Duleux’s “Chronique de Tabari”) declares that the Jinni bore Solomon’s corpse to a palace hewn in the rock upon an island surrounded by a branch of the “Great Sea” and set him on a throne, with his ring still on his finger, under a guard of twelve Jinns. “None hath looked upon the tomb save only two, Affan who took Bulukiya as his companion: with extreme pains they arrived at the spot, and Affan was about to carry off the ring when a thunderbolt consumed him. So Bulukiya returned.”

[520] Koran xxxviii. 34, or, “art the liberal giver.”

[521] i.e. of the last trumpet blown by the Archangel Israfil: an idea

borrowed from the Christians. Hence the title of certain churches — ad Tubam.

[522] This may mean that the fruits were fresh and dried like dates or tamarinds (a notable wonder), or soft and hard of skin like grapes and pomegranates.

[523] Arab. “Ai-lksvr” meaning lit. an essence; also the philosopher’s stone.

[524] Name of the Jinni whom Solomon imprisoned in Lake Tiberias (See vol. i., 41).

[525] Vulgarly pronounced “Jahannum.” The second hell is usually assigned to Christians. As there are seven Heavens (the planetary orbits) so, to satisfy Moslem love of symmetry, there must be as many earths and hells under the earth. The Egyptians invented these grim abodes, and the marvellous Persian fancy worked them into poem.

[526] Arab. “Yαjïj and Majuj,” first named in Gen. x. 2, which gives the ethnology of Asia Minor, circ. B.C. 800. “Gomer” is the Gimri or Cymmerians; “Magog” the original Magi, a division of the Medes, “Javan” the Ionian Greeks, “Meshesh” the Moschi; and “Tires” the Turusha, or primitive Cymmerians. In subsequent times, “Magog” was applied to the Scythians, and modern Moslems determine from the Koran (chaps. xviii. and xxi.) that Yajuj and Majuj are the Russians, whom they call Moska or Moskoff from the Moskwa River,

[527] I attempt to preserve the original pun; “Mukarrabin” (those near Allah) being the Cherubim, and the Creator causing Iblis to draw near Him (karraba).

[528] A vulgar version of the Koran (chaps. vii.), which seems to have borrowed from the Gospel of Barnabas. Hence Adam becomes a manner of God-man.

[529] These wild fables are caricatures of Rabbinical legends which began with “Lilith,” the Spirit-wife of Adam: Nature and her counterpart, Physis and Antiphysis, supply a solid basis for folk-lore. Amongst the Hindus we have Brahma (the Creator) and Viswakarmα, the anti-Creator: the former makes a horse and a bull and the latter caricatures them with an ass and a buffalo, and so forth.

[530] This is the “Lauh al-Mahfïz,” the Preserved Tablet, upon which are written all Allah’s decrees and the actions of mankind good (white) and evil (black). This is the “perspicuous Book” of the Koran, chaps. vi. 59. The idea again is Guebre.

[531] i.e. the night before Friday which in Moslem parlance would be Friday night.

[532] Again Persian “Gαw-i-Zamνn” = the Bull of the Earth.
“The cosmogony of the world,” etc., as we read in the Vicar of
Wakefield.

[533] The Calc. Edit. ii. 614. here reads by a clerical error “bull.”

[534] i.e. Lakes and rivers.

[535] Here some abridgement is necessary, for we have another recital of what has been told more than once.

[536] This name, “King of Life,” is Persian: “Tegh” or “Tigh” means a scimitar and “Bahrwαn,” is, I conceive, a mistake for “Bihrïn,” the Persian name of Alexander the Great.

[537] Arab. “Mulαkαt” or meeting the guest which, I have said, is an essential part of Eastern ceremony, the distance from the divan, room, house or town being proportioned to his rank or consideration.

[538] Arab. “Sifr”: whistling is held by the Badawi to be the speech of devils; and the excellent explorer Burckhardt got a bad name by the ugly habit.

539 The Arabs call “Shikk” (split man) and the Persians “Nνmchahrah” (half-face) a kind of demon like a man divided longitudinally: this gruesome creature runs with amazing speed and is very cruel and dangerous. For the celebrated soothsayers “Shikk” and “Sαtih” see Chenery’s Al-Hariri, .

540 Arab. “Takht” (Persian) = a throne or a capital.

541 Arab. “Wady al-Naml”; a reminiscence of the Koranic Wady (chaps. xxvii.), which some place in Syria and others in Tαif.

542 This is the old, old fable of the River Sabbation which Pliny ((xxx). 18) reports as “drying up every Sabbath-day” (Saturday): and which Josephus reports as breaking the Sabbath by flowing only on the Day of Rest.

543 They were keeping the Sabbath. When lodging with my Israelite friends at Tiberias and Safet, I made a point of never speaking to them (after the morning salutation) till the Saturday was over.

544 Arab. “La’al” and “Yαkït,” the latter also applied to the garnet and to a variety of inferior stones. The ruby is supposed by Moslems to be a common mineral thoroughly “cooked” by the sun, and produced only on the summits of mountains inaccessible even to Alpinists. The idea may have originated from exaggerated legends of the Badakhshαn country (supposed to be the home of the ruby) and its terrors of break-neck foot-paths, jagged peaks and horrid ravines: hence our “balas-ruby” through the Spanish corruption “Balaxe.” Epiphanius, archbishop of Salamis in Cyprus, who died A.D. 403, gives, m a little treatise (De duodecim gemmis rationalis summi sacerdotis Hebrζorum Liber, opera Fogginii, Romae, 1743,), a precisely similar description of the mode of finding jacinths in Scythia. “In a wilderness in the interior of Great Scythia,” he writes, “there is a valley begirt with stony mountains as with walls. It is inaccessible to man, and so excessively deep that the bottom of the valley is invisible from the top of the surrounding mountains. So great is the darkness that it has the effect of a kind of chaos. To this

place certain criminals are condemned, whose task it is to throw down into the valley slaughtered lambs, from which the skin has been first taken off. The little stones adhere to these pieces of flesh. Thereupon the eagles, which live on the summits of the mountains, fly down following the scent of the flesh, and carry away the lambs with the stones adhering to them. They, then, who are condemned to this place watch until the eagles have finished their meal, and run and take away the stones.” Epiphanius, who wrote this, is spoken of in terms of great respect by many ecclesiastical writers, and St. Jerome styles the treatise here quoted, “Egregium volumen, quod si legere volueris, plenissimam scientiam consequeris ,” and, indeed, it is by no means improbable that it was from the account of Epiphanius that this story was first translated into Arabic. A similar account is given by Marco Polo and by Nicolҫ de Conti, as of a usage which they had heard was practiced in India, and the position ascribed to the mountain by Conti, namely, fifteen days’ journey north of Vijanagar, renders it highly probable that Golconda was alluded to. He calls the mountain Albenigaras, and says that it was infested with serpents. Marco Polo also speaks of these serpents, and while his account agrees with that of Sindbad, inasmuch as the serpents, which are the prey of Sindbad’s Rukh, are devoured by the Venetian’s eagles, that of Conti makes the vultures and eagles fly away with the meat to places where they may be safe from the serpents. (Introd. p. xiii., India in the Fifteenth Century, etc., R. H. Major, London, Hakluyt Soc. MDCCCLVII.)

[545] Elder Victory: “Nasr” is a favourite name with Moslems.

[546] These are the “Swan-maidens” of whom Europe in late years has heard more than enough. It appears to me that we go much too far for an explanation of the legend; a high-bred girl is so like a swan in many points that the idea readily suggests itself. And it is also aided by the old Egyptian (and Platonic) belief in pre-existence and by the Rabbinic and Buddhistic doctrine of ante-natal sin, to say nothing of metempsychosis. (Joseph Ant. xvii.. 153.)

[547] The lines have occurred before. I quote Mr. Payne for variety.

[548] Arab. “Al-Khayαl”: it is a synonym of “al-Tayf’ and the nearest approach to our “ghost,” as has been explained. In poetry it is the figure of the beloved seen when dreaming.

[549] He does not kiss her mouth because he intends to marry her.

[550] It should be “manifest” excellence. (Koran xxvii. 16.)

[551] The phrase is Koranic used to describe Paradise, and Damascus is a familiar specimen of a city under which a river, the Baradah, passes, distributed into a multitude of canals.

[552] It may be noted that rose-water is sprinkled on the faces of the “nobility and gentry, “ common water being good enough for the commonalty. I have had to drink tea made in compliment with rose-water and did not enjoy it.

[553] The “Valley Flowery:” Zahrαn is the name of a place near Al-Medinah.

[554] The Proud or Petulant.

[555] i.e. Lion, Son of (?).

[556] i.e. Many were slain.

[557] I venture to draw attention to this battle-picture which is at once simple and highly effective.

[558] Anglicθ a quibble, evidently evasive.

[559] In text “Anα A’amil,” etc., a true Egypto-Syrian vulgarism.

[560] i.e. magical formulζ. The context is purposely left vague.

[561] The repetition is a condescension, a token of kindness.

[562] This is the common cubic of 18 inches: the modern vary from 22 to 26.

[563] I have noticed the two-humped Bactrian camel which the Syrians and Egyptians compare with an elephant. See (the neo-Syrian) Book of Kalilah and Dimnah.

[564] The Noachian dispensation revived the Islam or true religion first revealed to Adam and was itself revived and reformed by Moses.

[565] Probably a corruption of the Turkish "Kara Tαsh" = black stone, in Arab. "Hαjar Jahannam" (hell-stone), lava, basalt.

[566] A variant of lines in Night xx., vol. i., 211.

[567] i.e. Daughter of Pride: the proud.

[568] In the Calc. Edit. by misprint "Maktab." Jabal Mukattam is the old sea-cliff where the Mediterranean once beat and upon whose North-Western slopes Cairo is built.

[569] Arab. "Kutb"; lie. an axle, a pole; next a prince; a high order or doyen in Sainthood especially amongst the Sufi-gnostics.

[570] Lit. "The Green" (Prophet), a mysterious personage confounded with Elijah, St. George and others. He was a Moslem, i.e. a ewe believer in the Islam of his day and Wazir to Kaykobad, founder of the Kayanian dynasty, sixth century B.C. We have before seen him as a contemporary of Moses. My learned friend Ch. Clermone-Ganneau traces him back, with a multitude of his similars (Proteus, Perseus, etc.), to the son of Osiris (, Horus et Saint Georges).

[571] Arab. "Waled," more ceremonious than "ibn." It is, by the by, the origin of our "valet" in its sense of boy or servant who is popularly addressed Yα waled. Hence I have seen in a French book of travels "un petit Iavelet."

[572] Arab. "Azal" = Eternity (without beginning); "Abad" = Infinity (eternity without end).

[573] The Moslem ritual for slaughtering (by cutting the throat) is not

so strict as that of the Jews; but it requires some practice; and any failure in the conditions renders the meat impure, mere carrion (fatvs).

[574] The Wazir repeats all the words spoken by the Queen — but “in iteration there is no recreation.”

[575] A phrase always in the Moslem’s mouth: the slang meaning of “we put our trust in Allah” is “let’s cut our stick.”

[576] Koran liii. 14. This “Sidrat al-Muntahα” (Zizyphus lotus) stands m the seventh heaven on the right hand of Allah’s throne: and even the angels may not pass beyond it.

[577] Arab. “Habash” the word means more than “Abyssinia” as it includes the Dankali Country and the sea-board, a fact unknown to the late Lord Stratford de Redcliffe when he disputed with the Porte. I ventured to set him right and suffered accordingly.

[578] Here ends vol. ii. of the Mac. Edit.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

VOLUME VI.

I Inscribe This Volum
To My Old And Valued Correspondent,
I Whose Debt I Am Deep,
Professor Aloys Sprenger
(of Heidelberg),
Arabist, Philosopher and Friend.
Richard F. Burton.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

Sindbad The Seaman[1] and Sindbad The Landsman.

There lived in the city of Baghdad, during the reign of the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, a man named Sindbád the Hammál,[2] one in poor case who bore burdens on his head for hire. It happened to him one day of great heat that whilst he was carrying a heavy load, he became exceeding weary and sweated profusely, the heat and the weight alike oppressing him. Presently, as he was passing the gate of a merchant's house, before which the ground was swept and watered, and there the air was temperate, he sighted a broad bench beside the door; so he set his load thereon, to take rest and smell the air, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Hammal set his load upon the bench to take rest and smell the air, there came out upon him from the court-door a pleasant breeze and a delicious fragrance. He sat down on the edge of the bench, and at once heard from within the melodious sound of lutes and other stringed instruments, and mirth-exciting voices singing and reciting, together with the song of birds warbling and glorifying Almighty Allah in various tunes and tongues; turtles, mocking-birds, merles, nightingales, cushats and stone- curlews,[3] whereat he marvelled in himself and was moved to mighty joy and solace. Then he went up to the gate and saw within a great flower-garden wherein were pages and black slaves and such a train of servants and attendants and so forth as is found only with Kings and Sultans; and his nostrils were greeted with the savoury odours of all manner meats rich and delicate, and delicious and generous wines. So he raised his eyes heavenwards and said, "Glory to Thee, O Lord, O Creator and Provider, who providest whomso Thou wilt without count or stint! O mine Holy One, I cry Thee pardon for all sins and turn to Thee repenting of all offences! O Lord, there is no gainsaying Thee in Thine ordinance and Thy dominion, neither wilt Thou be questioned of that Thou dost, for Thou indeed over all things art Almighty!

Extolled be Thy perfection: whom Thou wilt Thou makest poor and whom Thou wilt Thou makest rich! Whom Thou wilt Thou exaltest and whom Thou wilt Thou abasest and there is no god but Thou! How mighty is Thy majesty and how enduring Thy dominion and how excellent Thy government! Verily, Thou favourest whom Thou wilt of Thy servants, whereby the owner of this place abideth in all joyance of life and delighteth himself with pleasant scents and delicious meats and exquisite wines of all kinds. For indeed Thou appointest unto Thy creatures that which Thou wilt and that which Thou hast foreordained unto them; wherefore are some weary and others are at rest and some enjoy fair fortune and affluence, whilst others suffer the extreme of travail and misery, even as I do." And he fell to reciting,

"How many by my labours, that evermore endure, * All goods of
life enjoy and in cooly shade recline?
Each morn that dawns I wake in travail and in woe, * And strange
is my condition and my burden gars me pine:
Many others are in luck and from miseries are free, * And Fortune
never loads them with loads the like o' mine:
They live their happy days in all solace and delight; * Eat,
drink and dwell in honour 'mid the noble and the digne:
All living things were made of a little drop of sperm, * Thine
origin is mine and my provenance is thine;
Yet the difference and distance 'twixt the twain of us are far *
As the difference of savour 'twixt vinegar and wine:
But at Thee, O God All-wise! I venture not to rail * Whose
ordinance is just and whose justice cannot fail."

When Sindbad the Porter had made an end of reciting his verses, he bore up his burden and was about to fare on, when there came forth to him from the gate a little foot-page, fair of face and shapely of shape and dainty of dress who caught him by the hand saying, "Come in and speak with my lord, for he calleth for thee." The Porter would have excused himself to the page but the lad would take no refusal; so he left his load with the doorkeeper in the vestibule and followed the boy into the house, which he found to be a goodly mansion, radiant and full of majesty, till he brought him to a grand sitting-room wherein he saw a company of nobles and great lords, seated at tables garnished with all manner of flowers and sweet-scented herbs, besides great plenty of dainty viands and fruits dried and fresh and confections and wines of the choicest vintages. There also were instruments of music and mirth and lovely slave-girls playing and singing. All the company was ranged according to rank; and in the highest place sat a man of worshipful and noble aspect whose beard-sides hoariness had stricken; and he was stately of stature and fair of favour, agreeable of aspect and full of gravity and dignity and majesty. So Sindbad the Porter was confounded at that which he beheld and said in himself, "By Allah, this must be either a piece of Paradise or some King's palace!" Then he saluted the company with much respect praying for their prosperity, and kissing the ground before them, stood with his head bowed down in humble attitude. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Porter, after kissing ground between their hands stood with his head bowed down in humble attitude. The master of the house bade him draw near and be seated and bespoke him kindly, bidding him welcome. Then he set before him various kinds of viands, rich and delicate and delicious, and the Porter, after saying his Bismillah, fell to and ate his fill, after which he exclaimed, "Praised be Allah whatso be our case![4] " and, washing his hands, returned thanks to the company for his entertainment. Quoth the host, "Thou art welcome and thy day is a blessed. But what is thy name and calling?" Quoth the other, "O my lord, my name is Sindbad the Hammal, and I carry folk's goods on my head for hire." The house-master smiled and rejoined, "Know, O Porter that thy name is even as mine, for I am Sindbad the Seaman; and now, O Porter, I would have thee let me hear the couplets thou recitedst at the gate anon." The Porter was abashed and replied, "Allah upon thee! Excuse me, for toil and travail and lack of luck when the hand is empty, teach a man ill manners and boorish ways." Said the host, "Be not ashamed; thou art become my brother; but repeat to me the verses, for they pleased me whenas I heard thee recite them at the gate. Hereupon the Porter repeated the couplets and they delighted the merchant, who said to him, “Know, O Hammal, that my story is a wonderful one, and thou shalt hear all that befel me and all I underwent ere I rose to this state of prosperity and became the lord of this place wherein thou seest me; for I came not to this high estate save after travail sore and perils galore, and how much toil and trouble have I not suffered in days of yore! I have made seven voyages, by each of which hangeth a marvellous tale, such as confoundeth the reason, and all this came to pass by doom of fortune and fate; for from what destiny doth write there is neither refuge nor flight. Know, then, good my lords (continued he) that I am about to relate the

First Voyage of Sindbad the Seaman.”[5]

My father was a merchant, one of the notables of my native place, a monied man and ample of means, who died whilst I was yet a child, leaving me much wealth in money and lands and farmhouses. When I grew up, I laid hands on the whole and ate of the best and drank freely and wore rich clothes and lived lavishly, companioning and consorting with youths of my own age, and considering that this course of life would continue for ever and ken no change. Thus did I for a long time, but at last I awoke from my heedlessness and, returning to my senses, I found my wealth had become unwealth and my condition ill-conditioned and all I once hent had left my hand. And recovering my reason I was stricken with dismay and confusion and bethought me of a saying of our lord Solomon, son of David (on whom be peace!), which I had heard aforetime from my father, “Three things are better than other three; the day of death is better than the day of birth, a live dog is better than a dead lion and the grave is better than want.”[6] Then I got together my remains of estates and property and sold all, even my clothes, for three thousand dirhams, with which I resolved to travel to foreign parts, remembering the saying of the poet,

“By means of toil man shall scale the height; * Who to fame
aspires mustn’t sleep o’ night:
Who seeketh pearl in the deep must dive, * Winning weal and
wealth by his main and might:

And who seeketh Fame without toil and strife * Th' impossible
seeketh and wasteth life."

So taking heart I bought me goods, merchandise and all needed for a voyage and, impatient to be at sea, I embarked, with a company of merchants, on board a ship bound for Bassorah. There we again embarked and sailed many days and nights, and we passed from isle to isle and sea to sea and shore to shore, buying and selling and bartering everywhere the ship touched, and continued our course till we came to an island as it were a garth of the gardens of Paradise. Here the captain cast anchor and making fast to the shore, put out the landing planks. So all on board landed and made furnaces[7] and lighting fires therein, busied themselves in various ways, some cooking and some washing, whilst other some walked about the island for solace, and the crew fell to eating and drinking and playing and sporting. I was one of the walkers but, as we were thus engaged, behold the master who was standing on the gunwale cried out to us at the top of his voice, saying, "Ho there! passengers, run for your lives and hasten back to the ship and leave your gear and save yourselves from destruction, Allah preserve you! For this island whereon ye stand is no true island, but a great fish stationary a-middlemost of the sea, whereon the sand hath settled and trees have sprung up of old time, so that it is become like unto an island;[8] but, when ye lighted fires on it, it felt the heat and moved; and in a moment it will sink with you into the sea and ye will all be drowned. So leave your gear and seek your safety ere ye die!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the ship-master cried to the passengers, "Leave your gear and seek safety, ere ye die;" all who heard him left gear and goods, clothes washed and unwashed, fire pots and brass cooking-pots, and fled back to the ship for their lives, and some reached it while others (amongst whom was I) did not, for suddenly the island shook and sank into the abysses of the deep, with all that were thereon, and the dashing sea surged over it with clashing waves. I sank with the others down, down into the deep, but Almighty Allah preserved me from drowning and threw in my way a great wooden tub of those that had served the ship's company for tubbing. I gripped it for the sweetness of life and, bestriding it like one riding, paddled with my feet like oars, whilst the waves tossed me as in sport right and left. Meanwhile the captain made sail and departed with those who had reached the ship, regardless of the drowning and the drowned; and I ceased not following the vessel with my eyes, till she was hid from sight and I made sure of death. Darkness closed in upon me while in this plight and the winds and waves bore me on all that night and the next day, till the tub brought to with me under the lee of a lofty island, with trees overhanging the tide. I caught hold of a branch and by its aid clambered up on to the land, after coming nigh upon death; but when I reached the shore, I found my legs cramped and numbed and my feet bore traces of the nibbling of fish upon their soles; withal I had felt nothing for excess of anguish and fatigue. I threw myself down on the island ground, like a dead man, and drowned in desolation swooned away, nor did I return to my senses till next morning, when the sun rose and revived me. But I found my feet swollen, so made shift to move by shuffling on my breech and crawling on my knees, for in that island were found store of fruits and springs of sweet water. I ate of the fruits which strengthened me; and thus I abode days and nights, till my life seemed to return and my spirits began to revive and I was better able to move about. So, after due consideration, I fell to exploring the island and diverting myself with gazing upon all things that Allah Almighty had created there; and rested under the trees from one of which I cut me a staff to lean upon. One day as I walked along the marge, I caught sight of some object in the distance and thought it a wild beast or one of the monster-creatures of the sea; but, as I drew near it, looking hard the while, I saw that it was a noble mare, tethered on the beach. Presently I went up to her, but she cried out against me with a great cry, so that I trembled for fear and turned to go away, when there came forth a man from under the earth and followed me, crying out and saying, "Who and whence art thou, and what caused thee to come hither?" "O my lord," answered I, "I am in very sooth, a waif, a stranger, and was left to drown with sundry others by the ship we voyaged in;[9] but Allah graciously sent me a wooden tub; so I saved myself thereon and it floated with me, till the waves cast me up on this island." When he heard this, he took my hand and saying, "Come with me," carried me into a great Sardab, or underground chamber, which was spacious as a saloon. He made me sit down at its upper end; then he brought me somewhat of food and, being anhungered, I ate till I was satisfied and refreshed; and when he had put me at mine ease he questioned me of myself, and I told him all that had befallen me from first to last; and, as he wondered at my adventure, I said, "By Allah, O my lord, excuse me; I have told thee the truth of my case and the accident which betided me; and now I desire that thou tell me who thou art and why thou abidest here under the earth and why thou hast tethered yonder mare on the brink of the sea." Answered he, "Know, that I am one of the several who are stationed in different parts of this island, and we are of the grooms of King Mihrjan[10] and under our hand are all his horses. Every month, about new-moon tide we bring hither our best mares which have never been covered, and picket them on the sea-shore and hide ourselves in this place under the ground, so that none may espy us. Presently, the stallions of the sea scent the mares and come up out of the water and seeing no one, leap the mares and do their will of them. When they have covered them, they try to drag them away with them, but cannot, by reason of the leg-ropes; so they cry out at them and butt at them and kick them, which we hearing, know that the stallions have dismounted; so we run out and shout at them, whereupon they are startled and return in fear to the sea. Then the mares conceive by them and bear colts and fillies worth a mint of money, nor is their like to be found on earth's face. This is the time of the coming forth of the sea-stallions; and Inshallah! I will bear thee to King Mihrjan" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fortieth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Syce[11] said to Sindbad the Seaman, "I will bear thee to King Mihrjan and show thee our country. And know that hadst thou not happened on us thou hadst perished miserably and none had known of thee: but I will be the means of the saving of thy life and of thy return to thine own land." I called down blessings on him and thanked him for his kindness and courtesy; and, while we were yet talking, behold, the stallion came up out of the sea; and, giving a great cry, sprang upon the mare and covered her. When he had done his will of her, he dismounted and would have carried her away with him, but could not by reason of the tether. She kicked and cried out at him, whereupon the groom took a sword and target[12] and ran out of the underground saloon, smiting the buckler with the blade and calling to his company, who came up shouting and brandishing spears; and the stallion took fright at them and plunging into the sea, like a buffalo, disappeared under the waves.[13] After this we sat awhile, till the rest of the grooms came up, each leading a mare, and seeing me with their fellow-Syce, questioned me of my case and I repeated my story to them. Thereupon they drew near me and spreading the table, ate and invited me to eat; so I ate with them, after which they took horse and mounting me on one of the mares, set out with me and fared on without ceasing, till we came to the capital city of King Mihrjan, and going in to him acquainted him with my story. Then he sent for me, and when they set me before him and salams had been exchanged, he gave me a cordial welcome and wishing me long life bade me tell him my tale. So I related to him all that I had seen and all that had befallen me from first to last, whereat he marvelled and said to me, “By Allah, O my son, thou hast indeed been miraculously preserved! Were not the term of thy life a long one, thou hadst not escaped from these straits; but praised by Allah for safety!” Then he spoke cheerily to me and entreated me with kindness and consideration: moreover, he made me his agent for the port and registrar of all ships that entered the harbour. I attended him regularly, to receive his commandments, and he favoured me and did me all manner of kindness and invested me with costly and splendid robes. Indeed, I was high in credit with him, as an intercessor for the folk and an intermediary between them and him, when they wanted aught of him. I abode thus a great while and, as often as I passed through the city to the port, I questioned the merchants and travellers and sailors of the city of Baghdad; so haply I might hear of an occasion to return to my native land, but could find none who knew it or knew any who resorted thither. At this I was chagrined, for I was weary of long strangerhood; and my disappointment endured for a time till one day, going in to King Mihrjan, I found him with a company of Indians. I saluted them and they returned my salam; and politely welcomed me and asked me of my country. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-first Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman said: — When they asked me of my country I questioned them of theirs and they told me that they were of various castes, some being called Shakiriyah[14] who are the noblest of their castes and neither oppress nor offer violence to any, and others Brahmans, a folk who abstain from wine, but live in delight and solace and merriment and own camels and horses and cattle. Moreover, they told me that the people of India are divided into two-and-seventy castes, and I marvelled at this with exceeding marvel. Amongst other things that I saw in King Mihrjan's dominions was an island called Kásil,[15] wherin all night is heard the beating of drums and tabrets; but we were told by the neighbouring islanders and by travellers that the inhabitants are people of diligence and judgment.[16] In this sea I saw also a fish two hundred cubits long and the fishermen fear it; so they strike together pieces of wood and put it to flight.[17] I also saw another fish, with a head like that of an owl, besides many other wonders and rarities, which it would be tedious to recount. I occupied myself thus in visiting the islands till, one day, as I stood in the port, with a staff in my hand, according to my custom, behold, a great ship, wherein were many merchants, came sailing for the harbour. When it reached the small inner port where ships anchor under the city, the master furled his sails and making fast to the shore, put out the landing-planks, whereupon the crew fell to breaking bulk and landing cargo whilst I stood by, taking written note of them. They were long in bringing the goods ashore so I asked the master, "Is there aught left in thy ship?"; and he answered, "O my lord, there are divers bales of merchandise in the hold, whose owner was drowned from amongst us at one of the islands on our course; so his goods remained in our charge by way of trust and we purpose to sell them and note their price, that we may convey it to his people in the city of Baghdad, the Home of Peace." "What was the merchant's name?" quoth I, and quoth he, "Sindbad the Seaman;" whereupon I straitly considered him and knowing him, cried out to him with a great cry, saying, "O captain, I am that Sindbad the Seaman who travelled with other merchants; and when the fish heaved and thou calledst to us some saved themselves and others sank, I being one of them. But Allah Almighty threw in my way a great tub of wood, of those the crew had used to wash withal, and the winds and waves carried me to this island, where by Allah's grace, I fell in with King Mihrjan's grooms and they brought me hither to the King their master. When I told him my story, he entreated me with favour and made me his harbour- master, and I have prospered in his service and found acceptance with him. These bales, therefore are mine, the goods which God hath given me." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-second Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sindbad the Seaman said to the captain, "These bales are mine, the goods which Allah hath given me," the other exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Verily, there is neither conscience nor good faith left among men!" said I, "O Rais,[18] what mean these words, seeing that I have told thee my case?" And he answered, "Because thou heardest me say that I had with me goods whose owner was drowned, thou thinkest to take them without right; but this is forbidden by law to thee, for we saw him drown before our eyes, together with many other passengers, nor was one of them saved. So how canst thou pretend that thou art the owner of the goods?" "O captain," said I, "listen to my story and give heed to my words, and my truth will be manifest to thee; for lying and leasing are the letter-marks of the hypocrites." Then I recounted to him all that had befallen me since I sailed from Baghdad with him to the time when we came to the fish-island where we were nearly drowned; and I reminded him of certain matters which had passed between us; whereupon both he and the merchants were certified at the truth of my story and recognized me and gave me joy of my deliverance, saying, "By Allah, we thought not that thou hadst escaped drowning! But the Lord hath granted thee new life." Then they delivered my bales to me, and I found my name written thereon, nor was aught thereof lacking. So I opened them and making up a present for King Mihrjan of the finest and costliest of the contents, caused the sailors carry it up to the palace, where I went in to the King and laid my present at his feet, acquainting him with what had happened, especially concerning the ship and my goods; whereat he wondered with exceeding wonder and the truth of all that I had told him was made manifest to him. His affection for me redoubled after that and he showed me exceeding honour and bestowed on me a great present in return for mine. Then I sold my bales and what other matters I owned making a great profit on them, and bought me other goods and gear of the growth and fashion of the island- city. When the merchants were about to start on their homeward voyage, I embarked on board the ship all that I possessed, and going in to the King, thanked him for all his favours and friendship and craved his leave to return to my own land and friends. He farewelled me and bestowed on me great store of the country-stuffs and produce; and I took leave of him and embarked. Then we set sail and fared on nights and days, by the permission of Allah Almighty; and Fortune served us and Fate favoured us, so that we arrived in safety at Bassorah-city where I landed rejoiced at my safe return to my natal soil. After a short stay, I set out for Baghdad, the House of Peace, with store of goods and commodities of great price. Reaching the city in due time, I went straight to my own quarter and entered my house where all my friends and kinsfolk came to greet me. Then I bought me eunuchs and concubines, servants and negro slaves till I had a large establishment, and I bought me houses, and lands and gardens, till I was richer and in better case than before, and returned to enjoy the society of my friends and familiars more assiduously than ever, forgetting all I had suffered of fatigue and hardship and strangerhood and every peril of travel; and I applied myself to all manner joys and solaces and delights, eating the dantiest viands and drinking the deliciousest wines; and my wealth allowed this state of things to endure. “This, then, is the story of my first voyage, and to-morrow, Inshallah! I will tell you the tale of the second of my seven voyages.” (Saith he who telleth the tale), Then Sindbad the Seaman made Sindbad the Landsman sup with him and bade give him an hundred gold pieces, saying, “Thou hast cheered us with thy company this day.”[19] The Porter thanked him and, taking the gift, went his way, pondering that which he had heard and marvelling mightily at what things betide mankind. He passed the night in his own place and with early morning repaired to the abode of Sindbad the Seaman, who received him with honour and seated him by his side. As soon as the rest of the company was assembled, he set meat and drink before them and, when they had well eaten and drunken and were merry and in cheerful case, he took up his discourse and recounted to them in these words the narrative of

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The Second Voyage of Sindbad the Seaman.

Know, O my brother, that I was living a most comfortable and enjoyable life, in all solace and delight, as I told you yesterday, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-third Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sindbad the Seaman's guests were all gathered together he thus bespake them: — I was living a most enjoyable life until one day my mind became possessed with the thought of travelling about the world of men and seeing their cities and islands; and a longing seized me to traffic and to make money by trade. Upon this resolve I took a great store of cash and, buying goods and gear fit for travel, bound them up in bales. Then I went down to the river-bank, where I found a noble ship and brand-new about to sail, equipped with sails of fine cloth and well manned and provided; so I took passage in her, with a number of other merchants, and after embarking our goods we weighed anchor the same day. Right fair was our voyage and we sailed from place to place and from isle to isle; and whenever we anchored we met a crowd of merchants and notables and customers, and we took to buying and selling and bartering. At last Destiny brought us to an island, fair and verdant, in trees abundant, with yellow-ripe fruits luxuriant, and flowers fragrant and birds warbling soft descant; and streams crystalline and radiant; but no sign of man showed to the descrier, no, not a blower of the fire.[20] The captain made fast with us to this island, and the merchants and sailors landed and walked about, enjoying the shade of the trees and the song of the birds, that chanted the praises of the One, the Victorious, and marvelling at the works of the Omnipotent King.[21] I landed with the rest; and, sitting down by a spring of sweet water that welled up among the trees, took out some vivers I had with me and ate of that which Allah Almighty had allotted unto me. And so sweet was the zephyr and so fragrant were the flowers, that presently I waxed drowsy and, lying down in that place, was soon drowned in sleep. When I awoke, I found myself alone, for the ship had sailed and left me behind, nor had one of the merchants or sailors bethought himself of me. I seared the island right and left, but found neither man nor Jinn, whereat I was beyond measure troubled and my gall was like to burst for stress of chagrin and anguish and concern, because I was left quite alone, without aught of wordly gear or meat or drink, weary and heart-broken. So I gave myself up for lost and said, “Not always doth the crock escape the shock. I was saved the first time by finding one who brought me from the desert island to an inhabited place, but now there is no hope for me.” Then I fell to weeping and wailing and gave myself up to an access of rage, blaming myself for having again ventured upon the perils and hardships of voyage, whenas I was at my ease in mine own house in mine own land, taking my pleasure with good meat and good drink and good clothes and lacking nothing, neither money nor goods. And I repented me of having left Baghdad, and this the more after all the travails and dangers I had undergone in my first voyage, wherein I had so narrowly escaped destruction, and exclaimed “Verily we are Allah’s and unto Him we are returning!” I was indeed even as one mad and Jinn-struck and presently I rose and walked about the island, right and left and every whither, unable for trouble to sit or tarry in any one place. Then I climbed a tall tree and looked in all directions, but saw nothing save sky and sea and trees and birds and isles and sands. However, after a while my eager glances fell upon some great white thing, afar off in the interior of the island; so I came down from the tree and made for that which I had seen; and behold, it was a huge white dome rising high in air and of vast compass. I walked all around it, but found no door thereto, nor could I muster strength or nimbleness by reason of its exceeding smoothness and slipperiness. So I marked the spot where I stood and went round about the dome to measure its circumference which I found fifty good paces. And as I stood, casting about how to gain an entrance the day being near its fall and the sun being near the horizon, behold, the sun was suddenly hidden from me and the air became dull and dark. Methought a cloud had come over the sun, but it was the season of summer; so I marvelled at this and lifting my head looked steadfastly at the sky, when I saw that the cloud was none other than an enormous bird, of gigantic girth and inordinately wide of wing which, as it flew through the air, veiled the sun and hid it from the island. At this sight my wonder redoubled and I remembered a story, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued in these words: — My wonder redoubled and I remembered a story I had heard aforetime of pilgrims and travellers, how in a certain island dwelleth a huge bird, called the “Rukh”[22] which feedeth its young on elephants; and I was certified that the dome which caught my sight was none other than a Rukh’s egg. As I looked and wondered at the marvellous works of the Almighty, the bird alighted on the dome and brooded over it with its wings covering it and its legs stretched out behind it on the ground, and in this posture it fell asleep, glory be to Him who sleepeth not! When I saw this, I arose and, unwinding my turband from my head, doubled it and twisted it into a rope, with which I girt my middle and bound my waist fast to the legs of the Rukh, saying in myself, “Peradventure, this bird may carry me to a land of cities and inhabitants, and that will be better than abiding in this desert island.” I passed the night watching and fearing to sleep, lest the bird should fly away with me unawares; and, as soon as the dawn broke and morn shone, the Rukh rose off its egg and spreading its wings with a great cry flew up into the air dragging me with it; nor ceased it to soar and to tower till I thought it had reached the limit of the firmament; after which it descended, earthwards, little by little, till it lighted on the top of a high hill. As soon as I found myself on the hard ground, I made haste to unbind myself, quaking for fear of the bird, though it took no heed of me nor even felt me; and, loosing my turband from its feet, I made off with my best speed. Presently, I saw it catch up in its huge claws something from the earth and rise with it high in air, and observing it narrowly I saw it to be a serpent big of bulk and gigantic of girth, wherewith it flew away clean out of sight. I marvelled at this and faring forwards found myself on a peak overlooking a valley, exceeding great and wide and deep, and bounded by vast mountains that spired high in air: none could descry their summits, for the excess of their height, nor was any able to climb up thereto. When I saw this, I blamed myself for that which I had done and said, “Would Heaven I had tarried in the island! It was better than this wild desert; for there I had at least fruits to eat and water to drink, and here are neither trees nor fruits nor streams. But there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Verily, as often as I am quit of one peril, I fall into a worse danger and a more grievous.” However, I took courage and walking along the Wady found that its soil was of diamond, the stone wherewith they pierce minerals and precious stones and porcelain and the onyx, for that it is a dense stone and a dure, whereon neither iron nor hardhead hath effect, neither can we cut off aught therefrom nor break it, save by means of leadstone.[23] Moreover, the valley swarmed with snakes and vipers, each big as a palm tree, that would have made but one gulp of an elephant; and they came out by night, hiding during the day, lest the Rukhs and eagles pounce on them and tear them to pieces, as was their wont, why I wot not. And I repented of what I had done and said, “By Allah, I have made haste to bring destruction upon myself!” The day began to wane as I went along and I looked about for a place where I might pass the night, being in fear of the serpents; and I took no thought of meat and drink in my concern for my life. Presently, I caught sight of a cave nearhand, with a narrow doorway; so I entered and seeing a great stone close to the mouth, I rolled it up and stopped the entrance, saying to myself, “I am safe here for the night; and as soon as it is day, I will go forth and see what destiny will do.” Then I looked within the cave and saw to the upper end a great serpent brooding on her eggs, at which my flesh quaked and my hair stood on end; but I raised my eyes to Heaven and, committing my case to fate and lot, abode all that night without sleep till daybreak, when I rolled back the stone from the mouth of the cave and went forth, staggering like a drunken man and giddy with watching and fear and hunger. As in this sore case I walked along the valley, behold, there fell down before me a slaughtered beast; but I saw no one, whereat I marvelled with great marvel and presently remembered a story I had heard aforetime of traders and pilgrims and travellers; how the mountains where are the diamonds are full of perils and terrors, nor can any fare through them; but the merchants who traffic in diamonds have a device by which they obtain them, that is to say, they take a sheep and slaughter and skin it and cut it in pieces and cast them down from the mountain-tops into the valley-sole, where the meat being fresh and sticky with blood, some of the gems cleave to it. There they leave it till mid-day, when the eagles and vultures swoop down upon it and carry it in their claws to the mountain-summits, whereupon the merchants come and shout at them and scare them away from the meat. Then they come and, taking the diamonds which they find sticking to it, go their ways with them and leave the meat to the birds and beasts; nor can any come at the diamonds but by this device, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

She said, it hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued his relation of what befel him in the Mountain of Diamonds, and informed them that the merchants cannot come at the diamonds save by the device aforesaid. So, when I saw the slaughtered beast fall (he pursued) and bethought me of the story, I went up to it and filled my pockets and shawl-girdle and turband and the folds of my clothes with the choicest diamonds; and, as I was thus engaged, down fell before me another great piece of meat. Then with my unrolled turband and lying on my back, I set the bit on my breast so that I was hidden by the meat, which was thus raised above the ground. Hardly had I gripped it, when an eagle swooped down upon the flesh and, seizing it with his talons, flew up with it high in air and me clinging thereto, and ceased not its flight till it alighted on the head of one of the mountains where, dropping the carcass he fell to rending it; but, behold, there arose behind him a great noise of shouting and clattering of wood, whereat the bird took fright and flew away. Then I loosed off myself the meat, with clothes daubed with blood therefrom, and stood up by its side; whereupon up came the merchant, who had cried out at the eagle, and seeing me standing there, bespoke me not, but was affrighted at me and shook with fear. However, he went up to the carcass and turning it over, found no diamonds sticking to it, whereat he gave a great cry and exclaimed, "Harrow, my disappointment! There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah with whom we seek refuge from Satan the stoned!" And he bemoaned himself and beat hand upon hand, saying, "Alas, the pity of it! How cometh this?" Then I went up to him and he said to me, "Who art thou and what causeth thee to come hither?" And I, "Fear not, I am a man and a good man and a merchant. My story is a wondrous and my adventures marvellous and the manner of my coming hither is prodigious. So be of good cheer, thou shalt receive of me what shall rejoice thee, for I have with me great plenty of diamonds and I will give thee thereof what shall suffice thee; for each is better than aught thou couldst get otherwise. So fear nothing." The man rejoiced thereat and thanked and blessed me; then we talked together till the other merchants, hearing me in discourse with their fellow, came up and saluted me; for each of them had thrown down his piece of meat. And as I went off with them I told them my whole story, how I had suffered hardships at sea and the fashion of my reaching the valley. But I gave the owner of the meat a number of the stones I had by me, so they all wished me joy of my escape, saying, "By Allah a new life hath been decreed to thee, for none ever reached yonder valley and came off thence alive before thee; but praised be Allah for thy safety!" We passed the night together in a safe and pleasant place, beyond measure rejoiced at my deliverance from the Valley of Serpents and my arrival in an inhabited land; and on the morrow we set out and journeyed over the mighty range of mountains, seeing many serpents in the valley, till we came to a fair great island, wherein was a garden of huge camphor trees under each of which an hundred men might take shelter. When the folk have a mind to get camphor, they bore into the upper part of the bole with a long iron; whereupon the liquid camphor, which is the sap of the tree, floweth out and they catch it in vessels, where it concreteth like gum; but, after this, the tree dieth and becometh firewood.[24] Moreover, there is in this island a kind of wild beast, called "Rhinoceros,"[25] that pastureth as do steers and buffalos with us; but it is a huge brute, bigger of body than the camel and like it feedeth upon the leaves and twigs of trees. It is a remarkable animal with a great and thick horn, ten cubits long, amiddleward its head; wherein, when cleft in twain, is the likeness of a man. Voyagers and pilgrims and travellers declare that this beast called "Karkadan" will carry off a great elephant on its horn and graze about the island and the sea-coast therewith and take no heed of it, till the elephant dieth and its fat, melting in the sun, runneth down into the rhinoceros's eyes and blindeth him, so that he lieth down on the shore. Then comes the bird Rukh and carrieth off both the rhinoceros's eyes and blindeth him, so that he lieth down on the shore. Then comes the bird Rukh and carrieth off both the rhinoceros and that which is on its horn to feed its young withal. Moreover, I saw in this island many kinds of oxen and buffalos, whose like are not found in our country. Here I sold some of the diamonds which I had by me for gold dinars and silver dirhams and bartered others for the produce of the country; and, loading them upon beasts of burden, fared on with the merchants from valley to valley and town to town, buying and selling and viewing foreign countries and the works and creatures of Allah, till we came to Bassorah-city, where we abode a few days, after which I continued my journey to Baghdad. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sindbad the Seaman returned from his travel to Baghdad, the House of Peace, he arrived at home with great store of diamonds and money and goods. (Continued he) I foregathered with my friends and relations and gave alms and largesse and bestowed curious gifts and made presents to all my friends and companions. Then I betook myself to eating well and drinking well and wearing fine clothes and making merry with my fellows, and forgot all my sufferings in the pleasures of return to the solace and delight of life, with light heart and broadened breast. And every one who heard of my return came and questioned me of my adventures and of foreign countries, and I related to them all that had befallen me, and the much I had suffered, whereat they wondered and gave me joy of my safe return. "This, then is the end of the story of my second voyage; and to-morrow, Inshallah! I will tell you what befel me in my third voyage." The company marvelled at his story and supped with him; after which he ordered an hundred dinars of gold to be given to the Porter, who took the sum with many thanks and blessings (which he stinted not even when he reached home) and went his way, wondering at what he had heard. Next morning as soon as day came in its sheen and shone, he rose and praying the dawn-prayer, repaired to the house of Sindbad the Seaman, even as he had bidden him, and went in and gave him good-morrow. The merchant welcomed him and made him sit with him, till the rest of the company arrived; and when they had well eaten and drunken and were merry with joy and jollity, their host began by saying, “Hearken, O my brothers, to what I am about to tell you; for it is even more wondrous than what you have already heard; but Allah alone kenneth what things His Omniscience concealed from man! And listen to

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

The Third Voyage of Sindbad the Seaman.

As I told you yesterday, I returned from my second voyage overjoyed at my safety and with great increase of wealth, Allah having requited me all that I had wasted and lost, and I abode awhile in Baghdad-city savouring the utmost ease and prosperity and comfort and happiness, till the carnal man was once more seized with longing for travel and diversion and adventure, and yearned after traffic and lucre and emolument, for that the human heart is naturally prone to evil. So making up my mind I laid in great plenty of goods suitable for a sea-voyage and repairing to Bassorah, went down to the shore and found there a fine ship ready to sail, with a full crew and a numerous company of merchants, men of worth and substance; faith, piety and consideration. I embarked with them and we set sail on the blessing of Allah Almighty and on His aidance and His favour to bring our voyage to a safe and prosperous issue and already we congratulated one another on our good fortune and boon voyage. We fared on from sea to sea and from island to island and city to city, in all delight and contentment, buying and selling wherever we touched, and taking our solace and our pleasure, till one day when, as we sailed athwart the dashing sea, swollen with clashing billows, behold, the master (who stood on the gunwale examining the ocean in all directions) cried out with a great cry, and buffeted his face and pluckt out his beard and rent his raiment, and bade furl the sail and cast the anchors. So we said to him, “O Rais, what is the matter?” “Know, O my brethren (Allah preserve you!), that the wind hath gotten the better of us and hath driven us out of our course into mid-ocean, and destiny, for our ill luck, hath brought us to the Mountain of the Zughb, a hairy folk like apes,[26] among whom no man ever fell and came forth alive; and my heart presageth that we all be dead men.” Hardly had the master made an end of his speech when the apes were upon us. They surrounded the ship on all sides swarming like locusts and crowding the shore. They were the most frightful of wild creatures, covered with black hair like felt, foul of favour and small of stature, being but four spans high, yellow-eyed and black-faced; none knoweth their language nor what they are, and they shun the company of men. We feared to slay them or strike them or drive them away, because of their inconceivable multitude; lest, if we hurt one, the rest fall on us and slay us, for numbers prevail over courage; so we let them do their will, albeit we feared they would plunder our goods and gear. They swarmed up the cables and gnawed them asunder, and on like wise they did with all the ropes of the ship, so that it fell off from the wind and stranded upon their mountainous coast. Then they laid hands on all the merchants and crew, and landing us on the island, made off with the ship and its cargo and went their ways, we wot not whither. We were thus left on the island, eating of its fruits and pot-herbs and drinking of its streams till, one day, we espied in its midst what seemed an inhabited house. So we made for it as fast as our feet could carry us and behold, it was a castle strong and tall, compassed about with a lofty wall, and having a two-leaved gate of ebony-wood both of which leaves open stood. We entered and found within a space wide and bare like a great square, round which stood many high doors open thrown, and at the farther end a long bench of stone and brasiers, with cooking gear hanging thereon and about it great plenty of bones; but we saw no one and marvelled thereat with exceeding wonder. Then we sat down in the courtyard a little while and presently falling asleep, slept from the forenoon till sundown, when lo! the earth trembled under our feet and the air rumbled with a terrible tone. Then there came down upon us, from the top of the castle, a huge creature in the likeness of a man, black of colour, tall and big of bulk, as he were a great date-tree, with eyes like coals of fire and eye-teeth like boar's tusks and a vast big gape like the mouth of a well. Moreover, he had long loose lips like camel's, hanging down upon his breast and ears like two Jarms[27] falling over his shoulder-blades and the nails of his hands were like the claws of a lion.[28] When we saw this frightful giant, we were like to faint and every moment increased our fear and terror; and we became as dead men for excess of horror and affright. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued: — When we saw this frightful giant we were struck with exceeding terror and horror. And after trampling upon the earth, he sat awhile on the bench; then he arose and coming to us seized me by the arm choosing me out from among my comrades the merchants. He took me up in his hand and turning me over felt me, as a butcher feeleth a sheep he is about to slaughter, and I but a little mouthful in his hands; but finding me lean and fleshless for stress of toil and trouble and weariness, let me go and took up another, whom in like manner he turned over and felt and let go; nor did he cease to feel and turn over the rest of us, one after another, till he came to the master of the ship. Now he was a sturdy, stout, broad-shouldered wight, fat and in full vigour; so he pleased the giant, who seized him, as a butcher seizeth a beast, and throwing him down, set his foot on his neck and brake it; after which he fetched a long spit and thrusting it up his backside, brought it forth of the crown of his head. Then, lighting a fierce fire, he set over it the spit with the Rais thereon, and turned it over the coals, till the flesh was roasted, when he took the spit off the fire and set it like a Kabáb-stick before him. Then he tare the body, limb from limb, as one jointeth a chicken and, rending the flesh with his nails, fell to eating of it and gnawing the bones, till there was nothing left but some of these, which he threw on one side of the wall. This done, he sat for a while; then he lay down on the stone-bench and fell asleep, snarking and snoring like the gurgling of a lamb or a cow with its throat cut; nor did he awake till morning, when he rose and fared forth and went his ways. As soon as we were certified that he was gone, we began to talk with one another, weeping and bemoaning ourselves for the risk we ran, and saying, “Would Heaven we had been drowned in the sea or that the apes had eaten us! That were better than to be roasted over the coals; by Allah, this is a vile, foul death! But whatso the Lord willeth must come to pass and there is no Majesty and there is no Might, save in Him, the Glorious, the Great! We shall assuredly perish miserably and none will know of us; as there is no escape for us from this place.” Then we arose and roamed about the island, hoping that haply we might find a place to hide us in or a means of flight, for indeed death was a light matter to us, provided we were not roasted over the fire[29] and eaten. However, we could find no hiding-place and the evening overtook us; so, of the excess of our terror, we returned to the castle and sat down awhile. Presently, the earth trembled under our feet and the black ogre came up to us and turning us over, felt one after other, till he found a man to his liking, whom he took and served as he had done the captain, killing and roasting and eating him: after which he lay down on the bench[30] and slept all night, snarking and snoring like a beast with its throat cut, till daybreak, when he arose and went out as before. Then we drew together and conversed and said one to other, "By Allah, we had better throw ourselves into the sea and be drowned than die roasted; for this is an abominable death!" Quoth one of us, "Hear ye my words! let us cast about to kill him, and be at peace from the grief of him and rid the Moslems of his barbarity and tyranny." Then said I, "Hear me, O my brothers; if there is nothing for it but to slay him, let us carry some of this firewood and planks down to the sea-shore and make us a boat wherein, if we succeed in slaughtering him, we may either embark and let the waters carry us whither Allah willeth, or else abide here till some ship pass, when we will take passage in it. If we fail to kill him, we will embark in the boat and put out to sea; and if we be drowned, we shall at least escape being roasted over a kitchen fire with sliced weasands; whilst, if we escape, we escape, and if we be drowned, we die martyrs." "By Allah," said they all, "this rede is a right;" and we agreed upon this, and set about carrying it out. So we haled down to the beach the pieces of wood which lay about the bench; and, making a boat, moored it to the strand, after which we stowed therein somewhat of victual and returned to the castle. As soon as evening fell the earth trembled under our feet and in came the blackamoor upon us, snarling like a dog about to bite. He came up to us and feeling us and turning us over one by one, took one of us and did with him as he had done before and ate him, after which he lay down on the bench and snored and snorted like thunder. As soon as we were assured that he slept, we arose and taking two iron spits of those standing there, heated them in the fiercest of the fire, till they were red-hot, like burning coals, when we gripped fast hold of them and going up to the giant, as he lay snoring on the bench, thrust them into his eyes and pressed upon them, all of us, with our united might, so that his eyeballs burst and he became stone blind. Thereupon he cried with a great cry, whereat our hearts trembled, and springing up from the bench, he fell a- groping after us, blind-fold. We fled from him right and left and he saw us not, for his sight was altogether blent; but we were in terrible fear of him and made sure we were dead men despairing of escape. Then he found the door, feeling for it with his hands and went out roaring aloud; and behold, the earth shook under us, for the noise of his roaring, and we quaked for fear. As he quitted the castle we followed him and betook ourselves to the place where we had moored our boat, saying to one another, “If this accursed abide absent till the going down of the sun and come not to the castle, we shall know that he is dead; and if he come back, we will embark in the boat and paddle till we escape, committing our affair to Allah.” But, as we spoke, behold, up came the blackamoor with other two as they were Ghuls, fouler and more frightful than he, with eyes like red-hot coals; which when we saw, we hurried into the boat and casting off the moorings paddled away and pushed out to sea.[31] As soon as the ogres caught sight of us, they cried out at us and running down to the sea-shore, fell a-pelting us with rocks, whereof some fell amongst us and others fell into the sea. We paddled with all our might till we were beyond their reach, but the most part of us were slain by the rock-throwing, and the winds and waves sported with us and carried us into the midst of the dashing sea, swollen with billows clashing. We knew not whither we went and my fellows died one after another, till there remained but three, myself and two others; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman thus continued: — Most part of us were slain by the rock-thowing and only three of us remained on board the boat for, as often as one died, we threw him into the sea. We were sore exhausted for stress of hunger, but we took courage and heartened one another and worked for dear life and paddled with main and might, till the winds cast us upon an island, as we were dead men for fatigue and fear and famine. We landed on the island and walked about it for a while, finding that it abounded in trees and streams and birds; and we ate of the fruits and rejoiced in our escape from the black and our deliverance from the perils of the sea; and thus we did till nightfall, when we lay down and fell asleep for excess of fatigue. But we had hardly closed our eyes before we were aroused by a hissing sound like the sough of wind, and awaking, saw a serpent like a dragon, a seld-seen sight, of monstrous make and belly of enormous bulk which lay in a circle around us. Presently it reared its head and, seizing one of my companions, swallowed him up to his shoulders; then it gulped down the rest of him, and we heard his ribs crack in its belly. Presently it went its way, and we abode in sore amazement and grief for our comrade and mortal fear for ourselves, saying, “By Allah, this is a marvellous thing! Each kind of death that threatened us is more terrible than the last. We were rejoicing in our escape from the black ogre and our deliverance from the perils of the sea; but now we have fallen into that which is worse. There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah! By the Almighty, we have escaped from the blackamoor and from drowning: but how shall we escape from this abominable and viperish monster?” Then we walked about the island, eating of its fruits and drinking of its streams till dusk, when we climbed up into a high tree and went to sleep there, I being on the topmost bough. As soon as it was dark night, up came the serpent, looking right and left; and, making for the tree whereon we were, climbed up to my comrade and swallowed him down to his shoulders. Then it coiled about the bole[32] with him, whilst I, who could not take my eyes off the sight, heard his bones crack in its belly, and it swallowed him whole, after which it slid down from the tree. When the day broke and the light showed me that the serpent was gone, I came down, as I were a dead man for stress of fear and anguish, and thought to cast myself into the sea and be at rest from the woes of the world; but could not bring myself to this, for verily life is dear. So I took five pieces of wood, broad and long, and bound one crosswise to the soles of my feet and others in like fashion on my right and left sides and over my breast; and the broadest and largest I bound across my head and made them fast with ropes. Then I lay down on the ground on my back, so that I was completely fenced in by the pieces of wood, which enclosed me like a bier.[33] So as soon as it was dark, up came the serpent, as usual, and made towards me, but could not get at me to swallow me for the wood that fenced me in. So it wriggled round me on every side, whilst I looked on, like one dead by reason of my terror; and every now and then it would glide away and come back; but as often as it tried to come at me, it was hindered by the pieces of wood wherewith I had bound myself on every side. It ceased not to beset me thus from sundown till dawn, but when the light of day shone upon the beast it made off, in the utmost fury and extreme disappointment. Then I put out my hand and unbound myself, well-nigh down among the dead men for fear and suffering; and went down to the island-shore, whence a ship afar off in the midst of the waves suddenly struck my sight. So I tore off a great branch of a tree and made signs with it to the crew, shouting out the while; which when the ship's company saw they said to another, "We must stand in and see what this is; peradventure 'tis a man." So they made for the island and presently heard my cries, whereupon they took me on board and questioned me of my case. I told them all my adventures from first to last, whereat they marvelled mightily and covered my shame[34] with some of their clothes. Moreover, they set before me somewhat of food and I ate my fill and I drank cold sweet water and was mightily refreshed; and Allah Almighty quickened me after I was virtually dead. So I praised the Most Highest and thanked Him for His favours and exceeding mercies, and my heart revived in me after utter despair, till meseemed as if all I had suffered were but a dream I had dreamed. We sailed on with a fair wind the Almighty sent us till we came to an island, called Al-Saláhitah,[35] which aboundeth in sandal- wood when the captain cast anchor, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued: — And when we had cast anchor, the merchants and the sailors landed with their goods to sell and to buy. Then the captain turned to me and said, "Hark'ee, thou art a stranger and a pauper and tellest us that thou hast undergone frightful hardship; wherefore I have a mind to benefit thee with somewhat that may further thee to thy native land, so thou wilt ever bless me and pray for me." "So be it," answered I; "thou shalt have my prayers." Quoth he, "Know then that there was with us a man, a traveller, whom we lost, and we know not if he be alive or dead, for we had no news of him; so I purpose to commit his bales of goods to thy charge, that thou mayst sell them in this island. A part of the proceeds we will give thee as an equivalent for thy pains and service, and the rest we will keep till we return to Baghdad, where we will enquire for his family and deliver it to them, together with the unsold goods. Say me then, wilt thou undertake the charge and land and sell them as other merchants do?" I replied "Hearkening and obedience to thee, O my lord; and great is thy kindness to me," and thanked him; whereupon he bade the sailors and porters bear the bales in question ashore and commit them to my charge. The ship's scribe asked him, "O master, what bales are these and what merchant's name shall I write upon them?"; and he answered, "Write on them the name of Sindbad the Seaman, him who was with us in the ship and whom we lost at the Rukh's island, and of whom we have no tidings; for we mean this stranger to sell them; and we will give him a part of the price for his pains and keep the rest till we return to Baghdad where, if we find the owner we will make it over to him, and if not, to his family." And the clerk said, "Thy words are apposite and thy rede is right." Now when I heard the captain give orders for the bales to be inscribed with my name, I said to myself, "By Allah, I am Sindbad the Seaman!" So I armed myself with courage and patience and waited till all the merchants had landed and were gathered together, talking and chaffering about buying and selling; then I went up to the captain and asked him, "O my lord, knowest thou what manner of man was this Sindbad, whose goods thou hast committed to me for sale?"; and he answered, "I know of him naught save that he was a man from Baghdad-city, Sindbad hight the Seaman, who was drowned with many others when we lay anchored at such an island and I have heard nothing of him since then." At this I cried out with a great cry and said, "O captain, whom Allah keep! know that I am that Sindbad the Seaman and that I was not drowned, but when thou castest anchor at the island, I landed with the rest of the merchants and crew; and I sat down in a pleasant place by myself and ate somewhat of food I had with me and enjoyed myself till I became drowsy and was drowned in sleep; and when I awoke, I found no ship and none near me. These goods are my goods and these bales are my bales; and all the merchants who fetch jewels from the Valley of Diamonds saw me there and will bear me witness that I am the very Sindbad the Seaman; for I related to them everything that had befallen me and told them how you forgot me and left me sleeping on the island, and that betided me which betided me." When the passengers and crew heard my words, they gathered about me and some of them believed me and others disbelieved; but presently, behold, one of the merchants, hearing me mention the Valley of Diamonds, came up to me and said to them, "Hear what I say, good people! When I related to you the most wonderful thing in my travels, and I told you that, at the time we cast down our slaughtered animals into the Valley of Serpents (I casting with the rest as was my wont), there came up a man hanging to mine, ye believed me not and gave me the lie." "Yes," quoth they, "thou didst tell us some such tale, but we had no call to credit thee." He resumed, "Now this is the very man, by token that he gave me diamonds of great value, and high price whose like are not to be found, requiting me more than would have come up sticking to my quarter of meat; and I companied with him to Bassorah-city, where he took leave of us and went on to his native stead, whilst we returned to our own land. This is he; and he told us his name, Sindbad the Seaman, and how the ship left him on the desert island. And know ye that Allah hath sent him hither, so might the truth of my story be made manifest to you. Moreover, these are his goods for, when he first foregathered with us, he told us of them; and the truth of his words is patent." Hearing the merchant's speech the captain came up to me and considered me straitly awhile, after which he said, "What was the mark on thy bales?" "Thus and thus," answered I, and reminded him of somewhat that had passed between him and me, when I shipped with him from Bassorah. Thereupon he was convinced that I was indeed Sindbad the Seaman and took me round the neck and gave me joy of my safety, saying, "By Allah, O my lord, thy case is indeed wondrous and thy tale marvellous; but lauded be Allah who hath brought thee and me together again, and who hath restored to thee thy goods and gear!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fiftieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman thus continued:— "Alhamdolillah!" quoth the captain, "lauded be Allah who hath restored unto thee thy goods and gear." Then I disposed of my merchandise to the best of my skill, and profited largely on them whereat I rejoiced with exceeding joy and congratulated myself on my safety and the recovery of my goods. We ceased not to buy and sell at the several islands till we came to the land of Hind, where we bought cloves and ginger and all manner spices; and thence we fared on to the land of Sind, where also we bought and sold. In these Indian seas, I saw wonders without number or count, amongst others a fish like a cow which bringeth forth its young and suckleth them like human beings; and of its skin bucklers are made.[36] There were eke fishes like asses and camels[37] and tortoises twenty cubits wide.[38] And I saw also a bird that cometh out of a sea-shell and layeth eggs and hatcheth her chicks on the surface of the water, never coming up from the sea to the land.[39] Then we set sail again with a fair wind and the blessing of Almighty Allah; and, after a prosperous voyage, arrived safe and sound at Bassorah. Here I abode a few days and presently returned to Baghdad where I went at once to my quarter and my house and saluted my family and familiars and friends. I had gained on this voyage what was beyond count and reckoning, so I gave alms and largesse and clad the widow and the orphan, by way of thanksgiving for my happy return, and fell to feasting and making merry with my companions and intimates and forgot, while eating well and drinking well and dressing well, everything that had befallen me and all the perils and hardships I had suffered. "These, then, are the most admirable things I sighted on my third voyage, and to-morrow, an it be the will of Allah, you shall come to me and I will relate the adventures of my fourth voyage, which is still more wonderful than those you have already heard." (Saith he who telleth the tale), Then Sindbad the Seaman bade give Sindbad the Landsman an hundred golden dinars as of wont and called for food. So they spread the tables and the company ate the night-meal and went their ways, marvelling at the tale they had heard. The Porter after taking his gold passed the night in his own house, also wondering at what his namesake the Seaman had told him, and as soon as day broke and the morning showed with its sheen and shone, he rose and praying the dawn-prayer betook himself to Sindbad the Seaman, who returned his salute and received him with an open breast and cheerful favour and made him sit with him till the rest of the company arrived, when he caused set on food and they ate and drank and made merry. Then Sindbad the Seaman bespake them and related to them the narrative of

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The Fourth Voyage of Sindbad the Seaman.

Know, O my brethren that after my return from my third voyage and foregathering with my friends, and forgetting all my perils and hardships in the enjoyment of ease and comfort and repose, I was visited one day by a company of merchants who sat down with me and talked of foreign travel and traffic, till the old bad man within me yearned to go with them and enjoy the sight of strange countries, and I longed for the society of the various races of mankind and for traffic and profit. So I resolved to travel with them and buying the necessaries for a long voyage, and great store of costly goods, more than ever before, transported them from Baghdad to Bassorah where I took ship with the merchants in question, who were of the chief of the town. We set out, trusting in the blessing of Almighty Allah; and with a favouring breeze and the best conditions we sailed from island to island and sea to sea, till, one day, there arose against us a contrary wind and the captain cast out his anchors and brought the ship to a standsill, fearing lest she should founder in mid-ocean. Then we all fell to prayer and humbling ourselves before the Most High; but, as we were thus engaged there smote us a furious squall which tore the sails to rags and tatters: the anchor-cable parted and, the ship foundering, we were cast into the sea, goods and all. I kept myself afloat by swimming half the day, till, when I had given myself up for lost, the Almighty threw in my way one of the planks of the ship, whereon I and some others of the merchants scrambled. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued as follows: — And when the ship foundered I scrambled on to a plank with some others of the merchants and, mounting it as we would a horse, paddled with our feet in the sea. We abode thus a day and a night, the wind and waves helping us on, and on the second day shortly before the mid-time between sunrise and noon[40] the breeze freshened and the sea wrought and the rising waves cast us upon an island, well-nigh dead bodies for weariness and want of sleep, cold and hunger and fear and thirst. We walked about the shore and found abundance of herbs, whereof we ate enough to keep breath in body and to stay our failing spirits, then lay down and slept till morning hard by the sea. And when morning came with its sheen and shone, we arose and walked about the island to the right and left, till we came in sight of an inhabited house afar off. So we made towards it, and ceased not walking till we reached the door thereof when lo! a number of naked men issued from it and without saluting us or a word said, laid hold of us masterfully and carried us to their king, who signed us to sit. So we sat down and they set food before us such as we knew not[41] and whose like we had never seen in all our lives. My companions ate of it, for stress of hunger, but my stomach revolted from it and I would not eat; and my refraining from it was, by Allah's favour, the cause of my being alive till now: for no sooner had my comrades tasted of it than their reason fled and their condition changed and they began to devour it like madmen possessed of an evil spirit. Then the savages gave them to drink of cocoa-nut oil and anointed them therewith; and straightway after drinking thereof, their eyes turned into their heads and they fell to eating greedily, against their wont. When I saw this, I was confounded and concerned for them, nor was I less anxious about myself, for fear of the naked folk. So I watched them narrowly, and it was not long before I discovered them to be a tribe of Magian cannibals whose King was a Ghul.[42] All who came to their country or whoso they caught in their valleys or on their roads they brought to this King and fed them upon that food and anointed them with that oil, whereupon their stomachs dilated that they might eat largely, whilst their reason fled and they lost the power of thought and became idiots. Then they stuffed them with cocoa-nut oil and the aforesaid food, till they became fat and gross, when they slaughtered them by cutting their throats and roasted them for the King's eating; but, as for the savages themselves, they ate human flesh raw.[43] When I saw this, I was sore dismayed for myself and my comrades, who were now become so stupefied that they knew not what was done with them and the naked folk committed them to one who used every day to lead them out and pasture them on the island like cattle. And they wandered amongst the trees and rested at will, thus waxing very fat. As for me, I wasted away and became sickly for fear and hunger and my flesh shrivelled on my bones; which when the savages saw, they left me alone and took no thought of me and so far forgot me that one day I gave them the slip and walking out of their place made for the beach which was distant and there espied a very old man seated on a high place, girt by the waters. I looked at him and knew him for the herdsman, who had charge of pasturing my fellows, and with him were many others in like case. As soon as he saw me, he knew me to be in possession of my reason and not afflicted like the rest whom he was pasturing; so signed to me from afar, as who should say, "Turn back and take the right-hand road, for that will lead thee into the King's highway." So I turned back, as he bade me, and followed the right-hand road, now running for fear and then walking leisurely to rest me, till I was out of the old man's sight. By this time, the sun had gone down and the darkness set in; so I sat down to rest and would have slept, but sleep came not to me that night, for stress of fear and famine and fatigue. When the night was half spent, I rose and walked on, till the day broke in all its beauty and the sun rose over the heads of the lofty hills and athwart the low gravelly plains. Now I was weary and hungry and thirsty; so I ate my fill of herbs and grasses that grew in the island and kept life in body and stayed my stomach, after which I set out again and fared on all that day and the next night, staying my greed with roots and herbs; nor did I cease walking for seven days and their nights, till the morn of the eighth day, when I caught sight of a faint object in the distance. So I made towards it, though my heart quaked for all I had suffered first and last, and behold it was a company of men gathering pepper-grains.[44] As soon as they saw me, they hastened up to me and surrounding me on all sides, said to me, "Who art thou and whence come?" I replied, "Know, O folk, that I am a poor stranger," and acquainted them with my case and all the hardships and perils I had suffered, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued: — And the men gathering pepper in the island questioned me of my case, when I acquainted them with all the hardships and perils I had suffered and how I had fled from the savages; whereat they marvelled and gave me joy of my safety, saying, “By Allah, this is wonderful! But how didst thou escape from these blacks who swarm in the island and devour all who fall in with them; nor is any safe from them, nor can any get out of their clutches?” And after I had told them the fate of my companions, they made me sit by them, till they got quit of their work; and fetched me somewhat of good food, which I ate, for I was hungry, and rested awhile, after which they took ship with me and carrying me to their island-home brought me before their King, who returned my salute and received me honourably and questioned me of my case. I told him all that had befallen me, from the day of my leaving Baghdad-city, whereupon he wondered with great wonder at my adventures, he and his courtiers, and bade me sit by him; then he called for food and I ate with him what sufficed me and washed my hands and returned thanks to Almighty Allah for all His favours praising Him and glorifying Him. Then I left the King and walked for solace about the city, which I found wealthy and populous, abounding in market-streets well stocked with food and merchandise and full of buyers and sellers. So I rejoiced at having reached so pleasant a place and took my ease there after my fatigues; and I made friends with the townsfolk, nor was it long before I became more in honour and favour with them and their King than any of the chief men of the realm. Now I saw that all the citizens, great and small, rode fine horses, high-priced and thorough-bred, without saddles or housings, whereat I wondered and said to the King, “Wherefore, O my lord, dost thou not ride with a saddle? Therein is ease for the rider and increase of power.” “What is a saddle?” asked he: “I never saw nor used such a thing in all my life;” and I answered, “With thy permission I will make thee a saddle, that thou mayest ride on it and see the comfort thereof.” And quoth he, “Do so.” So quoth I to him, “Furnish me with some wood,” which being brought, I sought me a clever carpenter and sitting by him showed him how to make the saddle-tree, portraying for him the fashion thereof in ink on the wood. Then I took wool and teased it and made felt of it, and, covering the saddle-tree with leather, stuffed it and polished it and attached the girth and stirrup leathers; after which I fetched a blacksmith and described to him the fashion of the stirrups and bridle-bit. So he forged a fine pair of stirrups and a bit, and filed them smooth and tinned[45] them. Moreover, I made fast to them fringes of silk and fitted bridle-leathers to the bit. Then I fetched one of the best of the royal horses and saddling and bridling him, hung the stirrups to the saddle and led him to the King. The thing took his fancy and he thanked me; then he mounted and rejoiced greatly in the saddle and rewarded me handsomely for my work. When the King's Wazir saw the saddle, he asked of me one like it and I made it for him. Furthermore, all the grandees and officers of state came for saddles to me; so I fell to making saddles (having taught the craft to the carpenter and blacksmith), and selling them to all who sought, till I amassed great wealth and became in high honour and great favour with the King and his household and grandees. I abode thus till, one day, as I was sitting with the King in all respect and contentment, he said to me, "Know thou, O such an one, thou art become one of us, dear as a brother, and we hold thee in such regard and affection that we cannot part with thee nor suffer thee to leave our city; wherefore I desire of thee obedience in a certain matter, and I will not have thee gainsay me." Answered I, "O King, what is it thou desirest of me? Far be it from me to gainsay thee in aught, for I am indebted to thee for many favours and bounties and much kindness, and (praised be Allah!) I am become one of thy servants." Quoth he, "I have a mind to marry thee to a fair, clever and agreeable wife who is wealthy as she is beautiful; so thou mayst be naturalised and domiciled with us: I will lodge thee with me in my palace; wherefore oppose me not neither cross me in this." When I heard these words I was ashamed and held my peace nor could make him any answer,[46] by reason of my much bashfulness before him. Asked he, "Why dost thou not reply to me, O my son?"; and I answered saying, "O my master, it is thine to command, O King of the age!" So he summoned the Kazi and the witnesses and married me straightway to a lady of a noble tree and high pedigree; wealthy in moneys and means; the flower of an ancient race; of surpassing beauty and grace, and the owner of farms and estates and many a dwelling-place. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-third Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued in these words: — Now after the King my master had married me to this choice wife, he also gave me a great and goodly house standing alone, together with slaves and officers, and assigned me pay and allowances. So I became in all ease and contentment and delight and forgot everything which had befalled me of weariness and trouble and hardship; for I loved my wife with fondest love and she loved me no less, and we were as one and abode in the utmost comfort of life and in its happiness. And I said in myself, "When I return to my native land, I will carry her with me." But whatso is predestined to a man, that needs must be, and none knoweth what shall befal him. We lived thus a great while, till Almighty Allah bereft one of my neighbours of his wife. Now he was a gossip of mine; so hearing the cry of the keeners I went in to condole with him on his loss and found him in very ill plight, full of trouble and weary of soul and mind. I condoled with him and comforted him, saying, "Mourn not for thy wife who hath now found the mercy of Allah; the Lord will surely give thee a better in her stead and thy name shall be great and thy life shall be long in the land, Inshallah!"[47] But he wept bitter tears and replied, "O my friend, how can I marry another wife and how shall Allah replace her to me with a better than she, whenas I have but one day left to live?" "O my brother," said I, "return to thy senses and announce not the glad tidings of thine own death, for thou art well, sound and in good case." "By thy life, O my friend," rejoined he, "to-morrow thou wilt lose me and wilt never see me again till the Day of Resurrection." I asked, "How so?" and he answered, "This very day they bury my wife, and they bury me with her in one tomb; for it is the custom with us, if the wife die first, to bury the husband alive with her and in like manner the wife, if the husband die first; so that neither may enjoy life after losing his or her mate." "By Allah," cried I, "this is a most vile, lewd custom and not to be endured of any!" Meanwhile, behold, the most part of the townsfolk came in and fell to condoling with my gossip for his wife and for himself. Presently they laid the dead woman out, as was their wont; and, setting her on a bier, carried her and her husband without the city, till they came to a place in the side of the mountain at the end of the island by the sea; and here they raised a great rock and discovered the mouth of a stone-rivetted pit or well,[48] leading down into a vast underground cavern that ran beneath the mountain. Into this pit they threw the corpse, then tying a rope of palm-fibres under the husband's armpits, they let him down into the cavern, and with him a great pitcher of fresh water and seven scones by was of viaticum.[49] When he came to the bottom, he loosed himself from the rope and they drew it up; and, stopping the mouth of the pit with the great stone, they returned to the city, leaving my friend in the cavern with his dead wife. When I saw this, I said to myself, "By Allah, this fashion of death is more grievous than the first!" And I went in to the King and said to him, "O my lord, why do ye bury the quick with the dead?" Quoth he, "It hath been the custom, thou must know, of our forbears and our olden Kings from time immemorial, if the husband die first, to bury his wife with him, and the like with the wife, so we may not sever them, alive or dead." I asked, "O King of the age, if the wife of a foreigner like myself die among you, deal ye with him as with yonder man?"; and he answered, "Assuredly, we do with him even as thou hast seen." When I heard this, my gall-bladder was like to burst, for the violence of my dismay and concern for myself: my wit became dazed; I felt as if in a vile dungeon; and hated their society; for I went about in fear lest my wife should die before me and they bury me alive with her. However, after a while, I comforted myself, saying, "Haply I shall predecease her, or shall have returned to my own land before she die, for none knoweth which shall go first and which shall go last." Then I applied myself to diverting my mind from this thought with various occupations; but it was not long before my wife sickened and complained and took to her pillow and fared after a few days to the mercy of Allah; and the King and the rest of the folk came, as was their wont, to condole with me and her family and to console us for her loss and not less to condole with me for myself. Then the women washed her and arraying her in her richest raiment and golden ornaments, necklaces and jewellery, laid her on the bier and bore her to the mountain aforesaid, where they lifted the cover of the pit and cast her in; after which all my intimates and acquaintances and my wife's kith and kin came round me, to farewell me in my lifetime and console me for my own death, whilst I cried out among them, saying, "Almighty Allah never made it lawful to bury the quick with the dead! I am a stranger, not one of your kind; and I cannot abear your custom, and had I known it I never would have wedded among you!" They heard me not and paid no heed to my words, but laying hold of me, bound me by force and let me down into the cavern, with a large gugglet of sweet water and seven cakes of bread, according to their custom. When I came to the bottom, they called out to me to cast myself loose from the cords, but I refused to do so; so they threw them down on me and, closing the mouth of the pit with the stones aforesaid, went their ways, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued: — When they left me in the cavern with my dead wife and, closing the mouth of the pit, went their ways, I looked about me and found myself in a vast cave full of dead bodies, that exhaled a fulsome and loathsome smell and the air was heavy with the groans of the dying. Thereupon I fell to blaming myself for what I had done, saying, "By Allah, I deserve all that hath befallen me and all that shall befal me! What curse was upon me to take a wife in this city? There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! As often as I say, I have escaped from one calamity, I fall into a worse. By Allah, this is an abominable death to die! Would Heaven I had died a decent death and been washed and shrouded like a man and a Moslem. Would I had been drowned at sea or perished in the mountains! It were better than to die this miserable death!" And on such wise I kept blaming my own folly and greed of gain in that black hole, knowing not night from day; and I ceased not to ban the Foul Fiend and to bless the Almighty Friend. Then I threw myself down on the bones of the dead and lay there, imploring Allah's help and in the violence of my despair, invoking death which came not to me, till the fire of hunger burned my stomach and thirst set my throat aflame when I sat up and feeling for the bread, ate a morsel and upon it swallowed a mouthful of water. After this, the worst night I ever knew, I arose, and exploring the cavern, found that it extended a long way with hollows in its sides; and its floor was strewn with dead bodies and rotten bones, that had lain there from olden time. So I made myself a place in a cavity of the cavern, afar from the corpses lately thrown down and there slept. I abode thus a long while, till my provision was like to give out; and yet I ate not save once every day or second day; nor did I drink more than an occasional draught, for fear my victual should fail me before my death; and I said to myself, "Eat little and drink little; belike the Lord shall vouchsafe deliverance to thee!" One day, as I sat thus, pondering my case and bethinking me how I should do, when my bread and water should be exhausted, behold, the stone that covered the opening was suddenly rolled away and the light streamed down upon me. Quoth I, "I wonder what is the matter: haply they have brought another corpse." Then I espied folk standing about the mouth of the pit, who presently let down a dead man and a live woman, weeping and bemoaning herself, and with her an ampler supply of bread and water than usual.[50] I saw her and she was a beautiful woman; but she saw me not; and they closed up the opening and went away. Then I took the leg- bone of a dead man and, going up to the woman, smote her on the crown of the head; and she cried one cry and fell down in a swoon. I smote her a second and a third time, till she was dead, when I laid hands on her bread and water and found on her great plenty of ornaments and rich apparel, necklaces, jewels and gold trinkets;[51] for it was their custom to bury women in all their finery. I carried the vivers to my sleeping place in the cavern-side and ate and drank of them sparingly, no more than sufficed to keep the life in me, lest the provaunt come speedily to an end and I perish of hunger and thirst. Yet did I never wholly lose hope in Almighty Allah. I abode thus a great while, killing all the live folk they let down into the cavern and taking their provisions of meat and drink; till one day, as I slept, I was awakened by something scratching and burrowing among the bodies in a corner of the cave and said, "What can this be?" fearing wolves or hyaenas. So I sprang up and seizing the leg- bone aforesaid, made for the noise. As soon as the thing was ware of me, it fled from me into the inward of the cavern, and lo! it was a wild beast. However, I followed it to the further end, till I saw afar off a point of light not bigger than a star, now appearing and then disappearing. So I made for it, and as I drew near, it grew larger and brighter, till I was certified that it was a crevice in the rock, leading to the open country; and I said to myself, "There must be some reason for this opening: either it is the mouth of a second pit, such as that by which they let me down, or else it is a natural fissure in the stonery." So I bethought me awhile and nearing the light, found that it came from a breach in the back side of the mountain, which the wild beasts had enlarged by burrowing, that they might enter and devour the dead and freely go to and fro. When I saw this, my spirits revived and hope came back to me and I made sure of life, after having died a death. So I went on, as in a dream, and making shift to scramble through the breach found myself on the slope of a high mountain, overlooking the salt sea and cutting off all access thereto from the island, so that none could come at that part of the beach from the city.[52] I praised my Lord and thanked Him, rejoicing greatly and heartening myself with the prospect of deliverance; then I returned through the crack to the cavern and brought out all the food and water I had saved up and donned some of the dead folk's clothes over my own; after which I gathered together all the collars and necklaces of pearls and jewels and trinkets of gold and silver set with precious stones and other ornaments and valuables I could find upon the corpses; and, making them into bundles with the grave clothes and raiment of the dead, carried them out to the back of the mountain facing the sea-shore, where I established myself, purposing to wait there till it should please Almighty Allah to send me relief by means of some passing ship. I visited the cavern daily and as often as I found folk buried alive there, I killed them all indifferently, men and women, and took their victual and valuables and transported them to my seat on the sea-shore. Thus I abode a long while, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued: — And after carrying all my victuals and valuables from the cavern to the coast I abode a long while by the sea, pondering my case, till one day I caught sight of a ship passing in the midst of the clashing sea, swollen with dashing billows. So I took a piece of a white shroud I had with me and, tying it to a staff, ran along the sea-shore, making signals therewith and calling to the people in the ship, till they espied me and hearing my shouts, sent a boat to fetch me off. When it drew near, the crew called out to me, saying, “Who art thou and how camest thou to be on this mountain, whereon never saw we any in our born days?” I answered, “I am a gentleman[53] and a merchant, who hath been wrecked and saved myself on one of the planks of the ship, with some of my goods; and by the blessing of the Almighty and the decrees of Destiny and my own strength and skill, after much toil and moil I have landed with my gear in this place where I awaited some passing ship to take me off.” So they took me in their boat together with the bundles I had made of the jewels and valuables from the cavern, tied up in clothes and shrouds, and rowed back with me to the ship, where the captain said to me, “How camest thou, O man, to yonder place on yonder mountain behind which lieth a great city? All my life I have sailed these seas and passed to and fro hard by these heights; yet never saw I here any living thing save wild beasts and birds.” I repeated to him the story I had told the sailors,[54] but acquainted him with nothing of that which had befallen me in the city and the cavern, lest there should be any of the islandry in the ship. Then I took out some of the best pearls I had with me and offered them to the captain, saying, “O my lord, thou hast been the means of saving me off this mountain. I have no ready money; but take this from me in requital of thy kindness and good offices.” But he refused to accept it of me, saying, “When we find a shipwrecked man on the sea-shore or on an island, we take him up and give him meat and drink, and if he be naked we clothe him; nor take we aught from him; nay, when we reach a port of safety, we set him ashore with a present of our own money and entreat him kindly and charitably, for the love of Allah the Most High.” So I prayed that his life be long in the land and rejoiced in my escape, trusting to be delivered from my stress and to forget my past mishaps; for every time I remembered being let down into the cave with my dead wife I shuddered in horror. Then we pursued our voyage and sailed from island to island and sea to sea, till we arrived at the Island of the Bell, which containeth a city two days’ journey in extent, whence after a six days’ run we reached the Island Kala, hard by the land of Hind.[55] This place is governed by a potent and puissant King and it produceth excellent camphor and an abundance of the Indian rattan: here also is a lead mine. At last by the decree of Allah, we arrived in safety at Bassorah-town where I tarried a few days, then went on to Baghdad-city, and, finding my quarter, entered my house with lively pleasure. There I foregathered with my family and friends, who rejoiced in my happy return and gave my joy of my safety. I laid up in my storehouses all the goods I had brought with me, and gave alms and largesse to Fakirs and beggars and clothed the widow and the orphan. Then I gave myself up to pleasure and enjoyment, returning to my old merry mode of life. “Such, then, be the most marvellous adventures of my fourth voyage, but to-morrow if you will kindly come to me, I will tell you that which befel me in my fifth voyage, which was yet rarer and more marvellous than those which forewent it. And thou, O my brother Sindbad the Landsman, shalt sup with me as thou art wont.” (Saith he who telleth the tale), When Sindbad the Seaman had made an end of his story, he called for supper; so they spread the table and the guests ate the evening meal; after which he gave the Porter an hundred dinars as usual, and he and the rest of the company went their ways, glad at heart and marvelling at the tales they had heard, for that each story was more extraordinary than that which forewent it. The porter Sindbad passed the night in his own house, in all joy and cheer and wonderment; and, as soon as morning came with its sheen and shone, he prayed the dawn-prayer and repaired to the house of Sindbad the Seaman, who welcomed him and bade him sit with him till the rest of the company arrived, when they ate and drank and made merry and the talk went round amongst them. Presently, their host began the narrative of the fifth voyage, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the host began in these words the narrative of

The Fifth Voyage of Sindbad the Seaman.

Know, O my brothers, that when I had been awhile on shore after my fourth voyage; and when, in my comfort and pleasures and merry-makings and in my rejoicing over my large gains and profits, I had forgotten all I had endured of perils and sufferings, the carnal man was again seized with the longing to travel and to see foreign countries and islands.[56] Accordingly I bought costly merchandise suited to my purpose and, making it up into bales, repaired to Bassorah, where I walked about the river-quay till I found a fine tall ship, newly builded with gear unused and fitted ready for sea. She pleased me; so I bought her and, embarking my goods in her, hired a master and crew, over whom I set certain of my slaves and servants as inspectors. A number of merchants also brought their outfits and paid me freight and passage-money; then, after reciting the Fatihah we set sail over Allah's pool in all joy and cheer, promising ourselves a prosperous voyage and much profit. We sailed from city to city and from island to island and from sea to sea viewing the cities and countries by which we passed, and selling and buying in not a few till one day we came to a great uninhabited island, deserted and desolate, whereon was a white dome of biggest bulk half buried in the sands. The merchants landed to examine this dome, leaving me in the ship; and when they drew near, behold, it was a huge Rukh's egg. They fell a- beating it with stones, knowing not what it was, and presently broke it open, whereupon much water ran out of it and the young Rukh appeared within. So they pulled it forth of the shell and cut its throat and took of it great store of meat. Now I was in the ship and knew not what they did; but presently one of the passengers came up to me and said, "O my lord, come and look at the egg we thought to be a dome." So I looked and seeing the merchants beating it with stones, called out to them, "Stop, stop! do not meddle with that egg, or the bird Rukh will come out and break our ship and destroy us."[57] But they paid no heed to me and gave not over smiting upon the egg, when behold, the day grew dark and dun and the sun was hidden from us, as if some great cloud had passed over the firmament.[58] So we raised our eyes and saw that what we took for a cloud was the Rukh poised between us and the sun, and it was his wings that darkened the day. When he came and saw his egg broken, he cried a loud cry, whereupon his mate came flying up and they both began circling about the ship, crying out at us with voices louder than thunder. I called to the Rais and crew, “Put out to sea and seek safety in flight, before we be all destroyed.” So the merchants came on board and we cast off and made haste from the island to gain the open sea. When the Rukhs saw this, they flew off and we crowded all sail on the ship, thinking to get out of their country; but presently the two re-appeared and flew after us and stood over us, each carrying in its claws a huge boulder which it had brought from the mountains. As soon as the he-Rukh came up with us, he let fall upon us the rock he held in his pounces; but the master put about ship, so that the rock missed her by some small matter and plunged into the waves with such violence, that the ship pitched high and then sank into the trough of the sea and the bottom of the ocean appeared to us. Then the she-Rukh let fall her rock, which was bigger than that of her mate, and as Destiny had decreed, it fell on the poop of the ship and crushed it, the rudder flying into twenty pieces; whereupon the vessel foundered and all and everything on board were cast into the main.[59] As for me I struggled for sweet life, till Almighty Allah threw in my way one of the planks of the ship, to which I clung and bestriding it, fell a-paddling with my feet. Now the ship had gone down hard by an island in the midst of the main and the winds and waves bore me on till, by permission of the Most High, they cast me up on the shore of the island, at the last gasp for toil and distress and half dead with hunger and thirst. So I landed more like a corpse than a live man and throwing myself down on the beach, lay there awhile, till I began to revive and recover spirits, when I walked about the island and found it as it were one of the garths and gardens of Paradise. Its trees, in abundance dight, bore ripe-yellow fruit for freight; its streams ran clear and bright; its flowers were fair to scent and to sight and its birds warbled with delight the praises of Him to whom belong permanence and all-might. So I ate my fill of the fruits and slaked my thirst with the water of the streams till I could no more and I returned thanks to the Most High and glorified Him; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her

permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued: — So when I escaped drowning and reached the island which afforded me fruit to eat and water to drink, I returned thanks to the Most High and glorified Him; after which I sat till nightfall, hearing no voice and seeing none inhabitant. Then I lay down, well-nigh dead for travail and trouble and terror, and slept without surcease till morning, when I arose and walked about under the trees, till I came to the channel of a draw-well fed by a spring of running water, by which well sat an old man of venerable aspect, girt about with a waist-cloth[60] made of the fibre of palm-fronds.[61] Quoth I to myself, "Haply this Shaykh is one of those who were wrecked in the ship and hath made his way to this island." So I drew near to him and saluted him, and he returned my salam by signs, but spoke not; and I said to him, "O nuncle mine, what causeth thee to sit here?" He shook his head and moaned and signed to me with his hands as who should say, "Take me on thy shoulders and carry me to the other side of the well-channel." And quoth I in my mind, "I will deal kindly with him and do what he desireth; it may be I shall win me a reward in Heaven for he may be a paralytic." So I took him on my back and carrying him to the place whereat he pointed, said to him, "Dismount at thy leisure." But he would not get off my back and wound his legs about my neck. I looked at them and seeing that they were like a buffalo's hide for blackness and roughness,[62] was affrighted and would have cast him off; but he clung to me and gripped my neck with his legs, till I was well-nigh choked, the world grew black in my sight and I fell senseless to the ground like one dead. But he still kept his seat and raising his legs drummed with his heels and beat harder than palm-rods my back and shoulders, till he forced me to rise for excess of pain. Then he signed to me with his hand to carry him hither and thither among the trees which bore the best fruits; and if ever I refused to do his bidding or loitered or took my leisure he beat me with his feet more grievously than if I had been beaten with whips. He ceased not to signal with his hand wherever he was minded to go; so I carried him about the island, like a captive slave, and he bepissed and conskited my shoulders and back, dismounting not night nor day; and whenas he wished to sleep he wound his legs about my neck and leaned back and slept awhile, then arose and beat me; whereupon I sprang up in haste, unable to gainsay him because of the pain he inflicted on me. And indeed I blamed myself and sore repented me of having taken compassion on him and continued in this condition, suffering fatigue not to be described, till I said to myself, “I wrought him a weal and he requited me with my ill; by Allah, never more will I do any man a service so long as I live!” And again and again I besought the Most High that I might die, for stress of weariness and misery; and thus I abode a long while till, one day, I came with him to a place wherein was abundance of gourds, many of them dry. So I took a great dry gourd and, cutting open the head, scooped out the inside and cleaned it; after which I gathered grapes from a vine which grew hard by and squeezed them into the gourd, till it was full of the juice. Then I stopped up the mouth and set it in the sun, where I left it for some days, until it became strong wine; and every day I used to drink of it, to comfort and sustain me under my fatigues with that froward and obstinate fiend; and as often as I drank myself drunk, I forgot my troubles and took new heart. One day he saw me drinking and signed to me with his hand, as who should say, “What is that?” Quoth I, “It is an excellent cordial, which cheereth the heart and reviveth the spirits.” Then, being heated with wine, I ran and danced with him among the trees, clapping my hands and singing and making merry; and I staggered under him by design. When he saw this, he signed to me to give him the gourd that he might drink, and I feared him and gave it him. So he took it and, draining it to the dregs, cast it on the ground, whereupon he grew frolicsome and began to clap hands and jig to and fro on my shoulders and he made water upon me so copiously that all my dress was drenched. But presently the fumes of the wine rising to his head, he became helplessly drunk and his side- muscles and limbs relaxed and he swayed to and fro on my back. When I saw that he had lost his senses for drunkenness, I put my hand to his legs and, loosing them from my neck, stooped down well-nigh to the ground and threw him at full length, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-eighth Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued: — So I threw the devil off my shoulders, hardly crediting my deliverance from him and fearing lest he should shake off his drunkenness and do me a mischief. Then I took up a great stone from among the trees and coming up to him smote him therewith on the head with all my might and crushed in his skull as he lay dead drunk. Thereupon his flesh and fat and blood being in a pulp, he died and went to his deserts, The Fire, no mercy of Allah be upon him! I then returned, with a heart at ease, to my former station on the sea-shore and abode in that island many days, eating of its fruits and drinking of its waters and keeping a look-out for passing ships; till one day, as I sat on the beach, recalling all that had befallen me and saying, “I wonder if Allah will save me alive and restore me to my home and family and friends!” behold, a ship was making for the island through the dashing sea and clashing waves. Presently, it cast anchor and the passengers landed; so I made for them, and when they saw me all hastened up to me and gathering round me questioned me of my case and how I came thither. I told them all that had betided me, whereat they marvelled with exceeding marvel and said, “He who rode on thy shoulder is called the ‘Shaykh al-Bahr’ or Old Man of the Sea,[63] and none ever felt his legs on neck and came off alive but thou; and those who die under him he eateth: so praised be Allah for thy safety!” Then they set somewhat of food before me, whereof I ate my fill, and gave me somewhat of clothes wherewith I clad myself anew and covered my nakedness; after which they took me up into the ship, and we sailed days and nights, till fate brought us to a place called the City of Apes, builded with lofty houses, all of which gave upon the sea and it had a single gate studded and strengthened with iron nails. Now every night, as soon as it is dusk the dwellers in this city use to come forth of the gates and, putting out to sea in boats and ships, pass the night upon the waters in their fear lest the apes should come down on them from the mountains. Hearing this I was sore troubled remembering what I had before suffered from the ape-kind. Presently I landed to solace myself in the city, but meanwhile the ship set sail without me and I repented of having gone ashore, and calling to mind my companions and what had befallen me with the apes, first and after, sat down and fell a-weeping and lamenting. Presently one of the townsfolk accosted me and said to me, “O my lord, meseemeth thou art a stranger to these parts?” “Yes,” answered I, “I am indeed a stranger and a poor one, who came hither in a ship which cast anchor here, and I landed to visit the town; but when I would have gone on board again, I found they had sailed without me.” Quoth he, “Come and embark with us, for if thou lie the night in the city, the apes will destroy thee.” “Hearkening and obedience,” replied I, and rising, straightway embarked with him in one of the boats, whereupon they pushed off from shore and anchoring a mile or so from the land, there passed the night. At daybreak, they rowed back to the city and landing, went each about his business. Thus they did every night, for if any tarried in the town by night the apes came down on him and slew him. As soon as it was day, the apes left the place and ate of the fruits of the gardens, then went back to the mountains and slept there till nightfall, when they again came down upon the city.[64] Now this place was in the farthest part of the country of the blacks, and one of the strangest things that befel me during my sojourn in the city was on this wise. One of the company with whom I passed the night in the boat, asked me, “O my lord, thou art apparently a stranger in these parts; hast thou any craft whereat thou canst work?”; and I answered, “By Allah, O my brother, I have no trade nor know I any handicraft, for I was a merchant and a man of money and substance and had a ship of my own, laden with great store of goods and merchandise; but it foundered at sea and all were drowned excepting me who saved myself on a piece of plank which Allah vouchsafed to me of His favour.” Upon this he brought me a cotton bag and giving it to me, said, “Take this bag and fill it with pebbles from the beach and go forth with a company of the townsfolk to whom I will give a charge respecting thee. Do as they do and belike thou shalt gain what may further thy return voyage to thy native land.” Then he carried me to the beach, where I filled my bag with pebbles large and small, and presently we saw a company of folk issue from the town, each bearing a bag like mine, filled with pebbles. To these he committed me, commending me to their care, and saying, “This man is a stranger, so take him with you and teach him how to gather, that he may get his daily bread, and you will earn your reward and recompense in Heaven." "On our head and eyes be it!" answered they and bidding me welcome, fared on with me till we came to a spacious Wady, full of lofty trees with trunks so smooth that none might climb them. Now sleeping under these trees were many apes, which when they saw us rose and fled from us and swarmed up among the branches; whereupon my companions began to pelt them with what they had in their bags, and the apes fell to plucking of the fruit of the trees and casting them at the folk. I looked at the fruits they cast at us and found them to be Indian[65] or cocoa-nuts; so I chose out a great tree, full of apes, and going up to it, began to pelt them with stones, and they in return pelted me with nuts, which I collected, as did the rest; so that even before I had made an end of my bagful of pebbles, I had gotten great plenty of nuts; and as soon as my companions had in like manner gotten as many nuts as they could carry, we returned to the city, where we arrived at the fag-end of day. Then I went in to the kindly man who had brought me in company with the nut- gatherers and gave him all I had gotten, thanking him for his kindness; but he would not accept them, saying, "Sell them and make profit by the price; and presently he added (giving me the key of a closet in his house) "Store thy nuts in this safe place and go thou forth every morning and gather them as thou hast done to-day, and choose out the worst for sale and supplying thyself; but lay up the rest here, so haply thou mayst collect enough to serve thee for thy return home." "Allah requite thee!" answered I and did as he advised me, going out daily with the cocoa-nut gatherers, who commended me to one another and showed me the best-stocked trees.[66] Thus did I for some time, till I had laid up great store of excellent nuts, besides a large sum of money, the price of those I had sold. I became thus at my ease and bought all I saw and had a mind to, and passed my time pleasantly greatly enjoying my stay in the city, till, as I stood on the beach, one day, a great ship steering through the heart of the sea presently cast anchor by the shore and landed a company of merchants, who proceeded to sell and buy and barter their goods for cocoa-nuts and other commodities. Then I went to my friend and told him of the coming of the ship and how I had a mind to return to my own country; and he said, "'Tis for thee to decide." So I thanked him for his bounties and took leave of him; then, going to the captain of the ship, I agreed with him for my passage and embarked my cocoa-nuts and what else I possessed. We weighed anchor, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued: — So I left the City of the Apes and embarked my cocoa-nuts and what else I possessed. We weighed anchor the same day and sailed from island to island and sea to sea; and whenever we stopped, I sold and traded with my cocoa-nuts, and the Lord requited me more than I erst had and lost. Amongst other places, we came to an island abounding in cloves[67] and cinnamon and pepper; and the country people told me that by the side of each pepper-bunch groweth a great leaf which shadeth it from the sun and casteth the water off it in the wet season; but, when the rain ceaseth the leaf turneth over and droopeth down by the side of the bunch.[68] Here I took in great store of pepper and cloves and cinnamon, in exchange for cocoa-nuts, and we passed thence to the Island of Al-Usirat,[69] whence cometh the Comorin aloes-wood and thence to another island, five days' journey in length, where grows the Chinese lign-aloes, which is better than the Comorin; but the people of this island[70] are fouler of condition and religion than those of the other, for that they love fornication and wine-bibbing, and know not prayer nor call to prayer. Thence we came to the pearl-fisheries, and I gave the divers some of my cocoa-nuts and said to them, "Dive for my luck and lot!" They did so and brought up from the deep bight[71] great store of large and priceless pearls; and they said to me, "By Allah, O my master, thy luck is a lucky!" Then we sailed on, with the blessing of Allah (whose name be exalted!); and ceased not sailing till we arrived safely at Bassorah. There I abode a little and then went on to Baghdad, where I entered my quarter and found my house and foregathered with my family and saluted my friends who gave me joy of my safe return, and I laid up all my goods and valuables in my storehouses. Then I distributed alms and largesse and clothed the widow and the orphan and made presents to my relations and comrades; for the Lord had requited me fourfold that I had lost. After which I returned to my old merry way of life and forgot all I had suffered in the great profit and gain I had made. “Such, then, is the history of my fifth voyage and its wonderments, and now to supper; and to-morrow, come again and I will tell you what befel me in my sixth voyage; for it was still more wonderful than this.” (Saith he who telleth the tale), Then he called for food; and the servants spread the table, and when they had eaten the evening-meal, he bade give Sindbad the porter an hundred golden dinars and the Landsman returned home and lay him down to sleep, much marvelling at all he had heard. Next morning, as soon as it was light, he prayed the dawn-prayer; and, after blessing Mohammed the Cream of all creatures, betook himself to the house of Sindbad the Seaman and wished him a good day. The merchant bade him sit and talked with him, till the rest of the company arrived. Then the servants spread the table and when they had well eaten and drunken and were mirthful and merry, Sindbad the Seaman began in these words the narrative of

The Sixth Voyage of Sindbad the Seaman.

Know, O my brothers and friends and companions all, that I abode some time, after my return from my fifth voyage, in great solace and satisfaction and mirth and merriment, joyance and enjoyment; and I forgot what I had suffered, seeing the great gain and profit I had made till, one day, as I sat making merry and enjoying myself with my friends, there came in to me a company of merchants whose case told tales of travel, and talked with me of voyage and adventure and greatness of pelf and lucre. Hereupon I remembered the days of my return from abroad, and my joy at once more seeing my native land and foregathering with my family and friends; and my soul yearned for travel and traffic. So compelled by Fate and Fortune I resolved to undertake another voyage; and, buying me fine and costly merchandise meet for foreign trade, made it up into bales, with which I journeyed from Baghdad to Bassorah. Here I found a great ship ready for sea and full of merchants and notables, who had with them goods of price; so I embarked my bales therein. And we left Bassorah in safety and good spirits under the safeguard of the King, the Preserver. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued: — And after embarking my bales and leaving Bassorah in safety and good spirits, we continued our voyage from place to place and from city to city, buying and selling and profiting and diverting ourselves with the sight of countries where strange folk dwell. And Fortune and the voyage smiled upon us, till one day, as we went along, behold, the captain suddenly cried with a great cry and cast his turband on the deck. Then he buffeted his face like a woman and plucked out his beard and fell down in the waist of the ship will nigh fainting for stress of grief and rage, and crying, “Oh and alas for the ruin of my house and the orphanship of my poor children!” So all the merchant and sailors came round about him and asked him, “O master, what is the matter?”; for the light had become night before their sight. And he answered, saying, “Know, O folk, that we have wandered from our course and left the sea whose ways we wot, and come into a sea whose ways I know not; and unless Allah vouchsafe us a means of escape, we are all dead men; wherefore pray ye to the Most High, that He deliver us from this strait. Haply amongst you is one righteous whose prayers the Lord will accept." Then he arose and clomb the mast to see an there were any escape from that strait; and he would have loosed the sails; but the wind redoubled upon the ship and whirled her round thrice and drave her backwards; whereupon her rudder brake and she fell off towards a high mountain. With this the captain came down from the mast, saying, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great; nor can man prevent that which is fore-ordained of fate! By Allah, we are fallen on a place of sure destruction, and there is no way of escape for us, nor can any of us be saved!" Then we all fell a-weeping over ourselves and bidding one another farewell for that our days were come to an end, and we had lost all hopes of life. Presently the ship struck the mountain and broke up, and all and everything on board of her were plunged into the sea. Some of the merchants were drowned and others made shift to reach the shore and save themselves upon the mountain; I amongst the number, and when we got ashore, we found a great island, or rather peninsula[72] whose base was strewn with wreckage of crafts and goods and gear cast up by the sea from broken ships whose passengers had been drowned; and the quantity confounded compt and calculation. So I climbed the cliffs into the inward of the isle and walked on inland, till I came to a stream of sweet water, that welled up at the nearest foot of the mountains and disappeared in the earth under the range of hills on the opposite side. But all the other passengers went over the mountains to the inner tracts; and, dispersing hither and thither, were confounded at what they saw and became like madmen at the sight of the wealth and treasures wherewith the shores were strewn. As for me I looked into the bed of the stream aforesaid and saw therein great plenty of rubies, and great royal pearls[73] and all kinds of jewels and precious stones which were as gravel in the bed of the rivulets that ran through the fields, and the sands sparkled and glittered with gems and precious ores. Moreover we found in the island abundance of the finest lign-aloes, both

Chinese and Comorin; and there also is a spring of crude ambergris[74] which floweth like wax or gum over the stream-banks, for the great heat of the sun, and runneth down to the sea-shore, where the monsters of the deep come up and swallowing it, return into the sea. But it burneth in their bellies; so they cast it up again and it congealeth on the surface of the water, whereby its color and quantities are changed; and at last, the waves cast it ashore, and the travellers and merchants who know it, collect it and sell it. But as to the raw ambergris which is not swallowed, it floweth over the channel and congealeth on the banks and when the sun shineth on it, it melteth and scenteth the whole valley with a musk-like fragrance: then, when the sun ceaseth from it, it congealeth again. But none can get to this place where is the crude ambergris, because of the mountains which enclose the island on all sides and which foot of man cannot ascend.[75] We continued thus to explore the island, marvelling at the wonderful works of Allah and the riches we found there, but sore troubled for our own case, and dismayed at our prospects. Now we had picked up on the beach some small matter of victual from the wreck and husbanded it carefully, eating but once every day or two, in our fear lest it should fail us and we die miserably of famine or affright. Moreover, we were weak for colic brought on by sea-sickness and low diet, and my companions deceased, one after other, till there was but a small company of us left. Each that died we washed and shrouded in some of the clothes and linen cast ashore by the tides; and after a little, the rest of my fellows perished, one by one, till I had buried the last of the party and abode alone on the island, with but a little provision left, I who was wont to have so much. And I wept over myself, saying, “Would Heaven I had died before my companions and they had washed and buried me! It had been better than I should perish and none wash me and shroud me and bury me. But there is Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued in these words: — Now after I had buried the last of my party and abode alone on the island, I arose and dug me a deep grave on the sea-shore, saying to myself, “Whenas I grow weak and know that death cometh to me, I will cast myself into the grave and die there, so the wind may drift the sand over me and cover me and I be buried therein.”[76] Then I fell to reproaching myself for my little wit in leaving my native land and betaking me again to travel, after all I had suffered during my first five voyages, and when I had not made a single one without suffering more horrible perils and more terrible hardships than in its forerunner and having no hope of escape from my present stress; and I repented me of my folly and bemoaned myself, especially as I had no need of money, seeing that I had enough and more than enough and could not spend what I had, no, nor a half of it in all my life. However, after a while Allah sent me a thought and I said to myself, “By God, needs must this stream have an end as well as a beginning; ergo an issue somewhere, and belike its course may lead to some inhabited place; so my best plan is to make me a little boat[77] big enough to sit in, and carry it and launching it on the river, embark therein and drop down the stream. If I escape, I escape, by God’s leave; and if I perish, better die in the river than here.” Then, sighing for myself, I set to work collecting a number of pieces of Chinese and Comorin aloes-wood and I bound them together with ropes from the wreckage; then I chose out from the broken-up ships straight planks of even size and fixed them firmly upon the aloes-wood, making me a boat-raft a little narrower than the channel of the stream; and I tied it tightly and firmly as though it were nailed. Then I loaded it with the goods, precious ores and jewels: and the union pearls which were like gravel and the best of the ambergris crude and pure, together with what I had collected on the island and what was left me of victual and wild herbs. Lastly I lashed a piece of wood on either side, to serve me as oars; and launched it, and embarking, did according to the saying of the poet,

“Fly, fly with life whenas evils threat; * Leave the house to
tell of its builder’s fate!
Land after land shalt thou seek and find * But no other life on
thy wish shall wait:
Fret not thy soul in thy thoughts o’ night; * All woes shall end
or sooner or late.

Whoso is born in one land to die, * There and only there shall
gang his gait:
Nor trust great things to another wight, * Soul hath only soul
for confederate."[78]

My boat-raft drifted with the stream, I pondering the issue of my affair; and the drifting ceased not till I came to the place where it disappeared beneath the mountain. I rowed my conveyance into the place which was intensely dark; and the current carried the raft with it down the underground channel.[79] The thin stream bore me on through a narrow tunnel where the raft touched either side and my head rubbed against the roof, return therefrom being impossible. Then I blamed myself for having thus risked my life, and said, "If this passage grow any straiter, the raft will hardly pass, and I cannot turn back; so I shall inevitably perish miserably in this place." And I threw myself down upon my face on the raft, by reason of the narrowness of the channel, whilst the stream ceased not to carry me along, knowing not night from day, for the excess of the gloom which encompassed me about and my terror and concern for myself lest I should perish. And in such condition my course continued down the channel which now grew wide and then straiter till, sore aweary by reason of the darkness which could be felt, I fell asleep, as I lay prone on the raft, and I slept knowing not an the time were long or short. When I awoke at last, I found myself in the light of Heaven and opening my eyes I saw myself in a broad stream and the raft moored to an island in the midst of a number of Indians and Abyssinians. As soon as these blackamoors[80] saw that I was awake, they came up to me and bespoke me in their speech; but I understood not what they said and thought that this was a dream and a vision which had betided me for stress of concern and chagrin. But I was delighted at my escape from the river. When they saw I understood them not and made them no answer, one of them came forward and said to me in Arabic, "Peace be with thee, O my brother! Who art thou and whence faredst thou thither? How camest thou into this river and what manner of land lies behind yonder mountains, for never knew we any one make his way thence to us?" Quoth I, "And upon thee be peace and the ruth of Allah and his blessing! Who are ye and what country is this?" "O my brother," answered he, "we are husbandmen and tillers of the soil, who came out to water our fields and plantations; and, finding thee asleep on this raft, laid hold of it and made it fast by us, against thou shouldst awake at thy leisure. So tell us how thou camest hither?" I answered, "For Allah's sake, O my lord, ere I speak give me somewhat to eat, for I am starving, and after ask me what thou wilt." So he hastened to fetch me food and I ate my fill, till I was refreshed and my fear was calmed by a good belly-full and my life returned to me. Then I rendered thanks to the Most High for mercies great and small, glad to be out of the river and rejoicing to be amongst them, and I told them all my adventures from first to last, especially my troubles in the narrow channel. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued: — When I landed and found myself amongst the Indians and Abyssinians and had taken some rest, they consulted among themselves and said to one another, "There is no help for it but we carry him with us and present him to our King, that he may acquaint him with his adventures." So they took me, together with the raft-boat and its lading of monies and merchandise; jewels, minerals and golden gear, and brought me to their King, who was King of Sarandib,[81] telling him what had happened; whereupon he saluted me and bade me welcome. Then he questioned me of my condition and adventures through the man who had spoken Arabic and I repeated to him my story from beginning to end, whereat he marvelled exceedingly and gave me joy of my deliverance; after which I arose and fetched from the raft great store of precious ores and jewels and ambergris and lign-aloes and presented them to the King, who accepted them and entreated me with the utmost honour, appointing me a lodging in his own palace. So I consorted with the chief of the islanders, and they paid me the utmost respect. And I quitted not the royal palace. Now the Island Sarandib lieth under the equinoctial line, its night and day both numbering twelve house. It measureth eighty leagues long by a breadth of thirty and its wideth is bounded by a lofty mountain[82] and a deep valley, The mountain is conspicuous from a distance of three days and it containeth many kinds of rubies and other minerals, and spice-trees of all sorts. The surface is covered with emery wherewith gems are cut and fashioned; diamonds are in its rivers and pearls are in its valleys. I ascended that mountain and solaced myself with a view of its marvels which are indescribable and afterwards I returned to the King.[83] Thereupon, all the travellers and merchants who came to the place questioned me of the affairs of my native land and of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid and his rule and I told them of him and of that wherefor he was renowned, and they praised him because of this; whilst I in turn questioned them of the manners and customers of their own countries and got the knowledge I desired. One day, the King himself asked me of the fashions and form of government of my country, and I acquainted him with the circumstance of the Caliph's sway in the city of Baghdad and the justice of his rule. The King marvelled at my account of his appointments and said, "By Allah, the Caliph's ordinances are indeed wise and his fashions of praiseworthy guise and thou hast made me love him by what thou tellest me; wherefore I have a mind to make him a present and send it by thee." Quoth I, "Hearkening and obedience, O my lord; I will bear thy gift to him and inform him that thou art his sincere lover and true friend." Then I abode with the King in great honour and regard and consideration for a long while till, one day, as I sat in his palace, I heard news of a company of merchants, that were fitting out a ship for Bassorah, and said to myself, "I cannot do better than voyage with these men." So I rose without stay or delay and kissed the King's hand and acquainted him with my longing to set out with the merchants, for that I pined after my people and mine own land. Quoth he, "Thou art thine own master; yet, if it be thy will to abide with us, on our head and eyes be it, for thou gladdenest us with thy company." "By Allah, O my lord," answered I, "thou hast indeed overwhelmed me with thy favours and well- doings; but I weary for a sight of my friends and family and native country." When he heard this, he summoned the merchants in question and commended me to their care, paying my freight and passage-money. Then he bestowed on me great riches from his treasuries and charged me with a magnificent present for the Caliph Harun al-Rashid. Moreover he gave me a sealed letter, saying, "Carry this with thine own hand to the Commander of the Faithful and give him many salutations from us!” “Hearing and obedience,” I replied. The missive was written on the skin of the Kháwi[84] (which is finer than lamb-parchment and of yellow colour), with ink of ultramarine and the contents were as follows. “Peace be with thee from the King of Al-Hind, before whom are a thousand elephants and upon whose palace-crenelles are a thousand jewels. But after (laud to the Lord and praises to His Prophet!): we send thee a trifling gift which be thou pleased to accept. Thou art to us a brother and a sincere friend; and great is the love we bear for thee in heart; favour us therefore with a reply. The gift besitteth not thy dignity: but we beg of thee, O our brother, graciously to accept it and peace be with thee.” And the present was a cup of ruby a span high[85] the inside of which was adorned with precious pearls; and a bed covered with the skin of the serpent which swalloweth the elephant, which skin hath spots each like a dinar and whoso sitteth upon it never sickeneth;[86] and an hundred thousand miskals of Indian lign- aloes and a slave-girl like a shining moon. Then I took leave of him and of all my intimates and acquaintances in the island and embarked with the merchants aforesaid. We sailed with a fair wind, committing ourselves to the care of Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) and by His permission arrived at Bassorah, where I passed a few days and nights equipping myself and packing up my bales. Then I went on to Baghdad-city, the House of Peace, where I sought an audience of the Caliph and laid the King’s presents before him. He asked me whence they came and I said to him, “By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, I know not the name of the city nor the way thither!” He then asked me, “O Sindbad, is this true which the King writeth?”; and I answered, after kissing the ground, “O my lord, I saw in his kingdom much more than he hath written in his letter. For state processions a throne is set for him upon a huge elephant, eleven cubits high: and upon this he sitteth having his great lords and officers and guests standing in two ranks, on his right hand and on his left. At his head is a man hending in hand a golden javelin and behind him another with a great mace of gold whose head is an emerald[87] a span long and as thick as a man’s thumb. And when he mounteth horse there mount with him a thousand horsemen clad in gold brocade and silk; and as the King proceedeth a man precedeth him, crying, ‘This is the King of great dignity, of high authority!’ And he continueth to repeat his praises in words I remember not, saying at the end of his panegyric, ‘This is the King owning the crown whose like nor Solomon nor the Mihraj[88] ever possessed.’ Then he is silent and one behind him proclaimeth, saying, ‘He will die! Again I say he will die!;’ and the other addeth, ‘Extolled be the perfection of the Living who dieth not!’[89] Moreover by reason of his justice and ordinance and intelligence, there is no Kazi in his city, and all his lieges distinguish between Truth and Falsehood.” Quoth the Caliph, “How great is this King! His letter hath shown me this; and as for the mightiness of his dominion thou hast told us what thou hast eye-witnessed. By Allah, he hath been endowed with wisdom as with wide rule.” Then I related to the Commander of the Faithful all that had befallen me in my last voyage; at which he wondered exceedingly and bade his historians record my story and store it up in his treasuries, for the edification of all who might see it. Then he conferred on me exceeding great favours, and I repaired to my quarter and entered my home, where I warehoused all my goods and possessions. Presently, my friends came to me and I distributed presents among my family and gave alms and largesse; after which I yielded myself to joyance and enjoyment, mirth and merry-making, and forgot all that I had suffered. “Such, then, O my brothers, is the history of what befel me in my sixth voyage, and to-morrow, Inshallah! I will tell you the story of my seventh and last voyage, which is still more wondrous and marvellous than that of the first six.” (Saith he who telleth the tale), Then he bade lay the table, and the company supped with him; after which he gave the Porter an hundred dinars, as of wont, and they all went their ways, marvelling beyond measure at that which they had heard. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sindbad the Seaman had related the history of what befel him in his sixth voyage, and all the company had dispersed, Sindbad the Landsman went home and slept as of wont. Next day he rose and prayed the dawn-prayer and repaired to his namesake’s house where, after the company was all assembled, the host began to relate

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

The Seventh Voyage of Sindbad the Seaman.

Know, O company, that after my return from my sixth voyage, which brought me abundant profit, I resumed my former life in all possible joyance and enjoyment and mirth and making merry day and night; and I tarried some time in this solace and satisfaction till my soul began once more to long to sail the seas and see foreign countries and company with merchants and hear new things. So having made up my mind, I packed up in bales a quantity of precious stuffs suited for sea-trade and repaired with them from Baghdad-city to Bassorah-town, where I found a ship ready for sea, and in her a company of considerable merchants. I shipped with them and becoming friends, we set forth on our venture, in health and safety; and sailed with a fair wind, till we came to a city called Madínat-al-Sín; but after we had left it, as we fared on in all cheer and confidence, devising of traffic and travel, behold, there sprang up a violent head-wind and a tempest of rain fell on us and drenched us and our goods. So we covered the bales with our cloaks and garments and drugget and canvas, lest they be spoiled by the rain, and betook ourselves to prayer and supplication to Almighty Allah and humbled ourselves before Him for deliverance from the peril that was upon us. But the captain arose and tightening his girdle tucked up his skirts and, after taking refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned, clomb to the mast-head, whence he looked out right and left and gazing at the passengers and crew fell to buffeting his face and plucking out his beard. So we cried to him, "O Rais, what is the matter?"; and he replied saying, "Seek ye deliverance of the Most High from the strait into which we have fallen and bemoan yourselves and take leave of one another; for know that the wind hath gotten the mastery of us and hath driven us into the uttermost of the seas of the world." Then he came down from the mast-head and opening his sea-chest, pulled out a bag of blue cotton, from which he took a powder like ashes. This he set in a saucer wetted with a little water and, after waiting a short time, smelt and tasted it; and then he took out of the chest a booklet, wherein he read awhile and said weeping, "Know, O ye passengers, that in this book is a marvellous matter, denoting that whoso cometh hither shall surely die, without hope of escape; for that this ocean is called the Sea of the Clime of the King, wherein is the sepulchre of our lord Solomon, son of David (on both be peace!) and therein are serpents of vast bulk and fearsome aspect: and what ship soever cometh to these climes there riseth to her a great fish[90] out of the sea and swalloweth her up with all and everything on board her." Hearing these words from the captain great was our wonder, but hardly had he made an end of speaking, when the ship was lifted out of the water and let fall again and we applied to praying the death-prayer[91] and committing our souls to Allah. Presently we heard a terrible great cry like the loud-pealing thunder, whereat we were terror-struck and became as dead men, giving ourselves up for lost. Then behold, there came up to us a huge fish, as big as a tall mountain, at whose sight we became wild for affight and, weeping sore, made ready for death, marvelling at its vast size and gruesome semblance; when lo! a second fish made its appearance than which we had seen naught more monstrous. So we bemoaned ourselves of our lives and farewelled one another; but suddenly up came a third fish bigger than the two first; whereupon we lost the power of thought and reason and were stupefied for the excess of our fear and horror. Then the three fish began circling round about the ship and the third and biggest opened his mouth to swallow it, and we looked into its mouth and behold, it was wider than the gate of a city and its throat was like a long valley. So we besought the Almighty and called for succour upon His Apostle (on whom be blessing and peace!), when suddenly a violent squall of wind arose and smote the ship, which rose out of the water and settled upon a great reef, the haunt of sea-monsters, where it broke up and fell asunder into planks and all and everything on board were plunged into the sea. As for me, I tore off all my clothes but my gown and swam a little way, till I happened upon one of the ship's planks whereto I clung and bestrode it like a horse, whilst the winds and the waters sported with me and the waves carried me up and cast me down; and I was in most piteous plight for fear and distress and hunger and thirst. Then I reproached myself for what I had done and my soul was weary after a life of ease and comfort; and I said to myself, "O Sindbad, O Seaman, thou repentest not and yet thou art ever suffering hardships and travails; yet wilt thou not renounce sea-travel; or, an thou say, 'I renounce,' thou liest in thy renouncement. Endure then with patience that which thou sufferest, for verily thou deservest all that betideth thee!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman continued: — But when I had bestridden the plank, quoth I to myself, "Thou deservest all that betideth thee. All this is decreed to me of Allah (whose name be exalted!), to turn me from my greed of gain, whence ariseth all that I endure, for I have wealth galore." Then I returned to my senses and said, "In very sooth, this time I repent to the Most High, with a sincere repentance, of my lust for gain and venture; and never will I again name travel with tongue nor in thought." And I ceased not to humble myself before Almighty Allah and weep and bewail myself, recalling my former estate of solace and satisfaction and mirth and merriment and joyance; and thus I abode two days, at the end of which time I came to a great island abounding in trees and streams. There I landed and ate of the fruits of the island and drank of its waters, till I was refreshed and my life returned to me and my strength and spirits were restored and I recited,

"Oft when thy case shows knotty and tangled skein, * Fate downs
from Heaven and straightens every ply:
In patience keep thy soul till clear thy lot * For He who ties
the knot can eke untie."

Then I walked about, till I found on the further side, a great river of sweet water, running with a strong current; whereupon I called to mind the boat-raft I had made aforetime and said to myself, "Needs must I make another; haply I may free me from this strait. If I escape, I have my desire and I vow to Allah Almighty to foreswear travel; and if I perish I shall be at peace and shall rest from toil and moil." So I rose up and gathered together great store of pieces of wood from the trees (which were all of the finest sanders-wood, whose like is not albe I knew it not), and made shift to twist creepers and tree-twigs into a kind of rope, with which I bound the billets together and so contrived a raft. Then saying, “An I be saved, ’tis of God’s grace,” I embarked thereon and committed myself to the current, and it bore me on for the first day and the second and the third after leaving the island; whilst I lay in the raft, eating not and drinking, when I was athirst, of the water of the river, till I was weak and giddy as a chicken, for stress of fatigue and famine and fear. At the end of this time I came to a high mountain, whereunder ran the river; which when I saw, I feared for my life by reason of the straitness I had suffered in my former journey, and I would fain have stayed the raft and landed on the mountain- side; but the current overpowered me and drew it into the subterranean passage like an archway; whereupon I gave myself up for lost and said, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” However, after a little, the raft glided into open air and I saw before me a wide valley, whereinto the river fell with a noise like the rolling of thunder and a swiftness as the rushing of the wind. I held on to the raft, for fear of falling off it, whilst the waves tossed me right and left; and the craft continued to descend with the current nor could I avail to stop it nor turn it shorewards, till it stopped with me at a great and goodly city, grandly edified and containing much people. And when the townsfolk saw me on the raft, dropping down with the current, they threw me out ropes which I had not strength enough to hold; then they tossed a net over the craft and drew it ashore with me, whereupon I fell to the ground amidst them, as I were a dead man, for stress of fear and hunger and lack of sleep. After awhile, there came up to me out of the crowd an old man of reverend aspect, well stricken in years, who welcomed me and threw over me abundance of handsome clothes, wherewith I covered my nakedness. Then he carried me to the Hammam-bath and brought me cordial sherbets and delicious perfumes; moreover, when I came out, he bore me to his house, where his people made much of me and, seating me in a pleasant place, set rich food before me, whereof I ate my fill and returned thanks to God the Most High for my deliverance. Thereupon his pages fetched me hot water, and I washed my hands, and his handmaids brought me silken napkins, with which I dried them and wiped my mouth. Also the Shaykh set apart for me an apartment in a part of his house and charged his pages and slave- girls to wait upon me and do my will and supply my wants. They were assiduous in my service, and I abode with him in the guest- chamber three days, taking my ease of good eating and good drinking and good scents till life returned to me and my terrors subsided and my heart was calmed and my mind was eased. On the fourth day the Shaykh, my host, came in to me and said, "Thou cheerest us with thy company, O my son, and praised be Allah for thy safety! Say: wilt thou now come down with me to the beach and the bazar and sell thy goods and take their price? Belike thou mayst buy thee wherewithal to traffic. I have ordered my servants to remove thy stock-in-trade from the sea and they have piled it on the shore." I was silent awhile and said to myself, "What mean these words and what goods have I?" Then said he, "O my son, be not troubled nor careful, but come with me to the market and if any offer for thy goods what price contenteth thee, take it; but, an thou be not satisfied, I will lay them up for thee in my warehouse, against a fitting occasion for sale." So I bethought me of my case and said to myself, "Do his bidding and see what are these goods!"; and I said to him, "O my nuncle the Shaykh, I hear and I obey; I may not gainsay thee in aught for Allah's blessing is on all thou dost." Accordingly he guided me to the market-street, where I found that he had taken in pieces the raft which carried me and which was of sandal-wood and I heard the broker calling it for sale. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman thus resumed his tale: — I found that the Shaykh had taken to pieces my raft which lay on the beach and the broker was crying the sandal-wood for sale. Then the merchants came and opened the gate of bidding for the wood and bid against one another till its price reached a thousand dinars, when they left bidding and my host said to me, "Hear, O my son, this is the current price of thy goods in hard times like these: wilt thou sell them for this or shall I lay them up for thee in my storehouses, till such time as prices rise?" "O my lord," answered I, "the business is in thy hands: do as thou wilt." Then asked he, "Wilt thou sell the wood to me, O my son, for an hundred gold pieces over and above what the merchants have bidden for it?" and I answered, "Yes, I have sold it to thee for monies received."[92] So, he bade his servants transport the wood to his storehouses and, carrying me back to his house, seated me and counted out to me the purchase money; after which he laid it in bags and setting them in a privy place, locked them up with an iron padlock and gave me its key. Some days after this, the Shaykh said to me, "O my son, I have somewhat to propose to thee, wherein I trust thou wilt do my bidding." Quoth I, "What is it?" Quoth he, "I am a very old man and have no son; but I have a daughter who is young in years and fair of favour and endowed with abounding wealth and beauty. Now I have a mind to marry her to thee, that thou mayst abide with her in this our country, and I will make thee master of all I have in hand for I am an old man and thou shalt stand in my stead." I was silent for shame and made him no answer, whereupon he continued, "Do my desire in this, O my son, for I wish but thy weal; and if thou wilt but do as I say, thou shalt have her at once and be as my son; and all that is under my hand or that cometh to me shall be thine. If thou have a mind to traffic and travel to thy native land, none shall hinder thee, and thy property will be at thy sole disposal; so do as thou wilt." "By Allah, O my uncle," replied I, "thou art become to me even as my father, and I am a stranger and have undergone many hardships: while for stress of that which I have suffered naught of judgment or knowledge is left to me. It is for thee, therefore, to decide what I shall do." Hereupon he sent his servants for the Kazi and the witnesses and married me to his daughter making us for a noble marriage-feast[93] and high festival. When I went in to her, I found her perfect in beauty and loveliness and symmetry and grace, clad in rich raiment and covered with a profusion of ornaments and necklaces and other trinkets of gold and silver and precious stones, worth a mint of money, a price none could pay. She pleased me and we loved each other; and I abode with her in solace and delight of life, till her father was taken to the mercy of Allah Almighty. So we shrouded him and buried him, and I laid hands on the whole of his property and all his servants and slaves became mine. Moreover, the merchants installed me in his office, for he was their Shaykh and their Chief; and none of them purchased aught but with his knowledge and by his leave. And now his rank passed on to me. When I became acquainted with the townsfolk, I found that at the beginning of each month they were transformed, in that their faces changed and they became like birds and they put forth wings wherewith they flew unto the upper regions of the firmament and none remained in the city save the women and children; and I said in my mind, “When the first of the month cometh, I will ask one of them to carry me with them, whither they go.” So when the time came and their complexion changed and their forms altered, I went in to one of the townsfolk and said to him, “Allah upon thee! carry me with thee, that I might divert myself with the rest and return with you.” “This may not be,” answered he; but I ceased not to solicit him and I importuned him till he consented. Then I went out in his company, without telling any of my family[94] or servants or friends, and he took me on his back and flew up with me so high in air, that I heard the angels glorifying God in the heavenly dome, whereat I wondered and exclaimed, “Praised be Allah! Extolled be the perfection of Allah!” Hardly had I made an end of pronouncing the Tasbih — praised be Allah! — when there came out a fire from heaven and all but consumed the company; whereupon they fled from it and descended with curses upon me and, casting me down on a high mountain, went away, exceeding wroth with me, and left me there alone. As I found myself in this plight, I repented of what I had done and reproached myself for having undertaken that for which I was unable, saying, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might, save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! No sooner am I delivered from one affliction than I fall into a worse.” And I continued in this case knowing not whither I should go, when lo! there came up two young men, as they were moons, each using as a staff a rod of red gold. So I approached them and saluted them; and when they returned my salam, I said to them, “Allah upon you twain; who are ye and what are ye?” Quoth they, “We are of the servants of the Most High Allah, abiding in this mountain;” and, giving me a rod of red gold they had with them, went their ways and left me. I walked on along the mountain-ridge staying my steps with the staff and pondering the case of the two youths, when behold, a serpent came forth from under the mountain, with a man in her[95] jaws, whom she had swallowed even to below his navel, and he was crying out and saying, "Whoso delivereth me, Allah will deliver him from all adversity!" So I went up to the serpent and smote her on the head with the golden staff, whereupon she cast the man forth of her mouth. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman thus continued: — When I smote the serpent on the head with my golden staff she cast the man forth of her mouth. Then I smote her a second time, and she turned and fled; whereupon he came up to me and said, "Since my deliverance from yonder serpent hath been at thy hands I will never leave thee, and thou shalt be my comrade on this mountain." "And welcome," answered I; so we fared on along the mountain, till we fell in with a company of folk, and I looked and saw amongst them the very man who had carried me and cast me down there. I went up to him and spake him fair, excusing myself to him and saying, "O my comrade, it is not thus that friend should deal with friend." Quoth he, "It was thou who well-nigh destroyed us by thy Tasbih and thy glorifying God on my back." Quoth I, "Pardon me, for I had no knowledge of this matter; but, if thou wilt take me with thee, I swear not to say a word." So he relented and consented to carry me with him, but he made an express condition that, so long as I abode on his back, I should abstain from pronouncing the Tasbih or otherwise glorifying God. Then I gave the wand of gold to him whom I had delivered from the serpent and bade him farewell, and my friend took me on his back and flew with me as before, till he brought me to the city and set me down in my own house. My wife came to meet me and saluting me gave me joy of my safety and then said, "Beware of going forth hereafter with yonder folk, neither consort with them, for they are brethren of the devils, and know not how to mention the name of Allah Almighty; neither worship they Him." "And how did thy father with them?" asked I; and she answered, "My father was not of them, neither did he as they; and as now he is dead methinks thou hadst better sell all we have and with the price buy merchandise and journey to thine own country and people, and I with thee; for I care not to tarry in this city, my father and my mother being dead." So I sold all the Shaykh's property piecemeal, and looked for one who should be journeying thence to Bassorah that I might join myself to him. And while thus doing I heard of a company of townsfolk who had a mind to make the voyage, but could not find them a ship; so they bought wood and built them a great ship wherein I took passage with them, and paid them all the hire. Then we embarked, I and my wife, with all our moveables, leaving our houses and domains and so forth, and set sail, and ceased not sailing from island to island and from sea to sea, with a fair wind and a favouring, till we arrived at Bassorah safe and sound. I made no stay there, but freighted another vessel and, transferring my goods to her, set out forthright for Baghdad-city, where I arrived in safety, and entering my quarter and repairing to my house, foregathered with my family and friends and familiars who laid up my goods in my warehouses. When my people who, reckoning the period of my absence on this my seventh voyage, had found it to be seven and twenty years, and had given up all hope of me, heard of my return, they came to welcome me and to give me joy of my safety; and I related to them all that had befallen me; whereat they marvelled with exceeding marvel. Then I forswore travel and vowed to Allah the Most High I would venture no more by land or sea, for that this seventh and last voyage had surfeited me of travel and adventure; and I thanked the Lord (be He praised and glorified!), and blessed Him for having restored me to my kith and kin and country and home. "Consider, therefore, O Sindbad, O Landsman," continued Sindbad the Seaman, "what sufferings I have undergone and what perils and hardships I have endured before coming to my present state." "Allah upon thee, O my Lord!" answered Sindbad the Landsman, "pardon me the wrong I did thee."[96] And they ceased not from friendship and fellowship, abiding in all cheer and pleasures and solace of life till there came to them the Destoyer of delights and the Sunderer of Societies, and the Shatterer of palaces and the Caterer for Cemeteries to wit, the Cup of Death, and glory be to the Living One who dieth not!"[97]

A Translation of
The Seventh Voyage of Sindbad the Seaman

according to
the version of the
Calcutta Edition

which differs in essential form
from the preceding
tale

Know, O my brothers and friends and companions all, that when I left voyaging and commercing, I said in myself, “Sufficeth me that hath befallen me;” and I spent my time in solace and pleasure. One day as I sat at home there came a knock at the door, and when the porter opened a page entered and said, “The Caliph biddeth thee to him.” I went with him to the King’s majesty and kissed ground and saluted him; whereupon he welcomed me and entreated me with honour and said, “O Sindbad, I have an occasion for thee: wilt thou do it?” So I kissed his hand and asked him, saying, “O my lord, what occasion hath the master for the slave?”; whereto he answered me, “I am minded that thou travel to the King of Sarandib and carry to him our writ and our gift, for that he hath sent to us a present and a letter. I trembled at these words and rejoined, “By Allah the Omnipotent, O my lord, I have taken a loathing to wayfare, and when I hear the words ‘Voyage’ or ‘Travel,’ my limbs tremble for what hath befallen me of hardships and horrors. Indeed I have no desire whatever for this; more by token as I have bound myself by oath not to quit Baghdad.” Then I informed the Caliph of all I had passed through from first to last, and he marvelled with exceeding marvel and said, “By the Almighty, O Sindbad, from ages of old such mishaps as happened to thee were never know to happen to any, and thou dost only right never even to talk of travel. For our sake, however, thou wilt go this time and carry our present and our letter to him of Sarandib; and Inshallah — by God’s leave! — thou shalt return quickly; and on this wise we shall be under no obligation to the said King.” I replied that I heard and obeyed, being unable to oppose his command, so he gave me the gifts and the missive with money to pay my way and I kissed hands and left the presence. Then I dropped down from Baghdad to the Gulf, and with other merchants embarked, and our ship sailed before a fair wind many days and nights till, by Allah's aid, we reached the island of Sarandib. As soon as we had made fast we landed and I took the present and the letter; and, going in with them to the King, kissed ground before him. When he saw me, he said, "Well come, O Sindbad! By Allah Omnipotent we were longing to see thee, and glory be to God who hath again shown us thy face!" Then taking me by the hand he made me sit by his side, rejoicing, and he welcomed me with familiar kindness again and entreated me as a friend. After this he began to converse with me and courteously addressed me and asked, "What was the cause of thy coming to us, O Sindbad?" So after kissing his hand and thanking him I answered, "O my lord, I have brought thee a present from my master, the Caliph Harun Al-Rashid;" and offered him the present and the letter which he read and at which he rejoiced with passing joy. The present consisted of a mare worth ten thousand ducats, bearing a golden saddle set with jewels; a book; a sumptuous suit of clothes and an hundred different kinds of white Cairene cloths and silks of Suez,[98] Cufa and Alexandria; Greek carpets and an hundred maunds[99] weight of linen and raw silk. Moreover there was a wondrous rarety, a marvellous cup of crystal middlemost of which was the figure of a lion faced by a kneeling man grasping a bow with arrow drawn to the very head, together with the food-tray[100] of Sulayman the son of David (on whom be peace!). The missive ran as follows, "Peace from King Al-Rashid, the aided of Allah (who hath vouchsafed to him and his forefathers noble rank and wide- spread glory), be on the fortunate Sultan. But after. Thy letter came to our hands and we rejoiced thereat; and we have sent the book entitled 'Delight of the Intelligent and for Friends the Rare Present,'[101] together with sundry curiosities suitable for Kings; so do thou favour us by accepting them: and peace be with thee!" Then the King lavished upon me much wealth and entreated me with all honour; so I prayed for him and thanked him for his munificence. Some days after I craved his leave to depart, but could not obtain it except by great pressing, whereupon I farewelled him and fared forth from his city, with merchants and other companions, homewards-bound without any desire for travel or companions, homewards-bound without any desire for travel or trade. We continued voyaging and coasting along many islands; but, when we were half-way, we were surrounded by a number of canoes, wherein were men like devils armed with bows and arrows, swords and daggers; habited in mail-coats and other armoury. They fell upon us and wounded and slew all who opposed them; then, having captured the ship and her contents, carried us to an island, where they sold us at the meanest price. Now I was bought by a wealthy man who, taking me to his house, gave me meat and drink and clothing and treated me in the friendliest manner; so I was heartened and I rested a little. One day he asked me, "Dost thou know any art or craft?" and I answered him, "O my lord, I am a merchant and know nothing but trade and traffic." "Dost thou know," rejoined he, "how to use bow and arrow?" "Yes," replied I, "I know that much." Thereupon he brought me a bow and arrows and mounted me behind him upon an elephant: then he set out as night was well nigh over and, passing through a forest of huge growths, came to a tall and sturdy tree up which he made me climb. Then he gave me the bow and arrows, saying, "Sit here now, and when the elephants troop hither in early morning, shoot at them; belike thou wilt hit one; and, if he fall, come and tell me." With this he left me. I hid myself in the tree being in sore terror and trembled till the sun arose; and, when the elephants appeared and wandered about among the trees, I shot my arrows at them and continued till I had shot down one of them. In the evening I reported my success to my master who was delighted in me and entreated me with high honour; and next morning he removed the slain elephant. In this wise I continued, every morning shooting an elephant which my master would remove till, one day, as I was perched in hiding on the tree there came on suddenly and unexpectedly an innumerable host of elephants whose screaming and trumpeting were such that I imagined the earth trembled under them. All surrounded my tree, whose circumference was some fifty cubits,[102] and one enormous monster came up to it and winding his trunk round the bole haled it up by the roots, and dashed it to the ground. I fell down fainting amongst the beasts when the monster elephant wound his trunk about me and, setting me on his back, went off with me, the others accompanying us. He carried me still unconscious till he reached the place for which he was making, when he rolled me off his back and presently went his ways followed by the others. So I rested a little; and, when my terror had subsided, I looked about me and I found myself among the bones of elephants, whereby I concluded that this was their burial-place, and that the monster elephant had led me thither on account of the tusks.[103] So I arose and walked a whole day and night till I arrived at the house of my master, who saw my colour changed by stress of affright and famine. He rejoiced in my return and said to me, “By Allah, thou hast made my heart sore! I went when thou wast missing and found the tree torn up, and thought that the elephants had slain thee. Tell me how it was with thee.” I acquainted him with all that had betided me; whereat he wondered greatly, and rejoiced and at last asked me, “Dost thou know the place?”; whereto I answered, “Yes, O my master!” So we mounted an elephant and fared until we came to the spot and, when my master beheld the heaps of tusks, he rejoiced greatly; then carrying away as many as he wanted he returned with me home. After this, he entreated me with increased favour and said, “O my son, thou hast shown us the way to great gain, wherefore Allah requite thee! Thou art freed for the Almighty’s sake and before His face! The elephants used to destroy many of us on account of our hunting them for their ivories and sorivellos; but Allah hath preserved thee from them, and thou hast profited us by the heaps to which thou hast led us.” “O my master,” replied I, “God free thy neck from the fire! And do thou grant me, O my master, thy gracious leave to return to my own country.” “Yes” quoth he, “thou shalt have that permission. But we have a yearly fair, when merchants come to us from various quarters to buy up these ivories. The time is drawing near; and, when they shall have done their business, I will send thee under their charge and will give thee wherewithal to reach thy home.” So I blessed and thanked him and remained with him, treated with respect and honour, for some days, when the merchants came as he had foretold, and bought and sold and bartered; and when they had made their preparations to return, my master came to me and said, “Rise and get thee ready to travel with the traders en route to thy country.” They had bought a number of tusks which they had bound together in loads and were embarking them when my master sent me with them, paying for my passage and settling all my debts; besides which he gave me a large present in goods. We set out and voyaged from island to island till we had crossed the sea and landed on the shores of the Persian Gulf, when the merchants brought out and sold their stores: I also sold what I had at a high profit; and I bought some of the prettiest things in the place for presents and beautiful rareties and everything else I wanted. I likewise bought for myself a beast and we fared forth and crossed the deserts from country to country till I reached Baghdad. Here I went in to the Caliph and, after saluting him and kissing hands, informed him of all that had befallen me; whereupon he rejoiced in my safety and thanked Almighty Allah; and he bade my story be written in letters of gold. I then entered my house and met my family and brethren: and such is the end of the history that happened to me during my seven voyages. Praise be to Allah, the One, the Creator, the Maker of all things in Heaven and Earth! —

Now when Shahrazad had ended her story of the two Sindbads, Dinarzad exclaimed, “O my sister, how pleasant is thy tale and how tasteful! How sweet and how grateful!” She replied, “And what is this compared with that I could tell thee tomorrow night?” Quoth the King, “What may it be?” And she said: — It is a tale touching

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE CITY OF BRASS.[104]

It is related that there was, in tide of yore and in times and years long gone before, at Damascus of Syria, a Caliph known as Abd al-Malik bin Marwan, the fifth of the Ommiade house. As this Commander of the Faithful was seated one day in his palace, conversing with his Sultans and Kings and the Grandees of his empire, the talk turned upon the legends of past peoples and the traditions of our lord Solomon, David's son (on the twain be peace!), and on that which Allah Almighty had bestowed on him of lordship and dominion over men and Jinn and birds and beasts and reptiles and the wind and other created things; and quoth the Caliph, "Of a truth we hear from those who forewent us that the Lord (extolled and exalted be He!) vouchsafed unto none the like of that which He vouchsafed unto our lord Solomon and that he attained unto that whereto never attained other than he, in that he was wont to imprison Jinns and Marids and Satans in cucurbites of copper and to stop them with lead and seal[105] them with his ring." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Caliph Abd al-Malik bin Marwan sat conversing with his Grandees concerning our lord Solomon, and these noted what Allah had bestowed upon him of lordship and dominion, quoth the Commander of the Faithful, "Indeed he attained unto that whereto never attained other than he, in that he was wont to imprison Jinns and Marids and Satans in cucurbites of copper and stop them with lead and seal them with his ring." Then said Talib bin Sahl (who was a seeker after treasures and had books that discovered to him hoards and wealth hidden under the earth), "O Commander of the Faithful, — Allah make thy dominion to endure and exalt thy dignity here and hereafter! — my father told me of my grandfather, that he once took ship with a company, intending for the island of Sikiliyah or Sicily, and sailed until there arose against them a contrary wind, which drove them from their course and brought them, after a month, to a great mountain in one of the lands of Allah the Most High, but where that land was they wot not. Quoth my grandfather: — This was in the darkness of the night and as soon as it was day, there came forth to us, from the caves of the mountain, folk black of colour and naked of body, as they were wild beasts, understanding not one word of what was addressed to them; nor was there any of them who knew Arabic, save their King who was of their own kind. When he saw the ship, he came down to it with a company of his followers and saluting us, bade us welcome and questioned us of our case and our faith. We told him all concerning ourselves and he said, Be of good cheer for no harm shall befal you.' And when we, in turn, asked them of their faith, we found that each was of one of the many creeds prevailing before the preaching of Al-Islam and the mission of Mohammed, whom may Allah bless and keep! So my shipmates remarked, We wot not what thou sayest.' Then quoth the King, No Adam-son hath ever come to our land before you: but fear not, and rejoice in the assurance of safety and of return to your own country.' Then he entertained us three days, feeding us on the flesh of birds and wild beasts and fishes, than which they had no other meat; and, on the fourth day, he carried us down to the beach, that we might divert ourselves by looking upon the fisher- folk. There we saw a man casting his net to catch fish, and presently he pulled them up and behold, in them was a cucurbite of copper, stopped with lead and sealed with the signet of Solomon, son of David, on whom be peace! He brought the vessel to land and broke it open, when there came forth a smoke, which rose a-twisting blue to the zenith, and we heard a horrible voice, saying, I repent! I repent! Pardon, O Prophet of Allah! I will never return to that which I did aforetime.' Then the smoke became a terrible Giant frightful of form, whose head was level with the mountain-tops, and he vanished from our sight, whilst our hearts were well-nigh torn out for terror; but the blacks thought nothing of it. Then we returned to the King and questioned him of the matter; whereupon quoth he, Know that this was one of the Jinns whom Solomon, son of David, being wroth with them, shut up in these vessels and cast into the sea, after stopping the mouths with melted lead. Our fishermen ofttimes, in casting their nets, bring up such bottles, which being broken open, there come forth of them Jinnis who, deeming that Solomon is still alive and can pardon them, make their submission to him and say, I repent, O Prophet of Allah!'" The Caliph marvelled at Talib's story and said, "Glory be to God! Verily, to Solomon was given a mighty dominion." Now al-Nábighah al-Zubyání[106] was present, and he said, "Talib hath spoken soothly as is proven by the saying of the All-wise, the Primæval One,

And Solomon, when Allah to him said, * Rise, be thou Caliph,
  rule with righteous sway:
Honour obedience for obeying thee; * And who rebels imprison him
  for aye'

Wherefore he used to put them in copper-bottles and cast them into the sea." The poet's words seemed good to the Caliph, and he said, "By Allah, I long to look upon some of these Solomonic vessels, which must be a warning to whoso will be warned." "O Commander of the Faithful," replied Talib, "it is in thy power to do so, without stirring abroad. Send to thy brother Abd al-Aziz bin Marwán, so he may write to Músá bin Nusayr,[107] governor of the Maghrib or Morocco, bidding him take horse thence to the mountains whereof I spoke and fetch thee therefrom as many of such cucurbites as thou hast a mind to; for those mountains adjoin the frontiers of his province." The Caliph approved his counsel and said "Thou hast spoken sooth, O Talib, and I desire that, touching this matter, thou be my messenger to Musa bin Nusayr; wherefore thou shalt have the White Flag[108] and all thou hast a mind to of monies and honour and so forth; and I will care for thy family during thine absence." "With love and gladness, O Commander of the Faithful!" answered Talib. "Go, with the blessing of Allah and His aid," quoth the Caliph, and bade write a letter to his brother, Abd al-Aziz, his viceroy in Egypt, and another to Musa bin Nusayr, his viceroy in North Western Africa, bidding him go himself in quest of the Solomonic bottles, leaving his son to govern in his stead. Moreover, he charged him to engage guides and to spare neither men nor money, nor to be remiss in the matter as he would take no excuse. Then he sealed the two letters and committed them to Talib bin Sahl, bidding him advance the royal ensigns before him and make his utmost speed and he gave him treasure and horsemen and footmen, to further him on his way, and made provision for the wants of his household during his absence. So Talib set out and arrived in due course at Cairo.[109] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Talib bin Sahl set out with his escort and crossed the desert country between Syria and Egypt, where the Governor came out to meet him and entreated him and his company with high honour whilst they tarried with him. Then he gave them a guide to bring them to the Sa'íd or Upper Egypt, where the Emir Musa had his abiding-place; and when the son of Nusayr heard of Talib's coming, he went forth to meet him and rejoiced in him. Talib gave him the Caliph's letter, and he took it reverently and, laying it on his head, cried, "I hear and I obey the Prince of the Faithful." Then he deemed it best to assemble his chief officers and when all were present he acquainted them with the contents of the Caliph's letter and sought counsel of them how he should act. "O Emir," answered they, "if thou seek one who shall guide thee to the place summon the Shaykh 'Abd al-Samad, ibn 'Abd al-Kuddús, al- Samúdí;[110] for he is a man of varied knowledge, who hath travelled much and knoweth by experience all the seas and wastes and words and countries of the world and the inhabitants and wonders thereof; wherefore send thou for him and he will surely guide thee to thy desire." So Musa sent for him, and behold, he was a very ancient man shot in years and broken down with lapse of days. The Emir saluted him and said, "O Shaykh Abd al-Samad, our lord the Commander of the Faithful, Abd al-Malik bin Marwan' hath commanded me thus and thus. I have small knowledge of the land wherein is that which the Caliph desireth; but it is told me that thou knowest it well and the ways thither. Wilt thou, therefore, go with me and help me to accomplish the Caliph's need? So it please Allah the Most High, thy trouble and travail shall not go waste." Replied the Shaykh, "I hear and obey the bidding of the Commander of the Faithful; but know, O Emir, that the road thither is long and difficult and the ways few." "How far is it?" asked Musa, and the Shaykh answered, "It is a journey of two years and some months going and the like returning; and the way is full of hardships and terrors and things wondrous and marvellous. Now thou art a champion of the Faith[111] and our country is hard by that of the enemy; and peradventure the Nazarenes may come out upon us in thine absence; wherefore it behoveth thee to leave one to rule thy government in thy stead." "It is well," answered the Emir and appointed his son Hárún Governor during his absence, requiring the troops to take the oath of fealty to him and bidding them obey him in all he should com mend. And they heard his words and promised obedience. Now this Harun was a man of great prowess and a renowned warrior and a doughty knight, and the Shaykh Abd al-Samad feigned to him that the place they sought was distant but four months' journey along the shore of the sea, with camping-places all the way, adjoining one another, and grass and springs, adding, "Allah will assuredly make the matter easy to us through thy blessing, O Lieutenant of the Commander of the Faithful!" Quoth the Emir Musa, "Knowest thou if any of the Kings have trodden this land before us?"; and quoth the Shaykh, "Yes, it belonged aforetime to Darius the Greek, King of Alexandria." But he said to Musa privily, "O Emir, take with thee a thousand camels laden with victual and store of gugglets."[112] The Emir asked, "And what shall we do with these?", and the Shaykh answered. "On our way is the desert of Kayrwán or Cyrene, the which is a vast wold four days' journey long, and lacketh water; nor therein doth sound of voice ever sound nor is soul at any time to be seen. Moreover, there bloweth the Simoon[113] and other hot winds called Al-Juwayb, which dry up the water-skins; but if the water be in gugglets, no harm can come to it." "Right," said Musa and sending to Alexandria, let bring thence great plenty of gugglets. Then he took with him his Wazir and two thousand cavalry, clad in mail cap-á-pie and set out, without other to guide them but Abd al-Samad who forewent them, riding on his hackney. The party fared on diligently, now passing through inhabited lands, then ruins and anon traversing frightful words and thirsty wastes and then mountains which spired high in air; nor did they leave journeying a whole year's space till, one morning, when the day broke, after they had travelled all night, behold, the Shaykh found himself in a land he knew not and said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" Quoth the Emir, "What is to do, O Shaykh?"; and he answered, saying, "By the Lord of the Ka'abah, we have wandered from our road!" "How cometh that?" asked Musa, and Abd al-Samad replied, "The stars were overclouded and I could not guide myself by them." "Where on God's earth are we now?" asked the Emir, and the Shaykh answered, "I know not; for I never set eyes on this land till this moment." Said Musa, "Guide us back to the place where we went astray", but the other, "I know it no more." Then Musa, "Let us push on; haply Allah will guide us to it or direct us aright of His power." So they fared on till the hour of noon-prayer, when they came to a fair champaign, and wide and level and smooth as it were the sea when calm, and presently there appeared to them, on the horizon some great thing, high and black, in whose midst was as it were smoke rising to the confines of the sky. They made for this, and stayed not in their course till they drew near thereto, when, lo! it was a high castle, firm of foundations and great and gruesome, as it were a towering mountain, builded all of black stone, with frowning crenelles and a door of gleaming China steel, that dazzled the eyes and dazed the wits. Round about it were a thousand steps and that which appeared afar off as it were smoke was a central dome of lead an hundred cubits high. When the Emir saw this, he marvelled thereat with exceeding marvel and how this place was void of inhabitants; and the Shaykh, after he had certified himself thereof, said, "There is no god but the God and Mohammed is the Apostle of God!" Quoth Musa, "I hear thee praise the Lord and hallow Him, and meseemeth thou rejoicest." "O Emir," answered Abd al-Samad, "Rejoice, for Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) hath delivered us from the frightful words and thirsty wastes." "How knowest thou that?" said Musa, and the other, "I know it for that my father told me of my grandfather that he said, We were once journeying in this land and, straying from the road, we came to this palace and thence to the City of Brass; between which and the place thou seekest is two full months' travel; but thou must take to the sea-shore and leave it not, for there be watering-places and wells and camping-grounds established by King Zú al-Karnayn Iskandar who, when he went to the conquest of Mauritania, found by the way thirsty deserts and wastes and wilds and dug therein water-pits and built cisterns.' " Quoth Musa, "Allah rejoice thee with good news!" and quoth the Shaykh, "Come, let us go look upon yonder palace and its marvels, for it is an admonition to whose will be admonished.” So the Emir went up to the palace, with the Shaykh and his officers, and coming to the gate, found it open. Now this gate was builded with lofty columns and porticoes whose walls and ceilings were inlaid with gold and silver and precious stones; and there led up to it flights of steps, among which were two wide stairs of coloured marble, never was seen their like; and over the doorway was a tablet whereon were graven letters of gold in the old ancient Ionian character. “O Emir,” asked the Shaykh, “Shall I read?”; and Musa answered, “Read and God bless thee!; for all that betideth us in this journey dependeth upon thy blessing.” So the Shaykh, who was a very learned man and versed in all tongues and characters, went up to the tablet and read whatso was thereon and it was verse like this,

“The signs that here their mighty works portray * Warn us that
all must tread the self-same way:
O thou who standest in this stead to hear * Tidings of folk,
whose power hath passed for aye,
Enter this palace-gate and ask the news * Of greatness fallen
into dust and clay:
Death has destroyed them and dispersed their might * And in the
dust they lost their rich display;
As had they only set their burdens down * To rest awhile, and
then had rode away.”

When the Emir Musa heard these couplets, he wept till he lost his senses and said, “There is no god but the God, the Living, the Eternal, who ceaseth not!” Then he entered the palace and was confounded at its beauty and the goodliness of its construction. He diverted himself awhile by viewing the pictures and images therein, till he came to another door, over which also were written verses, and said to the Shaykh, “Come read me these!” So he advanced and read as follows,

“Under these domes how many a company * Halted of old and fared
with-outen stay:
See thou what might displays on other wights * Time with his

shifts which could such lords waylay:
They shared together what they gathered * And left their joys and
fared to Death-decay:
What joys they joyed! what food they ate! and now * In dust
they're eaten, for the worm a prey."

At this the Emir Musa wept bitter tears; and the world waxed yellow before his eyes and he said, "Verily, we were created for a mighty matter!"[114] Then they proceeded to explore the palace and found it desert and void of living thing, its courts desolate and dwelling places waste laid. In the midst stood a lofty pavilion with a dome rising high in air, and about it were four hundred tombs, builded of yellow marble. The Emir drew near unto these and behold, amongst them was a great tomb, wide and long; and at its head stood a tablet of white marble, whereon were graven these couplets,

"How oft have I fought! and how many have slain! * How much have
I witnessed of blessing and bane!
How much have I eaten! how much have I drunk! * How oft have I
hearkened to singing-girl's strain!
How much have I bidden! how oft have forbid! * How many a castle
and castellain
I have sieged and have searched, and the cloistered maids * In
the depths of its walls for my captives were ta'en!
But of ignorance sinned I to win me the meeds * Which won proved
naught and brought nothing of gain:
Then reckon thy reck'ning, O man, and be wise * Ere the goblet of
death and of doom thou shalt drain;
For yet but a little the dust on thy head * They shall strew, and
thy life shall go down to the dead."

The Emir and his companions wept; then, drawing near unto the pavilion, they saw that it had eight doors of sandal-wood, studded with nails of gold and stars of silver and inlaid with all manner precious stones. On the first door were written these verses,

“What I left, I left it not for nobility of soul, * But through
sentence and decree that to every man are dight.
What while I lived happy, with a temper haught and high, * My
hoarding-place defending like a lion in the fight,
I took no rest, and greed of gain forbad me give a grain * Of
mustard seed to save from the fires of Hell my sprite,
Until stricken on a day, as with arrow, by decree * Of the Maker,
the Fashioner, the Lord of Might and Right.
When my death was appointed, my life I could not keep * By the
many of my stratagems, my cunning and my sleight:
My troops I had collected availed me not, and none * Of my
friends and of my neighbours had power to mend my plight:
Through my life I was weaned in journeying to death * In stress
or in solace, in joyance or despight:
So when money-bags are bloated, and dinar unto dinar * Thou
addest, all may leave thee with fleeting of the night:
And the driver of a camel and the digger of a grave[115] * Are
what thine heirs shall bring ere the morning dawneth bright:
And on Judgment Day alone shalt thou stand before thy Lord, *
Overladen with thy sins and thy crimes and thine affright:
Let the world not seduce thee with lurings, but behold * What
measure to thy family and neighbours it hath doled.”

When Musa heard these verses, he wept with such weeping that he swooned away; then, coming to himself, he entered the pavilion and saw therein a long tomb, awesome to look upon, whereon was a tablet of China steel and Shaykh Abd al-Samad drew near it and read this inscription: “In the name of Ever-lasting Allah, the Never-beginning, the Never-ending; in the name of Allah who begetteth not nor is He begot and unto whom the like is not; in the name of Allah the Lord of Majesty and Might; in the name of the Living One who to death is never dight!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Shaykh Abd al-Samad, having read the aforesaid, also found the following, “O thou who comest to this place, take warning by that which thou seest of the accidents of Time and the vicissitudes of Fortune and be not deluded by the world and its pomps and vanities and fallacies and falsehoods and vain allurements, for that it is flattering, deceitful end treacherous, and the things thereof are but a loan to us which it will borrow back from all borrowers. It is like unto the dreams of the dreamer and the sleep-visions of the sleeper or as the mirage of the desert, which the thirsty take for water;[116] and Satan maketh it fair for men even unto death These are the ways of the world; wherefore put not thou thy trust therein neither incline thereto, for it betrayeth him who leaneth upon it and who committeth himself thereunto in his affairs. Fall not thou into its snares neither take hold upon its skirts, but be warned by my example. I possessed four thou sand bay horses and a haughty palace, and I had to wife a thou sand daughters of kings, high-bosomed maids, as they were moons: I was blessed with a thousand sons as they were fierce lions, and I abode a thousand years, glad of heart and mind, and I amassed treasures beyond the competence of all the Kings of the regions of the earth, deeming that delight would still endure to me. But there fell on me unawares the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies, the Desolator of domiciles and the Spoiler of inhabited spots, the Murtherer of great and small, babes and children and mothers, he who hath no ruth on the poor for his poverty, or feareth the King for all his bidding or forbidding. Verily, we abode safe and secure in this palace, till there descended upon us the judgment of the Lord of the Three Worlds, Lord of the Heavens, and Lord of the Earths, the vengeance of the Manifest Truth[117] overtook us, when there died of us every day two, till a great company of us had perished. When I saw that destruction had entered our dwellings and had homed with us and in the sea of deaths had drowned us, I summoned a writer and bade him indite these verses and instances and admonitions, the which I let grave, with rule and compass, on these doors and tablets and tombs. Now I had an army of a thousand thousand bridles, men of warrior mien with forearms strong and keen, armed with spears and mail-coats sheen and swords that gleam; so I bade them don their long-hanging hauberks and gird on their biting blades and mount their high-mettled steeds and level their dreadful lances; and whenas there fell on us the doom of the Lord of heaven and earth, I said to them, Ho, all ye soldiers and troopers, can ye avail to ward off that which is fallen on me from the Omnipotent King?' But troopers and soldiers availed not unto this and said, How shall we battle with Him to whom no chamberlain barreth access, the Lord of the door which hath no doorkeeper?' Then quoth I to them, Bring me my treasures' Now I had in my treasuries a thousand cisterns in each of which were a thousand quintals[118] of red gold and the like of white silver, besides pearls and jewels of all kinds and other things of price, beyond the attainment of the kings of the earth. So they did that and when they had laid all the treasure in my presence, I said to them, Can ye ransom me with all this treasure or buy me one day of life therewith?' But they could not! So they resigned themselves to fore-ordained Fate and fortune and I submitted to the judgment of Allah, enduring patiently that which he decreed unto me of affliction, till He took my soul and made me to dwell in my grave. And if thou ask of my name, I am Kúsh, the son of Shaddád son of Ád the Greater." And upon the tablets were engraved these lines,

"An thou wouldst know my name, whose day is done * With shifts of
time and chances 'neath the sun,
Know I am Shaddád's son, who ruled mankind * And o'er all earth
upheld dominion!
All stubborn peoples abject were to me; * And Shám to Cairo and
to Adnanwone;[119]
I reigned in glory conquering many kings; * And peoples feared my
mischief every one.
Yea, tribes and armies in my hand I saw; * The world all dreaded
me, both friends and fone.
When I took horse, I viewed my numbered troops, * Bridles on
neighing steeds a million.
And I had wealth that none could tell or count, * Against
misfortune treasuring all I won;
Fain had I bought my life with all my wealth, * And for a
moment's space my death to shun;
But God would naught save what His purpose willed; * So from my
brethren cut I 'bode alone:

And Death, that sunders man, exchanged my lot * To pauper hut
from grandeur's mansion
When found I all mine actions gone and past * Wherefor I'm
pledged[120] and by my sin undone.
Then fear, O man, who by a brink dost range, * The turns of
Fortune and the chance of Change."

The Emir Musa was hurt to his heart and loathed his life for what he saw of the slaughtering-places of the folk; and, as they went about the highways and byeways of the palace, viewing its sitting-chambers and pleasaunces, behold they came upon a table of yellow onyx, upborne on four feet of juniper-wood,[121] and there-on these words graven, "At this table have eaten a thousand kings blind of the right eye and a thousand blind of the left and yet other thousand sound of both eyes, all of whom have departed the world and have taken up their sojourn in the tombs and the catacombs." All this the Emir wrote down and left the palace, carrying off with him naught save the table aforesaid. Then he fared on with his host three days' space, under the guidance of the Shaykh Abd al-Samad, till they came to a high hill, whereon stood a horseman of brass. In his hand he held a lance with a broad head, in brightness like blinding leven, whereon was graven, "O thou that comest unto me, if thou know not the way to the City of Brass, rub the hand of this rider and he will turn round and presently stop. Then take the direction whereto he faceth and fare fearless, for it will bring thee, without hardship, to the city aforesaid." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Emir Musa rubbed the horseman's hand he revolved like the dazzling lightning, and stopped facing in a direction other than that wherein they were journeying. So they took the road to which he pointed (which was the right way) and, finding it a beaten track, fared on through their days and nights till they had covered a wide tract of country. Then they came upon a pillar of black stone like a furnace chimney wherein was one sunken up to his armpits. He had two great wings and four arms, two of them like the arms of the sons of Adam and other two as they were lion's paws, with claws of iron, and he was black and tall and frightful of aspect, with hair like horses' tails and eyes like blazing coals, slit upright in his face. Moreover, he had in the middle of his forehead a third eye, as it were that of a lynx, from which flew sparks of fire, and he cried out saying, "Glory to my Lord, who hath adjudged unto me this grievous torment and sore punishment until the Day of Doom!" When the folk saw him, they lost their reason for affright and turned to flee; so the Emir Musa asked the Shaykh Abd al-Samad, "What is this?"; and he answered, "I know not." Whereupon quoth Musa, "Draw near and question him of his condition; haply he will discover to thee his case." "Allah assain thee, Emir! Indeed, I am afraid of him;" replied the Shaykh; but the Emir rejoined, saying, "Fear not; he is hindered from thee and from all others by that wherein he is." So Abd al-Samad drew near to the pillar and said to him which was therein, "O creature, what is thy name and what art thou and how camest thou here in this fashion?" "I am an Ifrit of the Jinn," replied he, "by name Dáhish, son of Al-A'amash,[122] and am confined here by the All-might, prisoned here by the Providence and punished by the judgement of Allah, till it pleases Him, to whom belong Might and Majesty, to release me." Then said Musa, "Ask him why he is in durance of this column?" So the Shaykh asked him of this, and the Ifrit replied, saying, "Verily my tale is wondrous and my case marvellous, and it is this. One of the sons of Iblis had an idol of red carnelian, whereof I was guardian, and there served it a King of the Kings of the sea, a Prince of puissant power and prow of prowess, over-ruling a thousand thousand warriors of the Jann who smote with swords before him and answered his summons in time of need. All these were under my commandment and obeyed my behest, being each and every rebels against Solomon, son of David, on whom be peace! And I used to enter the belly of the idol and thence bid and forbid them. Now this King's daughter loved the idol and was frequent in prostration to it and assiduous in its service; and she was the fairest woman of her day, accomplished in beauty and loveliness, elegance and grace. She was described unto Solomon and he sent to her father, saying, Give me thy daughter to wife and break thine idol of carnelian and testify saying, There is no god but the God and Solomon is the Prophet of

Allah!’ an thou do this, our due shall be thy due and thy debt shall be our debt, but, if thou refuse, make ready to answer the summons of the Lord and don thy grave-gear, for I will come upon thee with an irresistible host, which shall fill the waste places of earth and make thee as yesterday that is passed away and hath no return for aye.’ When this message reached the King, he waxed insolent and rebellious, pride-full and contumacious and he cried to his Wazirs, What say ye of this? Know ye that Solomon son of David hath sent requiring me to give him my daughter to wife, and break my idol of carnelian and enter his faith!’ And they replied, O mighty King, how shall Solomon do thus with thee? Even could he come at thee in the midst of this vast ocean, he could not prevail against thee, for the Marids of the Jann will fight on thy side and thou wilt ask succour of thine idol whom thou servest, and he will help thee and give thee victory over him. So thou wouldst do well to consult on this matter thy Lord,’ (meaning the idol aforesaid) and hear what he saith. If he say, Fight him, fight him, and if not, not.’ So the King went in without stay or delay to his idol and offered up sacrifices and slaughtered victims; after which he fell down before him, prostrate and weeping, and repeated these verses,

O my Lord, well I weet thy puissant hand: * Sulaymán would break
thee and see thee bann’d.
O my Lord, to crave succour here I stand * Command and I bow to
thy high command!’

Then I” (continued the Ifrit addressing the Shaykh and those about him), “of my ignorance and want of wit and recklessness of the commandment of Solomon and lack of knowledge anent his power, entered the belly of the idol and made answer as follows.

As for me, of him I feel naught affright, * For my lore and my
wisdom are infinite:
If he wish for warfare I’ll show him fight * And out of his body
I’ll tear his sprite!’

When the King heard my boastful reply, he hardened his heart and resolved to wage war upon the Prophet and to offer him battle; wherefore he beat the messenger with a grievous beating and returned a foul answer to Solomon, threatening him and saying, Of a truth, thy soul hath suggested to thee a vain thing; dost thou menace me with mendacious words? But gird thyself for battle; for, an thou come not to me, I will assuredly come to thee.' So the messenger returned to Solomon and told him all that had passed and whatso had befallen him, which when the Prophet heard, he raged like Doomsday and addressed himself to the fray and levied armies of men and Jann and birds and reptiles. He commanded his Wazir Al-Dimiryát, King of the Jann, to gather together the Marids of the Jinn from all parts, and he collected for him six hundred thousand thousand of devils.[123] Moreover, by his order, his Wazir Ásaf bin Barkhiyá levied him an army of men, to the number of a thousand thousand or more. These all he furnished with arms and armour and mounting, with his host, upon his carpet, took flight through air, while the beasts fared under him and the birds flew overhead, till he lighted down on the island of the refractory King and encompassed it about, filling earth with his hosts." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Ifrit continued, "So when Solomon the prophet (with whom be peace!) lighted down with his host on the island he sent to our King, saying, Behold, I am come: defend thy life against that which is fallen upon thee, or else make thy submission to me and confess my apostleship and give me thy daughter to lawful wife and break thine idol and worship the one God, the alone Worshipful; and testify, thou and thine, and say, There is no God but the God, and Solomon is the Apostle of Allah![124] This if thou do, thou shalt have pardon and peace; but if not, it will avail thee nothing to fortify thyself in this island, for Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) hath bidden the wind obey me; so I will bid it bear me to thee on my carpet and make thee a warning and an example to deter others.' But the King made answer to his messenger, saying, It may not on any wise be as he requireth of me; so tell him I come forth to him,' With this reply the messenger returned to Solomon, who thereupon gathered together all the Jinn that were under his hand, to the number of a thousand thousand, and added to them other than they of Marids and Satans from the islands of the sea and the tops of the mountains and, drawing them up on parade, opened his armouries and distributed to them arms and armour. Then the Prophet drew out his host in battle array, dividing the beasts into two bodies, one on the right wing of the men and the other on the left, and bidding them tear the enemies' horses in sunder. Furthermore, he ordered the birds which were in the island to hover over their heads and, whenas the assault should be made, that they should swoop down and tear out the foe's eyes with their beaks and buffet their faces with their wings; and they answered, saying, We hear and we obey Allah and thee, O Prophet of Allah!' Then Solomon seated himself on a throne of alabaster, studded with precious stones and plated with red gold; and, commanding the wind to bear him aloft, set his Wazir Asaf bin Barkhiya[125] and the kings of mankind on his right and his Wazir Al-Dimiryat and the kings of the Jinn on his left, arraying the beasts and vipers and serpents in the van. Thereupon they all set on us together, and we gave them battle two days over a vast plain; but, on the third day, disaster befel us, and the judgment of Allah the Most High was executed upon us. Now the first to charge upon them were I and my troops, and I said to my companions, Abide in your places, whilst I sally forth to them and provoke Al-Dimiryat to combat singular.' And behold, he came forth to the duello as he were a vast mountain, with his fires flaming and his smoke spireing, and shot at me a falling star of fire; but I swerved from it and it missed me. Then I cast at him in my turn, a flame of fire, and smote him; but his shaft[126] overcame my fire and he cried out at me so terrible a cry that meseemed the skies were fallen flat upon me, and the mountains trembled at his voice. Then he commanded his hosts to charge; accordingly they rushed on us and we rushed on them, each crying out upon other, and battle reared its crest rising in volumes and smoke ascending in columns and hearts well nigh cleaving. The birds and the flying Jinn fought in the air and the beasts and men and the foot-faring Jann in the dust and I fought with Al- Dimiryat, till I was aweary and he not less so. At last, I grew weak and turned to flee from him, whereupon my companions and tribesmen likewise took to flight and my hosts were put to the rout, and Solomon cried out, saying, Take yonder furious tyrant, the accursed, the infamous!' Then man fell upon man and Jinn upon Jinn and the armies of the Prophet charged down upon us, with the wild beasts and lions on their right hand and on their left, rending our horses and tearing our men; whilst the birds hovered over-head in air pecking out our eyes with their claws and beaks and beating our faces with their wings, and the serpents struck us with their fangs, till the most of our folk lay prone upon the face of the earth, like the trunks of date-trees. Thus defeat befel our King and we became a spoil unto Solomon. As to me, I fled from before Al-Dimiryat, but he followed me three months' journey, till I fell down for weariness and he overtook me, and pouncing upon me, made me prisoner. Quoth I, By the virtue of Him who hath exalted thee and abased me, spare me and bring me into the presence of Solomon, on whom be peace!' So he carried me before Solomon, who received me after the foulest fashion and bade bring this pillar and hollow it out. Then he set me herein and chained me and sealed me with his signet-ring, and Al- Dimiryat bore me to this place wherein thou seest me. Moreover, he charged a great angel to guard me, and this pillar is my prison until Judgment-day." Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Jinni who was prisoned in the pillar had told them his tale, from first to last, the folk marvelled at his story and at the frightfulness of his favour, and the Emir Musa said, "There is no God but the God! Soothly was Solomon gifted with a mighty dominion." Then said the Shaykh Abd al-Samad to the Jinni, "Ho there! I would fain ask thee of a thing, whereof do thou inform us." "Ask what thou wilt," answered the Ifrit Dahish and the Shaykh said, "Are there hereabouts any of the Ifrits imprisoned in bottles of brass from the time of Solomon (on whom be peace!)?" "Yes," replied the Jinni; "there be such in the sea of al-Karkar[127] on the shores whereof dwell a people of the lineage of Noah (on whom be peace!); for their country was not reached by the Deluge and they are cut off there from the other sons of Adam." Quoth Abd al-Samad, "And which is the way to the City of Brass and the place wherein are the cucurbites of Solomon, and what distance lieth between us and it?" Quoth the Ifrit, "It is near at hand," and directed them in the way thither. So they left him and fared forward till there appeared to them afar off a great blackness and therein two fires facing each other, and the Emir Musa asked the Shaykh, "What is yonder vast blackness and its twin fires?"; and the guide answered, "Rejoice O Emir, for this is the City of Brass, as it is described in the Book of Hidden Treasures which I have by me. Its walls are of black stone and it hath two towers of Andalusian brass,[128] which appear to the beholder in the distance as they were twin fires, and hence is it named the City of Brass." Then they fared on without ceasing till they drew near the city and behold, it was as it were a piece of a mountain or a mass of iron cast in a mould and impenetrable for the height of its walls and bulwarks; while nothing could be more beautiful than its buildings and its ordinance. So they dismounted down and sought for an entrance, but saw none neither found any trace of opening in the walls, albeit there were five-and-twenty portals to the city, but none of them was visible from without. Then quoth the Emir, "O Shaykh, I see to this city no sign of any gate;" and quoth he, "O Emir, thus is it described in my Book of Hidden Treasures; it hath five-and-twenty portals; but none thereof may be opened save from within the city." Asked Musa, " And how shall we do to enter the city and view its wonders?" and Talib son of Sahl, his Wazir, answered, "Allah assain the Emir! let us rest here two or three days and, God willing, we will make shift to come within the walls." Then said Musa to one of his men, "Mount thy camel and ride round about the city, so haply thou may light upon a gate or a place somewhat lower than this fronting us, or Inshallah! a breach whereby we can enter." Accordingly he mounted his beast, taking water and victuals with him, and rode round the city two days and two nights, without drawing rein to rest, but found the wall thereof as it were one block, without breach or way of ingress; and on the third day, he came again in sight of his companions, dazed and amazed at what he had seen of the extent and loftiness of the place, and said, "O Emir, the easiest place of access is this where you have alighted." Then Musa took Talib and Abd al-Samad and ascended the highest hill which overlooked the city. When they reached the top, they beheld beneath them a city, never saw eyes a greater or a goodlier, with dwelling-places and mansions of towering height, and palaces and pavilions and domes gleaming gloriously bright and sconces and bulwarks of strength infinite; and its streams were a-flowing and flowers a-blowing and fruits a glowing. It was a city with gates impregnable; but void and still, without a voice or a cheering inhabitant. The owl hooted in its quarters; the bird skimmed circling over its squares and the raven croaked in its great thoroughfares weeping and bewailing the dwellers who erst made it their dwelling.[129] The Emir stood awhile, marvelling and sorrowing for the desolation of the city and saying, Glory to Him whom nor ages nor changes nor times can blight, Him who created all things of His Might!" Presently, he chanced to look aside and caught sight of seven tablets of white marble afar off. So he drew near them and finding inscriptions graven thereon, called the Shaykh and bade him read these. Accordingly he came forward and, examining the inscriptions, found that they contained matter of admonition and warning and instances and restraint to those of understanding. On the first tablet was inscribed, in the ancient Greek character: "O son of Adam, how heedless art thou of that which is before thee! Verily, thy years and months and days have diverted thee therefrom. Knowest thou not that the cup of death is filled for thy bane which in a little while to the dregs thou shalt drain? Look to thy doom ere thou enter thy tomb. Where be the Kings who held dominion over the lands and abased Allah's servants and built these palaces and had armies under their commands? By Allah, the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies and the Devastator of dwelling-places came down upon them and transported them from the spaciousness of their palaces to the staitness of their burial-places." And at the foot of the tablet were written the following verses,

"Where are the Kings earth-peopling, where are they? * The built
and peopled left they e'er and aye!
They're tombed yet pledged to actions past away * And after death
upon them came decay.
Where are their troops? They failed to ward and guard! * Where
are the wealth and hoards in treasuries lay?
Th' Empyrean's Lord surprised them with one word, * Nor wealth

nor refuge could their doom delay!"

When the Emir heard this, he cried out and the tears ran down his cheeks and he exclaimed, "By Allah, from the world abstaining is the wisest course and the sole assaining!" And he called for pen- case and paper and wrote down what was graven on the first tablet. Then he drew near the second tablet and found these words graven thereon, "O son of Adam, what hath seduced thee from the service of the Ancient of Days and made thee forget that one day thou must defray the debt of death? Wottest thou not that it is a transient dwelling wherein for none there is abiding; and yet thou taketh thought unto the world and cleaves" fast thereto? Where be the kings who Irak peopled and the four quarters of the globe possessed? Where be they who abode in Ispahan and the land of Khorasan? The voice of the Summoner of Death summoned them and they answered him, and the Herald of Destruction hailed them and they replied, Here are we! Verily, that which they builded and fortified profited them naught; neither did what they had gathered and provided avail for their defence." And at the foot of the tablet were graven the following verses,

Where be the men who built and fortified * High places never man
their like espied?
In fear of Fate they levied troops and hosts, * Availing naught
when came the time and tide,
Where be the Kisrás homed in strongest walls? * As though they
ne'er had been from home they tried!"

The Emir Musa wept and exclaimed, "By Allah, we are indeed created for a grave matter!" Then he copied the inscription and passed on to the third tablet, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Emir Musa passed on to the third tablet, whereon was written, "O son of Adam, the things of this world thou lovest and prizest and the hest of thy Lord thou spurnest and despisest. All the days of thy life pass by and thou art content thus to aby. Make ready thy viaticum against the day appointed for thee to see and prepare to answer the Lord of every creature that be!" And at the foot were written these verses,

"Where is the wight who peopled in the past * Hind land and Sind; and there the tyrant played?
Who Zanj[130] and Habash bound beneath his yoke, * And Nubia curbed and low its puissance laid.
Look not for news of what is in his grave. * Ah, he is far who can thy vision aid!
The stroke of death fell on him sharp and sure; * Nor saved him palace, nor the lands he swayed."

At this Musa wept with sore weeping and, going on to the fourth tablet, he read inscribed thereon, "O son of Adam, how long shall thy Lord bear with thee and thou every day sunken in the sea of thy folly? Hath it then been stablished unto thee that some day thou shalt not die? O son of Adam, let not the deceits of thy days and nights and times and hours delude thee with their delights; but remember that death lieth ready for thee ambushing, fain on thy shoulders to spring, nor doth a day pass but he morneth with thee in the morning and nighteth with thee by night. Beware, then, of his onslaught and make provision there-against. As was with me, so it is with thee; thou wastest thy whole life and squanderest the joys in which thy days are rife. Hearken, therefore, to my words and put thy trust in the Lord of Lords; for in the world there is no stability; it is but as a spider's web to thee." And at the foot of the tablet were written these couplets,

"Where is the man who did those labours ply * And based and built and reared these walls on high?
Where be the castles' lords? Who therein dwelt * Fared forth and left them in decay to lie.
All are entombed, in pledge against the day * When every sin shall show to every eye.
None but the Lord Most High endurance hath, * Whose Might and Majesty shall never die."

When the Emir read this, he swooned away and presently coming to himself marvelled exceedingly and wrote it down. Then he drew near the fifth tablet and behold, thereon was graven, “O son of Adam, what is it that distracteth thee from obedience of thy Creator and the Author of thy being, Him who reared thee whenas thou west a little one, and fed thee whenas thou west full-grown? Thou art ungrateful for His bounty, albeit He watcheth over thee with His favours, letting down the curtain of His protection over thee. Needs must there be for thee an hour bitterer than aloes and hotter than live coals. Provide thee, therefore, against it; for who shall sweeten its gall or quench its fires? Bethink thee who forewent thee of peoples and heroes and take warning by them, ere thou perish.” And at the foot of the tablet were graven these couplets,

“Where be the Earth-kings who from where they bode, * Sped and
to grave yards with their hoardings yode:
Erst on their mounting-days there hadst beheld * Hosts that
concealed the ground whereon they rode:
How many a king they humbled in their day! * How many a host
they
led and laid on load!
But from th’ Empyrean’s Lord in haste there came * One word, and
joy waxed grief ere morning glowed.”

The Emir marvelled at this and wrote it down; after which he passed on to the sixth tablet and behold, was inscribed thereon, “O son of Adam, think not that safety will endure for ever and aye, seeing that death is sealed to thy head alway. Where be thy fathers, where be thy brethren, where thy friends and dear ones? They have all gone to the dust of the tombs and presented themselves before the Glorious, the Forgiving, as if they had never eaten nor drunken, and they are a pledge for that which they have earned. So look to thyself, ere thy tomb come upon thee.” And at the foot of the tablet were these couplets,

“Where be the Kings who ruled the Franks of old? * Where be the
King who peopled Tingis-wold[131] ?

Their works are written in a book which He, * The One, th' All-
father shall as witness hold."

At this the Emir Musa marvelled and wrote it down, saying, "There is no god but the God! Indeed, how goodly were these folk!" Then he went up to the seventh tablet and behold, thereon was written, "Glory to Him who fore-ordaineth death to all He createth, the Living One, who dieth not! O son of Adam, let not thy days and their delights delude thee, neither thine hours and the delices of their time, and know that death to thee cometh and upon thy shoulder sitteth. Beware, then, of his assault and make ready for his onslaught. As it was with me, so it is with thee; thou wastest the sweet of thy life and the joyance of thine hours. Give ear, then, to my rede and put thy trust in the Lord of Lords and know that in the world is no stability, but it is as it were a spider's web to thee and all that is therein shall die and cease to be. Where is he who laid the foundation of Amid[132] and builded it and builded Fárikín[133] and exalted it? Where be the peoples of the strong places? Whenas them they had inhabited, after their might into the tombs they descended. They have been carried off by death and we shall in like manner be afflicted by doom. None abideth save Allah the Most High, for He is Allah the Forgiving One." The Emir Musa wept and copied all this, and indeed the world was belittled in his eyes. Then he descended the hill and rejoined his host, with whom he passed the rest of tile day, casting about for a means of access to the city. And he said to his Wazir Talib bin Sahl and to the chief officers about him, "How shall we contrive to enter this city and view its marvels?: haply we shall find therein wherewithal to win the favour of the Commander of the Faithful." "Allah prolong the Emir's fortune!" replied Talib, "let us make a ladder and mount the wall therewith, so peradventure we may come at the gate from within." Quoth the Emir, "This is what occurred to my thought also, and admirable is the advice!" Then he called for carpenters and blacksmiths and bade them fashion wood and build a ladder plated and banded with iron. So they made a strong ladder and many men wrought at it a whole month. Then all the company laid hold of it and set it up against the wall, and it reached the top as truly as if it had been built for it before that time.

The Emir marvelled and said, “The blessing of Allah be upon you. It seems as though ye had taken the measure of the mure, so excellent is your work.” Then said he to his men, “Which of you will mount the ladder and walk along the wall and cast about for a way of descending into the city, so to see how the case stands and let us know how we may open the gate?” Whereupon quoth one of them, “I will go up, O Emir, and descend and open to you”; and Musa answered, saying, “Go and the blessing of Allah go with thee!” So the man mounted the ladder; but, when he came to the top of the wall, he stood up and gazed fixedly down into the city, then clapped his hands and crying out, at the top of his voice, “By Allah, thou art fair!” cast himself down into the place, and Musa cried, “By Allah, he is a dead man!” But another came up to him and said, “O Emir, this was a madman and doubtless his madness got the better of him and destroyed him. I will go up and open the gate to you, if it be the will of Allah the Most High.” “Go up,” replied Musa, “and Allah be with thee! But beware lest thou lose thy head, even as did thy comrade.” Then the man mounted the ladder, but no sooner had he reached the top of the wall than he laughed aloud, saying, “Well done! well done!”; and clapping palms cast himself down into the city and died forthright. When the Emir saw this, he said, “An such be the action of a reasonable man, what is that of the madman? If all our men do on this wise, we shall have none left and shall fail of our errand and that of the Commander of the Faithful. Get ye ready for the march: verily we have no concern with this city.” But a third one of the company said, “Haply another may be steadier than they.” So a third mounted the wall and a fourth and a fifth and all cried out and cast themselves down, even as did the first, nor did they leave to do thus, till a dozen had perished in like fashion. Then the Shaykh Abd al-Samad came forward and heartened himself and said, “This affair is reserved to none other than myself; for the experienced is not like the inexperienced.” Quoth the Emir, “Indeed thou shalt not do that nor will I have thee go up: an thou perish, we shall all be cut off to the last man since thou art our guide.” But he answered, saying, “Peradventure, that which we seek may be accomplished at my hands, by the grace of God Most High!” So the folk all agreed to let him mount the ladder, and he arose and heartening himself, said, “In the name of Allah, the Compassionating, the Compassionate!" and mounted the ladder, calling on the name of the Lord and reciting the Verses of Safety.[134] When he reached the top of the wall, he clapped his hands and gazed fixedly down into the city; whereupon the folk below cried out to him with one accord, saying "O Shaykh Abd al-Samad, for the Lord's sake, cast not thyself down!"; and they added, "Verily we are Allah's and unto Him we are returning! If the Shaykh fall, we are dead men one and all." Then he laughed beyond all measure and sat a long hour, reciting the names of Allah Almighty and repeating the Verses of Safety; then he rose arid cried out at the top of his voice, saying, O Emir, have no fear; no hurt shall betide you, for Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) hath averted from me the wiles and malice of Satan, by the blessing of the words, In the name of Allah the Compassionating the Compassionate!'" Asked Musa, "What didst thou see, O Shaykh?"; and Abd al-Samad answered, "I saw ten maidens, as they were Houris of Heaven calling to me with their hands" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Shaykh Abd al-Samad answered, "I saw ten maidens like Houris of Heaven,[135] and they calling and signing,[136] Come hither to us'; and meseemed there was below me a lake of water. So I thought to throw myself down, when behold, I espied my twelve companions lying dead; so I restrained myself and recited somewhat of Allah's Book, whereupon He dispelled from me the damsels' witchlike wiles and malicious guiles and they disappeared. And doubtless this was an enchantment devised by the people of the city, to repel any who should seek to gaze upon or to enter the place. And it hath succeeded in slaying our companions." Then he walked on along the wall, till he came to the two towers of brass aforesaid and saw therein two gates of gold, without pad locks or visible means of opening. Hereat he paused as long as Allah pleased[137] and gazed about him awhile, till he espied in the middle of one of the gates, a horseman of brass with hand outstretched as if pointing, and in his palm was somewhat written. So he went up to it and read these words, "O thou who comest to this place, an thou wouldst enter turn the pin in my navel twelve times and the gate will open.” Accordingly, he examined the horseman and finding in his navel a pin of gold, firm-set and fast fixed, he turned it twelve times, whereupon the horseman revolved like the blinding lightning and the gate swung open with a noise like thunder. He entered and found himself in a long passage,[138] which brought him down some steps into a guard-room furnished with goodly wooden benches, whereon sat men dead, over whose heads hung fine shields and keen blades and bent bows and shafts ready notched. Thence, he came to the main gate of the city; and, finding it secured with iron bars and curiously wrought locks and bolts and chains and other fastenings of wood and metal, said to himself, “Belike the keys are with yonder dead folk.” So he turned back to the guard-room and seeing amongst the dead an old man seated upon a high wooden bench, who seemed the chiefest of them, said in his mind, “Who knows but they are with this Shaykh? Doubtless he was the warder of the city and these others were under his hand.” So he went up to him and lifting his gown, behold, the keys were hanging to his girdle; whereat he joyed with exceeding joy and was like to fly for gladness. Then he took them and going up to the portal, undid the padlocks and drew back the bolts and bars, whereupon the great leaves flew open with a crash like the pealing thunder by reason of its greatness and terribleness. At this he cried out saying, “Allaho Akbar — God is most great!” And the folk without answered him with the same words, rejoicing and thanking him for his deed. The Emir Musa also was delighted at the Shaykh’s safety and the opening of the city-gate, and the troops all pressed forward to enter; but Musa cried out to them, saying, “O folk, if we all go in at once we shall not be safe from some ill-chance which may betide us. Let half enter and other half tarry without.” So he pushed forwards with half his men, bearing their weapons of war, and finding their comrades lying dead, they buried them; and they saw the doorkeepers and eunuchs and chamberlains and officers reclining on couches of silk and all were corpses. Then they fared on till they came to the chief market-place, full of lofty buildings whereof none overpassed the others, and found all its shops open, with the scales hung out and the brazen vessels ordered and the caravanserais full of all manner goods; and they beheld the merchants sitting on the shop-boards dead, with shrivelled skin and rotted bones, a warning to those who can take warning; and here they saw four separate markets all replete with wealth. Then they left the great bazar and went on till they came to the silk market, where they found silks and brocades, orfrayed with red gold and diapered with white silver upon all manner of colours, and the owners lying dead upon mats of scented goats' leather, and looking as if they would speak; after which they traversed the market-street of pearls and rubies and other jewels and came to that of the schroffs and money-changers, whom they saw sitting dead upon carpets of raw silk and dyed stuffs in shops full of gold and silver. Thence they passed to the perfumers' bazar where they found the shops filled with drugs of all kinds and bladders of musk and ambergris and Nadd-scent and camphor and other perfumes, in vessels of ivory and ebony and Khalanj-wood and Andalusian copper, the which is equal in value to gold; and various kinds of rattan and Indian cane; but the shopkeepers all lay dead nor was there with them aught of food. And hard by this drug-market they came upon a palace, imposingly edified and magnificently decorated; so they entered and found therein banners displayed and drawn sword blades and strung bows and bucklers hanging by chains of gold and silver and helmets gilded with red gold. In the vestibules stood benches of ivory, plated with glittering gold and covered with silken stuffs, whereon lay men, whose skin had dried up on their bones; the fool had deemed them sleeping; but, for lack of food, they had perished and tasted the cup of death. Now when the Emir Musa saw this, he stood still, glorifying Allah the Most High and hallowing Him and contemplating the beauty of the palace and the massiveness of its masonry and fair perfection of its ordinance, for it was builded after the goodliest and stablest fashion and the most part of its adornment was of green[139] lapis-lazuli, and on the inner door, which stood open, were written in characters of gold and ultramarine, these couplets,

"Consider thou, O man, what these places to thee showed * And be
upon thy guard ere thou travel the same road:
And prepare thee good provision some day may serve thy turn * For
each dweller in the house needs must yede wi' those who yode
Consider how this people their palaces adorned * And in dust have

been pledged for the seed of acts they sowed
They built but their building availed them not, and hoards * Nor
saved their lives nor day of Destiny forslowed:
How often did they hope for what things were undecreed. * And
passed unto their tombs before Hope the bounty showed
And from high and awful state all a sudden they were sent * To
the straitness of the grave and oh! base is their abode:
Then came to them a Crier after burial and cried, * What booted
thrones or crowns or the gold to you bestowed:
Where now are gone the faces hid by curtain and by veil, * Whose
charms were told in proverbs, those beauties ŕ-la-mode?
The tombs aloud reply to the questioners and cry, * Death's
canker and decay those rosy cheeks corrode'
Long time they ate and drank, but their joyaunce had a term, *
And the eater eke was eaten, and was eaten by the worm."

When the Emir read this, he wept, till he was like to swoon away--And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred ante Seventy-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Emir wept till he was like to swoon away, and bade write down the verses, after which he passed on into the inner palace and came to a vast hall, at each of whose four corners stood a pavilion lofty and spacious, washed with gold and silver and painted in various colours. In the heart of the hall was a great jetting- fountain of alabaster, surmounted by a canopy of brocade, and in each pavilion was a sitting-place and each place had its richly- wrought fountain and tank paved with marble and streams flowing in channels along the floor and meeting in a great and grand cistern of many-coloured marbles. Quoth the Emir to the Shaykh Abd al-Samad, "Come let us visit yonder pavilion!" So they entered the first and found it full of gold and silver and pearls and jacinths and other precious stones and metals, besides chests filled with brocades, red and yellow and white. Then they repaired to the second pavilion, and, opening a closet there, found it full of arms and armour, such as gilded helmets and Davidean[140] hauberks and Hindi swords and Arabian spears and

Chorasmian[141] maces and other gear of fight and fray. Thence they passed to the third pavilion, wherein they saw closets padlocked and covered with curtains wrought with all manner of embroidery. They opened one of these and found it full of weapons curiously adorned with open work and with gold and silver damascene and jewels. Then they entered the fourth pavilion, and opening one of the closets there, beheld in it great store of eating and drinking vessels of gold and silver, with platters of crystal and goblets set with fine pearls and cups of carnelian and so forth. So they all fell to taking that which suited their tastes and each of the soldiers carried off what he could. When they left the pavilions, they saw in the midst of the palace a door of teak-wood marquetried with ivory and ebony and plated with glittering gold, over which hung a silken curtain purfled with all manner of embroideries; and on this door were locks of white silver, that opened by artifice without a key. The Shaykh Abd al-Samad went valiantly up thereto and by the aid of his knowledge and skill opened the locks, whereupon the door admitted them into a corridor paved with marble and hung with veil- like[142] tapestries embroidered with figures of all manner beasts and birds, whose bodies were of red gold and white silver and their eyes of pearls and rubies, amazing all who looked upon them. Passing onwards they came to a saloon builded all of polished marble, inlaid with jewels, which seemed to the beholder as though the floor were flowing water[143] and whoso walked thereon slipped. The Emir bade the Shaykh strew somewhat upon it, that they might walk over it; which being done, they made shift to fare forwards till they came to a great domed pavilion of stone, gilded with red gold and crowned with a cupola of alabaster, about which were set lattice-windows carved and jewelled with rods of emerald,[144] beyond the competence of any King. Under this dome was a canopy of brocede, reposing upon pillars of red gold and wrought with figures of birds whose feet were of smaragd, and beneath each bird was a network of fresh- hued pearls. The canopy was spread above a jetting fountain of ivory and carnelian, plated with glittering gold and thereby stood a couch set with pearls and rubies and other jewels and beside the couch a pillar of gold. On the capital of the column stood a bird fashioned of red rubies and holding in his bill a pearl which shone like a star; and on the couch lay a damsel, as she were the lucident sun, eyes never saw a fairer. She wore a tight-fitting body-robe of fine pearls, with a crown of red gold on her head, filleted with gems, and on her forehead were two great jewels, whose light was as the light of the sun. On her breast she wore a jewelled amulet, filled with musk and ambergris and worth the empire of the Caesars; and around her neck hung a collar of rubies and great pearls, hollowed and filled with odoriferous musk And it seemed as if she gazed on them to the right and to the left. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the damsel seemed to be gazing at the folk to the right and to the left. The Emir Musa marvelled at her exceeding beauty and was confounded at the blackness of her hair and the redness of her cheeks, which made the beholder deem her alive and not dead, and said to her, "Peace be with thee, O damsel!" But Talib ibn Sahl said to him, "Allah preserve thee, O Emir, verily this damsel is dead and there is no life in her; so how shall she return thy salam?" adding, Indeed, she is but a corpse embalmed with exceeding art; her eyes were taken out after her death and quicksilver set under them, after which they were restored to their sockets. Wherefore they glisten and when the air moveth the lashes, she seemeth to wink and it appeareth to the beholder as though she looked at him, for all she is dead." At this the Emir marvelled beyond measure and said, "Glory be to God who subjugateth His creatures to the dominion of Death!" Now the couch on which the damsel lay, had steps, and thereon stood two statues of Andalusian copper representing slaves, one white and the other black. The first held a mace of steel[145] and the second a sword of watered steel which dazzled the eye; and between them, on one of the steps of the couch, lay a golden tablet, whereon were written, in characters of white silver, the following words: "In the name of God, the Compassionating, the Compassionate! Praise be to Allah, the Creator of mankind; and He is the Lord of Lords, the Causer of Causes! In the name of Allah, the Never beginning, the Everlasting, the Ordainer of Fate and Fortune! O son of Adam! what hath befooled thee in this long esperance? What hath unminded thee of the Death-day's mischance? Knowest thou not that Death calleth for thee and hasteneth to seize upon the soul of thee? Be ready, therefore, for the way and provide thee for thy departure from the world; for, assuredly, thou shalt leave it without delay. Where is Adam, first of humanity? Where is Noah with his progeny? Where be the Kings of Hind and Irak-plain and they who over earth's widest regions reign? Where do the Amalekites abide and the giants and tyrants of olden tide? Indeed, the dwelling-places are void of them and they have departed from kindred and home. Where be the Kings of Arab and Ajam? They are dead, all of them, and gone and are become rotten bones. Where be the lords so high in stead? They are all done dead. Where are Kora and Haman? Where is Shaddad son of Ad? Where be Canaan and Zul-Autad,[146] Lord of the Stakes? By Allah, the Reaper of lives hath reaped them and made void the lands of them. Did they provide them against the Day of Resurrection or make ready to answer the Lord of men? O thou, if thou know me not, I will acquaint thee with my name: I am Tadmurah,[147] daughter of the Kings of the Amalekites, of those who held dominion over the lands in equity and brought low the necks of humanity. I possessed that which never King possessed and was righteous in my rule and did justice among my lieges; yea, I gave gifts and largesse and freed bondsmen and bondswomen. Thus lived I many years in all ease and delight of life, till Death knocked at my door and to me and to my folk befel calamities galore; and it was on this wise. There betided us seven successive years of drought, wherein no drop of rain fell on us from the skies and no green thing sprouted for us on the face of earth.[148] So we ate what was with us of victual, then we fell upon the cattle and devoured them, until nothing was left. Thereupon I let bring my treasures and meted them with measures and sent out trusty men to buy food. They circuited all the lands in quest thereof and left no city unsought, but found it not to be bought and returned to us with the treasure after a long absence; and gave us to know that they could not succeed in bartering fine pearls for poor wheat, bushel for bushel, weight for weight. So, when we despaired of succour, we displayed all our riches and things of price and, shutting the gates of the city and its strong places, resigned ourselves to the deme of our Lord and committed our case to our King. Then we all died,[149] as thou seest us, and left what we had builded and all we had hoarded. This, then, is our story, and after the substance naught abideth but the trace.” Then they looked at the foot of the tablet and read these couplets,

“O child of Adam, let not hope make mock and flyte at thee, *
Prom all thy hands have treasuréd, removéd thou shalt be;
I see thou covetest the world and fleeting worldly charms, * And
races past and gone have done the same as thou I see.
Lawful and lawless wealth they got; but all their hoarded store,

* Their term accomplished, naught delayed of Destiny’s
decree.
Armies they led and puissant men and gained them gold galore; *
Then left their wealth and palaces by Pate compelled to
flee,
To straitness of the grave-yard and humble bed of dust * Whence,
pledged for every word and deed, they never more win free:
As a company of travellers had unloaded in the night * At house
that lacketh food nor is o’erfain of company:
Whose owner saith, O folk, there be no lodging here for you;’ *
So packed they who had erst unpacked and faréd hurriedly:
Misliking much the march, nor the journey nor the halt * Had
aught of pleasant chances or had aught of goodly greet
Then prepare thou good provision for to-morrow’s journey stored,

* Naught but righteous honest life shall avail thee with the
Lord!”

And the Emir Musa wept as he read, “By Allah, the fear of the Lord is the best of all property, the pillar of certainty and the sole sure stay. Verily, Death is the truth manifest and the sure behest, and therein, O thou, is the goal and return place evident. Take warning, therefore, by those who to the dust did wend and hastened on the way of the predestined end. Seest thou not that hoary hairs summon thee to the tomb and that the whiteness of thy locks maketh moan of thy doom? Wherefore be thou on the wake ready for thy departure and thine account to make. O son of Adam, what hath hardened thy heart in mode abhorred? What hath seduced thee from the service of thy Lord? Where be the peoples of old time? They are a warning to whoso will be warned! Where be the Kings of al-Sín and the lords of majestic mien? Where is Shaddad bin Ad and whatso he built and he stablished? Where is Nimrod who revolted against Allah and defied Him? Where is Pharaoh who rebelled against God and denied Him? Death followed hard upon the trail of them all, and laid them low sparing neither great nor small, male nor female; and the Reaper of Mankind cut them off, yea, by Him who maketh night to return upon day! Know, O thou who comest to this place, that she whom thou seest here was not deluded by the world and its frail delights, for it is faithless, perfidious, a house of ruin, vain and treacherous; and salutary to the creature is the remembrance of his sins; wherefore she feared her Lord and made fair her dealings and provided herself with provaunt against the appointed marching day. Whoso cometh to our city and Allah vouchsafeth him competence to enter it, let him take of the treasure all he can, but touch not aught that is on my body, for it is the covering of my shame[150] and the outfit for the last journey; wherefore let him fear Allah and despoil naught thereof; else will he destroy his own self. This have I set forth to him for a warning from me and a solemn trust to be; wherewith, peace be with ye and I pray Allah to keep you from sickness and calamity." And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-seventh Night,

She said, it hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Emir Musa read this, he wept with exceeding weeping till he swooned away and presently coming to himself, wrote down all he had seen and was admonished by all he had witnessed. Then he said to his men, "Fetch the camels and load them with these treasures and vases and jewels." "O Emir," asked Talib, "shall we leave our damsel with what is upon her, things which have no equal and whose like is not to be found and more perfect than aught else thou takest; nor couldst thou find a goodlier offering wherewithal to propitiate the favour of the Commander of the Faithful?" But Musa answered, "O man, heardest thou not what the Lady saith on this tablet? More by token that she giveth it in trust to us who are no traitors." "And shall we," rejoined the Wazir Talib, "because of these words, leave all these riches and jewels, seeing that she is dead? What should she do with these that are the adornments of the world and the ornament of the worldling, seeing that one garment of cotton would suffice for her covering? We have more right to them than she." So saying he mounted the steps of the couch between the pillars, but when he came within reach of the two slaves, lo! the mace-bearer smote him on the back and the other struck him with the sword he held in his hand and lopped off his head, and he dropped down dead. Quoth the Emir, "Allah have no mercy on thy resting-place! Indeed there was enough in these treasures, and greed of gain assuredly degradeth a man." Then he bade admit the troops; so they entered and loaded the camels with those treasures and precious ores; after which they went forth and the Emir commanded them to shut the gate as before. They fared on along the sea-shore a whole month, till they came in sight of a high mountain overlooking the sea and full of caves, wherein dwelt a tribe of blacks, clad in hides, with burnooses also of hide and speaking an unknown tongue. When they saw the troops they were startled like shying steeds and fled into the caverns, whilst their women and children stood at the cave doors, looking on the strangers. "O Shaykh Abd al-Samad," asked the Emir, "what are these folk?" and he answered, "They are those whom we seek for the Commander of the Faithful." So they dismounted and setting down their loads, pitched their tents; whereupon, almost before they had done, down came the King of the blacks from the mountain and drew near the camp. Now he understood the Arabic tongue; so, when he came to the Emir he saluted him with the salam and Musa returned his greeting and entreated him with honour. Then quoth he to the Emir, "Are ye men or Jinn?" "Well, we are men," quoth Musa; "but doubtless ye are Jinn, to judge by your dwelling apart in this mountain which is cut off from mankind, and by your inordinate bulk." "Nay," rejoined the black; "we also are children of Adam, of the lineage of Ham, son of Noah (with whom be peace!), and this sea is known as Al-Karkar." Asked Musa, "O King, what is your religion and what worship ye?"; and he answered, saying, "We worship the God of the heavens and our religion is that of Mohammed, whom Allah bless and preserve!" "And how came ye by the knowledge of this," questioned the Emir, "seeing that no prophet was inspired to visit this country?" "Know, Emir," replied the King, "that there appeared to us whilere from out the sea a man, from whom issued a light that illumined the horizons and he cried out, in a voice which was heard of men far and near, saying, O children of Ham, reverence to Him who seeth and is not seen and say ye, There is no god but the God, and Mohammed is the messenger of God!' And he added, I am Abu al-Abbás al-Khizr.' Before this we were wont to worship one another, but he summoned us to the service of the Lord of all creatures; and he taught us to repeat these words, There is no god save the God alone, who hath for partner none, and His is the kingdom and His is the praise. He giveth life and death and He over all things is Almighty.' Nor do we draw near unto Allah (be He exalted and extolled!) except with these words, for we know none other; but every eve before Friday[151] we see a light upon the face of earth and we hear a voice saying, Holy and glorious, Lord of the Angels and the Spirit! What He willeth is, and what He willeth not, is not. Every boon is of His grace and there is neither Majesty nor is there Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!' But ye," quoth the King, "who and what are ye and what bringeth you to this land?" Quoth Musa, "We are officers of the Sovereign of Al-Islam, the Commander of the Faithful, Abd al- Malik bin Marwan, who hath heard tell of the lord Solomon, son of David (on whom be peace!) and of that which the Most High bestowed upon him of supreme dominion; how he held sway over Jinn and beast and bird and was wont when he was wroth with one of the Marids, to shut him in a cucurbite of brass and, stopping its mouth on him with lead, whereon he impressed his seal ring, to cast him into the sea of Al-Karkar. Now we have heard tell that this sea is nigh your land; so the Commander of the Faithful hath sent us hither, to bring him some of these cucurbites, that he may look thereon and solace himself with their sight. Such, then, is our case and what we seek of thee, O King, and we desire that thou further us in the accomplishment of our errand commanded by the Commander of the Faithful." "With love and gladness," replied the black King, and carrying them to the guest house, entreated them with the utmost honour and furnished them with all they needed, feeding them upon fish. They abode thus three days, when he bade his divers fetch from out the sea some of the vessels of Solomon. So they dived and brought up twelve cucurbites, whereat the Emir and the Shaykh and all the company rejoiced in the accomplishment of the Caliph's need. Then Musa gave the King of the blacks many and great gifts; and he, in turn, made him a present Of the wonders of the deep, being fishes in human form,[152] saying "Your entertainment these three days hath been of the meat of these fish." Quoth the Emir, "Needs must we carry some of these to the Caliph, for the sight of them will please him more than the cucurbites of Solomon." Then they took leave of the black King and, setting out on their homeward journey, travelled till they came to Damascus, where Musa went in to the Commander of the Faithful and told him all that he had sighted and heard of verses and legends and instances, together with the manner of the death of Talib bin Sahl; and the Caliph said, "Would I had been with you, that I might have seen what you saw!" Then he took the brazen vessels and opened them, cucurbite after cucurbite, whereupon the devils came forth of them, saying, "We repent, O Prophet of Allah! Never again will we return to the like of this thing; no never!" And the Caliph marvelled at this. As for the daughters of the deep presented to them by the black King, they made them cisterns of planks, full of water, and laid them therein; but they died of the great heat. Then the Caliph sent for the spoils of the Brazen City and divided them among the Faithful, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph marvelled much at the cucurbites and their contents; then he sent for the spoils and divided them among the Faithful, saying, "Never gave Allah unto any the like of that which he bestowed upon Solomon David-son!" Thereupon the Emir Musa sought leave of him to appoint his son Governor of the Province in his stead, that he might be take himself to the Holy City of Jerusalem, there to worship Allah. So the Commander of the Faithful invested his son Harun with the government and Musa repaired to the Glorious and Holy City, where he died. This, then, is all that hath come down to us of the story of the City of Brass, and God is All-knowing! Now (continued

Shahrazad) I have another tale to tell anent the

CRAFT AND MALICE OF WOMEN,[153] OR THE TALE OF THE KING, HIS SON, HIS CONCUBINE AND THE SEVEN WAZIRS.

There was, in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, a puissant King among the Kings of China, the crown of crowned heads, who ruled over many men of war and vassals with wisdom and justice, might and majesty; equitable to his Ryots, liberal to his lieges and dearly beloved by the hearts of his subjects. He was wealthy as he was powerful, but he had grown old without being blessed with a son, and this caused him sore affliction. He could only brood over the cutting off of his seed and the oblivion that would bury his name and the passing of his realm into the stranger's hands. So he secluded himself in his palace, never going in and out or rising and taking rest till the lieges lost all tidings of him and were sore perplexed and began to talk about their King. Some said, "He's dead"; others said, "No, he's not"; but all resolved to find a ruler who could reign over them and carry out the customs of government. At last, utterly despairing of male issue, he sought the intercession of the Prophet (whom Allah bless and keep!) with the Most High and implored Him, by the glory of His Prophets and Saints and Martyrs and others of the Faithful who were acceptable to Heaven that he would grant him a son, to be the coolth of his eyes and heir to the kingdom after him. Then he rose forthright and, withdrawing to his sitting-saloon, sent for his wife who was the daughter of his uncle. Now this Queen was of surpassing beauty and loveliness, the fairest of all his wives and the dearest to him as she was the nearest: and to boot a woman of excellent wit and passing judgement. She found the King dejected and sorrowful, tearful-eyed and heavy-hearted; so she kissed ground between his hands and said, "O King, may my life ransom thy life! may Time never prove thy foe, nor the shifts of Fortune prevail over thee; may Allah grant thee every joy and ward off from thee all annoy! How is it I see thee brooding over thy case and tormented by the displeasures of memory?" He replied, "Thou wottest well that I am a man now shotten in years, who hath never been blessed with a son, a sight to cool his eyes; so I know that my kingdom shall pass away to the stranger in blood and my name and memory will be blotted out amongst men. ’Tis this causeth me to grieve with excessive grief.” “Allah do away with thy sorrows,” quoth she: “long ere this day a thought struck me; and yearning for issue arose in my heart even as in thine. One night I dreamed a dream and a voice said to me, ‘The King thy husband pineth for progeny: if a daughter be vouchsafed to him, she will be the ruin of his realm; if a son, the youth will undergo much trouble and annoy but he will pass through it without loss of life. Such a son can be conceived by thee and thee only and the time of thy conception is when the moon conjoineth with Gemini!’ I woke from my dream, but after what I heard that voice declare I refrained from breeding and would not consent to bear children.” “There is no help for it but that I have a son, Inshallah, — God willing!” cried the King. Thereupon she soothed and consoled him till he forgot his sorrows and went forth amongst the lieges and sat, as of wont, upon his throne of estate. All rejoiced to see him once more and especially the Lords of his realm. Now when the conjunction of the moon and Gemini took place, the King knew his wife carnally and, by order of Allah Almighty she became pregnant. Presently she anounced the glad tidings to her husband and led her usual life until her nine months of pregnancy were completed and she bare a male child whose face was as the rondure of the moon on its fourteenth night. The lieges of the realm congratulated one another thereanent and the King commanded an assembly of his Olema and philosophers, astrologers and horoscopists, whom he thus addressed, “I desire you to forecast the fortune of my son and to determine his ascendant[154] and whatever is shown by his nativity.” They replied “’Tis well, in Allah’s name, let us do so!” and cast his nativity with all diligence. After ascertaining his ascendant, they pronounced judgement in these words, “We see his lot favourable and his life viable and durable; save that a danger awaiteth his youth.” The father was sorely concerned at this saying, when they added “But, O King, he shall escape from it nor shall aught of injury accrue to him!” Hereupon the King cast aside all cark and care and robed the wizards and dismissed them with splendid honoraria; and he resigned himself to the will of Heaven and acknowledged that the decrees of destiny may not be countervailed. He committed his boy to wet nurses and dry nurses, handmaids and eunuchs, leaving him to grow and fill out in the Harim till he reached the age of seven. Then he addressed letters to his Viceroys and Governors in every clime and by their means gathered together Olema and philosophers and doctors of law and religion, from all countries, to a number of three hundred and three score. He held an especial assembly for them and, when all were in presence, he bade them draw near him and be at their ease while he sent for the food-trays and all ate their sufficiency. And when the banquet ended and the wizards had taken seats in their several degrees, the King asked them, "Wot ye wherefore I have gathered ye together?"; whereto all answered, "We wot not, O King!" He continued, "It is my wish that you select from amongst you fifty men, and from these fifty ten, and from these ten one, that he may teach my son omnem rem scibilem; for whenas I see the youth perfect in all science, I will share my dignity with the Prince and make him partner with me in my possessions." "Know, O King," they replied, "that among us none is more learned or more excellent than Al-Sindibad,[155] hight the Sage, who woneth in thy capital under thy protection. If such be thy design, summon him and bid him do thy will." The King acted upon their advice and the Sage, standing in the presence, expressed his loyal sentiments with his salutation, whereupon his Sovereign bade him draw nigh and thus raised his rank, saying, "I would have thee to know, O Sage, that I summoned this assembly of the learned and bade them choose me out a man to teach my son all knowledge; when they selected thee without dissenting thought or voice. If, then, thou feel capable of what they claimed for thee, come thou to the task and understand that a man's son and heir is the very fruit of his vitals and core of his heart and liver. My desire of thee is thine instruction of him; and to happy issue Allah guideth!" The King then sent for his son and committed him to Al-Sindibad conditioning the Sage to finish his education in three years. He did accordingly but, at the end of that time, the young Prince had learned nothing, his mind being wholly occupied with play and disport; and when summoned and examined by his sire, behold, his knowledge was as nil. Thereupon the King turned his attention to the learned once more and bade them elect a tutor for his youth; so they asked, “And what hath his governor, Al-Sindibad, been doing?” and when the King answered, “He hath taught my son naught;” the Olema and philosophers and high officers summoned the instructor and said to him, “O Sage, what prevented thee from teaching the King’s son during this length of days?” “O wise men,” he replied, “the Prince’s mind is wholly occupied with disport and play; yet, an the King will make with me three conditions and keep to them, I will teach him in seven months what he would not learn (nor indeed could any other lesson him) within seven years.” “I hearken to thee,” quoth the King, “and I submit myself to thy conditions;” and quoth Al-Sindibad, “Hear from me, Sire, and bear in mind these three sayings, whereof the first is, ‘Do not to others what thou wouldest not they do unto thee’;[156] and second, ‘Do naught hastily without consulting the experienced’; and thirdly, ‘Where thou hast power show pity.’[157] In teaching this lad I require no more of thee but to accept these three dictes and adhere thereto.” Cried the King, “Bear ye witness against me, O all ye here assembled, that I stand firm by these conditions!”; and caused a proces verbal to be drawn up with his personal security and the testimony of his courtiers. Thereupon the Sage, taking the Prince’s hand, led him to his place, and the King sent them all requisites of provaunt and kitchen-batteries, carpets and other furniture. Moreover the tutor bade build a house whose walls he lined with the whitest stucco painted over with ceruse,[158] and, lastly, he delineated thereon all the objects concerning which he proposed to lecture his pupil. When the place was duly furnished, he took the lad’s hand and installed him in the apartment which was amply furnished with belly-timber; and, after stablishing him therein, went forth and fastened the door with seven padlocks. Nor did he visit the Prince save every third day when he lessoned him on the knowledge to be extracted from the wall-pictures and renewed his provision of meat and drink, after which he left him again to solitude. So whenever the youth was straitened in breast by the tedium and ennui of loneliness, he applied himself diligently to his object-lessons and mastered all the deductions therefrom. His governor seeing this turned his mind into other channel and taught him the inner meanings of the external objects; and in a little time the pupil mastered every requisite. Then the Sage took him from the house and taught him cavalarice and Jerid play and archery. When the pupil had thoroughly mastered these arts, the tutor sent to the King informing him that the Prince was perfect and complete in all things required to figure favourably amongst his peers. Hereat the King rejoiced; and, summoning his Wazirs and Lords of estate to be present at the examination, commanded the Sage to send his son into the presence. Thereupon Al-Sindibad consulted his pupil's horoscope and found it barred by an inauspicious conjunction which would last seven days; so, in sore affright for the youth's life, he said, "Look into thy nativity-scheme." The Prince did so and, recognising the portent, feared for himself and presently asked the Sage, saying, "What dost thou bid me do?" "I bid thee," he answered, "remain silent and speak not a word during this se'nnight; even though thy sire slay thee with scourging. An thou pass safely through this period, thou shalt win to high rank and succeed to thy sire's reign; but an things go otherwise then the behest is with Allah from the beginning to the end thereof." Quoth the pupil, "Thou art in fault, O preceptor, and thou hast shown undue haste in sending that message to the King before looking into my horoscope. Hadst thou delayed till the week had passed all had been well." Quoth the tutor, "O my son, what was to be was; and the sole defaulter therein was my delight in thy scholarship. But now be firm in thy resolve; rely upon Allah Almighty and determine not to utter a single word." Thereupon the Prince fared for the presence and was met by the Wazirs who led him to his father. The King accosted him and addressed him but he answered not; and sought speech of him but he spake not. Whereupon the courtiers were astounded and the monarch, sore concerned for his son, summoned Al-Sindibad. But the tutor so hid himself that none could hit upon his trace nor gain tidings of him; and folk said, "He was ashamed to appear before the King's majesty and the courtiers." Under these conditions the Sovereign heard some of those present saying, "Send the lad to the Serraglio where he will talk with the women and soon set aside this bashfulness;" and, approving their counsel, gave orders accordingly. So the Prince was led into the palace, which was compassed about by a running stream whose banks were planted with all manner of fruit-trees and sweet-smelling flowers. Moreover, in this palace were forty chambers and in every chamber ten slave-girls, each skilled in some instrument of music, so that whenever one of them played, the palace danced to her melodious strains. Here the Prince passed one night; but, on the following morning, the King's favourite concubine happened to cast eyes upon his beauty and loveliness, his symmetrical stature, his brilliancy and his perfect grace, and love gat hold of her heart and she was ravished with his charms.[159] So she went up to him and threw herself upon him, but he made her no response; whereupon, being dazed by his beauty, she cried out to him and required him of himself and importuned him; then she again threw herself upon him and clasped him to her bosom kissing him and saying, "O King's son, grant me thy favours and I will set thee in thy father's stead; I will give him to drink of poison, so he may die and thou shalt enjoy his realm and wealth." When the Prince heard these words, he was sore enraged against her and said to her by signs, "O accursed one, so it please Almighty Allah, I will assuredly requite thee this thy deed, whenas I can speak; for I will go forth to my father and will tell him, and he shall kill thee." So signing, he arose in rage, and went out from her chamber; whereat she feared for herself. Thereupon she buffeted her face and rent her raiment and tare her hair and bared her head, then went in to the King and cast herself at his feet, weeping and wailing. When he saw her in this plight, he was sore concerned and asked her, "What aileth thee, O damsel? How is it with thy lord, my son? Is he not well?"; and she answered, "O King, this thy son, whom thy courtiers avouch to be dumb, required me of myself and I repelled him, whereupon he did with me as thou seest and would have slain me; so I fled from him, nor will I ever return to him, nor to the palace again, no, never again!" When the King heard this, he was wroth with exceeding wrath and, calling his seven Wazirs, bade them put the Prince to death. However, they said one to other, "If we do the King's commandment, he will surely repent of having ordered his son's death, for he is passing dear to him and this child came not to him save after despair; and he will round upon us and blame us, saying, 'Why did ye not contrive to dissuade me from slaying him?'" So they took counsel together, to turn him from his purpose, and the chief Wazir said, "I will warrant you from the King's mischief this day.” Then he went in to the presence and prostrating himself craved leave to speak. The King gave him permission, and he said, “O King, though thou hadst a thousand sons, yet were it no light matter to thee to put one of them to death, on the report of a woman, be she true or be she false; and belike this is a lie and a trick of her against thy son; for indeed, O King, I have heard tell great plenty of stories of the malice, the craft and perfidy of women.” Quoth the King, “Tell me somewhat of that which hath come to thy knowledge thereof.” And the Wazir answered, saying, ‘Yes, there hath reached me, O King, a tale entituled

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The King and his Wazir's Wife.[160]

There was once a King of the Kings, a potent man and a proud, who was devoted to the love of women and one day being in the privacy of his palace, he espied a beautiful woman on the terraceroof of her house and could not contain himself from falling consumedly in love with her.[161] He asked his folk to whom the house and the damsel belonged and they said, "This is the dwelling of the Wazir such an one and she is his wife." So he called the Minister in question and despatched him on an errand to a distant part of the kingdom, where he was to collect information and to return; but, as soon as he obeyed and was gone, the King contrived by a trick to gain access to his house and his spouse. When the Wazir's wife saw him, she knew him and springing up, kissed his hands and feet and welcomed him. Then she stood afar off, busying herself in his service, and said to him, "O our lord, what is the cause of thy gracious coming? Such an honour is not for the like of me." Quoth he, "The cause of it is that love of thee and desire thee-wards have moved me to this. Whereupon she kissed ground before him a second time and said, "By Allah, O our lord, indeed I am not worthy to be the handmaid of one of the King's servants; whence then have I the great good fortune to be in such high honour and favour with thee?" Then the King put out his hand to her intending to enjoy her person, when she said, "This thing shall not escape us; but take patience, O my King, and abide with thy handmaid all this day, that she may make ready for thee somewhat to eat and drink." So the King sat down on his Minister's couch and she went in haste and brought him a book wherein he might read, whilst she made ready the food. He took the book and, beginning to read, found therein moral instances and exhortations, such as restrained him from adultery and broke his courage to commit sin and crime. After awhile, she returned and set before him some ninety dishes of different kinds of colours, and he ate a mouthful of each and found that, while the number was many, the taste of them was one. At this, he marvelled with exceeding marvel and said to her, "O damsel, I see these meats to be manifold and various, but the taste of them is simple and the same." "Allah prosper the King!" replied she, "this is a parable I have set for thee, that thou mayst be admonished thereby." He asked, "And what is its meaning?"; and she answered, "Allah amend the case of our lord the King!; in thy palace are ninety concubines of various colours, but their taste is one."[162] When the King heard this, he was ashamed and rising hastily, went out, without offering her any affront and returned to his palace; but, in his haste and confusion, he forgot his signet-ring and left it under the cushion where he had been sitting and albeit he remembered it he was ashamed to send for it. Now hardly had he reached home when the Wazir returned and, presenting himself before the King, kissed the ground and made his report to him of the state of the province in question. Then he repaired to his own house and sat down on his couch and chancing to put his hand under the cushion, behold, he found the King's seal-ring. So he knew it and taking the matter to heart, held aloof in great grief from his wife for a whole year, not going in unto her nor even speaking to her, whilst she knew not the reason of his anger. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir held aloof from his wife, whilst she knew not the cause of his wrath. At last, being weary of the longsome neglect, she sent for her sire and told him the case; whereupon quoth he, "I will complain of him to the King, at some time when he is in the presence." So, one day, he went in to the King and, finding the Wazir and the Kazi of the army before him,[163] complained thus saying, "Almighty Allah amend the King's case! I had a fair flower-garden, which I planted with mine own hand and thereon spent my substance till it bare fruit; and its fruitage was ripe for plucking, when I gave it to this thy Wazir, who ate of it what seemed good to him, then deserted it and watered it not, so that its bloom wilted and withered and its sheen departed and its state changed." Then said the Wazir, "O my King, this man saith sooth. I did indeed care for and guard the garden and kept it in good condition and ate thereof, till one day I went thither and I saw the trail of the lion there, wherefore I feared for my life and withdrew from the garden." The King understood him that the trail of the lion meant his own seal-ring, which he had forgotten in the woman's house; so he said, “Return, O Wazir, to thy flower-garden and fear nothing, for the lion came not near it. It hath reached me that he went thither; but, by the honour of my fathers and forefathers, he offered it no hurt.” “Hearkening and obedience,” answered the Minister and, returning home sent for his wife and made his peace with her and thenceforth put faith in her chastity. “This I tell thee, O King (continued the Wazir), for no other purpose save to let thee know how great is their craft and how precipitancy bequeatheth repentance.[164] And I have also heard the following

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Story of the Confectioner, his Wife, and the Parrot.

Once upon a time there dwelt in Egypt a confectioner who had a wife famed for beauty and loveliness; and a parrot which, as occasion required, did the office of watchman and guard, bell and spy, and flapped her wings did she but hear a fly buzzing about the sugar. This parrot caused abundant trouble to the wife, always telling her husband what took place in his absence. Now one evening, before going out to visit certain friends, the confectioner gave the bird strict injunctions to watch all night and bade his wife make all fast, as he should not return until morning. Hardly had he left the door than the woman went for her old lover, who returned with her and they passed the night together in mirth and merriment, while the parrot observed all. Betimes in the morning the lover fared forth and the husband, returning, was informed by the parrot of what had taken place; whereupon he hastened to his wife's room and beat her with a painful beating. She thought in herself, "Who could have informed against me?" and she asked a woman that was in her confidence whether it was she. The woman protested by the worlds visible and invisible that she had not betrayed her mistress; but informed her that on the morning of his return home, the husband had stood some time before the cage listening to the parrot's talk. When the wife heard this, she resolved to contrive the destruction of the bird. Some days after, the husband was again invited to the house of a friend where he was to pass the night; and, before departing, he enjoined the parrot with the same injunctions as before; wherefore his heart was free from care, for he had his spy at home. The wife and her confidante then planned how they might destroy the credit of the parrot with the master. For this purpose they resolved to counterfeit a storm; and this they did by placing over the parrot's head a hand-mill (which the lover worked by pouring water upon a piece of hide), by waving a fan and by suddenly uncovering a candle hid under a dish. Thus did they raise such a tempest of rain and lightning, that the parrot was drenched and half-drowned in a deluge. Now rolled the thunder, then flashed the lightning; that from the noise of the hand-mill, this from the reflection of the candle; when thought the parrot to herself, “In very sooth the flood hath come on, such an one as belike Noah himself never witnessed.” So saying she buried her head under her wing, a prey to terror. The husband, on his return, hastened to the parrot to ask what had happened during his absence; and the bird answered that she found it impossible to describe the deluge and tempest of the last night; and that years would be required to explain the uproar of the hurricane and storm. When the shopkeeper heard the parrot talk of last night’s deluge, he said: “Surely O bird, thou art gone clean daft! Where was there, even in a dream, rain or lightning last night? Thou hast utterly ruined my house and ancient family. My wife is the most virtuous woman of the age and all thine accusations of her are lies.” So in his wrath he dashed the cage upon the ground, tore off the parrot’s head, and threw it from the window. Presently his friend, coming to call upon him, saw the parrot in this condition with head torn off, and without wings or plumage. Being informed of the circumstances he suspected some trick on the part of the woman, and said to the husband, “When your wife leaves home to go to the Hammam-bath, compel her confidante to disclose the secret.” So as soon as his wife went out, the husband entered his Harim and insisted on the woman telling him the truth. She recounted the whole story and the husband now bitterly repented having killed the parrot, of whose innocence he had proof. “This I tell thee, O King (continued the Wazir), that thou mayst know how great are the craft and malice of women and that to act in haste leadeth to repent at leisure.” So the King turned from slaying his son: but, next day, the favourite came in to him and, kissing the ground before him, said, “O King, why dost thou delay to do me justice? Indeed, the Kings have heard that thou commandest a thing and thy Wazir countermandeth it. Now the obedience of Kings is in the fulfilment of their commandments, and every one knows thy justice and equity: so do thou justice for me on the Prince. I also have heard tell a tale concerning

The Fuller and his Son.

There was once a man which was a fuller, and he used every day to go forth to the Tigris-bank a-cleaning clothes; and his son was wont to go with him that he might swim whilst his father was fulling, nor was he forbidden from this. One day, as the boy was swimming,[165] he was taken with cramp in the forearms and sank, whereupon the fuller plunged into the water and caught hold of him; but the boy clung about him and pulled him down and so father and son were both drowned. "Thus it is with thee, O King. Except thou prevent thy son and do me justice on him, I fear lest both of you sink together, thou and he." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it Was the Five Hundred and Eightieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the favourite had told her tale of the Fuller and his son, she ended with, "I fear lest both of you sink together, thou and he. Moreover," continued she, "for an instance of the malice of men, I have heard tell a tale concerning

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The Rake's Trick against the Chaste Wife.

A certain man loved a beautiful and lovely woman, a model of charms and grace, married to a man whom she loved and who loved her. Moreover, she was virtuous and chaste, like unto me, and her rake of a lover found no way to her; so when his patience was at an end, he devised a device to win his will. Now the husband had a young man, whom he had brought up in his house and who was in high trust with him as his steward. So the rake addressed himself to the youth and ceased not insinuating himself into his favour by presents and fair words and deeds, till he became more obedient to him than the hand to the mouth and did whatever he ordered him. One day, he said to him, "Harkye, such an one; wilt thou not bring me into the family dwelling-place some time when the lady is gone out?" "Yes," answered the young steward so, when his master was at the shop and his mistress gone forth to the Hammam, he took his friend by the hand and, bringing him into the house, showed him the sitting-rooms and all that was therein. Now the lover was determined to play a trick upon the woman; so he took the white of an egg which he had brought with him in a vessel, and spilt it on the merchant's bedding, unseen by the young man; after which he returned thanks and leaving the house went his way. In an hour or so the merchant came home; and, going to the bed to rest himself, found thereon something wet. So he took it up in his hand and looked at it and deemed it man's seed; whereat he stared at the young man with eyes of wrath, and asked him, "Where is thy mistress?"; and he answered, "She is gone forth to the Hammam and will return forthright after she has made her ablutions."[166] When the man heard this, his suspicion concerning the semen was confirmed; and he waxed furious and said, "Go at once and bring her back." The steward accordingly fetched her and when she came before her husband, the jealous man sprang upon her and beat her a grievous beating; then, binding her arms behind her, offered to cut her throat with a knife; but she cried out to the neighbours, who came to her, and she said to them, "This my man hath beaten me unjustly and without cause and is minded to kill me, though I know not what is mine offence." So they rose up and asked him, “Why hast thou dealt thus by her?” And he answered, “She is divorced.” Quoth they, “Thou hast no right to maltreat her; either divorce her or use her kindly, for we know her prudence and purity and chastity. Indeed, she hath been our neighbour this long time and we wot no evil of her.” Quoth he, “When I came home, I found on my bed seed like human sperm, and I know not the meaning of this.” Upon this a little boy, one of those present, came forward and said, “Show it to me, nuncle mine!” When he saw it, he smelt it and, calling for fire and a frying-pan, he took the white of egg and cooked it so that it became solid. Then he ate of it and made the husband and the others taste if it, and they were certified that it was white of egg. So the husband was convinced that he had sinned against his wife’s innocence, she being clear of all offence, and the neighbours made peace between them after the divorce, and he prayed her pardon and presented her with an hundred gold pieces. And so the wicked lover’s cunning trick came to naught. “And know, O King, that this is an instance of the malice of men and their perfidy.” When the King heard this, he bade his son be slain; but on the next day the second Wazir came forward for intercession and kissed ground in prostration. Whereupon the King said, “Raise thy head: prostration must be made to Allah only.”[167] So the Minister rose from before him and said, “O King, hasten not to slay thy son, for he was not granted to his mother by the Almighty but after despair, nor didst thou expect such good luck; and we hope that he will live to become a guerdon to thy reign and a guardian of thy good. Wherefore, have patience, O King; belike he will offer a fit excuse; and, if thou make haste to slay him, thou wilt surely repent, even as the merchant-wight repented.” Asked the King, “And how was it with the merchant, O Wazir?”; and the Wazir answered, “O King, I have heard a tale of

The Miser and the Loaves of Bread.

There was once a merchant, who was a niggard and miserly in his eating and drinking. One day, he went on a journey to a certain town and as he walked in the market-streets, behold, he met an old trot with two scones of bread which looked sound and fair, He asked her, “Are these for sale?”; and she answered, “Yes!” So he beat her down and bought them at the lowest price and took them home to his lodging, where he ate them that day. When morning morrowed, he returned to the same place and, finding the old woman there with other two scones, bought these also; and thus he ceased not during twenty-five days’ space when the old wife disappeared. He made enquiry for her, but could hear no tidings of her, till, one day as he was walking about the high streets, he chanced upon her: so he accosted her and, after the usual salutation and with much praise and politeness, asked why she had disappeared from the market and ceased to supply the two cakes of bread? Hearing this, at first she evaded giving him a reply; but he conjured her to tell him her case; so she said, “Hear my excuse, O my lord, which is that I was attending upon a man who had a corroding ulcer on his spine, and his doctor bade us knead flour with butter into a plaster and lay it on the place of pain, where it abode all night. In the morning, I used to take that flour and turn it into dough and make it into two scones, which I cooked and sold to thee or to another; but presently the man died and I was cut off from making cakes.”[168] When the merchant heard this, he repented whenas repentance availed him naught, saying, “Verily, we are Allah’s and verily unto Him we are returning! There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Him, the Glorious, the Great!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old trot told the merchant the provenance of the scones, he cried, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” And he repeated the saying of the Most High, “Whatever evil falleth to thee it is from thyself;”[169] and vomited till he fell sick and repented whenas repentance availed him naught. “Moreover, O King” (continued the second Wazir), “I have heard tell, of the malice of women, a tale of

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The Lady and her Two Lovers.

Once upon a time there was a man, who was sword-bearer to one of the Kings, and he loved a damsel of the common sort. One day, he sent his page to her with a message, as of wont between them, and the lad sat down with her and toyed with her. She inclined to him and pressed him to her breast and groped him and kissed him whereupon he sought carnal connection of her and she consented; but, as the two were thus, lo! the youth's master knocked at the door. So she pushed the page through a trapdoor into an underground chamber there and opened the door to his lord, who entered hending sword in hand and sat down upon her bed. Then she came up to him and sported and toyed with him, kissing him and pressing him to her bosom, and he took her and lay with her. Presently, her husband knocked at the door and the gallant asked her, "Who is that?"; whereto she answered, "My husband." Quoth he, "How shall I do?" Quoth she, "Draw thy sword and stand in the vestibule and abuse me and revile me; and when my husband comes in to thee, do thou go forth and wend thy ways." He did as she bade him; and, when the husband entered, he saw the King's sword-bearer standing with naked brand in hand, abusing and threatening his wife; but, when the lover saw him, he was ashamed and sheathing his scymitar, went forth the house. Said the man to his wife, "What means this?"; and she replied, "O man, how blessed is the hour of thy coming! Thou hast saved a True Believer from slaughter, and it happed after this fashion. I was on the house-terrace, spinning,[170] when behold, there came up to me a youth, distracted and panting for fear of death, fleeing from yonder man, who followed upon him as hard as he could with his drawn sword. The young man fell down before me, and kissed my hands and feet, saying, "O Protector, of thy mercy, save me from him who would slay me wrongously!" So I hid him in that underground chamber of ours and presently in came yonder man to me, naked brand in hand, demanding the youth. But I denied him to him, whereupon he fell to abusing and threatening me as thou sawest. And praised be Allah who sent thee to me, for I was distraught and had none to deliver me!" "Well hast thou done, O woman!" answered the husband. “Thy reward is with Allah the Almighty, and may He abundantly requite thy good deed!” Then he went to the trap door and called to the page, saying, “Come forth and fear not; no harm shall befal thee.” So he came out, trembling for fear, and the husband said, “Be of good cheer: none shall I hurt thee;” condoling with him on what had befallen him; whilst the page called down blessings on his head. Then they both went forth, nor was that Cornuto nor was the page aware of that which the woman had contrived. “This, then, O King,” said the Wazir, “is one of the tricks of women; so beware lest thou rely upon their words.” The King was persuaded and turned from putting his son to death; but, on the third day, the favourite came in to him and, kissing the ground before him, cried, “O King, do me justice on thy son and be not turned from thy purpose by thy Ministers’ prate, for there is no good in wicked Wazirs, and be not as the King of Baghdad, who relied on the word of a certain wicked counsellor of his.” Quoth he, “And how was that?” Quoth she, “There hath been told me, O auspicious and well-advised King, a tale of

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The Kings Son and the Ogress.[171]

A certain King had a son, whom he loved and favoured with exceeding favour, over all his other children; and this son said to him one day, “O my father, I have a mind to fare a-coursing and a-hunting.” So the King bade furnish him and commanded one of his Wazirs to bear him company and do all the service he needed during his trip. The Minister accordingly took everything that was necessary for the journey and they set out with a retinue of eunuchs and officers and pages, and rode on, sporting as they went, till they came to a green and well-grassed champaign abounding in pasture and water and game. Here the Prince turned to the Minister and told him that the place pleased him and he purposed to halt there. So they set down in that site and they loosed the falcons and lynxes and dogs and caught great plenty of game, whereat they rejoiced and abode there some days, in all joyance of life and its delight. Then the King’s son gave the signal for departure; but, as they went along, a beautiful gazelle, as if the sun rose shining from between her horns, that had strayed from her mate, sprang up before the Prince, whereupon his soul longed to make prize of her and he coveted her. So he said to the Wazir, “I have a mind to follow that gazelle;” and the Minister replied, “Do what seemeth good to thee.” Thereupon the Prince rode single-handed after the gazelle, till he lost sight of his companions, and chased her all that day till dusk, when she took refuge in a bit of rocky ground[172] and darkness closed in upon him. Then he would have turned back, but knew not the way; whereat he was sore concerned and said, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” He sat his mare all night till morning dawned, in quest of relief, but found none; and, when the day appeared, he fared on at hazard fearful, famished, thirsty, and knowing not whither to wend till it was noon and the sun beat down upon him with burning heat. By that time he came in sight of a great city, with massive base and lofty bulwarks; but it was ruined and desolate, nor was there any live thing therein save owl and raven. As he stood among the buildings, marvelling at their ordinance, lo! his eyes fell on a damsel, young, beautiful and lovely, sitting under one of the city walls wailing and weeping copious tears. So he drew nigh to her and asked, “Who art thou and who brought thee hither?” She answered, “I am called Bint al-Tamimah, daughter of Al-Tiyakh, King of the Gray Country. I went out one day to obey a call of nature,[173] when an Ifrit of the Jinn snatched me up and soared with me between heaven and earth; but as he flew there fell on him a shooting-star in the form of a flame of fire and burned him, and I dropped here, where these three days I have hungered and thirsted; but when I saw thee I longed for life.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Prince when addressed by the daughter of King Al-Tiyakh who said to him, “When I saw thee I longed for life,” was smitten with ruth and grief for her and took her up on his courser’s crupper, saying, “Be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear; for, if Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) restore me to my people and family, I will send thee back to thine own folk.” Then he rode on, praying for deliverance, and presently the damsel said to him, “O King’s son, set me down, that I may do an occasion under this wall.” So he drew bridle and she alighted. He waited for her a long while as she hid herself behind the wall; and she came forth, with the foulest of favours; which when he saw, his hair stood on end and he quaked for fear of her and he turned deadly pale. Then she sprang up on his steed, behind him, wearing the most loathly of aspects, and presently she said to him, “O King’s son, what ails thee that I see thee troubled and thy favour changed?” “I have bethought me of somewhat that troubles me.” “Seek aid against it of thy father’s troops and his braves.” “He whom I fear careth naught for troops, neither can braves affright him.” “Aid thyself against him with thy father’s monies and treasures.” “He whom I fear will not be satisfied with wealth.” “Ye hold that ye have in Heaven a God who seeth and is not seen and is Omnipotent and Omniscient.” “Yes, we have none but Him.” “Then pray thou to Him; haply He will deliver thee from me thine enemy!” So the King’s son raised his eyes to heaven and began to pray with his whole heart, saying, “O my God, I implore Thy succour against that which troubleth me.” Then he pointed to her with his hand, and she fell to the ground, burnt black as charcoal. Therewith he thanked Allah and praised Him and ceased not to fare forwards; and the Almighty (extolled and exalted be He!) of His grace made the way easy to him and guided him into the right road, so that he reached his own land and came upon his father's capital, after he had despaired of life. Now all this befel by the contrivance of the Wazir, who travelled with him, to the end that he might cause him to perish on the way; but Almighty Allah succoured him. "And this" (said the damsel) "have I told thee, O King, that thou mayst know that wicked Wazirs deal not honestly by nor counsel with sincere intent their Kings; wherefore be thou wise and ware of them in this matter." The King gave ear to her speech and bade put his son to death; but the third Wazir came in and said to his brother Ministers, "I will warrant you from the King's mischief this day" and, going in to him, kissed the ground between his hands and said, "O King, I am thy true counsellor and solicitous for thee and for thine estate, and indeed I rede thee the best of rede; it is that thou hasten not to slay thy son, the coolth of thine eyes and the fruit of thy vitals. Haply his sin is but a slight slip, which this damsel hath made great to thee; and indeed I have heard tell that the people of two villages once destroyed one another, because of a drop of honey." Asked the King, "How was that?"; and the Wazir answered, saying, "Know, O King, that I have heard this story anent

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The Drop of Honey.[174]

A certain hunter used to chase wild beasts in wold, and one day he came upon a grotto in the mountains, where he found a hollow full of bees' honey. So he took somewhat thereof in a water-skin he had with him and, throwing it over his shoulder, carried it to the city, followed by a hunting dog which was dear to him. He stopped at the shop of an oilman and offered him the honey for sale and he bought it. Then he emptied it out of the skin, that he might see it, and in the act a drop fell to the ground, whereupon the flies flocked to it and a bird swooped down upon the flies. Now the oilman had a cat, which sprang upon the bird, and the huntsman's dog, seeing the cat, sprang upon it and slew it; whereupon the oilman sprang upon the dog and slew it, and the huntsman in turn sprang upon the oilman and slew him. Now the oilman was of one village and the huntsman of another; and when the people of the two places heard what had passed, they took up arms and weapons and rose one on other in wrath and the two lines met; nor did the sword leave to play amongst them, till there died of them much people, none knoweth their number save Almighty Allah. "And amongst other stories of the malice of women" (continued the Wazir) "I have heard tell, O King, one concerning

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The Woman who made her Husband Sift Dust.[175]

A man once gave his wife a dirham to buy rice; so she took it and went to the rice-seller, who gave her the rice and began to jest with her and ogle her, for she was dowered with beauty and loveliness, saying, “Rice is not good but with sugar which if thou wilt have, come in with me for an hour.” So, saying, “Give me sugar,” she went in with him into his shop and he won his will of her and said to his slave, “Weigh her out a dirham’s worth of sugar.” But he made the slave a privy sign, and the boy, taking the napkin, in which was the rice, emptied it out and put in earth and dust in its stead, and for the sugar set stones, after which he again knotted up the napkin and left it by her. His object, in doing this, was that she should come to him a second time; so, when she went forth of the shop, he gave her the napkin and she took it, thinking to have in it rice and sugar, and ganged her gait; but when she returned home and, setting it before her husband, went for a cooking-pot, he found in it earth and stones. So, as soon as she came back bringing the pot, he said to her, “Did I tell thee I had aught to build, that thou bringest me earth and stones?” When she saw this; she knew that the rice-seller’s slave had tricked her; so she said to her husband, “O man, in my trouble of mind for what hath befallen me, I went to fetch the sieve and brought the cooking-pot.” “What hath troubled thee?” asked he; and she answered, “O husband, I dropped the dirham thou gavest me in the market-street and was ashamed to search for it before the folk; yet I grudged to lose the silver, so I gathered up the earth from the place where it fell and brought it away, thinking to sift it at home. Wherefore I went to fetch the sieve, but brought the cooking-pot instead.” Then she fetched the sieve and gave it to her husband, saying, “Do thou sift it; for thine eyes are sharper than mine.” Accordingly he sat, sifting the clay, till his face and beard were covered with dust; and he discovered not her trick, neither knew what had befallen her. “This then, O King,” said the Wazir, “is an instance of the malice of women, and consider the saying of Allah Almighty, “Surely the cunning of you (women) is great!’[176] And again, ‘Indeed, the malice of Satan is weak in comparison with the malice of women.'"[177] The King gave ear to his Wazir's speech and was persuaded thereby and was satisfied by what he cited to him of the signs of Allah[178] ; and the lights of good counsel arose and shone in the firmament of his understanding and he turned from his purpose of slaying his son. But on the fourth day, the favourite came in to him weeping and wailing and, kissing the ground before him, said, "O auspicious King, and lord of good rede, I have made plainly manifest to thee my grievance and thou hast dealt unjustly by me and hast forborne to avenge me on him who hath wronged me, because he is thy son and the darling of thy heart; but Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) will presently succour me against him, even as He succoured the King's son against his father's Wazir." "And how was that?" asked the King; and she answered, "I have heard tell, O King, a tale of

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The Enchanted String.[179]

There was once in times gone by a King who had one son and none other; and, when the Prince grew up to man's estate, he contracted him in marriage to another King's daughter. Now the damsel was a model of beauty and grace and her uncle's son had sought her in wedlock of her sire, but she would none of him. So, when he knew that she was to be married to another, envy and jealousy gat hold of him and he bethought himself and sent a noble present to the Wazir of the bridegroom's father and much treasure, desiring him to use craft for slaying the Prince or contrive to make him leave his intent of espousing the girl and adding, "O Wazir, indeed jealousy moveth me to this for she is my cousin."[180] The Wazir accepted the present and sent an answer, saying, "Be of good cheer and of eyes cool and clear, for I will do all that thou wishest." Presently, the bride's father wrote to the Prince, bidding him to his capital, that he might go in to his daughter; whereupon the King his father gave him leave to wend his way thither, sending with him the bribed Wazir and a thousand horse, besides presents and litters, tents and pavilions. The Minister set out with the Prince, plotting the while in his heart to do him a mischief; and when they came into the desert, he called to mind a certain spring of running water in the mountains there, called Al-Zahra,[181] whereof whosoever drank from a man became a woman. So he called a halt of the troops near the fountain and presently mounting steed again, said to the Prince, "Hast thou a mind to go with me and look upon a spring of water near hand?" The Prince mounted, knowing not what should befal him in the future,[182] and they rode on, unattended by any, and without stopping till they came to the spring. The Prince being thirsty said to the Wazir, "O Minister, I am suffering from drouth," and the other answered, "Get thee down and drink of this spring!" So he alighted and washed his hands and drank, when behold, he straightway became a woman. As soon as he knew what had befallen him, he cried out and wept till he fainted away, and the Wazir came up to him as if to learn what had befallen him and cried, "What aileth thee?" So he told him what had happened, and the Minister feigned to condole with him and weep for his affliction, saying, “Allah Almighty be thy refuge in thine affliction! How came this calamity upon thee and this great misfortune to betide thee, and we carrying thee with joy and gladness, that thou mightest go in to the King’s daughter? Verily, now I know not whether we shall go to her or not; but the rede[183] is thine. What dost thou command me to do?” Quoth the Prince, “Go back to my sire and tell him what hath betided me, for I will not stir hence till this matter be removed from me or I die in my regret.” So he wrote a letter to his father, telling him what had happened, and the Wazir took it and set out on his return to the city, leaving what troops he had with the Prince and inwardly exulting for the success of his plot. As soon as he reached the King’s capital, he went in to him and, telling him what had passed, delivered the letter. The King mourned for his son with sore mourning and sent for the wise men and masters of esoteric science, that they might discover and explain to him this thing which had befallen his son, but none could give him an answer. Then the Wazir wrote to the lady’s cousin, conveying to him the glad news of the Prince’s misfortune, and he when he read the letter rejoiced with great joy and thought to marry the Princess and answered the Minister sending him rich presents and great store of treasure and thanking him exceedingly. Meanwhile, the Prince abode by the stream three days and three nights, eating not nor drinking and committing himself, in his strait, unto Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) who disappointeth not whoso relieth on him. On the fourth night, lo! there came to him a cavalier on a bright-bay steed[184] with a crown on his head, as he were of the sons of the Kings, and said to him, “Who brought thee hither, O youth?” The Prince told him his mishap, how he was wending to his wedding, and how the Wazir had led him to a spring whereof he drank and incurred what had occurred; and as he spoke his speech was broken by tears. Having heard him the horseman pitied his case and said, “It was thy father’s Wazir who cast thee into this strait, for no man alive save he knoweth of this spring;” presently adding, “Mount thee behind me and come with me to my dwelling, for thou art my guest this night.” “Acquaint me who thou art ere I fare with thee,” quoth the Prince; and quoth the other, “I am a King’s son of the Jánn, as thou a King’s son of mankind; so be of good cheer and keep thine eyes clear of tear, for I will surely do away thy cark and care; and this is a slight thing unto me." So the Prince mounted him behind the stranger, and they rode on, leaving the troops, from the first of the day till midnight, when the King's son of the Jinn asked the Prince, "Knowest thou how many days' march we have covered in this time?" "Not I." "We have come a full year's journey for a diligent horseman." The Prince marvelled at this and said, "How shall I do to return to my people?" "That is not thine affair, but my business. As soon as thou art quit of thy complaint, thou shalt return to thy people in less than the twinkling of an eye; for that is an easy matter to me." When the Prince heard these words he was ready to fly for excess of joy; it seemed to him as he were in the imbroglio of a dream and he exclaimed, "Glory be to Him who can restore the unhappy to happiness!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Prince of the Jinn said to the Prince of mankind, "When thou art quit of thy complaint, thou shalt return to thy folk in less than the twinkling of an eye;" and the King's son rejoiced. They fared on all that night till the morning morrowed when lo! they found themselves in a green and smiling country, full of trees spireing and birds quiring and garths fruit-growing and palaces highshowing and waters a-flowing and odoriferous flowers a-blowing. Here the King's son of the Jinn alighted from his steed and, bidding the Prince do the like, took him by the hand and carried him into one of the palaces, where he found a great King and puissant Sultan; and abode with him all that day eating and drinking, till nightfall. Then the King's son of the Jinn mounted his courser and taking the Prince up behind him, fared on swiftly through the murks and glooms until morning, when lo, they found themselves in a dark land and a desert, full of black rocks and stones, as it were a piece of Hell; and the Prince asked the Jinni, "What is the name of this land?" Answered the other, "It is called the Black Country, and belongs to one of the Kings of the Jinn, by name Zu'l Janahayn, against whom none of the other Kings may prevail, neither may any enter his dominions save by his permit; so tarry thou here, whilst I go ask leave." So saying, he went away and, returning after awhile, they fared on again, till they landed at a spring of water welling forth of a black rock, and the King's son of the Jinn said to the King's son of men, "Alight!" He dismounted and the other cried, "Drink of this water!" So he drank of the spring without stay or delay; and, no sooner had he done so than, by grace of Allah, he became a man as before. At this he joyed with exceeding joy and asked the Jinni, "O my brother, how is this spring called?" Answered the other, "It is called the Women's Spring, for that no woman drinketh thereof but she becometh a man: wherefore do thou praise Allah the Most High and thank Him for thy restoration and mount." So the Prince prostrated himself in gratitude to the Almighty, after which he mounted again and they fared on diligently all that day, till they returned to the Jinni's home, where the Prince passed the night in all solace of life. They spent the next day in eating and drinking till nightfall, when the King's son of the Jinn asked the Prince, "Hast thou a mind to return to thy people this very night?" "Yes," he answered; "for indeed I long for them." Then the Jinni called one of his father's slaves, Rajiz[185] hight, and said to him, "Take this young man mounted on thy shoulders, and let not the day dawn ere he be with his father-in-law and his wife." Replied the slave, "Hearkening and obedience, and with love and gladness, and upon my head and eyes!" then, withdrawing awhile, re-appeared in the form of an Ifrit. When the Prince saw this, he lost his senses for affright, but the Jinni said to him, "Fear not; no harm shall befal thee. Mount thy horse and leap him on to the Ifrit's shoulders." "Nay," answered he, "I will leave my horse with thee and bestride his shoulders myself." So he bestrode the Ifrit's shoulders and, when the Jinni cried, "Close thine eyes, O my lord, and be not a craven!" he strengthened his heart and shut his eyes. Thereupon the Ifrit rose with him into the air and ceased not to fly between sky and earth, whilst the Prince was unconscious, nor was the last third of the night come before he alighted down with him on the terrace-roof of his father-in-law's palace. Then said the Ifrit, "Dismount and open thine eyes; for this is the palace of thy father-in-law and his daughter." So he came down and the Ifrit flew away and left him on the roof of the palace. When the day broke and the Prince recovered from his troubles, he descended into the palace and as his father-in-law caught sight of him, he came to meet him and marvelled to see him descend from the roof of the palace, saying, "We see folk enter by the doors; but thou comest from the skies." Quoth the Prince, "Whatso Allah (may He be extolled and exalted!) willeth that cometh to pass." And he told him all that had befallen him, from first to last, whereat the King marvelled and rejoiced in his safety; and, as soon as the sun rose, bade his Wazir make ready splendid bride-feasts. So did he and they held the marriage festival: after which the Prince went in unto his bride and abode with her two months, then departed with her for his father's capital. As for the damsel's cousin, he died forthright of envy and jealousy. When the Prince and his bride drew near his father's city, the King came out to meet them with his troops and Wazirs, and so Allah (blessed and exalted be He!) enabled the Prince to prevail against his bride's cousin and his father's Minister. "And I pray the Almighty" (added the damsel) "to aid thee against thy Wazirs, O King, and I beseech thee to do me justice on thy son!" When the King heard this, he bade put his son to death; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When is was the Five Hundred and Eighty-forth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the favourite had told her tale to the King she said, "I beseech thee to do me justice by putting thy son to death." Now this was the fourth day, so the fourth Wazir entered and, kissing the ground before him, said, "Allah stablish and protect the King! O King, be deliberate in doing this thou art resolved upon, for the wise man doth naught till he hath considered the issue thereof, and the proverb saith, 'Whoso looketh not to his actions' end, hath not the world to friend; and whoso acteth without consideration, there befalleth him what befel the Hammam-keeper with his wife.'" "And what betided him?" asked the King. And the Wazir answered, "I have heard tell, O King, a tale of the

Wazir's Son and the Hammam-Keepeer's Wife."[186]

There was once a bath-keeper, to whom resorted the notables of the folk and head men, and one day there came in to him a handsome youth of the sons of Wazirs who was fat and bulky of body. So he stood to serve him and when the young man put off his clothes[187] he saw not his yard, for that it was hidden between his thighs, by reason of the excess of his fat, and there appeared thereof but what was like unto a filbert.[188] At this the bath-keeper fell a-lamenting and smiting hand upon hand, which when the youth saw, he said to him, "What ails thee, O bath-keeper, to lament thus?" And he answered, saying, "O my lord, my lamentation is for thee, because thou art in sore straits, for all thy fair fortune and goodliness and exceeding comeliness, seeing thou hast naught wherewithal to do and receive delight, like unto other men." Quoth the youth, "Thou sayst sooth, but thou mindest me of somewhat I had forgotten." "What is that?" asked the bathkeeper, and the youth answered, "Take this gold piece and fetch me a pretty woman, that I may prove my nature on her." So he took the money and betaking himself to his wife, said to her, "O woman, there is come to me in the bath a young man of the sons of the Wazirs, as he were the moon on the fullest night; but he hath no prickle like other men, for that which he hath is but some small matter like unto a filbert. I lamented over his youth and he gave me this dinar and asked me to fetch him a woman on whom he might approve himself. Now thou art worthier of the money than another, and from this no harm shall betide us, for I will protect thee. So do thou sit with him awhile and laugh at him and take this dinar from him." So the good wife took the dinar and rising, adorned herself and donned the richest of her raiment. Now she was the fairest woman of her time. Then she went out with her husband and he carried her in to the Wazir's son in a privy place. When she came in to him, she looked at him and finding him a handsome youth, fair of favour as he were the moon at full, was confounded at his beauty and loveliness; and on like wise his heart and wit were amazed at the first sight of her and the sweetness of her smile. So he rose forthright and locking the door, took the damsel in his arms and pressed her to his bosom and they embraced, whereupon the young man's yard swelled and rose on end, as it were that of a jackass, and he rode upon her breast and futtered her, whilst she sobbed and sighed and writhed and wriggled under him. Now the bathkeeper was standing behind the door, awaiting what should betide between them, and he began to call her saying, "O Umm Abdillah, enough! Come out, for the day is long upon thy sucking child." Quoth the youth, "Go forth to thy boy and come back;" but quoth she, "If I go forth from thee, my soul will depart my body; as regards the child, so I must either leave him to die of weeping or let him be reared an orphan, without a mother." So she ceased not to abide with him till he had done his desire of her ten times running, while her husband stood at the door, calling her and crying out and weeping and imploring succour. But none came to aid him and he ceased not to do thus, saying, "I will slay myself!"; till at last, finding no way of access to his wife, and being distraught with rage and jealousy, to hear her sighing and murmuring and breathing hard under the young man, he went up to the top of the bath and, casting himself down therefrom, died. "Moreover, O King" (continued the Wazir), "there hath reached me another story of the malice of women." "What is that?" asked the King, and the Wazir said, "Know, O King, that it is anent

The Wife's Device to Cheat her Husband."

There was once a woman who had no equal in her day for beauty and loveliness and grace and perfection; and a certain lewd youth and an obscene setting eyes on her, fell in love with her and loved her with exceeding passion, but she was chaste and inclined not to adultery. It chanced one day that her husband went on a journey to a certain town, whereupon the young man fell to sending to her many times a day; but she made him no reply. At last, he resorted to an old woman, who dwelt hard by, and after saluting her he sat down and complained to her of his sufferings for love of the woman and his longing to enjoy her. Quoth she, "I will warrant thee this; no harm shall befal thee, for I will surely bring thee to thy desire, Inshallah, — an it please Allah the Most High!" At these words he gave her a dinar and went his way. When the morning morrowed she appeared before the woman and, renewing an old acquaintance with her, fell to visiting her daily, eating the undertime with her and the evening meal and carrying away food for her children. Moreover, she used to sport and jest with her, till the wife became corrupted[189] and could not endure an hour without her company. Now she was wont, when she left the lady's house, to take bread and fat wherewith she mixed a little pepper and to feed a bitch, that was in that quarter; and thus she did day by day, till the bitch became fond of her and followed her wherever she went. One day she took a cake of dough and, putting therein an overdose of pepper, gave it to the bitch to eat, whereupon the beast's eyes began to shed tears, for the heat of the pepper, and she followed the old woman, weeping. When the lady saw this she was amazed and asked the ancient, "O my mother, what ails this bitch to weep?" Answered she, "Learn, O my heart's love, that hers is a strange story. Know that she was once a close friend of mine, a lovely and accomplished young lady, a model of comeliness and perfect grace. A young Nazarene of the quarter fell in love with her and his passion and pining increased on him, till he took to his pillow, and he sent to her times manifold, begging her to have compassion on him and show him mercy, but she refused, albeit I gave her good counsel, saying, "O my daughter, have pity on him and be kind and consent to all he wisheth." She gave no heed to my advice, until, the young man's patience failing him, he complained at last to one of his friends, who cast an enchantment on her and changed her human shape into canine form. When she saw what transformation had befallen her and that there was none to pity her case save myself, she came to my house and began to fawn on me and buss my hands and feet and whine and shed tears, till I recognised her and said to her, 'How often did I not warn thee?; but my advice profited thee naught.'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old trot related to the young lady the tale of the bitch and recounted the case in her cunning and deceit, with the view to gain her consent and said to her, "When the enchanted beast came to me and wept I reminded her, 'How often did I not warn thee?; but my advice profited thee naught.' However, O my daughter, seeing her misery, I had compassion on her case and kept her by me; and as often as she bethinketh herself of her former estate, she weepeth thus, in pity for herself." When the lady heard this, she was taken with great alarm and said, "O my mother, by Allah, thou affrightest me with this thy story." "Why so?" asked the old woman. Answered the lady, "Because a certain handsome young man fell in love with me and hath sent many times to me, but hitherto I have repelled him; and now I fear lest there befal me the like of what befel this bitch." "O my daughter," rejoined the old woman, "look thou to what I counsel thee and beware of crossing me, for I am in great fear for thee. If thou know not his abiding-place, describe his semblance to me, that I may fetch him to thee, and let not any one's heart be angered against thee." So the lady described him to her, and she showed not to know him and said, "When I go out, I will ask after him." But when she left the lady, she went straight to the young man and said to him, "Be of good cheer, for I have played with the girl's wits; so to-morrow at noon wait thou at the head of the street, till I come and carry thee to her house, where thou shalt take thine ease with her the rest of the day and all night long." At this the young man rejoiced with exceeding joy and gave her two dinars, saying, "When I have won my wish of her, I will give thee ten gold pieces." Then she returned to the lady and said to her, "I have seen him and spoken with him on this matter. I found him exceeding wroth with thee and minded to do thee a harm, but I plied him with fair words till he agreed to come to-morrow at the time of the call to noon-prayer." When the lady heard this she rejoiced exceedingly and said, "O my mother, if he keep his promise, I will give thee ten dinars." Quoth the old woman, "Look to his coming from none but from me." When the next morn morrowed she said to the lady, "Make ready the early meal and forget not the wine and adorn thyself and don thy richest dress and decoration, whilst I go and fetch him to thee." So she clad herself in her finest finery and prepared food, whilst the old woman went out to look for the young man, who came not. So she went around searching for him, but could come by no news of him, and she said to herself, "What is to be done? Shall the food and drink she hath gotten ready be wasted and I lose the gold pieces she promised me? Indeed, I will not allow my cunning contrivance to come to naught, but will look her out another man and carry him to her." So she walked about the highways till her eyes fell on a pretty fellow, young and distinguished-looking, to whom the folk bowed and who bore in his face the traces of travel. She went up to him and saluting him, asked, "Hast thou a mind to meat and drink and a girl adorned and ready?" Answered he, "Where is this to be had?" "At home, in my house," rejoined she and carrying him to his own house, knocked at the door. The lady opened to them and ran in again, to make an end of her dressing and perfuming; whilst the wicked old woman brought the man, who was the husband and house-master, into the saloon and made him sit down congratulating herself on her cunning contrivance. Presently in walked the lady, who no sooner set eyes on her husband sitting by the old trot than she knew him and guessed how the case stood; nevertheless, she was not taken aback and without stay or delay bethought her of a device to hoodwink him. So she pulled off her outer boot and cried at her husband, "Is this how thou keepest the contract between us? How canst thou betray me and deal thus with me? Know that, when I heard of thy coming, I sent this old woman to try thee and she hath made thee fall into that against which I warned thee: so now I am certified of thine affair and that thou hast broken faith with me. I thought thee chaste and pure till I saw thee, with my own eyes, in this old woman's company and knew that thou didst frequent loose baggages." So saying, she fell to beating him with her slipper about the head, and crying out, "Divorce me! Divorce me!"; whilst he excused himself and swore to her, by Allah the Most High, that he had never in his life been untrue to her nor had done aught of that whereof she suspected him. But she stinted not to weep and scream and bash him, crying out and saying, "Come to my help, O Moslems!"; till he laid hold of her mouth with his hand and she bit it. Moreover, he humbled himself to her and kissed her hands and feet, whilst she would not be appeased and continued to cuff him. At last, she winked at the old woman to come and hold her hand from him. So she came up to her and kissed her hands and feet, till she made peace between them and they sat down together; whereupon the husband began to kiss her hands, saying, "Allah Almighty requite thee with all good, for that thou hast delivered me from her!" And the old woman marvelled at the wife's cunning and ready wit. "This, then, O King" (said the Wazir) "is one of many instances of the craft and malice and perfidy of women." When the King heard this story, he was persuaded by it and turned from his purpose to slay his son; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the fourth Wazir had told his tale, the King turned from his purpose to slay his son; but, on the fifth day, the damsel came in to him hending a bowl of poison in hand, calling on Heaven for help and buffeting her cheeks and face, and said to him, “O King, either thou shalt do me justice and avenge me on thy son, or I will drink up this poison-cup and die, and the sin of my blood shall be on thy head at the Day of Doom. These thy Ministers accuse me of malice and perfidy, but there be none in the world more perfidious than men. Hast thou not heard the story of the Goldsmith and the Cashmere[190] singing-girl?” “What befel the twain, O damsel?” asked the King; and she answered, saying, “There hath come to my knowledge, O august King, a tale of the

Goldsmith and the Cashmere Singing-Girl.

There lived once, in a city of Persia a goldsmith who delighted in women and in drinking wine. One day, being in the house of one of his intimates, he saw painted on the wall the figure of a lutanist, a beautiful damsel, beholder never beheld a fairer or a more pleasant. He looked at the picture again and again, marvelling at its beauty, and fell so desperately in love with it, that he sickened for passion and came near to die. It chanced that one of his friends came to visit him and sitting down by his side, asked how he did and what ailed him, whereto the goldsmith answered, "O my brother, that which ails me is love, and it befel on this wise. I saw a figure of a woman painted on the house- wall of my brother such an one and became enamoured of it." Hereupon the other fell to blaming him and said, "This was of thy lack of wit; how couldst thou fall in love with a painted figure on a wall, that can neither harm nor profit, that seeth not neither heareth, that neither taketh nor withholdeth." Said the sick man, "He who painted yonder picture never could have limned it save after the likeness of some beautiful woman." "Haply," rejoined his friend, "he painted it from imagination." "In any case," replied the goldsmith, "here am I dying for love of the picture, and if there live the original thereof in the world, I pray Allah Most High to protect my life till I see her." When those who were present went out, they asked for the painter of the picture and, finding that he had travelled to another town, wrote him a letter, complaining of their comrade's case and enquiring whether he had drawn the figure of his own inventive talents or copied it from a living model; to which he replied, "I painted it after a certain singing-girl belonging to one of the Wazirs in the city of Cashmere in the land of Hind." When the goldsmith heard this, he left Persia for Cashmere-city, where he arrived after much travail. He tarried awhile there till one day he went and clapped up an acquaintance with a certain of the citizens who was a druggist, a fellow of a sharp wit, keen, crafty; and, being one even-tide in company with him, asked him of their King and his polity; to which the other answered, saying, "Well, our King is just and righteous in his governance, equitable to his lieges and beneficent to his commons and abhorreth nothing in the world save sorcerers; but, whenever a sorcerer or sorceress falls into his hands, he casteth them into a pit without the city and there leaveth them in hunger to die." Then he questioned him of the King's Wazirs, and the druggist told him of each Minister, his fashion and condition, till the talk came round to the singing-girl and he told him, "She belongeth to such a Wazir." The goldsmith took note of the Minister's abiding place and waited some days, till he had devised a device to his desire; and one night of rain and thunder and stormy winds, he provided himself with thieves' tackle and repaired to the house of the Wazir who owned the damsel. Here he hanged a rope-ladder with grappling-irons to the battlements and climbed up to the terrace-roof of the palace. Thence he descended to the inner court and, making his way into the Harim, found all the slave-girls lying asleep, each on her own couch; and amongst them reclining on a couch of alabaster and covered with a coverlet of cloth of gold a damsel, as she were the moon rising on a fourteenth night. At her head stood a candle of ambergris, and at her feet another, each in a candlestick of glittering gold, her brilliancy dimming them both; and under her pillow lay a casket of silver, wherein were her Jewels. He raised the coverlet and drawing near her, considered her straitly, and behold, it was the lutanist whom he desired and of whom he was come in quest. So he took out a knife and wounded her in the back parts, a palpable outer wound, whereupon she awoke in terror; but, when she saw him, she was afraid to cry out, thinking he came to steal her goods. So she said to him, "Take the box and what is therein, but slay me not, for I am in thy protection and under thy safe-guard[191] and my death will profit thee nothing." Accordingly, he took the box and went away. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When is was the Five Hundred and Eighty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the goldsmith had entered the Wazir's palace he wounded the damsel slightly in the back parts and, taking the box which contained her jewels, wended his way. And when morning morrowed he donned clothes after the fashion of men of learning and doctors of the law and, taking the jewel-case went in therewith to the King of the city, before whom he kissed the ground and said to him, "O King, I am a devout man; withal a loyal well-wisher to thee and come hither a pilgrim to thy court from the land of Khorasan, attracted by the report of thy just governance and righteous dealing with thy subjects and minded to be under thy standard. I reached this city at the last of the day and finding the gate locked and barred, threw me down to sleep without the walls; but, as I lay betwixt sleep and wake, behold, I saw four women come up; one riding on a broom-stick, another on a wine-jar, a third on an oven-peel and a fourth on a black bitch,[192] and I knew that they were witches making for thy city. One of them came up to me and kicked me with her foot and beat me with a fox's tail she had in her hand, hurting me grievously, whereat I was wroth and smote her with a knife I had with me, wounding her in the back parts, as she turned to flee from me. When she felt the wound, she fled before me and in her flight let drop this casket, which I picked up and opening, found these costly jewels therein. So do thou take it, for I have no need thereof, being a wanderer in the mountains[193] who hath rejected the world from my heart and renounced it and all that is in it, seeking only the face of Allah the Most High." Then he set the casket before the King and fared forth. The King opened the box and emptying out all the trinkets it contained, fell to turning them over with his hand, till he chanced upon a necklace whereof he had made gift to the Wazir to whom the girl belonged. Seeing this, he called the Minister in question and said to him, "This is the necklace I gave thee?" He knew it at first sight and answered, "It is; and I gave it to a singing girl of mine." Quoth the King, "Fetch that girl to me forthwith." So he fetched her to him, and he said, "Uncover her back parts and see if there be a wound therein or no." The Wazir accordingly bared her backside and finding a knife-wound there, said, "Yes, O my lord, there is a wound." Then said the King, "This is the witch of whom the devotee told me, and there can be no doubt of it," and bade cast her into the witches' well. So they carried her thither at once. As soon as it was night and the goldsmith knew that his plot had succeeded, he repaired to the pit, taking with him a purse of a thousand dinars, and, entering into converse with the warder, sat talking with him till a third part of the night was passed, when he broached the matter to him, saying, "Know, O my brother, that this girl is innocent of that they lay to her charge and that it was I brought this calamity upon her." Then he told him the whole story, first and last, adding, "Take, O my brother, this purse of a thousand dinars and give me the damsel, that I may carry her to my own land, for these gold pieces will profit thee more than keeping her in prison; moreover Allah will requite thee for us, and we too will both offer up prayers for thy prosperity and safety." When the warder heard this story, he marvelled with exceeding marvel at that device and its success; then taking the money, he delivered the girl to the goldsmith, conditioning that he should not abide one hour with her in the city. Thereupon the goldsmith took the girl and fared on with her, without ceasing, till he reached his own country and so he won his wish. "See, then, O King" (said the damsel), "the malice of men and their wiles. Now thy Wazirs hinder thee from doing me justice on thy son; but to-morrow we shall stand, both thou and I, before the Just Judge, and He shall do me justice on thee, O King." When the King heard this, he commanded to put his son to death; but the fifth Wazir came in to him and kissing the ground before him, said, "O mighty King, delay and hasten not to slay thy son: speed will oftentimes repentance breed; and I fear for thee lest thou repent, even as did the man who never laughed for the rest of his days." "And how was that, O Wazir?" asked the King. Quoth he, "I have heard tell, O King, this tale concerning

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

The Man who never Laughed during the Rest of his Days.

There was once a man who was rich in lands and houses and monies and goods, eunuchs and slaves, and he died and went to the mercy of Allah the Most High; leaving a young son, who, when he grew up, gave himself to feasting and carousing and hearing music and singing and the loud laughter of parasites; and he wasted his substance in gifts and prodigality till he had squandered all the money his father left him, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young man, when he had squandered all the money his father had left him and naught thereof remained to him, betook himself to selling his slaves and handmaids, lands and houses and spent the proceeds on like wise, till he was reduced to beggary and must needs labour for his living. He abode thus a year's space, at the end of which time he was sitting one day under a wall, awaiting who should hire him when behold, there came up to him an old man of comely aspect and apparel and saluted him. The young man asked, "O uncle, hast thou known me aforetime?" and the other answered, "Not so, O my son, I know thee not at all, at all; but I see the trace of gentle breeding on thee despite thy present case." "O uncle, " rejoined the poor man, "needs must Fate and Fortune be accomplished; but, O uncle, O bright of blee, hast thou any occasion wherein thou wouldst employ me?" Said the other, "I wish, O my son, to employ thee in a slight matter." "What is it?" quoth the young man, and quoth the stranger, "We are eleven old men in one house, but we have none to serve us; so an thou wilt stay and take service with us, thou shalt have food and clothing to thy heart's content, besides what cometh to thee of coin and other good; and haply Allah will restore thee thy fortune by our means." Replied the youth, "Hearkening and obedience!" "But I have a condition to impose on thee." "What is that?" "O my son, it is that thou keep our secret in what thou seest us do, and if thou see us weep, that thou question us not of the cause of our weeping." "It is well, O uncle;" "Come with me, O my son, with the blessing of Allah Almighty." So he followed him to the bath, where the old man caused cleanse his body of the crusted dirt, after which he sent one to fetch a handsome garment of linen and clad him therein. Then he carried him to his company which was in his domicile and the youth found a house lofty and spacious and strongly builded, wherein were sitting-chambers facing one another; and saloons, in each one a fountain of water, with the birds warbling over it, and windows on every side, giving upon a fair garden within the house. The old man brought him into one of the parlours, which was variegated with many-coloured marbles, the ceiling thereof being decorated with ultramarine and glowing gold; and the floor bespread with silken carpets. Here he found ten Shaykhs in mourning apparel, seated one opposite other, weeping and wailing. He marvelled at their case and purposed to ask the reason, when he remembered the condition and held his peace. Then he who had brought him delivered to him a chest containing thirty thousand dinars and said to him, "O my son, spend freely from this chest what is fitting for our entertainment and thine own; and be thou faithful and remember that wherewith I charged thee." "I hear and I obey, " answered he and served them days and nights, till one of them died, whereupon his fellows washed him and shrouded him and buried him in a garden behind the house,[194] nor did death cease to take them, one after other, till there remained but the Shaykh who had hired the youth for service. Then the two men, old and young, dwelt together in that house alone for years and years, nor was there with them a third save Allah the Most High, till the elder fell sick; and when the younger despaired of his life, he went up to him and condoling with him, said, "O nuncle mine, I have waited upon you twelve years and have not failed of my duties a single hour, but have been loyal and faithful to you and served you with my might and main." "Yes, O my son," answered the old man, "thou hast served us well until all my comrades are gone to the mercy of Allah (to whom belong honour and glory!) and needs must I die also." "O my lord," said the other, "thou art in danger of death and I would fain have thee acquaint me with the cause of your weeping and wailing and of your unceasing mourning and lamentation and regrets." "O my son," answered the old man, "it concerns thee not to know this, so importune me not of what I may not do: for I have vowed to Almighty Allah that I would acquaint none of His creatures with this, lest he be afflicted with what befel me and my comrades. If, then, thou desire to be delivered from that into which we fell, look thou open not yonder door, "[195] and pointed to a certain part of the house; "but, if thou have a mind to suffer what we have suffered, then open it and thou shalt learn the cause of that thou hast seen us do; and whenas thou knowest it, thou shalt repent what time repentance will avail thee not." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the surviving Shaykh of the ten said to the youth, "Beware how thou open yonder door or thou shalt repent what time repentance will avail thee not." Then his sickness grew on him and he accomplished his term and departed life to the presence of his Lord; and the young man washed him with his own hands and shrouded him and buried him by the side of his comrades; after which he abode alone in the place and took possession of whatsoever was therein. Withal he was uneasy and troubled concerning the case of the old men, till, one day, as he sat pondering the words of his dead master and his injunction not to open the door, he suddenly bethought himself to go and look for it. So he rose up and repaired to the part whither the dead man had pointed and sought till, in a dark unfrequented corner, he found a little door, over which the spider had spun her webs and which was fastened with four padlocks of steel. Seeing this he recalled the old man's warning and restrained himself and went away; and he held aloof from it seven days, whilst all the time his heart prompted him to open it. On the eighth day his curiosity got the better of him and he said, "Come what will, needs must I open the door and see what will happen to me therefrom. Nothing can avert what is fated and fore-ordained of Allah the Most High; nor doth aught befal but by His will." So saying, he rose and broke the padlocks and opening the door saw a narrow passage, which he followed for some three hours when lo! he came out on the shore of a vast ocean[196] and fared on along the beach, marvelling at this main, whereof he had no knowledge and turning right and left. Presently, a great eagle swooped down upon him from the lift and seizing him in its talons, flew away with him betwixt heaven and earth, till it came to an island in the midst of the sea, where it cast him down and flew away. The youth was dazed and knew not whither he should wend, but after a few days as he sat pondering his case, he caught sight of the sails of a ship in the middlemost of the main, as it were a star in the sky; and his heart clave to it, so haply his deliverance might be therein. He continued gazing at the ship, until it drew nigh, when he saw that it was a foyst builded all of ivory and ebony, inlaid with glistening gold made fast by nails of steel, with oars of sandal and lign-aloes. In it were ten damsels, high-bosomed maids, as they were moons; and when they saw him, they came ashore to him and kissed his hands, saying, "Thou art the King, the Bridegroom!" Then there accosted him a young lady, as she were the sun shining in sky serene bearing in hand a silken napkin, wherein were a royal robe and a crown of gold set with all manner rubies and pearls. She threw the robe over him and set the crown upon his head, after which the damsels bore him on their arms to the foyst, where he found all kinds of silken carpets and hangings of various colours. Then they spread the sails and stretched out into mid-ocean. Quoth the young man, "Indeed, when they put to sea with me, meseemed it was a dream and I knew not whither they were wending with me. Presently, we drew near to land, and I saw the shore full of troops none knoweth their number save Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) and all were magnificently arrayed and clad in complete steel. As soon as the vessel had made fast to the land, they brought me five marked[197] horses of noble breeds, housed and saddled with gold, inlaid with all manner pearls and high-priced bezel stones. I chose out one of them and mounted it, whilst they led the four others before me. Then they raised the banners and the standards over my head, whilst the troops ranged themselves right and left, and we set out, with drums beating and cymbals clashing, and rode on; whilst I debated in myself whether I were in sleep or on wake; and we never ceased faring, I believing not in that my estate, but taking all this for the imbroglio of a dream, till we drew near to the green mead, full of palaces and gardens and trees and streams and blooms and birds chanting the praises of Allah the One, the Victorious. Hereupon, behold, an army sallied out from amid the palaces and gardens, as it were the torrent when it poureth down,[198] and the host overflowed the mead. These troops halted at a little distance from me and presently there rode forth from amongst them a King, preceded by some of his chief officers on foot." When he came up to the young man (saith the tale-teller) he dismounted also, and the two saluted each other after the goodliest fashion. Then said the King, "Come with us, for thou art my guest." So they took horse again and rode on stirrup touching stirrup in great and stately procession, conversing as they went, till they came to the royal palace, where they alighted together. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninetieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the two rode together in stately procession till they entered the palace, when the King taking the young man by the hand, led him into a domed room followed by his suite, and making him sit down on a throne of gold, seated himself beside him. Then he unbound the swathe from his lower face; and behold, the King was a young lady, like the splendid sun shining in the sheeny sky, perfect in beauty and loveliness, brilliancy and grace, arrogance[199] and all perfection. The youth looked upon this singular blessing and embodied boon and was lost in wonder at her charms and comeliness and seemlihead and at the splendour and affluence he saw about him, when she said "Know, O King, that I am the Queen of this land and that all the troops thou hast seen, whether horse or foot, are women, there is no man amongst them; for in this our state the men delve and sow and ear and occupy themselves with the tillage of the earth and the building of towns and other mechanical crafts and useful arts, whilst the women govern and fill the great offices of state and bear arms." At this the youth marvelled with exceeding marvel and, as they were in discourse, behold, in came the Wazir who was a tall gray-haired old woman of venerable semblance and majestic aspect, and it was told him that this was the Minister. Quoth the Queen to her, "Bring us the Kazi and witnesses." So she went out to do this, and the Queen, turning to him, conversed with him in friendly fashion, and enforced herself to reassure his awe of her and do away his shame with speech blander than the zephyr, saying, "Art thou content to be to me baron and I to thee feme?” Thereupon he arose and would have kissed ground between her hands, but she forbade him and he replied, saying, “O my lady, I am the least of thy slaves who serve thee.” “Seest thou all these servants and soldiers and riches and hoards and treasures?” asked she, and he answered, “Yes!” Quoth she, “All these are at thy commandment to dispose of them and give and bestow as seemeth good to thee.” Then she pointed to a closed door and said, “All these things are at thy disposal, save yonder door; that shalt thou not open, and if thou open it thou shalt repent when repentance will avail thee naught. So beware! and again I say, beware!” Hardly had she made an end of speaking when the Waziress entered followed by the Kazii and witnesses, all old women, with their hair streaming over their shoulders and of reverend and majestic presence; and the Queen bade them draw up the contract of marriage between herself and the young man. Accordingly, they performed the marriage-ceremony and the Queen made a great bride-feast, to which she bade all the troops; and after they had eaten and drunken, he went in unto his bride and found her a maid virginal. So he did away her hymen and abode with her seven years in all joyance and solace and delight of life, till, one day of the days, he bethought himself of the forbidden door and said in himself, “Except there were therein treasures greater and grander than any I have seen, she had not forbidden me therefrom.” So he rose and opened the door, when, lo! behind it was the very bird which had brought him from the sea-shore to the island, and it said to him, “No welcome to a face that shall never prosper!” When he saw it and heard what it said, he fled from it; but it followed him and seizing him in its talons, flew with him an hour’s journey betwixt heaven and earth, till it set him down in the place whence it had first carried him off and flew away. When he came to his senses, he remembered his late estate, great, grand and glorious, and the troops which rode before him and his lordly rule and all the honour and fair fortune he had lost and fell to weeping and wailing.[200] He abode two months on the sea-shore, where the bird had set him down, hoping yet to return to his wife, till, as he sat one night wakeful, mourning and musing, behold, he heard one speaking, albeit he saw no one, and saying, “How great were the delights! Alas, far from thee is the return of that which is past!”

When he heard this, he redoubled in his regrets and despaired of recovering his wife and his fair estate that was; so he returned, weary and broken-hearted, to the house where he had dwelt with the old men and knew that they had fared even as he and that this was the cause of their shedding tears and lamenting their lot; wherefore he ever after held them excused. Then, being overcome with chagrin and concern, he took to his chamber and gave himself up to mourning and lamentation; and he ceased not crying and complaining and left eating and drinking and pleasant scents and merriment; nor did he laugh once till the day of his death, when they buried him beside the Shaykhs. "See, then, O King," continued the Wazir "what cometh of precipitance; verily, it is unpraiseworthy and bequeatheth repentance; and in this I give thee true advice and loyal counsel." When the King heard this story, he turned from slaying his son; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninety-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King heard this story he turned from slaying his son; but, on the sixth day, the favourite came in to him hending a naked knife in hand, and said to him, "Know, O my lord, that except thou hearken to my complaint and protect thy right and thine honour against these thy Ministers, who are banded together against me, to do me wrong, I will kill myself with this knife, and my blood will testify against thee on the Day of Doom. Indeed, they pretend that women are full of tricks and malice and perfidy; and they design thereby to defeat me of my due and hinder the King from doing me justice; but, behold, I will prove to thee that men are more perfidious than women by the story of a King among the Kings and how he gained access to the wife of a certain merchant." "And what passed between them?" asked the King, and she answered, "I have heard tell, O august King, a tale of

The King's Son and the Merchant's Wife.

A certain merchant, who was addicted to jealousy, had a wife that was a model of beauty and loveliness; and of the excess of his fear and jealousy of her, he would not abide with her in any town, but built her a pavilion without the city, apart from all other buildings. And he raised its height and strengthened its doors and provided them with curious locks; and when he had occasion to go into the city, he locked the doors and hung the keys about his neck.[201] One day, when the merchant was abroad, the King's son of that city came forth, to take his pleasure and solace in the open country without the walls, and seeing the solitary pavilion, stood still to examine it for a long while. At last he caught sight of a charming lady looking and leaning out of one of the windows,[202] and being smitten with amazement at her grace and charms, cast about for a means of getting to her, but could find none. So he called up one of his pages, who brought him ink-case[203] and paper and wrote her a letter, setting forth his condition for love of her. Then he set it on the pile-point of an arrow and shot it at the pavilion, and it fell in the garden, where the lady was then walking with her maidens. She said to one of the girls, "Hasten and bring me yon letter," for she could read writing;[204] and, when she had read it and understood what he said in it of his love and passion, yearning and longing, she wrote him a merciful reply, to the effect that she was smitten with a yet fiercer desire for him; and then threw the letter down to him from one of the windows of the pavilion. When he saw her, he picked up the reply and after reading it, came under the window and said to her, "Let me down a thread, that I may send thee this key; which do thou take and keep by thee." So she let down a thread and he tied the key to it.[205] Then he went away and repairing to one of his father's Wazirs, complained to him of his passion for the lady and that he could not live without her; and the Minister said, "And how dost thou bid me contrive?" Quoth the Prince, "I would have thee set me in a chest[206] and commit it to the merchant, feigning to him that it is thine and desiring him to keep it for thee in his country-house some days, that I may have my will of her; then do thou demand it back from him." The Wazir answered, “With love and gladness.” So the Prince returned to his palace and fixing the padlock, the key whereof he had given the lady, on a chest he had by him, entered therein. Then the Wazir locked it upon him and setting it on a mule, carried it to the pavilion of the merchant, who, seeing the Minister, came forth to him and kissed his hands, saying, “Belike our lord the Wazir hath some need or business which we may have the pleasure and honour of accomplishing for him?” Quoth the Minister, “I would have thee set this chest in the safest and best place within thy house and keep it till I seek it of thee.” So the merchant made the porters carry it inside and set it down in one of his store-closets, after which he went out on business. As soon as he was gone, his wife arose and went up to the chest and unlocked it with the key the King’s son had given her, whereupon there came forth a youth like the moon. When she saw him, she donned her richest raiment and carried him to her sitting-saloon, where they abode seven days, eating and drinking and making merry: and as often as her husband came home, she put the Prince back into the chest and locked it upon him. One day the King asked for his son and the Wazir hurried off to the merchant’s place of business and sought of him the chest. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninety-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Wazir reached the merchant’s counting-house he asked for the box. The man accordingly repaired in haste to his pavilion, contrary to his custom and knocked at the door. When his wife was ware of him, she hurried the Prince back into the chest, but, in her confusion, forgot to lock it. The merchant bade the porters take it up and carry it to his house in the town. So they took up the box by the lid, whereupon it flew open and lo! the Prince was lying within. When the merchant saw him and knew him for the King’s son, he went out to the Wazir and said to him, “Go in, thou, and take the King’s son; for none of us may lay hands on him.” So the Minister went in and taking the Prince, went away with him. As soon as they were gone, the merchant put away his wife and swore that he would never marry again. “And,” continued the damsel, “I have heard tell, also, O King, a tale of

The Page who Feigned to Know the Speech of Birds.[207]

A certain man of rank once entered the slave-market and saw a page being cried for sale; so he bought him and carrying him home, said to his wife, “Take good care of him.” The lad abode there for a while till, one day, the man said to his wife, “Go forth to-morrow to the garden and take thy solace therein and amuse thyself and enjoy thyself.” And she replied, “With love and gladness!” Now when the page heard this, he made ready in secret meat and drink and fruits and desert, and sallied forth with them privily that night to the garden, where he laid the meat under one tree, the wine under another and the fruit and conserves under a third, in the way his mistress must pass. When morning morrowed the husband bade him accompany the lady to that garden carrying with him all the provisions required for the day; so she took horse and riding thither with him, dismounted and entered. Presently, as they were walking about, a crow croaked,[208] and the page said, “Thou sayst sooth;” whereupon his mistress asked him, “Dost thou know what the crow said?”; and he answered, “Yes, O my lady, he said, Under yonder tree is meat; go and eat it.” So she said, “I see thou really dost understand them;” then she went up to the tree and, finding a dish of meat ready dressed, was assured that the youth told the truth and marvelled with exceeding marvel. They ate of the meat and walked about awhile, taking their pleasure in the garden, till the crow croaked a second time, and the page again replied, “Thou sayst sooth.” “What said he?” quoth the lady, and quoth the page, “O my lady, he saith that under such a tree are a gugglet of water flavoured with musk and a pitcher of old wine.” So she went up with him to the tree and, finding the wine and water there, redoubled in wonderment and the page was magnified in her eyes. They sat down and drank, then arose and walked in another part of the garden. Presently the crow croaked again and the page said, “Thou sayst sooth.” Said the lady, “What saith he now?” and the page replied, “He saith that under yonder tree are fruits, fresh and dried.” So they went thither and found all as he said and sat down and ate. Then they walked about again till the crow croaked a fourth time, whereupon the page took up a stone and threw it at him. Quoth she, “What said he, that thou shouldst stone him?” “O my lady,” answered he, “he said what I cannot tell thee.” “Say on,” rejoined she, “and be not abashed in my presence, for there is naught between me and thee.” But he ceased not to say, “No,” and she to press him to speak, till at last she conjured him to tell her, and he answered, “The crow said to me, ‘Do with thy lady even as doth her husband.’” When she heard his words she laughed till she fell backward and said, “This is a light matter, and I may not gainsay thee therein.” So saying, she went up to a tree and, spreading the carpet under it, lay down, and called to him to come and do her need, when, lo! her husband, who had followed them unawares and saw this, called out to the page, saying, “Harkye, boy! What ails thy mistress to lie there, weeping?” Answered the page, “O my lord, she fell off the tree and was killed;[209] and none but Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) restored her to thee. Wherefore she lay down awhile to recover herself by rest.” When the lady saw her husband standing by her head, she rose and made a show of weakness and pain, saying, “O my back! O my sides! Come to my help, O my friends! I shall never survive this.” So her husband was deceived and said to the page, “Fetch thy mistress’s horse and set her thereon.” Then he carried her home, the boy holding one stirrup and the man the other and saying, “Allah vouchsafe thee ease and recovery!” “These then, O King,” (said the damsel) “are some instances of the craft of men and their perfidy; wherefore let not thy Wazirs turn thee from succouring me and doing me justice.” Then she wept, and when the King saw her weeping (for she was the dearest to him of all his slave-girls) he once more commanded to put his son to death; but the sixth Minister entered and kissing ground before him, said, “May the Almighty advance the King! Verily I am a loyal counsellor to thee, in that I counsel thee to deal deliberately in the matter of thy son;” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninety-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the sixth Wazir said, “O King, deal deliberately in the matter of thy son; for falsehood is as smoke and fact is built on base which shall not be broken; yea, and the light of sooth dispelleth the night of untruth. Know that the perfidy of women is great, even as saith Allah the Most High in His Holy Book, "Verily, the malice of you is great.[210] And indeed a tale hath reached me that a certain woman befooled the Chiefs of the State on such wise as never did any before her." Asked the King, "And how was that?" And the Wazir answered, "I have heard tell a tale, O King, as follows concerning

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The Lady and her Five Suitors.[211]

A woman of the daughters of the merchants was married to a man who was a great traveller. It chanced once that he set out for a far country and was absent so long that his wife, for pure ennui, fell in love with a handsome young man of the sons of the merchants, and they loved each other with exceeding love. One day, the youth quarrelled with another man, who lodged a complaint against him with the Chief of Police, and he cast him into prison. When the news came to the merchant's wife his mistress, she wellnigh lost her wits; then she arose and donning her richest clothes repaired to the house of the Chief of Police. She saluted him and presented a written petition to this purport, "He thou hast clapped in jail is my brother, such and such, who fell out with such an one; and those who testified against him bore false witness. He hath been wrongfully imprisoned, and I have none other to come in to me nor to provide for my support; therefore I beseech thee of thy grace to release him." When the magistrate had read the paper, he cast his eyes on her and fell in love with her forthright; so he said to her, "Go into the house, till I bring him before me; then I will send for thee and thou shalt take him." "O my lord," replied she, "I have none to protect me save Almighty Allah!: I am a stranger and may not enter any man's abode." Quoth the Wali, "I will not let him go, except thou come to my home and I take my will of thee." Rejoined she, "If it must be so, thou must needs come to my lodging and sit and sleep the siesta and rest the whole day there." "And where is thy abode?" asked he; and she answered, "In such a place," and appointed him for such a time. Then she went out from him, leaving his heart taken with love of her, and she repaired to the Kazi of the city, to whom she said, "O our lord the Kazi!" He exclaimed, "Yes!" and she continued, "Look into my case, and thy reward be with Allah the Most High!" Quoth he, "Who hath wronged thee?" and quoth she, "O my lord, I have a brother and I have none but that one, and it is on his account that I come to thee; because the Wali hath imprisoned him for a criminal and men have borne false witness against him that he is a wrongdoer; and I beseech thee to intercede for him with the Chief of

Police.” When the Kazi looked on her, he fell in love with her forthright and said to her, “Enter the house and rest awhile with my handmaids whilst I send to the Wali to release thy brother. If I knew the money-fine which is upon him, I would pay it out of my own purse, so I may have my desire of thee, for thou pleasest me with thy sweet speech.” Quoth she, “If thou, O my lord, do thus, we must not blame others.” Quoth he, “An thou wilt not come in, wend thy ways.” Then said she, “An thou wilt have it so, O our lord, it will be privier and better in my place than in thine, for here are slave-girls and eunuchs and goers-in and comers-out, and indeed I am a woman who wotteth naught of this fashion; but need compelleth.” Asked the Kazi, “And where is thy house?”; and she answered, “In such a place,” and appointed him for the same day and time as the Chief of Police. Then she went out from him to the Wazir, to whom she preferred her petition for the release from prison of her brother who was absolutely necessary to her: but he also required her of herself, saying, “Suffer me to have my will of thee and I will set thy brother free.” Quoth she, “An thou wilt have it so, be it in my house, for there it will be privier both for me and for thee. It is not far distant and thou knowest that which behoveth us women of cleanliness and adornment.” Asked he, “Where is thy house?” “In such a place,” answered she and appointed him for the same time as the two others. Then she went out from him to the King of the city and told him her story and sought of him her brother’s release. “Who imprisoned him?” enquired he; and she replied, “Twas thy Chief of Police.” When the King heard her speech, it transpierced his heart with the arrows of love and he bade her enter the palace with him, that he might send to the Kazi and release her brother. Quoth she, “O King, this thing is easy to thee, whether I will or nill; and if the King will indeed have this of me, it is of my good fortune; but, if he come to my house, he will do me the more honour by setting step therein, even as saith the poet,

‘O my friends, have ye seen or have ye heard * Of his visit whose virtues I hold so high?’”

Quoth the King, “We will not cross thee in this.” So she appointed him for the same time as the three others, and told him where her house was. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninety-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the woman told the King where her house was and appointed him for the same time as the Wali, the Kazi and the Wazir. Then she left him and betaking herself to a man which was a carpenter, said to him, “I would have thee make me a cabinet with four compartments one above other, each with its door for locking up. Let me know thy hire and I will give it thee.” Replied he, “My price will be four dinars; but, O noble lady and well-protected, if thou wilt vouchsafe me thy favours, I will ask nothing of thee.” Rejoined she, “An there be no help but that thou have it so, then make thou five compartments with their padlocks;” and she appointed him to bring it exactly on the day required. Said he, “It is well; sit down, O my lady, and I will make it for thee forthright, and after I will come to thee at my leisure.” So she sat down by him, whilst he fell to work on the cabinet, and when he had made an end of it she chose to see it at once carried home and set up in the sitting-chamber. Then she took four gowns and carried them to the dyer, who dyed them each of a different colour; after which she applied herself to making ready meat and drink; fruits, flowers and perfumes. Now when the appointed trysting day came, she donned her costliest dress and adorned herself and scented herself, then spread the sitting-room with various kinds of rich carpets and sat down to await who should come. And behold, the Kazi was the first to appear, devancing the rest, and when she saw him, she rose to her feet and kissed the ground before him; then, taking him by the hand, made him sit down by her on the couch and lay with him and fell to jesting and toying with him. By and by, he would have her do his desire, but she said, “O my lord, doff thy clothes and turband and assume this yellow cassock and this head-kerchief,[212] whilst I bring thee meat and drink; and after thou shalt win thy will.” So saying, she took his clothes and turband and clad him in the cassock and the kerchief; but hardly had she done this, when lo! there came a knocking at the door. Asked he, “Who is that rapping at the door?” and she answered, “My husband.” Quoth the Kazi, “What is to be done, and where shall I go?” Quoth she, “Fear nothing, I will hide thee in this cabinet;” and he, “Do as seemeth good to thee." So she took him by the hand and pushing him into the lowest compartment, locked the door upon him. Then she went to the house-door, where she found the Wali; so she bussed ground before him and taking his hand brought him into the saloon, where she made him sit down and said to him, "O my lord, this house is thy house; this place is thy place, and I am thy handmaid: thou shalt pass all this day with me; wherefore do thou doff thy clothes and don this red gown, for it is a sleeping gown." So she took away his clothes and made him assume the red gown and set on his head an old patched rag she had by her; after which she sat by him on the divan and she sported with him while he toyed with her awhile, till he put out his hand to her. Whereupon she said to him, "O our lord, this day is thy day and none shall share in it with thee; but first, of thy favour and benevolence, write me an order for my brother's release from gaol that my heart may be at ease." Quoth he, "Hearkening and obedience: on my head and eyes be it!"; and wrote a letter to his treasurer, saying, "As soon as this communication shall reach thee, do thou set such an one free, without stay or delay; neither answer the bearer a word." Then he sealed it and she took it from him, after which she began to toy again with him on the divan when, behold, some one knocked at the door. He asked, "Who is that?" and she answered, "My husband." "What shall I do?" said he, and she, "Enter this cabinet, till I send him away and return to thee." So she clapped him into the second compartment from the bottom and padlocked the door on him; and meanwhile the Kazi heard all they said. Then she went to the house-door and opened it, whereupon lo! the Wazir entered. She bussed the ground before him and received him with all honour and worship, saying, "O my lord, thou exaltest us by thy coming to our house; Allah never deprive us of the light of thy countenance!" Then she seated him on the divan and said to him, "O my lord, doff thy heavy dress and turband and don these lighter vestments." So he put off his clothes and turband and she clad him in a blue cassock and a tall red bonnet, and said to him, "Erst thy garb was that of the Wazirate; so leave it to its own time and don this light gown, which is better fitted for carousing and making merry and sleep." Thereupon she began to play with him and he with her, and he would have done his desire of her; but she put him off, saying, "O my lord, this shall not fail us." As they were talking there came a knocking at the door, and the Wazir asked her, "Who is that?": to which she answered, "My husband." Quoth he, "What is to be done?" Quoth she, "Enter this cabinet, till I get rid of him and come back to thee and fear thou nothing." So she put him in the third compartment and locked the door on him, after which she went out and opened the house-door when lo and behold! in came the King. As soon as she saw him she kissed ground before him, and taking him by the hand, led him into the saloon and seated him on the divan at the upper end. Then said she to him, "Verily, O King, thou dost us high honour, and if we brought thee to gift the world and all that therein is, it would not be worth a single one of thy steps us-wards." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninety-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King entered the lady's house she said to him, "Had we brought thee to gift the world and all which is therein, it would not be worth a single one of thy steps us-wards." And when he had taken his seat upon the divan she said, "Give me leave to speak one word." "Say what thou wilt," answered he, and she said, "O my lord, take thine ease and doff thy dress and turband." Now his clothes were worth a thousand dinars; and when he put them off she clad him in a patched gown, worth at the very most ten dirhams, and fell to talking and jesting with him; all this while the folk in the cabinet hearing everything that passed, but not daring to say a word. Presently, the King put his hand to her neck and sought to do his desire of her; when she said, "This thing shall not fail us, but I had first promised myself to entertain thee in this sitting-chamber, and I have that which shall content thee." Now as they were speaking, some one knocked at the door and he asked her, "Who is that?" "My husband," answered she, and he, "Make him go away of his own good will, or I will fare forth to him and send him away perforce." Replied she, "Nay, O my lord, have patience till I send him away by my skilful contrivance." "And I, how shall I do!" enquired the King; whereupon she took him by the hand and making him enter the fourth compartment of the cabinet, locked it upon him. Then she went out and opened the house-door when behold, the carpenter entered and saluted her. Quoth she, “What manner of thing is this cabinet thou hast made me?” “What aileth it, O my lady?” asked he, and she answered, “The top compartment is too strait.” Rejoined he, “Not so;” and she, “Go in thyself and see; it is not wide enough for thee.” Quoth he, “It is wide enough for four,” and entered the fifth compartment, whereupon she locked the door on him. Then she took the letter of the Chief of Police and carried it to the treasurer who, having read and understood it, kissed it and delivered her lover to her. She told him all she had done and he said, “And how shall we act now?” She answered, “We will remove hence to another city, for after this work there is no tarrying for us here.” So the twain packed up what goods they had and, loading them on camels, set out forthright for another city. Meanwhile, the five abode each in his compartment of the cabinet without eating or drinking three whole days, during which time they held their water until at last the carpenter could retain his no longer; so he staled on the King’s head, and the King urined on the Wazir’s head, and the Wazir piddled on the Wali and the Wali pissed on the head of the Kazi; whereupon the Judge cried out and said, “What nastiness[213] is this? Doth not what strait we are in suffice us, but you must make water upon us?’” The Chief of Police recognised the Kazi’s voice and answered, saying aloud, “Allah increase thy reward, O Kazi!” And when the Kazi heard him, he knew him for the Wali. Then the Chief of Police lifted up his voice and said, “What means this nastiness?” and the Wazir answered, saying, “Allah increase thy reward, O Wali!” whereupon he knew him to be the Minister. Then the Wazir lifted up his voice and said, “What means this nastiness?” But when the King heard and recognised his Minister’s voice, he held his peace and concealed his affair. Then said the Wazir, “May God damn[214] this woman for her dealing with us! She hath brought hither all the Chief Officers of the state, except the King.” Quoth the King, “Hold your peace, for I was the first to fall into the toils of this lewd strumpet.” Whereat cried the carpenter, “And I, what have I done? I made her a cabinet for four gold pieces, and when I came to seek my hire, she tricked me into entering this compartment and locked the door on me.” And they fell to talking with one another, diverting the King and doing away his chagrin. Presently the neighbours came up to the house and, seeing it deserted, said one to other, “But yesterday our neighbour, the wife of such an one, was in it; but now no sound is to be heard therein nor is soul to be seen. Let us break open the doors and see how the case stands, lest it come to the ears of the Wali or the King and we be cast into prison and regret not doing this thing before.” So they broke open the doors and entered the saloon, where they saw a large wooden cabinet and heard men within groaning for hunger and thirst. Then said one of them, “Is there a Jinni in this cabinet?” and his fellow, “Let us heap fuel about it and burn it with fire.” When the Kazi heard this, he bawled out to them, “Do it not!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninety-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the neighbours proposed to heap fuel about the cabinet and to burn it the Kazi bawled out to them, “Do it not!” And they said to one another, “Verily the Jinn make believe to be mortals and speak with men’s voices.” Thereupon the Kazi repeated somewhat of the Sublime Koran and said to the neighbours, “Draw near to the cabinet wherein we are.” So they drew near, and he said, “I am so and so the Kazi, and ye are such an one and such an one, and we are here a company.” Quoth the neighbours, “Who brought you here?” And he told them the whole case from beginning to end. Then they fetched a carpenter, who opened the five doors and let out Kazi, Wazir, Wali, King and carpenter in their queer disguises; and each, when he saw how the others were accoutred, fell a-laughing at them. Now she had taken away all their clothes; so every one of them sent to his people for fresh clothes and put them on and went out, covering himself therewith from the sight of the folk. “Consider, therefore, O our lord the King” (said the Wazir), “what a trick this woman played off upon the folk! And I have heard tell also a tale of

The Three Wishes,[215] or the Man who Longed to see the Night of Power.

A certain man had longed all his life to look upon the Night of

Power,[216] and one night it befel that he gazed at the sky and saw the angels, and Heaven's gates thrown open; and he beheld all things prostrating themselves before their Lord, each in its several stead. So he said to his wife, "Harkye, such an one, verily Allah hath shown me the Night of Power, and it hath been proclaimed to me, from the invisible world, that three prayers will be granted unto me; so I consult thee for counsel as to what shall I ask." Quoth she, "O man, the perfection of man and his delight is in his prickle; therefore do thou pray Allah to greaten thy yard and magnify it." So he lifted up his hands to heaven and said, "O Allah, greaten my yard and magnify it." Hardly had he spoken when his tool became as big as a column and he could neither sit nor stand nor move about nor even stir from his stead; and when he would have carnally known his wife, she fled before him from place to place. So he said to her, "O accursed woman, what is to be done? This is thy list, by reason of thy lust." She replied, "No, by Allah, I did not ask for this length and huge bulk, for which the gate of a street were too strait. Pray Heaven to make it less." So he raised his eyes to Heaven and said, "O Allah, rid me of this thing and deliver me therefrom." And immediately his prickle disappeared altogether and he became clean smooth. When his wife saw this, she said, "I have no occasion for thee, now thou are become pegless as a eunuch, shaven and shorn;" and he answered her, saying, "All this comes of thine ill-omened counsel and thine imbecile judgment. I had three prayers accepted of Allah, wherewith I might have gotten me my good, both in this world and in the next, and now two wishes are gone in pure waste, by thy lewd will, and there remaineth but one." Quoth she, "Pray Allah the Most High to restore thee thy yard as it was." So he prayed to his Lord and his prickle was restored to its first estate. Thus the man lost his three wishes by the ill counsel and lack of wit in the woman; "And this, O King" (said the Wazir), "have I told thee, that thou mightest be certified of the thoughtlessness of women and their inconsequence and silliness and see what cometh of hearkening to their counsel. Wherefore be not persuaded by them to slay thy son, thy heart's core, who shall cause thy remembrance to survive thee." The King gave ear to his Minister's words and forbore to put his son to death; but, on the seventh day, the damsel came in, shrieking, and after lighting a great fire in the King's presence, made as she would cast herself therein; whereupon they laid hands on her and brought her before him. He asked her, "Why hast thou done this?"; and she answered, "Except thou do me justice on thy son, I will cast myself into this very fire and accuse thee of this on the Day of Resurrection, for I am a-weary of my life, and before coming into thy presence I wrote my last will and testament and gave alms of my goods and resolved upon death. And thou wilt repent with all repentance, even as did the King of having punished the pious woman who kept the Hammam." Quoth the King, "How was that?" and quoth she, "I have heard tell, O King, this tale concerning

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The Stolen Necklace.

There was once a devotee, a recluse, a woman who had devoted herself to religion. Now she used to resort to a certain King's palace,[217] whose dwellers were blessed by her presence and she was held of them in high honour. One day she entered that palace according to her custom and sat down beside the King's wife. Presently the Queen gave her a necklace, worth a thousand dinars, saying, "Keep this for me, O woman, whilst I go to the Hammam." So she entered the bath, which was in the palace, and the pious woman remaining in the place where the Queen was and awaiting her return laid the necklace on the prayer-carpet and stood up to pray. As she was thus engaged, there came a magpie[218] which snatched up the necklace, while she went out to obey a call of nature and carrying it off, hid it inside a crevice in a corner of the palace-walls. When the Queen came out of the bath, she sought the necklace of the recluse, who also searched for it, but found it not nor could light on any trace of it; so she said to the King's wife, "By Allah, O my daughter, none hath been with me. When thou gavest me the necklace, I laid it on the prayer-carpet, and I know not if one of the servants saw it and took it without my heed, whilst I was engaged in prayer. Almighty Allah only knoweth what is come of it!" When the King heard what had happened, he bade his Queen put the bath-woman to the question by fire and grievous blows, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King bade his Queen question the bath-woman with fire and grievous blows, they tortured her with all manner tortures, but could not bring her to confess or to accuse any. Then he commanded to cast her into prison and manacle and fetter her; and they did as he bade. One day, after this, as the King sat in the inner court of his palace, with the Queen by his side and water flowing around him, he saw the pie fly into a crevice in a corner of the wall and pull out the necklace, whereupon he cried out to a damsel who was with him, and she caught the bird and took the necklace from it. By this the King knew that the pious bath-woman had been wronged and repented of that he had done with her. So he sent for her to the presence and fell to kissing her head and with many tears sought pardon of her. Moreover, he commanded much treasure to be given to her, but she refused and would none of it. However, she forgave him and went away, swearing never again to enter any one's house. So she betook herself to wandering in the mountains and valleys and worshipped God until she died, and Almighty Allah have mercy upon her! "And for an instance of the malice of the male sex" (continued the damsel), "I have heard, O King, tell this tale of

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The Two Pigeons.[219]

A pair of pigeons once stored up wheat and barley in their nest during the winter, and when the summer came, the grain shrivelled and became less; so the male pigeon said to his wife, “Thou hast eaten of this grain.” Replied she, “No, by Allah, I have never touched it!” But he believed not her words and beat her with his wings and pecked her with his bill, till he killed her. When the cold season returned, the corn swelled out and became as before, whereupon he knew that he had slain his wife wrongously and wickedly, and he repented whenas repentance availed him naught. Then he lay down by her side, mourning over her and weeping for grief, and left meat and drink, till he fell sick and died. “But” (added the damsel), “I know a story of the malice of men more extraordinary than either of these.” Quoth the King, “Let us hear what thou hast to tell;” and quoth she, “I have heard tell, O King, this

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Story of Prince Behram and the Princess Al-Datma.

There was once a King’s daughter, who had no equal in her time for beauty and loveliness and symmetrical stature and grace, brilliancy, amorous lace and the art of ravishing the wits of the masculine race and her name was Al-Datmá. She used to boast, “Indeed there is none like me in this age.” Nor was there one more accomplished than she in horsemanship and martial exercises and all that behoveth a cavalier. So all the Kings’ sons sought her to wife; but she would take none of them, saying, “No man shall marry me except he overcome me at lunge of lance and stroke of sword in fair field and patent plain. If any can do this, I will willingly wed him; but, if I overcome him, I will take his horse and clothes and arms and write with fire upon his forehead, ‘This is the freed man of Al-Datma.’” Now the sons of the Kings flocked to her from every quarter far and near, and she overcame them and put them to shame, stripping them of their arms and branding them with fire. Presently the son of a King of the Kings of the Persians, by name Behram ibn Tájí, heard of her and journeyed from afar to her father’s court, bringing with him men and horses and great store of wealth and royal treasures. When he drew near the city, he sent her parent a rich present and the King came out to meet him and honoured him with the utmost honour. Then the King’s son sent a message to him by his Wazir, demanding his daughter’s hand in marriage; but the King answered, saying, “O my son, as regards my daughter Al-Datma, I have no power over her, for she hath sworn by her soul to marry none except he overcome her in the listed field.” Quoth the Prince, “I journeyed hither from my father’s court with no other object but this; I came here to woo and for thine alliance to sue;” quoth the King, “Thou shalt meet her tomorrow.” So next day he sent to bid his daughter who, making ready for battle, donned her harness of war, and the folk, hearing of the coming joust, flocked from all sides to the field. Presently the Princess rode into the lists, armed cap-ŕ-pie and belted and with vizor down, and the Persian King’s son came out singlehanded to meet her, equipped at all points after the fairest of fashions. Then they drove at each other and fought a great while, wheeling and falsing, advancing and retreating, till the Princess, finding in him such courage and cavalarice as she had seen in none else, began to fear for herself lest he put her to shame before the bystanders and knew that he would assuredly overcome her. So she resolved to trick him and, raising her vizor, lo! her face appeared more brilliant than the full moon, which when he saw, he was confounded by her beauty and his strength failed and his spirit faltered. When she perceived this, she fell upon him unawares in his moment of weakness, and tare him from his saddle, and he became in her hands as he were a sparrow in the clutches of an eagle, knowing not what was done with him for amazement and confusion. So she took his steed and clothes and armour and, branding him with fire, let him wend his ways. When he recovered from his stupor, he abode several days without meat or drink or sleep for despite and love of the girl which had taken hold upon his heart. Then he sent a letter by certain of his slaves to his father, advising him that he could not return home till he had won his will of the Princess or died for want of her. When his sire got the letter, he was sore concerned for his son and would have succoured him by sending troops and soldiers; but his Wazirs dissuaded him from this and exhorted him to patience; so he committed his affair to Almighty Allah. Meanwhile, the Prince cast about for a means of coming to his desire; and presently, disguising himself as a decrepit old man, with a white beard over his own black beard repaired to a garden of the Princess wherein she used to walk most of her days. Here he sought out the gardener and said to him, “I am a stranger from a far country and from my youth upwards I have been a gardener, and in the grafting of trees and the culture of fruits and flowers and care of the vine none is more skilled than I.” When the gardener heard this, he rejoiced in him with exceeding joy and carried him into the garden, where he commended him to his underlings, and the Prince betook himself to the service of the garden and the tending of the trees and the bettering of their fruits and improving the Persian water-wheels and disposing the irrigation-channels. One day, as he was thus employed, lo! he saw some slaves enter the garden, leading mules laden with carpets and vessels, and asked them the meaning of this, to which they answered, “The

Princess is minded to take her pleasure." When he heard these words he hastened to his lodging and, fetching some of the jewels and ornaments he had brought with him from home, sat down in the garden and spread somewhat of them out before him, shaking and making a show of extreme old age, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninety-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the son of the Persian King, after disguising himself as an old man shotten in years and taking a seat in the garden, spread out somewhat of the jewels and ornaments before him and made a show of shaking and trembling as if for decrepitude and the weakness of extreme senility. After an hour or so a company of damsels and eunuchs entered with the Princess in their midst, as she were the moon among the stars, and dispersed about the garden, plucking the fruits and diverting themselves. Presently they espied a man sitting under one of the trees; and, making towards him (who was the Prince), found him a very old man, whose hands and feet trembled for decrepitude, and before him store of precious jewels and royal ornaments. So they marvelled at his case and asked him what he did there with the jewels; when he answered, "With these trinkets I would fain buy me to wife one of you." They laughed together at him and said, "If one of us marry thee, what wilt thou do with her?" Said he, "I will give her one kiss and divorce her." Then quoth the Princess, "I give thee this damsel to wife." So he rose and coming up to her, leaning on his staff and shivering and staggering, kissed her and gave her the jewels and ornaments; whereat she rejoiced and they, laughing at him, went their way. Next day, they came again to the garden, and finding him seated in the same place, with more jewels and ornaments than before spread in front of him, asked him, "O Shaykh, what wilt thou do with this jewellery?"; and he answered, saying, "I wish therewith to take one of you to wife even as yesterday." So the Princess said, "I marry thee to this damsel;" and he came up to her and kissed her and gave her the jewels, and they all went their ways. But, seeing such generosity to her handmaids, the Princess said in herself, "I have more right to all these fine things than these baggages, and no harm can betide me." So when morning morrowed she went down from her chamber singly into the garden, in the habit of one of her damsels, and presenting herself privily before the Prince, said to him, “O Shaykh, the King’s daughter hath sent me to thee, that thou mayst marry me.” He looked at her and knew her; so he answered, “With love and gladness,” and gave her jewels and ornaments of the finest and costliest. Then he rose to kiss her, and she off her guard and fearing nothing but, when he came up to her, he suddenly laid hold of her with a strong hand and instantly throwing her down, on the ground abated her maidenhead.[220] Then he pulled the beard from his face and said to her, “Dost thou not know me?” Asked she, “Who art thou?” and he answered, “I am Behram, the King’s son of Persia, who have changed my favour and am become a stranger to my people and estate for thy sake and have lavished my treasures for thy love.” So she rose from under him in silence and answered not his address nor spake a word of reply to him, being dazed for what had befallen her and seeing nothing better than to be silent, for fear of shame; and she bethought herself and said, “If I kill myself it will be useless and if I do him die, his death will profit me naught;” and presently added, “Nothing will serve me but that I elope with him to his own country.” Then she gathered together her monies and treasures and sent to him, acquainting him therewith, to the intent that he also might equip himself with his wealth and needs; and they agreed upon a night on which to depart. So, at the appointed time, they mounted race-horses and set out under cover of the gloom, nor did morning morrow till they had traversed a great distance; and they ceased not faring forwards till they drew near his father’s capital in the land of the Persians. When the King heard of his son’s coming, he rode out to meet him with his troops and rejoiced in him with exceeding joy. Then, after a few days, he sent the Princess’s father a splendid present, and a letter to the effect that his daughter was with him and demanding her wedding equipage. Al-Datma’s father came out to meet the messengers with the greatest gladness (for that he had deemed his daughter lost and had grieved sore for her loss): after which he made bride-feasts and, summoning the Kazi and the witnesses, let draw up the marriage-contract between his daughter and the Prince of Persia. He invested the envoys with robes of honour, then he made ready her equipage and despatched it to her;

and Prince Behram abode with her till death sundered their union. "See therefore, O King" (continued the favourite), "the malice of men in their dealing with women. As for me, I will not go back from my due till I die." So the King once more commanded to put his son to death; but the seventh Wazir came in to him and kissing the ground before him, said, "O King, have patience with me whilst I speak these words of good counsel to thee; how many patient and slow-moving men unto their hope attain, and how many who are precipitate fall into shameful state! Now I have seen how this damsel hath profligately excited the King by lies to horrible and unnatural cruelties; but I his Mameluke, whom he hath overwhelmed with his favours and bounties, do proffer him true and loyal rede; for that I, O King, know of the malice of women that which none knoweth save myself; and in particular there hath reached me, on this subject, the story of the old woman and the son of the merchant with its warning instances." Asked the King, "And what fell out between them, O Wazir?" and the seventh Wazir answered, "I have heard tell, O King, the tale of

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The House with the Belvedere.[221]

A wealthy merchant had a son who was very dear to him and who said to him one day, “O my father, I have a boon to beg of thee.” Quoth the merchant, “O my son, what is it, that I may give it thee and bring thee to thy desire, though it were the light of mine eyes.” Quoth the youth, “Give me money, that I may journey with the merchants to the city of Baghdad and see its sights and sail on the Tigris and look upon the palace of the Caliphs[222] ; for the sons of the merchants have described these things to me and I long to see them for myself.” Said the father, “O my child, O my little son, how can I endure to part from thee?” But the youth replied, ‘ I have said my say and there is no help for it but I journey to Baghdad with thy consent or e’en without it: such a longing for its sight hath fallen upon me as can only be assuaged by the going hither.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the merchant’s son said to his sire, “There is no help for it but that I journey to Baghdad.” Now when the father saw that there was no help for it, he provided his son with goods to the value of thirty thousand gold pieces and sent him with certain merchants in whom he trusted, committing him to their charge. Then he took leave of the youth, who journeyed with his friends the merchants till they reached Baghdad, the House of Peace, where he entered the market and hired him a house, so handsome and delectable and spacious and elegant that on seeing it he well nigh lost his wits for admiration; for therein were pavilions facing one another, with floors of coloured marbles and ceilings inlaid with gold and lapis lazuli, and its gardens were full of warbling birds. So he asked the door keeper[223] what was its monthly rent, and he replied, “Ten dinars.” Quoth the young man, “Speakest thou soothly or dost thou but jest with me?” Quoth the porter, “By Allah, I speak naught but the truth, for none who taketh up his abode in This house lodgeth in it more than a week[224] or two.” “And how is that?” quoth the youth; and quoth the porter, “O my son, whoso dwelleth in this house cometh not forth of it, except sick or dead, wherefore it is known amongst all the folk of Baghdad so that none offereth to inhabit it, and thus cometh it that its rent is fallen so low." Hearing this the young merchant marvelled with exceeding marvel and said, "Needs must there be some reason for this sickening and perishing." However after considering awhile and seeking refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned, he rented the house and took up his abode there. Then he put away apprehension from his thought and busied himself with selling and buying; and some days passed by without any such ill case befalling him in the house, as the doorkeeper had mentioned. One day as he sat upon the bench before his door, there came up a grizzled crone, as she were a snake speckled white and black, calling aloud on the name of Allah, magnifying Him inordinately and, at the same time, putting away the stones and other obstacles from the path.[225] Seeing the youth sitting there, she looked at him and marvelled at his case; where upon quoth he to her, "O woman, dost thou know me or am I like any thou knowest?" When she heard him speak, she toddled up to him and saluting him with the salaam, asked, "How long hast thou dwelt in this house?" Answered he, "Two months, O my mother;" and she said, "It was hereat I marvelled; for I, O my son, know thee not, neither dost thou know me, nor yet art thou like unto any one I know; but I marvelled for that none other than thou hath taken up his abode in this house but hath gone forth from it, dead or dying, saving thee alone. Doubtless, O my son, thou hast periled thy young years; but I suppose thou hast not gone up to the upper story neither looked out from the belvedere there." So saying, she went her way and he fell a pondering her words and said to himself, "I have not gone up to the top of the house; nor did I know that there was a belvedere there." Then he arose forthright and going in, searched the by ways of the house till he espied, in a wall corner among the trees, a narrow door between whose posts[226] the spider had woven her webs, and said in himself, "Haply the spider hath not webbed over the door, but because death and doom is within." However, he heartened himself with the saying of God the Most High, "Say, nothing shall befall us but what Allah hath written for us;"[227] and opening the door, ascended a narrow flight of stairs, till he came to the terrace roof, where he found a belvedere, in which he sat down to rest and solace himself with the view. Presently, he caught sight of a fine house and a well cared for hard by, surmounted by a lofty belvedere, over looking the whole of Baghdad, in which sat a damsel fair as a Houri. Her beauty took possession of his whole heart and made away with his reason, bequeathing to him the pains and patience of Job and the grief and weeping of Jacob. And as he looked at her and considered her curiously, an object to enamour an ascetic and make a devotee lovesick, fire was lighted in his vitals and he cried, "Folk say that whoso taketh up his abode in this house dieth or sickeneth. An this be so, yon damsel is assuredly the cause. Would Heaven I knew how I shall win free of this affair, for my wits are clean gone!" Then he descended from the terrace, pondering his case, and sat down in the house, but being unable to rest, he went out and took his seat at the door, absorbed in melancholy thought when, behold, up came the old woman afoot, praising and magnifying Allah as she went. When he saw her, he rose and accosting her with a courteous salaam and wishes for her life being prolonged said to her, "O my mother, I was healthy and hearty till thou madest mention to me of the door leading to the belvedere; so I opened it and ascending to the top Of the house, saw thence what stole away my senses; and now methinks I am a lost man, and I know no physician for me but thyself." When she heard this, she laughed and said, "No harm shall befall thee Inshallah so Allah please!" Whereupon he rose and went into the house and coming back with an hundred dinars in his sleeve, said to her, "Take this, O my mother, and deal with me the dealing of lords with slaves and succour me quickly for, if I die, a claim for my blood will meet thee on the Day of Doom." Answered she, "With love and gladness; but, O my son, I expect thou lend me thine aid in some small matter, whereby hangs the winning of thy wish." Quoth he, "What wouldst thou have me do, O my mother?" Quoth she, "Go to the silk market and enquire for the shop of Abú al-Fath bin Kaydám. Sit thee down on his counter and salute him and say to him, 'Give me the face veil[228] thou hast by thee orfrayed with gold:' for he hath none handsomer in his shop. Then buy it of him, O my son, at his own price however high and keep it till I come to thee to morrow, Allah Almighty willing." So saying, she went away and he passed the night upon live coals of the Ghazá[229] -wood. Next morning he took a thousand ducats in his pocket and repairing to the silk market, sought out the shop of Abu al-Fath to whom he was directed by one of the merchants. He found him a man of dignified aspect, surrounded by pages, eunuchs and attendants; for he was a merchant of great wealth and consideration befriended by the Caliph; and of the blessings which Allah the Most High had bestowed upon him was the damsel who had ravished the young man's heart. She was his wife and had not her match for beauty, nor was her like to be found with any of the sons of the Kings. The young man saluted him and Abu al-Fath returned his salaam and bade him be seated. So he sat down by him and said to him, "O merchant, I wish to look at such a face veil." Accordingly he bade his slave bring him a bundle of silk from the inner shop And opening it, brought out a number of veils, whose beauty amazed the youth. Among them was the veil he sought; so he bought it for fifty gold pieces and bore it home well pleased. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundredth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the youth after buying the veil of the merchant bore it home; but hardly had he reached the house when lo! up came the old woman. He rose to her and gave her his purchase when she bade him bring a live coal, with which she burnt one of the corners of the veil, then folded it up as before and, repairing to Abu al-Fath's house, knocked at the door. Asked the damsel, "Who is there?"; and she answered, "I, such an one." Now the damsel knew her for a friend of her mother so, when she heard her voice, she came out and opening the door to her, said, "What brought thee here, O my mother? My mamma hath left me and gone to her own house." Replied the old woman, "O my daughter, I know thy mother is not with thee, for I have been with her in her home, and I come not to thee, but because I fear to pass the hour of prayer; wherefore I desire to make my Wuzu-ablution with thee, for I know thou art clean and thy house pure."[230] The damsel admitted the old trot who saluted her and called down blessings upon her. Then she took the ewer and went into the wash house, where she made her ablutions and prayed in a place there. Presently, she came out again and said to the damsel, "O my daughter, I suspect thy handmaidens have been in yonder place and defiled it; so do thou show me another place where I may pray, for the prayer I have prayed I account null and void.” Thereupon the damsel took her by the hand and said to her, “O my mother, come and pray on my carpet, where my husband sits.” So she stood there and prayed and worshipped, bowed and prostrated; and presently, she took the damsel unawares and made shift to slip the veil under the cushion, unseen of her. Then she blessed her and went her ways. Now as the day was closing Abu al-Fath came home and sat down upon the carpet, whilst his wife brought him food and he ate of it his sufficiency and washed his hands; after which he leant back upon the cushion. Presently, he caught sight of a corner of the veil protruding from under the cushion; so he pulled it out and considered it straitly, when, knowing it for that he had sold to the young man, he at once suspected his wife of unchastity. Thereupon he called her and said, “Whence hadst thou this veil?” And she swore an oath to him, saying, “None hath come to me but thou.” The merchant was silent for fear of scandal, and said to himself, “If I open up this chapter, I shall be put to shame before all Baghdad;” for he was one of the intimates of the Caliph and so he could do nothing save hold his peace. So he asked no questions, but said to his wife, whose name was Mahzíyah, “It hath reached me that thy mother lieth ill of heart ache[231] and all the women are with her, weeping over her; wherefore I order thee to go to her.” Accordingly, she repaired to her mother’s house and found her in the best of health; and she asked her daughter, “What brings thee here at this hour?” So she told her what her husband had said and sat with her awhile; when behold, up came porters, who brought her clothes from her husband’s house, and transporting all her paraphernalia and what not else belonged to her of goods and vessels, deposited them in her mother’s lodging. When the mother saw this, she said to her daughter, “Tell me what hath passed between thee and thy husband, to bring about this.” But she swore to her that she knew not the cause thereof and that there had befallen nothing between them to call for this conduct. Quoth her mother, “Needs must there be a cause for this.” And she answered, saying, “I know of none, and after this, with Almighty Allah be it to make provision!” Whereupon her mother fell a weeping and lamented her daughter's separation from the like of this man, by reason of his sufficiency and fortune and the greatness of his rank and dignity. On this wise things abode some days, after which the curst, ill omened old woman, whose name was Miryam the Koranist,[232] paid a visit to Mahziyah, in her mother's house and saluted her cordially, saying, "What ails thee, O my daughter, O my darling? Indeed, thou hast troubled my mind." Then she went in to her mother and said to her, "O my sister, what is this business about thy daughter and her husband? It hath reached me that he hath divorced her! What hath she done to call for this?" Quoth the mother, "Belike her husband will return to her by the blessed influence of thy prayers, O Háfizah; so do thou pray for her, O my sister, for thou art a day faster and a night prayer." Then the three fell to talking together and the old woman said to the damsel, "O my daughter, grieve not for, if Allah please, I will make peace between thee and thy husband before many days." Then she left them and going to the young merchant, said to him, "Get ready a handsome entertainment for us, for I will bring her to thee this very night." So he sprang up and went forth and provided all that was fitting of meat and drink and so forth, then sat down to await the twain; whilst the old woman returned to the girl's mother and said to her, "O my sister, we have a splendid bride feast to night; so let thy daughter go with me, that she may divert herself and make merry with us and throw off her cark and care, and forget the ruin of her home. I will bring her back to thee even as I took her away." The mother dressed her daughter in her finest dress and costliest jewels and accompanied her to the door, where she commended her to the old woman's charge, saying, " 'Ware lest thou let any of Almighty Allah's creatures look upon her, for thou knowest her husband's rank with the Caliph; and do not tarry, but bring her back to me as soon as possible." The old woman carried the girl to the young man's house which she entered, thinking it the place where the wedding was to be held: but as soon as she came into the sitting saloon, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and First Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that as soon as the damsel entered the sitting saloon, the youth sprang up to her and flung his arms round her neck and kissed her hands and feet. She was confounded at his loveliness, as well as at the beauty of the place and the profusion of meat and drink, flowers and perfumes that she saw therein, and deemed all was a dream. When the old woman saw her amazement, she said to her, "The name of Allah be upon thee, O my daughter! Fear not; I am here sitting with thee and will not leave thee for a moment. Thou art worthy of him and he is worthy of thee." So the damsel sat down shame-fast and in great confusion; but the young man jested and toyed with her and entertained her with laughable stories and loving verses, till her breast broadened and she became at her ease. Then she ate and drank and growing warm with wine, took the lute and sang these couplets,

"My friend who went hath returned once more; * Oh, the welcome
light that such beauty shows!
And but for the fear of those arrowy eyes, * From his lovely
cheek I had culled the rose."

And when the youth saw that she to his beauty did incline he waxt drunken without wine and his life was a light matter to him compared with his love.[233] Presently the old woman went out and left them alone together to enjoy their loves till the next morning, when she went into them and gave them both good morrow[234] and asked the damsel, "How hast thou passed the night, O my lady?" Answered the girl, "Right well, thanks to thy adroitness and the excellence of thy going between."[235] Then said the old woman, "Up, let us go back to thy mother." At these words the young man pulled out an hundred sequins and gave them to her, saying, "Take this and leave her with me to night." So she left them and repaired to the girl's mother, to whom quoth she, "Thy daughter saluteth thee, and the bride's mother hath sworn her to abide with her this night." Replied the mother, "O my sister, bear her my salaam, and, if it please and amuse the girl, there is no harm in her staying the night; so let her do this and divert herself and come back to me at her leisure, for all I fear for her is chagrin on account of an angry husband." The old woman ceased not to make excuse after excuse to the girl's mother and to put off cheat upon cheat upon her, till Mahziyah had tarried seven days with the young man, of whom she took an hundred dinars each day for herself; while he enjoyed all the solace of life and coition. But at the end of this time, the girl's mother said to her, "Bring my daughter back to me forthright; for I am uneasy about her, because she hath been so long absent, and I misdoubt me of this." So the old woman went out saying, "Woe to thee! shall such words be spoken to the like of me?"; and, going to the young man's house, took the girl by the hand and carried her away (leaving him lying asleep on his bed, for he was drunken with wine) to her mother. She received her with pleasure and gladness and seeing her in redoubled beauty and brilliancy rejoiced in her with exceeding joy, saying, "O my daughter, my heart was troubled about thee and in my uneasiness I offended against this my sister the Koranist with a speech that wounded her." Replied Mahziyah, "Rise and kiss her hands and feet, for she hath been to me as a servant in my hour of need, and if thou do it not thou art no mamma of mine, nor am I thy girl." So the mother went up at once to the old woman and made her peace with her. Meanwhile, the young man recovered from his drunkenness and missed the damsel, but congratulated himself on having enjoyed his desire. Presently Miryam the old Koranist came in to him and saluted him, saying, "What thinkest thou of my feat?" Quoth he, "Excellently well conceived and contrived of thee was that same." Then quoth she, "Come, let us mend what we have marred and restore this girl to her husband, for we have been the cause of their separation and it is unrighteous." Asked he, "How shall I do?" and she answered, "Go to Abu al-Fath's shop and salute him and sit down by him, till thou seest me pass by, when do thou rise in haste and catch hold of my dress and abuse me and threaten me, demanding of me the veil. And do thou say to the merchant, 'Thou knowest, O my lord, the face veil I bought of thee for fifty dinars? It so chanced that my handmaid put it on and burnt a corner of it by accident; so she gave it to this old woman, who took it, promising to get it fine-drawn[236] and return it, and went away, nor have I seen her from that day to this.'" "With joy and good will," replied the young man, and rising forthright, walked to the shop of the silk merchant, with whom he sat awhile till behold, the old woman passed telling her beads on a rosary she held in hand; whereupon he sprang up and laying hold of her dress began to abuse and rail at her, whilst she answered him with fair words, saying, "Indeed, my son, thou art excusable." So the people of the bazaar flocked round the two, saying, "What is the matter?" and he replied, "O folk, I bought of this merchant a veil for fifty dinars and gave it to my slave girl, who wore it awhile, then sat down to fumigate it with perfume. Presently a spark flew out of the censer and, lighting on the edge of the veil, burnt a hole in it. So we committed it to this pestilent old woman, that she might give it to who should fine-draw it and return it to us; but from that time we have never set eyes on her again till this day." Answered the old woman, "This young man speaks sooth. I had the veil from him, but I took it with me into one of the houses where I am wont to visit and forgot it there, nor do I know where I left it; and, being a poor woman, I feared its owner and dared not face him." Now the girl's husband was listening to all they said, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the young man seized the old woman and spoke to her of the veil as she had primed him, the girl's husband was listening to all they said, from beginning to end, and when he heard the tale which the crafty old woman had contrived with the young man, he rose to his feet and said, "Allah Almighty! I crave pardon of the Omnipotent One for my sins and for what my heart suspected!" And he praised the Lord who had discovered to him the truth. Then he accosted the old woman and said to her, "Dost thou use to visit us?"[237] Replied she, "O my son, I visit you and other than you, for the sake of alms; but from that day to this, none hath given me news of the veil." Asked the merchant, "Hast thou enquired at my house?" and she answered, "O my lord, I did indeed go to thy house and ask; but they told me that the person of the house[238] had been divorced by the merchant; so I went away and asked no farther; nor have I enquired of anybody else until this day." Hereupon the merchant turned to the young man and said, "Let the old woman go her way; for the veil is with me." So saying he brought it out from the shop and gave it to the fine-drawer before all present. Then he betook himself to his wife and, giving her somewhat of money, took her to himself again, after making abundance of excuses to her and asking pardon of Allah, because he knew not what the old woman had done. (Said the Wazir), "This then, O King, is an instance of the malice of women and for another to the same purport, I have heard tell the following tale anent

The King's Son and the Ifrit's Mistress[239]

A certain King's son was once walking alone for his pleasure, when he came to a green meadow, abounding in trees laden with fruit and birds singing on the boughs, and a river running athwart it. The place pleased him; so he sat down there and taking out some dried fruits he had brought with him, began to eat, when lo! he espied a great smoke rising up to heaven and, taking fright, he climbed up into a tree and hid himself among the branches. Thence he saw an Ifrit rise out of the midst of the stream bearing on his head a chest of marble, secured by a padlock. He set down the chest on the meadow-sward and opened it and there came forth a damsel of mortal race like the sun shining in the sheeny sky. After seating her he solaced himself by gazing on her awhile, then laid his head in her lap and fell asleep, whereupon she lifted up his head and laying it on the chest, rose and walked about. Presently, she chanced to raise her eyes to the tree wherein was the Prince, and seeing him, signed to him to come down. He refused, but she swore to him, saying, "Except thou come down and do as I bid thee, I will wake the Ifrit and point thee out to him, when he will straightway kill thee." The King's son fearing she would do as she said, came down, whereupon she kissed his hands and feet and besought him to do her need. To this he consented and, when he had satisfied her wants, she said to him, "Give me this seal ring I see on thy finger." So he gave her his signet and she set it in a silken kerchief she had with her, wherein were more than four score others. When the Prince saw this, he asked her, "What dost thou with all these rings?"; and she answered, "In very sooth this Ifrit carried me off from my father's palace and shut me in this box, which he beareth about on his head wherever he goeth, with the keys about him; and he hardly leaveth me one moment alone of the excess of his jealousy over me, and hindereth me from what I desire. When I saw this, I swore that I would deny my last favours to no man whatsoever, and these rings thou seest are after the tale of the men who have had me; for after coition I took from each a seal ring and laid it in this kerchief." Then she added, "And now go thy ways, that I may look for another than thyself, for the Ifrit will not awake yet awhile." Hardly crediting what he had heard, the Prince returned to his father's palace, but the King knew naught of the damsel's malice (for she feared not this and took no count thereof), and seeing that his son had lost his ring, he bade put him to death.[240] Then he rose from his place and entered his palace; but his Wazirs came in to him and prevailed with him to abandon his purpose. The same night, the King sent for all of them and thanked them for having dissuaded him from slaying his son; and the Prince also thanked them, saying, "It was well done of you to counsel my father to let me live and Inshallah! I will soon requite you abundantly." Then he related to them how he had lost the ring, and they offered up prayers for his long life and advancement and withdrew. "See then, O King," (said the Wazir), "the malice of women and what they do unto men." The King hearkened to the Minister's counsel and again countermanded his order to slay his son. Next morning, it being the eighth day, as the King sat in his audience chamber in the midst of his Grandees and Emirs and Wazirs and Olema, the Prince entered, with his hand in that of his governor, Al Sindibad, and praised his father and his Ministers and lords and divines in the most eloquent words and thanked them for having saved his life; so that all who were present wondered at his eloquence and fluency of speech. His father rejoiced in him with exceeding, all surpassing joy, and calling him to him, kissed him between the eyes. Then he called his preceptor, al-Sindibad, and asked him why his son had kept silence these seven days, to which he replied, "O our lord, the truth is, it was I who enjoined him to this, in my fear for him of death: I knew this from the day of his birth; and, when I took his nativity, I found it written in the stars that, if he should speak during this period, he would surely die; but now the danger is over, by the King's fortune." At this the King was glad and said to his Wazirs, "If I had killed my son, would the fault have fallen on me or the damsel or on the preceptor, al-Sindibad?" But all present refrained from replying, and al-Sindibad said to the Prince, "Answer thou, O my son." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her

permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Al-Sindibad said, “Answer thou, O my son,” the Prince replied, “I have heard tell that a merchant at whose house certain guests once alighted sent his slave girl to the market to buy a jar of clotted milk.[241] So she bought it and set out on her return home; but on the way there passed over her a kite, holding and squeezing a serpent in its claws, and a drop of the serpent’s venom fell into the milk jar, unknown of the girl. So, when she came back, the merchant took the milk from her and drank of it, he and his guests; but hardly had it settled in their stomachs when they all died.[242] Now consider, O King, whose was the fault in this matter?” Thereupon some present said, “It was the fault of the company who drank the milk without examining it.” And other some, “That of the girl, who left the jar without cover.” But al-Sindibad asked the Prince, “What sayest thou, O my son?” Answered he, “I say that the folk err; it was neither the fault of the damsel nor of the company, for their appointed hour was come, their divinely decreed provision was exhausted and Allah had fore ordained them to die thus.”[243] When the courtiers heard this, they marvelled greatly and lifted up their voices, blessing the King’s son, and saying, “O our lord, thou hast made a reply sans peur, and thou art the sagest man of thine age sans reproche.” “Indeed, I am no sage,” answered the Prince; “the blind Shaykh and the son of three years and the son of five years were wiser than I.” Said the bystanders, “O youth, tell us the stories of these three who were wiser than thou art, O youth.” Answered he, “With all my heart. I have heard tell this tale concerning the

Sandal-Wood Merchant and the Sharpers.[244]

There once lived an exceeding rich merchant, who was a great traveller and who visited all manner of places. One day, being minded to journey to a certain city, he asked those who came thence, saying, “What kind of goods brought most profit there?” and they answered, “Chanders-wood; for it selleth at a high price.” So he laid out all his money in sandal and set out for that city; and arriving there at close of day, behold, he met and old woman driving her sheep. Quoth she to him, “Who art thou, O man? and quoth he, “I am a stranger, a merchant.” “Beware of the townsfolk,” said she, “for they are cheats, rascals, robbers who love nothing more than imposing on the foreigner that they may get the better of him and devour his substance. Indeed I give thee good counsel.” Then she left him and on the morrow there met him one of the citizens who saluted him and asked him, “O my lord, whence comest thou?” Answered the merchant, “From such a place.” “And what merchandise hast thou brought with thee?” enquired the other; and replied he, “Chanders-wood, for it is high of price with you.” Quoth the townsman, “He blundered who told thee that; for we burn nothing under our cooking-pots save sandal-wood, whose worth with us is but that of fuel.” When the merchant heard this he sighed and repented and stood balanced between belief and unbelief. Then he alighted at one of the khans of the city, and, when it was night, he saw a merchant make fire of chanders-wood under his cooking pot. Now this was the man who had spoken with him and this proceeding was a trick of his. When the townsman saw the merchant looking at him, he asked, “Wilt thou sell me thy sandal-wood for a measure[245] of whatever thy soul shall desire?” “I sell it to thee,” answered the merchant; and the buyer transported all the wood to his own house and stored it up there; whilst the seller purposed to take an equal quantity of gold for it. Next morning the merchant, who was a blue-eyed man, went out to walk in the city but, as he went along, one of the townsfolk, who was blue-eyed and one-eyed to boot, caught hold of him, saying, “Thou are he who stole my eye and I will never let thee go.”[246] The merchant denied this, saying, “I never stole it: the thing is impossible." Whereupon the folk collected round them and besought the one-eyed man to grant him till the morrow, that he might give him the price of his eye. So the merchant procured one to be surety for him, and they let him go. Now his sandal had been rent in the struggle with the one-eyed man; so he stopped at a cobbler's stall and gave it to him, saying, "Mend it and thou shalt have of me what shall content thee." Then he went on, till he came to some people sitting at play of forfeits and sat down with them, to divert his cark and care. They invited him to play with them and he did so; but they practised on him and overcoming him, offered him his choice,[247] either to drink up the sea or disburse all the money he had. "Have patience with me till to-morrow," said he, and they granted him the delay he sought; whereupon he went away, sore concerned for what had betided him and knowing not how he should do, and sat down in a solitary place heart-heavy, care- full, thought-opprest. And behold, the old woman passed by and seeing him thus, said to him, "Peradventure the townsfolk have gotten the better of thee, for I see the troubled at that which hath befallen thee: recount to me what aileth thee." So he told her all that had passed from first to last, and she said, "As for him who diddled thee in the matter of the chanders-wood, thou must know that with us it is worth ten gold pieces a pound. But I will give thee a rede, whereby I trust thou shalt deliver thyself; and it is this. Go to such and such a gate whereby lives a blind Shaykh, a cripple, who is knowing, wise as a wizard and experienced; and all resort to him and ask him what they require, when he counsels them what will be their advantage; for he is versed in craft[248] and magic and trickery. Now he is a sharper and the sharpers resort to him by night; therefore, I repeat, go thou to his lodging and hide thyself from thine adversaries, so thou mayst hear what they say, unseen of them; for he telleth them which party got the better and which got the worse; and haply thou shalt learn from them some plan which may avail to deliver thee from them." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old woman said to the merchant, "Go this night to that expert who is frequented by the townsfolk and hide thine identity: haply shalt thou hear from him some plea which shall deliver thee from thine adversaries.” So he went to the place she mentioned and hid himself albeit he took seat near the blind man. Before long, up came the Shaykh’s company who were wont to choose him for their judge: they saluted the oldster and one another and sat down round him, whereupon the merchant recognised his four adversaries. The Chief set somewhat of food before them and they ate; then each began to tell what had befallen him during his day, and amongst the rest came forward he of the chanders-wood and told the Shaykh how he had bought of one man sandal below its price, and had agreed to pay for it a Sá’a or measure of whatever the seller should desire.[249] Quoth the old man, “Thine opponent hath the better of thee.” Asked the other, “How can that be?”; and the Shaykh answered, “What if he say, I will take the measure full of gold or silver, wilt thou give it to him?” “Yes,” replied the other, “I will give it to him and still be the gainer.” And the Shaykh answered, “And if he say, I will take the measure full of fleas,[250] half male and half female, what wilt thou do?” So the sharper knew that he was worsted. Then came forward the one-eyed man and said, “O Shaykh, I met to-day a blue-eyed man, a stranger to the town; so I picked a quarrel with him and caught hold of him, saying, ‘’Twas thou robbedst me of my eye’; nor did I let him go, till some became surety for him that he should return to me to-morrow and satisfy me for my eye.” Quoth the oldster, “If he will he may have the better of thee and thou the worse.” “How so?” asked the sharper; and the Chief said, “he may say to thee, ‘Pluck out thine eye, and I will pluck out one of mine; then we will weigh them both, and if thine eye be of the same weight as mine, thou sayest sooth in what thou avouchest.’ So wilt thou owe him the legal price of his eye and be stone blind, whilst he will still see with his other eye.” So the sharper knew that the merchant might baffle him with such plea. Then came the cobbler; and said, “O Shaykh, a man brought me his sandal-shoe to-day, saying, ‘Mend this;’ and I asked him, ‘What wage wilt thou give me?’; when he answered, ‘Thou shalt have of me what will content thee.’ Now nothing will content me but all the wealth he hath.” Quoth the oldster, “And he will, he may take his sandal from thee and give thee nothing.” “How so?” quoth the cobbler, and quoth the Shaykh, “He has but to say to thee, ‘The Sultan’s enemies are put to the rout; his foes are waxed weak and his children and helpers are multiplied. Art thou content or no?’ If thou say, ‘I am content,’[251] he will take his sandal and go away; and if thou say, ‘I am not content,’ he will take his sandal and beat thee therewith over the face and neck.” So the cobbler owned himself worsted. Then came forward the gamester and said, “O Shaykh, I played at forfeits with a man to-day and beat him and quoth I to hime, ‘If thou drink the sea I will give thee all my wealth; and if not I will take all that is thine.’” Replied the Chief, “An he will he may worst thee.” “How so?” asked the sharper, and the Shaykh answered, “He hath but to say, ‘Hold for me the mouth of the sea in thine hand and give it me and I will drink it.’ But thou wilt not be able to do this; so he will baffle thee with this plea.” When the merchant heard this, he knew how it behoved him to deal with his adversaries. Then the sharpers left the Shaykh and the merchant returned to his lodging. Now when morning morrowed, the gamester came to him and summoned him to drink the sea; so he said to him, “Hold for me its mouth and I will drink it up.” Whereupon he confessed himself beaten and redeemed his foreit by paying an hundred gold pieces. Then came the cobbler and sought of him what should content him. Quoth the merchant, “Our lord the Sultan hath overcome his foes and hath destroyed his enemies and his children are multiplied. Art thou content or no?” “I am content,” replied the cobbler and, giving up the shoe[252] without wage, went away. Next came the one-eyed man and demanded the legal price of his eye. Said the merchant, “Pluck out thine eye, and I will pluck out mine: then we will weigh them, and if they are equal in weight, I will acknowledge thy truth, and pay thee the price of thine eye; but, if they differ, thou liest and I will sue thee for the price of mine eye.” Quoth the one-eyed man, “Grant me time;” but the merchant answered, saying, “I am a stranger and grant time to none, nor will I part from thee till thou pay.” So the sharper ransomed his eye by paying him an hundred ducats and went away. Last of all came the buyer of the chanders-wood and said, “Take the price of thy ware.” Asked the merchant, “What wilt thou give me?”; and the other answered, “We agreed for a Sá’a-measure of whatever thou shouldst desire; so, if thou wilt, take it full of gold and silver.”

“Not I,” rejoined the merchant, “Not I! nothing shall serve me but I must have it full of fleas, half male and half female.” Said the sharper, “I can do nothing of the kind;” and, confessing himself beaten, returned him his sandal-wood and redeemed himself from him with an hundred sequins, to be off his bargain. Then the merchant sold the chanders-wood at his own price and, quitting the city of sharpers, returned to his own land, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fifth Night

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the merchant had sold his chanders-wood and had taken the money he quitted that city and returned to his own land. Then the Prince continued, “But this is not more wondrous than the tale of the three-year-old child.” “What may that be?” asked the King, and the Prince answered, “I have heard tell this tale of

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The Debauchee and the Three-Year-Old Child.

Know, O King that a certain profligate man, who was addicted to the sex, once heard of a beautiful and lovely woman who dwelt in a city other than his own. So he journeyed thither, taking with him a present, and wrote her a note, setting forth all that he suffered of love-longing and desire for her and how his passion for her had driven him to forsake his native land and come to her; and he ended by praying for an assignation. She gave him leave to visit her and, as he entered her abode, she stood up and received him with all honour and worship, kissing his hands and entertaining him with the best entertainment of meat and drink. Now she had a little son, but three years old, whom she left and busied herself in cooking rice.[253] Presently the man said to her, “Come, let us go and lie together;” but she replied, “My son is sitting looking at us.” Quoth the man, “He is a little child, understanding not neither knowing how to speak.” Quoth the woman, “Thou wouldst not say thus, and thou knew his intelligence.” When the boy saw that the rice was done, he wept with bitter weeping and his mother said to him, “What gars thee weep, O my son?” “Ladle me out some rice,” answered he, “and put clarified butter in it.” So she ladled him out somewhat of rice and put butter therein; and the child ate a little, then began to weep again. Quoth she, “What ails thee now, O my son?”; and quoth he, “O mother mine, I want some sugar with my rice.” At this said the man, who was an-angered, “Thou art none other than a curst child.” “Curst thyself, by Allah,” answered the boy, “seeing thou weariest thyself and journeyest from city to city, in quest of adultery. As for me, I wept because I had somewhat in my eye, and my tears brought it out; and now I have eaten rice with butter and sugar and am content; so which is the curst of us twain?” The man was confounded at this rebuke from a little child and forthright grace entered him and he was reclaimed. Wherefor he laid not a finger on the woman, but went out from her and returned to his own country, where he lived a contrite life till he died. “As for the story of the five-year-old child” (continued the Prince), “I have heard tell, O King, the following anent

The Stolen Purse.

Four merchants once owned in common a thousand gold pieces; so they laid them mingled together in one purse and set out to buy merchandise therewith. They happened as they wended their way on a beautiful garden; so they left the purse with a woman who had care of the garden, saying to here, “Mind thee, thou shalt not give it back save when all four of us in person demand it of thee.” She agreed to this and they entered and strolled awhile about the garden-walks and ate and drank and made merry, after which one of them said to the others, “I have with me scented fuller’s-earth; come, let us wash our heads therewith in this running water.” Quoth another, “We lack a comb;” and a third, “Let us ask the keeper; belike she hath a comb.” Thereupon one of them arose and accosting the care-taker, said to her, “Give me the purse.” Said she, “Not until ye be all present or thy fellows bid me give it thee.” Then he called to his companions (who could see him but not hear him) saying, “She will not give it me;” and they said to her, “Give it him,” thinking he meant the comb. So she gave him the purse and he took it and made off as fast as he could. When the three others were wary of waiting, they went to the keeper and asked her, “Why wilt thou not give him the comb?” Answered she, “He demanded naught of me save the purse, and I gave not that same but with your consent, and he went his way with it.” When they heard her words they buffeted their faces and, laying hands upon her, said, “We authorized thee only to give him the comb;” and she rejoined, “He named not a comb to me.” Then they seized her and haled her before the Kazi, to whom they related their claim and he condemned her to make good the the purse and bound over sundry of her debtors to answer for her. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Sixth Night

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Kazi condemned the care-taker to make good the purse and bound over sundry of her debtors to answer for her. So she went forth, confounded and knowing not her way out of difficulty. Presently she met a five-year-old boy who, seeing her troubled, said to her, “What ails thee, O my mother?” But she gave him no answer, contemning him because of his tender age, and he repeated his question a second time and a third time till, at last, she told him all that had passed,[254] not forgetting the condition that she was to keep the purse until all four had demanded it of her. Said the boy, “Give me a dirham to buy sweetmeats withal and I will tell the how thou mayst acquit thyself.” So she gave him a silver and said to him, “What hast thou to say?” Quoth he, “Return to the Kazi, and say to him, It was agreed between myself and them that I should not give them the purse, except all four of them were present. Let them all four come and I will give them the purse, as was agreed.” So she went back to the Kazi and said to him as the boy had counselled; and he asked the merchants, “Was it thus agreed between you and this woman?”; and they answered, “Yes.” Quoth the Kazi, “Then bring me your comrade and take the purse.” So they went in quest of their fellow, whilst the keeper came off scot-free and went her way without let or hindrance. And Allah is Omniscient![255] When the King and his Wazir and those present in the assembly heard the Prince’s words they said to his father, “O our lord the King, in very sooth thy son is the most accomplished man of his time;” and they called down blessings upon the King and the Prince. Then the King strained his son to his bosom and kissed him between the eyes and questioned him of what had passed between the favourite and himself; and the Prince sware to him, by Almighty Allah and by His Holy Prophet that it was she who had required him of love which he refused, adding, “Moreover, she promised me that she would give thee poison to drink and kill the, so should the kingship be mine; whereupon I waxed wroth and signed to her, ‘O accursed one, whenas I can speak I will requite thee!’ So she feared me and did what she did.” The King believed his words and sending for the favourite said to those present, “How shall we put this damsel to death?” Some counselled him to cut out her tongue and other some to burn it with fire; but, when she came before the King, she said to him, “My case with thee is like unto naught save the tale of the fox and the folk.” “How so?” asked he; and she said, “I have heard, O King, tell a

Story of the Fox and the Folk.[256]

A fox once made his way into a city by the wall and, entering a currier's store-house, played havoc with all therein and spoiled the skins for the owner. One day, the currier set a trap for him and taking him, beat him with the hides, till he fell down senseless, whereupon the man deeming him to be dead, cast him out into the road by the city-gate. Presently, an old woman who was walking by, seeing the fox said, "This is a fox whose eye, hung about a child's neck, is salutary against weeping." So she pluckt out his right eye and went away. Then passed a boy, who said, "What does this tail on this fox?"; and cut off his brush. After a while, up came a man and saying, "This is a fox whose gall cleareth away film and dimness from the eyes, if they be anointed therewith like kohl," took out his knife to slit up the fox's paunch. But Reynard said in himself, "We bore with the plucking out of the eye and the cutting off of the tail; but, as for the slitting of the paunch, there is no putting up with that!" So saying, he sprang up and made off through the gate of the city, hardly believing in his escape. Quoth the King, "I excuse her, and in my son's hands be her doom. If he will, let him torture her, and if he will, let him kill her." Quoth the Prince, "Pardon is better than vengeance and mercy is of the quality of the noble;" and the King repeated, "'Tis for thee to decide, O my son." So the Prince set her free, saying, "Depart from our neighbourhood and Alla pardon what is past!" Therewith the King rose from his throne of estate and seating his son thereon, crowned him with his crown and bade the Grandees of his realm swear fealty and commanded them do homage to him. And he said, "O folk, indeed, I am stricken in years and desire to withdraw apart and devote myself only to the service of my Lord; and I call you to witness that I divest myself of the kingly dignity, even as I have divested myself of my crown and set it on my son's head." So the troops and officers swore fealty to the Prince, and his father gave himself up to the worship of his Lord nor stinted from this, whilst his son abode in his kingship, doing justice and righteousness; and his power was magnified and his sultanate strengthened and he abode in all delight and solace of life, till there came to him the Certainty.

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JUDAR[257] AND HIS BRETHREN.

There was once a man and a merchant named Omar and he had for issue three sons, the eldest called Sálim, the youngest Júdar and the cadet Salím. He reared them all till they came to man’s estate, but the youngest he loved more than his brothers, who seeing this, waxed jealous of Judar and hated him. Now when their father, who was a man shotten in years, saw that his two eldest sons hated their brother, he feared lest after his death trouble should befall him from them. So he assembled a company of his kinsfolk, together with divers men of learning and property distributors of the Kazi’s court, and bidding bring all his monies and cloth, said to them, “O folk, divide ye this money and stuff into four portions according to the law.” They did so, and he gave one part to each of his sons and kept the fourth himself, saying, “This was my good and I have divided it among them in my lifetime; and this that I have kept shall be for my wife, their mother, wherewithal to provide for her subsistence whenas she shall be a widow.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the merchant had divided his money and stuff into four portions he said, “This share shall be for my wife, their mother, wherewithal to provide for her subsistence whenas she shall be a widow.” A little while after this he died, and neither of the two elder brothers was content with his share,[258] but sought more of Judar, saying, “Our father’s wealth is in thy hands.” So he appealed to the judges; and the Moslems who had been present at the partition came and bore witness of that which they knew, wherefore the judge forbade them from one another; but Judar and his brothers wasted much money in bribes to him. After this, the twain left him awhile; presently, however, they began again to plot against him and he appealed a second time to the magistrate, who once more decided in his favour; but all three lost much money which went to the judges. Nevertheless Sálim and Salím forbore not to seek his hurt and to carry the case from court to court,[259] he and they losing till they had given all their good for food to the oppressors and they became poor, all three. Then the two elder brothers went to their mother and flouted her and beat her, and seizing her money crave her away. So she betook herself to her son Judar and told him how his brothers had dealt with her and fell to cursing the twain. Said he, “O my mother, do not curse them, for Allah will requite each of them according to his deed. But, O mother mine, see, I am become poor, and so are my brethren, for strife occasioneth loss ruin rife, and we have striven amain, and fought, I and they, before the judges, and it hath profited us naught: nay, we have wasted all our father left us and are disgraced among the folk by reason of our testimony one against other. Shall I then con tend with them anew on thine account and shall we appeal to the judges? This may not be! Rather do thou take up thine abode with me, and the scone I eat I will share with thee. Do thou pray for me and Allah will give me the means of thine alimony. Leave them to receive of the Almighty the recompense of their deed, and console thyself with the saying of the poet who said,

‘If a fool oppress thee bear patiently; * And from Time expect
thy revenge to see:
Shun tyranny; for if mount oppressed * A mount, ’twould be
shattered by tyranny.’”

And he soothed and comforted her till she consented and took up her dwelling with him. Then he get him a net and went a fishing every day in the river or the banks about Bulák and old Cairo or some other place in which there was water; and one day he would earn ten coppers,[260] another twenty and another thirty, which he spent upon his mother and himself, and they ate well and drank well. But, as for his brothers, they plied no craft and neither sold nor bought; misery and ruin and overwhelming calamity entered their houses and they wasted that which they had taken from their mother and became of the wretched naked beggars. So at times they would come to their mother, humbling themselves before her exceedingly and complaining to her of hunger; and she (a mother’s heart being pitiful) would give them some mouldy, sour smelling bread or, if there were any meat cooked the day before, she would say to them, “Eat it quick and go ere your brother come; for ’twould be grievous to him and he would harden his heart against me, and ye would disgrace me with him.” So they would eat in haste and go. One day among days they came in to their mother, and she set cooked meat and bread before them. As they were eating, behold, in came their brother Judar, at whose sight the parent was put to shame and confusion, fearing lest he should be wroth with her; and she bowed her face earthwards abashed before her son. But he smiled in their faces, saying, “Welcome, O my brothers! A blessed day![261] How comes it that ye visit me this blessed day?” Then he embraced them both and entreated them lovingly, saying to them, “I thought not that ye would have left me desolate by your absence nor that ye would have forborne to come and visit me and your mother.” Said they, “By Allah, O our brother, we longed sore for thee and naught withheld us but abashment because of what befell between us and thee; but indeed we have repented much. ’Twas Satan’s doing, the curse of Allah the Most High be upon him! And now we have no blessing but thyself and our mother.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Judar entered his place and saw his brothers, he welcomed them both, saying, “And I have no blessing but you twain.” And his mother exclaimed, “Allah whiten thy face, and increase thy prosperity, for thou art the most generous of us all, O my son!” Then he said “Welcome to you both! Abide with me; for the Lord is bountiful and good aboundeth with me.” So he made peace with them, and they supped and righted with him; and next morning, after they had broken their fast, Judar shouldered his net and went out, trusting in The Opener[262] whilst the two others also went forth and were absent till midday, when they returned and their mother set the noon meal before them. At nightfall Judar came home, bearing meat and greens, and they abode on this wise a month’s space, Judar catching fish and selling it and spending their price on his mother and his brothers, and these eating and frolicking till, one day, it chanced he went down to the river bank and throwing his net, brought it up empty. He cast it a second time, but again it came up empty and he said in himself, “No fish in this place!” So he removed to another and threw the net there, but without avail. And he ceased not to remove from place to place till night fall, but caught not a single sprat[263] and said to himself, “Wonderful! Hath the fish fled the river or what?” Then he shouldered the net and made for home, chagrined, concerned, feeling for his mother and brothers and knowing not how he should feed them that night. Presently, he came to a baker’s oven and saw the folk crowding for bread, with silver in their hands, whilst the baker took no note of them. So he stood there sighing, and the baker said to him, “Welcome to thee, O Judar! Dost thou want bread?” But he was silent and the baker continued, “An thou have no dirhams, take thy sufficiency and thou shalt get credit.” So Judar said, “Give me ten coppers’ worth of bread and take this net in pledge.” Rejoined the baker, “Nay, my poor fellow, the net is thy gate of earning thy livelihood, and if I take it from thee, I shall close up against thee the door of thy subsistence. Take thee ten Nusfs’ worth of bread and take these other ten, and to morrow bring me fish for the twenty.” “On my head and eyes be it!” quoth Judar and took the bread and money saying, “To morrow the Lord will dispel the trouble of my case and will provide me the means of acquittance.” Then he bought meat and vegetables and carried them home to his mother, who cooked them and they supped and went to bed. Next morning he arose at daybreak and took the net, and his mother said to him, “Sit down and break thy fast.” But he said, “Do thou and my brothers break fast,” and went down to the river about Bulak where he ceased not to cast once, twice, thrice; and to shift about all day, without aught falling to him, till the hour of mid afternoon prayer, when he shouldered his net and went away sore dejected. His way led him perforce by the booth of the baker who, when he saw him counted out to him the loaves and the money, saying, “Come, take it and go; an it be not today, ‘twill be tomorrow.” Judar would have excused himself, but the baker said to him, “Go! There needeth no excuse; an thou had netted aught, it would be with thee; so seeing thee empty handed, I knew thou hadst gotten naught; and if tomorrow thou have no better luck, come and take bread and be not abashed, for I will give thee credit.” So Judar took the bread and money and went home. On the third day also he sallied forth and fished from tank to tank until the time of afternoon prayer, but caught nothing; so he went to the baker and took the bread and silver as usual. On this wise he did seven days running, till he became disheartened and said in himself, “To day I go to the Lake Kárún.”[264] So he went thither and was about to cast his net, when there came up to him unawares a Maghrabí, a Moor, clad in splendid attire and riding a she mule with a pair of gold embroidered saddle bags on her back and all her trappings also orfrayed. The Moor alighted and said to him, “Peace be upon thee, O Judar, O son of Omar!” “And on thee likewise be peace, O my lord the pilgrim!” replied the fisherman. Quoth the Maghrabi, “O Judar, I have need of thee and, given thou obey me, thou shalt get great good and shalt be my companion and manage my affairs for me.” Quoth Judar, “O my lord, tell me what is in thy mind and I will obey thee, without demur.” Said the Moor, “Repeat the Fatihah, the Opening Chapter of the Koran.”[265] So he recited it with him and the Moor bringing out a silken cord, said to Judar, “Pinion my elbows behind me with this cord, as fast as fast can be, and cast me into the lake; then wait a little while; and, if thou see me put forth my hands above the water, raising them high ere my body show, cast thy net over me and drag me out in haste; but if thou see me come up feet foremost, then know that I am dead; in which case do thou leave me and take the mule and saddle bags and carry them to the merchants’ bazaar, where thou wilt find a Jew by name Shamáyah. Give him the mule and he will give thee an hundred dinars, which do thou take and go thy ways and keep the matter secret with all secrecy.” So Judar tied his arms tightly behind his back and he kept saying, “Tie tighter.” Then said he “Push me till I fall into the lake:” so he pushed him in and he sank. Judar stood waiting some time till, behold, the Moor’s feet appeared above the water, whereupon he knew that he was dead. So he left him and drove the mule to the bazaar, where seated on a stool at the door of his storehouse he saw the Jew who spying the mule, cried, “In very sooth the man hath perished,” adding, “and naught undid him but covetise.” Then he took the mule from Judar and gave him an hundred dinars, charging him to keep the matter secret. So Judar went and bought what bread he needed, saying to the baker, “Take this gold piece!”; and the man summed up what was due to him and said, “I still owe thee two days’ bread” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Ninth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Judar, when the baker after summing up what was due to him said, “I still owe thee two days’ bread,” replied, “Good,” and went on to the butcher, to whom he gave a gold piece and took meat, saying, “Keep the rest of the dinar on account.” Then he bought vegetables and going home, found his brothers importuning their mother for victual, whilst she cried, “Have patience till your brother come home, for I have naught.” So he went in to them and said, “Take and eat;” and they fell on the food like cannibals. Then he gave his mother the rest of his gold saying, “If my brothers come to thee, give them wherewithal to buy food and eat in my absence.” He slept well that night and next morning he took his net and going down to Lake Karun stood there and was about to cast his net, when behold, there came up to him a second Maghribi, riding on a she mule more handsomely accoutred than he of the day before and having with him a pair of saddle bags of which each pocket contained a casket. “Peace be with thee, O Judar!” said the Moor: “And with thee be peace, O my lord, the pilgrim!” replied Judar. Asked the Moor, “Did there come to thee yesterday a Moor riding on a mule like this of mine?” Hereat Judar was alarmed and answered, “I saw none,” fearing lest the other say, “Whither went he?” and if he replied, “He was drowned in the lake,” that haply he should charge him with having drowned him; wherefore he could not but deny. Rejoined the Moor, “Hark ye, O unhappy![266] this was my brother, who is gone before me.” Judar persisted, “I know naught of him.” Then the Moor enquired, “Didst thou not bind his arms behind him and throw him into the lake, and did he not say to thee, ‘If my hands appear above the water first, cast thy net over me and drag me out in haste; but, if my feet show first, know that I am dead and carry the mule to the Jew Shamayah, who shall give thee an hundred dinars?’” Quoth Judar, “Since thou knowest all this why and wherefore dost thou question me?”; and quoth the Moor, “I would have thee do with me as thou didst with my brother.” Then he gave him a silken cord, saying, “Bind my hands behind me and throw me in, and if I fare as did my brother, take the mule to the Jew and he will give thee other hundred dinars." Said Judar, "Come on;" so he came and he bound him and pushed him into the lake, where he sank. Then Judar sat watching and after awhile, his feet appeared above the water and the fisher said, "He is dead and damned! Inshallah, may Maghribis come to me every day, and I will pinion them and push them in and they shall die; and I will content me with an hundred dinars for each dead man." Then he took the mule to the Jew, who seeing him asked, "The other is dead?" Answered Judar, "May thy head live!"; and the Jew said, "This is the reward of the covetous!" Then he took the mule and gave Judar an hundred dinars, with which he returned to his mother. "O my son," said she, "whence hast thou this?" So he told her, and she said, "Go not again to Lake Karun, indeed I fear for thee from the Moors." Said he, "O my mother, I do but cast them in by their own wish, and what am I to do? This craft bringeth me an hundred dinars a day and I return speedily; wherefore, by Allah, I will not leave going to Lake Karun, till the race of the Magháribah[267] is cut off and not one of them is left." So, on the morrow which was the third day, he went down to the lake and stood there, till there came up a third Moor, riding on a mule with saddle bags and still more richly accoutred than the first two, who said to him, "Peace be with thee, O Judar, O son of Omar!" And the fisherman saying in himself, "How comes it that they all know me?" returned his salute. Asked the Maghribi, "Have any Moors passed by here?" "Two," answered Judar. "Whither went they?" enquired the Moor, and Judar replied, "I pinioned their hands behind them and cast them into the lake, where they were drowned, and the same fate is in store for thee." The Moor laughed and rejoined, saying, "O unhappy! Every life hath its term appointed." Then he alighted and gave the fisherman the silken cord, saying, "Do with me, O Judar, as thou didst with them." Said Judar, "Put thy hands behind thy back, that I may pinion thee, for I am in haste, and time flies." So he put his hands behind him and Judar tied him up and cast him in. Then he waited awhile; presently the Moor thrust both hands forth of the water and called out to him, saying, "Ho, good fellow, cast out thy net!" So Judar threw the net over him and drew him ashore, and lo! in each hand he held a fish as red as coral. Quoth the Moor, "Bring me the two caskets that are in the saddle bags." So Judar brought them and opened them to him, and he laid in each casket a fish and shut them up. Then he pressed Judar to his bosom and kissed him on the right cheek and the left, saying, “Allah save thee from all stress! By the Almighty, hadst thou not cast the net over me and pulled me out, I should have kept hold of these two fishes till I sank and was drowned, for I could not get ashore of myself.” Quoth Judar, “O my lord the pilgrim, Allah upon thee, tell me the true history of the two drowned men and the truth anent these two fishes and the Jew.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Tenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Judar asked the Maghribi, saying, “Prithee tell me first of the drowned men,” the Maghribi answered, “Know, O Judar, that these drowned men were my two brothers, by name Abd al-Salám and Abd al- Ahad. My own name is Abd al-Samad, and the Jew also is our brother; his name is Abd al-Rahim and he is no Jew but a true believer of the Maliki school. Our father, whose name was Abd al-Wadúd,[268] taught us magic and the art of solving mysteries and bringing hoards to light, and we applied ourselves thereto, till we compelled the Ifrits and Marids of the Jinn to do us service. By and by, our sire died and left us much wealth, and we divided amongst us his treasures and talismans, till we came to the books, when we fell out over a volume called ‘The Fables of the Ancients,’ whose like is not in the world, nor can its price be paid of any, nor is its value to be evened with gold and jewels; for in it are particulars of all the hidden hoards of the earth and the solution of every secret. Our father was wont to make use of this book, of which we had some small matter by heart, and each of us desired to possess it, that he might acquaint himself with what was therein. Now when we fell out there was in our company an old man by name Cohen Al-Abtan,[269] who had reared our sire and taught him divination and gramarye, and he said to us, ‘Bring me the book.’ So we gave it him and he continued, ‘Ye are my son’s sons, and it may not be that I should wrong any of you. So whoso is minded to have the volume, let him address himself to achieve the treasure of Al-Shamardal[270] and bring me the celestial planisphere and the Kohl phial and the seal ring and the sword. For the ring hath a Marid that serveth it called Al-Ra’ad al-Kásif;[271] and whoso hath possession thereof, neither King nor Sultan may prevail against him; and if he will, he may therewith make himself master of the earth, in all the length and breadth thereof. As for the brand, if its bearer draw it and brandish it against an army, the army will be put to the rout; and if he say the while, 'Slay yonder host,' there will come forth of that sword lightning and fire, that will kill the whole many. As for the planisphere, its possessor hath only to turn its face toward any country, east or west, with whose sight he hath a mind to solace himself, and therein he will see that country and its people, as they were between his hands and he sitting in his place; and if he be wroth with a city and have a mind to burn it, he hath but to face the planisphere towards the sun's disc, saying, 'Let such a city be burnt,' and that city will be consumed with fire. As for the Kohl phial, whoso pencilleth his eyes therefrom, he shall espy all the treasures of the earth. And I make this condition with you which is that whoso faileth to hit upon the hoards shall forfeit his right; and that none save he who shall achieve the treasure and bring me the four precious things which be therein shall have any claim to take this book.' So we all agreed to this condition, and he continued, 'O my sons, know that the treasure of Al-Shamardal is under the commandment of the sons of the Red King, and your father told me that he had himself essayed to open the treasure, but could not; for the sons of the Red King fled from him into the land of Egypt and took refuge in a lake there, called Lake Karun, whither he pursued them, but could not prevail over them, by reason of their stealing into that lake, which was guarded by a spell.' " — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Eleventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Cohen al-Abtan had told the youths this much, he continued his tale as follows, "So your father returned empty handed and unable to win to his wish; and after failing he complained to me of his ill-success, whereupon I drew him an astrological figure and found that the treasure could be achieved only by means of a young fisherman of Cairo, highs Judar bin Omar, the place of foregathering with whom was at Lake Karun, for that he should be the means of capturing the sons of the Red King and that the charm would not be dissolved, save if he should bind the hands of the treasure seeker behind him and cast him into the lake, there to do battle with the sons of the Red King. And he whose lot it was to succeed would lay hands upon them; but, if it were not destined to him he should perish and his feet appear above water. As for him who was successful, his hands would show first, whereupon it behoved that Judar should cast the net over him and draw him ashore." Now quoth my brothers Abd al-Salam and Abd al-Ahad, "We will wend and make trial, although we perish;" and quoth I, "And I also will go;" but my brother Abd al-Rahim (he whom thou sawest in the habit of a Jew) said, "I have no mind to this." Thereupon we agreed with him that he should repair to Cairo in the disguise of a Jewish merchant, so that, if one of us perished in the lake, he might take his mule and saddle bags and give the bearer an hundred dinars. The first that came to thee the sons of the Red King slew, and so did they with my second brother; but against me they could not prevail and I laid hands on them." Cried Judar, "And where is thy catch?" Asked the Moor, "Didst thou not see me shut them in the caskets?" "Those were fishes," said Judar. "Nay," answered the Maghribi, "they are Ifrits in the guise of fish. But, O Judar," continued he, "thou must know that the treasure can be opened only by thy means: so say, wilt thou do my bidding and go with me to the city Fez and Mequinez[272] where we will open the treasure?; and after I will give thee what thou wilt and thou shalt ever be my brother in the bond of Allah and return to thy family with a joyful heart." Said Judar, "O my lord the pilgrim, I have on my neck a mother and two brothers," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Twelfth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Judar said to the Maghribi, "I have on my neck a mother and two brothers, whose provider I am; and if I go with thee, who shall give them bread to eat?" Replied the Moor, "This is an idle excuse! if it be but a matter of expenditure, I will give thee a thousand ducats for thy mother, wherewith she may provide her self till thou come back: and indeed thou shalt return before the end of four months." So when Judar heard mention of the thousand diners, he said, "Here with them, O Pilgrim, and I am thy man;" and the Moor, pulling out the money, gave it to him, whereupon he carried it to his mother and told her what had passed between them, saying, “Take these thousand diners and expend of them upon thyself and my brothers, whilst I journey to Marocco with the Moor, for I shall be absent four months, and great good will betide me; so bless me, O my mother!” Answered she, “O my son, thou desolatest me and I fear for thee.” “O my mother,” rejoined he, “no harm can befall him who is in Allah’s keeping, and the Maghribi is a man of worth;” and he went on to praise his condition to her. Quoth she, “Allah incline his heart to thee! Go with him, O my son; peradventure, he will give thee somewhat.” So he took leave of his mother and rejoined the Moor Abd al-Samad, who asked him, “Hast thou consulted thy mother?” “Yes,” answered Judar; “and she blessed me.” “Then mount behind me,” said the Maghribi. So Judar mounted the mule’s crupper and they rode on from noon till the time of mid afternoon prayer, when the fisherman was an hungered; but seeing no victual with the Moor, said to him, “O my lord the pilgrim, belike thou hast forgotten to bring us aught to eat by the way?” Asked the Moor, “Art thou hungry?” and Judar answered, “Yes.” So Abd al-Samad alighted and made Judar alight and take down the saddle bage[273] ; then he said to him, “What wilt thou have, O my brother?” “Anything.” “Allah upon thee, tell me what thou hast a mind to.” “Bread and cheese.” “O my poor fellow! bread and cheese besit thee not; wish for some thing good.” “Just now everything is good to me.” “Dost thou like nice browned chicken?” “Yes!” “Dost thou like rice and honey?” “Yes!” And the Moor went on to ask him if he liked this dish and that dish till he had named four and twenty kinds of meats; and Judar thought to himself, “He must be daft! Where are all these dainties to come from, seeing he hath neither cook nor kitchen? But I’ll say to him, ‘’Tis enough!’” So he cried, “That will do: thou makest me long for all these meats, and I see nothing.” Quoth the Moor, “Thou art welcome, O Judar!” and, putting his hand into the saddle bags, pulled out a golden dish containing two hot browned chickens. Then he thrust his hand a second time and drew out a golden dish, full of kabobs[274] ; nor did he stint taking out dishes from saddle bags, till he had brought forth the whole of the four and twenty kinds he had named, whilst Judar looked on. Then said the Moor, “Fall to poor fellow!", and Judar said to him, "O my lord, thou carriest in yonder saddle bags kitchen and kitcheners!" The Moor laughed and replied, "These are magical saddle bags and have a servant, who would bring us a thousand dishes an hour, if we called for them." Quoth Judar, "By Allah, a meat thing in saddle bags'" Then they ate their fill and threw away what was left; after which the Moor replaced the empty dishes in the saddle bags and putting in his hand, drew out an ewer. They drank and making the Wuzu ablution, prayed the mid afternoon prayer; after which Abd al-Samad replaced the ewer and the two caskets in the saddle bags and throwing them over the mule's back, mounted and cried "Up with thee and let us be off," presently adding, "O Judar, knowest thou how far we have come since we left Cairo?" "Not I, by Allah," replied he, and Abd al-Samad, "We have come a whole month's journey." Asked Judar, "And how is that?"; and the Moor answered, "Know, O Judar, that this mule under us is a Marid of the Jinn who every day performeth a year's journey; but, for thy sake, she hath gone an easier pace." Then they set out again and fared on westwards till nightfall, when they halted and the Maghribi brought out supper from the saddle bags, and in like manner, in the morning, he took forth wherewithal to break their fast. So they rode on four days, journeying till midnight and then alighting and sleeping until morning, when they fared on again; and all that Judar had a mind to, he sought of the Moor, who brought it out of the saddle bags. On the fifth day, they arrived at Fez and Mequinez and entered the city, where all who met the Maghribi saluted him and kissed his hands; and he continued riding through the streets, till he came to a certain door, at which he knocked, whereupon it opened and out came a girl like the moon, to whom said he, "O my daughter, O Rahmah,[275] open us the upper chamber." "On my head and eyes, O my papa!" replied she and went in, swaying her hips to and fro with a graceful and swimming gait like a thirsting gazelle, movements that ravished Judar's reason, and he said, "This is none other than a King's daughter." So she opened the upper chamber, and the Moor, taking the saddle bags from the mule's back, said, "Go, and God bless thee!" when lo! the earth clove asunder and swallowing the mule, closed up again as before. And Judar said, "O Protector! praised be Allah, who hath kept us in safety on her back!" Quoth the

Maghribi, “Marvel not, O Judar. I told thee that the mule was an Ifrit; but come with us into the upper chamber.” So they went up into it, and Judar was amazed at the profusion of rich furniture and pendants of gold and silver and jewels and other rare and precious things which he saw there. As soon as they were seated, the Moor bade Rahmah bring him a certain bundle[276] and opening it, drew out a dress worth a thousand diners, which he gave to Judar, saying, “Don this dress, O Judar, and welcome to thee!” So Judar put it on and became a fair en sample of the Kings of the West. Then the Maghribi laid the saddle bags before him, and, putting in his hand, pulled out dish after dish, till they had before them a tray of forty kinds of meat, when he said to Judar, “Come near, O my master! eat and excuse us” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say,

When it was the Six Hundred and Thirteenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Maghribi having served up in the pavilion a tray of forty kinds of meat, said to Judar, “Come near, O my master, and excuse us for that we know not what meats thou desirest; but tell us what thou hast a mind to, and we will set it before thee without delay.” Replied Judar, “By Allah, O my lord the pilgrim, I love all kinds of meat and unlove none; so ask me not of aught, but bring all that cometh to thy thought, for save eating to do I have nought.” After this he tarried twenty days with the Moor, who clad him in new clothes every day, and all this time they ate from the saddle bags; for the Maghribi bought neither meat nor bread nor aught else, nor cooked, but brought everything out of the bags, even to various sorts of fruit. On the twenty first day, he said, “O Judar up with thee; this is the day appointed for opening the hoard of Al-Shamardal.” So he rose and they went afoot[277] without the city, where they found two slaves, each holding a she mule. The Moor mounted one beast and Judar the other, and they ceased not riding till noon, when they came to a stream of running water, on whose banks Abd al-Samad alighted saying, “Dismount, O Judar!” Then he signed with his hand to the slaves and said, “To it!” So they took the mules and going each his own way, were absent awhile, after which they returned, one bearing a tent, which he pitched, and the other carpets, which he spread in the tent and laid mattresses, pillows and cushions there around. Then one of them brought the caskets containing the two fishes; and another fetched the saddle bags; whereupon the Maghribi arose and said, “Come, O Judar!” So Judar followed him into the tent and sat down beside him; and he brought out dishes of meat from the saddle bags and they ate the undurn meal. Then the Moor took the two caskets and conjured over them both, whereupon there came from within voices that said’ “Adsumus, at thy service, O diviner of the world! Have mercy upon us!” and called aloud for aid. But he ceased not to repeat conjurations and they to call for help, till the two caskets flew in sunder, the fragments flying about, and there came forth two men, with pinioned hands saying, “Quarter, O diviner of the world! What wilt thou with us?” Quoth he, “My will is to burn you both with fire, except ye make a covenant with me, to open to me the treasure of Al-Shamardal.” Quoth they, “We promise this to thee, and we will open the tree sure to thee, so thou produce to us Judar bin Omar, the fisherman, for the hoard may not be opened but by his means, nor can any enter therein save Judar.” Cried the Maghribi “Him of whom ye speak, I have brought, and he is here, listening to you and looking at you.” Thereupon they covenanted with him to open the treasure to him, and he released them. Then he brought out a hollow wand and tablets of red carnelian which he laid on the rod; and after this he took a chafing dish and setting charcoal thereon, blew one breath into it and it kindled forthwith. Presently he brought incense and said, “O Judar, I am now about to begin the necessary conjurations and fumigations, and when I have once begun, I may not speak, or the charm will be naught; so I will teach thee first what thou must do to win thy wish.” “Teach me,” quoth Judar. “Know,” quoth the Moor, “that when I have recited the spell and thrown on the incense, the water will dry up from the river’s bed and discover to thee, a golden door, the bigness of the city gate, with two rings of metal thereon; whereupon do thou go down to the door and knock a light knock and wait awhile; then knock a second time a knock louder than the first and wait another while; after which give three knocks in rapid succession, and thou wilt hear a voice ask, ‘Who knocketh at the door of the treasure, unknowing how to solve the secrets?’ Do thou answer, ‘I am Judar the fisherman son of Omar’: and the door will open and there will come forth a figure with a brand in hand who will say to thee: ‘If thou be that man, stretch forth thy neck, that I may strike off thy head.’ Then do thou stretch forth thy neck and fear not; for, when he lifts his hand and smites thee with the sword, he will fall down before thee, and in a little thou wilt see him a body sans soul; and the stroke shall not hurt thee nor shall any harm befall thee; but, if thou gainsay him, he will slay thee. When thou hast undone his enchantment by obedience, enter and go on till thou see another door, at which do thou knock, and there will come forth to thee a horseman riding a mare with a lance on his shoulder and say to thee, ‘What bringeth thee hither, where none may enter ne man ne Jinni?’ And he will shake his lance at thee. Bare thy breast to him and he will smite thee and fall down forthright and thou shalt see him a body without a soul; but if thou cross him he will kill thee. Then go on to the third door, whence there will come forth to thee a man with a bow and arrows in his hand and take aim at thee. Bare thy breast to him and he will shoot at thee and fall down before thee, a body without a soul; but if thou oppose him, he will kill thee. Then go on to the fourth door” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her per misted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fourteenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Maghribi said to Judar, “Go on to the fourth door and knock and it shall be opened to thee, when there will come forth to thee a lion huge of bulk which will rush upon thee, opening his mouth and showing he hath a mind to devour thee. Have no fear of him, neither flee from him: but when he cometh to thee, give him thy hand and he will bite at it and fall down straightway, nor shall aught of hurt betide thee. Then enter the fifth door, where thou shalt find a black slave, who will say to thee, ‘Who art thou?’ Say, ‘I am Judar!’ and he will answer, ‘If thou be that man, open the sixth door.’ Then do thou go up to the door and say, ‘O Isa, tell Musa to open the door’; whereupon the door will fly open and thou wilt see two dragons, one on the left hand and another on the right, which will open their mouths and fly at thee, both at once. Do thou put forth to them both hands and they will bite each a hand and fall down dead; but an thou resist them, they will slay thee. Then go on to the seventh door and knock, whereupon there will come forth to thee thy mother and say, ‘Welcome, O my son! Come, that I may greet thee!’ But do thou reply, ‘Hold off from me and doff thy dress.’ And she will make answer, ‘O my son, I am thy mother and I have a claim upon thee for suckling thee and for rearing thee: how then wouldst thou strip me naked?’ Then do thou say, ‘Except thou put off thy clothes, I will kill thee!’ and look to thy right where thou wilt see a sword hanging up. Take it and draw it upon her, saying, ‘Strip!’ where upon she will wheedle thee and humble herself to thee; but have thou no ruth on her nor be beguiled, and as often as she putteth off aught, say to her, ‘Off with the rave’; nor do thou cease to threaten her with death, till she doff all that is upon her and fall down, whereupon the enchantment will be dissolved and the charms undone, and thou wilt be safe as to thy life. Then enter the hall of the treasure, where thou wilt see the gold lying in heaps; but pay no heed to aught thereof, but look to a closet at the upper end of the hall, where thou wilt see a curtain drawn. Draw back the curtain and thou wilt descry the enchanter, Al-Shamardal, lying upon a couch of gold, with something at his head round and shining like the moon, which is the celestial planisphere. He is baldrick’d with the sword[278] ; his finger is the ring and about his neck hangs a chain, to which hangs the Kohl phial. Bring me the four talismans, and beware lest thou forget aught of that which I have told thee, or thou wilt repent and there will be fear for thee.” And he repeated his directions a second and a third and a fourth time, till Judar said, “I have them by heart: but who may face all these enchantments that thou namest and endure against these mighty terrors?” Replied the Moor, “O Judar, fear not, for they are semblances without life;” and he went on to hearten him, till he said, “I put my trust in Allah.” Then Abd al-Samad threw perfumes on the chafing dish, and addressed himself to reciting conjurations for a time when, behold, the water disappeared and uncovered the river bed and discovered the door of the treasure, whereupon Judar went down to the door and knocked. Therewith he heard a voice saying, “Who knocketh at the door of the treasure, unknowing how to solve the secrets?” Quoth he, “I am Judar son of Omar;” whereupon the door opened and there came forth a figure with a drawn sword, who said to him, “Stretch forth thy neck.” So he stretched forth his neck and the species smote him and fell down, lifeless. Then he went on to the second door and did the like, nor did he cease to do thus, till he had undone the enchantments of the first six doors and came to the seventh door, whence there issued forth to him his mother, saying, “I salute thee, O my son!” He asked, “What art thou?”, and she answered, “O my son, I am thy mother who bare thee nine months and suckled thee and reared thee.” Quoth he, “Put off thy clothes.” Quoth she, “Thou art my son, how wouldst thou strip me naked?” But he said “Strip, or I will strike off thy head with this sword;” and he stretched out his hand to the brand and drew it upon her saying, “Except thou strip, I will slay thee.” Then the strife became long between them and as often as he redoubled on her his threats, she put off somewhat of her clothes and he said to her, “Doff the rest,” with many menaces; while she removed each article slowly and kept saying, “O my son, thou hast disappointed my fosterage of thee,” till she had nothing left but her petticoat trousers Then said she, “O my son, is thy heart stone? Wilt thou dishonour me by discovering my shame? Indeed, this is unlawful, O my son!” And he answered, “Thou sayest sooth; put not off thy trousers.” At once, as he uttered these words, she cried out, “He hath made default; beat him!” Whereupon there fell upon him blows like rain drops and the servants of the treasure flocked to him and dealt him a funding which he forgot not in all his days; after which they thrust him forth and threw him down without the treasure and the hoard doors closed of themselves, whilst the waters of the river returned to their bed. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fifteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the servants of the treasure beat Judar and cast him out and the hoard doors closed of themselves, whilst the river waters returned to their bed, Abd al-Samad the Maghribi took Judar up in haste and repeated conjurations over him, till he came to his senses but still dazed as with drink, when he asked him, “What hast thou done, O wretch?” Answered Judar, “O my brother, I undid all the opposing enchantments, till I came to my mother and there befell between her and myself a long contention. But I made her doff her clothes, O my brother, till but her trousers remained upon her and she said to me, ‘Do not dishonour me; for to discover one’s shame is forbidden.’ So I left her her trousers out of pity, and behold, she cried out and said, ‘He hath made default; beat him!’ Whereupon there came out upon me folk, whence I know not, and funding me with a belabouring which was a Sister of Death, thrust me forth; nor do I know what befell me after this.” Quoth the Moor, “Did I not warn thee not to swerve from my directions? Verily, thou hast injured me and hast injured thyself: for if thou hadst made her take off her petticoat trousers, we had won to our wish; but now thou must abide with me till this day next year.” Then he cried out to the two slaves, who struck the tent forthright and loaded it on the beasts; then they were absent awhile and presently returned with the two mules; and the twain mounted and rode back to the city of Fez, where Judar tarried with the Maghribi, eating well and drinking well and donning a grand dress every day, till the year was ended and the anniversary day dawned. Then the Moor said to him, “Come with me, for this is the appointed day.” And Judar said, “’Tis well.” So the Maghribi carried him without the city, where they found the two slaves with the mules, and rode on till they reached the river. Here the slaves pitched the tent and furnished it; and the Moor brought forth the tray of food and they ate the morning meal; after which Abd al-Samad brought out the wand and the tablets as before and, kindling the fire in the chafing dish, made ready the incense. Then said he, “O Judar, I wish to renew my charge to thee.” “O my lord the pilgrim,” replied he, “if I have forgotten the bastinado, I have forgotten the injunctions.”[279] Asked the Moor, “Dost thou indeed remember them?” and he answered, “Yes.” Quoth the Moor, “Keep thy wits, and think not that the woman is thy very mother; nay, she is but an enchantment in her semblance, whose purpose is to find thee defaulting. Thou camest off alive the first time; but, an thou trip this time, they will slay thee.” Quoth Judar, “If I slip this time, I deserve to be burnt of them.” Then Abd al-Samad cast the perfumes into the fire and recited the conjurations, till the river dried up; whereupon Judar descended and knocked. The door opened and he entered and undid the several enchantments, till he came to the seventh door and the semblance of his mother appeared before him, saying, “Welcome,[280] O my son!” But he said to her, “How am I thy son, O accursed? Strip!” And she began to wheedle him and put off garment after garment, till only her trousers remained; and he said to her, “Strip, O accursed!” So she put off her trousers and became a body without a soul. Then he entered the hall of the treasures, where he saw gold lying in heaps, but paid no heed to it and passed on to the closet at the upper end, where he saw the enchanter Al-Shamardal lying on a couch of gold, baldrick’d with the sword, with the ring on his finger, the Kohl phial on his breast and the celestial planisphere hanging over his head. So he loosed the sword and taking the ring, the Kohl phial and the planisphere, went forth, when behold, a band of music sounded for him and the servants of the treasure cried out, saying, “Mayest thou be assained with that thou hast gained, O Judar!” Nor did the music leave sounding, till he came forth of the treasure to the Maghribi, who gave up his conjurations and fumigations and rose up and embraced him and saluted him. Then Judar made over to him the four hoarded talismans, and he took them and cried out to the slaves, who carried away the tent and brought the mules. So they mounted and returned to Fez-city, where the Moor fetched the saddle bags and brought forth dish after dish of meat, till the tray was full, and said, “O my brother, O Judar, eat!” So he ate till he was satisfied, when the Moor emptied what remained of the meats and other dishes and returned the empty platters to the saddle bags. Then quoth he, “O Judar, thou hast left home and native land on our account and thou hast accomplished our dearest desire; wherefore thou hast a right to require a reward of us. Ask, therefore, what thou wilt, it is Almighty Allah who giveth unto thee by our means.[281] Ask thy will and be not ashamed, for thou art deserving.” “O my lord,” quoth Judar, “I ask first of Allah the Most High and then of thee, that thou give me yonder saddle bags.” So the Maghribi called for them and gave them to him, saying, “Take them, for they are thy due; and, if thou hadst asked of me aught else instead, I had given it to thee. Eat from them, thou and thy family; but, my poor fellow, these will not profit thee, save by way of provaunt, and thou hast wearied thyself with us and we promised to send thee home rejoicing. So we will join to these other saddle bags, full of gold and gems, and forward thee back to thy native land, where thou shalt become a gentleman and a merchant and clothe thyself and thy family; nor shalt thou want ready money for thine expenditure. And know that the manner of using our gift is on this wise. Put thy hand therein and say, ‘O servant of these saddle bags, I conjure thee by the virtue of the Mighty Names which have power over thee, bring me such a dish!’ And he will bring thee whatsoever thou askest, though thou shouldst call for a thousand different dishes a day.” So saying, he filled him a second pair of saddle bags half with gold and half with gems and precious stones; and, sending for a slave and a mule, said to him, “Mount this mule, and the slave shall go before thee and show thee the way, till thou come to the door of thy house, where do thou take the two pair of saddle bags and give him the mule, that he may bring it back. But admit none into thy secret; and so we commend thee to Allah!” “May the Almighty increase thy good!” replied Judar and, laying the two pairs of saddle bags on the mule’s back, mounted and set forth. The slave went on before him and the mule followed him all that day and night, and on the morrow he entered Cairo by the Gate of Victory,[282] where he saw his mother seated, saying, “Alms, for the love of Allah!” At this sight he well nigh lost his wits and alighting, threw himself upon her: and when she saw him she wept. Then he mounted her on the mule and walked by her stirrup,[283] till they came to the house, where he set her down and, taking the saddle bags, left the she mule to the slave, who led her away and returned with her to his master, for that both slave and mule were devils. As for Judar, it was grievous to him that his mother should beg; so, when they were in the house, he asked her, “O my mother, are my brothers well?”; and she answered, “They are both well.” Quoth he, “Why dost thou beg by the wayside?” Quoth she, “Because I am hungry, O my son,” and he, ‘Before I went away, I gave thee an hundred diners one day, the like the next and a thousand on the day of my departure.” “O my son, they cheated me and took the money from me, saying, ‘We will buy goods with it.’ Then they drove me away, and I fell to begging by the wayside, for stress of hunger.” “O my mother, no harm shall befall thee, now I am come; so have no concern, for these saddle bags are full of gold and gems, and good aboundeth with me.” “Verily, thou art blessed, O my son! Allah accept of thee and increase thee of His bounties! Go, O my son, fetch us some victual, for I slept not last night for excess of hunger, having gone to bed supperless. "Welcome to thee, O my mother! Call for what thou wilt to eat, and I will set it before thee this moment; for I have no occasion to buy from the market, nor need I any to cook. "O my son, I see naught with thee." "I have with me in these saddle bags all manner of meats." "O my son, whatever is ready will serve to stay hunger." "True, when there is no choice, men are content with the smallest thing; but where there is plenty, they like to eat what is good: and I have abundance; so call for what thou hast a mind to." "O my son, give me some hot bread and a slice of cheese." "O my mother, this befitteth not thy condition." "Then give me to eat of that which besitteth my case, for thou knowest it." "O my mother," rejoined he, "what suit thine estate are browned meat and roast chicken and peppered rice and it becometh thy rank to eat of sausages and stuffed cucumbers and stuffed lamb and stuffed ribs of mutton and vermicelli with broken almonds and nuts and honey and sugar and fritters and almond cakes." But she thought he was laughing at her and making mock of her; so she said to him, "Yauh! Yauh![284] what is come to thee? Dost thou dream or art thou daft?" Asked he, "Why deemest thou that I am mad?" and she answered, "Because thou namest to me all manner rich dishes. Who can avail unto their price, and who knoweth how to dress them?" Quoth he, "By my life! thou shalt eat of all that I have named to thee, and that at once;" and quoth she, "I see nothing;" and he, "Bring me the saddle bags." So she fetched them and feeling them, found them empty. However, she laid them before him and he thrust in his hand and pulled out dish after dish, till he had set before her all he had named. Whereupon asked she, "O my son, the saddle bags are small and moreover they were empty; yet hast thou taken thereout all these dishes. Where then were they all?"; and he answered, "O my mother, know that these saddle bags, which the Moor gave me, are enchanted and they have a servant whom, if one desire aught, he hath but to adjure by the Names which command him, saying, 'O servant of these saddle bags, bring me such a dish!' and he will bring it." Quoth his mother, "And may I put out my hand and ask of him?" Quoth he, "Do so." So she stretched out her hand and said, "O servant of the saddle bags, by the virtue of the Names which command thee, bring me stuffed ribs.” Then she thrust in her hand and found a dish containing delicate stuffed ribs of lamb. So she took it out, and called for bread and what else she had a mind to: after which Judar said to her, “O my mother, when thou hast made an end of eating, empty what is left of the food into dishes other than these, and restore the empty platters to the saddle bags carefully.” So she arose and laid them up in a safe place. “And look, O mother mine, that thou keep this secret,” added he; “and whenever thou hast a mind to aught, take it forth of the saddle bags and give alms and feed my brothers, whether I be present or absent.” Then he fell to eating with her and behold, while they were thus occupied, in came his two brothers, whom a son of the quarter[285] had apprised of his return, saying, “Your brother is come back, riding on a she mule, with a slave before him, and wearing a dress that hath not its like.” So they said to each other, “Would to Heaven we had not evilly entreated our mother! There is no hope but that she will surely tell him how we did by her, and then, oh our disgrace with him!” But one of the twain said, “Our mother is soft hearted, and if she tell him, our brother is yet tenderer over us than she; and, given we excuse ourselves to him, he will accept our excuse.” So they went in to him and he rose to them and saluting them with the friendliest salutation, bade them sit down and eat. So they ate till they were satisfied, for they were weak with hunger; after which Judar said to them, “O my brothers, take what is left and distribute it to the poor and needy.” “O brother,” replied they, “let us keep it to sup withal.” But he answered, “When supper time cometh, ye shall have more than this.” So they took the rest of the victual and going out, gave it to every poor man who passed by them, saying, “Take and eat,” till nothing was left. Then they brought back the dishes and Judar said to his mother, “Put them in the saddle bags.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Sixteenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Judar, when his brethren had finished their under meal, said to his mother, “Put back the platters in the saddle bags.” And when it was eventide, he entered the saloon and took forth of the saddle bags a table of forty dishes; after which he went up to the upper room and, sitting down between his brothers, said to his mother, "Bring the supper."[286] So she went down to the saloon and, finding there the dishes ready, laid the tray and brought up the forty dishes, one after other. Then they ate the evening meal, and when they had done, Judar said to his brothers, "Take and feed the poor and needy." So they took what was left and gave alms thereof, and presently he brought forth to them sweetmeats, whereof they ate, and what was left he bade them give to the neighbours. On the morrow, they brake their fast after the same fashion, and thus they fared ten days, at the end of which time quoth Sálim to Salím, "How cometh it that our brother setteth before us a banquet in the morning, a banquet at noon, and a banquet at sundown, besides sweetmeats late at night, and all that is left he giveth to the poor? Verily, this is the fashion of Sultans. Yet we never see him buy aught, and he hath neither kitchener nor kitchen, nor doth he light a fire. Whence hath he this great plenty? Hast thou not a mind to discover the cause of all this?" Quoth Salím, "By Allah, I know not: but knowest thou any who will tell us the truth of the case?" Quoth Sálim, "None will tell us save our mother." So they laid a plot and repairing to their mother one day, in their brother's absence, said to her, "O our mother, we are hungry." Replied she, "Rejoice, for ye shall presently be satisfied;" and going into the saloon, sought of the servant of the saddle bags hot meats, which she took out and set before her sons. "O our mother," cried they, "this meat is hot; yet hast thou not cooked, neither kindled a fire." Quoth she, "It cometh from the saddle bags;" and quoth they, "What manner of thing be these saddle bags?" She answered, "They are enchanted; and the required is produced by the charm:" she then told her sons their virtue, enjoining them to secrecy. Said they, "The secret shall be kept, O our mother, but teach us the manner of this." So she taught them the fashion thereof and they fell to putting their hands into the saddle bags and taking forth whatever they had a mind to. But Judar knew naught of this. Then quoth Sálim privily to Salím, "O my brother, how long shall we abide with Judar servant wise and eat of his alms? Shall we not contrive to get the saddle bags from him and make off with them?" "And how shall we make shift to do this?" "We will sell him to the galleys." "How shall we do that?"

"We two will go to the Raís, the Chief Captain of the Sea of Suez and bid him to an entertainment, with two of his company. What I say to Judar do thou confirm, and at the end of the night I will show thee what I will do." So they agreed upon the sale of their brother and going to the Captain's quarters said to him, "O Rais, we have come to thee on an errand that will please thee." "Good," answered he; and they continued, "We two are brethren, and we have a third brother, a lewd fellow and good for nothing. When our father died, he left us some money, which we shared amongst us, and he took his part of the inheritance and wasted it in frowardness and debauchery, till he was reduced to poverty, when he came upon us and cited us before the magistrates, avouching that we had taken his good and that of his father, and we disputed the matter before the judges and lost the money. Then he waited awhile and attacked us a second time, until he brought us to beggary; nor will he desist from us, and we are utterly weary of him; wherefore we would have thee buy him of us." Quoth the Captain, "Can ye cast about with him and bring him to me here? If so, I will pack him off to sea forthright." Quoth they "We cannot manage to bring him here; but be thou our guest this night and bring with thee two of thy men, not one more; and when he is asleep, we will aid one another to fall upon him, we five, and seize and gag him. Then shalt thou carry him forth the house, under cover of the night, and after do thou with him as thou wilt." Rejoined the Captain, "With all my heart! Will ye sell him for forty dinars?" and they, "Yes, come after nightfall to such a street, by such a mosque, and thou shalt find one of us awaiting thee." And he replied, "Now be off." Then they repaired to Judar and waited awhile, after which Sálim went up to him and kissed his hand. Quoth Judar, "What ails thee, O my brother?" And he made answer, saying, "Know that I have a friend, who hath many a time bidden me to his house in thine absence and hath ever hospitably entreated me, and I owe him a thousand kindnesses, as my brother here wotteth. I met him to day and he invited me to his house, but I said to him, 'I cannot leave my brother Judar.' Quoth he, 'Bring him with thee'; and quoth I, 'He will not consent to that; but if ye will be my guests, thou and thy brothers'[287] * * * * * (for his brothers were sitting with him); and I invited them thinking that they would refuse. But he accepted my invitation for all of them, saying, ‘Look for me at the gate of the little mosque,[288] and I will come to thee, I and my brothers.’ And now I fear they will come and am ashamed before thee. So wilt thou hearten my heart and entertain them this night, for thy good is abundant, O my brother? Or if thou consent not, give me leave to take them into the neighbours’ houses.” Replied Judar, “Why shouldst thou carry them into the neighbours’ houses? Is our house then so strait or have we not wherewith to give them supper? Shame on thee to consult me! Thou hast but to call for what thou needest and have rich viands and sweetmeats and to spare. Whenever thou bringest home folk in my absence, ask thy mother, and she will set before thee victual more than enough. Go and fetch them; blessings have descended upon us through such guests.” So Sálim kissed his hand and going forth, sat at the gate of the little mosque till after sundown, when the Captain and his men came up to him, and he carried them to the house. When Judar saw them he bade them welcome and seated them and made friends of them, knowing not what the future had in store for him at their hands. Then he called to his mother for supper, and she fell to taking dishes out of the saddlebags, whilst he said, “Bring such and such meats,” till she had set forty different dishes before them. They ate their sufficiency and the tray was taken away, the sailors thinking the while that this liberal entertainment came from Sálim. When a third part of the night was past, Judar set sweetmeats before them and Sálim served them, whilst his two brothers sat with the guests, till they sought to sleep. Accordingly Judar lay down and the others with him, who waited till he was asleep, when they fell upon him together and gagging and pinioning him, before he was awake, carried him forth of the house,[289] under cover of the night, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Seventeenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that they seized Judar and carrying him forth of the house under cover of the night, at once packed him off to Suez, where they shackled him and set him to work as a galley slave; and he ceased not to serve thus in silence a whole year.[290] So far concerning Judar; but as for his brothers, they went in next morning to his mother and said to her, “O our mother, our brother Judar is not awake.” Said she, “Do ye wake him.” Asked they, “Where lieth he?” and she answered, “With the guests.” They rejoined, “Haply he went away with them whilst we slept, O mother. It would seem that he had tasted of strangerhood and yearned to get at hidden hoards; for we heard him at talk with the Moors, and they said to him, ‘We will take thee with us and open the treasure to thee.’” She enquired, “Hath he then been in company with Moors?;” and they replied, saying, “Were they not our guests yester night?” And she, “Most like he hath gone with them, but Allah will direct him on the right way; for there is a blessing upon him and he will surely come back with great good.” But she wept, for it was grievous to her to be parted from her son. Then said they to her, “O accursed woman, dost thou love Judar with all this love, whilst as for us, whether we be absent or present, thou neither joyest in us nor sorrowest for us? Are we not thy sons, even as Judar is thy son?” She said, “Ye are indeed my sons: but ye are reprobates who deserve no favour of me, for since your father’s death I have never seen any good in you; whilst as for Judar, I have had abundant good of him and he hath heartened my heart and entreated me with honour; wherefore it behoveth me to weep for him, because of his kindness to me and to you.” When they heard this, they abused her and beat her; after which they sought for the saddle bags, till they found the two pairs and took the enchanted one and all the gold from one pouch and jewels from the other of the unenchanted, saying, “This was our father’s good.” Said their mother, “Not so, by Allah!, it belongeth to your brother Judar, who brought it from the land of the Magharibah.” Said they, “Thou liest, it was our father’s property; and we will dispose of it, as we please.” Then they divided the gold and jewels between them; but a brabble arose between them concerning the enchanted saddle bags, Sálim saying, “I will have them;” and Salím, saying, “I will take them;” and they came to high words. Then said she, “O my sons, ye have divided the gold and the jewels, but this may not be divided, nor can its value be made up in money; and if it be cut in twain, its spell will be voided; so leave it with me and I will give you to eat from it at all times and be content to take a morsel with you. If ye allow me aught to clothe me, ‘twill be of your bounty, and each of you shall traffic with the folk for himself. Ye are my sons and I am your mother; wherefore let us abide as we are, lest your brother come back and we be disgraced.” But they accepted not her words and passed the night, wrangling with each other. Now it chanced that a Janissary[291] of the King’s guards was a guest in the house adjoining Judar’s and heard them through the open window. So he looked out and listening, heard all the angry words that passed between them and saw the division of the spoil. Next morning he presented himself before the King of Egypt, whose name was Shams al-Daulah,[292] and told him all he had heard, whereupon he sent for Judar’s brothers and put them to the question, till they confessed; and he took the two pairs of Saddle bags from them and clapped them in prison, appointing a sufficient daily allowance to their mother. Now as regards Judar, he abode a whole year in service at Suez, till one day, being in a ship bound on a voyage over the sea, a wind arose against them and cast the vessel upon a rock projecting from a mountain, where she broke up and all on board were drowned and none get ashore save Judar. As soon as he landed he fared on inland, till he reached an encampment of Badawi, who questioned him of his case, and he told them he had been a sailor.[293] Now there was in camp a merchant, a native of Jiddah, who took pity on him and said to him, “Wilt thou take service with me, O Egyptian, and I will clothe thee and carry thee with me to Jiddah?” So Judar took service with him and accompanied him to Jiddah, where he showed him much favour. After awhile, his master the merchant set out on a pilgrimage to Meccah, taking Judar with him, and when they reached the city, the Cairene repaired to the Haram temple, to circumambulate the Ka’abah. As he was making the prescribed circuits,[294] he suddenly saw his friend Abd al-Samad the Moor doing the like; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Eighteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Judar, as he was making the circuits, suddenly saw his friend Abd al-Samad also circumambulating; and when the Maghribi caught sight of him, he saluted him and asked him of his state; whereupon Judar wept and told him all that had befallen him. So the Moor carried him to his lodging and entreated him with honour, clothing him in a dress of which the like was not, and saying to him, "Thou hast seen the end of thine ills, O Judar." Then he drew out for him a geomantic figure, which showed what had befallen Sálim and Salím and said to Judar, "Such and such things have befallen thy brothers and they are now in the King of Egypt's prison; but thou art right welcome to abide with me and accomplish thine ordinances of pilgrimage and all shall be well." Replied Judar, "O my lord, let me go and take leave of the merchant with whom I am and after I will come back to thee." "Dost thou owe money?" asked the Moor, and he answered, "No." Said Abd al-Samad, "Go thou and take leave of him and come back forth right, for bread hath claims of its own from the ingenuous." So Judar returned to the merchant and farewelled him, saying, "I have fallen in with my brother."[295] "Go bring him here," said the merchant, "and we will make him an entertainment." But Judar answered, saying, "He hath no need of that; for he is a man of wealth and hath many servants." Then the merchant gave Judar twenty dinars, saying, "Acquit me of responsibility";[296] and he bade him adieu and went forth from him. Presently, he saw a poor man, so he gave him the twenty ducats and returned to the Moor, with whom he abode till they had accomplished the pilgrimage rites when Abd al-Samad gave him the seal ring, that he had taken from the treasure of Al-Shamardal, saying, "This ring will win thee thy wish, for it enchanteth and hath a servant, by name Al-Ra'ad al-Kásif; so whatever thou hast a mind to of the wants of this world, rub this ring and its servant will appear and do all thou biddest him." Then he rubbed the ring before him, whereupon the Jinni appeared, saying, "Adsum, O my lord! Ask what thou wilt and it shall be given thee. Hast thou a mind to people a ruined city or ruin a populous one? to slay a king or to rout a host?" "O Ra'ad," said Abd al-Samad, "this is become thy lord; do thou serve him faithfully." Then he dismissed him and said to Judar, "Rub the ring and the servant will appear and do thou command him to do whatever thou desirest, for he will not gainsay thee. Now go to thine own country and take care of the ring, for by means of it thou wilt baffle thine enemies; and be not ignorant of its puissance." "O my lord," quoth Judar, "with thy leave, I will set out homewards." Quoth the Maghribi, "Summon the Jinni and mount upon his back; and if thou say to him, ‘Bring me to my native city this very day,’ he will not disobey thy commandment.” So he took leave of Moor Abd al-Samad and rubbed the ring, whereupon Al-Ra’ad presented himself, saying, “Adsum; ask and it shall be given to thee.” Said Judar, “Carry me to Cairo this day;” and he replied, “Thy will be done;” and, taking him on his back, flew with him from noon till midnight, when he set him down in the courtyard of his mother’s house and disappeared. Judar went in to his mother, who rose weeping, and greeted him fondly, and told him how the King had beaten his brothers and cast them into gaol and taken the two pairs of saddle bags; which when he heard, it was no light matter to him and he said to her, “Grieve not for the past; I will show thee what I can do and bring my brothers hither forth right.” So he rubbed the ring, whereupon its servant appeared, saying, “Here am I! Ask and thou shalt have.” Quoth Judar, “I bid thee bring me my two brothers from the prison of the King.” So the Jinni sank into the earth and came not up but in the midst of the gaol where Sálim and Salím lay in piteous plight and sore sorrow for the plagues of prison,[297] so that they wished for death, and one of them said to the other, “By Allah, O my brother, affliction is longsome upon us! How long shall we abide in this prison? Death would be relief.” As he spoke, behold, the earth clove in sunder and out came Al-Ra’ad, who took both up and plunged with them into the earth. They swooned away for excess of fear, and when they recovered, they found themselves in their mother’s house and saw Judar seated by her side. Quoth he, “I salute you, O my brothers! you have cheered me by your presence.” And they bowed their heads and burst into tears. Then said he, “Weep not, for it was Satan and covetise that led you to do thus. How could you sell me? But I comfort myself with the thought of Joseph, whose brothers did with him even more than ye did with me, because they cast him into the pit.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Nineteenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Judar said to his brothers, “How could you do with me thus? But repent unto Allah and crave pardon of Him, and He will forgive you both, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Merciful. As for me, I pardon you and welcome you: no harm shall befall you." Then he comforted them and set their hearts at ease and related to them all he had suffered, till he fell in with Shaykh Abd al-Samad, and told them also of the seal ring. They replied, "O our brother, forgive us this time; and, if we return to our old ways, do with us as thou wilt." Quoth he, "No harm shall befall you; but tell me what the King did with you." Quoth they, "He beat us and threatened us with death and took the two pairs of saddle bags from us." "Will he not care?"[298] said Judar, and rubbed the ring, whereupon Al-Ra'ad appeared. When his brothers saw him, they were frighted and thought Judar would bid him slay them; so they fled to their mother, crying, "O our mother, we throw our selves on thy generosity; do thou intercede for us, O our mother!" And she said to them, "O my sons, fear nothing!" Then said Judar to the servant, "I command thee to bring me all that is in the King's treasury of goods and such; let nothing remain and fetch the two pairs of saddle bags he took from my brothers." "I hear and I obey," replied Al-Ra'ad; and, disappearing straight way gathered together all he found in the treasury and returned with the two pairs of saddle bags and the deposits therein and laid them before Judar, saying, "O my lord, I have left nothing in the treasury." Judar gave the treasure to his mother bidding her keep it and laying the enchanted saddle bags before him, said to the Jinni, "I command thee to build me this night a lofty palace and overlay it with liquid gold and furnish it with magnificent furniture: and let not the day dawn, ere thou be quit of the whole work." Replied he, "Thy bidding shall be obeyed;" and sank into the earth. Then Judar brought forth food and they ate and took their ease and lay down to sleep. Meanwhile, Al-Ra'ad summoned his attendant Jinn and bade them build the palace. So some of them fell to hewing stones and some to building, whilst others plastered and painted and furnished; nor did the day dawn ere the ordinance of the palace was complete; whereupon Al-Ra'ad came to Judar and said to him, "O my lord, the palace is finished and in best order, an it please thee to come and look on it." So Judar went forth with his mother and brothers and saw a palace, whose like there was not in the whole world; and it confounded all minds with the goodliness of its ordinance. Judar was delighted with it while he was passing along the highway and withal it had cost him nothing. Then he asked his mother, “Say me, wilt thou take up thine abode in this palace?” and she answered, “I will, O my son,” and called down blessings upon him. Then he rubbed the ring and bade the Jinni fetch him forty handsome white hand maids and forty black damsels and as many Mamelukes and negro slaves. “Thy will be done,” answered Al-Ra’ad and betaking himself, with forty of his attendant Genii to Hind and Sind and Persia, snatched up every beautiful girl and boy they saw, till they had made up the required number. Moreover, he sent other four score, who fetched comely black girls, and forty others brought male chattels and carried them all to Judar’s house, which they filled. Then he showed them to Judar, who was pleased with them and said, “Bring for each a dress of the finest.” “Ready!” replied the servant. Then quoth he, “Bring a dress for my mother and another for myself, and also for my brothers.” So the Jinni fetched all that was needed and clad the female slaves, saying to them, “This is your mistress: kiss her hands and cross her not, but serve her, white and black.” The Mamelukes also dressed them selves and kissed Judar’s hands; and he and his brothers arrayed themselves in the robes the Jinni had brought them and Judar became like unto a King and his brothers as Wazirs. Now his house was spacious; so he lodged Sálim and his slave girls in one part thereof and Salím and his slave girls in another, whilst he and his mother took up their abode in the new palace; and each in his own place was like a Sultan. So far concerning them; but as regards the King’s Treasurer, thinking to take something from the treasury, he went in and found it altogether empty, even as saith the poet,

“’Twas as a hive of bees that greatly thrived; * But, when the bee swarm fled, ’twas clean unhived.”[299]

So he gave a great cry and fell down in a fit. When he came to himself, he left the door open and going in to King Shams al-Daulah, said to him, “O Commander of the Faithful,[300] I have to inform thee that the treasury hath become empty during the night.” Quoth the King, ‘What hast thou done with my monies which were therein?” Quoth he, “By Allah, I have not done aught with them nor know I what is come of them! I visited the place yesterday and saw it full; but to day when I went in, I found it clean empty, albeit the doors were locked, the walls were unpierced[301] and the bolts[302] are unbroken; nor hath a thief entered it.” Asked the King, “Are the two pairs of saddle bags gone?” “Yes,” replied the Treasurer; whereupon the King’s reason flew from his head, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Twentieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Treasurer informed the King that all in the treasury had been plundered, including the two pairs of saddlebags, the King’s reason flew from his head and he rose to his feet, saying, “Go thou before me.” Then he followed the Treasurer to the treasury and he found nothing there, whereat he was wroth with him; and he said to them, “O soldiers! know that my treasury hath been plundered during the night, and I know not who did this deed and dared thus to outrage me, without fear of me.” Said they, “How so?”; and he replied, “Ask the Treasurer.” So they questioned him, and he answered, saying, “Yesterday I visited the treasury and it was full, but this morning when I entered it I found it empty, though the walls were unpierced and the doors unbroken.” They all marvelled at this and could make the King no answer, when in came the Janissary, who had denounced Sálim and Salím, and said to Shams al-Daulah, “O King of the age, all this night I have not slept for that which I saw.” And the King asked, “And what didst thou see?” “Know, O King of the age,” answered the Kawwás, “that all night long I have been amusing myself with watching builders at work; and, when it was day, I saw a palace ready edified, whose like is not in the world. So I asked about it and was told that Judar had come back with great wealth and Mamelukes and slaves and that he had freed his two brothers from prison, and built this palace, wherein he is as a Sultan.” Quoth the King, “Go, look in the prison.” So they went thither and not finding Sálim and Salím, returned and told the King, who said, “It is plain now who be the thief; he who took Sálim and Salím out of prison it is who hath stolen my monies.” Quoth the Wazir, “O my lord, and who is he?”; and quoth the King, “Their brother Judar, and he hath taken the two pairs of saddle bags; but, O Wazir do thou send him an Emir with fifty men to seal up his goods and lay hands on him and his brothers and bring them to me, that I may hang them.” And he was sore enraged and said, “Ho, off with the Emir at once, and fetch them, that I may put them to death." But the Wazir said to him, "Be thou merciful, for Allah is merciful and hasteth not to punish His servants, whenas they sin against Him. More over, he who can build a palace in a single night, as these say, none in the world can vie with him; and verily I fear lest the Emir fall into difficulty for Judar. Have patience, therefore, whilst I devise for thee some device of getting at the truth of the case, and so shalt thou win thy wish, O King of the age." Quoth the King, "Counsel me how I shall do, O Wazir." And the Minister said, "Send him an Emir with an invitation; and I will make much of him for thee and make a show of love for him and ask him of his estate; after which we will see. If we find him stout of heart, we will use sleight with him, and if weak of will, then do thou seize him and do with him thy desire." The King agreed to this and despatched one of his Emirs, Othman highs, to go and invite Judar and say to him, "The King biddeth thee to a banquet;" and the King said to him, "Return not, except with him." Now this Othman was a fool, proud and conceited; so he went forth upon his errand, and when he came to the gate of Judar's palace, he saw before the door an eunuch seated upon a chair of gold, who at his approach rose not, but sat as if none came near, though there were with the Emir fifty footmen. Now this eunuch was none other than Al-Ra'ad al-Kasif, the servant of the ring, whom Judar had commanded to put on the guise of an eunuch and sit at the palace gate. So the Emir rode up to him and asked him, ' O slave, where is thy lord?"; whereto he answered, "In the palace;" but he stirred not from his leaning posture; whereupon the Emir Othman waxed wroth and said to him, 'O pestilent slave, art thou not ashamed, when I speak to thee, to answer me, sprawling at thy length, like a gallows bird?" Replied the eunuch "Off and multiply not words." Hardly had Othman heard this, when he was filled with rage and drawing his mace[303] would have smitten the eunuch, knowing not that he was a devil; but Al-Ra'ad leapt upon him and taking the mace from him, dealt him four blows with it. Now when the fifty men saw their lord beaten, it was grievous to them; so they drew their swords and ran to slay the slave; but he said, "Do ye draw on us, O dogs?" and rose at them with the mace, and every one whom he smote, he broke his bones and drowned him in his blood. So they fell back before him and fled, whilst he followed them, beating them, till he had driven them far from the palace gate; after which he returned and sat down on his chair at the door, caring for none. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Twenty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the eunuch having put to flight the Emir Othman, the King's officer, and his men, till they were driven far from Judar's gate, returned and sat down on his chair at the door, caring for none. But as for the Emir and his company, they returned, discomfited and funded, to King Shams al-Daulah, and Othman said, "O King of the age, when I came to the palace gate, I espied an eunuch seated there in a chair of gold and he was passing proud for, when he saw me approach, he stretched himself at full length albeit he had been sitting in his chair and entreated me contumeliously, neither offered to rise to me. So I began to speak to him and he answered without stirring, whereat wrath get hold of me and I drew the mace upon him, thinking to smite him. But he snatched it from me and beat me and my men therewith and overthrew us. So we fled from before him and could not prevail against him." At this, the King was wroth and said, "Let an hundred men go down to him." Accordingly, the hundred men went down to attack him; but he arose and fell upon them with the mace and ceased not smiting them till he had put them to the rout; when he regained his chair; upon which they returned to the King and told him what had passed, saying, "O King of the age, he beat us and we fled for fear of him." Then the King sent two hundred men against him, but these also he put to the rout, and Shams Al-Daulah said to his Minister, "I charge thee, O Wazir, take five hundred men and bring this eunuch in haste, and with him his master Judar and his brothers." Replied the Wazir, "O King of the age, I need no soldiers, but will go down to him alone and unarmed." "Go," quoth the King, "and do as thou seest suitable." So the Wazir laid down his arms and donning a white habit,[304] took a rosary in his hand and set out afoot alone and unattended. When he came to Judar's gate, he saw the slave sitting there; so he went up to him and seating himself by his side courteously, said to him, "Peace be with thee!"; whereto he replied, "And on thee be peace, O mortal! What wilt thou?" When the Wazir heard him say "O mortal," he knew him to be of the Jinn and quaked for fear; then he asked him, "O my lord, tell me, is thy master Judar here?" Answered the eunuch, "Yes, he is in the palace." Quoth the Minister, "O my lord, go thou to him and say to him, 'King Shams Al-Daulah saluteth thee and biddeth thee honour his dwelling with thy presence and eat of a banquet he hath made for thee;'" Quoth the eunuch, "Tarry thou here, whilst I consult him. So the Wazir stood in a respectful attitude, whilst the Marid went up to the palace and said to Judar, "Know, O my lord, that the King sent to thee an Emir and fifty men, and I beat them and drove them away. Then he sent an hundred men and I beat them also; then two hundred, and these also I put to the rout. And now he hath sent thee his Wazir unarmed, bidding thee visit him and eat of his banquet. What sayst thou?" Said Judar, "Go, bring the Wazir hither." So the Marid went down and said to him, "O Wazir, come speak with my lord." "On my head be it.", replied he and going in to Judar, found him seated, in greater state than the King, upon a carpet, whose like the King could not spread, and was dazed and amazed at the goodliness of the palace and its decoration and appointments, which made him seem as he were a beggar in comparison. So he kissed the ground before Judar and called down blessings on him; and Judar said to him, "What is thy business, O Wazir?" Replied he, "O my lord, thy friend King Shams Al-Daulah saluteth thee with the salaam and longeth to look upon thy face; wherefore he hath made thee an entertainment. So say, wilt thou heal his heart and eat of his banquet?" Quoth Judar, "If he be indeed my friend, salute him and bid him come to me." "On my head be it," quoth the Minister. Then Judar bringing out the ring rubbed it and bade the Jinni fetch him a dress of the best, which he gave to the Wazir saying, "Don this dress and go tell the King what I say." So the Wazir donned the dress, the like whereof he had never donned, and returning to the King told him what had passed and praised the palace and that which was therein, saying, "Judar biddeth thee to him." So the King called out, "Up, ye men; mount your horses and bring me my steed, that we may go to Judar!" Then he and his suite rode off for the Cairene palace. Meanwhile Judar summoned the Marid and said to him, "It is my will that thou bring me some of the Ifrits at thy command in the guise of guards and station them in the open square before the palace, that the King may see them and be awed by them; so shall his heart tremble and he shall know that my power and majesty be greater than his." Thereupon Al-Ra'ad brought him two hundred Ifrits of great stature and strength, in the guise of guards, magnificently armed and equipped, and when the King came and saw these tall burly fellows his heart feared them. Then he entered the palace, and found Judar sitting in such state as nor King nor Sultan could even. So he saluted him and made his obeisance to him, yet Judar rose not to him nor did him honour nor said "Be seated," but left him standing, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Twenty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King entered, Judar rose not to him, nor did him honour nor even said "Be seated!"; but left him standing,[305] so that fear entered into him and he could neither sit nor go away and said to himself, "If he feared me, he would not leave me thus unheeded peradventure he will do me a mischief, because of that which I did with his brothers." Then said Judar, "O King of the age, it beseemeth not the like of thee to wrong the folk and take away their good." Replied the King, "O my lord, deign excuse me, for greed impelled me to this and fate was thereby fulfilled; and, were there no offending, there would be no forgiving." And he went on to excuse himself for the past and pray to him for pardon and indulgence till he recited amongst other things this poetry,

"O thou of generous seed and true nobility, * Reproach me not for
that which came from me to thee
We pardon thee if thou have wrought us any wrong * And if I
wrought the wrong I pray thee pardon me!"

And he ceased not to humble himself before him, till he said, "Allah pardon thee!" and bade him be seated. So he sat down and Judar invested him with garments of pardon and immunity and ordered his brothers spread the table. When they had eaten, he clad the whole of the King's company in robes of honour and gave them largesse; after which he bade the King depart. So he went forth and thereafter came every day to visit Judar and held not his Divan save in his house: wherefore friendship and familiarity waxed great between them, and they abode thus awhile, till one day the King, being alone with his Minister, said to him, “O Wazir, I fear lest Judar slay me and take the kingdom away from me.” Replied the Wazir, “O King of the age, as for his taking the kingdom from thee, have no fear of that, for Judar’s present estate is greater than that of the King, and to take the kingdom would be a lowering of his dignity; but, if thou fear that he kill thee, thou hast a daughter: give her to him to wife and thou and he will be of one condition.” Quoth the King, “O Wazir, be thou intermediary between us and him”; and quoth the Minister, “Do thou invite him to an entertainment and pass the night with him in one of thy saloons. Then bid thy daughter don her richest dress and ornaments and pass by the door of the saloon. When he seeth her, he will assuredly fall in love with her, and when we know this, I will turn to him and tell him that she is thy daughter and engage him in converse and lead him on, so that thou shalt seem to know nothing of the matter, till he ask her to thee to wife. When thou hast married him to the Princess, thou and he will be as one thing and thou wilt be safe from him; and if he die, thou wilt inherit all he hath, both great and small.” Replied the King, “Thou sayst sooth, O my Wazir,” and made a banquet and invited thereto Judar who came to the Sultan’s palace and they sat in the saloon in great good cheer till the end of the day. Now the King had commanded his wife to array the maiden in her richest raiment and ornaments and carry her by the door of the saloon. She did as he told her, and when Judar saw the Princess, who had not her match for beauty and grace, he looked fixedly at her and said, “Ah!”; and his limbs were loosened; for love and longing and passion and pine were sore upon him; desire and transport get hold upon him and he turned pale. Quoth the Wazir, “May no harm befall thee, O my lord! Why do I see thee change colour and in suffering?” Asked Judar, “O Wazir, whose daughter is this damsel? Verily she hath enthralled me and ravished my reason.” Replied the Wazir, “She is the daughter of thy friend the King; and if she please thee, I will speak to him that he marry thee to her.” Quoth Judar, “Do so, O Wazir, and as I live, I will bestow on thee what thou wilt and will give the King whatsoever he shall ask to her dowry; and we will become friends and kinsfolk.” Quoth the Minister, “It shall go hard but thy desire be accomplished.” Then he turned to the King and said in his ear, “O King of the age, thy friend Judar seeketh alliance with thee and will have me ask of thee for him the hand of thy daughter, the Princess Asiyah; so disappoint me not. but accept my intercession, and what dowry soever thou askest he will give thee.” Said the King, “The dowry I have already received, and as for the girl, she is his handmaid; I give her to him to wife and he will do me honour by accepting her.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Twenty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Wazir whispered the King, “Judar seeketh alliance with thee by taking thy daughter to wife,” the other replied, “The dowry I have already received, and the girl is his handmaid: he will do me honour by accepting her.” So they spent the rest of that night together and on the morrow the King held a court, to which he summoned great and small, together with the Shaykh al-Islam.[306] Then Judar demanded the Princess in marriage and the King said, “The dowry I have received.” Thereupon they drew up the marriage contract and Judar sent for the saddle bags containing the jewels and gave them to the King as settlement upon his daughter. The drums beat and the pipes sounded and they held high festival, whilst Judar went in unto the girl. Thenceforward he and the King were as one flesh and they abode thus for many days, till Shams al-Daulah died; whereupon the troops proclaimed Judar Sultan, and he refused; but they importuned him, till he consented and they made him King in his father in law’s stead. Then he bade build a cathedral mosque over the late King’s tomb in the Bundukániyah[307] quarter and endowed it. Now the quarter of Judar’s house was called Yamániyah; but, when he became Sultan he built therein a congregational mosque and other buildings, wherefore the quarter was named after him and was called the Judariyah[308] quarter. Moreover, he made his brother Sálim his Wazir of the right and his brother Salím his Wazir of the left hand; and thus they abode a year and no more; for, at the end of that time, Sálim said to Salím, “O my brother, how long is this state to last?

Shall we pass our whole lives in slavery to our brother Judar? We shall never enjoy luck or lordship whilst he lives," adding, "so how shall we do to kill him and take the ring and the saddle bags?" Replied Salím, "Thou art craftier than I; do thou devise, whereby we may kill him." "If I effect this," asked Sálim, "wilt thou agree that I be Sultan and keep the ring and that thou be my right hand Wazir and have the saddle bags?" Salím answered, "I consent to this;" and they agreed to slay Judar their brother for love of the world and of dominion. So they laid a snare for Judar and said to him, "O our brother, verily we have a mind to glory in thee and would fain have thee enter our houses and eat of our entertainment and solace our hearts." Replied Judar, "So be it, in whose house shall the banquet be?" "In mine," said Sálim "and after thou hast eaten of my victual, thou shalt be the guest of my brother." Said Judar, " 'Tis well," and went with him to his house, where he set before him poisoned food, of which when he had eaten, his flesh rotted from his bones and he died.[309] Then Sálim came up to him and would have drawn the ring from his finger, but it resisted him; so he cut off the finger with a knife. Then he rubbed the ring and the Marid presented himself, saying, "Adsum! Ask what thou wilt." Quoth Sálim, "Take my brother Salím and put him to death and carry forth the two bodies, the poisoned and the slaughtered, and cast them down before the troops." So the Marid took Salím and slew him; then, carrying the two corpses forth, he cast them down before the chief officers of the army, who were sitting at table in the parlour of the house. When they saw Judar and Salím slain, they raised their hands from the food and fear get hold of them and they said to the Marid, "Who hath dealt thus with the Sultan and the Wazir Replied the Jinni, "Their brother Sálim." And behold, Sálim came up to them and said, "O soldiers, eat and make merry, for Judar is dead and I have taken to me the seal ring, whereof the Marid before you is the servant; and I bade him slay my brother Salím lest he dispute the kingdom with me, for he was a traitor and I feared lest he should betray me. So now I am become Sultan over you; will ye accept of me? If not, I will rub the ring and bid the Marid slay you all, great and small." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Twenty-fourth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sálim said to the officers, “Will ye accept me as your Sultan, otherwise I will rub the ring and the Marid shall slay you all, great and small?”; they replied, “We accept thee to King and Sultan.” Then he bade bury his brothers and summoned the Divan; and some of the folk followed the funeral, whilst others forewent him in state procession to the audience hall of the palace, where he sat down on the throne and they did homage to him as King; after which he said, “It is my will to marry my brother Judar’s wife.” Quoth they, “Wait till the days of widowhood are accomplished.[310] Quoth he, “I know not days of widowhood nor aught else. As my head liveth, I needs must go in unto her this very night.” So they drew up the marriage contract and sent to tell the Princess Asiyah, who replied, “Bid him enter.” Accordingly, he went in to her and she received him with a show of joy and welcome; but by and by she gave him poison in water and made an end of him. Then she took the ring and broke it, that none might possess it thenceforward, and tore up the saddle bags; after which she sent to the Shaykh al-Islam and other great officers of state, telling them what had passed and saying to them, “Choose you out a King to rule over you.” And this is all that hath come down to us of the Story of Judar and his Brethren.[311] But I have also heard, O King, a tale called the

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HISTORY OF GHARIB AND HIS BROTHER AJIB.[312]

There was once in olden time a King of might, Kundamir highs, who had been a brave and doughty man of war, a Kahramán,[313] in his day, but was grown passing old and decrepit. Now it pleased Allah to vouchsafe him, in his extreme senility, a son, whom he named Ajíb[314] — the Wonderful — because of his beauty and loveliness; so he committed the babe to the midwives and wet- nurses and handmaids and serving-women, and they reared him till he was full seven years old, when his father gave him in charge to a divine of his own folk and faith. The priest taught him the laws and tenets of their Misbelief and instructed him in philosophy and all manner of other knowledge, and it needed but three full told years ere he was proficient therein and his spirit waxed resolute and his judgment mature; and he became learned, eloquent and philosophic[315] ; consorting with the wise and disputing with the doctors of the law. When his father saw this of him, it pleased him and he taught him to back the steed and stab with spear and smite with sword, till he grew to be an accomplished cavalier, versed in all martial exercises; and, by the end of his twentieth year, he surpassed in all things all the folk of his day. But his skill in weapons made him grow up a stubborn tyrant and a devil arrogant, using to ride forth a- hunting and a-chasing amongst a thousand horsemen and to make raids and razzias upon the neighbouring knights, cutting off caravans and carrying away the daughters of Kings and nobles; wherefore many brought complaints against him to his father, who cried out to five of his slaves and when they came said, “Seize this dog!” So they seized Prince Ajib and, pinioning his hands behind him, beat him by his father’s command till he lost his senses; after which the King imprisoned him in a chamber so dark one might not know heaven from earth or length from breadth; and there he abode two days and a night. Then the Emirs went in to the King and, kissing the ground between his hands, interceded with him for the Prince, and he released him. So Ajib bore with his father for ten days, at the end of which he went in to him as he slept by night and smote his neck. When the day rose, he mounted the throne of his sire’s estate and bade his men arm themselves cap-ŕ-pie in steel and stand with drawn swords in front of him and on his right hand and on his left. By and by, the Emirs and Captains entered and finding their King slain and his son Ajib seated on the throne were confounded in mind and knew not what to do. But Ajib said to them, "O folk, verily ye see what your King hath gained. Whoso obeyeth me, I will honour him, and whoso gainsayeth me I will do with him that which I did with my sire." When they heard these words they feared lest he do them a mischief; so they replied, "Thou art our King and the son of our King;" and kissed ground before him; whereupon he thanked them and rejoiced in them. Then he bade bring forth money and apparel and clad them in sumptuous robes of honour and showered largesse upon them, wherefore they all loved him and obeyed him. In like manner he honoured the governors of the Provinces and the Shaykhs of the Badawin, both tributary and independent, so that the whole kingdom submitted to him and the folk obeyed him and he reigned and bade and forbade in peace and quiet for a time of five months. One Night, however, he dreamed a dream as he lay slumbering; whereupon he awoke trembling, nor did sleep visit him again till the morning. As soon as it was dawn he mounted his throne and his officers stood before him, right and left. Then he called the oneiromants and the astrologers and said to them "Expound to me my dream!" "What was the dream?" asked they; and he answered, "As I slept last Night, I saw my father standing before me, with his yard uncovered, and there came forth of it a thing the bigness of a bee, which grew till it became as a mighty lion, with claws like hangers. As I lay wondering at this lo! it ran upon me and smiting me with its claws, rent my belly in sunder; whereupon I awoke startled and trembling. So expound ye to me the meaning of this dream." The interpreters looked one at other; and, after considering, said, "O mighty King, this dream pointeth to one born of thy sire, between whom and thee shall befal strife and enmity, wherein he shall get the better of thee: so be on thy guard against him, by reason of this thy vision." When Ajib heard their words, he said, "I have no brother whom I should fear; so this your speech is mere lying." They replied, "We tell thee naught save what we know;" but he was an angered with them and bastinadoed them. Then he rose and, going in to the paternal palace, examined his father's concubines and found one of them seven months gone with child; whereupon he gave an order to two of his slaves, saying, "Take this damsel, ye twain, and carry her to the sea-shore and drown her." So they took her forthright and, going to the sea-shore, designed to drown her, when they looked at her and seeing her to be of singular beauty and loveliness said to each other, "Why should we drown this damsel? Let us rather carry her to the forest and live with her there in rare love-liasse." Then they took her and fared on with her days and nights till they had borne her afar off and had brought her to a bushy forest, abounding in fruit-trees and streams, where they both thought at the same time to win their will of her; but each said, "I will have her first." So they fell out one with the other concerning this, and while so doing a company of blackamoors came down upon them, and they drew their swords and both sides fell to laying on load. The mellay waxed hot with cut and thrust; and the two slaves fought their best; but the blacks slew them both in less than the twinkling of an eye. So the damsel abode alone and wandered about the forest, eating of its fruits and drinking of its founts, till in due time she gave birth to a boy, brown but clean limbed and comely, whom she named Gharíb, the Stranger, by reason of her strangerhood. Then she cut his navel-string and wrapping him in some of her own clothes, gave him to suck, harrowed at heart, and with vitals sorrowing for the estate she had lost and its honour and solace. And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say,

When it was the Six Hundred and Twenty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the damsel abode in the bush harrowed at heart and a-sorrowed; but she suckled her babe albeit she was full of grief and fear for her loneliness. Now behold, one day, there came horsemen and footmen into the forest with hawks and hounds and horses laden with partridges and cranes and wild geese and divers and other waterfowl; and young ostriches and hares and gazelles and wild oxen and lynxes and wolves and lions.[316] Presently, these Arabs entered the thicket and came upon the damsel, sitting with her child on her breast a-suckling him: so they drew near and asked her, "Say art thou a mortal or a Jinniyah?" Answered she, "I am a mortal, O Chiefs of the Arabs." Thereupon they told their Emir, whose name was Mardás, Prince of the Banú Kahtán,[317] and who had come forth that day to hunt with five hundred of his cousins and the nobles of his tribe, and who in the course of the chase had happened upon her. He bade them bring her before him, which they did and she related to him her past from first to last, whereat he marvelled. Then he cried to his kinsmen and escort to continue the chase, after which they took her and returned to their encampment, where the Emir appointed her a separate dwelling-place and five damsels to serve her; and he loved her with exceeding love and went in to her and lay with her. She conceived by him straightway, and, when her months were accomplished, she bare a man child and named him Sahím al- Layl.[318] He grew up with his brother Gharib among the nurses and throve and waxed upon the lap of the Emir Mardas who, in due time committed the two boys to a Fakih for instruction in the things of their faith; after which he gave them in charge to valiant knights of the Arabs, for training them to smite with sword and lunge with lance and shoot with shaft; so by the time they reached the age of fifteen, they knew all they needed and surpassed each and every brave of their tribe; for Gharib would undertake a thousand horse and Sahim al-Layl no fewer. Now Mardas had many enemies, and the men of his tribe were the bravest of all the Arabs, being doughty cavaliers, none might warm himself at their fire.[319] In his neighbourhood was an Emir of the Arabs, Hassan bin Sábit hight, who was his intimate friend; and he took to wife a noble lady of his tribe and bade all his friends to the wedding, amongst them Mardas lord of the Banu Kahtan, who accepted his invitation and set forth with three hundred riders of his tribe, leaving other four hundred to guard the women. Hassan met him with honour and seated him in the highest stead. Then came all the cavaliers to the bridal and he made them bride-feasts and held high festival by reason of the marriage, after which the Arabs departed to their dwelling- places. When Mardas came in sight of his camp, he saw slain men lying about and birds hovering over them right and left; and his heart sank within him at the sight. Then he entered the camp and was met by Gharib, clad in complete suit of ring-mail, who gave him joy of his safe return. Quoth Mardas, “What meaneth this case, O Gharib?”; and quoth Gharib, “Al-Hamal bin Májid attacked us with five hundred horsemen of his tribe.” Now the reason of this was that the Emir Mardas had a daughter called Mahdíyah, seer never saw fairer than she, and Al-Hamal, lord of the Banu Nabhán,[320] heard of her charms; whereupon he took horse with five hundred of his men and rode to Mardas to demand her hand; but he was not accepted and was sent away disappointed.[321] So he awaited till Mardas was absent on his visit to Hassan, when he mounted with his champions and, falling upon the camp of the Banu Kahtan, slew a number of their knights and the rest fled to the mountains. Now Gharib and his brother had ridden forth a- hunting and chasing with an hundred horse and returned not till midday, when they found that Al-Hamal had seized the camp and all therein and had carried off the maidens, among whom was Mahdiyah, driving her away with the captives. When Gharib saw this, he lost his wits for rage and cried out to Sahim, saying, “O my brother, O son of an accursed dam,[322] they have plundered our camp and carried off our women and children! Up and at the enemy, that we may deliver the captives!” So Gharib and Sahim and their hundred horse rushed upon the foe, and Gharib’s wrath redoubled, and he reaped a harvest of heads slain, giving the champions death-cup to drain, till he won to Al-Hamal and saw Mahdiyah among the captives. Then he drave at the lord of the Banu Nabhan braves; with his lance lunged him and from his destrier hurled him; nor was the time of mid-afternoon prayer come before he had slain the most part of the foe and put to rout the rest and rescued the captives; whereupon he returned to the camp in triumph, bearing the head of Al-Hamal on the point of his lance and improvising these couplets,

“I am he who is known on the day of fight, * And the Jinn of
earth at my shade take fright:
And a sword have I when my right hand wields, * Death hastens
from left on mankind to alight;
I have eke a lance and who look thereon * See a crescent head of
the liveliest light.[323]
And Gharib I’m highs of my tribe the brave * And if few my men I
feel naught affright.”

Hardly had Gharib made an end of these verses when up came Mardas who, seeing the slain and the vultures, was sore troubled and with fluttering heart asked the cause. The youth, after due greetings, related all that had befallen the tribe in his step- sire's absence. So Mardas thanked him and said, "Thou hast well requited our fosterage-pains in rearing thee, O Gharib!"; then he alighted and entered his pavilion, and the men stood about him, all the tribe praising Gharib and saying, "O our Emir, but for Gharib, not one of the tribe had been saved!" And Mardas again thanked him. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Six Hundred and Twenty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Mardas, hearing the tribesmen's praises of Gharib, again thanked him for his derring-do. But the youth, when he had delivered Mahdiyah from Al-Hamal whom he slew, was smitten by the shaft of her glances and fell into the nets of her allurements, wherefore his heart could not forget her and he became drowned in love and longing and the sweets of sleep forsook him and he had no joy of drink or meat. He would spur his horse up to the mountain tops, where he would spend the day in composing verses and return at nightfall; and indeed manifest upon him were the signs of affection and distraction. He discovered his secret to one of his companions and it became noised abroad in the camp, till it reached the ears of Mardas, who thundered and lightened and rose up and sat down and sparked and snorted and reviled the sun and the moon, saying, "This is the reward of him who reareth the sons of adultery! But except I kill Gharib, I shall be put to shame.''[324] Then he consulted one of the wise men of his tribe and after telling his secret took counsel with him of killing the youth. Quoth the elder, "O Emir, 'twas but yesterday that he freed thy daughter from captivity. If there be no help for it but thou must slay him, let it be by the hand of another than thyself, so none of the folk may misdoubt of thee." Quoth Mardas, "Advise me how I may do him die, for I look to none but to thee for his death." "O Emir," answered the other, "wait till he go forth to hunt and chase, when do thou take an hundred horse and lie in wait for him in some cave till he pass; then fall upon him unawares and cut him in pieces, so shalt thou be quit of his reproach." Said Mardas, "This should serve me well;" and chose out an hundred and fifty of his furious knights and Amalekites[325] whom he lessoned to his will. Then he watched Gharib till one day, he went forth to hunt and rode far away amongst the dells and hills; whereupon Mardas followed him with his men, ill-omened wights, and lay in wait for him by the way against he should return from the chase that they might sally forth and slay him. But as they lay in ambush among the trees behold, there fell upon them five hundred true Amalekites, who slew sixty of them and made fourscore and ten prisoners and trussed up Mardas with his arms behind his back. Now the reason of this was that when Gharib put Al-Hamal and his men to the sword, the rest fled and ceased not flying till they reached their lord's brother and told him what had happened, whereat his Doom-day rose and he gathered together his Amalekites and choosing out five hundred cavaliers, each fifty ells high,[326] set out with them in quest of blood-revengement for his brother. By the way he fell in with Mardas and his companions and there happened between them what happened; after which he bade his men alight and rest, saying, "O folk, the idols have given us an easy brood-wreak; so guard ye Mardas and his tribesmen, till I carry them away and do them die with the foulest of deaths." When Mardas saw himself a prisoner, he repented of what he had done and said, "This is the reward of rebelling against the Lord!" Then the enemy passed the night rejoicing in their victory, whilst Mardas and his men despaired of life and made sure of doom. So far concerning them; but as regards Sahim al-Layl, who had been wounded in the fight with Al-Hamal, he went in to his sister Mahdiyah, and she rose to him and kissed his hands, saying, "May thy two hands ne'er wither nor thine enemies have occasion to be blither! But for thee and Gharib, we had not escaped captivity among our foes. Know, however, O my brother, that thy father hath ridden forth with an hundred and fifty horse, purposing to slaughter Gharib; and thou wottest it would be sore loss and foul wrong to slay him, for that it was he who saved your shame and rescued your good." When Sahim heard this, the light in his sight became Night, he donned his battle-harness; and, mounting steed, rode for the place where Gharib was a-hunting. He presently came up with him and found that he had taken great plenty of game; so he accosted him and saluted him and said, “O my brother, why didst thou go forth without telling me?” Replied Gharib, “By Allah, naught hindered me but that I saw thee wounded and thought to give thee rest.” Then said Sahim, “O my brother, beware of my sire!” and told him how Mardas was abroad with an hundred and fifty men, seeking to slay him. Quoth Gharib, “Allah shall cause his treason to cut his own throat.” Then the brothers set out campwards, but night overtook them by the way and they rode on in the darkness, till they drew near the Wady wherein the enemy lay and heard the neighing of steeds in the gloom; whereupon said Sahim, “O my brother, my father and his men are ambushed in yonder valley; let us flee from it.” But Gharib dismounted and throwing his bridle to his brother, said to him, “Stay in this stead till I come back to thee.” Then he went on till he drew in sight of the folk, when he saw that they were not of his tribe and heard them naming Mardas and saying, “We will not slay him, save in his own land.” Wherefore he knew that nuncle Mardas was their prisoner, and said, “By the life of Mahdiyah, I will not depart hence till I have delivered her father, that she may not be troubled!” Then he sought and ceased not seeking till he hit upon Mardas and found him bound with cords; so he sat down by his side and said to him, “Heaven deliver thee, O uncle, from these bonds and this shame!” When Mardas saw Gharib his reason fled, and he said to him, “O my son, I am under thy protection: so deliver me in right of my fosterage of thee!” Quoth Gharib, “If I deliver thee, wilt thou give me Mahdiyah?” Quoth the Emir, “O my son, by whatso I hold sacred, she is thine to all time!” So he loosed him, saying, “Make for the horses, for thy son Sahim is there:” and Mardas crept along like a snake till he came to his son, who rejoiced in him and congratulated him on his escape. Meanwhile, Gharib unbound one after another of the prisoners, till he had freed the whole ninety and they were all far from the foe. Then he sent them their weapons and war horses, saying to them, “Mount ye and scatter yourselves round about the enemy and cry out, Ho, sons of Kahtan! And when they awake, do ye remove from them and encircle them in a thin ring.’’[327] So he waited till the last and third watch of the Night, when he cried out, “Ho, sons of Kahtan!” and his men answered in like guise, crying, “Ho, sons of Kahtan,” as with one voice; and the mountains echoed their slogan, so that it seemed to the raiders as though the whole tribe of Banu Kahtan were assailing them; wherefore they all snatched up their arms and fell upon one another, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say,

When it was the Six Hundred and Twenty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the raiders[328] awoke from sleep and heard Gharib and his men crying out, "Ho, sons of Kahtan!"; they imagined that the whole tribe was assailing them; wherefore they snatched up their arms and fell one upon other with mighty slaughter. Gharib and his men held aloof, and they fought one another till daybreak, when Gharib and Mardas and their ninety warriors came down upon them and killed some of them and put the rest to flight. Then the Banu Kahtan took the horses of the fugitives and the weapons of the slain and returned to their tribal camp, whilst Mardas could hardly credit his deliverance from the foe. When they reached the encampment, the stay-at-home folk all came forth to meet them and rejoiced in their safe return. Then they alighted and betook them to their tents; and all the youths of the tribe flocked to Gharib's stead and great and small saluted him and did him honour. But when Mardas saw this and the youths encircling his stepson he waxed more jealous of Gharib than before and said to his kinsfolk, "Verily, hatred of Gharib groweth on my heart, and what irketh me most is that I see these flocking about him! And to-morrow he will demand Mahdiyah of me." Quoth his confidant, "O Emir, ask of him somewhat he cannot avail to do." This pleased Mardas who passed a pleasant night and on the morrow, as he sat on his stuffed carpet, with the Arabs about him, Gharib entered, followed by his men and surrounded by the youth of the tribe, and kissed the ground before Mardas who, making a show of joy, rose to do him honour and seated him beside himself. Then said Gharib, "O uncle, thou madest me a promise; do thou fulfil it." Replied the Emir, "O my son, she is thine to all time; but thou lackest wealth." Quoth Gharib, "O uncle, ask of me what thou wilt, and I will fall upon the Emirs of the Arabs in their houses and on the Kings in their towns and bring thee fee[329] enough to fence the land from East to West." "O my son," quoth Mardas," I have sworn by all the Idols that I would not give Mabdiyah save to him who should take my blood-wite of mine enemy and do away my reproach.” “O uncle,” said Gharib, “tell me with which of the Kings thou hast a feud, that I may go to him and break his throne upon his pate.” “O my son,” replied Mardas, “I once had a son, a champion of champions, and he went forth one day to chase and hunt with an hundred horse. They fared on from valley to valley, till they had wandered far away amongst the mountains and came to the Wady of Blossoms and the Castle of Hám bin Shays bin Shaddád bin Khalad. Now in this place, O my son, dwelleth a black giant, seventy cubits high, who fights with trees from their roots uptorn; and when my son reached his Wady, the tyrant sallied out upon him and his men and slew them all, save three braves, who escaped and brought me the news. So I assembled my champions and fared forth to fight the giant, but could not prevail against him; wherefore I was baulked of my revenge and swore that I would not give my daughter in marriage save to him who should avenge me of my son.” Said Gharib, “O uncle, I will go to this Amalekite and take the wreak of thy son on him with the help of Almighty Allah.” And Mardas answered, saying, “O Gharib, if thou get the victory over him, thou wilt gain of him such booty of wealth and treasures as fires may not devour.” Cried Gharib, “Swear to me before witnesses thou wilt give me her to wife, so that with heart at ease I may go forth to find my fortune.” Accordingly, Mardas swore this to him and took the elders of the tribe to witness; whereupon Gharib fared forth, rejoicing in the attainment of his hopes, and went in to his mother, to whom he related what had passed. “O my son,” said she, “know that Mardas hateth thee and doth but send thee to this mountain, to bereave me of thee; then take me with thee and let us depart the tents of this tyrant.” But he answered, “O my mother, I will not depart hence till I win my wish and foil my foe.” Thereupon he slept till morning arose with its sheen and shone, and hardly had he mounted his charger when his friends, the young men, came up to him; two hundred stalwart knights armed cap-ŕ-pie and cried out to him, saying, “Take us with thee; we will help thee and company thee by the way.” And he rejoiced in them and cried, “Allah requite you for us with good!” adding, “Come, my friends, let us go.” So they set out and fared on the first day and the second day till evening, when they halted at the foot of a towering mount and baited their horses. As for Gharib, he left the rest and walked on into that mountain, till he came to a cave whence issued a light. He entered and found, at the higher facing end of the cave a Shaykh, three hundred and forty years old, whose eyebrows overhung his eyes and whose moustachios hid his mouth. Gharib at this sight was filled with awe and veneration, and the hermit said to him, “Methinks thou art of the idolaters, O my son, stone-worshipping[330] in the stead of the All-powerful King, the Creator of Night and Day and of the sphere rolling on her way.” When Gharib heard his words, his side muscles quivered and he said, “O Shaykh, where is this Lord of whom thou speakest, that I may worship him and take my fill of his sight?” Replied the Shaykh, “O my son, this is the Supreme Lord, upon whom none may look in this world. He seeth and is not seen. He is the Most High of aspect and is present everywhere in His works. He it is who maketh all the made and ordereth time to vade and fade; He is the Creator of men and Jinn and sendeth the Prophets to guide His creatures into the way of right. Whoso obeyeth Him, He bringeth into Heaven, and whoso gainsayeth Him, He casteth into Hell.” Asked Gharib, “And how, O uncle, saith whoso worshippeth this puissant Lord who over all hath power?” “O my son,” answered the Shaykh, “I am of the tribe of Ad, which were transgressors in the land and believed not in Allah. So He sent unto them a Prophet named Húd, but they called him liar and he destroyed them by means of a deadly wind; but I believed together with some of my tribe, and we were saved from destruction.[331] Moreover, I was present with the tribe of Thamúd and saw what befel them with their Prophet Sálih. After Salih, the Almighty sent a prophet, called Abraham the Friend,[332] to Nimrod son of Canaan, and there befel what befel between them. Then my companions died in the Saving Faith and I continued in this cave to serve Allah the Most High, who provideth my daily bread without my taking thought.” Quoth Gharib, “O uncle, what shall I say, that I may become of the troop of this mighty Lord?” “Say,” replied the old man, There is no god but the God and Abraham is the Friend of God.’ “ So Gharib embraced the Faith of Submission[333] with heart and tongue and the Shaykh said to him, “May the sweetness of belief and devotion be stablished in thy heart!” Then he taught him somewhat of the biblical ordinances and scriptures of Al-Islam and said to him, “What is thy name?”; and he replied, “My name is Gharib.” Asked the old man, “Whither art thou bound, O Gharib?” So he told him all his history, till he came to the mention of the Ghúl of the Mountain whom he sought, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Six Hundred and Twenty-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Gharib became a Moslem and told the Shaykh his past, from first to last, till he came to the mention of the Mountain-Ghul whom he sought, the old man asked him, “O Gharib, art thou mad that thou goest forth against the Ghul of the Mountain single handed?”; and he answered, “O my lord, I have with me two hundred horse.” “O Gharib,” rejoined the hermit, “hadst thou ten thousand riders yet shouldest thou not prevail against him, for his name is The-Ghul-who-eateth-men-we-pray-Allah-for-safety, and he is of the children of Ham. His father’s name was Hindi who peopled Hind and named it, and he left this son after him, whom he called Sa’adan the Ghul. Now the same was, O my son, even in his sire’s lifetime, a cruel tyrant and a rebellious devil and had no other food than flesh of the sons of Adam. His father when about to die forbade him from this, but he would not be forbidden and he redoubled in his forwardness, till Hindi banished him and drove him forth the Land of Hind, after battles and sore travail. Then he came to this country and fortifying himself herein, established his home in this place, whence he is wont to sally forth and cut the road of all that come and go, presently returning to the valley he haunteth. Moreover, he hath begotten five sons, warlike warlocks, each one of whom will do battle with a thousand braves, and he hath flocked the valley with his booty of treasure and goods besides horses and camels and cattle and sheep. Wherefore I fear for thee from him; so do thou implore Almighty Allah to further thee against him by the Tahlíl, the formula of Unity, and when thou drivest at the Infidels, cry, God is most Great!’ for, saying, There is no god but the God’ confoundeth those who misbelieve.” Then the Shaykh gave him a steel mace, an hundred pounds in weight, with ten rings which clashed like thunder whenas the wielder brandished it, and a sword forged of a thunderbolt,[334] three ells long and three spans broad, wherewith if one smote a rock, the stroke would cleave it in sunder. Moreover he gave him a hauberk and target and a book and said to him, “Return to thy tribe and expound unto them Al-Islam.” So Gharib left him, rejoicing in his new Faith, and fared till he found his companions, who met him with salams, saying, “What made thee tarry thus?” Whereupon he related to them that which had befallen him and expounded to them Al-Islam, and they all islamised. Early next morning, Gharib mounted and rode to the hermit to farewell him, after which he set out to return to his camp when behold, on his way, there met him a horseman cap-ŕ-pie armed so that only his eyes appeared, who made at him, saying, “Doff what is on thee, O scum[335] of the Arabs; or I will do thee die!” Therewith Gharib crave at him and there befel between them a battle such as would make a new-born child turn grey and melt the flinty rock with its sore affray; but presently the Badawi did off his face-veil, and lo! it was Gharib’s half- brother Sahim al-Layl. Now the cause of his coming thither was that when Gharib set out in quest of the Mountain-Ghul, Sahim was absent and on his return, not seeing his brother, he went in to his mother, whom he found weeping. He asked the reason of her tears and she told him what had happened of his brother’s journey, whereupon, without allowing himself aught of rest, he donned his war-gear and mounting rode after Gharib, till he overtook him and there befel between them what befel. When, therefore. Sahim discovered his face, Gharib knew him and saluted him, saying, “What moved thee to do this?” Quoth Sahim, “I had a mind to measure myself with thee in the field and make trial of my lustihood in cut and thrust.” Then they rode together and on the way Gharib expounded Al-Islam to Sahim, who embraced the Faith; nor did they cease riding till they were hard upon the valley. Meanwhile, the Mountain-Ghul espied the dust of their horses’ feet and said to his sons, “O my sons, mount and fetch me yonder loot.” So the five took horse and made for the party. When Gharib saw the five Amalekites approaching, he plied shovel-iron upon his steed’s flank and cried out, saying, “Who are ye, and what is your race and what do ye require?” Whereupon Falhún bin Sa’adan, the eldest of the five, came out and said, “Dismount ye and bind one another[336] and we will drive you to our father, that he may roast various of you and boil various, for it is long since he has tasted the flesh of Adam-son.” When Gharib heard these words he drove at Falhun, shaking his mace, so that the rings rang like the roaring thunder and the giant was confounded. Then he smote him a light blow with the mace between the shoulders, and he fell to the ground like a tall-trunked palm- tree; whereupon Sahim and some of his men fell upon him and pinioned him; then, putting a rope about his neck, they haled him along like a cow. Now when his brothers saw him a prisoner they charged home upon Gharib, who took three[337] of them captive and the fifth fled back to his sire, who said to him, “What is behind thee and where are the brothers of thee?” Quoth he “Verily, a beardless youth, forty cubits high, hath taken them prisoner.” Quoth Sa’adan, “May the sun pour no blessing on you!” and, going down from his hold, tore up a huge tree, with which he went in quest of Gharib and his folk; and he was on foot, for that no horse might carry him, because of the bigness of his body. His son followed him and the twain went on till they came up with Gharib and his company, when the Ghul fell upon them, without word said, and slew five men with his club. Then he made at Sahim and struck at him with his tree, but Sahim avoided the blow and it fell harmless; whereat Sa’adan was wroth and throwing down the weapon, sprang upon Sahim and caught him in his pounces as the sparrow hawk catcheth up the sparrow. Now when Gharib saw his brother in the Ghul’s clutches, he cried out, saying, “Allaho Akbar God is most Great! Oh the favour of Abraham the Friend, the Muhammad,[338] the Blessed One (whom Allah keep and assain!)”- -And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say,

When it was the Six Hundred and Twenty-ninth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Gharib saw his brother in the clutches of the Ghul, he cried out, saying “Oh the favour of Ibrahim, the Friend, the Blessed One (whom Allah keep and assain!) “; and crave his charger at Sa’adan, shaking his mace, till the rings loud rang. Then he cried out again, “God is most Great!” and smote the Ghul on the flat of the ribs with his mace, whereupon he fell to the ground, insensible, and loosed his grip on Sahim; nor did he come to himself ere he was pinioned and shackled. When his son saw this, he turned and fled; but Gharib drove steed after him and smiting him with his mace between the shoulders, threw him from his horse. So they bound him with his father and brethren and haltering them with ropes, haled them all six along like baggage- camels, till they reached the Ghul's castle, which they found full of goods and treasures and things of price; and there they also came upon twelve hundred Ajamis, men of Persia, bound and shackled. Gharib sat down on Sa'adan's chair, which had aforetime belonged to Sásá[339] bin Shays bin Shaddad bin Ad causing Sahim to stand on his right and his companions on his either hand, and sending for the Ghul of the Mountain, said to him, "How findest thou thyself, O accursed?" Replied Sa'adan, "O my lord, in the sorriest of plights for abasement and mortification; my sons and I, we are bound with ropes like camels." Quoth Gharib, "It is my will that you enter my faith, the faith Al-Islam highs, and acknowledge the Unity of the All knowing King whose All-might created Light and Night and every thing, there is no God but He, the Requiting King! and confess the mission and prophethood of Abraham the Friend (on whom be peace!)." So the Ghul and his sons made the required profession after the goodliest fashion, and Gharib bade loose their bonds; whereupon Sa'adan wept and would have kissed his feet, he and his sons: but Gharib forbade them and they stood with the rest who stood before him. Then said Gharib, "Harkye, Sa'adan!"; and he replied, "At thy service, O my lord!" Quoth Gharib, "What are these captives?" "O my lord," quoth the Ghul, "these are my game from the land of the Persians and are not the only ones." Asked Gharib, "And who is with them?"; and Sa'adan answered, "O my lord, there is with them the Princess Fakhr Táj, daughter of King Sabúr of Persia,[340] and an hundred damsels like moons." When Gharib heard this, he marvelled and said, "O Emir, how came ye by these?" Replied Sa'adan, "I went forth one night with my sons and five of my slaves in quest of booty, but finding no spoil in our way, we dispersed over wilds and words and fared on, hoping we might happen on somewhat of prey and not return emptyhanded, till we found ourselves in the land of the Persians. Presently, we espied a dust cloud and sent on to reconnoitre one of our slaves, who was absent a while and presently returned and said, O my lord, this is the Princess Fakhr Taj, daughter of Sabur, King of the Persians, Turcomans and Medes; and she is on a journey, attended by two thousand horse.’ Quoth I, Thou hast gladdened us with good news! We could have no finer loot than this.’ Then I and my sons fell upon the Persians and slew of them three hundred men and took the Princess and twelve hundred cavaliers prisoners, together with all that was with her of treasure and riches and brought them to this our castle.” Quoth Gharib, “Hast thou offered any violence to the Princess Fakhr Taj?” Quoth Sa’adan, “Not I, as thy head liveth and by the virtue of the Faith I have but now embraced!” Gharib replied “It was well done of thee, O Sa’adan, for her father is King of the world and doubtless he will despatch troops in quest of her and lay waste the dwellings of those who took her. And whoso looketh not to issue and end hath not Fate to friend. But where is the damsel?” Said Sa’adan, “I have set apart a pavilion for her and her damsels;” and said Gharib, “Show me her lodging,” whereto Sa’adan rejoined, “Hearkening and obedience!” So he carried him to the pavilion, and there he found the Princess mournful and cast down, weeping for her former condition of dignity and delight. When Gharib saw her, he thought the moon was near him and magnified Allah, the All-hearing, the All-seeing. The Princess also looked at him and saw him a princely cavalier, with velour shining from between his eyes and testifying for him and not against him; so she rose and kissed his hands, then fell at his feet, saying, “O hero of the age, I am under thy protection; guard me from this Ghul, for I fear lest he do away my maidenhead and after devour me. So take me to serve thine handmaidens.” Quoth Gharib, “Thou art safe and thou shalt be restored to thy father and the seat of thy worship.” Whereupon she prayed that he might live long and have advancement in rank and honour. Then he bade unbind the Persians and, turning to the Princess, said to her, “What brought thee forth of thy palace to the wilds and wastes, so that the highway- robbers made prize of thee?” She replied, “O my lord, my father and all the people of his realm, Turks and Daylamites, are Magians, worshipping fire, and not the All-powerful King. Now in our country is a monastery called the Monastery of the Fire, whither every year the daughters of the Magians and worshippers of the Fire resort at the time of their festival and abide there a month, after which they return to their houses. So I and my damsels set out, as of wont, attended by two thousand horse, whom my father sent with me to guard me; but by the way this Ghul came out against us and slew some of us and, taking the rest captive, imprisoned us in this hold. This, then, is what befel me, O valiant champion, whom Allah guard against the shifts of Time!" And Gharib said, "Fear not; for I will bring thee to thy palace and the seat of thy honours." Wherefore she blessed him and kissed his hands and feet. Then he went out from her, after having commanded to treat her with respect, and slept till morning, when he made the Wuzu-ablution and prayed a two-bow prayer, after the rite of our father Abraham the Friend (on whom be peace!), whilst the Ghul and his sons and Gharib's company all did the like after him. Then he turned to the Ghul and said to him, "O Sa'adan, wilt thou not show me the Wady of Blossoms?''[341] "I will, O my lord," answered he. So Gharib and his company and Princess Fakhr Taj and her maidens all rose and went forth, whilst Sa'adan commanded his slaves and slave- girls to slaughter and cook and make ready the morning-meal and bring it to them among the trees. For the Giant had an hundred and fifty handmaids and a thousand chattels to pasture his camels and oxen and sheep. When they came to the valley, they found it beautiful exceedingly and passing all degree; and birds on tree sang joyously and the mocking-nightingale trilled out her melody, and the cushat filled with her moan the mansions made by the Deity, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Six Hundred and Thirtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Gharib and his merry men and the Giant and his tribe reached the Wady of Blossoms they found birds flying free; the cushat filling with her moan the mansions made by the Deity, the bulbul singing as if 'twere human harmony and the merle whom to describe tongue faileth utterly; the turtle, whose plaining maddens men for loveecstasy and the ringdove and the popinjay answering her with fluency. There also were trees laden with all manner of fruitery, of each two kinds,[342] the pomegranate, sweet and sour upon branches growing luxuriantly, the almond-apricot,[343] the camphor-apricot[344] and the almond Khorasan highs; the plum, with whose branches the boughs of the myrobalan were entwined tight; the orange, as it were a cresses flaming light, the shaddock weighed down with heavy freight; the lemon, that cures lack of appetite, the citron against jaundice of sovereign might, and the date, red and yellow-bright, the especial handiwork of Allah the Most High. Of the like of this place saith the enamoured poet,

"When its birds in the lake make melody, * The lorn lover
yearneth its sight to see:
'Tis as Eden breathing a fragrant breeze, * With its shade and
fruits and rills flowing free."

Gharib marvelled at the beauty of that Wady and bade them set up there the pavilion of Fakhr Taj the Chosroite; so they pitched it among the trees and spread it with rich tapestries. Then he sat down and the slaves brought food and they ate their sufficiency; after which quoth Gharib, "Harkye, Sa'adan!": and quoth he, "At thy service, O my lord." "Hast thou aught of wine?" asked Gharib, and Sa'adan answered, "Yes, I have a cistern full of old wine." Said Gharib, "Bring us some of it." So Sa'adan sent ten slaves, who returned with great plenty of wine, and they ate and drank and were mirthful and merry. And Gharib bethought him of Mahdiyah and improvised these couplets,

"I mind our union days when ye were nigh, * And flames my heart
with love's consuming lowe.
By Allah, Ne'er of will I quitted you: * But shifts of Time from
you com pelled me go:
Peace and fair luck and greetings thousand-fold * To you, from
exiled lover's pining woe."

They abode eating and drinking and taking their pleasure in the valley for three days, after which they returned to the castle. Then Gharib called Sahim and said to him, "Take an hundred horse and go to thy father and mother and thy tribe, the Banu Kahtan, and bring them all to this place, here to pass the rest of their days, whilst I carry the Princess of Persia back to her father. As for thee, O Sa'adan, tarry thou here with thy sons, till I return to thee.” Asked Sa’adan, “And why wilt thou not carry me with thee to the land of the Persians?”; and Gharib answered, “Because thou stolest away King Sabur’s daughter and if his eye fall on thee, he will eat thy flesh and drink thy blood.” When the Ghul heard this, he laughed a loud laugh, as it were the pealing thunder, and said, “O my lord, by the life of thy head, if the Persians and Medes united against me, I would make them quaff the cup of annihilation.” Quoth Gharib, “ ’Tis as thou sayest;[345] but tarry thou here in fort till I return to thee;” and quoth the Ghul, “I hear and I obey.” Then Sahim departed with his comrades of the Banu Kahtan for the dwelling places of their tribe, and Gharib set out with Princess Fakhr Taj and her company, intending for the cities of Sabur, King of the Persians. Thus far concerning them; but as regards King Sabur, he abode awaiting his daughter’s return from the Monastery of the Fire, and when the appointed time passed by and she came not, flames raged in his heart. Now he had forty Wazirs, whereof the oldest, wisest and chiefest was highs Daydán: so he said to him, “O Minister, verily my daughter delayeth her return and I have no news of her though the appointed time is past; so do thou send a courier to the Monastery of the Fire to learn what is come of her.” “Hearkening and obedience,” replied Daydan; and, summoning the chief of the couriers, said to him, “Wend thou forthright to the Monastery.” So he lost no time and when he reached it, he asked the monks of the King’s daughter, but they said, “We have not seen her this year.” So the courier returned to the city of Isbánír[346] and told the Wazir, who went in to the King and acquainted him with the message. Now when Sabur heard this, he cast his crown on the ground, tore his beard and fell down in a trance. They sprinkled water upon him, and presently he came to himself, tearful-eyed and heavy-hearted, and repeated the words of the poet,

“When I far-parted patience call and tears, * Tears came to call
    but Patience never hears:
What, then, if Fortune parted us so far? * Fortune and Perfidy
    are peers

Then he called ten of his captains and bade them mount with a thousand horse and ride in different directions, in quest of his daughter. So they mounted forthright and departed each with his thousand; whilst Fakhr Taj's mother clad herself and her women in black and strewed ashes on her head and sat weeping and lamenting. Such was their case; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Thirty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that King Sabur sent his troops in quest of his daughter, whose mother clad herself and her women in black. Such was their case; but as regards the strange adventures of Gharib and the Princess, they journeyed on ten days, and on the eleventh day, appeared a dust cloud which rose to the confines of the sky; whereupon Gharib called the Emir of the Persians and said to him, "Go learn the cause thereof." "I hear and obey," replied he and crave his charger, till he came under the cloud of dust, where he saw folk and enquired of them. Quoth one of them, "We are of the Banu Hattál and are questing for plunder; our Emir is Samsam bin Al- Jiráh and we are five thousand horse." The Persians returned in haste and told their saying to Gharib, who cried out to his men of the Banu Kahtan and to the Persians, saying, "Don your arms!" They did as he bade them and presently up came the Arabs who were shouting, "A plunder! a plunder!" Quoth Gharib, "Allah confound you, O dogs of Arabs!" Then he loosed his horse and drove at them with the career of a right valiant kNight, shouting, "Allaho Akbar! Ho for the faith of Abraham the Friend, on whom be peace!" And there befel between them great fight and sore fray and the sword went round in sway and there was much said and say; nor did they leave fighting till fled the day and gloom came, when they drew from one another away. Then Gharib numbered his tribesmen and found that five of the Banu Kahtan had fallen and three-and- seventy of the Persians; but of the Banu Hattal they had slain more than five hundred horse. As for Samsam, he alighted and sought nor meat nor sleep, but said, "In all my life I never saw such a fighter as this youth! Anon he fighteth with the sword and anon with the mace; but, to-morrow I will go forth on champion wise and defy him to combat of twain in battle plain where edge and point are fain and I will cut off these Arabs.” Now, when Gharib returned to his camp, the Princess Fakhr Taj met him, weeping and affrighted for the terror of that which had befallen, and kissed his foot in the stirrup, saying, “May thy hands never wither nor thy foes be blither, O champion of the age! Alhamdolillah — Praise to God — who hath saved thee alive this day! Verily, I am in fear for thee from yonder Arabs.” When Gharib heard this, he smiled in her face and heartened and comforted her, saying, “Fear not, O Princess! Did the enemy fill this wild and wold yet would I scatter them, by the might of Allah Almighty.” She thanked him and prayed that he might be given the victory over his foes; after which she returned to her women and Gharib went to his tent, where he cleansed himself of the blood of the Infidels, and they lay on guard through the night. Next morning, the two hosts mounted and sought the plain where cut and thrust ruled sovereign. The first to prick into the open was Gharib, who crave his charger till he was near the Infidels and cried out, “Who is for jousting with me? Let no sluggard or weakling come out to me!” Whereupon there rushed forth a giant Amalekite of the lineage of the tribe of Ad, armed with an iron flail twenty pounds in weight, and drove at Gharib, saying, “O scum of the Arabs, take what cometh to thee and learn the glad tidings that thy last hour is at hand!” So saying, he aimed a blow at Gharib, but he avoided it and the flail sank a cubit into the ground. Now the badawi was bent double with the blow, so Gharib smote him with his mace and clove his forehead in sunder and he fell down dead and Allah hurried his soul to Hell-fire. Then Gharib charged and wheeled and called for champions; so there came out to him a second and a third and a fourth and so on, till ten had come forth to him and he slew them all. When the Infidels saw his form of fight and his smashing blows they hung back and forebore to fare forth to him, whereupon Samsam looked at them and said, “Allah never bless you! I will go forth to him.” So he donned his battle-gear and driving his charger into mid-field where he fronted the foe and cried out to Gharib saying, “Fie on thee, O dog of the Arabs! hath thy strength waxed so great that thou shouldst defy me in the open field and slaughter my men?” And Gharib replied, “Up and take bloodrevenge for the slaughter of thy braves!” So Samsam ran at Gharib who awaited him with broadened breast and heart enheartened, and they smote each at other with maces, till the two hosts marvelled and every eye was fixed on them. Then they wheeled about in the field and struck at each other two strokes; but Gharib avoided Samsam's stroke which wreak had wroke and dealt with a buffet that beat in his breastbone and cast him to the ground — stone dead. Thereupon all his host ran at Gharib as one man, and he ran at them, crying, "God is most Great! Help and Victory for us and shame and defeat for those who misbelieve the faith of Abraham the Friend, on whom be peace!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Six Hundred and Thirty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sam sam's tribesmen rushed upon Gharib as one man, he ran at them crying, "God is most Great! Help and Victory for us and shame and defeat for the Miscreant!" Now when the Infidels heard the name of the All-powerful King, the One, the All-conquering, whom the sight comprehendeth not, but He comprehendeth the sight,[347] they looked at one another and said, "What is this say that maketh our side-muscles tremble and weakeneth our resolution and causeth the life to fail in us? Never in our lives heard we aught goodlier than this saying!" adding, "Let us leave fighting, that we may ask its meaning." So they held their hands from the battle and dismounted; and their elders assembled and held counsel together, seeking to go to Gharib and saying, "Let ten of us repair to him!" So they chose out ten of their best, who set out for Gharib's tents. Now he and his people had alighted and returned to their camp, marvelling at the withdrawal of the Infidels from the fight. But, presently, lo and behold! the ten came up and seeking speech of Gharib, kissed the earth before him and wished him glory and lasting life. Quoth he to them, "What made you leave fighting?"; and quoth they, "O, my lord, thou didst affright us with the words thou shoutest out at us." Then asked Gharib, "What calamity do ye worship?"; and they answered, "We worship Wadd and Suwá'a and Yaghús,[348] lords of the tribe of Noah"; and Gharib, "We serve none but Allah Almighty, Maker of all things and Provider of all livings. He it is who created the heavens and the earth and stablished the mountains, who made water to well from the stones and the trees to grow and feedeth wild beasts in word; for He is Allah, the One, the All- powerful Lord." When they heard this, their bosoms broadened to the words of Unity-faith, and they said, "Verily, this be a Lord high and great, compassionating and compassionate!"; adding, "And what shall we say, to become of the Moslems, of those which submit themselves to Him?" Quoth Gharib, "Say, There is no god but the God and Abraham is the Friend of God.'" So the ten made veracious profession of the veritable religion and Gharib said to them, "An the sweet savour of Al-Islam be indeed stablished in your hearts, fare ye to your tribe and expound the faith to them; and if they profess, they shall be saved, but if they refuse we will burn them with fire." So the ten elders returned and expounded Al-Islam to their people and set forth to them the path of truth and creed, and they embraced the Faith of Submission with heart and tongue. Then they repaired on foot to Gharib's tent and kissing ground between his hands wished him honour and high rank, saying, "O our lord, we are become thy slaves; so command us what thou wilt, for we are to thee audient and obedient and we will never depart from thee, since Allah hath guided us into the right way at thy hands." Replied he, "Allah abundantly requite you! Return to your dwellings and march forth with your good and your children and forego me to the Wady of Blossoms and the castle of Sásá bin Shays,[349] whilst I carry the Princess Fakhr Taj, daughter of Sabur, King of the Persians, back to her father and return to you." "Hearkening and obedience," said they and straightway returned to their encampment, rejoicing in Al-Islam, and expounded the True Faith to their wives and children, who became Believers. Then they struck their tents and set forth, with their good and cattle, for the Wady of Blossoms. When they came in sight of the castle of Shays, Sa'adan and his sons sallied forth to them, but Gharib had charged them, saying, "If the Ghul of the Mountain come out to you and offer to attack you, do ye call upon the name of Allah the All-creator, and he will leave his hostile intent and receive you hospitably." So when he would have fallen upon them they called aloud upon the name of Almighty Allah and straightway he received them kindly and asked them of their case. They told him all that had passed between Gharib and themselves, whereupon he rejoiced in them and lodged them with him and loaded them with favours. Such was their case; but as regards Gharib, he and his, escorting the Princess fared on five days' journey towards the City of Isbanir, and on the sixth day they saw a dust-cloud. So Gharib sent one of the Persians to learn the meaning of this and he went and returned, swiftlier than bird in flight, saying, "O my lord, these be a thousand horse of our comrades, whom the King hath sent in quest of his daughter Fakhr Taj." When Gharib heard this, he commanded his company to halt and pitch the tents. So they halted and waited till the new comers reached them, when they went to meet them and told Túmán, their captain, that the Princess was with them; whereupon he went in to Gharib and kissing the ground before him, enquired for her. Gharib sent him to her pavilion, and he entered and kissed her hands and feet and acquainted her with what had befallen her father and mother. She told him in return all that had betided her and how Gharib had delivered her from the Ghul of the Mountain, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say,

When it was the Six Hundred and Thirty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King's daughter, Fakhr Taj, had told Tuman all that had befallen her from the Mountain-Ghul, and how he had imprisoned her and would have devoured her but for Gharib, adding, "And indeed, it behoveth my sire to give him the half of his reign," Tuman arose and returned to Gharib and kissed his hands and feet and thanked him for his good dealing, saying, "With thy leave, O my lord, I will return to Isbanir City and deliver to our King the good news of his daughter's approach." "Go," replied Gharib, "and take of him the gift of glad tidings." So Tuman returned with all dillgence to Isbanir, the Cities, and entering the palace, kissed ground before the King, who said to him, "What is there of new, O bringer of good news?" Quoth Tuman, "I will not speak thee, till thou give me the gift of glad tidings." Quoth the King, "Tell me thy glad tidings and I will content thee." So Tuman said, "O King, I bring thee joyful intelligence of the return of Princess Fakhr Taj." When Sabur heard his daughter's name, he fell down fainting and they sprinkled rose-water on him, till he recovered and cried to Tuman, "Draw near to me and tell me all the good which hath befallen her." So he came forward and acquainted him with all that had betided the Princess; and Sabur beat hand upon hand, saying, "Unhappy thou, O Fakhr Taj!''[350] And he bade give Tuman ten thousand gold pieces and conferred on him the government of Isfáhán City and its dependencies. Then he cried out to his Emirs, saying, "Mount, all of you, and fare we forth to meet the Princess Fakhr Taj!"; and the Chief Eunuch went in to the Queen-mother and told her and all the Harim the good news, whereat she rejoiced and gave him a robe of honour and a thousand dinars. Moreover, the people of the city heard of this and decorated the market streets and houses. Then the King and Tuman took horse and rode till they had sight of Gharib, when Sabur footed it and made some steps towards Gharib, who also dismounted and advanced to meet him; and they embraced and saluted each other, and Sabur bent over Gharib's hand and kissed it and thanked him for his favours.[351] They pitched their pavilions in face of each other and Sabur went in to his daughter, who rose and embracing him told him, all that had befallen her and how Gharib had rescued her from the clutches of the Ghul of the Mountain. Quoth the King, "By thy life, O Princess of fair ones, I will overwhelm him with gifts!"; and quoth she, "O my papa, make him thy son-in-law, that he may be to thee a force against thy foes, for he is passing valiant." Her father replied, "O my daughter, knowst thou not that King Khirad Sháh seeketh thee in marriage and that he hath cast the brocade[352] and hath given an hundred thousand dinars in settlement, and he is King of Shiraz and its dependencies and is lord of empire and horsemen and footmen?" But when the Princess heard these words she said, "O my papa! I desire not that whereof thou speakest, and if thou constrain me to that I have no mind to, I will slay myself." So Sabur left her and went in to Gharib, who rose to him; and they sat awhile together; but the King could not take his fill of looking upon him; and he said in his mind, "By Allah, my daughter is excusable if she love this Badawi!" Then he called for food and they ate and passed the night together. On the morrow, they took horse and rode till they arrived at the City of Isbanir and entered, stirrup to stirrup, and it was for them a great day. Fakhr Taj repaired to her palace and the abiding-place of her rank, where her mother and her women received her with cries of joy and loud lullilooings. As for King Sabur, he sat down on his throne and seated Gharib on his right hand, whilst the Princes and Chamberlains, the Emirs, Wazirs and Nabobs stood on either hand and gave him joy of the recovery of his daughter. Said Sabur, “Whoso loveth me let him bestow a robe of honour on Gharib,” and there fell dresses of honour on him like drops of rain. Then Gharib abode the King’s guest ten days, when he would have departed, but Sabur clad him in an honourable robe and swore him by his faith that he should not march for a whole month. Quoth Gharib, “O King, I am plighted to one of the girls of the Arabs and I desire to go in to her.” Quoth the King, “Whether is the fairer, thy betrothed or Fakhr Taj?” “O King of the age,” replied Gharib, “what is the slave beside the lord?” And Sabur said, “Fakhr Taj is become thy handmaid, for that thou didst rescue her from the pounces of the Ghul, and she shall have none other husband than thyself.” Thereupon Gharib rose and kissed ground, saying, “O King of the age, thou art a sovereign and I am but a poor man, and belike thou wilt ask a heavy dowry.” Replied the King, “O my son, know that Khirad Shah, lord of Shiraz and dependencies thereof, seeketh her in marriage and hath appointed an hundred thousand dinars to her dower; but I have chosen thee before all men, that I may make thee the sword of my kingship and my shield against vengeance.’’[353] Then he turned to his Chief Officers and said to them, “Bear witness[354] against me, O Lords of mine Empire, that I marry my daughter Fakhr Taj to my son Gharib.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Six Hundred and Thirty-fourth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sabur, King of Ajam-land said to his Chief Officers, “Bear ye witness against me that I marry my daughter Fakhr Taj, to my son Gharib!” With that he joined palms[355] with him and she became his wife. Then said Gharib, “Appoint me a dower and I will bring it to thee, for I have in the Castle of Sasa wealth and treasures beyond count.” Replied Sabur, “O my son, I want of thee neither treasure nor wealth and I will take nothing for her dower save the head of Jamrkán King of Dasht and the city of Ahwáz.[356] “ Quoth Gharib, “O King of the age, I will fetch my folk forthright and go to thy foe and spoil his realm.” Quoth Sabur, “Allah requite thee with good!” and dismissed the lords and commons, thinking, “If Gharib go forth against Jamrkan, he will never more return.” When morning morrowed the King mounted with Gharib and bidding all his troops take horse rode forth to the plain, where he said to his men, “Do ye tilt with spears and gladden my heart.” So the champions of Persia land played one against other, and Gharib said, “O King of the age, I have a mind to tilt with the horsemen of Ajam-land, but on one condition.” Asked the King, “What is that?”; and answered Gharib, “It is that I shall don a light tunic and take a headless lance, with a pennon dipped in saffron, whilst the Persian champions sally forth and tilt against me with sharp spears. If any conquer me, I will render myself to him: but, if I conquer him I will mark him on the breast and he shall leave the plain.” Then the King cried to the commander of the troops to bring forward the champions of the Persians; so he chose out from amongst the Princes one thousand two hundred of his stoutest champions, and the King said to them, in the Persian tongue, “Whoso slayeth this Badawi may ask of me what he will.” So they strove with one another for precedence and charged down upon Gharib and truth was distinguished from falsehood and jest from earnest. Quoth Gharib, “I put my trust in Allah, the God of Abraham the Friend, the Deity who hath power over all and from whom naught is hidden, the One, the Almighty, whom the sight comprehendeth not!” Then an Amalekite-like giant of the Persian champions rushed out to him, but Gharib let him not stand long before him ere he marked him and covered his breast with saffron and as he turned away, he smote him on the nape with the shaft of his lance, and he fell to the ground and his pages bore him from the lists.[357] Then a second champion came forth against him and he overcame him and marked him on the breast; and thus did he with a third and a fourth and a fifth; and there came out against him champion after champion till he had overcome them all and marked them on the breast; for Almighty Allah gave him the victory over them and they fared forth vanquish from the plain. Then the servants set food and strong wine before them! and they ate and drank, till Gharib’s wits were dazed by the drink. By and by, he went out to obey a call of Nature and would have returned, but lost his way and entered the palace of Fakhr Taj. When she saw him, her reason fled and she cried out to her women saying, “Go forth from me to your own places!" So they withdrew and she rose and kissed Gharib's hand, saying "Welcome to my lord, who delivered me from the Ghul! Indeed I am thine handmaid for ever and ever." Then she drew him to her bed and embraced him, whereupon desire was hot upon him and he broke her seal and lay with her till the morning. Meanwhile the King thought that he had departed; but on the morrow he went in to him and Sabur rose to him and made him sit by his side. Then entered the tributary kings and kissing the ground stood ranged in rows on the right and left and fell to talking of Gharib's velour and saying, "Extolled be He who gave him such prowess albeit he is so young in years!" As they were thus engaged, behold all espied from the palace-windows the dust of horse approaching and the King cried out to his scouts, saying, "Woe to you! Go and bring me news of yonder dust!" So a cavalier took horse and riding off, returned after a while, and said "O King, we found under that dust an hundred horse belonging to an Emir highs Sahim al-Layl." Gharib hearing these words, cried out, "O my lord, this is my brother, whom I had sent on an errand, and I will go forth to meet him." So saying, he mounted, with his hundred men of the Banu Kahtan and a thousand Persians, and rode to meet his brother in great state, but greatness belongeth to God alone.[358] When the two came up with each other, they dismounted and embraced, and Gharib said to Sahim, "O my brother, hast thou brought our tribe to the Castle of Sasa and the Wady of Blossoms?" "O my brother," replied Sahim, "when the perfidious dog Mardas heard that thou hadst made thee master of the stronghold belonging to the Mountain-Ghul, he was sore chagrined and said, Except I march hence, Gharib will come and carry off my daughter Mahdiyah without dower.' So he took his daughter and his goods and set out with his tribe for the land of Irak, where he entered the city of Cufa and put himself under the protection of King Ajib, seeking to give him his daughter to wife." When Gharib heard his brother's story, he well-nigh gave up the ghost for rage and said, "By the virtue of the faith of Al-Islam, the faith of Abraham the Friend, and by the Supreme Lord, I will assuredly go to the land of Irak and fierce war upon it I will set on foot." Then they returned to the city and going in to the King, kissed ground before him. He rose to Gharib and saluted Sahim; after which the elder brother told him what had happened and he put ten captains at his commandment, under each one's hand ten thousand horse of the doughtiest of the Arabs and the Ajams, who equipped themselves and were ready to depart in three days. Then Gharib set out and journeyed till he reached the Castle of Sasa whence the Ghul and his sons came forth to meet him and dismounting, kissed his feet in the stirrups. He told them all that had passed and the giant said, "O my lord, do thou abide in this thy castle, whilst I with my sons and servants repair to Irak and lay waste the city Al-Rusták[359] and bring to thy hand all its defenders bound in straitest bond." But Gharib thanked him and said, "O Sa'adan, we will all go." So he made him ready and the whole body set out for Irak, leaving a thousand horse to guard the Castle. Thus far concerning them; but as regards Mardas, he arrived with his tribe in the land of Irak bringing with him a handsome present and fared for Cufa-city which he entered. Then, he presented himself before Ajib and kissed ground between his hands and, after wishing him what is wished to kings, said, "O my lord, I come to place myself under thy protection." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say,

When it was the Six Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King that Mardas coming into the presence of Ajib, said to him, "I come to place myself under thy protection!" Quoth Ajib, "Tell me who hath wronged thee, that I may protect thee against him, though it were Sabur, King of the Persians and Turcomans and Daylamites." Quoth Mardas, "O King of the Age, he who hath wronged me is none other than a youth whom I reared in my bosom. I found him in his mother's lap in a certain valley and took her to wife She brought me a son, whom I named Sahim al-Layl, and her own son, Gharib highs, grew up on my knees and became a blasting thunderbolt and a lasting calamity,[360] for he smote Al-Hamal,[361] Prince of the Banu Nabhan, and slew footmen and threw horsemen. Now I have a daughter, who befitteth thee alone, and he sought her of me; so I required of him the head of the Ghul of the Mountain, wherefore he went to him and, after engaging him in singular combat, made the master his man and took the Castle of Sasa bin Shays bin Shaddad bin Ad, wherein are the treasures of the ancients and the hoards of the moderns. Moreover, I hear that, become a Moslem, he goeth about, summoning the folk to his faith. He is now gone to bear the Princess of Persia, whom he delivered from the Ghul, back to her father, King Sabur, and will not return but with the treasures of the Persians." When Ajib heard the story of Mardas he changed colour to yellow and was in ill case and made sure of his own destruction; then he said, O Mardas, is the youth's mother with thee or with him?"; and Mardas replied, "She is with me in my tents." Quoth Ajib, What is her name?"; quoth Mardas, "Her name is Nusrah." " 'Tis very she," rejoined Ajib and sent for her to the presence. Now when she came before him, he looked on her and knew her and asked her, "O accursed, where are the two slaves I sent with thee?"; and she answered, "They slew each other on my account;" whereupon Ajib bared his blade and smote her and cut her in twain. Then they dragged her away and cast her out; but trouble and suspicion entered Ajib's heart and he cried, "O Mardas, give me thy daughter to wife." He rejoined, "She is one of thine handmaids: I give her to thee to wife, and I am thy slave." Said Ajib, "I desire to look upon this son of an adulteress, Gharib, that I may destroy him and cause him taste all manner of torments." Then he bade give Mardas, to his daughter's dowry, thirty thousand dinars and an hundred pieces of silk-brocaded and fringed with gold and an hundred pieces of silk bordered stuffs and kerchiefs and golden collars. So he went forth with this mighty fine dowry and set himself to equip Mahdiyah in all diligence. Such was their case; but as regards Gharib, he fared on till he came to Al-Jazírah, which is the first town of Al-Irak[362] and is a walled and fortified city and he hard by it called a halt. When the townsfolk saw his army encamped before it, they bolted the gates and manned the walls, then went to the King of the city, who was called Al-Dámigh, the Brainer, for that he used to brain the champions in the open field of fight, and told him what was come upon them. So he looked forth from the battlements of the palace and seeing a conquering host, all of them Persians, encamped before the city, said to the citizens, "O folk, what do yonder Ajams want?"; and they replied, "We know not." Now Al- Damigh had among his officers a man called Saba' al-Kifár, the Desert-lion, keen of wit and penetrating as he were a flame of fire; so he called him and said to him, “Go to this stranger host and find out who they be and what they want and return quickly.” Accordingly, he sped like the wind to the Persian tents, where a company of Arabs rose up and met him saying, “Who art thou and what dost thou require?” He replied, “I am a messenger and an envoy from the lord of the city to your chief.” So they took him and carried him through the lines of tents, pavilions and standards, till they came to Gharib’s Shahmiyánah and told him of the mission. He bade them bring him in and they did so, whereupon he kissed ground before Gharib and wished him honour and length of days. Quoth Gharib, “What is thine errand?” and quoth Saba’ al-Kifar, “I am an envoy from the lord of the city of Al-Jazirah, Al-Damigh, brother of King Kundamir, lord of the city of Cufa and the land of Irak.” When Gharib heard his father’s name, the tears railed from his eyes in rills and he looked at the messenger and said, “What is thy name?”; and he replied, “My name is Saba’ al- Kifar.” Said Gharib, “Return to thy lord and tell him that the commander of this host is called Gharib, son of Kundamir, King of Cufa, whom his son Ajib slew, and he is come to take blood- revenge for his sire on Ajib the perfidious hound.” So Saba’ al- Kifar returned to the city and in great joy kissed the ground, when Al-Damigh said, “What is going on there, O Saba’ al-Kifar?” He replied, “O my master, the leader of yon host is thy nephew, thy brother’s son,” and told him all. The King deemed himself in a dream and asked the messenger, “O Saba’ al-Kifar, is this thou tellest me true?” and the Desert-lion answered, “As thy head liveth, it is sooth!” Then Al-Damigh bade his chief officers take horse forthright and all rode out to the camp, whence Gharib came forth and met him and they embraced and saluted each other; after which Gharib carried him to his tents and they sat down on beds of estate. Al-Damigh rejoiced in Gharib, his brother’s son, and presently turning to him, said, “I also have yearned to take blood-revenge for thy father, but could not avail against the dog thy brother; for that his troops are many and my troops are few.” Replied Gharib, “O uncle, here am I come to avenge my sire and blot out our shame and rid the realm of Ajib.” Said Al-Damigh, “O son of my brother, thou hast two blood-wreaks to take, that of thy father and that of thy mother.” Asked Gharib, “And what aileth my mother?”

and Al-Damigh answered, “Thy brother Ajib hath slain her.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Six Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Gharib heard these words of his uncle Al-Damigh, “Verily thy brother Ajib hath slain her!”, he asked what was the cause thereof and was told of all that had happened, especially how Mardas had married his daughter to Ajib who was about to go into her. Thereupon Gharib’s reason fled from his head and he swooned away and was nigh upon death. No sooner did he come to himself than he cried out to the troops, saying, “To horse!” But Al-Damigh said to him, “O son of my brother, wait till I make ready mine affairs and mount among my men and fare with thee at thy stirrup.” Replied Gharib “I have no patience to wait; do thou equip thy troops and join me at Cufa.” Thereupon Gharib mounted with his troops and rode, till he came to the town of Babel,[363] whose folk took fright at him. Now there was in this town a King called Jamak, under whose hand were twenty thousand horsemen, and there gathered themselves together to him from the villages other fifty thousand horse, who pitched their tents facing the city. Then Gharib wrote a letter and sent it to King Jamak by a messenger, who came up to the city-gate and cried out, saying, “I am an envoy;” whereupon the Warder of the Gate went in and told Jamak, who said, “Bring him to me.” So he led in the messenger, who kissing the ground before the King, gave him the letter, and Jamak opened it and read its contents as follows: “Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Three Worlds, Lord of all things, who giveth to all creatures their daily bread and who over all things is Omnipotent! These from Gharib, son of King Kundamir, lord of Irak and Cufa, to Jamak. Immediately this letter reacheth thee, let not thy reply be other than to break thine idols and confess the unity of the All-knowing King, Creator of light and darkness, Creator of all things, the All-powerful; and except thou do as I bid thee, I will make this day the blackest of thy days. Peace be on those who follow in the way of Salvation, fearing the issues of fornication, and obey the hest of the Most High King, Lord of this world and the next, Him who saith to a thing, Be’; and it becometh!” Now when Jamak read this letter, his eyes paled and his colour failed and he cried out to the messenger, “Go to thy lord and say to him, To-morrow, at daybreak there shall be fight and conflict and it shall appear who is the conquering hero.’” So he returned and told Gharib, who bade his men make ready for battle, whilst Jamak commanded his tents to be pitched in face of Gharib’s camp; and his troops poured forth like the surging sea and passed the night with intention of slaughter. As soon as dawned the day, the two hosts mounted and drew up in battle array and beat their drums amain and drave their steeds of swiftest strain; and they filled the whole earthly plain; and the champions to come out were fain. Now the first who sallied forth a championing to the field was the Ghul of the Mountain, bearing on shoulder a terrible tree, and he cried out between the two hosts, saying, “I am Sa’adan the Ghul! Who is for fighting, who is for jousting? Let no sluggard come forth to me nor weakling.” And he called out to his sons, saying, “Woe to you! Bring me fuel and fire, for I am an-hungered.” So they cried upon their slaves who brought firewood and kindled a fire in the heart of the plain. Then there came out to him a man of the Kafirs, an Amalekite of the unbelieving Amalekites, bearing on his shoulder a mace like the mast of a ship, and drove at Sa’adan the Ghul, saying, “Woe to thee, O Sa’adan!” When the giant heard this, he waxed furious beyond measure and raising his tree club, aimed at the Infidel a blow, that hummed through the air. The Amalekite met the stroke with his mace, but the tree beat down his guard and descending with its own weight, together with the weight of the mace upon his head, beat in his brain pan, and he fell like a long-stemmed palm-tree. Thereupon Sa’adan cried to his slaves, saying, “Take this fatted calf and roast him quickly.” So they hastened to skin the Infidel and roasted him and brought him to the Ghul, who ate his flesh and crunched his bones.[364] Now when the Kafirs saw how Sa’adan did with their fellow, their hair and pile stood on end; their skins quaked, their colour changed, their hearts died within them and they said to one another, “Whoso goeth out against this Ghul, he eateth him and cracketh his bones and causeth him to lack the zephyr-wind of the world.” Wherefore they held their hands, quailing for fear of the Ghul and his sons and turned to fly, making for the town; but Gharib cried out to his troops, saying, “Up and after the runaways!” So the Persians and the Arabs crave after the King of Babel and his host and caused sword to smite them, till they slew of them twenty thousand or more. Then the fugitives crowded together in the city gate and they killed of them much people; and they could not avail to shut the gate. So the Arabs and the Persians entered with them, fighting, and Sa’adan, snatching a mace from one of the slain, wielded it in the enemy’s face and gained the city race-course. Thence he fought his way through the foe and broke into the King’s palace, where he met with Jamak and so smote him with the mace, that he toppled senseless to the ground. Then he fell upon those who were in the palace and pounded them into pieces, till all that were left cried out, “Quarter! Quarter!” and Sa’adan said to them, “Pinion your King.” — And Shahrazad saw the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say,

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

FOOTNOTES VOLUME VI.

[1] Lane (vol. iii. 1) calls our old friend "Es-Sindibád of the Sea," and Benfey derives the name from the Sanskrit "Siddhapati"=lord of sages. The etymology (in Heb. Sandabar and in Greek Syntipas) is still uncertain, although the term often occurs in Arab stories; and some look upon it as a mere corruption of "Bidpai" (Bidyápati). The derivation offered by Hole (Remarks on the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, by Richard Hole, LL.D. London, Cadell, 1797) from the Persian ábád (a region) is impossible. It is, however, not a little curious that this purely Persian word (=a "habitation") should be found in Indian names as early as Alexanders' day, e.g. the "Dachina bades" of the Periplus is "Dakhsin-ábád," the Sanskr. being "Dakshinapatha."

[2] A porter like the famous Armenians of Constantinople. Some edits. call him "Al-Hindibád."

[3] Arab. "Karawán" (Charadrius dicnemus, Linn.): its shrill note is admired by Egyptians and hated by sportsmen.

[4] This ejaculation, still popular, averts the evil eye. In describing Sindbad the Seaman the Arab writer seems to repeat what one reads of Marco Polo returned to Venice.

[5] Our old friend must not be confounded with the eponym of the "Sindibád-námah;" the Persian book of Sindbad the Sage. See Night dlxxviii.

[6] The first and second are from Eccles. chapts. vii. 1, and ix. 4. The Bul. Edit. reads for the third, "The grave is better than the palace." None are from Solomon, but Easterns do not "verify quotations."

[7] Arab. "Kánún"; a furnace, a brasier before noticed (vol. v.,); here a pot full of charcoal sunk in the ground, or a little hearth of clay shaped like a horseshoe and opening down wind.

[8] These fish-islands are common in the Classics, e.g. the Pristis of Pliny (xvii. 4), which Olaus Magnus transfers to the Baltic (xxi. 6) and makes timid as the whales of Nearchus. C. J. Solinus (Plinii Simia) says, “Indica maria balćnas habent ultra spatia quatuor jugerum.” See also Bochart’s Hierozoicon (i. 50) for Job’s Leviathan (xli. 16-17). Hence deemed an island. A basking whale would readily suggest the Krakan and Cetus of Olaus Magnus (xxi. 25). Al-Kazwíni’s famous treatise on the “Wonders of the World” (Ajáib al-Makhlúkát) tells the same tale of the “Sulahfah” tortoise, the colossochelys, for which see Night dl.

[9] Sindbad does not say that he was a shipwrecked man, being a model in the matter of “travellers’ tales,” i.e. he always tells the truth when an untruth would not serve him.

[10] Lane (iii. 83) would make this a corruption of the Hindu “Maharáj”=great Rajah: but it is the name of the great autumnal fęte of the Guebres; a term composed of two good old Persian words “Mihr” (the sun, whence “Mithras”) and “ján”=life. As will presently appear, in the days of the Just King Anushirwán, the Persians possessed Southern Arabia and East Afica south of Cape Guardafui (Jird Háfún). On the other hand, supposing the word to be a corruption of Maharaj, Sindbad may allude to the famous Narsinga kingdom in Mid-south India whose capital was Vijaya- nagar; or to any great Indian Rajah even he of Kachch (Cutch), famous in Moslem story as the Balhará (Ballaba Rais, who founded the Ballabhi era; or the Zamorin of Camoens, the Samdry Rajah of Malabar). For Mahrage, or Mihrage, see Renaudot’s “Two Mohammedan Travellers of the Ninth Century.” In the account of Ceylon by Wolf (English Transl.) it adjoins the “Ilhas de Cavalos” (of wild horses) to which the Dutch merchants sent their brood-mares. Sir W. Jones (Description of Asia, chapt. ii.) makes the Arabian island Soborma or Mahráj=Borneo.

[11] Arab. “Sáis”; the well-known Anglo-Indian word for a groom or rather a “horse-keeper.”

[12] Arab. “Darakah”; whence our word.

[13] The myth of mares being impregnated by the wind was known to the Classics of Europe; and the “sea-stallion” may have arisen from the Arab practice of picketing mare asses to be covered by the wild ass. Colonel J. D. Watson of the Bombay Army suggests to me that Sindbad was wrecked at the mouth of the Ran of Kachch (Cutch) and was carried in a boat to one of the Islands there formed during the rains and where the wild ass (Equus Onager, Khar-gadh, in Pers. Gor-khar) still breeds. This would explain the “stallions of the sea” and we find traces of the ass blood in the true Kathiawár horse, with his dun colour, barred legs and dorsal stripe.

[14] The second or warrior caste (Kshatriya), popularly supposed to have been annihilated by Battle-axe Ramá (Parashu Ráma); but several tribes of Rajputs and other races claim the honourable genealogy. Colonel Watson would explain the word by “Shakháyát” or noble Káthis (Kathiawar-men), or by “Shikári,” the professional hunter here acting as stable-groom.

[15] In Bul. Edit. “Kábil.” Lane (iii. 88) supposes it to be the “Bartail” of Al-Kazwini near Borneo and quotes the Spaniard B. L. de Argensola (History of the Moluccas), who places near Banda a desert island, Poelsatton, infamous for cries, whistlings, roarings and dreadful apparitions, suggesting that it was peopled by devils (Stevens, vol. i.,).

[16] Some texts substitute for this last phrase, “And the sailors say that Al-Dajjál is there.” He is a manner of Moslem Antichrist, the Man of Sin per excellentiam, who will come in the latter days and lay waste the earth, leading 70,000 Jews, till encountered and slain by Jesus at the gate of Lud. (Sale’s Essay, sect. 4.)

[17] Also from Al-Kazwini: it is an exaggerated description of the whale still common off the East African Coast. My crew was dreadfully frightened by one between Berberah and Aden. Nearchus scared away the whales in the Persian Gulf by trumpets (Strabo, lib.

xv.). The owl-faced fish is unknown to me: it may perhaps be a seal or a manatee. Hole says that Father Martini, the Jesuit (seventeenth century), placed in the Canton Seas, an “animal with the head of a bird and the tail of a fish,”a parrot-beak?

[18] The captain or master (not owner) of a ship.

[19] The kindly Moslem feeling, shown to a namesake, however humble.

[20] A popular phrase to express utter desolation.

[21] The literature of all peoples contains this physiological perversion. Birds do not sing hymns; the song of the male is simply to call the female and when the pairing-season ends all are dumb.

[22] The older “roc.” The word is Persian, with many meanings, e.g. a cheek (Lalla “Rookh”); a “rook” (hero) at chess; a rhinoceros, etc. The fable world-wide of the wundervogel is, as usual, founded upon fact: man remembers and combines but does not create. The Egyptian Bennu (Ti-bennu=phoenix) may have been a reminiscence of gigantic pterodactyls and other winged monsters. From the Nile the legend fabled by these Oriental “putters out or five for one” overspread the world and gave birth to the Eorosh of the Zend, whence the Pers. “Símurgh” (=the “thirty-fowl- like”), the “Bar Yuchre” of the Rabbis, the “Garuda” of the Hindus; the “Anká” (“long-neck”) of the Arabs; the “Hathilinga bird,” of Buddhagosha’s Parables, which had the strength of five elephants; the “Kerkes” of the Turks; the “Gryps” of the Greeks; the Russian “Norka”; the sacred dragon of the Chinese; the Japanese “Pheng” and “Kirni”; the “wise and ancient Bird” which sits upon the ash-tree yggdrasil, and the dragons, griffins, basilisks, etc. of the Middle Ages. A second basis wanting only a superstructure of exaggeration (M. Polo’s Ruch had wing-feathers twelve paces long) would be the huge birds but lately killed out. Sindbad may allude to the Ćpyornus of Madagascar, a gigantic ostrich whose egg contains 2.35 gallons. The late Herr Hildebrand discovered on the African coast, facing Madagascar,

traces of another huge bird. Bochart (Hierozoicon ii. 854) notices the Avium Avis Ruch and taking the pulli was followed by lapidation on the part of the parent bird. A Persian illustration in Lane (iii. 90) shows the Rukh carrying off three elephants in beak and pounces with the proportions of a hawk and field mice: and the Rukh hawking at an elephant is a favourite Persian subject. It is possible that the "Twelve Knights of the Round Table" were the twelve Rukhs of Persian story. We need not go, with Faber, to the Cherubim which guarded the Paradise-gate. The curious reader will consult Dr. H. H. Wilson's Essays, edited by my learned correspondent, Dr. Rost, Librarian of the India House (vol. i. p-3).

[23] It is not easy to explain this passage unless it be a garbled allustion to the steel-plate of the diamond-cutter. Nor can we account for the wide diffusion of this tale of perils unless to enhance the value of the gem. Diamonds occur in alluvial lands mostly open and comparatively level, as in India, the Brazil and the Cape. Archbishop Epiphanius of Salamis (ob. A.D. 403) tells this story about the jacinth or ruby (Epiphanii Opera, a Petaio, Colonić 1682); and it was transferred to the diamond by Marco Polo (iii. 29, "of Eagles bring up diamonds") and Nicolo de Conti, whose "mountain Albenigaras" must be Vijayanagar in the kingdom of Golconda. Major Rennel places the famous mines of Pauna or Purna in a mountain-tract of more than 200 miles square to the southwest of the Jumna. Al-Kazwini locates the "Chaos" in the "Valley of the Moon amongst the mountains of Serendib" (Ceylon); the Chinese tell the same tale in the campaigns of Hulaku; and it is known in Armenia. Col. Yule (M. P. ii. 349) suggests that all these are ramifications of the legend told by Herodotus concerning the Arabs and their cinnamon (iii. 3). But whence did Herodotus borrow the tale?

[24] Sindbad correctly describes the primitive way of extracting camphor, a drug unknown to the Greeks and Romans, introduced by the Arabs and ruined in reputation by M. Raspail. The best Laurus Camphora grows in the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra and Borneo: although Marsden (Marco Polo) declares that the tree is not found South of the Equator. In the Calc. Edit. of two hundred Nights the

camphor-island (or peninsula) is called “Al- Ríhah” which is the Arab name for Jericho-town.

[25] In Bul. Edit. Kazkazan: Calc. Karkaddan and others Karkand and Karkadan; the word being Persian, Karg or Kargadan; the {Greek letters} of ĆlianhHist. Anim. xvi. 21). The length of the horn (greatly exaggerated) shows that the white species is meant; and it supplies only walking-sticks. Cups are made of the black horn (a bundle of fibres) which, like Venetian glass, sweat at the touch of poison. A section of the horn is supposed to show white lines in the figure of a man, and sundry likenesses of birds; but these I never saw. The rhinoceros gives splendid sport and the African is perhaps the most dangerous of noble game. It has served to explain away and abolish the unicorn among the Scientists of Europe. But Central Africa with one voice assures us that a horse-like animal with a single erectile horn on the forehead exists. The late Dr. Baikic, of Niger fame, thoroughly believed in it and those curious on the subject will read about Abu Karn (Father of a Horn) in Preface (pp. xvi.-xviii.) of the Voyage au Darfour, by Mohammed ibn Oman al-Tounsy (Al-Tunisi), Paris, Duprat, 1845.

[26] Ibn al-Wardi mentions an “Isle of Apes” in the Sea of China and Al-Idrísi places it two days’ sail from Sukutra (Dwipa Sukhatra, Socotra). It is a popular error to explain the Homeric and Herodotean legend of the Pygmies by anthropoid apes. The Pygmy fable (Pygmći Spithamai=1 cubit=3 spans) was, as usual, based upon fact, as the explorations of late years have proved: the dwarfs are homunculi of various tribes, the Akka, Doko, Tiki- Tiki, Wambilikimo (“two-cubit men”), the stunted race that share the central regions of Intertropical Africa with the abnormally tall peoples who speak dialects of the Great South African tongue, miscalled the “Bantu.” Hole makes the Pygmies “monkeys,” a word we have borrowed from the Italians (monichio ŕ mono=ape) and quotes Ptolemy, (Ape-Islands) East of Sunda.

[27] A kind of barge (Arab. Bárijah, plur. Bawárij) used on the Nile of sub-pyriform shape when seen in bird’s eye. Lane translates “ears

like two mortars” from the Calc. Edit.

[28] This giant is distinctly Polyphemus; but the East had giants and cyclopes of her own (Hierozoicon ii. 845). The Ajáib al-Hind (chapt. cxxii.) makes Polyphemus copulate with the sheep. Sir John Mandeville (if such person ever existed) mentions men fifty feet high in the Indian Islands; and Al-Kazwini and Al- Idrisi transfer them to the Sea of China, a Botany Bay for monsters in general.

[29] Fire is forbidden as a punishment amongst Mosems, the idea being that it should be reserved for the next world. Hence the sailors fear the roasting more than the eating: with ours it would probably be the reverse. The Persian insult “Pidar- sokhtah”=(son of a) burnt father, is well known. I have noted the advisability of burning the Moslem’s corpse under certain circumstances: otherwise the murderer may come to be canonised.

[30] Arab. “Mastabah”=the bench or form of masonry before noticed. In olden Europe benches were much more used than chairs, these being articles of luxury. So King Horne “sett him abenche;” and hence our “King’s Bench” (Court).

[31] This is from the Bresl. Edit. vol. iv. 32: the Calc. Edit gives only an abstract and in the Bul. Edit. the Ogre returned “accompanied by a female, greater than he and more hideous.” We cannot accept Mistress Polyphemus.

[32] This is from Al-Kazwini, who makes the serpent “wind itself round a tree or a rock, and thus break to pieces the bones of the breast in its belly.”

[33] “Like a closet,” in the Calc. Edit. The serpent is an exaggeration of the python which grows to an enormous size. Monstrous Ophidia are mentioned in sober history, e.g. that which delayed the army of Regulus. Dr. de Lacerda, a sober and sensible Brazilian traveller, mentions his servants sitting down upon a tree-trunk in the Captaincy of San Paulo (Brasil), which began to move and proved to be a huge snake. F. M. Pinto (the Sindbad of Portugal though not so

respectable) when in Sumatra takes refuge in a tree from "tigers, crocodiles, copped adders and serpents which slay men with their breath." Father Lobo in Tigre (chapt. x.) was nearly killed by the poison-breath of a huge snake, and healed himself with a bezoar carried ad hoc. Maffććus makes the breath of crocodiles suavissimus, but that of the Malabar serpents and vipers "adeo teter ac noxius ut afflatu ipso necare perhibeantur."

[34] Arab. "Aurat": the word has been borrowed by the Hindostani jargon, and means a woman, a wife.

[35] So in Al-Idrísi and Langlčs: the Bres. Edit. has "Al- Kalásitah"; and Al-Kazwini "Al-Salámit." The latter notes in it a petrifying spring which Camoens (The Lus. x. 104), places in Sunda, i.e. Java-Minor of M. Polo. Some read Salabat-Timor, one of the Moluccas famed for sanders, cloves, cinnamon, etc. (Purchas ii. 1784.)

[36] Evidently the hippopotamus (Pliny, viii. 25; ix. 3 and xxiii. 11). It can hardly be the Mulaccan Tapir, as shields are not made of the hide. Hole suggests the buffalo which found its way to Egypt from India viâ Persia; but this would not be a speciosum miraculum.

[37] The ass-headed fish is from Pliny (ix. ca): all those tales are founded upon the manatee (whose dorsal protuberance may have suggested the camel), the seal and the dugong or sea calf. I have noticed (Zanzibar i. 205) legends of ichthyological marvels current on the East African seaboard; and even the monsters of the Scottish waters are not all known: witness the mysterious "brigdie." See Bochart De Cetis i. 7; and Purchas iii. 930.

[38] The colossal tortoise is noticed by Ćlian (De Nat. Animal. xvi. 17), by Strabo (Lib. xv.), by Pliny (ix. 10) and Diodorus Siculus (iv. 1) who had heard of a tribe of Chelonophagi. Ćlian makes them 16 cubits long near Taprobane and serving as house-roofs; and others turn the shell into boats and coracles. A colossochelys was first found on the Scwalik Hills by Dr. Falconer and Major (afterwards Sir Proby) Cantley. In 1867 M. Emile Blanchard exhibited to the

Academie des Sciences a monster crab from Japan 1.20 metres long (or 2.50 including legs); and other travellers have reported 4 metres. These crustaceć seem never to cease growing and attain great dimensions under favourable circumstances, i.e. when not troubled by man.

[39] Lane suggests (iii. 97), and with some probability, that the "bird" was a nautilus; but the wild traditions concerning the barnacle-goose may perhaps have been the base of the fable. The albatross also was long supposed never to touch land. Possible the barnacle, like the barometz of Tartarean lamb, may be a survivor of the day when the animal and vegetable kingdoms had not yet branched off into different directions.

[40] Arab. "Zahwah," also meaning a luncheon. The five daily prayers made all Moslems take strict account of time, and their nomenclature of its division is extensive.

[41] This is the "insane herb." Davis, who visited Sumatra in 1599 (Purchas i. 120) speaks "of a kind of seed, whereof a little being eaten, maketh a man to turn foole, all things seeming to him to be metamorphosed." Linschoten's "Dutroa" was a poppy-like bud containing small kernels like melons which stamped and administered as a drink make a man "as if he were foolish, or out of his wits." This is Father Lobo's "Vanguini" of the Cafres, called by the Portuguese dutro (Datura Stramonium) still used by dishonest confectioners. It may be Dampier's Ganga (Ganjah) or Bang (Bhang) which he justly describes as acting differently "according to different constitutions; for some it stupefies, others it makes sleepy, others merry and some quite mad." (Harris, Collect. ii. 900.) Dr. Fryer also mentions Duty, Bung and Post, the Poust of Bernier, an infusion of poppy-seed.

[42] Arab. "Ghul," here an ogre, a cannibal. I cannot but regard the "Ghul of the waste" as an embodiment of the natural fear and horror which a man feels when he faces a really dangerous desert. As regards cannibalism, Al-Islam's religion of common sense freely

allows it when necessary to save life, and unlike our mawkish modern sensibility, never blames those who

Alimentis talibus usi
Produxere animos.

[43] For Cannibals, see the Massagetć of Herod (i.), the Padći of India (iii.), and the Essedones near Mćotis (iv.); Strabo (lib. iv.) of the Luci; Pomponious Mela (iii. 7) and St. Jerome (ad Jovinum) of Scoti. M. Polo locates them in Dragvia, a kingdom of Sumatra (iii. 17), and in Angaman (the Andamanian Isles?), possibly the ten Maniolai which Ptolemy (vii.), confusing with the Nicobars, places on the Eastern side of the Bay of Bengal; and thence derives the Heraklian stone (magnet) which attracts the iron of ships (See Serapion, De Magnete, fol. 6, Edit. of 1479, and Brown's Vulgar Errors, , 6th Edit.). Mandeville finds his cannibals in Lamaray (Sumatra) and Barthema in the "Isle of Gyava" (Java). Ibn Al-Wardi and Al-Kazwini notice them in the Isle Saksar, in the Sea of the Zanj (Zanzibar): the name is corrupted Persian "Sag-Sar" (Dogs'-heads) hence the dog- descended race of Camoens in Pegu (The Lus. x. 122). The Bresl. Edit. (iv. 52) calls them "Khawárij"=certain sectarians in Eastern Arabia. Needless to say that cocoa-nut oil would have no stupefying effect unless mixed with opium or datura, hemp or henbane.

[44] Black pepper is produced in the Goanese but we must go south to find the "Bilád al-Filfil" (home of pepper) i.e. Malabar. The exorbitant prices demanded by Venice for this spice led directly to the discovery of The Cape route by the Portuguese; as the "Grains of Paradise" (Amomum Granum Paradisi) induced the English to explore the West African Coast.

[45] Arab. "Kazdír." Sansk. "Kastír." Gr. "Kassiteron." Lat. "Cassiteros," evidently derived from one root. The Heb. is "Badih," a substitute, an alloy. "Tanakah" is the vulg. Arab. word, a congener of the Assyrian "Anaku," and "Kala-i" is the corrupt Arab. term used in India.

[46] Our Arabian Ulysses had probably left a Penelope or two at home and finds a Calypso in this Ogygia. His modesty at the mention of womankind is notable.

[47] These are the commonplaces of Moslem consolation on such occasions: the artistic part is their contrast with the unfortunate widower’s prospect.

[48] Lit. “a margin of stone, like the curb-stone of a well.”

[49] I am not aware that this vivisepulture of the widower is the custom of any race, but the fable would be readily suggested by the Sati (Suttee)-rite of the Hindus. Simple vivisepulture was and is practised by many people.

[50] Because she was weaker than a man. The Bresl. Edit. however, has “a gugglet of water and five scones.”

[51] The confession is made with true Eastern sang-froid and probably none of the hearers “disapproved” of the murders which saved the speaker’s life.

[52] This tale is evidently taken from the escape of Aristomenes the Messenian from the pit into which he had been thrown, a fox being his guide. The Arabs in an early day were eager students of Greek literature. Hole () noted the coincidence.

[53] Bresl. Edit. “Khwájah,” our “Howajee,” meaning a schoolmaster, a man of letters, a gentleman.

[54] And he does repeat at full length what the hearers must have known right well. I abridge.

[55] Island of the Bell (Arab. “Nákús”=a wooden gong used by Christians but forbidden to Moslems). “Kala” is written “Kela,” “Kullah” and a variety of ways. Baron Walckenaer places it at Keydah in the Malay peninsula opposite Sumatra. Renaudot identifies it with Calabar, “somewhere about the point of

Malabar.”

[56] Islands, because Arab cosmographers love to place their speciosa miracula in such places.

[57] Like the companions of Ulysses who ate the sacred oxen (Od. xii.).

[58] So the enormous kingfisher of Lucian’s True History (lib. ii.).

[59] This tale is borrowed from Ibn Al-Wardi, who adds that the greybeards awoke in the morning after eating the young Rukh with black hair which never turned white. The same legend is recounted by Al-Dimiri (ob. A.H. 808=1405-6) who was translated into Latin by Bochart (Hierozoicon ii.) and quoted by Hole and Lane (iii. 103). An excellent study of Marco Polo’s Rukh was made by my learned friend the late Prof. G. G. Bianconi of Bologna, “Dell’Uccello Ruc,” Bologna, Gamberini, 1868. Prof. Bianconi predicted that other giant birds would be found in Madagascar on the East African Coast opposite; but he died before hearing of Hildebrand’s discovery.

[60] Arab. “Izár,” the earliest garb of Eastern man; and, as such preserved in the Meccan pilgrimage. The “waist-cloth” is either tucked in or kept in place by a girdle.

[61] Arab. “Líf,” a succedaneum for the unclean sponge, not unknown in the “Turkish Baths” of London.

[62] The Persians have a Plinian monster called “Tasmeh- pá”=Strap-legs without bones. The “Old Man” is not an ourang- outang nor an Ifrít as in Sayf al-Mulúk, Night dcclxxi., but a jocose exaggeration of a custom prevailing in parts of Asia and especially in the African interior where the Tsetse-fly prevents the breeding of burden-beasts. Ibn Batútah tells us that in Malabar everything was borne upon men’s backs. In Central Africa the kinglet rides a slave, and on ceremonious occasions mounts his Prime Minister. I have often been reduced to this style of conveyance and found man the worst imaginable riding: there is no hold and the sharpness of the shoulder-

ridge soon makes the legs ache intolerably. The classicists of course find the Shaykh of the Sea in the Tritons and Nereus, and Bochart (Hiero. ii. 858, 880) notices the homo aquaticus, Senex Judćus and Senex Marinus. Hole () suggests the inevitable ouran-outan (man o' wood), one of "our humiliating copyists," and quotes "Destiny" in Scarron's comical romance (Part ii. chapt. i) and "Jealousy" enfolding Rinaldo. (O.F. lib. 42).

[63] More literally "The Chief of the Sea (-Coast)," Shaykh being here a chief rather than an elder (eoldermann, alderman). So the "Old Man of the Mountain," famous in crusading days, was the Chief who lived on the Nusayriyah or Ansári range, a northern prolongation of the Libanus. Our "old man" of the text may have been suggested by the Koranic commentators on chapt. vi. When an Infidel rises from the grave, a hideous figure meets him and says, "Why wonderest thou at my loathsomeness? I am thine Evil Deeds: thou didst ride upon me in the world and now I will ride upon thee." (Suiting the action to the words.)

[64] In parts of West Africa and especially in Gorilla-land there are many stories of women and children being carried off by apes, and all believe that the former bear issue to them. It is certain that the anthropoid ape is lustfully excited by the presence of women and I have related how at Cairo (1856) a huge cynocephalus would have raped a girl had it not been bayonetted. Young ladies who visited the Demidoff Gardens and menagerie at Florence were often scandalised by the vicious exposure of the baboons' parti-coloured persons. The female monkey equally solicits the attentions of man and I heard in India from my late friend, Mirza Ali Akbar of Bombay, that to his knowledge connection had taken place. Whether there would be issue and whether such issue would be viable are still disputed points: the produce would add another difficulty to the pseudo-science called psychology, as such mule would have only half a soul and issue by a congener would have a quarter-soul. A traveller well known to me once proposed to breed pithecoid men who might be useful as hewers of wood and drawers of water: his idea was to put the highest races of apes to the lowest of humanity. I never heard

what became of his “breeding stables.”

[65] Arab. “Jauz al-Hindi”: our word cocoa is from the Port. “Coco,” meaning a “bug” (bugbear) in allusion to its caricature of the human face, hair, eyes and mouth. I may here note that a cocoa-tree is easily climbed with a bit of rope or a handkerchief.

[66] Tomb-pictures in Egypt show tame monkeys gathering fruits and Grossier (Description of China, quoted by Hole and Lane) mentions a similar mode of harvesting tea by irritating the monkeys of the Middle Kingdom.

[67] Bresl. Edit. Cloves and cinnamon in those days grew in widely distant places.

[68] In pepper-plantations it is usual to set bananas (Musa Paradisiaca) for shading the young shrubs which bear bunches like ivy-fruit, not pods.

[69] The Bresl. Edit. has “Al-Ma’arat.” Langlčs calls it the
Island of Al-Kamárí. See Lane, iii. 86.

[70] Insula, pro. peninsula. “Comorin” is a corrupt. of “Kanyá” (=Virgo, the goddess Durgá) and “Kumári” (a maid, a princess); from a temple of Shiva’s wife: hence Ptolemy’s {Greek letters} and near it to the N. East {Greek letters}, “Promontorium Cori quod Comorini caput insulć vocant,” says Maffćus (Hist. Indic. i.). In the text “Al’úd” refers to the eagle-wood (Aloekylon Agallochum) so called because spotted like the bird’s plume. That of Champa (Cochin-China, mentioned in Camoens, The Lus. x. 129) is still famous.

[71] Arab. “Birkat”=tank, pool, reach, bight. Hence Birkat
Far’aun in the Suez Gulf. (Pilgrimage i. 297.)

[72] Probably Cape Comorin; to judge from the river, but the text names Sarandib (Ceylon Island) famous for gems. This was noticed by Marco Polo, iii. ca; and ancient authors relate the same of

“Taprobane.”

[73] I need hardly trouble the reader with a note on pearl- fisheries: the descriptions of travellers are continuous from the days of Pliny (ix. 35), Solinus (ca) and Marco Polo (iii. 23). Maximilian of Transylvania, in his narrative of Magellan’s voyage (Novus Orbis,) says that the Celebes produce pearls big as turtle-doves’ eggs; and the King of Porne (Borneo) had two unions as great as goose’s eggs. Pigafetta (in Purchas) reduces this to hen’s eggs and Sir Thomas Herbert to dove’s eggs.

[74] Arab. “Anbar” pronounced “Ambar;” wherein I would derive “Ambrosia.” Ambergris was long supposed to be a fossil, a vegetable which grew upon the sea-bottom or rose in springs; or a “substance produced in the water like naphtha or bitumen”(!): now it is known to be the egesta of a whale. It is found in lumps weighing several pounds upon the Zanzibar Coast and is sold at a high price, being held a potent aphrodisiac. A small hollow is drilled in the bottom of the cup and the coffee is poured upon the bit of ambergris it contains; when the oleaginous matter shows in dots amidst the “Kaymagh” (coffee-cream), the bubbly froth which floats upon the surface and which an expert “coffee servant” distributes equally among the guests. Argensola mentions in Ceylon, “springs of liquid bitumen thicker than our oil and some of pure balsam.”

[75] The tale-teller forgets that Sindbad and his companions have just ascended it; but this inconséquence is a characteristic of the Eastern Saga. I may note that the description of ambergris in the text tells us admirably well what it is not.

[76] This custom is alluded to by Lane (Mod Egypt, ch. xv.): it is the rule of pilgrims to Meccah when too ill to walk or ride (Pilgrimage i. 180). Hence all men carry their shrouds: mine, after being dipped in the Holy Water of Zemzem, was stolen from me by the rascally Somal of Berberah.

[77] Arab. “Fulk;” some Edits. read “Kalak” and “Ramaz” (=a raft).

[78] These lines occur in modified form in Night xi.

[79] These underground rivers (which Dr. Livingstone derided) are familiar to every geographer from Spenser's "Mole" to the Poika of Adelberg and the Timavo near Trieste. Hence "Peter Wilkins" borrowed his cavern which let him to Grandevolet. I have some experience of Sindbad's sorrows, having once attempted to descend the Poika on foot. The Classics had the Alpheus (Pliny v. 31; and Seneca, Nat. Quae. vi.), and the Tigris-Euphrates supposed to flow underground: and the Medićvals knew the Abana of Damascus and the Zenderúd of Isfahan.

[80] Abyssinians can hardly be called "blackamoors," but the arrogance of the white skin shows itself in Easterns (e.g. Turks and Brahmans) as much as, if not more than, amongst Europeans. Southern India at the time it was explored by Vasco da Gama was crowded with Abyssinian slaves imported by the Arabs.

[81] "Sarandib" and "Ceylon" (the Taprobane of Ptolemy and Diodorus Siculus) derive from the Pali "Sihalam" (not the Sansk. "Sinhala") shortened to Silam and Ilam in old Tamul. Van der Tunk would find it in the Malay "Pulo Selam"=Isle of Gems (the Ratna- dwípa or Jewel Isle of the Hindus and the Jazirat al-Yakút or Ruby-Island of the Arabs); and the learned Colonel Yule (Marco Polo ii 296) remarks that we have adopted many Malayan names, e.g. Pegu, China and Japan. Sarandib is clearly "Selan-dwípa," which Mandeville reduced to "Silha."

[82] This is the well-known Adam's Peak, the Jabal al-Ramun of the Arabs where Adam fell when cast out of Eden in the lowest or lunar sphere. Eve fell at Jeddah (a modern myth) and the unhappy pair met at Mount Arafat (i.e. recognition) near Meccah. Thus their fall was a fall indeed. (Pilgrimage iii. 259.)

[83] He is the Alcinous of our Arabian Odyssey.

[84] This word is not in the dictionaries; Hole () and Lane understand it to mean the hog-deer; but why, one cannot imagine. The animal is

neither “beautiful” nor “uncommon” and most men of my day have shot dozens in the Sind-Shikárgahs.

[85] M. Polo speaks of a ruby in Seilan (Ceylon) a palm long and three fingers thick: William of Tyre mentions a ruby weighing twelve Egyptian drams (Gibbon ii. 123), and Mandeville makes the King of Mammera wear about his neck a “rubye orient” one foot long by five fingers large.

[86] The fable is from Al-Kazwini and Ibn Al-Wardi who place the serpent (an animal sacred to Ćsculapius, Pliny, xxix. 4) “in the sea of Zanj” (i.e. Zanzibar). In the “garrow hills” of N. Eastern Bengal the skin of the snake Burrawar (?) is held to cure pain. (Asiat. Res. vol. iii.)

[87] For “Emerald,” Hole () would read emery or adamantine spar.

[88] Evidently Maháráj=Great Rajah, Rajah in Chief, an Hindu title common to the three potentates before alluded to, the Narsinga, Balhara or Samiry.

[89] This is probably classical. So the page said to Philip of Macedon every morning, “Remember, Philip, thou art mortal”; also the slave in the Roman Triumph,

“Respice poste te: hominem te esse memento!”

And the dying Severus, “Urnlet, soon shalt thou enclose what hardly a whole world could contain.” But the custom may also have been Indian: the contrast of external pomp with the real vanity of human life suggests itself to all.

[90] Arab. “Hút”; a term applied to Jonah’s whale and to monsters of the deep, “Samak” being the common fishes.

[91] Usually a two-bow prayer.

[92] This is the recognised formula of Moslem sales.

[93] Arab. “Walímah”; like our wedding-breakfast but a much more ceremonious and important affair.

[94] i.e. his wife (euphemistically). I remember an Italian lady being much hurt when a Maltese said to her “Mia moglie con rispetto parlando” (my wife, saving your presence). “What,” she cried, “he speaks of his wife as he would of the sweepings!”

[95] The serpent in Arabic is mostly feminine.

[96] i.e. in envying his wealth, with the risk of the evil eye.

[97] I subjoin a translation of the Seventh Voyage from the Calc. Edit. of the two hundred Nights which differs in essential points from the above. All respecting Sindbad the Seaman has an especial interest. In one point this world-famous tale is badly ordered. The most exciting adventures are the earliest and the falling off of the interest has a somewhat depressing effect. The Rukh, the Ogre and the Old Man o’ the Sea should come last.

[98] Arab. “Al-Suways:” this successor of ancient Arsinoë was, according to local tradition, founded by a Santon from Al-Sús in Marocco who called it after his name “Little Sús” (the wormlet).

[99] Arab. “Mann,” a weight varying from two to six pounds: even this common term is not found in the tables of Lane’s Mod. Egyptians, Appendix B. The “Maund” is a well-known Anglo-Indian weight.

[100] This article is not mentioned elsewhere in The Nights.

[101] Apparently a fancy title.

[102] The island is evidently Ceylon, long famed for elephants, and the tree is the well known “Banyan” (Ficus Indica). According to Linschoten and Wolf, the elephants of all lands do reverence and honour to those of Ceylon.

[103] “Tusks” not “teeth” which are not valued. As Hole remarks, the

elephants of Pliny and Sindbad are equally conscious of the value of ivory. Pliny (viii. 3) quotes Herodotus about the buying of ivories and relates how elephants, when hunted, break their “cornua” (as Juba called them) against a tree trunk by way of ransom. Ćlian, Plutarch, and Philostratus speak of the linguistic intelligence and religious worship of the “half-reason with the hand,” which the Hindus term “Háthí”=unimanus. Finally, Topsell’s Gesner () makes elephants bury their tusks, “which commonly drop out every tenth year.” In Arabian literature the elephant is always connected with India.

[104] This is a true “City of Brass.” (Nuhás asfar=yellow copper), as we learn in Night dcclxxii. It is situated in the “Maghrib” (Mauritania), the region of magic and mystery; and the idea was probably suggested by the grand Roman ruins which rise abruptly from what has become a sandy waste. Compare with this tale “The City of Brass” (Night cclxxii.). In Egypt Nuhás is vulg. pronounced Nihás.

[105] The Bresl. Edit. adds that the seal-ring was of stamped stone and iron, copper and lead. I have borrowed copiously from its vol. vi. p, et seq.

[106] As this was a well-known pre-Islamitic bard, his appearance here is decidedly anachronistic, probably by intention.

[107] The first Moslem conqueror of Spain whose lieutenant, Tárik, the gallant and unfortunate, named Gibraltar (Jabal al-Tarik).

[108] The colours of the Banú Umayyah (Ommiade) Caliphs were white, of the Banú Abbás (Abbasides) black, and of the Fatimites green. Carrying the royal flag denoted the generalissimo or plenipotentiary.

[109] i.e. Old Cairo, or Fustat: the present Cairo was then a Coptic village founded on an old Egyptian settlement called Lui-Tkeshroma, to which belonged the tanks on the hill and the great well, Bir Yusuf, absurdly attributed to Joseph the Patriarch. Lui is

evidently the origin of Levi and means a high priest (Brugsh ii. 130) and his son's name was Roma.

[110] I cannot but suspect that this is a clerical error for "Al-Samanhúdi," a native of Samanhúd (Wilkinson's "Semenood") in the Delta on the Damietta branch, the old Sebennytus (in Coptic Jem-nuti=Jem the God), a town which has produced many distinguished men in Moslem times. But there is also a Samhúd lying a few miles down stream from Denderah and, as its mounds prove, it is an ancient site.

[111] Egypt had not then been conquered from the Christians.

[112] Arab. "Kízán fukká'a," i.e. thin and slightly porous earthenware jars used for Fukká'a, a fermented drink, made of barley or raisins.

[113] I retain this venerable blunder: the right form is
Samúm, from Samm, the poison-wind.

[114] i.e. for worship and to prepare for futurity.

[115] The camel carries the Badawi's corpse to the cemetery which is often distant: hence to dream of a camel is an omen of death.

[116] Koran xxiv 39. The word "Saráb" (mirage) is found in Isaiah (xxxv. 7) where the passage should be rendered "And the mirage (sharab) shall become a lake" (not, "and the parched ground shall become a pool"). The Hindus prettily call it "Mrigatrishná" = the thirst of the deer.

[117] A name of Allah.

[118] Arab. "Kintár"=a hundredweight (i.e. 100 Ibs.), about 98 3/4 Ibs. avoir. Hence the French quintal and its congeners (Littré).

[119] i.e. "from Shám (Syria) to (the land of) Adnan," ancestor of the Naturalized Arabs that is, to Arabia.

[120] Koran lii. 21. “Every man is given in pledge for that which he shall have wrought.”

[121] There is a constant clerical confusion in the texts between “Arar” (Juniperus Oxycedrus used by the Breeks for the images of their gods) and “Marmar” marble or alabaster, in the Talmud “Marmora” = marble. evidently from {Greek letters} = brilliant, the brilliant stone.

[122] These Ifritical names are chosed for their bizarrerie. “Al-Dáhish” = the Amazed; and “Al-A’amash” = one with weak eyes always watering.

[123] The Arabs have no word for million; so Messer Marco Miglione could not have learned it from them. On the other hand the Hindus have more quadrillions than modern Europe.

[124] This formula, according to Moslems, would begin with the beginning “There is no iláh but Allah and Adam is the Apostle (rasúl = one sent, a messenger, not nabí = prophet) of Allah.” And so on with Noah, Moses, David (not Solomon as a rule) and Jesus, to Mohammed.

[125] This son of Barachia has been noticed before. The text embroiders the Koranic chapter No. xxvii.

[126] The Bresl. Edit. (vi. 371) reads “Samm-hu”=his poison, prob. a clerical error for “Sahmhu”=his shaft. It was a duel with the “Shiháb” or falling stars, the meteors which are popularly supposed, I have said, to be the arrows shot by the angels against devils and evil spirits when they approach too near Heaven in order to overhear divine secrets.

[127] A fancy sea from the Lat. “Carcer” (?).

[128] Andalusian = Spanish, the Vandal-land, a term accepted by the Moslem invader.

[129] This fine description will remind the traveller of the old Haurani towns deserted since the sixth century, which a silly writer miscalled the “Giant Cities of Bashan.” I have never seen anything weirder than a moonlight night in one of these strong places whose masonry is perfect as when first built, the snowy light pouring on the jet-black basalt and the breeze sighing and the jackal wailing in the desert around.

[130] “Zanj,” I have said, is the Arab. form of the Persian “Zang-bar” (=Black-land), our Zanzibar. Those who would know more of the etymology will consult my “Zanzibar,” etc., chaps. i.

[131] Arab. “Tanjah”=Strabo {Greek letters} (derivation uncertain), Tingitania, Tangiers. But why the terminal s ?

[132] Or Amidah, by the Turks called “Kara (black) Amid” from the colour of the stones and the Arabs “Diyar-bakr” (Diarbekir), a name which they also give to the whole province — Mesopotamia.

[133] Mayyáfárikín, an episcopal city in Diyar-bakr: the natives are called Fárikí; hence the abbreviation in the text.

[134] Arab. “Ayát al-Naját,” certain Koranic verses which act as talismans, such as, “And wherefore should we not put our trust in Allah ?” (xiv. 15); “Say thou, Naught shall befall us save what Allah hath decreed for us,’ “ (ix. 51), and sundry others.

[135] These were the “Brides of the Treasure,” alluded to in the story of Hasan of Bassorah and elsewhere.

[136] Arab. “Ishárah,” which may also mean beckoning. Easterns reverse our process: we wave hand or finger towards ourselves; they towards the object; and our fashion represents to them, Go away!

[137] i.e. musing a long time and a longsome.

[138] Arab. “Dihlíz” from the Persian. This is the long dark passage which leads to the inner or main gate of an Eastern city, and which is

built up before a siege. It is usually furnished with Mastabah-benches of wood and masonry, and forms a favourite lounge in hot weather. Hence Lot and Moses sat and stood in the gate, and here man speaks with his enemies.

[139] The names of colours are as loosely used by the Arabs as by the Classics of Europe; for instance, a light grey is called a "blue or a green horse." Much nonsense has been written upon the colours in Homer by men who imagine that the semi-civilised determine tints as we do. They see them but they do not name them, having no occasion for the words. As I have noticed, however, the Arabs have a complete terminology for the varieties of horse-hues. In our day we have witnessed the birth of colours, named by the dozen, because required by women's dress.

[140] For David's miracles of metallurgy see vol. i. 286.

[141] Arab. "Khwárazm," the land of the Chorasmioi, who are mentioned by Herodotus (iii. 93) and a host of classical geographers. They place it in Sogdiana (hod. Sughd) and it corresponds with the Khiva country.

[142] Arab. "Burka'," usually applied to a woman's face-veil and hence to the covering of the Ka'abah, which is the "Bride of Meccah."

[143] Alluding to the trick played upon Bilkís by Solomon who had heard that her legs were hairy like those of an ass: he laid down a pavement of glass over flowing water in which fish were swimming and thus she raised her skirts as she approached him and he saw that the report was true. Hence, as I have said, the depilatory.

[144] I understand the curiously carved windows cut in arabesque-work of marble. (India) or basalt (the Haurán) and provided with small panes of glass set in emeralds where tin would be used by the vulgar.

[145] Arab. "Bulád" from the Pers. "Pulád." Hence the name of the famous Druze family "Jumblat," a corruption of "Ján- pulád"=Life o' Steel.

[146] Pharaoh, so called in Koran (xxxviii. 11) because he tortured men by fastening them to four stakes driven into the ground. Sale translates “the contriver of the stakes” and adds, “Some understand the word figuratively, of the firm establishment of Pharaoh’s kingdom, because the Arabs fix their tents with stakes; but they may possibly intend that prince’s obstinacy and hardness of heart.” I may note that in “Tasawwuf,” or Moslem Gnosticism, Pharaoh represents, like Prometheus and Job, the typical creature who upholds his own dignity and rights in presence and despight of the Creator. Sáhib the Súfí declares that the secret of man’s soul (i.e. its emanation) was first revealed when Pharaoh declared himself god; and Al-Ghazálí sees in his claim the most noble aspiration to the divine, innate in the human spirit. (Dabistan, vol. iii.)

[147] In the Calc. Edit. “Tarmuz, son of the daughter,” etc.
According to the Arabs Tadmur (Palmyra) was built by Queen Tadmurah, daughter of Hassán bin Uzaynah.

[148] It is only by some such drought that I can account for the survival of those marvellous Haurani cities in the great valley S. E. of Damascus.

[149] So Moses described his own death and burial.

[150] A man’s “aurat” (shame) extends from the navel (included) to his knees, a woman’s from the top of the head to the tips of her toes. I have before noticed the Hindostaní application of the word.

[151] Arab. “Jum’ah” (= the assembly) so called because the General Resurrection will take place on that day and it witnessed the creation of Adam. Both these reasons are evidently after- thoughts; as the Jews received a divine order to keep Saturday, and the Christians, at their own sweet will, transferred the weekly rest-day to Sunday, wherefore the Moslem preferred Friday. Sabbatarianism, however, is unknown to Al-Islam and business is interrupted, by Koranic order ([xii. 9-10), only during congregational prayers in the Mosque. The most a Mohammedan does is not to work or travel till after public

service. But the Moslem hardly wants a “day of rest;” whereas a Christian, especially in the desperately dull routine of daily life and toil, without a gleam of light to break the darkness of his civilised and most unhappy existence, disctinctly requires it.

[152] Mankind, which sees itself everywhere and in everything, must create its own analogues in all the elements, air (Sylphs), fire (Jinns), water (Mermen and Mermaids) and earth (Kobolds), These merwomen were of course seals or manatees, as the wild women of Hanno were gorillas.

[153] Here begins the Sindibad-namah, the origin of Dolopathos (thirteenth century by the Trouvčre Harbers); of the “Seven Sages” (John Holland in 1575); the “Seven Wise Masters” and a host of minor romances. The Persian Sindibád-Námah assumed its present shape in A.D. 1375: Professor Falconer printed an abstract of it in the Orient. Journ. (xxxv. and xxxvi. 1841), and Mr. W. A. Clouston reissued the “Book of Sindibad,” with useful notes in 1884. An abstract of the Persian work is found in all edits. of The Nights; but they differ greatly, especially that in the Bresl. Edit. xii. p-377, from which I borrow the introduction. According to Hamzah Isfahání (ch. xli.) the Reguli who succeeded to Alexander the Great and preceded Sapor caused some seventy books to be composed, amongst which were the Liber Maruc, Liber Barsínas, Liber Sindibad, Liber Shimás, etc., etc.

[154] Eusebius De Praep. Evang. iii. 4, quotes Prophesy concerning the Egyptian belief in the Lords of the Ascendant whose names are given {Greek letters}: in these “Almenichiaka” we have the first almanac, as the first newspaper in the Roman “Acta Diurna.”

[155] “Al-Mas’údi,” the “Herodotus of the Arabs,” thus notices Sindibad the Sage (in his Murúj, etc., written about A.D. 934). “During the reign of Kurúsh (Cyrus) lived Al-Sindibad who wrote the Seven Wazirs, etc.” Al-Ya’akúbi had also named him, circ. A.D. 880. For notes on the name Sindibad, see Sindbad the Seaman, Night dxxxvi. I need not enter into the history of the “Seven Sages,” a book

evidently older than The Nights in present form; but refer the reader to Mr. Clouston, of whom more in a future page.

[156] Evidently borrowed from the Christians, although the latter borrowed from writers of the most remote antiquity. Yet the saying is the basis of all morality and in few words contains the highest human wisdom.

[157] It is curious to compare the dry and business-like tone of the Arab style with the rhetorical luxuriance of the Persian: p.10 of Mr. Clouston's "Book of Sindibad."

[158] In the text "Isfídáj," the Pers. Isped (or Saféd) áb, lit. = white water, ceruse used for women's faces suggesting our "Age of Bismuth," Blanc Rosati, Cręme de l'Impératrice, Perline, Opaline, Milk of Beauty, etc., etc.

[159] Commentators compare this incident with the biblical story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife and with the old Egyptian romance and fairy tale of the brothers Anapon and Saton dating from the fourteenth century, the days of Pharaoh Ramses Miamun (who built Pi-tum and Ramses) at whose court Moses or Osarsiph is supposed to have been reared (Cambridge Essays 1858). The incident would often occur, e.g. Phćdra-cum-Hippolytus; Fausta-cum-Crispus and Lucinian; Asoka's wife and Kunála, etc., etc. Such things happen in every-day life, and the situation has recommended itself to the folk lore of all peoples.

[160] Another version of this tale is given in the Bresl. Edit. (vol. viii. p-8: Night 675-6). It is the "Story of the King and the Virtuous Wife" in the Book of Sindibad. In the versions Arabic and Greek (Syntipas) the King forgets his ring; in the Hebrew Mishlé Sandabar, his staff, and his sandals in the old Spanish Libro de los Engannos et los Asayamientos de las Mugeres.

[161] One might fancy that this is Biblical, Bathsheba and Uriah. But such "villanies" must often have occurred in the East, at different times and places, without requiring direct derivation. The learned

Prof. H. H. Wilson was mistaken in supposing that these fictions "originate in the feeling which has always pervaded the East unfavourable to the dignity of women." They belong to a certain stage of civilisation when the sexes are at war with each other; and they characterise chivalrous Europe as well as misogynous Asia; witness Jankins, clerk of Oxenforde; while Ćsop's fable of the Lion and the Man also explains their frequency.

[162] The European form of the tale is "Toujours perdrix," a sentence often quoted but seldom understood. It is the reproach of M. l'Abbé when the Count (proprietor of the pretty Countess) made him eat partridge every day for a month; on which the Abbé says, "Alway partridge is too much of a good thing!" Upon this text the Count speaks. A correspondent mentions that it was told by Horace Walpole concerning the Confessor of a French King who reproved him for conjugal infidelities. The degraded French (for "toujours de la perdrix" or "des perdrix") suggests a foreign origin. Another friend refers me to No. x. of the "Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles" (compiled in A.D. 1432 for the amusement of the Dauphin, afterwards Louis XI.) whose chief personage "un grand seigneur du Royaulme d'Angleterre," is lectured upon fidelity by the lord's mignon, a "jeune et gracieux gentil homme de son hostel." Here the partridge became pastés d'anguille. Possibly Scott refers to it in Redgauntlet (chapt. iv.); "One must be very fond of partridge to accept it when thrown in one's face." Did not Voltaire complain at Potsdam of "toujours perdrix" and make it one of his grievances? A similar story is that of the chaplain who, weary of the same diet, uttered "grace" as follows: —

Rabbits hot, rabbits cold,
Rabbits tender, and rabbits tough,
Rabbits young, and rabbits old
I thank the Lord I've had enough.

And I as cordially thank my kind correspondents.

[163] The great legal authority of the realm.

[164] In all editions the Wazir here tells the Tale of the Merchant's Wife and the Parrot which, following Lane, I have transferred to vol. i. . But not to break the tradition I here introduce the Persian version of the story from the "Book of Sindibad." In addition to the details given in the note to vol. i., 52 {Vol1, FN#90}; I may quote the two talking-birds left to watch over his young wife by Rajah Rasálú (son of Shaliváhana the great Indian monarch circ. A.D. 81), who is to the Punjab what Rustam is to Persia and Antar to Arabia. In the "Seven Wise Masters" the parrot becomes a magpie and Mr. Clouston, in some clever papers on "Popular Tales and Fictions" contributed to the Glasgow Evening Times (1884), compares it with the history, in the Gesta Romanorum, of the Adulteress, the Abigail, and the Three Cocks, two of which crowed during the congress of the lady and her lover. All these evidently belong to the Sindibad cycle.

[165] In the days of the Caliph Al-Mustakfí bi llah (A.H. 333=944) the youth of Baghdad studied swimming and it is said that they could swim holding chafing-dishes upon which were cooking-pots and keep afloat till the meat was dressed. The story is that of "The Washerman and his Son who were drowned in the Nile," of the Book of Sindibad.

[166] Her going to the bath suggested that she was fresh from coition..

[167] Taken from the life of the Egyptian Mameluke Sultan (No. viii, regn. A.H, 825= A.D. 1421) who would not suffer his subjects to prostrate themselves or kiss the ground before him. See D'Herbelot for details.

[168] This nauseous Joe Miller has often been told in the hospitals of London and Paris. It is as old as the Hitopadesa.

[169] Koran iv. 81, "All is from Allah;" but the evil which befals mankind, though ordered by Allah, is yet the consequence of their own wickedness (I add, which wickedness was created by Allah).

[170] The Bresl. Edit. (xii. 266) says "bathing."

[171] This tale is much like that told in the Fifth Night (vol. i. 54). It is the story of the Prince and the Lamia in the Book of Sindibad wherein it is given with Persian rhetoric and diffuseness.

[172] Arab. "Wa'ar"= rocky, hilly, tree-less ground unfit for riding. I have noted that the three Heb. words "Year" (e.g. Kiryath-Yearin=City of forest), "Choresh" (now Hirsh, a scrub), and "Pardes" ({Greek letters} a chase, a hunting-park opposed to {Greek letters}, an orchard) are preserved in Arabic and are intelligible in Palestine. (Unexplored Syria, i. 207.)

[173] The privy and the bath are favourite haunts of the Jinns.

[174] Arab history is full of petty wars caused by trifles. In Egypt the clans Sa'ad and Harám and in Syria the Kays and Yaman (which remain to the present day) were as pugnacious as Highland Caterans. The tale bears some likeness to the accumulative nursery rhymes in "The House that Jack Built," and "The Old Woman and the Crooked Sixpence;" which find their indirect original in an allegorical Talmudic hymn.

[175] This is "The Story of the Old Man who sent his Young Wife to the Market to buy Rice," told with Persian reflections in the "Book of Sindibad."

[176] Koran xii. 28. The words were spoken by Potiphar to Joseph.

[177] Koran iv. 78. A mis-quotation, the words are, "Fight therefore against the friends of Satan, for the craft of Satan shall be weak."

[178] i.e. Koranic versets.

[179] In the Book of Sindibad this is the "Story of the Prince who went out to hunt and the stratagem which the Wazir practised on him."

[180] I have noted that it is a dire affront to an Arab if his first cousin

marry any save himself without his formal leave.

[181] i.e. the flowery, the splendid; an epithet of Fatimah, the daughter of the Apostle “the bright blooming.” Fátimah is an old Arab name of good omen, “the weaner:” in Egypt it becomes Fattúmah (an incrementative= “great weaner”); and so Amínah, Khadíjah and Nafísah on the banks of the Nile are barbarised to Ammúnah, Khaddúgah and Naffúsah.

[182] i.e. his coming misfortune, the phrase being euphemistic.

[183] Arab. “Ráy:” in theology it means “private judgment” and “Ráyí” (act. partic.) is a Rationalist. The Hanafí School is called “Asháb al-Ráy” because it allows more liberty of thought than the other three orthodox.

[184] The angels in Al-Islam ride piebalds.

[185] In the Bresl. Edit. “Zájir” (xii. 286).

[186] This is the “King’s Son and the Merchant’s Wife” of the Hitopadesa (chapt. i.) transferred to all the Prakrit versions of India. It is the Story of the Bath-keeper who conducted his Wife to the Son of the King of Kanuj in the Book of Sindibad.

[187] The pious Caliph Al-Muktadi bi Amri llah (A.H. 467=A.D. 1075) was obliged to forbid men entering the baths of Baghdad without drawers.

[188] This peculiarity is not uncommon amongst the so-called Aryan and Semitic races, while to the African it is all but unknown. Women highly prize a conformation which (as the prostitute described it) is always “either in his belly or in mine.”

[189] Easterns, I have said, are perfectly aware of the fact that women corrupt women much more than men do. The tale is the “Story of the Libertine Husband” in the Book of Sindibad; blended with the “Story of the Go-between and the Bitch” in the Book of Sindibad. It is

related in the “Disciplina Clericalis” of Alphonsus (A.D. 1106); the fabliau of La vieille qui seduisit la jeune fille; the Gesta Romanorum (thirteenth century) and the “Cunning Siddhikari” in the Kathá-Sarit-Ságara.

[190] The Kashmir people, men and women, have a very bad name in Eastern tales, the former for treachery and the latter for unchastity. A Persian distich says:

If folk be scarce as food in dearth ne’er let three lots come near ye:
First Sindi, second Jat, and third a rascally Kashmeeree.

The women have fair skins and handsome features but, like all living in that zone, Persians, Sindis, Afghans, etc., their bosoms fall after the first child and become like udders. This is not the case with Hindú women, Rajpúts, Maráthís, etc.

[191] By these words she appealed to his honour.

[192] These vehicles suggest derivation from European witchery. In the Bresl. Edit. (xii. 304) one of the women rides a “Miknasah” or broom.

[193] i.e. a recluse who avoids society.

[194] “Consecrated ground” is happily unknown to Moslems.

[195] This incident occurs in the “Third Kalandar’s Tale.” See vol. i. 157 {Vol 1, FN#290}; and note to . {Vol 1, FN#264}

[196] The Mac. Edit. has “Nahr”= river.

[197] i.e. marked with the Wasm or tribal sign to show their blood. The subject of Wasm is extensive and highly interesting, for many of these brands date doubtless from prehistoric ages. For instance, some of the great Anazah nation (not tribe) use a circlet, the initial of their name (an Ayn-letter), which thus shows the eye from which it was

formed. I have given some specimens of Wasm in The Land of Midian (i. 320) where, as amongst the “Sinaitic” Badawin, various kinds of crosses are preserved long after the death and burial of Christianity.

[198] i.e. from the heights. The “Sayl” is a dangerous feature in Arabia as in Southern India, where many officers have lost their lives by trying to swim it.

[199] Arab. “‘Ujb” I use arrogance in the Spanish sense of “arrogante,” gay and gallant.

[200] In this rechauffé Paul Pry escapes without losing an eye.

[201] Eastern tale-tellers always harp upon this theme, the cunning precautions taken by mankind and their utter confusion by “Fate and Fortune.” In such matters the West remarks, “Ce que femme veut, Dieu veut.”

[202] As favourite an occupation in Oriental lands as in Southern Europe and the Brazil, where the Quinta or country villa must be built by the road-side to please the mistress.

[203] The ink-case would contain the pens; hence called in India Kalamdán=reed (pen) box. I have advised travellers to prefer the strong Egyptian article of brass to the Persian, which is of wood or papier-mâché, prettily varnished, but not to wear it in the waist-belt, as this is a sign of being a scribe. (Pilgrimage i. 353.)

[204] The vulgar Eastern idea is that women are quite knowing enough without learning to read and write; and at all events they should not be taught anything beyond reading the Koran, or some clearly-written book. The contrast with modern Europe is great; greater still in Anglo-America of our day, and greatest with the new sects which propose “biunes” and “bisexuals” and “women robed with the sun.”

[205] In the Bresl. Edit. the Prince ties a key to a second arrow and shoots it into the pavilion.

[206] The "box-trick" has often been played with success, by Lord Byron amongst a host of others. The readiness with which the Wazir enters into the scheme is characteristic of oriental servility: an honest Moslem should at least put in a remonstrance.

[207] This story appears familiar, but I have not found it easy to trace. In "The Book of Sindibad" () it is apparently represented by a lacuna. In the Squire's Tale of Chaucer Canace's ring enables the wearer to understand bird-language, not merely to pretend as does the slave-boy in the text.

[208] The crow is an ill-omened bird in Al-lslam and in Eastern Christendom. "The crow of cursed life and foul odour," says the Book of Kalilah and Dimna (). The Hindus are its only protectors, and in this matter they follow suit with the Guebres. I may note that the word belongs to the days before "Aryan" and "Semitic" speech had parted; we find it in Heb. Oreb; Arab. Ghurab; Lat. Corvus; Engl. Crow, etc.

[209] Again in the Hibernian sense of being "kilt."

[210] Quoted in Night dlxxxii.; said by Kitfír or Itfír (Potiphar) when his wife (Ráil or Zulaykha) charged Joseph with attempting her chastity and he saw that the youth's garment was whole in front and rent in rear. (Koran, chapt. xii.)

[211] This witty tale, ending somewhat grossly here, has over-wandered the world. First we find it in the Kathá (S. S.) where Upakoshá, the merry wife of Vararuchi, disrobes her suitors, a family priest, a commander of the guard and the prince's tutor, under plea of the bath and stows them away in baskets which suggest Falstaff's "buck-basket." In Miss Stokes' "Indian Fairy Tales" the fair wife of an absent merchant plays a similar notable prank upon the Kotwal, the Wazir, the Kazi and the King; and akin to this is the exploit of Temal Rámákistnan, the Madrasi Tyl Eulenspiegel and Scogin who by means of a lady saves his life from the Rajah and the High Priest. Mr. G. H. Damant (p-360 of the "Indian Antiquary" of 1873) relates

the "Tale of the Touchstone," a legend of Dinahpur, wherein a woman "sells" her four admirers. In the Persian Tales ascribed to the Dervish "Mokles" (Mukhlis) of Isfahan, the lady Aruyá tricks and exposes a Kazi, a doctor and a governor. Boccaccio (viii. 1) has the story of a lady who shut up her gallant in a chest with her husband's sanction; and a similar tale (ix. 1) of Rinuccio and Alexander with the corpse of Scannadeo (Throkh-god). Hence a Lydgate (circ. A.D. 1430) derived the plot of his metrical tale of "The Lady Prioress and her Three Sisters"; which was modified in the Netherlandish version by the introduction of the Long Wapper, a Flemish Robin Goodfellow. Followed in English the metrical tale of "The Wright's Chaste Wife," by Adam of Cobham (edited by Mr. Furnivall from a MS. of circ. A.D. 1460) where the victims are a lord, a steward and a proctor. See also "The Master-Maid" in Dr. (now Sir George) Dasent's "Popular Tales from the Norse," Mr. Clouston, who gives these details more fully, mentions a similar Scottish story concerning a lascivious monk and the chaste wife of a miller.

[212]When Easterns sit down to a drinking bout, which means to get drunk as speedily and pleasantly as possible, they put off dresses of dull colours and robe themselves in clothes supplied by the host, of the brightest he may have, especially yellow, green and red of different shades. So the lady's proceeding was not likely to breed suspicion: al- though her tastes were somewhat fantastic and like Miss Julia's — peculiar.

[213] Arab. "Najásah," meaning anything unclean which requires ablution before prayer. Unfortunately mucus is not of the number, so the common Moslem is very offensive in the matter of nose.

[214] Here the word "la'an" is used which most Moslems express by some euphemism. The vulgar Egyptian says "Na'al" (Sapré and Sapristi for Sacré and Sacristie), the Hindostani express it "I send him the three letters" — lám, ayn and nún.

[215] The Mac. Edit. is here very concise; better the Bresi. Edit. (xii. 326). Here we have the Eastern form of the Three Wishes which

dates from the earliest ages and which amongst us has been degraded to a matter of "black pudding." It is the grossest and most brutal satire on the sex, suggesting that a woman would prefer an additional inch of penis to anything this world or the next can offer her. In the Book of Sindibad it is the story of the Peri and Religious Man; his learning the Great Name; and his consulting with his wife. See also La Fontaine's "Trois Souhaits," Prior's "Ladle," and "Les quatre Souhaits de Saint-Martin."

[216] Arab. "Laylat al-Kadr"= Night of Power or of Divine Decrees. It is "better than a thousand months" (Koran xcvii. 3), but unhappily the exact time is not known although all agree that it is one of the last ten in Ramazan. The latter when named by Kiláb ibn Murrah, ancestor of Mohammed, about two centuries before Al-lslam, corresponded with July-August and took its name from "Ramzá" or intense heat. But the Prophet, in the tenth Hijrah year, most unwisely forbade "Nasy"= triennial intercalation (Koran ix. 36) and thus the lunar month went round all the seasons. On the Night of Power the Koran was sent down from the Preserved Tablet by Allah's throne, to the first or lunar Heaven whence Gabriel brought it for opportunest revelation to the Apostle (Koran xcvii.). Also during this night all Divine Decrees for the ensuing year are taken from the Tablet and are given to the angels for execution whilst, the gates of Heaven being open, prayer (as in the text) is sure of success. This mass of absurdity has engendered a host of superstitions everywhere varying. Lane (Mod. Egypt, chapt. xxv.) describes how some of the Faithful keep tasting a cup of salt water which should become sweet in the Night of Nights. In (Moslem) India not only the sea becomes sweet, but all the vegetable creation bows down before Allah. The exact time is known only to Prophets; but the pious sit through the Night of Ramazan 27th (our 26th) praying and burning incense-pastilles. In Stambul this is officially held to be the Night of Power. So in medićval Europe on Christmas Eve the cattle worshipped God in their stalls and I have met peasants in France and Italy who firmly believed that brute beasts on that night not only speak but predict the events of the coming year.

[217] Hence the misfortune befel her; the pious especially avoid temporal palaces.

[218] This is our tale of "The Maid and the Magpie;" the Mac. Edit. does not specify the "Tayr" (any bird) but the Bresl. Edit. has Ak'ak, a pie. The true Magpie (C. Pica) called Buzarái (?) and Zaghzaghán Abú Mássah (=the Sweeper, from its tail) is found on the Libanus and Anti-Libanus (Unexplored Syria ii. 77-143), but I never saw it in other parts of Syria or in Arabia. It is completely ignored by the Reverend Mr. Tristram in his painfully superficial book "The Natural History of the Bible," published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (or rather Ignorance), London, 1873.

[219] This is "The Story of the Two Partridges," told at great length in the Book of Sindibad. See De Sacy's text in the Kalilah wa Damnah, quoted in the "Book of Kalilah and Damnah" ().

[220] This extremely wilful young person had rendered rape excusable. The same treat- ment is much called for by certain heroines of modern fiction — let me mention Princess Napraxine.

[221] The Story of the Hidden Robe, in the Book of Sindibad; where it is told with all manner of Persian embellishments.

[222] Now turned into Government offices for local administration; a "Tribunal of Commerce," etc.

[223] Arab. "Bawwáb," a personage as important as the old French concierge and a man of trust who has charge of the keys and with letting vacant rooms. In Egypt the Berber from the Upper Nile is the favourite suisse; being held more honest or rather less rascally than the usual Egyptian. These Berbers, however, are true barbarians, overfond of Búzah (the beer of Osiris) and not unfrequently dangerous. They are supposed by Moslems to descend from the old Syrians expelled by Joshua. For the favourite chaff against them, eating the dog (not the puppy-pie), see Pilgrimage i. 93. They are the "paddies', of Egypt to whom all kinds of bulls and blunders are attributed.

[224] Arab. "Juma'ah," which means either Friday or a week. In pre-Moslem times it was called Al-Arúbah (the other week-days being Shiyár or Saturday, Bawal, Bahan Jabar, Dabar and Fámunís or Thursday). Juma'ah, literally = "Meeting" or Congregation (-day), was made to represent the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Sunday because on that day Allah ended the work of creation; it was also the date of Mohammed's entering Al-Medinah. According to Al-Bayzáwí, it was called Assembly day because Ka'ab ibn Lowa, one of the Prophet's ancestors, used to gather the people before him on Fridays. Moslems are not forbidden to do secular work after the congregational prayers at the hour when they must "hasten to the commemoration of Allah and leave merchandising." (Koran, chaps. Ixii. 9.)

[225] This is done only by the very pious: if they see a bit of bread they kiss it, place it upon their heads and deposit it upon a wall or some place where it will not be trodden on. She also removed the stones lest haply they prove stumbling-blocks to some Moslem foot.

[226] Arab. "Ashjár," which may mean either the door-posts or the wooden bolts. Lane (iii. 174) translates it "among the trees" in a room!

[227] Koran (ix. 51), when Mohammed reproaches the unbelievers for not accompanying him to victory or martyrdom.

[228] Arab. "Kiná," a true veil, not the "Burká " or "nose bag" with the peep-holes. It is opposed to the "Tarkah" or "head veil." Europeans inveigh against the veil which represents the loup of Louis Quatorze's day: it is on the contrary the most coquettish of contrivances, hiding coarse skins, fleshy noses, wide mouths and vanishing chins, and showing only lustrous and liquid black eyes. Moreover a pretty woman, when she wishes, will always let you see something under the veil. (Pilgrimage i. 337.)

[229] A yellow-flowered artemisia or absinthe whose wood burns like holm-oak. (Unexplored Syria ii. 43.) See vol. ii. 24 for further

details.

[230] The Farz or obligatory prayers, I have noted, must be recited (if necessary) in the most impure place; not so the other orisons. Hence the use of the "Sajjádah" or prayer-rug an article too well known to require description.

[231] Anglicč a stomach-ache, a colic.

[232] Arab. "Al-Háfizah" which has two meanings. Properly it signifies the third order of Traditionists out of a total of five or those who know 300,000 traditions and their ascriptions. Popularly "one who can recite the Koran by rote." There are six great Traditionists whose words are held to be prime authorities; (1) Al-Bokhári, (2) Muslim, and these are entitled Al-Sahíhayn, The (two true) authorities. After them (3) Al-Tirmidi; and (4) Abu Daúd: these four being the authors of the "Four Sunan," the others are (5) Al- Nasái and (6) Ibn Májah (see Jarrett's Al-Siyuti p, 6; and, for modern Arab studies, Pilgrimage i. 154 et seq.).

[233] Lane (iii. 176) marries the amorous couple, thus making the story highly proper and robbing it of all its point.

[234] Arab. "Sabbahat," i.e. Sabbah-ak' Allah bi'l khayr =
Allah give thee good morning: still the popular phrase.

[235] Arab. "Ta'rísak," with the implied hint of her being a "Mu'arrisah" or she pander. The Bresl. Edit. (xii. 356) bluntly says "Kivádatak" thy pimping.

[236] Arab. "Rafw": the "Rafu-gar" or fine-drawer in India, who does this artistic style of darning, is famed for skill.

[237] The question sounds strange to Europeans, but in the Moslem East a man knows nothing, except by hearsay, of the women who visit his wife.

[238] Arab. "Ahl al-bayt," so as not rudely to say "wife."

[239] This is a mere abstract of the tale told in the Introduction (vol. i. 10-12). Here however, the rings are about eighty; there the number varies from ninety to five hundred and seventy.

[240] The father suspected the son of intriguing with one of his own women.

[241] Arab. and Heb. "Laban" (opp. to "laban-halíb," or simply "halíb" = fresh milk), milk artificially soured, the Dahin of India, the Kisainá of the Slavs and our Corstophine cream. But in The Nights, contrary to modern popular usage, "Laban" is also applied to Fresh milk. The soured form is universally in the East eaten with rice and enters into the Salátah or cucumber-salad. I have noted elsewhere that all the Galactophagi, the nomades who live on milk, use it in the soured never in the fresh form. The Badawi have curious prejudices about it: it is a disgrace to sell it (though not to exchange it), and "Labbán," or "milk-vendor," is an insult. The Bráhni and Beloch pomades have the same pundonor possibly learnt from the Arabs (Pilgrimage i. 363). For Igt (Akit), Mahir, Saribah, Jamídah and other lacteal preparations, see ibid. i. 362.

[242] I need hardly say that the poison would have been utterly harmless, unless there had been an abrasion of the skin. The slave-girl is blamed for carrying the jar uncovered because thus it would attract the evil eye. In the Book of Sindibad the tale appears as the Story of the Poisoned Guest; and the bird is a stork.

[243] The Prince expresses the pure and still popular Moslem feeling; and yet the learned and experienced Mr Redhouse would confuse this absolute Predestination with Providence. A friend tells me that the idea of absolute Fate in The Nights makes her feel as if the world were a jail.

[244] In the Book of Sindibad this is the Story of the Sandal-wood Merchant and the Advice of the Blind Old Man. Mr. Clouston () quotes a Talmudic joke which is akin to the Shaykh's advice and a reply of Tyl Eulenspiegel, the arch-rogue,

which has also a family resemblance.

[245] Arab. “Sá’a,” a measure of corn, etc., to be given in alms. The Kamus makes it = four mudds (each being 1/3 lbs.); the people understand by it four times the measure of a man’s two open hands.

[246] i.e. till thou restore my eye to me. This style of prothesis without apodosis is very common in Arabic and should be preserved in translation, as it adds a naďveté to the style. We find it in Genesis iii. 2, “And now lest he put forth his hand,” etc.

[247] They were playing at Muráhanah, like children amongst us. It is also called “Hukm wa Rizá” = order and consent. The penalty is usually something ridiculous, but here it was villainous.

[248] Every Moslem capital has a “Shaykh of the thieves” who holds a regular levées and who will return stolen articles for consideration; and this has lasted since the days of Diodorus Siculus (Pilgrimage i. 91).

[249] This was not the condition; but I have left the text as it is characteristic of the writer’s inconsequence.

[250] The idea would readily occur in Egypt where the pulex is still a plague although the Sultan is said to hold his court at Tiberias. “Male and female” says the rouge, otherwise it would be easy to fill a bushel with fleas. The insect was unknown to older India according to some and was introduced by strangers. This immigration is quite possible. In 1863 the jigger (P. penetrans) was not found in Western Africa; when I returned there in 1882 it had passed over from the Brazil and had become naturalised on the equatorial African seaboard. the Arabs call shrimps and prawns “sea-fleas” (bargúth al-bahr) showing an inland race. (See Pilgrimage i. 322.)

[251] Submission to the Sultan and the tidings of his well-being should content every Eastern subject. But, as Oriental history shows, the form of government is a Despotism tempered by assassination. And under no rule is man socially freer and his condition contrasts

strangely with the grinding social tyranny which characterises every mode of democracy or constitutionalism, i.e. political equality.

[252] Here the text has “Markúb” = a shoe; elsewhere “Na’al” = a sandal, especially with wooden sole. In classical Arabia, however, “Na’al” may be a shoe, a horse-shoe (iron-plate, not rim like ours). The Bresl. Edit. has “Watá,” any foot-gear.

[253] Water-melons (batáyikh) says the Mac. Edit. a misprint for Aruz or rice. Water-melons are served up raw cut into square mouthfuls, to be eaten with rice and meat. They serve excellently well to keep the palate clean and cool.

[254] The text recounts the whole story over again - more than European patience can bear.

[255] The usual formula when telling an improbable tale. But here it is hardly called for: the same story is told (on weak authority) of the Alewife, the Three Graziers and Attorney-General Nay (temp. James II. 1577-1634) when five years old (Journ. Asiat. Soc. N.S. xxx. 280). The same feat had been credited to Thomas Egerton, Lord Chancellor in A.D. 1540-1617 (Chalmers, Biographical Dictionary xxiii. 267-68). But the story had already found its way into the popular jest-books such as “Tales and Quick Answers, very Mery and Pleasant to Rede” (1530); “Jacke of Dover’s Quest of Inquirie for the Foole of all Fooles” (1604) under the title “The Foole of Westchester”, and in “Witty and Entertaining Exploits of George Buchanan, commonly called the King’s Fool.” The banker-bard Rogers (in Italy) was told a similar story concerning a widow of the Lambertini house (xivth centry). Thomas Wright (Introducition to the Seven Sages) says he had met the tale in Latin(xiiith-xivth centuries) and a variant in the “Nouveaux Contes ŕ rire (Amsterdam 1737), under the title “Jugement Subtil du Duc d’Ossone contre Deux Marchands.” Its origin is evidently the old Sindibád-namah translated from Syriac into Greek (“Syntipas,” xith century); into Hebrew (Mishlé Sandabar, xiith century) and from the Arabian version into old Castilian, “Libro de los Engannos et los

Asayamientos de las Mugeres" (A.D. 1255), whereof a translation is appended to Professor Comparetti's Socitey. The Persion metrical form (an elaboration of one much older) dates from 1375; and gave rise to a host of imitations such as the Turkish Tales of the Forty Wazirs and the Canarese "Kathá Manjari," where four persons contend about a purse. See also Gladwin's "Persian Moonshee," No. vi. of "Pleasing Stories;" and Mr. Clouston's paper, "The Lost Purse," in the Glasgow Evening Times. All are the Eastern form of Gavarni's "Enfants Terribles," showing the portentous precocity for which some children (infant phenomena, calculating boys, etc. etc.) have been famous.

[256] From the Bresl. Edit. xii. 381. The Sa'lab or Abu Hosayn (Father of the Fortlet) is the fox, in Marocco Akkáb: Talib Yusuf and Wa'wi are the jackal. Arabas have not preserved "Jakal" from the Heb. Shu'al and Persian Shaghal and Persian Shaghál (not Shagul) as the Rev. Mr. Tristram misinforms his readers. (Nat. Hist.)

[257] The name is old and classical Arabic: in Antar the young Amazon Jaydá was called Judar in public (Story of Jaydá and Khálid). It is also, as will be seen, the name of a quarter in Cairo, and men are often called after such places, e.g. Al-Jubní from the Súk al Jubn in Damascus. The story is exceedingly Egyptian and the style abounds in Cairene vulgarisms, especially in the Bresl. Edit. ix. 311.

[258] Had the merchant left his property to be divided after his death and not made a will he widow would have had only one-eighth instead of a fourth.

[259] Lit. "from tyrant to tyrant," i.e. from official to official, Al-Zalamah, the "tyranny" of popular parlance.

[260] The coin is omitted in the text but it is evidently the "Nusf" or half-dirham. Lane (iii.235), noting that the dinar is worth 170 "nusfs" in this tale, thinks that it was written (or copied?) after the Osmanh Conquest of Egypt. Unfortunately he cannot tell the precise period when the value of the small change fell so low.

[261] Arab "Yaum mubárak!" still a popular exclamation.

[262] i.e. of the door of daily bread.

[263] Arab. "Sírah," a small fish differently described (De Sacy, "Relation de l'Egypte par Abd allatif," p-288: Lane, Nights iii. 234. It is not found in Sonnini's list.

[264] A tank or lakelet in the southern parts of Cairo, long ago filled up; Von Hammer believes it inherited the name of the old Charon's Lake of Memphis, over which corpses were ferried.

[265] Thus making the agreement a kind of religious covenant, as Catholics would recite a Pater or an Ave Maria.

[266] Arab. "Yá miskím"=O poor devil; mesquin, meschino, words evidently derived from the East.

[267] Plur. of Maghribí a Western man, a Moor. I have already derived the word through the Lat. "Maurus" from Maghribiyún. Europeans being unable to pronounce the Ghayn (or gh like the modern Cairenes) would turn it into "Ma'ariyún." They are mostly of the Maliki school (for which see Sale) and are famous as magicians and treasure-finders. Amongst the suite of the late Amir Abd al-Kadir, who lived many years and died in Damascus, I found several men profoundly versed in Eastern spiritualism and occultism.

[268] The names are respectively, Slave of the Salvation, of the One (God), of the Eternal; of the Compassionate; and of the Loving.

[269] i.e. "the most profound"; the root is that of "Bátiní," a gnostic, a reprobate.

[270] i.e. the Tall One.

[271] The loud pealing or (ear-) breaking Thunder.

[272] Arab. "Fás and Miknás" which the writer evidently regards as one

city. “Fás” means a hatchet, from the tradition of one having been found, says Ibn Sa’íd, when digging the base under the founder Idrís bin Idrís (A.D. 808). His sword was placed on the pinnacle of the minaret built by the Imám Abu Ahmad bin Abi Bakr enclosed in a golden étui studded with pearls and precious stones. From the local pronunciation “Fes” is derived the red cap of the nearer Moslem East (see Ibn Batutah).

[273] Arab. “Al-Khurj,” whence the Span. Las Alforjas.

[274] Arab. “Kebáb,” mutton or lamb cut into small squares and grilled upon skewers: it is the roast meat of the nearer East where, as in the West, men have not learned to cook meat so as to preserve all its flavour. This is found in the “Asa’o” of the Argentine Gaucho who broils the flesh while still quivering and before the fibre has time to set. Hence it is perfectly tender, if the animal be young, and has a “meaty” taste half lost by keeping

[275] Equivalent to our puritanical “Mercy.”

[276] Arab. “Bukjah,” from the Persian Bukcheh: a favourite way of keeping fine clothes in the East is to lay them folded in a piece of rough long-cloth with pepper and spices to drive away moths.

[277] This is always specified, for respectable men go out of town on horse-back, never on “foot-back,” as our friends the Boers say. I have seen a Syrian put to sore shame when compelled by politeness to walk with me, and every acquaintance he met addressed him “Anta Zalamah!” What! afoot?

[278] This tale, including the Enchanted Sword which slays whole armies, was adopted in Europe as we see in Straparola (iv. 3), and the “Water of Life” which the Grimms found in Hesse, etc., “Gammer Grethel’s German Popular Stories,” Edgar Taylor, Bells, 1878; and now published in fuller form as “Grimm’s Household Tales,” by Mrs. Hunt, with Introduction by A. Lang, 2 vols. 8vo, 1884. It is curious that so biting and carping a critic, who will condescend to notice a misprint in another’s book, should lay himself open to

general animadversion by such a rambling farrago of half-digested knowledge as that which composes Mr. Andrew Lang's Introduction.

[279] These retorts of Judar are exactly what a sharp Egyptian Fellah would say on such occasions.

[280] Arab. "Salámát," plur. of Salam, a favourite Egyptian welcome.

[281] This sentence expresses a Moslem idea which greatly puzzles strangers. Arabic has no equivalent of our "Thank you" (Kassara 'llah Khayr-ak being a mere blessing Allah increase thy weal!), nor can Al-lslam express gratitude save by a periphrase. The Moslem acknowledges a favour by blessing the donor and by wishing him increase of prosperity. "May thy shadow never be less! " means, Mayest thou always extend to me thy shelter and protection. I have noticed this before but it merits repetition. Strangers, and especially Englishmen, are very positive and very much mistaken upon a point, which all who have to do with Egyptians and Arabs ought thoroughly to understand. Old dwellers in the East know that the theory of ingratitude in no way interferes with the sense of gratitude innate in man (and beast) and that the "lively sense of favours to come," is as quick in Orient land as in Europe.

[282] Outside this noble gate, the Bab al-Nay, there is a great cemetery wherein, by the by, lies Burckhardt, my predecessor as a Hájj to Meccah and Al-Medinah. Hence many beggars are always found squatting in its neighbourhood.

[283] Friends sometimes walk alongside the rider holding the stirrup in sign of affection and respect, especially to the returning pilgrim.

[284] Equivalent to our Alas! It is woman's word never used by men; and foreigners must be most careful of this distinction under pain of incurring something worse than ridicule. I remember an officer in the Bombay Army who, having learned Hindostani from women, always spoke of himself in the feminine and hugely scandalised the Sepoys.

[285] i.e. a neighbour. The "quarters" of a town in the East are often on

the worst of terms. See Pilgrimage.

[286] In the patriarchal stage of society the mother waits upon her adult sons. Even in Dalmatia I found, in many old-fashioned houses, the ladies of the family waiting upon the guests. Very pleasant, but somewhat startling at first.

[287] Here the apodosis would be “We can all sup together.”

[288] Arab. “Záwiyah” (=oratory), which is to a Masjid what a chapel is to a church.

[289] Arab. “Kasr,” prop. a palace: so the Tuscan peasant speaks of his “palazzo.”

[290] This sale of a free-born Moslem was mere felony. But many centuries later Englishmen used to be sold and sent to the plantations in America.

[291] Arab. “Kawwás,” lit. an archer, suggesting les archers de la Sainte Hermandade. In former days it denoted a sergeant, an apparitor, an officer who executed magisterial orders. In modern Egypt he became a policeman (Pilgrimage i. 29). As “Cavass” he appears in gorgeous uniform and sword, an orderly attached to public offices and Consulates.

[292] A purely imaginary King.

[293] The Bresl. Edit. (ix. 370) here and elsewhere uses the word “Nútiyá”=Nauta, for the common Bahríyah or Malláh.

[294] Arab. “Tawaf,” the name given to the sets (Ashwat) of seven circuits with the left shoulder presented to the Holy House, that is walking “widdershins” or “against the sun” (“with the sun” being like the movement of a watch). For the requisites of this rite see Pilgrimage iii. 234.

[295] Arab. “Akh”; brother has a wide signification amongst

Moslems and may be used to and of any of the Saving Faith.

[296] Said by the master when dismissing a servant and meaning, “I have not failed in my duty to thee!” The answer is, “Allah acquit thee thereof!’

[297] A Moslem prison is like those of Europe a century ago; to think of it gives gooseflesh. Easterns laugh at our idea of penitentiary and the Arabs of Bombay call it “Al-Bistán” (the Garden) because the court contains a few trees and shrubs. And with them a garden always suggests an idea of Paradise. There are indeed only two efficacious forms of punishment all the world over, corporal for the poor and fines for the rich, the latter being the severer form.

[298] i.e. he shall answer for this.

[299] A pun upon “Khalíyah” (bee hive) and “Khaliyah” (empty). Khalíyah is properly a hive of bees with a honey-comb in the hollow of a tree-trunk, opposed to Kawwárah, hive made of clay or earth (Al-Hariri; Ass. of Tiflis). There are many other terms, for Arabs are curious about honey. Pilgrimage iii. 110.

[300] Lane (iii. 237) supposes by this title that the author referred his tale to the days of the Caliphate. “Commander of the Faithful” was, I have said, the style adopted by Omar in order to avoid the clumsiness of “Caliph” (successor) of the Caliph (Abu Bakr) of the Apostle of Allah.

[301] eastern thieves count four modes of housebreaking, (1)picking out burnt bricks; (2) cutting through unbaked bricks; (3) wetting a mud wall and (4) boring through a wooden wall (Vikram and the Vampire).

[302] Arab. “Zabbat,” lit. a lizard (fem.) also a wooden lock, the only one used throughout Egypt. An illustration of its curious mechanism is given in Lane (M. E. Introduction)

[303] Arab. “Dabbús.” The Eastern mace is well known to English

collectors, it is always of metal, and mostly of steel, with a short handle like our facetiously called "life-preterver " The head is in various forms, the simplest a ball, smooth and round, or broken into sundry high and angular ridges like a melon, and in select weapons shaped like the head of some animal. bull, etc. See Night dcxlvi.

[304] The red habit is a sign of wrath and vengeance and the Persian Kings like Fath Al Shah, used to wear it when about to order some horrid punishment, such as the "Shakk"; in this a man was hung up by his heels and cut in two from the fork downwards to the neck, when a turn of the chopper left that untouched. White robes denoted peace and mercy as well as joy. The "white" hand and "black" hand have been explained. A "white death" is quiet and natural, with forgiveness of sins. A "black death" is violent and dreadful, as by strangulation; a "green death" is robing in rags and patches like a dervish, and a "red death" is by war or bloodshed (A. P. ii. 670). Among the mystics it is the resistance of man to his passions.

[305] This in the East is the way "pour se faire valoir"; whilst Europeans would hold it a mere "bit of impudence." aping dignity.

[306] The Chief Mufti or Doctor of the Law, an appointment first made by the Osmanli Mohammed II., when he captured Constantinople in A.D. 1453. Before that time the functions were discharged by the Kázi al-Kuzat (Kazi-in-Chief), the Chancellor.

[307] So called because here lived the makers of crossbows (Arab. Bunduk now meaning a fire piece, musket, etc.). It is the modern district about the well-known Khan al-Hamzawi.

[308] Pronounced "Goodareeyyah," and so called after one of the troops of the Fatimite Caliphs. The name "Yamániyah" is probably due to the story-teller's inventiveness.

[309] I have noted that as a rule in The Nights poetical justice is administered with much rigour and exactitude. Here, however, the tale-teller allows the good brother to be slain by the two wicked brothers as he permitted the adulterous queens to escape the sword of

Kamar al-Zaman. Dr. Steingass brings to my notice that I have failed to do justice to the story of Sharrkán (vol. ii.,), where I note that the interest is injured by the gratuitous incest But this has a deeper meaning and a grander artistic effect. Sharrkán begins with most unbrotherly feelings towards his father's children by a second wife. But Allah's decree forces him to love his half-sister despite himself, and awe and repentance convert the savage, who joys at the news of his brother's reported death, to a loyal and devoted subject of the same brother. But Judar with all his goodness proved himself an arrant softy and was no match for two atrocious villains. And there may be overmuch of forgiveness as of every other good thing.

[310] In such case the "'iddah" would be four months and ten days.

[311] Not quite true. Weil's German version, from a MS. in the Ducal Library of Gotha gives the "Story of Judar of Cairo and Mahmud of Tunis" in a very different form. It has been pleasantly "translated (from the German) and edited" by Mr. W. F. Kirby, of the British Museum, under the title of "The New Arabian Nights" (London: W. Swan Sonnenschein & Co.), and the author kindly sent me a copy. "New Arabian Nights" seems now to have become a fashionable title applied without any signification: such at least is the pleasant collection of Nineteenth Century Novelettes, published under that designation by Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson, Chatto and Windus, Piccadilly, 1884.

[312] Von Hammer holds this story to be a satire on Arab superstition and the compulsory propagation, the compelle intrare, of Al-Islam. Lane (iii. 235) omits it altogether for reasons of his own. I differ with great diffidence from the learned Baron whose Oriental reading was extensive; but the tale does not seem to justify his explanations. It appears to me simply one of the wilder romances, full of purposeful anachronisms (e.g. dated between Abraham and Moses, yet quoting the Koran) and written by someone familiar with the history of Oman. The style too is peculiar, in many places so abrupt that much manipulation is required to make it presentable: it suits, however, the rollicking, violent brigand-like life which it depicts. There is only

one incident about the end which justifies Von Hammer's suspicion.

[313] The Persian hero of romance who converses with the Simurgh or Griffin.

[314] The word is as much used in Egypt as wunderbar in Germany. As an exclamation is equivalent to "mighty fine!"

[315] In modern days used in a bad sense, as a freethinker, etc. So Dalilah the Wily is noted to be a philosopheress.

[316] The game is much mixed up after Arab fashion. The "Tufat" is the Siyáhgosh= Black-ears, of India (Felis caracal), the Persian lynx, which gives very good sport with Dachshunds. Lynxes still abound in the thickets near Cairo

[317] The "Sons of Kahtán," especially the Ya'arubah tribe, made much history in Oman. Ya'arub (the eponymus) is written Ya'arab and Ya'arib; but Ya'arub (from Ya'arubu Aorist of 'Aruba) is best, because according to all authorities he was the first to cultivate primitive Arabian speech and Arabic poetry. (Caussin de Perceval's Hist. des Arabes i.50, etc.)

[318] He who shooteth an arrow by night. See the death of Antar shot down in the dark by the archer Jazár, son of Jábír, who had been blinded by a red hot sabre passed before his eyes. I may note that it is a mere fiction of Al-Asma'i, as the real 'Antar (or 'Antarah) lived to a good old age, and probably died the "straw death."

[319] See vol. ii., , for a reminiscence of masterful King Kulayb and his Himá or domain. Here the phrase would mean, "None could approach them when they were wroth; none were safe from their rage."

[320] The sons of Nabhán (whom Mr. Badger calls Nebhán) supplied the old Maliks or Kings of Oman. (History of the Imams and Sayyids of Oman, etc., London, Hakluyt Soc. 1871.)

[321] This is a sore insult in Arabia, where they have not dreamt of a "Jawab-club," like that of Calcutta in the old days, to which only men who had been half a dozen times "jawab'd" (= refused in Anglo-Indian jargon) could belong. "I am not a stallion to be struck on the nose," say the Arabs.

[322] Again "inverted speech": it is as if we said, "Now, you're a damned fine fellow, so," etc. "Allah curse thee! Thou hast guarded thy women alive and dead;" said the man of Sulaym in admiration after thrusting his spear into the eye of dead Rabi'ah.

[323] The Badawi use javelins or throw-spears of many kinds, especially the prettily worked Mizrák (Pilgrimage i. 349); spears for footmen (Shalfah, a bamboo or palm-stick with a head about a hand broad), and the knightly lance, a male bamboo some 12 feet long with iron heel and a long tapering point often of open work or damascened steel, under which are tufts of black ostrich feathers, one or two. I never saw a crescent-shaped head as the text suggests. It is a "Pundonor" not to sell these weapons: you say, "Give me that article and I will satisfy thee!" After which the Sons of the Sand will haggle over each copper as if you were cheapening a sheep. (Ibid. iii. 73.)

[324] The shame was that Gharib had seen the girl and had fallen in love with her beauty instead of applying for her hand in recognised form. These punctilios of the Desert are peculiarly nice and tetchy; nor do strangers readily realise them.

[325] The Arabs derive these Noachidć from Imlik, great- grandson of Shem, who after the confusion of tongues settled at Sana'a, then moved North to Meccah and built the fifth Ka'abah. The dynastic name was Arkam, M. C. de Perceval's "Arcam," which he would identify with Rekem (Numbers xxxi. 8). The last Arkam fell before an army sent by Moses to purge the Holy Land (Al- Hijaz) of idolatry. Commentators on the Koran (chaps. vii.) call the Pharaoh of Moses Al-Walid and derive him from the Amalekites: we have lately ascertained that this Mene-Ptah was of the Shepherd-Kings and thus, according to the older Moslems, the Hyksos were of the seed of

Imlik. (Pilgrimage ii. 116, and iii. 190.) In Syria they fought with Joshua son of Nun. The tribe or rather nationality was famous and powerful: we know little about it and I may safely predict that when the Amalekite country shall have been well explored, it will produce monuments second in importance only to the Hittites. “A nomadic tribe which occupied the Peninsula of Sinai” (Smith’s Dict. of the Bible) is peculiarly superficial, even for that most superficial of books.

[326] The Amalekites were giants and lived 500 years.
(Pilgrimage, loc. cit.)

[327] His men being ninety against five hundred.

[328] Arab. “Kaum” (pron. Gúm) here=a razzia, afterwards=a tribe. Relations between Badawi tribes are of three kinds; (1) Asháb, allies offensive and defensive, friends who intermarry; (2) Kímán (plur. of Kaum) when the blood-feud exists, and (3) Akhwan= brothers. The last is a complicated affair, “Akháwat” or brotherhood, denotes the tie between patron and client (a noble and an ignoble tribe) or between the stranger and the tribe which claims an immemorial and unalienable right to its own lands. Hence a small fee (Al-Rifkah) must be paid and the traveller and his beast become “dakhíl,” or entitled to brother-help. The guardian is known in the West as Rafík; Rabí’a in Eastern Arabia; Ghafír in “Sinai ;” amongst the Somal, Abbán and the Gallas Mogásá. Further details are given in Pilgrimage iii. 85-87.

[329] Arab. “Mál,” here=Badawi money, flocks and herds, our “fee” from feoh, vieh, cattle; as pecunia from pecus, etc., etc.

[330] The litholatry of the old Arabs is undisputed: Manát the goddess-idol was a large rude stone and when the Meccans sent out colonies these carried with them stones of the Holy Land to be set up and worshipped like the Ka’abah. I have suggested (Pilgrimage iii. 159) that the famous Black Stone of Meccah, which appears to me a large aerolite, is a remnant of this worship and that the tomb of Eve near

Jeddah was the old “Sakhrah tawílah” or Long Stone (ibid. iii. 388). Jeddah is now translated the grandmother, alluding to Eve, a myth of late growth: it is properly Juddah=a plain lacking water.

[331] The First Adites, I have said, did not all perish: a few believers retired with the prophet Hud (Heber ?) to Hazramaut. The Second Adites, who had Márib of the Dam for capital and Lukman for king, were dispersed by the Flood of Al-Yaman. Their dynasty lasted a thousand years, the exodus taking place according to De Sacy in A.D. 150-170 or shortly after A.D. 100 (C. de Perceval), and was overthrown by Ya’arub bin Kahtán, the first Arabist; see Night dcxxv.

[332] This title has been noticed: it suggests the “Saint Abraham” of our medaeval travellers. Every great prophet has his agnomen: Adam the Pure (or Elect) of Allah, Noah the Nájiy (or saved) of Allah; Moses (Kalím) the Speaker with Allah; Jesus the Rúh (Spirit breath) or Kalám (the word) of Allah. For Mohammed’s see Al-Busiri’s Mantle-poem vv. 31-58.

[333] Koran (chaps. iii. 17), “Verily the true religion in the sight of Allah is Islam” i.e. resigning or devoting myself to the Lord, with a suspicion of “Salvation” conveyed by the root Salima, he was safe.

[334] Arab. “Sá’ikah,” which is supposed to be a stone. The allusion is to Antar’s sword, “Dhámi,” made of a stone, black, brilliant and hard as a rock (an aerolite), which had struck a camel on the right side and had come out by the left. The blacksmith made it into a blade three feet long by two spans broad, a kind of falchion or chopper, cased it with gold and called it Dhámi (the “Trenchant”) from its sharpness. But he said to the owner: —

The sword is trenchant, O son of the Ghalib clan,
Trenchant in sooth, but where is the sworder-man?

Whereupon the owner struck off the maker’s head, a most satisfactory answer to all but one.

[335] Arab. "Kutá'ah": lit. a bit cut off, fragment, nail- paring, and here un diminutif. I have described this scene in Pilgrimage iii. 68. Latro often says, "Thy gear is wanted by the daughter of my paternal uncle" (wife), and thus parades his politeness by asking in a lady's name.

[336] As will appear the two brothers were joined by a party of horsemen.

[337] "Four" says the Mac. Edit. forgetting Falhun with characteristic inconsequence.

[338] Muhammad (the deserving great praise) is the name used by men; Ahmad (more laudable) by angels, and Mahmúd (praised) by devils. For a similar play upon the name, "Allah Allah Muhammad ast" (God is God the praisworthy) see Dabistan ii. 416.

[339] The Mac. Edit. here gives "Sás," but elsewhere "Sásá," which is the correct form

[340] Sapor the Second (A.D. 310-330) was compelled to attack the powerful Arab hordes of Oman, most of whom, like the Tayy, Aus and Khazraj, the Banu Nabhán and the Hináwi left Al-Yaman A.D. 100-170, and settled in the north and north-east of Al-Najd This great exodus and dispersion of the tribes was caused, as has been said, by the bursting of the Dam of Márib originally built by Abd al-Shams Sabá, father of Himyar. These Yamanian races were plunged into poverty and roamed northwards, planting themselves amongst the Arabs of Ma'add son of Adnán. Hence the kingdom of Ghassan in Syria whose phylarchs under the Romans (i.e. Greek Emperors of Constantinople) controlled Palestine Tertia, the Arabs of Syria and Palestine, and the kingdom of Hárah, whose Lakhmite Princes, dependent upon Persia, managed the Arabs of the Euphrates, Oman and Al-Bahrayn. The Ma'addites still continued to occupy the central plateau of Arabia, a feature analogous with India "above the Ghauts."

[341] I have described (Pilgrimage i. 370) the grisly spot which a

Badawi will dignify by the name of Wady al-Ward=Vale of Roses.

[342] Koran xiii. 3, "Of every fruit two different kinds " i.e. large and small, black and white, sweet and sour.

[343] A graft upon an almond tree, which makes its kernel s..veet and gives it an especial delicacy of favour. See Russell's (excellent) Natural History of Aleppo, .

[344] So called from the flavour of the kernel it is well- known at Damascus where a favourite fruit is the dried apricot with an almond by way of kernel. There are many preparations of apricots, especially the "Mare's skin" (Jild al-fares or Kamar al-din) a paste folded into sheets and exactly resembling the article from which it takes a name. When wanted it is dissolved in water and eaten as a relish with bread or biscuit (Pilgrimage i. 289).

[345] "Ante Kamá takúl"=the vulgarest Cairene.

[346] This may be Ctesiphon, the ancient capital of the
Chosroës, on the Tigris below Baghdad; and spoken of elsewhere in
The Nights; especially as, in Night dclxvii., it is called
Isbanir Al-Madáin; Madáin Kisrá (the cities of Chosroës) being
the Arabic name of the old dual city.

[347] Koran vi. 103. The translation is Sale's which I have generally preferred, despite many imperfections: Lane renders this sentence, "The eyes see not Him, but He seeth the eyes ;" and Mr. Rodwell, "No vision taketh in Him (?), but He taketh in all vision ," and (better) "No eyesight reacheth to Him."

[348] Sale (sect. 1.) tells us all that was then known of these three which with Yá'úk and Nasr and the three "daughters of God," Goddesses or Energies (the Hindu Saktis) Allát Al-Uzzá and Manát mentioned in the Koran were the chiefs of the pre-lslamitic Pantheon. I cannot but suspect that all will be connected with old Babylonian worship. Al-Baydáwi (in Kor. Ixxi. 22) says of Wadd, Suwá'a, Yaghus, Ya'úk and Nasr that they were names of pious men between Adam and

Noah, afterwards deified: Yaghús was the giant idol of the Mazhaj tribe at Akamah of Al-Yaman and afterwards at Najrán Al-Uzzá was widely worshipped: her idol (of the tree Semurat) belonging to Ghatafán was destroyed after the Prophet’s order by Khálid bin Walíd. Allát or Al-Lát is written by Pocock (spec. 110) “Ilahat” i.e. deities in general. But Herodotus evidently refers to one god when he makes the Arabs worship Dionysus as {Greek letters} and Urania as {Greek letters} and the “tashdid” in Allát would, to a Greek ear, introduce another syllable (Alilat). This was the goddess of the Kuraysh and Thakíf whose temple at Taíf was circuited like the Ka’abah before Mohammed destroyed it.

[349] Shays (Shayth) is Ab Seth (Father Seth,) of the Hebrews, a name containing the initial and terminal letters of the Egypto- Phoenico-Hebrew Alphabet and the “Abjad” of the Arabs. Those curious about its connection with the name of Allah (El), the Zodiacal signs and with the constellations, visions but not wholly uninteresting, will consult “Unexplored Syria” (vol. i. 33).

[350] The exclamation of an honest Fellah.

[351] This is Antar with the Chosroë who “kissed the Absian hero between the eyes and bade him adieu, giving him as a last token a rich robe.” The coarser hand of the story-teller exaggerates everything till he makes it ridiculous.

[352] The context suggests thee this is a royal form of “throwing the handkerchief;” but it does not occur elsewhere. In face, the European idea seems to have arisen from the oriental practice of sending presents in napkins or kerchiefs.

[353] i.e. if the disappointed suitor attack me.

[354] i.e. if ever I he tempted to deny it.

[355] Arab. “Musáfahah,¨” the Arab fashion of shaking hands. The right palms are applied flat to each other; then the fingers are squeezed and the hand is raised to the forehead (Pilgrimage ii. 332).

[356] A city and province of Khuzistán the old Susiana. Dasht may be either the town in Khorasan or the “forests” (dasht) belonging to Ahwáz (Ahuaz in D’Herbelot).

[357] This is the contest between “Antar and the Satrap Khosrewan at the Court of Monzer.” but without its tragical finish.

[358] Elliptical “he rode out in great state, that is to say if greatness can truly be attributed to man,” for, etc.

[359] According to D’Herbelot (s.v. Rostac) it is a name given to the villages of Khorasan as “Souad” (Sawád) to those of Irak and Makhlaf to those of Al-Yaman: there is, how ever, a well- known Al-Rustak (which like Al-Bahrayn always takes the article) in the Province of Oman West of Maskat, and as it rhymes with “Irak” it does well enough. Mr. Badger calls this ancient capital of the Ya’arubah Imams “er-Rasták” (Imams of Oman).

[360] i.e. a furious knight.

[361] In the Mac. Edit. “Hassán,” which may rhyme with Nabhán, but it is a mere blunder.

[362] In Classical Arabic Irak (like Yaman, Bahrayn and Rusták) always takes the article.

[363] The story-teller goes back from Kufah founded in Omar’s day to the times of Abraham.

[364] This manuvre has often been practiced; especially by the first Crusaders under Bohemond (Gibbon) and in late years by the Arab slavers in Eastern Intertropical Africa. After their skirmishes with the natives they quartered and “bristled” the dead like game, roasted and boiled the choice pieces and pretended to eat the flesh. The enemy, who was not afraid of death, was struck with terror by the idea of being devoured, and this seems instinctive to the undeveloped mind.

VOLUME VII.

I Inscribe these pages
to

An Old And Valued Friend,

John W. Larking

(Whilome of Alexandria).

In Whose Hospitable Home ("The Sycamores") I Made My Final Preparations For A Pilgrimage To Meccah

and El-Medinah.

R. F. Burton

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

The History of Gharib and His Brother Ajib (continued)

When it was the Six Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night,

Shahrazad continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sa’adan having broken into the palace of King Jamak and pounded to pieces those therein, the survivors cried out, “Quarter! Quarter!”; and Sa’adan said to them, “Pinion your King!” So they bound Jamak and took him up, and Sa’adan drove them before him like sheep and brought them to Gharib’s presence, after the most part of the citizens had perished by the enemy’s swords. When the King of Babel came to himself, he found himself bound and heard Sa’adan say, “I will sup to-night off this King Jamak:” whereupon he turned to Gharib and cried to him, “I throw myself on thy mercy.” Replied Gharib, “Become a Moslem, and thou shalt be safe from the Ghul and from the vengeance of the Living One who ceaseth not.” So Jamak professed Al-Islam with heart and tongue and Gharib bade loose his bonds. Then he expounded The Faith to his people and they all became True Believers; after which Jamak returned to the city and despatched thence provaunt and henchmen to Gharib; and wine to the camp before Babel where they passed the night. On the morrow, Gharib gave the signal for the march and they fared on till they came to Mayyáfárikín,[1] which they found empty, for its people had heard what had befallen Babel and had fled to Cufa-city and told Ajib. When he heard the news, his Doom-day appeared to him and he assembled his braves and informing them of the enemy’s approach ordered them make ready to do battle with his brother’s host; after which he numbered them and found them thirty thousand horse and ten thousand foot.[2] So, needing more, he levied other fifty- thousand men, cavalry and infantry, and taking horse amid a mighty host, rode forwards, till he came upon his brother’s army encamped before Mosul and pitched his tents in face of their lines. Then Gharib wrote a writ and said to his officers, “Which of you will carry this letter to Ajib?” Whereupon Sahim sprang to his feet and cried, “O King of the Age, I will bear thy missive and bring thee back an answer.” So Gharib gave him the epistle and he repaired to the pavilion of Ajib who, when informed of his coming, said, “Admit him!” and when he stood in the presence asked him, “Whence comest thou?” Answered Sahim, “From the King of the Arabs and the Persians, son-in-law of Chosroë, King of the world, who sendeth thee a writ; so do thou return him a reply.” Quoth Ajib, “Give me the letter;” accordingly Sahim gave it to him and he tore it open and found therein, “In the name of Allah the Compassionating, the Compassionate! Peace on Abraham the Friend await! But afterwards. As soon as this letter shall come to thy hand, do thou confess the Unity of the Bountiful King, Causer of causes and Mover of the clouds;[3] and leave worshipping idols. An thou do this thing, thou art my brother and ruler over us and I will pardon thee the deaths of my father and mother, nor will I reproach thee with what thou hast done. But an thou obey not my bidding, behold, I will hasten to thee and cut off thy head and lay waste thy dominions. Verily, I give thee good counsel, and the Peace be on those who pace the path of salvation and obey the Most High King!” When Ajib read these words and knew the threat they contained, his eyes sank into the crown of his head and he gnashed his teeth and flew into a furious rage. Then he tore the letter in pieces and threw it away, which vexed Sahim and he cried out upon Ajib, saying, “Allah wither thy hand for the deed thou hast done!” With this Ajib cried out to his men, saying, “Seize yonder hound and hew him in pieces with your hangers.’’[4] So they ran at Sahim; but he bared blade and fell upon them and slew of them more than fifty braves; after which he cut his way out, though bathed in blood, and won back to Gharib, who said, “What is this case, O Sahim?” And he told him what had passed, whereat he grew livid for rage and crying “Allaho Akbar God is most great!” bade the battle-drums beat. So the fighting-men donned their hauberks and coats of straitwoven mail and baldrick’d themselves with their swords; the footmen drew out in battle-array, whilst the horsemen mounted their prancing horses and dancing camels and levelled their long lances, and the champions rushed into the field. Ajib and his men also took horse and host charged down upon host. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when

Gharib and his merry men took horse, Ajib and his troops also mounted and host charged down upon host. Then ruled the Kazi of Battle, in whose ordinance is no wrong, for a seal is on his lips and he speaketh not; and the blood railed in rills and purfled earth with curious embroidery; heads grew gray and hotter waxed battle and fiercer. Feet slipped and stood firm the valiant and pushed forwards, whilst turned the faint-heart and fled, nor did they leave fighting till the day darkened and the night starkened Then clashed the cymbals of retreat and the two hosts drew apart each from other, and returned to their tents, where they nighted. Next morning, as soon as it was day, the cymbals beat to battle and derring-do, and the warriors donned their harness of fight and baldrick'd[5] their blades the brightest bright and with the brown lance bedight mounted doughty steed every knight and cried out, saying, "This day no flight!" And the two hosts drew out in battle array, like the surging sea. The first to open the chapter[6] of war was Sahim, who drave his destrier between the two lines and played with swords and spears and turned over all the Capitula of combat till men of choicest wits were confounded. Then he cried out, saying, "Who is for fighting? Who is for jousting? Let no sluggard come out nor weakling!" Whereupon there rushed at him a horseman of the Kafirs, as he were a flame of fire; but Sahim let him not stand long before him ere he overthrew him with a thrust. Then a second came forth and he slew him also, and a third and he tare him in twain, and a fourth and he did him to death; nor did they cease sallying out to him and he left not slaying them, till it was noon, by which time he had laid low two hundred braves. Then Ajib cried to his men, "Charge once more," and sturdy host on sturdy host down bore and great was the clash of arms and battle-roar. The shining swords out rang; the blood in streams ran and footman rushed upon footman; Death showed in van and horse-hoof was shodden with skull of man; nor did they cease from sore smiting till waned the day and the night came on in black array, when they drew apart and, returning to their tents, passed the night there. As soon as morning morrowed the two hosts mounted and sought the field of fight; and the Moslems looked for Gharib to back steed and ride under the standards as was his wont, but he came not. So Sahim sent to his brother's pavilion a slave who, finding him not, asked the tent-pitchers,[7] but they answered, “We know naught of him.” Whereat he was greatly concerned and went forth and told the troops, who refrained from battle, saying, “An Gharib be absent, his foe will destroy us.” Now there was for Gharib’s absence a cause strange but true which we will set out in order due. And it was thus. When Ajib returned to his camp on the preceding Night, he called one of his guardsmen by name Sayyar and said to him, “O Sayyar, I have not treasured thee save for a day like this; and now I bid thee enter among Gharib s host and, pushing into the marquee of their lord, bring him hither to me and prove how wily thy cunning be.” And Sayyar said, “I hear and I obey.” So he repaired to the enemy’s camp and stealing into Gharib’s pavilion, under the darkness of the night, when all the men had gone to their places of rest, stood up as though he were a slave to serve Gharib, who presently, being athirst, called to him for water. So he brought him a pitcher of water, drugged with Bhang, and Gharib could not fulfill his need ere he fell down with head distancing heels, whereupon Sayyar wrapped him in his cloak and carrying him to Ajib’s tent, threw him down at his feet. Quoth Ajib, “O Sayyar, what is this?” Quoth he, “This be thy brother Gharib;” whereat Ajib rejoiced and said, “The blessings of the Idols light upon thee! Loose him and wake him.” So they made him sniff up vinegar and he came to himself and opened his eyes; then, finding himself bound and in a tent other than his own, exclaimed, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious the Great!” Thereupon Ajib cried out at him, saying, “Dost thou draw on me, O dog, and seek to slay me and take on me thy blood-wreak of thy father and thy mother? I will send thee this very day to them and rid the world of thee.” Replied Gharib, Kafir hound! soon shalt thou see against whom the wheels of fate shall revolve and who shall be overthrown by the wrath of the Almighty King, Who wotteth what is in hearts and Who shall leave thee in Gehenna tormented and confounded! Have ruth on thyself and say with me, ‘There is no god but the God and Abraham is the Friend of God!’ “ When Ajib heard Gharib’s words, he snarked and snorted and railed at his god, the stone, and called for the sworder and the leather rug of blood but his Wazir, who was at heart a Moslem though outwardly a Miscreant, rose and kissing ground before him, said, “Patience, O King, deal not hastily, but wait till we know the conquered from the conqueror. If we prove the victors, we shall have power to kill him and, if we be beaten, his being alive in our hands will be a strength to us.” And the Emirs said, “The Minister speaketh sooth”! — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ajib purposed to slay Gharib, the Wazir rose and said, “Deal not hastily, for we have always power to kill him!” So Ajib bade lay his brother Gharib in irons and chain him up in his own tent and set a thousand stout warriors to guard him. Meanwhile Gharib’s host, when they awoke that morning and found not their King, were as sheep sans a shepherd; but Sa’adan the Ghul cried out at them, saying, “O folk, don your war-gear and trust to your Lord to defend you!” So Arabs and Ajams mounted horse, after clothing themselves in hauberks of iron and shirting themselves in straight knit mail, and sallied forth to the field, the Chiefs and the colours moving in van. Then dashed out the Ghul of the Mountain, with a club on his shoulder, two hundred pounds in weight, and wheeled and careered, saying, “Ho, worshippers of idols, come ye out and renown it this day, for ’tis a day of onslaught! Whoso knoweth me hath enough of my mischief and whoso knoweth me not, I will make myself known to him. I am Sa’adan, servant of King Gharib. Who is for jousting? Who is for fighting? Let no faintheart come forth to me to-day or weakling.” And there rushed upon him a Champion of the Infidels, as he were a flame of fire, and drove at him, but Sa’adan charged home at him and dealt him with his club a blow which broke his ribs and cast him lifeless to the earth. Then he called out to his sons and slaves, saying, “Light the bonfire, and whoso falleth of the Kafirs do ye dress him and roast him well in the flame, then bring him to me that I may break my fast on him!” So they kindled a fire midmost the plain and laid thereon the slain, till he was cooked, when they brought him to Sa’adan, who gnawed his flesh and crunched his bones. When the Miscreants saw the Mountain-Ghul do this deed they were affrighted with sore affright, but Ajib cried out to his men, saying, “Out on you! Fall upon the Ogre and hew him in hunks with your scymitars!” So twenty thousand men ran at Sa’adan, whilst the footmen circled round him and rained upon him darts and shafts so that he was wounded in four-and-twenty places, and his blood ran down upon the earth, and he was alone. Then the host of the Moslems drave at the heathenry, calling for help upon the Lord of the three Worlds, and they ceased not from fight and fray till the day came to an end, when they drew apart. But the Infidels had captured Sa'adan, as he were a drunken man for loss of blood; and they bound him fast and set him by Gharib who, seeing the Ghul a prisoner, said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! O Sa'adan, what case is this?" "O my lord," replied Sa'adan, "it is Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) who ordaineth joy and annoy and there is no help but this and that betide." And Gharib rejoined, "Thou speakest sooth, O Sa'adan!" But Ajib passed the night in joy and he said to his men, "Mount ye on the morrow and fall upon the Moslems so shall not one of them be left alive." And they replied, "Hearkening and obedience!" This is how it fared with them; but as regards the Moslems, they passed the night, dejected and weeping for their King and Sa'adan; but Sahim said to them, "O folk, be not concerned, for the aidance of Almighty Allah is nigh." Then he waited till midnight, when he assumed the garb of a tent-pitcher; and, repairing to Ajib's camp, made his way between the tents and pavilions till he came to the King's marquee, where he saw him seated on his throne surrounded by his Princes. So he entered and going up to the candles which burnt in the tent snuffed them and sprinkled levigated henbane on the wicks; after which he withdrew and waited without the marquee, till the smoke of the burning henbane reached Ajib and his Princes and they fell to the ground like dead men. Then he left them and went to the prison tent, where he found Gharib and Sa'adan, guarded by a thousand braves, who were overcome with sleep. So he cried out at the guards, saying, "Woe to you! Sleep not; but watch your prisoners and light the cressets." Presently he filled a cresset with firewood, on which he strewed henbane, and lighting it, went round about the tent with it, till the smoke entered the nostrils of the guards, and they all fell asleep drowned by the drug; when he entered the tent and finding Gharib and Sa'adan also insensible he aroused them by making them smell and sniff at a sponge full of vinegar he had with him.

Thereupon he loosed their bonds and collars, and when they saw him, they blessed him and rejoiced In him. After this they went forth and took all the arms of the guards and Sahim said to them, “Go to your own camp;” while he re-entered Ajib’s pavilion and, wrapping him in his cloak, lifted him up and made for the Moslem encampment. And the Lord, the Compassionate, protected him, so that he reached Gharib’s tent in safety and unrolled the cloak before him. Gharib looked at its contents and seeing his brother Ajib bound, cried out, “Allaho Akbar — God is Most Great! Aidance! Victory!” And he blessed Sahim and bade him arouse Ajib. So he made him smell the vinegar mixed with incense, and he opened his eyes and, finding himself bound and shackled, hung down his head earth wards. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fortieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that after Sahim had aroused Ajib, whom he had made insensible with henbane and had brought to his brother Gharib, the captive opened his eyes and, feeling himself bound and shackled, hung down his head earthwards. Thereupon cried Sahim, “O Accursed, lift thy head!” So he raised his eyes and found himself amongst Arabs and Ajams and saw his brother seated on the throne of his estate and the place of his power, wherefore he was silent and spake not. Then Gharib cried out and said, “Strip me this hound!” So they stripped him and came down upon him with whips, till they weakened his body and subdued his pride, after which Gharib set over him a guard of an hundred knights. And when this fraternal correction had been administered they heard shouts of, “There is no God but the God!” and “God is Most Great!” from the camp of the Kafirs. Now the cause of this was that, ten days after his nephew King Al-Damigh, Gharib’s uncle, had set out from Al-Jazirah, with twenty thousand horse, and on nearing the field of battle, had despatched one of his scouts to get news. The man was absent a whole day, at the end of which time he returned and told Al-Damigh all that had happened to Gharib with his brother. So he waited till the night, when he fell upon the Infidels, crying out, “Allaho Akbar!” and put them to the edge of the biting scymitar. When Gharib heard the Takbir,[8] he said to Sahim, “Go find out the cause of these shouts and war-cries." So Sahim repaired to the field of battle and questioned the slaves and camp followers, who told him that King Al-Damigh had come up with twenty thousand men and had fallen upon the idolaters by night, saying, "By the virtue of Abraham the Friend, I will not forsake my brother's son, but will play a brave man's part and beat back the host of Miscreants and please the Omnipotent King!" So Sahim returned and told his uncle's derring-do to Gharib, who cried out to his men, saying, "Don your arms and mount your steeds and let us succour my father's brother!" So they took horse and fell upon the Infidels and put them to the edge of the sharp sword. By the morning they had killed nigh fifty thousand of the Kafirs and made other thirty thousand prisoners, and the rest of Ajib's army dispersed over the length and breadth of earth. Then the Moslems returned in victory and triumph, and Gharib rode out to meet his uncle, whom he saluted and thanked for his help. Quoth Al-Damigh, "I wonder if that dog Ajib fell in this day's affair." Quoth Gharib, "O uncle, be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear: know that he is with me in chains." When Al-Damigh heard this he rejoiced with exceeding joy and the two kings dismounted and entered the pavilion, but found no Ajib there; whereupon Gharib exclaimed, "O glory of Abraham, the Friend (with whom be peace!)," adding, "Alas, what an ill end is this to a glorious day!" and he cried out to the tent-pitchers, saying, "Woe to you! Where is my enemy who oweth me so much?" Quoth they, "When thou mountedst and we went with thee, thou didst not bid us guard him;" and Gharib exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" But Al-Damigh said to him, "Hasten not nor be concerned, for where can he go, and we in pursuit of him?" Now the manner of Ajib's escape was in this wise. His page Sayyar had been ambushed in the camp and when he saw Gharib mount and ride forth, leaving none to guard his enemy Ajib, he could hardly credit his eyes. So he waited awhile and presently crept to the tent and taking Ajib, who was senseless for the pain of the bastinado, on his back, made off with him into the open country and fared on at the top of his speed from early night to the next day, till he came to a spring of water, under an apple tree. There he set down Ajib from his back and washed his face, whereupon he opened his eyes and seeing Sayyar, said to him, “O Sayyar, carry me to Cufa that I may recover there and levy horsemen and soldiers wherewith to overthrow my foe: and know, O Sayyar, that I am anhungered.” So Sayyar sprang up and going out to the desert caught an ostrich-poult and brought it to his lord. Then he gathered fuel and deftly using the fire sticks kindled a fire,, by which he roasted the bird which he had hallal’d[9] and fed Ajib with its flesh and gave him to drink of the water of the spring, till his strength returned to him, after which he went to one of the Badawi tribal encampments, and stealing thence a steed mounted Ajib upon it and journeyed on with him for many days till they drew near the city of Cufa. The Viceroy of the capital came out to meet and salute the King, whom he found weak with the beating his brother had inflicted upon him; and Ajib entered the city and called his physicians. When they answered his summons, he bade them heal him in less than ten days’ time: they said, “We hear and we obey,” and they tended him till he became whole of the sickness that was upon him and of the punishment. Then he commanded his Wazirs to write letters to all his Nabobs and vassals, and he indited one-and-twenty writs and despatched them to the governors, who assembled their troops and set out for Cufa by forced marches. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Forty-first Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ajib sent orders to assemble the troops, who marched forthright to Cufa. Meanwhile, Gharib, being troubled for Ajib’s escape, despatched in quest of him a thousand braves, who dispersed on all sides and sought him a day and a night, but found no trace of him; so they returned and told Gharib, who called for his brother Sahim, but found him not; whereat he was sore concerned, fearing for him from the shifts of Fortune. And lo! Sahim entered and kissed ground before Gharib, who rose, when he saw him, and asked, “Where hast thou been, O Sahim?” He answered, “O King, I have been to Cufa and there I find that the dog Ajib hath made his way to his capital and is healed of his hurts: eke, he hath written letters to his vassals and sent them to his Nabobs who have brought him troops.” When Gharib heard this, he gave the command to march; so they struck tents and fared for Cufa. When they came in sight of the city, they found it compassed about with a host like the surging main, having neither beginning nor end. So Gharib with his troops encamped in face of the Kafirs and set up his standards, and darkness fell down upon the two hosts, whereupon they lighted camp-fires and kept watch till daybreak. Then King Gharib rose and making the Wuzu-ablution, prayed a two- bow prayer according to the rite of our father Abraham the Friend (on whom be the Peace!); after which he commanded the battle drums to sound the point of war. Accordingly, the kettle-drums beat to combat and the standards fluttered whilst the fighting- men armour donned and their horses mounted and themselves displayed and to plain fared. Now the first to open the gate of war was King Al-Damigh, who urged his charger between the two opposing armies and displayed himself and played with the swords and the spears, till both hosts were confounded and at him marvelled, after which he cried out, saying, “Who is for jousting? Let no sluggard come out to me or weakling; for I am Al-Damigh, the King, brother of Kundamir the King.” Then there rushed forth a horseman of the Kafirs, as he were a flame of fire, and drave at Al-Damigh, without word said; but the King received him with a lance-thrust in the breast so dour that the point issued from between his shoulders and Allah hurried his soul to the fire, the abiding-place dire. Then came forth a second he slew, and a third he slew likewise, and they ceased not to come out to him and he to slay them, till he had made an end of six-and-seventy fighting men. Hereupon the Miscreants and men of might hung back and would not encounter him; but Ajib cried out to his men and said, “Fie on you, O folk! if ye all go forth to him, one by one, he will not leave any of you, sitting or standing. Charge on him all at once and cleanse of them our earthly wone and strew their heads for your horses’ hoofs like a plain of stone!” So they waved the awe-striking flag and host was heaped upon host; blood rained in streams upon earth and railed and the Judge of battle ruled, in whose ordinance is no unright. The fearless stood firm on feet in the stead of fight, whilst the faint-heart gave back and took to flight thinking the day would never come to an end nor the curtains of gloom would be drawn by the hand of Night; and they ceased not to battle with swords and to smite till light darkened and murk starkened. Then the kettle- drums of the Infidels beat the retreat, but Gharib, refusing to stay his arms, drave at the Paynimry, and the Believers in Unity, the Moslems, followed him. How many heads and hands they shore, how many necks and sinews they tore, how many knees and spines they mashed and how many grown men and youths they to death bashed! With the first gleam of morning grey the Infidels broke and fled away, in disorder and disarray; and the Moslems followed them till middle-day and took over twenty thousand of them, whom they brought to their tents in bonds to stay. Then Gharib sat down before the gate of Cufa and commanded a herald to proclaim pardon and protection for every wight who should leave the worship to idols dight and profess the unity of His All-might the Creator of mankind and of light and night. So was made proclamation as he bade in the streets of Cufa and all that were therein embraced the True Faith, great and small; then they issued forth in a body and renewed their Islam before King Gharib, who rejoiced in them with exceeding joy and his breast broadened and he threw off all annoy. Presently he enquired of Mardas and his daughter Mahdiyah, and, being told that he had taken up his abode behind the Red Mountain, he called Sahim and said to him, “Find out for me what is become of thy father.” Sahim mounted steed without stay or delay and set his berry-brown spear in rest and fared on in quest till he reached the Red Mountain, where he sought for his father, yet found no trace of him nor of his tribe; however, he saw in their stead an elder of the Arabs, a very old man, broken with excess of years, and asked him of the folk and whither they were gone. Replied he, “O my son, when Mardas heard of Gharib’s descent upon Cufa he feared with great fear and, taking his daughter and his folk, set out with his handmaids and negroes into the wild and wold, and I wot not whither he went.” So Sahim, hearing the Shaykh’s words, returned to Gharib and told him thereof, whereat he was greatly concerned. Then he sat down on his father’s throne and, opening his treasuries, distributed largesse to each and every of his braves. And he took up his abode in Cufa and sent out spies to get news of Ajib. He also summoned the Grandees of the realm, who came and did him homage; as also did the citizens and he bestowed on them sumptuous robes of honour and commended the Ryots to their care. — And

Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Forty-second Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Gharib, after giving robes of honour to the citizens of Cufa and commending the Ryots to their care, went out on a day of the days to hunt, with an hundred horse, and fared on till he came to a Wady, abounding in trees and fruits and rich in rills and birds. It was a pasturing-place for roes and gazelles, to the spirit a delight whose scents reposed from the langour of fight. They encamped in the valley, for the day was dear and bright, and there passed the night. On the morrow, Gharib made the Wuzu-ablution and prayed the two-bow dawn-prayer, offering up praise and thanks to Almighty Allah; when, lo and behold! there arose a clamour and confusion in the meadows, and he bade Sahim go see what was to do. So Sahim mounted forthright and rode till he espied goods being plundered and horses haltered and women carried off and children crying out. Whereupon he questioned one of the shepherds, saying, “What be all this?”; and they replied, “This is the Harim of Mardas, Chief of the Banu Kahtan, and his good and that of his clan; for yesterday Jamrkan slew Mardas and made prize of his women and children and household stuff and all the belonging of his tribe. It is his wont to go a-raiding and to cut off highways and waylay wayfarers and he is a furious tyrant; neither Arabs nor Kings can prevail against him and he is the scourge and curse of the country.” Now when Sahim heard these news of his sire’s slaughter and the looting of his Harim and property, he returned to Gharib and told him the case, wherefore fire was added to his fire and his spirit chafed to wipe out his shame and his blood-wit to claim: so he rode with his men after the robbers till he overtook them and fell upon them, crying out and saying, “Almighty Allah upon the rebel, the traitor, the infidel!” and he slew in a single charge one-and-twenty fighting- men. Then he halted in mid-field, with no coward’s heart, and cried out, “Where is Jamrkan? Let him come out to me, that I may make him quaff the cup of disgrace and rid of him earth’s face!” Hardly had he made an end of speaking, when forth rushed Jamrkan, as he were a calamity of calamities or a piece of a mountain, cased in steel. He was a mighty huge[10] Amalekite; and he drave at Gharib without speech or salute, like the fierce tyrant he was. And he was armed with a mace of China steel, so heavy, so potent, that had he smitten a hill he had smashed it. Now when he charged, Gharib met him like a hungry lion, and the brigand aimed a blow at his head with his mace; but he evaded it and it smote the earth and sank therein half a cubit deep. Then Gharib took his battle flail and smiting Jamrkan on the wrist, crushed his fingers and the mace dropped from his grasp; whereupon Gharib bent down from his seat in selle and snatching it up, swiftlier than the blinding leven, smote him therewith full on the flat of the ribs, and he fell to the earth like a long-stemmed palm-tree. So Sahim took him and pinioning him, haled him off with a rope, and Gharib's horsemen fell on those of Jamrkan and slew fifty of them: the rest fled; nor did they cease flying till they reached their tribal camp and raised their voices in clamour; whereupon all who were in the Castle came out to meet them and asked the news. They told the tribe what had passed; and, when they heard that their chief was a prisoner, they set out for the valley vying one with other in their haste to deliver him. Now when King Gharib had captured Jamrkan and had seen his braves take flight, he dismounted and called for Jamrkan, who humbled himself before him, saying, "I am under thy protection, O champion of the Age!" Replied Gharib, "O dog of the Arabs, dost thou cut the road for the servants of Almighty Allah, and fearest thou not the Lord of the Worlds?" "O my master," asked Jamrkan, "and who is the Lord of the Worlds?" "O dog," answered Gharib, "and what calamity dost thou worship?" He said, "O my lord, I worship a god made of dates[11] kneaded with butter and honey, and at times I eat him and make me another." When Gharib heard this, he laughed till he fell backwards and said, "O miserable, there is none worship- worth save Almighty Allah, who created thee and created all things and provideth all creatures with daily bread, from whom nothing is hid and He over all things is Omnipotent." Quoth Jamrkan, "And where is this great god, that I may worship him?" Quoth Gharib, "O fellow, know that this god's name is Allah — the God — and it is He who fashioned the heavens and the earth and garred the trees to grow and the waters to flow. He created wild beasts and birds and Paradise and Hell-fire and veileth Himself from all eyes seeing and of none being seen. He, and

He only, is the Dweller on high. Extolled be His perfection! There is no god but He!" When Jamrkan heard these words, the ears of his heart were opened; his skin shuddered with horripilation and he said, "O my lord, what shall I say that I may become of you and that this mighty Lord may accept of me?" Replied Gharib, "Say, 'There is no god but the God and Abraham the Friend is the Apostle of God!'" " So he pronounced the profession of the Faith and was written of the people of felicity. Then quoth Gharib, " Say me, hast thou tasted the sweetness of Al-Islam?"; and quoth the other, "Yes;" whereupon Gharib cried, "Loose his bonds!" So they unbound him and he kissed ground before Gharib and his feet. Now whilst this was going on, behold, they espied a great cloud of dust that towered till it walled the word. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Forty-third Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Jamrkan islamised and kissed the ground between the hands of Gharib; and, as they were thus, behold, a great cloud of dust towered till it walled the wold and Gharib said to Sahim, "Go and see for us what it be." So he went forth, like a bird in full flight, and presently returned, saying, "O King of the Age, this dust is of the Banu Amir, the comrades of Jamrkan." Whereupon quoth Gharib to the new Moslem, "Ride out to thy people and offer to them Al- Islam: an they profess, they shall be saved; but, an they refuse, we will put them to the sword." So Jamrkan mounted and driving steed towards his tribesmen, cried out to them; and they knew him and dismounting, came up to him on foot and said, "We rejoice in thy safety, O our lord!" Said he, "O folk, whoso obeyeth me shall be saved; but whoso gainsayeth me, I will cut him in twain with this scymitar." And they made answer, saying, "Command us what thou wilt, for we will not oppose thy commandment." Quoth he, "Then say with me, 'There is no god but the God and Abraham is the Friend of God!' " They asked, "O our lord, whence haddest thou these words?" And he told them what had befallen him with Gharib, adding, "O folk, know ye not that I am your chief in battle-plain and where men of cut and thrust are fain; and yet a man single-handed me to prisoner hath ta'en and made me the cup of shame and disgrace to drain?" When they heard his speech, they spoke the word of Unity and Jamrkan led them to Gharib, at whose hands they renewed their profession of Al-Islam and wished him glory and victory, after they had kissed the earth before him. Gharib rejoiced in them and said to them, "O folk, return to your people and expound Al-Islam to them;" but all replied, "O our lord, we will never leave thee, whilst we live; but we will go and fetch our families and return to thee." And Gharib said, "Go, and join me at the city of Cufa." So Jamrkan and his comrades returned to their tribal camp and offered Al-Islam to their women and children, who all to a soul embraced the True Faith, after which they dismantled their abodes and struck their tents and set out for Cufa, driving before them their steeds, camels and sheep. During this time Gharib returned to Cufa, where the horsemen met him in state. He entered his palace and sat down on his sire's throne with his champions ranged on either hand. Then the spies came forwards, and informed him that his brother Ajib had made his escape and had taken refuge with Jaland[12] bin Karkar, lord of the city of Oman and land of Al-Yaman; whereupon Gharib cried aloud to his host, "O men, make you ready to march in three days." Then he expounded Al-Islam to the thirty thousand men he had captured in the first affair and exhorted them to profess and take service with him. Twenty thousand embraced the Faith, but the rest refused and he slew them. Then came forward Jamrkan and his tribe and kissed the ground before Gharib, who bestowed on him a splendid robe of honour and made him captain of his vanguard, saying, "O Jamrkan, mount with the Chiefs of thy kith and kin and twenty thousand horse and fare on before us to the land of Jaland bin Karkar." "Hearkening and obedience," answered Jamrkan and, leaving the women and children of the tribe in Cufa, he set forward. Then Gharib passed in review the Harim of Mardas and his eye lit upon Mahdiyah, who was among the women, wherewith he fell down fainting. They sprinkled rose-water on his face, till he came to himself, when he embraced Mahdiyah and carried her into a sitting-chamber, where he sat with her; and they twain lay together that night without fornication. Next morning he went out and sitting down on the throne of his kingship, robed his uncle Al-Damigh with a robe of honour; and appointed him his viceroy over all Al-Irak, commending Mahdiyah to his care, till he should return from his expedition against Ajib; and, when the order was accepted, he set out for the land of Al-Yaman and the City of Oman with twenty thousand horse and ten thousand foot. Now, when Ajib and his defeated army drew in sight of Oman, King Jaland saw the dust of their approach and sent to find out its meaning, scouts who returned and said, "Verily this is the dust of one hight Ajib, lord of Al-Irak." And Jaland wondered at his coming to his country and, when assured of the tidings, he said to his officers, "Fare ye forth and meet him." So they went out and met him and pitched tents for him at the city-gate; and Ajib entered in to Jaland, weeping eyed and heavy-hearted. Now Jaland's wife was the daughter of Ajib's paternal uncle and he had children by her; so, when he saw his kinsman in this plight, he asked for the truth of what ailed him and Ajib told him all that had befallen him, first and last, from his brother and said, "O King, Gharib biddeth the folk worship the Lord of the Heavens and forbiddeth them from the service of simulacres and other of the gods." When Jaland heard these words he raged and revolted and said, "By the virtue of the Sun, Lord of Life and Light, I will not leave one of thy brother's folk in existence! But where didst thou quit them and how many men are they?" Answered Ajib, "I left them in Cufa and they be fifty thousand horse." Whereupon Jaland called his Wazir Jawámard,[13] saying, "Take thee seventy thousand horse and fare to Cufa and bring me the Moslems alive, that I may torture them with all manner of tortures." So Jawamard departed with his host and fared through the first day and the second till the seventh day, when he came to a Wady abounding in trees and rills and fruits. Here he called a halt — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Forty-fourth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Jaland sent Jawamard with his army to Cufa, they came upon a Wady abounding in trees and rills where a halt was called and they rested till the middle of the Night, when the Wazir gave the signal for departure and mounting, rode on before them till hard upon dawn, at which time he descended into a well-wooded valley, whose flowers were fragrant and whose birds warbled on boughs, as they swayed gracefully to and fro, and Satan blew into his sides and puffed him up with pride and he improvised these couplets and cried,

"I plunge with my braves in the seething sea; * Seize the foe in
my strength and my valiancy;
And the doughtiest knights wot me well to be * Friend to friend
and fierce foe to mine enemy.
I will load Ghanb with the captive's chains * Right soon, and
return in all joy and glee;
For I've donned my mail and my weapons wield * And on all sides
charge at the chivalry."[14]

Hardly had Jawamard made an end of his verses when there came out upon him from among the trees a horseman of terrible mien covered and clad in steely sheen, who cried out to him, saying, "Stand, O riff-raff of the Arabs! Doff thy dress and ground thine arms- gear and dismount thy destrier and be off with thy life!" When Jawamard heard this, the light in his eyes became darkest night and he drew his sabre and drove at Jamrkan, for he it was, saying, "O thief of the Arabs, wilt thou cut the road for me, who am captain of the host of Jaland bin Karkar and am come to bring Gharib and his men in bond?" When Jamrkan heard these words, he said, "How cooling is this to my heart and liver!" And he made at Jawamard versifying in these couplets,

"I'm the noted knight in the field of fight, * Whose sabre and
spear every foe affright!
Jamrkan am I, to my foes a fear, * With a lance lunge known unto
every knight:
Gharib is my lord, nay my pontiff, my prince, * Where the two
hosts dash very lion of might:
An Imam of the Faith, pious, striking awe * On the plain where
his foes like the fawn take flight;
Whose voice bids folk to the faith of the Friend, * False,
doubling idols and gods despite!"

Now Jamrkan had fared on with his tribesmen ten days' journey from Cufa city and called a halt on the eleventh day till midnight, when he ordered a march and rode on devancing them till he descended into the valley aforesaid and heard Jawamard reciting his verses. So he drave at him as the driving of a ravening lion, and smiting him with his sword, clove him in twain and waited till his captains came up, when he told them what had passed and said to them, "Take each of you five thousand men and disperse round about the Wady, whilst I and the Banu Amir fall upon the enemy's van, shouting, Allaho Akbar God is Most Great! When ye hear my slogan, do ye charge them, crying like me upon the Lord, and smite them with the sword." "We hear and we obey," answered they and turning back to their braves did his bidding and spread themselves about the sides of the valley in the twilight forerunning the dawn. Presently, lo and behold! up came the army of Al-Yaman, like a flock of sheep, filling plain and steep, and Jamrkan and the Banu Amir fell upon them, shouting, "Allaho Akbar!" till all heard it, Moslems and Miscreants. Whereupon the True Believers ambushed in the valley answered from every side and the hills and mountains responsive cried and all things replied, green and dried, saying, "God is Most Great! Aidance and Victory to us from on High! Shame to the Miscreants who His name deny!" And the Kafirs were confounded and smote one another with sabres keen whilst the True Believers and pious fell upon them like flames of fiery sheen and naught was seen but heads flying and blood jetting and faint-hearts hieing. By the time they could see one another's faces, two-thirds of the Infidels had perished and Allah hastened their souls to the fire and abiding-place dire. The rest fled and to the deserts sped whilst the Moslems pursued them to slay and take captives till middle-day, when they returned in triumph with seven thousand prisoners; and but six and twenty thousand of the Infidels escaped and the most of them wounded. Then the Moslems collected the horses and arms, the loads and tents of the enemy and despatched them to Cufa with an escort of a thousand horse; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Jamrkan in his battle with Jawamard slew him and slew his men; and, after taking many prisoners and much money and many horses and loads, sent them with an escort of a thousand riders, to Cufa city. Then he and the army of Al-Islam dismounted and expounded The saving Faith to the prisoners, who made profession with heart and tongue; whereupon they released them from bonds and embraced them and rejoiced in them. Then Jamrkan made his troops, who had swelled to a mighty many, rest a day and a night and marched with the dawn, intending to attack Jaland bin Karkar in the city Of Oman; whilst the thousand horse fared back to Cufa with the loot. When they reached the city, they went in to King Gharib and told him what had passed, whereat he rejoiced and gave them joy and, turning to the Ghul of the Mountain, said, “Take horse with twenty thousand and follow Jamrkan.” So Sa’adan and his sons mounted and set out, amid twenty thousand horse for Oman. Meanwhile, the fugitives of the defeated Kafirs reached Oman and went in to Jaland, weeping and crying, “Woe!” and “Ruin!” whereat he was confounded and said to them, “What calamity hath befallen you?” So they told him what had happened and he said, “Woe to you! How many men were they?” They replied, “O King, there were twenty standards, under each a thousand men.” When Jaland heard these words he said, “May the sun pour no blessing on you! Fie upon you! What, shall twenty thousand overcome you, and you seventy thousand horse and Jawamard able to withstand three thousand in field of fight?” Then, in the excess of his rage and mortification, he bared his blade and cried out to those who were present, saying, “Fall on them!” So the courtiers drew their swords upon the fugitives and annihilated them to the last man and cast them to the dogs. Then Jaland cried aloud to his son, saying, “Take an hundred thousand horse and go to Al-Irak and lay it waste altogether.” Now this son’s name was Kúraján and there was no doughtier knight in all the force; for he could charge single-handed three thousand riders. So he and his host made haste to equip themselves and marched in battle-array, rank following rank, with the Prince at their head, glorying in himself and improvising these couplets,

“I’m Al-Kurajan, and my name is known * To beat all who in wold or in city wone!
How many a soldier my sword at will * Struck down like a cow on

the ground bestrown?
How many a soldier I’ve forced to fly * And have rolled their
heads as a ball is thrown?
Now I’ll drive and harry the land Irak[15] * And like rain
I’ll shower the blood of fone;
And lay hands on Ghanb and his men, whose doom * To the wise a
warning shall soon be shown!”

The host fared on twelve days’ journey and, while they were still marching, behold, a great dust cloud arose before them and walled the horizon and the whole region. So Kurajan sent out scouts, saying, “Go forth and bring me tidings of what meaneth this dust.” They went till they passed under the enemy’s standards and presently returning said, “O King, verily this is the dust of the Moslems.” Whereat he was glad and said, “Did ye count them?” And they answered, “We counted the colours and they numbered twenty.” Quoth he, “By my faith, I will not send one man-at-arms against them, but will go forth to them alone by myself and strew their heads under the horses’ hooves!” Now this was the army of Jamrkan who, espying the host of the Kafirs and seeing them as a surging sea, called a halt; so his troops pitched the tents and set up the standards, calling upon the name of the All-wise One, the Creator of light and gloom, Lord of all creatures, Who seeth while Him none see, the High to infinity, extolled and exalted be He! There is no God but He! The Miscreants also halted and pitched their tents, and Kurajan said to them “Keep on your arms, and in armour sleep, for during the last watch of the night we will mount and trample yonder handful under feet!” Now one of Jamrkan’s spies was standing nigh and heard what Kurajan had contrived; so he returned to the host and told his chief who said to them, “Arm yourselves and as soon as it is Night, bring me all the mules and camels and hang all the bells and clinkets and rattles ye have about their necks.” Now they had with them more than twenty thousand camels and mules. So they waited till the Infidels fell asleep, when Jamrkan commanded them to mount, and they rose to ride and on the Lord of the Worlds they relied. Then said Jamrkan, “Drive the camels and mules to the Miscreants’ camp and push them with your spears for goads!” They did as he bade and the beasts rushed upon the enemy’s tents, whilst the bells and clinkets and rattles jangled[16] and the Moslems followed at their heels, shouting, “God is Most Great!’’ till all the hills and mountains resounded with the name of the Highmost Deity, to whom belong glory and majesty! The cattle hearing this terrible din, took fright and rushed upon the tents and trampled the folk, as they lay asleep. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Forty-sixth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Jamrkan fell upon them with his men and steeds and camels, and the camp lay sleeping, the idolaters started up in confusion and, snatching up their arms, fell upon one another with smiting, till the most part was slaughtered. And when the day broke, they looked and found no Moslem slain, but saw them all on horseback, armed and armoured; wherefore they knew that this was a sleight which had been played upon them, and Kurajan cried out to the remnant of his folk, “O sons of whores, what we had a mind to do with them, that have they done with us and their craft hath gotten the better of our cunning.” And they were about to charge when, lo and behold! a cloud of dust rose high and walled the horizon-sky, when the wind smote it, so that it spired aloft and spread pavilion-wise in the lift and there it hung; and presently appeared beneath it the glint of helmet and gleam of hauberk and splendid warriors, baldrick’d with their tempered swords and holding in rest their supple spears. When the Kafirs saw this, they held back from the battle and each army sent out, to know the meaning of this dust, scouts, who returned with the news that it was an army of Moslems. Now this was the host of the Mountain- Ghul whom Gharib had despatched to Jamrkan’s aid, and Sa’adan himself rode in their van. So the two hosts of the True Believers joined company and rushing upon the Paynimry like a flame of fire, plied them with keen sword and Rudaynian spear and quivering lance, what while day was darkened and eyes for the much dust starkened. The valiant stood fast and the faint-hearted coward fled and to the wilds and the wolds swift sped, whilst the blood over earth was like torrents shed; nor did they cease from fight till the day took flight and in gloom came the night. Then the Moslems drew apart from the Miscreants and returned to their tents, where they ate and slept, till the darkness fled away and gave place to smiling day; when they prayed the dawn prayer and mounted to battle. Now Kurajan had said to his men as they drew off from fight (for indeed two thirds of their number had perished by sword and spear), "O folk, to-morrow, I will champion it in the stead of war where cut and thrust jar, and where braves push and wheel I will take the field." So, as soon as light was seen and morn appeared with its shine and sheen, took horse the hosts twain and shouted their slogans amain and bared the brand and hent lance in hand and in ranks took stand. The first to open the door of war was Kurajan, who cried out, saying, "Let no coward come out to me this day nor craven!" Whereupon Jamrkan and Sa'adan stood by the colours, but there ran at him a captain of the Banu Amir and the two drave each at other awhile, like two rams butting. Presently Kurajan seized the Moslem by the jerkin under his hauberk and, dragging him from his saddle, dashed him to the ground where he left him; upon which the Kafirs laid hands on him and bound him and bore him off to their tents; whilst Kurajan wheeled about and careered and offered battle, till another captain came out, whom also he took prisoner; nor did he leave to do thus till he had made prize of seven captains before mid-day. Then Jamrkan cried out with so mighty a cry, that the whole field made reply and heard it the armies twain, and ran at Kurajan with a heart in rageful pain, improvising these couplets,

"Jamrkan am I! and a man of might, * Whom the warriors fear with
a sore affright:
I waste the forts and I leave the walls * To wail and weep for
the wights I smite:
Then, O Kurajan, tread the rightful road * And quit the paths of
thy foul unright:
Own the One True God, who dispread the skies * And made founts
to

flow and the hills pegged tight:
An the slave embrace the True Faith, he'll 'scape * Hell pains
and in Heaven be deckt and dight!"

When Kurajan heard these words, he snarked and snorted and foully abused the sun and the moon and drave at Jamrkan, versifying with these couplets,

“I’m Kurajan, of this age the knight; * And my shade to the
lions of Shara’[17] is blight:
I storm the forts and snare kings of beasts * And warriors fear
me in field of fight;
Then, Harkye Jamrkan, if thou doubt my word, * Come forth to the
combat and try my might!”

When Jamrkan heard these verses, he charged him with a stout heart and they smote each at other with swords till the two hosts lamented for them, and they lunged with lance and great was the clamour between them: nor did they leave fighting till the time of mid-afternoon prayer was passed and the day began to wane. Then Jamrkan drave at Kurajan and smiting him on the breast with his mace,[18] cast him to the ground, as he were the trunk of a palm-tree; and the Moslems pinioned him and dragged him off with ropes like a camel. Now when the Miscreants saw their Prince captive, a hot fever-fit of ignorance seized on them and they bore down upon the True Believers thinking to rescue him; but the Moslem champions met them and left most of them prostrate on the earth, whilst the rest turned and sought safety in flight, seeking surer site, while the clanking sabres their back-sides smite. The Moslems ceased not pursuing them till they had scattered them over mount and word, when they returned from them to the spoil; whereof was great store of horses and tents and so forth: — good look to it for a spoil! Then Jamrkan went in to Kurajan and expounded to him Al-Islam, threatening him with death unless he embraced the Faith. But he refused; so they cut off his head and stuck it on a spear, after which they fared on towards Oman[19] city. But as regards the Kafirs, the survivors returned to Jaland and made known to him the slaying of his son and the slaughter of his host, hearing which he cast his crown to the ground and buffeting his face, till the blood ran from his nostrils, fell fainting to the floor. They sprinkled rose-water on his head, till he came to himself and cried to his Wazir, “Write letters to all my Governors and Nabobs, and bid them leave not a smiter with the sword nor a lunger with the lance nor a bender of the bow, but bring them all to me in one body." So he wrote letters and despatched them by runners to the Governors, who levied their power and joined the King with a prevailing host, whose number was one hundred and eighty thousand men. Then they made ready tents and camels and noble steeds and were about to march when, behold, up came Jamrkan and Sa'adan the Ghul, with seventy thousand horse, as they were lions fierce-faced, all steel-encased. When Jaland saw the Moslems trooping on he rejoiced and said, "By the virtue of the Sun, and her resplendent light, I will not leave alive one of my foes; no, not one to carry the news, and I will lay waste the land of Al-Irak, that I may take my wreak for my son, the havoc-making champion bold; nor shall my fire be quenched or cooled!" Then he turned to Ajib and said to him, "O dog of Al-Irak, 'twas thou broughtest this calamity on us! But by the virtue of that which I worship, except I avenge me of mine enemy I will do thee die after foulest fashion!" When Ajib heard these words he was troubled with sore trouble and blamed himself; but he waited till nightfall, when the Moslems had pitched their tents for rest. Now he had been degraded and expelled the royal camp together with those who were left to him of his suite: so he said to them, "O my kinsmen, know that Jaland and I are dismayed with exceeding dismay at the coming of the Moslems, and I know that he will not avail to protect me from my brother nor from any other; so it is my counsel that we make our escape, whilst all eyes sleep, and flee to King Ya'arub bin Kahtán,[20] for that he hath more of men and is stronger of reign." They, hearing his advice exclaimed "Right is thy rede," whereupon he bade them kindle fires at their tent-doors and march under cover of the night. They did his bidding and set out, so by daybreak they had already fared far away. As soon as it was morning Jaland mounted with two hundred and sixty thousand fighting-men, clad cap-à-pie in hauberks and cuirasses and strait-knit mail-coats, the kettle-drums beat a point of war and all drew out for cut and thrust and fight and fray. Then Jamrkan and Sa'adan rode out with forty thousand stalwart fighting-men, under each standard a thousand cavaliers, doughty champions, foremost in champaign. The two hosts drew out in battles and bared their blades and levelled their limber lances, for the drinking of the cup of death. The first to open the gate of strife was Sa'adan, as he were a mountain of syenite or a Marid of the Jinn. Then dashed out to him a champion of the Infidels, and the Ghul slew him and casting him to the earth, cried out to his sons and slaves, saying, "Light the fire and roast me this dead one." They did as he bade and brought him the roast and he ate it and crunched the bones, whilst the Kafirs stood looking on from afar; and they cried out, "Oh for aid from the light- giving Sun!" and were affrighted at the thought of being slain by Sa'adan. Then Jaland shouted to his men, saying, "Slay me yonder loathsome beast!" Whereupon another captain of his host drove at the Ghul; but he slew him and he ceased not to slay horseman after horseman, till he had made an end of thirty men. With this the blamed Kafirs held back and feared to face him, crying, "Who shall cope with Jinns and Ghuls?" But Jaland raised his voice saying, "Let an hundred horse charge him and bring him to me, bound or slain." So an hundred horse set upon Sa'adan with swords and spears, and he met them with a heart firmer than flint, proclaiming the unity of the Requiting King, whom no one thing diverteth from other thing. Then he cried aloud, "Allaho Akbar!" and, smiting them with his sword, made their heads fly and in one onset he slew of them four-and-seventy whereupon the rest took to flight. So Jaland shouted aloud to ten of his captains, each commanding a thousand men, and said to them, "Shoot his horse with arrows till it fall under him, and then lay hands on him." Therewith ten thousand horse drove at Sa'adan who met them with a stout heart; and Jamrkan, seeing this, bore down upon the Miscreants with his Moslems, crying out, "God is Most Great!" Before they could reach the Ghul, the enemy had slain his steed and taken him prisoner; but they ceased not to charge the Infidels, till the day grew dark for dust and eyes were blinded, and the sharp sword clanged while firm stood the valiant cavalier and destruction overtook the faint-heart in his fear; till the Moslems were amongst the Paynims like a white patch on a black bull. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Forty-seventh Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that battle raged between the Moslems and the Paynims till the True Believers were like a white patch on a black bull. Nor did they stint from the mellay till the darkness fell down, when they drew apart, after there had been slain of the Infidels men without compt. Then Jamrkan and his men returned to their tents; but they were in great grief for Sa'adan, so that neither meat nor sleep was sweet to them, and they counted their host and found that less than a thousand had been slain. But Jamrkan said, "O folk, to- morrow I will go forth into the battle-plain and place where cut and thrust obtain, and slay their champions and make prize of their families after taking them captives and I will ransom Sa'adan therewith, by the leave of the Requiting King, whom no one thing diverteth from other thing!" Wherefore their hearts were heartened and they joyed as they separated to their tents. Meanwhile Jaland entered his pavilion and sitting down on his sofa of estate, with his folk about him, called for Sa'adan and forthright on his coming, said to him, "O dog run wood and least of the Arab brood and carrier of firewood, who was it slew my son Kurajan, the brave of the age, slayer of heroes and caster down of warriors?" Quoth the Ghul, "Jamrkan slew him, captain of the armies of King Gharib, Prince of cavaliers, and I roasted and ate him, for I was anhungered." When Jaland heard these words, his eyes sank into his head for rage and he bade his swordbearer smite Sa'adan's neck. So he came forward in that intent, whereupon Sa'adan stretched himself mightily and bursting his bonds, snatched the sword from the headsman and hewed off his head. Then he made at Jaland who threw himself down from the throne and fled; whilst Sa'adan fell on the bystanders and killed twenty of the King's chief officers, and all the rest took to flight. Therewith loud rose the crying in the camp of the Infidels and the Ghul sallied forth of the pavilion and falling upon the troops smote them with the sword, right and left, till they opened and left a lane for him to pass; nor did he cease to press forward, cutting at them on either side, till he won free of the Miscreants' tents and made for the Moslem camp. Now these had heard the uproar among their enemies and said, "Haply some calamity hath befallen them." But whilst they were in perplexity, behold, Sa adan stood amongst them and they rejoiced at his coming with exceeding joy; more especially Jamrkan, who saluted him with the salam as did other

True Believers and gave him joy of his escape. Such was the case with the Moslems; but as regards the Miscreants, when, after the Ghul's departure, they and their King returned to their tents, Jaland said to them, "O folk, by the virtue of the Sun's light-giving ray and by the darkness of the Night and the light of the Day and the Stars that stray, I thought not this day to have escaped death in mellay; for, had I fallen into yonder fellow's hands, he had eaten me, as I were a kernel of wheat or a barley-corn or any other grain." They re- plied, "O King, never saw we any do the like of this Ghul." And he said, "O folk, to-morrow do ye all don arms and mount steed and trample them under your horses' hooves." Meanwhile the Moslems had ended their rejoicings at Sa'adan's return and Jamrkan said to them, "To-morrow, I will show you my derring-do and what behoveth the like of me, for by the virtue of Abraham the Friend, I will slay them with the foulest of slaughters and smite them with the bite of the sword, till all who have under- standing confounded at them shall stand. But I mean to attack both right and left wings; so, when ye see me drive at the King under the standards, do ye charge behind me with a resolute charge, and Allah's it is to decree what thing shall be!" Accord- ingly the two sides lay upon their arms till the day broke through night and the sun appeared to sight. Then they mounted swiftlier than the twinkling of the eyelid; the raven of the wold croaked and the two hosts, looking each at other with the eye of fascination, formed in line-array and prepared for fight and fray. The first to open the chapter of war was Jamrkan who wheeled and careered and offered fight in field; and Jaland and his men were about to charge when, behold, a cloud of dust uprolled till it walled the wold and overlaid the day. Then the four winds smote it and away it floated, torn to rags, and there appeared beneath it cavaliers, with helms black and garb white and many a princely knight and lances that bite and swords that smite and footmen who lion-like knew no affright. Seeing this both armies left fighting and sent out scouts to reconnoitre and report who thus had come in main and might. So they went and within the dust cloud disappeared from sight, and returned after awhile with the news aright that the approaching host was one of Moslems, under the command of King Gharib. When the True Believers heard from the scouts of the coming of their King, they rejoiced and driving out to meet him, dismounted and kissed the earth between his hands — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Forty-eighth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Moslems saw the presence of their King Gharib, they joyed with exceeding joy; and, kissing the earth between his hands, saluted him and gat around him whilst he welcomed them and rejoiced in their safety. Then they escorted him to their camp and pitched pavilions for him and set up standards; and Gharib sat down on his couch of estate, with his Grandees about him; and they related to him all that had befallen, especially to Sa'adan Meanwhile the Kafirs sought for Ajib and finding him not among them nor in their tents, told Jaland of his flight, whereat his Doomsday rose and he bit his fingers, saying, "By the Sun's light-giving round, he is a perfidious hound and hath fled with his rascal rout to desert-ground. But naught save force of hard fighting will serve us to repel these foes; so fortify your resolves and hearten your hearts and beware of the Moslems." And Gharib also said to the True Believers, "Strengthen your courage and fortify your hearts and seek aid of your Lord, beseeching him to vouchsafe you the victory over your enemies." They replied, "O King, soon thou shalt see what we will do in battle-plain where men cut and thrust amain." So the two hosts slept till the day arose with its sheen and shone and the rising sun rained light upon hill and down, when Gharib prayed the two-bow prayer, after the rite of Abraham the Friend (on whom be the Peace!) and wrote a letter, which he despatched by his brother Sahim to the King of the Kafirs. When Sahim reached the enemies' camp, the guards asked him what he wanted, and he answered them, "I want your ruler.''[21] Quoth they, "Wait till we consult him anent thee;" and he waited, whilst they went in to their Sovran and told him of the coming of a messenger, and he cried, "Hither with him to me!" So they brought Sahim before Jaland, who said to him, "Who hath sent thee?" Quoth he, King Gharib sends me, whom Allah hath made ruler over Arab and Ajam; receive his letter and return its reply." Jaland took the writ and opening it, read as follows, "In the name of Allah, the Compassionating, the Compassionate * the One, the All-knowing, the supremely Great * the Immemorial, the Lord of Noah and Sálih and Húd and Abraham and of all things He made! * The Peace be on him who followeth in the way of righteousness and who feareth the issues of frowardness * who obeyeth the Almighty King and followeth the Faith saving and preferreth the next world to any present thing! * But afterwards: O Jaland, none is worthy of worship save Allah alone, the Victorious, the One, Creator of night and day and the sphere revolving alway * Who sendeth the holy Prophets and garreth the streams to flow and the trees to grow, who vaulted the heavens and spread out the earth like a carpet below * Who feedeth the birds in their nests and the wild beasts in the deserts * for He is Allah the All-powerful, the Forgiving, the Long-suffering, the Protector, whom eye comprehendeth on no wise and who maketh night on day arise * He who sent down the Apostles and their Holy Writ. Know, O Jaland, that there is no faith but the Faith of Abraham the Friend; so cleave to the Creed of Salvation and be saved from the biting glaive and the Fire which followeth the grave * But, an thou refuse Al-Islam look for ruin to haste and thy reign to be waste and thy traces untraced * And, lastly, send me the dog Ajib hight that I may take from him my father's and mother's blood-wit." When Jaland had read this letter, he said to Sahim, "Tell thy lord that Ajib hath fled, he and his folk, and I know not whither he is gone; but, as for Jaland, he will not forswear his faith, and to-morrow, there shall be battle between us and the Sun shall give us the victory." So Sahim returned to his brother with this reply, and when the morning morrowed, the Moslems donned their arms and armour and bestrode their stout steeds, calling aloud on the name of the All-conquering King, Creator of bodies and souls, and magnifying Him with "Allaho Akbar." Then the kettle-drums of battle beat until earth trembled, and sought the field all the lordly warriors and doughty champions. The first to open the gate of battle was Jamrkan, who drave his charger into mid-plain and played with sword and javelin, till the understanding was amazed; after which he cried out, saying, "Ho! who is for tilting? Ho! who is for fighting? Let no sluggard come out to me to-day nor weakling! I am the slayer of Kurajan bin Jaland; who will come forth to avenge him?" When Jaland heard the name of his son, he cried out to his men, "O whore-sons, bring me yonder horseman who slew my son, that I may eat his flesh and drink his blood.” So an hundred fighting-men charged at Jamrkan, but he slew the most part of them and put their chief to flight; which feat when Jaland saw, he cried out to his folk, “At him all at once and assault him with one assault.” Accordingly they waved the awe-striking banners and host was heaped on host; Gharib rushed on with his men and Jamrkan did the same and the two sides met like two seas together clashing. The Yamáni sword and spear wrought havoc and breasts and bellies were rent, whilst both armies saw the Angel of Death face to face and the dust of the battle rose to the skirts of the sky. Ears went deaf and tongues went dumb and doom from every side came on whilst valiant stood fast and faint-heart fled: and they ceased not from fight and fray till ended the day, when the drums beat the retreat and the two hosts drew apart and returned, each to its tents. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Forty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Gharib ended the battle and the two hosts drew apart and each had returned to his own tents, he sat down on the throne of his realm and the place of his reign, whilst his chief officers ranged themselves about him, and he said, “I am sore concerned for the flight of the cur Ajib and I know not whither he has gone. Except I overtake him and take my wreak of him, I shall die of despite.” Whereupon Sahim came forward and kissing the earth before him, said, “O King, I will go to the army of the Kafirs and find out what is come of the perfidious dog Ajib.” Quoth Gharib, “Go, and learn the truth anent the hog.” So Sahim disguised himself in the habit of the Infidels and became as he were of them; then, making for the enemy’s camp, he found them all asleep, drunken with war and battle, and none were on wake save only the guards. He passed on and presently came to the King’s pavilion where he found King Jaland asleep unattended; so he crept up and made him smell and sniff up levigated Bhang and he became as one dead. Then Sahim went out and took a male mule, and wrapping the King in the coverlet of his bed, laid him on its back; after which he threw a mat over him and led the beast to the Moslem camp. Now when he came to Gharib’s pavilion and would have entered, the guards knew him not and prevented him, saying, "Who art thou?'' He laughed and uncovered his face, and they knew him and admitted him. When Gharib saw him he said, "What bearest thou there, O Sahim?"; and he replied, "O King, this is Jaland bin Karkar." Then he uncovered him, and Gharib knew him and said, "Arouse him, O Sahim." So he made him smell vinegar[22] and frankincense; and he cast the Bhang from his nostrils and, opening his eyes, found himself among the Moslems; whereupon quoth he, "What is this foul dream?" and closing his eyelids again, would have slept; but Sahim dealt him a kick, saying, "Open thine eyes, O accursed!" So he opened them and asked, "Where am I?"; and Sahim answered, "Thou art in the presence of King Gharib bin Kundamir, King of Irak." When Jaland heard this, he said, "O King, I am under thy protection! Know that I am not at fault, but that who led us forth to fight thee was thy brother, and the same cast enmity between us and then fled." Quoth Gharib, "Knowest thou whither he is gone?"; and quoth Jaland, "No, by the light-giving sun, I know not whither." Then Gharib bade lay him in bonds and set guards over him, whilst each captain returned to his own tent, and Jamrkan while wending said to his men, "O sons of my uncle, I purpose this night to do a deed wherewith I may whiten my face with King Gharib." Quoth they, "Do as thou wilt, we hearken to thy commandment and obey it." Quoth he, "Arm yourselves and, muffling your steps while I go with you, let us fare softly and disperse about the Infidels' camp, so that the very ants shall not be ware of you; and, when you hear me cry 'Allaho Akbar,' do ye the like and cry out, saying, 'God is Most Great!' and hold back and make for the city- gate; and we seek aid from the Most High." So the folk armed themselves cap-à-pie and waited till the noon of Night, when they dispersed about the enemy's camp and tarried awhile when, lo and behold! Jamrkan smote shield with sword and shouted, "Allaho Akbar'" Thereupon they all cried out the like, till rang again valley and mountain, hills, sands and ruins. The Miscreants awoke in dismay and fell one upon other, and the sword went round amongst them; the Moslems drew back and made for the city-gates, where they slew the warders and entering, made themselves masters of the town with all that was therein of treasure and women. Thus it befel with Jamrkan; but as regards King

Gharib, hearing the noise and clamour of "God is Most Great," he mounted with his troops to the last man and sent on in advance Sahim who, when he came near the field of fight, saw that Jamrkan had fallen upon the Kafirs with the Banu Amir by night and made them drink the cup of death. So he returned and told all to his brother, who called down blessings on Jamrkan. And the Infidels ceased not to smite one another with the biting sword and expending their strength till the day rose and lighted up the land, when Gharib cried out to his men, "Charge, O ye noble, and do a deed to please the All-knowing King!" So the True Believers fell upon the idolaters and plied upon every false hypocritical breast the keen sword and the quivering spear. They sought to take refuge in the city; but Jamrkan came forth upon them with his kinsmen, who hemmed them in between two mountain-ranges, and slew an innumerable host of them, and the rest fled into the wastes and words. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fiftieth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Moslem host charged upon the Miscreants they hewed them in pieces with the biting scymitar and the rest fled to the wastes and words; nor did the Moslems cease pursuing them with the sword, till they had scattered them abroad in the plains and stony places. Then they returned to Oman city, and King Gharib entered the palace of the King and, sitting down on the throne of his kingship, with his Grandees and Officers ranged right and left, sent for Jaland. They brought him in haste and Gharib expounded to him Al-Islam; but he rejected it; wherefore Gharib bade crucify him on the gate of the city, and they shot at him with shafts till he was like unto a porcupine. Then Gharib honourably robed Jamrkan and said to him, "Thou shalt be lord of this city and ruler thereof with power to loose and to bind therein, for it was thou didst open it with thy sword and thy folk." And Jamrkan kissed the King's feet, thanked him and wished him abiding victory and glory and every blessing. Moreover Gharib opened Jaland's treasuries and saw what was therein of coin, whereof he gave largesse to his captains and standard-bearers and fighting-men, yea, even to the girls and children; and thus he lavished his gifts ten days long. After this, one night he dreamt a terrible dream and awoke, troubled and trembling. So he aroused his brother Sahim and said to him, “I saw in my vision that we were in a wide valley, when there pounced down on us two ravening birds of prey, never in my life saw I greater than they; their legs were like lances, and as they swooped we were in sore fear of them.” Replied Sahim, “O King, this be some great enemy; so stand on thy guard against him.” Gharib slept not the rest of the night and, when the day broke, he called for his courser and mounted. Quoth Sahim, “Whither goest thou, my brother?” and quoth Gharib, “I awoke heavy at heart; so I mean to ride abroad ten days and broaden my breast.” Said Sahim, “Take with thee a thousand braves;” but Gharib replied, “I will not go forth but with thee and only thee.” So the two brothers mounted and, seeking the dales and leasows, fared on from Wady to Wady and from meadow to meadow, till they came to a valley abounding in streams and sweet-smelling flowers and trees laden with all manner eatable fruits, two of each kind. Birds warbled on the branches their various strains; the mocking bird trilled out her sweet notes fain and the turtle filled with her voice the plain. There sang the nightingale, whose chant arouses the sleeper, and the merle with his note like the voice of man and the cushat and the ring-dove, whilst the parrot with its eloquent tongue answered the twain. The valley pleased them and they ate of its fruits and drank of its waters, after which they sat under the shadow of its trees till drowsiness overcame them and they slept, glory be to Him who sleepeth not! As they lay asleep, lo! two fierce Marids swooped down on them and, taking each one on his shoulders, towered with them high in air, till they were above the clouds. So Gharib and Sahim awoke and found themselves betwixt heaven and earth; whereupon they looked at those who bore them and saw that they were two Marids, the head of the one being as that of a dog and the head of the other as that of an ape[23] with hair like horses’ tails and claws like lions’ claws, and both were big as great palm-trees. When they espied this case, they exclaimed,, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” Now the cause of this was that a certain King of the Kings of the Jinn, hight Mura’ash, had a son called Sá’ik, who loved a damsel of the Jinn, named Najmah;[24] and the twain used to foregather in that Wady under the semblance of two birds. Gharib and Sahim saw them thus and deeming them birds, shot at them with shafts but wounding only Sa'ik whose blood flowed. Najmah mourned over him; then, fearing lest the like calamity befal herself, snatched up her lover and flew with him to his father's palace, where she cast him down at the gate. The warders bore him in and laid him before his sire who, seeing the pile sticking in his rib exclaimed, "Alas, my son! Who hath done with thee this thing, that I may lay waste his abiding-place and hurry on his destruction, though he were the greatest of the Kings of the Jann?" Thereupon Sa'ik opened his eyes and said, "O my father, none slew me save a mortal in the Valley of Springs." Hardly had he made an end of these words, when his soul departed; whereupon his father buffeted his face, till the blood streamed from his mouth, and cried out to two Marids, saying, "Hie ye to the Valley of Springs and bring me all who are therein." So they betook themselves to the Wady in question, where they found Gharib and Sahim asleep, and, snatching them up, carried them to King Mura'ash.[25] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fifty-first Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the two Marids, after snatching up Gharib and Sahim in their sleep, carried them to Mura'ash, king of the Jann, whom they saw seated on the throne of his kinship, as he were a huge mountain, with four heads on his body,[26] the first that of a lion, the second that of an elephant, the third that of a panther, and the fourth that of a lynx. The Marids set them down before Mura'ash and said to him, "O King, these twain be they we found in the Valley of Springs." Thereupon he looked at them with wrathful eyes and snarked and snorted and shot sparks from his nostrils, so that all who stood by feared him. Then said he, "O dogs of mankind, ye have slain my son and lighted fire in my liver." Quoth Gharib, "Who is thy son, and who hath seen him?" Quoth Mura'ash, "Were ye not in the Valley of Springs and did ye not see my son there, in the guise of a bird, and did ye not shoot at him with wooden bolts that he died?" Replied Gharib, "I know not who slew him; and, by the virtue of the Great God, the One, the Immemorial who knoweth things all, and of Abraham the Friend, we saw no bird, neither slew we bird or beast!" Now when

Mura'ash heard Gharib swear by Allah and His greatness and by Abraham the Friend, he knew him for a Moslem (he himself being a worshipper of Fire, not of the All-powerful Sire), so he cried out to his folk, "Bring me my Goddess.[27] " Accordingly they brought a brazier of gold and, setting it before him, kindled therein fire and cast on drugs, whereupon there arose therefrom green and blue and yellow flames and the King and all who were present prostrated themselves before the brazier, whilst Gharib and Sahim ceased not to attest the Unity of Allah Almighty, to cry out "God is Most Great" and to bear witness to His Omnipotence. Presently, Mura'ash raised his head and, seeing the two Princes standing in lieu of falling down to worship, said to them, "O dogs, why do ye not prostrate yourselves?" Replied Gharib, "Out on you, O ye accursed! Prostration befitteth not man save to the Worshipful King, who bringeth forth all creatures into beingness from nothingness and maketh water to well from the barren rockwell, Him who inclineth heart of sire unto new-born scion and who may not be described as sitting or standing; the God of Noah and Salih and Hud and Abraham the Friend, Who created Heaven and Hell and trees and fruit as well,[28] for He is Allah, the One, the All-powerful." When Mura'ash heard this, his eyes sank into his head[29] and he cried out to his guards, saying, "Pinion me these two dogs and sacrifice them to my Goddess." So they bound them and were about to cast them into the fire when, behold, one of the crenelles of the palace-parapet fell down upon the brazier and brake it and put out the fire, which became ashes flying in air. Then quoth Gharib, "God is Most Great! He giveth aid and victory and He forsaketh those who deny Him, worshipping Fire and not the Almighty King!" Presently quoth Mura'ash, "Thou art a sorcerer and hast bewitched my Goddess, so that this thing hath befallen her." Gharib replied, "O madman, an the fire had soul or sense it would have warded off from self all that hurteth it." When Mura'ash heard these words, he roared and bellowed and reviled the Fire, saying, "By my faith, I will not kill you save by the fire!" Then he bade cast them into gaol; and, calling an hundred Marids, made them bring much fuel and set fire thereto. So they brought great plenty of wood and made a huge blaze, which flamed up mightily till the morning, when Mura'ash mounted an elephant, bearing on its back a throne of gold dubbed with jewels, and the tribes of the Jinn gathered about him in their various kinds. Presently they brought in Gharib and Sahim who, seeing the flaming of the fire, sought help of the One, the All- conquering Creator of night and day, Him of All-might, whom no sight comprehendeth, but who comprehendeth all sights, for He is the Subtle, the All-knowing. And they ceased not humbly beseeching Him till, behold, a cloud arose from West to East and, pouring down showers of rain, like the swollen sea, quenched the fire. When the King saw this, he was affrighted, he and his troops, and entered the palace, where he turned to the Wazirs and Grandees and said to them, "How say ye of these two men?" They replied, "O King, had they not been in the right, this thing had not befallen the fire; wherefore we say that they be true men which speak sooth." Rejoined Mura'ash, "Verily the Truth hath been displayed to me, ay, and the manifest way, and I am certified that the worship of the fire is false; for, were it goddess, it had warded off from itself the rain which quenched it and the stone which broke its brazier and beat it into ashes. Wherefore I believe in Him Who created the fire and the light and the shade and the heat. And ye, what say ye?" They answered, "O King, we also hear and follow and obey." So the King called for Gharib and embraced him and kissed him between the eyes and then summoned Sahim; whereupon the bystanders all crowded to kiss their hands and heads. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fifth-second Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Mura'ash and his men found salvation in the Saving Faith, Al- Islam, he called for Gharib and Sahim and kissed them between the eyes and so did all the Grandees who crowded to buss their hands and heads. Then Mura'ash sat down on the throne of his kingship and, seating Gharib on his right and Sahim on his left hand, said to them, "O mortals, what shall we say, that we may become Moslems?" Replied Gharib, "Say, 'There is no god but the God, and Abraham is the Friend of God!'" So the King and his folk professed Al-Islam with heart and tongue, and Gharib abode with them awhile, teaching them the ritual of prayer. But presently he called to mind his people and sighed, whereupon quoth Mura'ash, "Verily, trouble is gone and joy and gladness are come." Quoth Gharib, "O King, I have many foes and I fear for my folk from them." Then he related to him his history with his brother Ajib from first to last, and the King of the Jinns said, "O King of men, I will send one who shall bring thee news of thy people, for I will not let thee go till I have had my fill of thy face." Then he called two doughty Marids, by name Kaylaján and Kúraján, and after they had done him homage, he bade them repair to Al-Yaman and bring him news of Gharib's army. They replied, "To hear is to obey," and departed. Thus far concerning the brothers; but as regards the Moslems, they arose in the morning and led by their captains rode to King Gharib's palace, to do their service to him; but the eunuchs told them that the King had mounted with his brother and had ridden forth at peep o' day. So they made for the valleys and mountains and followed the track of the Princes, till they came to the Valley of Springs, where they found their arms cast down and their two gallant steeds grazing and said, "The King is missing from this place, by the glory of Abraham the Friend!" Then they mounted and sought in the valley and the mountains three days, but found no trace of them; whereupon they began the mourning ceremonies and, sending for couriers, said to them, "Do ye disperse yourselves about the cities and sconces and castles, and seek ye news of our King." "Harkening and obedience!" cried the couriers, who dispersed hither and thither each over one of the Seven Climes and sought everywhere for Gharib, but found no trace of him. Now when the tidings came to Ajib by his spies that his brother was lost and there was no news of the missing, he rejoiced and going in to King Ya'arub bin Kahtan, sought of him aid which he granted and gave him two hundred thousand Amalekites, wherewith he set out for Al-Yaman and sat down before the city of Oman. Jamrkan and Sa'adan sallied forth and offered him battle, and there were slain of the Moslems much folk, so the True Believers retired into the city and shut the gates and manned the walls. At this moment came up the two Marids Kaylajan and Kurajan and, seeing the Moslem beleaguered waited till nightfall, when they fell upon the miscreants and plied them with sharp swords of the swords of the Jinn, each twelve cubits long, if a man smote therewith a rock, verily he would cleave it in sunder. They charged the Idolaters, shouting, “Allaho Akbar! God is Most Great! He giveth aid and victory and forsaketh those who deny the Faith of Abraham the Friend!” and whilst they raged amongst the foes, fire issued from their mouths and nostrils, and they made great slaughter amongst them. Thereupon the Infidels ran out of their tents offering battle but, seeing these strange things, were confounded and their hair stood on end and their reason fled. So they snatched up their arms and fell one upon other, whilst the Marids shore off their heads, as a reaper eareth grain, crying, “God is Most Great! We are the lads of King Gharib, the friend of Mura’ash, King of the Jinn!” The sword ceased not to go round amongst them till the night was half spent, when the Misbelievers, imagining that the mountains were all Ifrits, loaded their tents and treasure and baggage upon camels and made off; and the first to fly was Ajib.- - And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fifty-third Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Misbelievers made off and the first to fly was Ajib. Thereupon the Moslems gathered together, marvelling at this that had betided the Infidels and fearing the tribesmen of the Jinn. But the Marids ceased not from pursuit, till they had driven them far away into the hills and words; and but fifty thousand Rebels[30] of two hundred thousand escaped with their lives and made for their own land, wounded and sore discomfited. Then the two Jinns returned and said to them, “O host of the Moslems, your lord King Gharib and his brother Sahim salute you; they are the guests of Mura’ash, King of the Jann, and will be with you anon.” When Gharib’s men heard that he was safe and well, they joyed with exceeding joy and said to the Marids, “Allah gladden you twain with good news, O noble spirits!” So Kurajan and Kaylajan returned to Mura’ash and Gharib; and acquainted them with that which had happened, whereat Gharib finding the two sitting together felt heart at ease and said, “Allah abundantly requite you!” Then quoth King Mura’ash, “O my brother, I am minded to show thee our country and the city of Japhet[31] son of Noah (on whom be peace!)” Quoth Gharib, “O King, do what seemeth good to thee.” So he called for three noble steeds and mounting, he and Gharib and Sahim, set out with a thousand Marids, as they were a piece of a mountain cloven lengthwise. They fared on, solacing themselves with the sight of valleys and mountains, till they came to Jabarsá,[32] the city of Japhet son of Noah (on whom be peace!) where the townsfolk all, great and small, came forth to meet King Mura'ash and brought them into the city in great state. Then Mura'ash went up to the palace of Japhet son of Noah and sat down on the throne of his kingship, which was of alabaster, ten stages high and latticed with wands of gold wherefrom hung all manner coloured silks. The people of the city stood before him and he said to them, "O seed of Yafis bin Nuh, what did your fathers and grandfathers worship?" They replied, "We found them worshipping Fire and followed their example, as thou well knowest." "O folk," rejoined Mura'ash, "we have been shown that the fire is but one of the creatures of Almighty Allah, Creator of all things; and when we knew this, we submitted ourselves to God, the One, the All-powerful, Maker of night and day and the sphere revolving alway, Whom comprehendeth no sight, but Who comprehendeth all sights, for He is the Subtle, the All-wise. So seek ye Salvation and ye shall be saved from the wrath of the Almighty One and from the fiery doom in the world to come." And they embraced Al-Islam with heart and tongue. Then Mura'ash took Gharib by the hand and showed him the palace and its ordinance and all the marvels it contained, till they came to the armoury, wherein were the arms of Japhet son of Noah. Here Gharib saw a sword hanging to a pin of gold and asked, "O King, whose is that?" Mura'ash answered, " 'Tis the sword of Yafis bin Nuh, wherewith he was wont to do battle against men and Jinn. The sage Jardúm forged it and graved on its back names of might.[33] It is named Al-Máhík the Annihilator for that it never descendeth upon a man, but it annihilateth him, nor upon a Jinni, but it crusheth him; and if one smote therewith a mountain 'twould overthrow it." When Gharib heard tell of the virtues of the sword, he said, "I desire to look on this blade;" and Mura'ash said, "Do as thou wilt." So Gharib put out his hand, and, hending the sword, drew it from its sheath; whereupon it flashed and Death crept on its edge and glittered; and it was twelve spans long and three broad. Now Gharib wished to become owner of it, and King Mura'ash said, "An thou canst smite with it, take it." "'Tis well," Gharib replied, and took it up, and it was in his hand as a staff; wherefore all who were present, men and Jinn, marvelled and said, "Well done, O Prince of Knights!" Then said Mura'ash "Lay thy hand on this hoard for which the Kings of the earth sigh in vain, and mount, that I may show thee the city." Then they took horse and rode forth the palace, with men and Jinns attending them on foot, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fifty-fourth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Gharib and King Mura'ash rode forth the palace of Japhet, with men and Jinns attending them on foot, they passed through the streets and thoroughfares of the town, by palaces and deserted mansions and gilded doorways, till they issued from the gates and entered gardens full of trees fruit-bearing and waters welling and birds speaking and celebrating the praises of Him to whom belong Majesty and Eternity; nor did they cease to solace themselves in the land till nightfall, when they returned to the palace of Japhet son of Noah and they brought them the table of food. So they ate and Gharib turned to the King of the Jann and said to him, "O King, I would fain return to my folk and my force; for I know not their plight after me." Replied Mura'ash, "By Allah, O my brother, I will not part with thee for a full month, till I have had my fill of thy sight." Now Gharib could not say nay, so he abode with him in the city of Japhet, eating and drinking and making merry, till the month ended, when Mura'ash gave him great store of gems and precious ores, emeralds and balass-rubies, diamonds and other jewels, ingots of gold and silver and likewise ambergis and musk and brocaded silks and else of rarities and things of price. Moreover he clad him and Sahim in silken robes of honour gold inwoven and set on Gharib's head a crown jewelled with pearls and diamonds of inestimable value. All these treasures he made up into even loads for him and, calling five hundred Marids, said to them, "Get ye ready to travel on the morrow, that we may bring King Gharib and Sahim back to their own country." And they answered, "We hear and we obey." So they passed the night in the city, purposing to depart on the morrow, but, next morning, as they were about to set forth behold, they espied a great host advancing upon the city, with horses neighing and kettle-drums beating and trumpets braying and riders filling the earth for they numbered threescore and ten thousand Marids, flying and diving, under a King called Barkán. Now this Barkan was lord of the City of Carnelian and the Castle of Gold and under his rule were five hill-strongholds, in each five hundred thousand Marids; and he and his tribe worshipped the Fire, not the Omnipotent Sire. He was a cousin of Mura'ash, the son of his father's brother, and the cause of his coming was that there had been among the subjects of King Mura'ash a misbelieving Marid, who professed Al-Islam hypocritically, and he stole away from his people and made for the Valley of Carnelian, where he went in to King Barkan and, kissing the earth before him, wished him abiding glory and prosperity. Then he told him of Mura'ash being converted to Al-Islam, and Barkan said, "How came he to tear himself away from his faith[34] ?'' So the rebel told him what had passed and, when Barkan heard it, he snorted and snarked and railed at Sun and Moon and sparkling Fire, saying, "By the virtue of my faith, I will surely slay mine uncle's son and his people and this mortal, nor will I leave one of them alive!" Then he cried out to the legions of the Jinn and choosing of them seventy thousand Marids, set out and fared on till he came to Jabarsá[35] the city of Japhet and encamped before its gates. When Mura'ash saw this, he despatched a Marid, saying, "Go to this host and learn all that it wanteth and return hither in haste." So the messenger rushed away to Barkan's camp, where the Marids flocked to meet him and said to him, "Who art thou?" Replied he, "An envoy from King Mura'ash;" whereupon they carried him in to Barkan, before whom he prostrated himself, saying, "O my lord, my master hath sent me to thee, to learn tidings of thee." Quoth Barkan, "Return to thy lord and say to him, 'This is thy cousin Barkan, who is come to salute thee.'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Marid-envoy of Mura'ash was borne before Barkan and said to him, "O my lord, my master hath sent me to thee to learn tidings of thee," Barkan replied, "Return to thy lord and say to him, 'This is thy cousin Barkan who is come to salute thee!'" So the messenger went back and told Mura'ash, who said to Gharib, "Sit thou on thy throne whilst I go and salute my cousin and return to thee." Then he mounted and rode to the camp of his uncle's son. Now this was a trick[36] of Barkan, to bring Mura'ash out and seize upon him, and he said to his Marids, whom he had stationed about him, "When ye see me embrace him,[37] lay hold of him and pinion him." And they replied, "To hear is to obey." So, when King Mura'ash came up and entered Barkan's pavilion, the owner rose to him and threw his arms round his neck; whereat the Jann fell upon Mura'ash and pinioned him and chained him. Mura'ash looked at Barkan and said, "What manner of thing is this?" Quoth Barkan, "O dog of the Jann, wilt thou leave the faith of thy fathers and grandfathers and enter a faith thou knowest not?" Rejoined Mura'ash, "O son of my uncle, indeed I have found the faith of Abraham the Friend to be the True Faith and all other than it vain." Asked Barkan, "And who told thee of this?"; and Mura'ash answered, "Gharib, King of Irak, whom I hold in the highest honour." "By the right of the Fire and the Light and the Shade and the Heat," cried Barkan, "I will assuredly slay both thee and him!" And he cast him into gaol. Now when Mura'ash's henchman saw what had befallen his lord, he fled back to the city and told the King's legionaries who cried out and mounted. Quoth Gharib, "What is the matter?" And they told him all that had passed, whereupon he cried out to Sahim, "Saddle me one of the chargers that King Mura'ash gave me." Said Sahim, "O my brother, wilt thou do battle with the Jinn?" Gharib replied, "Yes, I will fight them with the sword of Japhet son of Noah, seeking help of the Lord of Abraham the Friend (on whom be the Peace!); for He is the Lord of all things and sole Creator!" So Sahim saddled him a sorrel horse of the horses of the Jinn, as he were a castle strong among castles, and he armed and mounting, rode out with the legions of the Jinn, hauberk'd cap-à-pie. Then Barkan and his host mounted also and the two hosts drew out in lines facing each other. The first to open the gate of war was Gharib, who drave his steed into the mid-field and bared the enchanted blade, whence issued a glittering light that dazzled the eyes of all the Jinn and struck terror to their hearts. Then he played[38] with the sword till their wits were wildered, and cried out, saying, "Allaho Akbar! I am Gharib, King of Irak. There is no Faith save the Faith of Abraham the Friend!" Now when Barkan heard Gharib's words, he said, "This is he who seduced my cousin from his religion; so, by the virtue of my faith, I will not sit down on my throne till I have decapitated this Gharib and suppressed his breath of life and forced my cousin and his people back to their belief: and whoso baulketh me, him will I destroy." Then he mounted an elephant paper-white as he were a tower plastered with gypsum, and goaded him with a spike of steel which ran deep into his flesh, whereupon the elephant trumpeted and made for the battle-plain where cut and thrust obtain; and, when he drew near Gharib, he cried out to him, saying, "O dog of mankind, what made thee come into our land, to debauch my cousin and his folk and pervert them from one faith to other faith. Know that this day is the last of thy worldly days." Gharib replied, ''Avaunt,[39] O vilest of the Jann!" Therewith Barkan drew a javelin and making it quiver[40] in his hand, cast it at Gharib; but it missed him. So he hurled a second javelin at him; but Gharib caught it in mid-air and after poising it launched it at the elephant. It smote him on the flank and came out on the other side, whereupon the beast fell to the earth dead and Barkan was thrown to the ground, like a great palm-tree. Before he could stir, Gharib smote him with the flat of Japhet's blade on the nape of the neck, and he fell upon the earth in a fainting-fit; whereupon the Marids swooped down on him and surrounding him pinioned his elbows. When Barkan's people saw their king a prisoner, they drove at the others, seeking to rescue him, but Gharib and the Islamised Jinn fell upon them and gloriously done for Gharib! indeed that day he pleased the Lord who answereth prayer and slaked his vengeance with the talisman-sword! Whomsoever he smote, he clove him in sunder and before his soul could depart he became a heap of ashes in the fire; whilst the two hosts of the Jinn shot each other with flamy meteors till the battle-field was wrapped in smoke. And Gharib tourneyed right and left among the Kafirs who gave way before him, till he came to King Barkan's pavilion, with Kaylajan and Kurajan on his either hand, and cried out to them, "Loose your lord!" So they unbound Mura'ash and broke his fetters and —— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fifty-sixth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Gharib cried out to Kaylajan and Kurajan, saying, “Loose your lord!”, they unbound Mura’ash and broke his fetters, and he said to them, “Bring me my arms and my winged horse.” Now he had two flying steeds, one of which he had given to Gharib and the other he had kept for himself; and this he mounted after he had donned his battle-harness. Then he and Gharib fell upon the enemy, flying through the air on their winged horses, and the true believing Jinn followed them, shouting “Allaho Akbar — God is Most Great!” — till plains and hills, valleys and mountains re-worded the cry. The Infidels fled before them and they returned, after having slain more than thirty thousand Marids and Satans, to the city of Japhet, where the two Kings sat down on their couches of estate and sought Barkan, but found him not; for after capturing him they were diverted from him by stress of battle, where an Ifrit of his servants made his way to him and loosing him, carried him to his folk, of whom he found part slain and the rest in full flight. So he flew up with the King high in air and sat him down in the City of Carnelian and Castle of Gold, where Barkan seated himself on the throne of his kingship. Presently, those of his people who had survived the affair came in to him and gave him joy of his safety; and he said, “O folk, where is safety? My army is slain and they took me prisoner and have rent in pieces mine honour among the tribes of the Jann.” Quoth they, “O King, ’tis ever thus that kings still afflict and are afflicted.” Quoth he, “There is no help but I take my wreak and wipe out my shame, else shall I be for ever disgraced among the tribes of the Jann.” Then he wrote letters to the Governors of his fortresses, who came to him right loyally and, when he reviewed them, he found three hundred and twenty thousand fierce Marids and Satans, who said to him, “What is thy need?” And he replied, “Get ye ready to set out in three days’ time;” whereto they rejoined “Harkening and obedience!” On this wise it befel King Barkan; but as regards Mura’ash, when he discovered his prisoner’s escape, it was grievous to him and he said, “Had we set an hundred Marids to guard him, he had not fled; but whither shall he go from us?” Then said he to Gharib, “Know, O my brother, that Barkan is perfidious and will never rest from wreaking blood-revenge on us, but will assuredly assemble his legions and return to attack us; wherefore I am minded to forestall him and follow the trail of his defeat, whilst he is yet weakened thereby.” Replied Gharib, “This is the right rede, and will best serve our need;” and Mura’ash, said, “Oh my brother, let the Marids bear thee back to thine own country and leave me to fight the battles of the Faith against the Infidels, that I may be lightened of my sin-load.” But Gharib rejoined “By the virtue of the Clement, the Bountiful, the Veiler, I will not go hence till I do to death all the misbelieving Jinn; and Allah hasten their souls to the fire and dwelling-place dire; and none shall be saved but those who worship Allah the One, the Victorious! But do thou send Sahim back to the city of Oman, so haply he may be healed of his ailment.” For Sahim was sick. So Mura’ash cried to the Marids, saying, “Take ye up Sahim and these treasures and bear them to Oman city.” And after replying, “We hear and we obey,” they took them and made for the land of men. Then Mura’ash wrote letters to all his Governors and Captains of fortresses and they came to him with an hundred and sixty thousand warriors. So they made them ready and departed for the City of Carnelian and the Castle of Gold, covering in one day a year’s journey and halted in a valley, where they encamped and passed the night. Next morning as they were about to set forth, behold, the vanguard of Barkan’s army appeared, whereupon the Jinn cried out and the two hosts met and fell each upon other in that valley. Then the engagement was dight and there befel a sore fight as though an earthquake shook the site and fair plight waxed foul plight. Earnest came and jest took flight, and parley ceased ‘twixt wight and wight,[41] whilst long lives were cut short in a trice and the Unbelievers fell into disgrace and despite; for Gharib charged them, proclaiming the Unity of the Worshipful, the All- might and shore through necks and left heads rolling in the dust; nor did night betide before nigh seventy thousand of the Miscreants were slain, and of the Moslemised over ten thousand Marids had fallen Then the kettle-drums beat the retreat, and the two hosts drew apart, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fifty-seventh Night, She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the two hosts drew apart, Gharib and Mura'ash returned to their tents, after wiping their weapons, and supper being set before them, they ate and gave each other joy of their safety, and the loss of their Marids being so small. As for Barkan, he returned to his tent, grieving for the slaughter of his champions, and said to his officers, "O folk, an we tarry here and do battle with them on this wise in three days' time we shall be cut off to the last wight." Quoth they, "And how shall we do, O King?" Quoth Barkan, "We will fall upon them under cover of night whilst they are deep in sleep, and not one of them shall be left to tell the tale. So take your arms and when I give the word of command, attack and fall on your enemies as one." Now there was amongst them a Marid named Jandal whose heart inclined to Al-Islam; so, when he heard the Kafirs' plot, he stole away from them and going in to King Mura'ash and King Gharib, told the twain what Barkan had devised; whereupon Mura'ash turned to Gharib and said to him, "O my brother, what shall we do?" Gharib replied, "To-night we will fall upon the Miscreants and chase them into the wilds and the wolds if it be the will of the Omnipotent King." Then he summoned the Captains of the Jann and said to them, "Arm yourselves, you and yours; and, as soon as 'tis dark, steal out of your tents on foot, hundreds after hundreds, and lie in ambush among the mountains; and when ye see the enemy engaged among the tents, do ye fall upon them from all quarters. Hearten your hearts and rely on your Lord, and ye shall certainly conquer; and behold, I am with you!" So, as soon as it was dark Night, the Infidels attacked the camp, invoking aid of the fire and light; but when they came among the tents, the Moslems fell upon them, calling for help on the Lord of the Worlds and saying, "O Most Merciful of Mercifuls, O Creator of all createds!" till they left them like mown grass, cut down and dead. Nor did morning dawn before the most part of the unbelievers were species without souls and the rest made for the wastes and marshes, whilst Gharib and Mura'ash returned triumphant and victorious; and, making prize of the enemy's baggage, they rested till the morrow, when they set out for the City of Carnelian and Castle of Gold. As for Barkan, when the battle had turned against him and most of his lieges were slain, he fled through the dark with the remnant of his power to his capital where he entered his palace and assembling his legionaries said to them, “O folk, whoso hath aught of price, let him take it and follow me to the Mountain Káf, to the Blue King, lord of the Pied Palace; for he it is who shall avenge us.” So they took their women and children and goods and made for the Caucasus-mountain. Presently Mura’ash and Gharib arrived at the City of Carnelian and Castle of Gold to find the gates open and none left to give them news; whereupon they entered and Mura’ash led Gharib that he might show him the city, whose walls were builded of emeralds and its gates of red carnelian, with studs of silver, and the terrace-roofs of its houses and mansions reposed upon beams of lign aloes and sandal-wood. So they took their pleasure in its streets and alleys, till they came to the Palace of Gold and entering passed through seven vestibules, when they drew near to a building, whose walls were of royal balass-rubies and its pavement of emerald and jacinth. The two Kings were astounded at the goodliness of the place and fared on from vestibule to vestibule, till they had passed through the seventh and happened upon the inner court of the palace wherein they saw four daïses, each different from the others, and in the midst a jetting fount of red gold, compassed about with golden lions,[42] from whose mouths issued water. These were things to daze man’s wit. The estrade at the upper end was hung and carpeted with brocaded silks of various colours and thereon stood two thrones of red gold, inlaid with pearls and jewels. So Mura’ash and Gharib sat down on Barkan’s thrones and held high state in the Palace of Gold. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fifty-eighth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Mura’ash and Gharib took seat on Barkan’s thrones and held high state. Then said Gharib to Mura’ash, “What thinkest thou to do?” And Mura’ash replied, “O King of mankind, I have despatched an hundred horse to learn where Barkan is, that we may pursue him.” Then they abode three days in the palace, the scouting Marids returned with the news that Barkan had fled to the Mountain Kaf and craved protection of the Blue King who granted it; whereupon quoth Mura’ash to Gharib, “What sayest thou, O my brother?” and quoth

Gharib, "Except we attack them they will attack us." So they bade the host make ready for departure and after three days, they were about to set out with their troops, when the Marids, who had carried Sahim and the presents back to Oman, returned and kissed ground before Gharib. He questioned them of his people and they replied, "After the last affair, thy brother Ajib, leaving Ya'arub bin Kahtan, fled to the King of Hind and, submitting his case, sought his protection. The King granted his prayer and writing letters to all his governors, levied an army as it were the surging sea, having neither beginning nor end, wherewith he purposeth to invade Al-Irak and lay it waste." When Gharib heard this, he said, "Perish the Misbelievers! Verily, Allah Almighty shall give the victory to Al-Islam and I will soon show them hew and foin." Said Mura'ash, "O King of humans, by the virtue of the Mighty Name, I must needs go with thee to thy kingdom and destroy thy foes and bring thee to thy wish." Gharib thanked him and they rested on this resolve till the morrow, when they set out, intending for Mount Caucasus and marched many days till they reached the City of Alabaster and the Pied Palace. Now this city was fashioned of alabaster and precious stones by Bárik bin Fáki', father of the Jinn, and he also founded the Pied Palace, which was so named because edified with one brick of gold alternating with one of silver, nor was there builded aught like it in all the world. When they came within half a day's journey of the city, they halted to take their rest, and Mura'ash sent out to reconnoitre a scout who returned and said, "O King, within the City of Alabaster are legions of the Jinn, for number as the leaves of the trees or as the drops of rain." So Mura'ash said to Gharib, "How shall we do, O King of Mankind?" He replied, "O King, divide your men into four bodies and encompass with them the camp of the Infidels; then, in the middle of the Night, let them cry out, saying, 'God is Most Great!' and withdraw and watch what happeneth among the tribes of the Jinn." So Mura'ash did as Gharib counselled and the troops waited till midnight, when they encircled the foe and shouted "Allaho Akbar! Ho for the Faith of Abraham the Friend, on whom be the Peace!" The Misbelievers at this cry awoke in affright and snatching up their arms, fell one upon other till the morning, when most part of them were dead bodies and but few remained. Then Gharib cried out to the True Believers, saying, “Up and at the remnant of the Kafirs! Behold I am with you, and Allah is your helper!” So the Moslems drave at the enemy and Gharib bared his magical blade Al-Mahik and fell upon the foe, lopping off noses and making heads wax hoary and whole ranks turn tail. At last be came up with Barkan and smote him and bereft him of life and he fell down, drenched in his blood. On like wise he did with the Blue King, and by undurn-hour not one of the Kafirs was left alive to tell the tale. Then Gharib and Mura’ash entered the Pied Palace and found its walls builded of alternate courses of gold and silver, with door-sills of crystal and keystones of greenest emerald. In its midst was a fountain adorned with bells and pendants and figures of birds and beasts spouting forth water, and thereby a daïs[43] furnished with gold-brocaded silk, bordered or embroidered with jewels: and they found the treasures of the palace past count or description. Then they entered the women’s court, where they came upon a magnificent serraglio and Gharib saw, among the Blue King’s woman- folk a girl clad in a dress worth a thousand dinars, never had he beheld a goodlier. About her were an hundred slave-girls, upholding her train with golden hooks, and she was in their midst as the moon among stars. When he saw her, his reason was confounded and he said to one of the waiting-women, “Who may be yonder maid?” Quoth they, “This is the Blue King’s daughter, Star o’ Morn.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Fifty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Gharib asked the slave women saying, “Who may be yonder maid,” they replied, “This is Star o’ Morn, daughter to the Blue King.” Then Gharib turned to Mura’ash and said to him, “O King of the Jinn, I have a mind to take yonder damsel to wife.” Replied Mura’ash, “The palace and all that therein is, live stock and dead, are the prize of thy right hand; for, hadst thou not devised a stratagem to destroy the Blue King and Barkan, they had cut us off to the last one: wherefore the treasure is thy treasure and the folk thy thralls.” Gharib thanked him for his fair speech and going up to the girl, gazed steadfastly upon her and loved her with exceeding love, forgetting Fakhr Taj the Princess and even Mahdiyah. Now her mother was the Chinese

King's daughter whom the Blue King had carried off from her palace and perforce deflowered, and she conceived by him and bare this girl, whom he named Star o' Morn, by reason of her beauty and loveliness; for she was the very Princess of the Fair. Her mother died when she was a babe of forty days, and the nurses and eunuchs reared her, till she reached the age of seventeen; but she hated her sire and rejoiced in his slaughter. So Gharib put his palm to hers[44] and went in unto her that night and found her a virgin. Then he bade pull down the Pied Palace and divided the spoil with the true-believing Jinn, and there fell to his share one-and-twenty thousand bricks of gold and silver and money and treasure beyond speech and count. Then Mura'ash took Gharib and showed him the Mountain Kaf and all its marvels; after which they returned to Barkan's fortress and dismantled it and shared the spoil thereof. Then they repaired to Mura'ash's capital, where they tarried five days, when Gharib sought to revisit his native country and Mura'ash said, "O King of mankind, I will ride at thy stirrup and bring thee to thine own land." Replied Gharib, "No, by the virtue of Abraham the Friend, I will not suffer thee to weary thyself thus, nor will I take any of the Jinn save Kaylajan and Kurajan." Quoth the King, "Take with thee ten thousand horsemen of the Jinn, to serve thee;" but quoth Gharib, "I will take only as I said to thee." So Mura'ash bade a thousand Marids carry him to his native land, with his share of the spoil; and he commanded Kaylajan and Kurajan to follow him and obey him; and they answered, "Hearkening and obedience." Then said Gharib to the Marids, "Do ye carry the treasure and Star o' Morn;" for he himself thought to ride his flying steed. But Mura'ash said to him, "This horse, O my brother, will live only in our region, and, if it come upon man's earth, 'twill die: but I have in my stables a sea-horse, whose fellow is not found in Al-Irak, no, nor in all the world is its like." So he caused bring forth the horse, and when Gharib saw it, it interposed between him and his wits.[45] Then they bound it and Kaylajan bore it on his shoulders and Kurajan took what he could carry. And Mura'ash embraced Gharib and wept for parting from him, saying, "O my brother, if aught befal thee wherein thou art powerless, send for me and I will come to thine aid with an army able to lay waste the whole earth and what is thereon." Gharib thanked him for his kindness and zeal for the True Faith and took leave of him; whereupon the Marids set out with Gharib and his goods; and, after traversing fifty years' journey in two days and a Night, alighted near the city of Oman and halted to take rest. Then Gharib sent out Kaylajan, to learn news of his people, and he returned and said, "O King, the city is beleaguered by a host of Infidels, as they were the surging sea, and thy people are fighting them. The drums beat to battle and Jamrkan goeth forth as champion in the field." When Gharib heard this, he cried aloud, "God is Most Great!" and said to Kaylajan, "Saddle me the steed and bring me my arms and spear; for to-day the valiant shall be known from the coward in the place of war and battle-stead." So Kaylajan brought him all he sought and Gharib armed and belting in baldrick Al-Mahik, mounted the sea horse and made toward the hosts. Quoth Kaylajan and Kurajan to him, Set thy heart at rest and let us go to the Kafirs and scatter them abroad in the wastes and wilds till, by the help of Allah, the All-powerful, we leave not a soul alive, no, not a blower of the fire." But Gharib said "By the virtue of Abraham the Friend, I will not let you fight them without me and behold, I mount!" Now the cause of the coming of that great host was right marvellous.[46] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Sixtieth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Gharib had bidden Kaylajan go and learn news of his people, the Jinn fared forth and presently returning said, "Verily around thy city is a mighty host!" Now the cause of its coming was that Ajib, having fled the field after Ya'arub's army had been put to the rout, said to his people, "O folk, if we return to Ya'arub bin Kahtan, he will say to us, 'But for you, my son and my people had not been slain; and he will put us to death, even to the last man.' Wherefore, methinks we were better go to Tarkanán, King of Hind, and beseech him to avenge us." Replied they, "Come, let us go thither; and the blessing of the Fire be upon thee!" So they fared days and nights till they reached King Tarkanan's capital city and, after asking and obtaining permission to present himself, Ajib went in to him and kissed ground before him. Then he wished him what men use to wish to monarchy and said to him, "O King, protect me, so may protect thee the sparkling Fire and the Night with its thick darkness!” Tarkanan looked at Ajib and asked, “Who art thou and what dost thou want?”; to which the other answered, “I am Ajib King of Al-Irak; my brother hath wronged me and gotten the mastery of the land and the subjects have submitted themselves to him. Moreover, he hath embraced the faith of Al-Islam and he ceaseth not to chase me from country to country; and behold, I am come to seek protection of thee and thy power.” When Tarkanan heard Ajib’s words, he rose and sat down and cried, “By the virtue of the Fire, I will assuredly avenge thee and will let none serve other than my goddess the Fire!” And he called aloud to his son, saying, “O my son, make ready to go to Al-Irak and lay it waste and bind all who serve aught but the Fire and torment them and make example of them; yet slay them not, but bring them to me, that I may ply them with various tortures and make them taste the bitterness of humiliation and leave them a warning to whoso will be warned in this our while.” Then he chose out to accompany him eighty thousand fighting men on horseback and the like number on giraffes,[47] besides ten thousand elephants, bearing on their backs seats[48] of sandal-wood, latticed with golden rods, plated and studded with gold and silver and shielded with pavoises of gold and emerald; moreover he sent good store of war-chariots, in each eight men fighting with all kinds of weapons. Now the Prince’s name was Ra’ad Sháh,[49] and he was the champion of his time, for prowess having no peer. So he and his army equipped them in ten days’ time, then set out, as they were a bank of clouds, and fared on two months’ journey, till they came upon Oman city and encompassed it, to the joy of Ajib, who thought himself assured of victory. Jamrkan and Sa’adan and all their fighting-men sallied forth into the field of fight whilst the kettle-drums beat to battle and the horses neighed. At this moment up came King Gharib, who, as we have said, had been warned by Kaylajan; and he urged on his destrier and entered among the Infidels waiting to see who should come forth and open the chapter of war. Then out rushed Sa’adan the Ghul and offered combat, whereupon there issued forth to him one of the champions of Hind; but Sa’adan scarce let him take stand in front ere he smote him with his mace and crushed his bones and stretched him on the ground; and so did he with a second and a third, till he had slain thirty fighting-men. Then there dashed out at him an Indian cavalier, by name Battásh al- Akrán,[50] uncle to King Tarkanan and of his day the doughtiest man, reckoned worth five thousand horse in battle-plain and cried out to Sa'adan, saying, "O thief of the Arabs, hath thy daring reached that degree that thou shouldst slay the Kings of Hind and their champions and capture their horsemen? But this day is the last of thy worldly days." When Sa'adan heard these words, his eyes waxed blood-red and he drave at Battash and aimed a stroke at him with his club; but he evaded it and the force of the blow bore Sa'adan to the ground; and before he could recover himself, the Indians pinioned him and haled him off to their tents. Now when Jamrkan saw his comrade a prisoner, he cried out, saying, "Ho for the Faith of Abraham the Friend!" and clapping heel to his horse, ran at Battash. They wheeled about awhile, till Battash charged Jamrkan and catching him by his jerkin[51] tare him from his saddle and cast him to the ground; whereupon the Indians bound him and dragged him away to their tents. And Battash ceased not to overcome all who came out to him, Captain after Captain till he had made prisoners of four-and-twenty Chiefs of the Moslems, whereat the True Believers were sore dismayed. When Gharib saw what had befallen his braves, he drew from beneath his knee[52] a mace of gold weighing six-score pounds which had belonged to Barkan King of the Jann — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Sixty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Gharib beheld what had befallen his braves he drew forth a golden mace which had belonged to Barkan King of the Jann and clapped heel to his sea-horse, which bore him like the wind-gust into mid-field. Then he let drive at Battash, crying out, "God is Most Great! He giveth aid and victory and He abaseth whoso reject the Faith of Abraham the Friend!" and smote him with the mace, whereupon he fell to the ground and Gharib, turning to the Moslems, saw his brother Sahim and said to him, "Pinion me this hound." When Sahim heard his brother's words, he ran to Battash and bound him hard and fast and bore him off, whilst the Moslem braves wondered who this knight could be and the Indians said one to other, "Who is this horseman which came out from among them and hath taken our

Chief prisoner?” Meanwhile Gharib continued to offer battle and there issued forth to him a captain of the Hindís whom he felled to earth with his mace, and Kaylajan and Kurajan pinioned him and delivered him over to Sahim; nor did Gharib leave to do thus, till he had taken prisoner two-and-fifty of the doughtiest Captains of the army of Hind. Then the day came to an end and the kettle-drums beat the retreat; whereupon Gharib left the field and rode towards the Moslem camp. The first to meet him was Sahim, who kissed his feet in the stirrups and said, “May thy hand never wither, O champion of the age! Tell us who thou art among the braves.” So Gharib raised his vizor of mail and Sahim knew him and cried out, saying, “This is your King and your lord Gharib, who is come back from the land of the Jann!” When the Moslems heard Gharib’s name, they threw themselves off their horses’ backs, and, crowding about him, kissed his feet in the stirrups and saluted him, rejoicing in his safe return. Then they carried him into the city of Oman, where he entered his palace and sat down on the throne of his kingship, whilst his officers stood around him in the utmost joy. Food was set on and they ate, after which Gharib related to them all that had betided him with the Jinn in Mount Kaf, and they marvelled thereat with exceeding marvel and praised Allah for his safety. Then he dismissed them to their sleeping places; so they withdrew to their several lodgings, and when none abode with him but Kaylajan and Kurajan, who never left him, he said to them, “Can ye carry me to Cufa that I may take my pleasure in my Harim, and bring me back before the end of the night?” They replied, “O our lord, this thou askest is easy.” Now the distance between Cufa and Oman is sixty days’ journey for a diligent horseman, and Kaylajan said to Kurajan, “I will carry him going and thou coming back.” So he took up Gharib and flew off with him, in company with Kurajan; nor was an hour past before they set him down at the gate of his palace, in Cufa. He went in to his uncle Al-Damigh, who rose to him and saluted him; after which quoth Gharib, “How is it with my wives Fakhr Taj[53] and Mahdiyah?” Al-Damigh answered, “They are both well and in good case.” Then the eunuch went in and acquainted the women of the Harim with Gharib’s coming, whereat they rejoiced and raised the trill of joy and gave him the reward for good news. Presently in came King Gharib, and they rose and saluting him, conversed with him, till Al- Damigh entered, when Gharib related to them all that had befallen him in the land of the Jinn, whereat they all marvelled. Then he lay with Fakhr Taj till near daybreak, when he took leave of his wives and his uncle and mounted Kurajan's back, nor was the darkness dispelled before the two Marids set him down in the city of Oman. Then he and his men armed and he bade open the gates when, behold, up came a horseman from the host of the Indians, with Jamrkan and Sa'adan and the rest of the captive captains whom he had delivered, and committed them to Gharib. The Moslems, rejoicing in their safety, donned their mails and took horse, while the kettle-drums beat a point of war; and the Miscreants also drew up in line. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Sixty-second Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Moslem host mounted and rode to the plain of cut and thrust, the first to open the door of war was King Gharib who, drawing his sword Al-Mahik, drove his charger between the two ranks and cried out, saying, "Whoso knoweth me hath enough of my mischief and whoso unknoweth me, to him I will make myself known. I am Gharib, King of Al-Irak and Al-Yaman, brother of Ajib." When Ra'ad Shah, son of the King of Hind, heard this, he shouted to his captains, "Bring me Ajib." So they brought him and Ra'ad Shah said to him, "Thou wottest that this quarrel is thy quarrel and thou art the cause of all this slaughter. Now yonder standeth thy brother Gharib amiddle-most the fightfield and stead where sword and spear we shall wield; go thou to him and bring him to me a prisoner, that I may set him on a camel arsy-versy, and make a show of him and carry him to the land of Hind." Answered Ajib, "O King, send out to him other than I, for I am in ill-health this morning." But Ra'ad Shah snarked and snorted and cried, "By the virtue of the sparkling Fire and the light and the shade and the heat, unless thou fare forth to thy brother and bring him to me in haste, I will cut off thy head and make an end of thee." So Ajib took heart and urging his horse up to his brother in mid-field, said to him, "O dog of the Arabs and vilest of all who hammer down tent pegs, wilt thou contend with Kings? Take what to thee cometh and receive the glad tidings of thy death." When Gharib heard this, he said to him, “Who art thou among the Kings? And Ajib answered, saying, “I am thy brother, and this day is the last of thy worldly days.” Now when Gharib was assured that he was indeed his brother Ajib, he cried out and said, “Ho, to avenge my father and mother!” Then giving his sword to Kaylajan,[54] he drave at Ajib and smote him with his mace a smashing blow and a swashing, that went nigh to beat in his ribs, and seizing him by the mail gorges tore him from the saddle and cast him to the ground; whereupon the two Marids pounced upon him and binding him fast, dragged him off dejected and abject; whilst Gharib rejoiced in the capture of his enemy and repeated these couplets of the poet,

“I have won my wish and my need have scored * Unto Thee be the praise and the thanks, O our
Lord!
I grew up dejected and abject; poor, * But Allah vouchsafed me all boons implored:
I have conquered countries and mastered men * But for Thee were I naught, O thou Lord
adored!”

When Ra’ad Shah saw how evilly Ajib fared with his brother, he called for his charger and donning his harness and habergeon, mounted and dashed out a field. As soon as he drew near King Gharib, he cried out at him, saying, “O basest of Arabs and bearer of scrubs,[55] who art thou, that thou shouldest capture Kings and braves? Down from thy horse and put elbows behind back and kiss my feet and set my warriors free and go with me in bond of chains to my reign that I may pardon thee and make thee a Shaykh in our own land, so mayst thou eat there a bittock of bread.” When Gharib heard these words he laughed till he fell backwards and answered, saying, “O mad hound and mangy wolf, soon shalt thou see against whom the shifts of Fortune will turn!” Then he cried out to Sahim, saying, “Bring me the prisoners;” so he brought them, and Gharib smote off their heads; whereupon Ra’ad Shah drave at him, with the driving of a lordly champion and the onslaught of a fierce slaughterer and they falsed and feinted and fought till nightfall, when the kettle-drums beat the retreat. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the kettledrums beat the retreat, the two Kings parted and returned, each to his own place where his people gave him joy of his safety. And the Moslems said to Gharib, " 'Tis not thy wont O King, to prolong a fight;" and he replied, "O folk, I have done battle with many royalties[56] and champions; but never saw I a harder hitter than this one. Had I chosen to draw Al-Mahik upon him, I had mashed his bones and made an end of his days: but I delayed with him, thinking to take him prisoner and give him part enjoyment in Al-Islam." Thus far concerning Gharib; but as regards Ra'ad Shah, he returned to his marquee and sat upon his throne, when his Chiefs came in to him and asked him of his adversary, and he answered, "By the truth of the sparkling Fire, never in my life saw I the like of yonder brave! But to-morrow I will take him prisoner and lead him away dejected and abject." Then they slept till daybreak, when the battle-drums beat to fight and the swords in baldric were dight; and war-cries were cried amain and all mounted their horses of generous strain and drew out into the field, filling every wide place and hill and plain. The first to open the door of war was the rider outrageous and the lion rageous, King Gharib, who drave his steed between the two hosts and wheeled and careered over the field, crying, "Who is for fray, who is for fight? Let no sluggard come out to me this day nor dullard!" Before he had made an end of speaking, out rushed Ra'ad Shah, riding on an elephant, as he were a vast tower, in a seat girthed with silken bands; and between the elephant's ears sat the driver, bearing in hand a hook, wherewith he goaded the beast and directed him right and left. When the elephant drew near Gharib's horse, and the steed saw a creature it had never before set eyes on, it took fright;[57] wherefore Gharib dismounted and gave the horse to Kaylajan. Then he drew Al-Mahik and advanced to meet Ra'ad Shah a-foot, walking on till he faced the elephant. Now it was Ra'ad Shah's wont, when he found himself overmatched by any brave, to mount an elephant, taking with him an implement called the lasso,[58] which was in the shape of a net, wide at base and narrow at top with a running cord of silk passed through rings along its edges. With this he would attack horsemen and casting the meshes over them, draw the running noose and drag the rider off his horse and make him prisoner; and thus had he conquered many cavaliers. So, as Gharib came up to him, he raised his hand and, despreading the net over him, pulled him on to the back of the elephant and cried out to the beast to return to the Indian camp. But Kaylajan and Kurajan had not left Gharib and, when they beheld what had befallen their lord, they laid hold of the elephant, whilst Gharib strove with the net, till he rent it in sunder. Upon this the two Marids seized Ra'ad Shah and bound him with a cord of palm fibre. Then the two armies drove each at other and met with a shock like two seas crashing or two mountains together dashing, whilst the dust rose to the confines of the sky and blinded was every eye. The battle waxed fierce and fell, the blood ran in rills, nor did they cease to wage war with lunge of lance and sway of sword in lustiest way, till the day darkened and the night starkened, when the drums beat the retreat and the two hosts drew asunder.[59] Now the Moslems were evilly entreated that day by reason of the riders on elephants and giraffes,[60] and many of them were killed and most of the rest were wounded. This was grievous to Gharib who commanded the hurt to be medicined and turning to his Chief Officers, asked them what they counselled. Answered they, "O King, 'tis only the elephants and giraffes that irk us; were we but quit of them, we should overcome the enemy." Quoth Kaylajan and Kurajan, "We twain will unsheath our swords and fall on them and slay the most part of them." But there came forward a man of Oman, who had been privy counsellor to Jaland and said, "O King, I will be surety for the host, an thou wilt but hearken to me and follow my counsel." Gharib turned to his Captains and said to them, "Whatsoever this wise man shall say to you that do." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Sixty-fourth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Gharib said to his Captains, "Whatsoever this wise man shall say to you, that do"; they replied, "Hearing and obeying!" So the Omani chose out ten captains and asked them, "How many braves have ye under your hands?"; and they answered, "Ten thousand fighting-men." Then he carried them into the armoury and armed five thousand of them with harquebuses and other five thousand with cross bows and taught them to shoot with these new weapons.[61] Now as soon as it was day, the Indians came out to the field, armed cap-à-pie, with the elephants, giraffes and champions in their van; whereupon Gharib and his men mounted and both hosts drew out and the big drums beat to battle. Then the man of Oman cried out to the archers and harquebusiers to shoot, and they plied the elephants and giraffes with shafts and leaden bullets, which entered the beasts' flanks, whereat they roared out and turning upon their own ranks, trod them down with their hoofs. Presently the Moslems charged the Misbelievers and outflanked them right and left, whilst the elephants and giraffes trampled them and drove them into the hills and words, whither the Moslems followed hard upon them with the keen-edged sword and but few of the giraffes and elephants escaped. Then King Gharib and his folk returned, rejoicing in their victory; and on the morrow they divided the loot and rested five days; after which King Gharib sat down on the throne of his kingship and sending for his brother Ajib, said to him, "O dog, why hast thou assembled the Kings against us? But He who hath power over all things hath given us the victory over thee. So embrace the Saving Faith and thou shalt be saved, and I will forbear to avenge my father and mother on thee therefor, and I will make thee King again as thou wast, placing myself under thy hand." But Ajib said, "I will not leave my faith." So Gharib bade lay him in irons and appointed an hundred stalwart slaves to guard him; after which he turned to Ra'ad Shah and said to him, "How sayst thou of the faith of Al-Islam?" Replied he, "O my lord, I will enter thy faith; for, were it not a true Faith and a goodly, thou hadst not conquered us. Put forth thy hand and I will testify that there is no god but the God and that Abraham the Friend is the Apostle of God." At this Gharib rejoiced and said to him, "Is thy heart indeed stablished in the sweetness of this Belief?" And he answered, saying, "Yes, O my lord!" Then quoth Gharib, "O Ra'ad Shah, wilt thou go to thy country and thy kingdom?" and quoth he, "O. my lord, my father will put me to death, for that I have left his faith." Gharib rejoined, "I will go with thee and make thee king of the country and constrain the folk to obey thee, by the help of Allah the Bountiful, the Beneficent.” And Ra’ad Shah kissed his hands and feet. Then Gharib rewarded the counsellor who had caused the rout of the foe and gave him great wealth; after which he turned to Kaylajan and Kurajan, and said to them, “Harkye, Chiefs of the Jinn, ’tis my will that ye carry me, together with Ra’ad Shah and Jamrkan and Sa’adan to the land of Hind.” “We hear and we obey,” answered they. So Kurajan took up Jamrkan and Sa’adan, whilst Kaylajan took Gharib and Ra’ad Shah and made for the land of Hind. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and and Sixty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the two Marids had taken up Gharib and Jamrkan, Sa’adan the Ghul and Ra’ad Shah, they flew on with them from sundown till the last of the Night, when they set them down on the terrace of King Tarkanan’s palace at Cashmere. Now news was brought to Tarkanan by the remnants of his host of what had befallen his son, whereat he slept not neither took delight in aught, and he was troubled with sore trouble. As he sat in his Harim, pondering his case, behold, Gharib and his company descended the stairways of the palace and came in to him; and when he saw his son and those who were with him, he was confused and fear took him of the Marids. Then Ra’ad Shah turned to him and said, “How long wilt thou persist in thy frowardness, O traitor and worshipper of the Fire? Woe to thee! Leave worshipping the Fire and serve the Magnanimous Sire, Creator of day and Night, whom attaineth no sight.” When Tarkanan heard his son’s speech, he cast at him an iron club he had by him; but it missed him and fell upon a buttress of the palace and smote out three stones. Then cried the King, “O dog, thou hast destroyed mine army and hast forsaken thy faith and comest now to make me do likewise!” With this Gharib went up to him and dealt him a cuff on the neck which knocked him down; whereupon the Marids bound him fast and all the Harim- women fled. Then Gharib sat down on the throne of kingship and said to Ra’ad Shah, “Do thou justice upon thy father.” So Ra’ad Shah turned to him and said, “O perverse old man, become one of the saved and thou shalt be saved from the fire and the wrath of the All-powerful." But Tarkanan cried, "I will not die save in my own faith." Whereupon Gharib drew Al-Mahik and smote him therewith and he fell to the earth in two pieces, and Allah hurried his soul to the fire and abiding-place dire.[62] Then Gharib bade hang his body over the palace gate and they hung one half on the right hand and the other on the left and waited till day, when Gharib caused Ra'ad Shah don the royal habit and sit down on his father's throne, with himself on his dexter hand and Jamrkan and Sa'adan and the Marids standing right and left; and he said to Kaylajan and Kurajan, "Whoso entereth of the Princes and Officers, seize him and bind him, and let not a single Captain escape you." And they answered, "Hearkening and obedience!" Presently, the Officers made for the palace, to do their service to the King, and the first to appear was the Chief Captain who, seeing King Tarkanan's dead body cut in half and hanging on either side of the gate, was seized with terror and amazement. Then Kaylajan laid hold of him by the collar and threw him and intoned him; after which he dragged him into the palace and before sunrise they had bound three hundred and fifty Captains and set them before Gharib, who said to them, "O folk, have you seen your King hanging at the palace gate?" Asked they, "Who hath done this deed?"; and he answered, "I did it, by the help of Allah Almighty; and whoso opposeth me, I will do with him likewise." Then quoth they, "What is thy will with us?"; and quoth he, "I am Gharib, King of Al-Irak, he who slew your warriors; and now Ra'ad Shah hath embraced the Faith of Salvation and is become a mighty King and ruler over you. So do ye become True Believers and all shall be well with you; but, if ye refuse, you shall repent it." So they pronounced the profession of the Faith and were enrolled among the people of felicity. Then said Gharib, "Are your hearts indeed stablished in the sweetness of the Belief?"; and they replied, "Yes"; whereupon he bade release them and clad them in robes of honour, saying, "Go to your people and expound Al-Islam to them. Whoso accepteth the Faith spare him; but if he refuse slay him." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Sixty-sixth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that King

Gharib said to the troops of Ra’ad Shah, “Go to your people and offer Al-Islam to them. Whoso accepteth the Faith spare him; but if he refuse, slay him.” So they went out and, assembling the men under their command, explained what had taken place and expounded Al-Islam to them and they all professed. except a few, whom they put to death; after which they returned and told Gharib, who blessed Allah and glorified Him, saying, “Praised be the Almighty who hath made this thing easy to us without strife!” Then he abode in Cashmere of India forty days, till he had ordered the affairs of the country and cast down the shrines and temples of the Fire and built in their stead mosques and cathedrals, whilst Ra’ad Shah made ready for him rarities and treasures beyond count and despatched them to Al-Irak in ships. Then Gharib mounted on Kaylajan’s back and Jamrkan and Sa’adan on that of Kurajan, after they had taken leave of Ra’ad Shah; and journeyed through the night till break of day, when they reached Oman city where their troops met them and saluted them and rejoiced in them. Then they set out for Cufa where Gharib called for his brother Ajib and commanded to hang him. So Sahim brought hooks of iron and driving them into the tendons of Ajib’s heels, hung him over the gate; and Gharib bade them shoot him; so they riddled him with arrows, till he was like unto a porcupine. Then Gharib entered his palace and sitting down on the throne of his kingship, passed the day in ordering the affairs of the state. At nightfall he went in to his Harim, where Star o’ Morn came to meet him and embraced him and gave him joy, she and her women, of his safety. He spent that day and lay that night with her and on the morrow, after he had made the Ghusl-ablution and prayed the dawn-prayer, he sat down on his throne and commanded preparation to be made for his marriage with Mahdiyah. Accordingly they slaughtered three thousand head of sheep and two thousand oxen and a thousand he goats and five hundred camels and the like number of horses, beside four thousand fowls and great store of geese; never was such wedding in Al-Islam to that day. Then he went in to Mahdiyah and took her maidenhead and abode with her ten days; after which he committed the kingdom to his uncle Al-Damigh, charging him to rule the lieges justly, and journeyed with his women and warriors, till he came to the ships laden with the treasures and rarities which Ra’ad Shah had sent him, and divided the monies among his men who from poor became rich. Then they fared on till they reached the city of Babel, where he bestowed on Sahim Al-Layl a robe of honour and appointed him Sultan of the city. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Gharib, after robing his brother Sahim and appointing him Sultan, abode with him ten days, after which he set out again and journeyed nor stinted travel till he reached the castle of Sa’adan the Ghul, where they rested five days. Then quoth Gharib to Kaylajan and Kurajan, “Pass over to Isbánír al-Madáin, to the palace of the Chosroe, and find what is come of Fakhr Taj and bring me one of the King’s kinsmen, who shall acquaint me with what hath passed.” Quoth they, “We hear and we obey,” and set out forthright for Isbanir. As they flew between heaven and earth, behold, they caught sight of a mighty army, as it were the surging sea, and Kaylajan said to Kurajan, “Let us descend and determine what be this host.” So they alighted and walking among the troops, found them Persians and questioned the soldiers whose men they were and whither they were bound; whereto they made answer, “We are en route for Al-Irak, to slay Gharib and all who company him.” When the Marids heard these words, they repaired to the pavilion of the Persian general, whose name was Rustam, and waited till the soldiers slept, when they took up Rustam, bed and all, and made for the castle where Gharib lay. They arrived there by midnight and going to the door of the King’s pavilion, cried, “Permission!” which when he heard, he sat up and said, “Come in.” So they entered and set down the couch with Rustam asleep thereon. Gharib asked, “Who be this?” and they answered, “This be a Persian Prince, whom we met coming with a great host, thinking to slay thee and thine, and we have brought him to thee, that he may tell thee what thou hast a mind to know.” “Fetch me an hundred braves!” cried Gharib, and they fetched them; whereupon he bade them, “Draw your swords and stand at the head of this Persian carle!” Then they awoke him and he opened his eyes; and, finding an arch of steel over his head, shut them again, crying, “What be this foul dream?”

But Kaylajan pricked him with his sword point and he sat up and said, “Where am I?” Quoth Sahim, “Thou art in the presence of King Gharib, son-in- law of the King of the Persians. What is thy name and whither goest thou?” When Rustam heard Gharib’s name’ he bethought himself and said in his mind, “Am I asleep or awake? Whereupon Sahim dealt him a buffet, saying, “Why dost thou not answer?” And he raised his head and asked, “Who brought me from my tent out of the midst of my men?” Gharib answered, “These two Marids brought thee.” So he looked at Kaylajan and Kurajan and skited in his bag-trousers. Then the Marids fell upon him, baring their tusks and brandishing their blades, and said to him, “Wilt thou not rise and kiss ground before King Gharib?” And he trembled at them and was assured that he was not asleep; so he stood up and kissed the ground between the hands of Gharib, saying, “The blessing of the Fire be on thee, and long life be thy life, O King!” Gharib cried, “O dog of the Persians, fire is not worshipful, for that it is harmful and profiteth not save in cooking food.” Asked Rustam, “Who then is worshipful?”; and Gharib answered, “Alone worshipworth is God, who formed thee and fashioned thee and created the heavens and the earth.” Quoth the Ajami, “What shall I say that I may become of the party of this Lord and enter thy Faith?”; and quoth Gharib, “Say, ‘There is no god but the God, and Abraham is the Friend of God’.” So Rustam pronounced the profession of the Faith and was enrolled among the people of felicity. Then said he to Gharib, “Know, O my lord, that thy father-in-law, King Sabur, seeketh to slay thee; and indeed he hath sent me with an hundred thousand men, charging me to spare none of you.” Gharib rejoined, “Is this my reward for having delivered his daughter from death and dishonour? Allah will requite him his ill intent. But what is thy name?” The Persian answered, “My name is Rustam, general of Sabur;” and Gharib, “Thou shalt have the like rank in my army,” adding, “But tell me, O Rustam, how is it with the Princess Fakhr Taj?” “May thy head live, O King of the age!” “What was the cause of her death?” Rustam replied, “O my lord, no sooner hadst thou left us than one of the Princess’s women went in to King Sabur and said to him, ‘O my master, didst thou give Gharib leave to lie with the Princess my mistress?’ whereto he answered, ‘No, by the virtue of the fire!’ and drawing his sword, went in to his daughter and said to her, ‘O foul baggage, why didst thou suffer yonder Badawi to sleep with thee, without dower or even wedding?’ She replied, ‘O my papa, ’twas thou gavest him leave to sleep with me.’ Then he asked, ‘Did the fellow have thee?’ but she was silent and hung down her head. Hereupon he cried out to the midwives and slave-girls, saying, ‘Pinion me this harlot’s elbows behind her and look at her privy parts.’ So they did as he bade them and after inspecting her slit said to him, ‘O King, she hath lost her maidenhead. Whereupon he ran at her and would have slain her, but her mother rose up and threw herself between them crying, ‘O King, slay her not, lest thou be for ever dishonoured; but shut her in a cell till she die.’ So he cast her into prison till nightfall, when he called two of his courtiers and said to them, ‘Carry her afar off and throw her into the river Jayhun and tell none.’ They did his commandment, and indeed her memory is forgotten and her time is past.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Sixty-eighth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Gharib asked news of Fakhr Taj, Rustam informed him that she had been drowned in the river by her sire’s command. And when Gharib heard this, the world waxed wan before his eyes and he cried, “By the virtue of Abraham the Friend, I will assuredly go to yonder dog and overwhelm him and lay waste his realm!” Then he sent letters to Jamrkan and to the governors of Mosul and Mayyáfáríkín; and, turning to Rustam, said to him, “How many men hadst thou in thine army?” He replied, “An hundred thousand Persian horse;” and Gharib rejoined, “Take ten thousand horse and go to thy people and occupy them with war; I will follow on thy trail.” So Rustam mounted and taking ten thousand Arab horse made for his tribe, saying in himself, “I will do a deed shall whiten my face with King Gharib.” So he fared on seven days, till there remained but half a day’s journey between him and the Persian camp; when, dividing his host into four divisions he said to his men, “Surround the Persians on all sides and fall upon them with the sword.” They rode on from eventide till midnight, when they had compassed the camp of the Ajams, who were asleep in security, and fell upon them, shouting, "God is Most Great!" Whereupon the Persians started up from sleep and their feet slipped and the sabre went round amongst them; for the All-knowing King was wroth with them, and Rustam wrought amongst them as fire in dry fuel; till, by the end of the night, the whole of the Persian host was slain or wounded or fled, and the Moslems made prize of their tents and baggage, horses, camels and treasure-chests. Then they alighted and rested in the tents of the Ajams till King Gharib came up and, seeing what Rustam had done and how he had gained by stratagem a great and complete victory, he invested him with a robe of honour and said to him, "O Rustam, it was thou didst put the Persians to the rout; wherefore all the spoil is thine." So he kissed Gharib's hand and thanked him, and they rested till the end of the day, when they set out for King Sabur's capital. Meanwhile, the fugitives of the defeated force reached Isbanir and went in to Sabur, crying out and saying, "Alas!" and "Well-away!" and "Woe worth the day!" Quoth he, "What hath befallen you and who with his mischief hath smitten you?" So they told him all that had passed and said, "Naught befel us except that thy general Rustam, fell upon us in the darkness of the night because he had turned Moslem; nor did Gharib come near us." When the King heard this, he cast his crown to the ground and said, "There is no worth left us!" Then he turned to his son Ward Shah[63] and said to him, "O my son, there is none for this affair save thou." Answered Ward Shah, "By thy life, O my father, I will assuredly bring Gharib and his chiefs of the people in chains and slay all who are with him." Then he numbered his army and found it two hundred and twenty thousand men. So they slept, intending to set forth on the morrow; but, next morning, as they were about to march, behold, a cloud of dust arose and spread till it walled the world and baffled the sight of the farthest-seeing wight. Now Sabur had mounted to farewell his son, and when he saw this mighty great dust, he let call a runner and said to him, "Go find me out the cause of this dust-cloud." The scout went and returned, saying, "O my lord, Gharib and his braves are upon you;" whereupon they unloaded their bât-beasts and drew out in line of battle. When Gharib came up and saw the Persians ranged in row, he cried out to his men, saying, "Charge with the blessing of Allah!" So they waved the flags, and the Arabs and the Ajamis drave one at other and folk were heaped upon folk. Blood ran like water and all souls saw death face to face; the brave advanced and pressed forward to assail and the coward hung back and turned tail and they ceased not from fight and fray till ended day, when the kettle-drums beat the retreat and the two hosts drew apart. Then Sabur commanded to pitch his camp hard over the city-gate, and Gharib set up his pavilions in front of theirs; and every one went to his tent. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the two hosts drew apart, every one went to his tent until the morning. As soon as it was day, the two hosts mounted their strong steeds and levelled their lances and wore their harness of war; then they raised their slogan cries and drew out in battle-array, whilst came forth all the lordly knights and the lions of fights. Now the first to open the gate of battle was Rustam, who urged his charger into mid-field and cried out, “God is most Great! I am Rustam, champion-in-chief of the Arabs and Ajams. Who is for tilting, who is for fighting? Let no sluggard come out to me this day or weakling!” Then there rushed forth to him a champion of the Persians; the two charged each other and there befel between them a sore fight, till Rustam sprang upon his adversary and smote him with a mace he had with him, seventy pounds in weight, and beat his head down upon his breast, and he fell to the earth, dead and in his blood drowned. This was no light matter to Sabur and he commanded his men to charge; so they drave at the Moslems, invoking the aid of the light-giving Sun, whilst the True Believers called for help upon the Magnanimous King. But the Ajams, the Miscreants, outnumbered the Arabs, the Moslems, and made them drain the cup of death; which when Gharib saw he drew his sword Al-Mahik and crying out his war-cry, fell upon the Persians, with Kaylajan and Kurajan at either stirrup; nor did he leave playing upon them with blade till he hewed his way to the standard-bearer and smote him on the head with the flat of his sword, whereupon he fell down in a fainting-fit and the two Marids bore him off to their camp. When the Persians saw the standard fall, they turned and fled and for the city-gates made; but the Moslems followed them with the blade and they crowded together to enter the city, so that they could not shut the gates and there died of them much people. Then Rustam and Sa'adan, Jamrkan and Sahim, Al-Damigh, Kaylajan and Kurajan and all the braves Mohammedan and the champions of Faith Unitarian fell upon the misbelieving Persians in the gates, and the blood of the Kafirs ran in the streets like a torrent till they threw down their arms and harness and called out for quarter; whereupon the Moslems stayed their swords from the slaughter and drove them to their tents, as one driveth a flock of sheep. Meanwhile Gharib returned to his pavilion, where he doffed his gear and washed himself of the blood of the Infidels; after which he donned his royal robes and sat down on his chair of estate. Then he called for the King of the Persians and said to him, "O dog of the Ajams, what moved thee to deal thus with thy daughter? How seest thou me unworthy to be her baron?" And Sabur answered, saying, "O King, punish me not because of that deed which I did; for I repent me and confronted thee not in fight but in my fear of thee.''[64] When Gharib heard these words he bade throw him flat and beat him. So they bastinadoed him, till he could no longer groan, and cast him among the prisoners. Then Gharib expounded Al-Islam to the Persians and one hundred and twenty thousand of them embraced The Faith, and the rest he put to the sword. Moreover all the citizens professed Al-Islam and Gharib mounted and entered in great state the city Isbanir Al-Madain. Then he went into the King's palace and sitting down on Sabur's throne, gave robes and largesse and distributed the booty and treasure among the Arabs and Persians, wherefore they loved him and wished him victory and honour and endurance of days. But Fakhr Taj's mother remembered her daughter and raised the voice of mourning for her, and the palace was filled with wails and cries. Gharib heard this and entering the Harim, asked the women what ailed them, whereupon the Princess's mother came forward and said, "O my lord, thy presence put me in mind of my daughter and how she would have joyed in thy coming, had she been alive and well." Gharib wept for her and sitting down on his throne, called for Sabur, and they brought him stumbling in his shackles. Quoth Gharib to him, "O dog of the Persians, what didst thou do with thy daughter?" "I gave her to such an one and such an one," quoth the King, "saying, 'Drown her in the river Jayhún.'" So Gharib sent for the two men and asked them, “Is what he saith true?” Answered they, “Yes; but, O King, we did not drown her, nay we took pity on her and left her on the banks of the Jayhun, saying, ‘Save thyself and return not to the city, lest the King slay thee and slay us with thee.’ This is all we know of her.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Seventieth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the two men ended the tale of Fakhr Taj with these words, “And we left her upon the bank of the river Jayhun!” Now, when Gharib heard this he bade bring the astrologers and said to them, “Strike me a board of geomancy and find out what is come of Fakhr Taj, and whether she is still in the bonds of life or dead.” They did so and said, “O King of the age, it is manifest to us that the Princess is alive and hath borne a male child; but she is with a tribe of the Jinn, and will be parted from thee twenty years; count, therefore, how many years thou hast been absent in travel.” So he reckoned up the years of his absence and found them eight years and said, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!’’[65] Then he sent for all Sabur’s Governors of towns and strongholds and they came and did him homage. Now one day after this, as he sat in his palace, behold, a cloud of dust appeared in the distance and spread till it walled the whole land and darkened the horizon. So he summoned the two Marids and bade them reconnoitre, and they went forth under the dust-cloud and snatching up a horseman of the advancing host, returned and set him down before Gharib, saying, “Ask this fellow, for he is of the army.” Quoth Gharib, “Whose power is this?” and the man answered, “O King, ’tis the army of Khirad Shah,[66] King of Shiras, who is come forth to fight thee.” Now the cause of Khirad Shah’s coming was this. When Gharib defeated Sabur’s army, as hath been related, and took him prisoner, the King’s son fled, with a handful of his father’s force and ceased not flying till he reached the city of Shiras, where he went into King Khirad Shah and kissed ground before him, whilst the tears ran down his cheeks. When the King saw him in this case, he said to him, “Lift thy head, O youth, and tell me what maketh thee weep.” He replied, “O King, a King of the Arabs, by name Gharib, hath fallen on us and captured the King my sire and slain the Persians making them drain the cup of death." And he told him all that had passed from first to last. Quoth Khirad Shah, "Is my wife[67] well?" and quoth the Prince, "Gharib hath taken her." Cried the King "As my head liveth, I will not leave a Badawi or a Moslem on the face of the earth!" So he wrote letters to his Viceroys, who levied their troops and joined him with an army which when reviewed numbered eighty-five thousand men. Then he opened his armouries and distributed arms and armour to the troops, after which he set out with them and journeyed till he came to Isbanir, and all encamped before the city-gate. Hereupon Kaylajan and Kurajan came in to Gharib and kissing his knee, said to him, "O our Lord, heal our hearts and give us this host to our share." And he said, "Up and at them!" So the two Marids flew aloft high in the lift and lighting down in the pavilion of the King of Shiras, found him seated on his chair of estate, with the Prince of Persia Ward Shah son of Sabur, sitting on his right hand, and about him his Captains, with whom he was taking counsel for the slaughter of the Moslems. Kaylajan came forward and caught up the Prince and Kurajan snatched up the King and the twain flew back with them to Gharib, who caused beat them till they fainted Then the Marids returned to the Shirazian camp and, drawing their swords, which no mortal man had strength to wield, fell upon the Misbelievers and Allah hurried their souls to the Fire and abiding-place dire, whilst they saw no one and nothing save two swords flashing and reaping men, as a husbandman reaps corn. So they left their tents and mounting their horses bare- backed, fled; and the Marids pursued them two days and slew of them much people; after which they returned and kissed Gharib's hand. He thanked them for the deed they had done and said to them, "The spoil of the Infidels is yours alone: none shall share with you therein." So they called down blessings on him and going forth, gathered the booty together and abode in their own homes. On this wise it fared with them; but as regards Gharib and his lieges, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Seventy-first Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that after Gharib had put to flight the host of Khirad Shah, he bade Kaylajan and Kurajan take the spoil to their own possession nor share it with any; so they gathered the booty and abode in their own homes. Meanwhile the remains of the beaten force ceased not flying till they reached the city of Shiras and there lifted up the voice of weeping and began the ceremonial lamentations for those of them that had been slain. Now King Khirad Shah had a brother Sírán the Sorcerer hight, than whom there was no greater wizard in his day, and he lived apart from his brother in a certain stronghold, called the Fortalice of Fruits,[68] in a place abounding in trees and streams and birds and blooms, half a day's journey from Shiras. So the fugitives betook them thither and went in to Siran the Sorcerer, weeping and wailing aloud. Quoth he, "O folk, what garreth you weep?" and they told him all that had happened, especially how the two Marids had carried off his brother Khirad Shah; whereupon the light of his eyes became night and he said, "By the virtue of my faith, I will certainly slay Gharib and all his men and leave not one alive to tell the tale!" Then he pronounced certain magical words and summoned the Red King, who appeared and Siran said to him, "Fare for Isbanir and fall on Gharib, as he sitteth upon his throne." Replied he, "Hearkening and obedience!" and, gathering his troops, repaired to Isbanir and assailed Gharib, who seeing him, drew his sword Al-Mahik and he and Kaylajan and Kurajan fell upon the army of the Red King and slew of them five hundred and thirty and wounded the King himself with a grevious wound; whereupon he and his people fled and stayed not in their flight, till they reached the Fortalice of Fruits and went into Siran, crying out and exclaiming, "Woe!" and "Ruin!" And the Red King said to Siran, "O sage, Gharib hath with him the enchanted sword of Japhet son of Noah, and whomsoever he smiteth therewith he severeth him in sunder, and with him also are two Marids from Mount Caucasus, given to him by King Mura'ash. He it is who slew the Blue King and Barkan Lord of the Carnelian City, and did to death much people of the Jinn." When the Enchanter heard this, he said to the Red King "Go," and he went his ways; whereupon he resumed his conjurations, and calling up a Marid, by name Zu'ázi'a gave him a drachm of levigated Bhang and said to him, "Go thou to Isbanir and enter King Gharib's palace and assume the form of a sparrow. Wait till he fall asleep and there be none with him; then put the Bhang up his nostrils and bring him to me." "To hear is to obey," replied the Marid and flew to Isbanir, where, changing himself into a sparrow, he perched on the window of the palace and waited till all Gharib's attendants retired to their rooms and the King himself slept. Then he flew down and going up to Gharib, blew the powdered Bhang into his nostrils, till he lost his senses, whereupon he wrapped him in the bed-coverlet and flew off with him, like the storm-wind, to the Fortalice of Fruits; where he arrived at midnight and laid his prize before Siran. The Sorcerer thanked him and would have put Gharib to death, as he lay senseless under Bhang; but a man of his people withheld him saying, "O Sage, an thou slay him, his friend King Mura'ash will fall on us with all his Ifrits and lay waste our realm." "How then shall we do with him?" asked Siran, and the other answered, "Cast him into the Jayhun while he is still in Bhang and he shall be drowned and none will know who threw him in." And Siran bade the Marid take Gharib and cast him into Jayhun river. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Seventy-second Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Marid took Gharib and carried him to the Jayhun purposing to cast him therein, but it was grievous to him to drown him, wherefore he made a raft of wood and binding it with cords, pushed it out (and Gharib thereon) into the current, which carried it away. Thus fared it with Gharib; but as regards his people, when they awoke in the morning and went in to do their service to their King, they found him not and seeing his rosary on the throne, awaited him awhile, but he came not. So they sought out the head Chamberlain and said to him, "Go into the Harim and look for the King: for it is not his habit to tarry till this time." Accordingly, the Chamberlain entered the Serraglio and enquired for the King, but the women said, "Since yesterday we have not seen him." Thereupon he returned and told the Officers, who were confounded and said, "Let us see if he have gone to take his pleasure in the gardens." Then they went out and questioned the gardeners if they had seen the King, and they answered, "No;" whereat they were sore concerned and searched all the garths till the end of the day, when they returned in tears.

Moreover, the two Marids sought for him all round the city, but came back after three days, without having happened on any tidings of him. So the people donned black and made their complaint to the Lord of all worshipping men who doth as he is fain. Meanwhile, the current bore the raft along for five days till it brought it to the salt sea, where the waves disported with Gharib and his stomach, being troubled, threw up the Bhang. Then he opened his eyes and finding himself in the midst of the main, a plaything of the billows, said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Would to Heaven I wot who hath done this deed by me!" Presently as he lay, perplexed concerning his case, lo! he caught sight of a ship sailing by and signalled with his sleeve to the sailors, who came to him and took him up, saying, "Who art thou and whence comest thou?" He replied, "Do ye feed me and give me to drink, till I recover myself, and after I will tell you who I am." So they brought him water and victual, and he ate and drank and Allah restored to him his reason. Then he asked them, "O folk, what countrymen are ye and what is your Faith?;" and they answered, "We are from Karaj[69] and we worship an idol called Minkásh." Cried Gharib, "Perdition to you and your idol! O dogs, none is worthy of worship save Allah who created all things, who saith to a thing Be! and it becometh." When they heard this, they rose up and fell upon him in great wrath and would have seized him. Now he was without weapons, but whomsoever he struck, he smote down and deprived of life, till he had felled forty men, after which they overcame him by force of numbers and bound him fast, saying, "We will not slay him save in our own land, that we may first show him to our King." Then they sailed on till they came to the city of Karaj. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Seventy-third Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the ship's crew seized Gharib and bound him fast they said, "We will not slay him save in our own land." Then they sailed on till they came to the city of Karaj, the builder whereof was an Amalekite, fierce and furious; and he had set up at each gate of the city a magical figure of copper which, whenever a stranger entered, blew a blast on a trumpet, that all in the city heard it and fell upon the stranger and slew him, except they embraced their creed. When Gharib entered the city, the figure stationed at the gate blew such a horrible blast that the King was affrighted and going into his idol, found fire and smoke issuing from its mouth, nose and eyes. Now a Satan had entered the belly of the idol and speaking as with its tongue, said, "O King, there is come to thy city one hight Gharib, King of Al-Irak, who biddeth the folk quit their belief and worship his Lord; wherefore, when they bring him before thee, look thou spare him not." So the King went out and sat down on his throne; and presently, the sailors brought in Gharib and set him before the presence, saying, "O King, we found this youth shipwrecked in the midst of the sea, and he is a Kafir and believeth not in our gods." Then they told him all that had passed and the King said, "Carry him to the house of the Great Idol and cut his throat before him, so haply our god may look lovingly upon us." But the Wazir said, "O King, it befitteth not to slaughter him thus, for he would die in a moment: better we imprison him and build a pyre of fuel and burn him with fire." Thereupon the King commanded to cast Gharib into gaol and caused wood to be brought, and they made a mighty pyre and set fire to it, and it burnt till the morning. Then the King and the people of the city came forth and the Ruler sent to fetch Gharib; but his lieges found him not; so they returned and told their King who said, "And how made he his escape?" Quoth they, "We found the chains and shackles cast down and the doors fast locked." Whereat the King marvelled and asked, "Hath this fellow to Heaven up flown or into the earth gone down?;' and they answered, "We know not." Then said the King, "I will go and question my God, and he will inform me whither he is gone." So he rose and went in, to prostrate himself to his idol, but found it not and began to rub his eyes and say, "Am I in sleep or on wake?" Then he turned to his Wazir and said to him, "Where is my God and where is my prisoner? By my faith, O dog of Wazirs, haddest thou not counselled me to burn him, I had slaughtered him; for it is he who hath stolen my god and fled; and there is no help but I take brood-wreak of him!" Then he drew his sword and struck off the Wazir's head. Now there was for Gharib's escape with the idol a strange cause and it was on this wise. When they had shut him up in a cell adjoining the doomed shrine under which stood the idol, he rose to pray, calling upon the name of Almighty Allah and seeking deliverance of Him, to whom be honour and glory! The Marid who had charge of the idol and spoke in its name, heard him and fear got hold upon his heart and he said, “O shame upon me! Who is this seeth me while I see him not?” So he went in to Gharib and throwing himself at his feet, said to him, “O my Lord, what must I say that I may become of thy company and enter thy religion?” Replied Gharib, “Say, ‘There is no god but the God and Abraham is the Friend of God.’” So the Marid pronounced the profession of Faith and was enrolled among the people of felicity. Now his name was Zalzál, son of Al-Muzalzil,[70] one of the Chiefs of the Kings of the Jinn. Then he unbound Gharib and taking him and the idol, made for the higher air. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Marid took up Gharib and the idol and made for the higher air. Such was his case; but as regards the King, when his soldiers saw what had befallen and the slaughter of the Wazir they renounced the worship of the idol and drawing their swords, slew the King; after which they fell on one another, and the sword went round amongst them three days, till there abode alive but two men, one of whom prevailed over the other and killed him. Then the boys attacked the survivor and slew him and fell to fighting amongst themselves, till they were all killed; and the women and girls fled to the hamlets and forted villages; wherefore the city became desert and none dwelt therein but the owl. Meanwhile, the Marid Zalzal flew with Gharib towards his own country, the Island of Camphor and the Castle of Crystal and the Land of the Enchanted Calf, so called because its King Al-Muzalzil, had a pied calf, which he had clad in housings brocaded with red gold, and worshipped as a god. One day the King and his people went in to the calf and found him trembling; so the King said, “O my God, what hath troubled thee?” whereupon the Satan in the calf’s belly cried out and said, “O Muzalzil, verily thy son hath deserted to the Faith of Abraham the Friend, at the hands of Gharib Lord of Al-Irak;” and went on to tell him all that had passed from first to last. When the King heard the words of his calf he was confounded and going forth, sat down upon his throne. Then he summoned his

Grandees who came in a body, and he told them what he had heard from the idol, whereat they marvelled and said, “What shall we do, O King?” Quoth he, “When my son cometh and ye see him embrace him, do ye lay hold of him.” And they said, “Hearkening and obedience!” After two days came Zalzal and Gharib, with the King’s idol of Karaj, but no sooner had they entered the palace-gate than the Jinn seized on them and carried them before Al-Muzalzil, who looked at his son with eyes of ire and said to him, “O dog of the Jann, hast thou left thy Faith and that of thy fathers and grandfathers?” Quoth Zalzal, “I have embraced the True Faith, and on like wise do thou (Woe be to thee!) seek salvation and thou shalt be saved from the wrath of the King Almighty in sway, Creator of Night and Day.” Therewith his father waxed wroth and said, “O son of adultery, dost confront me with these words?” Then he bade clap him in prison and turning to Gharib, said to him, “O wretch of a mortal, how hast thou abused my son’s wit and seduced him from his Faith?” Quoth Gharib, “Indeed, I have brought him out of wrongousness into the way of righteousness, out of Hell into Heaven and out of unfaith to the True Faith.” Whereupon the King cried out to a Marid called Sayyár, saying “Take this dog and cast him into the Wady of Fire, that he may perish.” Now this valley was in the “Waste Quarter[71] “ and was thus named from the excess of its heat and the flaming of its fire, which was so fierce that none who went down therein could live an hour, but was destroyed; and it was compassed about by mountains high and slippery wherein was no opening. So Sayyar took up Gharib and flew with him towards the Valley of Fire, till he came within an hour’s journey thereof, when being weary, he alighted in a valley full of trees and streams and fruits, and setting down from his back Gharib chained as he was, fell asleep for fatigue. When Gharib heard him snore, he strove with his bonds till he burst them; then, taking up a heavy stone, he cast it down on the Marid’s head and crushed his bones, so that he died on the spot. Then he fared on into the valley. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Seventy-fifth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Gharib after killing the Marid fared on into the valley and found himself in a great island in mid-ocean, full of all fruits that lips and tongue could desire. So he abode alone on the island, drinking of its waters and eating of its fruits and of fish that he caught, and days and years passed over him, till he had sojourned there in his solitude seven years. One day, as he sat, behold, there came down on him from the air two Marids, each carrying a man; and seeing him they said, “Who art thou, O fellow, and of which of the tribes art thou?” Now they took him for a Jinni, because his hair was grown long; and he replied, saying, “I am not of the Jann,” whereupon they questioned him, and he told them all that had befallen him. They grieved for him and one of the Ifrits said, “Abide thou here till we bear these two lambs to our King, that he may break his fast on the one and sup on the other, and after we will come back and carry thee to thine own country.” He thanked them and said, “ Where be the lambs?” Quoth they, “These two mortals are the lambs.” And Gharib said, “I take refuge with Allah the God of Abraham the Friend, the Lord of all creatures, who hath power over everything! Then the Marids flew away and Gharib abode awaiting them two days, when one of them returned, bringing with him a suit of clothes wherewith he clad him. Then he took him up and flew with him sky- high out of sight of earth, till Gharib heard the angels glorifying God in Heaven, and a flaming shaft issued from amongst them and made for the Marid, who fled from it towards the earth. The meteor pursued him, till he came within a spear’s cast of the ground, when Gharib leaped from his shoulders and the fiery shaft overtook the Marid, who became a heap of ashes. As for Gharib, he fell into the sea and sank two fathoms deep, after which he rose to the surface and swam for two days and two nights, till his strength failed him and he made certain of death. But, on the third day as he was despairing he caught sight of an island steep and mountainous; so he swam for it and landing, walked on inland, where he rested a day and a Night, feeding on the growth of the ground. Then he climbed to the mountain top, and, descending the opposite slope, fared on two days till he came in sight of a walled and bulwarked city, abounding in trees and rills. He walked up to it; but, when he reached the gate, the warders seized on him, and carried him to their Queen, whose name was Ján Sháh.[72] Now she was five hundred years old, and every man who entered the city, they brought to her and she made him sleep with her, and when he had done his work, she slew him and so had she slain many men. When she saw Gharib, he pleased her mightily; so she asked him, "What be thy name and Faith and whence comest thou?" and he answered, "My name is Gharib King of Irak, and I am a Moslem." Said she, "Leave this Creed and enter mine and I will marry thee and make thee King." But he looked at her with eyes of ire and cried, "Perish thou and thy faith!" Cried she, "Dost thou blaspheme my idol, which is of red carnelian, set with pearls and gems?" And she called out to her men, saying, "Imprison him in the house of the idol; haply it will soften his heart." So they shut him up in the domed shrine and locking the doors upon him, went their way. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when they took Gharib, they jailed him in the idol's domed shrine; and locking the doors upon him, went their way. As soon as they were gone, Gharib gazed at the idol, which was of red carnelian, with collars of pearls and precious stones about its neck, and presently he went close to it and lifting it up, dashed it on the ground and brake it in bits; after which he lay down and slept till daybreak. When morning morrowed, the Queen took seat on her throne and said, "O men, bring me the prisoner." So they opened the temple doors and entering, found the idol broken in pieces, whereupon they buffeted their faces till the blood ran from the corners of their eyes. Then they made at Gharib to seize him; but he smote one of them with his fist and slew him, and so did he with another and yet another, till he had slain five-and-twenty of them and the rest fled and went in to Queen Jan Shah, shrieking loudly. Quoth she, "What is the matter?" and quoth they, "The prisoner hath broken thine idol and slain thy men," and told her all that had passed. When she heard this, she cast her crown to the ground and said, "There is no worth left in idols!" Then she mounted amid a thousand fighting-men and rode to the temple, where she found Gharib had gotten him a sword and come forth and was slaying men and overthrowing warriors. When she saw his prowess, her heart was drowned in the love of him and she said to herself, “I have no need of the idol and care for naught save this Gharib, that he may lie in my bosom the rest of my life.” Then she cried to her men, “Hold aloof from him and leave him to himself!”; then, going up to him she muttered certain magical words, whereupon his arm became benumbed, his forearm relaxed and the sword dropped from his hand. So they seized him and pinioned him, as he stood confounded, stupefied. Then the Queen returned to her palace, and seating herself on her seat of estate, bade her people withdraw and leave Gharib with her. When they were alone, she said to him, “ O dog of the Arabs, wilt thou shiver my idol and slay my people?” He replied, “O accursed woman, had he been a god he had defended himself!” Quoth she, “Stroke me and I will forgive thee all thou hast done.” But he replied, saying, “I will do nought of this.” And she said, “By the virtue of my faith, I will torture thee with grievous torture!” So she took water and conjuring over it, sprinkled it upon him and he became an ape. And she used to feed and water and keep him in a closet, appointing one to care for him; and in this plight he abode two years. Then she called him to her one day and said to him, “Wilt thou hearken to me?” And he signed to her with his head, “Yes.” So she rejoiced and freed him from the enchantment. Then she brought him food and he ate and toyed with her and kissed her, so that she trusted in him. When it was night she lay down and said to him, “Come, do thy business.” He replied, “ ’Tis well;” and, mounting on her breast, seized her by the neck and brake it, nor did he arise from her till life had left her. Then, seeing an open cabinet, he went in and found there a sword of damascened[73] steel and a targe of Chinese iron; so he armed himself cap-à-pie and waited till the day. As soon as it was morning, he went forth and stood at the gate of the palace. When the Emirs came and would have gone in to do their service to the Queen, they found Gharib standing at the gate, clad in complete war-gear; and he said to them, “O folk, leave the service of idols and worship the All-wise King, Creator of Night and Day, the Lord of men, the Quickener of dry bones, for He made all things and hath dominion over all.” When the Kafirs heard this, they ran at him, but he fell on them like a rending lion and charged through them again and again, slaying of them much people; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her

permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Seventy-seventh Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Kafirs fell upon Gharib, he slew of them much people; but, when the night came, they overcame him by dint of numbers and would have taken him by strenuous effort, when behold, there descended upon the Infidels a thousand Marids, under the command of Zalzal, who plied them with the keen sabre and made them drink the cup of destruction, whilst Allah hurried their souls to Hell-fire, till but few were left of the people of Jan Shah to tell the tale and the rest cried out, “Quarter! Quarter!” and believed in the Requiting King, whom no one thing diverteth from other thing, the Destroyer of the Jabábirah[74] and Exterminator of the Akásirah, Lord of this world and of the next. Then Zalzal saluted Gharib and gave him joy of his safety; and Gharib said to him, “How knowest thou of my case?” and he replied, “O my lord, my father kept me in prison two years, after sending thee to the Valley of Fire; then he released me, and I abode with him another year, till I was restored to favour with him, when I slew him and his troops submitted to me. I ruled them for a year’s space till, one Night, I lay down to sleep, having thee in thought, and saw thee in a dream, fighting against the people of Jan Shah; wherefore I took these thousand Marids and came to thee.” And Gharib marvelled at this happy conjuncture. Then he seized upon Jan Shah’s treasures and those of the slain and appointed a ruler over the city; after which the Marids took up Gharib and the monies and he lay the same night in the Castle of Crystal. He abode Zalzal’s guest six months, when he desired to depart; so Zalzal gave him rich presents and despatched three thousand Marids, who brought the spoils of Karaj-city and added them to those of Jan Shah. Then Zalzal loaded forty thousand Marids with the treasure and himself taking up Gharib, flew with his host towards the city of Isbanir al-Madain where they arrived at midnight. But as Gharib glanced around he saw the walls invested on all sides by a conquering army,[75] as it were the surging sea, so he said to Zalzal, “O my brother, what is the cause of this siege and whence came this army?” Then he alighted on the terrace roof of his palace and cried out, saying, “Ho, Star o’ Morn! Ho, Mahdiyah!” Whereupon the twain started up from sleep in amazement and said, “Who calleth us at this hour?” Quoth he, “ ’Tis I, your lord, Gharib, the Marvellous One of the deeds wondrous.” When the Princesses heard their lord’s voice, they rejoiced and so did the women and the eunuchs. Then Gharib went down to them and they threw themselves upon him and lullilooed with cries of joy, so that all the palace rang again and the Captains of the army awoke and said, “What is to do?” So they made for the palace and asked the eunuchs, “Hath one of the King’s women given birth to a child?”; and they answered, “No; but rejoice ye, for King Gharib hath returned to you.” So they rejoiced, and Gharib, after salams to the women came forth amongst his comrades, who threw themselves upon him and kissed his hands and feet, returning thanks to Almighty Allah and praising Him. Then he sat down on his throne, with his officers sitting about him, and questioned them of the beleaguering army. They replied, “O King, these troops sat down before the city three days ago and there are amongst them Jinns as well as men; but we know not what they want, for we have had with them neither battle nor speech.” And presently they added, “The name of the commander of the besieging army is Murad Shah and he hath with him an hundred thousand horse and three thousand foot, besides two hundred tribesmen of the Jinn.” Now the manner of his coming was wondrous. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Seventy-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the cause of this army coming upon Isbanir city was wondrous. When the two men, whom Sabur had charged to drown his daughter Fakhr Taj, let her go, bidding her flee for her life, she went forth distracted, unknowing whither to turn and saying, “Where is thine eye, O Gharib, that thou mayst see my case and the misery I am in?”; and wandered on from country to country, and valley to valley, till she came to a Wady abounding in trees and streams, in whose midst stood a strong-based castle and a lofty-builded as it were one of the pavilions of Paradise. So she betook herself thither and entering the fortalice, found it hung and carpeted with stuffs of silk and great plenty of gold and silver vessels; and therein were an hundred beautiful damsels. When the maidens saw Fakhr Taj, they came up to her and saluted her, deeming her of the virgins of the Jinn, and asked her of her case. Quoth she, “I am daughter to the Persians’ King;” and told them all that had befallen her; which when they heard, they wept over her and condoled with her and comforted her, saying, “Be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear, for here shalt thou have meat and drink and raiment, and we all are thy handmaids.” She called down blessings on them and they brought her food, of which she ate till she was satisfied. Then quoth she to them, “Who is the owner of this palace and lord over you girls?” and quoth they, “King Salsál, son of Dal, is our master; he passeth a night here once in every month and fareth in the morning to rule over the tribes of the Jann.” So Fakhr Taj took up her abode with them and after five days she gave birth to a male child, as he were the moon. They cut his navel cord and kohl’d his eyes then they named him Murad Shah, and he grew up in his mother’s lap. After a while came King Salsal, riding on a paper white elephant, as he were a tower plastered with lime and attended by the troops of the Jinn. He entered the palace, where the hundred damsels met him and kissed ground before him, and amongst them Fakhr Taj. When the King saw her, he looked at her and said to the others, “Who is yonder damsel?”; and they replied, “She is the daughter of Sabur, King of the Persians and Turks and Daylamites.” Quoth he, “Who brought her hither?” So they repeated to him her story; whereat he was moved to pity for her and said to her, “Grieve not, but take patience till thy son be grown a man, when I will go to the land of the Ajams and strike off thy father’s head from between his shoulders and seat thy son on the throne in his stead.” So she rose and kissed his hands and blessed him. Then she abode in the castle and her son grew up and was reared with the children of the King. They used to ride forth together a-hunting and birding and he became skilled in the chase of wild beasts and ravening lions and ate of their flesh, till his heart became harder than the rock. When he reached the age of fifteen, his spirit waxed big in him and he said to Fakhr Taj, “O my mamma, who is my papa?” She replied, “O my son, Gharib, King of Irak, is thy father and I am the King’s daughter, of the Persians,” and she told him her story. Quoth he, “Did my grandfather indeed give orders to slay thee and my father Gharib?”; and quoth she, “Yes.” Whereupon he, “By the claim thou hast on me for rearing me, I will assuredly go to thy father’s city and cut off his head and bring it into thy presence!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Murad Shah son of Fakhr Taj thus bespake his mother, she rejoiced in his speech. Now he used to go a-riding with two hundred Marids till he grew to man’s estate, when he and they fell to making raids and cutting off the roads and they pushed their razzias farther till one day he attacked the city of Shiraz and took it. Then he proceeded to the palace and cut off the King’s head, as he sat on his throne, and slew many of his troops, whereupon the rest cried “Quarter! Quarter!” and kissed his stirrups. Finding that they numbered ten thousand horse, he led them to Balkh, where he slew the King of the city and put his men to the rout and made himself master of the riches of the place. Thence he passed to Núrayn,[76] at the head of an army of thirty-thousand horse, and the Lord of Nurayn came out to him, with treasure and tribute, and did him homage. Then he went on to Samarcand of the Persians and took the city, and after that to Akhlát[77] and took that town also; nor was there any city he came to but he captured it. Thus Murad Shah became the head of a mighty host, and all the booty he made and spoils in the sundry cities he divided among his soldiery, who loved him for his valour and munificence. At last he came to Isbanir al-Madain and sat down before it, saying, “Let us wait till the rest of my army come up, when I will seize on my grandfather and solace my mother’s heart by smiting his neck in her presence.” So he sent for her, and by reason of this, there was no battle for three days, when Gharib and Zalzal arrived with the forty thousand Marids, laden with treasure and presents. They asked concerning the besiegers, but none could enlighten them beyond saying that the host had been there encamped for three days without a fight taking place. Presently came Fakhr Taj, and her son Murad Shah embraced her saying, “Sit in thy tent till I bring thy father to thee.” And she sought succour for him of the Lord of the Worlds, the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the earths. Next morning, as soon as it was day, Murad Shah mounted and rode forth, with the two hundred Marids on his right hand and the Kings of men on his left, whilst the kettle-drums beat to battle. When Gharib heard this, he also took to horse and, calling his people to the combat, rode out, with the jinn on his dexter hand and the men on his sinistral. Then came forth Murad Shah, armed cap-à-pie and drave his charger right and left, crying, "O folk, let none come forth to me but your King. If he conquer me, he shall be lord of both armies, and if I conquer him, I will slay him, as I have slain others." When Gharib heard his speech, he said, "Avaunt, O dog of the Arabs!" And they charged at each other and lunged with lances, till they broke, then hewed at each other with swords, till the blades were notched; nor did they cease to advance and retire and wheel and career, till the day was half spent and their horses fell down under them, when they dismounted and gripped each other. Then Murad Shah seizing Gharib lifted him up and strove to dash him to the ground; but Gharib caught him by the ears and pulled him with his might, till it seemed to the youth as if the heavens were falling on the earth[78] and he cried out, with his heart in his mouth, saying, "I yield myself to thy mercy, O Knight of the Age!" So Gharib bound him, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Eightieth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Gharib caught Murad Shah by the ears and well nigh tore them off he cried, "I yield myself to thy mercy, O Knight of the Age!" So Gharib bound him, and the Marids his comrades would have charged and rescued him, but Gharib fell on them with a thousand Marids and was about to smite them down, when they cried out "Quarter! Quarter!" and threw away their arms. Then Gharib returned to his Shahmiyánah which was of green silk, embroidered with red gold and set with pearls and gems; and, seating himself on his throne, called for Murad Shah. So they brought him, shuffling in his manacles and shackles. When the prisoner saw him, he hung down his head for shame; and Gharib said to him, "O dog of the Arabs, who art thou that thou shouldst ride forth and measure thyself against kings?" Replied Murad Shah, "O my lord, reproach me not, for indeed I have excuse." Quoth Gharib, "What manner of excuse hast thou?"; And quoth he, "Know, O my lord, that I came out to avenge my mother and my father on Sabur, King of the Persians; for he would have slain them; but my mother escaped and I know not whether he killed my father or not." When Gharib heard these words, he replied, "By Allah, thou art indeed excusable! But who were thy father and mother and what are their names?" Murad Shah said, "My sire was Gharib, King of Al-Irak, and my mother Fakhr Taj, daughter of King Sabur of Persia." When Gharib heard this, he gave a great cry and fell down fainting. They sprinkled rose- water on him, till he came to himself, when he said to Murad Shah, "Art thou indeed Gharib's son by Fakhr Taj?"; and he replied, "Yes." Cried Gharib, "Thou art a champion, the son of a champion. Loose my child!" And Sahim and Kaylajan went up to Murad Shah and set him free. Then Gharib embraced his son and, seating him beside himself, said to him, "Where is thy mother?" "She is with me in my tent," answered Murad Shah; and Gharib said, "Bring her to me." So Murad Shah mounted and repaired to his camp, where his comrades met him, rejoicing in his safety, and asked him of his case; but he answered, "This is no time for questions." Then he went in to his mother and told her what had passed; whereat she was gladdened with exceeding gladness: so he carried her to Gharib, and they two embraced and rejoiced in each other. Then Fakhr Taj and Murad Shah islamised and expounded The Faith to their troops, who all made profession with heart and tongue. After this, Gharib sent for Sabur and his son Ward Shah, and upbraided them for their evil dealing and expounded Al-Islam to them; but they refused to profess wherefore he crucified them on the gate of the city and the people decorated the town and held high festival. Then Gharib crowned Murad Shah with the crown of the Chosroës and made him King of the Persians and Turks and Medes; moreover, he made his uncle Al-Damigh, King over Al-Irak, and all the peoples and lands submitted themselves to Gharib. Then he abode in his kingship, doing justice among his lieges, wherefore all the people loved him, and he and his wives and comrades ceased not from all solace of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Societies, and extolled be the perfection of Him whose glory endureth for ever and aye and whose boons embrace all His creatures! This is every thing that hath come down to us of the history of Gharib and Ajib. And Abdullah bin Ma'amar al Kaysi hath thus related the tale of

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OTBAH[79] AND RAYYA.

I went one year on the pilgrimage to the Holy House of Allah, and when I had accomplished my pilgrimage, I turned back for visitation of the tomb of the Prophet, whom Allah bless and keep! One night, as I sat in the garden,[80] between the tomb and the pulpit, I heard a low moaning in a soft voice; so I listened to it and it said,

"Have the doves that moan in the lotus-tree * Woke grief in thy heart and bred misery?
Or doth memory of maiden in beauty deckt * Cause this doubt in thee, this despondency?
O night, thou art longsome for love-sick sprite * Complaining of Love and its ecstacy:
Thou makest him wakeful, who burns with fire * Of a love, like the live coal's ardency.
The moon is witness my heart is held * By a moonlight brow of the brightest blee:
I reckt not to see me by Love ensnared * Till ensnared before I could reck or see."

Then the voice ceased and not knowing whence it came to me I abode perplexed; but lo! it again took up its lament and recited,

"Came Rayya's phantom to grieve thy sight * In the thickest gloom of the black-haired Night!
And hath love of slumber deprived those eyes * And the phantom-vision vexed thy sprite?
I cried to the Night, whose glooms were like * Seas that surge and billow with might, with might:
'O Night, thou art longsome to lover who * Hath no aid nor help save the morning light!'
She replied, 'Complain not that I am long: * 'Tis love is the cause of thy longsome plight!'"

Now, at the first of the couplets, I sprang up and made for the quarter whence the sound came, nor had the voice ended repeating them, ere I was with the speaker and saw a youth of the utmost beauty, the hair of whose side face had not sprouted and in whose cheeks tears had worn twin trenches. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Eighty-first Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdullah bin Ma'amar al-Kaysi thus continued: — So I sprang up and made for the quarter whence the sound came, nor had the voice ended repeating the verses, ere I was with the speaker and saw a youth on whose side face the hair had not sprouted and in whose cheeks tears had worn twin trenches. Quoth I to him, "Fair befal thee for a youth!"; and quoth he, "And thee also! Who art thou?" I replied, "Abdullah bin Ma'amar al-Kaysi;" and he said, "Dost thou want aught?" I rejoined, "I was sitting in the garden and naught hath troubled me this night but thy voice. With my life would I ransom thee! What aileth thee?" He said, "Sit thee down." So I sat down and he continued, "I am Otbah bin al-Hubáb bin al-Mundhir bin al-Jamúh the Ansári.[81] I went out in the morning to the Mosque Al-Ahzáb[82] and occupied myself there awhile with prayer-bows and prostrations, after which I withdrew apart, to worship privily. But lo! up came women, as they were moons, walking with a swaying gait, and surrounding a damsel of passing loveliness, perfect in beauty and grace, who stopped before me and said, 'O Otbah, what sayst thou of union with one who seeketh union with thee?' Then she left me and went away; and since that time I have had no tidings of her nor come upon any trace of her; and behold, I am distracted and do naught but remove from place to place." Then he cried out and fell to the ground fainting. When he came to himself, it was as if the damask of his cheeks were dyed with safflower,[83] and he recited these couplets,

"I see you with my heart from far countrie * Would Heaven you
also me from far could see
My heart and eyes for you are sorrowing; * My soul with you
abides and you with me.
I take no joy in life when you're unseen * Or Heaven or Garden of
Eternity."

Said I, "O Otbah, O son of my uncle, repent to thy Lord and drave pardon for thy sin; for before thee is the terror of standing up to Judgment." He replied, "Far be it from me so to do. I shall never leave to love till the two mimosa-gatherers return."[84] I abode with him till daybreak, when I said to him, "Come let us go to the Mosque Al-Ahzab." So we went thither and sat there, till we had prayed the midday prayers, when lo! up came the women; but the damsel was not among them. Quoth they to him, "O Otbah, what thinkest thou of her who seeketh union with thee?" He said, "And what of her?"; and they replied, "Her father hath taken her and departed to Al-Samawah."[85] I asked them the name of the damsel and they said, "She is called Rayyá, daughter of Al-Ghitríf al-Sulami."[86] Whereupon Otbah raised his head and recited these verses,

"My friends, Rayya hath mounted soon as morning shone, * And to
Samawah's wilds her caravan is gone.
My friends, I've wept till I can weep no more, Oh, say, * Hath
any one a tear that I can take on loan."

Then said I to him, "O Otbah, I have brought with me great wealth, wherewith I desire to succour generous men; and by Allah, I will lavish it before thee,[87] so thou mayst attain thy desire and more than thy desire! Come with me to the assembly of the Ansaris." So we rose and went, till we entered their assembly, when I salam'd to them and they returned my greeting civilly. Then quoth I, "O assembly, what say ye of Otbah and his father?": and they replied, "They are of the princes of the Arabs." I continued, "Know that he is smitten with the calamity of love and I desire your furtherance to Al-Samawah." And they said, "To hear is to obey." So they mounted with us, the whole party, and we rode till we drew near the place of the Banu Sulaym. Now when Ghitrif heard of our being near, he hastened forth to meet us, saying, "Long life to you, O nobles!"; whereto we replied, "And to thee also! Behold we are thy guests." Quoth he, "Ye have lighted down at a most hospitable abode and ample;" and alighting he cried out, "Ho, all ye slaves, come down!" So they came down and spread skin-rugs and cushions and slaughtered sheep and cattle; but we said, "We will not taste of thy food, till thou have accomplished our need." He asked, "And what is your need?"; and we answered, "We demand thy noble daughter in marriage for Otbah bin Hubab bin Mundhir the illustrious and well born." "O my brethren," said he, "she whom you demand is owner of herself, and I will go in to her and tell her." So he rose in wrath[88] and went in to Rayya, who said to him, "O my papa, why do I see thee show anger?" And he replied, saying, "Certain of the Ansaris have come upon me to demand thy hand of me in marriage." Quoth she, "They are noble chiefs; the Prophet, on whom be the choicest blessings and peace, intercedeth for them with Allah. For whom among them do they ask me?" Quoth he, "For a youth known as Otbah bin al-Hubab;" and she said, "I have heard of Otbah that he performeth what he promiseth and findeth what he seeketh." Ghitrif cried, "I swear that I will never marry thee to him; no, never, for there hath been reported to me somewhat of thy converse with him." Said she, "What was that? But in any case, I swear that the Ansaris shall not be uncivilly rejected; wherefore do thou offer them a fair excuse." "How so?" "Make the dowry heavy to them and they will desist." "Thou sayst well," said he, and going out in haste, told the Ansaris, "The damsel of the tribe[89] consenteth; but she requireth a dowry worthy herself. Who engageth for this?" "I," answered I. Then said he, "I require for her a thousand bracelets of red gold and five thousand dirhams of the coinage of Hajar[90] and a hundred pieces of woollen cloth and striped stuffs[91] of Al-Yaman and five bladders of ambergris." Said I, "Thou shalt have that much; dost thou consent?"; and he said, "I do consent." So I despatched to Al-Medinah the Illumined[92] a party of the Ansaris, who brought all for which I had become surety; whereupon they slaughtered sheep and cattle and the folk assembled to eat of the food. We abode thus forty days when Ghitrif said to us, "Take your bride." So we sat her in a dromedary-litter and her father equipped her with thirty camel-loads of things of price; after which we farewelled him and journeyed till we came within a day's journey of Al-Medinah the Illumined, when there fell upon us horsemen, with intent to plunder, and methinks they were of the Banu Sulaym, Otbah drove at them and slew of them much people, but fell back, wounded by a lance-thrust, and presently dropped to the earth. Then there came to us succour of the country people, who drove away the highwaymen; but Otbah's days were ended. So we said, "Alas for Otbah, oh!;" and the damsel hearing it cast herself down from the camel and throwing herself upon him, cried out grievously and repeated these couplets,

"Patient I seemed, yet Patience shown by me * Was but
self-guiling till thy sight I see:
Had my soul done as due my life had gone, * Had fled before
mankind forestalling thee:
Then, after me and thee none shall to friend * Be just, nor any
soul with soul agree."

Then she sobbed a single sob and gave up the ghost. We dug one grave for them and laid them in the earth, and I returned to the dwellings of my people, where I abode seven years. Then I betook me again to Al-Hijaz and entering Al-Medinah the Illumined for pious visitation said in my mind, "By Allah, I will go again to Otbah's tomb!" So I repaired thither, and, behold, over the grave was a tall tree, on which hung fillets of red and green and yellow stuffs.[93] So I asked the people of the place, "How be this tree called?"; and they answered, "The tree of the Bride and the Bridegroom." I abode by the tomb a day and a night, then went my way; and this is all I know of Otbah. Almighty Allah have mercy upon him! And they also tell this tale of

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HIND, DAUGHTER OF AL-NU'MAN AND AL-HAJJAJ.[94]

It is related that Hind, daughter of Al-Nu'man, was the fairest woman of her day, and her beauty and loveliness were reported to Al-Hajjaj, who sought her in marriage and lavished much treasure on her. So he took her to wife, engaging to give her a dowry of two hundred thousand dirhams in case of divorce, and when he went into her, he abode with her a long time. One day after this, he went in to her and found her looking at her face in the mirror and saying,

"Hind is an Arab filly purest bred, * Which hath been covered by
a mongrel mule;
An colt of horse she throw by Allah! well; * If mule, it but
results from mulish rule."[95]

When Al-Hajjaj heard this, he turned back and went his way, unseen of Hind; and, being minded to put her away, he sent Abdullah bin Tahir to her, to divorce her. So Abdullah went in to her and said to her, "Al-Hajjaj Abu Mohammed saith to thee: 'Here be the two hundred thousand dirhams of thy contingent dowry he oweth thee'; and he hath deputed me to divorce thee." Replied she, "O Ibn Tahir, I gladly agree to this; for know that I never for one day took pleasure in him; so, if we separate, by Allah, I shall never regret him, and these two hundred thousand dirhams I give to thee as a reward for the glad tidings thou bringest me of my release from yonder dog of the Thakafites."[96] After this, the Commander of the Faithful, Abd al-Malik bin Marwan, heard of her beauty and loveliness, her stature and symmetry, her sweet speech and the amorous grace of her glances and sent to her, to ask her in marriage; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Eighty-second Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Prince of True Believers, Abd al-Malik bin Marwan, hearing of the lady's beauty and loveliness, sent to ask her in marriage; and she wrote him in reply a letter, in which, after the glorification of Allah and benediction of His Prophet, she said, “But afterwards. Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that the dog hath lapped in the vase.” When the Caliph read her answer, he laughed and wrote to her, citing his saying (whom may Allah bless and keep!) “If a dog lap in the vessel of one of you, let him wash seven times, once thereof with earth,” and adding, “Wash the affront from the place of use.”[97] With this she could not gainsay him; so she replied to him, saying (after praise and blessing), “O Commander of the Faithful I will not consent save on one condition, and if thou ask me what it is, I reply that Al-Hajjaj lead my camel to the town where thou tarriest barefoot and clad as he is.”[98] When the Caliph read her letter, he laughed long and loudly and sent to Al-Hajjaj, bidding him to do as she wished. He dared not disobey the order, so he submitted to the Caliph’s commandment and sent to Hind, telling her to make ready for the journey. So she made ready and mounted her litter, when Al-Hajjaj with his suite came up to Hind’s door and as she mounted and her damsels and eunuchs rode around her, he dismounted and took the halter of her camel and led it along, barefooted, whilst she and her damsels and tirewomen laughed and jeered at him and made mock of him. Then she said to her tirewoman, “Draw back the curtain of the litter;” and she drew back the curtain, till Hind was face to face with Al-Hajjaj, whereupon she laughed at him and he improvised this couplet,

“Though now thou jeer, O Hind, how many a night * I’ve left thee wakeful sighing for the light.”

And she answered him with these two,

“We reck not, an our life escape from bane, * For waste of wealth
and gear that went in vain:
Money may be regained and rank re-won * When one is cured of
malady and pain.”

And she ceased not to laugh at him and make sport of him, till they drew near the city of the Caliph, when she threw down a dinar with her own hand and said to Al-Hajjaj, “O camel-driver, I have dropped a dirham; look for it and give it to me.” So he looked and seeing naught but the dinar, said, “This is a dinar.” She replied, “Nay, ’tis a dirham.” But he said, “This is a dinar.” Then quoth she, “Praised be Allah who hath given us in exchange for a paltry dirham a dinar! Give it us.” And Al-Hajjaj was abashed at this. Then he carried her to the palace of the Commander of the Faithful, and she went in to him and became his favourite. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Eighty-third Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that men also tell a tale anent

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KHUZAYMAH BIN BISHR AND IKRIMAH AL-FAYYAZ.[99]

There lived once, in the days of the Caliph Sulayman bin Abd al-Malik[100] a man of the Banu Asad, by name Khuzaymah bin Bishr, who was famed for bounty and abundant wealth and excellence and righteous dealing with his brethren. He continued thus till times grew strait with him and he became in need of the aid of those Moslem brethren on whom he had lavished favour and kindness. So they succoured him a while and then grew weary of him, which when he saw, he went in to his wife who was the daughter of his father's brother, and said to her, "O my cousin, I find a change in my brethren; wherefore I am resolved to keep my house till death come to me." So he shut his door and abode in his home, living on that which he had by him, till it was spent and he knew not what to do. Now Ikrimah al-Raba'í, surnamed Al-Fayyáz, governor of Mesopotamia,[101] had known him, and one day, as he sat in his Audience-chamber, mention was made of Khuzaymah, whereupon quoth Ikrimah, "How is it with him?" And quoth they, "He is in a plight past telling, and hath shut his door and keepeth the house." Ikrimah rejoined, "This cometh but of his excessive generosity: but how is it that Khuzaymah bin Bishr findeth nor comforter nor requiter?" And they replied, "He hath found naught of this." So when it was night, Ikrimah took four thousand dinars and laid them in one purse; then, bidding saddle his beast, he mounted and rode privily to Khuzaymah's house, attended only by one of his pages, carrying the money. When he came to the door, he alighted and taking the purse from the page made him withdraw afar off; after which he went up to the door and knocked. Khuzaymah came out to him, and he gave him the purse, saying, "Better thy case herewith." He took it and finding it heavy put it from his hand and laying hold of the bridle of Ikrimah's horse, asked, "Who art thou? My soul be thy ransom!" Answered Ikrimah, "O man I come not to thee at a time like this desiring that thou shouldst know me." Khuzaymah rejoined, "I will not let thee go till thou make thyself known to me," whereupon Ikrimah said "I am hight Jabir Atharat al-Kiram."[102] Quoth

Khuzaymah, “Tell me more.” But Ikrimah cried, “No,” and fared forth, whilst Khuzaymah went in to his cousin and said to her, “Rejoice for Allah hath sent us speedy relief and wealth; if these be but dirhams, yet are they many. Arise and light the lamp.” She said, “I have not wherewithal to light it.” So he spent the night handling the coins and felt by their roughness that they were dinars, but could not credit it. Meanwhile Ikrimah returned to his own house and found that his wife had missed him and asked for him, and when they told her of his riding forth, she misdoubted of him, and said to him, “Verily the Wali of Al-Jazirah rideth not abroad after such an hour of the night, unattended and secretly, save to a wife or a mistress.” He answered, “Allah knoweth that I went not forth to either of these.” “Tell me then wherefore thou wentest forth?” “I went not forth at this hour save that none should know it.” “I must needs be told.” “Wilt thou keep the matter secret, if I tell thee?” “Yes!” So he told her the state of the case, adding, “Wilt thou have me swear to thee?” Answered she, “No, no, my heart is set at ease and trusteth in that which thou hast told me.” As for Khuzaymah, soon as it was day he made his peace with his creditors and set his affairs in order; after which he got him ready and set out for the Court of Sulayman bin Abd al-Malik, who was then sojourning in Palestine.[103] When he came to the royal gate, he sought admission of the chamberlain, who went in and told the Caliph of his presence. Now he was renowned for his beneficence and Sulayman knew of him; so he bade admit him. When he entered, he saluted the Caliph after the usual fashion of saluting[104] and the King asked, “O Khuzaymah, what hath kept thee so long from us?” Answered he, “Evil case,” and quoth the Caliph, “What hindered thee from having recourse to us?” Quoth he, “My infirmity, O Commander of the Faithful!” “And why,” said Sulayman, “comest thou to us now?” Khuzaymah replied, “Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that I was sitting one night late in my house, when a man knocked at the door and did thus and thus;” and he went on to tell him of all that had passed between Ikrimah and himself from first to last. Sulayman asked, “Knowest thou the man?” and Khuzaymah answered, “No, O Commander of the Faithful, he was reserved[105] and would say naught save, ‘I am hight Jabir Atharat al-Kiram.’” When Sulayman heard this, his heart burned within him for anxiety to discover the man, and he said, “If we knew him, truly we would requite him for his generosity.” Then he bound for Khuzaymah a banner[106] and made him Governor of Mesopotamia, in the stead of Ikrimah Al-Fayyaz; and he set out for Al-Jazirah. When he drew near the city, Ikrimah and the people of the place came forth to meet him and they saluted each other and went on into the town, where Khuzaymah took up his lodging in the Government-house and bade take security for Ikrimah and that he should be called to account.[107] So an account was taken against him and he was found to be in default for much money; whereupon Khuzaymah required of him payment, but he said, “I have no means of paying aught.” Quoth Khuzaymah, “It must be paid;” and quoth Ikrimah, “I have it not; do what thou hast to do.” So Khuzaymah ordered him to gaol. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Eighty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Khuzaymah, having ordered the imprisonment of Ikrimah Al-Fayyaz, sent to him again to demand payment of the debt; but he replied, “I am not of those who preserve their wealth at the expense of their honour; do what thou wilt.” Then Khuzaymah bade load him with irons and kept him in prison a month or more, till confinement began to tell upon him and he became wasted. After this, tidings of his plight travelled to the daughter of his uncle who was troubled with sore concern thereat and, sending for a freedwoman of hers, a woman of abundant judgment, and experience, said to her, “Go forthwith to the Emir Khuzaymah’s gate and say, ‘I have a counsel for the Emir.’ If they ask what it is, add, ‘I will not tell it save to himself’; and when thou enterest to him, beg to see him in private and when private ask him, ‘What be this deed thou hast done? Hath Jabir Atharat al-Kiram deserved of thee no better reward than to be cast into strait prison and hard bond of irons?’” The woman did as she was bid, and when Khuzaymah heard her words, he cried out at the top of his voice, saying, “Alas, the baseness of it! Was it indeed he?” And she answered, “Yes.” Then he bade saddle his beast forthwith and, summoning the honourable men of the city, repaired with them to the prison and opening the door, went in with them to Ikrimah, whom they found sitting in evil case, worn out and wasted with blows and misery. When he looked at Khuzaymah, he was abashed and hung his head; but the other bent down to him and kissed his face; whereupon he raised his head and asked, “What maketh thee do this?” Answered Khuzaymah, “The generosity of thy dealing and the vileness of my requital.” And Ikrimah said, “Allah pardon us and thee!” Then Khuzaymah commanded the jailor to strike off Ikrimah’s fetters and clap them on his own feet; but Ikrimah said, “What is this thou wilt do?” Quoth the other, “I have a mind to suffer what thou hast suffered.” Quoth Ikrimah, “I conjure thee by Allah, do not so!” Then they went out together and returned to Khuzaymah’s house, where Ikrimah would have farewelled him and wended his way; but he forbade him and Ikrimah said, “What is thy will of me?” Replied Khuzaymah, “I wish to change thy case, for my shame before the daughter of thine uncle is yet greater than my shame before thee.” So he bade clear the bath and entering with Ikrimah, served him there in person and when they went forth he bestowed on him a splendid robe of honour and mounted him and gave him much money. Then he carried him to his house and asked his leave to make his excuses to his wife and obtained her pardon. After this he besought him to accompany him to the Caliph who was then abiding at Ramlah[108] and he agreed. So they journeyed thither, and when they reached the royal quarters the chamberlain went in and acquainted the Caliph Sulayman bin Abd al-Malik with Khuzaymah’s arrival, whereat he was troubled and said, “What! is the Governor of Mesopotamia come without our command? This can be only on some grave occasion.” Then he bade admit him and said, before saluting him, “What is behind thee, O Khuzaymah?” Replied he, “Good, O Commander of the Faithful.” Asked Sulayman, “What bringeth thee?”; and he answered, saying, “I have discovered Jabir Atharat al-Kiram and thought to gladden thee with him, knowing thine excessive desire to know him and thy longing to see him.” “Who is he?” quoth the Caliph and quoth Khuzaymah, “He is Ikrimah Al-Fayyaz.” So Sulayman called for Ikrimah, who approached and saluted him as Caliph; and the King welcomed him and making him draw near his sitting-place, said to him, “O Ikrimah, thy good deed to him hath brought thee naught but evil,” adding, “Now write down in a note thy needs each and every, and that which thou desirest." He did so and the Caliph commanded to do all that he required and that forthwith. Moreover he gave him ten thousand dinars more than he asked for and twenty chests of clothes over and above that he sought, and calling for a spear, bound him a banner and made him Governor over Armenia and Azarbiján[109] and Mesopotamia, saying, "Khuzaymah's case is in thy hands, an thou wilt, continue him in his office, and if thou wilt, degrade him." And Ikrimah said, "Nay, but I restore him to his office, O Commander of the Faithful." Then they went out from him and ceased not to be Governors under Sulayman bin Abd al-Malik all the days of his Caliphate. And they also tell a tale of

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YUNUS THE SCRIBE AND THE CALIPH WALID BIN SAHL.

There lived in the reign of the Caliph Hishám, [110] son of Abd al-Malik, a man called Yúnus the Scribe well-known to the general, and he set out one day on a journey to Damascus, having with him a slave-girl of surpassing beauty and loveliness, whom he had taught all that was needful to her and whose price was an hundred thousand dirhams. When they drew near to Damascus, the caravan halted by the side of a lake and Yunus went down to a quiet place with his damsel and took out some victual he had with him and a leather bottle of wine. As he sat at meat, behold, came up a young man of goodly favour and dignified presence, mounted on a sorrel horse and followed by two eunuchs, and said to him, "Wilt thou accept me to guest?" "Yes," replied Yunus. So the stranger alighted and said, "Give me to drink of thy wine." Yunus gave him to drink and he said, "If it please thee, sing us a song." So Yunus sang this couplet extempore,

"She joineth charms were never seen conjoined in mortal dress: *
And for her love she makes me love my tears and wakefulness."

At which the stranger rejoiced with exceeding joy and Yunus gave him to drink again and again, till the wine got the better of him and he said, "Bid thy slave-girl sing." So she improvised this couplet,

"A houri, by whose charms my heart is moved to sore distress: *
Nor wand of tree nor sun nor moon her rivals I confess!"

The stranger was overjoyed with this and they sat drinking till nightfall, when they prayed the evening-prayer and the youth said to Yunus, "What bringeth thee to our city?" He replied, "Quest of wherewithal to pay my debts and better my case." Quoth the other, "Wilt thou sell me this slave-girl for thirty thousand dirhams?" Whereto quoth Yunus, "I must have more than that." He asked, "Will forty thousand content thee?"; but Yunus answered, "That would only settle my debts, and I should remain empty-handed." Rejoined the stranger, "We will take her of thee at fifty thousand dirhams[111] and give thee a suit of clothes to boot and the expenses of thy journey and make thee a sharer in my condition as long as thou livest." Cried Yunus, "I sell her to thee on these terms." Then said the young man, "Wilt thou trust me to bring thee the money to-morrow and let me take her with me, or shall she abide with thee till I pay down her price?" Whereto wine and shame and awe of the stranger led Yunus to reply, "I will trust thee; take her and Allah bless thee in her!" Whereupon the visitor bade one of his pages sit her before him on his beast, and mounting his own horse, farewelled of Yunus and rode away out of sight. Hardly had he left him, when the seller bethought himself and knew that he had erred in selling her and said to himself, "What have I done? I have delivered my slave-girl to a man with whom I am unacquainted, neither know I who he is; and grant that I were acquainted with him, how am I to get at him?" So he abode in thought till the morning, when he prayed the dawn-prayers and his companions entered Damascus, whilst he sat, perplexed and wotting not what to do, till the sun scorched him and it irked him to abide there. He thought to enter the city, but said in his mind, "If I enter Damascus, I cannot be sure but that the messenger will come and find me not, in which case I shall have sinned against myself a second sin." Accordingly he sat down in the shade of a wall that was there, and towards the wane of day, up came one of the eunuchs whom he had seen with the young man, whereat great joy possessed Yunus and he said in himself, "I know not that aught hath ever given me more delight than the sight of this castrato." When the eunuch reached him, he said to him, "O my lord, we have kept thee long waiting"; but Yunus disclosed nothing to him of the torments of anxiety he had suffered. Then quoth the castrato, "Knowest thou the man who bought the girl of thee?"; and quoth Yunus, "No," to which the other rejoined, "'Twas Walid bin Sahl,[112] the Heir Apparent." And Yunus was silent. Then said the eunuch, "Ride," and made him mount a horse he had with him and they rode till they came to a mansion, where they dismounted and entered. Here Yunus found the damsel, who sprang up at his sight and saluted him. He asked her how she had fared with him who had bought her and she answered, "He lodged me in this apartment and ordered me all I needed." Then he sat with her awhile, till suddenly one of the servants of the houseowner came in and bade him rise and follow him. So he followed the man into the presence of his master and found him yesternight's guest, whom he saw seated on his couch and who said to him, "Who art thou?" "I am Yunus the Scribe." "Welcome to thee, O Yunus! by Allah, I have long wished to look on thee; for I have heard of thy report. How didst thou pass the night?" "Well, may Almighty Allah advance thee!" "Peradventure thou repentedest thee of that thou didst yesterday and saidst to thyself: I have delivered my slave-girl to a man with who I am not acquainted, neither know I his name nor whence he cometh?" "Allah forbid, O Emir, that I should repent over her! Had I made gift of her to the Prince, she were the least of the gifts that are given unto him," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Eighty-fifth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Yunus the Scribe said to Walid, "Allah forbid I should repent over her! Had I made gift of her to the Prince, she were the least of gifts that are given to him, nor indeed is she worthy of his rank," Walid rejoined, "By Allah, but I repented me of having carried her away from thee and said to myself, 'This man is a stranger and knoweth me not, and I have taken him by surprise and acted inconsiderately by him, in my haste to take the damsel!' Dost thou recall what passed between us?" Quoth Yunus, "Yes!" and quoth Walid, "Dost thou sell this damsel to me for fifty thousand dirhams?" And Yunus said, "I do." Then the Prince called to one of his servants to bring him fifty thousand dirhams and a thousand and five hundred dinars to boot, and gave them all to Yunus, saying, "Take the slave's price: the thousand dinars are for thy fair opinion of us and the five hundred are for thy viaticum and for what present thou shalt buy for thy people. Art thou content?" "I am content," answered Yunus and kissed his hands, saying, "By Allah, thou hast filled my eyes and my hands and my heart!" Quoth Walid, "By Allah, I have as yet had no privacy of her nor have I taken my fill of her singing. Bring her to me!" So she came and he bade her sit, then said to her, "Sing." And she sang these verses,

"O thou who dost comprise all Beauty's boons! * O sweet of

nature, fain of coquetry!
In Turks and Arabs many beauties dwell; * But, O my fawn, in none thy charms I see.
Turn to thy lover, O my fair, and keep * Thy word, though but in visioned phantasy:
Shame and disgrace are lawful for thy sake * And wakeful nights full fill with joy and glee:
I'm not the first for thee who fared distraught; * Slain by thy love how many a many be!
I am content with thee for worldly share * Dearer than life and good art thou to me!"

When he heard this, he was delighted exceedingly and praised Yunus for his excellent teaching of her and her fair education. Then he bade his servants bring him a roadster with saddle and housings for his riding, and a mule to carry his gear, and said to him, "O Yunus, when it shall reach thee that command hath come to me, do thou join me; and, by Allah, I will fill thy hands with good and advance thee to honour and make thee rich as long as thou livest!" So Yunus said, "I took his goods and went my ways; and when Walid succeeded to the Caliphate, I repaired to him; and by Allah, he kept his promise and entreated me with high honour and munificence. Then I abode with him in all content of case and rise of rank and mine affairs prospered and my wealth increased and goods and farms became mine, such as sufficed me and will suffice my heirs after me; nor did I cease to abide with Walid, till he was slain, the mercy of Almighty Allah be on him!" And men tell a tale concerning

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HARUN AL-RASHID AND THE ARAB GIRL.

The Caliph Harun al-Rashid was walking one day with Ja’afar the Barmecide, when he espied a company of girls drawing water and went up to them, having a mind to drink. As he drew near, one of them turned to her fellows and improvised these lines,

“Thy phantom bid thou fleet, and fly * Far from the couch whereon I lie;
So I may rest and quench the fire, * Bonfire in bones aye flaming high;
My love-sick form Love’s restless palm * Rolls o’er the rug whereon I sigh:
How ’tis with me thou wottest well * How long, then, union wilt deny?”

The Caliph marvelled at her elegance and eloquence. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Eighty-sixth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph, hearing the girl’s verses, marvelled at her elegance and eloquence, and said to her, “O daughter of nobles, are these thine own or a quotation?” Replied she, “They are my very own,” and he rejoined, “An thou say sooth keep the sense and change the rhyme.” So she said,

“Bid thou thy phantom distance keep * And quit this couch the while I sleep;
So I may rest and quench the flames * Through all my body rageful creep,
In love-sick one, whom passion’s palms * Roll o’er the bed where grief I weep;
How ’tis with me thou wottest well; * All but thy union hold I cheap!”

Quoth the Caliph, “This also is stolen”; and quoth she, “Nay, ’tis my very own.” He said, “If it be indeed thine own, change the rhyme again and keep the sense.” So she recited the following,

“Unto thy phantom deal behest * To shun my couch the while I rest,
So I repose and quench the fire * That burns what lieth in my breast,
My weary form Love’s restless palm * Rolls o’er with boon of sleep unblest.
How ’tis with me thou wottest well * When union’s bought ’tis haply best!”

Quoth Al-Rashid, “This too is stolen”; and quoth she, “Not, so, ’tis mine.” He said, “If thy words be true change the rhyme once more.” And she recited,

“Drive off the ghost that ever shows * Beside my couch when I’d repose,
So I may rest and quench the fire * Beneath my ribs e’er flames and glows
In love-sick one, whom passion’s palms * Roll o’er the couch where weeping flows.
How ’tis with me thou wottest well * Will union come as union goes?”

Then said the Caliph, “Of what part of this camp art thou?”; and she replied, “Of its middle in dwelling and of its highest in tentpoles.”[113] Wherefore he knew that she was the daughter of the tribal chief. “And thou,” quoth she, “of what art thou among the guardians of the horses?”; and quoth he, “Of the highest in tree and of the ripest in fruit.” “Allah protect thee, O Commander of the Faithful!” said she, and kissing ground called down blessings on him. Then she went away with the maidens of the Arabs, and the Caliph said to Ja’afar, “There is no help for it but I take her to wife.” So Ja’afar repaired to her father and said to him, “The Commander of the Faithful hath a mind to thy daughter.” He replied, “With love and goodwill, she is a gift as a handmaid to His Highness our Lord the Commander of the Faithful.” So he equipped her and carried her to the Caliph, who took her to wife and went in to her, and she became of the dearest of his women to him. Furthermore, he bestowed on her father largesse such as succoured him among Arabs, till he was transported to the mercy of Almighty Allah. The Caliph, hearing of his death, went in to her greatly troubled; and, when she saw him looking afflicted, she entered her chamber and doffing all that was upon her of rich raiment, donned mourning apparel and raised lament for her father. It was said to her, “What is the reason of this?”; and she replied, “My father is dead.” So they repaired to the Caliph and told him and he rose and going in to her, asked her who had informed her of her father’s death; and she answered “It was thy face, O Commander of the Faithful!” Said he, “How so?”; and she said, “Since I have been with thee, I never saw thee on such wise till this time, and there was none for whom I feared save my father, by reason of his great age; but may thy head live, O Commander of the Faithful!” The Caliph’s eyes filled with tears and he condoled with her; but she ceased not to mourn for her father, till she followed him — Allah have mercy on the twain! And a tale is also told of

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AL-ASMA'I AND THE THREE GIRLS OF BASSORAH.

The Commander of the Faithful Harun Al-Rashid was exceeding restless one night and rising from his bed, paced from chamber to chamber, but could not compose himself to sleep. As soon as it was day, he said, "Fetch me Al-Asma'i!"[114] So the eunuch went out and told the doorkeepers; these sent for the poet and when he came, informed the Caliph who bade admit him and said to him, "O Asma'i, I wish thee to tell me the best thou hast heard of stories of women and their verses." Answered Al-Asma'i, "Hearkening and obedience! I have heard great store of women's verses; but none pleased me save three sets of couplets I once heard from three girls." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Eighty-seventh Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Al-Asma'i said to the Prince of True Believers, "Verily I have heard much, but nothing pleased me save three sets of couplets improvised by as many girls." Quoth the Caliph, "Tell me of them," and quoth he, "Know then, O Commander of the Faithful, that I once abode in Bassorah, and one day, as I was walking, the heat was sore upon me and I sought for a siesta-place but found none. However by looking right and left I came upon a porch swept and sprinkled, at the upper end whereof was a wooden bench under an open lattice-window, whence exhaled a scent of musk. I entered the porch and sitting down on the bench, would have stretcht me at full length when I heard from within a girl's sweet voice talking and saying, 'O my sisters, we are here seated to spend our day in friendly converse; so come, let us each put down an hundred dinars and recite a line of verse; and whoso extemporiseth the goodliest and sweetest line, the three hundred dinars shall be hers.' 'With love and gladness,' said the others; and the eldest recited the first couplet which is this,

'Would he come to my bed during sleep 'twere delight * But a visit on wake were delightsomer sight!'

Quoth the second,

‘Naught came to salute me in sleep save his shade * But ‘welcome, fair welcome,’ I cried to the spright!’

Then said the youngest,

‘My soul and my folk I engage for the youth * Musk-scented I see in my bed every night!’

Quoth I, ‘An she be fair as her verse hath grace, the thing is complete in every case.’ Then I came down from my bench[115] and was about to go away, when behold, the door opened and out came a slave-girl, who said to me, ‘Sit, O Shaykh!’ So I climbed up and sat down again when she gave me a scroll, wherein was written, in characters of the utmost beauty, with straight Alifs,[116] big-bellied Hás and rounded Waws, the following, ‘We would have the Shaykh (Allah lengthen his days!) to know that we are three maidens, sisters, sitting in friendly converse, who have laid down each an hundred dinars, conditioning that whoso recite the goodliest and sweetest couplet shall have the whole three hundred dinars; and we appoint thee umpire between us: so decide as thou seest best, and the Peace be on thee! Quoth I to the girl, ‘Here to me inkcase and paper.’ So she went in and, returning after a little, brought me a silvered inkcase and gilded pens[117] with which I wrote these couplets,

They talked of three beauties whose converse was quite * Like the
talk of a man with experience dight:
Three maidens who borrowed the bloom of the dawn * Making
hearts of their lovers in sorriest plight.
They were hidden from eyes of the prier and spy * Who
slept and their modesty mote not affright;
So they opened whatever lay hid in their hearts * And in
frolicsome fun began verse to indite.
Quoth one fair coquette with her amorous grace * Whose
teeth for the sweet of her speech flashèd bright: —
Would he come to my bed during sleep ‘twere delight * But a
visit on wake were delightsomer sight!
When she ended, her verse by her smiling was gilt: * Then
the second ‘gan singing as nightingale might: —
Naught came to salute me in sleep save his shade * But
‘welcome, fair welcome,’ I cried to the spright!

But the third I preferred for she said in reply, * With
expression most apposite, exquisite: —
My soul and my folk I engage for the youth * Musk-scented I see in my bed every night!
So when I considered their words to decide, * And not
make me the mock of the cynical wight;
I pronounced for the youngest, declaring her verse * Of all
verses be that which is nearest the right.'

Then I gave scroll to the slave-girl, who went upstairs with it, and behold, I heard a noise of dancing and clapping of hands and Doomsday astir. Quoth I to myself, ''Tis no time of me to stay here.' So I came down from the platform and was about to go away, when the damsel cried out to me, 'Sit down, O Asma'i!' Asked I, 'Who gave thee to know that I was Al-Asma'i?' and she answered, 'O Shaykh, an thy name be unknown to us, thy poetry is not!' So I sat down again and suddently the door opened and out came the first damsel, with a dish of fruits and another of sweetmeats. I ate of both and praised their fashion and would have ganged my gait; but she cried out, 'Sit down, O Asma'i!' Wherewith I raised my eyes to her and saw a rosy palm in a saffron sleeve, meseemed it was the full moon rising splendid in the cloudy East. Then she threw me a purse containing three hundred dinars and said to me, 'This is mine and I give it to thee by way of douceur in requital of thy judgment.'" Quoth the Caliph, "Why didst thou decide for the youngest?" and quoth Al-Asma'i, "O Commander of the Faithful, whose life Allah prolong! the eldest said, 'I should delight in him, if he visited my couch in sleep.' Now this is restricted and dependent upon a condition which may befal or may not befal; whilst, for the second, an image of dreams came to her in sleep, and she saluted it; but the youngest's couplet said that she actually lay with her lover and smelt his breath sweeter than musk and she engaged her soul and her folk for him, which she had not done, were he not dearer to her than her sprite." Said the Caliph, "Thou didst well, O Asma'i." and gave him other three hundred ducats in payment of his story. And I have heard a tale concerning

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IBRAHIM OF MOSUL AND THE DEVIL.[118]

Quoth Abu Ishak Ibrahim al-Mausili: — I asked Al-Rashid once to give me a day's leave that I might be private with the people of my household and my brethren, and he gave me leave for Saturday the Sabbath. So I went home and betook myself to making ready meat and drink and other necessaires and bade the doorkeepers shut the doors and let none come in to me. However, presently, as I sat in my sitting-chamber, with my women who were looking after my wants, behold, there appeared an old man of comely and reverend aspect,[119] clad in white clothes and a shirt of fine stuff with a doctor's turband on his head and a silver- handled staff in his hand, and the house and porch were full of the perfumes wherewith he was scented. I was greatly vexed at his coming in to me and thought to turn away the doorkeepers; but he saluted me after the goodliest fashion and I returned his greeting and bade him be seated. So he sat down and began entertaining me with stories of the Arabs and their verses, till my anger left me and methought my servants had sought to pleasure me by admitting a man of such good breeding and fine culture. Then I asked him, "Art thou for meat?"; and he answered, "I have no need of it." "And for drink?" quoth I, and quoth he, "That is as thou wilt." So I drank off a pint of wine and poured him out the like. Then said he, "O Abu Ishak, wilt thou sing us somewhat, so we may hear of thine art that wherein thou excellest high and low?" His words angered me; but I swallowed my anger and taking the lute played and sang. "Well done, O Abu Ishak!"[120] said he; whereat my wrath redoubled and I said to myself, "Is it not enough that he should intrude upon me, without my leave, and importune me thus, but he must call me by name, as though he knew not the right way to address me?" Quoth he, "An thou wilt sing something more we will requite thee." I dissembled my annoyance and took the lute and sang again, taking pains with what I sang and rising thereto altogether, in consideration of his saying, "We will requite thee." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Eighty-eighth Night, She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Shaykh said to Abu Ishak, "If thou wilt sing something more we will requite thee," I dissembled my annoyance (continued Ibrahim) and, taking the lute, sang again with great attention to my singing and rising altogether thereto, in consideration of his saying, "We will requite thee." He was delighted, and cried, "Well done, O my lord!"; presently adding, "Dost thou give me leave to sing?" "As thou wilt," answered I, deeming him weak of wit, in that he should think to sing in my presence, after that which he had heard from me. So he took the lute and swept the strings, and by Allah, I fancied they spoke in Arabic tongue, with a sweet and liquid and murmurous voice; then he began and sang these couplets,

"I bear a hurt heart, who will sell me for this * A heart whole
and free from all canker and smart?
Nay, none will consent or to barter or buy * Such loss, ne'er
from sorrow and sickness to part:
I groan wi' the groaning of wine-wounded men * And pine for the
pining ne'er freeth my heart."

And by Allah, meseemed the doors and the walls and all that was in the house answered and sang with him, for the beauty of his voice, so that I fancied my very limbs and clothes replied to him, and I abode amazed and unable to speak or move, for the trouble of my heart. Then he sang these couplets,

"Culvers of Liwa![121] to your nests return; * Your mournful
voices thrill this heart of mine.
Then back a-copse they flew, and well-nigh took * My life and
made me tell my secret pine.
With cooing call they one who's gone, as though * Their breasts
were maddened with the rage of wine:
Ne'er did mine eyes their like for culvers see * Who weep yet
tear-drops never dye their eyne."

And also these couplets,

“O Zephyr of Najd, when from Najd thou blow, * Thy breathings
heap only new woe on woe!
The turtle bespake me in bloom of morn * From the cassia-twig and
the willow-bough
She moaned with the moaning of love-sick youth * And exposed
love-secret I ne’er would show:
They say lover wearies of love when near * And is cured of love
an afar he go:
I tried either cure which ne’er cured my love; * But that
nearness is better than farness I know:[122]
Yet, — the nearness of love shall no ‘vantage prove * An whoso
thou lovest deny thee of love.”

Then said he, “O Ibrahim, sing this song after me, and preserving the mode thereof in thy singing, teach it to thy slave-girls.” Quoth I, “Repeat it to me.” But he answered, “There needs no repetition; thou hast it by heart nor is there more to learn.” Then he suddenly vanished from my sight. At this I was amazed and running to my sword drew it and made for the door of the Harim, but found it closed and said to the women, “What have ye heard?” Quoth they, “We have heard the sweetest of singing and the goodliest.” Then I went forth amazed, to the house-door and, finding it locked, questioned the doorkeepers of the old man. They replied, “What old man? By Allah, no one hath gone in to thee this day!” So I returned pondering the matter, when, behold, there arose from one of the corners of the house, a Vox et praeterea nihil, saying, “O Abu Ishak, no harm shall befal thee. ’Tis I, Abú Murrah,[123] who have been thy cup-companion this day, so fear nothing!” Then I mounted and rode to the palace, where I told Al-Rashid what had passed, and he said, “Repeat to me the airs thou heardest from him.” So I took the lute and played and sang them to him; for, behold, they were rooted in my heart. The Caliph was charmed with them and drank thereto, albeit he was no confirmed wine-bibber, saying, “Would he would some day pleasure us with his company, as he hath pleasured thee!”[124] Then he ordered me a present and I took it and went away. And men relate this story anent

THE LOVERS OF THE BANU UZRAH.[125]

Quoth Masrur the Eunuch, “The Caliph Harun Al-Rashid was very wakeful one night and said to me, ‘See which of the poets is at the door to-night.’ So I went out and finding Jamíl bin Ma’amar al-Uzrí[126] in the antechamber, said to him, ‘Answer the Commander of the Faithful.’ Quoth he, ‘I hear and I obey,’ and going in with me, saluted the Caliph, who returned his greeting and bade him sit down. Then he said to him, ‘O Jamil, hast thou any of thy wonderful new stories to tell us?’ He replied, ‘Yes, O Commander of the Faithful: wouldst thou fainer hear that which I have seen with mine eyes or that which I have only heard?’ Quoth the Caliph, ‘Tell me something thou hast actually beheld.’ Quoth Jamil, ‘’Tis well, O Prince of True Believers; incline thy heart to me and lend me thine ears.’ The Caliph took a bolster of red brocade, purfled with gold and stuffed with ostrich-feathers and, laying it under his thighs, propped up both elbows thereon; then he said to Jamil, ‘Now[127] for thy tale, O Jamil!’ Thereupon he begun, ‘Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that I was once desperately enamoured of a certain girl and used to pay her frequent visits.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Eighty-ninth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Caliph had propped his elbows upon the brocaded cushion, he said, “Out with thy tale, O Jamil!” and the poet begun: — Know, O Commander of the Faithful, I was desperately in love with a girl and used often to visit her, because she was my desire and delight of all the things of this world. After a while, her people removed with her, by reason of scarcity of pasture, and I abode some time without seeing her, till I grew restless for desire and longed for her sight and the flesh[128] urged me to journey to her. One night, I could hold out no longer; so I rose and saddling my she-camel, bound on my turban and donned my oldest dress.[129] Then I baldricked myself with my sword and slinging my spear behind me, mounted and rode forth in quest of her. I fared on fast till, one night, it was pitch dark and exceeding black, yet I persisted in the hard task of climbing down

Wadys and up hills, hearing on all sides the roaring of lions and howling of wolves and the cries of the wild beasts. My reason was troubled thereat and my heart sank within me; but for all that my tongue ceased not to call on the name of Almighty Allah. As I went along thus, sleep overtook me and the camel carried me aside out of my road, till, presently, something[130] smote me on the head, and I woke, startled and alarmed, and found myself in a pasturage full of trees and streams and birds on the branches, warbling their various speech and notes. As the trees were tangled I alighted and, taking my camel's halter in hand, fared on softly with her, till I got clear of the thick growth and came out into the open country, where I adjusted her saddle and mounted again, knowing not where to go nor whither the Fates should lead me; but, presently, peering afar into the desert, I espied a fire in its middle depth. So I smote my camel and made for the fire. When I drew near, I saw a tent pitched, and fronted by a spear stuck in the ground, with a pennon flying[131] and horses tethered and camels feeding, and said in myself, "Doubtless there hangeth some grave matter by this tent, for I see none other than it in the desert." So I went up thereto and said, "Peace be with you, O people of the tent, and the mercy of Allah and His Blessing!" Whereupon there came forth to me a young man as youths are when nineteen years old, who was like the full moon shining in the East, with valour written between his eyes, and answered, saying, "And with thee be the Peace, and Allah's mercy and His blessing! O brother of the Arabs, methinks thou hast lost thy way?" Replied I, "Even so, direct me right, Allah have mercy on thee!" He rejoined, "O brother of the Arabs, of a truth this our land is infested with lions and the night is exceeding dark and dreary, beyond measure cold and gloomy, and I fear lest the wild beasts rend thee in pieces; wherefore do thou alight and abide with me this night in ease and comfort, and to-morrow I will put thee in the right way." Accordingly, I dismounted and hobbled my she- camel with the end of her halter;[132] then I put off my heavy upper clothes and sat down. Presently the young man took a sheep and slaughtered it and kindled a brisk fire; after which he went into the tent and bringing out finely powdered salt and spices, fell to cutting off pieces of mutton and roasting them over the fire and feeding me therewith, weeping at one while and sighing at another.

Then he groaned heavily and wept sore and improvised these couplets,

“There remains to him naught save a flitting breath * And an eye
whose babe ever wandereth.
There remains not a joint in his limbs, but what * Disease firm
fixt ever tortureth.
His tears are flowing, his vitals burning; * Yet for all his
tongue still he silenceth.
All foemen in pity beweep his woes; * Ah for freke whom the
foeman pitieth!”

By this I knew, O Commander of the Faithful, that the youth was a distracted lover (for none knoweth passion save he who hath tasted the passion-savour), and quoth I to myself, “Shall I ask him?” But I consulted my judgment and said, “How shall I assail him with questioning, and I in his abode?” So I restrained myself and ate my sufficiency of the meat. When we had made an end of eating, the young man arose and entering the tent, brought out a handsome basin and ewer and a silken napkin, whose ends were purfled with red gold and a sprinkling-bottle full of rose-water mingled with musk. I marvelled at his dainty delicate ways and said in my mind, “Never wot I of delicacy in the desert.” Then we washed our hands and talked a while, after which he went into the tent and making a partition between himself and me with a piece of red brocade, said to me, “Enter, O Chief of the Arabs, and take thy rest; for thou hast suffered more of toil and travel than sufficeth this night and in this thy journey.” So I entered and finding a bed of green brocade, doffed my dress and passed a night such as I had never passed in my life. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Ninetieth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Jamil spoke, saying: — Never in my life passed I a night like that. I pondered the young man’s case, till the world was dark and all eyes slept, when I was aroused by the sound of a low voice, never heard I a softer or sweeter. I raised the curtain which hung between us and saw a damsel (never beheld I a fairer of face), by the young man's side and they were both weeping and complaining, one to other of the pangs of passion and desire and of the excess of their longing for union.[133] Quoth I, "By Allah, I wonder who may be this second one! When I entered this tent, there was none therein save this young man." And after reflection I added, "Doubtless this damsel is of the daughters of the Jinn and is enamoured of this youth; so they have secluded themselves with each other in this solitary place." Then I considered her closely and behold, she was a mortal and an Arab girl, whose face, when she unveiled, shamed the shining sun, and the tent was lit up by the light of her countenance. When I was assured that she was his beloved, I bethought me of lover-jealousy; so I let drop the curtain and covering my face, fell asleep. As soon as it was dawn I arose and donning my clothes, made the Wuzu-ablution and prayed such prayers as are obligatory and which I had deferred. Then I said, "O brother of the Arabs, wilt thou direct me into the right road and thus add to thy favours?" He replied, "At thy leisure, O chief of the Arabs, the term of the guest-rite is three days,[134] and I am not one to let thee go before that time." So I abode with him three days, and on the fourth day as we sat talking, I asked him of his name and lineage. Quoth he "As for my lineage, I am of the Banú Odhrah; my name is such an one, son of such an one and my father's brother is called such an one." And behold, O Commander of the Faithful, he was the son of my paternal uncle and of the noblest house of the Banú Uzrah. Said I, "O my cousin, what moved thee to act on this wise, secluding thyself in the waste and leaving thy fair estate and that of thy father and thy slaves and handmaids?" When he heard my words, his eyes filled with tears and he replied, "Know, O my cousin, that I fell madly in love of the daughter of my father's brother, fascinated by her, distracted for her, passion-possessed as by a Jinn, wholly unable to let her out of my sight. So I sought her in marriage of her sire, but he refused and married her to a man of the Banu Odhrah, who went in to her and carried her to his abiding-place this last year. When she was thus far removed from me and I was prevented from looking on her, the fiery pangs of passion and excess of love-longing and desire drove me to forsake my clan[135] and friends and fortune and take up my abode in this desert, where I have grown used to my solitude." I asked, “Where are their dwellings?” and he answered, “They are hard by, on the crest of yonder hill; and every night, at the dead time, when all eyes sleep, she stealeth secretly out of the camp, unseen of any one, and I satisfy my desire of her converse and she of mine.[136] So I abide thus, solacing myself with her a part of the night, till Allah work out that which is to be wrought; either I shall compass my desire, in spite[137] of the envious, or Allah will determine for me and He is the best of determinators.” Now when the youth told me his case, O Commander of the Faithful, I was concerned for him and perplexed by reason of my jealousy for his honour; so I said to him, “O son of my uncle, wilt thou that I point out to thee a plan and suggest to thee a project, whereby (please Allah) thou shalt find perfect welfare and the way of right and successful issue whereby the Almighty shall do away from thee that thou dreadest?” He replied, “Say on, O my cousin”; and quoth I, “When it is night and the girl cometh, set her on my she-camel which is swift of pace, and mount thou thy steed, whilst I bestride one of these dromedaries. So will we fare on all night and when the morrow morns, we shall have traversed wolds and wastes, and thou wilt have attained thy desire and won the beloved of thy heart. The Almighty’s earth is wide, and by Allah, I will back thee with heart and wealth and sword.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Ninety-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Jamil advised the elopement and night journey, promising his aid as long as he lived, the youth accepted and said, “O cousin, wait till I take counsel with her, for she is quick-witted and prudent and hath insight into affairs.” So (continued Jamil) when the night darkened and the hour of her coming arrived, and he awaiting her at the appointed tide, she delayed beyond her usual time, and I saw him go forth the door of the tent and opening his mouth, inhale the wafts of breeze that blew from her quarter, as if to snuff her perfume, and he repeated these two couplets: —

“Breeze of East who bringest me gentle air * From the place of
sojourn where dwells my fair:

O Breeze, of the lover thou bearest sign, * Canst not of her
coming some signal bear?”

Then he entered the tent and sat weeping awhile; after which he said to me, “O my cousin, some mischance must have betided the daughter of mine uncle, or some accident must have hindered her from coming to me this night,” presently adding, “But abide where thou art, till I bring thee the news.” And he took sword and shield and was absent a while of the night, after which he returned, carrying something in hand and called aloud to me. So I hastened to him and he said, “O my cousin, knowest thou what hath happened?” I replied, “No, by Allah!” Quoth he, “Verily, I am distraught concerning my cousin this night; for, as she was coming to me, a lion met her in the way and devoured her, and there remaineth of her but what thou seest.” So saying, he threw down what he had in his hand, and behold, it was the damsel’s turband and what was left of her bones. Then he wept sore and casting down his bow,[138] took a bag and went forth again saying, “Stir not hence till I return to thee, if it please Almighty Allah.” He was absent a while and presently returned, bearing in his hand a lion’s head, which he threw on the ground and called for water. So I brought him water, with which he washed the lion’s mouth and fell to kissing it and weeping; and he mourned for her exceedingly and recited these couplets,

“Ho thou lion who broughtest thyself to woe, * Thou art slain and
worse sorrows my bosom rend!
Thou hast reft me of fairest companionship, * Made her home
Earth’s womb till the world shall end.
To Time, who hath wrought me such grief, I say, * ‘Allah grant in
her stead never show a friend!’”

Then said he to me, “O cousin, I conjure thee by Allah and the claims of kindred and consanguinity[139] between us, keep thou my charge. Thou wilt presently see me dead before thee; whereupon do thou wash me and shroud me and these that remain of my cousin’s bones in this robe and bury us both in one grave and write thereon these two couplets,

‘On Earth surface we lived in rare ease and joy * By fellowship
joined in one house and home.
But Fate with her changes departed us, * And the shroud conjoins
us in Earth’s cold womb.’”

Then he wept with sore weeping and, entering the tent, was absent awhile, after which he came forth, groaning and crying out. Then he gave one sob and departed this world. When I saw that he was indeed dead, it was grievous to me and so sore was my sorrow for him that I had well-nigh followed him for excess of mourning over him. Then I laid him out and did as he had enjoined me, shrouding his cousin’s remains with him in one robe and laying the twain in one grave. I abode by their tomb three days, after which I departed and continued to pay frequent pious visits[140] to the place for two years. This then is their story, O Commander of the Faithful! Al-Rashid was pleased with Jamil’s story and rewarded him with a robe of honour and a handsome present. And men also tell a tale concerning

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THE BADAWI AND HIS WIFE.[141]

Caliph Mu'áwiyah was sitting one day in his palace[142] at Damascus, in a room whose windows were open on all four sides, that the breeze might enter from every quarter. Now it was a day of excessive heat, with no breeze from the hills stirring, and the middle of the day, when the heat was at its height, and the Caliph saw a man coming along, scorched by the heat of the ground and limping, as he fared on barefoot. Mu'awiyah considered him awhile and said to his courtiers, "Hath Allah (may He be extolled and exalted!) created any miserabler than he who need must hie abroad at such an hour and in such sultry tide as this?" Quoth one of them, "Haply he seeketh the Commander of the Faithful;" and quoth the Caliph, "By Allah, if he seek me, I will assuredly give to him, and if he be wronged, I will certainly succour him. Ho, boy! Stand at the door, and if yonder wild Arab seek to come in to me, forbid him not therefrom." So the page went out and presently the Arab came up to him and he said, "What dost thou want?" Answered the other, "I want the Commander of the Faithful," and the page said, "Enter." So he entered and saluted the Caliph, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Ninety-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the page allowed him to enter, the Badawi saluted the Caliph, who said to him, "Who art thou?" Replied the Arab, "I am a man of the Banú Tamím."[143] "And what bringeth thee here at this season?" asked Mu'awiyah; and the Arab answered, "I come to thee, complaining and thy protection imploring." "Against whom?" "Against Marwan bin al-Hakam,[144] thy deputy," replied he, and began reciting,

"Mu'áwiyah,[145] thou gen'rous lord, and best of men that be;

* And oh, thou lord of learning, grace and fair humanity,
Thee-wards I come because my way of life is strait to me: * O
help! and let me not despair thine equity to see.
Deign thou redress the wrong that dealt the tyrant whim of him *

Who better had my life destroyed than made such wrong to dree.
He robbed me of my wife Su'ad and proved him worst of foes, * Stealing mine honour 'mid my folk with foul iniquity;
And went about to take my life before th' appointed day * Hath dawned which Allah made my lot by destiny's decree."

Now when Mu'awiyah heard him recite these verses, with the fire flashing from his mouth, he said to him, "Welcome and fair welcome, O brother of the Arabs! Tell me thy tale and acquaint me with thy case." Replied the Arab, "O Commander of the Faithful, I had a wife whom I loved passing dear with love none came near; and she was the coolth of mine eyes and the joy of my heart; and I had a herd of camels, whose produce enabled me to maintain my condition; but there came upon us a bad year which killed off hoof and horn and left me naught. When what was in my hand failed me and wealth fell from me and I lapsed into evil case, I at once became abject and a burden to those who erewhile wished to visit me; and when her father knew it, he took her from me and abjured me and drove me forth without ruth. So I repaired to thy deputy, Marwan bin al-Hakam, and asked his aid. He summoned her sire and questioned him of my case, when he denied any knowledge of me. Quoth I, 'Allah assain the Emir! An it please him to send for the woman and question her of her father's saying, the truth will appear.' So he sent for her and brought her; but no sooner had he set eyes on her than he fell in love with her; so, becoming my rival, he denied me succour and was wroth with me, and sent me to prison, where I became as I had fallen from heaven and the wind had cast me down in a far land. Then said Marwan to her father, 'Wilt thou give her to me to wife, on a present settlement of a thousand dinars and a contingent dowry of ten thousand dirhams,[146] and I will engage to free her from yonder wild Arab!' Her father was seduced by the bribe and agreed to the bargain; whereupon Marwan sent for me and looking at me like an angry lion, said to me, 'O Arab, divorce Su'ad.' I replied, 'I will not put her away;' but he set on me a company of his servants, who tortured me with all manner of tortures, till I found no help for it but to divorce her. I did so and he sent me back to prison, where I abode till the days of her purification were accomplished, when he married her and let me go. So now I come hither in thee hoping and thy succour imploring and myself on thy protection throwing.” And he spoke these couplets,

“Within my heart is fire * Whichever flameth higher;
Within my frame are pains * For skill of leach too dire.
Live coals in vitals burn * And sparks from coal up spire:
Tears flood mine eyes and down * Coursing my cheek ne’er tire:
Only God’s aid and thine * I crave for my desire!”

Then he was convulsed,[147] and his teeth chattered and he fell down in a fit, squirming like a scotched snake. When Mu’awiyah heard his story and his verse, he said, “Marwan bin al- Hakam hath transgressed against the laws of the Faith and hath violated the Harim of True Believers!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Ninety-third Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Caliph Mu’awiyah heard the wild Arab’s words, he said, “The son of Al-Hakam hath indeed transgressed against the laws of the Faith and hath violated the Harim of True Believers,” presently adding, “O Arab, thou comest to me with a story, the like whereof I never heard!” Then he called for inkcase and paper and wrote to Marwan as follows, “Verily it hath reached me that thou transgresseth the laws of the Faith with regard to thy lieges. Now it behoveth the Wali who governeth the folk to keep his eyes from their lusts and stay his flesh from its delights.” And after he wrote many words, which (quoth he who told me the tale) I omit, for brevity’s sake, and amongst them these couplets,

“Thou wast invested (woe to thee!)[148] with rule for thee
unfit; * Crave thou of Allah pardon for thy foul adultery.
Th’ unhappy youth to us is come complaining ‘mid his groans * And
asks for redress for parting-grief and saddened me through
thee.
An oath have I to Allah sworn shall never be forsworn; * Nay,

for I'll do what Faith and Creed command me to decree.
An thou dare cross me in whate'er to thee I now indite * I of
thy flesh assuredly will make the vulture free.
Divorce Su'ad, equip her well, and in the hottest haste * With
Al-Kumayt and Ziban's son, hight Nasr, send to me."

Then he folded the letter and, sealing it with his seal, delivered it to Al-Kumayt[149] and Nasr bin Zibán (whom he was wont to employ on weighty matters, because of their trustiness) who took the missive and carried it to Al-Medinah, where they went in to Marwan and saluting him delivered to him the writ and told him how the case stood. He read the letter and fell a-weeping; but he went in to Su'ad (as 'twas not in his power to refuse obedience to the Caliph) and, acquainting her with the case, divorced her in the presence of Al-Kumayt and Nasr; after which he equipped her and delivered her to them, together with a letter to the Caliph wherein he versified as follows,

"Hurry not, Prince of Faithful Men! with best of grace thy vow

* I will accomplish as 'twas vowed and with the gladdest
gree.
I sinned not adulterous sin when loved her I, then how * Canst
charge me with advowtrous deed or any villainy?
Soon comes to thee that splendid sun which hath no living peer

* On earth, nor aught in mortal men or Jinns her like
shalt see."

This he sealed with his own signet and gave to the messengers who returned with Su'ad to Damascus and delivered to Mu'awiyah the letter, and when he had read it he cried, "Verily, he hath obeyed handsomely, but he exceedeth in his praise of the woman." Then he called for her and saw beauty such as he had never seen, for comeliness and loveliness, stature and symmetrical grace; moreover, he talked with her and found her fluent of speech and choice in words. Quoth he, "Bring me the Arab." So they fetched the man, who came, sore disordered for shifts and changes of fortune, and Mu'awiyah said to him, "O Arab, an thou wilt freely give her up to me, I will bestow upon thee in her stead three slave girls, high-bosomed maids like moons, with each a thousand dinars; and I will assign thee on the Treasury such an annual sum as shall content thee and enrich thee." When the Arab heard this, he groaned one groan and swooned away, so that Mu'awiyah thought he was dead; and, as soon as he revived, the Caliph said to him, "What aileth thee?" The Arab answered, "With heavy heart and in sore need have I appealed to thee from the injustice of Marwan bin al-Hakam; but to whom shall I appeal from thine injustice?" And he versified in these couplets,

"Make me not (Allah save the Caliph!) one of the betrayed *
    Who from the fiery sands to fire must sue for help and
    aid:
Deign thou restore Su'ád to this afflicted heart distraught, *
    Which every morn and eve by sorest sorrow is waylaid:
Loose thou my bonds and grudge me not and give her back to me;

* And if thou do so ne'er thou shalt for lack of thanks
    upbraid!"

Then said he, "By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, wert thou to give me all the riches contained in the Caliphate, yet would I not take them without Su'ad." And he recited this couplet,

"I love Su'ád and unto all but hers my love is dead, * Each morn I feel her love to me is drink and daily bread."

Quoth the Caliph, "Thou confessest to having divorced her and Marwan owned the like; so now we will give her free choice. An she choose other than thee, we will marry her to him, and if she choose thee, we will restore her to thee." Replied the Arab, "Do so." So Mu'awiyah said to her, "What sayest thou, O Su'ad? Which dost thou choose; the Commander of the Faithful, with his honour and glory and dominion and palaces and treasures and all else thou seest at this command, or Marwin bin al-Hakam with his violence and tyranny, or this Arab, with his hunger and poverty?" So she improvised these couplets,

“This one, whom hunger plagues, and rags unfold, * Dearer than
tribe and kith and kin I hold;
Than crownèd head, or deputy Marwán, * Or all who boast of
silver coins and gold.”

Then said she, “By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, I will not forsake him for the shifts of Fortune or the perfidies of Fate, there being between us old companionship we may not forget, and love beyond stay and let; and indeed ’tis but just that I bear with him in his adversity, even as I shared with him in prosperity.” The Caliph marvelled at her wit and love and constancy and, ordering her ten thousand dirhams, delivered her to the Arab, who took his wife and went away.[150] And they likewise tell a tale of

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THE LOVERS OF BASSORAH.

The Caliph Harun al-Rashid was sleepless one night; so he sent for Al-Asma’i and Husayn al-Khalí‘a[151] and said to them, “Tell me a story you twain and do thou begin, O Husayn.” He said, “’Tis well, O Commander of the Faithful;” and thus began: Some years ago, I dropped down stream to Bassorah, to present to Mohammed bin Sulayman al-Rabí‘í[152] a Kasidah or elegy I had composed in his praise; and he accepted it and bade me abide with him. One day, I went out to Al-Mirbad,[153] by way of Al-Muháliyah;[154] and, being oppressed by the excessive heat, went up to a great door, to ask for drink, when I was suddenly aware of a damsel, as she were a branch swaying, with eyes languishing, eye brows arched and finely pencilled and smooth cheeks rounded clad in a shift the colour of a pomegranate flower, and a mantilla of Sana’á[155] work; but the perfect whiteness of her body overcame the redness of her shift, through which glittered two breasts like twin granadoes and a waist, as it were a roll of fine Coptic linen, with creases like scrolls of pure white paper stuffed with musk [156] Moreover, O Prince of True Believers, round her neck was slung an amulet of red gold that fell down between her breasts, and on the plain of her forehead were browlocks like jet.[157] Her eyebrows joined and her eyes were like lakes; she had an aquiline nose and thereunder shell-like lips showing teeth like pearls. Pleasantness prevailed in every part of her; but she seemed dejected, disturbed, distracted and in the vestibule came and went, walking upon the hearts of her lovers, whilst her legs[158] made mute the voices of their ankle-rings; and indeed she was as saith the poet,

“Each portion of her charms we see * Seems of the whole a simile”

I was overawed by her, O Commander of the Faithful, and drew near her to greet her, and behold, the house and vestibule and highways breathed fragrant with musk. So I saluted her and she returned my salaam with a voice dejected and heart depressed and with the ardour of passion consumed. Then said I to her, “O my lady, I am an old man and a stranger and sore troubled by thirst. Wilt thou order me a draught of water, and win reward in heaven?" She cried, "Away, O Shaykh, from me! I am distracted from all thought of meat and drink." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Ninety-fourth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the damsel said, "O Shaykh, I am distracted from all thought of meat and drink." Quoth I (continued Husayn), "By what ailment, O my lady?" and quoth she, "I love one who dealeth not justly by me and I desire one who of me will none. Wherefore I am afflicted with the wakefulness of those who wake star-gazing." I asked, "O my lady, is there on the wide expanse of earth one to whom thou hast a mind and who to thee hath no mind?" Answered she, "Yes; and this for the perfection of beauty and loveliness and goodliness wherewith he is endowed." "And why standeth thou in this porch?" enquired I. "This is his road," replied she, "and the hour of his passing by." I said, "O my lady, have ye ever foregathered and had such commerce and converse as might cause this passion?" At this she heaved a deep sigh; the tears rained down her cheeks, as they were dew falling upon roses, and she versified with these couplets,

"We were like willow-boughs in garden shining * And scented
joys in happiest life combining;
Whenas one bough from other self would rend * And oh! thou
seest this for that repining!"

Quoth I, "O maid, and what betideth thee of thy love for this man?"; and quoth she, "I see the sun upon the walls of his folk and I think the sun is he; or haply I catch sight of him unexpectedly and am confounded and the blood and the life fly my body and I abide in unreasoning plight a week or e'en a se'nnight." Said I, "Excuse me, for I also have suffered that which is upon thee of love-longing and distraction of soul and wasting of frame and loss of strength; and I see in thee pallor of complexion and emaciation, such as testify of the fever-fits of desire. But how shouldst thou be unsmitten of passion and thou a sojourner in the land of Bassorah?" Said she, "By Allah, before I fell in love of this youth, I was perfect in beauty and loveliness and amorous grace which ravished all the Princes of Bassorah, till he fell in love with me.” I asked, “O maid, and who parted you?”; and she answered, “The vicissitudes of fortune, but the manner of our separation was strange; and ’twas on this wise. One New Year’s day I had invited the damsels of Bassorah and amongst them a girl belonging to Siran, who had bought her out of Oman for four score thousand dirhams. She loved me and loved me to madness and when she entered she threw herself upon me and well nigh tore me in pieces with bites and pinches.[159] Then we withdrew apart, to drink wine at our ease, till our meat was ready[160] and our delight was complete, and she toyed with me and I with her, and now I was upon her and now she was upon me. Presently, the fumes of the wine moved her to strike her hand on the inkle of my petticoat-trousers, whereby it became loosed, unknown of either of us, and my trousers fell down in our play. At this moment he came in unobserved and, seeing me thus, was wroth at the sight and made off, as the Arab filly hearing the tinkle of her bridle.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Ninety-fifth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the maiden said to Husayn al-Khali’a, “When my lover saw me playing, as I described to thee, with Siran’s girl, he went forth in anger. And ’tis now, O Shaykh, three years ago, and since then I have never ceased to excuse myself to him and coax him and crave his indulgence, but he will neither cast a look at me from the corner of his eye, nor write me a word nor speak to me by messenger nor hear from me aught.” Quoth I, “Harkye maid, is he an Arab or an Ajam?”; and quoth she, “Out on thee! He is of the Princes of Bassorah.” “Is he old or young?” asked I; and she looked at me laughingly and answered, “Thou art certainly a simpleton! He is like the moon on the night of its full, smooth-cheeked and beardless, nor is there any defect in him except his aversion to me.” Then I put the question, “What is his name?” and she replied, “What wilt thou do with him?” I rejoined, “I will do my best to come at him, that I may bring about reunion between you.” Said she, “I will tell thee on condition that thou carry him a note;” and I said “I have no objection to that.” Then quoth she, “His name is Zamrah bin al-Mughayrah, hight Abú al-

Sakhá,[161] and his palace is in the Mirbad.” Therewith she called to those within for inkcase and paper and tucking up[162] her sleeves, showed two wrists like broad rings of silver. She then wrote after the Basmalah as follows, “My lord, the omission of blessings[163] at the head of this my letter shows mine insufficiency, and know that had my prayer been answered, thou hadst never left me; for how often have I prayed that thou shouldest not leave me, and yet thou didst leave me! Were it not that distress with me exceedeth the bounds of restraint, that which thy servant hath forced herself to do in writing this writ were an aidance to her, despite her despair of thee, because of her knowledge of thee that thou wilt fail to answer. Do thou fulfil her desire, my lord, of a sight of thee from the porch, as thou passest in the street, wherewith thou wilt quicken the dead soul in her. Or, far better for her still than this, do thou write her a letter with thine own hand (Allah endow it with all excellence!), and appoint it in requital of the intimacy that was between us in the nights of time past, whereof thou must preserve the memory. My lord, was I not to thee a lover sick with passion? An thou answer my prayer, I will give to thee thanks and to Allah praise; and so The Peace!”[164] Then she gave me the letter and I went away. Next morning I repaired to the door of the Viceroy Mohammed bin Sulayman, where I found an assembly of the notables of Bassorah, and amongst them a youth who adorned the gathering and surpassed in beauty and brightness all who were there; and indeed the Emir Mohammed set him above himself. I asked who he was and behold, it was Zamrah himself: so I said in my mind, “Verily, there hath befallen yonder unhappy one that which hath befallen her[165] !” Then I betook myself to the Mirbad and stood waiting at the door of his house, till he came riding up in state, when I accosted him and invoking more than usual blessings on him, handed him the missive. When he read it and understood it he said to me, “O Shaykh, we have taken other in her stead. Say me, wilt thou see the substitute?” I answered, “Yes.” Whereupon he called out a woman’s name, and there came forth a damsel who shamed the two greater lights; swelling-breasted, walking the gait of one who hasteneth without fear, to whom he gave the note, saying, “Do thou answer it.” When she read it, she turned pale at the contents and said to me, “ O old man, crave pardon of Allah for this that thou hast brought." So I went out, O Commander of the Faithful, dragging my feet and returning to her asked leave to enter. When she saw me, she asked, "What is behind thee?"; and I answered, "Evil and despair." Quoth she, "Have thou no concern of him. Where are Allah and His power?"[166] Then she ordered me five hundred dinars and I took them and went away. Some days after I passed by the place and saw there horsemen and footmen. So I went in and lo! these were the companions of Zamrah, who were begging her to return to him; but she said, "No, by Allah, I will not look him in the face!" And she prostrated herself in gratitude to Allah and exultation over Zamrah's defeat. Then I drew near her, and she pulled out to me a letter, wherein was written, after the Bismillah, "My lady, but for my forbearance towards thee (whose life Allah lengthen!) I would relate somewhat of what betided from thee and set out my excuse, in that thou transgressedst against me, whenas thou wast manifestly a sinner against thyself and myself in breach of vows and lack of constancy and preference of another over us; for, by Allah, on whom we call for help against that which was of thy free will, thou didst transgress against the love of me; and so The Peace!" Then she showed me the presents and rarities he had sent her, which were of the value of thirty thousand dinars. I saw her again after this, and Zamrah had married her. Quoth Al-Rashid, "Had not Zamrah been beforehand with us, I should certainly have had to do with her myself."[167] And men tell the tale of

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ISHAK OF MOSUL AND HIS MISTRESS AND THE DEVIL.[168]

Quoth Ishak bin Ibrahim al-Mausili: I was in my house one night in the winter time, when the clouds had dispread themselves and the rains poured down in torrents, as from the mouths of water-skins, and the folk forbore to come and go about the ways for that which was therein of rain and slough. Now I was straitened in breast because none of my brethren came to me nor could I go to them, by reason of the mud and mire; so I said to my servant, “Bring me wherewithal I may divert myself.” Accordingly he brought me meat and drink, but I had no heart to eat, without some one to keep me company, and I ceased not to look out of window and watch the ways till nightfall, when I bethought myself of a damsel belonging to one of the sons of Al-Mahdi,[169] whom I loved and who was skilled in singing and playing upon instruments of music, and said to myself, “Were she here with us to-night, my joy would be complete and my night would be abridged of the melancholy and restlessness which are upon me.” At this moment one knocked at the door, saying, “Shall a beloved enter in who standeth at the door?” Quoth I to myself, “Meseems the plant of my desire hath fruited.” So I went to the door and found my mistress, with a long green skirt[170] wrapped about her and a kerchief of brocade on her head, to fend her from the rain. She was covered with mud to her knees and all that was upon her was drenched with water from gargoyles[171] and house spouts; in short, she was in sorry plight. So I said to her, “O my mistress, what bringeth thee hither through all this mud?” Replied she, “Thy messenger came and set forth to me that which was with thee of love and longing, so that I could not choose but yield and hasten to thee.” I marvelled at this And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Ninety-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel came and knocked at Ishak’s door, he went forth to her and cried, ‘O my lady, what bringeth thee hither through all this mud?”; and she replied, “Thy messenger came and set forth to me that which was with thee of love and longing, so that I could not choose but yield and hasten to thee." I marvelled at this, but did not like to tell her that I had sent no messenger; wherefore I said, "Praised be Allah for that He hath brought us together, after all I have suffered by the mortification of patience! Verily, hadst thou delayed an hour longer, I must have run to thee, because of my much love for thee and longing for thy presence." Then I called to my boy for water, that I might better her plight, and he brought a kettle full of hot water such as she wanted. I bade pour it over her feet, whilst I set to work to wash them myself; after which I called for one of my richest dresses and clad her therein after she had doffed the muddy clothes. Then, as soon as we were comfortably seated, I would have called for food, but she refused and I said to her, "Art thou for wine?"; and she replied, "Yes." So I fetched cups and she asked me, "Who shall sing?" "I, O my princess!" "I care not for that;" "One of my damsels?" "I have no mind to that either!" "Then sing thyself." "Not I!" "Who then shall sing for thee?" I enquired, and she rejoined, "Go out and seek some one to sing for me." So I went out, in obedience to her, though I despaired of finding any one in such weather and fared on till I came to the main street, where I suddenly saw a blind man striking the earth with his staff and saying, "May Allah not requite with weal those with whom I was! When I sang, they listened not, and when I was silent, they made light of me." So I said to him, "Art thou a singer?" and he replied, "Yes." Quoth I, "Wilt thou finish thy night with us and cheer us with thy company?"; and quoth he, "If it be thy will, take my hand." So I took his hand and, leading him to my house, said to the damsel, "O my mistress, I have brought a blind singer, with whom we may take our pleasure and he will not see us." She said, "Bring him to me." So I brought him in and invited him to eat. He ate but a very little and washed his hands, after which I brought him wine and he drank three cupsful. Then he said to me, "Who art thou?"; and I replied, "I am Ishak bin Ibrahim al-Mausili." Quoth he, "I have heard of thee and now I rejoice in thy company;" and I, "O my lord, I am glad in thy gladness." He said, "O Ishak, sing to me." So I took the lute by way of jest, and cried, "I hear and I obey." When I had made an end of my song, he said to me, "O Ishak, thou comest nigh to be a singer!" His words belittled me in mine own eyes and I threw the lute from my hand, whereupon he said, "Hast thou not with thee some one who is skilled in singing?" Quoth I, "I have a damsel with me;" and quoth he "Bid her sing." I asked him, "Wilt thou sing, when thou hast had enough of her singing?"; and he answered "Yes." So she sang and he said, "Nay, thou hast shown no art." Whereupon she flung the lute from her hand in wrath and cried, "We have done our best: if thou have aught, favour us with it by way of an alms." Quoth he, "Bring me a lute hand hath not touched." So I bade the servant bring him a new lute and he tuned it and preluding in a mode I knew not began to sing, improvising these couplets,

"Clove through the shades and came to me in night so dark and
sore * The lover weeting of herself 'twas trysting-tide
once more:
Naught startled us but her salaam and first of words she said

* 'May a beloved enter in who standeth at the door!'"

When the girl heard this, she looked at me askance and said, "What secret was between us could not thy breast hold for one hour, but thou must discover it to this man?" However, I swore to her that I had not told him and excused myself to her and fell to kissing her hands and tickling her breasts and biting her cheeks, till she laughed and, turning to the blind man, said to him, "Sing, O my lord!" So he took the lute and sang these two couplets,

"Ah, often have I sought the fair; how often fief and fain *
My palming felt the finger ends that bear the varied
stain!
And tickled pouting breasts that stand firm as pomegranates
twain * And bit the apple of her cheek kissed o'er and
o'er again."

So I said to her, "O my princess, who can have told him what we were about?" Replied she, "True," and we moved away from him. Presently quoth he, "I must make water;" and quoth I, "O boy, take the candle and go before him.” Then he went out and tarried a long while. So we went in search of him, but could not find him; and behold, the doors were locked and the keys in the closet, and we knew not whether to heaven he had flown or into earth had sunk. Wherefore I knew that he was Iblis and that he had done me pimp’s duty, and I returned, recalling to myself the words of Abu Nowas in these couplets,

“I marvel in Iblis such pride to see * Beside his low intent
 and villainy:
He sinned to Adam who to bow refused, * Yet pimps for all of
 Adam’s progeny,”

And they tell a tale concerning

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THE LOVERS OF AL-MEDINAH.

Quoth Ibrahim the father of Ishak,[172] I was ever a devoted friend to the Barmecide family. And it so happened to me one day, as I sat at home quite alone, a knock was heard at the door; so my servant went out and returned, saying, "A comely youth is at the door, asking admission." I bade admit him and there came in to me a young man, on whom were signs of sickness, and he said, "I have long wished to meet thee, for I have need of thine aid." "What is it thou requirest?" asked I. Whereupon he pulled out three hundred dinars and laying them before me, said, "I beseech thee to accept these and compose me an air to two couplets I have made." Said I, "Repeat them to me;" — and Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the youth came in to Ibrahim and placed the gold in his hands, saying, "Prithee accept it and compose me an air to two couplets," he replied, "Recite them to me," whereupon he recited,

"By Allah, glance of mine! thou hast opprest * My heart, so
quench the fire that burns my breast.
Blames me the world because in him[173] I live * Yet cannot
see him till in shroud I rest."

Accordingly, quoth Ibrahim, I set the verses to an air plaintive as a dirge and sang it to him; whereupon he swooned away and I thought that he was dead. However, after a while, he came to himself, and said to me, "Repeat the air." But I conjured him by Allah to excuse me, saying, "I fear lest thou die." "Would Heaven it were so!" replied he and ceased not humbly to importune me, till I had pity on him and repeated it; whereupon he cried out with a grievous cry and fell into a fit worse than before and I doubted not but that he was dead; but I sprinkled rose-water on him till he revived and sat up. I praised Allah for his recovery and laying the ducats before him, said, "Take thy money and depart from me."

Quoth he, “I have no need of the money and thou shalt have the like of it, if thou wilt repeat the air.” My breast broadened at the mention of the money and I said, “I will repeat it, but on three conditions: the first, that thou tarry with me and eat of my victual, till thou regain strength; the second, that thou drink wine enough to hearten thy heart, and the third, that thou tell me thy tale.” He agreed to this and ate and drank; after which he said, “I am of the citizens of Al-Medinah and I went forth one day a-pleasuring with my friends; and, following the road to Al-Akík,[174] saw a company of girls and amongst them a damsel as she were a branch pearled with dew, with eyes whose sidelong glances were never withdrawn till they had stolen away his soul who looked on them. The maidens rested in the shade till the end of the day, when they went away, leaving in my heart wounds slow to heal. I returned next morning to scent out news of her, but found none who could tell me of her; so I sought her in the streets and markets, but could come on no trace of her; wherefore I fell ill of grief and told my case to one of my kinsmen, who said to me, ‘No harm shall befall thee: the days of spring are not yet past and the skies show sign of rain,[175] whereupon she will go forth, and I will go out with thee, and do thou thy will.’ His words comforted my heart and I waited till al-Akik ran with water, when I went forth with my friends and kinsmen and sat in the very same place where I first saw her. We had not been seated long before up came the women, like horses running for a wager; and I whispered to a girl of my kindred, ‘Say to yonder damsel— ‘Quoth this man to thee, He did well who spoke this couplet,

‘She shot my heart with shaft, then turned on heel * And flying dealt fresh wound and scarring wheal.’

So she went to her and repeated my words, to which she replied saying, ‘Tell him that he said well who answered in this couplet,

‘The like of whatso feelest thou we feel; * Patience! perchance swift cure our hearts shall heal.’

I refrained from further speech for fear of scandal and rose to go away. She rose at my rising, and I followed and she looked back at me, till she saw I had noted her abode. Then she began to come to me and I to go to her, so that we foregathered and met often, till the case was noised abroad and grew notorious and her sire came to know of it. However I ceased not to meet her most assiduously and complained of my condition to my father, who assembled our kindred and repaired to ask her in marriage for me, of her sire, who cried, ‘Had this been proposed to me before he gave her a bad name by his assignations, I would have consented; but now the thing is notorious and I am loath to verify the saying of the folk.’ “ Then (continued Ibrahim) I repeated the air to him and he went away, after having acquainted me with his abode, and we became friends. Now I was devoted to the Barmecides; so next time Ja’afar bin Yahya sat to give audience, I attended, as was my wont, and sang to him the young man’s verses. They pleased him and he drank some cups of wine and said, “Fie upon thee! whose song is this?” So I told him the young man’s tale and he bade me ride over to him and give him assurances of the winning of his wish. Accordingly I fetched him to Ja’afar who asked him to repeat his story. He did so and Ja’afar said, “Thou art now under my protection: trust me to marry thee to her.” So his heart was comforted and he abode with us. When the morning morrowed Ja’afar mounted and went in to Al-Rashid, to whom he related the story. The Caliph was pleased with it and sending for the young man and myself, commanded me to repeat the air and drank thereto. Then he wrote to the Governor of Al-Hijaz, bidding him despatch the girl’s father and his household in honourable fashion to his presence and spare no expense for their outfit. So, in a little while, they came and the Caliph, sending for the man, commanded him to marry his daughter to her lover; after which he gave him an hundred thousand dinars, and the father went back to his folk. As for the young man, he abode one of Ja’afar’s cup companions till there happened what happened[176] whereupon he returned with his household to al-Medinah; may Almighty Allah have mercy upon their souls one and all! And they also tell, O auspicious King, a tale of

AL-MALIK AL-NASIR AND HIS WAZIR.

There was given to Abú Ámir bin Marwán,[177] a boy of the Christians, than whom never fell eyes on a handsomer. Al-Nasir the conquering Soldan saw him and said to Abu Amir, who was his Wazir, "Whence cometh this boy?" Replied he, "From Allah;" whereupon the other, "Wilt thou terrify us with stars and make us prisoner with moons?" Abu Amir excused himself to him and preparing a present, sent it to him with the boy, to whom he said, "Be thou part of the gift: were it not of necessity, my soul had not consented to give thee away." And he wrote with him these two couplets,

"My lord, this full moon takes in Heaven of thee new birth; *
  Nor can deny we Heaven excelleth humble earth:
Thee with my soul I please and — oh! the pleasant case! * No man
  e'er saw I who to give his soul prefer'th."

The thing pleased Al-Nasir and he requited him with much treasure and the Minister became high in favour with him. After this, there was presented to the Wazir a slave-girl, one of the loveliest women in the world, and he feared lest this should come to the King's ears and he desire her, and the like should happen as with the boy. So he made up a present still costlier than the first and sent it with her to the King, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Ninety-eighth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Abu Amir, when presented with the beautiful slave girl, feared lest it come to the Conquering King's ears and that the like should happen as with the boy, so he made up a present still costlier than the first and sent it with her to his master, accompanying it with these couplets,

"My lord, this be the Sun, the Moon thou hadst before; * So
  the two greater lights now in thy Heaven unite:

Conjunction promising to me prosperity, * And Kausar draught
to thee and Eden’s long delight.
Earth shows no charms, by Allah, ranking as their third, * Nor
King who secondeth our Conquering King in might.”

Wherefore his credit redoubled with al-Nasir; but, after a while, one of his enemies maligned him to the King, alleging that there still lurked in him a hot lust for the boy and that he ceased not to desire him, whenever the cool northern breezes moved him, and to gnash his teeth for having given him away. Cried the King, “Wag not thou thy tongue at him, or I will shear off thy head.” However, he wrote Abu Amir a letter, as from the boy. to the following effect: “O my lord, thou knowest that thou wast all and one to me and that I never ceased from delight with thee. Albeit I am with the Sultan, yet would I choose rather solitude with thee, but that I fear the King’s majesty: wherefore devise thou to demand me of him.” This letter he sent to Abu Amir by a little foot page, whom he enjoined to say, “This is from such an one: the King never speaketh to him.” When the Wazir read the letter and heard the cheating message, he noted the poison draught[178] and wrote on the back of the note these couplets,

“Shall man experience-lectured ever care * Fool-like to thrust
his head in lion’s lair?
I’m none of those whose wits to love succumb * Nor witless of
the snares my foes prepare:
Wert thou my sprite, I’d give thee loyally; * Shall sprite,
from body sundered, backwards fare?”

When al-Nasir knew of this answer, he marvelled at the Wazir’s quickness of wit and would never again lend ear to aught of insinuations against him. Then said he to him, “How didst thou escape falling into the net?” And he replied, “Because my reason is unentangled in the toils of passion.” And they also tell a tale of

THE ROGUERIES OF DALILAH THE CRAFTY AND HER DAUGHTER ZAYNAB THE CONEY-CATCHER.[179]

There lived in the time of Harun al-Rashid a man named Ahmad al-Danaf and another Hasan Shúmán[180] hight, the twain past-masters in fraud and feints, who had done rare things in their day; wherefore the Caliph invested them with caftans of honour and made them Captains of the Watch for Baghdad (Ahmad of the right hand and Hasan of the left hand); and appointed to each of them a stipend of a thousand dinars a month and forty stalwart men to be at their bidding. Moreover to Calamity Ahmad was committed the watch of the district outside the walls. So Ahmad and Hasan went forth in company of the Emir Khalid, the Wali or Chief of Police, attended each by his forty followers on horse-back, and preceded by the Crier, crying aloud and saying, “By command of the Caliph! None is captain of the watch of the right hand but Ahmad al- Danaf and none is captain of the watch of the left hand but Hasan Shuman, and both are to be obeyed when they bid and are to be held in all honour and worship.” Now there was in the city an old woman called Dalílah the Wily, who had a daughter by name Zaynab the Coney-catcher. They heard the proclamation made and Zaynab said to Dalilah, “See, O my mother, this fellow, Ahmad al-Danaf! He came hither from Cairo, a fugitive, and played the double-dealer in Baghdad, till he got into the Caliph’s company and is now become captain of the right hand, whilst that mangy chap Hasan Shuman is captain of the left hand, and each hath a table spread morning and evening and a monthly wage of a thousand dinars; whereas we abide unemployed and neglected in this house, without estate and without honour, and have none to ask of us.” Now Dalilah’s husband had been town-captain of Baghdad with a monthly wage of one thousand dinars; but he died leaving two daughters, one married and with a son by name Ahmad al- Lakít[181] or Ahmad the Abortion; and the other called Zaynab, a spinster. And this Dalilah was a past mistress in all manner of craft and trickery and double dealing; she could wile the very dragon out of his den and Iblis himself might have learnt deceit of her. Her father[182] had also been governor of the carrier-pigeons to the Caliph with a solde of one thousand dinars a month. He used to rear the birds to carry letters and messages, wherefore in time of need each was dearer to the Caliph than one of his own sons. So Zaynab said to her mother, “Up and play off some feint and fraud that may haply make us notorious” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Six Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Zaynab thus addressed her dam, “Up and play off some feint and fraud which may haply make us notorious in Baghdad, so perchance we shall win our father’s stipend for ourselves.” Replied the old trot, “As thy head liveth, O my daughter, I will play off higher-class rogueries in Baghdad than ever played Calamity Ahmad or Hasan the Pestilent.” So saying, she rose and threw over her face the Lisam-veil and donned clothes such as the poorer Sufis wear, petticoat-trousers falling over her heels, and a gown of white wool with a broad girdle. She also took a pitcher[183] and filled it with water to the neck; after which she set three dinars in the mouth and stopped it up with a plug of palm-fibre. Then she threw round her shoulder, baldrick-wise, a rosary as big as a load of firewood, and taking in her hand a flag, made of parti-coloured rags, red and yellow and green, went out, crying, “Allah! Allah!” with tongue celebrating the praises of the Lord, whilst her heart galloped in the Devil’s race- course, seeking how she might play some sharping trick upon town. She walked from street to street, till she came to an alley swept and watered and marble-paved, where she saw a vaulted gateway, with a threshold of alabaster, and a Moorish porter standing at the door, which was of sandalwood plated with brass and furnished with a ring of silver for knocker. Now this house belonged to the Chief of the Caliph’s Serjeant-ushers, a man of great wealth in fields, houses and allowances, called the Emir Hasan Sharr al-Tarík, or Evil of the Way, and therefor called because his blow forewent his word. He was married to a fair damsel, Khátún[184] hight, whom he loved and who had made him swear, on the night of his going in unto her, that he would take none other to wife over her nor lie abroad for a single night. And so things went on till one day, he went to the Divan and saw that each Emir had with him a son or two. Then he entered the Hammam-bath and looking at his face in the mirror, noted that the white hairs in his beard overlay its black, and he said in himself, “Will not He who took thy sire bless thee with a son?” So he went in to his wife, in angry mood, and she said to him, “Good evening to thee”; but he replied, “Get thee out of my sight: from the day I saw thee I have seen naught of good.” “How so?” quoth she. Quoth he, “On the night of my going in unto thee, thou madest me swear to take no other wife over thee, and this very day I have seen each Emir with a son and some with two. So I minded me of death[185] ; and also that to me hath been vouchsafed neither son nor daughter and that whoso leaveth no male hath no memory. This, then, is the reason of my anger, for thou art barren; and knowing thee is like planing a rock.” Cried she, “Allah’s name upon thee. Indeed, I have worn out the mortars with beating wool and pounding drugs,[186] and I am not to blame; the barrenness is with thee, for that thou art a snub-nosed mule and thy sperm is weak and watery and impregnateth not neither getteth children.” Said he, “When I return from my journey, I will take another wife;” and she, “My luck is with Allah!” Then he went out from her and both repented of the sharp words spoken each to other. Now as the Emir’s wife looked forth of her lattice, as she were a Bride of the Hoards[187] for the jewellery upon her, behold, there stood Dalilah espying her and seeing her clad in costly clothes and ornaments, said to herself, “’Twould be a rare trick, O Dalilah, to entice yonder young lady from her husband’s house and strip her of all her jewels and clothes and make off with the whole lot.” So she took up her stand under the windows of the Emir’s house, and fell to calling aloud upon Allah’s name and saying, “Be present, O ye Walis, ye friends of the Lord!” Whereupon every woman in the street looked from her lattice and, seeing a matron clad, after Sufi fashion, in clothes of white wool, as she were a pavilion of light, said, “Allah bring us a blessing by the aidance of this pious old person, from whose face issueth light!” And Khatun, the wife of the Emir Hasan, burst into tears and said to her handmaid, “Get thee down, O Makbúlah, and kiss the hand of Shaykh Abú Alí, the porter, and say to him, ‘Let yonder Religious enter to my lady, so haply she may get a blessing of her.'" So she went down to the porter and kissing his hand, said to him, "My mistress telleth thee, 'Let yonder pious old woman come in to me, so may I get a blessing of her'; and belike her benediction may extend to us likewise." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundredth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the handmaid went down and said to the porter, "Suffer yonder Religious enter to my lady so haply she may get a blessing of her, and we too may be blessed, one and all," the gate-keeper went up to Dalilah and kissed her hand, but she forbade him, saying, "Away from me, lest my ablution be made null and void.[188] Thou, also, art of the attracted God-wards and kindly looked upon by Allah's Saints and under His especial guardianship. May He deliver thee from this servitude, O Abu Ali!" Now the Emir owed three months' wage to the porter who was straitened thereby, but knew not how to recover his due from his lord; so he said to the old woman, "O my mother, give me to drink from thy pitcher, so I may win a blessing through thee." She took the ewer from her shoulder and whirled it about in air, so that the plug flew out of its mouth and the three dinars fell to the ground. The porter saw them and picked them up, saying in his mind, "Glory to God! This old woman is one of the Saints that have hoards at their command! It hath been revealed to her of me that I am in want of money for daily expenses; so she hath conjured me these three dinars out of the air." Then said he to her, "Take, O my aunt, these three dinars which fell from thy pitcher;" and she replied, "Away with them from me! I am of the folk who occupy not themselves with the things of the world, no never! Take them and use them for thine own benefit, in lieu of those the Emir oweth thee." Quoth he, "Thanks to Allah for succour! This is of the chapter of revelation!" Thereupon the maid accosted her and kissing her hand, carried her up to her mistress. She found the lady as she were a treasure, whose guardian talisman had been loosed; and Khatun bade her welcome and kissed her hand. Quoth she, "O my daughter, I come not to thee save for thy weal and by Allah's will." Then Khatun set food before her; but she said, "O my daughter, I eat naught except of the food of Paradise and I keep continual fast breaking it but five days in the year. But, O my child, I see thee chagrined and desire that thou tell me the cause of thy concern.” “O my mother,” replied Khatun, “I made my husband swear, on my wedding-night, that he would wive none but me, and he saw others with children and longed for them and said to me, ‘Thou art a barren thing!’ I answered, ‘Thou art a mule which begetteth not’; so he left me in anger, saying, ‘When I come back from my journey, I will take another wife,’ for he hath villages and lands and large allowances, and if he begat children by another, they will possess the money and take the estates from me.” Said Dalilah, “O my daughter, knowest thou not of my master, the Shaykh Abú al-Hamlát,[189] whom if any debtor visit, Allah quitteth him his debt, and if a barren woman, she conceiveth?” Khatun replied, “O my mother, since the day of my wedding I have not gone forth the house, no, not even to pay visits of condolence or congratulation.” The old woman rejoined, “O my child, I will carry thee to him and do thou cast thy burden on him and make a vow to him: haply when thy husband shall return from his journey and lie with thee thou shalt conceive by him and bear a girl or a boy: but, be it female or male, it shall be a dervish of the Shaykh Abu al-Hamlat.” Thereupon Khatun rose and arrayed herself in her richest raiment, and donning all her jewellery said, “Keep thou an eye on the house,” to her maid, who replied, “I hear and obey, O my lady.” Then she went down and the porter Abu Ali met her and asked her, “Whither away, O my lady?” “I go to visit the Shaykh Abu al-Hamlat;” answered she; and he, “Be a year’s fast incumbent on me! Verily yon Religious is of Allah’s saints and full of holiness, O my lady, and she hath hidden treasure at her command, for she gave me three dinars of red gold and divined my case, without my asking her, and knew that I was in want.” Then the old woman went out with the young lady Khatun, saying to her, “Inshallah, O my daughter, when thou hast visited the Shaykh Abu al-Hamlat, there shall betide thee solace of soul and by leave of Almighty Allah thou shalt conceive, and thy husband the Emir shall love thee by the blessing of the Shaykh and shall never again let thee hear a despiteful word.” Quoth Khatun, “I will go with thee to visit him, O my mother!” But Dalilah said to herself, “Where shall I strip her and take her clothes and jewellery, with the folk coming and going?” Then she said to her, “O my daughter, walk thou behind me, within sight of me, for this thy mother is a woman sorely burdened; everyone who hath a burden casteth it on me and all who have pious offerings[190] to make give them to me and kiss my hand." So the young lady followed her at a distance, whilst her anklets tinkled and her hair-coins[191] clinked as she went, till they reached the bazar of the merchants. Presently, they came to the shop of a young merchant, by name Sídí Hasan who was very handsome[192] and had no hair on his face. He saw the lady approaching and fell to casting stolen glances at her, which when the old woman saw, she beckoned to her and said, "Sit down in this shop, till I return to thee." Khatun obeyed her and sat down in the shop- front of the young merchant, who cast at her one glance of eyes that cost him a thousand sighs. Then the old woman accosted him and saluted him, saying, "Tell me, is not thy name Sidi Hasan, son of the merchant Mohsin?" He replied, "Yes, who told thee my name?" Quoth she, "Folk of good repute direct me to thee. Know that this young lady is my daughter and her father was a merchant who died and left her much money. She is come of marriageable age and the wise say, 'Offer thy daughter in marriage and not thy son'; and all her life she hath not come forth the house till this day. Now a divine warning and a command given in secret bid me wed her to thee; so, if thou art poor, I will give thee capital and will open for thee instead of one shop two shops." Thereupon quoth the young merchant to himself, "I asked Allah for a bride, and He hath given me three things, to wit, coin, clothing, and coynte." Then he continued to the old trot, "O my mother, that where-to thou directest me is well; but this long while my mother saith to me, 'I wish to marry thee,' but I object replying, 'I will not marry except on the sight of my own eyes.'" Said Dalilah, "Rise and follow my steps, and I will show her to thee, naked."[193] So he rose and took a thousand dinars, saying in himself, "Haply we may need to buy somewhat" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and First Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old woman said to Hasan, son of Mohsin the merchant, "Rise up and follow me, and I will show her naked to thee." So he rose and took with him a thousand dinars, saying in himself, "Haply we may need to buy somewhat or pay the fees for drawing up the marriage contract." The old woman bade him walk behind the young lady at a distance but within shot of sight and said to herself, "Where wilt thou carry the young lady and the merchant that thou mayest strip them both whilst his shop is still shut?" Then she walked on and Khatun after her, followed by the young merchant, till she came to a dyery, kept by a master dyer, by name Hajj Mohammed, a man of ill-repute; like the colocasia[194] seller's knife cutting male and female, and loving to eat both figs and pomegranates.[195] He heard the tinkle of the ankle rings and, raising his head, saw the lady and the young man. Presently the old woman came up to him and, after salaming to him and sitting down opposite him, asked him, "Art thou not Hajj Mohammed the dyer?" He answered, "Yes, I am he: what dost thou want?" Quoth she, "Verily, folks of fair repute have directed me to thee. Look at yonder handsome girl, my daughter, and that comely beardless youth, my son; I brought them both up and spent much money on both of them. Now, thou must know that I have a big old ruinous house which I have shored up with wood, and the builder saith to me, 'Go and live in some other place, lest belike it fall upon thee; and when this is repaired return hither.' So I went forth to seek me a lodging, and people of worth directed me to thee, and I wish to lodge my son and daughter with thee." Quoth the dyer in his mind, "Verily, here is fresh butter upon cake come to thee." But he said to the old woman, "'Tis true I have a house and saloon and upper floor; but I cannot spare any part thereof, for I want it all for guests and for the indigo- growers my clients." She replied, "O my son, 'twill be only for a month or two at the most, till our house be repaired, and we are strange folk. Let the guest-chamber be shared between us and thee, and by thy life, O my son, an thou desire that thy guests be ours, we will welcome them and eat with them and sleep with them." Then he gave her the keys, one big and one small and one crooked, saying to her "The big key is that of the house, the crooked one that of the saloon and the little one that of the upper floor." So Dalilah took the keys and fared on, followed by the lady who forwent the young merchant, till she came to the lane wherein was the house. She opened the door and entered, introducing the damsel to whom said she, "O my daughter, this (pointing to the saloon) is the lodging of the Shaykh Abu al-Hamlat; but go thou into the upper floor and loose thy outer veil and wait till I come to thee.” So she went up and sat down. Presently appeared the young merchant, whom Dalilah carried into the saloon, saying, “Sit down, whilst I fetch my daughter and show her to thee.” So he sat down and the old trot went up to Khatun who said to her, “I wish to visit the Shaykh, before the folk come.” Replied the beldame, “O my daughter, we fear for thee.” Asked Khatun, “Why so?” and Dalilah answered, “Because here is a son of mine, a natural who knoweth not summer from winter, but goeth ever naked. He is the Shaykh’s deputy and, if he saw a girl like thee come to visit his chief, he would snatch her earrings and tear her ears and rend her silken robes.[196] So do thou doff thy jewellery and clothes and I will keep them for thee, till thou hast made thy pious visitation.” Accordingly the damsel did off her outer dress and jewels and gave them to the old woman, who said, “I will lay them for thee on the Shaykh’s curtain, that a blessing may betide thee.” Then she went out, leaving the lady in her shift and petticoat-trousers, and hid the clothes and jewels in a place on the staircase; after which she betook herself to the young merchant, whom she found impatiently awaiting the girl, and he cried, “Where is thy daughter, that I may see her?” But she smote palm on breast and he said “What aileth thee?” Quoth she, “Would there were no such thing as the ill neighbour and the envious! They saw thee enter the house with me and asked me of thee; and I said, ‘This is a bridegroom I have found for my daughter.’ So they envied me on thine account and said to my girl, ‘Is thy mother tired of keeping thee, that she marrieth thee to a leper?’ There-upon I swore to her that she should not see thee save naked.” Quoth he, “I take refuge with Allah from the envious,” and baring his fore-arm, showed her that it was like silver. Said she, “Have no fear; thou shalt see her naked, even as she shall see thee naked;” and he said, “Let her come and look at me. Then he put off his pelisse and sables and his girdle and dagger and the rest of his raiment, except his shirt and bag-trousers, and would have laid the purse of a thousand dinars with them, but Dalilah cried, ‘Give them to me, that I may take care of them.” So she took them and fetching the girl’s clothes and jewellery shouldered the whole and locking the door upon them went her ways. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Second Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old woman had taken the property of the young merchant and the damsel and wended her ways, having locked the door upon them, she deposited her spoils with a druggist of her acquaintance and returned to the dyer, whom she found sitting, awaiting her. Quoth he, “Inshallah, the house pleaseth thee?”; and quoth she, “There is a blessing in it; and I go now to fetch porters to carry hither our goods and furniture. But my children would have me bring them a panade with meat; so do thou take this dinar and buy the dish and go and eat the morning meal with them.” Asked the dyer, “Who shall guard the dyery meanwhile and the people’s goods that be therein?”; and the old woman answered, “Thy lad!” “So be it,” rejoined he, and taking a dish and cover, went out to do her bidding. So far concerning the dyer who will again be mentioned in the tale; but as regards the old woman, she fetched the clothes and jewels she had left with the druggist and going back to the dyery, said to the lad, “Run after thy master, and I will not stir hence till you both return.” “To hear is to obey,” answered he and went away, while she began to collect all the customers’ goods. Presently, there came up an ass-driver, a scavenger, who had been out of work for a week and who was an Hashish-eater to boot; and she called him, saying, “Hither, O donkey-boy!” So he came to her and she asked, “Knowest thou my son the dyer?”; whereto he answered, “Yes, I know him.” Then she said, “The poor fellow is insolvent and loaded with debts, and as often as he is put in prison, I set him free. Now we wish to see him declared bankrupt and I am going to return the goods to their owners; so do thou lend me thine ass to carry the load and receive this dinar to its hire. When I am gone, take the handsaw and empty out the vats and jars and break them, so that if there come an officer from the Kází‘s court, he may find nothing in the dyery.” Quoth he, “I owe the Hajj a kindness and will do something for Allah’s love.” So she laid the things on the ass and, the Protector protecting her, made for her own house; so that she arrived there in safety and went in to her daughter Zaynab, who said to her, “O my mother, my heart bath been with thee! What hast thou done by way of roguery?” Dalilah replied, "I have played off four tricks on four wights; the wife of the Serjeant-usher, a young merchant, a dyer and an ass-driver, and have brought thee all their spoil on the donkey-boy's beast." Cried Zaynab, "O my mother, thou wilt never more be able to go about the town, for fear of the Serjeant-usher, whose wife's raiment and jewellery thou hast taken, and the merchant whom thou hast stripped naked, and the dyer whose customers' goods thou hast stolen and the owner of the ass." Rejoined the old woman, "Pooh, my girl! I reck not of them, save the donkey-boy, who knoweth me." Meanwhile the dyer bought the meat-panade and set out for the house, followed by his servant with the food on head. On his way thither, he passed his shop, where he found the donkey- boy breaking the vats and jars and saw that there was neither stuff nor liquor left in them and that the dyery was in ruins. So he said to him, "Hold thy hand, O ass-driver;" and the donkey-boy desisted and cried, "Praised be Allah for thy safety, O master! Verily my heart was with thee." "Why so?" "Thou art become bankrupt and they have filed a docket of thine insolvency." "Who told thee this?" "Thy mother told me, and bade me break the jars and empty the vats, that the Kazi's officers might find nothing in the shop, if they should come." "Allah confound the far One!"[197] cried the dyer; "My mother died long ago." And he beat his breast, exclaiming, "Alas, for the loss of my goods and those of the folk!" The donkey-boy also wept and ejaculated, "Alas, for the loss of my ass!"; and he said to the dyer, "Give me back my beast which thy mother stole from me." The dyer laid hold of him by the throat and fell to buffeting him, saying, "Bring me the old woman;" whilst the other buffeted him in return saying, "Give me back my beast." So they beat and cursed each other, till the folk collected around them — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Third Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the dyer caught hold of the donkey-boy and the donkey-boy caught hold of the dyer and they beat and cursed each other till the folk collected round them and one of them asked, "What is the matter, O Master Mohammed?" The ass-driver answered, "I will tell thee the tale," and related to them his story, saying, "I deemed I was doing the dyer a good turn; but, when he saw me he beat his breast and said, ‘My mother is dead.’ And now, I for one require my ass of him, it being he who hath put this trick on me, that he might make me lose my beast.” Then said the folk to the dyer, “O Master Mohammed, dost thou know this matron, that thou didst entrust her with the dyery and all therein?” And he replied, “I know her not; but she took lodgings with me to-day, she and her son and daughter.” Quoth one, “In my judgment, the dyer is bound to indemnify the ass- driver.” Quoth another, “Why so?” “Because,” replied the first, “he trusted not the old Woman nor gave her his ass save only because he saw that the dyer had entrusted her with the dyery and its contents.” And a third said, “O master, since thou hast lodged her with thee, it behoveth thee to get the man back his ass.” Then they made for the house, and the tale will come round to them again. Mean-while, the young merchant remained awaiting the old woman’s coming with her daughter, but she came not nor did her daughter; whilst the young lady in like manner sat expecting her return with leave from her son, the God-attended one, the Shaykh’s deputy, to go in to the holy presence. So weary of waiting, she rose to visit the Shaykh by herself and went down into the saloon, where she found the young merchant, who said to her, “Come hither! where is thy mother, who brought me to marry thee?” She replied, “My mother is dead, art thou the old woman’s son, the ecstatic, the deputy of the Shaykh Abu al-Hamlat?” Quoth he, “The swindling old trot is no mother of mine; she hath cheated me and taken my clothes and a thousand dinars.” Quoth Khatun, “And me also hath she swindled for she brought me to see the Shaykh Abu al-Hamlat and in lieu of so doing she hath stripped me.” Thereupon he, “I look to thee to make good my clothes and my thousand dinars;” and she, “I look to thee to make good my clothes and jewellery.” And, behold, at this moment in came the dyer and seeing them both stripped of their raiment, said to them, “Tell me where your mother is.” So the young lady related all that had befallen her and the young merchant related all that had betided him, and the Master-dyer exclaimed, “Alas, for the loss of my goods and those of the folk!”; and the ass-driver ejaculated, “Alas, for my ass! Give me, O dyer, my ass!” Then said the dyer, “This old woman is a sharper. Come forth, that I may lock the door.” Quoth the young merchant, "'Twere a disgrace to thee that we should enter thy house dressed and go forth from it undressed." So the dyer clad him and the damsel and sent her back to her house where we shall find her after the return of her husband. Then he shut the dyery and said to the young merchant, "Come, let us go and search for the old woman and hand her over to the Wali,[198] the Chief of Police." So they and the ass-man repaired to the house of the master of police and made their complaint to him. Quoth he, "O folk, what want ye?" and when they told him he rejoined, "How many old women are there not in the town! Go ye and seek for her and lay hands on her and bring her to me, and I will torture her for you and make her confess." So they sought for her all round the town; and an account of them will presently be given.[199] As for old Dalilah the Wily, she said, "I have a mind to play off another trick," to her daughter who answered, "O my mother, I fear for thee;" but the beldam cried, "I am like the bean husks which fall, proof against fire and water." So she rose, and donning a slave-girl's dress of such as serve people of condition, went out to look for some one to defraud. Presently she came to a by-street, spread with carpets and lighted with hanging lamps, and heard a noise of singing-women and drumming of tambourines. Here she saw a handmaid bearing on her shoulder a boy, clad in trousers laced with silver and a little Abá-cloak of velvet, with a pearl embroidered Tarbush-cap on his head, and about his neck a collar of gold set with jewels. Now the house belonged to the Provost of the Merchants of Baghdad, and the boy was his son. He had a virgin daughter, to boot, who was promised in marriage, and it was her betrothal they were celebrating that day. There was with her mother a company of noble dames and singing-women, and whenever she went upstairs or down, the boy clung to her. So she called the slave-girl and said to her, "Take thy young master and play with him, till the company break up." Seeing this, Dalilah asked the handmaid, "What festivities are these in your mistress's house;" and was answered "She celebrates her daughter's betrothal this day, and she hath singing-women with her." Quoth the old woman to herself, "O Dalilah, the thing to do is to spirit away this boy from the maid," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fourth Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old trot said to herself, “O Dalilah, the thing to do is to spirit away this boy from the maid!” she began crying out, “O disgrace! O ill luck!” Then pulling out a brass token, resembling a dinar, she said to the maid, who was a simpleton, “Take this ducat and go in to thy mistress and say to her, ‘Umm al-Khayr rejoiceth with thee and is beholden to thee for thy favours, and on the day of assembly she and her daughters will visit thee and handsel the tiring-women with the usual gifts.’” Said the girl, “O my mother, my young master here catcheth hold of his mamma, whenever he seeth her;” and she replied “Give him to me, whilst thou goest in and comest back.” So she gave her the child and taking the token, went in; whereupon Dalilah made off with the boy to a by-lane, where she stripped him of his clothes and jewels, saying to herself, “O Dalilah, ’twould indeed be the finest of tricks, even as thou hast cheated the maid and taken the boy from her, so now to carry on the game and pawn him for a thousand dinars.” So she repaired to the jewel-bazar, where she saw a Jew goldsmith seated with a cage full of jewellery before him, and said to herself, “’Twould be a rare trick to chouse this Jew fellow and get a thousand gold pieces worth of jewellery from him and leave the boy in pledge for it.” Presently the Jew looked at them and seeing the boy with the old woman, knew him for the son of the Provost of the Merchants. Now the Israelite was a man of great wealth, but would envy his neighbour if he sold and himself did not sell; so espying Dalilah, he said to her, “What seekest thou, O my mistress?” She asked, “Art thou Master Azariah[200] the Jew?” having first enquired his name of others; and he answered, “Yes.” Quoth she, “This boy’s sister, daughter of the Shahbandar of the Merchants, is a promised bride, and to- day they celebrate her betrothal; and she hath need of jewellery. So give me two pair of gold ankle-rings, a brace of gold bracelets, and pearl ear-drops, with a girdle, a poignard and a seal-ring.” He brought them out and she took of him a thousand dinars’ worth of jewellery, saying, “I will take these ornaments on approval; and whatso pleaseth them, they will keep and I will bring thee the price and leave this boy with thee till then.” He said, “Be it as thou wilt!” So she took the jewellery and made off to her own house, where her daughter asked her how the trick had sped. She told her how she had taken and stripped the Shahbandar's boy, and Zaynab said, "Thou wilt never be able to walk abroad again in the town." Meanwhile, the maid went in to her mistress and said to her, "O my lady, Umm al-Khayr saluteth thee and rejoiceth with thee and on assembly-day she will come, she and her daughters, and give the customary presents." Quoth her mistress, "Where is thy young master?" Quoth the slave-girl, "I left him with her lest he cling to thee, and she gave me this, as largesse for the singing-women." So the lady said to the chief of the singers, "Take thy money;" and she took it and found it a brass counter; whereupon the lady cried to the maid, "Get thee down, O whore, and look to thy young master." Accordingly, she went down and finding neither boy nor old woman, shrieked aloud and fell on her face. Their joy was changed into annoy, and behold, the Provost came in, when his wife told him all that had befallen and he went out in quest of the child, whilst the other merchants also fared forth and each sought his own road. Presently, the Shahbandar, who had looked every-where, espied his son seated, naked, in the Jew's shop and said to the owner, "This is my son." "'Tis well," answered the Jew. So he took him up, without asking for his clothes, of the excess of his joy at finding him; but the Jew laid hold of him, saying, "Allah succour the Caliph against thee!"[201] The Provost asked, "What aileth thee, O Jew?"; and he answered, "Verily the old woman took of me a thousand dinars' worth of jewellery for thy daughter, and left this lad in pledge for the price; and I had not trusted her, but that she offered to leave the child whom I knew for thy Son." Said the Provost, "My daughter needeth no jewellery, give me the boy's clothes." Thereupon the Jew shrieked out, "Come to my aid, O Moslems!" but at that moment up came the dyer and the ass-man and the young merchant, who were going about, seeking the old woman, and enquired the cause of their jangle. So they told them the case and they said, "This old woman is a cheat, who hath cheated us before you." Then they recounted to them how she had dealt with them, and the Provost said, "Since I have found my son, be his clothes his ransom! If I come upon the old woman, I will require them of her." And he carried the child home to his mother, who rejoiced in his safety. Then the Jew said to the three others "Whither go ye?"; and they answered, "We go to look for her." Quoth the Jew, "Take me with you," presently adding, "Is there any one of you knoweth her?" The donkey-boy cried, "I know her;" and the Jew said, "If we all go forth together, we shall never catch her; for she will flee from us. Let each take a different road, and be our rendezvous at the shop of Hajj Mas'úd, the Moorish barber." They agreed to this and set off, each in a different direction. Presently, Dalilah sallied forth again to play her tricks and the ass-driver met her and knew her. So he caught hold of her and said to her, "Woe to thee! Hast thou been long at this trade?" She asked, "What aileth thee?"; and he answered, "Give me back my ass." Quoth she, "Cover what Allah covereth, O my son! Dost thou seek thine ass and the people's things?" Quoth he, "I want my ass; that's all;" and quoth she, "I saw that thou wast poor: so I deposited thine ass for thee with the Moorish barber. Stand off, whilst I speak him fair, that he may give thee the beast." So she went up to the Maghrabi and kissed his hand and shed tears. He asked her what ailed her and she said, "O my son, look at my boy who standeth yonder. He was ill and exposed himself to the air, which injured his intellect. He used to buy asses and now, if he stand he saith nothing but, My ass! if he sit he crieth, My ass! and if he walk he crieth, My ass! Now I have been told by a certain physician that his mind is disordered and that nothing will cure him but drawing two of his grinders and cauterising him twice on either temple. So do thou take this dinar and call him to thee, saying, 'Thine ass is with me.'" Said the barber, "May I fast for a year, if I do not give him his ass in his fist!" Now he had with him two journeymen, so he said to one of them "Go, heat the irons." Then the old woman went her way and the barber called to the donkey-boy,[202] saying, "Thine ass is with me, good fellow! come and take him, and as thou livest, I will give him into thy palm." So he came to him and the barber carried him into a dark room, where he knocked him down and the journeymen bound him hand and foot. Then the Maghrabi arose and pulled out two of his grinders and fired him on either temple; after which he let him go, and he rose and said, "O Moor, why hast thou used me with this usage?" Quoth the barber, "Thy mother told me that thou hadst taken cold whilst ill, and hadst lost thy reason, so that, whether sitting or standing or walking, thou wouldst say nothing but My ass! So here is thine ass in thy fist." Said the other, "Allah requite thee for pulling out my teeth." Then the barber told him all that the old woman had related and he exclaimed, "Allah torment her!"; and the twain left the shop and went out, disputing. When the barber returned, he found his booth empty, for, whilst he was absent, the old woman had taken all that was therein and made off with it to her daughter, whom she acquainted with all that had befallen and all she had done. The barber, seeing his place plundered, caught hold of the donkey-boy and said to him, "Bring me thy mother." But he answered, saying, "She is not my mother; she is a sharper who hath cozened much people and stolen my ass." And lo! at this moment up came the dyer and the Jew and the young merchant, and seeing the Moorish barber holding on to the ass-driver who was fired on both temples, they said to him, "What hath befallen thee, O donkey-boy?" So he told them all that had betided him and the barber did the like; and the others in turn related to the Moor the tricks the old woman had played them. Then he shut up his shop and went with them to the office of the Police-master to whom they said, "We look to thee for our case and our coin."[203] Quoth the Wali, "And how many old women are there not in Baghdad! Say me, doth any of you know her?" Quoth the ass-man, "I do; so give me ten of thine officers." He gave them half a score archers and they all five went out, followed by the sergeants, and patrolled the city, till they met the old woman, when they laid hands on her and carrying her to the house of the Chief of Police, stood waiting under his office windows till he should come forth. Presently, the warders fell asleep, for excess of watching with their chief, and old Dalilah feigned to follow their example, till the ass-man and his fellows slept likewise, when she stole away from them and, going in to the Wali's Harim, kissed the hand of the mistress of the house and asked her "Where is the Chief of Police?" The lady answered, "He is asleep; what wouldst thou with him?" Quoth Dalilah, "My husband is a merchant of chattels and gave me five Mamelukes to sell, whilst he went on a journey. The Master of Police met me and bought them of me for a thousand dinars and two hundred for myself, saying, 'Bring them to my house.' So I have brought them." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fifth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old woman, entering the Harim of the Police-Master, said to his wife, “Verily the Wali bought of me five slaves for one thousand ducats and two hundred for myself, saying, ‘Bring them to my quarters.’ So I have brought them.” Hearing the old woman’s story she believed it and asked her, “Where are the slaves?” Dalilah replied, “O my lady, they are asleep under the palace window”; whereupon the dame looked out and seeing the Moorish barber clad in a Mameluke habit and the young merchant as he were a drunken Mameluke[204] and the Jew and the dyer and the ass-driver as they were shaven Mamelukes, said in herself, “Each of these white slaves is worth more than a thousand dinars.” So she opened her chest and gave the old woman the thousand ducats, saying, “Fare thee forth now and come back anon; when my husband waketh, I will get thee the other two hundred dinars from him.” Answered the old woman, “O my lady, an hundred of them are thine, under the sherbet-gugglet whereof thou drinkest,[205] and the other hundred do thou keep for me against I come back,” presently adding, “Now let me out by the private door.” So she let her out, and the Protector protected her and she made her way home to her daughter, to whom she related how she had gotten a thousand gold pieces and sold her five pursuers into slavery, ending with, “O my daughter, the one who troubleth me most is the ass-driver, for he knoweth me.” Said Zaynab, “O my mother, abide quiet awhile and let what thou hast done suffice thee, for the crock shall not always escape the shock.” When the Chief of Police awoke, his wife said to him, “I give thee joy of the five slaves thou hast bought of the old woman.” Asked he, “What slaves?” And she answered, “Why dost thou deny it to me? Allah willing, they shall become like thee people of condition.” Quoth he, “As my head liveth, I have bought no slaves! Who saith this?” Quoth she, “The old woman, the brokeress, from whom thou boughtest them; and thou didst promise her a thousand dinars for them and two hundred for herself.” Cried he, “Didst thou give her the money?” And she replied, “Yes; for I saw the slaves with my own eyes, and on each is a suit of clothes worth a thousand dinars; so I sent out to bid the sergeants have an eye to them.” The Wali went out and, seeing the five plaintiffs, said to the officers, “Where are the five slaves we bought for a thousand dinars of the old woman?” Said they, “There are no slaves here; only these five men, who found the old woman, and seized her and brought her hither. We fell asleep, whilst waiting for thee, and she stole away and entered the Harim. Presently out came a maid and asked us, ‘Are the five with you with whom the old woman came?’; and we answered, ‘Yes.’” Cried the Master of Police, “By Allah, this is the biggest of swindles!”; and the five men said, “We look to thee for our goods.” Quoth the Wali, “The old woman, your mistress, sold you to me for a thousand gold pieces.” Quoth they, “That were not allowed of Allah; we are free-born men and may not be sold, and we appeal from thee to the Caliph.” Rejoined the Master of Police, “None showed her the way to the house save you, and I will sell you to the galleys for two hundred dinars apiece.” Just then, behold, up came the Emir Hasan Sharr al-Tarik who, on his return from his journey, had found his wife stripped of her clothes and jewellery and heard from her all that had passed; whereupon quoth he, “The Master of Police shall answer me this” and repairing to him, said “Dost thou suffer old women to go round about the town and cozen folk of their goods? This is thy duty and I look to thee for my wife’s property.” Then said he to the five men, “What is the case with you?” So they told him their stories and he said, “Ye are wronged men,” and turning to the Master of Police, asked him, “Why dost thou arrest them?” Answered he, “None brought the old wretch to my house save these five, so that she took a thousand dinars of my money and sold them to my women.” Whereupon the five cried, “O Emir Hasan, be thou our advocate in this cause.” Then said the Master of Police to the Emir, “Thy wife’s goods are at my charge and I will be surety for the old woman. But which of you knoweth her?” They cried, “We all know her: send ten apparitors with us, and we will take her.” So he gave them ten men, and the ass-driver said to them, “Follow me, for I should know her with blue eyes.”[206] Then they fared forth and lo! they met old Dalilah coming out of a by-street: so they at once laid hands on her and brought her to the office of the Wali who asked her, “Where are the people’s goods?” But she answered, saying, “I have neither gotten them nor seen them.” Then he cried to the gaoler, “Take her with thee and clap her in gaol till the morning;” but he replied, “I will not take her nor will I imprison her lest she play a trick on me and I be answerable for her.” So the Master of Police mounted and rode out with Dalilah and the rest to the bank of the Tigris, where he bade the lamp-lighter crucify her by her hair. He drew her up by the pulley and bound her on the cross; after which the Master of Police set ten men to guard her and went home. Presently, the night fell down and sleep overcame the watchmen. Now a certain Badawi had heard one man say to a friend, “Praise be to Allah for thy safe return! Where hast thou been all this time?” Replied the other, “In Baghdad where I broke my fast on honey-fritters.”[207] Quoth the Badawi to himself “Needs must I go to Baghdad and eat honey-fritters therein”; for in all his life he had never entered Baghdad nor seen fritters of the sort. So he mounted his stallion and rode on towards Baghdad, saying in his mind, “’Tis a fine thing to eat honey-fritters! On the honour of an Arab, I will break my fast with honey-fritters and naught else!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Sixth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the wild Arab mounted horse and made for Baghdad saying in his mind, “’Tis a fine thing to eat honey-fritters! On the honour of an Arab I will break my fast with honey-fritters and naught else;” and he rode on till he came to the place where Dalilah was crucified and she heard him utter these words. So he went up to her and said to her, “What art thou?” Quoth she, “I throw myself on thy protection, O Shaykh of the Arabs!” and quoth he, “Allah indeed protect thee! But what is the cause of thy crucifixion?” Said she, “I have an enemy, an oilman, who frieth fritters, and I stopped to buy some of him, when I chanced to spit and my spittle fell on the fritters. So he complained of me to the Governor who commanded to crucify me, saying, ‘I adjudge that ye take ten pounds of honey-fritters and feed her therewith upon the cross. If she eat them, let her go, but if not, leave her hanging.’ And my stomach will not brook sweet things.” Cried the Badawi, “By the honour of the Arabs, I departed not the camp but that I might taste of honey-fritters! I will eat them for thee.” Quoth she, “None may eat them, except he be hung up in my place.” So he fell into the trap and unbound her; whereupon she bound him in her stead, after she had stripped him of his clothes and turband and put them on; then covering herself with his burnouse and mounting his horse, she rode to her house, where Zaynab asked her, “What meaneth this plight?”; and she answered, “They crucified me;” and told her all that had befallen her with the Badawi. This is how it fared with her; but as regards the watchmen, the first who woke roused his companions and they saw that the day had broken. So one of them raised his eyes and cried, “Dalilah.” Replied the Badawi, “By Allah! I have not eaten all night. Have ye brought the honey-fritters?” All exclaimed, “This is a man and a Badawi, and one of them asked him, “O Badawi, where is Dalilah and who loosed her?” He answered, “’Twas I; she shall not eat the honey-fritters against her will; for her soul abhorreth them.” So they knew that the Arab was ignorant of her case, whom she had cozened, and said to one another, “Shall we flee or abide the accomplishment of that which Allah hath written for us?” As they were talking, up came the Chief of Police, with all the folk whom the old woman had cheated, and said to the guards, “Arise, loose Dalilah.” Quoth the Badawi, “We have not eaten to-night. Hast thou brought the honey-fritters?” Whereupon the Wali raised his eyes to the cross and seeing the Badawi hung up in the stead of the old woman, said to the watchmen, “What is this?” “Pardon, O our lord!” “Tell me what hath happened” “We were weary with watching with thee on guard and , ‘Dalilah is crucified.’ So we fell asleep, and when we awoke, we found the Badawi hung up in her room; and we are at thy mercy.” “O folk, Allah’s pardon be upon you! She is indeed a clever cheat!” Then they unbound the Badawi, who laid hold of the Master of Police, saying, “Allah succour the Caliph against thee! I look to none but thee for my horse and clothes!” So the Wali questioned him and he told him what had passed between Dalilah and himself. The magistrate marvelled and asked him, “Why didst thou release her?”; and the Badawi answered, “I knew not that she was a felon.” Then said the others, “O Chief of Police, we look to thee in the matter of our goods; for we delivered the old woman into thy hands and she was in thy guard; and we cite thee before the Divan of the Caliph.” Now the Emir Hasan had gone up to the Divan, when in came the Wali with the Badawi and the five others, saying, “Verily, we are wronged men!” “Who hath wronged you?”

asked the Caliph; so each came forward in turn and told his story, after which said the Master of Police, “O Commander of the Faithful, the old woman cheated me also and sold me these five men as slaves for a thousand dinars, albeit they are free-born.” Quoth the Prince of True Believers, “I take upon myself all that you have lost”; adding to the Master of Police, “I charge thee with the old woman.” But he shook his collar, saying, “O Commander of the Faithful, I will not answer for her; for, after I had hung her on the cross, she tricked this Badawi and, when he loosed her, she tied him up in her room and made off with his clothes and horse.” Quoth the Caliph, “Whom but thee shall I charge with her?”; and quoth the Wali, “Charge Ahmad al-Danaf, for he hath a thousand dinars a month and one-and-forty followers, at a monthly wage of an hundred dinars each.” So the Caliph said, “Harkye, Captain Ahmad!” “At thy service, O Commander of the Faithful,” said he; and the Caliph cried, “I charge thee to bring the old woman before us.” Replied Ahmad, “I will answer for her.” Then the Caliph kept the Badawi and the five with him, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Seventh Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Caliph said to Calamity Ahmad, “I charge thee to bring the old woman before us,” he said, “I will answer for her O Commander of the Faithful!” Then the Caliph kept the Badawi and the five with him, whilst Ahmad and his men went down to their hall,[208] saying to one another, “How shall we lay hands on her, seeing that there are many old women in the town?” And quoth Ahmad to Hasan Shuman, “What counsellest thou?” Whereupon quoth one of them, by name Ali Kitf al- Jamal,[209] to Al-Danaf, “Of what dost thou take counsel with Hasan Shuman? Is the Pestilent one any great shakes?” Said Hasan, “O Ali, why dost thou disparage me? By the Most Great Name, I will not company with thee at this time!”; and he rose and went out in wrath. Then said Ahmad, “O my braves, let every sergeant take ten men, each to his own quarter and search for Dalilah.” All did his bidding, Ali included, and they said, “Ere we disperse let us agree to rendezvous in the quarter Al-Kalkh.” It was noised abroad in the city that Calamity Ahmad had undertaken to lay hands on Dalilah the Wily, and Zaynab said to her, "O my mother, an thou be indeed a trickstress, do thou befool Ahmad al-Danaf and his company." Answered Dalilah, "I fear none save Hasan Shuman;" and Zaynab said, "By the life of my browlock, I will assuredly get thee the clothes of all the one-and-forty." Then she dressed and veiled herself and going to a certain druggist, who had a saloon with two doors, salamed to him and gave him an ashrafi and said to him, "Take this gold piece as a douceur for thy saloon and let it to me till the end of the day." So he gave her the keys and she fetched carpets and so forth on the stolen ass and furnishing the place, set on each raised pavement a tray of meat and wine. Then she went out and stood at the door, with her face unveiled and behold, up came Ali Kitf al-Jamal and his men. She kissed his hand; and he fell in love with her, seeing her to be a handsome girl, and said to her, "What dost thou want?" Quoth she, "Art thou Captain Ahmad al-Danaf?"; and quoth he, "No, but I am of his company and my name is Ali Camel-shoulder." Asked she, "Whither fare you?"; and he answered, "We go about in quest of a sharkish old woman, who hath stolen folk's good, and we mean to lay hands on her. But who art thou and what is thy business?" She replied, "My father was a taverner at Mosul and he died and left me much money. So I came hither, for fear of the Dignities, and asked the people who would protect me, to which they replied, 'None but Ahmad al-Danaf.'" Said the men, "From this day forth, thou art under his protection"; and she replied, "Hearten me by eating a bit and drinking a sup of water."[210] They consented and entering, ate and drank till they were drunken, when she drugged them with Bhang and stripped them of their clothes and arms; and on like wise she did with the three other companions. Presently, Calamity Ahmad went out to look for Dalilah, but found her not, neither set eyes on any of his followers, and went on till he came to the door where Zaynab was standing. She kissed his hand and he looked on her and fell in love with her. Quoth she, "Art thou Captain Ahmad al- Danaf?"; and quoth he, "Yes: who art thou?" She replied, "I am a stranger from Mosul. My father was a vintner at that place and he died and left me much money wherewith I came to this city, for fear of the powers that be, and opened this tavern. The Master of Police hath imposed a tax on me, but it is my desire to put myself under thy protection and pay thee what the police would take of me, for thou hast the better right to it.” Quoth he, “Do not pay him aught: thou shalt have my protection and welcome.” Then quoth she, “Please to heal my heart and eat of my victual,” So he entered and ate and drank wine, till he could not sit upright, when she drugged him and took his clothes and arms. Then she loaded her purchase on the Badawi’s horse and the donkey-boy’s ass and made off with it, after she had aroused Ali Kitf al- Jamal. Camel-shoulder awoke and found himself naked and saw Ahmad and his men drugged and stripped: so he revived them with the counter-drug and they awoke and found themselves naked. Quoth Calamity Ahmad, “O lads, what is this? We were going to catch her, and lo! this strumpet hath caught us! How Hasan Shuman will rejoice over us! But we will wait till it is dark and then go away.” Meanwhile Pestilence Hasan said to the hall-keeper, “Where are the men?”; and as he asked, up they came naked; and he recited these two couplets[211] ,

“Men in their purposes are much alike, * But in their issues
  difference comes to light:
Of men some wise are, others simple souls; * As of the stars
  some dull, some pearly bright.

Then he looked at them and asked, “Who hath played you this trick and made you naked?”; and they answered, “We went in quest of an old woman, and a pretty girl stripped us.” Quoth Hasan, “She hath done right well.” They asked, “Dost thou know her?”; and he answered, “Yes, I know her and the old trot too.” Quoth they, “What shall we say to the Caliph?”; and quoth he, “O Danaf, do thou shake thy collar before him, and he will say, ‘Who is answerable for her’; and if he ask why thou hast not caught her; say thou, ‘We know her not; but charge Hasan Shuman with her.’ And if he give her into my charge, I will lay hands on her.” So they slept that night and on the morrow they went up to the Caliph’s Divan and kissed ground before him. Quoth he, “Where is the old woman, O Captain Ahmad?” But he shook his collar. The Caliph asked him why he did so, and he answered, “I know her not; but do thou charge Hasan Shuman to lay hands on her, for he knoweth her and her daughter also.” Then Hasan interceded for her with the Caliph, saying, “Indeed, she hath not played off these tricks, because she coveted the folk’s stuff, but to show her cleverness and that of her daughter, to the intent that thou shouldst continue her husband’s stipend to her and that of her father to her daughter. So an thou wilt spare her life I will fetch her to thee.” Cried the Caliph, “By the life of my ancestors, if she restore the people’s goods, I will pardon her on thine intercession!” And said the Pestilence, “Give me a pledge, O Prince of True Believers!” Whereupon Al-Rashid gave him the kerchief of pardon. So Hasan repaired to Dalilah’s house and called to her. Her daughter Zaynab answered him and he asked her, “Where is thy mother?” “Upstairs,” she answered; and he said, “Bid her take the people’s goods and come with me to the presence of the Caliph; for I have brought her the kerchief of pardon, and if she will not come with a good grace, let her blame only herself.” So Dalilah came down and tying the kerchief about her neck gave him the people’s goods on the donkey-boy’s ass and the Badawi’s horse. Quoth he, “There remain the clothes of my Chief and his men”; and quoth she, “By the Most Great Name, ’twas not I who stripped them!” Rejoined Hasan, “Thou sayst sooth, it was thy daughter Zaynab’s doing, and this was a good turn she did thee.” Then he carried her to the Divan and laying the people’s goods and stuff before the Caliph, set the old trot in his presence. As soon as he saw her, he bade throw her down on the carpet of blood, whereat she cried, “I cast myself on thy protection, O Shuman.’” So he rose and kissing the Caliph’s hands, said, “Pardon, O Commander of the Faithful! Indeed, thou gavest me the kerchief of pardon.” Said the Prince of True Believers, “I pardon her for thy sake: come hither, O old woman; what is thy name?” “My name is Wily Dalilah,” answered she, and the Caliph said “Thou art indeed crafty and full of guile.” Whence she was dubbed Dalilah the Wily One. Then quoth he, “Why hast thou played all these tricks on the folk and wearied our hearts?” and quoth she, “I did it not of lust for their goods, but because I had heard of the tricks which Ahmad al-Danaf and Hasan Shuman played in Baghdad and said to myself, ‘I too will do the like.’ And now I have returned the folk their goods.” But the ass-driver rose and said “I invoke Allah’s law[212] between me and her; for it sufficed her not to take my ass, but she must needs egg on the Moorish barber to tear out my eye-teeth and fire me on both temples." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the donkey-boy rose and cried out, "I invoke Allah's law between me and her; for it sufficed her not to take my ass, but she must needs egg on the barber to tear out my eye-teeth and fire me on both temples;" thereupon the Caliph bade give him an hundred dinars and ordered the dyer the like, saying, "Go; set up thy dyery again." So they called down blessings on his head and went away. The Badawi also took his clothes and horse and departed, saying, "'Tis henceforth unlawful and forbidden me to enter Baghdad and eat honey-fritters." And the others took their goods and went away. Then said the Caliph, "Ask a boon of me, O Dalilah!"; and she said, "Verily, my father was governor of the carrier-pigeons to thee and I know how to rear the birds; and my husband was town-captain of Baghdad. Now I wish to have the reversion of my husband and my daughter wisheth to have that of her father." The Caliph granted both their requests and she said, "I ask of thee that I may be portress of thy Khan." Now he had built a Khan of three stories, for the merchants to lodge in, and had assigned to its service forty slaves and also forty dogs he had brought from the King of the Sulaymániyah,[213] when he deposed him; and there was in the Khan a cook-slave, who cooked for the chattels and fed the hounds for which he let make collars. Said the Caliph, "O Dalilah, I will write thee a patent of guardianship of the Khan, and if aught be lost therefrom, thou shalt be answerable for it. "'Tis well," replied she; "but do thou lodge my daughter in the pavilion over the door of the Khan, for it hath terraced roofs, and carrier-pigeons may not be reared to advantage save in an open space." The Caliph granted her this also and she and her daughter removed to the pavilion in question, where Zaynab hung up the one-and-forty dresses of Calamity Ahmad and his company. Moreover, they delivered to Dalilah the forty pigeons which carried the royal messages, and the Caliph appointed the Wily One mistress over the forty slaves and charged them to obey her. She made the place of her sitting behind the door of the Khan, and every day she used to go up to the Caliph's Divan, lest he should need to send a message by pigeon-post and stay there till eventide whilst the forty slaves stood on guard at the Khan; and when darkness came on they loosed the forty dogs that they might keep watch over the place by night. Such were the doings of Dalilah the Wily One in Baghdad and much like them were

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

The Adventures of Mercury Ali of Cairo.[214]

Now as regards the works of Mercury ‘Alí; there lived once at Cairo,[215] in the days of Saláh the Egyptian, who was Chief of the Cairo Police and had forty men under him, a sharper named Ali, for whom the Master of Police used to set snares and think that he had fallen therein; but, when they sought for him, they found that he had fled like zaybak, or quicksilver, wherefore they dubbed him Ali Zaybak or Mercury Ali of Cairo. Now one day, as he sat with his men in his hall, his heart became heavy within him and his breast was straitened. The hall-keeper saw him sitting with frowning face and said to him, “What aileth thee, O my Chief? If thy breast be straitened take a turn in the streets of Cairo, for assuredly walking in her markets will do away with thy irk.” So he rose up and went out and threaded the streets awhile, but only increased in cark and care. Presently, he came to a wine-shop and said to himself, “I will go in and drink myself drunken.” So he entered and seeing seven rows of people in the shop, said, “Harkye, taverner! I will not sit except by myself.” Accordingly, the vintner placed him in a chamber alone and set strong pure wine before him whereof he drank till he lost his senses. Then he sallied forth again and walked till he came to the road called Red, whilst the people left the street clear before him, out of fear of him. Presently, he turned and saw a water-carrier trudging along, with his skin and gugglet, crying out and saying, “O exchange! There is no drink but what raisins make, there is no love-delight but what of the lover we take and none sitteth in the place of honour save the sensible freke[216] !” So he said to him, “Here, give me to drink!” The water-carrier looked at him and gave him the gugglet which he took and gazing into it, shook it up and lastly poured it out on the ground. Asked the water-carrier, “Why dost thou not drink?”; and he answered, saying, “Give me to drink.” So the man filled the cup a second time and he took it and shook it and emptied it on the ground; and thus he did a third time. Quoth the water-carrier, “An thou wilt not drink, I will be off.” And Ali said, “Give me to drink.” So he filled the cup a fourth time and gave it to him; and he drank and gave the man a dinar. The water-carrier looked at him with disdain and said, belittling him, “Good luck to thee! Good luck to thee, my lad! Little folk are one thing and great folk another!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say,

When it was the Seven Hundred and Ninth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the water-carrier receiving the dinar, looked at the giver with disdain and said “Good luck to thee! Good luck to thee! Little folk are one thing and great folk another.” Now when Mercury Ali heard this, he caught hold of the man’s gaberdine and drawing on him a poignard of price, such an one as that whereof the poet speaketh in these two couplets,

“Watered steel-blade, the world perfection calls, * Drunk with
the viper poison foes appals,
Cuts lively, burns the blood whene’er it falls; * And picks up
gems from pave of marble halls;”[217]

cried to him, “O Shaykh, speak reasonably to me! Thy water- skin is worth if dear three dirhams, and the gugglets I emptied on the ground held a pint or so of water.” Replied the water-carrier “’Tis well,” and Ali rejoined, “I gave thee a golden ducat: why, then dost thou belittle me? Say me, hast thou ever seen any more valiant than I or more generous than I?” Answered the water-carrier; “I have indeed, seen one more valiant than thou and eke more generous than thou; for, never, since women bare children, was there on earth’s face a brave man who was not generous.” Quoth Ali, “And who is he thou deemest braver and more generous than I?” Quoth the other, “Thou must know that I have had a strange adventure. My father was a Shaykh of the Water-carriers who give drink in Cairo and, when he died, he left me five male camels, a he-mule, a shop and a house; but the poor man is never satisfied; or, if he be satisfied he dieth. So I said to myself, ‘I will go up to Al-Hijaz’; and, taking a string of camels, bought goods on tick, till I had run in debt for five hundred ducats, all of which I lost in the pilgrimage. Then I said in my mind, ‘If I return to Cairo the folk will clap me in jail for their goods.’ So I fared with the pilgrims- caravan of Damascus to Aleppo and thence I went on to Baghdad, where I sought out the Shaykh of the Water-carriers of the city and finding his house I went in and repeated the opening chapter of the Koran to him. He questioned me of my case and I told him all that had betided me, whereupon he assigned me a shop and gave me a water-skin and gear. So I sallied forth a-morn trusting in Allah to provide, and went round about the city. I offered the gugglet to one, that he might drink; but he cried, ‘I have eaten naught whereon to drink; for a niggard invited me this day and set two gugglets before me; so I said to him, ‘O son of the sordid, hast thou given me aught to eat that thou offerest me drink after it?’ Wherefore wend thy ways, O water-carrier, till I have eaten somewhat: then come and give me to drink.’ Thereupon I accosted another and he said, ‘Allah provide thee!’ And so I went on till noon, without taking hansel, and I said to myself, ‘Would Heaven I had never come to Baghdad!’ Presently, I saw the folk running as fast as they could; so I followed them and behold, a long file of men riding two and two and clad in steel, with double neck-rings and felt bonnets and burnouses and swords and bucklers. I asked one of the folk whose suite this was, and he answered, ‘That of Captain Ahmad al-Danaf.’ Quoth I, ‘And what is he?’ and quoth the other, ‘He is town-captain of Baghdad and her Divan, and to him is committed the care of the suburbs. He getteth a thousand dinars a month from the Caliph and Hasan Shuman hath the like. More-over, each of his men draweth an hundred dinars a month; and they are now returning to their barrack from the Divan.’ And lo! Calamity Ahmad saw me and cried out, ‘Come give me drink.’ So I filled the cup and gave it him, and he shook it and emptied it out, like unto thee; and thus he did a second time. Then I filled the cup a third time and he took a draught as thou diddest; after which he asked me, ‘O water- carrier, whence comest thou?’ And I answered, ‘From Cairo,’ and he, ‘Allah keep Cairo and her citizens! What may bring thee thither?’ So I told him my story and gave him to understand that I was a debtor fleeing from debt and distress. He cried, ‘Thou art welcome to Baghdad’; then he gave me five dinars and said to his men, ‘For the love of Allah be generous to him.’ So each of them gave me a dinar and Ahmad said to me, ‘O Shaykh, what while thou abidest in Baghdad thou shalt have of us the like every time thou givest us to drink.’ Accordingly, I paid them frequent visits and good ceased not to come to me from the folk till, one day, reckoning up the profit I had made of them, I found it a thousand dinars and said to myself, 'The best thing thou canst do is to return to Egypt.' So I went to Ahmad's house and kissed his hand, and he said, 'What seekest thou?' Quoth I, 'I have a mind to depart'; and I repeated these two couplets,

'Sojourn of stranger, in whatever land, * Is like the castle based
upon the wind:
The breaths of breezes level all he raised. * And so on
homeward-way's the stranger's mind.'

I added, 'The caravan is about to start for Cairo and I wish to return to my people.' So he gave me a she-mule and an hundred dinars and said to me, 'I desire to send somewhat by thee, O Shaykh! Dost thou know the people of Cairo?' 'Yes,' answered I"; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Tenth Night,

She pursued, It bath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ahmad al-Danaf had given the water-carrier a she-mule and an hundred dinars and said to him, "I desire to send a trust by thee. Dost thou know the people of Cairo?" "I answered (quoth the water-carrier), 'Yes'; and he said, 'Take this letter and carry it to Ali Zaybak of Cairo and say to him, 'Thy Captain saluteth thee and he is now with the Caliph.' So I took the letter and journeyed back to Cairo, where I paid my debts and plied my water-carrying trade; but I have not delivered the letter, because I know not the abode of Mercury Ali." Quoth Ali, "O elder, be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear: I am that Ali, the first of the lads of Captain Ahmad: here with the letter!" So he gave him the missive and he opened it and read these two couplets,

"O adornment of beauties to thee write I * On a paper that
flies as the winds go by:
Could I fly, I had flown to their arms in desire, * But a bird
with cut wings; how shall ever he fly?"

“But after salutation from Captain Ahmad al-Danaf to the eldest of his sons, Mercury Ali of Cairo. Thou knowest that I tormented Salah al-Din the Cairene and befooled him till I buried him alive and reduced his lads to obey me, and amongst them Ali Kitf al-Jamal; and I am now become town-captain of Baghdad in the Divan of the Caliph who hath made me over-seer of the suburbs. An thou be still mindful of our covenant, come to me; haply thou shalt play some trick in Baghdad which may promote thee to the Caliph’s service, so he may appoint thee stipends and allowances and assign thee a lodging, which is what thou wouldst see and so peace be on thee.” When Ali read this letter, he kissed it and laying it on his head, gave the water-carrier ten dinars; after which he returned to his barracks and told his comrades and said to them, “I commend you one to other.” Then he changed all his clothes and, donning a travelling cloak and a tarboosh, took a case, containing a spear of bamboo-cane, four-and-twenty cubits long, made in several pieces, to fit into one another. Quoth his lieutenant, “Wilt thou go a journey when the treasury is empty?”; and quoth Ali, “When I reach Damascus I will send you what shall suffice you.” Then he set out and fared on, till he overtook a caravan about to start, whereof were the Shah-bandar, or Provost of the Merchants, and forty other traders. They had all loaded their beasts, except the Provost, whose loads lay upon the ground, and Ali heard his caravan-leader, who was a Syrian, say to the muleteers, “Bear a hand, one of you!” But they reviled him and abused him. Quoth Ali in himself, “None will suit me so well to travel withal as this leader.” Now Ali was beardless and well-favoured; so he went up to and saluted the leader who welcomed him and said, “What seekest thou?” Replied Ali, “O my uncle, I see thee alone with forty mule-loads of goods; but why hast thou not brought hands to help thee?” Rejoined the other, “O my son, I hired two lads and clothed them and put in each one’s pocket two hundred dinars; and they helped me till we came to the Dervishes’ Convent,[218] when they ran away.” Quoth Ali, “Whither are you bound?” and quoth the Syrian, “to Aleppo,” when Ali said, “I will lend thee a hand.” Accordingly they loaded the beasts and the Provost mounted his she-mule and they set out he rejoicing in Ali; and presently he loved him and made much of him and on this wise they fared on till nightfall, when they dismounted and ate and drank. Then came the time of sleep and Ali lay down on his side and made as if he slept; whereupon the Syrian stretched himself near him and Ali rose from his stead and sat down at the door of the merchant's pavilion. Presently the Syrian turned over and would have taken Ali in his arms, but found him not and said to himself, "Haply he hath promised another and he hath taken him; but I have the first right and another night I will keep him." Now Ali continued sitting at the door of the tent till nigh upon daybreak, when he returned and lay down near the Syrian, who found him by his side, when he awoke, and said to himself, "If I ask him where he hath been, he will leave me and go away." So he dissembled with him and they went on till they came to a forest, in which was a cave, where dwelt a rending lion. Now whenever a caravan passed, they would draw lots among themselves and him on whom the lot fell they would throw to the beast. So they drew lots and the lot fell not save upon the Provost of the Merchants. And lo! the lion cut off their way awaiting his prey, wherefore the Provost was sore distressed and said to the leader, "Allah disappoint the fortunes[219] of the far one and bring his journey to naught! I charge thee, after my death, give my loads to my children." Quoth Ali the Clever One, "What meaneth all this?" So they told him the case and he said, "Why do ye run from the tom-cat of the desert? I warrant you I will kill him." So the Syrian went to the Provost and told him of this and he said, "If he slay him, I will give him a thousand dinars," and said the other merchants, "We will reward him likewise one and all." With this Ali put off his mantle and there appeared upon him a suit of steel; then he took a chopper of steel[220] and opening it turned the screw; after which he went forth alone and standing in the road before the lion, cried out to him. The lion ran at him, but Ali of Cairo smote him between the eyes with his chopper and cut him in sunder, whilst the caravan-leader and the merchants looked on. Then said he to the leader, "Have no fear, O nuncle!" and the Syrian answered, saying, "O my son, I am thy servant for all future time." Then the Provost embraced him and kissed him between the eyes and gave him the thousand dinars, and each of the other merchants gave him twenty dinars. He deposited all the coin with the Provost and they slept that night till the morning, when they set out again, intending for Baghdad, and fared on till they came to the Lion's Clump and the Wady of Dogs, where lay a villain Badawi, a brigand and his tribe, who sallied forth on them. The folk fled from the highwaymen, and the Provost said, "My monies are lost!"; when, lo! up came Ali in a buff coat hung with bells, and bringing out his long lance, fitted the pieces together. Then he seized one of the Arab's horses and mounting it cried out to the Badawi Chief, saying, "Come out to fight me with spears!" Moreover he shook his bells and the Arab's mare took fright at the noise and Ali struck the Chief's spear and broke it. Then he smote him on the neck and cut off his head.[221] When the Badawin saw their chief fall, they ran at Ali, but he cried out, saying, "Allaho Akbar — God is Most Great!" — and, falling on them broke them and put them to flight. Then he raised the Chief's head on his spear-point and returned to the merchants, who rewarded him liberally and continued their journey, till they reached Baghdad. Thereupon Ali took his money from the Provost and committed it to the Syrian caravan-leader, saying, "When thou returnest to Cairo, ask for my barracks and give these monies to my deputy." Then he slept that night and on the morrow he entered the city and threading the streets enquired for Calamity Ahmad's quarters; but none would direct him thereto.[222] So he walked on, till he came to the square Al-Nafz, where he saw children at play, and amongst them a lad called Ahmad al-Lakít,[223] and said to himself, "O my Ali, thou shalt not get news of them but from their little ones." Then he turned and seeing a sweet-meat-seller bought Halwá of him and called to the children; but Ahmad al-Lakit drove the rest away and coming up to him, said, "What seekest thou?" Quoth Ali, "I had a son and he died and I saw him in a dream asking for sweetmeats: wherefore I have bought them and wish to give each child a bit." So saying, he gave Ahmad a slice, and he looked at it and seeing a dinar sticking to it, said "Begone! I am no catamite: seek another than I." Quoth Ali, "O my son, none but a sharp fellow taketh the hire, even as he is a sharp one who giveth it. I have sought all day for Ahmad al-Danaf's barrack, but none would direct me thereto; so this dinar is thine an thou wilt guide me thither." Quoth the lad, "I will run before thee and do thou keep up with me, till I come to the place, when I will catch up a pebble with my foot[224] and kick it against the door;

and so shalt thou know it." Accordingly he ran on and Ali after him, till they came to the place, when the boy caught up a pebble between his toes and kicked it against the door so as to make the place known. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Eleventh Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ahmad the Abortion had made known the place, Ali laid hold of him and would have taken the dinar from him, but could not; so he said to him, "Go: thou deservest largesse for thou art a sharp fellow, whole of wit and stout of heart. Inshallah, if I become a captain to the Caliph, I will make thee one of my lads." Then the boy made off and Ali Zaybak went up to the door and knocked; whereupon quoth Ahmad al-Danaf, "O doorkeeper, open the door; that is the knock of Quicksilver Ali the Cairene." So he opened the door and Ali entered and saluted with the salam Ahmad who embraced him, and the Forty greeted him. Then Calamity Ahmad gave him a suit of clothes, saying, "When the Caliph made me captain, he clothed my lads and I kept this suit[225] for thee." Then they seated him in the place of honour and setting on meat they ate well and drink they drank hard and made merry till the morning, when Ahmad said to Ali, "Beware thou walk not about the streets of Baghdad, but sit thee still in this barrack." Asked Ali, "Why so? Have I come hither to be shut up? No, I came to look about me and divert myself." Replied Ahmad, "O my son, think not that Baghdad be like Cairo. Baghdad is the seat of the Caliphate; sharpers abound therein and rogueries spring therefrom as worts spring out of earth." So Ali abode in the barrack three days when Ahmad said to him, "I wish to present thee to the Caliph, that he may assign thee an allowance." But he replied, "When the time cometh." So he let him go his own way. One day, as Ali sat in the barrack, his breast became straitened and his soul troubled and he said in himself, "Come, let us up and thread the ways of Baghdad and broaden my bosom." So he went out and walked from street to street, till he came to the middle bazar, where he entered a cook-shop and dined;[226] after which he went out to wash his hands. Presently he saw forty slaves, with felt bonnets and steel cutlasses, come walking, two by two; and last of all came Dalilah the

Wily, mounted on a she-mule, with a gilded helmet which bore a ball of polished steel, and clad in a coat of mail, and such like. Now she was returning from the Divan to the Khan of which she was portress; and when she espied Ali, she looked at him fixedly and saw that he resembled Calamity Ahmad in height and breadth. Moreover, he was clad in a striped Abá-cloak and a burnous, with a steel cutlass by his side and similar gear, while valour shone from his eyes, testifying in favour of him and not in disfavour of him. So she returned to the Khan and going in to her daughter, fetched a table of sand, and struck a geomantic figure, whereby she discovered that the stranger's name was Ali of Cairo and that his fortune overcame her fortune and that of her daughter. Asked Zaynab, "O my mother, what hath befallen thee that thou hast recourse to the sand-table?" Answered Dalilah, "O my daughter, I have seen this day a young man who resembleth Calamity Ahmad, and I fear lest he come to hear how thou didst strip Ahmad and his men and enter the Khan and play us a trick, in revenge for what we did with his chief and the forty; for methinks he has taken up his lodging in Al- Danaf's barrack." Zaynab rejoined, "What is this? Methinks thou hast taken his measure." Then she donned her fine clothes and went out into the streets. When the people saw her, they all made love to her and she promised and sware and listened and coquetted and passed from market to market, till she saw Ali the Cairene coming, when she went up to him and rubbed her shoulder against him. Then she turned and said "Allah give long life to folk of discrimination!" Quoth he, "How goodly is thy form! To whom dost thou belong?"; and quoth she, "To the gallant[227] like thee;" and he said, "Art thou wife or spinster?" "Married," said she. Asked Ali, "Shall it be in my lodging or thine? [228] and she answered, "I am a merchant's daughter and a merchant's wife and in all my life I have never been out of doors till to-day, and my only reason was that when I made ready food and thought to eat, I had no mind thereto without company. When I saw thee, love of thee entered my heart: so wilt thou deign solace my soul and eat a mouthful with me?" Quoth he, "Whoso is invited, let him accept." Thereupon she went on and he followed her from street to street, but presently he bethought himself and said, "What wilt thou do and thou a stranger? Verily 'tis said, 'Whoso doth whoredom in his strangerhood, Allah will send him back disappointed.’ But I will put her off from thee with fair words.” So he said to her, “Take this dinar and appoint me a day other than this;” and she said, “By the Mighty Name, it may not be but thou shalt go home with me as my guest this very day and I will take thee to fast friend.” So he followed her till she came to a house with a lofty porch and a wooden bolt on the door and said to him, “Open this lock.”[229] Asked he “Where is the key?”; and she answered, “’Tis lost.” Quoth he, “Whoso openeth a lock without a key is a knave whom it behoveth the ruler to punish, and I know not how to open doors without keys?”[230] With this she raised her veil and showed him her face, whereat he took one glance of eyes that cost him a thousand sighs. Then she let fall her veil on the lock and repeating over it the names of the mother of Moses, opened it without a key and entered. He followed her and saw swords and steel-weapons hanging up; and she put off her veil and sat down with him. Quoth he to himself, “Accomplish what Allah bath decreed to thee,” and bent over her, to take a kiss of her cheek; but she caught the kiss upon her palm, saying, “This beseemeth not but by night.” Then she brought a tray of food and wine, and they ate and drank; after which she rose and drawing water from the well, poured it from the ewer over his hands, whilst he washed them. Now whilst they were on this wise, she cried out and beat upon her breast, saying, “My husband had a signet-ring of ruby, which was pledged to him for five hundred dinars, and I put it on; but ’twas too large for me, so I straitened it with wax, and when I let down the bucket,[231] that ring must have dropped into the well. So turn thy face to the door, the while I doff my dress and go down into the well and fetch it.” Quoth Ali, “’Twere shame on me that thou shouldst go down there I being present; none shall do it save I.” So he put off his clothes and tied the rope about himself and she let him down into the well. Now there was much water therein and she said to him, “The rope is too short; loose thyself and drop down.” So he did himself loose from the rope and dropped into the water, in which he sank fathoms deep without touching bottom; whilst she donned her mantilla and taking his clothes, returned to her mother — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When is was the Seven Hundred and Twelfth Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ali of Cairo was in the well, Zaynab donned her mantilla and, taking his clothes, returned to her mother and said, "I have stripped Ali the Egyptian and cast him into the Emir Hasan's well, whence alas for his chance of escaping!"[232] Presently, the Emir Hasan, the master of the house, who had been absent at the Divan, came home and, finding the door open, said to his Syce, "Why didst thou not draw the bolt?" "O my lord," replied the groom, "indeed I locked it with my own hand." The Emir cried, "As my head liveth, some robber hath entered my house!" Then he went in and searched, but found none and said to the groom, "Fill the ewer, that I may make the Wuzu-ablution." So the man lowered the bucket into the well but, when he drew it up, he found it heavy and looking down, saw something therein sitting; whereupon he let it fall into the water and cried out, saying, "O my lord, an Ifrit came up to me out of the well!" Replied the Emir, "Go and fetch four doctors of the law, that they may read the Koran over him, till he go away." So he fetched the doctors and the Emir said to them, "Sit round this well and exorcise me this Ifrit." They did as he bade them; after which the groom and another servant lowered the bucket again and Ali clung to it and hid himself under it patiently till he came near the top, when he sprang out and landed among the doctors, who fell a-cuffing one another and crying out, "Ifrit! Ifrit!" The Emir looked at Ali and seeing him a young man, said to him, "Art thou a thief?" "No," replied Ali; "Then what dost thou in the well?" asked the Emir; and Ali answered, "I was asleep and dreamt a wet dream;[233] so I went down to the Tigris to wash myself and dived, whereupon the current carried me under the earth and I came up in this well." Quoth the other, "Tell the truth."[234] So Ali told him all that had befallen him, and the Emir gave him an old gown and let him go. He returned to Calamity Ahmad's lodging and related to him all that had passed. Quoth Ahmad, "Did I not warn thee that Baghdad is full of women who play tricks upon men?" And quoth Ali Kitf al-Jamal, "I conjure thee by the Mighty Name, tell me how it is that thou art the chief of the lads of Cairo and yet hast been stripped by a girl?" This was grievous to Ali and he repented him of not having followed Ahmad's advice. Then the Calamity gave him another suit of clothes and Hasan Shuman said to him, "Dost thou know the young person?" "No," replied Ali; and Hasan rejoined, "'Twas Zaynab, the daughter of Dalilah the Wily, the portress of the Caliph's Khan; and hast thou fallen into her toils, O Ali?" Quoth he, "Yes," and quoth Hasan, "O Ali, 'twas she who took thy Chief's clothes and those of all his men." "This is a disgrace to you all!" "And what thinkest thou to do?" "I purpose to marry her." "Put away that thought far from thee, and console thy heart of her." "O Hasan, do thou counsel me how I shall do to marry her." "With all my heart: if thou wilt drink from my hand and march under my banner, I will bring thee to thy will of her." "I will well." So Hasan made Ali put off his clothes; and, taking a cauldron heated therein somewhat as it were pitch, wherewith he anointed him and he became like unto a blackamoor slave. Moreover, he smeared his lips and cheeks and pencilled his eyes with red Kohl.[235] Then he clad him in a slave's habit and giving him a tray of kabobs and wine, said to him, "There is a black cook in the Khan who requires from the bazar only meat; and thou art now become his like; so go thou to him civilly and accost him in friendly fashion and speak to him in the blacks' lingo, and salute him, saying, ''Tis long since we met in the beer-ken.' He will answer thee, 'I have been too busy: on my hands be forty slaves, for whom I cook dinner and supper, besides making ready a tray for Dalilah and the like for her daughter Zaynab and the dogs' food.' And do thou say to him, 'Come, let us eat kabobs and lush swipes.'[236] Then go with him into the saloon and make him drunken and question him of his service, how many dishes and what dishes he hath to cook, and ask him of the dogs' food and the keys of the kitchen and the larder; and he will tell thee; for a man, when he is drunken, telleth all he would conceal were he sober. When thou hast done this drug him and don his clothes and sticking the two knives in thy girdle, take the vegetable-basket and go to the market and buy meat and greens, with which do thou return to the Khan and enter the kitchen and the larder and cook the food. Dish it up and put Bhang in it, so as to drug the dogs and the slaves and Dalilah and Zaynab and lastly serve up. When all are asleep, hie thee to the upper chamber and bring away every suit of clothes thou wilt find hanging there. And if thou have a mind to marry Zaynab, bring with thee also the forty carrier-pigeons." So Ali went to the Khan and going in to the cook, saluted him and said, "'Tis long since I have met thee in the beer-ken." The slave replied, "I have been busy cooking for the slaves and the dogs." Then he took him and making him drunken, questioned him of his work. Quoth the kitchener, "Every day I cook five dishes for dinner and the like for supper; and yesterday they sought of me a sixth dish,[237] yellow rice,[238] and a seventh, a mess of cooked pomegranate seed." Ali asked, "And what is the order of thy service?" and the slave answered, "First I serve up Zaynab's tray, next Dalilah's; then I feed the slaves and give the dogs their sufficiency of meat, and the least that satisfies them is a pound each." But, as fate would have it, he forgot to ask him of the keys. Then he drugged him and donned his clothes; after which he took the basket and went to the market. There he bought meat and greens. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Thirteenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ali of Cairo, after drugging the cook-slave with Bhang, took the two knives which he stuck in his belt and, carrying the vegetable-basket, went to the market where he bought meat and greens; and, presently returning to the Khan, he saw Dalilah seated at the gate, watching those who went in and came out, and the forty slaves with her, armed. So he heartened his heart and entered; but Dalilah knew him and said to him, "Back, O captain of thieves! Wilt thou play a trick on me in the Khan?" Thereupon he (dressed as a slave) turned and said to her, "What sayest thou, O portress?" She asked, "What hast thou done with the slave, our cook?; say me if thou hast killed or drugged him?" He answered, "What cook? Is there here another slave-cook than I?" She rejoined, "Thou liest, thou art Mercury Ali the Cairene." And he said to her, in slaves' patois, "O portress, are the Cairenes black or white? I will slave for you no longer." Then said the slaves to him, "What is the matter with thee, O our cousin?" Cried Dalilah, "This is none of your uncle's children, but Ali Zaybak the Egyptian; and meseems he hath either drugged your cousin or killed him." But they said, "Indeed this is our cousin Sa'adu'llah the cook;" and she, "Not so, 'tis Mercury Ali, and he hath dyed his skin." Quoth the sharper, "And who is Ali? I am Sa'adu'llah." Then she fetched unguent of proof, with which she anointed Ali's forearm and rubbed it; but the black did not come off; whereupon quoth the slaves "Let him go and dress us our dinner." Quoth Dalilah, "If he be indeed your cousin, he knoweth what you sought of him yesternight[239] and how many dishes he cooketh every day." So they asked him of this and he said, "Every day I cook you five dishes for the morning and the like for the evening meal, lentils and rice and broth and stew[240] and sherbet of roses; and yesternight ye sought of me a sixth dish and a seventh, to wit yellow rice and cooked pomegranate seed." And the slaves said "Right!" Then quoth Dalilah, "In with him and if he know the kitchen and the larder, he is indeed your cousin; but, if not, kill him." Now the cook had a cat which he had brought up, and whenever he entered the kitchen it would stand at the door and spring to his back, as soon as he went in. So, when Ali entered, the cat saw him and jumped on his shoulders; but he threw it off and it ran before him to the door of the kitchen and stopped there. He guessed that this was the kitchen door; so he took the keys and seeing one with traces of feathers thereon, knew it for the kitchen key and therewith opened the door. Then he entered and setting down the greens, went out again, led by the cat, which ran before him and stopped at another door. He guessed that this was the larder and seeing one of the keys marked with grease, knew it for the key and opened the door therewith; where-upon quoth the slaves, "O Dalilah, were he a stranger, he had not known the kitchen and the larder, nor had he been able to distinguish the keys thereof from the rest; verily, he is our cousin Sa'adu'llah." Quoth she, "He learned the places from the cat and distinguished the keys one from the other by the appearance: but this cleverness imposeth not upon me." Then he returned to the kitchen where he cooked the dinner and, carrying Zaynab's tray up to her room, saw all the stolen clothes hanging up; after which he went down and took Dalilah her tray and gave the slaves and the dogs their rations. The like he did at sundown and drugged Dalilah's food and that of Zaynab and the slaves. Now the doors of the Khan were opened and shut with the sun. So Ali went forth and cried out, saying, "O dwellers in the Khan, the watch is set and we have loosed the dogs; whoso stirreth out after this can blame none save himself." But he had delayed the dogs' supper and put poison therein; consequently when he set it before them, they ate of it and died while the slaves and Dalilah and Zaynab still slept under Bhang. Then he went up and took all the clothes and the carrier-pigeons and, opening the gate made off to the barrack of the Forty, where he found Hasan Shuman the Pestilence who said to him, "How hast thou fared?" Thereupon he told him what had passed and he praised him. Then he caused him to put off his clothes and boiled a decoction of herbs wherewith he washed him, and his skin became white as it was; after which he donned his own dress and going back to the Khan, clad the cook in the habit he had taken from him and made him smell to the counter-drug; upon which the slave awoke and going forth to the greengrocer's, bought vegetables and returned to the Khan. Such was the case with Al-Zaybak of Cairo; but as regards Dalilah the Wily, when the day broke, one of the lodgers in the Khan came out of his chamber and, seeing the gate open and the slaves drugged and the dogs dead, he went in to her and found her lying drugged, with a scroll on her neck and at her head a sponge steeped in the counter-drug. He set the sponge to her nostrils and she awoke and asked, "Where am I?" The merchant answered, "When I came down from my chamber I saw the gate of the Khan open and the dogs dead and found the slaves and thee drugged." So she took up the paper and read therein these words, "None did this deed save Ali the Egyptian." Then she awoke the slaves and Zaynab by making them smell the counter-Bhang and said to them, "Did I not tell you that this was Ali of Cairo?"; presently adding to the slaves, "But do ye conceal the matter." Then she said to her daughter, "How often have I warned thee that Ali would not forego his revenge? He hath done this deed in requital of that which thou diddest with him and he had it in his power to do with thee other than this thing; but he refrained therefrom out of courtesy and a desire that there should be love and friendship between us." So saying, she doffed her man's gear and donned woman's attire[241] and, tying the kerchief of peace about her neck, repaired to Ahmad al-Danaf's barrack. Now when Ali entered with the clothes and the carrier-pigeons, Hasan Shuman gave the hall-keeper the price of forty pigeons and he bought them and cooked them amongst the men. Presently there came a knock at the door and Ahmad said, "That is Dalilah's knock: rise and open to her, O hall-keeper.” So he admitted her and — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fourteenth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Dalilah was admitted, Hasan asked her, “What bringeth thee hither, O ill-omened old woman? Verily, thou and thy brother Zurayk the fishmonger are of a piece!”; and she answered, “O captain I am in the wrong and this my neck is at thy mercy; but tell me which of you it was that played me this trick?” Quoth Calamity Ahmad, “’Twas the first of my lads.” Rejoined Dalilah, “For the sake of Allah intercede with him to give me back the carrier-pigeons and what not, and thou wilt lay me under great obligation.” When Hasan heard this he said, “Allah requite thee, O Ali! Why didst thou cook the pigeons?”; and Ali answered, “I knew not that they were carrier-pigeons.” Then said Ahmad, “O hall-keeper bring us the cooked pigeons.” So he brought them and Dalilah took a piece and tasting it, said, “This is none of the carrier- pigeons’ flesh, for I fed them on grains of musk and their meat is become even as musk.” Quoth Shuman, “An thou desire to have the carrier-pigeons, comply with Ali’s will.” Asked she “What is that?” And Hasan answered, “He would have thee marry him to thy daughter Zaynab.” She said, “I have not command over her except of affection”; and Hasan said to Ali the Cairene “Give her the pigeons.” So he gave them to her, and she took them and rejoiced in them. Then quoth Hasan to her, “There is no help but thou return us a sufficient reply”; and Dalilah rejoined, “If it be indeed his wish to marry her, it availed nothing to play this clever trick upon us: it behoveth him rather to demand her in marriage of her mother’s brother and her guardian, Captain Zurayk, him who crieth out, saying, ‘Ho! a pound of fish for two farthings!’ and who hangeth up in his shop a purse containing two thousand dinars.” When the Forty heard this, they all rose and cried out, saying, “What manner of blather is this, O harlot? Dost thou wish to bereave us of our brother Ali of Cairo?” Then she returned to the Khan and said to her daughter, “Ali the Egyptian seeketh thee in marriage.” Whereat Zaynab rejoiced, for she loved him because of his chaste forbearance towards her,[242] and asked her mother what had passed. So she told her, adding, “I made it a condition that he should demand thy hand of thine uncle, so I might make him fall into destruction." Meanwhile Ali turned to his fellows and asked them, "What manner of man is this Zurayk?"; and they answered, "He was chief of the sharpers of Al-Irak land and could all but pierce mountains and lay hold upon the stars. He would steal the Kohl from the eye and, in brief, he had not his match for roguery; but he hath repented his sins and foresworn his old way of life and opened him a fishmonger's shop. And now he hath amassed two thousand dinars by the sale of fish and laid them in a purse with strings of silk, to which he hath tied bells and rings and rattles of brass, hung on a peg within the doorway. Every time he openeth his shop he suspendeth the said purse and crieth out, saying, 'Where are ye, O sharpers of Egypt, O prigs of Al-Irak, O tricksters of Ajam-land? Behold, Zurayk the fishmonger hath hung up a purse in front of his shop, and whoso pretendeth to craft and cunning, and can take it by sleight, it is his.' So the long fingered and greedy-minded come and try to take the purse, but cannot; for, whilst he frieth his fish and tendeth the fire, he layeth at his feet scone-like circles of lead; and whenever a thief thinketh to take him unawares and maketh a snatch at the purse he casteth at him a load of lead and slayeth him or doeth him a damage. So O Ali, wert thou to tackle him, thou wouldst be as one who jostleth a funeral cortège, unknowing who is dead;[243] for thou art no match for him, and we fear his mischief for thee. Indeed, thou hast no call to marry Zaynab, and he who leaveth a thing alone liveth without it." Cried Ali, "This were shame, O comrades; needs must I take the purse: but bring me a young lady's habit." So they brought him women's clothes and he clad himself therein and stained his hands with Henna, and modestly hung down his veil. Then he took a lamb and killing it, cut out the long intestine[244] which he cleaned and tied up below; moreover he filled it with the blood and bound it between his thighs; after which he donned petticoat-trousers and walking boots. He also made himself a pair of false breasts with birds' crops and filled them with thickened milk and tied round his hips and over his belly a piece of linen, which he stuffed with cotton, girding himself over all with a kerchief of silk well starched. Then he went out, whilst all who saw him exclaimed, "What a fine pair of hind cheeks!" Presently he saw an ass-driver coming, so he gave him a dinar and mounting, rode till he came to Zurayk's shop, where he saw the purse hung up and the gold glittering through it. Now Zurayk was frying fish, and Ali said, "O ass- man, what is that smell?" Replied he, "It's the smell of Zurayk's fish." Quoth Ali, "I am a woman with child and the smell harmeth me; go, fetch me a slice of the fish." So the donkey-boy said to Zurayk, "What aileth thee to fry fish so early and annoy pregnant women with the smell? I have here the wife of the Emir Hasan Sharr al-Tarik, and she is with child; so give her a bit of fish, for the babe stirreth in her womb. O Protector, O my God, avert from us the mischief of this day!" Thereupon Zurayk took a piece of fish and would have fried it, but the fire had gone out and he went in to rekindle it. Meanwhile Ali dismounted and sitting down, pressed upon the lamb's intestine till it burst and the blood ran out from between his legs. Then he cried aloud, saying, "O my back! O my side!" Whereupon the driver turned and seeing the blood running, said, "What aileth thee, O my lady?" Replied Ali, "I have miscarried"; where-upon Zurayk looked out and seeing the blood fled affrighted into the inner shop. Quoth the donkey-driver, "Allah torment thee, O Zurayk! The lady hath miscarried and thou art no match for her husband. Why must thou make a stench so early in the morning? I said to thee, 'Bring her a slice,' but thou wouldst not." Thereupon, he took his ass and went his way and, as Zurayk still did not appear, Ali put out his hand to the purse; but no sooner had he touched it than the bells and rattles and rings began to jingle and the gold to chink. Quoth Zurayk, who returned at the sound, "Thy perfidy hath come to light, O gallows-bird! Wilt thou put a cheat on me and thou in a woman's habit? Now take what cometh to thee!" And he threw a cake of lead at him, but it went agley and lighted on another; whereupon the people rose against Zurayk and said to him, "Art thou a trades-man or a swashbuckler? An thou be a tradesman, take down thy purse and spare the folk thy mischief." He replied, "Bismillah, in the name of Allah! On my head be it." As for Ali, he made off to the barrack and told Hasan Shuman what had happened, after which he put off his woman's gear and donning a groom's habit which was brought to him by his chief took a dish and five dirhams. Then he returned to Zurayk's shop and the fishmonger said to him, "What dost thou want, O my master?"[245] He showed him the dirhams and Zurayk would have given him of the fish in the tray, but he said, "I will have none save hot fish." So he set fish in the earthen pan and finding the fire dead, went in to relight it; whereupon Ali put out his hand to the purse and caught hold of the end of it. The rattles and rings and bells jingled and Zurayk said, "Thy trick hath not deceived me. I knew thee for all thou art disguised as a groom by the grip of thy hand on the dish and the dirhams." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fifteenth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ali of Egypt put out his hand to the purse, the bells and rings jingled and Zurayk said, "Thy trick hath not deceived me for all thou comest disguised as a groom I knew thee by the grip of thy hand on the dish and the dirhams!" So saying, he threw the lead at him, but he avoided it and it fell into the pan full of hot fish and broke it and overturned it, fat and all, upon the breast and shoulders of the Kazi, who was passing. The oil ran down inside his clothes to his privy parts and he cried out, "O my privities! What a sad pickle you are in! Alas, unhappy I! Who hath played me this trick?" Answered the people, "O our lord, it was some small boy that threw a stone into the pan: but for Allah's word, it had been worse." Then they turned and seeing the loaf of lead and that it was Zurayk who had thrown it, rose against him and said to him, "O Zurayk, this is not allowed of Allah! Take down the purse or it shall go ill for thee." Answered he, "I will take it down, Inshallah!" Meanwhile Ali returned to the barrack and told his comrades who cried, "Where is the purse?", all that had passed and they said, "Thou hast exhausted two- thirds of his cunning." Then he changed his groom's dress for the garb of a merchant and going out, met a snake-charmer, with a bag of serpents and a wallet containing his kit to whom said he, "O charmer, come and amuse my lads, and thou shalt have largesse." So he accompanied him to the barrack, where he fed him and drugging him with Bhang, doffed his clothes and put them on. Then he took the bags and repairing to Zurayk's shop began to play the reed-pipe. Quoth Zurayk, "Allah provide thee!" But Ali pulled out the serpents and cast them down before him; whereat the fishseller, who was afraid of snakes, fled from them into the inner shop. Thereupon Ali picked up the reptiles and, thrusting them back into the bag, stretched out his hand and caught hold of the end of the purse. The rings again rang and the bells and rattles jangled, and Zurayk cried, “Wilt thou never cease to play me tricks? Now thou feignest thyself a serpent-charmer!” So saying, he took up a piece of lead, and hurled it at Ali; but it missed him and fell on the head of a groom, who was passing by, following his master, a trooper, and knocked him down. Quoth the soldier, “Who felled him?”; and the folk said, “’Twas a stone fell from the roof.” So the soldier passed on and the people, seeing the piece of lead, went up to Zurayk and cried to him, “Take down the purse!”; and he said, “Inshallah, I will take it down this very night!” Ali ceased not to practice upon Zurayk till he had made seven different attempts but without taking the purse. Then he returned the snake-charmer his clothes and kit and gave him due benevolence; after which he went back to Zurayk’s shop and heard him say, “If I leave the purse here to-night, he will dig through the shop-wall and take it; I will carry it home with me.” So he arose and shut the shop; then he took down the purse and putting it in his bosom set out home, till he came near his house, when he saw a wedding in a neighbour’s lodging and said to himself, “I will hie me home and give my wife the purse and don my fine clothes and return to the marriage.” And Ali followed him. Now Zurayk had married a black girl, one of the freed women of the Wazir Ja’afar and she had borne him a son, whom he named Abdallah, and he had promised her to spend the money in the purse on the occasion of the boy’s circumcision and of his marriage- procession. So he went into his house and, as he entered, his wife saw that his face was overcast and asked him, “What hath caused thy sadness?” Quoth he, “Allah hath afflicted me this day with a rascal who made seven attempts to get the purse, but without avail;” and quoth she, “Give it to me, that I may lay it up against the boy’s festival-day.” (Now Ali, who had followed him lay hidden in a closet whence he could see and hear all.) So he gave her the purse and changed his clothes, saying, “Keep the purse safely, O Umm Abdallah, for I am going to the wedding.” But she said, “Take thy sleep awhile.” So he lay down and fell asleep. Presently, Ali rose and going on tiptoe to the purse, took it and went to the house of the wedding and stood there, looking on at the fun. Now meanwhile, Zurayk dreamt that he saw a bird fly away with the purse and awaking in affright, said to his wife, "Rise; look for the purse." So she looked and finding it gone, buffeted her face and said, "Alas the blackness of thy fortune, O Umm Abdallah! A sharker hath taken the purse." Quoth Zurayk, "By Allah it can be none other than rascal Ali who hath plagued me all day! He hath followed me home and seized the purse; and there is no help but that I go and get it back." Quoth she, "Except thou bring it, I will lock on thee the door and leave thee to pass the night in the street." So he went up to the house of the wedding, and seeing Ali looking on, said to himself, "This is he who took the purse; but he lodgeth with Ahmad al-Danaf." So he forewent him to the barrack and, climbing up at the back, dropped down into the saloon, where he found every one asleep. Presently there came a rap at the door and Zurayk asked, "Who is there!" "Ali of Cairo," answered the knocker; and Zurayk said, "Hast thou brought the purse?" So Ali thought it was Hasan Shuman and replied, "I have brought it;[246] open the door." Quoth Zurayk, "Impossible that I open to thee till I see the purse; for thy chief and I have laid a wager about it." Said Ali, "Put out thy hand." So he put out his hand through the hole in the side-door and Ali laid the purse in it; whereupon Zurayk took it and going forth, as he had come in, returned to the wedding. Ali stood for a long while at the door, but none opened to him; and at last he gave a thundering knock that awoke all the men and they said, "That is Ali of Cairo's peculiar rap." So the hall-keeper opened to him and Hasan Shuman said to him, "Hast thou brought the purse?" Replied Ali, "Enough of jesting, O Shuman: didst thou not swear that thou wouldest not open to me till I showed thee the purse, and did I not give it thee through the hole in the side door? And didst thou not say to me, 'I am sworn never to open the door till thou show me the purse?'" Quoth Hasan, "By Allah, 'twas not I who took it, but Zurayk!" Quoth Ali, "Needs must I get it again," and repaired to the house of the wedding, where he heard the buffoon[247] say, "Bravo,[248] O Abu Abdallah! Good luck to thee with thy son!" Said Ali, "My luck is in the ascendant," and going to the fishmonger's lodging, climbed over the back wall of the house and found his wife asleep. So he drugged her with Bhang and clad himself in her clothes. Then he took the child in his arms and went round, searching, till he found a palm-leaf basket containing buns,[249] which Zurayk of his niggardliness, had kept from the Greater Feast. Presently, the fishmonger returned and knocked at the door, whereupon Ali imitated his wife's voice and asked, "Who is at the door?" "Abu Abdallah," answered Zurayk and Ali said, "I swore that I would not open the door to thee, except thou broughtest back the purse." Quoth the fish-monger, "I have brought it." Cried Ali, "Here with it into my hand before I open the door;" and Zurayk answered, saying, "Let down the basket and take it therein." So Sharper Ali let down the basket and the other put the purse therein, whereupon Ali took it and drugged the child. Then he aroused the woman and making off by the back way as he had entered, returned with the child and the purse and the basket of cakes to the barrack and showed them all to the Forty, who praised his dexterity. Thereupon he gave them cakes, which they ate, and made over the boy to Hasan Shuman, saying, "This is Zurayk's child; hide it by thee." So he hid it and fetching a lamb, gave it to the hall-keeper who cooked it whole, wrapped in a cloth, and laid it out shrouded as it were a dead body. Meanwhile Zurayk stood awhile, waiting at the door, then gave a knock like thunder and his wife said to him, "Hast thou brought the purse?" He replied, "Didst thou not take it up in the basket thou diddest let down but now?"; and she rejoined, "I let no basket down to thee, nor have I set eyes on the purse." Quoth he, "By Allah the sharper hath been beforehand with me and hath taken the purse again!" Then he searched the house and found the basket of cakes gone and the child missing and cried out, saying, "Alas, my child!" Where-upon the woman beat her breast and said, "I and thee to the Wazir, for none hath killed my son save this sharper, and all because of thee." Cried Zurayk, "I will answer for him." So he tied the kerchief of truce about his neck and going to Ahmad al-Danaf's lodging, knocked at the door. The hall- keeper admitted him and as he entered Hasan Shuman asked him, "What bringeth thee here?" He answered, "Do ye intercede with Ali the Cairene to restore me my child and I will yield to him the purse of gold." Quoth Hasan, "Allah requite thee, O Ali! Why didst thou not tell me it was his child?" "What hath befallen him?" cried Zurayk, and Hasan replied, "We gave him raisins to eat, and he choked and died and this is he."

Quoth Zurayk “Alas, my son! What shall I say to his mother?” Then he rose and opening the shroud, saw it was a lamb barbecued and said, “Thou makest sport of me, O Ali!” Then they gave him the child and Calamity Ahmad said to him, “Thou didst hang up the purse, proclaiming that it should be the property of any sharper who should be able to take it, and Ali hath taken it; so ’tis the very property of our Cairene.” Zurayk answered “I make him a present of it;” but Ali said to him, “Do thou accept it on account of thy niece Zaynab.” And Zurayk replied, “I accept it.” Then quoth the Forty, “We demand of thee Zaynab in marriage for Ali of Cairo;” but quoth he, “I have no control over her save of kindness.” Hasan asked, “Dost thou grant our suit?”; and he answered, “Yes, I will grant her in marriage to him who can avail to her mahr or marriage-settlement.” “And what is her dowry?” enquired Hasan; and Zurayk replied, “She hath sworn that none shall mount her breast save the man who bringeth her the robe of Kamar, daughter of Azariah the Jew and the rest of her gear.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Sixteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Zurayk replied to Shuman, “She hath sworn that none shall ride astraddle upon her breast save the man who bringeth her the clothes of Kamar, daughter of Azariah the Jew and her crown and girdle and pantoufle[250] of gold,” Ali cried, “If I do not bring her the clothes this very night, I renounce my claim to her.” Rejoined Zurayk, “O Ali, thou art a dead man if thou play any of thy pranks on Kamar.” “Why so?” asked Ali and the other answered, “Her father, Jew Azariah, is a skilful, wily, perfidious magician who hath the Jinn at his service. He owneth without the city a castle, whose walls are one brick of gold and one of silver and which is visible to the folk only whilst he is therein: when he goeth forth, it disappeareth. He brought his daughter this dress I speak of from an enchanted treasure, and every day he layeth it in a charger of gold and, opening the windows of the palace, crieth out, ‘Where are the sharpers of Cairo, the prigs of Al-Irak, the master-thieves of Ajam-land? Whoso prevaileth to take this dress, ’tis his.’ So all the long- fingered ones essayed the adventure, but failed to take it, and he turned them by his magic into apes and asses." But Ali said, "I will assuredly take it, and Zaynab shall be displayed therein."[251] So he went to the shop of the Jew and found him a man of stern and forbidding aspect, seated with scales and stone-weights and gold and silver and nests of drawers and so forth before him, and a she-mule tethered hard by. Presently he rose and shutting his shop, laid the gold and silver in two purses, which he placed in a pair of saddle-bags and set on the she-mule's back. Then he mounted and rode till he reached the city-outskirts followed, without his knowledge, by Ali, when he took out some dust from a pocket-purse and, muttering over it, sprinkled it upon the air. No sooner had he done this than sharper Ali saw a castle which had not its like, and the Jew mounted the steps upon his beast which was a subject Jinni; after which he dismounted and taking the saddle-bags off her back, dismissed the she-mule and she vanished. Then he entered the castle and sat down. Presently, he arose and opening the lattices, took a wand of gold, which he set up in the open window and, hanging thereto a golden charger by chains of the same metal, laid in it the dress, whilst Ali watched him from behind the door, and presently he cried out, saying, "Where are the sharpers of Cairo? Where are the prigs of Al-Irak, the master-thieves of the Ajam-land? Whoso can take this dress by his sleight, 'tis his!" Then he pronounced certain magical words and a tray of food spread itself before him. He ate and conjured a second time, whereupon the tray disappeared; and yet a third time, when a table of wine was placed between his hands and he drank. Quoth Ali, "I know not how I am to take the dress except if he be drunken." Then he stole up behind the Jew whinger in grip; but the other turned and conjured, saying to his hand, "Hold with the sword;" whereupon Ali's right arm was held and abode half-way in the air hending the hanger. He put out his left hand to the weapon, but it also stood fixed in the air, and so with his right foot, leaving him standing on one foot. Then the Jew dispelled the charm from him and Ali became as before. Presently Azariah struck a table of sand and found that the thief's name was Mercury Ali of Cairo; so he turned to him and said, "Come nearer! Who art thou and what dost thou here?" He replied, "I am Ali of Cairo, of the band of Ahmad al-Danaf. I sought the hand of Zaynab, daughter of Dalilah the Wily, and she demanded thy daughter's dress to her dowry; so do thou give it to me and become a Moslem, an thou wouldst save thy life." Rejoined the Jew, "After thy death! Many have gone about to steal the dress, but failed to take it from me; wherefore an thou deign be advised, thou wilt begone and save thyself; for they only seek the dress of thee, that thou mayst fall into destruction; and indeed, had I not seen by geomancy that thy fortune overrideth my fortunes I had smitten thy neck." Ali rejoiced to hear that his luck overcame that of the Jew and said to him, "There is no help for it but I must have the dress and thou must become a True Believer." Asked the Jew, "Is this thy will and last word," and Ali answered, "Yes." So the Jew took a cup and filling it with water, conjured over it and said to Ali, "Come forth from this shape of a man into the form of an ass." Then he sprinkled him with the water and straightway he became a donkey, with hoofs and long ears, and fell to braying after the manner of asinines. The Jew drew round him a circle which became a wall over against him, and drank on till the morning, when he said to Ali, "I will ride thee to-day and give the she-mule a rest." So he locked up the dress, the charger, the rod and the charms in a cupboard[252] and conjured over Ali, who followed him. Then he set the saddle-bags on his back and mounting, fared forth of the Castle, whereupon it disappeared from sight and he rode into Baghdad, till he came to his shop, where he alighted and emptied the bags of gold and silver into the trays before him. As for Ali, he was tied up by the shop- door, where he stood in his asinine form hearing and understanding all that passed, without being able to speak. And behold, up came a young merchant with whom fortune had played the tyrant and who could find no easier way of earning his livelihood than water-carrying. So he brought his wife's bracelets to the Jew and said to him, "Give me the price of these bracelets, that I may buy me an ass." Asked the Jew, "What wilt thou do with him?"; and the other answered, "O master, I mean to fetch water from the river on his back, and earn my living thereby." Quoth the Jew, "Take this ass of mine." So he sold him the bracelets and received the ass-shaped Ali of Cairo in part payment and carried him home. Quoth Ali to himself, "If the Ass-man clap the pannel on thee and load thee with water-skins and go with thee half a score journeys a day he will ruin thy health and thou wilt die." So, when the water-carrier's wife came to bring him his fodder, he butted her with his head and she fell on her back; whereupon he sprang on her and smiting her brow with his mouth, put out and displayed that which his begetter left him. She cried aloud and the neighbours came to her assistance and beat him and raised him off her breast. When her husband the intended water-carrier came home, she said to him, “Now either divorce me or return the ass to his owner.” He asked, “What hath happened?”; and she answered, “This is a devil in the guise of a donkey. He sprang upon me, and had not the neighbours beaten him off my bosom he had done with me a foul thing.” So he carried the ass back to the Jew, who said to him, “Wherefore hast thou brought him back?” and he replied, “He did a foul thing with my wife.” So the Jew gave him his money again and he went away; and Azariah said to Ali, “Hast thou recourse to knavery, unlucky wretch that thou art, in order that” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Seventeenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the water-carrier brought back the ass, its Jew owner returned to him the monies and turning to Ali of Cairo said, “Hast thou recourse to knavery, unlucky wretch that thou art, in order that he may return thee to me? But since it pleaseth thee to be an ass, I will make thee a spectacle and a laughing stock to great and small.” Then he mounted him and rode till he came without the city, when he brought out the ashes in powder and conjuring over it sprinkled it upon the air and immediately the Castle appeared. He entered and taking the saddle-bags off the ass’s back set up the rod and hung to it the charger wherein were the clothes proclaiming aloud, “Where be the clever ones of all quarters who may avail to take this dress?” Then he conjured as before and meat was set before him and he ate and then wine when he drank; after which he took a cup of water and muttering certain words thereover, sprinkled it on the ass Ali, saying, “Quit this form and return to thy former shape.” Ali straightway became a man once more and Azariah said to him, “O Ali, take good advice and be content with my mischief. Thou hast no call to marry Zaynab nor to take my daughter’s dress, for ’tis no easy matter for thee: so leave greed and ‘twill be better for thee; else will I turn thee into a bear or an ape or set on thee an Ifrit, who will cast thee behind the Mountain Kaf." He replied, "I have engaged to take the dress and needs must I have it and thou must Islamize or I will slay thee." Rejoined the Jew, "O Ali, thou art like a walnut; unless it be broken it cannot be eaten." Then he took a cup of water and conjuring over it, sprinkled Ali with somewhat thereof, saying, "Take thou shape of bear;" whereupon he instantly became a bear and the Jew put a collar about his neck, muzzled him and chained him to a picket of iron. Then he sat down and ate and drank, now and then throwing him a morsel of his orts and emptying the dregs of the cup over him, till the morning, when he rose and laid by the tray and the dress and conjured over the bear, which followed him to the shop. There the Jew sat down and emptied the gold and silver into the trays before Ali, after binding him by the chain; and the bear there abode seeing and comprehending but not able to speak. Presently up came a man and a merchant, who accosted the Jew and said to him, "O Master, wilt thou sell me yonder bear? I have a wife who is my cousin and is sick; and they have prescribed for her to eat bears' flesh and anoint herself with bears' grease." At this the Jew rejoiced and said to himself, "I will sell him to this merchant, so he may slaughter him and we be at peace from him." And Ali also said in his mind, "By Allah, this fellow meaneth to slaughter me; but deliverance is with the Almighty." Then said the Jew, "He is a present from me to thee." So the merchant took him and carried him to the butcher, to whom he said, "Bring thy tools and company me." The butcher took his knives and followed the merchant to his house, where he bound the beast and fell to sharpening his blade: but, when he went up to him to slaughter him, the bear escaped from his hands and rising into the air, disappeared from sight between heaven and earth; nor did he cease flying till he alighted at the Jew's castle. Now the reason thereof was on this wise. When the Jew returned home, his daughter questioned him of Ali and he told her what had happened; whereupon she said, "Summon a Jinni and ask him of the youth, whether he be indeed Mercury Ali or another who seeketh to put a cheat on thee." So Azariah called a Jinni by conjurations and questioned him of Ali; and he replied, "'Tis Ali of Cairo himself. The butcher hath pinioned him and whetted his knife to slaughter him." Quoth the Jew, "Go, snatch him up and bring him hither, ere the butcher cut his throat." So the Jinni flew off and, snatching Ali out of the butcher's hands, bore him to the palace and set him down before the Jew, who took a cup of water and conjuring over it, sprinkled him therewith, saying, "Return to thine own shape." And he straightway became a man again as before. The Jew's daughter Kamar,[253] seeing him to be a handsome young man, fell in love with him and he fell in love with her; and she said to him, "O unlucky one, why dost thou go about to take my dress, enforcing my father to deal thus with thee?" Quoth he, "I have engaged to get it for Zaynab the Coney-catcher, that I may wed her therewith." And she said, "Others than thou have played pranks with my father to get my dress, but could not win to it," presently adding, "So put away this thought from thee." But he answered, "Needs must I have it, and thy father must become a Moslem, else I will slay him." Then said the Jew, "See, O my daughter, how this unlucky fellow seeketh his own destruction," adding, "Now I will turn thee into a dog." So he took a cup graven with characters and full of water and conjuring over it, sprinkled some of it upon Ali, saying, "Take thou form of dog." Whereupon he straight-way became a dog, and the Jew and his daughter drank together till the morning, when the father laid up the dress and charger and mounted his mule. Then he conjured over the dog, which followed him, as he rode towards the town, and all dogs barked at Ali[254] as he passed, till he came to the shop of a broker, a seller of second-hand goods, who rose and drove away the dogs, and Ali lay down before him. The Jew turned and looked for him, but finding him not, passed onwards. Presently, the broker shut up his shop and went home, followed by the dog, which, when his daughter saw enter the house, she veiled her face and said, "O my papa, dost thou bring a strange man in to me?" He replied, "O my daughter, this is a dog." Quoth she, "Not so, 'tis Ali the Cairene, whom the Jew Azariah hath enchanted;" and she turned to the dog and said to him, "Art not Ali of Cairo?" And he signed to her with his head, "Yes." Then her father asked her, "Why did the Jew enchant him?"; and she answered, "Because of his daughter Kamar's dress; but I can release him." Said the broker, "An thou canst indeed do him this good office, now is the time," and she, "If he will marry me, I will release him." And he signed to her with his head, "Yes."

So she took a cup of water, graven with certain signs and conjuring over it, was about to sprinkle Ali therewith, when lo and behold! she heard a great cry and the cup fell from her hand. She turned and found that it was her father's handmaid, who had cried out; and she said to her, "O my mistress, is't thus thou keepest the covenant between me and thee? None taught thee this art save I, and thou didst agree with me that thou wouldst do naught without consulting me and that whoso married thee should marry me also, and that one night should be mine and one night thine." And the broker's daughter said, "'Tis well." When the broker heard the maid's words, he asked his daughter, "Who taught the maid?"; and she answered, "O my papa, enquire of herself." So he put the question and she replied, "Know, O my lord, that, when I was with Azariah the Jew, I used to spy upon him and listen to him, when he performed his gramarye; and when he went forth to his shop in Baghdad, I opened his books and read in them, till I became skilled in the Cabbala-science. One day, he was warm with wine and would have me lie with him, but I objected, saying, 'I may not grant thee this except thou become a Moslem.' He refused and I said to him, 'Now for the Sultan's market.'[255] So he sold me to thee and I taught my young mistress, making it a condition with her that she should do naught without my counsel, and that whoso might wed her should wed me also, one night for me and one night for her." Then she took a cup of water and conjuring over it, sprinkled the dog therewith; saying, "Return thou to form of man." And he straightway was restored to his former shape; whereupon the broker saluted him with the salam and asked him the reason of his enchantment. So Ali told him all that had passed — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Eighteenth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the broker, having saluted Ali of Cairo with the salam, asked him the reason of his enchantment and what had befallen him; and he answered by telling him all that had passed, when the broker said to him, "Will not my daughter and the handmaid suffice thee?" but he answered, "Needs must I have Zaynab also." Now suddenly there came a rap at the door and the maid said, "Who is at the door?" The knocker replied, “Kamar, daughter of Azariah the Jew; say me, is Ali of Cairo with you?” Replied the broker’s daughter, “O thou daughter of a dog! If he be with us, what wilt thou with him? Go down, O maid, and open to her.” So the maid let her in, and when she looked upon Ali and he upon her, he said, “What bringeth thee hither O dog’s daughter?” Quoth she, “I testify that there is no god but the God and I testify that Mohammed is the Apostle of God.” And, having thus Islamised, she asked him, “Do men in the Faith of Al-Islam give marriage portions to women or do women dower men?” Quoth he, “Men endow women.” “Then,” said she, “I come and dower myself for thee, bringing thee, as my marriage-portion, my dress together with the rod and charger and chains and the head of my father, the enemy of thee and the foeman of Allah.” And she threw down the Jew’s head before him. Now the cause of her slaying her sire was as follows. On the night of his turning Ali into a dog, she saw, in a dream, a speaker who said to her, “Become a Moslemah.” She did so; and as soon as she awoke next morning she expounded Al-Islam to her father who refused to embrace the Faith; so she drugged him with Bhang and killed him. As for Ali, he took the gear and said to the broker, “Meet we to-morrow at the Caliph’s Divan, that I may take thy daughter and the handmaid to wife.” Then he set out rejoicing, to return to the barrack of the Forty. On his way he met a sweetmeat seller, who was beating hand upon hand and saying, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Folk’s labour hath waxed sinful and man is active only in fraud!” Then said he to Ali, “I conjure thee, by Allah, taste of this confection!” So Ali took a piece and ate it and fell down senseless, for there was Bhang therein; whereupon the sweetmeat-seller seized the dress and the charger and the rest of the gear and thrusting them into the box where he kept his sweetmeats hoisted it up and made off. Presently he met a Kazi, who called to him, saying, “Come hither, O sweet-meat seller!” So he went up to him and setting down his sack laid the tray of sweetmeats upon it and asked, “What dost thou want?” “Halwá and dragées,[256] “ answered the Kazi and, taking some in his hand, said, “Both of these are adulterated.” Then he brought out sweetmeats from his breast-pocket[257] and gave them to the sweetmeat-seller, saying, “Look at this fashion; how excellent it is! Eat of it and make the like of it." So he ate and fell down senseless, for the sweetmeats were drugged with Bhang, whereupon the Kazi bundled him into the sack and made off with him, charger and chest and all, to the barrack of the Forty. Now the Judge in question was Hasan Shuman and the reason of this was as follows. When Ali had been gone some days in quest of the dress and they heard no news of him, Calamity Ahmad said to his men, "O lads, go and seek for your brother Ali of Cairo." So they sallied forth in quest of him and among the rest Hasan Shuman the Pestilence, disguised in a Kazi's gear. He came upon the sweetmeat-seller and, knowing him for Ahmad al-Lakit[258] suspected him of having played some trick upon Ali; so he drugged him and did as we have seen. Mean-while, the other Forty fared about the streets and highways making search in different directions, and amongst them Ali Kitf al-Jamal, who espying a crowd, made towards the people and found the Cairene Ali lying drugged and senseless in their midst. So he revived him and he came to himself and seeing the folk flocking around him asked, "Where am I?" Answered Ali Camel-shoulder and his comrades, "We found thee lying here drugged but know not who drugged thee." Quoth Ali, "'Twas a certain sweetmeat-seller who drugged me and took the gear from me; but where is he gone?" Quoth his comrades, "We have seen nothing of him; but come, rise and go home with us." So they returned to the barrack, where they found Ahmad al-Danaf, who greeted Ali and enquired if he had brought the dress. He replied, "I was coming hither with it and other matters, including the Jew's head, when a sweetmeat-seller met me and drugged me with Bhang and took them from me." Then he told him the whole tale ending with, "If I come across that man of goodies again, I will requite him." Presently Hasan Shuman came out of a closet and said to him, "Hast thou gotten the gear, O Ali?" So he told him what had befallen him and added, "If I know whither the rascal is gone and where to find the knave, I would pay him out. Knowest thou whither he went?" Answered Hasan, "I know where he is," and opening the door of the closet, showed him the sweetmeat-seller within, drugged and senseless. Then he aroused him and he opened his eyes and finding himself in presence of Mercury Ali and Calamity Ahmad and the Forty, started up and said, "Where am I and who hath laid hands on me?” Replied Shuman, “’Twas I laid hands on thee;” and Ali cried, “O perfidious wretch, wilt thou play thy pranks on me?” And he would have slain him: but Hasan said to him, “Hold thy hand for this fellow is become thy kinsman.” “How my kinsman?” quoth Ali; and quoth Hasan, “This is Ahmad al- Lakit son of Zaynab’s sister.” Then said Ali to the prisoner, “Why didst thou thus, O Lakit?” and he replied, “My grandmother, Dalilah the Wily, bade me do it; only because Zurayk the fishmonger fore-gathered with the old woman and said, ‘Mercury Ali of Cairo is a sharper and a past master in knavery, and he will certainly slay the Jew and bring hither the dress.’ So she sent for me and said to me, ‘O Ahmad, dost thou know Ali of Cairo?’ Answered I, ‘Indeed I do and ’twas I directed him to Ahmad al-Danaf’s lodging when he first came to Baghdad.’ Quoth she, ‘Go and set thy nets for him, and if he have brought back the gear, put a cheat on him and take it from him.’ So I went round about the highways of the city, till I met a sweetmeat-seller and buying his clothes and stock-in-trade and gear for ten dinars, did what was done.” Thereupon quoth Ali, “Go back to thy grandmother and Zurayk, and tell them that I have brought the gear and the Jew’s head and say to them, ‘Meet me to-morrow at the Caliph’s Divan, there to receive Zaynab’s dowry.’ “ And Calamity Ahmad rejoiced in this and said, “We have not wasted our pains in rearing thee, O Ali!” Next morning Ali took the dress, the charger, the rod and the chains of gold, together with the head of Azariah the Jew mounted on a pike, and went up, accompanied by Ahmad al-Danaf and the Forty, to the Divan, where they kissed ground before the Caliph — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Nineteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ali the Cairene went up to the Caliph’s Divan, accompanied by his uncle Ahmad al-Danaf and his lads they kissed ground before the Caliph who turned and seeing a youth of the most valiant aspect, enquired of Calamity Ahmad concerning him and he replied, “O Commander of the Faithful, this is Mercury Ali the Egyptian captain of the brave boys of Cairo, and he is the first of my lads.” And the Caliph loved him for the valour that shone from between his eyes, testifying for him and not against him. Then Ali rose; and, casting the Jew's head down before him, said, "May thine every enemy be like this one, O Prince of True Believers!" Quoth Al-Rashid, "Whose head is this?"; and quoth Ali, "'Tis the head of Azariah the Jew." "Who slew him?" asked the Caliph. So Ali related to him all that had passed, from first to last, and the Caliph said, "I had not thought thou wouldst kill him, for that he was a sorcerer." Ali replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, my Lord made me prevail to his slaughter." Then the Caliph sent the Chief of Police to the Jew's palace, where he found him lying headless; so he laid the body on a bier,[259] and carried it to Al-Rashid, who commanded to burn it. Whereat, behold, up came Kamar and kissing the ground before the Caliph, informed him that she was the daughter of Jew Azariah and that she had become a Moslemah. Then she renewed her profession of Faith before the Commander of the Faithful and said to him "Be thou my intercessor with Sharper Ali that he take me to wife." She also appointed him her guardian to consent to her marriage with the Cairene, to whom he gave the Jew's palace and all its contents, saying, "Ask a boon of me." Quoth Ali, "I beg of thee to let me stand on thy carpet and eat of thy table;" and quoth the Caliph, "O Ali, hast thou any lads?" He replied, "I have forty lads; but they are in Cairo." Rejoined the Caliph, "Send to Cairo and fetch them hither," presently adding, "But, O Ali, hast thou a barrack for them?" "No," answered Ali; and Hasan Shuman said, "I make him a present of my barrack with all that is therein, O Commander of the Faithful." However, the Caliph retorted, saying, "Thy lodging is thine own, O Hasan;" and he bade his treasurer give the court architect ten thousand dinars, that he might build Ali a hall with four daïses and forty sleeping-closets for his lads. Then said he, "O Ali, hast thou any further wish, that we may command its fulfilment?"; and said Ali, "O King of the age, be thou my intercessor with Dalilah the Wily that she give me her daughter Zaynab to wife and take the dress and gear of Azariah's girl in lieu of dower." Dalilah accepted the Caliph's intercession and accepted the charger and dress and what not, and they drew up the marriage contracts between Ali and Zaynab and Kamar, the Jew's daughter and the broker's daughter and the handmaid. Moreover, the Caliph assigned him a solde with a table morning and evening, and stipends and allowances for fodder; all of the most liberal. Then Ali the Cairene fell to making ready for the wedding festivities and, after thirty days, he sent a letter to his comrades in Cairo, wherein he gave them to know of the favours and honours which the Caliph had bestowed upon him and said, “I have married four maidens and needs must ye come to the wedding.” So, after a reasonable time the forty lads arrived and they held high festival; he homed them in his barrack and entreated them with the utmost regard and presented them to the Caliph, who bestowed on them robes of honour and largesse. Then the tiring-women displayed Zaynab before Ali in the dress of the Jew’s daughter, and he went in unto her and found her a pearl unthridden and a filly by all save himself unridden. Then he went in unto the three other maidens and found them accomplished in beauty and loveliness. After this it befel that Ali of Cairo was one night on guard by the Caliph who said to him, “I wish thee O Ali, to tell me all that hath befallen thee from first to last with Dalilah the Wily and Zaynab the Coney-catcher and Zurayk the Fishmonger.” So Ali related to him all his adventures and the Commander of the Faithful bade record them and lay them up in the royal muniment-rooms. So they wrote down all that had befallen him and kept it in store with other histories for the people of Mohammed the Best of Men. And Ali and his wives and comrades abode in all solace of life, and its joyance, till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights and Sunderer of Societies; and Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) is All-knowing![260] And also men relate the tale of

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ARDASHIR AND HAYAT AL-NUFUS.[261]

There was once in the city of Shíráz a mighty King called Sayf al-A'azam Shah, who had grown old, without being blessed with a son. So he summoned the physicists and physicians and said to them, "I am now in years and ye know my case and the state of the kingdom and its ordinance; and I fear for my subjects after me; for that up to this present I have not been vouchsafed a son." Thereupon they replied, "We will compound thee a somewhat of drugs wherein shall be efficacy, if it please Almighty Allah!" So they mixed him drugs, which he used and knew his wife carnally, and she conceived by leave of the Most High Lord, who saith to a thing, "Be," and it becometh. When her months were accomplished, she gave birth to a male child like the moon, whom his father named Ardashir,[262] and he grew up and throve and applied himself to the study of learning and letters, till he attained the age of fifteen. Now there was in Al-Irak a King called Abd al-Kádir who had a daughter, by name Hayát al-Nufús, and she was like the rising full moon, but she had an hatred for men and the folk very hardly dared name mankind in her presence. The Kings of the Chosroës had sought her in marriage of her sire; but, when he spoke with her thereof, she said, "Never will I do this; and if thou force me thereto, I will slay myself." Now Prince Ardashir heard of her fame and fell in love with her and told his father who, seeing his case, took pity on him and promised him day by day that he should marry her. So he despatched his Wazir to demand her in wedlock, but King Abd al-Kadir refused, and when the Minister returned to King Sayf al-A'azam and acquainted him with what had befallen his mission and the failure thereof, he was wroth with exceeding wrath and cried, "Shall the like of me send to one of the Kings on a requisition and he accomplish it not?" Then he bade a herald make proclamation to his troops, bidding them bring out the tents and equip them for war with all diligence, though they should borrow money for the necessary expenses; and he said, "I will on no wise turn back, till I have laid waste King Abd al-Kadir's dominions and slain his men and plundered his treasures and blotted out his traces!" When the report of this reached Ardashir he rose from his carpet-bed, and going in to his father, kissed ground[263] between his hands and said, “O mighty King, trouble not thyself with aught of this thing” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Twentieth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when report of this reached the Prince he went in to his sire the King and, kissing ground between his hands, said, “O mighty King, trouble not thy soul with aught of this thing and levy not thy champions and armies neither spend thy monies. Thou art stronger than he, and if thou loose upon him this thy host, thou wilt lay waste his cities and dominions and spoil his good and slay his strong men and himself; but when his daughter shall come to know what hath befallen her father and his people by reason of her, she will slay herself, and I shall die on her account; for I can never live after her; no, never.” Asked the King, “And what then thinkest thou to do, O my son?” and the Prince answered, “I will don a merchant’s habit and cast about how I may win to the Princess and compass my desire of her.” Quoth Sayf al-A’azam, “Art thou determined upon this?”; and quoth the Prince, “Yes, O my sire;” whereupon the King called to his Wazir, and said to him, “Do thou journey with my son, the core of my heart, and help him to win his will and watch over him and guide him with thy sound judgment, for thou standest to him even in my stead.” “I hear and obey,” answered the Minister; and the King gave his son three hundred thousand dinars in gold and great store of jewels and precious stones and goldsmiths’ ware and stuffs and other things of price. Then Prince Ardashir went in to his mother and kissed her hands and asked her blessing. She blessed him and, forthright opening her treasures, brought out to him necklaces and trinkets and apparel and all manner of other costly objects hoarded up from the time of the bygone Kings, whose price might not be evened with coin. Moreover, he took with him of his Mamelukes and negro-slaves and cattle all that he needed for the road and clad himself and the Wazir and their company in traders’ gear. Then he farewelled his parents and kinsfolk and friends; and, setting out, fared on over wolds and wastes all hours of the day and watches of the night; and whenas the way was longsome upon him he improvised these couplets,

“My longing bred of love with mine unease for ever grows; *
Nor against all the wrongs of time one succourer arose:
When Pleiads and the Fishes show in sky the rise I watch, * As
worshipper within whose breast a pious burning glows:
For Star o’ Morn I speer until at last when it is seen, * I’m
madded with my passion and my fancy’s woes and throes:
I swear by you that never from your love have I been loosed; *
Naught am I save a watcher who of slumber nothing knows!
Though hard appear my hope to win, though languor aye
increase, * And after thee my patience fails and ne’er a
helper shows;
Yet will I wait till Allah shall be pleased to join our loves;

* I’ll mortify the jealous and I’ll mock me of my foes.”

When he ended his verse he swooned away and the Wazir sprinkled rose-water on him, till the Prince came to himself, when the Minister said to him, “O King’s son, possess thy soul in patience; for the consequence of patience is consolation, and behold, thou art on the way to whatso thou wishest.” And he ceased not to bespeak him fair and comfort him till his trouble subsided; and they continued their journey with all diligence. Presently, the Prince again became impatient of the length of the way and bethought him of his beloved and recited these couplets,

“Longsome is absence, restlessness increaseth and despite; *
And burn my vitals in the blaze my love and longings
light:
Grows my hair gray from pains and pangs which I am doomèd bear

* For pine, while tear-floods stream from eyes and sore
offend my sight:
I swear, O Hope of me, O End of every wish and will, * By Him
who made mankind and every branch with leafage dight,
A passion-load for thee, O my Desire, I must endure, * And

boast I that to bear such load no lover hath the might.
Question the Night of me and Night thy soul shall satisfy *
Mine eyelids never close in sleep throughout the livelong night."

Then he wept with sore weeping and 'plained of that he suffered for stress of love-longing; but the Wazir comforted him and spoke him fair, promising him the winning of his wish; after which they fared on again for a few days, when they drew near to the White City, the capital of King Abd al-Kadir, soon after sunrise. Then said the Minister to the Prince, "Rejoice, O King's son, in all good; for see, yonder is the White City, that which thou seekest." Whereat the Prince rejoiced with exceeding joy and recited these couplets,

"My friends, I yearn in heart distraught for him; * Longing abides and with sore pains I brim:
I mourn like childless mother, nor can find * One to console me when the light grows dim;
Yet when the breezes blow from off thy land, * I feel their freshness shed on heart and limb;
And rail mine eyes like water-laden clouds, * While in a tear-sea shed by heart I swim."

Now when they entered the White City they asked for the Merchants' Khan, a place of moneyed men; and when shown the hostelry they hired three magazines and on receiving the keys[264] they laid up therein all their goods and gear. They abode in the Khan till they were rested, when the Wazir applied himself to devise a device for the Prince, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Twenty-first Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Prince and the Minister alighted at the Khan and lodged their goods in the ground-floor magazines and there settled their servants. Then they tarried awhile till they had rested, when the Wazir arose and applied himself to devise a device for the Prince, and said to him, "I have bethought me of somewhat wherein, methinks, will be success for thee, so it please Almighty Allah.” Quoth Ardashir, “O thou Wazir of good counsel, do what cometh to thy mind, and may the Lord direct thy rede aright!” Quoth the Minister, “I purpose to hire thee a shop in the market-street of the stuff-sellers and set thee therein; for that all, great and small, have recourse to the bazar and, meseems, when the folk see thee with their own eyes sitting in the shop their hearts will incline to thee and thou wilt thus be enabled to attain thy desire, for thou art fair of favour and souls incline to thee and sight rejoiceth in thee.” The other replied, “Do what seemeth good to thee.” So the Wazir forthright began to robe the Prince and himself in their richest raiment and, putting a purse of a thousand dinars in his breast-pocket, went forth and walked about the city, whilst all who looked upon them marvelled at the beauty of the King’s son, saying, “Glory be to Him who created this youth ‘of vile water[265] ‘! Blessed be Allah excellentest of Creators!” Great was the talk anent him and some said, “This is no mortal, ‘this is naught save a noble angel’”;[266] and others, “Hath Rizwan, the door-keeper of the Eden-garden, left the gate of Paradise unguarded, that this youth hath come forth?” The people followed them to the stuff- market, where they entered and stood, till there came up to them an old man of dignified presence and venerable appearance, who saluted them, and they returned his salam. Then the Shaykh said to them, “O my lords, have ye any need, that we may have the honour of accomplishing?”; and the Wazir asked him, “Who art thou, O elder?” He answered, “I am the Overseer of the market.” Quoth the Wazir, “Know then, O Shaykh, that this youth is my son and I wish to hire him a shop in the bazar, that he may sit therein and learn to sell and buy and take and give, and come to ken merchants’ ways and habits.” “I hear and I obey,” replied the Overseer and brought them without stay or delay the key of a shop, which he caused the brokers sweep and clean. And they did his bidding. Then the Wazir sent for a high mattress, stuffed with ostrich-down, and set it up in the shop, spreading upon it a small prayer-carpet, and a cushion fringed with broidery of red gold. Moreover he brought pillows and transported thither so much of the goods and stuffs that he had brought with him as filled the shop. Next morning the young Prince came and opening the shop, seated himself on the divan, and stationed two Mamelukes, clad in the richest of raiment before him and two black slaves of the goodliest of the Abyssinians in the lower part of the shop. The Wazir enjoined him to keep his secret from the folk, so thereby he might find aid in the winning of his wishes; then he left him and charging him to acquaint him with what befel him in the shop, day by day returned to the Khan. The Prince sat in the shop till night as he were the moon at its fullest, whilst the folk, hearing tell of his comeliness, flocked to the place, without errand, to gaze on his beauty and loveliness and symmetry and perfect grace and glorify the Almighty who created and shaped him, till none could pass through that bazar for the excessive crowding of the folk about him. The King's son turned right and left, abashed at the throng of people that stared at him, hoping to make acquaintance with some one about the court, of whom he might get news of the Princess; but he found no way to this, wherefore his breast was straitened. Meanwhile, the Wazir daily promised him the attainment of his desire and the case so continued for a time till, one morning, as the youth sat in the shop, there came up an old woman of respectable semblance and dignified presence clad in raiment of devotees[267] and followed by two slave-girls like moons. She stopped before the shop and, having considered the Prince awhile, cried, "Glory be to God who fashioned that face and perfected that figure!" Then she saluted him and he returned her salam and seated her by his side. Quoth she, "Whence cometh thou, O fair of favour?"; and quoth he, "From the parts of Hind, O my mother; and I have come to this city to see the world and look about me." "Honour to thee for a visitor! What goods and stuffs hast thou? Show me something handsome, fit for Kings." "If thou wish for handsome stuffs, I will show them to thee; for I have wares that beseem persons of every condition." "O my son, I want somewhat costly of price and seemly to sight; brief, the best thou hast." "Thou must needs tell me for whom thou seekest it, that I may show thee goods according to the rank of the requiter." "Thou speakest sooth, O my son," said she. "I want somewhat for my mistress, Hayat al-Nufus, daughter of Abd al-Kadir, lord of this land and King of this country." Now when Ardashir heard his mistress's name, his reason flew for joy and his heart fluttered and he gave no order to slave or servant, but, putting his hand behind him, pulled out a purse of an hundred dinars and offered it to the old woman, saying, “This is for the washing of thy clothes.” Then he again put forth his hand and brought out of a wrapper a dress worth ten thousand dinars or more and said to her, “This is of that which I have brought to your country.” When the old woman saw it, it pleased her and she asked, “What is the price of this dress, O perfect in qualities?” Answered he, “I will take no price for it!” whereupon she thanked him and repeated her question; but he said, “By Allah, I will take no price for it. I make thee a present of it, an the Princess will not accept it and ’tis a guest-gift from me to thee. Alham- dolillah — Glory be to God — who hath brought us together, so that, if one day I have a want, I shall find in thee a helper to me in winning it!” She marvelled at the goodliness of his speech and the excess of his generosity and the perfection of his courtesy and said to him, “What is thy name, O my lord?” He replied, “My name is Ardashir;” and she cried, “By Allah this is a rare name! Therewith are Kings’ sons named, and thou art in a guise of the sons of the merchants!” Quoth he, “Of the love my father bore me, he gave me this name, but a name signifieth naught;” and quoth she in wonder, “O my son, take the price of thy goods.” But he swore that he would not take aught. Then the old lady said to him, “O my dear one, Truth (I would have thee know) is the greatest of all things and thou hadst not dealt thus generously by me but for a special reason: so tell me thy case and thy secret thought; belike thou hast some wish to whose winning I may help thee.” Thereupon he laid his hand in hers and, after exacting an oath of secrecy, told her the whole story of his passion for the Princess and his condition by reason thereof. The old woman shook her head and said, “True; but O my son, the wise say, in the current adage, ‘An thou wouldest be obeyed, abstain from ordering what may not be made’; and thou, my son, thy name is Merchant, and though thou hadst the keys of the Hidden Hoards, yet wouldst thou be called naught but Merchant. An thou wouldst rise to high rank, according to thy station, then seek the hand of a Kazi’s daughter or even an Emir’s; but why, O my son, aspirest thou to none but the daughter of the King of the age and the time, and she a clean maid, who knoweth nothing of the things of the world and hath never in her life seen anything but her palace wherein she dwelleth? Yet, for all her tender age, she is intelligent, shrewd, vivacious, penetrating, quick of wit, sharp of act and rare of rede: her father hath no other child and she is dearer to him than his life and soul. Every morning he cometh to her and giveth her good-morrow, and all who dwell in the palace stand in dread of her. Think not, O my son, that any dare bespeak her with aught of these words; nor is there any way for me thereto. By Allah, O my son, my heart and vitals love thee and were it in my power to give thee access to her, I would assuredly do it; but I will tell thee somewhat, wherein Allah may haply appoint the healing of thy heart, and will risk life and goods for thee, till I win thy will for thee." He asked, "And what is that, O my mother?" and she answered, "Seek of me the daughter of a Wazir or an Emir, and I will grant thy request; but it may not be that one should mount from earth to heaven at one bound." When the Prince heard this, he replied to her with courtesy and sense, "O my mother, thou art a woman of wit and knowest how things go. Say me doth a man, when his head irketh him, bind up his hand?" Quoth she, "No, by Allah, O my son"; and quoth he, "Even so my heart seeketh none but her and naught slayeth me but love of her. By Allah, I am a dead man, and I find not one to counsel me aright and succour me! Allah upon thee, O my mother, take pity on my strangerhood and the streaming of my tears!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Twenty-second Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ardashir, the King's son said to the old woman, "Allah upon thee, O my mother, take pity on my strangerhood and the streaming of my tears." Replied she, "By Allah, O my son, thy words rend my heart, but my hand hath no cunning wherewith to help thee." Quoth he, "I beseech thee of thy favour, carry her a letter and kiss her hands for me." So she had compassion on him and said, "Write what thou wilt and I will bear it to her." When he heard this, he was ready to fly for joy and calling for ink-case and paper, wrote these couplets,

"O Hayát al-Nufús, be gen'rous, and incline * To one who
 loving thee for parting's doomed to pine.
I was in all delight, in gladsomest of life, * But now I am
 distraught with sufferings condign.

To wakefulness I cling through longsomeness of night * And
with me sorrow chats[268] through each sad eve of
mine;
Pity a lover sad, a sore afflicted wretch * Whose eyelids
ever ulcered are with tearful brine;
And when the morning comes at last, the real morn * He finds
him drunken and distraught with passion's wine."

Then he folded the scroll and kissing it, gave it to the old woman; after which he put his hand to a chest and took out a second purse containing an hundred dinars, which he presented to her, saying, "Divide this among the slave-girls." She refused it and cried, "By Allah, O my son, I am not with thee for aught of this!"; however, he thanked her and answered, "There is no help but that thou accept of it." So she took it and kissing his hands, returned home; and going in to the Princess, cried, "O my lady, I have brought thee somewhat the like whereof is not with the people of our city, and it cometh from a handsome young man, than whom there is not a goodlier on earth's face!" She asked "O my nurse, and whence cometh the youth?" and the old woman answered, "From the parts of Hind; and he hath given me this dress of gold brocade, embroidered with pearls and gems and worth the Kingdom of Chosroës and Cæsar." Thereupon she opened the dress and the whole palace was illuminated by its brightness, because of the beauty of its fashion and the wealth of unions and jewels wherewith it was broidered, and all who were present marvelled at it. The Princess examined it and, judging it to be worth no less than a whole year's revenue of her father's kingdom, said to the old woman, "O my nurse, cometh this dress from him or from another?"[269] Replied she, "From him;" and Hayat al-Nufus asked, "Is this trader of our town or a stranger?" The old woman answered, "He is a foreigner, O my lady, newly come hither; and by Allah he hath servants and slaves; and he is fair of face, symmetrical of form, well mannered, open-handed and open-hearted, never saw I a goodlier than he, save thyself." The King's daughter rejoined, "Indeed this is an extraordinary thing, that a dress like this, which money cannot buy, should be in the hands of a merchant! What price did he set on it, O my nurse?" Quoth she, "By Allah, he would set no price on it, but gave me back the money thou sentest by me and swore that he would take naught thereof, saying, ‘’Tis a gift from me to the King’s daughter; for it beseemeth none but her; and if she will not accept it, I make thee a present of it.’” Cried the Princess, “By Allah, this is indeed marvellous generosity and wondrous munificence! But I fear the issue of his affair, lest haply[270] he be brought to necessity. Why didst thou not ask him, O my nurse, if he had any desire, that we might fulfil it for him?” The nurse replied, “O my lady, I did ask him, and he said to me, ‘I have indeed a desire’; but he would not tell me what it was. However, he gave me this letter and said, ‘Carry it to the Princess.’” So Hayat al-Nufus took the letter and opened and read it to the end; whereupon she was sore chafed; and lost temper and changing colour for anger she cried out to the old woman, saying, “Woe to thee, O nurse! What is the name of this dog who durst write this language to a King’s daughter? What affinity is there between me and this hound that he should address me thus? By Almighty Allah, Lord of the well Zemzem and of the Hatim Wall,[271] but that I fear the Omnipotent, the Most High, I would send and bind the cur’s hands behind him and slit his nostrils, and shear off his nose and ears and after, by way of example, crucify him on the gate of the bazar wherein is his booth!” When the old woman heard these words, she waxed yellow; her side-muscles[272] quivered and her tongue clave to her mouth; but she heartened her heart and said, “Softly, O my lady! What is there in his letter to trouble thee thus? Is it aught but a memorial containing his complaint to thee of poverty or oppression, from which he hopeth to be relieved by thy favour?” Replied she, “No, by Allah, O my nurse, ’tis naught of this; but verses and shameful words! However, O my nurse, this dog must be in one of three cases: either he is Jinn-mad, and hath no wit, or he seeketh his own slaughter, or else he is assisted to his wish of me by some one of exceeding puissance and a mighty Sultan. Or hath he heard that I am one of the baggages of the city, who lie a night or two with whosoever seeketh them, that he writeth me immodest verses to debauch my reason by talking of such matters?” Rejoined the old woman, “By Allah, O my lady, thou sayst sooth! But reck not thou of yonder ignorant hound, for thou art seated in thy lofty, firm-builded and unapproachable palace, to which the very birds cannot soar neither the wind pass over it, and as for him, he is clean distraught. Wherefore do thou write him a letter and chide him angrily and spare him no manner of reproof, but threaten him with dreadful threats and menace him with death and say to him, ‘Whence hast thou knowledge of me, that thou durst write me, O dog of a merchant, O thou who trudgest far and wide all thy days in wilds and wolds for the sake of gaining a dirham or a dinar? By Allah, except thou awake from thy sleep and put off thine intoxication, I will assuredly crucify thee on the gate of the market-street wherein is thy shop!’” Quoth the Princess, “I fear lest he presume, if I write to him”; and quoth the nurse, “And pray what is he and what is his rank that he should presume to us? Indeed, we write him but to the intent that his presumption may be cut off and his fear magnified.” And she ceased not craftily to persuade her, till she called for ink-case and paper and wrote him these couplets,

“O thou who claimest to be prey of love and ecstasy; * Thou,
who for passion spendest nights in grief and saddest
gree:
Say, dost thou (haughty one!) desire enjoyment of the moon? *
Did man e’er sue the moon for grace whate’er his lunacy?
I verily will counsel thee with rede the best to hear: * Cut
short this course ere come thou nigh sore risk, nay
death, to dree!
If thou to this request return, surely on thee shall fall *
Sore punishment, for vile offence a grievous penalty.
Be reasonable then, be wise, hark back unto thy wits; *
Behold, in very truth I speak with best advice to thee:
By Him who did all things that be create from nothingness; *
Who dressed the face of heaven with stars in brightest
radiancy:
If in the like of this thy speech thou dare to sin again! *
I’ll surely have thee crucified upon a trunk of tree.”

Then she rolled up the letter and gave it to the old woman who took it and, repairing to Ardashir’s shop, delivered it to him, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her

permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Twenty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old woman took that letter from Hayat al-Nufus she fared forth till she found the youth who was sitting in his shop and gave it to him, saying, “Read thine answer and know that when she perused thy paper she was wroth with exceeding wrath; but I soothed her and spake her fair, till she consented to write thee a reply.” He took the letter joyfully but, when he had read it and understood its drift, he wept sore, whereat the old woman’s heart ached and she cried, “O my son, Allah never cause thine eyes to weep nor thy heart to mourn! What can be more gracious than that she should answer thy letter when thou hast done what thou diddest?” He replied, “O my mother what shall I do for a subtle device? Behold, she writeth to me, threatening me with death and crucifixion and forbidding me from writing to her; and I, by Allah, see my death to be better than my life; but I beg thee of thy grace[273] to carry her another letter from me.” She said, “Write and I warrant I’ll bring thee an answer. By Allah, I will assuredly venture my life to win for thee thy wish, though I die to pleasure thee!” He thanked her and kissing her hands, wrote these verses,

“Do you threaten me wi’ death for my loving you so well? *
When Death to me were rest and all dying is by Fate?
And man’s death is but a boon, when so longsome to him grows *
His life, and rejected he lives in lonest state:
Then visit ye a lover who hath ne’er a soul to aid; * For on
pious works of men Heaven’s blessing shall await.
But an ye be resolved on this deed then up and on; * I’m in
bonds to you, a bondsman confined within your gate:
What path have I whose patience without you is no more? * How
is this, when a lover’s heart in stress of love is
strait?
O my lady show me ruth, who by passion am misused; * For all
who love the noble stand for evermore excused.”

He then folded the scroll and gave it to the old woman, together with two purses of two hundred dinars, which she would have refused, but he conjured her by oath to accept of them. So she took them both and said, “Needs must I bring thee to thy desire, despite the noses of thy foes.” Then she repaired to the palace and gave the letter to Hayat al-Nufus who said, “What is this, O my nurse? Here are we in a correspondence and thou coming and going! Indeed, I fear lest the matter get wind and we be disgraced.” Rejoined the old woman, “How so, O my lady? Who dare speak such word?” So she took the letter and after reading and understanding it she smote hand on hand, saying “Verily, this is a calamity which is fallen upon us, and I know not whence this young man came to us!” Quoth the old woman, “O my lady, Allah upon thee, write him another letter; but be rough with him this time and say to him, ‘An thou write me another word after this, I will have thy head struck off.’” Quoth the Princess, “O my nurse, I am assured that the matter will not end on such wise; ‘twere better to break off this exchange of letters; and, except the puppy take warning by my previous threats, I will strike off his head.” The old woman said, “Then write him a letter and give him to know this condition.” So Hayat al-Nufus called for pen-case and paper and wrote these couplets,

‘Ho, thou heedless of Time and his sore despight! * Ho, thou
heart whom hopes of my favours excite!
Think O pride-full! would’st win for thyself the skies? *
Would’st attain to the moon shining clear and bright?
I will burn thee with fire that shall ne’er be quenched, * Or
will slay thee with scymitar’s sharpest bite!
Leave it, friend, and ‘scape the tormenting pains, * Such as
turn hair-partings[274] from black to white.
Take my warning and fly from the road of love; * Draw thee
back from a course nor seemly nor right!”

Then she folded the scroll and gave it to the old woman, who was puzzled and perplexed by the matter. She carried it to Ardashir, and the Prince read the letter and bowed his head to the earth, making as if he wrote with his finger and speaking not a word. Quoth the old woman, “How is it I see thee silent stay and not say thy say?”; and quoth he, “O my mother, what shall I say, seeing that she doth but threaten me and redoubleth in hard-heartedness and aversion?” Rejoined the nurse, “Write her a letter of what thou wilt: I will protect thee; nor let thy heart be cast down, for needs must I bring you twain together.” He thanked her for her kindness and kissing her hand, wrote these couplets,

“A heart, by Allah! never soft to lover-wight, * Who sighs for
    union only with his friends, his sprite!
Who with tear-ulcered eyelids evermore must bide, * When
    falleth upon earth first darkness of the night:
Be just, be gen’rous, lend thy ruth and deign give alms * To
    love-molested lover, parted, forced to flight!
He spends the length of longsome night without a doze; *
    Fire-brent and drent in tear-flood flowing infinite:
Ah; cut not off the longing of my fondest heart * Now
    disappointed, wasted, flutt’ring for its blight.”

Then he folded the scroll and gave it to the old woman, together with three hundred dinars, saying, “This is for the washing of thy hands.” She thanked him and kissed his hands, after which she returned to the palace and gave the letter to the Princess, who took it and read it and throwing it from her fingers, sprang to her feet. Then she walked, shod as she was with pattens of gold, set with pearls and jewels, till she came to her sire’s palace, whilst the vein of anger started out between her eyes, and none dared ask her of her case. When she reached the palace, she enquired for the King, and the slave-girls and concubines replied to her, “O my lady, he is gone forth a-hunting and sporting.” So she returned, as she were a rending lioness, and bespake none for the space of three hours, when her brow cleared and her wrath cooled. As soon as the old woman saw that her irk and anger were past, she went up to her and, kissing ground between her hands, asked her, “O my lady, whither went those noble steps?” The Princess answered, “To the palace of the King my sire.” “And could no one do thine errand?” enquired the nurse. Replied the Princess, “No, for I went to acquaint him of that which hath befallen me with yonder cur of a merchant, so he might lay hands on him and on all the merchants of his bazar and crucify them over their shops nor suffer a single foreign merchant to tarry in our town." Quoth the old woman, "And was this thine only reason, O my lady, for going to thy sire?"; and quoth Hayat al-Nufus, "Yes, but I found him absent a-hunting and sporting and now I await his return." Cried the old nurse, "I take refuge with Allah, the All-hearing, the All-knowing! Praised be He! O my lady, thou art the most sensible of women and how couldst thou think of telling the King these fond words, which it behoveth none to publish?" Asked the Princess, "And why so?" and the nurse answered, "Suppose thou had found the King in his palace and told him all this tale and he had sent after the merchants and commanded to hang them over their shops, the folk would have seen them hanging and asked the reason and it would have been answered them, 'They sought to seduce the King's daughter.'" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Twenty-fourth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old woman said to the Princess, "Suppose thou had told this to the King and he had ordered the merchants to be hanged, would not folk have seen them and have asked the cause of the execution when the answer would have been, 'They sought to seduce the King's daughter?' Then would they have dispread divers reports concerning thee, some saying, 'She abode with them ten days, away from her palace, till they had taken their fill of her'; and other some in otherguise: for woman's honour, O my lady, is like ourded milk, the least dust fouleth it; and like glass, which, if it be cracked, may not be mended. So beware of telling thy sire or any other of this matter, lest thy fair fame be smirched, O mistress mine, for 'twill never profit thee to tell folk aught; no, never! Weigh what I say with thy keen wit, and if thou find it not just, do whatso thou wilt." The Princess pondered her words, and seeing them to be altogether profitable and right, said, "Thou speaketh sooth, O my nurse; but anger had blinded my judgment." Quoth the old woman, "Thy resolve to tell no one is pleasing to the Almighty; but something remaineth to be done: we must not let the shamelessness of yonder vile dog of a merchant pass without notice. Write him a letter and say to him ‘O vilest of traders, but that I found the King my father absent, I had straightway commanded to hang thee and all thy neighbours. But thou shalt gain nothing by this; for I swear to thee, by Allah the Most High, that an thou return to the like of this talk, I will blot out the trace of thee from the face of earth!’ And deal thou roughly with him in words, so shalt thou discourage him in this attempt and arouse him from his heedlessness.” “And will these words cause him to abstain from his offending?” asked the Princess; and the old woman answered, “How should he not abstain? Besides, I will talk with him and tell him what hath passed.” So the Princess called for ink-case and paper and wrote these couplets,

“To win our favours still thy hopes are bent; * And still
to win thy will art confident!
Naught save his pride-full aim shall slay a man; * And he by
us shall die of his intent
Thou art no lord of might, no chief of men, * Nabob or
Prince or Soldan Heaven-sent;
And were this deed of one who is our peer, * He had
returned with hair for fear white-sprent:
Yet will I deign once more excuse thy sin * So from
this time thou prove thee penitent.”

Then she gave the missive to the old woman, saying, “O my nurse, do thou admonish this puppy lest I be forced to cut off his head and sin on his account.” Replied the old woman, “By Allah, O my lady, I will not leave him a side to turn on!” Then she returned to the youth and, when salams had been exchanged, she gave him the letter. He read it and shook his head, saying, “Verily, we are Allah’s and unto him shall we return!” adding, “O my mother, what shall I do? My fortitude faileth me and my patience palleth upon me!” She replied, “O my son, be long- suffering: peradventure, after this Allah shall bring somewhat to pass. Write that which is in thy mind and I will fetch thee an answer, and be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear; for needs must I bring about union between thee and her, — Inshallah!” He blessed her and wrote to the Princess a note containing these couplets,

“Since none will lend my love a helping hand, * And I by
passion’s bale in death low-lain,
I bear a flaming fire within my heart * By day and night nor
place of rest attain,
How cease to hope in thee, my wishes’ term? * Or with my
longings to be glad and fain?
The Lord of highmost Heaven to grant my prayer * Pray I, whom
love of lady fair hath slain;
And as I’m clean o’erthrown by love and fear, * To grant me
speedy union deign, oh deign!”

Then he folded the scroll and gave it to the old woman, bringing out at the same time a purse of four hundred dinars. She took the whole and returning to the palace sought the Princess to whom she gave the letter; but the King’s daughter refused to take it and cried, “What is this?” Replied the old woman, “O my lady, this is only the answer to the letter thou sentest to that merchant dog.” Quoth Hayat al-Nufus, “Didst thou forbid him as I told thee?”; and quoth she, “Yes, and this is his reply.” So the Princess took the letter and read it to the end; then she turned to the old woman and exclaimed, “Where is the result of thy promise?” “O my lady, saith he not in his letter that he repenteth and will not again offend, excusing himself for the past?” “Not so, by Allah!: on the contrary, he increaseth.” “O my lady, write him a letter and thou shalt presently see what I will do with him.” “There needeth nor letter nor answer.” “I must have a letter that I may rebuke him roughly and cut off his hopes.” “Thou canst do that without a letter.” “I cannot do it without the letter.” So Hayat al-Nufus called for pen-case and paper and wrote these verses,

“Long have I chid thee but my chiding hindereth thee not * How
often would my verse with writ o’ hand ensnare thee, ah!
Then keep thy passion hidden deep and ever unrevealed, * And
if thou dare gainsay me Earth shall no more bear thee,
ah!
And if, despite my warning, thou dost to such words return, *
Death’s Messenger[275] shall go his rounds and dead
declare thee, ah!

Soon shall the wold's fierce chilling blast o'erblow that
corse o' thine; * And birds o' the wild with ravening
bills and beaks shall tear thee, ah!
Return to righteous course; perchance that same will profit
thee; * If bent on wilful aims and lewd I fain forswear
thee, ah!"

When she had made an end of her writing this, she cast the writ from her hand in wrath, and the old woman picked it up and went with it to Ardashir. When he read it to the last he knew that she had not softened to him, but only redoubled in rage against him and that he would never win to meet her, so he bethought himself to write her an answer invoking Allah's help against her. Thereupon he indited these couplets,

"O Lord, by the Five Shaykhs, I pray deliver me * From love,
which gars me bear such grief and misery.
Thou knowest what I bear for passion's fiery flame; * What
stress of sickness for that merciless maid I dree.
She hath no pity on the pangs to me decreed; * How long on
weakly wight shall last her tyranny?
I am distraught for her with passing agonies * And find no
friend, O folk! to hear my plaint and plea.
How long, when Night hath drooped her pinions o'er the world,

* Shall I lament in public as in privacy?
For love of you I cannot find forgetfulness; * And how forget
when Patience taketh wings to flee?
O thou wild parting-bird[276] say is she safe and sure *
From shift and change of time and the world's cruelty?"

Then he folded the scroll and gave it to the old woman, adding a purse of five hundred dinars; and she took it and carried it to the Princess, who read it to the end and learned its purport. Then, casting it from her hand, she cried, "Tell me O wicked old woman, the cause of all that hath befallen me from thee and from thy cunning and thine advocacy of him, so that thou hast made me write letter after letter and thou ceasest not to carry messages, going and coming between us twain, till thou hast brought about a correspondence and a connection. Thou leavest not to say, ‘I will ensure thee against his mischief and cut off from thee his speech’; but thou speakest not thus save only to the intent that I may continue to write thee letters and thou to fetch and carry between us, evening and morning, till thou ruin my repute. Woe to thee! Ho, eunuchs, seize her!” Then Hayat al-Nufus commanded them to beat her, and they lashed her till her whole body flowed with blood and she fainted away, whereupon the King’s daughter caused her slave-women to drag her forth by the feet and cast her without the palace and bade one of them stand by her head till she recovered, and say to her, “The Princess hath sworn an oath that thou shalt never return to and re-enter this palace; and she hath commanded to slay thee without mercy an thou dare return hither.” So, when she came to herself, the damsel told her what the King’s daughter said and she answered, “Hearkening and obedience.” Presently the slave-girls fetched a basket and a porter whom they caused carry her to her own house; and they sent after her a physician, bidding him tend her assiduously till she recovered. He did what he was told to do and as soon as she was whole she mounted and rode to the shop of Ardashir who was concerned with sore concern for her absence and was longing for news of her. As soon as he saw her, he sprang up and coming to meet her, saluted her; then he noticed that she was weak and ailing; so he questioned her of her case and she told him all that had befallen her from her nursling. When he heard this, he found it grievous and smote hand upon hand, saying, “By Allah, O my mother, this that hath betided thee straiteneth my heart! But, what, O my mother, is the reason of the Princess’s hatred to men?” Replied the old woman, “Thou must know O my son, that she hath a beautiful garden, than which there is naught goodlier on earth’s face and it chanced that she lay there one night. In the joyance of sleep, she dreamt a dream and ’twas this, that she went down into the garden, where she saw a fowler set up his net and strew corn thereabout, after which he withdrew and sat down afar off to await what game should fall into it. Ere an hour had passed the birds flocked to pick up the corn and a male pigeon[277] fell into the net and struggled in it, whereat all the others took fright and fled from him. His mate was amongst them, but she returned to him after the shortest delay; and, coming up to the net, sought out the mesh wherein his foot was entangled and ceased not to peck at it with her bill, till she severed it and released her husband, with whom she flew away. All this while, the fowler sat dozing, and when he awoke, he looked at the net and found it spoilt. So he mended it and strewed fresh grain, then withdrew to a distance and sat down to watch it again. The birds soon returned and began to pick up the corn, and among the rest the pair of pigeons. Presently, the she-pigeon fell into the net and struggled to get free; whereupon all the other birds flew away, and her mate, whom she had saved, fled with the rest and did not return to her. Meantime, sleep had again overcome the fowler; and, when he awoke after long slumbering, he saw the she-pigeon caught in the net; so he went up to her and freeing her feet from the meshes, cut her throat. The Princess startled by the dream awoke troubled, and said, 'Thus do men with women, for women have pity on men and throw away their lives for them, when they are in difficulties; but if the Lord decree against a woman and she fall into calamity, her mate deserteth her and rescueth her not, and wasted is that which she did with him of kindness. Allah curse her who putteth her trust in men, for they ill requite the fair offices which women do them!' And from that day she conceived an hatred to men." Said the King's son, "O my mother, doth she never go out into the highways?"; and the old woman replied, "Nay, O my son; but I will tell thee somewhat wherein, Allah willing, there shall be profit for thee. She hath a garden which is of the goodliest pleasaunces of the age; and every year, at the time of the ripening of the fruits, she goeth thither and taketh her pleasure therein only one day, nor layeth the night but in her pavilion. She entereth the garden by the private wicket of the palace which leadeth thereto; and thou must know that it wanteth now but a month to the time of her going forth. So take my advice and hie thee this very day to the keeper of that garden and make acquaintance with him and gain his good graces, for he admitteth not one of Allah's creatures into the garth, because of its communication with the Princess's palace. I will let thee know two days beforehand of the day fixed for her coming forth, when do thou repair to the garden, as of thy wont, and make shift to night there.

When the King's daughter cometh be thou hidden in some place or other"; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Twenty-fifth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old woman charged the King's son, saying, "I will let thee know two days beforehand of the King's daughter going down to the garden: do thou hide thee in some place or other; and, when thou espiest her, come forth and show thyself to her. When she seeth thee, she will fall in love with thee; for thou art fair to look upon and love covereth all things. So keep thine eyes cool and clear[278] and be of good cheer, O my son, for needs must I bring about union between thee and her." The young Prince kissed her hand and thanked her and gave her three pieces of Alexandrian silk and three of satin of various colours, and with each piece, linen for shifts and stuff for trousers and a kerchief for the turband and fine white cotton cloth of Ba'albak for the linings, so as to make her six complete suits, each handsomer than its sister. Moreover, he gave her a purse containing six hundred gold pieces and said to her, "This is for the tailoring." She took the whole and said to him, "O my son, art thou not pleased to acquaint me with thine abiding-place and I also will show thee the way to my lodging?" "Yes," answered he and sent a Mameluke with her to note her home and show her his own house. Then he rose and bidding his slaves shut the shop, went back to the Wazir, to whom he related all that had passed between him and the old woman, from first to last. Quoth the Minister, "O my son, should the Princess Hayat al-Nufus come out and look upon thee and thou find no favour with her what wilt thou do?" Quoth Ardashir, "There will be nothing left but to pass from words to deeds and risk my life with her; for I will snatch her up from amongst her attendants and set her behind me on a swift horse and make for the wildest of the wold. If I escape, I shall have won my wish and if I perish, I shall be at rest from this hateful life." Rejoined the Minister, "O my son, dost thou think to do this thing and live? How shall we make our escape, seeing that our country is far distant, and how wilt thou deal thus with a King of the Kings of the Age, who hath under his hand an hundred thousand horse, nor can we be sure but that he will despatch some of his troops to cut off our way? Verily, there is no good in this project which no wise man would attempt." Asked Ardashir, "And how then shall we do, O Wazir of good counsel? For unless I win her I am a dead man without a chance." The Minister answered, "Wait till to-morrow when we will visit this garden and note its condition and see what betideth us with the care-taker." So when the morning morrowed they took a thousand dinars in a poke and, repairing to the garden, found it compassed about with high walls and strong, rich in trees and rill-full leas and goodly fruiteries. And indeed its flowers breathed perfume and its birds warbled amid the bloom as it were a garden of the gardens of Paradise. Within the door sat a Shaykh, an old man on a stone bench and they saluted him. When he saw them and noted the fairness of their favour, he rose to his feet after returning their salute, and said, "O my lords, perchance ye have a wish which we may have the honour of satisfying?" Replied the Wazir, "Know, O elder, that we are strangers and the heat hath overcome us: our lodging is afar off at the other end of the city; so we desire of thy courtesy that thou take these two dinars and buy us somewhat of provaunt and open us meanwhile the door of this flower-garden and seat us in some shaded place, where there is cold water, that we may cool ourselves there, against thy return with the provision, when we will eat, and thou with us, and then, rested and refreshed, we shall wend our ways." So saying, he pulled out of his pouch a couple of dinars and put them into the keeper's hand. Now this care-taker was a man aged three-score and ten, who had never in all his life possessed so much money: so, when he saw the two dinars in his hand, he was like to fly for joy and rising forthwith opened the garden gate to the Prince and the Wazir, and made them enter and sit down under a wide-spreading, fruit-laden, shade-affording tree, saying, "Sit ye here and go no further into the garden, for it hath a privy door communicating with the palace of the Princess Hayat al-Nufus." They replied, "We will not stir hence." Whereupon he went out to buy what they had ordered and returned after awhile, with a porter bearing on his head a roasted lamb and bread. They ate and drank together and talked awhile, till, presently, the Wazir, looking about him in all corners right and left, caught sight of a lofty pavilion at the farther end of the garden; but it was old and the plaster was peeled from its walls and its buttresses were broken down. So he said to the Gardener, “O Shaykh, is this garden thine own or dost thou hire it?”; and he replied, “I am neither owner nor tenant of the garden, only its care-taker.” Asked the Minister, “And what is thy wage?” whereto the old man answered, “A dinar a month,” and quoth the Wazir, “Verily they wrong thee, especially an thou have a family.” Quoth the elder, “By Allah, O my lord, I have eight children and I” — The Wazir broke in, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Thou makest me bear thy grief my poor fellow! What wouldst thou say of him who should do thee a good turn, on account of this family of thine?” Replied the old man, “O my lord, whatsoever good thou dost shall be garnered up for thee with God the Most High!” Thereupon said the Wazir, “O Shaykh, thou knowest this garden of thine to be a goodly place; but the pavilion yonder is old and ruinous. Now I mean to repair it and stucco it anew and paint it handsomely, so that it will be the finest thing in the garth; and when the owner comes and finds the pavilion restored and beautified, he will not fail to question thee concerning it. Then do thou say, ‘O my lord, at great expense I set it in repair, for that I saw it in ruins and none could make use of it nor could anyone sit therein.’ If he says, ‘Whence hadst thou the money for this?’ reply, ‘I spent of my own money upon the stucco, thereby thinking to whiten my face with thee and hoping for thy bounties.’ And needs must he recompense thee fairly over the extent of thine expenses. To-morrow I will bring builders and plasterers and painters to repair this pavilion and will give thee what I promised thee.” Then he pulled out of his poke a purse of five hundred dinars and gave it to the Gardener, saying, “Take these gold pieces and expend them upon thy family and let them pray for me and for this my son.” Thereupon the Prince asked the Wazir, “What is the meaning of all this?” and he answered, “Thou shalt presently see the issue thereof.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Twenty-sixth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Wazir gave five hundred ducats to the old Gardener, saying, “Take these gold pieces and expend them upon thy family and let them pray for this my son," the old man looked at the gold and his wits fled; so he fell down at the Wazir's feet, kissing them and invoking blessings on him and his son; and when they went away, he said to them, "I shall expect you to-morrow: for by Allah Almighty, there must be no parting between us, night or day." Next morning the Wazir went to the Prince's shop and sent for the syndic of the builders; then he carried him and his men to the garth, where the Gardener rejoiced in their sight. He gave them the price of rations[279] and what was needful to the work- men for the restoration of the pavilion, and they repaired it and stucco'd it and decorated it. Then said the Minister to the painters, "Harkye, my masters, listen to my words and apprehend my wish and my aim. Know that I have a garden like this, where I was sleeping one night among the nights and saw in a dream a fowler set up nets and sprinkle corn thereabout. The birds flocked to pick up the grain, and a cock-bird fell into the net, whereupon the others took fright and flew away, and amongst the rest his mate; but, after awhile, she returned alone and picked at the mesh that held his feet, till she set him free and they flew away together. Now the fowler had fallen asleep and, when he awoke, he found the net empty; so he mended it and strewing fresh grain sat down afar off, waiting for game to fall into that snare. Presently the birds assembled again to pick up the grains, and amongst the rest the two pigeons. By-and-by, the hen-bird fell into the net, when all the other birds took fright at her and flew away, and her husband flew with them and did not return; whereupon the fowler came up and taking the quarry, cut her throat. Now, when her mate flew away with the others, a bird of raven seized him and slew him and ate his flesh and drank his blood, and I would have you pourtray me the presentment of this my dream, even as I have related it to you, in the liveliest colours, laying the fair scene in this rare garden, with its walls and trees and rills, and dwell especially on the fowler and the falcon. If ye do this I have set forth to you and the work please me, I will give you what shall gladden your hearts, over and above your wage." The painters, hearing these words, applied themselves with all diligence to do what he required of them and wrought it out in masterly style; and when they had made an end of the work, they showed it to the Wazir who, seeing his so-called dream set forth as it was[280] was pleased and thanked them and rewarded them munificently. Presently, the Prince came in, according to his custom, and entered the pavilion, unweeting what the Wazir had done. So when he saw the portraiture of the fowler and the birds and the net and beheld the male pigeon in the clutches of the hawk, which had slain him and was drinking his blood and eating his flesh, his understanding was confounded and he returned to the Minister and said, "O Wazir of good counsel, I have seen this day a marvel which, were it graven with needle-gravers on the eye-corners would be a warner to whoso will be warned?" Asked the Minister, "And what is that, O my lord?"; and the Prince answered, "Did I not tell thee of the dream the Princess had and how it was the cause of her hatred for men?" "Yes," replied the Wazir; and Ardashir rejoined, "By Allah, O Minister, I have seen the whole dream pourtrayed in painting, as I had eyed it with mine own eyes; but I found therein a circumstance which was hidden from the Princess, so that she saw it not, and 'tis upon this that I rely for the winning of my wish." Quoth the Wazir, "And what is that, O my son?"; and quoth the Prince, "I saw that, when the male bird flew away; and, leaving his mate entangled in the net, failed to return and save her, a falcon pounced on him and slaying him, ate his flesh and drank his blood. Would to Heaven the Princess had seen the whole of the dream and had beheld the cause of his failure to return and rescue her!" Replied the Wazir, "By Allah, O auspicious King, this is indeed a rare thing and a wonderful!" And the King's son ceased not to marvel at the picture and lament that the King's daughter had not beheld the dream to its end, saying in himself, "Would she had seen it to the last or might see the whole over again, though but in the imbroglio of sleep!" Then quoth the Wazir to him, "Thou saidst to me, 'Why wilt thou repair the pavilion?'; and I replied, 'Thou shalt presently see the issue thereof.' And behold, now its issue thou seest; for it was I did this deed and bade the painters pourtray the Princess's dream thus and paint the male bird in the pounces of the falcon which eateth his flesh and drinketh his blood; so that when she cometh to the pavilion, she will behold her dream depicted and see how the cock-pigeon was slain and excuse him and turn from her hate for men." When the Prince heard the Wazir's words, he kissed his hands and thanked him, saying, “Verily, the like of thee is fit to be Minister to the most mighty King, and, by Allah, an I win my wish and return to my sire, rejoicing, I will assuredly acquaint him with this, that he may redouble in honouring thee and advance thee in dignity and hearken to thine every word.” So the Wazir kissed his hand and they both went to the old Gardener and said, “Look at yonder pavilion and see how fine it is!” And he replied, “This is all of your happy thought.” Then said they, “O elder, when the owners of the place question thee concerning the restoration of the pavilion, say thou, ‘’Twas I did it of my own monies’; to the intent that there may betide thee fair favour and good fortune.” He said, “I hear and I obey”; and the Prince continued to pay him frequent visits. Such was the case with the Prince and the Wazir; but as regards Hayat al-Nufus, when she ceased to receive the Prince’s letters and messages and when the old woman was absent from her, she rejoiced with joy exceeding and concluded that the young man had returned to his own country. One day, there came to her a covered tray from her father; so she uncovered it and finding therein fine fruits, asked her waiting-women, “Is the season of these fruits come?” Answered they, “Yes.” Thereupon she cried, “Would we might make ready to take our pleasure in the flower-garden!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Twenty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Princess, after receiving the fruit from her sire, asked, “Is the season of these fruits set in?”; and they answered, “Yes!” Thereupon she cried, “Would we might make ready to take our pleasure in the flower-garden!” “O my lady,” they replied, “thou sayest well, and by Allah, we also long for the garden!” So she enquired, “How shall we do, seeing that every year it is none save my nurse who taketh us to walk in the garden and who pointeth out to us the various trees and plants; and I have beaten her and forbidden her from me? Indeed, I repent me of what was done by me to her, for that, in any case, she is my nurse and hath over me the right of fosterage. But there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” When her handmaids heard this, they all sprang up; and, kissing the ground between her hands, exclaimed, “Allah upon thee, O my lady, do thou pardon her and bid her to the presence!"; and quoth she, "By Allah, I am resolved upon this; but which of you will go to her, for I have prepared her a splendid robe of honour?" Hereupon two damsels came forward, by name Bulbul and Siwád al-'Ayn, who were comely and graceful and the principals among the Princess's women, and her favourites. And they said, "We will go to her, O King's daughter!"; and she said, "Do what seemeth good to you." So they went to the house of the nurse and knocked at the door and entered; and she, recognising the twain, received them with open arms and welcomed them. When they had sat awhile with her, they said to her, "O nurse, the Princess pardoneth thee and desireth to take thee back into favour." She replied, "This may never be, though I drink the cup of ruin! Hast thou forgotten how she put me to shame before those who love me and those who hate me, when my clothes were dyed with my blood and I well nigh died for stress of beating, and after this they dragged me forth by the feet, like a dead dog, and cast me without the door? So by Allah, I will never return to her nor fill my eyes with her sight!" Quoth the two girls, "Disappoint not our pains in coming to thee nor send us away unsuccessful. Where is thy courtesy uswards? Think but who it is that cometh in to visit thee: canst thou wish for any higher of standing than we with the King's daughter?" She replied, "I take refuge with Allah: well I wot that my station is less than yours; were it not that the Princess's favour exalted me above all her women, so that, were I wroth with the greatest of them, she had died in her skin of fright." They rejoined, "All is as it was and naught is in anywise changed. Indeed, 'tis better than before, for the Princess humbleth herself to thee and seeketh a reconciliation without intermediary." Said the old woman, "By Allah, were it not for your presence and intercession with me, I had never returned to her; no, not though she had commanded to slay me!" They thanked her for this and she rose and dressing herself accompanied them to the palace. Now when the King's daughter saw her, she sprang to her feet in honour, and the old woman said, "Allah! Allah! O King's daughter, say me, whose was the fault, mine or thine?" Hayat al-Nufus replied, "The fault was mine, and 'tis thine to pardon and forgive. By Allah, O my nurse, thy rank is high with me and thou hast over me the right of fosterage; but thou knowest that Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) hath allotted to His creatures four things, disposition, life, daily bread and death; nor is it in man's power to avert that which is decreed. Verily, I was beside myself and could not recover my senses; but, O my nurse, I repent of what deed I did." With this, the crone's anger ceased from her and she rose and kissed the ground before the Princess, who called for a costly robe of honour and threw it over her, whereat she rejoiced with exceeding joy in the presence of the Princess's slaves and women. When all ended thus happily, Hayat al-Nufus said to the old woman, "O my nurse, how go the fruits and growths of our garth?"; and she replied, "O my lady, I see excellent fruits in the town; but I will enquire of this matter and return thee an answer this very day." Then she withdrew, honoured with all honour and betook herself to Ardashir, who received her with open arms and embraced her and rejoiced in her coming, for that he had expected her long and longingly. She told him all that had passed between herself and the Princess and how her mistress was minded to go down into the garden on such a day. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Twenty-eighth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old woman betook herself to the Prince and told him all that had passed between herself and the Princess Hayat al-Nufus; and how her mistress was minded to go down into the garden on such a day and said to him, "Hast thou done as I bade thee with the Warder of the garden and hast thou made him taste of thy bounties?" He replied, "Yes, and the oldster is become my good friend: my way is his way and he would well I had need of him." Then he told her all that had happened and of the dream-paintings which the Wazir had caused to be limned in the pavilion; especially of the fowler, the net and the falcon: whereat she joyed with great joy and said, "Allah upon thee, do thou set thy Minister midmost thy heart, for this that he hath done pointeth to the keenness of his wit and he hath helped thee to the winning thy wish. So rise forthright, O my son, and go to the Hammam-bath and don thy daintiest dress, wherein may be our success. Then fare thou to the Gardener and make shift to pass the night in the garden, for though he should give the earth full of gold none may win to pass into it, whilst the King's daughter is therein. When thou hast entered, hide thee where no eye may espy thee and keep concealed till thou hear me cry, 'O Thou whose boons are hidden, save us from that we fear!' Then come forth from thine ambush and walk among the trees and show thy beauty and loveliness which put the moons to shame, to the intent that Princess Hayat al-Nufus may see thee and that her heart and soul may be filled with love of thee; so shalt thou attain to thy wish and thy grief be gone." "To hear is to obey," replied the young Prince and gave her a purse of a thousand dinars, which she took and went away. Thereupon Ardashir fared straight for the bath and washed; after which he arrayed himself in the richest of robes of the apparel of the Kings of the Chosroës and girt his middle with a girdle wherein were conjoined all manner precious stones and donned a turband inwoven with red gold and purfled with pearls and gems. His cheeks shone rosy-red and his lips were scarlet; his eyelids like the gazelle's wantoned; like a wine-struck wight in his gait he swayed; beauty and loveliness garbed him, and his shape shamed the bowing of the bough. Then he put in his pocket a purse containing a thousand dinars and, repairing to the flower-garden, knocked at the door. The Gardener opened to him and rejoicing with great joy salamed to him in most worshipful fashion; then, observing that his face was overcast, he asked him how he did. The King's son answered, "Know, O elder, that I am dear to my father and he never laid his hand on me till this day, when words arose between us and he abused me and smote me on the face and struck me with his staff and drave me away. Now I have no friend to turn to and I fear the perfidy of Fortune, for thou knowest that the wrath of parents is no light thing. Wherefore I come to thee, O uncle, seeing that to my father thou art known, and I desire of thy favour that thou suffer me abide in the garden till the end of the day, or pass the night there, till Allah grant good understanding between myself and my sire." When the old man heard these words he was concerned anent what had occurred and said, "O my lord, dost thou give me leave to go to thy sire and be the means of reconciliation between thee and him?" Replied Ardashir, "O uncle, thou must know that my father is of impatient nature, and irascible; so an thou proffer him reconciliation in his heat of temper he will make thee no answer; but when a day or two shall have passed, his heat will soften. Then go thou in to him and thereupon he will relent." "Hearkening and obedience," quoth the Gardener; "but, O my lord, do thou come with me to my house, where thou shalt night with my children and my family and none shall reproach this to us." Quoth Ardashir, "O uncle, I must be alone when I am angry."[281] The old man said, "It irketh me that thou shouldst lie solitary in the garden, when I have a house." But Ardashir said, "O uncle, I have an aim in this, that the trouble of my mind may be dispelled from me and I know that in this lies the means of regaining his favour and softening his heart to me." Rejoined the Gardener, "I will fetch thee a carpet to sleep on and a coverlet wherewith to cover thee;" and the Prince said, "There is no harm in that, O uncle." So the keeper rose and opened the garden to him, and brought him the carpet and coverlet, knowing not that the King's daughter was minded to visit the garth. On this wise fared it with the Prince; but as regards the nurse, she returned to the Princess and told her that the fruits were kindly ripe on the garden trees; whereupon she said, "O my nurse, go down with me to-morrow into the garden, that we may walk about in it and take our pleasure, — Inshallah; and send meanwhile to the Gardener, to let him know what we purpose." So she sent to the Gardener to say, "The Princess will visit the parterre to-morrow, so leave neither water-carriers nor tree-tenders therein, nor let one of Allah's creatures enter the garth." When word came to him, he set his water-ways and channels in order and, going to Ardashir, said to him, "O my lord, the King's daughter is mistress of this garden; and I have only to crave thy pardon, for the place is thy place and I live only in thy favours, except that my tongue is under thy feet.[282] I must tell thee that the Princess Hayat al-Nufus hath a mind to visit it to-morrow at the first of the day and hath bidden me leave none therein who might look upon her. So I would have thee of thy favour go forth of the garden this day, for the Queen will abide only in it till the time of mid-afternoon prayer and after it shall be at thy service for se'nnights and fortnights, months and years." Ardashir asked, "O elder, haply we have caused thee some mishap?"; and the other answered, "By Allah, O my lord, naught hath betided me from thee but honour!" Rejoined the Prince, "An it be so, nothing but all good shall befal thee through us; for I will hide in the garden and none shall espy me, till the King's daughter hath gone back to her palace." Said the Gardener, "O my lord, an she espy the shadow of a man in the garden or any of Allah's male creatures she will strike off my head;" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Twenty-ninth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Gardener said to the Prince, "An the King's daughter espy the shadow of a man in her garden, she will strike off my head;" the youth replied, "Have no fear, I will on no wise let any see me. But doubtless to-day thou lackest of spending-money for thy family." Then he put his hand to his purse and pulled out five hundred ducats, which he gave to him saying, "Take this gold and lay it out on thy family, that thy heart may be at ease concerning them." When the Shaykh looked upon the gold, his life seemed a light thing to him[283] and he suffered the Prince to tarry where he was, charging him straitly not to show himself in the garden. Then he left him loitering about. Meanwhile, when the eunuchs went in to the Princess at break of day, she bade open the private wicket leading from the palace to the parterres and donned a royal robe, embroidered with pearls and jewels and gems, over a shift of fine silk purfled with rubies. Under the whole was that which tongue refuseth to explain, whereat was confounded the brain and whose love would embrave the craven's strain. On her head she set a crown of red gold, inlaid with pearls and gems and she tripped in pattens of cloth of gold, embroidered with fresh pearls[284] and adorned with all manner precious stones. Then she put her hand upon the old woman's shoulder and commanded to go forth by the privy door; but the nurse looked at the garden and, seeing it full of eunuchs and handmaids walking about, eating the fruits and troubling the streams and taking their ease of sport and pleasure in the water said to the Princess, "O my lady, is this a garden or a madhouse?" Quoth the Princess, "What meaneth thy speech, O nurse?"; and quoth the old woman, "Verily the garden is full of slave-girls and eunuchs, eating of the fruits and troubling the streams and scaring the birds and hindering us from taking our ease and sporting and laughing and what not else; and thou hast no need of them. Wert thou going forth of thy palace into the highway, this would be fitting, as an honour and a ward to thee; but, now, O my lady, thou goest forth of the wicket into the garden, where none of Almighty Allah's creatures may look on thee." Rejoined the Princess, "By Allah, O nurse mine, thou sayst sooth! But how shall we do?"; and the old woman said, "Bid the eunuchs send them all away and keep only two of the slave-girls, that we may make merry with them. So she dismissed them all, with the exception of two of her handmaids who were most in favour with her. But when the old woman saw that her heart was light and that the season was pleasant to her, she said to her, "Now we can enjoy ourselves aright: so up and let us take our pleasance in the garden." The Princess put her hand upon her shoulder and went out by the private door. The two waiting-women walked in front and she followed them laughing at them and swaying gracefully to and fro in her ample robes; whilst the nurse forewent her, showing her the trees and feeding her with fruits; and so they fared on from place to place, till they came to the pavilion, which when the King's daughter beheld and saw that it had been restored, she asked the old woman, "O my nurse, seest thou yonder pavilion? It hath been repaired and its walls whitened." She answered, "By Allah, O my lady, I heard say that the keeper of the garden had taken stuffs of a company of merchants and sold them and bought bricks and lime and plaster and stones and so forth with the price; so I asked him what he had done with all this, and he said, 'I have repaired the pavilion which lay in ruins,' presently adding, 'And when the merchants sought their due of me, I said to them, 'Wait 'till the Princess visit the garden and see the repairs and they satisfy her; then will I take of her what she is pleased to bestow on me, and pay you what is your due.' Quoth I, 'What moved thee to do this thing?'; and quoth he, 'I saw the pavilion in ruins, the coigns thrown down and the stucco peeled from the walls, and none had the grace to repair it; so I borrowed the coin on my own account and restored the place; and I trust in the King's daughter to deal with me as befitteth her dignity.' I said, 'The Princess is all goodness and generosity and will no doubt requite thee.' And he did all this but in hopes of thy bounty." Replied the Princess, "By Allah, he hath dealt nobly in rebuilding it and hath done the deed of generous men! Call me my purse-keeperess." The old woman accordingly fetched the purse-keeperess, whom the Princess bade give the Gardener two thousand dinars; whereupon the nurse sent to him, bidding him to the presence of the King's daughter. But when the messenger said to him, "Obey the Queen's order," the Gardener felt feeble and, trembling in every joint, said in himself, "Doubtless, the Princess hath seen the young man, and this day will be the most unlucky of days for me." So he went home and told his wife and children what had happened and gave them his last charges and farewelled them, while they wept for and with him. Then he presented himself before the Princess, with a face the colour of turmeric and ready to fall flat at full length. The old woman remarked his plight and hastened to forestall him, saying "O Shaykh, kiss the earth in thanksgiving to Almighty Allah and be constant in prayer to Him for the Princess. I told her what thou didst in the matter of repairing the ruined pavilion, and she rejoiceth in this and bestoweth on thee two thousand dinars in requital of thy pains; so take them from the purse-keeperess and kiss the earth before the King's daughter and bless her and wend thy way." Hearing these words he took the gold and kissed the ground before Hayat al-Nufus, calling down blessings on her. Then he returned to his house, and his family rejoiced in him and blessed him[285] who had been the prime cause of this business. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Thirtieth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Care-taker took the two thousand ducats from the Princess and returned to his house, all his family rejoiced in him and blessed him who had been the prime cause of this business. Thus it fared with these; but as regards the old woman, she said to the Princess, "O my lady, this is indeed become a fine place! Never saw I a purer white than its plastering nor properer than its painting! I wonder if he have also repaired it within: else hath he made the outside white and left the inside black. Come, let us enter and inspect." So they went in, the nurse preceding, and found the interior painted and gilded in the goodliest way. The Princess looked right and left, till she came to the upper end of the estrade, when she fixed her eyes upon the wall and gazed long and earnestly thereat; whereupon the old woman knew that her glance had lighted on the presentment of her dream and took the two waiting-women away with her, that they might not divert her mind. When the King's daughter had made an end of examining the painting, she turned to the old woman, wondering and beating hand on hand, and said to her, "O my nurse, come, see a wondrous thing which were it graven with needle-gravers on the eye corners would be a warner to whoso will be warned." She replied, "And what is that, O my lady?"; when the Princess rejoined, "Go, look at the upper end of the estrade, and tell me what thou seest there." So she went up and considered the dream-drawing: then she came down, wondering, and said, "By Allah, O my lady, here is depicted the garden and the fowler and his net and the birds and all thou sawest in thy dream; and verily, nothing but urgent need withheld the male pigeon from returning to free his mate after he had fled her, for I see him in the talons of a bird of raven which hath slaughtered him and is drinking his blood and rending his flesh and eating it; and this, O my lady, caused his tarrying to return and rescue her from the net. But, O my mistress, the wonder is how thy dream came to be thus depicted, for, wert thou minded to set it forth in painture, thou hadst not availed to portray it. By Allah, this is a marvel which should be recorded in histories! Surely, O my lady, the angels appointed to attend upon the sons of Adam, knew that the cock-pigeon was wronged of us, because we blamed him for deserting his mate; so they embraced his cause and made manifest his excuse; and now for the first time we see him in the hawk's pounces a dead bird." Quoth the Princess, "O my nurse, verily, Fate and Fortune had course against this bird, and we did him wrong." Quoth the nurse, "O my mistress, foes shall meet before Allah the Most High: but, O my lady, verily, the truth hath been made manifest and the male pigeon's excuse certified to us; for had the hawk not seized him and drunk his blood and rent his flesh he had not held aloof from his mate, but had returned to her, and set her free from the net; but against death there is no recourse, nor, O my lady, is there aught in the world more tenderly solicitous than the male for the female, among all creatures which Almighty Allah hath created. And especially 'tis thus with man; for he starveth himself to feed his wife, strippeth himself to clothe her, angereth his family to please her and disobeyeth and denieth his parents to endow her. She knoweth his secrets and concealeth them and she cannot endure from him a single hour.[286] An he be absent from her one night, her eyes sleep not, nor is there a dearer to her than he: she loveth him more than her parents and they lie down to sleep in each other's arms, with his hand under her neck and her hand under his neck, even as saith the poet,

'I made my wrist her pillow and I lay with her in litter; *
And I said to Night 'Be long!' while the full moon showed
glitter:
Ah me, it was a night, Allah never made its like; * Whose
first was sweetest sweet and whose last bitt'rest
bitter!'[287]

Then he kisseth her and she kisseth him; and I have heard of a certain King that, when his wife fell sick and died, he buried himself alive with her, submitting himself to death, for the love of her and the strait companionship which was between them. Moreover, a certain King sickened and died, and when they were about to bury him, his wife said to her people: 'Let me bury myself alive with him: else will I slay myself and my blood shall be on your heads.' So, when they saw she would not be turned from this thing, they left her, and she cast herself into the grave with her dead husband, of the greatness of her love and tenderness for him." And the old woman ceased not to ply the Princess with anecdotes of conjugal love between men and women, till there ceased that which was in her heart of hatred for the sex masculine; and when she felt that she had succeeded in renewing in her the natural inclination of woman to man, she said to her, "'Tis time to go and walk in the garden." So they fared forth from the pavilion and paced among the trees. Presently the Prince chanced to turn and his eyes fell on Hayat al-Nufus; and when he saw the symmetry of her shape and the rosiclearness of her cheeks and the blackness of her eyes and her exceeding grace and her passing loveliness and her excelling beauty and her prevailing elegance and her abounding perfection, his reason was confounded and he could not take his eyes off her. Passion annihilated his right judgment and love overpassed all limits in him; his vitals were occupied with her service and his heart was aflame with the fire of repine, so that he swooned away and fell to the ground. When he came to himself, she had passed from his sight and was hidden from him among the trees; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Thirty-first Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Prince Ardashir, who lay hid in the garden, saw the Princess and her nurse walking amongst the trees, he swooned away for very love-longing. When he came to himself Hayat al-Nufus had passed from his sight and was hidden from him among the trees; so he sighed from his heart-core and improvised these couplets,

"Whenas mine eyes behold her loveliness, * My heart is torn
with love's own ecstasy.
I wake o'erthrown, castdown on face of earth * Nor can the
Princess[288] my sore torment see.
She turned and ravished this sad Love-thrall'd sprite; *
Mercy, by Allah, ruth; nay, sympathy!
O Lord, afford me union, deign Thou soothe * My soul, ere
grave-niche house this corse of me;
I'll kiss her ten times ten times, and times ten * For lover's
wasted cheek the kisses be!"

The old woman ceased not to lead the Princess a-pleasuring about the garden, till they reached the place where the Prince lay ambushed, when, behold she said, "O Thou whose bounties are hidden, vouchsafe us assurance from that we fear!" The King's son hearing the signal, left his lurking-place and, surprised by the summons, walked among the trees, swaying to and fro with a proud and graceful gait and a shape that shamed the branches. His brow was crowned with pearly drops and his cheeks red as the afterglow, extolled be Allah the Almighty in that He hath created! When the King's daughter caught sight of him, she gazed a long while on him and noticed his beauty and grace and loveliness and his eyes that wantoned like the gazelle's, and his shape that outvied the branches of the myrobalan; wherefore her wits were confounded and her soul captivated and her heart transfixed with the arrows of his glances. Then she said to the old woman, “O my nurse, whence came yonder handsome youth?”; and the nurse asked, “Where is he, O my lady?” “There he is,” answered Hayat al-Nufus; “near hand, among the trees.” The old woman turned right and left, as if she knew not of his presence, and cried, “And pray, who can have taught this youth the way into this garden?” Quoth Hayat al-Nufus, “Who shall give us news of the young man? Glory be to Him who created men! But say me, dost thou know him, O my nurse?” Quoth the old woman, “O my lady, he is the young merchant who wrote to thee by me.” The Princess (and indeed she was drowned in the sea of her desire and the fire of her passion and love-longing) broke out, “O my nurse, how goodly is this youth! Indeed he is fair of favour. Methinks, there is not on the face of earth a goodlier than he!” Now when the old woman was assured that the love of him had gotten possession of the Princess, she said to her, “Did I not tell thee, O my lady, that he was a comely youth with a beaming favour?” Replied Hayat al-Nufus, “O my nurse, King’s daughters know not the ways of the world nor the manners of those that be therein, for that they company with none, neither give they nor take they. O my nurse, how shall I do to bring about a meeting and present myself to him, and what shall I say to him and what will he say to me?” Said the old woman, “What device is left me? Indeed, we were confounded in this matter by thy behaviour”; and the Princess said, “O my nurse, know thou that if any ever died of passion, I shall do so, and behold, I look for nothing but death on the spot by reason of the fire of my love-longing.” When the old woman heard her words and saw the transport of her desire for him, she answered, “O my lady, now as for his coming to thee, there is no way thereto; and indeed thou art excused from going to him, because of thy tender age; but rise with me and follow me. I will accost him: so shalt thou not be put to shame, and in the twinkling of an eye affection shall ensue between you.” The King’s daughter cried, “Go thou before me, for the decree of Allah may not be rejected.” Accordingly they went up to the place where Ardashir sat, as he were the full moon at its fullest, and the old woman said to him, “See O youth, who is present before thee! ’Tis the daughter of our King of the age, Hayat al-Nufus: bethink thee of her rank and appreciate the honour she doth thee in coming to thee and rise out of respect for her and stand before her.” The Prince sprang to his feet in an instant and his eyes met her eyes, whereupon they both became as they were drunken without wine. Then the love of him and desire redoubled upon the Princess and she opened her arms and he his, and they embraced; but love-longing and passion overcame them and they swooned away and fell to the ground and lay a long while without sense. The old woman, fearing scandalous exposure, carried them both into the pavilion, and, sitting down at the door, said to the two waiting-women, “Seize the occasion to take your pleasure in the garden, for the Princess sleepeth.” So they returned to their diversion. Presently the lovers revived from their swoon and found themselves in the pavilion, whereat quoth the Prince, “Allah upon thee, O Princess of fair ones, is this vision or sleep-illusion?” Then the twain embraced and intoxicated themselves without wine, complaining each to other of the anguish of passion; and the Prince improvised these couplets,

“Sun riseth sheen from her brilliant brow, * And her cheek
shows the rosiest afterglow:
And when both appear to the looker-on, * The skyline star
ne’er for shame will show:
An the leven flash from those smiling lips, * Morn breaks and
the rays dusk and gloom o’erthrow.
And when with her graceful shape she sways, * Droops leafiest
Ban-tree[289] for envy low:
Me her sight suffices; naught crave I more: * Lord of Men and
Morn, be her guard from foe!
The full moon borrows a part of her charms; * The sun would
rival but fails his lowe.
Whence could Sol aspire to that bending grace? * Whence should
Luna see such wit and such mind-gifts know?
Who shall blame me for being all love to her, * ‘Twixt accord
and discord aye doomed to woe:
’Tis she won my heart with those forms that bend * What shall
lover’s heart from such charms defend?”

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Thirty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Prince had made an end of his verses, the Princess strained him to her bosom and kissed him on the mouth and between the eyes; whereupon his soul returned to him and he fell to complaining to her of that he had endured for stress of love and tyranny of longing and excess of transport and distraction and all he had suffered for the hardness of her heart. Hearing those words she kissed his hands and feet and bared her head,[290] whereupon the gloom gathered and the full moons dawned therein. Then said she to him, “O my beloved and term of all my wishes, would the day of estrangement had never been and Allah grant it may never return between us!” And they embraced and wept together, whilst she recited these couplets,

“O who shamest the Moon and the sunny glow: * Thou whose
slaught’ring tyranny lays me low;
With the sword of a look thou hast shorn my heart, * How
escape thy sword-glance fatal of blow?
Thus eke are thine eyebrows a bow that shot * My bosom with
shafts of fiercest lowe:
From thy cheeks’ rich crop cometh Paradise; * How, then, shall
my heart the rich crop forego?
Thy graceful shape is a blooming branch, * And shall pluck the
fruits who shall bear that bough.
Perforce thou drawest me, robst my sleep; * In thy love I
strip me and shameless show:[291]
Allah lend thee the rays of most righteous light, * Draw the
farthest near and a tryst bestow:
Then have ruth on the vitals thy love hath seared, * And the
heart that flies to thy side the mo’e!”

And when she ended her recitation, passion overcame her and she was distraught for love and wept copious tears, rain-like streaming down. This burnt the Prince’s heart and he in turn became troubled and distracted for love of her. So he drew nearer to her and kissed her hands and wept with sore weeping and they ceased not from lover-reproaches and converse and versifying, until the call to mid-afternoon prayer (nor was there aught between them other than this), when they bethought them of parting and she said to him, “O light of mine eyes and core of my heart, the time of severance has come between us twain: when shall we meet again?” “By Allah,” replied he (and indeed her words shot him as with shafts), “to mention of parting I am never fain!” Then she went forth of the pavilion, and he turned and saw her sighing sighs would melt the rock and weeping shower-like tears; whereupon he for love was sunken in the sea of desolation and improvised these couplets,

“O my heart’s desire! grows my misery * From the stress of
love, and what cure for me?
By thy face, like dawn when it lights the dark, * And thy hair
whose hue beareth night-tide’s blee,
And thy form like the branch which in grace inclines * To
Zephyr’s[292] breath blowing fain and free,
By the glance of thine eyes like the fawn’s soft gaze, * When
she views pursuer of high degree,
And thy waist down borne by the weight of hips, * These so
heavy and that lacking gravity,
By the wine of thy lip-dew, the sweetest of drink, * Fresh
water and musk in its purity,
O gazelle of the tribe, ease my soul of grief, * And grant me
thy phantom in sleep to see!”

Now when she heard his verses in praise of her, she turned back to him and embracing him, with a heart on fire for the anguish of severance, fire which naught save kisses and embraces might quench, cried, “Sooth the byword saith, Patience is for a lover and not the lack thereof. There is no help for it but I contrive a means for our reunion.” Then she farewelled him and fared forth, knowing not where she set her feet, for stress of her love; nor did she stay her steps till she found herself in her own chamber. When she was gone, passion and love-longing redoubled upon the young Prince and the delight of sleep was forbidden him, and the Princess in her turn tasted not food and her patience failed and she sickened for desire. As soon as dawned the day, she sent for the nurse, who came and found her condition changed and she cried, "Question me not of my case; for all I suffer is due to thy handiwork. Where is the beloved of my heart?" "O my lady, when did he leave thee? Hath he been absent from thee more than this night?" "Can I endure absence from him an hour? Come, find some means to bring us together speedily, for my soul is like to flee my body." "O my lady, have patience till I contrive thee some subtle device, whereof none shall be ware." "By the Great God, except thou bring him to me this very day, I will tell the King that thou hast corrupted me, and he will cut off thy head!" "I conjure thee, by Allah, have patience with me, for this is a dangerous matter!" And the nurse humbled herself to her, till she granted her three days' delay, saying, "O my nurse, the three days will be three years to me; and if the fourth day pass and thou bring him not, I will go about to slay thee." So the old woman left her and returned to her lodging, where she abode till the morning of the fourth day, when she summoned the tirewomen of the town and sought of them fine dyes and rouge for the painting of a virgin girl and adorning; and they brought her cosmetics of the best. Then she sent for the Prince and, opening her chest, brought out a bundle containing a suit of woman's apparel, worth five thousand dinars, and a head-kerchief fringed with all manner gems. Then said she to him, "O my son, hast thou a mind to foregather with Hayat al-Nufus?"; and he replied, "Yes." So she took a pair of tweezers and pulled out the hairs of his face and pencilled his eyes with Kohl.[293] Then she stripped him and painted him with Henna[294] from his nails to his shoulders and from his insteps to his thighs and tattooed[295] him about the body, till he was like red roses upon alabaster slabs. After a little, she washed him and dried him and bringing out a shift and a pair of petticoat-trousers made him put them on. Then she clad him in the royal suit aforesaid and, binding the kerchief about his head, veiled him and taught him how to walk, saying, "Advance thy left and draw back thy right." He did her bidding and forewent her, as he were a Houri faring abroad from Paradise. Then said she to him, "Fortify thy heart, for thou art going to the King's palace, where there will without fail be guards and eunuchs at the gate; and if thou be startled at them and show doubt or dread, they will suspect thee and examine thee, and we shall both get into grievous trouble and haply lose our lives: wherefore an thou feel thyself unable to this, tell me." He answered, "In very sooth this thing hath no terrors for me, so be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear." Then she went out preceding him till the twain came to the palace-gate, which was full of eunuchs. She turned and looked at him, as much as to say, "Art thou troubled or no?" and finding him all unchanged, went on. The chief eunuch glanced at the nurse and knew her but, seeing a damsel following her, whose charms confounded the reason, he said in his mind, "As for the old woman, she is the nurse; but as for the girl who is with her there is none in our land resembleth her in favour or approacheth her in fairness save the Princess Hayat al-Nufus, who is secluded and never goeth out. Would I knew how she came into the streets and would Heaven I wot whether or no 'twas by leave of the King!" Then he rose to learn somewhat concerning her and well nigh thirty castratos followed him; which when the old woman saw, her reason fled for fear and she said, "Verily, we are Allah's and to Him we shall return! Without recourse we are dead folk this time." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Thirty-third Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old nurse saw the head of the eunuchry and his assistants making for her she was in exceeding fear and cried, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Verily we are God's and unto him we shall return; without recourse we be dead folk this time." When the head eunuch heard her speak thus, fear gat hold upon him, by reason of that which he knew of the Princess's violence and that her father was ruled by her, and he said to himself, "Belike the King hath commanded the nurse to carry his daughter forth upon some occasion of hers, whereof she would have none know; and if I oppose her, she will be wroth with me and will say, 'This eunuch fellow stopped me, that he might pry into my affairs.' So she will do her best to kill me, and I have no call to meddle in this matter." So saying, he turned back, and with him the thirty assistants who drove the people from the door of the palace; whereupon the nurse entered and saluted the eunuchs with her head, whilst all the thirty stood to do her honour and returned her salam. She led in the Prince and he ceased not following her from door to door, and the Protector protected them, so that they passed all the guards, till they came to the seventh door: it was that of the great pavilion, wherein was the King's throne, and it communicated with the chambers of his women and the saloons of the Harim, as well as with his daughter's pavilion. So the old woman halted and said, "Here we are, O my son, and glory be to Him who hath brought us thus far in safety! But, O my son, we cannot foregather with the Princess except by night; for night enveileth the fearful." He replied, "True, but what is to be done?" Quoth she, "Hide thee in this black hole," showing him behind the door a dark and deep cistern, with a cover thereto. So he entered the cistern, and she went away and left him there till ended day, when she returned and carried him into the palace, till they came to the door of Hayat al-Nufus's apartment. The old woman knocked and a little maid came out and said, "Who is at the door?" Said the nurse, "'Tis I," whereupon the maid returned and craved permission of her lady, who said, "Open to her and let her come in with any who may accompany her." So they entered and the nurse, casting a glance around, perceived that the Princess had made ready the sitting-chamber and ranged the lamps in row and lighted candles of wax in chandeliers of gold and silver and spread the divans and estrades with carpets and cushions. Moreover, she had set on trays of food and fruits and confections and she had perfumed the place with musk and aloes-wood and ambergris. She was seated among the lamps and the tapers and the light of her face outshone the lustre of them all. When she saw the old woman, she said to her, "O nurse, where is the beloved of my heart?"; and the other replied, "O my lady, I cannot find him nor have mine eyes espied him, but I have brought thee his own sister; and here she is." Cried the Princess, "Art thou Jinn-mad? What need have I of his sister? Say me, an a man's head irk him, doth he bind up his hand?" The old woman answered, "No, by Allah, O my lady! But look on her, and if she pleases thee, let her be with thee." Then she uncovered the Prince's face, whereupon Hayat al-Nufus knew him and running to him, pressed him to her bosom, and he pressed her to his breast. Then they both fell down in a swoon and lay without sense a long while. The old woman sprinkled rose-water upon them till they came to themselves, when she kissed him on the mouth more than a thousand times and improvised these couplets,

“Sought me this heart’s dear love at gloom of night; * I rose
in honour till he sat forthright,
And said, ‘O aim of mine, O sole desire * In such night-visit
hast of guards no fright?’
Replied he, ‘Yes, I fearèd much, but Love * Robbed me of all
my wits and reft my sprite.’
We clipt with kisses and awhile clung we, * For here ’twas
safe; nor feared we watchman-wight:
Then rose we parting without doubtful deed * And shook out
skirts where none a stain could sight.”

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Thirty-fourth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when her lover visited Hayat al-Nufus in her palace, the twain embraced and she improvised some happy couplets beseeming the occasion. And when she had ended her extempore lines she said, “Is it indeed true that I see thee in my abode and that thou art my cup-mate and my familiar?” Then passion grew on her and love was grievous to her, so that her reason well-nigh fled for joy and she improvised these couplets,

“With all my soul I’ll ransom him who came to me in gloom * Of
night, whilst I had waited long to see his figure loom;
And naught aroused me save his weeping voice of tender tone *
And whispered I, ‘Fair fall thy foot and welcome and well
come!’
His cheek I kissed a thousand times, and yet a thousand more;

* Then clipt and clung about his breast enveiled in
darkling room.
And cried, ‘Now verily I’ve won the aim of every wish * So

praise and prayers to Allah for this grace now best
become.’
Then slept we even as we would the goodliest of nights * Till
morning came to end our night and light up earth with
bloom.”

As soon as it was day, she made him enter a place in her apartment unknown to any and he abode there till nightfall, when she brought him out and they sat in converse and carouse. Presently he said to her, “I wish to return to my own country and tell my father what hath passed between us, that he may equip his Wazir to demand thee in marriage of thy sire.” She replied, “O my love, I fear, an thou return to thy country and kingdom, thou wilt be distracted from me and forget the love of me; or that thy father will not further thy wishes in this matter and I shall die. Meseems the better rede were that thou abide with me and in my hand-grasp, I looking on thy face, and thou on mine, till I devise some plan, whereby we may escape together some night and flee to thy country; for I have cut off my hopes from my own people and I despair of them.” He rejoined, “I hear and obey;” and they fell again to their carousal and conversing. He tarried with her thus for some time till, one night, the wine was pleasant to them and they lay not down nor did they sleep till break of day. Now it chanced that one of the Kings sent her father a present, and amongst other things, a necklace of union jewels, nine-and-twenty grains, to whose price a King’s treasures might not suffice. Quoth Abd al-Kadir, “This rivière beseemeth none but my daughter Hayat al-Nufus;” and, turning to an eunuch, whose jaw-teeth the Princess had knocked out for reasons best known to herself,[296] he called to him and said, “Carry the necklace to thy lady and say to her, ‘One of the Kings hath sent thy father this, as a present, and its price may not be paid with money; put it on thy neck.’” The slave took the necklace, saying in himself, “Allah Almighty make it the last thing she shall put on in this world, for that she deprived me of the benefit of my grinder-teeth!”; and repairing to the Princess’s apartment, found the door locked and the old woman asleep before the threshold. He shook her, and she awoke in affright and asked, “What dost thou want?”; to which he answered, “The

King hath sent me on an errand to his daughter.” Quoth the nurse, “The key is not here, go away, whilst I fetch it;” but quoth he, “I cannot go back to the King without having done his commandment.” So she went away, as if to fetch the key; but fear overtook her and she sought safety in flight. Then the eunuch awaited her awhile; then, finding she did not return, he feared that the King would be angry at his delay; so he rattled at the door and shook it, whereupon the bolt gave way and the leaf opened. He entered and passed on, till he came to the seventh door and walking in to the Princess’s chamber found the place splendidly furnished and saw candles and flagons there. At this spectacle he marvelled and going close up to the bed, which was curtained by a hanging of silk, embroidered with a net-work of jewels, drew back the curtain from before the Princess and saw her sleeping with her arms about the neck of a young man handsomer than herself; whereat he magnified Allah Almighty, who had created such a youth of vile water, and said, “How goodly be this fashion for one who hateth men! How came she by this fellow? Methinks ’twas on his account that she knocked out my back teeth!” Then he drew the curtain and made for the door; but the King’s daughter awoke in affright and seeing the eunuch, whose name was Káfúr, called to him. He made her no answer: so she came down from the bed on the estrade; and catching hold of his skirt laid it on her head and kissed his feet, saying, “Veil what Allah veileth!” Quoth he, “May Allah not veil thee nor him who would veil thee! Thou didst knock out my grinders and saidst to me, ‘Let none make mention to me aught of men and their ways!’” So saying, he disengaged himself from her grasp and running out, locked the door on them and set another eunuch to guard it. Then he went in to the King who said to him “Hast thou given the necklace to Hayat al-Nufus?” The eunuch replied, “By Allah, thou deservest altogether a better fate;” and the King asked, “What hath happened? Tell me quickly;” whereto he answered, “I will not tell thee, save in private and between our eyes,” but the King retorted, saying, “Tell me at once and in public.” Cried the eunuch, “Then grant me immunity.” So the King threw him the kerchief of immunity and he said, “O King, I went into the Princess Hayat al-Nufus and found her asleep in a carpeted chamber and on her bosom was a young man. So I locked the door upon the two and came back to thee." When the King heard these words he started up and taking a sword in his hand, cried out to the Rais of the eunuchs, saying, "Take thy lads and go to the Princess's chamber and bring me her and him who is with her as they twain lie on the bed; but cover them both up." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King commanded the head eunuch to take his lads and to fetch and set before him Hayat al-Nufus and him who was with her, the chief and his men entered the Princess's apartment where he found her standing up, dissolved in railing tears, and the Prince by her side; so he said to them, "Lie down on the bed, as thou wast and let him do likewise." The King's daughter feared for her lover[297] and said to him, "This is no time for resistance." So they both lay down and the eunuchs covered them up and carried the twain into the King's presence. Thereupon Abd al-Kadir pulled off the coverings and the Princess sprang to her feet. He looked at her and would have smitten her neck: but the Prince threw himself on the father's breast, saying, "The fault was not hers but mine only: kill me before thou killest her." The King made at him, to cut him down, but Hayat al-Nufus cast herself on her father and said, "Kill me not him; for he is the son of a great King, lord of all the land in its length and breadth." When the King heard this, he turned to the Chief Wazir, who was a gathering-place of all that is evil, and said to him, "What sayst thou of this matter, O Minister?" Quoth his Wazir, "What I say is that all who find themselves in such case as this have need of lying, and there is nothing for it but to cut off both their heads, after torturing them with all manner of tortures." Hereupon the King called his sworder of vengeance, who came with his lads, and said to him, "Take this gallows bird and strike off his head and after do the like with this harlot and burn their bodies, and consult me not about them a second time." So the headsmen put his hand to her back, to take her; but the King cried out at him and cast at him somewhat he hent in hand, which had well-nigh killed him, saying, "O dog, how durst thou show ruth to those with whom I am wroth? Put thy hand to her hair and drag her along by it, so that she may fall on her face."

Accordingly he haled her by her hair and the Prince in like manner to the place of blood, where he tore off a piece of his skirt and therewith bound the Prince's eyes putting the Princess last, in the hope that some one would intercede for her. Then, having made ready the Prince he swung his sharp sword three times (whilst all the troops wept and prayed Allah to send them deliverance by some intercessor), and raised his hand to cut off Ardashir's head when, behold, there arose a cloud of dust, that spread and flew till it veiled the view. Now the cause thereof was that when the young Prince had delayed beyond measure, the King, his sire, had levied a mighty host and had marched with it in person to get tidings of his son. Such was his case; but as regards King Abd al-Kadir, when he saw this, he said, "O wights, what is the meaning of yonder dust that dimmeth sights?" The Grand Wazir sprang up and went out to reconnoitre and found behind the cloud men like locusts, of whom no count could be made nor aught avail of aid, filling the hills and plains and valleys. So he returned with the report to the King, who said to him, "Go down and learn for us what may be this host and the cause of its marching upon our country. Ask also of their commander and salute him for me and enquire the reason of his coming. An he came in quest of aught, we will aid him, and if he have a blood-feud with one of the Kings, we will ride with him; or, if he desire a gift, we will handsel him; for this is indeed a numerous host and a power uttermost, and we fear for our land from its mischief." So the Minister went forth and walked among the tents and troopers and body-guards, and ceased not faring on from the first of the day till near sundown, when he came to the warders with gilded swords in tents star-studded. Passing these, he made his way through Emirs and Wazirs and Nabobs and Chamberlains, to the pavilion of the Sultan, and found him a mighty King. When the King's officers saw him, they cried out to him, saying, "Kiss ground! Kiss ground!"[298] He did so and would have risen, but they cried out at him a second and a third time. So he kissed the earth again and again and raised his head and would have stood up, but fell down at full length for excess of awe. When at last he was set between the hands of the King he said to him, "Allah prolong thy days and increase thy sovranty and exalt thy rank, O thou auspicious King! And furthermore, of a truth, King

Abd al-Kadir saluteth thee and kisseth the earth before thee and asketh on what weighty business thou art come. An thou seek to avenge thee for blood on any King, he will take horse in thy service; or, an thou come in quest of aught, wherein it is in his power to help thee, he standeth up at thy service on account thereof." So Ardashir's father replied to the Wazir, saying, "O messenger, return to thy lord and tell him that the most mighty King Sayf al-A'azam Shah, Lord of Shiraz, had a son who hath been long absent from him and news of him have not come and all traces of him have been cut off. An he be in this city, he will take him and depart from you; but, if aught have befallen him or any mischief have ensued to him from you, his father will lay waste your land and make spoil of your goods and slay your men and seize your women. Return, therefore, to thy lord in haste and tell him this, ere evil befal him." Answered the Minister, "To hear is to obey!" and turned to go away, when the Chamberlains cried out to him, saying, "Kiss ground! Kiss ground!" So he kissed the ground a score of times and rose not till his life-breath was in his nostrils.[299] Then he left the King's high court and returned to the city, full of anxious thought concerning the affair of this King and the multitude of his troops, and going in to King Abd al-Kadir, pale with fear and trembling in his side-muscles, acquainted him with that had befallen him; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir returned from the court of the Great King, pale with fear and with side-muscles quivering for dread exceeding; and acquainted his lord with that had befallen him. Hereat disquietude and terror for himself and for his people laid hold upon him and he said to the Minister, "O Wazir, and who is this King's son?" Replied the other, "'Tis even he whom thou badest put to death, but praised be Allah who hastened not his slaughter! Else had his father wasted our lands and spoiled our good." Quoth the King "See now thy corrupt judgment, in that thou didst counsel us to slay him! Where is the young man, the son of yonder magnanimous King?" And quoth the Wazir, "O mighty King, thou didst command him be put to death." When the King heard this, he was clean distraught and cried out from his heart's core and in-most of head, saying, “Woe to you! Fetch me the Headsman forthright, lest death fall on him!” So they fetched the Sworder and he said, “O King of the Age, I have smitten off his head even as thou badest me.” Cried Abd al-Kadir “O dog, an this be true, I will assuredly send thee after him.” The Headsman replied, “O King, thou didst command me to slay him without consulting thee a second time.” Said the King, “I was in my wrath; but speak the truth, ere thou lose thy life;” and said the Sworder, “O King, he is yet in the chains of life.” At this Abd al-Kadir rejoiced and his heart was set at rest; then he called for Ardashir, and when he came, he stood up to receive him and kissed his mouth, saying, “O my son, I ask pardon of Allah Almighty for the wrong I have done thee, and say thou not aught that may lower my credit with thy sire, the Great King.” The Prince asked “O King of the Age, and where is my father?” and the other answered, “He is come hither on thine account.” Thereupon quoth Ardashir, “By thy worship, I will not stir from before thee till I have cleared my honour and the honour of thy daughter from that which thou laidest to our charge; for she is a pure virgin. Send for the midwives and let them examine her before thee. An they find her maidenhead gone, I give thee leave to shed my blood; and if they find her a clean maid, her innocence of dishonour and mine also will be made manifest.” So he summoned the midwives, who examined the Princess and found her a pure virgin and so told the King, seeking largesse of him. He gave them what they sought, putting off his royal robes to bestow on them, and in like manner he was bountiful to all who were in the Harim. And they brought forth the scent-cups and perfumed all the Lords of estate and Grandees; and not one but rejoiced with exceeding joy. Then the King threw his arms about Ardashir’s neck and entreated him with all worship and honour, bidding his chief eunuchs bear him to the bath. When he came out, he cast over his shoulders a costly robe and crowned him with a coronet of jewels; he also girt him with a girdle of silk, purfled with red gold and set with pearls and gems, and mounted him on one of his noblest mares, with selle and trappings of gold inlaid with pearls and jewels. Then he bade his Grandees and Captains mount on his service and escort him to his father’s presence; and charged him tell his sire that King Abd al-Kadir was at his disposal, hearkening to and obeying him in whatso he should bid or forbid. “I will not fail of this,” answered Ardashir and farewelling him, repaired to his father who, at sight of him, was transported for delight and springing up, advanced to meet him and embraced him, whilst joy and gladness spread among all the host of the Great King. Then came the Wazirs and Chamberlains and Captains and guards and kissed the ground before the Prince and rejoiced in his coming: and it was a great day with them for enjoyment, for the King’s son gave leave to those of King Abd al-Kadir’s officers who had accompanied him and others of the townsfolk, to view the ordinance of his father’s host, without let or stay, so they might know the multitude of the Great King’s troops and the might of his empire. And all who had seen him selling stuffs in the linendrapers’ bazar marvelled how his soul could have consented thereto, considering the nobility of his spirit and the loftiness of his dignity; but it was his love and inclination to the King’s daughter that to this had constrained him. Meanwhile, news of the multitude of her lover’s troops came to Hayat al-Nufus, who was still jailed by her sire’s commandment, till they knew what he should order respecting her, whether pardon and release or death and burning; and she looked down from the terrace-roof of the palace and, turning towards the mountains, saw even these covered with armed men. When she beheld all those warriors and knew that they were the army of Ardashir’s father, she feared lest he should be diverted from her by his sire and forget her and depart from her, whereupon her father would slay her. So she called a handmaid that was with her in her apartment by way of service, and said to her, “Go to Ardashir, son of the Great King, and fear not. When thou comest into his presence, kiss the ground before him and tell him what thou art and say to him, ‘My lady saluteth thee and would have thee to know that she is a prisoner in her father’s palace, awaiting his sentence, whether he be minded to pardon her or put her to death, and she beseecheth thee not to forget her or forsake her; for to-day thou art all-powerful; and, in whatso thou commandest, no man dare cross thee. Wherefore, an it seem good to thee to rescue her from her sire and take her with thee, it were of thy bounty, for indeed she endureth all these trials for thy sake. But, an this seem not good to thee, for that thy desire of her is at an end, still speak to thy sire, so haply he may intercede for her with her father and he depart not, till he have made him set her free and taken surety from and made covenant with him, that he will not go about to put her to death nor work her aught of harm. This is her last word to thee, may Allah not desolate her of thee, and so The Peace!'"[300] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the bondmaid sent by Hayat al-Nufus made her way to Ardashir and delivered him her lady's message, which when he heard, he wept with sore weeping and said to her, "Know that Hayat al-Nufus is my mistress and that I am her slave and the captive of her love. I have not forgotten what was between us nor the bitterness of the parting day; so do thou say to her, after thou hast kissed her feet, that I will speak with my father of her, and he shall send his Wazir, who sought her aforetime in marriage for me, to demand her hand once more of her sire, for he dare not refuse. So, if he send to her to consult her, let her make no opposition; for I will not return to my country without her." Then the handmaid returned to Hayat al-Nufus; and, kissing her hands, delivered to her the message, which when she heard, she wept for very joy and returned thanks to Almighty Allah. Such was her case; but as regards Ardashir, he was alone with his father that night and the Great King questioned him of his case, whereupon he told him all that had befallen him, first and last. Then quoth the King, "What wilt thou have me do for thee, O my son? An thou desire Abd al-Kadir's ruin, I will lay waste his lands and spoil his hoards and dishonour his house." Replied Ardashir, "I do not desire that, O my father, for he hath done nothing to me deserving thereof; but I wish for union with her; wherefore I beseech thee of thy favour to make ready a present for her father (but let it be a magnificent gift!) and send it to him by thy Minister, the man of just judgment." Quoth the King, "I hear and consent;" and sending for the treasures he had laid up from time past, brought out all manner precious things and showed them to his son, who was pleased with them. Then he called his Wazir and bade him bear the present with him[301] to King Abd al-Kadir and demand his daughter in marriage for Ardashir, saying, "Accept the present and return him a reply." Now from the time of

Ardashir's departure, King Abd al-Kadir had been troubled and ceased not to be heavy at heart, fearing the laying waste of his reign and the spoiling of his realm; when behold, the Wazir came in to him and saluting him, kissed ground before him. He rose up standing and received him with honour; but the Minister made haste to fall at his feet and kissing them cried, "Pardon, O King of the Age! The like of thee should not rise to the like of me, for I am the least of servants' slaves. Know, O King, that Prince Ardashir hath acquainted his father with some of the favours and kindnesses thou hast done him, wherefore he thanketh thee and sendeth thee in company of thy servant who standeth before thee, a present, saluting thee and wishing thee especial blessings and prosperities." Abd al-Kadir could not believe what he heard of the excess of his fear, till the Wazir laid the present before him, when he saw it to be such gift as no money could purchase nor could one of the Kings of the earth avail to the like thereof; wherefore he was belittled in his own eyes and springing to his feet, praised Almighty Allah and glorified Him and thanked the Prince. Then said the Minister to him, "O noble King, give ear to my word and know that the Great King sendeth to thee, desiring thine alliance, and I come to thee seeking and craving the hand of thy daughter, the chaste dame and treasured gem Hayat al-Nufus, in wedlock for his son Ardashir, wherefore, if thou consent to this proposal and accept of him, do thou agree with me for her marriage-portion." Abd al-Kadir hearing these words replied, "I hear and obey. For my part, I make no objection, and nothing can be more pleasurable to me; but the girl is of full age and reason and her affair is in her own hand. So be assured that I will refer it to her and she shall choose for herself." Then he turned to the chief eunuch and bade him go and acquaint the Princess with the event. So he repaired to the Harim and, kissing the Princess's hands, acquainted her with the Great King's offer adding, "What sayest thou in answer?" "I hear and I obey," replied she. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the chief eunuch of the Harim having informed the Princess how she had been demanded in marriage by the Great King and having heard her reply, "I hear and I obey," returned therewith to the King and gave him this answer, whereat he rejoiced with exceeding joy and, calling for a costly robe of honour, threw it over the Wazir's shoulders. Furthermore, he ordered him ten thousand dinars and bade him carry the answer to the Great King and crave leave for him to pay him a visit. "Hearing and obeying," answered the Minister; and, returning to his master, delivered him the reply and Abd al-Kadir's message, and repeated all their talk, whereat he rejoiced greatly and Ardashir was transported for delight and his breast broadened and he was a most happy man. King Sayf al-A'azam also gave King Abd al-Kadir leave to come forth to visit him; so, on the morrow, he took horse and rode to the camp of the Great King, who came to meet him and saluting him, seated him in the place of honour, and gave him welcome; and they two sat whilst Ardashir stood before them. Then arose an orator of the King Abd al-Kadir's court and pronounced an eloquent discourse, giving the Prince joy of the attainment of his desire and of his marriage with the Princess, a Queen among King's daughters. When he sat down the Great King caused bring a chest full of pearls and gems, together with fifty thousand dinars, and said to King Abd al-Kadir, "I am my son's deputy in all that concerneth this matter." So Abd al-Kadir acknowledged receipt of the marriage-portion and amongst the rest, fifty thousand dinars for the nuptial festivities; after which they fetched the Kazis and the witnesses, who wrote out the contract of marriage between the Prince and Princess, and it was a notable day, wherein all lovers made merry and all haters and enviers were mortified. They spread the marriage-feasts and banquets and lastly Ardashir went in unto the Princess and found her a jewel which had been hidden, an union pearl unthridden and a filly that none but he had ridden, so he notified this to his sire. Then King Sayf al-A'azam asked his son, "Hast thou any wish thou wouldst have fulfilled ere we depart?"; and he answered, "Yes, O King, know that I would fain take my wreak of the Wazir who entreated us on evil wise and the eunuch who forged a lie against us." So the King sent forthright to Abd al-Kadir, demanding of him the Minister and the castrato, whereupon he despatched them both to him and he commanded to hang them over the city gate. After this, they abode a little while and then sought of Abd al-Kadir leave for his daughter to equip her for departure. So he equipped her and mounted her in a Takhtrawán, a travelling litter of red gold, inlaid with pearls and gems and drawn by noble steeds. She carried with her all her waiting-women and eunuchs, as well as the nurse, who had returned, after her flight, and resumed her office. Then King Sayf al-A'azam and his son mounted and Abd al-Kadir mounted also with all the lords of his land, to take leave of his son-in-law and daughter; and it was a day to be reckoned of the goodliest of days. After they had gone some distance, the Great King conjured Abd al-Kadir to turn back; so he farewelled him and his son, after he had strained him to his breast and kissed him between the eyes and thanked him for his grace and favours and commended his daughter to his care. Then he went in to the Princess and embraced her; and she kissed his hands and they wept in the standing-place of parting. After this he returned to his capital and Ardashir and his company fared on, till they reached Shiraz, where they celebrated the marriage- festivities anew. And they abode in all comfort and solace and joyance of life, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and Severer of societies; the Depopulator of palaces and the Garnerer of graveyards. And men also relate the tale of

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

JULNAR THE SEA-BORN AND HER SON KING BADR BASIM OF PERSIA.

There was once in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, in Ajam-land a King Shahrimán[302] hight, whose abiding place was Khorásán. He owned an hundred concubines, but by none of them had he been blessed with boon of child, male or female, all the days of his life. One day, among the days, he bethought him of this and fell lamenting for that the most part of his existence was past and he had not been vouchsafed a son, to inherit the kingdom after him, even as he had inherited it from his fathers and forebears; by reason whereof there betided him sore cark and care and chagrin exceeding. As he sat thus one of his Mamelukes came in to him and said, “O my lord, at the door is a slave-girl with her merchant, and fairer than she eye hath never seen.” Quoth the King, “Hither to me with merchant and maid!”; and both came in to him. Now when Shahriman beheld the girl, he saw that she was like a Rudaynian lance,[303] and she was wrapped in a veil of gold-purfled silk. The merchant uncovered her face, whereupon the place was illumined by her beauty and her seven tresses hung down to her anklets like horses’ tails. She had Nature kohl’d eyes, heavy hips and thighs and waist of slenderest guise; her sight healed all maladies and quenched the fire of sighs, for she was even as the poet cries,

“I love her madly for she is perfect fair, * Complete in
   gravity and gracious way;
Nor overtall nor overshort, the while * Too full for trousers
   are those hips that sway:
Her shape is midmost ‘twixt o’er small and tall; * Nor long to
   blame nor little to gainsay:
O’erfall her anklets tresses black as night * Yet in her face
   resplends eternal day.”

The King seeing her marvelled at her beauty and loveliness, her symmetry and perfect grace and said to the merchant, “O Shaykh, how much for this maiden?” Replied the merchant, “O my lord, I bought her for two thousand dinars of the merchant who owned her before myself, since when I have travelled with her three years and she hath cost me, up to the time of my coming hither, other three thousand gold pieces; but she is a gift from me to thee.” The King robed him with a splendid robe of honour and ordered him ten thousand ducats, whereupon he kissed his hands, thanking him for his bounty and beneficence, and went his ways. Then the King committed the damsel to the tire-women, saying, “Amend ye the case of this maiden[304] and adorn her and furnish her a bower and set her therein.” And he bade his chamberlains carry her everything she needed and shut all the doors upon her. Now his capital wherein he dwelt, was called the White City and was seated on the sea- shore; so they lodged her in a chamber, whose latticed casements overlooked the main. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King after taking the maiden, committed her to the tire-women bidding them amend her case and set her in a bower, and ordered his chamberlains to shut all the doors upon her when they had lodged her in a chamber whose latticed casements overlooked the main. Then Shahriman went in to her; but she spake not to him neither took any note of him.[305] Quoth he, ’Twould seem she hath been with folk who have not taught her manners.” Then he looked at the damsel and saw her surpassing beauty and loveliness and symmetry and perfect grace, with a face like the rondure of the moon at its full or the sun shining in the sheeny sky. So he marvelled at her charms of favour and figure and he praised Allah the Creator (magnified be His might!), after which he walked up to her and sat him down by her side; then he pressed her to his bosom and seating her on his thighs, sucked the dew of her lips, which he found sweeter than honey. Presently he called for trays spread with richest viands of all kinds and ate and fed her by mouthfuls, till she had enough; yet she spoke not one word. The King began to talk to her and asked her of her name; but she abode still silent and uttered not a syllable nor made him any answer, neither ceased to hang down her head groundwards; and it was but the excess of her beauty and loveliness and the amorous grace that saved her from the royal wrath. Quoth he to himself, “Glory be to God, the Creator of this girl! How charming she is, save that she speaketh not! But perfection belongeth only to Allah the Most High.” And he asked the slave-girls whether she had spoken, and they said, “From the time of her coming until now she hath not uttered a word nor have we heard her address us.” Then he summoned some of his women and concubines and bade them sing to her and make merry with her, so haply she might speak. Accordingly they played before her all manner instruments of music and sports and what not and sang, till the whole company was moved to mirth, except the damsel, who looked at them in silence, but neither laughed nor spoke. The King’s breast was straitened; thereupon he dismissed the women and abode alone with that damsel: after which he doffed his clothes and disrobing her with his own hand, looked upon her body and saw it as it were a silvern ingot. So he loved her with exceeding love and falling upon her, took her maidenhead and found her a pure virgin; whereat he rejoiced with excessive joy and said in himself, “By Allah, ’tis a wonder that a girl so fair of form and face should have been left by the merchants a clean maid as she is!”[306] Then he devoted himself altogether to her, heeding none other and forsaking all his concubines and favourites, and tarried with her a whole year as it were a single day. Still she spoke not till, one morning he said to her (and indeed the love of her and longing waxed upon him), “O desire of souls, verily passion for thee is great with me, and I have forsaken for thy sake all my slave-girls and concubines and women and favourites and I have made thee my portion of the world and had patience with thee a whole year; and now I beseech Almighty Allah, of His favour, to soften thy heart to me, so thou mayst speak to me. Or, an thou be dumb, tell me by a sign, that I may give up hope of thy speech. I pray the Lord (extolled be He!) to vouchsafe me by thee a son child, who shall inherit the kingdom after me; for I am old and lone and have none to be my heir. Wherefore, Allah upon thee, an thou love me, return me a reply.” The damsel bowed her head awhile in thought, and presently raising it, smiled in his face, whereat it seemed to him as if lightning filled the chamber. Then she said, “O magnanimous liege lord, and valorous lion, Allah hath answered thy prayer, for I am with child by thee and the time of my delivery is near at hand, though I know not if the unborn babe be male or female.[307] But, had I not conceived by thee, I had not spoken to thee one word." When the King heard her speech, his face shone with joy and gladness and he kissed her head and hands for excess of delight, saying, "Alhamdolillah — laud to Lord — who hath vouchsafed me the things I desired!, first, thy speech, and secondly, thy tidings that thou art with child by me." Then he rose up and went forth from her and, seating himself on the throne of his kingship, in an ecstasy of happiness, bade his Wazir distribute to the poor and needy and widows and others an hundred thousand dinars, by way of thank-offering to Allah Most High and alms on his own account. The Minister did as bidden by the King who, returning to the damsel, sat with her and embraced and pressed her to his breast, saying, "O my lady, my queen, whose slave I am, prithee what was the cause of this thy silence? Thou hast been with me a whole year, night and day, waking and sleeping, yet hast not spoken to me till this day." She replied, "Hearken, O King of the Age, and know that I am a wretched exile, broken-hearted and far-parted from my mother and my family and my brother." When the King heard her words, he knew her desire and said, "As for thy saying that thou art wretched, there is for such speech no ground, inasmuch as my kingdom and good and all I possess are at thy service and I also am become thy bondman; but, as for thy saying, 'I am parted from my mother and brother and family', tell me where they are and I will send and fetch them to thee." Thereupon she answered, "Know, then, O auspicious King, that I am called Julnár[308] the Sea born and that my father was of the Kings of the Main. He died and left us his reign, but while we were yet unsettled, behold, one of the other Kings arose against us and took the realm from our hands. I have a brother called Sálih, and my mother also is a woman of the sea; but I fell out with my brother 'The Pious' and swore that I would throw myself into the hands of a man of the folk of the land. So I came forth of the sea and sat down on the edge of an island in the moonshine[309] , where a passer-by found me and, carrying me to his house, besought me of love-liesse; but I smote him on the head, so that he all but died; whereupon he carried me forth and sold me to the merchant from whom thou hadst me, and this was a good man and a virtuous; pious, loyal and generous. Were it not that thy heart loved me and that thou promotedest me over all thy concubines, I had not remained with thee a single hour, but had cast myself from this window into the sea and gone to my mother and family; but I was ashamed to fare themwards, being with child by thee; for they would have deemed evilly of me and would not have credited me, even although I swore to them, an I told them that a King had bought me with his gold and made me his portion of the world and preferred me over all his wives and every thing that his right hand possessed. This then is my story and — the Peace!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fortieth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Julnar[310] the Sea-born, answering the question of King Shahriman, told him her past from first to last, the King thanked her and kissed her between the eyes, saying, "By Allah, O my lady and light of mine eyes, I cannot bear to be parted from thee one hour; and given thou leave me, I shall die forthright. What then is to be done?" Replied she, "O my lord, the time of my delivery is at hand and my family needs must be present, that they may tend me; for the women of the land know not the manner of child-bearing of the women of the sea, nor do the daughters of the ocean know the manner of the daughters of the earth; and when my people come, I shall be reconciled to them and they will be reconciled to me." Quoth the King, "How do the people of the sea walk therein, without being wetted?"; and quoth she, "O King of the Age, we walk in the waters with our eyes open, as do ye on the ground, by the blessing of the names graven upon the seal-ring of Solomon David-son (on whom be peace!). But, O King, when my kith and kin come, I will tell them how thou boughtest me with thy gold, and hast entreated me with kindness and benevolence. It behoveth that thou confirm my words to them and that they witness thine estate with their own eyes and they learn that thou art a King, son of a King." He rejoined, "O my lady, do what seemeth good to thee and what pleaseth thee and I will consent to thee in all thou wouldst do." The damsel continued, "Yes, we walk in the sea and see what is therein and behold the sun, moon, stars and sky, as it were on the surface of earth; and this irketh us naught. Know also that there be many peoples in the main and various forms and creatures of all kinds that are on the land, and that all that is on the land compared with that which is in the main is but a very small matter." And the King marvelled at her words. Then she pulled out from her bosom two bits of Comorin lign-aloes and, kindling fire in a chafing-dish, chose somewhat of them and threw it in, then she whistled a loud whistle and spake words none understood. Thereupon arose a great smoke and she said to the King, who was looking on, "O my lord, arise and hide thyself in a closet, that I may show thee my brother and mother and family, whilst they see thee not; for I design to bring them hither, and thou shalt presently espy a wondrous thing and shalt marvel at the several creatures and strange shapes which Almighty Allah hath created." So he arose without stay or delay and entering a closet, fell a-watching what she should do. She continued her fumigations and conjurations till the sea foamed and frothed turbid and there rose from it a handsome young man of a bright favour, as he were the moon at its full, with brow flower-white, cheeks of ruddy light and teeth like the marguerite. He was the likest of all creatures to his sister and the tongue of the case spoke in his praise these two couplets,

"The full moon groweth perfect once a month * But thy face
each day we see perfectèd.
And the full moon dwelleth in single sign, * But to thee all
hearts be a dwelling stead."

After him there came forth of the sea an ancient dame with hair speckled gray and five maidens, as they were moons, bearing a likeness to the damsel hight Julnar. The King looked upon them as they all walked upon the face of the water, till they drew near the window and saw Julnar, whereupon they knew her and went in to her. She rose to them and met them with joy and gladness, and they embraced her and wept with sore weeping. Then said they to her, "O Julnar, how couldst thou leave us four years, and we unknowing of thine abiding place? By Allah the world hath been straitened upon us for stress of severance from thee, and we have had no delight of food or drink; no, not for one day, but have wept with sore weeping night and day for the excess of our longing after thee!” Then she fell to kissing the hands of the youth her brother and her mother and cousins, and they sat with her awhile, questioning her of her case and of what had betided her, as well as of her present estate. “Know,” replied she, “that, when I left you, I issued from the sea and sat down on the shore of an island, where a man found me and sold me to a merchant, who brought me to this city and sold me for ten thousand dinars to the King of the country, who entreated me with honour and forsook all his concubines and women and favourites for my sake and was distracted by me from all he had and all that was in his city.” Quoth her brother, “Praised be Allah, who hath reunited us with thee! But now, O my sister, ’tis my purpose that thou arise and go with us to our country and people.” When the King heard these words, his wits fled him for fear lest the damsel accept her brother’s words and he himself avail not to stay her, albeit he loved her passionately, and he became distracted with fear of losing her. But Julnar answered, “By Allah, O my brother, the mortal who bought me is lord of this city and he is a mighty King and a wise man, good and generous with extreme generosity. Moreover, he is a personage of great worth and wealth and hath neither son nor daughter. He hath entreated me with honour and done me all manner of favour and kindness; nor, from the day of his buying me to this time have I heard from him an ill word to hurt my heart: but he hath never ceased to use me courteously; doing nothing save with my counsel, and I am in the best of case with him and in the perfection of fair fortune. Furthermore, were I to leave him, he would perish; for he cannot endure to be parted from me an hour; and if I left him, I also should die, for the excess of the love I bear him, by reason of his great goodness to me during the time of my sojourn with him; for, were my father alive, my estate with him would not be like my estate with this great and glorious and puissant potentate. And verily, ye see me with child by him and praise be to Allah, who hath made me a daughter of the Kings of the sea, and my husband the mightiest of the Kings of the land, and Allah, in very sooth, he hath compensated me for whatso I lost.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Forty-first Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Julnar the Sea born told her brother all her tale, adding “Allah hath not cut me off, but hath compensated me for whatso I lost. Now this King hath no issue, male or female, so I pray the Almighty to vouchsafe me a son who shall inherit of this mighty sovran that which the Lord hath bestowed upon him of lands and palaces and possessions.” Now when her brother and the daughters of her uncle heard this her speech, their eyes were cooled thereby and they said, “O Julnar, thou knowest thy value with us and thou wottest the affection we bear thee and thou art certified that thou art to us the dearest of all creatures and thou art assured that we seek but ease for thee, without travail or trouble. Wherefore, an thou be in unease, arise and go with us to our land and our folk; but, an thou be at thine ease here, in honour and happiness, this is our wish and our will; for we desire naught save thy welfare in any case.”[311] Quoth she, “By Allah, I am here in the utmost ease and solace and honour and grace!” When the King heard what she said, he joyed with a heart set at rest and thanked her silently for this; the love of her redoubled on him and entered his heart-core and he knew that she loved him as he loved her and that she desired to abide with him, that she might see his child by her. Then Julnar bade her women lay the tables and set on all sorts of viands, which had been cooked in kitchen under her own eyes, and fruits and sweetmeats, whereof she ate, she and her kinsfolk. But, presently, they said to her, “O Julnar, thy lord is a stranger to us, and we have entered his house, without his leave or weeting. Thou hast extolled to us his excellence and eke thou hast set before us of his victual whereof we have eaten; yet have we not companied with him nor seen him, neither hath he seen us nor come to our presence and eaten with us, so there might be between us bread and salt.” And they all left eating and were wroth with her, and fire issued from their mouths, as from cressets; which when the King saw, his wits fled for excess of fear of them. But Julnar arose and soothed them and going to the closet where was the King her lord, said to him, “O my lord, hast thou seen and heard how I praised thee and extolled thee to my people and hast thou noted what they said to me of their desire to carry me away with them?” Quoth he, “I both heard and saw: May the Almighty abundantly requite thee for me! By Allah, I knew not the full measure of thy fondness until this blessed hour, and now I doubt not of thy love to me!” Quoth she, “O my lord, is the reward of kindness aught but kindness? Verily, thou hast dealt generously with me and hast entreated me with worship and I have seen that thou lovest me with the utmost love, and thou hast done me all manner of honour and kindness and preferred me above all thou lovest and desirest. So how should my heart be content to leave thee and depart from thee, and how should I do thus after all thy goodness to me? But now I desire of thy courtesy that thou come and salute my family, so thou mayst see them and they thee and pure love and friendship may be between you; for know, O King of the Age, that my brother and mother and cousins love thee with exceeding love, by reason of my praises of thee to them, and they say, ‘We will not depart from thee nor go to our homes till we have foregathered with the King and saluted him.’ For indeed they desire to see thee and make acquaintance with thee.” The King replied, “To hear is to obey, for this is my very own wish.” So saying, he rose and went in to them and saluted them with the goodliest salutation; and they sprang up to him and received him with the utmost worship, after which he sat down in the palace and ate with them; and he entertained them thus for the space of thirty days. Then, being desirous of returning home, they took leave of the King and Queen and departed with due permission to their own land, after he had done them all possible honour. Awhile after this, Julnar completed the days of her pregnancy and the time of her delivery being come, she bore a boy, as he were the moon at its full; whereat the utmost joy betided the King, for that he had never in his life been vouchsafed son or daughter. So they held high festival and decorated the city seven days, in the extreme of joy and jollity: and on the seventh day came Queen Julnar’s mother, Farásháh hight,[312] and brother and cousins, whenas they knew of her delivery. — And Shahrazad perceived the light of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Forty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Julnar was brought to bed and was visited by her people, the King received them with joy at their coming and said to them, “I said that I would not give my son a name till you should come and name him of your knowledge." So they named him Badr Básim,[313] and all agreed upon this name. Then they showed the child to his uncle Salih, who took him in his arms and arising began to walk about the chamber with him in all directions right and left. Presently he carried him forth of the palace and going down to the salt sea, fared on with him, till he was hidden from the King's sight. Now when Shahriman saw him take his son and disappear with him in the depth of the sea, he gave the child up for lost and fell to weeping and wailing; but Julnar said to him, "O King of the Age, fear not, neither grieve for thy son, for I love my child more than thou and he is with my brother, so reck thou not of the sea neither fear for him drowning. Had my brother known that aught of harm would betide the little one, he had not done this deed; and he will presently bring thee thy son safe, Inshallah — an it please the Almighty." Nor was an hour past before the sea became turbid and troubled and King Salih came forth and flew from the sea till he came up to them with the child lying quiet and showing a face like the moon on the night of fulness. Then, looking at the King he said, "Haply thou fearedst harm for thy son, whenas I plunged into the sea with him?" Replied the father, "Yes, O my lord, I did indeed fear for him and thought he would never be saved therefrom." Rejoined Salih, "O King of the land, we pencilled his eyes with an eye powder we know of and recited over him the names graven upon the seal-ring of Solomon David-son (on whom be the Peace!), for this is what we use to do with children newly born among us; and now thou needst not fear for him drowning or suffocation in all the oceans of the world, if he should go down into them; for, even as ye walk on the land, so walk we in the sea." Then he pulled out of his pocket a casket, graven and sealed and, breaking open the seals, emptied it; whereupon there fell from it strings of all manner jacinths and other jewels, besides three hundred bugles of emerald and other three hundred hollow gems, as big as ostrich eggs, whose light dimmed that of sun and moon. Quoth Salih, "O King of the Age, these jewels and jacinths are a present from me to thee. We never yet brought thee a gift, for that we knew not Julnar's abiding place neither had we of her any tidings or trace; but now that we see thee to be united with her and we are all become one thing, we have brought thee this present; and every little while we will bring thee the like thereof, Inshallah! for that these jewels and jacinths are more plentiful with us than pebbles on the beach and we know the good and the bad of them and their whereabouts and the way to them, and they are easy to us." When the King saw the jewels, his wits were bewildered and his sense was astounded and he said, "By Allah, one single gem of these jewels is worth my realm!" Then he thanked for his bounty Salih the Sea born and, looking towards Queen Julnar, said, "I am abashed before thy brother, for that he hath dealt munificently by me and bestowed on me this splendid gift, which the folk of the land were unable to present." So she thanked her brother for his deed and he said, "O King of the Age, thou hast the prior claim on us and it behoves us to thank thee, for thou hast entreated our sister with kindness and we have entered thy dwelling and eaten of thy victual; and the poet saith[314] ,

'Had I wept before she did in my passion for Saada, * I had
    healed my soul before repentance came.
But she wept before I did: her tears drew mine; and I said, *
    The merit belongs to the precedent.'"

"And" (resumed Salih the Pious) "if we stood on our faces in thy service, O King of the Age, a thousand years, yet had we not the might to requite thee, and this were but a scantling of thy due." The King thanked him with heartiest thanks and the Merman and Merwomen abode with him forty days' space, at the end of which Salih arose and kissed the ground before his brother in law, who asked "What wantest thou, O Salih?" He answered, "O King of the Age, indeed thou hast done us overabundant favours, and we crave of thy bounties that thou deal charitably with us and grant us permission to depart; for we yearn after our people and country and kinsfolk and our homes; so will we never forsake thy service nor that of my sister and my nephew; and by Allah, O King of the Age, 'tis not pleasant to my heart to part from thee; but how shall we do, seeing that we have been reared in the sea and that the sojourn of the shore liketh us not?" When the King heard these words he rose to his feet and farewelled Salih the Sea-born and his mother and his cousins, and all wept together, because of parting and presently they said to him, "Anon we will be with thee again, nor will we forsake thee, but will visit thee every few days." Then they flew off and descending into the sea, disappeared from sight. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Forty-third Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the relations of Julnar the Sea-born farewelled the King and her, weeping together because of parting; then they flew off and descending into the depths disappeared from sight. After this King Shahriman showed the more kindness to Julnar and honoured her with increase of honour; and the little one grew up and flourished, whilst his maternal uncle and grandam and cousins visited the King every few days and abode with him a month or two months at a time. The boy ceased not to increase in beauty and loveliness with increase of years, till he attained the age of fifteen and was unique in his perfection and symmetry. He learnt writing and Koran reading; history, syntax and lexicography; archery, spearplay and horsemanship and what not else behoveth the sons of Kings; nor was there one of the children of the folk of the city, men or women, but would talk of the youth's charms, for he was of surpassing beauty and perfection, even such an one as is praised in the saying of the poet,[315]

"The whiskers write upon his cheek, with ambergris on pearl, *
Two lines, as 'twere with jet upon an apple, line for
line.
Death harbours in his languid eye and slays with every glance,

* And in his cheek is drunkenness, and not in any wine."

And in that of another,

"Upsprings from table of his lovely cheeks[316] * A growth
like broidery my wonder is:
As 'twere a lamp that burns through night hung up * Beneath
the gloom[317] in chains of ambergris."

And indeed the King loved him with exceeding love, and summoning his Wazir and Emirs and the Chief Officers of state and Grandees of his realm, required of them a binding oath that they would make Badr Basim King over them after his sire; and they sware the oath gladly, for the sovran was liberal to the lieges, pleasant in parley and a very compend of goodness, saying naught but that wherein was advantage for the people. On the morrow Shahriman mounted, with all his troops and Emirs and Lords, and went forth into the city and returned. When they drew near the palace, the King dismounted, to wait upon his son who abode on horseback, and he and all the Emirs and Grandees bore the saddlecloth of honour before him, each and every of them bearing it in his turn, till they came to the vestibule of the palace, where the Prince alighted and his father and the Emirs embraced him and seated him on the throne of Kingship, whilst they (including his sire) stood before him. Then Badr Basim judged the people, deposing the unjust and promoting the just and continued so doing till near upon noon, when he descended from the throne and went in to his mother, Julnar the Sea-born, with the crown upon his head, as he were the moon. When she saw him, with the King standing before him, she rose and kissing him, gave him joy of the Sultanate and wished him and his sire length of life and victory over their foes. He sat with her and rested till the hour of mid afternoon prayer, when he took horse and repaired, with the Emirs before him, to the Maydan plain, where he played at arms with his father and his lords, till night fall, when he returned to the palace, preceded by all the folk. He rode forth thus every day to the tilting ground, returning to sit and judge the people and do justice between carl and churl; and thus he continued doing a whole year, at the end of which he began to ride out a-hunting and a-chasing and to go round about in the cities and countries under his rule, proclaiming security and satisfaction and doing after the fashion of Kings; and he was unique among the people of his day for glory and valour and just dealing among the subjects. And it chanced that one day the old King fell sick and his fluttering heart forebode him of translation to the Mansion of Eternity. His sickness grew upon him till he was nigh upon death, when he called his son and commended his mother and subjects to his care and caused all the Emirs and

Grandees once more swear allegiance to the Prince and assured himself of them by strongest oaths; after which he lingered a few days and departed to the mercy of Almighty Allah. His son and widow and all the Emirs and Wazirs and Lords mourned over him, and they built him a tomb and buried him therein. They ceased not ceremonially to mourn for him a whole month, till Salih and his mother and cousins arrived and condoled with their grieving for the King and said, "O Julnar, though the King be dead, yet hath he left this noble and peerless youth, and not dead is whoso leaveth the like of him, the rending lion and the shining moon." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Forty-fourth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Salih brother of Julnar and her mother and cousins said to her, "Albeit the King be dead, yet hath he left behind him as successor this noble and peerless youth, the rending lion and the shining moon." Thereupon the Grandees and notables of the Empire went in to King Badr Basim and said to him, "O King, there is no harm in mourning for the late sovran: but over- mourning beseemeth none save women; wherefore occupy thou not thy heart and our hearts with mourning for thy sire; inasmuch as he hath left thee behind him, and whoso leaveth the like of thee is not dead." Then they comforted him and diverted him and lastly carried him to the bath. When he came out of the Hammam, he donned a rich robe, purfled with gold and embroidered with jewels and jacinths; and, setting the royal crown on his head, sat down on his throne of kingship and ordered the affairs of the folk, doing equal justice between strong and weak, and exacting from the prince the dues of the pauper; wherefore the people loved him with exceeding love. Thus he continued doing for a full year, whilst, every now and then. his kinsfolk of the sea visited him, and his life was pleasant and his eye was cooled. Now it came to pass that his uncle Salih went in one night of the nights to Julnar and saluted her; whereupon she rose and embracing him seated him by her side and asked him, "O my brother, how art thou and my mother and my cousins?" He answered, "O my sister, they are well and glad and in good case, lacking naught save a sight of thy face." Then she set somewhat of food before him and he ate, after which talk ensued between the twain and they spake of King Badr Basim and his beauty and loveliness, his symmetry and skill in cavalarice and cleverness and good breeding. Now Badr was propped upon his elbow hard by them; and, hearing his mother and uncle speak of him, he feigned sleep and listened to their talk.[318] Presently Salih said to his sister, "Thy son is now seventeen years old and is unmarried, and I fear lest mishap befal him and he have no son; wherefore it is my desire to marry him to a Princess of the princesses of the sea, who shall be a match for him in beauty and loveliness." Quoth Julnar, "Name them to me for I know them all." So Salih proceeded to enumerate them to her, one by one, but to each she said, "I like not this one for my son; I will not marry him but to one who is his equal in beauty and loveliness and wit and piety and good breeding and magnanimity and dominion and rank and lineage."[319] Quoth Salih, "I know none other of the daughters of the Kings of the sea, for I have numbered to thee more than an hundred girls and not one of them pleaseth thee: but see, O my sister, whether thy son be asleep or no." So she felt Badr and finding on him the signs of slumber said to Salih, "He is asleep; what hast thou to say and what is thine object in making sure his sleeping?" Replied he, "O my sister, know that I have bethought me of a Mermaid of the mermaids who befitteth thy son; but I fear to name her, lest he be awake and his heart be taken with her love and maybe we shall be unable to win to her; so should he and we and the Grandees of the realm be wearied in vain and trouble betide us through this; for, as saith the poet,

'Love, at first sight, is a spurt of spray;[320] * But a spreading sea when it gaineth sway.'"

When she heard these words, she cried, "Tell me the condition of this girl, and her name for I know all the damsels of the sea, Kings' daughters and others; and, if I judge her worthy of him, I will demand her in marriage for him of her father, though I spend on her whatso my hand possesseth. So recount to me all anent her and fear naught, for my son sleepeth." Quoth Salih, "I fear lest he be awake; and the poet saith,

'I loved him, soon as his praise I heard; * For ear oft loveth ere eye survey.'"

But Julnar said, "Speak out and be brief and fear not, O my brother." So he said, "By Allah, O my sister, none is worthy of thy son save the Princess Jauharah, daughter of King Al- Samandal,[321] for that she is like unto him in beauty and loveliness and brilliancy and perfection; nor is there found, in sea or on land, a sweeter or pleasanter of gifts than she; for she is prime in comeliness and seemlihead of face and symmetrical shape of perfect grace; her cheek is ruddy dight, her brow flower white, her teeth gem-bright, her eyes blackest black and whitest white, her hips of heavy weight, her waist slight and her favour exquisite. When she turneth she shameth the wild cattle[322] and the gazelles and when she walketh, she breedeth envy in the willow branch: when she unveileth her face outshineth sun and moon and all who look upon her she enslaveth soon: sweet lipped and soft sided indeed is she." Now when Julnar heard what Salih said, she replied, "Thou sayest sooth, O my brother! By Allah, I have seen her many and many a time and she was my companion, when we were little ones but now we have no knowledge of each other, for constraint of distance; nor have I set eyes on her for eighteen years. By Allah none is worthy of my son but she!" Now Badr heard all they said and mastered what had passed, first and last, of these praises bestowed on Jauharah daughter of King Al-Samandal; so he fell in love with her on hearsay, pretending sleep the while, wherefore fire was kindled in his heart on her account full sore and he was drowned in a sea without bottom or shore. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Badr Basim heard the words of his uncle Salih and his mother Julnar, praising the daughter of King Al-Samandal, a flame of fire burnt in his heart full sore and he was drowned in a sea which hath nor bottom nor shore. Then Salih, looking at his sister, exclaimed, "By Allah, O my sister, there is no greater fool among the Kings of the sea than her father nor one more violent of temper than he! So name thou not the girl to thy son, till we demand her in marriage of her father. If he favour us with his assent, we will praise Allah Almighty; and if he refuse us and will not give her to thy son to wife, we will say no more about it and seek another match." Answered

Julnar, “Right is thy rede;” and they parleyed no more: but Badr passed the night with a heart on fire with passion for Princess Jauharah. However he concealed his case and spake not of her to his mother or his uncle, albeit he was on coals of fire for love of her. Now when it was morning, the King and his uncle went to the Hammam-bath and washed, after which they came forth and drank wine and the servants set food before them, whereof they and Julnar ate their sufficiency, and washed their hands. Then Salih rose and said to his nephew and sister, “With your leave, I would fain go to my mother and my folk for I have been with you some days and their hearts are troubled with awaiting me.” But Badr Basim said to him, “Tarry with us this day;” and he consented. Then quoth the King, “Come, O my uncle, let us go forth to the garden.” So they sallied forth and promenaded about the pastures and took their solace awhile, after which King Badr lay down under a shady tree, thinking to rest and sleep; but he remembered his uncle’s description of the maiden and her beauty and loveliness and shed railing tears, reciting these two couplets[323] ,

“Were it said to me while the flame is burning within me, *
 And the fire blazing in my heart and bowels,
‘Wouldst thou rather that thou shouldest behold them * Or a
 draught of pure water?’ — I would answer, ‘Them.’”

Then he sighed and wept and lamented, reciting these verses also,

“Who shall save me from love of a lovely gazelle, * Brighter
 browed than the sunshine, my bonnibel!
My heart, erst free from her love, now burns * With fire for
 the maid of Al-Samandal.”

When Salih heard what his nephew said, he smote hand upon hand and said, “There is no god but the God! Mohammed is the Apostle of God and there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” adding, “O my son, heardest thou what passed between me and thy mother respecting Princess Jauharah?” Replied Badr Basim, “Yes, O my uncle, and I fell in love with her by hearsay through what I heard you say. Indeed, my heart cleaveth to her and I cannot live without her." Rejoined his uncle, "O King, let us return to thy mother and tell her how the case standeth and crave her leave that I may take thee with me and seek the Princess in marriage of her sire; after which we will farewell her and I and thou will return. Indeed, I fear to take thee and go without her leave, lest she be wroth with me; and verily the right would be on her side, for I should be the cause of her separation from us. Moreover, the city would be left without king and there would be none to govern the citizens and look to their affairs, so should the realm be disordered against thee and the kingship depart from thy hands." But Badr Basim, hearing these words, cried, "O my uncle, if I return to my mother and consult her on such matter, she will not suffer me to do this; wherefore I will not return to my mother nor consult her." And he wept before him and presently added, "I will go with thee and tell her not and after will return." When Salih heard what his nephew said, he was confused anent his case and said, "I crave help of the Almighty in any event." Then, seeing that Badr Basim was resolved to go with him, whether his mother would let him or no, he drew from his finger a seal ring, whereon were graven certain of the names of Allah the Most High, and gave it to him, saying, "Put this on thy finger, and thou shalt be safe from drowning and other perils and from the mischief of sea beasts and great fishes." So King Badr Basim took the ring and set it on his finger. Then they dove into the deep — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Forty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Badr Basim and his uncle, after diving into the deep, fared on till they came to Salih's palace, where they found Badr Basim's grandmother, the mother of his mother, seated with her kinsfolk and, going in to them, kissed their hands. When the old Queen saw Badr, she rose to him and embracing him, kissed him between the eyes and said to him, "A blessed coming, O my son! How didst thou leave thy mother Julnar?" He replied, "She is well in health and fortune, and saluteth thee and her uncle's daughters." Then Salih related to his mother what had occurred between him and his sister and how King Badr

Basim had fallen in love with the Princess Jauharah daughter of Al-Samandal by report and told her the whole tale from beginning to end adding, “He hath not come save to demand her in wedlock of her sire;” which when the old Queen heard, she was wroth against her son with exceeding wrath and sore troubled and concerned and said, “O Salih, O my son, in very sooth thou diddest wrong to name the Princess before thy nephew, knowing, as thou dost, that her father is stupid and violent, little of wit and tyrannical of temper, grudging his daughter to every suitor; for all the Monarchs of the Main have sought her hand, but he rejected them all; nay, he would none of them, saying, ‘Ye are no match for her in beauty or in loveliness or in aught else.’ Wherefore we fear to demand her in wedlock of him, lest he reject us, even as be hath rejected others; and we are a folk of high spirit and should return broken- hearted.” Hearing these words Salih answered, “O my mother what is to do? For King Badr Basim saith, ‘There is no help but that I seek her in marriage of her sire, though I expend my whole kingdom’; and he avoucheth that, an he take her not to wife, he will die of love for her and longing.” And Salih continued, “He is handsomer and goodlier than she; his father was King of all the Persians, whose King he now is, and none is worthy of Jauharah save Badr Basim. Wherefore I purpose to carry her father a gift of jacinths and jewels befitting his dignity, and demand her of him in marriage. An he object to us that he is a King, behold, our man also is a King and the son of a King; or, if he object to us her beauty, behold our man is more beautiful than she; or, again, if he object to us the vastness of his dominion, behold our man’s dominion is vaster than hers and her father’s and numbereth more troops and guards, for that his kingdom is greater than that of Al- Samandal. Needs must I do my endeavour to further the desire of my sister’s son, though it relieve me of my life; because I was the cause of whatso hath betided; and, even as I plunged him into the ocean of her love, so will I go about to marry him to her, and may Almighty Allah help me thereto!” Rejoined his mother, “Do as thou wilt, but beware of giving her father rough words, whenas thou speakest with him; for thou knowest his stupidity and violence and I fear lest he do thee a mischief, for he knoweth not respect for any.” And Salih answered, “Hearkening and obedience.” Then he sprang up and taking two bags full of gems such as rubies and bugles of emerald, noble ores and all manner jewels gave them to his servants to carry and set out with his nephew for the palace of Al-Samandal. When they came thither, he sought audience of the King and being admitted to his presence, kissed ground before him and saluted him with the goodliest Salam. The King rose to him and honouring him with the utmost honour, bade him be seated. So he sat down and presently the King said to him, "A blessed coming: indeed thou hast desolated us, O Salih! But what bringeth thee to us? Tell me thine errand that we may fulfil it to thee." Whereupon Salih arose and, kissing the ground a second time, said, "O King of the Age, my errand is to Allah and the magnanimous liege lord and the valiant lion, the report of whose good qualities the caravans far and near have dispread and whose renown for benefits and beneficence and clemency and graciousness and liberality to all climes and countries hath sped." Thereupon he opened the two bags and, displaying their contents before Al-Samandal, said to him, "O King of the Age, haply wilt thou accept my gift and by showing favour to me heal my heart." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Forty-seventh Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Salih offered his gift to the King, saying, "My aim and end is that the Sovran show favour to me and heal my heart by accepting my present," King Al-Samandal asked, "With what object dost thou gift me with this gift? Tell me thy tale and acquaint me with thy requirement. An its accomplishment be in my power I will straightway accomplish it to thee and spare thee toil and trouble; and if I be unable thereunto, Allah compelleth not any soul aught beyond its power.''[324] So Salih rose and kissing ground three times, said, "O King of the Age, that which I desire thou art indeed able to do; it is in thy power and thou art master thereof; and I impose not on the King a difficulty, nor am I Jinn-demented, that I should crave of the King a thing whereto he availeth not; for one of the sages saith, 'An thou wouldst be complied with ask that which can be readily supplied'. Wherefore, that of which I am come in quest, the King (whom Allah preserve!) is able to grant." The King replied, "Ask what thou wouldst have, and state thy case and seek thy need." Then said Salih,[325] "O King of the Age, know that I come as a suitor, seeking the unique pearl and the hoarded jewel, the Princess Jauharah, daughter of our lord the King; wherefore, O King disappoint thou not thy suitor." Now when the King heard this, he laughed till he fell backwards, in mockery of him and said, "O Salih, I had thought thee a man of worth and a youth of sense, seeking naught save what was reasonable and speaking not save advisedly. What then hath befallen thy reason and urged thee to this monstrous matter and mighty hazard, that thou seekest in marriage daughters of Kings, lords of cities and climates? Say me, art thou of a rank to aspire to this great eminence and hath thy wit failed thee to this extreme pass that thou affrontest me with this demand?" Replied Salih, "Allah amend the King! I seek her not for myself (albeit, an I did, I am her match and more than her match, for thou knowest that my father was King of the Kings of the sea, for all thou art this day our King), but I seek her for King Badr Basim, lord of the lands of the Persians and son of King Shahriman, whose puissance thou knowest. An thou object that thou art a mighty great King, King Badr is a greater; and if thou object thy daughter's beauty King Badr is more beautiful than she and fairer of form and more excellent of rank and lineage; and he is the champion of the people of his day. Wherefore, if thou grant my request, O King of the Age thou wilt have set the thing in its stead; but, if thou deal arrogantly with us, thou wilt not use us justly nor travel with us the 'road which is straight'.[326] Moreover, O King, thou knowest that the Princess Jauharah, the daughter of our lord the King must needs be wedded and bedded, for the sage saith, a girl's lot is either grace of marriage or the grave.[327] Wherefore, an thou mean to marry her, my sister's son is worthier of her than any other man." Now when King Al-Samandal heard Salih's words, he was wroth with exceeding wrath; his reason well nigh fled and his soul was like to depart his body for rage, and he cried, "O dog, shall the like of thee dare to bespeak me thus and name my daughter in the assemblies,[328] saying that the son of thy sister Julnar is a match for her? Who art thou and who is this sister of thine and who is her son and who was his father,[329] that thou durst say to me such say and address me with such address? What are ye all, in comparison with my daughter, but dogs?” And he cried out to his pages, saying, “Take yonder gallows-bird’s head!” So they drew their swords and made for Salih but he fled and for the palace gate sped; and reaching the entrance, he found of his cousins and kinsfolk and servants, more than a thousand horse armed cap-à- pie in iron and close knitted mail-coats, hending in hand spears and naked swords glittering white. And these when they saw Salih come running out of the palace (they having been sent by his mother to his succour), questioned him and he told them what was to do; whereupon they knew that the King was a fool and violent-tempered to boot. So they dismounted and baring their blades, went in to the King Al-Samandal, whom they found seated upon the throne of his Kingship, unaware of their coming and enraged against Salih with furious rage; and they beheld his eunuchs and pages and officers unprepared. When the King saw them enter, drawn brand in hand, he cried out to his people, saying “Woe to you! Take me the heads of these hounds!” But ere an hour had sped Al-Samandal’s party were put to the route and relied upon flight, and Salih and his kinsfolk seized upon the King and pinioned him. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Forty-eighth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Salih and his kinsfolk pinioned the King, Princess Jauharah awoke and knew that her father was a captive and his guards slain. So she fled forth the palace to a certain island, and climbing up into a high tree, hid herself in its summit. Now when the two parties came to blows, some of King Al-Samandal’s pages fled and Badr Basim meeting them, questioned them of their case and they told him what had happened. But when he heard that the King was a prisoner, Badr feared for himself and fled, saying in his heart, “Verily, all this turmoil is on my account and none is wanted but I.” So he sought safety in flight, security to sight, knowing not whither he went; but destiny from Eternity fore-ordained drave him to the very island where the Princess had taken refuge, and he came to the very tree whereon she sat and threw himself down, like a dead man, thinking to lie and repose himself and knowing not there is no rest for the pursued, for none knoweth what Fate hideth for him in the future. As he lay down, he raised his eyes to the tree and they met the eyes of the Princess. So he looked at her and seeing her to be like the moon rising in the East, cried, “Glory to Him who fashioned yonder perfect form, Him who is the Creator of all things and who over all things is Almighty! Glory to the Great God, the Maker, the Shaper and Fashioner! By Allah, if my presentiments be true, this is Jauharah, daughter of King Al-Samandal! Methinks that, when she heard of our coming to blows with her father, she fled to this island and, happening upon this tree, hid herself on its head; but, if this be not the Princess herself, ’tis one yet goodlier than she.” Then he bethought himself of her case and said in himself, “I will arise and lay hands on her and question her of her condition; and, if she be indeed the she, I will demand her in wedlock of herself and so win my wish.” So he stood up and said to her, “O end of all desire, who art thou and who brought thee hither?” She looked at Badr Basim and seeing him to be as the full moon,[330] when it shineth from under the black cloud, slender of shape and sweet of smile answered, “O fair of fashion, I am Princess Jauharah, daughter of King Al-Samandal, and I took refuge in this place, because Salih and his host came to blows with my sire and slew his troops and took him prisoner, with some of his men, wherefore I fled, fearing for my very life,” presently adding, “And I weet not what fortune hath done with my father.” When King Badr Basim heard these words he marvelled with exceeding marvel at this strange chance, and thought: “Doubtless I have won my wish by the capture of her sire.” Then he looked at Jauharah and said to her, “Come down, O my lady; for I am slain for love of thee and thine eyes have captivated me. On my account and thine are all these broils and battles; for thou must know that I am King Badr Basim, Lord of the Persians and Salih is my mother’s brother and he it is who came to thy sire to demand thee of him in marriage. As for me, I have quitted my kingdom for thy sake, and our meeting here is the rarest coincidence. So come down to me and let us twain fare for thy father’s palace, that I may beseech uncle Salih to release him and I may make thee my lawful wife.” When Jauharah heard his words, she said in herself, “ ’Twas on this miserable gallows bird’s account, then, that all this hath befallen and that my father hath fallen prisoner and his chamberlains and suite have been slain and I have been departed from my palace, a miserable exile and have fled for refuge to this island. But, an I devise not against him some device to defend myself from him, he will possess himself of me and take his will of me; for he is in love and for aught that he doeth a lover is not blamed.'" Then she beguiled him with winning words and soft speeches, whilst he knew not the perfidy against him she purposed, and asked him, "O my lord and light of my eyes, say me, art thou indeed King Badr Basim, son of Queen Julnar?" And he answered, "Yes, O my lady." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Forty-ninth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Jauharah, daughter of King Al-Samandal, asked the youth, "Art thou in very sooth King Badr Basim, son of Queen Julnar?" And he answered, "Yes, O my lady!" Then she, "May Allah cut off my father and gar his kingdom cease from him and heal not his heart neither avert from him strangerhood, if he could desire a comelier than thou or aught goodlier than these fair qualities of thine! By Allah, he is of little wit and judgment!" presently adding, "But, O King of the Age, punish him not for that he hath done; more by token that an thou love me a span, verily I love thee a cubit. Indeed, I have fallen into the net of thy love and am become of the number of thy slain. The love that was with thee hath transferred itself to me and there is left thereof with thee but a tithe of that which is with me." So saying, she came down from the tree and drawing near him strained him to her bosom and fell to kissing him; whereat passion and desire for her redoubled on him and doubting not but she loved him, he trusted in her, and returned her kisses and caresses. Presently he said to her, "By Allah, O Princess, my uncle Salih set forth to me not a fortieth part of thy charms; no, nor a quarter-carat[331] of the four-and-twenty." Then Jauharah pressed him to her bosom and pronounced some unintelligible words; then spat on his face, saying, "Quit this form of man and take shape of bird, the handsomest of birds, white of robe, with red bill and legs." Hardly had she spoken, when King Badr Basim found himself transformed into a bird, the handsomest of birds, who shook himself and stood looking at her. Now Jauharah had with her one of her slave-girls, by name Marsínah[332] ; so she called her and said to her, “By Allah, but that I fear for the life of my father, who is his uncle’s prisoner, I would kill him! Allah never requite him with good! How unlucky was his coming to us; for all this trouble is due to his hard- headedness! But do thou, O slave-girl, bear him to the Thirsty Island and leave him there to die of thirst.” So Marsinah carried him to the island in question and would have returned and left him there but she said in herself, “By Allah, the lord of such beauty and loveliness deserveth not to die of thirst!” So she went forth from that island and brought him to another abounding in trees and fruits and rills and, setting him down there, returned to her mistress and told her, “I have left him on the Thirsty Island.” Such was the case with Badr Basim; but as regards King Salih he sought for Jauharah after capturing the King and killing his folk; but, finding her not, returned to his palace and said to his mother, “Where is my sister’s son, King Badr Basim?” “By Allah, O my son,” replied she, “I know nothing of him! For when it reached him that you and King Al-Samandal had come to blows and that strife and slaughter had betided between you, he was affrighted and fled.” When Salih heard this, he grieved for his nephew and said, “O my mother, by Allah, we have dealt negligently by King Badr and I fear lest he perish or lest one of King Al- Samandal’s soldiers or his daughter Jauharah fall in with him. So should we come to shame with his mother and no good betide us from her, for that I took him without her leave.” Then he despatched guards and scouts throughout the sea and elsewhere to seek for Badr; but they could learn no tidings of him; so they returned and told King Salih, wherefore cark and care redoubled on him and his breast was straitened for King Badr Basim. So far concerning nephew and uncle, but as for Julnar the Sea-born, after their departure she abode in expectation of them, but her son returned not and she heard no report of him. So when many days of fruitless waiting had gone by, she arose and going down into the sea, repaired to her mother, who sighting her rose to her and kissed her and embraced her, as did the Mermaids her cousins. Then she questioned her mother of King Badr Basim, and she answered, saying, “O my daughter, of a truth he came hither with his uncle, who took jacinths and jewels and carrying them to King Al-Samandal, demanded his daughter in marriage for thy son but he consented not and was violent against thy brother in words. Now I had sent Salih nigh upon a thousand horse and a battle befel between him and King Al-Samandal; but Allah aided thy brother against him, and he slew his guards and troops and took himself prisoner. Meanwhile, tidings of this reached thy son, and it would seem as if he feared for himself; wherefore he fled forth from us, without our will, and returned not to us, nor have we heard any news of him." Then Julnar enquired for King Salih, and his mother said, "He is seated on the throne of his kingship, in the stead of King Al-Samandal, and hath sent in all directions to seek thy son and Princess Jauharah." When Julnar heard the maternal words, she mourned for her son with sad mourning and was highly incensed against her brother Salih for that he had taken him and gone down with him into the sea without her leave; and she said, "O my mother, I fear for our realm; as I came to thee without letting any know; and I dread tarrying with thee, lest the state fall into disorder and the kingdom pass from our hands. Wherefore I deem best to return and govern the reign till it please Allah to order our son's affair for us. But look ye forget him not neither neglect his case; for should he come to any harm, it would infallibly kill me, since I see not the world save in him and delight but in his life." She replied, "With love and gladness, O my daughter. Ask not what we suffer by reason of his loss and absence." Then she sent to seek for her grandson, whilst Julnar returned to her kingdom, weeping-eyed and heavy- hearted, and indeed the gladness of the world was straitened upon her. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fiftieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Queen Juluar returned from her mother to her own realm, her breast was straitened and she was in ill-case. So fared it with her; but as regards King Badr Basim, after Princess Jauharah had ensorcelled him and had sent him with her handmaid to the Thirsty Island, saying, "Leave him there to die of thirst," and Marsinah had set him down in a green islet, he abode days and nights in the semblance of a bird eating of its fruits and drinking of its waters and knowing not whither to go nor how to fly; till, one day, there came a certain fowler to the island to catch somewhat wherewithal to get his living. He espied King Badr Basim in his form of a white-robed bird, with red bill and legs, captivating the sight and bewildering the thought; and, looking thereat, said in himself "Verily, yonder is a beautiful bird: never saw I its like in fairness or form." So he cast his net over Badr and taking him, carried him to the town, mentally resolved to sell him for a high price. On his way one of the townsfolk accosted him and said, "For how much this fowl, O fowler?" Quoth the fowler, "What wilt thou do with him an thou buy him?" Answered the other, "I will cut his throat and eat him;" whereupon said the birder, "Who could have the heart to kill this bird and eat him? Verily, I mean to present him to our King, who will give me more than thou wouldest give me and will not kill him, but will divert himself by gazing upon his beauty and grace, for in all my life, since I have been a fowler, I never saw his like among land game or water fowl. The utmost thou wouldst give me for him, however much thou covet him, would be a dirham, and, by Allah Almighty I will not sell him!" Then he carried the bird up to the King's palace and when the King saw it, its beauty and grace pleased him and the red colour of its beak and legs. So he sent an eunuch to buy it, who accosted the fowler and said to him, "Wilt thou sell this bird?" Answered he, "Nay, 'tis a gift from me to the King.''[333] So the eunuch carried the bird to the King and told him what the man had said; and he took it and gave the fowler ten dinars, whereupon he kissed ground and fared forth. Then the eunuch carried the bird to the palace and placing him in a fine cage, hung him up after setting meat and drink by him. When the King came down from the Divan, he said to the eunuch, "Where is the bird? Bring it to me, that I may look upon it; for, by Allah, 'tis beautiful!" So the eunuch brought the cage and set it between the hands of the King, who looked and seeing the food untouched, said, "By Allah, I wis not what it will eat, that I may nourish it!" Then he called for food and they laid the tables and the King ate. Now when the bird saw the flesh and meats and fruits and sweet meats, he ate of all that was upon the trays before the King, whereat the Sovran and all the bystanders marvelled and the King said to his attendants, eunuchs and Mamelukes, "In all my life I never saw a bird eat as doth this bird!" Then he sent an eunuch to fetch his wife that she might enjoy looking upon the bird, and he went in to summon her and said, “O my lady, the King desireth thy presence, that thou mayst divert thyself with the sight of a bird he hath bought. When we set on the food, it flew down from its cage and perching on the table, ate of all that was thereon. So arise, O my lady, and solace thee with the sight for it is goodly of aspect and is a wonder of the wonders of the age.” Hearing these words she came in haste; but, when she noted the bird, she veiled her face and turned to fare away. The King rose up and looking at her, asked, “Why dost thou veil thy face when there is none in presence save the women and eunuchs who wait on thee and thy husband?” Answered she, “O King, this bird is no bird, but a man like thyself.” He rejoined, “Thou liest, this is too much of a jest. How should he be other than a bird?”; and she “O King, by Allah, I do not jest with thee nor do I tell thee aught but the truth; for verily this bird is King Badr Basim, son of King Shahriman, Lord of the land of the Persians, and his mother is Julnar the Sea-born.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fifty-first Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King’s wife said to the King, “Verily, this is no bird but a man like thyself: he is King Badr Basim son of King Shariman and his mother is Julnar the Sea born,” quoth the King, “And how came he in this shape?”; and quoth she, “Princess Jauharah, daughter of King Al-Samandal, hath enchanted him:” and told him all that had passed with King Badr Basim from first to last.[334] The King marvelled exceedingly at his wife’s words and conjured her, on his life, to free Badr from his enchantment (for she was the notablest enchantress of her age), and not leave him in torment, saying, “May Almighty Allah cut off Jauharah’s hand, for a foul witch as she is! How little is her faith and how great her craft and perfidy!” Said the Queen, “Do thou say to him, ‘O Badr Basim, enter yonder closet!’” So the King bade him enter the closet and he went in obediently. Then the Queen veiled her face and taking in her hand a cup of water,[335] entered the closet where she pronounced over the water certain incomprehensible words ending with, “By the virtue of these mighty names and holy verses and by the majesty of Allah Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, the Quickener of the dead and

Appointer of the means of daily bread and the terms determined, quit this thy form wherein thou art and return to the shape in which the Lord created thee!” Hardly had she made an end of her words, when the bird trembled once and became a man; and the King saw before him a handsome youth, than whom on earth’s face was none goodlier. But when King Badr Basim found himself thus restored to his own form he cried, “There is no god but the God and Mohammed is the Apostle of God! Glory be to the Creator of all creatures and Provider of their provision, and Ordainer of their life terms preordained!” Then he kissed the King’s hand and wished him long life, and the King kissed his head and said to him, “O Badr Basim, tell me thy history from commencement to conclusion.” So he told him his whole tale, concealing naught; and the King marvelled thereat and said to him, “O Badr Basim, Allah hath saved thee from the spell: but what hath thy judgment decided and what thinkest thou to do?” Replied he, “O King of the Age, I desire thy bounty that thou equip me a ship with a company of thy servants and all that is needful; for ’tis long since I have been absent and I dread lest the kingdom depart from me. And I misdoubt me my mother is dead of grief for my loss; and this doubt is the stronger for that she knoweth not what is come of me nor whether I am alive or dead. Wherefore, I beseech thee, O King, to crown thy favours to me by granting me what I seek.” The King, after beholding the beauty and grace of Badr Basim and listening to his sweet speech, said, “I hear and obey.” So he fitted him out a ship, to which he transported all that was needful and which he manned with a company of his servants; and Badr Basim set sail in it, after having taken leave of the King. They sailed over the sea ten successive days with a favouring wind; but, on the eleventh day, the ocean became troubled with exceeding trouble, the ship rose and fell and the sailors were powerless to govern her. So they drifted at the mercy of the waves, till the craft neared a rock in mid-sea which fell upon her[336] and broke her up and all on board were drowned, save King Badr Basim who got astride one of the planks of the vessel, after having been nigh upon destruction. The plank ceased not to be borne by the set of the sea, whilst he knew not whither he went and had no means of directing its motion, as the wind and waves wrought for three whole days. But on the fourth the plank grounded with him on the sea-shore where he sighted a white city, as it were a dove passing white, builded upon a tongue of land that jutted out into the deep and it was goodly of ordinance, with high towers and lofty walls against which the waves beat. When Badr Basim saw this, he rejoiced with exceeding joy, for he was well-nigh dead of hunger and thirst, and dismounting from the plank, would have gone up the beach to the city; but there came down to him mules and asses and horses, in number as the sea-sands and fell to striking at him and staying him from landing. So he swam round to the back of the city, where he waded to shore and entering the place, found none therein and marvelled at this, saying, "Would I knew to whom doth this city belong, wherein is no lord nor any liege, and whence came these mules and asses and horses that hindered me from landing?" And he mused over his case. Then he walked on at hazard till he espied an old man, a grocer.[337] So he saluted him and the other returned his salam and seeing him to be a handsome young man, said to him, "O youth, whence comest thou and what brought thee to this city?" Badr told him his story; at which the old man marvelled and said, "O my son, didst thou see any on thy way?" He replied, "Indeed, O my father, I wondered in good sooth to sight a city void of folk." Quoth the Shaykh, "O my son, come up into the shop, lest thou perish." So Badr Basim went up into the shop and sat down; whereupon the old man set before him somewhat of food, saying, "O my son, enter the inner shop; glory be to Him who hath preserved thee from yonder she- Sathanas!" King Badr Basim was sore affrighted at the grocer's words; but he ate his fill and washed his hands; then glanced at his host and said to him, "O my lord, what is the meaning of these words? Verily thou hast made me fearful of this city and its folk." Replied the old man, "Know, O my son, that this is the City of the Magicians and its Queen is as she were a she-Satan, a sorceress and a mighty enchantress, passing crafty and perfidious exceedingly. All thou sawest of horses and mules and asses were once sons of Adam like thee and me; they were also strangers, for whoever entereth this city, being a young man like thyself, this miscreant witch taketh him and hometh him for forty days, after which she enchanteth him, and he becometh a mule or a horse or an ass, of those animals thou sawest on the sea-shore." —

And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fifty-second Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old grocer related to King Badr Basim the history of the enchantress ending with, "All these people hath she spelled; and, when it was thy intent to land they feared lest thou be transmewed like themselves; so they counselled thee by signs that said, 'Land not,' of their solicitude for thee, fearing that haply she should do with thee like as she had done with them. She possessed herself of this city and seized it from its citizens by sorcery and her name is Queen Lab, which being interpreted, meaneth in Arabic 'Almanac of the Sun.' "[338] When Badr Basim heard what the old man said, he was affrighted with sore affright and trembled like reed in wind saying in himself, "Hardly do I feel me free from the affliction wherein I was by reason of sorcery, when Destiny casteth me into yet sorrier case!" And he fell a-musing over his condition and that which had betided him. When the Shaykh looked at him and saw the violence of his terror, he said to him, "O my son, come, sit at the threshold of the shop and look upon yonder creatures and upon their dress and complexion and that wherein they are by reason of gramarye and dread not; for the Queen and all in the city love and tender me and will not vex my heart or trouble my mind." So King Badr Basim came out and sat at the shop-door, looking out upon the folk; and there passed by him a world of creatures without number. But when the people saw him, they accosted the grocer and said to him, "O elder, is this thy captive and thy prey gotten in these days?" The old man replied, "He is my brother's son, I heard that his father was dead; so I sent for him and brought him here that I might quench with him the fire of my home-sickness." Quoth they, "Verily, he is a comely youth; but we fear for him from Queen Lab, lest she turn on thee with treachery and take him from thee, for she loveth handsome young men." Quoth the Shaykh, "The Queen will not gainsay my commandment, for she loveth and tendereth me; and when she shall know that he is my brother's son, she will not molest him or afflict me in him neither trouble my heart on his account." Then King Badr Basim abode some months with the grocer, eating and drinking, and the old man loved him with exceeding love. One day, as he sat in the shop according to his custom, behold, there came up a thousand eunuchs, with drawn swords and clad in various kinds of raiment and girt with jewelled girdles: all rode Arabian steeds and bore in baldrick Indian blades. They saluted the grocer, as they passed his shop and were followed by a thousand damsels like moons, clad in various raiments of silks and satins fringed with gold and embroidered with jewels of sorts, and spears were slung to their shoulders. In their midst rode a damsel mounted on a Rabite mare, saddled with a saddle of gold set with various kinds of jewels and jacinths; and they reached in a body the Shaykh's shop. The damsels saluted him and passed on, till, lo and behold! up came Queen Lab, in great state, and seeing King Badr Basim sitting in the shop, as he were the moon at its full, was amazed at his beauty and loveliness and became passionately enamoured of him, and distraught with desire of him. So she alighted and sitting down by King Badr Basim said to the old man, "Whence hadst thou this handsome one?"; and the Shaykh replied, "He is my brother's son, and is lately come to me." Quoth Lab, "Let him be with me this night, that I may talk with him;" and quoth the old man, "Wilt thou take him from me and not enchant him?" Said she, "Yes," and said he, "Swear to me." So she sware to him that she would not do him any hurt or ensorcell him, and bidding bring him a fine horse, saddled and bridled with a golden bridle and decked with trappings all of gold set with jewels, gave the old man a thousand dinars saying, "Use this."[339] Then she took Badr Basim and carried him off, as he were the full moon on its fourteenth night, whilst all the folk, seeing his beauty, were grieved for him and said, "By Allah, verily, this youth deserveth not to be bewitched by yonder sorceress, the accursed!" Now King Badr Basim heard all they said, but was silent, committing his case to Allah Almighty, till they came to — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fifty-third Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that King Badr Basim ceased not faring with Queen Lab and her suite till they came to her palace-gate, where the Emirs and eunuchs and Lords of the realm took foot and she bade the Chamberlains dismiss her

Officers and Grandees, who kissed ground and went away, whilst she entered the palace with Badr Basim and her eunuchs and women. Here he found a place, whose like he had never seen at all, for it was builded of gold and in its midst was a great basin brimfull of water midmost a vast flower- garden. He looked at the garden and saw it abounding in birds of various kinds and colours, warbling in all manner tongues and voices, pleasurable and plaintive. And everywhere he beheld great state and dominion and said, "Glory be to God, who of His bounty and long-suffering provideth those who serve other than Himself!" The Queen sat down at a latticed window overlooking the garden on a couch of ivory, whereon was a high bed, and King Badr Basim seated himself by her side. She kissed him and pressing him to her breast, bade her women bring a tray of food. So they brought a tray of red gold, inlaid with pearls and jewels and spread with all manner of viands and he and she ate, till they were satisfied, and washed their hands; after which the waiting-women set on flagons of gold and silver and glass, together with all kinds of flowers and dishes of dried fruits. Then the Queen summoned the singing-women and there came ten maidens, as they were moons, hending all manner of musical instruments. Queen Lab crowned a cup and drinking it off, filled another and passed it to King Badr Basim, who took it and drank; and they ceased not to drink till they had their sufficiency. Then she bade the damsels sing, and they sang all manner modes till it seemed to Badr Basim as if the palace danced with him for joy. His sense was ecstasied and his breast broadened, and he forgot his strangerhood and said in himself, "Verily, this Queen is young and beautiful[340] and I will never leave her; for her kingdom is vaster than my kingdom and she is fairer than Princess Jauharah." So he ceased not to drink with her till even-tide came, when they lighted the lamps and waxen candles and diffused censer-perfumes; nor did they leave drinking, till they were both drunken, and the singing-women sang the while. Then Queen Lab, being in liquor, rose from her seat and lay down on a bed and dismissing her women called to Badr Basim to come and sleep by her side. So he lay with her, in all delight of life till the morning. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fifty-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Queen awoke she repaired to the Hammam-bath in the palace, King Badr Basim being with her, and they bathed and were purified; after which she clad him in the finest of raiment and called for the service of wine. So the waiting women brought the drinking-gear and they drank. Presently, the Queen arose and taking Badr Basim by the hand, sat down with him on chairs and bade bring food, whereof they ate, and washed their hands. Then the damsels fetched the drinking gear and fruits and flowers and confections, and they ceased not to eat and drink,[341] whilst the singing-girls sang various airs till the evening. They gave not over eating and drinking and merry- making for a space of forty days, when the Queen said to him, "O Badr Basim, say me whether is the more pleasant, this place or the shop of thine uncle the grocer?" He replied, "By Allah, O Queen, this is the pleasanter, for my uncle is but a beggarly man, who vendeth pot-herbs." She laughed at his words and the twain lay together in the pleasantest of case till the morning, when King Badr Basim awoke from sleep and found not Queen Lab by his side, so he said, "Would Heaven I knew where can she have gone!" And indeed he was troubled at her absence and perplexed about the case, for she stayed away from him a great while and did not return; so he donned his dress and went seeking her but not finding her, and he said to himself, "Haply, she is gone to the flower-garden." Thereupon he went out into the garden and came to a running rill beside which he saw a white she-bird and on the stream-bank a tree full of birds of various colours, and he stood and watched the birds without their seeing him. And behold, a black bird flew down upon that white-she bird and fell to billing her pigeon- fashion, then he leapt on her and trod her three consecutive times, after which the bird changed and became a woman. Badr looked at her and lo! it was Queen Lab. So he knew that the black bird was a man transmewed and that she was enamoured of him and had transformed herself into a bird, that he might enjoy her; wherefore jealousy got hold upon him and he was wroth with the Queen because of the black bird. Then he returned to his place and lay down on the carpet-bed and after an hour or so she came back to him and fell to kissing him and jesting with him; but being sore incensed against her he answered her not a word. She saw what was to do with him and was assured that he had witnessed what befel her when she was a white bird and was trodden by the black bird; yet she discovered naught to him but concealed what ailed her. When he had done her need, he said to her, “O Queen, I would have thee give me leave to go to my uncle’s shop, for I long after him and have not seen him these forty days.” She replied, “Go to him but tarry not from me, for I cannot brook to be parted from thee, nor can I endure without thee an hour.” He said, “I hear and I obey,” and mounting, rode to the shop of the Shaykh, the grocer, who welcomed him and rose to him and embracing him said to him, “How hast thou fared with yonder idolatress?” He replied, “I was well in health and happiness till this last night,” and told him what had passed in the garden with the black bird.[342] Now when the old man heard his words, he said, “Beware of her, for know that the birds upon the tree were all young men and strangers, whom she loved and enchanted and turned into birds. That black bird thou sawest was one of her Mamelukes whom she loved with exceeding love, till he cast his eyes upon one of her women, wherefore she changed him into a black bird”; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Badr Basim acquainted the old grocer with all the doings of Queen Lab and what he had seen of her proceedings, the Shaykh gave him to know that all the birds upon the tree were young men and strangers whom she had enchanted, and that the black bird was one of her Mamelukes whom she had transmewed. “And,” continued the Shaykh, “whenas she lusteth after him she transformeth herself into a she-bird that he may enjoy her, for she still loveth him with passionate love. When she found that thou knewest of her case, she plotted evil against thee, for she loveth thee not wholly. But no harm shall betide thee from her, so long as I protect thee; therefore fear nothing; for I am a Moslem, by name Abdallah, and there is none in my day more magical than I; yet do I not make use of gramarye save upon constraint. Many a time have I put to naught the sorceries of yonder accursed and delivered folk from her, and I care not for her, because she can do me no hurt: nay, she feareth me with exceeding fear, as do all in the city who, like her, are magicians and serve the fire, not the Omnipotent Sire. So to-morrow, come thou to me and tell me what she doth with thee; for this very night she will cast about to destroy thee, and I will tell thee how thou shalt do with her, that thou mayst save thyself from her malice." Then King Badr Basim farewelled the Shaykh and returned to the Queen whom he found awaiting him. When she saw him, she rose and seating him and welcoming him brought him meat and drink and the two ate till they had enough and washed their hands; after which she called for wine and they drank till the night was well nigh half spent, when she plied him with cup after cup till he was drunken and lost sense[343] and wit. When she saw him thus, she said to him, "I conjure thee by Allah and by whatso thou worshippest, if I ask thee a question wilt thou inform me rightly and answer me truly?" And he being drunken, answered, "Yes, O my lady." Quoth she, "O my lord and light of mine eyes, when thou awokest last night and foundest me not, thou soughtest me, till thou sawest me in the garden, under the guise of a white she-bird, and also thou sawest the black bird leap on me and tread me. Now I will tell the truth of this matter. That black bird was one of my Mamelukes, whom I loved with exceeding love; but one day he cast his eyes upon a certain of my slave-girls, wherefore jealousy gat hold upon me and I transformed him by my spells into a black bird and her I slew. But now I cannot endure without him a single hour; so, whenever I lust after him, I change myself into a she-bird and go to him, that he may leap me and enjoy me, even as thou hast seen. Art thou not therefore incensed against me, because of this, albeit by the virtue of Fire and Light, Shade and Heat, I love thee more than ever and have made thee my portion of the world?" He answered (being drunken), "Thy conjecture of the cause of my rage is correct, and it had no reason other than this." With this she embraced him and kissed him and made great show of love to him; then she lay down to sleep and he by her side. Presently about midnight she rose from the carpet-bed and King Badr Basim was awake; but he feigned sleep and watched stealthily to see what she would do. She took out of a red bag a something red, which she planted a-middlemost the chamber, and it became a stream, running like the sea; after which she took a handful of barley and strewing it on the ground, watered it with water from the river; whereupon it became wheat in the ear, and she gathered it and ground it into flour. Then she set it aside and returning to bed, lay down by Badr Basim till morning when he arose and washed his face and asked her leave to visit the Shaykh his uncle. She gave him permission and he repaired to Abdallah and told him what had passed. The old man laughed and said, "By Allah, this miscreant witch plotteth mischief against thee; but reck thou not of her ever!" Then he gave him a pound of parched corn[344] and said to him, "Take this with thee and know that, when she seeth it, she will ask thee, 'What is this and what wilt thou do with it?' Do thou answer, 'Abundance of good things is good'; and eat of it. Then will she bring forth to thee parched grain of her own and say to thee, 'Eat of this Sawík; and do thou feign to her that thou eatest thereof, but eat of this instead, and beware and have a care lest thou eat of hers even a grain; for, an thou eat so much as a grain thereof, her spells will have power over thee and she will enchant thee and say to thee, 'Leave this form of a man.' Whereupon thou wilt quit thine own shape for what shape she will. But, an thou eat not thereof, her enchantments will be null and void and no harm will betide thee therefrom; whereat she will be shamed with shame exceeding and say to thee, 'I did but jest with thee!' Then will she make a show of love and fondness to thee; but this will all be but hypocrisy in her and craft. And do thou also make a show of love to her and say to her, 'O my lady and light of mine eyes, eat of this parched barley and see how delicious it is.' And if she eat thereof, though it be but a grain, take water in thy hand and throw it in her face, saying, 'Quit this human form' (for what form soever thou wilt have her take). Then leave her and come to me and I will counsel thee what to do." So Badr Basim took leave of him and returning to the palace, went in to the Queen, who said to him, "Welcome and well come and good cheer to thee!" And she rose and kissed him, saying, "Thou hast tarried long from me, O my lord." He replied, "I have been with my uncle, and he gave me to eat of this Sawik." Quoth she, "We have better than that." Then she laid his parched Sawik in one plate and hers in another and said to him, "Eat of this, for 'tis better than thine." So he feigned to eat of it and when she thought he had done so, she took water in her hand and sprinkled him therewith, saying, “Quit this form, O thou gallows- bird, thou miserable, and take that of a mule one- eyed and foul of favour.” But he changed not; which when she saw, she arose and went up to him and kissed him between the eyes, saying, “O my beloved, I did but jest with thee; bear me no malice because of this.” Quoth he, “O my lady, I bear thee no whit of malice; nay, I am assured that thou lovest me: but eat of this my parched barley.” So she ate a mouthful of Abdallah’s Sawik; but no sooner had it settled in her stomach than she was convulsed; and King Badr Basim took water in his palm and threw it in her face, saying, “Quit this human form and take that of a dapple mule.” No sooner had he spoken than she found herself changed into a she-mule, whereupon the tears rolled down her cheeks and she fell to rubbing her muzzle against his feet. Then he would have bridled her, but she would not take the bit; so he left her and, going to the grocer, told him what had passed. Abdallah brought out for him a bridle and bade him rein her forthwith. So he took it to the palace, and when she saw him, she came up to him and he set the bit in her mouth and mounting her, rode forth to find the Shaykh. But when the old man saw her, he rose and said to her, “Almighty Allah confound thee, O accursed woman!” Then quoth he to Badr, “O my son, there is no more tarrying for thee in this city; so ride her and fare with her whither thou wilt and beware lest thou commit the bridle[345] to any.” King Badr thanked him and farewelling him, fared on three days, without ceasing, till he drew near another city and there met him an old man, gray headed and comely, who said to him, “Whence comest thou, O my son?” Badr replied, “From the city of this witch”; and the old man said, “Thou art my guest to-night.” He consented and went with him; but by the way behold, they met an old woman, who wept when she saw the mule, and said, “There is no god but the God! Verily, this mule resembleth my son’s she-mule, which is dead, and my heart acheth for her; so, Allah upon thee, O my lord, do thou sell her to me!” He replied, “By Allah, O my mother, I cannot sell her.” But she cried, “Allah upon thee, do not refuse my request, for my son will surely be a dead man except I buy him this mule.” And she importuned him, till he exclaimed, “I will not sell her save for a thousand dinars,” saying in himself, “Whence should this old woman get a thousand gold pieces?" Thereupon she brought out from her girdle a purse containing a thousand ducats, which when King Badr Basim saw, he said, "O my mother, I did but jest with thee; I cannot sell her." But the old man looked at him and said, "O my son, in this city none may lie, for whoso lieth they put to death." So King Badr Basim lighted down from the mule. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fifty-sixth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Badr Basim dismounted from and delivered the mule to the old woman, she drew the bit from her mouth and, taking water in her hand, sprinkled the mule therewith, saying, "O my daughter, quit this shape for that form wherein thou wast aforetime!" Upon this she was straightway restored to her original semblance and the two women embraced and kissed each other. So King Badr Basim knew that the old woman was Queen Lab's mother and that he had been tricked and would have fled; when, lo! the old woman whistled a loud whistle and her call was obeyed by an Ifrit as he were a great mountain, whereat Badr was affrighted and stood still. Then the old woman mounted on the Ifrit's back, taking her daughter behind her and King Badr Basim before her, and the Ifrit flew off with them; nor was it a full hour ere they were in the palace of Queen Lab, who sat down on the throne of kingship and said to Badr, "Gallows-bird that thou art, now am I come hither and have attained to that I desired and soon will I show thee how I will do with thee and with yonder old man the grocer! How many favours have I shown him! Yet he doth me frowardness; for thou hast not attained thine end but by means of him." Then she took water and sprinkled him therewith, saying, "Quit the shape wherein thou art for the form of a foul-favoured fowl, the foulest of all fowls"; and she set him in a cage and cut off from him meat and drink; but one of her women seeing this cruelty, took compassion on him and gave him food and water without her knowledge. One day, the damsel took her mistress at unawares and going forth the palace, repaired to the old grocer, to whom she told the whole case, saying, "Queen Lab is minded to make an end of thy brother's son." The Shaykh thanked her and said, "There is no help but that I take the city from her and make thee Queen thereof in her stead." Then he whistled a loud whistle and there came forth to him an Ifrit with four wings, to whom he said, "Take up this damsel and carry her to the city of Julnar the Sea-born and her mother Faráshah[346] for they twain are the most powerful magicians on face of earth." And he said to the damsel, "When thou comest thither, tell them that King Badr Basim is Queen Lab's captive." Then the Ifrit took up his load and, flying off with her, in a little while set her down upon the terrace roof of Queen Julnar's palace. So she descended and going in to the Queen, kissed the earth and told her what had passed to her son, first and last, whereupon Julnar rose to her and entreated her with honour and thanked her. Then she let beat the drums in the city and acquainted her lieges and the lords of her realm with the good news that King Badr Basim was found; after which she and her mother Farashah and her brother Salih assembled all the tribes of the Jinn and the troops of the main; for the Kings of the Jinn obeyed them since the taking of King Al-Samandal. Presently they all flew up into the air and lighting down on the city of the sorceress, sacked the town and the palace and slew all the Unbelievers therein in the twinkling of an eye. Then said Julnar to the damsel, "Where is my son?" And the slave-girl brought her the cage and signing to the bird within, cried, "This is thy son." So Julnar took him forth of the cage and sprinkled him with water, saying, "Quit this shape for the form wherein thou wast aforetime;" nor had she made an end of her speech ere he shook and became a man as before: whereupon his mother, seeing him restored to human shape, embraced him and he wept with sore weeping. On like wise did his uncle Salih and his grandmother and the daughters of his uncle and fell to kissing his hands and feet. Then Julnar sent for Shaykh Abdallah and thanking him for his kind dealing with her son, married him to the damsel, whom he had despatched to her with news of him, and made him King of the city. Moreover, she summoned those who survived of the citizens (and they were Moslems), and made them swear fealty to him and take the oath of loyalty, whereto they replied, "Hearkening and obedience!" Then she and her company farewelled him and returned to their own capital. The townsfolk came out to meet them, with drums beating, and decorated the place three days and held high festival, of the greatness of their joy for the return of their King Badr

Basim. After this Badr said to his mother, “O my mother, naught remains but that I marry and we be all united.” She replied, “Right is thy rede, O my son, but wait till we ask who befitteth thee among the daughters of the Kings.” And his grandmother Farashah, and the daughters of both his uncles said, “O Badr Basim, we will help thee to win thy wish forthright.” Then each of them arose and fared forth questing in the lands, whilst Julnar sent out her waiting women on the necks of Ifrits, bidding them leave not a city nor a King’s palace without noting all the handsome girls that were therein. But, when King Badr Basim saw the trouble they were taking in this matter, he said to Julnar, “O my mother, leave this thing, for none will content me save Jauharah, daughter of King Al-Samandal; for that she is indeed a jewel,[347] according to her name.” Replied Julnar, “I know that which thou seekest;” and bade forthright bring Al-Samandal the King. As soon as he was present, she sent for Badr Basim and acquainted him with the King’s coming, whereupon he went in to him. Now when Al-Samandal was aware of his presence, he rose to him and saluted him and bade him welcome; and King Badr Basim demanded of him his daughter Jauharah in marriage. Quoth he, “She is thine handmaid and at thy service and disposition,” and despatched some of his suite bidding them seek her abode and, after telling her that her sire was in the hands of King Badr Basim, to bring her forthright. So they flew up into the air and disappeared and they returned after a while, with the Princess who, as soon as she saw her father, went up to him and threw her arms round his neck. Then looking at her he said, “O my daughter, know that I have given thee in wedlock to this magnanimous Sovran, and valiant lion King Badr Basim, son of Queen Julnar the Sea-born, for that he is the goodliest of the folk of his day and most powerful and the most exalted of them in degree and the noblest in rank; he befitteth none but thee and thou none but him.” Answered she, “I may not gainsay thee, O my sire do as thou wilt, for indeed chagrin and despite are at an end, and I am one of his handmaids.” So they summoned the Kazi and the witnesses who drew up the marriage-contract between King Badr Basim and the Princess Jauharah, and the citizens decorated the city and beat the drums of rejoicing, and they released all who were in the jails, whilst the King clothed the widows and the orphans and bestowed robes of honour upon the Lords of the Realm and Emirs and Grandees: and they made bride-feasts and held high festival night and morn ten days, at the end of which time they displayed the bride, in nine different dresses, before King Badr Basim who bestowed an honourable robe upon King Al- Samandal and sent him back to his country and people and kinsfolk. And they ceased not from living the most delectable of life and the most solaceful of days, eating and drinking and enjoying every luxury, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of Societies; and this is the end of their story[348] , may Allah have mercy on them all! Moreover, O auspicious King, a tale is also told anent

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KING MOHAMMED BIN SABAIK AND THE MERCHANT HASAN.

There was once, in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, a King of the Kings of the Persians, by name Mohammed bin Sabáik, who ruled over Khorásán-land and used every year to go on razzia into the countries of the Miscreants in Hind and Sind and China and the lands of Máwarannahr beyond the Oxus and other regions of the barbarians and what not else. He was a just King, a valiant and a generous, and loved table-talk[349] and tales and verses and anecdotes and histories and entertaining stories and legends of the ancients. Whoso knew a rare recital and related it to him in such fashion as to please him he would bestow on him a sumptuous robe of honour and clothe him from head to foot and give him a thousand dinars, and mount him on a horse saddled and bridled besides other great gifts; and the man would take all this and wend his way. Now it chanced that one day there came an old man before him and related to him a rare story, which pleased the King and made him marvel, so he ordered him a magnificent present, amongst other things a thousand dinars of Khorasan and a horse with its housings and trappings. After this, the bruit of the King's munificence was blazed abroad in all countries and there heard of him a man, Hasan the Merchant hight, who was a generous, open-handed and learned, a scholar and an accomplished poet. Now the King had an envious Wazir, a multum-in-parvo of ill, loving no man, rich nor poor, and whoso came before the King and he gave him aught he envied him and said, "Verily, this fashion annihilateth wealth and ruineth the land; and such is the custom of the King." But this was naught save envy and despite in that Minister. Presently the King heard talk of Hasan the Merchant and sending for him, said to him as soon as he came into the presence, "O Merchant Hasan, this Wazir of mine vexeth and thwarteth me concerning the money I give to poets and boon-companions and story-tellers and glee-men, and I would have thee tell me a goodly history and a rare story, such as I have never before heard. An it please me, I will give thee lands galore, with their forts, in free tenure, in addition to thy fiefs and untaxed lands;

besides which I will put my whole kingdom in thy hands and make thee my Chief Wazir; so shalt thou sit on my right hand and rule my subjects. But, an thou bring me not that which I bid thee, I will take all that is in thy hand and banish thee my realm." Replied Hasan, "Hearkening and obedience to our lord the King! But thy slave beseecheth thee to have patience with him a year; then will he tell thee a tale, such as thou hast never in thy life heard, neither hath other than thou heard its like, not to say a better than it." Quoth the King, "I grant thee a whole year's delay." And he called for a costly robe of honour wherein he robed Hasan, saying, "Keep thy house and mount not horse, neither go nor come for a year's time, till thou bring me that I seek of thee. An thou bring it, especial favour awaiteth thee and thou mayst count upon that which I have promised thee; but an thou bring it not, thou art not of us nor are we of thee." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fifty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Mohammed son of Sabaik said to Hasan the Merchant, "An thou bring me that I seek of thee, especial favour awaiteth thee and thou mayest now rejoice in that which I have promised thee; but, an thou bring it not, thou art not of us nor are we of thee." Hasan kissed ground before the King and went out from the presence. Then he chose five of the best of his Mamelukes, who could all write and read and were learned, intelligent, accomplished; and he gave each of them five thousand dinars, saying, "I reared you not save for the like of this day; so do ye help me to further the King's desire and deliver me from his hand." Quoth they, "What wilt thou have us do? Our lives be thy ransom!" Quoth he, "I wish you to go each to a different country and seek out diligently the learned and erudite and literate and the tellers of wondrous stories and marvellous histories and do your endeavour to procure me the story of Sayf al-Mulúk. If ye find it with any one, pay him what price soever he asketh for it although he demand a thousand dinars; give him what ye may and promise him the rest and bring me the story; for whoso happeneth on it and bringeth it to me, I will bestow on him a costly robe of honour and largesse galore, and there shall be to me none more worshipped than he." Then said he to one of them, "Hie thou to Al-Hind and Al-Sind and all their provinces and dependencies." To another, "Hie thou to the home of the Persians and to China and her climates." To the third, "Hie thou to the land of Khorasan with its districts." To the fourth, "Hie thou to Mauritania and all its regions, districts, provinces and quarters." And to the fifth, "Hie thou to Syria and Egypt and their outliers." Moreover, he chose them out an auspicious day and said to them, "Fare ye forth this day and be diligent in the accomplishment of my need and be not slothful, though the case cost you your lives." So they farewelled him and departed, each taking the direction perscribed to him. Now, four of them were absent four months, and searched but found nothing; so they returned and told their master, whose breast was straitened, that they had ransacked towns and cities and countries for the thing he sought, but had happened upon naught thereof. Meanwhile, the fifth servant journeyed till he came to the land of Syria and entered Damascus, which he found a pleasant city and a secure, abounding in trees and rills, leas and fruiteries and birds chanting the praises of Allah the One, the All-powerful of sway, Creator of Night and Day. Here he tarried some time, asking for his master's desire, but none answered him, wherefore he was on the point of departing thence to another place, when he met a young man running and stumbling over his skirts. So he asked of him, "Wherefore runnest thou in such eagerness and whither dost thou press?" And he answered, "There is an elder here, a man of learning, who every day at this time taketh his seat on a stool[350] and relateth tales and stories and delectable anecdotes, whereof never heard any the like; and I am running to get me a place near him and fear I shall find no room, because of the much folk." Quoth the Mameluke, "Take me with thee;" and quoth the youth, "Make haste in thy walking." So he shut his door and hastened with him to the place of recitation, where he saw an old man of bright favour seated on a stool holding forth to the folk. He sat down near him and addressed himself to hear his story, till the going down of the sun, when the old man made an end of his tale and the people, having heard it all, dispersed from about him; whereupon the Mameluke accosted him and saluted him, and he returned his salam and greeted him with the utmost worship and courtesy. Then said the messenger to him, “O my lord Shaykh, thou art a comely and reverend man, and thy discourse is goodly; but I would fain ask thee of somewhat.” Replied the old man, “Ask of what thou wilt!” Then said the Mameluke, “Hast thou the story of Sayf al-Muluk and Badí‘a al-Jamál?” Rejoined the elder, “And who told thee of this story and informed thee thereof?” Answered the messenger, “None told me of it, but I am come from a far country, in quest of this tale, and I will pay thee whatever thou askest for its price if thou have it and wilt, of thy bounty and charity, impart it to me and make it an alms to me, of the generosity of thy nature for, had I my life in my hand and lavished it upon thee for this thing, yet were it pleasing to my heart.” Replied the old man, “Be of good cheer and keep thine eye cool and clear: thou shalt have it; but this is no story that one telleth in the beaten highway, nor do I give it to every one.” Cried the other, “By Allah, O my lord, do not grudge it me, but ask of me what price thou wilt.” And the old man, “If thou wish for the history give me an hundred dinars and thou shalt have it; but upon five conditions.” Now when the Mameluke knew that the old man had the story and was willing to sell it to him, he joyed with exceeding joy and said, “I will give thee the hundred dinars by way of price and ten to boot as a gratuity and take it on the conditions of which thou speakest.” Said the old man, “Then go and fetch the gold pieces, and take that thou seekest.” So the messenger kissed his hands and joyful and happy returned to his lodging, where he laid an hundred and ten dinars[351] in a purse he had by him. As soon as morning morrowed, he donned his clothes and taking the dinars, repaired to the story-teller, whom he found seated at the door of his house. So he saluted him and the other returned his salam. Then he gave him the gold and the old man took it and carrying the messenger into his house made him sit down in a convenient place, when he set before him ink-case and reed-pen and paper and giving him a book, said to him, “Write out what thou seekest of the night-story[352] of Sayf al-Muluk from this book.” Accordingly the Mameluke fell to work and wrote till he had made an end of his copy, when he read it to the old man, and he corrected it and presently said to him, “Know, O my son, that my five conditions are as follows; firstly, that thou tell not this story in the beaten high road nor before women and slave-girls nor to black slaves nor feather-heads; nor again to boys; but read it only before Kings and Emirs and Wazirs and men of learning, such as expounders of the Koran and others.” Thereupon the messenger accepted the conditions and kissing the old man’s hand, took leave of him, and fared forth. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fifty-eighth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Mameluke of Hasan the Merchant had copied the tale out of the book belonging to the old man of Damascus, and had accepted his conditions and farewelled him, he fared forth on the same day, glad and joyful, and journeyed on diligently, of the excess of his contentment, for that he had gotten the story of Sayf al-Muluk, till he came to his own country, when he despatched his servant to bear the good news to his master and say to him, “Thy Mameluke is come back in safety and hath won his will and his aim.” (Now of the term appointed between Hasan and the King there wanted but ten days.) Then, after taking rest in his own quarters he himself went in to the Merchant and told him all that had befallen him and gave him the book containing the story of Sayf al-Muluk and Badi’a al-Jamal, when Hasan joyed with exceeding joy at the sight and bestowed on him all the clothes he had on and gave him ten thoroughbred horses and the like number of camels and mules and three negro chattels and two white slaves. Then Hasan took the book and copied out the story plainly in his own hand; after which he presented himself before the King and said to him, “O thou auspicious King, I have brought thee a night-story and a rarely pleasant relation, whose like none ever heard at all.” When these words reached the King’s ear, he sent forthright for all the Emirs, who were men of understanding, and all the learned doctors and folk of erudition and culture and poets and wits; and Hasan sat down and read the history before the King, who marvelled thereat and approved it, as did all who were present, and they showered gold and silver and jewels upon the Merchant. Moreover, the King bestowed on him a costly robe of honour of the richest of his raiment and gave him a great city with its castles and outliers; and he appointed him one of his Chief Wazirs and seated him on his right hand. Then he caused the scribes write the story in letters of gold and lay it up in his privy treasures: and whenever his breast was straitened, he would summon Hasan and he would read him the story,[353] which was as follows: —

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Story of Prince Sayf al-Muluk and the Princess Badi'a al-Jamal.

There was once, in days of old and in ages and times long told, a King in Egypt called Asim bin Safwán,[354] who was a liberal and beneficent sovran, venerable and majestic. He owned many cities and sconces and fortresses and troops and warriors and had a Wazir named Fáris bin Sálih,[355] and he and all his subjects worshipped the sun and the fire, instead of the All-powerful Sire, the Glorious, the Victorious. Now this King was become a very old man, weakened and wasted with age and sickness and decrepitude; for he had lived an hundred and fourscore years and had no child, male or female, by reason whereof he was ever in cark and care from morning to night and from night to morn. It so happened that one day of the days, he was sitting on the throne of his Kingship, with his Emirs and Wazirs and Captains and Grandees in attendance on him, according to their custom, in their several stations, and whenever there came in an Emir, who had with him a son or two sons, or haply three who stood at the sides of their sires the King envied him and said in himself, "Every one of these is happy and rejoiceth in his children, whilst I, I have no child, and to-morrow I die and leave my reign and throne and lands and hoards, and strangers will take them and none will bear me in memory nor will there remain any mention of me in the world." Then he became drowned in the sea of thought and for the much thronging of griefs and anxieties upon his heart, like travellers faring for the well, he shed tears and descending from his throne, sat down upon the floor,[356] weeping and humbling himself before the Lord. Now when the Wazir and notables of the realm and others who were present in the assembly saw him do thus with his royal person, they feared for their lives and let the poursuivants cry aloud to the lieges, saying, "Hie ye to your homes and rest till the King recover from what aileth him." So they went away, leaving none in the presence save the Minister who, as soon as the King came to himself, kissed ground between his hands and said, "O King of the Age and the Time, wherefore this weeping and wailing? Tell me who hath transgressed against thee of the Kings or Castellans or Emirs or

Grandees, and inform me who hath thwarted thee, O my liege lord, that we may all fall on him and tear his soul from his two sides." But he spake not neither raised his head; whereupon the Minister kissed ground before him a second time and said to him, "O Master,[357] I am even as thy son and thy slave, nay, I have reared thee; yet know I not the cause of thy cark and chagrin and of this thy case; and who should know but I who should stand in my stead between thy hands? Tell me therefore why this weeping and wherefore thine affliction." Nevertheless, the King neither opened his mouth nor raised his head, but ceased not to weep and cry with a loud crying and lament with exceeding lamentation and ejaculate, "Alas!" The Wazir took patience with him awhile, after which he said to him, "Except thou tell me the cause of this thine affliction, I will set this sword to my heart and will slay myself before thine eyes, rather than see thee thus distressed." Then King Asim raised his head and, wiping away his tears, said, "O Minister of good counsel and experience, leave me to my care and my chagrin, for that which is in my heart of sorrow sufficeth me." But Faris said, "Tell me, O King, the cause of this thy weeping, haply Allah will appoint thee relief at my hands." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Fifty-ninth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir said to King Asim, "Tell me the cause of this thy weeping: haply Allah shall appoint thee relief at my hands." Replied the King, "O Wazir, I weep not for monies nor horses nor kingdoms nor aught else, but that I am become an old man, yea, very old, nigh upon an hundred and fourscore years of age, and I have not been blessed with a child, male or female; so, when I die, they will bury me and my trace will be effaced and my name cut off; the stranger will take my throne and reign and none will ever make mention of my being." Rejoined the Minister Faris, "O King of the Age, I am older than thou by an hundred years yet have I never been blest with boon of child and cease not day and night from cark and care and concern; so how shall we do, I and thou?" Quoth Asim, "O Wazir, hast thou no device or shift in this matter?" and quoth the Minister, "Know, O King that I have heard of a Sovran in the land of Sabá[358] by name

Solomon David-son (upon the twain be the Peace!),[359] who pretendeth to prophetship and avoucheth that he hath a mighty Lord who can do all things and whose kingdom is in the Heavens and who hath dominion over all mankind and birds and beasts and over the wind and the Jinn. Moreover, he kenneth the speech of birds and the language of every other created thing; and withal, he calleth all creatures to the worship of his Lord and discourseth to them of their service. So let us send him a messenger in the King's name and seek of him our need, beseeching him to put up prayer to his Lord, that He vouchsafe each of us boon of issue. If his Faith be soothfast and his Lord Omnipotent, He will assuredly bless each of us with a child male or female, and if the thing thus fall out, we will enter his faith and worship his Lord; else will we take patience and devise us another device." The King cried, "This is well seen, and my breast is braodened by this thy speech; but where shall we find a messenger befitting this grave matter, for that this Solomon is no Kinglet and the approaching him is no light affair? Indeed, I will send him none, on the like of this matter, save thyself; for thou art ancient and versed in all manner affairs and the like of thee is the like of myself; wherefore I desire that thou weary thyself and journey to him and occupy thyself sedulously with accomplishing this matter, so haply solace may be at thy hand." The Minister said, "I hear and I obey; but rise thou forthwith and seat thee upon the throne, so the Emirs and Lords of the realm and officers and the lieges may enter applying themselves to thy service, according to their custom; for they all went away from thee, troubled at heart on thine account. Then will I go out and set forth on the Sovran's errand." So the King arose forthright and sat down on the throne of his kingship, whilst the Wazir went out and said to the Chamberlain, "Bid the folk proceed to their service, as of their wont." Accordingly the troops and Captains and Lords of the land entered, after they had spread the tables and ate and drank and withdrew as was their wont, after which the Wazir Faris went forth from King Asim and, repairing to his own house, equipped himself for travel and returned to the King, who opened to him the treasuries and provided him with rarities and things of price and rich stuffs and gear without compare, such as nor Emir nor Wazir hath power to possess. Moreover, King Asim charged him to accost

Solomon with reverence, foregoing him with the salam, but not exceeding in speech; "and (continued he) then do thou ask of him thy need, and if he say 'tis granted, return to us in haste, for I shall be awaiting thee." Accordingly, the Minister kissed hands and took the presents and setting out, fared on night and day, till he came within fifteen days' journey of Saba. Meanwhile Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) inspired Solomon the son of David (the Peace be upon both!) and said to him, "O Solomon, the King of Egypt sendeth unto thee his Chief Wazir, with a present of rarities and such and such things of price; so do thou also despatch thy Counsellor Asaf bin Barkhiyá to meet him with honour and with victual at the halting-places; and when he cometh to thy presence, say unto him, 'Verily, thy King hath sent thee in quest of this and that and thy business is thus and thus.' Then do thou propound to him The Saving Faith."[360] Whereupon Solomon bade his Wazir make ready a company of his retainers and go forth to meet the Minister of Egypt with honour and sumptuous provision at the halting-places. So Asaf made ready all that was needed for their entertainment and setting out, fared on till he fell in with Faris and accosted him with the salam, honouring him and his company with exceeding honour. Moreover, he brought them provaunt and provender at the halting-places and said to them, "Well come and welcome and fair welcome to the coming guests! Rejoice in the certain winning of your wish! Be your souls of good cheer and your eyes cool and clear and your breasts be broadened!" Quoth Faris in himself, "Who acquainted him with this?"; and he said to Asaf,[361] "O my lord, and who gave thee to know of us and our need?" "It was Solomon son of David (on whom be the Peace!), told us of this!" "And who told our lord Solomon?" "The Lord of the heaven and the earth told him, the God of all creatures!" "This is none other than a mighty God!" "And do ye not worship him?" "We worship the Sun, and prostrate ourselves thereto." "O Wazir Faris, the sun is but a star of the stars created by Allah (extolled and exalted be He!), and Allah forbid that it should be a Lord! Because whiles it riseth and whiles it setteth, but our Lord is ever present and never absent and He over all things is Omnipotent!" Then they journeyed on a little while till they came to the land Saba and drew near the throne of Solomon David-son, (upon the twain be peace!), who commanded his hosts of men and Jinn and others[362] to form line on their road. So the beasts of the sea and the elephants and leopards and lynxes and all beasts of the land ranged themselves in espalier on either side of the way, after their several kinds, and similarly the Jinn drew out in two ranks, appearing all to mortal eyes without concealment, in divers forms grisly and gruesome. So they lined the road on either hand, and the birds bespread their wings over the host of creatures to shade them, warbling one to other in all manner of voices and tongues. Now when the people of Egypt came to this terrible array, they dreaded it and durst not proceed; but Asaf said to them, "Pass on amidst them and walk forward and fear them not: for they are slaves of Solomon son of David, and none of them will harm you." So saying, he entered between the ranks, followed by all the folk and amongst them the Wazir of Egypt and his company, fearful: and they ceased not faring forwards till they reached the city, where they lodged the embassy in the guest-house and for the space of three days entertained them sumptuously, entreating them with the utmost honour. Then they carried them before Solomon, prophet of Allah (on whom be the Peace!), and when entering they would have kissed the earth before him; but he forbade them, saying, "It befitteth not a man prostrate himself to earth save before Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!), Creator of Earth and Heaven and all other things; wherefore, whosoever of you hath a mind to sit let him be seated in my service, or to stand, let him stand, but let none stand to do me worship." So they obeyed him and the Wazir Faris and some of his intimates sat down, whilst certain of the lesser sort remained afoot to wait on him. When they had sat awhile, the servants spread the tables and they all, men and beasts, ate their sufficiency.[363] Then Solomon bade Faris expound his errand, that it might be accomplished, saying, "Speak and hide naught of that wherefor thou art come; for I know why ye come and what is your errand, which is thus and thus. The King of Egypt who despatched thee, Asim hight, hath become a very old man, infirm, decrepit; and Allah (whose name be exalted!) hath not blessed him with offspring, male or female. So he abode in cark and care and chagrin from morn to night and from night to morn. It so happened that one day of the days as he sat upon the throne of his kingship with his Emirs and Wazirs, and

Captains and Grandees in attendance on him, he saw some of them with two sons, others with one, and others even three, who came with their sires to do him service. So he said in himself, of the excess of his sorrow, 'Who shall get my kingdom after my death? Will any save a stranger take it? And thus shall I pass out of being as though I had never been!' On this account he became drowned in the sea of thought, until his eyes were flooded with tears and he covered his face with his kerchief and wept with sore weeping. Then he rose from off his throne and sat down upon the floor wailing and lamenting and none knew what was in heart as he grovelled in the ground save Allah Almighty." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Sixtieth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Solomon David-son (upon both of whom be peace!) after disclosing to the Wazir Faris that which had passed between himself and his master, King Asim, said to him, "Is this that I have told thee the truth, O Wazir?" Replied Faris, "O prophet of Allah, this thou hast said is indeed sooth and verity; but when we discoursed of this matter, none was with the King and myself, nor was any ware of our case; who, then told thee of all these things?" Answered Solomon, "They were told to me by my Lord who knoweth whatso is concealed[364] from the eye and what is hidden in the breasts." Quoth Faris, "O Prophet of Allah, verily this is none other than a mighty Lord and an omnipotent God!" And he Islamized with all his many. Then said Solomon to him, "Thou hast with thee such and such presents and rarities;" and Faris replied "Yes." The prophet continued, "I accept them all and give them in free gift unto thee. So do ye rest, thou and thy company, in the place where you have been lodging, till the fatigue of the journey shall cease from you; and to-morrow, Inshallah! thine errand shall be accomplished to the uttermost, if it be the will of Allah the Most High, Lord of heaven and earth and the light which followeth the gloom; Creator of all creatures." So Faris returned to his quarters and passed the night in deep thought. But when morning morrowed he presented himself before the Lord Solomon, who said to him, "When thou returnest to King Asim bin Safwan and you twain are re-united, do ye both go forth some day armed with bow, bolts and brand, and fare to such a place, where ye shall find a certain tree. Mount upon it and sit silent until the midhour between noon-prayer and that of mid-afternoon, when the noontide heat hath cooled; then descend and look at the foot of the tree, whence ye will see two serpents come forth, one with a head like an ape's and the other with a head like an Ifrit's. Shoot them ye twain with bolts and kill them both; then cut off a span's length from their heads and the like from their tails and throw it away. The rest of the flesh cook and cook well and give it to your wives to eat: then lie with them that night and, by Allah's leave, they shall conceive and bear male children." Moreover, he gave him a seal-ring, a sword and a wrapper containing two tunics[365] embroidered with gold and jewels, saying, "O Wazir Faris, when your sons grow up to man's estate, give to each of them one of these tunics." Then said he, "In the name of Allah! May the Almighty accomplish your desire! And now nothing remaineth for thee but to depart, relying on the blessing of the Lord the Most High, for the King looketh for thy return night and day and his eye is ever gazing on the road." So the Wazir advanced to the prophet Solomon son of David (upon both of whom be the Peace!) and farewelled him and fared forth from him after kissing his hands. Rejoicing in the accomplishment of his errand he travelled on with all diligence night and day, and ceased not wayfaring till he drew near to Cairo, when he despatched one of his servants to acquaint King Asim with his approach and the successful issue of his journey; which when the King heard he joyed with exceeding joy, he and his Grandees and Officers and troops especially in the Wazir's safe return. When they met, the Minister dismounted and, kissing ground before the King, gave him the glad news anent the winning of his wish in fullest fashion; after which he expounded the True Faith to him, and the King and all his people embraced Al-Islam with much joy and gladness. Then said Asim to his Wazir, "Go home and rest this night and a week to boot; then go to the Hammam-bath and come to me, that I may inform thee of what we shall have to consider." So Faris kissed ground and withdrew, with his suite, pages and eunuchs, to his house, where he rested eight days; after which he repaired to the King and related to him all that had passed between Solomon and himself, adding, “Do thou rise and go forth with me alone.” Then the King and the Minister took two bows and two bolts and repairing to the tree indicated by Solomon, clomb up into it and there sat in silence till the mid-day heat had passed away and it was near upon the hour of mid-afternoon prayer, when they descended and looking about them saw a serpent-couple[366] issue from the roots of the tree. The King gazed at them, marvelling to see them ringed with collars of gold about their necks, and said to Faris, “O Wazir, verily these snakes have golden torques! By Allah, this is forsooth a rare thing! Let us catch them and set them in a cage and keep them to look upon.” But the Minister said, “These hath Allah created for profitable use;[367] so do thou shoot one and I will shoot the other with these our shafts.” Accordingly they shot at them with arrows and slew them; after which they cut off a span’s length of their heads and tails and threw it away. Then they carried the rest to the King’s palace, where they called the kitchener and giving him the flesh said, “Dress this meat daintily, with onion-sauce[368] and spices, and ladle it out into two saucers and bring them hither at such an hour, without delay!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Sixty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King and the Wazir gave the serpents’ flesh to the kitchener, saying, “Cook it and ladle it out into two saucers and bring them hither without delay!”; the cook took the meat and went with it to the kitchen, where he cooked it and dressed it in skilful fashion with a mighty fine onion-sauce and hot spices; after which he ladled it out into two saucers and set them before the King and the Wazir, who took each a dish and gave their wives to eat of the meat. Then they went in that night unto them and knew them carnally, and by the good pleasure of Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) and His all-might and furtherance, they both conceived on one and the same night. The King abode three months, troubled in mind and saying in himself, “I wonder whether this thing will prove true or untrue”; till one day, as the lady his Queen was sitting, the child stirred in her womb and she felt a pain and her colour changed. So she knew that she was with child and calling the chief of her eunuchs, gave him this command, “Go to the King, wherever he may be and congratulate him saying, ‘O King of the Age, I bring thee the glad tidings that our lady’s pregnancy is become manifest, for the child stirreth in her womb’.” So the eunuch went out in haste, rejoicing, and finding the King alone, with cheek on palm, pondering this thing, kissed ground between his hands and acquainted him with his wife’s pregnancy. When the King heard his words, he sprang to his feet and in the excess of his joy, he kissed[369] the eunuch’s hands and head and doffing the clothes he had on, gave them to him. Moreover, he said to those who were present in his assembly, “Whoso loveth me, let him bestow largesse upon this man.”[370] And they gave him of coin and jewels and jacinths and horses and mules and estates and gardens what was beyond count or calculation. At that moment in came the Wazir Faris and said to Asim, “O my master, but now I was sitting alone at home and absorbed in thought, pondering the matter of the pregnancy and saying to myself, ‘Would I wot an this thing be true and whether my wife Khátún[371] have conceived or not!’ when, behold, an eunuch came in to me and brought me the glad tidings that his lady was indeed pregnant, for that her colour was changed and the child stirred in her womb; whereupon, in my joy, I doffed all the clothes I had on and gave them to him, together with a thousand dinars, and made him Chief of the Eunuchs.” Rejoined the King, “O Minister, Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) hath, of His grace and bounty and goodness, and beneficence, made gift to us of the True Faith and brought us out of night into light, and hath been bountiful to us, of His favour and benevolence; wherefore I am minded to solace the folk and cause them to rejoice.” Quoth Faris, “Do what thou wilt,[372] “ and quoth the King, “O Wazir, go down without stay or delay and set free all who are in the prisons, both criminals and debtors, and whoso transgresseth after this, we will requite as he deserveth even to the striking off of his head. Moreover, we forgive the people three years’ taxes, and do thou set up kitchens all around about the city walls[373] and bid the kitcheners hang over the fire all kinds of cooking pots and cook all manner of meats, continuing their cooking night and day, and let all comers, both of our citizens and of the neighbouring countries, far and near, eat and drink and carry to their houses. And do thou command the people to make holiday and decorate the city seven days and shut not the taverns night nor day[374] ; and if thou delay I will behead thee[375] !" So he did as the King bade him and the folk decorated the city and citadel and bulwarks after the goodliest fashion and, donning their richest attire, passed their time in feasting and sporting and making merry, till the days of the Queen's pregnancy were accomplished and she was taken, one night, with labour pains hard before dawn. Then the King bade summon all the Olema and astronomers, mathematicians and men of learning, astrologers, scientists and scribes in the city, and they assembled and sat awaiting the throwing of a bead into the cup[376] which was to be the signal to the Astrophils, as well as to the nurses and attendants, that the child was born. Presently, as they sat in expectation, the Queen gave birth to a boy like a slice of the moon when fullest and the astrologers fell to calculating and noted his star and nativity and drew his horoscope. Then, on being summoned they rose and, kissing the earth before the King, gave him the glad tidings, saying, "In very sooth the new-born child is of happy augury and born under an auspicious aspect, but" they added, "in the first of his life there will befall him a thing which we fear to name before the King." Quoth Asim, "Speak and fear not;" so quoth they, "O King, this boy will fare forth from this land and journey in strangerhood and suffer shipwreck and hardship and prisonment and distress, and indeed he hath before him the sorest of sufferings; but he shall free him of them in the end, and win to his wish and live the happiest of lives the rest of his days, ruling over subjects with a strong hand and having dominion in the land, despite enemies and enviers." Now when the King heard the astrologers' words, he said, "The matter is a mystery; but all that Allah Almighty hath written for the creature of good and bad cometh to pass and needs must betide him from this day to that a thousand solaces." So he paid no heed to their words or attention to their speeches but bestowed on them robes of honour, as well upon all who were present, and dismissed them; when, behold, in came Faris the Wazir and kissed the earth before the King in huge joy, saying, "Good tidings, O King! My wife hath but now given birth to a son, as he were a slice of the moon." Replied Asim, "O Wazir, go, bring thy wife and child hither, that she may abide with my wife in my palace, and they shall bring up the two boys together." So Faris fetched his wife and son and they committed the two children to the nurses wet and dry. And after seven days had passed over them, they brought them before the King and said to him, “What wilt thou name the twain?” Quoth he, “Do ye name them;” but quoth they, “None nameth the son save his sire.” So he said, “Name my son Sayf al-Muluk, after my grandfather, and the Minister’s son Sa’id[377] Then he bestowed robes of honour on the nurses wet and dry and said to them, “Be ye ruthful over them and rear them after the goodliest fashion.” So they brought up the two boys diligently till they reached the age of five, when the King committed them to a doctor of Sciences[378] who taught them to read the Koran and write. When they were ten years old, King Asim gave them in charge to masters, who instructed them in cavalarice and shooting with shafts and lunging with lance and play of Polo and the like till, by the time they were fifteen years old, they were clever in all manner of martial exercises, nor was there one to vie with them in horsemanship, for each of them would do battle with a thousand men and make head against them single handed. So when they came to years of discretion, whenever King Asim looked on them he joyed in them with exceeding joy; and when they attained their twenty-fifth year, he took Faris his Minister apart one day and said to him, “O Wazir, I am minded to consult with thee concerning a thing I desire to do.” Replied he, “Whatever thou hast a mind to do, do it; for thy judgment is blessed.” Quoth the King, “O Wazir, I am become a very old and decrepit man, sore stricken in years, and I desire to take up my abode in an oratory, that I may worship Allah Almighty and give my kingdom and Sultanate to my son Sayf al-Muluk for that he is grown a goodly youth, perfect in knightly exercises and intellectual attainments, polite letters and gravity, dignity and the art of government. What sayst thou, O Minister, of this project?” And quoth the counsellor, “Right indeed is thy rede: the idea is a blessed and a fortunate, and if thou do this, I will do the like and my son Sa’id shall be the Prince’s Wazir, for he is a comely young man and complete in knowledge and judgment. Thus will the two youths be together, and we will order their affair and neglect not their case, but guide them to goodness and in the way that is straight.” Quoth the King, “Write letters and send them by couriers to all the countries and cities and sconces and fortresses that be under our hands, bidding their chiefs be present on such a day at the Horse-course of the Elephant."[379] So the Wazir went out without stay or delay and despatched letters of this purport to all the deputies and governors of fortresses and others under King Asim; and he commanded also that all in the city should be present, far and near, high and low. When the appointed time drew nigh, King Asim bade the tent-pitchers plant pavilions in the midst of the Champ-de-Mars and decorate them after the most sumptuous fashion and set up the great throne whereon he sat not but on festivals. And they at once did his bidding. Then he and all his Nabobs and Chamberlains and Emirs sallied forth, and he commanded proclamation be made to the people, saying, "In the name of Allah, come forth to the Maydán!" So all the Emirs and Wazirs and Governors of provinces and Feudatories[380] came forth to the place of assembly and, entering the royal pavilion, addressed themselves to the service of the King as was their wont, and abode in their several stations, some sitting and others standing, till all the people were gathered together, when the King bade spread the tables and they ate and drank and prayed for him. Then he commanded the Chamberlains[381] to proclaim to the people that they should not depart: so they made proclamation to them, saying, "Let none of you fare hence till he have heard the King's words!" So they withdrew the curtains of the royal pavilion and the King said, "Whoso loveth me, let him remain till he have heard my speech!" Whereupon all the folk sat down in mind tranquil after they had been fearful, saying, "Wherefore have we been summoned by the King?" Then the Sovran rose to his feet, and making them swear that none would stir from his stead, said to them, "O ye Emirs and Wazirs and Lords of the land; the great and the small of you, and all ye who are present of the people; say me, wot ye not that this kingdom was an inheritance to me from my fathers and forefathers?" Answered they, "Yes, O King we all know that." And he continued, "I and you, we all worshipped the sun and moon, till Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) vouchsafed us the knowledge of the True Faith and brought us out of darkness unto light, and directed us to the religion of Al-Islam. Know that I am become a very old man, feeble and decrepit, and I desire to take up my abode in a hermitage[382] there to worship Allah Almighty and crave His pardon for past offenses and make this my son Sayf al-Muluk ruler. Ye know full well that he is a comely youth, eloquent, liberal, learned, versed in affairs, intelligent, equitable; wherefore I am minded presently to resign to him my realm and to make him ruler over you and seat him as Sultan in my stead, whilst I give myself to solitude and to the worship of Allah in an oratory, and my son and heir shall judge between you. What say ye then, all of you?" Thereupon they all rose and kissing ground before him, made answer with "Hearing and obedience," saying, "O our King and our defender an thou should set over us one of thy blackamoor slaves we would obey him and hearken to thy word and accept thy command: how much more then with thy son Sayf al-Muluk? Indeed, we accept of him and approve him on our eyes and heads!" So King Asim bin Safwan arose and came down from his seat and seating his son on the great throne,[383] took the crown from his own head and set it on the head of Sayf al-Muluk and girt his middle with the royal girdle.[384] Then he sat down beside his son on the throne of his kingship, whilst the Emirs and Wazirs and Lords of the land and all the rest of the folk rose and kissed ground before him, saying, "Indeed, he is worthy of the kingship and hath better right to it than any other." Then the Chamberlains made proclamation crying, "Amán! Amán! Safety! Safety!" and offered up prayers for his victory and prosperity. And Sayf al-Muluk scattered gold and silver on the heads of the lieges one and all. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Sixty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Asim seated his son, Sayf al-Muluk, upon the throne and all the people prayed for his victory and prosperity, the youth scattered gold and silver on the heads of the lieges, one and all, and conferred robes of honour and gave gifts and largesse. Then, after a moment, the Wazir Faris arose and kissing ground said, "O Emirs, O Grandees, ye ken that I am Wazir and that my Wazirate dateth from old, before the accession of King Asim bin Safwan, who hath now divested himself of the Kingship and made his son King in his stead?" Answered they, "Yes, we know that thy Wazirate is from sire after grandsire." He continued, "And now in my turn I divest myself of office and invest this my son Sa’id, for he is intelligent, quick-witted, sagacious. What say ye all?” And they replied, “None is worthy to be Wazir to King Sayf al-Muluk but thy son Sa’id, and they befit each other.” With this Faris arose and taking off his Wazirial turband, set it on his son’s head and eke laid his ink-case of office before him, whilst the Chamberlains and the Emirs said, “Indeed, he is deserving of the Wazirship” and the Heralds cried aloud, “Mubárak! Mubarak! — Felix sit et faustus!” After this, King Asim and Faris the Minister arose and, opening the royal treasuries, conferred magnificent robes of honour on all the Viceroys and Emirs and Wazirs and Lords of the land and other folk and gave salaries and benefactions and wrote them new mandates and diplomas with the signatures of King Sayf al-Muluk and his Wazir Sa’id. Moreover, he made distribution of money to the men-at-arms and gave guerdons, and the provincials abode in the city a full week ere they departed each to his own country and place. Then King Asim carried his son and his Wazir Sa’id back to the palace which was in the city and bade the treasurer bring the seal-ring and signet,[385] sword and wrapper; which being done, he said to the two young men, “O my sons, come hither and let each of you choose two of these things and take them.” The first to make choice was Sayf al-Muluk, who put out his hand and took the ring and the wrapper, whilst Sa’id took the sword and the signet; after which they both kissed the King’s hands and went away to their lodging. Now Sayf al-Muluk opened not the wrapper to see what was therein, but threw it on the couch where he and Sa’id slept by night, for it was their habit to lie together. Presently they spread them the bed and the two lay down with a pair of wax candles burning over them, and slept till midnight, when Sayf al-Muluk awoke and, seeing the bundle at his head, said in his mind, “I wonder what thing of price is in this wrapper my father gave me!” So he took it together with a candle and descended from the couch leaving Sa’id sleeping and carried the bundle into a closet, where he opened it and found within a tunic of the fabric of the Jann. He spread it out and saw on the lining[386] of the back, the portraiture wroughten in gold of a girl and marvellous was her loveliness; and no sooner had he set eyes on the figure than his reason fled his head and he became Jinn-mad for love thereof, so that he fell down in a swoon and presently recovering, began to weep and lament, beating his face and breast and kissing her. And he recited these verses,

“Love, at the first, is a spurt of spray[387] * Which Doom
disposes and Fates display;
Till, when deep diveth youth in passion-sea * Unbearable
sorrows his soul waylay.”

And also these two couplets,

“Had I known of love in what fashion he * Robbeth heart and
soul I had guarded me:
But of malice prepense I threw self away, * Unwitting of Love
what his nature be.”

And Sayf al-Muluk ceased not to weep and wail and beat face and breast, till Sa’id awoke and missing him from the bed and seeing but a single candle, said to himself, “Whither is Sayf al-Muluk gone?” Then he took the other candle and went round about the palace, till he came upon the closet where he saw the Prince lying at full length, weeping with sore weeping and lamenting aloud. So he said to him, “O my brother, for what cause are these tears and what hath befallen thee? Speak to me and tell me the reason thereof.” But Sayf al-Muluk spoke not neither raised his head and continued to weep and wail and beat hand on breast. Seeing him in this case quoth Sa’id, “I am thy Wazir and thy brother, and we were reared together, I and thou; so an thou do not unburden thy breast and discover thy secret to me, to whom shalt thou reveal it and disclose its cause?” And he went on to humble himself and kiss the ground before him a full hour, whilst Sayf al-Muluk paid no heed to him nor answered him a word, but gave not over to weeping. At last, being affrighted at his case and weary of striving with him, he went out and fetched a sword, with which he returned to the closet, and setting the point to his own breast, said to the Prince, “Rouse thee, O my brother! An thou tell me not what aileth thee, I will slay myself and see thee no longer in this case.” Whereupon Sayf al-Muluk raised his head towards the Wazir and answered him, “O my brother, I am ashamed to tell thee what hath betided me;" but Sa'id said, "I conjure thee by Allah, Lord of Lords, Liberator of Necks,[388] Causer of causes, the One, the Ruthful, the Gift-full, the Bountiful, that thou tell me what aileth thee and be not abashed at me, for I am thy slave and thy Minister and counsellor in all thine affairs!" Quoth Sayf al-Muluk, "Come and look at this likeness." So Sa'id looked at it awhile and considering it straitly, behold, he saw written, as a crown over its head, in letters of pearl, these words, "This is the counterfeit presentment of Badi'a al-Jamal, daughter of Shahyál bin Shárukh, a King of the Kings of the true-believing Jann who have taken up their abode in the city of Babel and sojourn in the garden of Iram, Son of 'Ad the Greater.'"[389] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sa'id, son of the Wazir Faris, had read to Sayf al-Muluk, son of King Asim, the writ on the tunic, which showed the portraiture of Badi'a al-Jamal, daughter of Shahyal bin Sharukh, a King of the Kings of the Moslem Jinns dwelling in Babel-city and in the Garden of Iram, son of 'Ad the Greater, he cried, "O my brother, knowest thou of what woman this is the presentment, that we may seek for her?" Sayf al-Muluk replied, "No, by Allah, O my brother, I know her not!" and Sa'id rejoined, "Come, read this writing on the crown." So Sayf al-Muluk read it and cried out from his heart's core and very vitals, saying, "Alas! Alas! Alas!" Quoth Sa'id, "O my brother, an the original of the portrait exist and her name be Badi'a al-Jamal, and she abide in the world, I will hasten to seek her, that thou mayst win thy will without delay. But, Allah upon thee, O my brother, leave this weeping and ascend thy throne, that the Officers of the State may come in to do their service to thee, and in the undurn, do thou summon the merchants and fakirs and travellers and pilgrims and paupers and ask of them concerning this city and the garden of Iram; haply by the help and blessing of Allah (extolled and exalted be He!), some one of them shall direct us thither." So, when it was day, Sayf al-Muluk went forth and mounted the throne, clasping the tunic in his arms, for he could neither stand nor sit without it, nor would sleep visit him save it were with him; and the Emirs and Wazirs and Lords and Officers came in to him. When the Divan was complete all being assembled in their places he said to his Minister, "Go forth to them and tell them that the King hath been suddenly struck by sickness and he, by Allah, hath passed the night in ill case." So Sa'id fared forth and told the folk what he said; which when old King Asim heard, he was concerned for his son and, summoning the physicians and astrologers, carried them in to Sayf al-Muluk. They looked at him and prescribed him ptisanes and diet-drinks, simples and medicinal waters and wrote him characts and incensed him with Nadd and aloes-wood and ambergris three days' space; but his malady persisted three months, till King Asim was wroth with the leaches and said to them, "Woe to you, O dogs! What? Are all of you impotent to cure my son? Except ye heal him forthright, I will put the whole of you to death." The Archiater replied, "O King of the Age, in very sooth we know that this is thy son and thou wottest that we fail not of diligence in tending a stranger; so how much more with medicining thy son? But thy son is afflicted with a malady hard to heal, which, if thou desire to know, we will discover it to thee." Quoth Asim, "What then find ye to be the malady of my son?"; and quoth the leach, "O King of the Age, thy son is in love and he loveth one to whose enjoyment he hath no way of access." At this the King was wroth and asked, "How know ye that my son is in love and how came love to him?"; they answered, "Enquire of his Wazir and brother Sa'id, for he knoweth his case." The King rose and repaired to his private closet and summoning Sa'id said to him, "Tell me the truth of thy brother's malady." But Sa'id replied, "I know it not." So King Asim said to the Sworder, "Take Sa'id and bind his eyes and strike his neck." Whereupon Sa'id feared for himself and cried, "O King of the Age, grant me immunity." Replied the King, "Speak and thou shalt have it." "Thy son is in love." "With whom is he in love?" "With a King's daughter of the Jann." "And where could he have espied a daughter of the Jinns?" "Her portrait is wroughten on the tunic that was in the bundle given thee by Solomon, prophet of Allah!" When the King heard this, he rose, and going in to Sayf al-Muluk, said to him, "O my son, what hath afflicted thee? What is this portrait whereof thou art enamoured? And why didst thou not tell me." He replied, "O my sire, I was ashamed to name this to thee and could not bring myself to discover aught thereof to any one at all; but now thou knowest my case, look how thou mayest do to cure me." Rejoined his father, "What is to be done? Were this one of the daughters of men we might devise a device for coming at her; but she is a King's daughter of the Jinns and who can woo and win her, save it be Solomon David-son, and hardly he?[390] However, O my son, do thou arise forthright and hearten thy heart and take horse and ride out a-hunting or to weapon-play in the Maydan. Divert thyself with eating and drinking and put away cark and care from thy heart, and I will bring thee an hundred maids of the daughters of Kings; for thou hast no need to the daughters of the Jann, over whom we lack controul and of kind other than ours." But he said, "I cannot renounce her nor will I seek other than her." Asked King Asim, "How then shall we do, O my son?"; and Sayf al-Muluk answered, "Bring us all the merchants and travellers and wanderers in the city, that we may question them thereof. Peradventure, Allah will lead us to the city of Babel and the garden of Iram." So King Asim bade summon all the merchants in the city and strangers and sea-captains and, as each came, enquired of him anent the city of Babel and its peninsula[391] and the garden of Iram; but none of them knew these places nor could any give him tidings thereof. However, when the séance broke up, one of them said, "O King of the Age, an thou be minded to ken this thing, up and hie thee to the land of China; for it hath a vast city[392] and a safe, wherein are store of rarities and things of price and folk of all kinds; and thou shalt not come to the knowledge of this city and garden but from its folk; it may be one of them will direct thee to that thou seekest." Whereupon quoth Sayf al-Muluk, "O my sire, equip me a ship, that I may fare to the China-land; and do thou rule the reign in my stead." Replied the old King, "O my son, abide thou on the throne of thy kingship and govern thy commons, and I myself will make the voyage to China and ask for thee of the city of Babel and the garden of Iram." But Sayf al-Muluk rejoined, "O my sire, in very sooth this affair concerneth me and none can search after it like myself: so, come what will, an thou give me leave to make the voyage, I will depart and wander awhile. If I find trace or tidings of her, my wish will be won, and if not, belike the voyage will broaden my breast and recruit my courage; and haply by foreign travel my case will be made easy to me, and if I live, I shall return to thee safe and sound." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Sixty-fourth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sayf al-Muluk said to his sire King Asim, "Equip me a ship that I may fare therein to the China-land and search for the object of my desire. If I live I shall return to thee safe and sound." The old King looked at his son and saw nothing for it but to do what he desired; so he gave him the leave he wanted and fitted him forty ships, manned with twenty thousand armed Mamelukes, besides servants, and presented him with great plenty of money and necessaries and warlike gear, as much as he required. When the ships were laden with water and victual, weapons and troops, Sayf al-Muluk's father and mother farewelled him and King Asim said, "Depart, O my son, and travel in weal and health and safety. I commend thee to Him with Whom deposits are not lost."[393] So the Prince bade adieu to his parents and embarked, with his brother Sa'id, and they weighed anchor and sailed till they came to the City of China. When the Chinamen heard of the coming of forty ships, full of armed men and stores, weapons and hoards, they made sure that these were enemies come to battle with them and seige them; so they bolted the gates of the town and made ready the mangonels.[394] But Sayf al-Muluk, hearing of this, sent two of his Chief Mamelukes to the King of China, bidding them say to him, "This is Sayf al-Muluk, son of King Asim of Egypt, who is come to thy city as a guest, to divert himself by viewing thy country awhile, and not for conquest or contention; wherefore, an thou wilt receive him, he will come ashore to thee; and if not he will return and will not disquiet thee nor the people of thy capital." They presented themselves at the city gates and said, "We are messengers from King Sayf al-Muluk." Whereupon the townsfolk opened the gates and carried them to their King, whose name was Faghfúr[395] Shah and between whom and King Asim there had erst been acquaintance. So, when he heard that the new-comer Prince was the son of King Asim, he bestowed robes of honour on the messengers and, bidding open the gates, made ready guest-gifts and went forth in person with the chief officers of his realm, to meet Sayf al-Muluk, and the two Kings embraced. Then Faghfur said to his guest, "Well come and welcome and fair cheer to him who cometh to us! I am thy slave and the slave of thy sire: my city is between thy hands to command and whatso thou seekest shall be brought before thee." Then he presented him with the guest-gifts and victual for the folk at their stations; and they took horse, with the Wazir Sa'id and the chiefs of their officers and the rest of their troops, and rode from the sea-shore to the city, which they entered with cymbals clashing and drums beating in token of rejoicing. There they abode in the enjoyment of fair entertainment for forty days, at the end of which quoth the King of China to Sayf al-Muluk, "O son of my brother, how is thy case[396] ? Doth my country please thee?"; and quoth Sayf al-Muluk, "May Allah Almighty long honour it with thee, O King!" Said Faghfur, "Naught hath brought thee hither save some need which hath occurred to thee; and whatso thou desirest of my country I will accomplish it to the." Replied Sayf al-Muluk, "O King, my case is a wondrous, "and told him how he had fallen in love with the portrait of Badi'a al-Jamal, and wept bitter tears. When the King of China heard his story, he wept for pity and solicitude for him and cried, "And what wouldst thou have now, O Sayf al-Muluk?"; and he rejoined, "I would have thee bring me all the wanderers and travellers, the seafarers and sea-captains, that I may question them of the original of this portrait; perhaps one of them may give me tidings of her." So Faghfur Shah sent out his Nabobs and Chamberlains and body-guards to fetch all the wanderers and travellers in the land, and they brought them before the two Kings, and they were a numerous company. Then Sayf al-Muluk questioned them of the City of Babel and the Garden of Iram, but none of them returned him a reply, whereupon he was bewildered and wist not what to do; but one of the sea-captains said to him, "O auspicious King, an thou wouldst know of this city and that garden, up and hie thee to the Islands of the Indian realm."[397] Thereupon Sayf al-Muluk bade bring the ships; which being done, they freighted them with vivers and water and all that they needed, and the Prince and his Wazir re-embarked, with all their men, after they had farewelled King Faghfur Shah. They sailed the seas four months with a fair wind, in safety and satisfaction till it chanced that one day of the days there came out upon them a wind and the billows buffeted them from all quarters. The rain and hail[398] descended on them and during twenty days the sea was troubled for the violence of the wind; wherefor the ships drave one against other and brake up, as did the carracks[399] and all on board were drowned, except Sayf al-Muluk and some of his servants, who saved themselves in a little cock-boat. Then the wind fell by the decree of Allah Almighty and the sun shone out; whereupon Sayf al-Muluk opened his eyes and seeing no sign of the ships nor aught but sky and sea, said to the Mamelukes who were with him, "Where are the carracks and cock-boats and where is my brother Sa'id?" They replied, "O King of the Age, there remain nor ships nor boats nor those who were therein; for they are all drowned and become food for fishes." Now when he heard this, he cried aloud and repeated the saying which whoso saith shall not be confounded, and it is, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" Then he fell to buffeting his face and would have cast himself into the sea, but his Mamelukes withheld him, saying "O King, what will this profit thee? Thou hast brought all this on thyself; for, hadst thou hearkened to thy father's words, naught thereof had betided thee. But this was written from all eternity by the will of the Creator of Souls." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night,

She resume, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sayf al-Muluk would have cast himself into the main, his Mamelukes withheld him saying, "What will this profit thee? Thou hast done this deed by thyself, yet was it written from all eternity by the will of the Creator of Souls, that the creature might accomplish that which Allah hath decreed unto him. And indeed, at the time of thy birth, the astrologers assured thy sire that all manner troubles should befal thee. So there is naught for it but patience till Allah deliver us from this our strait." Replied the Prince, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Neither is there refuge nor fleeing from that which He decreeth!" And he sighed and recited these couplets,

"By the Compassionate, I'm dazed about my case for lo! *

Troubles and griefs beset me sore; I know not whence they grow.
I will be patient, so the folk, that I against a thing *
Bitt’rer than very aloes’ self,[400] endurèd have, may know.
Less bitter than my patience is the taste of aloes-juice; *
I’ve borne with patience what’s more hot than coals with fire aglow.
In this my trouble what resource have I, save to commit * My case to Him who orders all that is, for weal or woe?”

Then he became drowned in the depth of thoughts and his tears ran down upon his cheeks like torrent-rain; and he slept a while of the day, after which he awoke and sought of food somewhat. So they set meat before him and he ate his sufficiency, till they removed the food from before him, whilst the boat drove on with them they knew not whither it was wandering. It drifted with them at the will of the winds and the waves, night and day a great while, till their victual was spent and they saw themselves shent and were reduced to extreme hunger and thirst and exhaustion, when behold, suddenly they sighted an island from afar and the breezes wafted them on, till they came thither. Then, making the cock-boat fast to the coast and leaving one therein to guard it, they fared on into the island, where they found abundance of fruits of all colours and ate of them till they were satisfied. Presently, they saw a person sitting among those trees and he was long-faced, of strange favour and white of beard and body. He called to one of the Mamelukes by his name, saying, “Eat not of these fruits, for they are unripe; but come hither to me, that I may give thee to eat of the best and the ripest.” The slave looked at him and thought that he was one of the shipwrecked, who had made his way to that island; so he joyed with exceeding joy at sight of him and went close up to him, knowing not what was decreed to him in the Secret Purpose nor what was writ upon his brow. But, when he drew near, the stranger in human shape leapt upon him, for he was a Marid,[401] and riding upon his shoulderblades and twisting one of his legs about his neck, let the other hang down upon his back, saying, “Walk on, fellow; for there is no escape for thee from me and thou art become mine ass." Thereupon the Mameluke fell a-weeping and cried out to his comrades, "Alas, my lord! Flee ye forth of this wood and save yourselves, for one of the dwellers therein hath mounted on my shoulders, and the rest seek you, desiring to ride you like me."When they heard these words, all fled down to the boat and pushed off to sea; whilst the islanders followed them into the water, saying, "Whither wend ye? Come, tarry with us and we will mount on your backs and give you meat and drink, and you shall be our donkeys." Hearing this they hastened the more seawards till they left them in the distance and fared on, trusting in Allah Almighty; nor did they leave faring for a month, till another island rose before them and thereon they landed. Here they found fruits of various kinds and busied themselves with eating of them, when behold, they saw from afar, somewhat lying in the road, a hideous creature as it were a column of silver. So they went up to it and one of the men gave it a kick, when lo! it was a thing of human semblance, long of eyes and cloven of head and hidden under one of his ears, for he was wont, whenas he lay down to sleep, to spread one ear under his head, and cover his face with the other ear.[402] He snatched up the Mameluke who had kicked him and carried him off into the middle of the island, and behold, it was all full of Ghuls who eat the sons of Adam. The man cried out to his fellows, "Save yourselves, for this is the island of the man-eating Ghuls, and they mean to tear me to bits and devour me." When they heard these words they fled back to the boat, without gathering any store of the fruits and, putting out to sea, fared on some days till it so happened that they came to another island, where they found a high mountain. So they climbed to the top and there saw a thick copse. Now they were sore anhungered; so they took to eating of the fruits; but, before they were aware, there came upon them from among the trees black men of terrible aspect, each fifty cubits high with eye-teeth[403] protruding from their mouths like elephants' tusks; and, laying hands on Sayf al-Muluk and his company, carried them to their King, whom they found seated on a piece of black felt laid on a rock, and about him a great company of Zanzibar-blacks, standing in his service. The blackamoors who had captured the Prince and his Mamelukes set them before the King and said to him, "We found these birds amoung the trees"; and the King was sharp-set; so he took two of the servants and cut their throats and ate them; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Sixty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Zanzibar-blacks took Sayf al-Muluk and his Mamelukes and set them before the King, saying, “O King, we came upon these birds among the trees.” Thereupon the King seized two of the Mamelukes and cut their throats and ate them; which, when Sayf al-Muluk saw, he feared for himself and wept and repeated these verses,

“Familiar with my heart are woes and with them I * Who shunned
them; for familiar are great hearts and high.
The woes I suffer are not all of single kind. * I have, thank
Allah, varied thousands to aby!”

Then he signed and repeated these also,

“The World hath shot me with its sorrows till * My heart is
coverèd with shafts galore;
And now, when strike me other shafts, must break * Against th’
old points the points that latest pour.”

When the King heard his weeping and wailing, he said, “Verily these birds have sweet voices and their song pleaseth me: put them in cages.” So they set them each in his own cage and hung them up at the King’s head that he might listen to their warbling. On this wise Sayf al-Muluk and his Mamelukes abode and the blackamoors gave them to eat and drink: and now they wept and now laughed, now spake and now were hushed, whilst the King of the blacks delighted in the sound of their voices. And so they continued for a long time. Now this King had a daughter married in another island who, hearing that her father had birds with sweet voices, sent a messenger to him seeking of him some of them. So he sent her, by her Cossid,[404] Sayf al-Muluk and three of his men in four cages; and, when she saw them, they pleased her and she bade hang them up in a place over her head. The Prince fell to marvelling at that which had befallen him and calling to mind his former high and honourable estate and weeping for himself; and the three servants wept for themselves; and the King’s daughter deemed that they sang. Now it was her wont, whenever any one from the land of Egypt or elsewhere fell into her hands and he pleased her, to advance him to great favour with her; and by the decree of Allah Almighty it befel that, when she saw Sayf al-Muluk she was charmed by his beauty and loveliness and symmetry and perfect grace, and she commanded to entreat him and his companions with honour and to loose them from their cages. Now one day she took the Prince apart and would have him enjoy her; but he refused, saying, “O my lady, I am a banisht wight and with passion for a beloved one in piteous plight, nor with other will I consent to love-delight.” Then she coaxed him and importuned him, but he held aloof from her, and she could not approach him nor get her desire of him by any ways and means. At last, when she was weary of courting him in vain, she waxed wroth with him and his Mamelukes, and commanded that they should serve her and fetch her wood and water. In such condition they abode four years till Sayf al-Muluk became weary of his life and sent to intercede with the Princess, so haply she might release them and let them wend their ways and be at rest from that their hard labour. So she sent for him and said to him, “If thou wilt do my desire, I will free thee from this thy durance vile and thou shalt go to thy country, safe and sound.” And she wept and ceased not to humble herself to him and wheedle him, but he would not hearken to her words; whereupon she turned from him, in anger, and he and his companions abode on the island in the same plight. The islanders knew them for “The Princess’s birds” and durst not work them any wrong; and her heart was at ease concerning them, being assured that they could not escape from the island. So they used to absent themselves from her two and three days at a time and go round about the desert parts in all directions, gathering firewood, which they brought to the Princess’s kitchen; and thus they abode five[405] years. Now one day it so chanced that the Prince and his men were sitting on the sea-shore, devising of what had befallen, and Sayf al-Muluk, seeing himself and his men in such case, bethought him of his mother and father and his brother Sa’id and, calling to mind what high degree he had been in, fell a-weeping and lamenting passing sore, whilst his slaves wept likewise. Then said they to him, “O King of the Age, how long shall we weep? Weeping availeth not; for this thing was written on our brows by the ordinance of Allah, to whom belong Might and Majesty. Indeed, the Pen runneth with that He decreeth and nought will serve us but patience: haply Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) who hath saddened us shall gladden us!” Quoth he, “O my brothers, how shall we win free from this accursed woman? I see no way of escape for us, save Allah of his grace deliver us from her; but methinks we may flee and be at rest from this hard labour.” And quoth they, “O King of the Age, whither shall we flee? For the whole island is full of Ghuls which devour the Sons of Adam, and whithersoever we go, they will find us there and either eat us or capture and carry us back to that accursed, the King’s daughter, who will be wroth with us.” Sayf al-Muluk rejoined, “I will contrive you somewhat, whereby peradventure Allah Almighty shall deliver us and help us to escape from this island.” They asked, “And how wilt thou do?”; and he answered, “Let us cut some of these long pieces of wood, and twist ropes of their bark and bind them one with another, and make of them a raft[406] which we will launch and load with these fruits: then we will fashion us paddles and embark on the raft after breaking our bonds with the axe. It may be that Almighty Allah will make it the means of our deliverance from this accursed woman and vouchsafe us a fair wind to bring us to the land of Hind, for He over all things is Almighty!” Said they, “Right is thy rede,” and rejoiced thereat with exceeding joy. So they arose without stay or delay and cut with their axes wood for the raft and twisted ropes to bind the logs and at this they worked a whole month. Every day about evening they gathered somewhat of fuel and bore it to the Princess’s kitchen, and employed the rest of the twenty-four hours working at the raft. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sayf al-Muluk and his Mamelukes, having cut the wood and twisted the ropes for their raft, made an end of it and launched it upon the sea; then, after breaking their bonds with the axe, and loading the craft with fruits plucked from the island-trees, they embarked at close of day; nor did any wot of their intent. They put out to sea in their raft and paddled on four months, knowing not whither the craft carried them, till their provaunt failed them and they were suffering the severest extreme of hunger and thirst, when behold, the sea waxed troubled and foamed and rose in high waves, and there came forth upon them a frightful crocodile,[407] which put out its claw and catching up one of the Mamelukes swallowed him. At the sight of this horror Sayf al-Muluk wept bitterly and he and the two men[408] that remained to him pushed off from the place where they had seen the crocodile, sore affrighted. After this they continued drifting on till one day they espied a mountain terrible tall and spiring high in air, whereat they rejoiced, when presently an island appeared. They made towards it with all their might congratulating one another on the prospect of making land; but hardly had they sighted the island on which was the mountain, when the sea changed face and boiled and rose in big waves and a second crocodile raised its head and putting out its claw caught up the two remaining Mamelukes and swallowed them. So Sayf al-Muluk abode alone, and making his way to the island, toiled till he reached the mountain-top, where he looked about and found a copse, and walking among the trees feel to eating of the fruits. Presently, he saw among the branches more than twenty great apes, each bigger than a he-mule, whereat he was seized with exceeding fear. The apes came down and surrounded him;[409] then they forewent him, signing to him to follow them, and walked on, and he too, till he came to a castle, tall of base and strong of build whose ordinance was one brick of gold and one of silver. The apes entered and he after them, and he saw in the castle all manner of rarities, jewels and precious metals such as tongue faileth to describe. Here also he found a young man, passing tall of stature with no hair on his cheeks, and Sayf al-Muluk was cheered by the sight for there was no human being but he in the castle. The stranger marvelled exceedingly at sight of the Prince and asked him, “What is thy name and of what land art thou and how camest thou hither? Tell me thy tale and hide from me naught thereof.” Answered the Prince, “By Allah, I came not hither of my own consent nor is this place of my intent; yet I cannot but go from place to place till I win my wish.”

Quoth the youth, “And what is thy object?”; and quoth the other, “I am of the land of Egypt and my name is Sayf al-Muluk son of King Asim bin Safwan”; and told him all that had passed with him, from first to last. Whereupon the youth arose and stood in his service, saying, “O King of the Age, I was erst in Egypt and heard that thou hadst gone to the land of China; but where is this land and where lies China-land?[410] Verily, this is a wondrous thing and marvellous matter!” Answered the Prince, “Sooth thou speakest but, when I left China-land, I set out, intending for the land of Hind and a stormy wind arose and the sea boiled and broke all my ships”; brief, he told him all that had befallen him till he came thither; whereupon quoth the other, “O King’s son, thou hast had enough of strangerhood and its sufferings; Alhamdolillah, — praised be Allah who hath brought thee hither! So now do thou abide with me, that I may enjoy thy company till I die, when thou shalt become King over this island, to which no bound is known, and these apes thou seest are indeed skilled in all manner of crafts; and whatso thou seekest here shalt thou find.” Replied Sayf al-Muluk, “O my brother I may not tarry in any place till my wish be won, albeit I compass the whole world in pursuit thereof and make quest of every one so peradventure Allah may bring me to my desire or my course lead me to the place wherein is the appointed term of my days, and I shall die my death.” Then the youth turned with a sign to one of the apes, and he went out and was absent awhile, after which he returned with other apes girt with silken zones.[411] They brought the trays and set on near[412] an hundred chargers of gold and saucers of silver, containing all manner of meats. Then they stood, after the manner of servants between the hands of Kings, till the youth signalled to the Chamberlains, who sat down, and he whose wont it was to serve stood, whilst the two Princes ate their sufficiency. Then the apes cleared the table and brought basins and ewers of gold, and they washed their hands in rose water; after which they set on fine sugar and nigh forty flagons, in each a different kind of wine, and they drank and took their pleasure and made merry and had a fine time. And all the apes danced and gambolled before them, what while the eaters sat at meat; which when Sayf al-Muluk saw, he marvelled at them and forgot that which had befallen him of sufferings. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Sixty-eighth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sayf al-Muluk saw the gestures and gambols of the apes, he marvelled thereat and forgot that which had betided him of strangerhood and its sufferings. At nightfall they lighted waxen candles in candlesticks of gold studded with gems and set on dishes of confections and fruits of sugar-candy. So they ate; and when the hour of rest was come, the apes spread them bedding and they slept. And when morning morrowed, the young man arose, as was his wont, before sunrise and waking Sayf al-Muluk said to him, "Put thy head forth of this lattice and see what standeth beneath it." So he put out his head and saw the wide waste and all the wold filled with apes, whose number none knew save Allah Almighty. Quoth he, "Here be great plenty of apes, for they cover the whole country: but why are they assembled at this hour?" Quoth the youth, "This is their custom. Every Sabbath,[413] all the apes in the island come hither, some from two and three days' distance, and stand here till I awake from sleep and put forth my head from this lattice, when they kiss ground before me and go about their business." So saying, he put his head out of the window; and when the apes saw him, they kissed the earth before him and went their way. Sayf al-Muluk abode with the young man a whole month when he farewelled him and departed, escorted by a party of nigh a hundred apes, which the young man bade escort him. They journeyed with him seven days, till they came to the limits of their islands,[414] when they took leave of him and returned to their places, while Sayf al-Muluk fared on alone over mount and hill, desert and plain, four months' journey, one day anhungered and the next satiated, now eating of the herbs of the earth and then of the fruits of the trees, till he repented him of the harm he had done himself by leaving the young man; and he was about to retrace his steps to him, when he saw something black afar off and said to himself, "Is this a city or trees? But I will not turn back till I see what it is." So he made towards it and when he drew near, he saw that it was a palace tall of base. Now he who built it was Japhet son of Noah (on whom be peace!) and it is of this palace that God the Most High speaketh in His precious Book, whenas He saith, "And an abandoned well and a high-builded palace."[415] Sayf al-Muluk sat down at the gate and said in his mind, "Would I knew what is within yonder palace and what King dwelleth there and who shall acquaint me whether its folk are men or Jinn? Who will tell me the truth of the case?" He sat considering awhile, but, seeing none go in or come out, he rose and committing himself to Allah Almighty entered the palace and walked on, till he had counted seven vestibules; yet saw no one. Presently looking to his right he beheld three doors, while before him was a fourth, over which hung a curtain. So he went up to this and raising the curtain, found himself in a great hall[416] spread with silken carpets. At the upper end rose a throne of gold whereon sat a damsel, whose face was like the moon, arrayed in royal raiment and beautified as she were a bride on the night of her displaying; and at the foot of the throne was a table of forty trays spread with golden and silvern dishes full of dainty viands. The Prince went up and saluted her, and she returned his salam, saying, "Art thou of mankind or of the Jinn?" Replied he, "I am a man of the best of mankind;[417] for I am a King, son of a King." She rejoined, "What seekest thou? Up with thee and eat of yonder food, and after tell me thy past from first to last and how thou camest hither." So he sat down at the table and removing the cover from a tray of meats (he being hungry), ate till he was full; then washed his right hand and going up to the throne, sat down by the damsel who asked him, "Who art thou and what is thy name and whence comest thou and who brought thee hither?" He answered, "Indeed my story is a long but do thou first tell me who and what and whence thou art and why thou dwellest in this place alone." She rejoined, "My name is Daulat Khátun[418] and I am the daughter of the King of Hind. My father dwelleth in the Capital-city of Sarandíb and hath a great and goodly garden, there is no goodlier in all the land of Hind or its dependencies; and in this garden is a great tank. One day, I went out into the garden with my slave-women and I stripped me naked and they likewise and, entering the tank, fell to sporting and solacing ourselves therein. Presently, before I could be ware, a something as it were a cloud swooped down on me and snatching me up from amongst my handmaids, soared aloft with me betwixt heaven and earth, saying, 'Fear not, O Daulat Khatun, but be of good heart.' Then he flew on with me a little while, after which he set me down in this palace and straightway without stay or delay became a handsome young man daintily apparelled, who said to me, ‘Now dost thou know me?’ Replied I, ‘No, O my lord’; and he said, ‘I am the Blue King, Sovran of the Jann; my father dwelleth in the Castle Al-Kulzum[419] hight, and hath under his hand six hundred thousand Jinn, flyers and divers. It chanced that while passing on my way I saw thee and fell in love with thee for thy lovely form: so I swooped down on thee and snatched thee up from among the slave-girls and brought thee to this the High-builded Castle, which is my dwelling-place. None may fare hither be he man or be he Jinni, and from Hind hither is a journey of an hundred and twenty years: wherefore do thou hold that thou wilt never again behold the land of thy father and thy mother; so abide with me here, in contentment of heart and peace, and I will bring to thy hands whatso thou seekest.’ Then he embraced me and kissed me,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the damsel said to Sayf al-Muluk, “Then the King of the Jann, after he had acquainted me with his case, embraced me and kissed me, saying, ‘Abide here and fear nothing’; whereupon he went away from me for an hour and presently returned with these tables and carpets and furniture. He comes to me every Third[420] and abideth with me three days and on Friday, at the time of mid-afternoon prayer, he departeth and is absent till the following Third. When he is here, he eateth and drinketh and kisseth and huggeth me, but doth naught else with me, and I am a pure virgin, even as Allah Almighty created me. My father’s name is Táj al-Mulúk, and he wotteth not what is come of me nor hath he hit upon any trace of me. This is my story: now tell me thy tale.” Answered the Prince, “My story is a long and I fear lest while I am telling it to thee the Ifrit come.” Quoth she “He went out from me but an hour before thy entering and will not return till Third: so sit thee down and take thine ease and hearten thy heart and tell me what hath betided thee, from beginning to end.” And quoth he, “I hear and I obey.” So he fell to telling her all that had befallen him from commencement to conclusion but, when she heard speak of Badi'a al-Jamal, her eyes ran over with railing tears and she cried, "O Badi'a al-Jamal, I had not thought this of thee! Alack for our luck! O Badi'a al-Jamal, dost thou not remember me nor say, 'My sister Daulat Khatun whither is she gone?'" And her weeping redoubled, lamenting for that Badi'a al-Jamal had forgotten her.[421] Then said Sayf al-Muluk, "O Daulat Khatun, thou art a mortal and she is a Jinniyah: how then can she be thy sister?" Replied the Princess, "She is my sister by fosterage and this is how it came about. My mother went out to solace herself in the garden, when labour-pangs seized her and she bare me. Now the mother of Badi'a al-Jamal chanced to be passing with her guards, when she also was taken with travail-pains; so she alighted in a side of the garden and there brought forth Badi'a al-Jamal. She despatched one of her women to seek food and childbirth-gear of my mother, who sent her what she sought and invited her to visit her. So she came to her with Badi'a al-Jamal and my mother suckled the child, who with her mother tarried with us in the garden two months. And before wending her ways the mother of Badi'a al-Jamal gave my mother somewhat,[422] saying, 'When thou hast need of me, I will come to thee a middlemost the garden,' and departed to her own land; but she and her daughter used to visit us every year and abide with us awhile before returning home. Wherefore an I were with my mother, O Sayf al-Muluk, and if thou wert with me in my own country and Badi'a al-Jamal and I were together as of wont, I would devise some device with her to bring thee to thy desire of her: but I am here and they know naught of me; for that an they kenned what is become of me, they have power to deliver me from this place; however, the matter is in Allah's hands (extolled and exalteth be He!) and what can I do?" Quoth Sayf al-Muluk, "Rise and let us flee and go whither the Almighty willeth;" but, quoth she, "We cannot do that: for, by Allah, though we fled hence a year's journey that accursed would overtake us in an hour and slaughter us." Then said the Prince, "I will hide myself in his way, and when he passeth by I will smite him with the sword and slay him." Daulat Khatun replied, "Thou canst not succeed in slaying him save thou his soul." Asked he, "And where is his soul?"; and she answered, "Many a time have I questioned him thereof but he would not tell me, till one day I pressed him and he waxed wroth with me and said to me, ‘How often wilt thou ask me of my soul? What hast thou to do with my soul?’ I rejoined, ‘O Hátim,[423] there remaineth none to me but thou, except Allah; and my life dependeth on thy life and whilst thou livest, all is well for me; so, except I care for thy soul and set it in the apple of this mine eye, how shall I live in thine absence? An I knew where thy soul abideth, I would never cease whilst I live, to hold it in mine embrace and would keep it as my right eye.’ Whereupon said he to me, ‘What time I was born, the astrologers predicted that I should lose my soul at the hands of the son of a king of mankind. So I took it and set it in the crop of a sparrow, and shut up the bird in a box. The box I set in a casket, and enclosing this in seven other caskets and seven chests, laid the whole in a alabastrine coffer,[424] which I buried within the marge of yon earth-circling sea; for that these parts are far from the world of men and none of them can win hither. So now see I have told thee what thou wouldst know, and do thou tell none thereof, for it is a secret between me and thee.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Seventieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Daulat Khatun acquainted Sayf al-Muluk with the whereabouts of the soul of the Jinni who had carried her off and repeated to him his speech ending with, “And this is a secret between me and thee!” “I rejoined,” quoth she, “‘To whom should I tell it, seeing that none but thou cometh hither with whom I may talk thereof?’ adding, ‘By Allah, thou hast indeed set thy soul in the strongest of strongholds to which none may gain access! How should a man win to it, unless the impossible be fore-ordained and Allah decree like as the astrologers predicted?’ Thereupon the Jinni, ‘Peradventure one may come, having on his finger the seal-ring of Solomon son of David (on the twain be peace!) and lay his hand with the ring on the face of the water, saying, ‘By the virtue of the names engraven upon this ring, let the soul of such an one come forth!’ Whereupon the coffer will rise to the surface and he will break it open and do the like with the chests and caskets, till he come to the little box, when he will take out the sparrow and strangle it, and I shall die.’” Then said Sayf al-Muluk, “I am the King’s son of whom he spake, and this is the ring of Solomon David-son on my finger: so rise, let us go down to the sea-shore and see if his words be leal or leasing!” Thereupon the two walked down to the sea-shore and the Princess stood on the beach, whilst the Prince waded into the water to his waist and laying his hand with the ring on the surface of the sea, said, “By the virtue of the names and talismans engraven on this ring, and by the might of Sulayman bid Dáúd (on whom be the Peace!), let the soul of Hatim the Jinni, son of the Blue King, come forth!” Whereat the sea boiled in billows and the coffer of alabaster rose to the surface. Sayf al-Muluk took it and shattered it against the rock and broke open the chests and caskets, till he came to the little box and drew thereout the sparrow. Then the twain returned to the castle and sat down on the throne; but hardly had they done this, when lo and behold! there arose a dust-cloud terrifying and some huge thing came flying and crying, “Spare me, O King’s son, and slay me not; but make me thy freedman, and I will bring thee to thy desire!” Quoth Daulat Khatun, “The Jinni cometh; slay the sparrow, lest this accursed enter the palace and take it from thee and slaughter me and slaughter thee after me.” So the Prince wrung the sparrow’s neck and it died, whereupon the Jinni fell down at the palace-door and became a heap of black ashes. Then said Daulat Khatun, “We are delivered from the hand of yonder accursed; what shall we do now?”; and Sayf al-Muluk replied, “It behoveth us to ask aid of Allah Almighty who hath afflicted us; belike He will direct us and help us to escape from this our strait.” So saying, he arose and pulling up[425] half a score of the doors of the palace, which were of sandal-wood and lign-aloes with nails of gold and silver, bound them together with ropes of silk and floss[426] -silk and fine linen and wrought of them a raft, which he and the Princess aided each other to hale down to the sea-shore. They launched it upon the water till it floated and, making it fast to the beach, returned to the palace, whence they removed all the chargers of gold and saucers of silver and jewels and precious stones and metals and what else was light of load and weighty of worth and freighted the raft therewith. Then they embarked after fashioning two pieces of wood into the likeness of paddles and casting off the rope-moorings, let the raft drift out to sea with them, committing themselves to Allah the Most High, who contenteth those that put their trust in Him and disappointeth not them who rely upon Him. They ceased not faring on thus four months until their victual was exhausted and their sufferings waxed severe and their souls were straitened; so they prayed Allah to vouchsafe them deliverance from that danger. But all this time when they lay down to sleep, Sayf al-Muluk set Daulat Khatun behind him and laid a naked brand at his back, so that, when he turned in sleep the sword was between them.[427] At last it chanced one night, when Sayf al-Muluk was asleep and Daulat Khatun awake, that behold, the raft drifted landwards and entered a port wherein were ships. The Princess saw the ships and heard a man, he being the chief and head of the captains, talking with the sailors; whereby she knew that this was the port of some city and that they were come to an inhabited country. So she joyed with exceeding joy and waking the Prince said to him, “Ask the captain the name of the city and harbour.” Thereupon Sayf al-Muluk arose and said to the captain, “O my brother, how is this harbour hight and what be the names of yonder city and its King?” Replied the Captain, “O false face![428] O frosty beard! an thou knew not the name of this port and city, how camest thou hither?” Quoth Sayf al-Muluk, “I am a stranger and had taken passage in a merchant ship which was wrecked and sank with all on board; but I saved myself on a plank and made my way hither; wherefore I asked thee the name of the place, and in asking is no offence.” Then said the captain, “This is the city of ‘Amáriyah and this harbour is called Kamín al-Bahrayn.”[429] When the Princess heard this she rejoiced with exceeding joy and said, “Praised be Allah!” He asked, “What is to do?”; and she answered, “O Sayf al-Muluk, rejoice in succour near hand; for the King of this city is my uncle, my father’s brother.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Seventy-first Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Daulat Khatun said to Sayf al-Muluk, “Rejoice in safety near hand; for the King of this city is my uncle, my father’s brother and his name is ‘Ali al-Mulúk,”[430] adding, “Say thou then to the captain, ‘Is the Sultan of the city, Ali al-Muluk, well?’” He asked but the captain was wroth with him and cried, “Thou sayest, ‘I am a stranger and never in my life came hither.’ Who then told thee the name of the lord of the city?” When Daulat Khatun heard this, she rejoiced and knew him for Mu’ín al-Dín,[431] one of her father’s captains. Now he had fared forth in search of her, after she was lost and finding her not, he never ceased cruising till he came to her uncle’s city. Then she bade Sayf al-Muluk say to him, “O Captain Mu’in al-Din, come and speak with thy mistress!” So he called out to him as she bade, whereat he was wroth with exceeding wrath and answered, “O dog, O thief, O spy, who art thou and how knowest thou me?” Then he said to one of the sailors, “Give me an ash[432] -stave, that I may go to yonder plaguing Arab and break his head.” So he tookt he stick and made for Sayf al-Muluk, but, when he came to the raft, he saw a something, wondrous, beauteous, which confounded his wits and considering it straitly he made sure that it was Daulat Khatun sitting there, as she were a slice of the moon; whereat he said to the Prince, “Who is that with thee?” Replied he, “A damsel by name Daulat Khatun.” When the captain heard the Princess’s name and knew that she was his mistress and the daughter of his King, he fell down in a fainting-fit, and when he came to himself, he left the raft and whatso was thereon and riding up to the palace, craved an audience of the King; whereupon the chamberlain went in to the presence and said, “Captain Mu’in al-Din is come to bring thee good news; so bid he be brought in.” The King bade admit him; accordingly he entered and kissing ground[433] said to him, “O King, thou owest me a gift for glad tidings; for thy brother’s daughter Daulat Khatun hath reached our city safe and sound, and is now on a raft in the harbour, in company with a young man like the moon on the night of its full.” When the King heard this, he rejoiced and conferred a costly robe of honour on the captain. Then he straightway bade decorate the city in honour of the safe return of his brother’s daughter, and sending for her and Sayf al-Muluk, saluted the twain and gave them joy of their safety; after which he despatched a messenger to his brother, to let him know that his daughter was found and was with him. As soon as the news reached Taj al-Muluk he gat him ready and assembling his troops set out for his brother’s capital, where he found his daughter and they rejoiced with exceeding joy. He sojourned with his brother a week, after which he took his daughter and Sayf al-Muluk and returned to

Sarandib, where the Princess foregathered with her mother and they rejoiced at her safe return; and held high festival and that day was a great day, never was seen its like. As for Sayf al-Muluk, the King entreated him with honour and said to him, “O Sayf al-Muluk, thou hast done me and my daughter all this good for which I cannot requite thee nor can any requite thee, save the Lord of the three Worlds; but I wish thee to sit upon the throne in my stead and rule the land of Hind, for I offer thee of my throne and kingdom and treasures and servants, all this in free gift to thee.” Whereupon Sayf al-Muluk rose and kissing the ground before the King, thanked him and answered, “O King of the Age, I accept all thou givest me and return it to thee in freest gift; for I, O King of the Age, covet not sovranty nor sultanate nor desire aught but that Allah the Most High bring me to my desire.” Rejoined the King, “O Sayf al-Muluk these my treasures are at thy disposal: take of them what thou wilt, without consulting me, and Allah requite thee for me with all weal!” Quoth the Prince, “Allah advance the King! There is no delight for me in money or in dominion till I win my wish: but now I have a mind to solace myself in the city and view its thoroughfares and market-streets.” So the King bade bring him a mare of the thoroughbreds, saddled and bridled; and Sayf al-Muluk mounted her and rode through the streets and markets of the city. As he looked about him right and left, lo! his eyes fell on a young man, who was carrying a tunic and crying it for sale at fifteen dinars: so he considered him and saw him to be like his brother Sa’id; and indeed it was his very self, but he was wan of blee and changed for long strangerhood and the travails of travel, so that he knew him not. However, he said to his attendants, “Take yonder youth and carry him to the palace where I lodge, and keep him with you till my return from the ride when I will question him.” But they understood him to say, “Carry him to the prison,” and said in themselves “Haply this is some runaway Mameluke of his.” So they took him and bore him to the bridewell, where they laid him in irons and left him seated in solitude, unremembered by any. Presently Sayf al-Muluk returned to the palace, but he forgot his brother Sa’id, and none made mention of him. So he abode in prison, and when they brought out the prisoners, to cut ashlar from the quarries they took Sa’id with them, and he wrought with the rest. He abode a month's space, in this squalor and sore sorrow, pondering his case and saying in himself, "What is the cause of my imprisonment?"; while Sayf al-Muluk's mind was diverted from him by rejoicing and other things; but one day, as he sat, he bethought him of Sa'id and said to his Mamelukes, "Where is the white slave I gave into your charge on such a day?" Quoth they, "Didst thou not bid us bear him to the bridewell?"; and quoth he, "Nay, I said not so; I bade you carry him to my palace after the ride." Then he sent his Chamberlains and Emirs for Sa'id and they fetched him in fetters, and loosing him from his irons set him before the Prince, who asked him, "O young man, what countryman art thou?"; and he answered, "I am from Egypt and my name is Sa'id, son of Faris the Wazir." Now hearing these words Sayf al-Muluk sprang to his feet and throwing himself off the throne and upon his friend, hung on his neck, weeping aloud for very joy and saying, "O my brother, O Sa'id, praise be Allah for that I see thee alive! I am thy brother Sayf al-Muluk, son of King Asim." Then they embraced and shed tears together and all who were present marvelled at them. After this Sayf al-Muluk bade his people bear Sa'id to the Hammam-bath: and they did so. When he came out, they clad him in costly clothing and carried him back to Sayf al-Muluk who seated him on the throne beside himself. When King Taj al-Muluk heard of the reunion of Sayf al-Muluk and his brother Sa'id, he joyed with you exceeding and came to them, and the three sat devising of all that had befallen them in the past from first to last. Then said Sa'id, "O my brother, O Sayf al-Muluk, when the ship sank with all on board I saved myself on a plank with a company of Mamelukes and it drifted with us a whole month, when the wind cast us, by the ordinance of Allah Almighty, upon an island. So we landed and entering among the trees took to eating of the fruits, for we were anhungred. Whilst we were busy eating, there fell on us unawares, folk like Ifrits[434] and springing on our shoulders rode us[435] and said to us, 'Go on with us; for ye are become our asses.' So I said to him who had mounted me, 'What art thou and why mountest thou me?' At this he twisted one of his legs about my neck, till I was all but dead, and beat upon my back the while with the other leg, till I thought he had broken my backbone. So I fell to the ground on my face, having no strength left in me for famine and thirst. From my fall he knew that I was hungry and taking me by the hand, led me to a tree laden with fruit which was a pear-tree[436] and said to me, ‘Eat thy fill of this tree.’ So I ate till I had enough and rose to walk against my will; but, ere I had fared afar the creature turned and leaping on my shoulders again drove me on, now walking, now running and now trotting, and he the while mounted on me, laughing and saying, ‘Never in my life saw I a donkey like unto thee!’ We abode thus for years till, one day of the days, it chanced that we saw there great plenty of vines, covered with ripe fruit; so we gathered a quantity of grape-bunches and throwing them into a pit, trod them with our feet, till the pit became a great water-pool. Then we waited awhile and presently returning thither, found that the sun had wroughten on the grape-juice and it was become wine. So we used to drink it till we were drunken and our faces flushed and we fell to singing and dancing and running about in the merriment of drunkenness;[437] whereupon our masters said to us, ‘What is it that reddeneth your faces and maketh you dance and sing?’ We replied, ‘Ask us not, what is your quest in questioning us hereof?’ But they insisted, saying, ‘You must tell us so that we may know the truth of the case,’ till we told them how we had pressed grapes and made wine. Quoth they, ‘Give us to drink thereof’; but quoth we, ‘The grapes are spent.’ So they brought us to a Wady, whose length we knew not from its breadth nor its beginning from its end wherein were vines each bunch of grapes on them weighing twenty pounds[438] by the scale and all within easy reach, and they said, ‘Gather of these.’ So we gathered a mighty great store of grapes and finding there a big trench bigger than the great tank in the King’s garden we filled it full of fruit. This we trod with our feet and did with the juice as before till it became strong wine, which it did after a month; whereupon we said to them, ‘’Tis come to perfection; but in what will ye drink it?’ And they replied, ‘We had asses like unto you; but we ate them and kept their heads: so give us to drink in their skulls.’ We went to their caves which we found full of heads and bones of the Sons of Adam, and we gave them to drink, when they became drunken and lay down, nigh two hundred of them. Then we said to one another, ‘Is it not enough that they should ride us, but they must eat us also? There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! But we will ply them with wine, till they are overcome by drunkenness, when we will slay them and be at rest from them.’ Accordingly, we awoke them and fell to filling the skulls and gave them to drink, but they said, ‘This is bitter.’ We replied, ‘Why say ye ’tis bitter? Whoso saith thus, except he drink of it ten times, he dieth the same day.’ When they heard this, they feared death and cried to us, ‘Give us to drink the whole ten times.’ So we gave them to drink, and when they had swallowed the rest of the ten draughts they waxed drunken exceedingly and their strength failed them and they availed not to mount us. Thereupon we dragged them together by their hands and laying them one upon another, collected great plenty of dry vine-stalks and branches and heaped it about and upon them: then we set fire to the pile and stood afar off, to see what became of them.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Seventy-second Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sa’id continued, “When we set fire to the pile wherein were the Ghuls, I with the Mamelukes stood afar off to see what became of them; and, as soon the fire was burnt out, we came back and found them a heap of ashes, wherefore we praised Allah Almighty who had delivered us from them. Then we went forth about the island and sought the sea-shore, where we parted and I and two of the Mamelukes fared on till we came to a thick copse full of fruit and there busied ourselves with eating, and behold, presently up came a man tall of stature, long of beard and lengthy of ear, with eyes like cressets, driving before him and feeding a great flock of sheep.[439] When he saw us he rejoiced and said to us, ‘Well come, and fair welcome to you! Draw near me that I may slaughter you an ewe of these sheep and roast it and give you to eat.’ Quoth we, ‘Where is thine abode?’ And quoth he, ‘Hard by yonder mountain; go on towards it till ye come to a cave and enter therein, for you will see many guests like yourselves; and do ye sit with them, whilst we make ready for you the guest-meal.’ We believed him so fared on, as he bade us, till we came to the cavern, where we found many guests, Sons of Adam like ourselves, but they were all blinded;[440] and when we entered, one said, ‘I’m sick’; and another, ‘I’m weak.’ So we cried to them, ‘What is this you say and what is the cause of your sickness and weakness?' They asked, 'Who are ye?'; and we answered, 'We are guests.' Then said they, 'What hath made you fall into the hands of yonder accursed? But there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! This is a Ghul who devoureth the Sons of Adam and he hath blinded us and meaneth to eat us.' Said we, 'And how did he blind you?' and they replied, 'Even as he will blind yourselves anon.' Quoth we, 'And how so?' And quoth they, 'He will bring you bowls of soured milk[441] and will say to you, 'Ye are weary with wayfare: take this milk and drink it.' And when ye have drunken thereof, ye will become blind like us.' Said I to myself, 'There is no escape for us but by contrivance.' So I dug a hole in the ground and sat over it. After an hour or so in came the accursed Ghul with bowls of milk, whereof he gave to each of us, saying, 'Ye come from the desert and are athirst: so take this milk and drink it, whilst I roast you the flesh.' I took the cup and carried it to my mouth but emptied it into the hole; then I cried out, 'Alas! my sight is gone and I am blind!' and clapping my hand to my eyes, fell a-weeping and a-wailing, whilst the accursed laughed and said, 'Fear not, thou art now become like mine other guests.' But, as for my two comrades, they drank the milk and became blind. Thereupon the Ghul arose and stopping up the mouth of the cavern came to me and felt my ribs, but found me lean and with no flesh on my bones: so he tried another and finding him fat, rejoiced. Then he slaughtered three sheep and skinned them and fetching iron spits, spitted the flesh thereon and set them over the fire to roast. When the meat was done, he placed it before my comrades who ate and he with them; after which he brought a leather-bag full of wine and drank thereof and lay down prone and snored. Said I to myself, 'He's drowned in sleep: how shall I slay him?' Then I bethought me of the spits and thrusting two of them into the fire, waited till they were as red-hot coals: whereupon I arose and girded myself and taking a spit in each hand went up to the accursed Ghul and thrust them into his eyes, pressing upon them with all my might. He sprang to his feet for sweet life and would have laid hold of me; but he was blind. So I fled from him into the inner cavern, whilst he ran after me; but I found no place of refuge from him nor whence I might escape into the open country, for the cave was stopped up with stones; wherefore I was bewildered and said to the blind men, ‘How shall I do with this accursed?’ Replied one of them, ‘O Sa’id, with a run and a spring mount up to yonder niche[442] and thou wilt find there a sharpened scymitar of copper: bring it to me and I will tell thee what to do.’ So I clombed to the niche and taking the blade, returned to the blind man, who said to me, ‘Smite him with the sword in his middle, and he will die forthright.’ So I rushed after the Ghul, who was weary with running after me and felt for the blind men that he might kill them and, coming up to him smote him with the sword a single stroke across his waist and he fell in twain. then he screamed and cried out to me, ‘O man, an thou desire to slay me, strike me a second stroke.’ Accordingly, I was about to smite him another cut; but he who had directed me to the niche and the scymitar said, ‘Smite him not a second time, for then he will not die, but will live and destroy us.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Seventy-third Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sa’id continued, “Now when I struck the Ghul with the sword he cried out to me, ‘O man, an thou desire to slay me, strike me a second stroke!” I was about so to do when he who had directed me to the scymitar said, ‘Smite him not a second time, for then he will not die but will live and destroy us!’ So I held my hand as he bade me, and the Ghul died. Then said the blind man to me, ‘Open the mouth of the cave and let us fare forth; so haply Allah may help us and bring us to rest from this place.’ And I said, ‘No harm can come to us now; let us rather abide here and repose and eat of these sheep and drink of this wine, for long is the land.’ Accordingly we tarried there two months, eating of the sheep and of the fruits of the island and drinking the generous grape-juice till it so chanced one day, as we sat upon the beach, we caught sight of a ship looming large in the distance; so we made signs for the crew and holla’d to them. They feared to draw near, knowing that the island was inhabited by a Ghul[443] who ate Adamites, and would have sheered off; but we ran down to the marge of the sea and made signs to them, with our turband-ends and shouted to them, whereupon one of the sailors, who was sharp of sight, said to the rest, “Harkye, comrades, I see these men formed like ourselves, for they have not the fashion of Ghuls.' So they made for us, little by little, till they drew near us in the dinghy[444] and were certified that we were indeed human beings, when they saluted us and we returned their salam and gave them the glad tidings of the slaying of the accursed, wherefore they thanked us. Then we carried to the ship all that was in the cave of stuffs and sheep and treasure, together with a viaticum of the island-fruits, such as should serve us days and months, and embarking, sailed on with a fair breeze three days; at the end of which the wind veered round against us and the air became exceeding dark; nor had an hour passed before the wind drave the craft on to a rock, where it broke up and its planks were torn asunder.[445] However, the Great God decreed that I should lay hold of one of the planks, which I bestrode, and it bore me along two days, for the wind had fallen fair again, and I paddled with my feet awhile, till Allah the Most High brought me safe ashore and I landed and came to this city, where I found myself a stranger, solitary, friendless, not knowing what to do; for hunger was sore upon me and I was in great tribulation. Thereupon I, O my brother, hid myself and pulling off this my tunic, carried it to the market, saying in my mind, 'I will sell it and live on its price, till Allah accomplish to me whatso he will accomplish.' Then I took the tunic in my hand and cried it for sale, and the folk were looking at it and bidding for it, when, O my brother, thou camest by and seeing me commandedst me to the palace; but thy pages arrested and thrust me into the prison and there I abode till thou bethoughtest thee of me and badst bring me before thee. So now I have told thee what befel me, and Alhamdolillah — Glorified be God — for reunion!" Much marvelled the two Kings at Sa'id's tale and Taj al-Muluk having made ready a goodly dwelling for Sayf al-Muluk and his Wazir, Daulat Khatun used to visit the Prince there and thank him for his favours and talk with him. One day, he met her and said to her, "O my lady, where is the promise thou madest me, in the palace of Japhet son of Noah, saying, 'Were I with my people, I would make shift to bring thee to thy desire?'" And Sa'id said to her, "O Princess, I crave thine aid to enable him to win his will." Answered she, "Yea, verily; I will do my endeavour for him, that he may attain his aim, if it please Allah Almighty." And she turned to Sayf al-Muluk and said to him, "Be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear." Then she rose and going in to her mother, said to her, "Come with me forthright and let us purify ourselves and make fumigations[446] that Badi'a al-Jamal and her mother may come and see me and rejoice in me." Answered the Queen, "With love and goodly gree;" and rising, betook herself to the garden and burnt off these perfumes which she always had by her; nor was it long before Badi'a al-Jamal and her mother made their appearance. The Queen of Hind foregathered with the other Queen and acquainted her with her daughter's safe return, whereat she rejoiced; and Badi'a al-Jamal and Daulat Khatun foregathered likewise and rejoiced in each other. Then they pitched the pavilions[447] and dressed dainty viands and made ready the place of entertainment; whilst the two Princesses withdrew to a tent apart and ate together and drank and made merry; after which they sat down to converse, and Badi'a al-Jamal said, "What hath befallen thee in thy strangerhood?" Replied Daulat Khatun, "O my sister how sad is severance and how gladsome is reunion; ask me not what hath befallen me! Oh, what hardships mortals suffer!" cried she, "How so?" and the other said to her, "O my sister, I was inmured in the High-builded Castle of Japhet son of Noah, whither the son of the Blue King carried me off till Sayf al-Muluk slew the Jinni and brought me back to my sire;" and she told her to boot all that the Prince had undergone of hardships and horrors before he came to the Castle.[448] Badi'a al-Jamal marvelled at her tale and said, "By Allah, O my sister, this is the most wondrous of wonders! This Sayf al-Muluk is indeed a man! But why did he leave his father and mother and betake himself to travel and expose himself to these perils?" Quoth Daulat Khatun, "I have a mind to tell thee the first part of his history; but shame of thee hindereth me therefrom." Quoth Badi'a al-Jamal, "Why shouldst thou have shame of me, seeing that thou art my sister and my bosom-friend and there is muchel a matter between thee and me and I know thou willest me naught but well? Tell me then what thou hast to say and be not abashed at me and hide nothing from me and have no fear of consequences." Answered Daulat Khatun, "By Allah, all the calamities that have betided this unfortunate have been on thine account and because of thee!" Asked Badi'a al-Jamal, "How so, O my sister?"; and the other answered, "Know that he saw thy portrait wrought on a tunic which thy father sent to Solomon son of David (on the twain be peace!) and he opened it not neither looked at it, but despatched it, with other presents and rarities to Asim bin Safwan, King of Egypt, who gave it, still unopened, to his son Sayf al-Muluk. The Prince unfolded the tunic, thinking to put it on, and seeing thy portrait, became enamoured of it; wherefore he came forth in quest of thee, and left his folk and reign and suffered all these terrors and hardships on thine account." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Daulat Khatun related to Badi'a al-Jamal the first part of Sayf al-Muluk's history; how his love for her was caused by the tunic whereon her presentment was wrought; how he went forth, passion-distraught, in quest of her; how he forsook his people and his kingdom for her sake and how he had suffered all these terrors and hardships on her account. When Badi'a al-Jamal hear this, she blushed rosy red and was confounded at Daulat Khatun and said, "Verily this may never, never be; for man accordeth not with the Jann." Then Daulat Khatun went on to praise Sayf al-Muluk and extol his comeliness and courage and cavalarice, and ceased not repeating her memories of his prowess and his excellent qualities till she ended with saying, "For the sake of Almighty Allah and of me, O sister mine, come and speak with him, though but one word!" But Badi'a al-Jamal cried, "By Allah, O sister mine, this that thou sayest I will not hear, neither will I assent to thee therein;" and it was as if she heard naught of what the other said and as if no love of Sayf al-Muluk and his beauty and bearing and bravery had gotten hold upon her heart. Then Daulat Khatun humbled herself and said, "O Badi'a al-Jamal, by the milk we have sucked, I and thou, and by that which is graven on the seal-ring of Solomon (on whom be peace!) hearken to these my words for I pledged myself in the High-builded Castle of Japhet, to show him thy face. So Allah upon thee, show it to him once, for the love of me, and look thyself on him!" And she ceased not to weep and implore her and kiss her hands and feet, till she consented and said, "For thy sake I will show him my face once and he shall have a single glance." With that Daulat Khatun's heart was gladdened and she kissed her hands and feet. Then she went forth and fared to the great pavilion in the garden and bade her slave-women spread it with carpets and set up a couch of gold and place the wine-vessels in order; after which she went into Sayf al-Muluk and to his Wazir Sa'id, whom she found seated in their lodging, and gave the Prince the glad tidings of the winning of his wish, saying, "Go to the pavilion in the garden, thou and thy brother, and hide yourselves there from the eyes of men so none in the palace may espy you, till I come to you with Badi'a al-Jamal." So they rose and repaired to the appointed pavilion, where they found the couch of gold set and furnished with cushions, and meat and wine ready served. So they sat awhile, whilst Sayf al-Muluk bethought him of his beloved and his breast was straitened and love and longing assailed him: wherefore he rose and walked forth from the vestibule of the pavilion. Sa'id would have followed him, but he said to him, "O my brother, follow me not, but sit in thy stead till I return to thee." So Sa'id abode seated, whilst Sayf al-Muluk went down into the garden, drunken with the wine of desire and distracted for excess of love-longing and passion-fire: yearning agitated him and transport overcame him and he recited these couplets,

"O passing Fair[449] I have none else but thee; * Pity this
slave in thy love's slavery!
Thou art my search, my joy and my desire! * None save thyself
shall love this heart of me:
Would Heaven I knew thou knewest of my wails * Night-long and
eyelids oped by memory.
Bid sleep to sojourn on these eyen-lids * Haply in vision I thy
sight shall see.
Show favour then to one thus love-distraught: * Save him from
ruin by thy cruelty!
Allah increase thy beauty and thy weal; * And be thy ransom
every enemy!
So shall on Doomsday lovers range beneath * Thy flag, and
beauties 'neath thy banner be."

Then he wept and recited these also,

“That rarest beauty ever bides my foe * Who holds my heart and
lurks in secresy:
Speaking, I speak of nothing save her charms * And when I’m
dumb in heart-core woneth she.”

Then he wept sore and recited the following,

“And in my liver higher flames the fire; * You are my wish and
longsome still I yearn:
To you (none other!) bend I and I hope * (Lovers long-suffering are!) your grace to earn;
And that you pity me whose frame by Love * Is waste and weak
his heart with sore concern:
Relent, be gen’rous, tender-hearted, kind: * From you I’ll
ne’er remove, from you ne’er turn!”

Then he wept and recited these also,

“Came to me care when came the love of thee, * Cruel sleep
fled me like thy cruelty:
Tells me the messenger that thou are wroth: * Allah forfend
what evils told me he!”

Presently Sa’id waxed weary of awaiting him and going forth in quest of him, found him walking in the garden, distraught and reciting these two couplets,

“By Allah, by th’ Almighty, by his right[450] * Who read
the Koran-Chapter ‘Fátír[451] hight;
Ne’er roam my glances o’er the charms I see; * Thy grace, rare
beauty, is my talk by night.”

So he joined him and the twain walked about the garden together solacing themselves and ate of its fruits. Such was their case;[452] but as regards the two Princesses, they came to the pavilion and entering therein after the eunuchs had richly furnished it, according to command, sat down on the couch of gold, beside which was a window that gave upon the garden. The castratos then set before them all manner rich meats and they ate, Daulat Khatun feeding her foster-sister by mouthfuls,[453] till she was satisfied; when she called for divers kinds of sweetmeats, and when the neutrals brought them, they ate what they would of them and washed their hands. After this Daulat Khatun made ready wine and its service, setting on the ewers and bowls and she proceeded to crown the cups and give Badi'a al-Jamal to drink, filling for herself after and drinking in turn. The Badi'a al-Jamal looked from the window into the garden and gazed upon the fruits and branches that were therein, till her glance fell on Sayf al-Muluk, and she saw him wandering about the parterres, followed by Sa'id, and she heard him recite verses, raining the while railing tears. And that glance of eyes cost her a thousand sighs, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Seventy-fifth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Badi'a al-Jamal caught sight of Sayf al-Muluk as he wandered about the garden, that glance of eyes cost her a thousand sighs, and she turned to Daulat Khatun and said to her (and indeed the wine sported with her senses), “O my sister, who is that young man I see in the garden, distraught, love-abying, disappointed, sighing?” Quoth the other, “Dost thou give me leave to bring him hither, that we may look on him?”; and quoth the other, “An thou can avail to bring him, bring him.” So Daulat Khatun called to him, saying “O King's son, come up to us and bring us thy beauty and thy loveliness!” Sayf al-Muluk recognised her voice and came up into the pavilion; but no sooner had he set eyes on Badi'a al-Jamal, than he fell down in a swoon; whereupon Daulat Khatun sprinkled on him a little rose-water and he revived. Then he rose and kissed ground before Badi'a al-Jamal who was amazed at his beauty and loveliness; and Daulat Khatun said to her, “Know, O Princess, that this is Sayf al-Muluk, whose hand saved me by the ordinance of Allah Almighty and he it is who hath borne all manner burthens on thine account: wherefore I would have thee look upon him with favour.” Hearing this Badi'a al-Jamal laughed and said, “And who keepeth faith, that this youth should do so? For there is no true love in men.” Cried Sayf al-Muluk, “O Princess, never shall lack of faith be in me, and all men are not created alike.” And he wept before her and recited these verses,

“O thou, Badi’a ‘l-Jamál, show thou some clemency * To one
those lovely eyes opprest with witchery!
By rights of beauteous hues and tints thy cheeks combine * Of
snowy white and glowing red anemone,
Punish not with disdain one who is sorely sick * By long, long
parting waste hath waxed this frame of me:
This is my wish, my will, the end of my desire, * And Union is
my hope an haply this may be!”

Then he wept with violent weeping; and love and longing got the mastery over him and he greeted her with these couplets,

“Peace be to you from lover’s wasted love, * All noble hearts
to noble favour show:
Peace be to you! Ne’er fail your form my dreams; * Nor hall
nor chamber the fair sight forego!
Of you I’m jealous: none may name your name: * Lovers to
lovers aye should bend thee low:
So cut not off your grace from him who loves * While sickness
wastes and sorrows overthrow.
I watch the flowery stars which frighten me; * While cark and
care mine every night foreslow.
Nor Patience bides with me nor plan appears: * What shall I
say when questioned of my foe?
God’s peace be with you in the hour of need, * Peace sent by
lover patient bearing woe!”

Then for the excess of his desire and ecstasy he repeated these coupletes also,

“If I to aught save you, O lords of me, incline; * Ne’er may I
win of you my wish, my sole design!
Who doth comprise all loveliness save only you? * Who makes

the Doomsday dawn e'en now before these eyne?
Far be it Love find any rest, for I am one * Who lost for love
of you this heart, these vitals mine."

When he had made an end of his verses, he wept with sore weeping and she said to him, "O Prince, I fear to grant myself wholly to thee lest I find in thee nor fondness nor affection; for oftentimes man's fidelity is small and his perfidy is great and thou knowest how the lord Solomon, son of David (on whom be the Peace!), took Bilkis to his love but, whenas he saw another fairer than she, turned from her thereto." Sayf al-Muluk replied, "O my eye and O my soul, Allah hath not made all men alike, and I, Inshallah, will keep my troth and die beneath thy feet. Soon shalt thou see what I will do in accordance with my words, and for whatso I say Allah is my warrant." Quoth Badi'a al-Jamal, "Sit and be of good heart and swear to me by the right of thy Faith and let us covenant together that each will not be false to other; and whichever of us breaketh faith may Almighty Allah punish!" At these words he sat down and set his hand in her hand and they sware each to other that neither of them would ever prefer to the other any one, either of man or of the Jann. Then they embraced for a whole hour and wept for excess of their joy, whilst passion overcame Sayf al-Muluk and he recited these couplets,

"I weep for longing love's own ardency * To her who claims the
heart and soul of me.
And sore's my sorrow parted long from you, * And short's my
arm to reach the prize I see;
And mourning grief for what my patience marred * To blamer's
eye unveiled my secresy;
And waxed strait that whilome was so wide * Patience nor force
remains nor power to dree.
Would Heaven I knew if God will ever deign to join * Our
lives, and from our cark and care and grief set free!"

After this mutual troth-plighting, Sayf al-Muluk arose and walked in the garden and Badi'a al-Jamal arose also and went forth also afoot followed by a slave-girl bearing somewhat of food and a flask[454] of wine. The Princess sat down and the damsel set the meat and wine before her: nor remained they long ere they were joined by Sayf al-Muluk, who was received with greeting and the two embraced and sat them down. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that having provided food and wine, Badi’a al-Jamal met Sayf al-Muluk with greetings, and the twain having embraced and kissed sat them down awhile to eat and drink. Then said she to him, “O King’s son, thou must now go to the garden of Iram, where dwelleth my grandmother, and seek her consent to our marriage. My slave-girl Marjánah will convey thee thither and as thou farest therein thou wilt see a great pavilion of red satin, lined with green silk. Enter the pavilion heartening thyself and thou wilt see inside it an ancient dame sitting on a couch of red gold set with pearls and jewels. Salute her with respect and courtesy: then look at the foot of the couch, where thou wilt descry a pair of sandals[455] of cloth interwoven with bars of gold, embroidered with jewels. Take them and kiss them and lay them on thy head[456] ; then put them under thy right armpit and stand before the old woman, in silence and with thy head bowed down. If she ask thee, ‘Who art thou and how camest thou hither and who led thee to this land? And why hast thou taken up the sandals?’ make her no answer, but abide silent till Marjanah enter, when she will speak with her and seek to win her aproof for thee and cause her look on thee with consent; so haply Allah Almight may incline her heart to thee and she may grant thee thy wish.” Then she called the handmaid Marjanah hight and said to her, “As thou lovest me, do my errand this day and be not neglectful therein! An thou acccomplish it, thou shalt be a free woman for the sake of Allah Almighty, and I will deal honourably by thee with gifts and there shall be none dearer to me than thou, nor will I discover my secrets to any save thee. So, by my love for thee, fulfil this my need and be not slothful therein.” Replied Marjanah, “O my lady and light of mine eyes, tell me what is it thou requirest of me, that I may accomplish it with both mine eyes.” Badi’a rejoined, “Take this mortal on thy shoulders and bear him to the bloom-garden of Iram and the pavilion of my grandmother, my father’s mother, and be careful of his safety. When thou hast brought him into her presence and seest him take the slippers and do them homage, and hearest her ask him, saying, ‘Whence art thou and by what road art come and who led thee to this land, and why hast thou taken up the sandals and what is thy need that I give heed to it?’ do thou come forward in haste and salute her with the salam and say to her, ‘O my lady, I am she who brought him hither and he is the King’s son of Egypt.[457] ’Tis he who went to the High-builded Castle and slew the son of the Blue King and delivered the Princess Daulat Khatun from the Castle of Japhet son of Noah and brought her back safe to her father: and I have brought him to thee, that he may give thee the glad tidings of her safety: so deign thou be gracious to him.’ Then do thou say to her, ‘Allah upon thee! is not this young man handsome, O my lady?’ She will reply, ‘Yes’; and do thou rejoin, ‘O my lady, indeed he is complete in honour and manhood and valour and he is lord and King of Egypt and compriseth all praiseworthy qualities.’ An she ask thee, ‘What is his need?’ do thou make answer, ‘My lady saluteth thee and saith to thee, how long shall she sit at home, a maid and unmarried? Indeed, the time is longsome upon her for she is as a magazine wherein wheat is heaped up.[458] What then is thine intent in leaving her without a mate and why dost thou not marry her in thy lifetide and that of her mother, like other girls?’ If she say, ‘How shall we do to marry her? An she have any one in mind, let her tell us of him, and we will do her will as far as may be!” do thou make answer, ‘O my lady, thy daughter saith to thee, ‘Ye were minded aforetime to marry me to Solomon (on whom be peace!) and portrayed him my portrait on a tunic. But he had no lot in me; so he sent the tunic to the King of Egypt and he gave it to his son, who saw my portrait figured thereon and fell in love with me; wherefore he left his father and mother’s realm and turning away from the world and whatso is therein, went forth at a venture, a wanderer, love-distraught, and hath borne the utmost hardships and honours for my sake of me.’ Now thou seest his beauty and loveliness, and thy daughter’s heart is enamoured of him; so if ye have a mind to marry her, marry her to this young man and forbid her not from him for he is young and passing comely and King of Egypt, nor wilt thou find a goodlier than he; and if ye will not give her to him, she will slay herself and marry none neither man nor Jinn.’” “And,” continued Badi’a al-Jamal, “Look thou, O Marjanah, ma mie,[459] how thou mayst do with my grandmother, to win her consent, and beguile her with soft words, so haply she may do my desire.” Quoth the damsel, “O my lady, upon my head and eyes will I serve thee and do what shall content thee.” Then she took Sayf al-Muluk on her shoulders and said to him, “O King’s son, shut thine eyes.” He did so and she flew up with him into the welkin; and after awhile she said to him, “O King’s son, open thine eyes.” He opened them and found himself in a garden, which was none other than the garden of Iram; and she showed him the pavilion and said, “O Sayf al-Muluk, enter therein!” Thereupon he pronounced the name of Allah Almighty and entering cast a look upon the garden, when he saw the old Queen sitting on the couch, attended by her waiting women. So he drew near her with courtesy and reverence and taking the sandals bussed them and did as Badi’a al-Jamal had enjoined him. Quoth the ancient dame, “Who art thou and what is thy country; whence comest thou and who brought thee hither and what may be thy wish? Wherefore dost thou take the sandals and kiss them and when didst thou ask of me a favour which I did not grant?” With this in came Marjanah[460] and saluting her reverently and worshipfully, repeated to her what Badi’a al-Jamal had told her; which when the old Queen heard, she cried out at her and was wroth with her and said, “How shall there be accord between man and Jinn?” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

FOOTNOTES VOLUME VII.

[1] Mayyafarikin, whose adjective for shortness is “Fárikí“: the place is often mentioned in The Nights as the then capital of Diyár Bakr, thirty parasangs from Násibín, the classical Nisibis, between the upper Euphrates and Tigris.

[2] This proportion is singular to moderns but characterised Arab and more especially Turcoman armies.

[3] Such is the bathos caused by the Saja’-assonance: in the music of the Arabic it contrasts strangely with the baldness of translation. The same is the case with the Koran beautiful in the original and miserably dull in European languages, it is like the glorious style of the “Anglican Version” by the side of its bastard brothers in Hindostani or Marathi; one of these marvels of stupidity translating the “Lamb of God” by “God’s little goat.

[4] This incident is taken from the Life of Mohammed who, in the “Year of Missions” (A. H. 7) sent letters to foreign potentates bidding them embrace Al-Islam, and, his seal being in three lines, Mohammed|Apostle|of Allah, Khusrau Parwíz (=the Charming) was offended because his name was placed below Mohammed’s. So he tore the letter in pieces adding, says Firdausi, these words: —

Hath the Arab’s daring performed such feat,
Fed on camel’s milk and the lizard’s meat,
That he cast on Kayánian crown his eye?
Fie, O whirling world! on thy faith and fie!

Hearing of this insult Mohammed exclaimed, “Allah shall tear his kingdom!” a prophecy which was of course fulfilled, or we should not have heard of it. These lines are horribly mutilated in the Dabistan (iii. 99).

[5] This “Taklíd” must not be translated “girt on the sword.” The Arab carries his weapon by a baldrick or bandoleer passed over his right

shoulder. In modern days the " Majdal" over the left shoulder supports on the right hip a line of Tatárif or brass cylinders for cartridges: the other cross- belt (Al-Masdar) bears on the left side the Kharízah or bullet-pouch of hide; and the Hizám or waist-belt holds the dagger and extra cartridges. (Pilgrimage iii. 90.)

[6] Arab. "Bab," which may mean door or gate. The plural form (Abwáb) occurs in the next line, meaning that he displayed all manner of martial prowess.

[7] Arab. "Farrásh" (also used in Persian), a man of general utility who pitches tents, sweeps the floors, administers floggings, etc. etc. (Pilgrimage iii. 90.)

[8] i.e. the slogan-cry of "Allaho Akbar," which M. C.
Barbier de Meynard compares with the Christian "Te Deum."

[9] The Anglo-Indian term for the Moslem rite of killing animals for food. (Pilgrimage i. 377.)

[10] Arab. "tawílan jiddan" a hideous Cairenism in these days; but formerly used by Al-Mas'údí and other good writers.

[11] Arab. " 'Ajwah," enucleated dates pressed together into a solid mass so as to be sliced with a knife like cold pudding. The allusion is to the dough-idols of the Hanífah tribe, whose eating their gods made the saturnine Caliph Omar laugh.

[12] Mr. Payne writes "Julned." In a fancy name we must not look for grammar, but a quiescent lám (l) followed by nún (n) is unknown to Arabic while we find sundry cases of "lan" (fath'd lám and nún), and Jalandah means noxious or injurious. In Oman also there was a dynasty called Julándah. for which see Mr. Badger (xiii. and passim).

[13] Doubtless for Jawan-mard — un giovane, a brave See vol. iv., .

[14] Mr. Payne transposes the distichs, making the last first. I have followed the Arabic order finding it in the Mac. and Bul. Edits. (ii.

129).

[15] Al-Irak like Al-Yaman may lose the article in verse.

[16] Arab. “Ka’ka’at”: hence Jabal Ka’ka’án, the higher levels in Meccah, of old inhabited by the Jurhamites and so called from their clashing and jangling arms; whilst the Amalekites dwelt in the lower grounds called Jiyád from their generous steeds. (Pilgrimage iii. 191.)

[17] Al-Shara’, a mountain in Arabia.

[18] See vol. vi., 249. “This (mace) is a dangerous weapon when struck on the shoulders or unguarded arm: I am convinced that a blow with it on a head armoured with a salade (cassis cælata, a light iron helmet) would stun a man” (says La Brocquière).

[19] Oman, which the natives pronounce “Amán,” is the region best known by its capital Maskat. These are the Omana Moscha and Omanum Emporium of Ptolemy and the Periplus. Ibn Batutah writes Ammán, but the best dictionaries give “Oman.” (N.B. — Mr. Badger, , wrongly derives Sachalitis from “Sawáhíly”: it is evidently “Sáhili.”) The people bear by no means the best character: Ibn Batutah (fourteenth century) says, “their wives are most base; yet, without denying this, their husbands express nothing like jealousy on the subject.” (Lee, .)

[20] The name I have said of a quasi-historical personage, son of Joktan, the first Arabist and the founder of the Tobbá (“successor”) dynasty in Al-Yaman; while Jurham, his brother, established that of Al-Hijaz. The name is probably chosen because well-known.

[21] Arab. “Hákim”: lit. one who orders; often confounded by the unscientific with Hakím, doctor, a philosopher. The latter re-appears in the Heb. Khákhám applied in modern days to the Jewish scribe who takes the place of the Rabbi.

[22] As has been seen, acids have ever been and are still administered

as counter-inebriants, while hot spices and sweets greatly increase the effect of Bhang, opium, henbane, datura &c. The Persians have a most unpleasant form of treating men when dead-drunk with wine or spirits. They hang them up by the heels, as we used to do with the drowned, and stuff their mouths with human ordure which is sure to produce emesis.

[23] Compare the description of the elephant-faced Vetála
(Kathá S.S. Fasc. xi.).

[24] The lover's name Sá'ik= the Striker (with lightning);
Najmah, the beloved= the star.

[25] I have modified the last three lines of the Mac. Edit. which contain a repetition evidently introduced by the carelessness of the copyist.

[26] The Hindu Charvakas explain the Triad, Bramha, Vishnu and Shiva, by the sexual organs and upon Vishnu's having four arms they gloss, "At the time of sexual intercourse, each man and woman has as many." (Dabistan ii. 202.) This is the Eastern view of Rabelais' "beast with two backs."

[27] Arab. "Rabbat-i," my she Lord, fire (nár) being feminine.

[28] The prose-rhyme is answerable for this galimatias.

[29] A common phrase equivalent to our "started from his head."

[30] Arab. "Máridúna"=rebels (against Allah and his orders).

[31] Arab. Yáfis or Yáfat. He had eleven sons and was entitled Abú al-Turk because this one engendered the Turcomans as others did the Chinese, Scythians, Slaves (Saklab), Gog, Magog, and the Muscovites or Russians. According to the Moslems there was a rapid falling off in size amongst this family. Noah's grave at Karak (the Ruin) a suburb of Zahlah, in La Brocquière's "Valley of Noah, where the Ark was built," is 104 ft. 10 in. Iong by 8 ft. 8 in. broad. (N.B. — It is a bit of the old aqueduct which Mr. Porter, the learned author of

the “Giant Cities of Bashan,” quotes as a “traditional memorial of primeval giants” — talibus carduis pascuntur asini!). Nabi Ham measures only 9 ft. 6 in. between headstone and tombstone, being in fact about as long as his father was broad.

[32] See Night dcliv., vol. vii, , infra.

[33] According to Turcoman legends (evidently post- Mohammedan) Noah gave his son, Japhet a stone inscribed with the Greatest Name, and it had the virtue of bringing on or driving off rain. The Moghuls long preserved the tradition and hence probably the sword.

[34] This expresses Moslem sentiment; the convert to Al-Islam being theoretically respected and practically despised. The Turks call him a “Burmá”=twister, a turncoat, and no one either trusts him or believes in his sincerity.

[35] The name of the city first appears here: it is found also in the Bul. Edit., vol. ii. .

[36] Arab. “ ‘Amala hílah,” a Syro-Egyptian vulgarism.

[37] i.e. his cousin, but he will not use the word.

[38] Arab. “La’ab,” meaning very serious use of the sword: we still preserve the old “sword-play.”

[39] Arab. “ Ikhsa,” from a root meaning to drive away a dog.

[40] Arab. “Hazza-hu,” the quivering motion given to the “Harbak” (a light throw-spear or javelin) before it leaves the hand.

[41] Here the translator must either order the sequence of the sentences or follow the rhyme.

[42] Possibly taken from the Lions’ Court in the Alhambra=(Dár) Al-hamrá, the Red House.

[43] Arab. “Sházarwán” from Pers. Shadurwán, a palace, cornice, etc.

That of the Meccan Ka'abah is a projection of about a foot broad in pent-house shape sloping downwards and two feet above the granite pavement: its only use appears in the large brass rings welded into it to hold down the covering. There are two breaks in it, one under the doorway and the other opposite Ishmael's tomb; and pilgrims are directed during circuit to keep the whole body outside it.

[44] The "Musáfahah" before noticed, vol. vi., .

[45] i.e. He was confounded at its beauty.

[46] Arab. "'Ajíb," punning upon the name.

[47] Arab. "Zarráf" (whence our word) from "Zarf"=walking hastily: the old "cameleopard" which originated the nursery idea of its origin. It is one of the most timid of the antelope tribe and unfit for riding.

[48] Arab. "Takht," a useful word, meaning even a saddle.
The usual term is "Haudaj"=the Anglo Indian "howdah."

[49] "Thunder-King," Arab. and Persian.

[50] i.e. "He who violently assaults his peers" (the best men of the age). Batshat al- Kubrá=the Great Disaster, is applied to the unhappy "Battle of Bedr" (Badr) on Ramazan 17, A.H. 2 (=Jan. 13, 624) when Mohammed was so nearly defeated that the Angels were obliged to assist him (Koran, chapts. iii. 11; i. 42; viii. 9). Mohammed is soundly rated by Christian writers for beheading two prisoners Utbah ibn Rabí'a who had once spat on his face and Nazir ibn Háris who recited Persian romances and preferred them to the "foolish fables of the Koran." What would our forefathers have done to a man who spat in the face of John Knox and openly preferred a French play to Pentateuch ?

[51] Arab. "Jilbáb" either habergeon (mail-coat) or the buff-jacket worn under it.

[52] A favourite way, rough and ready, of carrying light weapons, often

alluded to in The Nights. So Khusrawán in Antar carried "under his thighs four small darts, each like a blazing flame."

[53] Mr. Payne very reasonably supplants here and below Fakhr Taj (who in Night dcxxxiv is left in her father's palace and who is reported to be dead in Night dclxvii.) by Star o' Morn. But the former is also given in the Bul. Edit. (ii. 148), so the story teller must have forgotten all about her. I leave it as a model specimen of Eastern incuriousness.

[54] There is some chivalry in his unwillingness to use the magical blade. As a rule the Knights of Romance utterly ignore fair play and take every dirty advantage in the magic line that comes to hand.

[55] Arab. "Hammál al-Hatabi"=one who carries to market the fuel-sticks which he picks up in the waste. In the Koran (chapt. cxi.) it is applied to Umm Jamíl, wife of Mohammed's hostile cousin, Abd al-Uzza, there termed Abú Lahab (Father of smokeless Flame) with the implied meaning that she will bear fuel to feed Hell-fire.

[56] Arab. "Akyál," lit. whose word (Kaul) is obeyed, a title of the Himyarite Kings, of whom Al-Bergendi relates that one of them left an inscription at Samarcand, which many centuries ago no man could read. This evidently alludes to the dynasty which preceded the "Tobba" and to No. xxiv. Shamar Yar'ash (Shamar the Palsied). Some make him son of Malik surnamed Náshir al-Ni'am (Scatterer of Blessings) others of Afríkús (No. xviii.), who, according to Al-Jannabi, Ahmad bin Yusuf and Ibn Ibdun (Pocock, Spec. Hist. Arab.) founded the Berber (Barbar) race, the remnants of the Causanites expelled by the "robber, Joshua son of Nún," and became the eponymus of "Africa." This word which, under the Romans, denoted a small province on the Northern Sea-board, is, I would suggest, A'far-Káhi (Afar-land), the Afar being now the Dankali race, the country of Osiris whom my learned friend, the late Mariette Pasha, derived from the Egyptian "Punt" identified by him with the Somali country. This would make "Africa," as it ought to be, an Egyptian (Coptic) term.

[57] Herodotus (i. 80) notes this concerning the camel. Elephants are not allowed to walk the streets in Anglo-Indian cities, where they have caused many accidents.

[58] Arab. Wahk or Wahak, suggesting the Roman retiarius. But the lasso pure and simple, the favourite weapon of shepherd and herdsmen was well-known to the old Egyptians and in ancient India. It forms one of the T-letters in the hieroglyphs.

[59] Compare with this and other Arab battle-pieces the Pandit's description in the Kathá Sarit Sagara, e.g. "Then a confused battle arose with dint of arrow, javelin, lance, mace and axe, costing the lives of countless soldiers (N.B. — Millions are nothing to him); rivers of blood flowed with the bodies of elephants and horses for alligators, with the pearls from the heads of elephants for sands and with the heads of heroes for stones. That feast of battle delighted the flesh- loving demons who, drunk with blood instead of wine, were dancing with the palpitating trunks," etc.. etc. Fasc. xii. 526.

[60] The giraffe is here mal-placé: it is, I repeat, one of the most timid of the antelope tribe. Nothing can be more graceful than this huge game as it stands under a tree extending its long and slender neck to the foliage above it; but when in flight all the limbs seem loose and the head is carried almost on a level with the back.

[61] The fire-arms may have been inserted by the copier; the cross-bow (Arcubalista) is of unknown antiquity. I have remarked in my book of the Sword () that the bow is the first crucial evidence of the distinction between the human weapon and the bestial arm, and like the hymen or membrane of virginity proves a difference of degree if not of kind between man and the so-called lower animals. I note from Yule's Marco Polo (ii., 143) " that the cross-bow was re-introduced into European warfare during the twelfth century"; but the arbalesta was well known to the bon roi Charlemagne (Regnier Sat. X).

[62] In Al-Islam this was unjustifiable homicide, excused only because the Kafir had tried to slay his own son. He should have been

summoned to become a tributary and then, on express refusal, he might legally have been put to death.

[63] i.e. “Rose King,” like the Sikh name “Gulab Singh”=Rosewater Lion, sounding in translation almost too absurd to be true.

[64] “Repentance acquits the penitent” is a favourite and noble saying popular in Al-Islam. It is first found in Seneca; and is probably as old as the dawn of literature.

[65] Here an ejaculation of impatience.

[66] i.e. “King Intelligence”: it has a ludicrous sound suggesting only “Dandanha-i-Khirad,,=wisdom-teeth. The Mac. Edit. persistently keeps “Ward Shah,” copyist error.

[67] i.e. Fakhr Taj, who had been promised him in marriage.
See Night dcxxxiii. supra, vol. vi.

[68] The name does not appear till further on, after vague Eastern fashion which, here and elsewhere I have not had the heart to adopt. The same may be found in Ariosto, passim.

[69] A town in Persian Irak, unhappily far from the “Salt sea.”

[70] “Earthquake son of Ennosigaius” (the Earthquake- maker).

[71] Arab. “Ruba’al-Kharáb” or Ruba’al-Khálí (empty quarter), the great central wilderness of Arabia covering some 50,000 square miles and still left white on our maps. (Pilgrimage, i 14.)

[72] Pers. “Life King”, women also assume the title of
Shah.

[73] Arab. “Mujauhar”: the watery or wavy mark upon Eastern blades is called the “jauhar,” lit.=jewel. The peculiarity is also called water and grain, which gives rise to a host of double-entendres, puns, paronomasias and conceits more or less frigid.

[74] Etymologically meaning tyrants or giants; and applied to great heathen conquerors like Nimrod and the mighty rulers of Syria, the Anakim, Giants and other peoples of Hebrew fable. The Akásirah are the Chosroës before noticed.

[75] Arab. "Asker jarrár" lit. "drawing": so in Egyptian slang "Nás jarrár"=folk who wish to draw your money out of your pocket, greedy cheats.

[76] In Turkestan: the name means "Two lights."

[77] In Armenia, mentioned by Sadik Isfaháni (Transl.).

[78] This is the only ludicrous incident in the tale which justifies Von Hammer's suspicion. Compare it with the combat between Rustam and his son Sohráb.

[79] I cannot understand why Trébutien, iii., 457, writes this word Afba. He remarks that it is the "Oina and Riya" of Jámí, elegantly translated by M. de Chezy in the Journal Asiatique, vol. 1, 144.

[80] I have described this part of the Medinah Mosque in Pilgrimage ii., 62-69. The name derives from a saying of Mohammed (of which there are many variants), "Between my tomb and my pulpit is a garden of the Gardens of Paradise" (Burckhardt, Arabia,). The whole Southern portico (not only a part) now enjoys that honoured name and the tawdry decorations are intended to suggest a parterre.

[81] Mohammed's companions (Asháb), numbering some five hundred, were divided into two orders, the Muhájirin (fugitives) or Meccans who accompanied the Apostle to Al-Medinah (Pilgrimage ii. 138) and the Ansár (Auxiliaries) or Medinites who invited him to their city and lent him zealous aid (Ibid. ii. 130). The terms constantly occur in Arab history.

[82] The "Mosque of the Troops," also called Al-Fath (victory), the largest of the "Four Mosques:" it is still a place of pious visitation

where prayer is granted. Koran, chap. xxxiii., and Pilgrimage ii. 325.

[83] Arab. “Al-Wars,” with two meanings. The Alfáz Adwiyah gives it=Kurkum, curcuma, turmeric, safran d’Inde; but popular usage assigns it to Usfur, Kurtum or safflower (carthamus tinctorius). I saw the shrub growing all about Harar which exports it, and it is plentiful in Al-Yaman (Niebuhr,), where women affect it to stain the skin a light yellow and remove freckles: it is also an internal remedy in leprosy. But the main use is that of a dye, and the Tob stained with Wars is almost universal in some parts of Arabia. Sonnini () describes it at length and says that Europeans in Egypt call it “Parrot-seeds” because the bird loves it, and the Levant trader “Saffrenum.”

[84] Two men of the great ‘Anazah race went forth to gather Karaz, the fruit of the Sant (Mimosa Nilotica) both used for tanning, and never returned. Hence the proverb which is obsolete in conversation. See Burckhardt, Prov. 659: where it takes the place of “ad Graecas Kalendas.”

[85] Name of a desert (Mafázah) and a settlement on the Euphrates’ bank between Basrah and the site of old Kufah near Kerbela; the well known visitation place in Babylonian Irak.

[86] Of the Banu Sulaym tribe; the adjective is Sulami not Sulaymi.

[87] Arab. “Amám-ak”=before thee (in space); from the same root as Imam=antistes, leader of prayer; and conducing to perpetual puns, e.g. “You are Imám-i (my leader) and therefore should be Amám-i” (in advance of me).

[88] He was angry, as presently appears, because he had heard of certain love passages between the two and this in Arabia is a dishonour to the family.

[89] Euphemy for “my daughter.”

[90] The Badawin call a sound dollar “Kirsh hajar” or “Riyal hajar” (a

stone dollar; but the word is spelt with the greater h).

[91] Arab. Burdah and Habárah. The former often translated mantle is a thick woollen stuff, brown or gray, woven oblong and used like a plaid by day and by night. Mohammed’s Burdah woven in his Harem and given to the poet, Ka’ab, was 7 1/2 ft. long by 4 1/2: it is still in the upper Serraglio of Stambul. In early days the stuff was mostly striped; now it is either plain or with lines so narrow that it looks like one colour. The Habarah is a Burd made in Al-Yaman and not to be confounded with the Egyptian mantilla of like name (Lane, M. E. chapt. iii.).

[92] Every Eastern city has its special title. Al-Medinah is entitled “Al-Munawwarah” (the Illumined) from the blinding light which surrounds the Prophet’s tomb and which does not show to eyes profane (Pilgrimage ii. 3). I presume that the idea arose from the huge lamps of “The Garden.” I have noted that Mohammed’s coffin suspended by magnets is an idea unknown to Moslems, but we find the fancy in Al-Harawi related of St. Peter, “Simon Cephas (the rock) is in the City of Great Rome, in its largest church within a silver ark hanging by chains from the ceiling.” (Lee, Ibn Batutah,).

[93] Here the fillets are hung instead of the normal rag-strips to denote an honoured tomb. Lane (iii. 242) and many others are puzzled about the use of these articles. In many cases they are suspended to trees in order to transfer sickness from the body to the tree and whoever shall touch it. The Sawáhílí people term such articles a Keti (seat or vehicle) for the mysterious haunter of the tree who prefers occupying it to the patient’s person. Briefly the custom still popular throughout Arabia, is African and Fetish.

[94] Al-Mas’údí (chap. xcv.), mentions a Hind bint Asmá and tells a facetious story of her and the “enemy of Allah,” the poet Jarir.

[95] Here the old Shiah hatred of the energetic conqueror of Oman crops out again. Hind’s song is that of Maysum concerning her husband Mu’áwiyah which Mrs. Godfrey Clark (‘Ilâm-en-Nâs,) thus

translates: —

A hut that the winds make tremble
Is dearer to me than a noble palace;
And a dish of crumbs on the floor of my home
Is dearer to me than a varied feast;
And the soughing of the breeze through every crevice
Is dearer to me than the beating of drums.

Compare with Dr. Carlyle's No. X.: —

The russet suit of camel's hair
With spirits light and eye serene
Is dearer to my bosom far
Than all the trappings of a queen, etc. etc.

And with mine (Pilgrimage iii. 262): —

O take these purple robes away,
Give back my cloak of camel's hair
And bear me from this towering pile
To where the black tents flap i' the air, etc. etc.

[96] AI-Hajjaj's tribal name was Al-Thakifi or descendant of Thakíf. According to Al-Mas'udi, he was son of Faríghah (the tall Beauty) by Yúsuf bin Ukayl the Thakafite and vint au monde tout difforme avec l'anus obstrué. As he refused the breast, Satan, in human form, advised suckling him with the blood of two black kids, a black buck-goat and a black snake; which had the desired effect.

[97] Trebutien, iii., 465, translates these sayings into
Italian.

[98] Making him a "Kawwád"=leader, i.e. pimp; a true piece of feminine spite. But the Caliph prized Al-Hajjaj too highly to treat him as in the text.

[99] i.e. "The overflowing," with benefits; on account of his generosity.

[100] The seventh Ommiade A. H. 96-99 (715-719). He died of his fine appetite after eating at a sitting a lamb, six fowls, seventy pomegranates, and 11 1/4 lbs. of currants. He was also proud of his youth and beauty and was wont to say, “Mohammed was the Apostle and Abu Bakr witness to the Truth; Omar the Discriminator and Othman the Bashful, Mu’awiyah the Mild and Yazid the Patient; Abd al-Malik the Administrator and Walid the Tyrant; but I am the Young King!”

[101] Arab. Al-Jazírah, “the Island;” name of the region and the capital.

[102] i.e. “Repairer of the Slips of the Generous,” an evasive reply, which of course did not deceive the questioner.

[103] Arab. “Falastín,” now obsolete. The word has echoed far west and the name of the noble race has been degraded to “Philister,” a bourgeois, a greasy burgher.

[104] Saying, “The Peace be with thee, O Prince of True Believers!”

[105] Arab. “Mutanakkir,” which may also mean proud or in disguise.

[106] On appointment as viceroy. See vol. iii 307.

[107] The custom with outgoing Governors. It was adopted by the Spaniards and Portuguese especially in America. The generosity of Ikrimah without the slightest regard to justice or common honesty is characteristic of the Arab in story-books.

[108] The celebrated half-way house between Jaffa and Jerusalem.

[109] Alias the Kohistan or mountain region, Susiana (Khuzistan) whose capital was Susa; and the head-quarters of fire-worship. Azar (fire) was the name of Abraham’s father whom Eusebius calls “Athar.” (Pilgrimage iii. 336.)

[110] Tenth Ommiade A.H. 105-125 (=724-743), a wise and discreet ruler with an inclination to avarice and asceticism. According to some, the Ommiades produced only three statesmen, Mu'awayah, Abd al-Malik and Hisham; and the reign of the latter was the end of sage government and wise administration.

[111] About Â£1,250, which seems a long price; but in those days Damascus had been enriched with the spoils of the world adjacent.

[112] Eleventh Ommiade dynasty, A.H. 125-126 (=743-744). Ibn Sahl (son of ease, i.e. free and easy) was a nickname; he was the son of Yazíd II. and brother of Hishám. He scandalised the lieges by his profligacy, wishing to make the pilgrimage in order to drink upon the Ka'abah-roof; so they attacked the palace and lynched him. His death is supposed to have been brought about (27th of Jamáda al-Akhirah = April 16, 744) by his cousin and successor Yazíd (No. iii.) surnamed the Retrencher. The tale in the text speaks well for him; but generosity amongst the Arabs covers a multitude of sins, and people say, "Better a liberal sinner than a stingy saint."

[113] The tents of black wool woven by the Badawi women are generally supported by three parallel rows of poles lengthways and crossways (the highest line being the central) and the covering is pegged down. Thus the outline of the roofs forms two or more hanging curves, and these characterise the architecture of the Tartars and Chinese; they are still preserved in the Turkish (and sometimes in the European) "Kiosque," and they have extended to the Brazil where the upturned eaves, often painted vermilion below, at once attract the traveller's notice.

[114] See vol. iv., 159. The author of "Antar," known to Englishmen by the old translation of Mr. Terrick Hamilton, secretary of Legation at Constantinople. There is an abridgement of the forty-five volumes of Al-Asma'i's "Antar" which mostly supplies or rather supplied the "Antariyyah" or professional tale-tellers; whose theme was the heroic Mulatto lover.

[115] The "Dakkah" or long wooden sofa, as opposed to the "mastabah" or stone bench, is often a tall platform and in mosques is a kind of ambo railed round and supported by columns. Here readers recite the Koran: Lane (M.E. chapt. iii.) sketches it in the "Interior of a Mosque."

[116] Alif, Ha and Waw, the first, twenty-seventh and twenty-sixth letters of the Arabic alphabet: No. 1 is the most simple and difficult to write caligraphically.

[117] Reeds washed with gold and used for love-letters, &c.

[118] Lane introduced this tale into vol. i., , notes on chapt. iii., apparently not knowing that it was in The Nights. He gives a mere abstract, omitting all the verse, and he borrowed it either from the Halbat al-Kumayt (chapt. xiv.) or from Al-Mas'údí (chapt. cxi.). See the French translation, vol. vi. . I am at pains to understand why M. C. Barbier de Maynard writes "Réchid" with an accented vowel; although French delicacy made him render, by "fils de courtisane," the expression in the text, "O biter of thy mother's enlarged (or uncircumcised) clitoris" (Bazar).

[119] In Al-Mas'údi the Devil is "a young man fair of favour and formous of figure," which is more appropriate to a "Tempter." He also wears light stuffs of dyed silks.

[120] It would have been more courteous in an utter stranger to say, O my lord.

[121] The Arab Tempe (of fiction, not of grisly fact).

[122] These four lines are in Al-Mas'údi, chapt, cxviii. Fr. Trans. vii. 313, but that author does not tell us who wrote them.

[123] i.e. Father of Bitterness=the Devil. This legend of the Foul Fiend appearing to Ibrahim of Mosul (and also to Isam, N. dcxcv.) seems to have been accepted by contemporaries and reminds us of similar visitations in Europe — notably to Dr. Faust. One can only exclaim,

"Lor, papa, what nonsense you are talking!" the words of a small girl whose father thought proper to indoctrinate her into certain Biblical stories. I once began to write a biography of the Devil; but I found that European folk-lore had made such an unmitigated fool of the grand old Typhon-Ahriman as to take away from him all human interest.

[124] In Al-Mas'udi the Caliph exclaims, "Verily thou hast received a visit from Satan!"

[125] Al-Mas'udi, chapt. cxix. (Fr. transl. vii., 351) mentions the Banu Odhrah as famed for lovers and tells the pathetic tale of 'Orwah and 'Afrá.

[126] Jamil bin Ma'amar the poet has been noticed in Vol. ii. 102; and he has no business here as he died years before Al-Rashid was born. The tale begins like that of Ibn Mansúr and the Lady Budúr (Night cccxxvii.), except that Mansur does not offer his advice.

[127] Arab. "Halumma," an interjection=bring! a congener of the Heb. "Halúm"; the grammarians of Kufah and Bassorah are divided concerning its origin.

[128] Arab. "Nafs-í" which here corresponds with our canting "the flesh" the "Old Adam," &c.

[129] Arab. "Atmárí" used for travel. The Anglo-Americans are the only people who have the common sense to travel (where they are not known) in their "store clothes" and reserve the worst for where they are known.

[130] e.g. a branch or bough.

[131] Arab. "Ráyah káimah," which Lane translates a "beast standing"!

[132] Tying up the near foreleg just above the knee; and even with this a camel can hop over sundry miles of ground in the course of a night. The hobbling is shown in Lane. (Nights vol. ii., .)

[133] As opposed to “Severance” in the old knightly language of love, which is now apparently lost to the world. I tried it in the Lyrics of Camoens and found that I was speaking a forgotten tongue, which mightily amused the common sort of critic and reviewer.

[134] More exactly three days and eight hours, after which the guest becomes a friend, and as in the Argentine prairies is expected to do friend’s duty. The popular saying is, “The entertainment of a guest is three days; the viaticum (jáizah) is a day and a night, and whatso exceedeth this is alms.”

[135] Arab. “‘Ashírah.” Books tell us there are seven degrees of connection among the Badawin: Sha’ab, tribe or rather race; nation (as the Anazah) descended from a common ancestor; Kabílah the tribe proper (whence les Kabyles); Fasílah (sept), Imarah; Ashirah (all a man’s connections); Fakhiz (lit. the thigh, i.e., his blood relations) and Batn (belly) his kith and kin. Practically Kabílah is the tribe, Ashírah the clan, and Bayt the household; while Hayy may be anything between tribe and kith and kin.

[136] This is the true platonic love of noble Arabs, the Ishk ‘uzrí, noted in vol. ii., 104.

[137] Arab. “‘Alá raghm,” a favourite term. It occurs in theology; for instance, when the Shí‘ahs are asked the cause of such and such a ritual distinction they will reply, “Ala raghmi ‘l-Tasannun”: lit.=to spite the Sunnis.

[138] In the text “Al-Kaus” for which Lane and Payne substitute a shield. The bow had not been mentioned but — n’importe, the Arab reader would say. In the text it is left at home because it is a cowardly, far-killing weapon compared with sword and lance. Hence the Spaniard calls and justly calls the knife the “bravest of arms” as it wants a man behind it.

[139] Arab. “Rahim” or “Rihm”=womb, uterine relations, pity or sympathy, which may here be meant.

[140] Reciting Fátihahs and so forth, as I have described in the Cemetery of Al-Medinah (ii. 300). Moslems do not pay for prayers to benefit the dead like the majority of Christendom and, according to Calvinistic Wahhábi-ism, their prayers and blessings are of no avail. But the mourner's heart loathes reason and he prays for his dead instinctively like the so-termed "Protestant." Amongst the latter, by the bye, I find four great Sommités, (1) Paul of Tarsus who protested against the Hebraism of Peter; (2) Mohammed who protested against the perversions of Christianity; (3) Luther who protested against Italian rule in Germany, and lastly (4) one (who shall be nameless) that protests against the whole business.

[141] Lane transfers this to vol. i. 520 (notes to chapt. vii); and gives a mere abstract as of that preceding.

[142] We learn from Ibn Batutah that it stood South of the Great Mosque and afterwards became the Coppersmiths' Bazar. The site was known as Al-Khazrá (the Green) and the building was destroyed by the Abbasides. See Defrémery and Sanguinetti, i. 206.

[143] This great tribe or rather nation has been noticed before (vol. ii. 170). The name means "Strong," and derives from one Tamim bin Murr of the race of Adnan, nat. circ. A.D. 121. They hold the North-Eastern uplands of Najd, comprising the great desert Al-Dahná and extend to Al-Bahrayn. They are split up into a multitude of clans and septs; and they can boast of producing two famous sectarians. One was Abdullah bin Suffár, head of the Suffriyah; and the other Abdullah bin Ibáz (Ibadh) whence the Ibázíyah heretics of Oman who long included her princes. Mr. Palgrave wrongly writes Abadeeyah and Biadeeyah and my "Bayázi" was an Arab vulgarism used by the Zanzibarians. Dr. Badger rightly prefers Ibáziyah which he writes Ibâdhiyah (Hist. of the Imams, etc.).

[144] Governor of Al-Medinah under Mu'awiyah and afterwards (A.H. 64-65=683-4) fourth Ommiade. Al-Siyúti () will not account him amongst the princes of the Faithful, holding him a rebel against Al-Zubayr. Ockley makes Ibn al-Zubayr ninth and Marwán tenth Caliph.

[145] The address, without the vocative particle, is more emphatic; and the P.N. Mu'awiyah seems to court the omission.

[146] This may also mean that the Â£500 were the woman's "mahr" or marriage dowry and the Â£250 a present to buy the father's consent.

[147] Quite true to nature. See an account of the quasi- epileptic fits to which Syrians are subject and by them called Al-Wahtah in "The Inner Life of Syria," i. 233.

[148] Arab. "Wayha-k" here equivalent to Wayla-k. M. C. Barbier de Meynard renders the first "mon ami" and the second "misérable."

[149] This is an instance when the article (Al) is correctly used with one proper name and not with another. Al- Kumayt (P. N. of poet) lit. means a bay horse with black points: Nasr is victory.

[150] This anecdote, which reads like truth, is ample set off for a cart-load of abuse of women. But even the Hindus, determined misogynists in books, sometimes relent. Says the Katha Sarit Sagara: "So you see, King, honourable matrons are devoted to their husbands, and it is not the case that all women are always bad" (ii. 624). Let me hope that after all this Mistress Su'ad did not lead her husband a hardish life.

[151] Al-Khalí'a has been explained in vol. i. 311 {Vol 1, FN#633}: the translation of Al-Mas'udi (vi. 10) renders it "scélérat." Abú Alí al-Husayn the Wag was a Bassorite and a worthy companion of Abu Nowas the Debauchee; but he adorned the Court of Al-Amin the son, not of Al-Rashid the father.

[152] Governor of Bassorah, but not in Al-Husayn's day.

[153] The famous market-place where poems were recited, mentioned by Al-Hariri.

[154] A quarter of Bassorah.

[155] Capital of Al-Yaman, and then famed for its leather and other work (vol. v. 16).

[156] The creases in the stomach like the large navel are always insisted upon. Says the Kathá (ii. 525) “And he looked on that torrent river of the elixir of beauty, adorned with a waist made charming by those wave-like wrinkles,” etc.

[157] Arab. Sabaj (not Sabah, as the Mac. Edit. misprints it): I am not sure of its meaning.

[158] A truly Arab conceit, suggestingÂ

The music breathing from her face;

her calves moved rhythmically, suggesting the movement and consequent sound of a musical instrument.

[159] The morosa voluptas of the Catholic divines. The Sapphist described in the text would procure an orgasm (in gloria, as the Italians call it) by biting and rolling over the girl she loved; but by loosening the trouser-string she evidently aims at a closer tribadism the Arab “ Musáhikah.”

[160] We drink (or drank) after dinner, Easterns before the meal and half-Easterns (like the Russians) before and after. We talk of liquor being unwholesome on an empty stomach; but the truth is that all is purely habit. And as the Russian accompanies his Vodki with caviare, etc., so the Oriental drinks his Raki or Mahayá (Ma al-hayát=aqua vitæ) alternately with a Salátah, for whose composition see Pilgrimage i. 198. The Eastern practice has its advantages: it awakens the appetite, stimulates digestion and, what Easterns greatly regard, it is economical; half a bottle doing the work of a whole. Bhang and Kusumbá (opium dissolved and strained through a pledget of cotton) are always drunk before dinner and thus the “jolly” time is the preprandial, not the postprandial.

[161] “Abu al-Sakhá” (pronounced Abussakhá) = Father of

munificence.

[162] 'Arab. "Shammara," also used for gathering up the gown, so as to run the faster.

[163] i.e., blessing the Prophet and all True Believers (herself included).

[164] The style of this letter is that of a public scribe in a Cairo market-place thirty years ago.

[165] i.e.. she could not help falling in love with this beauty man.

[166] "Kudrat," used somewhat in the sense of our vague "Providence." The sentence means, leave Omnipotence to manage him. Mr. Redhouse, who forces a likeness between Moslem and Christian theology, tells us that "Qader is unjustly translated by Fate and Destiny, an old pagan idea abhorrent to Al-Islam which reposes on God's providence." He makes Kazá and Kismet quasi-synonymes of "Qazá" and "Qader," the former signifying God's decree, the latter our allotted portion, and he would render both by dispensation. Of course it is convenient to forget the Guarded Tablet of the learned and the Night of Power and skull-lectures of the vulgar. The eminent Turkish scholar would also translate Salát by worship (du'á being prayer) because it signifies a simple act of adoration without entreaty. If he will read the Opener of the Koran, recited in every set of prayers, he will find an especial request to be "led to the path which is straight." These vagaries are seriously adopted by Mr. E. J. W. Gibb in his Ottoman Poems (, etc.) London: Trübner and Co., 1882; and they deserve, I think, reprehension, because they serve only to mislead; and the high authority of the source whence they come necessarily recommends them to many.

[167] The reader will have noticed the likeness of this tale to that of Ibn Mansúr and the Lady Budúr (vol. iv., 228 et seq.){Vol 4, Tale 42} For this reason Lane leaves it untranslated (iii. 252).

[168] Lane also omits this tale (iii. 252). See Night dclxxxviii., vol. vii. et seq., for a variant of the story.

[169] Third Abbaside, A.H. 158-169 (=775-785), and father of Harun Al-Rashid. He is known chiefly for his eccentricities, such as cutting the throats of all his carrier-pigeons, making a man dine off marrow and sugar and having snow sent to him at Meccah, a distance of 700 miles.

[170] Arab. "Mirt"; the dictionaries give a short shift, cloak or breeches of wool or coarse silk.

[171] Arab. "Mayázíb" plur. of the Pers. Mizáb (orig. Míz-i-áb=channel of water) a spout for roof-rain. That which drains the Ka'abah on the N.-W. side is called Mizáb al-Rahmah (Gargoyle of Mercy) and pilgrims stand under it for a douche of holy water. It is supposed to be of gold, but really of silver gold-plated and is described of Burckhardt and myself. (Pilgrimage iii. 164.) The length is 4 feet 10 in.; width 9 in.; height of sides 8 in.; and slope at mouth 1 foot 6 in long.

[172] The Mac. and Bul. Edits. have by mistake "Son of Ishak." Lane has "Is-hak the son of Ibrahim" following Trébutien (iii. 483) but suggests in a note the right reading as above.

[173] Again masculine for feminine.

[174] There are two of this name. The Upper al-Akik contains the whole site of Al-Medinah; the Lower is on the Meccan road about four miles S.W. of the city. The Prophet called it "blessed" because ordered by an angel to pray therein. The poets have said pretty things about it, e.g.

O friend, this is the vale Akik; here stand and strive in thought:
If not a very lover, strive to be by love distraught!

for whose esoteric meaning see Pilgrimage ii. 24. I passed through Al-Akík in July when it was dry as summer dust and its "beautiful trees" were mere vegetable mummies.

[175] Those who live in the wet climates of the Northern temperates can hardly understand the delight of a shower in rainless lands, like Arabia and Nubia. In Sind we used to strip and stand in the downfall and raise faces sky-wards to get the full benefit of the douche. In Southern Persia food is hastily cooked at such times, wine strained, Kaliuns made ready and horses saddled for a ride to the nearest gardens and a happy drinking-bout under the cypresses. If a man refused, his friends would say of him, " See how he turns his back upon the blessing of Allah!" (like an ass which presents its tail to the weather).

[176] i.e. the destruction of the Barmecides.

[177] He was Wazir to the Great "Saladin" (Saláh al-Din = one conforming with the Faith): see vol. iv. 271, where Saladin is also entitled Al-Malik al-Nasir = the Conquering King. He was a Kurd and therefore fond of boys (like Virgil, Horace, etc.), but that perversion did not prevent his being one of the noblest of men. He lies in the Great Amawi Mosque of Damascus and I never visited a tomb with more reverence.

[178] Arab. "Ahassa bi'l-Shurbah :" in our idiom "he smelt a rat".

[179] This and the next tale are omitted by Lane (iii. 254) on "account of its vulgarity, rendered more objectionable by indecent incidents." It has been honoured with a lithographed reprint at Cairo A.H. 1278 and the Bresl. Edit. ix. 193 calls it the "Tale of Ahmad al-Danaf with Dalílah."

[180] "Ahmad, the Distressing Sickness," or "Calamity;" Hasan the Pestilent and Dalílah the bawd. See vol. ii. 329, and vol. iv. 75.

[181] A fÂtus, a foundling, a contemptible fellow.

[182] In the Mac. Edit. "her husband": the end of the tale shows the error, infra, . The Bresl. Edit., x. 195, informs us that Dalilah was a "Faylasúfiyah"=philosopheress.

[183] Arab. “Ibrík” usually a ewer, a spout-pot, from the Pers. Abríz=water-pourer: the old woman thus vaunted her ceremonial purity. The basin and ewer are called in poetry “the two rumourers,” because they rattle when borne about.

[184] Khátún in Turk. is=a lady, a dame of high degree; at times as here and elsewhere, it becomes a P. N.

[185] Arab. “Maut,” a word mostly avoided in the Koran and by the Founder of Christianity.

[186] Arab. “Akákír,” drugs, spices, simples which cannot be distinguished without study and practice. Hence the proverb (Burckhardt, 703), Is this an art of drugs? — difficult as the druggist’s craft?

[187] i.e. Beautiful as the fairy damsels who guard enchanted treasures, such as that of Al-Shamardal (vol. vi. 221).

[188] i.e. by contact with a person in a state of ceremonial impurity; servants are not particular upon this point and “Salát mamlúkíyah” (Mameluke’s prayers) means praying without ablution.

[189] i.e. Father of assaults, burdens or pregnancies; the last being here the meaning.

[190] Ex votos and so forth.

[191] Arab. “Iksah,” plaits, braids, also the little gold coins and other ornaments worn in the hair, now mostly by the middle and lower classes. Low Europeans sometimes take advantage of the native prostitutes by detaching these valuables, a form of “bilking” peculiar to the Nile-Valley.

[192] In Bresl. Edit. Malíh Kawí (pron. ‘Awi), a Cairene vulgarism.

[193] Meaning without veil or upper clothing.

[194] Arab. “Kallakás” the edible African arum before explained. This Colocasia is supposed to bear, unlike the palm, male and female flowers in one spathe.

[195] See vol. iii. 302. The figs refer to the anus and the pomegranates, like the sycomore, to the female parts. Me nec fæmina nec puer, &c., says Horace in pensive mood.

[196] It is in accordance to custom that the Shaykh be attended by a half-witted fanatic who would be made furious by seeing gold and silks in the reverend presence so coyly curtained.

[197] In English, “God damn everything an inch high!”

[198] Burckhardt notes that the Wali, or chief police officer at Cairo, was exclusively termed Al-Aghá and quotes the proverb (No. 156) “One night the whore repented and cried: — What! no Wali (Al-Aghá) to lay whores by the heels?” Some of these Egyptian by-words are most amusing and characteristic; but they require literal translation, not the timid touch of the last generation. I am preparing, for the use of my friend, Bernard Quaritch, a bonâ fide version which awaits only the promised volume of Herr Landberg.

[199] Lit. for “we leave them for the present”: the formula is much used in this tale, showing another hand, author or copyist.

[200] Arab. “Uzrah.”

[201] i.e. “Thou art unjust and violent enough to wrong even the Caliph!”

[202] I may note that a “donkey-boy” like our “post-boy” can be of any age in Egypt.

[203] They could legally demand to be recouped but the chief would have found some pretext to put off payment. Such at least is the legal process of these days.

[204] i.e. drunk with the excess of his beauty.

[205] A delicate way of offering a fee. When officers commanding regiments in India contracted for clothing the men, they found these douceurs under their dinner-napkins. All that is now changed; but I doubt the change being an improvement: the public is plundered by a "Board" instead of an individual.

[206] This may mean, I should know her even were my eyes blue (or blind) with cataract and the Bresl. Edit. ix. 231, reads "Ayní"=my eye; or it may be, I should know her by her staring, glittering, hungry eyes, as opposed to the "Hawar" soft-black and languishing (Arab. Prov. i. 115, and ii. 848). The Prophet said "blue-eyed (women) are of good omen." And when one man reproached another saying "Thou art Azrak" (blue-eyed!) he retorted, "So is the falcon!" "Zurk-an" in Kor. xx. 102, is translated by Mr. Rodwell "leaden eyes." It ought to be blue-eyed, dim-sighted, purblind.

[207] Arab, "Zalábiyah bi-'Asal."

[208] Arab. "Ká'ah," their mess-room, barracks.

[209] i.e. Camel shoulder-blade.

[210] So in the Brazil you are invited to drink a copa d'agua and find a splendid banquet. There is a smack of Chinese ceremony in this practice which lingers throughout southern Europe; but the less advanced society is, the more it is fettered by ceremony and "etiquette."

[211] The Bresl. edit. (ix. 239) prefers these lines: —

Some of us be hawks and some sparrow-hawks, *
And vultures some which at carrion pike;
And maidens deem all alike we be *
But, save in our turbands, we're not alike.

[212] Arab. Shar'a=holy law; here it especially applies to Al-Kisás=lex

talionis, which would order her eye-tooth to be torn out.

[213] i.e., of the Afghans. Sulaymáni is the Egypt and Hijazi term for an Afghan and the proverb says "Sulaymáni harámi" — the Afghan is a villainous man. See Pilgrimage i. 59, which gives them a better character. The Bresl. Edit. simply says, "King Sulaymán."

[214] This is a sequel to the Story of Dalilah and both are highly relished by Arabs. The Bresl. Edit. ix. 245, runs both into one.

[215] Arab. "Misr" (Masr), the Capital, says Savary, applied alternately to Memphis, Fostat and Grand Cairo each of which had a Jízah (pron. Gízah), skirt, angle, outlying suburb.

[216] For the curious street-cries of old Cairo see Lane (M. E. chapt. xiv.) and my Pilgrimage (i. 120): here the rhymes are of Zabíb (raisins), habíb (lover) and labíb (man of sense).

[217] The Mac. and Bul. Edits. give two silly couplets of moral advice: —

Strike with thy stubborn steel, and never fear *
    Aught save the Godhead of Allmighty Might;
And shun ill practices and never show *
    Through life but generous gifts to human sight.

The above is from the Bresl. Edit. ix. 247.

[218] Arab. "Al-Khanakah" now more usually termed a Takíyah. (Pilgrim. i. 124.)

[219] Arab. "Ka'b al-ba'íd" (Bresl. Edit. ix. 255)=heel or ankle, metaph. for fortune, reputation: so the Arabs say the "Ka'b of the tribe is gone!" here "the far one"=the caravan-leader.

[220] Arab. "Sharít," from Sharata=he Scarified; "Mishrat"=a lancet and "Sharítah"=a mason's rule. Mr. Payne renders "Sharít" by whinyard: it must be a chopper-like weapon, with a pin or screw

(laulab) to keep the blade open like the snap of the Spaniard's cuchillo. Dozy explains it=epée, synonyme de Sayf.

[221] Text "Dimágh," a Persianism when used for the head: the word properly means brain or meninx.

[222] They were afraid even to stand and answer this remarkable ruffian.

[223] Ahmad the Abortion, or the Foundling, nephew (sister's son) of Zaynab the Coneycatcher. See supra, .

[224] Here the sharp lad discovers the direction without pointing it out. I need hardly enlarge upon the prehensile powers of the Eastern foot: the tailor will hold his cloth between his toes and pick up his needle with it, whilst the woman can knead every muscle and at times catch a mosquito between the toes. I knew an officer in India whose mistress hurt his feelings by so doing at a critical time when he attributed her movement to pleasure.

[225] Arab. "Hullah"=dress. In old days it was composed of the Burd or Ridá, the shoulder-cloth from 6 to 9 or 10 feet long, and the Izár or waistcloth which was either tied or tucked into a girdle of leather or metal. The woman's waistcloth was called Nitáh and descended to the feet while the upper part was doubled and provided with a Tikkah or string over which it fell to the knees, overhanging the lower folds. This doubling of the "Hujrah," or part round the waist, was called the "Hubkah."

[226] Arab. "Taghaddá," the dinner being at eleven a.m. or noon.

[227] Arab. Ghandúr for which the Dictionaries give only "fat, thick." It applies in Arabia especially to a Harámi, brigand or freebooter, most honourable of professions, slain in foray or fray, opposed to "Fatís" or carrion (the corps crévé of the Klephts), the man who dies the straw-death. Pilgrimage iii. 66.

[228] My fair readers will note with surprise how such matters are

hurried in the East. The picture is, however, true to life in lands where “flirtation” is utterly unknown and, indeed, impossible.

[229] Arab. “Zabbah,” the wooden bolt (before noticed) which forms the lock and is opened by a slider and pins. It is illustrated by Lane (M. E. Introduction).

[230] i.e. I am not a petty thief.

[231] Arab. Satl=kettle, bucket. Lat. Situla (?).

[232] i.e. “there is no chance of his escaping.” It may also mean, “And far from him (Hayhát) is escape.”

[233] Arab. “Ihtilám,” the sign of puberty in boy or girl; this, like all emissions of semen, voluntary or involuntary, requires the Ghuzl or total ablution before prayers can be said, etc. See vol. v. 199, in the Tale of Tawaddud.

[234] This is the way to take an Eastern when he tells a deliberate lie; and it often surprises him into speaking the truth.

[235] The conjunctiva in Africans is seldom white; often it is red and more frequently yellow.

[236] So in the texts, possibly a clerical error for the wine which he had brought with the kabobs. But beer is the especial tipple of African slaves in Egypt.

[237] Arab. “Laun”, prop.=color, hue; but applied to species and genus, our “kind”; and especially to dishes which differ in appearance; whilst in Egypt it means any dish.

[238] Arab. “Zardah”=rice dressed with honey and saffron.
Vol. ii. 313. The word is still common in Turkey.

[239] Arab. “Laylat Ams,” the night of yesterday (Al-bárihah) not our “last night” which would be the night of the day spoken of.

[240] Arab. “Yakhní,” a word much used in Persia and India and properly applied to the complicated broth prepared for the rice and meat. For a good recipe see Herklots, Appendix xxix.

[241] In token of defeat and in acknowledgment that she was no match for men.

[242] This is a neat touch of nature. Many a woman, even of the world, has fallen in love with a man before indifferent to her because he did not take advantage of her when he had the opportunity.

[243] The slightest movement causes a fight at a funeral or a wedding-procession in the East; even amongst the “mild Hindus.”

[244] Arab. “Al-Musrán” (plur. of “Masír”) properly the intestines which contain the chyle. The bag made by Ali was, in fact, a “Cundum” (so called from the inventor, Colonel Cundum of the Guards in the days of Charles Second) or “French letter”; une capote anglaise, a “check upon child.” Captain Grose says (Class. Dict. etc. s.v. Cundum) “The dried gut of a sheep worn by a man in the act of coition to prevent venereal infection. These machines were long prepared and sold by a matron of the name of Philips at the Green Canister in Half Moon Street in the Strand * * * Also a false scabbard over a sword and the oilskin case for the colours of a regiment.” Another account is given in the Guide Pratique des Maladies Secrètes, Dr. G. Harris, Bruxelles. Librairie Populaire. He calls these petits sachets de baudruche “Candoms, from the doctor who invented them” (Littré ignores the word) and declares that the famous Ricord compared them with a bad umbrella which a storm can break or burst, while others term them cuirasses against pleasure and cobwebs against infection. They were much used in the last century. “Those pretended stolen goods were Mr. Wilkes’s Papers, many of which tended to prove his authorship of the North Briton, No. 45, April 23, 1763, and some Cundums enclosed in an envelope” (Records of C. of King’s Bench, London, 1763). “Pour finir l’inventaire de ces curiosités du cabinet de Madame Gourdan, il ne faut pas omettre une multitude de redingottes appelées d’Angleterre,

je ne sais pourquois. Vous connoissez, au surplus, ces espèces de boucliers qu'on oppose aux traits empoisonnés de l'amour; et qui n'emoussent que ceux du plaisir." (L'Observateur Anglois, Londres 1778, iii. 69.) Again we read: —

"Les capotes mélancoliques
Qui pendent chez les gros Millan (?)
S'enflent d'elles-memes, lubriques,
Et dechargent en se gonflant."
Passage Satyrique.

Also in Louis Prolat: —

"Il fuyait, me laissant une capote au cul."

The articles are now of two kinds mostly of baudruche (sheep's gut) and a few of caout-chouc. They are made almost exclusively in the faubourgs of Paris, giving employment to many women and young girls; Grenelle turns out the baudruche and Grenelle and Lilas the India-rubber article; and of the three or four makers M. Deschamps is best known. The sheep's gut is not joined in any way but of single piece as it comes from the animal after, of course, much manipulation to make it thin and supple; the inferior qualities are stuck together at the sides. Prices vary from 4 1/2 to 36 francs per gross. Those of India-rubber are always joined at the side with a solution especially prepared for the purpose. I have also heard of fish-bladders but can give no details on the subject. The Cundum was unknown to the ancients of Europe although syphilis was not: even prehistoric skeletons show traces of its ravages.

[245] Arab. "Yá Ustá" (for "Ustáz.") The Pers. term is Ustád=a craft-master, an artisan and especially a barber. Here it is merely a polite address.

[246] In common parlance Arabs answer a question (like the classics of Europe who rarely used Yes and No, Yea and Nay), by repeating its last words. They have, however, many affirmative particles e.g. Ni'am which answers a negative "Dost thou not go?" — Ni'am

(Yes!); and Ajal, a stronger form following a command, e.g. Sir (go) — Ajal, Yes verily. The popular form is Aywá (‘lláhi)=Yes, by Allah. The chief negatives are Má and Lá, both often used in the sense of “There is not.”

[247] Arab. “Khalbús,” prop. the servant of the Almah-girls who acts buffoon as well as pimp. The “Maskharah” (whence our “mask”) corresponds with the fool or jester of mediæval Europe: amongst the Arnauts he is called “Suttari” and is known by his fox’s tails: he mounts a mare, tom-toms on the kettle-drum and is generally one of the bravest of the corps. These buffoons are noted for extreme indecency: they generally appear in the ring provided with an enormous phallus of whip-cord and with this they charge man, woman and child, to the infinite delight of the public.

[248] Arab. “Shúbash” pronounced in Egypt Shobash: it is the Persian Sháh-básh lit.=be a King, equivalent to our bravo. Here, however, the allusion is to the buffoon’s cry at an Egyptian feast, “Shohbash ‘alayk, yá Sáhib al-faraj,”=a present is due from thee, O giver of the fête!” See Lane M. E. xxvii.

[249] Arab. “Ka’ak al-I’d:” the former is the Arab form of the Persian “Kahk” (still retained in Egypt) whence I would derive our word “cake.” It alludes to the sweet cakes which are served up with dates, the quatre mendiants and sherbets during visits of the Lesser (not the greater) Festival, at the end of the Ramazan fast. (Lane M.E. xxv.)

[250] Arab. “Tásúmah,” a rare word for a peculiar slipper. Dozy (s. v.) says only, espece de chaussure, sandale, pantoufle, soulier.

[251] Arab. “Ijtilá”=the displaying of the bride on her wedding night so often alluded to in The Nights.

[252] Arab. Khiskhánah; a mixed word from Klaysh=canvass or stuffs generally and Pers. Khánah=house room. Dozy (s.v.) says armoire, buffet.

[253] The Bresl. Edit. “Kamaríyah”=Moon-like (fem.) for

Moon.

[254] Every traveller describes the manners and customs of dogs in Eastern cities where they furiously attack all canine intruders. I have noticed the subject in writing of Al-Medinah where the beasts are confined to the suburbs. (Pilgrimage ii. 52-54.)

[255] She could legally compel him to sell her; because, being an Infidel, he had attempted to debauch a Moslemah.

[256] Arab. "Haláwat wa Mulabbas"; the latter etymologically means one dressed or clothed. Here it alludes to almonds, etc., clothed or coated with sugar. See Dozy (s.v.) "labas."

[257] Arab. "'Ubb" from a root=being long: Dozy (s.v.), says poche au sein; Habb al-'ubb is a woman's ornament.

[258] Who, it will be remembered, was Dalilah's grandson.

[259] Arab. "Tábút," a term applied to the Ark of the Covenant (Koran ii. 249), which contained Moses' rod and shoes, Aaron's mitre, the manna-pot, the broken Tables of the Law, and the portraits of all the prophets which are to appear till the end of time — an extensive list for a box measuring 3 by 2 cubits. Europeans often translate it coffin, but it is properly the wooden case placed over an honoured grave. "Irán" is the Ark of Moses' exposure, also the large hearse on which tribal chiefs were carried to earth.

[260] i.e. What we have related is not "Gospel Truth."

[261] Omitted by Lane (iii. 252) "because little more than a repetition" of Taj al-Mulúk and the Lady Dunyá. This is true; but the nice progress of the nurse's pimping is a well-finished picture and the old woman's speech (infra) is a gem.

[262] Artaxerxes; in the Mac. Edit. Azdashir, a misprint.

[263] I use "kiss ground" as we say "kiss hands." But it must not be

understood literally: the nearest approach would be to touch the earth with the finger-tips and apply them to the lips or brow. Amongst Hindus the Ashtánga-prostration included actually kissing the ground.

[264] The "key" is mentioned because a fee so called (miftáh) is paid on its being handed to the new lodger. (Pilgrimage i. 62.)

[265] The Koranic term for semen, often quoted.

[266] Koran, xii. 31, in the story of Joseph, before noticed.

[267] Probably the white woollens, so often mentioned, whose use is now returning to Europe, where men have a reasonable fear of dyed stuffs, especially since Aniline conquered Cochineal.

[268] Arab. "samír," one who enjoys the musámarah or night-talk outside the Arab tents. "Samar" is the shade of the moon, or half darkness when only stars shine without a moon, or the darkness of a moonless night. Hence the proverb (A. P. ii. 513) "Má af'al-hú al-samar wa'l kamar;" I will not do it by moondarkness or by moonshine, i.e. never. I have elsewhere remarked that "Early to bed and early to rise" is a civilised maxim; most barbarians sit deep into the night in the light of the moon or a camp-fire and will not rise till nearly noon. They agree in our modern version of the old saw: —

Early to bed and early to rise
Makes a man surly and gives him red eyes.

The Shayks of Arab tribes especially transact most of their public business during the dark hours.

[269] Suspecting that it had been sent by some Royal lover.

[270] Arab. "Rubbamá" a particle more emphatic than rubba,=perhaps, sometimes, often.

[271] "The broken (wall)" from Hatim=breaking. It fences the Hijr or

space where Ishmael is buried (vol. vi. 205); and I have described it in Pilgrimage iii. 165.

[272] Arab. "Faráis" (plur. of farísah): the phrase has often occurred and is=our "trembled in every nerve." As often happens in Arabic, it is "horsey;" alluding to the shoulder-muscles (not shoulder-blades, Preston) between neck and flank which readily quiver in blood-horses when excited or frightened.

[273] Arab. "Fazl"=exceeding goodness as in "Fazl wa ma'rifah"=virtue and learning.

[274] Arab. "Al-Mafárik" (plur. of Mafrak),=the pole or crown of the head, where the hair parts naturally and where baldness mostly begins.

[275] Arab. "Ná'i al-maut", the person sent round to announce a death to the friends and relations of the deceased and invite them to the funeral.

[276] Arab. "Táir al-bayn", any bird, not only the Hátim or black crow, which announces separation. Crows and ravens flock for food to the camps broken up for the springtide and autumnal marches, and thus become emblems of desertion and desolation. The same birds are also connected with Abel's burial in the Koran (v. 34), a Jewish tradition borrowed by Mohammed. Lastly, here is a paranomasia in the words "Ghuráb al-Bayn"=Raven of the Wold (the black bird with white breast and red beak and legs): "Ghuráb" (Heb. Oreb) connects with Ghurbah=strangerhood, exile, and "Bayn" with distance, interval, disunion, the desert (between the cultivated spots). There is another and a similar pun anent the Bán-tree; the first word meaning "he fared, he left."

[277] Arab. "Tayr," any flying thing, a bird; with true Arab carelessness the writer waits till the tale is nearly ended before letting us know that the birds are pigeons (Hamám).

[278] Arab. “Karr’aynan.” The Arabs say, “Allah cool thine eye,” because tears of grief are hot and those of joy cool (Al-Asma’i); others say the cool eye is opposed to that heated by watching; and Al-Hariri (Ass. xxvii.) makes a scorching afternoon “hotter than the tear of a childless mother.” In the burning climate of Arabia coolth and refrigeration are equivalent to refreshment and delight.

[279] Arab. “Muunah,” the “Mona” of Maroccan travellers (English not Italian who are scandalised by “Mona”) meaning the provisions supplied gratis by the unhappy villagers to all who visit them with passport from the Sultan. Our cousins German have lately scored a great success by paying for all their rations which the Ministers of other nations, England included, were mean enough to accept.

[280] Arab. “Kaannahu huwa”; lit.=as he (was) he. This reminds us of the great grammarian, Sibawayh, whose name the Persians derive from “Apple-flavour”(Sib + bú). He was disputing, in presence of Harun al-Rashid with a rival Al-Kisá’í, and advocated the Basrian form, “Fa-izá huwa hú” (behold, it was he) against the Kufan, “Fa-izá huwa iyyáhu” (behold, it was him). The enemy overcame him by appealing to Badawin, who spoke impurely, whereupon Sibawayh left the court, retired to Khorasan and died, it is said of a broken heart.

[281] This is a sign of the Saudáwí or melancholic temperament in which black bile pre-dominates. It is supposed to cause a distaste for society and a longing for solitude, an unsettled habit of mind and neglect of worldly affairs. I remarked that in Arabia students are subject to it, and that amongst philosophers and literary men of Mecca and Al-Medinah there was hardly one who was not spoken of as a “Saudawi.” See Pilgrimage ii. 49, 50.

[282] i.e. I am a servant and bound to tell thee what my orders are.

[283] A touching lesson on how bribes settle matters in the East.

[284] i.e. fresh from water (Arab. “Rutub”), before the air can tarnish

them. The pearl (margarita) in Arab. is Lu'lu'; the "unio" or large pearl Durr, plur. Durar. In modern parlance Durr is the second quality of the twelve into which pearls are divided.

[285] i.e. the Wazir, but purposely left vague.

[286] The whole of the nurse's speech is admirable: its naïve and striking picture of conjugal affection goes far to redeem the grossness of The Nights.

[287] The bitterness was the parting in the morning.

[288] English "Prin'cess," too often pronounced in French fashion Princess.

[289] In dictionaries "Bán" (Anglice ben-tree) is the myrobalan which produces gum benzoin. It resembles the tamarisk. Mr. Lyall (Translations of Ancient Arab Poetry, Williams and Norgate, 1885), calls it a species of Moringa, tall, with plentiful and intensely green foliage used for comparisons on account of its straightness and graceful shape of its branches. The nut supplies a medicinal oil.

[290] A sign of extreme familiarity: the glooms are the hands and the full moons are the eyes.

[291] Arab. "Khal'a al-'izár": lit.=stripping off jaws or side-beard.

[292] Arab. "Shimál"=the north wind.

[293] An operation well described by Juvenal —

Illa supercilium, modicâ fuligine tactum,
Obliquâ producit acu, pingitque, trementes
Attolens oculos.

Sonnini (Travels in Egypt, chapt. xvi.) justly remarks that this pencilling the angles of the eyes with Kohl, which the old Levant trade called alquifoux or arquifoux, makes them appear large and more oblong; and I have noted that the modern Egyptian (especially Coptic) eye, like that of the Sphinx and the old figures looks in profile as if it were seen in full. (Pilgrimage i. 214.)

[294] The same traveller notes a singular property in the Henna-flower that when smelt closely it exhales a "very powerful spermatic odour," hence it became a favourite with women as the tea-rose with us. He finds it on the nails of mummies, and identifies it with the Kupros of the ancient Greeks (the moderns call it Kene or Kena) and the {Bótrys tês kýproy} (Botrus cypri) of Solomon's Song (i. 14). The Hebr. is "Copher," a well-known word which the A. V. translates by "a cluster of camphire (?) in the vineyards of En-gedi"; and a note on iv. 13 ineptly adds, "or, cypress." The Revised Edit. amends it to "a cluster of henna-flowers." The Solomonic (?) description is very correct; the shrub affects vineyards, and about Bombay forms fine hedges which can be smelt from a distance.

[295] Hardly the equivalent of the Arab. "Kataba" (which includes true tattooing with needles) and is applied to painting "patches" of blue or green colour, with sprigs and arabesques upon the arms and especially the breasts of women. "Kataba" would also be applied to striping the fingers with Henna which becomes a shining black under a paste of honey, lime and sal-ammoniac. This "patching" is alluded to by Strabo and Galen (Lane M. E. chapt. ii.); and we may note that savages and barbarians can leave nothing of beauty unadorned; they seem to hate a plain surface like the Hindu silversmith, whose art is shown only in chasing.

[296] A violent temper, accompanied with voies de fait and personal violence, is by no means rare amongst Eastern princesses; and terrible tales are told in Persia concerning the daughters of Fath Ali Shah. Few men and no woman can resist the temptations of absolute command. The daughter of a certain Dictator all-powerful in the Argentine Republic was once seen on horseback with a white bridle of peculiar leather; it was made of the skin of a man who had boasted of her favours. The slave-girls suffer first from these masterful young persons and then it is the turn of the eunuchry.

[297] A neat touch; she was too thorough-bred to care for herself first.

[298] Here the ground or earth is really kissed.

[299] Corresponding with our phrase, “His heart was in his mouth.”

[300] Very artful is the contrast of the love-lorn Princess’s humility with her furious behaviour, in the pride of her purity, while she was yet a virginette and fancy free.

[301] Arab. “Suhbat-hu” lit.=in company with him, a popular idiom in Egypt and Syria. It often occurs in the Bresl. Edit.

[302] In the Mac. Edit. “Shahzamán,” a corruption of Sháh Zamán=King of the Age. (See vol. i. 2)

[303] For a note on this subject see vol. ii. 2.

[304] i.e. bathe her and apply cosmetics to remove ail traces of travel.

[305] These pretentious and curious displays of coquetry are not uncommon in handsome slave-girls when newly bought; and it is a kind of pundonor to humour them. They may also refuse their favours and a master who took possession of their persons by brute force would be blamed by his friends, men and women. Even the most despotic of despots, Fath Ali Shah of Persia, put up with refusals from his slave-girls and did not, as would the mean-minded, marry them to the grooms or cooks of the palace.

[306] Such continence is rarely shown by the young Jallabs or slave-traders; when older they learn how much money is lost with the chattel’s virginity.

[307] Midwives in the East, as in the less civilised parts of the West, have many nostrums for divining the sex of the unborn child.

[308] Arabic (which has no written “g”) from Pers. Gulnár (Gul-i-anár) pomegranate-flower, the “Gulnare” of Byron who learnt his

Orientalism at the Mekhitarist (Armenian) Convent, Venice. I regret to see the little honour now paid to the gallant poet in the land where he should be honoured the most. The systematic depreciation was begun by the late Mr. Thackeray, perhaps the last man to value the noble independence of Byron's spirit; and it has been perpetuated, I regret to see, by better judges. These critics seem wholly to ignore the fact that Byron founded a school which covered Europe from Russia to Spain, from Norway to Sicily, and which from England passed over to the two Americas. This exceptional success, which has not yet fallen even to Shakespeare's lot, was due to genius only, for the poet almost ignored study and poetic art. His great misfortune was being born in England under the Georgium Sidus. Any Continental people would have regarded him as one of the prime glories of his race.

[309] Arab. "Fí al-Kamar," which Lane renders "in the moonlight." It seems to me that the allusion is to the Comorin Islands; but the sequel speaks simply of an island.

[310] The Mac. Edit. misprints Julnár as Julnáz (so the Bul. Edit. ii. 233), and Lane's Jullanár is an Egyptian vulgarism. He is right in suspecting the "White City" to be imaginary; but its sea has no apparent connection with the Caspian. The mermen and mermaids appear to him to be of an inferior order of the Jinn, termed Al-Ghawwásah, the Divers, who fly through air and are made of fire which at times issues from their mouths.

[311] Arab. " lá Kulli hál," a popular phrase, like the Anglo-American " anyhow."

[312] In the text the name does not appear till near the end of the tale.

[313] i.e. Full moon smiling.

[314] These lines have occurred in vol. iii. 264. so I quote Lane ii. 499.

[315] 'These lines occurred in vol. ii. 301. I quote Mr.

Payne.

[316] Arab. “Khadd” = cheek from the eye-orbit to the place where the beard grows; also applied to the side of a rough highland, the side-planks of a litter, etc. etc.

[317] The black hair of youth.

[318] This manner of listening is not held dishonourable amongst Arabs or Easterns generally; who, however, hear as little good of themselves as Westerns declare in proverb.

[319] Arab. “Hasab wa nasab,” before explained as inherited degree and acquired dignity. See vol. iv. 171.

[320] Arab. “Mujájat”=spittle running from the mouth: hence Lane, “is like running saliva,” which, in poetry is not pretty.

[321] Arab. and Heb. “Salmandra” from Pers. Samandal (— dar — duk — dun, etc.), a Salamander, a mouse which lives in fire, some say a bird in India and China and others confuse with the chameleon (Bochart Hiero. Part ii. chapt. vi).

[322] Arab. “Mahá” one of the four kinds of wild cows or bovine antelopes, bubalus, Antelope defassa, A. Ieucoryx, etc.

[323] These lines have occurred in vol. iii. 279; so I quote Lane (iii. 274) by way of variety; although I do not like his “ bowels.”

[324] The last verse (286) of chapt. ii. The Cow: “compelleth” in the sense of “burdeneth.”

[325] Salih’s speeches are euphuistic.

[326] From the Fátihah.

[327] A truly Eastern saying, which ignores the “old maids” of the West.

[328] i.e naming her before the lieges as if the speaker were her and his superior. It would have been more polite not to have gone beyond " the unique pearl and the hoarded jewel :" the offensive part of the speech was using the girl's name.

[329] Meaning emphatically that one and all were nobodies.

[330] Arab Badr, the usual pun.

[331] Arab. "Kirát" {kerátion} the bean of the Abrus precatorius, used as a weight in Arabia and India and as a bead for decoration in Africa. It is equal to four Kamhahs or wheat grains and about 3 grs. avoir.; and being the twenty fourth of a miskal, it is applied to that proportion of everything. Thus the Arabs say of a perfect man, " He is of four-and-twenty Kirát" i.e. pure gold. See vol. iii. 239.

[332] The (she) myrtle: Kazimirski (A. de Biberstein)
Dictionnaire Arabe-Francais (Pairs Maisonneuve 1867) gives
Marsín=Rose de Jericho: myrte.

[333] Needless to note that the fowler had a right to expect a return present worth double or treble the price of his gift. Such is the universal practice of the East: in the West the extortioner says, "I leave it to you, sir!"

[334] And she does tell him all that the reader well knows.

[335] This was for sprinkling him, but the texts omit that operation. Arabic has distinct terms for various forms of metamorphosis. " Naskh " is change from a lower to a higher, as beast to man; " Maskh " (the common expression) is the reverse, " Raskh " is from animate to inanimate (man to stone) and "Faskh" is absolute wasting away to corruption.

[336] I render this improbable detail literally: it can only mean that the ship was dashed against a rock.

[337] Who was probably squatting on his shop counter. The "Bakkál"

(who must not be confounded with the épicier), lit. "vender of herbs" =greengrocer, and according to Richardson used incorrectly for Baddál (?) vendor of provisions. Popularly it is applied to a seller of oil, honey, butter and fruit, like the Ital. "Pizzicagnolo"=Salsamentarius, and in North-West Africa to an inn-keeper.

[338] Here the Shaykh is mistaken: he should have said, "The Sun in old Persian." "Almanac" simply makes nonsense of the Arabian Circe's name. In Arab. it is "Takwím," whence the Span. and Port. "Tacuino:" in Heb. Hakamathá-Takunah=sapientia dispositionis astrorum (Asiat. Research. iii.120).

[339] i.e. for thy daily expenses.

[340] Un adolescent aime toutes les femmes. Man is by nature polygamic whereas woman as a rule is monogamic and polyandrous only when tired of her lover. For the man, as has been truly said, loves the woman, but the love of the woman is for the love of the man.

[341] I have already noted that the heroes and heroines of Eastern love-tales are always bonnes fourchettes: they eat and drink hard enough to scandalise the sentimental amourist of the West; but it is understood that this abundant diet is necessary to qualify them for the Herculean labours of the love night.

[342] Here again a little excision is necessary; the reader already knows all about it.

[343] Arab. "Hiss," prop. speaking a perception (as of sound or motion) as opposed to "Hadas," a surmise or opinion without proof.

[344] Arab. "Sawík," the old and modern name for native frumenty, green grain (mostly barley) toasted, pounded, mixed with dates or sugar and eaten on journeys when cooking is impracticable. M. C. de Perceval (iii. 54), gives it a different and now unknown name; and Mr. Lane also applies it to "ptisane." It named the " Day of

Sawaykah “ (for which see Pilgrimage ii. 19), called by our popular authors the “ War of the Meal-sacks.”

[345] Mr. Keightley (H. 122-24 Tales and Popular Fictions, a book now somewhat obsolete) remarks, “There is nothing said about the bridle in the account of the sale (infra), but I am sure that in the original tale, Badr’s misfortunes must have been owing to his having parted with it. In Chaucer’s Squier’s Tale the bridle would also appear to have been of some importance. “He quotes a story from the Notti Piacevoli of Straparola, the Milanese, published at Venice in 1550. And there is a popular story of the kind in Germany.

[346] Here, for the first time we find the name of the mother who has often been mentioned in the story. Faráshah is the fem. or singular form of “Farásh,” a butterfly, a moth. Lane notes that his Shaykh gives it the very unusual sense of “a locust.”

[347] Punning upon Jauharah= “a jewel” a name which has an Hibernian smack.

[348] In the old version “All the lovers of the Magic Queen resumed their pristine forms as soon as she ceased to live;” moreover, they were all sons of kings, princes, or persons of high degree.

[349] Arab. “Munádamah,” = conversation over the cup (Lane), used somewhat in the sense of “Musámarah” = talks by moonlight.

[350] Arab. “Kursi,” a word of many meanings; here it would allure to the square crate-like seat of palm-fronds used by the Ráwi or public reciter of tales when he is not pacing about the coffee-house.

[351] Von Hammer remarks that this is precisely the sum paid in Egypt for a MS. copy of The Nights.

[352] Arab. “Samar,” the origin of Musámarah, which see, vol. iv. 237.

[353] The pomp and circumstance, with which the tale is introduced to the reader showing the importance attached to it. Lane, most

injudiciously I think, transfers the Proemium to a note in chapt. xxiv., thus converting an Arabian Night into an Arabian Note.

[354] ‘Asim = defending (honour) or defended, son of Safwán = clear, cold (dry). Trébutien ii. 126, has Safran.

[355] Fáris = the rider, the Knight, son of Sálih = the righteous, the pious, the just.

[356] In sign of the deepest dejection, when a man would signify that he can fall no lower.

[357] Arab. Yá Khawand (in Bresl. Edit. vol. iv. 191) and fem. form Khawandah () from Pers. Kháwand or Kháwandagár = superior, lord, master; Khudáwand is still used in popular as in classical Persian, and is universally understood in Hindostan.

[358] The Biblical Sheba, whence came the Queen of many
Hebrew fables.

[359] These would be the interjections of the writer or story-teller. The Mac. Edit. is here a sketch which must be filled up by the Bresl. Edit. vol. iv. 189-318: “Tale of King Asim and his son Sayf al-Mulúk with Badí‘a al-Jamál.”

[360] The oath by the Seal-ring of Solomon was the Stygian “swear” in Fairy-land. The signet consisted of four jewels, presented by as many angels, representing the Winds, the Birds, Earth (including sea) and Spirits, and the gems were inscribed with as many sentences: (1) To Allah belong Majesty and Might; (2) All created things praise the Lord; (3) Heaven and Earth are Allah’s slaves and (4) There is no god but the God and Mohammed is His messenger. For Sakhr and his theft of the signet see Dr. Weil’s, “The Bible, the Koran, and the Talmud.”

[361] Trébutien (ii. 128) remarks, “Cet Assaf peut être celui auquel David adresse plusieurs de ses psaumes, et que nos interprètes disent avoir été son maître de chapelle (from Biblioth. Orient).

[362] Mermen, monsters, beasts, etc.

[363] This is in accordance with Eastern etiquette; the guest must be fed before his errand is asked. The Porte, in the days of its pride, managed in this way sorely to insult the Ambassadors of the most powerful European kingdoms and the first French Republic had the honour of abating the barbarians' nuisance. So the old Scottish Highlanders never asked the name or clan of a chance guest, lest he prove a foe before he had eaten their food.

[364] In Bresl. Edit. (301) Kháfiyah: in Mac. Kháinah, the perfidy.

[365] So in the Mac. Edit., in the Bresl. only one "Kabá" or Kaftan; but from the sequel it seems to be a clerical error.

[366] Arab. "Su'ubán" (Thu'ubán) popularly translated "basilisk." The Egyptians suppose that when this serpent forms ring round the Ibn 'Irs (weasel or ichneumon) the latter emits a peculiar air which causes the reptile to burst.

[367] i.e. that prophesied by Solomon.

[368] Arab. "Takliyah" from kaly, a fry: Lane's Shaykh explained it as "onions cooked in clarified butter, after which they are put upon other cooked food." The mention of onions points to Egypt as the origin of this tale and certainly not to Arabia, where the strong-smelling root is hated.

[369] Von Hammer quotes the case of the Grand Vizier Yúsuf throwing his own pelisse over the shoulders of the Aleppine Merchant who brought him the news of the death of his enemy, Jazzár Pasha.

[370] This peculiar style of generosity was also the custom in contemporary Europe.

[371] Khátún, which follows the name (e.g. Hurmat Khatun), in India corresponds with the male title Khan, taken by the Pathan Moslems

(e.g. Pír Khán). Khánum is the affix to the Moghul or Tartar nobility, the men assuming a double designation e.g. Mirza Abdallah Beg. See Oriental collections (Ouseley's) vol. i. 97.

[372] Lit. "Whatso thou wouldest do that do!" a contrast with our European laconism.

[373] These are booths built against and outside the walls, made of palm-fronds and light materials.

[374] Von Hammer in Trébutien (ii. 135) says, "Such rejoicings are still customary at Constantinople, under the name of Donánmá, not only when the Sultanas are enceintes, but also when they are brought to bed. In 1803 the rumour of the pregnancy of a Sultana, being falsely spread, involved all the Ministers in useless expenses to prepare for a Donánmá which never took place." Lane justly remarks upon this passage that the title Sultán precedes while the feminine Sultánah follows the name.

[375] These words (Bresl. Edit.) would be spoken in jest, a grim joke enough, but showing the elation of the King's spirits.

[376] A signal like a gong: the Mac. Edit. reads "Tákah," = in at the window.

[377] Sayf al-Mulúk = "Sword (Egyptian Sif, Arab. Sayf, Gr. {xíphos}) of the Kings"; and he must not be called tout bonnement Sayf. Sái'd = the forearm.

[378] Arab. "Fakíh" = a divine, from Fikh = theology, a man versed in law and divinity i.e. (1) the Koran and its interpretation comprehending the sacred ancient history of the creation and prophets (Chapters iii., iv., v. and vi.), (2) the traditions and legends connected with early Moslem History and (3) some auxiliary sciences as grammar, syntax and prosody; logic, rhetoric and philosophy. See of "El-Mas'údí's Historical Encyclopædia etc.," by my friend Prof. Aloys Springer, London 1841. This fine fragment printed by the Oriental Translation Fund has been left unfinished

when the Asiatic Society of Paris has printed in Eight Vols. 8vo the text and translation of MM. Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille. What a national disgrace! And the same with the mere abridgment of Ibn Batutah by Prof. Lee (Orient. Tr. Fund 1820) when the French have the fine Edition and translation by Defrémery and Sanguinetti with index etc. in 4 vols. 8vo 1858-59. But England is now content to rank in such matters as encouragement of learning, endowment of research etc., into the basest of kingdoms, and the contrast of status between the learned Societies of London and of Paris, Berlin, Vienna or Rome is mortifying to an Englishman — a national opprobrium.

[379] Arab. "Maydán al-Fíl," prob. for Birkat al-Fíl, the Tank of the Elephant before-mentioned. Lane quotes Al-Makrizi who in his Khitat informs us that the lakelet was made about the end of the seventh century (A.H.), and in the seventeenth year of the eighth century became the site of the stables. The Bresl. Edit. (iv. 214) reads "Maydan al-'Adl," prob. for Al-'Ádil the name of the King who laid out the Maydán.

[380] Arab. "Asháb al-Ziyá'," the latter word mostly signifies estates consisting, strictly speaking of land under artificial irrigation.

[381] The Bresl. Edit. (iv. 215) has "Chawáshiyah" = 'Chiaush, the Turkish word, written with the Pers. "ch," a letter which in Arabic is supplanted by "sh," everywhere except in Morocco.

[382] Arab. "Záwiyah" lit. a corner, a cell. Lane (M. E., chapt. xxiv.) renders it "a small kiosque," and translates the famous Zawiyat al-Umyán (Blind Men's Angle) near the south-eastern corner of the Azhar or great Collegiate Mosque of Cairo, "Chapel of the Blind" (chapt. ix.). In popular parlance it suggests a hermitage.

[383] Arab. "Takht," a Pers. word used as more emphatic than the Arab. Sarír.

[384] This girding the sovereign is found in the hieroglyphs as a peculiarity of the ancient Kings of Egypt, says Von Hammer

referring readers to Denon.

[385] Arab. “Mohr,” which was not amongst the gifts of Solomon in Night dcclx. The Bresl. Edit. () adds “and the bow,” which is also de trop.

[386] Arab. “Batánah,” the ordinary lining opp. to Tazríb, or quilting with a layer of cotton between two folds of cloth. The idea in the text is that the unhappy wearer would have to carry his cross (the girl) on his back.

[387] This line has occurred in Night dccxliv. supra .

[388] Arab. “Mu’attik al-Rikáb” i.e. who frees those in bondage from the yoke.

[389] In the Mac. Edit. and in Trébutien (ii. 143) the King is here called Schimakh son of Scharoukh, but elsewhere, Schohiali = Shahyál, in the Bresl. Edit. Shahál. What the author means by “Son of ‘Ád the Greater,” I cannot divine.

[390] Lit. “For he is the man who can avail thereto,” with the meaning given in the text.

[391] Arab. “Jazírat,” insula or peninsula, vol. i. 2.

[392] Probably Canton with which the Arabs were familiar.

[393] i.e. “Who disappointeth not those who put their trust in Him.”

[394] Arab. “Al-Manjaníkát” plur. of manjanik, from Gr. {Mágganon}, Lat. Manganum (Engl. Mangonel from the dim. Mangonella). Ducange Glossarium, s.v. The Greek is applied originally to defensive weapons, then to the artillery of the day, Ballista, catapults, etc. The kindred Arab. form “Manjanín” is applied chiefly to the Noria or Persian waterwheel.

[395] Faghfúr is the common Moslem title for the Emperors of China;

in the Kamus the first syllable is Zammated (Fugh); in Al-Mas'udi (chapt. xiv.) we find Baghfúr and in Al-Idrisi Baghbúgh, or Baghbún. In Al-Asma'i Bagh = god or idol (Pehlewi and Persian); hence according to some Baghdád (?) and Bághistán a pagoda (?). Sprenger (Al-Mas'údi,) remarks that Baghfúr is a literal translation of Tien-tse and quotes Visdelou, "pour mieux faire comprendre de quel ciel ils veulent parler, ils poussent la généalogie (of the Emperor) plus loin. Ils lui donnent le ciel pour père, la terre pour mère, le soleil pour frère aîné et la lune pour sur aînée."

[396] Arab. "Kayf hálak" = how de doo? the salutation of a Fellah.

[397] i.e. subject to the Maharajah of Hind.

[398] This is not a mistake: I have seen heavy hail in Africa, N. Lat. 4 degrees; within sight of the Equator.

[399] Arab. "Harrákat," here used in the sense of smaller craft, and presently for a cock-boat.

[400] See vol. i. 138: here by way of variety I quote Mr. Payne.

[401] This explains the Arab idea of the "Old Man of the Sea" in Sindbad the Seaman (vol. vi. 50). He was not a monkey nor an unknown monster; but an evil Jinni of the most powerful class, yet subject to defeat and death.

[402] These Plinian monsters abound in Persian literature. For a specimen see Richardson Dissert. p. xlviii.

[403] Arab. "Anyáb," plur. of "Náb" = canine tooth (eye-tooth of man), tusks of horse and camel, etc.

[404] Arab, "Kásid," the Anglo-Indian Cossid. The post is called Baríd from the Persian "burídah" (cut) because the mules used for the purpose were dock-tailed. Barid applies equally to the post-mule, the

rider and the distance from one station (Sikkah) to another which varied from two to six parasangs. The letter-carrier was termed Al-Faránik from the Pers. Parwánah, a servant. In the Diwán al-Baríd (Post-office) every letter was entered in a Madraj or list called in Arabic Al-Askidár from the Persian “Az Kih dárí“ = from whom hast thou it?

[405] “Ten years” in the Bresl. Edit. iv. 244.

[406] In the Bresl. Edit. (iv. 245) we find “Kalak,” a raft, like those used upon the Euphrates, and better than the “Fulk,” or ship, of the Mac. Edit.

[407] Arab. “Timsah” from Coptic (Old Egypt) Emsuh or Msuh. The animal cannot live in salt-water, a fact which proves that the Crocodile Lakes on the Suez Canal were in old days fed by Nile-water; and this was necessarily a Canal.

[408] So in the Bresl. Edit. (iv. 245). In the Mac. text “one man,” which better suits the second crocodile, for the animal can hardly be expected to take two at a time.

[409] He had ample reason to be frightened. The large Cynocephalus is exceedingly dangerous. When travelling on the Gold Coast with my late friend Colonel De Ruvignes, we suddenly came in the grey of the morning upon a herd of these beasts. We dismounted, hobbled our nags and sat down, sword and revolver in hand. Luckily it was feeding time for the vicious brutes, which scowled at us but did not attack us. During my four years’ service on the West African Coast I heard enough to satisfy me that these powerful beasts often kill men and rape women; but I could not convince myself that they ever kept the women as concubines.

[410] As we should say in English “it is a far cry to Loch Awe”: the Hindu by-word is, “Dihlí (Delhi) is a long way off.” See vol. i. 37.

[411] Arab. “Fútah”, a napkin, a waistcloth, the Indian

Zones alluded to by the old Greek travellers.

[412] Arab. “Yají (it comes) miat khwánjah” — quite Fellah talk.

[413] As Trébutien shows (ii. 155) these apes were a remnant of some ancient tribe possibly those of Ã?d who had gone to Meccah to pray for rain and thus escaped the general destruction. See vol. i. 65. Perhaps they were the Jews of Aylah who in David’s day were transformed into monkeys for fishing on the Sabbath (Saturday) Koran ii. 61.

[414] I can see no reason why Lane purposely changes this to “the extremity of their country.”

[415] Koran xxii. 44, Mr. Payne remarks: — This absurd addition is probably due to some copyist, who thought to show his knowledge of the Koran, but did not understand the meaning of the verse from which the quotation is taken and which runs thus, “How many cities have We destroyed, whilst yet they transgressed, and they are laid low on their own foundations and wells abandoned and high-builded palaces!” Mr. Lane observes that the words are either misunderstood or purposely misapplied by the author of the tale. Purposeful perversions of Holy Writ are very popular amongst Moslems and form part of their rhetoric; but such is not the case here. According to Von Hammer (Trébutien ii. 154), “Eastern geographers place the Bir al-Mu’utallal (Ruined Well) and the Kasr al-Mashíd (High-builded Castle) in the province of Hadramaut, and we wait for a new Niebuhr to inform us what are the monuments or the ruins so called.” His text translates puits arides et palais de plâtre (not likely!). Lane remarks that Mashíd mostly means “plastered,” but here = Mushayyad, lofty, explained in the Jalálayn Commentary as = rafí‘a, high-raised. The two places are also mentioned by Al-Mas’údi; and they occur in Al-Kazwíni (see Night dccclviii.): both of these authors making the Koran directly allude to them.

[416] Arab. (from Pers.) “Aywán” which here corresponds with the Egyptian “líwán” a tall saloon with estrades.

[417] This naïve style of "renowning it" is customary in the East, contrasting with the servile address of the subject— "thy slave" etc.

[418] Daulat (not Dawlah) the Anglo-Indian Dowlat; prop. meaning the shifts of affairs, hence, fortune, empire, kingdom. Khátún = "lady," I have noted, follows the name after Turkish fashion.

[419] The old name of Suez-town from the Greek Clysma (the shutting), which named the Gulf of Suez "Sea of Kulzum." The ruins in the shape of a huge mound, upon which Sá'id Pasha built a Kiosk-palace, lie to the north of the modern town and have been noticed by me. (Pilgrimage, Midian, etc.) The Rev. Prof. Sayce examined the mound and from the Roman remains found in it determined it to be a fort guarding the old mouth of the Old Egyptian Sweet-water Canal which then debouched near the town.

[420] i.e. Tuesday. See vol. iii. 249.

[421] Because being a Jinniyah the foster-sister could have come to her and saved her from old maidenhood.

[422] Arab. "Hájah" properly a needful thing. This consisted according to the Bresl. Edit. of certain perfumes, by burning which she could summon the Queen of the Jinn.

[423] Probably used in its sense of a "black crow." The Bresl. Edit. (iv. 261) has "Khátim" (seal-ring) which is but one of its almost innumerable misprints.

[424] Here it is called "Tábik" and afterwards "Tábút."

[425] i.e. raising from the lower hinge-pins. See vol. ii. 214.

[426] Arab. "Abrísam" or "Ibrísam" (from Persian Abrísham or Ibrísham) = raw silk or floss, i.e. untwisted silk.

[427] This knightly practice, evidently borrowed from the East, appears in many romances of chivalry e.g. When Sir

Tristram is found by King Mark asleep beside Ysonde (Isentt) with drawn sword between them, the former cried: —

> Gif they weren in sinne
> Nought so they no lay.

And we are told: —

> Sir Amys and the lady bright
> To bed gan they go;
> And when they weren in bed laid,
> Sir Amys his sword out-brayed
> And held it between them two.

This occurs in the old French romance of Amys and Amyloun which is taken into the tale of the Ravens in the Seven Wise Masters where Ludovic personates his friend Alexander in marrying the King of Egypt's daughter and sleeps every night with a bare blade between him and the bride. See also Aladdin and his lamp. An Englishman remarked, "The drawn sword would be little hindrance to a man and maid coming together." The drawn sword represented only the Prince's honour.

[428] Arab. "Ya Sáki' al-Wajh," which Lane translates by "lying" or "liar."

[429] Kamín (in Bresl. Edit. "bayn" = between) Al-Bahrayn = Ambuscade or lurking-place of the two seas. The name of the city in Lane is "'Emareeych" imaginary but derived from Emarch ('imárah) = being populous. Trébutien (ii. 161) takes from Bresl. Edit. "Amar" and translates the port-name, "le lieu de refuge des deux mers."

[430] i.e. "High of (among) the Kings." Lane proposes to read 'Ali al-Mulk = high in dominion.

[431] Pronounce Mu'inuddeen = Aider of the Faith. The Bresl. Edit. (iv. 266) also read "Mu'in al-Riyásah" = Mu'in of the Captaincies.

[432] Arab. "Shúm" = a tough wood used for the staves with which donkeys are driven. Sir Gardner Wilkinson informed Lane that it is the ash.

[433] In Persian we find the fuller metaphorical form, "kissing the ground of obedience."

[434] For the Shaykh of the Sea(-board) in Sindbad the Seaman see vol. vi. 50.

[435] That this riding is a facetious exaggeration of the African practice I find was guessed by Mr. Keightley.

[436] Arab. "Kummasra": the root seems to be "Kamsara" = being slender or compact.

[437] Lane translates, "by reason of the exhilaration produced by intoxication." But the Arabic here has no assonance. The passage also alludes to the drunken habits of those blameless Ethiopians, the races of Central Africa where, after midday a chief is rarely if ever found sober. We hear much about drink in England but Englishmen are mere babes compared with these stalwart Negroes. In Unyamwezi I found all the standing bedsteads of pole-sleepers and bark-slabs disposed at an angle of about 20 degrees for the purpose of draining off the huge pottle-fulls of Pombe (Osirian beer) drained by the occupants; and, comminxit lectum potus might be said of the whole male population.

[438] This is not exaggerated. When at Hebron I saw the biblical spectacle of two men carrying a huge bunch slung to a pole, not so much for the weight as to keep the grapes from injury.

[439] The Mac. and Bul. Edits. add, "and with him a host of others after his kind"; but these words are omitted by the Bresl. Edit. and apparently from the sequel there was only one Ghul-giant.

[440] Probably alluding to the most barbarous Persian practice of

plucking or tearing out the eyes from their sockets. See Sir John Malcolm's description of the capture of Kirmán and Morier (in Zohrab, the hostage) for the wholesale blinding of the Asterabadian by the Eunuch-King Agha Mohammed Shah. I may note that the mediæval Italian practice called bacinare, or scorching with red-hot basins, came from Persia.

[441] Arab. "Laban" as opposed to "Halíb": in Night dcclxxiv. (infra) the former is used for sweet milk, and other passages could be cited. I have noted that all galaktophagi, or milk-drinking races, prefer the artificially soured to the sweet, choosing the fermentation to take place outside rather than inside their stomachs. Amongst the Somal I never saw man, woman or child drink a drop of fresh milk; and they offered considerable opposition to our heating it for coffee.

[442] Arab. "Tákah" not "an aperture" as Lane has it, but an arched hollow in the wall.

[443] In Trébutien (ii. 168) the cannibal is called "Goul Eli-Fenioun" and Von Hammer remarks, "There is no need of such likeness of name to prove that al this episode is a manifest imitation of the adventures of Ulysses in Polyphemus's cave; * * * and this induces the belief that the Arabs have been acquainted with the poems of Homer." Living intimately with the Greeks they could not have ignored the Iliad and the Odyssey: indeed we know by tradition that they had translations, now apparently lost. I cannot however, accept Lane's conjecture that "the story of Ulysses and Polyphemus may have been of Eastern origin." Possibly the myth came from Egypt, for I have shown that the opening of the Iliad bears a suspicious likeness to the proem of Pentaur's Epic.

[444] Arab. "Shakhtúr".

[445] In the Bresl. Edit. the ship is not wrecked but lands Sa'id in safety.

[446] So in the Shah-nameh the Símurgh-bird gives one of her feathers to her protégé Zál which he will throw into the fire when she is

wanted.

[447] Bresl. Edit. “Al-Zardakhánát” Arab. plur of Zarad-Khánah, a bastard word = armoury, from Arab. Zarad (hauberk) and Pers. Khánah = house etc.

[448] Some retrenchment was here found necessary to avoid “damnable iteration.”

[449] i.e. Badi’a al-Jamal.

[450] Mohammed.

[451] Koran xxxv. “The Creator” (Fátir) or the Angels, so called from the first verse.

[452] In the Bresl. Edit. () Sayf al-Muluk drops asleep under a tree to the lulling sound of a Sákiyah or water-wheel, and is seen by Badi’a al-Jamal, who falls in love with him and drops tears upon his cheeks, etc. The scene, containing much recitation, is long and well told.

[453] Arab. “Lukmah” = a bouchée of bread, meat, fruit or pastry, and especially applied to the rice balled with the hand and delicately inserted into a friend’s mouth.

[454] Arab. “Saláhiyah,” also written Saráhiyah: it means an ewer-shaped glass-bottle.

[455] Arab. “Sarmújah,” of which Von Hammer remarks that the dictionaries ignore it; Dozy gives the forms Sarmúj, Sarmúz, and Sarmúzah and explains them by “espèce de guêtre, de sandale ou de mule, qu’on chausse par-dessus la botte.”

[456] In token of profound submission.

[457] Arab. “Misr” in Ibn Khaldún is a land whose people are settled and civilised hence “Namsur” = we settle; and “Amsár” = settled provinces. Al-Misrayn was the title of Basrah and Kufah the two

military cantonments founded by Caliph Omar on the frontier of conquering Arabia and conquered Persia. Hence “Tamsír” = founding such posts, which were planted in Mesopotamia, Syria and Egypt. In these camps were stationed the veterans who had fought under Mohammed; but the spoils of the East soon changed them to splendid cities where luxury and learning flourished side by side. Sprenger (Al-Mas’údi p, 177) compares them ecclesiastically with the primitive Christian Churches such as Jerusalem, Alexandria and Antioch. But the Moslems were animated with an ardent love of liberty and Kufah under Al-Hajjaj the masterful, lost 100,000 of her turbulent sons without the thirst for independence being quenched. This can hardly be said of the Early Christians who, with the exception of a few staunch-hearted martyrs, appear in history as pauvres diables and poules mouillées, ever oppressed by their own most ignorant and harmful fancy that the world was about to end.

[458] i.e. Waiting to be sold and wasting away in single cursedness.

[459] Arab. “Yá dádati”: dádat is an old servant-woman or slave, often applied to a nurse, like its congener the Pers. Dádá, the latter often pronounced Daddeh, as Daddeh Bazm-árá in the Kuisum-nameh (Atkinson’s “Customs of the Women of Persia,” London, 8vo, 1832).

[460] Marjánah has been already explained. D’Herbelot derives from it the Romance name Morgante la Déconvenue, here confounding Morgana with Urganda; and Keltic scholars make Morgain = Mor Gwynn-the white maid (, Keightley’s Fairy Mythology, London, Whittaker, 1833).

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VOLUME VIII.

A Message to
Frederick Hankey,

formerly of No. 2, Rue Laffitte, Paris.

My Dear Fred,

If there be such a thing as “continuation,” you will see these lines in the far Spirit-land and you will find that your old friend has not forgotten you and Annie.

Richard F. Burton.

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King Mohammed Bin Sabaik and the Merchant Hasan (continued)

When it was the Seven Hundred and Seventy-seventh Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old Queen heard the handmaid's words she was wroth with sore wrath because of her and cried, "How shall there be accord between man and Jinn?" But Sayf al-Muluk replied, "Indeed, I will conform to thy will and be thy page and die in thy love and will keep with thee covenant and regard non but thee: so right soon shalt thou see my truth and lack of falsehood and the excellence of my manly dealing with thee, Inshallah!" The old woman pondered for a full hour with brow earthwards bent; after which she raised her head and said to him, "O thou beautiful youth, wilt thou indeed keep compact and covenant?" He replied, "Yes, by Him who raised the heavens and dispread the earth upon the waters, I will indeed keep faith and troth!" Thereupon quoth she, "I will win for thee thy wish, Inshallah! but for the present go thou into the garden and take thy pleasure therein and eat of its fruits, that have neither like in the world nor equal, whilst I send for my son Shahyal and confabulate with him of the matter. Nothing but good shall come of it, so Allah please, for he will not gainsay me nor disobey my commandment and I will marry thee with his daughter Badi'a al-Jamal. So be of good heart for she shall assuredly be thy wife, O Sayf al-Muluk." The Prince thanked her for those words and kissing her hands and feet, went forth from her into the garden; whilst she turned to Marjanah and said to her, "Go seek my son Shahyal wherever he is and bring him to me." So Marjanah went out in quest of King Shahyal and found him and set him before his mother. On such wise fared it with them; but as regards Sayf al-Muluk, whilst he walked in the garden, lo and behold! five Jinn of the people of the Blue King espied him and said to one another, "Whence cometh yonder wight and who brought him hither? Haply 'tis he who slew the son and heir of our lord and master the Blue King;" presently adding, 'But we will go about with him and question him and find out all from him." So they walked gently and softly up to him, as he sat in a corner of the garden, and sitting down by him, said to him, "O beauteous youth, thou didst right well in slaying the son of the Blue King and delivering from him Daulat Khatun; for he was a treacherous hound and had tricked her, and had not Allah appointed thee to her, she had never won free; no, never! But how diddest thou slay him?" Sayf al-Muluk looked at them and deeming them of the gardenfolk, answered, "I slew him by means of this ring which is on my finger." Therewith they were assured that it was he who had slain him; so they seized him, two of them holding his hands, whilst other two held his feet and the fifth his mouth, lest he should cry out and King Shahyal's people should hear him and rescue him from their hands. Then they lifted him up and flying away with him ceased not their flight till they came to their King and set him down before him, saying, "O King of the Age, we bring thee the murderer of thy son." "Where is he?" asked the King and they answered, "This is he." So the Blue King said to Sayf al-Muluk, "How slewest thou my son, the core of my heart and the light of my sight, without aught of right, for all he had done thee no ill deed?" Quoth the Prince, "Yea, verily! I slew him because of his violence and frowardness, in that he used to seize Kings' daughters and sever them from their families and carry them to the Ruined Well and the High-builded Castle of Japhet son of Noah and entreat them lewdly by debauching them. I slew him by means of this ring on my finger, and Allah hurried his soul to the fire and the abiding-place dire." Therewithal the King was assured that this was indeed he who slew his son; so presently he called his Wazirs and said to them, "This is the murtherer of my son sans shadow of doubt: so how do you counsel me to deal with him? Shall I slay him with the foulest slaughter or torture him with the terriblest torments or how?" Quoth the Chief Minister, "Cut off his limbs, one a day." Another, "Beat him with a grievous beating every day till he die." A third, "Cut him across the middle." A fourth, "Chop off all his fingers and burn him with fire." A fifth, "Crucify him;" and so on, each speaking according to his rede. Now there was with the Blue King an old Emir, versed in the vicissitudes and experienced in the exchanges of the times, and he said, "O King of the Age, verily I would say to thee somewhat, and thine is the rede whether thou wilt hearken or not to my say." Now he was the King's privy Councillor and the Chief

Officer of his empire, and the Sovran was wont to give ear to his word and conduct himself by his counsel and gainsay him not in aught. So he rose and kissing ground before his liege lord, said to him, “O King of the Age, if I advise thee in this matter, wilt thou follow my advice and grant me indemnity?” Quoth the King, “Set forth thine opinion, and thou shalt have immunity.” Then quoth he, “O King of the Age, an thou slay this one nor accept my advice nor hearken to my word, in very sooth I say that his death were now inexpedient, for that he his thy prisoner and in thy power, and under thy protection; so whenas thou wilt, thou mayst lay hand on him and do with him what thou desirest. Have patience, then, O King of the Age, for he hath entered the garden of Iram and is become the betrothed of Badi’a al-Jamal, daughter of King Shahyal, and one of them. Thy people seized him there and brought him hither and he did not hide his case from them or from thee. So an thou slay him, assuredly King Shahyal will seek blood-revenge and lead his host against thee for his daughter’s sake, and thou canst not cope with him nor make head against his power.” So the King hearkened to his counsel and commanded to imprison the captive. Thus fared it with Sayf al-Muluk; but as regards the old Queen, grandmother of Badi’a al-Jamal, when her son Shahyal came to her she despatched Marjanah in search of Sayf al-Muluk; but she found him not and returning to her mistress, said, “I found him not in the garden.” So the ancient dame sent for the gardeners and questioned them of the Prince. Quoth they, “We saw him sitting under a tree when behold, five of the Blue King’s folk alighted by him and spoke with him, after which they took him up and having gagged him flew away with him.” When the old Queen heard the damsel’s words it was no light matter to her and she was wroth with exceeding wrath: so she rose to her feet and said to her son, King Shahyal, “Art a King and shall the Blue King’s people come to our garden and carry off our guests unhindered, and thou alive?” And she proceeded to provoke him, saying, “It behoveth not that any transgress against us during thy lifetime.”[1] Answered he, “O mother of me, this man slew the Blue King’s son, who was a Jinni and Allah threw him into his hand. He is a Jinni and I am a Jinni: how then shall I go to him and make war on him for the sake of a mortal?” But she rejoined, “Go to him and demand our guest of him, and if he be still alive and the Blue King deliver him to thee, take him and return; but an he have slain him, take the King and all his children and Harim and household depending on him; then bring them to me alive that I may cut their throats with my own hand and lay in ruins his reign. Except thou go to him and do my bidding, I will not acquit thee of my milk and my rearing of thee shall be counted unlawful." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Seventy-eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the grandmother of Badi'a al-Jamal said to Shahyal, "Fare thee to the Blue King and look after Sayf al-Muluk: if he be still in life come with him hither; but an he have slain him take that King and all his children and Harim and the whole of his dependents an protégés and bring them here alive that I may cut their throats with my own hand and ruin his realm. Except thou go to him and do my bidding, I will not acquit thee of my milk and my rearing of thee shall be accounted unlawful." Thereupon Shahyal rose and assembling his troops, set out, in deference to his mother, desiring to content her and her friends, and in accordance with whatso had been fore-ordained from eternity without beginning; nor did they leave journeying till they came to the land of the Blue King, who met them with his army and gave them battle. The Blue King's host was put to the rout and the conquerors having taken him and all his sons, great and small, and Grandees and officers bound and brought them before King Shahyal, who said to the captive, "O Azrak,[2] where is the mortal Sayf al-Muluk who whilome was my guest?" Answered the Blue King, "O Shahyal, thou art a Jinni and I am a Jinni and is't on account of a mortal who slew my son that thou hast done this deed; yea, the murtherer of my son, the core of my liver and solace of my soul. How couldest thou work such work and spill the blood of so many thousand Jinn?" He replied, "Leave this talk! Knowest thou not that a single mortal is better, in Allah's sight, than a thousand Jinn?[3] If he be alive, bring him to me, and I will set thee free and all whom I have taken of thy sons and people; but an thou have slain him, I will slaughter thee and thy sons." Quoth the Malik al-Azrak, "O King, is this man of more account with thee than my son?"; and quoth

Shahyal, “Verily, thy son was an evildoer who kidnapped Kings’ daughters and shut them up in the Ruined Well and the High-builded Castle of Japhet son of Noah and entreated them lewdly.” Then said the Blue King, “He is with me; but make thou peace between us.” So he delivered the Prince to Shahyal, who made peace between him and the Blue King, and Al-Azrak gave him a bond of absolution for the death of his son. Then Shahyal conferred robes of honour on them and entertained the Blue King and his troops hospitably for three days, after which he took Sayf al-Muluk and carried him back to the old Queen, his own mother, who rejoiced in him with an exceeding joy, and Shahyal marvelled at the beauty of the Prince and his loveliness and his perfection. Then the Prince related to him his story from beginning to end, especially what did befal him with Badi’a al-Jamal and Shahyal said, “O my mother, since ’tis thy pleasure that this should be, I hear and I obey all that to command it pleaseth thee; wherefore do thou take him and bear him to Sarandib and there celebrate his wedding and marry him to her in all state, for he is a goodly youth and hath endured horrors for her sake.” So she and her maidens set out with Sayf al-Muluk for Sarandib and, entering the Garden belonging to the Queen of Hind, foregathered with Daulat Khatun and Badi’a al-Jamal. Then the lovers met, and the old Queen acquainted the two Princesses with all that had passed between Sayf al-Muluk and the Blue King and how the Prince had been nearhand to a captive’s death; but in repetition is no fruition. Then King Taj al-Muluk father of Daulat Khatun assembled the lords of his land and drew up the contract of marriage between Sayf al-Muluk and Badi’a al-Jamal; and he conferred costly robes of honour and gave banquets to the lieges. Then Sayf al-Muluk rose and, kissing ground before the King, said to him, “O King, pardon! I would fain ask of thee somewhat but I fear lest thou refuse it to my disappointment.” Taj al-Muluk replied, “By Allah, though thou soughtest my soul of me, I would not refuse it to thee, after all the kindness thou hast done me!” Quoth Sayf al-Muluk, “I wish thee to marry the Princess Daulat Khatun to my brother Sa’id, and we will both be thy pages.” “I hear and obey,” answered Taj al-Muluk, and assembling his Grandees a second time, let draw up the contract of marriage between his daughter and Sa’id; after which they scattered gold and silver and the King bade decorate the city. So they held high festival and Sayf al-Muluk went in unto Badi’a al-Jamal and Sa’id went in unto Daulat Khatun on the same night. Moreover Sayf al-Muluk abode forty days with Badi’a al-Jamal, at the end of which she said to him, “O King’s son, say me, is there left in thy heart any regret for aught?” And he replied, “Allah forfend! I have accomplished my quest and there abideth no regret in my heart at all: but I would fain meet my father and my mother in the land of Egypt and see if they continue in welfare or not.” So she commanded a company of her slaves to convey them to Egypt, and they carried them to Cairo, where Sayf al-Muluk and Sa’id foregathered with their parents and abode with them a week; after which they took leave of them and returned to Sarandib-city; and from this time forwards, whenever they longed for their folk, they used to go to them and return. Then Sayf al-Muluk and Badi’a al-Jamal abode in all solace of life and its joyance as did Sa’id and Daulat Khatun, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and Severer of societies; and they all died good Moslems. So glory be to the Living One who dieth not, who createth all creatures and decreeth to them death and who is the First, without beginning, and the Last, without end! This is all that hath come down to us of the story of Sayf al-Muluk and Badi’a al-Jamal. And Allah alone wotteth the truth.[4] But not less excellent than this tale is the History of

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HASAN OF BASSORAH.[5]

There was once of days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, a merchant, who dwelt in the land of Bassorah and who owned two sons and wealth galore. But in due time Allah, the All-hearing the All-knowing, decreed that he should be admitted to the mercy of the Most High; so he died, and his two sons laid him out and buried him, after which they divided his gardens and estates equally between them and of his portion each one opened a shop.[6] Presently the elder son, Hasan hight, a youth of passing beauty and loveliness, symmetry and perfect grace, betook himself to the company of lewd folk, women and low boys, frolicking with them in gardens and feasting them with meat and wine for months together and occupying himself not with his business like as his father had done, for that he exulted in the abundance of his good. After some time he had wasted all his ready money, so he sold all his father's lands and houses and played the wastrel until there remained in his hand nothing, neither little nor muchel, nor was one of his comrades left who knew him. He abode thus anhungred, he and his widowed mother, three days, and on the fourth day, as he walked along, unknowing whither to wend, there met him a man of his father's friends, who questioned him of his case. He told him what had befallen him and the other said, "O my son, I have a brother who is a goldsmith; an thou wilt, thou shalt be with him and learn his craft and become skilled therein." Hasan consented and accompanied him to his brother, to whom he commended him, saying, "In very sooth this is my son; do thou teach him for my sake." So Hasan abode with the goldsmith and busied himself with the craft; and Allah opened to him the door of gain and in due course he set up shop for himself. One day, as he sat in his booth in the bazar, there came up to him an 'Ajamí, a foreigner, a Persian, with a great white beard and a white turband[7] on his head, having the semblance of a merchant who, after saluting him, looked at his handiwork and examined it knowingly. It pleased him and he shook his head, saying, "By Allah, thou art a cunning goldsmith! What may be thy name?" "Hasan," replied the other, shortly.[8] The Persian continued to look at his wares, whilst

Hasan read in an old book[9] he hent in hand and the folk were taken up with his beauty and loveliness and symmetry and perfect grace, till the hour of mid-afternoon prayer, when the shop became clear of people and the Persian accosted the young man, saying, "O my son, thou art a comely youth! What book is that? Thou hast no sire and I have no son, and I know an art, than which there is no goodlier in the world." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Persian accosted the young man saying, "O my son, thou art a comely youth! Thou hast no sire and I have no son, and I know an art than which there is no goodlier in the world. Many have sought of me instruction therein, but I consented not to instruct any of them in it; yet hath my soul consented that I teach it to thee, for thy love hath gotten hold upon my heart and I will make thee my son and set up between thee and poverty a barrier, so shalt thou be quit of this handicraft and toil no more with hammer and anvil,[10] charcoal and fire." Hasan asked, "O my lord and when wilt thou teach me this?"; and the Persian answered, "To-morrow, Inshallah, I will come to thee betimes and make thee in thy presence fine gold of this copper." Whereupon Hasan rejoiced and sat talking with the Persian till nightfall, when he took leave of him and going in to his mother, saluted her with the salam and ate with her; but he was dazed, without memory or reason, for that the stranger's words had gotten hold upon his heart. So she questioned him and he told her what had passed between himself and the Persian, which when she heard, her heart fluttered and she strained him to her bosom, saying, "O my son, beware of hearkening to the talk of the folk, and especially of the Persians, and obey them not in aught; for they are sharpers and tricksters, who profess the art of alchemy[11] and swindle people and take their money and devour it in vain." Replied Hasan, "O my mother, we are paupers and have nothing he may covet, that he should put a cheat on us. Indeed, this Persian is a right worthy Shaykh and the signs of virtue are manifest on him; Allah hath inclined his heart to me and he hath adopted me to son." She was silent in her chagrin, and he passed the night without sleep, his heart being full of what the Persian had said to him; nor did slumber visit him for the excess of his joy therein. But when morning morrowed, he rose and taking the keys, opened the shop, whereupon behold, the Persian accosted him. Hasan stood up to him and would have kissed his hands; but he forbade him from this and suffered it not, saying, “O Hasan, set on the crucible and apply the bellows.”[12] So he did as the stranger bade him and lighted the charcoal. Then said the Persian, “O my son, hast thou any copper?” and he replied, “I have a broken platter.” So he bade him work the shears[13] and cut it into bittocks and cast it into the crucible and blow up the fire with the bellows, till the copper became liquid, when he put hand to turband and took therefrom a folded paper and opening it, sprinkled thereout into the pot about half a drachm of somewhat like yellow Kohl or eyepowder.[14] Then he bade Hasan blow upon it with the bellows, and he did so, till the contents of the crucible became a lump of gold.[15] When the youth saw this, he was stupefied and at his wits’ end for the joy he felt and taking the ingot from the crucible handled it and tried it with the file and found it pure gold of the finest quality: whereupon his reason fled and he was dazed with excess of delight and bent over the Persian’s hand to kiss it. But he forbade him, saying, “Art thou married?” and when the youth replied “No!” he said, “Carry this ingot to the market and sell it and take the price in haste and speak not.” So Hasan went down into the market and gave the bar to the broker, who took it and rubbed it upon the touchstone and found it pure gold. So they opened the biddings at ten thousand dirhams and the merchants bid against one another for it up to fifteen thousand dirhams,[16] at which price he sold it and taking the money, went home and told his mother all that had passed, saying, “O my mother, I have learnt this art and mystery.” But she laughed at him, saying, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Eightieth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan the goldsmith told his mother what he had done with the Ajami and cried, “I have learnt this art and mystery,” she laughed at him, saying, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in

Allah, the Glorious, the Great!"; and she was silent for vexation. Then of his ignorance, he took a metal mortar and returning to the shop, laid it before the Persian, who was still sitting there and asked him, "O my son, what wilt thou do with this mortar?" Hasan answered, "Let us put it in the fire, and make of it lumps of gold." The Persian laughed and rejoined, "O my son, art thou Jinn-mad that thou wouldst go down into the market with two ingots of gold in one day? Knowest thou not that the folk would suspect us and our lives would be lost? Now, O my son, an I teach thee this craft, thou must practise it but once in each twelvemonth; for that will suffice thee from year to year." Cried Hasan, "True, O my lord," and sitting down in his open shop, set on the crucible and cast more charcoal on the fire. Quoth the Persian, "What wilt thou, O my son?"; and quoth Hasan, "Teach me this craft." "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" exclaimed the Persian, laughing; "Verily, O my son, thou art little of wit and in nowise fitted for this noble craft. Did ever any during all his life learn this art on the beaten way or in the bazars? If we busy ourselves with it here, the folk will say of us, These practise alchemy; and the magistrates will hear of us, and we shall lose our lives.[17] Wherefore, O my son, an thou desire to learn this mystery forthright, come thou with me to my house." So Hasan barred his shop and went with that Ajamí; but by the way he remembered his mother's words and thinking in himself a thousand thoughts he stood still, with bowed head. The Persian turned and seeing him thus standing laughed and said to him, "Art thou mad? What! I in my heart purpose thee good and thou misdoubtest I will harm thee!" presently adding, "But, if thou fear to go with me to my house, I will go with thee to thine and teach thee there." Hasan replied, "'Tis well, O uncle," and the Persian rejoined, "Go thou before me." So Hasan led the way to his own house, and entering, told his mother of the Persian's coming, for he had left him standing at the door. She ordered the house for them and when she had made an end of furnishing and adorning it, her son bade her go to one of the neighbours' lodgings. So she left her home to them and wended her way, whereupon Hasan brought in the Persian, who entered after asking leave. Then he took in hand a dish and going to the market, returned with food, which he set before the Persian, saying, “Eat, O my lord, that between us there may be bread and salt and may Almighty Allah do vengeance upon the traitor to bread and salt!” The Persian replied with a smile, “True, O my son! Who knoweth the virtue and worth of bread and salt?”[18] Then he came forward and ate with Hasan, till they were satisfied; after which the Ajami said, “O my son Hasan, bring us somewhat of sweetmeats.” So Hasan went to the market, rejoicing in his words, and returned with ten saucers[19] of sweetmeats, of which they both ate and the Persian said, “May Allah abundantly requite thee, O my son! It is the like of thee with whom folk company and to whom they discover their secrets and teach what may profit him!”[20] Then said he, “O Hasan bring the gear.” But hardly did Hasan hear these words than he went forth like a colt let out to grass in spring-tide, and hastening to the shop, fetched the apparatus and set it before the Persian, who pulled out a piece of paper and said, “O Hasan, by the bond of bread and salt, wert thou not dearer to me than my son, I would not let thee into the mysteries of this art, for I have none of the Elixir[21] left save what is in this paper; but by and by I will compound the simples whereof it is composed and will make it before thee. Know, O my son Hasan, that to every ten pounds of copper thou must set half a drachm of that which is in this paper, and the whole ten will presently become unalloyed virgin gold;” presently adding, “O my son, O Hasan, there are in this paper three ounces,[22] Egyptian measure, and when it is spent, I will make thee other and more.” Hasan took the packet and finding therein a yellow powder, finer than the first, said to the Persian, “O my lord, what is the name of this substance and where is it found and how is it made?” But he laughed, longing to get hold of the youth, and replied, “Of what dost thou question? Indeed thou art a froward boy! Do thy work and hold thy peace.” So Hasan arose and fetching a brass platter from the house, shore it in shreds and threw it into the melting-pot; then he scattered on it a little of the powder from the paper and it became a lump of pure gold. When he saw this, he joyed with exceeding joy and was filled with amazement and could think of nothing save the gold; but, whilst he was occupied with taking up the lumps of metal from the melting-pot, the Persian pulled out of his turband in haste a packet of Cretan Bhang, which if an elephant smelt, he would sleep from night to night, and cutting off a little thereof, put it in a piece of the sweetmeat. Then said he, "O Hasan, thou art become my very son and dearer to me than soul and wealth, and I have a daughter whose like never have eyes beheld for beauty and loveliness, symmetry and perfect grace. Now I see that thou befittest none but her and she none but thee; wherefore, if it be Allah's will, I will marry thee to her." Replied Hasan, "I am thy servant and whatso good thou dost with me will be a deposit with the Almighty!" and the Persian rejoined, "O my son, have fair patience and fair shall betide thee." Therewith he gave him the piece of sweetmeat and he took it and kissing his hand, put it in his mouth, knowing not what was hidden for him in the after time for only the Lord of Futurity knoweth the Future. But hardly had he swallowed it, when he fell down, head foregoing heels, and was lost to the world; whereupon the Persian, seeing him in such calamitous case, rejoiced exceedingly and cried, "Thou hast fallen into my snares, O gallows-carrion, O dog of the Arabs! This many a year have I sought thee and now I have found thee, O Hasan!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Eighty-first Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan the goldsmith ate the bit of sweetmeat given to him by the Ajami and fell fainting to the ground, the Persian rejoiced exceedingly and cried, "This many a year have I sought thee and now I have found thee!" Then he girt himself and pinioned Hasan's arms and binding his feet to his hands laid him in a chest, which he emptied to that end and locked it upon him. Moreover, he cleared another chest and laying therein all Hasan's valuables, together with the piece of the first gold-lump and the second ingot which he had made locked it with a padlock. Then he ran to the market and fetching a porter, took up the two chests and made off with them to a place within sight of the city, where he set them down on the sea-shore, hard by a vessel at anchor there. Now this craft had been freighted and fitted out by the Persian and her master was awaiting him; so, when the crew saw him, they came to him and bore the two chests on board. Then the Persian called out to the Rais or Captain, saying, "Up and let us be off, for I have done my desire and won my wish.” So the skipper sang out to the sailors, saying, “Weigh anchor and set sail!” And the ship put out to sea with a fair wind. So far concerning the Persian; but as regards Hasan’s mother, she awaited him till supper-time but heard neither sound nor news of him; so she went to the house and finding it thrown open, entered and saw none therein and missed the two chests and their valuables; wherefore she knew that her son was lost and that doom had overtaken him; and she buffeted her face and rent her raiment crying out and wailing and saying, “Alas, my son, ah! Alas, the fruit of my vitals, ah!” And she recited these couplets,

“My patience fails me and grows anxiety; * And with your absence
growth of grief I see.
By Allah, Patience went what time ye went! * Loss of all Hope how
suffer patiently?
When lost my loved one how can’ joy I sleep? * Who shall enjoy
such life of low degree?
Thou ‘rt gone and, desolating house and home, * Hast fouled the
fount erst flowed from foulness free:
Thou wast my fame, my grace ‘mid folk, my stay; * Mine aid wast
thou in all adversity!
Perish the day, when from mine eyes they bore * My friend, till
sight I thy return to me!”

And she ceased not to weep and wail till the dawn, when the neighbours came in to her and asked her of her son, and she told them what had befallen him with the Persian, assured that she should never, never see him again. Then she went round about the house, weeping, and wending she espied two lines written upon the wall; so she sent for a scholar, who read them to her; and they were these,

“Leyla’s phantom came by night, when drowsiness had overcome
me,
towards morning while my companions were sleeping in the
desert,
But when we awoke to behold the nightly phantom, I saw the air
vacant and the place of visitation was distant.”[23]

When Hasan’s mother heard these lines, she shrieked and said, “Yes, O my son! Indeed, the house is desolate and the visitation-place is distant!” Then the neighbours took leave of her and after they had prayed that she might be vouchsafed patience and speedy reunion with her son, went away; but she ceased not to weep all watches of the night and tides of the day and she built amiddlemost the house a tomb whereon she let write Hasan’s name and the date of his loss, and thenceforward she quitted it not, but made a habit of incessantly biding thereby night and day. Such was her case; but touching her son Hasan and the Ajami, this Persian was a Magian, who hated Moslems with exceeding hatred and destroyed all who fell into his power. He was a lewd and filthy villain, a hankerer after alchemy, an astrologer and a hunter of hidden hoards, such an one as he of whom quoth the poet,

“A dog, dog-fathered, by dog-grandsire bred; * No good in dog
from dog race issued:
E’en for a gnat no resting-place gives he * Who is composed of
seed by all men shed.”[24]

The name of this accursed was Bahrám the Guebre, and he was wont, every year, to take a Moslem and cut his throat for his own purposes. So, when he had carried out his plot against Hasan the goldsmith, they sailed on from dawn till dark, when the ship made fast to the shore for the night, and at sunrise, when they set sail again, Bahram bade his black slaves and white servants bring him the chest wherein were Hasan. They did so, and he opened it and taking out the young man, made him sniff up vinegar and blew a powder into his nostrils. Hasan sneezed and vomited the Bhang; then, opening his eyes, he looked about him right and left and found himself amiddleward the sea on aboard a ship in full sail, and saw the Persian sitting by him; wherefore he knew that the accursed Magian had put a cheat on him and that he had fallen into the very peril against which his mother had warned him. So he spake the saying which shall never shame the sayer, to wit, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Verity, we are Allah’s and unto Him we are returning! O my God, be Thou gracious to me in Thine appointment and give me patience to endure this Thine affliction, O Lord of the three Worlds!" Then he turned to the Persian and bespoke him softly, saying, "O my father, what fashion is this and where is the covenant of bread and salt and the oath thou swarest to me?"[25] But Bahram stared at him and replied, "O dog, knoweth the like of me bond of bread and salt? I have slain of youths like thee a thousand, save one, and thou shalt make up the thousand." And he cried out at him and Hasan was silent, knowing that the Fate-shaft had shot him. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Eighty-second Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan beheld himself fallen into the hands of the damned Persian he bespoke him softly but gained naught thereby for the Ajami cried out at him in wrath, so he was silent, knowing that the Fate-shaft had shot him. Then the accursed bade loose his pinion-bonds and they gave him a little water to drink, whilst the Magian laughed and said, "By the virtue of the Fire and the Light and the Shade and the Heat, methought not thou wouldst fall into my nets! But the Fire empowered me over thee and helped me to lay hold upon thee, that I might win my wish and return and make thee a sacrifice, to her[26] so she may accept of me." Quoth Hasan, "Thou hast foully betrayed bread and salt"; whereupon the Magus raised his hand and dealt him such a buffet that he fell and, biting the deck with his fore-teeth, swooned away, whilst the tears trickled down his cheeks. Then the Guebre bade his servants light him a fire and Hasan said, "What wilt thou do with it?" Replied the Magian, "This is the Fire, lady of light and sparkles bright! This it is I worship, and if thou wilt worship her even as I, verily I will give thee half my monies and marry thee to my maiden daughter." Thereupon Hasan cried angrily at him, "Woe to thee! Thou art a miscreant Magian who to Fire dost pray in lieu of the King of Omnipotent sway, Creator of Night and Day; and this is naught but a calamity among creeds!" At this the Magian was wroth and said to him, "Wilt thou not then conform with me, O dog of the Arabs, and enter my faith?" But Hasan consented not to this: so the accursed Guebre arose and prostrating himself to the fire, bade his pages throw him flat on his face. They did so, and he beat him with a hide whip of plaited thongs[27] till his flanks were laid open, whilst he cried aloud for aid but none aided him, and besought protection, but none protected him. Then he raised his eyes to the All-powerful King and sought of Him succour in the name of the Chosen Prophet. And indeed patience failed him; his tears ran down his cheeks, like rain, and he repeated these couplets twain,

"In patience, O my God, Thy doom forecast * I'll bear, an thereby
  come Thy grace at last:
They've dealt us wrong, transgressed and ordered ill; * Haply Thy
  Grace shall pardon what is past."

Then the Magian bade his negro-slaves raise him to a sitting posture and bring him somewhat of meat and drink. So they sat food before him; but he consented not to eat or drink; and Bahram ceased not to torment him day and night during the whole voyage, whilst Hasan took patience and humbled himself in supplication before Almighty Allah to whom belong Honour and Glory; whereby the Guebre's heart was hardened against him. They ceased not to sail the sea three months, during which time Hasan was continually tortured till Allah Almighty sent forth upon them a foul wind and the sea grew black and rose against the ship, by reason of the fierce gale; whereupon quoth the captain and crew,[28] "By Allah, this is all on account of yonder youth, who hath been these three months in torture with this Magian. Indeed, this is not allowed of God the Most High." Then they rose against the Magian and slew his servants and all who were with him; which when he saw, he made sure of death and feared for himself. So he loosed Hasan from his bonds and pulling off the ragged clothes the youth had on, clad him in others; and made excuses to him and promised to teach him the craft and restore him to his native land, saying, "O my son, return me not evil for that I have done with thee." Quoth Hasan, "How can I ever rely upon thee again?"; and quoth Bahram, "O my son, but for sin, there were no pardon. Indeed, I did all these doings with thee, but to try thy patience, and thou knowest that the case is altogether in the hands of Allah." So the crew and captain rejoiced in Hasan's release, and he called down blessings on them and praised the Almighty and thanked

Him. With this the wind was stilled and the sky cleared and with a fair breeze they continued their voyage. Then said Hasan to Bahram, “O Master,[29] whither wendest thou?” Replied the Magian, “O my son, I am bound for the Mountain of Clouds, where is the Elixir which we use in alchemy.” And the Guebre swore to him by the Fire and the Light that he had no longer any cause to fear him. So Hasan’s heart was set at ease and rejoicing at the Persian’s words, he continued to eat and drink and sleep with the Magian, who clad him in his own raiment. They ceased not sailing on other three months, when the ship came to anchor off a long shoreline of many- coloured pebbles, white and yellow and sky-blue and black and every other hue, and the Magian sprang up and said, “O Hasan, come, let us go ashore for we have reached the place of our wish and will.” So Hasan rose and landed with Bahram, after the Persian had commended his goods to the captain’s care. They walked on inland, till they were far enough from the ship to be out of sight, when Bahram sat down and taking from his pocket a kettle-drum[30] of copper and a silken strap, worked in gold with characts, beat the drum with the strap, until there arose a cloud of dust from the further side of the waste. Hasan marvelled at the Magian’s doings and was afraid of him: he repented of having come ashore with him and his colour changed. But Bahram looked at him and said, “What aileth thee, O my son? By the truth of the Fire and the Light, thou hast naught to fear from me; and, were it not that my wish may never be won save by thy means, I had not brought thee ashore. So rejoice in all good; for yonder cloud of dust is the dust of somewhat we will mount and which will aid us to cut across this wold and make easy to us the hardships thereof.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Eighty-third Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Persian said to Hasan, “In very sooth yonder dust-cloud is the cloud of something we will mount and which will aid us to cut across this wold and will make easy to us the hardships thereof.” Presently the dust lifted off three she-dromedaries, one of which Bahram mounted and Hasan another. Then they loaded their victual on the third and fared on seven days, till they came to a wide champaign and, descending into its midst, they saw a dome vaulted upon four pilasters of red gold; so they alighted and entering thereunder, ate and drank and took their rest. Anon Hasan chanced to glance aside and seeing from afar a something lofty said to the Magian, "What is that, O nuncle?" Bahram replied, "'Tis a palace," and quoth Hasan, "Wilt thou not go thither, that we may enter and there repose ourselves and solace ourselves with inspecting it?" But the Persian was wroth and said, "Name not to me yonder palace; for therein dwelleth a foe, with whom there befel me somewhat whereof this is no time to tell thee." Then he beat the kettle-drum and up came the dromedaries, and they mounted and fared on other seven days. On the eighth day, the Magian said, "O Hasan, what seest thou?" Hasan replied, "I see clouds and mists twixt east and west." Quoth Bahram, "That is neither clouds nor mists, but a vast mountain and a lofty whereon the clouds split,[31] and there are no clouds above it, for its exceeding height and surpassing elevation. Yon mount is my goal and thereon is the need we seek. 'Tis for that I brought thee hither, for my wish may not be won save at thy hands." Hasan hearing this gave his life up for lost and said to the Magian, "By the right of that thou worshippest and by the faith wherein thou believest, I conjure thee to tell me what is the object wherefor thou hast brought me!" Bahram replied, "The art of alchemy may not be accomplished save by means of a herb which groweth in the place where the clouds pass and whereon they split. Such a site is yonder mountain upon whose head the herb groweth and I purpose to send thee up thither to fetch it; and when we have it, I will show thee the secret of this craft which thou desirest to learn." Hasan answered, in his fear, "'Tis well, O my master;" and indeed he despaired of life and wept for his parting from his parent and people and patrial stead, repenting him of having gainsaid his mother and reciting these two couplets,

"Consider but thy Lord, His work shall bring * Comfort to thee,
with quick relief and near:
Despair not when thou sufferest sorest bane: * In bane how many
blessed boons appear!"

They ceased not faring on till they came to the foothills of that mountain where they halted; and Hasan saw thereon a palace and asked Bahram, “What be yonder palace?”; whereto he answered, “’Tis the abode of the Jann and Ghuls and Satans.” Then the Magian alighted and making Hasan also dismount from his dromedary kissed his head and said to him, “Bear me no ill will anent that I did with thee, for I will keep guard over thee in thine ascent to the palace; and I conjure thee not to trick and cheat me of aught thou shalt bring therefrom; and I and thou will share equally therein.” And Hasan replied, “To hear is to obey.” Then Bahram opened a bag and taking out a handmill and a sufficiency of wheat, ground the grain and kneaded three round cakes of the flour; after which he lighted a fire and baked the bannocks. Then he took out the copper kettle-drum and beat it with the broidered strap, whereupon up came the dromedaries. He chose out one and said, “Hearken, O my son, O Hasan, to what I am about to enjoin on thee;” and Hasan replied, “’Tis well.” Bahram continued, “Lie down on this skin and I will sew thee up therein and lay thee on the ground; whereupon the Rakham birds[32] will come to thee and carry thee up to the mountain-top. Take this knife with thee; and, when thou feelest that the birds have done flying and have set thee down, slit open therewith the skin and come forth. The vultures will then take fright at thee and fly away; whereupon do thou look down from the mountain head and speak to me, and I will tell thee what to do.” So he sewed him up in the skin, placing therein three cakes and a leathern bottle full of water, and withdrew to a distance. Presently a vulture pounced upon him and taking him up, flew away with him to the mountain-top and there set him down. As soon as Hasan felt himself on the ground, he slit the skin and coming forth, called out to the Magian, who hearing his speech rejoiced and danced for excess of joy, saying to him, “Look behind thee and tell me what thou seest.” Hasan looked and seeing many rotten bones and much wood, told Bahram, who said to him, “This be what we need and seek. Make six bundles of the wood and throw them down to me, for this is wherewithal we do alchemy.” So he threw him the six bundles and when he had gotten them into his power he said to Hasan, “O gallows bird, I have won my wish of thee; and now, if thou wilt, thou mayst abide on this mountain, or cast thyself down to the earth and perish. So saying, he left him[33] and went away, and Hasan exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! This hound hath played the traitor with me." And he sat bemoaning himself and reciting these couplets,

"When God upon a man possessed of reasoning, Hearing and sight
His will in aught to pass would bring,
He stops his ears and blinds his eyes and draws his wit, From
him, as one draws out the hairs to paste that cling;
Till, His decrees fulfilled, He gives him back His wit, That
therewithal he may receive admonishing.
So say thou not of aught that haps, 'How happened it?' For Fate
and fortune fixed do order everything.[34] "

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Eighty-fourth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Magian sent Hasan to the mountain-top and made him throw down all he required he presently reviled him and left him and wended his ways and the youth exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! This damned hound hath played the traitor." Then he rose to his feet and looked right and left, after which he walked on along the mountain top, in mind making certain of death. He fared on thus till he came to the counterslope of the mountain, along which he saw a dark-blue sea, dashing with billows clashing and yeasting waves each as it were a lofty mount. So he sat down and repeated what he might of the Koran and besought Allah the Most High to ease him of his troubles, or by death or by deliverance from such strait. Then he recited for himself the funeral-prayer[35] and cast himself down into the main; but, the waves bore him up by Allah's grace, so that he reached the water unhurt, and the angel in whose charge is the sea watched over him, so that the billows bore him safe to land, by the decree of the Most High. Thereupon he rejoiced and praised Almighty Allah and thanked Him; after which he walked on in quest of something to eat, for stress of hunger, and came presently to the place where he had halted with the Magian, Bahram. Then he fared on awhile, till behold, he caught sight of a great palace, rising high in air, and knew it for that of which he had questioned the Persian and he had replied, “Therein dwelleth a foe, of mine.” Hasan said to himself, “By Allah, needs must I enter yonder palace; perchance relief awaiteth me there.” So coming to it and finding the gate open, he entered the vestibule, where he saw seated on a bench two girls like twin moons with a chess-cloth before them and they were at play. One of them raised her head to him and cried out for joy saying, “By Allah, here is a son of Adam, and methinks ’tis he whom Bahram the Magian brought hither this year!” So Hasan hearing her words cast himself at their feet and wept with sore weeping and said, “Yes, O my ladies, by Allah, I am indeed that unhappy.” Then said the younger damsel to her elder sister, “Bear witness against me,[36] O my sister, that this is my brother by covenant of Allah and that I will die for his death and live for his life and joy for his joy and mourn for his mourning.” So saying, she rose and embraced him and kissed him and presently taking him by the hand and her sister with her, led him into the palace, where she did off his ragged clothes and brought him a suit of King’s raiment wherewith she arrayed him. Moreover, she made ready all manner viands[37] and set them before him, and sat and ate with him, she and her sister. Then said they to him, “Tell us thy tale with yonder dog, the wicked, the wizard, from the time of thy falling into his hands to that of thy freeing thee from him; and after we will tell thee all that hath passed between us and him, so thou mayst be on thy guard against him an thou see him again.” Hearing these words and finding himself thus kindly received, Hasan took heart of grace and reason returned to him and he related to them all that had befallen him with the Magian from first to last. Then they asked, “Didst thou ask him of this palace?”; and he answered, “Yes, but he said, ‘Name it not to me; for it belongeth to Ghuls and Satans.’” At this, the two damsels waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and said, “Did that miscreant style us Ghuls and Satans?” And Hasan answered, “Yes.” Cried the younger sister, “By Allah, I will assuredly do him die with the foulest death and make him to lack the wind of the world!” Quoth Hasan, “And how wilt thou get at him, to kill him, for he is a crafty magician?”; and quoth she, “He is in a garden by name Al-Mushayyad,[38] and there is no help but that I slay him before long." Then said her sister, "Sooth spake Hasan in everything he hath recounted to us of this cur; but now tell him our tale, that all of it may abide in his memory." So the younger said to him, "Know, O my brother, that we are the daughters of a King of the mightiest Kings of the Jann, having Marids for troops and guards and servants, and Almighty Allah blessed him with seven daughters by one wife; but of his folly such jealousy and stiff-neckedness and pride beyond compare gat hold upon him that he would not give us in marriage to any one and, summoning his Wazirs and Emirs, he said to them, 'Can ye tell me of any place untrodden by the tread of men and Jinn and abounding in trees and fruits and rills?' And quoth they, 'What wilt thou therewith, O King of the Age?' And quoth he, 'I desire there to lodge my seven daughters.' Answered they, 'O King, the place for them is the Castle of the Mountain of Clouds, built by an Ifrit of the rebellious Jinn, who revolted from the covenant of our lord Solomon, on whom be the Peace! Since his destruction, none hath dwelt there, nor man nor Jinni, for 'tis cut off[39] and none may win to it. And the Castle is girt about with trees and fruits and rills, and the water running around it is sweeter than honey and colder than snow: none who is afflicted with leprosy or elephantiasis[40] or what not else drinketh thereof but he is healed forthright. Hearing this our father sent us hither, with an escort of his troops and guards and provided us with all that we need here. When he is minded to ride to us he beateth a kettle-drum, whereupon all his hosts present themselves before him and he chooseth whom he shall ride and dismisseth the rest; but, when he desireth that we shall visit him, he commandeth his followers, the enchanters, to fetch us and carry us to the presence; so he may solace himself with our society and we accomplish our desire of him; after which they again carry us back hither. Our five other sisters are gone a-hunting in our desert, wherein are wild beasts past compt or calculation and, it being our turn to do this we two abode at home, to make ready for them food. Indeed, we had besought Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) to vouchsafe us a son of Adam to cheer us with his company and praised be He who hath brought thee to us! So be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear, for no harm shall befal thee." Hasan rejoiced and said, “Alhamdolillah, laud to the Lord who guideth us into the path of deliverance and inclineth hearts to us!” Then his sister[41] rose and taking him by the hand, led him into a private chamber, where she brought out to him linen and furniture that no mortal can avail unto. Presently, the other damsels returned from hunting and birding and their sisters acquainted them with Hasan’s case; whereupon they rejoiced in him and going into him in his chamber, saluted him with the salam and gave him joy of his safety. Then he abode with them in all the solace of life and its joyance, riding out with them to the chase and taking his pleasure with them whilst they entreated him courteously and cheered him with converse, till his sadness ceased from him and he recovered health and strength and his body waxed stout and fat, by dint of fair treatment and pleasant time among the seven moons in that fair palace with its gardens and flowers; for indeed he led the delightsomest of lives with the damsels who delighted in him and he yet more in them. And they used to give him drink of the honey-dew of their lips[42] these beauties with the high bosoms, adorned with grace and loveliness, the perfection of brilliancy and in shape very symmetry. Moreover the youngest Princess told her sisters how Bahram the Magian had made them of the Ghuls and Demons and Satans,[43] and they sware that they would surely slay him. Next year the accursed Guebre again made his appearance, having with him a handsome young Moslem, as he were the moon, bound hand and foot and tormented with grievous tortures, and alighted with him below the palace-walls. Now Hasan was sitting under the trees by the side of the stream; and when he espied Bahram, his heart fluttered,[44] his hue changed and he smote hand upon hand. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Eighty-fifth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan the goldsmith saw the Magian, his heart fluttered, his hue changed and he smote hand upon hand. Then he said to the Princesses, “O my sisters, help me to the slaughter of this accursed, for here he is come back and in your grasp, and he leadeth with him captive a young Moslem of the sons of the notables, whom he is torturing with all manner grievous torments. Lief would I kill him and console my heart of him; and, by delivering the young Moslem from his mischief and restoring him to his country and kith and kin and friends, fain would I lay up merit for the world to come, by taking my wreak of him.[45] This will be an almsdeed from you and ye will reap the reward thereof from Almighty Allah." "We hear and we obey Allah and thee, O our brother, O Hasan," replied they and binding chin-veils, armed themselves and slung on their swords: after which they brought Hasan a steed of the best and equipped him in panoply and weaponed him with goodly weapons. Then they all sallied out and found the Magian who had slaughtered and skinned a camel, ill-using the young Moslem, and saying to him, "Sit thee in this hide." So Hasan came behind him, without his knowledge, and cried out at him till he was dazed and amazed. Then he came up to him, saying, "Hold thy hand, O accursed! O enemy of Allah and foe of the Moslems! O dog! O traitor! O thou that flame dost obey! O thou that walkest in the wicked ones' ways, worshipping the fire and the light and swearing by the shade and the heat!" Herewith the Magian turned and seeing Hasan, thought to wheedle him and said to him, "O my son, how diddest thou escape and who brought thee down to earth?" Hasan replied, "He delivered me, who hath appointed the taking of thy life to be at my hand, and I will torture thee even as thou torturedst me the whole way long. O miscreant, O atheist,[46] thou hast fallen into the twist and the way thou hast missed; and neither mother shall avail thee nor brother, nor friend nor solemn covenant shall assist thee; for thou saidst, O accursed, Whoso betrayeth bread and salt, may Allah do vengeance upon him! And thou hast broken the bond of bread and salt; wherefore the Almighty hath thrown thee into my grasp, and far is thy chance of escape from me." Rejoined Bahram, "By Allah, O my son, O Hasan, thou art dearer to me than my sprite and the light of mine eyes!" But Hasan stepped up to him and hastily smote him between the shoulders, that the sword issued gleaming from his throat-tendons and Allah hurried his soul to the fire, and abiding-place dire. Then Hasan took the Magian's bag and opened it, then having taken out the kettle-drum he struck it with the strap, whereupon up came the dromedaries like lightning. So he unbound the youth from his bonds and setting him on one of the camels, loaded him another with victual and water,[47] saying, “Wend whither thou wilt.” So he departed, after Almighty Allah had thus delivered him from his strait at the hands of Hasan. When the damsels saw their brother slay the Magian they joyed in him with exceeding joy and gat round him, marvelling at his valour and prowess,[48] and thanked him for his deed and gave him joy of his safety, saying, “O Hasan thou hast done a deed, whereby thou hast healed the burning of him that thirsteth for vengeance and pleased the King of Omnipotence!” Then they returned to the palace, and he abode with them, eating and drinking and laughing and making merry; and indeed his sojourn with them was joyous to him and he forgot his mother;[49] but while he led with them this goodly life one day, behold, there arose from the further side of the desert a great cloud of dust that darkened the welkin and made towards them. When the Princesses saw this, they said to him, “Rise, O Hasan, run to thy chamber and conceal thyself; or an thou wilt, go down into the garden and hide thyself among the trees and vines; but fear not, for no harm shall befal thee.” So he arose and entering his chamber, locked the door upon himself, and lay lurking in the palace. Presently the dust opened out and showed beneath it a great conquering host, as it were a surging sea, coming from the King, the father of the damsels. Now when the troops reached the castle, the Princesses received them with all honour and hospitably entertained them three days; after which they questioned them of their case and tidings and they replied saying, “We come from the King in quest of you.” They asked, “And what would the King with us?”; and the officers answered, “One of the Kings maketh a marriage festival, and your father would have you be present thereat and take your pleasure therewith.” The damsels enquired, “And how long shall we be absent from our place?”; and they rejoined, “The time to come and go, and to sojourn may be two months.” So the Princesses arose and going in to the palace sought Hasan, acquainted him with the case and said to him, “Verily this place is thy place and our house is thy house; so be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear and feel nor grief nor fear, for none can come at thee here; but keep a good heart and a glad mind, till we return to thee. The keys of our chambers we leave with thee; but, O our brother, we beseech thee, by the bond of brotherhood, in very deed not to open such a door, for thou hast no need thereto." Then they farewelled him and fared forth with the troops, leaving Hasan alone in the palace. It was not long before his breast grew straitened and his patience shortened: solitude and sadness were heavy on him and he sorrowed for his severance from them with passing chagrin. The palace for all its vastness, waxed small to him and finding himself sad and solitary, he bethought him of the damsels and their pleasant converse and recited these couplets,

"The wide plain is narrowed before these eyes * And the landscape
troubles this heart of mine.
Since my friends went forth, by the loss of them * Joy fled and
these eyelids rail floods of brine:
Sleep shunned these eyeballs for parting woe * And my mind is
worn with sore pain and pine:
Would I wot an Time shall rejoin our lots * And the joys of love
with night-talk combine."

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Eighty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that after the departure of the damsels, Hasan sat in the palace sad and solitary and his breast was straitened by severance. He used to ride forth a-hunting by himself in the wold and bring back the game and slaughter it and eat thereof alone: but melancholy and disquiet redoubled on him, by reason of his loneliness. So he arose and went round about the palace and explored its every part; he opened the Princesses' apartments and found therein riches and treasures fit to ravish the beholder's reason; but he delighted not in aught thereof, by reason of their absence. His heart was fired by thinking of the door they had charged him not to approach or open on any account and he said in himself, "My sister had never enjoined me not to open this door, except there were behind it somewhat whereof she would have none to know; but, by Allah, I will arise and open it and see what is within, though within it were sudden death!" Then he took the key and, opening the door,[50] saw therein no treasure but he espied a vaulted and winding staircase of Yamani onyx at the upper end of the chamber. So he mounted the stair, which brought him out upon the terrace- roof of the palace, whence he looked down upon the gardens and vergiers, full of trees and fruits and beasts and birds warbling praises of Allah, the One, the All-powerful; and said in himself “This is that they forbade to me.” He gazed upon these pleasaunces and saw beyond a surging sea, dashing with clashing billows, and he ceased not to explore the palace right and left, till he ended at a pavilion builded with alternate courses, two bricks of gold and one of silver and jacinth and emerald and supported by four columns. And in the centre he saw a sitting- room paved and lined with a mosaic of all manner precious stones such as rubies and emeralds and balasses and other jewels of sorts; and in its midst stood a basin[51] brimful of water, over which was a trellis-work of sandalwood and aloes-wood reticulated with rods of red gold and wands of emerald and set with various kinds of jewels and fine pearls, each sized as a pigeon’s egg. The trellis was covered with a climbing vine, bearing grapes like rubies, and beside the basin stood a throne of lign-aloes latticed with red gold, inlaid with great pearls and comprising vari-coloured gems of every sort and precious minerals, each kind fronting each and symmetrically disposed. About it the birds warbled with sweet tongues and various voices celebrating the praises of Allah the Most High: brief, it was a palace such as nor Cćsar nor Chosroës ever owned; but Hasan saw therein none of the creatures of Allah, whereat he marvelled and said in himself, “I wonder to which of the Kings this place pertaineth, or is it Many-Columned Iram whereof they tell, for who among mortals can avail to the like of this?” And indeed he was amazed at the spectacle and sat down in the pavilion and cast glances around him marvelling at the beauty of its ordinance and at the lustre of the pearls and jewels and the curious works which therein were, no less than at the gardens and orchards aforesaid and at the birds that hymned the praises of Allah, the One, the Almighty; and he abode pondering the traces of him whom the Most High had enabled to rear that structure, for indeed He is muchel of might.[52] And presently, behold, he espied ten birds[53] flying towards the pavilion from the heart of the desert and knew that they were making the palace and bound for the basin, to drink of its waters: so he hid himself, for fear they should see him and take flight. They lighted on a great tree and a goodly and circled round about it; and he saw amongst them a bird of marvel-beauty, the goodliest of them all, and the nine stood around it and did it service; and Hasan marvelled to see it peck them with its bill and lord it over them while they fled from it. He stood gazing at them from afar as they entered the pavilion and perched on the couch; after which each bird rent open its neck-skin with its claws and issued out of it; and lo! it was but a garment of feathers, and there came forth therefrom ten virgins, maids whose beauty shamed the brilliancy of the moon. They all doffed their clothes and plunging into the basin, washed and fell to playing and sporting one with other; whilst the chief bird of them lifted up the rest and ducked them down and they fled from her and dared not put forth their hands to her. When Hasan beheld her thus he took leave of his right reason and his sense was enslaved, so he knew that the Princesses had not forbidden him to open the door save because of this; for he fell passionately in love with her, for what he saw of her beauty and loveliness, symmetry and perfect grace, as she played and sported and splashed the others with the water. He stood looking upon them whilst they saw him not, with eye gazing and heart burning and soul[54] to evil prompting; and he sighed to be with them and wept for longing, because of the beauty and loveliness of the chief damsel. His mind was amazed at her charms and his heart taken in the net of her love; lowe was loosed in his heart for her sake and there waxed on him a flame, whose sparks might not be quenched, and desire, whose signs might not be hidden. Presently, they came up out of that basin, whilst Hasan marvelled at their beauty and loveliness and the tokens of inner gifts in the elegance of their movements. Then he cast a glance at the chief damsel who stood mother- naked and there was manifest to him what was between her thighs a goodly rounded dome on pillars borne, like a bowl of silver or crystal, which recalled to him the saying of the poet,[55]

“When I took up her shift and discovered the terrace-roof of her
 kaze, I found it as strait as my humour or eke my worldly
 ways:
So I thrust it, incontinent, in, halfway, and she heaved a sigh.

‘For what dost thou sigh?’ quoth I. ‘For the rest of it
sure,’ she says.”

Then coming out of the water they all put on their dresses and ornaments, and the chief maiden donned a green dress,[56] wherein she surpassed for loveliness all the fair ones of the world and the lustre of her face outshone the resplendent full moons: she excelled the branches with the grace of her bending gait and confounded the wit with apprehension of disdain; and indeed she was as saith the poet,[57]

“A maiden ’twas, the dresser’s art had decked with cunning
sleight;
The sun thou ‘d’st say had robbed her cheek and shone with
borrowed light.
She came to us apparelled fair in under vest of green,
Like as the ripe pomegranate hides beneath its leafy screen;
And when we asked her what might be the name of what she wore,
She answered in a quaint reply that double meaning bore:
The desert’s heart we penetrate in such apparel dressed,
And Pierce-heart therefore is the name by which we call the
vest.”

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Eighty-seventh Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan saw the damsels issue forth the basin, the chief maiden robbed his reason with her beauty and loveliness compelling him to recite the couplets forequoted. And after dressing they sat talking and laughing, whilst he stood gazing on them, drowned in the sea of his love, burning in the flames of passion and wandering in the Wady of his melancholy thought. And he said to himself, “By Allah, my sister forbade me not to open the door, but for cause of these maidens and for fear lest I should fall in love with one of them! How, O Hasan shalt thou woo and win them? How bring down a bird flying in the vasty firmament? By Allah thou hast cast thyself into a bottomless sea and snared thyself in a net whence there is no escape! I shall die desolate and none shall wot of my death." And he continued to gaze on the charms of the chief damsel, who was the lovliest creature Allah had made in her day, and indeed she outdid in beauty all human beings. She had a mouth magical as Solomon's seal and hair blacker than the night of estrangement to the love-despairing man; her brow was bright as the crescent moon of the Feast of Ramazán[58] and her eyes were like eyes wherewith gazelles scan; she had a polished nose straight as a cane and cheeks like blood-red anemones of Nu'uman, lips like coralline and teeth like strung pearls in carcanets of gold virgin to man, and a neck like an ingot of silver, above a shape like a wand of Bán: her middle was full of folds, a dimpled plain such as enforceth the distracted lover to magnify Allah and extol His might and main, and her navel[59] an ounce of musk, sweetest of savour could contain: she had thighs great and plump, like marble columns twain or bolsters stuffed with down from ostrich ta'en, and between them a somewhat, as it were a hummock great of span or a hare with ears back lain while terrace-roof and pilasters completed the plan; and indeed she surpassed the bough of the myrobalan with her beauty and symmetry, and the Indian rattan, for she was even as saith of them the poet whom love did unman,[60]

"Her lip-dews rival honey-sweets, that sweet virginity; *
    Keener than Hindi scymitar the glance she casts at thee:
She shames the bending bough of Bán with graceful movement slow *
    And as she smiles her teeth appear with leven's brilliancy:
When I compared with rose a-bloom the tintage of her cheeks, *
    She laughed in scorn and cried, 'Whoso compares with rosery
My hue and breasts, granados terms, is there no shame in him? *
    How should pomegranates bear on bough such fruit in form or blee?
Now by my beauty and mine eyes and heart and eke by Heaven *
    Of favours mine and by the Hell of my unclemency,
They say 'She is a garden-rose in very pride of bloom'; *
    And yet no rose can ape my cheek nor branch my symmetry!
If any garden own a thing which unto me is like, *
    What then is that he comes to crave of me and only me?'"

They ceased not to laugh and play, whilst Hasan stood still a-watching them, forgetting meat and drink, till near the hour of mid-afternoon prayer, when the beauty, the chief damsel, said to her mates, “O Kings’ daughters, it waxeth late and our land is afar and we are weary of this stead. Come, therefore, let us depart to our own place.” So they all arose and donned their feather vests, and becoming birds as they were before, flew away all together, with the chief lady in their midst. Then, Hasan, despairing of their return, would have arisen and gone down into the palace but could not move or even stand; wherefore the tears ran down his cheeks and passion was sore on him and he recited these couplets,

“May God deny me boon of troth if I * After your absence sweets
  of slumber know:
Yea; since that sev’rance never close mine eyes, * Nor rest
  repose me since departed you!
’Twould seem as though you saw me in your sleep; * Would Heaven
  the dreams of sleep were real-true!
Indeed I dote on sleep though needed not, * For sleep may bring
  me that dear form to view.”

Then Hasan walked on, little by little, heeding not the way he went, till he reached the foot of the stairs, whence he dragged himself to his own chamber; then he entered and shutting the door, lay sick eating not nor drinking and drowned in the sea of his solitude. He spent the night thus, weeping and bemoaning himself, till the morning, and when it morrowed he repeated these couplets,

“The birds took flight at eve and winged their way; * And sinless
  he who died of Love’s death-blow.
I’ll keep my love-tale secret while I can * But, an desire
  prevail, its needs must show:
Night brought me nightly vision, bright as dawn; * While nights
  of my desire lack morning-glow.
I mourn for them[61] while they heart-freest sleep * And winds
  of love on me their plaything blow:
Free I bestow my tears, my wealth, my heart * My wit, my sprite:Â

most gain who most bestow!
The worst of woes and banes is enmity * Beautiful maidens deal us
to our woe.
Favour they say's forbidden to the fair * And shedding lovers'
blood their laws allow;
That naught can love-sicks do but lavish soul, * And stake in
love-play life on single throw:[62]
I cry in longing ardour for my love: * Lover can only weep and
wail Love-lowe."

When the sun rose he opened the door, went forth of the chamber and mounted to the stead where he was before: then he sat down facing the pavilion and awaited the return of the birds till nightfall; but they returned not; wherefore he wept till he fell to the ground in a fainting-fit. When he came to after his swoon, he dragged himself down the stairs to his chamber; and indeed, the darkness was come and straitened upon him was the whole world and he ceased not to weep and wail himself through the livelong night, till the day broke and the sun rained over hill and dale its rays serene. He ate not nor drank nor slept, nor was there any rest for him; but by day he was distracted and by night distressed, with sleeplessness delirious and drunken with melancholy thought and excess of love-longing. And he repeated the verses of the love-distraught poet,

"O thou who shamest sun in morning sheen * The branch
confounding, yet with nescience blest;
Would Heaven I wot an Time shall bring return * And quench the
fires which flame unmanifest, —
Bring us together in a close embrace, * Thy cheek upon my cheek,
thy breast abreast!
Who saith, In Love dwells sweetness? when in Love * Are bitterer
days than Aloës[63] bitterest."

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Eighty-eighth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when

Hasan the goldsmith felt love redouble upon him, he recited those lines; and, as he abode thus in the stress of his love-distraction, alone and finding none to cheer him with company, behold, there arose a dust-cloud from the desert, wherefore he ran down and hid himself knowing that the Princesses who owned the castle had returned. Before long, the troops halted and dismounted round the palace and the seven damsels alighted and entering, put off their arms and armour of war. As for the youngest, she stayed not to doff her weapons and gear, but went straight to Hasan's chamber, where finding him not, she sought for him, till she lighted on him in one of the sleeping closets hidden, feeble and thin, with shrunken body and wasted bones and indeed his colour was changed and his eyes sunken in his face for lack of food and drink and for much weeping, by reason of his love and longing for the young lady. When she saw him in this plight, she was confounded and lost her wits; but presently she questioned him of his case and what had befallen him, saying, "Tell me what aileth thee, O my brother, that I may contrive to do away thine affliction, and I will be thy ransom!"[64] Whereupon he wept with sore weeping and by way of reply he began reciting,

"Lover, when parted from the thing he loves, * Has naught save
weary woe and bane to bear.
Inside is sickness, outside living lowe, * His first is fancy and
his last despair."

When his sister heard this, she marvelled at his eloquence and loquent speech and his readiness at answering her in verse and said to him, "O my brother, when didst thou fall into this thy case and what hath betided thee, that I find thee speaking in song and shedding tears that throng? Allah upon thee, O my brother, and by the honest love which is between us, tell me what aileth thee and discover to me thy secret, nor conceal from me aught of that which hath befallen thee in our absence; for my breast is straitened and my life is troubled because of thee." He sighed and railed tears like rain, after which he said, "I fear, O my sister, if I tell thee, that thou wilt not aid me to win my wish but wilt leave me to die wretchedly in mine anguish." She replied, "No, by Allah, O my brother, I will not abandon thee, though it cost me my life!" So he told her all that had befallen him, and that the cause of his distress and affliction was the passion he had conceived for the young lady whom he had seen when he opened the forbidden door; and how he had not tasted meat nor drink for ten days past. Then he wept with sore weeping and recited these couplets,

"Restore my heart as 'twas within my breast, * Let mine eyes
sleep again, then fly fro' me.
Deem ye the nights have had the might to change * Love's vow?
Who changeth may he never be!"

His sister wept for his weeping and was moved to ruth for his case and pitied his strangerhood; so she said to him, "O my brother, be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear, for I will venture being and risk existence to content thee and devise thee a device wherewith, though it cost me my dear life and all I hold dear, thou mayst get possession of her and accomplish thy desire, if such be the will of Allah Almighty. But I charge thee, O my brother, keep the matter secret from my sisterhood and discover not thy case to any one of them, lest my life be lost with thy life. An they question thee of opening the forbidden door, reply to them, 'I opened it not; no, never; but I was troubled at heart for your absence and by my loneliness here and yearning for you.'"[65] And he answered, "Yes: this is the right rede." So he kissed her head and his heart was comforted and his bosom broadened. He had been nigh upon death for excess of affright, for he had gone in fear of her by reason of his having opened the door; but now his life and soul returned to him. Then he sought of her somewhat of food and after serving it she left him, and went in to her sisters, weeping and mourning for him. They questioned her of her case and she told them how she was heavy at heart for her brother, because he was sick and for ten days no food had found way into his stomach. So they asked the cause of his sickness and she answered, "The reason was our severance from him and our leaving him desolate; for these days we have been absent from him were longer to him than a thousand years and scant blame to him, seeing he is a stranger, and solitary and we left him alone, with none to company with him or hearten his heart; more by token that he is but a youth and may be he called to mind his family and his mother, who is a woman in years, and bethought him that she weepeth for him all whiles of the day and watches of the night, ever mourning his loss; and we used to solace him with our society and divert him from thinking of her." When her sisters heard these words they wept in the stress of their distress for him and said, "Wa'lláhi—'fore Allah, he is not to blame!" Then they went out to the army and dismissed it, after which they went into Hasan and saluted him with the salam. When they saw his charms changed with yellow colour and shrunken body, they wept for very pity and sat by his side and comforted him and cheered him with converse, relating to him all they had seen by the way of wonders and rarities and what had befallen the bridegroom with the bride. They abode with him thus a whole month, tendering him and caressing him with words sweeter than syrup; but every day sickness was added to his sickness, which when they saw, they bewept him with sore weeping, and the youngest wept even more than the rest. At the end of this time, the Princesses having made up their minds to ride forth a-hunting and a-birding invited their sister to accompany them, but she said, "By Allah, O my sisters, I cannot go forth with you whilst my brother is in this plight, nor indeed till he be restored to health and there cease from him that which is with him of affliction. Rather will I sit with him and comfort him." They thanked her for her kindness and said to her, "Allah will requite thee all thou dost with this stranger." Then they left her with him in the palace and rode forth taking with them twenty days' victual; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Eighty-ninth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Princesses mounted and rode forth a-hunting and a-birding, after leaving in the palace their youngest sister sitting by Hasan's side; and as soon as the damsel knew that they had covered a long distance from home, she went in to him and said, "O my brother, come, show me the place where thou sawest the maidens." He rejoiced in her words, making sure of winning his wish, and replied, "Bismillah! On my head!" Then he essayed to rise and show her the place, but could not walk; so she took him up in her arms, holding him to her bosom between her breasts; and, opening the staircase-door, carried him to the top of the palace, and he showed her the pavilion where he had seen the girls and the basin of water, wherein they had bathed. Then she said to him, “Set forth to me, O my brother, their case and how they came.” So he described to her whatso he had seen of them and especially the girl of whom he was enamoured; but hearing these words she knew her and her cheeks paled and her case changed. Quoth he, “O my sister, what aileth thee to wax wan and be troubled?”; and quoth she, “O my brother, know thou that this young lady is the daughter of a Sovran of the Jann, of one of the most puissant of their Kings, and her father had dominion over men and Jinn and wizards and Cohens and tribal chiefs and guards and countries and cities and islands galore and hath immense wealth in store. Our father is a Viceroy and one of his vassals and none can avail against him, for the multitude of his many and the extent of his empire and the muchness of his monies. He hath assigned to his offspring, the daughters thou sawest, a tract of country, a whole year’s journey in length and breadth, a region girt about with a great river and a deep; and thereto none may attain, nor man nor Jann. He hath an army of women, smiters with swords and lungers with lances, five-and-twenty thousand in number, each of whom, whenas she mounteth steed and donneth battle-gear, eveneth a thousand knights of the bravest. Moreover, he hath seven daughters, who in valour and prowess equal and even excel their sisters,[66] and he hath made the eldest of them, the damsel whom thou sawest,[67] queen over the country aforesaid and who is the wisest of her sisters and in valour and horsemanship and craft and skill and magic excels all the folk of her dominions. The girls who companied with her are the ladies of her court and guards and grandees of her empire, and the plumed skins wherewith they fly are the handiwork of enchanters of the Jann. Now an thou wouldst get possession of this queen and wed this jewel seld-seen and enjoy her beauty and loveliness and grace, do thou pay heed to my words and keep them in thy memory. They resort to this place on the first day of every month; and thou must take seat here and watch for them; and when thou seest them coming hide thee near the pavilion sitting where thou mayst see them, without being seen of them, and beware, again beware lest thou show thyself, or we shall all lose our lives. When they doff their dress note which is the feather-suit of her whom thou lovest and take it, and it only, for this it is that carrieth her to her country, and when thou hast mastered it, thou hast mastered her. And beware lest she wile thee, saying, 'O thou who hast robbed my raiment, restore it to me, because here am I in thine hands and at thy mercy!' For, an thou give it her, she will kill thee and break down over us palace and pavilion and slay our sire: know, then, thy case and how thou shalt act. When her companions see that her feather-suit is stolen, they will take flight and leave her to thee, and beware lest thou show thyself to them, but wait till they have flown away and she despaireth of them: whereupon do thou go in to her and hale her by the hair of her head[68] and drag her to thee; which being done, she will be at thy mercy. And I rede thee discover not to her that thou hast taken the feather-suit, but keep it with care; for, so long as thou hast it in hold, she is thy prisoner and in thy power, seeing that she cannot fly to her country save with it. And lastly carry her down to thy chamber where she will be thine." When Hasan heard her words his heart became at ease, his trouble ceased and affliction left him; so he rose to his feet and kissing his sister's head, went down from the terrace with her into the palace, where they slept that night. He medicined himself till morning morrowed; and when the sun rose, he sprang up and opened the staircase-door and ascending to the flat roof sat there till supper-tide when his sister brought him up somewhat of meat and drink and a change of clothes and he slept. And thus they continued doing, day by day until the end of the month. When he saw the new moon, he rejoiced and began to watch for the birds, and while he was thus, behold, up they came, like lightning. As soon as he espied them, he hid himself where he could watch them, unwatched by them, and they lighted down one and all of them, and putting off their clothes, descended into the basin. All this took place near the stead where Hasan lay concealed, and as soon as he caught sight of the girl he loved, he arose and crept under cover, little by little, towards the dresses, and Allah veiled him so that none marked his approach for they were laughing and playing with one another, till he laid hand on the dress. Now when they had made an end of their diversion, they came forth of the basin and each of them slipped on her feather-suit. But the damsel he loved sought for her plumage that she might put it on, but found it not; whereupon she shrieked and beat her cheeks and rent her raiment. Her sisterhood[69] came to her and asked what ailed her, and she told them that her feather-suit was missing; wherefore they wept and shrieked and buffeted their faces: and they were confounded, wotting not the cause of this, and knew not what to do. Presently the night overtook them and they feared to abide with her lest that which had befallen her should befal them also; so they farewelled her and flying away left her alone upon the terrace-roof of the palace, by the pavilion basin. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Ninetieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan had carried off the girl's plumery, she sought it but found it not and her sisterhood flew away leaving her alone. When they were out of sight, Hasan gave ear to her and heard her say, "O who hast taken my dress and stripped me, I beseech thee to restore it to me and cover my shame, so may Allah never make thee taste of my tribulation!" But when Hasan heard her speak thus, with speech sweeter than syrup, his love for her redoubled, passion got the mastery of his reason and he had not patience to endure from her. So springing up from his hiding-place, he rushed upon her and laying hold of her by the hair dragged her to him and carried her down to the basement of the palace and set her in his own chamber, where he threw over her a silken cloak[70] and left her weeping and biting her hands. Then he shut the door upon her and going to his sister, informed her how he had made prize of his lover and carried her to his sleeping-closet, "And there," quoth he, "she is now sitting, weeping and biting her hands." When his sister heard this, she rose forthright and betook herself to the chamber, where she found the captive weeping and mourning. So she kissed ground before her and saluted her with the salam and the young lady said to her, "O King's daughter, do folk like you do such foul deed with the daughters of Kings? Thou knowest that my father is a mighty Sovran and that all the liege lords of the Jinn stand in awe of him and fear his majesty: for that there are with him magicians and sages and Cohens and Satans and Marids, such as none may cope withal, and under his hand are folk whose number none knoweth save Allah. How then doth it become you, O daughters of Kings, to harbour mortal men with you and disclose to them our case and yours? Else how should this man, a stranger, come at us?” Hasan’s sister made reply, “O King’s daughter, in very sooth this human is perfect in nobleness and purposeth thee no villainy; but he loveth thee, and women were not made save for men. Did he not love thee, he had not fallen sick for thy sake and well-nigh given up the ghost for desire of thee.” And she told her the whole tale how Hasan had seen her bathing in the basin with her attendants, and fallen in love with her, and none had pleased him but she, for the rest were all her handmaids, and none had availed to put forth a hand to her. When the Princess heard this, she despaired of deliverance and presently Hasan’s sister went forth and brought her a costly dress, wherein she robed her. Then she set before her somewhat of meat and drink and ate with her and heartened her heart and soothed her sorrows. And she ceased not to speak her fair with soft and pleasant words, saying, “Have pity on him who saw thee once and became as one slain by thy love;” and continued to console her and caress her, quoting fair says and pleasant instances. But she wept till daybreak, when her trouble subsided and she left shedding tears, knowing that she had fallen into the net and that there was no deliverance for her. Then said she to Hasan’s sister, “O King’s daughter, with this my strangerhood and severance from my country and sisterhood which Allah wrote upon my brow, patience becometh me to support what my Lord hath foreordained.” Therewith the youngest Princess assigned her a chamber in the palace, than which there was none goodlier and ceased not to sit with her and console her and solace her heart, till she was satisfied with her lot and her bosom was broadened and she laughed and there ceased from her what trouble and oppression possessed her, by reason of her separation from her people and country and sisterhood and parents. Thereupon Hasan’s sister repaired to him, and said, “Arise, go in to her in her chamber and kiss her hands and feet.”[71] So he went in to her and did this and bussed her between the eyes, saying, “O Princess of fair ones and life of sprites and beholder’s delight, be easy of heart, for I took thee only that I might be thy bondsman till the Day of Doom, and this my sister will be thy servant; for I, O my lady, desire naught but to take thee to wife, after the law of Allah and the practice of His Apostle, and whenas thou wilt, I will journey with thee to my country and carry thee to Baghdad-city and abide with thee there: moreover, I will buy thee handmaidens and negro chattels; and I have a mother, of the best of women, who will do thee service. There is no goodlier land than our land; everything therein is better than elsewhere and its folk are a pleasant people and bright of face." Now as he bespake her thus and strave to comfort her, what while she answered him not a syllable, lo! there came a knocking at the palace-gate. So Hasan went out to see who was at the door and found there the six Princesses, who had returned from hunting and birding, whereat he rejoiced and went to meet them and welcomed them. They wished him safety and health and he wished them the like; after which they dismounted and going each to her chamber doffed their soiled clothes and donned fine linen. Then they came forth and demanded the game, for they had taken a store of gazelles and wild cows, hares and lions, hyaenas, and others; so their suite brought out some thereof for butchering, keeping the rest by them in the palace, and Hasan girt himself and fell to slaughtering for them in due form,[72] whilst they sported and made merry, joying with great joy to see him standing amongst them hale and hearty once more. When they had made an end of slaughtering, they sat down and addressed themselves to get ready somewhat for breaking their fast, and Hasan, coming up to the eldest Princess, kissed her head and on like wise did he with the rest, one after other. Whereupon said they to him, "Indeed, thou humblest thyself to us passing measure, O our brother, and we marvel at the excess of the affection thou showest us. But Allah forfend that thou shouldst do this thing, which it behoveth us rather to do with thee, seeing thou art a man and therefor worthier than we, who are of the Jinn."[73] Thereupon his eyes brimmed with tears and he wept sore; so they said to him, "What causeth thee to weep? Indeed, thou troublest our pleasant lives with thy weeping this day. 'Twould seem thou longest after thy mother and native land. An things be so, we will equip thee and carry thee to thy home and thy friends." He replied, "By Allah, I desire not to part from you!" Then they asked, "Which of us hath vexed thee, that thou art thus troubled?" But he was ashamed to say, “Naught troubleth me save love of a damsel,” lest they should deny and disavow him: so he was silent and would tell them nothing of his case. Then his sister came forward and said to them, “He hath caught a bird from the air and would have you help him to tame her.” Whereupon they all turned to him and cried, “We are at thy service every one of us and whatsoever thou seekest that will we do: but tell us thy tale and conceal from us naught of thy case.” So he said to his sister, “Do thou tell them, for I am ashamed before them nor can I face them with these words.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Ninety-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Hasan said to his sister, “Do thou tell them my tale, for before them I stand abashed nor can I face them with these words.” So she said to them, “O my sisters, when we went away and left alone this unhappy one, the palace was straitened upon him and he feared lest some one should come in to him, for ye know that the sons of Adam are light of wits. So, he opened the door of the staircase leading to the roof, of his loneliness and trouble, and sat there, looking upon the Wady and watching the gate, in his fear lest any should come thither. One day, as he sat thus, suddenly he saw ten birds approach him, making for the palace, and they lighted down on the brink of the basin which is in the pavilion-terrace. He watched these birds and saw, amongst them, one goodlier than the rest, which pecked the others and flouted them, whilst none of them dared put out a claw to it. Presently, they set their nails to their neck-collars and, rending their feather-suits, came forth therefrom and became damsels, each and every, like the moon on fullest night. Then they doffed their dress and plunging into the water, fell to playing with one another, whilst the chief damsel ducked the others, who dared not lay a finger on her and she was fairest of favour and most famous of form and most feateous of finery. They ceased not to be in this case till near the hour of mid-afternoon prayer, when they came forth of the basin and, donning their feather-shifts, flew away home. Thereupon he waxed distracted, with a heart afire for love of the chief damsel and repenting him that he had not stolen her plumery. Wherefore he fell sick and abode on the palace-roof expecting her return and abstaining from meat and drink and sleep, and he ceased not to be so till the new moon showed, when behold, they again made their appearance according to custom and doffing their dresses went down into the basin. So he stole the chief damsel's feather-suit, knowing that she could not fly save therewith, hiding himself carefully lest they sight him and slay him. Then he waited till the rest had flown away, when he arose and seizing the damsel, carried her down from the terrace into the castle." Her sisters asked, "Where is she?"; and she answered, "She is with him in such a chamber." Quoth they, "Describe her to us, O our sister:" so quoth she, "She is fairer than the moon on the night of fullness and her face is sheenier than the sun; the dew of her lips is sweeter than honey and her shape is straighter and slenderer than the cane; one with eyes black as night and brow flower-white; a bosom jewel-bright, breasts like pomegranates twain and cheeks like apples twain, a waist with dimples overlain, a navel like a casket of ivory full of musk in grain, and legs like columns of alabastrine vein. She ravisheth all hearts with Nature-kohl'd eyne, and a waist slender-fine and hips of heaviest design and speech that heals all pain and pine: she is goodly of shape and sweet of smile, as she were the moon in fullest sheen and shine." When the Princesses heard these praises, they turned to Hasan and said to him, "Show her to us." So he arose with them, all love-distraught, and carrying them to the chamber wherein was the captive damsel, opened the door and entered, preceding the seven Princesses. Now when they saw her and noted her loveliness, they kissed the ground between her hands, marvelling at the fairness of her favour and the significance which showed her inner gifts, and said to her, "By Allah, O daughter of the Sovran Supreme, this is indeed a mighty matter: and haddest thou heard tell of this mortal among women thou haddest marvelled at him all thy days. Indeed, he loveth thee with passionate love; yet, O King's daughter, he seeketh not lewdness, but desireth thee only in the way of lawful wedlock. Had we known that maids can do without men, we had impeached him from his intent, albeit he sent thee no messenger, but came to thee in person; and he telleth us he hath burnt the feather dress; else had we taken it from him." Then one of them agreed with the Princess and becoming her deputy in the matter of the wedding contract, performed the marriage ceremony between them, whilst Hasan clapped palms with her, laying his hand in hers, and she wedded him to the damsel by consent; after which they celebrated her bridal feast, as beseemeth Kings' daughters, and brought Hasan in to her. So he rose and rent the veil and oped the gate and pierced the forge[74] and brake the seal, whereupon affection for her waxed in him and he redoubled in love and longing for her. Then, since he had gotten that which he sought, he gave himself joy and improvised these couplets,

"Thy shape's temptation, eyes as Houri's fain * And sheddeth
  Beauty's sheen[75] that radiance rare:
My glance portrayed thy glorious portraiture: * Rubies one-half
  and gems the third part were:
Musk made a fifth: a sixth was ambergris * The sixth a pearl but
  pearl without compare.
Eve never bare a daughter evening thee * Nor breathes thy like in
  Khuld's[76] celestial air.
An thou would torture me 'tis wont of Love * And if thou pardon
  'tis thy choice I swear:
Then, O world bright'ner and O end of wish! * Loss of thy charms
  who could in patience bear?"

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Ninety-second Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan went in unto the King's daughter and did away her maidenhead, he enjoyed her with exceeding joy and affection for her waxed in him and he redoubled in love-longing for her; so he recited the lines aforesaid. Now the Princesses were standing at the door and when they heard his verses, they said to her, "O King's daughter, hearest thou the words of this mortal? How canst thou blame us, seeing that he maketh poetry for love of thee and indeed he hath so done a thousand times."[77] When she heard this she rejoiced and was glad and felt happy and Hasan abode with her forty[78] days in all solace and delight, joyance and happiest plight, whilst the damsels renewed festivities for him every day and overwhelmed him with bounty and presents and rarities; and the King's daughter became reconciled to her sojourn amongst them and forgot her kith and kin. At the end of the forty days, Hasan saw in a dream, one night, his mother mourning for him and indeed her bones were wasted and her body had waxed shrunken and her complexion had yellowed and her favour had changed the while he was in excellent case. When she saw him in this state, she said to him, "O my son, O Hasan, how is it that thou livest thy worldly life at thine ease and forgettest me? Look at my plight since thy loss! I do not forget thee, nor will my tongue cease to name thy name till I die; and I have made thee a tomb in my house, that I may never forget thee. Would Heaven I knew[79] if I shall live, O my son, to see thee by my side and if we shall ever again foregather as we were." Thereupon Hasan awoke from sleep, weeping and wailing, the tears railed down his cheeks like rain and he became mournful and melancholy; his tears dried not nor did sleep visit him, but he had no rest, and no patience was left to him. When he arose, the Princesses came in to him and gave him good-morrow and made merry with him as was their wont; but he paid no heed to them; so they asked his wife concerning his case and she said, "I ken not." Quoth they, "Question him of his condition." So she went up to him and said, "What aileth thee, O my lord?" Whereupon he moaned and groaned and told her what he had seen in his dream and repeated these two couplets,

"Indeed afflicted sore are we and all distraught, * Seeking for
union; yet we find no way:
And Love's calamities upon us grow * And Love though light with
heaviest weight doth weigh."

His wife repeated to the Princesses what he said and they, hearing the verses, had pity on him and said to him, "In Allah's name, do as thou wilt, for we may not hinder thee from visiting thy mother; nay, we will help thee to thy wish by what means we may. But it behoveth that thou desert us not, but visit us, though it be only once a year." And he answered, "To hear is to obey: be your behest on my head and eyes!" Then they arose forthright and making him ready victual for the voyage, equipped the bride for him with raiment and ornaments and everything of price, such as defy description, and they bestowed on him gifts and presents which pens of ready writers lack power to set forth. Then they beat the magical kettle-drum and up came the dromedaries from all sides. They chose of them such as could carry all the gear they had prepared; amongst the rest five-and-twenty chests of gold and fifty of silver; and, mounting Hasan and his bride on others, rode with them three days, wherein they accomplished a march of three months. Then they bade them farewell and addressed themselves to return; whereupon his sister, the youngest damsel, threw herself on Hasan's neck and wept till she fainted. When she came to herself, she repeated these two couplets,

"Ne'er dawn the severance-day on any wise * That robs of sleep
these heavy-lidded eyes.
From us and thee it hath fair union torn * It wastes our force
and makes our forms its prize."

Her verses finished she farewelled him, straitly charging him, whenas he should have come to his native land and have foregathered with his mother and set his heart at ease, to fail not of visiting her once in every six months and saying, "If aught grieve thee or thou fear aught of vexation, beat the Magian's kettle-drum, whereupon the dromedaries shall come to thee; and do thou mount and return to us and persist not in staying away." He swore thus to do and conjured them to go home. So they returned to the palace, mourning for their separation from him, especially the youngest, with whom no rest would stay nor would Patience her call obey, but she wept night and day. Thus it was with them; but as regards Hasan and his wife, they fared on by day and night over plain and desert site and valley and stony heights through noon-tide glare and dawn's soft light; and Allah decreed them safety, so that they reached Bassorah-city without hindrance and made their camels kneel at the door of his house. Hasan then dismissed the dromedaries and, going up to the door to open it, heard his mother weeping and in a faint strain, from a heart worn with parting-pain and on fire with consuming bane, reciting these couplets,

“How shall he taste of sleep who lacks repose * Who wakes a-night
when all in slumber wone?
He ownĕd wealth and family and fame * Yet fared from house and
home an exile lone:
Live coal beneath his[80] ribs he bears for bane, * And mighty
longing, mightier ne’er was known:
Passion hath seized him, Passion mastered him; * Yet is he
constant while he maketh moan:
His case for Love proclaimeth aye that he, * (As prove his tears)
is wretched, woebegone.”

When Hasan heard his mother weeping and wailing he wept also and knocked at the door a loud knock. Quoth she, “Who is at the door?”; and quoth he, “Open!” Whereupon she opened the door and knowing him at first sight fell down in a fainting fit; but he ceased not to tend her till she came to herself, when he embraced her and she embraced him and kissed him, whilst his wife looked on mother and son. Then he carried his goods and gear into the house, whilst his mother, for that her heart was comforted and Allah had reunited her with her son versified with these couplets,

“Fortune had ruth upon my plight * Pitied my long long bane and
blight;
Gave me what I would liefest sight; * And set me free from all
afright.
So pardon I the sin that sin * nĕd she in days evanisht quite;
E’en to the sin she sinned when she * Bleached my hair-parting
silvern white.”

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Ninety-third Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Hasan with his mother then sat talking and she asked him, “How faredst thou, O my son, with the Persian?” whereto he answered, “O my mother, he was no Persian, but a Magian, who worshipped the fire, not the All-powerful Sire.” Then he told her how he dealt with him, in that he had journeyed with him to the Mountain of Clouds and sewed him up in the camel's skin, and how the vultures had taken him up and set him down on the summit and what he had seen there of dead folk, whom the Magian had deluded and left to die on the crest after they had done his desire. And he told her how he had cast himself from the mountain-top into the sea and Allah the Most High had preserved him and brought him to the palace of the seven Princesses and how the youngest of them had taken him to brother and he had sojourned with them till the Almighty brought the Magian to the place where he was and he slew him. Moreover, he told her of his passion for the King's daughter and how he had made prize of her and of his seeing her[81] in sleep and all else that had befallen him up to the time when Allah vouchsafed them reunion. She wondered at his story and praised the Lord who had restored him to her in health and safety. Then she arose and examined the baggage and loads and questioned him of them. So he told her what was in them, whereat she joyed with exceeding joy. Then she went up to the King's daughter, to talk with her and bear her company; but, when her eyes fell on her, her wits were confounded at her brilliancy and she rejoiced and marvelled at her beauty and loveliness and symmetry and perfect grace: and she sat down beside her, cheering her and comforting her heart while she never ceased to repeat "Alhamdolillah, O my son, for thy return to me safe and sound!" Next morning early she went down into the market and bought mighty fine furniture and ten suits of the richest raiment in the city, and clad the young wife and adorned her with everything seemly. Then said she to Hasan, "O my son, we cannot tarry in this town with all this wealth; for thou knowest that we are poor folk and the people will suspect us of practising alchemy. So come, let us depart to Baghdad, the House[82] of Peace, where we may dwell in the Caliph's Sanctuary, and thou shalt sit in a shop to buy and sell, in the fear of Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) and He shall open to thee the door of blessings with this wealth." Hasan approved her counsel and going forth straightway, sold the house and summoned the dromedaries, which he loaded with all his goods and gear, together with his mother and wife. Then he went down to the Tigris, where he hired him a craft to carry them to Baghdad and embarked therein all his possessions and his mother and wife. They sailed up the river with a fair wind for ten days till they drew in sight of Baghdad, at which they all rejoiced, and the ship landed them in the city, where without stay or delay Hasan hired a storehouse in one of the caravanserais and transported his goods thither. He lodged that night in the Khan and on the morrow, he changed his clothes and going down into the city, enquired for a broker. The folk directed him to one, and when the broker saw him, he asked him what he lacked. Quoth he, "I want a house, a handsome one and a spacious." So the broker showed him the houses at his disposal and he chose one that belonged to one of the Wazirs and buying it of him for an hundred thousand golden dinars, gave him the price. Then he returned to his caravanserai and removed all his goods and monies to the house; after which he went down to the market and bought all the mansion needed of vessels and carpets and other household stuff, besides servants and eunuchs, including a little black boy for the house. He abode with his wife in all solace and delight of life three years, during which time he was vouchsafed by her two sons, one of whom he named Násir and the other Mansúr: but, at the end of this time he bethought him of his sisters, the Princesses, and called to mind all their goodness to him and how they had helped him to his desire. So he longed after them and going out to the marketstreets of the city, bought trinkets and costly stuffs and fruit-confections, such as they had never seen or known. His mother asked him the reason of his buying these rarities and he answered, "I purpose to visit my sisters, who showed me every kind of kindness and all the wealth that I at present enjoy is due to their goodness and munificence: wherefore I will journey to them and return soon, Inshallah!" Quoth she, "O my son, be not long absent from me;" and quoth he, "Know, O my mother, how thou shalt do with my wife. Here is her feather-dress in a chest, buried under ground in such a place; do thou watch over it, lest haply she hap on it and take it, for she would fly away, she and her children, and I should never hear of them again and should die of grieving for them; wherefore take heed, O my mother, while I warn thee that thou name this not to her. Thou must know that she is the daughter of a King of the Jinn, than whom there is not a greater among the Sovrans of the Jann nor a richer in troops and treasure, and she is mistress of her people and dearest to her father of all he hath. Moreover, she is passing high-spirited, so do thou serve her thyself and suffer her not to go forth the door neither look out of window nor over the wall, for I fear the air for her when it bloweth,[83] and if aught befel her of the calamities of this world, I should slay myself for her sake." She replied, "O my son, I take refuge with Allah[84] from gainsaying thee! Am I mad that thou shouldst lay this charge on me and I disobey thee therein? Depart, O my son, with heart at ease, and please Allah, soon thou shalt return in safety and see her and she shall tell thee how I have dealt with her: but tarry not, O my son, beyond the time of travel." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Ninety-fourth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan had determined to visit the Princesses, he gave his mother the orders we have mentioned.[85] Now, as Fate would have it, his wife heard what he said to his mother and neither of them knew it. Then Hasan went without the city and beat the kettle-drum, whereupon up came the dromedaries and he loaded twenty of them with rarities of Al-Irak; after which he returned to his mother and repeated his charge to her and took leave of her and his wife and children, one of whom was a yearling babe and the other two years old. Then he mounted and fared on, without stopping night or day, over hills and valleys and plains and wastes for a term of ten days till, on the eleventh, he reached the palace and went in to his sisters, with the gifts he had brought them. The Princesses rejoiced at his sight and gave him joy of his safety, whilst his sister decorated the palace within and without. Then they took the presents and, lodging him in a chamber as before, asked him of his mother and his wife, and he told them that she had borne him two sons. And the youngest Princess, seeing him well and in good case, joyed with exceeding joy and repeated this couplet,

"I ever ask for news of you from whatso breezes pass * And never any but yourselves can pass across my mind."

Then he abode with them in all honour and hospitality, for three months, spending his time in feasting and merrymaking, joy and delight, hunting and sporting. So fared it with him; but as regards his wife, she abode with his mother two days after her husband's departure, and on the third day, she said to her, "Glory be to God! Have I lived with him three years and shall I never go to the bath?" Then she wept and Hasan's mother had pity on her condition and said to her, "O my daughter, here we are strangers and thy husband is abroad. Were he at home, he would serve thee himself, but, as for me, I know no one. However, O my daughter, I will heat thee water and wash thy head in the Hammam-bath which is in the house." Answered the King's daughter, "O my lady, hadst thou spoken thus to one of the slave-girls, she had demanded to be sold in the Sultan's open market and had not abode with thee.[86] Men are excusable, because they are jealous and their reason telleth them that, if a woman go forth the house, haply she will do frowardness. But women, O my lady, are not all equal and alike and thou knowest that, if woman have a mind to aught, whether it be the Hammam or what not else, none hath power over her to guard her or keep her chaste or debar her from her desire; for she will do whatso she willeth and naught restraineth her but her reason and her religion."[87] Then she wept and cursed fate and bemoaned herself and her strangerhood, till Hasan's mother was moved to ruth for her case and knew that all she said was but truth and that there was nothing for it but to let her have her way. So she committed the affair to Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) and making ready all that they needed for the bath, took her and went with her to the Hammam. She carried her two little sons with her, and when they entered, they put off their clothes and all the women fell to gazing on the Princess and glorifying God (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) for that He had created so fair a form. The women of the city, even those who were passing by, flocked to gaze upon her, and the report of her was noised abroad in Baghdad till the bath was crowded that there was no passing through it. Now it chanced there was present on that day and on that rare occasion with the rest of the women in the Hammam, one of the slave-girls of the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, by name Tohfah[88] the Lutanist, and she, finding the Hammam over crowded and no passing for the throng of women and girls, asked what was to do; and they told her of the young lady. So she walked up to her and, considering her closely, was amazed at her grace and loveliness and glorified

God (magnified be His majesty!) for the fair forms He hath created. The sight hindered her from her bath, so that she went not farther in nor washed, but sat staring at the Princess, till she had made an end of bathing and coming forth of the caldarium donned her raiment, whereupon beauty was added to her beauty. She sat down on the divan,[89] whilst the women gazed upon her; then she looked at them and veiling herself, went out. Tohfah went out with her and followed her, till she saw where she dwelt, when she left her and returned to the Caliph's palace; and ceased not wending till she went in to the Lady Zubaydah and kissed ground between her hands; whereupon quoth her mistress, "O Tohfah, why hast thou tarried in the Hammam?" She replied, "O my lady, I have seen a marvel, never saw I its like amongst men or women, and this it was that distracted me and dazed my wit and amazed me, so that I forgot even to wash my head." Asked Zubaydah, "And what was that?" ; and Tohfah answered, "O my lady, I saw a damsel in the bath, having with her two little boys like moons, eye never espied her like, nor before her nor after her, neither is there the fellow of her form in the whole world nor her peer amongst Ajams or Turks or Arabs. By the munificence, O my lady, an thou toldest the Commander of the Faithful of her, he would slay her husband and take her from him, for her like is not to be found among women. I asked of her mate and they told me that he is a merchant Hasan of Bassorah hight. Moreover, I followed her from the bath to her own house and found it to be that of the Wazir, with the two gates, one opening on the river and the other on the land.[90] Indeed, O my lady, I fear lest the Prince of True Believers hear of her and break the law and slay her husband and take love-liesse with her." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Ninety-fifth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Tohfah, after seeing the King's daughter, described her beauty to the Lady Zubaydah ending with, "Indeed, O my mistress, I fear lest the Prince of True Believers hear of her and break the law and slay her mate and take her to wife," Zubaydah cried, "Woe to thee, O Tohfah, say me, doth this damsel display such passing beauty and loveliness that the Commander of the Faithful should, on her account, barter his soul's good for his worldly lust and break the Holy Law! By Allah, needs must I look on her, and if she be not as thou sayest, I will bid strike off thy head! O strumpet, there are in the Caliph's Serraglio three hundred and three score slave girls, after the number of the days of the year, yet is there none amongst them so excellent as thou describest!" Tohfah replied, "No, by Allah, O my lady!: nor is there her like in all Baghdad; no, nor amongst the Arabs or the Daylamites nor hath Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) created the like of her!" Thereupon Zuhaydah called for Masrur, the eunuch, who came and kissed the ground before her, and she said to him, "O Masrur, go to the Wazir's house, that with the two gates, one giving on the water and the other on the land, and bring me the damsel who dwelleth there, also her two children and the old woman who is with her, and haste thou and tarry not." Said Masrur, "I hear and I obey," and repairing to Hasan's house, knocked at the door. Quoth the old woman, "Who is at the door?" and quoth he, "Masrur, the eunuch of the Commander of the Faithful." So she opened the door and he entered and saluted her with the salam; whereupon she returned his salute and asked his need; and he replied, "The Lady Zubaydah, daughter of Al-Kasim[91] and queen-spouse of the Commander of the Faithful Harun al-Rashid sixth[92] of the sons of Al-Abbas, paternal uncle of the Prophet (whom Allah bless and keep!) summoneth thee to her, thee and thy son's wife and her children; for the women have told her anent her and her beauty." Rejoined the old woman, "O my lord Masrur, we are foreigner folk and the girl's husband (my son) who is abroad and far from home hath strictly charged me not to go forth nor let her go forth in his absence, neither show her to any of the creatures of Allah Almighty; and I fear me, if aught befal her and he come back, he will slay himself; wherefore of thy favour I beseech thee, O Masrur, require us not of that whereof we are unable." Masrur retorted, "O my lady, if I knew aught to be feared for you in this, I would not require you to go; the Lady Zubaydah desireth but to see her and then she may return. So disobey not or thou wilt repent; and like as I take you, I will bring you both back in safety, Inshallah!" Hasan's mother could not gainsay him; so she went in and making the damsel ready, brought her and her children forth and they all followed Masrur to the palace of the Caliphate where he carried them in and seated them on the floor before the Lady Zubaydah. They kissed ground before her and called down blessings upon her; and Zubaydah said to the young lady (who was veiled), “Wilt thou not uncover thy face, that I may look on it?” So she kissed the ground between her hands and discovered a face which put to shame the full moon in the height of heaven. Zubaydah fixed her eyes on her and let their glances wander over her, whilst the palace was illumined by the light of her countenance; whereupon the Queen and the whole company were amazed at her beauty and all who looked on her became Jinn-mad and unable to bespeak one another. As for Zubaydah, she rose and making the damsel stand up, strained her to her bosom and seated her by herself on the couch. Moreover, she bade decorate the palace in her honour and calling for a suit of the richest raiment and a necklace of the rarest ornaments put them upon her. Then said she to her, “O liege lady of fair ones, verily thou astoundest me and fillest mine eyes.[93] What arts knowest thou?” She replied, “O my lady, I have a dress of feathers, and could I but put it on before thee, thou wouldst see one of the fairest of fashions and marvel thereat, and all who saw it would talk of its goodliness, generation after generation.” Zubaydah asked, “And where is this dress of thine?”; and the damsel answered, “’Tis with my husband’s mother. Do thou seek it for me of her.” So Zubaydah said to the old woman, “O my lady the pilgrimess, O my mother, go forth and fetch us her feather-dress, that we may solace ourselves by looking on what she will do, and after take it back again.” Replied the old woman, “O my lady, this damsel is a liar. Hast thou ever seen any of womankind with a dress of feathers? Indeed, this belongeth only to birds.” But the damsel said to the Lady Zubaydah, “As thou livest, O my lady, she hath a feather-dress of mine and it is in a chest, which is buried in such a store-closet in the house.” So Zubaydah took off her neck a rivičre of jewels, worth all the treasures of Chosroe and Cćsar, and gave it to the old woman, saying, “O my mother, I conjure thee by my life, take this necklace and go and fetch us this dress, that we may divert ourselves with the sight thereof, and after take it again!” But she sware to her that she had never seen any such dress and wist not what the damsel meant by her speech. Then the Lady Zubaydah cried out at her and taking the key from her, called Masrur and said to him as soon as her came, “Take this key and go to the house; then open it and enter a store-closet there whose door is such and such and amiddlemost of it thou wilt find a chest buried. Take it out and break it open and bring me the feather-dress which is therein and set it before me.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Ninety-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Lady Zubaydah, having taken the key from Hasan’s mother, handed it to Masrur, saying, “Take this key and open such a closet; then bring forth of it the chest; break it open; bring me the feather-dress which is therein and set it before me.” “Hearkening and obedience,” replied he and taking the key went forth, whereupon the old woman arose and followed him, weeping-eyed and repenting her of having given ear to the damsel and gone with her to the bath, for her desire to go thither was but a device. So she went with him to the house and opened the door of the closet, and he entered and brought out the chest. Then he took therefrom the feather-dress and wrapping it in a napkin, carried it to the Lady Zubaydah, who took it and turned it about, marvelling at the beauty of its make; after which she gave it to the damsel, saying, “Is this thy dress of feathers?” She replied, “Yes, O my lady,” and at once putting forth her hand, took it joyfully. Then she examined it and rejoiced to find it whole as it was, not a feather gone. So she rose and came down from beside the Lady Zubaydah and taking her sons in her bosom, wrapped herself in the feather-dress and became a bird, by the ordinance of Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!), whereat Zubaydah marvelled as did all who were present. Then she walked with a swaying and graceful gait and danced and sported and flapped her wings, whilst all eyes were fixed on her and all marvelled at what she did. Then said she with fluent tongue, “Is this goodly, O my ladies?”; and they replied, “Yes, O Princess of the fair! All thou dost is goodly.” Said she, “And this, O my mistresses, that I am about to do is better yet.” Then she spread her wings and flying up with her children to the dome of the palace, perched on the saloon-roof whilst they all looked at her, wide-eyed and said, “By Allah, this is indeed a rare and peregrine fashion! Never saw we its like.” Then, as she was about to take flight for her own land, she bethought her of Hasan and said, “Hark ye, my mistresses!” and she improvised these couplets,[94]

“O who hast quitted these abodes and faredst lief and light * To other objects of thy love with fain and fastest flight!
Deem’st thou that ‘bided I with you in solace and in joy * Or that my days amid you all were clear of bane and blight?
When I was captive ta’en of Love and snarčd in his snare, * He made of Love my prison and he fared fro’ me forthright:
So when my fear was hidden, he made sure that ne’er should I * Pray to the One, th’ Omnipotent to render me my right:
He charged his mother keep the secret with all the care she could, * In closet shut and treated me with enemy’s despight:
But I o’erheard their words and held them fast in memory * And hoped for fortune fair and weal and blessings infinite:
My faring to the Hammam-bath then proved to me the means * Of making minds of folk to be confounded at my sight:
Wondered the Bride of Al-Rashid to see my brilliancy * When she beheld me right and left with all of beauty dight:
Then quoth I, ‘O our Caliph’s wife, I once was wont to own * A dress of feathers rich and rare that did the eyes delight:
An it were now on me thou shouldst indeed see wondrous things * That would efface all sorrows and disperse all sores of sprite:’
Then deigned our Caliph’s Bride to cry, ‘Where is that dress of thine?’ * And I replied, ‘In house of him kept darkling as the night.’
So down upon it pounced Masrúr and brought it unto her, * And when ’twas there each feather cast a ray of beaming light:
Therewith I took it from his hand and opened it straightway * And saw its plumčd bosom and its buttons pleased my sight:
And so I clad myself therein and took with me my babes; * And spread my wings and flew away with all my main and might;
Saying, ‘O husband’s mother mine tell him when cometh he * An ever wouldest meet her thou from house and home must flee.’”

When she had made an end of her verses, the Lady Zubaydah said to her, “Wilt thou not come down to us, that we may take our fill of thy beauty, O fairest of the fair? Glory be to Him who hath given thee eloquence and brilliance!” But she said, “Far be from me that the Past return should see!” Then said she to the mother of the hapless, wretched Hasan, “By Allah, O my lady, O mother of my husband, it irketh me to part from thee; but, whenas thy son cometh to thee and upon him the nights of severance longsome shall be and he craveth reunion and meeting to see and whenas breezes of love and longing shake him dolefully, let him come in the islands of Wák[95] to me.” Then she took flight with her children and sought her own country, whilst the old woman wept and beat her face and moaned and groaned till she swooned away. When she came to herself, she said to the Lady Zubaydah, “O my lady, what is this thou hast done?” And Zubaydah said to her, “O my lady the pilgrimess, I knew not that this would happen and hadst thou told me of the case and acquainted me with her condition, I had not gainsaid thee. Nor did I know until now that she was of the Flying Jinn; else had I not suffered her to don the dress nor permitted her to take her children: but now, O my lady, words profit nothing; so do thou acquit me of offence against thee.” And the old woman could do no otherwise than shortly answer, “Thou art acquitted!” Then she went forth the palace of the Caliphate and returned to her own house, where she buffeted her face till she swooned away, When she came to herself, she pined for her daughter-in-law and her grandchildren and for the sight of her son and versified with these couplets,

“Your faring on the parting-day drew many a tear fro’ me, * Who
must your flying from the home long mourn in misery:
And cried I for the parting pang in anguish likest fire * And
tear-floods chafed mine eyelids sore that ne’er of tears
were free;
‘Yes, this is Severance, Ah, shall we e’er joy return of you? *
For your departure hath deprived my power of privacy!’
Ah, would they had returned to me in covenant of faith * An they
return perhaps restore of past these eyne may see.”

Then arising she dug in the house three graves and betook herself to them with weeping all whiles of the day and watches of the night; and when her son's absence was longsome upon her and grief and yearning and unquiet waxed upon her, she recited these couplets,

"Deep in mine eye-balls ever dwells the phantom-form of thee * My
heart when throbbing or at rest holds fast thy memory:
And love of thee doth never cease to course within my breast, *
As course the juices in the fruits which deck the branchy
tree:
And every day I see thee not my bosom straightened is * And even
censurers excuse the woes in me they see:
O thou whose love hath gotten hold the foremost in the heart * Of
me whose fondness is excelled by mine insanity:
Fear the Compassionate in my case and some compassion show! *
Love of thee makes me taste of death in bitterest pungency."

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Hasan's mother bewept through the watches of the night and the whiles of the day her separation from her son and his wife and children. On this wise it fared with her; but as regards Hasan, when he came to the Princesses, they conjured him to tarry with them three months, after which long sojourn they gave him five loads of gold and the like of silver and one load of victual and accompanied him on his homeward way till he conjured them to return, whereupon they farewelled him with an embrace; but the youngest came up to him, to bid him adieu and clasping his neck wept till she fainted. Then she recited these two couplets,

"When shall the severance-fire be quenched by union, love, with
you? * When shall I win my wish of you and days that were
renew?
The parting-day affrighted me and wrought me dire dismay * And
doubleth woe, O master mine, by the sad word 'Adieu.'"

Anon came forward the second Princess and embraced him and recited these two couplets,

“Farewelling thee indeed is like to bidding life farewell * And
like the loss of Zephyr[96] ’tis to lose thee far our
sight:
Thine absence is a flaming fire which burneth up my heart * And
in thy presence I enjoy the Gardens of Delight.”[97]

Presently came forward the third and embraced him and recited these two couplets,

“We left not taking leave of thee (when bound to other goal) *
From aught of ill intention or from weariness and dole:
Thou art my soul, my very soul, the only soul of me: * And how
shall I farewell myself and say, ‘Adieu my Soul?’”[98]

After her came forward the fourth and embraced him and recited these two couplets,

“Nought garred me weep save where and when of severance spake he,

* Persisting in his cruel will with sore persistency:
Look at this pearl-like ornament I’ve hung upon mine ear: * ’Tis
of the tears of me compact, this choicest jewelry!”

In her turn came forward the fifth and embraced him and recited these two couplets,

“Ah, fare thee not; for I’ve no force thy faring to endure, * Nor
e’en to say the word farewell before my friend is sped:
Nor any patience to support the days of severance, * Nor any
tears on ruined house and wasted home to shed.”

Next came the sixth and embraced him and recited these two couplets,

“I cried, as the camels went off with them, * And Love pained my
vitals with sorest pain:
Had I a King who would lend me rule * I’d seize every ship that
dares sail the Main.”

Lastly came forward the seventh and embraced him and recited these couplets,

“When thou seest parting, be patient still, * Nor let foreign
parts deal thy soul affright:
But abide, expecting a swift return, * For all hearts hold
parting in sore despight.”

And eke these two couplets,

“Indeed I’m heartbroken to see thee start, * Nor can I farewell
thee ere thou depart;
Allah wotteth I left not to say adieu * Save for fear that saying
would melt your heart.”

Hasan also wept for parting from them, till he swooned, and repeated these couplets,

“Indeed, ran my tears on the severance-day * Like pearls I
threaded in necklace-way:
The cameleer drove his camels with song * But I lost heart,
patience and strength and stay:
I bade them farewell and retired in grief * From tryst-place and
camp where my dearlings lay:
I turned me unknowing the way nor joyed * My soul, but in hopes
to return some day.
Oh listen, my friend, to the words of love * God forbid thy heart
forget all I say!
O my soul when thou partest wi’ them, part too * With all joys of
life nor for living pray!”

Then he farewelled them and fared on diligently night and day, till he came to Baghdad, the House of Peace and Sanctuary of the

Abbaside Caliphs, unknowing what had passed during his wayfare. At once entering his house he went in to his mother to salute her, but found her worn of body and wasted of bones, for excess of mourning and watching, weeping and wailing, till she was grown thin as a tooth-pick and could not answer him a word. So he dismissed the dromedaries then asked her of his wife and children and she wept till she fainted, and he seeing her in this state searched the house for them, but found no trace of them. Then he went to the store-closet and finding it open and the chest broken and the feather-dress missing, knew forthright that his wife had possessed herself thereof and flown away with her children. Then he returned to his mother and, finding her recovered from her fit, questioned her of his spouse and babes, whereupon she wept and said, "O my son, may Allah amply requite thee their loss! These are their three tombs."[99] When Hasan heard these words of his mother, he shrieked a loud shriek and fell down in a fainting-fit in which he lay from the first of the day till noon-tide; whereupon anguish was added to his mother's anguish and she despared of his life. However, after a-while, he came to himself and wept and buffeted his face and rent his raiment and went about the house clean distraught, reciting these two couplets,[100]

"Folk have made moan of passion before me, of past years, * And
live and dead for absence have suffered pains and fears;
But that within my bosom I harbour, with mine eyes * I've never
seen the like of nor heard with mine ears."

Then finishing his verses he bared his brand and coming up to his mother, said to her, "Except thou tell me the truth of the case, I will strike off thy head and kill myself." She replied, "O my son, do not such deed: put up thy sword and sit down, till I tell thee what hath passed." So he sheathed his scymitar and sat by her side, whilst she recounted to him all that had happened in his absence from first to last, adding, "O my son, but that I saw her weep in her longing for the bath and feared that she would go and complain to thee on thy return, and thou wouldst be wroth with me, I had never carried her thither; and were it not that the Lady Zubaydah was wroth with me and took the key from me by force, I had never brought out the feather-dress, though I died for it. But thou knowest, O my son, that no hand may measure length with that of the Caliphate. When they brought her the dress, she took it and turned it over, fancying that somewhat might be lost thereof, but she found it uninjured; wherefore she rejoiced and making her children fast to her waist, donned the feather-vest, after the Lady Zubaydah had pulled off to her all that was upon herself and clad her therein, in honour of her and because of her beauty. No sooner had she donned the dress than she shook and becoming a bird, promenaded about the palace, whilst all who were present gazed at her and marvelled at her beauty and loveliness. Then she flew up to the palace roof and perching thereon, looked at me and said: 'Whenas thy son cometh to thee and the nights of separation upon him longsome shall be and he craveth reunion and meeting to see and whenas the breezes of love and longing shake him dolefully let him leave his native land and journey to the Islands of Wak and seek me.' This, then, is her story and what befel in thine absence." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Ninety-eighth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that as soon as Hasan's mother had made an end of her story, he gave a great cry and fell down in a fainting fit which continued till the end of day, when he revived and fell to buffeting his face and writhing on the floor like a scotched snake. His mother sat weeping by his head until midnight, when he came to himself and wept sore and recited these couplets',[101]

"Pause ye and see his sorry state since when ye fain withdrew; *
Haply, when wrought your cruelty, you'll have the grace to rue:
For an ye look on him, you'll doubt of him by sickness-stress *
As though, by Allah, he were one before ye never knew.
He dies for nothing save for love of you, and he would be *
Numbered amid the dead did not he moan and groan for you.
And deem not pangs of severance sit all lightly on his soul; *
'Tis heavy load on lover-wight; 'twere lighter an ye slew."

Then having ended his verse he rose and went round about the house, weeping and wailing, groaning and bemoaning himself, five days, during which he tasted nor meat nor drink. His mother came to him and conjured him, till he broke his fast, and besought him to leave weeping; but he hearkened not to her and continued to shed tears and lament, whilst she strove to comfort him and he heeded her not. Then he recited these couplets,[102]

"Beareth for love a burden sore this soul of me, * Could break a
mortal's back however strong that be;
I am distraught to see my case and languor grows * Making my day
and night indifferent in degree:
I own to having dreaded Death before this day: * This day I hold
my death mine only remedy."

And Hasan ceased not to do thus till daybreak, when his eyes closed and he saw in a dream his wife grief-full and repentant for that which she had done. So he started up from sleep crying out and reciting these two couplets,

"Their image bides with me, ne'er quits me, ne'er shall fly; *
But holds within my heart most honourable stead;
But for reunion-hope, I'd see me die forthright, * And but for
phantom-form of thee my sleep had fled."

And as morning morrowed he redoubled his lamentations. He abode weeping-eyed and heavy-hearted, wakeful by night and eating little, for a whole month, at the end of which he bethought him to repair to his sisters and take counsel with them in the matter of his wife, so haply they might help him to regain her. Accordingly he summoned the dromedaries and loading fifty of them with rarities of Al-Irak, committed the house to his mother's care and deposited all his goods in safe keeping, except some few he left at home. Then he mounted one of the beasts and set out on his journey single handed, intent upon obtaining aidance from the Princesses, and he stayed not till he reached the Palace of the Mountain of Clouds, when he went in to the damsels and gave them the presents in which they rejoiced.

Then they wished him joy of his safety and said to him, “O our brother, what can ail thee to come again so soon, seeing thou wast with us but two months since?” Whereupon he wept and improvised these couplets,

“My soul for loss of lover sped I sight; * Nor life enjoying
neither life’s delight:
My case is one whose cure is all unknown; * Can any cure the sick
but doctor wight?
O who hast reft my sleep-joys, leaving me * To ask the breeze
that blew from that fair site, —
Blew from my lover’s land (the land that owns * Those charms so
sore a grief in soul excite),
‘O breeze, that visitest her land, perhaps * Breathing her scent,
thou mayst revive my sprite!’”

And when he ended his verse he gave a great cry and fell down in a fainting-fit. The Princesses sat round him, weeping over him, till he recovered and repeated these two couplets,

“Haply and happily may Fortune bend her rein * Bringing my love,
for Time’s a freke of jealous strain;[103]
Fortune may prosper me, supply mine every want, * And bring a
blessing where before were ban and bane.”

Then he wept till he fainted again, and presently coming to himself recited the two following couplets,

“My wish, mine illness, mine unease! by Allah, own * Art thou
content? then I in love contented wone!
Dost thou forsake me thus sans crime or sin * Meet me in ruth, I
pray, and be our parting gone.”

Then he wept till he swooned away once more and when he revived he repeated these couplets,

“Sleep fled me, by my side wake ever shows * And hoard of
tear-drops from these eyne aye flows;

For love they weep with beads cornelian-like * And growth of
distance greater dolence grows:
Lit up my longing, O my love, in me * Flames burning ‘neath my
ribs with fiery throes!
Remembering thee a tear I never shed * But in it thunder roars
and leven glows.”

Then he wept till he fainted away a fourth time, and presently recovering, recited these couplets,

“Ah! for lowe of love and longing suffer ye as suffer we? * Say,
as pine we and as yearn we for you are pining ye?
Allah do the death of Love, what a bitter draught is his! * Would
I wot of Love what plans and what projects nurseth he!
Your faces radiant-fair though afar from me they shine, * Are
mirrored in our eyes whatsoever the distance be;
My heart must ever dwell on the memories of your tribe; * And the
turtle-dove reneweth all as oft as moaneth she:
Ho thou dove, who passest night-tide in calling on thy fere, *
Thou doublest my repine, bringing grief for company;
And leavest thou mine eyelids with weeping unfulfilled * For the
dearlings who departed, whom we never more may see:
I melt for the thought of you at every time and hour, * And I
long for you when Night showeth cheek of blackest blee.”

Now when his sister heard these words and saw his condition and how he lay fainting on the floor, she screamed and beat her face and the other Princesses hearing her scream came out and learning his misfortune and the transport of love and longing and the passion and distraction that possessed him they questioned him of his case. He wept and told them what had befallen in his absence and how his wife had taken flight with her children, wherefore they grieved for him and asked him what she said at leave-taking. Answered he, “O my sisters, she said to my mother, ‘Tell thy son, whenas he cometh to thee and the nights of severance upon him longsome shall be and he craveth reunion and meeting to see, and whenas the winds of love and longing shake him dolefully, let him fare in the Islands of Wak to me." When they heard his words they signed one to other with their eyes and shook their heads, and each looked at her sister, whilst Hasan looked at them all. Then they bowed their heads groundwards and bethought themselves awhile; after which they raised their heads and said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!"; presently adding, "Put forth thy hand to heaven and when thou reach thither, then shalt thou win to thy wife. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Seven Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Princesses said to Hasan, "Put forth thy hand to Heaven and when thou reach thither, then shalt thou win to wife and children," thereat the tears ran down his cheeks like rain and wet his clothes, and he recited these couplets,

"Pink cheeks and eyes enpupil'd black have dealt me sore
 despight; * And whenas wake overpowered sleep my patience
 fled in fright:
The fair and sleek-limbed maidens hard of heart withal laid waste

* My very bones till not a breath is left for man to sight:
Houris, who fare with gait of grace as roes o'er sandy-mound: *
 Did Allah's saints behold their charms they'd doat thereon
 forthright;
Faring as fares the garden breeze that bloweth in the dawn. * For
 love of them a sore unrest and troubles rack my sprite:
I hung my hopes upon a maid, a loveling fair of them, * For whom
 my heart still burns with lowe in Lazá-hell they light; —
A dearling soft of sides and haught and graceful in her gait, *
 Her grace is white as morning, but her hair is black as
 night:
She stirreth me! But ah, how many heroes have her cheeks *
 Upstirred for love, and eke her eyes that mingle black and
 white."

Then he wept, whilst the Princesses wept for his weeping, and they were moved to compassion and jealousy for him. So they fell to comforting him and exhorting him to patience and offering up prayers for his reunion with his wife; whilst his sister said to him, “O my brother, be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear and be patient; so shalt thou win thy will; for whoso hath patience and waiteth, that he seeketh attaineth. Patience holdeth the keys of relief and indeed the poet saith,

‘Let destiny with slackened rein its course appointed fare! And
lie thou down to sleep by night, with heart devoid of care;
For ‘twixt the closing of an eye and th’ opening thereof, God
hath it in His power to change a case from foul to
fair.”[104]

So hearten thy heart and brace up thy resolve, for the son of ten years dieth not in the ninth.[105] Weeping and grief and mourning gender sickness and disease; wherefore do thou abide with us till thou be rested, and I will devise some device for thy winning to thy wife and children, Inshallah — so it please Allah the Most High!” And he wept sore and recited these verses,

“An I be healed of disease in frame, * I’m unhealed of illness in
heart and sprite:
There is no healing disease of love, * Save lover and loved one
to re-unite.”

Then he sat down beside her and she proceeded to talk with him and comfort him and question him of the cause and the manner of his wife’s departure. So he told her and she said, “By Allah, O my brother, I was minded to bid thee burn the feather-dress, but Satan made me forget it.” She ceased not to converse with him and caress him and company with him other ten days, whilst sleep visited him not and he delighted not in food; and when the case was longsome upon him and unrest waxed in him, he versified with these couplets,

“A beloved familiar o’erreigns my heart * And Allah’s ruling
reigns evermore:

She hath all the Arabs’ united charms * This gazelle who feeds on my bosom’s core.
Though my skill and patience for love of her fail, * I weep whilst I wot that ’tis vain to deplore.
The dearling hath twice seven years, as though * She were moon of five nights and of five plus four.”[106]

When the youngest Princess saw him thus distracted for love and longing-for passion and the fever-heat of desire, she went in to her sisterhood weeping-eyed and woeful-hearted, and shedding copious tears threw herself upon them, kissed their feet and besought them to devise some device for bringing Hasan to the Islands of Wak and effecting his reunion with his wife and wees. She ceased not to conjure them to further her brother in the accomplishment of his desire and to weep before them, till she made them weep and they said to her, “Hearten thy heart: we will do our best endeavour to bring about his reunion with his family, Inshallah!” And he abode with them a whole year, during which his eyes never could retain their tears. Now the sisterhood had an uncle, brother-german to their sire and his name was Abd al-Kaddús, or Slave of the Most Holy; and he loved the eldest with exceeding love and was wont to visit her once a year and do all she desired. They had told him of Hasan’s adventure with the Magian and how he had been able to slay him; whereat he rejoiced and gave the eldest Princess a pouch[107] which contained certain perfumes, saying, “O daughter of my brother, an thou be in concern for aught, or if aught irk thee, or thou stand in any need, cast of these perfumes upon fire naming my name and I will be with thee forthright and will do thy desire.” This speech was spoken on the first of Moharram[108] ; and the eldest Princess said to one of the sisterhood, “Lo, the year is wholly past and my uncle is not come. Rise, bring me the fire-sticks and the box of perfumes.” So the damsel arose rejoicing and, fetching what she sought, laid it before her sister, who opened the box and taking thence a little of the perfume, cast it into the fire, naming her unde’s name; nor was it burnt out ere appeared a dust-cloud at the farther end of the Wady; and presently lifting, it discovered a Shaykh riding on an elephant, which moved at a swift and easy pace, and trumpeted under the rider.

As soon as he came within sight of the Princesses, he began making signs to them with his hands and feet; nor was it long ere he reached the castle and, alighting from the elephant, came in to them, whereupon they embraced him and kissed his hands and saluted him with the salam. Then he sat down, whilst the girls talked with him and questioned him of his absence. Quoth he, "I was sitting but now with my wife, your aunt, when I smelt the perfumes and hastened to you on this elephant. What wouldst thou, O daughter of my brother?" Quoth she, "O uncle, indeed we longed for thee, as the year is past and 'tis not thy wont to be absent from us more than a twelvemonth." Answered he, "I was busy, but I purposed to come to you to-morrow." Wherefore they thanked him and blessed him and sat talking with him. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundredth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the girls sat down to chat with their uncle the eldest said to him, "O my uncle, we told thee the tale of Hasan of Bassorah, whom Bahram the Magian brought and how he slew the wizard and how, after enduring all manner of hardships and horrors, he made prize of the Supreme King's daughter and took her to wife and journeyed with her to his native land?" Replied he, "Yes, and what befel him after that?" Quoth the Princess, "She played him false after he was blest with two sons by her; for she took them in his absence and fled with them to her own country, saying to his mother: 'Whenas thy son returneth to thee and asketh for me and upon him the nights of severance longsome shall be and he craveth reunion and meeting to see and whenas the breezes of love and longing shake him dolefully, let him come in the Islands of Wak to me.'" When Abd al-Kaddus heard this, he shook his head and bit his forefinger; then, bowing his brow groundwards he began to make marks on the earth with his finger-tips;[109] after which he again shook his head and looked right and left and shook his head a third time, whilst Hasan watched him from a place where he was hidden from him. Then said the Princesses to their uncle, "Return us some answer, for our hearts are rent in sunder." But he shook his head at them, saying, "O my daughters, verily hath this man wearied himself in vain and cast himself into grievous predicament and sore peril; for he may not gain access to the Islands of Wak.” With this the Princesses called Hasan, who came forth and, advancing to Shaykh Abd al-Kaddus, kissed his hand and saluted him. The old man rejoiced in him and seated him by his side; whereupon quoth the damsels, “O uncle, acquaint our brother Hasan with that thou hast told us.” So he said to Hasan, “O my son, put away from thee this peine forte et dure; for thou canst never gain access to the Islands of Wak, though the Flying Jinn and the Wandering Stars were with thee; for that betwixt thee and these islands are seven Wadys and seven seas and seven mighty mountains. How then canst thou come at this stead and who shall bring thee thither? Wherefore, Allah upon thee, O my son, do thou reckon thy spouse and sons as dead and turn back forthright and weary not thy sprite! Indeed, I give thee good counsel, an thou wilt but accept it.” Hearing these words from the Shaykh, Hasan wept till he fainted, and the Princesses sat round him, weeping for his weeping, whilst the youngest sister rent her raiment and buffeted her face, till she swooned away. When Shaykh Abd al-Kaddus saw them in this transport of grief and trouble and mourning, he was moved to ruth for them and cried, “Be ye silent!” Then said he to Hasan, “O my son, hearten thy heart and rejoice in the winning of thy wish, an it be the will of Allah the Most High;” presently adding, “Rise, O my son, take courage and follow me.” So Hasan arose forthright and after he had taken leave of the Princesses followed him, rejoicing in the fulfilment of his wish. Then the Shaykh called the elephant and mounting, took Hasan up behind him and fared on three days with their nights, like the blinding leven, till he came to a vast blue mountain, whose stones were all of azure hue and amiddlemost of which was a cavern, with a door of Chinese iron. Here he took Hasan’s hand and let him down and alighting dismissed the elephant. Then he went up to the door and knocked, whereupon it opened and there came out to him a black slave, hairless, as he were an Ifrit, with brand in right hand and targe of steel in left. When he saw Abd al-Kaddus, he threw sword and buckler from his grip and coming up to the Shaykh kissed his hand. Thereupon the old man took Hasan by the hand and entered with him, whilst the slave shut the door behind them; when Hasan found himself in a vast cavern and a spacious, through which ran an arched corridor and they ceased not faring on therein a mile or so, till it abutted upon a great open space and thence they made for an angle of the mountain wherein were two huge doors cast of solid brass. The old man opened one of them and said to Hasan, “Sit at the door, whilst I go within and come back to thee in haste, and beware lest thou open it and enter.” Then he fared inside and, shutting the door after him, was absent during a full sidereal hour, after which he returned, leading a black stallion, thin of flank and short of nose, which was ready bridled and saddled, with velvet housings; and when it ran it flew, and when it flew, the very dust in vain would pursue; and brought it to Hasan, saying, “Mount!” So he mounted and Abd al-Kaddus opened the second door, beyond which appeared a vast desert. Then the twain passed through the door into that desert and the old man said to him, “O my son, take this scroll and wend thou whither this steed will carry thee. When thou seest him stop at the door of a cavern like this, alight and throw the reins over the saddle-bow and let him go. He will enter the cavern, which do thou not enter with him, but tarry at the door five days, without being weary of waiting. On the sixth day there will come forth to thee a black Shaykh, clad all in sable, with a long white beard, flowing down to his navel. As soon as thou seest him, kiss his hands and seize his skirt and lay it on thy head and weep before him, till he take pity on thee and he will ask thee what thou wouldst have. When he saith to thee, ‘What is thy want?’ give him this scroll which he will take without speaking and go in and leave thee. Wait at the door other five days, without wearying, and on the sixth day expect him; and if he come out to thee himself, know that thy wish will be won, but, if one of his pages come forth to thee, know that he who cometh forth to thee, purposeth to kill thee; and — the Peace![110] For know, O my son, that whoso self imperilleth doeth himself to death;” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and First Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that after handing the scroll to Hasan, Shaykh Abd al-Kaddus told him what would befal him and said, “Whoso self imperilleth doeth himself to death; but also who ventureth naught advantageth naught. However an thou fear for thy life, cast it not into danger of destruction; but, an thou fear not, up and do thy will, for I have expounded to thee the whole case. Yet shouldest thou be minded to return to thy friends the elephant is still here and he will carry thee to my nieces, who will restore thee to thy country and return thee to thy home, and Allah will vouchsafe thee a better than this girl, of whom thou art enamoured.” Hasan answered the Shaykh, saying, “And how shall life be sweet to me, except I win my wish? By Allah, I will never turn back, till I regain my beloved or my death overtake me!” And he wept and recited these couplets,

“For loss of lover mine and stress of love I dree, * I stood
    bewailing self in deep despondency.
Longing for him, the Spring-camp’s dust I kissed and kissed, *
    But this bred more of grief and galling reverie.
God guard the gone, who in our hearts must e’er abide * With
    nearing woes and joys which still the farther flee.
They say me, ‘Patience!’ But they bore it all away: * On
    parting-day, and left me naught save tormentry.
And naught affrighted me except the word he said, * ‘Forget me
    not when gone nor drive from memory.’
To whom shall turn I? hope in whom when you are lost? * Who were
    my only hopes and joys and woes of me?
But ah, the pang of home-return when parting thus! * How joyed at
    seeing me return mine enemy.
Then well-away! this ’twas I guarded me against! * And ah, thou
    lowe of Love double thine ardency![111]
An fled for aye my friends I’ll not survive the flight; * Yet an
    they deign return, Oh joy! Oh ecstacy!
Never, by Allah tears and weeping I’ll contain * For loss of you,
    but tears on tears and tears will rain.”

When Abd al-Kaddus heard his verse he knew that he would not turn back from his desire nor would words have effect on him, and was certified that naught would serve him but he must imperil himself, though it lose him his life. So he said to him, “Know, O my son, that the Islands of Wak are seven islands, wherein is a mighty host, all virgin girls, and the Inner Isles are peopled by Satans and Marids and warlocks and various tribesmen of the Jinn; and whoso entereth their land never returneth thence; at least none hath done so to this day. So, Allah upon thee, return presently to thy people, for know that she whom thou seekest is the King's daughter of all these islands: and how canst thou attain to her? Hearken to me, O my son, and haply Allah will vouchsafe thee in her stead a better than she." "O my lord," answered Hasan, though for the love of her I were cut in pieces yet should I but redouble in love and transport! There is no help but that I enter the Wak Islands and come to the sight of my wife and children; and Inshallah, I will not return save with her and with them." Said the Shaykh, "Then nothing will serve thee but thou must make the journey?" Hasan replied "Nothing! and I only ask of thee thy prayers for help and aidance; so haply Allah will reunite me with my wife and children right soon." Then he wept for stress of longing and recited these couplets,

"You are my wish, of creatures brightest-light * I deem you lief
    as hearing, fain as sight:
You hold my heart which hath become your home * And since you
    left me, lords, right sore's my plight:
Then think not I have yielded up your love, * Your love which set
    this wretch in fierce affright:
You went and went my joy whenas you went; * And waned and
wax'ed
    wan the brightest light:
You left me lone to watch the stars in woe: * Railing tears
    likest rain-drops infinite.
Thou'rt longsome to the wight, who pining lies * On wake,
    moon-gazing through the night,
O Night! Wind! an thou pass the tribe where they abide * Give
    them my greeting, life is fain of flight.
And tell them somewhat of the pangs I bear: * The loved one
    kenneth not my case aright."

Then he wept with sore weeping till he fainted away; and when he came to himself, Shaykh Abd al-Kaddus said to him, "O my son, thou hast a mother; make her not taste the torment of thy loss." Hasan replied, "By Allah, O my lord, I will never return except with my wife, or my death shall overtake me." And he wept and wailed and recited these couplets,

"By Love's right! naught of farness thy slave can estrange * Nor
am I one to fail in my fealty:
I suffer such pains did I tell my case * To folk, they'd cry,
'Madness! clean witless is he!'
Then ecstasy, love-longing, transport and lowe! * Whose case is
such case how shall ever he be?"

With this the old man knew that he would not turn from his purpose, though it cost him his life; so he handed him the scroll and prayed for him and charged him how he should do, saying "I have in this letter given a strict charge concerning thee to Abú al-Ruwaysh,[112] son of Bilkís, daughter of Mu'in, for he is my Shaykh and my teacher, and all, men and Jinn, humble themselves to him and stand in awe of him. And now go with the blessing of God." Hasan forthright set out giving the horse the rein, and it flew off with him swiftlier than lightning, and stayed not in its course ten days, when he saw before him a vast loom black as night, walling the world from East to West. As he neared it, the stallion neighed under him, whereupon there flocked to it horses in number as the drops of rain, none could tell their tale or against them prevail, and fell to rubbing themselves against it. Hasan was affrighted at them and fared forwards surrounded by the horses, without drawing rein till he came to the cavern which Shaykh Abd al-Kaddus had described to him. The steed stood still at the door and Hasan alighted and bridged the bridle over the saddle-bow[113] ; whereupon the steed entered the cavern, whilst the rider abode without, as the old man had charged him, pondering the issue of his case in perplexity and distraction and unknowing what would befal him. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Second Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Hasan, dismounting from the steed, stood at the cavern-mouth pondering the issue of his case and unknowing what might befal him. He abode standing on the same spot five days with their nights, sleepless, mournful, tearful-eyed; distracted, perplexed, pondering his severance from home and family, comrades and friends, with weeping eye-lids and heavy heart. Then he bethought him of his mother and of what might yet happen to him and of his separation from his wife and children and of all that he had suffered, and he recited these couplets,

“With you is my heart-cure a heart that goes; * And from
    hill-foot of eyelids the tear-rill flows:
And parting and sorrow and exile and dole * And farness from
    country and throe that o’erthrows:
Naught am I save a lover distracted by love, * Far parted from
    loved one and wilted by woes.
And ’tis Love that hath brought me such sorrow, say where * Is
    the noble of soul who such sorrow unknows?”

Hardly had Hasan made an end of his verses, when out came the Shaykh Abu al-Ruwaysh, a blackamoor and clad in black raiment, and at first sight he knew him by the description that Abd al-Kaddus had given him. He threw himself at his feet and rubbed his cheeks on them and seizing his skirt, laid it on his head and wept before him. Quoth the old man, “What wantest thou, O my son?” Whereupon he put out his hand to him with the letter, and Abu al-Ruwaysh took it and re-entered the cavern, without making him any answer. So Hasan sat down at the cave-mouth in his place other five days as he had been bidden, whilst concern grew upon him and terror redoubled on him and restlessness gat hold of him, and he fell to weeping and bemoaning himself for the anguish of estrangement and much watching. And he recited these couplets,

“Glory to Him who guides the skies! * The lover sore in sorrow
    lies.
Who hath not tasted of Love’s food * Knows not what mean its
    miseries.
Did I attempt to stem my tears * Rivers of blood would fount and

rise.
How many an intimate is hard * Of heart, and pains in sorest
wise!
An she with me her word would keep, * Of tears and sighs I'd fain
devise,
But I'm forgone, rejected quite * Ruin on me hath cast her eyes.
At my fell pangs fell wildlings weep * And not a bird for me but
cries."

Hasan ceased not to weep till dawn of the sixth day, when Shaykh Abu al-Ruwaysh came forth to him, clad in white raiment, and with his hand signed[114] to him to enter. So he went in, rejoicing and assured of the winning of his wish, and the old man took him by the hand and leading him into the cavern, fared on with him half a day's journey, till they reached an arched doorway with a door of steel. The Shaykh opened the door and they two entered a vestibule vaulted with onyx stones and arabesqued with gold, and they stayed not walking till they came to a great hall and a wide, paved and walled with marble. In its midst was a flower-garden containing all manner trees and flowers and fruits, with birds warbling on the boughs and singing the praises of Allah the Almighty Sovran; and there were four dad'ses, each facing other, and in each dad's a jetting fountain, at whose corners stood lions of red gold, spouting gerbes from their mouths into the basin. On each dad's stood a chair, whereon sat an elder, with exceeding store of books before him[115] and censers of gold, containing fire and perfumes, and before each elder were students, who read the books to him. Now when the twain entered, the elders rose to them and did them honour; whereupon Abu al-Ruwaysh signed to them to dismiss their scholars and they did so. Then the four arose and seating themselves before that Shaykh, asked him of the case of Hasan to whom he said, "Tell the company thy tale and all that hath betided thee from the beginning of thine adventure to the end." So Hasan wept with sore weeping and related to them his story with Bahram; whereupon all the Shaykhs cried out and said, "Is this indeed he whom the Magian caused to climb the Mountain of Clouds by means of the vultures, sewn up in the camel-hide?" And Hasan said, "Yes." So they turned to the Shaykh, Abu al-

Ruwaysh and said to him, "O our Shaykh, of a truth Bahram contrived his mounting to the mountaintop; but how came he down and what marvels saw he there?" And Abu al-Ruwaysh said, "O Hasan, tell them how thou camest down and acquaint them with what thou sawest of marvels." So he told them all that had befallen him, first and last; how he had gotten the Magian into his power and slain him, how he had delivered the youth from him and sent him back to his own country, and how he had captured the King's daughter of the Jinn and married her; yet had she played him false and taken the two boys she had borne him and flown away; brief, he related to them all the hardships and horrors he had undergone; whereat they marvelled, each and every, and said to Abu al-Ruwaysh, "O elder of elders, verily by Allah, this youth is to be pitied! But belike thou wilt aid him to recover his wife and wees." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Third Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan told his tale to the elders, they said to Shaykh Abu al-Ruwaysh, "This youth is to be pitied and haply thou wilt aid him to recover his wife and wees." He replied, "O my brothers, in very sooth this is a grave matter and a perilous; and never saw I any loathe his life save this youth. You know that the Islands of Wak are hard of access and that none may come to them but at risk of life; and ye know also the strength of their people and their guards. Moreover I have sworn an oath not to tread their soil nor transgress against them in aught; so how shall this man come at the daughter of the Great King, and who hath power to bring him to her or help him in this matter?" Replied the other, "O Shaykh of Shaykhs, verily this man is consumed with desire and he hath endangered himself to bring thee a scroll from thy brother Abd al-Kaddus; wherefore it behoveth thee to help him." And Hasan arose and kissed Abu al-Ruwaysh's feet and raising the hem of his garment laid it on his head, weeping and crying, "I beseech thee, by Allah, to reunite me with my wife and children, though it cost me my life and my soul!" The four elders all wept for his weeping and said to Abu al-Ruwaysh, "Deal generously with this unhappy and show him kindness for the sake of thy brother Abd al-Kaddus and profit by this occasion to earn reward from Allah for helping him." Quoth he, "This wilful youth weeteth not what he undertaketh; but Inshallah! we will help him after the measure of our means, nor leave aught feasible undone." When Hasan heard the Shaykh's word he rejoiced and kissed the hands of the five elders, one after other, imploring their aidance. Thereupon Abd al-Ruwaysh took inkcase and a sheet of paper and wrote a letter, which he sealed and gave to Hasan, together with a pouch of perfumed leather,[116] containing incense and fire-sticks[117] and other needs, and said to him, "Take strictest care of this pouch, and whenas thou fallest into any strait, burn a little of the incense therein and name my name, whereupon I will be with thee forthright and save thee from thy stress." Moreover, he bade one of those present fetch him an Ifrit of the Flying Jinn; and he did so incontinently; whereupon quoth Abu al-Ruwaysh to the fire-drake, "What is thy name!" Replied the Ifrit, "Thy thrall is hight Dahnash bin Faktash." And the Shaykh said "Draw near to me!" So Dahnash drew near to him and he put his mouth to his ear and said somewhat to him, whereat the Ifrit shook his head and answered, "I accept, O elder of elders!" Then said Abu al-Ruwaysh to Hasan, "Arise, O my son, mount the shoulders of this Ifrit, Dahnash the Flyer; but, when he heaveth thee heaven-wards and thou hearest the angels glorifying God a-welkin with 'Subhána 'lláh,' have a care lest thou do the like; else wilt thou perish and he too." Hasan replied, "I will not say a word; no, never;" and the old man continued, "O Hasan, after faring with thee all this day, to-morrow at peep of dawn he will set thee down in a land cleanly white, like unto camphor, whereupon do thou walk on ten days by thyself, till thou come to the gate of a city. Then enter and enquire for the King of the city; and when thou comest to his presence, salute him with the salam and kiss his hand: then give him this scroll and consider well whatso he shall counsel thee." Hasan replied, "Hearing and obeying," and rose up and mounted the Ifrit's shoulders, whilst the elders rose and offered up prayers for him and commended him to the care of Dahnash the Firedrake. And when he had perched on the Flyer's back the Ifrit soared with him to the very confines of the sky, till he heard the angels glorifying God in Heaven, and flew on with him a day and a night till at dawn of the next day he set him down in a land white as camphor, and went his way, leaving him there. When

Hasan found himself in the land aforesaid with none by his side he fared on night and day for ten days, till he came to the gate of the city in question and entering, enquired for the King. They directed him to him and told him that his name was King Hassún,[118] Lord of the Land of Camphor, and that he had troops and soldiers enough to fill the earth in its length and breadth. So he sought audience of him and, being admitted to his presence, found him a mighty King and kissed ground between his hands. Quoth the King, "What is thy want?" Whereupon Hasan kissed the letter and gave it to him. The King read it and shook his head awhile, then said to one of his officers, "Take this youth and lodge him in the house of hospitality." So he took him and stablished him in the guest-house, where he tarried three days, eating and drinking and seeing none but the eunuch who waited on him and who entertained him with discourse and cheered him with his company, questioning him of his case and how he came to that city; whereupon he told him his whole story, and the perilous condition wherein he was. On the fourth day, that eunuch carried him before the King, who said to him, "O Hasan, thou comest to me, seeking to enter the Islands of Wak, as the Shaykh of Shaykhs adviseth me. O my son, I would send thee thither this very day, but that by the way are many perils and thirsty wolds full of terrors; yet do thou have patience and naught save fair shall befal thee, for needs must I devise to bring thee to thy desire, Inshallah! Know, O my son, that here is a mighty host,[119] equipped with arms and steeds and warlike gear, who long to enter the Wak Islands and lack power thereto. But, O my son, for the sake of the Shaykh Abu al-Ruwaysh, son of Bilkis,[120] the daughter of Mu'in, I may not send thee back to him unfulfilled of thine affair. Presently there will come to us ships from the Islands of Wak and the first that shall arrive I will send thee on board of her and give thee in charge to the sailors, so they may take care of thee and carry thee to the Islands. If any question thee of thy case and condition, answer him saying, 'I am kinsman to King Hassun, Lord of the Land of Camphor;' and when the ship shall make fast to the shore of the Islands of Wak and the master shall bid thee land, do thou land. Now as soon as thou comest ashore, thou wilt see a multitude of wooden settles all about the beach, of which do thou choose thee one and crouch under it and stir not. And when dark night sets in, thou wilt see an army of women appear and flock about the goods landed from the ship, and one of them will sit down on the settle, under which thou hast hidden thyself, whereupon do thou put forth thy hand to her and take hold of her and implore her protection. And know thou, O my son, that an she accord thee protection, thou wilt win thy wish and regain thy wife and children; but, if she refuse to protect thee, make thy mourning for thyself and give up all hope of life, and make sure of death for indeed thou art a dead man. Understand, O my son, that thou adventurest thy life and this is all I can do for thee, and — the peace!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fourth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that King Hassun spake these words to Hasan and charged him as we have related, ending with, "This is all I can do for thee and know that except the Lord of Heaven had aided thee, thou hadst not come hither!" The youth wept till he swooned away, and when he recovered, he recited these two couplets,

"A term decreed my lot I 'spy; * And, when its days shall end, I die.
Though lions fought with me in lair * If Time be mine I'd beat them, I!"

Then having ended his verse he kissed the ground before the Sovran and said to him, "O mighty King, how many days remain till the coming of the ships?" Replied the other, "In a month's time they will come and will tarry here, selling their cargueson, other two months, after which they will return to their own country; so hope not to set out save after three whole months." Then the King bade him return to the house of hospitality and bade supply him with all that he needed of meat and drink and raiment fit for Kings. Hasan abode in the guest-house a month, at the end of which the vessels arrived and the King and the merchants went forth to them, taking Hasan with them. Amongst them he saw a ship with much people therein, like the shingles for number; none knew their tale save He who created them. She was anchored in mid-harbour and had cocks which transported her lading to the shore. So Hasan abode till the crew had landed all the goods and sold and bought and to the time of departure there wanted but three days; whereupon the King sent for him and equipped him with all he required and gave him great gifts: after which he summoned the captain of the great ship and said to him, “Take this youth with thee in the vessel, so none may know of him save thou, and carry him to the Islands of Wak and leave him there; and bring him not back.” And the Rais said, “To hear is to obey: with love and gladness!” Then quoth the King to Hasan, “Look thou tell none of those who are with thee in the ship thine errand nor discover to them aught of thy case; else thou art a lost man;” and quoth he, “Hearing and obedience!” With this he farewelled the King, after he had wished him long life and victory over his enviers and his enemies; wherefore the King thanked him and wished him safety and the winning of his wish. Then he committed him to the captain, who laid him in a chest which he embarked in a dinghy, and bore him aboard, whilst the folk were busy in breaking bulk and no man doubted but the chest contained somewhat of merchandise. After this, the vessels set sail and fared on without ceasing ten days, and on the eleventh day they made the land. So the Rais set Hasan ashore and, as he walked up the beach, he saw wooden settles[121] without number, none knew their count save Allah, even as the King had told him. He went on, till he came to one that had no fellow and hid under it till nightfall, when there came up a mighty many of women, as they were locusts over-swarming the land and they marched afoot and armed cap-ŕ-pie in hauberks and strait-knit coats of mail hending drawn swords in their hands, who, seeing the merchandise landed from the ships, busied themselves therewith. Presently they sat down to rest themselves, and one of them seated herself on the settle under which Hasan had crouched: whereupon he took hold of the hem of her garment and laid it on his head and throwing himself before her, fell to kissing her hands and feet and weeping and crying, “Thy protection! thy good-will!” Quoth she, “Ho, thou! Arise and stand up, ere any see thee and slay thee.” So he came forth and springing up kissed her hands and wept and said to her, “O my mistress, I am under thy protection!”; adding, “Have ruth on one who is parted from his people and wife and children, one who hath haste to rejoin them and one who adventureth life and soul for their sake! Take pity on me and be assured that therefor Paradise will be thy reward; or, an thou wilt not receive me, I beseech thee, by Allah the Great, the Concealer, to conceal my case!” The merchants stared to see him talking with her; and she, hearing his words and beholding his humility, was moved to ruth for him; her heart inclined to him and she knew that he had not ventured himself and come to that place, save for a grave matter. So she said to him, “O my son, be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear, hearten thy heart and take courage and return to thy hiding-place till the coming night, and Allah shall do as He will.” Then she took leave of him and Hasan crept under the wooden settle as before, whilst the troops lighted flambeaux of wax mixed with aloes-wood and Nadd-perfume and crude ambergris[122] and passed the night in sport and delight till the morning. At daybreak, the boats returned to the shore and the merchants busied themselves with buying and selling and the transport of the goods and gear till nightfall, whilst Hasan lay hidden beneath the settle, weeping-eyed and woeful-hearted, knowing not what was decreed to him in the secret preordainment of Allah. As he was thus, behold, the merchant-woman with whom he had taken refuge came up to him and giving him a habergeon and a helmet, a spear, a sword and a gilded girdle, bade him don them and seat himself on the settle after which she left him, for fear of the troops. So he arose and donned the mail-coat and helmet and clasped the girdle about his middle; then he slung the sword over his shoulder till it hung under his armpit, and taking the spear in his hand, sat down on that settle, whilst his tongue neglected not to name Allah Almighty and call on Him for protection. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fifth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan received the weapons which the merchant-woman had given to him, saying, “Sit thee upon the settle and let none wot thy case,” he armed himself and took his seat, whilst his tongue neglected not to name Allah Almighty and to call upon Him for protection. And behold, there appeared cressets and lanthorns and flambeaux and up came the army of women. So he arose and mingling with them, became as one of them. A little before daybreak, they set out, and Hasan with them, and fared on till they came to their camp, where they dispersed each to her tent, and Hasan followed one of them and lo! it was hers for whose protection he had prayed. When she entered, she threw down her arms and doffed her hauberk and veil. So Hasan did the like and looking at his companion, saw her to be a grizzled old woman blue-eyed and big-nosed, a calamity of calamities, the foulest of all created things, with face pock-marked and eyebrows bald, gap-toothed and chap-fallen, with hair hoary, nose running and mouth slavering;[123] even as saith the like of her the poet,

"In her cheek-corners nine calamities * Wone, and when shown,
each one Jehannam is:
Hideous the face and favour foulest foul * As cheek of hog; yea,
'tis a cesspool phiz."

And indeed she was like a pied snake or a scald she-wolf. Now when the old woman looked at Hasan, she marvelled and said, "How came this one to these lands and in which of the ships was he and how arrived he hither in safety?" And she fell to questioning him of his case and admiring at his arrival, whereupon he fell at her feet and rubbed his face on them and wept till he fainted; and, when he recovered himself, he recited these couplets,

"When will Time grant we meet, when shall we be * Again united
after severance stark?
And I shall win my choicest wish and view? * Blame end and Love
abide without remark?
Were Nile to flow as freely as my tears, * 'Twould leave no
region but with water-mark:
'Twould overthrow Hijaz and Egypt-land * 'Twould deluge Syria and
'twould drown Irák.
This, O my love, is caused by thy disdain, * Be kind and promise
meeting fair and fain!"

Then he took the crone’s skirt and laid it on his head and fell to weeping and craving her protection. When she saw his ardency and transport and anguish and distress, her heart softened to him and she promised him her safeguard, saying, “Have no fear whatsoever.” Then she questioned him of his case and he told her the manner of his coming thither and all that had befallen him from beginning to end, whereat she marvelled and said, “This that hath betide thee, methinks, never betided any save thyself and except thou hadst been vouchsafed the especial protection of Allah, thou hadst not been saved: but now, O my son, take comfort and be of good courage; thou hast nothing more to fear, for indeed thou hast won thy wish and attained thy desire, if it please the Most High!” Thereat Hasan rejoiced with joy exceeding and she sent to summon the captains of the army to her presence, and it was the last day of the month. So they presented themselves and the old woman said to them, “Go out and proclaim to all the troops that they come forth to-morrow at daybreak and let none tarry behind, for whoso tarryeth shall be slain.” They replied, “We hear and we obey,” and going forth, made proclamation to all the host anent a review next morning, even as she bade them, after which they returned and told her of this; whereby Hasan knew that she was the Commander-in-chief of the army and the Viceregent in authority over them; and her name was Shawahí the Fascinator, entituled Umm al-Dawáhi, or Mother of Calamities.[124] She ceased not to bid and forbid and Hasan doffed not off his arms from his body that day. Now when the morning broke, all the troops fared forth from their places, but the old woman came not out with them, and as soon as they were sped and the stead was clear of them, she said to Hasan, “Draw near unto me, O my son[125] .” So he drew near unto her and stood between her hands. Quoth she, “Why and wherefore hast thou adventured thyself so boldly as to enter this land, and how came thy soul to consent to its own undoing? Tell me the truth and the whole truth and fear aught of ill come of it, for thou hast my plighted word and I am moved to compassion for thy case and pity thee and have taken thee under my protection. So, if thou tell me the truth, I will help thee to win thy wish, though it involve the undoing of souls and the destruction of bodies; and since thou hast come to seek me, no hurt shall betide thee from me, nor will I suffer any to have at thee with harm of all who be in the Islands of Wak." So he told her his tale from first to last, acquainting her with the matter of his wife and of the birds; how he had captured her as his prize from amongst the ten and married her and abode with her, till she had borne him two sons, and how she had taken her children and flown away with them, whenas she knew the way to the feather-dress. Brief, he concealed from her no whit of his case, from the beginning to that day. But when Shawahi heard his relation, she shook her head and said to him, "Glory be to God who hath brought thee hither in safety and made thee hap upon me! For, hadst thou happened on any but myself, thou hadst lost thy life without winning thy wish; but the truth of thine intent and thy fond affection and the excess of thy love-longing for thy wife and yearning for thy children, these it was that have brought thee to the attainment of thine aim. Didst thou not love her and love her to distraction, thou hadst not thus imperilled thyself, and Alhamdolillah — Praised be Allah — for thy safety! Wherefore it behoveth us to do thy desire and conduce to thy quest, so thou mayst presently attain that thou seekest, if it be the will of Almighty Allah. But know, O my son, that thy wife is not here, but in the seventh of the Islands of Wak and between us and it is seven months' journey, night and day. From here we go to an island called the Land of Birds, wherein, for the loud crying of the birds and the flapping of their wings, one cannot hear other speak." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Sixth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old woman said to Hasan, "Indeed thy wife is in the Seventh Island,[126] the greatest amongst the Islands of Wak and betwixt us and it is a seven-months' journey. From here we fare for the Land of Birds, whereon for the force of their flying and the flapping of their wings, we cannot hear one other speak. Over that country we journey night and day, eleven days, after which we come forth of it to another called the Land of Ferals where, for stress of roaring of lions and howling of wolves and laughing of hyćnas and the crying of other beasts of prey we shall hear naught, and therein we travel twenty days' journey. Then we issue therefrom and come to a third country, called the Land of the Jánn, where, for stress of the crying of the Jinn and the flaming of fires and the flight of sparks and smoke from their mouths and the noise of their groaning and their arrogance in blocking up the road before us, our ears will be deafened and our eyes blinded, so that we shall neither hear nor see, nor dare any look behind him, or he perisheth: but there horseman boweth head on saddle-bow and raiseth it not for three days. After this, we abut upon a mighty mountain and a running river contiguous with the Isles of Wak, which are seven in number and the extent whereof is a whole year's journey for a well-girt horseman. And thou must know, O my son, that these troops are all virgin girls, and that the ruler over us is a woman of the Archipelago of Wak. On the bank of the river aforesaid is another mountain, called Mount Wak, and it is thus named by reason of a tree which beareth fruits like heads of the Sons of Adam.[127] When the sun riseth on them, the heads cry out all, saying in their cries:— 'Wak! Wak! Glory be to the Creating King, Al-Khallák!' And when we hear their crying, we know that the sun is risen. In like manner, at sundown, the heads set up the same cry, 'Wak! Wak! Glory to Al-Khallak!' and so we know that the sun hath set. No man may abide with us or reach to us or tread our earth; and betwixt us and the abiding-place of the Queen who ruleth over us is a month's journey from this shore, all the lieges whereof are under her hand, as are also the tribes of the Jinn, Marids and Satans, while of the warlocks none kenneth the number save He who created them. Wherefore, an thou be afraid, I will send with thee one who will convey thee to the coast and there bring one who will embark thee on board a ship that bear thee to thine own land. But an thou be content to tarry with us, I will not forbid thee and thou shalt be with me in mine eye,[128] till thou win thy wish, Inshallah!" Quoth he, "O my lady, I will never quit thee till I foregather with my wife or lose my life!"; and quoth she, "This is a light matter; be of good heart, for soon shalt thou come to thy desire, Allah willing; and there is no help but that I let the Queen know of thee, that she may help thee to attain thine aim." Hasan blessed her and kissed her head and hands, thanking her for her good deed and exceeding kindness and firm will. Then he set out with her, pondering the issue of his case and the horrors of his strangerhood; wherefore he fell a-weeping and a-wailing and recited these couplets,

“A Zephyr bloweth from the lover’s site; * And thou canst view me in the saddest plight:
The Night of Union is as brilliant morn; * And black the Severance-day as blackest night:
Farewelling friend is sorrow sorest sore * Parting from lover’s merest undelight.
I will not blame her harshness save to her, * And ‘mid mankind nor friend nor fere I sight:
How can I be consoled for loss of you? * Base censor’s blame shall not console my sprite!
O thou in charms unique, unique’s my love; * O peerless thou, my heart hath peerless might!
Who maketh semblance that he loveth you * And dreadeth blame is most blame-worthy wight.”

Then the old woman bade beat the kettle-drums for departure and the army set out. Hasan fared with her, drowned in the sea of solicitude and reciting verses like those above, whilst she strave to comfort him and exhorted him to patience; but he awoke not from his tristesse and heeded not her exhortations. They journeyed thus till they came to the boundaries of the Land of Birds[129] and when they entered it, it seemed to Hasan as if the world were turned topsy-turvy for the exceeding clamour. His head ached and his mind was dazed, his eyes were blinded and his ears deafened, and he feared with exceeding fear and made certain of death, saying to himself, “If this be the Land of Birds, how will be the Land of Beasts?” But, when the crone hight Shawahi saw him in this plight, she laughed at him, saying, “O my son, if this be thy case in the first island, how will it fare with thee, when thou comest to the others?” So he prayed to Allah and humbled himself before the Lord, beseeching Him to assist him against that wherewith He had afflicted him and bring him to his wishes; and they ceased not going till they passed out of the Land of Birds and, traversing the Land of Beasts, came to the Land of the Jann which when Hasan saw, he was sore affrighted and repented him of having entered it with them. But he sought aid of Allah the

Most High and fared on with them, till they were quit of the Land of the Jann and came to the river and set down their loads at the foot of a vast mountain and a lofty, and pitched their tents by the stream-bank. Then they rested and ate and drank and slept in security, for they were come to their own country. On the morrow the old woman set Hasan a couch of alabaster, inlaid with pearls and jewels and nuggets of red gold, by the river-side, and he sat down thereon, having first bound his face with a chin-kerchief, that discovered naught of him but his eyes. Then she bade proclaim among the troops that they should all assemble before her tent and put off their clothes and go down into the stream and wash; and this she did that she might parade before him all the girls, so haply his wife should be amongst them and he know her. So the whole army mustered before her and putting off their clothes, went down into the stream, and Hasan seated on his couch watched them washing their white skins and frolicking and making merry, whilst they took no heed of his inspecting them, deeming him to be of the daughters of the Kings. When he beheld them stripped of their clothes, his chord stiffened for that looking at them mother-naked he saw what was between their thighs, and that of all kinds, soft and rounded, plump and cushioned; large-lipped, perfect, redundant and ample,[130] and their faces were as moons and their hair as night upon day, for that they were of the daughters of the Kings. When they were clean, they came up out of the water, stark naked, as the moon on the night of fullness and the old woman questioned Hasan of them, company by company, if his wife were among them; but, as often as she asked him of a troop, he made answer, "She is not among these, O my lady." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Seventh Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old woman questioned Hasan of the girls, company after company, if haply his wife were among them; but as often as she asked him of a troop, he made answer, "She is not among these, O my lady!" Last of all, there came up a damsel, attended by ten slave-girls and thirty waiting-women, all of them high-bosomed maidens. They put off their clothes and went down into the river, where the damsel fell to riding the high horse over her women, throwing them down and ducking them. On this wise she continued for a full hour, after which all came up out of the water and sat down; and they brought her napkins[131] of gold-purfled silk, with which she dried herself. Then they brought her clothes and jewels and ornaments of the handiwork of the Jinn, and she donned them and rose and walked with graceful pace among the troops, she and her maidens. When Hasan saw her, his heart was ready to fly from his breast and he said, "Verily this girl is the likest of all folk to the bird I saw in the basin atop of the palace of my sisters the Princesses, and she lorded it over her lieges even as doth this one." The old woman asked, "O Hasan, is this thy wife?"; and he answered, "No, by thy life, O my lady; this is not my wife, nor ever in my life have I set eyes on her; neither among all the girls I have seen in these islands is there the like of my wife nor her match for symmetry and grace and beauty and loveliness!" Then said Shawaki, "Describe her to me and acquaint me with all her attributes, that I may have her in my mind; for I know every girl in the Islands of Wak, being commander of the army of maids and governor over them; wherefore, an thou describe her to me, I shall know her and will contrive for thee to take her." Quoth he, "My wife hath the fairest face and a form all grace; smooth is she of cheeks and high of breasts with eyes of liquid light, calves and thighs plump to sight, teeth snowy white, with dulcet speech dight; in speech soft and bland as she were a willow-wand; her gifts are a moral and lips are red as coral; her eyes wear natural Kohl-dye and her lower labia[132] in softness lie. On her right cheek is a mole and on her waist, under her navel, is a sign; her face shines as the rondure of the moon in sheen, her waist is slight, her hips a heavy weight, and the water of her mouth the sick doth heal, as it were Kausar or Salsabil."[133] Said the old woman, "Give me an increased account of her, Allah increase thee of passion for her!" Quoth he, "My wife hath a face the fairest fair and oval cheeks the rarest rare; neck long and spare and eyes that Kohl wear; her side face shows the Anemones of Nu'uman, her mouth is like a seal of cornelian and flashing teeth that lure and stand one in stead of cup and ewer. She is cast in the mould of pleasantness and between her thighs is the throne of the Caliphate, there is no such sanctuary among the Holy Places; as saith in its praise the poet,

“The name of what drave me distraught * Hath letters renowned
among men:
A four into five multiplied * And a multiplied six into
ten.[134] “

Then Hasan wept and chanted the following Mawwál,[135]

“O heart, an lover false thee, shun the parting bane * Nor to
forgetfulness thy thoughts constrain:
Be patient; thou shalt bury all thy foes; * Allah ne’er falseth
man of patience fain.”

And this also,

“An wouldst be life,long safe, vaunt not delight; * Never
despair, nor wone o’erjoyed in sprite!
Forbear, rejoice not, mourn not o’er thy plight * And in ill day
‘Have not we oped?’ — recite.”[136]

Thereupon the old woman bowed her head groundwards awhile, then, raising it, said, “Laud be to the Lord, the Mighty of Award! Indeed I am afflicted with thee, O Hasan! Would Heaven I had never known thee! This woman, whom thou describest to me as thy wife, I know by description and I know her to be none other than the eldest daughter of the Supreme King, she who ruleth over all the Islands of Wak. So open both eyes and consider thy case; and if thou be asleep, awake; for, if this woman be indeed thy wife, it is impossible for thee ever to obtain her, and though thou come to her, yet couldst thou not avail to her possession, since between thee and her the distance is as that between earth and Heaven. Wherefore, O my son, return presently and cast not thyself into destruction nor cast me with thee; for meseemeth thou hast no lot in her; so return whence thou camest lest our lives be lost.” And she feared for herself and for him. When Hasan heard her words, he wept till he fainted and she left not sprinkling water on his face, till he came to himself, when he continued to weep, so that he drenched his dress with tears, for the much cark and care and chagrin which betided him by reason of her words. And indeed he despaired of life and said to the old woman, “O my lady, and how shall I go back, after having come hither? Verily, I thought not thou wouldst forsake me nor fail of the winning of my wish, especially as thou art the Commander-in-chief of the army of the girls.” Answered Shawahl, “O my son, I doubted not but thy wife was a maid of the maids, and had I known she was the King’s daughter, I had not suffered thee to come hither nor had I shown the troops to thee, for all the love I bear thee. But now, O my son, thou hast seen all the girls naked; so tell me which of them pleaseth thee and I will give her to thee, in lieu of thy wife, and do thou put it that thy wife and children are dead and take her and return to thine own country in safety, ere thou fall into the King’s hand and I have no means of delivering thee. So, Allah upon thee, O my son, hearken unto me. Choose thyself one of these damsels, in the stead of yonder woman, and return presently to thy country in safety and cause me not quaff the cup of thine anguish! For, by Allah, thou hast cast thyself into affliction sore and peril galore, wherefrom none may avail to deliver thee evermore!” But Hasan hung down his head and wept with long weeping and recited these couplets,

“‘Blame not!’ said I to all who blamčd me; * ‘Mine eye-lids
naught but tears were made to dree:’
The tears that brim these orbs have overflowed * My checks, for
lovers and love’s cruelty.
Leave me to love though waste this form of me! * For I of Love
adore the insanity:
And, Oh my dearling, passion grows on me * For you — and you,
why
grudge me clemency?
You wronged me after swearing troth and plight, * Falsed my
companionship and turned to flee:
And cup of humbling for your rigours sore * Ye made me drain what
day departed ye:
Then melt, O heart, with longing for their sight * And, O mine
eyes, with crowns of tears be dight.”

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old woman said to Hasan, “By Allah, O my son, hearken to my words! Choose thee one of these girls in lieu of thy wife and presently return to thy country in safety,” he hung down his head and recited the couplets quoted above. Then he wept till he swooned away and Shawahl sprinkled water on his face till he revived, when she addressed him, “O my lord, I have no shift left; because if I carry thee to the city thy life is lost and mine also: for, when the Queen cometh to know of this, she will blame me for admitting thee into her lands and islands, whereto none of Adam’s sons hath access, and will slay me for bringing thee with me and for suffering mortal to look upon the virgins seen by thee in the sea, whom ne’er touched male, neither approached mate.” And Hasan sware that he had never looked on them with evil of eye. She resumed, “O my son, hearken to me and return to thy country and I will give thee wealth and treasures and things of price, such as shall suffice thee for all the women in the world. Moreover, I will give thee a girl of the best of them, so lend an ear to my words and return presently and imperil not thyself; indeed I counsel thee with good counsel.” But he wept and rubbed both cheeks against her feet, saying, “O my lady and mistress and coolth of mine eyes, how can I turn back now that I have made my way hither, without the sight of those I desire, and now that I have come near the beloved’s site, hoping for meeting forthright, so haply there may be a portion in reunion to my plight?” And he improvised these couplets,

“O Kings of beauty, grace to prisoner ta’en * Of eyelids fit to
 rule the Chosroës’ reign:
Ye pass the wafts of musk in perfumed breath; * Your cheeks the
 charms of blooming rose disdain.
The softest Zephyr breathes where pitch ye camp * And thence
 far-scattered sweetness fills the plain:
Censor of me, leave blame and stint advice! * Thou bringest
 wearying words and wisdom vain:
Why heat my passion with this flame and up- * braid me when

naught thou knowest of its bane?
Captured me eyes with passion maladifs, * And overthrew me with Love’s might and main:
I scatter tears the while I scatter verse; * You are my theme for rhyme and prosy strain.
Melted my vitals glow of rosy cheeks * And in the Lazá-lowe my heart is lain:
Tell me, an I leave to discourse of you, * What speech my breast shall broaden?
Tell me deign! Life-long I loved the lovelings fair, but ah, * To grant my wish eke Allah must be fain!”

Hearing his verses the old woman was moved to ruth for him and Allah planted the seed of affection for him in her heart; so coming up to him she consoled him, saying, “Be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear and put away trouble from thy thought, for, by Allah, I will venture my life with thee, till thou attain thine aim or death undo me!” With this, Hasan’s heart was comforted and his bosom broadened and he sat talking with the old woman till the end of the day, when all the girls dispersed, some entering their town-mansions and others nighting in the tents. Then the old woman carried him into the city and lodged him in a place apart, lest any should come to know of him and tell the Queen of him and she should slay him and slay her who had brought him thither. Moreover, she served him herself and strave to put him in fear of the awful majesty of the Supreme King, his wife’s father; whilst he wept before her and said, “O my lady, I choose death for myself and loathe this worldly life, if I foregather not with my wife and children: I have set my existence on the venture and will either attain my aim or die.” So the old woman fell to pondering the means of bringing him and his wife together and casting about how to do in the case of this unhappy one, who had thrown himself into destruction and would not be diverted from his purpose by fear or aught else; for, indeed he recked not of his life and the sayer of bywords saith, “Lover in nowise hearkeneth he to the speech of the man who is fancy-free.” Now the name of the Queen of the island wherein they were was Núr al-Hudŕ,[137] eldest daughter of the Supreme King, and she had six virgin sisters, abiding with their father, whose capital and court were in the chief city of that region and who had made her ruler over all the lands and islands of Wak. So when the ancient dame saw Hasan on fire with yearning after his wife and children, she rose up and repaired to the palace and going in to Queen Nur al-Huda kissed ground before her; for she had a claim on her favour because she had reared the King's daughters one and all and had authority over each and every of them and was high in honour and consideration with them and with the King. Nur al-Huda rose to her as she entered and embracing her, seated her by her side and asked her of her journey. She answered, "By Allah, O my lady 'twas a blessed journey and I have brought thee a gift which I will presently present to thee," adding, "O my daughter, O Queen of the age and the time, I have a favour to crave of thee and I fain would discover it to thee, that thou mayst help me to accomplish it, and but for my confidence that thou wilt not gainsay me therein, I would not expose it to thee." Asked the Queen, "And what is thy need? Expound it to me, and I will accomplish it to thee, for I and my kingdom and troops are all at thy commandment and disposition." Therewithal the old woman quivered as quivereth the reed on a day when the storm-wind is abroad and saying in herself, "O[138] Protector, protect me from the Queen's mischief!"[139] fell down before her and acquainted her with Hasan's case, saying, "O my lady, a man, who had hidden himself under my wooden settle on the seashore, sought my protection; so I took him under my safeguard and carried him with me among the army of girls armed and accoutred so that none might know him, and brought him into the city; and indeed I have striven to affright him with thy fierceness, giving him to know of thy power and prowess; but, as often as I threatened him, he weepeth and reciteth verses and sayeth, 'Needs must I have my wife and children or die, and I will not return to my country without them.' And indeed he hath adventured himself and come to the Islands of Wak, and never in all my days saw I mortal heartier of heart than he or doughtier of derring-do, save that love hath mastered him to the utmost of mastery." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Ninth Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old woman related to Queen Nur al-Huda the adventure of Hasan, ending with, "Never I saw any one heartier of heart than he save that love hath mastered him to the utmost of mastery," the Queen, after lending an attentive ear and comprehending the case, waxed wroth at her with exceeding wrath and bowed her head awhile groundwards; then, raising it, she looked at Shawahi and said to her, "O ill-omened beldam, art thou come to such a pass of lewdness that thou carriest males, men, with thee into the Islands of Wak and bringest them into me, unfearing of my mischief? Who hath foregone thee with this fashion, that thou shouldst do thus? By the head of the King, but for thy claim on me for fosterage and service, I would forthwith do both him and thee to die the foulest of deaths, that travellers might take warning by thee, O accursed, lest any other do the like of this outrageous deed thou hast done, which none durst hitherto! But go and bring him hither forthright, that I may see him; or I will strike off thy head, O accursed." So the old woman went out from her, confounded, unknowing whither she went and saying, "All this calamity hath Allah driven upon me from this Queen because of Hasan!" and going in to him, said, "Rise, speak with the Queen, O wight whose last hour is at hand!" So he rose and went with her, whilst his tongue ceased not to call upon Almighty Allah and say, "O my God, be gracious to me in Thy decrees and deliver me from this Thine affliction!"[140] And Shawahi went with him charging him by the way how he should speak with the Queen. When he stood before Nur al-Huda, he found that she had donned the chinveil[141] ; so he kissed ground before her and saluted her with the salam, improvising these two couplets,

"God make thy glory last in joy of life; * Allah confirm the
boons he deigned bestow:
Thy grace and grandeur may our Lord increase * And aye Th'
Almighty aid thee o'er thy foe!"

When he ended his verse Nur al-Huda bade the old woman ask him questions before her, that she might hear his answers: so she said to him, "The Queen returneth thy salam-greeting and saith to thee, ‘What is thy name and that of thy country, and what are the names of thy wife and children, on whose account thou art come hither?’” Quoth he, and indeed he had made firm his heart and destiny aided him, “O Queen of the age and tide and peerless jewel of the epoch and the time, my name is Hasan the fullfilled of sorrow, and my native city is Bassorah. I know not the name of my wife[142] but my children’s names are Násir and Mansúr.” When the Queen heard his reply and his provenance, she bespoke him herself and said, “And whence took she her children?” He replied, “O Queen, she took them from the city of Baghdad and the palace of the Caliphate.” Quoth Nur al-Huda, “And did she say naught to thee at the time she flew away?;” and quoth he, “Yes; she said to my mother, ‘Whenas thy son cometh to thee and the nights of severance upon him longsome shall be and he craveth meeting and reunion to see, and whenas the breezes of love and longing shake him dolefully let him come in the Islands of Wak to me.’” Whereupon Queen Nur al-Huda shook her head and said to him, “Had she not desired thee she had not said to thy mother this say, and had she not yearned for reunion with thee, never had she bidden thee to her stead nor acquainted thee with her abiding-place.” Rejoined Hasan, “O mistress of Kings and asylum of prince and pauper, whatso happened I have told thee and have concealed naught thereof, and I take refuge from evil with Allah and with thee; wherefore oppress me not, but have compassion on me and earn recompense and requital for me in the world to come, and aid me to regain my wife and children. Grant me my urgent need and cool mine eyes with my children and help me to the sight of them.” Then he wept and wailed and lamenting his lot recited these two couplets,

“Yea, I will laud thee while the ring-dove moans, * Though fail
 my wish of due and lawful scope:
Ne’er was I whirled in bliss and joys gone by * Wherein I found
 thee not both root and rope.”[143]

The Queen shook her head and bowed it in thought a long time; then, raising it, she said to Hasan (and indeed she was wroth), “I have ruth on thee and am resolved to show thee in review all the girls in the city and in the provinces of my island; and in case thou know thy wife, I will deliver her to thee; but, an thou know her not and know not her place, I will put thee to death and crucify thee over the old woman's door." Replied Hasan, "I accept this from thee, O Queen of the Age, and am content to submit to this thy condition. There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" And he recited these couplets,

"You've roused my desire and remain at rest, — * Waked my wounded
lids while you slept with zest.
And ye made me a vow ye would not hang back * But your guile when
you chained me waxt manifest.
I loved you in childhood unknowing Love; * Then slay me not who
am sore opprest.
Fear ye not from Allah when slaying a friend * Who gazeth on
stars when folk sleep their best?
By Allah, my kinsmen, indite on my tomb * 'This man was the slave
of Love's harshest hest!'
Haps a noble youth, like me Love's own thrall, * When he sees my
grave on my name shall call."

Then Queen Nur al-Huda commanded that not a girl should abide in the city but should come up to the palace and pass in review before Hasan and moreover she bade Shawahi go down in person and bring them up herself. Accordingly all the maidens in the city presented themselves before the Queen, who caused them to go in to Hasan, hundred after hundred, till there was no girl left in the place, but she had shown her to him; yet he saw not his wife amongst them. Then said she to him, "Seest thou her amongst these?"; and he replied, "By thy life, O Queen, she is not amongst them." With this she was sore enraged against him and said to the old woman, "Go in and bring out all who are in the palace and show them to him." So she displayed to him every one of the palace-girls, but he saw not his wife among them and said to the Queen, "By the life of thy head, O Queen, she is not among these." Whereat the Queen was wroth and cried out at those around her, saying, “Take him and hale him along, face to earth, and cut off his head, least any adventure himself after him and intrude upon us in our country and spy out our estate by thus treading the soil of our islands.” So they threw him down on his face and dragged him along; then, covering his eyes with his skirt, stood at his head with bared brands awaiting royal permission. Thereupon Shawahi came forward and kissing the ground before the Queen, took the hem of her garment and laid it on her head, saying, “O Queen, by my claim for fosterage, be not hasty with him, more by token of thy knowledge that this poor wretch is a stranger, who hath adventured himself and suffered what none ever suffered before him, and Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty,) preserved him from death, for that his life was ordained to be long. He heard of thine equity and entered thy city and guarded site;[144] wherefore, if thou put him to death, the report will dispread abroad of thee, by means of the travellers, that thou hatest strangers and slayest them. He is in any case at thy mercy and the slain of thy sword, if his wife be not found in thy dominions; and whensoever thou desireth his presence, I can bring him back to thee. Moreover, in very sooth I took him under my protection only of my trust in thy magnanimity through my claim on thee for fosterage, so that I engaged to him that thou wouldst bring him to his desire, for my knowledge of thy justice and quality of mercy. But for this, I had not brought him into thy kingdom; for I said to myself: ‘The Queen will take pleasure in looking upon him, and hearing him speak his verses and his sweet discourse and eloquent which is like unto pearls strung on string.’ Moreover, he hath entered our land and eaten of our meat; wherefore he hath a claim upon us.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Tenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Queen Nur al-Huda bade her pages seize Hasan and smite his neck, the old woman, Shawahi, began to reason with her and say, “Verily he hath entered our land and eaten of our meat, wherefore he hath a claim upon us, the more especially since I promised him to bring him in company with thee; and thou knowest that, parting is a grievous ill and severance hath power to kill, especially separation from children.

Now he hath seen all our women, save only thyself; so do thou show him thy face?” The Queen smiled and said, “How can he be my husband and have had children by me, that I should show him my face?” Then she made them bring Hasan before her and when he stood in the presence, she unveiled her face, which when he saw, he cried out with a great cry and fell down fainting. The old woman ceased not to tend him, till he came to himself and as soon as he revived he recited these couplets,

“O breeze that blowest from the land Irak * And from their
    corners whoso cry ‘Wak! Wak!’
Bear news of me to friends and say for me * I’ve tasted
    passion-food of bitter smack.
O dearlings of my love, show grace and ruth * My heart is melted
    for this severance-rack.”

When he ended his verse he rose and looking on the Queen’s face, cried out with a great cry, for stress whereof the palace was like to fall upon all therein. Then he swooned away again and the old woman ceased not to tend him till he revived, when she asked him what ailed him and he answered, “In very sooth this Queen is either my wife or else the likest of all folk to my wife.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Eleventh Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old woman asked Hasan what ailed him, he answered, “In very sooth this Queen is either my wife or else the likest of all folk to my wife.” Quoth Nur al-Huda to the old woman, “Woe to thee, O nurse! This stranger is either Jinn-mad or out of his mind, for he stareth me in the face with wide eyes and saith I am his wife.” Quoth the old woman, “O Queen, indeed he is excusable; so blame him not, for the saying saith, ‘For the lovesick is no remedy and alike are the madman and he.’” And Hasan wept with sore weeping and recited these two couplets,

“I sight their track and pine for longing love; * And o’er their
    homesteads weep I and I yearn:

And I pray Heaven who willčd we should part, * Will deign to
grant us boon of safe return."

Then said Hasan to the Queen once more, "By Allah, thou art not my wife, but thou art the likest of all folk to her!" Hereupon Nur al-Huda laughed till she fell backwards and rolled round on her side.[145] Then she said to him, "O my friend, take thy time and observe me attentively: answer me at thy leisure what I shall ask thee and put away from thee insanity and perplexity and inadvertency for relief is at hand." Answered Hasan, "O mistress of Kings and asylum of all princes and paupers, when I looked upon thee, I was distracted, seeing thee to be either my wife or the likest of all folk to her; but now ask me whatso thou wilt." Quoth she, "What is it in thy wife that resembleth me?"; and quoth he, "O my lady, all that is in thee of beauty and loveliness, elegance and amorous grace, such as the symmetry of thy shape and the sweetness of thy speech and the blushing of thy cheeks and the jutting of thy breasts and so forth, all resembleth her and thou art her very self in thy faculty of parlance and the fairness of thy favour and the brilliancy of thy brow."[146] When the Queen heard this, she smiled and gloried in her beauty and loveliness and her cheeks reddened and her eyes wantoned; then she turned to Shawahi Umm Dawahi and said to her, "O my mother, carry him back to the place where he tarried with thee and tend him thyself, till I examine into his affair; for, an he be indeed a man of manliness and mindful of friendship and love and affection, it behoveth we help him to win his wish, more by token that he hath sojourned in our country and eaten of our victual, not to speak of the hardships of travel he hath suffered and the travail and horrors he hath undergone. But, when thou hast brought him to thy house, commend him to the care of thy dependents and return to me in all haste; and Allah Almighty willing![147] all shall be well." Thereupon Shawahi carried him back to her lodging and charged her handmaids and servants and suite wait upon him and bring him all he needed nor fail in what was his due. Then she returned to Queen Nur al-Huda, who bade her don her arms and set out, taking with her a thousand doughty horsemen. So she obeyed and donned her war-gear and having collected the thousand riders reported them ready to the

Queen, who bade her march upon the city of the Supreme King, her father, there to alight at the abode of her youngest sister, Manár al-Saná[148] and say to her, “Clothe thy two sons in the coats of mail which their aunt hath made them and send them to her; for she longeth for them.” Moreover the Queen charged her keep Hasan’s affair secret and say to Manar al-Sana, after securing her children, “Thy sister inviteth thee to visit her.” “Then,” she continued, “bring the children to me in haste and let her follow at her leisure. Do thou come by a road other than her road and journey night and day and beware of discovering this matter to any. And I swear by all manner oaths that, if my sister prove to be his wife and it appear that her children are his, I will not hinder him from taking her and them and departing with them to his own country.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Twelfth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Oueen said, “I swear by Allah and by all manner of oaths that if she prove to be his wife, I will not hinder him from taking her but will aid him thereto and eke to departing with them to his mother-land.” And the old woman put faith in her words, knowing not what she purposed in her mind, for the wicked Jezebel had resolved that if she were not his wife she would slay him; but if the children resembled him, she would believe him. The Queen resumed, “O my mother, an my thought tell me true, my sister Manar al-Sana is his wife, but Allah alone is All-knowing! seeing that these traits of surpassing beauty and excelling grace, of which he spoke, are found in none except my sisters and especially in the youngest.” The old woman kissed her hand and returning to Hasan, told him what the Queen had said, whereat he was like to fly for joy and coming up to her, kissed her head. Quoth she, “O my son, kiss not my head, but kiss me on the mouth and be this kiss by way of sweetmeat for thy salvation.[149] Be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool and clear and grudge not to kiss my mouth, for I and only I was the means of thy foregathering with her. So take comfort, and hearten thy heart and broaden thy breast and gladden thy glance and console thy soul for, Allah willing, thy desire shall be accomplished at my hand.” So saying, she bade him farewell and departed, whilst he recited these two couplets,

“Witnesses unto love of thee I’ve four; * And wants each case two witnesses; no more!
A heart aye fluttering, limbs that ever quake, * A wasted frame and tongue that speech forswore.”

And also these two,

“Two things there be, an blood-tears thereover * Wept eyes till not one trace thou couldst discover,
Eyes ne’er could pay the tithe to them is due * The prime of youth and severance from lover.”

Then the old woman armed herself and, taking with her a thousand weaponed horsemen, set out and journeyed till she came to the island and the city where dwelt the Lady Manar al-Sana and between which and that of her sister Queen Nur al-Huda was three days’ journey. When Shawahi reached the city, she went in to the Princess and saluting her, gave her her sister’s salam and acquainted her with the Queen’s longing for her and her children and that she reproached her for not visiting her. Quoth Manar al-Sana, “Verily, I am beholden to my sister and have failed of my duty to her in not visiting her, but I will do so forthright.” Then she bade pitch her tents without the city and took with her for her sister a suitable present of rare things. Presently, the King her father looked out of a window of his palace, and seeing the tents pitched by the road, asked of them, and they answered him, “The Princess Manar al-Sana hath pitched her tents by the way-side, being minded to visit her sister Queen Nur al-Huda.” When the King heard this, he equipped troops to escort her to her sister and brought out to her from his treasuries meat and drink and monies and jewels and rarities which beggar description. Now the King had seven daughters, all sisters-german by one mother and father except the youngest: the eldest was called Núr al-Hudŕ, the second Najm al-Sabáh, the third Shams al-Zuhŕ, the fourth Shajarat al-Durr, the fifth Kút al-Kulúb, the sixth Sharaf al-Banát and the youngest Manar al-Sana, Hasan’s wife, who was their sister by the father’s side only.[150] Anon the old woman again presented herself and kissed ground before the Princess, who said to her, “Hast thou any need, O my mother?” Quoth Shawahi, “Thy sister, Queen Nur al-Huda, biddeth thee clothe thy sons in the two habergeons which she fashioned for them and send them to her by me, and I will take them and forego thee with them and be the harbinger of glad tidings and the announcer of thy coming to her.” When the Princess heard these words, her colour changed and she bowed her head a long while, after which she shook it and looking up, said to the old woman, “O my mother, my vitals tremble and my heart fluttereth when thou namest my children; for, from the time of their birth none hath looked on their faces either Jinn or man, male or female, and I am jealous for them of the zephyr when it breatheth in the night.” Exclaimed the old woman, “What words are these, O my lady? Dost thou fear for them from thy sister?” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Thirteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old woman said to the Princess Manar al-Sana, “What words be these, O my lady? Dost thou fear for them from thy sister? Allah safeguard thy reason! Thou mayst not cross the Queen’s majesty in this matter, for she would be wroth with thee. However, O my lady, the children are young, and thou art excusable in fearing for them, for those that love well are wont to deem ill: but, O my daughter, thou knowest my tenderness and mine affection for thee and thy children, for indeed I reared thee before them. I will take them in my charge and make my cheek their pillow and open my heart and set them within, nor is it needful to charge me with care of them in the like of this case; so be of cheerful heart and tearless eye and send them to her, for, at the most, I shall but precede thee with them a day or at most two days.” And she ceased not to urge her, till she gave way, fearing her sister’s fury and unknowing what lurked for her in the dark future, and consented to send them with the old woman. So she called them and bathed them and equipped them and changed their apparel. Then she clad them in the two little coats of mail and delivered them to Shawahi, who took them and sped on with them like a bird, by another road than that by which their mother should travel, even as the Queen had charged her; nor did she cease to fare on with all diligence, being fearful for them, till she came in sight of Nur al-

Huda’s city, when she crossed the river and entering the town, carried them in to their aunt. The Queen rejoiced at their sight and embraced them, and pressed them to her breast; after which she seated them, one upon the right thigh and the other upon the left; and turning round said to the old woman, “Fetch me Hasan forthright, for I have granted him my safeguard and have spared him from my sabre and he hath sought asylum in my house and taken up his abode in my courts, after having endured hardships and horrors and passed through all manner mortal risks, each terribler than other; yet hitherto is he not safe from drinking the cup of death and from cutting off his breath.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fourteenth Night, She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Queen Nur al-Huda bade the old woman bring Hasan she said, “Verily he hath endured hardships and horrors and passed through all manner mortal risks each terribler than other; yet hitherto he is not safe from death and from the cutting off of his breath.” Replied Shawahi, “An I bring him to thee, wilt thou reunite him with these his children? Or, if they prove not his, wilt thou pardon him and restore him to his own country?” Hearing these her words the Queen waxed exceeding wroth and cried to her, “Fie upon thee, O ill-omened old woman! How long wilt thou false us in the matter of this strange man who hath dared to intrude himself upon us and hath lifted our veil and pried into our conditions? Say me: thinkest thou that he shall come to our land and look upon our faces and betray our honour, and after return in safety to his own country and expose our affairs to his people, wherefore our report will be bruited abroad among all the Kings of the quarters of the earth and the merchants will journey bearing tidings of us in all directions, saying, ‘A mortal entered the Isles of Wak and traversed the Land of the Jinn and the lands of the Wild Beasts and the Islands of Birds and set foot in the country of the Warlocks and the Enchanters and returned in safety?’ This shall never be; no, never; and I swear by Him who made the Heavens and builded them; yea, by Him who dispread the earth and smoothed it, and who created all creatures and counted them, that, an they be not his children, I will assuredly slay him and strike his neck with mine own hand!” Then she cried out at the old woman, who fell down for fear; and set upon her the Chamberlain and twenty Mamelukes, saying, “Go with this crone and fetch me in haste the youth who is in her house.” So they dragged Shawahi along, yellow with fright and with side-muscles quivering, till they came to her house, where she went in to Hasan, who rose to her and kissed her hands and saluted her. She returned not his salam, but said to him, “Come; speak the Queen. Did I not say to thee: ‘Return presently to thine own country and I will give thee that to which no mortal may avail?’ And did I forbid thee from all this? But thou wouldst not obey me nor listen to my words; nay, thou rejectedst my counsel and chosest to bring destruction on me and on thyself. Up, then, and take that which thou hast chosen; for death is near hand. Arise: speak with yonder vile harlot[151] and tyrant that she is!" So Hasan arose, broken-spirited, heavy-hearted, and full of fear, and crying, "O Preserver, preserve Thou me! O my God, be gracious to me in that which Thou hast decreed to me of Thine affliction and protect me, O Thou the most Merciful of the Mercifuls!" Then, despairing of his life, he followed the twenty Mamelukes, the Chamberlain and the crone to the Queen's presence, where he found his two sons Nasir and Mansur sitting in her lap, whilst she played and made merry with them. As soon as his eyes fell on them, he knew them and crying a great cry fell down a-fainting for excess of joy at the sight of his children. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fifteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan's eyes fell upon his two sons, he knew them both and crying a great cry fell down a-fainting. They also knew him[152] and natural affection moved them so that they freed themselves from the Queen's lap and fell upon Hasan, and Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty,) made them speak and say to him, "O our father!" Whereupon the old woman and all who were present wept for pity and tenderness over them and said, "Praised be Allah, who hath reunited you with your Sire!" Presently, Hasan came to himself and embracing his children, wept till again he swooned away, and when he revived, he recited these verses,

"By rights of you, this heart of mine could ne'er aby * Severance
    from you albeit Union death imply!
Your phantom saith to me, 'A-morrow we shall meet!' * Shall I
    despite the foe the morrow-day espy?
By rights of you I swear, my lords, that since the day * Of
    severance ne'er the sweets of lips enjoyčd I!
An Allah bade me perish for the love of you, * Mid greatest
    martyrs for your love I lief will die.
Oft a gazelle doth make my heart her browsing stead * The while
    her form of flesh like sleep eludes mine eye:
If in the lists of Law my bloodshed she deny, * Prove it two

witnesses those cheeks of ruddy dye."

When Nur al-Huda was assured that the little ones were indeed Hasan's children and that her sister, the Princess Manar al-Sana, was his wife, of whom he was come in quest, she was wroth against her with wrath beyond measure. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Sixteenth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Nur al-Huda was certified that the little ones were Hasan's children and that her sister Manar al-Sana was his wife of whom he had come in quest, she raged with exceeding rage, too great to be assuaged and screamed in Hasan's face and reviled him and kicked him in the breast, so that he fell on his back in a swoon. Then she cried out at him, saying, "Arise! fly for thy life. But that I swore that no evil should betide thee from me, should thy tale prove true, I would slay thee with mine own hand forthright!" And she cried out at the old woman, who fell on her face for fear, and said to her, "By Allah, but that I am loath to break the oath that I swore, I would put both thee and him to death after the foulest fashion!"; presently adding, "Arise, go out from before me in safety and return to thine own country, for I swear by my fortune, if ever mine eye espy thee or if any bring thee in to me after this, I will smite off thy head and that of whoso bringeth thee!" Then she cried out to her officers, saying, "Put him out from before me!" So they thrust him out, and when he came to himself, he recited these couplets,

"You're far, yet to my heart you're nearest near; * Absent yet
present in my sprite you appear:
By Allah, ne'er to other I've inclined * But tyranny of Time in
patience bear!
Nights pass while still I love you and they end, * And burns my
breast with flames of fell Sa'ir;[153]
I was a youth who parting for an hour * Bore not, then what of
months that make a year?
Jealous am I of breeze-breath fanning thee; * Yea jealous-mad of
fair soft-sided fere!"

Then he once more fell down in a swoon, and when he came to himself, he found himself without the palace whither they had dragged him on his face; so he rose, stumbling over his skirts and hardly crediting his escape from Nur al-Huda. Now this was grievous to Shawahi; but she dared not remonstrate with the Queen by reason of the violence of her wrath. And forthright Hasan went forth, distracted and knowing not whence to come or whither to go; the world, for all its wideness, was straitened upon him and he found none to speak a kind word with him and comfort him, nor any to whom he might resort for counsel or to apply for refuge; wherefore he made sure of death for that he could not journey to his own country and knew none to travel with him, neither wist he the way thither nor might he pass through the Wady of the Jann and the Land of Beasts and the Islands of Birds. So giving himself up for lost he bewept himself, till he fainted, and when he revived, he bethought him of his children and his wife and of that might befal her with her sister, repenting him of having come to those countries and of having hearkened to none, and recited these couplets,

“Suffer mine eye-babes weep lost of love and tears express: *
  Rare is my solace and increases my distress:
The cup of Severance-chances to the dregs I’ve drained; * Who is
  the man to bear love-loss with manliness?
Ye spread the Carpet of Disgrace[154] betwixt us twain; * Ah,
  when shalt be uprolled, O Carpet of Disgrace?
I watched the while you slept; and if you deemed that I * Forgot
  your love I but forget forgetfulness:
Woe’s me! indeed my heart is pining for the love * Of you, the
  only leaches who can cure my case:
See ye not what befel me from your fell disdain? * Debased am I
  before the low and high no less.
I hid my love of you but longing laid it bare, * And burns my
  heart wi’ fire of passion’s sorest stress:
Ah! deign have pity on my piteous case, for I * Have kept our
  troth in secresy and patent place!
Would Heaven I wot shall Time e’er deign us twain rejoin! * You
  are my heart’s desire, my sprite’s sole happiness:

My vitals bear the Severance-wound: would Heaven that you * With
tidings from your camp would deign my soul to bless!”

Then he went on, till he came without the city, where he found the river, and walked along its bank, knowing not whither he went. Such was Hasan’s case; but as regards his wife Manar al-Sana, as she was about to carry out her purpose and to set out, on the second day after the departure of the old woman with her children, behold, there came in to her one of the chamberlains of the King her sire, and kissed ground between his hands, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Seventeenth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Manar al-Sana was about to set out upon the journey, behold, a chamberlain of the King, her sire, came in to her and kissing the ground before her, said, “O Princess, the Supreme King, thy father saluteth thee and biddeth thee to him.” So she rose and accompanied the chamberlain to learn what was required by her father, who seated her by his side on the couch, and said to her, “O my daughter, know that I have this night had a dream which maketh me fear for thee and that long sorrow will betide thee from this thy journey.” Quoth she, “How so, O my father, and what didst thou see in thy dream?” and quoth he, “I dreamt that I entered a hidden hoard, wherein was great store of monies, of jewels, of jacinths and of other riches; but ’twas as if naught pleased me of all this treasure and jewelry save seven bezels, which were the finest things there. I chose out one of the seven jewels, for it was the smallest, finest and most lustrous of them and its water pleased me; so I took it in my hand-palm and fared forth of the treasury. When I came without the door, I opened my hand, rejoicing, and turned over the jewel, when, behold, there swooped down on me out of the welkin a strange bird from a far land (for it was not of the birds of our country) and, snatching it from my hand, returned with it whence it came.[155] Whereupon sorrow and concern and sore vexation overcame me and my exceeding chagrin so troubled me that I awoke, mourning and lamenting for the loss of the jewel. At once on awaking I summoned the interpreters and expounders of dreams and declared to them my dream,[156] and they said to me: ‘Thou hast seven daughters, the youngest of whom thou wilt lose, and she will be taken from thee perforce, without thy will.’ Now thou, O my girl, art the youngest and dearest of my daughters and the most affectionate of them to me, and look’ye thou art about to journey to thy sister, and I know not what may befal thee from her; so go thou not; but return to thy palace.” But when the Princess heard her father’s words, her heart fluttered and she feared for her children and bent earthwards her head awhile: then she raised it and said to her sire, “O King, Queen Nur al-Huda hath made ready for me an entertainment and awaiteth my coming to her, hour by hour. These four years she hath not seen me and if I delay to visit her, she will be wroth with me. The utmost of my stay with her shall be a month and then I will return to thee. Besides, who is the mortal who can travel our land and make his way to the Islands of Wak? Who can gain access to the White Country and the Black Mountain and come to the Land of Camphor and the Castle of Crystal, and how shall he traverse the Island of Birds and the Wady of Wild Beasts and the Valley of the Jann and enter our Islands? If any stranger came hither, he would be drowned in the seas of destruction: so be of good cheer and eyes without a tear anent my journey; for none may avail to tread our earth.” And she ceased not to persuade him, till he deigned give her leave to depart. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Eighteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Princess ceased not to persuade him till he deigned give her leave to depart, and bade a thousand horse escort her to the river and abide there, till she entered her sister’s city and palace and returned to them, when they should take her and carry her back to him. Moreover, he charged her tarry with her sister but two days and return to him in haste; and she answered, “Hearing and obedience.” Then rising up she went forth and he with her and farewelled her. Now his words had sunken deep into her heart and she feared for her children; but it availeth not to fortify herself by any device against the onset of Destiny. So she set out and fared on diligently three days, till she came to the river and pitched her tents on its bank. Then she crossed the stream, with some of her counsellors, pages and suite and, going up to the city and the palace, went in to Queen Nur al-Huda, with whom she found her children who ran to her weeping and crying out, “O our father!” At this, the tears railed from her eyes and she wept; then she strained them to her bosom, saying, “What! Have you seen your sire at this time? Would the hour had never been, in which I left him! If I knew him to be in the house of the world, I would carry you to him.” Then she bemoaned herself and her husband and her children weeping and reciting these couplets,

“My friends, despight this distance and this cruelty, * I pine
for you, incline to you where’er you be.
My glance for ever turns toward your hearth and home * And mourns
my heart the bygone days you woned with me,
How many a night foregathered we withouten fear * One loving,
other faithful ever fain and free!”

When her sister saw her fold her children to her bosom, saying, “’Tis I who have done thus with myself and my children and have ruined my own house!” she saluted her not, but said to her, “O whore, whence haddest thou these children? Say, hast thou married unbeknown to thy sire or hast thou committed fornication?[157] An thou have played the piece, it behoveth thou be exemplarily punished; and if thou have married sans our knowledge, why didst thou abandon thy husband and separate thy sons from thy sire and bring them hither?” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Nineteenth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth Nur al-Huda, the Queen, to her sister Manar al-Sana, the Princess, “An thou have married sans our knowledge, why didst thou abandon thy husband and separate thy sons from their sire and bring them to our land? Thou hast hidden thy children from us. Thinkest thou we know not of this? Allah Almighty, He who is cognisant of the concealed, hath made known to us thy case and revealed thy condition and bared thy nakedness.” Then she bade her guards seize her and pinion her elbows and shackle her with shackles of iron. So they did as she commanded and she beat her with a grievous beating, so that her skin was torn, and hanged her up by the hair; after which she cast her in prison and wrote the King her father a writ acquainting him with her case and saying, "There hath appeared in our land a man, a mortal, by name Hasan, and our sister Manar al-Sana avoucheth that she is lawfully married to him and bare him two sons, whom she hath hidden from us and thee; nor did she discover aught of herself till there came to us this man and informed us that he wedded her and she tarried with him a long while; after which she took her children and departed, without his knowledge, bidding as she went his mother tell her son, whenas longing began to rack to come to her in the Islands of Wak. So we laid hands on the man and sent the old woman Shawahi to fetch her and her offspring, enjoining her to bring us the children in advance of her. And she did so, whilst Manar al-Sana equipped herself and set out to visit me. When the boys were brought to me and ere the mother came, I sent for Hasan the mortal who claimeth her to wife, and he on entering and at first sight knew them and they knew him; whereby was I certified that the children were indeed his children and that she was his wife and I learned that the man's story was true and he was not to blame, but that the reproach and the infamy rested with my sister. Now I feared the rending of our honour-veil before the folk of our Isles; so when this wanton, this traitress, came in to me, I was incensed against her and cast her into prison and bastinado'd her grievously and hanged her up by the hair. Behold, I have acquainted thee with her case and it is thine to command, and whatso thou orderest us that we will do. Thou knowest that in this affair is dishonour and disgrace to our name and to thine, and haply the islanders will hear of it, and we shall become amongst them a byword; wherefore it befitteth thou return us an answer with all speed." Then she delivered the letter to a courier and he carried it to the King, who, when he read it, was wroth with exceeding wrath with his daughter Manar al-Sana and wrote to Nur al-Huda, saying, "I commit her case to thee and give thee command over her life; so, if the matter be as thou sayest, kill her without consulting me." When the Queen had received and read her father's letter, she sent for Manar al-Sana and they set before her the prisoner drowned in her blood and pinioned with her hair, shackled with heavy iron shackles and clad in hair-cloth; and they made her stand in the presence abject and abashed. When she saw herself in this condition of passing humiliation and exceeding abjection, she called to mind her former high estate and wept with sore weeping and recited these two couplets,

"O Lord my foes are fain to slay me in despight * Nor deem I
anywise to find escape by flight:
I have recourse to Thee t' annul what they have done; * Thou art
th' asylum, Lord, of fearful suppliant wight."

Then wept she grievously, till she fell down in a swoon, and presently coming to herself, repeated these two couplets,[158]

"Troubles familiar with my heart are grown and I with them, *
Erst shunning; for the generous are sociable still.
Not one mere kind alone of woe doth lieger with me lie; * Praised
be God! There are with me thousands of kinds of ill."

And also these,

"Oft times Mischance shall straiten noble breast * With grief,
whence issue is for Him to shape:
But when the meshes straitest, tightest, seem * They loose,
though deemed I ne'er to find escape."

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Twentieth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Queen Nur al-Huda ordered into the presence her sister Princess Manar al-Sana, they set her between her hands and she, pinioned as she was recited the verses aforesaid. Then the Queen[159] sent for a ladder of wood and made the eunuchs lay her on her back, with her arms spread out and bind her with cords thereto; after which she bared her head and wound her hair about the ladder-rungs and indeed all pity for her was rooted out from her heart. When Manar al-Sana saw herself in this state of abjection and humiliation, she cried out and wept; but none succoured her. Then said she to the Queen, "O my sister, how is thy heart hardened against me? Hast thou no mercy on me nor pity on these little children?" But her words only hardened her sister's heart and she insulted her, saying, "O Wanton! O harlot! Allah have no ruth on whoso sueth for thee! How should I have compassion on thee, O traitress?" Replied Manar al-Sana who lay stretched on the ladder, "I appeal from thee to the Lord of the Heavens, concerning that wherewith thou revilest me and whereof I am innocent! By Allah, I have done no whoredom, but am lawfully married to him, and my Lord knoweth an I speak sooth or not! Indeed, my heart is wroth with thee, by reason of thine excessive hardheartedness against me! How canst thou cast at me the charge of harlotry, without knowledge? But my Lord will deliver me from thee and if that whoredom whereof thou accusest me be true, may He presently punish me for it!" Quoth Nur al-Huda after a few moments of reflection "How durst thou bespeak me thus?" and rose and beat her till she fainted away;[160] whereupon they sprinkled water on her face till she revived; and in truth her charms were wasted for excess of beating and the straitness of her bonds and the sore insults she had suffered. Then she recited these two couplets,

"If aught I've sinned in sinful way, * Or done ill deed and gone astray,
The past repent I and I come * To you and for your pardon pray!"

When Nur al-Huda heard these lines, her wrath redoubled and she said to her, "Wilt speak before me in verse, O whore, and seek to excuse thyself for the mortal sins thou hast sinned? 'Twas my desire that thou shouldst return to thy husband, that I might witness thy wickedness and matchless brazenfacedness; for thou gloriest in thy lewdness and wantonness and mortal heinousness." Then she called for a palm-stick and, whenas they brought the Jaríd, she arose and baring arms to elbows, beat her sister from head to foot; after which she called for a whip of plaited thongs, wherewith if one smote an elephant, he would start off at full speed, and came down therewith on her back and her stomach and every part of her body, till she fainted. When the old woman Shawahi saw this, she fled forth from the Queen's presence, weeping and cursing her; but Nur al-Huda cried out to her eunuchs, saying, "Fetch her to me!" So they ran after her and seizing her, brought her back to the Queen, who bade throw her on the ground and making them lay hold of her, rose and took the whip, with which she beat her, till she swooned away, when she said to her waiting-women, "Drag this ill-omened beldam forth on her face and put her out." And they did as she bade them. So far concerning them; but as regards Hasan, he walked on beside the river, in the direction of the desert, distracted, troubled, and despairing of life; and indeed he was dazed and knew not night from day for stress of affliction. He ceased not faring on thus, till he came to a tree whereto he saw a scroll hanging: so he took it and found written thereon these couplets,

"When in thy mother's womb thou wast, * I cast thy case the bestest best;
And turned her heart to thee, so she * Fosterčd thee on fondest breast.
We will suffice thee in whate'er * Shall cause thee trouble or unrest;
We'll aid thee in thine enterprise * So rise and bow to our behest."

When he had ended reading this scroll, he made sure of deliverance from trouble and of winning reunion with those he loved. Then he walked forward a few steps and found himself alone in a wild and perilous wold wherein there was none to company with him; upon which his heart sank within him for horror and loneliness and his side-muscles trembled, for that fearsome place, and he recited these couplets,

"O Zephyr of Morn, an thou pass where the dear ones dwell, * Bear greeting of lover who ever in love-longing wones!
And tell them I'm pledged to yearning and pawned to pine * And the might of my passion all passion of lovers unthrones.
Their sympathies haply shall breathe in a Breeze like thee * And quicken forthright this framework of rotting bones."[161]

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Twenty-first Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan read the scroll he was certified of deliverance from his trouble and made sure of winning reunion with those he loved. Then he walked forward a couple of steps and stopped finding himself alone in a wild and perilous wold wherein was none to company with him, so he wept sore and recited the verses before mentioned. Then he walked on a few steps farther beside the river, till he came upon two little boys of the sons of the sorcerers, before whom lay a rod of copper graven with talismans, and beside it a skull-cap[162] of leather, made of three gores and wroughten in steel with names and characts. The cap and rod were upon the ground and the boys were disputing and beating each other, till the blood ran down between them; whilst each cried, “None shall take the wand but I.” So Hasan interposed and parted them, saying, “What is the cause of your contention?” and they replied, “O uncle, be thou judge of our case, for Allah the Most High hath surely sent thee to do justice between us.” Quoth Hasan, “Tell me your case, and I will judge between you;” and quoth one of them, “We twain are brothers-german and our sire was a mighty magician, who dwelt in a cave on yonder mountain. He died and left us this cap and rod; and my brother saith, ‘None shall have the rod but I,’ whilst I say the like; so be thou judge between us and deliver us each from other.” Hasan asked, “What is the difference between the rod and the cap and what is their value? The rod appears to be worth six coppers[163] and the cap three;” whereto they answered, “Thou knowest not their properties.” “And what are their properties?” “Each of them hath a wonderful secret virtue, wherefore the rod is worth the revenue of all the Islands of Wak and their provinces and dependencies, and the cap the like!” “By Allah, O my sons, discover to me their secret virtues.” So they said, “O uncle, they are extraordinary; for our father wrought an hundred and thirty and five years at their contrivance, till he brought them to perfection and ingrafted them with secret attributes which might serve him extraordinary services and engraved them after the likeness of the revolving sphere, and by their aid he dissolved all spells; and when he had made an end of their fashion, Death, which all needs must suffer, overtook him. Now the hidden virtue of the cap is, that whoso setteth it on his head is concealed from all folks' eyes, nor can any see him, whilst it remaineth on his head; and that of the rod is that whoso owneth it hath authority over seven tribes of the Jinn, who all serve the order and ordinance of the rod; and whenever he who possesseth it smiteth therewith on the ground, their Kings come to do him homage, and all the Jinn are at his service." Now when Hasan heard these words, he bowed his head groundwards awhile, then said in himself, "By Allah, I shall conquer every foe by means of this rod and cap, Inshallah! and I am worthier of them both than these two boys. So I will go about forthright to get them from the twain by craft, that I may use them to free myself and my wife and children from yonder tyrannical Queen, and then we will depart from this dismal stead, whence there is no deliverance for mortal man nor flight. Doubtless, Allah caused me not to fall in with these two lads, but that I might get the rod and cap from them." Then he raised his head and said to the two boys, "If ye would have me decide the case, I will make trial of you and see what each of you deserveth. He who overcometh his brother shall have the rod and he who faileth shall have the cap." They replied, "O uncle, we depute thee to make trial of us and do thou decide between us as thou deems fit." Hasan asked, "Will ye hearken to me and have regard to my words?"; and they answered, "Yes." Then said he, "I will take a stone and throw it and he who outrunneth his brother thereto and picketh it up shall take the rod, and the other who is outraced shall take the cap." And they said, "We accept and consent to this thy proposal." Then Hasan took a stone and threw it with his might, so that it disappeared from sight. The two boys ran under and after it and when they were at a distance, he donned the cap and hending the rod in hand, removed from his place that he might prove the truth of that which the boys had said, with regard to their scant properties. The younger outran the elder and coming first to the stone, took it and returned with it to the place where they had left Hasan, but found no signs of him. So he called to his brother, saying, "Where is the man who was to be umpire between us?" Quoth the other, "I espy him not neither wot I whether he hath flown up to heaven above or sunk into earth beneath." Then they sought for him, but saw him not, though all the while he was standing in his stead hard by them. So they abused each other, saying, “Rod and Cap are both gone; they are neither mine nor thine: and indeed our father warned us of this very thing; but we forgot whatso he said.” Then they retraced their steps and Hasan also entered the city, wearing the cap and bearing the rod; and none saw him. Now when he was thus certified of the truth of their speech, he rejoiced with exceeding joy and making the palace, went up into the lodging of Shawahi, who saw him not, because of the cap. Then he walked up to a shelf[164] over her head upon which were vessels of glass and chinaware, and shook it with his hand, so that what was thereon fell to the ground. The old woman cried out and beat her face; then she rose and restored the fallen things to their places,[165] saying in herself, “By Allah, methinks Queen Nur al-Huda hath sent a Satan to torment me, and he hath tricked me this trick! I beg Allah Almighty deliver me from her and preserve me from her wrath, for, O Lord, if she deal thus abominably with her half-sister, beating and hanging her, dear as she is to her sire, how will she do with a stranger like myself, against whom she is incensed?” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Twenty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the ancient Lady of Calamities cried, “When Queen Nur al-Huda doeth such misdeed to her sister, what will she do to a stranger like myself, against whom she is incensed?” Then said she, “I conjure thee, O devil, by the Most Compassionate, the Bountiful-great, the High of Estate, of Dominion Elate who man and Jinn did create, and by the writing upon the seal of Solomon David-son (on both be the Peace!) speak to me and answer me;” Quoth Hasan, “I am no devil; I am Hasan, the afflicted, the distraught.” Then he raised the cap from his head and appeared to the old woman, who knew him and taking him apart, said to him, “What is come to thy reason, that thou returnest hither? Go hide thee; for, if this wicked woman have tormented thy wife with such torments, and she her sister, what will she do, an she light on thee?” Then she told him all that had befallen his spouse and that wherein she was of travail and torment and tribulation, and straitly described all the pains she endured adding, “And indeed the

Queen repenteth her of having let thee go and hath sent one after thee, promising him an hundred-weight of gold and my rank in her service; and she hath sworn that, if he bring thee back, she will do thee and thy wife and children dead." And she shed tears and discovered to Hasan what the Queen had done with herself, whereat he wept and said, "O my lady, how shall I do to escape from this land and deliver myself and my wife and children from this tyrannical Queen and how devise to return with them in safety to my own country?" Replied the old woman, "Woe to thee! Save thyself." Quoth he, "There is no help but I deliver her and my children from the Queen perforce and in her despite;" and quoth Shawahi, "How canst thou forcibly rescue them from her? Go and hide thyself, O my son, till Allah Almighty empower thee." Then Hasan showed her the rod and the cap, whereat she rejoiced with joy exceeding and cried, "Glory be to Him who quickeneth the bones, though they be rotten! By Allah, O my son, thou and thy wife were but of lost folk; now, however, thou art saved, thou and thy wife and children! For I know the rod and I know its maker, who was my Shaykh in the science of Gramarye. He was a mighty magician and spent an hundred and thirty and five years working at this rod and cap, till he brought them to perfection, when Death the Inevitable overtook him. And I have heard him say to his two boys, 'O my sons, these two things are not of your lot, for there will come a stranger from a far country, who will take them from you by force, and ye shall not know how he taketh them.' Said they, 'O our father, tell us how he will avail to take them.' But he answered, 'I wot not.' And O my son," added she, "how availedst thou to take them?" So he told her how he had taken them from the two boys, whereat she rejoiced and said, "O my son, since thou hast gotten the whereby to free thy wife and children, give ear to what I shall say to thee. For me there is no woning with this wicked woman, after the foul fashion in which she durst use me; so I am minded to depart from her to the caves of the Magicians and there abide with them until I die. But do thou, O my son, don the cap and hend the rod in hand and enter the place where thy wife and children are. Unbind her bonds and smite the earth with the rod saying, 'Be ye present, O servants of these names!' whereupon the servants of the rod will appear; and if there present himself one of the Chiefs of the

Tribes, command him whatso thou shalt wish and will." So he farewelled her and went forth, donning the cap and hending the rod, and entered the place where his wife was. He found her well-nigh lifeless, bound to the ladder by her hair, tearful-eyed and woeful-hearted, in the sorriest of plights, knowing no way to deliver herself. Her children were playing under the ladder, whilst she looked at them and wept for them and herself, because of the barbarities and sore treatings and bitter penalties which had befallen her; and he heard her repeat these couplets[166] ,

"There remaineth not aught save a fluttering breath and an eye
 whose owner is confounded.
And a desirous lover whose bowels are burned with fire
 notwithstanding which she is silent.
The exulting foe pitieth her at the sight of her. Alas for her
 whom the exulting foe pitieth!"

When Hasan saw her in this state of torment and misery and ignominy and infamy, he wept till he fainted; and when he recovered he saw his children playing and their mother aswoon for excess of pain; so he took the cap from his head and the children saw him and cried out, "O our father!" Then he covered his head again and the Princess came to herself, hearing their cry, but saw only her children weeping and shrieking, "O our father!" When she heard them name their sire and weep, her heart was broken and her vitals rent asunder and she said to them, "What maketh you in mind of your father at this time?" And she wept sore and cried out, from a bursten liver and an aching bosom, "Where are ye and where is your father?" Then she recalled the days of her union with Hasan and what had befallen her since her desertion of him and wept with sore weeping till her cheeks were seared and furrowed and her face was drowned in a briny flood. Her tears ran down and wetted the ground and she had not a hand loose to wipe them from her cheeks, whilst the flies fed their fill on her skin, and she found no helper but weeping and no solace but improvising verses. Then she repeated these couplets,

"I call to mind the parting-day that rent our loves in twain,

When, as I turned away, the tears in very streams did rain.
The cameleer urged on his beasts with them, what while I found
Nor strength nor fortitude, nor did my heart with me remain.
Yea, back I turned, unknowing of the road nor might shake off The
trance of grief and longing love that numbed my heart and
brain;
And worst of all betided me, on my return, was one Who came to
me, in lowly guise, to glory in my pain.
Since the belovčd's gone, O soul, forswear the sweet of life Nor
covet its continuance, for, wanting him, 'twere vain.
List, O my friend, unto the tale of love, and God forbid That I
should speak and that thy heart to hearken should not deign!
As 'twere El Asmaď himself, of passion I discourse Fancies rare
and marvellous, linked in an endless chain."[167]

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Twenty-third Night,

She continued, When Hasan went in to his wife he saw his children and heard her repeating the verses afore mentioned.[168] Then she turned right and left, seeking the cause of her children's crying out, "O our father!" but saw no one and marvelled that her sons should name their sire at that time and call upon him. But when Hasan heard her verses, he wept till he swooned away and the tears railed down his cheeks like rain. Then he drew near the children and raised the cap from his head unseen of his wife, whereupon they saw him and they knew him and cried out, saying, "O our father!" Their mother fell a-weeping again, when she heard them name their sire's name and said, "There is no avoiding the doom which Almighty Allah hath decreed!" adding, "O Strange! What garreth them think of their father at this time and call upon him, albeit it is not of their wont?" Then she wept and recited these couplets,

"The land of lamping moon is bare and drear; * O eyne of me pour
forth the brimming tear!
They marched: how shall I now be patient? * That I nor heart nor
patience own I swear!

O ye, who marched yet bide in heart of me, * Will you, O lords of
me, return to that we were?
What harm if they return and I enjoy * Meeting, and they had ruth
on tears of care?
Upon the parting-day they dimmed these eyne, * For sad surprise,
and lit the flames that flare.
Sore longed I for their stay, but Fortune stayed * Longings and
turned my hope to mere despair.
Return to us (O love!) by Allah, deign! * Enow of tears have
flowed for absence-bane."

Then Hasan could no longer contain himself, but took the cap from his head; whereupon his wife saw him and recognising him screamed a scream which startled all in the palace, and said to him, "How camest thou hither? From the sky hast thou dropped or through the earth hast thou come up?" And her eyes brimmed with tears and Hasan also wept. Quoth she, "O man, this be no time for tears or blame. Fate hath had its course and the sight was blinded and the Pen hath run with what was ordained of Allah when Time was begun: so, Allah upon thee, whencesoever thou comest, go hide, lest any espy thee and tell my sister and she do thee and me die!" Answered he, "O my lady and lady of all Queens, I have adventured myself and come hither, and either I will die or I will deliver thee from this strait and travel with thee and my children to my country, despite the nose of this thy wickedest sister." But as she heard his words she smiled and for awhile fell to shaking her head and said, "Far, O my life, far is it from the power of any except Allah Almighty to deliver me from this my strait! Save thyself by flight and wend thy ways and cast not thyself into destruction; for she hath conquering hosts none may withstand. Given that thou tookest me and wentest forth, how canst thou make thy country and escape from these islands and the perils of these awesome places? Verily, thou hast seen on thy way hither, the wonders, the marvels, the dangers and the terrors of the road, such as none may escape, not even one of the rebel Jinns. Depart, therefore, forthright and add not cark to my cark and care to my care, neither do thou pretend to rescue me from this my plight; for who shall carry me to thy country through all these vales and thirsty wolds and fatal steads?" Rejoined Hasan, "By thy life, O light of mine eyes, I will not depart this place nor fare but with thee!" Quoth she, "O man! How canst thou avail unto this thing and what manner of man art thou? Thou knowest not what thou sayest! None can escape from these realms, even had he command over Jinns, Ifrits, magicians, chiefs of tribes and Marids. Save thyself and leave me; perchance Allah will bring about good after ill." Answered Hasan, "O lady of fair ones, I came not save to deliver thee with this rod and with this cap." And he told her what had befallen him with the two boys; but, whilst he was speaking, behold, up came the Queen and heard their speech. Now when he was ware of her, he donned the cap and was hidden from sight, and she entered and said to the Princess, "O wanton, who is he with whom thou wast talking?" Answered Manar al-Sanar, "Who is with me that should talk with me, except these children?" Then the Quee took the whip and beat her, whilst Hasan stood by and looked on, nor did she leave beating her till she fainted; whereupon she bade transport her to another place. So they loosed her and carried her to another chamber whilst Hasan followed unseen. There they cast her down, senseless, and stood gazing upon her, till she revived and recited these couplets,[169]

"I have sorrowed on account of our disunion with a sorrow that
made the tears to overflow from my eyelids;
And I vowed that if Fortune reunite us, I would never again
mention our separation;
And I would say to the envious, Die ye with regret; By Allah I
have now attained my desire!
Joy hath overwhelmed me to such a degree that by its excess it
hath made me weep.
O eye, how hath weeping become thy habit? Thou weepest in joy as
well, as in sorrows."

When she ceased her verse the slave-girls went out from her and Hasan took off the cap; whereupon his wife said to him, "See, O man, all this befel me not save by reason of my having rebelled against thee and transgressed thy commandment and gone forth without thy leave.[170] So, Allah upon thee blame me not for my sins and know that women never wot a man's worth till they have lost him. Indeed, I have offended and done evil; but I crave pardon of Allah Almighty for whatso I did, and if He reunite us, I will never again gainsay thee in aught, no, never!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Twenty-fourth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Hasan's wife besought pardon of him saying, "Blame me not for my sin; and indeed I crave mercy of Allah Almighty." Quoth Hasan (and indeed his heart ached for her), "'Twas not thou that wast in fault; nay, the fault was mine and mine only, for I fared forth and left thee with one who knew not thy rank, neither thy worth nor thy degree. But know, O beloved of my heart and fruit of my vitals and light of mine eyes, that Allah (blessed be He!) hath ordained to me power of releasing thee; so, say me, wouldst thou have me carry thee to thy father's home, there to accomplish what Allah decreeth unto thee, or wilt thou forthright depart with me to mine own country, now that relief is come to thee?" Quoth she, "Who can deliver me save the Lord of the Heavens? Go to thy mother-land and put away from thee false hope; for thou knowest not the perils of these parts which, an thou obey me not, soon shalt thou sight." And she improvised these couplets,

"On me and with me bides thy volunty; * Why then such anger such despite to me?
Whate'er befel us Heaven forbid that love * Fade for long time or e'er forgotten be!
Ceased not the spy to haunt our sides, till seen * Our love estranged and then estranged was he:
In truth I trusted to fair thoughts of thine * Though spake the wicked spy maliciously.
We'll keep the secret 'twixt us twain and hold * Although the brand of blame unsheathed we see.
The livelong day in longing love I spend * Hoping acceptance-message from my friend."

Then wept she and her children, and the handmaidens heard them: so they came in to them and found them weeping, but saw not Hasan with them; wherefore they wept for ruth of them and damned Queen Nur al-Huda. Then Hasan took patience till night came on and her guards had gone to their sleeping-places, when he arose and girded his waist; then went up to her and, loosing her kissed her on the head and between the eyes and pressed her to his bosom, saying, "How long have we wearied for our mother-land and for reunion there! Is this our meeting in sleep, or on wake?" Then he took up the elder boy and she took up the younger and they went forth the palace; and Allah veiled them with the veil of His protection, so that they came safe to the outer gate which closed the entrance to the Queen's Serraglio. But finding it locked from without, Hasan said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Verily we are Allah's and unto Him shall we return!" With this they despaired of escape and Hasan beat hand upon hand, saying, "O Dispeller of dolours! Indeed, I had bethought me of every thing and considered its conclusion but this; and now, when it is daybreak, they will take us, and what device have we in this case?" And he recited the following two couplets,[171]

"Thou madest fair thy thought of Fate, whenas the days were fair,
And fearedst not the unknown ills that they to thee might bring.
The nights were fair and calm to thee; thou wast deceived by them, For in the peace of night is born full many a troublous thing."

Then Hasan wept and his wife wept for his weeping and for the abasement she had suffered and the cruelties of Time and Fortune,

"Baulks me my Fate as tho' she were my foe; * Each day she showeth me new cark and care:
Fate, when I aim at good, brings clear reverse, * And lets foul morrow wait on day that's fair."

And also these,

“Irks me my Fate and clean unknows that I * Of my high worth her shifts and shafts despise.
She nights parading what ill-will she works: * I night parading Patience to her eyes.”

Then his wife said to him, “By Allah, there is no relief for us but to kill ourselves and be at rest from this great and weary travail; else we shall suffer grievous torment on the morrow.” At this moment, behold, they heard a voice from without the door say, “By Allah, O my lady Manar al-Sana, I will not open to thee and thy husband Hasan, except ye obey me in whatso I shall say to you!” When they heard these words they were silent for excess of fright and would have returned whence they came; when lo! the voice spake again saying, “What aileth you both to be silent and answer me not?” Therewith they knew the speaker for the old woman Shawahi, Lady of Calamities, and said to her, “Whatsoever thou biddest us, that will we do; but first open the door to us; this being no time for talk.” Replied she, “By Allah, I will not open to you until ye both swear to me that you will take me with you and not leave me with yonder whore: so, whatever befalleth you shall befal me and if ye escape, I shall escape, and if ye perish, I shall perish: for yonder abominable woman, tribade[172] that she is! entreateth me with indignity and still tormenteth me on your account; and thou, O my daughter, knowest my worth.” Now recognising her they trusted in her and sware to her an oath such as contented her, whereupon she opened the door to them and they fared forth and found her riding on a Greek jar of red earthenware with a rope of palm-fibres about its neck,[173] which rolled under her and ran faster than a Najdi colt, and she came up to them, and said, “Follow me and fear naught, for I know forty modes of magic by the least of which I could make this city a dashing sea, swollen with clashing billows, and ensorcel each damsel therein to a fish, and all before dawn. But I was not able to work aught of my mischief, for fear of the King her father and of regard to her sisters, for that they are formidable, by reason of their many guards and tribesmen and servants. However, soon will I show you wonders of my skill in witchcraft; and now let us on, relying upon the blessing of Allah and His good aid.” Now Hasan and his wife rejoiced in this, making sure of escape, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Twenty-fifth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan and his wife, accompanied by the ancient dame Shawahi, fared forth from the palace, they made sure of deliverance and they walked on till they came without the city, when he fortified his heart and, smiting the earth with the rod, cried, "Ho, ye servants of these names, appear to me and acquaint me with your conditions!" Thereupon the earth clave asunder and out came ten[174] Ifrits, with their feet in the bowels of the earth and their heads in the clouds. They kissed the earth three times before Hasan and said as with one voice, "Adsumus! Here are we at thy service, O our lord and ruler over us! What dost thou bid us do? For we hear and obey thy commandment. An thou wilt, we will dry thee up seas and remove mountains from their places." So Hasan rejoiced in their words and at their speedy answer to his evocation; then taking courage and bracing up his resolution, he said to them, "Who are ye and what be your names and your races, and to what tribes and clans and companies appertain ye?" They kissed the earth once more and answered as with one voice, saying, "We are seven Kings, each ruling over seven tribes of the Jinn of all conditions, and Satans and Marids, flyers and divers, dwellers in mountains and wastes and wolds and haunters of the seas: so bid us do whatso thou wilt; for we are thy servants and thy slaves, and whoso possesseth this rod hath dominion over all our necks and we owe him obedience." Now when Hasan heard this, he rejoiced with joy exceeding, as did his wife and the old woman, and presently he said to the Kings of the Jinn, "I desire of you that ye show me your tribes and hosts and guards." "O our lord," answered they, "if we show thee our tribes, we fear for thee and these who are with thee, for their name is legion and they are various in form and fashion, figure and favour. Some of us are heads sans bodies and others bodies sans heads, and others again are in the likeness of wild beasts and ravening lions. However, if this be thy will, there is no help but we first show thee those of us who are like unto wild beasts. But, O our lord, what wouldst thou of us at this present?" Quoth Hasan, "I would have you carry me forthwith to the city of Baghdad, me and my wife and this honest woman.” But, hearing his words they hung down their heads and were silent, whereupon Hasan asked them, “Why do ye not reply?” And they answered as with one voice, “O our lord and ruler over us, we are of the covenant of Solomon son of David (on the twain be Peace!) and he sware us in that we would bear none of the sons of Adam on our backs; since which time we have borne no mortal on back or shoulder: but we will straightway harness thee horses of the Jinn, that shall carry thee and thy company to thy country.” Hasan enquired, “How far are we from Baghdad?” and they, “Seven years’ journey for a diligent horseman.” Hasan marvelled at this and said to them, “Then how came I hither in less than a year?”; and they said, “Allah softened to thee the hearts of His pious servants else hadst thou never come to this country nor hadst thou set eyes on these regions; no, never! For the Shaykh Abd al-Kaddus, who mounted thee on the elephant and the magical horse, traversed with thee, in ten days, three years’ journey for a well-girt rider, and the Ifrit Dahnash, to whom the Shaykh committed thee, carried thee a three years’ march in a day and a night; all which was of the blessing of Allah Almighty, for that the Shaykh Abu al-Ruwaysh is of the seed of Ásaf bin Barkhiyá[175] and knoweth the Most Great name of Allah.[176] Moreover, from Baghdad to the palace of the damsels is a year’s journey, and this maketh up the seven years.” When Hasan heard this, he marvelled with exceeding marvel and cried, “Glory be to God, Facilitator of the hard, Fortifier of the weak heart, Approximator of the far and Humbler of every froward tyrant, Who hath eased us of every accident and carried me to these countries and subjected to me these creatures and reunited me with my wife and children! I know not whether I am asleep or awake or if I be sober or drunken!” Then he turned to the Jinn and asked, “When ye have mounted me upon your steeds, in how many days will they bring us to Baghdad?”; and they answered, “They will carry you thither under the year, but not till after ye have endured terrible perils and hardships and horrors and ye have traversed thirsty Wadys and frightful wastes and horrible steads without number; and we cannot promise thee safety, O our lord, from the people of these islands,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her

permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Twenty-sixth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Jann said to Hasan, "We cannot promise thee safety, O our lord, from this Islandry, nor from the mischief of the Supreme King and his enchanters and warlocks. It may be they will overcome us and take you from us and we fall into affliction with them, and all to whom the tidings shall come after this will say to us: 'Ye are wrong-doers! How could ye go against the Supreme King and carry a mortal out of his dominions, and eke the King's daughter with him?' adding, 'Wert thou alone with us the thing were light; but He who conveyed thee hither is capable to carry thee back to thy country and reunite thee with thine own people forthright and in readiest plight. So take heart and put thy trust in Allah and fear not; for we are at thy service, to convey thee to thy country." Hasan thanked them therefor and said, "Allah requite you with good! but now make haste with the horses;" they replied, "We hear and we obey," and struck the ground with their feet, whereupon it opened and they disappeared within it and were absent awhile, after which they suddenly reappeared with three horses, saddled and bridled, and on each saddle-bow a pair of saddle-bags, with a leathern bottle of water in one pocket and the other full of provaunt. So Hasan mounted one steed and took a child before him, whilst his wife mounted a second and took the other child before her. Then the old woman alighted from the jar and bestrode the third horse and they rode on, without ceasing, all night. At break of day, they turned aside from the road and made for the mountain, whilst their tongues ceased not to name Allah. Then they fared on under the highland all that day, till Hasan caught sight of a black object afar as it were a tall column of smoke a-twisting skywards; so he recited somewhat of the Koran and Holy Writ, and sought refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned. The black thing grew plainer as they drew near, and when hard by it, they saw that it was an Ifrit, with a head like a huge dome and tusks like grapnels and jaws like a lane and nostrils like ewers and ears like leathern targes and mouth like a cave and teeth like pillars of stone and hands like winnowing forks and legs like masts: his head was in the cloud and his feet in the bowels of the earth had plowed. Whenas Hasan gazed upon him he bowed himself and kissed the ground before him, saying, "O Hasan, have no fear of me; for I am the chief of the dwellers in this land, which is the first of the Isles of Wak, and I am a Moslem and an adorer of the One God. I have heard of you and your coming and when I knew of your case, I desired to depart from the land of the magicians to another land, void of inhabitants and far from men and Jinn, that I might dwell there alone and worship Allah till my fated end came upon me. So I wish to accompany you and be your guide, till ye fare forth of the Wak Islands; and I will not appear save at night; and do ye hearten your hearts on my account; for I am a Moslem, even as ye are Moslems." When Hasan heard the Ifrit's words, he rejoiced with exceeding joy and made sure of deliverance; and he said to him, "Allah requite thee weal! Go with us relying upon the blessing of Allah!" So the Ifrit forewent them and they followed, talking and making merry, for their hearts were pleased and their breasts were eased and Hasan fell to telling his wife all that had befallen him and all the hardships he had undergone, whilst she excused herself to him and told him, in turn, all she had seen and suffered. They ceased not faring all that night. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Twenty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that they ceased not faring all that night and the horses bore them like the blinding leven, and when the day rose all put their hands to the saddle-bags and took forth provaunt which they ate and water which they drank. Then they sped diligently on their way, preceded by the Ifrit, who turned aside with them from the beaten track into another road, till then untrodden, along the sea-shore, and they ceased not faring on, without stopping, across Wadys and wolds a whole month, till on the thirty-first day there arose before them a dust-cloud, that walled the world and darkened the day; and when Hasan saw this, he was confused and turned pale; and more so when a frightful crying and clamour struck their ears. Thereupon the old woman said to him, "O my son, this is the army of the Wak Islands, that hath overtaken us; and presently they will lay violent hands on us." Hasan asked, "What shall I do, O my mother?"; and she answered, "Strike the earth with the rod." He did so whereupon the Seven Kings presented themselves and saluted him with the salam, kissing ground before him and saying, “Fear not neither grieve.” Hasan rejoiced at these words and answered them, saying, “Well said, O Princes of the Jinn and the Ifrits! This is your time!” Quoth they, “Get ye up to the mountain-top, thou and thy wife and children and she who is with thee and leave us to deal with them, for we know that you all are in the right and they in the wrong and Allah will aid us against them.” So Hasan and his wife and children and the old woman dismounted and dismissing the horses, ascended the flank of the mountain. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Twenty-eighth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Hasan with his wife, his children and the ancient dame ascended the mountain-flank after they had dismissed the coursers. Presently, up came Queen Nur al-Huda, with the troops right and left, and the captains went round about among the host and ranged them rank by rank in battle array. Then the hosts charged down upon each other and clashed together the twain with a mighty strain, the brave pressed on amain and the coward to fly was fain and the Jinn cast flames of fire from their mouths, whilst the smoke of them rose up to the confines of the sky and the two armies appeared and disappeared. The champions fought and heads flew from trunks and the blood ran in rills; nor did brand leave to play and blood to flow and battle fire to flow, till the murk o’ night came, when the two hosts drew apart and, alighting from their steeds rested upon the field by the fires they had kindled. Therewith the Seven Kings went up to Hasan and kissed the earth before him. He pressed forwards to meet them and thanked them and prayed Allah to give them the victory and asked them how they had fared with the Queen’s troops. Quoth they, “They will not withstand us more than three days, for we had the better of them to-day, taking some two thousand of them prisoners and slaying of them much folk whose compt may not be told. So be of good cheer and broad of breast.” Then they farewelled him and went down to look after the safety of their troops; and they ceased not to keep up the fires till the morning rose with its sheen and shone, when the fighting-men mounted their horses of noble strain and smote one another with thin-edged skean and with brawn of bill they thrust amain nor did they cease that day battle to darraign. Moreover, they passed the night on horseback clashing together like dashing seas; raged among them the fires of war and they stinted not from battle and jar, till the armies of Wak were defeated and their power broken and their courage quelled; their feet slipped and whither they fled soever defeat was before them; wherefore they turned tail and of flight began to avail: but the most part of them were slain and their Queen and her chief officers and the grandees of her realm were captive ta'en. When the morning morrowed, the Seven Kings presented themselves before Hasan and set for him a throne of alabaster inlaid with pearls and jewels, and he sat down thereon. They also set thereby a throne of ivory, plated with glittering gold, for the Princess Manar al-Sana and another for the ancient dame Shawahi Zat al-Dawahi. Then they brought before them the prisoners and among the rest, Queen Nur al-Huda with elbows pinioned and feet fettered, whom when Shawahi saw, she said to her, "Thy recompense, O harlot, O tyrant, shall be that two bitches be starved and two mares stinted of water, till they be athirst: then shalt thou be bound to the mares' tails and these driven to the river, with the bitches following thee that they may rend thy skin; and after, thy flesh shall be cut off and given them to eat. How couldst thou do with thy sister such deed, O strumpet, seeing that she was lawfully married, after the ordinance of Allah and of His Apostle? For there is no monkery in Al-Islam and marriage is one of the institutions of the Apostles (on whom be the Peace!)[177] nor were women created but for men." Then Hasan commanded to put all the captives to the sword and the old woman cried out, saying, "Slay them all and spare none[178] !" But, when Princess Manar al-Sana saw her sister in this plight, a bondswoman and in fetters, she wept over her and said, "O my sister, who is this hath conquered us and made us captives in our own country?" Quoth Nur al-Huda, "Verily, this is a mighty matter. Indeed this man Hasan hath gotten the mastery over us and Allah hath given him dominion over us and over all our realm and he hath overcome us, us and the Kings of the Jinn." And quoth her sister, "Indeed, Allah aided him not against you nor did he overcome you nor capture you save by means of this cap and rod." So Nur al-Huda was certified and assured that he had conquered her by means thereof and humbled herself to her sister, till she was moved to ruth for her and said to her husband, “What wilt thou do with my sister? Behold, she is in thy hands and she hath done thee no misdeed that thou shouldest punish her.” Replied Hasan, “Her torturing of thee was misdeed enow.” But she answered, saying, “She hath excuse for all she did with me. As for thee, thou hast set my father’s heart on fire for the loss of me, and what will be his case, if he lose my sister also?” And he said to her, “’Tis thine to decide; do whatso thou wilt.” So she bade loose her sister and the rest of the captives, and they did her bidding. Then she went up to Queen Nur al-Huda and embraced her, and they wept together a long while; after which quoth the Queen, “O my sister, bear me not malice for that I did with thee;” and quoth Manar al-Sana, “O my sister, this was foreordained to me by Fate.” Then they sat on the couch talking and Manar al-Sana made peace between the old woman and her sister, after the goodliest fashion, and their hearts were set at ease. Thereupon Hasan dismissed the servants of the rod thanking them for the succour which they had afforded him against his foes, and Manar al-Sana related to her sister all that had befallen her with Hasan her husband and every thing he had suffered for her sake, saying, “O my sister, since he hath done these deeds and is possessed of this might and Allah Almighty hath gifted him with such exceeding prowess, that he hath entered our country and beaten thine army and taken thee prisoner and defied our father, the Supreme King, who hath dominion over all the Princes of the Jinn, it behoveth us to fail not of what is due to him.” Replied Nur al-Huda, “By Allah, O my sister, thou sayest sooth in whatso thou tellest me of the marvels which this man hath seen and suffered; and none may fail of respect to him. But was all this on thine account, O my sister?” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Twenty-ninth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Princess Manar al-Sana repeated to her sister these praises of Hasan, the other replied, “By Allah, this man can claim all respect more by token of his generosity. But was all this on thine account?” “Yes,” answered Manar al-Sana, and they passed the night in converse till the morning morrowed and the sun rose and they were minded to depart. So they farewelled one another and Manar al-Sana gave God-speed to the ancient dame after the reconciling her with Queen Nur al-Huda. Thereupon Hasan smote the earth with the rod and its servants the Jinn appeared and saluted him, saying, “Praised be Allah, who hath set thy soul at rest! Command us what thou wilt, and we will do it for thee in less than the twinking of an eye.” He thanked them for their saying and said to them “Allah requite you with good! Saddle me two steeds of the best.” So they brought him forthwith two saddled coursers, one of which he mounted, taking his elder son before him, and his wife rode the other, taking the younger son in front of her. Then the Queen and the old woman also backed horse and departed, Hasan and his wife following the right and Nur al-Huda and Shawahi the left hand road. The spouses fared on with their children, without stopping, for a whole month, till they drew in sight of a city, which they found compassed about with trees and streams and making the trees dismounted beneath them thinking to rest there. As they sat talking, behold, they saw many horsemen coming towards them, whereupon Hasan rose and going to meet them, saw that it was King Hassun, lord of the Land of Camphor and Castle of Crystal, with his attendants. So Hasan went up to the King and kissed his hands and saluted him; and when Hassun saw him, he dismounted and seating himself with Hasan upon carpets under the trees returned his salam and gave him joy of his safety and rejoiced in him with exceeding joy, saying to him, “O Hasan, tell me all that hath befallen thee, first and last.” So he told him all of that, whereupon the King marvelled and said to him, “O my son, none ever reached the Islands of Wak and returned thence but thou, and indeed thy case is wondrous; but Alhamdolillah — praised be God — for safety!” Then he mounted and bade Hasan ride with his wife and children into the city, where he lodged them in the guest-house of his palace; and they abode with him three days, eating and drinking in mirth and merriment, after which Hasan sought Hassun’s leave to depart to his own country and the King granted it. Accordingly they took horse and the King rode with them ten days, after which he farewelled them and turned back, whilst Hasan and his wife and children fared on a whole month, at the end of which time they came to a great cavern, whose floor was of brass. Quoth Hasan to his wife, “Kennest thou yonder cave?”; and quoth she, “No.” Said he, “Therein dwelleth a Shaykh, Abu al-Ruwaysh hight, to whom I am greatly beholden, for that he was the means of my becoming acquainted with King Hassun.” Then he went on to tell her all that had passed between him and Abu al-Ruwaysh, and as he was thus engaged, behold, the Shaykh himself issued from the cavern-mouth. When Hasan saw him, he dismounted from his steed and kissed his hands, and the old man saluted him and gave him joy of his safety and rejoiced in him. Then he carried him into the antre and sat down with him, whilst Hasan related to him what had befallen him in the Islands of Wak; whereat the Elder marvelled with exceeding marvel and said, “O Hasan, how didst thou deliver thy wife and children?” So he told them the tale of the cap and the rod, hearing which he wondered and said, “O Hasan, O my son, but for this rod and the cap, thou hadst never delivered thy wife and children.” And he replied, “Even so, O my lord.” As they were talking, there came a knocking at the door and Abu al-Ruwaysh went out and found Abd al-Kaddus mounted on his elephant. So he saluted him and brought him into the cavern, where he embraced Hasan and congratulated him on his safety, rejoicing greatly in his return. Then said Abu al-Ruwaysh to Hasan, “Tell the Shaykh Abd al-Kaddus all that hath befallen thee, O Hasan.” He repeated to him every thing that had passed, first and last, till he came to the tale of the rod and cap, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Thirtieth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Hasan began relating to Shaykh Abd al-Kaddus and Shaykh Abu al-Ruwaysh (who sat chattting in the cave) all that had passed, first and last, till he came to the tale of the rod and cap; whereupon quoth Abd al-Kaddus, “O my son, thou hast delivered thy wife and thy children and hast no further need of the two. Now we were the means of thy winning to the Islands of Wak, and I have done thee kindness for the sake of my nieces, the daughters of my brother; wherefore I beg thee, of thy bounty and favour, to give me the rod and the Shaykh Abu al-Ruwaysh the cap.” When Hasan heard this, he hung down his head, being ashamed to reply, “I will not give them to you,” and said in his mind, “Indeed these two Shaykhs have done me great kindness and were the means of my winning to the Islands of Wak, and but for them I had never made the place, nor delivered my children, nor had I gotten me this rod and cap.” So he raised his head and answered, “Yes, I will give them to you: but, O my lords, I fear lest the Supreme King, my wife’s father, come upon me with his commando and combat with me in my own country, and I be unable to repel them, for want of the rod and the cap.” Replied Abd al-Kaddus, “Fear not, O my son; we will continually succour thee and keep watch and ward for thee in this place; and whosoever shall come against thee from thy wife’s father or any other, him we will fend off from thee; wherefore be thou of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool of tear, and hearten thy heart and broaden thy breast and feel naught whatsoever of fear, for no harm shall come to thee.” When Hasan heard this he was abashed and gave the cap to Abu al-Ruwaysh, saying to Abd al-Kaddus, “Accompany me to my own country and I will give thee the rod.” At this the two elders rejoiced with exceeding joy and made him ready riches and treasures which beggar all description. He abode with them three days, at the end of which he set out again and the Shaykh Abd al-Kaddus made ready to depart with him. So he and his wife mounted their beasts and Abd al-Kaddus whistled when, behold, a mighty big elephant trotted up with fore hand and feet on amble from the heart of the desert and he took it and mounted it. Then they farewelled Abu al-Ruwaysh who disappeared within his cavern; and they fared on across country traversing the land in its length and breadth wherever Abd al-Kaddus guided them by a short cut and an easy way, till they drew near the land of the Princesses; whereupon Hasan rejoiced at finding himself once more near his mother, and praised Allah for his safe return and reunion with his wife and children after so many hardships and perils; and thanked Him for His favours and bounties, reciting these couplets,

“Haply shall Allah deign us twain unite * And lockt in strict
  embrace we’ll hail the light:
And wonders that befel me I’ll recount, * And all I suffered from

the Severance-blight:
And fain I'll cure mine eyes by viewing you * For ever yearned my heart to see your sight:
I hid a tale for you my heart within * Which when we meet o' morn I'll fain recite:
I'll blame you for the deeds by you were done * But while blame endeth love shall stay in site."

Hardly had he made an end of these verses, when he looked and behold, there rose to view the Green Dome[179] and the jetting Fount and the Emerald Palace, and the Mountain of Clouds showed to them from afar; whereupon quoth Abd al-Kaddus, "Rejoice, O Hasan, in good tidings: to-night shalt thou be the guest of my nieces!" At this he joyed with exceeding joy and as also did his wife, and they alighted at the domed pavilion, where they took their rest[180] and ate and drank; after which they mounted horse again and rode on till they came upon the palace. As they drew near, the Princesses who were daughters of the King, brother to Shaykh Abd al-Kaddus, came forth to meet them and saluted them and their uncle who said to them, "O daughters of my brother, behold, I have accomplished the need of this your brother Hasan and have helped him to regain his wife and children." So they embraced him and gave him joy of his return in safety and health and of his reunion with his wife and children, and it was a day of festival[181] with them. Then came forward Hasan's sister, the youngest Princess, and embraced him, weeping with sore weeping, whilst he also wept for his long desolation: after which she complained to him of that which she had suffered for the pangs of separation and weariness of spirit in his absence and recited these two couplets,

"After thy faring never chanced I 'spy * A shape, but did thy form therein descry:
Nor closed mine eyes in sleep but thee I saw, * E'en as though dwelling 'twixt the lid and eye."

When she had made an end of her verses, she rejoiced with joy exceeding and Hasan said to her, "O my sister, I thank none in this matter save thyself over all thy sisters, and may Allah Almighty vouchsafe thee aidance and countenance!" Then he related to her all that had past in his journey, from first to last, and all that he had undergone, telling her what had betided him with his wife's sister and how he had delivered his wife and wees and he also described to her all that he had seen of marvels and grievous perils, even to how Queen Nur al-Huda would have slain him and his spouse and children and none saved them from her but the Lord the Most High. Moreover, he related to her the adventure of the cap and the rod and how Abd al-Kaddus and Abu al-Ruwaysh had asked for them and he had not agreed to give them to the twain save for her sake; wherefore she thanked him and blessed him wishing him long life; and he cried, "By Allah, I shall never forget all the kindness thou hast done me from incept to conclusion." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Thirty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Hasan foregathered with the Princesses, he related to his sister all that he had endured and said to her, "Never will I forget what thou hast done for me from incept to conclusion." Then she turned to his wife Manar al-Sana and embraced her and pressed her children to her breast, saying to her, "O daughter of the Supreme King, was there no pity in thy bosom, that thou partedst him and his children and settedst his heart on fire for them? Say me, didst thou desire by this deed that he should die?" The Princess laughed and answered, "Thus was it ordained of Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) and whoso beguileth folk, him shall Allah begule."[182] Then they set on somewhat of meat and drink, and they all ate and drank and made merry. They abode thus ten days in feast and festival, mirth and merry-making, at the end of which time Hasan prepared to continue his journey. So his sister rose and made him ready riches and rarities, such as defy description. Then she strained him to her bosom, because of leave-taking, and threw her arms round his neck whilst he recited on her account these couplets,

"The solace of lovers is naught but far, * And parting is naught
save grief singular:

And ill-will and absence are naught but woe, * And the victims of
Love naught but martyrs are;
And how tedious is night to the loving wight * From his true love
parted ‘neath evening star!
His tears course over his cheeks and so * He cries, ‘O tears be
there more to flow?’”

With this Hasan gave the rod to Shaykh Abd al-Kaddus, who joyed therein with exceeding joy and thanking him and securing it mounted and returned to his own place. Then Hasan took horse with his wife and children and departed from the Palace of the Princesses, who went forth[183] with him, to farewell him. Then they turned back and Hasan fared on, over wild and wold, two months and ten days, till he came to the city of Baghdad, the House of Peace, and repairing to his home by the private postern which gave upon the open country, knocked at the door. Now his mother, for long absence, had forsworn sleep and given herself to mourning and weeping and wailing, till she fell sick and ate no meat, neither took delight in slumber but shed tears night and day. She ceased not to call upon her son’s name albeit she despaired of his returning to her; and as he stood at the door, he heard her weeping and reciting these couplets,

“By Allah, heal, O my lords, the unwhole * Of wasted frame and
heart worn with dole:
An you grant her a meeting ’tis but your grace * Shall whelm in
the boons of the friend her soul:
I despair not of Union the Lord can grant * And to weal of
meeting our woes control!”

When she had ended her verses, she heard her son’s voice at the door, calling out, “O mother, mother ah! fortune hath been kind and hath vouchsafed our reunion!” Hearing his cry she knew his voice and went to the door, between belief and misbelief; but, when she opened it she saw him standing there and with him his wife and children; so she shrieked aloud, for excess of joy, and fell to the earth in a fainting-fit. Hasan ceased not soothing her, till she recovered and embraced him; then she wept with joy, and presently she called his slaves and servants and bade them carry all his baggage into the house.[184] So they brought in every one of the loads, and his wife and children entered also, whereupon Hasan's mother went up to the Princess and kissed her head and bussed her feet, saying, "O daughter of the Supreme King, if I have failed of thy due, behold, I crave pardon of Almighty Allah." Then she turned to Hasan and said to him, "O my son, what was the cause of this long strangerhood?" He related to her all his adventures from beginning to end; and when she heard tell of all that had befallen him, she cried a great cry and fell down a-fainting at the very mention of his mishaps. He solaced her, till she came to herself and said, "By Allah, O my son, thou hast done unwisely in parting with the rod and the cap for, hadst thou kept them with the care due to them, thou wert master of the whole earth, in its breadth and length; but praised be Allah, for thy safety, O my son, and that of thy wife and children!" They passed the night in all pleasance and happiness, and on the morrow Hasan changed his clothes and donning a suit of the richest apparel, went down into the bazar and bought black slaves and slave-girls and the richest stuffs and ornaments and furniture such as carpets and costly vessels and all manner other precious things, whose like is not found with Kings. Moreover, he purchased houses and gardens and estates and so forth and abode with his wife and his children and his mother, eating and drinking and pleasuring: nor did they cease from all joy of life and its solace till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies. And Glory be to Him who hath dominion over the Seen and the Unseen,[185] who is the Living, the Eternal, Who dieth not at all! And men also recount the adventures of

Khalifah the Fisherman of Baghdad

There was once in tides of yore and in ages and times long gone before in the city of Baghdad a fisherman, Khalífah hight, a pauper wight, who had never once been married in all his days. [186] It chanced one morning, that he took his net and went with it to the river, as was his wont, with the view of fishing before the others came. When he reached the bank, he girt himself and tucked up his skirts; then stepping into the water, he spread his net and cast it a first cast and a second but it brought up naught. He ceased not to throw it, till he had made ten casts, and still naught came up therein; wherefore his breast was straitened and his mind perplexed concerning his case and he said, “I crave pardon of God the Great, there is no god but He, the Living, the Eternal, and unto Him I repent. There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Whatso He willeth is and whatso He nilleth is not! Upon Allah (to whom belong Honour and Glory!) dependeth daily bread! Whenas He giveth to His servant, none denieth him; and whenas He denieth a servant, none giveth to him.” And of the excess of his distress, he recited these two couplets,

“An Fate afflict thee, with grief manifest, * Prepare thy
patience and make broad thy breast;
For of His grace the Lord of all the worlds * Shall send to wait
upon unrest sweet Rest.”

Then he sat awhile pondering his case, and with his head bowed down recited also these couplets,

“Patience, with sweet and with bitter Fate! * And weet that His
will He shall consummate:
Night oft upon woe as on abscess acts * And brings it up to the
bursting state:
And Chance and Change shall pass o’er the youth * And fleet from
his thoughts and no more shall bait.”

Then he said in his mind, “I will make this one more cast, trusting in Allah, so haply He may not disappoint my hope;” and he rose and casting into the river the net as far as his arm availed, gathered the cords in his hands and waited a full hour, after which he pulled at it and, finding it heavy, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Thirty-second Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Khalifah the Fisherman had cast his net sundry times into the stream, yet had it brought up naught, he pondered his case and improvised the verses afore quoted. Then he said in his mind, “I will make this one more cast, trusting in Allah who haply will not disappoint my hope." So he rose and threw the net and waited a full hour, after which time he pulled at it and, finding it heavy, handled it gently and drew it in, little by little, till he got it ashore, when lo and behold! he saw in it a one-eyed, lame-legged ape. Seeing this quoth Khalifah, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah! verily, we are Allah's and to Him we are returning! What meaneth this heart-breaking, miserable ill-luck and hapless fortune? What is come to me this blessed day? But all this is of the destinies of Almighty Allah!" Then he took the ape and tied him with a cord to a tree which grew on the river-bank, and grasping a whip he had with him, raised his arm in the air, thinking to bring down the scourge upon the quarry, when Allah made the ape speak with a fluent tongue, saying, "O Khalifah, hold thy hand and beat me not, but leave me bounden to this tree and go down to the river and cast thy net, confiding in Allah; for He will give thee thy daily bread." Hearing this Khalifah went down to the river and casting his net, let the cords run out. Then he pulled it in and found it heavier than before; so he ceased not to tug at it, till he brought it to land, when, behold, there was another ape in it, with front teeth wide apart, [187] Kohl-darkened eyes and hands stained with Henna-dyes; and he was laughing and wore a tattered waistcloth about his middle. Quoth Khalifah, "Praised be Allah who hath changed the fish of the river into apes!" [188] then, going up to the first ape, who was still tied to the tree, he said to him, "See, O unlucky, how fulsome was the counsel thou gavest me! None but thou made me light on this second ape: and for that thou gavest me good-morrow with thy one eye and thy lameness, [189] I am become distressed and weary, without dirham or dinar." So saying, he hent in hand a stick [190] and flourishing it thrice in the air, was about to come down with it upon the lame ape, when the creature cried out for mercy and said to him, "I conjure thee, by Allah, spare me for the sake of this my fellow and seek of him thy need; for he will guide thee to thy desire!" So he held his hand from him and throwing down the stick, went up to and stood by the second ape, who said to him, "O Khalifah, this my speech [191] will profit thee naught, except thou hearken to what I say to thee; but, an thou do my bidding and cross me not, I will be the cause of thine enrichment." Asked Khalifah, "And what hast thou to say to me that I may obey there therein?" The

Ape answered, “Leave me bound on the bank and hie thee down to the river; then cast thy net a third time, and after I will tell thee what to do.” So he took his net and going down to the river, cast it once more and waited awhile. Then he drew it in and finding it heavy, laboured at it and ceased not his travail till he got it ashore, when he found in it yet another ape; but this one was red, with a blue waistcloth about his middle; his hands and feet were stained with Henna and his eyes blackened with Kohl. When Khalifah saw this, he exclaimed, “Glory to God the Great! Extolled be the perfection of the Lord of Dominion! Verily, this is a blessed day from first to last: its ascendant was fortunate in the countenance of the first ape, and the scroll [192] is known by its superscription! Verily, to-day is a day of apes: there is not a single fish left in the river, and we are come out to-day but to catch monkeys!” Then he turned to the third ape and said, “And what thing art thou also, O unlucky?” Quoth the ape, “Dost thou not know me, O Khalifah!”; and quoth he, “Not I!” The ape cried, “I am the ape of Abu al-Sa’ádát [193] the Jew, the shroff.” Asked Khalifah, “And what dost thou for him?”; and the ape answered, “I give him good-morrow at the first of the day, and he gaineth five ducats; and again at the end of the day, I give him good-even and he gaineth other five ducats.” Whereupon Khalifah turned to the first ape and said to him, “See, O unlucky, what fine apes other folks have! As for thee, thou givest me good-morrow with thy one eye and thy lameness and thy ill-omened phiz and I become poor and bankrupt and hungry!” So saying, he took the cattle-stick and flourishing it thrice in the air, was about to come down with it on the first ape, when Abu al-Sa’adat’s ape said to him, “Let him be, O Khalifah, hold thy hand and come hither to me, that I may tell thee what to do.” So Khalifah threw down the stick and walking up to him cried, “And what hast thou to say to me, O monarch of all monkeys?” Replied the ape, “Leave me and the other two apes here, and take thy net and cast it into the river; and whatever cometh up, bring it to me, and I will tell thee what shall gladden thee.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Thirty-third Night

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the ape of Abu al-Sa’adat said to Khalifah, “Take thy net and cast it into the river; and whatever cometh up, bring it to me, and I will tell thee what shall gladden thee.” He replied, “I hear and obey,” and took the net and gathered it on his shoulder, reciting these couplets,

“When straitened is my breast I will of my Creator pray, * Who
may and can the heaviest weight lighten in easiest way;
For ere man’s glance can turn or close his eye by God His grace *
Waxeth the broken whole and yieldeth jail its prison-prey.
Therefore with Allah one and all of thy concerns commit * Whose
grace and favour men of wit shall nevermore gainsay.”

And also these twain,

“Thou art the cause that castest men in ban and bane; * Sorrow
e’en so and sorrow’s cause Thou canst assain:
Make me not covet aught that lies beyond my reach; * How many a
greedy wight his wish hath failed to gain!”

Now when Khalifah had made an end of his verse, he went down to the river and casting his net, waited awhile; after which he drew it up and found therein a fine young fish, [194] with a big head, a tail like a ladle and eyes like two gold pieces. When Khalifah saw this fish, he rejoiced, for he had never in his life caught its like, so he took it, marvelling, and carried it to the ape of Abu al-Sa’adat the Jew, as ‘twere he had gotten possession of the universal world. Quoth the ape, “O Khalifah, what wilt thou do with this and with thine ape?”; and quoth the Fisherman, “I will tell thee, O monarch of monkeys all I am about to do. Know then that first, I will cast about to make away with yonder accursed, my ape, and take thee in his stead and give thee every day to eat of whatso thou wilt.” Rejoined the ape, “Since thou hast made choice of me, I will tell thee how thou shalt do wherein, if it please Allah Almighty, shall be the mending of thy fortune. Lend thy mind, then, to what I say to thee and ’tis this!: Take another cord and tie me also to a tree, where leave me and go to the midst of The Dyke [195] and cast thy net into the Tigris. [196] Then after waiting awhile, draw it up and thou shalt find therein a fish, than which thou never sawest a finer in thy whole life. Bring it to me and I will tell thee how thou shalt do after this." So Khalifah rose forthright and casting his net into the Tigris, drew up a great cat-fish [197] the bigness of a lamb; never had he set eyes on its like, for it was larger than the first fish. He carried it to the ape, who said to him, "Gather thee some green grass and set half of it in a basket; lay the fish therein and cover it with the other moiety. Then, leaving us here tied, shoulder the basket and betake thee to Baghdad. If any bespeak thee or question thee by the way, answer him not, but fare on till thou comest to the market-street of the money-changers, at the upper end whereof thou wilt find the shop of Master [198] Abu al- Sa'adat the Jew, Shaykh of the shroffs, and wilt see him sitting on a mattress, with a cushion behind him and two coffers, one for gold and one for silver, before him, while around him stand his Mamelukes and negro-slaves and servant-lads. Go up to him and set the basket before him, saying,: 'O Abu al-Sa'adat, verily I went out to-day to fish and cast my net in thy name and Allah Almighty sent me this fish.' He will ask, 'Hast thou shown it to any but me?;' and do thou answer, "No, by Allah!' then will he take it of thee and give thee a dinar. Give it him back and he will give thee two dinars; but do thou return them also and so do with everything he may offer thee; and take naught from him, though he give thee the fish's weight in gold. Then will he say to thee, 'Tell me what thou wouldst have;' and do thou reply, "By Allah, I will not sell the fish save for two words!' He will ask, 'What are they?' and do thou answer, 'Stand up and say, 'Bear witness, O ye who are present in the market, that I give Khalifah the fisherman my ape in exchange for his ape, and that I barter for his lot my lot and luck for his luck.' This is the price of the fish, and I have no need of gold.' If he do this, I will every day give thee good-morrow and good-even, and every day thou shalt gain ten dinars of good gold; whilst this one-eyed, lame-legged ape shall daily give the Jew good-morrow, and Allah shall afflict him every day with an avanie [199] which he must needs pay, nor will he cease to be thus afflicted till he is reduced to beggary and hath naught. Hearken then to my words; so shalt thou prosper and be guided aright." Quoth Khalifah, "I accept thy counsel, O monarch of all the monkeys! But, as for this unlucky, may Allah never bless him! I know not what to do with him." Quoth the ape, "Let him go [200] into the water, and let me go also." "I hear and obey," answered Khalifah and unbound the three apes, and they went down into the river. Then he took up the cat-fish [201] which he washed then laid it in the basket upon some green grass, and covered it with other; and lastly shouldering his load, set out chanting the following Mawwál, [202]

"Thy case commit to a Heavenly Lord and thou shalt safety see; *
Act kindly through thy worldly life and live repentance-free.
Mate not with folk suspected, lest eke thou shouldst suspected be

* And from reviling keep thy tongue lest men revile at thee!"

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Thirty-fourth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Khalifah the fisherman, after ending his song, set out with the basket upon his shoulder and ceased not faring till he entered the city of Baghdad. And as he threaded the streets the folk knew him and cried out to him, saying, "What hast thou there, O Khalifah?" But he paid no heed to them and passed on till he came to the market- street of the money-changers and fared between the shops, as the ape had charged him, till he found the Jew seated at the upper end, with his servants in attendance upon him, as he were a King of the Kings of Khorason. He knew him at first sight; so he went up to him and stood before him, whereupon Abu al-Sa'adat raised his eyes and recognising him, said, "Welcome, O Khalifah! What wantest thou and what is thy need? If any have missaid thee or spited thee, tell me and I will go with thee to the Chief of Police, who shall do thee justice on him." Replied Khalifah, "Nay, as thy head liveth, O chief of the Jews, none hath missaid me. But I went forth this morning to the river and, casting my net into the Tigris on thy luck, brought up this fish." Therewith he opened the basket and threw the fish before the Jew who admired it and said, "By the Pentateuch and the Ten

Commandments,[203] I dreamt last night that the Virgin came to me and said, ‘Know, O Abu al-Sa’adat, that I have sent thee a pretty present!’ and doubtless ’tis this fish.” Then he turned to Khalifah and said to him, “By thy faith, hath any seen it but I?” Khalifah replied, “No, by Allah, and by Abu Bakr the Veridical,[204] none hath seen it save thou, O chief of the Jews!” Whereupon the Jew turned to one of his lads and said to him, “Come, carry this fish to my house and bid Sa’ádah[205] dress it and fry and broil it, against I make an end of my business and hie me home.” And Khalifah said, “Go, O my lad; let the master’s wife fry some of it and broil the rest.” Answered the boy, “I hear and I obey, O my lord” and, taking the fish, went away with it to the house. Then the Jew put out his hand and gave Khalifah the fisherman a dinar, saying, “Take this for thyself, O Khalifah, and spend it on thy family.” When Khalifah saw the dinar on his palm, he took it, saying, “Laud to the Lord of Dominion!” as if he had never seen aught of gold in his life; and went somewhat away, but, before he had gone far, he was minded of the ape’s charge and turning back threw down the ducat, saying, “Take thy gold and give folk back their fish! Dost thou make a laughing stock of folk?” The Jew hearing this thought he was jesting and offered him two dinars upon the other, but Khalifah said, “Give me the fish and no nonsense. How knewest thou I would sell it at this price?” Whereupon the Jew gave him two more dinars and said, “Take these five ducats for thy fish and leave greed.” So Khalifah hent the five dinars in hand and went away, rejoicing, and gazing and marvelling at the gold and saying, “Glory be to God! There is not with the Caliph of Baghdad what is with me this day!” Then he ceased not faring on till he came to the end of the market-street, when he remembered the words of the ape and his charge, and returning to the Jew, threw him back the gold. Quoth he, “What aileth thee, O Khalifah? Dost thou want silver in exchange for gold?” Khalifah replied, “I want nor dirhams nor dinars. I only want thee to give me back folk’s fish.” With this the Jew waxed wroth and shouted out at him, saying, “O fisherman, thou bringest me a fish not worth a sequin and I give thee five for it; yet art thou not content! Art thou Jinn-mad? Tell me for how much thou wilt sell it.” Answered Khalifah, “I will not sell it for silver nor for gold, only for two sayings[206] thou shalt say me.” When the Jew heard speak of the "Two Sayings," his eyes sank into his head, he breathed hard and ground his teeth for rage and said to him, "O nail-paring of the Moslems, wilt thou have me throw off my faith for the sake of thy fish, and wilt thou debauch me from my religion and stultify my belief and my conviction which I inherited of old from my forbears?" Then he cried out to the servants who were in waiting and said, "Out on you! Bash me this unlucky rogue's neck and bastinado him soundly!" So they came down upon him with blows and ceased not beating him till he fell beneath the shop, and the Jew said to them, "Leave him and let him rise." Whereupon Khalifah jumped up, as if naught ailed him, and the Jew said to him, "Tell me what price thou asketh for this fish and I will give it thee: for thou hast gotten but scant good of us this day." Answered the Fisherman, "Have no fear for me, O master, because of the beating; for I can eat ten donkeys' rations of stick." The Jew laughed at his words and said, "Allah upon thee, tell me what thou wilt have and by the right of my Faith, I will give it thee!" The Fisherman replied, "Naught from thee will remunerate me for this fish save the two words whereof I spake." And the Jew said, "Meseemeth thou wouldst have me become a Moslem?" [207] Khalifah rejoined, "By Allah, O Jew, an thou islamise 'twill nor advantage the Moslems nor damage the Jews; and in like manner, an thou hold to thy misbelief 'twill nor damage the Moslems nor advantage the Jews. But what I desire of thee is that thou rise to thy feet and say, 'Bear witness against me, O people of the market, that I barter my ape for the ape of Khalifah the Fisherman and my lot in the world for his lot and my luck for his luck.'" Quoth the Jew, "If this be all thou desirest 'twill sit lightly upon me." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Jew said to Khalifah the Fisherman, "If this be all thou desirest, 'twill sit lightly upon me." So he rose without stay or delay and standing on his feet, repeated the required words; after which he turned to the Fisherman and asked him, "Hast thou aught else to ask of me?" "No," answered he, and the Jew said, "Go in peace!" Hearing this Khalifah sprung to his feet forthright; took up his basket and net and returned straight to the Tigris, where he threw his net and pulled it in. He found it heavy and brought it not ashore but with travail, when he found it full of fish of all kinds. Presently, up came a woman with a dish, who gave him a dinar, and he gave her fish for it; and after her an eunuch, who also bought a dinar's worth of fish, and so forth till he had sold ten dinars' worth. And he continued to sell ten dinars' worth of fish daily for ten days, till he had gotten an hundred dinars. Now Khalifah the Fisherman had quarters in the Passage of the Merchants, [208] and, as he lay one night in his lodging much bemused with Hashish, he said to himself, "O Khalifah, the folk all know thee for a poor fisherman, and now thou hast gotten an hundred golden dinars. Needs must the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, hear of this from some one, and haply he will be wanting money and will send for thee and say to thee, 'I need a sum of money and it hath reached me that thou hast an hundred dinars: so do thou lend them to me those same.' I shall answer, 'O Commander of the Faithful, I am a poor man, and whoso told thee that I had an hundred dinars lied against me; for I have naught of this.' Thereupon he will commit me to the Chief of Police, saying, "Strip him of his clothes and torment him with the bastinado till he confess and give up the hundred dinars in his possession. Wherefore, meseemeth to provide against this predicament, the best thing I can do, is to rise forthright and bash myself with the whip, so to use myself to beating." And his Hashish [209] said to him, "Rise, doff thy dress." So he stood up and putting off his clothes, took a whip he had by him and set handy a leathern pillow; then he fell to lashing himself, laying every other blow upon the pillow and roaring out the while, "Alas! Alas! By Allah, 'tis a false saying, O my lord, and they have lied against me; for I am a poor fisherman and have naught of the goods of the world!" The noise of the whip falling on the pillow and on his person resounded in the still of night and the folk heard it, and amongst others the merchants, and they said, "Whatever can ail the poor fellow, that he crieth and we hear the noise of blows falling on him? 'Twould seem robbers have broken in upon him and are tormenting him." Presently they all came forth of their lodgings, at the noise of the blows and the crying, and repaired to Khalifah's room, but they found the door locked and said one to other, "Belike the robbers have come in upon him from the back of the adjoining saloon. It behoveth us to climb over by the roofs." So they clomb over the roofs and coming down through the sky- light, [210] saw him naked and flogging himself and asked him, "What aileth thee, O Khalifah?" He answered, "Know, O folk, that I have gained some dinars and fear lest my case be carried up to the Prince of True Believers, Harun al-Rashid, and he send for me and demand of me those same gold pieces; whereupon I should deny, and I fear that, if I deny, he will torture me, so I am torturing myself, by way of accustoming me to what may come." The merchants laughed at him and said, "Leave this fooling, may Allah not bless thee and the dinars thou hast gotten! Verily thou hast disturbed us this night and hast troubled our hearts." So Khalifah left flogging himself and slept till the morning, when he rose and would have gone about his business, but bethought him of his hundred dinars and said in his mind, "An I leave them at home, thieves will steal them, and if I put them in a belt [211] about my waist, peradventure some one will see me and lay in wait for me till he come upon me in some lonely place and slay me and take the money: but I have a device that should serve me well, right well." So he jumped up forthright and made him a pocket in the collar of his gaberdine and tying the hundred dinars up in a purse, laid them in the collar-pocket. Then he took his net and basket and staff and went down to the Tigris, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Khalifah the Fisherman, having set his hundred dinars in the collar-pocket took basket, staff and net and went down to the Tigris, where he made a cast but brought up naught. So he removed from that place to another and threw again, but once more the net came up empty; and he went on removing from place to place till he had gone half a day's journey from the city, ever casting the net which kept bringing up naught. So he said to himself, "By Allah, I will throw my net a-stream but his once more, whether ill come of it or weal!" [212] Then he hurled the net with all his force, of the excess of his wrath and the purse with the hundred dinars flew out of his collar-pocket and, lighting in mid-stream, was carried away by the strong current; whereupon he threw down the net and plunged into the water after the purse. He dived for it nigh a hundred times, till his strength was exhausted and he came up for sheer fatigue without chancing on it. When he despaired of finding the purse, he returned to the shore, where he saw nothing but staff, net and basket and sought for his clothes, but could light on no trace of them: so he said in himself, "O vilest of those wherefor was made the byword, 'The pilgrimage is not perfected save by copulation with the camel!" [213] Then he wrapped the net about him and taking staff in one hand and basket in other, went trotting about like a camel in rut, running right and left and backwards and forwards, dishevelled and dusty, as he were a rebel Marid let loose from Solomon's prison. [214] So far for what concerns the Fisherman Khalifah; but as regards the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, he had a friend, a jeweller called Ibn al-Kirnás, [215] and all the traders, brokers and middle-men knew him for the Caliph's merchant; wherefore there was naught sold in Baghdad, by way of rarities and things of price or Mamelukes or handmaidens, but was first shown to him. As he sat one day in his shop, behold, there came up to him the Shaykh of the brokers, with a slave-girl, whose like seers never saw, for she was of passing beauty and loveliness, symmetry and perfect grace, and among her gifts was that she knew all arts and sciences and could make verses and play upon all manner musical instruments. So Ibn al-Kirnas bought her for five thousand golden dinars and clothed her with other thousand; after which he carried her to the Prince of True Believers, with whom she lay the night and who made trial of her in every kind of knowledge and accomplishment and found her versed in all sorts of arts and sciences, having no equal in her time. Her name was Kút al-Kulúb [216] and she was even as saith the poet,

"I fix my glance on her, whene'er she wends; * And non-acceptance
of my glance breeds pain:
She favours graceful-necked gazelle at gaze; * And 'Graceful as
gazelle' to say we're fain."

And where is this [217] beside the saying of another?

"Give me brunettes; the Syrian spears, so limber and so straight,

Tell of the slender dusky maids, so lithe and proud of gait.
Languid of eyelids, with a down like silk upon her cheek, Within
her wasting lover's heart she queens it still in state."

On the morrow the Caliph sent for Ibn al-Kirnas the Jeweller, and bade him receive ten thousand dinars as to her price. And his heart was taken up with the slave-girl Kut al-Kulub and he forsook the Lady Zubaydah bint al-Kasim, for all she was the daughter of his father's brother [218] and he abandoned all his favorite concubines and abode a whole month without stirring from Kut al-Kulub's side save to go to the Friday prayers and return to her in all haste. This was grievous to the Lords of the Realm and they complained thereof to the Wazir Ja'afar the Barmecide, who bore with the Commander of the Faithful and waited till the next Friday, when he entered the cathedral-mosque and, foregathering with the Caliph, related to him all that occurred to him of extra-ordinary stories anent seld-seen love and lovers with intent to draw out what was in his mind. Quoth the Caliph, "By Allah, O Ja'afar, this is not of my choice; but my heart is caught in the snare of love and wot I not what is to be done!" The Wazir Ja'afar replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, thou knowest how this girl Kut al-Kulub is become at thy disposal and of the number of thy servants, and that which hand possesseth soul coveteth not. Moreover, I will tell thee another thing which is that the highest boast of Kings and Princes is in hunting and the pursuit of sport and victory; and if thou apply thyself to this, perchance it will divert thee from her, and it may be thou wilt forget her." Rejoined the Caliph, "Thou sayest well, O Ja'afar; come let us go a-hunting forthright, without stay or delay." So soon as Friday prayers were prayed, they left the mosque and at once mounting their she-mules rode forth to the chase. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Caliph Harun al-Rashid and the Wazir Ja'afar would go forth a-hunting and a-chasing, they mounted two she-mules and fared on into the open country, occupied with talk, and their attendants outwent them. Presently the heat became overhot and Al-Rashid said to his Wazir, “O Ja’afar, I am sore athirst.” Then he looked around and espying a figure in the distance on a high mound, asked Ja’afar, “Seest thou what I see?” Answered the Wazir, “Yes, O Commander of the Faithful; I see a dim figure on a high mound; belike he is the keeper of a garden or of a cucumber- plot, and in whatso wise water will not be lacking in his neighborhood;” presently adding, “I will go to him and fetch thee some.” But Al-Rashid said, “My mule is swifter than thy mule; so do thou abide here, on account of the troops, whilst I go myself to him and get of this person [219] drink and return.” So saying, he urged his she-mule, which started off like racing wind or railing-water and, in the twinkling of an eye, made the mound, where he found the figure he had seen to be none other than Khalifah the Fisherman, naked and wrapped in the net; and indeed he was horrible to behold, as to and fro he rolled with eyes for very redness like cresset-gleam and dusty hair in dishevelled trim, as he were an Ifrit or a lion grim. Al-Rashid saluted him and he returned his salutation; but he was wroth and fires might have been lit at his breath. Quoth the Caliph, “O man, hast thou any water?”; and quoth Khalifah, “Ho thou, art thou blind, or Jinn-mad? Get thee to the river Tigris, for ’tis behind this mound.” So Al-Rashid went around the mound and going down to the river, drank and watered his mule: then without a moment’s delay he returned to Khalifah and said to him, “What aileth thee, O man, to stand here, and what is thy calling?” The Fisherman cried, “This is a stranger and sillier question than that about the water! Seest thou not the gear of my craft on my shoulder?” Said the Caliph, “Belike thou art a fisherman?”; and he replied, “Yes.” Asked Al-Rashid, “Where is thy gaberdine, [220] and where are thy waistcloth and girdle and where be the rest of thy raiment?” Now these were the very things which had been taken from Khalifah, like for like; so, when he heard the Caliph name them, he got into his head that it was he who had stolen his clothes from the river-bank and coming down from the top of the mound, swiftlier than the blinding leven, laid hold of the mule’s bridle, saying, “Harkye, man, bring me back my things and leave jesting and joking.” Al-Rashid replied, “By Allah, I have not seen thy clothes nor know aught of them!” Now the Caliph had large cheeks and a small mouth; [221] so Khalifah said to him, “Belike, thou art by trade a singer or a piper on pipes? But bring me back my clothes fairly and without more ado, or I will bash thee with this my staff till thou bepiss thyself and befoul they clothes.” When Al-Rashid saw the staff in the Fisherman’s hand and that he had the vantage of him, he said to himself, “By Allah, I cannot brook from this mad beggar half a blow of that staff!” Now he had on a satin gown; so he pulled it off and gave it to Khalifah, saying, “O man, take this in place of thy clothes.” The Fisherman took it and turned it about and said, “My clothes are worth ten of this painted ‘Abá-cloak;” and rejoined the Caliph, “Put it on till I bring thee thy gear.” So Khalifah donned the gown, but finding it too long for him, took a knife he had with him, tied to the handle of his basket,[222] and cut off nigh a third of the skirt, so that it fell only beneath his knees. Then he turned to Al-Rashid and said to him, “Allah upon thee, O piper, tell me what wage thou gettest every month from thy master, for thy craft of piping.” Replied the Caliph, “My wage is ten dinars a month,” and Khalifah continued, “By Allah, my poor fellow, thou makest me sorry for thee! Why, I make thy ten dinars every day! Hast thou a mind to take service with me and I will teach thee the art of fishing and share my gain with thee? So shalt thou make five dinars a day and be my slavey and I will protect thee against thy master with this staff.” Quoth Al-Rashid, “I will well”; and quoth Khalifah, “Then get off thy she-ass and tie her up, so she may serve us to carry the fish hereafter, and come hither, that I may teach thee to fish forthright.” So Al-Rashid alighted and hobbling his mule, tucked his skirts into his girdle, and Khalifah said to him, “O piper, lay hold of the net thus and put it over thy forearm thus and cast it into the Tigris thus.” Accordingly, the Caliph took heart of grace and, doing as the fisherman showed him, threw the net and pulled at it, but could not draw it up. So Khalifah came to his aid and tugged at it with him; but the two together could not hale it up: whereupon said the fisherman, “O piper of ill- omen, for the first time I took thy gown in place of my clothes; but this second time I will have thine ass and will beat thee to boot, till thou bepiss and beskite thyself! An I find my net torn.” Quoth Al-Rashid, “Let the twain of us pull at once.” So they both pulled together and succeeded with difficulty in hauling that net ashore, when they found it full of fish of all kinds and colours; —

And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Khalifah the Fisherman and the Caliph hauled that net ashore, they found it full of fish of all kinds; and Khalifah said to Al- Rashid, “By Allah, O piper, thou art foul of favor but, an thou apply thyself to fishing, thou wilt make a mighty fine fisherman. But now ‘twere best thou bestraddle thine ass and make for the market and fetch me a pair of frails, [223] and I will look after the fish till thou return, when I and thou will load it on thine ass’s back. I have scales and weights and all we want, so we can take them with us and thou wilt have nothing to do but to hold the scales and pouch the price; for here we have fish worth twenty dinars. So be fast with the frails and loiter not.” Answered the Caliph, “I hear and obey” and mounting, left him with his fish, and spurred his mule, in high good humour, and ceased not laughing over his adventures with the Fisherman, till he came up to Ja’afar, who said to him, “O Commander of the Faithful, belike, when thou wentest down to drink, thou foundest a pleasant flower-garden and enteredst and tookest thy pleasure therein alone?” At this Al-Rashid fell a laughing again and all the Barmecides rose and kissed the ground before him, saying, “O Commander of the Faithful, Allah make joy to endure for thee and do away annoy from thee! What was the cause of thy delaying when thou faredst to drink and what hath befallen thee?” Quoth the Caliph, “Verily, a right wondrous tale and a joyous adventure and a wondrous hath befallen me.” And he repeated to them what had passed between himself and the Fisherman and his words, “Thou stolest my clothes!” and how he had given him his gown and how he had cut off a part of it, finding it too long for him. Said Ja’afar, “By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, I had it in mind to beg the gown of thee; but now I will go straight to the Fisherman and buy it of him.” The Caliph replied, “By Allah, he hath cut off a third part of the skirt and spoilt it! But, O Ja’afar, I am tired with fishing in the river, for I have caught great store of fish which I left on the bank with my master Khalifah, and he is watching them and waiting for me to return to him with a couple of frails and a matchet. [224] Then we are to go, I and he, to the market and sell the fish and share the price.” Ja’afar rejoined, “O Commander of the Faithful, I will bring you a purchaser for your fish.” And Al-Rashid retorted, “O Ja’afar, by the virtue of my holy forefathers, whoso bringeth me one of the fish that are before Khalifah, who taught me angling, I will give him for it a gold dinar.” So the crier proclaimed among the troops that they should go forth and buy fish for the Caliph, and they all arose and made for the river-side. Now, while Khalifah was expecting the Caliph’s return with the two frails, behold, the Mamelukes swooped down upon him like vultures and took the fish and wrapped them in gold-embroidered kerchiefs, beating one another in their eagerness to get at the Fisherman. Whereupon quoth Khalifah, “Doubtless these are of the fish of Paradise!” [225] and hending two fish in right hand and left, plunged into the water up to his neck and fell a-saying, “O Allah, by the virtue of these fish, let Thy servant the piper, my partner, come to me at this very moment.” And suddenly up to him came a black slave which was the chief of the Caliph’s negro eunuchs. He had tarried behind the rest, by reason of his horse having stopped to make water by the way, and finding that naught remained of the fish, little or much, looked right and left, till he espied Khalifah standing in the stream, with a fish in either hand, and said to him, “Come hither, O Fisherman!” But Khalifah replied, “Begone and none of your impudence!” [226] So the eunuch went up to him and said, “Give me the fish and I will pay thee their price.” Replied the Fisherman, “Art thou little of wit? I will not sell them.” Therewith the eunuch drew his mace upon him, and Khalifah cried out, saying, “Strike not, O loon! Better largesse than the mace.” [227] So saying, he threw the two fishes to the eunuch, who took them and laid them in his kerchief. Then he put hand in pouch, but found not a single dirham and said to Khalifah, “O Fisherman, verily thou art out of luck for, by Allah, I have not a silver about me! But come to- morrow to the Palace of the Caliphate and ask for the eunuch Sandal; whereupon the castratos will direct thee to me and by coming thither thou shalt get what falleth to thy lot and therewith wend thy ways.” Quoth Khalifah, “Indeed, this is a blessed day and its blessedness was manifest from the first of it!”[228] Then he shouldered his net and returned to Baghdad; and as he passed through the streets, the folk saw the

Caliph's gown on him and stared at him till he came to the gate of his quarter, by which was the shop of the Caliph's tailor. When the man saw him wearing a dress of the apparel of the Caliph, worth a thousand dinars, he said to him, "O Khalifah, whence hadst thou that gown?" Replied the Fisherman, "What aileth thee to be impudent? I had it of one whom I taught to fish and who is become my apprentice. I forgave him the cutting off of his hand [229] for that he stole my clothes and gave me this cape in their place." So the tailor knew that the Caliph had come upon him as he was fishing and jested with him and given him the gown; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

She resume, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph came upon Khalifah the Fisherman and gave him his own gown in jest wherewith the man fared home. Such was his case; but as regards Harun al-Rashid, he had gone out a-hunting and a-fishing only to divert his thoughts from the damsel, Kut al-Kulub. But when Zubaydah heard of her and of the Caliph's devotion to her, the Lady was fired with the jealousy which the more especially fireth women, so that she refused meat and drink and rejected the delights of sleep and awaited the Caliph's going forth on a journey or what not, that she might set a snare for the damsel. So when she learnt that he was gone hunting and fishing, she bade her women furnish the Palace fairly and decorate it splendidly and serve up viands and confections; and amongst the rest she made a China dish of the daintiest sweetmeats that can be made wherein she had put Bhang. Then she ordered one of her eunuchs go to the damsel Kut al-Kulub and bid her to the banquet, saying, "The Lady Zubaydah bint Al-Kasim, the wife of the Commander of the Faithful, hath drunken medicine to-day and, having heard tell of the sweetness of thy singing, longeth to divert herself somewhat of thine art." Kut al-Kulub replied, "Hearing and obedience are due to Allah and the Lady Zubaydah," and rose without stay or delay, unknowing what was hidden for her in the Secret Purpose. Then she took with her what instruments she needed and, accompanying the eunuch, ceased not fairing till she stood in the presence of the Princess. When she entered she kissed ground before her again and again, then rising to her feet, said, "Peace be on the Lady of the exalted seat and the presence whereto none may avail, daughter of the house Abbásí and scion of the Prophet’s family! May Allah fulfil thee of peace and prosperity in the days and the years!” [230] Then she stood with the rest of the women and eunuchs, and presently the Lady Zubaydah raised her eyes and considered her beauty and loveliness. She saw a damsel with cheeks smooth as rose and breasts like granado, a face moon-bright, a brow flower-white and great eyes black as night; her eyelids were langour-dight and her face beamed with light, as if the sun from her forehead arose and the murks of the night from the locks of her brow; and the fragrance of musk from her breath strayed and flowers bloomed in her lovely face inlaid; the moon beamed from her forehead and in her slender shape the branches swayed. She was like the full moon shining in the nightly shade; her eyes wantoned, her eyebrows were like a bow arched and her lips of coral moulded. Her beauty amazed all who espied her and her glances amated all who eyed her. Glory be to Him who formed her and fashioned her and perfected her! Brief, she was even as saith the poet of one who favoured her,

“When she’s incensed thou seest folk like slain, * And when she’s pleased, their souls are quick again:
Her eyne are armed with glances magical * Wherewith she kills and quickens as she’s fain.
The Worlds she leadeth captive with her eyes * As tho’ the Worlds were all her slavish train.”

Quoth the Lady Zubaydah, “Well come, and welcome and fair cheer to thee, O Kut al-Kulub! Sit and divert us with thine art and the goodliness of thine accomplishments.” Quoth the damsel, “I hear and I obey”; and, putting out her hand, took the tambourine, whereof one of its praisers speaketh in the following verses,

“Ho thou o’ the tabret, my heart takes flight * And love-smit cries while thy fingers smite!
Thou takest naught but a wounded heart, * The while for acceptance longs the wight:
So say thou word or heavy or light; * Play whate’er thou please

it will charm the sprite.
Sois bonne, unveil thy cheek, ma belle * Rise, deftly dance and
all hearts delight."

Then she smote the tambourine briskly and so sang thereto, that she stopped the birds in the sky and the place danced with them blithely; after which she laid down the tambourine and took the pipe
231 whereof it is said,

"She hath eyes whose babes wi' their fingers sign * To sweet tunes without a discordant line."

And as the poet also said in this couplet,

"And, when she announceth the will to sing, * For Union-joy 'tis
a time divine!"

Then she laid down the pipe, after she had charmed therewith all who were present, and took up the lute, whereof saith the poet,

"How many a blooming bough in glee-girl's hand is fain * as
lute to 'witch great souls by charm of cunning strain!
She sweeps tormenting lute strings by her artful touch * Wi'
finger-tips that surely chain with endless chain."

Then she tightened its pegs and tuned its strings and laying it in her lap, bended over it as mother bendeth over child; and it seemed as it were of her and her lute that the poet spoke in these couplets,

"Sweetly discourses she on Persian string * And Unintelligence
makes understand.
And teaches she that Love's a murtherer, * Who oft the reasoning
Moslem hath unmann'd.
A maid, by Allah, in whose palm a thing * Of painted wood like
mouth can speech command.
With lute she stauncheth flow of Love; and so * Stops flow of
blood the cunning leach's hand."

Then she preluded in fourteen different modes and sang to the lute an entire piece, so as to confound the gazers and delight her hearers.

After which she recited these two couplets,

“The coming unto thee is blest: * Therein new joys for aye
attend:
Its blisses are continuous * Its blessings never end.”

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fortieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the maiden, Kut al-Kulub, after singing these songs and sweeping the strings in presence of the Lady Zubaydah, rose and exhibited tricks of sleight of hand and legerdemain and all manner pleasing arts, till the Princess came near to fall in love with her and said to herself, “Verily, my cousin Al-Rashid is not to blame for loving her!” Then the damsel kissed ground before Zubaydah and sat down, whereupon they set food before her. Presently they brought her the drugged dish of sweetmeats and she ate thereof; and hardly had it settled in her stomach when her head fell backward and she sank on the ground sleeping. With this, the Lady said to her women, “Carry her up to one of the chambers, till I summon her”; and they replied, “We hear and we obey.” Then said she to one of her eunuchs, “Fashion me a chest and bring it hitherto to me!”, and shortly afterwards she bade make the semblance of a tomb and spread the report that Kut al-Kulub had choked and died, threatening her familiars that she would smite the neck of whoever should say, “She is alive.” Now, behold, the Caliph suddenly returned from the chase, and the first enquiry he made was for the damsel. So there came to him one of his eunuchs, whom the Lady Zubaydah had charged to declare she was dead, if the Caliph should ask for her and, kissing ground before him, said, “May thy head live, O my lord! Be certified that Kut al- Kulub choked in eating and is dead.” Whereupon cried Al-Rashid, “God never gladden thee with good news, O thou bad slave!” and entered the Palace, where he heard of her death from every one and asked, “Where is her tomb?” So they brought him to the sepulchre and showed him the pretended tomb, saying, “This is her burial-place.” When he saw it, he cried out and wept and embraced it, quoting these two couplets,[232]

“By Allah, O tomb, have her beauties ceased and disappeared from
sight * And is the countenance changed and wan, that shone
so wonder-bright?
O tomb, O tomb, thou art neither heaven nor garden, verily: * How
comes it then that swaying branch and moon in thee unite?

The Caliph, weeping sore for her, abode by the tomb a full hour, after which he arose and went away, in the utmost distress and the deepest melancholy. So the Lady Zubaydah saw that her plot had succeeded and forthright sent for the eunuch and said, “Hither with the chest!” He set it before her, when she bade bring the damsel and locking her up therein, said to the Eunuch, “Take all pains to sell this chest and make it a condition with the purchaser that he buy it locked; then give alms with its price.”[233] So he took it and went forth, to do her bidding. Thus fared it with these; but as for Khalifah the Fisherman, when morning morrowed and shone with its light and sheen, he said to himself, “I cannot do aught better to-day than visit the Eunuch who bought the fish of me, for he appointed me to come to him in the Palace of the Caliphate.” So he went forth of his lodging, intending for the palace, and when he came thither, he found Mamelukes, negro-slaves and eunuchs standing and sitting; and looking at them, behold, seated amongst them was the Eunuch who had taken the fish of him, with the white slaves waiting on him. Presently, one of the Mameluke-lads called out to him; whereupon the Eunuch turned to see who he was an lo! it was the Fisherman. Now when Khalifah was ware that he saw him and recognized him, he said to him, “I have not failed thee, O my little Tulip![234] On this wise are men of their word.” Hearing his address, Sandal the Eunuch [235] laughed and replied, “By Allah, thou art right, O Fisherman,” and put his hand to his pouch, to give him somewhat; but at that moment there arose a great clamour. So he raised his head to see what was to do and finding that it was the Wazir Ja’afar the Barmecide coming forth from the Caliph’s presence, he rose to him and forewent him, and they walked about, conversing for a longsome time. Khalifah the Fisherman waited awhile; then, growing weary of standing and finding that the Eunuch took no heed of him, he set himself in his way and beckoned to him from afar, saying, “O my lord Tulip, give me my due and let me go!” The Eunuch heard him, but was ashamed to answer him because of the minister’s presence; so he went on talking with Ja’afar and took no notice whatever of the Fisherman. Whereupon quoth Khalifah, “O Slow o’ Pay! [236] May Allah put to shame all churls and all who take folks’s goods and are niggardly with them! I put myself under thy protection, O my lord Bran-belly, [237] to give me my due and let me go!” The Eunuch heard him, but was ashamed to answer him before Ja’afar; and the Minister saw the Fisherman beckoning and talking to him, though he knew not what he was saying; so he said to Sandal, misliking his behaviour, “O Eunuch, what would yonder beggar with thee?” Sandal replied, “Dost thou not know him, O my lord the Wazir?”; and Ja’afar answered, “By Allah, I know him not! How should I know a man I have never seen but at this moment?” Rejoined the Eunuch, “O my lord, this is the Fisherman whose fish we seized on the banks of the Tigris. I came too late to get any and was ashamed to return to the Prince of True Believers, empty-handed, when all the Mamelukes had some. Presently I espied the Fisherman standing in mid-stream, calling on Allah, with four fishes in his hands, and said to him, ‘Give me what thou hast there and take their worth.’ He handed me the fish and I put my hand into my pocket, purposing to gift him with somewhat, but found naught therein and said, ‘Come to me in the Palace, and I will give thee wherewithal to aid thee in thy poverty. So he came to me to-day and I was putting hand to pouch, that I might give him somewhat, when thou camest forth and I rose to wait on thee and was diverted with thee from him, till he grew tired of waiting; and this is the whole story, how he cometh to be standing here.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Forty-first Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sandal the Eunuch related to Ja’afar the Barmecide the tale of Khalifah the Fisherman, ending with, “This is the whole story and how he cometh to be standing here!” the Wazir, hearing this account, smiled and said, “O Eunuch, how is it that this Fisherman cometh in his hour of need and thou satisfiest him not? Dost thou not know him, O Chief of the Eunuchs?” “No,” answered Sandal and Ja’afar said, “This is the Master of the Commander of the Faithful, and his partner and our lord the Caliph has arisen this morning, strait of breast, heavy of heart and troubled of thought, nor is there aught will broaden his breast save this fisherman. So let him not go, till I crave the Caliph’s pleasure concerning him and bring him before him; perchance Allah will relieve him of his oppression and console him for the loss of Kut al-Kulub, by means of the Fisherman’s presence, and he will give him wherewithal to better himself; and thou wilt be the cause of this.” Replied Sandal, “O my lord, do as thou wilt and may Allah Almighty long continue thee a pillar of the dynasty of the Commander of the Faithful, whose shadow Allah perpetuate [238] and prosper it, root and branch!” Then the Wazir Ja’afar rose up and went in to the Caliph, and Sandal ordered the Mamelukes not to leave the Fisherman; whereupon Khalifah cried, “How goodly is thy bounty, O Tulip! The seeker is become the sought. I come to seek my due, and they imprison me for debts in arrears!” [239] When Ja’afar came in to the presence of the Caliph, he found him sitting with his head bowed earthwards, breast straitened and mind melancholy, humming the verses of the poet,

“My blamers instant bid that I for her become consoled; * But I,
what can I do, whose heart declines to be controlled?
And how can I in patience bear the loss of lovely maid, * When
fails me patience for a love that holds with firmest hold!
Ne’er I’ll forget her nor the bowl that ‘twixt us both went round

* And wine of glances maddened me with drunkenness
ensoul’d.”

Whenas Ja’afar stood in the presence, he said, “Peace be upon thee, O Commander of the Faithful, Defender of the honour of the Faith and descendant of the uncle of the Prince of the Apostles, Allah assain him and save him and his family one and all!” The Caliph raised his head and answered, “And on thee be peace and the mercy of Allah and His blessings!” Quoth Ja’afar; “With leave of the Prince of True Believers, his servant would speak without restraint." Asked the Caliph, "And when was restraint put upon thee in speech and thou the Prince of Wazirs? Say what thou wilt." Answered Ja'afar, "When I went out, O my lord, from before thee, intending for my house, I saw standing at the door thy master and teacher and partner, Khalifah the Fisherman, who was aggrieved at thee and complained of thee saying, 'Glory be to God! I taught him to fish and he went away to fetch me a pair of frails, but never came back: and this is not the way of a good partner or of a good apprentice.' So, if thou hast a mind to partnership, well and good; and if not, tell him, that he may take to partner another." Now when the Caliph heard these words he smiled and his straitness of breast was done away with and he said, "My life on thee, is this the truth thou sayest, that the Fisherman standeth at the door?" and Ja'afar replied, "By thy life, O Commander of the Faithful, he standeth at the door." Quoth the Caliph, "O Ja'afar, by Allah, I will assuredly do my best to give him his due! If Allah at my hands send him misery, he shall have it; and if prosperity he shall have it." Then he took a piece of paper and cutting it in pieces, said to the Wazir, "O Ja'afar, write down with thine own hand twenty sums of money, from one dinar to a thousand, and the names of all kinds of offices and dignities from the least appointment to the Caliphate; also twenty kinds of punishment from the lightest beating to death." [240] "I hear and obey, O Commander of the Faithful," answered Ja'afar, and did as he was bidden. Then said the Caliph, "O Ja'afar, I swear by my holy forefathers and by my kinship to Hamzah [241] and Akil, [242] that I mean to summon the fisherman and bid him take one of these papers, whose contents none knowesth save thou and I; and whatsoever is written in the paper which he shall choose, I will give it to him; though it be the Caliphate I will divest myself thereof and invest him therewith and grudge it not to him; and, on the other hand, if there be written therein hanging or mutilation or death, I will execute it upon him. Now go and fetch him to me." When Ja'afar heard this, he said to himself, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! It may be somewhat will fall to this poor wretch's lot that will bring about his destruction, and I shall be the cause. But the Caliph hath sworn; so nothing remains now but to bring him in, and naught will happen save whatso Allah willeth." Accordingly he went out to Khalifah the Fisherman and laid hold of his hand to carry him in to the Caliph, whereupon his reason fled and he said in himself, "What a stupid I was to come after yonder ill-omened slave, Tulip, whereby he hath brought me in company with Bran- belly!" Ja'afar fared on with him, with Mamelukes before and behind, whilst he said, "Doth not arrest suffice, but these must go behind and before me, to hinder my making off?" till they had traversed seven vestibules, when the Wazir said to him, "Mark my words, O Fisherman! Thou standest before the Commander of the Faithful and Defender of the Faith!" Then he raised the great curtain and Khalifah's eyes fell on the Caliph, who was seated on his couch, with the Lords of the realm standing in attendance upon him. As soon as he knew him, he went up to him and said, "Well come, and welcome to thee, O piper! 'Twas not right of thee to make thyself a Fisherman and go away, leaving me sitting to guard the fish, and never to return! For, before I was aware, there came up Mamelukes on beasts of all manner colours, and snatched away the fish from me, I standing alone, and this was all of thy fault; for, hadst thou returned with the frails forthright, we had sold an hundred dinars' worth of fish. And now I come to seek my due, and they have arrested me. But thou, who hath imprisoned thee also in this place?" The Caliph smiled and raising a corner of the curtain, put forth his head and said to the Fisherman, "Come hither and take thee one of these papers." Quoth Khalifah the Fisherman, "Yesterday thou wast a fisherman, and to-day thou hast become an astrologer; but the more trades a man hath, the poorer he waxeth." Thereupon Ja'afar said, "Take the paper at once, and do as the Commander of the Faithful biddeth thee without prating." So he came forward and put forth his hand saying, "Far be it from me that this piper should ever again be my knave and fish with me!" Then taking the paper he handed it to the Caliph, saying, "O piper, what hath come out for me therein? Hide naught thereof." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Forty-second Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Khalifah the Fisherman took up one of the papers and handed it to the Caliph he said, “O piper, what have come out to me therein? Hide naught thereof.” So Al-Rashid received it and passed it on to Ja’afar and said to him, “Read what is therein.” He looked at it and said, “There is no Majesty there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” Said the Caliph, “Good news, [243] O Ja’afar? What seest thou therein?” Answered the Wazir, “O Commander of the Faithful, there came up from the paper, ‘Let the Fisherman receive an hundred blows with a stick.’” So the Caliph commanded to beat the Fisherman and they gave him an hundred sticks: after which he rose, saying, “Allah damn this, O Bran-belly! Are jail and sticks part of the game?” Then said Ja’afar, “O Commander of the Faithful, this poor devil is come to the river, and how shall he go away thirsting? We hope that among the alms-deeds of the Commander of the Faithful, he may have leave to take another paper, so haply somewhat may come out wherewithal he may succor his poverty.” Said the Caliph, “By Allah, O Ja’afar, if he take another paper and death be written therein, I will assuredly kill him, and thou wilt be the cause.” Answered Ja’afar, “If he die he will be at rest.” But Khalifah the Fisherman said to him, “Allah ne’er gladden thee with good news! Have I made Baghdad strait upon you, that ye seek to slay me?” Quoth Ja’afar, “Take thee a paper and crave the blessing of Allah Almighty!” So he put out his hand and taking a paper, gave it to Ja’afar, who read it and was silent. The Caliph asked, “Why art thou silent, O son of Yahya?”; and he answered, “O Commander of the Faithful, there hath come out on this paper, ‘Naught shall be given to the Fisherman.’” Then said the Caliph, “His daily bread will not come from us: bid him fare forth from before our face.” Quoth Ja’afar, “By the claims of thy pious forefathers, let him take a third paper, it may be it will bring him alimony;” and quoth the Caliph, “Let him take one and no more.” So he put out his hand and took a third paper, and behold, therein was written, “Let the Fisherman be given one dinar.” Ja’afar cried to him, “I sought good fortune for thee, but Allah willed not to thee aught save this dinar.” And Khalifah answered, “Verily, a dinar for every hundred sticks were rare good luck, may Allah not send thy body health!” The Caliph laughed at him and Ja’afar took him by the hand and led him out. When he reached the door, Sandal the eunuch saw him and said to him, “Hither, O Fisherman! Give us portion of that which the Commander of the Faithful hath bestowed on thee, whilst jesting with thee.” Replied Khalifah, “By Allah, O Tulip, thou art right! Wilt thou share with me, O nigger? Indeed, I have eaten stick to the tune of an hundred blows and have earned one dinar, and thou art but too welcome to it.” So saying, he threw him the dinar and went out, with the tears flowing down the plain of his cheeks. When the Eunuch saw him in this plight, he knew that he had spoken sooth and called to the lads to fetch him back: so they brought him back and Sandal, putting his hand to his pouch, pulled out a red purse, whence he emptied an hundred golden dinars into the Fisherman’s hand, saying, “Take this gold in payment of thy fish and wend thy ways.” So Khalifah, in high good humor, took the hundred ducats and the Caliph’s one dinar and went his way, and forgot the beating. Now, as Allah willed it for the furthering of that which He had decreed, he passed by the mart of the hand-maidens and seeing there a mighty ring where many folks were foregathering, said to himself, “What is this crowd?” So he brake through the merchants and others, who said, “Make wide the way for Skipper Rapscallion, [244] and let him pass.” Then he looked and behold, he saw a chest, with an eunuch seated thereon and an old man standing by it, and the Shaykh was crying, “O merchants, O men of money, who will hasten and hazard his coin for this chest of unknown contents from the Palace of the Lady Zubaydah bint al-Kasim, wife of the Commander of the Faithful? How much shall I say for you, Allah bless you all!” Quoth one of the merchants, “By Allah, this is a risk! But I will say one word and no blame to me. Be it mine for twenty dinars.” Quoth another, “Fifty,” and they went on bidding, one against other, till the price reached an hundred ducats. Then said the crier, “Will any of you bid more, O merchants?” And Khalifah the Fisherman said, “Be it mine for an hundred dinars and one dinar.” The merchants, hearing these words, thought he was jesting and laughed at him, saying, “O eunuch sell it to Khalifah for an hundred dinars and one dinar!” Quoth the eunuch, “By Allah, I will sell it to none but him! Take it, O Fisherman, the Lord bless thee in it, and here with thy gold.” So Khalifah pulled out the ducats and gave them to the eunuch, who, the bargain being duly made, delivered to him the chest and bestowed the price in alms on the spot; after which he returned to the Palace and acquainted the Lady Zubaydah with what he had done, whereat she rejoiced. Meanwhile the Fisherman hove the chest on shoulder, but could not carry it on this wise for the excess of its weight; so he lifted it on to his head and thus bore it to the quarter where he lived. Here he set it down and being weary, sat awhile, bemusing what had befallen him and saying in himself, “Would Heaven I knew what is in this chest!” Then he opened the door of his lodging and haled the chest until he got it into his closet; after which he strove to open it, but failed. Quoth he, “What folly possessed me to buy this chest? There is no help for it but to break it open and see what is herein.” So he applied himself to the lock, but could not open it, and said to himself, “I will leave it till to-morrow.” Then he would have stretched him out to sleep, but could find no room; for the chest filled the whole closet. So he got upon it and lay him down; but, when he had lain awhile, behold, he felt something stir under him whereat sleep forsook him and his reason fled. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Forty-third Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Khalifah the Fisherman lay down upon the chest and thus tarried awhile, behold, something stirred beneath him; whereat he was affrighted and his reason fled. So he arose and cried, “Meseems there be Jinns in the chest. Praise to Allah who suffered me not to open it! For, had I done so, they had risen against me in the dark and slain me, and from them would have befallen me naught of good.” Then he lay down again when, lo! the chest moved a second time, more than before; whereupon he sprang to his feet and said, “There it goes again: but this is terrible!” And he hastened to look for the lamp, but could not find it and had not the wherewithal to buy another. So he went forth and cried out, “Ho, people of the quarter!” Now the most part of the folk were asleep; but they awoke at his crying and asked, “What aileth thee, O Khalifah?” He answered, “Bring me a lamp, for the Jinn are upon me.” They laughed at him and gave him a lamp, wherewith he returned to his closet. Then he smote the lock of the chest with a stone and broke it and opening it, saw a damsel like a Houri lying asleep within. Now she had been drugged with Bhang, but at that moment she threw up the stuff and awoke; then she opened her eyes and feeling herself confined and cramped, moved. At this sight quoth Khalifah, "By Allah, O my lady, whence art thou?"; and quoth she, "Bring me Jessamine, and Narcissus." [245] and Khalifah answered, "There is naught here but Henna- flowers." [246] thereupon she came to herself and considering Khalifah, said to him, "What art thou?" presently adding, "And where am I?" He said, "Thou art in my lodging." Asked she, "Am I not in the Palace of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid?" And quoth he, "What manner of thing is Al-Rashid? [247] O madwoman, Thou art naught but my slave-girl: I bought thee this very day for an hundred dinars and one dinar, and brought thee home, and thou wast asleep in this here chest." When she had heard these words she said to him, "What is thy name?" Said he, "My name is Khalifah. How comes my star to have grown propitious, when I know my ascendant to have been otherwise?" She laughed and cried, "Spare me this talk! Hast thou anything to eat?" Replied he, "No, by Allah, nor yet to drink! I have not eaten these two days and am now in want of a morsel." She asked, "Hast thou no money?"; and he said, "Allah keep this chest which hath beggared me: I gave all I had for it and am become bankrupt." The damsel laughed at him and said, "Up with thee and seek of thy neighbours somewhat for me to eat, for I am hungry." So he went forth and cried out, "Ho, people of the quarter!" Now the folk were asleep; but they awoke and asked, "What aileth thee, O Khalifah?" Answered he, "O my neighbours, I am hungry and have nothing to eat." So one came down to him with a bannock and another with broken meats and a third with a bittock of cheese and a fourth with a cucumber; and so on till he lap was full and he returned to his closet and laid the whole between her hands, saying, "Eat." But she laughed at him, saying, "How can I eat of this, when I have not a mug of water whereof to drink? I fear to choke with a mouthful and die." Quoth he, "I will fill thee this pitcher."[248] So he took the pitcher and going forth, stood in the midst of the street and cried out, saying, "Ho, people of the quarter!" Quoth they, "What calamity is upon thee to-night, [249] O Khalifah!" And he said, "Ye gave me food and I ate; but now I am a-thirst; so give me to drink." Thereupon one came down to him with a mug and another with an ewer and a third with a gugglet; and he filled his pitcher and, bearing it back, said to the damsel, “O my lady, thou lackest nothing now.” Answered she, “True, I want nothing more at this present.” Quoth he, “Speak to me and say me thy story.” And quoth she, “Fie upon thee! An thou knowest me not, I will tell thee who I am. I am Kut al-Kulub, the Caliph’s handmaiden, and the Lady Zubaydah was jealous of me; so she drugged me with Bhang and set me in this chest,” presently adding, “Alhamdolillah — praised be God — for that the matter hath come to easy issue and no worse! But this befel me not save for thy good luck, for thou wilt certainly get of the Caliph Al-Rashid money galore, that will be the means of thine enrichment.” Quoth Khalifah, “Is not Al-Rashid he in whose Palace I was imprisoned?” “Yes,” answered she; and he said, “By Allah, never saw I more niggardly wight than he, that piper little of good and wit! He gave me an hundred blows with a stick yesterday and but one dinar, for all I taught him to fish and made him my partner; but he played me false.” Replied she, “Leave this unseemly talk, and open thine eyes and look thou bear thyself respectfully, whenas thou seest him after this, and thou shalt win thy wish.” When he heard her words, it was if he had been asleep and awoke; and Allah removed the veil from his judgment, because of his good luck, [250] and he answered, “On my head and eyes!” Then said he to her, “Sleep, in the name of Allah.” [251] So she lay down and fell asleep (and he afar from her) till the morning, when she sought of him inkcase [252] and paper and, when they were brought wrote to Ibn al- Kirnas, the Caliph’s friend, acquainting him with her case and how at the end of all that had befallen her she was with Khalifah the Fisherman, who had bought her. Then she gave him the scroll, saying, “Take this and hie thee to the jewel-market and ask for the shop of Ibn al-Kirnas the Jeweller and give him this paper and speak not.” “I hear and I obey,” answered Khalifah and going with the scroll to the market, enquired for the shop of Ibn al- Kirnas. They directed him to thither and on entering it he saluted the merchant, who returned his salam with contempt and said to him, “What dost thou want?” Thereupon he gave him the letter and he took it, but read it not, thinking the Fisherman a beggar, who sought an alms of him, and said to one of his lads, “Give him half a dirham.” Quoth Khalifah, “I want no alms; read the paper.” So Ibn al-Kirnas took the letter and read it; and no sooner knew its import than he kissed it and laying it on his head — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Forty-fourth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Ibn al-Kirnas read the letter and knew its import, he kissed it and laid it on his head; then he arose and said to Khalifah, “O my brother, where is thy house?” Asked Khalifah, “What wantest thou with my house? Wilt thou go thither and steal my slave-girl?” Then Ibn al-Kirnas answered, “No so: on the contrary, I will buy thee somewhat whereof you may eat, thou and she.” So he said, “My house is in such a quarter;” and the merchant rejoined, “Thou hast done well. May Allah not give thee health, O unlucky one!” [253] Then he called out to two of his slaves and said to them, “Carry this man to the shop of Mohsin the Shroff and say to him, ‘O Mohsin, give this man a thousand dinars of gold;’ then bring him back to me in haste.” So they carried him to the money-changer, who paid him the money, and returned with him to their master, whom they found mounted on a dapple she-mule worth a thousand dinars, with Mamelukes and pages about him, and by his side another mule like his own, saddled and bridled. Quoth the jeweller to Khalifah, “Bismillah, mount this mule.” Replied he, “I won’t; for by Allah, I fear she throw me;” and quoth Ibn al- Kirnas, “By God, needs must thou mount.” So he came up and mounting her, face to crupper, caught hold of her tail and cried out; whereupon she threw him on the ground and they laughed at him; but he rose and said, “Did I not tell thee I would not mount this great jenny-ass?” Thereupon Ibn al-Kirnas left him in the market and repairing to the Caliph, told him of the damsel; after which he returned and removed her to his own house. Meanwhile, Khalifah went home to look after the handmaid and found the people of the quarter foregathering and saying, “Verily, Khalifah is to-day in a terrible pickle! [254] Would we knew whence he can have gotten this damsel?” Quoth one of them, “He is a mad pimp; haply he found her lying on the road drunken, and carried her to his own house, and his absence showeth that he knoweth his offence.” As they were talking, behold, up came Khalifah, and they said to him, “What a plight is thine, O unhappy! Knowest thou not what is come to thee?” He replied, “No, by Allah!” and they said, “But just now there came Mamelukes and took away thy slave-girl whom thou stolest, and sought for thee, but found thee not.” Asked Khalifah, “And how came they to take my slave-girl?”; and quoth one, “Had he falled in their way, they had slain him.” But he, so far from heeding them, returned running to the shop of Ibn al-Kirnas, whom he met riding, and said to him, “By Allah, ’twas not right of thee to wheedle me and meanwhile send thy Mamelukes to take my slave-girl!” Replied the jeweller, “O idiot, come with me and hold thy tongue.” So he took him and carried him into a house handsomely builded, where he found the damsel seated on a couch of gold, with ten slave-girls like moons round her. Sighting her Ibn al-Kirnas kissed ground before her and she said, “What hast thou done with my new master, who bought me with all he owned?” He replied, “O my lady, I gave him a thousand golden dinars;” and related to her Khalifah’s history from first to last, whereat she laughed and said, “Blame him not; for he is but a common wight. These other thousand dinars are a gift from me to him and Almighty Allah willing, he shall win of the Caliph what shall enrich him.” As they were talking, there came an eunuch from the Commander of the Faithful, in quest of Kut al- Kulub, for, when he knew that she was in the house of Ibn al- Kirnas, he could not endure the severance, but bade bring her forthwith. So she repaired to the Palace, taking Khalifah with her, and going into the presence, kissed ground before the Caliph, who rose to her, saluting and welcoming her, and asked her how she had fared with him who had bought her. She replied, “He is a man, Khalifah the Fisherman hight, and there he standeth at the door. He telleth me that he hath an account to settle with the Commander of the Faithful, by reason of a partnership between him and the Caliph in fishing.” Asked Al-Rashid, “Is he at the door?” and she answered, “Yes.” So the Caliph sent for him and he kissed ground before him and wished him endurance of glory and prosperity. The Caliph marvelled at him and laughed at him and said to him, “O Fisherman, wast thou in very deed my partner [255] yesterday?” Khalifah took his meaning and heartening his heart and summoning spirit replied, “By Him who bestowed upon thee the succession to thy cousin, [256] I know her not in anywise and have had no commerce with her save by way of sight and speech!” Then he repeated to him all that had befallen him, since he last saw him, [257] whereat the Caliph laughed and his breast broadened and he said to Khalifah, “Ask of us what thou wilt, O thou who bringest to owners their own!” But he was silent; so the Caliph ordered him fifty thousand dinars of gold and a costly dress of honour such as great Sovrans don, and a she-mule, and gave him black slaves of the Súdán to serve him, so that he became as he were one of the Kings of that time. The Caliph was rejoiced at the recovery of his favourite and knew that all this was the doing of his cousin-wife, the Lady Zubaydah, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph rejoiced at the recovery of Kut al-Kulub and knew that all this was the doing of the Lady Zubaydah, his cousin-wife; wherefore he was sore enraged against her and held aloof from her a great while, visiting her not neither inclining to pardon her. When she was certified of this, she was sore concerned for his wrath and her face, that was wont to be rosy, waxed pale and wan till, when her patience was exhausted, she sent a letter to her cousin, the Commander of the Faithful making her excuses to him and confessing her offences, and ending with these verses

“I long once more the love that was between us to regain, * That
I may quench the fire of grief and bate the force of bane.
O lords of me, have ruth upon the stress my passion deals *
Enough to me is what you doled of sorrow and of pain.
’Tis life to me an deign you keep the troth you deigned to plight

* ’Tis death to me an troth you break and fondest vows
profane:
Given I’ve sinned a sorry sin, ye grant me ruth, for naught * By
Allah, sweeter is than friend who is of pardon fain.”

When the Lady Zubaydah’s letter reached the Caliph, and reading it he saw that she confessed her offence and sent her excuses to him therefor, he said to himself, “Verily, all sins doth Allah forgive; aye, Gracious, Merciful is He!"[258] And he returned her an answer, expressing satisfaction and pardon and forgiveness for what was past, whereat she rejoiced greatly. As for Khalifah, the Fisherman, the Caliph assigned him a monthly solde of fifty dinars and took him into especial favour, which would lead to rank and dignity, honour and worship. Then he kissed ground before the Commander of the Faithful and went forth with stately gait. When he came to the door, the Eunuch Sandal, who had given him the hundred dinars, saw him and knowing him, said to him, "O Fisherman, whence all this?" So he told him all that had befallen him, first and last, whereat Sandal rejoiced, because he had been the cause of his enrichment, and said to him, "Wilt thou not give me largesse of this wealth which is now become thine?" So Khalifah put hand to pouch and taking out a purse containing a thousand dinars, gave it to the Eunuch, who said, "Keep thy coins and Allah bless thee therein!" and marvelled at his manliness and at the liberality of his soul, for all his late poverty.[259] Then leaving the eunuch, Khalifah mounted his she-mule and rode, with the slaves' hands on her crupper, till he came to his lodging at the Khan, whilst the folk stared at him in surprise for that which had betided him of advancement. When he alighted from his beast they accosted him and enquired the cause of his change from poverty to prosperity, and he told them all that had happened to him from incept to conclusion. Then he bought a fine mansion and laid out thereon much money, till it was perfect in all points. And he took up his abode therein and was wont to recite thereon these two couplets,

"Behold a house that's like the Dwelling of Delight;[260] *
    Its aspect heals the sick and banishes despite.
Its sojourn for the great and wise appointed it, * And Fortune
    fair therein abideth day and night."

Then, as soon as he was settled in his house, he sought him in marriage the daughter of one of the chief men of the city, a handsome girl, and went in unto her and led a life of solace and satisfaction, joyaunce and enjoyment; and he rose to passing affluence and exceeding prosperity. So, when he found himself in this fortunate condition, he offered up thanks to Allah (extolled and excelled be He!) for what He had bestowed on him of wealth exceeding and of favours ever succeeding, praising his Lord with the praise of the grateful and chanting the words of the poet,

“To Thee be praise, O Thou who showest unremitting grace; * O
Thou whose universal bounties high and low embrace!
To Thee be praise from me! Then deign accept my praise for I *
Accept Thy boons and gifts with grateful soul in every case.
Thou hast with favours overwhelmed me, benefits and largesse *
And gracious doles my memory ne’er ceaseth to retrace.
All men from mighty main, Thy grace and goodness, drain and
drink; * And in their need Thou, only Thou, to them art
refuge-place!
So for the sake of him who came to teach mankind in ruth *
Prophet, pure, truthful-worded scion of the noblest race;
Ever be Allah’s blessing and His peace on him and all * His aids
[261] and kin while pilgrims fare his noble tomb to face!
And on his helpmeets [262] one and all, Companions great and
good, * Through time Eternal while the bird shall sing in
shady wood!”

And thereafter Khalifah continued to pay frequent visits to the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, with whom he found acceptance and who ceased not to overwhelm him with boons and bounty: and he abode in the enjoyment of the utmost honour and happiness and joy and gladness and in riches more than sufficing and in rank ever rising; brief, a sweet life and a savoury, pure as pleasurable, till there came to him the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies; and extolled be the perfection of Him to whom belong glory and permanence and He is the Living, the Eternal, who shall never die!

NOTE. I have followed the example of Mr. Payne and have translated in its entirety the Tale of Khalifah the Fisherman from the Breslau Edit. (Vol. iv. p-365, Night cccxxi- cccxxxii.) in preference to the unsatisfactory process of amalgamating it with that of the Mac. Edit. given above.

Khalif the Fisherman of Baghdad.

There was once, in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, in the city of Baghdad, a fisherman, by name Khalíf, a man of muckle talk and little luck. One day, as he sat in his cell,[263] he bethought himself and said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Would Heaven I knew what is my offence in the sight of my Lord and what caused the blackness of my fortune and my littleness of luck among the fishermen, albeit (and I say it who should not) in the city of Baghdad there is never a fisherman like myself." Now he lodged in a ruined place called a Khan, to wit, an inn,[264] without a door, and when he went forth to fish, he would shoulder the net, without basket or fish-slicers,[265] and when the folk would stare at him and say to him, "O Khalif, why not take with thee a basket, to hold the fish thou catchest?"; he would reply, "Even as I carry it forth empty, so would it come back, for I never manage to catch aught." One night he arose, in the darkness before dawn, and taking his net on his shoulder, raised his eyes to heaven and said, "Allah mine, O Thou who subjectedst the sea to Moses son of Imrán, give me this day my daily bread, for Thou art the best of bread-givers!" Then he went down to the Tigris and spreading his net, cast it into the river and waited till it had settled down, when he haled it in and drew it ashore, but behold, it held naught save a dead dog. So he cast away the carcase, saying, "O morning of ill doom! What a handsel is this dead hound, after I had rejoiced in its weight[266] !" Then he mended the rents in the net, saying, "Needs must there after this carrion be fish in plenty, attracted by the smell," and made a second cast. After awhile, he drew up and found in the net the hough[267] of a camel, that had caught in the meshes and rent them right and left. When Khalif saw his net in this state, he wept and said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! I wonder what is my offence and the cause of the blackness of my fortune and the littleness of my luck, of all folk, so that I catch neither cat-fish nor sprat,[268] that I may broil on the embers and eat, for all I dare say there is not in the city of Baghdad a fisherman like me." Then with a

Bismillah he cast his net a third time, and presently drawing it ashore found therein an ape scurvy and one-eyed, mangy, and limping hending an ivory rod in forehand. When Khalif saw this, he said, “This is indeed a blessed opening! What art thou, O ape?” “Dost thou not know me?” “No, by Allah, I have no knowledge of thee!” “I am thine ape!” “What use is there in thee, O my ape?” “Every day I give thee good-morrow, so Allah may not open to thee the door of daily bread.” “Thou failest not of this, O one-eye[269] of ill-omen! May Allah never bless thee! Needs must I pluck out thy sound eye and cut off thy whole leg, so thou mayst become a blind cripple and I be quit of thee. But what is the use of that rod thou hendest in hand?” “O Khalif, I scare the fish therewith, so they may not enter thy net.” “Is it so?: then this very day will I punish thee with a grievous punishment and devise thee all manner torments and strip thy flesh from thy bones and be at rest from thee, sorry bit of goods that thou art!” So saying, Khalif the Fisherman unwound from his middle a strand of rope and binding him to a tree by his side, said, “Lookee, O dog of an ape! I mean to cast the net again and if aught come up therein, well and good; but, if it come up empty, I will verily and assuredly make an end of thee, with the cruellest tortures and be quit of thee, thou stinking lot.” So he cast the net and drawing it ashore, found in it another ape and said, “Glory be to God the Great! I was wont to pull naught but fish out of this Tigris, but now it yieldeth nothing but apes.” Then he looked at the second ape and saw him fair of form and round of face with pendants of gold in his ears and a blue waistcloth about his middle, and he was like unto a lighted taper. So he asked him, “What art thou, thou also, O ape?”; and he answered, saying, “O Khalif, I am the ape of Abú al-Sa’ádát the Jew, the Caliph’s Shroff. Every day, I give him good-morrow, and he maketh a profit of ten gold pieces.” Cried the Fisherman, “By Allah, thou art a fine ape, not like this ill-omened monkey o’ mine!” So saying, he took a stick[270] and came down upon the sides of the ape, till he broke his ribs and he jumped up and down. And the other ape, the handsome one, answered him, saying, “O Khalif, what will it profit thee to beat him, though thou belabour him till he die?” Khalif replied, “How shall I do? Shall I let him wend his ways that he may scare me the fish with his hang-dog face and give me good-even and good-morrow every day, so Allah may not open to me the door of daily bread? Nay, I will kill him and be quit of him and I will take thee in his stead; so shalt thou give me good-morrow and I shall gain ten golden dinars a day." Thereupon the comely ape made answer, "I will tell thee a better way than that, and if thou hearken to me, thou shalt be at rest and I will become thine ape in lieu of him." Asked the Fisherman, "And what dost thou counsel me?"; and the ape answered, saying, "Cast thy net and thou shalt bring up a noble fish, never saw any its like, and I will tell thee how thou shalt do with it." Replied Khalif, "Lookee, thou too! An I throw my net and there come up therein a third ape, be assured that I will cut the three of you into six bits." And the second ape rejoined, "So be it, O Khalif. I agree to this thy condition." Then Khalif spread the net and cast it and drew it up, when behold, in it was a fine young barbel[271] with a round head, as it were a milking-pail, which when he saw, his wits fled for joy and he said, "Glory be to God! What is this noble creature? Were yonder apes in the river, I had not brought up this fish." Quoth the seemly ape, "O Khalif, an thou give ear to my rede, 'twill bring thee good fortune"; and quoth the Fisherman, "May God damn him who would gainsay thee henceforth!" Thereupon the ape said, "O Khalif, take some grass and lay the fish thereon in the basket[272] and cover it with more grass and take also somewhat of basil[273] from the greengrocer's and set it in the fish's mouth. Cover it with a kerchief and push thee through the bazar of Baghdad. Whoever bespeaketh thee of selling it, sell it not but fare on, till thou come to the market street of the jewellers and money-changers. Then count five shops on the right-hand side and the sixth shop is that of Abu al-Sa'adat the Jew, the Caliph's Shroff. When thou standest before him, he will say to thee, 'What seekest thou?'; and do thou make answer, 'I am a fisherwight, I threw my net in thy name and took this noble barbel, which I have brought thee as a present.' If he give thee aught of silver, take it not, be it little or mickle, for it will spoil that which thou wouldst do, but say to him, 'I want of thee naught save one word, that thou say to me, 'I sell thee my ape for thine ape and my luck for thy luck.' An the Jew say this, give him the fish and I shall become thine ape and this crippled, mangy and one-eyed ape will be his ape." Khalif replied, "Well said, O ape," nor did he cease faring Baghdad-wards and observing that which the ape had said to him, till he came to the Jew’s shop and saw the Shroff seated, with eunuchs and pages about him, bidding and forbidding and giving and taking. So he set down his basket, saying, “O Sultan of the Jews, I am a fisher-wight and went forth to-day to the Tigris and casting my net in thy name, cried, ‘This is for the luck of Abu al-Sa’adat;’ and there came up to me this Banni which I have brought thee by way of present.” Then he lifted the grass and discovered the fish to the Jew, who marvelled at its make and said, “Extolled be the perfection of the Most Excellent Creator!” Then he gave the fisherman a dinar, but he refused it and he gave him two. This also he refused and the Jew stayed not adding to his offer, till he made it ten dinars; but he still refused and Abu al-Sa’adat said to him, “By Allah, thou art a greedy one. Tell me what thou wouldst have, O Moslem!” Quoth Khalif, “I would have of thee but a single word.[274] “ When the Jew heard this, he changed colour and said, “Wouldst thou oust me from my faith? Wend thy ways;” and Khalif said to him, “By Allah, O Jew, naught mattereth an thou become a Moslem or a Nazarene!” Asked the Jew, “Then what wouldst thou have me say?”; and the fisherman answered, “Say, I sell thee my ape for thy ape and my luck for thy luck.” The Jew laughed, deeming him little of wit, and said by way of jest, “I sell thee my ape for thy ape and my luck for thy luck. Bear witness against him, O merchants! By Allah, O unhappy, thou art debarred from further claim on me!” So Khalif turned back, blaming himself and saying, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Alas that I did not take the gold!” and fared on blaming himself in the matter of the money till he came to the Tigris, but found not the two apes, whereupon he wept and slapped his face and strewed dust on his head, saying, “But that the second ape wheedled me and put a cheat on me, the one-eyed ape had not escaped.” And he gave not over wailing and weeping, till heat and hunger grew sore on him: so he took the net, saying, “Come, let us make a cast, trusting in Allah’s blessing; belike I may catch a cat-fish or a barbel which I may boil and eat.” So he threw the net and waiting till it had settled, drew it ashore and found it full of fish, whereat he was consoled and rejoiced and busied himself with unmeshing the fish and casting them on the earth. Presently, up came a woman seeking fish and crying out, “Fish is not to be found in the town.” She caught sight of Khalif, and said to him, “Wilt thou sell this fish, O Master?” Answered Khalif, “I am going to turn it into clothes, ’tis all for sale, even to my beard.[275] Take what thou wilt.” So she gave him a dinar and he filled her basket. Then she went away and behold, up came another servant, seeking a dinar’s worth of fish; nor did the folk cease till it was the hour of mid-afternoon prayer and Khalif had sold ten golden dinars’ worth of fish. Then, being faint and famisht, he folded and shouldered his net and, repairing to the market, bought himself a woollen gown, a calotte with a plaited border and a honey-coloured turband for a dinar receiving two dirhams by way of change, wherewith he purchased fried cheese and a fat sheep’s tail and honey and setting them in the oilman’s platter, ate till he was full and his ribs felt cold[276] from the mighty stuffing. Then he marched off to his lodgings in the magazine, clad in the gown and the honey-coloured turband and with the nine golden dinars in his mouth, rejoicing in what he had never in his life seen. He entered and lay down, but could not sleep for anxious thoughts and abode playing with the money half the night. Then said he in himself, “Haply the Caliph may hear that I have gold and say to Ja’afar, ‘Go to Khalif the Fisherman and borrow us some money of him.’ If I give it him, it will be no light matter to me, and if I give it not, he will torment me; but torture is easier to me than the giving up of the cash.[277] However, I will arise and make trial of myself if I have a skin proof against stick or not.” So he put off his clothes and taking a sailor’s plaited whip, of an hundred and sixty strands, ceased not beating himself, till his sides and body were all bloody, crying out at every stroke he dealt himself and saying “O Moslems! I am a poor man! O Moslems, I am a poor man! O Moslems, whence should I have gold, whence should I have coin?” till the neighbours, who dwelt with him in that place, hearing him crying and saying, “Go to men of wealth and take of them,” thought that thieves were torturing him, to get money from him, and that he was praying for aidance. Accordingly they flocked to him each armed with some weapon and finding the door of his lodging locked and hearing him roaring out for help, deemed that the thieves had come down upon him from the terrace-roof; so they fell upon the door and burst it open. Then they entered and found him mother-naked and bareheaded with body dripping blood, and altogether in a sad pickle; so they asked him, “What is this case in which we find thee? Hast thou lost thy wits and hath Jinn-madness betided thee this night?” And he answered them, “Nay; but I have gold with me and I feared lest the Caliph send to borrow of me and it were no light matter to give him aught; yet, an I gave not to him ’tis only too sure that he would put me to the torture; wherefore I arose to see if my skin were stick-proof or not.” When they heard these words they said to him, “May Allah not assain thy body, unlucky madman that thou art! Of a surety thou art fallen mad to-night! Lie down to sleep, may Allah never bless thee! How many thousand dinars hast thou, that the Caliph should come and borrow of thee?” He replied, “By Allah, I have naught but nine dinars.” And they all said, “By Allah, he is not otherwise than passing rich!” Then they left him wondering at his want of wit, and Khalif took his cash and wrapped it in a rag, saying to himself, “Where shall I hide all this gold? An I bury it, they will take it, and if I put it out on deposit, they will deny that I did so, and if I carry it on my head,[278] they will snatch it, and if I tie it to my sleeve, they will cut it away.” Presently, he espied a little breast-pocket in the gown and said, “By Allah, this is fine! ’Tis under my throat and hard by my mouth: if any put out his hand to hend it, I can come down on it with my mouth and hide it in my throttle.” So he set the rag containing the gold in the pocket and lay down, but slept not that night for suspicion and trouble and anxious thought. On the morrow, he fared forth of his lodging on fishing intent and, betaking himself to the river, went down into the water, up to his knees. Then he threw the net and shook it with might and main; whereupon the purse fell down into the stream. So he tore off gown and turband and plunged in after it, saying, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” Nor did he give over diving and searching the stream-bed, till the day was half spent, but found not the purse. Now one saw him from afar diving and plunging and his gown and turband lying in the sun at a distance from him, with no one by them; so he watched him, till he dived again when he dashed at the clothes and made off with them. Presently, Khalif came ashore and, missing his gown and turband, was chagrined for their loss with passing cark and care and ascended a mound, to look for some passer-by, of whom he might enquire concerning them, but found none. Now the Caliph Harun al-Rashid had gone a-hunting and chasing that day; and, returning at the time of the noon heat, was oppressed thereby and thirsted; so he looked for water from afar and seeing a naked man standing on the mound said to Ja'afar, "Seest thou what I see?" Replied the Wazir, "Yes, O Commander of the Faithful; I see a man standing on a hillock." Al-Rashid asked, "What is he?"; and Ja'afar answered, "Haply he is the guardian of a cucumber-plot." Quoth the Caliph, "Perhaps he is a pious man[279] ; I would fain go to him, alone, and desire of him his prayers; and abide ye where you are." So he went up to Khalif and saluting him with the salam said to him, "What art thou, O man?" Replied the fisherman, "Dost thou not know me? I am Khalif the Fisherman;" and the Caliph rejoined, "What? The Fisherman with the woollen gown and the honey-coloured turband[280] ?" When Khalif heard him name the clothes he had lost, he said in himself, "This is he who took my duds: belike he did but jest with me." So he came down from the knoll and said, "Can I not take a noontide nap[281] but thou must trick me this trick? I saw thee take my gear and knew that thou wast joking with me." At this, laughter got the better of the Caliph and he said; "What clothes hast thou lost? I know nothing of that whereof thou speakest, O Khalif." Cried the Fisherman, "By God the Great, except thou bring me back the gear, I will smash thy ribs with this staff!" (For he always carried a quarterstaff.) Quoth the Caliph, "By Allah, I have not seen the things whereof thou speakest!"; and quoth Khalif "I will go with thee and take note of thy dwelling-place and complain of thee to the Chief of Police, so thou mayst not trick me this trick again. By Allah, none took my gown and turband but thou, and except thou give them back to me at once, I will throw thee off the back of that she-ass thou ridest and come down on thy pate with this quarterstaff, till thou canst not stir!" Thereupon he tugged at the bridle of the mule so that she reared up on her hind legs and the Caliph said to himself, "What calamity is this I have fallen into with this madman?" Then he pulled off a gown he had on, worth an hundred dinars, and said to Khalif, "Take this gown in lieu of thine own." He took it and donning it saw it was too long; so he cut it short at the knees and turbanded his head with the cut-off piece; then said to the Caliph, “What art thou and what is thy craft? But why ask? Thou art none other than a trumpeter.” Al-Rashid asked, “What showed thee that I was a trumpeter by trade?”; and Khalif answered, “Thy big nostrils and little mouth.” Cried the Caliph, “Well guessed! Yes, I am of that craft.” Then said Khalif, “An thou wilt hearken to me, I will teach thee the art of fishing: ‘twill be better for thee than trumpeting and thou wilt eat lawfully[282] .” Replied the Caliph, “Teach it me so that I may see whether I am capable of learning it.” And Khalif said, “Come with me, O trumpeter.” So the Caliph followed him down to the river and took the net from him, whilst he taught him how to throw it. Then he cast it and drew it up, when, behold, it was heavy, and the fisherman said, “O trumpeter, an the net be caught on one of the rocks, drag it not too hard, or ‘twill break and by Allah, I will take thy she-ass in payment thereof!” The Caliph laughed at his words and drew up the net, little by little, till he brought it ashore and found it full of fish; which when Khalif saw, his reason fled for joy and presently he cried, “By Allah, O trumpeter, thy luck is good in fishing! Never in my life will I part with thee! But now I mean to send thee to the fish-bazar, where do thou enquire for the shop of Humayd the fisherman and say to him, ‘My master Khalif saluteth thee and biddeth thee send him a pair of frails and a knife, so he may bring thee more fish than yesterday.’ Run and return to me forthright!” The Caliph replied (and indeed he was laughing), “On my head, O master!” and, mounting his mule, rode back to Ja’afar, who said to him, “Tell me what hath betided thee.” So the Caliph told him all that had passed between Khalif the Fisherman and himself, from first to last, adding, “I left him awaiting my return to him with the baskets and I am resolved that he shall teach me how to scale fish and clean them.” Quoth Ja’afar, “And I will go with thee to sweep up the scales and clean out the shop.” And the affair abode thus, till presently the Caliph cried, “O Ja’afar, I desire of thee that thou despatch the young Mamelukes, saying to them, ‘Whoso bringeth me a fish from before yonder fisherman, I will give him a dinar;’ for I love to eat of my own fishing.” Accordingly Ja’afar repeated to the young white slaves what the Caliph had said and directed them where to find the man. They came down upon Khalif and snatched the fish from him; and when he saw them and noted their goodliness, he doubted not but that they were of the black-eyed Houris of Paradise: so he caught up a couple of fish and ran into the river, saying, “O Allah mine, by the secret virtue of these fish, forgive me!” Suddenly, up came the chief eunuch, questing fish, but he found none; so seeing Khalif ducking and rising in the water, with the two fish in his hands, called out to him, saying, “O Khalif, what hast thou there?” Replied the fisherman, “Two fish,” and the eunuch said, “Give them to me and take an hundred dinars for them.” Now when Khalif heard speak of an hundred dinars, he came up out of the water and cried, “Hand over the hundred dinars.” Said the eunuch, “Follow me to the house of Al-Rashid and receive thy gold, O Khalif;” and, taking the fish, made off to the Palace of the Caliphate. Meanwhile Khalif betook himself to Baghdad, clad as he was in the Caliph’s gown, which reached only to above his knees,[283] turbanded with the piece he had cut off therefrom and girt about his middle with a rope, and he pushed through the centre of the city. The folk fell a-laughing and marvelling at him and saying, “Whence hadst thou that robe of honour?” But he went on, asking, “Where is the house of Al-Rashád[284] ?;” and they answered, “Say, ‘The house of Al-Rashíd’;” and he rejoined, “’Tis all the same,” and fared on, till he came to the Palace of the Caliphate. Now he was seen by the tailor, who had made the gown and who was standing at the door, and when he noticed it upon the Fisherman, he said to him, “For how many years hast thou had admission to the palace?” Khalif replied, “Ever since I was a little one;” and the tailor asked, “Whence hadest thou that gown thou hast spoilt on this wise?” Khalif answered, “I had it of my apprentice the trumpeter.” Then he went up to the door, where he found the Chief Eunuch sitting with the two fishes by his side: and seeing him sable-black of hue, said to him, “Wilt thou not bring the hundred dinars, O uncle Tulip?” Quoth he, “On my head, O Khalif,” when, behold, out came Ja’afar from the presence of the Caliph and seeing the fisherman talking with the Eunuch and saying to him, “This is the reward of goodness, O nuncle Tulip,” went in to Al-Rashid and said to him, “O Commander of the Faithful, thy master the Fisherman is with the Chief Eunuch, dunning him for an hundred dinars." Cried the Caliph, "Bring him to me, O Ja'afar;" and the Minister answered, "Hearing and obeying." So he went out to the Fisherman and said to him, "O Khalif, thine apprentice the trumpeter biddeth thee to him;" then he walked on, followed by the other till they reached the presence-chamber, where he saw the Caliph seated, with a canopy over his head. When he entered, Al-Rashid wrote three scrolls and set them before him, and the Fisherman said to him, "So thou hast given up trumpeting and turned astrologer!" Quoth the Caliph to him, "Take thee a scroll." Now in the first he had written, "Let him be given a gold piece," in the second, "An hundred dinars," and in the third, "Let him be given an hundred blows with a whip." So Khalif put out his hand and by the decree of the Predestinator, it lighted on the scroll wherein was written, "Let him receive an hundred lashes," and Kings, whenas they ordain aught, go not back therefrom. So they threw him prone on the ground and beat him an hundred blows, whilst he wept and roared for succour, but none succoured him, and said, "By Allah, this is a good joke O trumpeter! I teach thee fishing and thou turnest astrologer and drawest me an unlucky lot. Fie upon thee,[285] in thee is naught of good!" When the Caliph heard his speech, he fell fainting in a fit of laughter and said, "O Khalif, no harm shall betide thee: fear not. Give him an hundred gold pieces." So they gave him an hundred dinars, and he went out, and ceased not faring forth till he came to the trunk-market, where he found the folk assembled in a ring about a broker, who was crying out and saying, "At an hundred dinars, less one dinar! A locked chest!" So he pressed on and pushed through the crowd and said to the broker, "Mine for an hundred dinars!" The broker closed with him and took his money, whereupon there was left him nor little nor much. The porters disputed awhile about who should carry the chest and presently all said, "By Allah, none shall carry this chest but Zurayk!"[286] And the folk said, "Blue-eyes hath the best right to it." So Zurayk shouldered the chest, after the goodliest fashion, and walked a-rear of Khalif. As they went along, the Fisherman said in himself, "I have nothing left to give the porter; how shall I rid myself of him? Now I will traverse the main streets with him and lead him about, till he be weary and set it down and leave it, when I will take it up and carry it to my lodging." Accordingly, he went round about the city with the porter from noontide to sundown, till the man began to grumble and said, “O my lord, where is thy house?” Quoth Khalif, “Yesterday I knew it, but to-day I have forgotten it.” And the porter said, “Give me my hire and take thy chest.” But Khalif said, “Go on at thy leisure, till I bethink me where my house is,” presently adding, “O Zurayk, I have no money with me. ’Tis all in my house and I have forgotten where it is.” As they were talking, there passed by them one who knew the Fisherman and said to him, “O Khalif, what bringeth thee hither?” Quoth the porter, “O uncle, where is Khalif’s house?” and quoth he, “’Tis in the ruined Khan in the Rawásín Quarter.”[287] Then said Zurayk to Khalif, “Go to; would Heaven thou hadst never lived nor been!” And the Fisherman trudged on, followed by the porter, till they came to the place when the Hammal said, “O thou whose daily bread Allah cut off in this world, have we not passed this place a score of times? Hadst thou said to me, ’Tis in such a stead, thou hadst spared me this great toil; but now give me my wage and let me wend my way.” Khalif replied “Thou shalt have silver, if not gold. Stay here, till I bring thee the same.” So he entered his lodging and taking a mallet he had there, studded with forty nails (wherewith an he smote a camel, he had made an end of it), rushed upon the porter and raised his forearm to strike him therewith; but Zurayk cried out at him, saying, “Hold thy hand! I have no claim on thee,” and fled. Now having got rid of the Hammal, Khalif carried the chest into the Khan, whereupon the neighbours came down and flocked about him, saying, “O Khalif, whence hadst thou this robe and this chest?” Quoth he, “From my apprentice Al-Rashid who gave them to me,” and they said, “The pimp is mad! Al-Rashid will assuredly hear of his talk and hang him over the door of his lodging and hang all in the Khan on account of the droll. This is a fine farce!” Then they helped him to carry the chest into his lodging and it filled the whole closet.[288] Thus far concerning Khalif; but as for the history of the chest, it was as follows: The Caliph had a Turkish slave-girl, by name Kut al-Kulúb, whom he loved with love exceeding and the Lady Zubaydah came to know of this from himself and was passing jealous of her and secretly plotted mischief against her. So, whilst the Commander of the Faithful was absent a-sporting and a-hunting, she sent for Kut al-Kulub and, inviting her to a banquet, set before her meat and wine, and she ate and drank. Now the wine was drugged with Bhang; so she slept and Zubaydah sent for her Chief Eunuch and putting her in a great chest, locked it and gave it to him, saying, “Take this chest and cast it into the river.” Thereupon he took it up before him on a he-mule and set out with it for the sea, but found it unfit to carry; so, as he passed by the trunk-market, he saw the Shaykh of the brokers and salesmen and said to him, “Wilt thou sell me this chest, O uncle?” The broker replied, “Yes, we will do this much.” “But,” said the Eunuch, “look thou sell it not except locked;” and the other, “’Tis well; we will do that also.”[289] So he set down the chest, and they cried it for sale, saying, “Who will buy this chest for an hundred dinars?”; and behold, up came Khalif the Fisherman and bought the chest after turning it over right and left; and there passed between him and the porter that which hath been before set out. Now as regards Khalif the Fisherman; he lay down on the chest to sleep, and presently Kut al-Kulub awoke from her Bhang and finding herself in the chest, cried out and said, “Alas!” Whereupon Khalif sprang off the chest-lid and cried out and said, “Ho, Moslems! Come to my help! There are Ifrits in the chest.” So the neighbours awoke from sleep and said to him, “What mattereth thee, O madman?” Quoth he, “The chest is full of Ifrits;” and quoth they, “Go to sleep; thou hast troubled our rest this night may Allah not bless thee! Go in and sleep, without madness.” He ejaculated, “I cannot sleep;” but they abused him and he went in and lay down once more. And behold, Kut al-Kulub spoke and said, “Where am I?” Upon which Khalif fled forth the closet and said, “O neighbours of the hostelry, come to my aid!” Quoth they, “What hath befallen thee? Thou troublest the neighbours’ rest.” “O folk, there be Ifrits in the chest, moving and speaking.” “Thou liest: what do they say?” “They say, ‘Where am I?’” “Would Heaven thou wert in Hell! Thou disturbest the neighbours and hinderest them of sleep. Go to sleep, would thou hadst never lived nor been!” So Khalif went in fearful because he had no place wherein to sleep save upon the chest-lid when lo! as he stood, with ears listening for speech, Kut al-Kulub spake again and said, “I’m hungry.” So in sore affright he fled forth and cried out, “Ho neighbours! ho dwellers in the Khan, come aid me!” Said they, “What is thy calamity now?”[290] And he answered, “The Ifrits in the chest say, ‘We are hungry.’” Quoth the neighbours one to other, “’Twould seem Khalif is hungry; let us feed him and give him the supper-orts; else he will not let us sleep to-night.” So they brought him bread and meat and broken victuals and radishes and gave him a basket full of all kinds of things, saying, “Eat till thou be full and go to sleep and talk not, else will we break thy ribs and beat thee to death this very night.” So he took the basket with the provaunt and entered his lodging. Now it was a moonlight night and the moon shone in full sheen upon the chest and lit up the closet with its light, seeing this he sat down on his purchase and fell to eating of the food with both hands. Presently Kut al-Kulub spake again and said, “Open to me and have mercy upon me, O Moslems!” So Khalif arose and taking a stone he had by him, broke the chest open and behold, therein lay a young lady as she were the sun’s shining light with brow flower-white, face moonbright, cheeks of rose-hue exquisite and speech sweeter than sugar-bite, and in dress worth a thousand dinars and more bedight. Seeing this his wits flew from his head for joy and he said, “By Allah, thou art of the fair!” She asked him, “What art thou, O fellow?” and he answered, “O my lady, I am Khalif the Fisherman.” Quoth she, “Who brought me hither?”; and quoth he, “I bought thee, and thou art my slave-girl.” Thereupon said she, “I see on thee a robe of the raiment of the Caliph.” So he told her all that had betided him, from first to last, and how he had bought the chest; wherefore she knew that the Lady Zubaydah had played her false; and she ceased not talking with him till the morning, when she said to him, “O Khalif, seek me from some one inkcase and reed-pen and paper and bring them to me.” So he found with one of the neighbours what she sought and brought it to her, whereupon she wrote a letter and folded it and gave it to him, saying, “O Khalif, take this paper and carry it to the jewel-market, where do thou enquire for the shop of Abu al-Hasan the jeweller and give it to him.” Answered the Fisherman, “O my lady, this name is difficult to me; I cannot remember it.” And she rejoined, “Then ask for the shop of Ibn al-’Ukáb.”[291] Quoth he, “O my lady, what is an ‘Ukab?”; and quoth she, “’Tis a bird which folk carry on fist with eyes hooded.” And he exclaimed, “O my lady, I know it.” Then he went forth from her and fared on, repeating the name, lest it fade from his memory; but, by the time he reached the jewel-market, he had forgotten it. So he accosted one of the merchants and said to him, “Is there any here named after a bird?” Replied the merchant, “Yes, thou meanest Ibn al-Ukab.” Khalif cried, “That’s the man I want,” and making his way to him, gave him the letter, which when he read and knew the purport thereof, he fell to kissing it and laying it on his head; for it is said that Abu al-Hasan was the agent of the Lady Kut al-Kulub and her intendant over all her property in lands and houses. Now she had written to him, saying, “From Her Highness the Lady Kut al-Kulub to Sir Abu al-Hasan the jeweller. The instant this letter reacheth thee, set apart for us a saloon completely equipped with furniture and vessels and negro-slaves and slave-girls and what not else is needful for our residence and seemly, and take the bearer of the missive and carry him to the bath. Then clothe him in costly apparel and do with him thus and thus.” So he said “Hearing and obeying,” and locking up his shop, took the Fisherman and bore him to the bath, where he committed him to one of the bathmen, that he might serve him, according to custom. Then he went forth to carry out the Lady Kut al-Kulub’s orders. As for Khalif, he concluded, of his lack of wit and stupidity, that the bath was a prison and said to the bathman, “What crime have I committed that ye should lay me in limbo?” They laughed at him and made him sit on the side of the tank, whilst the bathman took hold of his legs, that he might shampoo them. Khalif thought he meant to wrestle with him and said to himself, “This is a wrestling-place[292] and I knew naught of it.” Then he arose and seizing the bathman’s legs, lifted him up and threw him on the ground and broke his ribs. The man cried out for help, whereupon the other bathmen came in a crowd and fell upon Khalif and overcoming him by dint of numbers, delivered their comrade from his clutches and tunded him till he came to himself. Then they knew that the Fisherman was a simpleton and served him till Abu al-Hasan came back with a dress of rich stuff and clad him therein; after which he brought him a handsome she-mule, ready saddled, and taking him by the hand, carried him forth of the bath and said to him, “Mount.” Quoth he, “How shall I mount? I fear lest she throw me and break my ribs into my belly.” Nor would he back the mule, save after much travail and trouble, and they stinted not faring on, till they came to the place which Abu al-Hasan had set apart for the Lady Kut al-Kulub. Thereupon Khalif entered and found her sitting, with slaves and eunuchs about her and the porter at the door, staff in hand, who when he saw the Fisherman sprang up and kissing his hand, went before him, till he brought him within the saloon. Here the Fisherman saw what amazed his wit, and his eye was dazzled by that which he beheld of riches past count and slaves and servants, who kissed his hand and said, "May the bath be a blessing to thee!"[293] When he entered the saloon and drew near unto Kut al-Kulub, she sprang up to him and taking him by the hand, seated him on a high-mattrassed divan. Then she brought him a vase of sherbet of sugar, mingled with rosewater and willow-water, and he took it and drank it off and left not a single drop. Moreover, he ran his finger round the inside of the vessel[294] and would have licked it, but she forbade him, saying, "That is foul." Quoth he, "Silence; this is naught but good honey;" and she laughed at him and set before him a tray of meats, whereof he ate his sufficiency. Then they brought an ewer and basin of gold, and he washed his right hand and abode in the gladdest of life and the most honourable. Now hear what befel the Commander of the Faithful. When he came back from his journey and found not Kut al-Kulub, he questioned the Lady Zubaydah of her and she said, "She is verily dead, may thy head live, O Prince of True Believers!" But she had bidden dig a grave amiddlemost the Palace and had built over it a mock tomb, for her knowledge of the love the Caliph bore to Kut al-Kulub: so she said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, I made her a tomb amiddlemost the Palace and buried her there." Then she donned black,[295] a mere sham and pure pretence; and feigned mourning a great while. Now Kut al-Kulub knew that the Caliph was come back from his hunting excursion; so she turned to Khalif and said to him, "Arise; hie thee to the bath and come back." So he rose and went to the Hammam-bath, and when he returned, she clad him in a dress worth a thousand dinars and taught him manners and respectful bearing to superiors. Then said she to him, "Go hence to the Caliph and say to him, 'O Commander of the Faithful, 'tis my desire that this night thou deign be my guest.'" So Khalif arose and mounting his she-mule, rode, with pages and black slaves before him, till he came to the Palace of the Caliphate. Quoth the wise, "Dress up a stick and 'twill look chique."[296] And indeed his comeliness was manifest and his goodliness and the folk marvelled at this. Presently, the Chief Eunuch saw him, the same who had given him the hundred dinars that had been the cause of his good fortune; so he went in to the Caliph and said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, Khalif the Fisherman is become a King, and on him is a robe of honour worth a thousand dinars." The Prince of True Believers bade admit him; so he entered and said, "Peace be with thee, O Commander of the Faithful and Vice-regent of the Lord of the three Worlds and Defender of the folk of the Faith! Allah Almighty prolong thy days and honour thy dominion and exalt thy degree to the highmost height!" The Caliph looked at him and marvelled at him and how fortune had come to him at unawares; then he said to him, "O Khalif, whence hadst thou that robe which is upon thee?" He replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, it cometh from my house." Quoth the Caliph, "Hast thou then a house?"; and quoth Khalif, "Yea, verily! and thou, O Commander of the Faithful, art my guest this day." Al-Rashid said, "I alone, O Khalif, or I and those who are with me?"; and he replied, "Thou and whom thou wilt." So Ja'afar turned to him and said, "We will be thy guests this night;" whereupon he kissed ground again and withdrawing, mounted his mule and rode off, attended by his servants and suite of Mamelukes leaving the Caliph marvelling at this and saying to Ja'afar, "Sawest thou Khalif, with his mule and dress, his white slaves and his dignity? But yesterday I knew him for a buffoon and a jester." And they marvelled at this much. Then they mounted and rode, till they drew near Khalif's house, when the Fisherman alighted and, taking a bundle from one of his attendants, opened it and pulled out therefrom a piece of tabby silk[297] and spread it under the hoofs of the Caliph's she-mule; then he brought out a piece of velvet-Kimcob[298] and a third of fine satin and did with them likewise; and thus he spread well nigh twenty pieces of rich stuffs, till Al-Rashid and his suite had reached the house; when he came forward and said, "Bismillah,[299] O Commander of the Faithful!" Quoth Al-Rashid to Ja'afar, "I wonder to whom this house may belong," and quoth he, "It belongeth to a man hight Ibn al-Ukab, Syndic of the jewellers." So the Caliph dismounted and entering, with his courtiers, saw a high-builded saloon, spacious and boon, with couches on dad's and carpets and divans strown in place. So he went up to the couch that was set for himself on four legs of ivory, plated with glittering gold and covered with seven carpets. This pleased him and behold, up came Khalif, with eunuchs and little white slaves, bearing all manner sherbets, compounded with sugar and lemon and perfumed with rose and willow-water and the purest musk. The Fisherman advanced and drank and gave the Caliph to drink, and the cup-bearers came forward and served the rest of the company with the sherbets. Then Khalif brought a table spread with meats of various colours and geese and fowls and other birds, saying, "In the name of Allah!" So they ate their fill; after which he bade remove the tables and kissing the ground three times before the Caliph craved his royal leave to bring wine and music.[300] He granted him permission for this and turning to Ja'afar, said to him, "As my head liveth, the house and that which is therein is Khalif's; for that he is ruler over it and I am in admiration at him, whence there came to him this passing prosperity and exceeding felicity! However, this is no great matter to Him who saith to a thing, 'Be!' and it becometh; what I most wonder at is his understanding, how it hath increased, and whence he hath gotten this loftiness and this lordliness; but, when Allah willeth weal unto a man, He amendeth his intelligence before bringing him to worldly affluence." As they were talking, behold, up came Khalif, followed by cup-bearer lads like moons, belted with zones of gold, who spread a cloth of siglaton[301] and set thereon flagons of chinaware and tall flasks of glass and cups of crystal and bottles and hanaps[302] of all colours; and those flagons they filled with pure clear and old wine, whose scent was as the fragrance of virgin musk and it was even as saith the poet,

"Ply me and also my mate be plied * With pure wine prest in the
olden tide.[303]
Daughter of nobles[304] they lead her forth[305] * In
raiment of goblets beautified.
They belt her round with the brightest gems, * And pearls and
unions, the Ocean's pride;
So I by these signs and signets know * Wherefore the Wine is

entitled ‘Bride.’[306] “

And round about these vessels were confections and flowers, such as may not be surpassed. When Al-Rashid saw this from Khalif, he inclined to him and smiled upon him and invested him with an office; so Khalif wished him continuance of honour and endurance of days and said, “Will the Commander of the Faithful deign give me leave to bring him a singer, a lute-player her like was never heard among mortals ever?” Quoth the Caliph, “Thou art permitted!” So he kissed ground before him and going to a secret closet, called Kut al-Kulub, who came after she had disguised and falsed and veiled herself, tripping in her robes and trinkets; and she kissed ground before the Commander of the Faithful. Then she sat down and tuning the lute, touched its strings and played upon it, till all present were like to faint for excess of delight; after which she improvised these verses,

“Would Heaven I wot, will ever Time bring our beloveds back
again? * And, ah! will Union and its bliss to bless two
lovers deign?
Will Time assure to us united days and joinčd joy, * While from
the storms and stowres of life in safety we remain?
Then O Who bade this pleasure be, our parting past and gone, *
And made one house our meeting-stead throughout the Nights
contain;
By him, draw near me, love, and closest cling to side of me *
Else were my wearied wasted life, a vanity, a bane.”

When the Caliph heard this, he could not master himself, but rent his raiment and fell down a-swoon; whereupon all who were present hastened to doff their dress and throw it over him, whilst Kut al-Kulub signed to Khalif and said to him, “Hie to yonder chest and bring us what is therein;” for she had made ready therein a suit of the Caliph’s wear against the like of such hour as this. So Khalif brought it to her and she threw it over the Commander of the Faithful, who came to himself and knowing her for Kut al- Kulub, said, “Is this the Day of Resurrection and hath Allah quickened those who are in the tombs; or am I asleep and is this an imbroglio of dreams?” Quoth

Kut al-Kulub, “We are on wake, not on sleep, and I am alive, nor have I drained the cup of death.” Then she told him all that had befallen her, and indeed, since he lost her, life had not been light to him nor had sleep been sweet, and he abode now wondering, then weeping and anon afire for longing. When she had made an end of her story, the Caliph rose and took her by the hand, intending for her palace, after he had kissed her inner lips, and had strained her to his bosom; whereupon Khalif rose and said, “By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful! Thou hast already wronged me once, and now thou wrongest me again.” Quoth Al-Rashid, “Indeed thou speakest sooth, O Khalif,” and bade the Wazir Ja’afar give him what should satisfy him. So he straightway gifted him with all for which he wished and assigned him a village, the yearly revenues whereof were twenty thousand dinars. Moreover Kut al-Kulub generously presented him the house and all that was therein of furniture and hangings and white slaves and slave-girls and eunuchs great and small. So Khalif became possessed of this passing affluence and exceeding wealth and took him a wife, and prosperity taught him gravity and dignity, and good fortune overwhelmed him. The Caliph enrolled him among his equerries and he abode in all solace of life and its delights till he deceased and was admitted to the mercy of Allah. Furthermore they relate a tale anent[307]

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MASRUR AND ZAYN AL-MAWASIF.[308]

There was once in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before a man and a merchant Masrúr hight, who was of the comeliest of the folk of his tide, a wight of wealth galore and in easiest case; but he loved to take his pleasure in vergiers and flower-gardens and to divert himself with the love of the fair. Now it fortuned one night, as he lay asleep, he dreamt that he was in a garth of the loveliest, wherein were four birds, and amongst them a dove, white as polished silver. That dove pleased him and for her grew up in his heart an exceeding love. Presently, he beheld a great bird swoop down on him and snatch the dove from his hand, and this was grievous to him. After which he awoke and not finding the bird strave with his yearnings till morning, when he said in himself, “There is no help but that I go to-day to some one who will expound to me this vision.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Forty-sixth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the merchant awoke, he strave with his yearnings till morning when he said to himself, “There is no help but that I go this day to some one who will expound to me this vision.” So he went forth and walked right and left, till he was far from his dwelling-place, but found none to interpret the dream to him. Then he would have returned, but on his way behold, the fancy took him to turn aside to the house of a certain trader, a man of the wealthiest, and when he drew near to it, suddenly he heard from within a plaintive voice from a sorrowful heart reciting these couplets,

“The breeze o’ Morn blows uswards from her trace * Fragrant, and
heals the love-sick lover’s case.
I stand like captive on the mounds and ask * While tears make
answer for the ruined place:
Quoth I, ‘By Allah, Breeze o’ Morning, say * Shall Time and
Fortune aye this stead regrace?
Shall I enjoy a fawn whose form bewitched * And langourous

eyelids wasted frame and face?'"

When Masrur heard this, he looked in through the doorway and saw a garden of the goodliest of gardens, and at its farther end a curtain of red brocade, purfled with pearls and gems, behind which sat four damsels, and amongst them a young lady over four feet and under five in height, as she were the rondure of the lune and the full moon shining boon: she had eyes Kohl'd with nature's dye and joined eyebrows, a mouth as it were Solomon's seal and lips and teeth bright with pearls and coral's light; and indeed she ravished all wits with her beauty and loveliness and symmetry and perfect grace. When Masrur espied her, he entered the porch and went on entering till he came to the curtain: whereupon she raised her head and glanced at him. So he saluted her and she returned his salam with sweetest speech; and, when he considered her more straitly, his reason was dazed and his heart amazed. Then he looked at the garden and saw that it was full of jessamine and gilly flowers and violets and roses and orange blossoms and all manner sweet-scented blooms and herbs. Every tree was girt about with fruits and there coursed down water from four dad'ses, which faced one another and occupied the four corners of the garden. He looked at the first Líwán and found written around it with vermilion these two couplets,

"Ho thou the House! Grief never home in thee; * Nor Time work
treason on thine owner's head:
All good betide the House which every guest * Harbours, when sore
distrest for way and stead!"

Then he looked at the second dad's and found written thereon in red gold these couplets,

"Robe thee, O House, in richest raiment Time, * Long as the
birdies on the branchlets chime!
And sweetest perfumes breathe within thy walls * And lover meet
beloved in bliss sublime.
And dwell thy dwellers all in joy and pride * Long as the
wandering stars Heaven-hill shall climb."

Then he looked at the third, whereon he found written in ultramarine these two couplets,

“Ever thy pomp and pride, O House! display * While starkeneth
Night and shineth sheeny Day!
Boon Fortune bless all entering thy walls, * And whomso dwell in
thee, for ever and aye!”

Then he looked at the fourth and saw painted in yellow characters this couplet,

“This garden and this lake in truth * Are fair sitting-steads, by
the Lord of Ruth!”

Moreover, in that garden were birds of all breeds, ring-dove and cushat and nightingale and culver, each singing his several song, and amongst them the lady, swaying gracefully to and fro in her beauty and grace and symmetry and loveliness and ravishing all who saw her. Presently quoth she to Masrur, “Hola man! what bringeth thee into a house other than thy house and wherefore comest thou in unto women other than thy women, without leave of their owner?” Quoth he, “O my lady, I saw this garden, and the goodliness of its greenery pleased me and the fragrance of its flowers and the carolling of its birds; so I entered, thinking to gaze on it awhile and wend my way.” Said she, “With love and gladness!”; and Masrur was amazed at the sweetness of her speech and the coquetry of her glances and the straightness of her shape, and transported by her beauty and seemlihead and the pleasantness of the garden and the birds. So in the disorder of his spirits he recited these couplets,

“As a crescent-moon in the garth her form * ‘Mid Basil and
jasmine and Rose I scan;
And Violet faced by the Myrtle-spray * And Nu’umán’s bloom and
Myrobalan:
By her perfume the Zephyrs perfumĕd breathe * And with scented
sighings the branches fan.
O Garden, thou perfect of beauty art * All charms comprising in

perfect plan;
And melodious birdies sing madrigals * And the Full Moon[309]
shineth in branchshade wan;
Its ring-dove, its culver, its mocking-bird * And its Philomel
sing my soul t' unman;
And the longing of love all my wits confuseth * For her charms,
as the man whom his wine bemuseth."

Now when Zayn al-Mawásif heard his verse, she glanced at him with eyes which bequeathed a thousand sighs and utterly ravished his wisdom and wits and replied to him in these lines,

"Hope not of our favours to make thy prey * And of what thou
wishest thy greed allay:
And cease thy longing; thou canst not win * The love of the Fair
thou'rt fain t' essay,
My glances to lovers are baleful and naught * I reek of thy
speech: I have said my say!"

"Ho, thou! Begone about thy business, for we are none of the woman-tribe who are neither thine nor another's.[310] " And he answered, "O my lady, I said nothing ill." Quoth she, "Thou soughtest to divert thyself[311] and thou hast had thy diversion; so wend thy ways." Quoth he, "O my lady, belike thou wilt give me a draught of water, for I am athirst." Whereupon she cried, "How canst thou drink of a Jew's water, and thou a Nazarene?" But he replied, "O my lady, your water is not forbidden to us nor ours unlawful to you, for we are all as one creation." So she said to her slave-girl, "Give him to drink;" and she did as she was bidden. Then she called for the table of food, and there came four damsels, high-bosomed maids, bearing four trays of meats and four gilt flagons full of strong old-wine, as it were the tears of a slave of love for clearness, and a table around whose edge were graven these couplets,

"For eaters a table they brought and set * In the banquet-hall
and 'twas dight with gold:
Like th' Eternal Garden that gathers all * Man wants of meat and

wines manifold."

And when the high-breasted maids had set all this before him, quoth she, "Thou soughtest to drink of our drink; so up and at our meat and drink!" He could hardly credit what his ears had heard and sat down at the table forthright; whereupon she bade her nurse[312] give him a cup, that he might drink. Now her slave-girls were called, one Hubúb, another Khutúb and the third Sukúb,[313] and she who gave him the cup was Hubub. So he took the cup and looking at the outside there saw written these couplets,

"Drain not the bowl but with lovely wight * Who loves thee and
wine makes brighter bright.
And 'ware her Scorpions[314] that o'er thee creep * And guard
thy tongue lest thou vex her sprite."

Then the cup went round and when he emptied it he looked inside and saw written,

"And 'ware her Scorpions when pressing them, * And hide her
secrets from foes' despight."

Whereupon Masrur laughed her-wards and she asked him, "What causeth thee to laugh?" "For the fulness of my joy," quoth he. Presently, the breeze blew on her and the scarf[315] fell from her head and discovered a fillet[316] of glittering gold, set with pearls and gems and jacinths; and on her breast was a necklace of all manner ring-jewels and precious stones, to the centre of which hung a sparrow of red gold, with feet of red coral and bill of white silver and body full of Nadd-powder and pure ambergris and odoriferous musk. And upon its back was engraved,

"The Nadd is my wine-scented powder, my bread; * And the
bosom's
my bed and the breasts my stead:
And my neck-nape complains of the weight of love, * Of my pain,
of my pine, of my drearihead."

Then Masrur looked at the breast of her shift and behold, thereon lay wroughten in red gold this verse,

“The fragrance of musk from the breasts of the fair * Zephyr
borrows, to sweeten the morning air.”

Masrur marvelled at this with exceeding wonder and was dazed by her charms and amazement gat hold upon him. Then said Zayn al-Mawásif to him, “Begone from us and go about thy business, lest the neighbours hear of us and even us with the lewd.” He replied, “By Allah, O my lady, suffer my sight to enjoy the view of thy beauty and loveliness.” With this she was wroth with him and leaving him, walked in the garden, and he looked at her shift-sleeve and saw upon it embroidered these lines,

“The weaver-wight wrote with gold-ore bright * And her wrists on
brocade rained a brighter light:
Her palms are adorned with a silvern sheen; * And favour her
fingers the ivory’s white:
For their tips are rounded like priceless pearl; * And her charms
would enlighten the nightiest night.”

And, as she paced the garth, Masrur gazed at her slippers and saw written upon them these pleasant lines,

“The slippers that carry these fair young feet * Cause her form
to bend in its gracious bloom:
When she paces and waves in the breeze she owns, * She shines
fullest moon in the murkiest gloom.”

She was followed by her women leaving Hubub with Masrur by the curtain, upon whose edge were embroidered these couplets,

“Behind the veil a damsel sits with gracious beauty dight, *
Praise to the Lord who decked her with these inner gifts of
sprite!
Guards her the garden and the bird fain bears her company; *
Gladden her wine-draughts and the bowl but makes her

brighter-bright.
Apple and Cassia-blossom show their envy of her cheeks; * And
borrows Pearl resplendency from her resplendent light;
As though the sperm that gendered her were drop of
marguerite[317] * Happy who kisses her and spends in her
embrace the night."

So Masrur entered into a long discourse with Hubub and presently said to her, "O Hubub, hath thy mistress a husband or not?" She replied, "My lady hath a husband; but he is actually abroad on a journey with merchandise of his." Now whenas he heard that her husband was abroad on a journey, his heart lusted after her and he said, "O Hubub, glorified be He who created this damsel and fashioned her! How sweet is her beauty and her loveliness and her symmetry and perfect grace! Verily, into my heart is fallen sore travail for her. O Hubub, so do that I come to enjoy her, and thou shalt have of me what thou wilt of wealth and what not else." Replied Hubub, "O Nazarene, if she heard thee speak thus, she would slay thee, or else she would kill herself, for she is the daughter of a Zealot[318] of the Jews nor is there her like amongst them: she hath no need of money and she keepeth herself ever cloistered, discovering not her case to any." Quoth Masrur, "O Hubub, an thou wilt but bring me to enjoy her, I will be to thee slave and foot page and will serve thee all my life and give thee whatsoever thou seekest of me." But quoth she, "O Masrur, in very sooth this woman hath no lust for money nor yet for men, because my lady Zayn al-Mawasif is of the cloistered, going not forth her house-door in fear lest folk see her; and but that she bore with thee by reason of thy strangerhood, she had not permitted thee to pass her threshold; no, not though thou wert her brother." He replied, "O Hubub, be thou our go-between and thou shalt have of me an hundred gold dinars and a dress worth as much more, for that the love of her hath gotten hold of my heart." Hearing this she said, "O man, let me go about with her in talk and I will return thee and answer and acquaint thee with what she saith. Indeed, she loveth those who berhyme her and she affecteth those who set forth her charms and beauty and loveliness in verse, and we may not prevail over her save by wiles and soft speech and beguilement." Thereupon Hubub rose and going up to her mistress, accosted her with privy talk of this and that and presently said to her, "O my lady, look at yonder young man, the Nazarene; how sweet is his speech and how shapely his shape!" When Zayn al-Mawasif heard this, she turned to her and said, "An thou like his comeliness love him thyself. Art thou not ashamed to address the like of me with these words? Go, bid him begone about his business; or I will make it the worse for him." So Hubub returned to Masrur, but acquainted him not with that which her mistress had said. Then the lady bade her hie to the door and look if she saw any of the folk, lest foul befal them. So she went and returning, said, "O my lady, without are folk in plenty and we cannot let him go forth this night." Quoth Zayn al-Mawasif, "I am in dole because of a dream I have seen and am fearful therefrom." And Masrur said, "What sawest thou? Allah never trouble thy heart!" She replied, "I was asleep in the middle of the night, when suddenly an eagle swooped down upon me from the highest of the clouds and would have carried me off from behind the curtain, wherefore I was affrighted at him. Then I awoke from sleep and bade my women bring me meat and drink, so haply, when I had drunken, the dolour of the dream would cease from me." Hearing this, Masrur smiled and told her his dream from first to last and how he had caught the dove, whereat she marvelled with exceeding marvel. Then he went on to talk with her at great length and said, "I am now certified of the truth of my dream, for thou art the dove and I the eagle, and there is no hope but that this must be, for, the moment I set eyes on thee, thou tookest possession of my vitals and settest my heart a-fire for love of thee!" Thereupon Zayn al-Mawasif became wroth with exceeding wrath and said to him, "I take refuge with Allah from this! Allah upon thee, begone about thy business ere the neighbours espy thee and there betide us sore reproach," adding, "Harkye, man! Let not thy soul covet that it shall not obtain. Thou weariest thyself in vain; for I am a merchant's wife and a merchant's daughter and thou art a druggist; and when sawest thou a druggist and a merchant's daughter conjoined by such sentiment?" He replied, "O my lady, never lacked love-liesse between folk[319] ; so cut thou not off from me hope of this and whatsoever thou seekest of me of money and raiment and ornaments and what not else, I will give thee." Then he abode with her in discourse and mutual blaming whilst she still redoubled in anger, till it was black night, when he said to her, "O my lady, take this gold piece and fetch me a little wine, for I am athirst and heavy hearted." So she said to the slave-girl Hubub, "Fetch him wine and take naught from him, for we have no need of his dinar." So she went whilst Masrur held his peace and bespake not the lady, who suddenly improvised these lines,

"Leave this thy design and depart, O man! * Nor tread paths where
lewdness and crime trepan!
Love is a net shall enmesh thy sprite, * Make thee rise a-morning
sad, weary and wan:
For our spy thou shalt eke be the cause of talk; * And for thee
shall blame me my tribe and clan:
Yet scant I marvel thou lovest a Fair: — * Gazelles hunting lions
we aye shall scan!"

And he answered her with these,

"Joy of boughs, bright branch of Myrobalan! * Have ruth on the
heart all thy charms unman:
Death-cup to the dregs thou garrest me drain * And don weed of
Love with its bane and ban:
How can soothe I a heart which for stress of pine * Burns with
living coals which my longings fan?"

Hearing these lines she exclaimed, "Away from me! Quoth the saw 'Whoso looseth his sight wearieth his sprite.' By Allah, I am tired of discourse with thee and chiding, and indeed thy soul coveteth that shall never become thine; nay, though thou gave me my weight in gold, thou shouldst not get thy wicked will of me; for, I know naught of the things of the world, save pleasant life, by the boon of Allah Almighty!" He answered, "O my lady Zayn al-Mawasif, ask of me what thou wilt of the goods of the world." Quoth she, "What shall I ask of thee? For sure thou wilt fare forth and prate of me in the highway and I shall become a laughing-stock among the folk and they will make a byword of me in verse, me who am the daughter of the chief of the merchants and whose father is known of the notables of the tribe. I have no need of money or raiment and such love will not be hidden from the people and I shall be brought to shame, I and my kith and kin.” With this Masrur was confounded and could make her no answer; but presently she said, “Indeed, the master-thief, if he steal, stealeth not but what is worth his neck, and every woman who doth lewdness with other than her husband is styled a thief; so, if it must be thus and no help[320] , thou shalt give me whatsoever my heart desireth of money and raiment and ornaments and what not.” Quoth he, “An thou sought of me the world and all its regions contain from its East to its West, ‘twere but a little thing, compared with thy favour;” and quoth she, “I will have of thee three suits, each worth a thousand Egyptian dinars, and adorned with gold and fairly purfled with pearls and jewels and jacinths, the best of their kind. Furthermore I require that thou swear to me thou wilt keep my secret nor discover it to any and that thou wilt company with none but me; and I in turn will swear to thee a true oath that I will never false thee in love.” So he sware to her the oath she required and she sware to him, and they agreed upon this; after which she said to her nurse Hubub, “To-morrow go thou with Masrur to his lodging and seek somewhat of musk and ambergris and Nadd and rose-water and see what he hath. If he be a man of condition, we will take him into favour; but an he be otherwise we will leave him.” Then said she to him, “O Masrur, I desire somewhat of musk and ambergris and aloes-wood and Nadd; so do thou send it me by Hubub;” and he answered, “With love and gladness; my shop is at thy disposal!” Then the wine went round between them and their séance was sweet: but Masrur’s heart was troubled for the passion and pining which possessed him; and when Zayn al-Mawasif saw him in this plight, she said to her slave-girl Sukub, “Arouse Masrur from his stupor; mayhap he will recover.” Answered Sukub, “Hearkening and obedience,” and sang these couplets,

“Bring gold and gear an a lover thou, * And hymn thy love so
success shalt row;
Joy the smiling fawn with the black-edged eyne * And the bending
lines of the Cassia-bough:

On her look, and a marvel therein shalt sight, * And pour out thy
life ere thy life-term show:
Love's affect be this, an thou weet the same; * But, an gold
deceive thee, leave gold and go!"

Hereupon Masrur understood her and said, "I hear and apprehend. Never was grief but after came relief, and after affliction dealing He will order the healing." Then Zayn al-Mawasif recited these couplets,

"From Love-stupor awake, O Masrur, 'twere best; * For this day I
dread my love rend thy breast;
And to-morrow I fear me folks' marvel-tale * Shall make us a
byword from East to West:
Leave love of my like or thou'lt gain thee blame; * Why turn thee
us-wards? Such love's unblest!
For one strange of lineage whose kin repel * Thou shalt wake
ill-famed, of friends dispossest:
I'm a Zealot's child and affright the folk: * Would my life were
ended and I at rest!"

Then Masrur answered her improvisation and began to say these lines,

"To grief leave a heart that to love ne'er ceased; * Nor blame,
for your blame ever love increased:
You misrule my vitals in tyrant-guise; * Morn and Eve I wend not
or West or East;
Love's law forbids me to do me die; * They say Love's victim is
ne'er released:
Well-away! Could I find in Love's Court a judge * I'd 'plain and
win to my rights at least."

They ceased not from mutual chiding till morning morrowed, when Zayn al-Mawasif said, "O Masrur 'tis time for thee to depart, lest one of the folk see thee and foul befal us twain." So he arose and accompanied by nurse Hubub fared on, till they came to his lodging, where he talked with her and said to her, "All thou seekest of me is ready for thee, so but thou wilt bring me to enjoy her." Hubub replied, "Hearten thy heart;" whereupon he rose and gave her an hundred dinars, saying "O Hubub, I have by me a dress worth an hundred gold pieces." Answered she, "O Masrur, make haste with the trinkets and other things promised her, ere she change her mind, for we may not take her, save with wile and guile, and she loveth the saying of verse." Quoth he, "Hearing and obeying," and bringing her the musk and ambergris and lign-aloes and rose-water, returned with her to Zayn al-Mawasif and saluted her. She returned his salam with the sweetest speech, and he was dazed by her beauty and improvised these lines,

"O thou sheeniest Sun who in night dost shine! * O who stole my
    soul with those large black eyne!
O slim-shaped fair with the graceful neck! * O who shamest Rose
    wi' those cheeks o' thine!
Blind not our sight wi' thy fell disdain, * Disdain, that shall
    load us with pain and pine;
Passion homes in our inmost, nor will be quenched * The fire of
    yearning in vitals li'en:
Your love has housčd in heart of me * And of issue but you see I
    ne'er a sign:
Then haply you'll pity this hapless wight * Thy sad lover and
    then — O the Morn divine!"

When Zayn al-Mawasif heard his verses, she cast at him a glance of eyes, that bequeathed him a thousand regrets and sighs and his wits and soul were ravished in such wise, and answered him with these couplets[321] ,

"Think not from her, of whom thou art enamoured aye * To win
    delight; so put desire from thee away.
Leave that thou hop'st, for 'gainst her rigours whom thou lov'st

* Among the fair, in vain is all thou canst essay.
My looks to lovers bring discomfiture and woe: Indeed, * I make
    no count of that which thou dost say."

When Masrur heard this, he hardened his heart and took patience concealing his case and saying in himself, “There is nothing for it against calamity save long-suffering;” and after this fashion they abode till nightfall when Zayn al-Mawasif called for food and they set before her a tray wherein were all manner of dishes, quails and pigeons and mutton and so forth, whereof they ate their sufficiency. Then she bade take away the tables and they did so and fetched the lavatory gear; and they washed their hands, after which she ordered her women to bring the candlesticks, and they set on candelabra and candles therein of camphorated wax. Thereupon quoth Zayn al-Mawasif, “By Allah, my breast is straitened this night and I am afevered;” and quoth Masrur, “Allah broaden thy breast and banish thy bane!” Then she said, “O Masrur, I am used to play at chess: say me, knowest aught of the game?” He replied, “Yes; I am skilled therein;” whereupon she commanded her handmaid Hubub fetch her the chessboard. So she went away and presently returning with the board, set it before her, and behold, it was of ivory-marquetried ebony with squares marked in glittering gold, and its pieces of pearl and ruby. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Forty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Zayn al-Mawasif bade the chessboard be brought, they set it between her hands; and Masrur was amazed at this, when she turned to him and said, “Wilt have red or white?” He replied, “O Princess of the fair and adornment of morning air, do thou take the red for they formous are and fitter for the like of thee to bear and leave the white to my care.” Answered she, “So be it;” and, taking the red pieces, ranged them opposite the white, then put out her hand to a piece purposing the first pass into the battle-plain. Masrur considered her fingers, which were white as paste, and was confounded at their beauty and shapely shape; whereupon she turned to him and said, “O Masrur, be not bedazed, but take patience and calm thyself.” He rejoined, “O thou whose beauty shameth the moon, how shall a lover look on thee and have patience-boon?” And while this was doing she cried, “Checkmate[322] !” and beat him; wherefore she knew that he was Jinn-mad for love of her and said to him, “O Masrur, I will not play with thee save for a set stake.” He replied, “I hear and obey,” and she rejoined, “Swear to me and I will swear to thee that neither of us will cheat[323] the adversary.” So both sware this and she said, “O Masrur, an I beat thee, I will have ten dinars of thee, but an thou beat me, I will give thee a mere nothing.” He expected to win, so he said, “O my lady, be not false to thine oath, for I see thou art an overmatch for me at this game!” “Agreed,” said she and they ranged their men and fell again to playing and pushing on their pawns and catching them up with the queens and aligning and matching them with the castles and solacing them with the onslaught of the knights. Now the “Adornment of Qualities” wore on head a kerchief of blue brocade so she loosed it off and tucking up her sleeve, showed a wrist like a shaft of light and passed her palm over the red pieces, saying to him, “Look to thyself.” But he was dazzled at her beauty, and the sight of her graces bereft him of reason, so that he became dazed and amazed and put out his hand to the white men, but it alit upon the red. Said she, “O Masrur, where be thy wits? The red are mine and the white thine;” and he replied, “Whoso looketh at thee perforce loseth all his senses.” Then, seeing how it was with him, she took the white from him and gave him the red, and they played and she beat him. He ceased not to play with her and she to beat him, whilst he paid her each time ten dinars, till, knowing him to be distraught for love of her, she said, “O Masrur, thou wilt never win to thy wish, except thou beat me, for such was our understanding; and henceforth, I will not play with thee save for a stake of an hundred dinars a game.” “With love and gladness,” answered he and she went on playing and ever beating him and he paid her an hundred dinars each time; and on this wise they abode till the morning, without his having won a single game, when he suddenly sprang to his feet. Quoth she, “What wilt thou do, O Masrur?”; and quoth he, “I mean to go to my lodging and fetch somewhat of money: it may be I shall come to my desire.” “Do whatso seemeth good to thee,” said she; so he went home and taking all the money he had, returned to her improvising these two couplets,

“In dream I saw a bird o’er speed (meseem’d), * Love’s garden
decked with blooms that smiled and gleamed:

But I shall ken, when won my wish and will * Of thee, the
truthful sense of what I dreamed."

Now when Masrur returned to her with all his monies they fell a-playing again; but she still beat him and he could not beat her once; and in such case they abode three days, till she had gotten of him the whole of his coin; whereupon said she, "O Masrur, what wilt thou do now?"; and he replied, "I will stake thee a druggist's shop." "What is its worth?" asked she; and he answered, "Five hundred dinars." So they played five bouts and she won the shop of him. Then he betted his slave-girls, lands, houses, gardens, and she won the whole of them, till she had gotten of him all he had; whereupon she turned to him and said, "Hast thou aught left to lay down?" Cried he, "By Him who made me fall into the snare of thy love, I have neither money to touch nor aught else left, little or much!" She rejoined, "O Masrur, the end of whatso began in content shall not drive man to repent; wherefore, an thou regret aught, take back thy good and begone from us about thy business and I will hold thee quit towards me." Masrur rejoined, "By Him who decreed these things to us, though thou sought to take my life 'twere a wee thing to stake for thine approof, because I love none but thee!" Then said she, "O Masrur, fare forthright and fetch the Kazi and the witnesses and make over to me by deed all thy lands and possessions." "Willingly," replied he and, going forth without stay or delay, brought the Kazi and the witnesses and set them before her. When the judge saw her, his wits fled and his mind was amazed and his reason was dazed for the beauty of her fingers, and he said to her, "O my lady, I will not write out the writ of conveyance, save upon condition that thou buy the lands and mansions and slave-girls and that they all pass under thy control and into thy possession." She rejoined, "We're agreed upon that. Write me a deed, whereby all Masrur's houses and lands and slave-girls and whatso his right hand possesseth shall pass to Zayn al-Mawasif and become her property at such a price." So the Kazi wrote out the writ and the witnesses set hands thereto; whereupon she took it. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Forty-eighth Night, She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Zayn al-Mawasif took from the Kazi the deed which made over her lover's property to her, she said to him, "O Masrur, now gang thy gait." But her slave-girl Hubub turned to him and said, "Recite us some verses." So he improvised upon that game of chess these couplets,

"Of Time and what befel me I complain, * Mourning my loss by
chess and eyes of bane.
For love of gentlest, softest-sided fair * Whose like is not of
maids or mortal strain:
The shafts of glances from those eyne who shot * And led her
conquering host to battle-plain
Red men and white men and the clashing Knights * And, crying
'Look to thee!' came forth amain:
And, when down charging, finger-tips she showed * That gloomed
like blackest night for sable stain,
The Whites I could not rescue, could not save * While ecstasy
made tear-floods rail and rain:
The Pawns and Castles with their Queens fell low * And fled the
Whites nor could the brunt sustain:
Yea, with her shaft of glance at me she shot * And soon that
shaft had pierced my heart and brain:
She gave me choice between her hosts, and I * The Whites like
moonlight first to choose was fain,
Saying, 'This argent folk best fitteth me * I love them, but the
Red by thee be ta'en!'
She playčd me for free accepted stake * Yet amorous mercy I could
ne'er obtain:
O fire of heart, O pine and woe of me, * Wooing a fair like moon
mid starry train:
Burns not my heart O no! nor aught regrets * Of good or land, but
ah! her eyes' disdain!
Amazed I'm grown and dazed for drearihead * And blame I Time
who
brought such pine and pain.
Quoth she, 'Why art thou so bedazed!' quoth I * 'Wine-drunken

wight shall more of wine assain?’
That mortal stole my sense by silk-soft shape, * Which doth for
heart-core hardest rock contain.
I nervčd self and cried, ‘This day she’s mine’ * By bet, nor fear
I prove she unhumŕne:
My heart ne’er ceased to seek possession, till * Beggared I found
me for conditions twain:
Will youth you loveth shun the Love-dealt blow, * Tho’ were he
whelmed in Love’s high-surging main?
So woke the slave sans e’en a coin to turn, * Thralled to repine
for what he ne’er shall gain!”

Zayn al-Mawasif hearing these words marvelled at the eloquence of his tongue and said to him, “O Masrur, leave this madness and return to thy right reason and wend thy ways; for thou hast wasted all thy moveables and immoveables at the chess-game, yet hast not won thy wish, nor hast thou any resource or device whereby thou mayst attain to it.” But he turned to her and said, “O my lady, ask of me whatso thou wilt and thou shalt have it; for I will bring it to thee and lay it at thy feet.” Answered she, “O Masrur, thou hast no money left.” “O goal of all hopes, if I have no money, the folk will help me.” “Shall the giver turn asker?” “I have friends and kinsfolk, and whatsoever I seek of them, they will give me.” “O Masrur, I will have of thee four pods of musk and four vases of civet[324] and four pounds of ambergris and four thousand dinars and four hundred pieces of royal brocade, purfled with gold. An thou bring me these things, O Masrur, I will grant thee my favours.” “This is a light matter to me, O thou that puttest the moons to shame,” replied he and went forth to fetch her what she sought. She sent her maid Hubub after him, to see what worth he had with the folk of whom he had spoken to her; but, as he walked along the highways he turned and seeing her afar off, waited till she came up to him and said to her, “Whither away, O Hubub?” So she said to him, “My mistress sent me to follow for this and that,” and he replied, “By Allah, O Hubub, I have nothing to hand!” She asked, “Then why didst thou promise her?”; and he answered, “How many a promise made is unkept of its maker! Fine words in love-matters needs must be.” When she heard this from him, she said, “O Masrur, be of good cheer and eyes clear for, by Allah, most assuredly I will be the means of thy coming to enjoy her!” Then she left him nor ceased walking till she stood before her mistress weeping with sore weeping, and said, “O my lady, indeed he is a man of great consideration, and good repute among the folk.” Quoth Zayn al-Mawasif, “There is no device against the destiny of Almighty Allah! Verily, this man found not in me a pitiful heart, for that I despoiled him of his substance and he got of me neither affection nor complaisance in granting him amorous joy; but, if I incline to his inclination, I fear lest the thing be bruited abroad.” Quoth Hubub, “O my lady, verily, grievous upon us is his present plight and the loss of his good and thou hast with thee none save thyself and thy slave-girl Sukub; so which of us two would dare prate of thee, and we thy handmaids?” With this, she bowed her head for a while ground-wards and the damsels said to her, “O my lady, it is our rede that thou send after him and show him grace and suffer him not ask of the sordid; for how bitter is such begging!” So she accepted their counsel and calling for inkcase and paper, wrote him these couplets,

“Joy is nigh, O Masrúr, so rejoice in true rede; * Whenas night
    shall fall thou shalt do kind-deed:
Crave not of the sordid a loan, fair youth, * Wine stole my wits
    but they now take heed:
All thy good I reft shall return to thee, * O Masrúr, and I’ll
    add to them amorous meed;
For indeed th’ art patient, and sweet of soul * When wronged by
    thy lover’s tyrannic greed.
So haste to enjoy us and luck to thee! * Lest my folk come
    between us speed, love, all speed!
Hurry uswards thou, nor delay, and while * My mate is far, on
    Love’s fruit come feed.”

Then she folded the paper and gave it to Hubub the handmaid, who carried it to Masrur and found him weeping and reciting in a transport of passion and love-longing these lines,

“A breeze of love on my soul did blow * That consumed my liver
for stress of lowe;
When my sweetheart went all my longings grew; * And with tears in
torrent mine eyelids flow:
Such my doubt and fears, did I tell their tale * To deaf rocks
and pebbles they’d melt for woe.
Would Heaven I wot shall I sight delight, * And shall win my wish
and my friend shall know!
Shall be folded up nights that doomed us part * And I be healed
of what harms my heart?”

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Forty-ninth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that while Masrur, transported by passion and love-longing, was repeating his couplets in sing-song tone Hubub knocked at his door; so he rose and opened to her, and she entered and gave him the letter. He read it and said to her, “O Hubub, what is behind thee of thy lady’s news[325] ?” She answered, “O my lord, verily, in this letter is that dispenseth me from reply, for thou art of those who readily descry!” Thereat he rejoiced with joy exceeding and repeated these two couplets,

“Came the writ whose contents a new joy revealed, * Which in
vitals mine I would keep ensealed:
And my longings grew when I kissed that writ, * As were pearl of
passion therein concealed.”

Then he wrote a letter answering hers and gave it to Hubub, who took it and returned with it to her mistress and forthright fell to extolling his charms to her and expiating on his good gifts and generosity; for she was become a helper to him, to bring about his union with her lady. Quoth Zayn al-Mawasif, “O Hubub, indeed he tarrieth to come to us;” and quoth Hubub, “He will certainly come soon.” Hardly had she made an end of speaking when behold, he knocked at the door, and she opened to him and brought him in to her mistress, who saluted him with the salam[326] and welcomed him and seated him by her side. Then she said to Hubub, "Bring me a suit of brocade;" so she brought a robe broidered with gold and Zayn al-Mawasif threw it over him, whilst she herself donned one of the richest dresses and crowned her head with a net of pearls of the freshest water. About this she bound a fillet of brocade, purfled with pearls, jacinths and other jewels, from beneath which she let down two tresses[327] each looped with a pendant of ruby, charactered with glittering gold, and she loosed her hair, as it were the sombrest night; and lastly she incensed herself with aloes-wood and scented herself with musk and ambergris, and Hubub said to her, "Allah save thee from the evil eye!" Then she began to walk, swaying from side to side with gracefullest gait, whilst Hubub who excelled in verse-making, recited in her honour these couplets,

"Shamed is the bough of Bán by pace of her; * And harmed are
lovers by the gaze of her.
A moon she rose from murks, the hair of her, * A sun from locks
the brow encase of her:
Blest he she nights with by the grace of her, * Who dies in her
with oath by days of her!"

So Zayn al-Mawasif thanked her and went up to Masrur, as she were full moon displayed. But when he saw her, he rose to his feet and exclaimed, "An my thought deceive me not, she is no human, but one of the brides of Heaven!" Then she called for food and they brought a table, about whose marge were written these couplets,[328]

"Dip thou with spoons in saucers four and gladden heart and eye *
With many a various kind of stew and fricassee and fry.
Thereon fat quails (ne'er shall I cease to love and tender them)

* And rails and fowls and dainty birds of all the kinds that
fly.
Glory to God for the Kabobs, for redness all aglow, * And
potherbs, steeped in vinegar, in porringers thereby!
Fair fall the rice with sweet milk dressed, wherein the hands did
plunge * And eke the forearms of the fair were buried,

bracelet-high!
How my heart yearneth with regret over two plates of fish * That
by two manchet-cakes of bread of Tewarij[329] did lie!"

Then they ate and drank and made mirth and merriment, after which the servants removed the table of food and set on the wine service; so cup and tasse[330] passed round between them and they were gladdened in soul. Then Masrur filled the cup and saying, "O whose thrall am I and who is my mistress!"[331] chanted these improvised couplets,

"Mine eyes I admire that can feed their fill * On charms of a
girl rising worlds to light:
In her time she hath none to compare for gifts * Of spirit and
body a mere delight.
Her shape breeds envy in Cassia-tree * When fares she forth in
her symmetry dight:
With luminous brow shaming moon of dark * And crown-like crescent
the brightest bright.
When treads she earth's surface her fragrance scents * The Zephyr
that breathes over plain and height."

When he ended his extempore song she said, "O Masrur, whoso religiously keepeth his faith and hath eaten our bread and salt, it behoveth us to give him his due; so put away from thee all thought of what hath been and I will restore thee thy lands and houses and all we have taken from thee." He replied, "O my lady, I acquit thee of that whereof thou speakest, though thou hadst been false to the oath and covenant between us; for I will go and become a Moslem." Zayn al-Mawasif protested that she would follow suit[332] when Hubub cried to her, "O my lady, thou art young of years and knowest many things, and I claim the intercession of Almighty Allah with thee for, except thou do my bidding and heal my heart, I will not lie the night with thee in the house." And she replied, "O Hubub, it shall be as thou wilt. Rise and make us ready another sitting-room." So she sprang to her feet and gat ready a room and adorned and perfumed it after fairest fashion even as her lady loved and preferred; after which she again set on food and wine, and the cup went round between them and their hearts were glad. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fiftieth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Zayn al-Mawasif bade her maid Hubub make ready a private sitting-room she arose and did her bidding, after which she again set food and wine before them and cup and tasse went round gladdening their hearts. Presently quoth Zayn al-Mawasif, "O Masrur, come is the time of Union and favour; so, as thou studiest my love to savour recite us some verses surpassing of flavour. " Upon this he recited the following ode[333] ,

"I am taken: my heart bums with living flame
For Union shorn whenas Severance came,
In the love of a damsel who forced my soul
And with delicate cheeklet my reason stole.
She hath eyebrows united and eyes black-white
And her teeth are leven that smiles in light:
The tale of her years is but ten plus four;
Tears like Dragon's blood[334] for her love I pour.
First I saw that face 'mid parterre and rill,
Outshining full Lune on horizon-hill;
And stood like a captive for awe, and cried,
'Allah's Peace, O who in demesne[335] doth hide!'
She returned my salam, gaily answering
With the sweetest speech likest pearls a-string.
But when heard my words, she right soon had known
My want and her heart waxed hard as stone,
And quoth she, 'Be not this a word silly-bold?'
But quoth I, 'Refrain thee nor flyte and scold!
An to-day thou consent such affair were light;
They like is the loved, mine the lover-wight!'
When she knew my mind she but smiled in mirth
And cried, 'Now, by the Maker of Heaven and Earth!
I'm a Jewess of Jewry's driest e'er seen

And thou art naught save a Nazarene.
Why seek my favours? Thine’s other caste;
An this deed thou do thou’lt repent the past.
Say, does Love allow with two Faiths to play?
Men shall blame thee like me, at each break of day!
Wilt thou laugh at beliefs and deride their rite,
And in thine and mine prove thee sinful sprite?
An thou lovedest me thou hadst turnĕd Jew,
Losing worlds for love and my favours due;
And by the Evangel strong oath hadst sworn
To keep our secret intact from scorn!’
So I took the Torah and sware strong oath
I would hold to the covenant made by both.
Then by law, religion and creed I sware,
And bound her by oaths that most binding were;
And asked her, ‘Thy name, O my dear delight?’
And she, ‘Zayn al-Mawásif at home I’m hight!’
‘O Zayn al-Mawasif!’ (cried I) ‘Hear my call:
Thy love hath made me thy veriest thrall!’
Then I peeped ‘neath her chin-veil and ‘spied such charms
That the longing of love filled my heart with qualms.
‘Neath the curtain I ceased not to humble me,
And complain of my heart-felt misery;
But when she saw me by Love beguiled
She raised her face-veil and sweetly smiled:
And when breeze of Union our faces kiss’d
With musk-pod she scented fair neck and wrist;
And the house with her essences seemed to drip,
And I kissed pure wine from each smiling lip:
Then like branch of Bán ‘neath her robe she swayed
And joys erst unlawful[336] she lawful made:
And joined, conjoined through our night we lay
With clip, kiss of inner lip, langue fourrée.
The world hath no grace but the one loved fere
In thine arms to clasp with possession sheer!
With the morn she rose and she bade Good-bye
While her brow shone brighter than moon a-sky;

Reciting at parting (while tear-drops hung
On her cheeks, these scattered and other strung),[337]
'Allah's pact in mind all my life I'll bear
And the lovely nights and strong oath I sware.'"

Zayn al-Mawasif was delighted and said to him, "O Masrur, how goodly are thy inner gifts! May he live not who would harm thy heart!" Then she entered her boudoir and called him: so he went in to her and taking her in his arms, embraced her and hugged her and kissed her and got of her that which he had deemed impossible and rejoiced in winning the sweet of amorous will. Then said she, "O Masrur, thy good is unlawful to me and is lawfully thine again now that we are become lovers." So she returned to him all she had taken of him and asked him, "O Masrur, hast thou a flower-garden whither we may wend and take our pleasure?"; whereto he answered, "Yes, O my lady, I have a garden that hath not its like." Then he returned to his lodgings and bade his slave-girls make ready a splendid banquet in a handsome room; after which he summoned Zayn al-Mawasif who came surrounded by her damsels, and they ate and drank and made mirth and merriment, whilst the cup passed round between them and their spirits rose high. Then lover withdrew with beloved and Zayn al-Mawasif said to Masrur, "I have bethought me of some dainty verses, which I would fain sing to the lute." He replied, "Do sing them"; so she took the lute and tuning it, sang to a pleasant air these couplets,

"Joy from stroke of string doth to me incline, * And sweet is
a-morning our early wine;
Whenas Love unveileth the amourist's heart, * And by rending the
veil he displays his sign,
With a draught so pure, so dear, so bright, * As in hand of
Moons[338] the Sun's sheeny shine
O' nights it cometh with joy to 'rase * The hoar of sorrow by
boon divine."

Then ending her verse, she said to him, "O Masrur, recite us somewhat of thy poetry and favour us with the fruit of thy thought."

So he recited these two couplets,

“We joy in full Moon who the wine bears round, * And in concert
of lutes that from gardens sound;
Where the dove moans at dawn and where bends the bough * To
Morn,
and all pathways of pleasure are found.”

When he had finished his recitation she said to him, “Make us some verses on that which hath passed between us an thou be occupied with love of me.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fifty-first Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Zayn al-Mawasif said to Masrur, “An thou be occupied with love of me, make us some verses on that hath passed between us,” “With love and gladness,” he replied and improvised the following Kasídah[339] ,

“Stand thou and hear what fell to me * For love of you gazelle to
dree!
Shot me a white doe with her shaft * O’ glances wounding
woundily.
Love was my ruin, for was I * Straitened by longing ecstasy:
I loved and woo’d a young coquette * Girded by strong artillery,
Whom in a garth I first beheld * A form whose sight was symmetry.
I greeted her and when she deigned * Greeting return, ‘Salám,’
quoth she
‘What be thy name?’ said I, she said, * ‘My name declares my
quality![340] ‘
‘Zayn al-Mawásif I am hight.’ * Cried I, ‘Oh deign I mercy see,’
‘Such is the longing in my heart * No lover claimeth rivalry!’
Quoth she, ‘With me an thou ‘rt in love * And to enjoy me
pleadest plea,
I want of thee oh! muchel wealth; * Beyond all compt my wants o’
thee!
I want o’ thee full many a robe * Of sendal, silk and damaskry;

A quarter quintal eke of musk: * These of one night shall pay the
fee.
Pearls, unions and carnelian[341] -stones * The bestest best of
jewelry!’
Of fairest patience showed I show * In contrariety albe:
At last she favoured me one night * When rose the moon a crescent
wee;
An stranger blame me for her sake * I say, ‘O blamers listen ye!
She showeth locks of goodly length * And black as blackest night
its blee;
While on her cheeks the roses glow * Like Lazá-flame incendiary:
In every eyelash is a sword * And every glance hath archery:
Her liplets twain old wine contain, * And dews of fount-like
purity:
Her teeth resemble strings o’ pearls, * Arrayed in line and fresh
from sea:
Her neck is like the neck of doe, * Pretty and carven perfectly:
Her bosom is a marble slab * Whence rise two breasts like towers
on lea:
And on her stomach shows a crease * Perfumed with rich perfumery;
Beneath which same there lurks a Thing * Limit of mine
expectancy.
A something rounded, cushioned-high * And plump, my lords, to
high degree:
To me ’tis likest royal throne * Whither my longings wander free;
There ‘twixt two pillars man shall find * Benches of high-built
tracery.
It hath specific qualities * Drive sanest men t’ insanity;
Full mouth it hath like mouth of neck * Or well begirt by stony
key;
Firm lips with camelry’s compare * And shows it eye of cramoisie.
An draw thou nigh with doughty will * To do thy doing lustily,
Thou’ll find it fain to face thy bout * And strong and fierce in
valiancy.
It bendeth backwards every brave * Shorn of his battle-bravery.
At times imberbe, but full of spunk * To battle with the
Paynimry.

‘T will show thee liveliness galore * And perfect in its
  raillery:
Zayn al-Mawasif it is like * Complete in charms and courtesy.
To her dear arms one night I came * And won meed given lawfully:
I passed with her that self-same night * (Best of my nights!) in
  gladdest glee;
And when the morning rose, she rose * And crescent like her
  visnomy:
Then swayed her supple form as sway * The lances lopt from limber
  tree;
And when farewelling me she cried, * ‘When shall such nights
  return to me?’
Then I replied, ‘O eyen-light, * When He vouchsafeth His
  decree!’”[342]

Zayn al-Mawasif was delighted with this Ode and the utmost gladness gat hold of her. Then said she, “O Masrur day-dawn draweth nigh and there is naught for it save to fly for fear of scandal and spy!” He replied, “I hear and obey,” and rising led her to her lodging, after which he returned to his quarters[343] and passed the rest of the night pondering on her charms. When the morning morrowed with its sheen and shone, he made ready a splendid present and carried it to her and sat by her side. And thus they abode awhile, in all solace of life and its delight, till one day there came to Zayn al-Mawasif a letter from her husband reporting to her his speedy return. Thereupon she said in herself, “May Allah not keep him nor quicken him! If he come hither, our life will be troubled: would Heaven I might despair of him!” Presently entered Masrur and sat with her at chat, as was his wont, whereupon she said to him, “O Masrur, I have received a missive from my mate, announcing his speedy return from his wayfaring. What is to be done, since neither of us without other can live?” He replied, “I know not; but thou art better able to judge, being acquainted with the ways of thy man, more by token that thou art one of the sharpest-witted of women and past mistress of devices such as devise that whereof fail the wise.” Quoth she, “He is a hard man and jealous of his household: but, when he shall come home and thou hearest of his coming, do thou repair to him and salute him and sit down by his side, saying, ‘O my brother, I am a druggist.’ Then buy of him somewhat of drugs and spices of sorts and call upon him frequently and prolong thy talks with him and gainsay him not in whatsoever he shall bid thee; so haply that I would contrive may betide, as it were by chance.” “I hear and I obey,” quoth Masrur and fared forth from her, with heart a-fire for love. When her husband came home, she rejoiced in meeting him and after saluting him bade him welcome; but he looked in her face and seeing it pale and sallow (for she had washed it with saffron, using one of women’s arts), asked her of her case. She answered that she had been sick, she and her women, from the time of his wayfaring, adding, “Verily, our hearts have been engrossed with thoughts of thee because of the length of thine absence.” And she went on to complain to him of the misery of separation and to pour forth copious tears, saying, “Hadst thou but a companion with thee, my heart had not borne all this cark and care for thee. So, Allah upon thee, O my lord, travel not again without a comrade and cut me not off from news of thee, that my heart and mind may be at rest concerning thee!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fifty-second Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Zayn al-Mawasif said to her mate, “Travel not without comrade and cut me not off from news of thee, that my heart and mind may be at rest concerning thee,” he replied, “With love and gladness! By Allah thy bede is good indeed and right is thy rede! By thy life, it shall be as thou dost heed.” Then he unpacked some of his stock-in-trade and carrying the goods to his shop, opened it and sat down to sell in the Soko.[344] No sooner had he taken his place than lo and behold! up came Masrur and saluting him, sat down by his side and began talking and talked with him awhile. Then he pulled out a purse and taking forth gold, handed it to Zayn al-Mawasif’s man and said, “Give me the worth of these dinars in drugs and spices of sorts, that I may sell them in my shop.” The Jew replied, “I hear and I obey,” and gave him what he sought. And Masrur continued to pay him frequent visits till, one day, the merchant said to him, “I have a mind to take me a man to partner in trade.” Quoth Masrur, “And I also, desire to take a partner; for my father was a merchant in the land of Al-Yaman and left me great store of money and I fear lest it fare from me." Quoth the Jew, turning towards him, "Wilt thou be my partner, and I will be thy partner and a true friend and comrade to thee at home and abroad; and I will teach thee selling and buying, giving and taking?" And Masrur rejoined, "With all my heart." So the merchant carried him to his place and seated him in the vestibule, whilst he went in to his wife and said to her, "I have provided me with a partner and have bidden him hither as a guest; so do thou get us ready good guest-cheer." Whenas she heard this, she rejoiced divining that it was Masrur, and made ready a magnificent banquet,[345] of her delight in the success of her device. Then, when the guest drew nigh, her husband said to her, "Come out with me to him and bid him welcome and say, 'Thou gladdenest us[346] !'" But Zayn al-Mawasif made a show of anger, crying, "Wilt thou have me display myself before a strange man? I take refuge with Allah! Though thou cut me to bits, I will not appear before him!" Rejoined he, "Why shouldst thou be abashed at him, seeing that he is a Nazarene and we are Jews and, to boot, we are become chums, he and I?" Quoth she, "I am not minded to present myself before a strange man, on whom I have never once set eyes and whom I know not any wise." Her husband thought she spoke sooth and ceased not to importune her, till she rose and veiling herself, took the food and went out to Masrur and welcomed him; whereupon he bowed his head groundwards, as he were ashamed, and the Jew, seeing such dejection said in himself, "Doubtless, this man is a devotee." They ate their fill and the table being removed, wine was set on. As for Zayn al-Mawasif, she sat over against Masrur and gazed on him and he gazed on her till ended day, when he went home, with a heart to fire a prey. But the Jew abode pondering the grace and the comeliness of him; and, as soon as it was night, his wife according to custom served him with supper and they seated themselves before it. Now he had a mockingbird which was wont, whenever he sat down to meat, to come and eat with him and hover over his head; but in his absence the fowl was grown familiar with Masrur and used to flutter about him as he sat at meals. Now when Masrur disappeared and the master returned, it knew him not and would not draw near him, and this made him thoughtful concerning his case and the fowl's withdrawing from him. As for

Zayn al-Mawasif, she could not sleep with her heart thinking of Masrur, and thus it was with her a second and even a third night, till the Jew became aware of her condition and, watching her while she sat distraught, began to suspect somewhat wrong. On the fourth night, he awoke in the middle thereof and heard his wife babbling in her sleep and naming Masrur, what while she lay on her husband's bosom, wherefore he misdoubted her; but he dissembled his suspicions and when morning morrowed he repaired to his shop and sat therein. Presently, up came Masrur and saluted him. He returned his salam and said to him, "Welcome, O my brother!" adding anon, "I have wished for thee;" and he sat talking with him for an hour or so, after which he said to him, "Rise, O my brother, and hie with me to my house, that we may enter into the pact of brotherhood."[347] Replied Masrur, "With joy and goodly gree," and they repaired to the Jew's house, where the master went in and told his wife of Masrur's visit, for the purpose of conditioning their partnership, and said, "Make us ready a goodly entertainment, and needs must thou be present and witness our brotherhood." But she replied, "Allah upon thee, cause me not show myself to this strange man, for I have no mind to company with him." So he held his peace and forbore to press her and bade the waiting-women bring food and drink. Then he called the mocking-bird but it knew not its lord and settled upon Masrur's lap; and the Jew said to him, "O my master, what is thy name?" He answered, "My name is Masrur;" whereupon the Jew remembered that this was the name which his wife had repeated all night long in her sleep. Presently, he raised his head and saw her making signs[348] with her forefingers to Masrur and motioning to him with her eyes, wherefore he knew that he had been completely cozened and cuckolded and said, "O my lord, excuse me awhile, till I fetch my kinsmen, so they may be present at our swearing brotherhood." Quoth Masrur, "Do what seemeth good to thee;" whereupon the Jew went forth the house and returning privily by a back way. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fifty-third Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Zayn al-Mawasif's husband said to Masrur, "Excuse me awhile, till I fetch my cousins to witness the brother-bond between me and thee." Then he went forth and, privily returning behind the sitting-room, there took his station hard by a window which gave upon the saloon and whence he could watch them without their seeing him. Suddenly quoth Zayn al-Mawasif to her maid Sukub, "Whither is thy master gone?"; and quoth she, "He is gone without the house." Cried the mistress, "Lock the door and bar it with iron and open thou not till he knock, after thou hast told me." Answered Sukub, "So shall it be done." Then, while her husband watched them, she rose and filling a cup with wine, flavoured with powdered musk and rose-water, went close to Masrur, who sprang up to meet her, saying, "By Allah, the water of thy mouth is sweeter than this wine!" "Here it is for thee," said she and filling her mouth with wine, gave him to drink thereof, whilst he gave her the like to drink; after which she sprinkled him with rose-water from front to foot, till the perfume scented the whole place. All this while, the Jew was looking on and marvelling at the stress of love that was between them, and his heart was filled with fury for what he saw and he was not only wroth, but jealous with exceeding jealousy. Then he went out again and coming to the door found it locked and knocked a loud knock of the excess of his rage; whereupon quoth Sukub, "O my lady, here is my master;" and quoth Zayn al-Mawasif, "Open to him; would that Allah had not brought him back in safety!" So Sukub went and opened the door to the Jew, who said to her, "What ailed thee to lock the door?" Quoth she, "It hath never ceased to be locked thus during thine absence; nor hath it been opened night nor day;" and cried he, "Thou hast done well; this pleaseth me." Then he went in to Masrur, laughing and dissembling his chagrin, and said to him, "O Masrur, let us put off the conclusion of our pact of brotherhood this day and defer it to another." Replied Masrur, "As thou wilt," and hied him home, leaving the Jew pondering his case and knowing not what to do; for his heart was sore troubled and he said in himself, "Even the mocking-bird disowneth me and the slave-girls shut the door in my face and favour another." And of his exceeding chagrin, he fell to reciting these couplets,

"Masrur joys life made fair by all delight of days, * Fulfilled

of boons, while mine the sorest grief displays.
The Days have falsed me in the breast of her I love * And in my
heart are fires which all-consuming blaze:
Yea, Time was clear for thee, but now ’tis past and gone * While
yet her lovely charms thy wit and senses daze:
Espied these eyes of mine her gifts of loveliness: * Oh, hard my
case and sore my woe on spirit weighs!
I saw the maiden of the tribe deal rich old wine * Of lips like
Salsabíl to friend my love betrays:
E’en so, O mocking-bird, thou dost betray my breast * And to a
rival teachest Love and lover-ways:
Strange things indeed and wondrous saw these eyne of me * Which
were they sleep-drowned still from Sleep’s abyss would raise:
I see my best belovĕd hath forsworn my love * And eke like my
mocking-bird fro’ me a-startled strays.
By truth of Allah, Lord of Worlds who, whatso wills * His Fate,
for creatures works and none His hest gainsays,
Forsure I’ll deal to that ungodly wight his due * Who but to sate
his wicked will her heart withdrew!”

When Zayn al-Mawasif heard this, her side-muscles trembled and quoth she to her handmaid, “Heardest thou those lines?”; whereupon quoth the girl, “I never heard him in my born days recite the like of these verses; but let him say what he will.” Then having assured himself of the truth of his suspicions, the Jew began to sell all his property, saying to himself, “Unless I part them by removing her from her mother land the twain will not turn back from this that they are engaged in, no, never!” So, when he had converted all his possessions into coin, he forged a letter and read it to Zayn al-Mawasif, declaring that it had come from his kinsmen, who invited him to visit them, him and his wife. She asked, “How long shall we tarry with them?” and he answered, “Twelve days.” Accordingly she consented to this and said, “Shall I take any of my maids with me?”; whereto he replied, “Take Hubub and Sukub and leave Khutub here.” Then he made ready a handsome camel-litter[349] for his spouse and her women and prepared to set out with them; whilst she sent to her leman, telling him what had betided her and saying, “O Masrur, an the trysting-time[350] that is between us pass and I come not back, know that he hath cheated and cozened us and planned a plot to separate us each from other, so forget thou not the plighted faith betwixt us, for I fear that he hath found out our love and I dread his craft and perfidy." Then, whilst her man was busy about his march she fell a-weeping and lamenting and no peace was left her, night or day. Her husband saw this, but took no note thereof; and when she saw there was scant help for it, she gathered together her clothes and gear and deposited them with her sister, telling her what had befallen her. Then she farewelled her and going out from her, drowned in tears, returned to her own house, where she found her husband had brought the camels and was busy loading them, having set apart the handsomest dromedary for her riding, and when she saw this and knew that needs must she be separated from Masrur, she waxt clean distraught. Presently it chanced that the Jew went out on some business of his; so she fared forth to the first or outer door and wrote thereon these couplets, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fifty-fourth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Zayn al-Mawasif saw her spouse summon the camels and knew that the march needs must be, she waxt clean distraught. Presently it chanced that the Jew went out on some business so she fared forth to the first door and wrote thereon these couplets,

"Bear our salams, O Dove, from this our stead * From lover to
beloved far severčd!
Bid him fro' me ne'er cease to yearn and mourn * O'er happy days
and hours for ever fled:
Eke I in grief shall ever mourn and yearn, * Dwelling on days of
love and lustihead;
Long was our joyance, seeming aye to last, * When night and
morning to reunion led;
Till croaked the Raven[351] of the Wold one day * His cursed
croak and did our union dead.
We sped and left the homestead dark and void * Its gates
unpeopled and its dwellers sped."

Then she went to the second door and wrote thereon these couplets,

“O who passest this doorway, by Allah, see * The charms of my
fere in the glooms and make plea
For me, saying, ‘I think of the Past and weep * Yet boot me no
tears flowing full and free.’
Say, ‘An fail thee patience for what befel * Scatter earth and
dust on the head of thee!
And o’er travel lands East and West, and deem * God sufficeth thy
case, so bear patiently!’”

Then she went to the third door and wept sore and thereon wrote these couplets,

“Fare softly, Masrúr! an her sanctuary * Thou seek, and read what
a-door writ she.
Ne’er forget Love-plight, if true man; how oft * Hast savoured
Nights’ bitter and sweetest gree!
O Masrúr! forget not her neighbourhood * For wi’ thee must her
gladness and joyance flee!
But beweep those dearest united days * When thou camest veilĕd in
secresy;
Wend for sake of us over farthest wone; * Span the wold for us,
for us dive in sea;
Allah bless the past days! Ah, how glad they were * When in
Gardens of Fancy the flowers pluckt we!
The nights of Union from us are fled * And parting-glooms dim
their radiancy;
Ah! had this lasted as hopĕd we, but * He left only our breasts
and the rosery.
Will revolving days on Re-union dawn? * Then our vow to the Lord
shall accomplisht be.
Learn thou our lots are in hand of Him * Who on lines of
skull[352] writes our destiny!”

Then she wept with sore weeping and returned to the house, wailing and remembering what had passed and saying, “Glory be to God who hath decreed to us this!” And her affliction redoubled for severance from her beloved and her departure from her mother-land, and she recited these couplets,

“Allah’s peace on thee, House of Vacancy! * Ceased in thee all
 our joys, all our jubilee.
O thou Dove of the homestead, ne’er cease to bemoan * Whose moons
 and full moons[353] sorest severance dree:
Masrúr, fare softly and mourn our loss; * Loving thee our eyes
 lose their brilliancy:
Would thy sight had seen, on our marching day, * Tears shed by a
 heart in Hell’s flagrancy!
Forget not the plight in the garth-shade pledged * When we sat
 enveiléd in privacy:”

Then she presented herself before her husband, who lifted her into the litter he had let make for her; and, when she found herself on the camel’s back, she recited these couplets,

“The Lord, empty House! to thee peace decree * Long we bore
 therein growth of misery:
Would my life-thread were shorn in that safe abode * And o’ night
 I had died in mine ecstasy!
Home-sickness I mourn, and my strangerhood * Irks my soul, nor
 the riddle of future I ree.
Would I wot shall I ever that house resee * And find it, as erst,
 home of joy and glee!”

Said her husband, “O Zayn al-Mawasif grieve not for thy departure from thy dwelling; for thou shalt return to it ere long Inshallah!” And he went on to comfort her heart and soothe her sorrow. Then all set out and fared on till they came without the town and struck into the high road, whereupon she knew that separation was certain and this was very grievous to her. And while such things happened Masrur sat in his quarters, pondering his case and that of his mistress, and his heart forewarned him of severance. So he rose without stay and delay and repairing to her house, found the outer door padlocked and read the couplets she had written thereon; upon which he fell down in a fainting fit. When he came to himself, he opened the first door and entering, read what was written upon the second and likewise upon the third doors; wherefore passion and love-longing and distraction grew on him. So he went forth and hastened in her track, till he came up with the light caravan[354] and found her at the rear, whilst her husband rode in the van, because of his merchandise. When he saw her, he clung to the litter, weeping and wailing for the anguish of parting, and recited these couplets,

“Would I wot for what crime shot and pierced are we * Thro’ the
days with Estrangement’s archery!
O my heart’s desire, to thy door I came * One day, when high waxt
mine expectancy:
But I found the home waste as the wold and void * And I ‘plained
my pine and groaned wretchedly:
And I asked the walls of my friends who fared * With my heart in
pawn and in pendency;
And they said, ‘All marched from the camp and left *An ambushed
sorrow on hill and lea;’
And a writ on the walls did they write, as write * Folk who keep
their faith while the Worlds are three.”

Now when Zayn al-Mawasif heard these lines, she knew that it was Masrur. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Zayn al-Mawasif heard these lines she knew that it was Masrur and wept, she and her handmaids, and said to him, “O Masrur, I conjure thee by Allah, turn back, lest my husband see us twain together!” At her words he swooned away; and when he revived, they took leave each of other and he recited the following couplets,

“The Caravan-chief calleth loud o’ night * Ere the Breeze bear

his cry in the morning-light:
They girded their loads and prepared to fare, * And hurried while murmured the leader-wight.
They scent the scene on its every side, * As their march through the valley they expedite.
After winning my heart by their love they went * O’ morn when their track could deceive my sight.
O my neighbour fair, I reckt ne’er to part, * Or the ground bedewed with my tears to sight!
Woe betide my heart, now hath Severance hand * To heart and vitals dealt bane and blight.”

Then he clung to the litter, weeping and wailing, whilst she besought him to turn back ere morn for fear of scorn. So he came up to her Haudaj and farewelling her a second time, fell down in a swoon. He lay an hour or so without life, and when he revived he found the caravan had fared forth of sight. So he turned in the direction of their wayfare and scenting the breeze which blew from their quarter, chanted these improvised lines,

“No breeze of Union to the lover blows * But moan he maketh burnt with fiery woes:
The Zephyr fans him at the dawn o’ day; * But when he wakes the horizon lonely shows:
On bed of sickness strewn in pain he lies, * And weeps he bloody tears in burning throes,
For the fair neighbour with my heart they bore * ‘Mid travellers urging beasts with cries and blows.
By Allah from their stead no Zephyr blew * But sniffed I as the wight on eyeballs goes;[355]
And snuff the sweetest South as musk it breathes * And on the longing lover scent bestows.”

Then Masrur returned, mad with love-longing, to her house, and finding it lone from end to end[356] and forlorn of friend, wept till he wet his clothes; after which he swooned away and his soul was like to leave his body. When he revived, he recited these two couplets,

“O Spring-camp have ruth on mine overthrowing * My abjection, my
leanness, my tears aye flowing,
Waft the scented powder[357] of breezes they breathe * In hope
it cure heart of a grief e’er growing.”

Then he returned to his own lodging confounded and tearful-eyed, and abode there for the space of ten days. Such was his case; but as regards the Jew, he journeyed on with Zayn al-Mawasif half a score days, at the end of which he halted at a certain city and she, being by that time assured that her husband had played her false, wrote to Masrur a letter and gave it to Hubub, saying, “Send this to Masrur, so he may know how foully and fully we have been tricked and how the Jew hath cheated us.” So Hubub took it and despatched it to Masrur, and when it reached, its news was grievous to him and he wept till he watered the ground. Then he wrote a reply and sent it to his mistress, subscribing it with these two couplets,

“Where is the way to Consolation’s door * How shall console him
flames burn evermore?
How pleasant were the days of yore all gone: * Would we had
somewhat of those days of yore!”

When the missive reached Zayn al-Mawasif, she read it and again gave it to her handmaid Hubub, saying to her, “Keep it secret!” However, the husband came to know of their correspondence and removed with her and her two women to another city, at a distance of twenty days’ march. Thus it befel Zayn al-Mawasif; but as regards Masrur, sleep was not sweet to him nor was peace peaceful to him or patience left to him, and he ceased not to be thus till, one night, his eyes closed for weariness and he dreamt that he saw Zayn al-Mawasif come to him in the garden and embrace him; but presently he awoke and found her not: whereupon his reason fled and his wits wandered and his eyes ran over with tears; love-longing to the utterest gat hold of his heart and he recited these couplets,

“Peace be to her, who visits me in sleeping phantasy * Stirring
desire and growing love to uttermost degree:

Verily from that dream I rose with passion maddenčd * For sight
of fairest phantom come in piece to visit me:
Say me, can dreams declare the truth anent the maid I love, * And
quench the fires of thirst and heal my love-sick malady?
Anon to me she is liberal and she strains me to her breast; *
Anon she soothes mine anxious heart with sweetest
pleasantry:
From off her dark-red damask lips the dew I wont to sip * The
fine old wine that seemed to reek of musk's perfumery.
I wondered at the wondrous things between us done in dreams, *
And won my wish and all my will of things I hoped to see;
And from that dreamery I rose, yet ne'er could hope to find *
Trace of my phantom save my pain and fiery misery:
And when I looked on her a-morn, 'twas as a lover mad * And every
eve was drunken yet no wine brought jollity.
O breathings of the northern breeze, by Allah fro' me bear *
Them-wards the greetings of my love and best salams that be:
Say them, 'The wight with whom ye made that plight of fealty *
Time with his changes made him drain Death's cup and slain
is he!'"

Then he went out and ceased not to weep till he came to her house and looking on it, saw it empty and void. Presently, it seemed to him he beheld her form before him, whereupon fires flamed in him and his griefs redoubled and he fell down aswoon; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fifty-sixth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Masrur saw the vision of Zayn al-Mawasif and felt her embrace, he joyed with passing joy. As soon as he awoke he sought her house, but finding it empty and void he fell down a-swoon; and when he came to himself, he recited these couplets,

"Fro' them inhale I scent of Ottar and of Bán; * So fare with
heart which ecstasies of love unman:
I'd heal thy longings (love-sick lover!) by return * To site of
beauty void sans friend or mate to scan:

But still it sickeneth me with parting’s ban and bane * Minding
mine olden plight with friend and partisan.”

When he had made an end of these verses, he heard a raven croak beside the house and wept, saying, “Glory be to God! The raven croaketh not save over a ruined homestead.” Then he moaned and groaned and recited these couplets,

“What ails the Raven that he croaks my lover’s house hard by, *
And in my vitals lights a fire that flameth fierce and high?
For times now past and gone I spent in joyance of their love *
With love my heart hath gone to waste and I sore pain aby:
I die of longing love and lowe still in my liver raging * And
wrote to her but none there is who with the writ may hie:
Ah well-away for wasted frame! Hath farčd forth my friend * And
if she will o’ nights return Oh would that thing wot I!
Then, Ho thou Breeze of East, and thou by morn e’er visit her; *
Greet her from me and stand where doth her tribe encampčd
lie!”

Now Zayn al-Mawasif had a sister, by name Nasím — the Zephyr — who stood espying him from a high place; and when she saw him in this plight, she wept and sighed and recited these couplets,

“How oft bewailing the place shall be this coming and going, *
While the House bemoaneth its builder with tear-flood ever
a-flowing?
Here was bestest joy ere fared my friend with the caravan hieing

* And its dwellers and brightest-suns[358] ne’er ceased
in its walls a-glowing:
Where be those fullest moons that here were always arising? *
Bedimmed them the Shafts of Days their charms of spirit
unknowing:
Leave then what is past of the Fair thou wast ever with love
espying * And look; for haply the days may restore them
without foreshowing:

For hadst thou not been, its dwellers had never departed flying *
Nor haddest thou seen the Crow with ill-omened croak
a-crying."

Masrur wept sore hearing these verses and apprehending their significance. Now Nasim knew that which was between him and her sister of love and longing, ecstasy and passion; so she said to him, "Allah upon thee, O Masrur, away from this house, lest any see thee and deem thou comest on my account! Indeed thou hast caused my sister quit it and now thou wouldst drive me also away. Thou knowest that, but for thee, the house would not now be void of its dwellers: so be consoled for her loss and leave her: what is past is past." When he heard this, he wept bitterly and said to her, "O Nasim, if I could, I should fly for longing after her; so how can I be comforted for her?" Quoth she, "Thou hast no device save patience;" and quoth he, "I beseech thee, for Allah's sake, write me a writ to her, as from thyself, and get me an answer from her, to comfort my heart and quench the fire in my vitals." She replied, "With love and gladness," and took inkcase and paper, whilst Masrur began to set out to her the violence of his longing and what tortures he suffered for the anguish of severance, saying, "This letter is from the lover despairing and sorrowful * the bereaved, the woeful * with whom no peace can stay * nor by night nor by day * but he weepeth copious tears alway. * Indeed, tears his eyelids have ulcerated and his sorrows have kindled in his liver a fire unsated. His lamentation is lengthened and restlessness is strengthened and he is as he were a bird unmated * While for sudden death he awaiteth * Alas, my desolation for the loss of thee * and alas, my yearning affliction for the companionship of thee! * Indeed, emaciation hath wasted my frame * and my tears a torrent became * mountains and plains are straitened upon me for grame * and of the excess of my distress, I go saying,

"Still cleaves to this homestead mine ecstasy, * And redoubled
pine for its dwellers I dree;
And I send to your quarters the tale of my love * And the cup of
your love gave the Cup-boy to me.

And for faring of you and your farness from home * My wounded lids are from tears ne'er free:
O thou leader of litters, turn back with my love * For my heart redoubleth its ardency:
Greet my love and say him that naught except * Those brown-red lips deals me remedy:
They bore him away and our union rent * And my vitals with Severance-shaft shot he:
My love, my lowe and my longing to him * Convey, for of parting no cure I see:
I swear an oath by your love that I * Will keep pact and covenant faithfully,
To none I'll incline or forget your love * How shall love-sick lover forgetful be?
So with you be the peace and my greeting fair * In letters that perfume of musk-pod bear."

Her sister Nasim admired his eloquence of tongue and the goodliness of his speech and the elegance of the verses he sang, and was moved to ruth for him. So she sealed the letter with virgin musk and incensed it with Nadd-scent and ambergris, after which she committed it to a certain of the merchants saying, "Deliver it not to any save to Zayn al-Mawasif or to her handmaid Hubub." Now when the letter reached her sister, she knew it for Masrur's dictation and recognised himself in the grace of its expression. So she kissed it and laid it on her eyes, whilst the tears streamed from her lids and she gave not over weeping, till she fainted. As soon as she came to herself, she called for pencase and paper and wrote him the following answer; complaining the while of her desire and love-longing and ecstasy and what was hers to endure of pining for her lover and yearning to him and the passion she had conceived for him. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fifty-seventh Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Zayn al-Mawasif wrote the following reply to Masrur's missive: "This letter to my lord and master I indite * the king of my heart and my secret sprite * Indeed, wakefulness agitateth me * and melancholy increaseth on me * and I have no patience to endure the absence of thee * O thou who excellest sun and moon in brilliancy * Desire of repose despoileth me * and passion destroyeth me * and how should it be otherwise with me, seeing that I am of the number of the dying? *O glory of the world and Ornament of life, she whose vital spirits are cut off shall her cup be sweet to quaff? * For that she is neither with the quick nor with the dead.” And she improvised these couplets and said,

“Thy writ, O Masrúr, stirred my sprite to pine * For by Allah,
all patience and solace I tyne:
When I read thy scripture, my vitals yearned * And watered the
herbs of the wold these eyne.
On Night’s wings I’d fly an a bird * And sans thee I weet not the
sweets of wine:
Life’s unlawful to me since thou faredst far * To bear parting-
lowe is no force of mine.”

Then she sprinkled the letter with powder of musk and ambergris and, having sealed it with her signet, committed it to a merchant, saying, “Deliver it to none save to my sister.” When it reached Nasim she sent it to Masrur, who kissed it and laid it on his eyes and wept till he fell into a trance. Such was their case; but as regards the Jew, he presently heard of their correspondence and began again to travel from place to place with Zayn al-Mawasif and her damsels, till she said to him, “Glory to God! How long wilt thou fare with us and bear us afar from our homes?” Quoth he, “I will fare on with you a year’s journey, so no more letters may reach you from Masrur. I see how you take all my monies and give them to him; so all that I miss I shall recover from you: and I shall see if Masrur will profit you or have power to deliver you from my hand.” Then he repaired to a blacksmith, after stripping her and her damsels of their silken apparel and clothing them in raiment of hair-cloth, and bade him make three pairs of iron shackles. When they were ready, he brought the smith in to his wife, having said to him, “Put the shackles on the legs of these three slave-girls.” The first that came forward was Zayn al-Mawasif, and when the blacksmith saw her, his sense forsook him and he bit his finger tips and his wit fled forth his head and his transport grew sore upon him. So he said to the Jew, “What is the crime of these damsels?” Replied the other, “They are my slave-girls, and have stolen my good and fled from me.” Cried the smith, “Allah disappoint thy jealous whims! By the Almighty, were this girl before the Kazi of Kazis,[359] he would not even reprove her, though she committed a thousand crimes a day. Indeed, she showeth not thief’s favour and she cannot brook the laying of irons on her legs.” And he asked him as a boon not to fetter her, interceding with him to forbear the shackles. When she saw the blacksmith taking her part in this wise she said to her husband, “I conjure thee, by Allah, bring me not forth before yonder strange man!” Said he, “Why then camest thou forth before Masrur?”; and she made him no reply. Then he accepted the smith’s intercession, so far as to allow him to put a light pair of irons on her legs, for that she had a delicate body, which might not brook harsh usage, whilst he laid her handmaids in heavy bilboes, and they ceased not, all three, to wear hair-cloth night and day till their bodies became wasted and their colour changed. As for the blacksmith, exceeding love had fallen on his heart for Zayn al-Mawasif; so he returned home in great concern and he fell to reciting extempore these couplets,

“Wither thy right, O smith, which made her bear * Those iron
  chains her hands and feet to wear!
Thou hast ensoiled a lady soft and bright, * Marvel of marvels,
  fairest of the fair:
Hadst thou been just, those anklets ne’er had been * Of iron: nay
  of purest gold they were:
By Allah! did the Kázis’ Kázi sight * Her charms, he’d seat her
  in the highest chair.”

Now it chanced that the Kazi of Kazis passed by the smith’s house and heard him improvise these lines; so he sent for him and as soon as he saw him said to him, “O blacksmith, who is she on whom thou callest so instantly and eloquently and with whose love thy heart is full filled?” The smith sprang to his feet and kissing the

Judge's hand, answered, "Allah prolong the days of our lord the Kazi and ample his life!" Then he described to him Zayn al-Mawasif's beauty and loveliness, brilliancy and perfection, and symmetry and grace and how she was lovely faced and had a slender waist and heavily based; and acquainted him with the sorry plight wherein she was for abasement and durance vile and lack of victual. When the Kazi heard this, he said, "O blacksmith, send her to us and show her that we may do her justice, for thou art become accountable for the damsel and unless thou guide her to us, Allah will punish thee at the Day of Doom." "I hear and obey," replied the smith and betook himself without stay and delay to Zayn al-Mawasif's lodging, but found the door barred and heard a voice of plaintive tone that came from heart forlorn and lone; and it was Zayn al-Mawasif reciting these couplets,

"I and my love in union were unite; * And filled my friend to me
 cups clearly bright
Between us reigned high mirth and jollity, * Nor Eve nor Morn
 brought 'noyance or affright
Indeed we spent most joyous time, with cup * And lute and
 dulcimer to add delight,
Till Time estranged our fair companionship; * My lover went and
 blessing turned to blight.
Ah would the Severance-raven's croak were stilled * And
 Union-dawn of Love show blessĕd light!"

When the blacksmith heard this, he wept like the weeping of the clouds. Then he knocked at the door and the women said, "Who is at the door?" Answered he, "'Tis I, the blacksmith," and told them what the Kazi had said and how he would have them appear before him and make their complaint to him, that he might do them justice on their adversary. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fifty-eighth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the blacksmith told Zayn al-Mawasif what the Kazi had said, and how he summoned them that he might apply the Lex Talionis to their adversary, she rejoined, “How can we go to him, seeing the door is locked on us and our feet shackled and the Jew hath the keys?” The smith replied, “I will make the keys for the padlocks and therewith open door and shackles.” Asked she, “But who will show us the Kazi’s house?”; and he answered, “I will describe it to you.” She enquired, “But how can we appear before him, clad as we are in haircloth reeking with sulphur?” And the smith rejoined, “The Kazi will not reproach this to you, considering your case.” So saying, he went forthright and made keys for the padlocks, wherewith he opened the door and the shackles, and loosing the irons from their legs, carried them forth and guided them to the Kazi’s mansion. Then Hubub did off the hair-cloth garments from her lady’s body and carried her to the Hammam, where she bathed her and attired her in silken raiment, and her colour returned to her. Now it happened, by exceeding good fortune, that her husband was abroad at a bride-feast in the house of one of the merchants; so Zayn al-Mawasif, the Adornment of Qualities, adorned herself with the fairest ornaments and repaired to the Kazi, who at once on espying her rose to receive her. She saluted him with softest speech and winsomest words, shooting him through the vitals the while with the shafts of her glances, and said, “May Allah prolong the life of our lord the Kazi and strengthen him to judge between man and man!” Then she acquainted him with the affair of the blacksmith and how he had done nobly by them, whenas the Jew had inflicted on her and her women heart-confounding torments; and how his victims deathwards he drave, nor was there any found to save. “O damsel,” quoth the Kazi, “what is thy name?” “My name is Zayn al Mawasif, — Adomment of Qualities — and this my handmaid’s name is Hubub.” “Thy name accordeth with the named and its sound conformeth with its sense.” Whereupon she smiled and veiled her face, and he said to her, “O Zayn al-Mawasif, hast thou a husband or not?” “I have no husband”; “And what is thy Faith?” “That of Al-Islam, and the religion of the Best of Men.” “Swear to me by Holy Law replete with signs and instances that thou ownest the creed of the Best of Mankind.” So she swore to him and pronounced the profession of the Faith. Then asked the Kazi, “How cometh it that thou wastest thy youth with this Jew?” And she answered, “Know, O Kazi (may Allah prolong thy days in contentment and bring thee to thy will and thine acts with benefits seal!), that my father left me, after his death, fifteen thousand dinars, which he placed in the hands of this Jew, that he might trade therewith and share his gains with me, the head of the property[360] being secured by legal acknowledgment. When my father died, the Jew coveted me and sought me in marriage of my mother, who said, ‘How shall I drive her from her Faith and cause to become a Jewess? By Allah, I will denounce thee to the rulers!’ He was affrighted at her words and taking the money, fled to the town of Adan.[361] When we heard where he was, we came to Adan in search of him, and when we foregathered with him there, he told us that he was trading in stuffs with the monies and buying goods upon goods. So we believed him and he ceased not to cozen us till he cast us into jail and fettered us and tortured us with exceeding sore torments; and we are strangers in the land and have no helper save Almighty Allah and our lord the Kazi.” When the judge heard this tale he asked Hubub the nurse, “Is this indeed thy lady and are ye strangers and is she unmarried?”, and she answered, “Yes.” Quoth he, “Marry her to me and on me be incumbent manumission of my slaves and fasting and pilgrimage and almsgiving of all my good an I do you not justice on this dog and punish him for that he hath done!” And quoth she, “I hear and obey.” Then said the Kazi, “Go, hearten thy heart and that of thy lady; and to-morrow, Inshallah, I will send for this Miscreant and do you justice on him and ye shall see prodigies of his punishment.” So Hubub called down blessings upon him and went forth from him with her mistress, leaving him with passion and love-longing fraught and with distress and desire distraught. Then they enquired for the house of the second Kazi and presenting themselves before him, told him the same tale. On like wise did the twain, mistress and maid with the third and the fourth, till Zayn al-Mawasif had made her complaint to all the four Kazis, each of whom fell in love with her and besought her to wed him, to which she consented with a “Yes”; nor wist any one of the four that which had happened to the others. All this passed without the knowledge of the Jew, who spent the night in the house of the bridefeast. And when morning morrowed, Hubub arose and gat ready her lady’s richest raiment; then she clad her therewith and presented herself with her before the four Kazis in the court of justice. As soon as she entered, she veiled her face and saluted the judges, who returned her salam and each and every of them recognised her. One was writing, and the reed-pen dropped from his hand, another was talking, and his tongue became tied, and a third was reckoning and blundered in his reckoning; and they said to her, "O admirable of attributes and singular among beauties! be not thy heart other than hearty, for we will assuredly do thee justice and bring thee to thy desire." So she called down blessings on them and farewelled them and went her ways. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Fifty-ninth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Kazis said to Zayn al-Mawasif, "O admirable of attributes and singular among beauties! Be not thy heart other than hearty for our doing thy desire and thy winning to thy will." So she called down blessings on them and farewelled them and went her ways, the while her husband abode with his friends at the marriage-banquet and knew naught of her doings. Then she proceeded to beseech the notaries and scribes and the notables and the Chiefs of Police to succour her against that unbelieving miscreant and deliver her from the torment she suffered from him. Then she wept with sore weeping and improvised these couplets,

"Rain showers of torrent tears, O Eyne and see * An they will
quench the fires that flame in me:
After my robes of gold-embroidered silk * I wake to wear the
frieze of monkery:
And all my raiment reeks of sulphur-fumes * When erst my shift
shed musky fragrancy:
And hadst thou, O Masrúr, my case descried, * Ne'er hadst thou
borne my shame and ignomy.
And eke Hubúb in iron chains is laid * By Miscreant who unknows
God's Unity.
The creed of Jewry I renounce and home, * The Moslem's Faith
accepting faithfully
Eastwards[362] I prostrate self in fairest guise * Holding the

only True Belief that be:
Masrúr! forget not love between us twain * And keep our vows and
troth with goodly gree:
I've changed my faith for sake of thee, and I * For stress of
love will cleave to secrecy:
So haste to us, an us in heart thou bear, * As noble spirit, nor
as laggard fare."

After this she wrote a letter to Masrur, describing to him all that the Jew had done with her from first to last and enclosed the verses aforesaid. Then she folded the scroll and gave it to her maid Hubub, saying, "Keep this in thy pocket, till we send it to Masrur." Upon these doings lo and behold! in came the Jew and seeing them joyous, said to them, "How cometh it that I find you merry? Say me, hath a letter reached you from your bosom friend Masrur?" Replied Zayn al-Mawasif, "We have no helper against thee save Allah, extolled and exalted be He! He will deliver us from thy tyranny, and except thou restore us to our birth-place and homestead, we will complain of thee tomorrow to the Governor of this town and to the Kazi." Quoth he, "Who struck off the shackles from your legs? But needs must I let make for each of you fetters ten pounds in weight and go round about the city with you." Replied Hubub, "All that thou purposest against us thou shall fall into thyself, so it please Allah the Most High, by token that thou hast exiled us from our homes, and to-morrow we shall stand, we and thou, before the Governor of the city." They nighted on this wise and next morning the Jew rose up in haste and went out to order new shackles, whereupon Zayn al-Mawasif arose and repaired with her women to the court-house, where she found the four Kazis and saluted them. They all returned her salutation and the Kazi of Kazis said to those about him, "Verily this damsel is lovely as the Venus-star[363] and all who see her love her and bow before her beauty and loveliness." Then he despatched four sergeants, who were Sharífs,[364] saying, "Bring ye the criminal after abjectest fashion." So, when the Jew returned with the shackles and found none in the house, he was confounded; but, as he abode in perplexity, suddenly up came the officers and laying hold of him beat him with a sore beating and dragged him face downwards before the Kazi. When the judge saw him, he cried out in his face and said to him, “Woe to thee, O foe of God, is it come to such a pass with thee that thou doest the deed thou hast done and bringest these women far from their country and stealest their monies and wouldst make them Jews? How durst thou seek to make miscreants of Moslems?” Answered the Jew, “O my lord this woman is my wife.” Now when the Kazis heard this, they all cried out, saying, “Throw this hound on the ground and come down on his face with your sandals and beat him with sore blows, for his offence is unpardonable.” So they pulled off his silken gear and clad him in his wife’s raiment of hair-cloth, after which they threw him down and plucked out his beard and belaboured him about the face with sandals. Then they sat him on an ass, face to crupper, arsiversy, and making him take its tail in his hand, paraded him round about the city, ringing the bell before him in every street; after which they brought him back to the judges in sorriest plight; and the four Kazis with one voice condemned him to have his feet and hands cut off and lastly to be crucified. When the accursed heard this sentence his sense forsook him and he was confounded and said, “O my lords the Kazis, what would ye of me?” They replied, “Say thou, ‘This damsel is not my wife and the monies are her monies, and I have transgressed against her and brought her far from her country.’” So he confessed to this and the Kazis recorded his confession in legal form and taking the money from him, gave it to Zayn al-Mawasif, together with the document. Then she went away and all who saw her were confounded at her beauty and loveliness, whilst each of the Kazis looked for her committing herself to him. But, when she came to her lodging, she made ready all matters she needed and waited till night. Then she took what was light of load and weighty of worth, and setting out with her maids under cover of the murks three days with their nights fared on without stopping. Thus it was with her; but as regards the Kazis they ordered the Jew to prison. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Sixtieth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Kazis ordered the Jew to prison and on the morrow they looked for Zayn al-Mawasif coming to them, they and their assessors; but she presented herself not to any of them. Then said the Chief Kazi, “I wish to-day to make an excursion without the town on business there.” So he mounted his she-mule and taking his page with him, went winding about the streets of the town, searching its length and width for Zayn al-Mawasif, but never finding her. On this errand he came upon the other three Kazis, going about on the same, each deeming himself the only one to whom she had given tryst. He asked them whither they were riding and why they were going about the streets; when they told him their business, whereby he saw that their plight was as his plight and their quest as his quest. So they all four rode throughout the city, seeking her, but could hit on no trace of her and returned to their houses, sick for love, and lay down on the bed of langour. Presently the Chief Kazi bethought himself of the blacksmith; so he sent for him and said to him, “O blacksmith, knowest thou aught of the damsel whom thou didst direct to me? By Allah, an thou discover her not to me, I will whack thee with whips.” Now when the smith heard this, he recited these couplets[365] ,

“She who my all of love by love of her hath won * Owns every
  Beauty and for others leaves she none:
She gazes, a gazelle; she breathes, fresh ambergris * She waves,
  a lake; she sways, a bough; she shines, a Sun.”

Then said the blacksmith, “By Allah, O my lord, since she fared forth from thy worshipful presence,[366] I have not set eyes on her; no, not once. Indeed she took possession of my heart and wits and all my talk and thoughts are of her. I went to her lodging but found her not, nor found I any who could give me news of her, and it is as if she had dived into the depths of the sea or had ascended to the sky.” Now when the Kazi heard this, he groaned a groan, that his soul was like to depart therefor, and he said, “By Allah, well it were had we never seen her!” Then the smith went away, whilst the Kazi fell down on his bed and became sick of langour for her sake, and on like wise fared it with the other three Kazis and assessors. The mediciners paid them frequent calls, but found in them no ailment requiring a leach: so the city-notables went in to the Chief Kazi and saluting him, questioned him of his case; whereupon he sighed and showed them that was in his heart, reciting these couplets,

“Stint ye this blame; enough I suffer from Love’s malady * Nor
chide the Kazi frail who fain must deal to folk decree!
Who doth accuse my love let him for me find some excuse: * Nor
blame; for lovers blameless are in lover-slavery!
I was a Kázi whom my Fate deigned aid with choicest aid * By writ
and reed and raisčd me to wealth and high degree;
Till I was shot by sharpest shaft that knows nor leach nor cure *
By Damsel’s glance who came to spill my blood and murther
me.
To me came she, a Moslemah and of her wrongs she ‘plained * With
lips that oped on Orient-pearls ranged fair and orderly:
I looked beneath her veil and saw a wending moon at full * Rising
below the wings of Night engloomed with blackest blee:
A brightest favour and a mouth bedight with wondrous smiles; *
Beauty had brought the loveliest garb and robed her
cap-ŕ-pie.
By Allah, ne’er beheld my eyes a face so ferly fair * Amid
mankind whoever are, Arab or Ajamí.
My Fair! What promise didst thou make what time to me thou
said’st * ‘Whenas I promise I perform, O Kazi, faithfully.’
Such is my stead and such my case calamitous and dire * And ask
me not, ye men of spunk, what dreadful teen I dree.”

When he ended his verse he wept with sore weeping and sobbed one sob and his spirit departed his body, which seeing they washed him and shrouded him and prayed over him and buried him graving on his tomb these couplets,

“Perfect were lover’s qualities in him was brought a-morn, *
Slain by his love and his beloved, to this untimely grave:
Kázi was he amid the folk, and aye ’twas his delight * To foster
all the folk and keep a-sheath the Justice-glaive:
Love caused his doom and ne’er we saw among mankind before *
The
lord and master louting low before his thrallčd slave.”

Then they committed him to the mercy of Allah and went away to the second Kazi, in company with the physician, but found in him nor injury nor ailment needing a leach. Accordingly they questioned him of his case and what preoccupied him; so he told them what ailed him, whereupon they blamed him and chid him for his predicament and he answered them with these couplets,

"Blighted by her yet am I not to blame; * Struck by the dart at
me her fair hand threw.
Unto me came a woman called Hubúb * Chiding the world from year
to year anew:
And brought a damsel showing face that shamed * Full moon that
sails through Night-tide's blackest hue,
She showed her beauties and she 'plained her plain * Which tears
in torrents from her eyelids drew:
I to her words gave ear and gazed on her * Whenas with smiling
lips she made me rue.
Then with my heart she fared where'er she fared * And left me
pledged to sorrows soul subdue.
Such is my tale! So pity ye my case * And this my page with
Kazi's gear indue."

Then he sobbed one sob and his soul fled his flesh; whereupon they gat ready his funeral and buried him commending him to the mercy of Allah; after which they repaired to the third Kazi and the fourth, and there befel them the like of what befel their brethren.[367] Furthermore, they found the Assessors also sick for love of her, and indeed all who saw her died of her love or, an they died not, lived on tortured with the lowe of passion. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Sixty-first Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the city folk found all the Kazis and the Assessors sick for love of her, and all who saw her died lovesick or, an they died not, lived on tortured with the lowe of passion for stress of pining to no purpose — Allah have mercy on them one and all! Meanwhile Zayn al- Mawasif and her women drave on with all diligence till they were far distant from the city and it so fortuned that they came to a convent by the way, wherein dwelt a Prior called Danis and forty monks.[368] When the Prior saw her beauty, he went out to her and invited her to alight, saying, “Rest with us ten days and after wend your ways.” So she and her damsels alighted and entered the convent; and when Danis saw her beauty and loveliness, she debauched his belief and he was seduced by her: wherefore he fell to sending the monks, one after other with love-messages; but each who saw her fell in love with her and sought her favours for himself, whilst she excused and denied herself to them. But Danis ceased not his importunities till he had dispatched all the forty, each one of whom fell love-sick at first sight and plied her with blandishments never even naming Danis; whilst she refused and rebuffed them with harsh replies. At last when Danis’s patience was at an end and his passion was sore on him, he said in himself, “Verily, the sooth-sayer saith, ‘Naught scratcheth my skin but my own nail and naught like my own feet for mine errand may avail.’” So up he rose and made ready rich meats, and it was the ninth day of her sojourn in the convent where she had purposed only to rest. Then he carried them in to her and set them before her, saying, “Bismillah, favour us by tasting the best of the food at our command.” So she put forth her hand, saying, “For the name of Allah the Compassionating, the Compassionate!” and ate, she and her handmaidens. When she had made an end of eating, he said to her, “O my lady, I wish to recite to thee some verses.” Quoth she, “Say on,” and he recited these couplets,

“Thou hast won my heart by cheek and eye of thee, * I’ll praise
for love in prose and poesy.
Wilt fly a lover, love-sick, love-distraught * Who strives in
dreams some cure of love to see?
Leave me not fallen, passion-fooled, since I * For pine have left
uncared the Monast’ry:
O Fairest, ’tis thy right to shed my blood, * So rue my case and
hear the cry of me!”

When Zayn al-Mawasif heard his verses, she answered him with these two couplets,

"O who suest Union, ne'er hope such delight * Nor solicit my
favours, O hapless wight!
Cease to hanker for what thou canst never have: * Next door are
the greedy to sore despight."

Hearing this he returned to his place, pondering in himself and knowing not how he should do in her affair, and passed the night in the sorriest plight. But, as soon as the darkness was darkest Zayn al-Mawasif arose and said to her handmaids, "Come, let us away, for we cannot avail against forty men, monks, each of whom requireth me for himself." Quoth they, "Right willingly!" So they mounted their beasts and issued forth the convent gate, — Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Sixty-second Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Zayn al-Mawasif and her handmaids issued forth the convent gate and, under favour of the night, rode on till they overtook a caravan, with which they mingled and found it came from the city of 'Adan wherein the lady had dwelt. Presently, Zayn al-Mawasif heard the people of the caravan discoursing of her own case and telling how the Kazis and Assessors were dead of love for her and how the townsfolk had appointed in their stead others who released her husband from prison. Whereupon she turned to her maids and asked them, "Heard ye that?"; and Hubub answered, "If the monks were ravished with love of thee, whose belief it is that shunning women is worship, how should it be with the Kazis, who hold that there is no monkery in Al-Islam? But let us make our way to our own country, whilst our affair is yet hidden." So they drave on with all diligence. Such was their case; but as regards the monks, on the morrow, as soon as it was day they repaired to Zayn al-Mawasif's lodging, to salute her, but found the place empty, and their hearts sickened within them. So the first monk rent his raiment and improvised these couplets,

"Ho ye, my friends, draw near, for I forthright * From you
depart, since parting is my lot:
My vitals suffer pangs o' fiery love; * Flames of desire in heart
burn high and hot,

For sake of fairest girl who sought our land * Whose charms th’ horizon’s full moon evens not.
She fared and left me victimed by her love * And slain by shaft those lids death-dealing shot.”

Then another monk recited the following couplets,

“O ye who with my vitals fled, have ruth * On this unhappy: haste ye homeward-bound:
They fared, and fared fair Peace on farthest track * Yet lingers in mine ear that sweetest sound:
Fared far, and far their fane; would Heaven I saw Their shade in vision float my couch around:
And when they went wi’ them they bore my heart * And in my tear-floods all of me left drowned.”

A third monk followed with these extempore lines,

“Throne you on highmost stead, heart, ears and sight * Your wone’s my heart; mine all’s your dwelling-site:
Sweeter than honey is your name a-lip, * Running, as ‘neath my ribs runs vital sprite:
For Love hath made me as a tooth-pick[369] lean * And drowned in tears of sorrow and despight:
Let me but see you in my sleep, belike * Shall clear my cheeks of tears that lovely sight.”

Then a fourth recited the following couplets,

“Dumb is my tongue and scant my speech for thee * And Love the direst torture gars me dree:
O thou full Moon, whose place is highest Heaven, * For thee but double pine and pain in me.”

And a fifth these,[370]

“I love a moon of comely shapely form * Whose slender waist hath title to complain:

Whose lip-dews rival must and long-kept wine; * Whose heavy
haunches haunt the minds of men:
My heart each morning burns with pain and pine * And the
night-talkers note I'm passion-slain;
While down my cheeks carnelian-like the tears * Of rosy red
shower down like railing rain."

And a sixth the following,

"O thou who shunnest him thy love misled! * O Branch of Bán, O
star of highmost stead!
To thee of pine and passion I complain, * O thou who fired me
with cheeks rosy-red.
Did e'er such lover lose his soul for thee, * Or from prostration
and from prayers fled?"

And a seventh these,

"He seized my heart and freed my tears to flow * Brought strength
to Love and bade my Patience go.
His charms are sweet as bitter his disdain; * And shafts of love
his suitors overthrow.
Stint blame, O blamer, and for past repent * None will believe
thee who dost Love unknow!"

And on like wise all the rest of the monks shed tears and repeated verses. As for Danis, the Prior, weeping and wailing redoubled on him, for that he found no way to her enjoyment, and he chanted the following couplets[371] ,

"My patience failed me when my lover went * And fled that day
mine aim and best intent.
O Guide o' litters lead their camels fair, * Haply some day
they'll deign with me to tent!
On parting-day Sleep parted from my lids * And grew my grieving
and my joy was shent.
I moan to Allah what for Love I dree'd * My wasted body and my
forces spent."

Then, despairing of her, they took counsel together and with one mind agreed to fashion her image and set it up with them, and applied themselves to this till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and Severer of societies. Meanwhile, Zayn al-Mawasif fared on, without ceasing, to find her lover Masrur, till she reached her own house. She opened the doors, and entered; then she sent to her sister Nasim, who rejoiced with exceeding joy at the news of her return and brought her the furniture and precious stuffs left in her charge. So she furnished the house and dressed it, hanging the curtains over the doors and burning aloes-wood and musk and ambergris and other essences till the whole place reeked with the most delightful perfumes: after which the Adornment of Qualities donned her finest dress and decorations and sat talking with her maids, whom she had left behind when journeying, and related to them all that had befallen her first and last. Then she turned to Hubub and giving her dirhams, bade her fetch them something to eat. So she brought meat and drink and when they had made an end of eating and drinking,[372] Zayn al-Mawasif bade Hubub go and see where Masrur was and how it fared with him. Now he knew not of her return; but abode with concern overcast and sorrow might not be overpast; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Zayn al-Mawasif entered her house she was met by her sister Nasim who brought her the furniture and stuffs wherewith she furnished the place; and then she donned her finest dress. But Masrur knew naught of her return and abode with concern overcast and sorrow might not be overpast; no peace prevailed with him nor was patience possible to him. Whenas pine and passion, desire and distraction waxed on him, he would solace himself by reciting verse and go to the house and set him its walls to buss. It chanced that he went out that day to the place where he had parted from his mistress and repeated this rare song,

“My wrongs hide I, withal they show to sight; * And now mine eyes
from sleep to wake are dight.

I cry when melancholy tries my sprite * Last not, O world nor
work more despight;
Lo hangs my soul 'twixt hardship and affright.
Were the Sultan hight Love but fair to me, * Slumber mine eyes'
companion were to me,
My Lords, some little mercy spare to me, * Chief of my tribe: be
debonnair to me,
Whom Love cast down, erst rich now pauper-wight!

Censors may blame thee but I look beyond * Mine ears I stop and
leave their lies unconned
And keep my pact wi' those I love so fond: * They say, 'Thou
lov'st a runaway!' I respond,
'Whist! whenas Fate descends she blinds the sight!'"

Then he returned to his lodging and sat there weeping, till sleep overcame him, when he saw in a dream as if Zayn al-Mawasif were come to the house, and awoke in tears. So he set off to go thither, improvising these couplets,

"Shall I be consoled when Love hath mastered the secret of me *
And my heart is aglow with more than the charcoal's ardency?
I love her whose absence I plain before Allah for parting-stower

* And the shifts of the days and doom which allotted me
Destiny:
When shall our meeting be, O wish O' my heart and will? * O
favour of fullest Moon, when shall we Re-union see?"

As he made an end of his recitation, he found himself walking adown in Zayn al-Mawasif's street and smelt the sweet savour of the pastiles wherewithal she had incensed the house; wherefore his vitals fluttered and his heart was like to leave his breast and desire flamed up in him and distraction redoubled upon him; when lo, and behold! Hubub, on her way to do her lady's errand suddenly appeared at the head of the street and he rejoiced with joy exceeding. When she saw him, she went up to him and saluting him, gave him the glad news of her mistress's return, saying, "She hath sent me to bid thee to her." Whereat he was glad indeed, with gladness naught could exceed; and she took him and returned with him to the house. When Zayn al-Mawasif saw him, she came down to him from the couch and kissed him and he kissed her and she embraced him and he embraced her; nor did they leave kissing and embracing till both swooned away for stress of affection and separation. They lay a long while senseless, and when they revived, Zayn al-Mawasif bade Hubub fetch her a gugglet of sherbet of sugar and another of sherbet of lemons. So she brought what she desired and they sat eating and drinking nor ceased before nightfall, when they fell to recalling all that had befallen them from commencement to conclusion. Then she acquainted him with her return to Al-Islam, whereat he rejoiced and he also became a Moslem. On like wise did her women, and they all repented to Allah Almighty of their infidelity. On the morrow she made send for the Kazi and the witnesses and told them that she was a widow and had completed the purification-period and was minded to marry Masrur. So they drew up the wedding-contract between them and they abode in all delight of life. Meanwhile, the Jew, when the people of Adan released him from prison, set out homewards and fared on nor ceased faring till he came within three days' journey of the city. Now as soon as Zayn al-Mawasif heard of his coming she called for her handmaid Hubub and said to her, "Go to the Jews' burial-place and there dig a grave and plant on it sweet basil and jessamine and sprinkle water thereabout. If the Jew come and ask thee of me, answer, 'My mistress died twenty days ago of chagrin on thine account.' If he say, show me her tomb, take him to the grave and after weeping over it and making moan and lament before him, contrive to cast him therein and bury him alive."[373] And Hubub answered, "I hear and I obey." Then they laid up the furniture in the store closets, and Zayn al-Mawasif removed to Masrur's lodging, where he and she abode eating and drinking, till the three days were past; at the end of which the Jew arrived and knocked at the door of his house. Quoth Hubub, "Who's at the door?"; and quoth he, "Thy master." So she opened to him and he saw the tears railing down her cheeks and said, "What aileth thee to weep and where is thy mistress?" She replied, "My mistress is dead of chagrin on thine account.” When he heard this, he was perplexed and wept with sore weeping and presently said, “O Hubub, where is her tomb?” So she carried him to the Jews’ burial-ground and showed him the grave she had dug; whereupon he shed bitter tears and recited this pair of couplets,[374]

“Two things there are, for which if eyes wept tear on tear * Of
   blood, till they were like indeed to disappear,
They never could fulfil the Tithe of all their due: * And these
   are prime of youth and loss of loveling dear.”

Then he wept again with bitter tears and recited these also,

“Alack and Alas! Patience taketh flight: * And from parting of
   friend to sore death I’m dight:
O how woeful this farness from dear one, and oh * How my heart is
   rent by mine own unright!
Would Heaven my secret I erst had kept * Nor had told the pangs
   and my liver-blight:
I lived in all solace and joyance of life * Till she left and
   left me in piteous plight:
O Zayn al-Mawasif, I would there were * No parting departing my
   frame and sprite:
I repent me for troth-breach and blame my guilt * Of unruth to
   her whereon hopes I built.”

When he had made an end of this verse, he wept and groaned and lamented till he fell down a-swoon, whereupon Hubub made haste to drag him to the grave and throw him in, whilst he was insensible yet quick withal. Then she stopped up the grave on him and returning to her mistress acquainted her with what had passed, whereat she rejoiced with exceeding joy and recited these two couplets,

“The world sware that for ever ’twould gar me grieve: *Tis false,
   O world, so thine oath retrieve[375] !
The blamer is dead and my love’s in my arms: * Rise to herald of
   joys and tuck high thy sleeve[376] !”

Then she and Masrur abode each with other in eating and drinking and sport and pleasure and good cheer, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and Sunderer of societies and Slayer of sons and daughters. And I have also heard tell the following tale of

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ALI NUR AL-DIN AND MIRIAM THE GIRDLE-GIRL[377]

There was once in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before in the parts of Cairo, a merchant named Táj al-Dín who was of the most considerable of the merchants and of the chiefs of the freeborn. But he was given to travelling everywhere and loved to fare over wild and wold, waterless lowland and stony waste, and to journey to the isles of the seas, in quest of dirhams and dinars: wherefore he had in his time encountered dangers and suffered duresse of the way such as would grizzle little children and turn their black hair grey. He was possessed of black slaves and Mamelukes, Eunuchs and concubines, and was the wealthiest of the merchants of his time and the goodliest of them in speech, owning horses and mules and Bactrian camels and dromedaries; sacks great and small of size; goods and merchandise and stuffs such as muslins of Hums, silks and brocades of Ba'allak, cotton of Mery, stuffs of India, gauzes of Baghdad, burnouses of Moorland and Turkish white slaves and Abyssinian castratos and Grecian girls and Egyptian boys; and the coverings of his bales were silk with gold purfled fair, for he was wealthy beyond compare. Furthermore he was rare of comeliness, accomplished in goodliness, and gracious in his kindliness, even as one of his describers doth thus express,

"A merchant I spied whose lovers * Were fighting in furious
guise:
Quoth he, 'Why this turmoil of people?' * Quoth I, 'Trader, for
those fine eyes!'"

And saith another in his praise and saith well enough to accomplish the wish of him,

"Came a merchant to pay us a visit * Whose glance did my heart
surprise:
Quoth he, 'What surprised thee so?' * Quoth I, 'Trader, 'twas
those fine eyes.'"

Now that merchant had a son called Ali Nur al-Din, as he were the full moon whenas it meeteth the sight on its fourteenth night, a marvel of beauty and loveliness, a model of form and symmetrical grace, who was sitting one day as was his wont, in his father's shop, selling and buying, giving and taking when the sons of the merchants girt him around and he was amongst them as moon among stars, with brow flower-white and cheeks of rosy light in down the tenderest dight, and body like alabaster-bright even as saith of him the poet,

"'Describe me!' a fair one said. * Said I, 'Thou art Beauty's
queen.'
And, speaking briefest speech, * 'All charms in thee are seen.'"

And as saith of him one of his describers,

"His mole upon plain of cheek is like * Ambergrís-crumb on marble
plate,
And his glances likest the sword proclaim * To all Love's rebels
'The Lord is Great!'"[378]

The young merchants invited him saying, "O my lord Nur al-Din, we wish thee to go this day a-pleasuring with us in such a garden." And he answered, "Wait till I consult my parent, for I cannot go without his consent." As they were talking, behold, up came Taj al-Din, and his son looked at him and said, "O father mine, the sons of the merchants have invited me to wend a-pleasuring with them in such a garden. Dost thou grant me leave to go?" His father replied, "Yes, O my son, fare with them;" and gave him somewhat of money. So the young men mounted their mules and asses and Nur al-Din mounted a she-mule and rode with them to a garden, wherein was all that soul desireth and that eye charmeth. It was high of walls which from broad base were seen to rise; and it had a gateway vault-wise with a portico like a saloon and a door azure as the skies, as it were one of the gates of Paradise: the name of the door-keeper was Rizwán,[379] and over the gate were trained an hundred trellises which grapes overran; and these were of various dyes, the red like coralline, the black like the snouts of Súdán[380] -men and the white like egg of the pigeon-hen. And in it peach and pomegranate were shown and pear, apricot and pomegranate were grown and fruits with and without stone hanging in clusters or alone, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Sixty-fourth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the sons of the merchants entered the vergier, they found therein all that soul desireth or eye charmeth, grapes of many hues grown, hanging in bunches or alone, even as saith of them the poet,

"Grapes tasting with the taste of wine * Whose coats like
blackest Raven's shine:
Their sheen, amid the leafage shows, * Like women's fingers
henna'd fine."

And as saith another on the same theme,

"Grape-bunches likest as they sway * A-stalk, my body frail and
snell:
Honey and water thus in jar, * When sourness past, make
Hydromel."

Then they entered the arbour of the garden and saw there Rizwan the gate-keeper sitting, as he were Rizwan the Paradise-guardian, and on the door were written these lines,

"Garth Heaven-watered wherein clusters waved * On boughs which
full of sap to bend were fain:
And, when the branches danced on Zephyr's palm, * The Pleiads
shower'd as gifts[381] fresh pearls for rain."

And within the arbour were written these two couplets,

"Come with us, friend, and enter thou * This garth that cleanses
rust of grief:
Over their skirts the Zephyrs trip[382] * And flowers in sleeve
to laugh are lief."[383]

So they entered and found all manner fruits in view and birds of every kind and hue, such as ringdove, nightingale and curlew; and the turtle and the cushat sang their love lays on the sprays. Therein were rills that ran with limpid wave and flowers suave; and bloom for whose perfume we crave and it was even as saith of it the poet in these two couplets,

“The Zephyr breatheth o’er its branches, like * Fair girls that
trip as in fair skirts they pace:
Its rills resemble swords in hands of knights * Drawn from the
scabbard and containing-case.”[384]

And again as singeth the songster,

“The streamlet swings by branchy wood and aye * Joys in its
breast those beauties to display;
And Zephyr noting this, for jealousy * Hastens and bends the
branches other way.”

On the trees of the garden were all manner fruits, each in two sorts, and amongst them the pomegranate, as it were a ball of silver-dross,[385] whereof saith the poet and saith right well,

“Granados of finest skin, like the breasts * Of maid
firm-standing in sight of male;
When I strip the skin, they at once display * The rubies
compelling all sense to quail.”

And even as quoth another bard,

“Close prest appear to him who views th’ inside * Red rubies in
brocaded skirts bedight:
Granado I compare with marble dome * Or virgin’s breasts
delighting every sight:
Therein is cure for every ill as e’en * Left an Hadís the Prophet
pure of sprite;
And Allah (glorify His name) eke deigned * A noble say in Holy
Book indite.[386]

The apples were the sugared and the musky and the Dámáni, amazing the beholder, whereof saith Hassan the poet,

“Apple which joins hues twain, and brings to mind * The cheek of lover and beloved combined:
Two wondrous opposites on branch they show * This dark[387] and that with hue incarnadined
The twain embraced when spied the spy and turned * This red, that yellow for the shame designed.”[388]

There also were apricots of various kinds, almond and camphor and Jíláni and ‘Antábi,[389] wereof saith the poet,

“And Almond-apricot suggesting swain * Whose lover’s visit all his wits hath ta’en.
Enough of love-sick lovers’ plight it shows * Of face deep yellow and heart torn in twain.”[390]

And saith another and saith well,

“Look at that Apricot whose bloom contains * Gardens with brightness gladding all men’s eyne:
Like stars the blossoms sparkle when the boughs * Are clad in foliage dight with sheen and shine.”

There likewise were plums and cherries and grapes, that the sick of all diseases assain and do away giddiness and yellow choler from the brain; and figs the branches between, varicoloured red and green, amazing sight and sense, even as saith the poet,

“’Tis as the Figs with clear white skins outthrown * By foliaged trees, athwart whose green they peep,
Were sons of Roum that guard the palace-roof * When shades close in and night-long ward they keep.”[391]

And saith another and saith well,

“Welcome[392] the Fig! To us it comes * Ordered in handsome

plates they bring:
Likest a Sufrah[393] -cloth we draw * To shape of bag without a
ring."

And how well saith a third,

"Give me the Fig sweet-flavoured, beauty-clad, * Whose inner
beauties rival outer sheen:
And when it fruits thou tastest it to find * Chamomile's scent
and Sugar's saccharine:
And eke it favoureth on platters poured * Puff-balls of silken
thread and sendal green."

And how excellent is the saying of one of them,

"Quoth they (and I had trained my taste thereto * Nor cared for
other fruits whereby they swore),
'Why lovest so the Fig?' whereto quoth I * 'Some men love Fig and
others Sycamore.[394] '"

And are yet goodlier those of another,

"Pleaseth me more the fig than every fruit * When ripe and
hanging from the sheeny bough;
Like Devotee who, when the clouds pour rain, * Sheds tears and
Allah's power doth avow."

And in that garth were also pears of various kinds Sinaďtic,[395] Aleppine and Grecian growing in clusters and alone, parcel green and parcel golden. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the merchants' sons went down into the garth they saw therein all the fruits we mentioned and found pears Sinaďtic, Aleppine and Grecian of every hue, which here clustering there single grew, parcel green and parcel yellow to the gazer a marvel-view, as saith of them the poet,

"With thee that Pear agree, whose hue a-morn * Is hue of hapless
lover yellow pale;
Like virgin cloistered strait in strong Harím * Whose face like
racing steed outstrips the veil."

And Sultani[396] peaches of shades varied, yellow and red, whereof saith the poet,

"Like Peach in vergier growing * And sheen of Andam[397]
showing:
Whose balls of yellow gold * Are dyed with blood-gouts flowing."

There were also green almonds of passing sweetness, resembling the cabbage[398] of the palm-tree, with their kernels within three tunics lurking of the Munificent King's handiworking, even as is said of them,

"Three coats yon freshest form endue * God's work of varied shape
and hue:
Hardness surrounds it night and day; * Prisoning without a sin to
rue."

And as well saith another,

"Seest not that Almond plucked by hand * Of man from bough
where
wont to dwell:
Peeling it shows the heart within * As union-pearl in oyster-
shell."

And as saith a third better than he,

"How good is Almond green I view! * The smallest fills the hand
of you:
Its nap is as the down upon * The cheeks where yet no beardlet
grew:
Its kernels in the shell are seen, * Or bachelors or married two,
As pearls they were of lucent white * Casěd and lapped in

Jasper's hue."

And as saith yet another and saith well,

"Mine eyes ne'er looked on aught the Almond like * For charms,
when blossoms[399] in the Prime show bright:
Its head to hoariness of age inclines * The while its cheek by
youth's fresh down is dight."

And jujube-plums of various colours, grown in clusters and alone whereof saith one, describing them,

"Look at the Lote-tree, note on boughs arrayed * Like goodly
apricots on reed-strown floor,[400]
Their morning-hue to viewer's eye is like * Cascavels[401]
cast of purest golden ore."

And as saith another and saith right well,

"The Jujube-tree each Day * Robeth in bright array.
As though each pome thereon * Would self to sight display.
Like falcon-bell of gold * Swinging from every spray."

And in that garth grew blood oranges, as they were the Khaulanján,[402] whereof quoth the enamoured poet,[403]

"Red fruits that fill the hand, and shine with sheen * Of fire,
albe the scarf-skin's white as snow.
'Tis marvel snow on fire doth never melt * And, stranger still,
ne'er burns this living lowe!"

And quoth another and quoth well,

"And trees of Orange fruiting ferly fair * To those who straitest
have their charms surveyed;
Like cheeks of women who their forms have decked * For holiday in
robes of gold brocade."

And yet another as well,

“Like are the Orange-hills[404] when Zephyr breathes * Swaying
 the boughs and spray with airy grace,
Her cheeks that glow with lovely light when met * At greeting-
 tide by cheeks of other face.”

And a fourth as fairly,

“And fairest Fawn, we said to him ‘Portray * This garth and
 oranges thine eyes survey:’
And he, ‘Your garden favoureth my face * Who gathereth orange
 gathereth fire alway.’”

In that garden too grew citrons, in colour as virgin gold, hanging down from on high and dangling among the branches, as they were ingots of growing gold;[405] and saith thereof the ‘namoured poet,

“Hast seen a Citron-copse so weighed adown * Thou fearest bending
 roll their fruit on mould;
And seemed, when Zephyr passed athwart the tree * Its branches
 hung with bells of purest gold?”

And shaddocks,[406] that among their boughs hung laden as though each were the breast of a gazelle-like maiden, contenting the most longing wight, as saith of them the poet and saith aright,

“And Shaddock mid the garden-paths, on bough * Freshest like
 fairest damsel met my sight;
And to the blowing of the breeze it bent * Like golden ball to
 bat of chrysolite.”

And the lime sweet of scent, which resembleth a hen’s egg, but its yellowness ornamenteth its ripe fruit, and its fragrance hearteneth him who plucketh it, as saith the poet who singeth it,

“Seest not the Lemon, when it taketh form, * Catch rays of light
 and all to gaze constrain;

Like egg of pullet which the huckster's hand * Adorneth dyeing
with the saffron-stain?"

Moreover in this garden were all manner of other fruits and sweet-scented herbs and plants and fragrant flowers, such as jessamine and henna and water-lilies[407] and spikenard[408] and roses of every kind and plantain[409] and myrtle and so forth; and indeed it was without compare, seeming as it were a piece of Paradise to whoso beheld it. If a sick man entered it, he came forth from it like a raging lion, and tongue availeth not to its description, by reason of that which was therein of wonders and rarities which are not found but in Heaven: and how should it be otherwise when its doorkeeper's name was Rizwan? Though widely different were the stations of those twain! Now when the sons of the merchants had walked about gazing at the garden after taking their pleasure therein, they say down in one of its pavilions and seated Nur al-Din in their midst. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Sixty-sixth Night,

She resume, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the sons of the merchants sat down in the pavilion they seated Nur al-Din in their midst on a rug of gold-purfled leather of Al-Táif,[410] leaning on a pillow[411] of minever, stuffed with ostrich down. And they gave him a fan of ostrich feathers, whereon were written these two couplets,

"A fan whose breath is fraught with fragrant scent; * Minding of
happy days and times forspent,
Wafting at every time its perfumed air * O'er face of noble youth
on honour bent."

Then they laid by their turbands and outer clothes and sat talking and chatting and inducing one another to discourse, while they all kept their eyes fixed on Nur al-Din and gazed on his beauteous form. After the sitting had lasted an hour or so, up came a slave with a tray on his head, wherein were platters of china and crystal containing viands of all sorts (for one of the youths had so charged his people before coming to the garden); and the meats were of whatever walketh earth or wingeth air or swimmeth waters, such as Katá-grouse and fat quails and pigeon-poults and mutton and chickens and the delicatest fish. So, the tray being sat before them, they fell to and ate their fill; and when they had made an end of eating, they rose from meat and washed their hands with pure water and musk-scented soap, and dried them with napery embroidered in silk and bugles; but to Nur al-Din they brought a napkin laced with red gold whereon he wiped his hands. Then coffee[412] was served up and each drank what he would, after which they sat talking, till presently the garden-keeper who was young went away and returning with a basket full of roses, said to them, "What say ye, O my masters, to flowers?" Quoth one of them, "There is no harm in them,[413] especially roses, which are not to be resisted." Answered the gardener, "'Tis well, but it is of our wont not to give roses but in exchange for pleasant converse; so whoever would take aught thereof, let him recite some verses suitable to the situation." Now they were ten sons of merchants of whom one said, "Agreed: give me thereof and I will recite thee somewhat of verse apt to the case." Accordingly the gardener gave him a bunch of roses[414] which he took and at once improvised these three couplets,

"The Rose in highest stead I rate * For that her charms ne'er
satiate;
All fragrant flow'rs be troops to her * Their general of high
estate:
Where she is not they boast and vaunt; * But, when she comes,
they stint their prate."

Then the gardener gave a bunch to another and he recited these two couplets,

"Take, O my lord, to thee the Rose * Recalling scent by mush be
shed.
Like virginette by lover eyed * Who with her sleeves[415]
enveileth head."

Then he gave a bunch to a third who recited these two couplets,

"Choice Rose that gladdens heart to see her sight; * Of Nadd
recalling fragrance exquisite.
The branchlets clip her in her leaves for joy, * Like kiss of
lips that never spake in spite."

Then he gave a bunch to a fourth and he recited these two couplets,

"Seest not that rosery where Rose a-flowering displays * Mounted
upon her steed of stalk those marvels manifold?
As though the bud were ruby-stone and girded all around * With
chrysolite and held within a little hoard of gold."

Then he gave a posy to a fifth and he recited these two couplets,

"Wands of green chrysolite bare issue, which * Were fruits like
ingots of the growing gold.[416]
And drops, a dropping from its leaves, were like * The tears my
languorous eyelids railed and rolled."

Then he gave a sixth a bunch and he recited these two couplets,

"O Rose, thou rare of charms that dost contain * All gifts and
Allah's secrets singular,
Thou'rt like the loved one's cheek where lover fond * And fain of
Union sticks the gold dinar."[417]

Then he gave a bunch to a seventh and he recited these two couplets,

"To Rose quoth I, 'What gars thy thorns to be put forth * For all
who touch thee cruellest injury?'
Quoth she, 'These flowery troops are troops of me * Who be their
lord with spines for armoury.'"

And he gave an eighth a bunch and he recited these two couplets,

"Allah save the Rose which yellows a-morn * Florid, vivid and

likest the nugget-ore;
And bless the fair sprays that displayed such flowers * And mimic
suns gold-begilded bore."

Then he gave a bunch to a ninth and he recited these two couplets,

"The bushes of golden-hued Rose excite * In the love-sick lover
joys manifold:
'Tis a marvel shrub watered every day * With silvern lymph and it
fruiteth gold."

Then he gave a bunch of roses to the tenth and last and he recited these two couplets,

"Seest not how the hosts of the Rose display * Red hues and
yellow in rosy field?
I compare the Rose and her arming thorn * To emerald lance
piercing golden shield."

And whilst each one hent bunch in hand, the gardener brought the wine-service and setting it before them, on a tray of porcelain arabesqued with red gold, recited these two couplets,

"Dawn heralds day-light: so wine pass round, * Old wine, fooling
sage till his wits he tyne:
Wot I not for its purest clarity * An 'tis wine in cup or 'tis
cup in wine."[418]

Then the gardener filled and drank and the cup went round, till it came to Nur al-Din's turn, whereupon the man filled and handed it to him; but he said, "This thing I wot it not nor have I ever drunken thereof, for therein is great offence and the Lord of All-might hath forbidden it in His Book." Answered the gardener, "O my Lord Nur al-Din, an thou forbear to drink only by reason of the sin, verily Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) is bountiful, of sufferance great, forgiving and compassionate and pardoneth the mortalest sins: His mercy embraceth all things, Allah's ruth be upon the poet who saith,

‘Be as thou wilt, for Allah is bountiful * And when thou sinnest
feel thou naught alarm:
But ‘ware of twofold sins nor ever dare * To give God partner or
mankind to harm.’”

Then quoth one of the sons of the merchants, “My life on thee, O my lord Nur al-Din, drink of this cup!” And another conjured him by the oath of divorce and yet another stood up persistently before him, till he was ashamed and taking the cup from the gardener, drank a draught, but spat it out again, crying, “’Tis bitter.” Said the young gardener, “O my lord Nur al-Din, knowest thou not that sweets taken by way of medicine are bitter? Were this not bitter, ’twould lack of the manifold virtues it possesseth; amongst which are that it digesteth food and disperseth cark and care and dispelleth flatulence and clarifieth the blood and cleareth the complexion and quickeneth the body and hearteneth the hen-hearted and fortifieth the sexual power in man; but to name all its virtues would be tedious. Quoth one of the poets,

‘We’ll drink and Allah pardon sinners all * And cure of ills by
sucking cups I’ll find:
Nor aught the sin deceives me; yet said He * ‘In it there be
advantage[419] to mankind.’”

Then he sprang up without stay or delay and opened one of the cupboards in the pavilion and taking out a loaf of refined sugar, broke off a great slice which he put into Nur al-Din’s cup, saying, “O my lord, an thou fear to drink wine, because of its bitterness, drink now, for ’tis sweet.” So he took the cup and emptied it: whereupon one of his comrades filled him another, saying, “O my lord Nur al-Din, I am thy slave,” and another did the like, saying, “I am one of thy servants,” and a third said, “For my sake!” and a fourth, “Allah upon thee, O my lord Nur al-Din, heal my heart!” And so they ceased not plying him with wine, each and every of the ten sons of merchants till they had made him drink a total of ten cups. Now Nur al-Din’s body was virgin of wine-bibbing, or never in all his life had he drunken vine-juice till that hour, wherefore its fumes wrought in his brain and drunkenness was stark upon him and he stood up (and indeed his tongue was thick and his speech stammering) and said, “O company, by Allah, ye are fair and your speech is goodly and your place pleasant; but there needeth hearing of sweet music; for drink without melody lacks the chief of its essentiality, even as saith the poet,

‘Pass round the cup to the old and the young man, too, And take
the bowl from the hand of the shining moon,[420]
But without music, I charge you, forbear to drink; I see even
horses drink to a whistled tune.’”[421]

Therewith up sprang the gardener lad and mounting one of the young men’s mules, was absent awhile, after which he returned with a Cairene girl, as she were a sheep’s tail, fat and delicate, or an ingot of pure silvern ore or a dinar on a porcelain plate or a gazelle in the wold forlore. She had a face that put to shame the shining sun and eyes Babylonian[422] and brows like bows bended and cheeks rose-painted and teeth pearly-hued and lips sugared and glances languishing and breast ivory white and body slender and slight, full of folds and with dimples dight and hips like pillows stuffed and thighs like columns of Syrian stone, and between them what was something like a sachet of spices in wrapper swathed. Quoth the poet of her in these couplets,

“Had she shown her shape to idolaters’ sight, * They would gaze
on her face and their gods detest:
And if in the East to a monk she’d show’d, * He’d quit Eastern
posture and bow to West.[423]
An she crached in the sea and the briniest sea * Her lips would
give it the sweetest zest.”

And quoth another in these couplets,

“Brighter than Moon at full with kohl’d eyes she came * Like Doe,
on chasing whelps of Lioness intent:
Her night of murky locks lets fall a tent on her * A tent of

hair[424] that lacks no pegs to hold the tent;
And roses lighting up her roseate cheeks are fed * By hearts and livers flowing fire for languishment:
An 'spied her all the Age's Fair to her they'd rise *
Humbly,[425] and cry 'The meed belongs to precedent!'"

And how well saith a third bard,[426]

"Three things for ever hinder her to visit us, for fear Of the intriguing spy and eke the rancorous envier;
Her forehead's lustre and the sound of all her ornaments And the sweet scent her creases hold of ambergris and myrrh.
Grant with the border of her sleeve she hide her brow and doff
Her ornaments, how shall she do her scent away from her?"

She was like the moon when at fullest on its fourteenth night, and was clad in a garment of blue, with a veil of green, over brow flower-white that all wits amazed and those of understanding amated. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the gardener brought a girl whom we have described possessed of the utmost beauty and loveliness and fine stature and symmetrical grace as it were she the poet signified when he said,[427]

"She came apparelled in a vest of blue,
That mocked the skies and shamed their azure hue;
I thought thus clad she burst upon my sight,
Like summer moonshine on a wintry night."

And how goodly is the saying of another and how excellent,

"She came thick veiled, and cried I, 'O display * That face like full moon bright with pure-white ray.'
Quoth she, 'I fear disgrace,' quoth I, 'Cut short * This talk, no shift of days thy thoughts affray.'
Whereat she raised her veil from fairest face * And crystal spray

on gems began to stray:
And I forsooth was fain to kiss her cheek, * Lest she complain of
me on Judgment-Day.
And at such tide before the Lord on High * We first of lovers
were redress to pray:
So ‘Lord, prolong this reckoning and review’ * (Prayed I) ‘that
longer I may sight my may.’”

Then said the young gardener to her, “Know thou, O lady of the fair, brighter than any constellation which illumineth air we sought, in bringing thee hither naught but that thou shouldst entertain with converse this comely youth, my lord Nur al-Din, for he hath come to this place only this day.” And the girl replied, “Would thou hadst told me, that I might have brought what I have with me!” Rejoined the gardener, “O my lady, I will go and fetch it to thee.” “As thou wilt,” said she: and he, “Give me a token.” So she gave him a kerchief and he fared forth in haste and returned after awhile, bearing a green satin bag with slings of gold. The girl took the bag from him and opening it shook it, whereupon there fell thereout two-and-thirty pieces of wood, which she fitted one into other, male into female and female into male[428] till they became a polished lute of Indian workmanship. Then she uncovered her wrists and laying the lute in her lap, bent over it with the bending of mother over babe, and swept the strings with her finger-tips; whereupon it moaned and resounded and after its olden home yearned; and it remembered the waters that gave it drink and the earth whence it sprang and wherein it grew and it minded the carpenters who cut it and the polishers who polished it and the merchants who made it their merchandise and the ships that shipped it; and it cried and called aloud and moaned and groaned; and it was as if she asked it of all these things and it answered her with the tongue of the case, reciting these couplets,[429]

“A tree whilere was I the Bulbul’s home * To whom for love I
bowed my grass-green head:
They moaned on me, and I their moaning learnt * And in that moan
my secret all men read:
The woodman felled me falling sans offence, * And slender lute of

me (as view ye) made:
But, when the fingers smite my strings, they tell * How man
despite my patience did me dead;
Hence boon-companions when they hear my moan * Distracted wax
as
though by wine misled:
And the Lord softens every heart to me, * And I am hurried to the
highmost stead:
All who in charms excel fain clasp my waist; * Gazelles of
languid eyne and Houri maid:
Allah ne'er part fond lover from his joy * Nor live the loved one
who unkindly fled."

Then the girl was silent awhile, but presently taking the lute in lap, again bent over it, as mother bendeth over child, and preluded in many different modes; then, returning to the first, she sang these couplets,

"Would they [430] the lover seek without ado, * He to his
heavy grief had bid adieu:
With him had vied the Nightingale[431] on bough * As one far
parted from his lover's view:
Rouse thee! awake! The Moon lights Union-night * As tho' such
Union woke the Morn anew.
This day the blamers take of us no heed * And lute-strings bid us
all our joys ensue.
Seest not how four-fold things conjoin in one * Rose, myrtle,
scents and blooms of golden hue.[432]
Yea, here this day the four chief joys unite * Drink and dinars,
beloved and lover true:
So win thy worldly joy, for joys go past * And naught but storied
tales and legends last."

When Nur al-Din heard the girl sing these lines he looked on her with eyes of love and could scarce contain himself for the violence of his inclination to her; and on like wise was it with her, because she glanced at the company who were present of the sons of the merchants and she saw that Nur al-Din was amongst the rest as moon among stars; for that he was sweet of speech and replete with amorous grace, perfect in stature and symmetry, brightness and loveliness, pure of all defect, than the breeze of morn softer, than Tasnim blander, as saith of him the poet,[433]

“By his cheeks’ unfading damask and his smiling teeth I swear, By
the arrows that he feathers with the witchery of his air,
By his sides so soft and tender and his glances bright and keen,
By the whiteness of his forehead and the blackness of his
hair,
By his arched imperious eyebrows, chasing slumber from my lids
With their yeas and noes that hold me ‘twixt rejoicing and
despair,
By the Scorpions that he launches from his ringlet-clustered
brows, Seeking still to slay his lovers with his rigours
unaware,
By the myrtle of his whiskers and the roses of his cheek, By his
lips’ incarnate rubies and his teeth’s fine pearls and rare,
By the straight and tender sapling of his shape, which for its
fruit Doth the twin pomegranates, shining in his snowy
bosom, wear,
By his heavy hips that tremble, both in motion and repose, And
the slender waist above them, all too slight their weight to
bear,
By the silk of his apparel and his quick and sprightly wit, By
all attributes of beauty that are fallen to his share;
Lo, the musk exhales its fragrance from his breath, and eke the
breeze From his scent the perfume borrows, that it scatters
everywhere.
Yea, the sun in all his splendour cannot with his brightness vie
And the crescent moon’s a fragment that he from his nails
doth pare.”

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Sixty-eighth Night, She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Nur al-Din was delighted with the girl's verses and he swayed from side to side for drunkenness and fell a-praising her and saying,

"A lutanist to us inclined * And stole our wits bemused with
wine:
And said to us her lute, 'The Lord * Bade us discourse by voice
divine.'"

When she heard him thus improvise the girl gazed at him with loving eyes and redoubled in passion and desire for him increased upon her, and indeed she marvelled at his beauty and loveliness, symmetry and grace, so that she could not contain herself, but took the lute in lap again and sang these couplets,

"He blames me for casting on him my sight * And parts fro' me
bearing my life and sprite:
He repels me but kens what my heart endures * As though Allah
himself had inspired the wight:
I portrayed his portrait in palm of hand * And cried to mine
eyes, 'Weep your doleful plight.'
For neither shall eyes of me spy his like * Nor my heart have
patience to bear its blight:
Wherefore, will I tear thee from breast, O Heart * As one who
regards him with jealous spite.
And when say I, 'O heart be consoled for pine,' * 'Tis that heart
to none other shall e'er incline:"

Nur al-Din wondered at the charms of her verse and the elegance of her expression and the sweetness of her voice and the eloquence of her speech and his wit fled for stress of love and longing, and ecstasy and distraction, so that he could not refrain from her a single moment, but bent to her and strained her to his bosom: and she in like manner bowed her form over his and abandoned herself to his embrace and bussed him between the eyes. Then he kissed her on the mouth and played with her at kisses, after the manner of the billing of doves; and she met him with like warmth and did with him as she was done by till the others were distracted and rose to their feet; whereupon Nur al-Din was ashamed and held his hand from her. Then she took her lute and, preluding thereon in manifold modes, lastly returned to the first and sang these couplets,

“A Moon, when he bends him those eyes lay bare * A brand that
gars gazing gazelle despair:
A King, rarest charms are the host of him * And his lance-like
shape men with cane compare:
Were his softness of sides to his heart transferred * His friend
had not suffered such cark and care:
Ah for hardest heart and for softest sides! * Why not that to
these alter, make here go there?
O thou who accusest my love excuse: * Take eternal and leave me
the transient share.”[434]

When Nur al-Din heard the sweetness of her voice and the rareness of her verse, he inclined to her for delight and could not contain himself for excess of wonderment; so he recited these couplets,

“Methought she was the forenoon sun until she donned the veil *
But lit she fire in vitals mine still flaring fierce and
high,
How had it hurt her an she deigned return my poor salám * With
fingertips or e’en vouchsafed one little wink of eye?
The cavalier who spied her face was wholly stupefied * By charms
that glorify the place and every charm outvie.
‘Be this the Fair who makes thee pine and long for love liesse? *
Indeed thou art excused!’ ‘This is my fairest she;’(quoth I)
Who shot me with the shaft of looks nor deigns to rue my woes *
Of strangerhood and broken heart and love I must aby:
I rose a-morn with vanquished heart, to longing love a prey * And
weep I through the live long day and all the night I cry.”

The girl marvelled at his eloquence and elegance and taking her lute, smote thereon with the goodliest of performance, repeating all the melodies, and sang these couplets,

“By the life o’ thy face, O thou life o’ my sprite! * I’ll ne’er
    leave thy love for despair or delight:
When art cruel thy vision stands hard by my side * And the
    thought of thee haunts me when far from sight:
O who saddenest my glance albe weeting that I * No love but thy
    love will for ever requite?
Thy cheeks are of Rose and thy lips-dews are wine; * Say, wilt
    grudge them to us in this charming site?”

Hereat Nur al-Din was gladdened with extreme gladness and wondered with the utmost wonder, so he answered her verse with these couplets,

“The sun yellowed not in the murk gloom li’en * But lay pearl
    enveiled ‘neath horizon-chine;
Nor showed its crest to the eyes of Morn * But took refuge from
    parting with Morning-shine.[435]
Take my tear-drops that trickle as chain on chain * And they’ll
    tell my case with the clearest sign.
An my tears be likened to Nile-flood, like * Malak’s[436]
    flooded flat be this love o’mine.
Quoth she, ‘Bring thy riches!’ Quoth I, ‘Come, take!’ * ‘And thy
    sleep?’ ‘Yes, take it from lids of eyne!’”

When the girl heard Nur al-Din’s words and noted the beauty of his eloquence her senses fled and her wit was dazed and love of him gat hold upon her whole heart. So she pressed him to her bosom and fell to kissing him like the billing of doves, whilst he returned her caresses with successive kisses; but preeminence appertaineth to precedence.[437] When she had made an end of kissing, she took the lute and recited these couplets,

“Alas, alack and well-away for blamer’s calumny! * Whether or not
    I make my moan or plead or show no plea:
O spurner of my love I ne’er of thee so hard would deem * That I

of thee should be despised, of thee my property.
I wont at lovers' love to rail and for their passion chide, * But
now I fain debase myself to all who rail at thee:
Yea, only yesterday I wont all amourists to blame * But now I
pardon hearts that pine for passion's ecstasy;
And of my stress of parting-stowre on me so heavy weighs * At
morning prayer to Him I'll cry, 'In thy name, O Ali!'"

And also these two couplets,

"His lovers said, 'Unless he deign to give us all a drink * Of
wine, of fine old wine his lips deal in their purity;
We to the Lord of Threefold Worlds will pray to grant our prayer'

* And all exclaim with single cry 'In thy name, O Ali!'"

Nur al-Din, hearing these lines and their rhyme, marvelled at the fluency of her tongue and thanked her, praising her grace and passing seductiveness; and the damsel, delighted at his praise, arose without stay or delay and doffing that was upon her of outer dress and trinkets till she was free of all encumbrance sat down on his knees and kissed him between the eyes and on his cheek-mole. Then she gave him all she had put off. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the girl gave to Nur al-Din all she had doffed, saying, "O beloved of my heart, in very sooth the gift is after the measure of the giver." So he accepted this from her and gave it back to her and kissed her on the mouth and cheeks and eyes. When this was ended and done, for naught is durable save the Living, the Eternal, Provider of the peacock and the owl,[438] Nur al-Din rose from the séance and stood upon his feet, because the darkness was now fallen and the stars shone out; whereupon quoth the damsel to him, "Whither away, O my lord?"; and quoth he, "To my father's home." Then the sons of the merchants conjured him to night with them, but he refused and mounting his shemule, rode, without stopping, till he reached his parent's house, where his mother met him and said to him, "O my son, what hath kept thee away till this hour? By Allah, thou hast troubled myself and thy sire by thine absence from us, and our hearts have been occupied with thee." Then she came up to him, to kiss him on his mouth, and smelling the fumes of the wine, said, "O my son, how is it that, after prayer and worship thou hast become a wine-bibber and a rebel against Him to whom belong creation and commandment?" But Nur al-Din threw himself down on the bed and lay there. Presently in came his sire and said, "What aileth Nur al-Din to lie thus?"; and his mother answered, "'Twould seem his head acheth for the air of the garden." So Taj al-Din went up to his son, to ask him of his ailment, and salute him, and smelt the reek of wine.[439] Now the merchant loved not wine-drinkers; so he said to Nur al-Din, "Woe to thee, O my son! Is folly come to such a pass with thee, that thou drinkest wine?" When Nur al-Din heard his sire say this, he raised his hand, being yet in his drunkenness, and dealt him a buffet, when by decree of the Decreer the blow lit on his father's right eye which rolled down on his cheek; whereupon he fell a-swoon and lay therein awhile. They sprinkled rose-water on him till he recovered, when he would have beaten his son; but the mother withheld him, and he swore, by the oath of divorce from his wife that, as soon as morning morrowed, he would assuredly cut off his son's right hand.[440] When she heard her husband's words, her breast was straitened and she feared for her son and ceased not to soothe and appease his sire, till sleep overcame him. Then she waited till moon-rise, when she went in to her son, whose drunkenness had now departed from him, and said to him, "O Nur al-Din, what is this foul deed thou diddest with thy sire?" He asked, "And what did I with him?"; and answered she, "Thou dealtest him a buffet on the right eye and struckest it out so that it rolled down his cheek; and he hath sworn by the divorce-oath that, as soon as morning shall morrow he will without fail cut off thy right hand." Nur al-Din repented him of that he had done, whenas repentance profited him naught, and his mother said to him, "O my son, this penitence will not profit thee; nor will aught avail thee but that thou arise forthwith and seek safety in flight: go forth the house privily and take refuge with one of thy friends and there what Allah shall do await, for he changeth case after case and state upon state." Then she opened a chest and taking out a purse of an hundred dinars said, "O my son, take these dinars and provide thy wants therewith, and when they are at an end, O my son, send and let me know thereof, that I may send thee other than these, and at the same time covey to me news of thyself privily: haply Allah will decree thee relief and thou shalt return to thy home." And she farewelled him and wept passing sore, nought could be more. Thereupon Nur al-Din took the purse of gold and was about to go forth, when he espied a great purse containing a thousand dinars, which his mother had forgotten by the side of the chest. So he took this also and binding the two purses about his middle,[441] set out before dawn threading the streets in the direction of Búlák, where he arrived when day broke and all creatures arose, attesting the unity of Allah the Opener and went forth each of them upon his several business, to win that which Allah had unto him allotted. Reaching Bulak he walked on along the riverbank till he sighted a ship with her gangway out and her four anchors made fast to the land. The folk were going up into her and coming down from her, and Nur al-Din, seeing some sailors there standing, asked them whither they were bound, and they answered, "To Rosetta-city." Quoth he, "Take me with you;" and quoth they, "Well come, and welcome to thee, to thee, O goodly one!" So he betook himself forthright to the market and buying what he needed of vivers and bedding and covering, returned to the port and went on board the ship, which was ready to sail and tarried with him but a little while before she weighed anchor and fared on, without stopping, till she reached Rosetta,[442] where Nur al-Din saw a small boat going to Alexandria. So he embarked in it and traversing the sea-arm of Rosetta fared on till he came to a bridge called Al-Jámí, where he landed and entered Alexandria by the gate called the Gate of the Lote-tree. Allah protected him, so that none of those who stood on guard at the gate saw him, and he walked on till he entered the city. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Seventieth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Nur al-Din entered Alexandria he found it a city goodly of pleasaunces, delightful to its inhabitants and inviting to inhabit therein. Winter had fared from it with his cold and Prime was come to it with his roses: its flowers were kindly ripe and welled forth its rills. Indeed, it was a city goodly of ordinance and disposition; its folk were of the best of men, and when the gates thereof were shut, its folk were safe.[443] And it was even as is said of it in these couplets,

"Quoth I to a comrade one day, * A man of good speech and rare,
'Describe Alexandria.' * Quoth he, 'Tis a march-town fair.'
Quoth I, 'Is there living therein?' * And he, 'An the wind blow
there.'"

Or as saith one of the poets,

"Alexandria's a frontier;[444] Whose dews of lips are sweet
and clear;
How fair the coming to it is, * So one therein no raven speer!"

Nur al-Din walked about the city and ceased not walking till he came to the merchants' bazar, whence he passed on to the mart of the money-changers and so on in turn to the markets of the confectioners and fruiterers and druggists, marvelling, as he went, at the city, for that the nature of its qualities accorded with its name.[445] As he walked in the druggists' bazar, behold, an old man came down from his shop and saluting him, took him by the hand and carried him to his home. And Nur al-Din saw a fair bystreet, swept and sprinkled, whereon the zephyr blew and made pleasantness pervade it and the leaves of the trees overshaded it. Therein stood three houses and at the upper end a mansion, whose foundations were firm sunk in the water and its walls towered to the confines of the sky. They had swept the space before it and they had sprinkled it freshly; so it exhaled the fragrance of flowers, borne on the zephyr which breathed upon the place; and the scent met there who approached it on such wise as it were one of the gardens of Paradise. And, as they had cleaned and cooled the by-street's head, so was the end of it with marble spread. The Shaykh carried Nur al-Din into the house and setting somewhat of food before him ate with his guest. When they had made an end of eating, the druggist said to him, "When camest thou hither from Cairo?”; and Nur al-Din replied, “This very night, O my father.” Quoth the old man, “What is thy name?”; and quoth he, “Ali Nur al-Din.” Said the druggist, “O my son, O Nur al-Din, be the triple divorce incumbent on me, an thou leave me so long as thou abidest in this city; and I will set thee apart a place wherein thou mayst dwell.” Nur al-Din asked, “O my lord the Shaykh, let me know more of thee”; and the other answered, “Know, O my son, that some years ago I went to Cairo with merchandise, which I sold there and bought other, and I had occasion for a thousand dinars. So thy sire Taj al-Din weighed them out[446] for me, all unknowing me, and would take no written word of me, but had patience with me till I returned hither and sent him the amount by one of my servants, together with a gift. I saw thee, whilst thou wast little; and, if it please Allah the Most High, I will repay thee somewhat of the kindness thy father did me.” When Nur al-Din heard the old man’s story, he showed joy and pulling out with a smile the purse of a thousand dinars, gave it to his host the Shaykh and said to him, “Take charge of this deposit for me, against I buy me somewhat of merchandise whereon to trade.” Then he abode some time in Alexandria city taking his pleasure every day in its thoroughfares, eating and drinking ad indulging himself with mirth and merriment till he had made an end of the hundred dinars he had kept by way of spending-money; whereupon he repaired to the old druggist, to take of him somewhat of the thousand dinars to spend, but found him not in his shop and took a seat therein to await his return. He sat there gazing right and left and amusing himself with watching the merchants and passers-by, and as he was thus engaged behold, there came into the bazar a Persian riding on a she-mule and carrying behind him a damsel; as she were argent of alloy free or a fish Balti[447] in mimic sea or a doe-gazelle on desert lea. Her face outshone the sun in shine and she had witching eyne and breasts of ivory white, teeth of marguerite, slender waist and sides dimpled deep and calves like tails of fat sheep;[448] and indeed she was perfect in beauty and loveliness, elegant stature and symmetrical grace, even as saith one, describing her,[449]

“’Twas as by will of her she was create * Nor short nor long, but

Beauty’s mould and mate:
Rose blushes reddest when she sees those cheeks * And fruits the
bough those marvel charms amate:
Moon is her favour, Musk the scent of her * Branch is her shape:Â
she passeth man’s estate:
’Tis e’en as were she cast in freshest pearl * And every limblet
shows a moon innate.”

Presently the Persian lighted down from his she-mule and making the damsel also dismount loudly summoned the broker and said to him as soon as he came, “Take this damsel and cry her for sale in the market.” So he took her and leading her to the middlemost of the bazar disappeared for a while and presently he returned with a stool of ebony, inlaid with ivory, and setting it upon the ground, seated her thereon. Then he raised her veil and discovered a face as it were a Median targe[450] or a cluster of pearls:[451] and indeed she was like the full moon, when it filleth on its fourteenth night, accomplished in brilliant beauty. As saith the poet,

“Vied the full moon for folly with her face, * But was
eclipsed[452] and split for rage full sore;
And if the spiring Bán with her contend * Perish her hands who
load of fuel bore!”[453]

And how well saith another,

“Say to the fair in the wroughten veil * How hast made that
monk-like worshipper ail?
Light of veil and light of face under it * Made the hosts of
darkness to fly from bale;
And, when came my glance to steal look at cheek. * With a
meteor-shaft the Guard made me quail.”[454]

Then said the broker to the merchants,[455] “How much do ye bid for the union-pearl of the diver and prize-quarry of the fowler?” Quoth one, “She is mine for an hundred dinars.” And another said, “Two hundred,” and a third, “Three hundred”; and they ceased not to bid, one against other, till they made her price nine hundred and fifty dinars, and there the biddings stopped awaiting acceptance and consent.[456] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Seventy-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the merchants bid one against other till they made the price of the girl nine hundred and fifty dinars. Then the broker went up to her Persian master and said to him, "The biddings for this thy slave-girl have reached nine hundred and fifty dinars: so say me, wilt thou sell her at that price and take the money?" Asked the Persian, "Doth she consent to this? I desire to fall in with her wishes, for I sickened on my journey hither and this handmaid tended me with all possible tenderness, wherefore I sware not to sell her but to him whom she should like and approve, and I have put her sale in her own hand. So do thou consult her and if she say, 'I consent,' sell her to whom thou wilt: but an she say, 'No,' sell her not." So the broker went up to her and asked her, "O Princess of fair ones, know that thy master putteth thy sale in thine own hands, and thy price hath reached nine hundred and fifty dinars; dost thou give me leave to sell thee?" She answered, "Show me him who is minded to buy me before clinching the bargain." So he brought her up to one of the merchants a man stricken with years and decrepit; and she looked at him a long while, then turned to the broker and said to him, "O broker, art thou Jinn-mad or afflicted in thy wit?" Replied he, "Why dost thou ask me this, O Princess of fair ones?"; and said she, "Is it permitted thee of Allah to sell the like of me to yonder decrepit old man, who saith of his wife's case these couplets,

'Quoth she to me, — and sore enraged for wounded pride was she, *
For she in sooth had bidden me to that which might not be, —
'An if thou swive me not forthright, as one should swive his wife, * Thou be made a cuckold straight, reproach it not to me.
Meseems thy yard is made of wax, for very flaccidness; * For when I rub it with my hand, it softens instantly.'[457]

And said he likewise of his yard,

‘I have a yard that sleeps in base and shameful way * When grants
my lover boon for which I sue and pray:
But when I wake o’ mornings[458] all alone in bed, * ’Tis fain
o’ foin and fence and fierce for futter-play.’

And again quoth he thereof of his yard,

‘I have a froward yard of temper ill * Dishonoring him who shows
it most regard:
It stands when sleep I, when I stand it sleeps * Heaven pity not
who pitieth that yard!’”

When the old merchant heard this ill flouting from the damsel, he was wroth with wrath exceeding beyond which was no proceeding and said to the broker, “O most ill-omened of brokers, thou hast not brought into the market this ill-conditioned wench but to gibe me and make mock of me before the merchants.” Then the broker took her aside and said to her, “O my lady, be not wanting in self-respect. The Shaykh at whom thou didst mock is the Syndic of the bazar and Inspector[459] thereof and a committee-man of the council of the merchants.” But she laughed and improvised these two couplets,

“It behoveth folk who rule in our time, * And ’tis one of the
duties of magistrateship,
To hand up the Wali above his door * And beat with a whip the
Mohtasib!”

Adding, “By Allah, O my lord, I will not be sold to yonder old man; so sell me to other than him, for haply he will be abashed at me and vend me again and I shall become a mere servant[460] and it beseemeth not that I sully myself with menial service; and indeed thou knowest that the matter of my sale is committed to myself.” He replied, “I hear and I obey,” and carried her to a man which was one of the chief merchants. And when standing hard by him the broker asked, “How sayst thou, O my lady? Shall I sell thee to my lord Sharíf al-Dín here for nine hundred and fifty gold pieces?” She looked at him and, seeing him to be an old man with a dyed beard, said to the broker, “Art thou silly, that thou wouldst sell me to this worn out Father Antic? Am I cotton refuse or threadbare rags that thou marchest me about from greybeard to greybeard, each like a wall ready to fall or an Ifrit smitten down of a fire-ball? As for the first, the poet had him in mind when he said,[461]

‘I sought of a fair maid to kiss her lips of coral red, But, ‘No,
by Him who fashioned things from nothingness!’ she said.
Unto the white of hoary hairs I never had a mind, And shall my
mouth be stuffed, forsooth, with cotton, ere I’m dead?’

And how goodly is the saying of the poet,

‘The wise have said that white of hair is light that shines and
robes * The face of man with majesty and light that awes the
sight;
Yet until hoary seal shall stamp my parting-place of hair * I
hope and pray that same may be black as the blackest night.
Albe Time-whitened beard of man be like the book he bears[462]

* When to his Lord he must return, I’d rather ‘twere not
white,’

And yet goodlier is the saying of another,

‘A guest hath stolen on my head and honour may he lack! * The
sword a milder deed hath done that dared these locks to
hack.
Avaunt, O Whiteness,[463] wherein naught of brightness
gladdens sight * Thou ‘rt blacker in the eyes of me than
very blackest black!’

As for the other, he is a model of wantonness and scurrilousness and a blackener of the face of hoariness; his dye acteth the foulest of lies: and the tongue of his case reciteth these lines,[464]

‘Quoth she to me, ‘I see thou dy’st thy hoariness;’ and I, ‘I do

but hide it from thy sight, O thou mine ear and eye!'
She laughed out mockingly and said, 'A wonder 'tis indeed! Thou
so aboundest in deceit that even thy hair's a lie.'

And how excellent is the saying of the poet,

'O thou who dyest hoariness with black, * That youth wi' thee
abide, at least in show;
Look ye, my lot was dyčd black whilome * And (take my word!)
none
other hue 'twill grow.'"

When the old man with dyed beard heard such words from the slave-girl, he raged with exceeding rage in fury's last stage and said to the broker, "O most ill-omened of brokers, this day thou hast brought to our market naught save this gibing baggage to flout at all who are therein, one after other, and fleer at them with flyting verse and idle jest?" And he came down from his shop and smote on the face the broker who took her an angered and carried her away saying to her, "By Allah, never in my life saw I a more shameless wench than thyself![465] Thou hast cut off my daily bread and thine own this day and all the merchants will bear me a grudge on thine account." Then they saw on the way a merchant called Shihab al-Dín who bid ten dinars more for her, and the broker asked her leave to sell her to him. Quoth she, "Trot him out that I may see him and question him of a certain thing, which if he have in his house, I will be sold to him; and if not, then not." So the broker left her standing there and going up to Shihab al-Din, said to him, "O my lord, know that yonder damsel tells me she hath a mind to ask thee somewhat, which an thou have, she will be sold to thee. Now thou hast heard what she said to thy fellows, the merchants," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Seventy-second Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the broker said to the merchant, "Thou hast heard what this handmaid said to thy fellows, the traders, and by Allah, I fear to bring her to thee, lest she do with thee like as she did with thy neighbours and so

I fall into disgrace with thee: but, an thou bid me bring her to thee, I will bring her." Quoth the merchant, "Hither with her to me." "Hearing and obeying," answered the broker and fetched for the purchaser the damsel, who looked at him and said, "O my lord, Shihab al-Din, hast thou in thy house round cushions stuffed with ermine strips?" Replied Shihab al-Din, "Yes, O Princess of fair ones, I have at home half a score such cushions; but I conjure thee by Allah, tell me, what will thou do with them?" Quoth she, "I will bear with thee till thou be asleep, when I will lay them on thy mouth and nose and press them down till thou die." Then she turned to the broker and said to him, "O thou refuse of brokers, meseemeth thou art mad, in that thou showest me this hour past, first to a pair of greybeards, in each of whom are two faults, and then thou proferrest me to my lord Shihab al-Din wherein be three defects; firstly, he is dwarfish, secondly, he hath a nose which is big, and thirdly, he hath a beard which is long. Of him quoth one of the poets,

'We never heard of wight nor yet espied * Who amid men three
gifts hath unified:
To wit, a beard one cubit long, a snout * Span-long and figure
tall a finger wide:'

And quoth another poet,

'From the plain of his face springs a minaret * Like a bezel of
ring on his finger set:
Did creation enter that vasty nose * No created thing would
elsewhere be met.'"

When Shihab al-Din heard this, he came down from his shop and seized the broker by the collar, saying, "O scurviest of brokers, what aileth thee to bring us a damsel to flout and make mock of us, one after other, with her verses and talk that a curse is?" So the broker took her and carried her away from before him and fared, saying, "By Allah, all my life long, since I have plied this profession never set I eyes on the like of thee for unmannerliness nor aught more curst to me than thy star, for thou hast cut off my livelihood this day and I have gained no profit by thee save cuffs on the neck-nape and catching by the collar!” Then he brought her to the shop of another merchant, owner of negro slaves and white servants, and stationing her before him, said to her, “Wilt thou be sold to this my lord ‘Alá al-Dín?” She looked at him and seeing him hump-backed, said, “This is a Gobbo,” and quoth the poet of him,

‘Drawn in thy shoulders are and spine thrust out, * As seeking
star which Satan gave the lout;[466]
Or as he tasted had first smack of scourge * And looked in marvel
for a second bout.’

And saith another on the same theme,

‘As one of you who mounted mule, * A sight for me to ridicule: Is ‘t not a farce? Who feels surprise * An start and bolt with him the mule?’

And another on a similar subject,

‘Oft hunchback addeth to his bunchy back * Faults which gar folk
upon his front look black:
Like branch distort and dried by length of days * With citrons
hanging from it loose and slack.’”

With this the broker hurried up to her and, carrying her to another merchant, said to her, “Wilt thou be sold to this one?” She looked at him and said, “In very sooth this man is blue-eyed;[467] how wilt thou sell me to him?” Quoth one of the poets,

‘His eyelids sore and bleared * Weakness of frame denote:
Arise, ye folk and see * Within his eyes the mote!’”

Then the broker carried her to another and she looked at him and seeing that he had a long beard, said to the broker, “Fie upon thee! This is a ram, whose tail hath sprouted from his gullet. Wilt thou sell me to him, O unluckiest of brokers? Hast thou not heard say: ‘All long of beard are little of wits? Indeed, after the measure of the length of the beard is the lack of sense; and this is a well-known thing among men of understanding.’ As saith one of the poets,

‘Ne’er was a man with beard grown overlong, * Tho’ be he therefor
    reverenced and fear’d,
But who the shortness noted in his wits * Added to longness noted
    in his beard.’

And quoth another,[468]

‘I have a friend with a beard which God hath made to grow to a
    useless length,
It is like unto one of the nights of winter long and dark and
    cold.’”

With this the broker took her and turned away with her, and she asked, “Whither goest thou with me?” He answered, “Back to thy master the Persian; it sufficeth me what hath befallen me because of thee this day; for thou hast been the means of spoiling both my trade and his by thine ill manners.” Then she looked about the market right and left, front and rear till, by the decree of the Decreer her eyes fell on Ali Nur al-Din the Cairene. So she gazed at him and saw him[469] to be a comely youth of straight slim form and smooth of face, fourteen years old, rare in beauty and loveliness and elegance and amorous grace like the full moon on the fourteenth night with forehead flower-white, and cheeks rosy red, neck like alabaster and teeth than jewels finer and dews of lips sweeter than sugar, even as saith of him one of his describers,

“Came to match him in beauty and loveliness rare * Full moons and
    gazelles but quoth I, ‘Soft fare!
Fare softly, gazelles, nor yourselves compare * With him and, O
    Moons, all your pains forbear!’”

And how well saith another bard,

“Slim-waisted loveling, from his hair and brow * Men wake a-morn
    in night and light renewed.
Blame not the mole that dwelleth on his cheek * For Nu’uman’s
    bloom aye shows spot negro-hued.”

When the slave-girl beheld Nur al-Din he interposed between her and her wits; she fell in love to him with a great and sudden fall and her heart was taken with affection for him; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Seventy-third Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the slave-girl beheld Nur al-Din, her heart was taken with affection for him; so she turned to the broker and said to him, “Will not yonder young merchant who is sitting among the traders in the gown of striped broadcloth bid somewhat more for me?” The broker replied, “O lady of fair ones, yonder young man is a stranger from Cairo, where his father is chief of the trader-guild and surpasseth all the merchants and notables of the place. He is but lately come to this our city and lodgeth with one of his father’s friends; but he hath made no bid for thee nor more nor less.” When the girl heard the broker’s words, she drew from her finger a costly signet-ring of ruby and said to the man, “Carry me to yonder youth, and if he buy me, this ring shall be thine, in requital of thy travail with me this day.” The broker rejoiced at this and brought her up to Nur al-Din, and she considered him straitly and found him like the full moon, perfect in loveliness and a model of fine stature and symmetric grace, even as saith of him one of his describers.

“Waters of beauty o’er his cheeks flow bright, * And rain his
glances shafts that sorely smite:
Choked are his lovers an he deal disdain’s * Bitterest draught
denaying love-delight.
His forehead and his stature and my love * Are perfect perfected
perfection-dight;
His raiment folds enfold a lovely neck * As crescent moon in
collar buttoned tight:
His eyne and twinnčd moles and tears of me * Are night that
nighteth to the nightliest night.
His eyebrows and his features and my frame[470] * Crescents on
crescents are as crescents slight:
His pupils pass the wine-cup to his friends * Which, albe sweet,
tastes bitter to my sprite;

And to my thirsty throat pure drink he dealt * From smiling lips
what day we were unite:
Then is my blood to him, my death to him * His right and rightful
and most righteous right.”

The girl gazed at Nur al-Din and said, “O my lord, Allah upon thee, am I not beautiful?”; and he replied, “O Princess of fair ones, is there in the world a comelier than thou?” She rejoined, “Then why seest thou all the other merchants bid high for me and art silent nor sayest a word neither addest one dinar to my price? ’Twould seem I please thee not, O my lord!” Quoth he, “O my lady, were I in my own land, I had bought thee with all that my hand possesseth of monies;” and quoth she, “O my lord, I said not, ‘Buy me against thy will,’ yet, didst thou but add somewhat to my price, it would hearten my heart, though thou buy me not, so the merchants may say, ‘Were not this girl handsome, yonder merchant of Cairo had not bidden for her, for the Cairenes are connoisseurs in slave-girls.’” These words abashed Nur al-Din and he blushed and said to the broker, “How high are the biddings for her?” He replied, “Her price hath reached nine hundred and sixty dinars,[471] besides brokerage, as for the Sultan’s dues, they fall on the seller.” Quoth Nur al-Din, “Let me have her for a thousand dinars, brokerage and price.” And the damsel hastening to the fore and leaving the broker, said, “I sell myself to this handsome young man for a thousand dinars.” But Nur al-Din held his peace. Quoth one, “We sell to him;” and another, “He deserveth her;” and a third, “Accursed, son of accursed, is he who biddeth and doth not buy!”; and a fourth, “By Allah, they befit each other!” Then, before Nur al-Din could think, the broker fetched Kazis and witnesses, who wrote out a contract of sale and purchase; and the broker handed the paper to Nur al-Din, saying, “Take thy slave-girl and Allah bless thee in her for she beseemeth none but thee and none but thou beseemeth her.” And he recited these two couplets,

“Boon Fortune sought him in humblest way[472] * And came to
him draggle-tailed, all a-stir:
And none is fittest for him but she * And none is fittest but he

for her."

Hereat Nur al-Din was abashed before the merchants; so he arose without stay or delay and weighed out the thousand dinars which he had left as a deposit with his father's friend the druggist, and taking the girl, carried her to the house wherein the Shaykh had lodged him. When she entered and saw nothing but ragged patched carpets and worn out rugs, she said to him, "O my lord, have I no value to thee and am I not worthy that thou shouldst bear me to thine own house and home wherein are thy goods, that thou bringest me into thy servant's lodging? Why dost thou not carry me to thy father's dwelling?" He replied, "By Allah, O Princess of fair ones, this is my house wherein I dwell; but it belongeth to an old man, a druggist of this city, who hath set it apart for me and lodged me therein. I told thee that I was a stranger and that I am of the sons of Cairo city." She rejoined, "O my lord, the least of houses sufficeth till thy return to thy native place; but, Allah upon thee, O my lord, go now and fetch us somewhat of roast meat and wine and dried fruit and dessert." Quoth Nur al-Din, "By Allah, O Princess of fair ones, I had no money with me but the thousand dinars I paid down to thy price nor possess I any other good. The few dirhams I owned were spent by me yesterday." Quoth she, "Hast thou no friend in the town, of whom thou mayst borrow fifty dirhams and bring them to me, that I may tell thee what thou shalt do therewith?" And he said, "I have no intimate but the druggist." Then he betook himself forthright to the druggist and said to him, "Peace be with thee, O uncle!" He returned his salam and said to him, "O my son, what hast thou bought for a thousand dinars this day?" Nur al-Din replied, "I have bought a slave-girl;" and the oldster rejoined, "O my son, art thou mad that thou givest a thousand dinars for one slave-girl? Would I knew what kind of slave-girl she is?" Said Nur al-Din, "She is a damsel of the children of the Franks;" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Nur al-Din said to the ancient druggist, "The damsel is of the children of the Franks;" and the Shaykh said, "O my son, the best of the girls of the

Franks are to be had in this our town for an hundred dinars, and by Allah, O my son, they have cheated thee in the matter of this damsel! However, an thou have taken a fancy to her, lie with her this night and do thy will of her and to-morrow morning go down with her to the market and sell her, though thou lose by her two hundred dinars, and reckon that thou hast lost them by shipwreck or hast been robbed of them on the road." Nur al-Din replied, "Right is thy rede, O uncle, but thou knowest that I had but the thousand dinars wherewith I purchased the damsel, and now I have not a single dirham left to spend; so I desire of thy favour and bounty that thou lend me fifty dirhams, to provide me withal, till to-morrow, when I will sell her and repay thee out of her price." Said the old man, "Willingly, O my son," and counted out to him the fifty dirhams. Then he said to him, "O my son, thou art but young in years and the damsel is fair, so belike thy heart will be taken with her and it will be grievous to thee to vend her. Now thou hast nothing to live on and these fifty dirhams will readily be spent and thou wilt come to me and I shall lend thee once and twice and thrice, and so on up to ten times; but, an thou come to me after this, I will not return thy salam[473] and our friendship with thy father will end ill." Nur al-Din took the fifty dirhams and returned with them to the damsel, who said to him, "O my lord, wend thee at once to the market and fetch me twenty dirhams' worth of stained silk of five colours and with the other thirty buy meat and bread and fruit and wine and flowers." So he went to the market and purchasing for her all she sought, brought it to her, whereupon she rose and tucking up her sleeves, cooked food after the most skilful fashion, and set it before him. He ate and she ate with him, till they had enough, after which she set on the wine, and she drank and he drank, and she ceased not to ply him with drink and entertain him with discourse, till he became drunken and fell asleep. Thereupon she arose without stay or delay and taking out of her bundle a budget of Táifí leather,[474] opened it and drew forth a pair of knitting needles, wherewith she fell to work and stinted not till she had made a beautiful zone, which she folded up in a wrapper after cleaning it and ironing it, and laid it under her pillow. Then she doffed her dress till she was mother-naked and lying down beside Nur al-Din shampoo'd him till he awoke from his heavy sleep. He found by his side a maiden like virgin silver, softer than silk and delicater than a tail of fatted sheep, than standard more conspicuous and goodlier than the red camel,[475] in height five feet tall with breasts firm and full, brows like bended bows, eyes like gazelles' eyes and cheeks like blood-red anemones, a slender waist with dimples laced and a navel holding an ounce of the unguent benzoin, thighs like bolsters stuffed with ostrich-down, and between them what the tongue fails to set forth and at mention whereof the tears jet forth. Brief it was as it were she to whom the poet alluded in these two couplets,

"From her hair is Night, from her forehead Noon * From her
  side-face Rose; from her lip wine boon:
From her Union Heaven, her Severance Hell: * Pearls from her
  teeth; from her front full Moon."

And how excellent is the saying of another bard,[476]

"A Moon she rises, Willow-wand she waves * Breathes ambergris and
  gazeth a gazelle.
Meseems that sorrow wooes my heart and wins * And when she wends
  makes haste therein to dwell.
Her face is fairer than the Stars of Wealth[477] * And sheeny
  brows the crescent Moon excel."

And quoth a third also,

"They shine fullest Moons, unveil Crescent-bright; *
  Sway tenderest Branches and turn wild kine;
'Mid which is a Dark-eyed for love of whose charms *
  The Sailors[478] would joy to be ground low-li'en."

So Nur al-Din turned to her at once and clasping her to his bosom, sucked first her upper lip and then her under lip and slid his tongue between the twain into her mouth. Then he rose to her and found her a pearl unthridden and a filly none but he had ridden. So he abated her maidenhead and had of her amorous delight and there was knitted between them a love-bond which might never know breach nor severance.[479] He rained upon her cheeks kisses like the falling of pebbles into water, and struck with stroke upon stroke, like the thrusting of spears in battle brunt; for that Nur al-Din still yearned after clipping of necks and sucking of lips and letting down of tress and pressing of waist and biting of cheek and cavalcading on breast with Cairene buckings and Yamani wrigglings and Abyssinian sobbings and Hindí pamoisons and Nubian lasciviousness and Rífí leg-liftings[480] and Damiettan moanings and Sa'ídí[481] hotness and Alexandrian languishment[482] and this damsel united in herself all these virtues, together with excess of beauty and loveliness, and indeed she was even as saith of her the poet,

"This is she I will never forget till I die * Nor draw near but
to those who to her draw nigh.
A being for semblance like Moon at full * Praise her Maker, her
Modeller glorify!
Tho' be sore my sin seeking love-liesse * On esperance-day ne'er
repent can I;
A couplet reciting which none can know * Save the youth who in
couplets and rhymes shall cry,
'None weeteth love but who bears its load * Nor passion, save
pleasures and pains he aby.'"

So Nur al-Din lay with the damsel through the night in solace and delight, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Seventy-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Nur al-Din lay with that damsel through the night in solace and delight, the twain garbed in the closely buttoned garments of embrace, safe and secure against the misways of nights and days, and they passed the dark hours after the goodliest fashion, fearing naught, in their joys love-fraught, from excess of talk and prate. As saith of them the right excellent poet,[483]

“Go, visit her thou lovest, and regard not
The words detractors utter; envious churls
Can never favour love. Oh! sure the merciful
Ne’er make a thing more fair to look upon,
Than two fond lovers in each other’s arms,
Speaking their passion in a mute embrace.
When heart has turned to heart, the fools would part them
Strike idly on cold steel. So when thou’st found
One purely, wholly thine, accept her true heart,
And live for her alone. Oh! thou that blamest
The love-struck for their love, give o’er thy talk
How canst thou minister to a mind diseased?”

When the morning morrowed in sheen and shone, Nur al-Din awoke from deep sleep and found that she had brought water:[484] so they made the Ghusl-ablution, he and she, and he performed that which behoved him of prayer to his Lord, after which she set before him meat and drink, and he ate and drank. Then the damsel put her hand under her pillow and pulling out the girdle which she had knitted during the night, gave it to Nur al-Din, who asked, “Whence cometh this girdle?”[485] Answered she, “O my lord, ’tis the silk thou boughtest yesterday for twenty dirhams. Rise now and go to the Persian bazar and give it to the broker, to cry for sale, and sell it not for less than twenty gold pieces in ready money.” Quoth Nur al-Din, “O Princess of fair ones how can a thing, that cost twenty dirhams and will sell for as many dinars, be made in a single night?”; and quoth she, “O my lord, thou knowest not the value of this thing; but go to the market therewith and give it to the broker, and when he shall cry it, its worth will be made manifest to thee.” Herewith he carried the zone to the market and gave it to the broker, bidding him cry it, whilst he himself sat down on a masonry bench before a shop. The broker fared forth and returning after a while said to him, “O my lord, rise take the price of thy zone, for it hath fetched twenty dinars money down.” When Nur al-Din heard this, he marvelled with exceeding marvel and shook with delight. Then he rose, between belief and misbelief, to take the money and when he had received it, he went forthright and spent it all on silk of various colours and returning home, gave his purchase to the damsel, saying, "Make this all into girdles and teach me likewise how to make them, that I may work with thee; for never in the length of my life saw I a fairer craft than this craft nor a more abounding in gain and profit. By Allah, 'tis better than the trade of a merchant a thousand times!" She laughed at his language and said, "O my lord, go to thy friend the druggist and borrow other thirty dirhams of him, and to-morrow repay him from the price of the girdle the thirty together with the fifty already loaned to thee." So he rose and repaired to the druggist and said to him, "O Uncle, lend me other thirty dirhams, and to-morrow, Almighty Allah willing, I will repay thee the whole fourscore." The old man weighed him out thirty dirhams, wherewith he went to the market and buying meat and bread, dried fruits, and flowers as before, carried them home to the damsel whose name was Miriam,[486] the Girdle-girl. She rose forthright and making ready rich meats, set them before her lord Nur al-Din; after which she brought the wine-service and they drank and plied each other with drink. When the wine began to play with their wits, his pleasant address and inner grace pleased her, and she recited these two couplets,

"Said I to Slim-waist who the wine engraced * Brought in
musk-scented bowl and a superfine,
'Was it prest from thy cheek?' He replied 'Nay, nay! * When did
man from Roses e'er press the Wine?'"

And the damsel ceased not to carouse with her lord and ply him with cup and bowl and require him to fill for her and give her to drink of that which sweeteneth the spirits, and whenever he put forth hand to her, she drew back from him, out of coquetry. The wine added to her beauty and loveliness, and Nur al-Din recited these two couplets,

"Slim-waist craved wine from her companeer; * Cried (in meeting
of friends when he feared for his fere,)
'An thou pass not the wine thou shalt pass the night, * A-banisht
my bed!' And he felt sore fear."

They ceased not drinking till drunkenness overpowered Nur al-Din and he slept; whereupon she rose forthright and fell to work upon a zone, as was her wont. When she had wrought it to end, she wrapped it in paper and doffing her clothes, lay down by his side and enjoyed dalliance and delight till morn appeared. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Miriam the Girdle-girl, having finished her zone and wrapped it in paper doffed her dress and lay down by the side of her lord; and then happened to them what happened of dalliance and delight; and he did his devoir like a man. On the morrow, she gave him the girdle and said to him, "Carry this to the market and sell it for twenty dinars, even as thou soldest its fellow yesterday." So he went to the bazar and sold the girdle for twenty dinars, after which he repaired to the druggist and paid him back the eighty dirhams, thanking him for the bounties and calling down blessings upon him. He asked, "O my son, hast thou sold the damsel?"; and Nur al-Din answered, "Wouldst thou have me sell the soul out of my body?" and he told him all that had passed, from commencement to conclusion, whereat the druggist joyed with joy galore, than which could be no more and said to him, "By Allah, O my son, thou gladdenest me! Inshallah, mayst thou ever be in prosperity! Indeed I wish thee well by reason of my affection for thy father and the continuance of my friendship with him." Then Nur al-Din left the Shaykh and straightway going to the market, bought meat and fruit and wine and all that he needed according to his custom and returned therewith to Miriam. They abode thus a whole year in eating and drinking and mirth and merriment and love and good comradeship, and every night she made a zone and he sold it on the morrow for twenty dinars, wherewith he bought their needs and gave the rest to her, to keep against a time of necessity. After the twelvemonth she said to him one day, "O my lord, whenas thou sellest the girdle to-morrow, buy for me with its price silk of six colours, because I am minded to make thee a kerchief to wear on thy shoulders, such as never son of merchant, no, nor King's son, ever rejoiced in its like." So next day he fared forth to the bazar and after selling the zone brought her the dyed silks she sought and Miriam the Girdle-girl wrought at the kerchief a whole week, for, every night, when she had made an end of the zone, she would work awhile at the kerchief till it was finished. Then she gave it to Nur al-Din, who put it on his shoulders and went out to walk in the market-place, whilst all the merchants and folk and notables of the town crowded about him, to gaze on his beauty and that of the kerchief which was of the most beautiful. Now it chanced that one night, after this, he awoke from sleep and found Miriam weeping passing sore and reciting these couplets,

"Nears my parting fro' my love, nigher draws the Severance-day *
  Ah well-away for parting! and again ah well-away!
And in tway is torn my heart and O pine I'm doomed to bear * For
  the nights that erst witnessed our pleasurable play!
No help for it but Envier the twain of us espy * With evil eye
  and win to us his lamentable way.
For naught to us is sorer than the jealousy of men * And the
  backbiter's eyne that with calumny affray."

He said, "O my lady Miriam,[487] what aileth thee to weep?"; and she replied, "I weep for the anguish of parting for my heart presageth me thereof." Quoth he, "O lady of fair ones, and who shall interpose between us, seeing that I love thee above all creatures and tender thee the most?"; and quoth she, "And I love thee twice as well as thou me; but fair opinion of fortune still garreth folk fall into affliction, and right well saith the poet,[488]

'Think'st thou thyself all prosperous, in days which prosp'rous
  be,
Nor fearest thou impending ill, which comes by Heaven's decree?
We see the orbs of heav'n above, how numberless they are,
But sun and moon alone eclips'd, and ne'er a lesser star!
And many a tree on earth we see, some bare, some leafy green,
Of them, not one is hurt with stone save that has fruitful been!
See'st not th' refluent ocean, bear carrion on its tide,
While pearls beneath its wavy flow, fixed in the deep, abide?'"

Presently she added, “O my lord Nur al-Din, an thou desire to nonsuit separation, be on thy guard against a swart-visaged oldster, blind of the right eye and lame of the left leg; for he it is who will be the cause of our severance. I saw him enter the city and I opine that he is come hither in quest of me.” Replied Nur al-Din, “O lady of fair ones, if my eyes light on him, I will slay him and make an example of him.” Rejoined she, “O my lord, slay him not; but talk not nor trade with him, neither buy nor sell with him nor sit nor walk with him nor speak one word to him, no, not even the answer prescribed by law,[489] and I pray Allah to preserve us from his craft and his mischief.” Next morning, Nur al-Din took the zone and carried it to the market, where he sat down on a shop-bench and talked with the sons of the merchants, till the drowsiness preceding slumber overcame him and he lay down on the bench and fell asleep. Presently, behold, up came the Frank whom the damsel had described to him, in company with seven others, and seeing Nur al-Din lying asleep on the bench, with his head wrapped in the kerchief which Miriam had made for him and the edge thereof in his grasp, sat down by him and hent the end of the kerchief in hand and examined it, turning it over for some time. Nur al-Din sensed that there was something and awoke; then, seeing the very man of whom Miriam had warned him sitting by his side, cried out at him with a great cry which startled him. Quoth the Frank, “What aileth thee to cry out thus at us? Have we taken from thee aught?”; and quoth Nur al-Din, “By Allah, O accursed, haddest thou taken aught from me, I would carry thee before the Chief of Police!” Then said the Frank, “O Moslem, I conjure thee by thy faith and by that wherein thou believest, inform me whence thou haddest this kerchief;” and Nur al-Din replied, “Tis the handiwork of my lady mother,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Seventy-seventh Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Frank asked Nur al-Din anent the maker of the kerchief, he answered, saying, “In very sooth this kerchief is the handiwork of my mother, who made it for me with her own hand.” Quoth the Frank “Wilt thou sell it to me and take ready money for it?,” and quoth Nur al-Din, “By Allah, I will not sell it to thee or to any else, for she made none other than it.” “Sell it to me and I will give thee to its price this very moment five hundred dinars, money down; and let her who made it make thee another and a finer.” “I will not sell it at all, for there is not the like of it in this city.” “O my lord, wilt thou sell it for six hundred ducats of fine gold?” And the Frank went on to add to his offer hundred by hundred, till he bid nine hundred dinars; but Nur al-Din said, “Allah will open to me otherwise than by my vending it. I will never sell it, not for two thousand dinars nor more than that; no, never.” The Frank ceased not to tempt him with money, till he bid him a thousand dinars, and the merchants present said, “We sell thee the kerchief at that price:[490] pay down the money.” Quoth Nur al-Din, “I will not sell it, I swear by Allah!”[491] But one of the merchants said to him, “Know thou, O my son, that the value of this kerchief is an hundred dinars at most and that to an eager purchaser, and if this Frank pay thee down a thousand for it, thy profit will be nine hundred dinars, and what gain canst thou desire greater than this gain? Wherefore ’tis my rede that thou sell him this kerchief at that price and bid her who wrought it make thee other finer than it: so shalt thou profit nine hundred dinars by this accursed Frank, the enemy of Allah and of The Faith.” Nur al-Din was abashed at the merchants and sold the kerchief to the Frank, who, in their presence, paid him down the thousand dinars, with which he would have returned to his handmaid to congratulate her on what had passed; but the stranger said, “Harkye, O company of merchants, stop my lord Nur al-Din, for you and he are my guests this night. I have a jar of old Greek wine and a fat lamb, fresh fruit, flowers and confections; wherefore do ye all cheer me with your company to-night and not one of you tarry behind.” So the merchants said, “O my lord Nur al-Din, we desire that thou be with us on the like of this night, so we may talk together, we and thou, and we pray thee, of thy favour and bounty, to bear us company, so we and thou, may be the guests of this Frank, for he is a liberal man.” And they conjured him by the oath of divorce[492] and hindered him by main force from going home. Then they rose forthright and shutting up their shops, took Nur al-Din and fared with the Frank, who brought them to a goodly and spacious saloon, wherein were two dad’ses.

Here he made them sit and set before them a scarlet tray-cloth of goodly workmanship and unique handiwork, wroughten in gold with figures of breaker and broken, lover and beloved, asker and asked, whereon he ranged precious vessels of porcelain and crystal, full of the costliest confections, fruits and flowers, and brought them a flagon of old Greek wine. Then he bade slaughter a fat lamb and kindling fire, proceeded to roast of its flesh and feed the merchants therewith and give them draughts of that wine, winking at them the while to ply Nur al-Din with drink. Accordingly they ceased not plying him with wine till he became drunken and took leave of his wits; so when the Frank saw that he was drowned in liquor, he said to him, "O my lord Nur al-Din, thou gladdenest us with thy company to-night: welcome, and again welcome to thee." Then he engaged him awhile in talk, till he could draw near to him, when he said, with dissembling speech, "O my lord, Nur al-Din, wilt thou sell me thy slave-girl, whom thou boughtest in presence of these merchants a year ago for a thousand dinars? I will give thee at this moment five thousand gold pieces for her and thou wilt thus make four thousand ducats profit." Nur al-Din refused, but the Frank ceased not to ply him with meat and drink and lure him with lucre, still adding to his offers, till he bid him ten thousand dinars for her; whereupon Nur al-Din, in his drunkenness, said before the merchants, "I sell her to thee for ten thousand dinars: hand over the money." At this the Frank rejoiced with joy exceeding and took the merchants to witness the sale. They passed the night in eating and drinking, mirth and merriment, till the morning, when the Frank cried out to his pages, saying, "Bring me the money." So they brought it to him and he counted out ten thousand dinars to Nur al-Din, saying, "O my lord, take the price of thy slave-girl, whom thou soldest to me last night, in the presence of these Moslem merchants." Replied Nur al-Din, "O accursed, I sold thee nothing and thou liest anent me, for I have no slave-girls." Quoth the Frank, "In very sooth thou didst sell her to me and these merchants were witnesses to the bargain." Thereupon all said, "Yes, indeed! thou soldest him thy slave-girl before us for ten thousand dinars, O Nur al-Din and we will all bear witness against thee of the sale. Come, take the money and deliver him the girl, and Allah will give thee a better than she in her stead. Doth it irk thee, O

Nur al-Din, that thou boughtest the girl for a thousand dinars and hast enjoyed for a year and a half her beauty and loveliness and taken thy fill of her converse and her favours? Furthermore thou hast gained some ten thousand golden dinars by the sale of the zones which she made thee every day and thou soldest for twenty sequins, and after all this thou hast sold her again at a profit of nine thousand dinars over and above her original price. And withal thou deniest the sale and belittlest and makest difficulties about the profit! What gain is greater than this gain and what profit wouldst thou have profitabler than this profit? An thou love her thou hast had thy fill of her all this time: so take the money and buy thee another handsomer than she; or we will marry thee to one of our daughters, lovelier than she, at a dowry of less than half this price, and the rest of the money will remain in thy hand as capital." And the merchants ceased not to ply him with persuasion and special arguments till he took the ten thousand dinars, the price of the damsel, and the Frank straightway fetched Kazis and witnesses, who drew up the contract of sale by Nur al-Din of the handmaid hight Miriam the Girdle-girl. Such was his case; but as regards the damsel's, she sat awaiting her lord from morning till sundown and from sundown till the noon of night; and when he returned not, she was troubled and wept with sore weeping. The old druggist heard her sobbing and sent his wife, who went in to her and finding her in tears, said to her, "O my lady, what aileth thee to weep?" Said she, "O my mother, I have sat waiting the return of my lord, Nur al-Din all day; but he cometh not, and I fear lest some one have played a trick on him, to make him sell me, and he have fallen into the snare and sold me." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Seventy-eighth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Miriam the Girdle-girl said to the druggist's wife, "I am fearful lest some one have been playing a trick on my lord to make him sell me, and he have fallen into the snare and sold me." Said the other, "O my lady Miriam, were they to give thy lord this hall full of gold as thy price, yet would he not sell thee, for what I know of his love to thee. But, O my lady, belike there be a company come from his parents at Cairo and he hath made them an entertainment in the lodging where they alighted, being ashamed to bring them hither, for that the place is not spacious enough for them or because their condition is less than that he should bring them to his own house; or belike he preferred to conceal thine affair from them, so passed the night with them; and Inshallah! to-morrow he will come to thee safe and sound. So burden not thy soul with cark and care, O my lady, for of a certainty this is the cause of his absence from thee last night and I will abide with thee this coming night and comfort thee, until thy lord return to thee." So the druggist's wife abode with her and cheered her with talk throughout the dark hours and, when it was morning, Miriam saw her lord enter the street followed by the Frank and amiddlemost a company of merchants, at which sight her side-muscles quivered and her colour changed and she fell a-shaking, as ship shaketh in mid-ocean for the violence of the gale. When the druggist's wife saw this, she said to her, "O my lady Miriam what aileth thee that I see thy case changed and thy face grown pale and show disfeatured?" Replied she, "By Allah, O my lady, my heart forebodeth me of parting and severance of union!" And she bemoaned herself with the saddest sighs, reciting these couplets,[493]

"Incline not to parting, I pray; * For bitter its savour is aye.
E'en the sun at his setting turns pale * To think he must part
from the day;
And so, at his rising, for joy * Of reunion, he's radient and
gay."

Then Miriam wept passing sore wherethan naught could be more, making sure of separation, and cried to the druggist's wife, "O my mother, said I not to thee that my lord Nur al-Din had been tricked into selling me? I doubt not but he hath sold me this night to yonder Frank, albeit I bade him beware of him; but deliberation availeth not against destiny. So the truth of my words is made manifest to thee." Whilst they were talking, behold, in came Nur al-Din, and the damsel looked at him and saw that his colour was changed and that he trembled and there appeared on his face signs of grief and repentance: so she said to him, "O my lord Nur al-Din, meseemeth thou hast sold me." Whereupon he wept with sore weeping and groaned and lamented and recited these couplets,[494]

“When e’er the Lord ‘gainst any man,
Would fulminate some harsh decree,
And he be wise, and skilled to hear,
And used to see;
He stops his ears, and blinds his heart,
And from his brain ill judgment tears,
And makes it bald as ‘twere a scalp,
Reft of its hairs;[495]
Until the time when the whole man
Be pierced by this divine command;
Then He restores him intellect
To understand.”

Then Nur al-Din began to excuse himself to his handmaid, saying, “By Allah, O my lady Miriam, verily runneth the Reed with whatso Allah hath decreed. The folk put a cheat on me to make me sell thee, and I fell into the snare and sold thee. Indeed, I have sorely failed of my duty to thee; but haply He who decreed our disunion will vouchsafe us reunion.” Quoth she, “I warned thee against this, for this it was I dreaded.” Then she strained him to her bosom and kissed him between the eyes, reciting these couplets,

“Now, by your love! your love I’ll ne’er forget, * Though lost my
life for stress of pine and fret:
I weep and wail through livelong day and night * As moans the
dove on sandhill-tree beset.
O fairest friends, your absence spoils my life; * Nor find I
meeting-place as erst we met.”

At this juncture, behold, the Frank came in to them and went up to Miriam, to kiss her hands; but she dealt him a buffet with her palm on the cheek, saying, “Avaunt, O accursed! Thou hast followed after me without surcease, till thou hast cozened my lord into selling me! But O accursed, all shall yet be well, Inshallah!” The Frank laughed at her speech and wondered at her deed and excused himself to her, saying, “O my lady Mirian, what is my offence? Thy lord Nur al-Din here sold thee of his full consent and of his own free will. Had he loved thee, by the right of the Messiah, he had not transgressed against thee! And had he not fulfilled his desire of thee, he had not sold thee.” Quoth one of the poets,

‘Whom I irk let him fly fro’ me fast and faster * If I name his
name I am no directer.
Nor the wide wide world is to me so narrow * That I act expecter
to this rejecter.’”[496]

Now this handmaid was the daughter of the King of France, the which is a wide and spacious city,[497] abounding in manufactures and rarities and trees and flowers and other growths, and resembleth the city of Constantinople; and for her going forth of her father’s city there was a wondrous cause and thereby hangeth a marvellous tale which we will set out in due order, to divert and delight the hearer.[498] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the cause of Miriam the Girdle-girl leaving her father and mother was a wondrous and thereby hangeth a marvellous tale. She was reared with her father and mother in honour and indulgence and learnt rhetoric and penmanship and arithmetic and cavalarice and all manner crafts, such as broidery and sewing and weaving and girdle-making and silk-cord making and damascening gold on silver and silver on gold, brief all the arts both of men and women, till she became the union-pearl of her time and the unique gem of her age and day. Moreover, Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) had endowed her with such beauty and loveliness and elegance and perfection of grace that she excelled therein all the folk of her time, and the Kings of the isles sought her in marriage of her sire, but he refused to give her to wife to any of her suitors, for that he loved her with passing love and could not bear to be parted from her a single hour. Moreover, he had no other daughter than herself, albeit he had many sons, but she was dearer to him than all of them. It fortuned one year that she fell sick of an exceeding sickness and came nigh upon death, werefore she made a vow that, if she recovered from her malady, she would make the pilgrimage to a certain monastery, situate in such an island, which was high in repute among the Franks, who used to make vows to it and look for a blessing therefrom. When Miriam recovered from her sickness, she wished to accomplish her vow anent the monastery and her sire despatched her to the convent in a little ship, with sundry daughters of the city-notables to wait upon her and patrician Knights to protect them all. As they drew near the island, there came out upon them a ship of the ships of the Moslems, champions of The Faith, warring in Allah's way, who boarded the vessel and making prize of all therein, knights and maidens, gifts and monies, sold their booty in the city of Kayrawán.[499] Miriam herself fell into the hands of a Persian merchant, who was born impotent[500] and for whom no woman had ever discovered her nakedness; so he set her to serve him. Presently, he fell ill and sickened well nigh unto death, and the sickness abode with him two months, during which she tended him after the goodliest fashion, till Allah made him whole of his malady, when he recalled her tenderness and loving-kindness to him and the persistent zeal with which she had nurst him and being minded to requite her the good offices she had done him, said to her, "Ask a boon of me?" She said, "O my lord, I ask of thee that thou sell me not but to the man of my choice." He answered, "So be it. I guarantee thee. By Allah, O Miriam, I will not sell thee but to him of whom thou shalt approve, and I put thy sale in thine own hand." And she rejoiced herein with joy exceeding. Now the Persian had expounded to her Al-Islam and she became a Moslemah and learnt of him the rules of worship. Furthermore during that period the Perisan had taught her the tenets of The Faith and the observances incumbent upon her: he had made her learn the Koran by heart and master somewhat of the theological sciences and the traditions of the Prophet; after which, he brought her to Alexandria-city and sold her to Nur al-Din, as we have before set out. Meanwhile, when her father, the King of France, heard what had befallen his daughter and her company, he saw Doomsday break and sent after her ships full of knights and champions, horsemen and footmen; but they fell not in any trace of her whom they sought in the Islands[501] of the Moslems;

so all returned to him, crying out and saying, “Well-away!” and “Ruin!” and “Well worth the day!” The King grieved for her with exceeding grief and sent after her that one-eyed lameter, blind of the left,[502] for that he was his chief Wazir, a stubborn tyrant and a froward devil,[503] full of craft and guile, bidding him make search for her in all the lands of the Moslems and buy her, though with a shipload of gold. So the accursed sought her, in all the islands of the Arabs and all the cities of the Moslems, but found no sign of her till he came to Alexandria-city where he made quest for her and presently discovered that she was with Nur al-Din Ali the Cairene, being directed to the trace of her by the kerchief aforesaid, for that none could have wrought it in such goodly guise but she. Then he bribed the merchants to help him in getting her from Nur al-Din and beguiled her lord into selling her, as hath been already related. When he had her in his possession, she ceased not to weep and wail: so he said to her, “O my lady Miriam, put away from thee this mourning and grieving and return with me to the city of thy sire, the seat of thy kingship and the place of thy power and thy home, so thou mayst be among thy servants and attendants and be quit of this abasement and this strangerhood. Enough hath betided me of travail, of travel and of disbursing monies on thine account, for thy father bade me buy thee back, though with a shipload of gold; and now I have spent nigh a year and a half in seeking thee.” And he fell to kissing her hands and feet and humbling himself to her; but the more he kissed and grovelled she only redoubled in wrath against him, and said to him, “O accursed, may Almighty Allah not vouchsafe thee to win thy wish!” Presently his pages brought her a she-mule with gold-embroidered housings and mounting her thereon, raised over her head a silken canopy, with staves of gold and silver, and the Franks walked round about her, till they brought her forth the city by the sea-gate,[504] where they took boat with her and rowing out to a great ship in harbor embarked therein. Then the monocular Wazir cried out to the sailors, saying, “Up with the mast!” So they set it up forthright and spreading the newly bent sails and the colours manned the sweeps and put out to sea. Meanwhile Miriam continued to gaze upon Alexandria, till it disappeared from her eyes, when she fell a-weeping in her privacy with sore weeping. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Eightieth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Wazir of the Frankish King put out to sea in the ship bearing Miriam the Girdle-girl, she gazed Alexandria-wards till the city was hidden from her sight when she wailed and wept copious tears and recited these couplets,

"O dwelling of my friends say is there no return * Uswards? But
what ken I of matters Allah made?
Still fare the ships of Severance, sailing hastily * And in my
wounded eyelids tear have ta'en their stead,
For parting from a friend who was my wish and will * Healed every
ill and every pain and pang allay'd.
Be thou, O Allah, substitute of me for him * Such charge some day
the care of Thee shall not evade."

Then she could not refrain from weeping and wailing. So the patrician[505] knights came up to her and would have comforted her, but she heeded not their consoling words, being distracted by the claims of passion and love-longing. And she shed tears and moaned and complained and recited these couplets,

"The tongue of Love within my vitals speaketh * Saying, 'This
lover boon of Love aye seeketh!'
And burn my liver hottest coals of passion * And parting on my
heart sore suffering wreaketh.
How shall I face this fiery love concealing * When fro' my
wounded lids the tear aye leaketh?

In this plight Miriam abode during all the voyage; no peace was left her at all nor would patience come at her call. Such was her case in company with the Wazir, the monocular, the lameter; but as regards Nur al-Din the Cairene, when the ship had sailed with Miriam, the world was straitened upon him and he had neither peace nor patience. He returned to the lodging where they twain had dwelt, and its aspect was black and gloomy in his sight. Then he saw the métier wherewith she had been wont to make the zones and her dress that had been upon her beauteous body: so he pressed them to his breast, whilst the tears gushed from his eyes and he recited these couplets,

“Say me, will Union after parting e’er return to be * After
long-lasting torments, after hopeless misery?
Alas! Alas! what wont to be shall never more return * But grant
me still return of dearest her these eyne may see.
I wonder me will Allah deign our parted lives unite * And will my
dear one’s plighted troth preserve with constancy!
Naught am I save the prey of death since parting parted us; * And
will my friends consent that I a weird so deadly dree?
Alas my sorrow! Sorrowing the lover scant avails; * Indeed I melt
away in grief and passion’s ecstasy:
Past is the time of my delight when were we two conjoined: *
Would Heaven I wot if Destiny mine esperance will degree!
Redouble then, O Heart, thy pains and, O mine eyes, o’erflow *
With tears till not a tear remain within these eyne of me?
Again alas for loved ones lost and loss of patience eke! * For
helpers fail me and my griefs are grown beyond decree.
The Lord of Threefold Worlds I pray He deign to me return * My
lover and we meet as wont in joy and jubilee.”

Then Nur al-Din wept with weeping galore than which naught could be more; and peering into ever corner of the room, recited these two couplets,

“I view their traces and with pain I pine * And by their sometime
home I weep and yearn;
And Him I pray who parting deigned decree * Some day He deign
vouchsafe me their return!”

Then Nur al-Din sprang to his feet and locking the door of the house, fared forth running at speed, to the sea shore whence he fixed his eyes on the place of the ship which had carried off his Miriam whilst sighs burst from his breast and tears from his lids as he recited these couplets,

“Peace be with you, sans you naught compensateth me * The near, the far, two cases only here I see:
I yearn for you at every hour and tide as yearns * For water-place wayfarer plodding wearily.
With you abide my hearing, heart and eyen-sight * And (sweeter than the honeycomb) your memory.
Then, O my Grief when fared afar your retinue * And bore that ship away my sole expectancy.”

And Nur al-Din wept and wailed, bemoaned himself and complained, crying out and saying, “O Miriam! O Miriam! Was it but a vision of thee I saw in sleep or in the allusions of dreams?” And by reason of that which grew on him of regrets, he recited these couplets,[506]

“Mazed with thy love no more I can feign patience,
This heart of mine has held none dear but thee!
And if mine eye hath gazed on other’s beauty,
Ne’er be it joyed again with sight of thee!
I’ve sworn an oath I’ll ne’er forget to love thee,
And sad’s this breast that pines to meet with thee!
Thou’st made me drink a love-cup full of passion,
Blest time! When I may give the draught to thee!
Take with thee this my form where’er thou goest,
And when thou ‘rt dead let me be laid near thee!
Call on me in my tomb, my bones shall answer
And sigh responses to a call from thee!
If it were asked, ‘What wouldst thou Heaven should order?’
‘His will,’ I answer, ‘First, and then what pleases thee.’”

As Nur al-Din was in this case, weeping and crying out, “O Miriam! O Miriam!” behold, an old man landed from a vessel and coming up to him, saw him shedding tears and heard him reciting these verses,

“O Maryam of beauty[507] return, for these eyne * Are as
densest clouds railing drops in line:
Ask amid mankind and my railers shall say * That mine eyelids are
drowning these eyeballs of mine.”

Said the old man, “O my son, meseems thou weepest for the damsel who sailed yesterday with the Frank?” When Nur al-Din heard these words of the Shaykh he fell down in a swoon and lay for a long while without life; then, coming to himself, he wept with sore weeping and improvised these couplets,

“Shall we e’er be unite after severance-tide * And return in the
perfectest cheer to bide?
In my heart indeed is a lowe of love * And I’m pained by the
spies who my pain deride:
My days I pass in amaze distraught, * And her image a-nights I
would see by side:
By Allah, no hour brings me solace of love * And how can it when
makebates vex me and chide?
A soft-sided damsel of slenderest waist * Her arrows of eyne on
my heart hath plied?
Her form is like Bán[508] -tree branch in garth * Shame her
charms the sun who his face most hide:
Did I not fear God (be He glorified!) * ‘My Fair be glorified!’
Had I cried.”

The old man looked at him and noting his beauty and grace and symmetry and the fluency of his tongue and the seductiveness of his charms, had ruth on him and his heart mourned for his case. Now that Shaykh was the captain of a ship, bound to the damsel’s city, and in this ship were a hundred Moslem merchants, men of the Saving Faith; so he said to Nur al-Din, “Have patience and all will yet be well; I will bring thee to her an it be the will of Allah, extolled and exalted be He!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Eighty-first Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when

the old skipper said to Nur al-Din, “I will bring thee to her, Inshallah!” the youth asked, “When shall we set out?” and the other said, “Come but three days more and we will depart in peace and prosperity.” Nur al-Din rejoiced at the captain’s words with joy exceeding and thanked him for his bounty and benevolence. Then he recalled the days of love-liesse dear and union with his slave-girl without peer, and he shed bitter tears and recited these couplets,

“Say, will to me and you the Ruthful union show * My lords! Shall
e’er I win the wish of me or no?
A visit-boon by you will shifty Time vouchsafe? * And seize your
image eye-lids which so hungry grow?
With you were Union to be sold, I fain would buy; * But ah, I see
such grace doth all my means outgo!”

Then Nur al-Din went forthright to the market and bought what he needed of viaticum and other necessaries for the voyage and returned to the Rais, who said to him, “O my son, what is that thou hast with thee?” said he, “My provisions and all whereof I have need for the voyage.” Thereupon quoth the old man, laughing, “O my son, art thou going a-pleasuring to Pompey’s Pillar?[509] Verily, between thee and that thou seekest is two months’ journey and the wind be fair and the weather favourable.” Then he took of him somewhat of money and going to the bazar, bought him a sufficiency of all that he needed for the voyage and filled him a large earthen jar[510] with fresh water. Nur al-Din abode in the ship three days until the merchants had made an end of their precautions and preparations and embarked, when they set sail and putting out to sea, fared on one-and-fifty days. After this, there came out upon them corsairs,[511] pirates who sacked the ship and taking Nur al-Din and all therein prisoners, carried them to the city of France and paraded them before the King, who bade cast them into jail, Nur al-Din amongst the number. As they were being led to prison the galleon[512] arrived with the Princess Miriam and the one-eyed Wazir, and when it made the harbour, the lameter landed and going up to the King gave him the glad news of his daughter’s safe return: whereupon they beat the kettledrums for good tidings and decorated the city after the goodliest fashion. Then the King took horse, with all his guards and lords and notables and rode down to the sea to meet her. The moment the ship cast anchor she came ashore, and the King saluted her and embraced her and mounting her on a bloodsteed, bore her to the palace, where her mother received her with open arms, and asked her of her case and whether she was a maid as before or whether she had become a woman carnally known by man.[513] She replied, "O my mother, how should a girl, who hath been sold from merchant to merchant in the land of Moslems, a slave commanded, abide a virgin? The merchant who bought me threatened me with the bastinado and violenced me and took my maidenhead, after which he sold me to another and he again to a third." When the Queen heard these her words, the light in her eyes became night and she repeated her confession to the King who was chagrined thereat and his affair was grievous to him. So he expounded her case to his Grandees and Patricians[514] who said to him, "O King, she hath been defiled by the Moslems and naught will purify her save the striking off of an hundred Mohammedan heads." Whereupon the King sent for the True Believers he had imprisoned; and they decapitated them, one after another, beginning with the captain, till none was left save Nur al-Din. They tare off a strip of his skirt and binding his eyes therewith, led him to the rug of blood and were about to smite his neck, when behold, an ancient dame came up to the King at that very moment and said, "O my lord, thou didst vow to bestow upon each and every church five Moslem captives, to help us in the service thereof, so Allah would restore thee thy daughter the Princess Miriam; and now she is restored to thee, so do thou fulfil thy vow." The King replied, "O my mother, by the virtue of the Messiah and the Veritable Faith, there remaineth to me of the prisoners but this one captive, whom they are about to put to death: so take him with thee to help in the service of the church, till there come to me more prisoners of the Moslems, when I will send thee other four. Hadst thou come earlier, before they hewed off the heads of these, I had given thee as many as thou wouldest have." The old woman thanked the King for his boon and wished him continuance of life, glory and prosperity. Then without loss of time she went up to Nur al-Din, whom she raised from the rug of blood; and, looking narrowly at him saw a comely youth and a dainty, with a delicate skin and a face like the moon at her full; whereupon she carried him to the church and said to him, "O my son, doff these clothes which are upon thee, for they are fit only for the service of the Sultan."[515] So saying the ancient dame brought him a gown and hood of black wool and a broad girdle,[516] in which she clad and cowled him; and, after binding on his belt, bade him do the service of the church. Accordingly, he served the church seven days, at the end of which time behold, the old woman came up to him and said, "O Moslem, don thy silken dress and take these ten dirhams and go out forthright and divert thyself abroad this day, and tarry not here a single moment, lest thou lose thy life." Quoth he, "What is to do, O my mother?"; and quoth she, "Know, O my son, that the King's daughter, the Princess Miriam the Girdle-girl, hath a mind to visit the church this day, to seek a blessing by pilgrimage and to make oblation thereto, a douceur[517] of thank-offering for her deliverance from the land of the Moslems and in fulfilment of the vows she vowed to the Messiah, so he would save her. With her are four hundred damsels, not one of whom but is perfect in beauty and loveliness and all of them are daughters of Wazirs and Emirs and Grandees: they will be here during this very hour and if their eyes fall on thee in this church, they will hew thee in pieces with swords." Thereupon Nur al-Din took the ten dirhams from the ancient dame, and donning his own dress, went out to the bazar and walked about the city and took his pleasure therein, till he knew its highways and gates, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Eighty-second Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Nur al-Din, after donning his own dress and taking the ten dirhams from the ancient dame, fared forth to the market streets and wandered about a while till he knew every quarter of the city, after which he returned to the church[518] and saw the Princess Miriam the Girdle-girl, daughter of the King of France come up to the fane, attended by four hundred damsels, high-bosomed maids like moons, amongst whom was the daughter of the one-eyed Wazir and those of the Emirs and Lords of the realm; and she walked in their midst as she were moon among stars. When his eyes fell upon her Nur al-Din could not contain himself, but cried out from the core of his heart, “O Miriam! O Miriam!” When the damsels heard his outcry they ran at him with swords shining bright like flashes of leven-light and would have slain him forthright. But the Princess turned and looking on him, knew him with fullest knowledge, and said to her maidens, “Leave this youth; doubtless he is mad, for the signs of madness be manifest on his face.” When Nur al-Din heard this, he uncovered his head and rolled his eyes and made signs with his hands and twisted his legs, foaming the while at the mouth. Quoth the Princess, “Said I not that the poor youth was mad? Bring him to me and stand off from him, that I may hear what he saith; for I know the speech of the Arabs and will look into his case and see if his madness admit of cure or not.” So they laid hold of him and brought him to her; after which they withdrew to a distance and she said to him, “Hast thou come hither on my account and ventured thy life for my sake and feignest thyself mad?” He replied, “O my lady, hast thou not heard the saying of the poet?,[519]

‘Quoth they, ‘Thou’rt surely raving mad for her thou lov’st;’ and
I, ‘There is no pleasantness in life but for the mad,’
reply.
Compare my madness with herself for whom I rave; if she Accord
therewith, then blame me not for that which I aby.’”

Miriam replied, “By Allah, O Nur al-Din, indeed thou hast sinned against thyself, for I warned thee of this before it befell thee: yet wouldst thou not hearken to me, but followedst thine own lust: albeit that whereof I gave thee to know I learnt not by means of inspiration nor physiognomy[520] nor dreams, but by eye-witness and very sight; for I saw the one-eyed Wazir and knew that he was not come to Alexandria but in quest of me.” Said he, “O my lady Miriam, we seek refuge with Allah from the error of the intelligent!”[521] Then his affliction redoubled on him and he recited this saying,[522]

“Pass o’er my fault, for ’tis the wise man’s wont
Of other’s sins to take no harsh account;
And as all crimes have made my breast their site,

So thine all shapes of mercy should unite.
Who from above would mercy seek to know,
Should first be merciful to those below."

Then Nur al-Din and Princess Miriam ceased not from lovers' chiding which to trace would be tedious, relating each to other that which had befallen them and reciting verses and making moan, one to other, of the violence of passion and the pangs of pine and desire, whilst the tears ran down their cheeks like rivers, till there was left them no strength to say a word and so they continued till day deprated and night darkened. Now the Princess was clad in a green dress, purfled with red gold and broidered with pearls and gems which enhanced her beauty and loveliness and inner grace; and right well quoth the poet of her,[523]

"Like the full moon she shineth in garments all of green, With
  loosened vest and collars and flowing hair beseen.
'What is thy name?' I asked her, and she replied, 'I'm she Who
  roasts the hearts of lovers on coals of love and teen.
I am the pure white silver, ay, and the gold wherewith The
  bondsmen from strait prison and dour releasčd been.'
Quoth I, 'I'm all with rigours consumed;' but 'On a rock,' Said
  she, 'such as my heart is, thy plaints are wasted clean.'
'Even if thy heart,' I answered, 'be rock in very deed, Yet hath
  God caused fair water well from the rock, I ween.'"

And when night darkened on them the Lady Miriam went up to her women and asked them, "Have ye locked the door?"; and they answered, "Indeed we have locked it." So she took them and went with them to a place called the Chapel of the Lady Mary the Virgin, Mother of Light, because the Nazarenes hold that there are her heart and soul. The girls betook themselves to prayer for blessings from above and circuited all the church; and when they had made an end of their visitation, the Princess turned to them and said, "I desire to pass the night alone in the Virgin's chapel and seek a blessing thereof, for that yearning after it hath betided me, by reason of my long absence in the land of the Moslems; and as for you, when ye have made an end of your visitation, do ye sleep whereso ye will." Replied they, "With love and goodly gree: be it as thou wilt!"; and leaving her alone in the chapel, dispersed about the church and slept. The Lady Miriam waited till they were out of sight and hearing, then went in search of Nur al-Din, whom she found sitting in a corner on live coals, awaiting her. He rose and kissed her hands and feet and she sat down and seated him by her side. Then she pulled off all that was upon her of raiment and ornaments and fine linen and taking Nur al-Din in her arms strained him to her bosom. And they ceased not, she and he, from kissing and clipping and strumming to the tune of "hocus-pocus,"[524] saying the while, "How short are the nights of Union and the nights of Disunion how long are they!" and reciting these verses,

"O Night of Union, Time's virginal prized, * White star of the
Nights with auroral dyes,
Thou garrest Dawn after Noon to rise * Say art thou Kohl in
Morning's Eyes,
Or wast thou Slumber to bleared eye lief?
O Night of Parting, how long thy stay * Whose latest hours aye
the first portray,
This endless circle that noways may * Show breach till the coming
of Judgment-day,
Day when dies the lover of parting-grief."[525]

As they were in this mighty delight and joy engrossing they heard one of the servants of the Saint[526] smite the gong[527] upon the roof, to call the folk to the rites of their worship, and he was even as saith the poet,

"I saw him strike the gong and asked of him straightway, * Who
made the Fawn[528] at striking going so knowing, eh?'
And to my soul, 'What smiting irketh thee the more — * Striking
the gong or striking note of going,[529] say?'"

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Eighty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Nur al-Din and Miriam the Girdle-girl rose forthwith and donned her clothes and ornaments; but this was grievous to Nur al-Din, and his gladness was troubled; the tears streamed from his eyes and he recited these couplets,

“I ceasčd not to kiss that cheek with budding roses dight * And
eyes down cast and bit the same with most emphatic bite;
Until we were in gloria[530] and lay him down the spy * And
sank his eyes within his brain declining further sight:
And struck the gongs as they that had the charge of them were
like * Muezzin crying duty-prayers in Allah’s book indite.
Then rose she up right hastily and donned the dress she’d doffed

* Sore fearing lest a shooting-star[531] upon our heads
alight.
And cried, ‘O wish and will of me, O end of all my hopes! *
Behold the morning comes to us in brightest whitest light.’
I swear if but one day of rule were given to my life * And I were
made an Emperor of majesty and might,
Adown I’d break the buttresses of churches one and all * And by
their slaughter rid the earth of every shaveling wight.”

Then the Lady Miriam pressed him to her bosom and kissed his cheek and asked him, “O Nur al-Din, how long hast thou been in this town?” “Seven days.” “Hast thou walked about in it, and dost thou know its ways and issues and its sea-gates and land gates?” “Yes!” “Knowest thou the way to the offertory-chest[532] of the church?” “Yes!” “Since thou knowest all this, as soon as the first third[533] of the coming night is over, go to the offertory-chest and take thence what thou wishest and willest. Then open the door that giveth upon the tunnel[534] leading to the sea, and go down to the harbour, where thou wilt find a little ship and ten men therein, and when the Rais shall see thee, he will put out his hand to thee. Give him thy hand and he will take thee up into the ship, and do thou wait there till I come to thee. But ‘ware and have a care lest sleep overtake thee this night, or thou wilt repent whenas repentance shall avail thee naught.” Then the Princess farewelled him and going forth from Nur al-Din, aroused from sleep her women and the rest of the damsels, with whom she betook herself to the church door and knocked; whereupon the ancient dame opened to her and she went forth and found the knights and varlets standing without. They brought her a dapple she-mule and she mounted: whereupon they raised over her head a canopy[535] with curtains of silk, and the knights took hold of the mule’s halter. Then the guards[536] encompassed her about, drawn brand in hand, and fared on with her, followed by her, till they brought her to the palace of the King her father. Meanwhile, Nur al-Din abode concealed behind the curtain, under cover of which Miriam and he had passed the night, till it was broad day, when the main door was opened and the church became full of people. Then he mingled with the folk and accosted the old Prioress, the guardian[537] of the shrine, who said to him, “Where didst thou lie last night?” Said he, “In the town as thou badest me.” Quoth she, “O my son, thou hast done the right thing; for, hadst thou nighted in the Church, she had slain thee on the foulest wise.” And quoth he, “Praised be Allah who hath delivered me from the evil of this night!” Then he busied himself with the service of the church and ceased not busying till day departed and night with darkness starkened when he arose and opened the offertory-chest and took thence of jewels whatso was light of weight and weighty of worth. Then he tarried till the first watch of the night was past, when he made his way to the postern of the tunnel and opening it, went forth, calling on Allah for protection, and ceased not faring on until, after finding and opening the door, he came to the sea. Here he discovered the vessel moored to the shore near the gate; and her skipper, a tall old man of comely aspect with a long beard, standing in the waist, his ten men being ranged before him. Nur al-Din gave him his hand, as Miriam had bidden him, and the captain took it and pulling him on board of the ship cried out to his crew, saying, “Cast off the moorings and put out to sea with us, ere day break.” Said one of the ten, “O my lord the Captain, how shall we put out now, when the King hath notified us that to-morrow he will embark in this ship and go round about the sea, being fearful for his daughter Miriam from the Moslem thieves?” But the Rais cried out at them saying, “Woe to you, O accursed; Dare ye gainsay me and bandy words with me?” So saying the old captain bared his blade and with it dealt the sailor who had spoken a thrust in the throat, that the steel came out gleaming from his nape; and quoth another of the sailors, “What hath our comrade done of crime, that thou shouldst cut his throat?” Thereupon the captain clapped hand to sword and smote off the speaker’s head, nor did he leave smiting the rest of the sailors till he had slain them all, one after other, and cast the ten bodies ashore. Then he turned to Nur al-Din and cried out at him with a terrible great cry, that made him tremble, saying, “Go down and pull up the mooring-stake.” Nur al-Din feared lest he should strike him also with the sword; so he sprang up and leapt ashore and pulling up the stake jumped aboard again, swiftlier than the dazzling leven. The captain ceased not to bid him do this and do that and tack and wear hither and thither and look at the stars, and Nur al-Din did all that he bade him, with heart a-quaking for affright; whilst he himself spread the sails, and the ship fared with the twain into the dashing sea, swollen with clashing billows. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Eighty-fourth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the old skipper had made sail he drave the ship, aided by Nur al-Din, into the dashing sea before a favouring gale. Meanwhile, Nur al-Din held on to the tackle immersed in deep thought, and drowned in the sea of solicitude, knowing not what was hidden for him in the future; and whenever he looked at the captain, his heart quaked and he knew not whither the Rais went with him. He abode thus, preoccupied with care and doubt, till it was high day, when he looked at the skipper and saw him take hold of his long beard and pull at it, whereupon it came off in his hand and Nur al-Din, examining it, saw that it was but a false beard glued on. So he straitly considered that same Rais, and behold, it was the Princess Miriam, his mistress and the dearling of his heart, who had contrived to waylay the captain and slay him and skinned off his beard, which she had stuck on to her own face. At this Nur al-Din was transported for joy, and his breast broadened and he marvelled at her prowess and the stoutness of her heart and said to her, “Welcome, O my hope and my desire and the end of mine every wish!” Then love and gladness agitated him and he made sure of winning to his hopes and his expectancy; wherefore he broke out into song and chanted these couplets,

“To all who unknown my love for the May * From whom Fate disjoins
me O say, I pray,
‘Ask my kith and kin of my love that aye * Ensweetens my verses
to lovely lay:
For the loss of the tribesmen my life o’er sway!’

Their names when named heal all malady; * Cure and chase from
heart every pain I dree:
And my longings for love reach so high degree * That my Sprite is
maddened each morn I see,
And am grown of the crowd to be saw and say.

No blame in them will I e’er espy: * No! nor aught of solace sans
them descry:
Your love hath shot me with pine, and I * Bear in heart a flame
that shall never die,
But fire my liver with fiery ray.

All folk my sickness for marvel score * That in darkest night I
wake evermore
What ails them to torture this heart forlore * And deem right for
loving my blood t’ outpour:
And yet — how justly unjust are they!

Would I wot who ’twas could obtain of you * To wrong a youth
who’s so fain of you:
By my life and by Him who made men of you * And the spy tell
aught I complain of you
He lies, by Allah, in foulest way!

May the Lord my sickness never dispel, * Nor ever my heart of its
pains be well,
What day I regret that in love I fell * Or laud any land but

wherein ye dwell:
Wring my heart and ye will or make glad and gay!

I have vitals shall ever be true to you * Though racked by the rigours not new to you
Ere this wrong and this right I but sue to you: * Do what you will to thrall who to you
Shall ne'er grudge his life at your feet to lay."

When Nur al-Din ceased to sing, the Princess Miriam marvelled at his song and thanked him therefor, saying, "Whoso's case is thus it behoveth him to walk the ways of men and never do the deed of curs and cowards." Now she was stout of heart and cunning in the sailing of ships over the salt sea, and she knew all the winds and their shiftings and every course of the main. So Nur al-Din said, "O my lady, hadst thou prolonged this case on me,[538] I had surely died for stress of affright and chagrin, more by token of the fire of passion and love-longing and the cruel pangs of separation." She laughed at his speech and rising without stay or delay brought out somewhat of food and liquor; and they ate and drank and enjoyed themselves and made merry. Then she drew forth rubies and other gems and precious stones and costly trinkets of gold and silver and all manner things of price, light of weight and weighty of worth, which she had taken from the palace of her sire and his treasuries, and displayed them to Nur al-Din, who rejoiced therein with joy exceeding. All this while the wind blew fair for them and merrily sailed the ship nor ceased sailing till they drew near the city of Alexandria and sighted its landmarks, old and new, and Pompey's Pillar. When they made the port, Nur al-Din landed forthright and securing the ship to one of the Fulling-Stones,[539] took somewhat of the treasures that Miriam had brought with her, and said to her, "O my lady, tarry in the ship, against I return and carry thee up into the city in such way as I should wish and will." Quoth she, "It behoveth that this be done quickly, for tardiness in affairs engendereth repentance." Quoth he, "There is no tardiness in me;" and, leaving her in the ship, went up into the city to the house of the druggist his father's old fried, to borrow of his wife for Miriam veil and mantilla, and walking boots and petticoat-trousers after the usage of the women of Alexandria, unknowing that there was appointed to betide him of the shifts of Time, the Father of Wonders, that which was far beyond his reckoning. Thus it befel Nur al-Din and Miriam the Girdle-girl; but as regards her sire the King of France, when he arose in the morning, he missed his daughter and questioned her women and her eunuchs of her. Answered they, “O our lord, she went out last night, to go to Church and after that we have no tidings of her.” But, as the King talked with them, behold, there arose so great a clamour of cries below the palace, that the place rang thereto, and he said, “What may be the news?” The folk replied, “O King, we have found ten men slain on the sea-shore, and the royal yacht is missing. Moreover we saw the postern of the Church, which giveth upon the tunnel leading to the sea, wide open; and the Moslem prisoner, who served in the Church, is missing.” Quoth the King, “An my ship be lost, without doubt or dispute.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Eighty-fifth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King of France missed his daughter they brought him tidings of her, saying, “Thy yacht is lost”; and he replied, “An the craft be lost, without dispute or doubt my daughter is in it.” So he summoned without stay or delay the Captain of the Port and cried out at him, saying, “By the virtue[540] of the Messiah and the Faith which is no liar, except thou and thy fighting men overtake my ship forthright and bring it back to me, with those who are therein, I will do thee die the foulest of deaths and make a terrible example of thee!” Thereupon the captain went out from before him, trembling, and betook himself to the ancient dame of the Church, to whom said he, ‘Heardest thou aught from the captive, that was with thee, anent his native land and what countryman he was?” And she answered, “He used to say, I come from the town of Alexandria.” When the captain heard the old woman’s words he returned forthright to the port and cried out to the sailors, “Make ready and set sail.” So they did his bidding and straightway putting out to sea, fared night and day till they sighted the city of Alexandria at the very time when Nur al-Din landed, leaving the Princess in the ship. They soon espied the royal yacht and knew her; so they moored their own vessel at a distance therefrom and putting off in a little frigate they had with them, which drew but two cubits of water and in which were an hundred fighting-men, amongst them the one-eyed Wazir (for that he was a stubborn tyrant and a froward devil and a wily thief, none could avail against his craft, as he were Abu Mohammed al-Battál[541]), they ceased not rowing till they reached the bark and boarding her, all at once, found none therein save the Princess Miriam. So they took her and the ship, and returning to their own vessel, after they had landed and waited a long while,[542] set sail forthright for the land of the Franks, having accomplished their errand, without a fight or even drawing sword. The wind blew fair for them and they sailed on, without ceasing and with all diligence, till they reached the city of France and landing with the Princess Miriam carried her to her father, who received her, seated on the throne of his Kingship. As soon as he saw her, he said to her, "Woe to thee, O traitress! What ailed thee to leave the faith of thy fathers and forefathers and the safeguard of the Messiah, on whom is our reliance, and follow after the faith of the Vagrants,[543] to wit, the faith of Al-Islam, the which arose with the sword against the Cross and the Images?" Replied Miriam, "I am not at fault, I went out by night to the church, to visit the Lady Mary and seek a blessing of her, when there fell upon me unawares a band of Moslem robbers, who gagged me and bound me fast and carrying me on board the barque, set sail with me for their own country. However, I beguiled them and talked with them of their religion, till they loosed my bonds; and ere I knew it thy men overtook me and delivered me. And by the virtue of the Messiah and the Faith which is no liar and the Cross and the Crucified thereon, I rejoiced with joy exceeding in my release from them and my bosom broadened and I was glad for my deliverance from the bondage of the Moslems!" Rejoined the King, "Thou liest, O whore! O adultress! By the virtue of that which is revealed of prohibition and permission in the manifest Evangel,[544] I will assuredly do thee die by the foulest of deaths and make thee the vilest of examples! Did it not suffice thee to do as thou didst the first time and put off thy lies upon us, but thou must return upon us with thy deceitful inventions?" Thereupon the King bade kill her and crucify her over the palace gate; but, at that moment the one-eyed

Wazir, who had long been enamoured of the Princess, came in to him and said, "Ho King! slay her not, but give her to me to wife, and I will watch over her with the utmost warding, nor will I go in unto her, till I have built her a palace of solid stone, exceeding high of foundation, so no thieves may avail to climb up to its terrace-roof; and when I have made an end of building it, I will sacrifice thirty Moslems before the gate thereof, as an expiatory offering to the Messiah for myself and for her." The King granted his request and bade the priests and monks and patriarchs marry the Princess to him; so they did his bidding, whereupon he bade set about building a strong and lofty palace, befitting her rank and the workmen fell to work upon it. On this wise it betided the Princess Miriam and her sire and the one-eyed Wazir; but as regards Nur al-Din, when he came back with the petticoat-trousers and mantilla and walking boots and all the attire of Alexandrian women which he had borrowed of the druggist's wife, he "found the air void and the fane afar[545] "; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Eighty-sixth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Nur al-Din, "found the air void[546] and the fane afar," his heart sank within him and he wept floods of tears and recited these verses,[547]

"The phantom of Soada came by night to wake me towards morning
while my companions were sleeping in the desert:
But when we awoke to behold the nightly phantom, I saw the air
vacant, and the place of visitation distant."

Then Nur al-Din walked on along the sea-shore and turned right and left, till he saw folk gathered together on the beach and heard them say, "O Moslems, there remaineth no honour to Alexandria-city, since the Franks enter it and snatch away those who are therein and return to their own land, at their leisure[548] nor pursued of any of the Moslems or fighters for the Faith!" Quoth Nur al-Din to them, "What is to do?"; and quoth they, "O my son, one of the ships of the Franks, full of armed men, came down but now upon the port and carried off a ship which was moored here, with her that was therein, and made unmolested for their own land." Nur al-Din fell down a-swoon, on hearing these words; and when he recovered they questioned him of his case and he told them all that had befallen him first and last; whereupon they all took to reviling him and railing at him, saying, "Why couldst thou not bring her up into the town without mantilla and muffler?" And all and each of the folk gave him some grievous word, berating him with sharp speech, and shooting at him some shaft of reproach, albeit one said, "Let him be; that which hath befallen him sufficeth him," till he again fell down in a fainting-fit. And behold, at this moment, up came the old druggist, who, seeing the folk gathered together, drew near to learn what was the matter and found Nur al-Din lying a-swoon in their midst. So he sat down at his head and arousing him, said to him as soon as he recovered, "O my son, what is this case in which I see thee?" Nur al-Din said, "O uncle, I had brought back in a barque my lost slave-girl from her father's city, suffering patiently all I suffered of perils and hardships; and when I came with her to this port, I made the vessel fast to the shore and leaving her therein, repaired to thy dwelling and took of thy consort what was needful for her, that I might bring her up into the town; but the Franks came and capturing barque and damsel made off unhindered, and returned to their own land." Now when the Shaykh, the druggist, heard this, the light in his eyes became night and he grieved with sore grieving for Nur al-Din and said to him, "O my son, why didst thou not bring her out of the ship into the city without mantilla? But speech availeth not at this season; so rise, O my son, and come up with me to the city; haply Allah will vouchsafe thee a girl fairer than she, who shall console thee for her. Alhamdolillah-praised be Allah-who hath not made thee lose aught by her! Nay, thou hast gained by her. And bethink thee, O my son, that Union and Disunion are in the hands of the Most High King." Replied Nur al-Din, "By Allah, O uncle, I can never be consoled for her loss nor will I ever leave seeking her, though on her account I drink the cup of death!" Rejoined the druggist, "O my son, and what art thou minded to do?" Quoth Nur al-Din, "I am minded to return to the land of the Franks[549] and enter the city of France and emperil myself there; come what may, loss of life or gain of life." Quoth the druggist, "O my son, there is an old saw, 'Not always doth the crock escape the shock'; and if they did thee no hurt the first time, belike they will slay thee this time, more by token that they know thee now with full knowledge." Quoth Nur al-Din, "O my uncle, let me set out and be slain for the love of her straightway and not die of despair for her loss by slow torments." Now as Fate determined there was then a ship in port ready to sail, for its passengers had made an end of their affairs[550] and the sailors had pulled up the mooring-stakes, when Nur al-Din embarked in her. So they shook out their canvas and relying on the Compassionate, put out to sea and sailed many days, with fair wind and weather, till behold, they fell in with certain of the Frank cruisers, which were scouring those waters and seizing upon all ships they saw, in their fear for the King's daughter from the Moslem corsairs: and as often as they made prize of a Moslem ship, they carried all her people to the King of France, who put them to death in fulfilment of the vow he had vowed on account of his daughter Miriam. So, seeing the ship wherein was Nur al-Din they boarded her and taking him and the rest of the company prisoners, to the number of an hundred Moslems, carried them to the King and set them between his hands. He bade cut their throats. Accordingly they slaughtered them all forthwith, one after another, till there was none left but Nur al-Din, whom the headsman had left to the last, in pity of his tender age and slender shape. When the King saw him, he knew him right well and said to him, "Art thou not Nur al-Din, who was with us before?" Said he, "I was never with thee: and my name is not Nur al-Din, but Ibrahim." Rejoined the King; "Thou liest, thou art Nur al-Din, he whom I gave to the ancient dame the Prioress, to help her in the service of the church." But Nur al-Din replied, "O my lord, my name is Ibrahim." Quoth the King, "Wait a while," and bade his knights fetch the old woman forthright, saying, "When she cometh and seeth thee, she will know an thou be Nur al-Din or not." At this juncture, behold, in came the one-eyed Wazir who had married the Princess and kissing the earth before the King said to him, "Know, O King, that the palace is finished; and thou knowest how I vowed to the Messiah that, when I had made an end of building it, I would cut thirty Moslems' throats before its doors; wherefore I am come to take them of thee, that I may sacrifice them and so fulfil my vow to the Messiah. They shall be at my charge, by way of loan, and whenas there come prisoners to my hands, I will give thee other thirty in lieu of them.” Replied the King, ‘By the virtue of the Messiah and the Faith which is no liar, I have but this one captive left!” And he pointed to Nur al-Din, saying, “Take him and slaughter him at this very moment and the rest I will send thee when there come to my hands other prisoners of the Moslems.” Thereupon the one-eyed Wazir arose and took Nur al-Din and carried him to his palace, thinking to slaughter him on the threshold of the gate; but the painters said to him, “O my lord, we have two days’ painting yet to do: so bear with us and delay to cut the throat of this captive, till we have made an end of our work; haply by that time the rest of the thirty will come, so thou mayst despatch them all at one bout and accomplish thy vow in a single day.” Thereupon the Wazir bade imprison Nur al-Din. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Eighty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Wazir bade imprison Nur al-Din, they carried him to the stables and left him there in chains, hungering and thirsting and making moan for himself; for indeed he saw death face to face. Now it fortuned, by the ordinance of Destiny and fore-ordained Fate, that the King had two stallions, own brothers,[551] such as the Chosroe Kings might sigh in vain to possess themselves of one of them; they were called Sábik and Láhik[552] and one of them was pure silvern white while the other was black as the darksome night. And all the Kings of the isles had said, “Whoso stealeth us one of these stallions, we will give him all he seeketh of red gold and pearls and gems;” but none could avail to steal them. Now one of them fell sick of a jaundice and there came a whiteness over his eyes;[553] whereupon the King gathered together all the farriers in the city to treat him; but they all failed of his cure. Presently the Wazir came into the King; and finding him troubled because of the horse, thought to do away his concern and said to him, “O King, give me the stallion and I will cure him,” The King consented and caused carry the horse to the stable wherein Nur al-Din lay chained; but, when he missed his brother, he cried out with an exceeding great cry and neighed, so that he affrighted all the folk. The Wazir, seeing that he did thus but because he was parted from his brother, went to tell the King, who said, "If this, which is but a beast, cannot brook to be parted from his brother, how should it be with those that have reason?" And he bade his grooms take the other horse and put him with his brother in the Wazir's stables, saying, "Tell the Minister that the two stallions be a gift from me to him, for the sake of my daughter Miriam." Nur al-Din was lying in the stable, chained and shackled, when they brought in the two stallions and he saw that one of them had a film over his eyes. Now he had some knowledge of horses and of the doctoring of their diseases; so he said to himself, "This by Allah is my opportunity! I will go to the Wazir and lie to him, saying, 'I will heal thee this horse': then will I do with him somewhat that shall destroy his eyes, and he will slay me and I shall be at rest from this woe-full life." So he waited till the Wazir entered the stable, to look upon the steed, and said to him, "O my lord, what will be my due, an I heal this horse, and make his eyes whole again?" Replied the Wazir, "As my head liveth, an thou cure him, I will spare thy life and give thee leave to crave a boon of me!" And Nur al-Din said, "O my lord, bid my hands be unbound!" So the Wazir bade unbind him and he rose and taking virgin glass,[554] brayed it and mixed it with unslaked lime and a menstruum of onion-juice. Then he applied the whole to the horse's eyes and bound them up, saying in himself, "Now will his eyes be put out and they will slay me and I shall be at rest from this woe-full life." Then he passed the night with a heart free from the uncertainty[555] of cark and care, humbling himself to Allah the Most High and saying, "O Lord, in Thy knowledge is that which dispenseth with asking and craving!" Now when the morning morrowed and the sun shone, the Wazir came to the stable and, loosing the bandage from the horse's eyes considered them and found them finer than before, by the ordinance of the King who openeth evermore. So he said to Nur al-Din, "O Moslem, never in the world saw I the like of thee for the excellence of thy knowledge. By the virtue of the Messiah and the Faith which is no liar, thou makest me with wonder to admire, for all the farriers of our land have failed to heal this horse!" Then he went up to Nur al-Din and, doing off his shackles with his own hand, clad him in a costly dress and made him his master of the Horse; and he appointed him stipends and allowances and lodged him in a story over the stables. So Nur al-Din abode awhile, eating and drinking and making merry and bidding and forbidding those who tended the horses; and whoso neglected or failed to fodder those tied up in the stable wherein was his service, he would throw down and beat with grievous beating and lay him by the legs in bilboes of iron. Furthermore, he used every day to descend and visit the stallions and rub them down with his own hand, by reason of that which he knew of their value in the Wazir's eyes and his love for them; wherefore the Minister rejoiced in him with joy exceeding and his breast broadened and he was right glad, unknowing what was to be the issue of his case. Now in the new palace, which the one-eyed Wazir had bought for Princess Miriam, was a lattice-window overlooking his old house and the flat wherein Nur al-Din lodged. The Wazir had a daughter, a virgin of extreme loveliness, as she were a fleeing gazelle or a bending branchlet, and it chanced that she sat one day at the lattice aforesaid and behold, she heard Nur al-Din, singing and solacing himself under his sorrows by improvising these verses,

"O my Censor who wakest a-morn to see * The joys of life and its
  jubilee!
Had the fangs of Destiny bitten thee * In such bitter case thou
  hadst pled this plea,
  'Ah me, for Love and his case, ah me:
  My heart is burnt by the fires I dree!'
But from Fate's despight thou art safe this day;- * From her
  falsest fay and her crying 'Nay!'
Yet blame him not whom his woes waylay * Who distraught shall
say
  in his agony,
  'Ah me, for Love and his case, ah me:
  My heart is burnt by the fires I dree!'
Excuse such lovers in flight abhorr'd * Nor to Love's distreses
  thine aid afford:
Lest thy self be bound by same binding cord * And drink of Love's
  bitterest injury.
  'Ah me, for Love and his case, ah me:
  My heart is burnt by the fires I dree!'

In His service I wont as the days went by * With freest heart
through the nights to lie;
Nor tasted wake, nor of Love aught reckt * Ere my heart to
subjection summoned he:
'Ah me, for Love and his case, ah me:
My heart is burnt by the fires I dree!'
None weet of Love and his humbling wrong * Save those he
sickened
so sore, so long,
Who have lost their wits 'mid the lover-throng * Draining
bitterest cup by his hard decree:
'Ah me, for Love and his case, ah me:
My heart is burnt by the fires I dree!'
How oft in Night's gloom he cause wake to rue * Lovers' eyne, and
from eyelids their sleep withdrew;
Till tears to the railing of torrents grew, * Overflowing cheeks
, unconfined and free:
'Ah me, for Love and his case, ah me:
My heart is burnt by the fires I dree!'
How many a man he has joyed to steep * In pain, and for pine hath
he plundered sleep, —
Made don garb of mourning the deepest deep * And even his
dreaming forced to flee:
'Ah me, for Love and his case, ah me:
My heart is burnt by the fires I dree!'
How oft sufferance fails me! How bones are wasted * And down my
cheeks torrent tear-drops hasted:
And embittered She all the food I tasted * However sweet it was
wont to be:
'Ah me, for Love and his case, ah me:
My heart is burnt by the fires I dree!'
Most hapless of men who like me must love, * And must watch
when
Night droops her wing from above,
Who, swimming the main where affection drove * Must sign and
sink
in that gloomy sea:

‘Ah me, for Love and his case, ah me:
My heart is burnt by the fires I dree!’
Who is he to whom Love e’er stinted spite * And who scaped his springes and easy sleight;
Who free from Love lived in life’s delight? * Where is he can boast of such liberty?
‘Ah me, for Love and his case, ah me:
My heart is burnt by the fires I dree!’
Deign Lord such suffering wight maintain * Then best Protector, protect him deign!
Establish him and his life assain * And defend him from all calamity:
‘Ah me, for Love and his case, ah me:
My heart is burnt by the fires I dree!’”

And when Nur al-Din ended his say and ceased to sing his rhyming lay, the Wazir’s daughter said to herself, “By the virtue of the Messiah and the Faith which is no liar, verily this Moslem is a handsome youth! But doubtless he is a lover separated from his mistress. Would Heaven I wot an the beloved of this fair one is fair like unto him and if she pine for him as he for her! An she be seemly as he is, it behoveth him to pour forth tears and make moan of passion; but, an she be other than fair, his days are wasted in vain regrets and he is denied the taste of delights.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Eighty-eighth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir’s daughter said to herself, “An his beloved be fair as he, it behoveth him to pour forth tears; and, if other than fair, his heart is wasted in vain regrets!” Now Miriam the Girdle-girl, the Minister’s consort, had removed to the new palace the day before and the Wazir’s daughter knew that she was straitened of breast; so she was minded to seek her and talk with her and tell her the tidings of the young man and the rhymes and verses she had heard him recite; but, before she could carry out her design the Princess sent for her to cheer her with her converse. So she went to her and found her heavy at heart and her tears hurrying down her cheeks; and whilst she was weeping with sore weeping she recited these couplets,

“My life is gone but love-longings remain * And my breast is
straitened with pine and pain:
And my heart for parting to melt is fain * Yet hoping that union
will come again,
And join us in one who now are twain.
Stint your blame to him who in heart’s your thrall * With the
wasted frame which his sorrows gall,
Nor with aim of arrow his heart appal * For parted lover is
saddest of all,
And Love’s cup of bitters is sweet to drain!”

Quoth the Wazir’s daughter to her, “What aileth thee, O Princess, to be thus straitened in breast and sorrowful of thought?” Whereupon Miriam recalled the greatness of the delights that were past and recited these two couplets,

“I will bear in patience estrangement of friend * And on cheeks
rail tears that like torrents wend:
Haply Allah will solace my sorrow, for He * Neath the ribs of
unease maketh ease at end.”

Said the Wazir’s daughter, “O Princess, let not thy breast be straitened, but come with me straightway to the lattice; for there is with us in the stable[556] a comely young man, slender of shape and sweet of speech, and meseemeth he is a parted lover.” Miriam asked, “And by what sign knowest thou that he is a parted lover?”; and she answered, “O Queen, I know it by his improvising odes and verses all watches of the night and tides of the day.” Quoth the Princess in herself, “If what the Wazir’s daughter says be true, these are assuredly the traits of the baffled, the wretched Ali Nur al-Din. Would I knew if indeed he be the youth of whom she speaketh?” At this thought, love-longing and distraction of passion redoubled on her and she rose at once and walking with the maiden to the lattice, looked down upon the stables, where she saw her love and lord Nur al-Din and fixing her eyes steadfastly upon him, knew him with the bestest knowledge of love, albeit he was sick, of the greatness of his affection for her and of the fire of passion, and the anguish of separation and yearning and distraction. Sore upon him was emaciation and he was improvising and saying,

“My heart is a thrall; my tears ne’er abate * And their rains the
railing of clouds amate;
‘Twixt my weeping and watching and wanting love; * And whining
and pining for dearest mate.
Ah my burning heat, my desire, my lowe! * For the plagues that
torture my heart are eight;
And five upon five are in suite of them; * So stand and listen to
all I state:
Mem’ry, madding thoughts, moaning languishment, * Stress of
longing love, plight disconsolate;
In travail, affliction and strangerhood, * And annoy and joy when
on her I wait.
Fail me patience and stay for engrossing care * And sorrows my
suffering soul regrate.
On my heart the possession of passion grows * O who ask of what
fire in my heart’s create,
Why my tears in vitals should kindle flame, * Burning heart with
ardours insatiate,
Know, I’m drowned in Deluge[557] of tears and my soul * From
Lazá-lowe fares to Háwiyah-goal.”[558]

When the Princess Miriam beheld Nur al-Din and heard his loquence and verse and speech, she made certain that it was indeed her lord Nur al-Din; but she concealed her case from the Wazir’s daughter and said to her, “By the virtue of the Messiah and the Faith which is no liar, I thought not thou knewest of my sadness!” Then she arose forthright and withdrawing from the window, returned to her own place, whilst the Wazir’s daughter went to her own occupations. The Princess awaited patiently awhile, then returned to the window and sat there, gazing upon her beloved Nur al-Din and delighting her eyes with his beauty and inner and outer grace. And indeed, she saw that he was like unto moon at full on fourteenth night; but he was ever sighing with tears never drying, for that he recalled whatso he had been abying. So he recited these couplets,

“I hope for Union with my love which I may ne’er obtain * At all,
but bitterness of life is all the gain I gain:
My tears are likest to the main for ebb and flow of tide; * But
when I meet the blamer-wight to staunch my tears I’m fain.
Woe to the wretch who garred us part by spelling of his
spells;[559] * Could I but hend his tongue in hand I’d
cut his tongue in twain:
Yet will I never blame the days for whatso deed they did *
Mingling with merest, purest gall the cup they made me
drain!
To whom shall I address myself; and whom but you shall seek * A
heart left hostage in your Court, by you a captive ta’en?
Who shall avenge my wrongs on you,[560] tyrant despotical *
Whose tyranny but grows the more, the more I dare complain?
I made him regnant of my soul that he the reign assain * But me
he wasted wasting too the soul I gave to reign.
Ho thou, the Fawn, whom I so lief erst gathered to my breast *
Enow of severance tasted I to own its might and main,
Thou’rt he whose favours joined in one all beauties known to man,

* Yet I thereon have wasted all my Patience’ fair domain.
I entertained him in my heart whereto he brought unrest * But I
am satisfied that I such guest could entertain.
My tears for ever flow and flood, likest the surging sea * And
would I wot the track to take that I thereto attain.
Yet sore I fear that I shall die in depths of my chagrin * And
must despair for evermore to win the wish I’d win.”

When Miriam heard the verses of Nur al-Din the loving-hearted, the parted; they kindled in her vitals a fire of desire, and while her eyes ran over with tears, she recited these two couplets,

“I longed for him I love; but, when we met, * I was amazed nor
tongue nor eyes I found.

I had got ready volumes of reproach; * But when we met, could
syllable no sound."

When Nur al-Din heard the voice of Princess Miriam, he knew it and wept bitter tears, saying, "By Allah, this is the chanting of the Lady Miriam." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

FOOTNOTES VOLUME VIII.

[1] Ironicč; we are safe as long as we are defended by such a brave.

[2] Blue, azure. This is hardly the place for a protest, but I must not neglect the opportunity of cautioning my readers against rendering Bahr al-Azrak ("Blue River") by "Blue Nile." No Arab ever knew it by that name or thereby equalled it with the White Nile. The term was a pure invention of Abyssinian Bruce who was well aware of the unfact he was propagating, but his inordinate vanity and self-esteem, contrasting so curiously with many noble qualities, especially courage and self-reliance, tempted him to this and many other a traveller's tale.

[3] This is orthodox Moslem doctrine and it does something for the dignity of human nature which has been so unwisely depreciated and degraded by Christianity. The contrast of Moslem dignity and Christian abasement in the East is patent to every unblind traveller.

[4] Here ends vol. iii. of the Mac. Edit.

[5] This famous tale is a sister prose-poem to the "Arabian Odyssey" Sindbad the Seaman; only the Bassorite's travels are in Jinn-land and Japan. It has points of resemblance in "fundamental outline" with the Persian Romance of the Fairy Hasan Bánú and King Bahrám-i-Gúr. See also the Kathá (s.s.) and the two sons of the Asúra Máyá; the Tartar "Sidhi Kúr" (Tales of a Vampire or Enchanted Corpse) translated by Mr. W. J. Thoms (the Father of "Folk-lore" in 1846,) in "Lays and Legends of various Nations"; the Persian Bahár-i-Dánish (Prime of Lore). Miss Stokes' "Indian Fairy Tales"; Miss Frere's "Old Deccan Days" and Mrs. F. A. Steel's "Tale of the King and his Seven Sons," with notes by Lieutenant (now Captain) R. C. Temple (Folk-lore of the Panjab, Indian Antiquary of March, 1882).

[6] In the Mac. Edit. (vol. iv. i.) the merchant has two sons who became one a brazier ("dealer in copper-wares" says Lane iii. 385)

and the other a goldsmith. The Bresl. Edit. (v. 264) mentions only one son, Hasan, the hero of the story which is entitled, “Tale of Hasan al-Basrí and the Isles of Wák Wák.”

[7] Arab. “Shásh Abyaz:” this distinctive sign of the True Believer was adopted by the Persian to conceal his being a fire-worshipper, Magian or “Guebre.” The latter word was introduced from the French by Lord Byron and it is certainly far superior to Moore’s “Gheber.”

[8] Persians being always a suspected folk.

[9] Arab. “Al-Búdikah” afterwards used (Night dcclxxix) in the sense of crucible or melting-pot, in modern parlance a pipe-bowl; and also written “Bútakah,” an Arab distortion of the Persian “Bútah.”

[10] Arab. “Sindán” or “Sindiyán” (Dozy). “Sandán,” anvil; “Sindán,” big, strong (Steingass).

[11] Arab. “Kímiya,” (see vol. i. 305) properly the substance which transmutes metals, the “philosopher’s stone” which, by the by, is not a stone; and comes from {chymeía,chymós} = a fluid, a wet drug, as opposed to Iksír (Al-) {Xerón, Xérion}, a dry drug. Those who care to see how it is still studied will consult my History of Sindh (chapt. vii) and my experience which pointed only to the use made of it in base coinage. Hence in mod. tongue Kímiyáwi, an alchemist, means a coiner, a smasher. The reader must not suppose that the transmutation of metals is a dead study: I calculate that there are about one hundred workers in London alone.

[12] Arab. “Al-Kír,” a bellows also = Kúr, a furnace. For the full meaning of this sentence, see my “Book of the Sword,” .

[13] Lit. “bade him lean upon it with the shears” (Al-Káz).

[14] There are many kinds of Kohls (Hindos. Surmá and Kajjal) used in medicine and magic. See Herklots, .

[15] Arab. “Sabíkah” = bar, lamina, from “Sabk” = melting, smelting: the lump in the crucible would be hammered out into an ingot in order to conceal the operation

[16] i.e. Ł375.

[17] Such report has cost many a life: the suspicion was and is still deadly as heresy in a “new Christian” under the Inquisition.

[18] Here there is a double entendre: openly it means, “Few men recognise as they should the bond of bread and salt:” the other sense would be (and that accounts for the smile), “What the deuce do I care for the bond?”

[19] Arab. “Kabbát” in the Bresl. Edit. “Ka’abán “: Lane (iii. 519) reads “Ka’áb plur. of Ka’ab a cup.”

[20] A most palpable sneer. But Hasan is purposely represented as a “softy” till aroused and energized by the magic of Love.

[21] Arab. “Al-iksír” (see Night dcclxxix, supra): the Greek word which has returned from a trip to Arabia and reappeared in Europe as “Elixir.”

[22] “Awák” plur. of “Ukíyah,” the well-known “oke,” or “ocque,” a weight varying from 1 to 2 lbs. In Morocco it is pronounced “Wukíyah,” and = the Spanish ounce (Rudimentos del Arabe Vulgar, etc., by Fr. José de Lorchundi, Madrid, Rivadeneyra, 1872).

[23] These lines have occurred in vol. iv. 267, where references to other places are given. I quote Lane by way of variety. In the text they are supposed to have been written by the Persian, a hint that Hasan would never be seen again.

[24] i.e. a superfetation of iniquity.

[25] Arab. “Kurbán,” Heb. { }Corban = offering, oblation to be brought to the priest’s house or to the altar of the tribal God Yahveh, Jehovah

(Levit. ii, 2-3 etc.). Amongst the Maronites Kurban is the host (-wafer) and amongst the Turks ‘Id al-Kurban (sacrifice-feast) is the Greater Bayram, the time of Pilgrimage.

[26] Nár = fire, being feminine, like the names of the other “elements.”

[27] The Egyptian Kurbáj of hippopotamus-hide (Burkh. Nubia, p,282) or elephant-hide (Turner ii. 365). Hence the Fr. Cravache (as Cravat is from Croat).

[28] In Mac. Edit. “Bahriyah”: in Bresl. Edit. “Nawátíyah.”
See vol. vi. 242, for {Naýtes}, navita, nauta.

[29] In Bresl. Edit. (iv. 285) “Yá Khwájah,” for which see vol. vi. 46.

[30] Arab. “Tabl” (vulg. baz) = a kettle-drum about half a foot broad held in the left hand and beaten with a stick or leathern thong. Lane refers to his description (M.E. ii. chapt. v.) of the Dervish’s drum of tinned copper with parchment face, and renders Zakhmah or Zukhmah (strap, stirrup-leather) by “plectrum,” which gives a wrong idea. The Bresl. Edit. ignores the strap.

[31] The “Spartivento” of Italy, mostly a tall headland which divides the clouds. The most remarkable feature of the kind is the Dalmatian Island, Pelagosa.

[32] The “Rocs” (Al-Arkhákh) in the Bresl. Edit. (iv. 290).
The Rakham = aquiline vulture.

[33] Lane here quotes a similar incident in the romance “Sayf Zú al-Yazan,” so called from the hero, whose son, Misr, is sewn up in a camel’s hide by Bahrám, a treacherous Magian, and is carried by the Rukhs to a mountain-top.

[34] These lines occurred in Night xxvi. vol. i. 275: I quote
Mr. Payne for variety.

[35] Thus a Moslem can not only circumcise and marry himself but can

also bury canonically himself. The form of this prayer is given by Lane M. E. chapt. xv.

[36] i.e. If I fail in my self-imposed duty, thou shalt charge me therewith on the Judgment-day.

[37] Arab. “Al-Alwán,” plur. of laun (colour). The latter in Egyptian Arabic means a “dish of meat.” See Burckhardt No. 279. I repeat that the great traveller’s “Arabic Proverbs” wants republishing for two reasons. First he had not sufficient command of English to translate with the necessary laconism and assonance: secondly in his day British Philistinism was too rampant to permit a literal translation. Consequently the book falls short of what the Oriental student requires; and I have prepared it for my friend Mr. Quaritch.

[38] i.e. Lofty, high-builded. See Night dcclxviii. vol. vii. . In the Bresl. Edit. Al-Masíd (as in Al-Kazwíni): in the Mac. Edit. Al-Mashid

[39] Arab. “Munkati” here = cut off from the rest of the world. Applied to a man, and a popular term of abuse in Al-Hijáz, it means one cut off from the blessings of Allah and the benefits of mankind; a pauvre sire. (Pilgrimage ii. 22.)

[40] Arab. “Baras au Juzám,” the two common forms of leprosy. See vol. iv. 51. Popular superstition in Syria holds that coition during the menses breeds the Juzám, Dáa al-Kabír (Great Evil) or Dáa al-Fíl (Elephantine Evil), i.e. Elephantiasis and that the days between the beginning of the flow (Sabíl) to that of coition shows the age when the progeny will be attacked; for instance if it take place on the first day, the disease will appear in the tenth year, on the fourth the fortieth and so on. The only diseases really dreaded by the Badawin are leprosy and small-pox. Coition during the menses is forbidden by all Eastern faiths under the severest penalties. Al-Mas’údi relates how a man thus begotten became a determined enemy of Ali; and the ancient Jews attributed the magical powers of Joshua Nazarenus to this accident of his birth, the popular idea being that sorcerers are thus impurely engendered.

[41] By adoption - See vol. iii. 151. This sudden affection (not love) suggests the “Come to my arms, my slight acquaintance!” of the Anti-Jacobin. But it is true to Eastern nature; and nothing can be more charming than this fast friendship between the Princess and Hasan.

[42] En tout bien et en tout honneur, be it understood.

[43] He had done nothing of the kind; but the feminine mind is prone to exaggeration. Also Hasan had told them a fib, to prejudice them against the Persian.

[44] These nervous movements have been reduced to a system in the Turk. “Ihtilájnámeh” = Book of palpitations, prognosticating from the subsultus tendinum and other involuntary movements of the body from head to foot; according to Ja’afar the Just, Daniel the Prophet, Alexander the Great; the Sages of Persia and the Wise Men of Greece. In England we attend chiefly to the eye and ear.

[45] Revenge, amongst the Arabs, is a sacred duty; and, in their state of civilization, society could not be kept together without it. So the slaughter of a villain is held to be a sacrifice to Allah, who amongst Christians claims for Himself the monopoly of vengeance.

[46] Arab. “Zindík.” See vol. v. 230.

[47] Lane translates this “put for him the remaining food and water;” but Al-Ákhar (Mac. Edit.) evidently refers to the Najíb (dromedary).

[48] We can hardly see the heroism of the deed, but it must be remembered that Bahram was a wicked sorcerer, whom it was every good Moslem’s bounden duty to slay. Compare the treatment of witches in England two centuries ago.

[49] The mother in Arab tales is ma mčre, now becoming somewhat ridiculous in France on account of the over use of that venerable personage.

[50] The forbidden closet occurs also in Sayf Zú al-Yazan, who enters it and finds the bird-girls. Trébutien ii, 208 says, “Il est assez remarquable qu’il existe en Allemagne une tradition ŕ peu prčs semblable, et qui a fourni le sujet d’un des contes de Musaeus, entitulé, le voile enlevé.” Here Hasan is artfully left alone in a large palace without other companions but his thoughts and the reader is left to divine the train of ideas which drove him to open the door.

[51] Arab. “Buhayrah” (Bresl. Edit. “Bahrah”), the tank or cistern in the Hosh (court-yard) of an Eastern house. Here, however, it is a rain-cistern on the flat roof of the palace (See Night dcccviii).

[52] This description of the view is one of the most gorgeous in The Nights.

[53] Here again are the “Swan-maidens” (See vol. v. 346) “one of the primitive myths, the common heritage of the whole Aryan (Iranian) race.” In Persia Bahram-i-Gúr when carried off by the Dív Sapíd seizes the Peri’s dove-coat: in Santháli folk-lore Torica, the Goatherd, steals the garment doffed by one of the daughters of the sun; and hence the twelve birds of Russian Story. To the same cycle belong the Seal-tales of the Faroe Islands (Thorpe’s Northern Mythology) and the wise women or mermaids of Shetland (Hibbert). Wayland the smith captures a wife by seizing a mermaid’s raiment and so did Sir Hagán by annexing the wardrobe of a Danubian water-nymph. Lettsom, the translator, mixes up this swan-raiment with that of the Valkyries or Choosers of the Slain. In real life stealing women’s clothes is an old trick and has often induced them, after having been seen naked, to offer their persons spontaneously. Of this I knew two cases in India, where the theft is justified by divine example. The blue god Krishna, a barbarous and grotesque Hindu Apollo, robbed the raiment of the pretty Gopálís (cowherdesses) who were bathing in the Arjun River and carried them to the top of a Kunduna tree; nor would he restore them till he had reviewed the naked girls and taken one of them to wife. See also Imr al-Kays (of the Mu’allakah) with “Onaiza” at the port of Daratjuljul (Clouston’s Arabian Poetry, p.4). A critic has complained of my tracing the

origin of the Swan-maiden legend to the physical resemblance between the bird and a high-bred girl (vol. v. 346). I should have explained my theory which is shortly, that we must seek a material basis for all so-called supernaturalisms, and that anthropomorphism satisfactorily explains the Swan-maiden, as it does the angel and the devil. There is much to say on the subject; but this is not the place for long discussion.

[54] Arab. “Nafs Ammárah,” corresponding with our canting term “The Flesh.” Nafs al-Nátíkah is the intellectual soul or function; Nafs al-Ghazabíyah = the animal function and Nafs al Shahwáníyah = the vegetative property.

[55] The lines occur in vol. ii. 331: I have quoted Mr.
Payne. Here they are singularly out of place.

[56] Not the “green gown” of Anglo-India i.e. a white ball-dress with blades of grass sticking to it in consequence of a “fall backwards.”

[57] These lines occur in vol. i. 219: I have borrowed from
Torrens ().

[58] The appearance of which ends the fast and begins the
Lesser Festival. See vol. i. 84.

[59] See note, vol. i. 84, for notices of the large navel; much appreciated by Easterns.

[60] Arab. “Shá’ir Al-Walahán” = the love-distraught poet; Lane has “a distracted poet.” My learned friend Professor Aloys Sprenger has consulted, upon the subject of Al-Walahán the well-known Professor of Arabic at Halle, Dr. Thorbeck, who remarks that the word (here as further on) must be an adjective, mad, love-distraught, not a “lakab” or poetical cognomen. He generally finds it written Al-Shá’ir al-Walahán (the love-demented poet) not Al-Walahán al-Shá’ir = Walahán the Poet. Note this burst of song after the sweet youth falls in love: it explains the cause of verse-quotation in The Nights, poetry being the natural language of love and battle.

[61] "Them" as usual for "her."

[62] Here Lane proposes a transposition, for "Wa-huwá (and he) fi'l-hubbi," to read "Fi 'l-hubbi wa huwa (wa-hwa);" but the latter is given in the Mac. Edit.

[63] For the pun in "Sabr"=aloe or patience. See vol. i. 138. In Herr Landberg (i. 93) we find a misunderstanding of the couplet —

"Aw'ákibu s-sabri (Kála ba'azuhum)
 Mahmúdah: Kultu, 'khshi an takhirriní.'"

"The effects of patience" (or aloes) quoth one "are praiseworthy!" Quoth I, "Much I fear lest it make me stool." Mahmúdah is not only un laxatif, but a slang name for a confection of aloes.

[64] Arab. "Akúna fidá-ka." Fidá = ransom, self-sacrifice and Fidá'an = instead of. The phrase, which everywhere occurs in The Nights, means, "I would give my life to save thine"

[65] Thus accounting for his sickness, improbably enough but in flattering way. Like a good friend (feminine) she does not hesitate a moment in prescribing a fib.

[66] i.e. the 25,000 Amazons who in the Bresl. Edit. (ii. 308) are all made to be the King's Banát" = daughters or protégées. The Amazons of Dahome (see my "Mission") who may now number 5,000 are all officially wives of the King and are called by the lieges "our mothers."

[67] The tale-teller has made up his mind about the damsel; although in this part of the story she is the chief and eldest sister and subsequently she appears as the youngest daughter of the supreme Jinn King. The mystification is artfully explained by the extraordinary likeness of the two sisters. (See Night dccccxi.)

[68] This is a reminiscence of the old-fashioned "marriage by capture," of which many traces survive, even among the civilised who wholly

ignore their origin.

[69] Meaning her companions and suite.

[70] Arab. "'Abáah" vulg. "'Abáyah." See vol. ii. 133.

[71] Feet in the East lack that development of sebaceous glands which afflicts Europeans.

[72] i.e. cutting the animals' throats after Moslem law.

[73] In Night dcclxxviii. supra p.5, we find the orthodox Moslem doctrine that "a single mortal is better in Allah's sight than a thousand Jinns." For, I repeat, Al-Islam systematically exalts human nature which Christianity takes infinite trouble to degrade and debase. The results of its ignoble teaching are only too evident in the East: the Christians of the so-called (and miscalled) "Holy Land" are a disgrace to the faith and the idiomatic Persian term for a Nazarene is "Tarsá" = funker, coward.

[74] Arab. "Sakaba Kúrahá;" the forge in which children are hammered out?

[75] Arab. "Má al-Maláhat" = water (brilliancy) of beauty.

[76] The fourth of the Seven Heavens, the "Garden of Eternity," made of yellow coral.

[77] How strange this must sound to the Young Woman of London in the nineteenth century.

[78] "Forty days" is a quasi-religious period amongst Moslem for praying, fasting and religious exercises: here it represents our "honey-moon." See vol. v. .

[79] Yá layta, still popular. Herr Carlo Landberg (Proverbes et Dictons du Peuple Arabe, vol. i. of Syria, Leyden, E. J. Brill, 1883) explains layta for rayta (=raayta) by permutation of liquids and argues that the

contraction is ancient (). But the Herr is no Arabist: “Layta” means “would to Heaven,” or, simply “I wish,” “I pray” (for something possible or impossible); whilst “La’alla” (perhaps, it may be) prays only for the possible: and both are simply particles governing the noun in the oblique or accusative case.

[80] “His” for “her,” i.e. herself, making somewhat of confusion between her state and that of her son.

[81] i.e. his mother; the words are not in the Mac. Edit.

[82] Baghdad is called House of Peace, amongst other reasons, from the Dijlah (Tigris) River and Valley “of Peace.” The word was variously written Baghdád, Bághdád, (our old Bughdaud and Bagdat), Baghzáz, Baghzán, Baghdán, Baghzám and Maghdád as Makkah and Bakkah (Koran iii. 90). Religious Moslems held Bágh (idol) and Dád (gift) an ill-omened conjunction, and the Greeks changed it to Eirenopolis. (See Ouseley’s Oriental Collcctions, vol. i. p-20.)

[83] This is a popular saying but hardly a “vulgar proverb.”
(Lane iii. 522.) It reminds rather of Shakespear’s:

“So loving to my mother,
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly.”

[84] i.e. God forbid that I should oppose thee!

[85] Here the writer again forgets apparently, that Shahrazad is speaking: she may, however, use the plural for the singular when speaking of herself.

[86] i.e. She would have pleaded ill-treatment and lawfully demanded to be sold.

[87] The Hindus speak of “the only bond that woman knows — her heart.”

[88] i.e. a rarity, a present (especially in Persian).

[89] Arab. "Al-bisát" wa'l-masnad lit. the carpet and the cushion.

[90] For "Báb al-bahr" and "Báb al-Barr" see vol. iii. 281.

[91] She was the daughter of Ja'afar bin Mansúr; but, as will be seen, The Nights again and again called her father Al-Kásim.

[92] This is an error for the fifth which occurs in the popular saying, "Is he the fifth of the sons of Al-Abbás!" i.e. Harun al-Rashid. Lane (note, in loco) thus accounts for the frequent mention of the Caliph, the greatest of the Abbasides in The Nights. But this is a causa non causa.

[93] i.e. I find thy beauty all-sufficient. So the proverb "The son of the quarter (young neighbour) filleth not the eye," which prefers a stranger.

[94] They are mere doggerel, like most of the pičces de circonstance.

[95] Afterwards called Wák Wák, and in the Bresl. Edit. Wák al-Wák. See Lane's notes upon these Islands. Arab Geographers evidently speak of two Wak Waks. Ibn al-Fakih and Al-Mas'údi (Fr. Transl., vol. iii. 6-7) locate one of them in East Africa beyond Zanzibar and Sofala. "Le territoire des Zendjes (Zanzibar-Negroids) commence au canal (Al-Khalij) dérivé du haut Nil (the Juln River?) et se prolonge jusqu'au pays de Sofalah et des Wak-Wak." It is simply the peninsula of Guardafui (Jard Hafun) occupied by the Gallas, pagans and Christians, before these were ousted by the Moslem Somal; and the former perpetually ejaculated "Wak" (God) as Moslems cry upon Allah. This identification explains a host of other myths such as the Amazons, who as Marco Polo tells us held the "Female Island" Socotra (Yule ii. 396). The fruit which resembled a woman's head (whence the puellć Wakwakienses hanging by the hair from trees), and which when ripe called out "Wak Wak" and "Allah al-Khallák" (the Creator) refers to the Calabash-tree (Adausonia digitata), that grotesque growth, a vegetable elephant, whose gourds, something

larger than a man’s head, hang by a slender filament. Similarly the “cocoa” got its name, in Port. = Goblin, from the fancied face at one end. The other Wak Wak has been identified in turns with the Seychelles, Madagascar, Malacca, Sunda or Java (this by Langlčs), China and Japan. The learned Prof. de Goeje (Arabishe Berichten over Japan, Amsterdam, Muller, 1880) informs us that in Canton the name of Japan is Wo-Kwok, possibly a corruption of Koku-tan, the ebony-tree (Diospyros ebenum) which Ibn Khor-dábah and others find together with gold in an island 4,500 parasangs from Suez and East of China. And we must remember that Basrah was the chief starting-place for the Celestial Empire during the rule of the Tang dynasty (seventh and ninth centuries). Colonel J. W. Watson of Bombay suggests New Guinea or the adjacent islands where the Bird of Paradise is said to cry “Wak Wak!” Mr. W. F. Kirby in the Preface (p. ix.) to his neat little book “The New Arabian Nights,” says: “The Islands of Wak-Wak, seven years’ journey from Bagdad, in the story of Hasan, have receded to a distance of a hundred and fifty years’ journey in that of Majin (of Khorasan). There is no doubt(?) that the Cora Islands, near New Guinea, are intended; for the wonderful fruits which grow there are Birds of Paradise, which settle in flocks on the trees at sunset and sunrise, uttering this very cry.” Thus, like Ophir, Wak Wak has wandered all over the world and has been found even in Peru by the Turkish work Tárikh al-Hind al-Gharbi = History of the West Indies (Orient. Coll. iii 189).

[96] I accept the emendation of Lane’s Shaykh, “Nasím “ (Zephyr) for “Nadím “ (cup-companion).

[97] “Jannat al-Ná’im” = Garden of Delights is No. V Heaven, made of white diamond.

[98] This appears to her very prettily put.

[99] This is the “House of Sadness” of our old chivalrous Romances. See chapt. vi. of “Palmerin of England,” by Francisco de Moraes (ob. 1572), translated by old Anthony Munday (dateless, 1590?) and “corrected” (read spoiled) by Robert Southey, London, Longmans,

1807.

[100] The lines have occurred in Night clix. (vol. iii. 183), I quote Mr. Payne who, like Lane, prefers “in my bosom” to “beneath my ribs.”

[101] In this tale the Bresl. Edit. more than once adds “And let us and you send a blessing to the Lord of Lords” (or to “Mohammed,” or to the “Prophet”); and in vol. v. has a long prayer. This is an act of contrition in the tale-teller for romancing against the expressed warning of the Founder of Al-Islam.

[102] From Bresl. Edit. (vi. 29): the four in the Mac. Edit. are too irrelevant.

[103] Arab. “Ghayúr” — jealous, an admirable epithet which Lane dilutes to “changeable” — making a truism of a metaphor.

[104] These lines have occurred before. I quote Mr. Payne.

[105] i.e. One fated to live ten years.

[106] This poetical way of saying “fourteen” suggests Camoens (The Lusiads) Canto v. 2.

[107] Arab. “Surrah,” lit. = a purse: a few lines lower down it is called “‘Ulbah” = a box which, of course, may have contained the bag.

[108] The month which begins the Moslem year.

[109] As an Arab often does when deep in thought. Lane appositely quotes John viii. 6. “Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground.” Mr. Payne translates, “He fell a-drumming on the earth with his fingers,” but this does not complete the sense.

[110] i.e.”And the peace of Allah be upon thee! that will end thy story.” The Arab formula, “Wa al-Salám” (pron. Wassalám) is used in a variety of senses.

[111] Like Camoens, one of the model lovers, he calls upon

Love to torment him still more — ad majorem Dei (amoris) gloriam.

[112] Pron. Aboor-Ruwaysh. “The Father of the little Feather”: he is afterwards called “Son of the daughter of the accursed Iblis”; yet, as Lane says, “he appears to be a virtuous person.”

[113] Arab. “Kantara al-lijám fi Karbús (bow) sarjih.”

[114] I do not translate “beckoned” because the word would give a wrong idea. Our beckoning with the finger moved towards the beckoner makes the so-beckoned Eastern depart in all haste. To call him you must wave the hand from you.

[115] The Arabs knew what large libraries were; and a learned man could not travel without camel-loads of dictionaries.

[116] Arab. “Adim;” now called Bulghár, our Moroccan leather.

[117] Arab. “Zinád,” which Lane renders by “instruments for striking fire,” and Mr. Payne, after the fashion of the translators of Al-Hariri, “flint and steel.”

[118] A congener of Hasan and Husayn, little used except in Syria where it is a favourite name for Christians. The Muhít of Butrus Al-Bostáni (s.v.) tells us that it also means a bird called Abú Hasan and supplies various Egyptian synonyms. In Mod. Arab. Grammar the form Fa’’úl is a diminutive as Hammúd for Ahmad, ‘Ammúr for ‘Amrú. So the fem. form, Fa’’úlah, e.g. Khaddúgah = little Khadijah and Naffúsah=little Nafisah; Ar’úrah = little clitoris - whereas in Heb. it is an incrementative e.g. dabbúlah a large dablah (cake or lump of dried figs, etc.).

[119] In the Mac. Edit. “Soldiers of Al-Daylam” i.e. warlike as the Daylamites or Medes. See vol. ii. 94.

[120] Bilkís, it will be remembered, is the Arab. name of the
Queen of Sheba who visited Solomon. In Abyssinia she is termed
Kebra zá negest or zá makadá, the latter (according to Ferdinand

Werne's "African Wanderings," Longmans, 1852) being synonymous
with Ityopia or Habash (Ethiopia or Abyssinia).

[121] Arab. "Dakkah," which Lane translates by "settee."

[122] Arab. "Ambar al-Khám" the latter word (raw) being pure Persian.

[123] The author neglects to mention the ugliest part of old-womanhood in the East, long empty breasts like tobacco-pouches. In youth the bosom is beautifully high, arched and rounded, firm as stone to the touch, with the nipples erect and pointing outwards. But after the girl-mother's first child (in Europe le premier embellit) all changes. Nature and bodily power have been overtasked; then comes the long suckling at the mother's expense: the extension of the skin and the enlargement of its vessels are too sudden and rapid for the diminished ability of contraction and the bad food aids in the continual consumption of vitality. Hence, among Eastern women age and ugliness are synonymous. It is only in the highest civilisation that we find the handsome old woman.

[124] The name has occurred in the Knightly tale of King Omar and his sons, Vol. ii. 269. She is here called Mother of Calamities,but in , Vol. iv. of the Mac. Edit. she becomes "Lady (Zát) al-Dawáhi." It will be remembered that the title means calamitous to the foe.

[125] By this address she assured him that she had no design upon his chastity. In Moslem lands it is always advisable to accost a strange woman, no matter how young, with, "Yá Ummí!" = O my mother. This is pledging one's word, as it were, not to make love to her.

[126] Apparently the Wakites numbered their Islands as the Anglo-Americans do their streets. For this they have been charged with "want of imagination"; but the custom is strictly classical. See at Pompeii "Reg (io) I; Ins (ula) I, Via Prima, Secunda," etc.

[127] These are the Puellć Wakwakienses of whom Ibn Al-Wardi

relates after an ocular witness, “Here too is a tree which bears fruits like women who have fair faces and are hung by their hair. They come forth from integuments like large leathern bags (calabash-gourds?) and when they sense air and sun they cry ‘Wak! Wak!’ (God! God!) till their hair is cut, and when it is cut they die; and the islanders understand this cry wherefrom they augure ill.” The Ajáib al-Hind (chapt. xv.) places in Wak-land the Samandal, a bird which enters the fire without being burnt evidently the Egyptian “Pi-Benni,” which the Greeks metamorphised to “Phnix.” It also mentions a hare-like animal, now male then female, and the Somal behind Cape Guardafui tell the same tale of their Cynhyćnas.

[128] i.e. I will keep thee as though thou wert the apple of my eye.

[129] A mere exaggeration of the “Gull-fairs” noted by travellers in sundry islands as Ascension and the rock off Brazilian Santos.

[130] Arab. “Kámil wa Basít wa Wáfir” = the names of three popular metres, for which see the Terminal Essay.

[131] Arab. “Manáshif” = drying towels, Plur. of Minshafah, and the popular term which Dr. Jonathan Swift corrupted to “Munnassaf.” Lane (Nights, Introduct. p. ix.).

[132] Arab. “Shafaif” opposed to “Shafah” the mouth-lips.

[133] Fountains of Paradise. This description is a fair instance of how the Saj’a (prose-rhyme) dislocates the order; an Arab begins with hair, forehead, eyebrows and lashes and when he reaches the nose, he slips down to the toes for the sake of the assonance. If the latter be neglected the whole list of charms must be otherwise ordered; and the student will compare Mr. Payne’s version of this passage with mine.

[134] A fair specimen of the Arab logogriph derived from the Abjad Alphabet which contains only the Hebrew and Syriac letters not the six Arabic. Thus 4 X 5=20 which represents the Kaf (K) and 6 X 10=60, or Sin (S). The whole word is thus “Kus”, the Greek {kysňs}

or {kyssňs}, and the lowest word, in Persian as in Arabic, for the female pudenda, extensively used in vulgar abuse. In my youth we had at the University something of the kind,

To five and five and fifty-five
The first of letters add
To make a thing to please a King
And drive a wise man mad.

Answer VVLVA. Very interesting to the anthropological student is this excursus of Hasan, who after all manner of hardships and horrors and risking his life to recover his wife and children, breaks out into song on the subject of her privities. And it can hardly be tale-teller's gag as both verse and prose show considerable art in composition. (See .)

Supplementary Note To Hasan of Bassorah.

Note(p.93) — There is something wondrous naďve in a lover who, when asked by his mistress to sing a song in her honour, breaks out into versical praises of her parts. But even the classical Arab authors did not disdain such themes. See in Al-Harírí (Ass. of Mayyáfarikín) where Abú Zayd laments the impotency of old age in form of a Rasy or funeral oration (Preston , and Chenery). It completely deceived Sir William Jones, who inserted it into the chapter "De Poesi Funebri," (Poeseos Asiaticć Commentarii), gravely noting, "Hćc Elegia non admodum dissimilis esse videtur pulcherrimi illius carminis de Sauli et Jonathani obitu; at que adeň versus iste 'ubi provocant adversarios nunquam rediit a pugnć contentione sine spiculo sanguine imbuto,' ex Hebrćo reddi videtur,

A sanguine occisorum, a fortium virorum adipe,
Arcus Jonathani non rediit irritus."

I need hardly say with Captain Lockett (226) that this "Sabb warrior," this Arabian Achilles, is the celebrated Bonus Deus or Hellespontiacus of the Ancients. The oration runs thus: —

O folk I have a wondrous tale, so rare
Much shall it profit hearers wise and ware!
I saw in salad-years a potent Brave
And sharp of edge and point his warrior glaive;
Who entered joust and list with hardiment
Fearless of risk, of victory confident,
His vigorous onset straitest places oped
And easy passage through all narrows groped:
He ne’er encountered foe in single fight
But came from tilt with spear in blood stained bright;
Nor stormed a fortress howso strong and stark —
With fencčd gates defended deep and dark —
When shown his flag without th’ auspicious cry
“Aidance from Allah and fair victory nigh!”
Thus wise full many a night his part he played
In strength and youthtide’s stately garb arrayed,
Dealing to fair young girl delicious joy
And no less welcome to the blooming boy.
But Time ne’er ceased to stint his wondrous strength
(Steadfast and upright as the gallow’s length)
Until the Nights o’erthrew him by their might
And friends contemned him for a feckless wight;
Nor was a wizard but who wasted skill
Over his case, nor leach could heal his ill.
Then he abandoned arms abandoned him
Who gave and took salutes so fierce and grim;
And now lies prostrate drooping haughty crest;
For who lives longest him most ills molest.
Then see him, here he lies on bier for bet; —
Who will a shroud bestow on stranger dead?

A fair measure of the difference between Eastern and Western manners is afforded by such a theme being treated by their gravest writers and the verses being read and heard by the gravest and most worshipful men, whilst amongst us Preston and Chenery do not dare even to translate them. The latter, indeed, had all that immodest modesty for which English professional society is notable in this xixth century. He spoiled by needlessly excluding from a scientific publication (Mem. R.A.S.) all of my Proverbia Communia Syriaca (see Unexplored Sryia, i. 364) and every item which had a shade of double entendre. But Nemesis frequently found him out: during his short and obscure rule in Printing House Square, The Thunderer was distinguished by two of the foulest indecencies that ever appeared in an English paper.

The well-known Koranic verse, whereby Allah is introduced into an indecent tale and "Holy Writ" is punned upon. I have noticed (iii. 206) that victory Fat'h lit.=opening everything (as e.g. a maidenhead).

[135] Egyptian and Syrian vulgar term for Mawálíyah or Mawáliyah, a short poem on subjects either classical or vulgar. It generally consists of five lines all rhyming except the penultimate. The metre is a species of the Basít which, however, admits of considerable poetical license; this being according to Lane the usual "Weight,"

/ / / .

The scheme is distinctly anapćstic and Mr. Lyall (Translations of Ancient Arabic Poetry) compares with a cognate metre, the Tawíl, certain lines in Abt Vogler, e.g.

"Ye know why the forms are fair, ye hear how the tale is told."

[136] i.e. repeat the chapter of the Koran termed The Opening, and beginning with these words, "Have we not opened thy breast for thee and eased thee of thy burden which galled thy back? * * * Verily with the difficulty cometh ease!" — Koran xciv. vol. 1, 5.

[137] Lane renders Nur al-Hudŕ (Light of Salvation) by Light of Day which would be Nur al-Hadŕ.

[138] In the Bresl. Edit. "Yá Salám"=O safety! — a vulgar ejaculation.

[139] A favourite idiom meaning from the mischief which may (or will)

come from the Queen.

[140] He is not strong-minded but his feminine persistency of purpose, likest to that of a sitting hen, is confirmed by the "Consolations of religion." The character is delicately drawn.

[141] In token that she intended to act like a man.

[142] This is not rare even in real life: Moslem women often hide and change their names for superstitious reasons, from the husband and his family.

[143] Arab. "Sabab" which also means cause. Vol. ii. 14.
There is the same metaphorical use of "Habl"= cord and cause.

[144] Arab. "Himŕ," a word often occurring in Arab poetry, domain, a pasture or watered land forcibly kept as far as a dog's bark would sound by some masterful chief like "King Kulayb." (See vol. ii. 77.) This tenure was forbidden by Mohammed except for Allah and the Apostle (i.e. himself). Lane translates it "asylum."

[145] She was a maid and had long been of marriageable age.

[146] The young man had evidently "kissed the Blarney stone"; but the flattery is the more telling as he speaks from the heart.

[147] "Inshallah " here being= D. V.

[148] i.e. The "Place of Light" (Pharos), or of Splendour. Here we find that Hasan's wife is the youngest sister, but with an extraordinary resemblance to the eldest, a very masterful young person. The anagnorisis is admirably well managed.

[149] i.e. the sweetmeats of the feast provided for the returning traveller. The old woman (like others) cannot resist the temptation of a young man's lips. Happily for him she goes so far and no farther.

[150] The first, fourth, fifth and last names have already occurred: the

others are in order, Star o' Morn, Sun of Undurn and Honour of Maidenhood. They are not merely fanciful, but are still used in Egypt and Syria.

[151] Arab. "Fájirah" and elsewhere "Áhirah," =whore and strumpet used often in loose talk as mere abuse without special meaning.

[152] This to Westerns would seem a most improbable detail, but Easterns have their own ideas concerning "Al-Muhabbat al-ghariziyah" =natural affection, blood speaking to blood, etc.

[153] One of the Hells (see vol. iv. 143). Here it may be advisable to give the names of the Seven Heavens (which are evidently based upon Ptolemaic astronomy) and which correspond with the Seven Hells after the fashion of Arabian system-mania. (1) Dar al-Jalál (House of Glory) made of pearls; (2) Dár al-Salám (of Rest), rubies and jacinths; (3) Jannat al-Maawá (Garden of Mansions, not "of mirrors," as Herklots has it,), made of yellow copper; (4) Jannat al-Khuld (of Eternity), yellow coral; (5) Jannat al-Na'ím (of Delights), white diamond; (6) Jannat al-Firdaus (of Paradise), red gold; and (7) Jannat al-'Adn (of Eden, or Al-Karár= of everlasting abode, which some make No. 8), of red pearls or pure musk. The seven Hells are given in vol. v. 241; they are intended for Moslems (Jahannam); Christians (Lazŕ); Jews (Hutamah); Sabians (Sa'ir); Guebres (Sakar); Pagans or idolaters (Jahím); and Hypocrites (Háwiyah).

[154] Arab. "'Atb," more literally= "blame," "reproach."

[155] Bresl. Edit. In the Mac. "it returned to the place whence I had brought it" — an inferior reading.

[156] The dreams play an important part in the Romances of Chivalry, e.g. the dream of King Perion in Amadis de Gaul, chapt. ii. (London; Longmans, 1803).

[157] Amongst Moslems bastardy is a sore offence and a love-child is exceedingly rare. The girl is not only carefully guarded but she also guards herself knowing that otherwise she will not find a husband.

Hence seduction is all but unknown. The wife is equally well guarded and lacks opportunities hence adultery is found difficult except in books. Of the Ibn (or Walad) Harám (bastard as opposed to the Ibn Halál) the proverb says, “This child is not thine, so the madder he be the more is thy glee!” Yet strange to say public prostitution has never been wholly abolished in Al-Islam. Al-Mas’údi tells us that in Arabia were public prostitutes’(Bagháyá), even before the days of the Apostle, who affected certain quarters as in our day the Tartúshah of Alexandria and the Hosh Bardak of Cairo. Here says Herr Carlo Landberg (, Syrian Proverbs) “Elles parlent une langue toute ŕ elle.” So pretentious and dogmatic a writer as the author of Proverbes et Dictons de la Province de Syrie, ought surely to have known that the Hosh Bardak is the head-quarters of the Cairene Gypsies. This author, who seems to write in order to learn, reminds me of an acute Oxonian undergraduate of my day who, when advised to take a “coach,” became a “coach” himself.

[158] These lines occur in vol. vii. . I quote Mr. Payne.

[159] She shows all the semi-maniacal rancour of a good woman, or rather a woman who has not broken the eleventh commandment, “Thou shalt not be found out,” against an erring sister who has been discovered. In the East also these unco’gúid dames have had, and too often have, the power to carry into effect the cruelty and diabolical malignity which in London and Paris must vent itself in scan. mag. and anonymous letters.

[160] These faintings and trances are as common in the Romances of Chivalry e.g. Amadis of Gaul, where they unlace the garments to give more liberty, pour cold water on the face and bathe the temples and pulses with diluted vinegar (for rose water) exactly as they do in The Nights.

[161] So Hafiz, “Bád-i-Sabá chu bugzarí” etc.

[162] Arab. “Takiyah.” See vol. i. 224 and for the Tarn-Kappe vol. iv. .

In the Sinthásana Dwatrinsati (vulgo. Singhásan Battísí), or Thirty-two Tales of a Throne, we find a bag always full of gold, a bottomless purse; earth which rubbed on the forehead overcomes all; a rod which during the first watch of the night furnishes jewelled ornaments; in the second a beautiful girl; in the third invisibility, and in the fourth a deadly foe or death; a flower-garland which renders the possessor invisible and an unfading lotus-flower which produces a diamond every day.

[163] Arab. “Judad,” plur. of Jadíd, lit.= new coin, ergo applied to those old and obsolete; 10 Judad were= one nusf or half dirham.

[164] Arab. “Raff,” a shelf proper, running round the room about 7-7″ feet from the ground. During my day it was the fashion in Damascus to range in line along the Raff splendid porcelain bowls brought by the Caravans in olden days from China, whilst on the table were placed French and English specimens of white and gold “china” worth perhaps a franc each.

[165] Lane supposes that the glass and china-ware had fallen upon the divan running round the walls under the Raff and were not broken.

[166] These lines have occurred in Night dclxxxix. vol. vii. . I quote Lane.

[167] The lines have occurred before. I quote Mr. Payne.

[168] This formula, I repeat, especially distinguishes the
Tale of Hasan of Bassorah.

[169] These lines have occurred in vol. 1. 249. I quote Lane.

[170] She speaks to the “Gallery,” who would enjoy a loud laugh against Mistress Gadabout. The end of the sentence must speak to the heart of many a widow.

[171] These lines occur in vol. i. 25: so I quote Mr. Payne.

[172] Arab. “Musáhikah;” the more usual term for a Tribade is “Sahíkah” from “Sahk” in the sense of rubbing: both also are applied to onanists and masturbators of the gender feminine.

[173] i.e. by way of halter. This jar is like the cask in Auerbach’s Keller; and has already been used by witches; Night dlxxxvii. vol. vi. 158.

[174] Here they are ten but afterwards they are reduced to seven: I see no reason for changing the text with Lane and Payne.

[175] Wazir of Solomon. See vol. i. 42; and vol. iii. 97.

[176] Arab. “Ism al-A’azam,” the Ineffable Name, a superstition evidently derived from the Talmudic fancies of the Jews concerning their tribal god, Yah or Yahvah.

[177] The tradition is that Mohámmed asked Akáf al-Wadá’ah “Hast a wife?”; and when answered in the negative, “Then thou appertainest to the brotherhood of Satans! An thou wilt be one of the Christian monks then company therewithal; but an thou be of us, know that it is our custom to marry!”

[178] The old woman, in the East as in the West, being the most vindictive of her kind. I have noted (Pilgrimage iii. 70) that a Badawi will sometimes though in shame take the blood-wit; but that if it be offered to an old woman she will dash it to the ground and clutch her knife and fiercely swear by Allah that she will not eat her son’s blood.

[179] Neither dome nor fount etc. are mentioned before, the normal inadvertency.

[180] In Eastern travel the rest comes before the eating and drinking.

[181] Arab. “‘Id” (pron.’Eed) which I have said (vol. i. 42, 317) is applied to the two great annual festivals, the “Fęte of Sacrifice,” and the “Break-Fast.” The word denotes restoration to favour and

Moslems explain as the day on which Adam (and Eve) who had been expelled from Paradise for disobedience was re-established (U'ída) by the relenting of Allah. But the name doubtless dates amongst Arabs from days long before they had heard of the "Lord Nomenclator."

[182] Alluding to Hasan seizing her feather dress and so taking her to wife.

[183] Arab. "Kharajú"=they (masc.) went forth, a vulgarism for "Kharajna" (fem.)

[184] Note the notable housewife who, at a moment when youth would forget everything, looks to the main chance.

[185] Arab. "Al-Malakút" (not "Malkút" as in Freytag) a Sufi term for the world of Spirits (De Lacy Christ, Ar. i. 451). Amongst Eastern Christians it is vulgarly used in the fem. and means the Kingdom of Heaven, also the preaching of the Gospel.

[186] This is so rare, even amongst the poorest classes in the East, that it is mentioned with some emphasis.

[187] A beauty among the Egyptians, not the Arabs.

[188] True Fellah— "chaff."

[189] Alluding to the well-known superstition, which has often appeared in The Nights, that the first object seen in the morning, such as a crow, a cripple, or a cyclops determines the fortunes of the day. Notices in Eastern literature are as old as the days of the Hitopadesa; and there is a something instinctive in the idea to a race of early risers. At an hour when the senses are most impressionable the aspect of unpleasant spectacles has double effect.

[190] Arab. "Masúkah," the stick used for driving cattle, bâton gourdin (Dozy). Lane applies the word to a wooden plank used for levelling the ground.

[191] i.e. the words I am about to speak to thee.

[192] Arab. “Sahifah,” which may mean “page” (Lane) or “book” (Payne).

[193] Pronounce, “Abussa’ádát” = Father of Prosperities:
Lane imagines that it came from the Jew’s daughter being called “Sa’adat.” But the latter is the Jew’s wife (Night dcccxxxiii) and the word in the text is plural.

[194] Arab. “Furkh samak” lit. a fish-chick, an Egyptian vulgarism.

[195] Arab. “Al-Rasif”; usually a river-quay, levée, an embankment. Here it refers to the great dyke which distributed the Tigris-water.

[196] Arab. “Dajlah,” see vol. i, p 180. It is evidently the origin of the biblical “Hid-dekel” “Hid” = fierceness, swiftness.

[197] Arab. “Bayáz” a kind of Silurus (S. Bajad, Forsk.) which Sonnini calls Bayatto, Saksatt and Hébedé; also Bogar (Bakar, an ox). The skin is lubricous, the flesh is soft and insipid and the fish often grows to the size of a man. Captain Speke and I found huge specimens in the Tangany ika Lake.

[198] Arab. “Mu’allim,” vulg. “M’allim,” prop.= teacher, master esp. of a trade, a craft. In Egypt and Syria it is a civil address to a Jew or a Christian, as Hájj is to a Moslem.

[199] Arab. “Gharámah,” an exaction, usually on the part of government like a corvée etc. The Europeo-Egyptian term is Avania (Ital.) or Avanie (French).

[200] Arab. “Sayyib-hu” an Egyptian vulgarism found also in Syria. Hence Sáibah, a woman who lets herself go (a-whoring) etc. It is syn. with “Dashar,” which Dozy believes to be a softening of Jashar; and Jashsh became Dashsh.

[201] The Silurus is generally so called in English on account of its

feeler-acting mustachios.

[202] See Night dcccvii, vol. viii. .

[203] This extraordinary confusion of two distinct religious mythologies cannot be the result of ignorance. Educated Moslems know at least as much as Christians do, on these subjects, but the Rawi or story-teller speaks to the "Gallery." In fact it becomes a mere 'chaff' and The Nights give some neat specimens of our modern linguistic.

[204] See vol. ii. 197. "Al-Siddíkah" (fem.) is a title of Ayishah, who, however, does not appear to have deserved it.

[205] The Jew's wife.

[206] Here is a double entendre. The fisherman meant a word or two. The Jew understood the Shibboleth of the Moslem Creed, popularly known as the "Two Words," — I testify that there is no Ilah (god) but Allah (the God) and I testify that Mohammed is the Messenger of Allah. Pronouncing this formula would make the Jew a Moslem. Some writers are surprised to see a Jew ordering a Moslem to be flogged; but the former was rich and the latter was poor. Even during the worst days of Jewish persecutions their money-bags were heavy enough to lighten the greater part, if not the whole of their disabilities. And the Moslem saying is, "The Jew is never your (Moslem or Christian) equal: he must be either above you or below you." This is high, because unintentional praise of the (self-) Chosen People.

[207] He understands the "two words" (Kalmatáni) the Moslem's double profession of belief; and Khalifah's reply embodies the popular idea that the number of Moslems (who will be saved) is preordained and that no art of man can add to it or take from it.

[208] Arab. "Mamarr al-Tujjár" (passing-place of the traders) which Lane renders "A chamber within the place through which the traders passed." At the end of the tale (Night dccxlv.) we find him living in a Khan and the Bresl. Edit. (see my terminal note) makes him dwell in

a magazine (i.e. ground- floor store-room) of a ruined Khan.

[209] The text is somewhat too concise and the meaning is that the fumes of the Hashish he had eaten (“his mind under the influence of hasheesh,” says Lane) suggested to him, etc.

[210] Arab. “Mamrak” either a simple aperture in ceiling or roof for light and air or a more complicated affair of lattice- work and plaster; it is often octagonal and crowned with a little dome. Lane calls it “Memrak,” after the debased Cairene pronunciation, and shows its base in his sketch of a Ka’áh (M.E., Introduction).

[211] Arab. “Kamar.” This is a practice especially amongst pilgrims. In Hindostan the girdle, usually a waist-shawl, is called Kammar-band our old “Cummerbund.” Easterns are too sensible not to protect the pit of the stomach, that great ganglionic centre, against sun, rain and wind, and now our soldiers in India wear flannel-belts on the march.

[212] Arab. “Fa-immá ‘alayhá wa-immá bihá,” i.e. whether (luck go) against it or (luck go) with it.

[213] “O vilest of sinners!” alludes to the thief. “A general plunge into worldly pursuits and pleasures announced the end of the pilgrimage-ceremonies. All the devotees were now “whitewashed” — the book of their sins was a tabula rasa: too many of them lost no time in making a new departure down South and in opening a fresh account” (Pilgrimage iii. 365). I have noticed that my servant at Jeddah would carry a bottle of Raki, uncovered by a napkin, through the main streets.

[214] The copper cucurbites in which Solomon imprisoned the rebellious Jinns, often alluded to in The Nights.

[215] i.e. Son of the Chase: it is prob. a corruption of the Persian Kurnas, a pimp, a cuckold, and introduced by way of chaff, intelligible only to a select few “fast” men.

[216] For the name see vol. ii.61, in the Tale of Ghánim bin

‘Ayyúb where the Caliph’s concubine is also drugged by the Lady Zubaydah.

[217] We should say, “What is this?” etc. The lines have occurred before so I quote Mr. Payne.

[218] Zubaydah, I have said, was the daughter of Ja’afar, son of the Caliph al-Mansur, second Abbaside. The story-teller persistently calls her daughter of Al-Kásim for some reason of his own; and this he will repeat in Night dcccxxxix.

[219] Arab. “Shakhs,” a word which has travelled as far as Hindostan.

[220] Arab. “Shamlah” described in dictionaries, as a cloak covering the whole body. For Hizám (girdle) the Bresl. Edit. reads “Hirám” vulg. “Ehrám,” the waist-cloth, the Pilgrim’s attire.

[221] He is described by Al-Siyúti () as “very fair, tall handsome and of captivating appearance.”

[222] Arab. “Uzn al-Kuffah” lit. “Ear of the basket,” which vulgar Egyptians pronounce “Wizn,” so “Wajh” (face) becomes “Wishsh” and so forth.

[223] Arab. “Bi-fardayn” = with two baskets, lit. “two singles,” but the context shows what is meant. English Frail and French Fraile are from Arab. “Farsalah” a parcel (now esp. of coffee-beans) evidently derived from the low Lat. “Parcella” (Du Cange, Paris, firmin Didot 1845). Compare “ream,” vol. v. 109.

[224] Arab. “Sátúr,” a kind of chopper which here would be used for the purpose of splitting and cleaning and scaling the fish.

[225] And, consequently, that the prayer he is about to make will find ready acceptance.

[226] Arab. “Ruh bilá Fuzúl” (lit. excess, exceeding) still a popular

phrase.

[227] i.e. better give the fish than have my head broken.

[228] Said ironicč, a favourite figure of speech with the Fellah: the day began badly and threatened to end unluckily.

[229] The penalty of Theft. See vol. i. 274.

[230] This is the model of a courtly compliment; and it would still be admired wherever Arabs are not “frankified.”

[231] Arab. “Shibábah;” Lane makes it a kind of reed- flageolet.

[232] These lines occur in vol. i. 76: I quote Mr. Payne.

[233] The instinctive way of juggling with Heaven like our sanding the sugar and going to church.

[234] Arab. “Yá Shukayr,” from Shakar, being red (clay, etc.): Shukár is an anemone or a tulip and Shukayr is its dim. Form. Lane’s Shaykh made it a dim. of “Ashkar” = tawny, ruddy (of complexion), so the former writes, “O Shukeyr.” Mr. Payne prefers “O Rosy cheeks.”

[235] For “Sandal,” see vol. ii. {55}. Sandalí properly means an Eunuch clean rasé, but here Sandal is a P.N. = Sandal-wood.

[236] Arab. “Yá mumátil,” one who retards payment.

[237] Arab. “Kirsh al-Nukhál” = Guts of bran, a term little fitted for the handsome and distinguished Persian. But Khalifah is a Fellah-grazioso of normal assurance shrewd withal; he blunders like an Irishman of the last generation and he uses the first epithet that comes to his tongue. See Night dcccxliii. for the sudden change in Khalifah.

[238] So the Persian “May your shadow never be less” means, I have said, the shadow which you throw over your servant. Shade, cold

water and fresh breezes are the joys of life in arid Arabia.

[239] When a Fellah demanded money due to him by the Government of Egypt, he was a once imprisoned for arrears of taxes and thus prevented from being troublesome. I am told that matters have improved under English rule, but I “doubt the fact.”

[240] This freak is of course not historical. The tale- teller introduces it to enhance the grandeur and majesty of Harun al-Rashid, and the vulgar would regard it as a right kingly diversion. Westerns only wonder that such things could be.

[241] Uncle of the Prophet: for his death see Pilgrimage ii. 248.

[242] First cousin of the Prophet, son of Abú Tálib, a brother of Al-Abbas from whom the Abbasides claimed descent.

[243] i.e. I hope thou hast or Allah grant thou have good tidings to tell me.

[244] Arab. “Nákhúzah Zulayt.” The former, from the Persian Nákhodá or ship-captain which is also used in a playful sense “a godless wight,” one owning no (ná) God (Khudá). Zulayt = a low fellow, blackguard.

[245] Yásamín and Narjis, names of slave-girls or eunuchs.

[246] Arab. Tamar-hanná, the cheapest of dyes used ever by the poorest classes. Its smell, I have said, is that of newly mown hay, and is prized like that of the tea-rose.

[247] The formula (meaning, “What has he to do here?”) is by no means complimentary.

[248] Arab. “Jarrah” (pron. “Garrah”) a “jar.” See Lane (M.E. chapt. v.) who was deservedly reproached by Baron von Hammer for his superficial notices. The “Jarrah” is of pottery, whereas the “Dist” is a large copper chauldron and the Khalkinah one of lesser size.

[249] i.e. What a bother thou art, etc.

[250] This sudden transformation, which to us seems exaggerated and unnatural, appears in many Eastern stories and in the biographies of their distinguished men, especially students. A youth cannot master his lessons; he sees a spider climbing a slippery wall and after repeated falls succeeding. Allah opens the eyes of his mind, his studies become easy to him, and he ends with being an Allámah (doctissimus).

[251] Arab. "Bismillah, Námí!" here it is not a blessing, but a simple invitation, "Now please go to sleep."

[252] The modern inkcase of the Universal East is a lineal descendant of the wooden palette with writing reeds. See an illustration of that of "Amásis, the good god and lord of the two lands" (circ. B.C. 1350) in British Museum (, "The Dwellers on the Nile," by E. A. Wallis Bridge, London, 56, Paternoster Row, 1885).

[253] This is not ironical, as Lane and Payne suppose, but a specimen of inverted speech — Thou art in luck this time!

[254] Arab. "Marhúb" = terrible: Lane reads "Mar'úb" = terrified. But the former may also mean, threatened with something terrible.

[255] i.e. in Kut al-Kulúb.

[256] Lit. to the son of thy paternal uncle, i.e. Mohammed.

[257] In the text he tells the whole story beginning with the eunuch and the hundred dinars, the chest, etc.: but— "of no avail is a twice-told tale."

[258] Koran xxxix. 54. I have quoted Mr. Rodwell who affects the Arabic formula, omitting the normal copulatives.

[259] Easterns find it far easier to "get the chill of poverty out of their bones" than Westerns.

[260] Arab. “Dar al-Na’ím.” Name of one of the seven stages of the Moslem heaven. This style of inscription dates from the days of the hieroglyphs. A papyrus describing the happy town of Raamses ends with these lines. —

Daily is there a supply of food:
Within it gladness doth ever brood

* * * *

Prolonged, increased; abides there Joy, etc., etc.

[261] Arab. “Ansár” = auxiliaries, the men of Al-Medinah (Pilgrimage ii. 130, etc.).

[262] Arab. “Asháb” = the companions of the Prophet who may number 500 (Pilgrimage ii. 81, etc.).

[263] Arab. “Hásilah” prob. a corner of a “Godown” in some Khan or Caravanserai.

[264] Arab. “Funduk” from the Gr. {pandocheîon}, whence the Italian Fondaco e.g. at Venice the Fondaco de’ Turchi.

[265] Arab. “Astár” plur. of Satr: in the Mac. Edit. Sátúr, both (says Dozy) meaning “Couperet” (a hatchet). Habicht translates it “a measure for small fish,” which seems to be a shot and a bad shot as the text talks only of means of carrying fish. Nor can we accept Dozy’s emendation Astál (plur. of Satl) pails, situlć. In Petermann’s Reisen (i. 89) Satr=assiette.

[266] Which made him expect a heavy haul.

[267] Arab. “Urkúb” = tendon Achilles in man hough or pastern in beast, etc. It is held to be an incrementative form of ‘Akab (heel); as Kur’úb of Ka’b (heel) and Khurtúm of Khatm (snout).

[268] Arab. “Karmút” and “Zakzúk.” The former (pronounced Garmút)

is one of the many Siluri (S. Carmoth Niloticus) very common and resembling the Shál. It is smooth and scaleless with fleshy lips and soft meat and as it haunts muddy bottoms it was forbidden to the Ancient Egyptians. The Zakzúk is the young of the Shál (Synodontis Schal: Seetzen); its plural form Zakázik (pronounced Zigázig) gave a name to the flourishing town which has succeeded to old Bubastis and of which I have treated in "Midian" and "Midian Revisited."

[269] "Yá A'awar"=O one-eye! i.e.. the virile member. So the vulgar insult "Ya ibn al-aur" (as the vulgar pronounce it) "O son of a yard!" When Al-Mas'údi writes (Fr. Trans. vii. 106), "Udkhul usbu'ak fí aynih," it must not be rendered "Il faut lui faire violence": thrust thy finger into his eye ('Ayn) means "put thy penis up his fundament!" ('Ayn being=Dubur). The French remarks, "On en trouverait l'équivalent dans les bas-fonds de notre langue." So in English "pig's eye," "blind eye," etc.

[270] Arab. "Nabbút"=a quarterstaff: see vol. i. 234.

[271] Arab. "Banní," vulg. Benni and in Lane (Lex. Bunni) the Cyprinus Bynni (Forsk.), a fish somewhat larger than a barbel with lustrous silvery scales and delicate flesh, which Sonnini believes may be the "Lepidotes" (smooth-scaled) mentioned by Athenćus. I may note that the Bresl. Edit. (iv. 332) also affects the Egyptian vulgarism "Farkh-Banni" of the Mac. Edit. (Night dcccxxxii.).

[272] The story-teller forgets that Khalif had neither basket nor knife.

[273] Arab. "Rayhán" which may here mean any scented herb.

[274] In the text "Fard Kalmah," a vulgarism. The Mac. Edit. (Night dccxxxv.) more aptly says, "Two words" (Kalmatáni, vulg. Kalmatayn) the Twofold Testimonies to the Unity of Allah and the Mission of His Messenger.

[275] The lowest Cairene chaff which has no respect for itself or others.

[276] Arab. "Karrat azlá hú": alluding to the cool skin of healthy men

when digesting a very hearty meal.

[277] This is the true Fellah idea. A peasant will go up to his proprietor with the "rint" in gold pieces behind his teeth and undergo an immense amount of flogging before he spits them out. Then he will return to his wife and boast of the number of sticks he has eaten instead of paying at once and his spouse will say, "Verily thou art a man." Europeans know nothing of the Fellah. Napoleon Buonaparte, for political reasons, affected great pity for him and horror of his oppressors, the Beys and Pashas; and this affectation gradually became public opinion. The Fellah must either tyrannise or be tyrannised over; he is never happier than under a strong-handed despotism and he has never been more miserable than under British rule or rather misrule. Our attempts to constitutionalise him have made us the laughing-stock of Europe.

[278] The turban is a common substitute for a purse with the lower classes of Egyptians; and an allusion to the still popular practice of turban-snatching will be found in vol. i. .

[279] Arab. "Sálih," a devotee; here, a naked Dervish.

[280] Here Khalif is made a conspicuous figure in Baghdad like Boccaccio's Calandrino and Co. He approaches in type the old Irishman now extinct, destroyed by the reflux action of Anglo-America (U.S.) upon the miscalled "Emerald Isle." He blunders into doing and saying funny things whose models are the Hibernian "bulls" and acts purely upon the impulse of the moment, never reflecting till (possibly) after all is over.

[281] Arab. "Kaylúlah," explained in vol. i. 51.

[282] i.e. thy bread lawfully gained. The "Bawwák" (trumpeter) like the "Zammár" (piper of the Mac. Edit.) are discreditable craftsmen, associating with Almahs and loose women and often serving as their panders.

[283] i.e. he was indecently clad. Man's "shame" extends from navel to

knees. See vol vi. 118.

[284] Rashád would be=garden-cresses or stones: Rashíd the heaven-directed.

[285] Arab. "Uff 'alayka"=fie upon thee! Uff=lit. Sordes Aurium and Tuff (a similar term of disgust)=Sordes unguinum. To the English reader the blows administered to Khalif appear rather hard measure. But a Fellah's back is thoroughly broken to the treatment and he would take ten times as much punishment for a few piastres.

[286] Arab. "Zurayk" dim. of Azrak=blue-eyed. See vol. iii. 104.

[287] Of Baghdad.

[288] Arab. "Hásil," i.e. cell in a Khan for storing goods: elsewhere it is called a Makhzan (magazine) with the same sense.

[289] The Bresl. text (iv. 347) abbreviates, or rather omits; so that in translation details must be supplied to make sense.

[290] Arab. "Kamán," vulgar Egyptian, a contraction from Kamá (as) + anna (since, because). So " Kamán shuwayh"=wait a bit; " Kamán marrah"=once more and "Wa Kamána-ka"=that is why.

[291] i.e. Son of the Eagle: See vol. iv. 177. Here, however, as the text shows it is hawk or falcon. The name is purely fanciful and made mnemonically singular.

[292] The Egyptian Fellah knows nothing of boxing like the Hausá man; but he is fond of wrestling after a rude and uncultivated fashion, which would cause shouts of laughter in Cumberland and Cornwall. And there are champions in this line, See vol. ii. 93.

[293] The usual formula. See vol. ii. 5.

[294] As the Fellah still does after drinking a cuplet ("fingán" he calls

it) of sugared coffee.

[295] He should have said “white,” the mourning colour under the Abbasides.

[296] Anglicč, “Fine feathers make fine birds”; and in Eastern parlance, “Clothe the reed and it will become a bride.” (Labbis al-Búsah tabkí ‘Arúsah, Spitta Bey, No. 275.) I must allow myself a few words of regret for the loss of this Savant, one of the most singleminded men known to me. He was vilely treated by the Egyptian Government, under the rule of the Jew-Moslem Riyáz; and, his health not allowing him to live in Austria, he died shortly after return home.

[297] Arab. “ Saub (Tobe) ‘Atábi”: see vol. iii. 149.

[298] In text “Kimkhá,” which Dozy also gives Kumkh=chenille,
tissu de soie veloutee: Damasqučte de soie or et argent de
Venise, du Levant , ŕ fleurs, etc. It comes from Kamkháb or
Kimkháb, a cloth of gold, the well-known Indian “Kimcob.”

[299] Here meaning=Enter in Allah’s name!

[300] The Arabs have a saying, “Wine breeds gladness, music merriment and their offspring is joy.”

[301] Arab. “Jokh al-Saklát,” rich kind of brocade on broadcloth.

[302] Arab. “Hanabát,” which Dozy derives from O. German
Hnapf, Hnap now Napf: thence too the Lat. Hanapus and
Hanaperium:
Ital. Anappo, Nappo; Provenc. Enap and French and English
“Hanap”= rich bowl, basket, bag. But this is known even to the
dictionaries.

[303] Arab. “ Kirám,” nobles, and “ Kurúm,” vines, a word which appears in Carmel=Karam-El (God’s vineyard).

[304] Arab. “Suláf al-Khandarísí,” a contradiction. Suláf=the ptisane of

wine. Khandarísí, from Greek {chóndros}, lit. gruel, applies to old wine.

[305] i.e. in bridal procession.

[306] Arab. “Al-’Arús, one of the innumerable tropical names given to wine by the Arabs. Mr. Payne refers to Grangeret de la Grange, Anthologie Arabe, .

[307] Here the text of the Mac. Edition is resumed.

[308] i.e. “Adornment of (good) Qualities.” See the name punned on in Night dcccli. Lane omits this tale because it contains the illicit “Amours of a Christian and a Jewess who dupes her husband in various abominable ways.” The text has been taken from the Mac. and the Bresl. Edits. x. 72 etc. In many parts the former is a mere Epitome.

[309] The face of her who owns the garden.

[310] i.e. I am no public woman.

[311] i.e. with the sight of the garden and its mistress — purposely left vague.

[312] Arab. “Dádat.” Night dcclxxvi. vol. vii. .

[313] Meaning respectively “Awaking” (or blowing hard), “Affairs” (or Misfortunes) and “Flowing” (blood or water). They are evidently intended for the names of Jewish slave-girls.

[314] i.e. the brow-curls, or accroche-cÂurs. See vol. i. 168.

[315] Arab. “Wisháh” usually applied to woman’s broad belt, stomacher (Al-Hariri Ass. of Rayy).

[317] The old Greek “Stephane.”

[317] Alluding to the popular fancy of the rain-drop which becomes a

pearl.

[318] Arab. “Ghází”=one who fights for the faith.

[319] i.e. people of different conditions.

[320] The sudden change appears unnatural to Europeans; but an Eastern girl talking to a strange man in a garden is already half won. The beauty, however, intends to make trial of her lover’s generosity before yielding.

[321] These lines have occurred in the earlier part of the Night: I quote Mr. Payne for variety.

[322] Arab. “Al-Sháh mát”=the King is dead, Pers. and Arab. grotesquely mixed: Europeans explain “Checkmate” in sundry ways, all more or less wrong.

[323] Cheating (Ghadr) is so common that Easterns who have no tincture of Western civilisation look upon it not only as venial but laudable when one can take advantage of a simpleton. No idea of “honour” enters into it. Even in England the old lady whist-player of the last generation required to be looked after pretty closely — if Mr. Charles Dickens is to be trusted.

[324] Arab. “Al-Gháliyah,” whence the older English Algallia. See vol. i., 128. The Voyage of Linschoten, etc. Hakluyt Society MDCCCLXXXV., with notes by my learned friend the late Arthur Coke Burnell whose early death was so sore a loss to Oriental students.

[325] A favourite idiom, “What news bringest thou?” (“O Asám!” Arab. Prov. ii. 589) used by Háris bin Amrú, King of Kindah, to the old woman Asám whom he had sent to inspect a girl he purposed marrying.

[326] Amongst the Jews the Arab Salám becomes “Shalúm” and a

Jewess would certainly not address this ceremonial greeting to a Christian. But Eastern storytellers care little for these minutić; and the “Adornment of Qualities,” was not by birth a Jewess as the sequel will show.

[327] Arab. “Sálifah,” the silken plaits used as adjuncts. See vol. iii, 313.

[328] I have translated these lines in vol. i. 131, and quoted Mr. Torrens in vol. iv. 235. Here I borrow from Mr. Payne.

[329] Mr. Payne notes: — Apparently some place celebrated for its fine bread, as Gonesse in seventeenth-century France. It occurs also in Bresl. Edit. (iv. 203) and Dozy does not understand it. But Arj the root=good odour.

[330] Arab. “Tás,” from Pers. Tásah. M. Charbonneau a Professor of Arabic at Constantine and Member of the Asiatic Soc. Paris, who published the Histoire de Chams-Eddine et Nour-Eddine with Maghrabi punctuation (Paris, Hachette, 1852) remarks the similarity of this word to Tazza and a number of other whimsical coincidences as Zauj, {zygós} jugum; Inkár, negare; matrah, matelas; Ishtirá, acheter, etc. To which I may add wasat, waist; zabad, civet; Bás, buss (kiss); uzrub (pron. Zrub), drub; Kat’, cut; Tarík, track; etc., etc.

[331] We should say “To her (I drink)” etc.

[332] This is ad captandum. The lovers becoming Moslems would secure the sympathy of the audience. In the sequel (Night dccclviii) we learn that the wilful young woman was a born Moslemah who had married a Jew but had never Judaized.

[333] The doggerel of this Kasidah is not so phenomenal as some we have seen.

[334] Arab. “‘Andam”=Brazil wood, vol. iii. 263.

[335] Arab. “ Himŕ.” See supra, .

[336] i.e. her favours were not lawful till the union was sanctified by heartwhole (if not pure) love.

[337] Arab. “Mansúr wa munazzam=oratio soluta et ligata.

[338] i.e. the cupbearers.

[339] Which is not worse than usual.

[340] i.e. “Ornament of Qualities.”

[341] The ‘Akík, a mean and common stone, ranks high in Moslem poetry on account of the saying of Mohammed recorded by Ali and Ayishah “Seal with seals of Carnelian.” (‘Akik.)

[342] See note ii. at the end of this volume.

[343] Arab. “Mahall” as opposed to the lady’s “Manzil,” which would be better “Makám.” The Arabs had many names for their old habitations, e.g.; Kubbah, of brick; Sutrah, of sun-dried mud; Hazírah, of wood; Tiráf, a tent of leather; Khabáa, of wool; Kash’a, of skins; Nakhád, of camel’s or goat’s hair; Khaymah, of cotton cloth; Wabar, of soft hair as the camel’s undercoat and Fustát (the well-known P.N.) a tent of horsehair or any hair (Sha’ar) but Wabar.

[344] This is the Maghribi form of the Arab. Súk=a bazar-street, known from Tanjah (Tangiers) to Timbuctoo.

[345] Arab. “Walímah” usually=a wedding-feast. According to the learned Nasíf al-Yazají the names of entertainments are as follows: Al-Jafalŕ=a general invitation, opp. to Al-Nakarŕ, especial; Khurs, a childbirth feast; ‘Akíkah, when the boy-babe is first shaved; A’zár=circumcision-feast; Hizák, when the boy has finished his perlection of the Koran; Milák, on occasion of marriage-offer; Wazímah, a mourning entertainment; Wakírah=a “house-warming”; Nakí’ah, on returning from wayfare; ‘Akírah, at beginning of the month Rajab; Kirŕ=a guest-feast and Maadubah, a feast for other cause; any feast.

[346] Arab. “Anistaná” the pop. phrase=thy company gladdens us.

[347] Here “Muákhát” or making mutual brotherhood would be=entering into a formal agreement for partnership. For the forms of “making brotherhood,” see vol. iii. {151}.

[348] Arab. “Ishárah” in classical Arab. signs with the finger (beckoning); Aumá with the hand; Ramz, with the lips; Khalaj, with the eyelids (wink); and Ghamz with the eye. Aumáz is a furtive glance, especially of women, and Ilház, a side-glance from lahaza, limis oculis intuitus est. See Preston’s Al-Hariri, .

[349] Arab. “Haudaj” (Hind. Haudah, vulg. Howda=elephant-saddle), the women’s camel-litter, a cloth stretched over a wooden frame. See the Prize-poem of Lebid, v. 12.

[350] i.e. the twelve days’ visit.

[351] See note, vol. vii. {226}. So Dryden (Virgil): —

> “And the hoarse raven on the blasted bough
> By croaking to the left presaged the coming blow.”

And Gay (Fable xxxvii.),

> “That raven on the left-hand oak,
> Curse on his ill-betiding croak!”

In some Persian tales two crows seen together are a good omen.

[352] Vulgar Moslems hold that each man’s fate is written in the sutures of his skull but none can read the lines. See vol. iii. 123.

[353] i.e. cease not to bemoan her lot whose moon-faced beloved ones are gone.

[354] Arab. “Rukb” used of a return caravan; and also meaning travellers on camels. The vulgar however apply “Rákib” (a camel-rider) to a man on horseback who is properly Fáris plur.

"Khayyálah," while "Khayyál" is a good rider. Other names are "Fayyál" (elephant-rider), Baghghál (mule-rider) and Hammár (donkey-rider).

[355] A popular exaggeration. See vol. i. 117

[356] Lit. Empty of tent-ropes (Atnáb).

[357] Arab. "'Abír," a fragrant powder sprinkled on face, body and clothes. In India it is composed of rice flower or powdered bark of the mango, Deodar (uvaria longifolia), Sandalwood, lign-aloes or curcuma (zerumbat or zedoaria) with rose-flowers, camphor, civet and anise-seed. There are many of these powders: see in Herklots Chiksá, Phul, Ood, Sundul, Uggur, and Urgujja.

[358] i.e. fair faced boys and women. These lines are from the Bresl. Edit. x. 160.

[359] i.e. the Chief Kazi. For the origin of the Office and title see vol. ii. 90, and for the Kazi al-Arab who administers justice among the Badawin see Pilgrimage iii. 45.

[360] Arab. "Raas al-Mál"=capital, as opposed to Ribá or Ribh=interest. This legal expression has been adopted by all Moslem races.

[361] Our Aden which is thus noticed by Abulfeda (A.D. 1331): "Aden in the lowlands of Tehámah * * * also called Abyana from a man (who found it?), built upon the seashore, a station (for land travellers) and a sailing-place for merchant ships India-bound, is dry and sunparcht (Kashifah, squalid, scorbutic) and sweet water must be imported. * * * It lies 86 parasangs from San'á but Ibn Haukal following the travellers makes it three stages. The city, built on the skirt of a wall-like mountain, has a watergate and a landgate known as Bab al-Sákayn. But 'Adan Lá'ah (the modest, the timid, the less known as opposed to Abyan, the better known?) is a city in the mountains of Sabir, Al-Yaman, whence issued the supporters of the Fatimite Caliphs of Egypt." 'Adan etymologically means in Arab.

and Heb. pleasure ({hédone}), Eden (the garden), the Heaven in which spirits will see Allah and our "Coal-hole of the East," which we can hardly believe ever to have been an Eden. Mr. Badger who supplied me with this note described the two Adens in a paper in Ocean Highways, which he cannot now find. In the 'Ajáib al-Makhlúkát, Al-Kazwíni (ob. A.D. 1275) derives the name from Ibn Sinán bin Ibrahím; and is inclined there to place the Bír al-Mu'attal (abandoned well) and the Kasr alMashíd (lofty palace) of Koran xxii. 44; and he adds "Kasr al-Misyad" to those mentioned in the tale of Sayf al-Mulúk and Badí'a al-Jamál.

[362] Meaning that she had been carried to the Westward of Meccah.

[363] Arab. "Zahrawíyah" which contains a kind of double entendre. Fátimah the Prophet's only daughter is entitled Al-Zahrá the "bright-blooming"; and this is also an epithet of Zohrah the planet Venus. For Fatimah see vol. vi. 145. Of her Mohammed said, "Love your daughters, for I too am a father of daughters" and, "Love them, they are the comforters, the dearlings." The Lady appears in Moslem history a dreary young woman (died ćt. 28) who made this world, like Honorius, a hell in order to win a next-world heaven. Her titles are Zahrá and Batúl (Pilgrimage ii. 90) both signifying virgin. Burckhardt translates Zahrá by "bright blooming" (the etymological sense): it denotes literally a girl who has not menstruated, in which state of purity the Prophet's daughter is said to have lived and died. "Batúl" has the sense of a "clean maid" and is the title given by Eastern Christians to the Virgin Mary. The perpetual virginity of Fatimah even after motherhood (Hasan and Husayn) is a point of orthodoxy in Al-Islam as Juno's with the Romans and Umá's with the Hindú worshippers of Shiva. During her life Mohammed would not allow Ali a second wife, and he held her one of the four perfects, the other three being Asia wife of "Pharaoh," the Virgin Mary and Khadijah his own wife. She caused much scandal after his death by declaring that he had left her the Fadak estate (Abulfeda I, 133, 273) a castle with a fine palm-orchard near Khaybar. Abu Bakr dismissed the claim quoting the Apostle's Hadis, "We prophets are folk who

will away nothing: what we leave is alms-gift to the poor," and Shí'ahs greatly resent his decision. (See Dabistan iii. 5152 for a different rendering of the words.) I have given the popular version of the Lady Fatimah's death and burial (Pilgrimage ii. 315) and have remarked that Moslem historians delight in the obscurity which hangs over her last resting-place, as if it were an honour even for the receptacle of her ashes to be concealed from the eyes of men. Her repute is a curious comment on Tom Hood's

"Where woman has never a soul to save."

[364] For Sharif and Sayyid, descendants of Mohammed, see vol. iv. 170.

[365] These lines have occurred with variants in vol. iii. 257, and iv. 50.

[366] Arab. "Hazrat," esp. used in India and corresponding with our medićval "prćsentia vostra."

[367] This wholesale slaughter by the tale-teller of worshipful and reverend men would bring down the gallery like a Spanish tragedy in which all the actors are killed.

[368] They are called indifferently "Ruhbán"=monks or "Batárikah"=patriarchs. See vol. ii. 89.

[369] Arab. "Khilál." The toothpick, more esteemed by the Arabs than by us, is, I have said, often used by the poets as an emblem of attenuation without offending good taste. Nizami (Layla u Majnún) describes a lover as "thin as a toothpick." The "elegant" Hariri (Ass. of Barkaid) describes a toothpick with feminine attributes, "shapely of shape, attractive, provocative of appetite, delicate as the leanest of lovers, polished as a poinard and bending as a green bough."

[370] From Bresl. Edit. x. 194.

[371] Trébutien (vol. ii. 344 et seq.) makes the seven monks sing as many anthems, viz. (1) Congregamini; (2) Vias tuas demonstra mihi;

(3) Dominus illuminatis; (4) Custodi linguam; (5) Unam petii a Domino; (6) Nec adspiciat me visus, and (7) Turbatus est a furore oculus meus. Dánis the Abbot chaunts Anima mea turbata est valdč.

[372] A neat and characteristic touch: the wilful beauty eats and drinks before she thinks of her lover. Alas for Masrur married.

[373] The unfortunate Jew, who seems to have been a model husband (Orientally speaking), would find no pity with a coffee-house audience because he had been guilty of marrying a Moslemah. The union was null and void therefore the deliberate murder was neither high nor petty treason. But, The Nights, though their object is to adorn a tale, never deliberately attempt to point a moral and this is one of their many charms.

[374] These lines have repeatedly occurred. I quote Mr.
Payne.

[375] i.e. by the usual expiation. See vol. {ii. 186}.

[376] Arab. "Shammirí"=up and ready!

[377] I borrow the title from the Bresl. Edit. x. 204. Mr. Payne prefers "Ali Noureddin and the Frank King's Daughter." Lane omits also this tale because it resembles Ali Shar and Zumurrud (vol. iv. 187) and Alá al-Din Abu al-Shámát (vol. iv. 29), "neither of which is among the text of the collection." But he has unconsciously omitted one of the highest interest. Dr. Bacher (Germ. Orient. Soc.) finds the original in Charlemagne's daughter Emma and his secretary Eginhardt as given in Grimm's Deutsche Sagen. I shall note the points of resemblance as the tale proceeds. The correspondence with the King of France may be a garbled account of the letters which passed between Harun al-Rashid and Nicephorus, "the Roman dog."

[378] Arab. "Allaho Akbar," the Moslem slogan or war-cry. See vol. ii. 89.

[379] The gate-keeper of Paradise. See vol. iii. 15, 20.

[380] Negroes. Vol. iii. 75.

[381] Arab. "Nakat," with the double meaning of to spot and to handsel especially dancing and singing women; and, as Mr. Payne notes in this acceptation it is practically equivalent to the English phrase "to mark (or cross) the palm with silver." I have translated "Anwá" by Pleiads; but it means the setting of one star and simultaneous rising of another foreshowing rain. There are seven Anwá (plur. of nawa) in the Solar year viz. Al-Badri (Sept.-Oct.); Al-Wasmiyy (late autumn and December); Al-Waliyy (to April); Al-Ghamír (June); Al-Busriyy (July); Bárih al-Kayz (August) and Ahrák al-Hawá extending to September 8. These are tokens of approaching rain, metaphorically used by the poets to express "bounty". See Preston's Hariri () and Chenery upon the Ass. of the Banu Haram.

[382] i.e. They trip and stumble in their hurry to get there.

[383] Arab. "Kumm" = sleeve or petal. See vol. v. 32.

[384] Arab. "Kiráb" = sword-case of wood, the sheath being of leather.

[385] Arab. "Akr kayrawán," both rare words.

[386] A doubtful tradition in the Mishkát al-Masábih declares that every pomegranate contains a grain from Paradise. See vol. i. 134. The Koranic reference is to vi. 99.

[387] Arab. "Aswad," lit. black but used for any dark colour, here green as opposed to the lighter yellow.

[388] The idea has occurred in vol. i. 158.

[389] So called from the places where they grow.

[390] See vol. vii. for the almond-apricot whose stone is cracked to get at the kernel.

[391] For Roum see vol. iv. 100: in Morocco "Roumi" means simply a

European. The tetrastich alludes to the beauty of the Greek slaves.

[392] Arab. “Ahlan” in adverb form lit. = “as one of the household”: so in the greeting “Ahlan wa Sahlan” (and at thine ease), wa Marhabá (having a wide free place).

[393] For the Sufrah table-cloth see vol. i. 178.

[394] See vol. iii. 302, for the unclean allusion in fig and sycamore.

[395] In the text “of Tor”: see vol. ii. 242. The pear is mentioned by Homer and grows wild in South Europe. Dr. Victor Hehn (The Wanderings of Plants, etc.) comparing the Gr.{ápios} with the Lat. Pyrus, suggests that the latter passed over to the Kelts and Germans amongst whom the fruit was not indigenous. Our fine pears are mostly from the East. e.g. the “bergamot” is the Beg Armud, Prince of Pears, from Angora.

[396] i.e. “Royal,” it may or may not come from Sultaníyah, a town near Baghdad. See vol. i. 83; where it applies to oranges and citrons.

[397] ‘Andam = Dragon’s blood: see vol. iii. 263.

[398] Arab. “Jamár,” the palm-pith and cabbage, both eaten by
Arabs with sugar.

[399] Arab. “Anwár” = lights, flowers (mostly yellow): hence the Moroccan “N’wár,” with its usual abuse of Wakf or quiescence.

[400] Mr. Payne quotes Eugčne Fromentin, “Un Eté dans le Sahara,” Paris, 1857, . Apricot drying can be seen upon all the roofs at Damascus where, however, the season for each fruit is unpleasantly short, ending almost as soon as it begins.

[401] Arab. “Jalájal” = small bells for falcons: in Port. cascaveis, whence our word.

[402] Khulanján. Sic all editions; but Khalanj, or Khaulanj adj.

Khalanji, a tree with a strong-smelling wood which held in hand as a chaplet acts as perfume, as is probably intended. In Span. Arabic it is the Erica-wood. The "Muhit" tells us that is a tree parcel yellow and red growing in parts of India and China, its leaf is that of the Tamarisk (Tarfá); its flower is coloured red, yellow and white; it bears a grain like mustard-seed (Khardal) and of its wood they make porringers. Hence the poet sings,

"Yut 'amu 'l-shahdu fí 'l-jifáni, wa yuska * Labanu 'l-Bukhti fi Kusá'i 'l-Khalanji:
Honey's served to them in platters for food; * Camels' milk in bowls of the Khalanj wood."

The pl. Khalánij is used by Himyán bin Kaháfah in this "bayt",

"Hattá izá má qazati 'l-Hawáijá * Wa malaat Halába-há 'l-Khalánijá:
Until she had done every work of hers * And with sweet milk had filled the porringers."

[403] In text Al-Shá'ir Al-Walahán, vol. iii. 226.

[404] The orange I have said is the growth of India and the golden apples of the Hesperides were not oranges but probably golden nuggets. Captain Rolleston (Globe, Feb. 5, '84, on "Morocco-Lixus") identifies the Garden with the mouth of the Lixus River while M. Antichan would transfer it to the hideous and unwholesome Bissagos Archipelago.

[405] Arab. "Ikyán," the living gold which is supposed to grow in the ground.

[406] For the Kubbad or Captain Shaddock's fruit see vol. ii. 310, where it is misprinted Kubád.

[407] Full or Fill in Bresl. Edit. = Arabian jessamine or cork-tree ({phellón}. The Bul. and Mac. Edits. read "filfil" = pepper or palm-fibre.

[408] Arab. “Sumbul al-’Anbari”; the former word having been introduced into England by patent medicines. “Sumbul” in Arab. and Pers. means the hyacinth, the spikenard or the Sign Virgo.

[409] Arab. “Lisán al-Hamal” lit. = Lamb’s tongue.

[410] See in Bresl. Edit. X, 221. Taif, a well-known town in the mountain region East of Meccah, and not in the Holy Land, was once famous for scented goat’s leather. It is considered to be a “fragment of Syria” (Pilgrimage ii. 207) and derives its name = the circumambulator from its having circuited pilgrim-like round the Ka’abah (Ibid.).

[411] Arab. “Mikhaddah” = cheek-pillow: Ital. guanciale. In Bresl. Edit. Mudawwarah (a round cushion) Sinjabiyah (of Ermine). For “Mudawwarah” see vol. iv. 135.

[412] “Coffee” is here evidently an anachronism and was probably inserted by the copyist. See vol. v. 169, for its first metnion. But “Kahwah” may have preserved its original meaning = strong old wine (vol. ii. 261); and the amount of wine-drinking and drunkenness proves that the coffee movement had not set in.

[413] i.e. they are welcome. In Marocco “Lá baas” means, “I am pretty well” (in health).

[414] The Rose (Ward) in Arab. is masculine, sounding to us most uncouth. But there is a fem. form Wardah = a single rose.

[415] Arab. “Akmám,” pl. of Kumm, a sleeve, a petal. See vol. iv. 107 and supra . The Moslem woman will show any part of her person rather than her face, instinctively knowing that the latter may be recognised whereas the former cannot. The traveller in the outer East will see ludicrous situations in which the modest one runs away with hind parts bare and head and face carefully covered.

[416] Arab. “Ikyán” which Mr. Payne translates “vegetable gold” very picturesquely but not quite preserving the idea. See supra .

[417] It is the custom for fast youths, in Egypt, Syria, and elsewhere to stick small gold pieces, mere spangles of metal on the brows, cheeks and lips of the singing and dancing girls and the perspiration and mask of cosmetics make them adhere for a time till fresh movement shakes them off.

[418] See the same idea in vol. i. 132, and 349.

[419] "They will ask thee concerning wine and casting of lots; say: 'In both are great sin and great advantages to mankind; but the sin of them both is greater than their advantage.'" See Koran ii. 216. Mohammed seems to have made up his mind about drinking by slow degrees; and the Koranic law is by no means so strict as the Mullahs have made it. The prohibitions, revealed at widely different periods and varying in import and distinction, have been discussed by Al-Bayzáwi in his commentary on the above chapter. He says that the first revelation was in chapt. xvi. 69 but, as the passage was disregarded, Omar and others consulted the Apostle who replied to them in chapt. ii. 216. Then, as this also was unnoticed, came the final decision in chapt. v. 92, making wine and lots the work of Satan. Yet excuses are never wanting to the Moslem, he can drink Champagne and Cognac, both unknown in Mohammed's day and he can use wine and spirits medicinally, like sundry of ourselves, who turn up the nose of contempt at the idea of drinking for pleasure.

[420] i.e. a fair-faced cup-bearer. The lines have occurred before: so I quote Mr. Payne.

[421] It is the custom of the Arabs to call their cattle to water by whistling; not to whistle to them, as Europeans do, whilst making water.

[422] i.e. bewitching. See vol. i. 85. These incompatible metaphors are brought together by the Saj'a (prose rhyme) in— "iyah."

[423] Mesopotamian Christians, who still turn towards Jerusalem, face the West, instead of the East, as with Europeans: here the monk is so dazed that he does not know what to do.

[424] Arab. “Bayt Sha’ar” = a house of hair (tent) or a couplet of verse. Watad (a tentpeg) also is prosodical, a foot when the two first letters are “moved” (vowelled) and the last is jazmated (quiescent), e.g. Lakad. It is termed Majmú’a (united), as opposed to “Mafrúk” (separated), e.g. Kabla, when the “moved” consonants are disjoined by a quiescent.

[425] Lit. standing on their heads, which sounds ludicrous enough in English, not in Arabic.

[426] These lines are in vol. iii. 251. I quote Mr. Payne who notes “The bodies of Eastern women of the higher classes by dint of continual maceration, Esther-fashion, in aromatic oils and essences, would naturally become impregnated with the sweet scents of the cosmetics used.”

[427] These lines occur in vol. i. 218: I quote Torrens for variety.

[428] So we speak of a “female screw.” The allusion is to the dove-tailing of the pieces. This personification of the lute has occurred before: but I solicit the reader’s attention to it; it has a fulness of Oriental flavour all its own.

[429] I again solicit the reader’s attention to the simplicity, the pathos and the beauty of this personification of the lute.

[430] “They” for she.

[431] The Arabs very justly make the “‘Andalib” = nightingale, masculine.

[432] Anwár = lights or flowers: See Night dccclxv. supra .

[433] These couplets have occurred in vol. i. 168; so I quote
Mr. Payne.

[434] i.e. You may have his soul but leave me his body: company with him in the next world and let me have him in this.

[435] Alluding to the Koranic (cxiii. 1.), “I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak from the mischief of that which He hath created, etc.” This is shown by the first line wherein occurs the Koranic word “Ghásik” (cxiii. 3) which may mean the first darkness when it overspreadeth or the moon when it is eclipsed.

[436] “Malak” = level ground; also tract on the Nile sea.
Lane M.E. ii. 417, and Bruckhardt Nubia 482.

[437] This sentiment has often been repeated.

[438] The owl comes in because “Búm” (pron. boom) rhymes with
Kayyúm = the Eternal.

[439] For an incident like this see my Pilgrimmage (vol. i. 176). How true to nature the whole scene is; the fond mother excusing her boy and the practical father putting the excuse aside. European paternity, however, would probably exclaim, “The beast’s in liquor!”

[440] In ancient times this seems to have been the universal and perhaps instinctive treatment of the hand that struck a father. By Nur al-Din’s flight the divorce-oath became technically null and void for Taj al-Din had sworn to mutilate his son next morning.

[441] So Roderic Random and his companions “sewed their money between the lining and the waistband of their breeches, except some loose silver for immediate expense on the road.” For a description of these purses see Pilgrimage i. 37.

[442] Arab. Rashid (our Rosetta), a corruption of the Coptic
Trashit; ever famous for the Stone.

[443] For a parallel passage in praise of Alexandria see vol. i. 290, etc. The editor or scribe was evidently an Egyptian.

[444] Arab. “Saghr” (Thagr), the opening of the lips showing the teeth. See vol. i. .

[445] Iskandariyah, the city of Iskandar or Alexander the Great, whose "Soma" was attractive to the Greeks as the corpse of the Prophet Daniel afterwards was to the Moslems. The choice of site, then occupied only by the pauper village of Rhacotis, is one proof of many that the Macedonian conqueror had the inspiration of genius.

[446] i.e. paid them down. See vol. i. 281; vol. ii. 145.

[447] Arab. "Baltiyah," Sonnini's "Bolti" and Nébuleux (because it is dozid-coloured when fried), the Labrus Niloticus from its labra or large fleshy lips. It lives on the "leaves of Paradise" hence the flesh is delicate and savoury and it is caught with the épervier or sweep-net in the Nile, canals and pools.

[448] Arab. "Liyyah," not a delicate comparison, but exceedingly apt besides rhyming to "Baltiyah." The cauda of the "five-quarter sheep, whose tails are so broad and thick that there is as much flesh upon them as upon a quarter of their body," must not be confounded with the lank appendage of our English muttons. See i. 25, Dr. Burnell's Linschoten (Hakluyt Soc. 1885).

[449] A variant occurs in vol. iv. 191.

[450] Arab. "Tars Daylami," a small shield of bright metal.

[451] Arab. "Kaukab al-durri," see Pilgrimage ii. 82.

[452] Arab. "Kusúf" applied to the moon; Khusúf being the solar eclipse.

[453] May Abú Lahab's hands perish. . . and his wife be a bearer of faggots!" Koran cxi. 1 & 4. The allusion is neat.

[454] Alluding to the Angels who shoot down the Jinn. See vol. i. 224. The index misprints "Shibáh."

[455] For a similar scene see Ali Shar and Zumurrud, vol. iv. 187.

[456] i.e. of the girl whom as the sequel shows, her owner had promised not to sell without her consent. This was and is a common practice. See vol. iv. 192.

[457] These lines have occurred in vol. iii. . I quote Mr. Payne.

[458] Alluding to the erectio et distensio penis which comes on before dawn in tropical lands and which does not denote any desire for women. Some Anglo-Indians term the symptom signum salutis, others a urine-proud pizzle.

[459] Arab. “Mohtasib,” in the Maghrib “Mohtab,” the officer charged with inspecting weights and measures and with punishing fraud in various ways such as nailing the cheat’s ears to his shop’s shutter, etc.

[460] Every where in the Moslem East the slave holds himself superior to the menial freeman, a fact which I would impress upon the several Anti-slavery Societies, honest men whose zeal mostly exceeds their knowledge, and whose energy their discretion.

[461] These lines, extended to three couplets, occur in vol. iv. 193. I quote Mr. Payne.

[462] “At this examination (on Judgment Day) Mohammedans also believe that each person will have the book, wherein all the actions of his life are written, delivered to him; which books the righteous will receive in their right hand, and read with great pleasure and satisfaction; but the ungodly will be obliged to take them, against their wills, in their left (Koran xvii. xviii. lxix, and lxxxiv.), which will be bound behind their backs, their right hand being tied to their necks.” Sale, Preliminary Discourse; Sect. iv.

[463] “Whiteness” (bayáz) also meaning lustre, honour.

[464] This again occurs in vol. iv. 194. So I quote Mr. Payne.

[465] Her impudence is intended to be that of a captive Princess.

[466] i.e. bent groundwards.

[467] See vol. iv. 192. In Marocco Za'ar is applied to a man with fair skin, red hair and blue eyes (Gothic blood?) and the term is not complimentary as "Sultan Yazid Za'ar."

[468] The lines have occurred before (vol. iv. 194). I quote Mr. Lane ii. 440. Both he and Mr. Payne have missed the point in "ba'zu layáli" a certain night when his mistress had left him so lonely.

[469] Arab. "Raat-hu." This apparently harmless word suggests one similar in sound and meaning which gave some trouble in its day. Says Mohammed in the Koran (ii. 98) "O ye who believe! say not (to the Apostle) Rá'iná (look at us) but Unzurná (regard us)." "Rá'iná" as pronounced in Hebrew means "our bad one."

[470] By reason of its leanness.

[471] In the Mac. Edit. "Fifty." For a scene which illustrates this mercantile transaction see my Pilgrimage i. 88, and its deduction. "How often is it our fate, in the West as in the East, to see in bright eyes and to hear from rosy lips an implied, if not an expressed 'Why don't you buy me?' or, worse still, 'Why can't you buy me?'"

[472] See vol. ii. 165 dragging or trailing the skirts = walking without the usual strut or swagger: here it means assuming the humble manners of a slave in presence of the master.

[473] This is the Moslem form of "boycotting": so amongst early Christians they refused to give one another God-speed. Amongst Hindús it takes the form of refusing "Hukkah (pipe) and water" which practically makes a man an outcast. In the text the old man expresses the popular contempt for those who borrow and who do not repay. He had evidently not read the essay of Elia on the professional borrower.

[474] See note .

[475] i.e. the best kind of camels.

[476] This first verse has occurred three times.

[477] Arab. “Surayyá” in Dictionaries a dim. of Sarwá = moderately rich. It may either denote abundance of rain or a number of stars forming a constellation. Hence in Job (xxxviii. 31) it is called a heap (kímah).

[478] Pleiads in Gr. the Stars whereby men sail.

[479] This is the Eastern idea of the consequence of satisfactory coition which is supposed to be the very seal of love. Westerns have run to the other extreme.

[480] “Al-Ríf” simply means lowland: hence there is a Ríf in the Nile-delta. The word in Europe is applied chiefly to the Maroccan coast opposite Gibraltar (not, as is usually supposed the North-Western seaboard) where the Berber-Shilhá race, so famous as the “Rif pirates” still closes the country to travellers.

[481] i.e. Upper Egypt.

[482] These local excellencies of coition are described jocosely rather than anthropologically.

[483] See vol. i. 223: I take from Torrens, .

[484] For the complete ablution obligatory after copulation before prayers can be said. See vol. v. 199.

[485] Arab. “Zunnár,” the Greek {zoonárion}, for which, see vol. ii. 215.

[486] Miriam (Arabic Maryam), is a Christian name, in Moslem lands. Abú Maryam “Mary’s father” (says Motarrazi on Al-Hariri, Ass. of Alexandria) is a term of contempt, for men are called after sons (e.g.

Abu Zayd), not after daughters. In more modern authors Abu Maryam is the name of ushers and lesser officials in the Kazi's court.

[487] This formality, so contrary to our Western familiarity after possession, is an especial sign of good breeding amongst Arabs and indeed all Eastern nations. It reminds us of the "grand manner" in Europe two hundred years ago, not a trace of which now remains.

[488] These lines are in Night i. ordered somewhat differently: so I quote Torrens ().

[489] i.e. to the return Salám— "And with thee be peace and the mercy of Allah and His blessings!" See vol. ii. 146. The enslaved Princess had recognised her father's Wazir and knew that he could have but one object, which being a man of wit and her lord a "raw laddie," he was sure to win.

[490] It is quite in Moslem manners for the bystanders to force the sale seeing a silly lad reject a most advantageous offer for sentimental reasons. And the owner of the article would be bound by their consent.

[491] Arab. "Wa'llahi." "Bi" is the original particle of swearing, a Harf al-jarr (governing the genitive as Bi'lláhi) and suggesting the idea of adhesion: "Wa" (noting union) is its substitute in oath-formulć and "Ta" takes the place of Wa as Ta'lláhi. The three-fold forms are combined in a great "swear."

[492] i.e. of divorcing their own wives.

[493] These lines have occurred before: I quote Mr. Payne.

[494] These lines are in Night xxvi., vol. i. 275: I quote Torrens (), with a correction for "when ere."

[495] This should be "draws his senses from him as one pulls hair out of pate."

[496] Rághib and Záhid: see vol. v. 141.

[497] Carolus Magnus then held court in Paris; but the text evidently alludes to one of the port-cities of Provence as Marseille which we English will miscall Marseilles.

[498] Here the writer, not the young wife, speaks; but as a tale-teller he says “hearer” not “reader.”

[499] Kayrawán, the Arab. form of the Greek Cyrene which has lately been opened to travellers and has now lost the mystery which enshrouded it. In Hafiz and the Persian poets it is the embodiment of remoteness and secrecy; as we till the last quarter century spoke of the “deserts of Central Africa.”

[500] Arab. ““Innín”: alluding to all forms of impotence, from dislike, natural deficiency or fascination, the favourite excuse. Easterns seldom attribute it to the true cause, weak action of the heart; but the Romans knew the truth when they described one of its symptoms as cold feet. “Clino-pedalis, ad venerem invalidus, ab ea antiqua opinione, frigiditatem pedum concubituris admodum officere.” Hence St. Francis and the bare-footed Friars. See Glossarium Eroticum Linguae Latinć, Parisiis, Dondey-Dupré, MDCCCXXVI.

[501] I have noted the use of “island” for “land” in general. So in the European languages of the sixteenth century, insula was used for peninsula, e.g. Insula de Cori = the Corean peninsula.

[502] As has been noticed (vol. i. 333), the monocular is famed for mischief and men expect the mischief to come from his blinded eye.

[503] Here again we have a specimen of “inverted speech” (vol. ii. 265); abusive epithets intended for a high compliment, signifying that the man was a tyrant over rebels and a froward devil to the foe.

[504] Arab. “Bab al-Bahr,” see vol. iii. 281.

[505] Arab. “Batárikah” see vol. ii. 89. The Templars, Knights of Malta

and other orders half ecclesiastic, half military suggested the application of the term.

[506] These lines have occurred in vol. i. 280 — I quote
Torrens ().

[507] Maryam al-Husn containing a double entendre, “O place of the white doe (Rím) of beauty!” The girl’s name was Maryam the Arab. form of Mary, also applied to the B.V. by Eastern Christians. Hence a common name of Syrian women is “Husn Maryam” = (one endowed with the spiritual beauties of Mary: vol. iv. 87). I do not think that the name was “manufactured by the Arab story-tellers after the pattern of their own names (e.g. Nur al-Din or Noureddin, light of the faith, Tajeddin, crown of faith, etc.) for the use of their imaginary Christian female characters.”

[508] I may here remind readers that the Bán, which some Orientalists will write “Ben,” is a straight and graceful species of Moringa with plentiful and intensely green foliage.

[509] Arab. “Amúd al-Sawári” = the Pillar of Masts, which is still the local name of Diocletian’s column absurdly named by Europeans “Pompey’s Pillar.”

[510] Arab. “Batiyah,” also used as a wine-jar (amphora), a flagon.

[511] Arab. “Al-Kursán,” evidently from the Ital. “Corsaro,” a runner. So the Port. “Cabo Corso,” which we have corrupted to “Cape Coast Castle” (Gulf of Guinea), means the Cape of Tacking.

[512] Arab. “Ghuráb,” which Europeans turn to “Grab.”

[513] Arab. “Sayyib” (Thayyib) a rare word: it mostly applies to a woman who leaves her husband after lying once with him.

[514] Arab. “Batárikah:” here meaning knights, leaders of armed men as in Night dccclxii., supra , it means “monks.”

[515] i.e. for the service of a temporal monarch.

[516] Arab. “Sayr” = a broad strip of leather still used by way of girdle amongst certain Christian religions in the East.

[517] Arab. “Haláwat al-Salámah,” the sweetmeats offered to friends after returning from a journey or escaping sore peril. See vol. iv. 60.

[518] So Eginhardt was an Erzcapellan and belonged to the ghostly profession.

[519] These lines are in vols. iii. 258 and iv. 204. I quote Mr. Payne.

[520] Arab. “Firásah,” lit. = skill in judging of horse flesh (Faras) and thence applied, like “Kiyáfah,” to physiognomy. One Kári was the first to divine man’s future by worldly signs (Al-Maydáni, Arab. prov. ii. 132) and the knowledge was hereditary in the tribe Mashíj.

[521] Reported to be a “Hadis” or saying of Mohammed, to whom are attributed many such shrewd aphorisms, e.g. “Allah defend us from the ire of the mild (tempered).”

[522] These lines are in vol. i. 126. I quote Torrens ().

[523] These lines have occurred before. I quote Mr. Payne.

[524] Arab. “Khák-bák,” an onomatopÂia like our flip-flap and a host of similar words. This profaning a Christian Church which contained the relics of the Virgin would hugely delight the coffee-house habitués, and the Egyptians would be equally flattered to hear that the son of a Cairene merchant had made the conquest of a Frankish Princess Royal. That he was an arrant poltroon mattered very little, as his cowardice only set of his charms.

[525] i.e. after the rising up of the dead.

[526] Arab. “Nafísah,” the precious one i.e. the Virgin.

[527] Arab. “Nákús,” a wooden gong used by Eastern Christians which were wisely forbidden by the early Moslems.

[528] i.e. a graceful, slender youth.

[529] There is a complicatd pun in this line: made by splitting the word after the fashion of punsters. “Zarbu ‘l-Nawákísí” = the striking of the gongs, and “Zarbu ‘l Nawá, Kísí = striking the departure signal: decide thou (fem. addressed to the Nafs, soul or self)” I have attempted a feeble imitation.

[530] The modern Italian term of the venereal finish.

[531] Arab. “Najm al-Munkazzi,” making the envious spy one of the prying Jinns at whom is launched the Shiháb or shooting-star by the angels who prevent them listening at the gates of Heaven. See vol. i. 224.

[532] Arab. “Sandúk al-Nuzur,” lit. “the box of vowed oblations.” This act of sacrilege would find high favour with the auditory.

[533] The night consisting like the day of three watches. See vol. i.

[534] Arab. “Al-Khaukhah,” a word now little used.

[535] Arab. “Námúsiyah,” lit. mosquito curtains.

[536] Arab. “Jáwashiyah,” see vol. ii. 49.

[537] Arab. “Kayyimah,” the fem. of “Kayyim,” misprinted “Kayim” in vol. ii. 93.

[538] i.e. hadst thou not disclosed thyself. He has one great merit in a coward of not being ashamed for his cowardice; and this is a characteristic of the modern Egyptian, whose proverb is, “He ran away, Allah shame him! is better than, He was slain, Allah bless him!”

[539] Arab. “Ahjar al-Kassárín” nor forgotten. In those days ships anchored in the Eastern port of Alexandria which is now wholly abandoned on account of the rocky bottom and the dangerous “Levanter,” which as the Gibraltar proverb says

“Makes the stones canter.”

[540] Arab. “Hakk” = rights, a word much and variously used. To express the possessive “mine” a Badawi says “Hakki” (pron. Haggi) and “Lílí;” a Syrian “Shítí” for Shayyati, my little thing or “taba ‘i” my dependent; an Egyptian “Bitá’ i” my portion and a Maghribi “M’tá ‘i” and “diyyáli” (di allazí lí = this that is to me). Thus “mine” becomes a shibboleth.

[541] i.e. The “Good for nothing,” the “Bad’un;” not some forgotten ruffian of the day, but the hero of a tale antedating The Nights in their present form. See Terminal Essay, x. ii.

[542] i.e. Hoping to catch Nur al-Din.

[543] Arab. “Sawwáhún” = the Wanderers, Pilgrims, wandering Arabs, whose religion, Al-Islam, so styled by its Christain opponents. And yet the new creed was at once accepted by whole regions of Christians, and Mauritania, which had rejected Roman paganism and Gothic Christianity. This was e.g. Syria and the so-called “Holy Land,” not because, as is fondly asserted by Christians, al-Islam was forced upon them by the sword, but on account of its fulfilling a need, its supplying a higher belief, unity as opposed to plurality, and its preaching a more manly attitude of mind and a more sensible rule of conduct. Arabic still preserves a host of words special to the Christian creed; and many of them have been adopted by Moslems but with changes of signification.

[544] i.e. of things commanded and things prohibited. The writer is thinking of the Koran in which there are not a few abrogated injunctions.

[545] See below for the allusion.

[546] Arab. “Kafrá” = desert place. It occurs in this couplet,

> “Wa Kabrun Harbin fí-makánin Kafrin;
> Wa laysa Kurba Kabri Harbin Kabrun.”
> “Harb’s corse is quartered in coarse wold accurst;
> Nor close to corse of Harb is other corse;—”

words made purposely harsh because uttered by a Jinni who killed a traveller named “Harb.” So Homer: —

{pollŕ d’ hánanta, kátanta, párantá te dachmía t’ ęlthon.}

and Pope: —

“O’er hills, o’er dales, o’er crags, o’er rocks they go, etc.”

See Preface (p. v.) to Captain A. Lockett’s learned and whimsical volume, “The Muit Amil” etc. Calcutta, 1814.

[547] These lines have occurred vol. iv. 267. I quote Mr. Lane.

[548] The topethesia is here designedly made absurd. Alexandria was one of the first cities taken by the Moslems (A.H. 21 = 642) and the Christian pirates preferred attacking weaker places, Rosetta and Damietta.

[549] Arab. “Bilád al-Rúm,” here and elsewhere applied to France.

[550] Here the last line of , vol. iv. in the Mac. Edit. is misplaced and belongs to the next page.

[551] Arab. “Akhawán shakíkán” = brothers german (of men and beasts) born of one father and mother, sire and dam.

[552] “The Forerunner” and “The Overtaker,” terms borrowed from the Arab Epsom.

[553] Known to us as "the web and pin," it is a film which affects Arab horses in the damp hot regions of Malabar and Zanzibar and soon blinds them. This equine cataract combined with loin-disease compels men to ride Pegu and other ponies.

[554] Arab. "Zujáj bikr" whose apparent meaning would be glass in the lump and unworked. Zaj áj bears, however, the meaning of clove-nails (the ripe bud of the clove-shrub) and may possibly apply to one of the manifold "Alfáz Adwiyah" (names of drugs). Here, however, pounded glass would be all sufficient to blind a horse: it is much used in the East especially for dogs affected by intestinal vermicules.

[555] Alluding to the Arab saying "The two rests" (Al-ráhatáni) "certainty of success or failure," as opposed to "Wiswás" when the mind fluctuates in doubt.

[556] She falls in love with the groom, thus anticipating the noble self-devotion of Miss Aurora Floyd.

[557] Arab. "Túfán" see vol. {iv. 136}: here it means the "Deluge of Noah."

[558] Two of the Hells. See vol. v. 240.

[559] Lit. "Out upon a prayer who imprecated our parting!"

[560] The use of masculine for feminine has frequently been noted. I have rarely changed the gender or the number the plural being often employed for the singular (vol. i. 98). Such change may avoid "mystification and confusion" but this is the very purpose of the substitution which must be preserved if "local colour" is to be respected.

VOLUME IX.

To Alexander Baird of Urie.

My Dear Baird,

I avail my self of a privilege of authorship, not yet utterly obsolete, to place your name at the head of this volume. Your long residence in Egypt and your extensive acquaintance with its “politic,” private and public, make you a thouroughly competent judge of the merits and demerits of this volume; and encourage me to hope that in reading it you will take something of the pleasure I have had in writing it..

Ever yours sincerely,
Richard F. Burton.
Tangier, December 31, 1885.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

Ali Nur Al-Din and Miriam the Girdle-Girl (continued)

When it was the Eight Hundred and Eighty-ninth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Nur al-Din heard the voice singing these verses he said in himself, “Verily this be the Lady Miriam chanting without hesitation or doubt or suspicion of one from without.[1] Would Heaven I knew an my thought be true and if it be indeed she herself or other self!” And regrets redoubled upon him and he bemoaned himself and recited these couplets,

“When my blamer saw me beside my love * Whom I met in a site that
lay open wide,
I spake not at meeting a word of reproach * Though oft it comfort
sad heart to chide;
Quoth the blamer, ‘What means this silence that bars * Thy making
answer that hits his pride?’
And quoth I, ‘O thou who as fool dost wake, * To misdoubt of
lovers and Love deride;
The sign of lover whose love is true * When he meets his belovиd
is mum to bide.’”

When he had made an end of these verses, the Lady Miriam fetched inkcase and paper and wrote therein: “After honour due to the Basmalah,[2] may the peace of Allah be upon thee and His mercy and blessings be! I would have thee know that thy slavegirl Miriam saluteth thee, who longeth sore for thee; and this is her message to thee. As soon as this letter shall fall into thy hands, do thou arise without stay and delay and apply thyself to that we would have of thee with all diligence and beware with all wariness of transgressing her commandment and of sleeping. When the first third of the night is past, (for that hour is of the most favourable of times) apply thee only to saddling the two stallions and fare forth with them both to the Sultan’s Gate.[3] If any ask thee whither thou wend, answer, ‘I am going to exercise the steeds,’ and none will hinder thee; for the folk of this city trust to the locking of the gates.” Then she folded the letter in a silken kerchief and threw it out of the latticed window to Nur al-Din, who took it and reading it, knew it for the handwriting of the Lady Miriam and comprehended all its contents. So he kissed the letter and laid it between his eyes; then, calling to mind that which had betided him with her of the sweets of love-liesse, he poured forth his tears whilst he recited these couplets,

“Came your writ to me in the dead of the night * And desire for
you stirrиd heart and sprite;
And, remembered joys we in union joyed, * Praised the Lord who
placed us in parting plight.”

As soon as it was dark Nur al-Din busied himself with making ready the stallions and patiented till the first watch of the night was past; when, without a moment delay, Nur al-Din the lover full of teen, saddled them with saddles of the goodliest, and leading them forth of the stable, locked the door after him and repaired with them to the city-gate, where he sat down to await the coming of the Princess. Meanwhile, Miriam returned forthright to her private apartment, where she found the one-eyed Wazir seated, elbow-propt upon a cushion stuffed with ostrich-down; but he was ashamed to put forth his hand to her or to bespeak her. When she saw him, she appealed to her Lord in heart, saying, “Allahumma-O my God-bring him not to his will of me nor to me defilement decree after purity!” Then she went up to him and made a show of fondness for him and sat down by his side and coaxed him, saying, “O my lord, what is this aversion thou displayest to me? Is it pride or coquetry on thy part? But the current byword saith, ‘An the salam-salutation be little in demand, the sitters salute those who stand.”[4] So if, O my lord, thou come not to me neither accost me, I will go to thee and accost thee.” Said he, “To thee belong favour and kindness, O Queen of the earth in its length and breadth; and what am I but one of thy slaves and the least of thy servants. Indeed, I was ashamed to intrude upon thine illustrious presence, O unique pearl, and my face is on the earth at thy feet.” She rejoined, “Leave this talk and bring us to eat and drink." Accordingly he shouted to his eunuchs and women an order to serve food, and they set before them a tray containing birds of every king that walk and fly and in nests increase and multiply, such as sand-grouse and quails and pigeon-poults and lambs and fatted geese and fried poultry and other dishes of all sorts and colours. The Princess put out her hand to the tray and began to eat and feed the Wazir with her fair finger-tips and kiss him on the mouth. They ate till they had enough and washed their hands, after which the handmaidens removed the table of food and set on the service of wine. So Princess Miriam filled the cup and drank and gave the Wazir to drink and served him with assiduous service, so that he was like to fly for joy and his breast broadened and he was of the gladdest. When she saw that the wine had gotten the better of his senses, she thrust her hand into her bosom and brought out a pastile of virgin Cretan-Bhang, which she had provided against such an hour, whereof if an elephant smelt a dirham's weight, he would sleep from year to year. She distracted his attention and crumbled the drug into the cup: then, filling it up, handed it to the Wazir, who could hardly credit his senses for delight. So he took it and kissing her hand, drank it off, but hardly had it settled in his stomach when he fell head foremost to the ground. Then she rose and filling two great pairs of saddle-bags with what was light of weight and weighty of worth of jewels and jacinths and precious stones, together with somewhat of meat and drink, donned harness of war and armed herself for fight. She also took with her for Nur al-Din what should rejoice him of rich and royal apparel and splendid arms and armour, and shouldering the bags (for indeed her strength equalled her valiancy), hastened forth from the new palace to join her lover. On this wise fared it with the Lady Miriam; but as regards Nur al-Din, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Ninetieth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Lady Miriam left the new palace, she went straightways to meet her lover for indeed she was as valiant as she was strong; but Nur al-Din the distracted, the full of teen, sat at the city-gate hending the horses' halters in hand, till Allah (to whom belong Majesty and

Might) sent a sleep upon him and he slept-glory be to Him who sleepeth not! Now at that time the Kings of the Islands had spent much treasure in bribing folk to steal the two steeds or one of them; and in those days there was a black slave, who had been reared in the islands skilled in horse-lifting; wherefore the Kings of the Franks seduced him with wealth galore to steal one of the stallions and promised him, if he could avail to lift the two, that they would give him a whole island and endue him with a splendid robe of honour. He had long gone about the city of France in disguise, but succeeded not in taking the horses, whilst they were with the King; but, when he gave them in free gift to the Wazir and the monocular one carried them to his own stable, the blackamoor thief rejoiced with joy exceeding and made sure of success, saying in himself, “By the virtue of the Messiah and the Faith which is no liar, I will certainly steal the twain of them!” Now he had gone out that very night, intending for the stable, to lift them; but, as he walked along, behold, he caught sight of Nur al-Din lying asleep, with the halters in his hands. So he went up to the horses and loosing the halters from their heads, was about to mount one of them and drive the other before him, when suddenly up came the Princess Miriam, carrying on her shoulders the couple of saddle-bags. She mistook the black for Nur al-Din and handed him one pair of bags, which he laid on one of the stallions: after which she gave him the other and he set it on the second steed, without word said to discover that it was not her lover. Then they mounted and rode out of the gate[5] in silence till presently she asked, “O my lord Nur al-Din, what aileth thee to be silent?” Whereupon the black turned to her and cried angrily, “What sayst thou, O damsel?” When she heard the slave’s barbarous accents, she knew that the speech was not of Nur al-Din; so raising her eyes she looked at him and saw that he was a black chattel, snub-nosed and wide-mouthed, with nostrils like ewers; whereupon the light in her eyes became night and she asked him, “Who art thou, O Shaykh of the sons of Ham and what among men is thy name?” He answered, “O daughter of the base, my name is Mas’ъd, the lifter of horses, when folk slumber and sleep.” She made him no reply, but straightway baring her blade, smote him on the nape and the blade came out gleaming from his throat-tendons, whereupon he fell earthwards, weltering in his blood, and Allah hurried his soul to the Fire and abiding-place dire. Then she took the other horse by the bridle and retraced her steps in search of Nur al-Din, whom she found lying, asleep and snoring, in the place where she had appointed him to meet her, hending the halters in hand, yet knowing not his fingers from his feet. So she dismounted and gave him a cuff,[6] whereupon he awoke in affright and said to her, "O m lady, praised be Allah for thy safe coming!" Said she "Rise and back this steed and hold thy tongue!" So he rose and mounted one of the stallions, whilst she bestrode the other, and they went forth the city and rode on awhile in silence. Then said she to him, "Did I not bid thee beware of sleeping? Verily, he prospereth not who sleepeth." He rejoined, "O my lady, I slept not but because of the cooling of my heart by reason of thy promise. But what hath happened, O my lady?" So she told him her adventure with the black, first and last, and he said, "Praised be Allah for safety!" Then they fared on at full speed, committing their affair to the Subtle, the All-wise and conversing as they went, till they came to the place where the black lay prostrate in the dust, as he were an Ifrit, and Miriam said to Nur al-Din, "Dismount; strip him of his clothes and take his arms." He answered, "By Allah, O my lady, I dare not dismount nor approach him." And indeed he marvelled at the blackamoor's stature and praised the Princess for her deed, wondering the while at her valour and stout-heartedness. They fared on lustily and ceased not so doing all that night and halted not till the day broke with its shine and sheen and the sun shone bright upon plain and height when they came to a wide riverino lea wherein the gazelles were frisking gracefully. Its surface was clothed with green and on all sides fruit trees of every kind were seen: its slopes for flowers like serpents' bellies showed, and birds sang on boughs aloud and its rills in manifold runnels flowed. And indeed it was as saith the poet and saith well and accomplisheth the hearer's desire,

"Rosy red Wady hot with summer-glow, * Where twofold tale of
common growth was piled.
In copse we halted wherein bent to us * Branches, as bendeth
nurse o'er weanling-child.

And pure cold water quenching thirst we sipped: * To cup-mate
sweeter than old wine and mild:
From every side it shut out sheen of sun * Screen-like, but wooed
the breeze to cool the wild:
And pebbles, sweet as maidens deckt and dight * And soft as
threaded pearls, the touch beguiled."

And as saith another,

"And when birdies o'er warble its lakelet, it gars *
Longing[7] lover to seek it where morning glows;
For likest to Paradise lie its banks * With shade and fruitage
and fount that flows."

Presently Princess Miriam and Nur al-Din alighted to rest in this Wady, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Ninety-first Night,

She said, It hat reached me, O auspicious King, that when Princess Miriam and Nur al-Din alighted in that valley, they ate of its fruits and drank of its streams, after turning the stallions loose to pasture: then they sat talking and recalling their past and all that had befallen them and complaining one to other of the pangs of parting and of the hardships suffered for estrangement and love-longing. As they were thus engaged, behold, there arose in the distance a dust-cloud which spread till it walled the world, and they heard the neighing of horses and clank of arms and armour. Now the reason of this was, that after the Princess had been bestowed in wedlock upon the Wazir who had gone in to her that night, the King went forth at daybreak, to give the couple good morrow, taking with him, after the custom of Kings with their daughters, a gift of silken stuffs and scattering gold and silver among the eunuchs and tire-women, that they might snatch at and scramble for it. And he fared on escorted by one of his pages; but when he came to the new palace, he found the Wazir prostrate on the carpet, knowing not his head from his heels; so he searched the place right and left for his daughter, but found her not; whereat he was troubled sore with concern galore and his wits forlore. Then he bade bring hot water and virgin vinegar and frankincense[8] and mingling them together, blew the mixture into the Wazir's nostrils and shook him, whereupon he cast the Bhang forth of his stomach, as it were a bit of cheese. He repeated the process, whereupon the Minister came to himself and the King questioned him of his case and that of his daughter. He replied, "O mighty King, I have no knowledge of her save that she poured me out a cup of wine with her own hand; and from that tide to this I have no recollection of aught nor know I what is come of her." When the King heard this, the light in his eyes became night, and he drew his scymitar and smote the Wazir on the head, then the steel came out gleaming from between his grinder teeth. Then, without an instant delay, he called the groom sand syces and demanded of them the two stallions: but they said, "O King, the two steeds were lost in the night and together with them our chief, the Master of Horse; for, when we awoke in the morning, we found all the doors wide open." Cried the King, "By the faith of me and by all wherein my belief is stablished on certainty, none but my daughter hath taken the steeds, she and the Moslem captive which used to tend the Church and which took her aforetime! Indeed I knew him right well and none delivered him from my hand save this one-eyed Wazir; but now he is requited his deed." Then the King called his three sons, who were three doughty champions, each of whom could withstand a thousand horse in the field of strife and the stead where cut and thrust are rife; and bade them mount. So they took horse forthwith and the King and the flower of his knights and nobles and officers mounted with them and followed on the trail of the fugitives till Miriam saw them, when she mounted her charger and baldrick'd her blade and took her arms. Then she said to Nur al-Din, "How is it with thee and how is thy heart for fight and strife and fray?" Said he, "Verily, my steadfastness in battle-van is as the steadfastness of the stake in bran."[9] And he improvised and said,

"O Miriam thy chiding I pray, forego; * Nor drive me to death or injurious blow:
How e'er can I hope to bear fray and fight * Who quake at the croak of the corby-crow?

I who shiver for fear when I see the mouse * And for very funk I
bepiss my clo'!
I loveno foin but the poke in bed, * When coynte well knoweth my
prickle's prow;
This is rightful rede, and none other shows * Righteous as this
in my sight, I trow."

Now when Miriam heard his speech and the verse he made, she laughed and smilingly said, "O my lord Nur al-Din, abide in thy place and I will keep thee from their ill grace, though they be as the sea-sands in number. But mount and ride in rear of me, and if we be defeated and put to flight, beware of falling, for none can overtake thy steed." So saying, she turned her lance-head towards foe in plain and gave her horse the rein, whereupon he darted off under her, like the stormy gale or like waters that from straitness of pipes outrail. Now Miriam was the doughtiest of the folk of her time and the unique pearl of her age and tide; for her father had taught her, whilst she was yet little, on steeds to ride and dive deep during the darkness of the night in the battle tide. When the King saw her charging down upon them, he knew her but too well and turning to his eldest son, said, "O Bartaut,[10] thou who art surnamed Ras al-Killaut[11] this is assuredly thy sister Miriam who chargeth upon us, and she seeketh to wage war and fight fray with us. So go thou out to give her battle: and I enjoin thee by the Messiah and the Faith which is no liar, an thou get the better of her, kill her not till thou have propounded to her the Nazarene faith. An she return to her old creed, bring her to me prisoner; but an she refuse, do her die by the foulest death and make of her the vilest of examples, as well as the accursed which is with her." Quoth Bartaut, "Hearkening and obedience"; and, rushing out forthright to meet his sister, said to her, "O Miriam, doth not what hath already befallen us on thine account suffice thee, but thou must leave the faith of thy fathers and forefathers and follow after the faith of the Vagrants in the lands, that is to say, the faith of Al-Islam? By the virtue of the Messiah and the Faith which is no liar, except thou return to the creed of the Kings thy Forebears and walk therein after the goodliest fashion, I will put thee to an ill death and make of thee the most shameful of ensamples!" But Miriam laughed at his speech and replied, "Well-away! Far be it that the past should present stay or that he who is dead should again see day! I will make thee drink the sourest of regrets! By Allah, I will not turn back upon the faith of Mohammed son of Abdullah, who made salvation general; for his is the True Faith; nor will I leave the right road though I drain the cup of ruin!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Ninety-second Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Miriam exclaimed to her brother, "Well-away! Heaven forfend that I turn back from the faith of Mohammed Abdullah-son who made salvation general; for his is the Right Road nor will I leave it although I drain the cup of ruin." When the accursed Bartaut heard this, the light in his eyes became night, the matter was great and grievous to him and between them there befel a sore fight. The twain swayed to and fro battling throughout the length and breadth of the valley and manfully enduring the stress of combat singular, whilst all eyes upon them were fixed in admiring surprise: after which they wheeled about and foined and feinted for a long bout and as often as Bartaut opened on his sister Miriam a gate of war,[12] she closed it to and put it to naught, of the goodliness of her skill and her art in the use of arms and her cunning of cavalarice. Nor ceased they so doing till the dust overhung their heads vault-wise and they were hidden from men's eyes; and she ceased not to baffle Bartaut and stop the way upon him, till he was weary and his courage wavered and his resolution was worsted and his strength weakened; whereupon she smote him on the nape, that the sword came out gleaming from his throat tendons and Allah hurried his soul to the Fire and the abiding-place which is dire. Then Miriam wheeled about in the battleplain and the stead where cut and thrust are fain; and championed it and offered battle, crying out and saying, "Who is for fighting? Who is for jousting? Let come forth to me to-day no weakling or niderling; ay, let none come forth to me but the champions who the enemies of The Faith represent, that I may give them to drink the cup of ignominious punishment. O worshippers of idols, O miscreants, O rebellious folk, this day verily shall the faces of the people of the True Faith be whitened and theirs who deny the Compassionate be blackened!” Now when the King saw his eldest son slain, he smote his face and rent his dress and cried out to his second son, saying, “O Batrъs, thou who art surnamed Khara al-Sъs,[13] go forth, O my son, in haste and do battle with thy sister Miriam; avenge me the death of thy brother Bartaut and bring her to me a prisoner, abject and humiliated!” He answered, “Hearkening and obedience, O my sire, and charging down drave at his sister, who met him in mid-career, and they fought, he and she, a sore fight, yet sorer than the first. Bartus right soon found himself unable to cope with her might and would have sought safety in flight, but of the greatness of her prowess could not avail unto this sleight; for, as often as he turned to flee, she drave after him and still clave to him and pressed him hard, till presently she smote him with the sword in his throat, that it issued gleaming from his nape, and sent him after his brother. Then she wheeled about in the mid-field and plain where cut and thrust are dealed, crying out and saying, “Where be the Knights? Where be the Braves? Where is the one-eyed Wazir, the lameter, of the crooked faith[14] the worthy believer?” Thereupon the King her father cried out with heart in bleeding guise and tear-ulcerated eyes, saying, “She hath slain my second son, by the virtue of the Messiah and the Faith which is no liar!” And he called aloud to his youngest son, saying, “O Fasyбn, surnamed Salh al-Subyбn,[15] go forth, O my son, to do battle with thy sister and take of her the blood-wreak for thy brothers and fall on her, come what may; and whether thou gain or thou lose the day;[16] and if thou conquer her, slay her with foulest slaughter!” So he drave out to Miriam, who ran at him with the best of her skill and charged him with the goodliness of her cleverness and her courage and her cunning in fence and cavalarice, crying to him, “O accursed, O enemy of Allah and the Moslems, I will assuredly send thee after thy brothers and woeful is the abiding-place of the Miscreants!” So saying, she unsheathed her sword and smote him and cut off his head and arms and sent him after his brothers and Allah hurried his soul to the Fire and the abiding-place dire. Now when the Knights and riders who rode with her sire saw his three sons slain, who were the doughtiest of the folk of their day, there fell on their hearts terror of the Princess Miriam, awe of her overpowered them; they bowed their heads earthwards and they made sure of ruin and confusion, disgrace and destruction. So with the flames of hate blazing in heart they turned their backs forthright and addressed themselves to flight. When the King saw his sons slain and on his flying troops cast sight, there fell on him bewilderment and affright, whilst his heart also was a-fire for despight. Then quoth he to himself, “In very sooth Princess Miriam hath belittled us; and if I venture myself and go out against her alone, haply she will gar me succumb and slay me without ruth, even as she slew her brothers and make of me the foulest of examples, for she hath no longer any desire for us nor have we of her return any hope. Wherefore it were the better rede that I guard mine honour and return to my capital.” So he gave reins to his charger and rode back to his city. But when he found himself in his palace, fire was loosed in his heart for rage and chagrin at the death of his three gallant sons and the defeat of his troops and the disgrace to his honour; nor did he abide half an hour ere he summoned his Grandees and Officers of state and complained to them of that his daughter Miriam had done with him of the slaughter of her brothers and all he suffered therefrom of passion and chagrin, and sought advice of them. They all counselled him to write to the Vicar of Allah in His earth, the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, and acquaint him with his circumstance. So he wrote a letter to the Caliph, containing, after the usual salutations, the following words. “We have a daughter, Miriam the Girdle-girl hight, who hath been seduced and debauched from us by a Moslem captive, named Nur al-Din Ali, son of the merchant Taj al-Din of Cairo, and he hath taken her by night and went forth with her to his own country; wherefore I beg of the favour of our lord the Commander of the Faithful that he write to all the lands of the Moslems to seize her and send her back to us by a trusty messenger.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Ninety-third Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King of France wrote to the Caliph and Prince of True Believers, Harun al-Rashid, a writ humbling himself by asking for his daughter Miriam and begging of his favour that he write to all the Moslems, enjoining her seizure and sending back to him by a trusty messenger of the servants of his Highness the Commander of the Faithful; adding, "And in requital of your help and aidance in this matter, we will appoint to you half of the city of Rome the Great, that thou mayst build therein mosques for the Moslems, and the tribute thereof shall be forwarded to you." And after writing this writ, by rede of his Grandees and Lords of the land, he folded the scroll and calling his Wazir, whom he had appointed in the stead of the monocular Minister, bade him seal it with the seal of the kingdom, and the Officers of state also set hands and seals thereto; after which the King bade the Wazir bear the letter to Baghdad,[17] the Palace of Peace, and hand it into the Caliph's own hand, saying, "An thou bring her back, thou shalt have of me the fiefs of two Emirs and I will bestow on thee a robe of honour with two-fold fringes of gold." The Wazir set out with the letter and fared on over hill and dale, till he came to the city of Baghdad, where he abode three days, till he was rested from the way, when he sought the Palace of the Commander of the Faithful and when guided thereto he entered it and craved audience. The Caliph bade admit him; so he went in and kissing ground before him, handed to him the letter of the King of France, together with rich gifts and rare presents beseeming the Commander of the Faithful. When the Caliph read the writ and apprehended its significance, he commanded his Wazir to write, without stay or delay, despatches to all the lands of the Moslems, setting out the name and favour of Princess Miriam and of Nur al-Din, stating how they had eloped and bidding all who found them lay hands on them and send them to the Commander of the Faithful, and warning them on no wise in that matter to use delay or indifference. So the Wazir wrote the letters and sealing them, despatched them by couriers to the different Governors, who hastened to obey the Caliph's commandment and addressed themselves to make search in all the lands for persons of such name and favour. On this wise it fared with the Governors and their subjects; but as regards Nur al-Din and Miriam the Girdle-girl, they fared on without delay after defeating the King of France and his force and the Protector protected them, till they came to the land of Syria and entered Damascus-city. Now the couriers of the Caliph had foregone them thither by a day and the Emir of Damascus knew that he was commanded to arrest the twain as soon as found, that he might send them to the Caliph.

Accordingly, when they entered the city, the secret police[18] accosted them and asked them their names. They told them the truth and acquainted them with their adventure and all that had betided them; whereupon they knew them for those of whom they were in search and seizing them, carried them before the Governor of the city. He despatched them to the city of Baghdad under escort of his officers who, when they came thither, craved audience of the Caliph which he graciously granted; so they came into the presence; and, kissing ground before him, said, "O Commander of the Faithful, this is Miriam the Girdle-girl, daughter of the King of France, and this is the captive Nur al-Din, son of the merchant Taj al-Din of Cairo, who debauched her from her sire and stealing her from his kingdom and country fled with her to Damascus, where we found the twain as they entered the city, and questioned them. They told us the truth of their case: so we laid hands on them and brought them before thee." The Caliph looked at Miriam and saw that she was slender and shapely of form and stature, the handsomest of the folk of her tide and the unique pearl of her age and her time; sweet of speech[19] and fluent of tongue, stable of soul and hearty of heart. Thereupon she kissed the ground between his hands and wished him permanence of glory and prosperity and surcease of evil and enmity. He admired the beauty of her figure and the sweetness of her voice and the readiness of her replies and said to her, "Art thou Miriam the Girdle-girl, daughter of the King of France?" Answered she, "Yes, O Prince of True Believers and Priest of those who the Unity of Allah receive and Defender of the Faith and cousin of the Primate of the Apostles!" Then the Caliph turned to Nur al-Din Ali and seeing him to be a shapely youth, as he were the shining full moon on fourteenth night, said to him, "And thou, art thou Ali Nur al-Din, son of the merchant Taj al-Din of Cairo?" Said he, "Yes, O Commander of the Faithful and stay of those who for righteousness are care-full!" The Caliph asked, "How cometh it that thou hast taken this damsel and fled forth with her of her father's kingdom?" So Nur al-Din proceeded to relate to the Commander of the Faithful all his past, first and last; whereat the Caliph was astonied with extreme astonishment and diverted and exclaimed, "How manifold are the sufferings that men suffer!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her

permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Ninety-fourth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Caliph Harun al-Rashid asked Nur al-Din of his adventure and was told of all that had passed, first and last, he was astonied with extreme astonishment and exclaimed, "How manifold are the sufferings that men suffer!" Then he turned to the Princess and said to her, "Know, O Miriam, that thy father, the King of France, hath written to me anent thee. What sayst thou?" She replied, "O Vicar of Allah on His earth and Executor of the precepts of His prophet and commands to man's unworth,[20] may He vouchsafe thee eternal prosperity and ward thee from evil and enmity! Thou art Viceregent of Allah in His earth and I have entered thy Faith, for that it is the creed which Truth and Righteousness inspire; and I have left the religion of the Miscreants who make the Messiah a liar,[21] and I am become a True Believer in Allah the Bountiful and in the revelation of His compassionate Apostle. I worship Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) and acknowledge Him to be the One God and prostrate myself humbly before Him and glorify Him; and I say before the Caliph, 'Verily , I testify that there is no god but the God and I testify that Mohammed is the Messenger of God, whom He sent with the Guidance and the True Faith, that He might make it victorious over every other religion, albeit they who assign partners to God be averse from it.'[22] Is it therefore in thy competence, O Commander of the Faithful, to comply with the letter of the King of the heretics and send me back to the land of the schismatics who deny The Faith and give partners to the All-wise King, who magnify the Cross and bow down before idols and believe in the divinity of Jesus, for all he was only a creature? An thou deal with me thus, O Viceregent of Allah, I will lay hold upon thy skirts on the Day of Muster before the Lord and make my complaint of thee to thy cousin the Apostle of Allah (whom God assain and preserve!) on the Day when wealth availeth not neither children save one come unto Allah wholehearted!"[23] Answered the Caliph, "O Miriam, Allah forfend that I should do this ever! How can I send back a Moslemah believer in the one God and in His Apostle to that which Allah hath forbidden and eke His Messenger hath forbidden?" Quoth she, "I testify that there is no god but the God and that Mohammed is the Apostle of God!” Rejoined the Caliph, “O Miriam, Allah bless and direct thee in the way of righteousness! Since thou art a Moslemah and a believer in Allah the One, I owe thee a duty of obligation and it is that I should never transgress against thee nor forsake thee, though be lavished unto me on thine account the world full of gold and gems. So be of good cheer and eyes clear of tear; and be thy breast broadened and thy case naught save easy. Art thou willing that this youth Ali of Cairo be to thee man and thou to him wife?” Replied Miriam, “O Prince of True Believers, how should I be other than willing to take him to husband, seeing that he bought me with his money and hath entreated me with the utmost kindness and, for crown of his good offices, he hath ventured his life for my sake many times?” So the Caliph summoned the Kazi and the witneses and married her to him assigning her a dowry and causing the Grandees of his realm be present and the marriage day was a notable. Then he turned to the Wazir of the French King, who was present, and said to him, “Hast thou heard her words? How can I her send back to her father the Infidel, seeing that she is a Moslemah and a believer in the Unity? Belike he will evil entreat her and deal harshly with her, more by token that she hath slain his sons, and I shall bear blame for her on Resurrection-day. And indeed quoth the Almighty ‘Allah will by no means make a way for the Infidels over the True Believers.’[24] So return to thy King and say to him, ‘Turn from this thing and hope not to come at thy desire thereof.’” Now this Wazir was a Zany: so he said to the Caliph, “O Commander of the Faithful, by the virtue of the Messiah and the Faith which is no liar, were Miriam forty times a Moslemah and forty times thereto, I may not depart from thee without that same Miriam! And if thou send her not back with me of free will, I will hie me to her sire and cause him despatch thee an host, wherewith I will come upon you from the landward and the seaward; and the van whereof shall be at your capital city whilst the rear is yet on the Euphrates[25] and they shall lay waste thy realms.” When the Caliph heard these words from the accursed Wazir of the King of France, the light in his face became night and he was wroth at his speech with exceeding wrath and said to him, “O damned one, O dog of the Nazarenes, art thou come to such power that thou durst assail me with the King of the Franks?" Then quoth he to his guards, "Take this accursed and do him die"; and he repeated this couplet,[26]

"This be his recompense who will * Oppose and thwart his betters' will."

Then he commanded to cut off the Wazir's head and burn his body; but Princess Miriam cried, "O Commander of the Faithful, soil not thy sword with the blood of this accursed." So saying, she bared her brand and smote him and made his head fly from his corpse, and he went to the house of ungrace; his abode was Gehenna, and evil is the abiding-place. The Caliph marvelled at the force of her fore-arm and the strength of her mind, and they carried the dead Wazir forth of the pavilion and burnt him. Then the Commander of the Faithful bestowed upon Nur al-Din a splendid robe of honour and assigned to him and her a lodging in his palace. Moreover, he appointed them solde and rations, and commanded to transport to their quarters all they needed of raiment and furniture and vessels of price. They sojourned awhile in Baghdad in all delight of life and solace thereof till Nur al-Din longed for his mother and father. So he submitted the matter to the Caliph and sought his leave to revisit his native land and visit his kinsfolk, and he granted him the permission he sought and calling Miriam, commended them each to other. He also loaded them with costly presents and rarities and bade write letters to the Emirs and Olema and notables of Cairo the God-guarded, commending Nur al-Din and his wife and parents to their care and charging them honour them with the highmost honour. When the news reached Cairo, the merchant Taj al-Din joyed at the return of his son and Nur al-Din's mother likewise rejoiced therein with passing joy. The Emirs and the notables of the city went forth to meet him, in obedience to the Caliph's injunctions, and indeed it was for them a right note-worthy day, wherein foregathered the lover and the beloved and the seeker attained the sought. Moreover, all the Emirs made them bride-feasts, each on his own day, and joyed in them with joy exceeding and vied in doing them honour, one the other succeeding. When Nur al-Din foregathered with his mother and father, they were gladdened in each other with the utmost gladness and care and affliction ceased from them, whilst his parents joyed no less in the Princess Miriam and honoured her with the highmost honour. Every day, there came to them presents from all the Emirs and great merchants, and they were in new delight and gladness exceeding the gladness of festival. Then they ceased not abiding in solace and pleasance and good cheer and abounding prosperity, eating and drinking with mirth and merriment, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and Sunderer of societies, Waster of houses and palace-domes and Peopler of the bellies of the tombs. So they were removed from worldly stead and became of the number of the dead; and glory be to the Living One, who dieth not and in whose hand are the keys of the Seen and the Unseen! And a tale was also told by the Emir Shujб al-Dнn,[27] Prefect of Cairo anent

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THE MAN OF UPPER EGYPT AND HIS FRANKISH WIFE.

We lay one night in the house of a man of the Sa’нd or Upper Egypt, and he entertained us and entreated us hospitably. Now he was a very old man swart with exceeding swarthiness, and he had little children, who were white, of a white dashed with red. So we said to him, “Harkye, such an one, how cometh it that these thy children are white, whilst thou thyself art passing swart?” and he said, “Their mother was a Frankish woman, whom I took prisoner in the days of Al-Malik al-Nбsir Salбh al-Dнn,[28] after the battle of Hattнn,[29] when I was a young man.” We asked, “And how gottest thou her?” and he answered, “I had a rare adventure with her.” Quoth we, “Favour us with it;” and quoth he, “With all my heart! You must know that I once sowed a crop of flax in these parts and pulled it and scutched it and spent on it five hundred gold pieces; after which I would have sold it, but could get no more than this therefor, and the folk said to me, ‘Carry it to Acre: for there thou wilt haply make good gain by it.’ Now Acre was then in the hands of the Franks; [30] so I carried my flax thither and sold part of it at six months’ credit. One day, as I was selling, behold, there came up a Frankish woman (now ’tis the custom of the women of the Franks to go about the market streets with unveiled faces), to buy flax of me, and I saw of her beauty what dazed my wits. So I sold her somewhat of flax and was easy with her concerning the price; and she took it and went away. Some days after, she returned and bought somewhat more flax of me and I was yet easier with her about the price; and she repeated her visits to me, seeing that I was in love with her. Now she was used to walk in company of an old woman to whom I said, “I am sore enamoured of thy mistress. Canst thou contrive for me to enjoy her?” Quoth she, ‘I will contrive this for thee; but the secret must not go beyond us three, me, thee and her; and there is no help but that thou be lavish with money, to boot.’ And I answered, saying, ‘Though my life were the price of her favours ‘twere no great matter.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Ninety-Fifth Night, She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the old woman said to the man, “However the secret must not go beyond us three, to wit me, thee and her; and there is no help but thou be lavish of thy money to boot.” He replied, “Though my life were the price of her favours ‘twere no great matter.” “So it was agreed” (continued the man of Upper Egypt), “that I should pay her fifty dinars and that she should come to me; whereupon I procured the money and gave it to the old woman. She took it and said, ‘Make ready a place for her in thy house, and she will come to thee this night.’ Accordingly I went home and made ready what I could of meat and drink and wax candles and sweetmeats. Now my house overlooked the sea and ’twas the season of summer; so I spread the bed on the terrace roof. Presently, the Frank woman came and we ate and drank, and the night fell dark. We lay down under the sky, with the moon shining on us, and fell to watching the shimmering of the stars in the sea: and I said to myself, ‘Art thou not ashamed before Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) and thou a stranger, under the heavens and in presence of the deep waters, to disobey Him with a Nazarene woman and merit the torment of Fire?’ Then said I, ‘O my God, I call Thee to witness that I abstain from this Christian woman this night, of shamefastness before Thee and fear of Thy vengeance!’ So I slept till the morning, and she arose at peep of day full of anger and went away. I walked to my shop and sat there; and behold, presently she passed, as she were the moon, accompanied by the old woman who was also angry; whereat my heart sank within me and I said to myself, ‘Who art thou that thou shouldst refrain from yonder damsel? Art thou Sarн al-Sakatн or Bishr Barefoot or Junayd of Baghdad or Fuzayl bin ‘Iyбz?’[31] Then I ran after the old woman and coming up with her said to her, ‘Bring her to me again;’ and said she, ‘By the virtue of the Messiah, she will not return to thee but for an hundred ducats!’ Quoth I, ‘I will give thee a hundred gold pieces.’ So I paid her the money and the damsel came to me a second time; but no sooner was she with me than I returned to my whilome way of thinking and abstained from her and forbore her for the sake of Allah Almighty. Presently she went away and I walked to my shop, and shortly after the old woman came up, in a rage. Quoth I to her, ‘Bring her to me again;’ and quoth she, ‘By the virtue of the Messiah, thou shalt never again enjoy her presence with thee, except for five hundred ducats, and thou shalt perish in thy pain!’ At this I trembled and resolved to spend the whole price of my flax and therewith ransom my life. But, before I could think, I heard the crier proclaiming and saying, ‘Ho, all ye Moslems, the truce which was between us and you is expired, and we give all of you Mahometans who are here a week from this time to have done with your business and depart to your own country.’ Thus her visits were cut off from me and I betook myself to getting in the price of the flax which men had bought upon credit, and to bartering what remained in my hands for other goods. Then I took with me fair merchandise and departed Acre with a soul full of affection and love-longing for the Frankish woman, who had taken my heart and my coin. So I journeyed till I made Damascus, where I sold the stock in trade I had brought from Acre, at the highest price, because of the cutting off of communication by reason of the term of truce having expired; and Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) vouchsafed me good gain. Then I fell to trading in captive slave- girls, thinking thus to ease my heart of its pining for the Frankish woman, and in this traffic engaged I abode three years, till there befel between Al-Malik al-N6sir and the Franks what befel of the action of Hattin and other encounters and Allah gave him the victory over them, so that he took all their Kings prisoners and he opened [32] the coast [33] cities by His leave. Now it fortuned one day after this, that a man came to me and sought of me a slave-girl for Al-Malik al-Nasir. Having a handsome handmaid I showed her to him and he bought her of me for an hundred dinars and gave me ninety thereof, leaving ten still due to me, for that there was no more found in the royal treasury that day, because he had expended all his monies in waging war against the Franks. Accordingly they took counsel with him and he said, ‘Carry him to the treasury[34] where are the captives’ lodging and give him his choice among the damsels of the Franks, so he may take one of them for the ten dinars,’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Ninety-sixth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that whenas Al-Malik al-Nasir said, “ ‘ Give him his choice to take one of the girls for the ten dinars that are due to him;' they brought me to the captives' lodging and showed me all who were therein, and I saw amongst them the Frankish damsel with whom I had fallen in love at Acre and knew her right well. Now she was the wife of one of the cavaliers of the Franks. So I said, 'Give me this one,' and carrying her to my tent, asked her, 'Dost thou know me?' She answered, 'No;' and I rejoined, 'I am thy friend, the sometime flax-merchant with whom thou hadst to do at Acre and there befel between us what befel. Thou tookest money of me and saidest, 'Thou shalt never again see me but for five hundred dinars.' And now thou art become my property for ten ducats.' Quoth she, 'This is a mystery. Thy faith is the True Faith and I testify that there is no god but the God and that Mohammed is the Messenger of God!' And she made perfect profession of Al-Islam. Then said I to myself, 'By Allah, I will not go in unto her till I have set her free and acquainted the Kazi.' So I betook myself to Ibn Shadd6d[35] and told him what had passed and he married me to her. Then I lay with her that night and she conceived; after which the troops departed and we returned to Damascus. But within a few days there came an envoy from the King of the Franks, to seek the captives and the prisoners, according to the treaty between the Kings. So Al-Malik al-Nasir restored all the men and women captive, till there remained but the woman who was with me and the Franks said, 'The wife of such an one the Knight is not here.' Then they asked after her and making strict search for her, found that she was with me; whereupon they demanded her of me and I went in to her sore concerned and with colour changed; and she said to me, 'What aileth thee and what evil assaileth thee?' Quoth I, 'A messenger is come from the King to take all the captives, and they demand thee of me.' Quoth she, 'Have no fear, bring me to the King and I know what to say before and to him.' I carried her into the presence of the Sultan Al-Malik al- Nasir, who was seated, with the envoy of the King of the Franks on his right hand, and I said to him, 'This is the woman that is with me.' Then quoth the King and the envoy to her, 'Wilt thou go to thy country or to[36] thy husband? For Allah hath loosed thy bonds and those of thy fellow captives.' Quoth she to the Sultan, 'I am become a Moslemah and am great with child, as by my middle ye may see, and the Franks shall have no more profit of me.’ The envoy asked, ‘Whether is dearer to thee, this Moslem or thy first husband and knight such an one?;’ and she answered him even as she had answered the Sultan. Then said the envoy to the Franks with him, ‘Heard ye her words?’ They replied, ‘Yes.’ And he said to me, ‘Take thy wife and depart with her.’ So I took her and went away; but the envoy sent after me in haste and cried, ‘Her mother gave me a charge for her, saying, ‘My daughter is a captive and naked; and I would have thee carry her this chest.’ Take it thou and deliver it to her.’ Accordingly I carried the chest home and gave it to her. She opened it and found in it all her raiment as she had left it and therein I saw the two purses of fifty and an hundred dinars which I had given her, untouched and tied up with my own tying, wherefore I praised Almighty Allah. These are my children by her and she is alive to this day and ’twas she dressed you this food.” We marvelled at his story and at that which had befallen him of good fortune, and Allah is All-knowing. But men also tell a tale anent the

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RUINED MAN OF BAGHDAD AND HIS SLAVE-GIRL

There was of old time in Baghdad a man of condition, who had inherited from his father abounding affluence. He fell in love with a slave-girl; so he bought her and she loved him as he loved her; and he ceased not to spend upon her, till all his money was gone and naught remained thereof; whereupon he sought a means of getting his livelihood, but availed not to find any. Now this young man had been used, in the days of his affluence, to frequent the assemblies of those who were versed in the art of singing and had thus attained to the utmost excellence therein. Presently he took counsel with one of his intimates, who said to him, "Meseems thou canst find no better profession than to sing, thou and thy slave-girl; for on this wise thou wilt get money in plenty and wilt eat and drink." But he misliked this, he and the damsel, and she said to him, "I have bethought me of a means of relief for thee." He asked, "What is it?;" and she answered, "Do thou sell me; thus shall we be delivered of this strait, thou and I, and I shall be in affluence; for none will buy the like of me save a man of fortune, and with this I will contrive for my return to thee." He carried her to the market and the first who saw her was a Hashimi[37] of Bassorah, a man of good breeding, fine taste and generosity, who bought her for fifteen hundred dinars. (Quoth the young man, the damsel's owner), "When I had received the price, I repented me and wept, I and the damsel; and I sought to cancel the sale; but the purchaser would not consent. So I took the gold in a bag, knowing not whither I should wend, now my house was desolate of her and buffeted my face and wept and wailed as I had never done before. Then I entered a mosque and sat shedding tears, till I was stupefied and losing my senses fell asleep, with the bag of money under my head by way of pillow. Presently, ere I could be ware, a man plucked the bag from under my head and ran off with it at speed: whereupon I started up in alarm and affright and would have arisen to run after him; but lo! my feet were bound with a rope and I fell on my face. Then I took to weeping and buffeting myself, saying, 'Thou hast parted with thy soul[38] and thy wealth is lost!'"- -

And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young man continued, “So I said to myself, ‘Thou hast parted with thy soul and thy wealth is lost.’ Then, of the excess of my chagrin, I betook myself to the Tigris and wrapping my face in my gown, cast myself into the stream. The bystanders saw me and cried, ‘For sure, this is because of some great trouble that hath betided him.’ They cast themselves in after me and bringing me ashore, questioned me of my case. I told them what misadventure had befallen me and they condoled with me. Then an old man of them came to me and said, ‘Thou hast lost thy money, but why goest thou about to lose thy life and become of the people of The Fire?[39] Arise, come with me, that I may see thy lodging.’ I went with him to my house and he sat with me awhile, till I waxed calmer, and becoming tranquil I thanked him and he went away. When he was gone, I was like to kill myself, but bethought me of the Future and the Fire; so I fared forth my house and fled to one of my friends and told him what had befallen me. He wept for pity of me and gave me fifty dinars, saying, ‘Take my advice and hie thee from Baghdad forthright and let this provide thee till thy heart be diverted from the love of her and thou forget her. Thy forbears were Secretaries and Scribes and thy handwriting is fine and thy breeding right good: seek out, then, whom thou wilt of the Intendants[40] and throw thyself on his bounty; thus haply Allah shall reunite thee with thy slave-girl.’ I hearkened to his words (and indeed my mind was strengthened and I was somewhat comforted) and resolved to betake myself to Wasit,[41] where I had kinfolk. So I went down to the river- side, where I saw a ship moored and the sailors embarking goods and goodly stuffs. I asked them to take me with them and carry me to W6sit; but they replied, ‘We cannot take thee on such wise, for the ship belongeth to a Hashimi.’ However, I tempted them with promise of passage-money and they said, ‘We cannot embark thee on this fashion;[42] but, if it must be, doff those fine clothes of thine and don sailor’s gear and sit with us as thou wert one of us.’ I went away and buying somewhat of sailors’ clothes, put them on; after which I bought me also somewhat of provisions for the voyage; and, returning to the vessel, which was bound for Bassorah, embarked with the crew. But ere long I saw my slave-girl herself come on board, attended by two waiting- women; whereupon what was on me of chagrin subsided and I said in myself, ‘Now shall I see her and hear her singing, till we come to Bassorah.’ Soon after, up rode the Hashimi, with a party of people, and they embarked aboard the ship, which dropped down the river with them. Presently the Hashimi brought out food and ate with the damsel, whilst the rest ate amidships. Then said he to her, ‘How long this abstinence from singing and permanence in this wailing and weeping? Thou art not the first that hath been parted from a beloved!’ Wherefore I knew what she suffered for love of me. Then he hung a curtain before her along the gunwale and calling those who ate apart, sat down with them without the curtain; and I enquired concerning them and behold they were his brethren.[43] He set before them what they needed of wine and dessert, and they ceased not to press the damsel to sing, till she called for the lute and tuning it, intoned these two couplets,

‘The company left with my love by night, * Nor forbore to fare
with heart’s delight:
And raged, since their camels off paced, a fire * As of
Ghazб[44] -wood in the lover’s sprite.’

Then weeping overpowered her and she threw down the elute and ceased singing; whereat the folks were troubled and I slipped down a-swoon. They thought I was possessed[45] and one of them began reciting exorcisms in my ear; nor did they cease to comfort her and beseech her to sing, till she tuned the lute again and chaunted these couplets twain,

‘I stood and bewailed who their loads had bound * And far yode
but still in my heart are found;
I drew near the ruins and asked of them * And the camp was void
and lay waste the ground.’

Then she fell down in a fainting-fit and weeping arose amongst the folk; and I also cried out and fainted away. The sailors were startled by me and one of the Hashimi's pages said to them, 'How came ye to take this madman on board?' So they said one to other, 'As soon as we come to the next village, we will set him ashore and rid us of him.' When I heard this, I was sore troubled but I heartened and hardened myself, saying in thought, 'Nothing will serve me to deliver myself from their hands, except I make shift to acquaint her with my presence in the ship, so she may prevent my being set ashore.' Then we sailed when we came hard by a hamlet[46] and the skipper said, 'Come, let us go ashore.' Therewith they all landed, save myself; and as evening fell I rose and going behind the curtain took the lute and changed its accord, mode[47] by mode, and tuning it after a fashion of my own,[48] that she had learnt of me, returned to my place in the ship;" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Ninety-eighth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young man continued, "I returned to my place in the ship; and presently the whole party came on board again and the moon shone bright upon river and height. Then said the Hashimi to the damsel, 'Allah upon thee, trouble not our joyous lives!' So she took the lute, and touching it with her hand, gave a sob, that they thought her soul had fled her frame, and said, 'By Allah, my master and teacher is with us in this ship!' Answered the Hashimi, 'By Allah, were this so, I would not forbid him our conversation! Haply he would lighten thy burthen, so we might enjoy thy singing: but his being on board is far from possible.' However she said, 'I cannot smite lute-string or sing sundry airs I was wont to sing whilst my lord is with us.' Quoth the Hashimi, 'Let us ask the sailors;' and quoth she, 'Do so.' He questioned them, saying, 'Have ye carried anyone with you!'; and they answered, 'No.' Then I feared lest the enquiry should end there; so I laughed and said, 'Yes; I am her master and taught her whenas I was her lord.' Cried she, 'By Allah, that is my lord's voice!' Thereupon the pages carried me to the Hashimi, who knew me at first sight and said to me, 'Out on thee! What plight is this in which I see thee and what hath brought thee to such condition?' I related to him all that had befallen me of my affair, weeping the while, and the damsel made loud wail from behind the curtain. The Hashimi wept with sore weeping, he and his brethren, for pity of me, and he said, ‘By Allah, I have not drawn near this damsel nor enjoyed her, nor have I even heard her sing till this day! I am a man to whom Allah hath been ample and I came to Baghdad but to hear singing and seek my allowances of the Commander of the Faithful. I accomplished both my needments and being about to return home, said to myself, ‘Let us hear some what of the singing of Baghdad.’ Wherefore I bought this damsel, knowing not that such was the case with you twain; and I take Allah to witness that, when I reach Bassorah I will free her and marry her to thee and assign you what shall suffice you, and more; but on condition that, whenever I have a mind to hear music, a curtain shall be hung for her and she shall sing to me from behind it, and thou shalt be of the number of my brethren and boon-companions.’ Hereat I rejoiced and the Hashimi put his head within the curtain and said to her, ‘Will that content thee?’; whereupon she fell to blessing and thanking him. Then he called a servant and said to him, ‘Take this young man and do off his clothes and robe him in costly raiment and incense[49] him and bring him back to us.’ So the servant did with me as his master bade him and brought me back to him, and served me with wine, even as the rest of the company. Then the damsel began singing after the goodliest fashion and chanted these couplets,

‘They blamed me for causing my tears to well * When came my
beloved to bid farewell:
They ne’er tasted the bitters of parting nor felt * Fire beneath
my ribs that flames fierce and fell!
None but baffled lover knows aught of Love, * Whose heart is lost
where he wont to dwell.’

The folk rejoiced in her song with exceeding joy and my gladness redoubled, so that I took the lute from the damsel and preluding after the most melodious fashion, sang these couplets,

‘Ask (if needs thou ask) the Compassionate, * And the generous
donor of high estate.
For asking the noble honours man * And asking the churl entails

bane and bate:
When abasement is not to be ‘scaped by wight * Meet it asking
boons of the good and great.
Of Grandee to sue ne’er shall vilify man, * But ’tis vile on the
vile of mankind to ‘wait.’

The company rejoiced in me with joy exceeding and the ceased not from pleasure and delight, whilst anon I sang and anon the damsel, till we came to one of the landing-places, where the vessel moored and all on board disembarked and I with them. Now I was drunken with wine and squatted on my hams to make water; but drowsiness overcame me and I slept, and the passengers returned to the ship which ran down stream without any missing me, for that they also were drunken, and continued their voyage until they reached Bassorah. As for me I awoke not till the heat of the sun aroused me, when I rose and looked about me, but saw no one. Now I had given my spending money to the damsel and had naught left: I had also forgotten to ask the Hashimi his name and where his house was at Bassorah and his titles; thus I was confounded and my joy at meeting the damsel had been but a dream; and I abode in perplexity till there came up a great vessel wherein I embarked and she carried me to Bassorah. Now I knew none there much less the Hashimi’s house, so I accosted a grocer and taking of him inkcase and paper, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Eight Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Baghdad man who owned the maid entered Bassorah, he was perplexed for not knowing the Hashimi’s house. “So I accosted” (said he) “a grocer and, taking of him inkcase and paper, sat down to write. He admired my handwriting and seeing my dress stained and soiled, questioned me of my case, to which I replied that I was a stranger and poor. Quoth he, ‘Wilt thou abide with me and order the accounts of my shop and I will give thee thy food and clothing and half a dirham a day for ordering the accompts of my shop?’; and quoth I, ‘’Tis well,’ and abode with him and kept his accounts and ordered his income and expenditure for a month, at the end of which he found his income increased and his disbursements diminished; wherefore he thanked me and made my wage a dirham a day. When the year was out, he proposed to me to marry his daughter and become his partner in the shop. I agreed to this and went in to my wife and applied me to the shop. But I was broken in heart and spirit, and grief was manifest upon me; and the grocer used to drink and invite me thereto, but I refrained for melancholy. I abode on this wise two years till, one day, as I sat in the shop, behold, there passed by a parcel of people with meat and drink, and I asked the grocer what was the matter. Quoth he, 'This is the day of the pleasure-makers, when all the musicians and dancers of the town go forth with the young men of fortune to the banks of the Ubullah river[50] and eat and drink among the trees there.' The spirit prompted me to solace myself with the sight of this thing and I said in my mind, 'Haply among these people I may foregather with her I love.' So I told the grocer that I had a mind to this and he said, 'Up and go with them an thou please.' He made me ready meat and drink and I went till I came to the River of Ubullah, when, behold, the folk were going away: I also was about to follow, when I espied the Rais of the bark wherein the Hashimi had been with the damsel and he was going along the river. I cried out to him and his company who knew me and took me on board with them and said to me, 'Art thou yet alive?'; and they embraced me and questioned me of my case. I told them my tale and they said, 'Indeed, we thought that drunkenness had gotten the better of thee and that thou hadst fallen into the water and wast drowned.' Then I asked them of the damsel, and they answered, 'When she came to know of thy loss, she rent her raiment and burnt the lute and fell to buffeting herself and lamenting and when we returned with the Hashimi to Bassorah we said to her, 'Leave this weeping and wailing.' Quoth she, 'I will don black and make me a tomb beside the house and abide there and repent from singing.'[51] We allowed her so to do and on this wise she abideth to this day. Then they carried me to the Hashimi's house, where I saw the damsel as they had said. When she espied me, she cried out a great cry, methought she had died, and I embraced her with a long embrace. Then said the Hashimi to me, 'Take her;' and I said, ''Tis well: but do thou free her and according to thy promise marry her to me.’ Accordingly he did this and gave us costly goods and store of raiment and furniture and five hundred dinars, saying, ‘This is the amount of that which I purpose to allow you every month, but on condition that thou be my cup-companion and that I hear the girl sing when I will.’ Furthermore, he assigned us private quarters and bade transport thither all our need; so, when I went to the house I found it filled full of furniture and stuffs and carried the damsel thither. Then I betook myself to the grocer and told him all that had betided me, begging to hold me guiltless for divorcing his daughter, without offence on her part; and I paid her her dowry[52] and what else behoved me.[53] I abode with the Hashimi in this way two years and became a man of great wealth and was restored to the former estate of prosperity wherein I had been at Baghdad, I and the damsel. And indeed Allah the Bountiful put an end to our troubles and loaded us with the gifts of good fortune and caused our patience to result in the attainment of our desire: wherefore to Him be the praise in this world and the next whereto we are returning.”[54] And among the tales men tell is that of

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KING JALI’AD OF HIND AND HIS WAZIR SHIMAS; FOLLOWED BY THE HISTORY OF KING WIRD KHAN, SON OF KING JALI’AD, WITH HIS WOMEN AND WAZIRS.[55]

There was once in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, in the land of Hind, a mighty King, tall of presence and fair of favour and goodly of parts, noble of nature and generous, beneficent to the poor and loving to his lieges and all the people of his realm. His name was Jalн’бd and under his hand were two-and-seventy Kings and in his cities three hundred and fifty Kazis. He had three score and ten Wazirs and over every ten of them he set a premier. The chiefest of all his ministers was a man called Shimбs[56] who was then[57] two and twenty years old, a statesman of pleasant presence and noble nature, sweet of speech and ready in reply; shrewd in all manner of business, skilful withal and sagacious for all his tender age, a man of good counsel and fine manners versed in all arts and sciences and accomplishments; and the King loved him with exceeding love and cherished him by reason of his proficiency in eloquence and rhetoric and the art of government and for that which Allah had given him of compassion and brooding care[58] with his lieges for he was a King just in his Kingship and a protector of his peoples, constant in beneficence to great and small and giving them that which befitted them of good governance and bounty and protection and security and a lightener of their loads in taxes and tithes. And indeed he was loving to them each and every, high and low, entreating them with kindness and solicitude and governing them in such goodly guise as none had done before him. But, with all this, Almighty Allah had not blessed him with a child, and this was grievous to him and to the people of his reign. It chanced, one night, as Jali’ad[59] lay in his bed, occupied with anxious thought of the issue of the affair of his Kingdom, that sleep overcame him and he dreamt that he poured water upon the roots of a tree, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundredth Night,

She continued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King saw himself in his vision pouring water upon the roots of a tree, about which were many other trees; and lo and behold! there came fire out of this tree and burnt up every growth which encompassed it; whereupon Jali'ad awoke affrighted and trembling, and calling one of his pages said to him, "Go fetch the Wazir Shimas in all haste." So he betook himself to Shimas and said to him, "The King calleth for thee forthright because he hath awoke from his sleep in affright and hath sent me to bring thee to him in haste." When Shimas heard this, he arose without stay or delay and going to the King, found him seated on his bed. He prostrated himself before him, wishing him permanence of glory and prosperity, and said, "May Allah not cause thee grieve, O King! What hath troubled thee this night, and what is the cause of thy seeking me thus in haste?" The King bade him be seated; and, as soon as he sat down, began telling his tale and said to him, "I have dreamt this night a dream which terrified me, and 'twas, that methought I poured water upon the roots of a tree where about were many other trees and as I was thus engaged, lo and behold! fire issued therefrom and burnt up all the growths that were around it; wherefore I was affrighted and fear took me. Then I awoke and sent to bid thee to me, because of thy knowledge and skill in the interpretation of dreams and of that which I know of the vastness of thy wisdom and the greatness of thine understanding." At this Shimas the Wazir bowed his head groundwards awhile and presently raising it, smiled; so the King said to him, "What deemest thou, O Shimas? Tell me the truth of the matter and hide naught from me." Answered Shimas, "O King, verily Allah Almighty granteth thee thy wish and cooleth thine eyes; for the matter of this dream presageth all good, to wit, that the Lord will bless thee with a son, who shall inherit the Kingdom from thee, after thy long life. But there is somewhat else I desire not to expound at this present, seeing that the time is not favourable for interpretation." The King rejoiced in these words with exceeding joy and great was his contentment; his trouble departed from him, his mind was at rest and he said, "If the case be thus of the happy presage of my dream, do thou complete to me its exposition when the fitting time betideth: for that which it behoveth not to expound to me now, it behoveth that thou expound to me when its time cometh, so my joy may be fulfilled, because I seek naught in this save the approof of Allah extolled and exalted be He!" Now when the Wazir Shimas saw that the King was urgent to have the rest of the exposition, he put him off with a pretext; but Jali'ad assembled all the astrologers and interpreters of dreams of his realm and as soon as they were in the presence related to them his vision, saying, "I desire you to tell me the true interpretation of this." Whereupon one of them came forward and craved the King's permission to speak, which being granted, he said, "Know, O King, that thy Wazir Shimas is nowise unable to interpret this thy dream; but he shrank from troubling thy repose. Wherefore he disclosed not unto thee the whole thereof; but, an thou suffer me to speak, I will expose to thee that which he concealed from thee." The King replied, "Speak without respect for persons, O interpreter, and be truthful in thy speech." The interpreter said, "Know then, O King, that there will be born to thee a boy- child who shall inherit the Kingship from thee, after thy long life; but he shall not order himself towards the lieges after thy fashion; nay, he shall transgress thine ordinances and oppress thy subjects, and there shall befal him what befel the Mouse with the Cat[60] ; and I seek refuge with Almighty Allah[61] !" The King asked, "But what is the story of the Cat and the Mouse?"; and the interpreter answered "May Allah prolong the King's life! They tell the following tale of

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The Mouse and the Cat.

A grimalkin, that is to say, a Cat, went out one night to a certain garden, in search of what she might devour, but found nothing and became weak for the excess of cold and rain that prevailed that night. So she sought for some device whereby to save herself. As she prowled about in search of prey, she espied a nest at the foot of a tree, and drawing near unto it, sniffed thereat and purred till she scented a Mouse within and went round about it, seeking to enter and seize the inmate. When the Mouse smelt the Cat, he turned his back to her and scraped up the earth with his forehand, to stop the nest-door against her; whereupon she assumed a weakly voice and said, "Why dost thou thus, O my brother? I come to seek refuge with thee, hoping that thou wilt take pity on me and harbour me in thy nest this night; for I am weak because of the greatness of my age and the loss of my strength, and can hardly move. I have ventured into thy garden tonight, and how many a time have I called upon death, that I might be at rest from this pain! Behold, here am I at thy door, prostrate for cold and rain and I beseech thee, by Allah, take of thy charity my hand and bring me in with thee and give me shelter in the vestibule of thy nest; for I am a stranger and wretched and 'tis said, 'Whoso sheltereth a stranger and a wretched one in his home his shelter shall be Paradise on the Day of Doom.' And thou, O my brother, it behoveth thee to earn eternal reward by succouring me and suffering me abide with thee this night till the morning, when I will wend my way." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and First Night,

She pursued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth the Cat to the Mouse, "So suffer me to night with thee this night, after which I will wend my way." Hearing these words the Mouse replied, "How shall I suffer thee enter my nest seeing that thou art my natural foe and thy food is of my flesh? Indeed I fear lest thou false me, for that is of thy nature and there is no faith in thee, and the byword saith, 'It befitteth not to entrust a lecher with a fair woman nor a moneyless man with money nor fire with fuel.' Neither doth it behove me to entrust myself to thee; and ’tis said, ‘Enmity of kind, as the enemy himself groweth weaker groweth stronger.’ “ The Cat made answer in the faintest voice, as she were in most piteous case, saying, “What thou advancest of admonitory instances is the truth and I deny not my offences against thee; but I beseech thee to pardon that which is past of the enmity of kind between me and thee, for ’tis said, ‘Whoso forgiveth a creature like himself, his Creator will forgive him his sins.’ ’Tis true that whilome I was thy foe but here am I a suitor for thy friendship, and they say, ‘An thou wilt have thy foe become thy friend, do with him good.’ O my brother, I swear to thee by Allah and make a binding covenant with thee that I will hurt thee nevermore and for the best of reasons, to wit, that I have no power thereto; wherefore place thy trust in Allah and do good and accept my oath and covenant.” Quoth the Mouse, “How can I accept the covenant of one between whom and me there is a rooted enmity, and whose wont it is to deal treacherously by me? Were the feud between us aught but one of blood, this were light to me; but it is an enmity of kind between souls, and it is said, ‘Whoso trusteth himself to his foe is as one who thrusteth hand into a serpent’s[62] mouth.’” Quoth the Cat, full of wrath, “My breast is strait and my soul is faint: indeed I am in articulo mortis and ere long I shall die at thy door and my blood will be on thy head, for that thou hadst it in thy power to save me in mine extremity: and this is my last word to thee.” Herewith the fear of Allah Almighty overcame the Mouse and ruth gat hold upon his heart and he said in himself, “Whoso would have the succour of Allah the Most High against his foe, let him entreat him with compassion and kindness show. I rely upon the Almighty in this matter and will deliver this Cat from this her strait and earn the divine reward for her.” So he went forth and dragged into his nest the Cat, where she abode till she was rested and somewhat strengthened and restored, when she began to bewail her weakness and wasted strength and want of gossips. The Mouse entreated her in friendly guise and comforted her and busied himself with her service; but she crept along till she got command of the issue of the nest, lest the Mouse should escape. So when the nest-owner would have gone out after his wont, he drew near the Cat; whereupon she seized him and taking him in her claws, began to bite him and shake him and take him in her mouth and lift him up and cast him down and run after him and cranch him and torture him.[63] The Mouse cried out for help, beseeching deliverance of Allah and began to upbraid the Cat, saying, "Where is the covenant thou madest with me and where are the oaths thou swarest to me? Is this my reward from thee? I brought thee into my nest and trusted myself to thee: but sooth he speaketh that saith, 'Whoso relieth on his enemy's promise desireth not salvation for himself.' And again, 'Whoso confideth himself to his foe deserveth his own destruction.' Yet do I put my trust in my Creator, for He will deliver me from thee." Now as he was in this condition, with the Cat about to pounce on him and devour him, behold, up came a huntsman, with hunting dogs trained to the chase. One of the hounds passed by the mouth of the nest and hearing a great scuffling, thought that within was a fox tearing somewhat; so he crept into the hole, to get at him, and coming upon the Cat, seized on her. When she found herself in the dog's clutches, she was forced to take thought anent saving herself and loosed the Mouse alive and whole without wound. Then the hound brake her neck and dragging her forth of the hole, threw her down dead: and thus was exemplified the truth of the saying, "Who hath compassion shall at the last be compassionated. Whoso oppresseth shall presently be oppressed." "This, then, O King," added the interpreter, "is what befel the Mouse and the Cat and teacheth that none should break faith with those who put trust in him; for who ever doth perfidy and treason, there shall befal him the like of that which befel the Cat. As a man meteth, so shall it be meted unto him, and he who betaketh himself to good shall gain his eternal reward. But grieve thou not, neither let this trouble thee, O King, for that assuredly thy son, after his tyranny and oppression, shall return to the goodliness of thy policy. And I would that yon learned man, thy Wazir Shimas, had concealed from thee naught in that which he expounded unto thee; and this had been well advised of him, for 'tis said, 'Those of the folk who most abound in fear are the amplest of them in knowledge and the most emulous of good.'" The King received the interpreter's speech with submission and gifted him and his fellows with rich gifts; then, dismissing them he arose and withdrew to his own apartments and fell to pondering the issue of his affair. When night came, he went in to one of his women, who was most in favour with him and dearest to him of them all, and lay with her: and ere some four months had passed over her, the child stirred in her womb, whereat she rejoiced with joy exceeding and told the King. Quoth he, “My dream said sooth, by Allah the Helper!”; and he lodged her in the goodliest of lodgings and entreated her with all honour, bestowing on her store of rich gifts and manifold boons. Then he sent one of his pages to fetch his Wazir Shimas and as soon as he was in the presence told the Minister what had betided, rejoicing and saying, “My dream is come true and I have won my wish. It may be this burthen will be a man-child and inherit the Kingship after me; what sayest thou of this, O Shimas?” But he was silent and made no reply, whereupon cried the King, “What aileth thee that thou rejoicest not in my joy and returnest me no answer? Doth the thing mislike thee, O Shimas?” Hereat the Wazir prostrated himself before him and said, “O King, may Allah prolong thy life! What availeth it to sit under the shade of a tree, if there issue fire therefrom, and what is the delight of one who drinketh pure wine, if he be choked thereby, and what doth it profit to quench one’s thirst with sweet cool water, if one be drowned therein? I am Allah’s servant and thine, O King; but there are three things[64] whereof it besitteth not the understanding to speak, till they be accomplished; to wit, the wayfarer, till he return from his way, the man who is in fight, till he have overcome his foe, and the pregnant woman, till she have cast her burthen.” —— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Second Night,

She resumed: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that after Shimas had enumerated to the King the three things whereof it besitteth not the understanding to speak save after they are done, he continued, “For know, O King, that he, who speaketh of aught before its accomplishment is like the Fakir who had hung over his head the jar of clarified butter.[65] ” “What is the story of the Fakir,” asked the King, “and what happened to him?” Answered the Wazir, “O King, they tell this tale anent

The Fakir and his Jar of Butter.[66]

A fakir[67] abode once with one of the nobles of a certain town, who made him a daily allowance of three scones and a little clarified butter and honey. Now such butter was dear in those parts and the Devotee laid all that came to him together in a jar he had, till he filled it and hung it up over his head for safe keeping. One night, as he sat on his bed, staff in hand, he fell a-musing upon the butter and the greatness of its price and said in himself, “Needs must I sell all this butter I have by me and buy with the price an ewe and take to partner therein a Fellah[68] fellow who hath a ram. The first year she will bear a male lamb and a female and the second a female and a male and these in their turn will bear other males and other females, nor will they give over bearing females and males, till they become a great matter. Then will I take my share and vent thereof what I will. The males I will sell and buy with them bulls and cows, which will also increase and multiply and become many; after which I will purchase such a piece of land and plant a garden therein and build thereon a mighty fine[69] palace. Moreover, I will get me robes and raiment and slaves and slave girls and hold a wedding never was seen the like thereof. I will slaughter cattle and make rich meats and sweetmeats and confections and assemble all the musicians and mimes and mountebanks and player- folk and after providing flowers and perfumes and all manner sweet herbs, I will bid rich and poor, Fakirs and Olema, captains and lords of the land, and whoso asketh for aught, I will cause it to be brought him; and I will make ready all manner of meat and drink and send out a crier to cry aloud and say, ‘Whoso seeketh aught, let him ask and get it.’ Lastly I will go in to my bride, after her unveiling and enjoy her beauty and loveliness; and I will eat and drink and make merry and say to myself, ‘Verily, hast thou won thy wish,’ and will rest from devotion and divine worship. Then in due time my wife will bear me a boy, and I shall rejoice in him and make banquets in his honour and rear him daintily and teach him philosophy and mathematics and polite letters;[70] so that I shall make his name renowned among men and glory in him among the assemblies of the learned; and I will bid him do good and he shall not gainsay me, and I will forbid him from lewdness and iniquity and exhort him to piety and the practice of righteousness; and, I will bestow on him rich and goodly gifts; and, if I see him obsequious in obedience, I will redouble my bounties towards him: but, an I see him incline to disobedience, I will come down on him with this staff.” So saying, he raised his hand, to beat his son withal but the staff hit the jar of butter which overhung his head, and brake it; whereupon the shards fell upon him and the butter ran down upon his head, his rags and his beard. So his clothes and bed were spoiled and he became a caution to whoso will be cautioned. “Wherefore, O King,” added the Wazir, “it behoveth not a man to speak of aught ere it come to pass.” Answered the King, “Thou sayest sooth! Fair fall thee for a Wazir! Verily the truth thou speakest and righteousness thou counsellest. Indeed, thy rank with me is such as thou couldst wish[71] and thou shalt never cease to be accepted of me.” Thereupon the Wazir prostrated himself before the King and wished him permanence of prosperity, saying, “Allah prolong thy days and thy rank upraise! Know that I conceal from thee naught, nor in private nor in public aught; thy pleasure is my pleasure, and thy displeasure my displeasure. There is no joy for me save in thy joyance and I cannot sleep o’ nights an thou be angered against me, for that Allah the Most High hath vouchsafed me all good through thy bounties to me: wherefore I beseech the Almighty to guard thee with His angels, and to make fair thy reward whenas thou meetest Him.” The King rejoiced in this, whereupon Shimas arose and went out from before him. In due time the King’s wife bare a male child, and the messengers hastened to bear the glad tidings and to congratulate the Sovran, who rejoiced therein with joy exceeding and thanked all with abundant thanks, saying, “Alhamdolillah — laud to the Lord — who hath vouchsafed me a son, after I had despaired, for He is pitiful and ruthful to His servants.” Then he wrote to all the lieges of his land, acquainting them with the good news and bidding them to his capital; and great were the rejoicings and festivities in all the realm. Accordingly there came Emirs and Captains, Grandees and Sages, Olema and literati, scientists and philosophers from every quarter to the palace and all presenting themselves before the King, company after company, according to their different degrees, gave him joy, and he bestowed largesse upon them. Then he signed to the seven chief Wazirs, whose head was Shimas, to speak, each after the measure of his wisdom, upon the matter which concerned him the most. So the Grand Wazir Shimas began and sought leave of the King to speak, which being granted, he spake as follows.[72] "Praised be Allah who brought us into existence from non-existence and who favoureth His servants with Kings that observe justice and equity in that wherewith He hath invested them of rule and dominion, and who act righteously with that which he appointeth at their hands of provision for their lieges; and most especially our Sovereign by whom He hath quickened the deadness of our land, with that which He hath conferred upon us of bounties, and hath blessed us of His protection with ease of life and tranquillity and fair dealing! What King did ever with his folk that which this King hath done with us in fulfilling our needs and giving us our dues and doing us justice, one of other, and in abundant carefulness over us and redress of our wrongs? Indeed, it is of the favour of Allah to the people that their King be assiduous in ordering their affairs and in defending them from their foes; for the end of the enemy's intent is to subdue his enemy and hold him in his hand; and many peoples[73] bring their sons as servants unto Kings, and they become with them in the stead of slaves, to the intent that they may repel ill-willers from them.[74] As for us, no enemy hath trodden our soil in the days of this our King, by reason of this passing good fortune and exceeding happiness, that no describer may avail to describe, for indeed it is above and beyond all description. And verily, O King, thou art worthy of this highest happiness, and we are under thy safeguard and in the shadow of thy wings, may Allah make fair thy reward and prolong thy life![75] Indeed, we have long been diligent in supplication to Allah Almighty that He would vouchsafe an answer to our prayers and continue thee to us and grant thee a virtuous son, to be the coolth of thine eyes: and now Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) hath accepted of us and replied to our petition," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Shimas the Wazir said to the King, "And now Almighty Allah hath accepted of us and answered our petition and brought us speedy relief, even as He did to the Fishes in the pond of water.” The King asked, “And how was that, and what is the tale?”; and Shimas answered him, “Hear, O King the story of

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The Fishes and the Crab.

In a certain place there was a piece of water, wherein dwelt a number of Fishes, and it befel that the pond dwindled away and shrank and wasted, till there remained barely enough to suffice them and they were nigh upon death and said, “What will become of us? How shall we contrive and of whom shall we seek counsel for our deliverance?” Thereupon arose one of them, who was the chiefest in wit and age, and cried, “There is nothing will serve us save that we seek salvation of Allah; but let us consult the Crab and ask his advice: so come ye all[76] and hie we himwards and hear his rede for indeed he is the chiefest and wisest of us all in coming upon the truth.” Each and every approved of the Fish’s advice and betook themselves in a body to the Crab, whom they found squatted in his hole, without news or knowledge of their strait. So they saluted him with the salam and said, “O our lord, doth not our affair concern thee, who art ruler and the head of us?” The Crab returned their salutation, replying, “And on you be The Peace! What aileth you and what d’ye want?” So they told him their case and the strait wherein they were by reason of the wastage of the water, and that, when it should be dried up, destruction would betide them, adding, “Wherefore we come to thee, expecting thy counsel and what may bring us deliverance, for thou art the chiefest and the most experienced of us.” The Crab bowed his head awhile and said, “Doubtless ye lack understanding, in that ye despair of the mercy of Allah Almighty and His care for the provision of His creatures one and all. Know ye not that Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) provideth all His creatures without account and that He fore-ordained their daily meat ere He created aught of creation and appointed to each of His creatures a fixed term of life and an allotted provision, of His divine All might? How then shall we burthen ourselves with concern for a thing which in His secret purpose is indite? Wherefore it is my rede that ye can do naught better than to seek aid of Allah Almighty, and it behoveth each of us to clear his conscience with his Lord, both in public and private, and pray Him to succour us and deliver us from our difficulties; for Allah the Most High disappointeth not the expectation of those who put their trust in Him and rejecteth not the supplications of those who prefer their suit to Him. When we have mended our ways, our affairs will be set up and all will be well with us, and when the winter cometh and our land is deluged, by means of a just one's prayer, He will not cast down the good He hath built up. So 'tis my counsel that we take patience and await what Allah shall do with us. An death come to us, as is wont, we shall be at rest, and if there befal us aught that calleth for flight, we will flee and depart our land whither Allah will."[77] Answered all the fishes with one voice "Thou sayst sooth, O our lord: Allah requite thee for us with weal!" Then each returned to his stead, and in a few days the Almighty vouchsafed unto them a violent rain and the place of the pond was filled fuller than before. "On like wise, O King," continued Shimas, "we despaired of a child being born to thee, and now that God hath blessed us and thee with this well-omened son, we implore Him to render him blessed indeed and make him the coolth of thine eyes and a worthy successor to thee and grant us of him the like of that which He hath granted us of thee; for Almighty Allah disappointeth not those that seek Him and it behoveth none to cut off hope of the mercy of his God." Then, rose the second Wazir and saluting the King with the salam spake, after his greeting was returned, as follows: "Verily, a King is not called a King save he give presents and do justice and rule with equity and show munificence and wisely govern his lieges, maintaining the obligatory laws and apostolic usages established among them and justifying them, one against other, and sparing their blood and warding off hurt from them; and of his qualities should be that he never abide incurious of the poor and that he succour the highest and lowest of them and give them each the rights to them due, so that all bless him and are obedient to his command. Without doubt, a King who is after this wise of his lieges is beloved and gaineth of this world eminence and of the next honour and favour with the Creator thereof. And we, the body politic of thy subjects, acknowledge in thee, O King, all the attributes of kingship I have noted, even as it is said, 'The best of things is that the King of a people be just and equitable, their physician skilful and their teacher experience-full, acting according to his knowledge.' Now we enjoy this happiness, after we had despaired of the birth of a son to thee, to inherit thy kingship; however, Allah (extolled be His name!) hath not disappointed thine expectation, but hath granted thy petition, by reason of the goodliness of thy trust in Him and thy submission of thine affairs to Him. Then fair fall thy hope! There hath betided thee that which betided the Crow and the Serpent.” Asked the King “What was that?”; and the Wazir answered, “Hear, O King, the tale of

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The Crow and the Serpent.

A crow once dwelt in a tree, he and his wife, in all delight of life, till they came to the time of the hatching of their young, which was the midsummer season, when a Serpent issued from its hole and crawled up the tree wriggling around the branches till it came to the Crows' nest, where it coiled itself up and there abode all the days of the summer, whilst the Crow was driven away and found no opportunity to clear his home nor any place wherein to lie. When the days of heat were past, the Serpent went away to its own place and quoth the Crow to his wife, "Let us thank Almighty Allah, who hath preserved us and delivered us from this Serpent, albeit we are forbidden from increase this year. Yet the Lord will not cut off our hope; so let us express our gratitude to Him for having vouchsafed us safety and soundness of body: indeed, we have none other in whom to confide, and if He will and we live to see the next year, He shall give us other young in the stead of those we have missed this year." Next summer when the hatching-season came round, the Serpent again sallied forth from its place and made for the Crows' nest; but, as it was coiling up a branch, a kite swooped down on it and struck claws into its head and tare it, whereupon it fell to the ground a-swoon, and the ants came out upon it and ate it.[78] So the Crow and his wife abode in peace and quiet and bred a numerous brood and thanked Allah for their safety and for the young that were born to them. "In like manner, O King," continued the Wazir, "it behoveth us to thank God for that wherewith He hath favoured thee and us in vouchsafing us this blessed child of good omen, after despair and the cutting off of hope. May He make fair thy future reward and the issue of thine affair!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fourth Night,

She continued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the second Wazir had ended with the words, "Allah make fair thy future reward and the issue of thine affair!", the third Wazir presently rose and said, "Rejoice, O just King, in the assurance of present prosperity and future felicity; for him, whom the denizens of Earth love, the denizens of Heaven likewise love; and indeed Almighty Allah hath made affection to be thy portion and hath stablished it in the hearts of the people of thy kingdom; wherefore to Him be thanks and praise from us and from thee, so He may deign increase His bounty unto thee and unto us in thee! For know, O King, that man can originate naught but by command of Allah the Most High and that He is the Giver and all good which befalleth a creature hath its end and issue in Him. He allotteth His favours to His creatures, as it liketh Him; to some he giveth gifts galore while others He doometh barely to win their daily bread. Some He maketh Lords and Captains, and others Recluses, who abstain from the world and aspire but to Him, for He it is who saith, 'I am the Harmer with adversity and the Healer with prosperity. I make whole and make sick. I enrich and impoverish. I kill and quicken: in my hand is everything and unto Me all things do tend.' Wherefore it behoveth all men to praise Him. Now, especially thou, O King, art of the fortunate, the pious, of whom it is said, 'The happiest of the just is he for whom Allah uniteth the weal of this world and of the next world; who is content with that portion which Allah allotteth to him and who giveth Him thanks for that which He hath stablished.' And indeed he that is rebellious and seeketh other than the dole which God hath decreed unto him and for him, favoureth the wild Ass and the Jackal.''[79] The King asked, "And what is the story of the twain?"; the Wazir answered, "Hear, O King, the tale of

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The Wild Ass and the Jackal.

A certain Jackal was wont every day to leave his lair and fare forth questing his daily bread. Now one day, as he was in a certain mountain, behold, the day was done and he set out to return when he fell in with another Jackal who saw him on the tramp, and each began to tell his mate of the quarry he had gotten. Quoth one of them, “The other day I came upon a wild Ass and I was an-hungred, for it was three days since I had eaten; so I rejoiced in this and thanked Almighty Allah for bringing him into my power. Then I tare out his heart and ate it and was full and returned to my home. That was three days ago, since which time I have found nothing to eat, yet am I still full of meat.” When the other Jackal heard his fellow’s story, he envied his fulness and said in himself, “There is no help but that I eat the heart of a wild Ass.” So he left feeding for some days, till he became emaciated and nigh upon death and bestirred not himself neither did his endeavour to get food, but lay coiled up in his earth. And whilst he was thus, behold, one day there came out two hunters trudging in quest of quarry and started a wild Ass. They followed on his trail tracking him all day, till at last one of them shot at him a forked[80] arrow, which pierced his vitals and reached his heart and killed him in front of the Jackal’s hole. Then the hunters came up and finding him dead, pulled out the shaft from his heart, but only the wood came away and the forked head abode in the Ass’s belly. So they left him where he lay, expecting that others of the wild beasts would flock to him; but, when it was eventide and nothing fell to them, they returned to their abiding places. The Jackal, hearing the commotion at the mouth of his home, lay quiet till nightfall, when he came forth of his lair, groaning for weakness and hunger, and seeing the dead Ass lying at his door, rejoiced with joy exceeding till he was like to fly for delight and said, “Praised be Allah who hath won me my wish without toil! Verily, I had lost hope of coming at a wild Ass or aught else; and assuredly[81] the Almighty hath sent him to me and drave him fall to my homestead.” Then he sprang on the body and tearing open its belly, thrust in his head and with his nose rummaged about its entrails, till he found the heart and tearing a tid-bit swallowed it: but, as soon as he had so done, the forked head of the arrow struck deep in his gullet and he could neither get it down into his belly nor bring it forth of his throttle. So he made sure of destruction and said, “Of a truth it beseemeth not the creature to seek for himself aught over and above that which Allah hath allotted to him. Had I been content with what He appointed to me, I had not come to destruction.” “Wherefore, O King,” added the Wazir, “it becometh man to be content with whatso Allah hath distributed to him and thank Him for His bounties to him and cast not off hope of his Lord. And behold, O King, because of the purity of thy purpose and the fair intent of thy good works, Allah hath blessed thee with a son, after despair: wherefore we pray the Almighty to vouchsafe him length of days and abiding happiness and make him a blessed successor, faithful in the observance of thy covenant, after thy long life.” Then arose the fourth Wazir and said, “Verily, an the King be a man of understanding, a frequenter of the gates of wisdom,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fifth Night,

She pursued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the fourth Wazir, arose and said, “Verily an the King be a man of understanding, a frequenter of the gates of wisdom, versed in science, government and policy, and eke upright in purpose and just to his subjects, honouring those to whom honour is due, revering those who are digne of reverence, tempering puissance with using clemency whenas it behoveth, and protecting both governors and governed, lightening all burthens for them and bestowing largesse on them, sparing their blood and covering their shame and keeping his troth with them. Such a King, I say, is worthy of felicity both present and future worldly and other- worldly, and this is of that which protecteth him from ill-will and helpeth him to the stablishing of his Kingdom and the victory over his enemies and the winning of his wish, together with increase of Allah’s bounty to him and His favouring him for his praise of Him and the attainment of His protection. But an the King be the contrary of this, he never ceaseth from misfortunes and calamities, he and the people of his realm; for that his oppression embraceth both stranger far and kinsman near and there cometh to pass with him that which befel the unjust King with the pilgrim Prince.” King Jali’ad asked, “And how was that?” and the Wazir answered, “Hear, O King, the tale of

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The Unjust King and the Pilgrim Prince.

There was once in Mauritania-land[82] a King who exceeded in his rule, a tyrant, violent and over severe, who had no respect for the welfare or protection of his lieges nor of those who entered his realm; and from everyone who came within his Kingdom his officers took four-fifths of his monies, leaving him one- fifth and no more. Now Allah Almighty decreed that he should have a son, who was fortunate and God-favoured and seeing the pomps and vanities of this world to be transient as they are unrighteous, renounced them in his youth and rejected the world and that which is therein and fared forth serving the Most High, wandering pilgrim-wise over words and wastes and bytimes entering towns and cities. One day, he came to his father's capital and the guards laid hands on him and searched him but found naught upon him save two gowns, one new and the other old.[83] So they stripped the new one from him and left him the old, after they had entreated him with contumely and contempt; whereat he complained and said, "Woe to you, O ye oppressors! I am a poor man and a pilgrim,[84] and what shall this gown by any means profit you? Except ye restore it to me, I will go to the King and make complaint to him of you." They replied, "We act thus by the King's command: so do what seemeth good to thee." Accordingly he betook himself to the King's palace and would have entered, but the chamberlains denied him admittance, and he turned away, saying in himself, "There is nothing for me except to watch till he cometh out and complain to him of my case and that which hath befallen me." And whilst he waited, behold, he heard one of the guards announce the King's faring forth; whereupon he crept up, little by little, till he stood before the gate; and presently when the King came out, he threw himself in his way and after blessing him and wishing him weal, he made his complaint to him informing him how scurvily he had been entreated by the gatekeepers. Lastly he gave him to know that he was a man of the people of Allah[85] who had rejected the world seeking acceptance of Allah and who went wandering over earth and entering every city and hamlet, whilst all the folk he met gave him alms according to their competence. "I entered this thy city" (continued he), "hoping that the folk would deal kindly and graciously with me as with others of my condition,[86] but thy followers stopped me and stripped me of one of my gowns and loaded me with blows. Wherefore do thou look into my case and take me by the hand and get me back my gown and I will not abide in thy city an hour." Quoth the unjust King, "Who directed thee to enter this city, unknowing the custom of its King?"; and quoth the pilgrim, "Give me back my gown and do with me what thou wilt." Now when the King heard this, his temper changed for the worse and he said, "O fool,[87] we stripped thee of thy gown, so thou mightest humble thyself to us, but since thou makest this clamour I will strip thy soul from thee." Then he commanded to cast him into gaol, where he began to repent of having answered the King and reproached himself for not having left him the gown and saved his life. When it was the middle of the night, he rose to his feet and prayed long and prayerfully, saying, "O Allah, Thou art the Righteous Judge. Thou knowest my case and that which hath befallen me with this tyrannical King, and I, Thine oppressed servant, beseech Thee, of the abundance of Thy mercy, to deliver me from the hand of this unjust ruler and send down on him Thy vengeance; for Thou art not unmindful of the unright of every oppressor. Wherefore, if Thou know that he hath wronged me, loose on him Thy vengeance this night and send down on him Thy punishment; for Thy rule is just and Thou art the Helper of every mourner, O Thou to whom belong the power and the glory to the end of time!" When the gaoler heard the prayer of the poor prisoner he trembled in every limb, and behold, a fire suddenly broke out in the King's palace and consumed it and all that were therein, even to the door of the prison,[88] and none was spared but the gaoler and the pilgrim. Now when the gaoler saw this, he knew that it had not befallen save because of the pilgrim's prayer; so he loosed him and fleeing with him forth of the burning, betook himself, he and the King's son, to another city. So was the unjust King consumed, he and all his city, by reason of his injustice, and he lost the goods both of this world and the next world. "As for us, O auspicious King" continued the Wazir, "we neither lie down nor rise up without praying for thee and thanking Allah the Most High for His grace in giving thee to us, tranquil in reliance on thy justice and the excellence of thy governance; and sore indeed was our care for thy lack of a son to inherit thy kingdom, fearing lest after thee there betide us a King unlike thee. But now the Almighty hath bestowed His favours upon us and done away our concern and brought us gladness in the birth of this blessed child; wherefore we beseech the Lord to make him a worthy successor to thee and endow him with glory and felicity enduring and good abiding." Then rose the fifth Wazir and said, "Blessed be the Most High," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Sixth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the fifth Wazir said, "Blessed be the Most High, Giver of all good gifts and graces the most precious! But to continue: we are well assured that Allah favoureth whoso are thankful to Him and mindful of His faith; and thou, O auspicious King, art far-famed for these illustrious virtues and for justice and equitable dealing between subject and subject and in that which is acceptable to Allah Almighty. By reason of this hath the Lord exalted thy dignity and prospered thy days and bestowed on thee the good gift of this august child, after despair, wherefrom there hath betided us gladness abiding and joys which may not be cut off; for we before this were in exceeding cark and passing care, because of thy lack of issue, and full of concern bethinking us of all thy justice and gentle dealing with us and fearful lest Allah decree death to thee and there be none to succeed thee and inherit the kingdom after thee, and so we be divided in our counsels and dissensions arise between us and there befal us what befel the Crows." Asked the King, "And what befel the Crows?"; and the Wazir answered saying, "Hear, O auspicious King, the tale of

The Crows and the Hawk.

There was once, in a certain desert, a spacious Wady, full of rills and trees and fruits and birds singing the praises of Allah the One of All might, Creator of day and night; and among them was a troop of Crows, which led the happiest of lives. Now they were under the sway and government of a Crow who ruled them with mildness and benignity, so that they were with him in peace and contentment; and by reason of their wisely ordering their affairs, none of the other birds could avail against them. Presently it chanced that there befel their chief the doom irrevocably appointed to all creatures and he departed life;[89] whereupon the others mourned for him with sore mourning, and what added to their grief was that there abided not amongst them like him one who should fill his place. So they all assembled and took counsel together concerning whom it befitted for his goodness and piety to set over them; and a party of them chose one Crow, saying, "It beseemeth that this be King over us," whilst others objected to him and would none of him; and thus there arose division and dissension amidst them and the strife of excitement waxed hot between them. At last they agreed amongst themselves and consented to sleep the night upon it and that none should go forth at dawn next day to seek his living, but that all must wait till high morning, when they should gather together all in one place. "Then," said they, "we will all take flight at once and whichsoever shall soar above the rest in his flying, he shall be accepted of us as ruler and be made King over us." The fancy pleased them; so they made covenant together and did as they had agreed and took flight all, but each of them deemed himself higher than his fellow; wherefore quoth this one, "I am highest," and that, "Nay, that am I." Then said the lowest of them, "Look up, all of you, and whomsoever ye find the highest of you, let him be your chief." So they raised their eyes and seeing the Hawk soaring over them, said each to other, "We agreed that which bird soever should be the highest of us we will make king over us, and behold, the Hawk is the highest of us: what say ye to him?" And they all cried out, "We accept of him." Accordingly they summoned the Hawk and said to him, "O Father of

Good,[90] we have chosen thee ruler over us, that thou mayst look into our affair." The Hawk consented, saying, "Inshallah, ye shall win of me abounding weal." So they rejoiced and made him their King. But after awhile, he fell to taking a company of them every day and betaking himself with them afar off to one of the caves, where he struck them down and eating their eyes and brains, threw their bodies into the river. And he ceased not doing on this wise, it being his intent to destroy them all till, seeing their number daily diminishing, the Crows flocked to him and said, "O our King, we complain to thee because from the date we made thee Sovran and ruler over us, we are in the sorriest case and every day a company of us is missing and we know not the reason of this, more by token that the most part thereof are the high in rank and of those in attendance on thee. We must now look after our own safety." Thereupon the Hawk waxed wroth with them and said to them, "Verily, ye are the murtherers, and ye forestall me with accusation!" So saying, he pounced upon them and tearing to pieces half a score of their chiefs in front of the rest, threatened them and drave them out, sorely cuffed and beaten, from before him. Hereat they repented them of that which they had done and said, "We have known no good since the death of our first King especially in the deed of this stranger in kind; but we deserve our sufferings even had he destroyed us one by one to the last of us, and there is exemplified in us the saying of him that saith, 'Whoso submitteth him not to the rule of his own folk, the foe hath dominion over him, of his folly.' And now there is nothing for it but to flee for our lives, else shall we perish." So they took flight and dispersed to various places. "And we also, O King," continued the Wazir, "feared lest the like of this befal us and there become ruler over us a King other than thyself; but Allah hath vouchsafed us this boon and hath sent us this blessed child, and now we are assured of peace and union and security and prosperity in our Mother-land. So lauded be Almighty Allah and to Him be praise and thanks and goodly gratitude! And may He bless the King and us all his subjects and vouchsafe unto us and him the acme of felicity and make his life-tide happy and his endeavour constant!" Then arose the sixth Wazir and said, "Allah favour thee with all felicity, O King, in this world and in the next world! Verily, the ancients have left us this saying, 'Whoso prayeth and fasteth and giveth parents their due and is just in his rule meeteth his Lord and He is well pleased with him.’ Thou hast been set over us and hast ruled us justly and thine every step in this hath been blessed; wherefore we beseech Allah Almighty to make great thy reward eternal and requite thee thy beneficence. I have heard what this wise man hath said respecting our fear for the loss of our prosperity, by reason of the death of the King or the advent of another who should not be his parallel, and how after him dissensions would be rife among us and calamity betide from our division and how it behoved us therefore to be instant in prayer to Allah the Most High, so haply He might vouchsafe the King a happy son to inherit the kingship after him. But, after all, the issue of that which man desireth of mundane goods and wherefor he lusteth is unknown to him and consequently it behoveth a mortal to ask not of his Lord a thing whose end he wotteth not; for that haply the hurt of that thing is nearer to him than its gain and his destruction may be in that he seeketh and there may befal him what befel the Serpent charmer, his wife and children and the folk of his house.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Seventh Night,

She said: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the sixth Wazir said, “It behoveth not a man to ask of his Lord aught whereof he ignoreth the issue for that haply the hurt of that thing may be nearer than its gain, his destruction may be in that he seeketh and there may befal him what befel the Serpent charmer, his children, his wife and his household,” the King asked, “What was that?”; and the Wazir answered, “Hear, O King the tale of

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The Serpent-charmer and his Wife.

There was once a man, a Serpent-charmer,[91] who used to train serpents, and this was his trade; and he had a great basket,[92] wherein were three snakes but the people of his house knew this not. Every day he used to go round with this pannier about the town gaining his living and that of his family by showing the snakes, and at eventide he returned to his house and clapped them back into the basket privily. This lasted a long while, but it chanced one day, when he came home, as was his wont, his wife asked him, saying, "What is in this pannier?" And he replied, "What wouldest thou with it? Is not provision plentiful with you? Be thou content with that which Allah hath allotted to thee and ask not of aught else." With this the woman held her peace; but she said in herself, "There is no help but that I search this basket and know what is there." So she egged on her children and enjoined them to ask him of the pannier and importune him with their questions, till he should tell them what was therein. They presently concluded that it contained something to eat and sought every day of their father that he should show them what was therein; and he still put them off with pleasant pretences and forbade them from asking this. On such wise they abode awhile, the wife and mother still persisting in her quest till they agreed with her that they would neither eat meat nor drain drink with their father, till he granted them their prayer and opened the basket to them. One night, behold, the Serpent- charmer came home with great plenty of meat and drink and took his seat calling them to eat with him: but they refused his company and showed him anger. Whereupon he began to coax them with fair words, saying, "Lookye, tell me what you would have, that I may bring it you, be it meat or drink or raiment." Answered they, "O our father, we want nothing of thee but that thou open this pannier that we may see what is therein, else we will slay ourselves." He rejoined, "O my children, there is nothing good for you therein and indeed the opening of it will be harmful to you." Hereat they redoubled in rage for all he could say, which when he saw, he began to scold them and threaten them with beating, except they returned from such condition; but they only increased in anger and persistence in asking, till at last he waxed wroth and took a staff to beat them, and they fled from before him within the house. Now the basket was present and the Serpent-charmer had not hidden it anywhere, so his wife left him occupied with the children and opened the pannier in haste, that she might see what was therein. Thereupon behold, the serpents came out and first struck their fangs into her and killed her; then they hied round about the house and slew all, great and small, who were therein; except the Serpent-charmer, who left the place and went his way. "If then, O auspicious King," continued the Wazir, "thou consider this, thou wilt be convinced that it is not for a man to desire aught save that which God the Great refuseth not to him; nay, he should be content with what He willeth. And thou, O King, for the overflowing of thy wisdom and the excellence of thine understanding, Allah hath cooled thine eyes with the advent of this thy son, after despair, and hath comforted thy heart; wherefore we pray the Almighty to make him of the just successors acceptable to Himself and to his subjects." Then rose the seventh Wazir and said, "O King, I know and certify all that my brethren, these Ministers wise and learned, have said in the presence, praising thy justice and the goodness of thy policy and proving how thou art distinguished in this from all Kings other than thyself; wherefore they gave thee the preference over them. Indeed, this be of that which is incumbent on us, O King, and I say, Praised be Allah in that He hath guerdoned thee with His gifts and vouchsafed thee of His mercy, the welfare of the realm; and hath succoured thee and ourselves, on condition that we increase in gratitude to Him; and all this no otherwise than by thine existence! What while thou remainest amongst us, we fear not oppression neither dread unright, nor can any take long-handed advantage of our weakness! and indeed it is said, 'The greatest good of a people is a just King and their greatest ill an unjust King'; and again, 'Better dwell with rending lions than with a tyrannous Sultan.' So praised be Almighty Allah with eternal praise for that He hath blessed us with thy life and vouchsafed thee this blessed child, whenas thou wast stricken in years and hadst despaired of issue! For the goodliest of the gifts in this world is a virtuous sire, and it is said, 'Whoso hath no progeny his life is without result and he leaveth no memory.' As for thee, because of the righteousness of thy justice and thy pious reliance on Allah the Most High, thou hast been vouchsafed this happy son; yea, this blessed[93] child cometh as a gift from the Most High Lord to us and to thee, for the excellence of thy governance and the goodliness of thy long-sufferance; and in this thou hast fared even as fared the Spider and the Wind." Asked the King, "And what is the story of the Spider and the Wind?" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Eighth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King asked, "And what is the story of the twain?", the Wazir answered, "Give ear, O King, to the tale of

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The Spider and the Wind.

A Spider once attached herself to a high gate[94] and a retired and span her web there and dwelt therein in peace, giving thanks to the Almighty, who had made this dwelling-place easy to her and had set her in safety from noxious reptiles. On this wise she abode a long while, still giving thanks to Allah for her ease and regular supply of daily bread, till her Creator bethought Him to try her and make essay of her gratitude and patience. So he sent upon her a strong east Wind, which carried her away, web and all, and cast her into the main. The waves washed her ashore, and she thanked the Lord for safety and began to upbraid the Wind, saying, “O Wind, why hast thou dealt thus with me and what good hast thou gotten by bearing me hither from my abiding-place, where indeed I was in safety, secure in my home on the top of that gate?” Replied the Wind, saying, “O Spider, hast thou not learnt that this world is a house of calamities; and, say me, who can boast of lasting happiness that such portion shall be thine? Wottest thou not that Allah tempteth His creatures in order to learn by trial what may be their powers of patience? How, then, doth it beset thee to upbraid me, thou who hast been saved by me from the vasty deep?” “Thy words are true, O Wind,” replied the Spider, “yet not the less do I desire to escape from this stranger land into which thy violence hath cast me.” The Wind rejoined, “Cease thy blaming, for right soon I will bear thee back and replace thee in thy place, as thou wast aforetime.” So the Spider waited patiently, till the north-east Wind left blowing and there arose a south-west Wind, which gently caught her up and flew with her towards her dwelling-place; and when she came to her abode, she knew it and clung to it. “And we,” continued the Wazir, “beseech Allah (who hath rewarded the King for his singleness of heart and patience and hath taken pity on his subjects and blessed them with His favour and hath vouchsafed the King this son in his old age, after he had despaired of issue and removed him not from the world, till He had blessed him with coolth of eyes and bestowed on him what He hath bestowed of Kingship and Empire!) to vouchsafe unto thy son that which He hath vouchsafed unto thee of dominion and Sultanship and glory! Amen.”

Then said the King, “Praised be Allah over all praise and thanks be to Him over all thanks! There is no god but He, the Creator of all things, by the light of whose signs we know the glory of His greatness and who giveth kingship and command over his own country to whom He willeth of His servants! He chooseth of them whomso He please to make him His viceroy and viceregent over His creatures and commandeth him to just and equitable dealing with them and the maintenance of religious laws and practices and right conduct and constancy in ordering their affairs to that which is most acceptable to Him and most grateful to them. Whoso doth thus and obeyeth the commandment of his Lord, his desire attaineth and the orders of his God maintaineth; so Providence preserveth him from the perils of the present world and maketh ample his recompense in the future world; for indeed He neglecteth not the reward of the righteous. And whoso doth otherwise than as Allah biddeth him sinneth mortal sin and disobeyeth his Lord, preferring his mundane to his supra-mundane weal. He hath no trace in this world and in the next no portion: for Allah spareth not the unjust and the mischievous, nor doth He neglect any of His servants. These our Wazirs have set forth how, by reason of our just dealing with them and our wise governance of affairs, Allah hath vouchsafed us and them His grace, for which it behoveth us to thank Him, because of the great abundance of His mercies; each of them hath also spoken that wherewith the Almighty inspired Him concerning this matter, and they have vied one with another in rendering thanks to the Most High Lord and praising Him for His favours and bounties. I also render thanks to Allah for that I am but a slave commanded; my heart is in His hand and my tongue in His subjection, accepting that which He adjudgeth to me and to them, come what may thereof. Each one of them hath said what passed through his mind on the subject of this boy and hath set forth that which was of the renewal of divine favour to us, after my years had reached the term when confidence faileth and despair assaileth. So praised be Allah who hath saved us from disappointment and from the alternation of rulers, like to the alternation of night and day! For verily, this was a great boon both to them and to us; wherefore we praise Almighty Allah who hath given a ready answer to our prayer and hath blessed us with this boy and set him in high place, as the inheritor of the kingship. And we entreat him, of His bounty and clemency, to make him happy in his actions, prone to pious works, so he may become a King and a Sultan governing his people with justice and equity, guarding them from perilous error and frowardness, of His grace, goodness and generosity!” When the King had made an end of his speech, the sages and Olema rose and prostrated themselves before Allah and thanked the King; after which they kissed his hands and departed, each to his own house, whilst Jali’ad withdrew into his palace, where, he looked upon the new-born and offered up prayers for him and named him Wird Khбn.[95] The boy grew up till he attained the age of twelve,[96] when the King being minded to have him taught the arts and sciences, bade build him a palace amiddlemost the city, wherein were three hundred and threescore rooms,[97] and lodged him therein. Then he assigned him three wise men of the Olema and bade them not be lax in teaching him day and night and look that there was no kind of learning but they instruct him hterin, so he might become versed in all knowledge. He also commanded them to sit with him one day in each of the rooms by turn and write on the door thereof that which they had taught him therein of various kinds of lore and report to himself, every seven days, whatso instructions they had imparted to him. So they went in to the Prince and stinted not from educating him day nor night, nor withheld from him aught of that they knew; and presently there appeared in him readiness to receive instruction such as none had shown before him. Every seventh day his governors reported to the King what his son had learnt and mastered, whereby Jali’ad became proficient in goodly learning and fair culture, and the Olema said to him, “Never saw we one so richly gifted with understanding as is this boy: Allah bless thee in him and give thee joy of his life!” When the Prince had completed his twelfth year, he knew the better part of every science and excelled all the Olema and sages of his day: wherefore his governors brought him to his sire and said to him, “Allah gladden thine eyes, O King, with this auspicious youth! We bring him to thee, after he hath learnt all manner knowledge, and there is not one of the learned men of the time nor a scientist who hath attained to that whereto he hath attained of science.” The King rejoiced in this with joy exceeding and thanking the Almighty prostrated himself in gratitude before Allah (to whom belong Majesty and Might!), saying, “Laud be to the Lord for His mercies incalculable!” Then he called his Chief Wazir and said to him, “Know, O Shimas, that the governors of my son are come to tell me that he hath mastered every kind of knowledge and there is nothing but they have instructed him therein, so that he surpasseth in this all who forewent him. What sayst thou, O Shimas?” Hereat the Minister prostrated himself before Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) and kissed the King’s hand, saying, “Loath is the ruby stone, albe it be bedded in the hardest rock on hill, to do aught but shine as a lamp, and this thy son is such a gem. His tender age hath not hindered him from becoming a sage and Alhamdolillah — praised be Allah — for that which He deigned bestow on him! But to-morrow I will call an assembly of the flower of the Emirs and men of learning and examine the Prince and cause him speak forth that which is with him in their presence, Inshallah!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Ninth Night,

She pursued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King Jali’ad heard the words of his Wazir Shimas, he commanded the attendance of the keenest-witted[98] of the Olema and most accomplished of the learned and sages of his dominions, and they all presented themselves on the morrow at the door of the palace, whereupon the King bade admit them. Then entered Shimas and kissed the hands of the Prince, who rose and prostrated himself to the Minister: but Shimas said, “It behoveth not the lion-whelp to prostrate himself to any of the wild beasts, nor besitteth it that Light prostrate itself to shade.” Quoth the Prince, “Whenas the lion-whelp seeth the leopard,[99] he riseth up to him and prostrateth himself before him, because of his wisdom, and Light prostrateth itself to shade for the purpose of disclosing that which is therewithin.” Quoth Shimas, “True, O my lord; but I would have thee answer me anent whatso I shall ask thee, by leave of His Highness and his lieges.” And the youth said, “And I, with permission of my sire, will answer thee.” So Shimas began and said, “Tell me what is the Eternal, the Absolute, and what are the two manifestations[100] thereof and whether of the two is the abiding one?” Answered the Prince, “Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) is the Eternal, the Absolute; for that He is Alpha, without beginning, and Omega, without end. Now his two manifestations are this world and the next, and the abiding one of the two is the world to come.” Q “Thou sayst truly and I approve thy reply; but I would have thee tell me, how knowest thou that one of Allah’s manifestations is this world and the other the world to come?”— “I know this because this world was created from nothingness and had not its being from any existing thing; wherefore its affair is referable to the first essence. Moreover, it is a commodity swift of ceasing, the works whereof call for requital of action and this postulateth the reproduction[101] of whatso passeth away; so the next world is the second manifestation.” Q “Now inform me how knowest thou that the world to come is the abiding one of the two existences?”— “Because it is the house of requital for deeds done in this world prepared by the Eternal sans surcease.” Q “Who are the people of this world most to be praised for their practice?”— “Those who prefer their weal in the world to come before their weal in this world.” Q “And who is he that preferreth his future to his present welfare?”— “He who knoweth that he dwelleth in a perishing house, that he was created but to vade away and that, after vading away, he will be called to account; and indeed, were there in this world one living and abiding for ever, he would not prefer it to the next world.” Q “Can the future life subsist permanently without the present?”— “He who hath no present life hath no future life: and indeed I liken this world and its folk and the goal to which they fare with certain workmen, for whom an Emir buildeth a narrow house and lodgeth them therein, commanding each of them to do a certain task and assigning to him a set term and appointing one to act as steward over them. Whoso doeth the work appointed unto him, the steward bringeth him forth of that straitness; but whoso doeth it not within the stablished term is punished. After awhile, behold, they find honey exuding from the chinks of the house,[102] and when they have eaten thereof and tasted its sweetness of savour, they slacken in their ordered task and cast it behind their backs. So they patiently suffer the straitness and distress wherein they are, with what they know of the future punishment whereto they are fast wending, and are content with this worthless and easily won sweetness; and the Steward leaveth not to fetch every one of them forth of the house, for ill or good, when his appointed period shall have come. Now we know the world to be a dwelling wherein all eyes are dazed, and that each of its folk hath his set term; and he who findeth the little sweetness that is in the world and busieth himself therewith is of the number of the lost, since he preferreth the things of this world to the things of the next world; but whoso payeth no heed to this poor sweetness and preferreth the things of the coming world to those of this world, is of those who are saved." Q "I have heard what thou sayest of this world and the next and I accept thine answer; but I see they are as two placed in authority over man; needs must he content them both, and they are contrary one to other. So, if the creature set himself to seek his livelihood, it is harmful to his soul in the future: and if he devote himself to the next world, it is hurtful to his body, and there is no way for him of pleasing these two contraries at once."— "Indeed, the quest of one's worldly livelihood with pious intent and on lawful wise is a viaticum for the quest of the goods of the world to come; if a man spend a part of his days in seeking his livelihood in this world, for the sustenance of his body, and devote the rest of his day to seeking the goods of the next world, for the repose of his soul and the warding off of hurt therefrom; and indeed I see this world and the other world as they were two Kings, a just and an unjust." Asked Shimas, "How so?" and the youth began the tale of

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The Two Kings.

There were once two Kings, a just and an unjust; and this one had a land abounding in trees and fruits and herbs; but he let no merchant pass without robbing him of his monies and his merchandise, and the traders endured this with patience, by reason of their profit from the fatness of the earth in the means of life and its pleasantness, more by token that it was renowned for its richness in precious stones and gems. Now the just King, who loved jewels, heard of this land and sent one of his subjects thither, giving him much specie and bidding him pass with it into the other's realm and buy jewels therefrom. So he went thither; and, it being told to the unjust King that a merchant was come to his kingdom with much money to buy jewels withal, he sent for him to the presence and said to him, "Who art thou and whence comest thou and who brought thee thither and what is thy errand?" Quoth the merchant, "I am of such and such a region, and the King of that land gave me money and bade me buy therewith jewels from this country; so I obeyed his bidding and came." Cried the unjust King, "Out on thee! Knowest thou not my fashion of dealing with the people of my realm and how each day I take their monies? How then comest thou to my country? And behold, thou hast been a sojourner here since such a time!" Answered the trader, "The money is not mine, not a mite of it; nay, 'tis a trust in my hands till I bring its equivalent to its owner." But the King said, "I will not let thee take thy livelihood of my land or go out therefrom, except thou ransom thyself with this money all of it." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Tenth Night,

She resumed: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the unjust Ruler said to the trader who came to buy jewels from his country, "'Tis not possible for thee to take thy livelihood of my land except thou ransom thy life with this money, all of it; else shalt thou die." So the man said in himself, "I am fallen between two Kings, and I know that the oppression of this ruler embraceth all who abide in his dominions: and if I satisfy him not, I shall lose both life and money (whereof is no doubt) and shall fail of my errand; whilst, on the other hand, if I give him all the gold, it will most assuredly prove my ruin with its owner, the other King: wherefore no device will serve me but that I give this one a trifling part thereof and content him therewith and avert from myself and from the money perdition. Thus shall I get my livelihood of the fatness of this land, till I buy that which I desire of jewels; and, after satisfying the tyrant with gifts, I will take my portion of the profit and return to the owner of the money with his need, trusting in his justice and indulgence, and unfearing that he will punish me for that which this unjust King taketh of the treasure, especially if it be but a little." Then the trader called down blessings on the tyrant and said to him, "O King, I will ransom myself and this specie with a small portion thereof, from the time of my entering thy country to that of my going forth therefrom." The King agreed to this and left him at peace for a year, till he bought all manner jewels with the rest of the money and returned therewith to his master, to whom he made his excuses, confessing to having saved himself from the unjust King as before related. The just King accepted his excuse and praised him for his wise device and set him on his right hand in his divan and appointed him in his kingdom an abiding inheritance and a happy life-tide.[103] "Now the just King is the similitude of the future world and the unjust King that of the present world ; the jewels that be in the tyrant's dominions are good deeds and pious works. The merchant is man and the money he hath with him is the provision appointed him of Allah. When I consider this, I know that it behoveth him who seeketh his livelihood in this world to leave not a day without seeking the goods of the world to come, so shall he content this world with that which he gaineth of the fatness of the earth and satisfy the other world with that which he spendeth of his life in seeking after it." Q "Are the spirit[104] and the body alike in reward and retribution, or is the body, as the luster of lusts and doer of sinful deeds, and especially affected with punishment?"— "The inclination to lusts and sins may be the cause of earning reward by the withholding of the soul therefrom and the repenting thereof; but the command[105] is in the hand of Him who doth what He will, and things by their contraries are distinguished. Thus subsistence is necessary to the body, but there is no body without soul; and the purification of the spirit is in making clean the intention in this world and taking thought to that which shall profit in the world to come. Indeed, soul and body are like two horses racing for a wager or two foster- brothers or two partners in business. By the intent are good deeds distinguished and thus the body and soul are partners in actions and in reward and retribution, and in this they are like the Blind man and the Cripple with the Overseer of the garden." Asked Shimas, "How so?" and the Prince said, "Hear, O Wazir, the tale of

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The Blind Man and the Cripple.

A blind man and a Cripple were travelling-companions and used to beg alms in company. One day they sought admission into the garden of some one of the benevolent, and a kind-hearted wight, hearing their talk, took compassion on them and carried them into his garden, where he left them after plucking for them some of its produce and went away, bidding them do no waste nor damage therein. When the fruits became ripe, the Cripple said to the Blind man, “Harkye, I see ripe fruits and long for them, but I cannot rise to eat thereof; so go thou arise, for thou art sound of either leg, and fetch us somewhat that we may eat.” Replied the Blind, “Fie upon thee! I had no thought of them, but now that thou callest them to my mind, I long to eat of them and I am impotent unto this, being unable to see them; so how shall we do to get at them?” At this moment, behold, up came the Overseer of the garden, who was a man of understanding, and the Cripple said to him, “Harkye, O Overseer! I long for somewhat of those fruits; but we are as thou seest; I am a cripple and my mate here is stone-blind: so what shall we do?” Replied the Overseer, “Woe to you! Have ye forgotten that the master of the garden stipulated with you that ye should do nothing whereby waste or damage befal it: so take warning and abstain from this.” But they answered, “Needs must we get our portion of these fruits that we may eat thereof: so tell us some device whereby we shall contrive this.” When the Overseer saw that they were not to be turned from their purpose, he said, “This, then, is my device, O Cripple, let the Blind bear thee on his back and take thee under the tree whose fruit pleaseth thee, so thou mayst pluck what thou canst reach thereof.” Accordingly the Blind man took on his back the Cripple who guided him till he brought him under a tree, and he fell to plucking from it what he would and tearing at its boughs till he had despoiled it: after which they went roundabout and throughout the garden and wasted it with their hands and feet, nor did they cease from this fashion, till they had stripped all the trees of the garth. Then they returned to their place and presently up came the master of the garden, who, seeing it in this plight, was wroth with sore wrath and coming up to them said, “Woe to you! What fashion is this? Did I not stipulate with you that ye should do no damage in the garden?” Quoth they, “Thou knowest that we are powerless to come at any of the fruit, for that one of us is a cripple and cannot rise and the other is blind and cannot see that which is before him: so what is our offence?” But the master answered, “Think ye I know not how ye wrought and how ye have gone about to do waste in my garden? I know, as if I had been with thee, O Blind, that thou tookest the Cripple pick-a-back, and he showed thee the way till thou borest him to the trees.” Then he punished them with grievous punishment and thrust them out of the garden. “Now the Blind is the similitude of the body which seeth not save by the spirit, and the Cripple that of the soul, for that it hath no power of motion but by the body; the garden is the works, for which the creature is rewarded or punished, and the Overseer is the reason which biddeth to good and forbiddeth from evil. Thus the body and the soul are partners in reward and retribution.” Q “Which of the learned men is most worthy of praise, according to thee?”— “He who is learned in the knowledge of Allah and whose knowledge profiteth him.” Q “And who is this?”— “Whoso is intent upon seeking to please his Lord and avoid His wrath.” Q “And which of them is the most excellent?”— “He who is most learned in the knowledge of Allah.” Q “And which is the most experienced of them?”— “Whoso in doing according to his knowledge is most constant.” Q “ And which is the purest hearted of them?”— “He who is most assiduous in preparing for death and praising the Lord and least of them in hope, and indeed he who penetrateth his soul with the awful ways of death is as one who looketh into a clear mirror, for that he knoweth the truth, and the mirror still increaseth in clearness and brilliance.” Q “What are the goodliest of treasures?”— “The treasures of heaven.” Q “Which is the goodliest of the treasures of Heaven?”— “The praise of Allah and His magnification.” Q “Which is the most excellent of the treasures of earth?”— “The practice of kindness.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Eleventh Night,

She said: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Wazir Shimas asked the King’s son, saying, “Which is the most excellent of the treasures of earth?” he answered, “The practice of kindness.” So the Minister pursued, “Tell me of three several and different things, knowledge and judgment and wit, and of that which uniteth them.”— “Knowledge cometh of learning, judgment of experience and wit of reflection, and they are all stablished and united in reason. Whoso combineth these three qualities attaineth perfection, and he who addeth thereto the piety and fear of the Lord is in the right course.” Q “Take the case of a man of learning and wisdom, endowed with right judgment, luminous intelligence and a keen wit and excelling, and tell me can desire and lust change these his qualities?”— “Yes; for these two passions, when they enter into a man, alter his wisdom and understanding and judgment and wit, and he is like the Ossifrage[106] which, for precaution against the hunters, abode in the upper air, of the excess of his subtlety; but, as he was thus, he saw a fowler set up his nets and when the toils were firmly staked down bait them with a bit of meat; which when he beheld, desire and lust thereof overcame him and he forgot that which he had seen of springes and of the sorry plight of all birds that fell into them. So he swooped down from the welkin and pouncing upon the piece of meat, was meshed in the same snare and could not win free. When the fowler came up and saw the Ossifrage taken in his toils he marvelled with exceeding marvel and said, ‘I set up my nets, thinking to take therein pigeons and the like of small fowl; how came this Ossifrage to fall into it?’ It is said that when desire and lust incite a man of understanding to aught, he considereth the end thereof and refraineth from that which they make fair and represseth with his reason his lust and his concupiscence; for, when these passions urge him to aught, it behoveth him to make his reason like unto a horseman skilled in horsemanship who mounting a skittish horse, curbeth him with a sharp bit,[107] so that he go aright with him and bear him whither he will. As for the ignorant man, who hath neither knowledge nor judgment, while all things are obscure to him and desire and lust lord it over him, verily he doeth according to his desire and his lust and is of the number of those that perish; nor is there among men one in worse case than he.” Q “When is knowledge profitable and when availeth reason to ward off the ill effects of desire and lust?”— “When their possessor useth them in quest of the goods of the next world, for reason and knowledge are altogether profitable; but it befitteth not their owner to expend them in the quest of the goods of this world, save in such measure as may be needful for gaining his livelihood and defending himself from its mischief; but to lay them out with a view to futurity." Q "What is most worthy that a man should apply himself thereto and occupy his heart withal?"— "Good works and pious." Q "If a man do this it diverteth him from gaining his living; how then shall he do for his daily bread wherewith he may not dispense?"— "A man's day is four-and-twenty hours, and it behoveth him to employ one third thereof in seeking his living, another in prayer and repose and the other in the pursuits of knowledge;[108] for a reasonable man without knowledge is a barren land, which hath no place for tillage, tree-planting or grass-growing. Except it be prepared for tilth and plantation no fruit will profit therein; but, if it be tilled and planted, it bringeth forth goodly fruits. So with the man lacking education; there is no profit in him till knowledge be planted in him; then doth he bear fruit." Q "What sayst thou of knowledge without understanding?"— "It is as the knowledge of a brute[109] beast, which hath learnt the hours of its foddering and waking, but hath no reason." Q "Thou hast been brief in thine answer here anent; but I accept thy reply. Tell me, how shall I guard myself against the Sultan?"— "By giving him no way to thee." Q "And how can I but give him way to me, seeing that he is set in dominion over me and that the reins of my affair be in his hand?"— "His dominion over thee lieth in the duties thou owest him; wherefore, an thou give him his due, he hath no farther dominion over thee." Q "What are a Wazir's duties to his King?"— "Good counsel and zealous service both in public and private, right judgment, the keeping of his secrets and that he conceal from his lord naught of that whereof he hath a right to be informed, lack of neglect of aught of his need with the gratifying of which he chargeth him, the seeking his approval in every guise, and the avoidance of his anger." Q "How should the Wazir do with the King?"— "An thou be Wazir to the King and wouldst fain become safe from him, let thy hearing and thy speaking to him surpass his expectation of thee, and be thy seeking of thy want from him after the measure of thy rank in his esteem, and beware lest thou advance thyself to a dignity whereof he deemeth thee unworthy, for this would be like presuming against him. So, if thou take advantage of his mildness and raise thee to a rank beyond that which he deemeth thy due, thou wilt be like the hunter, whose wont it was to trap wild beasts for their pelts and cast away the flesh. Now a lion used to come to that place and eat of the carrion; and in course of time, he made friendship with the hunter, who would throw meat to him and wipe his hands on his back, whilst the lion wagged his tail.[110] But when the hunter saw his tameness and gentleness and submissiveness to him, he said to himself, 'Verily this lion humbleth himself to me and I am master of him, and I see not why I should not mount him and strip off his hide, as with the other wild beasts.' So he took courage and sprang on the lion's back, presuming on his mildness and deeming himself sure of him; which when the lion saw, he raged with exceeding rage and raising his fore paw, smote the hunter, that he drove his claws into his vitals; after which he cast him under foot and tare him in pieces and devoured him. By this we may know that it behoveth the Wazir to bear himself towards the King according to that which he seeth of his condition and not presume upon the superiority of his own judgment, lest the King become jealous of him." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Twelfth Night,

She continued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the youth, the son of King Jali'ad, said to Shimas the Wazir, "It behoveth the Minister to bear himself towards the Monarch according to that which he seeth of his condition, and not to presume upon the superiority of his own judgment lest the King wax jealous of him." Quoth Shimas, "How shall the Wazir grace himself in the King's sight."— "By the performance of the trust committed to him and of loyal counsel and sound judgment and the execution of his commands." Q "As for what thou sayest of the Wazir's duty to avoid the King's anger and perform his wishes and apply himself diligently to the doing of that wherewith he chargeth him, such duty is always incumbent on him; but how, an the King's whole pleasure be tyranny and the practice of oppression and exorbitant extortion; and what shall the Wazir do, if he be afflicted by intercourse with this unjust lord? An he strive to turn him from his lust and his desire, he cannot do this, and if he follow him in his lusts and flatter him with false counsel, he assumeth the weight of responsibility herein and becometh an enemy to the people. What sayst thou of this?”— “What thou speakest, O Wazir, of his responsibility and sinfulness ariseth only in the case of his abetting the King in his wrong-doing; but it behoveth the Wazir, when the King taketh counsel with him of the like of this, to show forth to him the way of justice and equity and warn him against tyranny and oppression and expound to him the principles of righteously governing the lieges; alluring him with the future reward that pertaineth to this and restraining him with warning of the punishment he otherwise will incur. If the King incline to him and hearken unto his words, his end is gained, and if not, there is nothing for it but that he depart from him after courteous fashion, because in parting for each of them is ease.” Q “What are the duties of the King to his subjects and what are the obligations of the lieges to their lord?”— “They shall do whatso he ordereth them with pure intent and obey him in that which pleaseth him and pleaseth Allah and the Apostle of Allah. And the lieges can claim of the lord that he protect their possessions and guard their women,[111] even as it is their duty to hearken unto him and obey him and expend their lives freely in his defence and give him his lawful due and praise him fairly for that which he bestoweth upon them of his justice and bounty.” Q “Have his subjects any claim upon the King other than that which thou hast said?”— “Yes: the rights of the subjects from their Sovran are more binding than the liege lord’s claim upon his lieges; for that the breach of his duty towards them is more harmful than that of their duty towards him; because the ruin of the King and the loss of his kingdom and fortune befal not save by the breach of his devoir to his subjects; wherefore it behoveth him who is invested with the kingship to be assiduous in furthering three things, to wit, the fostering of the faith, the fostering of his subjects and the fostering of government; for by the ensuing of these three things, his kingdom shall endure.” Q “How doth it behove him to do for his subjects’ weal?”— “By giving them their due and maintaining their laws and customs[112] and employing Olema and learned men to teach them and justifying them, one of other, and sparing their blood and defending their goods and lightening their loads and strengthening their hosts.” Q “What is the Minister’s claim upon the Monarch?”— “None hath a more imperative claim on the King than hath the Wazir, for three reasons: firstly, because of that which shall befal him from his liege lord in case of error in judgment, and because of the general advantage to King and commons in case of sound judgment; secondly, that folk may know the goodliness of the degree which the Wazir holdeth in the King’s esteem and therefore look on him with eyes of veneration and respect and submission[113] ; and thirdly, that the Wazir, seeing this from King and subjects, may ward off from them that which they hate and fulfil to them that which they love.” Q “I have heard all thou hast said of the attributes of King and Wazir and liege and approve thereof: but now tell me what is incumbent in keeping the tongue from lying and folly and slandering good names and excess in speech.”— “It behoveth a man to speak naught but good and kindness and to talk not of that which toucheth him not; to leave detraction nor carry tale he hath heard from one man to his enemy, neither seek to harm his friend nor his foe with his Sultan and reck not of any (neither of him from whom he hopeth for good nor of him whom he feareth for mischief) save of Allah Almighty; for He indeed is the only one who harmeth or profiteth. Let him not impute default unto any nor talk ignorantly, lest he incur the weight and the sin thereof before Allah and earn hate among men; for know thou that speech is like an arrow which once shot none can avail to recall. Let him also beware of disclosing his secret to one who shall discover it, lest he fall into mischief by reason of its disclosure, after confidence on its concealment; and let him be more careful to keep his secret from his friend than from his foe; for the keeping a secret with all folk is of the performance of faithful trust.” Q “Tell me how a man should bear himself with his family and friends.”— “There is no rest for a son of Adam save in righteous conduct: he should render to his family that which they deserve and to his brethren whatso is their due.” Q “What should one render to one’s kinsfolk?”— “To parents, submission and soft speech and affability and honour and reverence. To brethren good counsel and readiness to expend money for them and assistance in their undertakings and joyance in their joy and grieving for their grief and closing of the eyes toward the errors that they may commit; for, when they experience this from a man, they requite him with the best of counsel they can command and expend their lives in his defence; wherefore, an thou know thy brother to be trusty, lavish upon him thy love and help him in all his affairs." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Thirteenth Night,

She pursued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the youth, the son and heir of King Jali'ad, when questioned by the Wazir upon the subjects aforesaid, returned him satisfactory replies; when Shimas resumed, "I see that brethren are of two kinds, brethren of trust and brethren of society.[114] As for the first who be friends, there is due to them that which thou hast set forth; but now tell me of the others who be acquaintances." — As for brethren of society, thou gettest of them pleasance and goodly usance and fair speech and enjoyable company; so be thou not sparing to them of thy delights, but be lavish to them thereof, like as they are lavish to thee, and render to them that which they render to thee of affable countenance and an open favour and sweet speech, so shall thy life be pleasant and thy words be accepted of them." Q "Tell me now of the provision decreed by the Creator to all creatures. Hath He alloted to men and beasts each his several provision to the completion of his appointed life-term; and if this allotment be thus, what maketh him who seeketh his livelihood to incur hardships and travail in the quest of that which he knoweth must come to him, if it be decreed to him, albeit he incur not the misery of endeavour; and which, if it be not decreed to him, he shall not win, though he strive after it with his uttermost striving? Shall he therefore stint endeavour and in his Lord put trust and to his body and his soul give rest?"— "Indeed, we see clearly that to each and every there is a provision distributed and a term prescribed; but to all livelihood are a way and means, and he who seeketh would get ease of his seeking by ceasing to seek; withal there is no help but that he seek his fortune. The seeker is, however, in two cases: either he gaineth his fortune or he faileth thereof. In the first case, his pleasure consisteth in two conditions: first, in the having gained his fortune, and secondly, in the laudable[115] issue of his quest; and in the other case, his pleasure consisteth, first, in his readiness to seek his daily bread; secondly, in his abstaining from being a burthen to the folk, and thirdly, in his freedom from liability to blame." Q "What sayst thou of the means of seeking one's fortune?"— "A man shall hold lawful that which Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) alloweth, and unlawful whatso He forbiddeth." Reaching this pass the discourse between them came to an end, and Shimas and all the Olema present rose and prostrating themselves before the young Prince, magnified and extolled him, whilst his father pressed him to his bosom and seating him on the throne of kingship, said, "Praised be Allah who hath blessed me with a son to be the coolth of mine eyes in my lifetime!" Then said the King's son to Shimas in presence of all the Olema, "O sage that art versed in spiritual questions, albeit Allah have vouchsafed to me but scanty knowledge, yet do I comprehend thine intent in accepting from me what I proffered in answer concerning that whereof thou hast asked me, whether I hit or missed the mark therein, and belike thou forgavest my errors; but now I am minded to question thee anent a thing, whereof my judgment faileth and whereto my capacity is insufficient and which my tongue availeth not to set forth, for that it is obscure to me, with the obscurity of clear water in a black vessel. Wherefore I would have thee expound it to me so no iota thereof may remain doubtful to the like of me, to whom its obscurity may present itself in the future, even as it hath presented itself to me in the past; since Allah, even as He hath made life to be in lymph[116] and strength in food and the cure of the sick in the skill of the leach, so hath He appointed the healing of the fool to be in the learning of the wise. Give ear, therefore, to my speech." Replied the Wazir, "O luminous of intelligence and master of casuistical questions, thou whose excellence all the Olema attest, by reason of the goodliness of thy discretion of things and thy distribution[117] thereof and the justness of thine answers to the questions I have asked thee, thou knowest that thou canst enquire of me naught but thou art better able than I to form a just judgment thereon and expound it truly, for that Allah hath vouchsafed unto thee such wisdom as He hath bestowed on none other of men. But inform me of what thou wouldst question me." Quoth the Prince, "Tell me from what did the Creator (magnified be His all-might!) create the world, albeit there was before it naught and there is naught seen in this world but it is created from something; and the Divine Creator (extolled and exalted be He!) is able to create things from nothing,[118] yet hath His will decreed, for all the perfection of His power and grandeur, that He shall create naught but from something." The Wazir replied, "As for those, who fashion vessels of potter's clay,[119] and other handicraftsmen, who cannot originate one thing save from another thing, they are themselves only created entities; but, as for the Creator, who hath wrought the world after this wondrous fashion, an thou wouldst know His power (extolled and exalted be He!) of calling things into existence, extend thy thought and consider the various kinds of created things, and thou wilt find signs and instances, proving the perfection of His puissance and that He is able to create the ens from the non-ens; nay, He called things into being, after absolute non-existence, for the elements which be the matter of created things were sheer nothingness. I will expound this to thee, so thou mayst be in no scepticism thereof, and the marvel-signs of the alternation of Night and Day shall make this clear to thee. When the light goeth and the night cometh, the day is hidden from us and we know not the place where it abideth; and when the night passeth away with its darkness and its terror, the day cometh and we know not the abiding-place of the night.[120] In like manner, when the sun riseth upon us, we know not where it hath laid up its light, and when it setteth, we ignore the abiding-place of its setting; and the examples of this among the works of the Creator (magnified be His name and glorified be His might!) abound in what confoundeth the thought of the keenest-witted of human beings." Rejoined the Prince, "O sage, thou hast set before me of the power of the Creator what is incapable of denial; but tell me how He called His creatures into existence." Answered Shimas, "He created them by the sole power of His one Word,[121] which existed before time, and wherewith he created all things." Quoth the Prince, "Then Allah (be His name magnified and His might glorified!) only willed the existence of created things, before they came into being?" Replied Shimas, "And of His will, He created them with His one Word and but for His speech and that one Word, the creation had not come into existence." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fourteenth Night, She resumed: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that after the King's son had asked his sire's Wazir the casuistical questions aforesaid, and had received a sufficient answer, Shimas said to him, "O dear my son,[122] there is no man can tell thee other but this I have said, except he twist the words handed down to us of the Holy Law and turn the truths thereof from their evident meaning. And such a perversion is their saying that the Word hath inherent and positive power and I take refuge with Allah from such a mis-belief! Nay, the meaning of our saying that Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) created the world with His Word is that He (exalted be His name!) is One in His essence and His attributes and not that His Word hath independent power. On the contrary, power is one of the attributes of Allah, even as speech and other attributes of perfection are attributes of Allah (exalted be His dignity and extolled be His empery!); wherefore He may not be conceived without His Word, nor may His Word be conceived without Him; for, with His Word, Allah (extolled be His praise!) created all His creatures, and without His Word, the Lord created naught. Indeed, He created all things but by His Word of Truth, and by Truth are we created." Quoth the Prince, "I comprehend that which thou hast said on the subject of the Creator and from thee I accept this with understanding; but I hear thee say that He created the world by His Word of Truth. Now Truth is the opposite of Falsehood; whence then arose Falsehood with its opposition unto Truth, and how cometh it to be possible that it should be confounded therewith and become doubtful to human beings, so that they need to distinguish between the twain? And doth the Creator (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) love Falsehood or hate it? An thou say He loveth Truth and by it created all things and abhorreth Falsehood, how came the False, which the Creator hateth, to invade the True which He loveth?" Quoth Shimas, "Verily Allah the Most High created man all Truth[123] , loving His name and obeying His word, and on this wise man had no need of repentance till Falsehood invaded the Truth whereby he was created by means of the capability[124] which Allah had placed in him, being the will and the inclination called lust of lucre.[125] When the False invaded the True on this wise, right became confounded with wrong, by reason of the will of man and his capability and greed of gain, which is the voluntary side of him together with the weakness of human nature: wherefore Allah created penitence for man, to turn away from him Untruth and stablish him in Truth, and He created for him also punishment, if he should abide in the obscurity of Falsehood." Quoth the Prince, "Tell me how came Untruth to invade Truth, so as to be confounded therewith and how became man liable to punishment and so stood in need of repentance." Replied Shimas, "When Allah created man with Truth, He made him loving to Himself and there was for him neither repentance nor punishment; but he abode thus till Allah put in him the soul, which is of the perfection of humanity, albeit naturally inclined to lust which is inherent therein. From this sprang the growth of Untruth and its confusion with Truth, wherewith man was created and with the love whereof his nature had been made; and when man came to this pass, he declined from the Truth with disobedience and whoso declineth from the Truth falleth into Falsehood." Said the Prince, "Then Falsehood invaded Truth only by reason of disobedience and transgression?" Shimas replied, "Yes: and it is thus because Allah loveth mankind, and of the abundance of His love to man He created him having need of Himself, that is to say, of the very Truth. But oftentimes man lapseth from this by cause of the inclination of the soul to lusts and turneth to frowardness, wherefore he falleth into Falsehood by the act of disobeying his Lord and thus deserveth punishment; and by putting away from himself Falsehood with repentance and by the returning to the love of the Truth, he meriteth future reward." Quoth the Prince, "Tell me the origin of sin, whilst all mankind trace their being to Adam, and how cometh it that he, being created of Allah with truth, drew disobedience on himself; then was his disobedience coupled with repentance, after the soul had been set in him, that his issue might be reward or retribution? Indeed, we see some men constant in sinfulness, inclining to that which He loveth not and transgressing in this the original intent and purpose of their creation, which is the love of the Truth, and drawing on themselves the wrath of their Lord, whilst we see others constant in seeking the satisfaction of their Creator and obeying Him and meriting mercy and future recompense. What causeth this difference prevailing between them?" Replied Shimas, "The origin of disobedience descending upon mankind is attributable to Iblis, who was the noblest of all that Allah (magnified be His name!) created of angels[126] and men and Jinn, and the love of the Truth was inherent in him, for he knew naught but this; but whenas he saw himself unique in such dignity, there entered into him pride and conceit, vainglory and arrogance which revolted from loyalty and obedience to the commandment of His Creator; wherefore Allah made him inferior to all creatures and cast him out from love, making his abiding- place to be in disobedience. So when he knew that Allah (glorified be His name!) loved not disobedience and saw Adam and the case wherein he was of truth and love and obedience to his Creator, envy entered into him and he devised some device to pervert Adam from the truth, that he might be a partaker with himself in Falsehood; and by this, Adam incurred chastisement for his inclining to disobedience, which his foe made fair to him, and his subjection to his lusts, whenas he transgressed the charge of his Lord, by reason of the appearance of Falsehood. When the Creator (magnified be the praises of Him and hallowed be the names of Him!) saw the weakness of man and the swiftness of his inclining to his enemy and leaving the truth, He appointed to him, of His mercy, repentance, that therewith he might arise from the slough[127] of inclination to disobedience and taking the arms and armour of repentance, overcome therewith his foe Iblis and his hosts and return to the Truth, wherein he was created. When Iblis saw that Allah (magnified be His praise!) had appointed him a protracted term,[128] he hastened to wage war upon man and to beset him with wiles, to the intent that he might oust him from the favour of his Lord and make him a partaker with himself in the wrath which he and his hosts had incurred; wherefore Allah (extolled be His praises!) appointed unto man the capability of penitence and commanded him to apply himself to the Truth and persevere therein; and forbade him from disobedience and frowardness and revealed to him that he had on the earth an enemy warring against him and relaxing not from him night nor day. Thus hath man a right to future reward, if he adhere to the Truth, in the love of which his nature was created; but he becometh liable to punishment, if the flesh master him and incline him to lusts." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fifteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the young Prince had questioned Shimas touching disputed points of olden time and had been duly answered, he presently said, “Now tell me by what power is the creature able to transgress against his Creator, seeing that His omnipotence is without bounds, even as thou hast set forth, and that naught can overcome Him or depart from His will? Deemest thou not that He is able to turn His creatures from this disobedience and compel them eternally to hold the Truth?” Answered Shimas, “In very sooth Almighty Allah (honoured be His name!) is just and equitable and loving-kind to the people of His affection.[129] He created His creatures with justice and equity and of the inspiration of His justice and the overflowing of His mercy, He gave them kingship over themselves, that they should do whatever they might design. He showeth them the way of righteousness and bestoweth on them the power and ability of doing what they will of good: and if they do the opposite thereof, they fall into destruction and disobedience.” Q “If the Creator, as thou sayest, have granted to mankind power and ability[130] and they by reason thereof are empowered to do whatso they will, why then doth He not come between them and that which they desire of wrong and turn them to the right?”— “This is of the greatness of His mercy and the goodliness of His wisdom; for, even as aforetime he showed wrath to Iblis and had no mercy on him, even so he showed Adam mercy, by means[131] of repentance, and accepted of him, after He had been wroth with him.” Q “He is indeed mere Truth, for He it is who requiteth every one according to his works, and there is no Creator save Allah who hath power over all things. But tell me, hath He created that which He loveth and that which He loveth not or only that which He loveth?”— “He created all things, but favoureth only that which he loveth.” Q “What reckest thou of two things, one whereof is pleasing to God and earneth future reward for him who practiseth it and the other offendeth Allah and entaileth lawful punishment upon the doer?”— “Expound to me these two things and make me to apprehend them, that I may speak concerning them.” Q “They are good and evil, the two things inherent in the body and in the soul.”— “O wise youth, I see that thou knowest good and evil to be of the works which the soul and the body combine to do. Good is named good, because it is in favour with God, and evil is termed ill, for that in it is His ill-will. Indeed, it behoveth thee to know Allah and to please Him by the practice of good, for that He hath bidden us to this and forbidden us to do evil.” Q “I see these two things, to wit, good and evil, to be wrought only by the five senses familiarly known in the body of man, which be the sensorium[132] whence proceed speech, hearing, sight, smell and touch. Now I would have thee tell me whether these five senses were created altogether for good or for evil.”— “Apprehend, O man, the exposition of that whereof thou askest and it is a manifest proof; so lay it up in thine innermost thought and take it to thy heart. And this it is that the Creator (extolled and exalted be He!) created man with Truth and impressed him with the love thereof and there proceedeth from it no created thing save by the puissance of the Most High, whose trace is in every phenomenon. He[133] (extol we Him and exalt we Him!) is not apt but to the ordering of justice and equity and beneficence, and He created man for the love of Him and set in him a soul, wherein the inclination to lusts was innate and assigned him capability and ableness and appointed the Five Senses aforesaid to be to him a means of winning Heaven or Hell.” Q “How so?”— “In that He created the Tongue for speech, the Hands for action, the Feet for walking and the Eyes for seeing and the Ears for hearing, and upon each bestowed especial power and incited them to exercise and motion, bidding each of them do naught save that which pleaseth Him. Now what pleaseth Him in Speech is truthfulness and abstaining from its opposite, which is falsehood; and what pleaseth Him in Sight is turning it unto that which He loveth and leaving the contrary, which is turning it unto that which He hateth, such as looking unto lusts; and what pleaseth Him in Hearing is hearkening to naught but the True, such as admonition and that which is in Allah’s writ and leaving the contrary, which is listening to that which incurreth the anger of Allah; and what pleaseth Him in the Hands is not hoarding up that which He entrusteth to them, but expending it in such way as shall please Him and leaving the contrary, which is avarice or spending in sinfulness that which He hath committed to them; and what pleaseth Him in the Feet is that they be constant in the pursuit of good, such as the quest of instruction, and leave its contrary, which is the walking in other than the way of Allah. Now respecting the rest of the lusts which man practiseth, they proceed from the body by command of the soul. But the lusts which proceed from the body are of two kinds, the lust of reproduction and the lust of the belly. As for the former, that which pleaseth Allah thereof is that it be not other than lawful[134] and He is displeased with it if contrary to His law. As for the lust of the belly, eating and drinking, what pleaseth Allah thereof is that each take naught save that which the Almighty hath appointed him be it little or mickle, and praise the Lord and thank Him; and what angereth Him thereof is that a man take that which is not his by right. All precepts other than these are false, and thou knowest that Allah created every thing and delighteth only in Good and commandeth each member of the body to do that which He hath made on it incumbent, for that He is the All-wise, the All- knowing." Q "Was it foreknown unto Allah Almighty (exalted be His power!) that Adam, by eating of the tree from which He forbade him and whence befel what befel, would leave obedience for disobedience?"— "Yes, O sage youth. This was foreknown unto Allah Almighty ere He created Adam, and the proof and manifestation attached thereto is the warning He gave him against eating of the tree and His informing him that, if he ate of the fruit he would be disobedient. And this was in the way of justice and equity, lest Adam should have an argument wherewith he might excuse himself against his Lord. When therefore, he fell into error and calamity and when disgrace waxed sore upon him and reproach, this passed to his posterity after him; wherefore Allah sent Prophets and Apostles and gave to them Books and they taught us the divine commandments and expounded to us what was therein of admonitions and precepts and made clear to us and manifest the way of righteousness and explained to us what it behoved us to do and what to leave undone. Now we are endowed with Freewill and he who acteth within these lawful limits winneth his wish and prospereth, while whoso transgresseth these legal bounds and doeth other than that which these precepts enjoin, resisteth the Lord and is ruined in both Abodes. This then is the road of Good and Evil. Thou knowest that Allah over all things is Omnipotent and created not lusts for us but of His pleasure and volunty, and He bade us use them in the way of lawfulness, so they might be to us a good; but, when we use them in the way of sinfulness they are to us an evil. Therefore what of righteous we compass is from Allah Almighty, and what of wrongous from ourselves[135] His creatures, not from the Creator, exalted be He herefor with highmost exaltation!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Sixteenth Night,

She continued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the youth, King Jali'ad's son had questioned Shimas concerning these subtleties and had been duly answered, he pursued, "That which thou hast expounded to me concerning Allah and His creatures I understand; but tell me of one matter, concerning which my mind is perplexed with extreme wonderment, and that is that I marvel at the sons of Adam, how careless they are of the life to come and at their lack of taking thought thereof and their love to this world, albeit they know that they must needs leave it and depart from it, whilst they are yet young in years."— "Yes, verily; and that which thou seest of its changefulness and traitorousness with its children is a sign that Fortune to the fortunate will not endure nor to the afflicted affliction; for none of its people is secure from its changefulness and even if one have power over it and be content therewith, yet there is no help but that his estate change and removal hasten unto him. Wherefore man can put no trust therein nor profit by that which he enjoyeth of its gilding and glitter[136] ; and we knowing this will know that the sorriest of men in condition are those who are deluded by this world and are unmindful of the other world; for that whatso of present ease they enjoy will not even the fear and misery and horrors which will befal them after their removal therefrom. Thus are we certified that, if the creature knew that which will betide him with the coming of death[137] and his severance from that which he enjoyeth of pleasure and delight, he would cast away the world and that which is therein; for we are certified that the next life is better for us and more profitable." Said the Prince, "O sage, thou hast dispelled the darkness that was upon my heart by the light of thy shining lamp and hast directed me into the right road I must tread on the track of Truth and hast given me a lantern whereby I may see." Then rose one of the learned men who were in the presence and said, “When cometh the season of Prime, needs must the hare seek the pasture as well as the elephant; and indeed I have heard from you twain such questions and solutions as I never before heard; but now leave that and let me ask you of somewhat. Tell me, what is the best of the goods of the world?” Replied the Prince, “Health of body, lawful livelihood and a virtuous son.” Q “What is the greater and what is the less?”— “The greater is that to which a lesser than itself submitteth and the less that which submitteth to a greater than itself.” Q “What are the four things wherein concur all creatures?”— “Men concur in meat and drink, the sweet of sleep, the lust of women and the agonies of death.” Q “What are the three things whose foulness none can do away?”— “Folly, meanness of nature, and lying.” Q “What is the best kind of lie,[138] though all kinds are foul?”— “That which averteth harm from its utterer and bringeth gain.” Q “What kind of truthfulness is foul, though all kinds are fair?”— “That of a man glorying in that which he hath and vaunting himself thereof.” Q “What is the foulest of foulnesses?”— “When a man boasteth himself of that which he hath not.” Q “Who is the most foolish of men?”— “He who hath no thought but of what he shall put in his belly.” Then said Shimas, “O King, verily thou art our King, but we desire that thou assign the kingdom to thy son after thee, and we will be thy servants and lieges.” So the King exhorted the Olema and others who were in the presence to remember that which they had heard and do according thereto and enjoined them to obey his son’s commandment, for that he made him his heir-apparent,[139] so he should be the successor of the King his sire; and he took an oath of all the people of his empire, literates and braves and old men and boys, to mention none other, that they would not oppose him in the succession nor transgress against his commandment. Now when the Prince was seventeen years old, the King sickened of a sore sickness and came nigh to die; so, being certified that his decease was at hand, he said to the people of his household, “This is disease of Death which is upon me; wherefore do ye summon my son and kith and kin and gather together the Grandees and Notables of my empire, so not one of them may remain except he be present.” Accordingly they fared forth and made proclamation to those who were near and published the summons to those who were afar off, and they all assembled and went in to the King. Then said they to him, “How is it with thee, O King, and how deemest thou for thyself of these thy dolours?” Quoth Jali’ad, “Verily, this my malady is mortal and the shaft of death hath executed that which Allah Almighty decreed against me: this is the last of my days in the world here and the first of my days in the world hereafter.” Then said he to his son, “Draw near unto me.” So the youth drew near, weeping with weeping so sore, that he well nigh drenched the bed, whilst the King’s eyes welled tears and all who were present wept. Quoth Jali’ad, “Weep not, O my son; I am not the first whom this Inevitable betideth; nay, it is common to all that Allah hath created. But fear thou the Almighty and do good deeds which shall precede thee to the place whither all creatures tend and wend. Obey not thy lusts, but occupy thy soul with lauding the Lord in thy standing up and thy sitting down, in thy waking and in thy sleeping. Make the Truth the aim of thine eyes; this is the last of my speech with thee and — The Peace.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Seventeenth Night,

She pursued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Jali’ad charged his son with such injunctions and made him his heir to succeed him in his reign, the Prince said, “O dear father mine,[140] thou knowest that I have ever been to thee obedient and thy commandment carrying out, mindful of thine injunctions and thine approof seeking, for thou hast been to me the best of fathers; how, then, after thy death, shall I depart from that which contenteth thee? And now, having fairly ordered my nurture thou art about to depart from me and I have no power to bring thee back to me; but, an I be mindful of thy charge, I shall be blessed therein and great good fortune shall betide me.” Quoth the King, and indeed he was in the last agony of departing life, “Dear my son, cleave fast unto ten precepts, which if thou hold, Allah shall profit thee herewith in this world and the next world, and they are as follows. Whenas thou art wroth, curb thy wrath; when thou art afflicted, be patient; when thou speakest be soothfast; when thou promisest, perform; when thou judgest, do justice; when thou hast power, be merciful; deal generously by thy governors and lieutenants; forgive thy foes; be lavish of good offices to thine adversary, and stay thy mischief from him. Observe also other ten precepts,[141] wherewith Allah shall profit thee among the people of thy realm, to wit, when thou dividest, be just; when thou punishest, oppress not; when thou engagest thyself, fulfil thine engagement; hearken to those that give thee loyal counsel; when offence is offered to thee, neglect it; abstain from contention; enjoin thy subjects to the observance of the divine laws and of praiseworthy practices; abate ignorance with a sharp sword; withhold thy regard from treachery and its untruth; and, lastly, do equal justice between the folk, so they may love thee, great and small, and the wicked and corrupt of them may fear thee." Then he addressed himself to the Emirs and Olema which were present when he appointed his son to be his successor, saying, "Beware ye of transgressing the commandment of your King and neglecting to hearken to your chief, for therein lieth ruin for your realm and sundering for your society and bane for your bodies and perdition for your possessions; and your foe would exult over you. Well ye wot the covenant ye made with me, and even thus shall be your covenant with this youth and the troth which plighted between you and me shall be also between you and him; wherefore it behoveth you to give ear unto and obey his commandment, for that in this is the well-being of your conditions. So be ye constant with him anent that wherein ye were with me and your estate shall prosper and your affairs be fair; for behold, he hath the Kingship over you and is the lord of your fortune, and — The Peace." Then the death- agony[142] seized him and his tongue was bridled; so he pressed his son to him and kissed him and gave thanks unto Allah; after which his hour came and his soul fared forth. All his subjects and the people of his court mourned and keened over him and they shrouded him and buried him with pomp and honour and reverence; after which they returned with the Prince and clad him in the royal robes and crowned him with his father's crown and put the seal-ring on his finger, after seating him on the Throne of Sovranship. The young King ordered himself towards them, after his father's fashion of mildness and justice and benevolence, for a little while till the world waylaid him and entangled him in its lusts, whereupon, its pleasures made him their prey and he turned to its gilding and gewgaws, forsaking the engagements which his father had imposed upon him and casting off his obedience to him, neglecting the affairs of his reign and treading a road wherein was his own destruction. The love of women waxed stark in him and came to such a pass that, whenever he heard tell of a beauty, he would send for her and take her to wife; and after this wise, he collected women more in number than ever had Solomon, David-son, King of the children of Israel. Also he would shut himself up with a company of them for a month at a time, during which he went not forth neither enquired of his realm or its rule nor looked into the grievances of such of his subjects as complained to him; and if they wrote to him, he returned them no reply. Now when they saw this and witnessed his neglect of their affairs and lack of care for their interests and those of the state, they were assured that ere long some calamity would betide them and this was grievous to them. So they met privily one with other and took counsel together blaming their King, and one of them said to the rest, “Come, let us go to Shimas, Chief of the Wazirs, and set forth to him our case and acquaint him with that wherein we are by reason of this King, so he may admonish him; else, in a little, calamity will dawn upon us, for the world hath dazzled the Sovran with its delights and seduced him with its snares.” Accordingly, they repaired to Shimas and said to him, “O wise man and prudent, the world hath dazed the King with its delights and taken him in its toils, so that he turneth unto vanity and worketh for the undoing of the state. Now with the disordering of the state the commons will be corrupted and our affairs will run to ruin. We see him not for days and months nor cometh there forth from him any commandment to us or to the Wazir or any else. We cannot refer aught of our need to him and he looketh not to the administration of justice nor taketh thought to the condition of any of his subjects, in his disregard of them.[143] And behold we are come to acquaint thee with the truth of things, for that thou art the chiefest and most accomplished of us and it behoveth not that calamity befal a land wherein thou dwellest, seeing that thou art most able of any to amend this King. Wherefore go thou and speak with him: haply he will hearken to thy word and return unto the way of Allah.”[144] So Shimas arose forthright and repairing to the palace, foregathered with the first page he could find and said to him, “Fair my son, I beseech thee ask leave for me to go in to the King, for I have an affair, concerning which I would fain see his face and acquaint him therewith and hear what he shall answer me there anent.” Answered the page, “O my lord, by Allah, this month past hath he given none leave to come in to him, nor have I all this time looked upon his face; but I will direct thee to one who shall crave admission for thee. Do thou lay hold of such a blackamoor slave who standeth at his head and bringeth him food from the kitchen. When he cometh forth to go to the kitchen, ask him what seemeth good to thee; for he will do for thee that which thou desirest.” So the Wazir repaired to the door of the kitchen and sat there a little while, till up came the black and would have entered the kitchen; but Shimas caught hold of him and said to him, “Dear my son, I would fain stand in presence of the King and speak with him of somewhat especially concerneth him; so prithee, of thy kindness, when he hath ended his undurn-meal and his temper is at its best, speak for me and get me leave to approach him, so I may bespeak him of that which shall suit him.” “I hear and obey,” answered the black and taking the food carried it to the King, who ate thereof and his temper was soothed thereby. Then said the black to him, “Shimas standeth at the door and craveth admission, so he may acquaint thee with matters that specially concern thee.” At this the King was alarmed and disquieted and commanded to admit the Minister. — And Shahrazed perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Eighteenth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King bade the blackamoor admit Shimas, the slave went forth to him and bade him enter; whereupon he went in and falling prone before Allah, kissed the King’s hands and blessed him. Then said the King, “What hath betided thee, O Shimas, that thou seekest admission unto me?” He answered, “This long while have I not looked upon the face of my lord the King and indeed I longed sore for thee; and now, behold, I have seen thy countenance and come to thee with a word which I would lief say to thee, O King stablished in all prosperity!” Quoth the King, “Say what seemeth good to thee;” and quoth Shimas, “I would have thee bear in mind O King, that

Allah Almighty hath endowed thee with learning and wisdom, for all the tenderness of thy years, such as He never vouchsafed unto any of the Kings before thee, and hath fulfilled the measure of his bounties to thee with the Kingship; and He loveth not that thou depart from that wherewith He hath endowed thee unto other than it, by means of thy disobedience to Him; wherefore it behoveth thee not to levy war against[145] Him with thy hoards but of His injunctions to be mindful and unto His commandments obedient. Indeed, I have seen thee, this while past, forget thy sire and his charges and reject his covenant and neglect his counsel and words of wisdom and renounce his justice and good governance, remembering not the bounty of Allah to thee neither requiting it with gratitude and thanks to Him.” The King asked, “How so? And what is the manner of this?”; and Shimas answered, “The manner of it is that thou neglectest to administer the affairs of the state and that which Allah hath committed unto thee of the interests of thy lieges and surrenderest thyself to thy lower nature in that which it maketh fair to thee of the slight lusts of the world. Verily it is said that the welfare of the state and of the Faith and of the folk is of the things which it behoveth the King to watch; wherefore it is my rede, O King, that thou look fairly to the issue of thine affair, for thus wilt thou find the manifest road wherein is salvation, and not accept a trifling pleasure and a transient which leadeth to the abyss of destruction, lest there befal thee that which befel the Fisherman.” The King asked, “What was that?”; and Shimas answered, “There hath reached me this tale of

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The Foolish Fisherman.

A fisherman went forth to a river for fishing therein as was his wont; and when he came thither and walked upon the bridge, he saw a great fish and said in himself, "'Twill not serve me to abide here, but I will follow yonder fish whitherso it goeth, till I catch it, for it will relieve me from fishing for days and days." So he did off his clothes and plunged into the river after the fish. The current bore him along till he overtook it and laid hold of it, when he turned and found himself far from the bank. But albeit he saw what the stream had done with him, he would not loose the fish and return, but ventured life and gripping it fast with both hands, let his body float with the flow, which carried him on till it cast him into a whirlpool[146] none might enter and come out therefrom. With this he fell to crying out and saying, "Save a drowning man!" And there came to him folk of the keepers of the river and said to him, "What ailed thee to cast thyself into this great peril?" Quoth he, "It was I myself who forsook the plain way wherein was salvation and gave myself over to concupiscence and perdition." Quoth they, "O fellow, why didst thou leave the way of safety and cast thyself into this destruction, knowing from of old that none may enter herein and be saved? What hindered thee from throwing away what was in thy hand and saving thyself? So hadst thou escaped with thy life and not fallen into this perdition, whence there is no deliverance; and now not one of us can rescue thee from this thy ruin." Accordingly the man cut off all his hopes of life and lost that which was in his hand and for which his flesh had prompted him to venture himself, and died a miserable death. "And I tell thee not this parable, O King," added Shimas, "but that thou mayest leave this contemptible conduct that diverteth thee from thy duties and look to that which is committed to thee of the rule of thy folk and the maintenance of the order of thy realm, so that none may see fault in thee." The King asked, "What wouldst thou have me do?" And Shimas answered, "Tomorrow, an thou be well and in good case,[147] give the folk leave to come in to thee and look into their affairs and excuse thyself to them and promise them of thine own accord good governance and prosperity." Quoth the King, "O Shimas, thou hast spoken sensibly and rightly; and to-morrow, Inshallah, I will do that which thou counsellest me." So the Wazir went out from him and told the lieges all he had said to him; and, when morning morrowed, the King came forth of his privacy and bade admit the people, to whom he excused himself, promising them that thenceforward he would deal with them as they wished, wherewith they were content and departed each to his own dwelling.[148] Then one of the King's wives, who was his best-beloved of them and most in honour with him, visited him and seeing him changed of colour and thoughtful over his affairs, by reason of that which he had heard from his Chief Wazir, said to him, "O King, how is it that I see thee troubled in mind? Hast thou aught to complain of?" Answered he, "No: but my pleasures have distracted me from my duties. What right have I to be thus negligent of my affairs and those of my subjects? If I continue on this wise, soon, very soon, the kingdom will pass out of my hand." She rejoined, "I see, O King, that thou hast been duped by the Wazirs and Ministers, who wish but to torment and entrap thee, so thou mayst have no joyance of this thy kingship neither feel ease nor taste delight; nay, they would have thee consume thy life in warding off trouble from them, till thy days be wasted in travail and weariness and thou be as one who slayeth himself for the benefit of another or like the Boy and the Thieves." Asked the King, "How was that?" and she answered, "They tell the following tale anent

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The Boy and the Thieves.

Seven Thieves once went out to steal, according to their custom, and fell in with a Boy, poor and orphaned to boot, who besought them for somewhat to eat. One of them asked him, “Wilt go with us, O Boy, and we will feed thee and give thee drink, clothe thee and entreat thee kindly?” And he answered, “Needs must I go with you whitherso ye will and ye are as my own kith and kin.” So they took him and fared on with him till they came to a garden, and entering, went round about therein till they found a walnut- tree laden with ripe fruit and said to him, “O Boy, wilt thou enter this garden with us and swarm up this tree and eat of its walnuts thy sufficiency and throw the rest down to us?” He consented and entered with them, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Nineteenth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Boy consented and entered with the Thieves, one of them said to other “Look which is the lightest and smallest of us and make him climb the tree.” And they said, “None of us is slighter than this Boy.” So they sent him up into the tree and said to him, “O Boy, touch not aught of the fruit, lest some one see thee and work thee a mischief.” He asked, “How then shall I do?”, and they answered, “Sit among the boughs and shake them one by one with all thy might, so that which is thereon may fall, and we will pick it up. Then, when thou hast made an end of shaking down the fruit, come down and take thy share of that which we have gathered.” Accordingly he began to shake every branch at which he could come, so that the nuts fell and the thieves picked them up and ate some and hid other some till all were full, save the Boy who had eaten naught. As they were thus engaged, behold, up came the owner of the garden who, standing to witness the spectacle, enquired of them, “What do ye with this tree?” They replied “We have taken naught thereof; but we were passing by and seeing yonder Boy on the tree, took him for the owner thereof and besought him to give us to eat of the fruit. thereat he fell to shaking one of the branches, so that the nuts dropped down, and we are not at fault." Quoth the master to the Boy, "What sayst thou?"; and quoth he, "These men lie; but I will tell thee the truth. It is that we all came hither together and they bade me climb the tree and shake its boughs that the nuts might fall down to them, and I obeyed their bidding." Said the master, "Thou hast cast thyself into sore calamity; but hast thou profited by eating aught of the fruit?"; and he said, "I have eaten naught thereof." Rejoined the owner of the garden, "Now know I thy folly and thine ignorance in that thou hast wrought to ruin thyself and profit others." Then said he to the Thieves, "I have no resort against you, so wend your ways!" But he laid hands on the Boy and punished him. "On like wise," added the favourite, "thy Wazirs and Officers of state would sacrifice thee to their interests and do with thee as did the Thieves with the Boy." Answered the King, "Thou sayst sooth, and speakest truth. I will not go forth to them nor leave my pleasures." Then he passed the night with his wife in all delight till the morning, when the Grand Wazir arose and, assembling the Officers of state, together with those of the lieges who were present with them, repaired with them to the palace-gate, congratulating one another and rejoicing. But the door opened not nor did the King come forth unto them nor give them leave to go in to him. So, when they despaired of him, they said to Shimas, "O excellent Wazir and accomplished sage, seest thou not the behaviour of this lad, young of years and little of wit, how he addeth to his offences falsehood? See how he hath broken his promise to us and hath not performed that for which he engaged unto us, and this sin it behoveth thee join unto his other sins; but we beseech thee go in to him yet again and discover what is the cause of his holding back and refusal to come forth; for we doubt not but that the like of this action cometh of his corrupt nature, and indeed he is now hardened to the highest degree." Accordingly, Shimas went in to the King and bespake him, saying, "Peace be with thee, O King! How cometh it that I see thee give thyself up to these slight pleasures and neglect the great affair whereto it behoveth thee sedulously apply thyself? Thou art like unto a man who had a milch-camel and, coming one day to milk her, the goodness of her milk made him neglect to hold fast her halter; which whenas she felt, she haled herself free and made off into the wold. Thus the man lost both milk and camel and the loss that betided him surpassed his gain. Wherefore, O King, do thou look unto that wherein is thy welfare and the weal of thy subjects; for, even as it behoveth not a man to sit forever at the kitchen door, because of his need unto food, so should he not alway company with women, by reason of his inclination to them. And as a man should eat but as much food as will guard him from the pains of hunger and drink but what will ward off the pangs of thirst, in like manner it behoveth the sensible man to content himself with passing two of the four-and-twenty hours of his day with women and expend the rest in ordering his own affairs and those of his people. For to be longer than this in company with women is hurtful both to mind and body, seeing that they bid not unto good neither direct thereto: wherefore it besitteth not a man to accept from them or word or deed, for indeed it hath reached me that many men have come to ruin through their women, and amongst others a certain man who perished through conversation with his wife at her command." The King asked, "How was that?" and Shimas answered, saying, "Hear, O King the tale of

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The Man and his Wife.

They relate that a certain man had a wife whom he loved and honoured, giving ear to her speech and doing according to her rede. Moreover, he had a garden, which he had newly planted with his own hand, and was wont to go thither every day, to tend it and water it. One day his wife asked him, “What hast thou planted in thy garden?”, and he answered, “All thou lovest and desirest, and I am assiduous in tending and watering it.” Quoth she, “Wilt thou not carry me thither and show it to me, so I may look upon it and offer thee up a pious prayer for its prosperity, seeing that my orisons are effectual?” Quoth he, “I will well, but have patience with me till the morrow, when I will come and take thee.” So early on the ensuing day, he carried her to the garden which he entered with her. Now two young men saw them enter from afar and said each to other, “Yonder man is an adulterer and yonder woman an adulteress, and they have not entered this garden but to commit adultery.” Thereupon they followed the couple to see what they would do, and hid themselves in a corner of the garden. The man and his wife after entering abode awhile therein, and presently he said to her, “Pray me the prayer thou didst promise me;” but she replied, saying, “I will not pray for thee, until thou do away my desire of that which women seek from men.” Cried he, “Out on thee, O woman! Hast thou not thy fill of me in the house? Here I fear scandal, especially as thou divertest me from my affairs. Fearest thou not that someone will see us?” Quoth she, “We need have no care for that, seeing that we do neither sin nor lewdness; and, as for the watering of the garden, that may wait, because thou canst water it when thou wilt.” And she would take neither excuse nor reason from him, but was instant with him in seeking carnal coition. So he arose and lay with her, which when the young men aforesaid saw, they ran upon them and seized them,[149] saying, “We will not let you go, for ye are adulterers, and except we have carnal knowledge of the woman, we will report you to the police.” Answered the man, “Fie upon you! This is my wife and I am the master of the garden.” They paid no heed to him, but fell upon the woman, who cried out to him for succour, saying, “Suffer them not to defile me!” Accordingly he came up to them, calling out for help; but one of them turned on him and smote him with his dagger and slew him. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Twentieth Night,

She continued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that after slaying the husband the two young men returned to the wife and ravished her. “This I tell thee, O King,” continued the Wazir, “But that thou mayst know that it becometh not men to give ear unto a woman’s talk neither obey her in aught nor accept her judgment in counsel. Beware, then, lest thou don the dress of ignorance, after the robe of knowledge and wisdom, and follow perverse rede, after knowing that which is righteous and profitable. Wherefore pursue thou not a paltry pleasure, whose trending is to corruption and whose inclining is unto sore and uttermost perdition.” When the King heard this from Shimas he said to him, “To-morrow I will come forth to them, an it be the will of Allah the Most High.” So Shimas returned to the Grandees and Notables who were present and told them what the King had said. But this came to the ears of the favourite wife; whereupon she went in to the King and said to him, “The subjects of a King should be his slaves; but I see, O King, thou art become a slave to thy subjects, because thou standest in awe of them and fearest their mischief.[150] They do but desire to make proof of thine inner man; and if they find thee weak, they will disdain thee; but, if they find thee stout and brave, they will dread thee. On this wise do ill Wazirs with their King, for that their wiles are many; but I will make manifest unto thee the truth of their malice. An thou comply with the conditions they demand, they will cause thee cease ruling and do their will; nor will they leave leading thee on from affair to affair, till they cast thee into destruction, and thy case will be as that of the Merchant and the Robbers.” Asked the King, “How was that?” and she answered, “I have heard tell this tale anent

The Merchant and the Robbers.

There was once a wealthy Merchant, who set out for a certain city purposing to sell merchandise there, and when he came thither, he hired him a lodging wherein he took up his abode. Now certain Robbers saw him, men wont to lie in wait for merchants, that they might rob their goods; so they went to his house and sought some device whereby to enter in, but could find no way thereto, and their Captain said, "I'll manage you his matter." Then he went away and, donning the dress of a leach, threw over his shoulder a bag containing somewhat of medicines, after which he set out, crying, 'Who lacks a doctor?' and fared on till he came to the merchant's lodging and him sitting eating the noon-day dinner. So he asked him, "Dost thou need thee a physician?"; and the trader answered, "I need naught of the kind, but sit thee down and eat with me." The thief sat down facing him and began to eat. Now this merchant was a belle fourchette, and the Robber seeing this, said to himself, "I have found my chance." Then he turned to his host and said to him, "'Tis but right for me to give thee an admonition, and after thy kindness to me, I cannot hide it from thee. I see thee to be a great eater and the cause of this is a disorder in thy stomach; wherefore unless thou take speedy measures for thy cure, thine affair will end in perdition." Quoth the merchant, "My body is sound and my stomach speedy of digestion, and though I be a hearty eater, yet is there no disease in my body, to Allah be the praise and the thanks!" Quoth the Robber, "It may appear thus unto thee; but I know thou hast a disease incubating in thy vitals and if thou hearken to me, thou wilt medicine thyself." The Merchant asked, "And where shall I find him who knoweth my remedy?"; and the Robber answered, "Allah is the Healer; but a physician like myself cureth the sick to the best of his power." Then the other said, "Show me at once my remedy and give me thereof." Hereupon he gave him a powder, wherein was a strong dose of aloes,[151] saying, "Use this to- night;" and he accepted it gratefully. When the night came, the Merchant tasted somewhat of the powder and found it nauseous of gust; nevertheless he misdoubted not of it, but swallowed it all and therefrom found ease that night. Next night the thief brought him another powder, wherein was yet more aloes, and he took it: it purged him that night, but he bore patiently with this and rejected it not. When the Robber saw that he gave ear unto his word and put trust in him nor would gainsay him in aught, he brought him a deadly drug[152] and gave it to him. The Merchant swallowed it and no sooner had he done this than that which was in his stomach fell down and his bowels were rent in sunder, and by the morrow he was a dead man; whereupon the Robbers came and took all the merchandise and monies that belonged to him. "This I tell thee, O King," added the favourite "but that thou mayst not accept one word from these deluders; else will there befal thee that whereby thou wilt destroy thyself." Cried the King, "Thou sayst sooth; I will not go forth to them." Now when the morning morrowed, the folk assembled together and repairing to the King's door, sat there the most part of the day, till they despaired of his coming forth, when they returned to Shimas and said to him, "O sage philosopher and experienced master, seest thou not that this ignorant lad doth naught but redouble in falsehood to us? Verily 'twere only reasonable and right to take the Kingdom from him and give it to another, so our affairs may be ordered and our estates maintained; but go thou in to him a third time and tell him that naught hindereth us from rising against him and taking the Kingship from him but his father's goodness to us and that which he required from us of oaths and engagements. However, to-morrow, we will all, to the last of us, assemble here with our arms and break down the gate of the citadel[153] ; and if he come forth to us and do that which we wish, no harm is yet done[154] ; else we will go in to him and slay him and put the Kingdom in the hand of other than he." So the Wazir Shimas went in to him and said, "O King, that grovellest in thy gusts and thy lusts, what is this thou dost with thyself? Would Heaven I wot who seduced thee thereto! An it be thou who sinnest against thyself, there hath ceased from thee that which we knew in thee aforetime of integrity and wisdom and eloquence. Could I but learn who hath thus changed thee and fumed thee from wisdom to folly and from fidelity to iniquity and from mildness to harshness and from acceptation of me to aversion from me! How cometh it that I admonish thee thrice and thou acceptest not mine admonition and that I counsel thee rightfully and still thou gainsayest my counsel? Tell me, what is this child's play and who is it prompteth thee thereunto? Know that the people of thy Kingdom have agreed together to come in to thee and slay thee and give thy Kingdom to another. Art able to cope with them all and save thyself from their hands or canst quicken thyself after being killed? If, indeed, thou be potent to do all this, thou art safe and hast no occasion for my rede; but an thou have any concern for thy life and thy kingship, return to thy sound sense and hold fast thy reign and show forth to the folk the power of thy prowess and persuade the people with thine excuse, for they are minded to tear away that which is in thy hand and commit it unto other, being resolved upon revolt and rebellion, led thereto by that which they know of thy youth and thy self-submission to love-liesse and lusts; for that stones, albeit they lie long under water, an thou withdraw them therefrom and smite one upon other, fire will be struck from them. Now thy lieges are many folk and they have taken counsel together against thee, with a design to transfer the Kingship from thee to another and accomplish upon thee whatso they desire of thy destruction. So shalt thou fare as did the Jackals with the Wolf." —— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Twenty-first Night,

She pursued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Wazir Shimas concluded with saying, "And they shall accomplish upon thee whatso they desire of thy destruction; so shalt thou fare as fared the Jackals with the Wolf." Asked the King, "How was that?" and the Wazir answered, "They tell the following tale of

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The Jackals and the Wolf.

A pack of Jackals[155] went out one day to seek food, and as they prowled about in quest of this, behold, they happened upon a dead camel and said in themselves, “Verily we have found wherewithal we may live a great while; but we fear lest one of us oppress the other and the strong bear down the weak with his strength and so the puny of us perish. Wherefore it behoveth us seek one who shall judge between us and appoint unto each his part, so the force-full may not lord it over the feeble.” As they consulted together on such subject, suddenly up came a Wolf, and one of the Jackals said to the others, “Right is your rede; let us make this Wolf judge between us, for he is the strongest of beasts and his father was Sultan over us aforetime; so we hope in Allah that he will do justice between us.” Accordingly they accosted the Wolf and acquainting him with what they had resolved concerning him said, “We make thee judge between us, so thou mayst allot unto each of us his day’s meat, after the measure of his need, lest the strong of us bear down the weak and some of us destroy other of us.” The Wolf accepted the governance of their affairs and allotted to each of them what sufficed him that day; but on the morrow he said in his mind, “An I divide this camel amongst these weaklings, no part thereof will come to me, save the pittance they will assign to me, and if I eat it alone, they can do me no harm, seeing that they are a prey to me and to the people of my house. Who, then, is the one to hinder me from taking it all for myself? Surely, ’tis Allah who hath bestowed it on me by way of provision without any obligation to any of them. It were best that I keep it for myself, and henceforth I will give them naught.” Accordingly, next morning when the Jackals came to him, as was their wont, and sought of him their food, saying, “O Abu Sirhбn,[156] give us our day’s provender,[157] “ he answered saying, “I have nothing left to give you.” Whereupon they went away in the sorriest plight, saying, “Verily, Allah hath cast us into grievous trouble with this foul traitor, who regardeth not Allah nor feareth Him; but we have neither stratagem nor strength on our side.” Moreover one of them said, “Haply ’twas but stress of hunger that moved him to this; so let him eat his fill to-day, and to-morrow we will go to him again.” Accordingly, on the morrow, they again betook themselves to the Wolf and said to him, “O Father of Foray, we gave thee authority over us, that thou mightest apportion unto each of us his day’s meat and do the weak justice against the strong of us, and that, when this provaunt is finished, thou shouldst do thine endeavour to get us other and so we be always under thy watch and ward. Now hunger is hard upon us, for that we have not eaten these two days; so do thou give us our day’s ration and thou shalt be free to dispose of all that remaineth as thou wilt.” But the Wolf returned them no answer and redoubled in his hardness of heart and when they strave to turn him from his purpose he would not be turned. Then said one of the Jackals to the rest, “Nothing will serve us but that we go to the Lion and cast ourselves on his protection and assign unto him the camel. If he vouchsafe us aught thereof, ‘twill be of his favour, and if not, he is worthier of it than this scurvy rascal.” So they betook themselves to the Lion and acquainted him with that which had betided them from the Wolf, saying, “We are thy slaves and come to thee imploring thy protection, so thou mayst deliver us from this Wolf, and we will be thy thralls.” When the Lion heard their story, he was jealous for Almighty Allah[158] and went with them in quest of the Wolf who, seeing him approach addressed himself to flight; but the Lion ran after him and seizing him, rent him in pieces and restored their prey to the Jackals. “This showeth,” added Shimas, “that it fitteth no King to neglect the affairs of his subjects; wherefore do thou hearken to my rede and give credit to the words which I say to thee.” Quoth the King, “I will hearken to thee and to-morrow, Inshallah, I will go forth to them.” Accordingly Shimas went from him and returning to the folk, told them that the King had accepted his advice and promised to come out unto them on the morrow. But, when the favourite heard this saying reported of Shimas and was certified that needs must the King go forth to his subjects, she betook herself to him in haste and said to him, “How great is my wonder at thy submissiveness and thine obedience to thy slaves! Knowest thou not that these Wazirs are thy thralls? Why then dost thou exalt them to this highmost pitch of importance that they imagine them it was they gave thee this kingship and advanced thee to this rank and that it is they who confer favours on thee, albeit they have no power to do thee the least damage? Indeed, ’tis not thou who owest submission to them; but on the contrary they owe it to thee, and it is their duty to carry out thine orders. How cometh it then, that thou art so mightily affrighted at them? It is said, ‘Unless thy heart be like iron, thou art not fit to be a Sovran.’ But thy mildness hath deluded these men, so that they presume upon thee and cast off their allegiance, although it behoveth that they be constrained unto thy obedience and enforced to thy submission. Therefore an thou hasten to accept their words and leave them as they now are and vouchsafe to them the least thing against thy will, they will weigh heavily upon thee and require other concessions of thee, and this will become their habit. But, an thou hearken to me, thou wilt not advance any one of them to power neither wilt thou accept his word nor encourage him to presume upon thee; else wilt thou fare with them as did the Shepherd with the Rogue.” Asked the King, “How was that?” and she answered, “They relate this adventure of

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The Shepherd and the Rogue.[159]

There was once a Shepherd, who fed a flock of sheep in the wold and kept over them strait watch. One night, there came to him a Rogue thinking to steal some of his charges and, finding him assiduous in guarding them, sleeping not by night nor neglecting them by day, prowled about him all the livelong night, but could plunder nothing from him. So, when he was weary of striving, he betook himself to another part of the waste and trapping a lion, skinned him and stuffed his hide with bruised straw[160] ; after which he set it up on a high place in the desert, where the Shepherd might see it and be assured thereof. Then he accosted the Shepherd and said to him, "Yonder lion hath sent me to demand his supper of these sheep." The Shepherd asked, "Where is the lion?" and the Rogue answered, "Lift thine eyes; there he standeth." So the Shepherd raised his eyes and seeing the semblance deemed it a very lion and was much affrighted; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Twenty-second Night,

She resumed: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Shepherd saw the semblance of the lion, he deemed it a very lion and was affrighted with the sorest fright, trembling for dread so he said to the thief, "O my brother take what thou wilt, I will not gainsay thee." Accordingly the Rogue took what he would of the sheep and redoubled in greed by reason of the excess of the Shepherd's fear. Accordingly, every little while, he would hie to him and terrify him, saying, "The lion hath need of this and requireth that, and his intent is to do thus and thus," and take his sufficiency of the sheep; and he stinted not to do thus with him, till he had wasted the most part of his flock. "This, O King," added the favourite, "I tell thee only that thou suffer not the Grandees of thy realm to be deluded by thy mildness and easiness of temper and presume on thee; and, in right rede, their death were better than that they deal thus with thee." Quoth the King, "I accept this thy counsel and will not hearken to their admonition neither will I go out unto them." On the morrow the Wazirs and Officers of State and heads of the people assembled; and, taking each with him his weapon, repaired to the palace of the King, so they might break in upon him and slay him and seat another in his stead. When they came to the door, they required the doorkeeper to open to them; but he refused, whereupon they sent to fetch fire, wherewith to burn down the doors and enter. The doorkeeper, hearing what they said went in to the King in haste and told him that the folk were gathered together at the gate, adding, "They required me to open to them, but I refused; and they have sent to fetch fire to burn down the doors withal, so they may come into thee and slay thee. What dost thou bid me do?" Quoth the King in himself, "Verily, I am fallen into uttermost perdition." Then he sent for the favourite; and, as soon as she came, said to her, "Indeed, Shimas never told me aught but I found it true, and now great and small are come purposing to slay me and thee; and because the doorkeeper would not open to them, they have sent to fetch fire, to burn the doors withal; so will the house be burnt and we therein. What dost thou counsel me to do?" She replied, "No harm shall betide thee, nor let thine affair affright thee. This is a time when the simple rise against their Kings." Quoth he, "What dost thou counsel me to do and how shall I act in this affair?" Quoth she, "My rede is that thou fillet thy head and feign thyself sick; then send for the Wazir Shimas, who will come and see the plight wherein thou art; and do thou say to him, 'Verily I purposed to go forth to the folk this day; but this malady hindered me. So go thou out to them and acquaint them with my condition and tell them that to- morrow I will fare forth without fail to them and do their need and look into their affairs, so they may be reassured and their rage may subside.' Then do thou summon ten of thy father's slaves, stalwart men of strength and prowess, to whom thou canst entrust thyself, hearing to thy hest and complying with thy commandment, surely keeping thy secret and lief to thy love; and charge them on the morrow to stand at thy head and bid them suffer none of the folk to enter, save one by one; and all who enter do thou say, 'Seize them and do them die.' An they agree with thee upon this, to-morrow set up thy throne in the Divan[161] and open thy doors. When the folk see that thou hast opened to them their minds will be set at ease and they will come to thee with a whole heart, and seek admission to thee. Then do thou admit them, one after one, even as I said to thee and work with them thy will; but it behoveth thee begin by slaying Shimas, their chief and leader; for he is the Grand Wazir and head of the matter. Therefore do him die first and after put all the rest to death, one after other, and spare none whom thou knowest to have broken with thee his covenant; and in like way slaughter all whose violence thou fearest. An thou deal thus with them, there will be left them no power to make head against thee; so shalt thou be at rest from them with full repose, and shalt enjoy thy kingship in peace and do whatso thou wilt; and know that there is no device that will profit thee more than this." Quoth the King, "Verily, this thy counsel is just and that which thou biddest me is to the point and I will assuredly do as thou directest." So he called for a fillet and bound his head therewith and shammed sickness. Then he sent for the Grand Wazir and said to him, "O Shimas, thou knowest that I love thee and hearken to the counsel of thee and thou art to me as brother and father both in one; also thou knowest that I do all thou biddest me and indeed thou badest me go forth to the lieges and sit to judge between them. Now I was assured that this was right rede on thy part, and purposed to go forth to them yesterday; but this sickness assailed me and I cannot sit up. It hath reached me that the folk are incensed at my failure to come forth to them and are minded of their mischief to do with me that which is unmeet for that they know not what ailment aileth me. So go thou forth to them and acquaint them with my case and the condition I am in; and excuse me to them, for I am obedient to their bidding and will do as they desire; wherefore order this affair and engage thyself for me herefor, even as thou hast been a loyal counsellor to me and to my sire before me, and it is of thy wont to make peace between the people. To-morrow, Inshallah, I will without fail come forth to them, and peradventure my sickness will cease from me this night, by the blessing of the purest intent and the good I purpose them in my heart." So Shimas prostrated himself to Allah and called down blessings on the King and kissed his hand, rejoicing at this. Then he went forth to the folk and told them what he had heard from the King and forbade them from that which they had a mind to do, acquainting them with what excused the King for his absence and informing them that he had promised to come forth to them on the morrow and deal with them according to their desires;

whereupon they dispersed and hied them to their houses. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Twenty-third Night,

She said: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Shimas went from the presence to the ringleaders of the commons and said to them, "To-morrow the Sovran will come forth to you and will deal with you as ye desire." So they hied them to their homes. On such wise fared it with them; but as regards the Monarch, he summoned ten slaves of gigantic stature,[162] men of hard heart and prow of prowess, whom he had chosen from amongst his father's body-guards; and said to them, "Ye know the favour, esteem and high rank ye held with my sire and all the bounties, benefits and honours he bestowed on you, and I will advance you to yet higher dignity with me than this. Now I will tell you the reason thereof and ye are under safeguard of Allah from me. But first I will ask you somewhat, wherein if ye do my desire, obeying me in that which I shall bid you and conceal my secret from all men, ye shall have of me largesse and favour surpassing expectation. But above all things obedience!" The ten thralls answered him with one mouth and in sequent words, saying, "Whatso thou biddest us, O our liege, that we will do, nor will we depart in aught from thy commandment, for thou art our lord and master." Quoth the King, "Allah allot you weal! Now will I tell you the reason why I have chosen you out for increase of honour with me. Ye know how liberally my father dealt with the folk of his realm and the oath he took from them on behalf of me and how they promised him that they would break faith with me nor gainsay the bidding of me; and ye saw how they did yesterday, whenas they gathered all together about me and would have slain me. Now I am minded to do with them somewhat; and 'tis this, for that I have considered their action of yesterday and see that naught will restrain them from its like save exemplary chastisement; wherefore I perforce charge you privily to do to death whom I shall point out to you, to the intent that I may ward off mischief and calamity from my realm by slaying their leaders and Chiefs; and the manner thereof shall be on this wise. To-morrow I will sit on this seat in this chamber and give them admission to me one by one, coming in at one door and going out at another; and do ye, all ten, stand before me and be attentive to my signs: and whoso entereth singly, take him and drag him into yonder chamber and kill him and hide his corpse." The slaves answered, "We hearken to thy hest and obey thy order." Whereupon he gave them gifts and dismissed them for the night. On the morrow he summoned the thralls and bade set up the royal seat; then he donned his kingly robes and taking the Book of law-cases[163] in his hands, posted the ten slaves before him and commanded to open the doors. So they opened the doors and the herald proclaimed aloud, saying, "Whoso hath authority, let him come to the King's carpet[164] !" Whereupon up came the Wazirs and Prefects and Chamberlains and stood, each in his rank. Then the King bade admit them, one after one, and the first to enter was Shimas, according to the custom of the Grand Wazir; but no sooner had he presented himself before the King, and ere he could beware, the ten slaves gat about him, and dragging him into the adjoining chamber, despatched him. On like wise did they with the rest of the Wazirs and Olema and Notables, slaying them, one after other, till they made a clean finish.[165] Then the King called the headsmen and bade them ply sword upon all who remained of the folk of valour and stowre: so they fell on them and left none whom they knew for a man of mettle but they slew him, sparing only the proletaires and the refuse of the people. These they drove away and they returned each to his folk, whilst the King secluded himself with his pleasures and surrendered his soul to its lusts, working tyranny, oppression and violence, till he outraced all the men of evil who had forerun him.[166] Now this King's dominion was a mine of gold and silver and jacinths and jewels and the neighbouring rulers, one and all, envied him this empire and looked for calamity to betide him. Moreover, one of them, the King of Outer Hind, said in himself, "I have gotten my desire of wresting the realm from the hand of yonder silly lad, by reason of that which hath betided of his slaughter of the Chiefs of his State and of all men of valour and mettle that were in his country. This is my occasion to snatch away that which is in his hand, seeing he is young in years and hath no knowledge of war nor judgment thereto, nor is there any left to counsel him aright or succour him. Wherefore this very day will I open on him the door of mischief by writing him a writ wherein I will flyte him and reproach him with that which he hath done and see what he will reply." So he indited him a letter to the following effect, "In the name of Allah the Compassionating, the Compassionate * And after * I have heard tell of that which thou hast done with thy Wazirs and Olema and men of valiancy * and that whereinto thou hast cast thyself of calamity * so that there is neither power nor strength left in thee to repel whoso shall assail thee, more by token that thou transgressest and orderest thyself tyrannously and profligately * Now Allah hath assuredly given me the conquering of thee and the mastery over thee and into my hand hath delivered thee; wherefore do thou give ear to my word and obey the commandment of me and build me an impregnable castle amiddlemost the sea * An thou can not do this, depart thy realm and with thy life go flee * for I will send unto thee, from the farthest ends of Hind, twelve hordes[167] of horse, each twelve thousand fighting-men strong, who shall enter thy land and spoil thy goods and slay thy men and carry thy women into captivity * Moreover, I will make my Wazir, Badi'a captain over them and bid him lay strait siege to thy capital till the master he be; * and I have bidden the bearer of this letter that he tarry with thee but days three * So, an thou do my demand, thou shalt be saved; else will I send that which I have said unto thee." Then he sealed the scroll and gave it to a messenger, who journeyed with it till he came to the capital of Wird Khan and delivered it to him. When the King read it, his strength failed him, his breast waxed strait and he made sure of destruction, having none to whom he might resort for aid or advice. Presently he rose and went in to his favourite wife who, seeing him changed of colour, said to him, "What mattereth thee, O King?" Quoth he, "This day I am no King but slave to the King." And he opened the letter and read it to her, whereupon she fell to weeping and wailing and rending her raiment. Then he asked her, "Hast thou aught of rede or resource in this grievous strait?"; but she answered, "Women have no resource in time of war, nor have women any strength or aught of counsel. 'Tis men alone who in like of this affair have force and discourse and resource." When the King heard her words, there befel him the utmost regret and repentance and remorse for that he had transgressed against his Wazirs and Officers and Lords of his land, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Twenty-fourth Night,

She continued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when King Wird Khan heard the words of his favourite wife there befel him the utmost regret and repentance for having transgressed against and slain his Wazirs and the chiefs of his state, and he would that he had died ere there came to him the like of these shameful tidings. Then he said to his women, “Verily, there hath betided me from you that which befel the Francolin and the Tortoises.” Asked they, “What was that?”; and he answered, “Men tell this tale of

The Francolin and the Tortoises.”

It is said that sundry Tortoises dwelt once in a certain island abounding in trees and fruiterers and rills, and it fortuned, one day, that a Francolin, passing over the island, was overcome with the fiery heat and fatigue and being in grievous suffering stayed his flight therein. Presently, looking about for a cool place, he espied the resort of the Tortoises and alighted down near their home. Now they were then abroad foraging for food, and when they returned from their feeding places to their dwelling, they found the Francolin there. His beauty pleased them and Allah made him lovely in their eyes, so that they exclaimed “Subh6na ‘ll6h,” extolling their Creator and loved the Francolin with exceeding love and rejoiced in him, saying one to other, “Forsure this is of the goodliest of the birds;” and all began to caress him and entreat him with kindness. When he saw that they looked on him with eyes of affection, he inclined to them and companioned with them and took up his abode with them, flying away in the morning whither he would and returning at eventide to pass the night by side of them. On this wise he continued a long while until the Tortoises, seeing that his daily absence from them desolated them and finding that they never saw him save by night (for at dawn he still took flight in haste and they knew not what came of him, for all that their love grew to him), said each to other, “Indeed, we love this Francolin and he is become our true friend and we cannot bear parting from him, so how shall we devise some device tending to make him abide with us always? For he flieth away at dawn and is absent from us all day and we see him not save by night.” Quoth one of them, “Be easy, O my sisters; I will bring him not to leave us for the turn of an eye?" and quoth the rest, saying, "An thou do this, we will all be thy thralls." So, when the Francolin came back from his feeding-place and sat down amongst them, that wily Tortoise drew near unto him and called down blessings on him, giving him joy of his safe return and saying, "O my lord, know that Allah hath vouch-safed thee our love and hath in like manner set in thy heart the love of us, whereby thou art become to us a familiar friend and a comrade in this desert. Now the goodliest of times for those who love one another is when they are united and the sorest of calamities for them are absence and severance. But thou departest from us at peep of day and returnest not to us till sundown, wherefore there betideth us extreme desolation. Indeed this is exceeding grievous to us and we abide in sore longing for such reason." The Francolin replied, "Indeed, I love you also and yearn for you yet more than you can yearn for me, nor is it easy for me to leave you; but my hand hath no help for this, seeing that I am a fowl with wings and may not wone with you always, because that is not of my nature. For a bird, being a winged creature, may not remain still, save it be for the sake of sleep o' nights; but, as soon as it is day, he flieth away and seeketh his morning-meal in what place soever pleaseth him." Answered the Tortoise, "Sooth thou speakest! Nevertheless he who hath wings hath no repose at most seasons, for that the good he getteth is not a fourth part of what ill betideth him, and the highmost aims of the creature are repose and ease of life. Now Allah hath bred between us and thee love and fellowship and we fear for thee, lest some of thine enemies catch thee and thou perish and we be denied the sight of thy countenance." Rejoined the Francolin, "True! But what rede hast thou or resource for my case?" Quoth the Tortoise, "My advice is that thou pluck out thy wing-feathers, wherewith thou speedest thy flight, and tarry with us in tranquillity, eating of our meat and drinking of our drink in this pasturage, that aboundeth in trees rife with fruits yellow-ripe and we will sojourn, we and thou, in this fruitful stead and enjoy the company of one another." The Francolin inclined to her speech, seeking ease for himself, and plucked out his wing-feathers, one by one, in accordance with the rede approved of by the Tortoise; then he took up his abode with them and contented himself with the little ease and transient pleasure he enjoyed. Presently up came a Weasel[168] and glancing at the Francolin, saw that his wings were plucked, so that he could not fly, whereat he rejoiced with joy exceeding and said to himself, "Verily yonder Francolin is fat of flesh and scant of feather." So he went up to him and seized him, whereupon the Francolin called out to the Tortoises for help; but when they saw the Weasel hend him, they drew apart from him and huddled together, choked with weeping for him, for they witnessed how the beast tortured him. Quoth the Francolin, "Is there aught with you but weeping?"; and quoth they, "O our brother, we have neither force nor resource nor any course against a Weasel." At this the Francolin was grieved and cutting off all his hopes of life said to them, "The fault is not yours, but mine own fault, in that I hearkened to you and plucked out my wing-feathers wherewith I used to fly. Indeed I deserve destruction for having obeyed you, and I blame you not in aught." "On like wise," continued the King, "I do not blame you, O women; but I blame and reproach myself for that I remembered not that ye were the cause of the transgression of our father Adam, by reason whereof he was cast out from the Garden of Eden, and for that I forgot ye are the root of all evil and hearkened to you, in mine ignorance, lack of sense and weakness of judgment, and slew my Wazirs and the Governors of my State, who were my loyal advisers in all mine actions and my glory and my strength against whatsoever troubled me. But at this time find I not one to replace them nor see I any who shall stand me in their stead; and I fall into utter perdition." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Twenty-fifth Night,

She pursued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King blamed himself saying, "'Twas I that hearkened to you in mine ignorance and slew my Wazirs so that now I find none to stand in their stead, and unless Allah succour me with one of sound judgment, who shall guide me to that wherein is my deliverance, I am fallen into utter perdition." Then he arose and withdrew into his bedchamber, bemoaning his Wazirs and wise men and saying, "Would Heaven those lions were with me at this time, though but for an hour; so I might excuse myself unto them and look on them and bemoan to them my case and the travail that hath betided me after them!" And he abode all his day sunken in the sea of cark and care neither eating nor drinking. But as soon as the night fell dark, he arose and changing his raiment, donned old clothes and disguised himself and went forth at a venture to walk about the city, so haply he might hear from any some word of comfort. As he wandered about the main streets, behold, he chanced upon two boys who had sought a retired seat by a wall and he observed that they were equal in age, or about twelve years old. As they talked together he drew near them whereas he might hear and apprehend what they said, unseen of them, and heard one say to the other, "Listen, O my brother, to what my sire told me yesternight of the calamity which hath betided him in the withering of his crops before their time, by reason of the rarity of rain and the sore sorrow that is fallen on this city." Quoth the other, "Wottest thou not the cause of this affliction?"; and quoth the first, "No! and, if thou ken it, pray tell it me." Rejoined the other, "Yes, I wot it and will tell it thee. Know that I have heard from one of my father's friends that our King slew his Wazirs and Grandees, not for aught of offence done of them, but only by reason of his love for women and inclination to them; for that his Ministers forbade him from this, but he would not be forbidden and commanded to do them die in obedience to his wives. Thus he slew Shimas my sire, who was his Wazir and the Wazir of his father before him and the chief of his council; but right soon thou shalt see how Allah will do with him by reason of his sins against them and how He shall avenge them of him." The other boy asked, "What can Allah do now that they are dead?"; and his fellow answered, "Know that the King of Outer Hind[169] maketh light of our monarch, and hath sent him a letter berating him and saying to him, 'Build me a castle amiddlemost the sea, or I will send unto thee Badi'a my Wazir, with twelve hordes of horse, each twelve thousand strong, to seize upon thy kingdom and slay thy men and carry thee and thy women into captivity.' And he hath given him three days' time to answer after the receipt of that missive. Now thou must know, O my brother, that this King of Outer Hind is a masterful tyrant, a man of might and prowess in fight, and in his realm are much people; so unless our King make shift to fend him off from himself, he will fall into perdition, whilst the King of Hind, after slaying our Sovran, will seize on our possessions and massacre our men and make prize of our women." When the King heard this their talk, his agitation increased and he inclined to the boys, saying, "Surely, this boy is a wizard, in that he is acquainted with this thing without learning it from me; for the letter is in my keeping and the secret also and none hath knowledge of such matter but myself. How then knoweth this boy of it? I will resort to him and talk with him and I pray Allah that our deliverance may be at his hand." Hereupon the King approached the boy softly and said to him, "O thou dear boy, what is this thou sayest of our King, that he did ill of the evilest in slaying his Wazirs and the Chiefs of his State? Indeed he sinned against himself and his subjects and thou art right in that which thou sayest. But tell me, O my son, whence knowest thou that the King of Outer Hind hath written him a letter, berating him and bespeaking him with the grievous speech whereof thou tellest?" The boy replied, "O brother, I know this from the sand[170] wherewith I take compt of night and day and from the saying of the ancients, 'No mystery from Allah is hidden; for the sons of Adam have in them a spiritual virtue which discovereth to them the darkest secrets.'" Answered Wird Khan, "True, O my son, but whence learnedest thou geomancy and thou young of years?" Quoth the boy, "My father taught it me;" and quoth the King, "Is thy father alive or dead?" "He is dead," replied the boy. Then Wird Khan asked, "Is there any resource or device for our King, whereby to ward off from himself and his kingdom this sore calamity?" And the boy answered, saying, "It befitteth not that I speak with thee of this; but, an the King send for me and ask me how he shall do to baffle his foe and get free of his snares, I will acquaint him with that wherein, by the power of Allah Almighty, shall be his salvation." Rejoined Wird Khan, "But who shall tell the King of this that he may send for thee and invite thee to him?" The boy retorted, "I hear that he seeketh men of experience and good counsel, so I will go up with them to him and tell him that wherein shall be his welfare and the warding off of this affliction from him; but, an he neglect the pressing matter and busy himself with his love-liesse among his women and I go to him of my own accord designing to acquaint him with the means of deliverance, he will assuredly give orders to slay me, even as he slew those his Wazirs, and my courtesy to him will be the cause of my destruction. Wherefore the folk will think slightly of me and belittle my wit and I shall be of those of whom it is said, 'He whose science excelleth his sense perisheth by his ignorance.'" When the King heard the boy's words, he was assured of his sagacity, and the excellence of his merit was manifest and he was certified that deliverance would betide him and his subjects at the boy's hands. So presently he resumed the colloquy and asked him, "Whence art thou and where is thy home?"; and the boy answered, "This is the wall of our house." The King took note of the place and farewelling the boy, returned to his palace in high spirits. there he changed his clothes and called for meat and wine, forbidding his women from him; and he ate and drank and returned thanks to Allah the Most High and besought Him of succour and deliverance, and he craved His pardon and forgiveness for that which he had done with his Wazirs and Olema and turned to Him with sincere repentance, imposing on himself many a prayer and long fasting, by way of discipline-vow. On the morrow, he called one of his confidential eunuchs and, describing to him the boy's home, bade him repair thither and bring him to his presence with all gentleness. Accordingly the slave sought out the boy and said to him, "The King summoneth thee, that good may betide thee from him and that he may ask thee a question; then shalt thou return safe and sound to thy dwelling." Asked the boy, "What is the King's need of me that he biddeth me to him on this wise?", and the eunuch answered, "My lord's occasion with thee is question and answer." "A thousand times hearkening and a thousand times obeying the commandment of the King!" replied the boy and accompanied the slave to the palace. When he came into the presence, he prostrated himself before Allah and after salaming, called down blessings on the King who returned his salutation and bade him be seated. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Twenty-sixth Night,

She resumed: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the boy appeared before the King and saluted him with the salam, Wird Khan returned his salutation and bade him be seated. So he sat down and the King asked him, "Knowest thou who talked with thee yesternight?” Answered the boy, “Yes,” and the King said, “And where is he?” “’Tis he who speaketh with me at this present,” said the boy. Rejoined the King, “Thou sayst sooth, O friend,” and bade set him a chair beside his own, whereon he made him sit and called for meat and drink. Then they talked awhile and the King said, “Ho, thou the Wazir,[171] in our talk yesternight thou toldest me that thou hadst a device whereby thou couldst defend us from the malice of the King of Hind. What is this contrivance and how shall we manœuvre to ward off his mischief from us? Tell me, that I may make thee chief of those who speak with me in the realm and choose thee to be my Grand Wazir and do according to thy judgment in all thou counsellest me and assign thee a splendid honorarium.” Answered the boy, “O King, keep thy honorarium to thyself and seek counsel and policy of thy women, who directed thee to slay my father Shimas and the rest of the Wazirs.” When the King heard this, he was ashamed and sighed and said, “O thou dear boy, was Shimas indeed thy sire?” The boy replied, “Shimas was indeed my sire, and I am in truth his son.” Whereupon the King bowed his head, whilst the tears ran from his eyes, and he craved pardon of Allah. Then said he, “O boy, indeed I did this of my ignorance and by the evil counsel of the women, for ‘Great indeed is their malice’[172] ; but I beseech thee to forgive me and I will set thee in thy father’s stead and make thy rank higher than his rank. Moreover, an thou do away from us this retribution sent down from Heaven, I will deck thy neck with a collar of gold and mount thee on the goodliest of steeds and bid the crier make proclamation before thee, saying, ‘This is the lief[173] boy, the Wazir who sitteth in the second seat after the King!’ And touching what thou sayest of the women, I have it in mind to do vengeance on them at such time as Almighty Allah shall will it. But tell me now what thou hast with thee of counsel and contrivance, that my heart may be content.” Quoth the boy, “Swear to me an oath that thou wilt not gainsay me in whatso I shall say to thee and that I from that which I fear shall be safe,” and quoth the King, “This is the covenant of Allah between me and thee, that I will not go from thy word and that thou shalt be my chief counsellor and whatsoever thou biddest me, that will I do; and the Almighty Lord is witness betwixt us twain whatso I say.” Therewith the boy’s breast waxed broad and the field of speech was opened to him wide and he said, “O King, my rede to thee is that thou await the expiration of the delay appointed to thee for answering the courier of the King of Hind, and when he cometh before thee seeking the reply, do thou put him off to another day. With this he will excuse himself to thee, on the ground of his master having appointed him certain fixed days, and importune for an answer; but do thou rebut him and defer him to another day, without specifying what day it be. Then will he go forth from thee an-angered and betake himself into the midst of the city and speak openly among the folk, saying, ‘O people of the city, I am a courier of the King of Outer Hind, who is a monarch of great puissance and of determination such as softeneth iron. He sent me with a letter to the King of this city appointing to me certain days, saying, ‘An thou be not with me by the time appointed, my vengeance shall fall on thee.’ Now, behold, I went in to the King of this city and gave him the missive, which when he had read, he sought of me a delay of three days, after which he would return me an answer to the letter and I agreed to this of courtesy and consideration for him. When the three days were past, I went to seek the reply of him, but he delayed me to another day; and now I have no patience to wait longer; so I am about to return to my lord, the King of Outer Hind, and acquaint him with that which hath befallen me; and ye, O folk, are witnesses between me and him.’ All this will be reported to thee and do thou send for him and speak him gently and say to him, ‘O thou who seekest thine own ruin, what hath moved thee to blame us among our subjects? Verily, thou deservest present death at our hands; but the ancients say, ‘Clemency is of the attributes of nobility.’ Know that our delay in answering arose not from helplessness on our part, but from our much business and lack of leisure to look into thine affair and write a reply to thy King.’ Then call for the scroll and read it again and laugh loud and long and say to the courier, ‘Hast thou a letter other than this? If so, we will write thee an answer to that also.’ He will say, ‘I have none other than this letter’; but do thou repeat thy question to him a second time and a third time, and he will reply, ‘I have none other at all.’ Then say to him, ‘Verily, this thy King is utterly witless in that he writeth us the like of this writ seeking to arouse our wrath against him, so that we shall go forth to him with our forces and domineer over his dominions and capture his kingdom. But we will not punish him this time for his unmannerly manners as shown in this letter, because he is wanting in wit and feeble of foresight, and it beseemeth our dignity that we first warn him not to repeat the like of these childish extravagances; and if he risk his life by returning to the like of this, he will deserve speedy destruction. Indeed, methinks this King of thine who sent thee on such errand must be an ignorant fool, taking no thought to the issue of things and having no Wazir of sense and good counsel, with whom he may advise. Were he a man of mind, he had taken counsel with a Wazir, ere sending us the like of this laughable letter. But he shall have a reply similar to his script and surpassing it, for I will give it to one of the boys of the school to answer.' Then send for me and, when I come to the presence, bid me read the letter and reply thereto." When the King heard the boy's speech, his breast broadened and he approved his proposal and his device delighted him. So he conferred gifts upon him and installing him in his father's office, sent him away rejoicing. And as soon as expired the three days of delay which he had appointed, the courier presented himself and going in to the King, demanded the answer; but he put him off to another day; whereupon he went to the end of the carpet-room[174] and spake with unseemly speech, even as the boy had foresaid. Then he betook himself to the bazar and cried, "Ho, people of this city, I am a courier of the King of Outer Hind and came with a message to your monarch who still putteth me off from a reply. Now the term is past which my master limited to me and your King hath no excuse, and ye are witnesses unto this." When these words reached the King, he sent for that courier and said to him, "O thou that seeketh thine own ruin, art thou not the bearer of a letter from King to King, between whom are secrets, and how cometh it that thou goest forth among the folk and publishest Kings' secrets to the vulgar? Verily, thou meritest retribution from us, but this we will forbare, for the sake of returning an answer by thee to this fool of a King of thine: and it befitteth not that any return to him reply but the least of the boys of the school." Then he sent for the Wazir's son, who came and prostrating himself before Allah, offered up prayers for the King's lasting glory and long life; whereupon Wird Khan threw him the letter, saying, "Read that letter and write me an acknowledgment thereof in haste." The boy took the letter and read it, smiled; then he laughed; then he laughed aloud and asked the King, "Didst thou send for me to answer this letter?" "Yes," answered Wird Khan, and the boy said, "O King, methought thou hadst sent for me on some grave occasion; indeed, a lesser than I had answered this letter but 'tis thine to command, O puissant potentate." Quoth the King, "Write the reply forthright, on account of the courier, for that he is appointed a term and we have delayed him another day." Quoth the boy, "With the readiest hearkening and obedience," and pulling out paper and inkcase[175] wrote as follows: — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Twenty-seventh Night,

She said: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the boy took the letter and read it, he forthright pulled out inkcase and paper and wrote as follows:— "In the name of Allah the Compassionating, the Compassionate! Peace be upon him who hath gotten pardon and deliverance and the mercy of the Merciful! But after, O thou who pretendest thyself a mighty King and art but a King in word and not in deed, we give thee to know that thy letter hath reached us and we have read it and have taken note of that which is therein of absurdities and peregrine extravagances, whereby we are certified of thine ignorance and ill-will to us. Verily, thou hast put out thy hand to that whereunto thou canst never reach; and, but that we have compassion on Allah's creatures and the lieges, we had not held back from thee. As for thy messenger, he went forth to the market-streets and published the news of thy letter to great and small, whereby he merited retaliation from us; but we spared him and remitted his offence, of pity for him, seeing that he is excusable with thee and not for aught of respect to thyself. As for that whereof thou makest mention in thy letter of the slaying of my Wazirs and Olema and Grandees, this is the truth and this I did for a reason that arose with me, and I slew not one man of learning but there are with me a thousand of his kind, wiser than he and cleverer and wittier; nor is there with me a child but is filled with knowledge, and I have, in the stead of each of the slain, of those who surpass in his kind, what is beyond count. Each man of my troops also can cope with an horde of thine, whilst, as for monies I have a manufactory that maketh every day a thousand pounds of silver, besides gold, and precious stones are with me as pebbles; and as for the people of my possessions I cannot set forth to thee their goodliness and abundance of means. How darest thou, therefore, presume upon us and say to us, ‘Build me a castle amiddlemost the main’? Verily, this is a marvellous thing, and doubtless it ariseth from the slightness of thy wit; for hadst thou aught of sense, thou hadst enquired of the beatings of the billows and the waftings of the winds. But wall it off from the waves and the surges of the sea and still the winds, and we will build thee the castle. Now as for thy pretension that thou wilt vanquish me, Allah forfend that such thing should befal and the like of thee should lord it over us and conquer our realm! Nay, the Almighty hath given me the victory over thee, for that thou hast transgressed against me and rebelled without due cause. Know, therefore, that thou hast merited retribution from the Lord and from me; but I fear Allah in respect of thee and thy subjects[176] and will not take horse against thee except after warning. Wherefore, an thou also fear Allah, hasten to send me this year’s tribute; else will I not turn from my design to ride forth against thee with a thousand thousand[177] and an hundred thousand fighting men, all furious giants on elephants, and I will range them round about my Wazir and bid him besiege thee three years, in lieu of the three days’ delay thou appointedst to thy messenger, and I will make myself master of thy dominion, except that I will slay none save thyself alone and take captive therefrom none but thy Harim.” Then the boy drew his own portrait in the margin of the letter and wrote thereunder the words: “This answer was written by the least of the boys of the school.” After this he sealed it and handed it to the King, who gave it to the courier, and the man, after taking it and kissing the King’s hands went forth from him thanking Allah and the Sovran for his royal clemency to him and marvelling at the boy’s intelligence. He arrived at the court of the King, his master, on the third day after the expiration of the term appointed to him, and found that he had called a meeting of his council, by reason of the failure of the courier to return at the time appointed. So he went in to the King and prostrating himself before him, gave him the letter. The King took it and questioned him of the cause of his tarrying and how it was with King Wird Khan. So he told him all he had seen with his own eyes and heard with his own ears; whereat the King's wit was confounded and he said, "Out on thee! What tale is this thou tellest me of the like of this King?" Answered the courier, "O mighty monarch, here am I in thy presence,[178] but open the letter and read it, and the truth of my speech will be manifest to thee." So the King opened the letter and read it and seeing the semblance of the boy who had written it, made sure of the loss of his kingdom and was perplexed anent the end of his affair. Then, turning to his Wazirs and Grandees, he acquainted them with what had occurred and read to them the letter, whereat they were affrighted with the sorest affright and sought to soothe the King's terror with words that were only from the tongue, whilst their hearts were torn piecemeal with palpitations of alarm. But Badi'a (the Chief Wazir) presently said, "Know, O King, that there is no profit in that which my brother Wazirs have proffered, and it is my rede that thou write this King a writ and excuse thyself to him therein, saying, 'I love thee and loved thy father before thee and sent thee not this letter by the courier except only to prove thee and try thy constancy and see what was in thee of valiancy and thy proficiency in matters of practick and theorick and skill in enigmas and that wherewith thou art endowed of all perfections, So we pray Almighty Allah to bless thee in thy kingdom and strengthen the defences of thy capital and add to thy dominion, since thou art mindful of thyself and managest to accomplish every need of thy subjects'. And send it to him by another courier." Exclaimed the King, "By Allah of All-might! 'tis a marvel of marvels that this man should be a mighty King and ready for war, after his slaughter of all the wise men of his kingdom and his counsellors and the captains of his host and that his realm should be populous and prosper after this and there should issue therefrom this prodigious power! But the marvelousest of all is that the little ones of its schools should return the like of this answer for its King. Verily, of the vileness of my greed I have kindled this fire upon myself and lieges, and I know not how I shall quench it, save by taking the advice of this my Wazir." Accordingly he gat ready a costly present, with eunuchs and slaves manifold, and wrote the following reply, "In the name of Allah the Compassionating, the

Compassionate! To proceed: O Glorious King Wird Khan, son of my dear brother, Jali'ad, may the Lord have mercy on thee and continue thee! Thine answer to our letter hath reached us and we have read it and apprehended its contents and see therein that which gladdeneth us and this is the utmost of that which we sought of Allah for thee; so we beseech Him to exalt thy dignity and stablish the pillars of thy state and give thee the victory over thy foes and those who purpose thee frowardness. Know, O King, that thy father was my brother and that there were between us in his lifetime pacts and covenants, and never saw he from me aught save weal, nor ever saw I from him other than good; and when he deceased and thou tookest seat upon the throne of his kingship, there betided us the utmost joy and gladness; but, when the news reached us of that which thou didst with thy Wazirs and the Notables of thy State, we feared lest the report of thee should come to the ears of some King other than ourselves and he should presume against thee, for that we deemed thee negligent of thine affairs and of the maintenance of thy defences and neglectful of the interests of thy kingdom; so we let write unto thee what should arouse thy spirit. But, when we saw that thou returnedest us the like of this reply, our heart was set at ease for thee, may Allah give thee enjoyment[179] of thy kingdom and stablish thee in thy dignity! And so peace be with thee." Then he despatched the letter and the presents to Wird Khan with an escort of an hundred horse, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Twenty-eighth Night,

She continued: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the monarch of Outer Hind, after making ready his presents, despatched them to King Wird Khan with an escort of an hundred horse, who fared on till they came to his court and saluting him, presented letter and gifts. The King read the writ and lodged the leader of the escort in a befitting place, entreating him with honour and accepting the presents he presented. So the news of this was bruited abroad among the folk and the King rejoiced therein with joy exceeding. Then he sent for the boy, the son of Shimas, and the Captain of the hundred horse; and, entreating the young Wazir with honour, gave him the letter to read; whilst he himself blamed the King's conduct to the

Captain who kissed his hands and made his excuses to him, offering up prayers for the continuance of his life and the permanence of his prosperity. The King thanked him for this and bestowed upon him honours and largesse and gave to all his men what befitted them and made ready presents to send by them and bade the boy Wazir indite an answer to their King's letter. So the boy wrote a reply, wherein, after an address[180] beautiful exceedingly, he touched briefly on the question of reconciliation and praised the good breeding of the envoy and of his mounted men, and showed it, when duly finished, to the King who said to him, "Read it, O thou dear boy, that we may know what is written[181] therein." So the boy read the letter in the presence of the hundred horse, and the King and all present marvelled at its ordinance of style and sense. Then the King sealed the letter and delivering it to the Captain of the hundred horse, dismissed him with some of his own troops, to escort him as far as the frontier of his country. The Captain returned, confounded in mind at that which he had seen of the boy's knowledge and thanking Allah for the speedy accomplishment of his errand and the acceptance of peace, to the King of Outer Hind. Then going in to the presence, he delivered the presents and handed to him the letter, telling him what he had seen and heard, whereat the King rejoiced with joy exceeding and rendered lauds to his Lord the Most High and honoured the Captain commending his care and zeal and advancing him in rank. And from that hour he woned in peace and tranquillity and all happiness. As for King Wird Khan, he returned to the paths of righteousness, abandoning his evil ways and repenting to Allah with sincere penitence; and he gave up womanising altogether and applied himself wholly to the ordering of the affairs of his realm and the governance of his people in the fear of Allah. Furthermore, he made the son of Shimas Wazir in his father's stead, and the chief after himself in his realm and keeper of his secrets and bade decorate his capital for seven days and likewise the other cities of his kingdom. At this the subjects rejoiced and fear and alarm ceased from them and they were glad in the prospect of justice and equity and instant in prayer for the King and for the Minister who from him and them had done away this trouble. Then said the King to the Wazir, "What is thy rede for the assuring of the state and the prospering of the people and the return of the realm to its aforetime state as regards Captains and Councillors?" Answered the boy, "O King of high estate, in my judgment it behoveth before all, that thou begin by rending out from thy heart the root of wickedness and leave thy debauchery and tyranny and addiction to women; for, an thou return to the root of transgression, the second backsliding will be worse than the first." The King asked, "And what is the root of sinfulness that it behoveth me to root out from my heart?"; and was answered by the Wazir, little of years but great of wit, "O King the root of wickedness is subjection to the desire of women and inclining to them and following their counsel and contrivance; for the love of them changeth the soundest wit and corrupteth the most upright nature, and manifest proofs bear witness to my saying, wherein an thou meditate them and follow their actions and consequences with eyes intent, thou wilt find a loyal counsellor against thy own soul and wilt stand in no need whatever of my rede. Look, then, thou occupy not thy heart with the thought of womankind and do away the trace of them from thy mind, for that Allah the Most High hath forbidden excessive use of them by the mouth of His prophet Moses, so that quoth a certain wise King to his son, 'O my son, when thou succeedest to the kingdom after me, frequent not women overmuch, lest thy heart be led astray and thy judgment be corrupted; for that overmuch commerce with them leadeth to love of them, and love of them to corruption of judgment'. And the proof of this is what befel our Lord Solomon, son of David, (peace be upon the twain of them!) whom Allah specially endowed with knowledge and wisdom and supreme dominion, nor vouchsafed He to any one of the Kings his predecessors the like of that which He gave him; and women were the cause of his father's offending. The examples of this are many, O King, and I do but make mention of Solomon to thee for that thou knowest that to none was given such dominion as that with which he was invested, so that all the Kings of the earth obeyed him. Know then, O King, that the love of women is the root of all evil and none of them hath any judgment; wherefore it behoveth a man use them according to his need and not incline to them with utter inclination for that will cast him into corruption and perdition. An thou hearken to my words, all thine affairs will prosper; but, an thou neglect them thou wilt repent, whenas repentance will not profit thee.” Answered the King, ‘Verily, I have left my whilome inclination to women.’ — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Twenty-ninth Night,

She pursued: It hath reached me, O mighty monarch, that King Wird Khan said to his Wazir, “Indeed, I have left my whilome inclination to women and have altogether renounced my infatuation for them; but how shall I do to punish them in retaliation of their misdeeds? For the slaying of thy sire Shimas was of their malice and not of my own will, and I know not what ailed my reason that I consented with their proposal to slay him “ Then he cried, “Ah me!” and groaned and lamented, saying “Well-away and alas for the loss of my Wazir and his just judgment and admirable administration and for the loss of his like of the Wazirs and Heads of the State and of the goodliness of their apt counsels and sagacious!” “O King,” quoth the boy-minister, “Know that the fault is not with women alone, for that they are like unto a pleasing stock in trade, whereto the lusts of the lookers-on incline. To whosoever lusteth and buyeth, they sell it, but whoso buyeth not, none forceth him to buy; so that the fault is of him who buyeth, especially if he know the harmfulness of that merchandise. Now, I warn thee, as did my sire before me, but thou acceptedest not to his counsel.” Answered the King, “O Wazir, indeed I have fixed this fault upon myself, even as thou hast said, and I have no excuse except divine foreordainment.” Rejoined the Wazir, “O King, know that Almighty Allah hath created us and endowed us with capability and appointed to us freewill and choice; so, if we will, we do, and if we will, we do not. The Lord commanded us not to do harm, lest sin attach to us; wherefore it befitteth us to take compt of whatso is right to do, for that the Almighty biddeth us naught but good in all cases and forbiddeth us only from evil; but what we do, we do of our own design, be it fair or faulty.” Quoth the King, “Thou sayest sooth, and indeed my fault arose from my surrendering myself to my lusts, albeit often and often my better self warned me from this, and thy sire Shimas also warned me often and often, but my lusts overcame my wits. Hast thou then with thee aught that may withhold me from again committing this error and whereby my reason may be victorious over the desires of my soul?" Quoth the Wazir, "Yes: I can tell thee what will restrain thee from relapsing into this fault, and it is that thou doff the garment of ignorance and don that of understanding, and disobey thy passions and obey thy Lord and revert to the policy of the just King thy sire, and fulfil thy duties to Allah the Most High and to thy people and apply thyself to the defence of thy faith and the promotion of thy subjects' welfare and rule thyself aright and forbear the slaughter of thy people; and look to the end of things and sever thyself from tyranny and oppression and arrogance and lewdness, and practice justice, equity and humility and bow before the bidding of the Almighty and apply thyself to gentle dealing with those of His creatures over whom He set thee and be assiduous as it besitteth thee in fulfilling their prayers unto thee. An thou be constant herein may thy days be serene and may Allah of His mercy pardon thee and make thee loved and feared of all who look on thee; so shall thy foes be brought to naught, for the Omnipotent shall rout their hosts and thou shalt have acceptance with Him and of His creatures be dreaded and to them endeared." Quoth the King, "Indeed thou hast quickened my vitals and illumined my heart with thy sweet speech and hast opened the eyes of my clear-seeing after blindness; and I am resolved to do whatso thou hast set forth to me, with the help of the Almighty leaving my former case of lust and sinfulness and bringing forth my soul from durance vile to deliverance and from fear to safety. So it behoveth thee to be joyful hereat and contented, for that I am become to thee as a son, maugre my more of age, and thou to me as a dear father, despite thy tenderness of years, and it hath become incumbent on me to do mine utmost endeavour in all thou commandest me. Wherefore I thank the bounty of Allah and thy bounty because He hath vouchsafed me, by thee, fair fortune and goodly guidance and just judgment to ward off my cark and care; and the security of my lieges hath been brought about by thy hand, through the excellence of thy knowledge and the goodliness of thy contrivance. And thou, from this hour, shalt be the counsellor of my kingdom and equal to myself in all but sitting upon the throne; and whatso thou dost shall be law to me and none shall disobey thy word, young in years though thou be, for that thou art old in wit and knowledge. So I thank Allah who deigned grant thee to me, that thou mayst guide me into the way of salvation and out of the crooked paths of perdition.” Quoth the Wazir, “O auspicious King, know that no merit is due to me for giving thee loyal counsel; for that to succour thee by deed and word is one of the things which is incumbent on me, seeing that I am but a plant of thy bounty, and not I alone, but one before me was overwhelmed with thy beneficence, so that we are both alike partakers in thy honours and favours, and how shall we not acknowledge this? Moreover thou, O King, art our shepherd and ruler and he who wardeth off from us our foes, and to whom are committed our protection and our guardian, constant in endeavour for our safety. Indeed, though we lavished our lives in thy service yet should we not fulfil that which is incumbent on us of gratitude to thee; but we supplicate Allah Almighty, who hath set thee over us and made thee our ruler, and beseech Him vouchsafe thee long life and success in all thine enterprises and not to make trial of thee with afflictions in thy time, but bring thee to thy desire and make thee to be reverenced till the day of thy death and lengthen thine arms in generosity, so thou mayst have command over every wise man and subdue every wicked man and all the wise and brave be found with thee in thy realm and all the ignorant and cowardly be plucked out from thy reign; and we pray Him to withhold from thy people scarcity and calamity and sow among them the seed of love and friendship and cause them to enjoy of this world its prosperity and of the next felicity, of His grace and bounty and hidden mercies. Amen![182] For He is over all things Omnipotent and there is naught difficult unto Him, to Him all things tend.” When the King heard the Wazir’s prayer, he was mightily rejoiced and inclined to him with his whole heart, saying, “Know, O Wazir, thou art to me in lieu of brother and son and father, and naught but death shall divide me from thee. All that my hand possesseth thou shalt have the disposal of and, if I have no child to succeed me, thou shalt sit on my throne in my stead; for thou art the worthiest of all the folk of my realm, and I will invest thee with my Kingship in the presence of the Grandees of my state and appoint thee my heir apparent to inherit the kingdom after me, Inshallah!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Thirtieth Night,

She resumed: It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that King Wird Khan said to the son of Shimas the whilome Wazir, “Presently I will name thee my successor and make thee my heir apparent, and I will call the Grandees of mine Empire to witness thereto.” Then he summoned his Secretary and bade him write to all the Lords of his land, convoking them at his Court, and caused proclamation to be made in his city to all the townsfolk great and small, bidding every one of the Emirs and Governors and Chamberlains and other officers and dignitaries to his presence as well as the Olema and Literati learned in the law. He held to boot a grand Divan and made a banquet, never was its like seen anywhere and thereto he bade all the folk, high and low. So they assembled and abode in merry making, eating and drinking a month’s space, after which the King clothed the whole of his household and the poor of his Kingdom and bestowed on the men of knowledge abundant largesse. Then he chose out a number of the Olema and wise men who were known to the son of Shimas, and caused them go in to him, bidding him choose out of them six that he might make them Wazirs under commandment of the boy. Accordingly he selected six of the oldest of them in years and the best in wits and fullest of lore and the quickest of memory and judgment, and presented them to the King, who clad them in Wazirial habit saying, “Ye are become my Ministers, under the commandment of this my Grand Wazir, the son of Shimas. Whatsoever he saith to you or biddeth you to do, ye shall never and in no wise depart from it, albeit he is the youngest of you in years; for he is the eldest of you in intellect and intelligence.” Then he seated them upon chairs, adorned with gold after the usage of Wazirs, and appointed to them stipends and allowances, bidding them choose out such of the notables of the kingdom and officers of the troops present at the banquet as were aptest for the service of the state, that he might make them Captains of tens and Captains of hundreds and Captains of thousands and appoint to them dignities and stipends and assign them provision, after the manner of Grandees. This they did with entire diligence and he bade them also handsel all who were present with large gifts and dismiss them each to his country with honour and renown; he also charged his governors to rule the people with justice and enjoined them to be tender to the poor as well as to the rich and bade succour them from the treasury, according to their several degrees. So the Wazirs wished him permanence of glory and continuance of life, and he commanded to decorate the city three days, in gratitude to Allah Almighty for mercies vouchsafed to him. Such was the case with the King and his Wazir, Ibn Shimas, in the ordinance of his kingdom through his Emirs and Governors; but as regards the favourite women, wives, concubines and others who, by their malice and perfidy, had brought about the slaughter of the Wazirs and had well nigh ruined the realm, as soon as the Court was dissolved and all the people had departed, each to his own place, after their affairs had been set in order, the King summoned his boy-Minister, the son of Shimas, and the other six Wazirs and taking them apart privily, said to them, "Know, O Wazirs that I have been a wanderer from the right way, drowned in ignorance, opposed to admonition, a breaker of facts and promises and a gainsayer of good counsellors; and the cause of all this was my being fooled by these women and the wiles whereby they beset me and the glozing lure of their speech, whereby they seduced me to sin and my acceptance of this, for that I deemed the words of them true and loyal counsel, by reason of their sweetness and softness; but lo, and behold! they were deadly poison. And now I am certified that they sought but to ruin and destroy me, wherefore they deserve punishment and retribution from me, for justice sake, that I may make them a warning to whoso will be warned. And what say your just judgments anent doing them to die?" Answered the boy Wazir, "O mighty King, I have already told thee that women are not alone to blame, but that the fault is shared between them and the men who hearken to them. However, they deserve punishment and requital for two reasons: firstly for the fulfilment of thy word, because thou art the supreme King; and secondly, by reason of their presumption against thee and their seducing thee and their meddling with that which concerneth them not and whereof it befitteth them not even to speak. Wherefore they have right well deserved death; yet let that which hath befallen them suffice them, and do thou henceforth reduce them to servants' estate. But it is thine to command in this and in other than this." Then one of the Wazirs seconded the counsel of Ibn Shimas; but another of them prostrated himself before the King and said to him, “Allah prolong the King’s life! An thou be indeed resolved to do with them that which shall cause their death, do with them as I shall say to thee.” Asked Wird Khan, “And what is that?”; and the Wazir answered, “‘Twere best that thou bid some of thy female slaves carry the women who played thee false to the apartment, wherein befel the slaughter of thy Wazirs and wise men and imprison them there; and bid that they be provided with a little meat and drink, enough to keep life in their bodies. Let them never be suffered to go forth of that place, and whenever one of them dies, let her abide among them, as she is, till they die all, even to the last of them. This is the least of their desert, because they were the cause of this great avail, ay, and the origin of all the troubles and calamities that have befallen in our time; so shall there be verified in them the saying of the Sayer, ‘Whoso diggeth his brother a pit shall surely himself fall into it, albeit of long safety he have benefit.’” The King accepted the Wazir’s counsel and sending for four stalwart female slaves, committed the offending women to them, bidding them bear them into the place of slaughter and imprison them there and allow them every day a little coarse food and a little troubled water. They did with them as he bade; wherefore the women mourned with sore mourning, repenting them of that which they had done and lamenting with grievous lamentation. Thus Allah gave them their reward of abjection in this world and prepared for them torment in the world to come; nor did they cease to abide in that murky and noisome place, whilst every day one or other of them died, till they all perished, even to the last of them;[183] and the report of this event was bruited abroad in all lands and countries. This is the end of the story of the King and his Wazirs and subjects, and praise be to Allah who causeth peoples to pass away, and quickeneth the bones that rot in decay; Him who alone is worthy to be glorified and magnified alway and hallowed for ever and aye! And amongst the tales they tell is one of

ABU KIR THE DYER AND ABU SIR THE BARBER.

There dwelt once, in Alexandria city, two men, of whom one was a dyer, by name Abъ Khr, and the other a barber Abъ Shr[184] ; and they were neighbours in the market-street, where their shops stood side by side. The dyer was a swindler and a liar, an exceeding wicked wight, as if indeed his head-temples were hewn out of a boulder rock or fashioned of the threshold of a Jewish synagogue, nor was he ashamed of any shameful work he wrought amongst the folk. It was his wont, when any brought him cloth for staining, first to require of him payment under pretence of buying dyestuffs therewith. So the customer would give him the wage in advance and wend his ways, and the dyer would spend all he received on meat and drink; after which he would sell the cloth itself as soon as ever its owner turned his back and waste its worth in eating and drinking and what not else, for he ate not but of the daintiest and most delicate viands nor drank but of the best of that which doth away the with of man. And when the owner of the cloth came to him, he would say to him, "Return to me to-morrow before sunrise and thou shalt find thy stuff dyed." So the customer would go away, saying to himself, "One day is near another day," and return next day at the appointed time, when the dyer would say to him, "Come to-morrow; yesterday I was not at work, for I had with me guests and was occupied with doing what their wants required till they went: but to-morrow before sunrise come and take thy cloth dyed." So he would fare forth and return on the third day, when Abu Kir would say to him, "Indeed yesterday I was excusable, for my wife was brought to bed in the night and all day I was busy with manifold matters; but to-morrow, without fail, come and take thy cloth dyed." When the man came again at the appointed time, he would put him off with some other pretence, it mattered little what, and would swear to him; — Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Thirty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that every time the owner of an article came to the dyer he would put him off with any pretext[185] and would swear to him; nor would he cease to promise and swear to him, as often as he came, till the customer lost patience and said, “How often wilt thou say to me, ‘To-morrow?’ Give me my stuff: I will not have it dyed.” Whereupon the dyer would make answer, “By Allah, O my brother, I am abashed at thee; but I must tell the truth and may Allah harm all who harm folk in their goods!” The other would exclaim, “Tell me what hath happened;” and Abu Kir would reply, “As for thy stuff I dyed that same on matchless wise and hung it on the drying rope but ’twas stolen and I know not who stole it.” If the owner of the stuff were of the kindly he would say, “Allah will compensate me;” and if he were of the ill-conditioned, he would haunt him with exposure and insult, but would get nothing of him, though he complained of him to the judge. He ceased not doing thus till his report was noised abroad among the folk and each used to warn other against Abu Kir who became a byword amongst them. So they all held aloof from him and none would be entrapped by him save those who were ignorant of his character; but, for all this, he failed not daily to suffer insult and exposure from Allah’s creatures. By reason of this his trade became slack and he used to go to the shop of his neighbour the barber Abu Sir and sit there, facing the dyery and with his eyes on the door. Whenever he espied any one who knew him not standing at the dyery-door, with a piece of stuff in his hand, he would leave the barber’s booth and go up to him saying, “What seekest thou, O thou?”; and the man would reply, “Take and dye me this thing.” So the dyer would ask, “What colour wilt thou have it?” For, with all his knavish tricks his hand was in all manner of dyes; but he was never true to any one; wherefore poverty had gotten the better of him. Then he would take the stuff and say, “Give me my wage in advance and come to-morrow and take the stuff.” So the stranger would advance him the money and wend his way; whereupon Abu Kir would carry the cloth to the market-street and sell it and with its price buy meat and vegetables and tobacco[186] and fruit and what not else he needed; but, whenever he saw any one who had given him stuff to dye standing at the door of his shop, he would not come forth to him or even show himself to him. On this wise he abode years and years, till it fortuned one day that he received cloth to dye from a man of wrath and sold it and spent the proceeds. The owner came to him every day, but found him not in his shop; for, whenever he espied any one who had claim against him, he would flee from him into the shop of the barber Abu Sir. At last, that angry man finding that he was not to be seen and growing weary of such work, repaired to the Kazi and bringing one of his serjeants to the shop, nailed up the door, in presence of a number of Moslems, and sealed it, for that he saw therein naught save some broken pans of earthenware to stand him instead of his stuff; after which the serjeant took the key, saying to the neighbours, "Tell him to bring back this man's cloth then come to me[187] and take his shop key;" and went his way, he and the man. Then said Abu Sir to Abu Kir, "What ill business is this?[188] Whoever bringeth thee aught thou losest it for him. What hath become of this angry man's stuff?" Answered the dyer, "O my neighbour, 'twas stolen from me." "Prodigous!" exclaimed the barber. "Whenever any one giveth thee aught, a thief stealeth it from thee! Art thou then the meeting-place of every rogue upon town? But I doubt me thou liest: so tell me the truth." Replied Abu Kir, "O my neighbour, none hath stolen aught from me." Asked Abu Sir, "What then dost thou with the people's property?"; and the dyer answered, "Whenever any one giveth me aught to dye, I sell it and spend the price." Quoth Abu Sir, "Is this permitted thee of Allah?" and quoth Abu Kir, "I do this only out of poverty, because business is slack with me and I am poor and have nothing."[189] And he went on to complain to him of the dulness of his trade and his lack of means. Abu Sir in like manner lamented the little profit of his own calling, saying, "I am a master of my craft and have not my equal in this city; but no one cometh to me to be polled, because I am a pauper; and I loathe this art and mystery, O my brother." Abu Kir replied, "And I also loathe my own craft, by reason of its slackness; but, O my brother, what call is there for abiding in this town? Let us depart from it, I and thou, and solace ourselves in the lands of mankind, carrying in our hands our crafts which are in demand all the world over; so shall we breathe the air and rest from this grievous trouble." And he ceased not to commend travel to Abu Sir, till the barber became wishful to set out; so they agreed upon their route, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Thirty-second Night, She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abu Kir ceased not his praises of wayfaring to Abu Sir till the barber became wishful to depart; so they agreed upon their route, at which decision Abu Kir rejoiced and improvised these lines,

“Leave thy home for abroad an wouldst rise on high, * And travel
    whence benefits five-fold rise;
The soothing of sorrow and winning of bread, * Knowledge,
manners
    and commerce with good men and wise.
An they say that in travel are travail and care, * And disunion
    of friends and much hardship that tries;
Yet to generous youth death is better than life * In the house of
    contempt betwixt haters and spies.”

When they agreed to travel together Abu Kir said to Abu Sir, “O my neighbour, we are become brethren and there is no difference between us, so it behoveth us to recite the F6tihah[190] that he of us who gets work shall of his gain feed him who is out of work, and whatever is left, we will lay in a chest; and when we return to Alexandria, we will divide it fairly and equally.” “So be it,” replied Abu Sir, and they repeated the Opening Chapter of the Koran on this understanding. Then Abu Sir locked up his shop and gave the key to its owner, whilst Abu Kir left his door locked and sealed and let the key lie with the Kazi’s serjeant; after which they took their baggage and embarked on the morrow in a galleon[191] upon the salt sea. They set sail the same day and fortune attended them, for, of Abu Sir’s great good luck, there was not a barber in the ship albeit it carried an hundred and twenty men, besides captain and crew. So, when they loosed the sails, the barber said to the dyer, “O my brother, this is the sea and we shall need meat and drink; we have but little provaunt with us and haply the voyage will be long upon us; wherefore methinks I will shoulder my budget and pass among the passengers, and may be some one will say to me, ‘Come hither, O barber, and shave me,’ and I will shave him for a scone or a silver bit or a draught of water: so shall we profit by this, I and thou too.” “There’s no harm in that,” replied the dyer and laid down his head and slept, whilst the barber took his gear and water-tasse[192] and throwing over his shoulder a rag, to serve as napkin (because he was poor), passed among the passengers. Quoth one of them, "Ho, master, come and shave me." So he shaved him, and the man gave him a half-dirham;[193] whereupon quoth Abu Sir, "O my brother, I have no use for this bit; hadst thou given me a scone 'twere more blessed to me in this sea, for I have a shipmate and we are short of provision." So he gave him a loaf and a slice of cheese and filled him the tasse with sweet water. The barber carried all this to Abu Kir and said, "Eat the bread and cheese and drink the water." Accordingly he ate and drank, whilst Abu Sir again took up his shaving gear and, tasse in hand and rag on shoulder, went round about the deck among the passengers. One man he shaved for two scones and another for a bittock of cheese, and he was in demand, because there was no other barber on board. Also he bargained with every one who said to him, "Ho, master, shave me!" for two loaves and a half dirham, and they gave him whatever he sought, so that, by sundown, he had collected thirty loaves and thirty silvers with store of cheese and olives and botargoes.[194] And besides these he got from the passengers whatever he asked for and was soon in possession of things galore. Amongst the rest he shaved the Captain,[195] to whom he complained of his lack of victual for the voyage, and the skipper said to him, "Thou art welcome to bring thy comrade every night and sup with me and have no care for that so long as ye sail with us." Then he returned to the dyer, whom he found asleep; so he roused him; and when Abu Kir awoke, he saw at his head an abundance of bread and cheese and olives and botargoes and said, "Whence gottest thou all this?" "From the bounty of Allah Almighty," replied Abu Sir. Then Abu Kir would have fallen to, but the barber said to him, "Eat not of this, O my brother; but leave it to serve us another time; for know that I shaved the Captain and complained to him of our lack of victual: whereupon quoth he, 'Welcome to thee! Bring thy comrade and sup both of ye with me every night.' And this night we sup with him for the first time." But Abu Kir replied, "My head goeth round with sea-sickness and I cannot rise from my stead; so let me sup off these things and fare thou alone to the Captain." Abu Sir replied, "There is no harm in that;" and sat looking at the other as he ate, and saw him hew off gobbets, as the quarryman heweth stone from the hill-quarries and gulp them down with the gulp of an elephant which hath not eaten for days, bolting another mouthful ere he had swallowed the previous one and glaring the while at that which was before him with the glowering of a Ghul and blowing as blowing as bloweth the hungry bull over his beans and bruised straw. Presently up came a sailor and said to the barber, “O craftsmaster, the Captain biddeth thee come to supper and bring thy comrade.” Quoth the barber to the dyer, “Wilt thou come with us?”; but quoth he, “I cannot walk.” So the barber went by himself and found the Captain sitting before a tray whereon were a score or more of dishes and all the company were awaiting him and his mate. When the Captain saw him he asked, “Where is thy friend?”; and Abu Sir answered, “O my lord, he is sea-sick.” Said the skipper, “That will do him no harm; his sickness will soon pass off; but do thou carry him his supper and come back, for we tarry for thee.” Then he set apart a porringer of Kabбbs and putting therein some of each dish, till there was enough for ten, gave it to Abu Sir, saying, “Take this to thy chum.” He took it and carried it to the dyer, whom he found grinding away with his dog-teeth[196] at the food which was before him, as he were a camel, and heaping mouthful on mouthful in his hurry. Quoth Abu Sir, “Did I not say to thee, ‘Eat not of this’? Indeed the Captain is a kindly man. See what he hath sent thee, for that I told him thou wast sea-sick.” “Give it here,” cried the dyer. So the barber gave him the platter, and he snatched it from him and fell upon his food, ravening for it and resembling a grinning dog or a raging lion or a Rukh pouncing on a pigeon or one well-nigh dead for hunger who seeing meat falls ravenously to eat. Then Abu Sir left him and going back to the Captain, supped and enjoyed himself and drank coffee[197] with him; after which he returned to Abu Kir and found that he had eaten all that was in the porringer and thrown it aside, empty. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Thirty-third Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Abu Sir returned to Abu Kir he saw that he had eaten all that was in the porringer and had thrown it aside empty. So he took it up and gave it to one of the Captain's servants, then went back to Abu Kir and slept till the morning. On the morrow, he continued to shave, and all he got by way of meat and drink he gave to his shipmate, who ate and drank and sat still, rising not save to do what none could do for him, and every night the barber brought him a full porringer from the Captain's table. They fared thus twenty days until the galleon cast anchor in the harbour of a city; whereupon they took leave of the skipper and landing, entered the town and hired them a closet in a Khan. Abu Sir furnished it and buying a cooking pot and a platter and spoons[198] and what else they needed, fetched meat and cooked it; but Abu Kir fell asleep the moment he entered the Caravanserai and awoke not till Abu Sir aroused him and set a tray of food[199] before him. When he awoke, he ate and saying to Abu Sir, "Blame me not, for I am giddy," fell asleep again. Thus he did forty days, whilst, every day, the barber took his gear and making the round of the city, wrought for that which fell to his lot,[200] and returning, found the dyer asleep and aroused him. The moment he awoke he fell ravenously upon the food, eating as one who cannot have his fill nor be satisfied; after which he went asleep again. On this wise he passed other forty days and whenever the barber said to him, "Sit up and be comfortable[201] and go forth and take an airing in the city, for 'tis a gay place and a pleasant and hath not its equal among the cities," he would reply, "Blame me not, for I am giddy." Abu Sir cared not to hurt his feelings nor give him hard words; but, on the forty-first day, he himself fell sick and could not go abroad; so he engaged the porter of the Khan to serve them both, and he did the needful for them and brought them meat and drink whilst Abu Kir would do nothing but eat and sleep. The man ceased not to wait upon them on this wise for four days, at the end of which time the barber's malady redoubled on him, till he lost his senses for stress of sickness; and Abu Kir, feeling the sharp pangs of hunger, arose and sought in his comrade's clothes, where he found a thousand silver bits. He took them and, shutting the door of the closet upon Abu Sir, fared forth without telling any; and the doorkeeper was then at market and thus saw him not go out. Presently Abu Kir betook himself to the bazar and clad himself in costly clothes, at a price of five hundred half-dirhams; then he proceeded to walk about the streets and divert himself by viewing the city which he found to be one whose like was not among cities; but he noted that all its citizens were clad in clothes of white and blue, without other colour. Presently he came to a dyer's and seeing naught but blue in his shop, pulled out to him a kerchief and said, "O master, take this and dye it and win thy wage." Quoth the dyer, "The cost of dyeing this will be twenty dirhams;" and quoth Abu Kir, "In our country we dye it for two." "Then go and dye it in your own country! As for me, my price is twenty dirhams and I will not bate a little thereof." "What colour wilt thou dye it?" "I will dye it blue." "But I want it dyed red." "I know not how to dye red." "Then dye it green." "I know not how to dye green." "Yellow." "Nor yet yellow." Thereupon Abu Kir went on to name the different tints to him, one after other, till the dyer said, "We are here in this city forty master-dyers, not one more nor one less; and when one of us dieth, we teach his son the craft. If he leave no son, we abide lacking one, and if he leave two sons, we teach one of them the craft, and if he die, we teach his brother. This our craft is strictly ordered, and we know how to dye but blue and no other tine whatsoever." Then said Abu Kir, "Know that I too am a dyer and wot how to dye all colours; and I would have thee take me into thy service on hire, and I will teach thee everything of my art, so thou mayst glory therein over all the company of dyers." But the dyer answered, "We never admit a stranger into our craft." Asked Abu Kir, "And what if I open a dyery for myself?"; whereto the other answered, "We will not suffer thee to do that on any wise;" whereupon he left him and going to a second dyer, made him the like proposal; but he returned him the same answer as the first; and he ceased not to go from one to other, till he had made the round of the whole forty masters; but they would not accept him either to master or apprentice. Then he repaired to the Shaykh of the Dyers and told him what had passed, and he said, "We admit no strangers into our craft." Hereupon Abu Kir became exceeding wroth and going up to the King of that city, made complaint to him, saying, "O King of the age, I am a stranger and a dyer by trade"; and he told him whatso had passed between himself and the dyers of the town, adding, "I can dye various kinds of red, such as rose-colour and jujubel-colour[202] and various kinds of green, such as grass-green and pistachio-green and olive and parrot's wing, and various kinds of black, such as coal-black and Kohl-black, and various shades of yellow, such as orange and lemon-colour," and went on to name to him the rest of the colours. Then said he, "O King of the age, all the dyers in thy city can not turn out of hand any one of these tincts, for they know not how to dye aught but blue; yet will they not admit me amongst them, either to master or apprentice." Answered the King, "Thou sayst sooth for that matter, but I will open to thee a dyery and give thee capital and have thou no care anent them; for whoso offereth to do thee let or hindrance, I will hang him over his shop-door." Then he sent for builders and said to them, "Go round about the city with this master-dyer, and whatsoever place pleaseth him, be it shop or Khan or what not, turn out its occupier and build him a dyery after his wish. Whatsoever he biddeth you, that do ye and oppose him not in aught." And he clad him in a handsome suit and gave him two white slaves to serve him, and a horse with housings of brocade and a thousand dinars, saying, "Expend this upon thyself against the building be completed." Accordingly Abu Kir donned the dress and mounting the horse, became as he were an Emir. Moreover the King assigned him a house and bade furnish it; so they furnished it for him. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Thirty-fourth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King assigned a house to Abu Kir and bade furnish it and he took up his abode therein. On the morrow he mounted and rode through the city, whilst the architects went before him; and he looked about him till he saw a place which pleased him and said, "This stead is seemly;" whereupon they turned out the owner and carried him to the King, who gave him as the price of his holding, what contented him and more. Then the builders fell to work, whilst Abu Kir said to them, "Build thus and thus and do this and that," till they built him a dyery that had not its like; whereupon he presented himself before the King and informed him that they had done building the dyery and that there needed but the price of the dye-stuffs and gear to set it going. Quoth the King, "Take these four thousand dinars to thy capital and let me see the first fruits of thy dyery." So he took the money and went to the market where, finding dye-stuffs[203] plentiful and well-nigh worthless, he bought all he needed of materials for dyeing; and the King sent him five hundred pieces of stuff, which he set himself to dye of all colours and then he spread them before the door of his dyery. When the folk passed by the shop, they saw a wonder-sight whose like they had never in their lives seen; so they crowded about the entrance, enjoying the spectacle and questioning the dyer and saying, "O master, what are the names of these colours?" Quoth he, "This is red and that yellow and the other green" and so on, naming the rest of the colours. And they fell to bringing him longcloth and saying to him, "Dye it for us like this and that and take what hire thou seekest." When he had made an end of dyeing the King's stuffs, he took them and went up with them to the Divan; and when the King saw them he rejoiced in them and bestowed abundant bounty on the dyer. Furthermore, all the troops brought him stuffs, saying, "Dye for us thus and thus;" and he dyed for them to their liking, and they threw him gold and silver. After this his fame spread abroad and his shop was called the Sultan's Dyery. Good came in to him at every door and none of the other dyers could say a word to him, but they used to come to him kissing his hands and excusing themselves to him for past affronts they had offered him and saying, "Take us to thine apprentices." But he would none of them for he had become the owner of black slaves and handmaids and had amassed store of wealth. On this wise fared it with Abu Kir; but as regards Abu Sir, after the closet door had been locked on him and his money had been stolen, he abode prostrate and unconscious for three successive days, at the end of which the Concierge of the Khan, chancing to look at the door, observed that it was locked and bethought himself that he had not seen and heard aught of the two companions for some time. So he said in his mind, "Haply they have made off, without paying rent,[204] or perhaps they are dead, or what is to do with them?" And he waited till sunset, when he went up to the door and heard the barber groaning within. He saw the key in the lock; so he opened the door and entering, found Abu Sir lying, groaning, and said to him, "No harm to thee: where is thy friend?" Replied Abu Sir, "By Allah, I came to my senses only this day and called out; but none answered my call. Allah upon thee, O my brother, look for the purse under my head and take from it five half-dirhams and buy me somewhat nourishing, for I am sore anhungered.” The porter put out his hand and taking the purse, found it empty and said to the barber, “The purse is empty; there is nothing in it.” Whereupon Abu Sir knew that Abu Kir had taken that which was therein and had fled and he asked the porter, “Hast thou not seen my friend?” Answered the doorkeeper, “I have not seen him these three days; and indeed methought you had departed, thou and he.” The barber cried, “Not so; but he coveted my money and took it and fled seeing me sick.” Then he fell a-weeping and a-wailing but the doorkeeper said to him, “No harm shall befal thee, and Allah will requite him his deed.” So he went away and cooked him some broth, whereof he ladled out a plateful and brought it to him; nor did he cease to tend him and maintain him with his own monies for two months’ space, when the barber sweated[205] and the Almighty made him whole of his sickness. Then he stood up and said to the porter, “An ever the Most High Lord enable me, I will surely requite thee thy kindness to me; but none requiteth save the Lord of His bounty!” Answered the porter, “Praised be He for thy recovery! I dealt not thus with thee but of desire for the face of Allah the Bountiful.” Then the barber went forth of the Khan and threaded the market-streets of the town, till Destiny brought him to the bazar wherein was Abu Kir’s dyery, and he saw the vari-coloured stuffs dispread before the shop and a jostle of folk crowding to look upon them. So he questioned one of the townsmen and asked him, “What place is this and how cometh it that I see the folk crowding together?”; whereto the man answered, saying, “This is the Sultan’s Dyery, which he set up for a foreigner Abu Kir hight; and whenever he dyeth new stuff, we all flock to him and divert ourselves by gazing upon his handiwork, for we have no dyers in our land who know how to stain with these colours; and indeed there befel him with the dyers who are in the city that which befel.”[206] And he went on to tell him all that had passed between Abu Kir and the master-dyers and how he had complained of them to the Sultan who took him by the hand and built him that dyery and gave him this and that: brief, he recounted to him all that had occurred. At this the barber rejoiced and said in himself, “Praised be Allah who hath prospered him, so that he is become a master of his craft! And the man is excusable, for of a surety he hath been diverted from thee by his work and hath forgotten thee; but thou actedst kindly by him and entreatedst him generously, what time he was out of work; so, when he seeth thee, he will rejoice in thee and entreat thee generously, even as thou entreatedst him." According he made for the door of the dyery and saw Abu Kir seated on a high mattress spread upon a bench beside the doorway, clad in royal apparel and attended by four blackamoor slaves and four white Mamelukes all robed in the richest of raiment. Moreover, he saw the workmen, ten negro slaves, standing at work; for, when Abu Kir bought them, he taught them the craft of dyeing, and he himself sat amongst his cushions, as he were a Grand Wazir or a mighty monarch putting his hand to naught, but only saying to the men, "Do this and do that." So the barber went up to him and stood before him, deeming he would rejoice in him when he saw him and salute him and entreat him with honour and make much of him; but, when eye fell upon eye, the dyer said to him, "O scoundrel, how many a time have I bidden thee stand not at the door of the workshop? Hast thou a mind to disgrace me with the folk, thief[207] that thou art? Seize him." So the blackamoors ran at him and laid hold of him; and the dyer rose up from his seat and said, "Throw him." Accordingly they threw him down and Abu Kir took a stick and dealt him an hundred strokes on the back; after which they turned him over and he beat him other hundred blows on his belly. Then he said to him, "O scoundrel, O villian, if ever again I see thee standing at the door of this dyery, I will forthwith send thee to the King, and he will commit thee to the Chief of Police, that he may strike thy neck. Begone, may Allah not bless thee!" So Abu Sir departed from him, broken-hearted by reason of the beating and shame that had betided him; whilst the bystanders asked Abu Kir, "What hath this man done?" He answered, "The fellow is a thief, who stealeth the stuffs of folk." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Abu Kir beat Abu Sir and thrust him forth he said to those present, "He is a thief who stealeth the stuffs of folk; he hath robbed me of cloth, how many a time! and I still said in myself, 'Allah forgive him!' He is a poor man; and I cared not to deal roughly with him; so I used to give my customers the worth of their goods and forbid him gently; but he would not be forbidden: and if he come again, I will send him to the King, who will put him to death and rid the people of his mischief." And the bystanders fell to abusing the barber after his back was turned. Such was the behaviour of Abu Kir; but as regards Abu Sir, he returned to the Khan, where he sat pondering that which the dyer had done by him and he remained seated till the burning of the beating subsided, when he went out and walked about the markets of the city. Presently, he bethought him to go to the Hammam-bath; so he said to one of the townsfolk, "O my brother, which is the way to the Baths?" Quoth the man, "And what manner of thing may the Baths be?" and quoth Abu Sir, "'Tis a place where people wash themselves and do away their dirt and defilements, and it is of the best of the good things of the world." Replied the townsman, "Get thee to the sea," but the barber rejoined, "I want the Hammam-baths." Cried the other, "We know not what manner of thing is the Hammam, for we all resort to the sea; even the King, when he would wash, betaketh himself to the sea." When Abu Sir was assured that there was no bath in the city and that the folk knew not the Baths nor the fashion thereof, he betook himself to the King's Divan and kissing ground between his hands called down blessings on him and said, "I am a stranger and a Bath-man by trade, and I entered thy city and thought to go to the Hammam; but found not one therein. How cometh a city of this comely quality to lack a Hammam, seeing that the bath is of the highest of the delights of this world?" Quoth the King, "What manner of thing is the Hammam?" So Abu Sir proceeded to set forth to him the quality of the bath, saying, "Thy capital will not be a perfect city till there be a Hammam therein." "Welcome to thee!" said the King and clad him in a dress that had not its like and gave him a horse and two blackamoor slaves, presently adding four handmaids and as many white Mamelukes: he also appointed him a furnished house and honoured him yet more abundantly than he had honoured the dyer. After this he sent builders with him saying to them, "Build him a Hammam in what place soever shall please him." So he took them and went with them through the midst of the city, till he saw a stead that suited him. He pointed it out to the builders and they set to work, whilst he directed them, and they wrought till they builded him a Hammam that had not its like. Then he bade them paint it, and they painted it rarely, so that it was a delight to the beholders; after which Abu Sir went up to the King and told him that they had made an end of building and decorating the Hammam, adding, “There lacketh naught save the furniture.” The King gave him ten thousand dinars wherewith he furnished the Bath and ranged the napkins on the ropes; and all who passed by the door stared at it and their mind confounded at its decorations. So the people crowded to this spectacle, whose like they had never in their lives seen, and solaced themselves by staring at it and saying, “What is this thing?” To which Abu Sir replied, “This is a Hammam;” and they marvelled thereat. Then he heated water and set the bath aworking,[208] and he made a jetting fountain in the great basin, which ravished the wit of all who saw it of the people of the city. Furthermore, he sought of the King ten Mamelukes not yet come to manhood, and he gave him ten boys like moons; whereupon Abu Sir proceeded to shampoo them, saying, “Do in this wise with the bathers.” Then he burnt perfumes and sent out a crier to cry aloud in the city, saying, “O creatures of Allah, get ye to the Baths which be called the Sultan’s Hammam!” So the lieges came thither and Abu Sir bade the slave-boys wash their bodies. The folk went down into the tank and coming forth, seated themselves on the raised pavement, whilst the boys shampooed them, even as Abu Sir had taught them; and they continued to enter the Hammam and do their need therein gratis and go out, without paying, for the space of three days. On the fourth day the barber invited the King, who took horse with his Grandees and rode to the Baths, where he put off his clothes and entered; then Abu Sir came in to him and rubbed his body with the bag-gloves, peeling from his skin dirt-rolls like lamp-wicks and showing them to the King, who rejoiced therein, and clapping his hand upon his limbs heard them ring again for very smoothness and cleanliness[209] ; after which thorough washing Abu Sir mingled rose-water with the water of the tank and the King went down therein. When he came forth, his body was refreshed and he felt a lightness and liveliness such as he had never known in his life. Then the barber made him sit on the dais and the boys proceeded to shampoo him, whilst the censers fumed with the finest lign-aloes.[210] Then said the King, “O master is this the Hammam?”; and Abu Sir said, “Yes.” Quoth the King, “As my head liveth, my city is not become a city indeed but by this Bath,” presently adding, “But what pay takest thou for each person?” Quoth Abu Sir, “That which thou biddest will I take;” whereupon the King cried, “Take a thousand gold pieces for every one who washeth in thy Hammam.” Abu Sir, however, said, “Pardon, O King of the age! All men are not alike, but there are amongst them rich and poor, and if I take of each a thousand dinars, the Hammam will stand empty, for the poor man cannot pay this price.” Asked the King, “How then wilt thou do for the price!”; and the barber answered, “I will leave it to their generosity.[211] Each who can afford aught shall pay that which his soul grudgeth not to give, and we will take from every man after the measure of his means. On this wise will the folk come to us and he who is wealthy shall give according to his station and he who is wealth-less shall give what he can afford. Under such condition the Hammam will still be at work and prosper exceedingly; but a thousand dinars is a Monarch’s gift, and not every man can avail to this.” The Lords of the Realm confirmed Abu Sir’s words, saying, “This is the truth, O King of the age! Thinkest thou that all folk are like unto thee, O glorious King[212] ?” The King replied, “Ye say sooth; but this man is a stranger and poor and ’tis incumbent on us to deal generously with him, for that he hath made in our city this Hammam whose like we have never in our lives seen and without which our city were not adorned nor hath gotten importance; wherefore, an we favour him with increase of fee ‘twill not be much.” But the Grandees said, “An thou wilt guerdon him be generous with thine own monies, and let the King’s bounty be extended to the poor by means of the low price of the Hammam, so the lieges may bless thee; but, as for the thousand dinars, we are the Lords of thy Land, yet do our souls grudge to pay it; and how then should the poor be pleased to afford it?” Quoth the King, “O my Grandees, for this time let each of you give him an hundred dinars and a Mameluke, a slave girl and a blackamoor;” and quoth they, “’Tis well; we will give it; but after to-day whoso entereth shall give him only what he can afford, without grudging.” “No harm in that,” said the King; and they gave him the thousand gold pieces and three chattels. Now the number of the Nobles who were washed with the King that day was four hundred souls; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the number of the Nobles who were washed with the King that day were four hundred souls; so that the total of that which they gave him was forty thousand dinars, besides four hundred Mamelukes and a like number of negroes and slave-girls.[213] Moreover the King gave him ten thousand dinars, besides ten white slaves and ten hand-maidens and a like number of blackamoors; whereupon coming forward Abu Sir kissed the ground before him and said, "O auspicious Sovereign, lord of justice, what place will contain me all these women and slaves?" Quoth the King, "O weak o' wit, I bade not my nobles deal thus with thee but that we might gather together unto thee wealth galore; for may be thou wilt bethink thee of thy country and family and repine for them and be minded to return to thy mother-land; so shalt thou take from our country muchel of money to maintain thyself withal, what while thou livest in thine own country." And quoth Abu Sir, "O King of the age, (Allah advance thee!) these white slaves and women and negroes befit only Kings and hadst thou ordered me ready money, it were more profitable to me than this army; for they must eat and drink and dress, and whatever betideth me of wealth, it will not suffice for their support." The King laughed and said, "By Allah thou speakest sooth! They are indeed a mighty host, and thou hast not the wherewithal to maintain them; but wilt thou sell them to me for an hundred dinars a head?" Said Abu Sir, "I sell them to thee at that price." So the King sent to his treasurer for the coin and he brought it and gave Abu Sir the whole of the price without abatement[214] and in full tale; after which the King restored the slaves to their owners, saying, "Let each of you who knoweth his slaves take them; for they are a gift from me to you." So they obeyed his bidding and took each what belonged to him; whilst Abu Sir said to the King, "Allah ease thee, O King of the age, even as thou hast eased me of these Ghuls, whose bellies none may fill save Allah[215] !" The King laughed, and said he spake sooth; then, taking the Grandees of his Realm from the Hammam returned to his palace; but the barber passed the night in counting out his gold and laying it up in bags and sealing them; and he had with him twenty black slaves and a like number of Mamelukes and four slave girls to serve him. Now when morning morrowed, he opened the Hammam and sent out a crier to cry, saying, "Whoso entereth the Baths and washeth shall give that which he can afford and which his generosity requireth him to give." Then he seated himself by the pay-chest[216] and customers flocked in upon him, each putting down that which was easy to him, nor had eventide evened ere the chest was full of the good gifts of Allah the Most High. Presently the Queen desired to go to the Hammam, and when this came to Abu Sir's knowledge, he divided the day on her account into two parts, appointing that between dawn and noon to men and that between midday and sundown to women.[217] As soon as the Queen came, he stationed a handmaid behind the pay-chest; for he had taught four slave-girls the service of the Hammam, so that they were become expert bathwomen and tire-women. When the Queen entered, this pleased her and her breast waxed broad and she laid down a thousand dinars. Thus his report was noised abroad in the city, and all who entered the bath he entreated with honour, were they rich or poor; good came in upon him at every door and he made acquaintance with the royal guards and got him friends and intimates. The King himself used to come to him one day in every week, leaving with him a thousand dinars and the other days were for rich and poor alike; and he was wont to deal courteously with the folk and use them with the utmost respect. It chanced that the King's sea-captain came in to him one day in the bath; so Abu Sir did off his dress and going in with him, proceeded to shampoo him and entreated him with exceeding courtesy. When he came forth, he made him sherbet and coffee; and when he would have given him somewhat, he swore that he would not accept from him aught. So the captain was under obligation to him, by reason of his exceeding kindness and courtesy and was perplexed how to requite the bath-man his generous dealing. Thus fared it with Abu Sir: but as regards Abu Kir, hearing all the people recounting wonders of the Baths and saying, "Verily, this Hammam is the Paradise of this world! Inshallah, O such an one, thou shalt go with us to-morrow to this delightful bath," he said to himself, "Needs must I fare like the rest of the world, and see this bath that hath taken folk's wits." So he donned his richest dress and mounting a she-mule and bidding the attendance of four white slaves and four blacks, walking before and behind him, he rode to the Hammam. When he alighted at the door, he smelt the scent of burning aloes-wood and found people going in and out and the benches full of great and small. So he entered the vestibule and saw Abu Sir, who rose to him and rejoiced in him: but the dyer said to him, "Is this the way of well-born men? I have opened me a dyery and am become master-dyer of the city and acquainted with the King and have risen to prosperity and authority: yet camest thou not to me nor askest of me nor saidst, Where's my comrade? For my part I sought thee in vain and sent my slaves and servants to make search for thee in all the Khans and other places; but they knew not whither thou hadst gone, nor could any one give me tidings of thee." Said Abu Sir, "Did I not come to thee and didst thou not make me out a thief and bastinado me and dishonour me before the world?" At this Abu Kir made a show of concern and asked, "What manner of talk is this? Was it thou whom I beat?"; and Abu Sir answered, "Yes, 'twas I." Whereupon Abu Kir swore to him a thousand oaths that he knew him not and said, "There was a fellow like thee, who used to come every day and steal the people's stuff, and I took thee for him." And he went on to pretend penitence, beating hand upon hand and saying, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great? Indeed we have sinned against thee; but would that thou hadst discovered thyself to me and said, I am such an one! Indeed the fault is with thee, for that thou madest not thyself known unto me, more especially seeing that I was distracted for much business." Replied Abu Sir, "Allah pardon thee,[218] O my comrade! This was foreordained in the Secret Purpose, and reparation is with Allah. Enter and put off thy clothes and bathe at thine ease." Said the dyer, "I conjure thee, by Allah, O my brother, forgive me!"; and said Abu Sir, "Allah acquit thee of blame and forgive thee! Indeed this thing was decreed to me from all eternity." Then asked Abu Kir, "Whence gottest thou this high degree?"; and answered Abu Sir, "He who prospered thee prospered me; for I went up to the King and described to him the fashion of the Hammam and he bade me build one." And the dyer said, "Even as thou art beknown of the King, so also am I;" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Abu Kir and Abu Sir were exchanging reproof and excuse, the dyer said to him, "Even as thou art beknown of the King, so also am I; and, Inshallah,-God willing-I will make him love and favour thee more than ever, for my sake, he knoweth not that thou art my comrade, but I will acquaint him of this and commend thee to him." But Abu Sir said, "There needeth no commendation; for He who moveth man's heart to love still liveth; and indeed the King and all his court affect me and have given me this and that." And he told him the whole tale and said to him, "Put off thy clothes behind the chest and enter the Hammam, and I will go in with thee and rub thee down with the glove." So he doffed his dress and Abu Sir, entering the bath with him, soaped him and gloved him and then dressed him and busied himself with his service till he came forth, when he brought him dinner and sherbets, whilst all the folk marvelled at the honour he did him. Then Abu Kir would have given him somewhat; but he swore that he would not accept aught from him and said to him, "Shame upon such doings! Thou art my comrade, and there is no difference between us." Then Abu Kir observed, "By Allah, O my comrade, this is a mighty fine Hammam of thine, but there lacketh somewhat in its ordinance." Asked Abu Sir, "And what is that?" and Abu Kir answered, "It is the depilatory,[219] to wit, the paste compounded of yellow arsenic and quicklime which removeth the hair with comfort. Do thou prepare it and next time the King cometh, present it to him, teaching him how he shall cause the hair to fall off by such means, and he will love thee with exceeding love and honour thee." Quoth Abu Sir, "Thou speakest sooth, and Inshallah, I will at once make it." Then Abu Kir left him and mounted his mule and going to the King said to him, "I have a warning to give thee, O King of the age!" "And what is thy warning?" asked the King; and Abu Kir answered, "I hear that thou hast built a Hammam." Quoth the King, "Yes: there came to me a stranger and I builded the Baths for him, even as I builded the dyery for thee; and indeed 'tis a mighty fine Hammam and an ornament to my city;" and he went on to describe to him the virtues of the bath. Quoth the dyer, "Hast thou entered therein?"; and quoth the King, "Yes." Thereupon cried Abu Kir, "Alhamdolillah-praised be God,-who save thee from the mischief of yonder villain and foe of the Faith, I mean the bathkeeper!" The King enquired, "And what of him?"; and Abu Kir replied, "Know, O King of the age that, an thou enter the Hammam again, after this day, thou wilt surely perish." "How so?" said the King; and the dyer said, "This bath-keeper is thy foe and the foe of the Faith, and he induced thee not to stablish this Bath but because he designed therein to poison thee. He hath made for thee somewhat and he will present it to thee when thou enterest the Hammam, saying, 'This is a drug which, if one apply to his parts below the waist, will remove the hair with comfort.' Now it is no drug, but a drastic dreg and a deadly poison; for the Sultan of the Christians hath promised this obscene fellow to release to him his wife and children, an he will kill thee; for they are prisoners in the hands of that Sultan. I myself was captive with him in their land, but I opened a dyery and dyed for them various colours, so that they conciliated the King's heart to me and he bade me ask a boon of him. I sought of him freedom and he set me at liberty, whereupon I made my way to this city and seeing yonder man in the Hammam, said to him, 'How didst thou effect thine escape and win free with thy wife and children?' Quoth he, 'We ceased not to be in captivity, I and my wife and children, till one day the King of the Nazarenes held a court whereat I was present, amongst a number of others; and as I stood amongst the folk, I heard them open out on the Kings and name them, one after other, till they came to the name of the King of this city, whereupon the King of the Christians cried out 'Alas!' and said, 'None vexeth me[220] in the world, but the King of such a city![221] Whosoever will contrive me his slaughter I will give him all he shall ask.' So I went up to him and said, 'An I compass for thee his slaughter, wilt thou set me free, me and my wife and my children?' The King replied 'Yes; and I will give thee to boot whatso thou shalt desire.' So we agreed upon this and he sent me in a galleon to this city, where I presented myself to the King and he built me this Hammam. Now, therefore, I have nought to do but to slay him and return to the King of the Nazarenes, that I may redeem my children and my wife and ask a boon of him.’ Quoth I, “And how wilt thou go about to kill him?’; and quoth he, ‘By the simplest of all devices; for I have compounded him somewhat wherein is poison; so, when he cometh to the bath, I shall say to him, ‘Take this paste and anoint therewith thy parts below the waist for it will cause the hair[222] to drop off.’ So he will take it and apply it to himself and the poison will work in him a day and a night, till it reacheth his heart and destroyeth him; and meanwhile I shall have made off and none will know that it was I slew him.’” “When I heard this,” added Abu Kir, “I feared for thee, my benefactor, wherefore I have told thee of what is doing.” As soon as the King heard the dyer’s story, he was wroth with exceeding wrath and said to him, “Keep this secret.” Then he resolved to visit the Hammam, that he might dispel doubt by supplying certainty; and when he entered, Abu Sir doffed his dress and betaking himself as of wont to the service of the King, proceeded to glove him; after which he said to him, “O King of the age, I have made a drug which assisteth in plucking out the lower hair.” Cried the King, “Bring it to me”: so the barber brought it to him and the King, finding it nauseous of smell, was assured that it was poison; wherefore he was incensed and called out to his guards, saying, “Seize him!” Accordingly they seized him and the King donned his dress and returned to his palace, boiling with fury, whilst none knew the cause of his indignation; for, of the excess of his wrath he had acquainted no one therewith and none dared ask him. Then he repaired to the audience-chamber and causing Abu Sir to be brought before him, with his elbows pinioned, sent for his Sea-captain and said to him, “Take this villain and set him in a sack with two quintals of lime unslacked and tie its mouth over his head. Then lay him in a cock-boat and row out with him in front of my palace, where thou wilt see me sitting at the lattice. Do thou say to me, ‘Shall I cast him in?’ and if I answer, ‘Cast him!’ throw the sack into the sea, so the quick-lime may be slaked on him to the intent that he shall die drowned and burnt.”[223] “Hearkening and obeying;” quoth the Captain and taking Abu Sir from the presence carried him to an island facing the King’s palace, where he said to him, “Ho thou, I once visited thy Hammam and thou entreatedst me with honour and accomplishedst all my needs and I had great pleasure of thee: moreover, thou swarest that thou wouldst take no pay of me, and I love thee with a great love. So tell me how the case standeth between thee and the King and what abominable deed thou hast done with him that he is wroth with thee and hath commanded me that thou shouldst die this foul death.” Answered Abu Sir, “I have done nothing, nor weet I of any crime I have committed against him which meriteth this!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Sea-captain asked Abu Sir the cause of the King’s wrath with him, he replied, “By Allah, O my brother I have committed no crime against him which meriteth this!” Rejoined the Captain, “Verily, thou wast high in rank with the King, such as none ever won before thee, and all who are prosperous are envied. Haply some one was jealous of thy good fortune and threw out certain hints concerning thee to the King, by reason whereof he is become enraged against thee with rage so violent: but be of good cheer; no harm shall befal thee; for, even as thou entreatedst me generously, without acquaintanceship between me and thee, so now I will deliver thee. But, an if I release thee, thou must abide with me on this island till some galleon sail from our city to thy native land, when I will send thee thither therein.” Abu Sir kissed his hand and thanked him for that; after which the Captain fetched the quicklime and set it in a sack, together with a great stone, the size of a man, saying, “I put my trust in Allah!”[224] Then he gave the barber a net, saying, “Cast this net into the sea, so haply thou mayst take somewhat of fish. For I am bound to supply the King’s kitchen with fish every day; but to-day I have been distracted from fishing by this calamity which hath befallen thee, and I fear lest the cook’s boys come to me in quest of fish and find none. So, an thou take aught, they will find it and thou wilt veil my face,[225] whilst I go and play off my practice in front of the palace and feign to cast thee into the sea.” Answered Abu Sir, “I will fish the while; go thou and God help thee!” So the Captain set the sack in the boat and paddled till he came under the palace, where he saw the King seated at the lattice and said to him, “O King of the age, shall I cast him in?” “Cast him!” cried the King, and signed to him with his hand, when lo and behold!; something flashed like leven and fell into the sea. Now that which had fallen into the water was the King's seal-ring; and the same was enchanted in such way that, when the King was wroth with any one and was minded to slay him, he had but to sign to him with his right hand, whereon was the signet-ring, and therefrom issued a flash of lightning, which smote the object, and thereupon his head fell from between his shoulders; and the troops obeyed him not, nor did he overcome the men of might save by means of the ring. So, when it dropped from his finger, he concealed the matter and kept silence, for that dared not say, "My ring is fallen into the sea," for fear of the troops, lest they rise against him and slay him. On this wise it befel the King; but as regards Abu Sir, after the Captain had left him on the island he took the net and casting it into the sea presently drew it up full of fish; nor did he cease to throw it and pull it up full, till there was a great mound of fish before him. So he said in himself, "By Allah, his long while I have not eaten fish!"; and chose himself a large fat fish, saying, "When the Captain cometh back, I will bid him fry it for me, so I may dine on it." Then he cut its throat with a knife he had with him; but the knife stuck in its gills and there he saw the King's signet-ring; for the fish had swallowed it and Destiny had driven it to that island, where it had fallen into the net. He took the ring and drew it on his little finger,[226] not knowing its peculiar properties. Presently, up came two of the cook's boys in quest of fish and seeing Abu Sir, said to him, "O man, whither is the Captain gone?" "I know not," said he and signed to them with his right hand; when, behold, the heads of both underlings dropped off from between their shoulders. At this Abu Sir was amazed and said, "Would I wot who slew them!" And their case was grievous to him and he was still pondering it, when the Captain suddenly returned and seeing the mound of fishes and two men lying dead and the seal-ring on Abu Sir's finger, said to him, "O my brother, move not thy hand whereon is the signet-ring; else thou wilt kill me." Abu Sir wondered at this speech and kept his hand motionless; whereupon the Captain came up to him and said, "Who slew these two men?" "By Allah, O my brother I wot not!" "Thou sayst sooth; but tell me whence hadst thou that ring?" "I found it in this fish's gills." "True," said the Captain, "for I saw it fall flashing from the King's palace and disappear in the sea, what time he signed towards thee,[227] saying, Cast him in. So I cast the sack into the water, and it was then that the ring slipped from his finger and fell into the sea, where this fish swallowed it, and Allah drave it to thee, so that thou madest it thy prey, for this ring was thy lot; but kennest thou its property?" Said Abu Sir, "I knew not that it had any properties peculiar to it;" and the Captain said, "Learn, then, that the King's troops obey him not save for fear of this signet-ring, because it is spelled, and when he was wroth with any one and had a mind to kill him, he would sign at him therewith and his head would drop from between his shoulders; for there issued a flash of lightning from the ring and its ray smote the object of his wrath, who died forthright." At this, Abu Sir rejoiced with exceeding joy and said to the Captain, "Carry me back to the city;" and he said, "That will I, now that I no longer fear for thee from the King; for, wert thou to sign at him with thy hand, purposing to kill him, his head would fall down between thy hands; and if thou be minded to slay him and all his host, thou mayst slaughter them without let or hindrance." So saying, he embarked him in the boat and bore him back to the city; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Captain embarked with Abu Sir he bore him back to the city, so Abu Sir landed and going up to the palace, entered the council-chamber, where he found the King seated facing his officers, in sore cark and care by reason of the seal-ring and daring not tell any of his folk anent its loss. When he saw Abu Sir, he said to him, "Did we not cast thee into the sea? How hast thou contrived to come forth of it?" Abu Sir replied, "O King of the age, whenas thou badest throw me into the sea, thy Captain carried me to an island and asked me of the cause of thy wrath against me, saying, 'What hast thou done with the King, that he should decree thy death?' I answered, 'By Allah, I know not that I have wrought him any wrong!' Quoth he, 'Thou wast high in rank with the King, and haply some one envied thee and threw out certain hints concerning thee to him, so that he is become incensed against thee. But when I visited thee in thy Hammam, thou entreatedst me honourably, and I will requite thee thy hospitality to me by setting thee free and sending thee back to thine own land.’ Then he set a great stone in the sack in my stead and cast it into the sea; but, when thou signedst to him to throw me in, thy seal-ring dropped from thy finger into the main, and a fish swallowed it. Now I was on the island a-fishing, and this fish came up in the net with the others; whereupon I took it, intending to broil it; but, when I opened its belly, I found the signet-ring therein; so I took it and put it on my finger. Presently, up came two of the servants of the kitchen, questing fish, and I signed to them with my hand, knowing not the property of the seal-ring, and their heads fell off. Then the Captain came back, and seeing the ring on my finger, acquainted me with its spell; and behold, I have brought it back to thee, for that thou dealtest kindly by me and entreatedst me with the utmost honour, nor is that which thou hast done me of kindness lost upon me. Here is thy ring; take it! But an I have done with thee aught deserving of death, tell me my crime and slay me and thou shalt be absolved of sin in shedding my blood.” So saying, he pulled the ring from his finger and gave it to the King who, seeing Abu Sir’s noble conduct, took the ring and put it on and felt life return to him afresh. Then he rose to his feet and embracing the barber, said to him, “O man, thou art indeed of the flower of the well-born! Blame me not, but forgive me the wrong I have done thee. Had any but thou gotten hold of this ring, he had never restored it to me.” Answered Abu Sir, “O King of the age, an thou wouldst have me forgive thee, tell me what was my fault which drew down thine anger upon me, so that thou commandedst to do me die.” Rejoined the King, “By Allah, ’tis clear to me that thou art free and guiltless in all things of offence since thou hast done this good deed; only the dyer denounced thee to me in such and such words;” and he told him all that Abu Kir had said. Abu Sir replied, “By Allah, O King of the age, I know no King of the Nazarenes nor during my days have ever journeyed to a Christian country, nor did it ever come into my mind to kill thee. But this dyer was my comrade and neighbour in the city of Alexandria where life was straitened upon us; therefore we departed thence, to seek our fortunes, by reason of the narrowness of our means at home, after we had recited the Opening Chapter of the Koran together, pledging ourselves that he who got work should feed him who lacked work; and there befel me with him such and such things.” Then he went on to relate to the King all that had betided him with Abu Kir the dyer; how he had robbed him of his dirhams and had left him alone and sick in the Khan-closet and how the door-keeper had fed him of his own monies till Allah recovered him of his sickness, when he went forth and walked about the city with his budget, as was his wont, till he espied a dyery, about which the folk were crowding; so he looked at the door and seeing Abu Kir seated on a bench there, went in to salute him, whereupon he accused him of being a thief and beat him a grievous beating; brief, he told him his whole tale, from first to last, and added, “O King of the age, ’twas he who counselled me to make the depilatory and present it to thee, saying, ‘The Hammam is perfect in all things but that it lacketh this’; and know, O King of the age, that this drug is harmless and we use it in our land where ’tis one of the requisites of the bath; but I had forgotten it: so, when the dyer visited the Hammam I entreated him with honour and he reminded me of it, and enjoined me to make it forthwith. But do thou send after the porter of such a Khan and the workmen of the dyery and question them all of that which I have told thee.” Accordingly the King sent for them and questioned them one and all and they acquainted him with the truth of the matter. Then he summoned the dyer, saying, “Bring him barefooted, bareheaded and with elbows pinioned!” Now he was sitting in his house, rejoicing in Abu Sir’s death; but ere he could be ware, the King’s guards rushed in upon him and cuffed him on the nape, after which they bound him and bore him into the presence, where he saw Abu Sir seated by the King’s side and the door-keeper of the Khan and workmen of the dyery standing before him. Quoth the door-keeper to him, “Is no this thy comrade whom thou robbedst of his silvers and leftest with me sick in the closet doing such and such by him?” And the workmen said to him, “Is not this he whom thou badest us seize and beat?” Therewith Abu Kir’s baseness was made manifest to the King and he was certified that he merited torture yet sorer than the torments of Munkar and Nakhr.[228] So he said to his guards, “Take him and parade him about the city and the markets;” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fortieth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicous King, that when the King heard the words spoken by the door-keeper of the Caravanserai and the workmen of the dyery, he was certified of the vileness of Abu Kir; so he upbraided him with flout and fleer and said to his guards, “Take him and parade him about the city and the market-streets; then set him in a sack and cast him into the sea.” Whereupon quoth Abu Sir, “O King of the age, accept my intercession for him, for I pardon him all he hath done with me.” But quoth the King, “An thou pardon him all his offences against thee, I cannot pardon him his offences against me.” And he cried out, saying, “Take him.” So they took him and paraded him about the city, after which they set him in a sack with quicklime and cast him into the sea, and he died, drowned and burnt. Then said the King to the barber, “O Abu Sir, ask of me what thou wilt and it shall be given thee.” And he answered, saying, “I ask of thee to send me back to my own country, for I care no longer to tarry here.” Then the King gifted him great store of gifts, over and above that which he had whilome bestowed on him; and amongst the rest a galleon freighted with goods; and the crew of this galleon were Mamelukes; so he gave him these also, after offering to make him his Wazir whereto the barber consented not. Presently he farewelled the King and set sail in his own ship manned by his own crew; nor did he cast anchor till he reached Alexandria and made fast to the shore there. Then he landed and one of his Mamelukes, seeing a sack on the beach, said to Abu Sir, “O my lord, there is a great heavy sack on the sea-shore, with the mouth tied up and I know not what therein.” So Abu Sir came up and opening the sack, found therein the remains of Abu Kir, which the sea had borne thither. He took it forth and burying it near Alexandria, built over the grave a place of visitation and endowed it with mortmain writing over the door these couplets,

“Man is known among me as his deeds attest; * Which make noble
origin manifest:
Backbite not, lest other men bit thy back; * Who saith aught, the
same shall to him be addrest:
Shun immodest words and indecent speech * When thou speakest in

earnest or e’en in jest.[229]
We bear with the dog which behaves itself * But the lion is
chained lest he prove a pest:
And the desert carcases swim the main * While union-pearls on the
sandbank rest[230] :
No sparrow would hustle the sparrow-hawk, * Were it not by folly
and weakness prest:
A-sky is written on page of air * ‘Who doth kindly of kindness
shall have the best!’
‘Ware of gathering sugar from bitter gourd:[231] * ‘Twill
prove to its origin like in taste.”

After this Abu Sir abode awhile, till Allah took him to Himself, and they buried him hard by the tomb of his comrade Abu Kir; wherefore that place was called Abu Kir and Abu Sir; but it is now known as Abu Kir only. This, then, is that which hath reached us of their history, and glory be to Him who endureth for ever and aye and by whose will interchange the night and the day. And of the stories they tell is one anent

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ABDULLAH[232] THE FISHERMAN AND ABDULLAH THE MERMAN.

There was once a Fisherman named Abdullah, who had a large family, to wit, nine children and their mother, so was he poor, very poor, owning naught save his net. Every day he used to go to the sea a-fishing, and if he caught little, he sold it and spent the price on his children, after the measure of that which Allah vouchsafed him of provision; but if he caught much, he would cook a good mess of meat and buy fruit and spend without stint till nothing was left him, saying to himself, "The daily bread of to-morrow will come to-morrow." Presently, his wife gave birth to another child, making a total of ten, and it chanced that day that he had nothing at all; so she said to him, "O my master, see and get me somewhat wherewithal I may sustain myself." Quoth he, "I am going (under favour of Almighty Allah) this day seawards to fish on the luck of this new-born child, that we may see its fair fortune;" and quoth she, "Put thy trust in Allah!" So he took his net and went down to the sea-shore, where he cast it on the luck of the little one, saying, "O my God, make his living of ease not of unease, and abundant, not scant!" Then he waited awhile and drew in the net, which came up full of rubbish and sand and pebbles and weeds, and he saw therein no sign of fish neither muchel nor little. He cast it again and waited, then drew it in, but found no catch in it, and threw it a third and a fourth and a fifth time still not a single fish came up. So he removed to another place beseeching his daily bread of Allah Almighty and thus he kept working till the end of the day, but caught not so much as a minnow;[233] whereat he fell a-marvelling in himself and said self-communing, "Hath Allah then created this new-born child without lot of provision? This may never, never be. He who slitteth the corners of the lips hath pledged Himself for its provision, because Almighty Allah is the Bountiful, the Provider!"[234] So saying, he shouldered his net and turned him homewards, broken-spirited and heavy at heart about his family, for that he had left them without food, more by token that his wife was in the straw. And as he continued trudging along and saying in himself, "How shall I do and what shall I say to the children to- night?” he came to a baker’s oven and saw a crowd about it; for the season was one of dearth and in those days food was scant with the folk; so people were proffering the baker money, but he paid no heed to any of them, by reason of the dense crowd. The fisherman stood looking and snuffing he smell of the hot bread (and indeed his soul longed for it, by reason of his hunger), till the baker caught sight of him and cried out to him, “Come hither, O fisherman!” So he went up to him, and the baker said, “Dost thou want bread?” But he was silent. Quoth the baker, “Speak out and be not ashamed, for Allah is bountiful. An thou have no silver, I will give thee bread and have patience with thee till weal betide thee.” And quoth the fisherman, “By Allah, O master, I have indeed no money! But give me bread enough for my family, and I will leave thee this net in pawn till the morrow.” Rejoined the baker, “Nay, my poor fellow, this net is thy shop and the door of thy daily subsistence; so an thou pawn it, wherewithal wilt thou fish? Tell me how much will suffice thee?”; and replied the fisherman, “Ten half-dirhams’ worth.”[235] So he gave him ten Nusfs worth of bread and ten in silver saying, “Take these ten Nusfs and cook thyself a mess of meat therewith; so wilt thou owe me twenty, for which bring me fish to-morrow; but, an thou catch nothing again, come and take thy bread and thy ten Nusfs, and I will have patience with thee till better luck betide thee,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Forty-first Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the baker said to the fisherman, “Take whatso thou needest and I will have patience with thee till better luck betide thee, after the which thou shalt bring me fish for all thou owest me.” Said the fisherman, Almighty Allah reward thee, and requite thee for me with all good!” Then he took the bread and the coins and went away, glad at heart, and buying what he could returned to his wife whom he found sitting up, soothing the children, who were weeping for hunger, and saying to them, “At once your father will be here with what ye may eat.” So he set the bread before them and they ate, whilst he told his wife what had befallen him, and she said, “Allah is bountiful.”[236] On the morrow, he shouldered his net and went forth of his house, saying, “I beseech thee, O Lord, to vouchsafe me this day that which shall whiten my face with the baker!”[237] When he came to the sea- shore, he proceeded to cast his net and pull it in; but there came up no fish therein; and he ceased not to toil thus till ended day but he caught nothing. Then he set out homewards, in great concern, and the way to his house lay past the baker’s oven; so he said to himself, “How shall I go home? But I will hasten my pace that the baker may not see me.” When he reached the shop, he saw a crowd about it and walked the faster, being ashamed to face his creditor; but the baker raised his eyes to him and cried out to him, saying, “Ho, fisherman! Come and take thy bread and spending-money. Meseems thou forgettest.” Quoth Abdullah, “By Allah, I had not forgotten; but I was ashamed to face thee, because I have caught no fish this day;” and quoth the baker, “Be not ashamed. Said I not to thee, At thy leisure,[238] till better luck betide thee?” Then he gave him the bread and the ten Nusfs and he returned and told his wife, who said, “Allah is bountiful. Better luck shall yet betide thee and thou shalt give the baker his due, Inshallah.” He ceased not doing on this wise forty days, betaking himself daily to the sea, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, and returning home without fish; and still he took bread and spending-money of the baker, who never once named the fish to him nor neglected him nor kept him waiting like the folk,[239] but gave him the bread and the ten half-dirhams without delay. Whenever the fisherman said to him, “O my brother, reckon with me,” he would say, “Be off:[240] this is no time for reckoning. Wait till better luck betide thee, and then I will reckon with thee.” And the fisherman would bless him and go away thanking him. On the one-and-fortieth day, he said to his wife, “I have a mind to tear up the net and be quit of this life.” She asked, “Why wilt thou do this?”; and he answered, “Meseems there is an end of my getting my daily bread from the waters. How long shall this last? By Allah, I burn with shame before the baker and I will go no more to the sea, so I may not pass by his oven, for I have none other way home; and every time I pass he calleth me and giveth me the bread and the ten silvers. How much longer shall I run in debt to him?” The wife replied, “Alhamdolillah — lauded be the Lord, the Most High, who hath inclined his heart to thee, so that he giveth thee our daily bread!

What dislikest thou in this?"; and the husband rejoined, "I owe him now a mighty great sum of dirhams, and there is no doubt but that he will demand his due." "Hath he vexed thee with words?" "No, on the contrary, he still refuseth to reckon with me, saying, 'Wait till better luck betide thee.'" "If he press thee, say to him, 'Wait till there come the good luck for which we hope, thou and I.'" "And when will the good luck come that we hope for?" "Allah is bountiful." "Sooth thou speakest!" So saying he shouldered his net and went down to the sea-side, praying, "O Lord provide thou me, though but with one fish, that I may give it to the baker!" And he cast his net into the sea and pulling it in, found it heavy; so he tugged at it till he was tired with sore travail. But when he got it ashore, he found in it a dead donkey swollen and stinking; whereat his senses sickened and he freed it from the net, saying, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Indeed, I can no more! I say to that wife of mine, 'There is no more provision for me in the waters; let me leave this craft.' And she still answereth me, 'Allah is bountiful: good will presently betide thee.' Is this dead ass the good whereof she speaketh?" And he grieved with the sorest grief. Then he turned to another place, so he might remove from the stench of the dead donkey, and cast his net there and waited a full hour: then he drew it in and found it heavy. Thereupon quoth he, "Good; we are hauling up all the dead donkeys in the sea and ridding it of its rubbish.[241] " However he gave not over tugging at the net, till blood came from the palms of his hands, and when he got it ashore, he saw a man[242] in it and took him for one of the Ifrits of the lord Solomon, whom he was wont to imprison in cucurbits of brass and cast him into the main, believing that the vessel had burst for length of years and that the Ifrit had come forth and fallen into the net; wherefore he fled from him, crying out and saying, "Mercy, mercy, O Ifrit of Solomon!" But the Adamite called out to him from within the net and said, "Come hither, O fisherman, and flee not from me; for I am human like thyself. Release me, so thou mayst get a recompense for me of Allah." Whenas he heard these words, the fisherman took heart and coming up to him, said to him, "Art thou not an Ifrit of the Jinn?"; and replied the other, "No: I am a mortal and a believer in Allah and His Apostle." Asked the fisherman, "Who threw thee into the sea?"; and the other answered, "I am of the children of the sea, and was going about therein, when thou castest the net over me. We are people who obey Allah's commandments and show loving-kindness unto the creatures of the Almighty, and but that I fear and dread to be of the disobedient, I had torn thy net; but I accept that which the Lord hath decreed unto me; wherefore by setting me free thou becomest my owner and I thy captive. Wilt thou then set me free for the love[243] of Almighty Allah and make a covenant with me and become my comrade? I will come to thee every day in this place, and do thou come to me and bring me a gift of the fruits of the land. For with you are grapes and figs and water-melons and peaches and pomegranates and so forth, and all thou bringest me will be acceptable unto me. Moreover, with us are coral and pearls and chrysolites and emeralds and rubies and other gems, and I will fill thee the basket, wherein thou bringest me the fruit, with precious stones of the jewels of the sea.[244] What sayst thou to this, O my brother?" Quoth the fisherman, "Be the Opening Chapter of the Koran between thee and me upon this!" So they recited together the F6tihah, and the fisherman loosed the Merman from the net and asked him, "What is thy name?" He replied, "My name is Abdullah of the sea; and if thou come hither and see me not, call out and say, 'Where art thou, O Abdullah, O Merman?' and I will be with thee." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Forty-second Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdullah of the sea thus enjoined the other, "An thou come hither and see me not, call out and say, 'Where art thou, O Abdullah, O Merman?' and I will be with thee forthwith. But thou, what is thy name?" Quoth the fisherman, "My name also is Abdullah;" and quoth the other, "Thou art Abdullah of the land and I am Abdullah of the Sea; but tarry here till I go and fetch thee a present." And the fisherman repented him of having released him and said to himself, "How know I that he will come back to me? Indeed, he beguiled me, so that I loosed him, and now he will laugh at me.[245] Had I kept him, I might have made a show of him for the diversion of the city-folk and taken silver from all men and gone with him to the houses of the great.” And he repented him of having set him free and said, “Thou hast let thy prey from thy hand away.” But, as he was thus bemoaning his folly in releasing the prisoner, behold, Abdullah the merman returned to him, with both hands full of pearls and coral and smaragds and rubies and other gems, and said to him, “Take these, O my brother, and excuse me; had I a fish-basket[246] I would have filled it for thee.” Abdullah the fisherman rejoiced and took the jewels from the Merman who said to him, “Every day come hither, before sunrise,” and farewelling him, went down into the sea; whilst the other returned to the city, rejoicing, and stayed not walking till he came to the baker’s oven and said to him, “O my brother, good luck is come to us at last; so do thou reckon with me.” Answered the baker, “There needeth no reckoning. An thou have aught, give it me: and if thou have naught, take thy bread and spending-money and begone, against weal betide thee.” Rejoined the fisherman, “O my friend, indeed weal hath betided me of Allah’s bounty, and I owe thee much money; but take this.” So saying, he took for him a handful of the pearls and coral and rubies and other jewels he had with him (the handful being about half of the whole), and gave them to the baker, saying, “Give me some ready money to spend this day, till I sell these jewels.” So the baker gave him all the money he had in hand and all the bread in his basket and rejoiced in the jewels, saying, “I am thy slave and thy servant.” Then he set all the bread on his head and following the fisherman home, gave it to his wife and children, after which he repaired to the market and brought meat and greens and all manner fruit. Moreover, he left his oven and abode with Abdullah all that day, busying himself in his service and fulfilling all his affairs. Said the fisherman, “O my brother, thou weariest thyself;” and the baker replied, “This is my duty, for I am become thy servant and thou hast overwhelmed me with thy boons.” Rejoined the fisherman, “’Tis thou who wast my benefactor in the days of dearth and distress.” And the baker passed that night with him enjoying good cheer and became a faithful friend to him. Then the fisherman told his wife what had befallen him with the Merman, whereat she rejoiced and said, “Keep thy secret, lest the government come down upon thee;” but he said, “Though I keep my secret from all men, yet will I not hide it from the baker.” On the morrow, he rose betimes and, shouldering a basket which he had filled in the evening with all manner fruits, repaired before sunrise to the sea-shore, and setting down the crate on the water-edge called out, “Where art thou, O Abdullah, O Merman?” He answered, “Here am I, at thy service;” and came forth to him. The fisherman gave him the fruit and he took it and plunging into the sea with it, was absent a full hour, after which time he came up, with the fish-basket full of all kinds of gems and jewels. The fisherman set it on his head and went away; and, when he came to the oven, the baker said to him, “O my lord, I have baked thee forty bunns[247] and have sent them to thy house; and now I will bake some firsts and as soon as all is done, I will bring it to thy house and go and fetch thee greens and meat.” Abdullah handed to him three handfuls of jewels out of the fish-basket and going home, set it down there. Then he took a gem of price of each sort and going to the jewel-bazar, stopped at the Syndic’s shop and said to him, “Buy these precious stones of me.” “Show them to me,” said the Shaykh. So he showed them to him and the jeweller said, “Hast thou aught beside these?”; and Abdullah replied, “I have a basket-full at home.” The Syndic asked, “And where is thine house?” and the fisherman answered, “In such a quarter”; whereupon the Shaykh took the jewels from him and said to his followers, “Lay hold of him, for he is the thief who stole the jewellery of the Queen, the wife of our Sultan.” And he bade beat him. So they bastinadoed him and pinioned him; after which the Syndic and all the people of the jewel-market arose and set out for the palace, saying, “We have caught the thief.” Quoth one, “None robbed such an one but this villain,” and quoth another, “’Twas none but he stole all that was in such an one’s house;” and some said this and others said that. All this while he was silent and spake not a word nor returned a reply, till they brought him before the King, to whom said the Syndic, “O King of the age, when the Queen’s necklace was stolen, thou sentest to acquaint us of the theft, requiring of us the discovery of the culprit; wherefore I strove beyond the rest of the folk and have taken the thief for thee. Here he standeth before thee, and these be the jewels we have recovered from him.” Thereupon the King said to the chief eunuch, “Carry these jewels for the Queen to see, and say to her, ‘Are these thy property thou hast lost?’” So the eunuch took the jewels and went in with them to the Queen, who seeing their lustre marvelled at them and sent to the King to say, “I have found my necklace in my own place and these jewels are not my property; nay, they are finer than those of my necklace. So oppress not the man;” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Forty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the King’s wife sent to the King to say, “These are not my property; nay, these gems are finer than those of my necklace. So oppress not this man; but, if he will sell them, buy them for thy daughter Umm al-Su’ъd,[248] that we may set them in a necklace for her.” When the eunuch returned and told the King what the Queen said, he damned the Syndic of the jewellers, him and his company, with the damnation of Бd and Thamъd,[249] and they said to him, “O King of the age, we knew this man for a poor fisherman and deemed such things too much for him,[250] so we supposed that he had stolen them.” Cried the King, “O ye filthy villains, begrudge ye a True Believer good fortune? Why did ye not make due enquiry of him? Haply Allah Almighty hath vouchsafed him these things from a source whereupon he reckoned not. Why did ye make him out a thief and disgrace him amongst the folk? Begone, and may Allah never bless you!” So they went out affrighted and the King said to Abdullah, “O man (Allah bless thee in all He hath bestowed on thee!), no harm shall befal thee; but tell me truly, whence gottest thou these jewels; for I am a King yet have I not the like of them.” The fisherman replied, “O King of the age, I have a fish-basket full of them at home and the case is thus and thus.” Then he told him of his friendship with the Merman, adding, “We have made a covenant together that I shall bring him every day a basket full of fruit and that he shall fill me the basket with these jewels.” Quoth the King, O man this is thy lucky lot; but wealth needeth rank,[251] I will defend thee for the present against men’s domineering; but haply I shall be deposed or die and another rule in my stead, and he shall slay thee because of his love of the goods of this world and his covetousness. So I am minded to marry thee to my daughter and make thee my Wazir and bequeath thee the kingdom after me, so none may hanker for thy riches when I am gone. Then said he, “Hie with this man to the Hammam.” So they bore him to the Baths and bathed his body and robed him in royal raiment, after which they brought him back to the King, and he made him his Wazir and sent to his house couriers and the soldiers of his guard and all the wives of the notables, who clad his wife and children in Kingly costume and mounting the woman in a horse-litter, with the little child in her lap, walked before her to the palace, escorted by the troops and couriers and officers. They also brought her elder children in to the King who made much of them, taking them in his lap and seating them by his side; for they were nine children male and the King had no son and heir nor had he been blessed with any child save this one daughter, Umm al-Su’ud hight. Meanwhile the Queen entreated Abdullah’s wife with honour and bestowed favours on her and made her Waziress to her. Then the King bade draw up the marriage contract between his daughter and Abdullah of the Land[252] who assigned to her, as her dower, all the gems and precious stones in his possession, and they opened the gates of festival. The King commanded by proclamation to decorate the city, in honour of his daughter’s wedding. Then Abdullah went in unto the Princess and abated her maidenhead. Next morning the King looked out of the lattice and saw Abdullah carrying on his head a fish-crate full of fruit. So he called to him, “What hast thou there, O my son- in-law, and whither wendest thou?” The fisherman replied, “To my friend, Abdullah the Merman;” and the King said, “O my son-in- law, this is no time to go to thy comrade.” Quoth Abdullah, “Indeed, I fear to break tryst with him, lest he reckon me a liar and say, ‘The things of the world have diverted thee from me,’” and quoth the King, “Thou speakest sooth: go to thy friend and God help thee!” So he walked through the city on his way to his companion; and, as he went, he heard the folk who knew him say, “There goeth the King’s son-in-law to exchange fruit for gems;” whilst those who knew him not said, “Ho, fellow, how much a pound? Come, sell to me.” And he answered, saying, “Wait till I come back to thee,” for that he would not hurt the feelings of any man. Then he fared on till he came to the sea-shore and foregathered with his friend Abdullah the Merman, to whom he delivered the fruit, receiving gems in return. He ceased not doing thus till one day, as he passed by the baker’s oven, he found it closed; and so he did ten days, during which time the oven remained shut and he saw nothing of the baker. So he said to himself, “This is a strange thing! Would I wot whither the baker went!” Then he enquired of his neighbour, saying, “O my brother, where is thy neighbour the baker and what hath Allah done with him?”; and the other responded, “O my lord, he is sick and cometh not forth of his house.” “Where is his house?” asked Abdullah; and the other answered, “In such a quarter.” So he fared thither and enquired of him; but, when he knocked at the door, the baker looked out of window and seeing his friend the fisherman, full basket on head, came down and opened the door to him. Abdullah entered and throwing himself on the baker embraced him and wept, saying, “How dost thou, O my friend? Every day, I pass by thine oven and see it unopened; so I asked thy neighbour, who told me that thou wast sick; therefore I enquired for thy house, that I might see thee.” Answered the baker, “Allah requite thee for me with all good! Nothing aileth me; but it reached me that the King had taken thee, for that certain of the folk had lied against thee and accused thee of being a robber wherefore I feared and shut shop and hid myself.” “True,” said Abdullah and told him all that had befallen him with the King and the Shaykh of the jewellers’ bazar, adding “Moreover, the King hath given me his daughter to wife and made me his Wazir;” and, after a pause, “So do thou take what is in this fish-basket to thy share and fear naught.” Then he left him, after having done away from him his affright, and returned with the empty crate to the King, who said to him, “O my son-in-law, ’twould seem thou hast not foregathered with thy friend the Merman to-day.” Replied Abdullah, “I went to him but that which he gave me I gave to my gossip the baker, to whom I owe kindness.” “Who may be this baker?” asked the King; and the fisherman answered, “He is a benevolent man, who did with me thus and thus in the days of my poverty and never neglected me a single day nor hurt my feelings.” Quoth the King, “What is his name?”; and quoth the fisherman “His name is Abdullah the Baker; and my name is Abdullah of the Land and that of my friend the Merman Abdullah of the Sea.” Rejoined the King, “And my name also is Abdullah; and the servants of Allah[253] are all brethren. So send and fetch thy friend the baker, that I may make him my Wazir of the left."[254] So he sent for the baker who speedily came to the presence, and the King invested him with the Wazirial uniform and made him Wazir of the left, making Abdullah of the Land his Wazir of the right. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Forty-fourth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the King made his son-in-law, Abdullah of the Land, Wazir of the right and Abdullah the baker Wazir of the left. In such condition the fisherman abode a whole year, every day carrying for the Merman the crate full of fruit and receiving it back, full of jewels; and when fruit failed from the gardens, he carried him raisins and almonds and filberts and walnuts and figs and so forth; and all that he brought for him the Merman accepted and returned him the fish-basket full of jewels according to his custom. Now it chanced one day that he carried him the crate, full of dry[255] fruits as was his wont, and his friend took them from him. Then they sat down to converse, Abdullah the fisherman on the beach and Abdullah the Merman in the water near the shore, and discoursed; and the talk went round between them, till it fell upon the subject of sepulchres; whereat quoth the Merman, "O my brother, they say that the Prophet (whom Allah assain and save!) is buried with you on the land. Knowest thou his tomb?" Abdullah replied, "Yes; it lieth in a city called Yathrib.[256] " Asked the Merman, "And do the people of the land visit it?" "Yes," answered the fisherman, and the other said, "I give you joy, O people of the land, of visiting[257] that noble Prophet and compassionate, which whoso visiteth meriteth his intercession! Hast thou made such visitation, O my brother?" Replied the fisherman, "No: for I was poor and had not the necessary sum[258] to spend by the way, nor have I been in easy case but since I knew thee and thou bestowedst on me this good fortune. But such visitation behoveth me after I have pilgrimed to the Holy House of Allah[259] and naught withholdeth me therefrom but my love to thee, because I cannot leave thee for one day." Rejoined the Merman, "And dost thou set the love of me before the visitation of the tomb of Mohammed (whom Allah assain and save!), who shall intercede for thee on the Day of Review before Allah and shall save thee from the Fire and through whose intercession thou shalt enter Paradise? And dost thou, for the love of the world, neglect to visit the tomb of thy Prophet[260] Mohammed, whom God bless and preserve?” Replied Abdullah, “No, by Allah, I set the visitation of the Prophet’s tomb above all else, and I crave thy leave to pray before it this year.” The Merman rejoined, “I grant thee leave, on condition that when thou shalt stand by his sepulchre thou salute him for me with the Salam. Furthermore I have a trust to give thee; so come thou with me into the sea, that I may carry thee to my city and entertain thee in my house and give thee a deposit; which when thou takest thy station by the Prophet’s tomb, do thou lay thereon, saying, ‘O apostle of Allah, Abdullah the Merman saluteth thee, and sendeth thee this present, imploring thine intercession to save him from the Fire.’” Said the fisherman, “O my brother, thou wast created in the water and water is thy abiding-place and doth thee no hurt, but, if thou shouldst come forth to the land, would any harm betide thee?” The Merman replied, “Yes; my body would dry up and the breezes of the land would blow upon me and I should die.” Rejoined the fisherman, “And I, in like manner, was created on the land and the land is my abiding-place; but, an I went down into the sea, the water would enter my belly and choke me and I should die.” Retorted the other, “Have no fear for that, for I will bring thee an ointment, wherewith when thou hast anointed thy body, the water will do thee no hurt, though thou shouldst pass the lave of thy life going about in the great deep: and thou shalt lie down and rise up in the sea and naught shall harm thee.” Quoth the fisherman, “An the case by thus, well and good; but bring me the ointment, so that I may make trial of it;” and quoth the Merman, “So be it;” then, taking the fish-basket disappeared in the depths. He was absent awhile, and presently returned with an unguent as it were the fat of beef, yellow as gold and sweet of savour. Asked the fisherman, “What is this, O my brother?”; and answered the Merman, “’Tis the liver-fat of a kind of fish called the Dandбn,[261] which is the biggest of all fishes and the fiercest of our foes. His bulk is greater than that of any beast of the land, and were he to meet a camel or an elephant, he would swallow it at a single mouthful.” Abdullah enquired, “O my brother, what doth this baleful beast?”; and the Merman replied, “He eateth of the beasts of the sea. Hast thou not heard the saying, ‘Like the fishes of the sea: forcible eateth feeble?[262] "' "True; but have you many of these Dandans in the sea?" "Yes, there be many of them with us. None can tell their tale save Almighty Allah." "Verily, I fear lest, if I go down with thee into the deep a creature of this kind fall in with me and devour me." "Have no fear: when he seeth thee, he will know thee for a son of Adam and will fear thee and flee. He dreadeth none in the sea as he dreadeth a son of Adam; for that an he eateth a man he dieth forthright, because human fat is a deadly poison to this kind of creature; nor do we collect its liver-speck save by means of a man, when he falleth into the sea and is drowned; for that his semblance becometh changed and ofttimes his flesh is torn; so the Dandan eateth him, deeming him the same of the denizens of the deep, and dieth. Then we light upon our enemy dead and take the speck of his liver and grease ourselves so that we can over-wander the main in safety. Also, wherever there is a son of Adam, though there be in that place an hundred or two hundred or a thousand or more of these beasts, all die forthright an they but hear him, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdullah of the sea said to Abdullah of the Land, "And if a thousand or more of this kind hear an Adamite cry a single cry, forthright all die nor hath one of them power to remove from his place; so, whenever a son of Adam falleth into the sea, we take him and anoint him with this fat and go round about the depths with him, and whenever we see a Dandan or two or three or more, we bid him cry out and they all die forthright for his once crying." Quoth the fisherman, "I put my trust in Allah;" and, doffing his clothes, buried them in a hole which he dug in the beach; after which he rubbed his body from head to heels with that ointment. Then he descended into the water and diving, opened his eyes and the brine did him no hurt. So he walked right and left, and if he would, he rose to the sea-face, and if he would, he sank to the base. And he beheld the water as it were a tent over his head; yet it wrought him no hurt. Then said the Merman to him, "What seest thou, O my brother?"; and said he, "O my brother, I see naught save weal[263] ; and indeed thou spakest truth in that which thou saidst to me; for the water doth me no hurt."

Quoth the Merman, “Follow me.” So he followed him and they ceased not faring on from place to place, whilst Abdullah discovered before him and on his right and left mountains of water and solaced himself by gazing thereon and on the various sorts of fish, some great and some small, which disported themselves in the main. Some of them favoured buffaloes[264] others oxen and others dogs and yet others human beings; but all to which they drew near fled, whenas they saw the fisherman, who said to the Merman, “O my brother, how is it that I see all the fish, to which we draw near, flee from us afar?” Said the other, “Because they fear thee, for all things that Allah hath made fear the son of Adam.[265] “ The fisherman ceased not to divert himself with the marvels of the deep, till they came to a high mountain and fared on beside it. Suddenly, he heard a mighty loud cry and turning, saw some black thing, the bigness of a camel or bigger, coming down upon him from the liquid mountain and crying out. So he asked his friend, “What is this, O my brother?”; and the Merman answered, “This is the Dandan. He cometh in search of me, seeking to devour me; so cry out at him, O my brother, ere he reach us; else he will snatch me up and devour me.” Accordingly Abdullah cried out at the beast and behold, it fell down dead; which when he saw, he said, “Glorified be the perfection of God and His praise! I smote it not with the sword nor knife; how cometh it that, for all the vastness of the creature’s bulk, it could not bear my cry, but died?” Replied the Merman, “Marvel not, for, by Allah, O my brother, were there a thousand or two thousand of these creatures, yet could they not endure the cry of a son of Adam.” Then they walked on, till they made a city, whose inhabitants the fisherman saw to be all women, there being no male among them; so he said to his companion, “O my brother, what city is this and what are these women?” “This is the city of women; for its inhabitants are of the women of the sea.” “Are there any males among them?” “No!” “Then how do they conceive and bear young, without males?[266] “ “The King of the sea banisheth them hither and they conceive not neither bear children. All the women of the sea, with whom he is wroth, he sendeth to this city, and they cannot leave it; for, should one of them come forth therefrom, any of the beasts of the sea that saw her would eat her. But in other cities of the main there are both males and females.”

Thereupon asked the fisherman, “Are there then other cities than this in the sea?”; and the Merman answered, “There are many.” Quoth the fisherman, “And is there a Sultan over you in the sea?” “Yes,” quoth the Merman. Then said Abdullah “O my brother, I have indeed seen many marvels in the main!” But the Merman said, “And what hast thou seen of its marvels?[267] Hast thou not heard the saying, ‘The marvels of the sea are more manifold than the marvels of the land?’” “True,” rejoined the fisherman and fell to gazing upon those women, whom he saw with faces like moons and hair like women’s hair, but their hands and feet were in their middle and they had tails like fishes’ tails. Now when the Merman had shown him the people of the city, he carried him forth therefrom and forewalked him to another city, which he found full of folk, both males and females, formed like the women aforesaid and having tails; but there was neither selling nor buying amongst them, as with the people of the land, nor were they clothed, but went all naked and with their same uncovered. Said Abdullah “O my brother, I see males and females alike with their shame exposed,[268] “ and the other said, “This is because the folk of the sea have no clothes.” Asked the fisherman, “And how do they when they marry?” The Merman answered, “They do not marry; but every one who taketh a liking to a female doth his will of her.” Quoth Abdullah, “This is unlawful! Why doth he not ask her in marriage and dower her and make her a wedding festival and marry her, in accordance with that which is pleasing to Allah and His Apostle?”; and quoth the other, “We are not all of one religion: some of us are Moslems, believers in The Unity, others Nazarenes and what not else; and each marrieth in accordance with the ordinances of his creed; but those of us who marry are mostly Moslems.” The fisherman continued, “Ye are naked and have neither buying nor selling among you: of what then is your wives’ dowry? Do ye give them jewels and precious stones?” The Merman rejoined, “Gems with us are only stones without worth: but upon the Moslem who is minded to marry they impose a dowry of a certain number of fishes of various kinds that he must catch, a thousand or two thousand, more or less, according to the agreement between himself and the bride’s father. As soon as he bringeth the amount required, the families of the bride and bridegroom assemble and eat the marriage-banquet; after which they bring him in to his bride, and he catcheth fish and feedeth her; or, if he be unable, she catcheth fish and feedeth him." Enquired the fisherman, "And how if a woman commit adultery?"; and the other replied, "If a woman be convicted of this case, they banish her to the City of Women; and if she be with child by her gallant, they leave her till she be delivered; then, if she give birth to a girl, they banish her with her, calling her adulteress, daughter of adulteress, and she abideth a maid till she die; but, if the woman give birth to a male child, they carry it to the Sultan of the Sea, who putteth it to death." Abdullah marvelled at this and the Merman carried him to another city and thence to another and yet another, till he had diverted him with the sight of eighty cities, and he saw the people of each city unlike those of every other. Then said he to the Merman, "O my brother, are there yet other cities in the main?"; whereto said the other, "And what hast thou seen of the cities of the sea and its wondrous spectacles? By the virtue of the noble Prophet, the benign, the compassionate, were I to show thee every day a thousand cities for a thousand years, and in each city a thousand marvels, I should not have shown thee one carat of the four-and- twenty carats of the cities of the sea and its miracles! I have but shown thee our own province and country, nothing more." The fisherman thus resumed, "O my brother, since this is the case, what I have seen sufficeth me, for I am a-weary of eating fish, and these fourscore days I have been in thy company, thou hast fed me, morning and night, upon nothing but raw fish, neither broiled nor boiled." "And what is broiled or boiled?" "We broil fish with fire and boil it in water and dress it in various ways and make many dishes of it." "And how should we come by fire in the sea? We know not broiled nor boiled nor aught else of the kind." "We also fry it in olive-oil and oil of sesame.[269] " How should be come by olive-oil and oil of sesame in the sea? Verily we know nothing of that thou namest." "True, but O my brother, thou hast shown me many cities; yet hast thou not shown me thine own city." "As for mine own city, we passed it a long way, for it is near the land whence we came, and I left it and came with thee hither, thinking only to divert thee with the sight of the greater cities of the sea." "That which I have seen of them sufficeth me; and now I would have thee show me thine own city." "So be it," answered Abdullah of the Sea; and, returning on his traces, carried him back thither and said to him, "This is my city." Abdullah of the Land looked and saw a city small by comparison with those he had seen; then he entered with his comrade of the deep and they fared on till they came to a cave. Quoth the Merman, "This is my house and all the houses in the city are like this, caverns great and small in the mountains; as are also those of every other city of the sea. For whoso is minded to make him a house must repair to the King and say to him, 'I wish to make me a house in such a place.' Whereupon the King sends with him a band of the fish called 'Peckers,'[270] which have beaks that crumble the hardest rock, appointing for their wage a certain quantum of fish. They betake themselves to the mountain chosen by the intended owner and therein pierce the house, whilst the owner catcheth fish for them and feedeth them, till the cave is finished, when they wend their ways and the house-owner taketh up his abode therein. On such wise do all the people of the sea; they traffic not one with other nor serve each other save by means of fish; and their food is fish and they themselves are a kind of fish.[271] " Then he said to him, "Enter!" So Abdullah entered and the Merman cried out, saying, "Ho, daughter mine!" when behold, there came to him a damsel with a face like the rondure of the moon and hair long, hips heavy, eyes black-edged and waist slender; but she was naked and had a tail. When she saw Abdullah of the Land she said to her sire, "O my father, what is this No-tail[272] thou hast brought with thee?" He replied, "O my daughter this is my friend of the land, from whom I used to bring thee the fruits of the ground. Come hither and salute him with the salam." So she came forward and saluted the fisherman with loquent tongue and eloquent speech; and her father said to her, "Bring meat for our guest, by whose visit a blessing hath betided us:[273] " whereupon she brought him two great fishes, each the bigness of a lamb, and the Merman said to him, "Eat." So he ate for stress of hunger, despite himself; because he was tired of eating fish and they had naught else save fish. Before long, in came the Merman's wife, who was beautiful of form and favour and with her two children, each having in his hand a young fish, which he craunched as a man would craunch a cucumber. When she saw the fisherman with her husband, she said, "What is this No-tail?" And she and her sons and their sister came up to him and fell to examining the back parts of Abdullah of the Land, and saying, "Yea, by Allah, he is tailless!"; and they laughed at him. So he said to the Merman, "O my brother, hast thou brought me hither to make me a butt and a laughing-stock for thy children and thy consort?" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Forty-sixth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdullah of the Land said to Abdullah of the sea, "O my brother, hast thou brought me hither to make me a butt and a laughing-stock for thy children and thy consort?" Cried the Merman, "Pardon, O my brother! Those who have no tails are rare among us, and whenever one such is found, the Sultan taketh him, to make fun of him, and he abideth a marvel amongst us, and all who see him laugh at him. But, O my brother, excuse these young children and this woman, for they lack wits." Then he cried out to his family, saying, "Silence!"; so they were afraid and held their peace; whilst he went on to soothe Abdullah's mind. Presently, as they were talking, behold, in came some ten Mermen, tall and strong and stout, and said to him, "O Abdullah, it hath reached the King that thou hast with thee a No-tail of the No-tails of the earth." Answered the Merman, "Yes; and this is he; but he is not of us nor of the children of the sea. He is my friend of the land and hath come to me as a guest and I purpose to carry him back to the land." Quoth they, "We cannot depart but with him; so, an thou have aught to say, arise and come with him before the King; and whatso thou wouldst say to us, say thou that same to the King." Then quoth the Merman to the fisherman, "O my brother, my excuse is manifest, and we may not disobey the King: but go thou with me to him and I will do my best to deliver thee from him, Inshallah! Fear not, for he deemeth thee of the children of the sea; but, when he seeth thee, he will know thee to be of the children of the land, and he will surely entreat thee honourably and restore thee to the land." And Abdullah of the Land replied, "'Tis thine to decide, I will trust in Allah and wend with thee." So he took him and carried him to the King, who, when he saw him, laughed at him and said, "Welcome to the No-tail!" And all who were about the King began to laugh at him and say, “Yea, by Allah, he is tailless!” Then Abdullah of the Sea came forward and acquainted the King with the fisherman’s case, saying, “This man is of the children of the land and he is my comrade and cannot live amongst us, for that he loveth not the eating of fish, except it be fried or boiled; wherefore I desire that thou give me leave to restore him to the land.” Whereto the King replied, “Since the case is so, and he cannot live among us, I give thee leave to restore him to his place, after due entertainment,” presently adding, “Bring him the guest-meal.” So they brought him fish of various kinds and colours and he ate, in obedience to the royal behest; after which the King said to him, “Ask a boon of me.” Quoth he, “I ask of thee that thou give me jewels;” and the King said, “Carry him to the jewel-house and let him choose that whereof he hath need.” So his friend carried him to the jewel-house and he picked out whatso he would, after which the Merman brought him back to his own city and pulling out a purse, said to him, “Take this deposit and lay it on the tomb of the Prophet, whom Allah save and assain!” And he took it, knowing not what was therein. Then the Merman went forth with him, to bring him back to land, and by the way he heard singing and merrymaking and saw a table spread with fish and folk eating and singing and holding mighty high festival. So Abdullah of the Land said to his friend, “What aileth these people to rejoice thus? Is there a wedding among them?” Replied Abdullah of the Sea, “Nay; one of them is dead.” Asked the fisherman, “Then do ye, when one dieth amongst you, rejoice for him and sing and feast?”; and the Merman answered, “Yes: and ye of the land, what do ye?” Quoth Abdullah of the Land, “When one dieth amongst us, we weep and keen for him and the women beat their faces and rend the bosoms of their raiment, in token of mourning for the dead.” But Abdullah the Merman stared at him with wide eyes and said to him, “Give me the deposit!” So he gave it to him. Then he set him ashore and said to him, “I have broken off our companionship and our amity; wherefore from this day forward thou shalt no more see me, nor I see thee.” Cried the fisherman, “Why sayst thou this?”; and the other said, “Are ye not, O folk of the land, a deposit of Allah?” “Yes.” “Why then,” asked the Merman, “is it grievous to you that Allah should take back His deposit and wherefore weep ye over it?

How can I entrust thee with a deposit for the Prophet (whom Allah save and assain!), seeing that, when a child is born to you, ye rejoice in it, albeit the Almighty setteth the soul therein as a deposit; and yet, when he taketh it again, it is grievous to you and ye weep and mourn? Since it is hard for thee to give up the deposit of Allah, how shall it be easy to thee to give up the deposit of the Prophet?[274] Wherefore we need not your companionship." Saying thus he left him and disappeared in the sea. Thereupon Abdullah of the Land donned his dress and taking the jewels, went up to the King, who met him lovingly and rejoiced at his return saying, "How dost thou, O my son-in-law, and what is the cause of thine absence from me this while?" So he told him his tale and acquainted him with that which he had seen of marvels in the sea, whereat the King wondered. Then he told him what Abdullah the Merman had said[275] ; and the King replied, "Indeed 'twas thou wast at fault to tell him this." Nevertheless, he continued for some time to go down to the shore and call upon Abdullah of the Sea, but he answered him not nor came to him; so, at last, he gave up all hope of him and abode, he and the King his father-in-law and the families of them both in the happiest of case and the practice of righteous ways, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies and they died all. Wherefore glory be to the Living, who dieth not, whose is the empire of the Seen and the Unseen, who over all things is Omnnipotent and is gracious to His servants and knowth their every intent! And amongst the tales they tell is one anent

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

HARUN AL-RASHID AND ABU HASAN, THE MERCHANT OF OMAN.

The Caliph Harun al-Rashid was one night wakeful exceedingly; so he called Masrur and said to him as soon as he came, “Fetch me Ja’afar in haste.” Accordingly, he went out and returned with the Wazir, to whom said the Caliph, “O Ja’afar wakefulness hath mastered me this night and forbiddeth sleep from me, nor wot I what shall drive it away from me.” Replied Ja’afar, “O Commander of the Faithful, the wise say, ‘Looking on a mirror, entering the Hammam-bath and hearkening unto song banish care and chagrin.’” He rejoined, “O Ja’afar I have done all this, but it hath brought me naught of relief, and I swear by my pious forbears unless thou contrive that which shall abate from me this insomny, I will smite thy neck.” Quoth Ja’afar, “O Commander of the Faithful, wilt thou do that which I shall counsel thee?” whereupon quoth the Caliph, “And what is that thou counselleth?” He replied, “It is that thou take boat with us and drop down Tigris River with the tide to a place called Karn al-Sirat, so haply we may hear what we never heard or see what we never saw, for ’tis said, ‘The solace of care is in one of three things; that a man see what he never before saw or hear what he never yet heard or tread an earth he erst hath never trodden.’ It may be this shall be the means of remedying thy restlessness, O Commander of the Faithful, Inshallah! There, on either side of the river, are windows and balconies one facing other, and it may be we shall hear or see from one of these somewhat wherewith our hearts may be heartened.” Ja’afar’s counsel pleased the Caliph, so he rose from his place and taking with him the Wazir and his brother Al-Fazl and Isaac[276] the boon-companion and Abu Nowas and Abu Dalaf[277] and Masrur the Sworder, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Forty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Caliph arose from his seat with Ja’afar and the rest of the party, all entered the wardrobe, where they donned merchant’s gear. Then they went down to the Tigris and embarking in a gilded boat, dropped down with the stream, till they came to the place they sought, when they heard the voice of a damsel singing to the lute and chanting these couplets,

“To him when the wine cup is near I declare, * While in coppice
loud shrilleth and trilleth Hazбr,
‘How long this repining from joys and delight? * Wake up for this
life is a borrowed ware!’
Take the cup from the hand of the friend who is dear * With
languishing eye-lids and languorous air.
I sowed on his cheek a fresh rose, which amid * His side-locks
the fruit of granado-tree bare.
Thou wouldst deem that the place where he tare his fair
cheek[278] * Were ashes, while cheeks hues incendiary
wear.
Quoth the blamer, ‘Forget him! But where’s my excuse * When his
side-face is growing the downiest hair?[279] ‘“

When the Caliph heard this, he said, “O Ja’afar, how goodly is that voice!”; and the Wazir replied, “O our lord, never smote my hearing aught sweeter or goodlier than this singing! But, good my lord, hearing from behind a wall is only half hearing; how would it be an we heard it from behind a curtain?” Quoth the Caliph, “Come, O Ja’afar, let us play the parasites with the master of this house; and haply we shall look upon the songstress, face to face;” and quoth Ja’afar, “I hear and I obey.” So they landed and sought admittance; when behold, there came out to them a young man, fair of favour, sweet of speech and fluent of tongue, who said to them, “Well come and welcome, O lords that honour me with your presence! Enter in all comfort and convenience!” So they went in (and he with them) to a saloon with four faces, whose ceiling was decorated with gold and its walls adorned with ultramarine.[280] At its upper end was a daпs, whereon stood a goodly row of seats[281] and thereon sat an hundred damsels like moons. The house-master cried out to them and they came down from their seats. Then he turned to Ja’afar and said to him “O my lord, I know not the honourable of you from the more honourable: Bismillah! deign he that is highest in rank among you favour me by taking the head of the room, and let his brethren sit each in his several stead." So they sat down, each according to his degree, whilst Masrur abode standing before them in their service; and the host asked them, "O my guests, with your leave, shall I set somewhat of food before you?" and they answered, "Yes." Hearing this he bade his handmaids bring food, whereupon four damsels with girded waists placed in front of them a table, whereon were rare meats of that which flieth and walketh earth and swimmeth seas, sand-grouse and quails and chickens and pigeons; and written on the raised edge of the tray were verses such as sorted with the entertainment. So they ate till they had enough and washed their hands, after which said the young man, "O my lords, if you have any want, let us know it, that we may have the honour of satisfying it." They replied, "'Tis well: we came not to thy dwelling save for the sake of a voice we heard from behind the wall of thy house, and we would fain hear it again and know her to whom it belongeth. So, an thou deem right to vouchsafe us this favour, it will be of the generosity of thy nature, and after we will return whence we came." Quoth the host, "Ye are welcome;" and, turning to a black slave-girl, said to her, "Fetch me thy mistress such an one." So she went away and returning with a chair of chinaware, cushioned with brocade, set it down: then withdrew again and presently returned with a damsel, as she were the moon on the night of its full, who sat down on the chair. Then the black girl gave her a bag of satin wherefrom she brought out a lute, inlaid with gems and jacinths and furnished with pegs of gold. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Forty-eighth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the damsel came forward, she took her seat upon the chair and brought out from its case a lute and behold, it was inlaid with gems and jacinths and furnished with pegs of gold. Then she tuned its strings, even as saith the poet of her and her lute in these lines,

"She sits it in lap like a mother fond * And she strikes the
  strings that can make it speak:
And ne'er smiteth her right an injurious touch * But her left

repairs of her right the wreak.[282] “

Then she strained the lute to her bosom, bending over it as mother bendeth over babe, and swept the strings which complained as child to mother complaineth; after which she played upon it and began improvisng these couplets,

“An Time my lover restore me I’ll blame him fain, * Saying,
  ‘Pass, O my dear, the bowl and in passing drain
The wine which hath never mixed with the heart of man * But he
  passes to joy from annoy and to pleasure from pain.’
Then Zephyr arose to his task of sustaining the cup: * Didst e’er
  see full Moon that in hand the star hath ta’en?[283]
How oft I talked thro’ the night, when its rounded Lune * Shed on
  darkness of Tigris’ bank a beamy rain!
And when Luna sank in the West ’twas as though she’d wave * O’er
  the length of the watery waste a gilded glaive.”

When she had made an end of her verse, she wept with sore weeping and all who were in the place wept aloud till they were well-nigh dead; nor was there one of them but took leave of his wits and rent his raiment and beat his face, for the goodliness of her singing. Then said Al-Rashid, “This damsel’s song verily denoteth that she is a lover departed from her beloved.” Quoth her master, “She hath lost father and mother;” but quoth the Caliph, “This is not the weeping of one who hath lost mother and father, but the yearning of one who hath lost him she loveth.” And he was delighted with her singing and said to Isaac, “By Allah, never saw I her like!”; and Isaac said, “O my lord, indeed I marvel at her with utterest marvel and am beside myself for delight.” Now Al-Rashid with all this stinted not to look upon the house-master and note his charms and the daintiness of his fashion; but he saw on his face a pallor as he would die; so he turned to him and said, “Ho, youth!” and the other said, “Adsum! — at thy service, O my lord.” The Caliph asked, “Knowest thou who we are?”; and he answered, “No.” Quoth Ja’afar, “Wilt thou that I tell thee the names of each of us?”; and quoth the young man “Yes;” when the Wazir said, “This is the Commander of the Faithful, descendant of the uncle of the Prince of the Apostles," and named to him the others of the company; after which quoth Al-Rashid, "I wish that thou acquaint me with the cause of the paleness of thy face, whether it be acquired or natural from thy birth-tide." Quoth he, "O Prince of True Believers, my case is wondrous and my affair marvellous; were it graven with gravers on the eye-corners it were a warner to whoso will be warned." Said the Caliph, "Tell it to me: haply thy healing may be at my hand." Said the young man, "O Commander of the Faithful, lend me thine ears and give me thy whole mind." And he, "Come; tell it me, for thou makest me long to hear it." So the young man began,— "Know then, O Prince of True Believers, that I am a merchant of the merchants of the sea and come from Oman city, where my sire was a trader and a very wealthy trader having thirty ships trafficking upon the main, whose yearly hire was thirty thousand dinars; and he was a generous man and had taught me writing and all whereof a wight hath need. When his last hour drew near, he called me to him and gave me the customary charge; then Almighty Allah took him and admitted him to His mercy and may He continue the Commander of the Faithful on life! Now my late father had partners trading with his coin and voyaging on the ocean. So one day, as I sat in my house with a company of merchants, a certain of my servants came in to me and said, 'O my lord, there is at the door a man who craveth admittance to thee!' I gave leave and he came in, bearing on his head a something covered. He set it down and uncovered it, and behold it was a box wherein were fruits out of season and herbs conserved in salt and fresh, such as are not found in our land. I thanked him and gifted him with an hundred dinars, and he went away grateful. Then I divided these things amongst my friends and guests who were present and asked them whence they came. Quoth they, 'They come from Bassorah,' and praised them and went on to portray the beauties of Bassorah and all agreed that there was naught in the world goodlier than Baghdad and its people. Then they fell to describing Baghdad and the fine manners of its folk and the excellence of its air and the beauty of its ordinance, till my soul longed for it and all my hopes clave to looking upon it. So I arose and selling my houses and lands, ships and slaves, negroes and handmaids, I got together my good, to wit, a thousand thousand dinars, besides gems and jewels, wherewith I freighted a vessel and setting out therein with the whole of the property, voyaged awhile. Then I hired a barque and embarking therein with all my monies sailed up the river some days till we arrived at Baghdad. I enquired where the merchants abode and what part was pleasantest for domicile and was answered, ‘The Karkh quarter.’ So I went thither and hiring a house in a thoroughfare called the Street of Saffron, transported all my goods to it and took up my lodging therein for some time. At last one day which was a Friday, I sallied forth to solace myself taking with me somewhat of coin. I went first to a cathedral-mosque, called the Mosque of Mansur, where the Friday service was held, and when we had made an end of congregational prayers, I fared forth with the folk to a place hight Karn al-Sirat, where I saw a tall and goodly mansion, with a balcony overlooking the river-bank and pierced with a lattice- window. So I betook myself thither with a company of folk and sighted there an old man sitting, handsomely clad and exhaling perfumes. His beard forked upon his breast in two waves like silver-wire, and about him were four damsels and five pages. So I said to one of the folk, ‘What is the name of this old man and what is his business?’; and the man said, ‘His name is T6hir ibn al-Al6a, and he is a keeper of girls: all who go into him eat and drink and look upon fair faces.’ Quoth I, ‘By Allah, this long while have I wandered about in search of something like this!’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Forty-ninth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant cried, “‘By Allah this long while I have gone about in search of something like this!’ So I went up to the Shaykh, O Commander of the Faithful, and saluting him said to him, ‘O my lord, I need somewhat of thee!’ He replied, ‘What is thy need?’ and I rejoined, ‘’Tis my desire to be thy guest to-night.’ He said, ‘With all my heart; but, O my son, with me are many damsels, some whose night is ten dinars, some forty and others more. Choose which thou wilt have.’ Quoth I, ‘I choose her whose night is ten dinars.’ And I weighed out to him three hundred dinars, the price of a month; whereupon he committed me to a page, who carried me to a

Hammam within the house and served me with goodly service. When I came out of the Bath he brought me to a chamber and knocked at the door, whereupon out came a handmaid, to whom said he, ‘Take thy guest!’ She met me with welcome and cordiality, laughing and rejoicing, and brought me into a mighty fine room decorated with gold. I considered her and saw her like the moon on the night of its fulness having in attendance on her two damsels as they were constellations. She made me sit and seating herself by my side, signed to her slave-girls who set before us a tray covered with dishes of various kinds of meats, pullets and quails and sand-grouse and pigeons. So we ate our sufficiency, and never in my life ate I aught more delicious than this food. When we had eaten she bade remove the tray and set on the service of wine and flowers, sweetmeats and fruits; and I abode with her a month in such case. At the end of that time, I repaired to the Bath; then, going to the old man, I said to him, ‘O my lord, I want her whose night is twenty dinars.’ ‘Weigh down the gold,’ said he. So I fetched money and weighed out to him six hundred dinars for a month’s hire, whereupon he called a page and said to him, ‘Take thy lord here.’ Accordingly he carried me to the Hammam and thence to the door of a chamber, whereat he knocked and there came out a handmaid, to whom quoth he, ‘Take thy guest!’ She received me with the goodliest reception and I found in attendance on her four slave-girls, whom she commanded to bring food. So they fetched a tray spread with all manner meats, and I ate. When I had made an end of eating and the tray had been re- moved, she took the lute and sang thereto these couplets,

‘O waftings of musk from the Babel-land! * Bear a message from me
which my longings have planned:
My troth is pledged to that place of yours, * And to friends
there ‘biding — a noble band;
And wherein dwells she whom all lovers love * And would hend, but
she cometh to no man’s hand.’

I abode with her a month, after which I returned to the Shaykh and said to him, ‘I want the forty dinar one.’ ‘Weigh out the money,’ said he. So I weighed out to him twelve hundred dinars, the mensual hire, and abode with her one month as it were one day, for what I saw of the comeliness of her semblance and the goodliness of her converse. After this I went to the Shaykh one evening and heard a great noise and loud voices; so I asked him, ‘What is to do?’; and he answered, saying, ‘This is the night of our remarkablest nights, when all souls embark on the river and divert themselves by gazing one upon other. Hast thou a mind to go up to the roof and solace thyself by looking at the folk?’ ‘Yes,’ answered I, and went up to the terrace roof,[284] whence I could see a gathering of people with flambeaux and cressets, and great mirth and merriment. Then I went up to the end of the roof and beheld there, behind a goodly curtain, a little chamber in whose midst stood a couch of juniper-wood[285] plated with shimmering gold and covered with a handsome carpet. On this sat a lovely young lady, confounding all beholders with her beauty and comeliness and symmetry and perfect grace, and by her side a youth, whose hand was on her neck; and he was kissing her and she kissing him. When I saw them, O Prince of True Believers, I could not contain myself nor knew where I was, so dazed and dazzled was I by her beauty: but, when I came down, I questioned the damsel with whom I was and described the young lady to her. ‘What wilt thou with her?’ asked she; and I, ‘She hath taken my wit.’ ‘O Abu al-Hasan, hast thou a mind to her?’ ‘Ay, by Allah! for she hath captivated my heart and soul.’ ‘This is the daughter of Tahir ibn al-Alaa; she is our mistress and we are all her handmaids; but knowest thou, O Abu al-Hasan, what be the price of her night and her day?’ ‘No!’ ‘Five hundred dinars, for she is a regret to the heart of Kings!’[286] ‘By Allah, I will spend all I have on this damsel!’ So saying I lay, heartsore for desire, through the livelong night till the morning, when I repaired to the Hammam and presently donned a suit of the richest royal raiment and betaking myself to Ibn al-Alaa, said to him, ‘O my lord, I want her whose night is five hundred dinars.’ Quoth he, ‘Weigh down the money.’ So I weighed out to him fifteen thousand dinars for a month’s hire and he took them and said to the page, ‘Carry him to thy mistress such an one!’ Accordingly he took me and carried me to an apartment, than which my eyes never saw a goodlier on the earth’s face and there I found the young lady seated. When I saw her, O Commander of the Faithful, my reason was confounded with her beauty, for she was like the full moon on its fourteenth night," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fiftieth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young man continued to describe before the Prince of True Believers the young lady's characteristics, saying, "She was like the full moon on her fourteenth night, a model of grace and symmetry and loveliness. Her speech shamed the tones of the lute, and it was as it were she whom the poet meant in these verses,

'She cried while played in her side Desire, * And Night o'er hung
her with blackest blee: —
'O Night shall thy murk bring me ne'er a chum * To tumble and
futter this coynte of me?'
And she smote that part with her palm and sighed * Sore sighs and
a-weeping continued she,
'As the toothstick beautifies teeth e'en so * Must prickle to
coynte as a toothstick be.
O Moslems, is never a stand to your tools, * To assist a woman's
necessity?'
Thereat rose upstanding beneath its clothes * My yard, as crying,
'At thee! at thee!'
And I loosed her trouser-string, startling her: * 'Who art thou?'
and I said, 'A reply to thy plea!'
And began to stroke her with wrist-thick yard, * Hurting hinder
cheeks by its potency:
And she cried as I rose after courses three * 'Suit thy gree the
stroke!' and I— 'suit thy gree!'

And how excellent is the saying of another![287] ,

'A fair one, to idolaters if she her face should show, They'd leave their idols and her face for only Lord would know. If in the Eastward she appeared unto a monk, for sure, He'd cease from turning to the West and to the East bend low; And if into the briny sea one day she chanced to spit, Assuredly the salt sea's floods straight fresh and sweet would grow.’

And that of another,

‘I looked at her one look and that dazed me * Such rarest gifts
of mind and form to see,
When doubt inspired her that I loved her, and * Upon her cheeks
the doubt showed showily.’

I saluted her and she said to me, ‘Well come and welcome, and fair welcome!’; and taking me by the hand, O Prince of True Believers, made me sit down by her side; whereupon, of the excess of my desire, I fell a-weeping for fear of severance and pouring forth the tears of the eye, recited these two couplets,

‘I love the nights of parting though I joy not in the same * Time
haply may exchange them for the boons of Union-day:
And the days that bring Union I unlove for single thought, *
Seeing everything in life lacking steadfastness of stay.’

Then she strave to solace me with soft sweet speech, but I was drowned in the deeps of passion, fearing even in union the pangs of disunion, for excess of longing and ecstasy of passion; and I bethought me of the lowe of absence and estrangement and repeated these two couplets,

‘I thought of estrangement in her embrace * And my eyes rained
tears red as ‘Andam-wood.
So I wiped the drops on that long white neck; * For
camphor[288] is wont to stay flow of blood.’

Then she bade bring food and there came four damsels, high-bosomed girls and virginal, who set before us food and fruits and confections and flowers and wine, such as befit none save kings. So, O Commander of the Faithful, we ate, and sat over our wine, compassed about with blooms and herbs of sweet savour, in a chamber suitable only for kings. Presently, one of her maids brought her a silken bag, which she opened and taking thereout a lute, laid it in her lap and smote its strings, whereat it complained as child complaineth to mother, and she sang these two couplets,

'Drink not pure wine except from hand of slender youth * Like
wine for daintiness and like him eke the wine:
For wine no joyance brings to him who drains the cup * Save bring
the cup-boy cheek as fair and fain and fine.'

So, I abode with her, O Commander of the Faithful, month after month in similar guise, till all my money was spent; wherefore I began to bethink me of separation as I sat with her one day and my tears railed down upon my cheeks like rills, and I became not knowing night from light. Quoth she, 'Why dost thou weep?'; and quoth I, 'O light of mine eyes, I weep because of our parting.' She asked, 'And what shall part me and thee, O my lord?'; and I answered, 'By Allah, O my lady, from the day I came to thee, thy father hath taken of me, for every night, five hundred dinars, and now I have nothing left. Right soothfast is the saw, 'Penury maketh strangerhood at home and money maketh a home in strangerhood'; and indeed the poet speaks truth when he saith,

'Lack of good is exile to man at home; * And money shall house him where'er he roam.'

She replied, 'Know that it is my father's custom, whenever a merchant abideth with him and hath spent all his capital, to entertain him three days; then doth he put him out and he may return to us nevermore. But keep thou thy secret and conceal thy case and I will so contrive that thou shalt abide with me till such time as Allah will;[289] for, indeed, there is in my heart a great love for thee. Thou must know that all my father's money is under my hand and he wotteth not its full tale; so, every morning, I will give thee a purse of five hundred dinars which do thou offer to my sire, saying, 'Henceforth, I will pay thee only day by day.' He will hand the sum to me, and I will give it to thee again, and we will abide thus till such time as may please Allah.' Thereupon I thanked her and kissed her hand; and on this wise, O Prince of True Believers, I abode with her a whole year, till it chanced on a certain day that she beat one of her handmaids grievously and the slave-girl said, 'By Allah, I will assuredly torture thy heart, even as thou hast tortured me!' So she went to the girl’s father and exposed to him all that had passed, first and last, which when Tahir ibn Alaa heard he arose forthright and coming in to me, as I sat with his daughter, said, ‘Ho, such an one!’; and I said, ‘At thy service.’ Quoth he, ‘’Tis our wont, when a merchant grow poor with us, to give him hospitality three days; but thou hast had a year with us, eating and drinking and doing what thou wouldst.’ Then he turned to his pages and cried to them, ‘Pull off his clothes.’ They did as he bade them and gave me ten dirhams and an old suit worth five silvers; after which he said to me, ‘Go forth; I will not beat thee nor abuse thee; but wend thy ways and if thou tarry in this town, thy blood be upon thine own head.’ So I went forth, O Commander of the Faithful, in my own despite, knowing not whither to hie, for had fallen on my heart all the trouble in the world and I was occupied with sad thought and doubt. Then I bethought me of the wealth which I had brought from Oman and said in myself, ‘I came hither with a thousand thousand dinars, part price of thirty ships, and have made away with it all in the house of yonder ill-omened man, and now I go forth from him, bare and broken-hearted! But there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!’ Then I abode three days in Baghdad, without tasting meat or drink, and on the fourth day seeing a ship bound for Bassorah, I took passage in her of the owner, and when we reached our port, I landed and went into the bazar, being sore anhungered. Presently, a man saw me, a grocer, whom I had known aforetime, and coming up to me, embraced me, for he had been my friend and my father’s friend before me. Then he questioned me of my case, seeing me clad in those tattered clothes; so I told him all that had befallen me, and he said, ‘By Allah, this is not the act of a sensible man! But after this that hath befallen thee what dost thou purpose to do?’ Quoth I, ‘I know not what I shall do,’ and quoth he, ‘Wilt thou abide with me and write my outgo and income and thou shalt have two dirhams a day, over and above thy food and drink?’ I agreed to this and abode with him, O Prince of True Believers, selling and buying, till I had gotten an hundred dinars; when I hired me an upper chamber by the river-side, so haply a ship should come up with merchandise, that I might buy goods with the dinars and go back with them to Baghdad. Now it fortuned that one day, there came ships with merchandise, and all the merchants resorted to them to buy, and I went with them on board, when behold, there came two men out of the hold and setting themselves chairs on the deck, sat down thereon. The merchants addressed themselves to the twain with intent to buy, and the man said to one of the crew, ‘Bring the carpet.’ Accordingly he brought the carpet and spread it, and another came with a pair of saddle-bags, whence he took a budget and emptied it on the carpet; and our sights were dazzled with that which issued therefrom of pearls and corals and jacinths and carnelians and other jewels of all sorts and colours.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fifty-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young merchant, after recounting to the Caliph the matter of the bag and its containing jewels of all sorts, continued, “Presently, O Commander of the Faithful, said one of the men on the chairs, ‘O company of merchants, we will sell but this to-day, by way of spending-money, for that we are weary.’ So the merchants fell to bidding one against other for the jewels and bid till the price reached four hundred dinars. Then said to me the owner of the bag (for he was an old acquaintance of mine, and when he saw me, he came down to me and saluted me), ‘Why dost thou not speak and bid like the rest of the merchants?’ I said, ‘O my lord, by Allah, the shifts of fortune have run against me and I have lost my wealth and have only an hundred dinars left in the world.’ Quoth he, ‘O Omбni, after this vast wealth, can only an hundred dinars remain to thee?’ And I was abashed before him and my eyes filled with tears; whereupon he looked at me and indeed my case was grievous to him. So he said to the merchants, ‘Bear witness against me that I have sold all that is in this bag of various gems and precious stones to this man for an hundred gold pieces, albeit I know them to be worth so many thousand dinars, and this is a present from me to him.’ Then he gave me the saddle-bag and the carpet, with all the jewels that were thereon, for which I thanked him, and each and every of the merchants present praised him. Presently I carried all this to the jewel-market and sat there to sell and buy. Now among the precious stones was a round amulet of the handi-work of the masters,[290] weighing half a pound: it was red of the brightest, a carnelian on both whose sides were graven characts and characters, like the tracks of ants; but I knew not its worth. I sold and bought a whole year, at the end of which I took the amulet[291] and said, 'This hath been with me some while, and I know not what it is nor what may be its value.' So I gave it to the broker who took it and went round with it and returned, saying, 'None of the merchants will give me more than ten dirhams for it.' Quoth I, 'I will not sell it at that price;' and he threw it in my face and went away. Another day I again offered it for sale and its price reached fifteen dirhams; whereupon I took it from the broker in anger and threw it back into the tray. But a few days after, as I sat in my shop, there came up to me a man, who bore the traces of travel, and saluting me, said, 'By thy leave, I will turn over what thou hast of wares.' Said I, ''Tis well,' and indeed, O Commander of the Faithful, I was still wroth by reason of the lack of demand for the talisman. So the man fell to turning over my wares, but took nought thereof save the amulet, which when he saw, he kissed his hand and cried, 'Praised be Allah!' Then said he to me, 'O my lord, wilt thou sell this?'; and I replied, 'Yes,' being still angry. Quoth he, 'What is its price?' And I asked, 'How much wilt thou give?' He answered, 'Twenty dinars': so I thought he was making mock of me and exclaimed, 'Wend thy ways.' But he resumed, 'I will give thee fifty dinars for it.' I made him no answer, and he continued, 'A thousand dinars.' But I was silent, declining to reply, whilst he laughed at my silence and said, 'Why dost thou not return me an answer?' 'Hie thee home,' repeated I and was like to quarrel with him. But he bid thousand after thousand, and I still made him no reply, till he said, 'Wilt thou sell it for twenty thousand dinars?' I still thought he was mocking me; but the people gathered about me and all of them said, 'Sell to him, and if he buy not, we will all up and at him and drub him and thrust him forth the city.' So quoth I to him, 'Wilt thou buy or dost thou jest?'; and quoth he, 'Wilt thou sell or dost thou joke?' I said, 'I will sell if thou wilt buy;' then he said, 'I will buy it for thirty thousand dinars; take them and make the bargain;' so I cried to the bystanders, 'Bear witness against him,' adding to him, 'But on condition that thou acquaint me with the virtues and profit of this amulet for which thou payest all this money.' He answered, 'Close the bargain, and I will tell thee this;’ I rejoined, ‘I sell it to thee;’ and he retorted, ‘Allah be witness of that which thou sayst and testimony!’ Then he brought out the gold and giving it to me took the amulet, and set it in his bosom; after which he turned to me and asked, ‘Art thou content?’ Answered I, ‘Yes,’ and he said to the people, ‘Bear witness against him that he hath closed the bargain and touched the price, thirty thousand dinars.’ Then he turned to me and said, ‘Harkye, my poor fellow, hadst thou held back from selling, by Allah I would have bidden thee up to an hundred thousand dinars, nay, even to a thousand thousand!’ When I heard these words, O Commander of the Faithful, the blood fled my face, and from that day there overcame it this pallor thou seest. Then said I to him, ‘Tell me the reason of this and what is the use of this amulet.’ And he answered, saying, ‘Know that the King of Hind hath a daughter, never was seen a thing fairer than she, and she is possessed with a falling sickness.[292] So the King summoned the Scribes and men of science and Divines, but none of them could relieve her of this. Now I was present in the assembly; so I said to him, ‘O King, I know a man called Sa’adu’ll6h the Babylonian, than whom there is not on the face of the earth one more masterly in these matters, and if thou see fit to send me to him, do so.’ Said he, ‘Go to him;’ and quoth I, ‘Bring me a piece of carnelian.’ Accordingly he gave me a great piece of carnelian and an hundred thousand dinars and a present, which I took, and with which I betook myself to the land of Babel. Then I sought out the Shaykh and when he was shown to me I delivered to him the money and the present, which he accepted and sending for a lapidary, bade him fashion the carnelian into this amulet. Then he abode seven months in observation of the stars, till he chose out an auspicious time for engraving it, when he graved upon it these talismanic characters which thou seest, and I took it and returned with it to the King.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fifty-second Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young man said to the Commander of the Faithful, “‘So after the Shaykh had spoken, I took this talisman and returned with it to the King. Now the Princess was bound with four chains, and every night a slave-girl lay with her and was found in the morning with her throat cut. The King took the amulet and laid it upon his daughter who was straightway made whole. At this he rejoiced with exceeding joy and invested me with a vest of honour and gave alms of much money; and he caused set the amulet in the Princess's necklace. It chanced, one day, that she embarked with her women in a ship and went for a sail on the sea. Presently, one of her maids put out her hand to her, to sport with her, and the necklace brake asunder and fell into the waves. From that hour the possessor[293] of the Princess returned to her, wherefore great grief betided the King and he gave me much money, saying, 'Go thou to Shaykh Sa'adu'llah and let him make her another amulet, in lieu of that which is lost.' I journeyed to Babel, but found the old man dead; whereupon I returned and told the King, who sent me and ten others to go round about in all countries, so haply we might find a remedy for her: and now Allah hath caused me happen on it with thee.' Saying these words, he took from me the amulet, O Commander of the Faithful, and went his ways. Such, then, is the cause of the wanness of my complexion. As for me, I repaired to Baghdad, carrying all my wealth with me, and took up my abode in the lodgings where I lived whilome. On the morrow, as soon as it was light, I donned my dress and betook myself to the house of Tahir ibn al-Alaa, that haply I might see her whom I loved, for the love of her had never ceased to increase upon my heart. But when I came to his home, I saw the balcony broken down and the lattice builded up; so I stood awhile, pondering my case and the shifts of Time, till there came up a serving-man, and I questioned him, saying, 'What hath God done with Tahir ibn al-Alaa?' He answered, 'O my brother, he hath repented to Almighty Allah.[294] ' Quoth I, 'What was the cause of his repentance?'; and quoth he, 'O my brother, in such a year there came to him a merchant, by name Abu al-Hasan the Omani, who abode with his daughter awhile, till his wealth was all spent, when the old man turned him out, broken-hearted. Now the girl loved him with exceeding love, and when she was parted from him, she sickened of a sore sickness and came nigh upon death. As soon as her father knew how it was with her, he sent after and sought for Abu al-Hasan through the lands, pledging himself to bestow upon whoso should produce him an hundred thousand dinars; but none could find him nor come on any trace of him; and she is now hard upon death.' Quoth I, 'And how is it with her sire?' and quoth the servant, 'He hath sold all his girls, for grief of that which hath befallen him, and hath repented to Almighty Allah.' Then asked I, 'What wouldst thou say to him who should direct thee to Abu al-Hasan the Omani?'; and he answered, 'Allah upon thee, O my brother, that thou do this and quicken my poverty and the poverty of my parents![295] ' I rejoined, 'Go to her father and say to him, Thou owest me the reward for good news, for that Abu al-Hasan the Omani standeth at the door.' With this he set off trotting, as he were a mule loosed from the mill, and presently came back, accompanied by Shaykh Tahir himself, who no sooner saw me than he returned to his house and gave the man an hundred thousand dinars which he took and went away blessing me. Then the old man came up and embraced me and wept, saying, 'O my lord, where hast thou been absent all this while? Indeed, my daughter hath been killed by reason of her separation from thee; but come with me into the house.' So we entered and he prostrated himself in gratitude to the Almighty, saying, 'Praised be Allah who hath reunited us with thee!' Then he went in to his daughter and said to her, 'The Lord hath healed thee of this sickness;' and said she, 'O my papa, I shall never be whole of my sickness, save I look upon the face of Abu al-Hasan.' Quoth he, 'An thou wilt eat a morsel and go to the Hammam, I will bring thee in company with him.' Asked she, 'Is it true that thou sayst?'; and he answered, 'By the Great God, 'tis true!' She rejoined, 'By Allah, if I look upon his face, I shall have no need of eating!' Then said he to his page, 'Bring in thy lord.' Thereupon I entered, and when she saw me, O Prince of True Believers, she fell down in a swoon, and presently coming to herself, recited this couplet,

'Yea, Allah hath joined the parted twain, * When no thought they thought e'er to meet again.'

Then she sat upright and said, 'By Allah, O my lord, I had not deemed to see thy face ever more, save it were in a dream!' So she embraced me and wept, and said, 'O Abu al-Hasan, now will I eat and drink.' The old man her sire rejoiced to hear these words and they brought her meat and drink and we ate and drank, O Commander of the Faithful. After this, I abode with them awhile, till she was restored to her former beauty, when her father sent for the Kazi and the witnesses and bade write out the marriage-contract between her and me and made a mighty great bride-feast; and she is my wife to this day and this is my son by her." So saying he went away and returned with a boy of rare beauty and symmetry of form and favour to whom said he, "Kiss the ground before the Commander of the Faithful." He kissed ground before the Caliph, who marvelled at his beauty and glorified his Creator; after which Al-Rashid departed, he and his company, saying, "O Ja'afar, verily, this is none other than a marvellous thing, never saw I nor heard I aught more wondrous." When he was seated in the palace of the Caliphate, he cried, "O Masrur!" who replied, "Here am I, O my lord!" Then said he, "Bring the year's tribute of Bassorah and Baghdad and Khorasan, and set it in this recess.[296] " Accordingly he laid the three tributes together and they were a vast sum of money, whose tale none might tell save Allah. Then the Caliph bade draw a curtain before the recess and said to Ja'afar, "Fetch me Abu al-Hasan." Replied Ja'afar, "I hear and obey," and going forth, returned presently with the Omani, who kissed ground before the Caliph, fearing lest he had sent for him because of some fault that he had committed when he was with him in his house. Then said Al-Rashid, "Harkye, O Omani!" and he replied, "Adsum, O Prince of True Believers! May Allah ever bestow his favours upon thee!" Quoth the Caliph, "Draw back yonder curtain." Thereupon Abu al-Hasan drew back the curtain from the recess and was confounded and perplexed at the mass of money he saw there. Said Al-Rashid, "O Abu al-Hasan, whether is the more, this money or that thou didst lose by the amulet?[297] "; and he answered, "This is many times the greater, O Commander of the Faithful!" Quoth the Caliph, "Bear witness, all ye who are present, that I give this money to this young man." So Abu al-Hasan kissed ground and was abashed and wept before the Caliph for excess of joy. Now when he wept, the tears ran down from his eyelids upon his cheeks and the blood returned to its place and his face became like the moon on the night of its fulness. Whereupon quoth the Caliph, "There is no god but the God! Glory be to Him who decreeth change upon change and is Himself the Everlasting who changeth not!" Saying these words, he bade fetch a mirror and showed Abu al-Hasan his face therein, which when he saw, he prostrated himself, in gratitude to the Most High Lord. Then the Caliph bade transport the money to Abu al-Hasan's house and charged the young man not to absent himself from him, so he might enjoy his company as a cup-companion. Accordingly he paid him frequent visits, till Al-Rashid departed to the mercy of Almighty Allah; and glory be to Him who dieth not the Lord of the Seen and the Unseen! And among tales they tell is one touching

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IBRAHIM AND JAMILAH.[298]

Al-Khasнb,[299] Wazir of Egypt, had a son named Ibrahнm, than whom there was none goodlier, and of his fear for him, he suffered him not to go forth, save to the Friday prayers. One day, as the youth was returning from the mosque, he came upon an old man, with whom were many books; so he lighted down from his horse and seating himself beside him, began to turn over the tomes and examine them. In one of them he espied the semblance of a woman which all but spoke, never was seen on the earth's face one more beautiful; and as this captivated his reason and confounded his wit, he said to the old man, "O Shaykh, sell me this picture." The bookseller kissed ground between his hands and said, "O my lord, 'tis thine without price.[300] " Ibrahim gave him an hundred dinars and taking the book in which was the picture, fell to gazing upon it and weeping night and day, abstaining from meat and drink and sleep. Then said he in his mind, "An I ask the bookseller of the painter of this picture, haply he will tell me; and if the original be living, I will seek access to her; but, if it be only a picture, I will leave doting upon it and plague myself no more for a thing which hath no real existence." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fifty-third Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the youth Ibrahim said in his mind, "An I ask the bookseller of the painter of this picture, haply he will tell me; and, if it be only a picture, I will leave doting upon it and plague myself no more for a thing which hath no real existence." So on the next Friday he betook himself to the bookseller, who sprang up to receive him, and said to him, "Oh uncle, tell me who painted this picture." He replied, "O my lord, a man of the people of Baghdad painted it, by name Abu al-K6sim al-Sandal6ni who dwelleth in a quarter called Al-Karkh; but I know not of whom it is the portraiture." So Ibrahim left him without acquainting any of his household with his case, and returned to the palace, after praying the Friday prayers. Then he took a bag and filling it with gold and gems to the value of thirty thousand dinars, waited till the morning, when he went out, without telling any, and presently overtook a caravan. Here he saw a Badawi and asked him, “O uncle, what distance is between me and Baghdad?”; and the other answered, “O my son, where art thou, and where is Baghdad?[301] Verily, between thee and it is two months’ journey.” Quoth Ibrahim, “O nuncle, an thou wilt guide me to Baghdad, I will give thee an hundred dinars and this mare under me that is worth other thousand gold pieces;” and quoth the Badawi, “Allah be witness of what we say! Thou shalt not lodge this night but with me.” So Ibrahim agreed to this and passed the night with him. At break of dawn, the Badawi took him and fared on with him in haste by a near road, in his greed for the mare and the promised good; nor did they leave wayfaring till they came to the walls of Baghdad, when said the wildling, “Praised be Allah for safety! O my lord, this is Baghdad.” Whereat Ibrahim rejoiced with exceeding joy and alighting from the mare, gave her to the Desert-man, together with the hundred dinars. Then he took the bag and entering the city walked on, enquiring for the quarter Al-Karkh and the station of the merchants, till Destiny drave him to a by-way, wherein were ten houses, five fronting five, and at the farther end was a two-leaved door with a silver ring. By the gate stood two benches of marble, spread with the finest carpets, and on one of them sat a man of handsome aspect and reverend, clad in sumptuous clothing and attended by five Mamelukes like moons. When the youth Ibrahim saw the street, he knew it by the description the bookseller had given him; so he salamed to the man, who returned his salutation and bidding him welcome, made him sit down and asked him of his case. Quoth Ibrahim, “I am a stranger man and desire of thy favour that thou look me out a house in this street where I may take up my abode.” With this the other cried out, saying, “Ho, Ghazбlah![302] “; and there came forth to him a slave-girl, who said, “At thy service, O my lord!” Said her master, “Take some servants and fare ye all and every to such a house and clean it and furnish it with whatso is needful for this handsome youth.” So she went forth and did his bidding; whilst the old man took the youth and showed him the house; and he said, “O my lord, how much may be the rent of this house?” The other answered, “O bright of face, I will take no rent of thee whilst thou abidest therein.” Ibrahim thanked him for this and the old man called another slave-girl, whereupon there came forth to him a damsel like the sun, to whom said he, “Bring chess.” So she brought it and one of the servants set the cloth;[303] whereupon said the Shaykh to Ibrahim, “Wilt thou play with me?”; and he answered, “Yes.” So they played several games and Ibrahim beat him, when his adversary exclaimed, “Well done, O youth! Thou art indeed perfect in qualities. By Allah, there is not one in Baghdad can beat me, and yet thou hast beaten me!” Now when they had made ready the house and furnished it with all that was needful, the old man delivered the keys to Ibrahim and said to him, “O my lord, wilt thou not enter my place and eat of my bread?” He assented and walking in with him, found it a handsome house and a goodly, decorated with gold and full of all manner pictures and furniture galore and other things, such as tongue faileth to set out. The old man welcomed him and called for food, whereupon they brought a table of the make of Sana’a of al-Yaman and spread it with all manner rare viands, than which there was naught costlier nor more delicious. So Ibrahim ate his sufficiency, after which he washed his hands and proceeded to inspect the house and furniture. Presently, he turned to look for the leather bag, but found it not and said in himself, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! I have eaten a morsel worth a dirham or two and have lost a bag wherein is thirty thousand dinars’ worth: but I seek aid of Allah!” And he was silent and could not speak, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fifty-fourth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the youth Ibrahim saw that his bag was lost, he was silent and could not speak for the greatness of his trouble. Presently his host brought the chess and said to him, “Wilt thou play with me?”; and he said, “Yes.” So they played and the old man beat him. Ibrahim cried, “Well done!” and left playing and rose: upon which his host asked him, “What aileth thee, O youth?” whereto he answered, “I want the bag.” Thereupon the Shaykh rose and brought it out to him, saying, “Here it is, O my lord. Wilt thou now return to playing with me?” “Yes,” replied Ibrahim. Accordingly they played and the young man beat him. Quoth the Shaykh, “When thy thought was occupied with the bag, I beat thee: but, now I have brought it back to thee, thou beatest me. But, tell me, O my son, what countryman art thou.” Quoth Ibrahim, “I am from Egypt,” and quoth the oldster, “And what is the cause of thy coming to Baghdad?”; whereupon Ibrahim brought out the portrait and said to him, “Know, O uncle, that I am the son of Al-Kasib, Wazir of Egypt, and I saw with a bookseller this picture, which bewildered my wit. I asked him who painted it and he said, ‘He who wrought it is a man, Abu al-Kasim al-Sandalani hight, who dwelleth in a street called the Street of Saffron in the Karkh quarter of Baghdad.’ So I took with me somewhat of money and came hither alone, none knowing of my case; and I desire of the fullness of thy favour that thou direct me to Abu al-Kasim, so I may ask him of the cause of his painting this picture and whose portrait it is. And whatsoever he desireth of me, I will give him that same.” Said his host, “By Allah, O my son, I am Abu al-Kasim al-Sandalani, and this is a prodigious thing how Fate hath thus driven thee to me!” Now when Ibrahim heard these words, he rose to him and embraced him and kissed his head and hands, saying, “Allah upon thee, tell me whose portrait it is!” The other replied, “I hear and I obey,” and rising, opened a closet and brought out a number of books, wherein he had painted the same picture. Then said he, “Know, O my son, that the original of this portrait is my cousin, the daughter of my father’s brother, whose name is Abъ al-Lays.[304] She dwelleth in Bassorah of which city her father is governor, and her name is Jamнlah — the beautiful. There is not on the face of the earth a fairer than she; but she is averse from men and cannot hear the word ‘man’ pronounced in her presence. Now I once repaired to my uncle, to the intent that he should marry me to her, and was lavish of wealth to him; but he would not consent thereto: and when his daughter knew of this she was indignant and sent to me to say, amongst other things, ‘An thou have wit, tarry not in this town; else wilt thou perish and thy sin shall be on thine own neck.[305] ‘ For she is a virago of viragoes. Accordingly I left Bassorah, brokenhearted, and limned this likeness of her in books and scattered them abroad in various lands, so haply they might fall into the hands of a comely youth like thyself and he contrive access to her and peradventure she might fall in love with him, purposing to take a promise of him that, when he should have possession of her, he would show her to me, though I look but for a moment from afar off.” When Ibrahim son of Al-Kasib heard these words, he bowed his head awhile in thought and Al-Sandalani said to him, “O my son, I have not seen in Baghdad a fairer than thou, and meseems that, when she seeth thee, she will love thee. Art thou willing, therefore, in case thou be united with her and get possession of her, to show her to me, if I look but for a moment from afar?” Ibrahim replied, Yes; and the painter rejoined, “This being so, tarry with me till thou set out.” But the youth retorted, “I cannot tarry longer; for my heart with love of her is all afire.” “Have patience three days,” said the Shaykh, “till I fit thee out a ship, wherein thou mayst fare to Bassorah.” Accordingly he waited whilst the old man equipped him a craft and stored therein all that he needed of meat and drink and so forth. When the three days were past, he said to Ibrahim, “Make thee ready for the voyage; for I have prepared thee a packet-boat furnished with all thou requirest. The craft is my property and the seamen are of my servants. In the vessel is what will suffice thee till thy return, and I have charged the crew to serve thee till thou come back in safety.” Thereupon Ibrahim farewelled his host and embarking, sailed down the river till he came to Bassorah, where he pulled out an hundred dinars for the sailors, but they said, “We have gotten our hire of our lord.” However he replied, “Take this by way of largesse; and I will not acquaint him therewith.” So they took it and blessed him. Then the youth landed and entering the town asked, “Where do the merchants lodge?” and was answered, “In a Khan called the Khan of Hamad6n.”[306] So he walked to the market wherein stood the Khan, and all eyes were fixed upon him and men’s sight was attracted to him by reason of his exceeding beauty and loveliness. He entered the caravanserai, with one of the sailors in his company; and, asking for the porter, was directed to an aged man of reverend aspect. He saluted him and the doorkeeper returned his greeting; after which Ibrahim said to him, “O uncle, hast thou a nice chamber?” He replied, ‘Yes,” and taking him and the sailor, opened to them a handsome room decorated with gold, and said, “O youth, this chamber befitteth thee.” Ibrahim pulled out two dinars and gave them to him, saying, “Take these to key-money."[307] And the porter took them and blessed him. Then the youth Ibrahim sent the sailor back to the ship and entered the room, where the doorkeeper abode with him and served him, saying, "O my lord, thy coming hath brought us joy!" Ibrahim gave him a dinar, and said, "Buy us herewith bread and meat and sweetmeats and wine." Accordingly the doorkeeper went to the market; and, buying ten dirhams' worth of victual, brought it back to Ibrahim and gave him the other ten dirhams. But he cried to him, "Spend them on thyself;" whereat the porter rejoiced with passing joy. Then he ate a scone with a little kitchen[308] and gave the rest to the concierge, adding, "Carry this to the people of thy household." The porter carried it to his family and said to them, "Methinketh there is not on the face of the earth a more generous than the young man who has come to lodge with us this day, nor yet a pleasanter than he. An he abide with us, we shall grow rich." Then he returned to Ibrahim and found him weeping; so he sat down and began to rub[309] his feet and kiss them, saying, "O my lord, wherefore weepest thou? May Allah not make thee weep!" Said Ibrahim, "O uncle, I have a mind to drink with thee this night;" and the porter replied, "Hearing and obeying!" So he gave him five dinars and said, "Buy us fresh fruit and wine;" and presently added other five, saying, "With these buy also for us dessert[310] and flowers and five fat fowls and bring me a lute." The doorkeeper went out and, buying what he had ordered, said to his wife, "Strain this wine and cook us this food and look thou dress it daintily, for this young man overwhelmeth us with his bounties." She did as he bade her, to the utmost of desire; and he took the victuals and carried them to Ibrahim son of the Sultan. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that then they ate and drank and made merry, and Ibrahim wept and repeated the following verses,

"O my friend! an I rendered my life, my sprite, * My wealth and
 whatever the world can unite;
Nay, th' Eternal Garden and Paradise[311] * For an hour of
 Union my heart would buy't!"

Then he sobbed a great sob and fell down a-swoon. The porter sighed, and when he came to himself, he said to him, “O my lord, what is it gars thee weep and who is she to whom thou alludest in these verses? Indeed, she cannot be but as dust to thy feet.” But Ibrahim arose and for all reply brought out a parcel of the richest raiment that women wear and said to him, “Take this to thy Harim.” So he carried it to his wife and she returned with him to the young man’s lodging and behold, she found him weeping, quoth the doorkeeper to him, “Verily, thou breakest our hearts! Tell us what fair one thou desirest, and she shall be naught save thy handmaid.” Quoth he, “O uncle, know that I am the son of al-Kasib, Wazir of Egypt, and I am enamoured of Jamilah, daughter of Abu al-Lays the Governor.” Exclaimed the porter’s wife, “Allah! Allah! O my brother, leave this talk, lest any hear of us and we perish. Verily there is not on earth’s face a more masterful than she, nor may any name to her the word ‘man’, for she is averse from men. Wherefore, O my son, turn from her to other than her.” Now when Ibrahim heard this, he wept with sore weeping and the doorkeeper said to him, “I have nothing save my life; but that I will risk for thy love and find thee a means of winning thy will.” Then the twain went out from him, and on the morrow he betook himself to the Hammam and donned a suit of royal raiment, after which he returned to his lodging, when behold, the porter and his wife came in to him and said, “Know, O my lord, that there is a humpbacked tailor here who seweth for the lady Jamilah. Go thou to him and acquaint him with thy case; haply he will show thee the way of attaining thine aim.” So the youth Ibrahim arose and betaking himself to the shop of the humpbacked tailor, went in to him and found with him ten Mamelukes as they were moons. He saluted them with the salam, and they returned his greeting and bade him welcome and made him sit down; and indeed they rejoiced in him and were amazed at his charms and loveliness, especially the hunchback who was confounded at his beauty of form and favour. Presently he said to the Gobbo, “I desire that thou sew me up my pocket;” and the tailor took a needleful of silk and sewed up his pocket which he had torn purposely; whereupon Ibrahim gave him five dinars and returned to his lodging. Quoth the tailor, “What thing have I done for this youth, that he should give me five gold pieces?" And he passed the night, pondering his beauty and generosity. And when morning morrowed Ibrahim repaired to the shop and saluted the tailor, who returned his salam and welcomed him and made much of him. Then he sat down and said to the hunchback, "O uncle, sew up my pocket, for I have rent it again." Replied the tailor, "On my head and eyes, O my son," and sewed it up; whereupon Ibrahim gave him ten ducats and he took them, amazed at his beauty and generosity. Then said he, "By Allah, O youth, for this conduct of thine needs must be a cause, this is no matter of sewing up a pocket. But tell me the truth of thy case. An thou be in love with one of these boys,[312] by Allah, there is not among them a comelier than thou, for they are each and every as the dust at thy feet; and behold, they are all thy slaves and at thy command. Or if it be other than this, tell me." Replied Ibrahim, "O uncle, this is no place for talk, for my case is wondrous and my affair marvellous." Rejoined the tailor, "An it be so, come with me to a place apart." So saying, he rose up in haste and took the youth by the hand and carrying him into a chamber behind the shop, said, "Now tell me thy tale, O youth!" Accordingly Ibrahim related his story first and last to the tailor, who was amazed at his speech and cried, "O youth, fear Allah for thyself :[313] indeed she of whom thou speakest is a virago and averse from men. Wherefore, O my brother, do thou guard thy tongue, else thou wilt destroy thyself." When Ibrahim heard the hunchback's words, he wept with sore weeping and clinging to the tailor's skirts said, "Help me, O my uncle, or I am a dead man; for I have left my kingdom and the kingdom of my father and grandfather and am become a stranger in the lands and lonely; nor can I endure without her." When the tailor saw how it was with him, he pitied him and said, "O my son, I have but my life and that I will venture for thy love, for thou makest my heart ache. But by to-morrow I will contrive thee somewhat whereby thy heart shall be solaced." Ibrahim blessed him and returning to the khan, told the doorkeeper what the hunchback had said, and he answered, "Indeed, he hath dealt kindly with thee." Next morning, the youth donned his richest dress and taking a purse of gold, repaired to the Gobbo and saluted him. Then he sat down and said, "O uncle, keep thy word with me." Quoth the hunchback, "Arise forthright and take thee three fat fowls and three ounces[314] of sugar- candy and two small jugs which do thou fill with wine; also a cup. Lay all these in a budget[315] and to-morrow, after the morning-prayers, take boat with them, saying to the boatman, ‘I would have thee row me down the river below Bassorah.’ An he say to thee, ‘I cannot go farther than a parasang’ do thou answer, ‘As thou wilt;’ but, when he shall have come so far, lure him on with money to carry thee farther; and the first flower-garden thou wilt descry after this will be that of the lady Jamilah. Go up to the gate as soon as thou espiest it and there thou wilt see two high steps, carpeted with brocade, and seated thereon a Quasimodo like me. Do thou complain to him of thy case and crave his favour: belike he will have compassion on thy condition and bring thee to the sight of her, though but for a moment from afar. This is all I can do for thee; and unless he be moved to pity for thee, we be dead men, I and thou. This then is my rede and the matter rests with the Almighty.” Quoth Ibrahim, “I seek aid of Allah; whatso He willeth becometh; and there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah!” Then he left the hunchback tailor and returned to his lodging where, taking the things his adviser had named, he laid them in a bag. On the morrow, as soon as it was day, he went down to Tigris bank, where he found a boatman asleep; so he awoke him and giving him ten sequins, bade him row him down the river below Bassorah. Quoth the man, “O my lord, it must be on condition that I go no farther than a parasang; for if I pass that distance by a span, I am a lost man, and thou too.” And quoth Ibrahim, “Be it as thou wilt.” Thereupon he took him and dropped down the river with him till he drew near the flower garden, when he said to him, “O my son, I can go no farther; for, if I pass this limit, we are both dead men.” Hereat Ibrahim pulled out other ten dinars and gave them to him, saying, “Take this spending-money and better thy case therewithal.” The boatman was ashamed to refuse him and fared on with him crying “I commit the affair to Allah the Almighty!” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fifty-sixth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the youth Ibrahim gave the boatman other ten dinars, the man took them, saying, “I commit the affair to Allah the Almighty!” and fared on with him down stream. When they came to the flower garden, the youth sprang out of the boat, in his joy, a spring of a spear’s cast from the land, and cast himself down, whilst the boatman turned and fled. Then Ibrahim fared forward and found all as it had been described by the Gobbo: he also saw the garden- gate open, and in the porch a couch of ivory, whereon sat a hump backed man of pleasant presence, clad in gold-laced clothes and hending in hand a silvern mace plated with gold. So he hastened up to him and seizing his hand kissed it; whereupon asked the hunchback, “Who art thou and whence comest thou and who brought thee hither, O my son?” And indeed, when the man saw Ibrahim Khasib-son, he was amazed at his beauty. He answered, “O uncle, I am an ignorant lad and a stranger,” and he wept. The hunchback had pity on him and taking him up on the couch, wiped away his tears and said to him, “No harm shall come to thee. An thou be in debt, may Allah settle thy debt: and if thou be in fear, may Allah appease thy fear!” Replied Ibrahim, “O uncle, I am neither in fear nor am I in debt, but have money in plenty, thanks to Allah.” Rejoined the other, “Then, O my son, what is thy need that thou venturest thyself and thy loveliness to a place wherein is destruction?” So he told him his story and disclosed to him his case, whereupon the man bowed his head earthwards awhile, then said to him, “Was he who directed thee to me the humpbacked tailor?” “Yes,” answered Ibrahim, and the keeper said, “This is my brother, and he is a blessed man!” presently adding, “But, O my son, had not affection for thee sunk into my heart, and had I not taken compassion on thee, verily thou wert lost, thou and my brother and the doorkeeper of the Khan and his wife. For know that this flower-garden hath not its like on the face of the earth and that it is called the Garden of the Wild Heifer,[316] nor hath any entered it in all my life long, save the Sultan and myself and its mistress Jamilah; and I have dwelt here twenty years and never yet saw any else attain to this stead. Every forty days the Lady Jamilah cometh hither in a bark and landeth in the midst of her women, under a canopy of satin, whose skirts ten damsels hold up with hooks of gold, whilst she entereth, and I see nothing of her. Natheless, I have but my life and I will risk it for the sake of thee.” Herewith Ibrahim kissed his hand and the keeper said to him, “Sit by me, till I devise somewhat for thee.” Then he took him by the hand and carried him into the flower-garden which, when he saw, he deemed it Eden, for therein were trees intertwining and palms high towering and waters welling and birds with various voices carolling. Presently, the keeper brought him to a domed pavilion and said to him, “This is where the Lady Jamilah sitteth.” So he examined it and found it of the rarest of pleasances, full of all manner paintings in gold and lapis lazuli. It had four doors, whereto man mounted by five steps, and in its centre was a cistern of water, to which led down steps of gold all set with precious stones. Amiddlewards the basin was a fountain of gold, with figures, large and small, and water jetting in gerbes from their mouths; and when, by reason of the issuing forth of the water, they attuned themselves to various tones, it seemed to the hearer as though he were in Eden. Round the pavilion ran a channel of water, turning a Persian wheel[317] whose buckets[318] were silvern covered with brocade. To the left of the pavilion[319] was a lattice of silver, giving upon a green park, wherein were all manner wild cattle and gazelles and hares, and on the right hand was another lattice, overlooking a meadow full of birds of all sorts, warbling in various voices and bewildering the hearers’ wits. Seeing all this the youth was delighted and sat down in the doorway by the gardener, who said to him, “How seemeth to thee my garden?” Quoth Ibrahim “’Tis the Paradise of the world!” Whereat the gardener laughed. Then he rose and was absent awhile and presently returned with a tray, full of fowls and quails and other dainties including sweet-meats of sugar, which he set before Ibrahim, saying, “Eat thy sufficiency.” So he ate his fill, whereat the keeper rejoiced and cried, “By Allah, this is the fashion of Kings and sons of Kings!”[320] Then said he, “O Ibrahim, what hast thou in yonder bag?” Accordingly he opened it before him and the keeper said, “Carry it with thee; ‘twill serve thee when the Lady Jamilah cometh; for when once she is come, I shall not be able to bring thee food.” Then he rose and taking the youth by the hand, brought him to a place fronting the pavilion, where he made him an arbour[321] among the trees and said to him, “Get thee up here, and when she cometh thou wilt see her and she will not see thee. This is the best I can do for thee and on Allah be our dependence! Whenas she singeth, drink thou to her singing, and whenas she departeth thou shalt return in safety whence thou camest, Inshallah!" Ibrahim thanked him and would have kissed his hand, but he forbade him. Then the youth laid the bag in the arbour and the keeper said to him, "O Ibrahim, walk about and take thy pleasure in the garth and eat of its fruits, for thy mistress's coming is appointed to be to- morrow." So he solaced himself in the garden and ate of its fruits; after which he nighted with the keeper. And when morning morrowed and showed its sheen and shone, he prayed the dawn- prayer and presently the keeper came to him with a pale face, and said to him, "Rise, O my son, and go up into the arbour: for the slave-girls are come to order the place, and she cometh after them;" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fifty-seventh Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the keeper came to Ibrahim Khasib-son in the Garden he said to him, "Rise, O my son, and go up into the arbour; for the slave-girls are come to order the place and she cometh after them. So beware lest thou spit or sneeze or blow thy nose[322] ; else we are dead men, I and thou." Hereupon Ibrahim rose and went up into his nest, whilst the keeper fared forth, saying, "Allah grant thee safety, O my son!" Presently behold, up came four slave-girls, whose like none ever saw, and entering the pavilion, doffed their outer dresses and washed it. Then they sprinkled it with rose- water and incensed it with ambergris and aloes-wood and spread it with brocade. After these came fifty other damsels, with instruments of music, and amongst them Jamilah, within a canopy of red brocade, whose skirts the handmaidens bore up with hooks of gold, till she had entered the pavilion, so that Ibrahim saw naught of her nor of her raiment. So he said to himself, "By Allah, all my travail is lost! But needs must I wait to see how the case will be." Then the damsels brought meat and drink and they ate and drank and washed their hands, after which they set her a royal chair and she sat down; and all played on instruments of music and with ravishing voices incomparably sang. Presently, out ran an old woman, a duenna, and clapped hands and danced, whilst the girls pulled her about, till the curtain was lifted and forth came Jamilah laughing. Ibrahim gazed at her and saw that she was clad in costly robes and ornaments, and on her head was a crown set with pearls and gems. About her long fair neck she wore a necklace of unions and her waist was clasped with a girdle of chrysolite bugles, with tassels of rubies and pearls. The damsels kissed ground before her, and, 'When I considered her" (quoth Ibrahim), "I took leave of my senses and wit and I was dazed and my thought was confounded for amazement at the sight of loveliness whose like is not on the face of the earth. So I fell into a swoon and coming to myself, weeping-eyed, recited these two couplets,

'I see thee and close not mine eyes for fear * Lest their lids
    prevent me beholding thee:
An I gazed with mine every glance these eyne * Ne'er could sight
    all the loveliness moulding thee.'"

Then said the old Kahramanah[323] to the girls, "Let ten of you arise and dance and sing." And Ibrahim when looking at them said in himself, "I wish the lady Jamilah would dance." When the handmaidens had made an end of their pavane, they gathered round the Princess and said to her, "O my lady, we long for thee to dance amongst us, so the measure of our joy may be fulfilled, for never saw we a more delicious day than this." Quoth Ibrahim to himself, "Doubtless the gates of Heaven are open[324] and Allah hath granted my prayer." Then the damsels bussed her feet and said to her, "By Allah, we never saw thee broadened of breast as to-day!" Nor did they cease exciting her, till she doffed her outer dress and stood in a shift of cloth of gold,[325] broidered with various jewels, showing breasts which stood out like pomegranates and unveiling a face as it were the moon on the night of fullness. Then she began to dance, and Ibrahim beheld motions he had never in his life seen their like, for she showed such wondrous skill and marvellous invention, that she made men forget the dancing of bubbles in wine-cups and called to mind the inclining of the turbands from head[326] -tops: even as saith of her the poet[327] ,

"A dancer whose form is like branch of Ban! * Flies my soul well

nigh as his steps I greet:
While he dances no foot stands still and meseems * That the fire
of my heart is beneath his feet."

And as quoth another,[328]

"A dancer whose figure is like a willow-branch: my soul almost
quitteth me at the sight of her movements.
No foot can remain stationary at her dancing, she is as though
the fire of my heart were beneath her feet."

Quoth Ibrahim, "As I gazed upon her, she chanced to look up and caught sight of me whereupon her face changed and she said to her women, 'Sing ye till I come back to you.' Then, taking up a knife half a cubit long, she made towards me, crying, 'There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!' Now when I saw this, I well-nigh lost my wits; but, whenas she drew near me and face met face, the knife dropped from her hand, and she exclaimed, 'Glory to Him who changeth men's hearts!' Then said she to me, 'O youth, be of good cheer, for thou art safe from what thou dost fear!' Whereupon I fell to weeping, and she to wiping away my tears with her hand and saying, 'O youth, tell me who thou art, and what brought thee hither.' I kissed the ground before her and seized her skirt; and she said, 'No harm shall come to thee; for, by Allah, no male hath ever filled mine eyes[329] but thyself! Tell me, then, who thou art.' So I recited to her my story from first to last, whereat she marvelled and said to me, 'O my lord, I conjure thee by Allah, tell me if thou be Ibrahim bin al-Khasib?' I replied, 'Yes!' and she threw herself upon me, saying, 'O my lord, 'twas thou madest me averse from men; for, when I heard that there was in the land of Egypt a youth than whom there was none more beautiful on earth's face, I fell in love with thee by report, and my heart became enamoured of thee, for that which reached me of thy passing comeliness, so that I was, in respect of thee, even as saith the poet,

'Mine ear forewent mine eye in loving him; * For ear shall love before the eye at times.'

'So praised be Allah who hath shown thy face! But, by the almighty, had it been other than thou, I had crucified the keeper of the garden and the porter of the Khan and the tailor and him who had recourse to them!' And presently she added, 'But how shall I contrive for somewhat thou mayst eat, without the knowledge of my women?' Quoth I, 'With me is somewhat we may eat and drink;' and I opened the bag before her. She took a fowl and began to morsel me and I to morsel her; which when I saw, it seemed to me that this was a dream. Then I brought out wine and we drank, what while the damsels sang on; nor did they leave to do thus from morn to noon, when she rose and said, 'Go now and get thee a boat and await me in such a place, till I come to thee: for I have no patience left to brook severance.' I replied, 'O my lady, I have with me a ship of my own, whose crew are in my hire, and they await me.' Rejoined she, 'This is as we would have it,' and returning to her women," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fifty-eighth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Lady Jamilah returned to her women, she said to them, "Come, let us go back to our palace." They replied, "Why should we return now, seeing that we use to abide here three days?" Quoth she, "I feel an exceeding oppression in myself, as though I were sick, and I fear lest this increase upon me."[330] So they answered, "We hear and obey," and donning their walking-dresses went down to the river-bank and embarked in a boat; whereupon behold, the keeper of the garden came up to Ibrahim and said to him, knowing not what had happened, "O Ibrahim, thou hast not had the luck to enjoy the sight of her, and I fear lest she have seen thee, for 'tis her wont to tarry here three days." Replied Ibrahim, "She saw me not nor I her; for she came not forth of the pavilion."[331] Rejoined the keeper, "True, O my son, for, had she seen thee, we were both dead men: but abide with me till she come again next week, and thou shalt see her and take thy fill of looking at her." Replied the Prince, "O my lord, I have with me money and fear for it: I also left men behind me and I dread lest they take advantage of my absence."[332] He retorted, "O my son 'tis grievous to me to part with thee;" and he embraced and farewelled him. Then Ibrahim returned to the Khan where he lodged, and foregathering with the doorkeeper, took of him all his property and the porter said, “Good news, Inshallah!”[333] But Ibrahim said, “I have found no way to my want, and now I am minded to return to my people.” Whereupon the porter wept; then taking up his baggage, he carried them to the ship and abade him adieu. Ibrahim repaired to the place which Jamilah had appointed him and awaited her there till it grew dark, when, behold, she came up, disguised as a bully-boy with rounded beard and waist bound with a girdle. In one hand she held a bow and arrows and in the other a bared blade, and she asked him, “Art thou Ibrahim, son of al-Khasib, lord of Egypt?” “He I am,” answered the Prince; and she said, “What ne’er-do-well art thou, who comes to debauch the daughters of Kings? Come: speak with the Sultan.”[334] “Therewith” (quoth Ibrahim) “I fell down in a swoon and the sailors died[335] in their skins for fear; but, when she saw what had betided me, she pulled off her beard and throwing down her sword, ungirdled her waist whereupon I knew her for the Lady Jamilah and said to her, ‘By Allah, thou hast rent my heart in sunder!’[336] adding to the boatmen, ‘Hasten the vessel’s speed.’ So they shook out the sail and putting off, fared on with all diligence; nor was it many days ere we made Baghdad, where suddenly we saw a ship lying by the river-bank. When her sailors saw us, they cried out to our crew, saying, ‘Ho, such an one and such an one, we give you joy of your safety!’ Then they drave their ship against our craft and I looked and in the other boat beheld Abu al-Kasim al-Sandalani who when he saw us exclaimed ‘This is what I sought: go ye in God’s keeping; as for me, I have a need to be satisfied!’ Then he turned to me and said, ‘Praised be Allah for safety! Hast thou accomplished thine errand?’ I replied, ‘Yes!’ Now Abu al-Kasim had a flambeau before him; so he brought it near our boat,[337] and when Jamilah saw him, she was troubled and her colour changed: but, when he saw her, he said, ‘Fare ye in Allah’s safety. I am bound to Bassorah, on business for the Sultan; but the gift is for him who is present.’[338] Then he brought out a box of sweetmeats, wherein was Bhang and threw it into our boat: whereupon quoth I to Jamilah, ‘O coolth of mine eyes, eat of this.’ But she wept and said, ‘O Ibrahim, wottest thou who that is?’ and said I, ‘Yes, ’tis such an one.’ Replied she, ‘He is my first cousin, son of my father’s brother[339] who sought me aforetime in marriage of my sire; but I would not accept of him. And now he is gone to Bassorah and most like he will tell my father of us.’ I rejoined, ‘O my lady he will not reach Bassorah, till we are at Mosul.’ But we knew not what lurked for us in the Secret Purpose. “Then” (continued Ibrahim) “I ate of the sweetmeat, but hardly had it reached my stomach when I smote the ground with my head; and lay there till near dawn, when I sneezed and the Bhang issued from my nostrils. With this, I opened my eyes and found myself naked and cast out among ruins; so I buffeted my face and said in myself, ‘Doubtless this is a trick Al-Sandalani hath played me.’ But I knew not whither I should wend, for I had upon me naught save my bag-trousers.[340] However, I rose and walked on a little, till I suddenly espied the Chief of Police coming towards me, with a posse of men with swords and targes;[341] whereat I took fright and seeing a ruined Hammam hid myself there. Presently, my foot stumbled upon something; so I put my hand to it, and it became befouled with blood. I wiped my hand upon my bag-trousers, unknowing what had befouled it, and put it out a second time, when it fell upon a corpse whose head came up in my hand. I threw it down, saying, ‘There is no Majesty and there is no Might in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!’; and I took refuge in one of the corner-cabinets of the Hammam. Presently the Wali stopped at the bath-door and said, ‘Enter this place and search.’ So ten of them entered with cressets, and I of my fear retired behind a wall and looking upon the corpse, saw it to be that of a young lady[342] with a face like the full moon; and her head lay on one side and her body clad in costly raiment on the other. When I saw this, my heart fluttered with affright. Then the Chief of Police entered and said, ‘Search the corners of the bath.’ So they entered the place wherein I was, and one of them seeing me, came up hending in hand a knife half a cubit long. When he drew near me, he cried, ‘Glory be to God, the Creator of this fair face! O youth, whence art thou?’ Then he took me by the hand and said, ‘O youth, why slewest thou this woman?’ Said I, ‘By Allah, I slew her not, nor wot I who slew her, and I entered not this place but in fear of you!’ And I told him my case, adding, ‘Allah upon thee, do me no wrong, for I am in concern for myself!’ Then he took me and carried me to the Wali who, seeing the marks of blood on my hand said, ‘This needeth no proof: strike off his head!' — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Fifty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ibrahim continued, 'Then they carried me before the Wali and he, seeing the bloodstains on my hand, cried, 'This needeth no proof: strike off his head!' Now hearing these words, I wept with sore weeping the tears streaming from my eyes and recited these two couplets[343] ,

'We trod the steps that for us were writ, * And whose steps are
written he needs must tread
And whose death is decreed in one land to be * He ne'er shall
perish in other stead.'

Then I sobbed a single sob and fell a-swoon; and the headsman's heart was moved to ruth for me and he exclaimed, 'By Allah, this is no murtherer's face!' But the Chief said, 'Smite his neck.' So they seated me on the rug of blood and bound my eyes; after which the sworder drew his sword and asking leave of the Wali, was about to strike off my head, whilst I cried out, 'Alas, my strangerhood!' when lo and behold! I heard a noise of horse coming up and a voice calling aloud, 'Leave him! Stay thy hand, O Sworder!'" Now there was for this a wondrous reason and a marvellous cause; and 'twas thus. Al-Khasib, Wazir of Egypt, had sent his Head Chamberlain to the Caliph Harun al-Rashid with presents and a letter, saying, "My son hath been missing this year past, and I hear that he is in Baghdad; wherefore I crave of the bounty of the Vicegerent of Allah that he make search for tidings of him and do his endeavour to find him and send him back to me with the Chamberlain." When the Caliph read the missive, he commanded the Chief of Police to search out the truth of the matter, and he ceased not to enquire after Ibrahim, till it was told him that he was at Bassorah, whereupon he informed the Caliph, who wrote a letter to the viceroy and giving it to the Chamberlain of Egypt, bade him repair to Bassorah and take with him a company of the Wazir's followers. So, of his eagerness to find the son of his lord, the Chamberlain set out forthright and happened by the way upon Ibrahim, as he stood on the rug of blood. When the

Wali saw the Chamberlain, he recognised him and alighted to him and as he asked, “What young man is that and what is his case?” The Chief told him how the matter was and the Chamberlain said (and indeed he knew him not for the son of the Sultan[344]) “Verily this young man hath not the face of one who murthereth.” And he bade loose his bonds; so they loosed him and the Chamberlain said, “Bring him to me!” and they brought him, but the officer knew him not his beauty being all gone for the horrors he had endured. Then the Chamberlain said to him, “O youth, tell me thy case and how cometh this slain woman with thee.” Ibrahim looked at him and knowing him, said to him, “Woe to thee! Dost thou not know me? Am I not Ibrahim, son of thy lord? Haply thou art come in quest of me.” With this the Chamberlain considered him straitly and knowing him right well, threw himself at his feet; which when the Wali saw, his colour changed, and the Chamberlain cried to him, “Fie upon thee, O tyrant! Was it thine intent to slay the son of my master Al-Khasib, Wazir of Egypt?” The Chief of Police kissed his skirt, saying “O my lord,[345] how should I know him? We found him in this plight and saw the girl lying slain by his side.” Rejoined the Chamberlain, “Out on thee! Thou art not fit for the office. This is a lad of fifteen and he hath not slain a sparrow; so how should he be a murtherer? Why didst thou not have patience with him and question him of his case?” Then the Chamberlain and the Wali cried to the men, “Make search for the young lady’s murtherer.” So they re-entered the bath and finding him, brought him to the Chief of Police, who carried him to the Caliph and acquainted him with that which had occurred. al-Rashid bade slay the slayer and sending for Ibrahim, smiled in his face and said to him, “Tell me thy tale and that which hath betided thee.” So he recounted to him his story from first to last, and it was grievous to the Caliph, who called Masrur his Sworder, and said to him, “Go straightway and fall upon the house of Abu al-Kasim al-Sandalani and bring me him and the young lady.” The eunuch went forth at once and breaking into the house, found Jamilah bound with her own hair and nigh upon death; so he loosed her and taking the painter, carried them both to the Caliph, who marvelled at Jamilah’s beauty. Then he turned to Al-Sandalani and said, “Take him and cut off his hands, wherewith he beat this young lady; then crucify him and deliver his monies and possessions to Ibrahim.” They did his bidding, and as they were thus, behold, in came Abu al-Lays governor of Bassorah, the Lady Jamilah’s father, seeking aid of the Caliph against Ibrahim bin al- Khasib Wazir of Egypt and complaining to him that the youth had taken his daughter. Quoth Al-Rashid, “He hath been the means of delivering her from torture and slaughter.” Then he sent for Ibrahim, and when he came, he said to Abu al-Lays, “Wilt thou not accept of this young man, son of the Soldan of Egypt, as husband to thy daughter? ‘ Replied Abu al-Lays, “I hear and I obey Allah and thee, O Commander of the Faithful;” whereupon the Caliph summoned the Kazi and the witnesses and married the young lady to Ibrahim. Furthermore, he gave him all Al Sandalani’s wealth and equipped him for his return to his own country, where he abode with Jamilah in the utmost of bliss and the most perfect of happiness, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies; and glory be to the Living who dieth not! They also relate, O auspicious King, a tale anent

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ABU AL-HASAN OF KHORASAN.[346]

The Caliph Al-Mu'tazid bi 'llah[347] was a high-spirited Prince and a noble-minded lord; he had in Baghdad six hundred Wazirs and of the affairs of the folk naught was hidden from him. He went forth one day, he and Ibn Hamdъn,[348] to divert himself with observing his lieges and hearing the latest news of the people; and, being overtaken with the heats of noonday, they turned aside from the main thoroughfare into a little by-street, at the upper end whereof they saw a handsome and high-builded mansion, discoursing of its owner with the tongue of praise. They sat down at the gate to take rest, and presently out came two eunuchs as they were moons on their fourteenth night. Quoth one of them to his fellow, "Would Heaven some guest would seek admission this day! My master will not eat but with guests and we are come to this hour and I have not yet seen a soul." The Caliph marvelled at their speech and said, "This is a proof of the house-master's liberality: there is no help but that we go in to him and note his generosity, and this shall be a means of favour betiding him from us." So he said to the eunuch, "Ask leave of thy lord for the admission of a company[349] of strangers." For in those days it was the Caliph's wont, whenas he was minded to observe his subjects, to disguise himself in merchant's garb. The eunuch went in and told his master, who rejoiced and rising, came out to them in person. He was fair of favour and fine of form and he appeared clad in a tunic of Nнshбръr[350] silk and a gold laced mantle; and he dripped with scented waters and wore on his hand a signet ring of rubies. When he saw them, he said to them, "Well come and welcome to the lords who favour us with the utmost of favour by their coming!" So they entered the house and found it such as would make a man forget family and fatherland for it was like a piece of Paradise. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Sixtieth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Caliph entered the mansion, he and the man with him, they saw it to be such as would make one forget family and fatherland, for it was like a piece of Paradise. Within it was a flower-garden, full of all kinds of trees, confounding sight and its dwelling-places were furnished with costly furniture. They sat down and the Caliph fell to gazing at the house and the household gear. (Quoth Ibn Hamdъn), "I looked at the Caliph and saw his countenance change, and being wont to know from his face whether he was amused or anangered, said to myself, 'I wonder what hath vexed him.' Then they brought a golden basin and we washed our hands, after which they spread a silken cloth and set thereon a table of rattan. When the covers were taken off the dishes, we saw therein meats rare as the blooms of Prime in the season of their utmost scarcity, twofold and single, and the host said, 'Bismillah, O my lords! By Allah, hunger pricketh me; so favour me by eating of this food, as is the fashion of the noble.' Thereupon he began tearing fowls apart and laying them before us, laughing the while and repeating verses and telling stories and talking gaily with pleasant sayings such as sorted with the entertainment. We ate and drank, then removed to another room, which confounded beholders with its beauty and which reeked with exquisite perfumes. Here they brought us a tray of fruits freshly-gathered and sweetmeats the finest flavoured, whereat our joys increased and our cares ceased. But withal the Caliph" (continued Ibn Hamdun) "ceased not to wear a frowning face and smiled not at that which gladdened all souls, albeit it was his wont to love mirth and merriment and the putting away of cares, and I knew that he was no envious wight and oppressor. So I said to myself, 'Would Heaven I knew what is the cause of his moroseness and why we cannot dissipate his ill-humour!' Presently they brought the tray of wine which friends doth conjoin and clarified draughts in flagons of gold and crystal and silver, and the host smote with a rattan-wand on the door of an inner chamber, whereupon behold, it opened and out came three damsels, high-bosomed virginity with faces like the sun at the fourth hour of the day, one a lutist, another a harpist and the third a dancer-artiste. Then he set before us dried fruits and confections and drew between us and the damsels a curtain of brocade, with tassels of silk and rings of gold. The Caliph paid no heed to all this, but said to the host, who knew not who was in his company, 'Art thou noble?'[351] Said he, 'No, my lord; I am but a man of the sons of the merchants and am known among the folk as Abъ al-Hasan Ali, son of Ahmad of Khorasan.’ Quoth the Caliph, ‘Dost thou know me, O man?’, and quoth he, ‘By Allah, O my lord, I have no knowledge of either of your honours!’ Then said I to him, ‘O man, this is the Commander of the Faithful, AI-Mu’tazid bi ‘llah grandson of Al-Mutawakkil ala ‘llah.’[352] Whereupon he rose and kissed the ground before the Caliph, trembling for fear of him, and said, ‘O Prince of True Believers, I conjure thee, by the virtue of thy pious forbears, an thou have seen in me any shortcomings or lack of good manners in thy presence, do thou forgive me!’ Replied the Caliph, ‘As for that which thou hast done with us of honouring and hospitality nothing could have exceeded it; and as for that wherewith I have to reproach thee here, an thou tell me the truth respecting it and it commend itself to my sense, thou shalt be saved from me; but, an thou tell me not the truth, I will take thee with manifest proof and punish thee with such punishment as never yet punished any.’ Quoth the man, ‘Allah forbid that I tell thee a lie! But what is it that thou reproachest to me, O Commander of the Faithful?’ Quoth the Caliph, ‘Since I entered thy mansion and looked upon its grandeur, I have noted the furniture and vessels therein, nay, even to thy clothes, and behold, on all of them is the name of my grandfather Al-Mutawakkil ala ‘llah.’[353] Answered Abu al-Hasan, ‘Yes, O Commander of the Faithful (the Almighty protect thee), truth is thine inner garb and sincerity is thine outer garment and none may speak otherwise than truly in thy presence.’ The Caliph bade him be seated and said, ‘Tell us.’” So he began, “Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that my father belonged to the markets of the money-changers and druggists and linendrapers and had in each bazar a shop and an agent and all kinds of goods. Moreover, behind the money-changer’s shop he had an apartment, where he might be private, appointing the shop for buying and selling. His wealth was beyond count and to his riches there was none amount; but he had no child other than myself, and he loved me and was tenderly fain of me. When his last hour was at hand, he called me to him and commended my mother to my care and charged me to fear Almighty Allah. Then he died, may Allah have mercy upon him and continue the Prince of True Believers on life! And I gave myself up to pleasure and eating and drinking and took to myself comrades and intimates. My mother used to forbid me from this and to blame me for it, but I would not hear a word from her, till my money was all gone, when I sold my lands and houses and naught was left me save the mansion wherein I now dwell, and it was a goodly stead, O Commander of the Faithful. So I said to my mother, ‘I wish to sell the house;’ but she said, ‘O my son, an thou sell it, thou wilt be dishonoured and wilt have no place wherein to take shelter.’ Quoth I, ‘’Tis worth five thousand dinars, and with one thousand of its price I will buy me another house and trade with the rest.’ Quoth she, ‘Wilt thou sell it to me at that price?’; and I replied, ‘Yes.’ Whereupon she went to a coffer and opening it, took out a porcelain vessel, wherein were five thousand dinars. When I saw this meseemed the house was all of gold and she said to me, ‘O my son, think not that this is of thy father’s good. By Allah, O my son, it was of my own father’s money and I have treasured it up against a time of need; for, in thy father’s day I was a wealthy woman and had no need of it.’ I took the money from her, O Prince of True Believers, and fell again to feasting and carousing and merrymaking with my friends, unheeding my mother’s words and admonitions, till the five thousand dinars came to an end, when I said to her, ‘I wish to sell the house.’ Said she, ‘O my son, I forbade thee from selling it before, of my knowledge that thou hadst need of it; so how wilt thou sell it a second time?’ Quoth I, ‘Be not longsome of speech with me, for I must and will sell it;’ and quoth she, ‘Then sell it to me for fifteen thousand dinars, on condition that I take charge of thine affairs.’ So I sold her the house at that price and gave up my affairs into her charge, whereupon she sought out the agents of my father and gave each of them a thousand dinars, keeping the rest in her own hands and ordering the outgo and the income. Moreover she gave me money to trade withal and said to me, ‘Sit thou in thy father’s shop.’ So I did her bidding, O Commander of the Faithful, and took up my abode in the chamber behind the shop in the market of the money-changers, and my friends came and bought of me and I sold to them; whereby I made good cheape and my wealth increased. When my mother saw me in this fair way, she discovered to me that which she had treasured up of jewels and precious stones, pearls, and gold, and I bought back my houses and lands that I had squandered and my wealth became great as before. I abode thus for some time, and the factors of my father came to me and I gave them stock-in-trade, and I built me a second chamber behind the shop. One day, as I sat there, according to my custom, O Prince of True Believers, there came up to me a damsel, never saw eyes a fairer than she of favour, and said, ‘Is this the private shop of Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn Ahmad al-Khorasani?’ Answered I, ‘Yes,’ and she asked, ‘Where is he?’ ‘He am I,’ said I, and indeed my wit was dazed at the excess of her loveliness. She sat down and said to me, ‘Bid thy page weigh me out three hundred dinars.’ Accordingly I bade him give her that sum and he weighed it out to her and she took it and went away, leaving me stupefied. Quoth my man to me, ‘Dost thou know her?’, and quoth I, ‘No, by Allah!’ He asked, ‘Then why didst thou bid me give her the money?’; and I answered, ‘By Allah, I knew not what I said, of my amazement at her beauty and loveliness!’ Then he rose and followed her, without my knowledge, but presently returned, weeping and with the mark of a blow on his face. I enquired of him what ailed him, and he replied, ‘I followed the damsel, to see whither she went; but, when she was aware of me, she turned and dealt me this blow and all but knocked out my eye.’ After this, a month passed, without her coming, O Commander of the Faithful, and I abode bewildered for love of her; but, at the end of this time, she suddenly appeared again and saluted me, whereat I was like to fly for joy. She asked me how I did and said to me, ‘Haply thou saidst to thyself, What manner of trickstress is this, who hath taken my money and made off?’ Answered I, ‘By Allah, O my lady, my money and my life are all thy very own!’ With this she unveiled herself and sat down to rest, with the trinkets and ornaments playing over her face and bosom. Presently, she said to me, ‘Weigh me out three hundred dinars.’ ‘Hearkening and obedience,’ answered I and weighed out to her the money. She took it and went away and I said to my servant, ‘Follow her.’ So he followed her, but returned dumbstruck, and some time passed without my seeing her. But, as I was sitting one day, behold, she came up to me and after talking awhile, said to me, ‘Weigh me out five hundred dinars, for I have need of them.’ I would have said to her, ‘Why should I give thee my money?’; but my love immense hindered me from utterance; for, O Prince of True Believers, whenever I saw her, I trembled in every joint and my colour paled and I forgot what I would have said and became even as saith the poet,

‘’Tis naught but this! When a-sudden I see her * Mumchance I bide nor a word can say her.’

So I weighed out for her the five hundred ducats, and she took them and went away; whereupon I arose and followed her myself, till she came to the jewel-bazar, where she stopped at a man’s shop and took of him a necklace. Then she turned and seeing me, said, ‘Pay him five hundred dinars for me.’ When the jeweller saw me, he rose to me and made much of me, and I said to him, ‘Give her the necklace and set down the price to me.’ He replied, ‘I hear and obey,’ and she took it and went away;” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Sixty-first Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abu Hasan the Khorasani thus pursued his tale, “So I said to the jeweller, ‘Give her the necklace and set down the price to me.’ Then she took it and went away; but I followed her, till she came to the Tigris and boarded a boat there, whereupon I signed with my hand to the ground, as who should say, ‘I kiss it before thee.’ She went off laughing, and I stood watching her, till I saw her land and enter a palace, which when I considered, I knew it for the palace of the Caliph Al-Mutawakkil. So I turned back, O Commander of the Faithful, with all the cares in the world fallen on my heart, for she had of me three thousand dinars, and I said to myself, ‘She hath taken my wealth and ravished my wit, and peradventure I shall lose my life for her love.’ Then I returned home and told my mother all that had befallen me, and she said, ‘O my son, beware how thou have to do with her after this, or thou art lost.’ When I went to my shop, my factor in the drug-market, who was a very old man, came to me and said, ‘O my lord, how is it that I see thee changed in case and showing marks of chagrin? Tell me what aileth thee.’ So I told him all that had befallen me with her and he said, ‘O my son, this is indeed one of the handmaidens of the palace of the Commander of the Faithful and haply she is the Caliph’s favourite concubine: so do thou reckon the money as spent for the sake of Almighty Allah[354] and occupy thyself no more with her. An she come again, beware lest she have to do with thee and tell me of this, that I may devise thee some device lest perdition betide thee.' Then he fared forth and left me with a flame of fire in my heart. At the end of the month behold, she came again and I rejoiced in her with exceeding joy. Quoth she, 'What ailed thee to follow me?'; and quoth I, 'Excess of passion that is in my heart urged me to this,' and I wept before her. She wept for ruth of me and said, 'By Allah, there is not in thy heart aught of love-longing but in my heart is more! Yet how shall I do? By Allah, I have no resource save to see thee thus once a month.' Then she gave me a bill saying, 'Carry this to such an one of such a trade who is my agent and take of him what is named therein.' But I replied, 'I have no need of money; be my wealth and my life thy sacrifice!' Quoth she, 'I will right soon contrive thee a means of access to me, whatever trouble it cost me.' Then she farewelled me and fared forth, whilst I repaired to the old druggist and told him what had passed. He went with me to the palace of Al-Mutawakkil which I knew for that which the damsel had entered; but the Shaykh was at a loss for a device. Presently he espied a tailor sitting with his apprentices at work in his shop, opposite the lattice giving upon the river bank and said to me, 'Yonder is one by whom thou shalt win thy wish; but first tear thy pocket and go to him and bid him sew it up. When he hath done this, give him ten dinars.' 'I hear and obey,' answered I and taking with me two pieces[355] of Greek brocade, went to the tailor and bade him make of them four suits, two with long-sleeved coats and two without. When he had finished cutting them out and sewing them, I gave him to his hire much more than of wont, and he put out his hand to me with the clothes; but I said, 'Take them for thyself and for those who are with thee.' And I fell to sitting with him and sitting long: I also bespoke of him other clothes and said to him, 'Hang them out in front of thy shop, so the folk may see them and buy them.' He did as I bade him, and whoso came forth of the Caliph's palace and aught of the clothes pleased him, I made him a present thereof, even to the doorkeeper. One day of the days the tailor said to me, 'O my son, I would have thee tell me the truth of thy case; for thou hast bespoken of me an hundred costly suits, each worth a mint of money, and hast given the most of them to the folk.

This is no merchant's fashion, for a merchant calleth an account for every dirham, and what can be the sum of thy capital that thou givest these gifts and what thy gain every year? Tell me the truth of thy case, that I may assist thee to thy desire;' presently adding, 'I conjure thee by Allah, tell me, art thou not in love?' 'Yes,' replied I; and he said, 'With whom?' Quoth I, 'With one of the handmaids of the Caliph's palace;' and quoth he, 'Allah put them to shame! How long shall they seduce the folk? Knowest thou her name?' Said I, 'No;' and said he, 'Describe her to me.' So I described her to him and he cried, 'Out on it! This is the lutanist of the Caliph Al-Mutawakkil and his pet concubine. But she hath a Mameluke[356] and do thou make friends with him; it may be he shall become the means of thy having access to her.' Now as we were talking, behold, out walked the servant in question from the palace, as he were a moon on the fourteenth night; and, seeing that I had before me the clothes which the tailor had made me, and they were of brocade of all colours, he began to look at them and examine them. Then he came up to me and I rose and saluted him. He asked, 'Who art thou?' and I answered, 'I am a man of the merchants.' Quoth he, 'Wilt thou sell these clothes?'; and quoth I, 'Yes.' So he chose out five of them and said to me, 'How much these five?' Said I, 'They are a present to thee from me in earnest of friendship between me and thee.' At this he rejoiced and I went home and fetching a suit embroidered with jewels and jacinths, worth three thousand dinars, returned therewith and gave it to him. He accepted it and carrying me into a room within the palace, said to me, 'What is thy name among the merchants?' Said I, 'I am a man of them.'[357] He continued, 'Verily I misdoubt me of thine affair.' I asked, 'Why so?' and he answered, 'Because thou hast bestowed on me a costly gift and won my heart therewith, and I make certain that thou art Abu al-Hasan of Khorasan the Shroff.' With this I fell aweeping, O Prince of True Believers; and he said to me, 'Why dost thou weep? By Allah, she for whom thou weepest is yet more longingly in love with thee than thou with her! And indeed her case with thee is notorious among all the palace women. But what wouldst thou have?' Quoth I, 'I would have thee succour me in my calamity.' So he appointed me for the morrow and I returned home. As soon as I rose next morning, I betook myself to him and waited in his chamber till he came in and said to me, ‘Know that yesternight when, after having made an end of her service by the Caliph, she returned to her apartment, I related to her all that had passed between me and thee and she is minded to foregather with thee. So stay with me till the end of the day.’ Accordingly I stayed with him till dark, when the Mameluke brought me a shirt of gold-inwoven stuff and a suit of the Caliph’s apparel and clothing me therein, incensed me[358] and I became like the Commander of the Faithful. Then he brought me to a gallery with rows of rooms on either side and said to me, ‘These are the lodgings of the Chief of the slave-girls; and when thou passest along the gallery, do thou lay at each door a bean, for ’tis the custom of the Caliph to do this every night,’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Sixty-second Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Mameluke said to Abu Hasan, “When thou passest along the gallery set down at each door a bean for ’tis the custom of the Caliph so to do, till thou come to the second passage on thy right hand, when thou wilt see a door with a marble threshold .[359] Touch it with thy hand or, an thou wilt, count the doors which are so many, and enter the one whose marks are thus and thus. There thy mistress will see thee and take thee in with her. As for thy coming forth, verily Allah will make it easy to me, though I carry thee out in a chest.” Then he left me and returned, whilst I went on, counting the doors and laying at each a bean. When I had reached the middle of the gallery, I heard a great clatter and saw the light of flambeaux coming towards me. As the light drew near me, I looked at it and behold, the Caliph himself, came surrounded by the slave-girls carrying waxen lights, and I heard one of the women[360] say to another, ‘O my sister, have we two Caliphs? Verily, the Caliph whose perfumes and essences I smelt, hath already passed by my room and he hath laid the bean at my door, as his wont; and now I see the light of his flambeaux, and here he cometh with them.’ Replied the other, ‘Indeed this is a wondrous thing, for disguise himself in the Caliph’s habit none would dare.’ Then the light drew near me, whilst I trembled in every limb; and up came an eunuch, crying out to the concubines and saying, ‘Hither!’

Whereupon they turned aside to one of the chambers and entered. Then they came out again and walked on till they came to the chamber of my mistress and I heard the Caliph say, ‘Whose chamber is this?’ They answered, ‘This is the chamber of Shajarat al-Durr.’ And he said, ‘Call her.’ So they called her and she came out and kissed the feet of the Caliph, who said to her, ‘Wilt thou drink to-night?’ Quoth she, ‘But for thy presence and the looking on thine auspicious countenance, I would not drink, for I incline not to wine this night.’ Then quoth the Commander of the Faithful to the eunuch, ‘Bid the treasurer give her such necklace;’ and he commanded to enter her chamber. So the waxen lights entered before him and he followed them into the apartment. At the same moment, behold, there came up a damsel, the lustre of whose face outshone that of the flambeau in her hand, and drawing near she said, ‘Who is this?’ Then she laid hold of me and carrying me into one of the chambers, said to me, ‘Who art thou?’ I kissed the ground before her saying, ‘I implore thee by Allah, O my lady, spare my blood and have ruth on me and commend thyself unto Allah by saving my life!’; and I wept for fear of death. Quoth she, ‘Doubtless, thou art a robber;’ and quoth I, ‘No, by Allah, I am no robber. Seest thou on me the signs of thieves?’ Said she, ‘Tell me the truth of thy case and I will put thee in safety.’ So I said, ‘I am a silly lover and an ignorant, whom passion and my folly have moved to do as thou seest, so that I am fallen into this slough of despond.’ Thereat cried she, ‘Abide here till I come back to thee;’ and going forth she presently returned with some of her handmaid’s clothes wherein she clad me and bade me follow her; so I followed her till she came to her apartment and commanded me to enter. I went in and she led me to a couch, whereon was a mighty fine carpet, and said, ‘Sit down here: no harm shall befal thee. Art thou not Abu al-Hasan Ali the Khorasani, the Shroff?’ I answered, ‘Yes,’ and she rejoined, ‘Allah spare thy blood given thou speak truth! An thou be a robber, thou art lost, more by token that thou art dressed in the Caliph’s habit and incensed with his scents. But, an thou be indeed Abu al-Hasan, thou art safe and no hurt shall happen to thee, for that thou art the friend of Shajarat al-Durr, who is my sister and ceaseth never to name thee and tell us how she took of thee money, yet wast thou not chagrined, and how thou didst follow her to the river bank and madest sign as thou wouldst kiss the earth in her honour; and her heart is yet more aflame for thee than is thine for her. But how camest thou hither? Was it by her order or without it? She hath indeed imperilled thy life[361] . But what seekest thou in this assignation with her?' I replied, 'By Allah, O my lady, 'tis I who have imperilled my own life, and my aim in foregathering with her is but to look on her and hear her pretty speech.' She said, 'Thou hast spoken well;' and I added, 'O my lady, Allah is my witness when I declare that my soul prompteth me to no offence against her honour.' Cried she, 'In this intent may Allah deliver thee! Indeed compassion for thee hath gotten hold upon my heart.' Then she called her handmaid and said to her, 'Go to Shajarat al-Durr and say to her, 'Thy sister saluteth thee and biddeth thee to her; so favour her by coming to her this night, according to thy custom, for her breast is straitened.' The slave-girl went out and presently returning, told her mistress that Shajarat al-Durr said, 'May Allah bless me with thy long life and make me thy ransom! By Allah, hadst thou bidden me to other than this, I had not hesitated; but the Caliph's migraine constraineth me and thou knowest my rank with him.' But the other said to her damsel, 'Return to her and say, 'Needs must thou come to my mistress upon a private matter between thee and her!' So the girl went out again and presently returned with the damsel, whose face shone like the full moon. Her sister met her and embraced her; then said she, 'Ho, Abu al-Hasan, come forth to her and kiss her hands!' Now I was in a closet within the apartment; so I walked out, O Commander of the Faithful, and when my mistress saw me, she threw herself upon me and strained me to her bosom saying, 'How camest thou in the Caliph's clothes and his ornaments and perfumes? Tell me what hath befallen thee.' So I related to her all that had befallen me and what I had suffered for affright and so forth; and she said, 'Grievous to me is what thou hast endured for my sake and praised be Allah who hath caused the issue to be safety, and the fulfilment of safety is in thy entering my lodging and that of my sister.' Then she carried me to her own apartment, saying to her sister, 'I have covenanted with him that I will not be united to him unlawfully; but, as he hath risked himself and incurred these perils, I will be earth for his treading and dust to his sandals!'" — And

Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that quoth the damsel to her sister, “I have covenanted with him that I will not be united to him unlawfully; but, as he hath risked himself and incurred these perils, I will be earth for his treading and dust to his sandals!” Replied her sister, “In this intent may Allah deliver him!”; and my mistress rejoined, ‘Soon shalt thou see how I will do, so I may lawfully foregather with him and there is no help but that I lavish my heart’s blood to devise this.’ Now as we were in talk, behold, we heard a great noise and turning, saw the Caliph making for her chamber, so engrossed was he by the thought of her; whereupon she took me, O Prince of True Believers and hid me in a souterrain[362] and shut down the trap-door upon me. Then she went out to meet the Caliph, who entered and sat down, whilst she stood between his hands to serve him, and commanded to bring wine. Now the Caliph loved a damsel by name Banjah, who was the mother of Al-Mu’tazz bi ‘llah[363] ; but they had fallen out and parted; and in the pride of her beauty and loveliness she would not make peace with him, nor would Al-Mutawakkil, for the dignity of the Caliphate and the kingship, make peace with her neither humble himself to her, albeit his heart was aflame with passion for her, but sought to solace his mind from her with her mates among the slave-girls and with going in to them in their chambers. Now he loved Shajarat al-Durr’s singing: so he bade her sing, when she took the lute and tuning the strings sang these verses,

‘The world-tricks I admire betwixt me and her; * How, us parted,
the World would to me incline:
I shunned thee till said they, ‘He knows not Love;’ * I sought
thee till said they, ‘No patience is mine!’
Then, O Love of her, add to my longing each night, * And, O
Solace, thy comforts for Doomsday assign!
Soft as silk is her touch and her low sweet voice * Twixt o’er
much and o’er little aye draweth the line:
And eyne whereof Allah said ‘Be ye!’ and they * Became to man’s

wit like the working of wine.’

When the Caliph heard these verses, he was pleasured with exceeding pleasure, and I also, O Commander of the Faithful, was pleasured in my hiding-place, and but for the bounty of Almighty Allah, I had cried out and we had been disgraced. Then she sang also these couplets,

‘I embrace him, yet after him yearns my soul * For his love, but
can aught than embrace be nigher?
I kiss his lips to assuage my lowe; * But each kiss gars it glow
with more flaming fire;
’Tis as though my vitals aye thirst unquencht * Till I see two
souls mixt in one entire.’

The Caliph was delighted and said, ‘O Shajarat al-Durr, ask a boon of me.’ She replied, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, I ask of thee my freedom, for the sake of the reward thou wilt obtain therein.’[364] Quoth he, ‘Thou art free for the love of Allah;’ whereupon she kissed ground before him. He resumed, ‘Take the lute and sing me somewhat on the subject of my slave-girl, of whom I am enamoured with warmest love: the folk seek my pleasure and I seek hers.’ So she took the lute and sang these two couplets,

‘My charmer who spellest my piety[365] * On all accounts I’ll
have thee, have thee,
Or by humble suit which besitteth Love * Or by force more fitting
my sovranty.’

The Caliph admired these verses and said, ‘Now, take up thy lute and sing me a song setting out my case with three damsels who hold the reins of my heart and make rest depart; and they are thyself and that wilful one and another I will not name, who hath not her like.’[366] So she took the lute and playing a lively measure, sang these couplets,

‘Three lovely girls hold my bridle-rein * And in highest stead my
heart overreign.

I have none to obey amid all mankind * But obeying them I but win disdain:
This is done through the Kingship of Love, whereby * The best of my kingship they made their gain.’

The Caliph marvelled with exceeding marvel at the aptness of these verses to his case and his delight inclined him to reconciliation with the recalcitrant damsel. So he went forth and made for her chamber whither a slave-girl preceded him and announced to her the coming of the Caliph. She advanced to meet him and kissed the ground before him; then she kissed his feet and he was reconciled to her and she was reconciled to him. Such was the case with the Caliph; but as regards Shajarat al-Durr, she came to me rejoicing and said, ‘I am become a free woman by thy blessed coming! Surely Allah will help me in that which I shall contrive, so I may foregather with thee in lawful way.’ And I said, ‘Alhamdolillah!’ Now as we were talking, behold her Mameluke-eunuch entered and we related to him that which had passed, when he said, ‘Praised be Allah who hath made the affair to end well, and we implore the Almighty to crown His favours with thy safe faring forth the palace!’ Presently appeared my mistress’s sister, whose name was F6tir, and Shajarat al-Durr said to her, ‘O my sister, how shall we do to bring him out of the palace in safety; for indeed Allah hath vouchsafed me manumission and, by the blessing of his coming, I am become a free woman.’ Quoth Fatir, ‘I see nothing for it but to dress him in woman’s gear.’ So she brought me a suit of women’s clothes and clad me therein; and I went out forthwith, O Commander of the Faithful; but, when I came to the midst of the palace, behold, I found the Caliph seated there, with the eunuchs in attendance upon him. When he saw me, he misdoubted of me with exceeding doubt, and said to his suite, ‘Hasten and bring me yonder handmaiden who is faring forth.’ So they brought me back to him and raised the veil from my face, which when he saw, he knew me and questioned me of my case. I told him the whole truth, hiding naught, and when he heard my story, he pondered my case awhile, without stay or delay, and going into Shajarat al-Durr’s chamber, said to her, ‘How couldst thou prefer before me one of the sons of the merchants?’ She kissed ground between his hands and told him her tale from first to last, in accordance with the truth; and he hearing it had compassion upon her and his heart relented to her and he excused her by reason of love and its circumstances. Then he went away and her eunuch came in to her and said, ‘Be of good cheer; for, when thy lover was set before the Caliph, he questioned him and he told him that which thou toldest him, word by word.’ Presently the Caliph returned and calling me before him, said to me, ‘What made thee dare to violate the palace of the Caliphate?’ I replied, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, ’twas my ignorance and passion and my confidence in thy clemency and generosity that drave me to this.’ And I wept and kissed the ground before him. Then said he, ‘I pardon you both,’ and bade me be seated. So I sat down and he sent for the Kazi Ahmad ibn Abi Duwбd[367] and married me to her. Then he commanded to make over all that was hers to me and they displayed her to me[368] in her lodging. After three days, I went forth and transported all her goods and gear to my own house; so every thing thou hast seen, O Commander of the Faithful, in my house and whereof thou misdoubtest, is of her marriage-equipage. After this, she said to me one day, ‘Know that Al-Mutawakkil is a generous man and I fear lest he remember us with ill mind, or that some one of the envious remind him of us; wherefore I purpose to do somewhat that may ensure us against this.’ Quoth I, ‘And what is that?;’ and quoth she, ‘I mean to ask his leave to go the pilgrimage and repent[369] of singing.’ I replied, ‘Right is this rede thou redest;’ but, as we were talking, behold, in came a messenger from the Caliph to seek her, for that Al-Mutawakkil loved her singing. So she went with the officer and did her service to the Caliph, who said to her, ‘Sever not thyself from us;’[370] and she answered ‘I hear and I obey.’ Now it chanced one day, after this, she went to him, he having sent for her, as was his wont; but, before I knew, she came back, with her raiment rent and her eyes full of tears. At this I was alarmed, misdoubting me that he had commanded to seize upon us, and said, ‘Verily we are Allah’s and unto Him shall we return! Is Al-Mutawakkil wroth with us?’ She replied, ‘Where is Al-Mutawakkil? Indeed Al-Mutawakkil’s rule is ended and his trace is blotted out!’ Cried I, ‘Tell me what has happened;’ and she, ‘He was seated behind the curtain, drinking, with Al-Fath bin Khбkбn[371] and Sadakah bin Sadakah, when his son Al-Muntasir fell upon him, with a company of the Turks,[372] and slew him; and merriment was turned to misery and joy to weeping and wailing for annoy. So I fled, I and the slave-girl, and Allah saved us.’ When I heard this, O Commander of the Faithful, I arose forthright and went down stream to Bassorah, where the news reached me of the falling out of war between Al-Muntasir and Al-Musta’ʜn bi ‘llah;[373] wherefore I was affrighted and transported my wife and all my wealth to Bassorah. This, then, is my tale, O Prince of True Believers, nor have I added to or taken from it a single syllable. So all that thou seest in my house, bearing the name of thy grandfather Al-Mutawakkil, is of his bounty to us, and the fount of our fortune is from thy noble sources;[374] for indeed ye are people of munificence and a mine of beneficence.” The Caliph marvelled at his story and rejoiced therein with joy exceeding: and Abu al-Hasan brought forth to him the lady and the children she had borne him, and they kissed ground before the Caliph, who wondered at their beauty. Then he called for inkcase and paper and wrote Abu al-Hasan a patent of exemption from taxes on his lands and houses for twenty years. Moreover, he rejoiced in him and made him his cup-companion, till the world parted them and they took up their abode in the tombs, after having dwelt under the palace-domes; and glory be to Allah, the King Merciful of doom. And they also tell a tale concerning

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KAMAR AL-ZAMAN AND THE JEWELLER’S WIFE.[375]

There was once, in time of old, a merchant hight Abd al-Rahmбn, whom Allah had blessed with a son and daughter, and for their much beauty and loveliness, he named the girl Kaubab al-Sabбh and the boy Kamar al-Zamбn.[376] When he saw what Allah had vouchsafed the twain of beauty and loveliness, brilliancy and symmetry, he feared for them the evil eyes[377] of the espiers and the jibing tongues of the jealous and the craft of the crafty and the wiles of the wicked and shut them up from the folk in a mansion for the space of fourteen years, during which time none saw them save their parents and a slave-girl who served them. Now their father could recite the Koran, even as Allah sent it down, as also did his wife, wherefore the mother taught her daughter to read and recite it and the father his son till both had gotten it by heart. Moreover, the twain learned from their parents writing and reckoning and all manner of knowledge and polite letters and needed no master. When Kamar al-Zaman came to years of manhood, the wife said to her husband, “How long wilt thou keep thy son Kamar al-Zaman sequestered from the eyes of the folk? Is he a girl or a boy?” He answered, “A boy.” Rejoined she, “An he be a boy, why dost thou not carry him to the bazar and seat him in thy shop, that he may know the folk and they know him, to the intent that it may become notorious among men that he is thy son, and do thou teach him to sell and to buy. Peradventure somewhat may befal thee; so shall the folk know him for thy son and he shall lay his hand on thy leavings. But, an thou die, as the case now is, and he say to the folk, ‘I am the son of the merchant Abd al-Rahman,’ verily they will not believe him, but will cry, ‘We have never seen thee and we knew not that he had a son,’ wherefore the government will seize thy goods and thy son will be despoiled. In like manner the girl; I mean to make her known among the folk, so may be some one of her own condition may ask her in marriage and we will wed her to him and rejoice in her.” Quoth he, “I did thus of my fear for them from the eyes of the folk,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Sixty-fourth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Merchant's wife spake to him in such wise, he replied, "I did thus of my fear for them from the eyes of the folk and because I love them both and love is jealous exceedingly and well saith he who spoke these verses,

'Of my sight I am jealous for thee, of me, * Of thyself, of thy
stead, of thy destiny:
Though I shrined thee in eyes by the craze of me * In such
nearness irk I should never see:
Though thou wert by my side all the days of me * Till Doomsday I
ne'er had enough of thee.'"

Said his wife, "Put thy trust in Allah, for no harm betideth him whom He protecteth, and carry him with thee this very day to the shop." Then she clad the boy in the costliest clothes and he became a seduction to all who on him cast sight and an affliction to the heart of each lover wight. His father took him and carried him to the market, whilst all who saw him were ravished with him and accosted him, kissing his hand and saluting him with the salam. Quoth one, "Indeed the sun hath risen in such a place and blazeth in the bazar," and another, "The rising-place of the full moon is in such a quarter;" and a third, "The new moon of the Festival[378] hath appeared to the creatures of Allah." And they went on to allude to the boy in talk and call down blessings upon him. But his father scolded the folk for following his son to gaze upon him, because he was abashed at their talk, but he could not hinder one of them from talking; so he fell to abusing the boy's mother and cursing her because she had been the cause of his bringing him out. And as he gazed about he still saw the folk crowding upon him behind and before. Then he walked on till he reached his shop and opening it, sat down and seated his son before him: after which he again looked out and found the thoroughfare blocked with people for all the passers-by, going and coming, stopped before the shop to stare at that beautiful face and could not leave him; and all the men and women crowded in knots about him, applying to themselves the words of him who said,

“Thou madest Beauty to spoil man’s sprite * And saidst, ‘O my
servants, fear My reprove:’
But lovely Thou lovest all loveliness * How, then, shall thy
servants refrain from Love?”

When the merchant Abd al-Rahman saw the folk thus crowding about him and standing in rows, both women and men, to fix eyes upon his son, he was sore ashamed and confounded and knew not what to do; but presently there came up from the end of the bazar a man of the wandering Dervishes, clad in haircloth, the garb of the pious servants of Allah and seeing Kamar al-Zaman sitting there as he were a branch of Bбn springing from a mound of saffron, poured forth copious tears and recited these two couplets,

“A wand uprising from a sandy knoll, * Like full moon shining
brightest sheen, I saw;
And said, ‘What is thy name?’ Replied he ‘Lъlъ’ * ‘What’ (asked
I) ‘Lily?’ and he answered ‘Lб, lб!’”[379]

Then the Dervish fell to walking, now drawing near and now moving away,[380] and wiping his gray hairs with his right hand, whilst the heart of the crowd was cloven asunder for awe of him. When he looked upon the boy, his eyes were dazzled and his wit confounded, and exemplified in him was the saying of the poet,

“While that fair-faced boy abode in the place, * Moon of
breakfast-fкte he lit by his face,[381]
Lo! there came a Shaykh with leisurely pace * A reverend trusting
to Allah’s grace,
And ascetic signals his gait display’d.
He had studied Love both by day and night * And had special
knowledge of Wrong and Right;
Both for lad and lass had repined his sprite, * And his form like
toothpick was lean and slight,
And old bones with faded skin were o’erlaid.
In such arts our Shaykh was an Ajamн[382] * With a catamite
ever in company;

In the love of woman, a Platonist he[383] * But in either
versed to the full degree,
And Zaynab to him was the same as Zayd.[384]
Distraught by the Fair he adored the Fair * O'er Spring-camp
wailed, bewept ruins bare.[385]
Dry branch thou hadst deemed him for stress o' care, * Which the
morning breeze swayeth here and there,
For only the stone is all hardness made!
In the lore of Love he was wondrous wise * And wide awake with
all-seeing eyes.
Its rough and its smooth he had tried and tries * And hugged buck
and doe in the self-same guise
And with greybeard and beardless alike he
play'd."[386]

Then he came up to the boy and gave him a root[387] of sweet basil, whereupon his father put forth his hand to his pouch and brought out for him some small matter of silver, saying, "Take thy portion, O Dervish, and wend thy ways." He took the dirhams, but sat down on the masonry-bench alongside the shop and opposite the boy and fell to gazing upon him and heaving sigh upon sigh, whilst his tears flowed like springs founting. The folk began to look at him and remark upon him, some saying, "All Dervishes are lewd fellows," and other some, "Verily, this Dervish's heart is set on fire for love of this lad." Now when Abd al-Rahman saw this case, he arose and said to the boy, "Come, O my son, let us lock up the shop and hie us home, for it booteth not to sell and buy this day; and may Almighty Allah requite thy mother that which she hath done with us, for she was the cause of all this!" Then said he, "O Dervish, rise, that I may shut my shop." So the Dervish rose and the merchant shut his shop and taking his son, walked away. The Dervish and the folk followed them, till they reached their place, when the boy went in and his father, turning to the Dervish, said to him, "What wouldst thou, O Dervish, and why do I see thee weep?" He replied, "O my lord, I would fain be thy guest this night, for the guest is the guest of Almighty Allah." Quoth the merchant, "Welcome to the guest of God: enter, O Dervish!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the merchant, the father of Kamar al-Zaman, heard the saying of the Dervish, “I am Allah’s guest,” he replied, “Welcome to the guest of God: enter, O Dervish!” But he said to himself, “An the beggar be enamoured of the boy and sue him for sin, needs must I slay him this very night and bury him secretly. But, an there be no lewdness in him, the guest shall eat his portion.” Then he brought him into a saloon, where he left him with Kamar al-Zaman, after he had said privily to the lad, “O my son, sit thou beside the Dervish when I am gone out and sport with him and provoke him to love-liesse and if he seek of thee lewdness, I who will be watching you from the window overlooking the saloon will come down to him and kill him.” So, as soon as Kamar al-Zaman was alone in the room with the Dervish, he sat down by his side and the old man began to look upon him and sigh and weep. Whenever the lad bespake him, he answered him kindly, trembling the while and would turn to him groaning and crying, and thus he did till supper was brought in, when he fell to eating, with his eyes on the boy but refrained not from shedding tears. When a fourth part of the night was past and talk was ended and sleep-tide came, Abd al-Rahman said to the lad, “O my son, apply thyself to the service of thine uncle the Dervish and gainsay him not:” and would have gone out; but the Dervish cried to him, “O my lord, carry thy son with thee or sleep with us.” Answered the merchant, “Nay, my son shall lie with thee: haply thy soul may desire somewhat, and he will look to thy want and wait upon thee.” Then he went out leaving them both together, and sat down in an adjoining room which had a window giving upon the saloon. Such was the case with the merchant; but as to the lad, as soon as his sire had left them, he came up to the Dervish and began to provoke him and offer himself to him, whereupon he waxed wroth and said, “What talk is this, O my son? I take refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned! O my Lord, indeed this is a denial of Thee which pleaseth Thee not! Avaunt from me, O my son!” So saying, the Dervish arose and sat down at a distance; but the boy followed him and threw himself upon him, saying, “Why, O Dervish, wilt thou deny thyself the joys of my possession, and I with a heart that loveth thee?" Hereupon the Dervish's anger redoubled and he said, "An thou refrain not from me, I will summon thy sire and tell him of thy doings." Quoth the lad, "My father knoweth my turn for this and it may not be that he will hinder me: so heal thou my heart. Why dost thou hold off from me? Do I not please thee?" Answered the Dervish, "By Allah, O my son, I will not do this, though I be hewn in pieces with sharp-edged swords!"; and he repeated the saying of the poet,

"Indeed my heart loves all the lovely boys * As girls; nor am I
slow to such delight,
But, though I sight them every night and morn, * I'm neither of
Lot's folk[388] nor wencher-wight."

Then he shed tears and said, "Arise, open the door, that I may wend my way, for I will lie no longer in this lodging." Therewith he rose to his feet; but the boy caught hold of him, saying, "Look at the fairness of my face and the cramoisy of my cheeks and the softness of my sides and the lusciousness of my lips." Moreover he discovered to him calves that would shame wine and cupcarrier[389] and gazed on him with fixed glance that would baffle enchanter and enchantments; for he was passing of loveliness and full of blandishment, even as saith of him one of the poets who sang,

"I can't forget him, since he rose and showed with fair design *
Those calves of legs whose pearly shine make light in
nightly gloom:
Wonder not an my flesh uprise as though 'twere Judgment-day *
When every shank shall bared be and that is Day of
Doom."[390]

Then the boy displayed to him his bosom, saying, "Look at my breasts which be goodlier than the breasts of maidens and my lip-dews are sweeter than sugar-candy. So quit scruple and asceticism and cast off devoutness and abstinence and take thy fill of my possession and enjoy my loveliness. Fear naught, for thou art safe from hurt, and leave this hebetude for 'tis a bad habit." And he went on to discover to him his hidden beauties, striving to turn the reins of his reason with his bendings in graceful guise, whilst the Dervish turned away his face and said, “I seek refuge with Allah! Have some shame, O my son![391] This is a forbidden thing I deem and I will not do it, no, not even in dream.” The boy pressed upon him, but the Dervish got free from him and turning towards Meccah addressed himself to his devotions. Now when the boy saw him praying, he left him till he had prayed a two-bow prayer and saluted,[392] when he would have accosted him again; but the Dervish again repeated the intent[393] and prayed a second two-bow prayer, and thus he did a third and a fourth and a fifth time. Quoth the lad, “What prayers are these? Art thou minded to take flight upon the clouds? Thou lettest slip our delight, whilst thou passest the whole night in the prayer-niche.” So saying, he threw himself upon the Dervish and kissed him between the eyes; but the Shaykh said, “O my son, put Satan away from thine estate and take upon thee obedience of the Compassionate.” Quoth the other, “An thou do not with me that which I desire, I will call my sire and say to him, The Dervish is minded to do lewdness with me. Whereupon he will come in to thee and beat thee till thy bones be broken upon thy flesh.” All this while Abd al-Rahman was watching with his eyes and hearkening with his ears, and he was certified that there was no frowardness in the Dervish and he said to himself, “Were he a lewd fellow, he had not stood out against all this importunity.” The boy continued to beguile the Dervish and every time he expressed purpose of prayer, he interrupted him, till at last he waxed wroth with passing wrath and was rough with him and beat him. Kamar al-Zaman wept and his father came in and having wiped away his tears and comforted him said to the Dervish, “O my brother, since thou art in such case, why didst thou weep and sigh when thou sawest my son? Say me, is there a reason for this?” He replied, “There is;” and Abd al-Rahman pursued, “When I saw thee weep at his sight, I deemed evil of thee and bade the boy do with thee thus, that I might try thee, purposing in myself, if I saw thee sue him for sin, to come in upon thee and kill thee. But, when I saw what thou didst, I knew thee for one of those who are virtuous to the end. Now Allah upon thee, tell me the cause of thy weeping!” The Dervish sighed and said, “O my lord, chafe not a closed[394] wound.”

But the merchant said, “There is no help but thou tell me;” and the other began, “Know thou that I am a Dervish who wander in the lands and the countries, and take warning by the display[395] of the Creator of Night and Day. It chanced that one Friday I entered the city of Bassorah in the undurn.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Sixty-sixth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Dervish said to the merchant, “Know, then, that I a wandering mendicant chanced one Friday to enter the city of Bassorah in the undurn and saw the shops open and full of all manner of wares and meat and drink; but the place was deserted and therein was neither man nor woman nor girl nor boy: nor in the markets and the main streets was there dog or cat nor sounded sound nor friend was found. I marvelled at this end and said to myself, ‘I wonder whither the people of the city be gone with their cats and dogs and what hath Allah done with them?’ Now I was anhungred so I took hot bread from a baker’s oven and going into the shop of an oilman, spread the bread with clarified butter and honey and ate. Then I entered the shop of a sherbet-seller and drank what I would; after which, seeing a coffee-shop open, I went in and found the pots on the fire, full of coffee;[396] but there was no one there. So I drank my fill and said, ‘Verily, this is a wondrous thing! It seemeth as though Death had stricken the people of this city and they had all died this very hour, or as if they had taken fright at something which befel them and fled, without having time to shut their shops.’ Now whilst pondering this matter, lo! I heard a sound of a band of drums beating; whereat I was afraid and hid myself for a while: then, looking out through a crevice, I saw damsels, like moons, come walking through the market, two by two, with uncovered heads and faces displayed. They were in forty pairs, thus numbering fourscore and in their midst a young lady, riding on a horse that could hardly move his legs for that which was upon it of silvern trappings and golden and jewelled housings. Her face was wholly unveiled, and she was adorned with the costliest ornaments and clad in the richest of raiment and about her neck she wore a collar of gems and on her bosom were necklaces of gold; her wrists were clasped with bracelets which sparkled like stars, and her ankles with bangles of gold set with precious stones. The slave-girls walked before her and behind and on her right and left and in front of her was a damsel bearing in baldric a great sword, with grip of emerald and tassels of jewel-encrusted gold. When that young lady came to where I lay hid, she pulled up her horse and said, ‘O damsels, I hear a noise of somewhat within yonder shop: so do ye search it, lest haply there be one hidden there, with intent to enjoy a look at us, whilst we have our faces unveiled.’ So they searched the shop opposite the coffee-house[397] wherein I lay hid, whilst I abode in terror; and presently I saw them come forth with a man and they said to her, ‘O our lady, we found a man there and here he is before thee.’ Quoth she to the damsel with the sword, ‘Smite his neck.’ So she went up to him and struck off his head; then, leaving the dead man lying on the ground, they passed on. When I saw this, I was affrighted; but my heart was taken with love of the young lady. After an hour or so, the people reappeared and every one who had a shop entered it; whilst the folk began to come and go about the bazars and gathered around the slain man, staring at him as a curiosity. Then I crept forth from my hiding place by stealth, and none took note of me, but love of that lady had gotten possession of my heart, and I began to enquire of her privily. None, however, gave me news of her; so I left Bassorah, with vitals yearning for her love; and when I came upon this thy son, I saw him to be the likest of all creatures to the young lady; wherefore he reminded me of her and his sight revived the fire of passion in me and kindled anew in my heart the flames of love-longing and distraction. And such is the cause of my shedding tears!” Then he wept with sore weeping till he could no more and said, “O my lord, I conjure thee by Allah, open the door to me, so I may gang my gait!” Accordingly Abd al-Rahman opened the door and he went forth. Thus fared it with him; but as regards Kamar al-Zaman, when he heard the Dervish’s story, his heart was taken with love of the lady and passion gat the mastery of him and raged in him longing and distraction; so, on the morrow, he said to his sire, “All the sons of the merchants wander about the world to attain their desire, nor is there one of them but his father provideth for him a stock-in-trade wherewithal he may travel and traffic for gain. Why, then, O my father, dost thou not outfit me with merchandise, so I may fare with it and find my luck?" He replied, "O my son, such merchants lack money; so they send their sons to foreign parts for the sake of profit and pecuniary gain and provision of the goods of the world. But I have monies in plenty nor do I covet more: why then should I exile thee? Indeed, I cannot brook to be parted from thee an hour, more especially as thou art unique in beauty and loveliness and perfect grace and I fear for thee." But Kamar al-Zaman said, "O my father, nothing will serve but thou must furnish me with merchandise wherewithal to travel; else will I fly from thee at unawares though without money or merchandise. So, an thou wish to solace my heart, make ready for me a stock-in-trade, that I may travel and amuse myself by viewing the countries of men." Abd al-Rahman, seeing his son enamoured of travel, acquainted his wife with this, saying, "Verily thy son would have me provide him with goods, so he may fare therewith to far regions, albeit Travel is Travail."[398] Quoth she, "What is there to displease thee in this? Such is the wont of the sons of the merchants and they all vie one with other in glorifying globe-trotting and gain." Quoth he, "Most of the merchants are poor and seek growth of good; but I have wealth galore." She replied, "More of a good thing hurteth not; and, if thou comply not with his wish, I will furnish him with goods of my own monies." Quoth Abd al-Rahman, "I fear strangerhood for him, inasmuch as travel is the worst of trouble;" but she said, "There is no harm in strangerhood for him when it leadeth to gaining good; and, if we consent not, our son will go away and we shall seek him and not find him and be dishonoured among the folk." The merchant accepted his wife's counsel and provided his son with merchandise to the value of ninety thousand gold pieces, whilst his mother gave him a purse containing forty bezel-stones, jewels of price, the least of the value of one of which was five hundred ducats, saying, "O my son, be careful of this jewellery for 'twill be of service to thee." Thereupon Kamar al-Zaman took the jewels and set out for Bassorah, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Kamar al-Zaman took the jewels and set out for Bassorah after he had laid them in a belt, which he buckled about his waist; and he stayed not till there remained aught but a day’s journey between that city and himself; when the Arabs came out upon him and stripped him naked and slew his men and servants; but he laid himself down among the slain and wallowed in their blood, so that the wildlings took him for dead and left him without even turning him over and made off with their booty. When the Arabs had gone their ways, Kamar al-Zaman arose, having naught left but the jewels in his girdle, and fared on nor ceased faring till he came to Bassorah. It chanced that his entry was on a Friday and the town was void of folk, even as the Dervish had informed him. He found the market-streets deserted and the shops wide open and full of goods; so he ate and drank and looked about him. Presently, he heard a band of drums beating and hid himself in a shop, till the slave-girls came up, when he looked at them; and, seeing the young lady riding amongst them, love and longing overcame him and desire and distraction overpowered him, so that he had no force to stand. After awhile, the people reappeared and the bazars filled. Whereupon he went to the market and repairing to a jeweller and pulling out one of his forty gems sold it for a thousand dinars, wherewith he returned to his place and passed the night there; and when morning morrowed he changed his clothes and going to the Hamman came forth as he were the full moon. Then he sold other four stones for four thousand dinars and sauntered solacing himself about the main streets of Bassorah, clad in the costliest of clothes; till he came to a market, where he saw a barber’s shop. So he went in to the barber who shaved his head; and, clapping up an acquaintance with him, said to him, “O my father, I am a stranger in these parts and yesterday I entered this city and found it void of folk, nor was there in it any living soul, man nor Jinni. Then I saw a troop of slave-girls and amongst them a young lady riding in state:” and he went on to tell him all he had seen. Said the barber, “O my son, hast thou told any but me of this?”; and he said, “No.” The other rejoined, “Then, O my son, beware thou mention this before any but me; for all folk cannot keep a secret and thou art but a little lad and I fear lest the talk travel from man to man, till it reach those whom it concerneth and they slay thee. For know, O my son, that this thou hast seen, none ever kenned nor knew in other than this city. As for the people of Bassorah they are dying of this annoy; for every Friday forenoon they shut up the dogs and cats, to hinder them from going about the market-streets, and all the people of the city enter the cathedral-mosques, where they lock the doors on them[399] and not one of them can pass about the bazar nor even look out of casement; nor knoweth any the cause of this calamity. But, O my son, to-night I will question my wife concerning the reason thereof, for she is a midwife and entereth the houses of the notables and knoweth all the city news. So Inshallah, do thou come to me to-morrow and I will tell thee what she shall have told me." With this Kamar al-Zaman pulled out a handful of gold and said to him, "O my father, take this gold and give it to thy wife, for she is become my mother." Then he gave him a second handful, saying, "Take this for thyself." Whereupon quoth the barber, "O my son, sit thou in thy place, till I go to my wife and ask her and bring the news of the true state of the case." So saying, he left him in the shop and going home, acquainted his wife with the young man's case, saying, "I would have thee tell me the truth of this city-business, so I may report it to this young merchant, for he hath set his heart on weeting the reason why men and beasts are forbidden the market-streets every Friday forenoon; and methinks he is a lover, for he is openhanded and liberal, and if we tell him what he would trow, we shall get great good of him." Quoth she, "Go back and say to him, 'Come, speak with thy mother, my wife, who sendeth her salam to thee and saith to thee, Thy wish is won.'" Accordingly he returned to the shop, where he found Kamar al-Zaman sitting awaiting him and repeated him the very words spoken by his spouse. Then he carried him in to her and she welcomed him and bade him sit down; whereupon he pulled out an hundred ducats and gave them to her, saying, "O my mother, tell me who this young lady may be." Said she, "Know, O my son, that there came a gem to the Sultan of Bassorah from the King of Hind, and he was minded to have it pierced. So he summoned all the jewellers in a body and said to them, 'I wish you to drill me this jewel. Whoso pierceth it, I will give him whatsoever he shall ask; but if he break it, I will cut off his head.' At this they were afraid and said, 'O King of the age, a jewel is soon spoilt and there are few who can pierce them without injury, for most of them have a flaw. So do not thou impose upon us a task to which we are unable; for our hands cannot avail to drill this jewel.

However, our Shaykh[400] is more experienced than we.' Asked the King, 'And who is your Shaykh?'; and they answered, 'Master Obayd: he is more versed than we in this art and hath wealth galore and of skill great store. Therefore do thou send for him to the presence and bid him pierce thee this jewel.' Accordingly the King sent for Obayd and bade him pierce the jewel, imposing on him the condition aforesaid. He took it and pierced it to the liking of the King who said to him, 'Ask a boon of me, O master'; and said he, 'O King of the age, allow me delay till to-morrow.' Now the reason of this was that he wished to take counsel with his wife, who is the young lady thou sawest riding in procession; for he loveth her with exceeding love, and of the greatness of his affection for her, he doth naught without consulting her; wherefore he put off asking till the morrow. When he went home, he said to her, 'I have pierced the King a jewel and he hath granted me a boon which I deferred asking till to-morrow, that I might consult thee. Now what dost thou wish, that I may ask it?' Quoth she, 'We have riches such as fires may not consume; but, an thou love me, ask of the King to make proclamation in the streets of Bassorah that all the townsfolk shall every Friday enter the mosques, two hours before the hour of prayer, so none may abide in the town at all great or small except they be in the mosques or in the houses and the doors be locked upon them, and that every shop of the town be left open. Then will I ride with my slave-women through the heart of the city and none shall look on me from window or lattice; and every one whom I find abroad I will kill.'[401] So he went in to the King and begged of him this boon, which he granted him and caused proclamation to be made amongst the Bassorites," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When is was the Nine Hundred and Sixty-eighth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Jeweller begged his boon, the King bade proclamation be made amongst the Bassorites, but the people objected that they feared for their goods from the cats and dogs; wherefore he commanded to shut the animals up till the folk should come forth from the Friday prayers. So the jeweller's wife fell to sallying forth every Friday, two hours before the time of congregational prayer, and riding in state through the city with her women; during which time none dareth pass through the market-place nor look out of casement or lattice. This, then, is what thou wouldest know and I have told thee who she is; but, O my son, was it thy desire only to have news of her or hast thou a mind to meet her?” Answered he, “O my mother, ’tis my wish to foregather with her.” Quoth she, “Tell me what valuables thou hast with thee”; and quoth he, “O my mother, I have with me precious stones of four sorts, the first worth five hundred dinars each, the second seven hundred, the third eight hundred and the fourth a thousand ducats.” She asked, “Art thou willing to spend four of these?”; and he answered, “I am ready to spend all of them.” She rejoined, “Then, arise, O my son, and go straight to thy lodging and take a bezel-gem of those worth five hundred sequins, with which do thou repair to the jewel market and ask for the shop of Master Obayd, the Shaykh of the Jewellers. Go thither and thou wilt find him seated in his shop, clad in rich clothes, with workmen under his hand. Salute him and sit down on the front shelf of his shop;[402] then pull out the jewel and give it to him, saying, ‘O master, take this stone and fashion it into a seal-ring for me with gold. Make it not large, a Miskбl[403] in weight and no more; but let the fashion of it be thy fairest.’ Then give him twenty dinars and to each of his prentices a dinar. Sit with him awhile and talk with him and if a beggar approach thee, show thy generosity by giving him a dinar, to the intent that he may affect thee, and after this, leave him and return to thy place. Pass the night there, and next morning, take an hundred dinars and bring them and give them to thy father the barber, for he is poor.” Quoth Kamar al-Zaman, “Be it so,” and returning to his caravanserai, took a jewel worth five hundred gold pieces and went with it to the jewel-bazar. There he enquired for the shop of Master Obayd, Shaykh of the Jewellers, and they directed him thereto. So he went thither and saw the Shaykh, a man of austere aspect and robed in sumptuous raiment with four journeymen under his hand. He addressed him with “Peace be upon you!” and the jeweller returned his greeting and welcoming him, made him sit down. Then he brought out the jewel and said, “O master, I wish thee to make me this jewel into a seal-ring with gold. Let it be the weight of a Miskal and no more, but fashion it excellently.” Then he pulled out twenty dinars and gave them to him, saying, “This is the fee for chasing and the price of the ring shall remain.”[404] And he gave each of the apprentices a gold piece, wherefore they loved him, and so did Master Obayd. Then he sat talking with the jeweller and whenever a beggar came up to him, he gave him a gold piece and they all marvelled at his generosity. Now Master Obayd had tools at home, like those he had in the shop, and whenever he was minded to do any unusual piece of work, it was his custom to carry it home and do it there, that his journeymen might not learn the secrets of his wonderful workmanship.[405] His wife used to sit before him, and when she was sitting thus and he looking upon her,[406] he would fashion all manner of marvellously wroughten trinkets, such as were fit for none but kings. So he went home and sat down to mould the ring with admirable workmanship. When his wife saw him thus engaged, she asked him, “What wilt thou do with this bezel-gem?”; and he answered, “I mean to make it into a ring with gold, for ’tis worth five hundred dinars.” She enquired, “For whom?”; and he answered, “For a young merchant, who is fair of face, with eyes that wound with desire, and cheeks that strike fire and mouth like the seal of Sulaym6n and cheeks like the bloom of Nu’m6n and lips red as coralline and neck like the antelope’s long and fine. His complexion is white dashed with red and he is well-bred, pleasant and generous and doth thus and thus.” And he went on to describe to her now his beauty and loveliness and then his perfection and bounty and ceased not to vaunt his charms and the generosity of his disposition, till he had made her in love with him; for there is no sillier cuckold than he who vaunteth to his wife another man’s handsome looks and unusual liberality in money matters. So, when desire rose high in her, she said to him, “Is aught of my charms found in him?” Said he, “He hath all thy beauties; and he is thy counterpart in qualities. Meseemeth his age is even as thine and but that I fear to hurt thy feelings, I would say that he is a thousand times handsomer than thou art.” She was silent, yet the fire of fondness was kindled in her heart. And the jeweller ceased not to talk with her and to set out Kamar al-Zaman’s charms before her till he had made an end of moulding the ring; when he gave it to her and she put it on her finger, which it fitted exactly. Quoth she, “O my lord, my heart loveth this ring and I long for it to be mine and will not take it from my finger." Quoth he, "Have patience! The owner of it is generous, and I will seek to buy it of him, and if he will sell it, I will bring it to thee. Or if he have another such stone, I will buy it and fashion it for thee into a ring like this." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the jeweller said to his wife, "Have patience! The owner of it is generous and I will seek to buy it of him; and, if he will sell it, I will bring it to thee; or, if he have another such stone I will buy it and fashion it for thee into a ring like this." On this wise it fared with the jeweller and his wife; but as regards Kamar al-Zaman, he passed the night in his lodging and on the morrow he took an hundred dinars and carried them to the old woman, the barber's wife, saying to her, "Accept these gold pieces," and she replied, "Give them to thy father." So he gave them to the barber and she asked, "Hast thou done as I bade thee?" He answered, "Yes," and she said, "Go now to the Shaykh, the jeweller, and if he give thee the ring, put it on the tip of thy finger and pull it off in haste and say to him, 'O master, thou hast made a mistake; the ring is too tight.' He will say, 'O merchant, shall I break it and mould it again larger?' And do thou say, 'It booteth not to break it and fashion it anew. Take it and give it to one of thy slave-women.' Then pull out another stone worth seven hundred dinars and say to him, 'Take this stone and set it for me, for 'tis handsomer than the other.' Give him thirty dinars and to each of the prentices two, saying, 'These gold pieces are for the chasing and the price of the ring shall remain.' Then return to thy lodging for the night and on the morrow bring me two hundred ducats, and I will complete thee the rest of the device." So the youth went to the jeweller, who welcomed him and made him sit down in his shop; and he asked him, "Hast thou done my need?" "Yes," answered Obayd and brought out to him the seal-ring; whereupon he set it on his finger-tip and pulling it off in haste, cried, "Thou hast made a mistake, O master;" and threw it to him, saying, "'Tis too strait for my finger." Asked the jeweller, "O merchant, shall I make it larger?" But he answered, "Not so; take it as a gift and give it to one of thy slave-girls. Its worth is trifling, some five hundred dinars; so it booteth not to fashion it over again." Then he brought out to him another stone worth seven hundred sequins and said to him, "Set this for me: 'tis a finer gem." Moreover he gave him thirty dinars and to each of his workmen two. Quoth Obayd, "O my lord we will take the price of the ring when we have made it."[407] But Kamar al-Zaman said, "This is for the chasing, and the price of the ring remains over." So saying, he went away home, leaving the jeweller and his men amazed at the excess of his generosity. Presently the jeweller returned to his wife and said, "O Halʜmah,[408] never did I set eyes on a more generous than this young man, and as for thee, thy luck is good, for he hath given me the ring without price, saying, 'Give it to one of thy slave-women.'" And he told her what had passed, adding, "Methinks this youth is none of the sons of the merchants, but that he is of the sons of the Kings and Sultans." Now the more he praised him, the more she waxed in love-longing, passion and distraction for him. So she took the ring and put it on her finger, whilst the jeweller made another one, a little larger than the first. When he had finished moulding it, she put it on her finger, under the first, and said, "Look, O my lord, how well the two rings show on my finger! I wish they were both mine." Said he, "Patience! It may be I shall buy thee this second one." Then he lay that night and on the morrow he took the ring and went to his shop. As for Kamar al-Zaman, as soon as it was day, he repaired to the barber's wife and gave her two hundred dinars. Quoth she, "Go to the jeweller and when he giveth thee the ring, put it on thy finger and pull it off again in haste, saying, 'Thou hast made a mistake, O master! This ring is too large. A master like thee, when the like of me cometh to him with a piece of work, it behoveth him to take right measure; and if thou hadst measured my finger, thou hadst not erred.' Then pull out another stone worth a thousand dinars and say to him, 'Take this and set it, and give this ring to one of thy slave-women.' Give him forty ducats and to each of his journeymen three, saying, "This is for the chasing, and for the cost of the ring, that shall remain.' And see what he will say. Then bring three hundred dinars and give them to thy father the barber that he may mend his fortune withal, for he is a poor man." Answered Kamar al-Zaman, "I hear and obey," and betook himself to the jeweller, who welcomed him and making him sit down, gave him the ring. He took it and put it on his finger; then pulled it off in haste and said, “It behoveth a master like thee, when the like of me bringeth him a piece of work, to take his measure. Hadst thou measured my finger, thou hadst not erred; but take it and give it to one of thy slave-women.” Then he brought out to him a stone worth a thousand sequins and said to him, “Take this and set it in a signet-ring for me after the measure of my finger.” Quoth Obayd, “Thou hast spoken sooth and art in the right;” and took his measure, whereupon he pulled out forty gold pieces and gave them to him, saying, “Take these for the chasing and the price of the ring shall remain.” Cried the jeweller, “O my lord, how much hire have we taken of thee! Verily, thy bounty to us is great!” “No harm,” replied Kamar al-Zaman and sat talking with him awhile and giving a dinar to every beggar who passed by the shop. Then he left him and went away, whilst the jeweller returned home and said to his wife, ‘How generous is this young merchant! Never did I set eyes on a more open-handed or a comelier than he, no, nor a sweeter of speech.’ And he went on to recount to her his charms and generosity and was loud in his praise. Cried she, “O thou lack-tact,[409] since thou notest these qualities in him, and indeed he hath given thee two seal rings of price, it behoveth thee to invite him and make him an entertainment and entreat him lovingly. When he seeth that thou affectest him and cometh to our place, we shall surely get great good of him; and if thou grudge him the banquet do thou bid him and I will entertain him of my monies.” Quoth he, “Dost thou know me to be niggardly, that thou sayest this Say?; and quoth she, “Thou art no niggard, but thou lackest tact. Invite him this very night and come not without him. An he refuse, conjure him by the divorce oath and be persistent with him.” “On my head and eyes,” answered he and moulded the ring till he had finished it, after which he passed the night and went forth on the morrow to his shop and sat there. On this wise it was with him; but as for Kamar al-Zaman, he took three hundred dinars and carrying them to the old wife, gave them to her for the barber, her husband. Said she, “Most like he will invite thee to his house this day; and if he do this and thou pass the night there, tell me in the morning what befalleth thee and bring with thee four hundred dinars and give them to thy father.” Answered he, “Hearing and obeying;" and as often as he ran out of money, he would sell some of his stones. So he repaired to the jeweller, who rose to him and received him with open arms, greeted him heartily and clapped up companionship with him. Then he gave him the ring, and he found it after the measure of his finger and said to the jeweller, "Allah bless thee, O prince of artists! The setting is conformable but the stone is not to my liking." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Nine Hundred and Seventieth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Kamar al-Zaman said to the jeweller, "The setting is conformable to my wishes, but the stone is not to my liking. I have a handsomer than this: so take the seal-ring and give it to one of thy slave women." Then he gave him a fourth stone and an hundred dinars, saying, "Take thy hire and excuse the trouble we have given thee." Obayd replied, "O merchant, all the trouble thou hast given us thou hast requited us and hast overwhelmed us with thy great bounties: and indeed my heart is taken with love of thee and I cannot brook parting from thee. So, Allah upon thee, be thou my guest this night and heal my heart." He rejoined, "So be it; but needs must I go to my Khan, that I may give a charge to my domestics and tell them that I shall sleep abroad to-night, so they may not expect me." "Where dost thou lodge?" asked the jeweller; and he answered, "In such a Khan." Quoth Obayd, "I will come for thee there;" and quoth the other "'Tis well." So the jeweller repaired to the Khan before sundown, fearing lest his wife should be anangered with him, if he returned home without his guest; and, carrying Kamar al-Zaman to his house, seated him in a saloon that had not its match. Halimah saw him, as he entered, and was ravished with him. They talked till supper was served when they ate and drank; after which appeared coffee and sherbets, and the jeweller ceased not to entertain him with talk till eventide, when they prayed the obligatory prayers. Then entered a handmaid with two cups[410] of night drink, which when they had drunk, drowsiness overcame them and they slept. Presently in came the jeweller's wife and seeing them asleep, looked upon Kamar al-Zaman's face and her wit was confounded at his beauty. Said she, "How can he sleep who loveth the fair?" and, turning him over on his back, sat astraddle upon his breast. Then, in the mania of her passion for him, she rained down kisses on his cheeks, till she left a mark upon them and they became exceeding red and his cheek bones shone; and, she sucked his lips, till the blood ran out into her mouth; but with all this, her fire was not quenched nor her thirst assuaged. She ceased not to kiss and clip him and twine leg with leg, till the forebrow of Morn grew white and the dawn broke forth in light; when she put in his pocket four cockals[411] and went away. Then she sent her maid with something like snuff, which she applied to their nostrils and they sneezed and awoke, when the slave-girl said, "O my lords, prayer is a duty; so rise ye and pray the dawn-prayer." And she brought them basin and ewer.[412] Quoth Kaman al-Zamar "O master, 'tis late and we have overslept ourselves;" and quoth the jeweller, "O my friend verily the air of this room is heavy; for, whenever I sleep in it, this happens to me." Rejoined Kamar al-Zaman, "True," and proceeded to make the Wuzu ablution; but, when he put the water to his face, his cheeks and lips burned him. Cried he, "Prodigious! If the air of the room be heavy and we have been drowned in sleep, what aileth my cheeks and lips that they burn me?" And he said to the jeweller, "O master, my cheeks and lips burn me." The other replied, "I guess this cometh of the mosquito-bites." "Strange!" said Kamar al-Zaman. "Hath this thing happened to thee?" Replied Obayd, "No! But whenever I have by me a guest like thee, he complaineth in the morning of the mosquito-bites, and this happeneth only when he is like thee beardless. If he be bearded the mosquitoes sting him not, and naught hindereth them from me but my beard. It seems mosquitoes love not bearded men."[413] Rejoined Kamar al-Zaman, "True." Then the maid brought them early breakfast and they broke their fast and went out. Kamar al-Zaman betook himself to the old woman, who exclaimed, when she saw him, "I see the marks of joyance on thy face: tell me what thou hast seen." Said he, "I have seen nothing. Only I supped with the house master in a saloon and prayed the night prayer, after which we fell asleep and woke not till morning." She laughed and said, "What be those marks on thy cheeks and lips?" He answered, "'Twas the mosquitoes of the saloon that did this with me;" and she rejoined, "'Tis well. But did the same thing betide the house master?" He retorted, "Nay; but he told me that the mosquitoes of that saloon molest not bearded men, but sting those only who have no hair on face, and that whenever he hath for guest one who is beardless, the stranger awaketh complaining of the mosquito bites; whereas an he have a beard, there befalleth him naught of this." Said she, "Sooth thou speakest: but say me, sawest thou aught save this?" And he answered, "I found four cockals in my pocket." Quoth she, "Show them to me." So he gave them to her and she laughed and said, "Thy mistress laid these in thy pocket." He asked, "How so?" And she answered, " 'Tis as if she said to thee, in the language of signs,[414] 'An thou wert in love, thou wouldst not sleep, for a lover sleepeth not: but thou hast not ceased to be a child and fit for nothing but to play with these cockals. So what drave thee to fall in love with the fair?' Now she came to thee by night and finding thee asleep, scored thy cheeks with her kisses and left thee this sign. But that will not suffice her of thee and she will certainly send her husband to invite thee again to night; so, when thou goest home with him, hasten not to fall asleep, and on the morrow bring me five hundred dinars and come and acquaint me with what hath passed, and I will perfect for thee the device." Answered he, "I hear and obey," and went back to the Khan. Thus it befel him; but as regards the jeweller's wife, she said to her husband, "Is the guest gone?" Answered he, "Yes, but, O Halimah,[415] the mosquitoes plagued him last night and scarified his cheeks and lips, and indeed I was abashed before him." She rejoined, "This is the wont of the mosquitoes of our saloon; for they love none save the beardless. But do thou invite him again to night." So he repaired to the Khan where the youth abode, and bidding him, carried him to his house, where they ate and drank and prayed the night-prayer in the saloon, after which the slave-girl entered and gave each of them a cup of night-drink, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Seventy first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the slave-girl went in to the twain and gave each of them a cup of night drink, and they drank and fell asleep. Presently, in came Halimah and said, "O good-for-nothing, how canst thou sleep and call thyself a lover? A lover sleepeth not!" Then she mounted on his breast and ceased not to come down upon him with kisses and caresses, biting and sucking his lips and so forth, till the morning. when she put in his pocket a knife and sent her handmaid to arouse them. And when the youth awoke, his cheeks were on fire, for excess of redness, and his lips like coral, for dint of sucking and kissing. Quoth the jeweller, “Did the mosquitoes plague thee last night?”; and quoth the other, “Nay!”; for he now knew the conceit and left complaining. Then he felt the knife in his pocket and was silent; but when he had broken his fast and drunk coffee, he left the jeweller and going to the Khan; took five hundred dinars of gold and carried them to the old woman, to whom he related what had passed, saying, “I slept despite myself, and when I woke at dawn I found nothing but a knife in my pocket.” Exclaimed the old trot, “May Allah protect thee from her this next night! For she saith to thee by this sign, ‘An thou sleep again, I will cut thy throat.’ Thou wilt once more be bidden to the jeweller’s house to-night,[416] and if thou sleep, she will slay thee.” Said he, “What is to be done?”; and said she, “Tell me what thou atest and drankest before sleeping.” Quoth he, “We supped as was our wont and prayed the night- prayer, after which there came in to us a maid, who gave each of us a cup of night-drink, which when I had drunk, I fell asleep and awoke not till the morning.” Quoth the old woman, “The mischief is in the cup: so, when the maid giveth it to thee, take it from her, but drink not and wait till the master of the house have drunken and fallen asleep; then say to her, ‘Give me a draught of water,’ and she will go to fetch thee the gugglet. Then do thou empty the cup behind the pillow and lie down and feign sleep. So when she cometh back with the gugglet, she will deem that thou hast fallen asleep, after having drunk off the cup, and will leave thee; and presently the case will appear to thee; but beware of disobeying my bidding.” Answered he, “I hear and I obey,” and returned to the Khan. Meanwhile the jeweller’s wife said to her husband, “A guest’s due honour is three nights’ entertainment: so do thou invite him a third time.” Whereupon he betook himself to the youth and inviting him, carried him home and sat down with him in the saloon. When they had supped and prayed the night-prayer, behold, in came the handmaid and gave each of them a cup. Her master drank and fell asleep; but Kamar al-Zaman forbore to drink, whereupon quoth the maid, “Wilt thou not drink, O my lord?” Answered he, “I am athirst, bring me the gugglet.” Accordingly she went to fetch it, and he emptied the cup behind the pillow and lay down. When the slave-girl returned, she saw him lying down and going to her mistress said, “He hath drunk off the cup and fallen asleep;” whereupon quoth Halimah to herself, “Verily, his death is better than his life.” Then, taking a sharp knife, she went in to him, saying, “Three times, and thou notedst not the sign, O fool![417] So now I will rip up thy maw.” When he saw her making for him knife in hand, he opened his eyes and rose, laughing; whereupon said she, “’Twas not of thine own wit, that thou camest at the meaning of the sign, but by the help of some wily cheat; so tell me whence thou hadst this knowledge.” “From an old woman,” replied he, “between whom and me befel such and such;” and he told her all that had passed. Quoth she, “To- morrow go thou forth from us and seek her and say, ‘Hast thou any further device in store?’ And if she answer, ‘I have,’ do thou rejoin, ‘Then do thy best that I may enjoy her publicly.’ But, if she say, ‘I have no means of doing that, and this is the last of my devices,’ put her away from thy thought, and to-morrow night my husband will come to thee and invite thee. Do thou come with him and tell me and I will consider what remaineth to be done.” Answered he, “There is no harm in that!” Then he spent the rest of the night with her in embracing and clipping, plying the particle of copulation in concert[418] and joining the conjunctive with the conjoined,[419] whilst her husband was as a cast-out nunnation of construction.[420] And they ceased not to be thus till morning, when she said to him, “’Tis not a night of thee that will content me, nor a day; no, nor yet a month nor a year; but it’s my intent to abide with thee the rest of my life. Wait, however, till I play my husband a trick which would baffle the keenest-witted and win for us our wishes. I will cause doubt to enter into him, so that he shall divorce me, whereupon I will marry thee and go with thee to thine own country; I will also transport all his monies and hoards to thy lodging and will contrive thee the ruin of his dwelling place and the blotting out of his traces. But do thou hearken to my speech and obey me in that I shall say to thee and gainsay me not.” He replied, “I hear and I obey: in me there is none opposition.” Then said she, “Go to the Khan and, when my husband cometh to thee and inviteth thee, say to him, ‘O my brother, a son of Adam is apt to be burdensome, and when his visits grow over frequent, both generous and niggard loathe him.[421] How then shall I go with thee every night and lie I and thee, on the saloon? An thou wax not chagrined with me, thy Harim will bear me grudge, for that I hinder thee from thine. Therefore if thou have a mind to my company, take me a house beside thine own and we will abide thus, now I sitting with thee till the time of sleep, and now with me thou. Then I will go to my place and thou to thy Harim and this will be a better rede than that I hinder thee from thy Harim every night.’ Then will he come to me and take counsel with me, and I will advise him to turn out our neighbour, for the house wherein he liveth is our house and he renteth it of us; and once thou art in the house, Allah will make easy to us the rest of our scheme.” And presently she added, “Go now and do as I bid thee.” Answered he, “I hear and obey;” whereupon she left him and went away, whilst he lay down and feigned to be asleep. Presently, the handmaid came and aroused them; and when the jeweller awoke, he said to his guest, “O merchant have the mosquitoes worried thee?” He replied, “No,” and Obayd said, “Belike thou art grown used to them.” Then they broke their fast and drank coffee, after which they fared forth to their affairs, and Kamar al-Zaman betook himself to the old crone, and related to her what had passed, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Seventy-second Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Kamar al-Zaman betook himself to the old crone, he related to her what had passed, saying, “She spake to me this and that, and I answered her thus and thus. Now say me, hast thou any farther device for bringing me to enjoy her publicly?” Quoth she, “O my son, here endeth my contrivance, and now I am at the term of my devices.” Upon this he left her and returned to the Khan where, as eventide evened, the jeweller came to him and invited him. He said, “I cannot go with thee.” Asked the merchant, “Why so? I love thee and cannot brook separation from thee. Allah upon thee come with me!” The other replied, “An it be thy wish to continue our comradeship and keep up the friendship betwixt thee and me, take me a house by the side of thine own and when thou wilt, thou shalt pass the evening with me and I with thee; but, as soon as the time of sleep cometh, each of us shall hie him to his own home and lie there.” Quoth Obayd, “I have a house adjoining mine, which is my own property: so go thou with me to night and to- morrow I will have the house untenanted for thee.” Accordingly he went with him and they supped and prayed the night prayer, after which the jeweller drank the cup of drugged[422] liquor and fell asleep: but in Kamar al-Zaman’s cup there was no trick; so he drank it and slept not. Then came the jeweller’s wife and sat chatting with him through the dark hours, whilst her husband lay like a corpse. When he awoke in the morning as of wont, he sent for his tenant and said to him, “O man, quit me the house, for I have need of it.” “On my head and eyes,” answered the other and voided the house to him, whereupon Kamar al-Zaman took up his abode therein and transported thither all his baggage. The jeweller passed that evening with him, then went to his own house. On the next day, his wife sent for a cunning builder and bribed him with money to make her an underground-way[423] from her chamber to Kamar al-Zaman’s house, with a trap-door under the earth. So, before the youth was ware, she came in to him with two bags of money and he said to her, “Whence comest thou?” She showed him the tunnel and said to him, “Take these two bags of his money.” Then she sat with him, the twain toying and tumbling together till the morning, when she said, “Wait for me, till I go to him and wake him, so he may go to his shop, and I return to thee.” He sat expecting her, whilst she went away and awoke her husband, who made the Wuzu-ablution and prayed and went to his shop. As soon as he was gone, she took four bags and, carrying them through the Souterrain to Kamar al-Zaman, said to him, “Store these up;” then she sat with him awhile, after which she retired to her home and he betook himself to the bazar. When he returned at sundown, he found in his house ten purses and jewels and much besides. Presently the jeweller came to him and carried him to his own house, where they passed the evening in the saloon, till the handmaid came in according to custom, and brought them the drink. Her master drank and fell asleep, whilst naught betided Kamar al-Zaman for that his cup was wholesome and there was no trick therein. Then came

Halimah who sat down atoying with him, whilst the slave-girl transported the jeweller's goods to Kamar al-Zaman's house by the secret passage. Thus they did till morning, when the handmaid awoke her lord and gave them to drink coffee, after which they went each his own way. On the third day the wife brought out to him a knife of her husband's, which he had chased and wrought with his own hand, and which he priced at five hundred dinars. But there was no knife like it and because of the eagerness with which folk sought it of him, he had laid it up in a chest and could not bring himself to sell it to any one in creation. Quoth she, "Take this knife and set it in thy waist shawl and go to my husband and sit with him. Then pull out the knife and say to him, 'O master, look at this knife I bought to-day and tell me if I have the worst or the best of the bargain.' He will know it, but will be ashamed to say to thee, 'This is my knife;' so he will ask thee, 'Whence didst thou buy it and for how much?'; and do thou make answer, 'I saw two Levantines[424] disputing and one said to the other, 'Where hast thou been?' Quoth his companion, 'I have been with my mistress, and whenever I foregather with her, she giveth me ten dirhams; but this day she said to me, 'My hand is empty of silver for thee to day, but take this knife of my husband's.' So I took it and intend to sell it.' The knife pleased me and hearing his tale I said to him, 'Wilt thou sell it to me?' when he replied, 'Buy.' So I got it of him for three hundred gold pieces and I wonder whether it was cheap or dear.' And note what he will say to thee. Then talk with him awhile and rise and come back to me in haste. Thou wilt find me awaiting thee at the tunnel mouth, and do thou give me the knife." Replied Kamar al-Zaman, "I hear and I obey," and taking the knife set it in his waist-shawl. Then he went to the shop of the jeweller, who saluted him with the salam and welcomed him and made him sit down. He spied the knife in his waist shawl, at which he wondered and said to himself, "That is my knife: who can have conveyed it to this merchant?" And he fell a-musing and saying in his mind, "I wonder an it be my knife or a knife like it!" Presently Kamar al-Zaman pulled it out and said to him, "Harkye, master; take this knife and look at it." Obayd took it and knew it right well, but was ashamed to say, "This is my knife;" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Seventy-third Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the jeweller took the knife from Kamar al-Zaman, he knew it, but was ashamed to say, “This is my knife.” So he asked, “Where didst thou buy it?” Kamar al-Zaman answered as Halimah had charged him, and the jeweller said, “The knife was cheap at that price, for it is worth five hundred dinars.” But fire flamed in his heart and his hands were tied from working at his craft. Kamar al-Zaman continued to talk with him, whilst he was drowned in the sea of solicitudes, and for fifty words wherewith the youth bespoke him, he answered him but one; for his heart ached and his frame was racked and his thoughts were troubled and he was even as saith the poet,

“I have no words though folk would have me talk * And who bespeak
me find me thought waylaid:
Plunged in the Care-sea’s undiscovered depths, * Nor aught of
difference see ‘twixt man and maid!”

When Kamar al-Zaman saw his case thus changed, he said to him, “Belike thou art busy at this present,” and leaving him, returned in hottest haste to his own house, where he found Halimah standing at the passage door awaiting him. Quoth she “Hast thou done as I bade thee?”; and quoth he, “Yes.” She asked, “What said he to thee?”; and he answered, “He told me that the knife was cheap at that price, for that it was worth five hundred dinars: but I could see that he was troubled; so I left him and know not what befel him after that.” Cried she, “Give me the knife and reck thou not of him.” Then she took the knife and restoring it to its place, sat down. Now after Kamar al-Zaman’s departure fire flamed in the jeweller’s heart and suspicion was sore upon him and he said to himself, “Needs must I get up and go look for the knife and cut down doubt with certainty.” So he rose and repaired to his house and went in to his wife, snorting like a dragon;[425] and she said to him, “What mattereth thee, O my lord?” He asked, “Where is my knife?” and she answered, “In the chest,” and smote hand upon breast, saying, “O my grief! Belike thou hast fallen out with some one and art come to fetch the knife to smite him withal.” Said he, “Give me the knife. Let me see it.” But said she, “Not till thou swear to me that thou wilt not smite any one therewith.” So he swore this to her and she opened the chest and brought out to him the knife and he fell to turning it over, saying, “Verily, this is a wondrous thing!” Then quoth he to her, “Take it and lay it back in its place;” and she, “Tell me the meaning of all this.” He answered, “I saw with our friend a knife like this,” and told her all that had passed between himself and the youth, adding, “But, when I saw it in the chest, my suspicion ended in certainty.” Said she, “Haply thou misdoubtedst of me and deemedst that I was the Levantine’s mistress and had given him the knife.” He replied, “Yes, I had my doubts of this; but, when I saw the knife, suspicion was lifted from my heart.” Rejoined she, “O man, there is now no good in thee!” And he fell to excusing himself to her, till he appeased her; after which he fared forth and returned to his shop. Next day, she gave Kamar al-Zaman her husband’s watch, which he had made with his own hand and whereof none had the like, saying, “Go to his shop and sit by his side and say to him, ‘I saw again to- day him whom I saw yesterday. He had a watch in his hand and said to me, ‘Wilt thou buy this watch?’ Quoth I, ‘Whence hadst thou it?’; and quoth he, ‘I was with my mistress and she gave me this watch.’ So I bought it of him for eight-and-fifty gold pieces. Look at it: is it cheap at that price or dear?’ Note what he shall say to thee; then return to me in haste and give me the watch.” So Kamar al-Zaman repaired to the jeweller and did with him as she had charged him. When Obayd saw the watch, he said, “This is worth seven hundred ducats;” and suspicion entered into him. Then the youth left him and returning to the wife, gave her back the watch. Presently, her husband suddenly came in snorting, and said to her, “Where is my watch?” Said she, “Here it is;” and he cried, “Give it to me.” So she brought it to him and he exclaimed, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!”; and she too exclaimed, “O man, there is something the matter with thee. Tell me what it is.” He replied, “What shall I say? Verily, I am bewildered by these chances!” And he recited these couplets,[426]

“Although the Merciful be doubtless with me,

Yet am I sore bewildered, for new griefs
Have compassed me about, or ere I knew it,
I have endured till Patience self became
Impatient of my patience. — I have endured
Waiting till Heaven fulfil my destiny. —
I have endured till e'en endurance owned
How I bore up with her; (a thing more bitter
Than bitter aloes) yet though a bitterer thing
Is not, than is that drug it were more bitter
To me should Patience leave me unsustained."

Then said he to his wife, "O woman, I saw with the merchant our friend, first my knife, which I knew, for that its fashion was a device of my own wit, nor doth its like exist; and he told me of it a story that troubled the heart: so I came back and found it at home. Again to day I see him with the watch, whose fashion also is of my own device, nor is there the fellow of it in Bassorah, and of this also he told me a story that saddened my heart. Wherefore I am bewildered in my wit and know not what is to come to me." Quoth she, "The purport of thy speech is that thou suspectedst me of being the friend of that merchant and his leman, and eke of giving him thy good; so thou camest to question me and make proof of my perfidy; and, had I not shown thee the knife and the watch, thou hadst been certified of my treason. But since, O man, thou deemest me this ill deme, henceforth I will never again break with thee bread nor drain with thee drink, for I loathe thee with the loathing of prohibition.[427] " So he gentled her and excused himself till he had appeased her and returned, repenting him of having bespoken her thus, to his shop, where he sat, And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the jeweller quitted his wife, he repented having bespoken her thus and, returning to his shop, he sat there in disquiet sore and anxiety galore, between belief and unbelief. About eventide he went home alone, not bringing Kamar al-Zaman with him: whereupon quoth his wife, "Where is the merchant?"; and quoth he, "In his lodgings." She asked, “Is the friendship between thee and him grown cold?” and he answered, “By Allah, I have taken a dislike to him, because of that which hath betided me from him.”[428] Quoth she, “Go fetch him, to please me.” So he arose and went in to Kamar al-Zaman in his house; where he saw his own goods strewn about and knew them. At this sight, fire was kindled in his heart and he fell asighing. Quoth the youth, “How is it that I see thee melancholy?” Obayd was ashamed to say, “Here are my goods in thy house: who brought them hither?”; so he replied only, “A vexation hath betided me; but come thou with me to my house, that we may solace ourselves there.” The other rejoined, “Let me be in my place: I will not go with thee.” But the jeweller conjured him to come and took him to his house, where they supped and passed the evening together, Kamar al-Zaman talking with the jeweller, who was drowned in the sea of solicitude and for a hundred words, wherewith the guest bespoke him, answered him only one word. Presently, the handmaid brought them two cups of drink, as usual, and they drank; whereupon the jeweller fell asleep, but the youth abode on wake, because his cup was not drugged. Then came Halimah and said to her lover, “How deemest thou of yonder cornuted, who is drunken in his heedlessness and weeteth not the wiles of women? There is no help for it but that I cozen him into divorcing me. To-morrow, I will disguise myself as a slave-girl and walk after thee to his shop, where do thou say to him, ‘O master, I went to-day into the Khan of Al-Yasirjнyah, where I saw this damsel and bought her for a thousand dinars. Look at her for me and tell me whether she was cheap at that price or dear.’ Then uncover to him my face and breasts and show all of me to him; after which do thou carry me back to thy house, whence I will go to my chamber by the secret passage, so I may see the issue of our affair with him.” Then the twain passed the night in mirth and merriment, converse and good cheer, dalliance and delight till dawn, when she returned to her own place and sent the handmaid to arouse her lawful lord and her lover. Accordingly they arose and prayed the dawn-prayer and brake their fast and drank coffee, after which Obayd repaired to his shop and Kamar al-Zaman betook himself to his own house. Presently, in came Halimah to him by the tunnel, in the guise of a slave-girl, and indeed she was by birth a slave-girl.[429] Then he went out and she walked behind him, till he came to the jeweller's shop and saluting him, sat down and said, "O master, I went into the Khan of Al-Yasirjiyah to-day, to look about me, and saw this damsel in the broker's hands. She pleased me; so I bought her for a thousand dinars and I would have thee look upon her and see if she be cheap at that price or no." So saying, he uncovered her face and the jeweller saw her to be his own wife, clad in her costliest clothes, tricked out in her finest trinkets and kohl'd and henna'd, even as she was wont to adorn herself before him in the house. He knew with full knowledge her face and dress and trinkets, for those he had wrought with his own hand, and he saw on her fingers the seal-rings he had newly made for Kamar al- Zaman, whereby he was certified with entire assurance that she was indeed his very wife. So he asked her, "What is thy name, O slave-girl?"; and she answered, "Halimah," naming to him her own name; whereat he was amazed and said to the youth, "For how much didst thou buy her?" He replied, "For a thousand dinars"; and the jeweller rejoined, "Thou hast gotten her gratis; for her rings and clothes and trinkets are worth more than that." Said Kamar al-Zaman, "May Allah rejoice thee with good news! Since she pleaseth thee, I will carry her to my house;" and Obayd said, "Do thy will." So he took her off to his house, whence she passed through the secret passage to her own apartment and sat there. Meanwhile, fire flamed in the jeweller's heart and he said to himself, "I will go see my wife. If she be at home, this slave- girl must be her counterpart, and glory be to Him who alone hath no counterpart! But, if she be not at home, 'tis she herself without a doubt." Then he set off running, and coming to his house, found his wife sitting in the same clothes and ornaments he had seen upon her in the shop; whereupon he beat hand upon hand, saying, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" "O man," asked she, "art thou mad or what aileth thee? 'Tis not thy wont to do thus, and needs must it be that something hath befallen thee." Answered he, "If thou wilt have me tell thee be not vexed." Quoth she, "Say on"; so he said, "Our friend the merchant hath bought a slave-girl, whose shape is as thy shape and her height as thy height; more- over, her name is even as thy name and her apparel is the like of thine apparel. Brief, she resembleth thee in all her attributes, and on her fingers are seal-rings like thy seal-rings and her trinkets are as thy trinkets. So, when he displayed her to me, methought it was thyself and I was perplexed concerning my case. Would we had never seen this merchant nor companied with him; and would he had never left his own country and we had not known him, for he hath troubled my life which before was serene, causing ill- feeling to succeed good faith and making doubt to enter into my heart." Said she, "Look in my face, belike I am she who was with him and he is my lover and I disguised myself as a slave-girl and agreed with him that he should display me to thee, so he might lay a snare for thee." He replied, "What words are these? Indeed, I never suspected that thou wouldst do the like of this deed." Now this jeweller was unversed in the wiles of women and knew not how they deal with men, nor had he heard the saying of him who said,

"A heart bore thee off in chase of the fair, * As fled Youth and
came Age wi' his hoary hair:
Layla troubles me and love-joys are far; * And rival and risks
brings us cark and care.
An would'st ask me of woman, behold I am * In physic of
womankind
wise and ware:
When grizzleth man's head and his monies fail, * His lot in their
love is a poor affair."

Nor that of another,[430]

"Gainsay women; he obeyeth Allah best, who saith them nay And he
prospers not who giveth them his bridle-rein to sway;
For they'll hinder him from winning to perfection in his gifts,
Though a thousand years he study, seeking after wisdom's
way."

And a third,

"Women Satans are, made for woe of man: * To Allah I fly from
such Satanesses!

Whom they lure by their love he to grief shall come * And lose
bliss of world and the Faith that blesses."

Said she, "Here am I sitting in my chamber; so go thou to him forthright and knock at the door and contrive to go in to him quickly. An thou see the damsel with him 'tis a slave-girl of his who resembleth me (and Glory be to Him who hath no resemblance![431]) But, an thou see no slave-girl with him, then am I myself she whom thou sawest with him in the shop, and thine ill thought of me will be stablished." "True," answered Obayd, and went out leaving her, whereupon she passed through the hidden passage and seating herself by Kamar al-Zaman, told him what had passed, saying, "Open the door quickly and show me to him." Now, as they were talking, behold, there came a knocking at the door. Quoth Kamar al-Zaman, "Who is at the door?"; and quoth the jeweller, "I, thy friend; thou displayedst to me thy slave- girl in the bazar, and I rejoiced for thee in her, but my joy in her was not completed; so open the door and let me look at her again." Rejoined he, "So be it," and opened the door to him, whereupon he saw his wife sitting by him. She rose and kissed their hands; and he looked at her; then she talked with him awhile and he saw her not to be distinguished from his wife in aught and said, "Allah createth whatso He will." Then he went away more disheartened than before and returned to his own house where he saw his wife sitting, for she had foregone him thither by the souterrain. —And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Seventy-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the young lady forewent her spouse by the souterrain as he fared through the door and sat down in her upper chamber;[432] so as soon as he entered she asked him, "What hast thou seen?" and he answered, "I found her with her master; and she resembleth thee." Then said she, "Off to thy shop and let this suffice thee of ignoble suspicion and never again deem ill of me." Said he, "So be it: accord me pardon for what is past." And she, "Allah grant thee grace!"[433] whereupon he kissed her right and left and went back to his shop. Then she again betook herself to Kamar al-Zaman through the underground passage, with four bags of money, and said to him, “Equip thyself at once for the road and be ready to carry off the money without delay, against I devise for thee the device I have in mind.” So he went out and purchased mules and loaded them and made ready a travelling litter, he also bought Mamelukes and eunuchs and sending, without let or hindrance, the whole without the city, returned to Halimah and said to her, “I have made an end of my affairs.” Quoth she, “And I on my side am ready; for I have transported to thy house all the rest of his monies and treasures and have left him nor little nor much, whereof he may avail himself. All this is of my love for thee, O dearling of my heart, for I would sacrifice my husband to thee a thousand times. But now it behoveth, thou go to him and farewell him, saying, ‘I purpose to depart after three days and am come to bid thee adieu; so do thou reckon what I owe thee for the hire of the house that I may send it to thee and acquit my conscience.’ Note his reply and return to me and tell me; for I can no more: I have done my best, by cozening him, to anger him with me and cause him to put me away, but I find him none the less infatuated with me. So nothing will serve us but to depart to thine own country.” And quoth he, “O rare! an but swevens prove true!”[434] Then he went to the jeweller’s shop and sitting down by him, said to him, “O master, I set out for home in three days’ time, and am come to farewell thee. So I would have thee reckon what I owe thee for the hire of the house, that I may pay it to thee and acquit my conscience.” Answered Obayd, “What talk is this? Verily, ’tis I who am indebted to thee. By Allah, I will take nothing from thee for the rent of the house, for thou hast brought down blessings upon us! However, thou desolatest me by thy departure, and but that it is forbidden to me, I would certainly oppose thee and hinder thee from returning to thy country and kinsfolk.” Then he took leave of him, whilst they both wept with sore weeping and the jeweller went with him, and when they entered Kamar al-Zaman’s house, there they found Halimah who stood before them and served them; but when Obayd returned home, he found her sitting there; nor did he cease to see her thus in each house in turn, for the space of three days, when she said to Kamar al-Zaman, “Now have I transported to thee all that he hath of monies and hoards and carpets and things of price, and there remaineth with him naught save the slave-girl, who used to come in to you with the night-drink: but I cannot part with her, for that she is my kinswoman and she is dear to me as a confidante. So I will beat her and be wroth with her and when my spouse cometh home, I will say to him, ‘I can no longer put up with this slave-girl nor stay in the house with her; so take her and sell her.’ Accordingly he will sell her and do thou buy her, that we may carry her with us.” Answered he, “No harm in that.” So she beat the girl and when the jeweller came in, he found her weeping and asked her why she wept. Quoth she, “My mistress hath beaten me.” He then went in to his wife and said to her, “What hath that accursed girl done, that thou hast beaten her?” She replied, “O man, I have but one word to say to thee, and ’tis that I can no longer bear the sight of this girl; so take her and sell her, or else divorce me.” Quoth he, “I will sell her that I may not cross thee in aught;” and when he went out to go to the shop he took her and passed with her by Kamar al-Zaman. No sooner had he gone out than his wife slipped through the underground passage to Kamar al-Zaman, who placed her in the litter, before the Shaykh her husband reached him. When the jeweller came up and the lover saw the slave-girl with him, he asked him, “What girl is this?”; and the other answered, “’Tis my slave-girl who used to serve us with the night-drink; she hath disobeyed her mistress who is wroth with her and hath bidden me sell her.” Quoth the youth, “An her mistress have taken an aversion to her, there is for her no abiding with her; but sell her to me, that I may smell your scent in her, and I will make her handmaid to my slave Halimah.” “Good,” answered Obayd: “take her.” Asked Kamar al-Zaman, “What is her price?”; but the jeweller said, “I will take nothing from thee, for thou hast been bountiful to us.” So he accepted her from him and said to Halimah, “Kiss thy lord’s hand.” Accordingly, she came out from the litter and kissing Obayd’s hand, remounted, whilst he looked hard at her. Then said Kamar al-Zaman, “I commend thee to Allah, O Master Obayd! Acquit my conscience of responsibility.[435] “ Answered the jeweller, “Allah acquit thee! and carry thee safe to thy family!” Then he bade him farewell and went to his shop weeping, and indeed it was grievous to him to part from Kamar al- Zaman, for that he had been friend and friendship hath its debtorship; yet he rejoiced in the dispelling of the doubts which had befallen him anent his wife, since the young man was now gone and his suspicions had not been stablished. Such was his case; but as regards Kamar al-Zaman, the young lady said to him, “An thou wish for safety, travel with me by other than the wonted way.” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Halimah said to Kamar al-Zaman, “An thou wish for safety, travel with me by other than the wonted way,” he replied, “Hearing and obeying;” and, taking a road other than that used by folk, fared on without ceasing from region to region till he reached the confines of Egypt-land[436] and sent his sire a letter by a runner. Now his father the merchant Abd al-Rahman was sitting in the market among the merchants, with a heart on fire for separation from his son, because no news of the youth had reached him since the day of his departure; and while he was in such case the runner came up and cried, “O my lords, which of you is called the merchant Abd al-Rahman?” They said, “What wouldst thou of him?”; and he said, “I have a letter for him from his son Kamar al-Zaman, whom I left at Al-Arнsh.”[437] At this Abd al-Rahman rejoiced and his breast was broadened and the merchants rejoiced for him and gave him joy of his son’s safety. Then he opened the letter and read as follows, “From Kamar al-Zaman to the merchant Abd al-Rahman. And after Peace be upon thee and upon all the merchants! An ye ask concerning us, to Allah be the praise and the thanks. Indeed we have sold and bought and gained and are come back in health, wealth and weal.” Whereupon Abd al-Rahman opened the door[438] of rejoicing and made banquets and gave feasts and entertainments galore, sending for instruments of music and addressing himself to festivities after rarest fashion. When Kamar al-Zaman came to Al-Sбlihiyah,[439] his father and all the merchants went forth to meet him, and Abd al-Rahman embraced him and strained him to his bosom and sobbed till he swooned away. When he came to himself he said, “Oh, ’tis a boon day O my son, whereon the Omnipotent Protector hath reunited us with thee!” And he repeated the words of the bard,

“The return of the friend is the best of all boons, * And the joy-

cup circles o’ morns and noons:
So well come, welcome, fair welcome to thee, * The light of the
time and the moon o’ full moons.”

Then, for excess of joy, he poured forth a flood of tears from his eyes and he recited also these two couplets,

“The Moon o’ the Time,[440] shows unveilиd light; * And, his
journey done, at our door doth alight:
His locks as the nights of his absence are black * And the sun
upstands from his collar’s[441] white.”

Then the merchants came up to him and saluting him, saw with him many loads and servants and a travelling litter enclosed in a spacious circle.[442] So they took him and carried him home; and when Halimah came forth from the litter, his father held her a seduction to all who beheld her. So they opened her an upper chamber, as it were a treasure from which the talismans had been loosed;[443] and when his mother saw her, she was ravished with her and deemed her a Queen of the wives of the Kings. So she rejoiced in her and questioned her; and she answered, “I am wife to thy son;” and the mother rejoined, “Since he is wedded to thee we must make thee a splendid marriage-feast, that we may rejoice in thee and in my son.” On this wise it befel her; but as regards the merchant Abd al-Rahman, when the folk had dispersed and each had wended his way, he foregathered with his son and said to him, “O my son, what is this slave-girl thou hast brought with thee and for how much didst thou buy her?”[444] Kamar al-Zaman said, “O my father, she is no slave-girl; but ’tis she who was the cause of my going abroad.” Asked his sire, “How so?”; and he answered, “’Tis she whom the Dervish described to us the night he lay with us; for indeed my hopes clave to her from that moment and I sought not to travel save on account of her. The Arabs came out upon me by the way and stripped me and took my money and goods, so that I entered Bassorah alone and there befel me there such and such things;” and he went on to relate to his parent all that had befallen him from commencement to conclusion. Now when he had made an end of his story, his father said to him, “O my son, and after all this didst thou marry her?” “No; but I have promised her marriage.” “Is it thine intent to marry her?” “An thou bid me marry her, I will do so; otherwise I will not marry her.” Thereupon quoth his father, “An thou marry her, I am quit of thee in this world and in the next, and I shall be incensed against thee with sore indignation. How canst thou wed her, seeing that she hath dealt thus with her husband? For, even as she did with her spouse for thy sake, so will she do the like with thee for another’s sake, because she is a traitress and in a traitor there is no trusting. Wherefore an thou disobey me, I shall be wroth with thee; but, an thou give ear to my word, I will seek thee out a girl handsomer than she, who shall be pure and pious, and marry thee to her, though I spend all my substance upon her; and I will make thee a wedding without equal and will glory in thee and in her; for ’tis better that folk should say, Such an one hath married such an one’s daughter, than that they say, He hath wedded a slave-girl sans birth or worth.” And he went on to persuade his son to give up marrying her, by citing in support of his say, proofs, stories, examples, verses and moral instances, till Kamar al-Zaman exclaimed, “O my father, since the case is thus, ’tis not right and proper that I marry her.” And when his father heard him speak on such wise, he kissed him between the eyes, saying, “Thou art my very son, and as I live, O my son, I will assuredly marry thee to a girl who hath not her equal!” Then the merchant set Obayd’s wife and her handmaid in a chamber high up in the house and, before locking the door upon the twain, he appointed a black slave-girl to carry them their meat and drink and he said to Halimah, “Ye shall abide imprisoned in this chamber, thou and thy maid, till I find one who will buy you, when I will sell you to him. An ye resist, I will slay ye both, for thou art a traitress, and there is no good in thee.” Answered she, “Do thy will: I deserve all thou canst do with me.” Then he locked the door upon them and gave his Harim a charge respecting them, saying, “Let none go up to them nor speak with them, save the black slave-girl who shall give them their meat and drink through the casement of the upper chamber.” So she abode with her maid, weeping and repenting her of that which she had done with her spouse. Meanwhile Abd al-Rahman sent out the marriage-brokers to look out a maid of birth and worth for his son, and the women ceased not to make search, and as often as they saw one girl, they heard of a fairer than she, till they came to the house of the Shaykh al-Islam[445] and saw his daughter. In her they found a virgin whose equal was not in Cairo for beauty and loveliness, symmetry and perfect grace, and she was a thousand-fold handsomer than the wife of Obayd. So they told Abd al-Rahman of her and he and the notables repaired to her father and sought her in wedlock of him. Then they wrote out the marriage contract and made her a splendid wedding; after which Abd al-Rahman gave bride feasts and held open house forty days. On the first day, he invited the doctors of the law and they held a splendid nativity[446] : and on the morrow, he invited all the merchants, and so on during the rest of the forty days, making a banquet every day to one or other class of folk, till he had bidden all the Olema and Emirs and Antients[447] and Magistrates, whilst the kettle-drums were drummed and the pipes were piped and the merchant sat to greet the guests, with his son by his side, that he might solace himself by gazing on the folk, as they ate from the trays. Each night Abd al-Rahman illuminated the street and the quarter with lamps and there came every one of the mimes and jugglers and mountebanks and played all manner play; and indeed it was a peerless wedding. On the last day he invited the Fakirs, the poor and the needy, far and near, and they flocked in troops and ate, whilst the merchant sat, with his son by his side.[448] And among the paupers, behold, entered Shaykh Obayd the jeweller and he was naked and weary and bare on his face the marks of wayfare. When Kamar al-Zaman saw him, he knew him and said to his sire, “Look, O my father, at yonder poor man who is but now come in by the door.” So he looked and saw him clad in worn clothes and on him a patched gown[449] worth two dirhams: his face was yellow and he was covered with dust and was as he were an offcast of the pilgrims.[450] He was groaning as groaneth a sick man in need, walking with a tottering gait and swaying now to the right and then to the left, and in him was realized his saying who said,[451]

“Lack-gold abaseth man and doth his worth away, Even as the
setting sun that pales with ended day.
He passeth ‘mongst the folk and fain would hide his head; And
when alone, he weeps with tears that never stay.

Absent, none taketh heed to him or his concerns; Present, he hath
no part in life or pleasance aye.
By Allah, whenas men with poverty are cursed, But strangers midst
their kin and countrymen are they!”

And the saying of another,

“The poor man fares by everything opposed: * On him to shut the
door Earth ne’er shall fail:
Thou seest men abhor him sans a sin, * And foes he finds tho’ none
the cause can tell:
The very dogs, when sighting wealthy man, * Fawn at his feet and
wag the flattering tail;
Yet, an some day a pauper loon they sight, * All at him bark and,
gnashing fangs, assail.”

And how well quoth a third,

“If generous youth be blessed with luck and wealth, *
Displeasures fly his path and perils fleet:
His enviers pimp for him and par’site-wise * E’en without tryst
his mistress hastes to meet.
When loud he farts they say ‘How well he sings!’ * And when he
fizzles[452] cry they, ‘Oh, how sweet!’”

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Seventy-seventh Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when his son said to Abd al-Rahman, “Look at yonder pauper!” he asked, “O my son, who is this?” And Kamar al-Zaman answered, “This is Master Obayd the jeweller, husband of the woman who is imprisoned with us.” Quoth Abd al-Rahman, “Is this he of whom thou toldest me?”; and quoth his son, “Yes; and indeed I wot him right well.” Now the manner of Obayd’s coming thither was on this wise. When he had farewelled Kamar al-Zaman, he went to his shop and thence going home, laid his hand on the door, whereupon it opened and he entered and found neither his wife nor the slave-girl, but saw the house in sorriest plight, quoting in mute speech his saying who said,[453]

“The chambers were like a bee-hive well stocked: * When their bees quitted it, they became empty.”

When he saw the house void, he turned right and left and presently went round about the place, like a madman, but came upon no one. Then he opened the door of his treasure-closet, but found therein naught of his money nor his hoards; whereupon he recovered from the intoxication of fancy and shook off his infatuation and knew that it was his wife herself who had turned the tables upon him and outwitted him with her wiles. He wept for that which had befallen him, but kept his affair secret, so none of his foes might exult over him nor any of his friends be troubled, knowing that, if he disclosed his secret, it would bring him naught but dishonour and contumely from the folk; wherefore he said in himself, “O Obayd, hide that which hath betided thee of affliction and ruination; it behoveth thee to do in accordance with his saying who said,

‘If a man’s breast with bane he hides be straitenиd, * The breast that tells its hidden bale is straiter still.’”

Then he locked up his house and, making for his shop, gave it in charge of one of his apprentices to whom said he, “My friend the young merchant hath invited me to accompany him to Cairo, for solacing ourselves with the sight of the city, and sweareth that he will not march except he carry us with him, me and my wife. So, O my son, I make thee my steward in the shop, and if the King ask for me, say thou to him, ‘He is gone with his Harim to the Holy House of Allah.’”[454] Then he sold some of his effects and bought camels and mules and Mamelukes, together with a slave- girl,[455] and placing her in a litter, set out from Bassorah after ten days. His friends farewelled him and none doubted but that he had taken his wife and gone on the Pilgrimage, and the folk rejoiced in this, for that Allah had delivered them from being shut up in the mosques and houses every Friday. Quoth some of them, “Allah grant he may never return to Bassorah, so we may no more be boxed up in the mosques and houses every Friday!”; for that this usage had caused the people of Bassorah exceeding vexation. Quoth another, “Methinks he will not return from this journey, by reason of the much-praying of the people of Bassorah against him."[456] And yet another, "An he return, 'twill not be but in reversed case."[457] So the folk rejoiced with exceeding joy in the jeweller's departure, after they had been in mighty great chagrin, and even their cats and dogs were comforted. When Friday came round, however, the crier proclaimed as usual that the people should repair to the mosques two hours before prayer time or else hide themselves in their houses, together with their cats and dogs; whereat their breasts were straitened and they assembled in general assembly and betaking themselves to the King's divan, stood between his hands and said, "O King of the age, the jeweller hath taken his Harim and departed on the pilgrimage to the Holy House of Allah: so the cause of our restrains hath ceased to be, and why therefore are we now shut up?" Quoth the King, "How came this traitor to depart without telling me? But, when he cometh back from his journey, all will not be save well[458] : so go ye to your shops and sell and buy, for this vexation is removed from you." Thus far concerning the King and the Bassorites; but as for the jeweller, he fared on ten days' journey, and as he drew near Baghdad, there befel him that which had befallen Kamar al-Zaman, before his entering Bassorah; for the Arabs[459] came out upon him and stripped him and took all he had and he escaped only by feigning himself dead. As soon as they were gone, he rose and fared on, naked as he was, till he came to a village, where Allah inclined to him the hearts of certain kindly folk, who covered his shame with some old clothes; and he asked his way, begging from town to town, till he reached the city of Cairo the God-guarded. There, burning with hunger, he went about alms-seeking in the market- streets, till one of the townsfolk said to him, "O poor man, off with thee to the house of the wedding-festival and eat and drink; for to-day there is open table for paupers and strangers." Quoth he, "I know not the way thither": and quoth the other, "Follow me and I will show it to thee." He followed him, till he brought him to the house of Abd al-Rahman and said to him, "This is the house of the wedding; enter and fear not, for there is no doorkeeper at the door of the festival." Accordingly he entered and Kamar al- Zaman knew him and told his sire who said, "O my son, leave him at this present: belike he is anhungered: so let him eat his sufficiency and recover himself and after we will send for him." So they waited till Obayd had eaten his fill and washed his hands and drunk coffee and sherbets of sugar flavoured with musk and ambergris and was about to go out, when Abd al-Rahman sent after him a page who said to him, "Come, O stranger, and speak with the merchant Abd al-Rahman." "Who is he?" asked Obayd; and the man answered, "He is the master of the feast." Thereupon the jeweller turned back, thinking that he meant to give him a gift, and coming up to Abd al-Rahman, saw his friend Kamar al-Zaman and went nigh to lose his senses for shame before him. But Kamar al- Zaman rose to him and embracing him, saluted him with the salam, and they both wept with sore weeping. Then he seated him by his side and Abd al-Rahman said to his son, "O destitute of good taste, this is no way to receive friends! Send him first to the Hammam and despatch after him a suit of clothes of the choicest, worth a thousand dinars."[460] Accordingly they carried him to the bath, where they washed his body and clad him in a costly suit, and he became as he were Consul of the Merchants. Meanwhile the bystanders questioned Kamar al-Zaman of him, saying, "Who is this and whence knowest thou him?" Quoth he, "This is my friend, who lodged me in his house and to whom I am indebted for favours without number, for that he entreated me with exceeding kindness. He is a man of competence and condition and by trade a jeweller, in which craft he hath no equal. The King of Bassorah loveth him dearly and holdeth him in high honour and his word is law with him." And he went on to enlarge before them on his praises, saying, "Verily, he did with me thus and thus and I have shame of him and know not how to requite him his generous dealing with me." Nor did he leave to extol him, till his worth was magnified to the bystanders and he became venerable in their eyes; so they said, "We will all do him his due and honour him for thy sake. But we would fain know the reason why he hath departed his native land and the cause of his coming hither and what Allah hath done with him, that he is reduced to this plight?" Replied Kamar al- Zaman, "O folk, marvel not, for a son of Adam is still subject to Fate and Fortune, and what while he abideth in this world, he is not safe from calamities. Indeed he spake truly who said these couplets,

The world tears man to shreds, so be thou not * Of those whom
lure of rank and title draws:
Nay; ‘ware of slips and turn from sin aside * And ken that bane
and bale are worldly laws:
How oft high Fortune falls by least mishap * And all things bear
inbred of change a cause!’

Know that I entered Bassorah in yet iller case and worse distress than this man, for that he entered Cairo with his shame hidden by rags; but I indeed came into his town with my nakedness uncovered, one hand behind and another before; and none availed me but Allah and this dear man. Now the reason of this was that the Arabs stripped me and took my camels and mules and loads and slaughtered my pages and serving-men; but I lay down among the slain and they thought that I was dead, so they went away and left me. Then I arose and walked on, mother-naked, till I came to Bassorah where this man met me and clothed me and lodged me in his house, he also furnished me with money, and all I have brought back with me I owe to none save to Allah’s goodness and his goodness. When I departed, he gave me great store of wealth and I returned to the city of my birth with a heart at ease. I left him in competence and condition, and haply there hath befallen him some bale of the banes of Time, that hath forced him to quit his kinsfolk and country, and there happened to him by the way the like of what happened to me. There is nothing strange in this; but now it behoveth me to requite him his noble dealing with me and do according to the saying of him who saith,

‘O who praisest Time with the fairest appraise, * Knowest thou
what Time hath made and unmade?
What thou dost at least be it kindly done,[461] * For with pay
he pays shall man be repaid.’”

As they were talking and telling the tale, behold, up came Obayd as he were Consul[462] of the Merchants; whereupon they all rose to salute him and seated him in the place of honour. Then said Kamar al-Zaman to him, “O my friend, verily, thy day[463] is blessed and fortunate! There is no need to relate to me a thing that befel me before thee. If the Arabs have stripped thee and robbed thee of thy wealth, verily our money is the ransom of our bodies, so let not thy soul be troubled; for I entered thy city naked and thou clothedst me and entreatedst me generously, and I owe thee many a kindness. But I will requite thee." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Nine Hundred and Seventy-eighth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Kamar al-Zaman said to Master Obayd the jeweller, "Verily I entered thy city naked and thou clothedst me and I owe thee many a kindness. But I will requite thee and do with thee even as thou didst with me; nay, more: so be of good cheer and eyes clear of tear." And he went on to soothe him and hinder him from speech, lest he should name his wife and what she had done with him; nor did he cease to ply him with saws and moral instances and verses and conceits and stories and legends and console him, till the jeweller saw his drift and took the hint and kept silence concerning the past, diverting himself with the tales and rare anecdotes he heard and repeating in himself these lines,

"On the brow of the World is a writ; an thereon thou look, * Its
contents will compel thine eyes tears of blood to rain:
For the World never handed to humans a cup with its right, * But
with left it compelled them a beaker of ruin to drain."

Then Kamar al-Zaman and his father took Obayd and carrying him into the saloon of the Harim, shut themselves up with him; and Abd al-Rahman said to him, "We did not hinder thee from speaking before the folk, but for fear of dishonour to thee and to us: but now we are private; so tell me all that hath passed between thee and thy wife and my son." So he told him all, from beginning to end, and when he had made an end of his story, Abd al-Rahman asked him, "Was the fault with my son or with thy wife?" He answered, "By Allah, thy son was not to blame, for men must needs lust after women, and 'tis the bounden duty of women to defend themselves from men. So the sin lieth with my wife, who played me false and did with me these deeds."[464] Then Abd al-Rahman arose and taking his son aside, said to him, “O my son, we have proved his wife and know her to be a traitress; and now I mean to prove him and see if he be a man of honour and manliness, or a wittol.”[465] “How so?” asked Kamar al-Zaman; and Abd al- Rahman answered, “I mean to urge him to make peace with his wife, and if he consent thereto and forgive her, I will smite him with a sword and slay him and kill her after, her and her maid, for there is no good in the life of a cuckold and a queen;[466] but, if he turn from her with aversion I will marry him to thy sister and give him more of wealth than that thou tookest from him.” Then he went back to Obayd and said to him, “O master, verily, the commerce of women requireth patience and magnanimity and whoso loveth them hath need of fortitude, for that they order themselves viper-wise towards men and evilly entreat them, by reason of their superiority over them in beauty and loveliness: wherefore they magnify themselves and belittle men. This is notably the case when their husbands show them affection; for then they requite them with hauteur and coquetry and harsh dealing of all kinds. But, if a man be wroth whenever he seeth in his wife aught that offendeth him, there can be no fellowship between them; nor can any hit it off with them who is not magnanimous and long-suffering; and unless a man bear with his wife and requite her foul doing with forgiveness, he shall get no good of her conversation. Indeed, it hath been said of them, ‘Were they in the sky, the necks of men would incline themwards’; and he who hath the power and pardoneth, his reward is with Allah. Now this woman is thy wife and thy companion and she hath long consorted with thee; wherefore it behoveth that thou entreat her with indulgence which in fellowship is of the essentials of success. Furthermore, women fail in wit and Faith,[467] and if she have sinned, she repenteth and Inshallah she will not again return to that which she whilome did. So ’tis my rede that thou make peace with her and I will restore thee more than the good she took; and if it please thee to abide with me, thou art welcome, thou and she, and ye shall see naught but what shall joy you both; but, an thou seek to, return to thine own land. For that which falleth out between a man and his wife is manifold, and it behoveth thee to be indulgent and not take the way of the violent.” Said the jeweller, “O my lord, and where is my wife?” and said Abd al-Rahman, “She is in that upper chamber, go up to her and be easy with her, for my sake, and trouble her not; for, when my son brought her hither, he would have married her, but I forbade him from her and shut her up in yonder room, and locked the door upon her saying in myself, ‘Haply her husband will come and I will hand her over to him safe; for she is fair of favour, and when a woman is like unto this one, it may not be that her husband will let her go.’ What I counted on is come about and praised be Allah Almighty for thy reunion with thy wife! As for my son, I have sought him another woman in marriage and have married him to her: these banquets and rejoicings are for his wedding, and to-night I bring him to his bride. So here is the key of the chamber where thy wife is: take it and open the door and go in to her and her handmaid and be buxom with her. There shall be brought you meat and drink and thou shalt not come down from her till thou have had thy fill of her.” Cried Obayd, “May Allah requite thee for me with all good, O my lord!” and taking the key, went up, rejoicing. The other thought his words had pleased him and that he consented thereto; so he took the sword and following him unseen, stood to espy what should happen between him and his wife. This is how it fared with the merchant Abd al-Rahman; but as for the jeweller, when he came to the chamber-door, he heard his wife weeping with sore weeping for that Kamar al-Zaman had married another than her, and the handmaid saying to her, “O my lady, how often have I warned thee and said, ‘Thou wilt get no good of this youth: so do thou leave his company.’ But thou heededst not my words and spoiledst thy husband of all his goods and gavest them to him. After the which thou forsookest thy place, of thine fondness and infatuation for him, and camest with him to this country. And now he hath cast thee out from his thought and married another and hath made the issue of thy foolish fancy for him to be durance vile.” Cried Halimah, “Be silent, O accursed! Though he be married to another, yet some day needs must I occur to his thought. I cannot forget the nights I have spent in his company and in any case I console myself with his saying who said,

‘O my lords, shall he to your mind occur * Who recurs to you only
sans other mate?

Grant Heaven you ne'er shall forget his state * Who for state of
you forgot own estate!'

It cannot be but he will bethink him of my affect and converse and ask for me, wherefore I will not turn from loving him nor change from passion for him, though I perish in prison; for he is my love and my leach[468] and my reliance is on him that he will yet return to me and deal fondly with me." When the jeweller heard his wife's words, he went in to her and said to her, "O traitress, thy hope in him is as the hope of Iblis[469] in Heaven. All these vices were in thee and I knew not thereof; for, had I been ware of one single vice, I had not kept thee with me an hour. But now I am certified of this in thee, it behoveth me to do thee die although they put me to death for thee, O traitress!" and he clutched her with both hands and repeated these two couplets,

"O fair ones forth ye cast my faithful love * With sin, nor had
ye aught regard for right:
How long I fondly clung to you, but now * My love is loathing and
I hate your sight."

Then he pressed hardly upon her windpipe and brake her neck, whereupon her handmaid cried out "Alas, my mistress!" Said he, "O harlot, 'tis thou who art to blame for all this, for that thou knewest this evil inclination to be in her and toldest me not."[470] Then he seized upon her and strangled her. All this happened while Abd al-Rahman stood, brand in hand, behind the door espying with his eyes and hearing with his ears. Now when Obayd the]eweller had done this, apprehension came upon him and he feared the issue of his affair and said to himself, "As soon as the merchant learneth that I have killed them in his house, he will surely slay me; yet I beseech Allah that He appoint the taking of my life to be while I am in the True Belief!" And he abode bewildered about his case and knew not what to do, but, as he was thus behold, in came Abd al-Rahman from his lurking-place without the door and said to him, "No harm shall befal thee, for indeed thou deservest safety. See this sword in my hand. 'Twas in my mind to slay thee, hadst thou made peace with her and restored her to favour, and I would also have slain her and the maid. But since thou hast done this deed, welcome to thee and again welcome! And I will reward thee by marrying thee to my daughter, Kamar al-Zaman's sister." Then he carried him down and sent for the woman who washed the dead: whereupon it was bruited abroad that Kamar al-Zaman had brought with him two slave-girls from Bassorah and that both had deceased. So the people began to condole with him saying, "May thy head live!" and "May Allah compensate thee!" And they washed and shrouded them and buried them, and none knew the truth of the matter. Then Abd al-Rahman sent for the Shaykh al-Islam and all the notables and said, "O Shaykh, draw up the contract of marriage between my daughter Kaukab al-Salah[471] and Master Obayd the jeweller and set down that her dowry hath been paid to me in full." So he wrote out the contract and Abd al-Rahman gave the company to drink of sherbets, and they made one wedding festival for the two brides the daughter of the Shaykh al-Islam and Kamar al-Zaman's sister; and paraded them in one litter on one and the same night; after which they carried Kamar al-Zaman and Obayd in procession together and brought them in to their brides.[472] When the jeweller went in to Abd al-Rahman's daughter, he found her handsomer than Halimah and a thousand-fold lovelier. So he took her maidenhead and on the morrow, he went to the Hammam with Kamar al-Zaman. Then he abode with them awhile in pleasance and joyance, after which he began to yearn for his native land; so he went in to Abd al-Rahman and said to him, "O uncle, I long for my own country, for I have there estates and effects, which I left in charge of one of my prentices; and I am minded to journey thither that I may sell my properties and return to thee. So wilt thou give me leave to go to my country for that purpose?" Answered the merchant, "O my son, I give thee leave to do this and there be no fault in thee or blame to thee for these words, for 'Love of mother-land is a part of Religion'; and he who hath not good in his own country hath none in other folks' country. But, haply, an thou depart without thy wife, when thou art once come to thy native place, it may seem good to thee to settle there, and thou wilt be perplexed between returning to thy wife and sojourning in thine own home; so it were the righter rede that thou carry thy wife with thee; and after, an thou desire to return to us, return and welcome to you both; for we are folk who know not divorce and no woman of us marrieth twice, nor do we lightly discard a man."[473] Quoth Obayd, "Uncle, I fear me thy daughter will not consent to journey with me to my own country." Replied Abd al-Rahman, "O my son, we have no women amongst us who gainsay their spouses, nor know we a wife who is wroth with her man." The jeweller cried, "Allah bless you and your women!" and going in to his wife, said to her, "I am minded to go to my country: what sayst thou?" Quoth she, "Indeed, my sire had the ordering of me, whilst I was a maid, and when I married, the ordering all passed into the hands of my lord and master, nor will I gainsay him." Quoth Obayd, "Allah bless thee and thy father, and have mercy on the womb that bare thee and the loins that begat thee!" Then he cut his thongs[474] and applied himself to making ready for his journey. His father-in- law gave him much good and they took leave each of other, after which tile jeweller and his wife journeyed on without ceasing, till they reached Bassorah where his kinsmen and comrades came out to meet him, doubting not but that he had been in Al-Hijaz. Some rejoiced at his return, whilst others were vexed, and the folk said one to another, "Now will he straiten us again every Friday, as before, and we shall be shut up in the mosques and houses, even to our cats and our dogs." On such wise it fared with him; but as regards the King of Bassorah, when he heard of his return, he was wroth with him; and sending for him, upbraided him and said to him, "Why didst thou depart, without letting me know of thy departure? Was I unable to give thee somewhat wherewith thou mightest have succoured thyself in thy pilgrimage to the Holy House of Allah?" Replied the jeweller, "Pardon, O my lord! By Allah, I went not on the pilgrimage! but there have befallen me such and such things." Then he told him all that had befallen him with his wife and with Abd al-Rahman of Cairo and how the merchant had given him his daughter to wife, ending with these words, "And I have brought her to Bassorah." Said the King, "By the Lord, did I not fear Allah the Most High, I would slay thee and marry this noble lady after thy death, though I spent on her mints of money, because she befitteth none but Kings. But Allah hath appointed her of thy portion and may He bless thee in her! So look thou use her well."

Then he bestowed largesse on the jeweller, who went out from before him and abode with his wife five years, after which he was admitted to the mercy of the Almighty. Presently the King sought his widow in wedlock; but she refused, saying, “O King, never among my kindred was a woman who married again after her husband’s death; wherefore I will never take another husband, nor will I marry thee, no, though thou kill me.” Then he sent to her one who said, “Dost thou seek to go to thy native land?” And she answered, “An thou do good, thou shalt be requited therewith.” So he collected for her all the jeweller’s wealth and added unto her of his own, after the measure of his degree. Lastly he sent with her one of his Wazirs, a man famous for goodness and piety, and an escort of five hundred horse, who journeyed with her, till they brought her to her father; and in his home she abode, without marrying again, till she died and they died all. So, if this woman would not consent to replace her dead husband with a Sultan, how shall she be compared with one who replaced her husband, whilst he was yet alive, with a youth of unknown extraction and condition, and especially when this was in lewd carriage and not by way of lawful marriage? So he who deemeth all women alike,[475] there is no remedy for the disease of his insanity. And glory be to Him to whom belongeth the empire of the Seen and the Unseen and He is the Living, who dieth not! And among the tales they tell, O auspicious King, is one of

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ABDULLAH BIN FAZIL AND HIS BROTHERS.[476]

The Caliph Harun al-Rashid was one day examining the tributes of his various provinces and viceroyalties, when he observed that the contributions of all the countries and regions had come into the treasury, except that of Bassorah which had not arrived that year. So he held a Divan because of this and said, "Hither to me with the Wazir Ja'afar;" and when they brought him into the presence he thus bespoke him, "The tributes of all the provinces have come into the treasury, save that of Bassorah, no part whereof hath arrived." Ja'afar replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, belike there hath befallen the governor of Bassorah something that hath diverted him from sending the tribute." Quoth the Caliph, "The time of the coming of the tribute was twenty days ago; what then, can be his excuse for that, in this time, he hath neither sent it nor sent to show cause for not doing so?" And quoth the Minister, "O Commander of the Faithful, if it please thee, we will send him a messenger. Rejoined the Caliph, "Send him Abu Ishak al-Mausili,[477] the boon companion," and Ja'afar, "Hearkening and obedience to Allah and to thee, O Prince of True Believers!" Then he returned to his house and summoning Abu Ishak, wrote him a royal writ and said to him, "Go to Abdullah bin Fazil, Viceroy of Bassorah, and see what hath diverted him from sending the tribute. If it be ready, do thou receive it from him in full and bring it to me in haste, for the Caliph hath examined the tributes of the provinces and findeth that they are all come in, except that of Bassorah: but an thou see that it is not ready and he make an excuse to thee, bring him back with thee, that he may report his excuse to the Caliph with his own tongue." Answered Abu Ishak, "I hear and I obey;" and taking with him five thousand horse of Ja'afar's host set out for Bassorah. Now when Abdullah bin Fazil heard of his approach, he went out to meet him with his troops, and led him into the city and carried him to his palace, whilst the escort encamped without the city walls, where he appointed to them all whereof they stood in need. So Abu Ishak entered the audience-chamber and sitting down on the throne, seated the governor beside himself, whilst the notables sat round him, according to their several degrees. After salutation with the salam Abdullah bin Fazil said to him “O my lord, is there for thy coming to us any cause?;” and said Abu Ishak, “Yes, I come to seek the tribute; for the Caliph enquireth of it and the time of its coming is gone by.” Rejoined Abdullah bin Fazil, “O my lord, would Heaven thou hadst not wearied thyself nor taken upon thyself the hardships of the journey! For the tribute is ready in full tale and complete, and I purpose to despatch it to-morrow. But, since thou art come, I will entrust it to thee, after I have entertained thee three days; and on the fourth day I will set the tribute between thine hands. But it behoveth us now to offer thee a present in part requital of thy kindness and the goodness of the Commander of the Faithful.” “There is no harm in that,” said Abu Ishak. So Abdullah bin Fazil dismissed the Divan and carrying him into a saloon that had not its match, bade set a tray of food before him and his companions. They ate and drank and made merry and enjoyed themselves; after which the tray was removed and there came coffee and sherbets. They sat conversing till a third part of the night was past, when they spread for Abu Ishak bedding on an ivory couch inlaid with gold glittering sheeny. So he lay down and the viceroy lay down beside him on another couch; but wakefulness possessed Abu Ishak and he fell to meditating on the metres of prosody and poetical composition, for that he was one of the primest of the Caliph’s boon-companions and he had a mighty fine fore-arm[478] in producing verses and pleasant stories; nor did he leave to lie awake improvising poetry till half the night was past. Presently, behold, Abdullah bin Fazil arose, and girding his middle, opened a locker,[479] whence he brought out a whip; then, taking a lighted waxen taper, he went forth by the door of the saloon. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Abdullah bin Fazil went forth by the door of the saloon deeming Abu Ishak asleep, the Caliph’s cup-companion, seeing this, marvelled and said in himself, “Whither wendeth Abdullah bin Fazil with that whip? Perhaps he is minded to punish some body. But needs must I follow him and see what he will do this night.” So he arose and went out after him softly, very softly, that he might not be seen and presently saw him open a closet and take thence a tray containing four dishes of meat and bread and a gugglet of water. Then he went on, carrying the tray and secretly followed by Abu Ishak, till he came to another saloon and entered, whilst the cup-companion stood behind the door and, looking through the chink, saw a spacious saloon, furnished with the richest furniture and having in its midst a couch of ivory plated with gold glittering sheeny, to which two dogs were made fast with chains of gold. Then Abdullah set down the tray in a comer and tucking up his sleeves, loosed the first dog, which began to struggle in his hands and put its muzzle to the floor, as it would kiss the ground before him, whining the while in a weak voice. Abdullah tied its paws behind its back and throwing it on the ground, drew forth the whip and beat it with a painful beating and a pitiless. The dog struggled, but could not get free, and Abdullah ceased not to beat it with the same whip till it left groaning and lay without consciousness. Then he took it and tied it up in its place, and unbinding the second dog, did with him as he had done with the first; after which he pulled out a kerchief and fell to wiping away their tears and comforting them, saying, “Bear me not malice; for by Allah, this is not of my will, nor is it easy to me! But it may be Allah will grant you relief from this strait and issue from your affliction.” And he prayed for the twain what while Abu Ishak the cup-companion stood hearkening with his ears and espying with his eyes, and indeed he marvelled at his case. Then Abdullah brought the dogs the tray of food and fell to morselling them with his own hand, till they had enough, when he wiped their muzzles and lifting up the gugglet, gave them to drink; after which he took up the tray, gugglet and candle and made for the door. But Abu Ishak forewent him and making his way back to his couch, lay down; so that he saw him not, neither knew that he had walked behind him and watched him. Then the governor replaced the tray and the gugglet in the closet and returning to the saloon, opened the locker and laid the whip in its place; after which he doffed his clothes and lay down. But Abu Ishak passed the rest of that night pondering this affair neither did sleep visit him for excess of wonderment, and he ceased not to say in himself, “I wonder what can be the meaning of this!” Nor did he leave wondering till day break, when they arose and prayed the dawn-prayer. Then they set the breakfast[480] before them and they ate and drank coffee, after which they went out to the divan. Now Abu Ishak's thought was occupied with this mystery all day long but he concealed the matter and questioned not Abdullah thereof. Next night, he again followed the governor and saw him do with the two dogs as on the previous night, first beating them and then making his peace with them and giving them to eat and to drink; and so also he did the third night. On the fourth day he brought the tribute to Abu Ishak who took it and departed, without opening the matter to him. He fared on, without ceasing, till he came to Baghdad, where he delivered the tribute to the Caliph, who questioned him of the cause of its delay. Replied he, "O Commander of the Faithful, I found that the governor of Bassorah had made ready the tribute and was about to despatch it; and I delayed a day, it would have met me on the road. But, O Prince of True Believers, I had a wondrous adventure with Abdullah bin Fazil; never in my life saw I its like." "And what was it, O Abu Ishak?" asked the Caliph. So he replied, "I saw such and such;" and, brief, acquainted him with that which the governor had done with the two dogs, adding, "After such fashion, I saw him do three successive nights, first beating the dogs, then making his peace with them and comforting them and giving them to eat and drink, I watching him, and he seeing me not." Asked the Caliph, "Didst thou question him of the cause of this?"; and the other answered, "No, as thy head liveth, O Commander of the Faithful." Then said Al-Rashid, "O Abu Ishak, I command thee to return to Bassorah and bring me Abdullah bin Fazil and the two dogs." Quoth he, "O Commander of the Faithful, excuse me from this; for indeed Abdullah entertained me with exceedingly hospitable entertainment and I became ware of this case with chance undesigned and acquainted thee therewith. So how can I go back to him and bring him to thee? Verily, if I return to him, I shall find me no face for shame of him; wherefore 'twere meet that thou send him another than myself, with a letter under thine own hand, and he shall bring him to thee, him and the two dogs." But quoth the Caliph, "If I send him other than thyself, peradventure he will deny the whole affair and say, 'I've no dogs.' But if I send thee and thou say to him, 'I saw them with mine own eyes,' he will not be able to deny that. Wherefore nothing will serve but that thou go and fetch him and the two dogs; otherwise I will surely slay thee.”[481] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Eightieth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Caliph Harun al-Rashid said to Abu Ishak, “Nothing will serve but that thou go and fetch him and the two dogs; otherwise I will surely slay thee.” Abu Ishak replied, “Hearing and obeying, O Commander of the Faithful: Allah is our aidance and good is the Agent. He spake sooth who said, ‘Man’s wrong is from the tongue;’[482] and ’tis I who sinned against myself in telling thee. But write me a royal rescript[483] and I will go to him and bring him back to thee.” So the Caliph gave him an autograph and he took it and repaired to Bassorah. Seeing him come in the governor said, “Allah forfend us from the mischief of thy return, O Abu Ishak! How cometh it I see thee return in haste? Peradventure the tribute is deficient and the Caliph will not accept it?” Answered Abu Ishak, “O Emir Abdullah, my return is not on account of the deficiency of the tribute, for ’tis full measure and the Caliph accepteth it; but I hope that thou wilt excuse me, for that I have failed in my duty as thy guest and indeed this lapse of mine was decreed of Allah Almighty.” Abdullah enquired, “And what may be the lapse?” and he replied, “Know that when I was with thee, I followed thee three following nights and saw thee rise at midnight and beat the dogs and return; whereat I marvelled, but was ashamed to question thee thereof. When I came back to Baghdad, I told the Caliph of thine affair, casually and without design, whereupon he charged me to return to thee, and here is a letter under his hand. Had I known that the affair would lead to this, I had not told him, but Destiny foreordained thus.” And he went on to excuse himself to him; whereupon said Abdullah, “Since thou hast told him this, I will bear out thy report with him, lest he deem thee a liar, for thou art my friend. Were it other than thou, I had denied the affair and given him the lie. But now I will go with thee and carry the two dogs with me, though this be to me ruin-rife and the ending of my term of life.” Rejoined the other, “Allah will veil[484] thee, even as thou hast veiled my face with the Caliph!” Then Abdullah took a present beseeming the Commander of the Faithful and mounting the dogs with him, each on a camel, bound with chains[485] of gold, journeyed with Abu Ishak to Baghdad, where he went in to the Caliph and kissed ground before him. He deigned bid him sit; so he sat down and brought the two dogs before Al-Rashid, who said to him “What be these dogs, O Emir Abdullah?” Whereupon they fell to kissing the floor between his hands and wagging their tails and weeping, as if complaining to him. The Caliph marvelled at this and said to the governor, “Tell me the history of these two dogs and the reason of thy beating them and after entreating them with honour.” He replied, “O Vicar of Allah, these be no dogs, but two young men, endowed with beauty and seemliness, symmetry and shapeliness, and they are my brothers and the sons of my father and mother.” Asked the Caliph, “How is it that they were men and are become dogs?”; and he answered, “An thou give me leave, O Prince of True Believers, I will acquaint thee with the truth of the circumstance.” Said Al-Rashid, “Tell me and ‘ware of leasing, for ’tis of the fashion of the hypocrites, and look thou tell truth, for that is the Ark[486] of safety and the mark of virtuous men.” Rejoined Abdullah, “Know then, O vice-regent of Allah, when I tell thee the story of these dogs, they will both bear witness against me: an I speak sooth they will certify it and if I lie they will give me the lie.” Cried the Caliph, “These are of the dogs; they cannot speak nor answer; so how can they testify for thee or against thee?” But Abdullah said to them, “O my brothers, if I speak a lying word, do ye lift your heads and stare with your eyes; but, if I say sooth hang down your heads and lower your eyes.” Then said he to the Caliph, “Know, O Commander of the Faithful, that we are three brothers by one mother and the same father. Our sire’s name was Fazil and he was so named because his mother bare two sons at one birth, one of whom died forthright and the other twin remained alive, wherefore his sire named him Fazil — the Remainder. His father brought him up and reared him well, till he grew to manhood when he married him to our mother and died. Our mother conceived a first time and bare this my first brother, whom our sire named Mansъr; then she conceived again and bare this my second brother, whom he named Nбsir[487] ; after which she conceived a third time and bare me, whom he named Abdullah. My father reared us all three till we came to man’s estate, when he died, leaving us a house and a shop full of coloured stuffs of all kinds, Indian and Greek and Khor6s6ni and what not, besides sixty thousand dinars. We washed him and buried him to the ruth of his Lord, after which we built him a splendid monument and let pray for him prayers for the deliverance of his soul from the fire and held perlections of the Koran and gave alms on his behalf, till the forty days[488] were past; when I called together the merchants and nobles of the folk and made them a sumptuous entertainment. As soon as they had eaten, I said to them, ‘O merchants, verily this world is ephemeral, but the next world is eternal, and extolled be the perfection of Him who endureth always after His creatures have passed away! Know ye why I have called you together this blessed day?’ And they answered, ‘Extolled be Allah sole Scient of the hidden things.[489] ‘ Quoth I, ‘My father died, leaving much of money, and I fear lest any have a claim against him for a debt or a pledge[490] or what not else, and I desire to discharge my father’s obligations towards the folk. So whoso hath any demand on him, let him say, ‘He oweth me so and so,’ and I will satisfy it to him, that I may acquit the responsibility of my sire.[491] ‘ The merchants replied, ‘O Abdullah, verily the goods of this world stand not in stead of those of the world to come, and we are no fraudful folk, but all of us know the lawful from the unlawful and fear Almighty Allah and abstain from devouring the substance of the orphan. We know that thy father (Allah have mercy on him!) still let his money lie with the folk,[492] nor did he suffer any man’s claim on him to go unquitted, and we have ever heard him declare, ‘I am fearful of the people’s substance.’ He used always to say in his prayers, ‘O my God, Thou art my stay and my hope! Let me not die while in debt.’ And it was of his wont that, if he owed any one aught, he would pay it to him, without being pressed, and if any owed him aught he would not dun him, but would say to him, ‘At thy leisure.’ If his debtor were poor, he would release him from his liability and acquit him of responsibility; and if he were not poor and died in his debt, he would say, ‘Allah forgive him what he owed me!’ And we all testify that he owed no man aught.’ Quoth I, ‘May Allah bless you!’ Then I turned to these my brothers and said, ‘Our father owed no man aught and hath left us much money and stuffs, besides the house and the shop. Now we are three and each of us is entitled to one third part. So shall we agree to waive division and wone copartners in our wealth and eat together and drink together, or shall we apportion the stuffs and the money and take each his part?' Said they, 'We will divide them and take each his share.'" (Then Abdullah turned to the two dogs and said to them, "Did it happen thus, O my brothers?"; and they bowed their heads and lowered their eyes, as to say, "Yes.") Abdullah continued "I called in a departitor from the Kazi's court, O Prince of True Believers, and he distributed amongst us the money and the stuffs and all our father had left, allotting the house and shop to me in exchange for a part of the coin and clothes to which I was entitled. We were content with this; so the house and shop fell to my share, whilst my brothers took their portion in money and stuffs. I opened the shop and stocking it with my stuffs bought others with the money apportioned to me, over and above the house and shop, till the place was full, and I sat selling and buying. As for my brothers, they purchased stuffs and hiring a ship, set out on a voyage to the far abodes of folk. Quoth I, 'Allah aid them both! As for me, my livelihood is ready to my hand and peace is priceless.' I abode thus a whole year, during which time Allah opened the door of fortune to me and I gained great gains, till I became possessed of the like of that which our father had left us. One day, as I sat in my shop, with two fur pelisses on me, one of sable and the other of meniver,[493] for it was the season of winter and the time of the excessive cold, behold, there came up to me my two brothers, each clad in a ragged shirt and nothing more, and their lips were white with cold, and they were shivering. When I saw them in this plight, it was grievous to me and I mourned for them," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Eighty-first Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdullah bin Fazil continued to the Caliph, "When I saw them in this plight, it was grievous to me and I mourned for them and my reason fled my head. So I rose and embraced them and wept over their condition: then I put on one of them the pelisse of sable and on the other the fur coat of meniver and, carrying them to the Hammam, sent thither for each of them a suit of apparel such as befitted a merchant worth a thousand.[494] When they had washed and donned each his suit, I carried them to my house where, seeing them well nigh famished, I set a tray of food before them and ate with them, caressing them and comforting them.” (Then he again turned to the two dogs and said to them “Was this so, O my brothers?”; and they bent their heads and lowered their eyes.) So Abdullah continued “When they had eaten, O Vicar of Allah, quoth I to them, ‘What hath befallen you and where are your goods?’; and quoth they, ‘We fared up the river,[495] till we came to a city called Cufa, where we sold for ten dinars the piece of stuff that had cost half a ducat and that which cost us a ducat for twenty. So we profited greatly and bought Persian stuffs at the rate of ten sequins per piece of silk worth forty in Bassorah. Thence we removed to a city called Al-Karkh[496] where we sold and bought and made gain galore and amassed of wealth great store.’ And they went on to set forth to me the places and the profits. So I said to them, ‘Since ye had such good luck and lot, how cometh it that I see you return naked?’ They sighed and answered, ‘O our brother, some one must have evileyed us, and in travel there is no trusting. When we had gotten together these monies and goods, we freighted a ship therewith and set sail, intending for Bassorah. We fared on three days and on the fourth day we saw the sea rise and fall and roar and foam and swell and dash, whilst the waves clashed together with a crash, striking out sparks like fire[497] in the darks. The winds blew contrary for us and our craft struck upon the point of a bill-projected rock, where it brake up and plunged us into the river, and all we had with us was lost in the waters. We abode struggling on the surface a day and a night, till Allah sent us another ship, whose crew picked us up and we begged our way from town to town, suffering mighty sore hardships and selling our body-clothes piecemeal, to buy us food, till we drew near Bassorah; nor did we make the city till we had drained the draught of a thousand miseries. But, had we come safely off with that which was by us, we had brought back riches that might be evened with those of the King: but this was fore ordained to us of Allah.’ I said, ‘O my brothers, let not your hearts be grieved, for wealth is the ransom of bodies and safety is property. Since Allah hath written you of the saved, this is the end of desire, for want and wealth are but as it were illusions of dreams and God-gifted is he who said, ‘If a man from destruction can save his head * Let him hold his wealth as a slice of nail.’

I continued, ‘O my brothers we will suppose that our sire died to-day and left us all this wealth that is with me, for I am right willing to share it with you equally.’ So I fetched a departitor from the Kazi’s court and brought out to him all my money, which he distributed into three equal parts, and we each took one. Then said I to them, ‘O my brothers, Allah blesseth a man in his daily bread, if he be in his own country: so let each of you open him a shop and sit therein to get his living; and he to whom aught is ordained in the Secret Purpose,[498] needs must he get it.’ Accordingly, I helped each of them to open a shop and filled it for him with goods, saying to them, ‘Sell and buy and keep your monies and spend naught thereof; for all ye need of meat and drink and so forth I will furnish to you.’ I continued to entreat them generously, and they fell to selling and buying by day and returning at even-tide to my house where they lay the night; nor would I suffer them to expend aught of their own substance. But, whenever I sat talking with them, they would praise travel and proclaim its pleasures and vaunt the gains they had made therein; and they ceased not to urge me to accompany them in travelling over foreign parts.” (Then he said to the dogs, “Was this so, O my brothers?” and they again bowed their heads and lowered their eyes in confirmation of his words.) He continued, “On such wise, O Vicar of Allah, they continued to urge me and tempt me to travel by vaunting the great gains and profit to be obtained thereby till I said to them, ‘Needs must I fare with you for your sake!’ Then I entered into a contract of partnership with them and we chartered a ship and packing up all manner of precious stuffs and merchandise of every kind, freighted it therewith; after which we embarked in it all we needed and, setting sail from Bassorah, launched out into the dashing sea, swollen with clashing surge whereinto whoso entereth is lone and lorn and whence whoso cometh forth is as a babe new-born. We ceased not sailing on till we came to a city of the cities, where we sold and bought and made great cheape. Thence we went on to another place, and we ceased not to pass from land to land and port to port, selling and buying and profiting, till we had gotten us great wealth and much advantage. Presently, we came to a mountain,[499] where the captain cast anchor and said to us, ‘O passengers; go ye ashore; ye shall be saved from this day,[500] and make search; it may be ye shall find water.’ So all landed I amongst the crowd, and dispersed about the island in search of water. As for me, I climbed to the top of the mountain, and whilst I went along, lo and behold! I saw a white snake fleeing and followed by a black dragon, foul of favour and frightful of form, hotly pursuing her. Presently he overtook her and clipping her, seized her by the head and wound his tail about her tail, whereupon she cried out and I knew that he purposed to rape her. So I was moved to ruth for her and taking up a lump of granite,[501] five pounds or more in weight, hurled it at the dragon. It smote him on the head and crushed it, and ere I knew, the white snake changed and became a young girl bright with beauty and loveliness and brilliancy and perfect grace, as she were the shining full moon, who came up to me and kissing my hands, said to me, ‘Allah veil thee with two-fold veils, one from shame in this world and the other from the flame in the world to come on the day of the Great Upstanding, the day when neither wealth nor children shall avail save to him who shall come to Allah with a sound heart!’[502] And presently she continued, ‘O mortal, thou hast saved my honour and I am indebted to thee for kindness, wherefore it behoveth me to requite thee.’ So saying, she signed with her hand to the earth, which opened and she descended thereinto: then it closed up again over her and by this I knew that she was of the Jinn. As for the dragon, fire was kindled in him and consumed him and he became ashes. I marvelled at this and returned to my comrades, whom I acquainted with whatso I had seen, and we passed the night in the island. On the morrow the Captain weighed anchor and spread the sails and coiled the ropes and we sailed till the shore faded from our gaze. We fared on twenty days, without seeing or land or bird, till our water came to an end and quoth the Rais to us, ‘O folk, our fresh water is spent.’ Quoth we, ‘Let us make for land; haply we shall find water.’ But he exclaimed, ‘By Allah, I have lost my way and I know not what course will bring me to the seaboard.’ Thereupon betided us sore chagrin and we wept and besought Almighty Allah to guide us into the right course. We passed that night in the sorriest case: but God-gifted is He who said,

‘How many a night have I spent in woes * That would grizzle the
suckling-babe with fear:
But morrowed not morn ere to me there came * ‘Aidance from Allah
and victory near.’[503]

But when the day arose in its sheen and shone, we caught sight of a high mountain and rejoiced therein. When we came to its skirts, the Captain said to us, ‘O folk, go ashore and seek for water.’ So we all landed and sought water but found none, whereat we were sore afflicted because we were suffering for want of it. As for me, I climbed up to the mountain-top and on the other side thereof I saw a spacious circle[504] distant from us an hour’s journey or more. Presently I called my companions and as soon as they all rejoined me, said to them ‘Look at yonder basin behind this mountain; for I see therein a city high of base and a strong-cornered place girt with sconce and rampartry, pasturage and lea and doubtless it wanteth not water and good things. So hie we thither and fetch drink therefrom and buy what we need of provisions, meat and fruit, and return.’ But they said, ‘We fear lest the city-folk be Kafirs ascribing to Allah partners and enemies of The Faith and lay hand on us and take us captive or else slay us; so should we cause the loss of our own lives, having cast ourselves into destruction and evil emprise. Indeed, the proud and presumptuous are never praiseworthy, for that they ever fare in danger of calamities, even as saith of such an one a certain poet,

‘Long as earth is earth, long as sky is sky, * The o’erproud is blamed tho’ from risk he fly!’

So we will not expose ourselves to peril.’ I replied, ‘O folk, I have no authority over you; so I will take my brothers and go to yonder city.’ But my brothers said to me, ‘We also fear this thing and will not go with thee.’ Quoth I, ‘As for me, I am resolved to go thither, and I put my trust in Allah and accept whatsoever He shall decree to me. Do ye therefore await me, whilst I wend thither and return to you twain.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Eighty-second Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that

Abdullah said, "'Do ye twain await me whilst I wend thither and return to you.'" "So I left them and walked on till I came to the gate of the place and saw it a city of building wondrous and projection marvellous, with boulevards high-towering and towers strong-builded and palaces high-soaring. Its portals were of Chinese iron, rarely gilded and graven on such wise as confounded the wit. I entered the gateway and saw there a stone bench, whereon sat a man bearing on his forearm a chain of brass, whereto hung fourteen keys; so I knew him to be the porter of the city and that it had fourteen gates. I drew near him and said to him 'Peace be with thee!'; but he returned not my salam and I saluted him a second and a third time; but he made me no reply. Then I laid my hand on his shoulder and said to him, 'Ho thou, why dost thou not return my salam? Art thou asleep or deaf or other than a Moslem, that thou refrainest from exchanging the salutation?' But he answered me not neither stirred; so I considered him and saw that he was stone. Quoth I, 'Verily an admirable matter! This is a stone wroughten in the semblance of a son of Adam and wanting in naught save speech!' Then I left him and entering the city, beheld a man standing in the road; so I went up to him and scrutinised him and found him stone. Presently, as I walked adown the broad-ways, and saw that this was every where the case, I met an old woman bearing on her head a bundle of clothes ready for washing; so I went up to her and examining her, saw that she was stone, and the bundle of clothes on her head was stone also.[505] Then I fared for the market, where I saw an oilman with his scales set up and fronted by various kinds of wares such as cheese and so forth, all of stone. Moreover, I saw all manner of tradesmen seated in their shops and men and women and children, some standing and some sitting; but they were all stone; and the stuffs were like spiders' webs. I amused myself with looking upon them, and as often as I laid hold upon a piece of stuff, it powdered in my hands like dust dispread. Presently I saw some chests and opening one of them, found it full of gold in bags; so I laid hold upon the bags, but they crumbled away in my grasp, whilst the gold abode unchanged. I carried off of it what I could carry and said to myself, 'Were my brothers with me, they might take of this gold their fill and possess themselves of these hoards which have no owner.' Then I entered another shop and found therein more than this, but could bear away no more than I had borne. I left this market and went on to another and thence to another and another, much enjoying the sight of all manner of creatures of various kinds, all several stones, even to the dogs and the cats, till I came to the goldsmiths' bazar, where I saw men sitting in their shops, with their stock-in-trade about them, some in their hands and others in crates of wicker- work. When I saw this, O Commander of the Faithful, I threw down the gold and loaded myself with goldsmiths' ware, as much as I could carry. Then I went on to the jewel-market and saw there the jewellers seated in their shops, each with a tray before him, full of all sorts of precious stones, jacinths and diamonds and emeralds and balass rubies and so forth: but all the shop-keepers were stones; whereupon I threw away the goldsmiths' ware and carried off as many jewels as I could carry, regretting that my brothers were not with me, so they might take what they would of those costly gems. Then I left the jewel-market and went on till I came to a great door, quaintly gilded and decorated after the fairest fashion, within which were wooden benches and in the porch sat eunuchs, and body-guards; horsemen, and footmen and officers of police each and every robed in the richest of raiment; but they were all stones. I touched one of them and his clothes crumbled away from his body like cobwebs. Then I passed through the door and saw a palace without equal for its building and the goodliness of the works that were therein. Here I found an audience-chamber, full of Grandees and Wazirs and Officers and Emirs, seated upon chairs and every one of them stone. Moreover, I saw a throne of red gold, crusted with pearls and gems, and seated thereon a son of Adam arrayed in the most sumptuous raiment and bearing on his head a Chosrцan[506] crown, diademed with the finest stones that shed a light like the light of day; but, when I came up to him, I found him stone. Then I went on to the gate of the Harim and entering, found myself in the Queen's presence-chamber, wherein I saw a throne of red gold, inlaid with pearls and gems, and the Queen seated thereon. On her head she wore a crown diademed with finest jewels, and round about her were women like moons, seated upon chairs and clad in the most sumptuous clothing of all colours. There also the eunuchry, with their hands upon their breasts,[507] were standing in the attitude of service, and indeed this hall confounded the beholder's wits with what was therein of quaint gilding and rare painting and curious carving and fine furniture. There hung the most brilliant lustres[508] of limpid crystal, and in every globe[509] of the crystal was an unique jewel, whose price money might not fulfil. So I threw down that which was with me, O Prince of True Believers, and fell to taking of these jewels what I could carry, bewildered as to what I should bear away and what I should leave; for indeed I saw the place as it were a treasure of the treasures of the cities. Presently I espied a wicket[510] standing open and within it a staircase: so I entered and mounting forty steps, heard a human voice reciting the Koran in a low tone. I walked towards that sound till I came to the main door hung with a silken curtain, laced with wires of gold whereon were strung pearls and coral and rubies and cut emeralds which gave forth a light like the light of stars. The voice came from behind the curtain: so I raised it and discovered a gilded door, whose beauty amazed the mind. I passed through the door and found myself in a saloon as it were a hoard upon earth's surface[511] and therein a girl as she were the sun shining fullest sheen in the zenith of a sky serene. She was robed in the costliest of raiment and decked with ornaments the most precious that could be and withal she was of passing beauty and loveliness, a model of symmetry and seemliness, of elegance and perfect grace, with waist slender and hips heavy and dewy lips such as heal the sick and eyelids lovely in their languor, as it were she of whom the sayer spake when he said,

'My best salam to what that robe enrobes of symmetry, * And what
that blooming garth of cheek enguards of rosy blee:
It seems as though the Pleiades depend upon her brow; * And other
lights of Night in knots upon her breast we see:
Did she but don a garment weft of Rose's softest leaf, * The leaf
of Rose would draw her blood[512] when pluckt that fruit
from tree:
And did she crache in Ocean's face, next Morn would see a change

* To sweeter than the honeycomb of what was briny sea:
And did she deign her favours grant to grey-beard staff-enpropped

* He'd wake and rend the lion's limbs for might and
valiancy.'"

Then Abdullah continued, "O Prince of True Believers, as soon as I saw that girl I fell passionately in love with her and going straight up to her, found her seated on a high couch, reciting by heart and in grateful memory the Book of Allah, to whom belong honour and glory! Her voice was like the harmony of the gates of Heaven, when Rizwan openeth them, and the words came from her lips like a shower of gems; whilst her face was with beauty dight, bright and blossom-white, even as saith the poet of a similar sight,

'O thou who gladdenest man by speech and rarest quality; * Grow
longing and repine for thee and grow beyond degree!
In thee two things consume and melt the votaries of Love; * The
dulcet song of David joined with Joseph's brilliancy.'

When I heard her voice of melody reciting the sublime Koran, my heart quoted from her killing glances, 'Peace, a word from a compassionating Lord;'[513] but I stammered[514] in my speech and could not say the salam-salutation aright, for my mind and sight were confounded and I was become as saith the bard,

'Love-longing urged me not except to trip in speech o'er free; *
Nor, save to shed my blood I passed the campment's boundary:
I ne'er will hear a word from those who love to rail, but I *
Will testify to love of him with every word of me.'

Then I hardened myself against the horrors of repine and said to her, 'Peace be with thee, O noble Lady, and treasured jewel! Allah grant endurance to the foundation of thy fortune fair and upraise the pillars of thy glory rare!' Said she, 'And on thee from me be peace and salutation and high honour, O Abdullah, O son of Fazil! Well come and welcome and fair welcome to thee, O dearling mine and coolth of mine eyne!' Rejoined I, 'O my lady, whence wottest thou my name and who art thou and what case befel the people of this city, that they are become stones? I would have thee tell me the truth of the matter, for indeed I am admiring at this city and its citizens and that I have found none alive therein save thyself. So, Allah upon thee, tell me the cause of all this, according to the truth!’ Quoth she, ‘Sit, O Abdullah, and Inshallah, I will talk with thee and acquaint thee in full with the facts of my case and of this place and its people; and there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!’ So I sat me down by her side and she said to me, ‘Know, O Abdullah, (may Allah have mercy on thee!) that I am the daughter of the King of this city and that it is my sire whom thou sawest seated on the high stead in the Divan, and those who are round about him were the Lords of his land and the Guards of his empery. He was a King of exceeding prowess and had under his hand a thousand thousand and sixty thousand troopers. The number of the Emirs of his Empire was four-and-twenty thousand, all of them Governors and Dignitaries. He was obeyed by a thousand cities, besides towns, hamlets and villages; and sconces and citadels, and the Emirs[515] of the wild Arabs under his hand were a thousand in number, each commanding twenty thousand horse. Moreover, he had monies and treasures and precious stones and jewels and things of price, such as eye never saw nor of which ear ever heard.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Eight-third Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Princess, daughter to the King of the Stone-city, thus continued, “Verily, O Abdullah my father had monies and hoards, such as eye never saw and of which ear never heard. He used to debel Kings and do to death champions and braves in battle and in the field of fight, so that the Conquerors feared him and the Chosroлs[516] humbled themselves to him. For all this, he was a miscreant in creed ascribing to Allah partnership and adoring idols, instead of the Lord of worship; and all his troops were of images fain in lieu of the All-knowing Sovereign. One day of the days as he sat on the throne of his Kingship, compassed about with the Grandees of his realm, suddenly there came in to him a Personage, whose face illumined the whole Divan with its light. My father looked at him and saw him clad in a garb of green,[517] tall of stature and with hands that reached beneath his knees. He was of reverend aspect and awesome and the light[518] shone from his face. Said he to my sire, ‘O rebel, O idolater, how long wilt thou take pride in worshipping idols and abandoning the service of the All-knowing King? Say, ‘I testify that there is no god but the God and that Mohammed is His servant and His messenger.’ And embrace Al-Islam, thou and thy tribe; and put away from you the worship of idols, for they neither suffice man’s need nor intercede. None is worshipful save Allah alone, who raised up the heavens without columns and spread out the earths like carpets in mercy to His creatures.’[519] Quoth my father, ‘Who art thou, O man who rejectest the worship of idols, that thou sayst thus? Fearest thou not that the idols will be wroth with thee?’ He replied, ‘The idols are stones; their anger cannot prejudice me nor their favour profit me. So do thou set in my presence thine idol which thou adorest and bid all thy folk bring each his image: and when they are all present, do ye pray them to be wroth with me and I will pray my Lord to be wroth with them, and ye shall descry the difference between the anger of the creature and that of the Creator. For your idols, ye fashioned them yourselves and the Satans clad themselves therewith as with clothing, and they it is who spake to you from within the bellies of the images,[520] for your idols are made and the maker is my God to whom naught is impossible. An the True appear to you, do ye follow it, and if the False appear to you do ye leave it.’ Cried they, ‘Give us a proof of thy god, that we may see it;’ and quoth he, ‘Give me proof of your gods.’ So the King bade every one who worshipped his lord in image-form to bring it, and all the armies brought their idols to the Divan. Thus fared it with them; but as for me, I was sitting behind a curtain, whence I could look upon my father’s Divan, and I had an idol of emerald whose bigness was as the bigness of a son of Adam. My father demanded it, so I sent it to the Divan, where they set it down beside that of my sire, which was of jacinth, whilst the Wazir’s idol was of diamond.[521] As for those of the Grandees and Notables, some were of balass-ruby and some of carnelian, others of coral or Comorin aloes-wood and yet others of ebony or silver or gold; and each had his own idol, after the measure of his competence; whilst the idols of the common soldiers and of the people were some of granite, some of wood, some of pottery and some of mud; and all were of various hues yellow and red; green, black and white. Then said the Personage to my sire, 'Pray your idol and these idols to be wroth with me.' So they aligned the idols in a Divan,[522] setting my father's idol on a chair of gold at the upper end, with mine by its side, and ranking the others each according to the condition of him who owned it and worshipped it. Then my father arose and prostrating himself to his own idol, said to it, 'O my god, thou art the Bountiful Lord, nor is there among the idols a greater than thyself. Thou knowest that this person cometh to me, attacking thy divinity and making mock of thee; yea, he avoucheth that he hath a god stronger than thou and ordereth us leave adoring thee and adore his god. So be thou wrath with him, O my god!' And he went on to supplicate the idol; but the idol returned him no reply neither bespoke him with aught of speech; whereupon quoth he, 'O my god, this is not of thy wont, for thou usedst to answer me, when I addressed thee. How cometh it that I see thee silent and speaking not? Art thou unheeding or asleep?[523] Awake; succour me and speak to me!' And he shook it with his hand; but it spake not neither stirred from its stead. Thereupon quoth the Personage, 'What aileth thine idol that it speaketh not?'; and quoth the King, 'Methinks he is absent-minded or asleep.' Exclaimed the other, 'O enemy of Allah, how canst thou worship a god that speaketh not nor availeth unto aught and not worship my God, who to prayers deigns assent and who is ever present and never absent, neither unheeding nor sleeping, whom conjecture may not ween, who seeth and is not seen and who over all things terrene is omnipotent? Thy god is powerless and cannot guard itself from harm; and indeed a stoned Satan had clothed himself therewith as with a coat that he might debauch thee and delude thee. But now hath its devil departed; so do thou worship Allah and testify that there is no god but He and that none is worshipful nor worshipworth but Himself; neither is there any good but His good. As for this thy god, it cannot ward off hurt from it; so how shall it ward off harm from thee? See with thine own eyes its impotence.' So saying, he went up to the idol and dealt it a cuff on the neck, that it fell to the ground; whereupon the King waxed wroth and cried to the bystanders, 'This froward atheist hath smitten my god. Slay him!' So they would have arisen to smite him, but none of them could stir from his place. Then he propounded to them Al-Islam; but they refused to become Moslems and he said, ‘I will show you the wroth of my Lord.’ Quoth they, ‘Let us see it!’ So he spread out his hands and said, ‘O my God and my Lord, Thou art my stay and my hope; answer Thou my prayer against these lewd folk, who eat of Thy good and worship other gods. O Thou the Truth, O Thou of All- might, O Creator of Day and Night, I beseech Thee to turn these people into stones, for Thou art the Puissant nor is aught impossible to Thee, and Thou over all things are omnipotent!’ And Allah transformed the people of this city into stones; but, as for me, when I saw the manifest proof of His deity, I submitted myself to Him and was saved from that which befel the rest. Then the Personage drew near me and said ‘Felicity[524] was fore- ordained of Allah to thee and in this a purpose had He.’ And he went on to instruct me and I took unto him the oath and covenant.[525] I was then seven years of age and am now thirty years old. Then said I to him, ‘O my lord, all that is in the city and all its citizens are become stones by thine effectual prayer, and I am saved, for that I embraced Al-Islam at thy hands. Wherefore thou art become my Shaykh; so do thou tell me thy name and succour me with thy security and provide me with provision whereon I may subsist.’ Quoth he, ‘My name is Abu al- ‘Abbбs al-Khizr’; and he planted me a pomegranate-tree, which forthright grew up and foliaged, flowered and fruited, and bare one pomegranate; whereupon quoth he, ‘Eat of that wherewith Allah the Almighty provideth thee and worship Him with the worship which is His due.’ Then he taught me the tenets of Al-Islam and the canons of prayer and the way of worship, together with the recital of the Koran, and I have now worshipped Allah in this place three-and-twenty years. Each day the tree yieldeth me a pomegranate which I eat and it sustaineth me from tide to tide; and every Friday, Al-Khizr (on whom be peace!) cometh to me and ’tis he who acquainted me with thy name and gave me the glad tidings of thy soon coming hither, saying to me, ‘When he shall come to thee, entreat him with honour and obey his bidding and gainsay him not; but be thou to him wife and he shall be to thee man, and wend with him whitherso he will.’ So, when I saw thee, I knew thee and such is the story of this city and of its people, and the Peace!’” Then she showed me the pomegranate-tree, whereon was one granado, which she took and eating one-half thereof herself, gave me the other to eat, and never did I taste aught sweeter or more savoury or more satisfying than that pomegranate. After this, I said to her, ‘Art thou content, even as the Shaykh Al-Khizr charged thee, to be my wife and take me to mate; and art thou ready to go with me to my own country and abide with me in the city of Bassorah?’ She replied, ‘Yes, Inshallah: an it please Almighty Allah. I hearken to thy word and obey thy hest without gainsaying.’ Then I made a binding covenant with her and she carried me into her father’s treasury, whence we took what we could carry and going forth that city, walked on till we came to my brothers, whom I found searching for me. They asked, ‘Where hast thou been? Indeed thou hast tarried long from us, and our hearts were troubled for thee.’ And the captain of the ship said to me, ‘O merchant Abdullah, the wind hath been fair for us this great while, and thou hast hindered us from setting sail.’ And I answered, ‘There is no harm in that: ofttimes slow[526] is sure and my absence hath wrought us naught but advantage, for indeed, there hath betided me therein the attainment of our hopes and God-gifted is he who said,

‘I weet not, whenas to a land I fare * In quest of good, what I
shall there obtain;
Or gain I fare with sole desire to seek; * Or loss that seeketh
me when seek I gain.’

Then said I to them, ‘See what hath fallen to me in this mine absence;’ and displayed to them all that was with me of treasures and told them what I had beheld in the City of Stone, adding, ‘Had ye hearkened to me and gone with me, ye had gotten of these things great gain.’” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Eighty-fourth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdullah bin Fazil said to his shipmates and to his two brothers, “Had ye gone with me, ye had gotten of these things great gain.” But they said, “By Allah, had we gone, we had not dared to go in to the King of the city!” Then I said to my brothers, ‘No harm shall befal you; for that which I have will suffice us all and this is our lot.'[527] So I divided my booty into four parts according to our number and gave one to each of my brothers and to the Captain, taking the fourth for myself, setting aside somewhat for the servants and sailors, who rejoiced and blessed me: and all were content with what I gave them, save my brothers who changed countenance and rolled their eyes. I perceived that lust of lucre had gotten hold of them both; so I said to them, 'O my brothers, methinketh what I have given you doth not satisfy you; but we are brothers and there is no difference between us. My good and yours are one and the same thing, and if I die none will inherit of me but you.' And I went on to soothe them. Then I bore the Princess on board the galleon and lodged her in the cabin, where I sent her somewhat to eat and we sat talking, I and my brothers. Said they, 'O our brother, what wilt thou do with that damsel of surpassing beauty?' And I replied, 'I mean to contract marriage with her, as soon as I reach Bassorah and make a splendid wedding and go in to her there.' Exclaimed one of them, 'O my brother, verily, this young lady excelleth in beauty and loveliness and the love of her is fallen on my heart; wherefore I desire that thou give her to me and I will espouse her.' And the other cried, 'I too desire this: give her to me, that I may espouse her.' 'O my brothers,' answered I, 'indeed she took of me an oath and a covenant that I would marry her myself; so, if I give her to one of you, I shall be false to my oath and to the covenant between me and her, and haply she will be broken- hearted, for she came not with me but on condition that I marry her. So how can I wed her to other than myself? As for your both loving her, I love her more than you twain, for she is my treasure-trove, and as for my giving her to one of you, that is a thing which may not be. But, if we reach Bassorah in safety, I will look you out two girls of the best of the damsels of Bassorah and demand them for you in marriage and pay the dower of my own monies and make one wedding and we will all three go into our brides on the same night. But leave ye this damsel, for she is of my portion.' They held their peace, and I thought they were content with that which I had said. Then we fared onwards for Bassorah, and every day I sent her meat and drink; but she came not forth of the cabin, whilst I slept between my brothers on deck. We sailed thus forty days, till we sighted Bassorah city and rejoiced that we were come near it. Now I trusted in my brothers and was at my ease with them, for none knoweth the hidden future save Allah the Most High; so I lay down to sleep that night; but, as I abode drowned in slumber, I suddenly found myself caught up by these my brothers, one seizing me by the legs and the other by the arms, for they had taken counsel together to drown me in the sea for the sake of the damsel. When I saw myself in their hands, I said to them, ‘O my brothers, why do ye this with me?’ And they replied, ‘Ill-bred that thou art, wilt thou barter our affection for a girl?; we will cast thee into the sea, because of this.’ So saying, they threw me overboard.” (Here Abdullah turned to the dogs and said to them, “Is this that I have said true O my brothers or not?”; and they bowed their heads and fell a-whining, as if confirming his speech; whereat the Caliph wondered). Then Abdullah resumed, “O Commander of the Faithful, when they threw me into the sea, I sank to the bottom; but the water bore me up again to the surface, and before I could think, behold a great bird, the bigness of a man, swooped down upon me and snatching me up, flew up with me into upper air. I fainted and when I opened my eyes, I found myself in a strong- pillared place, a high-builded palace, adorned with magnificent paintings and pendants of gems of all shapes and hues. Therein were damsels standing with their hands crossed over their breasts and, behold in their midst was a lady seated on a throne of red gold, set with pearls and gems, and clad in apparel whereon no mortal might open his eyes, for the lustre of the jewels wherewith they were decked. About her waist she wore a girdle of jewels no money could pay their worth and on her head a three- fold tiara dazing thought and wit and dazzling heart and sight. Then the bird which had carried me thither shook and became a young lady bright as sun raying light. I fixed my eyes on her and behold, it was she whom I had seen, in snake form on the mountain and had rescued from the dragon which had wound his tail around her. Then said to her the lady who sat upon the throne, ‘Why hast thou brought hither this mortal?’; and she replied, ‘O my mother, this is he who was the means of veiling my honour[528] among the maidens of the Jinn.’ Then quoth she to me, ‘Knowest thou who I am?’; and quoth I, ‘No.’ Said she, ‘I am she who was on such a mountain, where the black dragon strave with me and would have forced my honour, but thou slewest him.’ And I said, ‘I saw but a white snake with the dragon.’ She rejoined, “Tis I who was the white snake; but I am the daughter of the Red King, Sovran of the Jann and my name is Sa’ʜdah.[529] She who sitteth there is my mother and her name is Mubбrakah, wife of the Red King. The black dragon who attacked me and would have done away my honour was Wazir to the Black King, Darfʜl by name, and he was foul of favour. It chanced that he saw me and fell in love with me; so he sought me in marriage of my sire, who sent to him to say, ‘Who art thou, O scum of Wazirs, that thou shouldst wed with Kings’ daughters?’ Whereupon he was wroth and sware an oath that he would assuredly do away my honour, to spite my father. Then he fell to tracking my steps and following me whithersoever I went, designing to ravish me; wherefore there befel between him and my parent mighty fierce wars and bloody jars, but my sire could not prevail against him, for that he was fierce as fraudful and as often as my father pressed hard upon him and seemed like to conquer he would escape from him, till my sire was at his wits’ end. Every day I was forced to take new form and hue; for, as often as I assumed a shape, he would assume its contrary, and to whatsoever land I fled he would snuff my fragrance and follow me thither, so that I suffered sore affliction of him. At last I took the form of a snake and betook myself to the mountain where thou sawest me; whereupon he changed himself to a dragon and pursued me, till I fell into his hands, when he strove with me and I struggled with him, till he wearied me and mounted me, meaning to have his lustful will of me: but thou camest and smotest him with the stone and slewest him. Then I returned to my own shape and showed myself to thee, saying, ‘I am indebted to thee for a service such as is not lost save with the son of adultery.’[530] So, when I saw thy brothers do with thee this treachery and throw thee into the sea, I hastened to thee and saved thee from destruction, and now honour is due to thee from my mother and my father.’ Then she said to the Queen, ‘O my mother, do thou honour him as deserveth he who saved my virtue.’ So the Queen said to me, ‘Welcome, O mortal! Indeed thou hast done us a kindly deed which meriteth honour.’ Presently she ordered me a treasure-suit,[531] worth a mint of money, and store of gems and precious stones, and said, ‘Take him and carry him in to the King.’ Accordingly, they carried me into the King in his Divan, where I found him seated on his throne, with his Marids and guards before him; and when I saw him my sight was blent for that which was upon him of jewels; but when he saw me, he rose to his feet and all his officers rose also, to do him worship. Then he saluted me and welcomed me and entreated me with the utmost honour, and gave me of that which was with him of good things; after which he said to some of his followers, ‘Take him and carry him back to my daughter, that she may restore him to the place whence she brought him.’ So they carried me back to the Lady Sa’idah, who took me up and flew away with me and my treasures. On this wise fared it with me and the Princess; but as regards the Captain of the galleon, he was aroused by the splash of my fall, when my brothers cast me into the sea, and said, ‘What is that which hath fallen overboard?’ Whereupon my brothers fell to weeping and beating of breasts and replied, ‘Alas, for our brother’s loss! He thought to do his need over the ship’s side[532] and fell into the water!’ Then they laid their hands on my good, but there befel dispute between them because of the damsel, each saying, ‘None shall have her but I.’ And they abode jangling and wrangling each with other and remembered not their brother nor his drowning and their mourning for him ceased. As they were thus, behold Sa’idah alighted with me in the midst of the galleon,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Eighty-fifth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdullah bin Fazil continued, “As they were thus, behold, Sa’idah alighted with me in the midst of the galleon and when my brothers saw me, they embraced me and rejoiced in me, saying, ‘O our brother, how hast thou fared in that which befel thee? Indeed our hearts have been occupied with thee.’ Quoth Sa’idah, ‘Had ye any heart- yearnings for him or had ye loved him, ye had not cast him into the sea; but choose ye now what death ye will die.’ Then she seized on them and would have slain them; but they cried out, saying, ‘In thy safeguard, O our brother!’ Thereupon I interceded and said to her, ‘I claim of thine honour not to kill my brothers.’ Quoth she, ‘There is no help but that I slay them, for they are traitors.’ But I ceased not to speak her fair and conciliate her till she said, ‘To content thee, I will not kill them, but I will enchant them.’ So saying, she brought out a cup and filling it with sea-water, pronounced over it words that might not be understood; then saying, ‘Quit this human shape for the shape of a dog;’ she sprinkled them with the water, and immediately they were transmewed into dogs, as thou seest them, O Vicar of Allah.” Whereupon he turned to the dogs and said to them, “Have I spoken the truth, O my brothers?” And they bowed their heads, as they would say, “Thou hast spoken sooth.” At this he continued, “Then she said to those who were in the galleon, ‘Know ye that Abdullah bin Fazil here present is become my brother and I shall visit him once or twice every day: so, whoso of you crosseth him or gainsayeth his bidding or doth him hurt with hand or tongue, I will do with him even as I have done with these two traitors and bespell him to a dog, and he shall end his days in that form, nor shall he find deliverance.’ And they all said to her, ‘O our lady, we are his slaves and his servants every one of us and will not disobey him in aught.’ Moreover, she said to me, ‘When thou comest to Bassorah, examine all thy property and if there lack aught thereof, tell me and I will bring it to thee, in whose hands and in what place soever it may be, and will change him who took it into a dog. When thou hast magazined thy goods, clap a collar[533] of wood on the neck of each of these two traitors and tie them to the leg of a couch and shut them up by themselves. Moreover, every night, at midnight, do thou go down to them and beat each of them a bout till he swoon away; and if thou suffer a single night to pass without beating them, I will come to thee and drub thee a sound drubbing, after which I will drub them.’ And I answered, ‘To hear is to obey.’ Then said she, ‘Tie them up with ropes till thou come to Bassorah.’ So I tied a rope about each dog’s neck and lashed them to the mast, and she went her way. On the morrow we entered Bassorah and the merchants came out to meet me and saluted me, and no one of them enquired of my brothers. But they looked at the dogs and said to me, ‘Ho, such and such,[534] what wilt thou do with these two dogs thou hast brought with thee?’ Quoth I, ‘I reared them on this voyage and have brought them home with me.’ And they laughed at them, knowing not that they were my brothers. When I reached my house, I put the twain in a closet and busied myself all that night with the unpacking and disposition of the bales of stuffs and jewels. Moreover, the merchants were with me being minded to offer me the salam; wherefore I was occupied with them and forgot to beat the dogs or chain them up. Then without doing them aught of hurt, I lay down to sleep, but suddenly and unexpectedly there came to me the Red King's daughter Sa'idah and said to me, 'Did I not bid thee clap chains on their necks and give each of them a bout of beating?' So saying, she seized me and pulling out a whip, flogged me till I fainted away, after which she went to the place where my brothers were and with the same scourge beat them both till they came nigh upon death. Then said she to me, 'Beat each of them a like bout every night, and if thou let a night pass without doing this, I will beat thee;' and I replied, 'O my lady, to-morrow I will put chains on their necks, and next night I will beat them nor will I leave them one night unbeaten.' And she charged me strictly to beat them and disappeared. When the morning morrowed it being no light matter for me to put fetters of iron on their necks, I went to a goldsmith and bade him make them collars and chains of gold. He did this and I put the collars on their necks and chained them up, as she bade me; and next night I beat them both in mine own despite. This befel in the Caliphate of Al- Mahdi,[535] third of the sons of Al-Abbas, and I commended myself to him by sending him presents, so he invested me with the government and made me viceroy of Bassorah. On this wise I abode some time and after a while I said to myself, 'Haply her wrath is grown cool;' and left them a night unbeaten, whereupon she came to me and beat me a bout whose burning I shall never forget long as I live. So, from that time to this, I have never left them a single night unbeaten during the reign of Al-Mahdi; and when he deceased and thou camest to the succession, thou sentest to me, confirming me in the government of Bassorah. These twelve years past have I beaten them every night, in mine own despite, and after I have beaten them, I excuse myself to them and comfort them and give them to eat and drink; and they have remained shut up, nor did any of the creatures of Allah know of them, till thou sentest to me Abu Ishak the boon-companion, on account of the tribute, and he discovered my secret and returning to thee, acquainted thee therewith. Then thou sentest him back to fetch me and them; so I answered with ‘Hearkening and obedience,’ and brought them before thee, whereupon thou questionedst me and I told thee the truth of the case; and this is my history.” The Caliph marvelled at the case of the two dogs and said to Abdullah, “Hast thou at this present forgiven thy two brothers the wrong they did thee, yea or nay?” He replied, “O my lord, may Allah forgive them and acquit them of responsibility in this world and the next! Indeed, ’tis I who stand in need of their forgiveness, for that these twelve years past I have beaten them a grievous bout every night!” Rejoined the Caliph, “O Abdullah, Inshallah, I will endeavour for their release and that they may become men again, as they were before, and I will make peace between thee and them; so shall you live the rest of your lives as brothers loving one another; and like as thou hast forgiven them, so shall they forgive thee. But now take them and go down with them to thy lodging and this night beat them not, and to-morrow there shall be naught save weal.” Quoth Abdullah, “O my lord, as thy head liveth, if I leave them one night unbeaten, Sa’idah will come to me and beat me, and I have no body to brook beating.” Quoth the Caliph, “Fear not, for I will give thee a writing under my hand.[536] An she come to thee, do thou give her the paper and if, when she has read it, she spare thee, the favour will be hers; but, if she obey not my bidding, commit thy business to Allah and let her beat thee a bout and suppose that thou hast forgotten to beat them for one night and that she beateth thee because of that: and if it fall out thus and she thwart me, as sure as I am Commander of the Faithful, I will be even with her.” Then he wrote her a letter on a piece of paper, two fingers broad, and sealing it with his signet-ring, gave it to Abdullah, saying, “O Abdullah, if Sa’idah come, say to her, ‘The Caliph, King of mankind, hath commanded me to leave beating them and hath written me this letter for thee; and he saluteth thee with the salam.’ Then give her the warrant and fear no harm.” After which he exacted of him an oath and a solemn pledge that he would not beat them. So Abdullah took the dogs and carried them to his lodging, saying to himself, “I wonder what the Caliph will do with the daughter of the Sovran of the Jinn, if she cross him and trounce me to-night! But I will bear with a bout of beating for once and leave my brothers at rest this night, though for their sake I suffer torture.” Then he bethought himself awhile, and his reason said to him, “Did not the Caliph rely on some great support, he had never forbidden me from beating them.” So he entered his lodging and doffed the collars from the dogs’ necks, saying, “I put my trust in Allah,” and fell to comforting them and saying, “No harm shall befal you; for the Caliph, fifth[537] of the sons of Al-Abbas, hath pledged himself for your deliverance and I have forgiven you. An it please Allah the Most High, the time is come and ye shall be delivered this blessed night; so rejoice ye in the prospect of peace and gladness.” When they heard these words, they fell to whining with the whining of dogs, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Eighty-sixth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdullah bin Fazil said to his brothers, “Rejoice ye in the prospect of comfort and gladness.” And when they heard his words they fell to whining with the whining of dogs, and rubbed their jowls against his feet, as if blessing him and humbling themselves before him. He mourned over them and took to stroking their backs till supper time; and when they set on the trays he bade the dogs sit. So they sat down and ate with him from the tray, whilst his officers stood gaping and marvelling at his eating with dogs and all said, “Is he mad or are his wits gone wrong? How can the Viceroy of Bassorah city, he who is greater than a Wazir, eat with dogs? Knoweth he not that the dog is unclean?[538] “ And they stared at the dogs, as they ate with him as servants eat with their lords,[539] knowing not that they were his brothers; nor did they cease staring at them, till they had made an end of eating, when Abdullah washed his hands and the dogs also put out their paws and washed; whereupon all who were present began to laugh at them and to marvel, saying, one to other, “Never in our lives saw we dogs eat and wash their paws after eating!” Then the dogs sat down on the divans beside Abdullah, nor dared any ask him of this; and thus the case lasted till midnight, when he dismissed the attendants and lay down to sleep and the dogs with him, each on a couch; whereupon the servants said one to other, “Verily, he hath lain down to sleep and the two dogs are lying with him.” Quoth another, “Since he hath eaten with the dogs from the same tray, there is no harm in their sleeping with him; and this is naught save the fashion of madmen." Moreover, they ate not anything of the food which remained in the tray, saying, "'Tis unclean." Such was their case; but as for Abdullah, ere he could think, the earth clave asunder and out rose Sa'idah, who said to him, "O Abdullah, why hast thou not beaten them this night and why hast thou undone the collars from their necks? Hast thou acted on this wise perversely and in mockery of my commandment? But I will at once beat thee and spell thee into a dog like them." He replied, "O my lady, I conjure thee by the graving upon the seal-ring of Solomon David-son (on the twain be peace!) have patience with me till I tell thee my cause and after do with me what thou wilt." Quoth she, "Say on," and quoth he, "The reason of my not punishing them is only this. The King of mankind, the Commander of the Faithful, the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, ordered me not to beat them this night and took of me oaths and covenants to that effect; and he saluteth thee with the salam and hath committed to me a mandate under his own hand, which he bade me give thee. So I obeyed his order for to obey the Commander of the Faithful is obligatory; and here is the mandate. Take it and read it and after work thy will." She replied "Hither with it!" So he gave her the letter and she opened it and read as follows, "In the name of Allah, the Compassionating, the Compassionate! From the King of mankind, Harun al-Rashid, to the daughter of the Red King, Sa'idah! But, after. Verily, this man hath forgiven his brothers and hath waived his claim against them, and we have enjoined them to reconciliation. Now, when reconciliation ruleth, retribution is remitted, and if you of the Jinn contradict us in our commandments, we will contrary you in yours and traverse your ordinances; but, an ye obey our bidding and further our orders, we will indeed do the like with yours. Wherefore I bid thee hurt them no hurt, and if thou believe in Allah and in His Apostle, it behoveth thee to obey and us to command.[540] So an thou spare them, I will requite thee with that whereto my Lord shall enable me; and the token of obedience is that thou remove thine enchantment from these two men, so they may come before me to-morrow, free. But an thou release them not, I will release them in thy despite, by the aid of Almighty Allah." When she had read the letter, she said, "O Abdullah, I will do nought till I go to my sire and show him the mandate of the monarch of mankind and return to thee with the answer in haste." So saying, she signed with her hand to the earth, which clave open and she disappeared therein, whilst Abdullah's heart was like to fly for joy and he said, "Allah advance the Commander of the Faithful!" As for Sa'idah, she went in to her father; and, acquainting him with that which had passed, gave him the Caliph's letter, which he kissed and laid on his head. Then he read it and understanding its contents said, "O my daughter, verily, the ordinance of the monarch of mankind obligeth us and his commandments are effectual over us, nor can we disobey him: so go thou and release the two men forthwith and say to them, 'Ye are freed by the intercession of the monarch of mankind.' For, should he be wroth with us, he would destroy us to the last of us; so do not thou impose on us that which we are unable." Quoth she "O my father, if the monarch of mankind were wroth with us, what could he do with us?"; and quoth her sire, "He hath power over us for several reasons. In the first place, he is a man and hath thus pre-eminence over us[541] ; secondly he is the Vicar of Allah; and thirdly, he is constant in praying the dawn-prayer of two bows[542] ; therefore were all the tribes of the Jinn assembled together against him from the Seven Worlds they could do him no hurt. But he, should he be wroth with us would pray the dawn-prayer of two bows and cry out upon us one cry, when we should all present ourselves before him obediently and be before him as sheep before the butcher. If he would, he could command us to quit our abiding-places for a desert country wherein we might not endure to sojourn; and if he desired to destroy us, he would bid us destroy ourselves, whereupon we should destroy one another. Wherefore we may not disobey his bidding for, if we did this, he would consume us with fire nor could we flee from before him to any asylum. Thus is it with every True Believer who is persistent in praying the dawn-prayer of two bows; his commandment is effectual over us: so be not thou the means of our destruction, because of two mortals, but go forthright and release them, ere the anger of the Commander of the Faithful fall upon us." So she returned to Abdullah and acquainted him with her father's words, saying, "Kiss for us the hands of the Prince of True Believers and seek his approval for us." Then she brought out the tasse and filling it with water, conjured over it and uttered words which might not be understood; after which she sprinkled the dogs with the water saying, “Quit the form of dogs and return to the shape of men!” Whereupon they became men as before and the spell of the enchantment was loosed from them. Quoth they, “I testify that there is no god but the God and I testify that Mohammed is the Apostle of God!” Then they fell on their brother’s feet and hands, kissing them and beseeching his forgiveness: but he said, “Do ye forgive me;” and they both repented with sincere repentance, saying, “Verily, the damned Devil lured us and covetise deluded us: but our Lord hath requited us after our deserts, and forgiveness is of the signs of the noble.” And they went on to supplicate their brother and weep and profess repentance for that which had befallen him from them[543] . Then quoth he to them, “What did ye with my wife whom I brought from the City of Stone?” Quoth they, “When Satan tempted us and we cast thee into the sea, there arose strife between us, each saying, I will have her to wife. Now when she heard these words and beheld our contention, she knew that we had thrown thee into the sea; so she came up from the cabin and said to us, ‘Contend not because of me, for I will not belong to either of you. My husband is gone into the sea and I will follow him.’ So saying, she cast herself overboard and died.” Exclaimed Abdullah, “In very sooth she died a martyr[544] ! But there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” Then he wept for her with sore weeping and said to his brothers, “It was not well of you to do this deed and bereave me of my wife.” They answered, “Indeed, we have sinned, but our Lord hath requited us our misdeed and this was a thing which Allah decreed unto us, ere He created us.” And he accepted their excuse; but Sa’idah said to him, “Have they done all these things to thee and wilt thou forgive them?” He replied, “O my sister, whoso hath power[545] and spareth, for Allah’s reward he prepareth.” Then said she, “Be on thy guard against them, for they are traitors;” and farewelled him and fared forth. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Eighty-seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdullah, when Sa’idah warned him and blessed him and went her ways, passed the rest of the night with his brothers and on the morrow, he sent them to the Hammam and clad each of them, on his coming forth, in a suit worth a hoard of money. Then he called for the tray of food and they set it before him and he ate, he and his brothers. When his attendants saw the twain and knew them for his brothers they saluted them and said to him, "O our lord, Allah give thee joy of thy reunion with thy dear brothers! Where have they been this while?" He replied, "It was they whom ye saw in the guise of dogs; praise be to Allah who hath delivered them from prison and grievous torment!" Then he carried them to the Divan of the Caliph and kissing ground before Al-Rashid wished him continuance of honour and fortune and surcease of evil and enmity. Quoth the Caliph, "Welcome, O Emir Abdullah! Tell me what hath befallen thee." And quoth he, "O Commander of the Faithful (whose power Allah increase!) when I carried my brothers home to my lodging, my heart was at rest concerning them, because thou hadst pledged thyself to their release and I said in myself, 'Kings fail not to attain aught for which they strain, inasmuch as the divine favour aideth them.' So I took off the collars from their necks, putting my trust in Allah, and ate with them from the same tray, which when my suite saw, they made light of my wit and said each to other, 'He is surely mad! How can the governor of Bassorah who is greater than the Wazir, eat with dogs?' Then they threw away what was in the tray, saying, 'We will not eat the dogs' orts.' And they went on to befool my reason, whilst I heard their words, but returned them no reply because of their unknowing that the dogs were my brothers. When the hour of sleep came, I sent them away and addressed myself to sleep; but, ere I was ware, the earth clave in sunder and out came Sa'idah, the Red King's daughter, enraged against me, with eyes like fire." And he went on to relate to the Caliph all what had passed between him and her and her father and how she had transmewed his brothers from canine to human form, adding, "And here they are before thee, O Commander of the Faithful!" The Caliph looked at them and seeing two young men like moons, said, "Allah requite thee for me with good, O Abdullah, for that thou hast acquainted me with an advantage[546] I knew not! Henceforth, Inshallah, I will never leave to pray these two-bow orisons before the breaking of the dawn, what while I live."

Then he reproved Abdullah's brothers for their past transgressions against him and they excused themselves before the Caliph, who said, "Join hands[547] and forgive one another and Allah pardon what is past!" Upon which he turned to Abdullah and said to him, "O Abdullah, make thy brothers thine assistants and be careful of them." Then he charged them to be obedient to their brother and bade them return to Bassorah after he had bestowed on them abundant largesse. So they went down from the Caliph's Divan whilst he rejoiced in this advantage he had obtained by the action aforesaid, to wit, persistence in praying two inclinations before dawn, and exclaimed, "He spake truth who said, 'The misfortune of one tribe fortuneth another tribe.'"[548] On this wise befel it to them from the Caliph; but as regards Abdullah, he left Baghdad carrying with him his brothers in all honour and dignity and increase of quality, and fared on till they drew near Bassorah, when the notables and chief men of the place came out to meet them and after decorating the city brought them thereinto with a procession which had not its match and all the folk shouted out blessings on Abdullah as he scattered amongst them silver and gold. None, however, took heed to his brothers; wherefore jealousy and envy entered their hearts, for all he entreated them tenderly as one tenders an ophthalmic eye; but the more he cherished them, the more they redoubled in hatred and envy of him: and indeed it is said on the subject,

"I'd win good will of every one, but whoso envies me * Will not
be won on any wise and makes mine office hard:
How gain the gree of envious wight who coveteth my good, * When
naught will satisfy him save to see my good go marr'd?"

Then he gave each a concubine that had not her like, and eunuchs and servants and slaves white and black, of each kind forty. He also gave each of them fifty steeds all thoroughbreds and they got them guards and followers; and he assigned to them revenues and appointed them solde and stipends and made them his assistants, saying to them, "O my brothers, I and you are equal and there is no distinction between me and you twain," — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Eighty-eighth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Abdullah assigned stipends to his brothers and made them his assistants, saying, “O my brothers, I and you are equal and there is no distinction between me and you twain, and after Allah and the Caliph, the commandment is mine and yours. So rule you at Bassorah in my absence and in my presence, and your commandments shall be effectual; but look that ye fear Allah in your ordinances and beware of oppression, which if it endure depopulateth; and apply yourselves to justice, for justice, if it be prolonged, peopleth a land. Oppress not the True Believers, or they will curse you and ill report of you will reach the Caliph, wherefore dishonour will betide both me and you. Go not therefore about to violence any, but whatso ye greed for of the goods of the folk, take it from my goods, over and above that whereof ye have need; for ’tis not unknown to you what is handed down in the Koran of prohibition versets on the subject of oppression and Allah-gifted is he who said these couplets,

‘Oppression ambusheth in sprite of man * Whom naught withholdeth
save the lack of might:
The sage shall ne’er apply his wits to aught * Until befitting
time direct his sight:
The tongue of wisdom woneth in the heart; * And in his mouth the
tongue of foolish wight.
Who at occasion’s call lacks power to rise * Is slain by feeblest
who would glut his spite.
A man may hide his blood and breed, but aye * His deeds on
darkest hiddens cast a light.
Wights of ill strain with ancestry as vile * Have lips which
never spake one word aright:
And who committeth case to hands of fool * In folly proveth self
as fond and light;
And who his secret tells to folk at large * Shall rouse his foes
to work him worst despight.
Suffice the generous what regards his lot * Nor meddles he with
aught regards him not’”

And he went on to admonish his brothers and bid them to equity and forbid them from tyranny, doubting not but they would love him the better for his boon of good counsel[549] and he relied upon them and honoured them with the utmost honour; but notwithstanding all his generosity to them, they only waxed in envy and hatred of him, till, one day, the two being together alone, quoth Nasir to Mansur, "O my brother, how long shall we be mere subjects of our brother Abdullah, and he in this estate of lordship and worship? After being a merchant, he is become an Emir, and from being little, he is grown great: but we, we grow not great nor is there aught of respect or degree left us; for, behold, he laugheth at us and maketh us his assistants! What is the meaning of this? Is it not that we are his servants and under his subjection? But, long as he abideth in good case, our rank will never be raised nor shall we be aught of repute; wherefore we shall not fulfil our wish, except we slay him and win to his wealth, nor will it be possible to get his gear save after his death. So, when we have slain him, we shall become lords and will take all that is in his treasuries of gems and things of price and divide them between us. Then will we send the Caliph a present and demand of him the government of Cufah, and thou shalt be governor of Cufah and I of Bassorah. Thus each of us shall have formal estate and condition, but we shall never effect this, except we put him out of the world!" Answered Mansur, "Thou sayest sooth, but how shall we do to kill him?" Quoth Nasir, "We will make an entertainment in the house of one of us and invite him thereto and serve him with the uttermost service. Then will we sit through the night with him in talk and tell him tales and jests and rare stories till his heart melteth with sitting up when we will spread him a bed, that he may lie down to sleep. When he is asleep, we will kneel upon him and throttle him and throw him into the river; and on the morrow, we will say, 'His sister the Jinniyah came to him, as he sat chatting with us, and said to him, 'O thou scum of mankind, who art thou that thou shouldst complain of me to the Commander of the Faithful? Deemest thou that we dread him? As he is a King, so we too are Kings, and if he mend not his manners in our regard we will do him die by the foulest of deaths. But meantime I will slay thee, that we may see what the hand of the Prince of True Believers availeth to do.' So saying, she caught him up and clave the earth and disappeared with him which when we saw, we swooned away. Then we revived and we reck not what is become of him.' And saying this we will send to the Caliph and tell him the case and he will invest us with the government in his room. After awhile, we will send him a sumptuous present and seek of him the government of Cufah, and one of us shall abide in Bassorah and the other in Cufah. So shall the land be pleasant to us and we will be down upon the True Believers and win our wishes." And quoth Mansur, "Thou counsellest well, O my brother," and they agreed upon the murther. So Nasir made an entertainment and said to Abdullah, "O my brother, verily I am thy brother, and I would have thee hearten my heart thou and my brother Mansur and eat of my banquet in my house, so I may boast of thee and that it may be said, The Emir Abdullah hath eaten of his brother Nasir's guest meal; when my heart will be solaced by this best of boons." Abdullah replied, "So be it, O my brother; there is no distinction between me and thee and thy house is my house; but since thou invitest me, none refuseth hospitality save the churl." Then he turned to Mansur and said to him, "Wilt thou go with me to thy brother Nasir's house and we will eat of his feast and heal his heart?" Replied Mansur, "As thy head liveth, O my brother, I will not go with thee, unless thou swear to me that, after thou comest forth of brother Nasir's house, thou wilt enter my house and eat of my banquet! Is Nasir thy brother and am not I thy brother? So, even as thou heartenest his heart, do thou hearten mine." Answered Abdullah, "There is no harm in that: with love and gladly gree! When I come out from Nasir's house, I will enter thine, for thou art my brother even as he." So he kissed his hand and going forth of the Divan, made ready his feast. On the morrow, Abdullah took horse and repaired, with his brother Mansur and a company of his officers, to Nasir's house, where they sat down, he and Mansur and his many. Then Nasir set the trays before them and welcomed them; so they ate and drank and sat in mirth and merriment; after which the trays and the platters were removed and they washed their hands. They passed the day in feasting and wine-drinking and diversion and delight till night-fall, when they supped and prayed the sundown prayers, and the night orisons; after which they sat conversing and carousing, and Nasir and Mansur fell to telling stories whilst Abdullah hearkened. Now they three were alone in the pavilion, the rest of the company being in another place, and they ceased not to tell quips and tales and rare adventures and anecdotes, till Abdullah's heart was dissolved within him for watching and sleep overcame him. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Eighty-ninth Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Abdullah was a-wearied with watching and wanted to sleep, they also lay beside him on another couch and waited till he wasdrowned in slumber and when they were certified thereof they arose and knelt upon him: whereupon he awoke and seeing them kneeling on his breast, said to them, "What is this, O my brothers?" Cried they, "We are no brothers of thine, nor do we know thee unmannerly that thou art! Thy death is become better than thy life." Then they gripped him by the throat and throttled him, till he lost his senses and abode without motion; so that they deemed him dead. Now the pavilion wherein they were overlooked the river; so they cast him into the water; but, when he fell, Allah sent to his aid a dolphin[550] who was accustomed to come under that pavilion because the kitchen had a window that gave upon the stream; and, as often as they slaughtered any beast there, it was their wont to throw the refuse into the river and the dolphin came and picked it up from the surface of the water; wherefore he ever resorted to the place. That day they had cast out much offal by reason of the banquet; so the dolphin ate more than of wont and gained strength. Hearing the splash of Abdullah's fall, he hastened to the spot, where he saw a son of Adam and Allah guided him so that he took the man on his back and crossing the current made with him for the other bank, where he cast his burthen ashore. Now the place where the dolphin cast up Abdullah was a well-beaten highway, and presently up came a caravan and finding him lying on the river bank, said, "Here is a drowned man, whom the river hath cast up;" and the travellers gathered around to gaze at the corpse. The Shaykh of the caravan was a man of worth, skilled in all sciences and versed in the mystery of medicine and, withal, sound of judgment: so he said to them, "O folk, what is the news?" They answered, "Here is a drowned man;" whereupon he went up to Abdullah and examining him, said to them, “O folk, there is life yet in this young man, who is a person of condition and of the sons of the great, bred in honour and fortune, and Inshallah there is still hope of him.” Then he took him and clothing him in dry clothes warmed him before the fire; after which he nursed him and tended him three days’ march till he revived; but he was passing feeble by reason of the shock, and the chief of the caravan proceeded to medicine him with such simples as he knew, what while they ceased not faring on till they had travelled thirty days’ journey from Bassorah and came to a city in the land of the Persians, by name ‘Aъj.[551] Here they alighted at a Khan and spread Abdullah a bed, where he lay groaning all night and troubling the folk with his groans. And when morning morrowed the concierge of the Khan came to the chief of the caravan and said to him, “What is this sick man thou hast with thee? Verily, he disturbeth us.” Quoth the chief, “I found him by the way, on the river-bank and well nigh drowned; and I have tended him, but to no effect, for he recovereth not.” Said the porter, “Show him to the Shaykhah[552] Rбjihah.” “Who is this Religious?” asked the chief of the caravan, and the doorkeeper answered, “There is with us a holy woman, a clean maid and a comely, called Rajihah, to whom they present whoso hath any ailment; and he passeth a single night in her house and awaketh on the morrow, whole and ailing nothing.” Quoth the chief, “Direct me to her;” quoth the porter, “Take up thy sick man.” So he took up Abdullah and the doorkeeper forewent him, till he came to a hermitage, where he saw folk entering with many an ex voto offering and other folk coming forth, rejoicing. The porter went in, till he came to the curtain,[553] and said, “Permission, O Shaykhah Rajihah! Take this sick man.” Said she, “Bring him within the curtain;” and the porter said to Abdullah, “Enter.” So he entered and looking upon the holy woman, saw her to be his wife whom he had brought from the City of Stone. And when he knew her she also knew him and saluted him and he returned her salam. Then said he, “Who brought thee hither?”; and she answered, “When I saw that thy brothers had cast thee away and were contending concerning me, I threw myself into the sea; but my Shaykh Al-Khizr Abu al-’Abbбs took me up and brought me to this hermitage, where he gave me leave to heal the sick and bade cry in the city, ‘Whoso hath any ailment, let him repair to the Shaykhah Rajihah;' and he also said to me, 'Tarry in this hermitage till the time betide, and thy husband shall come to thee here.' So all the sick used to flock to me and I rubbed them and shampoo'd them and they awoke on the morrow whole and sound; whereby the report of me became noised abroad among the folk, and they brought me votive gifts, so that I have with me abundant wealth. And now I live here in high honour and worship, and all the people of these parts seek my prayers." Then she rubbed him and by the ordinance of Allah the Most High, he became whole. Now Al-Khizr used to come to her every Friday night, and it chanced that the day of Abdullah's coming was a Thursday.[554] Accordingly, when the night darkened he and she sat, after a supper of the richest meats, awaiting the coming of Al-Khizr, who made his appearance anon and carrying them forth of the hermitage, set them down in Abdullah's palace at Bassorah, where he left them and went his way. As soon as it was day, Abdullah examined the palace and knew it for his own; then, hearing the folk clamouring without, he looked forth of the lattice and saw his brothers crucified, each on his own cross. Now the reason of this was as ensueth. When they had thrown him into the Tigris, the twain arose on the morrow, weeping and saying, "Our brother! the Jinniyah hath carried off our brother!" Then they made ready a present and sent it to the Caliph, acquainting him with these tidings and suing from him the government of Bassorah. He sent for them and questioned them and they told him the false tale we have recounted, whereupon he was exceeding wroth.[555] So that night he prayed a two-bow prayer before daybreak, as of his wont, and called upon the tribes of the Jinn, who came before him subject-wise, and he questioned them of Abdullah: when they sware to him that none of them had done him aught of hurt and said, "We know not what is become of him." Then came Sa'idah, daughter of the Red King, and acquainted the Caliph with the truth of Abdullah's case, and he dismissed the Jinn. On the morrow, he subjected Nasir and Mansur to the bastinado till they confessed, one against other: whereupon the Caliph was enraged with them and cried, "Carry them to Bassorah and crucify them there before Abdullah's palace." Such was their case; but as regards Abdullah, when he saw his brothers crucified, he commanded to bury them, then took horse and repairing to Baghdad, acquainted the Caliph with that which his brothers had done with him, from first to last and told him how he had recovered his wife; whereat Al-Rashid marvelled and summoning the Kazi and the witnesses, bade draw up the marriage- contract between Abdullah and the damsel whom he had brought from the City of Stone. So he went in to her and woned with her at Bassorah till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies; and extolled be the perfection of the Living, who dieth not! Moreover, O auspicious King, I have heard a tale anent

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FOOTNOTES VOLUME IX.

[1] Arab. “Wa lб rajma ghaybin:” lit. = without stone-throwing (conjecture) of one latent.

[2] i.e. saying Bismillah, etc. See vol. v. 206.

[3] Where he was to await her.

[4] As a rule, amongst Moslems the rider salutes the man on foot and the latter those who sit. The saying in the text suggests the Christian byword anent Mohammed and the Mountain, which is, I need hardly say, utterly unknown to Mahommedans.

[5] The story-teller does not remember that “the city-folk trust to the locking of the gates” (dccclxxxix.); and forgets to tell us that the Princess took the keys from the Wazir whom she had hocussed. In a carefully corrected Arabic Edition of The Nights, a book much wanted, the texts which are now in a mutilated state would be supplied with these details.

[6] Which probably would not be the last administered to him by the Amazonian young person, who after her mate feared to approach the dead blackamoor must have known him to be cowardly as Cairenes generally are. Moreover, he had no shame in his poltroonery like the recreant Fellah-soldiers, in the wretched Sawбkin campaign against the noble Sъdбni negroids, who excused their running away by saying, “We are Egyptians” i.e. too good men and Moslems to lose our lives as becomes you Franks and dog-Christians. Yet under Mohammed Ali the Great, Fellah-soldiers conquered the “colligated” Arabs (Pilgrimage iii. 48) of Al-Asir (Ophir) at Bissel and in Wahhabi-land and put the Turks to flight at the battle of Nazib, and the late General Jochmus assured me that he saved his command, the Ottoman cavalry in Syria, by always manњuvring to refuse a pitched battle. But Mohammed Ali knew his men. He never failed to shoot a runaway, and all his officers, even the lieutenants, were Turks or Albanians. Sa’id Pasha was the first to appoint Fellah-officers and

under their command the Egyptian soldier, one of the best in the East, at once became the worst. We have at last found the right way to make them fight, by officering them with Englishmen, but we must not neglect the shooting process whenever they dare to turn tail.

[7] “Al-walhбn” (as it should be printed in previous places, instead of Al-walahбn) is certainly not a P.N. in this place.

[8] Arab. “Kundur,” Pers. and Arab. manna, mastich, frankincense, the latter being here meant.

[9] So Emma takes the lead and hides her lover under her cloak during their flight to the place where they intended to lie concealed. In both cases the women are the men.

[10] Or “Bartъt,” in which we recognise the German Berthold.

[11] i.e. Head of Killaut which makes, from the Muhнt , “the name of a son of the sons of the Jinn and the Satans.”

[12] i.e. attacked her after a new fashion: see vol. i. 136.

[13] i.e. Weevil’s dung; hence Suez = Suways the little weevil, or “little Sus” from the Maroccan town: see The Mines of Midian for a note on the name. Near Gibraltar is a fiumara called Guadalajara i.e. Wady al-Khara, of dung. “Bartъs” is evidently formed “on the weight” of “Bartъt;” and his metonym is a caricature, a chaff fit for Fellahs.

[14] Arab. “Al-Din al-a’raj,” the perverted or falsified Faith, Christianity having been made obsolete and abolished by the Mission of Mohammed, even as Christianity claims to have superseded the Mosaic and Noachian dispensations. Moslems are perfectly logical in their deductions, but logic and truth do not always go together.

[15] The “Breaker of Wind” (faswah = a fizzle, a silent crepitus) “son of Children’s dung.”

[16] Arab. “Ammб laka au ‘alayk” lit. = either to thee (be the gain) or upon thee (be the loss). This truly Arabic idiom is varied in many ways.

[17] In addition to what was noted in vol. iii. 100 and viii. 51, I may observe that in the “Masnavi” the “Baghdad of Nulliquity” is opposed to the Ubiquity of the World. The popular derivation is Bagh (the idol-god, the slav “Bog”) and dбd a gift, he gave (Persian). It is also called Al-Zaurб = a bow, from the bend of the Tigris where it was built.

[18] Arab. “Jawбsнs” plur. of Jбsъs lit. the spies.

[19] The Caliph could not “see” her “sweetness of speech”; so we must understand that he addressed her and found out that she was fluent of tongue. But this idiomatic use of the word “see” is also found in the languages of Southern Europe: so Camoens (Lus. 1. ii.), “Ouvi * * * vereis” lit. = “hark, you shall see” which sounds Hibernian.

[20] Here “Farz” (Koranic obligation which it is mortal sin to gainsay) follows whereas it should precede “Sunnat” (sayings and doings of the Apostle) simply because “Farz” jingles with “Arz” (earth).

[21] Moslems, like modern Agnostics, hold that Jesus of Nazareth would be greatly scandalized by the claims to Godship advanced for him by his followers.

[22] Koran ix. 33: See also v. 85. In the passage above quoted Mr. Rodwell makes the second “He” refer to the deity.

[23] Koran xxvi. 88, 89. For a very indifferent version (and abridgment) of this speech, see Saturday Review, July 9, 1881.

[24] Koran iv. 140.

[25] Arab. “Furбt” from the Arab. “Faruta” = being sweet, as applied to water. Al-Furбtбni = the two sweet (rivers), are the Tigris and Euphrates. The Greeks, who in etymology were satisfied with Greek,

derived the latter from {euphrainein} (to gladden, lætificare, for which see Pliny and Strabo, although both are correct in explaining "Tigris") and Selden remarks hereon, "Talibus nugis nugantur Græculi." But not only the "Græculi"; e.g. Parkhurst's good old derivations from the Heb. "Farah" of fero, fructus, Freya (the Goddess), frayer (to spawn), friand, fry (of fish), etc., etc.

[26] The great Caliph was a poet; and he spoke verses as did all his contemporaries: his lament over his slave-girl Haylanah (Helen) is quoted by Al-Suyuti, .

[27] "The Brave of the Faith."

[28] i.e., Saladin. See vol. iv. p. {271}.

[29] usually called the Horns of Hattin (classically Hittin) North of Tiberias where Saladin by good strategy and the folly of the Franks annihilated the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. For details see the guide-books. In this action (June 23, 1187), after three bishops were slain in its defence, the last fragment of the True Cross (or rather the cross verified by Helena) fell into Moslem hands. The Christians begged hard for it, but Saladin, a conscientious believer, refused to return to them even for ransom "the object of their iniquitous superstition." His son, however, being of another turn, would have sold it to the Franks who then lacked money to purchase. It presently disappeared and I should not be surprised if it were still lying, an unknown and inutile lignum in some Cairene mosque.

[30] Akkб (Acre) was taken by Saladin on July 29, 1187. The Egyptian states that he was at Acre in 1184 or three years before the affair of Hattin (Night dcccxcv.).

[31] Famous Sufis and ascetics of the second and third centuries A.H. For Bishr Barefoot, see vol. ii. p. {203}. Al-Sakati means "the old-clothes man;" and the names of the others are all recorded in D'Herbelot.

[32] i.e., captured, forced open their gates.

[33] Arab. “Al-Sбhil” i.e. the seaboard of Syria; properly Phњnicia or the coast-lands of Southern Palestine. So the maritime lowlands of continental Zanzibar are called in the plur. Sawбhil = “the shores” and the people Sawбhнlн = Shore-men.

[34] Arab. “Al-Khizбnah” both in Mac. Edit. and Breslau x. 426. Mr. Payne has translated “tents” and says, “Saladin seems to have been encamped without Damascus and the slave-merchant had apparently come out and pitched his tent near the camp for the purposes of his trade.” But I can find no notice of tents till a few lines below.

[35] Bahб al-Dнn ibn Shaddбd, then Kбzi al-Askar (of the Army) or Judge-Advocate-General under Saladin.

[36] i.e. “abide with” thy second husband, the Egyptian.

[37] A descendant of Hбshim, the Apostle’s great-grandfather from whom the Abbasides were directly descended. The Ommiades were less directly akin to Mohammed, being the descendants of Hashim’s brother, Abd al-Shams. The Hashimis were famed for liberality; and the quality seems to have been inherited. The first Hбshim got his name from crumbling bread into the Sarнd or brewis of the Meccan pilgrims during “The Ignorance.” He was buried at Ghazzah (Gaza) but his tomb was soon forgotten.

[38] i.e. thy lover.

[39] i.e. of those destined to hell; the especial home of Moslem suicides.

[40] Arab. “Ummбl” (plur. of ‘Бmil) viceroys or governors of provinces.

[41] A town of Irбk Arabi (Mesopotamia) between Baghdad and Bassorah built upon the Tigris and founded by Al-Hajjaj: it is so called because the “Middle” or half-way town between Basrah and Kufah. To this place were applied the famous lines: —

In good sooth a right noble race are they;
Whose men “yea” can’t say nor their women “nay.”

[42] i.e. robed as thou art.

[43] i.e. his kinsfolk of the Hashimis.

[44] See vol. ii. 24. {Vol2, FN#49}

[45] Arab. “Sur’itu” = I was possessed of a Jinn, the common Eastern explanation of an epileptic fit long before the days of the Evangel. See vol. iv. 89.

[46] Arab. “Zʜ’ah,” village, feof or farm.

[47] Arab. “Tarʜkah.”

[48] “Most of the great Arab musicians had their own peculiar fashion of tuning the lute, for the purpose of extending its register or facilitating the accompaniment of songs composed in uncommon keys and rhythms or possibly of increasing its sonority, and it appears to have been a common test of the skill of a great musician, such as Ishac el-Mausili or his father Ibrahim, to require him to accompany a difficult song on a lute purposely untuned. As a (partial) modern instance of the practice referred to in the text, may be cited Paganini’s custom of lowering or raising the G string of the violin in playing certain of his own compositions. According to the Kitab el-Aghani, Ishac el-Mausili is said to have familiarized himself, by incessant practice, with the exact sounds produced by each division of the strings of the four course lute of his day, under every imaginable circumstance of tuning.” It is regrettable that Mr. Payne does not give us more of such notes.

[49] See vol. vii. 363 for the use of these fumigations.

[50] In the Mac. Edit. “Aylah” for Ubullah: the latter is one of the innumerable canals, leading from Bassorah to Ubullah-town a distance of twelve miles. Its banks are the favourite pleasure- resort

of the townsfolk, being built over with villas and pavilions (now no more) and the orchards seem to form one great garden, all confined by one wall. See Jaubert's translation of Al-Idrisi, vol. i. p-69. The Aylah, a tributary of the Tigris, waters (I have noted) the Gardens of Bassorah.

[51] Music having been forbidden by Mohammed who believed with the vulgar that the Devil has something to do with it. Even Paganini could not escape suspicion in the nineteenth century.

[52] The "Mahr," or Arab dowry consists of two parts, one paid down on consummation and the other agreed to be paid to the wife, contingently upon her being divorced by her husband. If she divorce him this portion, which is generally less than the half, cannot be claimed by her; and I have related the Persian abomination which compels the woman to sacrifice her rights. See vol. iii. , [343].

[53] i.e. the cost of her maintenance during the four months of single blessedness which must or ought to elapse before she can legally marry again.

[54] Lane translates most incompletely, "To Him, then, be praise, first and last!"

[55] Lane omits because it is "extremely puerile" this most characteristic tale, one of the two oldest in The Nights which Al Mas'udi mentions as belonging to the Hazбr Afsбneh (See Terminal Essay). Von Hammer (Preface in Trйbutien's translation p. xxv) refers the fables to an Indian (Egyptian ?) origin and remarks, "sous le rapport de leur antiquitй et de la morale qu'ils renferment, elles mйritent la plus grande attention, mais d'un autre cфtй elles ne sont rien moins qu'amusantes."

[56] Lane (iii. 579) writes the word "Shemmas": the Bresl. Edit. (viii. 4) "Shнmбs."

[57] i.e. When the tale begins.

[58] Arab. “Khafz al-jinбh” drooping the wing as a brooding bird. In the Koran ([vii. 88) lowering the wing” = demeaning oneself gently.

[59] The Bresl. Edit. (viii. 3) writes “Kil’бd”: Trйbutien (iii. 1) “le roi Djilia.”

[60] As the sequel shows the better title would be, “The Cat and the Mouse” as in the headings of the Mac. Edit. and “What befel the Cat with the Mouse,” as a punishment for tyranny. But all three Edits. read as in the text and I have not cared to change it. In our European adaptations the mouse becomes a rat.

[61] So that I may not come to grief by thus daring to foretell evil things.

[62] Arab. “Af’б’” pl. Afб’н = {yphis}, both being derived from O. Egypt. Hfi, a worm, snake. Af’б is applied to many species of the larger ophidia, all supposed to be venomous, and synonymous with “Sall” (a malignant viper) in Al-Mutalammis. See Preston’s Al-Hariri, .

[63] This apparently needless cruelty of all the feline race is a strong weapon in the hand of the Eastern “Dahrн” who holds that the world is God and is governed by its own laws, in opposition to the religionists believing in a Personal Deity whom, moreover, they style the Merciful, the Compassionate, etc. Some Christians have opined that cruelty came into the world with “original Sin,” but how do they account for the hideous waste of life and the fearful destructiveness of the fishes which certainly never learned anything from man? The mystery of the cruelty of things can be explained only by a Law without a Law-giver.

[64] The three things not to be praised before death in Southern Europe are a horse, a priest and a woman; and it has become a popular saying that only fools prophesy before the event.

[65] ‘Arab. “Sawn” =butter melted and skimmed. See vol. i. 144.

[66] This is a mere rechauffй of the Barber's tale of his Fifth Brother (vol. i. 335). In addition to the authorities there cited I may mention the school reading-lesson in Addison's Spectator derived from Galland's version of "Alnaschar and his basket of Glass," the Persian version of the Hitopadesa or "Anwбr-i-Suhayli (Lights of Canopes) by Husayn Vб'iz; the Foolish Sachali of "Indian Fairy Tales" (Miss Stokes); the allusion in Rabelais to the fate of the "Shoemaker and his pitcher of milk" and the "Dialogues of creatures moralised" (1516), whence probably La Fontaine drew his fable, "La Laitиre et le Pot au lait."

[67] Arab. ' 'Nбsik," a religious, a man of Allah from Nask, devotion: somewhat like Sбlik (Dabistan iii. 251)

[68] The well-known Egyptian term for a peasant, a husbandman, extending from the Nile to beyond Mount Atlas.

[69] This is again, I note, the slang sense of "'Azнm," which in classical Arabic means simply great.

[70] Arab "Adab" ; see vol. i. 132. It also implies mental discipline, the culture which leads to excellence, good manners and good morals; and it is sometimes synonymous with literary skill and scholarship. "Ilm al-Adab," says Haji Khalfah (Lane's Lex.), "is the science whereby man guards against error in the language of the Arabs spoken or written."

[71] i.e. I esteem thee as thou deservest.

[72] The style is intended to be worthy of the statesman. In my "Mission to Dahome" the reader will find many a similar scene.

[73] The Bresl. Edit. (vol. viii. 22) reads "Turks" or "The Turk" in lieu of "many peoples."

[74] i.e. the parents.

[75] The humour of this euphuistic Wazirial speech, purposely made

somewhat pompous, is the contrast between the unhappy Minister’s praises and the result of his prognostication. I cannot refrain from complimenting Mr. Payne upon the admirable way in which he has attacked and mastered all the difficulties of its abstruser passages.

[76] Arab. “Halummъ” plur. of “Halumma” = draw near! The latter form is used by some tribes for all three numbers; others affect a dual and a plural (as in the text). Preston (Al-Hariri,) derives it from Heb., but the geographers of Kufah and Basrah (who were not etymologists) are divided about its origin. He translates () “Halumma Jarran” = being the rest of the tale in continuation with this, i.e. in accordance with it, like our “and so forth.” And in , he makes Halumma = Hayya i.e. hither! (to prayer, etc).

[77] This is precisely the semi-fatalistic and wholly superstitious address which would find favour with Moslems of the present day: they still prefer “calling upon Hercules” to putting their shoulders to the wheel. Mr. Redhouse had done good work in his day but of late he has devoted himself, especially in the “Mesnevi,” to a rapprochement between Al-Islam and Christianity which both would reject (see supra, vol. vii.). The Calvinistic predestination as shown in the term “vessel of wrath,” is but a feeble reflection of Moslem fatalism. On this subject I shall have more to say in a future volume.

[78] The inhabitants of temperate climates have no idea what ants can do in the tropics. The Kafirs of South Africa used to stake down their prisoners (among them a poor friend of mine) upon an ant-hill and they were eaten atom after atom in a few hours. The death must be the slowest form of torture; but probably the nervous system soon becomes insensible. The same has happened to more than one hapless invalid, helplessly bedridden, in Western Africa. I have described an invasion of ants in my “Zanzibar,” vol. ii. 169; and have suffered from such attacks in many places between that and Dahomey.

[79] Arab. “Sa’lab.” See vol. iii. 132 {FN#150}, where it is a fox. I render it jackal because that cousin of the fox figures as a carrion-

eater in Hindu folk-lore, the Hitopadesa, Panchopakhyan, etc. This tale, I need hardly say, is a mere translation; as is shown by the Kathб s.s. “Both jackal and fox are nicknamed Joseph the Scribe (Tбlib Yъsuf) in the same principle that lawyers are called landsharks by sailors.” (P. 65, Moorish Lotus Leaves, etc., by George D. Cowan and R. L. N. Johnston, London, Tinsleys, 1883.)

[80] Arab. “Sahm mush’ab” not “barbed” (at the wings) but with double front, much used for birding and at one time familiar in the West as in the East. And yet “barbed” would make the fable read much better.

[81] Arab. “la’lla,” usually = haply, belike; but used here and elsewhere = forsure, certainly.

[82] Arab. “Maghrib” (or in full Maghrib al-Aksб) lit. = the Land of the setting sun for whose relation to “Mauritania” see vol. {vi.} 220. It is almost synonymous with “Al-Gharb” = the West whence Portugal borrowed the two Algarves, one being in Southern Europe and the other over the straits about Tangier- Ceuta; fronting Spanish Trafalgar, i.e. Taraf al-Gharb, the edge of the West. I have noted (Pilgrimage i. 9) the late Captain Peel’s mis-translation “Cape of Laurels” (Al-Ghбr).

[83] Even the poorest of Moslem wanderers tries to bear with him a new suit of clothes for keeping the two festivals and Friday service in the Mosque. See Pilgrimage i. 235; iii. 257, etc.

[84] Arab. “Sбyih” lit. a wanderer, subaudi for religious and ascetic objects; and not to be confounded with the “pilgrim” proper.

[85] i.e. a Religious, a wandering beggar.

[86] This was the custom of the whole Moslem world and still is where uncorrupted by Christian uncharity and contempt for all “men of God” save its own. But the change in such places as Egypt is complete and irrevocable. Even in 1852 my Dervish’s frock brought me nothing but contempt in Alexandria and Cairo.

[87] Arab. “Ya jбhil,” lit. =O ignorant. The popular word is Ahmak which, however, in the West means a maniac, a madman, a Santon; “Bohlн” being= a fool.

[88] The prison according to the practice of the East being in the palace: so the Moorish ‘Kasbah,” which lodges the Governor and his guard, always contains the jail.

[89] Arab. “Tuwuffiya,” lit.=was received (into the grace of God), an euphemistic and more polite term than “mбta”=he died. The latter term is avoided by the Founder of Chnstianity; and our Spiritualists now say “passed away to a higher life,” a phrase embodying a theory which, to say the least, is “not proven”

[90] Arab. “Yб Abб al-Khayr”= our my good lord, sir, fellow, etc.

[91] Arab. “Hбwi” from “Hayyah,” a serpent. See vol. iii. 145. Most of the Egyptian snake charmers are Gypsies, but they do not like to be told of their origin. At Baroda in Guzerat I took lessons in snake-catching, but found the sport too dangerous; when the animal flees, the tail is caught by the left hand and the right is slipped up to the neck, a delicate process, as a few inches too far or not far enough would be followed by certain death in catching a Cobra. At last certain of my messmates killed one of the captives and the snake-charmer would have no more to do with me.

[92] Arab. “Sallah,” also Pers., a basket of wickerwork. This article is everywhere used for lodging snakes from Egypt to Morocco.

[93] Arab. “Mubбrak.” It is a favourite name for a slave in Morocco; the slave-girl being called Mubбrakah; and the proverb being, “Blessed is the household which hath neither M’bбrk nor M’bбrkah” (as they contract the words).

[94] The Bresl. Edit. (viii. 48) instead of the Gate (Bбb) gives a Bбdhanj=a Ventilator; for which latter rendering see vol. i. 257. The spider’s web is Koranic (lxxxi. 40) “Verily frailest of all houses is the house of the spider.”

[95] Prob. from the Persian Wird=a pupil, a disciple.

[96] And yet, as the next page shows the youth’s education was complete in his twelfth year. But as all three texts agree, I do not venture upon changing the number to six or seven, the age at which royal education outside the Harem usually begins.

[97] i.e. One for each day in the Moslem year. For these object-lessons, somewhat in Kinder-garten style, see the Book of Sindibad or The Malice of Women (vol. vi. 126).

[98] Arab. “Jahбbizah” plur. of “Jahbiz”=acute, intelligent (from the Pers. Kahbad or Kihbad?)

[99] Arab. “Nimr” in the Bresl. Edit. viii. 58. The Mac. Edit. suggests that the leopard is the lion’s Wazir.

[100] Arab “Kaun” lit. =Being, existence. Trйbutien (iii. 20) has it “Qu’est-ce que l’ кtre (God), l’existence (Creation), l’кtre dans l’existence (the world), et la durйe de l’кtre dans l’existence (the other world).

[101] i.e for the purpose of requital. All the above is orthodox Moslem doctrine, which utterly ignores the dictum “ex nihilo nihil fit;” and which would look upon Creation by Law (Darwinism) as opposed to Creation by miracle (e.g. the Mosaic cosmogony) as rank blasphemy. On the other hand the Eternity of Matter and its transcendental essence are tenets held by a host of Gnostics, philosophers and Eastern Agnostics.

[102] This is a Moslem lieu commun; usually man is likened to one suspended in a bottomless well by a thin rope at which a rodent is continually gnawing and who amuses himself in licking a few drops of honey left by bees on the revetement.

[103] A curious pendant to the Scriptural parable of the Unjust Steward.

[104] Arab. “Rъh” Heb. Ruach: lit. breath (spiritus) which in the animal kingdom is the surest sign of life. See vol. v. 29. Nothing can be more rigidly materialistic than the called Mosaic law.

[105] Arab. “Al-Amr” which may also mean the business, the matter, the affair.

[106] Arab. “Ukбb al-kбsir.” lit. =the breaker eagle.

[107] Arab “Lijбm shadнd:” the ring-bit of the Arabs is perhaps the severest form known: it is required by the Eastern practice of pulling up the horse when going at full speed and it is too well known to require description. As a rule the Arab rides with a “lady’s hand” and the barbarous habit of “hanging on by the curb” is unknown to him. I never pass by Rotten Row or see a regiment of English Cavalry without wishing to leave riders nothing but their snaffles.

[108] We find this orderly distribution of time (which no one adopts) in many tongues and many forms. In the Life of Sir W. Jones (vol. i. , Poetical Works etc.) the following occurs, “written in India on a small piece of paper”; —

Sir Edward Coke
“Six hours to sleep, in law’s grave study six!
Four spend in prayer, — the rest on Heaven fix!”
Rather:
“Seven hours to law, to soothing slumber seven;
Ten to the world allot, and all to Heaven!”

But this is not practical. I must prefer the Chartist distribution:

Six hours sleep and six hours play:
Six hours work and six shillings a day.

Mr Froude (Oceana) speaks of New Zealanders having attained that ideal of operative felicity: —

Eight to work, eight to play;

Eight to sleep and eight shillings a day.

[109] Arab. “Bahнmah,” mostly=black cattle: see vol. iv. 54.

[110] As a rule when the felidж wag their tails, it is a sign of coming anger, the reverse with the canidж.

[111] In India it is popularly said that the Rajah can do anything with the Ryots provided he respects their women and their religion — not their property.

[112] Arab. “Sunan” for which see vol. v. 36, 167. Here it is=Rasm or usage, equivalent to our precedents, and held valid, especially when dating from olden time, in all matters which are not expressly provided for by Koranic command. For instance a Hindн Moslem (who doubtless borrowed the customs from Hindъs) will refuse to eat with the Kafir, and when the latter objects that there is no such prohibition in the Koran will reply, “No: but it is our Rasm.” As a rule the Anglo-Indian is very ignorant on this essential point.

[113] Lit. “lowering the wings,” see supra .

[114] .i.e. friends and acquaintances.

[115] Arab. “Hamнdah”=praiseworthy or satisfactory.

[116] Not only alluding to the sperm of man and beast, but also to the “Neptunist” doctrine held by the ancient Greeks and Hindus and developed in Europe during the last century.

[117] Arab. “Taksнm” dividing into parts, analysis.

[118] this is the usual illogical contention of all religions. It is not the question whether an Almighty Being can do a given thing: the question is whether He has or has not done it.

[119] Upon the old simile of the potter I shall have something to say in a coming volume.

[120] A fine specimen of a peculiarity in the undeveloped mind of man, the universal confusion between things objective as a dead body and states of things as death. We begin by giving a name, for facility of intercourse, to phases, phenomena and conditions of matter; and, having created the word we proceed to supply it with a fanciful entity, e.g. “The Mind (a useful term to express the aggregate action of the brain, nervous system etc.) of man is immortal.” The next step is personification as Time with his forelock, Death with his skull and Night (the absence of light) with her starry mantle. For poetry this abuse of language is a sine qua non, but it is deadly foe to all true philosophy.

[121] Christians would naturally understand this “One Word” to be the {lygos} of the Platonists, adopted by St. John (comparatively a late writer) and by the Alexandrian school, Jewish (as Philo Judжus) and Christian. But here the tale-teller alludes to the Divine Word “Kun” (be!) whereby the worlds came into existence.

[122] Arab. “Ya bunayyн” a dim. form lit. “O my little son !” an affectionate address frequent in Russian, whose “little father” (under “Bog”) is his Czar.

[123] Thus in two texts. Mr. Payne has, “Verily God the Most High created man after His own image, and likened him to Himself, all of Him truth, without falsehood; then He gave him dominion over himself and ordered him and forbade him, and it was man who transgressed His commandment and erred in his obedience and brought falsehood upon himself of his own will.” Here he borrows from the Bresl. Edit. viii. 84 (five first lines). But the doctrine is rather Jewish and Christian than Moslem: Al-Mas’ъdi (ii. 389) introduces a Copt in the presence of Ibn Tutъn saying, “Prince, these people (designing a Jew) pretend that Allah Almighty created Adam (i.e. mankind) after His own image” (‘Alб Sъrati-h).

[124] Arab. “Istitб’ah”=ableness e.g. “Al hajj ‘inda ‘l-Istitб’ah”=Pilgrimage when a man is able thereto (by easy circumstances).

[125] Arab. “Al-Kasab,” which phrenologists would translate “acquisitiveness,” The author is here attempting to reconcile man’s moral responsibility, that is Freewill, with Fate by which all human actions are directed and controlled. I cannot see that he fails to “apprehend the knotty point of doctrine involved”; but I find his inability to make two contraries agree as pronounced as that of all others, Moslems and Christians, that preceded him in the same path.

[126] The order should be, “men, angels and Jinn,” for which see vol. i. . But “angels” here takes precedence because Iblis was one of them.

[127] Arab. “Wartah”=precipice, quagmire, quicksand and hence sundry secondary and metaphorical significations, under which, as in the “Semitic” (Arabic) tongues generally, the prosaical and material sense of the word is clearly evident. I noted this in Pilgrimage iii. 66 and was soundly abused for so saying by a host of Sciolists.

[128] i.e. Allowing the Devil to go about the world and seduce mankind until Doomsday when “auld Sootie’s” occupation will be gone. Surely “Providence” might have managed better.

[129] i.e. to those who deserve His love.

[130] Here “Istitб’ah” would mean capability of action, i.e. freewill, which is a mere word like “free-trade.”

[131] Arab. “Bi al-taubah” which may also mean “for (on account of his) penitence.” The reader will note how the learned Shimas “dodges” the real question. He is asked why the “Omnipotent, Omniscient did not prevent (i.e. why He created) sin?” He answers that He kindly permitted (i.e. created and sanctioned) it that man might repent. Proh pudor! If any one thus reasoned of mundane matters he would be looked upon as the merest fool.

[132] Arab. “Mahall al-Zauk,” lit.=seat of taste.

[133] Mr. Payne translates “it” i.e. the Truth; but the formula following the word shows that Allah is meant.

[134] Moslems, who do their best to countermine the ascetic idea inherent in Christianity, are not ashamed of the sensual appetite; but rather the reverse. I have heard in Persia of a Religious, highly esteemed for learning and saintly life who, when lodged by a disciple at Shiraz, came out of his sleeping room and aroused his host with the words “Shahwat dбram!” equivalent to our “I want a woman.” He was at once married to one of the slave-girls and able to gratify the demands of the flesh.

[135] Koran iv. 81, “Whatever good betideth thee is from God, and whatever betideth thee of evil is from thyself”: rank Manichжism is pronounced as any in Christendom.

[136] Arab. “Zukhruf” which Mr. Payne picturesquely renders “painted gawds.”

[137] It is the innate craving in the “Aryan” (Iranian, not the Turanian) mind, this longing to know what follows Death, or if nothing follow it, which accounts for the marvellous diffusion of the so-called Spiritualism which is only Swedenborgianism systematised and carried out into action, amongst nervous and impressionable races like the Anglo-American. In England it is the reverse; the obtuse sensitiveness of a people bred on beef and beer has made the “Religion of the Nineteenth Century” a manner of harmless magic, whose miracles are table-turning and ghost seeing whilst the prodigious rascality of its prophets (the so-called Mediums) has brought it into universal disrepute. It has been said that Catholicism must be true to co-exist with the priest and it is the same with Spiritualism proper, by which I understand the belief in a life beyond the grave, a mere continuation of this life; it flourishes (despite the Medium) chiefly because it has laid before man the only possible and intelligible idea of a future state.

[138] See vol. vi. . The only lie which degrades a man in his own estimation and in that of others, is that told for fear of telling the truth. Au reste, human society and civilised intercourse are built upon a system of conventional lying, and many droll stories illustrate

the consequences of disregarding the dictum, la veritй n’est pas toujours bonne a dire.

139 Arab. “Walн’ahd” which may mean heir-presumptive (whose heirship is contingent) or heir-apparent.

140 Arab. “Yб abati”= O my papa (which here would sound absurd).

141 All the texts give a decalogue; but Mr. Payne has reduced it to a heptalogue.

142 The Arabs who had a variety of anжsthetics never seem to have studied the subject of “euthanasia.” They preferred seeing a man expire in horrible agonies to relieving him by means of soporifics and other drugs: so I have heard Christians exult in saying that the sufferer “kept his senses to the last.” Of course superstition is at the bottom of this barbarity; the same which a generation ago made the silly accoucheur refuse to give ether because of the divine (?) saying “In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children.” (Gen iii. 16.) In the Bosnia-Herzegovina campaign many of the Austrian officers carried with them doses of poison to be used in case of being taken prisoners by the ferocious savages against whom they were fighting. As many anecdotes about “Easing off the poor dear” testify, the Euthanasia-system is by no means unknown to the lower classes in England. I shall have more to say on this subject.

143 See vol. iii. for the consequences of royal seclusion of which Europe in the present day can contribute examples. The lesson which it teaches simply is that the world can get on very well without royalties.

144 The grim Arab humour in the text is the sudden change for the worse of the good young man. Easterns do not believe in the Western saw, “Nemo repente fuit turpissimus.” The spirited conduct of the subjects finds many parallels in European history, especially in Portugal: see my Life of Camoens .

145 Arab. “Muhбrabah” lit.=doing battle; but is sometimes used in the

sense of gain-saying or disobeying.

[146] Arab. “Duwбmah” (from “duwбm”=vertigo, giddiness) also applied to a boy’s whip-top.

[147] Arab. “Khayr o (wa) Бfiyah,” a popular phrase much used in salutations, &c.

[148] Another instance, and true to life, of the democracy of despotism in which the express and combined will of the people is the only absolute law. Hence Russian autocracy is forced into repeated wars for the possession of Constantinople which, in the present condition of the Empire, would be an unmitigated evil to her and would be only too glad to see a Principality of Byzantium placed under the united protection of the European Powers. I have treated of this in my paper on the “Partition of Turkey,” which first appeared, headed the “Future of Turkey,” in the Daily Telegraph, of March 7, 1880, and subsequently by its own name in the Manchester Examiner, January 3, 1881. The main reason why the project is not carried out appears to be that the “politicals” would thereby find their occupation gone and they naturally object to losing so fine a field of action. So Turkey still plays the rфle of the pretty young lady being courted by a rabble of valets.

[149] Good Moslems are bound to abate such scandals; and in a case of the kind even neighbours are expected to complain before the Chief of Police. This practice forms “Vigilance Committees” all over the Mahommedan East: and we may take a leaf out of their books if dynamite-outrages continue.

[150] But a Hadis, attributed to Mohammed, says, “The Prince of a people is their servant.” See Matth. xx. 26-27.

[151] Easterns are well aware of the value of this drug which has become the base of so many of our modern medicines.

[152] The strangest poison is mentioned by Sonnini who, as a rule, is a trustworthy writer. Noticing the malignity of Egyptian women he

declares (, English trans.) that they prepare a draught containing a quant. suff. of menstruous discharge at certain phases of the moon, which produces symptoms of scurvy; the gums decay, the teeth, beard and hair fall off, the body dries, the limbs lose strength and death follows within a year. He also asserts that no counterpoison is known and if this be true he confers a boon upon the Locustж and Brinvilliers of modern Europe. In Morocco “Ta’am” is the vulgar name for a mixture of dead men’s bones, eyes, hair and similar ingredients made by old wives and supposed to cause a wasting disease for which the pharmacopњia has no cure. Dogs are killed by needles cunningly inserted into meat-balls; and this process is known throughout the Moslem world.

[153] Which contained the Palace.

[154] Arab. “Lб baas.” See Night vol. iv. 164.

[155] For Ta’lab (Sa’lab) see supra, . In Morocco it is undoubtedly the red or common fox which, however, is not gregarious as in the text.

[156] See vol. iii. 146.

[157] Arab. “Muunah” which in Morocco applies to the provisions furnished gratis by the unfortunate village-people to travellers who have a passport from the Sultan: its root is Maun =supplying necessaries. “The name is supposed to have its origin in that of Manna, the miraculous provision bestowed by the bounty of Heaven on the Israelites while wandering in the deserts of Arabia.” Such is the marvellous information we find in , “Morocco and the Moors” by John Drummond Hay (Murray, 1861).

[158] i.e. He resolved to do them justice and win a reward from Heaven.

[159] Arab. ‘‘Luss” = thief, robber, rogue, rascal, the Persian “Luti” of popular usage. This is one of the many ‘‘Simpleton stories” in which Eastern folk-lore abounds. I hear that Mr. Clouston is preparing a collection, and look forward to it with interest.

[160] Arab. “Tibn” for which see vol. i 16.

[161] A fanciful origin of “Dнvбn” (here an audience-chamber) which may mean demons (plural of Dнv) is attributed to a King of Persia. He gave a series of difficult documents and accounts to his scribes and surprised at the quickness and cleverness with which they were ordered exclaimed, “These men be Divs!” Hence a host of secondary meanings as a book of Odes with distichs rhymed in alphabetical order and so forth.

[162] In both cases the word “Jabбbirah” is used, the plur. of Jabbбr, the potent, especially applied to the Kings of the Canaanites and giants like the mythical Og of Bashan. So the Heb. Jabbъrah is a title of the Queens of Judah.

[163] Arab. “Kitбb al-Kazб”= the Book of Judgments, such as the Kazi would use when deciding cases in dispute, by legal precedents and the Rasm or custom of the country.

[164] i.e. sit before the King as referee, etc.

[165] This massacre of refractory chiefs is one of the grand moyens of Eastern state-craft, and it is almost always successful because circumstances require it; popular opinion approves of it and it is planned and carried out with discretion and secrecy. The two familiar instances in our century are the massacre of the Mamelukes by Mohammed Ali Pasha the Great and of the turbulent chiefs of the Omani Arabs by our ancient ally Sayyid Sa’нd, miscalled the “Imбm of Maskat.”

[166] The metaphor (Sabaka) is from horse-racing, the Arabs being, I have said, a horsey people.

[167] Arab. “Kurdъs” = A body of horse.

[168] Arab. “Ibn ‘Irs.” See vol. iii. 147.

[169] Arab. “Al Hind-al-Aksб.” The Sanskrit Sindhu (lands on the

Indus River) became in Zend “Hendu” and hence in Arabic Sind and Hind, which latter I wish we had preserved instead of the classical “India” or the poetical “Ind.”

[170] i.e. by geomancy: see vol. iii. 269 for a note on
Al-Raml. The passage is not in the Mac. Edit.

[171] This address gave the boy Wazirial rank. In many parts of Europe, England included, if the Sovereign address a subject with a title not belonging to him, it is a disputed point if the latter can or cannot claim it.

[172] Koran, chapter of Joseph xii. 28, spoken by Potiphar after Joseph’s innocence had been proved by a witness in Potiphar’s house or according to the Talmud (Sepher Hбdjascher) by an infant in the cradle. The texts should have printed this as a quotation (with vowel points).

[173] Arab. “Al-’Azнz,” alluding to Joseph the Patriarch entitled in Egypt “Azнz al-Misr”= Magnifico of Misraim (Koran xii. 54). It is generally believed that Ismail Pasha, whose unwise deposition has caused the English Government such a host of troubles and load of obloquy, aspired to be named “‘Azнz” by the Porte; but was compelled to be satisfied with Khadнv (vulg. written Khedive, and pronounced even “Kйdivй”), a Persian title, which simply means prince or Rajah, as Khadнv-i-Hind.

[174] i.e. The Throne room.

[175] For the “Dawбt” or wooden inkcase containing reeds see
vol. v. 239 and viii. 178. I may remark that its origin is the
Egyptian “Pes,” of which there is a specimen in the British
Museum inscribed, “Amбsis the good god and Lord of the two
Lands.”

[176] i.e. I am governed by the fear of Allah in my dealings to thee and thy subjects.

[177] Arabic has no single word for million although the Maroccans have adopted "Milyъn" from the Spaniards (see of the Rudimentos del Бrabe vulgar que se habla en el imperio de Marruccos por El P. Fr. Josи de Lerchundi, Madrid 1872): This lack of the higher numerals, the reverse of the Hindu languages, makes Arabic "arithmology" very primitive and almost as cumbrous as the Chinese.

[178] i.e. I am thy slave to slay or to pardon.

[179] Arab. "Matta'aka 'llah"=Allah permit thee to enjoy, from the root mata', whence cometh the Maroccan Matб'i=my, mine, which answers to Bitб'i in Egypt.

[180] Arab. "Khitбb" = the exordium of a letter preceding its business-matter and in which the writer displays all his art. It ends with "Ammб ba'd," lit.=but after, equivalent to our "To proceed." This "Khitбb" is mostly skipped over by modern statesmen who will say, "Now after the nonsense let us come to the sense"; but their secretaries carefully weigh every word of it, and strongly resent all shortcomings.

[181] Strongly suggesting that the King had forgotten how to read and write. So not a few of the Amirs of Sind were analphabetic and seemed rather proud of it: "a Baloch cannot write, but he always carries a signet-ring." I heard of an old English lady of the past generation in Northern Africa who openly declared "A Warrington shall never learn to read or write."

[182] Arab. "Бmin," of which the Heb. form is Amen from the root Amn=stability, constancy. In both tongues it is a particle of affirmation or consent=it is true! So be it! The Hebrew has also "Amanah"=verily, truly.

[183] To us this seems a case of "hard lines" for the unhappy women; but Easterns then believed and still believe in the divinity which doth hedge in a King, in his reigning by the "grace of God," and in his being the Viceregent of Allah upon earth; briefly in the old faith of

loyalty which great and successful republics are fast making obsolete in the West and nowhere faster than in England.

[184] Abъ Sнr is a manifest corruption of the old Egyptian Pousiri, the Busiris of our classics, and it gives a name to sundry villages in modern Egypt where it is usually pronounced “Bъsнr”. Abъ Kнr lit. = the Father of Pitch, is also corrupted to Abou Kir (Bay); and the townlet now marks the site of jolly old Canopus, the Chosen Land of Egyptian debauchery.

[185] It is interesting to note the superior gusto with which the Eastern, as well as the Western tale-teller describes his scoundrels and villains whilst his good men and women are mostly colourless and unpicturesque. So Satan is the true hero of Paradise-Lost and by his side God and man are very ordinary; and Mephistopheles is much better society than Faust and Margaret.

[186] Arab. “Dukhбn,” lit. = smoke, here tobacco for the Chibouk, “Timbбk” or “Tumbбk” being the stronger (Persian and other) variety which must be washed before smoking in the Shнshah or water-pipe. Tobacco is mentioned here only and is evidently inserted by some scribe: the “weed” was not introduced into the East before the end of the sixteenth century (about a hundred years after coffee), when it radically changed the manners of society.

[187] Which meant that the serjeant, after the manner of such officials, would make him pay dearly before giving up the key. Hence a very severe punishment in the East is to “call in a policeman” who carefully fleeces all those who do not bribe him to leave them in freedom.

[188] Arab. “Mб Dбhiyatak?” lit. “What is thy misfortune?”
The phrase is slighting if not insulting.

[189] Amongst Moslems the plea of robbing to keep life and body together would be accepted by a good man like Abu Sir, who still consorted with a self-confessed thief.

[190] To make their agreement religiously binding. See vol. iv. 36.

[191] Arab. “Ghaliyъn”; many of our names for craft seem connected with Arabic: I have already noted “Carrack” = harrбk: to which add Uskuf in Marocco pronounced ‘Skuff = skiff; Katнrah = a cutter; Bбrijah = a barge; etc. etc.

[192] The patient is usually lathered in a big basin of tinned brass, “Mambrino’s helmet” with a break in the rim to fit the throat; but the poorer classes carry only a small cup with water instead of soap and water ignoring the Italian proverb, “Barba ben saponata mezza fatta” = well lathered is half shaved. A napkin fringed at either end is usually thrown over the Figaro’s shoulder and used to wipe the razor.

[193] Arab. “Nusf.” See vol. ii. 37.

[194] Arab. “Batбrikh” the roe (sperm or spawn) of the salted Fasнkh (fish) and the Bъrн (mugil cephalus) a salt-water fish caught in the Nile and considered fair eating. Some write Butбrghб from the old Egyptian town Burбt, now a ruin between Tinnis and Damietta (Sonnini).

[195] Arab. “Kaptбn,” see vol. iv. 85.

[196] Arab. “Anyбb,” plur. of Nбb applied to the grinder teeth but mostly to the canines or eye teeth, tusks of animals, etc. (See vol. vii.) opp. to Saniyah, one of the four central incisors, a camel in the sixth year and horse, cow, sheep and goat in fourth year.

[197] The coffee (see also vol. viii. 274) like the tobacco is probably due to the scribe; but the tale appears to be comparatively modern. In The Nights men eat, drink and wash their hands but do not smoke and sip coffee like the moderns. See my Terminal Essay B§2.

[198] Arab. “Mi’lakah” (Bresl. Edit. x, 456). The fork is modern even in the East and the Moors borrow their term for it from fourchette. But the spoon, which may have begun with a cockle-shell, dates from the remotest antiquity.

[199] Arab. “Sufrah” properly the cloth or leather upon which food is placed. See vol. i. 178.

[200] i.e. gaining much one day and little another.

[201] Lit. “Rest thyself” i.e. by changing posture.

[202] Arab. “Unnбbi” = between dark yellow and red.

[203] Arab. “Nнlah” lit. = indigo, but here applied to all the materials for dyeing. The word is Sanskrit, and the growth probably came from India, although during the Crusaders’ occupation of Jerusalem it was cultivated in the valley of the lower Jordan. I need hardly say that it has nothing to do with the word “Nile” whose origin is still sub judice. And yet I lately met a sciolist who pompously announced to me this philological absurdity as a discovery of his own.

[204] Still a popular form of “bilking” in the Wakбlahs or Caravanserais of Cairo: but as a rule the Bawwбb (porter or doorkeeper) keeps a sharp eye on those he suspects. The evil is increased when women are admitted into these places; so periodical orders for their exclusion are given to the police.

[205] Natives of Egypt always hold this diaphoresis a sign that the disease has abated and they regard it rightly in the case of bilious remittents to which they are subject, especially after the hardships and sufferings of a sea-voyage with its alternations of fasting and over-eating.

[206] Not simply, “such and such events happened to him”
(Lane); but, “a curious chance befel him.”

[207] Arab. “Harбmi,” lit. = one who lives on unlawful gains; popularly a thief.

[208] i.e. he turned on the water, hot and cold.

[209] Men are often seen doing this in the Hammam. The idea is that

the skin when free from sebaceous exudation sounds louder under the clapping. Easterns judge much by the state of the perspiration, especially in horse-training, which consists of hand-gallops for many successive miles. The sweat must not taste over salt and when held between thumb and forefinger and the two are drawn apart must not adhere in filaments.

[210] Lit. “Aloes for making Nadd;” see vol. i. 310. “Eagle-wood” (the Malay Aigla and Agallochum the Sansk. Agura) gave rise to many corruptions as lignum aloes, the Portuguese Рбо d’ Aguila etc. “Calamba” or “Calambak” was the finest kind. See Colonel Yule in the “Voyage of Linschoten” (vol. i. 120 and 150). Edited for the Hakluyt Soc. (1885) by my learned and most amiable friend, the late Arthur Cooke Burnell.

[211] The Hammam is one of those unpleasant things which are left “Ala jъdi-k” = to thy generosity; and the higher the bather’s rank the more he or she is expected to pay. See Pilgrimage i. 103. In 1853 I paid at Cairo 3 piastres and twenty paras, something more than sixpence, but now five shillings would be asked.

[212] This is something like the mythical duchess in England who could not believe that the poor were starving when sponge-cakes were so cheap.

[213] This magnificent “Bakhshish” must bring water into the mouths of all the bath-men in the coffee-house assembly.

[214] i.e. the treasurer did not, as is the custom of such gentry, demand and receive a large “Bakhshish” on the occasion.

[215] A fair specimen of clever Fellah chaff.

[216] In the first room of the Hammam, called the Maslakh or stripping-place, the keeper sits by a large chest in which he deposits the purses and valuables of his customers and also makes it the caisse for the pay. Something of the kind is now done in the absurdly called “Turkish Baths” of London.

[217] This is the rule in Egypt and Syria and a clout hung over the door shows that women are bathing. I have heard, but only heard, that in times and places when eunuchs went in with the women youths managed by long practice to retract the testicles so as to pass for castratos. It is hard to say what perseverance may not effect in this line; witness Orsini and his abnormal development of hearing, by exercising muscles which are usually left idle.

[218] This reference to Allah shows that Abu Sir did not believe his dyer-friend.

[219] Arab. “Dawб” (lit. remedy, medicine) the vulgar term: see vol. iv. 256: also called Rasmah, Nъrah and many other names.

[220] Arab. “Мб Kahara-nн” = or none hath overcome me.

[221] Bresl. Edit. “The King of Isbбniya.” For the “Ishbбn” (Spaniards) an ancient people descended from Japhet son of Noah and who now are no more, see Al-Mas’udi (Fr. Transl. I. 361). The “Herodotus of the Arabs” recognises only the “Jalбlikah” or Gallicians, thus bearing witness to the antiquity and importance of the Gallego race.

[222] Arab. “Sha’r,” properly, hair of body, pile, especially the pecten. See Burckhardt (Prov. No. 202), “grieving for lack of a cow she made a whip of her bush,” said of those who console themselves by building Castles in Spain. The “parts below the waist” is the decent Turkish term for the privities.

[223] The drowning is a martyr’s death, the burning is a foretaste of Hell-fire.

[224] Meaning that if the trick had been discovered the Captain would have taken the barber’s place. We have seen (vol. i. 63) the Prime Minister superintending the royal kitchen and here the Admiral fishes for the King’s table. It is even more naпve than the Court of Alcinцus.

[225] Bresl. Edit. xi. 32: i.e. save me from disgrace.

[226] Arab. “Khinsir” or “Khinsar,” the little finger or the middle finger. In Arabic each has its own name or names which is also that of the corresponding toe, e.g. Ibhбm (thumb); Sabbбbah, Musabbah or Da’бah (fore-finger); Wastб (medius); Binsir (annularis ring-finger) and Khinsar (minimus). There are also names for the several spaces between the fingers. See the English Arabic Dictionary (London, Kegan Paul and Co., 1881) by the Revd. Dr. Badger, a work of immense labour and research but which I fear has been to the learned author a labour of love not of profit.

[227] Meaning of course that the King signed towards the sack in which he supposed the victim to be, but the ring fell off before it could take effect. The Eastern story-teller often balances his multiplicity of words and needless details by a conciseness and an elliptical style which make his meaning a matter of divination.

[228] See vol. v. 111.

[229] This couplet was quoted to me by my friend the Rev. Dr. Badger when he heard that I was translating “The Nights”: needless to say that it is utterly inappropriate.

[230] For a similar figure see vol i. 25.

[231] Arab. “Hanzal”: see vol. v. 19.

[232] The tale begins upon the model of “Jъdar and his Brethren,” vi. 213. Its hero’s full name is Abdu’llбhi=Slave of Allah, which vulgar Egyptians pronounce Abdallah and purer speakers, Badawin and others, Abdullah: either form is therefore admissible. It is more common among Moslems but not unknown to Christians especially Syrians who borrow it from the Syriac Alloh. Mohammed is said to have said, “The names most approved by Allah are Abdu’llah, Abd al-Rahmбn (Slave of the Compassionate) and such like” (Pilgrimage i. 20).

[233] Arab. “Sнrah” here probably used of the Nile-sprat (Clupea Sprattus Linn.) or Sardine of which Forsk says, “Sardinn in Al-

Yaman is applied to a Red Sea fish of the same name.” Hasselquist the Swede notes that Egyptians stuff the Sardine with marjoram and eat it fried even when half putrid.

[234] i.e. by declaring in the Koran (lxvii. 14; lxxiv. 39; lxxviii. 69; lxxxviii. 17), that each creature hath its appointed term and lot; especially “Thinketh man that he shall be left uncared for?” (xl. 36).

[235] Arab. “Nusf,” see vol. ii. 37.

[236] Arab. “Allah Karim” (which Turks pronounce Kyeгнm) a consecrated formula used especially when a man would show himself resigned to “small mercies.” The fisherman’s wife was evidently pious as she was poor; and the description of the pauper household is simple and effective.

[237] This is repeated in the Mac. Edit. p-97; an instance amongst many of most careless editing.

[238] Arab. “Ala mahlak” (vulg.), a popular phrase, often corresponding with our “Take it coolly.”

[239] For “He did not keep him waiting, as he did the rest of the folk.” Lane prefers “nor neglected him as men generally would have done.” But we are told supra that the baker “paid no heed to the folk by reason of the dense crowd.”

[240] Arab. “Ruh!” the most abrupt form, whose sound is coarse and offensive as the Turkish yell, “Gyel!”=come here.

[241] Bresl. Edit. xi. 50-51.

[242] Arab. “Бdami”=an Adamite, one descended from the mythical and typical Adam for whom see Philo Judжus. We are told in one place a few lines further on that the merman is of humankind; and in another that he is a kind of fish (Night dccccxlv). This belief in mermen, possible originating with the caricatures of the human face in the intelligent seal and stupid manatee, is universal. Al-Kazwini

declares that a waterman with a tail was dried and exhibited, and that in Syria one of them was married to a woman and had by her a son "who understood the languages of both his parents." The fable was refined to perfect beauty by the Greeks: the mer-folk of the Arabs, Hindus and Northerners (Scandinavians, etc) are mere grotesques with green hair, etc. Art in its highest expression never left the shores of the Mediterranean, and there is no sign that it ever will.

[243] Here Lane translates "Wajh" lit. "the desire of seeing the face of God," and explains in a note that a "Muslim holds this to be the greatest happiness that can be enjoyed in Paradise." But I have noted that the tenet of seeing the countenance of the Creator, except by the eyes of spirit, is a much disputed point amongst Moslems.

[244] Artful enough is this contrast between the squalid condition of the starving fisherman and the gorgeous belongings of the Merman.

[245] Lit. "Verily he laughed at me so that I set him free."
This is a fair specimen of obscure conciseness.

[246] Arab. "Mishannah," which Lane and Payne translate basket: I have always heard it used of an old gunny-bag or bag of plaited palm-leaves.

[247] Arab. "Kaff Shurayk" applied to a single bun. The Shurayk is a bunn, an oblong cake about the size of a man's hand (hence the term "Kaff"=palm) with two long cuts and sundry oblique crosscuts, made of leavened dough, glazed with egg and Samn (clarified butter) and flavoured with spices (cinnamon, curcuma, artemisia and prunes mahalab) and with aromatic seeds, (Rihat al-'ajin) of which Lane (iii. 641) specifies aniseed, nigella, absinthium, (Artemisia arborescens) and Kбfъrah (A. camphorata Monspeliensis) etc. The Shurayk is given to the poor when visiting the tombs and on certain fкtes.

[248] "Mother of Prosperities."

[249] Tribes of pre-historic Arabs who were sent to Hell for bad behaviour to Prophets Sбlih and Hъd. See vol. iii. 294.

[250] "Too much for him to come by lawfully."

[251] To protect it. The Arab. is "Jбh"=high station, dignity.

[252] The European reader, especially feminine, will think this a hard fate for the pious first wife but the idea would not occur to the Moslem mind. After bearing ten children a woman becomes "Umm al-banбti w'al-banнn"=a mother of daughters and sons, and should hold herself unfit for love-disport. The seven ages of womankind are thus described by the Arabs and I translate the lines after a well-known (Irish) model: —

From ten years to twenty —
Of beauty there's plenty.
From twenty to thirty —
Fat, fair and alert t'ye.
From thirty to forty —
Lads and lasses she bore t'ye.
From forty to fifty —
An old'un and shifty.
From fifty to sixty —
A sorrow that sticks t'ye.
From sixty to seventy —
A curse of God sent t'ye.

For these and other sentiments upon the subject of women and marriage see Pilgrimage ii. 285-87.

[253] Abdullah, as has been said, means "servant or rather slave of Allah."

[254] Again the "Come to my arms, my slight acquaintance," of the Anti-Jacobin.

[255] Arab. "Nukl," e.g. the quatre mendiants as opposed to "Fбkihah"=fresh fruit. The Persians, a people who delight in gross practical jokes, get the confectioner to coat with sugar the droppings of sheep and goats and hand them to the bulk of the party. This

pleasant confection is called “Nukl-i-peshkil” — dung-dragйes.

[256] The older name of Madнnat al-Nabi, the city of the Prophet; vulg. called Al-Medinah per excellentiam. See vol. iv. 114. In the Mac. and Bul. texts we have “Tayyibah”=the goodly, one of the many titles of that Holy City: see Pilgrimage ii. 119.

[257] Not “visiting the tomb of,” etc. but visiting the Prophet himself, who is said to have declared that “Ziyбrah” (visitation) of his tomb was in religion the equivalent of a personal call upon himself.

[258] Arab. “Nafakah”; for its conditions see Pigrimage iii. 224. I have again and again insisted upon the Anglo-Indian Government enforcing the regulations of the Faith upon pauper Hindi pilgrims who go to the Moslem Holy Land as beggars and die of hunger in the streets. To an “Empire of Opinion” this is an unmitigated evil (Pilgrimage iii. 256); and now, after some thirty-four years, there are signs that the suggestions of common sense are to be adopted. England has heard of the extraordinary recklessness and inconsequence of the British-Indian “fellow- subject.”

[259] The Ka’abah of Meccah.

[260] When Moslems apply “Nabн!” to Mohammed it is in the peculiar sense of “prophet” ({prophйtes})=one who speaks before the people, not one who predicts, as such foresight was adjured by the Apostle. Dr. A. Neubauer (The Athenжum No. 3031) finds the root of “Nabн!” in the Assyrian Nabu and Heb. Noob (occurring in Exod. vii. 1. “Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.” i.e. orator, speaker before the people), and holds it to be a Canaanite term which supplanted “Roeh” (the Seer) e.g. 1 Samuel ix. 9. The learned Hebraist traces the cult of Nebo, a secondary deity in Assyria to Palestine and Phњnicia, Palmyra, Edessa (in the Nebok of Abgar) and Hierapolis in Syria or Mabug (Nabog?).

[261] I cannot find “Dandбn” even in Lib. Quintus de Aquaticis Animalibus of the learned Sam. Bochart’s “Hierozoпcon” (London, 1663) and must conjecture that as “Dandбn” in Persian means a tooth

(vol. ii. 83) the writer applied it to a sun-fish or some such well-fanged monster of the deep.

[262] A favourite proverb with the Fellah, when he alludes to the Pasha and to himself.

[263] An euphemistic answer, unberufen as the Germans say.

[264] It is a temptation to derive this word from bBњuf a l’eau, but I fear that the theory will not hold water. The “buffaloes” of Alexandria laughted it to scorn.

[265] Here the writer’s zoological knowledge is at fault. Animals, which never or very rarely see man, have no fear of him whatever. This is well-known to those who visit the Gull-fairs at Ascension Island, Santos and many other isolated rocks; the hen birds will peck at the intruder’s ankles but they do not rise from off their eggs. For details concerning the “Gull-fair” of the Summer Islands consult “The History of the Bermudas,” edited by Sir J. H. Lefroy for the Hakluyt Society, 1882. I have seen birds on Fernando Po peak quietly await a second shot; and herds of antelopes, the most timed of animals, in the plains of Somali-land only stared but were not startled by the report of the gun. But Arabs are not the only moralists who write zoological nonsense: witness the notable verse,

“Birds in their little nests agree,”

when the feathered tribes are the most pugnacious of breathing beings.

[266] Lane finds these details “silly and tiresome or otherwise objectionable,” and omits them.

[267] Meaning, “Thou hast as yet seen little or nothing.” In most Eastern tongues a question often expresses an emphatic assertion. See vol. i. 37.

[268] Easterns wear as a rule little clothing but it suffices for the

essential purposes of decency and travellers will live amongst them for years without once seeing an accidental “exposure of the person.” In some cases, as with the Nubian thong-apron, this demand of modesty requires not a little practice of the muscles; and we all know the difference in a Scotch kilt worn by a Highlander and a cockney sportsman.

[269] Arab. “Shнraj”=oil extracted from rape seed but especially from sesame. The Persians pronounce it “Sнraj” (apparently unaware that it is their own word “Shнrah”=juice in Arabic garb) and have coined a participle “Musayrij” e.g., Bъ-i- musayrij, taint of sesame-oil applied especially to the Jews who very wisely prefer, in Persia and elsewhere, oil which is wholesome to butter which is not. The Moslems, however, declare that its immoderate use in cooking taints the exudations of the skin.

[270] Arab. “Nakkбrъn” probably congeners of the redoubtable “Dandбn.”

[271] Bresl. Edit. xi. 78. The Mac. says “They are all fish” (Kullu-hum) and the Bul. “Their food (aklu-hum) is fish.”

[272] Arab. “Az’ar,” usually=having thin hair. The general term for tailless is “abtar.” See Koran cviii. 3, when it means childless.

[273] A common formula of politeness.

[274] Bresl. Edit. xi. 82; meaning, “You will probably keep it for yourself.” Abdullah of the Sea is perfectly logical; but grief is not. We weep over the deaths of friends mostly for our own sake: theoretically we should rejoice that they are at rest; but practically we are afflicted by the thought that we shall never again see their pleasant faces.

[275] i.e. about rejoicing over the newborns and mourning over the dead.

[276] i.e. Ishak of Mosul, for whom see vol. iv. 119. The

Bresl. Edit. has Fazнl for Fazl.

[277] Abu Dalaf al-Ijili, a well-known soldier equally famed for liberality and culture.

[278] Arab. “Takhmнsh,” alluding to the familiar practice of tearing face and hair in grief for a loss, a death, etc.

[279] i.e. When he is in the very prime of life and able to administer fiers coups de canif.

> “For ladies e’en of most uneasy virtue
> Prefer a spouse whose age is short of thirty.”
> Don Juan 1. 62.

[280] Arab. “Lбzuward”: see vol. iii. 33.

[281] Arab. “Sidillah.” The Bresl. Edit. (v. 99), has, “a couch of ivory and ebony, whereon was that which befitted it of mattresses and cushions * * * * and on it five damsels.”

[282] i.e. As she untunes the lute by “pinching” the strings over-excitedly with her right, her other hand retunes it by turning the pegs.

[283] i.e. The slim cupbearer (Zephyr) and fair-faced girl
(Moon) handed round the bubbling bowl (star).

[284] Arab. “Al-Sath” whence the Span. Azotea. The lines that follow are from the Bresl. Edit. v. 110.

[285] This “‘Ar’ar” is probably the Callitris quadrivalvis whose resin (“Sandarac”) is imported as varnish from African Mogador to England. Also called the Thuja, it is of cypress shape, slow growing and finely veined in the lower part of the base. Most travellers are agreed that it is the Citrus-tree of Roman Mauritania, concerning which Pliny (xiii. 29) gives curious details, a single table costing from a million sesterces (BJ900) to 1,400,000. For other details see , “Morocco and the Moors,” by my late friend Dr. Leared (London:

Sampson Low, 1876).

[286] i.e. Kings might sigh for her in vain.

[287] These lines are in vol. viii. 279. I quote Mr. Payne.

[288] A most unsavoury comparison to a Persian who always connects camphor with the idea of a corpse.

[289] Arab. “Ila mб shбa’ llбh” i.e. as long as you like.

[290] i.e. of gramarye.

[291] Arab. “Ta’wнz”=the Arab Tilasm, our Talisman, a charm, an amulet; and in India mostly a magic square. The subject is complicated and occupies in Herklots some sixty pages, 222-284.

[292] The Bul. and Mac. Edits. give the Princess’s malady, in error, as Dбa al-Sudб’ (megrims), instead of Dбa al-Sar’ (epilepsy) as in the Bresl. Edit. The latter would mean that she is possessed by a demon, again the old Scriptural fancy (see vol. v. 28). The subject is highly fitted for romance but not for a “serious” book which ought to know better.

[293] Arab. “Al-’Бriz”=the demon who possessed her.

[294] i.e. He hath renounced his infamous traffic.

[295] Alluding to the favourite Eastern saying, “The poor man hath no life.”

[296] In this and the following lines some change is necessary for the Bresl. and Mac. texts are very defective. The Arabic word here translated “recess” is “Aywбn,” prop. a hall, an open saloon.

[297] i.e. by selling it for thirty thousand gold pieces, when he might have got a million for it.

[298] The tale is not in the Bresl. Edit.

[299] Al-Khasнb (= the fruitful) was the son of ‘Abd al-Hamнd and intendant of the tribute of Egypt under Harun al-Rashid, but neither Lord nor Sultan. Lane (iii. 669) quotes three couplets in his honour by Abu Nowбs from of “Elmacini (Al-Makнn) Historia Saracenica.”

If our camel visit not the land of Al-Khasib, what man after Al-Khasib shall they visit? For generosity is not his neighbour; nor hath it sojourned near him; but generosity goeth wherever he goeth: He is a man who purchaseth praise with his wealth, and who knoweth that the periods of Fortune revolve.

[300] The old story “Ala jъdi-k”= upon thy generosity, which means at least ten times the price.

[301]i.e. The distance is enormous.

[302] A gazelle; but here the slave-girl’s name.

[303] See vol. ii. 104. Herklots (Pl. vii. fig. 2) illustrates the cloth used in playing the Indian game, Pachнsн. The “board” is rather European than Oriental, but it has of late years spread far and wide, especially the backgammon board.

[304] i.e. “Father of the Lion.”

[305] Or as we should say, “Thy blood will be on thine own head.”

[306] Called after the famous town in Persian Mesopotamia which however is spelt with the lesser aspirate. See . The Geographical works of Sбdik-i-Ispahбni, London; Oriental Transl. Fund, 1882. Hamdan (with the greater aspirate) and Hamdun mean only the member masculine, which may be a delicate piece of chaff for the gallery

[307] Arab. “Hulwбn al-miftбh,” for which see vol. vii. 212. Mr. Payne compares it with the French denier a Dieu, given to the concierge on like occasions.

[308] Arab. ‘Udm, a relish, the Scotch “kitchen,” Lat. Opsonium, Ital. Companatico and our “by-meat.” See vol. iv. 128.

[309] Arab. “Kabasa” = he shampoo’d. See vol. ii. {23}.

[310] Arab. “Nukl.” See supra .

[311] Arab. “Jannat al-Khuld” and “Firdaus,” two of the Heavens repeatedly noticed.

[312] The naпvetй is purely Horatian, that is South European versus North European.

[313] i.e. “Have some regard for thy life.”

[314] Arab. “Awбk” plur. of Ъkiyyah a word known throughout the Moslem East. As an ounce it weighs differently in every country and in Barbary (Mauritania) which we call Morocco, it is a nominal coin containing twelve Flъs (fulъs) now about = a penny. It is a direct descendant from the “Uk” or “Wuk” (ounce) of the hieroglyphs (See Sharpe’s Egypt or any other Manual) and first appeared in Europe as the Greek {unkна}.

[315] Arab. “Kбrah” usually a large bag.

[316] Arab. “Lъlъah,” which may mean the Union-pearl; but here used in the sense of “wild cow,” the bubalus antelope, alluding to the farouche nature of Miss Jamilah. We are also told infra that the park was full of “Wuhъsh” = wild cattle.

[317] Arab. “Sбkiyah,” the venerable old Persian wheel, for whose music see Pilgrimage ii. 198. But “Sakiyah” is also applied, as here, to the water-channel which turns the wheel.

[318] Arab. “Kawбdнs,” plur. of “Kбdъs,” the pots round the rim of the Persian wheel: usually they are of coarse pottery.

[319] In the text “Sбkiyah” a manifest error for “Kubbah.”

[320] Easterns greatly respect a belle fourchette, especially when the eater is a lover.

[321] Arab. “‘Arнshah,” a word of many meanings, tent, nest, vine-trellis, etc.

[322] To spit or blow the nose in good society is “vulgar.” Sneezing (Al-’Atsah) is a complicated affair. For Talmudic traditions of death by sneezing see Lane (M. E. chapt. viii). Amongst Hindus sneezing and yawning are caused by evil spirits whom they drive away by snapping thumb and forefinger as loudly as possible. The pagan Arabs held sneezing a bad omen, which often stopped their journeys. Moslems believe that when Allah placed the Soul (life ?) in Adam, the dry clay became flesh and bone and the First Man, waking to life, sneezed and ejaculated “Alhamdolillah;” whereto Gabriel replied, “Allah have mercy upon thee, O Adam!” Mohammed, who liked sneezing because accompanied by lightness of body and openness of pores, said of it, “If a man sneeze or eructate and say ‘Alhamdolillah’ he averts seventy diseases of which the least is leprosy” (Juzбm); also, “If one of you sneeze, let him exclaim, ‘Alhamdolillah,’ and let those around salute him in return with, ‘Allah have mercy upon thee!’ and lastly let him say, ‘Allah direct you and strengthen your condition.”’ Moderns prefer, “Allah avert what may joy thy foe!” = (our God bless you!) to which the answer is “Alhamdolillah!” Mohammed disliked yawning (Suabб or Thuabб), because not beneficial as a sneeze and said, “If one of you gape and cover not his mouth, a devil leaps into it. “ This is still a popular superstition from Baghdad to Morocco.

[323] A duenna, nursery governess, etc. See vol. i. 231.

[324] For this belief see the tale called “The Night of Power,” vol. vi. 180.

[325] The Anglo-Indian “Kincob” (Kimkh’бb); brocade, silk flowered with gold or silver.

[326] Lane finds a needless difficulty in this sentence, which is far-

fetched only because Kuus (cups) requires Ruus (head-tops) by way of jingle. It means only “’Twas merry in hall when beards wag all.”

[327] The Mac. Edit. gives two couplets which have already occurred from the Bull Edit i. 540.

[328] The lines are half of four couplets in vol. iv. 192; so
I quote Lane.

[329].i.e. none hath pleased me. I have quoted the popular saying, “The son of the quarter filleth not the eye.” i.e. women prefer stranger faces.

[330] Here after the favourite Oriental fashion, she tells the truth but so enigmatically that it is more deceptive than an untruth; a good Eastern quibble infinitely more dangerous than an honest downright lie. The consciousness that the falsehood is part fact applies a salve to conscience and supplies a force lacking in the mere fib. When an Egyptian lies to you look straight in his eyes and he will most often betray himself either by boggling or by a look of injured innocence.

[331] Another true lie.

[332] Arab. ``’Yastaghнвънн,” lit. = they deem my absence too long.

[333] An euphemistic form of questioning after absence: “Is all right with thee?”

[334] Arab. “Kallim al-Sultan!” the formula of summoning which has often occurred in The Nights.

[335] Lane translates “Almost died,” Payne “Well-nigh died;” but the text says “died.” I would suggest to translators

“Be bould, be bould and every where be bould!”

[336] He is the usual poltroon contrasted with the manly and masterful girl, a conjunction of the lioness and the lamb sometimes seen in real

life.

[337] That he might see Jamilah as Ibrahim had promised.

[338] A popular saying, i.e., les absents ont toujours tort.

[339] Who had a prior right to marry her, but not against her consent after she was of age.

[340] Arab “Sirwбl.” In Al-Hariri it is a singular form (see No. ii. of the twelve riddles in Ass. xxiv.), but Mohammed said to his followers “Tuakhkhizъ” (adopt ye) “Sarбwнlбt.” The latter is regularly declinable but the broken form Sarбwнl is imperfectly declinable on account of its “heaviness,” as are all plurals whose third letter is an Alif followed by i or н in the next syllable.

[341] Arab. “Matarik” from mitrak or mitrakah a small wooden shield coated with hide. This even in the present day is the policeman’s equipment in the outer parts of the East.

[342] Arab. “Sabнyah” for which I prefer Mr. Payne’s “young lady” to Lane’s “damsel”; the latter should be confined to Jбriyah as both bear the double sense of girl and slave (or servant) girl. “Bint” again is daughter, maid or simply girl.

[343] The sense of them is found in vol. ii. 41.

[344] Here the text is defective, but I hardly like to supply the omission. Mr. Payne introduces from below, “for that his charms were wasted and his favour changed by reason of the much terror and affliction he had suffered.” The next lines also are very abrupt and unconnected.

[345] Arab. “Yб Maulбya!” the term is still used throughout Moslem lands; but in Barbary where it is pronounced “Moolбee” Europeans have converted it to “Muley” as if it had some connection with the mule. Even in Robinson Crusoe we find “muly” or “Moly Ismael” (chapt. ii.); and we hear the high-sounding name Maulб-i-Idrнs, the patron saint of the Sunset Land, debased to “Muley Drнs.”

[346] Lane omits this tale because “it is very similar, but inferior in interest, to the Story told by the Sultan’s Steward.” See vol. i. 278.

[347] Sixteenth Abbaside A.H. 279–289 (=A.D. 891–902). “He was comely, intrepid, of grave exterior, majestic in presence, of considerable intellectual power and the fiercest of the Caliphs of the House of Abbas. He once had the courage to attack a lion” (Al-Siyuti). I may add that he was a good soldier and an excellent administrator, who was called Saffбh the Second because he refounded the House of Abbas. He was exceedingly fanatic and died of sensuality, having first kicked his doctor to death, and he spent his last moments in versifying.

[348] Hamdъn bin Ismб’нl, called the Kбtib or Scribe, was the first of his family who followed the profession of a Nadнm or Cup-companion. His son Ahmad (who is in the text) was an oral transmitter of poetry and history. Al-Siyъti () and De Slane I. Khall (ii. 304) notice him.

[349] Probably the Caliph had attendants, but the text afterwards speaks of them as two. Mac. Edit. iv. , line 2; and a few lines below, “the Caliph and the man with him.”

[350] Arab. “Naysбbъr,” the famous town in Khorasan where Omar-i-Khayyбm (whom our people will call Omar Khayyбm) was buried and where his tomb is still a place of pious visitation. A sketch of it has lately appeared in the illustrated papers. For an affecting tale concerning the astronomer-poet’s tomb, borrowed from the Nigбristбn see the Preface by the late Mr. Fitzgerald whose admirable excerpts from the Rubaiyat (101 out of 820 quatrains) have made the poem popular among all the English-speaking races.

[351] Arab. “A-Sharнf anta?” (with the Hamzah-sign of interrogation)=Art thou a Sharнf (or descendant of the Apostle)?

[352] Tenth Abbaside (A.H. 234–247=848–861), grandson of Al-Rashid and born of a slave-concubine. He was famous for his hatred of the Alides (he destroyed the tomb of Al-Husayn) and claimed the

pardon of Allah for having revised orthodox traditionary doctrines. He compelled the Christians to wear collars of wood or leather and was assassinated by five Turks.

[353] His father was Al-Mu'tasim bi 'llah (A.H. 218–227=833–842) the son of Al-Rashid by M6ridah a slave-concubine of foreign origin. He was brave and of high spirit, but destitute of education; and his personal strength was such that he could break a man's elbow between his fingers. He imitated the apparatus of Persian kings; and he was called the "Octonary" because he was the 8th Abbaside; the 8th in descent from Abbas; the 8th son of Al-Rashid; he began his reign in A.H. 218; lived 48 years; was born under Scorpio (8th Zodiacal sign); was victorious in 8 expeditions; slew 8 important foes and left 8 male and 8 female children. For his introducing Turks see vol. iii, 81.

[354] i.e. as if it were given away in charity.

[355] Arab. "Shukkah," a word much used in the Zanzibar trade where it means a piece of long-cloth one fathom long. See my "Lake Regions of Central Africa," vol. i. 147, etc.

[356] He is afterwards called in two places "Kh6dim"=eunuch.

[357] A courteous way of saying, "Never mind my name: I wish to keep it hidden." The formula is still popular.

[358] Arab. "Bakhkharanн" i.e. fumigated me with burning aloes-wood, Calumba or similar material.

[359] In sign of honour. The threshold is important amongst Moslems: in one of the Mameluke Soldans' sepulchres near Cairo I found a granite slab bearing the "cartouche" (shield) of Khufu (Cheops) with the four hieroglyphs hardly effaced.

[360] i.e. One of the concubines by whose door he had passed.

[361] Epistasis without the prostasis, "An she ordered thee so to do:"

the situation justifies the rhetorical figure.

362 Arab. “Sardбb” see vol. i, 340.

363 Thirteenth Abbaside A.H. 252–255 (=866–869). His mother was a Greek slave called Kabнhah (Al-Mas’udi and Al-Siyuti); for which “Banjah” is probably a clerical error. He was exceedingly beautiful and was the first to ride out with ornaments of gold. But he was impotent in the hands of the Turks who caused the mob to depose him and kill himВ — his death being related in various ways.

364 i.e. The reward from Allah for thy good deed.

365 Arab. “Nusk” abstinence from women, a part of the Zahid’s asceticism.

366 Arab. “Munбzirah” the verbal noun of which, “Munбzarah,” may also mean “dispute.” The student will distinguish between “Munazarah” and Munafarah=a contention for precedence in presence of an umpire.

367 The Mac. Edit. gives by mistake “Abъ Dбъd”: the Bul. correctly “Abъ Duwбd,” He was Kбzi al-Kuzбt (High Chancellor) under Al-Mu’tasim, Al-Wasik bi’llah (Vathek) and Al-Mutawakkil.

368 Arab. “Zaffъ”=they led the bride to the bridegroom’s house; but here used in the sense of displaying her as both were in the palace.

369 i.e. renounce the craft which though not sinful (harбm) is makrъh or religiously unpraiseworthy; Mohammed having objected to music and indeed to the arts in general.

370 Arab. “Lб tankati’н;” do not be too often absent from us. I have noticed the whimsical resemblance of “Kat’” and our “cut”; and here the metaphorical sense is almost identical.

371 See Ibn Khallikan ii. 455.

[372] The Turkish body-guard. See vol. iii. 81.

[373] Twelfth Abbaside (A.H. 248-252=862-866) the son of a slave-concubine Mukhбrik. He was virtuous and accomplished, comely, fair-skinned, pock-marked and famed for defective pronunciation; and he first set the fashion of shortening men’s capes and widening the sleeves. After may troubles with the Turks, who were now the Prжtorian guard of Baghdad, he was murdered at the instigation of Al-Mu’ tazz, who succeeded him, by his Chamberlain Sa’id bin Salнh.

[374] Arab. “Usъl,” his forbears, his ancestors.

[375] Lane rejects this tale because it is “extremely objectionable; far more so than the title might lead me to expect.” But he quotes the following marginal note by his Shaykh:— “Many persons (women) reckon marrying a second time amongst the most disgraceful of actions. This opinion is commonest in the country-towns and villages; and my mother’s relations are thus distinguished; so that a woman of them, when her husband dieth or divorceth her while she is young, passeth in widowhood her life, however long it may be, and disdaineth to marry a second time.” I fear that this state of things belongs to the good old days now utterly gone by; and the loose rule of the stranger, especially the English, in Egypt will renew the scenes which characterised Sind when Sir Charles Napier hanged every husband who cut down an adulterous wife. I have elsewhere noticed the ignorant idea that Moslems deny to women souls and seats in Paradise, whilst Mohammed canonised two women in his own family. The theory arose with the “Fathers” of the Christian Church who simply exaggerated the misogyny of St. Paul. St. Ambrose commenting on Corinthians i. ii., boldly says:— “Feminas ad imaginem Dei factas non esse.” St. Thomas Aquinas and his school adopted the Aristotelian view, “Mulier est erratum naturж, et mas occasionatus, et per accidens generatur; atque ideo est monstrum.” For other instances see Bayle s. v. Gediacus (Revd. Simon of Brandebourg) who in 1695 published a “Defensio Sexus muliebris,” a refutation of an anti-Socinian satire or squib, “Disputatio

perjucunda, Mulieres homines non esse,” Parisiis, 1693. But when Islam arose in the seventh century, the Christian learned cleverly affixed the stigma of their own misogyny upon the Moslems ad captandas fœminas and in Southern Europe the calumny still bears fruit. Mohammed (Koran, chapt. xxiv.) commands for the first time, in the sixth year of his mission, the veiling and, by inference, the seclusion of women, which was apparently unknown to the Badawin and, if practised in the cities was probably of the laxest. Nor can one but confess that such modified separation of the sexes, which it would be impossible to introduce into European manners, has great and notable advantages. It promotes the freest intercourse between man and man, and thus civilises what we call the “lower orders”: in no Moslem land, from Morocco to China, do we find the brutals without manners or morals which are bred by European and especially by English civilisation. For the same reason it enables women to enjoy fullest intimacy and friendship with one another, and we know that the best of both sexes are those who prefer the society of their own as opposed to “quite the lady’s man” and “quite the gentleman’s woman.” It also adds an important item to social decorum by abolishing e.g. such indecencies as the “ball-room flirtation” — a word which must be borrowed from us, not translated by foreigners. And especially it gives to religious meetings, a tone which the presence of women modifies and not for the better. Perhaps, the best form is that semi-seclusion of the sex, which prevailed in the heroic ages of Greece, Rome, and India (before the Moslem invasion), and which is perpetuated in Christian Armenia and in modern Hellas. It is a something between the conventual strictness of Al-Islam and the liberty, or rather licence, of the “Anglo-Saxon” and the “Anglo-American.” And when England shall have cast off that peculiar insularity which makes her differ from all civilised peoples, she will probably abolish three gross abuses, time-honoured scandals, which bear very heavily on women and children. The first is the Briton’s right to will property away from his wife and offspring. The second is the action for “breach of promise,” salving the broken heart with pounds, shillings, and pence: it should be treated simply as an exaggerated breach of contract. The third is the procedure popularly called “Crim. Con.,” and this is the most scandalous of all: the offence is against the rights of property, like robbery or burglary, and it ought to be treated criminally with fine, imprisonment and in cases with corporal punishment after the sensible procedure of Moslem law.

[376] "Moon of the age," a name which has before occurred.

[377] The Malocchio or gettatura, so often noticed.

[378] The crescent of the month Zu 'l-Ka'dah when the Ramazan-fast is broken. This allusion is common. Comp. vol. i. 84.

[379] This line contains one of the Yes, Yes and No, No trifles alluded to in vol. ii, 60. Captain Lockett (M. A. 103) renders it "I saw a fawn upon a hillock whose beauty eclipsed the full moon. I said, What is thy name? she answered Deer. What my Dear said I, but she replied, no, no!" To preserve the sound I have sacrificed sense: Lulu is a pearl, Li? li? (= for me, for me?) and La! La! = no! no! See vol. i, 217. I should have explained a line which has puzzled some readers,

"A sun (face) on wand (neck) in knoll of sand (hips) she showed" etc,

[380] Arab. "Al-huwayna," a rare term.

[381] Bright in the eyes of the famishing who is allowed to break his fast.

[382] Mr. Payne reads "Maghrabi" = a Mauritanian, Maroccan, the Moors (not the Moorish Jews or Arabs) being a race of Sodomites from highest to lowest. But the Mac. and Bul. Edit. have "Ajami."

[383] For "Ishk uzri" = platonic love see vol. i. 232; ii. 104.

[384] Zaynab (Zenobia) and Zayd are generic names for women and men.

[385] i.e. He wrote "Kasidahs" (= odes, elegies) after the fashion of the

"Suspended Poems" which mostly open with the lover gazing upon the traces of the camp where his beloved had dwelt. The exaggerated conventionalism of such exordium shows that these early poems had been preceded by a host of earlier pieces which had been adopted as canons of poetry.

[386] The verses are very mal-a-propos, like many occurring in The Nights, for the maligned Shaykh is proof against all the seductions of the pretty boy and falls in love with a woman after the fashion of Don Quixote. Mr. Payne complains of the obscurity of the original owing to abuse of the figure enallage; but I find them explicit enough, referring to some debauched elder after the type of Abu Nowбs.

[387] Arab. "'Irk" = a root which must here mean a sprig, a twig. The basil grows to a comparatively large size in the East.

[388] Arab. "Lait "= one connected with the tribe of Lot, see vol. v. 161.

[389] For the play upon "Saki" (oblique case of sak, leg-calf) and Saki a cupbearer see vol. ii. 327.

[390] "On a certain day the leg shall be bared and men shall be called upon to bow in adoration, but they shall not be able" (Koran, lxviii. 42). "Baring the leg" implies a grievous calamity, probably borrowed from the notion of tucking up the skirts and stripping for flight. On the dangerous San Francisco River one of the rapids is called "Tira-calcoens" = take off your trousers (Highlands of the Brazil, ii. 35). But here the allusion is simply ludicrous and to a Moslem blasphemous.

[391] Arab. "Istahi," a word of every day use in reproof. So the Hindost. "Kuchh sharm nahin?" hast thou no shame? Shame is a passion with Orientals and very little known to the West.

[392] i.e. Angels and men saying, "The Peace (of God) be on us and on all righteous servants of Allah!" This ends every prayer.

[393] Arab. “Al-Niyah,” the ceremonial purpose or intent to pray, without which prayer is null and void. See vol. v. 163. The words would be “I purpose to pray a two-bow prayer in this hour of deadly danger to my soul.” Concerning such prayer see vol. i. 142.

[394] Arab. “Sбkin” = quiescent, Let a sleeping hound lie.

[395] Arab. “Бsбr” lit. traces i.e. the works, the mighty signs and marvels.

[396] The mention of coffee now frequently occurs in this tale and in that which follows: the familiar use of it showing a comparatively late date, and not suggesting the copyist’s hand.

[397] Arab. “Al-Kahwah,” the place being called from its produce. See Pilgrimage i. 317-18.

[398] Arab. “Al-Ghurbah Kurbah:” the translation in the text is taken from my late friend Edward Eastwick, translator of the Gulistan and author of a host of works which show him to have been a ripe Oriental scholar.

[399] The fiction may have been suggested by the fact that in all Moslem cities from India to Barbary the inner and outer gates are carefully shut during the noontide devotions, not “because Friday is the day on which creation was finished and Mohammed entered Al-Medinah;” but because there is a popular idea that in times now approaching the Christians will rise up against the Moslems during prayers and will repeat the “Sicilian Vespers.”

[400] i.e. the syndic of the Guild of Jewellers.

[401] This is an Arab Lady Godiva of the wrong sort.

[402] This is explained in my Pilgrimage i. 99 et seq.

[403] About three pennyweights. It varies, however, everywhere and in Morocco the “Mezkal” as they call it is an imaginary value, no such

coin existing.

[404] i.e. over and above the value of the gold, etc.

[405] This was the custom of contemporary Europe and more than one master cutler has put to death an apprentice playing Peeping Tom to detect the secret of sword-making.

[406] Among Moslems husbands are divided into three species; (1) of “Bahr” who is married for love; (2) of “Dahr,” for defence against the world, and (3) of “Mahr” for marriage-settlements (money). Master Obayd was an unhappy compound of the two latter; but he did not cease to be a man of honour.

[407] The Mac. Edit. here is a mass of blunders and misprints.

[408] The Mac. Edit. everywhere calls her “Sabiyah” = the young lady and does not mention her name Halimah = the Mild, the Gentle till the cmlxxivth Night. I follow Mr. Payne’s example by introducing it earlier into the story, as it avoids vagueness and repetition of the indefinite.

[409] Arab “Adнm al-Zauk,”=without savour. applied to an insipid mannerless man as “b6rid” (cold) is to a fool. “Ahl Zauk” is a man of pleasure, a voluptuary, a hedonist.

[410] Arab. “Finj6n” the egg-shell cups from which the Easterns still drink coffee.

[411] Arab. “Aw6shik” a rare word, which Dozy translates “osselet” (or osselle) and Mr. Payne, “hucklebones,” concerning which he has obliged me with this note. Chambaud renders osselet by “petit os avec lequel les enfants jouent.” Hucklebone is the hip-bone but in the plural it applies to our cockals or cockles: Latham gives “hucklebone,” (or cockal), one of the small vertebrж of the coccygis, and Littleton translates “Talus,” a hucklebone, a bone to play with like a dye, a play called cockal. (So also in Rider.) Hucklebones and knucklebones are syn.: but the latter is modern and liable to give a

false idea, besides being tautological. It has nothing to do with the knuckles and derives from the German “Knцchel” (dialectically Knцchelein) a bonelet.

412 For ablution after sleep and before prayer. The address of the slave-girl is perfectly natural: in a Moslem house we should hear it this day, nor does it show the least sign of “frowardness.”

413 The perfect stupidity of the old wittol is told with the driest Arab humour.

414 This is a rechauffй of the Language of Signs in “Azнz and Azнzah” vol. ii. 302.

415 In the Mac. Edit. “Yб Fulбnah”=O certain person.

416 Arab. “Laylat al-Kбbilah,” lit.=the coming night, our to-night; for which see vol. iii. {249}.

417 Arab. “Ya Ahmak!” which in Marocco means a madman, a maniac, a Santon.

418 The whole passage has a grammatical double entendre whose application is palpable. Harf al-Jarr=a particle governing the noun in the genitive or a mode of thrusting and tumbling.

419 Arab. “Al-Silah” =conjunctive (sentence), also coition; Al-Mausъl= the conjoined, a grammatical term for relative pronoun or particle.

420 Arab. “Tanwнn al-Izбfah ma’zъl” = the nunnation in construction cast out. “Tanwнn” (nunnation) is pronouncing the vowels of the case-endings of a noun with n -un for u (nominative) -in for i (genitive) and -an for a (accusative). This nunnation expresses indefiniteness, e.g. “Malikun”=a king, any king. When the noun is made definite by the Ma’rifah or article (al), the Tanwin must be dropped, e.g. Al-Maliku = the King; Al- Malikun being a grammatical absurdity. In construction or regimen (izбfah) the

nunnation must also disappear, as Maliku ‘l-Hindi = the King of Hind (a King of Hind would be Malikun min Mulъki ‘l-Hindi = a King from amongst the Kings of Hind). Thus whilst the wife and the lover were conjoined as much as might be, the hocussed and sleeping husband was dismissed (ma’zъl=degraded) like a nunnation dropped in construction. I may add that the terminal syllables are invariably dropped in popular parlance and none but Mr. G. Palgrave (who afterwards ignored his own assertion) ever found an Arab tribe actually using them in conversation although they are always pronounced when reading the Koran and poetry.

[421] This was a saying of Mohammed about overfrequency of visits, “Zur ghibban, tazid hubban”=call rarely that friendship last fairly. So the verse of Al-Mutanabbi,

“How oft familiarity breeds dislike.”

Preston quotes Jesus ben Sirach, {mи йmpipte hнna mи epoorthкs, kaм mи makran aphнstoo hнna mи epilesthкs}. Also Al-Hariri (Ass. xv. of “The Legal”; De Sacy 1. 2.) “Visit not your friend more than one day in a month, nor stop longer than that with him!” Also Ass. xvi. 487, 8. “Multiply not visits to thy friend.” “None so disliked as one visiting too often.” (Preston). In the Cent nouvelles (52) Nouvelles (No. lii.) the dying father says to his son:— “Jamais ne vous hantez tant en l’ostel de votre voisin que l’on vous y serve de pain bis.” In these matters Moslems follow the preaching and practice of the Apostle, who was about as hearty and genial as the “Great Washington.” But the Arab had a fund of dry humour which the Anglo-American lacked altogether.

[422] Arab. “‘Amal” — action, operation. In Hindostani it is used (often with an Alif for an Ayn) as intoxication e.g. Amal рбпн strong waters and applied to Sharбb (wine), Bozah (Beer), Tбdн (toddy or the fermented juice of the Tбd, Borassus flabelliformis), Naryбli (juice of the cocoa-nut tree) Saynddi (of the wild date, Elate Sylvestris), Afyъn (opium and its preparations as post=poppy seeds) and various forms of Cannabis Sativa, as Ganja, Charas, Madad,

Sabzi etc. for which see Herklots' Glossary.

[423] Arab "Sardбb," mostly an underground room (vol. i. 340) but here a tunnel.

[424] Arab. "Al-Lбwandiyah": this and the frequent mention of coffee and presently of a watch (sб'ah) show that the tale in its present state, cannot be older than the end of the sixteenth century.

[425] Arab. "Su'bбn," vol. i. 172.

[426] The lines have occurred in vol. i. 238, where I have noted the punning "Sabr"= patience or aloes. I quote Torrens: the Templar, however, utterly abolishes the pun in the last couplet:- -

"The case is not at my command, but in fair Patience hand
I'm set by Him who order'th all and doth such case command."

"Amr" here=case (circumstance) or command (order) with a suspicion of reference to Murr=myrrh, bitterness. The reader will note the resignation to Fate's decrees which here and in host of places elevates the tone of the book.

[427] i.e. as one loathes that which is prohibited, and with a loathing which makes it unlawful for me to cohabit with thee.

[428] This is quite natural to the sensitive Eastern.

[429] Hence, according to Moslem and Eastern theory generally her lewd and treasonable conduct. But in Egypt not a few freeborn women and those too of the noblest, would beat her hollow at her own little game. See for instance the booklet attributed to Jalбl al-SiyъtH and entitled Kitбb al-Hzбh (Book of Explanation) fH 'Ilm al-Nikбh (in the Science of Carnal Copulation). There is a copy of it in the British Museum; and a friend kindly supplied me with a lithograph from Cairo; warning me that there are doubts about the authorship.

[430] These lines have occurred in vol. iii. 214: I quote Mr. Payne.

[431] This ejaculation, as the waw shows, is parenthetic; spoken either by Halimah, by Shahrazad or by the writer.

[432] Arab. “Kasr” here meaning an upper room.

[433] To avoid saying, I pardon thee.

[434] A proverbial saying which here means I could only dream of such good luck.

[435] A good old custom amongst Moslems who have had business transactions with each other: such acquittance of all possible claims will be quoted on “Judgment-Day,” when debts will be severely enquired into.

[436] Arab. “Kutr (tract or quarter) Misr,” vulgarly pronounced “Masr.” I may remind the reader that the Assyrians called the Nile-valley “Musur” whence probably the Heb. Misraim a dual form denoting Upper and Lower Egypt which are still distinguished by the Arabs into Sa’id and Misr. The hieroglyphic term is Ta-mera=Land of the Flood; and the Greek Aigyptos is probably derived from Kahi-Ptah (region of the great God Ptah) or Ma Ka Ptah (House of the soul of Ptah). The word “Copt” or “Kopt,” in Egyptian “Kubti” and pronounced “Gubti,” contains the same consonants

[437] Now an unimportant frontier fort and village dividing Syria-Palestine from Egypt and famed for the French battle with the Mamelukes (Feb. 19, 1799) and the convention for evacuating Egypt. In the old times it was an important site built upon the “River of Egypt” now a dried up Wady; and it was the chief port of the then populous Najab or South Country. According to Abulfeda it derived its name (the “boothy,” the nest) from a hut built there by the brothers of Joseph when stopped at the frontier by the guards of Pharaoh. But this is usual Jewish infection of history.

[438] Arab. “Bбb.” which may also=“Chapter” or category. See vol. i., 136 and elsewhere (index). In Egypt “Bбb” sometimes means a sepulchral cave hewn in a rock (plur. Bнbбn) from the Coptic “Bнb.”

[439] i.e. “The Holy,” a town some three marches (60 miles) N. East of Cairo; thus showing the honour done to our unheroic hero. There is also a Sбlihiyah quarter or suburb of Damascus famous for its cemetery of holy men, but the facetious Cits change the name to Zбlliniyah=causing to stray; in allusion to its Kurdish population. Baron von Hammer reads “le faubourg Adelieh” built by Al-Malik Al-Adil and founded a chronological argument on a clerical error.

[440] Kamar al-Zaman; the normal pun on the name; a practice as popular in the East as in the West, and worthy only of a pickpocket in either place.

[441] Arab. “Azrбr” plur. of “Zirr” and lit. = “buttons,” i.e. of his robe collar from which his white neck and face appear shining as the sun.

[442] Arab. “Dбirah”: the usual inclosure of Kanбts or tent-flaps pitched for privacy during the halt.

[443] i.e. it was so richly ornamented that it resembled an enchanted hoard whose spells, hiding it from sight, had been broken by some happy treasure seeker.

[444] The merchant who is a “stern parent” and exceedingly ticklish on the Pundonor saw at first sight her servile origin which had escaped the mother. Usually it is the other way.

[445] Not the head of the Church, or Chief Pontiff, but the Chief of the Olema and Fukahб (Fбkihs or D.D.’s.) men learned in the Law (divinity). The order is peculiarly Moslem, in fact the succedaneum for the Christian “hierarchy,” an institution never contemplated by the Founder of Christianity. This title shows the modern date of the tale.

[446] Arab. “Maulid,” prop. applied to the Birth-feast of Mohammed

which begins on the 3rd day of Rabн al-Awwal (third Moslem month) and lasts a week or ten days (according to local custom), usually ending on the 12th and celebrated with salutes of cannon, circumcision feasts, marriage banquets, Zikr-litanies, perlections of the Koran and all manner of solemn festivities including the “powder-play” (Lбb al-Bбrъt) in the wilder corners of Al-Islam. It is also applied to the birth-festivals of great Santons (as Ahmad al-Badawi) for which see Lane M. E. chapt. xxiv. In the text it is used like the Span. “Funcion” or the Hind “Tamбshб,” any great occasion of merry-making.

[447] Arab. “Sanбjik” Plur. of Sanjak (Turk.) = a banner, also applied to the bearer (ensign or cornet) and to a military rank mostly corresponding with Bey or Colonel.

[448] I have followed Mr. Payne’s ordering of the text which, both in the Mac. and Bull. Edits., is wholly inconsequent and has not the excuse of rhyme.

[449] Arab. “Jilbбb,” a long coarse veil or gown which in Barbary becomes a “Jallбbiyah,” a striped and hooded cloak of woollen stuff.

[450] i.e. a broken down pilgrim left to die on the road.

[451] These lines have occurred in vol. i. 272. I quote Mr. Payne.

[452] Note the difference between “Zirt,” the loud crepitus and “Faswah” the susurrus which Captain Grose in his quaint “Lexicum Balatronicum,” calls a “fice” or a “foyse” (from the Arabic Fas, faswah ?).

[453] These lines have occurred in Night dcxix, vol. vi. 246; where the pun on Khaliyah is explained. I quote Lane.

[454] The usual pretext of “God bizness,” as the Comoro men call it. For the title of the Ka’abah see my Pilgrimage vol. iii. 149.

[455] This was in order to travel as a respectable man; he could also send the girl as a spy into the different Harims to learn news of the lady who had eloped.

[456] A polite form of alluding to their cursing him.

[457] i.e. on account of the King taking offence at his unceremonious departure.

[458] i.e. It will be the worse for him.

[459] I would here remind the reader that "'Arabiyyun" pl. 'Urb is a man of pure Arab race, whether of the Ahl al-Madar (=people of mortar, i.e. citizens) or Ahl al-Wabar (=tents of goat or camel's hair); whereas "A'rбbiyyun" pl. A'rбb is one who dwells in the Desert whether Arab or not. Hence the verse: —

"They name us Al-A'rбb but Al-'Urb is our name."

[460] I would remind the reader that the Dinбr is the golden denarius (or solidus) of Eastern Rome while the Dirham is the silver denarius, whence denier, danaro, dнnheiro, etc., etc. The oldest dinars date from A.H. 91-92 (=714-15) and we find the following description of one struck in A.H. 96 by Al-Walid the VI. Ommiade: —

Obverse:
Area. "There is no ilбh but Allah: He is one: He hath no partner."
Circle. "Mohammed is the Messenger of Allah who hath sent him with the true Guidance and Religion that he manifest it above all other Creeds."

Reverse:
Area. "Allah is one: Allah is Eternal: He begetteth not, nor is He begot."
Circle. "Bismillah: This Dinar was struck anno 96."

See "'Ilвm-en-Nas" (warnings for Folk) a pleasant little volume by

Mr. Godfrey Clarke (London, King and Co., 1873), mostly consisting of the minor tales from The Nights, especially this group between Nights ccxlvii. and cdlxi.; but rendered valuable by the annotations of my old friend, the late Frederick Ayrton.

[461] The reader will note the persistency with which the duty of universal benevolence is preached.

[462] Arab. from Pers. “Shah-bandar”: see vol. iv. 29.

[463] i.e. of thy coming, a popular compliment.

[464] This is the doctrine of the universal East; and it is true concerning wives and widows, not girls when innocent or rather ignorant. According to Western ideas Kamar al-Zaman was a young scoundrel of the darkest dye whose only excuses were his age, his inexperience and his passions.

[465] Arab. “Dayyъs” prop. = a man who pimps for his own wife and in this sense constantly occurring in conversation.

[466] This is taking the law into one’s own hands with a witness; yet amongst races who preserve the Pundonor in full and pristine force, e.g. the Afghans and the Persian Iliyat, the killing so far from being considered murder or even justifiable homicide would be highly commended by public opinion.

[467] Arab. “Nбkisбtu’aklin wa dнn”: the words are attributed to the Prophet whom we find saying, “Verily in your wives and children ye have an enemy, wherefore beware of them” (Koran lxiv. 14): compare 1 Cor. vii. 28, 32. But Maotre Jehan de Meung went farther,

> “Toutes кtez, serez ou fыtes
> De faict ou de volontй, putes.”

[468] Arab. “Habнbн wa tabнbн,” the common jingle.

[469] Iblis and his connection with Diabolos has been noticed in vol. i.

13. The word is foreign as well as a P.N. and therefore is imperfectly declined, although some authorities deduce it from “ablasa”=he despaired (of Allah’s mercy). Others call him Al-Hбris (the Lion) hence Eve’s first-born was named in his honour Abd al-Haris. His angelic name was Azбzнl before he sinned by refusing to prostrate himself to Adam, as Allah had commanded the heavenly host for a trial of faith, not to worship the first man, but to make him a Keblah or direction of prayer addressed to the Almighty. Hence he was ejected from Heaven and became the arch-enemy of mankind (Koran xviii. 48). He was an angel but related to the Jinn: Al-Bayzбwi, however (on Koran ii. 82), opines that angelic by nature he became a Jinn by act. Ibn Abbas held that he belonged to an order of angels who are called Jinn and begot issue as do the nasnбs, the Ghъl and the Kutrub which, however are male and female, like the pre-Adamite manwoman of Genesis, the “bi-une” of our modern days. For this subject see Terminal Essay.

[470] As usual in the East and in the West the husband was the last to hear of his wife’s ill conduct. But even Othello did not kill Emilia.

[471] i.e. Star of the Morning: the first word occurs in Bar Cokba Barchocheba=Son of the Star, i.e., which was to come out of Jacob (Numbers xxiv. 17). The root, which does not occur in Heb., is Kaukab to shine. This Rabbi Akilah was also called Bar Cozla= Son of the Lie.

[472] Here some excision has been judged advisable as the names of the bridegrooms and the brides recur with damnable iteration.

[473] See the note by Lane’s Shaykh at the beginning of the tale. The contrast between the vicious wife of servile origin and the virtuous wife of noble birth is fondly dwelt upon but not exaggerated.

[474] i.e. those of his water skins for the journey, which as usual required patching and supplying with fresh handles after long lying dry.

[475] A popular saying also applied to men. It is usually accompanied

with showing the open hand and a reference to the size of the fingers. I find this story most interesting from an anthropological point of view; suggesting how differently various races regard the subject of adultery. In Northern Europe the burden is thrown most unjustly upon the man, the woman who tempts him being a secondary consideration; and in England he is absurdly termed “a seducer.” In former times he was “paraded” or “called out,” now he is called up for damages, a truly ignoble and shopkeeper-like mode of treating a high offence against private property and public morality. In Anglo-America, where English feeling is exaggerated, the lover is revolver’d and the woman is left unpunished. On the other hand, amongst Eastern and especially Moslem peoples, the woman is cut down and scant reckoning is taken from the man. This more sensible procedure has struck firm root amongst the nations of Southern Europe where the husband kills the lover only when he still loves his wife and lover like is furious at her affection being alienated.

Practically throughout the civilised world there are only two ways of treating women, Moslems keep them close, defend them from all kinds of temptations and if they go wrong kill them. Christians place them upon a pedestal, the observed of all observers, expose them to every danger and if they fall, accuse and abuse them instead of themselves. And England is so grandly logical that her law, under certain circumstances, holds that Mrs. A. has committed adultery with Mr. B. but Mr. B. has not committed adultery with Mrs. A. Can any absurdity be more absurd? Only “summum jus, summa injuria.” See my Terminal Essay. I shall have more to say upon this curious subject, the treatment of women who can be thoroughly guarded only by two things, firstly their hearts and secondly by the “Spanish Padlock.”

[476] Lane owns that this is “one of the most entertaining tales in the work,” but he omits it “because its chief and best portion is essentially the same as the story of the First of the Three Ladies of Baghdad.” The truth is he was straitened for space by his publisher and thus compelled to cut out some of the best stories in The Nights.

[477] i.e. Ibrahim of Mosul, the musician poet often mentioned in The Nights. I must again warn the reader that the name is pronounced Is-hбk (like Isaac with a central aspirate) not Ishбk. This is not unnecessary when we hear Tait-shill for Tait's hill and "Frederick-shall" for {Friedrichs-hall.}

[478] i.e. He was a proficient, an adept.

[479] Arab. from Pers. Dъlбb=a waterwheel, a buttery, a cupboard.

[480] Arab. "Futъr," the chhotн hбzirн of Anglo-India or breakfast proper, eaten by Moslems immediately after the dawn- prayer except in Ramбzбn. Amongst sensible people it is a substantial meal of bread and boiled beans, eggs, cheese, curded milk and the pastry called fatнrah, followed by coffee and a pipe. See Lane M. E. chapt. v. and my Pilgrimage ii. 48.

[481] This "off-with-his-head" style must not be understood literally. As I have noted, it is intended by the writer to show the Kingship and the majesty of the "Vicar of Allah."

[482] Lit. "the calamity of man (insбn) is from the tongue" (lisбn).

[483] For Khatt Sharнf, lit.=a noble letter, see vol. ii. 39.

[484] Arab. "Allah yastura-k"=protect thee by hiding what had better be hidden.

[485] Arab. "Janбzнr"=chains, an Arabised plural of the Pers. Zanjнr with the metathesis or transposition of letters peculiar to the vulgar; "Janбzнr" for "Zanбjнr."

[486] Arab. "Safнnah"=(Noah's) Ark, a myth derived from the Baris of Egypt with subsequent embellishments from the Babylonian deluge-legends: the latter may have been survivals of the days when the waters of the Persian Gulf extended to the mountains of Eastern Syria. Hence I would explain the existence of extinct volcanoes within sight of Damascus (see Unexplored Syria i.) visited, I

believe, for the first time by my late friend Charles F. Tyrwhitt-Drake and myself in May, 1871.

[487] Mansur and Nбsir are passive and active participles from the same root, Nasr=victory; the former means triumphant and the latter triumphing.

[488] The normal term of Moslem mourning, which Mohammed greatly reduced disliking the abuse of it by the Jews who even in the present day are the strictest in its observance.

[489] An euphuistic and euphemistic style of saying, “No, we don’t know.”

[490] Arab. “Rahan,” an article placed with him in pawn.

[491] A Moslem is bound, not only by honour but by religion, to discharge the debts of his dead father and mother and so save them from punishment on Judgment-day. Mohammed who enjoined mercy to debtors while in the flesh (chapt. ii. 280, etc.) said “Allah covereth all faults except debt; that is to say, there will be punishment therefor.” Also “A martyr shall be pardoned every fault but debt.” On one occasion he refused to pray for a Moslem who died insolvent. Such harshness is a curious contrast with the leniency which advised the creditor to remit debts by way of alms. And practically this mild view of indebtedness renders it highly unadvisable to oblige a Moslem friend with a loan.

[492] i.e. he did not press them for payment; and, it must be remembered, he received no interest upon his monies, this being forbidden in the Koran.

[493] Al-Mas’ъdi (chap. xvii.) alludes to furs of Sable (Samъr), hermelline (Al-Farwah) and Bortбs (Turkish) furs of black and red foxes. For Samъr see vol. iv. 57. Sinjбb is Persian for the skin of the grey squirrel (Mus lemmus, the lemming), the meniver, erroneously miniver, (menu vair) as opposed to the ermine = (Mus Armenius, or mustela erminia.) I never visit England without being surprised at the

vile furs worn by the rich, and the folly of the poor in not adopting the sheepskin with the wool inside and the leather well tanned which keeps the peasant warm and comfortable between Croatia and Afghanistan.

[494] Arab. "Tбjir Alfн" which may mean a thousand dinars
(BJ500) or a thousand purses (=BJ5,000). "Alfн" is not an
uncommon
P.N., meaning that the bearer (Pasha or pauper) had been bought
for a thousand left indefinite.

[495] Tigris-Euphrates.

[496] Possibly the quarter of Baghdad so called and mentioned in The Nights more than once.

[497] For this fiery sea see Sind Revisited i. 19.

[498] Arab. "Al-Ghayb" which may also mean "in the future" (unknown to man).

[499] Arab. "Jabal"; here a mountainous island: see vol. i. 140.

[500] i.e. ye shall be spared this day's miseries. See my
Pilgrimage vol. i. 314, and the delight with which we glided into
Marsб Damghah.

[501] Arab. "Sъwбn"="Syenite" (-granite) also used for flint and other hard stones. See vol. i. 238.

[502] Koran xxiv. Male children are to the Arab as much prized an object of possession as riches, since without them wealth is of no value to him. Mohammed, therefore, couples wealth with children as the two things wherewith one wards off the ills of this world, though they are powerless against those of the world to come.

[503] An exclamation derived from the Surat Nasr (cx. 1) one of the most affecting in the Koran. It gave Mohammed warning of his death

and caused Al-Abbбs to shed tears; the Prophet sings a song of victory in the ixth year of the Hijrah (he died on the xth) and implores the pardon of his Lord.

[504] Arab. “Dбirah,” a basin surrounded by hills. The words which follow may mean, “An hour’s journey or more in breadth.”

[505] These petrified folk have occurred in the “Eldest Lady’s Tale” (vol. i. 165), where they are of “black stone.”

[506] Arab. “Tбj Kisrawi,” such as was worn by the Chosroes Kings. See vol. i. 75.

[507] The familiar and far-famed Napoleonic pose, with the arms crossed over the breast, is throughout the East the attitude assumed by slave and servant in presence of his master. Those who send statues to Anglo-India should remember this.

[508] Arab. “Tб бlнk”=hanging lamps, often in lantern shape with coloured glass and profuse ornamentation; the Maroccan are now familiar to England.

[509] Arab. “Kidrah,” lit.=a pot, kettle; it can hardly mean “an interval.”

[510] The wicket or small doorway, especially by the side of a gate or portal, is called “the eye of the needle” and explains Matt. xix. 24, and Koran vii. 38. In the Rabbinic form of the proverb the camel becomes an elephant. Some have preferred to change the Koranic Jamal (camel) for Habl (cable) and much ingenuity has been wasted by Christian commentators on Mark x. 25, and Luke xviii. 25.

[511] i.e. A “Kanz” (enchanted treasury) usually hidden underground but opened by a counter-spell and transferred to earth’s face. The reader will note the gorgeousness of the picture.

[512] Oriental writers, Indian and Persian, as well as Arab, lay great stress upon the extreme delicacy of the skin of the fair ones celebrated in their works, constantly attributing to their heroines

bodies so sensitive as to brook with difficulty the contact of the finest shift. Several instances of this will be found in the present collection and we may fairly assume that the skin of an Eastern beauty, under the influence of constant seclusion and the unremitting use of cosmetics and the bath, would in time attain a pitch of delicacy and sensitiveness such as would in some measure justify the seemingly extravagant statements of their poetical admirers, of which the following anecdote (quoted by Ibn Khellikan from the historian Et Teberi) is a fair specimen. Ardeshir ibn Babek (Artaxerxes I.), the first Sassanian King of Persia (A.D. 226-242), having long unsuccessfully besieged El Hedr, a strong city of Mesopotamia belonging to the petty King Es Satiroun, at last obtained possession of it by the treachery of the owner's daughter Nezireh and married the latter, this having been the price stipulated by her for the betrayal to him of the place. "It happened afterwards that, one night, as she was unable to sleep and turned from side to side in the bed, Ardeshir asked her what prevented her from sleeping. She replied, 'I never yet slept on a rougher bed than this; I feel something irk me.' He ordered the bed to be changed, but she was still unable to sleep. Next morning, she complained of her side, and on examination, a myrtle-leaf was found adhering to a fold of the skin, from which it had drawn blood. Astonished at this circumstance, Ardeshir asked her if it was this that had kept her awake and she replied in the affirmative. 'How then,' asked he, 'did your father bring you up?' She answered, 'He spread me a bed of satin and clad me in silk and fed me with marrow and cream and the honey of virgin bees and gave me pure wine to drink.' Quoth Ardeshir, 'The same return which you made your father for his kindness would be made much more readily to me'; and bade bind her by the hair to the tail of a horse, which galloped off with her and killed her." It will be remembered that the true princess, in the well-known German popular tale, is discovered by a similar incident to that of the myrtle-leaf. I quote this excellent note from Mr. Payne (ix. 148), only regretting that annotation did not enter into his plan of producing The Nights. Amongst Hindu story-tellers a phenomenal softness of the skin is a lieu commun: see Vikram and the Vampire (p.285, "Of the marvellous delicacy of their Queens"); and the Tale of the Sybarite might be referred to in the lines given above.

[513] "(55) Indeed joyous on that day are the people of Paradise in their employ; (56) In shades, on bridal couches reclining they and their wives: (57) Fruits have they therein and whatso they desire. (58) 'Peace!' shall be a word from a compassionating Lord." Koran xxxvi. 55-58, the famous Chapt. "Yб Sнn;" which most educated Moslems learn by heart. See vol. iii. 19. In addition to the proofs there offered that the Moslem Paradise is not wholly sensual I may quote, "No soul wotteth what coolth of the eyes is reserved (for the good) in recompense of their works" (Koran lxx. 17). The Paradise of eating, drinking, and copulating which Mr. Palgrave (Arabia, i. 368) calls "an everlasting brothel between forty celestial concubines" was preached solely to the baser sort of humanity which can understand and appreciate only the pleasures of the flesh. To talk of spiritual joys before the Badawin would have been a non-sens, even as it would be to the roughs of our great cities.

[514] Arab. "Lajlaj" lit.=rolling anything round the mouth when eating; hence speaking inarticulately, being tongue-tied, stuttering, etc.

[515] The classical "Phylarchs," who had charge of the Badawin.

[516] "The Jabбbirah" (giant-rulers of Syria) and the "Akбsirah" (Chosroлs-Kings of Persia).

[517] This shows (and we are presently told) that the intruder was Al-Khizr, the "Green Prophet," for whom see vol. iv. 175.

[518] i.e. of salvation supposed to radiate from all Prophets, esp. from Mohammed.

[519] This formula which has occurred from the beginning (vol.i.1) is essentially Koranic: See Chapt. li. 18-19 and passim.

[520] This trick of the priest hidden within the image may date from the days of the vocal Memnon, and was a favourite in

India, especially at the shrine of Somnauth (Soma-nбth), the Moon-god, Atergatis Aphrodite, etc.

[521] Arab. “Almбs”=Gr. Adamas. In opposition to the learned ex-Professor Maskelyne I hold that the cutting of the diamond is of very ancient date. Mr. W. M. Flinders Patrie (The Pyramids and Temples of Gizah, London: Field and Tuer, 1884) whose studies have thoroughly demolished the freaks and unfacts, the fads and fancies of the “Pyramidists,” and who may be said to have raised measurement to the rank of a fine art, believes that the Euritic statues of old Egypt such as that of Khufu (Cheops) in the Bulak Museum were drilled by means of diamonds. Athenжus tells us (lib. v.) that the Indians brought pearls and diamonds to the procession of Ptolemy Philadelphus; and this suggests cutting, as nothing can be less ornamental than the uncut stone.

[522] i.e. as if they were holding a “Durbar”; the King’s idol in the Sadr or place of honour and the others ranged about it in their several ranks.

[523] These words are probably borrowed from the taunts of Elijah to the priests of Baal (1 Kings xviii. 27). Both Jews and Moslems wilfully ignored the proper use of the image or idol which was to serve as a Keblah or direction of prayer and an object upon which to concentrate thought and looked only to the abuse of the ignobile vulgus who believe in its intrinsic powers. Christendom has perpetuated the dispute: Romanism affects statues and pictures: Greek orthodoxy pictures and not statues and the so-called Protestantism ousts both.

[524] Arab. “Sa’бdah”=worldly prosperity and future happiness.

[525] Arab. “Al-Ahd wa al-Mнsбk” the troth pledged between the Murнd or apprentice-Darwaysh and the Shaykh or Master-Darwaysh binding the former to implicit obedience etc.

[526] Arab. “Taakhнr” lit. postponement and meaning acting with deliberation as opposed to “Ajal” (haste), precipitate action

condemned in the Koran lxv. 38.

[527] i.e. I have been lucky enough to get this and we will share it amongst us.

[528] i.e. of saving me from being ravished.

[529] Sa’нdah=the auspicious (fem.): Mubбrakah,=the blessed; both names showing that the bearers were Moslemahs.

[530] i.e. the base-born from whom base deeds may be expected.

[531] Arab. “Badlat Kunъzнyah”=such a dress as would be found in enchanted hoards (Kunъz): e.g. Prince Esterhazy’s diamond jacket.

[532] The lieu d’aisance in Eastern crafts is usually a wooden cage or framework fastened outside the gunwale, very cleanly but in foul weather very uncomfortable and even dangerous.

[533] Arab. “Ghull,” a collar of iron or other metal, sometimes made to resemble the Chinese Kza or Cangue, a kind of ambulant pillory, serving like the old stocks which still show in England the veteris vestigia ruris. See Davis, “The Chinese,” i. 241. According to Al-Siyъti () the Caliph Al-Mutawakkil ordered the Christians to wear these Ghulls round the neck, yellow head-gear and girdles, to use wooden stirrups and to place figures of devils before their houses. The writer of The Nights presently changes Ghull to “chains” and “fetters of iron.”

[534] Arab. “Yб fulбn,” O certain person! See vol. iii. 191.

[535] Father of Harun al-Rashid A.H. 158-169 (=775-785) third Abbaside who both in the Mac. and the Bul. Edits. is called “the fifth of the sons of Al-Abbas.” He was a good poet and a man of letters, also a fierce persecutor of the “Zindiks” (Al-Siyuti 278), a term especially applied to those who read the Zend books and adhered to Zoroastrianism, although afterwards applied to any heretic or atheist. He made many changes at Meccah and was the first who had a train

of camels laden with snow for his refreshment along a measured road of 700 miles (Gibbon, chapt. lii.). He died of an accident when hunting: others say he was poisoned after leaving his throne to his sons Musa al-Hadi and Harun al-Rashid. The name means "Heaven-directed" and must not be confounded with the title of the twelfth Shi'ah Im6m Mohammed Abu al-K6sim born at Sarramanrai A.H. 255 whom Sale (sect. iv.) calls "Mahdi or Director" and whose expected return has caused and will cause so much trouble in Al-Islam.

[536] This speciosum miraculum must not be held a proof that the tale was written many years after the days of Al-Rashid. Miracles grow apace in the East and a few years suffice to mature them. The invasion of Abraha the Abyssinia{n} took place during the year of Mohammed's birth; and yet in an early chapter of the Koran (No. cv.) written perhaps forty-five years afterwards, the small-pox is turned into a puerile and extravagant miracle. I myself became the subject of a miracle in Sind which is duly chronicled in the family-annals of a certain Pir or religious teacher. See History of Sindh () and Sind Revisited (i. 156).

[537] In the texts, "Sixth."

[538] Arab. "Najis"=ceremonially impure especially the dog's mouth like the cow's mouth amongst the Hindus; and requiring after contact the Wuzu-ablution before the Moslem can pray.

[539] Arab. "Akl al-hashamah" (hashamah=retinue; hishmah=reverence, bashfulness) which may also mean "decorously and respectfully," according to the vowel-points.

[540] i.e. as the Vice-regent of Allah and Vicar of the Prophet.

[541] For the superiority of mankind to the Jinn see vol. viii. 5;44.

[542] According to Al-Siyuti, Harun al-Rashid prayed every day a hundred bows.

[543] As the sad end of his betrothed was still to be accounted for.

[544] For the martyrdom of the drowned see vol. i, 171, to quote no other places.

[545] i.e. if he have the power to revenge himself. The sentiment is Christian rather than Moslem.

[546] i.e. the power acquired (as we afterwards learn) by the regular praying of the dawn-prayer. It is not often that The Nights condescend to point a moral or inculcate a lesson as here; and we are truly thankful for the immunity.

[547] Arab. “Musбfahah” which, I have said, serves for our shaking hands: and extends over wide regions. They apply the palms of the right hands flat to each other without squeezing the fingers and then raise the latter to the forehead. Pilgrimage ii. 332, has also been quoted.

[548] Equivalent to our saying about an ill wind, etc.

[549] A proof of his extreme simplicity and bonhomie.

[550] Arab. “Dбrfнl”=the Gr. {delphнs} later {delphнn}, suggesting that the writer had read of Arion in Herodotus i. 23.

[551] ‘Aъj; I can only suggest, with due diffidence, that this is intended for Kъch the well-known Baloch city in Persian Carmania (Kirmбn) and meant by Richardson’s “Koch Гj buloch.” But as the writer borrows so much from Al-Mas’udi it may possibly be Aъk in Sнstбn where stood the heretical city “Shбdrak,” chapt. cxxii.

[552] i.e. The excellent (or surpassing) Religious. Shaykhah, the fem. of Shaykh, is a she-chief, even the head of the dancing- girls will be entitled “Shaykhah.”

[553] The curtain would screen her from the sight of men- invalids and probably hung across the single room of the “Zбwiyah” or hermit’s

cell. The curtain is noticed in the tales of two other reverend women; vols. {v.} 155 and v. 257.

[554] Abdullah met his wife on Thursday, the night of which would amongst Moslems be Friday night.

[555] i.e. with Sa'idah.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

VOLUME X.

To
His Excellency Yacoub Artin Pasha,

Minister of Instruction, Etc. Etc. Etc. Cairo.

My Dear Pasha, During the last dozen years, since we first met at Cairo, you have done much for Egyptian folk-lore and you can do much more. This volume is inscribed to you with a double purpose; first it is intended as a public expression of gratitude for your friendly assistance; and, secondly, as a memento that the samples which you have given us imply a promise of further gift. With this lively sense of favours to come I subscribe myself

Ever yours friend and fellow worker,
Richard F. Burton
London, July 12, 1886.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

MA'ARUF THE COBBLER AND HIS WIFE

There dwelt once upon a time in the God-guarded city of Cairo a cobbler who lived by patching old shoes.[1] His name was Ma'aruf[2] and he had a wife called Fatimah, whom the folk had nicknamed "The Dung;"[3] for that she was a whorish, worthless wretch, scanty of shame and mickle of mischief. She ruled her spouse and abused him; and he feared her malice and dreaded her misdoings; for that he was a sensible man but poor-conditioned. When he earned much, he spent it on her, and when he gained little, she revenged herself on his body that night, leaving him no peace and making his night black as her book;[4] for she was even as of one like her saith the poet: —

How manifold nights have I passed with my wife * In the saddest
plight with all misery rife:
Would Heaven when first I went in to her * With a cup of cold
poison I'd ta'en her life.

One day she said to him, "O Ma'aruf, I wish thee to bring me this night a vermicelli-cake dressed with bees' honey."[5] He replied, "So Allah Almighty aid me to its price, I will bring it thee. By Allah, I have no dirhams to-day, but our Lord will make things easy."[6] Rejoined she, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Ninetieth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ma'aruf the Cobbler said to his spouse, "By Allah, I have no dirhams to-day, but our Lord will make things easy to me!" She rejoined, "I wot naught of these words; look thou come not to me save with the vermicelli and bees' honey; else will I make thy night black as thy fortune whenas thou fellest into my hand." Quoth he, "Allah is bountiful!" and going out with grief scattering itself from his body, prayed the dawn-prayer and opened his shop. After which he sat till noon, but no work came to him and his fear of his wife redoubled. Then he arose and went out perplexed as to how he should do in the matter of the vermicelli-cake, seeing he had not even the wherewithal to buy bread. Presently he came to the shop of the Kunafah-seller and stood before it, whilst his eyes brimmed with tears. The pastry-cook glanced at him and said, “O Master Ma’aruf, why dost thou weep? Tell me what hath befallen thee.” So he acquainted him with his case, saying, “My wife would have me bring her a Kunafah; but I have sat in my shop till past mid-day and have not gained even the price of bread; wherefore I am in fear of her.” The cook laughed and said, “No harm shall come to thee. How many pounds wilt thou have?” “Five pounds,” answered Ma’aruf. So the man weighed him out five pounds of vermicelli-cake and said to him, “I have clarified butter, but no bees’ honey. Here is drip-honey,[7] however, which is better than bees’ honey; and what harm will there be, if it be with drip-honey?” Ma’aruf was ashamed to object, because the pastry-cook was to have patience with him for the price, and said, “Give it me with drip-honey.” So he fried a vermicelli-cake for him with butter and drenched it with drip-honey, till it was fit to present to Kings. Then he asked him, “Dost thou want bread[8] and cheese?”; and Ma’aruf answered, “Yes.” So he gave him four half dirhams worth of bread and one of cheese, and the vermicelli was ten nusfs. Then said he, “Know, O Ma’aruf, that thou owest me fifteen nusfs; so go to thy wife and make merry and take this nusf for the Hammam;[9] and thou shalt have credit for a day or two or three till Allah provide thee with thy daily bread. And straiten not thy wife, for I will have patience with thee till such time as thou shalt have dirhams to spare.” So Ma’aruf took the vermicelli-cake and bread and cheese and went away, with a heart at ease, blessing the pastry-cook and saying, “Extolled be Thy perfection, O my Lord! How bountiful art Thou!” When he came home, his wife enquired of him, “Hast thou brought the vermicelli-cake?”; and, replying “Yes,” he set it before her. She looked at it and seeing that it was dressed with cane-honey,[10] said to him, “Did I not bid thee bring it with bees’ honey? Wilt thou contrary my wish and have it dressed with cane-honey?” He excused himself to her, saying, “I bought it not save on credit;” but said she, “This talk is idle; I will not eat Kunafah save with bees’ honey.” And she was wroth with it and threw it in his face, saying, “Begone, thou pimp, and bring me other than this !” Then she dealt him a buffet on the cheek and knocked out one of his teeth. The blood ran down upon his breast and for stress of anger he smote her on the head a single blow and a slight; whereupon she clutched his beard and fell to shouting out and saying, “Help, O Moslems!” So the neighbours came in and freed his beard from her grip; then they reproved and reproached her, saying, “We are all content to eat Kunafah with cane-honey. Why, then, wilt thou oppress this poor man thus? Verily, this is disgraceful in thee!” And they went on to soothe her till they made peace between her and him. But, when the folk were gone, she sware that she would not eat of the vermicelli, and Ma’aruf, burning with hunger, said in himself, “She sweareth that she will not eat; so I will e’en eat.” Then he ate, and when she saw him eating, she said, “Inshallah, may the eating of it be poison to destroy the far one’s body.”[11] Quoth he, “It shall not be at thy bidding,” and went on eating, laughing and saying, “Thou swarest that thou wouldst not eat of this; but Allah is bountiful, and to-morrow night, an the Lord decree, I will bring thee Kunafah dressed with bees’ honey, and thou shalt eat it alone.” And he applied himself to appeasing her, whilst she called down curses upon him; and she ceased not to rail at him and revile him with gross abuse till the morning, when she bared her forearm to beat him. Quoth he, “Give me time and I will bring thee other vermicelli-cake.” Then he went out to the mosque and prayed, after which he betook himself to his shop and opening it, sat down; but hardly had he done this when up came two runners from the Kazi’s court and said to him, “Up with thee, speak with the Kazi, for thy wife hath complained of thee to him and her favour is thus and thus.” He recognised her by their description; and saying, “May Allah Almighty torment her!” walked with them till he came to the Kazi’s presence, where he found Fatimah standing with her arm bound up and her face-veil besmeared with blood; and she was weeping and wiping away her tears. Quoth the Kazi, “Ho man, hast thou no fear of Allah the Most High? Why hast thou beaten this good woman and broken her forearm and knocked out her tooth and entreated her thus?” And quoth Ma’aruf, “If I beat her or put out her tooth, sentence me to what thou wilt; but in truth the case was thus and thus and the neighbours made peace between me and her.” And he told him the story from first to last. Now this Kazi was a benevolent man; so he brought out to him a quarter dinar, saying, “O man, take this and get her Kunafah with bees' honey and do ye make peace, thou and she." Quoth Ma'aruf, "Give it to her." So she took it and the Kazi made peace between them, saying, "O wife, obey thy husband; and thou, O man, deal kindly with her.[12] " Then they left the court, reconciled at the Kazi's hands, and the woman went one way, whilst her husband returned by another way to his shop and sat there, when, behold, the runners came up to him and said, "Give us our fee." Quoth he, "The Kazi took not of me aught; on the contrary, he gave me a quarter dinar." But quoth they "'Tis no concern of ours whether the Kazi took of thee or gave to thee, and if thou give us not our fee, we will exact it in despite of thee." And they fell to dragging him about the market; so he sold his tools and gave them half a dinar, whereupon they let him go and went away, whilst he put his hand to his cheek and sat sorrowful, for that he had no tools wherewith to work. Presently, up came two ill-favoured fellows and said to him, "Come, O man, and speak with the Kazi; for thy wife hath complained of thee to him." Said he, "He made peace between us just now." But said they, "We come from another Kazi, and thy wife hath complained of thee to our Kazi." So he arose and went with them to their Kazi, calling on Allah for aid against her; and when he saw her, he said to her, "Did we not make peace, good woman?" Whereupon she cried, "There abideth no peace between me and thee." Accordingly he came forward and told the Kazi his story, adding, "And indeed the Kazi Such-an-one made peace between us this very hour." Whereupon the Kazi said to her, "O strumpet, since ye two have made peace with each other, why comest thou to me complaining?" Quoth she, "He beat me after that;" but quoth the Kazi, "Make peace each with other, and beat her not again, and she will cross thee no more." So they made peace and the Kazi said to Ma'aruf, "Give the runners their fee." So he gave them their fee and going back to his shop, opened it and sat down, as he were a drunken man for excess of the chagrin which befel him. Presently, while he was still sitting, behold, a man came up to him and said, "O Ma'aruf, rise and hide thyself, for thy wife hath complained of thee to the High Court[13] and Abú Tabak[14] is after thee." So he shut his shop and fled towards the Gate of Victory.[15] He had five nusfs of silver left of the price of the lasts and gear; and therewith he bought four worth of bread and one of cheese, as he fled from her. Now it was the winter season and the hour of mid-afternoon prayer; so, when he came out among the rubbish-mounds the rain descended upon him, like water from the mouths of water-skins, and his clothes were drenched. He therefore entered the ‘Adiliyah,[16] where he saw a ruined place and therein a deserted cell without a door; and in it he took refuge and found shelter from the rain. The tears streamed from his eyelids, and he fell to complaining of what had betided him and saying, “Whither shall I flee from this whore? I beseech Thee, O Lord, to vouchsafe me one who shall conduct me to a far country, where she shall not know the way to me!” Now while he sat weeping, behold, the wall clave and there came forth to him therefrom one of tall stature, whose aspect caused his body-pile to bristle and his flesh to creep, and said to him, “O man, what aileth thee that thou disturbest me this night? These two hundred years have I dwelt here and have never seen any enter this place and do as thou dost. Tell me what thou wishest and I will accomplish thy need, as ruth for thee hath got hold upon my heart.” Quoth Ma’aruf, “Who and what art thou?”; and quoth he, “I am the Haunter[17] of this place.” So Ma’aruf told him all that had befallen him with his wife and he said, “Wilt thou have me convey thee to a country, where thy wife shall know no way to thee?” “Yes,” said Ma’aruf; and the other, “Then mount my back.” So he mounted on his back and he flew with him from after supper-tide till daybreak, when he set him down on the top of a high mountain — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Ninety-first Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Marid having taken up Ma’aruf the Cobbler, flew off with him and set him down upon a high mountain and said to him, “O mortal, descend this mountain and thou wilt see the gate of a city. Enter it, for therein thy wife cannot come at thee.” He then left him and went his way, whilst Ma’aruf abode in amazement and perplexity till the sun rose, when he said to himself, “I will up with me and go down into the city: indeed there is no profit in my abiding upon this highland.” So he descended to the mountain-foot and saw a city girt by towering walls, full of lofty palaces and gold-adorned buildings which was a delight to beholders. He entered in at the gate and found it a place such as lightened the grieving heart; but, as he walked through the streets the townsfolk stared at him as a curiosity and gathered about him, marvelling at his dress, for it was unlike theirs. Presently, one of them said to him, “O man, art thou a stranger?” “Yes.” “What countryman art thou?” “I am from the city of Cairo the Auspicious.” “And when didst thou leave Cairo?” “I left it yesterday, at the hour of afternoon-prayer.” Whereupon the man laughed at him and cried out, saying, “Come look, O folk, at this man and hear what he saith!” Quoth they, “What doeth he say?”; and quoth the townsman, “He pretendeth that he cometh from Cairo and left it yesterday at the hour of afternoon-prayer!” At this they all laughed and gathering round Ma’aruf, said to him, “O man, art thou mad to talk thus? How canst thou pretend that thou leftest Cairo at mid-afternoon yesterday and foundedst thyself this morning here, when the truth is that between our city and Cairo lieth a full year’s journey?” Quoth he, “None is mad but you. As for me, I speak sooth, for here is bread which I brought with me from Cairo, and see, ’tis yet new.” Then he showed them the bread and they stared at it, for it was unlike their country bread. So the crowd increased about him and they said to one another, “This is Cairo bread: look at it;” and he became a gazing-stock in the city and some believed him, whilst others gave him the lie and made mock of him. Whilst this was going on, behold, up came a merchant riding on a she-mule and followed by two black slaves, and brake a way through the people, saying, “O folk, are ye not ashamed to mob this stranger and make mock of him and scoff at him?” And he went on to rate them, till he drave them away from Ma’aruf, and none could make him any answer. Then he said to the stranger, “Come, O my brother, no harm shall betide thee from these folk. Verily they have no shame.”[18] So he took him and carrying him to a spacious and richly-adorned house, seated him in a speak-room fit for a King, whilst he gave an order to his slaves, who opened a chest and brought out to him a dress such as might be worn by a merchant worth a thousand.[19] He clad him therewith and Ma’aruf, being a seemly man, became as he were consul of the merchants. Then his host called for food and they set before them a tray of all manner exquisite viands. The twain ate and drank and the merchant said to Ma'aruf, "O my brother, what is thy name?" "My name is Ma'aruf and I am a cobbler by trade and patch old shoes." "What countryman art thou?" "I am from Cairo." "What quarter?" "Dost thou know Cairo?" "I am of its children.[20] I come from the Red Street.[21] " "And whom dost thou know in the Red Street?" "I know such an one and such an one," answered Ma'aruf and named several people to him. Quoth the other, "Knowest thou Shaykh Ahmad the druggist?[22] " "He was my next neighbour, wall to wall." "Is he well?" "Yes." "How many sons hath he?" "Three, Mustafà, Mohammed and Ali." "And what hath Allah done with them?" "As for Mustafà, he is well and he is a learned man, a professor[23] : Mohammed is a druggist and opened him a shop beside that of his father, after he had married, and his wife hath borne him a son named Hasan." "Allah gladden thee with good news!" said the merchant; and Ma'aruf continued, "As for Ali, he was my friend, when we were boys, and we always played together, I and he. We used to go in the guise of the children of the Nazarenes and enter the church and steal the books of the Christians and sell them and buy food with the price. It chanced once that the Nazarenes caught us with a book; whereupon they complained of us to our folk and said to Ali's father: — An thou hinder not thy son from troubling us, we will complain of thee to the King. So he appeased them and gave Ali a thrashing; wherefore he ran away none knew whither and he hath now been absent twenty years and no man hath brought news of him." Quoth the host, "I am that very Ali, son of Shaykh Ahmad the druggist, and thou art my playmate Ma'aruf."[24] So they saluted each other and after the salam Ali said, "Tell me why, O Ma'aruf, thou camest from Cairo to this city." Then he told him all that had befallen him of ill-doing with his wife Fatimah the Dung and said, "So, when her annoy waxed on me, I fled from her towards the Gate of Victory and went forth the city. Presently, the rain fell heavy on me; so I entered a ruined cell in the Adiliyah and sat there, weeping; whereupon there came forth to me the Haunter of the place, which was an Ifrit of the Jinn, and questioned me. I acquainted him with my case and he took me on his back and flew with me all night between heaven and earth, till he set me down on yonder mountain and gave me to know of this city. So I came down from the mountain and entered the city, when people crowded about me and questioned me. I told them that I had left Cairo yesterday, but they believed me not, and presently thou camest up and driving the folk away from me, carriedst me this house. Such, then, is the cause of my quitting Cairo; and thou, what object brought thee hither?” Quoth Ali, “The giddiness[25] of folly turned my head when I was seven years old, from which time I wandered from land to land and city to city, till I came to this city, the name whereof is Ikhtiyán al-Khatan.[26] I found its people an hospitable folk and a kindly, compassionate for the poor man and selling to him on credit and believing all he said. So quoth I to them: — I am a merchant and have preceded my packs and I need a place wherein to bestow my baggage. And they believed me and assigned me a lodging. Then quoth I to them: — Is there any of you will lend me a thousand dinars, till my loads arrive, when I will repay it to him; for I am in want of certain things before my goods come? They gave me what I asked and I went to the merchants’ bazar, where, seeing goods, I bought them and sold them next day at a profit of fifty gold pieces and bought others.[27] And I consorted with the folk and entreated them liberally, so that they loved me, and I continued to sell and buy, till I grew rich. Know, O my brother, that the proverb saith, The world is show and trickery: and the land where none wotteth thee, there do whatso liketh thee. Thou too, an thou say to all who ask thee, I’m a cobbler by trade and poor withal, and I fled from my wife and left Cairo yesterday, they will not believe thee and thou wilt be a laughing-stock among them as long as thou abidest in the city; whilst, an thou tell them, An Ifrit brought me hither, they will take fright at thee and none will come near thee; for they will say, This man is possessed of an Ifrit and harm will betide whoso approacheth him. And such public report will be dishonouring both to thee and to me, because they ken I come from Cairo.” Ma’aruf asked:— “How then shall I do?”; and Ali answered, “I will tell thee how thou shalt do, Inshallah! To-morrow I will give thee a thousand dinars and a she-mule to ride and a black slave, who shall walk before thee and guide thee to the gate of the merchants’ bazar; and do thou go into them. I will be there sitting amongst them, and when I see thee, I will rise to thee and salute thee with the salam and kiss thy hand and make a great man of thee. Whenever I ask thee of any kind of stuff, saying, Hast thou brought with thee aught of such a kind? do thou answer, “Plenty.[28] “ And if they question me of thee, I will praise thee and magnify thee in their eyes and say to them, Get him a store-house and a shop. I also will give thee out for a man of great wealth and generosity; and if a beggar come to thee, bestow upon him what thou mayst; so will they put faith in what I say and believe in thy greatness and generosity and love thee. Then will I invite thee to my house and invite all the merchants on thy account and bring together thee and them, so that all may know thee and thou know them,” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Ninety-second Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the merchant Ali said to Ma’aruf, “I will invite thee to my house and invite all the merchants on thy account and bring together thee and them, so that all may know thee and thou know them, whereby thou shalt sell and buy and take and give with them; nor will it be long ere thou become a man of money.” Accordingly, on the morrow he gave him a thousand dinars and a suit of clothes and a black slave and mounting him on a she-mule, said to him, “Allah give thee quittance of responsibility for all this,[29] inasmuch as thou art my friend and it behoveth me to deal generously with thee. Have no care; but put away from thee the thought of thy wife’s misways and name her not to any.” “Allah requite thee with good!” replied Ma’aruf and rode on, preceded by his blackamoor till the slave brought him to the gate of the merchants’ bazar, where they were all seated, and amongst them Ali, who when he saw him, rose and threw himself upon him, crying, “A blessed day, O Merchant Ma’aruf, O man of good works and kindness[30] !” And he kissed his hand before the merchants and said to them, “Our brothers, ye are honoured by knowing[31] the merchant Ma’aruf.” So they saluted him, and Ali signed to them to make much of him, wherefore he was magnified in their eyes. Then Ali helped him to dismount from his she-mule and saluted him with the salam; after which he took the merchants apart, one after other, and vaunted Ma’aruf to them. They asked, “Is this man a merchant?;” and he answered, “Yes; and indeed he is the chiefest of merchants, there liveth not a wealthier than he; for his wealth and the riches of his father and forefathers are famous among the merchants of Cairo. He hath partners in Hind and Sind and Al-Yaman and is high in repute for generosity. So know ye his rank and exalt ye his degree and do him service, and wot also that his coming to your city is not for the sake of traffic, and none other save to divert himself with the sight of folk's countries: indeed, he hath no need of strangerhood for the sake of gain and profit, having wealth that fires cannot consume, and I am one of his servants." And he ceased not to extol him, till they set him above their heads and began to tell one another of his qualities. Then they gathered round him and offered him junkets[32] and sherbets, and even the Consul of the Merchants came to him and saluted him; whilst Ali proceeded to ask him, in the presence of the traders, "O my lord, haply thou hast brought with thee somewhat of such and such a stuff?"; and Ma'aruf answered,"Plenty." Now Ali had that day shown him various kinds of costly clothes and had taught him the names of the different stuffs, dear and cheap. Then said one of the merchants, "O my lord, hast thou brought with thee yellow broad cloth?": and Ma'aruf said, "Plenty"! Quoth another, "And gazelles' blood red[33] ?"; and quoth the Cobbler, "Plenty"; and as often as he asked him of aught, he made him the same answer. So the other said, "O Merchant Ali had thy countryman a mind to transport a thousand loads of costly stuffs, he could do so"; and Ali said, "He would take them from a single one of his store-houses, and miss naught thereof." Now whilst they were sitting, behold, up came a beggar and went the round of the merchants. One gave him a half dirham and another a copper,[34] but most of them gave him nothing, till he came to Ma'aruf who pulled out a handful of gold and gave it to him, whereupon he blessed him and went his ways. The merchants marvelled at this and said, "Verily, this is a King's bestowal for he gave the beggar gold without count, and were he not a man of vast wealth and money without end, he had not given a beggar a handful of gold." After a while, there came to him a poor woman and he gave her a handful of gold; whereupon she went away, blessing him, and told the other beggars, who came to him, one after other, and he gave them each a handful of gold, till he disbursed the thousand dinars. Then he struck hand upon hand and said, "Allah is our sufficient aid and excellent is the Agent!" Quoth the Consul, "What aileth thee, O Merchant

Ma'aruf?"; and quoth he, "It seemeth that the most part of the people of this city are poor and needy; had I known their misery I would have brought with me a large sum of money in my saddle-bags and given largesse thereof to the poor. I fear me I may be long abroad[35] and 'tis not in my nature to baulk a beggar; and I have no gold left: so, if a pauper come to me, what shall I say to him?" Quoth the Consul, "Say, Allah will send thee thy daily bread[36] !"; but Ma'aruf replied, "That is not my practice and I am care-ridden because of this. Would I had other thousand dinars, wherewith to give alms till my baggage come!" "Have no care for that," quoth the Consul and sending one of his dependents for a thousand dinars, handed them to Ma'aruf, who went on giving them to every beggar who passed till the call to noon-prayer. Then they entered the Cathedral-mosque and prayed the noon-prayers, and what was left him of the thousand gold pieces he scattered on the heads of the worshippers. This drew the people's attention to him and they blessed him, whilst the merchants marvelled at the abundance of his generosity and openhandedness. Then he turned to another trader and borrowing of him other thousand ducats, gave these also away, whilst Merchant Ali looked on at what he did, but could not speak. He ceased not to do thus till the call to mid-afternoon prayer, when he entered the mosque and prayed and distributed the rest of the money. On this wise, by the time they locked the doors of the bazar,[37] he had borrowed five thousand sequins and given them away, saying to every one of whom he took aught, "Wait till my baggage come when, if thou desire gold I will give thee gold, and if thou desire stuffs, thou shalt have stuffs; for I have no end of them." At eventide Merchant Ali invited Ma'aruf and the rest of the traders to an entertainment and seated him in the upper end, the place of honour, where he talked of nothing but cloths and jewels, and whenever they made mention to him of aught, he said, "I have plenty of it." Next day, he again repaired to the market-street where he showed a friendly bias towards the merchants and borrowed of them more money, which he distributed to the poor: nor did he leave doing thus twenty days, till he had borrowed threescore thousand dinars, and still there came no baggage, no, nor a burning plague.[38] At last folk began to clamour for their money and say, "The merchant Ma'aruf's baggage cometh not. How long will he take people's monies and give them to the poor?" And quoth one of them, "My rede is that we speak to Merchant Ali." So they went to him and said, "O Merchant Ali, Merchant Ma'aruf's baggage cometh not." Said he, "Have patience, it cannot fail to come soon." Then he took Ma'aruf aside and said to him, "O Ma'aruf, what fashion is this? Did I bid thee brown[39] the bread or burn it? The merchants clamour for their coin and tell me that thou owest them sixty thousand dinars, which thou hast borrowed and given away to the poor. How wilt thou satisfy the folk, seeing that thou neither sellest nor buyest?" Said Ma'aruf, "What matters it[40] ; and what are threescore thousand dinars? When my baggage shall come, I will pay them in stuffs or in gold and silver, as they will." Quoth Merchant Ali, "Allah is Most Great! Hast thou then any baggage?"; and he said, "Plenty." Cried the other, "Allah and the Hallows[41] requite thee thine impudence! Did I teach thee this saying, that thou shouldst repeat it to me? But I will acquaint the folk with thee." Ma'aruf rejoined, "Begone and prate no more! Am I a poor man? I have endless wealth in my baggage and as soon as it cometh, they shall have their money's worth two for one. I have no need of them." At this Merchant Ali waxed wroth and said, "Unmannerly wight that thou art, I will teach thee to lie to me and be not ashamed!" Said Ma'aruf, "E'en work the worst thy hand can do! They must wait till my baggage come, when they shall have their due and more." So Ali left him and went away, saying in himself, "I praised him whilome and if I blame him now, I make myself out a liar and become of those of whom it is said:- -Whoso praiseth and then blameth lieth twice."[42] And he knew not what to do. Presently, the traders came to him and said, "O Merchant Ali, hast thou spoken to him?" Said he, "O folk, I am ashamed and, though he owe me a thousand dinars, I cannot speak to him. When ye lent him your money ye consulted me not; so ye have no claim on me. Dun him yourselves, and if he pay you not, complain of him to the King of the city, saying: — He is an impostor who hath imposed upon us. And he will deliver you from the plague of him." Accordingly, they repaired to the King and told him what had passed, saying, "O King of the age, we are perplexed anent this merchant, whose generosity is excessive; for he doeth thus and thus, and all he borroweth, he giveth away to the poor by handsful. Were he a man of naught, his sense would not suffer him to lavish gold on this wise; and were he a man of wealth, his good faith had been made manifest to us by the coming of his baggage; but we see none of his luggage, although he avoucheth that he hath baggage-train and hath preceded it. Now some time hath past, but there appeareth no sign of his baggage-train, and he oweth us sixty thousand gold pieces, all of which he hath given away in alms.” And they went on to praise him and extol his generosity. Now this King was a very covetous man, a more covetous than Ash’ab[43] ; and when he heard tell of Ma’aruf’s generosity and openhandedness, greed of gain got the better of him and he said to his Wazir, “Were not this merchant a man of immense wealth, he had not shown all this munificence. His baggage-train will assuredly come, whereupon these merchants will flock to him and he will scatter amongst them riches galore. Now I have more right to this money than they; wherefore I have a mind to make friends with him and profess affection for him, so that, when his baggage cometh whatso the merchants would have had I shall get of him; and I will give him my daughter to wife and join his wealth to my wealth.” Replied the Wazir, “O King of the age, methinks he is naught but an impostor, and ’tis the impostor who ruineth the house of the covetous;” — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Ninety-third Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Wazir said to the King, “Methinks he is naught but an impostor, and ’tis the impostor who ruineth the house of the covetous;” the King said, “O Wazir, I will prove him and soon know if he be an impostor or a true man and whether he be a rearling of Fortune or not.” The Wazir asked, “And how wilt thou prove him?”; and the King answered, “I will send for him to the presence and entreat him with honour and give him a jewel which I have. An he know it and wot its price, he is a man of worth and wealth; but an he know it not, he is an impostor and an upstart and I will do him die by the foulest fashion of deaths.” So he sent for Ma’aruf, who came and saluted him. The King returned his salam and seating him beside himself, said to him, “Art thou the merchant Ma’aruf?” and said he, “Yes.”

Quoth the King, “The merchants declare that thou owest them sixty thousand ducats. Is this true?” “Yes,” quoth he. Asked the King, “Then why dost thou not give them their money?”; and he answered, “Let them wait till my baggage come and I will repay them twofold. An they wish for gold, they shall have gold; and should they wish for silver, they shall have silver; or an they prefer for merchandise, I will give them merchandise; and to whom I owe a thousand I will give two thousand in requital of that wherewith he hath veiled my face before the poor; for I have plenty.” Then said the King, “O merchant, take this and look what is its kind and value.” And he gave him a jewel the bigness of a hazel-nut, which he had bought for a thousand sequins and not having its fellow, prized it highly. Ma’aruf took it and pressing it between his thumb and forefinger brake it, for it was brittle and would not brook the squeeze. Quoth the King, “Why hast thou broken the jewel?”; and Ma’aruf laughed and said, “O King of the age, this is no jewel. This is but a bittock of mineral worth a thousand dinars; why dost thou style it a jewel? A jewel I call such as is worth threescore and ten thousand gold pieces and this is called but a piece of stone. A jewel that is not of the bigness of a walnut hath no worth in my eyes and I take no account thereof. How cometh it, then, that thou, who art King, stylest this thing a jewel, when ’tis but a bit of mineral worth a thousand dinars? But ye are excusable, for that ye are poor folk and have not in your possession things of price.” The King asked, “O merchant, hast thou jewels such as those whereof thou speakest?”; and he answered, “Plenty.” Whereupon avarice overcame the King and he said, “Wilt thou give me real jewels?” Said Ma’aruf, “When my baggage-train shall come, I will give thee no end of jewels; and all that thou canst desire I have in plenty and will give thee, without price.” At this the King rejoiced and said to the traders, “Wend your ways and have patience with him, till his baggage arrive, when do ye come to me and receive your monies from me.” So they fared forth and the King turned to his to his Wazir and said to him, Pay court to Merchant Ma’aruf and take and give with him in talk and bespeak him of my daughter, Princess Dunyá, that he may wed her and so we gain these riches he hath.” Said the Wazir, “O King of the age, this man’s fashion misliketh me and methinks he is an impostor and a liar: so leave this whereof thou speakest lest thou lose thy daughter for naught." Now this Minister had sued the King aforetime to give him his daughter to wife and he was willing to do so, but when she heard of it she consented not to marry him. Accordingly, the King said to him, "O traitor, thou desirest no good for me, because in past time thou soughtest my daughter in wedlock, but she would none of thee; so now thou wouldst cut off the way of her marriage and wouldst have the Princess lie fallow, that thou mayst take her; but hear from me one word. Thou hast no concern in this matter. How can he be an impostor and a liar, seeing that he knew the price of the jewel, even that for which I bought it, and brake it because it pleased him not? He hath jewels in plenty, and when he goeth in to my daughter and seeth her to be beautiful she will captivate his reason and he will love her and give her jewels and things of price: but, as for thee, thou wouldst forbid my daughter and myself these good things." So the Minister was silent, for fear of the King's anger, and said to himself, "Set the curs on the cattle[44] !" Then with show of friendly bias he betook himself to Ma'aruf and said to him, "His Highness the King loveth thee and hath a daughter, a winsome lady and a lovesome, to whom he is minded to marry thee. What sayst thou?" Said he, "No harm in that; but let him wait till my baggage come, for marriage-settlements on Kings' daughters are large and their rank demandeth that they be not endowed save with a dowry befitting their degree. At this present I have no money with me till the coming of my baggage, for I have wealth in plenty and needs must I make her marriage-portion five thousand purses. Then I shall need a thousand purses to distribute amongst the poor and needy on my wedding-night, and other thousand to give to those who walk in the bridal procession and yet other thousand wherewith to provide provaunt for the troops and others[45] ; and I shall want an hundred jewels to give to the Princess on the wedding-morning[46] and other hundred gems to distribute among the slavegirls and eunuchs, for I must give each of them a jewel in honour of the bride; and I need wherewithal to clothe a thousand naked paupers, and alms too needs must be given. All this cannot be done till my baggage come; but I have plenty and, once it is here, I shall make no account of all this outlay." The Wazir returned to the King and told him what Ma'aruf said, whereupon quoth he, “Since this is his wish, how canst thou style him impostor and liar?” Replied the Minister, “And I cease not to say this.” But the King chid him angrily and threatened him, saying, “By the life of my head, an thou cease not this talk, I will slay thee! Go back to him and fetch him to me and I will manage matters with him myself.” So the Wazir returned to Ma’aruf and said to him, “Come and speak with the King.” “I hear and I obey,” said Ma’aruf and went in to the King, who said to him, “Thou shalt not put me off with these excuses, for my treasury is full; so take the keys and spend all thou needest and give what thou wilt and clothe the poor and do thy desire and have no care for the girl and the handmaids. When the baggage shall come, do what thou wilt with thy wife, by way of generosity, and we will have patience with thee anent the marriage-portion till then, for there is no manner of difference betwixt me and thee; none at all.” Then he sent for the Shaykh Al-Islam[47] and bade him write out the marriage-contract between his daughter and Merchant Ma’aruf, and he did so; after which the King gave the signal for beginning the wedding festivities and bade decorate the city. The kettle drums beat and the tables were spread with meats of all kinds and there came performers who paraded their tricks. Merchant Ma’aruf sat upon a throne in a parlour and the players and gymnasts and effeminates[48] and dancing-men of wondrous movements and posture-makers of marvellous cunning came before him, whilst he called out to the treasurer and said to him, “Bring gold and silver.” So he brought gold and silver and Ma’aruf went round among the spectators and largessed each performer by the handful; and he gave alms to the poor and needy and clothes to the naked and it was a clamorous festival and a right merry. The treasurer could not bring money fast enough from the treasury, and the Wazir’s heart was like to burst for rage; but he dared not say a word, whilst Merchant Ali marvelled at this waste of wealth and said to Merchant Ma’aruf, “Allah and the Hallows visit this upon on thy head-sides[49] ! Doth it not suffice thee to squander the traders’ money, but thou must squander that of the King to boot?” Replied Ma’aruf, “’Tis none of thy concern: whenas my baggage shall come, I will requite the King manifold.” And he went on lavishing money and saying in himself, “A burning plague! What will happen will happen and there is no flying from that which is fore-ordained.” The festivities ceased not for the space of forty days, and on the one-and-fortieth day, they made the bride’s cortège and all the Emirs and troops walked before her. When they brought her in before Ma’aruf, he began scattering gold on the people’s heads, and they made her a mighty fine procession, whilst Ma’aruf expended in her honour vast sums of money. Then they brought him in to Princess Dunya and he sat down on the high divan; after which they let fall the curtains and shut the doors and withdrew, leaving him alone with his bride; whereupon he smote hand upon hand and sat awhile sorrowful and saying, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” Quoth the Princess, “O my lord, Allah preserve thee! What aileth thee that thou art troubled?” Quoth he, “And how should I be other than troubled, seeing that thy father hath embarrassed me and done with me a deed which is like the burning of green corn?” She asked, “And what hath my father done with thee? Tell me!”; and he answered, “He hath brought me in to thee before the coming of my baggage, and I want at very least an hundred jewels to distribute among thy handmaids, to each a jewel, so she might rejoice therein and say, My lord gave me a jewel on the night of his going in to my lady. This good deed would I have done in honour of thy station and for the increase of thy dignity; and I have no need to stint myself in lavishing jewels, for I have of them great plenty.” Rejoined she, “Be not concerned for that. As for me, trouble not thyself about me, for I will have patience with thee till thy baggage shall come, and as for my women have no care for them. Rise, doff thy clothes and take thy pleasure; and when the baggage cometh we shall get the jewels and the rest.” So he arose and putting off his clothes sat down on the bed and sought love-liesse and they fell to toying with each other. He laid his hand on her knee and she sat down in his lap and thrust her lip like a tit-bit of meat into his mouth, and that hour was such as maketh a man to forget his father and his mother. So he clasped her in his arms and strained her fast to his breast and sucked her lip, till the honey-dew ran out into his mouth; and he laid his hand under her left-armpit, whereupon his vitals and her vitals yearned for coition. Then he clapped her between the breasts and his hand slipped down between her thighs and she girded him with her legs, whereupon he made of the two parts proof amain and crying out, “O sire of the chin-veils twain[50] !” applied the priming and kindled the match and set it to the touch-hole and gave fire and breached the citadel in its four corners; so there befel the mystery[51] concerning which there is no enquiry: and she cried the cry that needs must be cried.[52] — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it Was the Nine Hundred and Ninety-fourth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that while the Princess Dunyá cried the cry which must be cried, Merchant Ma’aruf abated her maidenhead and that night was one not to be counted among lives for that which it comprised of the enjoyment of the fair, clipping and dallying *langue fourrée* and futtering till the dawn of day, when he arose and entered the Hammam whence, after donning a suit for sovrans suitable he betook himself to the King’s Divan. All who were there rose to him and received him with honour and worship, giving him joy and invoking blessings upon him; and he sat down by the King’s side and asked, “Where is the treasurer?” They answered, “Here he is, before thee,” and he said to him, “Bring robes of honour for all the Wazirs and Emirs and dignitaries and clothe them therewith.” The treasurer brought him all he sought and he sat giving to all who came to him and lavishing largesse upon every man according to his station. On this wise he abode twenty days, whilst no baggage appeared for him nor aught else, till the treasurer was straitened by him to the uttermost and going in to the King, as he sat alone with the Wazir in Ma’aruf’s absence, kissed ground between his hands and said, “O King of the age, I must tell thee somewhat, lest haply thou blame me for not acquainting thee therewith. Know that the treasury is being exhausted; there is none but a little money left in it and in ten days more we shall shut it upon emptiness.” Quoth the King, “O Wazir, verily my son-in-law’s baggage-train tarrieth long and there appeareth no news thereof.” The Minister laughed and said , Allah be gracious to thee, O King of the age! Thou art none other but heedless with respect to this impostor, this liar. As thy head liveth, there is no baggage for him, no, nor a burning plague to rid us of him! Nay, he hath but imposed on thee without surcease, so that he hath wasted thy treasures and married thy daughter for naught. How long therefore wilt thou be heedless of this liar?" Then quoth the King, "O Wazir, how shall we do to learn the truth of his case?"; and quoth the Wazir, "O King of the age, none may come at a man's secret but his wife; so send for thy daughter and let her come behind the curtain, that I may question her of the truth of his estate, to the intent that she may make question of him and acquaint us with his case." Cried the King, "There is no harm in that; and as my head liveth, if it be proved that he is a liar and an impostor, I will verily do him die by the foulest of deaths!" Then he carried the Wazir into the sitting-chamber and sent for his daughter, who came behind the curtain, her husband being absent, and said, "What wouldst thou, O my father?" Said he "Speak with the Wazir." So she asked, "Ho thou, the Wazir, what is thy will?"; and he answered, "O my lady, thou must know that thy husband hath squandered thy father's substance and married thee without a dower; and he ceaseth not to promise us and break his promises, nor cometh there any tidings of his baggage; in short we would have thee inform us concerning him." Quoth she, "Indeed his words be many, and he still cometh and promiseth me jewels and treasures and costly stuffs; but I see nothing." Quoth the Wazir, "O my lady, canst thou this night take and give with him in talk and whisper to him: — Say me sooth and fear from me naught, for thou art become my husband and I will not transgress against thee. So tell me the truth of the matter and I will devise thee a device whereby thou shalt be set at rest. And do thou play near and far[53] with him in words and profess love to him and win him to confess and after tell us the facts of his case." And she answered, "O my papa, I know how I will make proof of him." Then she went away and after supper her husband came in to her, according to his wont, whereupon Princess Dunya rose to him and took him under the armpit and wheedled him with winsomest wheedling (and all-sufficient[54] are woman's wiles whenas she would aught of men); and she ceased not to caress him and beguile him with speech sweeter than the honey till she stole his reason; and when she saw that he altogether inclined to her, she said to him, "O my beloved, O coolth of my eyes and fruit of my vitals, Allah never desolate me by less of thee nor Time sunder us twain me and thee! Indeed, the love of thee hath homed in my heart and the fire of passion hath consumed my liver, nor will I ever forsake thee or transgress against thee. But I would have thee tell me the truth, for that the sleights of falsehood profit not, nor do they secure credit at all seasons. How long wilt thou impose upon my father and lie to him? I fear lest thine affair be discovered to him, ere we can devise some device and he lay violent hands upon thee? So acquaint me with the facts of the case for naught shall befal thee save that which shall begladden thee; and, when thou shalt have spoken sooth, fear not harm shall betide thee. How often wilt thou declare that thou art a merchant and a man of money and hast a luggage-train? This long while past thou sayest, My baggage! my baggage! but there appeareth no sign of thy baggage, and visible in thy face is anxiety on this account. So an there be no worth in thy words, tell me and I will contrive thee a contrivance whereby by thou shalt come off safe, Inshallah!" He replied, "I will tell thee the truth, and then do thou whatso thou wilt." Rejoined she, "Speak and look thou speak soothly; for sooth is the ark of safety, and beware of lying, for it dishonoureth the liar and God-gifted is he who said: —

'Ware that truth thou speak, albe sooth when said * Shall cause
  thee in threatenèd fire to fall:
And seek Allah's approof, for most foolish he * Who shall anger
  his Lord to make friends with thrall."

He said, "Know, then, O my lady, that I am no merchant and have no baggage, no, nor a burning plague; nay, I was but a cobbler in my own country and had a wife called Fatimah the Dung, with whom there befel me this and that." And he told her his story from beginning to end; whereat she laughed and said, "Verily, thou art clever in the practice of lying and imposture!" Whereto he answered, "O my lady, may Allah Almighty preserve thee to veil sins and countervail chagrins!" Rejoined she, "Know, that thou imposedst upon my sire and deceivedst him by dint of thy deluding vaunts, so that of his greed for gain he married me to thee. Then thou squanderedst his wealth and the Wazir beareth thee a grudge for this. How many a time hath he spoken against thee to my father, saying, Indeed, he is an impostor, a liar! But my sire hearkened not to his say, for that he had sought me in wedlock and I consented not that he be baron and I femme. However, the time grew longsome upon my sire and he became straitened and said to me, Make him confess. So I have made thee confess and that which was covered is discovered. Now my father purposeth thee a mischief because of this; but thou art become my husband and I will never transgress against thee. An I told my father what I have learnt from thee, he would be certified of thy falsehood and imposture and that thou imposest upon Kings' daughters and squanderest royal wealth: so would thine offence find with him no pardon and he would slay thee sans a doubt: wherefore it would be bruited among the folk that I married a man who was a liar, an impostor, and this would smirch mine honour. Furthermore an he kill thee, most like he will require me to wed another, and to such thing I will never consent; no, not though I die![55] So rise now and don a Mameluke's dress and take these fifty thousand dinars of my monies, and mount a swift steed and get thee to a land whither the rule of my father doth not reach. Then make thee a merchant and send me a letter by a courier who shall bring it privily to me, that I may know in what land thou art, so I may send thee all my hand can attain. Thus shall thy wealth wax great and if my father die, I will send for thee, and thou shalt return in respect and honour; and if we die, thou or I and go to the mercy of God the Most Great, the Resurrection shall unite us. This, then, is the rede that is right: and while we both abide alive and well, I will not cease to send thee letters and monies. Arise ere the day wax bright and thou be in perplexed plight and perdition upon thy head alight!" Quoth he, "O my lady, I beseech thee of thy favour to bid me farewell with thine embracement;" and quoth she, "No harm in that."[56] So he embraced her and knew her carnally; after which he made the Ghusl-ablution; then, donning the dress of a white slave, he bade the syces saddle him a thoroughbred steed. Accordingly, they saddled him a courser and he mounted and farewelling his wife, rode forth the city at the last of the night, whilst all who saw him deemed him one of the Mamelukes of the Sultan going abroad on some business. Next morning, the King and his Wazir repaired to the sitting-chamber and sent for Princess Dunya who came behind the curtain; and her father said to her, "O my daughter, what sayst thou?" Said she, "I say, Allah blacken thy Wazir's face, because he would have blackened my face in my husband's eyes!" Asked the King, "How so?"; and she answered, "He came in to me yesterday; but, before I could name the matter to him, behold, in walked Faraj the Chief Eunuch, letter in hand, and said: — Ten white slaves stand under the palace window and have this letter, saying: — Kiss for us the hands of our lord, Merchant Ma'aruf, and give him this letter, for we are of his Mamelukes with the baggage, and it hath reached us that he hath wedded the King's daughter, so we are come to acquaint him with that which befel us by the way. Accordingly I took the letter and read as follows: — From the five hundred Mamelukes to his highness our lord Merchant Ma'aruf. But further. We give thee to know that, after thou quittedst us, the Arabs[57] came out upon us and attacked us. They were two thousand horse and we five hundred mounted slaves and there befel a mighty sore fight between us and them. They hindered us from the road thirty days doing battle with them and this is the cause of our tarrying from thee." — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Ninety-fifth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Princess Dunya said to her sire, "My husband received a letter from his dependents ending with: — The Arabs hindered us from the road thirty days which is the cause of our being behind time. They also took from us of the luggage two hundred loads of cloth and slew of us fifty Mamelukes. When the news reached my husband, he cried, Allah disappoint them! What ailed them to wage war with the Arabs for the sake of two hundred loads of merchandise? What are two hundred loads? It behoved them not to tarry on that account, for verily the value of the two hundred loads is only some seven thousand dinars. But needs must I go to them and hasten them. As for that which the Arabs have taken, 'twill not be missed from the baggage, nor doth it weigh with me a whit, for I reckon it as if I had given it to them by way of an alms. Then he went down from me, laughing and taking no concern for the wastage of his wealth nor the slaughter of his slaves. As soon as he was gone, I looked out from the lattice and saw the ten Mamelukes who had brought him the letter, as they were moons, each clad in a suit of clothes worth two thousand dinars, there is not with my father a chattel to match one of them. He went forth with them to bring up his baggage and hallowed be Allah who hindered me from saying to him aught of that thou badest me, for he would have made mock of me and thee, and haply he would have eyed me with the eye of disparagement and hated me. But the fault is all with thy Wazir,[58] who speaketh against my husband words that besit him not." Replied the King, "O my daughter, thy husband's wealth is indeed endless and he recketh not of it; for, from the day he entered our city, he hath done naught but give alms to the poor. Inshallah, he will speedily return with the baggage, and good in plenty shall betide us from him." And he went on to appease her and menace the Wazir, being duped by her device. So fared it with the King; but as regards Merchant Ma'aruf he rode on into waste lands, perplexed and knowing not to what quarter he should betake him; and for the anguish of parting he lamented and in the pangs of passion and love-longing he recited these couplets: —

Time falsed our Union and divided who were one in tway; * And the
    sore tyranny of Time doth melt my heart away:
Mine eyes ne'er cease to drop the tear for parting with my dear;

* When shall Disunion come to end and dawn the Union-day?
O favour like the full moon's face of sheen, indeed I'm he * Whom
    thou didst leave with vitals torn when faring on thy way.
Would I had never seen thy sight, or met thee for an hour; *
    Since after sweetest taste of thee to bitters I'm a prey.
Ma'aruf will never cease to be enthralled by Dunyá's[59]
    charms * And long live she albe he die whom love and longing
    slay,
O brilliance, like resplendent sun of noontide, deign them heal *
    His heart for kindness[60] and the fire of longing love
    allay!
Would Heaven I wot an e'er the days shall deign conjoin our lots,

* Join us in pleasant talk o' nights, in Union glad and gay:
Shall my love's palace hold two hearts that savour joy, and I *
    Strain to my breast the branch I saw upon the
    sand-hill[61] sway?

O favour of full moon in sheen, never may sun o' thee * Surcease
to rise from Eastern rim with all-enlightening ray!
I'm well content with passion-pine and all its bane and bate *
For luck in love is evermore the butt of jealous Fate.

And when he ended his verses, he wept with sore weeping, for indeed the ways were walled up before his face and death seemed to him better than dreeing life, and he walked on like a drunken man for stress of distraction, and stayed not till noontide, when he came to a little town and saw a plougher hard by, ploughing with a yoke of bulls. Now hunger was sore upon him; and he went up to the ploughman and said to him, "Peace be with thee!"; and he returned his salam and said to him, "Welcome, O my lord! Art thou one of the Sultan's Mamelukes?" Quoth Ma'aruf, "Yes;" and the other said "Alight with me for a guest-meal." Whereupon Ma'aruf knew him to be of the liberal and said to him, "O my brother, I see with thee naught with which thou mayst feed me: how is it, then, that thou invitest me?" Answered the husbandman, "O my lord, weal is well nigh.[62] Dismount thee here: the town is near hand and I will go and fetch thee dinner and fodder for thy stallion." Rejoined Ma'aruf, "Since the town is near at hand, I can go thither as quickly as thou canst and buy me what I have a mind to in the bazar and eat." The peasant replied, "O my lord, the place is but a little village[63] and there is no bazar there, neither selling nor buying. So I conjure thee by Allah, alight here with me and hearten my heart, and I will run thither and return to thee in haste." Accordingly he dismounted and the Fellah left him and went off to the village, to fetch dinner for him whilst Ma'aruf sat awaiting him. Presently he said in himself, "I have taken this poor man away from his work; but I will arise and plough in his stead, till he come back, to make up for having hindered him from his work.[64] " Then he took the plough and starting the bulls, ploughed a little, till the share struck against something and the beasts stopped. He goaded them on, but they could not move the plough; so he looked at the share and finding it caught in a ring of gold, cleared away the soil and saw that it was set centre-most a slab of alabaster, the size of the nether millstone. He strave at the stone till he pulled it from its place, when there appeared beneath it a souterrain with a stair. Presently he descended the flight of steps and came to a place like a Hammam, with four daïses, the first full of gold, from floor to roof, the second full of emeralds and pearls and coral also from ground to ceiling; the third of jacinths and rubies and turquoises and the fourth of diamonds and all manner other preciousest stones. At the upper end of the place stood a coffer of clearest crystal, full of union-gems each the size of a walnut, and upon the coffer lay a casket of gold, the bigness of a lemon. When he saw this, he marvelled and rejoiced with joy exceeding and said to himself, "I wonder what is in this casket?" So he opened it and found therein a seal-ring of gold, whereon were graven names and talismans, as they were the tracks of creeping ants. He rubbed the ring and behold, a voice said, "Adsum! Here am I, at thy service, O my lord! Ask and it shall be given unto thee. Wilt thou raise a city or ruin a capital or kill a king or dig a river-channel or aught of the kind? Whatso thou seekest, it shall come to pass, by leave of the King of All-might, Creator of day and night." Ma'aruf asked, "O creature of my lord, who and what art thou?"; and the other answered, "I am the slave of this seal-ring standing in the service of him who possesseth it. Whatsoever he seeketh, that I accomplish for him, and I have no excuse in neglecting that he biddeth me do; because I am Sultan over two-and-seventy tribes of the Jinn, each two-and-seventy thousand in number every one of which thousand ruleth over a thousand Marids, each Marid over a thousand Ifrits, each Ifrit over a thousand Satans and each Satan over a thousand Jinn: and they are all under command of me and may not gainsay me. As for me, I am spelled to this seal-ring and may not thwart whoso holdeth it. Lo! thou hast gotten hold of it and I am become thy slave; so ask what thou wilt, for I hearken to thy word and obey thy bidding; and if thou have need of me at any time, by land or by sea rub the signet-ring and thou wilt find me with thee. But beware of rubbing it twice in succession, or thou wilt consume me with the fire of the names graven thereon; and thus wouldst thou lose me and after regret me. Now I have acquainted thee with my case and — the Peace!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Ninety-sixth Night, She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Slave of the Signet-ring acquainted Ma'aruf with his case, the Merchant asked him, "What is thy name?" and the Jinni answered, "My name is Abú al-Sa'ádát.[65] " Quoth Ma'aruf, "O Abú al-Sa'ádát what is this place and who enchanted thee in this casket?"; and quoth he, "O my lord, this is a treasure called the Hoard of Shaddád son of Ad, him who the base of Many-columned Iram laid, the like of which in the lands was never made.[66] ' I was his slave in his lifetime and this is his seal-ring, which he laid up in his treasure; but it hath fallen to thy lot." Ma'aruf enquired, "Canst thou transport that which is in this hoard to the surface of the earth?"; and the Jinni replied, "Yes! Nothing were easier." Said Ma'aruf, "Bring it forth and leave naught." So the Jinni signed with his hand to the ground, which clave asunder, and he sank and was absent a little while. Presently, there came forth young boys full of grace, and fair of face bearing golden baskets filled with gold which they emptied out and going away, returned with more; nor did they cease to transport the gold and jewels, till ere an hour had sped they said, "Naught is left in the hoard." Thereupon out came Abú al-Sa'ádát and said to Ma'aruf, "O my lord, thou seest that we have brought forth all that was in the hoard." Ma'aruf asked, "Who be these beautiful boys?" and the Jinni answered, "They are my sons. This matter merited not that I should muster for it the Marids, wherefore my sons have done thy desire and are honoured by such service. So ask what thou wilt beside this." Quoth Ma'aruf, "Canst thou bring me he-mules and chests and fill the chests with the treasure and load them on the mules?" Quoth Abú al-Sa'ádát, "Nothing easier," and cried a great cry; whereupon his sons presented themselves before him, to the number of eight hundred, and he said to them, "Let some of you take the semblance of he-mules and others of muleteers and handsome Mamelukes, the like of the least of whom is not found with any of the Kings; and others of you be transmewed to muleteers, and the rest to menials." So seven hundred of them changed themselves into bât-mules and other hundred took the shape of slaves. Then Abú al-Sa'ádát called upon his Marids, who presented themselves between his hands and he commanded some of them to assume the aspect of horses saddled with saddles of gold crusted with jewels. And when Ma'aruf saw them do as he bade he cried, “Where be the chests?” They brought them before him and he said, “Pack the gold and the stones, each sort by itself.” So they packed them and loaded three hundred he-mules with them. Then asked Ma’aruf, “O Abú al-Sa’ádát, canst thou bring me some loads of costly stuffs?”; and the Jinni answered, “Wilt thou have Egyptian stuffs or Syrian or Persian or Indian or Greek?” Ma’aruf said, “Bring me an hundred loads of each kind, on five hundred mules;” and Abú al-Sa’ádát, “O my lord accord me delay that I may dispose my Marids for this and send a company of them to each country to fetch an hundred loads of its stuffs and then take the form of he-mules and return, carrying the stuffs.” Ma’aruf enquired, “What time dost thou want?”; and Abú al-Sa’ádát replied, “The time of the blackness of the night, and day shall not dawn ere thou have all thou desirest.” Said Ma’aruf, “I grant thee this time,” and bade them pitch him a pavilion. So they pitched it and he sat down therein and they brought him a table of food. Then said Abú al-Sa’ádát to him, “O my lord, tarry thou in this tent and these my sons shall guard thee: so fear thou nothing; for I go to muster my Marids and despatch them to do thy desire.” So saying, he departed, leaving Ma’aruf seated in the pavilion, with the table before him and the Jinni’s sons attending upon him, in the guise of slaves and servants and suite. And while he sat in this state behold, up came the husband man, with a great porringer of lentils[67] and a nose-bag full of barley and seeing the pavilion pitched and the Mamelukes standing, hands upon breasts, thought that the Sultan was come and had halted on that stead. So he stood openmouthed and said in himself, “Would I had killed a couple of chickens and fried them red with clarified cow-butter for the Sultan!” And he would have turned back to kill the chickens as a regale for the Sultan; but Ma’aruf saw him and cried out to him and said to the Mamelukes, “Bring him hither.” So they brought him and his porringer of lentils before Ma’aruf, who said to him, “What is this?” Said the peasant, “This is thy dinner and thy horse’s fodder! Excuse me, for I thought not that the Sultan would come hither; and, had I known that, I would have killed a couple of chickens and entertained him in goodly guise.” Quoth Ma’aruf, “The Sultan is not come. I am his son-in-law and I was vexed with him. However he hath sent his officers to make his peace with me, and now I am minded to return to city. But thou hast made me this guest-meal without knowing me, and I accept it from thee, lentils though it be, and will not eat save of thy cheer." Accordingly he bade him set the porringer amiddlemost the table and ate of it his sufficiency, whilst the Fellah filled his belly with those rich meats. Then Ma'aruf washed his hands and gave the Mamelukes leave to eat; so they fell upon the remains of the meal and ate; and, when the porringer was empty, he filled it with gold and gave it to the peasant, saying, "Carry this to thy dwelling and come to me in the city, and I will entreat thee with honour." Thereupon the peasant took the porringer full of gold and returned to the village, driving the bulls before him and deeming himself akin to the King. Meanwhile, they brought Ma'aruf girls of the Brides of the Treasure,[68] who smote on instruments of music and danced before him, and he passed that night in joyance and delight, a night not to be reckoned among lives. Hardly had dawned the day when there arose a great cloud of dust which presently lifting, discovered seven hundred mules laden with stuffs and attended by muleteers and baggage-tenders and cresset-bearers. With them came Abú al-Sa'ádát, riding on a she-mule, in the guise of a caravan-leader, and before him was a travelling-litter, with four corner-terminals[69] of glittering red gold, set with gems. When Abú al-Sa'ádát came up to the tent, he dismounted and kissing the earth, said to Ma'aruf, "O my lord, thy desire hath been done to the uttermost and in the litter is a treasure-suit which hath not its match among Kings' raiment: so don it and mount the litter and bid us do what thou wilt." Quoth Ma'aruf, "O Abú al-Sa'ádát, I wish thee to go to the city of Ikhtiyan al-Khatan and present thyself to my father-in-law the King; and go thou not in to him but in the guise of a mortal courier;" and quoth he, "To hear is to obey." So Ma'aruf wrote a letter to the Sultan and sealed it and Abú al-Sa'ádát took it and set out with it; and when he arrived, he found the King saying, "O Wazir, indeed my heart is concerned for my son-in-law and I fear lest the Arabs slay him. Would Heaven I wot whither he was bound, that I might have followed him with the troops! Would he had told me his destination!" Said the Wazir, "Allah be merciful to thee for this thy heedlessness! As thy head liveth, the wight saw that we were awake to him and feared dishonour and fled, for he is nothing but an impostor, a liar." And behold, at this moment in came the courier and kissing ground before the King, wished him permanent glory and prosperity and length of life. Asked the King, "Who art thou and what is thy business?" "I am a courier," answered the Jinni, "and thy son-in-law who is come with the baggage sendeth me to thee with a letter, and here it is!" So he took the letter and read therein these words, "After salutations galore to our uncle[70] the glorious King! Know that I am at hand with the baggage-train: so come thou forth to meet me with the troops." Cried the King, "Allah blacken thy brow, O Wazir! How often wilt thou defame my son-in-law's name and call him liar and impostor? Behold, he is come with the baggage-train and thou art naught but a traitor." The Minister hung his head ground-wards in shame and confusion and replied, "O King of the age, I said not this save because of the long delay of the baggage and because I feared the loss of the wealth he hath wasted." The King exclaimed, "O traitor, what are my riches! Now that his baggage is come he will give me great plenty in their stead." Then he bade decorate the city and going in to his daughter, said to her, "Good news for thee! Thy husband will be here anon with his baggage; for he hath sent me a letter to that effect and here am I now going forth to meet him." The Princess Dunyá marvelled at this and said in herself, "This is a wondrous thing! Was he laughing at me and making mock of me, or had he a mind to try me, when he told me that he was a pauper? But Alhamdolillah, Glory to God, for that I failed not of my duty to him!" On this wise fared it in the palace; but as regards Merchant Ali, the Cairene, when he saw the decoration of the city and asked the cause thereof, they said to him, "The baggage-train of Merchant Ma'aruf, the King's son-in-law, is come." Said he, "Allah is Almighty! What a calamity is this man![71] He came to me, fleeing from his wife, and he was a poor man. Whence then should he get a baggage-train? But haply this is a device which the King's daughter hath contrived for him, fearing his disgrace, and Kings are not unable to do anything. May Allah the Most High veil his fame and not bring him to public shame!" — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night,

She pursued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when

Merchant Ali asked the cause of the decorations, they told him the truth of the case; so he blessed Merchant Ma'aruf and cried, "May Allah Almighty veil his fame and not bring him to public shame!" And all the merchants rejoiced and were glad for that they would get their monies. Then the King assembled his troops and rode forth, whilst Abú al-Sa'ádát returned to Ma'aruf and acquainted him with the delivering of the letter. Quoth Ma'aruf, "Bind on the loads;" and when they had done so, he donned the treasure-suit and mounting the litter became a thousand times greater and more majestic than the King. Then he set forward; but, when he had gone half-way, behold, the King met him with the troops, and seeing him riding in the Takhtrawan and clad in the dress aforesaid, threw himself upon him and saluted him, and giving him joy of his safety, greeted him with the greeting of peace. Then all the Lords of the land saluted him and it was made manifest that he had spoken the truth and that in him there was no lie. Presently he entered the city in such state procession as would have caused the gall-bladder of the lion to burst[72] for envy and the traders pressed up to him and kissed his hands, whilst Merchant Ali said to him, "Thou hast played off this trick and it hath prospered to thy hand, O Shaykh of Impostors! But thou deservest it and may Allah the Most High increase thee of His bounty!"; whereupon Ma'aruf laughed. Then he entered the palace and sitting down on the throne said, "Carry the loads of gold into the treasury of my uncle the King and bring me the bales of cloth." So they brought them to him and opened them before him, bale after bale, till they had unpacked the seven hundred loads, whereof he chose out the best and said, "Bear these to Princess Dunyá that she may distribute them among her slavegirls; and carry her also this coffer of jewels, that she may divide them among her handmaids and eunuchs." Then he proceeded to make over to the merchants in whose debt he was stuffs by way of payment for their arrears, giving him whose due was a thousand, stuffs worth two thousand or more; after which he fell to distributing to the poor and needy, whilst the King looked on with greedy eyes and could not hinder him; nor did he cease largesse till he had made an end of the seven hundred loads, when he turned to the troops and proceeded to apportion amongst them emeralds and rubies and pearls and coral and other jewels by handsful, without count, till the King said to him, “Enough of this giving, O my son! There is but little left of the baggage.” But he said, “I have plenty.” Then indeed, his good faith was become manifest and none could give him the lie; and he had come to reck not of giving, for that the Slave of the Seal-ring brought him whatsoever he sought. Presently, the treasurer came in to the King and said, “O King of the age, the treasury is full indeed and will not hold the rest of the loads. Where shall we lay that which is left of the gold and jewels?” And he assigned to him another place. As for the Princess Dunya when she saw this, her joy redoubled and she marvelled and said in herself, “Would I wot how came he by all this wealth!” In like manner the traders rejoiced in that which he had given them and blessed him; whilst Merchant Ali marvelled and said to himself, “I wonder how he hath lied and swindled, that he hath gotten him all these treasures[73] ? Had they come from the King’s daughter, he had not wasted them on this wise! But how excellent is his saying who said: —

When the Kings’ King giveth, in reverence pause * And venture not
to enquire the cause:
Allah gives His gifts unto whom He will, * So respect and abide
by His Holy Laws!”

So far concerning him; but as regards the King, he also marvelled with passing marvel at that which he saw of Ma’aruf’s generosity and open-handedness in the largesse of wealth. Then the Merchant went in to his wife, who met him, smiling and laughing-lipped and kissed his hand, saying, “Didst thou mock me or hadst thou a mind to prove me with thy saying: — I am a poor man and a fugitive from my wife? Praised be Allah for that I failed not of my duty to thee! For thou art my beloved and there is none dearer to me than thou, whether thou be rich or poor. But I would have thee tell me what didst thou design by these words.” Said Ma’aruf, “I wished to prove thee and see whether thy love were sincere or for the sake of wealth and the greed of worldly good. But now ’tis become manifest to me that thine affection is sincere and as thou art a true woman, so welcome to thee! I know thy worth.” Then he went apart into a place by himself and rubbed the seal-ring, whereupon Abu al-Sa’adat presented himself and said to him, “Adsum, at thy service! Ask what thou wilt.” Quoth Ma’aruf, “I want a treasure-suit and treasure-trinkets for my wife, including a necklace of forty unique jewels.” Quoth the Jinni, “To hear is to obey,” and brought him what he sought, whereupon Ma’aruf dismissed him and carrying the dress and ornaments in to his wife, laid them before her and said, “Take these and put them on and welcome!” When she saw this, her wits fled for joy, and she found among the ornaments a pair of anklets of gold set with jewels of the handiwork of the magicians, and bracelets and earrings and a belt[74] such as no money could buy. So she donned the dress and ornaments and said to Ma’aruf, “O my lord, I will treasure these up for holidays and festivals.” But he answered, “Wear them always, for I have others in plenty.” And when she put them on and her women beheld her, they rejoiced and bussed his hands. Then he left them and going apart by himself, rubbed the seal-ring whereupon its slave appeared and he said to him, “Bring me an hundred suits of apparel, with their ornaments of gold.” “Hearing and obeying,” answered Abu al-Sa’adat and brought him the hundred suits, each with its ornaments wrapped up within it. Ma’aruf took them and called aloud to the slave-girls, who came to him and he gave them each a suit: so they donned them and became like the black-eyed girls of Paradise, whilst the Princess Dunya shone amongst them as the moon among the stars. One of the handmaids told the King of this and he came in to his daughter and saw her and her women dazzling all who beheld them; whereat he wondered with passing wonderment. Then he went out and calling his Wazir, said to him, “O Wazir, such and such things have happened; what sayst thou now of this affair?” Said he, “O King of the age, this be no merchant’s fashion; for a merchant keepeth a piece of linen by him for years and selleth it not but at a profit. How should a merchant have generosity such as this generosity, and whence should he get the like of these monies and jewels, of which but a slight matter is found with the Kings? So how should loads thereof be found with merchants? Needs must there be a cause for this; but, an thou wilt hearken to me, I will make the truth of the case manifest to thee.” Answered the King, “O Wazir, I will do thy bidding.” Rejoined the Minister, “Do thou foregather with thy son-in-law and make a show of affect to him and talk with him and say: — O my son-in-law, I have a mind to go, I and thou and the Wazir but no more, to a flower-garden that we may take our pleasure there. When we come to the garden, we will set on the table wine, and I will ply him therewith and compel him to drink; for, when he shall have drunken, he will lose his reason and his judgment will forsake him. Then we will question him of the truth of his case and he will discover to us his secrets, for wine is a traitor and Allah-gifted is he who said: —

When we drank the wine, and it crept its way * To the place of
  Secrets, I cried, "O stay!"
In my fear lest its influence stint my wits * And my friends spy
  matters that hidden lay.

When he hath told us the truth we shall ken his case and may deal with him as we will; because I fear for thee the consequences of this his present fashion: haply he will covet the kingship and win over the troops by generosity and lavishing money and so depose thee and take the kingdom from thee." "True," answered the King. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Ninety-eighth Night,

She resumed, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Wazir devised this device the King said to him, "Thou hast spoken sooth!"; and they passed the night on this agreement. And when morning morrowed the King went forth and sat in the guest-chamber, when lo, and behold! the grooms and serving-men came in to him in dismay. Quoth he, "What hath befallen you?"; and quoth they, "O King of the age, the Syces curried the horses and foddered them and the he-mules which brought the baggage; but, when we arose in the morning, we found that thy son-in-law's Mamelukes had stolen the horses and mules. We searched the stables, but found neither horse nor mule; so we entered the lodging of the Mamelukes and found none there, nor know we how they fled." The King marvelled at this, unknowing that the horses and Mamelukes were all Ifrits, the subjects of the Slave of the Spell, and asked the grooms, "O accursed how could a thousand beasts and five hundred slaves and servants flee without your knowledge?” Answered they, “We know not how it happened,” and he cried, “Go, and when your lord cometh forth of the Harim, tell him the case.” So they went out from before the King and sat down bewildered, till Ma’aruf came out and, seeing them chagrined enquired of them, “What may be the matter?” They told him all that had happened and he said, “What is their worth that ye should be concerned for them? Wend your ways.” And he sat laughing and was neither angry nor grieved concerning the case; whereupon the King looked in the Wazir’s face and said to him, “What manner of man is this, with whom wealth is of no worth? Needs must there be a reason for this?” Then they talked with him awhile and the King said to him, “O my son-in-law, I have a mind to go, I, thou and the Wazir, to a garden, where we may divert ourselves.” “No harm in that,” said Ma’aruf. So they went forth to a flower-garden, wherein every sort of fruit was of kinds twain and its waters were flowing and its trees towering and its birds carolling. There they entered a pavilion, whose sight did away sorrow from the soul, and sat talking, whilst the Minister entertained them with rare tales and quoted merry quips and mirth-provoking sayings and Ma’aruf attentively listened, till the time of dinner came, when they set on a tray of meats and a flagon of wine. When they had eaten and washed hands, the Wazir filled the cup and gave it to the King, who drank it off; then he filled a second and handed it to Ma’aruf, saying, “Take the cup of the drink to which Reason boweth neck in reverence.” Quoth Ma’aruf, “What is this, O Wazir?”; and quoth he, “This is the grizzled[75] virgin and the old maid long kept at home,[76] the giver of joy to hearts, whereof saith the poet: —

The feet of sturdy Miscreants[77] went trampling heavy tread,

* And she hath ta’en a vengeance dire on every Arab’s head.
A Káfir youth like fullest moon in darkness hands her round *
Whose eyne are strongest cause of sin by him inspiritèd.

And Allah-gifted is he who said: —

’Tis as if wine and he who bears the bowl, * Rising to show her charms for man to see,[78] Were dancing undurn-Sun whose face the moon * Of night adorned with stars of Gemini. So subtle is her essence it would seem * Through every limb like course of soul runs she.

And how excellent is the saying of the poet: —

Slept in mine arms full Moon of brightest blee * Nor did that sun
eclipse in goblet see:
I nighted spying fire whereto bow down * Magians, which bowed
from ewer's lip to me.

And that of another: —

It runs through every joint of them as runs * The surge of health returning to the sick.

And yet another: —

I marvel at its pressers, how they died * And left us aqua vitae- -lymph of life!

And yet goodlier is the saying of Abu Nowas: —

Cease then to blame me, for thy blame doth anger bring * And with
the draught that maddened me come med'cining:
A yellow girl[79] whose court cures every carking care; * Did
a stone touch it would with joy and glee upspring:
She riseth in her ewer during darkest night * The house with
brightest, sheeniest light illumining:
And going round of youths to whom the world inclines[80] *
Ne'er, save in whatso way they please, their hearts shall
wring.
From hand of coynted[81] lass begarbed like yarded lad,[82]

* Wencher and Tribe of Lot alike enamouring,
She comes: and say to him who dares claim lore of love *
Something hast learnt but still there's many another thing.

But best of all is the saying of Ibn al-Mu'tazz[83] : —

On the shady woody island[84] His showers Allah deign * Shed
on Convent hight Abdún[85] drop and drip of railing rain:
Oft the breezes of the morning have awakened me therein * When

the Dawn shows her blaze,[86] ere the bird of flight was fain;
And the voices of the monks that with chants awoke the walls * Black-frocked shavelings ever wont the cup amorn to drain.[87]
'Mid the throng how many fair with languour-kohl'd eyes[88] * And lids enfolding lovely orbs where black on white was lain,
In secret came to see me by shirt of night disguised * In terror and in caution a-hurrying amain!
Then I rose and spread my cheek like a carpet on his path * In homage, and with skirts wiped his trail from off the plain.
But threatening disgrace rose the Crescent in the sky * Like the paring of a nail yet the light would never wane:
Then happened whatso happened: I disdain to kiss and tell * So deem of us thy best and with queries never mell.

And gifted of God is he who saith: —

In the morn I am richest of men * And in joy at good news I start up
For I look on the liquid gold[89] * And I measure it out by the cup.

And how goodly is the saying of the poet: —

By Allah, this is th' only alchemy * All said of other science false we see!
Carat of wine on hundredweight of woe * Transmuteth gloomiest grief to joy and glee.

And that of another: —

The glasses are heavy when empty brought * Till we charge them all with unmixèd wine.
Then so light are they that to fly they're fain * As bodies lightened by soul divine.

And yet another: —

Wine-cup and ruby-wine high worship claim; * Dishonour ‘twere to see their honour waste:
Bury me, when I’m dead, by side of vine * Whose veins shall moisten bones in clay misplaced;
Nor bury me in wold and wild, for I * Dread only after death no wine to taste.”[90]

And he ceased not to egg him on to the drink, naming to him such of the virtues of wine as he thought well and reciting to him what occurred to him of poetry and pleasantries on the subject, till Ma’aruf addressed himself to sucking the cup-lips and cared no longer for aught else. The Wazir ceased not to fill for him and he to drink and enjoy himself and make merry, till his wits wandered and he could not distinguish right from wrong. When the Minister saw that drunkenness had attained in him to utterest and the bounds transgressed, he said to him, “By Allah, O Merchant Ma’aruf, I admire whence thou gottest these jewels whose like the Kings of the Chosroës possess not! In all our lives never saw we a merchant that had heaped up riches like unto thine or more generous than thou, for thy doings are the doings of Kings and not merchants’ doings. Wherefore, Allah upon thee, do thou acquaint me with this, that I may know thy rank and condition.” And he went on to test him with questions and cajole him, till Ma’aruf, being reft of reason, said to him, “I’m neither merchant nor King,” and told him his whole story from first to last. Then said the Wazir, “I conjure thee by Allah, O my lord Ma’aruf, show us the ring, that we may see its make.” So, in his drunkenness, he pulled off the ring and said, “Take it and look upon it.” The Minister took it and turning it over, said, “If I rub it, will its slave appear?” Replied Ma’aruf, “Yes. Rub it and he will appear to thee, and do thou divert thyself with the sight of him.” Thereupon the Wazir rubbed the ring and behold forthright appeared the Jinni and said, “Adsum, at thy service, O my lord! Ask and it shall be given to thee. Wilt thou ruin a city or raise a capital or kill a king? Whatso thou seekest, I will do for thee, sans fail.” The Wazir pointed to Ma’aruf and said, “Take up yonder wretch and cast him down in the most desolate of desert lands, where he shall find nothing to eat nor drink, so he may die of hunger and perish miserably, and none know of him." Accordingly, the Jinni snatched him up and flew with him betwixt heaven and earth, which when Ma'aruf saw, he made sure of destruction and wept and said, "O Abu al-Sa'adat, whither goest thou with me?" Replied the Jinni, "I go to cast thee down in the Desert Quarter,[91] O ill-bred wight of gross wits. Shall one have the like of this talisman and give it to the folk to gaze at? Verily, thou deservest that which hath befallen thee; and but that I fear Allah, I would let thee fall from a height of a thousand fathoms, nor shouldst thou reach the earth, till the winds had torn thee to shreds." Ma'aruf was silent[92] and did not again bespeak him till he reached the Desert Quarter and casting him down there, went away and left him in that horrible place. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Nine Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Slave of the Seal-ring took up Ma'aruf and cast him down in the Desert Quarter where he left him and went his ways. So much concerning him; but returning to the Wazir who was now in possession of the talisman, he said to the King, "How deemest thou now? Did I not tell thee that this fellow was a liar, an impostor, but thou wouldst not credit me?" Replied the King, "Thou wast in the right, O my Wazir, Allah grant thee weal! But give me the ring, that I may solace myself with the sight." The Minister looked at him angrily and spat in his face, saying, "O lack-wits, how shall I give it to thee and abide thy servant, after I am become thy master? But I will spare thee no more on life." Then he rubbed the seal-ring and said to the Slave, "Take up this ill-mannered churl and cast him down by his son-in-law the swindler-man." So the Jinni took him up and flew off with him, whereupon quoth the King to him, "O creature of my Lord, what is my crime?" Abu al-Sa'adat replied, "That wot I not, but my master hath commanded me and I cannot cross whoso hath compassed the enchanted ring." Then he flew on with him, till he came to the Desert Quarter and, casting him down where he had cast Ma'aruf left him and returned. The King hearing Ma'aruf weeping, went up to him and acquainted him with his case; and they sat weeping over that which had befallen them and found neither meat nor drink. Meanwhile the Minister, after driving father-in-law and son-in-law from the country, went forth from the garden and summoning all the troops held a Divan, and told them what he had done with the King and Ma'aruf and acquainted them with the affair of the talisman, adding, "Unless ye make me Sultan over you, I will bid the Slave of the Seal-ring take you up one and all and cast you down in the Desert Quarter where you shall die of hunger and thirst." They replied, "Do us no damage, for we accept thee as Sultan over us and will not anywise gainsay thy bidding." So they agreed, in their own despite, to his being Sultan over them, and he bestowed on them robes of honour, seeking all he had a mind to of Abu al-Sa'adat, who brought it to him forthwith. Then he sat down on the throne and the troops did homage to him; and he sent to Princess Dunya, the King's daughter, saying, "Make thee ready, for I mean to come in unto thee this night, because I long for thee with love." When she heard this, she wept, for the case of her husband and father was grievous to her, and sent to him saying, "Have patience with me till my period of widowhood[93] be ended: then draw up thy contract of marriage with me and go in to me according to law." But he sent back to say to her, "I know neither period of widowhood nor to delay have I a mood; and I need not a contract nor know I lawful from unlawful; but needs must I go in unto thee this night." She answered him saying, "So be it, then, and welcome to thee!"; but this was a trick on her part. When the answer reached the Wazir, he rejoiced and his breast was broadened, for that he was passionately in love with her. He bade set food before all the folk, saying, "Eat; this is my bride-feast; for I purpose to go in to the Princess Dunya this night." Quoth the Shaykh al-Islam, "It is not lawful for thee to go in unto her till her days of widowhood be ended and thou have drawn up thy contract of marriage with her." But he answered, "I know neither days of widowhood nor other period; so multiply not words on me." The Shaykh al-Islam was silent,[94] fearing his mischief, and said to the troops, "Verily, this man is a Kafir, a Miscreant, and hath neither creed nor religious conduct." As soon as it was evenfall, he went in to her and found her robed in her richest raiment and decked with her goodliest adornments. When she saw him, she came to meet him, laughing and said, “A blessed night! But hadst thou slain my father and my husband, it had been more to my mind.” And he said, “There is no help but I slay them.” Then she made him sit down and began to jest with him and make show of love caressing him and smiling in his face so that his reason fled; but she cajoled him with her coaxing and cunning only that she might get possession of the ring and change his joy into calamity on the mother of his forehead:[95] nor did she deal thus with him but after the rede of him who said[96] : —

I attained by my wits * What no sword had obtained,
And return wi’ the spoils * Whose sweet pluckings I gained.

When he saw her caress him and smile upon him, desire surged up in him and he besought her of carnal knowledge; but, when he approached her, she drew away from him and burst into tears, saying, “O my lord, seest thou not the man looking at us? I conjure thee by Allah, screen me from his eyes! How canst thou know me what while he looketh on us?” When he heard this, he was angry and asked, “Where is the man?”; and answered she, “There he is, in the bezel of the ring! putting out his head and staring at us.” He thought that the Jinni was looking at them and said laughing, “Fear not; this is the Slave of the Seal-ring, and he is subject to me.” Quoth she, “I am afraid of Ifrits; pull it off and throw it afar from me.” So he plucked it off and laying it on the cushion, drew near to her, but she dealt him a kick, her foot striking him full in the stomach[97] , and he fell over on his back senseless; whereupon she cried out to her attendants, who came to her in haste, and said to them, “Seize him!” So forty slavegirls laid hold on him, whilst she hurriedly snatched up the ring from the cushion and rubbed it; whereupon Abu al-Sa’adat presented himself, saying, “Adsum, at thy service O my mistress.” Cried she, “Take up yonder Infidel and clap him in jail and shackle him heavily.” So he took him and throwing him into the Prison of Wrath[98] returned and reported, “I have laid him in limbo.” Quoth she, “Whither wentest thou with my father and my husband?”; and quoth he, “I cast them down in the Desert Quarter.” Then cried she, “I command thee to fetch them to me forthwith.” He replied, “I hear and I obey,” and taking flight at once, stayed not till he reached the

Desert Quarter, where he lighted down upon them and found them sitting weeping and complaining each to other. Quoth he, “Fear not, for relief is come to you”; and he told them what the Wazir had done, adding, “Indeed I imprisoned him with my own hands in obedience to her, and she hath bidden me bear you back.” And they rejoiced in his news. Then he took them both up and flew home with them; nor was it more than an hour before he brought them in to Princess Dunya, who rose and saluted sire and spouse. Then she made them sit down and brought them food and sweetmeats, and they passed the rest of the night with her. On the next day she clad them in rich clothing and said to the King, “O my papa, sit thou upon thy throne and be King as before and make my husband thy Wazir of the Right and tell thy troops that which hath happened. Then send for the Minister out of prison and do him die, and after burn him, for that he is a Miscreant, and would have gone in unto me in the way of lewdness, without the rites of wedlock and he hath testified against himself that he is an Infidel and believeth in no religion. And do tenderly by thy son-in-law, whom thou makest thy Wazir of the Right.” He replied, “Hearing and obeying, O my daughter. But do thou give me the ring or give it to thy husband.” Quoth she, “It behoveth not that either thou or he have the ring. I will keep the ring myself, and belike I shall be more careful of it than you. Whatso ye wish seek it of me and I will demand it for you of the Slave of the Seal-ring. So fear no harm so long as I live and after my death, do what ye twain will with the ring.” Quoth the King, “This is the right rede, O my daughter,” and taking his son-in-law went forth to the Divan. Now the troops had passed the night in sore chagrin for Princess Dunya and that which the Wazir had done with her, in going in to her after the way of lewdness, without marriage-rites, and for his ill-usage of the King and Ma’aruf, and they feared lest the law of Al-Islam be dishonoured, because it was manifest to them that he was a Kafir. So they assembled in the Divan and fell to reproaching the Shaykh al-Islam, saying, “Why didst thou not forbid him from going in to the Princess in the way of lewdness?” Said he, “O folk, the man is a Miscreant and hath gotten possession of the ring and I and you may not prevail against him. But Almighty Allah will requite him his deed, and be ye silent, lest he slay you.” And as the host was thus engaged in talk, behold the King and Ma'aruf entered the Divan. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Thousandth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the troops sorely chagrined sat in the Divan talking over the ill-deeds done by the Wazir to their Sovran, his son-in-law and his daughter, behold, the King and Ma'aruf entered. Then the King bade decorate the city and sent to fetch the Wazir from the place of duresse. So they brought him, and as he passed by the troops, they cursed him and abused him and menaced him, till he came to the King, who commanded to do him dead by the vilest of deaths. Accordingly, they slew him and after burned his body, and he went to Hell after the foulest of plights; and right well quoth one of him: —

The Compassionate show no ruth to the tomb where his bones shall lie * And Munkar and eke Nakír[99] ne'er cease to abide thereby!

The King made Ma'aruf his Wazir of the Right and the times were pleasant to them and their joys were untroubled. They abode thus five years till, in the sixth year, the King died and Princess Dunya made Ma'aruf Sultan in her father's stead, but she gave him not the seal-ring. During this time she had conceived by him and borne him a boy of passing loveliness, excelling in beauty and perfection, who ceased not to be reared in the laps of nurses till he reached the age of five, when his mother fell sick of a deadly sickness and calling her husband to her, said to him, "I am ill." Quoth he, "Allah preserve thee, O dearling of my heart!" But quoth she, "Haply I shall die and thou needest not that I commend to thy care thy son: wherefore I charge thee but be careful of the ring, for thine own sake and for the sake of this thy boy." And he answered, "No harm shall befal him whom Allah preserveth!" Then she pulled off the ring and gave it to him, and on the morrow she was admitted to the mercy of Allah the Most High,[100] whilst Ma'aruf abode in possession of the kingship and applied himself to the business of governing. Now it chanced that one day, as he shook the handkerchief[101] and the troops withdrew to their places that he betook himself to the sitting-chamber, where he sat till the day departed and the night advanced with murks bedight. Then came in to him his cup-companions of the notables according to their custom, and sat with him by way of solace and diversion, till midnight, when they craved permission to withdraw. He gave them leave and they retired to their houses; after which there came in to him a slave-girl affected to the service of his bed, who spread him the mattress and doffing his apparel, clad him in his sleeping-gown. Then he lay down and she kneaded his feet, till sleep overpowered him; whereupon she withdrew to her own chamber and slept. But suddenly he felt something beside him in the bed and awaking started up in alarm and cried, "I seek refuge with Allah from Satan the stoned!" Then he opened his eyes and seeing by his side a woman foul of favour, said to her, "Who art thou?" Said she, "Fear not, I am thy wife Fatimah al-Urrah." Whereupon he looked in her face and knew her by her loathly form and the length of her dog-teeth: so he asked her, "Whence camest thou in to me and who brought thee to this country?" "In what country art thou at this present?" "In the city of Ikhtiyan al-Khatan. But thou, when didst thou leave Cairo?" "But now." "How can that be?" "Know," said she, "that, when I fell out with thee and Satan prompted me to do thee a damage, I complained of thee to the magistrates, who sought for thee and the Kazis enquired of thee, but found thee not. When two days were past, repentance gat hold upon me and I knew that the fault was with me; but penitence availed me not, and I abode for some days weeping for thy loss, till what was in my hand failed and I was obliged to beg my bread. So I fell to begging of all, from the courted rich to the contemned poor, and since thou leftest me, I have eaten of the bitterness of beggary and have been in the sorriest of conditions. Every night I sat beweeping our separation and that which I suffered, since thy departure, of humiliation and ignominy, of abjection and misery." And she went on to tell him what had befallen her, whilst he stared at her in amazement, till she said, "Yesterday, I went about begging all day but none gave me aught; and as often as I accosted any one and craved of him a crust of bread, he reviled me and gave me naught. When night came, I went to bed supperless, and hunger burned me and sore on me was that which I suffered: and I sat weeping when, behold, one appeared to me and said, O woman why weepest thou? Said I, erst I had a husband who used to provide for me and fulfil my wishes; but he is lost to me and I know not whither he went and have been in sore straits since he left me. Asked he, What is thy husband's name? and I answered, His name is Ma'aruf. Quoth he, I ken him. Know that thy husband is now Sultan in a certain city, and if thou wilt, I will carry thee to him. Cried I, I am under thy protection: of thy bounty bring me to him! So he took me up and flew with me between heaven and earth, till he brought me to this pavilion and said to me: — Enter yonder chamber, and thou shalt see thy husband asleep on the couch. Accordingly I entered and found thee in this state of lordship. Indeed I had not thought thou wouldst forsake me, who am thy mate, and praised be Allah who hath united thee with me!" Quoth Ma'aruf, "Did I forsake thee or thou me? Thou complainedst of me from Kazi to Kazi and endedst by denouncing me to the High Court and bringing down on me Abú Tabak from the Citadel: so I fled in mine own despite." And he went on to tell her all that had befallen him and how he was become Sultan and had married the King's daughter and how his beloved Dunya had died, leaving him a son who was then seven years old. She rejoined, "That which happened was fore-ordained of Allah; but I repent me and I place myself under thy protection beseeching thee not to abandon me, but suffer me eat bread, with thee by way of an alms." And she ceased not to humble herself to him and to supplicate him till his heart relented towards her and he said, "Repent from mischief and abide with me, and naught shall betide thee save what shall pleasure thee: but, an thou work any wickedness, I will slay thee nor fear any one. And fancy not that thou canst complain of me to the High Court and that Abu Tabak will come down on me from the Citadel; for I am become Sultan and the folk dread me: but I fear none save Allah Almighty, because I have a talismanic ring which when I rub, the Slave of the Signet appeareth to me. His name is Abu al-Sa'adat, and whatsoever I demand of him he bringeth to me. So, an thou desire to return to thine own country, I will give thee what shall suffice thee all thy life long and will send thee thither speedily; but, an thou desire to abide with me, I will clear for thee a palace and furnish it with the choicest of silks and appoint thee twenty slave-girls to serve thee and provide thee with dainty dishes and sumptuous suits, and thou shalt be a Queen and live in all delight till thou die or

I die. What sayest thou of this?” “I wish to abide with thee,” she answered and kissed his hand and vowed repentance from frowardness. Accordingly he set apart a palace for her sole use and gave her slave-girls and eunuchs, and she became a Queen. The young Prince used to visit her as he visited his sire; but she hated him for that he was not her son; and when the boy saw that she looked on him with the eye of aversion and anger, he shunned her and took a dislike to her. As for Ma’aruf, he occupied himself with the love of fair handmaidens and bethought him not of his wife Fatimah the Dung, for that she was grown a grizzled old fright, foul-favoured to the sight, a bald-headed blight, loathlier than the snake speckled black and white; the more that she had beyond measure evil entreated him aforetime; and as saith the adage, “Ill-usage the root of desire disparts and sows hate in the soil of hearts;” and God-gifted is he who saith: —

Beware of losing hearts of men by thine injurious deed; * For
  when Aversion takes his place none may dear Love restore:
Hearts, when affection flies from them, are likest unto glass *
  Which broken, cannot whole be made,— ’tis breached for
  evermore.

And indeed Ma’aruf had not given her shelter by reason of any praiseworthy quality in her, but he dealt with her thus generously only of desire for the approval of Allah Almighty. — Here Dunyazad interrupted her sister Shahrazad, saying, “How winsome are these words of thine which win hold of the heart more forcibly than enchanters’ eyne; and how beautiful are these wondrous books thou hast cited and the marvellous and singular tales thou hast recited!” Quoth Shahrazad, “And where is all this compared with what I shall relate to thee on the coming night, an I live and the King deign spare my days?” So when morning morrowed and the day brake in its sheen and shone, the King arose from his couch with breast broadened and in high expectation for the rest of the tale and saying, “By Allah, I will not slay her till I hear the last of her story;” repaired to his Durbár while the Wazir, as was his wont, presented himself at the Palace, shroud under arm. Shahriyar tarried abroad all that day, bidding and forbidding between man and man; after which he returned to his Harim and, according to his custom went in to his wife Shahrazad.[102]

When it was the Thousand and First Night,

Dunyazad said to her sister, “Do thou finish for us the History of Ma’aruf!” She replied, “With love and goodly gree, an my lord deign permit me recount it.” Quoth the King, “I permit thee; for that I am fain of hearing it.” So she said: — It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Ma’aruf would have naught to do with his wife by way of conjugal duty. Now when she saw that he held aloof from her bed and occupied himself with other women, she hated him and jealousy gat the mastery of her and Iblis prompted her to take the seal-ring from him and slay him and make herself Queen in his stead. So she went forth one night from her pavilion, intending for that in which was her husband King Ma’aruf; and it chanced by decree of the Decreer and His written destiny, that Ma’aruf lay that night with one of his concubines; a damsel endowed with beauty and loveliness, symmetry and a stature all grace. And it was his wont, of the excellence of his piety, that, when he was minded to have to lie with a woman, he would doff the enchanted seal-ring from his finger, in reverence to the Holy Names graven thereon, and lay it on the Pillow, nor would he don it again till he had purified himself by the Ghusl-ablution. Moreover, when he had lain with a woman, he was used to order her go forth from him before daybreak, of his fear for the seal-ring; and when he went to the Hammam he locked the door of the pavilion till his return, when he put on the ring, and after this, all were free to enter according to custom. His wife Fatimah the Dung knew of all this and went not forth from her place till she had certified herself of the case. So she sallied out, when the night was dark, purposing to go in to him, whilst he was drowned in sleep, and steal the ring, unseen of him. Now it chanced at this time that the King’s son had gone out, without light, to the Chapel of Ease for an occasion, and sat down over the marble slab[103] of the jakes in the dark, leaving the door open. Presently, he saw Fatimah come forth of her pavilion and make stealthily for that of his father and said in himself, “What aileth this witch to leave her lodging in the dead of the night and make for my father’s pavilion? Needs must there be some reason for this:” so he went out after her and followed in her steps unseen of her. Now he had a short sword of watered steel, which he held so dear that he went not to his father’s Divan, except he were girt therewith; and his father used to laugh at him and exclaim, “Mahallah![104] This is a mighty fine sword of thine, O my son! But thou hast not gone down with it to battle nor cut off a head therewith.” Whereupon the boy would reply, “I will not fail to cut off with it some head which deserveth[105] cutting.” And Ma’aruf would laugh at his words. Now when treading in her track, he drew the sword from its sheath and he followed her till she came to his father’s pavilion and entered, whilst he stood and watched her from the door. He saw her searching about and heard her say to herself, “Where hath he laid the seal-ring?”; whereby he knew that she was looking for the ring and he waited till she found it and said, “Here it is.” Then she picked it up and turned to go out; but he hid behind the door. As she came forth, she looked at the ring and turned it about in her grasp. But when she was about to rub it, he raised his hand with the sword and smote her on the neck; and she cried a single cry and fell down dead. With this Ma’aruf awoke and seeing his wife strown on the ground, with her blood flowing, and his son standing with the drawn sword in his hand, said to him, “What is this, O my son?” He replied, “O my father, how often hast thou said to me, Thou hast a mighty fine sword; but thou hast not gone down with it to battle nor cut off a head. And I have answered thee, saying, I will not fail to cut off with it a head which deserveth cutting. And now, behold, I have therewith cut off for thee a head well worth the cutting!” And he told him what had passed. Ma’aruf sought for the seal-ring, but found it not; so he searched the dead woman’s body till he saw her hand closed upon it; whereupon he took it from her grasp and said to the boy, “Thou art indeed my very son, without doubt or dispute; Allah ease thee in this world and the next, even as thou hast eased me of this vile woman! Her attempt led only to her own destruction, and Allah-gifted is he who said: —

When forwards Allah’s aid a man’s intent, * His wish in every
case shall find consent:
But an that aid of Allah be refused, * His first attempt shall do

him damagement."

Then King Ma'aruf called aloud to some of his attendants, who came in haste, and he told them what his wife Fatimah the Dung had done and bade them to take her and lay her in a place till the morning. They did his bidding, and next day he gave her in charge to a number of eunuchs, who washed her and shrouded her and made her a tomb[106] and buried her. Thus her coming from Cairo was but to her grave, and Allah-gifted is he who said[107] : —

We trod the steps appointed for us: and he whose steps are
appointed must tread them.
He whose death is decreed to take place in our land shall not die
in any land but that.

And how excellent is the saying of the poet: —

I wot not, whenas to a land I fare, * Good luck pursuing, what my
lot shall be.
Whether the fortune I perforce pursue * Or the misfortune which
pursueth me.

After this, King Ma'aruf sent for the husbandman, whose guest he had been, when he was a fugitive, and made him his Wazir of the Right and his Chief Counsellor.[108] Then, learning that he had a daughter of passing beauty and loveliness, of qualities nature-ennobled at birth and exalted of worth, he took her to wife; and in due time he married his son. So they abode awhile in all solace of life and its delight and their days were serene and their joys untroubled, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies, the Depopulator of populous places and the Orphaner of sons and daughters. And glory be to the Living who dieth not and in whose hand are the Keys of the Seen and the Unseen!"

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Conclusion.

Now, during this time, Shahrazad had borne the King three boy children: so, when she had made an end of the story of Ma'aruf, she rose to her feet and kissing ground before him, said, "O King of the time and unique one[109] of the age and the tide, I am thine handmaid and these thousand nights and a night have I entertained thee with stories of folk gone before and admonitory instances of the men of yore. May I then make bold to crave a boon of Thy Highness?" He replied, "Ask, O Shahrazad, and it shall be granted to thee.[110] " Whereupon she cried out to the nurses and the eunuchs, saying, "Bring me my children." So they brought them to her in haste, and they were three boy children, one walking, one crawling and one sucking. She took them and setting them before the King, again kissed the ground and said, "O King of the age, these are thy children and I crave that thou release me from the doom of death, as a dole to these infants; for, an thou kill me, they will become motherless and will find none among women to rear them as they should be reared." When the King heard this, he wept and straining the boys to his bosom, said, "By Allah, O Shahrazad, I pardoned thee before the coming of these children, for that I found thee chaste, pure, ingenuous and pious! Allah bless thee and thy father and thy mother and thy root and thy branch! I take the Almighty to witness against me that I exempt thee from aught that can harm thee." So she kissed his hands and feet and rejoiced with exceeding joy, saying, The Lord make thy life long and increase thee in dignity and majesty[111] !"; presently adding, "Thou marvelledst at that which befel thee on the part of women; yet there betided the Kings of the Chosroës before thee greater mishaps and more grievous than that which hath befallen thee, and indeed I have set forth unto thee that which happened to Caliphs and Kings and others with their women, but the relation is longsome and hearkening groweth tedious, and in this is all sufficient warning for the man of wits and admonishment for the wise." Then she ceased to speak, and when King Shahriyar heard her speech and profited by that which she said, he summoned up his reasoning powers and cleansed his heart and caused his understanding revert and turned to Allah Almighty and said to himself, “Since there befel the Kings of the Chosroës more than that which hath befallen me, never, whilst I live, shall I cease to blame myself for the past. As for this Shahrazad, her like is not found in the lands; so praise be to Him who appointed her a means for delivering His creatures from oppression and slaughter!” Then he arose from his séance and kissed her head, whereat she rejoiced, she and her sister Dunyazad, with exceeding joy. When the morning morrowed, the King went forth and sitting down on the throne of the Kingship, summoned the Lords of his land; whereupon the Chamberlains and Nabobs and Captains of the host went in to him and kissed ground before him. He distinguished the Wazir, Shahrazad’s sire, with special favour and bestowed on him a costly and splendid robe of honour and entreated him with the utmost kindness, and said to him, “Allah protect thee for that thou gavest me to wife thy noble daughter, who hath been the means of my repentance from slaying the daughters of folk. Indeed I have found her pure and pious, chaste and ingenuous, and Allah hath vouchsafed me by her three boy children; wherefore praised be He for his passing favour.” Then he bestowed robes of honour upon his Wazirs, and Emirs and Chief Officers and he set forth to them briefly that which had betided him with Shahrazad and how he had turned from his former ways and repented him of what he had done and purposed to take the Wazir’s daughter, Shahrazad, to wife and let draw up the marriage-contract with her. When those who were present heard this, they kissed the ground before him and blessed him and his betrothed[112] Shahrazad, and the Wazir thanked her. Then Shahriyar made an end of his sitting in all weal, whereupon the folk dispersed to their dwelling-places and the news was bruited abroad that the King purposed to marry the Wazir’s daughter, Shahrazad. Then he proceeded to make ready the wedding gear, and presently he sent after his brother, King Shah Zaman, who came, and King Shahriyar went forth to meet him with the troops. Furthermore, they decorated the city after the goodliest fashion and diffused scents from censers and burnt aloes-wood and other perfumes in all the markets and thoroughfares and rubbed themselves with saffron,[113] what while the drums beat and the flutes and pipes sounded and mimes and mountebanks played and plied their arts and the King lavished on them gifts and largesse; and in very deed it was a notable day. When they came to the palace, King Shahriyar commanded to spread the tables with beasts roasted whole and sweetmeats and all manner of viands and bade the crier cry to the folk that they should come up to the Divan and eat and drink and that this should be a means of reconciliation between him and them. So, high and low, great and small came up unto him and they abode on that wise, eating and drinking, seven days with their nights. Then the King shut himself up with his brother and related to him that which had betided him with the Wazir's daughter, Shahrazad, during the past three years and told him what he had heard from her of proverbs and parables, chronicles and pleasantries, quips and jests, stories and anecdotes, dialogues and histories and elegies and other verses; whereat King Shah Zaman marvelled with the uttermost marvel and said, "Fain would I take her younger sister to wife, so we may be two brothers-german to two sisters-german, and they on like wise be sisters to us; for that the calamity which befel me was the cause of our discovering that which befel thee and all this time of three years past I have taken no delight in woman, save that I lie each night with a damsel of my kingdom, and every morning I do her to death; but now I desire to marry thy wife's sister Dunyazad." When King Shahriyar heard his brother's words, he rejoiced with joy exceeding and arising forthright, went in to his wife Shahrazad and acquainted her with that which his brother purposed, namely that he sought her sister Dunyazad in wedlock; whereupon she answered, "O King of the age, we seek of him one condition, to wit, that he take up his abode with us, for that I cannot brook to be parted from my sister an hour, because we were brought up together and may not endure separation each from other.[114] If he accept this pact, she is his handmaid." King Shahriyar returned to his brother and acquainted him with that which Shahrazad had said; and he replied, "Indeed, this is what was in my mind, for that I desire nevermore to be parted from thee one hour. As for the kingdom, Allah the Most High shall send to it whomso He chooseth, for that I have no longer a desire for the kingship." When King Shahriyar heard his brother's words, he rejoiced exceedingly and said, "Verily, this is what I wished, O my brother. So Alhamdolillah — Praised be Allah — who hath brought about union between us." Then he sent after the Kazis and Olema, Captains and Notables, and they married the two brothers to the two sisters. The contracts were written out and the two Kings bestowed robes of honour of silk and satin on those who were present, whilst the city was decorated and the rejoicings were renewed. The King commanded each Emir and Wazir and Chamberlain and Nabob to decorate his palace and the folk of the city were gladdened by the presage of happiness and contentment. King Shahriyar also bade slaughter sheep and set up kitchens and made bride-feasts and fed all comers, high and low; and he gave alms to the poor and needy and extended his bounty to great and small. Then the eunuchs went forth, that they might perfume the Hammam for the brides; so they scented it with rosewater and willow-flower-water and pods of musk and fumigated it with Kákilí[115] eagle-wood and ambergris. Then Shahrazad entered, she and her sister Dunyazad, and they cleansed their heads and clipped their hair. When they came forth of the Hammam-bath, they donned raiment and ornaments; such as men were wont prepare for the Kings of the Chosroës; and among Shahrazad's apparel was a dress purfled with red gold and wrought with counterfeit presentments of birds and beasts. And the two sisters encircled their necks with necklaces of jewels of price, in the like whereof Iskander[116] rejoiced not, for therein were great jewels such as amazed the wit and dazzled the eye; and the imagination was bewildered at their charms, for indeed each of them was brighter than the sun and the moon. Before them they lighted brilliant flambeaux of wax in candelabra of gold, but their faces outshone the flambeaux, for that they had eyes sharper than unsheathed swords and the lashes of their eyelids bewitched all hearts. Their cheeks were rosy red and their necks and shapes gracefully swayed and their eyes wantoned like the gazelle's; and the slave-girls came to meet them with instruments of music. Then the two Kings entered the Hammam-bath, and when they came forth, they sat down on a couch set with pearls and gems, whereupon the two sisters came up to them and stood between their hands, as they were moons, bending and leaning from side to side in their beauty and loveliness. Presently they brought forward Shahrazad and displayed her, for the first dress, in a red suit; whereupon King Shahriyar rose to look upon her and the wits of all present, men and women, were bewitched for that she was even as saith of her one of her describers[117] : —

A sun on wand in knoll of sand she showed, * Clad in her
cramoisy-hued chemisette:
Of her lips' honey-dew she gave me drink * And with her rosy
cheeks quencht fire she set.

Then they attired Dunyazad in a dress of blue brocade and she became as she were the full moon when it shineth forth. So they displayed her in this, for the first dress, before King Shah Zaman, who rejoiced in her and well-nigh swooned away for love-longing and amorous desire; yea, he was distraught with passion for her, whenas he saw her, because she was as saith of her one of her describers in these couplets[118] : —

She comes apparelled in an azure vest * Ultramarine as skies are
deckt and dight:
I view'd th' unparallel'd sight, which showed my eyes * A
Summer-moon upon a Winter-night.

Then they returned to Shahrazad and displayed her in the second dress, a suit of surpassing goodliness, and veiled her face with her hair like a chin-veil.[119] Moreover, they let down her side-locks and she was even as saith of her one of her describers in these couplets: —

O hail to him whose locks his cheeks o'ershade, * Who slew my
life by cruel hard despight:
Said I, "Hast veiled the Morn in Night?" He said, * "Nay I but
veil Moon in hue of Night."

Then they displayed Dunyazad in a second and a third and a fourth dress and she paced forward like the rising sun, and swayed to and fro in the insolence of beauty; and she was even as saith the poet of her in these couplets[120] : —

The sun of beauty she to all appears * And, lovely coy she mocks

all loveliness:
And when he fronts her favour and her smile * A-morn, the sun of
day in clouds must dress.

Then they displayed Shahrazad in the third dress and the fourth and the fifth and she became as she were a Bán-branch snell or a thirsting gazelle, lovely of face and perfect in attributes of grace, even as saith of her one in these couplets[121] : —

She comes like fullest moon on happy night. * Taper of waist with
shape of magic might:
She hath an eye whose glances quell mankind, * And ruby on her
cheeks reflects his light:
Enveils her hips the blackness of her hair; * Beware of curls
that bite with viper-bite!
Her sides are silken-soft, that while the heart * Mere rock
behind that surface ‘scapes our sight:
From the fringed curtains of her eyne she shoots * Shafts that at
furthest range on mark alight.

Then they returned to Dunyazad and displayed her in the fifth dress and in the sixth, which was green, when she surpassed with her loveliness the fair of the four quarters of the world and outvied, with the brightness of her countenance, the full moon at rising tide; for she was even as saith of her the poet in these couplets[122] : —

A damsel ’twas the tirer’s art had decked with snare and sleight,

* And robed with rays as though the sun from her had
borrowed light:
She came before us wondrous clad in chemisette of green, * As
veilèd by his leafy screen Pomegranate hides from sight:
And when he said, “How callest thou the fashion of thy dress?” *
She answered us in pleasant way with double meaning dight,
We call this garment crève-coeur; and rightly is it hight, * For
many a heart wi’ this we brake and harried many a sprite.”

Then they displayed Shahrazad in the sixth and seventh dresses and clad her in youth's clothing, whereupon she came forward swaying from side to side and coquettishly moving and indeed she ravished wits and hearts and ensorcelled all eyes with her glances. She shook her sides and swayed her haunches, then put her hair on sword-hilt and went up to King Shahriyar, who embraced her as hospitable host embraceth guest, and threatened her in her ear with the taking of the sword; and she was even as saith of her the poet in these words: —

Were not the Murk[123] of gender male, * Than feminines
  surpassing fair,
Tirewomen they had grudged the bride, * Who made her beard and
  whiskers wear!

Thus also they did with her sister Dunyazad, and when they had made an end of the display the King bestowed robes of honour on all who were present and sent the brides to their own apartments. Then Shahrazad went in to King Shahriyar and Dunyazad to King Shah Zaman and each of them solaced himself with the company of his beloved consort and the hearts of the folk were comforted. When morning morrowed, the Wazir came in to the two Kings and kissed ground before them; wherefore they thanked him and were large of bounty to him. Presently they went forth and sat down upon couches of Kingship, whilst all the Wazirs and Emirs and Grandees and Lords of the land presented themselves and kissed ground. King Shahriyar ordered them dresses of honour and largesse and they prayed for the permanence and prosperity of the King and his brother. Then the two Sovrans appointed their sire-in-law the Wazir to be Viceroy in Samarcand and assigned him five of the Chief Emirs to accompany him, charging them attend him and do him service. The Minister kissed the ground and prayed that they might be vouchsafed length of life: then he went in to his daughters, whilst the Eunuchs and Ushers walked before him, and saluted them and farewelled them. They kissed his hands and gave him joy of the Kingship and bestowed on him immense treasures; after which he took leave of them and setting out, fared days and nights, till he came near Samarcand, where the townspeople met him at a distance of three marches and rejoiced in him with exceeding joy. So he entered the city and they decorated the houses and it was a notable day. He sat down on the throne of his kingship and the Wazirs did him homage and the Grandees and Emirs of Samarcand and all prayed that he might be vouchsafed justice and victory and length of continuance. So he bestowed on them robes of honour and entreated them with distinction and they made him Sultan over them. As soon as his father-in-law had departed for Samarcand, King Shahriyar summoned the Grandees of his realm and made them a stupendous banquet of all manner of delicious meats and exquisite sweetmeats. He also bestowed on them robes of honour and guerdoned them and divided the kingdoms between himself and his brother in their presence, whereat the folk rejoiced. Then the two Kings abode, each ruling a day in turn, and they were ever in harmony each with other while on similar wise their wives continued in the love of Allah Almighty and in thanksgiving to Him; and the peoples and the provinces were at peace and the preachers prayed for them from the pulpits, and their report was bruited abroad and the travellers bore tidings of them to all lands. In due time King Shahriyar summoned chroniclers and copyists and bade them write all that had betided him with his wife, first and last; so they wrote this and named it "The Stories of the Thousand Nights and A Night." The book came to thirty volumes and these the King laid up in his treasury. And the two brothers abode with their wives in all pleasance and solace of life and its delights, for that indeed Allah the Most High had changed their annoy into joy; and on this wise they continued till there took them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies, the Desolator of dwelling-places and Garnerer of grave-yards, and they were translated to the ruth of Almighty Allah; their houses fell waste and their palaces lay in ruins[124] and the Kings inherited their riches. Then there reigned after them a wise ruler, who was just, keen-witted and accomplished and loved tales and legends, especially those which chronicle the doings of Sovrans and Sultans, and he found in the treasury these marvellous stories and wondrous histories, contained in the thirty volumes aforesaid. So he read in them a first book and a second and a third and so on to the last of them, and each book astounded and delighted him more than that which preceded it, till he came to the end of them. Then he admired whatso he had read therein of description and discourse and rare traits and anecdotes and moral instances and reminiscences and bade the folk copy them and dispread them over all lands and climes; wherefore their report was bruited abroad and the people named them “The marvels and wonders of the Thousand Nights and A Night.” This is all that hath come down to us of the origin of this book, and Allah is All-knowing.[125] So Glory be to Him whom the shifts of Time waste not away, nor doth aught of chance or change affect His sway: whom one case diverteth not from other case and Who is sole in the attributes of perfect grace. And prayer and peace be upon the Lord’s Pontiff and Chosen One among His creatures, our lord MOHAMMED the Prince of mankind through whom we supplicate Him for a goodly and a godly

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FINIS.

Terminal Essay

Preliminary

The reader who has reached this terminal stage will hardly require my assurance that he has seen the mediaeval Arab at his best and, perhaps, at his worst. In glancing over the myriad pictures of this panorama, those who can discern the soul of goodness in things evil will note the true nobility of the Moslem's mind in the Moyen Age, and the cleanliness of his life from cradle to grave. As a child he is devoted to his parents, fond of his comrades and respectful to his "pastors and masters," even schoolmasters. As a lad he prepares for manhood with a will and this training occupies him throughout youthtide: he is a gentleman in manners without awkwardness, vulgar astonishment or mauvaise-honte. As a man he is high-spirited and energetic, always ready to fight for his Sultan, his country and, especially, his Faith: courteous and affable, rarely failing in temperance of mind and self-respect, self-control and self-command: hospitable to the stranger, attached to his fellow citizens, submissive to superiors and kindly to inferiors — if such classes exist: Eastern despotisms have arrived nearer the idea of equality and fraternity than any republic yet invented. As a friend he proves a model to the Damons and Pythiases: as a lover an exemplar to Don Quijote without the noble old Caballero's touch of eccentricity. As a knight he is the mirror of chivalry, doing battle for the weak and debelling the strong, while ever "defending the honour of women." As a husband his patriarchal position causes him to be loved and fondly loved by more than one wife: as a father affection for his children rules his life: he is domestic in the highest degree and he finds few pleasures beyond the bosom of his family. Lastly, his death is simple, pathetic end edifying as the life which led to it.

Considered in a higher phase, the mediaeval Moslem mind displays, like the ancient Egyptian, a most exalted moral idea, the deepest reverence for all things connected with his religion and a sublime conception of the Unity and Omnipotence of the Deity. Noteworthy too is a proud resignation to the decrees of Fate and Fortune (Kazá wa Kadar), of Destiny and Predestination — a feature which ennobles the low aspect of Al-Islam even in these her days of comparative degeneration and local decay. Hence his moderation in prosperity, his fortitude in adversity, his dignity, his perfect self-dominance and, lastly, his lofty quietism which sounds the true heroic ring. This again is softened and tempered by a simple faith in the supremacy of Love over Fear, an unbounded humanity and charity for the poor and helpless: an unconditional forgiveness of the direst injuries ("which is the note of the noble"); a generosity and liberality which at times seem impossible and an enthusiasm for universal benevolence and beneficence which, exalting kindly deeds done to man above every form of holiness, constitute the root and base of Oriental, nay, of all, courtesy. And the whole is crowned by pure trust and natural confidence in the progress and perfectability of human nature, which he exalts instead of degrading; this he holds to be the foundation stone of society and indeed the very purpose of its existence. His Pessimism resembles far more the optimism which the so-called Books of Moses borrowed from the Ancient Copt than the mournful and melancholy creed of the true Pessimist, as Solomon the Hebrew, the Indian Buddhist and the esoteric European imitators of Buddhism. He cannot but sigh when contemplating the sin and sorrow, the pathos and bathos of the world; and feel the pity of it, with its shifts and changes ending in nothingness, its scanty happiness and its copious misery. But his melancholy is expressed in —

> "A voice divinely sweet, a voice no less
> Divinely sad."

Nor does he mourn as they mourn who have no hope: he has an absolute conviction in future compensation; and, meanwhile, his lively poetic impulse, the poetry of ideas, not of formal verse, and his radiant innate idealism breathe a soul into the merest matter of squalid work-a-day life and awaken the sweetest harmonies of Nature epitomised in Humanity.

Such was the Moslem at a time when “the dark clouds of ignorance and superstition hung so thick on the intellectual horizon of Europe as to exclude every ray of learning that darted from the East and when all that was polite or elegant in literature was classed among the Studia Arabum”[126] Nor is the shady side of the picture less notable. Our Arab at his worst is a mere barbarian who has not forgotten the savage. He is a model mixture of childishness and astuteness, of simplicity and cunning, concealing levity of mind under solemnity of aspect. His stolid instinctive conservatism grovels before the tyrant rule of routine, despite that turbulent and licentious independence which ever suggests revolt against the ruler: his mental torpidity, founded upon physical indolence, renders immediate action and all manner of exertion distasteful: his conscious weakness shows itself in overweening arrogance and intolerance. His crass and self-satisfied ignorance makes him glorify the most ignoble superstitions, while acts of revolting savagery are the natural results of a malignant fanaticism and a furious hatred of every creed beyond the pale of Al-Islam.

It must be confessed that these contrasts make a curious and interesting tout ensemble.

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§ I THE ORIGIN OF THE NIGHTS.

A. — The Birth place.

Here occur the questions, Where and When was written and to Whom do we owe a prose-poem which, like the dramatic epos of Herodotus, has no equal?

I proceed to lay before the reader a procès-verbal of the sundry pleadings already in court as concisely as is compatible with intelligibility, furnishing him with references to original authorities and warning him that a fully-detailed account would fill a volume. Even my own reasons for decidedly taking one side and rejecting the other must be stated briefly. And before entering upon this subject I would distribute the prose-matter of our Recueil of Folk-lore under three heads

1. The Apologue or Beast-fable proper, a theme which may be of any age, as it is found in the hieroglyphs and in the cuneiforms.

2. The Fairy-tale, as for brevity we may term the stories based upon supernatural agency: this was a favourite with olden Persia; and Mohammed, most austere and puritanical of the "Prophets," strongly objected to it because preferred by the more sensible of his converts to the dry legends of the Talmud and the Koran, quite as fabulous without the halo and glamour of fancy.

3. The Histories and historical anecdotes, analects, and acroamata, in which the names, when not used achronistically by the editor or copier, give unerring data for the earliest date à quo and which, by the mode of treatment, suggest the latest.

Each of these constituents will require further notice when the subject-matter of the book is discussed. The metrical portion of The Nights may also be divided into three categories, viz.: —

1. The oldest and classical poetry of the Arabs, e.g. the various quotations from the "Suspended Poems."

2. The mediaeval, beginning with the laureates of Al-Rashid's court, such as Al-Asma'í and Abú Nowás, and ending with Al-Harírí A.H. 446-516 = 1030-1100.

3. The modern quotations and the pièces de circonstance by the editors or copyists of the Compilation.[127]

Upon the metrical portion also further notices must be offered at the end of this Essay.

In considering the uncle derivatur of The Nights we must carefully separate subject-matter from language-manner. The neglect of such essential difference has caused the remark, “It is not a little curious that the origin of a work which has been known to Europe and has been studied by many during nearly two centuries, should still be so mysterious, and that students have failed in all attempts to detect the secret.” Hence also the chief authorities at once branched off into two directions. One held the work to be practically Persian: the other as persistently declared it to be purely Arab.

Professor Galland, in his Epistle Dedicatory to the Marquise d’O, daughter of his patron M. de Guillerague, showed his literary acumen and unfailing sagacity by deriving The Nights from India via Persia; and held that they had been reduced to their present shape by an Auteur Arabe inconnu. This reference to India, also learnedly advocated by M. Langlès, was inevitable in those days: it had not then been proved that India owed all her literature to far older civilisations and even that her alphabet the Nágari, erroneously called Devanágari, was derived through Phnicia and Himyar-land from Ancient Egypt. So Europe was contented to compare The Nights with the Fables of Pilpay for upwards of a century. At last the Pehlevi or old Iranian origin of the work found an able and strenuous advocate in Baron von Hammer-Purgstall [128] who worthily continued what Galland had begun: although a most inexact writer, he was extensively read in Oriental history and poetry. His contention was that the book is an Arabisation of the Persian Hazár Afsánah or Thousand Tales and he proved his point.

Von Hammer began by summoning into Court the “Herodotus of the Arabs, (Ali Abú al-Hasan) Al-Mas’údi who, in A.H. 333 (=944) about one generation before the founding of Cairo, published at Bassorah the first edition of his far-famed Murúj al-Dahab wa Ma’ádin al- Jauhar, Meads of Gold and Mines of Gems. The Styrian Orientalist[129] quotes with sundry misprints[130] an ampler version of a passage in Chapter lxviii., which is abbreviated in the French translation of M. C. Barbier de Meynard.[131]

“And, indeed, many men well acquainted with their (Arab) histories[132] opine that the stories above mentioned and other trifles were strung together by men who commended themselves to the Kings by relating them, and who found favour with their contemporaries by committing them to memory and by reciting them. Of such fashion[133] is the fashion of the books which have come down to us translated from the Persian (Fárasiyah), the Indian (Hindíyah),[134] and the Græco-Roman (Rúmíyah)[135] : we have noted the judgment which should be passed upon compositions of this nature. Such is the book entituled Hazár Afsánah or The Thousand Tales, which word in Arabic signifies Khuráfah (Faceti): it is known to the public under the name of [he Boot of a Thousand Nights and a Night, (Kitab Alf Laylah wa Laylah).[136] This is an history of a King and his Wazir, the minister's daughter and a slave-girl (járiyah) who are named Shírzád (lion-born) and Dínár- zád (ducat-born).[137] Such also is the Tale of Farzah,[138] (alii Firza), and Simás, containing details concerning the Kings and Wazirs of Hind: the Book of Al-Sindibád[139] and others of a similar stamp."

Von Hammer adds, quoting chaps. cxvi. of Al-Mas'údi that Al-Mansúr (second Abbaside A.H. 136-158 = 754-775, and grandfather of Al- Rashíd) caused many translations of Greek and Latin, Syriac and Persian (Pehlevi) works to be made into Arabic, specifying the "Kalílah wa Damnah,"[140] the Fables of Bidpái (Pilpay), the Logic of Aristotle, the Geography of Ptolemy and the Elements of Euclid. Hence he concludes "L'original des Mille et une Nuits * * * selon toute vraisemblance, a été traduit au temps du Khalife Mansur, c'est-á-dire trente ans avant le règne du Khalife Haroun al-Raschid, qui, par la suite, devait lui-même jouer un si grand rôle dans ces histoires." He also notes that, about a century after Al-Mas'udi had mentioned the Hazár Afsánah, it was versified and probably remodelled by one "Rásti," the Takhallus or nom de plume of a bard at the Court of Mahmúd, the Ghaznevite Sultan who, after a reign of thirty-three years, ob. A.D. 1030.[141]

Von Hammer some twelve years afterwards (Journ. Asiat August, 1839) brought forward, in his "Note sur l'origine Persane des Mille et une Nuits," a second and an even more important witness: this was the famous Kitab al-Fihrist,[142] or Index List of (Arabic) works, written (in A.H. 387 = 987) by Mohammed bin Is'hák al-Nadím (cup-companion or equerry), "popularly known as Ebou Yacoub el-Werrek."[143] The following is an extract () from the Eighth Discourse which consists of three arts (funún).[144] "The first section on the history of the confabulatores nocturni (tellers of night tales) and the relaters of fanciful adventures, together with the names of books treating upon such subjects. Mohammed ibn Is'hak saith: The first who indited themes of imagination and made books of them, consigning these works to the libraries, and who ordered some of them as though related by the tongues of brute beasts, were the palæo-Persians (and the Kings of the First Dynasty). The Ashkanian Kings of the Third Dynasty appended others to them and they were augmented and amplified in the days of the Sassanides (the fourth and last royal house). The Arabs also translated them into Arabic, and the loquent and eloquent polished and embellished them and wrote others resembling them. The first work of such kind was entituled The Book of Hazar Afsán,' signifying Alf Khuráfah, the argument whereof was as follows. A King of their Kings was wont, when he wedded a woman and had lain one night with her, to slay her on the next morning. Presently he espoused a damsel of the daughters of the Kings, Shahrázád[145] hight, one endowed with intellect and erudition and, whenas she lay with him, she fell to telling him tales of fancy; moreover she used to connect the story at the end of the night with that which might induce the King to preserve her alive and to ask her of its ending on the next night until a thousand nights had passed over her. Meanwhile he cohabited with her till she was blest by boon of child of him, when she acquainted him with the device she had wrought upon him; wherefore he admired her intelligence and inclined to her and preserved her life. That King had also a Kahramánah (nurse and duenna, not entremetteuse), hight Dínárzád (Dunyázád?), who aided the wife in this (artifice). It is also said that this book was composed for (or, by) Humái daughter of Bahman[146] and in it were included other matters. Mohammed bin Is'hak adds: — And the truth is, Inshallah,[147] that the first who solaced himself with hearing night-tales was Al-Iskandar (he of Macedon) and he had a number of men who used to relate to him imaginary stories and provoke him to laughter: he, however, designed not therein merely to please himself, but that he might thereby become the more cautious and alert. After him the Kings in like fashion made use of the book entitled Hazár Afsán.’ It containeth a thousand nights, but less than two hundred night-stories, for a single history often occupied several nights. I have seen it complete sundry times; and it is, in truth, a corrupted book of cold tales.”[148]

A writer in The Athenum,[149] objecting to Lane’s modern date for The Nights, adduces evidence to prove the greater antiquity of the work. (Abu al-Hasan) Ibn Sa’id (bin Musa al-Gharnati = of Granada) born in A.H. 615 = 1218 and ob. Tunis A.H. 685 = 1286, left his native city and arrived at Cairo in A.H. 639 = 1241. This Spanish poet and historian wrote Al-Muhallá bi al-Ash’ár (The Adorned with Verses), a Topography of Egypt and Africa, which is apparently now lost. In this he quotes from Al-Kurtubi, the Cordovan;[150] and he in his turn is quoted by the Arab historian of Spain, Abú al-Abbás Ahmad bin Mohammed al Makkári, in the “Windwafts of Perfume from the Branches of Andalusia the Blooming”[151] (A.D. 1628-29). Mr. Payne (x. 301) thus translates from Dr. Dozy’s published text.

“Ibn Said (may God have mercy upon him!) sets forth in his book, El Muhella bi-s-Shaar, quoting from El Curtubi the story of the building of the Houdej in the Garden of Cairo, the which was of the magnificent pleasaunces of the Fatimite Khalifs, the rare of ordinance and surpassing, to wit that the Khalif El Aamir bi-ahkam-illah[152] let build it for a Bedouin woman, the love of whom had gotten the mastery of him, in the neighbourhood of the Chosen Garden’[153] and used to resort often thereto and was slain as he went thither; and it ceased not to be a pleasuring-place for the Khalifs after him. The folk abound in stories of the Bedouin girl and Ibn Meyyah[154] of the sons of her uncle (cousin?) and what hangs thereby of the mention of El-Aamir, so that the tales told of them on this account became like unto the story of El Bettál[155] and the Thousand Nights and a Night and what resembleth them.”

The same passage from Ibn Sa’id, corresponding in three MSS., occurs in the famous Khitat[156] attributed to Al-Makrizi (ob. A.D. 1444) and was thus translated from a MS. in the British Museum by

Mr. John Payne (ix. 303)

"The Khalif El-Aamir bi-ahkam-illah set apart, in the neighbourhood of the Chosen Garden, a place for his beloved the Bedouin maid (Aaliyah)[157] which he named El Houdej. Quoth Ibn Said, in the book El-Muhella bi-l-ashar, from the History of El Curtubi, concerning the traditions of the folk of the story of the Bedouin maid and Ibn Menah (Meyyah) of the sons of her uncle and what hangs thereby of the mention of the Khalif El Aamír bi-ahkam-illah, so that their traditions (or tales) upon the garden became like unto El Bettál[158] and the Thousand Nights and what resembleth them."

This evidently means either that The Nights existed in the days of Al-'Ámir (xiith cent.) or that the author compared them with a work popular in his own age. Mr. Payne attaches much importance to the discrepancy of titles, which appears to me a minor detail. The change of names is easily explained. Amongst the Arabs, as amongst the wild Irish, there is divinity (the proverb says luck) in odd numbers and consequently the others are inauspicious. Hence as Sir Wm. Ouseley says (Travels ii. 21), the number Thousand and One is a favourite in the East (Olivier, Voyages vi. 385, Paris 1807), and quotes the Cistern of the "Thousand and One Columns" at Constantinople. Kaempfer (Amn, Exot.) notes of the Takiyahs or Dervishes' convents and the Mazárs or Santons' tombs near Koniah (Iconium), "Multa seges sepulchralium quæ virorum ex omni ævo doctissimorum exuvias condunt, mille et unum recenset auctor Libri qui inscribitur Hassaaer we jek mesaar (Hazár ve yek Mezár), i.e., mille et unum mausolea." A book, The Hazar o yek Ruz (= 1001 Days), was composed in the mid-xviith century by the famous Dervaysh Mukhlis, Chief Sofi of Isfahan: it was translated into French by Petis de la Croix, with a preface by Cazotte, and was englished by Ambrose Phillips. Lastly, in India and throughout Asia where Indian influence extends, the number of cyphers not followed by a significant number is indefinite: for instance, to determine hundreds the Hindus affix the required figure to the end and for 100 write 101; for 1000, 1001. But the grand fact of the Hazár Afsánah is its being the archetype of The Nights, unquestionably proving that the Arab work borrows from the Persian bodily its cadre or framework, the principal characteristic; its exordium and its dénoûement, whilst the two heroines still bear the old Persic names.

Baron Silvestre de Sacy[159] — clarum et venerabile nomen — is the chief authority for the Arab provenance of The Nights. Apparently founding his observations upon Galland,[160] he is of opinion that the work, as now known, was originally composed in Syria[161] and written in the vulgar dialect; that it was never completed by the author, whether he was prevented by death or by other cause; and that imitators endeavoured to finish the work by inserting romances which were already known but which formed no part of the original recueil, such as the Travels of Sindbad the Seaman, the Book of the Seven Wazirs and others. He accepts the Persian scheme and cadre of the work, but no more. He contends that no considerable body of præ-Mohammedan or non-Arabic fiction appears in the actual texts[162] ; and that all the tales, even those dealing with events localised in Persia, India, China and other infidel lands and dated from ante-islamitic ages mostly with the naïvest anachronism, confine themselves to depicting the people, manners and customs of Baghdad and Mosul, Damascus and Cairo, during the Abbaside epoch, and he makes a point of the whole being impregnated with the strongest and most zealous spirit of Mohammedanism. He points out that the language is the popular or vulgar dialect, differing widely from the classical and literary; that it contains many words in common modern use and that generally it suggests the decadence of Arabian literature. Of one tale he remarks: — The History of the loves of Camaralzaman and Budour, Princess of China, is no more Indian or Persian than the others. The prince's father has Moslems for subjects, his mother is named Fatimah and when imprisoned he solaces himself with reading the Koran. The Genii who interpose in these adventures are, again, those who had dealings with Solomon. In fine, all that we here find of the City of the Magians, as well as of the fire-worshippers, suffices to show that one should not expect to discover in it anything save the production of a Moslem writer.

All this, with due deference to so high an authority, is very superficial. Granted, which nobody denies, that the archetypal Hazár Afsánah was translated from Persic into Arabic nearly a thousand years ago, it had ample time and verge enough to assume another and a foreign dress, the corpus however remaining untouched. Under the hands of a host of editors, scribes and copyists, who have no scruples anent changing words, names and dates, abridging descriptions and attaching their own decorations, the florid and rhetorical Persian would readily be converted into the straight-forward, business-like, matter of fact Arabic. And what easier than to islamise the old Zoroasterism, to transform Ahrimán into Iblís the Shaytan, Ján bin Ján into Father Adam, and the Divs and Peris of Kayomars and the olden Guebre Kings into the Jinns and Jinniyahs of Sulayman? Volumes are spoken by the fact that the Arab adapter did not venture to change the Persic names of the two heroines and of the royal brothers or to transfer the mise- en-scène any whither from Khorasan or outer Persia. Where the story has not been too much worked by the literato's pen, for instance the "Ten Wazirs" (in the Bresl. Edit. vi. I9I-343) which is the Guebre Bakhtiyár-námah, the names and incidents are old Iranian and with few exceptions distinctly Persian. And at times we can detect the process of transition, e.g. when the Mázin of Khorásán[163] of the Wortley Montagu MS. becomes the Hasan of Bassorah of the Turner Macan MS. (Mac. Edit.).

Evidently the learned Baron had not studied such works as the Totá- kaháni or Parrot-chat which, notably translated by Nakhshabi from the Sanskrit Suka-Saptati,[164] has now become as orthodoxically Moslem as The Nights. The old Hindu Rajah becomes Ahmad Sultan of Balkh, the Prince is Maymún and his wife Khujisteh. Another instance of such radical change is the later Syriac version of Kaliliah wa Dimnah,[165] old "Pilpay" converted to Christianity. We find precisely the same process in European folk-lore; for instance the Gesta Romanorum in which, after five hundred years, the life, manners and customs of the Romans lapse into the knightly and chivalrous, the Christian and ecclesiastical developments of mediaeval Europe. Here, therefore, I hold that the Austrian Arabist has proved his point whilst the Frenchman has failed.

Mr. Lane, during his three years' labour of translation, first accepted Von Hammer's view and then came round to that of De Sacy; differing, however, in minor details, especially in the native country of The Nights. Syria had been chosen because then the most familiar to Europeans: the "Wife of Bath" had made three pilgrimages to Jerusalem; but few cared to visit the barbarous and dangerous Nile-Valley. Mr. Lane, however, was an enthusiast for Egypt or rather for Cairo, the only part of it he knew; and, when he pronounces The Nights to be of purely "Arab," that is, of Nilotic origin, his opinion is entitled to no more deference than his deriving the sub-African and negroid Fellah from Arabia, the land per excellentiam of pure and noble blood. Other authors have wandered still further afield. Some finding Mosul idioms in the Recueil, propose "Middlegates" for its birth-place and Mr. W. G. P. Palgrave boldly says "The original of this entertaining work appears to have been composed in Baghdad about the eleventh century; another less popular but very spirited version is probably of Tunisian authorship and somewhat later."[166]

B. — The Date.

The next point to consider is the date of The Nights in its present form; and here opinions range between the tenth and the sixteenth centuries. Professor Galland began by placing it arbitrarily in the middle of the thirteenth. De Sacy, who abstained from detailing reasons and who, forgetting the number of editors and scribes through whose hands it must have passed, argued only from the nature of the language and the peculiarities of style, proposed le milieu du neuvième siècle de l'hégire (= A.D. 1445-6) as its latest date. Mr. Hole, who knew The Nights only through Galland's version, had already advocated in his "Remarks" the close of the fifteenth century; and M. Caussin (de Perceval), upon the authority of a supposed note in Galland's MS.[167] (vol. iii. fol. 20, verso), declares the compiler to have been living in A.D. 1548 and 1565. Mr. Lane says "Not begun earlier than the last fourth of the fifteenth century nor ended before the first fourth of the sixteenth," i.e. soon after Egypt was conquered by Selim, Sultan of the Osmanli Turks in A.D. 1517. Lastly the learned Dr. Weil says in his far too scanty Vorwort (p. ix. 2nd Edit.):-"Das wahrscheinlichste dürfte also sein, das im 15. Jahrhundert ein Egyptier nach altern Vorbilde Erzählungen für 1001 Nächte theils erdichtete, theils nach mündlichen Sagen, oder frühern schriftlichen Aufzeichnungen, bearbeitete, dass er aber entweder sein Werk nicht vollendete, oder dass ein Theil desselben verloren ging, so dass das Fehlende von Andern bis ins 16. Jahrhundert hinein durch neue Erzählungen ergänzt wurde.”

But, as justly observed by Mr. Payne, the first step when enquiring into the original date of The Nights is to determine the nucleus of the Repertory by a comparison of the four printed texts and the dozen MSS. which have been collated by scholars.[168] This process makes it evident that the tales common to all are the following thirteen: —

1. The Introduction (with a single incidental story “The Bull and the Ass”). 2. The Trader and the Jinni (with three incidentals). 3. The Fisherman and the Jinni (with four). 4. The Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdad (with six). 5. The Tale of the Three Apples. 6. The Tale of Núr-al-Dín Ali and his son Badr al-Dín Hasan. 7. The Hunchback’s Tale (with eleven incidentals). 8. Nur al-Dín and Anís al-Jalís. 9. Tale of Ghánim bin ‘Ayyúb (with two incidentals). 10. Alí bin Bakkár and Shams al-Nahár (with two). 11. Tale of Kamar al-Zamán. 12. The Ebony Horse; and 13. Julnár the Seaborn.

These forty-two tales, occupying one hundred and twenty Nights, form less than a fifth part of the whole collection which in the Mac. Edit.[169] contains a total of two hundred and sixty-four Hence Dr. Patrick Russell,[170] the Natural Historian of Aleppo,[171] whose valuable monograph amply deserves study even in this our day, believed that the original Nights did not outnumber two hundred, to which subsequent writers added till the total of a thousand and one was made up. Dr. Jonathan Scott,[172] who quotes Russell, “held it highly probable that the tales of the original Arabian Nights did not run through more than two hundred and eighty Nights, if so many.” So this suggestion I may subjoin, “habent sue fate libelli.” Galland, who preserves in his Mille et une Nuits only about one fourth of The Nights, ends them in No. cclxiv[173] with the seventh voyage of Sindbad: after that he intentionally omits the dialogue between the sisters and the reckoning of time, to proceed uninterruptedly with the tales. And so his imitator, Petis de la Croix,[174] in his Mille et un Jours, reduces the thousand to two hundred and thirty-two.

The internal chronological evidence offered by the Collection is useful only in enabling us to determine that the tales were not written after a certain epoch: the actual dates and, consequently, all deductions from them, are vitiated by the habits of the scribes. For instance we find the Tale of the Fisherman and the Jinni (vol. i. 41) placed in A.H. I69 = A.D. 785,[175] which is hardly possible. The immortal Barber in the "Tailor's Tale" (vol. i. 304) places his adventure with the unfortunate lover on Safar 10, A.H. 653 (= March 25th, 1255) and 7,320 years of the era of Alexander.[176] This is supported in his Tale of Himself (vol. i. p-348), where he dates his banishment from Baghdad during the reign of the penultimate Abbaside, Al-Mustansir bi 'llah[177] (A.H. 623-640 = 1225-1242), and his return to Baghdad after the accession of another Caliph who can be no other but Al- Muntasim bi 'llah (A.H. 640-656 = A.D. 1242-1258). Again at the end of the tale (vol. i. 350) he is described as "an ancient man, past his ninetieth year" and "a very old man" in the days of Al- Mustansir (vol. i. 318); SO that the Hunchback's adventure can hardly be placed earlier than A.D. 1265 or seven years after the storming of Baghdad by Huláku Khan, successor of Janghíz Khan, a terrible catastrophe which resounded throughout the civilised world. Yet there is no allusion to this crucial epoch and the total silence suffices to invalidate the date.[178] Could we assume it as true, by adding to A.D. 1265 half a century for the composition of the Hunchback's story and its incidentals, we should place the earliest date in A.D. 1315.

As little can we learn from inferences which have been drawn from the body of the book: at most they point to its several editions or redactions. In the Tale of the "Ensorcelled Prince" (vol. i. 77) Mr. Lane (i. 135) conjectured that the four colours of the fishes were suggested by the sumptuary laws of the Mameluke Soldan, Mohammed ibn Kala'un, "subsequently to the commencement of the eighth century of the Flight, or fourteenth of our era." But he forgets that the same distinction of dress was enforced by the Caliph Omar after the capture of Jerusalem in A.D. 636; that it was revived by Harun al-Rashid, a contemporary of Carolus Magnus and that it was noticed as a long standing grievance by the so-called Mandeville in A.D. 1322. In the Tale of the Porter and the Ladies of Baghdad the "Sultáni oranges" (vol. i. 83) have been connected with Sultáníyah city in Persian Irák, which was founded about the middle of the thirteenth century: but "Sultáni" may simply mean "royal," a superior growth. The same story makes mention (vol. i. 94) of

Kalandars or religious mendicants, a term popularly corrupted, even in writing, to Karandal.[179] Here again "Kalandar" may be due only to the scribes as the Bresl. Edit. reads Sa'alúk = asker, beggar. The Khan al-Masrúr in the Nazarene Broker's story (i. 265) was a ruin during the early ninth century A.H. = A.D. 1420; but the Báb Zuwaylah (i. 269) dates from A.D. 1087. In the same tale occurs the Darb al-Munkari (or Munakkari) which is probably the Darb al-Munkadi of Al-Makrizi's careful topography, the Khitat (ii. 40). Here we learn that in his time (about A.D. 1430) the name had become obsolete, and the highway was known as Darb al-Amír Baktamír al-Ustaddar from one of two high officials who both died in the fourteenth century (circ. A.D. 1350). And lastly we have the Khan al-Jáwali built about A.D. 1320. In Badr al-Din Hasan (vol. i. 237) "Sáhib" is given as a Wazirial title and it dates only from the end of the fourteenth century.[180] In Sindbad the Seaman, there is an allusion (vol. vi. 67) to the great Hindu Kingdom, Vijayanagar of the Narasimha,[181] the great power of the Deccan; but this may be due to editors or scribes as the despotism was founded only in the fourteenth century(A.D. 1320). The Ebony Horse (vol. v. 1) apparently dates before Chaucer; and "The Sleeper and The Waker" (Bresl. Edit. iv. 134-189) may precede Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew": no stress, however, can be laid upon such resemblances, the nouvelles being world-wide. But when we come to the last stories, especially to Kamar al-Zaman II. and the tale of Ma'arúf, we are apparently in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The first contains (Night cmlxxvii.) the word Láwandiyah = Levantine, the mention of a watch = Sá'ah in the next Night[182] ; and, further on (cmlxxvi.), the "Shaykh Al-Islam," an officer invented by Mohammed II. after the capture of Stambul in A.D. 1453. In Ma'arúf the 'Ádiliyah is named; the mosque founded outside the Bab al-Nasr by Al-Malik al-'Ádil, Túmán Bey in A.H. 906 = A.D. 1501. But, I repeat, all these names may be mere interpolations.

On the other hand, a study of the vie intime in Al-Islam and of the manners and customs of the people proves that the body of the work, as it now stands, must have been written before A.D. 1400. The Arabs use wines, ciders and barley-beer, not distilled spirits; they have no coffee or tobacco and, while familiar with small-pox (judrí), they ignore syphilis. The battles in The Nights are fought with bows and javelins, swords, spears (for infantry) and lances (for cavalry); and, whenever fire-arms are mentioned, we must suspect the scribe. Such is the case with the Madfa' or cannon by means of which Badr Al-Din Hasan breaches the bulwarks of the Lady of Beauty's virginity (i. 223). This consideration would determine the work to have been written before the fourteenth century. We ignore the invention-date and the inventor of gunpowder, as of all old discoveries which have affected mankind at large: all we know is that the popular ideas betray great ignorance and we are led to suspect that an explosive compound, having been discovered in the earliest ages of human society, was utilised by steps so gradual that history has neglected to trace the series. According to Demmin[183] , bullets for stuffing with some incendiary composition, in fact bombs, were discovered by Dr. Keller in the Palafites or Crannogs of Switzerland; and the Hindu's Agni-Astar ("fire-weapon"), Agni-bán ("fire-arrow") and Shatagni ("hundred- killer"), like the Roman Phalarica, and the Greek fire of Byzantium, suggest explosives. Indeed, Dr. Oppert[184] accepts the statement of Flavius Philostratus that when Appolonius of Tyana, that grand semi-mythical figure, was travelling in India, he learned the reason why Alexander of Macedon desisted from attacking the Oxydracæ who live between the Ganges and the Hyphasis (Satadru or Sutledge):- "These holy men, beloved by the gods, overthrow their enemies with tempests and thunderbolts shot from their walls." Passing over the Arab sieges of Constantinople (A.D. 668) and Meccah (A.D. 690) and the disputed passage in Firishtah touching the Tufang or musket during the reign of Mahmúd the Ghaznevite[185] (ob. A.D. 1030), we come to the days of Alphonso the Valiant, whose long and short guns, used at the Siege of Madrid in A.D. 1084, are preserved in the Armeria Real. Viardot has noted that the African Arabs first employed cannon in A.D. 1200, and that the Maghribis defended Algeciras near Gibraltar with great guns in A. D. 1247, and utilised them to besiege Seville in A.D. 1342. This last feat of arms introduced the cannon into barbarous Northern Europe, and it must have been known to civilised Asia for many a decade before that date.

The mention of wine in The Nights, especially the Nabíz or fermented infusion of raisins well known to the præ-Mohammeden Badawis, perpetually recurs. As a rule, except only in the case of holy personages and mostly of the Caliph Al-Rashid, the "service of wine" appears immediately after the hands are washed; and women, as well as men, drink, like true Orientals, for the honest purpose of getting drunk-la recherche de l'ideal, as the process has been called. Yet distillation became well known in the fourteenth century. Amongst the Greeks and Romans it was confined to manufacturing aromatic waters, and Nicander the poet (B.C. 140) used for a still the term , like the Irish "pot" and its produce "poteen." The simple art of converting salt water into fresh, by boiling the former and passing the steam through a cooled pipe into a recipient, would not have escaped the students of the Philosopher's "stone;" and thus we find throughout Europe the Arabic modifications of Greek terms Alchemy, Alembic (Al-), Chemistry and Elixir; while "Alcohol" (Al-Kohl), originally meaning "extreme tenuity or impalpable state of pulverulent substances," clearly shows the origin of the article. Avicenna, who died in A.H. 428 = 1036, nearly two hundred years before we read of distillation in Europe, compared the human body with an alembic, the belly being the cucurbit and the head the capital:-he forgot one important difference but n'importe. Spirits of wine were first noticed in the xiiith century, when the Arabs had overrun the Western Mediterranean, by Arnaldus de Villa Nova, who dubs the new invention a universal panacea; and his pupil, Raymond Lully (nat. Majorca A.D. 1236), declared this essence of wine to be a boon from the Deity. Now The Nights, even in the latest adjuncts, never allude to the "white coffee" of the "respectable" Moslem, the Ráki (raisin-brandy) or Ma-hayát (aqua-vitæ) of the modern Mohametan: the drinkers confine themselves to wine like our contemporary Dalmatians, one of the healthiest and the most vigorous of seafaring races in Europe.

Syphilis also, which at the end of the xvth century began to infect Europe, is ignored by The Nights. I do not say it actually began: diseases do not begin except with the dawn of humanity; and their history, as far as we know, is simple enough. They are at first sporadic and comparatively non-lethal: at certain epochs which we can determine, and for reasons which as yet we cannot, they break out into epidemics raging with frightful violence: they then subside into the endemic state and lastly they return to the milder sporadic form. For instance, "English cholera" was known of old: in 1831 (Oct. 26) the Asiatic type took its place and now, after sundry violent epidemics, the disease is becoming endemic on the Northern seaboard of the Mediterranean, notably in Spain and Italy. So small-pox (Al-judrí, vol. i. 256) passed over from Central Africa to Arabia in the year of Mohammed's birth (A.D. 570) and thence overspread the civilised world, as an epidemic, an endemic and a sporadic successively. The "Greater Pox" has appeared in human bones of pre historic graves and Moses seems to mention gonorrha (Levit. xv. 12). Passing over allusions in Juvenal and Martial,[186] we find Eusebius relating that Galerius died (A.D. 302) of ulcers on the genitals and other parts of his body; and, about a century afterwards, Bishop Palladius records that one Hero, after conversation with a prostitute, fell a victim to an abscess on the penis (phagedænic shanker?). In 1347 the famous Joanna of Naples founded (æt. 23), in her town of Avignon, a bordel whose in- mates were to be medically inspected a measure to which England (proh pudor!) still objects. In her Statuts du Lieu- publiqued'Avignon, No. iv. she expressly mentions the Malvengut de paillardise. Such houses, says Ricord who studied the subject since 1832, were common in France after A.D. 1200; and sporadic venereals were known there. But in A.D. 1493-94 an epidemic broke out with alarming intensity at Barcelona, as we learn from the "Tractado llamado fructo de todos los Sanctos contra el mal serpentino, venido de la Isla espanola," of Rodrigo Ruiz Días, the specialist. In Santo Domingo the disease was common under the names Hipas, Guaynaras and Taynastizas: hence the opinion in Europe that it arose from the mixture of European and "Indian" blood.[187] Some attributed it to the Gypsies who migrated to Western Europe in the xvth century:[188] others to the Moriscos expelled from Spain. But the pest got its popular name after the violent outbreak at Naples in A.D. 1493-4, when Charles VIII. of Anjou with a large army of mercenaries, Frenchmen, Spaniards, and Germans, attacked Ferdinand II. Thence it became known as the Mal de Naples and Morbus Gallicus-una gallica being still the popular term in neo Latin lands-and the "French disease" in England. As early as July 1496

Marin Sanuto (Journal i. 171) describes with details the “Mal Franzoso.” The scientific “syphilis” dates from Fracastori’s poem (A.D. 1521) in which Syphilus the Shepherd is struck like Job, for abusing the sun. After crippling a Pope (Sixtus IV.[189]) and killing a King (Francis I.) the Grosse Vérole began to abate its violence, under the effects of mercury it is said; and became endemic, a stage still shown at Scherlievo near Fiume, where legend says it was implanted by the Napoleonic soldiery. The Aleppo and other “buttons” also belong apparently to the same grade. Elsewhere it settled as a sporadic and now it appears to be dying out while gonorrha is on the increase.[190]

The Nights, I have said, belongs to the days before coffee (A.D. 1550) and tobacco (A.D. 1650) had overspread the East. The former, which derives its name from the Káfá or Káffá province, lying south of Abyssinia proper and peopled by the Sidáma Gallas, was introduced to Mokha of Al-Yaman in A.D. 1429-30 by the Shaykh al- Sházili who lies buried there, and found a congenial name in the Arabic Kahwah=old wine.[191] In The Nights (Mac. Edit.) it is mentioned twelve times[192] ; but never in the earlier tales: except in the case of Kamar al-Zaman II. it evidently does not belong to the epoch and we may fairly suspect the scribe. In the xvith century coffee began to take the place of wine in the nearer East; and it gradually ousted the classical drink from daily life and from folk-tales.

It is the same with tobacco, which is mentioned only once by The Nights (cmxxxi.), in conjunction with meat, vegetables and fruit and where it is called “Tábah.” Lane (iii. 615) holds it to be the work of a copyist; but in the same tale of Abu Kir and Abu Sir, sherbet and coffee appear to have become en vogue, in fact to have gained the ground they now hold. The result of Lord Macartney’s Mission to China was a suggestion that smoking might have originated spontaneously in the Old World.[193] This is un- doubtedly true. The Bushmen and other wild tribes of Southern Africa threw their Dakhá (cannabis indica) on the fire and sat round it inhaling the intoxicating fumes. Smoking without tobacco was easy enough. The North American Indians of the Great Red Pipe Stone Quarry and those who lived above the line where nicotiana grew, used the kinni-kinik or bark of the red willow and some seven other succedanea.[194] But tobacco proper, which soon superseded all materials except hemp and opium, was first adopted by the Spaniards of Santo Domingo in A.D. 1496 and reached England in 1565. Hence the word, which, amongst the so-called Red Men, denoted the pipe, the container, not the contained, spread over the Old World as a generic term with additions, like Tutun,''[195] for special varieties. The change in English manners brought about by the cigar after dinner has already been noticed; and much of the modified sobriety of the present day may be attributed to the influence of the Holy Herb en cigarette. Such, we know from history was its effect amongst Moslems; and the normal wine-parties of The Nights suggest that the pipe was unknown even when the latest tales were written.

C.

We know absolutely nothing of the author or authors who produced our marvellous Recueil. Galland justly observes (Epist. Dedic.), "probably this great work is not by a single hand; for how can we suppose that one man alone could own a fancy fertile enough to invent so many ingenious fictions?" Mr. Lane, and Mr. Lane alone, opined that the work was written in Egypt by one person or at most by two, one ending what the other had begun, and that he or they had re-written the tales and completed the collection by new matter composed or arranged for the purpose. It is hard to see how the distinguished Arabist came to such a conclusion: at most it can be true only of the editors and scribes of MSS. evidently copied from each other, such as the Mac. and the Bul. texts. As the Reviewer (Forbes Falconer?) in the "Asiatic Journal" (vol. xxx., 1839) says, "Every step we have taken in the collation of these agreeable fictions has confirmed us in the belief that the work called the Arabian Nights is rather a vehicle for stories, partly fixed and partly arbitrary, than a collection fairly deserving, from its constant identity with itself, the name of a distinct work, and the reputation of having wholly emanated from the same inventive mind. To say nothing of the improbability of supposing that one individual, with every license to build upon the foundation of popular stories, a work which had once received a definite form from a single writer, would have been multiplied by the copyist with some regard at least to his arrangement of words as well as matter. But the various copies we have seen bear about as much mutual resemblance as if they had passed through the famous process recommended for disguising a plagiarism: Translate your English author into French and again into English'."

Moreover, the style of the several Tales, which will be considered in a future page (§ iii.), so far from being homogeneous is heterogeneous in the extreme. Different nationalities show them selves; West Africa, Egypt and Syria are all represented and, while some authors are intimately familiar with Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo, others are equally ignorant. All copies, written and printed, absolutely differ in the last tales and a measure of the divergence can be obtained by comparing the Bresl. Edit. with the Mac. text: indeed it is my conviction that the MSS. preserved in Europe would add sundry volumes full of tales to those hitherto translated; and here the Wortley Montagu copy can be taken as a test. We may, I believe, safely compare the history of The Nights with the so-called Homeric poems, the Iliad and the Odyssey, a collection of immortal ballads and old Epic formulæ and verses traditionally handed down from rhapsode to rhapsode, incorporated in a slowly-increasing body of poetry and finally welded together about the age of Pericles.

To conclude. From the data above given I hold myself justified in drawing the following deductions: —

1. The framework of the book is purely Persian perfunctorily arabised; the archetype being the Hazár Afsánah.[196]

2. The oldest tales, such as Sindibad (the Seven Wazirs) and King Jili'ád, may date from the reign of Al-Mansur, eighth century A.D.

3. The thirteen tales mentioned above () as the nucleus of the Repertory, together with "Dalilah the Crafty,"[197] may be placed in our tenth century.

4. The latest tales, notably Kamar al-Zaman the Second and Ma'aruf the Cobbler, are as late as the sixteenth century.

5. The work assumed its present form in the thirteenth

century.

6. The author is unknown for the best reason; there never was one: for information touching the editors and copyists we must await the fortunate discovery of some MSS.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

§ II. THE NIGHTS IN EUROPE.

The history of The Nights in Europe is one of slow and gradual development. The process was begun (1704-17) by Galland, a Frenchman, continued (1823) by Von Hammer an Austro-German, and finished by Mr. John Payne (1882-84) an Englishman. But we must not forget that it is wholly and solely to the genius of the Gaul that Europe owes "The Arabian Nights' Entertainments" over which Western childhood and youth have spent so many spelling hours. Antoine Galland was the first to discover the marvellous fund of material for the story-teller buried in the Oriental mine; and he had in a high degree that art of telling a tale which is far more captivating than culture or scholarship. Hence his delightful version (or perversion) became one of the world's classics and at once made Sheherazade and Dinarzarde, Haroun Alraschid, the Calendars and a host of other personages as familiar to the home reader as Prospero, Robinson Crusoe, Lemuel Gulliver and Dr. Primrose. Without the name and fame won for the work by the brilliant paraphrase of the learned and single-minded Frenchman, Lane's curious hash and latinized English, at once turgid and emasculated, would have found few readers. Mr. Payne's admirable version appeals to the Orientalist and the "stylist," not to the many-headed; and mine to the anthropologist and student of Eastern manners and customs. Galland did it and alone he did it: his fine literary flaire, his pleasing style, his polished taste and perfect tact at once made his work take high rank in the republic of letters nor will the immortal fragment ever be superseded in the infallible judgment of childhood. As the Encyclopædia Britannica has been pleased to ignore this excellent man and admirable Orientalist, numismatologist and littérateur, the reader may not be unwilling to see a short sketch of his biography.[198]

Antoine Galland was born in A.D. 1646 of peasant parents "poor and honest" at Rollot, a little bourg in Picardy some two leagues from Montdidier. He was a seventh child and his mother, left a widow in early life and compelled to earn her livelihood, saw scant chance of educating him when the kindly assistance of a Canon of the Cathedral and President of the Collége de Noyon relieved her difficulties. In this establishment Galland studied Greek and Hebrew for ten years, after which the “strait thing at home” apprenticed him to a trade. But he was made for letters; he hated manual labour and he presently removed en cachette to Paris, where he knew only an ancient kinswoman. She introduced him to a priestly relative of the Canon of Noyon, who in turn recommended him to the “Sous-principal” of the Collége Du Plessis. Here he made such notable progress in Oriental studies, that M. Petitpied, a Doctor of the Sorbonne, struck by his abilities, enabled him to study at the Collége Royal and eventually to catalogue the Eastern MSS. in the great ecclesiastical Society. Thence he passed to the Collége Mazarin, where a Professor, M. Godouin, was making an experiment which might be revived to advantage in our present schools. He collected a class of boys, aged about four, and proposed to teach them Latin speedily and easily by making them converse in the classical language as well as read and write it.[199] Galland, his assistant, had not time to register success or failure before he was appointed attaché-secretary to M. de Nointel named in 1660 Ambassadeur de France for Constantinople. His special province was to study the dogmas and doctrines and to obtain official attestations concerning the articles of the Orthodox (or Greek) Christianity which had then been a subject of lively discussion amongst certain Catholics, especially Arnauld (Antoine) and Claude the Minister, and which even in our day occasionally crops up amongst “Protestants.”[200] Galland, by frequenting the cafés and listening to the tale-teller, soon mastered Romaic and grappled with the religious question, under the tuition of a deposed Patriarch and of sundry Matráns or Metropolitans, whom the persecutions of the Pashas had driven for refuge to the Palais de France. M. de Nointel, after settling certain knotty points in the Capitulations, visited the harbour-towns of the Levant and the “Holy Places,” including Jerusalem, where Galland copied epigraphs, sketched monuments and collected antiques, such as the marbles in the Baudelot Gallery of which Père Dom Bernard de Montfaucon presently published specimens in his ‘‘Palæographia Græca,” etc. (Parisiis, 1708).

In Syria Galland was unable to buy a copy of The Nights: as he expressly states in his Epistle Dedicatory, il a fallu le faire venir de

Syrie. But he prepared himself for translating it by studying the manners and customs, the religion and superstitions of the people; and in 1675, leaving his chief, who was ordered back to Stambul, he returned to France. In Paris his numismatic fame recommended him to MM. Vaillant, Carcary and Giraud who strongly urged a second visit to the Levant, for the purpose of collecting, and he set out without delay. In 1691 he made a third journey, travelling at the expense of the Compagnie des Indes-Orientales, with the main object of making purchases for the Library and Museum of Colbert the magnificent. The commission ended eighteen months afterwards with the changes of the Company, when Colbert and the Marquis de Louvois caused him to be created "Antiquary to the King," Louis le Grand, and charged him with collecting coins and medals for the royal cabinet. As he was about to leave Smyrna, he had a narrow escape from the earthquake and subsequent fire which destroyed some fifteen thousand of the inhabitants: he was buried in the ruins; but, his kitchen being cold as becomes a philosopher's, he was dug out unburnt.[201]

Galland again returned to Paris where his familiarity with Arabic and Hebrew, Persian and Turkish recommended him to MM. Thevenot and Bignon: this first President of the Grand Council acknowledged his services by a pension. He also became a favourite with D'Herbelot whose Bibliothèque Orientale, left unfinished at his death, he had the honour of completing and prefacing.[202] President Bignon died within the twelvemonth, which made Galland attach himself in 1697 to M. Foucault, Councillor of State and Intendant (governor) of Caen in Lower Normandy, then famous for its academy: in his new patron's fine library and numismatic collection he found materials for a long succession of works, including a translation of the Koran.[203] They recommended him strongly to the literary world and in 1701 he was made a member of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres.

At Caen Galland issued in 1704,[204] the first part of his Mille et une Nuits, Contes Arabes traduits en François which at once became famous as "The Arabian Nights' Entertainments." Mutilated, fragmentary and paraphrastic though the tales were, the glamour of imagination, the marvel of the miracles and the gorgeousness and magnificence of the scenery at once secured an exceptional success; it was a revelation in romance, and the public recognised that it stood in presence of a monumental literary work. France was a-fire with delight at a something so new, so unconventional, so entirely without purpose, religious, moral or philosophical: the Oriental wanderer in his stately robes was a startling surprise to the easy-going and utterly corrupt Europe of the ancien régime with its indecently tight garments and perfectly loose morals. “Ils produisirent,” said Charles Nodier, a genius in his way, “dès le moment de leur publication, cet effet qui assure aux productions de l’esprit une vogue populaire, quoiqu’ils appartinssent à une littérature peu connue en France; et que ce genre de composition admit ou plutôt exigeât des détails de moeurs, de caractère, de costume et de localités absolument étrangers à toutes les idées établies dans nos contes et nos romans. On fut étonné du charme que résultait du leur lecture. C’est que la vérité des sentimens, la nouveauté des tableaux, une imagination féconde en prodiges, un coloris plein de chaleur, l’attrait d’une sensibilité sans prétention, et le sel d’un comique sans caricature, c’est que l’esprit et le naturel enfin plaisent partout, et plaisent à tout le monde.”[205]

The Contes Arabes at once made Galland’s name and a popular tale is told of them and him known to all reviewers who, however, mostly mangle it. In the Biographie Universelle of Michaud[206] we find: — Dans les deux premiers volumes de ces contes l’exorde était toujours, “Ma chère sur, si vous ne dormez pas, faites-nous un de ces contes que vous savez.” Quelques jeunes gens, ennuyés de cette plate uniformité, allèrent une nuit qu’il faisait très-grand froid, frapper à la porte de l’auteur, qui courut en chemise à sa fenêtre. Après l’avoir fait morfondre quelque temps par diverses questions insignificantes, ils terminèrent en lui disant, “Ah, Monsieur Galland, si vous ne dormez pas, faites-nous un de ces beaux contes que vous savez si bien.” Galland profita de la lecon, et supprima dans les volumes suivants le préambule qui lui avait attiré la plaisanterie. This legend has the merit of explaining why the Professor so soon gave up the Arab framework which he had deliberately adopted.

The Nights was at once translated from the French[207] though when, where and by whom no authority seems to know. In Lowndes’ “Bibliographer’s Manual” the English Editio Princeps is thus noticed, “Arabian Nights’ Entertainments translated from the French, London, 1724, 12mo, 6 vols.” and a footnote states that this translation, very inaccurate and vulgar in its diction, was often reprinted. In 1712 Addison introduced into the Spectator (No. 535, Nov. 13) the Story of Alnaschar (= Al-Nashshár, the Sawyer) and says that his remarks on Hope “may serve as a moral to an Arabian tale which I find translated into French by Monsieur Galland.” His version appears, from the tone and style, to have been made by himself, and yet in that year a second English edition had appeared. The nearest approach to the Edit. Princeps in the British Museum[208] is a set of six volumes bound in three and corresponding with Galland’s first half dozen. Tomes i. and ii. are from the fourth edition of 1713, Nos. iii. and iv. are from the second of 1712 and v. and vi. are from the third of 1715. It is conjectured that the two first volumes were reprinted several times apart from their subsequents, as was the fashion of the day; but all is mystery. We (my friends and I) have turned over scores of books in the British Museum, the University Library and the Advocates’ Libraries of Edinburgh and Glasgow: I have been permitted to put the question in “Notes and Queries” and in the “Antiquary”; but all our researches hitherto have been in vain.

The popularity of The Nights in England must have rivalled their vogue in France, judging from the fact that in 1713, or nine years after Galland’s Edit. Prin. appeared, they had already reached a fourth issue. Even the ignoble national jealousy which prompted Sir William Jones grossly to abuse that valiant scholar, Auquetil du Perron, could not mar their popularity. But as there are men who cannot read Pickwick, so they were not wanting who spoke of “Dreams of the distempered fancy of the East.”[209] “When the work was first published in England,” says Henry Webber,[210] “it seems to have made a considerable impression upon the public.” Pope in 1720 sent two volumes (French? or English?) to Bishop Atterbury, without making any remark on the work; but, from his very silence, it may be presumed that he was not displeased with the perusal. The bishop, who does not appear to have joined a relish for the flights of imagination to his other estimable qualities, expressed his dislike of these tales pretty strongly and stated it to be his opinion, formed on the frequent descriptions of female dress, that they were the work of some Frenchman (Petis de la Croix, a mistake afterwards corrected by Warburton). The Arabian Nights, however, quickly made their way to public favour. “We have been informed of a singular instance of the effect they produced soon after their first appearance. Sir James Stewart, Lord Advocate for Scotland, having one Saturday evening found his daughters employed in reading these volumes, seized them with a rebuke for spending the evening before the ‘Sawbbath’ in such worldly amusement; but the grave advocate himself became a prey to the fascination of the tales, being found on the morning of the Sabbath itself employed in their perusal, from which he had not risen the whole night.” As late as 1780 Dr. Beattie professed himself uncertain whether they were translated or fabricated by M. Galland; and, while Dr. Pusey wrote of them “Noctes Mille et Una dictæ, quæ in omnium firmè populorum cultiorum linguas conversæ, in deliciis omnium habentur, manibusque omnium terentur,”[211] the amiable Carlyle, in the gospel according to Saint Froude, characteristically termed them “downright lies” and forbade the house to such “unwholesome literature.” What a sketch of character in two words!

The only fault found in France with the Contes Arabes was that their style is peu correcte; in fact they want classicism. Yet all Gallic imitators, Trébutien included, have carefully copied their leader and Charles Nodier remarks:— “Il me semble que l’on n’a pas rendu assez de justice au style de Galland. Abondant sans être prolixe, naturel et familier sans être lâche ni trivial, il ne manque jamais de cette elegance qui résulte de la facilité, et qui présente je ne sais quel mélange de la naïveté de Perrault et de la bonhomie de La Fontaine.”

Our Professor, with a name now thoroughly established, returned in 1706 to Paris, where he was an assiduous and efficient member of the Société Numismatique and corresponded largely with foreign Orientalists. Three years afterwards he was made Professor of Arabic at the Collége de France, succeeding Pierre Dippy; and, during the next half decade, he devoted himself to publishing his valuable studies. Then the end came. In his last illness, an attack of asthma complicated with pectoral mischief, he sent to Noyon for his nephew Julien Galland[212] to assist him in ordering his MSS. and in making his will after the simplest military fashion: he bequeathed his writings to the Bibliothèque du Roi, his Numismatic Dictionary to the Academy and his Alcoran to the Abbé Bignon. He died, aged sixty-nine on February 17, 1715, leaving his second part of The Nights unpublished.[213]

Professor Galland was a French littérateur of the good old school which is rapidly becoming extinct. Homme vrai dans les moindres choses (as his Éloge stated); simple in life and manners and single-hearted in his devotion to letters, he was almost childish in worldly matters, while notable for penetration and acumen in his studies. He would have been as happy, one of his biographers remarks, in teaching children the elements of education as he was in acquiring his immense erudition. Briefly, truth and honesty, exactitude and indefatigable industry characterised his most honourable career.

Galland informs us (Epist. Ded.) that his MS. consisted of four volumes, only three of which are extant,[214] bringing the work down to Night cclxxxii., or about the beginning of "Camaralzaman." The missing portion, if it contained like the other volumes 140 pages, would end that tale together with the Stories of Ghánim and the Enchanted (Ebony) Horse; and such is the disposition in the Bresl. Edit. which mostly favours in its ordinance the text used by the first translator. But this would hardly have filled more than two-thirds of his volumes; for the other third he interpolated, or is supposed to have interpolated, the ten[215] following tales.

1. Histoire du prince Zeyn Al-asnam et du Roi des Génies.[216] 2. Histoire de Codadad et de ses frères. 3. Histoire de la Lampe merveilleuse (Aladdin). 4. Histoire de l'aveugle Baba Abdalla. 5. Histoire de Sidi Nouman. 6. Histoire de Cogia Hassan Alhabbal. 7. Histoire d'Ali Baba, et de Quarante Voleurs exterminés par une Esclave. 8. Histoire d'Ali Cogia, marchand de Bagdad. 9. Histoire du prince Ahmed et de la fée Peri-Banou. 10. Histoire de deux Surs jalouses de leur Cadette.[217]

Concerning these interpolations which contain two of the best and most widely known stories in the work, Aladdin and the Forty Thieves, conjectures have been manifold but they mostly run upon three lines. De Sacy held that they were found by Galland in the public libraries of Paris. Mr. Chenery, whose acquaintance with Arabic grammar was ample, suggested that the Professor had borrowed them from the recitations of the Rawis, rhapsodists or professional story-tellers in the bazars of Smyrna and other ports of the Levant. The late Mr. Henry Charles Coote (in the “Folk-Lore Record,” vol. iii. Part ii. et seq.), “On the source of some of M. Galland’s Tales,” quotes from popular Italian, Sicilian and Romaic stories incidents identical with those in Prince Ahmad, Aladdin, Ali Baba and the Envious Sisters, suggesting that the Frenchman had heard these paramythia in Levantine coffee-houses and had inserted them into his unequalled corpus fabularum. Mr. Payne (ix. 268) conjectures the probability “of their having been composed at a comparatively recent period by an inhabitant of Baghdad, in imitation of the legends of Haroun er Rashid and other well-known tales of the original work;” and adds, “It is possible that an exhaustive examination of the various MS. copies of the Thousand and One Nights known to exist in the public libraries of Europe might yet cast some light upon the question of the origin of the interpolated Tales.” I quite agree with him, taking “The Sleeper and the Waker’’ and “Zeyn Al-asnam” as cases in point; but I should expect, for reasons before given, to find the stories in a Persic rather than an Arabic MS. And I feel convinced that all will be recovered: Galland was not the man to commit a literary forgery.

As regards Aladdin, the most popular tale of the whole work, I am convinced that it is genuine, although my unfortunate friend, the late Professor Palmer, doubted its being an Eastern story. It is laid down upon all the lines of Oriental fiction. The mise-en-scène is China, “where they drink a certain warm liquor” (tea); the hero’s father is a poor tailor; and, as in “Judar and his Brethren,” the Maghribi Magician presently makes his appearance, introducing the Wonderful Lamp and the Magical Ring. Even the Sorcerer’s cry, “New lamps for old lamps !” — a prime point — is paralleled in the Tale of the Fisherman’s Son,[218] where the Jew asks in exchange only old rings and the Princess, recollecting that her husband kept a shabby, well-worn ring in his writing-stand, and he being asleep, took it out and sent it to the man. In either tale the palace is transported to a distance and both end with the death of the wicked magician and the hero and heroine living happily together ever after.

All Arabists have remarked the sins of omission and commission, of abridgment, amplification and substitution, and the audacious distortion of fact and phrase in which Galland freely indulged, whilst his knowledge of Eastern languages proves that he knew better. But literary license was the order of his day and at that time French, always the most begueule of European languages, was bound by a rigorisme of the narrowest and the straightest of lines from which the least ecart condemned a man as a barbarian and a tudesque. If we consider Galland fairly we shall find that he errs mostly for a purpose, that of popularising his work; and his success indeed justified his means. He has been derided (by scholars) for “Hé Monsieur!” and “Ah Madame!”; but he could not write “O mon sieur” and “O ma dame;” although we can borrow from biblical and Shakespearean English, “O my lord!” and “O my lady!” “Bon Dieu! ma sur” (which our translators English by “O heavens,” Night xx.) is good French for Wa’lláhi — by Allah; and “cinquante cavaliers bien faits” (“fifty handsome gentlemen on horseback”) is a more familiar picture than fifty knights. “L’officieuse Dinarzade” (Night lxi.), and “Cette plaisante querelle des deux frères” (Night 1xxii.) become ridiculous only in translation— “the officious Dinarzade” and “this pleasant quarrel;” while “ce qu’il y de remarquable” (Night 1xxiii.) would relieve the Gallic mind from the mortification of “Destiny decreed.” “Plusieurs sortes de fruits et de bouteilles de vin” (Night ccxxxi. etc.) Europeanises flasks and flaggons; and the violent convulsions in which the girl dies (Night cliv., her head having been cut off by her sister) is mere Gallic squeamishness: France laughs at “le shoking” in England but she has only to look at home especially during the reign of Galland’s contemporary — Roi Soleil. The terrible “Old man” (Shaykh) “of the Sea” (- board) is badly described by “l’incommode vieillard” (“the ill- natured old fellow”): “Brave Maimune” and “Agréable Maimune” are hardly what a Jinni would say to a Jinniyah (ccxiii.); but they are good Gallic. The same may be noted of “Plier les voiles pour marque qu’il se rendait” (Night ccxxxv.), a European practice; and of the false note struck in two passages. “Je m’estimais heureuse d’avoir fait une si belle conquête” (Night 1xvii.) gives a Parisian turn; and, “Je ne puis voir sans horreur cet abominable barbier que voilà: quoiqu’il soit né dans un pays où tout le monde est blanc, il ne laisse pas à resembler a un Éthiopien;

mais il a l’âme encore plus noire et horrible que le visage” (Night clvii.), is a mere affectation of Orientalism. Lastly, “Une vieille dame de leur connaissance” (Night clviii.) puts French polish upon the matter of fact Arab’s “an old woman.”

The list of absolute mistakes, not including violent liberties, can hardly be held excessive. Professor Weil and Mr. Payne (ix. 271) justly charge Galland with making the Trader (Night i.) throw away the shells (écorces) of the date which has only a pellicle, as Galland certainly knew; but dates were not seen every day in France, while almonds and walnuts were of the quatre mendiants. He preserves the écorces, which later issues have changed to noyaux, probably in allusion to the jerking practice called Inwá. Again in the “First Shaykh’s Story” (vol. i. 27) the “maillet” is mentioned as the means of slaughtering cattle, because familiar to European readers: at the end of the tale it becomes “le couteaufuneste.” In Badral Din a “tarte à la crême,” so well known to the West, displaces, naturally enough, the outlandish “mess of pomegranate-seeds.” Though the text especially tells us the hero removed his bag-trousers (not only “son habit”) and placed them under the pillow, a crucial fact in the history, our Professor sends him to bed fully dressed, apparently for the purpose of informing his readers in a foot- note that Easterns “se couchent en caleçon” (Night lxxx.). It was mere ignorance to confound the arbalète or cross-bow with the stone-bow (Night xxxviii.), but this has universally been done, even by Lane who ought to have known better; and it was an unpardonable carelessness or something worse to turn Nár (fire) and Dún (in lieu of) into “le faux dieu Nardoun” (Night lxv.): as this has been untouched by De Sacy, I cannot but conclude that he never read the text with the translation. Nearly as bad also to make the Jewish physician remark, when the youth gave him the left wrist (Night cl.), “voilà une grande ignorance de ne savoir pas que l’on presente la main droite à un médecin et non pas la gauche” — whose exclusive use all travellers in the East must know. I have noticed the incuriousness which translates “along the Nile-shore” by “up towards Ethiopia” (Night cli.), and the “Islands of the Children of Khaledan” (Night ccxi.) instead of the Khálidatáni or Khálidát, the Fortunate Islands. It was by no means “des petite soufflets” (“some taps from time to time with her fingers”) which the sprightly dame administered to the Barber’s second brother (Night clxxi.), but sound and heavy “cuffs” on the nape; and the sixth brother (Night clxxx.) was not “aux lèvres fendues” (“he of the hair-lips”), for they had been cut off by the Badawi jealous of his fair wife. Abu al-Hasan would not greet his beloved by saluting “le tapis à ses pieds:” he would kiss her hands and feet. Haïatalnefous (Hayat al-Nufús, Night ccxxvi.) would not “throw cold water in the Princess’s face:” she would sprinkle it with eau-de-rose. “Camaralzaman” I. addresses his two abominable wives in language purely European (ccxxx.), “et de la vie il ne s’approcha d’elles,” missing one of the fine touches of the tale which shows its hero a weak and violent man, hasty and lacking the pundonor. “La belle Persienne,” in the Tale of Nur al-Din, was no Persian; nor would her master address her, “Venez çà, impertinente!” (“come hither, impertinence”). In the story of Badr, one of the Comoro Islands becomes “L’île de la Lune.” “Dog” and “dog-son” are not “injures atroces et indignes d’un grand roi:” the greatest Eastern kings allow themselves far more energetic and significant language.

Fitnah[219] is by no means “Force de curs.” Lastly the dénoûement of The Nights is widely different in French and in Arabic; but that is probably not Galland’s fault, as he never saw the original, and indeed he deserves high praise for having invented so pleasant and sympathetic a close, inferior only to the Oriental device.[220]

Galland’s fragment has a strange effect upon the Orientalist and those who take the scholastic view, be it wide or narrow. De Sacy does not hesitate to say that the work owes much to his fellow-countryman’s hand; but I judge otherwise: it is necessary to dissociate the two works and to regard Galland’s paraphrase, which contains only a quarter of The Thousand Nights and a Night, as a wholly different book. Its attempts to amplify beauties and to correct or conceal the defects and the grotesqueness of the original, absolutely suppress much of the local colour, clothing the bare body in the best of Parisian suits. It ignores the rhymed prose and excludes the verse, rarely and very rarely rendering a few lines in a balanced style. It generally rejects the proverbs, epigrams and moral reflections which form the pith and marrow of the book; and, worse still, it disdains those finer touches of character which are often

Shakespearean in their depth and delicacy, and which, applied to a race of familiar ways and thoughts, manners and customs, would have been the wonder and delight of Europe. It shows only a single side of the gem that has so many facets. By deference to public taste it was compelled to expunge the often repulsive simplicity, the childish indecencies and the wild orgies of the original, contrasting with the gorgeous tints, the elevated morality and the religious tone of passages which crowd upon them. We miss the odeur du sang which taints the parfums du harem; also the humouristic tale and the Rabelaisian outbreak which relieve and throw out into strong relief the splendour of Empire and the havoc of Time. Considered in this light it is a caput mortuum, a magnificent texture seen on the wrong side; and it speaks volumes for the genius of the man who could recommend it in such blurred and caricatured condition to readers throughout the civilised world. But those who look only at Galland's picture, his effort to "transplant into European gardens the magic flowers of Eastern fancy," still compare his tales with the sudden prospect of magnificent mountains seen after a long desert-march: they arouse strange longings and indescribable desires; their marvellous imaginativeness produces an insensible brightening of mind and an increase of fancy-power, making one dream that behind them lies the new and unseen, the strange and unexpected — in fact, all the glamour of the unknown.

The Nights has been translated into every far-extending Eastern tongue, Persian, Turkish and Hindostani. The latter entitles them Hikáyát al-Jalílah or Noble Tales, and the translation was made by Munshi Shams al-Din Ahmad for the use of the College of Fort George in A.H. 1252 = 1836.[221] All these versions are direct from the Arabic: my search for a translation of Galland into any Eastern tongue has hitherto been fruitless.

I was assured by the late Bertholdy Seemann that the "language of Hoffmann and Heine" contained a literal and complete translation of The Nights; but personal enquiries at Leipzig and elsewhere convinced me that the work still remains to be done. The first attempt to improve upon Galland and to show the world what the work really is was made by Dr. Max Habicht and was printed at Breslau (1824-25), in fifteen small square volumes.[222] Thus it appeared before the “Tunis Manuscript”[223] of which it purports to be a translation. The German version is, if possible, more condemnable than the Arabic original. It lacks every charm of style; it conscientiously shirks every difficulty; it abounds in the most extraordinary blunders and it is utterly useless as a picture of manners or a book of reference. We can explain its lâches only by the theory that the eminent Professor left the labour to his collaborateurs and did not take the trouble to revise their careless work.

The next German translation was by Aulic Councillor J. von Hammer-Purgstallt who, during his short stay at Cairo and Constantinople, turned into French the tales neglected by Galland. After some difference with M. Caussin (de Perceval) in 1810, the Styrian Orientalist entrusted his MS. to Herr Cotta the publisher of Tubingen. Thus a German version appeared, the translation of a translation, at the hand of Professor Zinserling,[224] while the French version was unaccountably lost en route to London. Finally the “Contes inédits,” etc., appeared in a French translation by G. S. Trébutien (Paris, mdcccxxviii.). Von Hammer took liberties with the text which can compare only with those of Lane: he abridged and retrenched till the likeness in places entirely disappeared; he shirked some difficult passages and he misexplained others. In fact the work did no honour to the amiable and laborious historian of the Turks.

The only good German translation of The Nights is due to Dr. Gustav Weil who, born on April 24, 1808, is still (1886) professing at Heidelburg.[225] His originals (he tells us) were the Breslau Edition, the Bulak text of Abd al-Rahman al- Safati and a MS. in the library of Saxe Gotha. The venerable savant, who has rendered such service to Arabism, informs me that Aug. Lewald’s “Vorhalle” (pp. i.-xv.)[226] was written without his knowledge. Dr. Weil neglects the division of days which enables him to introduce any number of tales: for instance, Galland’s eleven occupy a large part of vol. iii. The Vorwort wants development, the notes, confined to a few words, are inadequate and verse is everywhere rendered by prose, the Saj’a or assonance being wholly ignored. On the other hand the scholar shows himself by a correct translation, contrasting strongly with those which preceded him, and by a strictly literal version, save where the treatment required to be modified in a book intended for the public. Under such circumstances it cannot well be other than longsome and monotonous reading.

Although Spain and Italy have produced many and remarkable Orientalists, I cannot find that they have taken the trouble to translate The Nights for themselves: cheap and gaudy versions of Galland seem to have satisfied the public.[227] Notes on the Romaic, Icelandic, Russian (?) and other versions, will be found in a future page.

Professor Galland has never been forgotten in France where, amongst a host of editions, four have claims to distinction;[228] and his success did not fail to create a host of imitators and to attract what De Sacy justly terms "une prodigieuse importation de marchandise de contrabande." As early as 1823 Von Hammer numbered seven in France (Trébutien, Préface xviii.) and during later years they have grown prodigiously. Mr. William F. Kirby, who has made a special study of the subject, has favoured me with detailed bibliographical notes on Galland's imitators which are printed in Appendix No. II.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

§ III. THE MATTER AND THE MANNER OF THE NIGHTS.

A. — The Matter.

Returning to my threefold distribution of this Prose Poem (Section § I) into Fable, Fairy Tale and historical Anecdote[229] , let me proceed to consider these sections more carefully.

The Apologue or Beast-fable, which apparently antedates all other subjects in The Nights, has been called "One of the earliest creations of the awakening consciousness of mankind." I should regard it, despite a monumental antiquity, as the offspring of a comparatively civilised age, when a jealous despotism or a powerful oligarchy threw difficulties and dangers in the way of speaking "plain truths." A hint can be given and a friend or foe can be lauded or abused as Belins the sheep or Isengrim the wolf when the Author is debarred the higher enjoyment of praising them or dispraising them by name. And, as the purposes of fables are twofold —

> Duplex libelli dos est: quod risum movet,
> Et quod prudenti vitam consilio monet —

The speaking of brute beasts would give a piquancy and a pleasantry to moral design as well as to social and political satire.

The literary origin of the fable is not Buddhistic: we must especially shun that "Indo-Germanic" school which goes to India for its origins, when Pythagoras, Solon, Herodotus, Plato, Aristotle and possibly Homer sat for instruction at the feet of the Hir-seshtha, the learned grammarians of the pharaohnic court. Nor was it Æsopic, evidently Æsop inherited the hoarded wealth of ages. As Professor Lepsius taught us, "In the olden times within the memory of man, we know only of one advanced culture; of only one mode of writing, and of only one literary development, viz. those of Egypt." The invention of an alphabet, as opposed to a syllabary, unknown to Babylonia, to

Assyria and to that extreme bourne of their civilising influence, China, would for ever fix their literature — poetry, history and criticism,[230] the apologue and the anecdote. To mention no others The Lion and the Mouse appears in a Leyden papyrus dating from B.C 1200-1166 the days of Rameses III. (Rhampsinitus) or Hak On, not as a rude and early attempt, but in a finished form, postulating an ancient origin and illustrious ancestry. The dialogue also is brought to perfection in the discourse between the Jackal Koufi and the Ethiopian Cat (Revue Égyptologique ivme. année Part i.). Africa therefore was the home of the Beast-fable not as Professor Mahaffy thinks, because it was the chosen land of animal worship, where

Oppida tote canem venerantur nemo Dianam;[231]

but simply because the Nile-land originated every form of literature between Fabliau and Epos.

From Kemi the Black-land it was but a step to Phoenicia, Judæa,[232] Phrygia and Asia Minor, whence a ferry led over to Greece. Here the Apologue found its populariser in {Greek}, Æsop, whose name, involved in myth, possibly connects with :—”Æsopus et Aithiops idem sonant” says the sage. This would show that the Hellenes preserved a legend of the land whence the Beast-fable arose, and we may accept the fabulist’s æra as contemporary with Croesus and Solon (B.C. 570,) about a century after Psammeticus (Psamethik 1st) threw Egypt open to the restless Greek.[233] From Africa too the Fable would in early ages migrate eastwards and make for itself a new home in the second great focus of civilisation formed by the Tigris-Euphrates Valley. The late Mr. George Smith found amongst the cuneiforms fragmentary Beast-fables, such as dialogues between the Ox and the Horse, the Eagle and the Sun. In after centuries, when the conquests of Macedonian Alexander completed what Sesostris and Semiramis had begun, and mingled the manifold families of mankind by joining the eastern to the western world, the Orient became formally hellenised. Under the Seleucidæ and during the life of the independent Bactrian Kingdom (B.C. 255-125), Grecian art and science, literature and even language overran the old Iranic reign and extended eastwards throughout northern India. Porus sent two embassies to Augustus in B.C. 19 and in one of them the herald Zarmanochagas (Shramanácharya) of Bargosa, the modern

Baroch in Guzerat, bore an epistle upon vellum written in Greek (Strabo xv. I section 78). "Videtis gentes populosque mutasse sedes" says Seneca (De Cons. ad Helv. c. vi.). Quid sibi volunt in mediis barbarorum regionibus Græcæ artes? Quid inter Indos Persasque Macedonicus sermo? Atheniensis in Asia turba est." Upper India, in the Macedonian days would have been mainly Buddhistic, possessing a rude alphabet borrowed from Egypt through Arabia and Phoenicia, but still in a low and barbarous condition: her buildings were wooden and she lacked, as far as we know, stone-architecture — the main test of social development. But the Bactrian Kingdom gave an impulse to her civilisation and the result was classical opposed to vedic Sanskrit. From Persia Greek letters, extending southwards to Arabia, would find indigenous imitators and there Æsop would be represented by the sundry sages who share the name Lokman.[234] One of these was of servile condition, tailor, carpenter or shepherd; and a "Habashi" (Æthiopian) meaning a negro slave with blubber lips and splay feet, so far showing a superficial likeness to the Æsop of history.

The Æsopic fable, carried by the Hellenes to India, might have fallen in with some rude and fantastic barbarian of Buddhistic "persuasion" and indigenous origin: so Reynard the Fox has its analogue amongst the Kafirs and the Vái tribe of Mandengan negroes in Liberia[235] amongst whom one Doalu invented or rather borrowed a syllabarium. The modern Gypsies are said also to have beast-fables which have never been traced to a foreign source (Leland). But I cannot accept the refinement of difference which Professor Benfey, followed by Mr. Keith- Falconer, discovers between the Æsopic and the Hindu apologue:— "In the former animals are allowed to act as animals: the latter makes them act as men in the form of animals." The essence of the beast-fable is a reminiscence of Homo primigenius with erected ears and hairy hide, and its expression is to make the brother brute behave, think and talk like him with the superadded experience of ages. To early man the "lower animals," which are born, live and die like himself, showing all the same affects and disaffects, loves and hates, passions, prepossessions and prejudices, must have seemed quite human enough and on an equal level to become his substitutes. The savage, when he began to reflect, would regard the carnivor and the serpent with awe, wonder and dread; and would soon suspect the same mysterious potency in the brute as in himself: so the Malays still look upon the Uran-utan, or Wood-man, as the possessor of superhuman wisdom. The hunter and the herdsman, who had few other companions, would presently explain the peculiar relations of animals to themselves by material metamorphosis, the bodily transformation of man to brute giving increased powers of working him weal and woe. A more advanced stage would find the step easy to metempsychosis, the beast containing the Ego (alias soul) of the human: such instinctive belief explains much in Hindu literature, but it was not wanted at first by the Apologue.

This blending of blood, this racial baptism would produce a fine robust progeny; and, after our second century, Ægypto-Græco-Indian stories overran the civilised globe between Rome and China. Tales have wings and fly farther than the jade hatchets of proto-historic days. And the result was a book which has had more readers than any other except the Bible. Its original is unknown.[236] The volume, which in Pehlevi became the Jávidán Khirad ("Wisdom of Ages") or the Testament of Hoshang, that ancient guebre King, and in Sanskrit the Panchatantra ("Five Chapters"), is a recueil of apologues and anecdotes related by the learned Brahman, Vishnu Sharmá for the benefit of his pupils the sons of an Indian Rajah. The Hindu original has been adapted and translated into a number of languages; Arabic, Hebrew and Syriac, Greek and Latin, Persian and Turkish, under a host of names.[237] Voltaire[238] wisely remarks of this venerable production: — Quand on fait réflexion que presque toute la terre a été enfatuée de pareils contes, et qu'ils ont fait l'education du genre humain, on trouve les fables de Pilpay, de Lokman,[239] d'Ésope, bien raisonables. But methinks the sage of Ferney might have said far more. These fables speak with the large utterance of early man; they have also their own especial beauty — the charms of well- preserved and time-honoured old age. There is in their wisdom a perfume of the past, homely and ancient-fashioned like a whiff of pot pourri, wondrous soothing withal to olfactories agitated by the patchoulis and jockey clubs of modern pretenders and petit- maîtres, with their grey young heads and pert intelligence, the motto of whose ignorance is “Connu!” Were a dose of its antique, mature experience adhibited to the Western before he visits the East, those few who could digest it might escape the normal lot of being twisted round the fingers of every rogue they meet from Dragoman to Rajah. And a quotation from them tells at once: it shows the quoter to be man of education, not a “Jangalí,” a sylvan or savage, as the Anglo-Indian official is habitually termed by his more civilised “fellow-subject.”

The main difference between the classical apologue and the fable in The Nights is that while Æsop and Gabrias write laconic tales with a single event and a simple moral, the Arabian fables are often “long-continued novelle involving a variety of events, each characterised by some social or political aspect, forming a narrative highly interesting in itself, often exhibiting the most exquisite moral, and yet preserving, with rare ingenuity, the peculiar characteristics of the actors.”[240] And the distinction between the ancient and the mediæval apologue, including the modern which, since “Reineke Fuchs,” is mainly German, appears equally pronounced. The latter is humorous enough and rich in the wit which results from superficial incongruity: but it ignores the deep underlying bond which connects man with beast. Again, the main secret of its success is the strain of pungent satire, especially in the Renardine Cycle, which the people could apply to all unpopular “lordes and prelates, gostly and worldly.”

Our Recueil contains two distinct sets of apologues. [241] The first (vol. iii.) consists of eleven, alternating with five anecdotes (Nights cxlvi. — cliii.), following the lengthy and knightly romance of King Omar bin al Nu’man and followed by the melancholy love tale of Ali bin Bakkár. The second series in vol. ix., consisting of eight fables, not including ten anecdotes (Nights cmi. — cmxxiv.), is injected into the romance of King Jali’ad and Shimas mentioned by Al-Mas’udi as independent of The Nights. In both places the Beast-fables are introduced with some art and add variety to the subject-matter, obviating monotony — the deadly sin of such works — and giving repose to the hearer or reader after a climax of excitement such as the murder of the Wazirs. And even these are not allowed to pall upon the mental palate, being mingled with anecdotes and short tales, such as the Hermits (iii. 125), with biographical or literary episodes, acroamata, table-talk and analects where humorous Rabelaisian anecdote finds a place; in fact the fabliau or novella. This style of composition may be as ancient as the apologues. We know that it dates as far back as Rameses III., from the history of the Two Brothers in the Orbigny papyrus,[242] the prototype of Yusuf and Zulaykha, the Koranic Joseph and Potiphar's wife. It is told with a charming naïveté and such sharp touches of local colour as, "Come, let us make merry an hour and lie together! Let down thy hair!"

Some of the apologues in The Nights are pointless enough, rien moins qu'amusants; but in the best specimens, such as the Wolf and the Fox[243] (the wicked man and the wily man), both characters are carefully kept distinct and neither action nor dialogue ever flags. Again The Flea and the Mouse (iii. 151), of a type familiar to students of the Pilpay cycle, must strike the home-reader as peculiarly quaint.

Next in date to the Apologue comes the Fairy Tale proper, where the natural universe is supplemented by one of purely imaginative existence. "As the active world is inferior to the rational soul," says Bacon with his normal sound sense, "so Fiction gives to Mankind what History denies and in some measure satisfies the Mind with Shadows when it cannot enjoy the Substance. And as real History gives us not the success of things according to the deserts of vice and virtue, Fiction corrects it and presents us with the fates and fortunes of persons rewarded and punished according to merit." But I would say still more. History paints or attempts to paint life as it is, a mighty maze with or without a plan: Fiction shows or would show us life as it should be, wisely ordered and laid down on fixed lines. Thus Fiction is not the mere handmaid of History: she has a household of her own and she claims to be the triumph of Art which, as Göethe remarked, is "Art because it is not Nature." Fancy, la folle du logis, is "that kind and gentle portress who holds the gate of Hope wide open, in opposition to Reason, the surly and scrupulous guard."[244] As Palmerin of England says and says well, "For that the report of noble deeds doth urge the courageous mind to equal those who bear most commendation of their approved valiancy; this is the fair fruit of Imagination and of ancient histories." And, last but not least, the faculty of Fancy takes count of the cravings of man's nature for the marvellous, the impossible, and of his higher aspirations for the

Ideal, the Perfect: she realises the wild dreams and visions of his generous youth and portrays for him a portion of that "other and better world," with whose expectation he would console his age.

The imaginative varnish of The Nights serves admirably as a foil to the absolute realism of the picture in general. We enjoy being carried away from trivial and commonplace characters, scenes and incidents; from the matter of fact surroundings of a work-a-day world, a life of eating and drinking, sleeping and waking, fighting and loving, into a society and a mise-en-scène which we suspect can exist and which we know does not. Every man at some turn or term of his life has longed for supernatural powers and a glimpse of Wonderland. Here he is in the midst of it. Here he sees mighty spirits summoned to work the human mite's will, however whimsical, who can transport him in an eye- twinkling whithersoever he wishes; who can ruin cities and build palaces of gold and silver, gems and jacinths; who can serve up delicate viands and delicious drinks in priceless chargers and impossible cups and bring the choicest fruits from farthest Orient: here he finds magas and magicians who can make kings of his friends, slay armies of his foes and bring any number of beloveds to his arms. And from this outraging probability and out-stripping possibility arises not a little of that strange fascination exercised for nearly two centuries upon the life and literature of Europe by The Nights, even in their mutilated and garbled form. The reader surrenders himself to the spell, feeling almost inclined to enquire "And why may it not be true?''[245] His brain is dazed and dazzled by the splendours which flash before it, by the sudden procession of Jinns and Jinniyahs, demons and fairies, some hideous, others preternaturally beautiful; by good wizards and evil sorcerers, whose powers are unlimited for weal and for woe; by mermen and mermaids, flying horses, talking animals, and reasoning elephants; by magic rings and their slaves and by talismanic couches which rival the carpet of Solomon. Hence, as one remarks, these Fairy Tales have pleased and still continue to please almost all ages, all ranks and all different capacities.

Dr. Hawkesworth[246] observes that these Fairy Tales find favour "because even their machinery, wild and wonderful as it is, has its laws; and the magicians and enchanters perform nothing but what was naturally to be expected from such beings, after we had once granted them existence.” Mr. Heron “rather supposes the very contrary is the truth of the fact. It is surely the strangeness, the unknown nature, the anomalous character of the supernatural agents here employed, that makes them to operate so powerfully on our hopes, fears, curiosities, sympathies, and, in short, on all the feelings of our hearts. We see men and women, who possess qualities to recommend them to our favour, subjected to the influence of beings, whose good or ill will, power or weakness, attention or neglect, are regulated by motives and circumstances which we cannot comprehend: and hence, we naturally tremble for their fate, with the same anxious concern, as we should for a friend wandering, in a dark night, amidst torrents and precipices; or preparing to land on a strange island, while he knew not whether he should be received, on the shore, by cannibals waiting to tear him piecemeal, and devour him, or by gentle beings, disposed to cherish him with fond hospitality.” Both writers have expressed themselves well, but meseems each has secured, as often happens, a fragment of the truth and holds it to be the whole Truth. Granted that such spiritual creatures as Jinns walk the earth, we are pleased to find them so very human, as wise and as foolish in word and deed as ourselves: similarly we admire in a landscape natural forms like those of Staffa or the Palisades which favour the works of architecture. Again, supposing such preternaturalisms to be around and amongst us, the wilder and more capricious they prove, the more our attention is excited and our forecasts are baffled to be set right in the end. But this is not all. The grand source of pleasure in Fairy Tales is the natural desire to learn more of the Wonderland which is known to many as a word and nothing more, like Central Africa before the last half century: thus the interest is that of the “Personal Narrative” of a grand exploration to one who delights in travels. The pleasure must be greatest where faith is strongest; for instance amongst imaginative races like the Kelts and especially Orientals, who imbibe supernaturalism with their mother’s milk. “I am persuaded,” writes Mr. Bayle St. John,[247] “that the great scheme of preternatural energy, so fully developed in The Thousand and One Nights, is believed in by the majority of the inhabitants of all the religious professions both in Syria and Egypt.” He might have added “by every reasoning being from prince to peasant, from Mullah to Badawi, between Marocco and Outer Ind.”

The Fairy Tale in The Nights is wholly and purely Persian. The gifted Iranian race, physically the noblest and the most beautiful of all known to me, has exercised upon the world- history an amount of influence which has not yet been fully recognised. It repeated for Babylonian art and literature what Greece had done for Egyptian, whose dominant idea was that of working for eternity a . Hellas and Iran instinctively chose as their characteristic the idea of Beauty, rejecting all that was exaggerated and grotesque; and they made the sphere of Art and Fancy as real as the world of Nature and Fact. The innovation was hailed by the Hebrews. The so-called Books of Moses deliberately and ostentatiously ignored the future state of rewards and punishments, the other world which ruled the life of the Egyptian in this world: the lawgiver, whoever he may have been, Osarsiph or Moshe, apparently held the tenet unworthy of a race whose career he was directing to conquest and isolation in dominion. But the Jews, removed to Mesopotamia, the second cradle of the creeds, presently caught the infection of their Asiatic media; superadded Babylonian legend to Egyptian myth; stultified The Law by supplementing it with the “absurdities of foreign fable” and ended, as the Talmud proves, with becoming the most wildly superstitious and “other worldly’’ of mankind.

The same change befel Al-Islam. The whole of its supernaturalism is borrowed bodily from Persia, which had “imparadised Earth by making it the abode of angels.” Mohammed, a great and commanding genius, blighted and narrowed by surroundings and circumstances to something little higher than a Covenanter or a Puritan, declared to his followers,

“I am sent to ‘stablish the manners and customs;”

and his deficiency of imagination made him dislike everything but “women, perfumes, and prayers,” with an especial aversion to music and poetry, plastic art and fiction. Yet his system, unlike that of Moses, demanded thaumaturgy and metaphysical entities, and these he perforce borrowed from the Jews who had borrowed them from the Babylonians: his soul and spirit, his angels and devils, his cosmogony, his heavens and hells, even the Bridge over the Great Depth are all either Talmudic or Iranian. But there he stopped and would have stopped others. His enemies among the Koraysh were in the habit of reciting certain Persian fabliaux and of extolling them as superior to the silly and equally fictitious stories of the "Glorious Koran." The leader of these scoffers was one Nazr ibn Háris who, taken prisoner after the Battle of Bedr, was incontinently decapitated, by apostolic command, for what appears to be a natural and sensible preference. It was the same furious fanaticism and one-idea'd intolerance which made Caliph Omar destroy all he could find of the Alexandrian Library and prescribe burning for the Holy Books of the Persian Guebres. And the taint still lingers in Al-Islam: it will be said of a pious man, "He always studies the Koran, the Traditions and other books of Law and Religion; and he never reads poems nor listens to music or to stories."

Mohammed left a dispensation or rather a reformation so arid, jejune and material that it promised little more than the "Law of Moses," before this was vivified and racially baptised by Mesopotamian and Persic influences. But human nature was stronger than the Prophet and, thus outraged, took speedy and absolute revenge. Before the first century had elapsed, orthodox Al-Islam was startled by the rise of Tasawwuf or Sufyism[248] a revival of classic Platonism and Christian Gnosticism, with a mingling of modern Hylozoism; which, quickened by the glowing imagination of the East, speedily formed itself into a creed the most poetical and impractical, the most spiritual and the most transcendental ever invented; satisfying all man's hunger for "belief" which, if placed upon a solid basis of fact and proof, would forthright cease to be belief.

I will take from The Nights, as a specimen of the true Persian romance, "The Queen of the Serpents" (vol. v. 298), the subject of Lane's Carlylean denunciation. The first gorgeous picture is the Session of the Snakes which, like their Indian congeners the Nága kings and queens, have human heads and reptile bodies, an Egyptian myth that engendered the "old serpent" of Genesis. The Sultánah welcomes Hásib Karím al-Dín, the hapless lad who had been left in a cavern to die by the greedy woodcutters; and, in order to tell him her tale, introduces the “Adventures of Bulúkiyá”: the latter is an Israelite converted by editor and scribe to Mohammedanism; but we can detect under his assumed faith the older creed. Solomon is not buried by authentic history “beyond the Seven (mystic) Seas,” but at Jerusalem or Tiberias; and his seal-ring suggests the Jám-i-Jam, the crystal cup of the great King Jamshíd. The descent of the Archangel Gabriel, so familiar to Al-Islam, is the manifestation of Bahman, the First Intelligence, the mightiest of the Angels who enabled Zarathustra-Zoroaster to walk like Bulukiya over the Dálatí or Caspian Sea. [249] Amongst the sights shown to Bulukiya, as he traverses the Seven Oceans, is a battle royal between the believing and the unbelieving Jinns, true Magian dualism, the eternal duello of the Two Roots or antagonistic Principles, Good and Evil, Hormuzd and Ahriman, which Milton has debased into a common-place modern combat fought also with cannon. Sakhr the Jinni is Eshem chief of the Divs, and Kaf, the encircling mountain, is a later edition of Persian Alborz. So in the Mantak al-Tayr (Colloquy of the Flyers) the Birds, emblems of souls, seeking the presence of the gigantic feathered biped Simurgh, their god, traverse seven Seas (according to others seven Wadys) of Search, of Love, of Knowledge, of Competence, of Unity, of Stupefaction, and of Altruism (i.e. annihilation of self), the several stages of contemplative life. At last, standing upon the mysterious island of the Simurgh and “casting a clandestine glance at him they saw thirty birds[250] in him; and when they turned their eyes to themselves the thirty birds seemed one Simurgh: they saw in themselves the entire Simurgh; they saw in the Simurgh the thirty birds entirely.” Therefore they arrived at the solution of the problem “We and Thou;” that is, the identity of God and Man; they were for ever annihilated in the Simurgh and the shade vanished in the sun (Ibid. iii. 250). The wild ideas concerning Khalít and Malít (vol. v. 319) are again Guebre. “From the seed of Kayomars (the androgyne, like pre- Adamite man) sprang a tree shaped like two human beings and thence proceeded Meshia and Meshianah, first man and woman, progenitors of mankind;” who, though created for “Shídistán, Light-land,” were seduced by Ahriman. This “two-man-tree” is evidently the duality of Physis and Anti-physis, Nature and her counterpart, the battle between Mihr, Izad or Mithra with his Surush and Feristeh (Seraphs and Angels) against the Divs who are the children of Time led by the arch demon-Eshem. Thus when Hormuzd created the planets, the dog, and all useful animals and plants, Ahriman produced the comets, the wolf, noxious beasts and poisonous growths. The Hindus represent the same metaphysical idea by Bramhá the Creator and Visva- karma, the Anti- creator,[251] miscalled by Europeans Vulcan: the former fashions a horse and a bull and the latter caricatures them with an ass and a buffalo, — evolution turned topsy turvy. After seeing nine angels and obtaining an explanation of the Seven Stages of Earth which is supported by the Gav-i-Zamín, the energy, symbolised by a bull, implanted by the Creator in the mundane sphere, Bulukiya meets the four Archangels, to wit Gabriel who is the Persian Rawánbakhsh or Life-giver; Michael or Beshter, Raphael or Israfil alias Ardibihisht, and Azazel or Azrail who is Dumá or Mordad, the Death-giver; and the four are about to attack the Dragon, that is, the demons hostile to mankind who were driven behind Alborz-Kaf by Tahmuras the ancient Persian king. Bulukiya then recites an episode within an episode, the "Story of Jánsháh," itself a Persian name and accompanied by two others (vol. v. 329), the mise-en-scène being Kabul and the King of Khorasan appearing in the proem. Janshah, the young Prince, no sooner comes to man's estate than he loses himself out hunting and falls in with cannibals whose bodies divide longitudinally, each moiety going its own way: these are the Shikk (split ones) which the Arabs borrowed from the Persian Ním- chihrah or Half-faces. They escape to the Ape-island whose denizens are human in intelligence and speak articulately, as the universal East believes they can: these Simiads are at chronic war with the Ants, alluding to some obscure myth which gave rise to the gold-diggers of Herodotus and other classics, "emmets in size somewhat less than dogs but bigger than foxes."[252] The episode then falls into the banalities of Oriental folk-lore. Janshah, passing the Sabbation river and reaching the Jews' city, is persuaded to be sewn up in a skin and is carried in the normal way to the top of the Mountain of Gems where he makes acquaintance with Shaykh Nasr, Lord of the Birds: he enters the usual forbidden room; falls in love with the pattern Swan-maiden; wins her by the popular process; loses her and recovers her through the Monk Yaghmús, whose name, like that of King Teghmús, is a burlesque of the Greek; and, finally, when she is killed by a shark, determines to mourn her loss till the end of his days. Having heard this story Bulukiya quits him; and, resolving to regain his natal land, falls in with Khizr; and the Green Prophet, who was Wazir to Kay Kobad (vith century B. C.) and was connected with Macedonian Alexander (!) enables him to win his wish. The rest of the tale calls for no comment.

Thirdly and lastly we have the histories, historical stories and the "Ana" of great men in which Easterns as well as Westerns delight: the gravest writers do not disdain to relieve the dullness of chronicles and annals by means of such discussions, humorous or pathetic, moral or grossly indecent. The dates must greatly vary: some of the anecdotes relating to the early Caliphs appear almost contemporary; others, like Ali of Cairo and Abu al- Shamat, may be as late as the Ottoman Conquest of Egypt (sixteenth century). All are distinctly Sunnite and show fierce animus against the Shi'ah heretics, suggesting that they were written after the destruction of the Fatimite dynasty (twelfth century) by Salah al-Din (Saladin the Kurd) one of the latest historical personages and the last king named in The Nights. [253] These anecdotes are so often connected with what a learned Frenchman terms the "regne féerique de Haroun er-Réschid,"[254] that the Great Caliph becomes the hero of this portion of The Nights. Aaron the Orthodox was the central figure of the most splendid empire the world had seen, the Viceregent of Allah combining the powers of Cæsar and Pope, and wielding them right worthily according to the general voice of historians. To quote a few: Ali bin Talib al-Khorásáni described him, in A.D. 934, a century and-a-half after his death when flattery would be tongue-tied, as, "one devoted to war and pilgrimage, whose bounty embraced the folk at large." Sa'adi (ob. A.D. 1291) tells a tale highly favourable to him in the "Gulistan" (lib. i. 36). Fakhr al-Din[255] (xivth century) lauds his merits, eloquence, science and generosity; and Al-Siyuti (nat. A.D. 1445) asserts "He was one of the most distinguished of Caliphs and the most illustrious of the Princes of the Earth" (). The Shaykh al-Nafzáwi[256] (sixteenth century) in his Rauz al-Átir fí Nazáh al-Khátir = Scented Garden-site for Heart-delight, calls Harun (chapt.

vii.) the “Master of munificence and bounty, the best of the generous.” And even the latest writers have not ceased to praise him. Says Alí Azíz Efendi the Cretan, in the Story of Jewád[257] (), “Harun was the most bounteous, illustrious and upright of the Abbaside Caliphs.”

The fifth Abbaside was fair and handsome, of noble and majestic presence, a sportsman and an athlete who delighted in polo and archery. He showed sound sense and true wisdom in his speech to the grammarian-poet Al-Asma’î, who had undertaken to teach him:—“Ne m’enseignez jamais en public, et ne vous empressez pas trop de me donner des avis en particulier. Attendez ordinairement que je vous interroge, et contentez vous de me donner une response précise à ce que je vous demanderai, sans y rien ajouter de superflu. Gardez vous surtout de vouloir me préoccuper pour vous attirer ma creance, et pour vous donner de l’autorité. Ne vous etendez jamais trop en long sur les histoires et les traditions que vous me raconterez, si je ne vous en donne la permission. Lorsque vous verrai que je m’eloignerai de l’équité dans mes jugements, ramenez-moi avec douceur, sans user de paroles fâcheuses ni de réprimandes. Enseignez-moi principalement les choses qui sont les plus necessaires pour les dis cours que je dois faire en public, dans les mosquées et ailleurs; et ne parlez point en termes obscurs, ou mystérieux, ni avec des paroles trop recherchées.’’[258]

He became well read in science and letters, especially history and tradition, for “his understanding was as the understanding of the learned;” and, like all educated Arabs of his day, he was a connoisseur of poetry which at times he improvised with success.[259] He made the pilgrimage every alternate year and sometimes on foot, while “his military expeditions almost equalled his pilgrimages.” Day after day during his Caliphate he prayed a hundred “bows,” never neglecting them, save for some especial reason, till his death; and he used to give from his privy purse alms to the extent of a hundred dirhams per diem. He delighted in panegyry and liberally rewarded its experts, one of whom, Abd al-Sammák the Preacher, fairly said of him, “Thy humility in thy greatness is nobler than thy greatness.”“No Caliph,” says Al-Niftawayh, “had been so profusely liberal to poets, lawyers and divines, although as the years advanced he wept over his extravagance amongst other sins.” There was vigorous manliness in his answer to the Grecian Emperor who had sent him an insulting missive:— “In the name of Allah! From the Commander of the Faithful Harun al-Rashid, to Nicephorus the Roman dog. I have read thy writ, O son of a miscreant mother! Thou shalt not hear, thou shalt see my reply.” Nor did he cease to make the Byzantine feel the weight of his arm till he “nakh’d”[260] his camel in the imperial Court-yard; and this was only one instance of his indomitable energy and hatred of the Infidel. Yet, if the West is to be believed, he forgot his fanaticism in his diplomatic dealings and courteous intercourse with Carolus Magnus.[261] Finally, his civilised and well regulated rule contrasted as strongly with the barbarity and turbulence of occidental Christendom, as the splendid Court and the luxurious life of Baghdad and its carpets and hangings devanced the quasi-savagery of London and Paris whose palatial halls were spread with rushes.

The great Caliph ruled twenty-three years and a few months (A.H. 170-193 = A.D. 786-808); and, as his youth was chequered and his reign was glorious, so was his end obscure.[262] After a vision foreshadowing his death,[263] which happened, as becomes a good Moslem, during a military expedition to Khorasan, he ordered his grave to be dug and himself to be carried to it in a covered litter: when sighting the fosse he exclaimed, “O son of man thou art come to this!” Then he commanded himself to be set down and a perfection of the Koran to be made over him in the litter on the edge of the grave. He was buried (æt. forty-five) at Sanábád, a village near Tús.

Aaron the Orthodox appears in The Nights as a headstrong and violent autocrat, a right royal figure according to the Moslem ideas of his day. But his career shows that he was not more tyrannical or more sanguinary than the normal despot of the East, or the contemporary Kings of the West: in most points, indeed, he was far superior to the historic misrulers who have afflicted the world from Spain to furthest China. But a single great crime, a tragedy whose details are almost incredibly horrible, marks his reign with the stain of infamy, with a blot of blood never to be washed away. This tale, “full of the waters of the eye,” as Firdausi sings, is the massacre of the Barmecides; a story which has often been told and which cannot here be passed over in silence. The ancient and noble Iranian house, belonging to the "Ebná" or Arabised Persians, had long served the Ommiades till, early in our eighth century, Khálid bin Bermek,[264] the chief, entered the service of the first Abbaside and became Wazir and Intendant of Finance to Al-Saffah. The most remarkable and distinguished of the family, he was in office when Al-Mansur transferred the capital from Damascus, the headquarters of the hated Ommiades, to Baghdad, built ad hoc. After securing the highest character in history by his personal gifts and public services, he was succeeded by his son and heir Yáhyá (John), a statesman famed from early youth for prudence and profound intelligence, liberality and nobility of soul.[265] He was charged by the Caliph Al-Mahdi with the education of his son Harun, hence the latter was accustomed to call him father; and, until the assassination of the fantastic tyrant Al-Hádi, who proposed to make his own child Caliph, he had no little difficulty in preserving the youth from death in prison. The Orthodox, once seated firmly on the throne, appointed Yáhyá his Grand Wazir. This great administrator had four sons, Al-Fazl, Ja'afar, Mohammed, and Musa,[266] in whose time the house of Bermek rose to that height from which decline and fall are, in the East, well nigh certain and immediate. Al-Fazl was a foster- brother of Harun, an exchange of suckling infants having taken place between the two mothers for the usual object, a tightening of the ties of intimacy: he was a man of exceptional mind, but he lacked the charm of temper and manner which characterised Ja'afar.

The poets and rhetoricians have been profuse in their praises of the cadet who appears in The Nights as an adviser of calm sound sense, an intercessor and a peace-maker, and even more remarkable than the rest of his family for an almost incredible magnanimity and generosity — une générosité effrayante. Mohammed was famed for exalted views and nobility of sentiment and Musa for bravery and energy: of both it was justly said, "They did good and harmed not."[267]

For ten years (not including an interval of seven) from the time of Al-Rashid's accession (A.D. 786) to the date of their fall, (A.D. 803), Yahya and his sons, Al-Fazl and Ja'afar, were virtually rulers of the great heterogeneous empire, which extended from Mauritania to Tartary, and they did notable service in arresting its disruption. Their downfall came sudden and terrible like “a thunderbolt from the blue.” As the Caliph and Ja’afar were halting in Al-’Umr (the convent) near Anbár-town on the Euphrates, after a convivial evening spent in different pavilions, Harun during the dead of the night called up his page Yásir al-Rikhlah[268] and bade him bring Ja’afar’s head. The messenger found Ja’afar still carousing with the blind poet Abú Zakkár and the Christian physician Gabriel ibn Bakhtiashú, and was persuaded to return to the Caliph and report his death; the Wazir adding, “An he express regret I shall owe thee my life; and, if not, whatso Allah will be done.” Ja’afar followed to listen and heard only the Caliph exclaim “O sucker of thy mother’s clitoris, if thou answer me another word, I will send thee before him!” whereupon he at once bandaged his own eyes and received the fatal blow. Al-Asma’í, who was summoned to the presence shortly after, recounts that when the head was brought to Harun he gazed at it, and summoning two witnesses commanded them to decapitate Yasir, crying, “I cannot bear to look upon the slayer of Ja’afar!” His vengeance did not cease with the death: he ordered the head to be gibbetted at one end and the trunk at the other abutment of the Tigris bridge where the corpses of the vilest malefactors used to be exposed; and, some months afterwards, he insulted the remains by having them burned — the last and worst indignity which can be offered to a Moslem. There are indeed pity and terror in the difference between two such items in the Treasury-accounts as these: “Four hundred thousand dinars (£200,000) to a robe of honour for the Wazir Ja’afar bin Yahya;” and, “Ten kírát, (5 shill.) to naphtha and reeds for burning the body of Ja’afar the Barmecide.”

Meanwhile Yahya and Al-Fazl, seized by the Caliph Harun’s command at Baghdad, were significantly cast into the prison “Habs al- Zanádikah” — of the Guebres — and their immense wealth which, some opine, hastened their downfall, was confiscated. According to the historian, Al-Tabari, who, however, is not supported by all the annalists, the whole Barmecide family, men, women, and children, numbering over a thousand, were slaughtered with only three exceptions; Yahya, his brother Mohammed, and his son Al- Fazl. The Caliph's foster-father, who lived to the age of seventy-four, was allowed to die in jail (A.H. 805) after two years' imprisonment at Rukkah. Al-Fazl, after having been tortured with two hundred blows in order to make him produce concealed property, survived his father three years and died in Nov. A.H. 808, some four months before his terrible foster- brother. A pathetic tale is told of the son warming water for the old man's use by pressing the copper ewer to his stomach.

The motives of this terrible massacre are variously recounted, but no sufficient explanation has yet been, or possibly ever will be, given. The popular idea is embodied in The Nights. [269] Harun, wishing Ja'afar to be his companion even in the Harem, had wedded him, pro formâ, to his eldest sister Abbásah, "the loveliest woman of her day," and brilliant in mind as in body; but he had expressly said "I will marry thee to her, that it may be lawful for thee to look upon her but thou shalt not touch her." Ja'afar bound himself by a solemn oath; but his mother Attábah was mad enough to deceive him in his cups and the result was a boy (Ibn Khallikan) or, according to others, twins. The issue was sent under the charge of a confidential eunuch and a slave-girl to Meccah for concealment; but the secret was divulged to Zubaydah who had her own reasons for hating husband and wife and cherished an especial grievance against Yahya.[270] Thence it soon found its way to head-quarters. Harun's treatment of Abbásah supports the general conviction: according to the most credible accounts she and her child were buried alive in a pit under the floor of her apartment.

But, possibly, Ja'afar's perjury was only "the last straw." Already Al-Fazl bin Rabî'a, the deadliest enemy of the Barmecides, had been entrusted (A.D. 786) with the Wazirate which he kept seven years. Ja'afar had also acted generously but imprudently in abetting the escape of Yahya bin Abdillah, Sayyid and Alide, for whom the Caliph had commanded confinement in a close dark dungeon: when charged with disobedience the Wazir had made full confession and Harun had (they say) exclaimed, "Thou hast done well!" but was heard to mutter, "Allah slay me an I slay thee not."[271] The great house seems at times to have abused its powers by being too peremptory with Harun and Zubaydah, especially in money matters;[272] and its very greatness would have created for it many and powerful enemies and detractors who plied the Caliph with anonymous verse and prose. Nor was it forgotten that, before the spread of Al-Islam, they had presided over the Naubehár or Pyræthrum of Balkh; and Harun is said to have remarked anent Yahya, "The zeal for magianism, rooted in his heart, induces him to save all the monuments connected with his faith."[273] Hence the charge that they were "Zanádakah," a term properly applied to those who study the Zend scripture, but popularly meaning Mundanists, Positivists, Reprobates, Atheists; and it may be noted that, immediately after al-Rashid's death, violent religious troubles broke out in Baghdad. Ibn Khallikan[274] quotes Sa'id ibn Salim, a well-known grammarian and traditionist who philosophically remarked, "Of a truth the Barmecides did nothing to deserve Al- Rashid's severity, but the day (of their power and prosperity) had been long and whatso endureth long waxeth longsome." Fakhr al-Din says (), "On attribue encore leur ruine aux manières fières et orgueilleuses de Djafar (Ja'afar) et de Fadhl (Al- Fazl), manières que les rois ne sauroient supporter." According to Ibn Badrún, the poet, when the Caliph's sister 'Olayyah[275] asked him, "O my lord, I have not seen thee enjoy one happy day since putting Ja'afar to death: wherefore didst thou slay him?" he answered, "My dear life, an I thought that my shirt knew the reason I would rend it in pieces!" I therefore hold with Al Mas'udi,

"As regards the intimate cause (of the catastrophe) it is unknown and Allah is Omniscient."

Aaron the Orthodox appears sincerely to have repented his enormous crime. From that date he never enjoyed refreshing sleep: he would have given his whole realm to recall Ja'afar to life; and, if any spoke slightingly of the Barmecides in his presence, he would exclaim, "God damn your fathers! Cease to blame them or fill the void they have left." And he had ample reason to mourn the loss. After the extermination of the wise and enlightened family, the affairs of the Caliphate never prospered: Fazl bin Rabí'a, though a man of intelligence and devoted to letters, proved a poor substitute for Yahya and Ja'afar; and the Caliph is reported to have applied to him the couplet: —

No sire to your sire,[276] I bid you spare * Your calumnies or their place replace.

His unwise elevation of his two rival sons filled him with fear of poison, and, lastly, the violence and recklessness of the popular mourning for the Barmecides,[277] whose echo has not yet died away, must have added poignancy to his tardy penitence. The crime still “sticks fiery off” from the rest of Harun’s career: it stands out in ghastly prominence as one of the most terrible tragedies recorded by history, and its horrible details make men write passionately on the subject to this our day.[278]

As of Harun so of Zubaydah it may be said that she was far superior in most things to contemporary royalties, and she was not worse at her worst than the normal despot-queen of the Morning-land. We must not take seriously the tales of her jealousy in The Nights, which mostly end in her selling off or burying alive her rivals; but, even were all true, she acted after the recognised fashion of her exalted sisterhood. The secret history of Cairo, during the last generation, tells of many a viceregal dame who committed all the crimes, without any of the virtues which characterised Harun’s cousin-spouse. And the difference between the manners of the Caliphate and the “respectability” of the nineteenth century may be measured by the Tale called “Al-Maamun and Zubaydah.”[279] The lady, having won a game of forfeits from her husband, and being vexed with him for imposing unseemly conditions when he had been the winner, condemned him to lie with the foulest and filthiest kitchen-wench in the palace; and thus was begotten the Caliph who succeeded and destroyed her son.

Zubaydah was the grand-daughter of the second Abbaside Al-Mansur, by his son Ja’afar whom The Nights persistently term Al-Kasim: her name was Amat al-Azíz or Handmaid of the Almighty; her cognomen was Umm Ja’afar as her husband’s was Abú Ja’afar; and her popular name “Creamkin” derives from Zubdah,[280] cream or fresh butter, on account of her plumpness and freshness. She was as majestic and munificent as her husband; and the hum of prayer was never hushed in her palace. Al-Mas’udi[281] makes a historian say to the dangerous Caliph Al-Káhir, “The nobleness and generosity of this Princess, in serious matters as in her diversions, place her in the highest rank"; and he proceeds to give ample proof. Al-Siyuti relates how she once filled a poet's mouth with jewels which he sold for twenty thousand dinars. Ibn Khallikan (i. 523) affirms of her, "Her charity was ample, her conduct virtuous, and the history of her pilgrimage to Meccah and of what she undertook to execute on the way is so well-known that it were useless to repeat it." I have noted (Pilgrimage iii. 2) how the Darb al-Sharki or Eastern road from Meccah to Al-Medinah was due to the piety of Zubaydah who dug wells from Baghdad to the Prophet's burial place and built not only cisterns and caravanserais, but even a wall to direct pilgrims over the shifting sands. She also supplied Meccah, which suffered severely from want of water, with the chief requisite for public hygiene by connecting it, through levelled hills and hewn rocks, with the Ayn al-Mushásh in the Arafat subrange; and the fine aqueduct, some ten miles long, was erected at a cost of 1,700,000 to 2,000,000 of gold pieces. [282] We cannot wonder that her name is still famous among the Badawin and the "Sons of the Holy Cities." She died at Baghdad, after a protracted widowhood, in A.H. 216 and her tomb, which still exists, was long visited by the friends and dependents who mourned the loss of a devout and most liberal woman.

The reader will bear with me while I run through the tales and add a few remarks to the notices given in the notes: the glance must necessarily be brief, however extensive be the theme. The admirable introduction follows, in all the texts and MSS. known to me, the same main lines but differs greatly in minor details as will be seen by comparing Mr. Payne's translation with Lane's and mine. In the Tale of the Sage Dúbán appears the speaking head which is found in the Kamil, in Mirkhond and in the Kitáb al-Uyún: M. C. Barbier de Meynard (v. 503) traces it back to an abbreviated text of Al-Mas'udi. I would especially recommend to students The Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdad (i. 82), whose mighty orgie ends so innocently in general marriage. Lane (iii. 746) blames it "because it represents Arab ladies as acting like Arab courtesans"; but he must have known that during his day the indecent frolic was quite possible in some of the highest circles of his beloved Cairo. To judge by the style and changes of person, some of the most "archaic" expressions suggest the hand of the Ráwi or professional tale-teller; yet as they are in all the texts they cannot be omitted in a loyal translation. The following story of The Three Apples perfectly justifies my notes concerning which certain carpers complain. What Englishman would be jealous enough to kill his cousin-wife because a blackamoor in the streets boasted of her favours? But after reading what is annotated in vol. i. 6, and purposely placed there to give the key-note of the book, he will understand the reasonable nature of the suspicion; and I may add that the same cause has commended these "skunks of the human race" to debauched women in England.

The next tale, sometimes called "The Two Wazírs," is notable for its regular and genuine drama-intrigue which, however, appears still more elaborate and perfected in other pieces. The richness of this Oriental plot-invention contrasts strongly with all European literatures except the Spaniard's, whose taste for the theatre determined his direction, and the Italian, which in Boccaccio's day had borrowed freely through Sicily from the East. And the remarkable deficiency lasted till the romantic movement dawned in France, when Victor Hugo and Alexander Dumas showed their marvellous powers of faultless fancy, boundless imagination and scenic luxuriance, "raising French Poetry from the dead and not mortally wounding French prose.''[283] The Two Wazirs is followed by the gem of the volume, The Adventure of the Hunchback-jester (i. 225), also containing an admirable surprise and a fine development of character, while its "wild but natural simplicity" and its humour are so abounding that it has echoed through the world to the farthest West. It gave to Addison the Story of Alnaschar[284] and to Europe the term "Barmecide Feast," from the "Tale of Shacabac" (vol. i. 343). The adventures of the corpse were known in Europe long before Galland as shown by three fabliaux in Barbazan. I have noticed that the Barber's Tale of himself (i. 317) is historical and I may add that it is told in detail by Al-Mas'udi (chapt. cxiv).

Follows the tale of Núr al-Dín Alí, and what Galland miscalls "The Fair Persian," a brightly written historiette with not a few touches of true humour. Noteworthy are the Slaver's address (vol. ii. 15), the fine description of the Baghdad garden (vol. ii. 21-24), the drinking-party (vol. ii. 25), the Caliph's frolic (vol. ii. 31-37) and the happy end of the hero's misfortunes (vol. ii. 44) Its brightness is tempered by the gloomy tone of the tale which succeeds, and which has variants in the Bagh o Bahar, a Hindustani versionof the Persian "Tale of the Four Darwayshes;" and in the Turkish Kirk Vezir or "Book of the Forty Vezirs." Its dismal péripéties are relieved only by the witty indecency of Eunuch Bukhayt and the admirable humour of Eunuch Kafur, whose "half lie" is known throughout the East. Here also the lover's agonies are piled upon him for the purpose of unpiling at last: the Oriental tale-teller knows by experience that, as a rule, doleful endings "don't pay."

The next is the long romance of chivalry, "King Omar bin al-Nu'man" etc., which occupies an eighth of the whole repertory and the best part of two volumes. Mr. Lane omits it because "obscene and tedious," showing the license with which he translated; and he was set right by a learned reviewer,[285] who truly declared that "the omission of half-a-dozen passages out of four hundred pages would fit it for printing in any language[286] and the charge of tediousness could hardly have been applied more unhappily." The tale is interesting as a picture of mediæval Arab chivalry and has many other notable points; for instance, the lines (iii. 86) beginning "Allah holds the kingship!" are a lesson to the manichæanism of Christian Europe. It relates the doings of three royal generations and has all the characteristics of Eastern art: it is a phantasmagoria of Holy Places, palaces and Harems; convents, castles and caverns, here restful with gentle landscapes (ii. 240) and there bristling with furious battle-pictures (ii. 117, 221-8, 249) and tales of princely prowess and knightly derring-do. The characters stand out well. King Nu'man is an old lecher who deserves his death; the ancient Dame Zát al-Dawáhi merits her title Lady of Calamities (to her foes); Princess Abrizah appears as a charming Amazon, doomed to a miserable and pathetic end; Zau al-Makán is a wise and pious royalty; Nuzhat al-Zamán, though a longsome talker, is a model sister; the Wazir Dandán, a sage and sagacious counsellor, contrasts with the Chamberlain, an ambitious miscreant; Kánmakán is the typical Arab knight, gentle and brave: —

Now managing the mouthes of stubborne steedes
Now practising the proof of warlike deedes;

And the kind-hearted, simple-minded Stoker serves as a foil to the villains, the kidnapping Badawi and Ghazbán the detestable negro. The fortunes of the family are interrupted by two episodes, both equally remarkable. Taj al-Mulúk[287] is the model lover whom no difficulties or dangers can daunt. In Azíz and Azízah (ii. 291) we have the beau ideal of a loving woman: the writer's object was to represent a "softy" who had the luck to win the love of a beautiful and clever cousin and the mad folly to break her heart. The poetical justice which he receives at the hands of women of quite another stamp leaves nothing to be desired. Finally the plot of "King Omar" is well worked out; and the gathering of all the actors upon the stage before the curtain drops may be improbable but it is highly artistic.

The long Crusading Romance is relieved by a sequence of sixteen fabliaux, partly historiettes of men and beasts and partly apologues proper — a subject already noticed. We have then (iii. 162) the saddening and dreary love-tale of Ali bin Bakkár, a Persian youth and the Caliph's concubine Shams al-Nahár. Here the end is made doleful enough by the deaths of the "two martyrs," who are killed off, like Romeo and Juliet,[288] a lesson that the course of true Love is sometimes troubled and that men as well as women can die of the so-called "tender passion." It is followed (iii. 212) by the long tale of Kamar al-Zamán, or Moon of the Age, the first of that name, the "Camaralzaman" whom Galland introduced into the best European society. Like "The Ebony Horse" it seems to have been derived from a common source with "Peter of Provence" and "Cleomades and Claremond"; and we can hardly wonder at its wide diffusion: the tale is brimful of life, change, movement, containing as much character and incident as would fill a modern three-volumer and the Supernatural pleasantly jostles the Natural; Dahnash the Jinn and Maymúnah daughter of Al-Dimiryát,[289] a renowned King of the Jann, being as human in their jealousy about the virtue of their lovers as any children of Adam, and so their metamorphosis to fleas has all the effect of a surprise. The troupe is again drawn with a broad firm touch. Prince Charming, the hero, is weak and wilful, shifty and immoral, hasty and violent: his two spouses are rivals in abominations as his sons, Amjad and As'ad, are examples of a fraternal affection rarely found in half- brothers by sister-wives.

There is at least one fine melodramatic situation (iii. 228); and marvellous feats of indecency, a practical joke which would occur only to the canopic mind (iii. 300-305), emphasise the recovery of her husband by that remarkable "blackguard," the Lady Budúr. The interpolated tale of Ni'amah and Naomi (iv. I), a simple and pleasing narrative of youthful amours, contrasts well with the boiling passions of the incestuous and murderous Queens and serves as a pause before the grand denouement when the parted meet, the lost are found, the unwedded are wedded and all ends merrily as a xixth century novel.

The long tale of Alá al-Din, our old friend "Aladdin," is wholly out of place in its present position (iv. 29): it is a counterpart of Ali Nûr al-Din and Miriam the Girdle-girl (vol. ix. i); and the mention of the Shahbandar or Harbour-master (iv. 29), the Kunsul or Consul (), the Kaptan (Capitano), the use of cannon at sea and the choice of Genoa city () prove that it belongs to the xvth or xvith century and should accompanyKamar al-Zamàn II. and Ma'aruf at the end of The Nights. Despite the lutist Zubaydah being carried off by the Jinn, the Magic Couch, a modification of Solomon's carpet, and the murder of the King who refused to islamize, it is evidently a European tale and I believe with Dr. Bacher that it is founded upon the legend of "Charlemagne's" daughter Emma and his secretary Eginhardt, as has been noted in the counterpart (vol. ix. 1).

This quasi-historical fiction is followed hy a succession of fabliaux, novelle and historiettes which fill the rest of the vol. iv. and the whole of vol. v. till we reach the terminal story, The Queen of the Serpents (vol. v. p-329). It appears to me that most of them are historical and could easily be traced. Not a few are in Al-Mas'udi; for instance the grim Tale of Hatim of Tayy (vol. iv. 94) is given bodily in "Meads of Gold" (iii. 327); and the two adventures of Ibrahim al-Mahdi with the barber-surgeon (vol. iv. 103) and the Merchant's sister (vol. iv. 176) are in his pages (vol. vii. 68 and 18). The City of Lubtayt (vol. iv. 99) embodies the legend of Don Rodrigo, last of the Goths, and may have reached the ears of Washington Irving; Many-columned Iram (vol. iv. 113) is held by all Moslems to be factual and sundry writers have recorded the tricks played by Al- Maamun with the Pyramids of Jizah which still show his handiwork.[290] The germ of Isaac of Mosul (vol. iv. 119) is found in Al-Mas’udi who (vii. 65) names “Burán” the poetess (Ibn Khall. i. 268); and Harun al-Rashid and the Slave-girl (vol. iv. 153) is told by a host of writers. Ali the Persian is a rollicking tale of fun from some Iranian jest-book: Abu Mohammed hight Lazybones belongs to the cycle of “Sindbad the Seaman,” with a touch of Whittington and his Cat; and Zumurrud (“Smaragdine”) in Ali Shar (vol. iv. 187) shows at her sale the impudence of Miriam the Girdle-girl and in bed the fescennine device of the Lady Budur. The “Ruined Man who became Rich,” etc. (vol. iv. 289) is historical and Al-Mas’udi (vii. 281) relates the coquetry of Mahbúbah the concubine (vol. iv. 291): the historian also quotes four couplets, two identical with Nos. 1 and 2 in The Nights (vol. iv. 292) and adding: —

Then see the slave who lords it o’er her lord * In lover privacy
and public site:
Behold these eyes that one like Ja’afar saw: * Allah on Ja’afar
reign boons infinite!

Uns al-Wujúd (vol. v. 32) is a love-tale which has been translated into a host of Eastern languages; and The Lovers of the Banu Ozrah belong to Al-Mas’udi’s “Martyrs of Love” (vii. 355), with the ozrite “Ozrite love” of Ibn Khallikan (iv. 537). “Harun and the Three Poets” (vol. v. 77) has given to Cairo a proverb which Burckhardt (No. 561) renders “The day obliterates the word or promise of the Night,” for

The promise of night is effaced by day.

It suggests Congreve’s Doris: —

For who o’er night obtain’d her grace,
She can next day disown, etc.

“Harun and the three Slave-girls” (vol. v. 81) smacks of Gargantua (lib. i. c. 11): “It belongs to me, said one: ’Tis mine, said another”; and so forth. The Simpleton and the Sharper (vol. v. 83) like the Foolish Dominie (vol. v. 118) is an old Joe Miller in Hindu as well as Moslem folk-lore. “Kisra Anushirwán” (vol. v. 87) is “The

King, the Owl and the Villages of Al- Mas'udi" (iii. 171), who also notices the Persian monarch's four seals of office (ii. 204); and "Masrur the Eunuch and Ibn Al- Káribi" (vol. v. 109) is from the same source as Ibn al-Magházili the Reciter and a Eunuch belonging to the Caliph Al-Mu'tazad (vol. viii. 161). In the Tale of Tawaddud (vol. v. 139) we have the fullest development of the disputations and displays of learning then so common in Europe, teste the "Admirable Crichton"; and these were affected not only by Eastern tale- tellers but even by sober historians. To us it is much like "padding" when Nuzhat al-Zamán (vol. ii. 156 etc.) fags her hapless hearers with a discourse covering sixteen mortal pages; when the Wazir Dandan (vol. ii. 195, etc.) reports at length the cold speeches of the five high-bosomed maids and the Lady of Calamities and when Wird Khan, in presence of his papa (Nights cmxiv-xvi.) discharges his patristic exercitations and heterogeneous knowledge. Yet Al-Mas'udi also relates, at dreary extension (vol. vi. 369) the disputation of the twelve sages in presence of Barmecide Yahya upon the origin, the essence, the accidents and the omnes res of Love; and in another place (vii. 181) shows Honayn, author of the Book of Natural Questions, undergoing a long examination before the Caliph Al-Wásik (Vathek) and describing, amongst other things, the human teeth. See also the dialogue or catechism of Al-Hajjáj and Ibn Al-Kirríya in Ibn Khallikan (vol. i. 238-240).

These disjecta membra of tales and annals are pleasantly relieved by the seven voyages of Sindbad the Seaman (vol. vi. 1-83). The "Arabian Odyssey" may, like its Greek brother, descend from a noble family, the "Shipwrecked Mariner" a Coptic travel-tale of the twelfth dynasty (B. C. 3500) preserved on a papyrus at St. Petersburg. In its actual condition "Sindbad," is a fanciful compilation, like De Foe's "Captain Singleton," borrowed from travellers' tales of an immense variety and extracts from Al- Idrísi, Al-Kazwíni and Ibn al-Wardi. Here we find the Polyphemus, the Pygmies and the cranes of Homer and Herodotus; the escape of Aristomenes; the Plinian monsters well known in Persia; the magnetic mountain of Saint Brennan (Brandanus); the aeronautics of "Duke Ernest of Bavaria"[291] and sundry cuttings from Moslem writers dating between our ninth and fourteenth centuries.[292] The

"Shayhk of the Seaboard" appears in the Persian romance of Kámaraupa translated by Francklin, all the particulars absolutely corresponding. The "Odyssey" is valuable because it shows how far Eastward the mediaeval Arab had extended: already in The Ignorance he had reached China and had formed a centre of trade at Canton. But the higher merit of the cento is to produce one of the most charming books of travel ever written, like Robinson Crusoe the delight of children and the admiration of all ages.

The hearty life and realism of Sindbad are made to stand out in strong relief by the deep melancholy which pervades "The City of Brass" (vol. vi. 83), a dreadful book for a dreary day. It is curious to compare the doleful verses (p, 105) with those spoken to Caliph Al-Mutawakkil by Abu al-Hasan Ali (A1-Mas'udi, vii. 246). We then enter upon the venerable Sindibad-nameh, the Malice of Women (vol. vi. 122), of which, according to the Kitab al-Fihrist (vol. i. 305), there were two editions, a Sinzibád al- Kabír and a Sinzibád al-Saghír, the latter being probably an epitome of the former. This bundle of legends, I have shown, was incorporated with the Nights as an editor's addition; and as an independent work it has made the round of the world.

Space forbids any detailed notice of this choice collection of anecdotes for which a volume would be required. I may, however, note that the "Wife's device" (vol. vi. 152) has its analogues in the Kathá (chapt. xiii.) in the Gesta Romanorum (No. xxviii.) and in Boccaccio (Day iii. 6 and Day vi. 8), modified by La Fontaine to Richard Minutolo (Contes lib. i. tale 2): it is quoted almost in the words of The Nights by the Shaykh al-Nafzáwi (). That most witty and indecent tale The Three Wishes (vol. vi. 180) has forced its way disguised as a babe into our nurseries. Another form of it is found in the Arab proverb "More luckless than Basús" (Kamus), a fair Israelite who persuaded her husband, also a Jew, to wish that she might become the loveliest of women. Jehovah granted it, spitefully as Jupiter; the consequence was that her contumacious treatment of her mate made him pray that the beauty might be turned into a bitch; and the third wish restored her to her original state.

The Story of Júdar (vol. vi. 207) is Egyptian, to judge from its local knowledge (p and 254) together with its ignorance of Marocco

(). It shows a contrast, in which Arabs delight, of an almost angelical goodness and forgiveness with a well-nigh diabolical malignity, and we find the same extremes in Abú Sír the noble-minded Barber and the hideously inhuman Abú Kír. The excursion to Mauritania is artfully managed and gives a novelty to the mise-en-scène. Gharíb and Ajíb (vi. 207, vii. 91) belongs to the cycle of Antar and King Omar bin Nu'man: its exaggerations make it a fine type of Oriental Chauvinism, pitting the superhuman virtues, valour, nobility and success of all that is Moslem, against the scum of the earth which is non-Moslem. Like the exploits of Friar John of the Chopping-knives (Rabelais i. c. 27) it suggests ridicule cast on impossible battles and tales of giants, paynims and paladins. The long romance is followed by thirteen historiettes all apparently historical: compare "Hind, daughter of Al-Nu'man" (vol. viii. 7-145) and "Isaac of Mosul and the Devil" (vol. vii. 136-139) with Al Mas'udi v. 365 and vi. 340. They end in two long detective-tales like those which M. Gaboriau has popularised, the Rogueries of Dalilah and the Adventures of Mercury Ali, based upon the principle, "One thief wots another." The former, who has appeared before (vol. ii. 329), seems to have been a noted character: Al-Mas'udi says (viii. 175) "in a word this Shaykh (Al-'Ukáb) outrivalled in his rogueries and the ingenuities of his wiles Dállah (Dalilah?) the Crafty and other tricksters and coney-catchers, ancient and modern."

The Tale of Ardashir (vol. vii. 209-264) lacks originality: we are now entering upon a series of pictures which are replicas of those preceding. This is not the case with that charming Undine, Julnár the Sea-born (vol. vii. 264-308) which, like Abdullah of the Land and Abdullah of the Sea (vol. ix. Night cmxl.), describes the vie intime of mermen and merwomen. Somewhat resembling Swift's inimitable creations, the Houyhnhnms for instance, they prove, amongst other things, that those who dwell in a denser element can justly blame and severely criticise the contradictory and unreasonable prejudices and predilections of mankind. Sayf al-Mulúk (vol. viii. Night dcclviii.), the romantic tale of two lovers, shows by its introduction that it was originally an independent work and it is known to have existed in Persia during the eleventh century: this novella has found its way into every Moslem language of the East even into Sindi, which calls the hero “Sayfal.” Here we again meet the Old Man of the Sea or rather the Shaykh of the Seaboard and make acquaintance with a Jinn whose soul is outside his body: thus he resembles Hermotimos of Klazamunae in Apollonius, whose spirit left his mortal frame à discretion. The author, philanthropically remarking (vol. viii. 4) “Knowest thou not that a single mortal is better, in Allah’s sight than a thousand Jinn?” brings the wooing to a happy end which leaves a pleasant savour upon the mental palate.

Hasan of Bassorah (vol. viii. 7-145) is a Master Shoetie on a large scale like Sindbad, but his voyages and travels extend into the supernatural and fantastic rather than the natural world. Though long the tale is by no means wearisome and the characters are drawn with a fine firm hand. The hero with his hen-like persistency of purpose, his weeping, fainting and versifying is interesting enough and proves that “Love can find out the way.” The charming adopted sister, the model of what the feminine friend should be; the silly little wife who never knows that she is happy till she loses happiness; the violent and hard-hearted queen with all the cruelty of a good woman, and the manners and customs of Amazon land are outlined with a life-like vivacity. Khalífah the next tale (vol. viii. 147-184) is valuable as a study of Eastern life, showing how the fisherman emerges from the squalor of his surroundings and becomes one of the Caliph’s favourite cup-companions. Ali Nur al-Din (vol. viii. 264) and King Jali’ad (vol. ix., Night dcccxciv) have been noticed elsewhere and there is little to say of the concluding stories which bear the evident impress of a more modern date.

Dr. Johnson thus sums up his notice of The Tempest. “Whatever might have been the intention of their author, these tales are made instrumental to the production of many characters, diversified with boundless invention, and preserved with profound skill in nature; extensive knowledge of opinions, and accurate observation of life. Here are exhibited princes, courtiers and sailors, all speaking in their real characters. There is the agency of airy spirits and of earthy goblin, the operations of magic, the tumults of a storm, the adventures of a desert island, the native effusion of untaught affection, the punishment of guilt, and the final happiness of those for whom our passions and reason are equally interested.”

We can fairly say this much and far more for our Tales. Viewed as a tout ensemble in full and complete form, they are a drama of Eastern life, and a Dance of Death made sublime by faith and the highest emotions, by the certainty of expiation and the fulness of atoning equity, where virtue is victorious, vice is vanquished and the ways of Allah are justified to man. They are a panorama which remains ken-speckle upon the mental retina. They form a phantasmagoria in which archangels and angels, devils and goblins, men of air, of fire, of water, naturally mingle with men of earth; where flying horses and talking fishes are utterly realistic: where King and Prince meet fisherman and pauper, lamia and cannibal; where citizen jostles Badawi, eunuch meets knight; the Kazi hob-nobs with the thief; the pure and pious sit down to the same tray with the bawd and the pimp; where the professional religionist, the learned Koranist and the strictest moralist consort with the wicked magician, the scoffer and the debauchee- poet like Abu Nowas; where the courtier jests with the boor and where the sweep is bedded with the noble lady. And the characters are "finished and quickened by a few touches swift and sure as the glance of sunbeams." The work is a kaleidoscope where everything falls into picture; gorgeous palaces and pavilions; grisly underground caves and deadlywolds; gardens fairer than those of the Hesperid; seas dashing with clashing billows upon enchanted mountains; valleys of the Shadow of Death; air-voyages and promenades in the abysses of ocean; the duello, the battle and the siege; the wooing of maidens and the marriage- rite. All the splendour and squalor, the beauty and baseness, the glamour and grotesqueness, the magic and the mournfulness, the bravery and the baseness of Oriental life are here: its pictures of the three great Arab passions, love, war and fancy, entitle it to be called "Blood, Musk and Hashish."[293] And still more, the genius of the story-teller quickens the dry bones of history, and by adding Fiction to Pact revives the dead past: the Caliphs and the Caliphate return to Baghdad and Cairo, whilst Asmodeus kindly removes the terrace-roof of every tenement and allows our curious glances to take in the whole interior. This is perhaps the best proof of their power. Finally, the picture- gallery opens with a series of weird and striking adventures and shows as a tail-piece, an idyllic scene of love and wedlock in halls before reeking with lust and blood.

I have noticed in my Foreword that the two main characteristics of The Nights are Pathos and Humour, alternating with highly artistic contrast, and carefully calculated to provoke tears and smiles in the coffee-house audience which paid for them. The sentimental portion mostly breathes a tender passion and a simple sadness: such are the Badawi's dying farewell (vol i. 75); the lady's broken heart on account of her lover's hand being cut off (vol. i. 277); the Wazir's death, the mourner's song and the "tongue of the case" (vol. ii. 10); the murder of Princess Abrízah with the babe sucking its dead mother's breast (vol. ii. 128); and, generally, the last moments of good Moslems (e. g. vol. 167), which are described with inimitable terseness and naïveté. The sad and the gay mingle in the character of the good Hammam-stoker who becomes Roi Crotte and the melancholy deepens in the Tale of the Mad Lover (vol. v. 138); the Blacksmith who could handle fire without hurt (vol. v. 271); the Devotee Prince (vol. v. iii) and the whole Tale of Azízah (vol. ii. 298), whose angelic love is set off by the sensuality and selfishness of her more fortunate rivals. A new note of absolutely tragic dignity seems to be struck in the Sweep and the Noble Lady (vol. iv. 125), showing the piquancy of sentiment which can be evolved from the common and the unclean. The pretty conceit of the Lute (vol. v. 244) is afterwards carried out in the Song (vol. viii. 281), which is a masterpiece of originality[294] and (in the Arabic) of exquisite tenderness and poetic melancholy, the wail over the past and the vain longing for reunion. And the very depths of melancholy, of majestic pathos and of true sublimity are reached in Many-columned Iram (vol. iv. 113) and the City of Brass (vol. vi. 83): the metrical part of the latter shows a luxury of woe; it is one long wail of despair which echoes long and loud in the hearer's heart.

In my Foreword I have compared the humorous vein of the comic tales with our northern "wut," chiefly for the dryness and slyness which pervade it. But it differs in degree as much as the pathos varies. The staple article is Cairene "chaff," a peculiar banter possibly inherited from their pagan forefathers: instances of this are found in the Cock and Dog (vol. i. 22), the Eunuch's address to the Cook (vol. i. 244), the Wazir's exclamation, "Too little pepper!"

(vol. i. 246), the self- communing of Judar (vol. vi. 219), the Hashish-eater in Ali Shár (vol. iv. 213), the scene between the brother-Wazirs (vol. i. 197), the treatment of the Gobbo (vol. i. 221, 228), the Water of Zemzem (vol. i. 284), and the Eunuchs Bukhayt and Kafur[295] (vol. ii. 49, 51). At times it becomes a masterpiece of fun, of rollicking Rabelaisian humour underlaid by the caustic mother-wit of Sancho Panza, as in the orgie of the Ladies of Baghdad (vol. i. 92, 93); the Holy Ointment applied to the beard of Luka the Knight— "unxerunt regem Salomonem" (vol. ii. 222); and Ja'afar and the Old Badawi (vol. v. 98), with its reminiscence of "chaffy" King Amasis. This reaches its acme in the description of ugly old age (vol. v. 3); in The Three Wishes, the wickedest of satires on the alter sexus (vi. 180); in Ali the Persian (vol. iv. 139); in the Lady and her Five Suitors (vol. vi. 172), which corresponds and contrasts with the dully told Story of Upakosa and her Four Lovers of the Kathá (); and in The Man of Al- Yaman (vol. iv. 245) where we find the true Falstaffian touch. But there is sterling wit, sweet and bright, expressed without any artifice of words, in the immortal Barber's tales of his brothers, especially the second, the fifth and the sixth (vol. i. 324, 325 and 343). Finally, wherever the honest and independent old debauchee Abu Nowas makes his appearance the fun becomes fescennine and milesian.

B. — The Manner of the Nights.

And now, after considering the matter, I will glance at the language and style of The Nights. The first point to remark is the peculiarly happy framework of the Recueil, which I cannot but suspect set an example to the Decamerone and its host of successors.[296] The admirable Introduction, a perfect mise- en-scène, gives the amplest raison d'être of the work, which thus has all the unity required for a great romantic recueil. We perceive this when reading the contemporary Hindu work the Kathá Sarit Ságara,[297] which is at once so like and so unlike The Nights: here the preamble is insufficient; the whole is clumsy for want of a thread upon which the many independent tales and fables should be strung[298] ; and the consequent disorder and confusion tell upon the reader, who cannot remember the sequence without taking notes.

As was said in my Foreword "without The Nights no Arabian

Nights!" and now, so far from holding the pauses "an intolerable interruption to the narrative," I attach additional importance to these pleasant and restful breaks introduced into long and intricate stories. Indeed beginning again I should adopt the plan of the Cal. Edit. opening and ending every division with a dialogue between the sisters. Upon this point, however, opinions will differ and the critic will remind me that the consensus of the MSS. would be wanting: The Bresl. Edit. in many places merely interjects the number of the night without interrupting the tale; the MS. in the Bibliotheque Nationale used by Galland contains only cclxxxii and the Frenchman ceases to use the division after the ccxxxvith Night and in some editions after the cxcviith.[299] A fragmentary MS. according to Scott whose friend J. Anderson found it in Bengal, breaks away after Night xxix; and in the Wortley Montagu, the Sultan relents at an early opportunity, the stories, as in Galland, continuing only as an amusement. I have been careful to preserve the balanced sentences with which the tales open; the tautology and the prose- rhyme serving to attract attention, e. g., "In days of yore and in times long gone before there was a King," etc.; in England where we strive not to waste words this becomes "Once upon a time." The closings also are artfully calculated, by striking a minor chord after the rush and hurry of the incidents, to suggest repose: "And they led the most pleasurable of lives and the most delectable, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies and they became as though they had never been." Place this by the side of Boccaccio's favourite formulae: — Egli conquistò poi la Scozia, e funne re coronato (ii, 3); Et onorevolmente visse infino alla fine (ii, 4); Molte volte goderono del loro amore: Iddio faccia noi goder del nostro (iii, 6): E cosi nella sue grossezza si rimase e ancor vi si sta (vi, 8). We have further docked this tail into: "And they lived happily ever after."

I cannot take up the Nights in their present condition, without feeling that the work has been written down from the Ráwi or Nakkál,[300] the conteur or professional story-teller, also called Kassás and Maddáh, corresponding with the Hindu Bhat or Bard. To these men my learned friend Baron A. von Kremer would attribute the Mu'allakat vulgarly called the Suspended Poems, as being "indited from the relation of the Ráwi." Hence in our text the frequent interruption of the formula Kal' al-Rawi = quotes the reciter; dice Turpino. Moreover, The Nights read in many places like a hand-book or guide for the professional, who would learn them by heart; here and there introducing his "gag" and "patter". To this "business" possibly we may attribute much of the ribaldry which starts up in unexpected places: it was meant simply to provoke a laugh. How old the custom is and how unchangeable is Eastern life is shown, a correspondent suggests, by the Book of Esther which might form part of The Alf Laylah. "On that night (we read in Chap. vi. 1) could not the King sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the King." The Ráwi would declaim the recitative somewhat in conversational style; he would intone the Saj'a or prose-rhyme and he would chant to the twanging of the Rabáb, a one-stringed viol, the poetical parts. Dr. Scott[301] borrows from the historian of Aleppo a life-like picture of the Story-teller. "He recites walking to and fro in the middle of the coffee-room, stopping only now and then, when the expression requires some emphatical attitude. He is commonly heard with great attention; and not unfrequently in the midst of some interesting adventure, when the expectation of his audience is raised to the highest pitch, he breaks off abruptly and makes his escape, leaving both his hero or heroine and his audience in the utmost embarrassment. Those who happen to be near the door endeavour to detain him, insisting upon the story being finished before he departs; but he always makes his retreat good[302] ; and the auditors suspending their curiosity are induced to return at the same time next day to hear the sequel. He has no sooner made his exit than the company in separate parties fall to disputing about the characters of the drama or the event of an unfinished adventure. The controversy by degrees becomes serious and opposite opinions are maintained with no less warmth than if the fall of the city depended upon the decision."

At Tangier, where a murder in a "coffee-house" had closed these hovels, pending a sufficient payment to the Pasha; and where, during the hard winter of 1885-86, the poorer classes were compelled to puff their Kayf (Bhang, cannabis indica) and sip their black coffee in the muddy streets under a rainy sky, I found the Ráwi active on Sundays and Thursdays, the market days. The favourite place was the "Soko de barra," or large bazar, outside the town whose condition is that of Suez and Bayrut half a century ago. It is a foul slope; now slippery with viscous mud, then powdery with fetid dust, dotted with graves and decaying tombs, unclean booths, gargottes and tattered tents, and frequented by women, mere bundles of unclean rags, and by men wearing the haik or burnús, a Franciscan frock, tending their squatting camels and chaffering over cattle for Gibraltar beef- eaters. Here the market-people form a ring about the reciter, a stalwart man affecting little raiment besides a broad waist-belt into which his lower chiffons are tucked, and noticeable only for his shock hair, wild eyes, broad grin and generally disreputable aspect. He usually handles a short stick; and, when drummer and piper are absent, he carries a tiny tom-tom shaped like an hour- glass, upon which he taps the periods. This Scealuidhe, as the Irish call him, opens the drama with extempore prayer, proving that he and the audience are good Moslems: he speaks slowly and with emphasis, varying the diction with breaks of animation, abundant action and the most comical grimace: he advances, retires and wheels about, illustrating every point with pantomime; and his features, voice and gestures are so expressive that even Europeans who cannot understand a word of Arabic divine the meaning of his tale. The audience stands breathless and motionless surprising strangers[303] by the ingenuousness and freshness of feeling hidden under their hard and savage exterior. The performance usually ends with the embryo actor going round for alms and flourishing in air every silver bit, the usual honorarium being a few "f'lús," that marvellous money of Barbary, big coppers worth one-twelfth of a penny. All the tales I heard were purely local, but Fakhri Bey, a young Osmanli domiciled for some time in Fez and Mequinez, assured me that The Nights are still recited there.

Many travellers, including Dr. Russell, have complained that they failed to find a complete MS. copy of The Nights. Evidently they never heard of the popular superstition which declares that no one can read through them without dying — it is only fair that my patrons should know this. Yacoub Artín Pasha declares that the superstition dates from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and he explains it in two ways. Firstly, it is a facetious exaggeration, meaning that no one has leisure or patience to wade through the long repertory. Secondly, the work is condemned as futile. When Egypt produced savants and legists like Ibn al- Hajar, Al-’Ayni, and Al-Kastalláni, to mention no others, the taste of the country inclined to dry factual studies and positive science; nor, indeed, has this taste wholly died out: there are not a few who, like Khayri Pasha, contend that the mathematic is more useful even for legal studies than history and geography, and at Cairo the chief of the Educational Department has always been an engineer, i. e., a mathematician. The Olema declared war against all “futilities,” in which they included not only stories but also what is politely entitled Authentic History. From this to the fatal effect of such lecture is only a step. Society, however, cannot rest without light literature; so the novel- reading class was thrown back upon writings which had all the indelicacy and few of the merits of The Nights.

Turkey is the only Moslem country which has dared to produce a regular drama[304] and to arouse the energies of such brilliant writers as Muníf Pasha, statesman and scholar; Ekrem Bey, literato and professor; Kemál Bey, held by some to be the greatest writer in modern Osmanli-land and Abd al-Hakk Hamíd Bey, first Secretary of the London Embassy. The theatre began in its ruder form by taking subjects bodily from The Nights; then it annexed its plays as we do — the Novel having ousted the Drama — from the French; and lastly it took courage to be original. Many years ago I saw Harun al-Rashid and the Three Kalandars, with deer-skins and all their properties de rigueur in the court-yard of Government House, Damascus, declaiming to the extreme astonishment and delight of the audience. It requires only to glance at The Nights for seeing how much histrionic matter they contain.

In considering the style of The Nights we must bear in mind that the work has never been edited according to our ideas of the process. Consequently there is no just reason for translating the whole verbatim et literatim, as has been done by Torrens, Lane and Payne in his “Tales from the Arabic.”[305] This conscientious treatment is required for versions of an author like Camns, whose works were carefully corrected and arranged by a competent littérateur, but it is not merited by The Nights as they now are. The Macnaghten, the

Bulak and the Bayrut texts, though printed from MSS. identical in order, often differ in minor matters. Many friends have asked me to undertake the work: but, even if lightened by the aid of Shaykhs, Munshis and copyists, the labour would be severe, tedious and thankless: better leave the holes open than patch them with fancy work or with heterogeneous matter. The learned, indeed, as Lane tells us (i. 74; iii. 740), being thoroughly dissatisfied with the plain and popular, the ordinary and "vulgar" note of the language, have attempted to refine and improve it and have more than once threatened to remodel it, that is, to make it odious. This would be to dress up Robert Burns in plumes borrowed from Dryden and Pope.

The first defect of the texts is in the distribution and arrangement of the matter, as I have noticed in the case of Sindbad the Seaman (vol. vi. 77). Moreover, many of the earlier Nights are overlong and not a few of the others are overshort: this, however, has the prime recommendation of variety. Even the vagaries of editor and scribe will not account for all the incoherences, disorder and inconsequence, and for the vain iterations which suggest that the author has forgotten what he said. In places there are dead allusions to persons and tales which are left dark, e. g. vol. i. p, 57, 61, etc. The digressions are abrupt and useless, leading nowhere, while sundry pages are wearisome for excess of prolixity or hardly intelligible for extreme conciseness. The perpetual recurrence of mean colloquialisms and of words and idioms peculiar to Egypt and Syria[306] also takes from the pleasure of the perusal. Yet we cannot deny that it has its use: this unadorned language of familiar conversation, in its day adapted for the understanding of the people, is best fitted for the Rawi's craft in the camp and caravan, the Harem, the bazar and the coffee- house. Moreover, as has been well said, The Nights is the only written half-way house between the literary and colloquial Arabic which is accessible to all, and thus it becomes necessary to the students who would qualify themselves for service in Moslem lands from Mauritania to Mesopotamia. It freely uses Turkish words like "Khátún" and Persian terms as "Sháhbandar," thus requiring for translation not only a somewhat archaic touch, but also a vocabulary borrowed from various sources: otherwise the effect would not be reproduced. In places, however, the style rises to the highly ornate approaching the pompous; e. g. the Wazirial addresses in the tale of King Jali'ad. The battle-scenes, mostly admirable (vol. v. 365), are told with the conciseness of a despatch and the vividness of an artist; the two combining to form perfect "word-pictures." Of the Badí'a or euphuistic style, "Parleying euphuism," and of Al Saj'a, the prose rhyme, I shall speak in a future page.

The characteristics of the whole are naïveté and simplicity, clearness and a singular concision. The gorgeousness is in the imagery not in the language; the words are weak while the sense, as in the classical Scandinavian books, is strong; and here the Arabic differs diametrically from the florid exuberance and turgid amplifications of the Persian story-teller, which sound so hollow and unreal by the side of a chaster model. It abounds in formulæ such as repetitions of religious phrases which are unchangeable. There are certain stock comparisons, as Lokman's wisdom, Joseph's beauty, Jacob's grief, Job's patience, David's music, and Maryam the Virgin's chastity. The eyebrow is a Nún; the eye a Sád, the mouth a Mím. A hero is more prudent than the crow, a better guide than the Katá grouse, more generous than the cock, warier than the crane, braver than the lion, more aggressive than the panther, finer-sighted than the horse, craftier than the fox, greedier than the gazelle, more vigilant than the dog, and thriftier than the ant. The cup-boy is a sun rising from the dark underworld symbolised by his collar; his cheek-mole is a crumb of ambergris, his nose is a scymitar grided at the curve; his lower lip is a jujube; his teeth are the Pleiades or hailstones; his browlocks are scorpions; his young hair on the upper lip is an emerald; his side beard is a swarm of ants or a Lám (-letter) enclosing the roses or anemones of his cheek. The cup-girl is a moon who rivals the sheen of the sun; her forehead is a pearl set off by the jet of her "idiot-fringe;" her eyelashes scorn the sharp sword; and her glances are arrows shot from the bow of the eyebrows. A mistress necessarily belongs, though living in the next street, to the Wady Liwá and to a hostile clan of Badawin whose blades are ever thirsting for the lover's blood and whose malignant tongues aim only at the "defilement of separation." Youth is upright as an Alif, or slender and bending as a branch of the Bán-tree which we should call a willow-wand,[307] while Age, crabbed and crooked, bends groundwards vainly seeking in the dust his lost juvenility. As Baron de Slane says of these stock comparisons (Ibn Khall. i. xxxvi.), “The figurative language of Moslem poets is often difficult to be understood. The narcissus is the eye; the feeble stem of that plant bends languidly under its dower, and thus recalls to mind the languor of the eyes. Pearls signify both tears and teeth; the latter are sometimes called hailstones, from their whiteness and moisture; the lips are cornelians or rubies; the gums, a pomegranate flower; the dark foliage of the myrtle is synonymous with the black hair of the beloved, or with the first down on the cheeks of puberty. The down itself is called the izâr, or head-stall of the bridle, and the curve of the izar is compared to the letters lâm ( ) and nûn ( ).[308] Ringlets trace on the cheek or neck the letter Waw ( ); they are called Scorpions (as the Greek), either from their dark colour or their agitated movements; the eye is a sword; the eyelids scabbards; the whiteness of the complexion, camphor; and a mole or beauty-spot, musk, which term denotes also dark hair. A mole is sometimes compared also to an ant creeping on the cheek towards the honey of the mouth; a handsome face is both a full moon and day; black hair is night; the waist is a willow-branch or a lance; the water of the face is self-respect: a poet sells the water of his face[309] when he bestows mercenary praises on a rich patron.”

This does not sound promising: yet, as has been said of Arab music, the persistent repetition of the same notes in the minor key is by no means monotonous and ends with haunting the ear, occupying the thought and touching the soul. Like the distant frog-concert and chirp of the cicada, the creak of the water- wheel and the stroke of hammers upon the anvil from afar, the murmur of the fountain, the sough of the wind and the plash of the wavelet, they occupy the sensorium with a soothing effect, forming a barbaric music full of sweetness and peaceful pleasure.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

§ IV. SOCIAL CONDITION.

I here propose to treat of the Social Condition which The Nights discloses, of Al-Islam at the earlier period of its development, concerning the position of women and about the pornology of the great Saga-book.

A. — Al-Islam.

A splendid and glorious life was that of Baghdad in the days of the mighty Caliph,[310] when the Capital had towered to the zenith of grandeur and was already trembling and tottering to the fall. The centre of human civilisation, which was then confined to Greece and Arabia, and the metropolis of an Empire exceeding in extent the widest limits of Rome, it was essentially a city of pleasure, a Paris of the ixth century. The "Palace of Peace" (Dár al-Salám), worthy successor of Babylon and Nineveh, which had outrivalled Damascus, the "Smile of the Prophet," and Kufah, the successor of Hira and the magnificent creation of Caliph Omar, possessed unrivalled advantages of site and climate. The Tigris- Euphrates Valley, where the fabled Garden of Eden has been placed, in early ages succeeded the Nile- Valley as a great centre of human development; and the prerogative of a central and commanding position still promises it, even in the present state of decay and desolation under the unspeakable Turk, a magnificent future,[311] when railways and canals shall connect it with Europe. The city of palaces and government offices, hotels and pavilions, mosques and colleges, kiosks and squares, bazars and markets, pleasure grounds and orchards, adorned with all the graceful charms which Saracenic architecture had borrowed from the Byzantines, lay couched upon the banks of the Dijlah-Hiddekel under a sky of marvellous purity and in a climate which makes mere life a "Kayf" — the luxury of tranquil enjoyment. It was surrounded by far extending suburbs, like Rusafah on the Eastern side and villages like Baturanjah, dear to the votaries of pleasure; and with the roar of a gigantic capital mingled the hum of prayer, the trilling of birds, the thrilling of harp and lute, the shrilling of pipes, the witching strains of the professional Almah, and the minstrel's lay.

The population of Baghdad must have been enormous when the smallest number of her sons who fell victims to Huláku Khan in 1258 was estimated at eight hundred thousand, while other authorities more than double the terrible “butcher’s bill.” Her policy and polity were unique. A well regulated routine of tribute and taxation, personally inspected by the Caliph; a network of waterways, canaux d’arrosage; a noble system of highways, provided with viaducts, bridges and caravanserais, and a postal service of mounted couriers enabled it to collect as in a reservoir the wealth of the outer world. The facilities for education were upon the most extended scale; large sums, from private as well as public sources, were allotted to Mosques, each of which, by the admirable rule of Al-Islam, was expected to contain a school: these establishments were richly endowed and stocked with professors collected from every land between Khorasan and Marocco;[312] and immense libraries[313] attracted the learned of all nations. It was a golden age for poets and panegyrists, koranists and literati, preachers and rhetoricians, physicians and scientists who, besides receiving high salaries and fabulous presents, were treated with all the honours of Chinese Mandarins; and, like these, the humblest Moslem — fisherman or artizan — could aspire through knowledge or savoir faire to the highest offices of the Empire. The effect was a grafting of Egyptian, and old Mesopotamian, of Persian and Græco-Latin fruits, by long Time deteriorated, upon the strong young stock of Arab genius; and the result, as usual after such imping, was a shoot of exceptional luxuriance and vitality. The educational establishments devoted themselves to the three main objects recognised by the Moslem world, Theology, Civil Law and Belles Lettres; and a multitude of trained Councillors enabled the ruling powers to establish and enlarge that complicated machinery of government, at once concentrated and decentralized, a despotism often fatal to the wealthy great but never neglecting the interests of the humbler lieges, which forms the beau idéal of Oriental administration. Under the Chancellors of the Empire the Kazis administered law and order, justice and equity; and from their decisions the poorest subject, Moslem or miscreant, could claim with the general approval of the lieges, access and appeal to the Caliph who, as Imám or Antistes of the Faith was High President of a Court of Cassation.

Under wise administration Agriculture and Commerce, the twin pillars of national prosperity, necessarily flourished. A scientific canalisation, with irrigation works inherited from the ancients, made the Mesopotamian Valley a rival of Kemi the Black Land, and rendered cultivation a certainty of profit, not a mere speculation, as it must ever be to those who perforce rely upon the fickle rains of Heaven. The remains of extensive mines prove that this source of public wealth was not neglected; navigation laws encouraged transit and traffic; and ordinances for the fisheries aimed at developing a branch of industry which is still backward even during the xixth century. Most substantial encouragement was given to trade and commerce, to manufactures and handicrafts, by the flood of gold which poured in from all parts of earth; by the presence of a splendid and luxurious court, and by the call for new arts and industries which such a civilisation would necessitate. The crafts were distributed into guilds and syndicates under their respective chiefs, whom the government did not “govern too much”: these Shahbandars, Mukaddams and Nakíbs regulated the several trades, rewarded the industrious, punished the fraudulent and were personally answerable, as we still see at Cairo, for the conduct of their constituents. Public order, the sine quâ non of stability and progress, was preserved, first, by the satisfaction of the lieges who, despite their characteristic turbulence, had few if any grievances; and, secondly, by a well directed and efficient police, an engine of statecraft which in the West seems most difficult to perfect. In the East, however, the Wali or Chief Commissioner can reckon more or less upon the unsalaried assistance of society: the cities are divided into quarters shut off one from other by night, and every Moslem is expected, by his law and religion, to keep watch upon his neighbours, to report their delinquencies and, if necessary, himself to carry out the penal code. But in difficult cases the guardians of the peace were assisted by a body of private detectives, women as well as men: these were called Tawwábún = the Penitents, because like our Bow-street runners, they had given up an even less respectable calling. Their adventures still delight the vulgar, as did the Newgate Calendar of past generations; and to this class we owe the Tales of Calamity Ahmad, Dalilah the

Wily One, Saladin with the Three Chiefs of Police (vol. iv. 271), and Al-Malik al-Záhir with the Sixteen Constables (Bresl. Edit. xi. p-99). Here and in many other places we also see the origin of that "picaresque" literature which arose in Spain and overran Europe; and which begat Le Moyen de Parvenir. [314]

I need say no more on this heading, the civilisation of Baghdad contrasting with the barbarism of Europe then Germanic, The Nights itself being the best expositor. On the other hand the action of the state-religion upon the state, the condition of Al- Islam during the reign of Al-Rashid, its declension from the primitive creed and its relation to Christianity and Christendom, require a somewhat extended notice. In offering the following observations it is only fair to declare my standpoints.

1. All forms of "faith," that is, belief in things unseen, not subject to the senses, and therefore unknown and (in our present stage of development) unknowable, are temporary and transitory: no religion hitherto promulgated amongst men shows any prospect of being final or otherwise than finite.

2. Religious ideas, which are necessarily limited, may all be traced home to the old seat of science and art, creeds and polity in the Nile-Valley and to this day they retain the clearest signs of their origin.

3. All so-called "revealed" religions consist mainly of three portions, a cosmogony more or less mythical, a history more or less falsified and a moral code more or less pure.

Al-Islam, it has been said, is essentially a fighting faith and never shows to full advantage save in the field. The faith and luxury of a wealthy capital, the debauchery and variety of vices which would spring up therein, naturally as weeds in a rich fallow, and the cosmopolitan views which suggest themselves in a meeting-place of nations, were sore trials to the primitive simplicity of the "Religion of Resignation" — the saving faith. Harun and his cousin-wife, as has been shown, were orthodox and even fanatical; but the Barmecides were strongly suspected of heretical leanings; and while the many- headed showed itself, as usual, violent, and ready to do battle about an Azan-call, the learned, who sooner or later leaven the masses, were profoundly dissatisfied with the dryness and barrenness of Mohammed's creed, so acceptable to the vulgar, and were devising a series of schisms and innovations.

In the Tale of Tawaddud (vol. v. 189) the reader has seen a fairly extended catechism of the Creed (Dín), the ceremonial observances (Mazhab) and the apostolic practices (Sunnat) of the Shafi'í school which, with minor modifications, applies to the other three orthodox. Europe has by this time clean forgotten some tricks of her former bigotry, such as "Mawmet" (an idol!) and "Mahommerie" (mummery[315]), a place of Moslem worship: educated men no longer speak with Ockley of the "great impostor Mahomet," nor believe with the learned and violent Dr. Prideaux that he was foolish and wicked enough to dispossess "certain poor orphans, the sons of an inferior artificer" (the Banú Najjár!). A host of books has attempted, though hardly with success, to enlighten popular ignorance upon a crucial point; namely, that the Founder of Al-Islam, like the Founder of Christianity, never pretended to establish a new religion. His claims, indeed, were limited to purging the "School of Nazareth" of the dross of ages and of the manifold abuses with which long use had infected its early constitution: hence to the unprejudiced observer his reformation seems to have brought it nearer the primitive and original doctrine than any subsequent attempts, especially the Judaizing tendencies of the so-called "Protestant" churches. The Meccan Apostle preached that the Hanafiyyah or orthodox belief, which he subsequently named Al-Islam, was first taught by Allah, in all its purity and perfection, to Adam and consigned to certain inspired volumes now lost; and that this primal Holy Writ received additions in the days of his descendants Shís (Seth) and Idris (Enoch?), the founder of the Sabian (not "Sabæan") faith. Here, therefore, Al-Islam at once avoided the deplorable assumption of the Hebrews and the Christians, — an error which has been so injurious to their science and their progress, — of placing their "firstman" in circa B. C. 4000 or somewhat subsequent to the building of the Pyramids: the Pre- Adamite[316] races and dynasties of the Moslems remove a great stumbling-block and square with the anthropological views of the present day. In process of time, when the Adamite religion demanded a restoration and a supplement, its pristine virtue was revived, restored and further developed by the books communicated to Abraham, whose dispensation thus takes the place of the Hebrew Noah and his Noachidæ. In due time the Torah, or Pentateuch, superseded and abrogated the Abrahamic dispensation; the "Zabúr" of David (a book not confined to the Psalms) reformed the Torah; the Injíl or Evangel reformed the Zabur and was itself purified, quickened and perfected by the Koran which means the Reading or the Recital. Hence Locke, with many others, held Moslems to be unorthodox, that is, anti-Trinitarian Christians who believe in the Immaculate Conception, in the Ascension and in the divine mission of Jesus; and when Priestley affirmed that "Jesus was sent from God," all Moslems do the same. Thus they are, in the main point of doctrine connected with the Deity, simply Arians as opposed to Athanasians. History proves that the former was the earlier faith which, though formally condemned in A. D. 325 by Constantine's Council of Nice, [317] overspread the Orient beginning with Eastern Europe, where Ulphilas converted the Goths; which extended into Africa with the Vandals, claimed a victim or martyr as late as in the sixteenth century [318] and has by no means died out in this our day.

The Talmud had been completed a full century before Mohammed's time and the Evangel had been translated into Arabic; moreover travel and converse with his Jewish and Christian friends and companions must have convinced the Meccan Apostle that Christianity was calling as loudly for reform as Judaism had done. [319] An exaggerated Trinitarianism or rather Tritheism, a "Fourth Person" and Saint-worship had virtually dethroned the Deity; whilst Mariolatry had made the faith a religio muliebris, and superstition had drawn from its horrid fecundity an incredible number of heresies and monstrous absurdities. Even ecclesiastic writers draw the gloomiest pictures of the Christian Church in the fourth and seventh centuries, and one declares that the "Kingdom of Heaven had become a Hell." Egypt, distracted by the blood- thirsty religious wars of Copt and Greek, had been covered with hermitages by a yens aeterna of semi-maniacal superstition. Syria, ever "feracious of heresies," had allowed many of her finest tracts to be monopolised by monkeries and nunneries.[320] After many a tentative measure Mohammed seems to have built his edifice upon two bases, the unity of the Godhead and the priesthood of the pater-familias. He abolished for ever the “sacerdos alter Christus” whose existence, as some one acutely said, is the best proof of Christianity, and whom all know to be its weakest point. The Moslem family, however humble, was to be the model in miniature of the State, and every father in Al-Islam was made priest and pontiff in his own house, able unaided to marry himself, to circumcise (to baptise as it were) his children, to instruct them in the law and canonically to bury himself (vol. viii. 22). Ritual, properly so called, there was none; congregational prayers were merely those of the individual en masse, and the only admitted approach to a sacerdotal order were the Olema or scholars learned in the legistic and the Mullah or schoolmaster. By thus abolishing the priesthood Mohammed reconciled ancient with modern wisdom. “Scito dominum,” said Cato, “pro totâ familiâ rem divinam facere”: “No priest at a birth, no priest at a marriage, no priest at a death,” is the aspiration of the present Rationalistic School.

The Meccan Apostle wisely retained the compulsory sacrament of circumcision and the ceremonial ablutions of the Mosaic law; and the five daily prayers not only diverted man’s thoughts from the world but tended to keep his body pure. These two institutions had been practiced throughout life by the Founder of Christianity; but the followers who had never seen him, abolished them for purposes evidently political and propagandist. By ignoring the truth that cleanliness is next to godliness they paved the way for such saints as Simon Stylites and Sabba who, like the lowest Hindu orders of ascetics, made filth a concominant and an evidence of piety: even now English Catholic girls are at times forbidden by Italian priests a frequent use of the bath as a sign post to the sin of “luxury.” Mohammed would have accepted the morals contained in the Sermon on the Mount much more readily than did the Jews from whom its matter was borrowed.[321] He did something to abolish the use of wine, which in the East means only its abuse; and he denounced games of chance, well knowing that the excitable races of sub-tropical climates cannot play with patience, fairness or moderation. He set aside certain sums for charity to be paid by every Believer and he was the first to establish a poor-rate (Zakát): thus he avoided the shame and scandal of mendicancy which, beginning in the Catholic countries of Southern Europe, extends to Syria and as far East as Christianity is found. By these and other measures of the same import he made the ideal Moslem's life physically clean, moderate and temperace.

But Mohammed, the "master mind of the age," had, we must own, a "genuine prophetic power, a sinking of self in the Divine not distinguishable in kind from the inspiration of the Hebrew prophets," especially in that puritanical and pharisaic narrowness which, with characteristic simplicity, can see no good outside its own petty pale. He had insight as well as outsight, and the two taught him that personal and external reformation were mean matters compared with elevating the inner man. In the "purer Faith," which he was commissioned to abrogate and to quicken, he found two vital defects equally fatal to its energy and to its longevity. These were (and are) its egoism and its degradation of humanity. Thus it cannot be a "pleroma": it needs a Higher Law.[322] As Judaism promised the good Jew all manner of temporal blessings, issue, riches, wealth, honour, power, length of days, so Christianity offered the good Christian, as a bribe to lead a godly life, personal salvation and a future state of happiness, in fact the Kingdom of Heaven, with an alternative threat of Hell. It never rose to the height of the Hindu Brahmans and Lao-Tse (the "Ancient Teacher"); of Zeno the Stoic and his disciples the noble Pharisees[323] who believed and preached that Virtue is its own reward. It never dared to say, "Do good for Good's sake;"[324] even now it does not declare with Cicero, "The sum of all is that what is right should be sought for its own sake, because it is right, and not because it is enacted." It does not even now venture to say with Philo Judæus, "The good man seeks the day for the sake of the day, and the light for the light's sake; and he labours to acquire what is good for the sake of the good itself, and not of anything else." So far for the egotism, naive and unconscious, of Christianity, whose burden is, "Do good to escape Hell and gain Heaven."

A no less defect in the "School of Galilee" is its low view of human nature. Adopting as sober and authentic history an Osirian-Hebrew myth which Philo and a host of Rabbis explain away, each after his own fashion, Christianity dwells, lovingly as it were, upon the "Fall" of man[325] and seems to revel in the contemptible condition to which “original sin” condemned him; thus grovelling before God ad majorem Dei gloriam. To such a point was and is this carried that the Synod of Dort declared, Infantes infidelium morientes in infantiâ reprobatos esse statui mus; nay, many of the orthodox still hold a Christian babe dying unbaptised to be unfit for a higher existence, and some have even created a “limbo” expressly to domicile the innocents “of whom is the kingdom of Heaven.” Here, if any where, the cloven foot shows itself and teaches us that the only solid stratum underlying priestcraft is one composed of £ s. d.

And I never can now believe it, my Lord! (Bishop) we come to this earth Ready damned, with the seeds of evil sown quite so thick at our birth, sings Edwin Arnold.[326] We ask, can infatuation or hypocrisy — for it must be the one or the other — go farther? But the Adamical myth is opposed to all our modern studies. The deeper we dig into the Earth’s “crust,” the lower are the specimens of human remains which occur; and hitherto not a single “find” has come to revive the faded glories of

> Adam the goodliest man of men since born (!)
> His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.

Thus Christianity, admitting, like Judaism, its own saints and santons, utterly ignores the progress of humanity, perhaps the only belief in which the wise man can take unmingled satisfaction. Both have proposed an originally perfect being with hyacinthine locks, from whose type all the subsequent humans are degradations physical and moral. We on the other hand hold, from the evidence of our senses, that early man was a savage very little superior to the brute; that during man’s millions of years upon earth there has been a gradual advance towards perfection, at times irregular and even retrograde, but in the main progressive; and that a comparison of man in the xixth century with the caveman[327] affords us the means of measuring past progress and of calculating the future of humanity.

Mahommed was far from rising to the moral heights of the ancient sages: he did nothing to abate the egotism of Christianity; he even exaggerated the pleasures of its Heaven and the horrors of its Hell. On the other hand he did much to exalt human nature. He passed over the “Fall” with a light hand; he made man superior to the angels; he encouraged his fellow creatures to be great and good by dwelling upon their nobler not their meaner side; he acknowledged, even in this world, the perfectability of mankind, including womankind, and in proposing the loftiest ideal he acted unconsciously upon the grand dictum of chivalry — Honneur oblige.[328] His prophets were mostly faultless men; and, if the “Pure of Allah” sinned, he “sinned against himself.” Lastly, he made Allah predetermine the career and fortunes, not only of empires, but of every created being; thus inculcating sympathy and tolerance of others, which is true humanity, and a proud resignation to evil as to good fortune. This is the doctrine which teaches the vulgar Moslem a dignity observed even by the “blind traveller,” and which enables him to display a moderation, a fortitude, and a self-command rare enough amongst the followers of the “purer creed.”

Christian historians explain variously the portentous rise of Al-Islam and its marvellous spread over vast regions, not only of pagans and idolators but of Christians. Prideaux disingenuously suggests that it “seems to have been purposely raised up by God, to be a scourge to the Christian Church for not living in accordance with their most holy religion.” The popular excuse is by the free use of the sword; this, however, is mere ignorance: in Mohammed’s day and early Al-Islam only actual fighters were slain:[329] the rest were allowed to pay the Jizyah, or capitation-tax, and to become tributaries, enjoying almost all the privileges of Moslems. But even had forcible conversion been most systematically practiced, it would have afforded an insufficient explanation of the phenomenal rise of an empire which covered more ground in eighty years than Rome had gained in eight hundred. During so short a time the grand revival of Monotheism had consolidated into a mighty nation, despite their eternal blood-feuds, the scattered Arab tribes; a six-years’ campaign had conquered Syria, and a lustre or two utterly overthrew Persia, humbled the Græco-Roman, subdued Egypt and extended the Faith along northern Africa as far as the Atlantic. Within three generations the Copts of Nile-land had formally cast out Christianity, and the same was the case with Syria, the cradle of the Nazarene, and Mesopotamia, one of his strongholds, although both were backed by all the remaining power of the Byzantine empire. Northwestern Africa, which had rejected the idolatro-philosophic system of pagan and imperial Rome, and had accepted, after lukewarm fashion, the Arian Christianity imported by the Vandals, and the “Nicene mystery of the Trinity,” hailed with enthusiasm the doctrines of the Koran and has never ceased to be most zealous in its Islam. And while Mohammedanism speedily reduced the limits of Christendom by one-third, while through-out the Arabian, Saracenic and Turkish invasions whole Christian peoples embraced the monotheistic faith, there are hardly any instances of defection from the new creed and, with the exception of Spain and Sicily, it has never been suppressed in any land where once it took root. Even now, when Mohammedanism no longer wields the sword, it is spreading over wide regions in China, in the Indian Archipelago, and especially in Western and Central Africa, propagated only by self-educated individuals, trading travellers, while Christianity makes no progress and cannot exist on the Dark Continent without strong support from Government. Nor can we explain this honourable reception by the “licentiousness” ignorantly attributed to Al-Islam, one of the most severely moral of institutions; or by the allurements of polygamy and concubinage, slavery,[330] and a “wholly sensual Paradise” devoted to eating, drinking[331] and the pleasures of the sixth sense. The true and simple explanation is that this grand Reformation of Christianity was urgently wanted when it appeared, that it suited the people better than the creed which it superseded and that it has not ceased to be sufficient for their requirements, social, sexual and vital. As the practical Orientalist, Dr. Leitner, well observes from his own experience, “The Mohammedan religion can adapt itself better than any other and has adapted itself to circumstances and to the needs of the various races which profess it, in accordance with the spirit of the age.”[332] Hence, I add, its wide diffusion and its impregnable position. “The dead hand, stiff and motionless,” is a forcible simile for the present condition of Al-Islam; but it results from limited and imperfect observation and it fails in the sine quâ non of similes and metaphors, a foundation of fact.

I cannot quit this subject without a passing reference to an admirably written passage in Mr. Palgrave’s travels[333] which is essentially unfair to Al-Islam. The author has had ample opportunities of comparing creeds: of Jewish blood and born a Protestant, he became a Catholic and a Jesuit (Père Michel Cohen)[334] in a Syrian convent; he crossed Arabia as a good Moslem and he finally returned to his premier amour, Anglicanism. But his picturesque depreciation of Mohammedanism, which has found due appreciation in more than one popular volume, [335] is a notable specimen of special pleading, of the ad captandum in its modern and least honest form. The writer begins by assuming the arid and barren Wahhabi-ism, which he had personally studied, as a fair expression of the Saving Faith. What should we say to a Moslem traveller who would make the Calvinism of the sourest Covenanter, model, genuine and ancient Christianity? What would sensible Moslems say to these propositions of Professor Maccovius and the Synod of Dort: — Good works are an obstacle to salvation. God does by no means will the salvation of all men: he does will sin and he destines men to sin, as sin? What would they think of the Inadmissible Grace, the Perseverance of the Elect, the Supralapsarian and the Sublapsarian and, finally, of a Deity the author of man's existence, temptation and fall, who deliberately pre-ordains sin and ruin? "Father Cohen" carries out into the regions of the extreme his strictures on the one grand vitalising idea of Al-Islam, "There is no god but God;"[336] and his deduction concerning the Pantheism of Force sounds unreal and unsound, compared with the sensible remarks upon the same subject by Dr. Badgers[337] who sees the abstruseness of the doctrine and does not care to include it in hard and fast lines or to subject it to mere logical analysis. Upon the subject of "predestination" Mr. Palgrave quotes, not from the Koran, but from the Ahádís or Traditional Sayings of the Apostle; but what importance attaches to a legend in the Mischnah, or Oral Law, of the Hebrews utterly ignored by the Written Law? He joins the many in complaining that even the mention of "the love of God" is absent from Mohammed's theology, burking the fact that it never occurs in the Jewish scriptures and that the genius of Arabic, like Hebrew, does not admit the expression: worse still, he keeps from his reader such Koranic passages as, to quote no other, "Allah loveth you and will forgive your sins" (iii. 29). He pities Allah for having "no son, companion or counsellor" and, of course, he must equally commiserate Jehovah. Finally his views of the lifelessness of Al-Islam are directly opposed to the opinions of Dr. Leitner and the experience of all who have lived in Moslem lands. Such are the ingenious but not ingenuous distortions of fact, the fine instances of the pathetic fallacy, and the noteworthy illustrations of the falsehood of extremes, which have engendered "Mohammedanism a Relapse: the worst form of Monotheism,"[338] and which have been eagerly seized upon and further deformed by the authors of popular books, that is, volumes written by those who know little for those who know less.

In Al-Rashid's day a mighty change had passed over the primitive simplicity of Al-Islam, the change to which faiths and creeds, like races and empires and all things sublunary, are subject. The proximity of Persia and the close intercourse with the Græco-Romans had polished and greatly modified the physiognomy of the rugged old belief: all manner of metaphysical subtleties had cropped up, with the usual disintegrating effect, and some of these threatened even the unity of the Godhead. Musaylimah and Karmat had left traces of their handiwork: the Mutazilites (separatists or secessors) actively propagated their doctrine of a created and temporal Koran. The Khárijí or Ibázi, who rejects and reviles Abú Turáb (Caliph Ali), contended passionately with the Shí'ah who reviles and rejects the other three "Successors;" and these sectarians, favoured by the learned, and by the Abbasides in their jealous hatred of the Ommiades, went to the extreme length of the Ali-Iláhi — the God-makers of Ali — whilst the Dahrí and the Zindík, the Mundanist and the Agnoetic, proposed to sweep away the whole edifice. The neo-Platonism and Gnosticism which had not essentially affected Christendom,[339] found in Al-Islam a rich fallow and gained strength and luxuriance by the solid materialism and conservatism of its basis. Such were a few of the distracting and resolving influences which Time had brought to bear upon the True Believer and which, after some half a dozen generations, had separated the several schisms by a wider breach than that which yawns between Orthodox, Romanist and Lutheran. Nor was this scandal in Al-Islam abated until the Tartar sword applied to it the sharpest remedy.

B. — Woman.

The next point I propose to consider is the position of womanhood in The Nights, so curiously at variance with the stock ideas concerning the Moslem home and domestic policy still prevalent, not only in England, but throughout Europe. Many readers of these volumes have remarked to me with much astonishment that they find the female characters more remarkable for decision, action and manliness than the male; and are wonderstruck by their masterful attitude and by the supreme influence they exercise upon public and private life.

I have glanced at the subject of the sex in Al-Islam to such an extent throughout my notes that little remains here to be added. Women, all the world over are what men make them; and the main charm of Amazonian fiction is to see how they live and move and have their being without any masculine guidance. But it is the old ever-new fable

"Who drew the Lion vanquished? 'Twas a man!''

The books of the Ancients, written in that stage of civilisation when the sexes are at civil war, make women even more than in real life the creatures of their masters: hence from the dawn of literature to the present day the sex has been the subject of disappointed abuse and eulogy almost as unmerited. Ecclesiastes, perhaps the strangest specimen of an "inspired volume" the world has yet produced, boldly declares "One (upright) man among a thousand I have found; but a woman among all have I not found" (vol. vii. 28), thus confirming the pessimism of Petronius: —

Femina nulla bona est, et si bona contigit ulla
 Nescio quo fato res male facta bona est.

In the Psalms again (xxx. 15) we have the old sneer at the three insatiables, Hell, Earth and the Parts feminine (os vulvæ); and Rabbinical learning has embroidered these and other texts, producing a truly hideous caricature. A Hadis attributed to Mohammed runs, "They (women) lack wits and faith. When Eve was created Satan rejoiced saying: — Thou art half of my host, the trustee of my secret and my shaft wherewith I shoot and miss not!" Another tells us, "I stood at the gate of Heaven, and lo! most of its inmates were poor, and I stood at the gate of Hell, and lo! most of its inmates were women.''[340] "Take care of the glass-phials!" cried the Prophet to a camel-guide singing with a sweet voice. Yet the Meccan Apostle made, as has been seen, his own household produce two perfections. The blatant popular voice follows with such "dictes" as, "Women are made of nectar and poison"; "Women have long hair and short wits" and so forth. Nor are the Hindus behindhand. Woman has fickleness implanted in her by Nature like the flashings of lightning (Kathá s.s. i. 147); she is valueless as a straw to the heroic mind (169); she is hard as adamant in sin and soft as flour in fear (170) and, like the fly, she quits camphor to settle on compost (ii. I7). "What dependence is there in the crowing of a hen?" (women's opinions) says the Hindi proverb; also "A virgin with grey hairs!" (i.e. a monster) and, "Wherever wendeth a fairy face a devil wendeth with her." The same superficial view of holding woman to be lesser (and very inferior) man is taken generally by the classics; and Euripides distinguished himself by misogyny, although he drew the beautiful character of Alcestis. Simonides, more merciful than Ecclesiastes, after naming his swine-women, dog-women, cat-women, etc., ends the decade with the admirable bee-woman, thus making ten per cent. honest. In mediæval or Germanic Europe the doctrine of the Virgin mother gave the sex a status unknown to the Ancients except in Egypt, where Isis was the help-mate and completion of Osiris, in modern parlance "The Woman clothed with the Sun." The kindly and courtly Palmerin of England, in whose pages "gentlemen may find their choice of sweet inventions and gentlewomen be satisfied with courtly expectations," suddenly blurts out, "But in truth women are never satisfied by reason, being governed by accident or appetite" (chaps. xlix).

The Nights, as might be expected from the emotional East, exaggerate these views. Women are mostly "Sectaries of the god Wünsch"; beings of impulse, blown about by every gust of passion; stable only in instability; constant only in inconstancy. The false ascetic, the perfidious and murderous crone and the old hag-procuress who pimps like Umm Kulsum,[341] for mere pleasure, in the luxury of sin, are drawn with an experienced and loving hand. Yet not the less do we meet with examples of the dutiful daughter, the model lover matronly in her affection, the devoted wife, the perfect mother, the saintly devotee, the learned preacher, Univira the chaste widow and the self-sacrificing heroic woman. If we find (vol. iii. 216) the sex described as: —

An offal cast by kites where'er they list,

and the studied insults of vol. iii. 318, we also come upon an admirable sketch of conjugal happiness (vol. vii. ? 43); and, to mention no other, Shahryar's attestation to Shahrazad's excellence in the last charming pages of The Nights.[342] It is the same with the Kathá whose praise and dispraise are equally enthusiastic; e.g., "Women of good family are guarded by their virtue, the sole efficient chamberlain; but the Lord himself can hardly guard the unchaste. Who can stem a furious stream and a frantic woman?" (i. 328). "Excessive love in woman is your only hero for daring" (i. 339). "Thus fair ones, naturally feeble, bring about a series of evil actions which engender discernment and aversion to the world; but here and there you will find a virtuous woman who adorneth a glorious house as the streak of the moon arrayeth the breadth of the Heavens" (i. 346). "So you see, King, honourable matrons are devoted to their husbands and 'tis not the case that women are always bad" (ii. 624). And there is true wisdom in that even balance of feminine qualities advocated by our Hindu-Hindi class-book the Toti-námeh or Parrot volume. The perfect woman has seven requisites. She must not always be merry (1) nor sad (2); she must not always be talking (3) nor silently musing (4); she must not always be adorning herself (5) nor neglecting her person (6); and, (7) at all times she must be moderate and self possessed.

The legal status of womankind in Al-Islam is exceptionally high, a fact of which Europe has often been assured, although the truth has not even yet penetrated into the popular brain. Nearly a century ago one Mirza Abú Tálib Khán, an Amildár or revenue collector, after living two years in London, wrote an "apology" for, or rather a vindication of, his countrywomen which is still worth reading and quoting.[343] Nations are but superficial judges of one another: where customs differ they often remark only the salient distinctive points which, when examined, prove to be of minor importance. Europeans seeing and hearing that women in the East are "cloistered" as the

Grecian matron was wont and ; that wives may not walk out with their husbands and cannot accompany them to “balls and parties”; moreover, that they are always liable, like the ancient Hebrew, to the mortification of the “sister-wife,” have most ignorantly determined that they are mere serviles and that their lives are not worth living. Indeed, a learned lady, Miss Martineau, once visiting a Harem went into ecstasies of pity and sorrow because the poor things knew nothing of — say trigonometry and the use of the globes. Sonnini thought otherwise, and my experience, like that of all old dwellers in the East, is directly opposed to this conclusion.

I have noted (Night cmlxii.) that Mohammed, in the fifth year of his reign,[344] after his ill-advised and scandalous marriage[345] with his foster-daughter Zaynab, established the Hiján or veiling of women. It was probably an exaggeration of local usage: a modified separation of the sexes, which extended and still extends even to the Badawi, must long have been customary in Arabian cities, and its object was to deliver the sexes from temptation, as the Koran says (xxxii. 32), “purer will this (practice) be for your hearts and their hearts.”[346] The women, who delight in restrictions which tend to their honour, accepted it willingly and still affect it, they do not desire a liberty or rather a licence which they have learned to regard as inconsistent with their time-honoured notions of feminine decorum and delicacy, and they would think very meanly of a husband who permitted them to be exposed, like hetairæ, to the public gaze.[347] As Zubayr Pasha, exiled to Gibraltar for another’s treason, said to my friend, Colonel Buckle, after visiting quarters evidently laid out by a jealous husband, “We Arabs think that when a man has a precious jewel, ’tis wiser to lock it up in a box than to leave it about for anyone to take.” The Eastern adopts the instinctive, the Western prefers the rational method. The former jealously guards his treasure, surrounds it with all precautions, fends off from it all risks and if the treasure go astray, kills it. The latter, after placing it en evidence upon an eminence in ball dress with back and bosom bared to the gaze of society, a bundle of charms exposed to every possible seduction, allows it to take its own way, and if it be misled, he kills or tries to kill the misleader. It is a fiery trial and the few who safely pass through it may claim a higher standpoint in the moral world than those who have never been sorely tried. But the crucial question is whether Christian Europe has done wisely in offering such temptations.

The second and main objection to Moslem custom is the marriage-system which begins with a girl being wedded to a man whom she knows only by hearsay. This was the habit of our forbears not many generations ago, and it still prevails amongst noble houses in Southern Europe, where a lengthened study of it leaves me doubtful whether the "love-marriage," as it is called, or wedlock with an utter stranger, evidently the two extremes, is likely to prove the happier. The "sister-wife" is or would be a sore trial to monogamic races like those of Northern Europe where Caia, all but the equal of Caius in most points mental and physical and superior in some, not unfrequently proves herself the "man of the family," the "only man in the boat." But in the East, where the sex is far more delicate, where a girl is brought up in polygamy, where religious reasons separate her from her husband, during pregnancy and lactation, for three successive years; and where often enough like the Mormon damsel she would hesitate to "nigger it with a one-wife-man," the case assumes a very different aspect and the load, if burden it be, falls comparatively light. Lastly, the "patriarchal household" is mostly confined to the grandee and the richard, whilst Holy Law and public opinion, neither of which can openly be disregarded, assign command of the household to the equal or first wife and jealously guard the rights and privileges of the others.

Mirza Abu Talib "the Persian Prince"[348] offers six reasons why "the liberty of the Asiatic women appears less than that of the Europeans," ending with,

> I'll fondly place on either eye
> The man that can to this reply.

He then lays down eight points in which the Moslem wife has greatly the advantage over her Christian sisterhood; and we may take his first as a specimen. Custom, not contrary to law, invests the Mohammedan mother with despotic government of the homestead, slaves, servants and children, especially the latter: she alone directs their early education, their choice of faith, their marriage and their establishment in life; and in case of divorce she takes the daughters, the sons going to the sire. She has also liberty to leave her home, not only for one or two nights, but for a week or a fortnight, without consulting her husband; and whilst she visits a strange household, the master and all males above fifteen are forbidden the Harem. But the main point in favour of the Moslem wife is her being a "legal sharer": inheritance is secured to her by Koranic law; she must be dowered by the bridegroom to legalise marriage and all she gains is secured to her; whereas in England a "Married Woman's Property Act" was completed only in 1882 after many centuries of the grossest abuses.

Lastly, Moslems and Easterns in general study and intelligently study the art and mystery of satisfying the physical woman. In my Foreword I have noticed among barbarians the system of "making men,"[349] that is, of teaching lads first arrived at puberty the nice conduct of the instrumentum paratum plantandis avibus: a branch of the knowledge-tree which our modern education grossly neglects, thereby entailing untold miseries upon individuals, families and generations. The mock virtue, the most immodest modesty of England and of the United States in the xixth century, pronounces the subject foul and fulsome:"Society" sickens at all details; and hence it is said abroad that the English have the finest women in Europe and least know how to use them. Throughout the East such studies are aided by a long series of volumes, many of them written by learned physiologists, by men of social standing and by religious dignitaries high in office. The Egyptians especially delight in aphrodisiac literature treating, as the Turks say, de la partie au-dessous de la taille; and from fifteen hundred to two thousand copies of a new work, usually lithographed in cheap form, readily sell off. The pudibund Lane makes allusion to and quotes (A. N. i. 216) one of the most out spoken, a 4to of 464 pages, called the Halbat al-Kumayt or "Race- Course of the Bay Horse," a poetical and horsey term for grape- wine. Attributed by D'Herbelot to the Kazi Shams al-Din Mohammed, it is wholly upon the subject of wassail and women till the last few pages, when his reverence exclaims:— "This much, O reader, I have recounted, the better thou mayst know what to avoid;" and so forth, ending with condemning all he had praised.[350] Even the divine and historian Jalál al-Dín al-Siyuti is credited with having written, though the authorship is much disputed, a work entitled, “Kitáb al-Ízáh fi ‘ilm al-Nikáh” =The Book of Exposition in the Science of Coition: my copy, a lithograph of 33 pages, undated, but evidently Cairene, begins with exclaiming “Alhamdolillah — Laud to the Lord who adorned the virginal bosom with breasts and who made the thighs of women anvils for the spear handles of men!” To the same amiable theologian are also ascribed the “Kitáb Nawázir al-Ayk fi al-Nayk” = Green Splendours of the Copse in Copulation, an abstract of the “Kitáb al-Wisháh fí fawáid al-Nikáh” = Book of the Zone on Coition-boon. Of the abundance of pornographic literature we may judge from a list of the following seven works given in the second page of the “Kitáb Rujú’a al-Shaykh ila Sabáh fi ‘l-Kuwwat al-Báh[351] “ = Book of Age-rejuvenescence in the power of Concupiscence: it is the work of Ahmad bin Sulayman, surnamed Ibn Kamál Pasha.

1. Kitáb al-Báh by Al-Nahli.
2. Kitáb al’-Ars wa al’-Aráis (Book of the Bridal and the Brides) by Al-Jáhiz.
3. Kitáb al-Kiyán (Maiden’s Book) by Ibn Hájib al-Nu’mán.
4. Kitáb al-Ízáh fí asrár al-Nikáh (Book of the Exposition on the Mysteries of married Fruition).
5. Kitáb Jámi’ al-Lizzah (The Compendium of Pleasure) by Ibn Samsamáni.
6. Kitáb Barján (Yarján?) wa Janáhib (? ?)[352]
7. Kitáb al-Munákahah wa al-Mufátahah fí Asnáf al-Jimá’ wa Álátih (Book of Carnal Copulation and the Initiation into the modes of Coition and its Instrumentation) by Aziz al-Din al-Masíhí.[353]

To these I may add the Lizzat al-Nisá (Pleasures of Women), a text-book in Arabic, Persian and Hindostani: it is a translation and a very poor attempt, omitting much from, and adding naught to, the famous Sanskrit work Ananga-Ranga (Stage of the Bodiless One i.e. Cupido) or Hindu Art of Love (Ars Amoris Indica).[354] I have copies of it in Sanskrit and Maráthi,Guzrati and Hindostani: the latter is an unpaged 8vo of p, including eight pages of most grotesque illustrations showing the various san (the Figuræ Veneris or positions of copulation), which seem to be the triumphs of contortionists.

These pamphlets lithographed in Bombay are broad cast over the land.[355]

It must not be supposed that such literature is purely and simply aphrodisiacal. The learned Sprenger, a physician as well as an Arabist, says (Al-Mas’údi) of a tractate by the celebrated Rhazes in the Leyden Library, “The number of curious observations, the correct and practical ideas and the novelty of the notions of Eastern nations on these subjects, which are contained in this book, render it one of the most important productions of the medical literature of the Arabs.” I can conscientiously recommend to the Anthropologist a study of the “Kutub al-Báh.”

C. — Pornography.

Here it will be advisable to supplement what was said in my Foreword (p. xiii.) concerning the turpiloquium of The Nights. Readers who have perused the ten volumes will probably agree with me that the naïve indecencies of the text are rather gaudis-serie than prurience; and, when delivered with mirth and humour, they are rather the “excrements of wit” than designed for debauching the mind. Crude and indelicate with infantile plainness; even gross and, at times, “nasty” in their terrible frankness, they cannot be accused of corrupting suggestiveness or subtle insinuation of vicious sentiment. Theirs is a coarseness of language, not of idea; they are indecent, not depraved; and the pure and perfect naturalness of their nudity seems almost to purify it, showing that the matter is rather of manners than of morals. Such throughout the East is the language of every man, woman and child, from prince to peasant, from matron to prostitute: all are as the naïve French traveller said of the Japanese: “si grossiers qu’ils ne sçavent nommer les choses que par leur nom.” This primitive stage of language sufficed to draw from Lane and Burckhardt strictures upon the “most immodest freedom of conversation in Egypt,” where, as all the world over, there are three several stages for names of things and acts sensual. First we have the mot cru, the popular term, soon followed by the technical and scientific, and, lastly, the literary or figurative nomenclature, which is often much more immoral because more attractive, suggestive and seductive than the “raw word.” And let me observe that the highest civilisation is now returning to the language of nature. In La Glu of

M. J. Richepin, a triumph of the realistic school, we find such "archaic" expressions as la petée, putain, foutue à la six- quatre-dix; un facétieuse pétarade; tu t'es foutue de, etc. Eh vilain bougre! and so forth.[356] To those critics who complain of these raw vulgarisms and puerile indecencies in The Nights I can reply only by quoting the words said to have been said by Dr. Johnson to the lady who complained of the naughty words in his dictionary— "You must have been looking for them, Madam!"

But I repeat (p. xiv.) there is another element in The Nights and that is one of absolute obscenity utterly repugnant to English readers, even the least prudish. It is chiefly connected with what our neighbours call le vice contre nature — as if anything can be contrary to nature which includes all things.[357] Upon this subject I must offer details, as it does not enter into my plan to ignore any theme which is interesting to the Orientalist and the Anthropologist. And they, methinks, do abundant harm who, for shame or disgust, would suppress the very mention of such matters: in order to combat a great and growing evil deadly to the birth-rate — the mainstay of national prosperity — the first requisite is careful study. As Albert Bollstoedt, Bishop of Ratisbon, rightly says. — Quia malum non evitatum nisi cognitum, ideo necesse est cognoscere immundiciem coitus et multa alla quæ docentur in isto libro. Equally true are Professor Mantegazza's words:[358] Cacher les plates du cur humain au nom de la pudeur, ce n'est au contraire qu'hypocrisie ou peur. The late Mr. Grote had reason to lament that when describing such institutions as the far-famed of Thebes, the Sacred Band annihilated at Chaeroneia, he was compelled to a reticence which permitted him to touch only the surface of the subject. This was inevitable under the present rule of Cant[359] in a book intended for the public: but the same does not apply to my version of The Nights, and now I proceed to discuss the matter sérieusement, honnêtement, historiquement; to show it in decent nudity not in suggestive fig-leaf or feuille de vigne.

D. — Pederasty.

The "execrabilis familia pathicorum" first came before me by a chance of earlier life. In 1845, when Sir Charles Napier had conquered and annexed Sind, despite a fraction (mostly venal) which sought favour with the now defunct "Court of Directors to the

Honourable East India Company," the veteran began to consider his conquest with a curious eye. It was reported to him that Karáchi, a townlet of some two thousand souls and distant not more than a mile from camp, supported no less than three lupanars or borders, in which not women but boys and eunuchs, the former demanding nearly a double price,[360] lay for hire. Being then the only British officer who could speak Sindi, I was asked indirectly to make enquiries and to report upon the subject; and I undertook the task on express condition that my report should not be forwarded to the Bombay Government, from whom supporters of the Conqueror's policy could expect scant favour, mercy or justice. Accompanied by a Munshi, Mirza Mohammed Hosayn of Shiraz, and habited as a merchant, Mirza Abdullah the Bushiri[361] passed many an evening in the townlet, visited all the porneia and obtained the fullest details, which were duly despatched to Government House. But the "Devil's Brother" presently quitted Sind leaving in his office my unfortunate official: this found its way with sundry other reports[362] to Bombay and produced the expected result. A friend in the Secretariat informed me that my summary dismissal from the service had been formally proposed by one of Sir Charles Napier's successors, whose decease compels me parcere sepulto. But this excess of outraged modesty was not allowed.

Subsequent enquiries in many and distant countries enabled me to arrive at the following conclusions: —

1. There exists what I shall call a "Sotadic Zone," bounded westwards by the northern shores of the Mediterranean (N. Lat. 43) and by the southern (N. Lat. 30). Thus the depth would be 780 to 800 miles including meridional France, the Iberian Peninsula, Italy and Greece, with the coast-regions of Africa from Marocco to Egypt.

2. Running eastward the Sotadic Zone narrows, embracing Asia Minor, Mesopotamia and Chaldæa, Afghanistan, Sind, the Punjab and Kashmir.

3. In Indo-China the belt begins to broaden, enfolding China, Japan and Turkistan.

4. It then embraces the South Sea Islands and the New World where, at the time of its discovery, Sotadic love was, with some exceptions, an established racial institution.

5. Within the Sotadic Zone the Vice is popular and endemic, held at the worst to be a mere peccadillo, whilst the races to the North and South of the limits here defined practice it only sporadically amid the opprobrium of their fellows who, as a rule, are physically incapable of performing the operation and look upon it with the liveliest disgust.

Before entering into topographical details concerning pederasty, which I hold to be geographical and climatic, not racial, I must offer a few considerations of its cause and origin. We must not forget that the love of boys has its noble, sentimental side. The Platonists and pupils of the Academy, followed by the Sufis or Moslem Gnostics, held such affection, pure as ardent, to be the beau idéal which united in man's soul the creature with the Creator. Professing to regard youths as the most cleanly and beautiful objects in this phenomenal world, they declared that by loving and extolling the chef-d'uvre, corporeal and intellectual, of the Demiurgus, disinterestedly and without any admixture of carnal sensuality, they are paying the most fervent adoration to the Causa causans. They add that such affection, passing as it does the love of women, is far less selfish than fondness for and admiration of the other sex which, however innocent, always suggest sexuality;[363] and Easterns add that the devotion of the moth to the taper is purer and more fervent than the Bulbul's love for the Rose. Amongst the Greeks of the best ages the system of boy-favourites was advocated on considerations of morals and politics. The lover undertook the education of the beloved through precept and example, while the two were conjoined by a tie stricter than the fraternal. Hieronymus the Peripatetic strongly advocated it because the vigorous disposition of youths and the confidence engendered by their association often led to the overthrow of tyrannies. Socrates declared that "a most valiant army might be composed of boys and their lovers; for that of all men they would be most ashamed to desert one another." And even Virgil, despite the foul flavour of Formosum pastor Corydon, could write: —

Nisus amore pio pueri.

The only physical cause for the practice which suggests itself to me and that must be owned to be purely conjectural, is that within the Sotadic Zone there is a blending of the masculine and feminine temperaments, a crasis which elsewhere occurs only sporadically. Hence the male féminisme whereby the man becomes patiens as well as agens, and the woman a tribade, a votary of mascula Sappho,[364] Queen of Frictrices or Rubbers.[365] Prof. Mantegazza claims to have discovered the cause of this pathological love, this perversion of the erotic sense, one of the marvellous list of amorous vagaries which deserve, not prosecution but the pitiful care of the physician and the study of the psychologist. According to him the nerves of the rectum and the genitalia, in all cases closely connected, are abnormally so in the pathic, who obtains, by intromission, the venereal orgasm which is usually sought through the sexual organs. So amongst women there are tribads who can procure no pleasure except by foreign objects introduced a posteriori. Hence his threefold distribution of sodomy; (1) Peripheric or anatomical, caused by an unusual distribution of the nerves and their hyperæsthesia; (2) Luxurious, when love a tergo is preferred on account of the narrowness of the passage; and (3) the Psychical. But this is evidently superficial: the question is what causes this neuropathy, this abnormal distribution and condition of the nerves.[366]

As Prince Bismarck finds a moral difference between the male and female races of history, so I suspect a mixed physical temperament effected by the manifold subtle influences massed together in the word climate. Something of the kind is necessary to explain the fact of this pathological love extending over the greater portion of the habitable world, without any apparent connection of race or media, from the polished Greek to the cannibal Tupi of the Brazil. Walt Whitman speaks of the ashen grey faces of onanists: the faded colours, the puffy features and the unwholesome complexion of the professed pederast with his peculiar cachetic expression, indescribable but once seen never forgotten, stamp the breed, and Dr. G. Adolph is justified in declaring "Alle Gewohnneits-paederasten erkennen sich einander schnell, oft met einen Thick." This has nothing in common with the féminisme which betrays itself in the pathic by womanly gait, regard and gesture: it is a something sui generic; and the same may be said of the colour and look of the young priest who honestly refrains from women and their substitutes. Dr. Tardieu, in his well-known work, "Étude Medico-régale sur les

Attentats aux Murs," and Dr. Adolph note a peculiar infundibuliform disposition of the "After" and a smoothness and want of folds even before any abuse has taken place, together with special forms of the male organs in confirmed pederasts. But these observations have been rejected by Caspar, Hoffman, Brouardel and Dr. J. H. Henry Coutagne (Notes sur la Sodomie, Lyon, 1880), and it is a medical question whose discussion would here be out of place.

The origin of pederasty is lost in the night of ages; but its historique has been carefully traced by many writers, especially Virey,[367] Rosenbaum[368] and M. H. E. Meier.[369] The ancient Greeks who, like the modern Germans, invented nothing but were great improvers of what other races invented, attributed the formal apostolate of Sotadism to Orpheus, whose stigmata were worn by the Thracian women;

> — Omnemque refugerat Orpheus
> Fœmineam venerem; —
> Ille etiam Thracum populis fuit auctor, amorem
> In teneres transferre mares: citraque juventam
> Ætatis breve ver, et primos carpere flores.
> Ovid Met. x. 79-85.

Euripides proposed Laïus father of Oedipus as the inaugurator, whereas Timæus declared that the fashion of making favourites of boys was introduced into Greece from Crete, for Malthusian reasons said Aristotle (Pol. ii. 10), attributing it to Minos. Herodotus, however, knew far better, having discovered (ii. c. 80) that the Orphic and Bacchic rites were originally Egyptian. But the Father of History was a traveller and an annalist rather than an archæologist and he tripped in the following passage (i. c. 135), "As soon as they (the Persians) hear of any luxury, they instantly make it their own, and hence, among other matters, they have learned from the Hellenes a passion for boys" ("unnatural lust," says modest Rawlinson). Plutarch (De Malig, Herod. xiii.)[370] asserts with much more probability that the Persians used eunuch boys according to the Mos Græciæ, long before they had seen the Grecian main.

In the Holy Books of the Hellenes, Homer and Hesiod, dealing with the heroic ages, there is no trace of pederasty, although, in a long subsequent generation, Lucian suspected Achilles and Patroclus as he did Orestes and Pylades, Theseus and Pirithous. Homer's praises of beauty are reserved for the feminines, especially his favourite Helen. But the Dorians of Crete seem to have commended the abuse to Athens and Sparta and subsequently imported it into Tarentum, Agrigentum and other colonies. Ephorus in Strabo (x. 4 § 21) gives a curious account of the violent abduction of beloved boys ({Greek}) by the lover ({Greek}); of the obligations of the ravisher ({Greek}) to the favourite ({Greek})[371] and of the "marriage-ceremonies" which lasted two months. See also Plato, Laws i. c. 8. Servius (Ad Æneid. x. 325) informs us "De Cretensibus accepimus, quod in amore puerorum intemperantes fuerunt, quod postea in Lacones et in totam Græciam translatum est." The Cretans and afterwards their apt pupils the Chalcidians held it disreputable for a beautiful boy to lack a lover. Hence Zeus, the national Doric god of Crete, loved Ganymede;[372] Apollo, another Dorian deity, loved Hyacinth, and Hercules, a Doric hero who grew to be a sun-god, loved Hylas and a host of others: thus Crete sanctified the practice by the examples of the gods and demigods. But when legislation came, the subject had qualified itself for legal limitation and as such was undertaken by Lycurgus and Solon, according to Xenophon (Lac. ii. 13), who draws a broad distinction between the honest love of boys and dishonest ({Greek}) lust. They both approved of pure pederastía, like that of Harmodius and Aristogiton; but forbade it with serviles because degrading to a free man. Hence the love of boys was spoken of like that of women (Plato: Phædrus; Repub. vi. c. I9 and Xenophon, Synop. iv. 10), e.g., "There was once a boy, or rather a youth, of exceeding beauty and he had very many lovers" — this is the language of Hafiz and Sa'adi. Æschylus, Sophocles and Euripides were allowed to introduce it upon the stage, for "many men were as fond of having boys for their favourites as women for their mistresses; and this was a frequent fashion in many well-regulated cities of Greece." Poets like Alcæus, Anacreon, Agathon and Pindar affected it and Theognis sang of a "beautiful boy in the flower of his youth." The statesmen Aristides and Themistocles quarrelled over Stesileus of Teos; and Pisistratus loved Charmus who first built an altar to Puerile Eros, while Charmus loved Hippias son of Pisistratus. Demosthenes the Orator took into keeping a youth called Cnosion greatly to the indignation of his wife. Xenophon loved Clinias and Autolycus; Aristotle, Hermeas, Theodectes[373] and others; Empedocles, Pausanias; Epicurus, Pytocles; Aristippus, Eutichydes and Zeno with his Stoics had a philosophic disregard for women, affecting only pederastía. A man in Athenæus (iv. c. 40) left in his will that certain youths he had loved should fight like gladiators at his funeral; and Charicles in Lucian abuses Callicratidas for his love of "sterile pleasures." Lastly there was the notable affair of Alcibiades and Socrates, the "sanctus pæderasta"[374] being violemment soupçonné when under the mantle: — non semper sine plagâ ab eo surrexit. Athenæus (v. c. I3) declares that Plato represents Socrates as absolutely intoxicated with his passion for Alcibiades.[375] The Ancients seem to have held the connection impure, or Juvenal would not have written: —

Inter Socraticos notissima fossa cinædos,

followed by Firmicus (vii. 14) who speaks of "Socratici pædicones." It is the modern fashion to doubt the pederasty of the master of Hellenic Sophrosyne, the "Christian before Christianity;" but such a world-wide term as Socratic love can hardly be explained by the lucus-a-non-lucendo theory. We are overapt to apply our nineteenth century prejudices and prepossessions to the morality of the ancient Greeks who would have specimen'd such squeamishness in Attic salt.

The Spartans, according to Agnon the Academic (confirmed by Plato, Plutarch and Cicero), treated boys and girls in the same way before marriage: hence Juvenal (xi. 173) uses ''Lacedæmonius" for a pathic and other writers apply it to a tribade. After the Peloponnesian War, which ended in B.C. 404, the use became merged in the abuse. Yet some purity must have survived, even amongst the Botians who produced the famous Narcissus,[376] described by Ovid (Met. iii. 339); —

Multi ilium juvenes, multæ cupiere puellæ;
Nulli ilium juvenes, nullæ tetigere puellæ:[377]

for Epaminondas, whose name is mentioned with three beloveds, established the Holy Regiment composed of mutual lovers, testifying the majesty of Eros and preferring to a discreditable life a glorious death. Philip's redactions on the fatal field of Chaeroneia form their fittest epitaph. At last the Athenians, according to Æschines, officially punished Sodomy with death; but the threat did not abolish bordels of boys, like those of Karáchi; the Porneia and Pornoboskeia, where slaves and pueri venales "stood," as the term was, near the Pnyx, the city walls and a certain tower, also about Lycabettus (Æsch. contra Tim.); and paid a fixed tax to the state. The pleasures of society in civilised Greece seem to have been sought chiefly in the heresies of love — Hetairesis[378] and Sotadism.

It is calculated that the French of the sixteenth century had four hundred names for the parts genital and three hundred for their use in coition. The Greek vocabulary is not less copious, and some of its pederastic terms, of which Meier gives nearly a hundred, and its nomenclature of pathologic love are curious and picturesque enough to merit quotation.

To live the life of Abron (the Argive), i.e. that of a , pathic or passive lover.

The Agathonian song.

Aischrourgía = dishonest love, also called Akolasía, Akrasía, Arrenokoitía, etc.

Alcinoan youths, or "non conformists,"

In cute curandâ plus æquo operate Juventus.

Alegomenos, the "unspeakable," as the pederast was termed by the Council of Ancyra: also the Agrios, Apolaustus and Akolastos.

Androgyne, of whom Ansonius wrote (Epig. lxviii. 15): —

Ecce ego sum factus femina de puero.

Badas and badízein = clunes torquens: also Bátalos= a catamite.

Catapygos, Katapygosyne = puerarius and catadactylium from Dactylion, the ring, used in the sense of Nerissa's, but applied to the corollarium puerile.

Cinædus (Kínaidos), the active lover ({Greek}) derived either from his kinetics or quasi {Greek} = dog modest. Also Spatalocinædus (lasciviâ fluens) = a fair Ganymede.

Chalcidissare (Khalkidizein), from Chalcis in Euba, a city famed for love à posteriori; mostly applied to le léchement des testicules by children.

Clazomenae = the buttocks, also a sotadic disease, so called from the Ionian city devoted to Aversa Venus; also used of a pathic,

— et tergo femina pube vir est.

Embasicoetas, prop. a link-boy at marriages, also a "night-cap" drunk before bed and lastly an effeminate; one who perambulavit omnium cubilia (Catullus). See Encolpius' pun upon the Embasicete in Satyricon, cap. iv.

Epipedesis, the carnal assault.

Geiton lit. "neighbour" the beloved of Encolpius, which has produced the Fr. Giton = Bardache, Ital. bardascia from the Arab. Baradaj, a captive, a slave; the augm. form is Polygeiton.

Hippias (tyranny of) when the patient (woman or boy) mounts the agent. Aristoph. Ves. So also Kelitizein = peccare superne or equum agitare supernum of Horace.

Mokhthería, depravity with boys.

Paidika, whence pædicare (act.) and pædicari (pass.): so in the
Latin poet: —

PEnelopes primam DIdonis prima sequatur,
Et primam CAni, syllaba prima REmi.

Pathikos, Pathicus, a passive, like Malakos (malacus, mollis, facilis), Malchio, Trimalchio (Petronius), Malta, Maltha and in Hor. (Sat. ii. 25)

Malthinus tunicis demissis ambulat.

Praxis = the malpractice.

Pygisma = buttockry, because most actives end within the nates, being too much excited for further intromission.

Phnicissare ({Greek})= cunnilingere in tempore menstruum, quia hoc vitium in Phnicia generate solebat (Thes. Erot. Ling. Latinæ);

also irrumer en miel.

Phicidissare, denotat actum per canes commissum quando lambunt cunnos vel testiculos (Suetonius): also applied to pollution of childhood.

Samorium flores (Erasmus, Prov. xxiii) alluding to the androgynic prostitutions of Samos.

Siphniassare ({Greek}, from Siphnos, hod. Sifanto Island) = digito podicem fodere ad pruriginem restinguendam, says Erasmus (see Mirabeau's Erotika Biblion, Anoscopie).

Thrypsis = the rubbing.

Pederastía had in Greece, I have shown, its noble and ideal side: Rome, however, borrowed her malpractices, like her religion and polity, from those ultra-material Etruscans and debauched with a brazen face. Even under the Republic Plautus (Casin. ii. 21) makes one of his characters exclaim, in the utmost sang-froid, "Ultro te, amator, apage te a dorso meo!" With increased luxury the evil grew and Livy notices (xxxix. 13), at the Bacchanalia, plura virorum inter sese quam fminarum stupra. There were individual protests; for instance, S. Q. Fabius Maximus Servilianus (Consul U.C. 612) punished his son for dubia castitas; and a private soldier, C. Plotius, killed his military Tribune, Q. Luscius, for unchaste proposals. The Lex Scantinia (Scatinia?), popularly derived from Scantinius the Tribune and of doubtful date (B.C. 226?), attempted to abate the scandal by fine and the Lex Julia by death; but they were trifling obstacles to the flood of infamy which surged in with the Empire. No class seems then to have disdained these "sterile pleasures:" l'on n'attachoit point alors à cette espèce d'amour une note d'infamie, comme en païs de chrétienté, says Bayle under "Anacreon." The great Cæsar, the Cinaedus calvus of Catullus, was the husband of all the wives and the wife of all the husbands in Rome (Suetonius, cap. Iii.); and his soldiers sang in his praise, Gallias Cæsar, subegit, Nicomedes Cæsarem (Suet. cies. xlix.); whence his sobriquet "Fornix Birthynicus." Of Augustus the people chaunted

Videsne ut Cinædus orbem digito temperet?

Tiberius, with his pisciculi and greges exoletorum, invented the Symplegma or nexus of Sellarii, agentes et patientes, in which the spinthriæ (lit. women's bracelets) were connected in a chain by the bond of flesh[379] (Seneca Quaest. Nat.). Of this refinement which in the earlier part of the nineteenth century was renewed by sundry Englishmen at Naples, Ausonius wrote (Epig. cxix. I),

Tres uno in lecto: stuprum duo perpetiuntur;

And Martial had said (xii. 43)

Quo symplegmate quinque copulentur;
Qua plures teneantur a catena; etc.

Ausonius recounts of Caligula he so lost patience that he forcibly entered the priest M. Lepidus, before the sacrifice was completed. The beautiful Nero was formally married to Pythagoras (or Doryphoros) and afterwards took to wife Sporus who was first subjected to castration of a peculiar fashion; he was then named Sabina after the deceased spouse and claimed queenly honours. The "Othonis et Trajani pathici" were famed; the great Hadrian openly loved Antinous,and the wild debaucheries of Heliogabalus seem only to have amused, instead of disgusting, the Romans.

Uranopolis allowed public lupanaria where adults and meritorii pueri, who began their career as early as seven years, stood for hire: the inmates of these cauponæ wore sleeved tunics and dalmatics like women. As in modern Egypt pathic boys, we learn from Catullus, haunted the public baths. Debauchées had signals like freemasons whereby they recognised one another. The Greek Skematízein was made by closing the hand to represent the scrotum and raising the middle finger as if to feel whether a hen had eggs, tâter si les poulettes ont l'uf: hence the Athenians called it Catapygon or sodomite and the Romans digitus impudicus or infamis, the "medical finger"[380] of Rabelais and the Chiromantists. Another sign was to scratch the head with the minimus — digitulo caput scabere Juv. ix. 133).[381] The prostitution of boys was first forbidden by Domitian; but Saint Paul, a Greek, had formally expressed his abomination of Le Vice (Rom. i. 26; i. Cor. vi. 8); and we may agree with Grotius (de Verit. ii. c. 13) that early Christianity did much to suppress it. At last the Emperor Theodosius punished it with fire as a profanation, because sacro-sanctum esse debetur hospitium virilis animæ.

In the pagan days of imperial Rome her literature makes no difference between boy and girl. Horace naïvely says (Sat. ii. 118): —

Ancilla aut verna est praesto puer;

and with Hamlet, but in a dishonest sense: —

— Man delights me not
Nor woman neither.

Similarly the Spaniard Martial, who is a mine of such pederastic allusions (xi. 46): —

Sive puer arrisit, sive puella tibi.

That marvellous Satyricon which unites the wit of Molière[382] with the debaucheries of Piron, whilst the writer has been described, like Rabelais, as purissimus in impuritate, is a kind of Triumph of Pederasty. Geiton the hero, a handsome, curly-pated hobbledehoy of seventeen, with his câlinerie and wheedling tongue, is courted like one of the sequor sexus: his lovers are inordinately jealous of him and his desertion leaves deep scars upon the heart. But no dialogue between man and wife in extremis could be more pathetic than that in the scene where shipwreck is imminent. Elsewhere every one seems to attempt his neighbour: a man alte succinctus assails Ascyltos; Lycus, the Tarentine skipper, would force Encolpius and so forth: yet we have the neat and finished touch (cap. vii.):— "The lamentation was very fine (the dying man having manumitted his slaves) albeit his wife wept not as though she loved him. How were it had he not behaved to her so well?"

Erotic Latin glossaries[383] give some ninety words connected with pederasty and some, which "speak with Roman simplicity," are peculiarly expressive. "Averse Venus" alludes to women being treated as boys: hence Martial, translated by Piron, addresses Mistress Martial (x. 44): —

Teque puta, cunnos, uxor, habere duos.

The capillatus or comatus is also called calamistratus, the darling curled with crisping-irons; and he is an Effeminatus, i.e., qui muliebria patitur; or a Delicatus, slave or eunuch for the use of the Draucus, Puerarius (boy-lover) or Dominus (Mart. xi. 7I). The Divisor is so called from his practice Hillas dividere or cædere, something like Martial's cacare mentulam or Juvenal's Hesternæ occurrere cænæ. Facere vicibus (Juv. vii. 238), incestare se invicem or mutuum facere (Plaut. Trin. ii. 437), is described as "a puerile vice," in which the two take turns to be active and passive: they are also called Gemelli and Fratres = compares in pædicatione. Illicita libido is = præpostera seu postica Venus, and is expressed by the picturesque phrase indicare (seu incurvare) aliquem. Depilatus, divellere pilos, glaber, laevis and nates pervellere are allusions to the Sotadic toilette. The fine distinction between demittere and dejicere caput are worthy of a glossary, while Pathica puella, puera, putus, pullipremo pusio, pygiaca sacra, quadrupes, scarabæus and smerdalius explain themselves.

From Rome the practice extended far and wide to her colonies, especially the Provincia now called Provence. Athenæus (xii. 26) charges the people of Massilia with "acting like women out of luxury"; and he cites the saying "May you sail to Massilia!" as if it were another Corinth. Indeed the whole Keltic race is charged with Le Vice by Aristotle (Pol. ii. 66), Strabo (iv. 199) and Diodorus Siculus (v. 32). Roman civilisation carried pederasty also to Northern Africa, where it took firm root, while the negro and negroid races to the South ignore the erotic perversion, except where imported by foreigners into such kingdoms as Bornu and Haussa. In old Mauritania, now Marocco,[384] the Moors proper are notable sodomites; Moslems, even of saintly houses, are permitted openly to keep catamites, nor do their disciples think worse of their sanctity for such licence: in one case the English wife failed to banish from the home "that horrid boy."

Yet pederasty is forbidden by the Koran. In chapter iv. 20 we read: "And if two (men) among you commit the crime, then punish them both," the penalty being some hurt or damage by public reproach, insult or scourging. There are four distinct references to Lot and the Sodomites in chapters vii. 78; xi. 77-84; xxvi. I60-I74 and xxix. 28-35. In the first the prophet commissioned to the people says, "Proceed ye to a fulsome act wherein no creature hath foregone ye? Verily ye come to men in lieu of women lustfully." We have then an account of the rain which made an end of the wicked and this judgment on the Cities of the Plain is repeated with more detail in the second reference. Here the angels, generally supposed to be three, Gabriel, Michael and Raphael, appeared to Lot as beautiful youths, a sore temptation to the sinners and the godly man's arm was straitened concerning his visitors because he felt unable to protect them from the erotic vagaries of his fellow townsmen. He therefore shut his doors and from behind them argued the matter: presently the riotous assembly attempted to climb the wall when Gabriel, seeing the distress of his host, smote them on the face with one of his wings and blinded them so that all moved off crying for aid and saying that Lot had magicians in his house. Hereupon the "Cities" which, if they ever existed, must have been Fellah villages, were uplifted: Gabriel thrust his wing under them and raised them so high that the inhabitants of the lower heaven (the lunar sphere) could hear the dogs barking and the cocks crowing. Then came the rain of stones: these were clay pellets baked in hell-fire, streaked white and red, or having some mark to distinguish them from the ordinary and each bearing the name of its destination like the missiles which destroyed the host of Abrahat al-Ashram.[385] Lastly the "Cities" were turned upside down and cast upon earth. These circumstantial unfacts are repeated at full length in the other two chapters; but rather as an instance of Allah's power than as a warning against pederasty, which Mohammed seems to have regarded with philosophic indifference. The general opinion of his followers is that it should be punished like fornication unless the offenders made a public act of penitence. But here, as in adultery, the law is somewhat too clement and will not convict unless four credible witnesses swear to have seen rem in re. I have noticed (vol. i. 211) the vicious opinion that the Ghilmán or Wuldán, the beautiful boys of Paradise, the counter parts of the Houris, will be lawful catamites to the True Believers in a future state of happiness: the idea is nowhere countenanced in Al-Islam; and, although I have often heard debauchées refer to it, the learned look upon the assertion as scandalous.

As in Marocco so the Vice prevails throughout the old regencies of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli and all the cities of the South Mediterranean seaboard, whilst it is unknown to the Nubians, the Berbers and the wilder tribes dwelling inland. Proceeding Eastward we reach Egypt, that classical region of all abominations which, marvellous to relate, flourished in closest contact with men leading the purest of lives, models of moderation and morality, of religion and virtue. Amongst the ancient Copts Le Vice was part and portion of the Ritual and was represented by two male partridges alternately copulating (Interp. in Priapi Carm. xvii). The evil would have gained strength by the invasion of Cambyses (B.C. 524), whose armies, after the victory over Psammenitus. settled in the Nile-Valley and held it, despite sundry revolts, for some hundred and ninety years. During these six generations the Iranians left their mark upon Lower Egypt and especially, as the late Rogers Bey proved, upon the Fayyum, the most ancient Delta of the Nile.[386] Nor would the evil be diminished by the Hellenes who, under Alexander the Great, "liberator and saviour of Egypt" (B.C. 332), extinguished the native dynasties: the love of the Macedonian for Bagoas the Eunuch being a matter of history. From that time and under the rule of the Ptolemies the morality gradually decayed; the Canopic orgies extended into private life and the debauchery of the men was equalled only by the depravity of the women. Neither Christianity nor Al-Islam could effect a change for the better; and social morality seems to have been at its worst during the past century when Sonnini travelled (A.D. 1717). The French officer, who is thoroughly trustworthy, draws the darkest picture of the widely spread criminality, especially of the bestiality and the sodomy (chaps. xv.), which formed the "delight of the Egyptians." During the Napoleonic conquest Jaubert in his letter to General Bruix (p. I9) says, "Les Arabes et les Mamelouks ont traité quelques-uns de nos prisonniers comme Socrate traitait, dit-on, Alcibiade. Il fallait périr ou y passer." Old Anglo-Egyptians still chuckle over the tale of Sa'id Pasha and M. de Ruyssenaer, the high-dried and highly respectable Consul-General for the Netherlands, who was solemnly advised to make the experiment, active and passive, before offering his opinion upon the subject. In the present age extensive intercourse with Europeans has produced not a reformation but a certain reticence amongst the upper classes: they are as vicious as ever, but they do not care for displaying their vices to the eyes of mocking strangers.

Syria and Palestine, another ancient focus of abominations, borrowed from Egypt and exaggerated the worship of androgynic and hermaphroditic deities. Plutarch (De Iside) notes that the old Nilotes held the moon to be of "male-female sex," the men sacrificing to Luna and the women to Lunus.[387] Isis also was a hermaphrodite, the idea being that Aether or Air (the lower heavens) was the menstruum of generative nature; and Damascius explained the tenet by the all-fruitful and prolific powers of the atmosphere. Hence the fragment attributed to Orpheus, the song of Jupiter (Air): —

All things from Jove descend
Jove was a male, Jove was a deathless bride;
For men call Air, of two fold sex, the Jove.

Julius Pirmicus relates that "The Assyrians and part of the Africians" (along the Mediterranean seaboard?) "hold Air to be the chief element and adore its fanciful figure (imaginata figura), consecrated under the name of Juno or the Virgin Venus. * * * Their companies of priests cannot duly serve her unless they effeminate their faces, smooth their skins and disgrace their masculine sex by feminine ornaments. You may see men in their very temples amid general groans enduring miserable dalliance and becoming passives like women (viros muliebria pati), and they expose, with boasting and ostentation, the pollution of the impure and immodest body." Here we find the religious significance of eunuchry. It was practiced as a religious rite by the Tympanotribas or Gallus,[388] the castrated votary of Rhea or Bona Mater, in Phrygia called Cybele, self mutilated but not in memory of Atys; and by a host of other creeds: even Christianity, as sundry texts show,[389] could not altogether cast out the old possession. Here too we have an explanation of Sotadic love in its second stage, when it became, like cannibalism, a matter of superstition. Assuming a nature- implanted tendency, we see that like human sacrifice it was held to be the most acceptable offering to the God-goddess in the Orgia or sacred ceremonies, a something set apart for peculiar worship. Hence in Rome as in Egypt the temples of Isis (Inachidos limina, Isiacæ sacraria Lunæ) were centres of sodomy, and the religious practice was adopted by the grand priestly castes from Mesopotamia to Mexico and Peru.

We find the earliest written notices of the Vice in the mythical destruction of the Pentapolis (Gen. xix.), Sodom, Gomorrah (= ‘Amirah, the cultivated country), Adama, Zeboïm and Zoar or Bela. The legend has been amply embroidered by the Rabbis who make the Sodomites do everything à l’envers: e.g., if a man were wounded he was fined for bloodshed and was compelled to fee the offender; and if one cut off the ear of a neighbour’s ass he was condemned to keep the animal till the ear grew again. The Jewish doctors declare the people to have been a race of sharpers with rogues for magistrates, and thus they justify the judgment which they read literally. But the traveller cannot accept it. I have carefully examined the lands at the North and at the South of that most beautiful lake, the so-called Dead Sea, whose tranquil loveliness, backed by the grand plateau of Moab, is an object of admiration to all save patients suffering from the strange disease “Holy Land on the Brain.”[390] But I found no traces of craters in the neighbourhood, no signs of vulcanism, no remains of “meteoric stones”: the asphalt which named the water is a mineralised vegetable washed out of the limestones, and the sulphur and salt are brought down by the Jordan into a lake without issue. I must therefore look upon the history as a myth which may have served a double purpose. The first would be to deter the Jew from the Malthusian practices of his pagan predecessors, upon whom obloquy was thus cast, so far resembring the scandalous and absurd legend which explained the names of the children of Lot by Pheiné and Thamma as “Moab” .(Mu-ab) the water or semen of the father, and “Ammon” as mother’s son, that is, bastard. The fable would also account for the abnormal fissure containing the lower Jordan and the Dead Sea, which the late Sir R. I. Murchison used wrong-headedly to call a “Volcano of Depression”: this geological feature, that cuts off the river-basin from its natural outlet, the Gulf of Eloth (Akabah), must date from myriads of years before there were “Cities of the Plains.” But the main object of the ancient lawgiver, Osarsiph, Moses or the Moseidæ, was doubtless to discountenance a perversion prejudicial to the increase of population. And he speaks with no uncertain voice, Whoso lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death (Exod. xxii. I9): If a man lie with mankind as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them (Levit. xx. 13; where v.v. 15-16 threaten with death man and woman who lie with beasts). Again, There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel (Deut. xxii. 5).

The old commentators on the Sodom-myth are most unsatisfactory, e.g. Parkhurst, s.v. Kadesh. “From hence we may observe the peculiar propriety of this punishment of Sodom and of the neighbouring cities. By their sodomitical impurities they meant to acknowledge the Heavens as the cause of fruitfulness independently upon, and in opposition to, Jehovah;[391] therefore Jehovah, by raining upon them not genial showers but brimstone from heaven, not only destroyed the inhabitants, but also changed all that country, which was before as the garden of God, into brimstone and salt that is not sown nor beareth, neither any grass groweth therein.” It must be owned that to this Pentapolis was dealt very hard measure for religiously and diligently practicing a popular rite which a host of cities even in the present day, as Naples and Shiraz, to mention no others, affect for simple luxury and affect with impunity. The myth may probably reduce itself to very small proportions, a few Fellah villages destroyed by a storm, like that which drove Brennus from Delphi.

The Hebrews entering Syria found it religionised by Assyria and Babylonia, whence Accadian Ishtar had passed west and had become Ashtoreth, Ashtaroth or Ashirah,[392] the Anaitis of Armenia, the Phnician Astarte and the Greek Aphrodite, the great Moon-goddess,[393] who is queen of Heaven and Love. In another phase she was Venus Mylitta = the Procreatrix, in Chaldaic Mauludatá and in Arabic Moawallidah, she who bringeth forth. She was worshipped by men habited as women and vice-versâ; for which reason in the Torah (Deut. xx. 5) the sexes are forbidden to change dress. The male prostitutes were called Kadesh the holy, the women being Kadeshah, and doubtless gave themselves up to great excesses. Eusebius (De bit. Const. iii. c. 55) describes a school of impurity at Aphac, where women and “men who were not men” practiced all manner of abominations in honour of the Demon (Venus). Here the Phrygian symbolism of Kybele and Attis (Atys) had become the Syrian Ba’al Tammuz and Astarte, and the Grecian Dionæa and Adonis, the anthropomorphic forms of the two greater lights. The site, Apheca, now Wady al-Afik on the route from Bayrut to the Cedars, is a glen of wild and wondrous beauty, fitting frame-work for the loves of goddess and demigod: and the ruins of the temple destroyed by Constantine contrast with Nature's work, the glorious fountain, splendidior vitro, which feeds the River Ibrahim and still at times Adonis runs purple to the sea.[394]

The Phnicians spread this androgynic worship over Greece. We find the consecrated servants and votaries of Corinthian Aphrodite called Hierodouli (Strabo viii. 6), who aided the ten thousand courtesans in gracing the Venus-temple: from this excessive luxury arose the proverb popularised by Horace. One of the headquarters of the cult was Cyprus where, as Servius relates (Ad Æn. ii. 632), stood the simulacre of a bearded Aphrodite with feminine body and costume, sceptered and mitred like a man. The sexes when worshipping it exchanged habits and here the virginity was offered in sacrifice: Herodotus (i. c. 199) describes this defloration at Babylon but sees only the shameful part of the custom which was a mere consecration of a tribal rite. Everywhere girls before marriage belong either to the father or to the clan and thus the maiden paid the debt due to the public before becoming private property as a wife. The same usage prevailed in ancient Armenia and in parts of Ethiopia; and Herodotus tells us that a practice very much like the Babylonian "is found also in certain parts of the Island of Cyprus:" it is noticed by Justin (xviii. c. 5) and probably it explains the "Succoth Benoth" or Damsels' booths which the Babylonians bans planted to the cities of Samaria.[395] The Jews seem very successfully to have copied the abominations of their pagan neighbours, even in the matter of the "dog."[396] In the reign of wicked Rehoboam (B.C. 975) "There were also sodomites in the land and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel" (I Kings xiv. 20). The scandal was abated by zealous King Asa (B.C. 958) whose grandmother[397] was high-priestess of Priapus (princeps in sacris Priapi): he took away the sodomites out of the land" (I Kings XV. I2). Yet the prophets were loud in their complaints, especially the so-called Isaiah (B.C. 760), "except the Lord of Hosts had left to us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom (i. 9); and strong measures were required from good King Josiah (B.C. 641) who amongst other things, "brake down the houses of the sodomites that were by the house of the Lord, where the women wove hangings for the grove" (2 Kings xxiii. 7). The bordels of boys (pueris alienis adhæseverunt) appear to have been near the Temple.

Syria has not forgotten her old "praxis." At Damascus I found some noteworthy cases amongst the religious of the great Amawi Mosque. As for the Druses we have Burckhardt's authority (Travels in Syria, etc.,), "unnatural propensities are very common amongst them."

The Sotadic Zone covers the whole of Asia Minor and Mesopotamia now occupied by the "unspeakable Turk," a race of born pederasts; and in the former region we first notice a peculiarity of the feminine figure, the mammæ inclinatæ, jacentes et pannosæ, which prevails over all this part of the belt. Whilst the women to the North and South have, with local exceptions, the mammæ stantes of the European virgin,[398] those of Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan and Kashmir lose all the fine curves of the bosom, sometimes even before the first child; and after it the hemispheres take the form of bags. This cannot result from climate only; the women of Marathá-land, inhabiting a damper and hotter region than Kashmir, are noted for fine firm breasts even after parturition. Le Vice of course prevails more in the cities and towns of Asiatic Turkey than in the villages; yet even these are infected; while the nomad Turcomans contrast badly in this point with the Gypsies, those Badawin of India. The Kurd population is of Iranian origin, which means that the evil is deeply rooted: I have noted in The Nights that the great and glorious Saladin was a habitual pederast. The Armenians, as their national character is, will prostitute themselves for gain but prefer women to boys: Georgia supplied Turkey with catamites whilst Circassia sent concubines. In Mesopotamia the barbarous invader has almost obliterated the ancient civilisation which is ante-dated only by the Nilotic: the mysteries of old Babylon nowhere survive save in certain obscure tribes like the Mandæans, the Devil-worshippers and the Alí-iláhi. Entering Persia we find the reverse of Armenia; and, despite Herodotus, I believe that Iran borrowed her pathologic love from the peoples of the Tigris-Euphrates Valley and not from the then insignificant Greeks. But whatever may be its origin, the corruption is now bred in the bone. It begins in boyhood and many Persians account for it by paternal severity. Youths arrived at puberty find none of the facilities with which Europe supplies fornication. Onanism[399] is to a certain extent discouraged by circumcision, and meddling with the father's slave-girls and concubines would be risking cruel punishment if not death. Hence they use each other by turns, a "puerile practice" known as Alish-Takish, the Lat. facere vicibus or mutuum facere. Temperament, media, and atavism recommend the custom to the general; and after marrying and begetting heirs, Paterfamilias returns to the Ganymede. Hence all the odes of Hafiz are addressed to youths, as proved by such Arabic exclamations as 'Afáka 'llah = Allah assain thee (masculine)[400] : the object is often fanciful but it would be held coarse and immodest to address an imaginary girl.[401] An illustration of the penchant is told at Shiraz concerning a certain Mujtahid, the head of the Shi'ah creed, corresponding with a prince-archbishop in Europe. A friend once said to him, "There is a question I would fain address to your Eminence but I lack the daring to do so." "Ask and fear not," replied the Divine. "It is this, O Mujtahid! Figure thee in a garden of roses and hyacinths with the evening breeze waving the cypress-heads, a fair youth of twenty sitting by thy side and the assurance of perfect privacy. What, prithee, would be the result?" The holy man bowed the chin of doubt upon the collar of meditation; and, too honest to lie, presently whispered, "Allah defend me from such temptation of Satan!" Yet even in Persia men have not been wanting who have done their utmost to uproot the Vice: in the same Shiraz they speak of a father who, finding his son in flagrant delict, put him to death like Brutus or Lynch of Galway. Such isolated cases, however, can effect nothing. Chardin tells us that houses of male prostitution were common in Persia whilst those of women were unknown: the same is the case in the present day and the boys are prepared with extreme care by diet, baths, depilation, unguents and a host of artists in cosmetics.[402] Le Vice is looked upon at most as a peccadillo and its mention crops up in every jest-book. When the Isfahan man mocked Shaykh Sa'adi by comparing the bald pates of Shirazian elders to the bottom of a lotá, a brass cup with a wide-necked opening used in the Hammam, the witty poet turned its aperture upwards and thereto likened the well-abused podex of an Isfahani youth. Another favourite piece of Shirazian "chaff" is to declare that when an Isfahan father would set up his son in business he provides him with a pound of rice, meaning that he can sell the result as compost for the kitchen-garden, and with the price buy another meal: hence the saying Khakh-i-pái káhú = the soil at the lettuce-root. The Isfahanis retort with the name of a station or halting-place between the two cities where, under presence of making travellers stow away their riding-gear, many a Shirazi had been raped: hence "Zín o takaltú tú bi-bar" = carry within saddle and saddle-cloth! A favourite Persian punishment for strangers caught in the Harem or Gynæceum is to strip and throw them and expose them to the embraces of the grooms and negro-slaves. I once asked a Shirazi how penetration was possible if the patient resisted with all the force of the sphincter muscle: he smiled and said, "Ah, we Persians know a trick to get over that; we apply a sharpened tent peg to the crupper bone (os coccygis) and knock till he opens." A well known missionary to the East during the last generation was subjected to this gross insult by one of the Persian Prince- governors, whom he had infuriated by his conversion-mania: in his memoirs he alludes to it by mentioning his "dishonoured person;" but English readers cannot comprehend the full significance of the confession. About the same time Shaykh Nasr, Governor of Bushire, a man famed for facetious blackguardism, used to invite European youngsters serving in the Bombay Marine and ply them with liquor till they were insensible. Next morning the middies mostly complained that the champagne had caused a curious irritation and soreness in la parse-posse. The same Eastern "Scrogin" would ask his guests if they had ever seen a man-cannon (Adami-top); and, on their replying in the negative, a grey-beard slave was dragged in blaspheming and struggling with all his strength. He was presently placed on all fours and firmly held by the extremities; his bag-trousers were let down and a dozen peppercorns were inserted ano suo: the target was a sheet of paper held at a reasonable distance; the match was applied by a pinch of cayenne in the nostrils; the sneeze started the grapeshot and the number of hits on the butt decided the bets. We can hardly wonder at the loose conduct of Persian women perpetually mortified by marital pederasty. During the unhappy campaign of 1856-57 in which, with the exception of a few brilliant skirmishes, we gained no glory, Sir James Outram and the Bombay army showing how badly they could work, there was a formal outburst of the Harems; and even women of princely birth could not be kept out of the officers' quarters.

The cities of Afghanistan and Sind are thoroughly saturated with Persian vice, and the people sing

Kadr-i-kus Aughán dánad, kadr-i-kunrá Kábuli:
The worth of coynte the Afghan knows: Cabul prefers the
other chose![403]

The Afghans are commercial travellers on a large scale and each caravan is accompanied by a number of boys and lads almost in woman's attire with kohl'd eyes and rouged cheeks, long tresses and henna'd fingers and toes, riding luxuriously in Kajáwas or camel-panniers: they are called Kúch-i safari, or travelling wives, and the husbands trudge patiently by their sides. In Afghanistan also a frantic debauchery broke out amongst the women when they found incubi who were not pederasts; and the scandal was not the most insignificant cause of the general rising at Cabul (Nov. 1841), and the slaughter of Macnaghten, Burnes and other British officers.

Resuming our way Eastward we find the Sikhs and the Moslems of the Panjab much addicted to Le Vice, although the Himalayan tribes to the north and those lying south, the Rájputs and Marathás, ignore it. The same may be said of the Kash mirians who add another Kappa to the tria Kakista, Kappado clans, Kretans, and Kilicians: the proverb says,

Agar kaht-i-mardum uftad, az ín sih jins kam gírí;
Eki Afghán, dovvum Sindí[404] siyyum
badjins-i-Kashmírí:

Though of men there be famine yet shun these three-

Afghan, Sindi and rascally Kashmírí.

M. Louis Daville describes the infamies of Lahore and Lakhnau where he found men dressed as women, with flowing locks under crowns of flowers, imitating the feminine walk and gestures, voice and fashion of speech, and ogling their admirers with all the coquetry of bayadères. Victor Jacquemont's Journal de Voyage describes the pederasty of Ranjít Singh, the "Lion of the Panjáb," and his pathic Guláb Singh whom the English inflicted upon Cashmir as ruler by way of paying for his treason. Yet the Hindus, I repeat, hold pederasty in abhorrence and are as much scandalised by being called Gánd-márá (anus-beater) or Gándú (anuser) as Englishmen would be. During the years 1843-44 my regiment, almost all Hindu Sepoys of the Bombay Presidency, was stationed at a purgatory called Bandar Ghárrá,[405] a sandy flat with a scatter of verdigris-green milk-bush some forty miles north of Karáchi the headquarters. The dirty heap of mud-and-mat hovels, which represented the adjacent native village, could not supply a single woman; yet only one case of pederasty came to light and that after a tragical fashion some years afterwards. A young Brahman had connection with a soldier comrade of low caste and this had continued till, in an unhappy hour, the Pariah patient ventured to become the agent. The latter, in Arab. Al-Fá'il =the "doer," is not an object of contempt like Al-Mafúl = the "done"; and the high caste sepoy, stung by remorse and revenge, loaded his musket and deliberately shot his paramour. He was hanged by court martial at Hyderabad and, when his last wishes were asked, he begged in vain to be suspended by the feet; the idea being that his soul, polluted by exiting "below the waist," would be doomed to endless trans-migrations through the lowest forms of life.

Beyond India, I have stated, the Sotadic Zone begins to broaden out, embracing all China, Turkistan and Japan. The Chinese, as far as we know them in the great cities, are omnivorous and omnifutuentes: they are the chosen people of debauchery, and their systematic bestiality with ducks, goats, and other animals is equalled only by their pederasty. Kæmpfer and Orlof Torée (Voyage en Chine) notice the public houses for boys and youths in China and Japan. Mirabeau (L'Anandryne) describes the tribadism of their women in hammocks.

When Pekin was plundered the Harems contained a number of balls a little larger than the old musket-bullet, made of thin silver with a loose pellet of brass inside somewhat like a grelot;[406] these articles were placed by the women between the labia and an up-and-down movement on the bed gave a pleasant titillation when nothing better was to be procured. They have every artifice of luxury, aphrodisiacs, erotic perfumes and singular applications. Such are the pills which, dissolved in water and applied to the glans penis, cause it to throb and swell: so according to Amerigo Vespucci American women could artificially increase the size of their husbands' parts.[407] The Chinese bracelet of caoutchouc studded with points now takes the place of the Herisson, or Annulus hirsutus,[408] which was bound between the glans and prepuce. Of the penis succedaneus, that imitation of the Arbor vitæ or Soter Kosmou, which the Latins called phallus and fascinum,[409] the French godemiché and the Italians passatempo and diletto (whence our "dildo"), every kind abounds, varying from a stuffed "French letter" to a cone of ribbed horn which looks like an instrument of torture. For the use of men they have the "merkin,"[410] a heart-shaped article of thin skin stuffed with cotton and slit with an artificial vagina: two tapes at the top and one below lash it to the back of a chair. The erotic literature of the Chinese and Japanese is highly developed and their illustrations are often facetious as well as obscene. All are familiar with that of the strong man who by a blow with his enormous phallus shivers a copper pot; and the ludicrous contrast of the huge-membered wights who land in the Isle of Women and presently escape from it, wrinkled and shrivelled, true Domine Dolittles. Of Turkistan we know little, but what we know confirms my statement. Mr. Schuyler in his Turkistan (i. 132) offers an illustration of a "Batchah" (Pers. bachcheh = catamite), "or singing-boy surrounded by his admirers." Of the Tartars Master Purchas laconically says (v. 419), "They are addicted to Sodomie or Buggerie." The learned casuist Dr. Thomas Sanchez the Spaniard had (says Mirabeau in Kadhésch) to decide a difficult question concerning the sinfulness of a peculiar erotic perversion. The Jesuits brought home from Manilla a tailed man whose moveable prolongation of the os coccygis measured from 7 to 10 inches: he had placed himself between two women, enjoying one naturally while the other used his tail as a penis succedaneus. The verdict was incomplete sodomy and simple fornication. For the islands north of Japan, the “Sodomitical Sea,” and the “nayle of tynne” thrust through the prepuce to prevent sodomy, see Lib. ii. cha of Master Thomas Caudish’s Circumnavigation, and vol. vi. of Pinkerton’s Geography translated by Walckenaer.

Passing over to America we find that the Sotadic Zone contains the whole hemisphere from Behring’s Straits to Magellan’s. This prevalence of “mollities” astonishes the anthropologist, who is apt to consider pederasty the growth of luxury and the especial product of great and civilised cities, unnecessary and therefore unknown to simple savagery, where the births of both sexes are about equal and female infanticide is not practiced. In many parts of the New World this perversion was accompanied by another depravity of taste — confirmed cannibalism.[411] The forests and campos abounded in game from the deer to the pheasant-like penelope, and the seas and rivers produced an unfailing supply of excellent fish and shell-fish;[412] yet the Brazilian Tupis preferred the meat of man to every other food.

A glance at Mr. Bancroft[413] proves the abnormal development of sodomy amongst the savages and barbarians of the New World. Even his half-frozen Hyperboreans “possess all the passions which are supposed to develop most freely under a milder temperature” (i. 58). “The voluptuousness and polygamy of the North American Indians, under a temperature of almost perpetual winter, is far greater than that of the most sensual tropical nations” (Martin’s Brit. Colonies iii. 524). I can quote only a few of the most remarkable instances. Of the Koniagas of Kadiak Island and the Thinkleets we read (i. 81-82), “The most repugnant of all their practices is that of male concubinage. A Kadiak mother will select her handsomest and most promising boy, and dress and rear him as a girl, teaching him only domestic duties, keeping him at women s work, associating him with women and girls, in order to render his effeminacy complete. Arriving at the age of ten or fifteen years, he is married to some wealthy man who regards such a companion as a great acquisition. These male concubines are called Achnutschik or Schopans” (the authorities quoted being Holmberg, Langsdorff, Billing, Choris, Lisiansky and Marchand). The same is the case in Nutka Sound and the Aleutian Islands, where "male concubinage obtains throughout, but not to the same extent as amongst the Koniagas." The objects of "unnatural" affection have their beards carefully plucked out as soon as the face-hair begins to grow, and their chins are tattooed like those of the women. In California the first missionaries found the same practice, the youths being called Joya (Bancroft, i. 415 and authorities Palon, Crespi, Boscana, Mofras, Torquemada, Duflot and Fages). The Comanches unite incest with sodomy (i. 515). "In New Mexico, according to Arlegui, Ribas, and other authors, male concubinage prevails to a great extent; these loathsome semblances of humanity, whom to call beastly were a slander upon beasts, dress themselves in the clothes and perform the functions of women, the use of weapons being denied them" (i. 585). Pederasty was systematically practiced by the peoples of Cueba, Careta, and other parts of Central America. The Caciques and some of the headmen kept harems of youths who, as soon as destined for the unclean office, were dressed as women. They went by the name of Camayoas, and were hated and detested by the good wives (i. 733-74). Of the Nahua nations Father Pierre de Gand (alias de Musa) writes, "Un certain nombre de prâtres n'avaient point de femmes, sed eorum loco pueros quibus abutebantur. Ce péché était si commun dans ce pays que, jeunes ou vieux, tous étaient infectés; ils y étaient si adonnés que mêmes les enfants de six ens s'y livraient" (Ternaux,Campans, Voyages, Série i. Tom. x.). Among the Mayas of Yucatan Las Casas declares that the great prevalence of "unnatural" lust made parents anxious to see their progeny wedded as soon as possible (Kingsborough's Mex. Ant. viii. 135). In Vera Paz a god, called by some Chin and by others Cavial and Maran, taught it by committing the act with another god. Some fathers gave their sons a boy to use as a woman, and if any other approached this pathic he was treated as an adulterer. In Yucatan images were found by Bernal Diaz proving the sodomitical propensities of the people (Bancroft v. 198). De Pauw (Recherches Philosophiques sur les Americains, London, I77I) has much to say about the subject in Mexico generally: in the northern provinces men married youths who, dressed like women, were forbidden to carry arms. According to Gomara there were at Tamalpais houses of male prostitution; and from Diaz and others we gather that the pecado nefando was the rule. Both in Mexico and in Peru it might have caused, if it did not justify, the cruelties of the Conquistadores. Pederasty was also general throughout Nicaragua, and the early explorers found it amongst the indigenes of Panama.

We have authentic details concerning Le Vice in Peru and its adjacent lands, beginning with Cieza de Leon, who must be read in the original or in the translated extracts of Purchas (vol. v. 942, etc.), not in the cruelly castrated form preferred by the Council of the Hakluyt Society. Speaking of the New Granada Indians he tells us that "at Old Port (Porto Viejo) and Puna, the Deuill so farre prevayled in their beastly Deuotions that there were Boyes consecrated to serue in the Temple; and at the times of their Sacrifices and Solemne Feasts, the Lords and principall men abused them to that detestable filthinesse;" i.e. performed their peculiar worship. Generally in the hill-countries the Devil, under the show of holiness, had introduced the practice; for every temple or chief house of adoration kept one or two men or more which were attired like women, even from the time of their childhood, and spake like them, imitating them in everything; with these, under pretext of holiness and religion, principal men on principal days had commerce. Speaking of the arrival of the Giants[414] at Point Santa Elena, Cieza says (chap. lii.), they were detested by the natives, because in using their women they killed them, and their men also in another way. All the natives declare that God brought upon them a punishment proportioned to the enormity of their offence. When they were engaged together in their accursed intercourse, a fearful and terrible fire came down from Heaven with a great noise, out of the midst of which there issued a shining Angel with a glittering sword, wherewith at one blow they were all killed and the fire consumed them.[415] There remained a few bones and skulls which God allowed to bide unconsumed by the fire, as a memorial of this punishment. In the Hakluyt Society's bowdlerisation we read of the Tumbez Islanders being "very vicious, many of them committing the abominable offence" (); also, "If by the advice of the Devil any Indian commit the abominable crime, it is thought little of and they call him a woman." In chapters lii. and lviii. we find exceptions. The Indians of Huancabamba, "although so near the peoples of Puerto

Viejo and Guayaquil, do not commit the abominable sin;” and the Serranos, or island mountaineers, as sorcerers and magicians inferior to the coast peoples, were not so much addicted to sodomy.

The Royal Commentaries of the Yncas shows that the evil was of a comparatively modern growth. In the early period of Peruvian history the people considered the crime “unspeakable:” if a Cuzco Indian, not of Yncarial blood, angrily addressed the term pederast to another, he was held infamous for many days. One of the generals having reported to the Ynca Ccapacc Yupanqui that there were some sodomites, not in all the valleys, but one here and one there, “nor was it a habit of all the inhabitants but only of certain persons who practised it privately,” the ruler ordered that the criminals should be publicly burnt alive and their houses, crops and trees destroyed: moreover, to show his abomination, he commanded that the whole village should so be treated if one man fell into this habit (Lib. iii. ca). Elsewhere we learn, “There were sodomites in some provinces, though not openly nor universally, but some particular men and in secret. In some parts they had them in their temples, because the Devil persuaded them that the Gods took great delight in such people, and thus the Devil acted as a traitor to remove the veil of shame that the Gentiles felt for this crime and to accustom them to commit it in public and in common.”

During the times of the Conquistadores male concubinage had become the rule throughout Peru. At Cuzco, we are told by Nuno de Guzman in 1530 “The last which was taken, and which fought most couragiously, was a man in the habite of a woman, which confessed that from a childe he had gotten his liuing by that filthinesse, for which I caused him to be burned.” V. F. Lopez[416] draws a frightful picture of pathologic love in Peru. Under the reigns which followed that of Inti-Kapak (Ccapacc) Amauri, the country was attacked by invaders of a giant race coming from the sea: they practiced pederasty after a fashion so shameless that the conquered tribes were compelled to fly(). Under the pre-Yncarial Amauta, or priestly dynasty, Peru had lapsed into savagery and the kings of Cuzco preserved only the name. “Toutes ces hontes et toutes ces misères provenaient de deux vices infâmes, la bestialité et la sodomie. Les

> femmes surtout étaient offensées de voir la nature frustrée de tous ses droits. Wiles pleuraient ensemble en leurs réunions sur le misérable état dans loquel elles étaient tombées, sur le mépris avec lequel elles étaient traitées. * * * * Le monde était renversé, les hommes s'aimaient et étaient jaloux les uns des autres. * * * Elles cherchaient, mais en vain, les moyens de remédier au mal; elles employaient des herbes et des recettes diaboliques qui leur ramenaient bien quelques individus, mais ne pouvaient arrêter les progrès incessants du vice. Cet état de choses constitua un véritable moyen âge, qui aura jusqu'à l'établissement du gouvernement des Incas" ().

When Sinchi Roko (the xcvth of Montesinos and the xcist of Garcilazo) became Ynca, he found morals at the lowest ebb. "Ni la prudence de l'Inca, ni les lois sévères qu'il avait promulguées n'avaient pu extirper entièrement le péché contre nature. Il reprit avec une nouvelle violence, et les femmes en furent si jalouses qu'un grand nombre d'elles tuerent leurs maris. Les devins et les sorciers passaient leurs journées à fabriquer, avec certaines herbes, des compositions magiques qui rendaient fous ceux qui en mangaient, et les femmes en faisaient prendre, soit dans les aliments, soit dans la chicha, à ceux dont elles étaient jalouses'' ().

I have remarked that the Tupi races of the Brazil were infamous for cannibalism and sodomy; nor could the latter be only racial as proved by the fact that colonists of pure Lusitanian blood followed in the path of the savages. Sr. Antonio Augusto da Costa Aguiar[417] is outspoken upon this point. "A crime which in England leads to the gallows, and which is the very measure of abject depravity, passes with impunity amongst us by the participating in it of almost all or of many (de quasi todos, ou de muitos) Ah! if the wrath of Heaven were to fall by way of punishing such crimes (delictos), more than one city of this Empire, more than a dozen, would pass into the category of the Sodoms and Gomorrains" (). Till late years pederasty in the Brazil was looked upon as a peccadillo; the European immigrants following the practice of the wild men who were naked but not, as Columbus said, "clothed in innocence." One of Her Majesty's Consuls used to tell a tale of the hilarity provoked in a "fashionable" assembly by the open declaration of a young gentleman that his mulatto “patient” had suddenly turned upon him, insisting upon becoming agent. Now, however, under the influences of improved education and respect for the public opinion of Europe, pathologic love amongst the Luso-Brazilians has been reduced to the normal limits.

Outside the Sotadic Zone, I have said, Le Vice is sporadic, not endemic: yet the physical and moral effect of great cities where puberty, they say, is induced earlier than in country sites, has been the same in most lands, causing modesty to decay and pederasty to flourish. The Badawi Arab is wholly pure of Le Vice; yet San’á the capital of Al-Yaman and other centres of population have long been and still are thoroughly infected. History tells us of Zú Shanátir, tyrant of “Arabia Felix,” in A.D. 478, who used to entice young men into his palace and cause them after use to be cast out of the windows: this unkindly ruler was at last poniarded by the youth Zerash, known from his long ringlets as “Zú Nowás.” The negro race is mostly untainted by sodomy and tribadism. Yet Joan dos Sanctos[418] found in Cacongo of West Africa certain “Chibudi, which are men attyred like women and behaue themselves womanly, ashamed to be called men; are also married to men, and esteem that vnnaturale damnation an honor.” Madagascar also delighted in dancing and singing boys dressed as girls. In the Empire of Dahomey I noted a corps of prostitutes kept for the use of the Amazon-soldieresses.

North of the Sotadic Zone we find local but notable instances. Master Christopher Burrough[419] describes on the western side of the Volga “a very fine stone castle, called by the name Oueak, and adioyning to the same a Towne called by the Russes, Sodom, * * * which was swallowed into the earth by the justice of God, for the wickednesse of the people.” Again: although as a rule Christianity has steadily opposed pathologic love both in writing and preaching, there have been remarkable exceptions. Perhaps the most curious idea was that of certain medical writers in the middle ages: “Usus et amplexus pueri, bene temperatus, salutaris medicine” (Tardieu). Bayle notices (under “Vayer”) the infamous book of Giovanni della Casa, Archbishop of Benevento, “De laudibus Sodomiæ,”[420] vulgarly known as “Capitolo del Forno.” The same writer refers (under “Sixte iv.”) to the report that the Dominican Order, which systematically decried Le Vice, had presented a request to the Cardinal di Santa Lucia that sodomy might be lawful during three months per annum, June to August; and that the Cardinal had underwritten the petition “Be it done as they demand.” Hence the Fæda Venus of Battista Mantovano. Bayle rejects the history for a curious reason, venery being colder in summer than in winter, and quotes the proverb “Aux mods qui n’ont pas d’ R, peu embrasser et bien boire.” But in the case of a celibate priesthood such scandals are inevitable: witness the famous Jesuit epitaph Ci-gît un Jesuite, etc.

In our modern capitals, London, Berlin and Paris for instance, the Vice seems subject to periodical outbreaks. For many years, also, England sent her pederasts to Italy, and especially to Naples, whence originated the term “Il vizio Inglese.” It would be invicious to detail the scandals which of late years have startled the public in London and Dublin: for these the curious will consult the police reports. Berlin, despite her strong devour of Phariseeism, Puritanism and Chauvinism in religion, manners and morals, is not a whit better than her neighbours. Dr. Gaspar,[421] a well-known authority on the subject, adduces many interesting cases, especially an old Count Cajus and his six accomplices. Amongst his many correspondents one suggested to him that not only Plato and Julius Cæsar but also Winckelmann and Platen(?) belonged to the Society; and he had found it flourishing in Palermo, the Louvre, the Scottish Highlands and St. Petersburg to name only a few places. Frederick the Great is said to have addressed these words to his nephew, “Je puis vous assurer, par mon expérience personelle, que ce plaisir est peu agréable à cultiver.” This suggests the popular anecdote of Voltaire and the Englishman who agreed upon an “experience” and found it far from satisfactory. A few days afterwards the latter informed the Sage of Ferney that he had tried it again and provoked the exclamation, “Once a philosopher: twice a sodomite!” The last revival of the kind in Germany is a society at Frankfort and its neighbourhood, self-styled Les Cravates Noires, in opposition, I suppose, to Les Cravates Blanches of A. Belot.

Paris is by no means more depraved than Berlin and London; but, whilst the latter hushes up the scandal, Frenchmen do not: hence we see a more copious account of it submitted to the public. For France of the xviith century consult the “Histoire de la Prostitution chez tous les Peuples du Monde,” and “La Prance devenue Italienne,” a treatise which generally follows”L’Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules” by Bussy, Comte de Rabutin.[422] The headquarters of male prostitution were then in the Champ Flory, i.e., Champ de Flore, the privileged rendezvous of low courtesans. In the xviiith century, “quand le Francais a tête folle,” as Voltaire sings, invented the term “Péché philosophique,” there was a temporary recrudescence; and, after the death of Pidauzet de Mairobert (March, 1779), his “Apologie de la Secte Anandryne” was published in L’Espion Anglais. In those days the Allée des Veuves in the Champs Elysees had a “fief reservé des Ebugors”[423] — “veuve” in the language of Sodom being the maîtresse en titre, the favourite youth.

At the decisive moment of monarchical decomposition Mirabeau[424] declares that pederasty was reglementée and adds, Le goût des pédérastes, quoique moins en vogue que du temps de Henri III. (the French Heliogabalus), sous le règne desquel les hommes se provoquaient mutuellement[425] sous les portiques du Louvre, fait des progrès considérables. On salt que cette ville (Paris) est un chef-d’uvre de police; en conséquence, il y a des lieux publics autorisés à cet effet. Les jeunes yens qui se destinent à la professign, vent soigneusement enclassés; car les systèmes réglementaires s’étendent jusques-là. On les examine; ceux qui peuvent être agents et patients, qui vent beaux, vermeils, bien faits, potelés, sont réservés pour les grands seigneurs, ou se font payer très-cher par les évêques et les financiers. Ceux qui vent privés de leurs testicules, ou en termes de l’art (car notre langue est plus chaste qui nos murs), qui n’ont pas le poids du tisserand, mais qui donnent et reçoivent, forment la seconde classe; ils vent encore chers, parceque les femmes en usent tandis qu’ils servent aux hommes. Ceux qui ne sont plus susceptibles d’érection tant ils sont usés, quoiqu’ils aient tous ces organes nécessaires au plaisir, s’inscrivent comme patiens purs, et composent la troisième classe: mais celle qui prèside à ces plaisirs, vérifie leur impuissance. Pour cet effet, on les place tout nus sur un matelas ouvert par la moitié inférieure; deux filles les caressent de leur mieux, pendant qu'une troisieme frappe doucement avec desorties naissantes le siège des désire vénériens. Après un quart d'heure de cet essai, on leur introduit dans l'anus un poivre long rouge qui cause une irritation considérable; on pose sur les échauboulures produites par les orties, de la moutarde fine de Caudebec, et l'on passe le gland au camphre. Ceux qui résistent à ces épreuves et ne donnent aucun signe d'érection, servent comme patiens à un tiers de paie seulement.[426]

The Restoration and the Empire made the police more vigilant in matters of politics than of morals. The favourite club, which had its mot de passe, was in the Rue Doyenne, old quarter St Thomas de Louvre; and the house was a hotel of the xviith century. Two street-doors, on the right for the male gynæceum and the left for the female, opened at 4 p.m. in winter and 8 p.m. in summer. A decoy-lad, charmingly dressed in women's clothes, with big haunches and small waist, promenaded outside; and this continued till 1826 when the police put down the house.

Under Louis Philippe, the conquest of Algiers had evil results, according to the Marquis de Boissy. He complained without ambages of murs Arabes in French regiments, and declared that the result of the African wars was an éffrayable débordement pédérastique, even as the vérole resulted from the Italian campaigns of that age of passion, the xvith century. From the military the fléau spread to civilian society and the Vice took such expansion and intensity that it may be said to have been democratised in cities and large towns; at least so we gather from the Dossier des Agissements des Pédérastes. A general gathering of "La Sainte Congregation des glorieux Pádárastes" was held in the old Petite Rue des Marais where, after the theatre, many resorted under pretext of making water. They ranged themselves along the walls of a vast garden and exposed their podices: bourgeois, richards and nobles came with full purses, touched the part which most attracted them and were duly followed by it. At the Allée des Veuves the crowd was dangerous from 7 to 8 p.m.: no policeman or ronde de nun' dared venture in it; cords were stretched from tree to tree and armed guards drove away strangers amongst whom, they say, was once Victor Hugo. This nuisance was at length suppressed by the municipal administration.

The Empire did not improve morals. Balls of sodomites were held at No. 8 Place de la Madeleine where, on Jan. 2, ‘64, some one hundred and fifty men met, all so well dressed as women that even the landlord did not recognise them. There was also a club for sotadic debauchery called the Cent Gardes and the Dragons de l’Impératrice.[427] They copied the imperial toilette and kept it in the general wardrobe: hence “faire l’Impératrice” meant to be used carnally. The site, a splendid hotel in the Allée des Veuves, was discovered by the Procureur-Géneral, who registered all the names; but, as these belonged to not a few senators and dignitaries, the Emperor wisely quashed proceedings. The club was broken up on July 16, ‘64. During the same year La Petite Revue, edited by M. Loredan Larchy, son of the General, printed an article, “Les échappés de Sodome”: it discusses the letter of M. Castagnary to the Progrès de Lyons and declares that the Vice had been adopted by plusieurs corps de troupes. For its latest developments as regards the chantage of the tantes (pathics), the reader will consult the last issues of Dr. Tardieu’s well-known Études.[428] He declares that the servant-class is most infected; and that the Vice is commonest between the ages of fifteen and twenty five.

The pederasty of The Nights may briefly be distributed into three categories. The first is the funny form, as the unseemly practical joke of masterful Queen Budúr (vol. iii. 300-306) and the not less hardi jest of the slave-princess Zumurrud (vol. iv. 226). The second is in the grimmest and most earnest phase of the perversion, for instance where Abu Nowas[429] debauches the three youths (vol. v. 64 69); whilst in the third form it is wisely and learnedly discussed, to be severely blamed, by the Shaykhah or Reverend Woman (vol v. 154).

To conclude this part of my subject, the éclaircissement des obscánités. Many readers will regret the absence from The Nights of that modesty which distinguishes “Amadis de Gaul,” whose author, when leaving a man and a maid together says, “And nothing shall be here related; for these and suchlike things which are conformable neither to good conscience nor nature, man ought in reason lightly to pass over, holding them in slight esteem as they deserve.” Nor have we less respect for Palmerin of England who after a risqué scene declares, “Herein is no offence offered to the wise by wanton speeches, or encouragement to the loose by lascivious matter.” But these are not oriental ideas, and we must e’en take the Eastern as we find him. He still holds “Naturalla non sunt turpia,” together with “Mundis omnia munda”; and, as Bacon assures us the mixture of a lie cloth add to pleasure, so the Arab enjoys the startling and lively contrast of extreme virtue and horrible vice placed in juxtaposition.

Those who have read through these ten volumes will agree with me that the proportion of offensive matter bears a very small ratio to the mass of the work. In an age saturated with cant and hypocrisy, here and there a venal pen will mourn over the “Pornography” of The Nights, dwell upon the “Ethics of Dirt” and the “Garbage of the Brothel”; and will lament the “wanton dissemination (!) of ancient and filthy fiction.” This self- constituted Censor morum reads Aristophanes and Plato, Horace and Virgil, perhaps even Martial and Petronius, because “veiled in the decent obscurity of a learned language”; he allows men Latinè loqui; but he is scandalised at stumbling-blocks much less important in plain English. To be consistent he must begin by bowdlerising not only the classics, with which boys’ and youths’ minds and memories are soaked and saturated at schools and colleges, but also Boccaccio and Chaucer, Shakespeare and Rabelais; Burton, Sterne, Swift, and a long list of works which are yearly reprinted and republished without a word of protest. Lastly, why does not this inconsistent puritan purge the Old Testament of its allusions to human ordure and the pudenda; to carnal copulation and impudent whoredom, to adultery and fornication, to onanism, sodomy and bestiality? But this he will not do, the whited sepulchre! To the interested critic of the Edinburgh Review (No. 335 of July, 1886), I return my warmest thanks for his direct and deliberate falsehoods: — lies are one- legged and short-lived, and venom evaporates.[430] It appears to me that when I show to such men, so “respectable” and so impure, a landscape of magnificent prospects whose vistas are adorned with every charm of nature and art, they point their unclean noses at a little heap of muck here and there lying in a field-corner.

§ V ON THE PROSE-RHYME AND THE POETRY OF THE NIGHTS

A. — The Saj'a.

According to promise in my Foreword (p. xiii.), I here proceed to offer a few observations concerning the Saj'a or rhymed prose and the Shi'r, or measured sentence, that is, the verse of The Nights. The former has in composition, metrical or unmetrical three distinct forms. Saj'a mutáwazi (parallel), the most common is when the ending words of sentences agree in measure, assonance and final letter, in fact our full rhyme; next is Saj'a mutarraf (the affluent), when the periods, hemistichs or couplets end in words whose terminal letters correspond, although differing in measure and number; and thirdly, Saj'a muwázanah (equilibrium) is applied to the balance which affects words corresponding in measure but differing in final letters.[431]

Al-Saj'a, the fine style or style fleuri, also termed Al-Badí'a, or euphuism, is the basis of all Arabic euphony. The whole of the Koran is written in it; and the same is the case with the Makámát of Al-Hariri and the prime masterpieces of rhetorical composition: without it no translation of the Holy Book can be satisfactory or final, and where it is not the Assemblies become the prose of prose. Thus universally used the assonance has necessarily been abused, and its excess has given rise to the saying "Al-Saj's faj'a" — prose rhyme's a pest. English translators have, unwisely I think, agreed in rejecting it, while Germans have not. Mr Preston assures us that "rhyming prose is extremely ungraceful in English and introduces an air of flippancy": this was certainly not the case with Friedrich Rückert's version of the great original and I see no reason why it should be so or become so in our tongue. Torrens (Pref. p. vii.) declares that "the effect of the irregular sentence with the iteration of a jingling rhyme is not pleasant in our language:" he therefore systematically neglects it and gives his style the semblance of being "scamped" with the object of saving study and trouble. Mr. Payne (ix. 379) deems it an "excrescence born of the excessive facilities for rhyme afforded by the language," and of Eastern delight in antithesis of all kinds whether of sound or of thought; and, aiming elaborately at grace of style, he omits it wholly, even in the proverbs.

The weight of authority was against me but my plan compelled me to disregard it. The dilemma was simply either to use the Saj'a or to follow Mr. Payne's method and "arrange the disjecta membra of the original in their natural order"; that is, to remodel the text. Intending to produce a faithful copy of the Arabic, I was compelled to adopt the former, and still hold it to be the better alternative. Moreover I question Mr. Payne's dictum (ix. 383) that "the Seja-form is utterly foreign to the genius of English prose and that its preservation would be fatal to all vigour and harmony of style." The English translator of Palmerin of England, Anthony Munday, attempted it in places with great success as I have before noted (vol. viii. 60); and my late friend Edward Eastwick made artistic use of it in his Gulistan. Had I rejected the "Cadence of the cooing dove" because un-English, I should have adopted the balanced periods of the Anglican marriage service[432] or the essentially English system of alliteration, requiring some such artful aid to distinguish from the vulgar recitative style the elevated and classical tirades in The Nights. My attempt has found with reviewers more favour than I expected; and a kindly critic writes of it, "These melodious fray meets, these little eddies of song set like gems in the prose, have a charming effect on the ear. They come as dulcet surprises and mostly recur in highly-wrought situations, or they are used to convey a vivid sense of something exquisite in nature or art. Their introduction seems due to whim or caprice, but really it arises from a profound study of the situation, as if the Tale-teller felt suddenly compelled to break into the rhythmic strain."

B. — The Verse.

The Shi'r or metrical part of The Nights is considerable amounting to not less than ten thousand lines, and these I could not but render in rhyme or rather in monorhyme. This portion has been a bugbear to translators. De Sacy noticed the difficulty of the task (). Lane held the poetry untranslatable because abounding in the figure Tajnís, our paronomasia or paragram, of which there are seven distinct varieties,[433] not to speak of other rhetorical flourishes. He therefore omitted the greater part of the verse as tedious and, through the loss of measure and rhyme, “generally intolerable to the reader.” He proved his position by the bald literalism of the passages which he rendered in truly prosaic prose and succeeded in changing the facies and presentment of the work. For the Shi’r, like the Saj’a, is not introduced arbitrarily; and its unequal distribution throughout The Nights may be accounted for by rule of art. Some tales, like Omar bin al-Nu’man and Tawaddud, contain very little because the theme is historical or realistic; whilst in stories of love and courtship as that of Rose-in-hood, the proportion may rise to one-fifth of the whole. And this is true to nature. Love, as Addison said, makes even the mechanic (the British mechanic!) poetical, and Joe Hume of material memory once fought a duel about a fair object of dispute.

Before discussing the verse of The Nights it may be advisable to enlarge a little upon the prosody of the Arabs. We know nothing of the origin of their poetry, which is lost in the depths of antiquity, and the oldest bards of whom we have any remains belong to the famous epoch of the war Al-Basús, which would place them about A.D. 500. Moreover, when the Muse of Arabia first shows she is not only fully developed and mature, she has lost all her first youth, her beauté du diable, and she is assuming the characteristics of an age beyond “middle age.” No one can study the earliest poetry without perceiving that it results from the cultivation of centuries and that it has already assumed that artificial type and conventional process of treatment which presages inevitable decay. Its noblest period is included in the century preceding the Apostolate of Mohammed, and the oldest of that epoch is the prince of Arab songsters, Imr al-Kays, “The Wandering King.” The Christian Fathers characteristically termed poetry Vinum Dæmonorum. The stricter Moslems called their bards “enemies of Allah”; and when the Prophet, who hated verse and could not even quote it correctly, was asked who was the best poet of the Peninsula he answered that the “Man of Al-Kays,” i.e. the worshipper of the Priapus-idol, would usher them all into Hell. Here he only echoed the general verdict of his countrymen who loved poetry and, as a rule, despised poets. The earliest complete pieces of any volume and substance saved from the wreck of old Arabic literature and familiar in our day are the seven Kasídahs (purpose-odes or tendence-elegies) which are popularly known as the

Gilded or the Suspended Poems; and in all of these we find, with an elaboration of material and formal art which can go no further, a subject-matter of trite imagery and stock ideas which suggest a long ascending line of model ancestors and predecessors.

Scholars are agreed upon the fact that many of the earliest and best Arab poets were, as Mohammed boasted himself, unalphabetic[434] or rather could neither read nor write. They addressed the ear and the mind, not the eye. They "spoke verse," learning it by rote and dictating it to the Ráwi, and this reciter again transmitted it to the musician whose pipe or zither accompanied the minstrel's song. In fact the general practice of writing began only at the end of the first century after The Flight.

The rude and primitive measure of Arab song, upon which the most complicated system of metres subsequently arose, was called Al-Rajaz, literally "the trembling," because it reminded the highly imaginative hearer of a pregnant she-camel's weak and tottering steps. This was the carol of the camel-driver, the lover's lay and the warrior's chaunt of the heroic ages; and its simple, unconstrained flow adapted it well for extempore effusions. Its merits and demerits have been extensively discussed amongst Arab grammarians, and many, noticing that it was not originally divided into hemistichs, make an essential difference between the Shá'ir who speaks poetry and the Rájiz who speaks Rajaz. It consisted, to describe it technically, of iambic dipodia (U-U-), the first three syllables being optionally long or short It can generally be read like our iambs and, being familiar, is pleasant to the English ear. The dipodia are repeated either twice or thrice; in the former case Rajaz is held by some authorities, as Al-Akhfash (Sa'íd ibn Másadah), to be mere prose. Although Labíd and Antar composed in iambics, the first Kásídah or regular poem in Rajaz was by Al-Aghlab al-Ajibi temp. Mohammed: the Alfíyah-grammar of Ibn Málik is in Rajaz Muzdawij, the hemistichs rhyming and the assonance being confined to the couplet. Al-Hariri also affects Rajaz in the third and fifth Assemblies. So far Arabic metre is true to Nature: in impassioned speech the movement of language is iambic: we say "I will, I will," not "I will."

For many generations the Sons of the Desert were satisfied with

Nature's teaching; the fine perceptions and the nicely trained ear of the bard needing no aid from art. But in time came the inevitable prosodist under the formidable name of Abu Abd al- Rahmán al-Khalíl, i. Ahmad, i. Amrú, i. Tamím al-Faráhidi (of the Faráhid sept), al-Azdi (of the Azd clan), al Yahmadi (of the Yahmad tribe), popularly known as Al-Khalíl ibn Ahmad al-Basri, of Bassorah, where he died æt. 68, scanning verses they say, in A.H. 170 (= 786-87). Ibn Khallikán relates (i. 493) on the authority of Hamzah al-Isfaháni how this "father of Arabic grammar and discoverer of the rules of prosody" invented the science as he walked past a coppersmith's shop on hearing the strokes of a hammer upon a metal basin: "two objects devoid of any quality which could serve as a proof and an illustration of anything else than their own form and shape and incapable of leading to any other knowledge than that of their own nature."[435] According to others he was passing through the Fullers' Bazar at Basrah when his ear was struck by the Dak dak (Arabic letters) and the Dakak-dakak (Arabic letters) of the workmen. In these two onomapoetics we trace the expression which characterises the Arab tongue: all syllables are composed of consonant and vowel, the latter long or short as B and B ; or of a vowelled consonant followed by a consonant as Bal, Bau (Arabic) .

The grammarian, true to the traditions of his craft which looks for all poetry to the Badawi,[436] adopted for metrical details the language of the Desert. The distich, which amongst Arabs is looked upon as one line, he named "Bayt," nighting- place, tent or house; and the hemistich Misrá'ah, the one leaf of a folding door. To this "scenic" simile all the parts of the verse were more or less adapted. The metres, our feet, were called "Arkán," the stakes and stays of the tent; the syllables were "Usúl" or roots divided into three kinds: the first or "Sabab" (the tent-rope) is composed of two letters, a vowelled and a quiescent consonant as "Lam."[437] The "Watad" or tent peg of three letters is of two varieties; the Majmú', or united, a foot in which the two first consonants are moved by vowels and the last is jazmated or made quiescent by apocope as "Lakad"; and the Mafrúk, or disunited, when the two moved consonants are separated by one jazmated, as "Kabla." And lastly the "Fásilah" or intervening space, applied to the main pole of the tent, consists of four letters.

The metres were called Buhúr or “seas” (plur. of Bahr), also meaning the space within the tent-walls, the equivoque alluding to pearls and other treasures of the deep. Al-Khalil, the systematiser, found in general use only five Dáirah (circles, classes or groups of metre); and he characterised the harmonious and stately measures, all built upon the original Rajaz, as Al- Tawíl (the long),[438] Al-Kámil (the complete), Al-Wáfir (the copious), Al-Basít (the extended) and Al-Khafíf (the light).[439] These embrace all the Mu’allakát and the Hamásah, the great Anthology of Abú Tammám; but the crave for variety and the extension of foreign intercourse had multiplied wants and Al- Khalil deduced from the original five Dáirah, fifteen, to which Al-Akhfash (ob. A.D. 830) added a sixteenth, Al-Khabab. The Persians extended the number to nineteen: the first four were peculiarly Arab; the fourteenth, the fifteenth and seventeenth peculiarly Persian and all the rest were Arab and Persian.[440]

Arabic metre so far resembles that of Greece and Rome that the value of syllables depends upon the “quantity” or position of their consonants, not upon accent as in English and the Neo-Latin tongues. Al-Khalil was doubtless familiar with the classic prosody of Europe, but he rejected it as unsuited to the genius of Arabic and like a true Eastern Gelehrte he adopted a process devised by himself. Instead of scansion by pyrrhics and spondees, iambs and trochees, anapæsts and similar simplifications he invented a system of weights (“wuzún”). Of these there are nine[441] memorial words used as quantitive signs, all built upon the root “fa’l” which has rendered such notable service to Arabic and Hebrew[442] grammar and varying from the simple “fa’ál,” in Persian “fa’úl” (U), to the complicated “Mutafá’ilun”(UU - U -) , anapæst + iamb. Thus the prosodist would scan the Shahnámeh of Firdausi as

Fa’úlun, fa’úlun, fa’úlun, fa’ál.
U - - U - - U - - -

These weights also show another peculiarity of Arabic verse. In English we have few if any spondees: the Arabic contains about three longs to one short; hence its gravity, stateliness and dignity. But these longs again are peculiar, and sometimes strike the European ear as shorts, thus adding a difficulty for those who would represent Oriental metres by western feet, ictus and accent. German Arabists can register an occasional success in such attempts: Englishmen none. My late friend Professor Palmer of Cambridge tried the tour de force of dancing on one leg instead of two and notably failed: Mr. Lyall also strove to imitate Arabic metre and produced only prose bewitched.[443] Mr. Payne appears to me to have wasted trouble in "observing the exterior form of the stanza, the movement of the rhyme and (as far as possible) the identity in number of the syllables composing the beits." There is only one part of his admirable version concerning which I have heard competent readers complain; and that is the metrical, because here and there it sounds strange to their ears.

I have already stated my conviction that there are two and only two ways of translating Arabic poetry into English. One is to represent it by good heroic or lyric verse as did Sir William Jones; the other is to render it after French fashion, by measured and balanced Prose, the little sister of Poetry. It is thus and thus only that we can preserve the peculiar cachet of the original. This old world Oriental song is spirit-stirring as a "blast of that dread horn," albeit the words be thin. It is heady as the "Golden Wine" of Libanus, to the tongue water and brandy to the brain — the clean contrary of our nineteenth century effusions. Technically speaking, it can be vehicled only by the verse of the old English ballad or by the prose of the Book of Job. And Badawi poetry is a perfect expositor of Badawi life, especially in the good and gladsome old Pagan days ere Al-Islam, like the creed which it abolished, overcast the minds of men with its dull grey pall of realistic superstition. They combined to form a marvellous picture — those contrasts of splendour and squalor amongst the sons of the sand. Under airs pure as æther, golden and ultramarine above and melting over the horizon into a diaphanous green which suggested a resection of Kaf, that unseen mountain-wall of emerald, the so-called Desert, changed face twice a year; now brown and dry as summer-dust; then green as Hope, beautified with infinite verdure and broad sheetings of rain-water. The vernal and autumnal shiftings of camp, disruptions of homesteads and partings of kith and kin, friends and lovers, made the life many-sided as it was vigorous and noble, the outcome of hardy frames, strong minds and spirits breathing the very essence of liberty and independence. The day began with the dawn-drink, "generous wine bought with shining ore," poured into the crystal goblet from the leather bottle swinging before the cooling breeze. The rest was spent in the practice of weapons, in the favourite arrow game known as Al- Maysar, gambling which at least had the merit of feeding the poor; in racing for which the Badawin had a mania, and in the chase, the foray and the fray which formed the serious business of his life. And how picturesque the hunting scenes; the greyhound, like the mare, of purest blood; the falcon cast at francolin and coney; the gazelle standing at gaze; the desert ass scudding over the ground-waves; the wild cows or bovine antelopes browsing with their calves and the ostrich-chickens flocking round the parent bird! The Musámarah or night-talk round the camp-fire was enlivened by the lute-girl and the glee-man, whom the austere Prophet described as "roving distraught in every vale" and whose motto in Horatian vein was, "To day we shall drink, to-morrow be sober, wine this day, that day work." Regularly once a year, during the three peaceful months when war and even blood revenge were held sacrilegious, the tribes met at Ukádh (Ocaz) and other fairsteads, where they held high festival and the bards strave in song and prided themselves upon doing honour to women and to the successful warriors of their tribe. Brief, the object of Arab life was to be — to be free, to be brave, to be wise; while the endeavours of other peoples was and is to have — to have wealth, to have knowledge, to have a name; and while moderns make their "epitome of life" to be, to do and to suffer. Lastly the Arab's end was honourable as his life was stirring: few Badawin had the crowning misfortune of dying "the straw-death."

The poetical forms in The Nights are as follows: — The Misrá'ah or hemistich is half the "Bayt" which, for want of a better word, I have rendered couplet: this, however, though formally separated in MSS., is looked upon as one line, one verse; hence a word can be divided, the former part pertaining to the first and the latter to the second moiety of the distich. As the Arabs ignore blank verse, when we come upon a rhymeless couplet we know that it is an extract from a longer composition in monorhyme. The Kit'ah is a fragment, either an occasional piece or more frequently a portion of a Ghazal (ode) or

Kasídah (elegy), other than the Matlá, the initial Bayt with rhyming distichs. The Ghazal and Kasídah differ mainly in length: the former is popularly limited to eighteen couplets: the latter begins at fifteen and is of indefinite number. Both are built upon monorhyme, which appears twice in the first couplet and ends all the others, e g., aa + ba + ca, etc.; nor may the same assonance be repeated, unless at least seven couplets intervene. In the best poets, as in the old classic verse of France, the sense must be completed in one couplet and not run on to a second; and, as the parts cohere very loosely, separate quotation can generally be made without injuring their proper effect. A favourite form is the Rubá'i or quatrain, made familiar to English ears by Mr. Fitzgerald's masterly adaptation of Omar-i-Khayyám: the movement is generally aa + ba, but it also appears as ab + cb, in which case it is a Kit'ah or fragment. The Murabbá, tetrastichs or four fold-song, occurs once only in The Nights (vol.i. 98); it is a succession of double Bayts or of four lined stanzas rhyming aa + bc + dc + ec: in strict form the first three hemistichs rhyme with one another only, independently of the rest of the poem, and the fourth with that of every other stanza, e.g., aa + ab + cb + db. The Mukhammas, cinquains or pentastichs (Night cmlxiv.), represents a stanza of two distichs and a hemistich in monorhyme, the fifth line being the "bob" or burden: each succeeding stanza affects a new rhyme, except in the fifth line, e.g., aaaab + ccccb + ddddb and so forth. The Muwwál is a simple popular song in four to six lines; specimens of it are given in the Egyptian grammar of my friend the late Dr. Wilhelm Spitta.[444] The Muwashshah, or ornamented verse, has two main divisions: one applies to our acrostics in which the initials form a word or words; the other is a kind of Musaddas, or sextines, which occurs once only in The Nights (cmlxxxvii.). It consists of three couplets or six-line strophes: all the hemistichs of the first are in monorhyme; in the second and following stanzas the three first hemistichs take a new rhyme, but the fourth resumes the assonance of the first set and is followed by the third couplet of No. 1, serving as bob or refrain, e.g., aaaaaa + bbbaaa + cccaaa and so forth. It is the most complicated of all the measures and is held to be of Morisco or Hispano-Moorish origin.

Mr. Lane (Lex.) lays down, on the lines of Ibn Khallikan (i. 476, etc.) and other representative literati, as our sole authortties for pure Arabic, the precedence in following order. First of all ranks the Jáhili (Ignoramus) of The Ignorance, the : these pagans left hemistichs, couplets, pieces and elegies which once composed a large corpus and which is now mostly forgotten. Hammád al-Ráwiyah, the Reciter, a man of Persian descent (ob. A.H. 160=777) who first collected the Mu'allakát, once recited by rote in a séance before Caliph Al-Walid two thousand poems of præ-Mohammedan bards.[445] After the Jáhili stands the Mukhadram or Muhadrim, the "Spurious," because half Pagan half Moslem, who flourished either immediately before or soon after the preaching of Mohammed. The Islámi or full-blooded Moslem at the end of the first century A.H (= 720) began the process of corruption in language; and, lastly he was followed by the Muwallad of the second century who fused Arabic with non- Arabic and in whom purity of diction disappeared.

I have noticed (I § A.) that the versical portion of The Nights may be distributed into three categories. First are the olden poems which are held classical by all modern Arabs; then comes the mediæval poetry, the effusions of that brilliant throng which adorned the splendid Court of Harun al-Rashid and which ended with Al-Haríri (ob. A.H. 516); and, lastly, are the various pièces de circonstance suggested to editors or scribes by the occasion. It is not my object to enter upon the historical part of the subject: a mere sketch would have neither value not interest whilst a finished picture would lead too far: I must be contented to notice a few of the most famous names.

Of the præ-Islamites we have Ádi bin Zayd al-Ibádi the "celebrated poet" of Ibn Khallikán (i. 188); Nábighat (the full-grown) al-Zubyáni who flourished at the Court of Al-Nu'man in AD. 580-602, and whose poem is compared with the "Suspendeds,''[446] and Al-Mutalammis the "pertinacious" satirist, friend and intimate with Tarafah of the "Prize Poem." About Mohammed's day we find Imr al-Kays "with whom poetry began," to end with Zú al-Rummah; Amrú bin Mádi Karab al-Zubaydi, Labíd; Ka'b ibn Zuhayr, the father one of the Mu'al-lakah-poets, and the son author of the Burdah or Mantle-poem (see vol. iv. 115), and Abbás bin Mirdás who lampooned the Prophet and had "his tongue cut out" i.e. received a double share of booty from Ali. In the days of Caliph Omar we have Alkamah bin Olátha followed by Jamíl bin Ma'mar of the Banu Ozrah (ob. A.H. 82), who loved Azzá. Then came Al-Kuthayyir (the dwarf, ironicè), the lover of Buthaynah, "who was so lean that birds might be cut to bits with her bones :" the latter was also a poetess (Ibn Khall. i. 87), like Hind bint al-Nu'man who made herself so disagreeable to Al-Hajjáj (ob. A.H. 95) Jarír al-Khatafah, the noblest of the Islami poets in the first century, is noticed at full length by Ibn Khallikan (i. 294) together with his rival in poetry and debauchery, Abú Firás Hammám or Homaym bin Ghalib al-Farazdak, the Tamími, the Ommiade poet "without whose verse half Arabic would be lost:"[447] he exchanged satires with Jarír and died forty days before him (A.H. 110). Another contemporary, forming the poetical triumvirate of the period, was the debauched Christian poet Al-Akhtal al-Taghlibi. They were followed by Al- Ahwas al-Ansári whose witty lampoons banished him to Dahlak Island in the Red Sea (ob. A.H. 179 = 795); by Bashshár ibn Burd and by Yúnus ibn Habib (ob. A.H. 182).

The well known names of the Harun-cycle are Al-Asma'i, rhetorician and poet, whose epic with Antar for hero is not forgotten (ob. A.H. 2I6); Isaac of Mosul (Ishak bin Ibrahim of Persian origin); Al-'Utbi "the Poet" (ob. A.H. 228); Abu al-Abbás al-Rakáshi; Abu al-Atahiyah, the lover of Otbah; Muslim bin al- Walíd al-Ansari; Abú Tammám of Tay, compiler of the Hamásah (ob. A.H. 230), "a Muwallad of the first class" (says Ibn Khallikan i. 392); the famous or infamous Abu Nowás, Abu Mus'ab (Ahmad ibn Ali) who died in A.H. 242; the satirist Dibil al-Khuzáí (ob. A.H. 246) and a host of others quos nunc perscribere longum est. They were followed by Al-Bohtori "the Poet" (ob. A.H. 286); the royal author Abdullah ibn al-Mu'tazz (ob. A.H. 315); Ibn Abbád the Sahib (ob. A.H. 334); Mansúr al-Halláj the martyred Sufi; the Sahib ibn Abbad, Abu Faras al-Hamdáni (ob. A.H. 357); Al-Námi (ob. A.H. 399) who had many encounters with that model Chauvinist Al-Mutanabbi, nicknamed Al-Mutanabbih (the "wide awake"), killed A.H. 354; Al-Manázi of Manazjird (ob. 427); Al-Tughrai author of the Lámiyat al-'Ajam (ob. A.H. 375); Al-Haríri the model rhetorician (ob. A.H. 516); Al-Hájiri al-Irbili, of Arbela (ob. A.H. 632); Bahá al-Din al-Sinjari (ob. A.H.

622); Al-Kátib or the Scribe (ob. A.H. 656); Abdun al-Andalúsi the Spaniard (our xiith century) and about the same time Al-Náwaji, author of the Halbat al-Kumayt or"Race course of the Bay horse" — poetical slang for wine.[448]

Of the third category, the pièces d'occasion, little need be said: I may refer readers to my notes on the doggrels in vol. ii. 34, 35, 56, 179, 182, 186 and 261; in vol. v. 55 and in vol. viii. 50.

Having a mortal aversion to the details of Arabic prosody, I have persuaded my friend Dr. Steingass to undertake in the following pages the subject as far as concerns the poetry of The Nights. He has been kind enough to collaborate with me from the beginning, and to his minute lexicographical knowledge I am deeply indebted for discovering not a few blemishes which would have been "nuts to the critic." The learned Arabist's notes will be highly interesting to students: mine (§V.) are intended to give a superficial and popular idea of the Arab's verse mechanism.

"The principle of Arabic Prosody (called 'Arúz, pattern standard, or 'Ilm al-'Arúz, science of the 'Arúz), in so far resembles that of classical poetry, as it chiefly rests on metrical weight, not on accent, or in other words a verse is measured by short and long quantities, while the accent only regulates its rhythm. In Greek and Latin, however, the quantity of the syllables depends on their vowels, which may be either naturally short or long, or become long by position, i.e. if followed by two or more consonants. We all remember from our school-days what a fine string of rules had to be committed to and kept in memory, before we were able to scan a Latin or Greek verse without breaking its neck by tripping over false quantities. In Arabic, on the other hand, the answer to the question, what is metrically long or short, is exceedingly simple, and flows with stringent cogency from the nature of the Arabic Alphabet. This, strictly speaking, knows only consonants (Harf, pl. Hurúf). The vowels which are required, in order to articulate the consonants, were at first not represented in writing at all. They had to be supplied by the reader, and are not improperly called "motions" (Harakát), because they move or lead on, as it were, one letter to another. They are three in number, a (Fathah), i (Kasrah), u (Zammah), originally sounded as the corresponding English vowels in bat, bit and butt respectively, but in certain cases modifying their pronunciation under the influence of a neighbouring consonant. When the necessity made itself felt to represent them in writing, especially for the sake of fixing the correct reading of the Koran, they were rendered by additional signs, placed above or beneath the consonant, after which they are pronounced, in a similar way as it is done in some systems of English shorthand. A consonant followed by a short vowel is called a "moved letter" (Muharrakah); a consonant without such vowel is called "resting" or "quiescent" (Sákinah), and can stand only at the end of a syllable or word.

And now we are able to formulate the one simple rule, which determines the prosodical quantity in Arabic: any moved letter, as ta, li, mu, is counted short; any moved letter followed by a quiescent one, as taf, fun, mus, i.e. any closed syllable beginning and terminating with a consonant and having a short vowel between, forms a long quantity. This is certainly a relief in comparison with the numerous rules of classical Prosody, proved by not a few exceptions, which for instance in Dr. Smith's elementary Latin Grammar fill eight closely printed pages.

Before I proceed to show how from the prosodical unities, the moved and the quiescent letter, first the metrical elements, then the feet and lastly the metres are built up, it will be necessary to obviate a few misunderstandings, to which our mode of transliterating Arabic into the Roman character might give rise.

The line::

"Love in my heart they lit and went their ways," (vol. i. 232)

runs in Arabic:

"Akámú al-wajda fí kalbí wa sárú" (Mac. Ed. i. 179).

Here, according to our ideas, the word akamú would begin with a short vowel a, and contain two long vowels á and ú; according to Arabic views neither is the case. The word begins with "Alif," and its second syllable ká closes in Alif after Fathah (a), in the same way, as the third syllable mú closes in the letter Wáw (w) after Zammah (u).

The question, therefore, arises, what is "Alif." It is the first of the twenty-eight Arabic letters, and has through the medium of the Greek Alpha nominally entered into our alphabet, where it now plays rather a misleading part. Curiously enough, however, Greek itself has preserved for us the key to the real nature of the letter. In the initial a is preceded by the so called spiritus lends (‘), a sign which must be placed in front or at the top of any vowel beginning a Greek word, and which represents that slight aspiration or soft breathing almost involuntarily uttered, when we try to pronounce a vowel by itself. We need not go far to find how deeply rooted this tendency is and to what exaggerations it will sometimes lead. Witness the gentleman who, after mentioning that he had been visiting his “favourite haunts” on the scenes of his early life, was sympathetically asked, how the dear old ladies were. This spiritus lends is the silent h of the French “homme” and the English “honour,” corresponding exactly to the Arabic Hamzah, whose mere prop the Alif is, when it stands at the beginning of a word: a native Arabic Dictionary does not begin with Báb al-Alif (Gate or Chapter of the Alif), but with Báb al-Hamzah. What the Greeks call Alpha and have transmitted to us as a name for the vowel a, is in fact nothing else but the Arabic Hamzah-Alif,(~)moved by Fathah, i.e. bearing the sign(~) for a at the top (~), just as it might have the sign Zammah (~) superscribed to express u (~), or the sign Kasrah (~) subjoined to represent i(~). In each case the Hamzah-Alif, although scarcely audible to our ear, is the real letter and might fitly be rendered in transliteration by the above mentioned silent h, wherever we make an Arabic word begin with a vowel not preceded by any other sign. This latter restriction refers to the sign ‘, which in Sir Richard Burton’s translation of The Nights, as frequently in books published in this country, is used to represent the Arabic letter ~ in whose very name ‘Ayn it occurs. The ‘Ayn is “described as produced by a smart compression of the upper part of the windpipe and forcible emission of breath,” imparting a guttural tinge to a following or preceding vowel- sound; but it is by no means a mere guttural vowel, as Professor Palmer styles it. For Europeans, who do not belong to the Israelitic dispensation, as well as for Turks and Persians, its exact pronunciation is most difficult, if not impossible to acquire.

In reading Arabic from transliteration for the purpose of scanning poetry, we have therefore in the first instance to keep in mind that no Arabic word or syllable can begin with a vowel. Where our mode of rendering Arabic in the Roman character would make this appear to be the case, either Hamzah (silent h), or ‘Ayn (represented by the sign’) is the real initial, and the only element to be taken in account as a letter. It follows as a self- evident corollary that wherever a single consonant stands between two vowels, it never closes the previous syllable, but always opens the next one. Our word “Akámu,” for instance, can only be divided into the syllables: A (properly Ha)-ká-mú, never into Ak-á-mú or Ak-ám-ú.

It has been stated above that the syllable ká is closed by the letter Alif after Fathah, in the same way as the syllable mú is closed by the letter Wáw, and I may add now, as the word fí is closed by the letter Yá (y). To make this perfectly clear, I must repeat that the Arabic Alphabet, as it was originally written, deals only with consonants. The signs for the short vowel-sounds were added later for a special purpose, and are generally not represented even in printed books, e.g. in the various editions of The Nights, where only quotations from the Koran or poetical passages are provided with the vowel-points. But among those consonants there are three, called weak letters (Hurúf al-illah), which have a particular organic affinity to these vowel sounds: the guttural Hamzah, which is akin to a, the palatal Yá, which is related to i, and the labial Wáw, which is homogeneous with u. Where any of the weak letters follows a vowel of its own class, either at the end of a word or being itself followed by another consonant, it draws out or lengthens the preceding vowel and is in this sense called a letter of prolongation (Harf al-Madd). Thus, bearing in mind that the Hamzah is in reality a silent h, the syllable ká might be written kah, similarly to the German word “sah,” where the h is not pronounced either, but imparts a lengthened sound to the a. In like manner mú and fí are written in Arabic muw and fiy respectively, and form long quantities not because they contain a vowel long by nature, but because their initial “Muharrakah” is followed by a “Sákinah,” exactly as in the previously mentioned syllables taf, fun, mus.[449] In the Roman transliteration, Akámú forms a word of five letters, two of which are consonants, and three vowels; in Arabic it represents the combination H(a)k(a)hm(u)w, consisting also of five letters but all consonants, the intervening vowels being expressed in writing either merely by superadded external signs, or more frequently not at all. Metrically it represents one short and two long quantities (U - -), forming in Latin a trisyllable foot, called Bacchíus, and in Arabic a quinqueliteral "Rukn" (pillar) or "Juz" (part, portion), the technical designation for which we shall introduce presently.

There is one important remark more to be made with regard to the Hamzah: at the beginning of a word it is either conjunctive, Hamzat al-Wasl, or disjunctive, Hamzat al-Kat'. The difference is best illustrated by reference to the French so-called aspirated h, as compared with the above-mentioned silent h. If the latter, as initial of a noun, is preceded by the article, the article loses its vowel, and, ignoring the silent h altogether, is read with the following noun almost as one word: le homme becomes l'homme (pronounced lomme) as le ami becomes l'ami. This resembles very closely the Arabic Hamzah Wasl. If, on the other hand, a French word begins with an aspirated h, as for instance héros, the article does not drop its vowel before the noun, nor is the h sounded as in the English word "hero," but the effect of the aspirate is simply to keep the two vowel sounds apart, so as to pronounce le éros with a slight hiatus between, and this is exactly what happens in the case of the Arabic Hamzah Kat'.

With regard to the Wasl, however, Arabic goes a step further than French. In the French example, quoted above, we have seen it is the silent h and the preceding vowel which are eliminated; in Arabic both the Hamzah and its own Harakah, i.e. the short vowel following it, are supplanted by their antecedent. Another example will make this clear. The most common instance of the Hamzah Wasl is the article al (for h(a)l=the Hebrew hal), where it is moved by Fathah. But it has this sound only at the beginning of a sentence or speech, as in "Al-Hamdu" at the head of the Fatihah, or in "Alláhu" at the beginning of the third Surah. If the two words stand in grammatical connection, as in the sentence "Praise be to God," we cannot say "Al-Hamdu li-Alláhi," but the junction (Wasl) between the dative particle li and the noun which it governs must take place. According to the French principle, this junction would be effected at the cost of the preceding element and li Alláhi would become l'Alláhí; in Arabic, on the contrary, the kasrated l of the particle takes the place of the following fathated Hamzah and we read li 'lláhi instead.

Proceeding in the Fatihah we meet with the verse “Iyyáka na’budu wa iyyáka nasta’ínu,” Thee do we worship and of Thee do we ask aid. Here the Hamzah of iyyáka (properly hiyyáka with silent h) is disjunctive, and therefore its pronunciation remains the same at the beginning and in the middle of the sentence, or, to put it differently, instead of coalescing with the preceding wa into wa’yyáka, the two words are kept separate by the Hamzah, reading wa iyyáka, just as it was the case with the French Le héros.

If the conjunctive Hamzah is preceded by a quiescent letter, this takes generally Kasrah: “Tálat al-Laylah,” the night was longsome, would become Tálati ‘l-Laylah. If, however, the quiescent letter is one of prolongation, it mostly drops out altogether, and the Harakah of the next preceding letter becomes {he connecting vowel between the two words, which in our parlance would mean that the end vowel of the first word is shortened before the elided initial of the second. Thus “fí al-bayti,” in the house, which in Arabic is written f(i)y h(a)l-b(a)yt(i) and which we transliterate fí ‘l-bayti, is in poetry read fil-bayti, where we must remember that the syllable fil, in spite of its short vowel, represents a long quantity, because it consists of a moved letter followed by a quiescent one. Fíl would be overlong and could, according to Arabic prosody, stand only in certain cases at the end of a verse, i.e. in pause, where a natural tendency prevails to prolong a sound.

The attentive reader will now be able to fix the prosodical value of the line quoted above with unerring security. For metrical purposes it syllabifies into: A-ká-mul-vaj-da fí kal-bí wa sá-rú, containing three short and eight long quantities. The initial unaccented a is short, for the same reason why the syllables da and wa are so, that is, because it corresponds to an Arabic letter, the Hamzah or silent h, moved by Fathah. The syllables ká, fí, bí, sá, rú are long for the same reason why the syllables mul, waj, kal are so, that is, because the accent in the transliteration corresponds to a quiescent Arabic letter, following a moved one. The same simple criterion applies to the whole list, in which I give in alphabetical order the first lines and the metre of all the poetical pieces contained in the Mac. edition, and which will be found at the end of this volume. {This appendix is not included in the electronic text}

The prosodical unities, then, in Arabic are the moved and the quiescent letter, and we are now going to show how they combine into metrical elements, feet, and metres.

i. The metrical elements (Usúl) are:

1. The Sabab,[450] which consists of two letters and is either khafíf (light) or sakíl (heavy). A moved letter followed by a quiescent, i.e. a closed syllable, like the afore-mentioned taf, fun, mus, to which we may now add fá=fah, ‘í=‘iy, ‘ú=‘uw, form a Sabab khafíf, corresponding to the classical long quantity (-). Two moved letters in succession, like mute, ‘ala, constitute a Sabab sakíl, for which the classical name would be Pyrrhic (U U). As in Latin and Greek, they are equal in weight and can frequently interchange, that is to say, the Sabab khafíf can be evolved into a sakíl by moving its second Harf, or the latter contracted into the former, by making its second letter quiescent.

2. The Watad, consisting of three letters, one of which is quiescent. If the quiescent follows the two moved ones, the Watad is called majmú’ (collected or joined), as fa’ú (=fa’uw), mafá (=mafah), ‘ilun, and it corresponds to the classical Iambus (U -). If, on the contrary, the quiescent intervenes or separates between the two moved letters, as in fá’i (= fah’i), látu (=lahtu), taf’i, the Watad is called mafrúk (separated), and has its classical equivalent in the Trochee (- U)

3. The Fásilah,[451] containing four letters, i.e. three moved ones followed by a quiescent, and which, in fact, is only a shorter name for a Sabab sakíl followed by a Sabab khafíf, as mute + fá, or ‘ala + tun, both of the measure of the classical Anapaest (U U -)

ii. These three elements, the Sabab, Watad and Fásilah, combine further into feet Arkáan, pl. of Rukn, or Ajzáa, pl. of Juz, two words explained supra . The technical terms by which the feet are named are derivatives of the root fa’l, to do, which, as the student will remember, serves in Arabic Grammar to form the Auzán or weights, in accordance with which words are derived from roots. It consists of the three letters Fá (f), ‘Ayn (‘), Lám (l), and, like any other Arabic root, cannot strictly speaking be pronounced, for the introduction of any vowel-sound would make it cease to be a root and change it into an individual word. The above fa’l, for instance, where the initial Fá is moved by Fathah (a), is the Infinitive or verbal noun, "to do," "doing." If the ʻAyn also is moved by Fathah, we obtain fa'al, meaning in colloquial Arabic "he did" (the classical or literary form would be fa'ala). Pronouncing the first letter with Zammah (u), the second with Kasrah (i), i.e., fu'il, we say "it was done" (classically fu'ila). Many more forms are derived by prefixing, inserting or subjoining certain additional letters called Hurúf al-Ziyádah (letters of increase) to the original radicals: fá'il, for instance, with an Alif of prolongation in the first syllable, means "doer"; maf'úl (=maf'uwl), where the quiescent Fá is preceded by a fathated Mím (m), and the zammated ʻAyn followed by a lengthening Waw, means "done"; Mufá'alah, where, in addition to a prefixed and inserted letter, the feminine termination ah is subjoined after the Lám, means "to do a thing reciprocally." Since these and similar changes are with unvarying regularity applicable to all roots, the grammarians use the derivatives of Fa'l as model-forms for the corresponding derivations of any other root, whose letters are in this case called its Fá, ʻAyn and Lám. From a root, e.g., which has Káf (k) for its first letter or Fá, Tá (t) for its second letter or ʻAye, and Bá (b) for its third letter or Lám

fa'l would be katb =to write, writing;
fa'al would be katab =he wrote;
fu'il would be kutib =it was written;
fa'il would be katib =writer, scribe;
maf'úl would be maktúb=written, letter;
mufá'alah would be mukátabah = to write reciprocally, correspondence.

The advantage of this system is evident. It enables the student, who has once grasped the original meaning of a root, to form scores of words himself, and in his readings, to understand hundreds, nay thousands, of words, without recourse to the Dictionary, as soon as he has learned to distinguish their radical letters from the letters of increase, and recognises in them a familiar root. We cannot wonder, therefore, that the inventor of Arabic Prosody readily availed himself of the same plan for his own ends. The Taf'íl, as it is here called, that is, the representation of the metrical feet by current derivatives of fa’l, has in this case, of course, nothing to do with the etymological meaning of those typical forms. But it proves none the less useful in another direction: in simply naming a particular foot it shows at the same time its prosodical measure and character, as will now be explained in detail.

We have seen supra that the word Akámú consists of a short syllable followed by two long ones (U - -), and consequently forms a foot, which the classics would call Bacchíus. In Latin there is no connection between this name and the metrical value of the foot: we must learn both by heart. But if we are told that its Taf’íl in Arabic is Fa’úlun, we understand at once that it is composed of the Watad majmú’ fa’ú (U -) and the Sabab khafíf lun (-), and as the Watad contains three, the Sabab two letters, it forms a quinqueliteral foot or Juz khamásí.

In combining into feet, the Watad has the precedence over the Sabab and the Fásilah, and again the Watad majmú’ over the Watad mafrúk. Hence the Prosodists distinguish between Ajzá aslíyah or primary feet (from Asl, root), in which this precedence is observed, and Ájzá far’íyah or secondary feet (from Far’= branch), in which it is reversed. The former are four in number:- -

1. Fa’ú.lun, consisting,as we have just seen, of a Watad majmú’ followed by a Sabab khafíf = the Latin Bacchíus (U - -).

2. Mafá.’í.lun, i.e. Watad majmú’ followed by two Sabab khafíf = the Latin Epitritus primus (U - - -).

3. Mufá.’alatun, i.e. Watad majmú’ followed by Fásilah = the Latin Iambus followed by Anapaest (U - UU -).

4. Fá’i.lá.tun, i.e. Watad mafrúk followed by two Sabab khafíf = the Latin Epitritus secundus (-U- -).

The number of the secondary feet increases to six, for as Nos. 2 and 4 contain two Sabab, they “branch out” into two derived feet each, according to both Sabab or only one changing place with regard to the Watad. They are:

5. Fá.’ilun, i.e. Sabab khafíf followed by Watad majmú’= the Latin Creticus (-U-). The primary Fa’ú.lun becomes by transposition Lun.fa’ú. To bring this into conformity with a current derivative of fa’l, the initial Sabab must be made to contain the first letter of the

root, and the Watad the two remaining ones in their proper order. Fá is therefore substituted for lun, and ‘ilun for fa’ú, forming together the above Fá.’ilun. By similar substitutions, which it would be tedious to specify in each separate case, Mafá.’í.lun becomes:

6. Mus.taf.’ilun, for ‘Í.lun.mafá, i.e. two Sabab khafíf, followed by Watad majmú’ = the Latin Epitritus tertius (- -U-), or:

7. Fá.’ilá.tun, for Lun.mafá.’í, i.e. Watad majmú’ between two Sabab khafíf = the Latin Epitritus secundus (-U- -).

8. Mutafá.’ilun (for ‘Alatun.mufá, the reversed Mufá.’alatun), i.e. Fásilah followed by Watad majmú’=the Latin Anapaest succeeded by Iambus (UU-U-). The last two secondary feet are transpositions of No. 4, Fá’i.lá.tun, namely:

9. Maf.’ú.látu, for Lá.tun.fá’i, i.e. two Sabab khafíf, followed by Watad mafrúk = the Latin Epitritus quartus (- - -U).

10. Mus.taf’i.lun, for Tun.fá’i.lá, i.e. Watad mafrúk between two Sabab khafíf=the Latin Epitritus tertius (- -U-).[452]

The “branch”-foot Fá.’ilun (No. 5), like its “root” Fa’ú.lun (No. 1), is quinqueliteral. All other feet, primary or secondary, consist necessarily of seven letters, as they contain a triliteral Watad (see supra i. 2) with either two biliteral Sabab khafíf (i. 1) or a quadriliteral Fásilah (i. 3). They are, therefore, called Sabá’í = seven lettered.

iii. The same principle of the Watad taking precedence over Sabab and Fásilah, rules the arrangement of the Arabic metres, which are divided into five circles (Dawáir, pl. of Dáirah), so called for reasons presently to be explained. The first is named:

A. Dáirat al-Mukhtalif, circle of “the varied” metre, because it is composed of feet of various length, the five-lettered Fa’úlun (supra ii. 1) and the seven-lettered Mafá’ílun (ii. 2) with their secondaries Fá’ilun, Mustaf.’ilun and Fá.’ilátun (ii. 5-7), and it comprises three Buhúr or metres (pi. of Bahr, sea), the Tawíl, Madíd and Basít.

1. Al-Tawil, consisting of twice

Fa’ú.lun Mafá.’ílun Fa’ú.lun Mafá.’ílun,

the classical scheme for which would be

U - - | U - - - | U - - | U - - - |

If we transfer the Watad Fa’ú from the beginning of the line to the end, it would read:

Lun.mafá’í Lun.fa’ú Lun.mafá’í Lun.fa’ú which, after the substitutions indicated above (ii. 7 and 5), becomes:

2. Al-Madíd, consisting of twice
Fá.’ilátun Fá.’ilun Fá.’ilátun Fá.’ilun.
which may be represented by the classical scheme

- U - - | - U - | - U - - | - U - |

If again, returning to the Tawíl, we make the break after the Watad of the second foot we obtain the line:

‘Ílun.fa’ú. Lum.mafá ‘Ílun.fa’u Lun.mafá, and as metrically ‘Ílun.fa’ú (two Sabab followed by Watad) and Lun.mafá (one Sabab followed by Watad) are=‘Ílun.mafá and Lun.fa’ú respectively, their Taf’il is effected by the same substitutions as in ii. 5 and 6, and they become:

3. Basít, consisting of twice
Mustaf.’ilun Fá.’ilun Mustaf.’ilun Fá.’ilun,
in conformity with the classical scheme:

- - U - | - U - | - - U - | - U - |

Thus one metre evolves from another by a kind of rotation, which suggested to the Prosodists an ingenious device of representing them by circles (hence the name Dáirah), round the circumference of which on the outside the complete Taf’íl of the original metre is written, while each moved letter is faced by a small loop, each quiescent by a small vertical stroke[453] inside the circle. Then, in the case of this present Dáirat al-Mukhtalif for instance, the loop corresponding to the initial f of the first Fa’úlun is marked as the beginning of the Tawíl, that corresponding to its l (of the Sabab fun) as the beginning of the Madid, and that corresponding to the ‘Ayn of the next Mafá’ílun as the beginning of the Basít. The same process applies to all the following circles, but our limited space compels us simply to enumerate them, together with their Buhúr, without further reference to the mode of their evolution.

B. Dáirat al-Mútalif, circle of “the agreeing” metre, so called because all its feet agree in length, consisting of seven letters each. It contains:

1. Al-Wáfir, composed of twice
Mufá.’alatun Mufá.’alatun Mufá.’alatun (ii. 3)

= U - U U - | U - U U - | U - U U - |

where the Iambus in each foot precedes the Anapaest, and its reversal:

2. Al-Kámil, consisting of twice
Mutafá.’ilun Mutafá.’ilun Mutafá.’ilun (ii. 8)

= U U - U - | U U - U - | U U - U - |

where the Anapaest takes the first place in every foot.

C. Dáirat al-Mujtalab, circle of “the brought on” metre, so called because its seven-lettered feet are brought on from the first circle.

1. Al-Hazaj, consisting of twice
Mafá.’ílun Mafá.’ílun Mafá.’ílun (ii. 2)

= U - - - | U - - - | U - - - | U - - - |

2. Al-Rajaz, consisting of twice
Mustaf.’ilun Mustaf.’ilun Mustaf.’ilun,
and, in this full form, almost identical with the Iambic Trimeter of the Greek Drama:

- - U - | - - U - | - - U - |

3. Al-Ramal, consisting of twice
Fá.’ilátun Fá.’ilátun Fá.’ilátun,
the trochaic counterpart of the preceding metre

= - U - - | - U - - | - U - - |

D. Dáirat al-Mushtabih, circle of “the intricate” metre, so called from its intricate nature, primary mingling with secondary feet, and one foot of the same verse containing a Watad majmú’, another a Watad mafrúk, i.e. the iambic rhythm alternating with the trochaic and vice versa. Its Buhúr are:

1. Al-Sarí’, twice

Mustaf.’ilun Mustaf.’ilun Maf’ú.látu (ii. 6 and 9)
= - - U - | - - U - | - - - U |

2. Al-Munsarih, twice

Mustaf.’ilun Mafú.látu Mustaf.’ilun (ii. 6. 9. 6)
= - - U - | - - - U | - - U - |

3. Al-Khafíf, twice

Fá.’ílátun Mustaf’i.lun Fá.’ílátun (ii. 7.10.7)
= - U - - | - - U - | - U - - |

4. Al-Muzári’, twice

Mafá.’ílun Fá’í.látun Mafá.’ílun (ii. 2.4.2)
= U - - - | - U - - | U - - - |

5. Al-Muktazib, twice

Maf’ú.látu Mustaf.’ilun Maf’ú.látu (ii. 9.6.9)
= - - - U | - - U - | - - - U |

6. Al-Mujtass, twice

Mustaf’i.lun Fá.’ílátun Mustaf’ i.lun (ii. 10.7.10)
= - - U - | - U - - | - - U - |

E. Dáirat al-Muttafik, circle of “the concordant” metre, so called for the same reason why circle B is called “the agreeing,” i.e. because the feet all harmonise in length, being here, however, quinqueliteral, not seven-lettered as in the Mátalif. Al-Khalil the

inventor of the ‘‘Ilm al-’Arúz, assigns to it only one metre:
1. Al-Mutakárib, twice

Fa’úlun Fa’úlun Fa’úlun Fa’úlun (ii. 1)
= U - - | U - - | U - - |

Later Prosodists added:
2. Al-Mutadárak, twice

Fá’ilun Fá’ilun Fá’ilun Fá’ilun (ii. 5)
= - U - | - U - | - U - |

The feet and metres as given above are, however, to a certain extent merely theoretical; in practice the former admit of numerous licenses and the latter of variations brought about by modification or partial suppression of the feet final in a verse. An Arabic poem (Kasídah, or if numbering less than ten couplets, Kat’ah) consists of Bayts or couplets, bound together by a continuous rhyme, which connects the first two lines and is repeated at the end of every second line throughout the poem. The last foot of every odd line is called ‘Arúz (fem. in contradistinction of Arúz in the sense of Prosody which is masc.), pl. A’áiriz, that of every even line is called Zarb, pl. Azrub, and the remaining feet may be termed Hashw (stuffing), although in stricter parlance a further distinction is made between the first foot of every odd and even line as well.

Now with regard to the Hashw on the one hand, and the ‘Aruz and Zarb on the other, the changes which the normal feet undergo are of two kinds: Zuháf (deviation) and ‘Illah (defect). Zuháf applies, as a rule, occasionally and optionally to the second letter of a Sabab in those feet which compose the Hashw or body- part of a verse, making a long syllable short by suppressing its quiescent final, or contracting two short quantities in a long one, by rendering quiescent a moved letter which stands second in a Sabab sakíl. In Mustaf’ilun (ii. 6. = - - U -), for instance, the s of the first syllable, or the f of the second, or both may be dropped and it will become accordingly Mutaf’ilun, by substitution Mafá’ilun (U - U -), or Musta’ilun, by substitution, Mufta’ilun (- U U -), or Muta’ilun, by substitution

Fa’ilatun (U U U -).[454] This means that wherever the foot Mustaf.’ilun occurs in the Hashw of a poem, we can represent it by the scheme U U U - i.e. the Epitritus tertius can, by poetical licence, change into Diiambus, Choriambus or Paeon quartus. In Mufá’alatun (ii. 3. = U - U U -) and Mutafá’ilun (ii. 8. = U U - U -), again, the Sabab ‘ala and mute may become khafíf by suppression of their final Harakah and thus turn into Mufá’altun, by substitution Mafá’ílun (ii. 2. = U - - -), and Mutfá’ilun, by substitution Mustaf’ilun (ii 6.= - - U U as above). In other words the two feet correspond to the schemes U*U-U* and U-U-U-, where a Spondee can take the place of the Anapaest after or before the Iambus respectively.

‘Illah, the second way of modifying the primitive or normal feet, applies to both Sabab and Watad, but only in the ‘Aruz and Zarb of a couplet, being at the same time constant and obligatory. Besides the changes already mentioned, it consists in adding one or two letters to a Sabab or Watad, or curtailing them more or less, even to cutting them off altogether. We cannot here exhaust this matter any more than those touched upon until now, but must be satisfied with an example or two, to show the proceeding in general and indicate its object.

We have seen that the metre Basít consists of the two lines:

Mustaf.’ilun Fá.’ilun Mustaf’ilun Fá’ilun
Mustaf’ilun Fá’ilun Mustaf’ilun Fá’ilun.

This complete form, however, is not in use amongst Arab poets. If by the Zuháf Khabn, here acting as ‘Illah, the Alif in the final Fá’ilun is suppressed, changing it into Fa’ilun (U U -), it becomes the first ‘Aruz, called makhbúnah, of the Basít, the first Zarb of which is obtained by submitting the final Fá’ilun of the second line to the same process. A second Zarb results, if in Fá’ilun the final n of the ‘Watad ‘ilun is cut off and the preceding l made quiescent by the ‘Illah Kat’ thus giving Fá’il and by substitution Fa’lun (- -). Thus the formula becomes: —

Mustaf’ilun Fá’ilun Mustaf’ilun Fa’ilun
Mustaf’ilun Fá’ilun Mustaf’ilun{Fa’ilun

{Fa’lun

As in the Hashw, i.e. the first three feet of each line, the Khabn can likewise be applied to the medial Fá’ilun, and for Mustaf’ilun the poetical licences, explained above, may be introduced, this first ‘Arúz or Class of the Basít with its two Zarb or subdivisions will be represented by the scheme

U U | U | U U | - - U - | - U - | - - U U | U U -

U U | U { U U - - - U - | - U - { - -

that is to say in the first subdivision of this form of the Basít both lines of each couplet end with an Anapaest and every second line of the other subdivision terminates in a Spondee.

The Basít has four more A’áriz, three called majzúah, because each line is shortened by a Juz or foot, one called mashtúrah (halved), because the number of feet is reduced from four to two, and we may here notice that the former kind of lessening the number of feet is frequent with the hexametrical circles (B. C. D.), while the latter kind can naturally only occur in those circles whose couplet forms an octameter (A. E.). Besides being majzúah, the second ‘Aruz is sahíhah (perfect) consisting of the normal foot Mustaf’ilun. It has three Azrub: 1. Mustaf’ilán (- - U -, with an overlong final syllable, see supra), produced by the ‘Illah Tazyíl, i.e. addition of a quiescent letter at the end (Mustaf’ilunn, by substitution Mustaf’ilán); 2. Mustaf’ilun, like the ‘Aruz; 3. Maf’úlun (- - -), produced by the ‘Illah Kat’ (see the preceding page; Mustaf’ilun, by dropping the final n and making the l quiescent becomes Mustaf’il and by substitution Maf’úlun). Hence the formula is:

Mustaf’ilun Fá’ilun Mustaf’ilun
{ Mustaf’il n
Mustaf’ilun Fá’ilun{ Mustaf’ilun
{ Maf’úulun,

which, with its allowable licenses, may be represented by the scheme:

U U | U | - - U - | - U - | - - U -

{ U U
U U | U { - - U -
- - U - | - U - { - - U -
{ U
{ - - -

The above will suffice to illustrate the general method of the Prosodists, and we must refer the reader for the remaining classes and subdivisions of the Basít as well as the other metres to more special treatises on the subject, to which this Essay is intended merely as an introduction, with a view to facilitate the first steps of the student in an important, but I fear somewhat neglected, field of Arabic learning.

If we now turn to the poetical pieces contained in The Nights, we find that out of the fifteen metres, known to al-Khalil, or the sixteen of later Prosodists, instances of thirteen occur in the Mac. N. edition, but in vastly different proportions. The total number amounts to 1,385 pieces (some, however, repeated several times), out of which 1,128 belong to the first two circles, leaving only 257 for the remaining three. The same disproportionality obtains with regard to the metres of each circle. The Mukhtalif is represented by 331 instances of Tawíl and 330 of Basít against 3 of Madíd; the Mutalif by 321 instances of Kámil against 143 of Wafír; the Mujtalab by 32 instances of Ramal and 30 of Rajaz against 1 of Hazaj; the Mushtabih by 72 instances of Khafíf and 52 of Sarí’ against 18 of Munsarih and 15 of Mujtass; and lastly the Muttafik by 37 instances of Mutakárib. Neither the Mutadárak (E. 2), nor the Muzári’ and Muktazib (D. 4.5) are met with.

Finally it remains for me to quote a couplet of each metre, showing how to scan them, and what relation they bear to the theoretical formulas exhibited on to .

It is characteristic for the preponderance of the Tawíl over all the other metres, that the first four lines, with which my alphabetical list begins, are written in it. One of these belongs to a poem which has for its author Bahá al-Din Zuhayr (born A.D. 1186 at Mekkah or in its vicinity, ob. 1249 at Cairo), and is to be found in full in Professor Palmer's edition of his works, . Sir Richard Burton translates the first Bayt (vol. i. 290):

An I quit Cairo and her pleasances * Where can I hope to find so gladsome ways?

Professor Palmer renders it:

Must I leave Egypt where such joys abound?
What place can ever charm me so again ?

In Arabic it scans:

U - U | U - - - | U - U | U - U - |
A-arhalu'en Misrin wa tíbi na'ímihil[455]
U - U | U - - - | U - U | U - U - |
Fa-ayyu makánin ba'dahá li-ya sháiku.

In referring to iii. A. I. , it will be seen that in the Hashw Fa'úlun (U - -) has become Fa'úlu (U - U) by a Zuháf called Kabz (suppression of the fifth letter of a foot if it is quiescent) and that in the 'Arúz and Zarb Mafá'ílun (U - - -) has changed into Mafá'ilun (U - U -) by the same Zuháf acting as 'Illah. The latter alteration shows the couplet to be of the second Zarb of the first 'Arúz of the Tawíl. If the second line did terminate in Mafá'ílun, as in the original scheme, it would be the first Zarb of the same 'Arúz; if it did end in Fa'úlun (U - -) or Mafá'íl (U - -) it would represent the third or fourth subdivision of this first class respectively. The Tawíl has one other 'Arúz, Fa'úlun, with a twofold Zarb, either Fa'úlun also, or Mafá'ilun.

The first instance of the Basít occurring in The Nights are the lines translated vol. i. :

Containeth Time a twain of days, this of blessing, that of bane *
And holdeth Life a twain of halves, this of pleasure, that
of pain.

In Arabic (Mac. N. i. II):

- - U - | - U - | - - U - | U U - |
Al-Dahru yaumáni zá amnun wa zá hazaru

- - U - | - U - | - - U - | U U - |
Wa’l-’Ayshu shatráni zá safwun wa zá kadaru.

Turning back to , where the A’áríz and Azrub of the Basít are shown, the student will have no difficulty to recognise the Bayt as one belonging to the first Zarb of the first ‘Arúz.

As an example of the Madid we quote the original of the lines (vol. v. 131): —

I had a heart, and with it lived my life * ’Twas seared with fire
and burnt with loving-lowe.

They read in Arabic: —

- U - - | - U - | U U - |
Kána lí kalbun a’íshu bihi

- U - - | - U - | U - |
Fa’ktawá bi’l-nári wa’htarak.

If we compare this with the formula (iii. A. 2.), we find that either line of the couplet is shortened by a foot; it is, therefore, majzú. The first ‘Arúz of this abbreviated metre is Fá’ilátun (- U - -), and is called sahíhah (perfect) because it consists of the normal third foot. In the second ‘Arúz, Fá’ilátun loses its end syllable tun by the ‘Illah Hafz (suppression of a final Sabab khafíf), and becomes Fá’ilá (- U -), for which Fá’ilun is substituted. Shortening the first syllable of Fá’ilun, i.e. eliminating the Alif by Khabn, we obtain the third ‘Arúz Fa’ilun (U U -) as that of the present lines, which has two Azrub: Fa’ilun, like the ‘Arúz, and Fa’lun (- -), here, again by Khabn, further reduced to Fa’al (U -).

Ishak of Mosul, who improvises the piece, calls it “so difficult and so rare, that it went nigh to deaden the quick and to quicken the dead”; indeed, the native poets consider the metre Madíd as the most difficult of all, and it is scarcely ever attempted by later writers. This accounts for its rare occurrence in The Nights, where only two more instances are to be found, Mac. N. ii. 244 and iii. 404.

The second and third circle will best be spoken of together, as the Wáfir and Kámil have a natural affinity to the Hazaj and Rajaz. Let us revert to the line: —

U - - - | U - - - | U - - |
Akámú ‘l-wajda fí kalbí wa sárú.

Translated, as it were, into the language of the Prosodists it will be: —

Mafá’ílun[456] ‘Mafá’ílun Fa’úlun,

and this, standing by itself, might prima facie be taken for a line of the Hazaj (iii. C. I), with the third Mafá’ílun shortened by Hafz (see above) into Mafá’í for which Fa’úlun would be substituted. We have seen () that and how the foot Mufá’alatun can change into Mafá’ílun, and if in any poem which otherwise would belong to the metre Hazaj, the former measure appears even in one foot only along with the latter, it is considered to be the original measure, and the poem counts no longer as Hazaj but as Wáfir. In the piece now under consideration, it is the second Bayt where the characteristic foot of the Wáfir first appears: —

U - - - | U - U U | U - - |
Naat ‘anní’l-rubú’u wa sákiníhá

U - U U - | U - U U - | U - - |
Wa kad ba’uda ‘l-mazáru fa-lá mazáru.

Anglicè (vol. iii. 296): —

Far lies the camp and those who camp therein; * Far is her tent
shrine where I ne’er shall tent.

It must, however, be remarked that the Hazaj is not in use as a hexameter, but only with an ‘Arúz majzúah or shortened by one foot. Hence it is only in the second ‘Arúz of the Wafír, which is likewise majzúah, that the ambiguity as to the real nature of the metre can arise;[457] and the isolated couplet: —

U - - - | U - - - | U - - |
Yárídu ‘l-mar-u an yu’tá munáhu

U - - - | U - - - | U - - |
Wa yabá ‘lláhu illá ma yurídu

Man wills his wish to him accorded be, * But Allah naught accords
save what he wills (vol. iv. 157),

being hexametrical, forms undoubtedly part of a poem in Wafír although it does not contain the foot Mufá’alatun at all. Thus the solitary instance of Hazaj in The Nights is Abú Nuwás’ abomination, beginning with: —

U - - - | U - - - |

Fa-lá tas’au ilá ghayrí

U - - - | U - - - |
Fa-’indi ma’dinu ‘l-khayri (Mac. N. ii. 377).

Steer ye your steps to none but me * Who have a mine of luxury
(vol. v. 65).

If in the second ‘Arúz of the Wáfir, Maf’áílun (U - - -) is further shortened to Mafá’ilun (U - U -), the metre resembles the second ‘Arúz of Rajaz, where, as we have seen, the latter foot can, by licence, take the place of the normal Mustaf’ilun (- - U -).

The Kámil bears a similar relation to the Rajaz, as the Wáfir bears to the Hazaj. By way of illustration we quote from Mac. N. ii. 8 the first two Bayts of a little poem taken from the 23rd Assembly of Al Hariri: —

- - U - | - - U - | U U - U - |
Yá khátiba ‘l-dunyá ‘l-daniyyati innahá

U U - U - | U U - U - | - - - |
Sharaku 'l-radà wa karáratu 'l-akdári

- - U - | - - U - | - - U - |
Dárun matà má azhakat fí yaumiha

- - U - | - - U - | - - - |
Abkat ghadan bu'dan lahá min dári.

In Sir Richard Burton's translation (vol. iii. 319): —

O thou who woo'st a World unworthy, learn * 'Tis house of evils, 'tis Perdition's net:
A house where whoso laughs this day shall weep * The next; then perish house of fume and fret.

The 'Arúz of the first couplet is Mutafá'ilun, assigning the piece to the first or perfect (sahíhah) class of the Kámil. In the Hashw of the opening line and in that of the whole second Bayt this normal Mutafá'ilun has, by licence, become Mustaf'ilun, and the same change has taken place in the 'Arúz of the second couplet; for it is a peculiarity which this metre shares with a few others, to allow certain alterations of the kind Zuháf in the 'Arúz and Zarb as well as in the Hashw. This class has three subdivisions: the Zarb of the first is Mutafá'ilun, like the 'Arúz the Zarb of the second is Fa'alátun (U U - -), a substitution for Mutafá'il which latter is obtained from Mutafá'ilun by suppressing the final n and rendering the l quiescent; the Zarb of the third is Fa'lun (- - -) for Mútfá, derived from Mutafá'ilun by cutting off the Watad 'ilun and dropping the medial a of the remaining Mutafá.

If we make the 'Ayn of the second Zarb Fa'alátun also quiescent by the permitted Zuháf Izmár, it changes into Fa'látun, by substitution Maf 'úlun (- - -) which terminates the rhyming lines of the foregoing quotation. Consequently the two couplets taken together, belong to the second Zarb of the first 'Aruz of the Kámil, and the metre of the poem with its licences may be represensed by the scheme:

- | - | - |
U U - U - | U U - U - | U U - U - |

- | - | - |
U U - U - | U U - U - | U U - - |

Taken isolated, on the other hand, the second Bayt might be of the metre Rajaz, whose first ‘Arúz Mustaf’ilun has two Azrub: one equal to the Arúz, the other Maf’últun as above, but here substituted for Mustaf’il after applying the ‘Illah Kat’ (see p 247) to Mustaf’ilun. If this were the metre of the poem throughout the scheme with the licences peculiar to the Rajaz would be:

U U | U U | U U | - - U U | - - U - | - - U - |

U U | U U | U | - - U - | - - U - | - - - |

The pith of Al-Hariri’s Assembly is that the knight errant not to say the arrant wight of the Romance, Abú Sayd of Sarúj accuses before the Walí of Baghdad his pretended pupil, in reality his son, to have appropriated a poem of his by lopping off two feet of every Bayt. If this is done in the quoted lines, they read:

- - U - | - - U - |
Yá khátiba ‘l-dunyá ‘l-dandy.

U U - U | U U - U - |
Yati innahá sharaku ‘l-radá

- - U - | - - U - |
Dárun matà má azhakat,

- - U - | - - U - |
Fí yaumihá abkat ghadá,

with a different rhyme and of a different variation of metre. The amputated piece belongs to the fourth Zarb of the third ‘Aruz of Kámil, and its second couplet tallies with the second subdivision of the second class of Rajaz.

The Rajaz, an iambic metre pure and simple, is the most popular, because the easiest, in which even the Prophet was caught napping sometimes, at the dangerous risk of following the perilous leadership of Imru 'l-Kays. It is the metre of improvisation, of ditties, and of numerous didactic poems. In the latter case, when the composition is called Urjúzah, the two lines of every Bayt rhyme, and each Bayt has a rhyme of its own. This is the form in which, for instance, Ibn Málik's Alfíyah is written, as well as the remarkable grammatical work of the modern native scholar, Nasíf al-Yazijí, of which a notice will be found in Chenery's Introduction to his Translation of Al-Hariri.

While the Hazaj and Rajaz connect the third circle with the first and second, the Ramal forms the link between the third and fourth Dáirah. Its measure Fá'ilátun (- U - -) and the reversal of it, Maf'úlátu (- - - U), affect the trochaic rhythm, as opposed to the iambic of the two first-named metres. The iambic movement has a ring of gladness about it, the trochaic a wail of sadness: the former resembles a nimble pedestrian, striding apace with an elastic step and a cheerful heart; the latter is like a man toiling along on the desert path, where his foot is ever and anon sliding back in the burning sand (Raml, whence probably the name of the metre). Both combined in regular alternation, impart an agitated character to the verse, admirably fit to express the conflicting emotions of a passion stirred mind.

Examples of these more or less plaintive and pathetic metres are numerous in the Tale of Uns al-Wujúd and the Wazir's Daughter, which, being throughout a story of love, as has been noted, vol. v. 33, abounds in verse, and, in particular, contains ten out of the thirty two instances of Ramal occurring in The Nights. We quote:

Ramal, first Zarb of the first 'Arúz (Mac. N. ii. 361):

  - U - - | U U - - | - U - |
Inna li 'l-bulbuli sautan fí 'l-sahar

  - U - - | U U - - | - U - |
Ashghala 'l-áshika 'an husni 'l-water

The Bulbul's note, whenas dawn is nigh * Tells the lover from strains of strings to fly (vol. v. 48).

Sarí', second Zarb of the first 'Arúz (Mac. N. ii. 359):

U - U - | - - U - | - U - |
Wa fákhitin kad kála fí nauhihi

- - U - | - - U - | - U - |
Yá Dáiman shukran 'alà balwatí

I heard a ringdove chanting soft and plaintively, * "I thank
Thee, O Eternal for this misery" (vol. v. 47).

Khafíf, full or perfect form (sahíh), both in Zarb and 'Arúz (Mac. N. ii. 356):

- U - - | U - U - | - U - - |
Yá li-man ashtakí 'l-gharáma 'llazí bi

U U - - | U - U - | - U - - |
Wa shujúní wa furkatí 'an habíbí

O to whom now of my desire complaining sore shall I * Bewail my
parting from my fere compellèd thus to fly (vol. v. 44).

Mujtass, the only 'Arúz (majzúah sahíhah, i.e. shortened by one foot and perfect) with equal Zarb (Mac. N. ii. 367):

- - U - | U U - - |
Ruddú 'alayya habíbí

- - U - | - U - - |
Lá hajatan lí bi-málin

To me restore my dear * I want not wealth untold (vol. v. 55).

As an instance of the Munsarih, I give the second occurring in The Nights, because it affords me an opportunity to show the student how useful a knowledge of the laws of Prosody frequently proves for ascertaining the correct reading of a text. Mac. N. i. 33 we find the line:

- U U - | - U U - | - U U - |
Arba'atun má 'jtama'at kattu izá.

This would be Rajaz with the licence Mufta'ilun for Mustaf'ilun. But the following lines of the fragment evince, that the metre is Munsarih; hence, a clerical error must lurk somewhere in the second foot. In fact, on page 833 of the same volume, we find the piece repeated, and here the first couplet reads

- U U - | - U - U | - U U - |
Arba'atun má 'jtama'na kattu siwà

U - U - | - U - U | - U U - |
Alà azá mujhatí wa safki damí

Four things which ne'er conjoin unless it be * To storm my vitals
and to shed my blood (vol. iii. 237).

The Mutákarib, the last of the metres employed in The Nights, has gained a truly historical importance by the part which it plays in Persian literature. In the form of trimetrical double-lines, with a several rhyme for each couplet, it has become the "Nibelungen"-stanza of the Persian epos: Firdausí's immortal "Book of Kings" and Nizámi's Iskander-námah are written in it, not to mention a host of Masnawis in which Sufic mysticism combats Mohammedan orthodoxy. On account of its warlike and heroical character, therefore, I choose for an example the knightly Jamrakán's challenge to the single fight in which he conquers his scarcely less valiant adversary Kaurajan, Mac. N. iii. 296:

U - - | U - U | U - - | U - - |
Aná 'l-Jamrakánu kawiyyn 'l-janáni

U - - | U - U | U - - | U - - |
Jamí'u 'l-fawárisi takhshà kitálí.

Here the third syllable of the second foot in each line is shortened by licence, and the final Kasrah of the first line, standing in pause, is long, the metre being the full form of the Mutakárib as exhibited , iii. E. 1. If we suppress the Kasrah of al-Janáni, which is also allowable in pause, and make the second line to rhyme with the first, saying, for instance:

U - - | U - U | U - - | U -
Aná ‘l-Jamrakánu kawiyyu ‘l-janán

U - - | U - - | U - - | U -
La-yakshà kitálí shijá’u ‘l-zamán,

we obtain the powerful and melodious metre in which the Sháhnámah sings of Rustam’s lofty deeds, of the tender love of Rúdabah and the tragic downfall of Siyawush

Shall I confess that in writing the foregoing pages it has been my ambition to become a conqueror, in a modest way, myself: to conquer, I mean, the prejudice frequently entertained, and shared even by my accomplished countryman, Rückert, that Arabic Prosody is a clumsy and repulsive doctrine. I have tried to show that it springs naturally from the character of the language, and, intimately connected, as it is, with the grammatical system of the Arabs, it appears to me quite worthy of the acumen of a people, to whom, amongst other things, we owe the invention of Algebra, the stepping-stone of our whole modern system of Mathematics I cannot refrain, therefore, from concluding with a little anecdote anent al-Khalíl, which Ibn Khallikán tells in the following words. His son went one day into the room where his father was, and on finding him scanning a piece of poetry by the rules of Prosody he ran out and told the people that his father had lost his wits. They went in immediately and related to al-Khalíl what they had heard, on which he addressed his son in these terms:

“Had you known what I was saying, you would have excused me, and had you known what you said, I should have blamed you But you did not understand me, so you blamed me, and I knew that you were ignorant, so I pardoned you.”

L’Envoi.

Here end, to my sorrow, the labours of a quarter-century, and here I must perforce say with the “poets’ Poet,”

> “Behold! I see the haven nigh at hand,
> To which I mean my wearie course to bend;
> Vere the main shete, and bear up with the land
> The which afore is fairly to be ken’d.”

Nothing of importance now indeed remains for me but briefly to estimate the character of my work and to take cordial leave of my readers, thanking them for the interest they have accorded to these volumes and for enabling me thus successfully to complete the decade.

Without pudor malus or over-diffidence I would claim to have fulfilled the promise contained in my Foreword. The anthropological notes and notelets, which not only illustrate and read between the lines of the text, but assist the student of Moslem life and of Arabo-Egyptian manners, customs and language in a multitude of matters shunned by books, form a repertory of Eastern knowledge in its esoteric phase, sexual as well as social.

To assert that such lore is unnecessary is to state, as every traveller knows, an “absurdum.” Few phenomena are more startling than the vision of a venerable infant, who has lived half his long life in the midst of the wildest anthropological vagaries and monstrosities, and yet who absolutely ignores all that India or Burmah enacts under his very eyes. This is crass ignorance, not the naive innocence of Saint Francis who, seeing a man and a maid in a dark corner, raised his hands to Heaven and thanked the Lord that there was still in the world so much of Christian Charity.

Against such lack of knowledge my notes are a protest; and I may claim success despite the difficulty of the task. A traveller familiar with Syria and Palestine, Herr Landberg, writes, “La plume refuserait son service, la langue serait insuffisante, si celui qui connait la vie de tous les jours des Orientaux, surtout des classes élévees, voulait la devoiler. L’Europe est bien loin d’en avoir la moindre idée.”

In this matter I have done my best, at a time too when the hapless

English traveller is expected to write like a young lady for young ladies, and never to notice what underlies the most superficial stratum. And I also maintain that the free treatment of topics usually taboo'd and held to be "alekta" — unknown and unfitted for publicity — will be a national benefit to an "Empire of Opinion," whose very basis and buttresses are a thorough knowledge by the rulers of the ruled. Men have been crowned with gold in the Capitol for lesser services rendered to the Respublica.

That the work contains errors, shortcomings and many a lapsus, I am the first and foremost to declare. Yet in justice to myself I must also notice that the maculæ are few and far between; even the most unfriendly and interested critics have failed to point out an abnormal number of slips. And before pronouncing the "Vos plaudite!" or, as Easterns more politely say, "I implore that my poor name may be raised aloft on the tongue of praise," let me invoke the fair field and courteous favour which the Persian poet expected from his readers.

> (Veil it, an fault thou find, nor jibe nor jeer: —
> None may be found of faults and failings clear!)

RICHARD F. BURTON.

Athenæum Club, September 30, 86.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

APPENDIX

Memorandum

I make no apology for the number and extent of bibliographical and other lists given in this Appendix: they may cumber the book but they are necessary to complete my design. This has been to supply throughout the ten volumes the young Arabist and student of Orientalism and Anthropology with such assistance as I can render him; and it is my conviction that if with the aid of this version he will master the original text of the "Thousand Nights and a Night," he will find himself at home amongst educated men in Egypt and Syria, Najd and Mesopotamia, and be able to converse with them like a gentleman; not, as too often happens in Anglo- India, like a "Ghoráwálá" (groom). With this object he will learn by heart what instinct and inclination suggest of the proverbs and instances, the verses, the jeux d'esprit and especially the Koranic citations scattered about the text; and my indices will enable him to hunt up the tale or the verses which he may require for quotation wven when writing an ordinary letter to a "native" correspondent. Thus he will be spared the wasted labour of wading through volumes in order to pick up a line.

The following is the list of indices: —

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Appendix I.

I. Index to the Tales in the ten Volumes. II. Alphabetical Table of the Notes (Anthropological, etc.) prepared by F. Steingass, Ph.D. III. Alphabetical Table of First Lines (metrical portion) in English and Arabic, prepared by Dr. Steingass. IV. Tables of Contents of the various Arabic texts. A. The Unfinished Calcutta Edition (1814-18). B. The Breslau Text (1825-43) from Mr. Payne's Version. C. The MacNaghten or Turner-Macan Text (A.D. 1839-42) and the Bulak Edition (A.H. 1251 = A.D. 1835-36), from Mr. Payne's Version. D. The same with Mr. Lane's and my Version.

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Appendix II.

Contributions to the Bibliography of the Thousand and One Nights, and their Imitations, with a Table shewing the contents of the principal editions and translations of The Nights. By W. F. Kirby, Author of “Ed-Dimiryaht, and Oriental Romance”; “The New Arabian Nights,” $c.

Appendix I
Index I

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Prepared by F. Steingass, Ph.D.
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Prepared by Dr. Steingass.

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I asked the author of mine ills, ii. 60.

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I embrace him, yet after him yearns my soul, ix. 242.
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I feed eyes on their stead by the valley's side, iii. 234
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I'm estranged fro' my folk and estrangement's long, iii. 71.
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I'm the noted Knight in the field of fight, vii. 18.
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I marvel hearing people questioning, ii. 293
I marvel in Iblis such pride to see, vii. 139.
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I past by a broken tomb amid a garth right sheen, ii. 325.
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I see not happiness lies in gathering gold, ii. 166.
I see the woes of the world abound, i. 298.
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I see thee full of song and plaint and love's own ecstasy, iii.

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I see you with my heart from far countrie, vii. 93.
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I walk for fear of interview the weakling’s walk, v. 147.
I wander ‘mid these walls, my Layla’s walls, i. 238.
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I weep for longing love’s own ardency, vii. 369.
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If another share in the thing I love, iv. 234.
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If I to aught save you, O lords of me, incline, vii. 369.
If ill betide thee through thy slave, i. 194.
If Kings would see their high emprize preserved, v. 106.
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If Time unite us after absent while, i. 157.
If your promise of personal call prove untrue, iii. 252.
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In her cheek cornered nine calamities, viii. 86.
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In ruth and mildness surety lies, ii. 160.
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In thought I see thy form when farthest far or nearest near, ii. 42
In thy whole world there is not one, iv. 187.
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Incline not to parting, I pray, viii. 314.
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Indeed I am consoled now and sleep without a tear, iv. 242.
Indeed I deem thy favours might be bought, iii. 34.
Indeed I hourly need thy choicest aid, v. 281.
Indeed I'll bear my love for thee with firmest soul, iv. 241.
Indeed I longed to share unweal with thee, iii. 323.
Indeed I'm heart-broken to see thee start, viii. 63.
Indeed I'm strong to bear whatever befal, iii. 46.
Indeed my heart loves all the lovely boys, ix. 253.
Indeed, ran my tears on the severance day, vii. 64.
Indeed, to watch the darkness moon he blighted me, iii. 277.
Irks me my fate and clean unknows that I, viii. 130.
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Is it not strange one house us two contain iv. 279.
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It happed one day a hawk pounced on a bird, iv. 103
It runs through every joint of them as runs, x. 39.
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It was as though the sable dye upon her palms, iii. 105.

Jamil, in Holy War go fight! to me they say: ii. 102.
Jahannam, next Lazá, and third Hatim, v. 240.
Jamrkan am I! and a man of might, vii. 23.
Joy from stroke of string cloth to me incline, viii. 227.
Joy is nigh, O Masrúr, so rejoice in true rede, viii. 221.

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Joy of boughs, bright branch of Myrobalan! viii. 213.
Joy so o'ercometh me, for stress of joy, v. 355.
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Kingdom with none endures: if thou deny this truth, where be the Kings of earlier earth? i. 129.
Kinsmen of mine were those three men who came to thee, iv. 289.
Kisras and Cæsars in a bygone day, ii. 41.
Kiss then his fingers which no fingers are, iv. 147.

Lack of good is exile to man at home, ix. 199.
Lack gold abaseth man and cloth his worth away, ix. 290.
Lady of beauty, say, who taught thee hard and harsh design, iii.

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Laud to my Lord who gave thee all of loveliness, iv. 143.
Leave this blame, I will list to no enemy's blame! iii. 61.
Leave this thy design and depart, O man! viii. 212.
Leave thou the days to breed their ban and bate, ii. 41.
Leave thy home for abroad an wouldest rise on high, ix. 138.
Let days their folds and plies deploy, ii. 309.
Let destiny with slackened rein its course appointed fare! viii.

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Let Fate with slackened bridle fare her pace, iv. 173.
Let Fortune have her wanton way, i. 107.
Let thy thought be ill and none else but ill, iii. 142.
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Life has no sweet for me since forth ye fared, iii. 177.
Like are the orange hills when zephyr breathes, viii. 272.
Like a tree is he who in wealth cloth wone, ii. 14.
Like fullest moon she shines on happiest night, v. 347.
Like moon she shines amid the starry sky, v.32.
Like peach in vergier growing, viii. 270.

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327.

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Long have I chid thee, but my chiding hindereth thee not, vii.

225.

Long have I wept o’er severance ban and bane, i. 249.
Long I lamented that we fell apart, ii. 187.
Long, long have I bewailed the sev’rance of our loves, iii. 275.
Long was my night for sleepless misery, iv. 263.
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Look at the I.ote-tree, note on boughs arrayed, viii. 271.
Look at the apricot whose bloom contains, viii. 268.
Look on the Pyramids and hear the twain, v. 106.
Love, at first sight, is a spurt of spray, vii. 280.
Love, at the first, is a spurt of spray, vii. 330.
Love for my fair they chide in angry way. iii. 233.
Love in my breast they lit and fared away, iii. 296.
Love in my heart they lit and went their ways, i. 232.
Love-longing urged me not except to trip in speech o’er free, ix.

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Love smote my frame so sore on parting day, ii. 152.
Love’s tongue within my heart speaks plain to thee, iv. 135.
Love’s votaries I ceased not to oppose, iii. 290.
Lover with his beloved loseth will and aim, v. 289.
Lover, when parted from the thing he loves, viii. 36.
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Make thy game by guile for thou’rt born in a time, iii. 141.
Man is known among men as his deeds attest, ix. 164.
Man wills his wish to him accorded be, iv.
Many whose ankle rings are dumb have tinkling belts, iii. 302.
Masrur joys life made fair by all delight of days, nil. 234.
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May coins thou makest joy in heart instil, ix. 69.
May God deny me boon of troth if I, viii. 34.
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Mazed with thy love no more I can feign patience, viii. 321.
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Men and dogs together are all gone by, iv. 268.
Men are a hidden malady iv. 188.
Men craving pardon will uplift their hands, iii. 304.
Men have ‘plained of pining before my time, iii. 183.
Men in their purposes are much alike, vii. 169.
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Methought she was the forenoon sun until she donned the veil, viii. 284.
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Mine eyes I admire that can feed their fill, viii. 224
Mine eyes ne’er looked on aught the Almond like, viii. 270.
Mine eyes were dragomans for my tongue betied, i 121.
Mine is a Chief who reached most haught estate, i. 253.
‘Minish this blame I ever bear from you, iii. 60.
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Most beautiful is earth in budding bloom, ii. 86.
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My body bides the sad abode of grief and malady, iv. 230.
My censors say, What means this pine for him? v. 158.
My charmer who spellest my piety, ix. 243.

My coolth of eyes, the darling child of me, v. 260.
My day of bliss is that when thou appearest, iii. 291.
My friend I prithee tell me, ‘neath the sky, v. 107.
My friend who went hath returned once more, Vi. 196.
My friends, despite this distance and this cruelty, viii. 115.
My friends, I yearn in heart distraught for him, vii. 212.
My friends! if ye are banisht from mine eyes, fin 340.
My friends, Rayya hath mounted soon as morning shone, vii. 93.
My fondness, O my moon, for thee my foeman is, iii. 256.
My heart disheartened is, my breast is strait, ii. 238.
My heart is a thrall: my tears ne’er abate, viii. 346.
My life for the scavenger! right well I love him, i. 312.
My life is gone but love longings remain, viii. 345.
My longing bred of love with mine unease for ever grows, vii. 211.
My Lord hath servants fain of piety, v. 277.
My lord, this be the Sun, the Moon thou hadst before, vii. 143.
My lord, this full moon takes in Heaven of thee new birth, vii. 143.
My love a meeting promised me and kept it faithfully, iii. 195.
My loved one’s name in cheerless solitude aye cheereth me, v. 59.
My lover came in at the close of night, iv. 124.
My lover came to me one night, iv. 252.
My mind’s withdrawn from Zaynab and Nawar, iii. 239.
My patience failed me when my lover went, viii. 259.
My patience fails me and grows anxiety, viii. 14.
My prickle is big and the little one said, iii. 302.
My Salám to the Fawn in the garments concealed, iv. 50.
My sin to thee is great, iv. 109.
My sister said, as saw she how I stood, iii. 109.
My sleeplessness would show I love to bide on wake, iii. 195.
My soul and my folk I engage for the youth, vii. 111.
My soul for loss of lover sped I sight, viii. 67.

My soul be sacrifice for one, whose going, iii. 292.
My soul thy sacrifice! I chose thee out, iii. 303.
My soul to him who smiled back my salute, iii. 168.
My tale, indeed, is tale unlief, iv. 265.
My tears thus flowing rival with my wine, iii. 169.
My tribe have slain that brother mine, Umaym, iv. 110.
My wish, mine illness, mine unease! by Allah, own, viii. 68.
My wrongs hide I, withal they show to sight, viii. 260.
My yearning for thee though long is fresh, iv. 211.

Naught came to salute me in sleep save his shade, vii. 111.
Naught garred me weep save where and when of severance spake he, viii. 63.
Nears my parting fro, my love, nigher draws the severance-day, viii. 308.
Need drives a man into devious roads, ii. 14.
Needs must I bear the term by Fate decreed, ii. 41.
Ne’er cease thy gate be Ka’abah to mankind, iv. 148.
Ne’er dawn the severance-day on any wise, viii. 49.
Ne’er incline thee to part, ii. 105.
Ne’er was a man with beard grown over. long, viii. 298.
News my wife wots is not locked in a box! i. 311.
News of my love fill all the land, I swear, iii. 287.
No breeze of Union to the lover blows, viii. 239.
No! I declare by Him to whom all bow, v. 152.
No longer beguile me, iii. 137.
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None but the good a secret keep, And good men keep it unrevealed, i. 87.
None but the men of worth a secret keep, iii. 289.
None keepeth a secret but a faithful person, iv. 233.
None other charms but shine shall greet mine eyes, i. 156.
None wotteth best joyance but generous youth v. 67.
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Now an, by Allah, unto man were fully known, iii. 128.
Now, an of woman ask ye, I reply, iii. 214.
Now blame him not; for blame brings only vice and pain, ii. 297.
Now, by my life, brown hue hath point of comeliness, iv. 258.
Now, by thy life, and wert thou just my life thou hadst not ta’en, i. 182.
Now, by your love! your love I’ll ne’er forget, viii, 315.
Now I indeed will hide desire and all repine, v. 267.
Now is my dread to incur reproaches which. 59.
Now love hast banished all that bred delight, iii. 259.
Now with their says and said no more vex me the chiding race, iv.

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O adornment of beauties to thee write I vii. 176.
O beauty’s Union! love for thee’s my creed, iii. 303.
O best of race to whom gave Hawwá boon of birth, v. 139.
O bibber of liquor, art not ashamed v. 224.
O breeze that blowest from the land Irak viii. 103.
O child of Adam let not hope make mock and flyte at thee vi. 116
O culver of the copse, with salams I greet, v. 49.
O day of joys to either lover fain! v. 63.
O dwelling of my friends, say is there no return, viii. 319.
O fair ones forth ye cast my faithful love, ix. 300.
O fertile root and noble growth of trunk, ii. 43.
O fisherman no care hast thou to fear, v. 51.
O flier from thy home when foes affright! v. 290.
O friends of me one favour more I pray v. 125.
O glad news bearer well come! ii. 326.
O hail to him whose locks his cheeks o’er shade, x. 58.
O Hayat al-Nufuis be gen’rous and incline vii. 217.
O heart, an lover false thee, shun the parting bane, viii.94.
O heart! be not thy love confined to one, iii. 232.
O hope of me! pursue me not with rigour and disdain, iii. 28.
O joy of Hell and Heaven! whose tormentry, iii. 19.
O Keener, O sweetheart, thou fallest not short, i. 311.
O Kings of beauty, grace to prisoner ta’en, viii. 96.

O Lord, by the Five Shaykhs, I pray deliver me, vii. 226.
O Lord, how many a grief from me hast driven, v. 270.
O Lord, my foes are fain to slay me in despight, viii. 117.
O Lords of me, who fared but whom my heart e’er followeth, iv 239
O Love, thou’rt instant in thy cruellest guise, iv. 204.
O lover thou bringest to thought a tide, v. 50.
O Maryam of beauty return for these eyne, viii. 321.
O Miriam thy chiding I pray, forego, ix. 8.
O moon for ever set this earth below, iii. 323.
O Moslem! thou whose guide is Alcorán iv. 173.
O most noble of men in this time and stound, iv. 20.
O my censor who wakest amorn to see viii. 343.
O my friend, an I rendered my life, my sprite, ix. 214.
O my friend! reft of rest no repose I command, ii. 35.
O my friends, have ye seen or have ye heard vi. 174.
O my heart’s desire, grows my misery, vii. 248.
O my Lord, well I weet thy puissant hand, vi. 97.
O Night of Union, Time’s virginal prize viii. 328.
O my lords, shall he to your minds occur ix. 299.
O Night here I stay! I want no morning light, iv. 144.
O passing Fair I have none else but thee, vii. 365.
O pearl-set mouth of friend, iv. 231.
O pearly mouth of friend, who set those pretty pearls in line, iv. 231.
O Rose, thou rare of charms that dost contain, viii. 275.
O sire, be not deceived by worldly joys, v. 114.
O son of mine uncle! same sorrow I bear, iii. 61.
O spare me, thou Ghazban, indeed enow for me, ii. 126.
O Spring-camp have ruth on mine overthrowing, viii. 240.
O thou Badi’a ‘l-Jamál, show thou some clemency, vii. 368.
O thou of generous seed and true nobility, vi. 252.
O thou sheeniest Sun who m night dost shine, viii. 215.
O Thou the One, whose grace cloth all the world embrace, v. 272.
O thou tomb! O thou tomb! be his horrors set in blight? i. 76.
O thou to whom sad trembling wights in fear complain! iii. 317.
O thou who barest leg-calf better to suggest, ii. 327.
O thou who claimest to be prey of love and ecstasy, vii. 220.

O thou who deignest come at sorest sync, iii.78.
O thou who dost comprise all Beauty's boons! vii. 107.
O thou who dyest hoariness with black, viii. 295.
O thou who fearest Fate, i. 56.
O thou who for thy wakeful nights wouldst claim my love to boon, iii. 26.
O thou who givest to royal state sweet savour, ii. 3.
O thou who gladdenest man by speech and rarest quality, ix. 322.
O thou who seekest innocence to 'guile, iii. 137.
O thou who seekest parting, safely fare! ii. 319.
O thou who seekest separation, act leisurely, iv. 200.
O thou who seekest severance, i. 118.
O thou who shamest sun in morning sheen, viii. 35.
O thou who shunnest him thy love misled! viii. 259.
O thou who wooest Severance, easy fare! iii. 278.
O thou who woo'st a world unworthy learn, iii. 319.
O thou whose boons to me are more than one, iii. 317.
O thou whose favours have been out of compt, iii. 137.
O thou whose forehead, like the radiant East, i. 210.
O to whom I gave soul which thou torturest, iv. 19.
O to whom now of my desire complaining sore shall I, v. 44.
O toiler through the glooms of night in peril and in pain, i. 38.
O turtle dove, like me art thou distraught? v. 47.
O waftings of musk from the Babel-land! ix. 195.
O who didst win my love in other date, v. 63.
O who hast quitted these abodes and faredst fief and light, viii.

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O who quest Union, ne'er hope such delight, viii. 257.
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Pleaseth me more the fig than every fruit viii. 269.
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flies, i. 68.
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The sun of beauty she to sight appears, i. 218.
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The world tears man to shreds, so be thou not, ix. 295.
The world tricks I admire betwixt me and her, ix. 242.
The world’s best joys long be thy lot, my lord, i. 203.
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There be no writer who from death shall fleet, i. 128.
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They bore him bier’d and all who followed wept, ii. 281.
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This day oppressor and oppressed meet, v. 258.
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Thou hast failed who would sink me in ruin-sea, iii. 108.
Thou hast granted more favours than ever I crave, ii. 32.
Thou hast restored my wealth, sans greed and ere, iv. 111.
Thou hast some art the hearts of men to clip, i. 241.
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Thou liest, O foulest of Satans, thou art, iii. 108.
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Thou madest fair thy thought of Fate, viii. 130.
Thou pacest the palace a marvel-sight, i. 176.
Thou present, in the Heaven of Heavens I dwell, iii. 268.
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Thou west create of dust and cam'st to life, iv. 190.
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Though amorn I may awake with all happiness in hand, i. 75.
Though now thou jeer, O Hind, how many a night, vii. 98.
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Three lovely girls hold my bridle-rein, ix. 243.
Three matters hinder her from visiting us in fear, iii. 231.
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Thy case commit to a Heavenly Lord and thou shalt safety see,

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Thy phantom bid thou fleet and fly, vii. 108.
Thy presence bringeth us a grace, i. 175.
Thy shape with willow branch I dare compare, iv. 255.
Thy shape’s temptation, eyes as Houri’s fain, viii. 47.
Thy sight hath never seen a fairer sight, ii. 292.
Thy writ, O Masrur, stirred my sprite to pine, viii. 245.
Time falsed our union and divided who were one in sway, x. 26.
Time gives me tremble, Ah, how sore the baulk! i. 144.
Time has recorded gifts she gave the great, i. 128.
Time hath for his wont to upraise and debase, ii. 143
Time hath shattered all my frame, ii. 4.
Time sware my life should fare in woeful waste, ii. 186.
’Tis as if wine and he who bears the bowl, x.38.
’Tis as the Figs with clear white skins outthrown, viii. 268.
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’Tis naught but this! When a-sudden I see her, ix. 235.
’Tis not at every time and tide unstable, iv. 188.
’Tis thou hast trodden coyness-path not I, iii. 332.
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To even her with greeny bough were vain, i. 156.
To grief leave a heart that to love ne’er ceased, viii. 215.
To him I spake of coupling but he said to me, iii. 301.
To him when the wine cup is near I declare, ix. 189.
To Karím, the cream of men thou gayest me, ii. 35.
To kith and kin bear thou sad tidings of our plight, iii. 111.
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To Rose quoth I, What gars thy thorns to be put forth, viii. 276.
To severance you doom my love and all unmoved remain, i. 181.
To slay my foes is chiefest bliss I wist, ii. 239.
To th’ AII-wise Subtle One trust worldly things, i. 56.
To Thee be praise, O Thou who showest unremitting grace, viii. 183.
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Truth best befits thee albeit truth, i. 298.
Turn thee from grief nor care a jot! i. 56
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’Twas by will of her she was create, viii. 291.
’Twas not of love that fared my feet to them, iv. 180.
’Twas not satiety bade me leave the dearling of my soul, i. 181.
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‘Twixt me and riding many a noble dame v. 266.
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Two hosts fare fighting thee the livelong day, i. 132.
Two lovers barred from every joy and bliss, v. 240.
Two things there are, for which if eyes wept tear on tear, viii. 263.
Two things there be, an blood-tears thereover, viii. 106.
Two nests in one, blood flowing easiest wise, v. 239.
Tyrannise not, if thou hast the power to do so, iv. 189.

Umm Amr’, thy boons Allah repay! v. 118.
Under my raiment a waste body lies, v. 151.
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Uns al-Wujud dost deem me fancy free, v. 43.
Unto thee, As’ad! I of passion pangs complain, iii. 312.
Unto thy phantom deal behest, vii. 109.
Upsprings from table of his lovely cheek vii. 277.

Veiling her cheeks with hair a-morn she comes, i. 218.
Verily women are devils created for us, iii. 322.
Vied the full moon for folly with her face, viii. 291.
Virtue in hand of thee hath built a house, iv. 138.
Visit thy lover, spurn what envy told, i. 223.
Void are the private rooms of treasury, iv. 267.

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Wands of green chrysolite bare issue which, viii. 275.
‘Ware how thou hurtest man with hurt of hearts, ii. 197.
‘Ware that truth thou speak, albe sooth when said, x. 23.
Was’t archer shot me, or was’t shine eyes, v. 33.
Watch some tall ship she’ll joy the sight of thee, ii. 20.
Watered steel-blade, the world perfection calls, vii. 173.
Waters of beauty e’er his cheeks flow bright, viii. 299.
We joy in full Moon who the wine bears round, viii. 227.
We left not taking leave of thee (when bound to other goal), viii. 63.
We lived on earth a life of fair content, v. 71.
We lived till saw we all the marvels Love can bear, v. 54.
We’ll drink and Allah pardon sinners all, viii. 277.
We never heard of wight nor yet espied, viii. 296.
We reck not, an our life escape from bane, vii. 99.
We tread the path where Fate hath led, i. 107.
We trod the steps appointed for us, x. 53.
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Prepared by Dr. Steingass.
[Index III-B is not included]

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Appendix II

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS, AND THEIR IMITATIONS, WITH A TABLE SHOWING THE CONTENTS OF THE PRINCIPAL EDITIONS IND TRANSLATIONS OF THE NIGHTS.

By W. F. KIRBY

Author of "Ed-Dimiryaht: an Oriental Romance," "The New Arabian Nights," &c.

The European editions of the Thousand and One Nights, even excluding the hundreds of popular editions which have nothing specially noticeable about them, are very numerous; and the following Notes must, I am fully aware, be incomplete, though they will, perhaps, be found useful to persons interested in the subject. Although I believe that editions of most of the English, French, and

German versions of any importance have passed through my hands, I have not had an opportunity of comparing many in other languages, some of which at least may be independent editions, not derived from Galland. The imitations and adaptations of The Nights are, perhaps, more numerous than the editions of The Nights themselves, if we exclude mere reprints of Galland; and many of them are even more difficult of access.

In the following Notes, I have sometimes referred to tales by their numbers in the Table.

Galland's Ms. and Translation.

The first MS. of The Nights known in Europe was brought to Paris by Galland at the close of the 17th century; and his translation was published in Paris, in twelve small volumes, under the title of "Les Mille et une Nuit: Contes Arabes, traduits en Francois par M. Galland." These volumes appeared at intervals between 1704 and 1717. Galland himself died in 1715, and it is uncertain how far he was responsible for the latter part of the work. Only the first six of the twelve vols. are divided into Nights, vol. 6 completing the story of Camaralzaman, and ending with Night 234. The Voyages of Sindbad are not found in Galland's MS., though he has intercalated them as Nights 69-90 between Nos. 3 and 4. It should be mentioned, however, that in some texts (Bresl., for instance) No. 133 is placed much earlier in the series than in others.

The stories in Galland's last six vols. may be divided into two classes, viz., those known to occur in genuine texts of The Nights, and those which do not. To the first category belong Nos. 7, 8, 59, 153 and 170; and some even of these are not found in Galland's own MS., but were derived by him from other sources. The remaining tales (Nos. 191-198) do not really belong to The Nights; and, strange to say, although they are certainly genuine Oriental tales, the actual originals have never been found. I am inclined to think that Galland may, perhaps, have written and adapted them from his recollection of stories which he himself heard related during his own residence in the East, especially as most of these tales appear to be derived rather from Persian or Turkish than from Arabian sources.

The following Preface appeared in vol. 9 which I translate from

Talander's German edition, as the original is not before me:

"The two stories with which the eighth volume concludes do not properly belong to the Thousand and One Nights. They were added and printed without the previous knowledge of the translator, who had not the slightest idea of the trick that had been played upon him until the eighth volume was actually on sale. The reader must not, therefore, be surprised that the story of the Sleeper Awakened, which commences vol. 9, is written as if Scheherazade had related it immediately after the story of Ganem, which forms the greater part of vol. 8. Care will be taken to omit these two stories in a new edition, as not belonging to the work."

It is, perhaps, not to be wondered at that when the new edition was actually published, subsequently to Galland's death, the condemned stories were retained, and the preface withdrawn; though No. 170 still reads as if it followed No. 8.

The information I have been able to collect respecting the disputed tales is very slight. I once saw a MS. advertised in an auction catalogue (I think that of the library of the late Prof. H. H. Wilson) as containing two of Galland's doubtful tales, but which they were was not stated. The fourth and last volume of the MS. used by Galland is lost; but it is almost certain that it did not contain any of these tales (compare Payne, ix. 265 note).

The story of Zeyn Alasnam (No. 191) is derived from the same source as that of the Fourth Durwesh, in the well-known Hindustani reading-book, the Bagh o Bahar. If it is based upon this, Galland has greatly altered and improved it, and has given it the whole colouring of a European moral fairy tale.

The story of Ali Baba (No. 195) is, I have been told, a Chinese tale. It occurs under the title of the Two Brothers and the Forty-nine Dragons in Geldart's Modern Greek Tales. It has also been stated that the late Prof. Palmer met with a very similar story among the Arabs of Sinai (Payne, ix. 266).

The story of Sidi Nouman (No 194b) may have been based partly upon the Third Shaykh's Story (No. 1c), which Galland omits. The feast of the Ghools is, I believe, Greek or Turkish, rather than Arabic, in character, as vampires, personified plague, and similar horrors are much commoner in the folk-lore of the former peoples.

Many incidents of the doubtful, as well as of the genuine tales, are common in European folk-lore (versions of Nos. 2 and 198, for instance, occur in Grimm's Kinder und Hausmärchen), and some of the doubtful tales have their analogues in Scott's MS., as will be noticed in due course.

I have not seen Galland's original edition in 12 vols.; but the Stadt-Bibliothek of Frankfort-on-Main contains a copy, published at La Haye, in 12 vols. (with frontispieces), made up of two or more editions, as follows: —

Vol. i. (ed. 6) 1729; vols. ii. iii. iv. (ed. 5) 1729; vols. v. vi. viii. (ed. 5) 1728; vol. vii. (ed. 6) 1731; vols. ix. to xi, (ed. not noted) 1730; and vol. xii. (ed. not noted) 1731.

The discrepancies in the dates of the various volumes look (as Mr. Clouston has suggested) as if separate volumes were reprinted as required, independently of the others. This might account for vols. v. vi. and viii. of the fifth edition having been apparently reprinted before vols. ii. iii. and iv.

The oldest French version in the British Museum consists of the first eight vols., published at La Haye, and likewise made up of different editions, as follows: —

i. (ed. 5) 1714; ii. iii. iv. (ed. 4) 1714; v. vi. (ed. 5) 1728; vii. (ed. 5) 1719; viii. ("suivant la copie imprimée à Paris") 1714.

Most French editions (old and new) contain Galland's Dedication, "À Madame la Marquise d'O., Dame du Palais de Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne," followed by an "Avertissement." In addition to these, the La Haye copies have Fontenelle's Approbation prefixed to several volumes, but in slightly different words, and bearing different dates. December 27th, 1703 (vol. i.); April 14th, 1704 (vol. vi.); and October 4th, 1705 (vol. vii.). This is according to the British Museum copy; I did not examine the Frankfort copy with reference to the Approbation. The Approbation is translated in full in the old English version as follows: "I have read, by Order of my Lord Chancellor, this Manuscript, wherein I find nothing that ought to hinder its being Printed. And I am of opinion that the Publick will be very well pleased with the Perusal of these Oriental Stories. Paris, 27th December, 1705 [apparently a misprint for 1703] (Signed)

FONTENELLE."

In the Paris edition of 1726 (vide infrà), Galland says in his Dedication, "Il a fallu le faire venir de Syrie, et mettre en François, le premier volume que voici, de quatre seulement qui m'ont été envoyez." So, also, in a Paris edition (in eight vols. 12mo) of 1832; but in the La Haye issue of 1714, we read not "quatre" but "six" volumes. The old German edition of Talander (vide infrà) does not contain Galland's Dedication (Epitre) or Avertissement.

The earliest French editions were generally in 12 vols., or six; I possess a copy of a six-volume edition, published at Paris in 1726. It may be the second, as the title-page designates it as "nouvelle edition, corrigée."

Galland's work was speedily translated into various European languages, and even now forms the original of all the numerous popular editions. The earliest English editions were in six volumes, corresponding to the first six of Galland, and ending with the story of Camaralzaman; nor was it till nearly the end of the 18th century that the remaining half of the work was translated into English. The date of appearance of the first edition is unknown to bibliographers; Lowndes quotes an edition of 1724 as the oldest; but the British Museum contains a set of six vols., made up of portions of the second, third and fourth editions, as follows: —

Vols. i. ii. (ed. 4) 1713; vols. iii. iv. (ed. 2) 1712; and vols. v. vi. (ed. 3) 1715.

Here likewise the separate volumes seem to have been reprinted independently of each other; and it is not unlikely that the English translation may have closely followed the French publication, being issued volume by volume, as the French appeared, as far as vol. vi. The title-page of this old edition is very quaint:

"Arabian Nights Entertainments, consisting of One thousand and one Stories, told by the Sultaness of the Indies to divert the Sultan from the Execution of a Bloody Vow he had made, to marry a Lady every day, and have her head cut off next Morning, to avenge himself for the Disloyalty of the first Sultaness, also containing a better account of the Customs, Manners and Religion of the Eastern Nations, viz., Tartars, Persians and Indians, than is to be met with in any Author hitherto published. Translated into French from the

Arabian MSS. by Mr. Galland of the Royal Academy, and now done into English. Printed for Andrew Bell at the Cross Keys and Bible, in Cornhill."

The British Museum has an edition in 4to published in 1772, in farthing numbers, every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. It extends to 79 numbers, forming five volumes.

The various editions of the Old English version appear to be rare, and the set in the British Museum is very poor. The oldest edition which I have seen containing the latter half of Galland's version is called the 14th edition, and was published in London in four volumes, in 1778. Curiously enough, the "13th edition," also containing the conclusion, was published at Edinburgh in three volumes in 1780. Perhaps it is a reprint of a London edition published before that of 1778. The Scotch appear to have been fond of The Nights, as there are many Scotch editions both of The Nights and the imitations.

Revised or annotated editions by Piguenit (4 vols., London, 1792) and Gough (4 vols., Edinburgh, 1798) may deserve a passing notice.

A new translation of Galland, by Rev. E. Forster, in five vols. 4to, with engravings from pictures by Robert Smirke, R.A., appeared in 1802, and now commands a higher price than any other edition of Galland. A new edition in 8vo appeared in 1810. Most of the recent popular English versions are based either upon Forster's or Scott's.

Another translation from Galland, by G. S. Beaumont (four vols. 8vo), appeared in 1811. (Lowndes writes Wiliam Beaumont.)

Among the various popular editions of later date we may mention an edition in two vols., 8vo, published at Liverpool (1813), and containing Cazotte's Continuation; an edition published by Griffin and Co., in 1866, to which Beckford's "Vathek" is appended; an edition "arranged for the perusal of youthful readers," by the Hon. Mrs. Sugden (Whittaker & Co., 1863); and "Five Favourite Tales from The Arabian Nights in words of one syllable, by A. & E. Warner" (Lewis, 1871).

Some of the English editions of Galland aim at originality by arranging the tales in a different order. The cheap edition published by Dicks in 1868 is one instance.

An English version of Galland was published at Lucknow, in four vols., 8vo, in 1880.

I should, perhaps, mention that I have not noticed De Sacy's "Mille et une Nuit," because it is simply a new edition of Galland; and I have not seen either Destain's French edition (mentioned by Sir R. F. Burton), nor Cardonne's Continuation (mentioned in Cabinet des Fées, xxxvii.). As Cardonne died in 1784, his Continuation, if genuine, would be the earliest of all.

The oldest German version, by Talander, seems to have appeared in volumes, as the French was issued; and these volumes were certainly reprinted when required, without indication of separate editions, but in slightly varied style, and with alteration of date. The old German version is said to be rarer than the French. It is in twelve parts — some, however, being double. The set before me is clearly made up of different reprints, and the first title-page is as follows: "Die Tausend und eine Nacht, worinnen seltzame Arabische Historien und wunderbare Begebenheiten, benebst artigen Liebes-Intriguen, auch Sitten und Gewohnheiten der Morgenländer, auf sehr anmuthige Weise, erzehlet werden; Erstlich vom Hru. Galland, der Königl. Academie Mitgliede aus der Arabischen Sprache in die Französische und aus selbiger anitzo ins Deutsche übersetzt: Erster und Anderer Theil. Mit der Vorrede Herru Talanders. Leipzig Verlegts Moritz Georg Weidmann Sr. Konigl. Maj. in Hohlen und Churfürstl. Durchl. zu Sachsen Buchhändler, Anno 1730." Talander's Preface relates chiefly to the importance of the work as illustrative of Arabian manners and customs, &c. It is dated from "Liegnitz, den 7 Sept., Anno 1710," which fixes the approximate date of publication of the first part of this translation. Vols. i. and ii. of my set (double vol. with frontispiece) are dated 1730, and have Talander's preface; vols. iii. and iv. (divided, but consecutively paged, and with only one title-page and frontispiece and reprint of Talander's preface) are dated 1719; vols. v. and vi. (same remarks, except that Talander's preface is here dated 1717) are dated 1737; vol. vii. (no frontispiece; preface dated 1710) is dated 1721; vol. viii (no frontispiece nor preface, nor does Talander's name appear on the title-page) is dated 1729; vols. ix. and x. (divided, but consecutively paged, and with only one title-page and frontispiece; Talander's name and preface do not appear, but Galland's preface to vol. ix., already mentioned, is prefixed) are dated 1731; and vols. xi. and xii. (same remarks, but no preface) are dated 1732.

Galland's notes are translated, but not his preface and dedication.

There is a later German translation (6 vols. 8vo, Bremen, 1781-1785) by J. H. Voss, the author of the standard German translation of Homer.

The British Museum has just acquired a Portuguese translation of Galland, in 4 volumes: "As Mil e uma Noites, Contos Arabes," published by Ernesto Chardron, Editor, Porto e Braga, 1881.

There are two editions of a modern Greek work in the British Museum (1792 and 1804), published at Venice in three small volumes. The first volume contains Galland (Nos. 1-6 of the table) and vols. ii. and iii. chiefly contain the Thousand and One Days. It is, apparently, translated from some Italian work.

Several editions in Italian (Mille ed una Notte) have appeared at Naples and Milan; they are said by Sir R. F. Burton to be mere reprints of Galland.

There are, also, several in Dutch, one of which, by C. Van der Post, in 3 vols. 8vo, published at Utrecht in 1848, purports, I believe, to be a translation from the Arabic, and has been reprinted several times. The Dutch editions are usually entitled, "Arabische Vertellinge." A Danish edition appeared at Copenhagen in 1818, under the title of "Prindsesses Schehezerade. Fortällinger eller de saakatle Tusende og een Nat. Udgivna paa Dansk vid Heelegaan." Another, by Rasmassen, was commenced in 1824; and a third Danish work, probably founded on the Thousand and One Nights, and published in 1816, bears the title, "Digt og Eventyr fra Osterland, af arabiska og persischen utrykta kilder."

I have seen none of these Italian, Dutch or Danish editions; but there is little doubt that most, if not all, are derived from Galland's work.

The following is the title of a Javanese version, derived from one of the Dutch editions, and published at Leyden in 1865, "Eenige Vertellingen uit de Arabisch duizend en één Nacht. Naar de Nederduitsche vertaling in het Javaansch vertaald, door Winter-Roorda."

Mr. A. G. Ellis has shown me an edition of Galland's Aladdin

(No. 193) in Malay, by M. Van der Lawan (?) printed in Batavia, A.D. 1869.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

CAZZOTTE'S CONTINUATION, AND THE COMPOSITE EDITIONS OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

We shall speak elsewhere of the Cabinet des Fées; but the last four volumes of this great collection (38 to 41), published at Geneva from 1788 to 1793, contain a work entitled, "Les Veillées du Sultan Schahriar avec la Sultane Scheherazade; histoires incroyables, amusantes et morales, traduites de l'arabe par M. Cazotte et D. Chavis. Faisant suite aux Mille et une Nuits." Some copies bear the abridged title of "La suite des Mille et une Nuits. Contes Arabes, traduits par Dom Chavis et M. Cazotte."

This collection of tales was pronounced to be spurious by many critics, and even has been styled "a bare-faced forgery" by a writer in the Edinburgh Review of July, 1886. It is, however, certain that the greater part, if not all, of these tales are founded on genuine Eastern sources, though very few have any real claim to be regarded as actually part of the Thousand and One Nights.

Translations of the originals of most of these tales have been published by Caussin de Perceval and Gauttier; and a comparison clearly shows the great extent to which Chavis and Cazotte have altered, amplified and (in a literary sense) improved their materials.

It is rather surprising that no recent edition of this work seems to have been issued, perhaps owing to the persistent doubts cast upon its authenticity, only a few of the tales, and those not the best, having appeared in different collections. My friend, Mr. A. G. Ellis, himself an Oriental scholar, has remarked to me that he considers these tales as good as the old "Arabian Nights"; and I quite agree with him that Chavis and Cazotte's Continuation is well worthy of re-publication in its entirety.

The following are the principal tales comprised in this collection, those included in our Table from later authors being indicated.

1. The Robber Caliph, or the Adventures of Haroun Alraschid with the Princess of Persia, and the beautiful Zutulbe. (No. 246.)

2. The Power of Destiny, being the History of the Journey of

Giafar to Damas, containing the Adventures of Chelih and his Family. (No. 280.)

3. History of Halechalbe and the Unknown Lady. (No. 204c.)

4. Story of Xailoun the Idiot.

5. The Adventures of Simoustapha and the Princess Ilsetilsone. (No. 247.)

6. History of Alibengiad, Sultan of Herak, and of the False Birds of Paradise.

7. History of Sinkarib and his Two Viziers. (No. 249.)

8. History of the Family of the Schebandad of Surat.

9. Story of Bohetzad and his Ten Viziers. (No. 174.)

10. Story of Habib and Dorathil-Goase. (No. 251.)

11. History of the Maugraby, or the Magician.

Of these, Nos. 4, 6, 8 and 11 only are not positively known in the original. No. 11 is interesting, as it is the seed from which Southey's "Thalaba the Destroyer" was derived.

On the word Maugraby, which means simply Moor, Cazotte has the following curious note: "Ce mot signifie barbare, barbaresque plus proprement. On jure encore par lui en Provence, en Languedoc, et en Gascogne Maugraby; ou ailleurs en France Meugrebleu."

The Domdaniel, where Zatanai held his court with Maugraby and his pupilmagicians, is described as being under the sea near Tunis.
In Weil's story of Joodar and Mahmood (No. 201) the Magician Mahmood is always called the Moor of Tunis.

No. 3 (=our No. 204c) contains the additional incident of the door opened only once a year which occurs in our No. 9a, aa.

Moore probably took the name Namouna from Cazotte's No. 5, in which it occurs. In the same story we find a curious name of a Jinniyah, Setelpedour. Can it be a corruption of Sitt El Budoor?

For further remarks on Cazotte's Continuation, compare Russell's History of Aleppo, i. ; and Russell and Scott, Ouseley's Oriental Collections, i. p, 247; ii. ; and the "Gentleman's Magazine" for February, 1779.

An English version under the title "Arabian Tales, or a Continuation of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments," translated by Robert Heron, was published in Edinburgh in 1792 in 4 vols., and in London in 1794 in 3 vols. It was reprinted in Weber's "Tales of the East" (Edinburgh, 1812); and, as already mentioned, is included in an edition of the Arabian Nights published in Liverpool in 1813.

A German translation forms vols. 5 to 8 of the "Blaue Bibliothek," published in Gotha in 1790 and 1791; and the British Museum possesses vols. 3 and 4 of a Russian edition, published at Moscow in 1794 and 1795, which is erroneously entered in the catalogue as the Arabian Nights in Russian.

Respecting the work of Chavis and Cazotte, Sir R. F. Burton remarks, "Dom Dennis Chavis was a Syrian priest of the order of Saint Bazil, who was invited to Paris by the learned minister, Baron Arteuil, and he was assisted by M. Cazotte, a French author, then well known, but wholly ignorant of Arabic. These tales are evidently derived from native sources; the story of Bohetzad (King Bakhtiyar) and his Ten Wazirs is taken bodily from the Bres. Edit. [not so; but the original Arabic had long been known in the French libraries]. As regards the style and treatment, it is sufficient to say that the authors out-Gallanded Galland, while Heron exaggerates every fault of his original."

The first enlarged edition of Galland in French was published by Caussin de Perceval, at Paris, in 9 vols., 8vo (1806). In addition to Galland's version, he added four tales (Nos. 21a, 22, 32 and 37), with which he had been furnished by Von Hammer. He also added a series of tales, derived from MSS. in the Parisian libraries, most of which correspond to those of Cazotte.

The most important of the later French editions was published by E. Gauttier in 7 vols. in 1822; it contains much new matter. At the end, the editor gives a list of all the tales which he includes, with arguments. He has rather oddly distributed his material so as to make only 568 nights. The full contents are given in our Table; the following points require more special notice. Vol. i. Gauttier omits the Third Shaykh's story (No. 1c) on account of its indecency, although it is really no worse than any other story in The Nights. In the story of the Fisherman, he has fallen into a very curious series of errors. He has misunderstood King Yunan's reference to King Sindbad (Burton i.) to refer to the Book of Sindibad (No. 135); and has confounded it with the story of the Forty Vazirs, which he says exists in Arabic as well as in Turkish. Of this latter, therefore, he gives an imperfect version, embedded in the story of King Yunan (No. 2a). Here it may be observed that another imperfect French version of the Forty Vazirs had previously been published by Petis de la Croix under the title of Turkish Tales. A complete German version by Dr. Walter F. A. Behrnauer was published at Leipzig in 1851, and an English version by Mr. E. J. W. Gibb has appeared while these sheets are passing through the press.

Vol. ii. After No. 6 Gauttier places versions of Nos. 32 and 184 by Langlès. The Mock Caliph is here called Aly-Chah. The other three tales given by Caussin de Perceval from Von Hammer's MSS. are omitted by Gauttier. Vol. v. (after No. 198) concludes with two additional tales (Nos. 207h and 218) from Scott's version. But the titles are changed, No. 207h being called the Story of the Young Prince and the Green Bird, and No. 218 the Story of Mahmood, although there is another story of Mahmood in vol. 1. (==No. 135m) included as part of the Forty Vazirs.

Vol. vi. includes the Ten Vazirs (No. 174), derived, however, not from the Arabic, but from the Persian Bakhtyar Nameh. Three of the subordinate tales in the Arabic version are wanting in Gauttier's, and another is transferred to his vol. vii., but he includes one, the King and Queen of Abyssinia (No. 252), which appears to be wanting in the Arabic. The remainder of the volume contains tales from Scott's version, the title of Mazin of Khorassaun (No. 215) being altered to the Story of Azem and the Queen of the Genii.

Vol. vii. contains a series of tales of which different versions of six only (Nos. 30, 174, 246, 248, 249 and 250) were previously published. Though these have no claim to be considered part of The Nights, they are of sufficient interest to receive a passing mention, especially as Gauttier's edition seems not to have been consulted by any later writer on The Nights, except Habicht, who based his own edition mainly upon it. Those peculiar to Gauttier's edition are therefore briefly noticed.

Princess Ameny (No. 253) — A princess who leaves home disguised as a man, and delivers another princess from a black slave. The episode (253b) is a story of enchantment similar to Nos. 1a-c.

Aly Djohary (No. 254) — Story of a young man's expedition in search of a magical remedy.

The Princes of Cochin China (No. 255) — The princes travel in search of their sister who is married to a Jinni, who is under the curse of Solomon. The second succeeds in breaking the spell, and thus rescues both his brother, his sister, and the Jinni by killing a bird to which the destiny of the last is attached. (This incident is common in fiction; we find it in the genuine Nights in Nos. 154a and 201.)

The Wife with Two Husbands (No. 256) — A well-known Eastern story; it may be found in Wells' "Mehemet the Kurd," p-127, taken from the Forty Vazirs. Compare Gibbs, the 24th Vazir's Story, p-266.

The Favourite (No. 257) — One of the ordinary tales of a man smuggled into a royal harem in a chest (compare Nos. 6b and 166).

Zoussouf and the Indian Merchant (No. 258) — Story of a ruined man travelling to regain his fortune.

Prince Benazir (No. 258) — Story of a Prince promised at his birth, and afterwards given up by his parents to an evil Jinni, whom he ultimately destroys. (Such promises, especially, as here, in cases of difficult labour, are extremely common in folk-tales; the idea probably originated in the dedication of a child to the Gods.) Gauttier thinks that this story may have suggested that of Maugraby to Cazotte; but it appears to me rather doubtful whether it is quite elaborate enough for Cazotte to have used it in this manner.

Selim, Sultan of Egypt (No. 261) — This and its subordinate tales chiefly relate to unfaithful wives; that of Adileh (No. 261b) is curious; she is restored to life by Jesus (whom Gauttier, from motives of religious delicacy, turns into a Jinni!) to console her disconsolate husband, and immediately betrays the latter. These tales are apparently from the Forty Vazirs; cf. Gibbs, the 10th Vazir's Story, p-129 (= our No. 261) and the Sixth Vazir's Story, p-84 (= No. 261b.)

The bulk of the tales in Gauttier's vol. vii. are derived from posthumous MSS. of M. Langlès, and several have never been published in English. Gauttier's version of Heycar (No. 248) was contributed by M. Agoub.

The best-known modern German version (Tausend und Eine Nacht, Arabische Erzahlungen, Deutsch von Max. Habicht, Fr. H. von der Hagen und Carl Schall. Breslau, 15 vols. 12mo) is mainly based upon Gauttier's edition, but with extensive additions, chiefly derived from the Breslau text. An important feature of this version is that it includes translations of the prefaces of the various editions used by the editors, and therefore supplies a good deal of information not always easily accessible elsewhere. There are often brief notes at the end of the volumes.

The fifth edition of Habicht's version is before me, dated 1840; but the preface to vol. i. is dated 1824, which may be taken to represent the approximate date of its first publication. The following points in the various vols. may be specially noticed: —

Vol. i. commences with the preface of the German editor, setting forth the object and scope of his edition; and the prefaces of Gauttier and Galland follow. No. 1c, omitted by Gauttier, is inserted in its place. Vols. ii. and iii. (No. 133), notes, chiefly from Langlès, are appended to the Voyages of Sindbad; and the destinations of the first six are given as follows: —

I. Voyage to Sumatra. IV. Voyage to the Sunda Islands.
II. Voyage to Ceylon. V. Voyage to the Sunda Islands.
III. Voyage to Selahath. VI. Voyage to Zeilan.

Vol. v. contains an unimportant notice from Galland, with additional remarks by the German editors, respecting the division of the work into Nights.

Vol. vi. contains another unimportant preface respecting Nos. 191 and 192.

Vol. x. Here the preface is of more importance, relating to the contents of the volume, and especially to the Ten Vazirs (No. 174).

Vol. xi. contains tales from Scott. The preface contains a full account of his MSS., and the tales published in his vol. vi. This preface is taken partly from Ouseley's Oriental Collections, and partly from Scott's own preface.

Vol. xii. contains tales from Gauttier, vol. vii. The preface gives the full contents of Clarke's and Von Hammer's MSS.

Vol. xiii. includes Caussin de Perceval's Preface, the remaining tales from Gauttier's vol. vii. (ending with Night 568), and four tales from Caussin which Gauttier omits (Nos. 21a, 22, 37 and 202).

Vols. xiv. and xv. (extending from Night 884 to Night 1001) consist of tales from the Breslau edition, to which a short preface, signed by Dr. Max. Habicht, is prefixed. The first of these tales is a fragment of the important Romance of Seyf Zul Yesn (so often referred to by Lane), which seems to have been mixed with Habicht's MS. of The Nights by mistake. (Compare Payne, Tales, iii. 243.)

In this fragment we have several incidents resembling The Nights; there is a statue which sounds an alarm when an enemy enters a city (cf. Nos. 59 and 137); Seyf himself is converted to the faith of Abraham, and enters a city where a book written by Japhet is preserved. The text of this story has lately been published; and Sir R. F. Burton informs me that he thinks he has seen a complete version in some European language; but I have not succeeded in obtaining any particulars concerning it.

On account of the interest and importance of the work, I append to this section an English version of the fragment translated into German by Habicht. (From the extreme simplicity of the style, which I have preserved, I suspect that the translation is considerably abridged.)

There is an Icelandic version of The Nights (þúsund og ein Nott. Arabiskar Sögur. Kaupmannahöfn, 1857, 4 vols. roy. 8vo), which contains Galland's tales, and a selection of others, distributed into 1001 Nights, and apparently taken chiefly from Gauttier, but with the addition of two or three which seem to be borrowed from Lane (Nos. 9a, 163, 165, &c.). It is possibly derived immediately from some Danish edition.

There is one popular English version which may fairly be called a composite edition; but it is not based upon Gauttier. This is the "Select Library Edition. Arabian Nights' Entertainments, selected and revised for general use. To which are added other specimens of

Eastern Romance. London: James Burns, 1847. 2 vols."

It contains the following tales from The Nights: Nos. 134, 3, 133, 162, 1, 2, 155, 191, 193, 192, 194, 194a, 194c, 21, 198, 170, 6.

No. 134 is called the City of Silence, instead of the City of Brass, and is certainly based partly upon Lane. In No. 155, Manar Al Sana is called Nur Al Nissa. One story, "The Wicked Dervise," is taken from Dow's "Persian Tales of Inatulla;" another "The Enchanters, or the Story of Misnar," is taken from the "Tales of the Genii." Four other tales, "Jalaladdeen of Bagdad," "The two Talismans," "The Story of Haschem," and "Jussof, the Merchant of Balsora," clearly German imitations, are said to be translated from the German of Grimm, and there are two others, "Abdullah and Balsora," and "The King and his Servant," the origin of which I do not recognise, although I think I have read the last before.

Grimm's story of Haschem concludes with the hero's promotion to the post of Grand Vizier to Haroun Al-Rashid, in consequence of the desire of the aged "Giafar" to end his days in peaceful retirement! The principal incident in Jalaladdeen, is that of the Old Woman in the Chest, borrowed from the wellknown story of the Merchant Abudah in the "Tales of the Genii," and it is thus an imitation of an imitation,

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE STORY OF SAIF ZUL YEZN (ZU'L YAZAN) ACCORDING TO HABICHT'S GERMAN VERSION.

In very ancient times, long before the age of Mohammed, there lived a King of Yemen, named Zul Yezn. He was a Himyarite of the race of Fubbaa (Tabbá') and had large armies and a great capital. His Minister was named Yottreb (Yathrab == Medinat), and was well skilled in the knowledge of the ancients. He once had a vision in which the name of the Prophet was revealed to him, with the announcement of his mission in later times; and he was also informed that he would be the last of the Prophets. In consequence of this vision he believed in the Prophet before his advent; but he concealed his faith. One day the King held a review of his troops, and was delighted with their number and handsome appearance. He said to the Wazir, "Is there any person on earth whose power can compare with mine?" "O yes," answered the Wazir, "there is King Baal-Beg, whose troops fill the deserts and the cultivated lands, the plains and the valleys." "I must make war upon him, then," exclaimed the King, "and destroy his power." He immediately ordered the army to prepare to march, and after a few days the drums and trumpets were heard. The King and his Wazir set forth in magnificent array, and after a rapid march, they arrived before the holy city Medina, which may God keep in high renown! The Wazir then said to the King, "Here is the holy house of God, and the place of great ceremonies. No one should enter here who is not perfectly pure, and with head and feet bare. Pass around it with your companions, according to the custom of the Arabs." The King was so pleased with the place that he determined to destroy it, to carry the stones to his own country, and to rebuild it there, that the Arabs might come to him on pilgrimage, a nd that he might thus exalt himself above all Kings. He pondered over this plan all night, but next morning he found his body fearfully swollen. He immediately sent for his Wazir, and lamented over his misfortune. "This is a judgment sent upon you," replied the Wazir, "by the Lord of this house. If you alter your intention of destroying the temple, you will be healed at once." The King gave up his project, and soon found himself cured. Soon afterwards he said to himself, "This misfortune happened to me at night, and left me next day of its own accord; but I will certainly destroy the house." But next morning his face was so covered with open ulcers that he could no longer be recognised. The Wazir then approached him and said, "O King, renounce your intention, for it would be rebellion against the Lord of Heaven and Earth, who can destroy every one who opposes him." When the King heard this, he reflected awhile and said, "What would you wish me to do?" The Wazir replied, "Cover the house with carpets from Yemen." The King resolved to do this, and when night came he retired to rest. He then saw an apparition which ordered him not to march further into the country of King Baal-Beg, but to turn towards Abyssinia and Nigritia, adding, "Remain there, and choose it as thy residence, and assuredly one of thy race will arise through whom the threat of Noah shall be fulfilled." When the King awoke next morning he related this to the Wazir, who advised him to use his own judgment about it. The King immediately gave orders to march. The army set forth, and after ten days they arrived at a country the soil of which seemed to consist of chalk, for it appeared quite white. The Wazir Yottreb then went to the King and requested his permission to found a city here for his people. "Why so?" asked the King. "Because," replied the Wazir, "this will one day be the place of Refuge of the Prophet Mohammed, who will be sent at the end of time." The King then gave his consent, and Yottreb immediately summoned architects and surveyors, who dug out the ground, and reared the walls, and erected beautiful palaces. They did not desist from the work until the Wazir ordered a number of his people to remove to this city with their families. This was done, and their posterity inhabit the city to this day. He then gave them a scroll, and said, "He who comes to you as a fugitive to this house will be the ruler of this city." He then called the city Yottreb after his own name, and the scroll descended from father to son till the Apostle of God arrived as a fugitive from Mecca, when the inhabitants went out to meet him, and presented him with it. They afterwards became his auxiliaries and were known as the Ansar. But we must now return to

King Zul Yezn. He marched several days toward Abyssinia, and at last arrived in a beautiful and fertile country where he informed his Wazir that he would like to build a city for his subjects. He gave the necessary orders, which were diligently executed; canals were dug and the surrounding country cultivated; and the city was named Medinat El-Hamra, the Red. At last the news reached the King of Abyssinia, whose name was Saif Ar-Raad (Thunder-sword), and whose capital was called Medinat ad-Durr (the Rich in Houses). Part of this city was built on solid land and the other was built in the sea. This prince could bring an army of 600,000 men into the field, and his authority extended to the extremity of the then known world. When he was informed of the invasion of Zul Yezn, he summoned his two Wazirs, who were named Sikra Divas and Ar-Ryf. The latter was well versed in ancient books, in which he had discovered that God would one day send a Prophet who would be the last of the series. He believed this himself, but concealed it from the Abyssinians, who were still worshippers of Saturn. When the Wazirs came before the King, he said to them,"See how the Arabs are advancing against us; I must fight them." Sikra Divas opposed this design, fearing lest the threat of Noah should be fulfilled. "I would rather advise you," said he, "to make the King a present and to send with it the most beautiful maiden in your palace. But give her poison secretly, and instruct her to poison the King when she is alone with him. If he is once dead, his army will retire without a battle." The King adopted this advice, and prepared rich presents, and summoned a beautiful girl, whose artfulness and malice were well known. Her name was Kamrya (Moonlight). The King said to her, "I have resolved to send you as a present, for a secret object. I will give you poison, and when you are alone with the Prince to whom I will send you, drop it into his cup, and let him take it. As soon as he is dead, his army will leave us in peace." "Very well, my master," replied the girl, "I will accomplish your wish." He then sent her with the other presents and a letter to the city of Zul Yezn. But the Wazir Ar-Ryf had scarcely left the King's presence when he wrote a letter, and commanded a slave to carry it to Zul Yezn. "If you can give it to him before the arrival of the slave- girl," added he, "I will give you your freedom." The slave made all possible haste to the Arab King, but yet the presents arrived before him. A chamberlain went to the King and informed him that a messenger had arrived at the gate with presents from the King of Abyssinia, and requested permission to enter. Zul Yezn immediately ordered that he should be admitted, and the presents and the maiden were at once delivered to him. When he saw her, he was astonished at her beauty, and was greatly delighted. He immediately ordered her to be conveyed to his palace, and was very soon overcome with love for her. He was just about to dissolve the assembly to visit Kamrya, when the Wazir Yottreb detained him, saying, "Delay a while, O King, for I fear there is some treachery hidden behind this present. The Abyssinians hate the Arabs exceedingly, but are unwilling to make war with them, lest the threat of Noah should be fulfilled. It happened one day that Noah was sleeping when intoxicated with wine, and the wind uncovered him. His son Ham laughed, and did not cover him; but his other son Seth (sic) came forward, and covered him up. When Noah awoke, he exclaimed to Ham, May God blacken thy face!' But to Seth he said, May God make the posterity of thy brother the servants of thine until the day of Resurrection!' This is the threat which they dread as the posterity of Ham." While the King was still conversing with his Wazir, the Chamberlain announced the arrival of a messenger with a letter. He was immediately admitted, and delivered the letter, which was read by the Wazir Yottreb. Ar-Ryf had written, "Be on your guard against Kamrya, O King, for she hath poison with her, and is ordered to kill you when she is alone with you." The King now began loudly to praise the acuteness of his Wazir, and went immediately to Kamrya with his drawn sword. When he entered, she rose and kissed the ground, but he exclaimed, "You have come here to poison me!" She was confounded, and took out the poison, and handed it to the King, full of artifice, and thinking, "If I tell him the truth, he will have a better opinion of me, and if he confides in me, I can kill him in some other manner than with this poison." It fell out as she expected, for the King loved her, gave her authority over his palace and his female slaves, and found himself very happy in her possession. But she herself found her life so pleasant that, although King Ar-Raad frequently sent to ask her why she had not fulfilled her commission, she always answered, "Wait a little; I am seeking an opportunity, for the King is very suspicious." Some time passed over, and at length she became pregnant. Six months afterwards Zul Yezn fell ill; and as his sickness increased, he assembled the chief men of his Court, informed them of the condition of Kamrya, and after commending her to their protection, he ordered that if she bore a son, he should succeed him. They promised to fulfil his commands, and a few days afterwards Zul Yezn died. Kamrya now governed the country, till she brought forth a son. He was a child of uncommon beauty, and had a small mole on his cheek. When she saw the child she envied him, and said to herself, "What, shall he take away the kingdom from me? No, it shall never be;" and from this time forward she determined to put him to death. After forty days, the people requested to see their King. She showed him to them, and seated him on the throne of the kingdom, whereupon they did homage to him, and then dispersed. His mother took him back into the Palace, but her envy increased so much that she had already grasped a sword to kill him, when her nurse entered and asked what she was going to do. "I am about to kill him," answered she. "Have you not reflected," said the nurse, "that if you kill him the people will revolt, and may kill you also?" "Let me kill him," persisted she, "for even should they kill me, too, I should at least be released from my envy." "Do not act thus," warned the nurse, "or you may repent it, when repentance cannot help you." "It must be done," said Kamrya. "Nay, then," said the nurse, "if it cannot be avoided, let him at least be cast into the desert, and if he lives, so much the better for him; but if he dies, you are rid of him for ever." She followed this advice and set out on the way at night time with the child, and halted at a distance of four days' journey, when she sat down under a tree in the desert. She took him on her lap, and suckled him once more, and then laid him on a bed, putting a purse under his head, containing a thousand gold pieces and many jewels. "Whoever finds him," said she, "may use the money to bring him up;" and thus she left him.

It happened by the gracious decree of God, that hunters who were chasing gazelles surprised a female with a fawn; the former took to flight, and the hunters carried off the little one. When the mother returned from the pasture, and found her fawn gone, she traversed the desert in all directions in search of it, and at length the crying of the deserted child attracted her. She lay down by the child, and the child sucked her. The gazelle left him again to go to graze, but always returned to the little one when she was satisfied. This went on till it pleased God that she should fall into the net of a hunter. But she became enraged, tore the net, and fled. The hunter pursued her, and overtook her when she reached the child, and was about to give him suck. But the arrival of the hunter compelled the gazelle to take to flight, and the child began to cry, because he was not yet satisfied. The hunter was astonished at the sight, and when he lifted the child up, he saw the purse under his head, and a string of jewels round his neck. He immediately took the child with him, and went to a town belonging to an Abyssinian king named Afrakh, who was a dependent of King Saif Ar-Raad. He handed over the child to him, saying that he had found it in the lair of a gazelle. When the King took the child into his care, it smiled at him, and God awakened a feeling of love towards him in the King's heart; and he then noticed the mole on his cheek. But when his Wazir Sikar Diun, the brother of Sikar Divas, who was Wazir to King Saif Ar-Raad, entered and saw the child, God filled his heart with hate towards him. "Do not believe what this man told you," he said, when the King told him the wonderful story of the discovery, "it can only be the child of a mother who has come by it wrongly, and has abandoned it in the desert, and it would be better to kill it." "I cannot easily consent to this," said the King. But he had hardly spoken, when the palace was filled with sounds of rejoicing, and he was informed that his wife had just been safely delivered of a child. On this news he took the boy on his arm, and went to his wife, and found that the new-born child was a girl, and that she had a red mole on her cheek. He wondered when he saw this, and said to Sikar Diun, "See how beautiful they are!" But when the Wazir saw it, he slapped his face, and cast his cap on the ground, exclaiming, "Should these two moles unite, I prophesy the downfall of Abyssinia, for they presage a great calamity. It would be better to kill either the boy or your daughter." "I will kill neither of them," replied the King, "for they have been guilty of no crime." He immediately provided nurses for the two children, naming his daughter Shama (Mole) and the boy Wakhs[471] El Fellat (Lonely one, or Desert); and he reared them in separate apartments, that they might not see each other. When they were ten years old, Wakhs El Fellat grew very strong, and soon became a practised horseman, and surpassed all his companions in this accomplishment, and in feats of arms. But when he was fifteen, he was so superior to all others, that Sikar Diun threatened the King that he would warn King Saif Ar-Raad that he was nurturing his enemy in his house, if he did not immediately banish him from the country; and this threat caused King Afrakh great alarm. It happened that he had a general, who was called Gharag El Shaker (Tree-splitter), because he was accustomed to hurl his javelin at trees, and thus to cleave them asunder. He had a fortress three days' journey from the town; and the King said to him, "Take Wakhs El Fellat to your castle, and never let him return to this neighbourhood." He added privately, "Look well after him and preserve him from all injury, and have him instructed in all accomplishments." The general withdrew, and took the boy with him to his castle, and instructed him thoroughly in all accomplishments and sciences. One day he said to him, "One warlike exercise is still unknown to you." "What is that?" said Wakhs El Fellat. "Come and see for yourself," replied he. The general then took him to a place where several trees were growing, which were so thick that a man could not embrace the trunk. He then took his javelin, hurled it at one of them, and split the trunk. Wakhs El Fellat then asked for the javelin, and performed the same feat, to the astonishment of his instructor. "Woe to thee!" exclaimed he, "for I perceive that you are the man through whom the threat of Noah will be fulfilled against us. Fly, and never let yourself be seen again in our country, or I will kill you." Wakhs El Fellat then left the town, not knowing where to go. He subsisted for three days on the plants of the earth, and at last he arrived at a town encircled by high walls, the gates of which were closed. The inhabitants were clothed in black, and uttered cries of lamentation. In the foreground he saw a bridal tent, and a tent of mourning. This was the city of King Afrakh who had reared him, and the cause of the mourning of the inhabitants was as follows. Sikar Diun was very angry that the King had refused to follow his advice, and put the boy to death, and had left the town to visit one of his friends, who was a magician, to whom he related the whole story. "What do you propose to do now?" asked the magician. "I will attempt to bring about a separation between him and his daughter," said the Wazir. "I will assist you," was the answer of the magician. He immediately made the necessary preparations, and summoned an evil Jinni named Mukhtatif (Ravisher) who inquired, "What do you require of me?" "Go quickly to the city of King Afrakh, and contrive that the inhabitants shall leave it." In that age men had intercourse with the more powerful Jinn, and each attained their ends by means of the other. The Jinn did not withdraw themselves till after the advent of the Prophet. The magician continued, "When the inhabitants have left the city, they will ask you what you want. Then say, Bring me out Shama, the daughter of your King, adorned with all her jewels, and I will come to-morrow and carry her away. But if you refuse, I will destroy your city, and destroy you all together.'" When Mukhtatif heard the words of this priest of magic, he did as he was commanded, and rushed to the city. When Sikar Diun saw this, he returned to King Afrakh to see what would happen; but he had scarcely arrived when the voice of Mukhtatif resounded above the city. The inhabitants went to the King, and said, "You have heard what is commanded, and if you do not yield willingly, you will be obliged to do so by force." The King then went weeping to the mother of the Princess, and informed her of the calamity. She could scarcely contain herself for despair, and all in the palace wept at parting from the Princess. Meantime Shama was richly attired, torn from her parents, and hurried to the bridal tent before the town, to he carried away by the evil Jinni. The inhabitants were all assembled on the walls of the city, weeping. It was just at this moment that Wakhs El Fellat arrived from the desert, and entered the tent to see what was going on. When King Afrakh, who was also on the wall, saw him, he cried out to him, but he did not listen, and dismounted, fastened his horse to a tent-stake, and entered. Here he beheld a maiden of extraordinary beauty and perfection, but she was weeping. While he was completely bewildered by her beauty, she was no less struck by his appearance. "Who art thou?" said the maiden to him. "Tell me rather who art thou?" returned he. "I am Shama, the daughter of King Afrakh." "Thou art Shama?" he exclaimed, "and I am Wakhs El Fellat, who was reared by thy father." When they were thus acquainted, they sat down together to talk over their affairs, and she took this opportunity of telling him what had passed with the Jinni, and how he was coming to carry her away. “O, you shall see how I will deal with him,” answered he, but at this moment the evil Jinni approached, and his wings darkened the sun. The inhabitants uttered a terrible cry, and the Jinni darted upon the tent, and was about to raise it when he saw a man there, talking to the daughter of the King. “Woe to thee, O son of earth,” he exclaimed, “what authority have you to sit by my betrothed?” When Wakhs El Fellat saw the terrible form of the Jinni, a shudder came over him, and he cried to God for aid. He immediately drew his sword, and struck at the Jinni, who had just extended his right hand to seize him, and the blow was so violent that it struck off the hand. “What, you would kill me?” exclaimed Mukhtatif, and he took up his hand, put it under his arm, and flew away. Upon this there was a loud cry of joy from the walls of the city. The gates were thrown open, and King Afrakh approached, companied by a crowd of people with musical instruments, playing joyful music; and Wakhs El Fellat was invested with robes of honour; but when Sikar Diun saw it it was gall to him. The King prepared an apartment expressly for Wakhs El Fellat, and while Shama returned to her palace, he gave a great feast in honour of her deliverance from the fiend. After seven days had passed, Shama went to Wakhs El Fellat, and said to him, “Ask me of my father tomorrow, for you have rescued me, and he will not be able to refuse you.” He consented very willingly, and went to the King early next morning. The King gave him a very favourable reception, and seated him with him on the throne; but Wakhs El Fellat had not courage to prefer his suit, and left him after a short interview. He had not long returned to his own room, when Shama entered, saluted him, and asked, “Why did you not demand me?” “I was too bashful,” he replied. “Lay this feeling aside,” returned she, “and demand me.” “Well, I will certainly do so to-morrow,” answered he. Thereupon she left him, and returned to her own apartment. Early next morning Wakhs El Fellat went again to the King, who gave him a friendly reception, and made him sit with him. But he was still unable to prefer his suit, and returned to his own room. Soon after Shama came to him and said, “How long is this bashfulness to last? Take courage, and if not, request some one else to speak for you.” She then left him, and next morning he repeated his visit to the King. “What is your request?” asked the latter. “I am come as a suitor,” said Wakhs El Fellat, “and ask the hand of your noble daughter Shama.” When Sikar Diun heard this, he slapped his face. “What is the matter with you?” asked the King. “This is what I have foreseen,” answered he, “for if these two moles unite, the destruction of Abyssinia is accomplished.” “How can I refuse him?” replied the King, “when he has just delivered her from the fiend.” “Tell him,” answered Sikar Diun, “that you must consult with your Wazir.” The King then turned to Wakhs El Fellat, and said, “My son, your request is granted as far as I am concerned, but I leave my Wazir to arrange it with you, so you must consult him about it.” Wakhs El Fellat immediately turned to the Wazir, and repeated his request to him. Sikar Diun answered him in a friendly manner. “The affair is as good as arranged, no one else is suited for the King’s daughter, but you know that the daughters of the Kings require a dowry.” “Ask what you please,” returned Wakhs El Fellat. “We do not ask you for money or money’s worth,” said the Wazir, “but for the head of a man named Sudun, the Ethiopian.” “Where can I find him?” said the prince. The Wazir replied, “He is said to dwell in the fortress of Reg, three days’ journey from here.” “But what if I fail to bring the head of Sudun?” asked he. “But you will have it,” returned the Wazir; and after this understanding the audience ceased, and each returned to his dwelling.

Now this Sudun had built his fortress on the summit of a high hill. It was very secure, and he defended it with the edge of the sword. It was his usual resort, from whence he sallied forth on plundering expeditions, and rendered the roads unsafe. At length the news of him reached King Saif Ar-Raad, who sent against him three thousand men, but he routed and destroyed them all. Upon this, the King sent a larger number against him, who experienced the same fate. He then despatched a third army, upon which Sudun fortified himself afresh, and reared the walls of his fortress so high that an eagle could scarcely pass them. We will now return to Shama, who went to Wakhs El Fellat, and reproached him with the conditions he had agreed to, and added, “It would be better for you to leave this place, and take me with you, and we will put ourselves under the protection of some powerful king.” “God forbid,” replied he, “that I should take you with me in so dishonourable a manner." As he still positively refused to consent, she grew angry, and left him. Wakhs El Fellat lay down to rest, but he could not sleep. So he rose up, mounted his horse, and rode away at midnight; and in the morning he met a horseman who stationed himself in his path, but who was so completely armed that his face was concealed. When Wakhs El Fellat saw him, he cried to him, "Who are you, and where are you going?" But instead of replying, he pressed upon him, and aimed a blow which Wakhs El Fellat successfully parried. A fight then commenced between them, which lasted till nearly evening. At last the difference in their strength became perceptible, and Wakhs El Fellat struck his adversary so violent a blow with his javelin that his horse fell to the ground. He then dismounted, and was about to slay him, when the horseman cried to him, "Do not kill me, O brave warrior, or you will repent when repentance will no more avail you." "Tell me who you are?" returned Wakhs El Fellat. "I am Shama, the daughter of King Afrakh," replied the horseman. "Why have you acted thus?" asked he. "I wished to try whether you would be able to hold your own against Sudun's people," she replied. "I have tried you now, and found you so valiant that I fear no longer on your account. Take me with you, O hero." "God forbid that I should do so," he returned; "what would Sikar Diun and the others say? They would say that if Shama had not been with him, he would never have been able to prevail against Sudun." She then raised her eyes to heaven, and said, "O God, permit him to fall into some danger from which I alone may deliver him!" Upon this Wakhs El Fellat pursued his journey, without giving any attention to her words. On the third day he arrived at the valley where the fortress of Sudun was situated, when he began to work his way along behind the trees; and towards evening he arrived at the fortress itself, which he found to be surrounded with a moat; and the gates were closed. He was still undecided what course to take, when he heard the sound of an approaching caravan; and he hid himself in the fosse of the fortress to watch it. He then saw that it was driven forward by a large body of men, and that the merchants were bound on their mules. When they arrived at the castle, they knocked at the gate; and when the troop entered, Wakhs El Fellat entered with them; and they unloaded the goods and bound the prisoners without noticing him. When the armed men had finished their work, they ascended to the castle, but he remained below. After a time, he wished to follow them, but when he trod on the first step, it gave way under him, and a dagger flew out, which struck him in the groin. Upon this his eyes filled with tears, and he already looked upon his destruction as certain, when a form came towards him from the entrance of the castle, to deliver him; and as it drew nearer, he perceived that it was Shama. He was filled with astonishment, and cried out, "God has heard your prayer! How did you come here?" "I followed your traces," she replied, "till you entered the castle, when I imitated your example, and mingled with the troops. I have now saved your life, although you have refused to take me with you; but if you wish to advance further, do not neglect to try whether each step is fixed, with the point of your sword." He now again began to ascend, feeling the way before him, and Shama followed, till they arrived at the last stair, when they saw that the staircase ended in a revolving wheel. "Spring higher," advised Shama, "for I see a javelin which magic art has placed here." They sprang over it, and pursued their way till they reached a large anteroom, lighted by a high cupola. They stopped here awhile, and examined everything carefully. At last they approached the door of a room, and on looking through the crevices, they saw about a hundred armed negroes, among whom was a black slave who looked as savage as a lion. The room was lighted by wax candles, placed on gold and silver candlesticks. At this moment, the black said, "Slaves, what have you done with the prisoners belonging to the caravan?" "We have chained them in the prison below, and left them in the safest place," was the reply. But he continued, "If one of them was carelessly bound, he might be able to release himself and the others, and to gain possession of the stairs. Let one of you therefore go down, examine them carefully, and tighten their bonds." One of them therefore came out, and the two strangers hid themselves in the anteroom. When he had passed them, Wakhs El Fellat stepped forward and pierced him through with his sword; Shama dragged his body aside, and they both remained quiet for a time. But as the slave remained away from his companions too long, Sudun exclaimed, "Go and see why he does not return, for I have been in great alarm ever since we entered the castle to- day." A second then rose and took his sword, and as he came into the anteroom, Wakhs El Fellat clove him in twain at one blow and Shama dragged his body also on one side. They again waited quietly for a time, when Sudun said, "It seems as if hunters are watching our slaves, and are killing them one after another." A third then hastened out, and Wakhs El Fellat struck him such a blow that he fell dead to the ground, and Shama dragged him also away. But as he likewise remained absent so long, Sudun himself stood up and all the others with him, and he said, "Did I not warn and caution you? There is a singing in my ears, and my heart trembles, for there must be people here who are watching our men." He himself now came out, and the others followed him with lights and holding their hands on their swords, when one of the foremost suddenly stopped. "Why do you not advance!" cried the others. "How shall I go forward," said he, "when he who has slain our friends stands before us." This answer was repeated to Sudun when he called on them in a voice of thunder to advance. When he heard this, he forced his way through them till he perceived Wakhs El Fellat. "Who are you, Satan?" cried he, "and who brought you here?" "I came here," replied he, "to cut off your head, and destroy your memory." "Have you any blood-feud against me?" asked Sudun, "or any offence to revenge upon me?" "I have no enmity against you in my heart," said Wakhs El Fellat, "and you have never injured me; but I have asked Shama in marriage of her father, and he has demanded of me your head as a condition. Be on your guard, that you may not say I acted foully towards you." "Madman," cried Sudun, "I challenge you to a duel. Will you fight inside or outside the fortress?" "I leave that to you," returned Wakhs El Fellat. "Well, then, await me here," was the reply. Sudun then went in, clothed himself in gilded armour, girt on a saw-like sword, and came out holding a shining club in his hand. He was so enraged that he knew not what to say, and at once attacked Wakhs El Fellat, who threw himself on his adversary like a raging lion, and they fought together like hungry wolves; but both despaired of victory. The swords spake a hard language on the shields, and each of the combatants wished that he had never been born. When this desperate fight had lasted a long time, Shama was greatly troubled lest Sudun should prove victorious. So she seized a dagger and struck at Sudun, wounding the nerves of his hand, so that he dropped his sword, while she exclaimed to Wakhs El Fellat, “Make an end of him.” “No,” replied Wakhs El Fellat, “I will make him my prisoner, for he is a brave and valiant man.” “With whom are you speaking?” asked Sudun. “With Shama,” answered he. “What,” said Sudun, “did she come with you?” “Yes,” replied he. “Then let her come before me.” She came forward, and Sudun said, “Is the world too narrow for your father that he could demand nothing as your dowry but my head?” “This was his desire,” answered she. Wakhs El Fellat then said, “Take your sword and defend yourself, for I will not fight with you, now that it has fallen out of your hand.” But Sudun replied , “I will not fight with you, for I am wounded, so take my head, and go in peace with your bride.” He then sat down and bowed his head. “If you speak truly,” said Wakhs El Fellat, “separate yourself from your people.” “Why so?” “Because I fear lest they may surround me, and compel me to fight with them, and there is no need for me to shed their blood.” Sudun then left the castle, bowed his head, and said, “Finish your work.” But Wakhs El Fellat said, “If you speak truth, come with me across the fosse of the castle into the open ground.” He did so, carefully barring the castle behind him, and said, “Now take my head.”

When the slaves saw this, they mounted the walls, and wept and lamented. But Shama cried out, “Take his head, and let us hasten our return before morning dawns.” “What,” said Wakhs El Fellat, “should I kill so brave a man in so treacherous a manner, when he is so noble and magnanimous?” He then went up to Sudun, kissed his head, and said, “Rise up, O warrior of the age, for you and your companions are safe from me.” They now all embraced each other, and made an offensive and defensive compact. “Take me with you alive, O brave man,” said Sudun, “and hand me over to the King as his daughter’s dowry. If he consents, well; but if not, take my head, and woo your wife.” “God forbid,” said Wakhs El Fellat, “that I should act thus after your magnanimity. Rather return to the castle, and assure your companions of your safety.” All this passed under the eyes of the other armed men. They rejoiced at the knightly conduct of both , and now came down, fell at the feet of Sudun and embraced him. They then did the same to Wakhs El Fellat, whose hands they kissed and loaded him with praises. After this, they all returned to the castle, and agreed to set out presently. They took with them whatever treasures there were, and Wakhs El Fellat commanded them to release the prisoners and restore them their goods. They now all mounted their horses and journeyed to the country of King Afrakh, greatly rejoiced at the mutual love of the warriors. When they approached the town, Shama parted from them, that nothing should be known of her absence in the company. During this time, King Afrakh and Sikar Diun had amused themselves with hunting, jesting, and sporting, and sent out scouts daily to look for Wakhs El Fellat. "What can have become of him?" said the King once to Sikar Diun. "Sudun has certainly killed him," replied the latter, "and you will never see him again." While they were thus talking, they observed a great cloud of dust, and as it drew nearer, they could see the armed men more distinctly. The company was led by a black knight, by whose side rode a younger white horseman. When the King saw this, he exclaimed, "Wakhs El Fellat has returned, in company with Sudun and his host." "Wait a little," replied Sikar Dian, "till we are certain of it." But when they drew nearer, and they could doubt no longer, Sikar Diun mounted his horse and fled, accompanied by the King and his followers, till they reached the town, and barred the gates. They then watched from the walls, to see what would happen. When they saw that the strangers dismounted and pitched tents, the King thought it was a good sign. He therefore ordered the town to be decorated, and the gates to be opened, and rode out, attended by a considerable escort, and approached the tents. The other party now mounted their horses to go to meet them. When they approached each other, King Afrakh was about to dismount, but Wakhs El Fellat would not allow it, and the King embraced him, and congratulated him on his safety. He then saluted Sudun also, but the latter did not return his salutation. He invited him to enter the town, but he declined, as did Wakhs El Fellat likewise, who did not wish to part from his companions. The King returned accompanied only by his own people, and prepared the best reception for the new-comers. On the following morning the King held a general council, at which Sikar Diun appeared greatly depressed. "Did I not warn you beforehand," said he to the King, "what you now see for yourself of this evil-doer? Did we not send him to bring the head of Sudun, and he returns with him safe and sound, and on the best of terms, while our hearts are oppressed with anxiety?" "You may be right," replied the King, "but what are we to do now?"

This conversation was interrupted by a tumult caused by the arrival of Wakhs El Fellat and Sudun, who came to pay their respects to the King. The King invited them to sit down, but Sudun remained standing, and when he asked him again, he replied, "You craven, was the world too narrow for you that you desired my head as your daughter's dowry?" "Sit down," said the King, "for I know that you are angry." "How can I sit down," returned Sudun, "when you have ordered my death?" "God forbid that I should act so unjustly," said the King; "it was Sikar Diun." "What," said he, "do you accuse me of such an action in my presence?" "Did you not make this condition with Wakhs El Fellat," said the King, "and send him on his errand?" Sikar Diun then turned to Sudun, and said, "Sit down, brave warrior, for we only did so from love to you, that we might be able to make a treaty with you, and that you might join our company." After this answer, Sudun concealed his anger, and sat down. Refreshments were now brought in, and after partaking of them, Wakhs El Fellat and Sudun returned to their tents. Several days passed in this manner, and at length Sudun said to Wakhs El Fellat, "O my master, it is time for you to demand Shama in marriage, now you have won her with the edge of the sword. You have fulfilled their conditions long since by bringing them my head, but you have made no further progress at present. Ask for her once more, and if they will not give her up, I will fall upon them with the sword, and we will carry Shama off, and then lay waste the city." "I will demand her as my wife again to-morrow," replied the other. When he went to the palace next day, he found the King and all the court assembled. When they saw him, they all rose from their seats, and when they sat down again, he alone remained standing. "Why do you not sit down," said the King, "for all your wishes are now fulfilled?" "I have still to ask for Shama," he replied. "You know," returned the King, "that ever since her birth I have allowed Sikar Diun to make all arrangements for her." He now turned to Sikar Diun, who replied in a friendly tone, “She is yours, for you have fulfilled the conditions, and you have only now to give her ornaments.” “What kind of ornaments?” asked he. “Instead of ornaments,” replied the traitor, “we desire to receive a book containing the history of the Nile. If you bring it us, she is wholly yours, but if not, there is no marriage to be thought of.” “Where is it to be found?” “I cannot tell you myself.” “Well, then,” returned Wakhs El Fellat, “if I do not bring you the book, Shama is lost to me; all present are witnesses to this.” He went out with these words, pushing his way through the crowded assembly, and Sudun behind him, till they reached their tents. “Why did you promise that,” said Sudun, “let us rather overcome them with the sword, and take Shama from them.” “Not so,” replied Wakhs El Fellat, “I will only possess her honourably.” “And yet you do not even know how to find the book,” said Sudun; “rather listen to my advice, retire to my fortress, and leave me in their power.” “I would never act thus,” said Wakhs El Fellat, “though I should suffer death.” After these and similar speeches, supper was brought in, and each retired to his sleeping apartment. But Wakhs El Fellat had scarcely entered his room when Shama came in. “What have you done,” said she, “and what engagement have you undertaken? How can you fulfil this condition? Do you not see that their only object is to destroy you, or at least to get rid of you? I have come to warn you again, and I say to you once more, take me with you to Sudun’s castle, where we can live at peace, and do not act as they tell you.” “I will carry out my engagement,” he replied; “I will not possess you like a coward, even though I should be cut to pieces with swords.” Upon this, Shama was angry and left him, while he lay down to rest, but could not sleep. He therefore rose up, saddled and mounted his horse and rode away, without knowing where, abandoning himself wholly to the will of God. He wandered about thus for several days, until he reached a lonely tower. He knocked at the door, and a voice answered, “Welcome, O thou who hast separated thyself from thy companions; enter without fear, O brave Saif, son of Zul Yezn.” When he pushed the door it opened, and his eyes beheld a noble and venerable old man, from whose appearance it was at once obvious that he busied himself with the strictest life and fear of God. “Welcome,” cried he again; “if you had travelled from east to West you would have found no one who could show you how to obtain the book you seek as well as I can, for I have dwelt here awaiting your arrival for sixty years.” “But that was before I was born,” said Wakhs El Fellat to himself. He then asked aloud, “By what name did you address me just now?” “O Saif,” answered the old man, “that is your true name, for you are a sword (Saíf) to the Abyssinians; but whom do you worship?” “O my master,” was the reply, “the Abyssinians worship Saturn (Sukhal) but I am in perplexity, and know not whom to worship.” “My son,” replied the old man, “worship Him who has reared the heavens over us without pillars, and who has rested the earth on water; the only and eternal God, the Lord who is only and alone to be reverenced. I worship Him and none other beside him, for I follow the religion of Abraham.” “What is your name?” asked Wakhs El Fellat. “I am called Shaikh Gyat.” “What declaration must I make,” he asked the old man, “to embrace your religion?” “Say There is no God but God, and Abraham is the Friend of God.’ If you make this profession, you will be numbered among the believers.” He at once repeated the formula, and Shaikh Gyat was much pleased, and devoted the night to teaching him the history of Abraham and his religion, and the forms of worship. Towards morning he said, “O my son, whenever you advance to battle, say, God is great, grant me victory, O God, and destroy the infidels,’ and help will be near you. Now pursue your journey, but leave your horse here until your return. Enter the valley before you, under the protection of God, and after three days you will meet some one who will aid you.” Wakhs El Fellat set out on that road, and after three days he met a horseman who saluted him, and exclaimed, “Welcome, Saif Zul Yezn, for you bring happiness to this neighbourhood.” Saif returned his salutation, and asked, “How do you know me, and how do you know my name?” “I am not a brave or renowned warrior,” was the answer, “but one of the maidens of this country and my mother taught me your name.” “What is your name and that of your mother?” “My mother’s name is Alka,” answered she, “and I am called Taka.” When he heard this he was greatly rejoiced, for he remembered that Shaikh Gyat had said to him, “O thou, whose destiny will be decided by Alka and Taka.” “O noble virgin,” said he, “where is your mother, Alka?” “Look round,” she replied; and he saw a very large and lofty city at some distance. "Know," said she, "that 360 experienced philosophers dwell in that city. My mother Alka is their superior, and directs all their affairs and actions. She knew that you would come to this neighbourhood in search of a book concerning the Nile, which was written by Japhet, the son of Noah, and she wishes you to attain your end by her means. She also informed me of your coming, and promised me to you, saying, You shall have no other husband but him.' We expected you to- day, and she sent me to meet you, adding, Warn him not to enter the town by daylight, or it will be his destruction.' Wait here, therefore, till nightfall, and only approach the city after dark. Turn to the right along the wall, and stand still when you reach the third tower, where we will await you. As soon as we see you we will throw you a rope; bind it round your waist, and we will draw you up. The rest will be easy." "But why need you give yourselves all this trouble?" said Saif Zul Yezn. "Know," replied she, "that the inhabitants of this city have been informed of your approaching arrival by their books, and are aware that you are about to carry away their book, which they hold in superstitious reverence. On the first day of each month they repair to the building where it is preserved; and they adore it and seek counsel from it respecting their affairs. They have also a king whose name is Kamrun. When they knew that you were coming for the book they constructed a talisman against you. They have made a copper statue, and fixed a brazen horn in its hand, and have stationed it at the gate of the city. If you enter, the statue will sound the horn, and it will only do so upon your arrival. They would then seize you and put you to death. On this account we desire to baffle their wisdom by drawing you up to the walls of the city at another place." "May God reward you a thousandfold," replied he; "but go now, and announce my arrival to your mother." She went away, and he approached the city in the darkness of night, and turned towards the third tower on the right, where he found Alka and Taka. When they recognised him, they immediately threw him the rope, which he fastened about him. When he was drawn up, they descended from the wall, and were about to proceed to Alka's house, when the talisman suddenly acted, and the statue blew the horn loudly. "Hasten to our house," cried Alka; and they succeeded in reaching it safely and barred the doors, when the noise increased. The whole population of the city rose up, and the streets were filled. "What is this disturbance about?" asked Saif. "This is all due," replied Alka, "to the alarm sounded by the statue, because you have entered the town. There will be a great meeting held to-morrow, where all the wise men will assemble, to attempt to discover the whereabouts of the intruder; but by God's help, I will guide them wrong, and confuse their counsels. Go to our neighbour the fisherman," added she to her daughter, "and see what he has caught." She went, and brought news that he had taken a large fish, of the size of a man. "Take this piece of gold," said her mother, "and bring us the fish;" and when she did so, she told her to clean it, which was done. Food was then brought in, and they ate and talked. The night passed quietly, but on the following morning Alka ordered Saif Zul Yezn to undress, and to hide in the skin of the fish. She put her mouth to the mouth of the fish, and took a long rope, which she fastened under Saif's armpits. She then let him down into a deep well, and fastened him there, saying, "Remain here, till I come back." She then left him, and went to the great hall of the King, where the divan was already assembled, and the King had taken his seat on the throne. All rose up when she entered, and when she had seated herself, the King said to her, "O mother, did you not hear the blast of the horn yesterday, and why did you not come out with us?" "I did hear it," she replied, "but I did not heed it." "But you know," said he, "that the sound can only be heard upon the arrival of the stranger who desires to take the book." "I know it, O King; but permit me to choose forty men from among those assembled here." She did so, and selected ten from among the forty again. She then said to them, "Take a Trakhtramml (sandboard on which the Arabs practise geomancy and notation) and look and search." They did so, but had scarcely finished when they looked at each other in amazement. They destroyed their calculation, and began a second, and confused this, too, and began a third, upon which they became quite confounded. "What are you doing there?" asked the King at last. "You go on working and obliterating your work; what have you discovered?" "O King," replied they, "we find that the stranger has entered the town, but not by any gate. He appears to have passed in between Heaven and earth, like a bird. After this, a fish swallowed him, and carried him down into some dark water." "Are you fools?" asked the King angrily; and turning to Alka, continued, "Have you ever seen a man flying between Heaven and earth, and afterwards swallowed by a fish, which descends with him into dark water?" "O King," replied she, "I always forbid the wise men to eat heavy food, for it disturbs their understanding and weakens their penetration; but they will not heed me." At this the King was angry, and immediately drove them from the hall. But Alka said, "It will be plain to-morrow what has happened." She left the hall, and when she reached home, she drew Saif Zul Yezn out of the well, and he dressed himself again. They sat down, and Alka said, "I have succeeded in confounding their deliberations to- day! and there will be a great assembly to-morrow, when I must hide you in a still more out-of-the-way place." After this they supped, and went to rest. Next morning Alka called her daughter, and said, "Bring me the gazelle." When it was brought her, she said, "Bring me the wings of an eagle." Taka gave them to her, and she bound them on the back of the gazelle. She then took a pair of compasses, which she fixed in the ceiling of the room. She next took two other pairs of compasses, which she fixed in the ceiling of the room. She next took two other pairs of compasses, and tied one between the fore feet, and the other between the hind feet of the gazelle. She then tied a rope to the compasses in the roof, and the two ends to the other pairs. But she made Saif Zul Yezn lie down in such a position that his head was between the feet of the gazelle. She then said to him, "Remain here till I come back"; and went to the King, with whom she found a very numerous assemblage of the wise men. As soon as she entered, the King made her sit beside him on the throne. "O my mother Alka," he said, "I could not close an eye last night from anxiety concerning yesterday's events." "Have you no wise men," returned she, "who eat the bread of the divan?" She then turned to them, saying, "Select the wisest among you!" and they chose the wisest among them. She ordered them to take the sandboard again, but they became so confused that they were obliged to begin again three times from the beginning. "What do you discover?" said the King angrily. "O our master," replied they, "he whom we seek has been carried away by a beast of the desert, which is flying with him between Heaven and earth." "How is this?" said the King to Alka; "have you ever seen anything like it?" He seized his sword in a rage, and three fled, and he killed four of the others. When Alka went home, she released Saif, and told him what had happened. Next morning Alka took the gazelle, and slaughtered it in a copper kettle. She then took a golden mortar, and reversed it over it, and said to Saif Zul Yezn, "Sit on this mortar till I come back." She then went to the divan, and chose out six wise men, who again took the sandboard, and began again three times over in confusion. "Alas," said the King, in anger, "What misfortune do you perceive?" "O our master," they exclaimed in consternation, "our understanding is confused, for we see him sitting on a golden mountain, which is in the midst of a sea of blood, surrounded by a copper wall." The King was enraged, and broke up the assembly, saying, "O Alka, I will now depend on you alone." "To-morrow I will attempt to show you the stranger," she replied. When she came home, she related to Saif what had happened, and said, "I shall know by to-morrow what to tell the King to engage his attention, and prevent him from pursuing you." Next morning she found Taka speaking to Saif Zul Yezn alone; and she asked her, "What does he wish?" "Mother," replied Taka, "he wishes to go to the King's palace, to see him and the divan." "What you wish shall be done," said she to Saif, "but you must not speak." He assented to the condition, and she dressed him as her attendant, gave him a sandboard, and went with him to the King, who said to her, "I could not sleep at all last night, for thinking of the stranger for whom we are seeking." "Now that the affair is in my hands," returned she, "you will find me a sufficient protection against him." She immediately ordered Saif to give her the sandboard. She took it, and when she had made her calculations, she said joyfully to the King, "O my lord, I can give you the welcome news of the flight of the stranger, owing to his dread of you and your revenge." When the King heard this, he rent his clothes, slapped his face, and said, "He would not have departed, without having taken the book." "I cannot see if he has taken anything," replied she. "This is the first of the month," said the King, "come and let us see if it is missing." He then went with a large company to the building where the book was kept. Alka turned away from the King for a moment to say to Saif, "Do not enter with us, for if you enter, the case will open of itself, and the book will fall into your hands. This would at once betray you, and you would be seized and put to death, and all my labour would have been in vain." She then left him, and rejoined the King. When they reached the building, the doors were opened, and when the King entered, they found the book. They immediately paid it the customary honours, and protracted this species of worship, while Saif stood at the door, debating with himself whether to enter or not. At last his impatience overcame him, and he entered, and at the same instant the casket was broken to pieces, and the book fell out. The King then ordered all to stand up, and the book rolled to Saif Zul Yezn. Upon this all drew their swords, and rushed upon him. Saif drew his sword also, and cried "God is great!" as Shaikh Gyat had taught him. He continued to fight and defend himself, and struggled to reach the door. The entire town arose in tumult to pursue him, when he stumbled over a dead body, and was seized. "Let me not see his face," cried the King, "but throw him into the mine." This mine was eighty yards deep, and had not been opened for sixty years. It was closed by a heavy leaden cover, which they replaced, after they had loaded him with chains, and thrown him in. Saif sat there in the darkness, greatly troubled, and lamenting his condition to Him who never sleeps. Suddenly, a side wall of the mine opened, and a figure came forth which approached and called him by his name. "Who are you?" asked Saif. "I am a woman named Akissa, and inhabit the mountain where the Nile rises. We are a nation who hold the faith of Abraham. A very pious man lives below us in a beautiful palace. But an evil Jinni named Mukhtatif lived near us also, who loved me, and demanded me in marriage of my father. He consented from fear, but I was unwilling to marry an evil being who was a worshipper of fire. How can you promise me in marriage to an infidel?' said I to my father. I shall thereby escape his malice myself,' replied he. I went out and wept, and complained to the pious man about the affair. Do you know who will kill him?' said he to me, and I answered, No.' I will direct you to him who has cut off his hand,' said he. His name is Saif Zul Yezn, and he is now in the city of King Kamrun, in the mine.' Thereupon he brought me to you, and I come as you see me, to guide you to my country, that you may kill Mukhtatif, and free the earth from his wickedness.” She then moved him, and shook him, and all his chains fell off. She lifted him on her shoulders, and carried him to the palace of the Shaikh, who was named Abbas Salam. Here he heard a voice crying, “Enter, Saif Zul Yezn.” He did so, and found a grave and venerable old man, who gave him a very friendly reception, saying, “Wait till to-morrow, when Akissa will come to guide you to the castle of Mukhtatif.” He remained with him for the night, and when Akissa arrived next morning, the old man told her to hasten, that the world might be soon rid of the monster. They then left this venerable man, and when they had walked awhile, Akissa said to Saif, “Look before you.” He did so, and perceived a black mass at some distance. “This is the castle of the evil- doer,” said she, “but I cannot advance a step further than this.” Saif therefore pursued his way alone, and when he came near the castle, he walked round it to look for the entrance. As he was noticing the extraordinary height of the castle, which was founded on the earth, but appeared to overtop the clouds, he saw a window open, and several people looked out, who pointed at him with their fingers, exclaiming, “That is he, that is he!” They threw him a rope, which they directed him to bind round him. They drew him up by it, when he found himself in the presence of three hundred and sixty damsels, who saluted him by his name.

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(Here Habicht’s fragment ends.)

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SCOTT'S MSS. AND TRANSLATIONS.

In 1800, Jonathan Scott, LL.D., published a volume of "Tales, Anecdotes, and Letters, translated from the Arabic and Persian," based upon a fragmentary MS., procured by J. Anderson in Bengal, which included the commencement of the work (Nos. 1-3) in 29 Nights; two tales not divided into Nights (Nos. 264 and 135) and No. 21.

Scott's work includes these two new tales (since republished by Kirby and Clouston), with the addition of various anecedotes, &c., derived from other sources. The "Story of the Labourer and the Chair" has points of resemblance to that of "Malek and the Princess Chirine" (Shirin?) in the Thousand and One Days; and also to that of "Tuhfet El Culoub" (No. 183a) in the Breslau Edition. The additional tales in this MS. and vol. of translations are marked "A" under Scott in our Tables. Scott published the following specimens (text and translation) in Ouseley's Oriental Collections (1797 and following years) No. 135m (i. p-257) and Introduction (ii. p-172; 228- 257). The contents are fully given in Ouseley, vol. ii. p, 35.

Scott afterwards acquired an approximately complete MS. in 7 vols., written in 1764 which was brought from Turkey by E. Wortley Montague. Scott published a table of contents (Ouseley, ii. p-34), in which, however, the titles of some few of the shorter tales, which he afterwards translated from it, are omitted, while the titles of others are differently translated. Thus "Greece" of the Table becomes "Yemen" in the translation; and "labourer" becomes "sharper." As a specimen, he subsequently printed the text and translation of No. 145 (Ouseley, ii. p-367).

This MS., which differs very much from all others known, is now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford.

In 1811, Scott published an edition of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, in 6 vols., vol. 1 containing a long introduction, and vol. 6, including a series of new tales from the Oxford MS. (There is a small paper edition; and also a large paper edition, the latter with frontispieces, and an Appendix including a table of the tales contained in the MS.) It had originally been Scott's intention to retranslate the MS.; but he appears to have found it beyond his powers. He therefore contented himself with re-editing Galland, altering little except the spelling of the names, and saying that Galland's version is in the main so correct that it would be useless repetition to go over the work afresh. Although he says that he found many of the tales both immoral and puerile, he translated most of those near the beginning, and omitted much more (including several harmless and interesting tales, such as No. 152) towards the end of his MS. than near the beginning. The greater part of Scott's additional tales, published in vol. 6, are included in the composite French and German editions of Gauttier and Habicht; but, except Nos. 208, 209, and 215, republished in my "New Arabian Nights," they have not been reprinted in England, being omitted in all the many popular versions which are professedly based upon Scott, even in the edition in 4 vols., published in 1882, which reprints Scott's Preface.

The edition of 1882 was published about the same time as one of the latest reissues of Lane's Thousand and One Nights; and the Saturday Review of Nov. 4, 1882 (), published an article on the Arabian Nights, containing the following amusing passage: "Then Jonathan Scott, LL.D. Oxon, assures the world that he intended to retranslate the tales given by Galland; but he found Galland so adequate on the whole that he gave up the idea, and now reprints Galland, with etchings by M. Lalauze, giving a French view of Arab life. Why Jonathan Scott, LL.D., should have thought to better Galland, while Mr. Lane's version is in existence, and has just been reprinted, it is impossible to say."

The most interesting of Scott's additional tales, with reference to ordinary editions of The Nights, are as follows: —

No. 204b is a variant of No. 37.

No. 204c is a variant of 3e, in which the wife, instead of the husband, acts the part of a jealous tyrant. (Compare Cazotte's story of Halechalbe.)

No. 204e. Here we have a reference to the Nesnás, which only appears once in the ordinary versions of The Nights (No. 132b; Burton, v.,).

No. 206b. is a variant of No. 156.

No. 207c. This relates to a bird similar to that in the Jealous Sisters (No. 198), and includes a variant of 3ba.

No. 207h. Another story of enchanted birds. The prince who seeks them encounters an "Oone" under similar circumstances to those under which Princess Parizade (No. 198) encounters the old durwesh. The description is hardly that of a Marid, with which I imagine the Ons are wrongly identified.

No. 208 contains the nucleus of the famous story of Aladdin (No. 193).

No. 209 is similar to No. 162; but we have again the well incident of No. 3ba, and the exposure of the children as in No. 198.

No. 215. Very similar to Hasan of Bassorah (No. 155). As Sir R. F. Burton (vol. viii., , note) has called in question my identification of the Islands of WákWák with the Aru Islands near New Guinea, I will quote here the passages from Mr. A. R. Wallace's Malay Archipelago (cha) on which I based it:— "The trees frequented by the birds are very lofty. . . . . One day I got under a tree where a number of the Great Paradise birds were assembled, but they were high up in the thickest of the foliage, and flying and jumping about so continually that I could get no good view of them. . . . . Their voice is most extraordinary. At early morn, before the sun has risen, we hear a loud cry of Wawk — wawk — wawk, w k — w k — w k,' which resounds through the forest, changing its direction continually. This is the Great Bird of Paradise going to seek his breakfast. . . . . The birds had now commenced what the people here call sacaleli,' or dancing-parties, in certain trees in the forest, which are not fruit-trees as I at first imagined, but which have an immense head of spreading branches and large but scattered leaves, giving a clear space for the birds to play and exhibit their plumes. On one of these trees a dozen or twenty full-plumaged male birds assemble together, raise up their wings, stretch out their necks, and elevate their exquisite plumes, keeping them in a continual vibration. Between whiles they fly across from branch to branch in great excitement, so that the whole tree is filled with waving plumes in every variety of attitude and motion."

No. 216bc appears to be nearly the same as No. 42.

No. 225 is a variant of No. 135q.

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WEIL'S TRANSLATION.

The only approximately complete original German translation is "Tausend und eine Nacht. Arabische Erzählungen. Zum Erstenmale aus dem Urtexte vollständig und treu übersetzt von Dr. Gustav Weil," four vols., Stuttgart. The first edition was in roy. 8vo, and was published at Stuttgart and Pforzheim in 1839-1842; the last volume I have not seen; it is wanting in the copy in the British Museum. This edition is divided into Nights, and includes No. 25b. In the later editions, which are in small square 8vo, but profusely illustrated, like the larger one, this story is omitted (except No. 135m, which the French editors include with it), though Galland's doubtful stories are retained; and there is no division into Nights. The work has been reprinted several times, and the edition quoted in our Table is described as "Zweiter Abdruck der dritten vollstandig umgearbeiteten, mit Anmerkungen und mit einer Einleitung versehenen Auflage" (1872).

Weil has not stated from what sources he drew his work, except that No. 201 is taken from a MS. in the Ducal Library at Gotha. This is unfortunate, as his version of the great transformation scene in No. 3b (Burton, vol. i., p, 135), agrees more closely with Galland than with any other original version. In other passages, as when speaking of the punishment of Aziz (No. 9a, aa), Weil seems to have borrowed an expression from Lane, who writes "a cruel wound;" Weil saying "a severe (schwere) wound."

Whereas Weil gives the only German version known to me of No. 9 (though considerably abridged) he omits many tales contained in Zinserling and Habicht, but whether because his own work was already too bulky, or because his original MSS. did not contain them, I do not know; probably the first supposition is correct, for in any case it was open to him to have translated them from the printed texts, to which he refers in his Preface.

Two important stories (Nos. 200 and 201) are not found in any other version; but as they are translated in my "New Arabian Nights," I need not discuss them here. I will, however, quote a passage from the story of Judar and Mahmood, which I omitted because it is not required by the context, and because I thought it a little out of place in a book published in a juvenile series. It is interesting from its analogy to the story of Semele.

When King Kashuk (a Jinni) is about to marry the daughter of King Shamkoor, we read (New Arabian Nights,), "Shamkoor immediately summoned my father, and said, Take my daughter, for you have won her heart.' He immediately provided an outfit for his daughter, and when it was completed, my father and his bride rode away on horseback, while the trousseau of the Princess followed on three hundred camels." The passage proceeds (the narrator being Daruma, the offspring of the marriage), "When my father had returned home, and was desirous of celebrating his marriage Kandarin (his Wazir) said to him, Your wife will be destroyed if you touch her, for you are created of fire, and she is created of earth, which the fire devours. You will then bewail her death when it is too late. To-morrow,' continued he, I will bring you an ointment with which you must rub both her and yourself; and you may then live long and happily together.' On the following day he brought him a white ointment, and my father anointed himself and his bride with it, and consummated his marriage without danger."

I may add that this is the only omission of the smallest consequence in my rendering of either story.

I have heard from more than one source that a complete German translation of The Nights was published, and suppressed; but I have not been able to discover the name of the author, the date, or any other particulars relating to the subject.

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VON HAMMER'S MS., AND THE TRANSLATIONS DERIVED FROM IT.

Several complete copies of The Nights were obtained by Europeans about the close of the last or the beginning of the present century; and one of these (in 4 vols.) fell into the bands of the great German Orientalist, Joseph von Hammer. This MS. agrees closely with the printed Bul. and Mac. texts, as well as with Dr. Clarke's MS., though the names of the tales sometimes vary a little. One story, "The two Wazirs," given in Von Hammer's list as inedited, no doubt by an oversight, is evidently No. 7, which bears a similar title in Torrens. One title, "Al Kavi," a story which Von Hammer says was published in "Mag. Encycl.," and in English (probably by Scott in Ouseley's Oriental Collections, vide anteà) puzzled me for some time; but from its position, and the title I think I have identified it as No. 145, and have entered it as such. No. 9a in this as well as in several other MSS., bears the title of the Two Lovers, or of the Lover and the Beloved.

Von Hammer made a French translation of the unpublished tales, which he lent to Caussin de Perceval, who extracted from it four tales only (Nos. 21a, 22, 32 and 37), and only acknowledged his obligations in a general way to a distinguished Orientalist, whose name he pointedly suppressed. Von Hammer, naturally indignant, reclaimed his MS., and had it translated into German by Zinserling. He then sent the French MS. to De Sacy, in whose hands it remained for some time, although he does not appear to have made any use of it, when it was despatched to England for publication; but the courier lost it on the journey, and it was never recovered.

Zinserling's translation was published under the title, "Der Tausend und einen Nacht noch nicht übersetzte Mährchen, Erzählungen und Anekdoten, zum erstenmale aus dem Arabischen in's Französische übersetzt von Joseph von Hammer, und aus dem Französischen in's Deutsche von Aug. E. Zinserling, Professor." (3 vols., Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1823.) The introductory matter is of considerable importance, and includes notices of 12 different MSS., and a list of contents of Von Hammer's MS. The tales begin with

No. 23, Nos. 9-19 being omitted, because Von Hammer was informed that they were about to be published in France. (This possibly refers to Asselan Riche's "Scharkan," published in 1829.) The tales and anecdotes in this edition follow the order of The Nights. No. 163 is incomplete, Zinserling giving only the commencement; and two other tales (Nos. 132b and 168) are related in such a confused manner as to be unintelligible, the former from transposition (perhaps in the sheets of the original MS.) and the latter from errors and omissions. On the other hand, some of the tales (No. 137 for instance) are comparatively full and accurate.

A selection from the longer tales was published in English in 3 vols. in 1826, under the title of "New Arabian Nights Entertainments, selected from the original Oriental MS. by Jos. von Hammer, and now first translated into English by the Rev. George Lamb." I have only to remark that No. 132b is here detached from its connection with No. 132, and is given an independent existence.

A complete French re-translation of Zinserling's work, also in 3 vols., by G. S. Trébutien (Contes inédits des Mille et une Nuits), was published in Paris in 1828; but in this edition the long tales are placed first, and all the anecdotes are placed together last.

The various MSS. mentioned by Von Hammer are as follows: —

I. Galland's MS. in Paris.

II. Another Paris MS., containing 870 Nights. (No. 9 is specially noticed as occurring in it.) This seems to be the same as a MS. subsequently mentioned by Von Hammer as consulted by Habicht.

III. Scott's MS. (Wortley Montague).

IV. Scott's MS. (Anderson).

V. Dr. Russell's MS. from Aleppo (224 Nights).

VI. Sir W. Jones' MS., from which Richardson extracted No. 6ee for his grammar.

VII. A. MS. at Vienna (200 Nights).

VIII. MS. in Italinski's collection.

IX. Clarke's MS.

X. An Egyptian MS. at Marseilles.

XI. Von Hammer's MS.

XII. Habicht's MS. (==Bres. text).

XIII. Caussin's MS.

XIV. De Sacy’s MS.
XV. One or more MSS. in the Vatican.

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TRANSLATIONS OF THE PRINTED TEXTS.

These are noticed by Sir R. F. Burton in his "Foreword" (vol. i., pp. x-xii.) and consequently can be passed over with a brief mention here.

Torrens' edition (vol. 1) extends to the end of Night 50 (Burton, ii.,).

Lane's translation originally appeared in monthly half-crown parts, from 1839 to 1841. It is obvious that he felt himself terribly restricted in space; for the third volume, although much thicker than the others, is not only almost destitute of notes towards the end, but the author is compelled to grasp at every excuse to omit tales, even excluding No. 168, which he himself considered "one of the most entertaining tales in the work" (chap. xxix., note 12), on account of its resemblance to Nos. 1b and 3d. Part of the matter in Lane's own earlier notes is apparently derived from No. 132a, which he probably did not at first intend to omit. Sir R. F. Burton has taken 5 vols. to cover the same ground which Lane has squeezed into his vol. 3. But it is only fair to Lane to remark that in such cases the publisher is usually far more to blame than the author.

In 1847 appeared a popular edition of Lane, entitled, "The Thousand and One Nights, or the Arabian Nights Entertainments, translated and arranged for family reading, with explanatory notes. Second edition." Here Galland's old spelling is restored, and the "explanatory notes," ostentatiously mentioned on the title page, are entirely omitted. This edition was in 3 vols. I have seen a copy dated 1850; and think I have heard of an issue in 1 vol.; and there is an American reprint in 2 vols. The English issue was ultimately withdrawn from circulation in consequence of Lane's protests. (Mr. S. L. Poole's Life of E. W. Lane, .) It contains the woodcut of the Flying Couch, which is wanting in the later editions of the genuine work; but not Galland's doubtful tales, as Poole asserts.

Several editions of the original work, edited by Messrs. E. S. and S. L. Poole, have appeared at intervals from 1859 to 1882. They differ little from the original edition except in their slightly smaller size.

The short tales included in Lane's notes were published separately as one of Knight's Weekly Volumes, in 1845, under the title of "Arabian Tales and Anecdotes, being a selection from the notes to the new translation of the Thousand and One Nights, by E. W. Lane, Esq."

Finally, in 1883, Mr. Stanley Lane Poole published a classified and arranged edition of Lane's notes under the title of "Arabian Society in the Middle Ages."

Mr. John Payne's version of the Mac. edition was issued in 9 vols. by the Villon Society to subscribers only. It appeared from 1882 to 1884, and only 500 copies were printed. Judging from the original prospectus, it seems to have been the author's intention to have completed the work in 8 vols., and to have devoted vol. 9 to Galland's doubtful tales; but as they are omitted, he must have found that the work ran to a greater length than he had anticipated, and that space failed him. He published some preliminary papers on the Nights in the New Quarterly Magazine for January and April, 1879.

Mr. Payne subsequently issued "Tales from the Arabic of the Breslau and Calcutta (1814-18) editions of the Thousand Nights and One Night, not occurring in the other printed texts of the work." (Three vols., London, 1884.) Of this work, issued, like the other, by the Villon Society, to subscribers only, 750 copies were printed, besides 50 on large paper. The third volume includes indices of all the tales in the four principal printed texts.

Finally we have Sir R. F. Burton's translation now in its entirety before his subscribers. It is restricted to 1,000 copies. (Why not 1,001?) The five supplementary vols. are to include tales wanting in the Mac. edition, but found in other texts (printed and MS.), while Lady Burton's popular edition will allow of the free circulation of Sir R. F. Burton's work among all classes of the reading public.

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COLLECTIONS OF SELECTED TALES.

There are many volumes of selections derived from Galland, but these hardly require mention; the following may be noticed as derived from other sources:

1. Caliphs and Sultans, being tales omitted in the usual editions of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. Re-written and re-arranged by Sylvanus Hanley, F. L. S., etc., London, 1868; 2nd edition 1870.

Consists of portions of tales chiefly selected from Scott, Lamb, Chavis and Cazotte, Trébutien and Lane; much abridged, and frequently strung together, as follows: —

Nos. 246, 41, 32 (including Nos. 111, 21a, and 89); 9a (including 9aa [which Hanley seems, by the way, to have borrowed from some version which I do not recognise], 22 and 248); 155, 156, 136, 162; Xailoun the Silly (from Cazotte); 132 and 132a; and 169 (including 134 and 135x).

2. Ilâm-en-Nâs. Historical tales and anecdotes of the time of the early Kalîfahs. Translated from the Arabic and annotated by Mrs. Godfrey Clerk, author of "The Antipodes, and Round the World." London, 1873.

Many of these anecdotes, as is candidly admitted by the authoress in her Preface, are found with variations in the Nights, though not translated by her from this source.

3. The New Arabian Nights. Select tales not included by Galland or Lane. By W. F. Kirby, London, 1882.

Includes the following tales, slightly abridged, from Weil and Scott: Nos. 200, 201, 264, 215, 209, and 208.

Two editions have appeared in England, besides reprints in America and Australia.

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SEPARATE EDITIONS OF SINGLE OR COMPOSITE TALES.

6e (ee). — The Barber’s Fifth Brother.

Mr. W. A. Clouston (in litt.) calls attention to the version of this story by Addison in the “Spectator,” No. 535, Nov. 13, 1712, after Galland. There is good reason to suppose that this is subsequent to the first English edition, which, however, Addison does not mention. There is also an English version in Faris’ little Arabic Grammar (London, 1856), and likewise in Richardson’s Arabic Grammar. The latter author extracted it from a MS. belonging to Sir W. Jones.

5. — Nur Al-din and Badr Al-din Hasan.

There are two Paris editions of the “Histoire de Chems-Eddine et de NourEddine,” edited by Prof. Cherbonneau. The first (1852) contains text and notes, and the second (1869) includes text, vocabulary and translations.

7. — Nur Al-din and Anis Al-jalis.

An edition by Kasimiraki of “Enis’ el-Djelis, ou histoire de la belle Persane,” appeared in Paris in 1867. It includes text, translation and notes.

9. — King Omar Bin Al-nu’aman.

There is a French abridgment of this story entitled, “Scharkan, Conte Arabe, suivi de quelques anecdotes orientales; traduit par M. Asselan Riche, Membre de la Société Asiatique de Paris” (Paris and Marseilles, 12mo, 1829, p). The seven anecdotes appended are as follows: (1) the well-known story of Omar’s prisoner and the glass of water; (2) Elhedjadj and a young Arab; (3)=our No. 140; (4) Anecdote of Elhedjadj and a story-teller; (5)=our No. 86; (6) King Bahman and the Moubed’s parable of the Owls; (7)=our No. 145.

133. — Sindbad the Seaman.

This is the proper place to call attention to a work specially relating to this story, “Remarks on the Arabian Nights Entertainments; in which the origin of Sindbad’s Voyages and other Oriental Fictions is particularly described. By Richard Hole, LL.D.” (London, 1797, pp. iv. 259.)

It is an old book, but may still be consulted with advantage.

There are two important critical editions of No. 133, one in
French and one in German.

1. Les Voyages de Sind-bâd le marin et la ruse des Femmes. Contes arabes. Traduction littérale, accompagnée du Texte et des Notes. Par L. Langlès (Paris, 1814).

The second story is our No. 184.

2. Die beiden Sindbad oder Reiseabenteuer Sindbads des Seefabrers. Nach einer zum ersten Male in Europa bedruckten Aegyptischen Handschrift unmittelbar und wortlich treu aus den Arabischen übersetzt und mit erklärenden Anmerkungen, nebst zwei sprachlichen Beilagen zum Gebrauch für abgehende Orientalisten herausgegeben von J. G. H. Reinsch (Breslau, 1826).

135. — The Craft and Malice of Women.

The literature of this cluster of tales would require a volume in itself, and I cannot do better than refer to Mr. W. A. Clouston’s “Book of Sindibad” (8vo, Glasgow, 1884) for further information. This book, though privately printed and limited to 300 copies, is not uncommon.

136. — Judar and His Brethren.

An edition of this story, entitled “Histoire de Djouder le
Pêcheur,” edited by Prof. Houdas, was published in the
Bibliothèque Algérienne, at Algiers, in 1865. It includes text
and vocabulary.

174. — The Ten Wazirs.

This collection of tales has also been frequently reprinted separately. It is the Arabic version of the Persian Bakhtyar Nameh, of which Mr. Clouston issued a privately-printed edition in 1883.

The following versions have come under my notice: —

1. Nouveaux Contes Arabes, ou Supplement aux Mille et une Nuits
suivies de Mélanges de Littérature orientale et de lettres, par l’Abbe
* * * (Paris, 1788, p).

This work consists chiefly of a series of tales selected and adapted from the Ten Vazirs. “Written in Europe by a European, and its interest is found in the Terminal Essay, on the Mythologia Aesopica” (Burton in litt.).

2. Historien om de ti Vezirer og hoorledes det gik dem med Kong Azád Bachts Sön, oversat af Arabisk ved R. Rask (8vo, Kobenhavn, 1829).

3. Habicht, x. p. vi., refers to the following: — Historia decem Vezirorum et filii regis Azad-Bacht insertis XIII. aliis narrationibus, in usum tironum Cahirensem, edid. G. Knös, Göttingen, 1807, 8vo.

He also states that Knös published the commencement in 1805, in his “Disquisitio de fide Herodoti, quo perhibet Phoenices Africam navibus circumvectos esse cum recentiorum super hac re sententiis excussis. — Adnexurn est specimen sermonis Arabici vulgaris s. initium historiae filii regis Azad-Bacht e Codice inedito.”

4. Contes Arabes. Histoire des dix Vizirs (Bakhtyar Nameh) Traduite et annotée par René Basset, Professeur A l’école superieure des lettres d’Algérie. Paris, 1883.

Chavis and Cazotte (anteà p, 472) included a version of the Ten Vazirs in their work; and others are referred to in our Table of Tales.

248. — The Wise Heycar.

Subsequently to the publication of Gauttier’s edition of The Nights, Agoub republished his translation under the title of “Le sage Heycar, conte Arabe” (Paris, 1824).

A few tales published by Scott in Ouseley’s Oriental Collections have already been noticed (anteà, p, 435).

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TRANSLATIONS OF COGNATE ORIENTAL ROMANCES ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE NIGHTS.

1. Les Mille et Un Jours. Contes Persanes.

"In imitation of the Arabian Nights, was composed a Persian collection entitled Hazár Yek Rúz or the Thousand and One Days,' of which Petis de la Croix published a French rendering [in 1710], which was done into English [by Dr. King, and published in 2 vols. (with the Turkish Tales=Forty Vezirs) as early as 1714; and subsequently] by Ambrose Phillips" (in 1738) (Clouston, in litt). Here, and occasionally elsewhere, I have quoted from some MSS. notes on The Nights by Mr. W. A. Clouston, which Sir R. F. Burton kindly permitted me to inspect. Mr. Clouston then quotes Cazotte's Preface (not in my edition of the Thousand and One Days), according to which the book was written by the celebrated Dervis Moclès (Mukhlis), chief of the Sofis (Sufis?) of lspahan, founded upon certain Indian comedies. Petis de la Croix was on friendly terms with Mukhlis, who allowed him to take a copy of his work in 1675, during his residence in Ispahan. (I find these statements confirmed in the Cabinet des Fées, xxxvii. p, 274, 278, and in Weber's "Tales of the East," i. pp. xxxvi., xxxxii.)

The framework of the story is the same as Nos. 9a and 152: a Princess, who conceives an aversion to men from dreaming of the self-devotion of a doe, and the indifference and selfishness of a stag. Mr. Clouston refers to Nakhshabí's Tútí Náma (No. 33 of Káderí's abridgment, and 39 of India Office MS. 2,573 whence he thinks it probable that Mukhlis may have taken the tale.) But the tale itself is repeated over and over again in many Arabic, Persian, and Turkish collections; in fact, there are few of commoner occurrence.

The tales are told by the nurse in order to overcome the aversion of the Princess to men. They are as follows:

Introduction and Conclusion: Story of the Princess of Cashmir.
1. Story of Aboulcassem Bafry.
2. Story of King Ruzvanchad and the Princess Cheheristani.
    a. Story of the young King of Thibet and the Princess of

    the Naimans.
  b. Story of the Vazir Cavercha.
3. Story of Couloufe and the Beautiful Dilara.
4. Story of Prince Calaf and the Princess of China.
  a. Story of Prince Fadlallah, son of Bei-Ortoc, King of Moussel=Nos. 184 and 251.
5. Story of King Bedreddin-Lolo, and his Vazir Atalmulk, surnamed the Sad Vazir.
  a. Story of Atalmulk and the Princess Zelica Beghume.
  b. Story of Prince Seyf-el-Molouk.
  c. Story of Malek and the Princess Chirine.
  d. Story of King Hormuz, surnamed the King without trouble.
    da. Story of Avicenna.
  e. Story of the fair Arouya. Cf. Nos. 135q and 225.
  f. Singular Adventures of Aboulfawaris, surnamed the Great Traveller (2 Voyages).
6. Story of the Two Brother Genii, Adis and Dahy.
7. Story of Nasiraddolé, King of Moussel, of Abderrahman, Merchant of Bagdad, and the Beautiful Zeineb.
8. Story of Repsima=No. 181r.

This work has many times been reprinted in France, where it holds a place only second to The Nights.

Sir R. F. Burton remarks, concerning the Persian and Turkish Tales of Petis de la Crois (the latter of which form part of the Forty Vazirs, No. 251), “Both are weak and servile imitations of Galland by an Orientalist who knew nothing of the East. In one passage in the story of Fadlallah, we read of Le Sacrifice du Mont Arafáte,’ which seems to have become a fixture in the European brain. I found the work easy writing and exceedingly hard reading.”

The following tales require a passing notice: —

1. Story of Aboulcassem Bafry. — A story of concealed treasure; it has also some resemblance to No. 31.

2. Ruzvanchad and Cheheristani. — Cheheristani is a jinniyah, who is pursued by the King, under the form of a white doe; marries him, and becomes the mother of Balkis, the Queen of Sheba. She exacts a promise from him never to rebuke her for any of her actions: he breaks it, and she leaves him for a time.

2a. The Young King of Thibet. — Two imposters obtain magic rings by which they can assume the shapes of other persons.

2a, b. The Vazir Cavercha. — This is one of Scott's stories (No. 223 of our Table). It goes back at least as far as the Ring of Polycrates. It is the 8th Vezir's Story in Mr. Gibbs' Forty Vezirs (p-205).

4. Prince Calaf. — This story is well known, and is sometimes played as a comedy. The Princess Turandot puts riddles to her suitors, and beheads them if they fail to answer.

5b. Story of Prince Seyj-el-Molouk. — This story is perhaps an older version than that which appears in The Nights (No. 154a). It is placed long after the time of Solomon; Saad is devoured by ants (Weber (ii.) has substituted wild beasts!); and when Seyf enters the palace of Malika (=Daulet Khatoon), the jinni surprises them, and is overpowered by Seyf's ring. He then informs him of the death of Saad; and that Bedy al-Jernal was one of the mistresses of Solomon; and has also long been dead.

5b. Malek and Chirine. — Resembles No. 264; Malek passes himself off as the Prophet Mohammed; burns his box (not chair) with fireworks on his weddingday, and is thus prevented from ever returning to the Princess.

5f. Adventures of Aboulfawaris. — Romantic travels, resembling Nos. 132a and 133.

2. Antar. — This is the most famous of the Badawi romances. It resembles No. 137 in several particulars, but is destitute of supernaturalism. An English abridgment in 4 vols. was published in 1820; and the substance of vol. 1 had appeared, as a fragment, in the previous year, under the title of "Antar, a Bedoueen Romance translated from the Arabic by Terrick Hamilton, Esq., Oriental Secretary to the British Embassy at Constantinople." I have also seen vol. 1 of a French translation, published about 1862, and extending to the death of Shas.

Lane (Modern Egyptians, ch. 21-23) describes several other Arab romances, which have not yet been translated; viz. Aboo-Zeyd; Ez-Zahir, and Delhemeh.

3. GLAIVE-DES-COURONNES (Seif el-Tidjân) Roman traduit de l'Arabe. Par M. le Dr. Perron (Paris, 1862).

A romantic story of Arab chivalry, less overloaded with supernaturalism than No. 137; but more supernatural than Antar. The hero marries (among other wives) two jinniyahs of the posterity of Iblis. In ch. 21 we have an account of a magical city much resembling the City of Brass (No. 134) and defended by similar talismans.

4. MEHEMET THE KURD, and other tales, from Eastern sources, by Charles Wells, Turkish Prizeman of King's College, London, and Member of the Royal Asiatic Society (London, 1865).

The first story, taken from an Arabic MS., is a narrative of a handsome simpleminded man, with whom Princesses fall in love, and who is raised to a mighty throne by their enchantments. Some of the early incidents are not unlike those in the well-known German story of Lucky Hans (Hans im Glück). In one place there is an enchanted garden, where Princesses disport themselves in feather-dresses (as in No. 155, &c.), and where magic apples grow. (Note that apples are always held in extraordinary estimation in The Nights, cf. Nos. 4 and 264.) Among the shorter stories we find No. 251h; a version of Nos. 9a and 152 (probably that referred to by Mr. Clouston as in the Tuti Nama); a story "The Prince Tailor," resembling No. 251; No. 256, and one or two other tales not connected with The Nights. (Most of Wells' shorter tales are evidently taken from the Forty Vezirs.)

5. RECUEIL DES CONTES POPULAIRES de la Kabylie du Djardjara, recueillis et traduits par J. Rivière (Paris, 1882). I have not seen this book; but it can hardly fail to illustrate The Nights.

6. THE STORY OF JEWAD, Romance by 'Ali 'Aziz Efendi the Cretan. Translated from the Turkish by E. J. W. Gibb, M.R.A.S., &c. (Glasgow, 1884).

A modern Turkish work, written in A. H. 1211 (1796-97). It contains the following tales: —

The Story of Jew d.

1. The Story of Eb -'Ali-Sin ;. 2. The Story of Monia Em n. 3. The Story of Ferah-N z, the daughter of the King of China. a. The Story of Khoja 'Abdu-llah. 4. The Story told by Jew d to Iklilu'l Mulk. a. The Story of Sh b r and Hum . c. The Story of Ghazanfer and R hila. 5. The Story of Qara Khan.

The following deserve notice from our present point of view: —

The Story of Jewad. — Here we have magical illusions, as in Nos. 247 and 251a. Such narratives are common in the East; Lane (Nights, ch. i., note 15) is inclined to attribute such illusions to the influence of drugs; but the narratives seem rather to point to so-called electro-biology, or the Scotch Glamour (such influences, as is notorious, acting far more strongly upon Orientals than upon Europeans).

2. The Story of Monia Em n corresponds to the Story of Naerdan and Guzulbec, in Caylus' Oriental Tales. A story of magical illusions.

3. The Story of Ferah N z. — Here again we have a variant of Nos. 9a and 152.

3a. Khoja 'Abdu-ltab. — This is a version of the Story of Aboulcassem in the Thousand and One Days.

4a. Sh b r and Hum . — The commencement of this story might have suggested to Southey the adventures of Thalaba and Oneida in the Gardens of Aloadin; the remainder appears to be taken from the Story of the young King of Thibet, in the Thousand and One Days.

5. Qara Khan. — The principal part of this story is borrowed from the First Voyage of Aboulfawaris in the Thousand and One Days; it has some resemblance to the story of the Mountain of Loadstone in No. 3c.

7. FRÜCHTE DES ASIATISCHEN GEIST, von A. T. Hartmann. 2 vols., 12mo (Münster) 1803. A collection of anecdotes, &c., from various Eastern sources, Arabic, Indian, &c. I think it not impossible that this may be the work referred to by Von Hammer in the preface to Zinserling's "1001 Nacht" (p. xxvii. note) as "Asiatische Perleuschnur von Hartmann." At least I have not yet met with any work to which the scanty indication would apply better.

8. TUTI-NAMA. I could hardly pass over the famous Persian and Turkish "Parrot-Book" quite without notice; but its tales have rarely any direct connection with those in The Nights, and I have not

attempted to go into its very extensive bibliography.

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DR. CLARKE'S M.S.

Dr. Edward Daniel Clarke has given an account of an important MS. nearly agreeing with Bul. and Mac., which he purchased in Egypt, in his "Travels in various countries of Europe, Asia and Africa." Part ii. Greece, Egypt, and the Holy Land. Section i. (1812) App. iii., p-704. Unfortunately, this MS. was afterwards so damaged by water during a shipwreck that it was rendered totally illegible. The list of tales (as will be seen by the numbers in brackets, which correspond to our Table, as far as the identifications are safe) will show the approximate contents of the MS., but the list (which is translated into German by Habicht in the preface to his vol. 12) was evidently compiled carelessly by a person nearly ignorant of Arabic, perhaps with the aid of an interpreter, Maltese, or other, and seems to abound with the most absurd mistakes. The full text of Clarke's App. iii. is as follows: "List of One Hundred and Seventy-two Tales, contained in a manuscript copy of the 'Àlif Lila va Lilin,' or 'Arabian Nights,' as it was procured by the Author in Egypt."

N.B. — The Arabic words mentioned in this list are given as they appeared to be pronounced in English characters, and of course, therefore, adapted to English pronunciation.

The number of tales amounts to 172, but one tale is supposed to occupy many nights in the recital, so that the whole number is divided into "One Thousand and One Nights." It rarely happens that any two copies of the Alif Lila va Lilin resemble each other. This title is bestowed upon any collection of Eastern tales divided into the same number of parts. The compilation depends upon the taste, the caprice, and the opportunities of the scribe, or the commands of his employer. Certain popular stories are common to almost all copies of the Arabian Nights, but almost every collection contains some tales which are not found in every other. Much depends upon the locality of the scribe. The popular stories of Egypt will be found to differ materially from those of Constantinople. A nephew of the late Wortley Montague, living in Rosetta, had a copy of the Arabian Nights, and upon comparing the two manuscripts it appeared that out of the 172 tales here enumerated only 37 were found in his manuscript. In order to mark, therefore, the stories which were common to the two manuscripts, an asterisk has been prefixed to the thirty-seven tales which appeared in both copies.

1. The Bull and the Ass (a). 2. The Merchant and the Hobgoblin (1; Habicht translates Kobold!). 3. The Man and the Antelope (1a). 4. The Merchant and Two Dogs (1b). 5. The Old Man and the Mule (1c). *6. The History of the Hunters (2). 7&8. The History of King Unam and the Philosopher Reinan (2a). *9. History of King Sinbad and Elbase (2a, ab). *10. History of the Porter (3). *11. History of Karanduli. 12. Story of the Mirror. 13. Story of the Three Apples (4). *14. Of Shensheddin Mohammed, and his Brother Noureddin (5). *15. Of the Taylor, Little Hunchback, the Jew and the Christian (6). 16. The History of Noureddin Ali (7). 17. Ditto of Gaumayub, &c. (8). *18. The History of King Omar and Oman and his Children. (This tale is extremely long, and occupies much of the manuscript) (9). *19. Of the Lover and the Beloved (9a). 20. Story of the Peacock, the Goose, the Ass, the Horse, &c. (10). 21. Of the Pious Man (11). 22. Of the Pious Shepherd. 23. Of the Bird and the Turtle (12). 24. Of the Fox, the Hawk, &c. (13). 25. Of the Lord of the Beasts. *26. Of the Mouse and the Partridge (14). 27. Of the Raven and the Cat (15). 28. Of the Raven, the Fox, the Mouse, the Flea, &c., &c. (16). 29. Story of the Thief (18). *30. Of Aul Hassan and the Slave Shemsney Har (20). *31. Of Kamrasaman, &c. (21). 32. Of Naam and Nameto la (21a). *33. Of Aladin Abuskelmat (22). *34. Of Hallina Die (23). 35. Story of Maan Jaamnazida (24). 36. History of the Town Litta (26). 37. Story of Hassan Abdulmelac (27). 38. Of Ibrahim Elmachde, Brother of Haroun al Raschid (28). 39. History of the Famous Garden Ezem (Paradise) (29). 40. Of Isaac of Mossul (30). 41. Of Hasli Hasli. 42. Of Mohammed Eli Ali (32). 43. Of Ali the Persian (33). 44. History of the Raschid and his Judge (34). 45. Of Haled Immi Abdullah. 46. Of Jafaard the Bamasside (36). 47. Of Abokohammed Kurlan (37). 48. Of Haroun al-Raschid and Sala. 49. History of Mamoan (40). 50. Of Shar and the Slave Zemroud (41). 51. Of the Lady Bedoor (literally Mrs. Moon-face) and Mr. Victorious (42). 52. Of Mammon and Mohammed of Bassorah. 53. Of Haroun al-Raschid and his Slave (44). 54. Of the Merchant in Debt (45). 55. Of Hassoun Medin, the Governor (46). 56. Of King

Nassir and his Three Children — the Governor of Cairo, the Governor of Bulac, and the Governor of Old Cairo (47). 57. History of the Banker and the Thief (48). 58. Of Aladin, Governor of Constantinople. 59. Of Mamoon and Ibrahim (50). 60. Of a certain King (51). 61. Of a Pious Man (52). 62. Of Abul Hassan Ezeada (53). 63. Of a Merchant (54). 64. Of a Man of Bagdad (55). 65. Of Modavikil (56). *66. Of Virdan in the time of Hakim Veemrelack (N.B. — He built the Mosque in going from Cairo to Heliopolis) (57). 67. Of a Slave and an Ape (58). *68. Story of the Horse of Ebony (59). *69. Of Insilvujud (60). 70. Of Eban Vas (61). 71. Of an Inhabitant of Bassora (62). 72. History of a Man of the tribe of Arabs of Beucadda (63). 73. History of Benriddin, Vizir of Yemen (64). 74. Of a Boy and a Girl (65). 75. Of Mutelmis (66). 76. Of Haroun al Rashid and the Lady Zebeda (67). 77. Of Mussa ab imni Zibir (69). 78. Of the Black Father. 79. Of Haroun al Raschid. 80. Story of an Ass Keeper (74?). 81. Of Haroun al Rashid and Eboo Yussuf (75). 82. Of Hakim, Builder of the Mosque (76). 83. Of Melikel Horrais. 84. Of a Gilder and his Wife (78). 85. Of Hashron, &c. (79). 86. Of Yackyar, &c., the Barmadride (80). 87. Of Mussa, &c. 88. Of Said, &c. 89. Of the Whore and the Good Woman. 90. Of Raschid and Jacob his Favourite. 91. Of Sherif Hussein. 92. Of Mamoon, son of Haroun al Raschid (87). 93. Of the repenting Thief (88) 94. Of Haroun al Raschid (89). 95. Of a Divine, &c. (90). 96. Another story of a Divine. 97. The Story of the Neighbours. 98. Of Kings (94). 99. Of Abdo Rackman (95). 100. Of Hind, daughter of Nackinan (96). 101. Of Tabal (97). 102. Of Isaac son of Abraham (98). 103. Of a Boy and a Girl. 104. Story of Chassim Imni Addi. 105. Of Abul Abass. 106. Of Ebubecker Ben Mohammed. 107. Of Ebi Evar. 108. Of Emmin, brother of Mamon (105). 109. Of six Scheiks of Bagdad. 110. Of an Old Woman. 111. Of a Wild Girl. 112. Of Hasan Elgevire of Bagdad. 113. Of certain Kings. 114. Of a king of Israel (116). 115. Of Alexander (117). 116. Of King Nusharvian (118). 117. Of a Judge and his Wife (119). 118. Of an Emir. 119. Of Malek Imnidinar. 120. Of a devout man of the children of Israel (122). 121. Of Hedjage Himni Yussuf (123). 122. Of a Blacksmith (124). 123. Of a devout man (125). 124. Of Omar Imnilchatab. 125. Of Ibrahim Elchaber. 126. Of a Prophet (128). 127. Of a Pious Man (129). 128. Of a Man of the Children of Israel (130). 129. Of Abul Hassan Duradge (131). 130. Of Sultana Hayaat. 131. Of the Philosopher Daniel (132). *132. Of Belukia (132A). *133. The Travels of Sinbad — certain seven voyages, &c. (133). 134. Of the Town of Copper (134). 135. Of the Seven Virgins and the Slave (135). *136. Story of Judais (136). 137. The Wonderful History. 138. Of Abdullah lmni Mohammi. 139. Of Hind Imni Haman (139). 140. Of Chazmimé Imni Bashés (140). 141. Of Jonas the Secretary (141). 142. Of Haroun al-Rashid (142). 143. Of ditto. 144. Of Ebon Isaac Ibrahim (144). 145. Of Haroun al Raschid, Misroor and the Poet. 146. Of the Caliph Moavia. 147. Of Haroun al Raschid. 148. Of Isaac Imni Ibrahim (148), 149. Of Ebwi Amér. *150. Of Achmet Ezenth and the old Female Pim. Of the three Brothers. 152. Of Erdeshir and Hiaker, of Julmar El Bacharia (152). 153. Of Mahomet, &c. 154. Ditto (154?). *155. Story of Safil Moluki (154A). *156. Of Hassan, &c. (155). *157. Of Caliph the Hunter (156). *158. Of Mersir and his Mistress (157). 159. Of Noureddin and Mary (158). 160. Of a Bedouin and a Frank (159). 161. Of a Man of Baghdad and his Female Slave (160). 162. Of a King, his Son, and the Vizir Shemar (161). *163. Of a Merchant and the Thieves. *164. Of Abousir and Aboukir (162). *165. Abdulak El Beri and Abdulak El Backari (163). *166. Of Haroun al Raschid. 167. Of the Merchant Abul Hassan al-Omani (164). 168. Of Imnil Echarib (168). 169. Of Moted Bila. *170. Of Kamasi Zemuan (167). *171. Of Abdulah Imni Fasil (168). *172. The Story of Maroof (169).

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IMITATIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS WORKS HAVING MORE OR LESS CONNECTION WITH THE NIGHTS.

The success of Galland’s work led to the appearance of numerous works more or less resembling it, chiefly in England and France. Similar imitations, though now less numerous, have continued to appear down to the present day.

The most important of the older works of this class were published in French in the “Cabinet des Fées” (Amsterdam and Geneva, 1785-1793; 41 vols.); in English in “Tales of the East: comprising the most popular Romances of Oriental origin, and the best imitations by European authors, with new translations and additional tales never before published, to which is prefixed an introductory dissertation, containing an account of each work and of its author or translator. By Henry Weber, Esq.” (Edinburgh, 1812, 3 vols.); and in German in “Tausand und ein Tag. Morgenländische Erzählungen aus dem Persisch, Turkisch und Arabisch, nach Petis de la Croix, Galland, Cardonne, Chavis und Cazotte, dem Grafen Caylus, und Anderer. Übersetzt von F. H. von der Hagen” (Prenzlau, 1827-1837, 11 vols.). In the “Cabinet des Fées” I find a reference to an older collection of tales (partly Oriental) called the “Bibliothèque des Fées et des Génies,” by the Abbé de la Porte, which I have not seen, but which is, in part, incorporated in the “Cabinet.” It formed only 2 vols. 12mo, and was published in 1765.

The examination of these tales is difficult, for they comprise several classes, not always clearly defined: —

1. Satires on The Nights themselves (e.g. the Tales of the Count of Hamilton). 2. Satires in an Oriental garb (e.g. Beckford’s Vathek). 3. Moral tales in an Oriental garb (e.g. Mrs. Sheridan’s Nourjahad). 4. Fantastic tales with nothing Oriental about them but the name (e.g. Stevenson’s New Arabian Nights). 5. Imitations pure and simple (e.g. G. Meredith’s Shaving of Shagpat). 6. Imitations more or less founded on genuine Oriental sources (e.g. the Tales of the Comte de Caylus). 7. Genuine Oriental Tales (e.g. Mille et une Jours, translated

by Petis de la Croix).

Most of the tales belonging to Class 7 and some of those belonging to Class 6 have been treated of in previous sections. The remaining tales and imitations will generally need only a very brief notice; sometimes only the title and the indication of the class to which they belong. We will begin with an enumeration of the Oriental contents of the Cabinet des Fées, adding W. i., ii. and iii. to show which are included in Weber's "Tales of the East": —

7-11. 1001 Nuits (W. 1). 12, 13. Les Aventures d'Abdalla (W. iii). 14, 15. 1001 Jours (Persian tales, W. ii.). 16. Histoire de la Sultane de Perse et des Visirs. Contes Turcs (Turkish tales, W. 3==our 251). 16. Les Voyages de Zulma dans le pays des Fées. 17, 18. Contes de Bidpai. 19. Contes Chinois, on les Aventures merveilleuses du Mandarin Fum-Hoam (W. iii.). 21, 22. Les Mille et un Quart d'Heures. Contes Tartares (W. iii.). 22, 23. Les Sultanes de Guzerath, ou les Songes des hommes eveillés. Contes Moguls (W. iii.). 25. Nouveaux Contes Orientaux, par le Comte de Caylus (W. ii.). 29, 30. Les Contes des Génies (W. iii.). 30. Les Aventures de Zelouide et d'Amanzarifdine. 30. Contes Indiens par M. de Moncrif. 33. Nourjahad (W. ii.). 34. Contes de M. Pajon. 38-41. Les Veillées du Sultan Schahriar, &c. (Chavis and Cazotte; cf. anteà, ; W. i. ii.).

(Weber also includes, in his vol. ii. Nos. 21a, 22, 32 and 37, after Caussin de Perceval.)

12, 13. The Adventures of Abdallah, the Son of Hanif (Class 5 or 6).

Originally published in 1713; attributed to M. de Bignon, a young Abbé. A series of romantic travels, in which Eastern and Western fiction is mixed; for instance, we have the story of the Nose- tree, which so far as I know has nothing Oriental about it.

16. The Voyages of Zulma in Fairy Land (Class 4).

European fairy tales, with nothing Oriental about them but the names of persons and places. The work is unfinished.

17, 18. The Tales of Bidpai (translated by Galland) are Indian, and therefore need no further notice here.

19-23. Chinese, Tartarian and Mogul Tales (Class 6).

Published in 1723, and later by Thomas Simon Gueulette.

Concerning these tales, Mr. Clouston remarks (in litt.): “Much of the groundwork of these clever imitations of the Arabian Nights has been, directly or indirectly, derived from Eastern sources; for instance, in the so-called Tartar tales, the adventures of the Young Calender find parallels, (1) in the well-known Bidpai tale of the Bráhman, the Sharpers and the Goat (Kalila and Dimna, Pánchatantra, Hitopadesa, &c.) and (2) in the worldwide story of the Farmer who outwitted the Six Men (Indian Antiquary, vol. 3) of which there are many versions current in Europe, such as the Norse tale of Big Peter and Little Peter, the Danish tale of Great Claus and Little Claus; the German tale (Grimm) of the Little Farmer; the Irish tale of Little Fairly (Samuel Lover’s collection of Irish Fairy Legends and Stories); four Gaelic versions in Campbell’s Popular Tales of the West Highlands; a Kaba’il version in Riviere’s French collection (Contes populaires Kabylies); Uncle Capriano in Crane’s recently published Italian Popular Tales; and a Latin mediaeval version (written probably in the I * *1th century) in which the hero is called Unibos,’ because he had only one cow.”

25. Oriental Tales (Class 6).

Mr. Clouston observes, “Appeared in 1749,[472] and on the title page are said to have been translated from MSS. in the Royal French Library. The stories are, however, largely the composition of De Caylus himself, and those elements of them which are traceable to Asiatic sources have been considerably Frenchified.”

Nevertheless they are not without interest, and are nearly all of obviously Oriental origin. One of the stories is a fantastic account of the Birth of Mahomet, including romantic travels largely borrowed from No. 132a. Another story is a version of that of the Seven Sleepers. Other noteworthy tales are the story of the Dervish Abounader, which resembles Nos. 193 and 216d; and the story of Naerdan and Guzulbec, which is a tale of magical illusions similar to that of Monia Emin, in the Turkish story of Jewad.

The Count de Caylus was the author of various European as well as Oriental fairy tales. Of his Oriental collection, Sir R. F. Burton remarks:— “The stories are not Eastern but Western fairy tales proper, with kings and queens, giants and dwarfs, and fairies, good and bad. Barbets' act as body guard and army. Written in good old style, and free language, such as, for instance, son pétenlaire, with here and there a touch of salt humour, as in Rosanie Charmante reine (car on n'a jamais parlé autrement à une reine, quel que laide qu'elle ait été).'"

29, 30. Tales of the Genii (Class 3).

Written in the middle of the last century by Rev. James Ridley, but purporting to be translated from the Persian of Horam, the son of Asmar, by Sir Charles Morell.

These tales have been reprinted many times; but it is very doubtful if they are based on any genuine Oriental sources. The amount of Oriental colouring may be guessed from the story of Urad, who having consented to become the bride of a Sultan on condition that he should dismiss all his concubines, and make her his sole queen (like Harald Harfagr on his marriage with Ragnhilda), is presented to his loving subjects as their Sultana!

32. Adventures of Zeloide and Amanzarifdine. Indian Tales, by M. de Moncrif (Class 4). Ordinary European Fairy Tales, with the scene laid in the East.

33. Nourjahad, by Mrs. Sheridan (Class 3).

An unworthy favourite is reformed by a course of practical moral lessons conveyed by the Sultan through supposed supernatural agencies. Mr. Clouston regards it as "one of the very best of the imitations of Eastern fiction. The plot is ingeniously conceived and well wrought out, and the interest never flags throughout."

34. Pajon's Oriental Tales (Class 5). These demand no special notice.

In addition to the above, the following Oriental works are mentioned in the Cabinet des Fées, but not reprinted:

1. Apologues orientaux, par l'abbé Blanchet.
2. Mélanges de littérature orientale, par Cardonne. (Paris, 2 vols. 1770.)
3. Neraïr et Meloe, roman oriental, par H. B. Deblanes (1759).
4. Contes orientaux, par M. de la Dixmerie.
5. Les Cinq Cent Matinées et une demie, contes Syriens, par le chevalier de Duclos.

6. Abassâi, conte oriental, par Mademoiselle Fault (ou Fauques) 1752.
7. Les Contes du Serail, par Mdlle. Fault (1753.)
8. Kara Mustapha, conte oriental, par Fromaget (1745).
9. Zilia et Cénie, par Francoise d'Isembourg d'Hippincourt de Graffigny.
10. Salned et Garalde, conte oriental, par A. H. De la Motte.
11. Anecdotes orientales, par G. Mailhol (2 vols. 1752).
12. Alzahel, traduit d'un manuscrit arabe, par Mdlle. Raigné de Malfontaine (Mercure, 1773).
13. Mahmoud le Gasnevide, conte oriental, par J. F. Melon.
14. Contes Orientaux, ou les recits du Sage Caleb, voyageur persan, par Mme. Mouet.
15. Nadir, par A. G. de Montdorge.
16. Lettres Persanes, de Montesquieu.
17. Les Amusements de Jour, ou recueil de petits contes, par Mme. de Mortemar.
18. Mirloh, conte oriental, par Martine de Morville (1769).
19. Ladila, anecdote turque (par la même) 1769.
20. Daira, histoire orientale, par A. J. J. de la Riche de la Poupelinière (1761).
21. Cara Mustapha, par de Preschat.
22. Des trois Nations, conte oriental, par Marianne Robert (1760).
23. Contes Orientaux, tirés des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Roi, 2 vols. 12mo (1749).

This is the same as the Count de Caylus' Oriental Tales. Sir R. F. Burton has received the following memorandum, respecting a copy of an earlier edition of the same work: "Contes Orientaux, tirés des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Roy de France, ornés de figures en taille douce. A la Haye, 1743, 2 vols. 12mo, polished calf gilt, gilt edges, arms in gilt on the sides.

"The Preface says, M. Petit et M. Galland n'ont en aucune connaissance des manuscrits dont cet ouvrage est tiré.'

"The Tales are from the MSS. and translations sent by those despatched by the French Ministers to Constantinople to learn Arabic, &c., and so become fit to act as Dragomans and Interpreters to the French Embassy."

There is a copy of this work in the British Museum; it proves, as I expected, to be the series of tales subsequently attributed to the Count de Caylus.

In addition to the above, the following, of which I can only give the names, are mentioned in the Cabinet des Fées, but not reprinted:—

1. Alma-Moulin, conte oriental, 1779.
2. Gengiskan, histoire orientale, par M. de St. M.
3. Almanzor et Zelira, conte arabe, par M. Bret. (1772). {From "les mercures."}
4. Almerine et Zelima, ou les Dangers de la Beauté, conte orientale, 1773. {From "les mercures."}
5. Les Ames, conte arabe, par M. B —— ——. {From "les mercures."}
6. Balky, conte oriental, 1768. {From "les mercures."}
7. Mirza, ou Is necessité d'etre utile (1774). {From "les mercures."}
8. Zaman, histoire orientale, par M. B. {From "les mercures."}
9. Anecdotes Orientales, par Mayol, 1752.12mo.
10. Contes très moguls.
11. Foka ou les Metamorphoses, conte chinois. Derobé à M. de V. 1777. 12mo.
12. Mahulem, histoire orientale. 12mo, 1776.
13. Mille et une heure, contes Peruviens. 4 vols. 12mo, 1733.
14. Histoire de Khedy, Hermite de Mont Ararat. Conte orientale, traduit de l'Anglais, 12mo, 1777.
15. Zambeddin, histoire orientale. 12mo, 1768.
16. Zelmoille et Zulmis et Turlableu. Par M. l'Abbé de Voisem, 12mo, 1747.
17. Roman Oriental, Paris, 1753.

The remaining imitations, &c., known to me I shall place roughly in chronological order, premising that I fear the list must be very incomplete, and that I have met with very few except in English and French.

A. — French

1. Zadig, ou la Destinée, par Voltaire[473] probably partakes of classes 2 and 6; said to be partly based on Gueulette's "Soirées Bretonnes," published in 1712. The latter is included in Cabinet des Fées, Vol. 32.

2. Vathek, an Arabian Tale, by William Beckford. I include this book here because it was written and first published in French. Its popularity was once very great, and it contains some effective passages, though it belongs to Class 2, and is rather a parody than an imitation of Oriental fiction. The Caliph Vathek, after committing many crimes at the instance of his mother, the witch Carathis, in order to propitiate Eblis, finally starts on an expedition to Istakar. On the way, he seduces Nouronihar, the beautiful daughter of the Emir Fakreddin, and carries her with him to the Palace of Eblis, where they am condemned to wander eternally, with their hearts surrounded with flames.

This idea (which is certainly not Oriental, so far as I know) took the fancy of Byron, who was a great admirer of Vathek, and he has mixed it with genuine Oriental features in a powerful passage in the Giaour, beginning:

"But thou, false infidel! shalt writhe
Beneath avenging Monkir's scythe;
And from its torment 'scape alone
To wander round lost Eblis' throne;
And fire unquenched, unquenchable,
Around, within thy heart shall dwell;
Nor ear can hear, nor tongue can tell
The tortures of that inward hell!" &c.

How errors relative to Eastern matters are perpetuated is illustrated by the fact that I have seen these lines quoted in some modern philosophical work as descriptive of the hell in which the

Mohammedans believe!

Southey, in Thalaba, b. 1., speaks of the Sarsar, “the Icy Wind of Death,” an expression which he probably borrowed from Vathek.

3. The Count of Hamilton’s Fairy Tales. Written shortly after the first publication of Galland’s work. There is an English Translation among Bohn’s Extra Volumes.

4. Les Mille et un Fadaises, par Cazotte. Class 1. I have not seen them.

5. La Mille et deuxième Nuit, par Theophilus Gautier (Paris, 1880). Probably Class 1 or 2; I have not seen it.

B. — English.

1. The Vision of Mirza (Addison in the “Spectator”). Class 3.

2. The Story of Amurath. Class 3. I do not know the author. I read it in a juvenile book published about the end of last century, entitled the Pleasing Instructor.

3. The Persian Tales of Inatulla of Delhi. Published in 1768, by Colonel Alexander Dow at Edinburgh. A French translation appeared at Amsterdam in two vols. and in Paris in one vol. (1769). Class 6. Chiefly founded on a wellknown Persian work, of which a more correct, though still incomplete, version was published in 3 vols. by Jonathan Scott in 1799, under the title of Bahar Danush, or Garden of Knowledge.

5. Rasselas, by Samuel Johnson. Class 3. Too well known to need comment.

6. Almoran and Hamet, by Dr. Hawksworth. Class 3. Very popular at the beginning of the present century, but now forgotten.

7. Oriental Fairy Tales (London, 1853). Class 4. A series of very pretty fairy tales, by an anonymous author, in which the scene is laid in the East (especially Egypt).

8. The Shaving of Shagpat, by George Meredith (London, 1855). Class 5. I prefer this to most other imitations of an Oriental tale.

9. The Thousand and One Humbugs. Classes 1 and 2. Published in “Household Words,” vol. xi. (1855) p-267, 289-292, 313-316. Parodies on Nos. 1, 195, 6d, and 6e,f.

10. Eastern Tales, by many story-tellers. Compiled and edited from ancient and modern authors by Mrs. Valentine, author of “Sea Fights and Land Battles,” &c. (Chandos Classics.)

In her preface, the authoress states that the tales “are gathered from both ancient and modern French, Italian and English sources.”

Contains 14 tales, some genuine, others imitations, One, “Alischar and Smaragdine,” is a genuine story of The Nights (No. 41 of our Table), and is probably taken from Trébutien. Three tales, “Jalaladeen,” “Haschem,” and “Jussuf,” are Grimm’s imitations, taken probably from the composite English edition of 1847, and with the same illustrations. “The Seven Sleepers” and the “Four Talismans” are from the Count de Caylus’ tales; “Halechalbe” and “Bohetzad” (our No. 174) are from Chavis and Cazotte; “The Enchanters” and “Urad” are from the “Tales of the Genii”; and “The Pantofles” is the well-known story of the miser Casem and his slippers, but I know not where it first appeared. The remaining three tales are unknown to me, and as I have seen no volume of Italian Oriental tales, some, no doubt, are derived from the Italian sources of which the authoress spoke. They are the following: “The Prince and the Lions,” “The City of the Demons” (a Jewish story purporting to have been written in England) and “Sadik Beg.”

11. New Arabian Nights, by R. L. Stevenson (London, 1882).

12. More New Arabian Nights. The Dynamiter. By R. L. Stevenson and Vander Grift (London, 1882). Class 4.

Of these tales, Sir R. F. Burton observes, “The only visible connection with the old Nights is in the habit of seeking adventures under a disguise. The method is to make the main idea possible and the details extravagant. In another New Arabian Nights,’ the joint production of MM. Brookfield, Besant and Pollock, the reverse treatment is affected, the leading idea being grotesque and impossible, and the details accurate and lifelike.”

C. — German.

It is quite possible that there are many imitations in German, but I have not met with them. I can only mention one or two tales by Hauff (the Caliph turned Stork, and the Adventures of Said); a story called “Ali and Gulhindi,” by what author I do not now remember; and some imitations said to be by Grimm, already mentioned in reference to the English composite edition of 1847. They are all European fairy tales, in an Eastern dress.

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CONCLUSION.

Among books specially interesting to the student of The Nights, I may mention Weil's "Biblische Legenden der Muselmänner, aus arabischen Quellen zusammengetragen, und mit jüdischen Sagen verglichen" (Frankfort-on-Main, 1845). An anonymous English translation appeared in 1846 under the title of "The Bible, the Koran, and the Talmud," and it also formed one of the sources from which the Rev. S. Baring-Gould compiled his "Legends of Old Testament Characters" (2 vols., 1871). The late Prof. Palmer's "Life of Haroun Al-Raschid" (London, 1881), is not much more than a brief popular sketch. The references to The Nights in English and other European literatures are innumerable; but I cannot refrain from quoting Mark Twain's identification of Henry the Eighth with Shahryar (Huckleberry Finn, chap. xxiii).

"My, you ought to have seen old Henry the Eighth when he was in bloom. He was a blossom. He used to marry a new wife every day, and chop off her head next morning. And he would do it just as indifferent as if he was ordering up eggs. "Fetch up Nell Gwynn," he says. They fetch her up. Next morning, "Chop off her head." And they chop it off. "Fetch up Jane Shore," he says; and up she comes. Next morning, "Chop off her head." And they chop it off. "Ring up Fair Rosamun." Fair Rosamun answers the bell. Next morning, "Chop off her head." And he made every one of them tell him a tale every night, and he kept that up till he had hogged a thousand and one tales that way, and then he put them all in a book, and called it Domesday Book — which was a good name, and stated the case. You don't know kings, Jim, but I know them, and this old rip of ourn is one of the cleanest I've struck in history. Well, Henry, he takes a notion he wants to get up some trouble with this country. How does he do it — give notice? — give the country a show? No. All of a sudden he heaves all the tea in Boston Harbour overboard, and whacks out a declaration of independence, and dares them to come on. That was his style — he never give anybody a chance. He had suspicions of his father, the Duke of Wellington. Well, what did he do? — ask him to show up? No — drownded him in a butt of mamsey, like a cat. Spose people left money laying around where he was — what did he do? He collared it. Spose he contracted to do a thing, and you paid him, and didnt set down there and see that he done it — what did he do? He always done the other thing. Spose he opened his mouth — what then? If he didnt shut it up powerful quick, he'd lose a lie, every time. That's the kind of a bug Henry was."

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

FOOTNOTES VOLUME X.

[1] Arab. "Zarábín" (pl. of zarbún), lit. slaves' shoes or sandals (see vol. iii.) the chaussure worn by Mamelukes. Here the word is used in its modern sense of stout shoes or walking boots.

[2] The popular word means goodness, etc.

[3] Dozy translates "'Urrah"=Une Mégère: Lane terms it a "vulgar word signifying a wicked, mischievous shrew." But it is the fem. form of 'Urr=dung; not a bad name for a daughter of Billingsgate.

[4] i.e. black like the book of her actions which would be shown to her on Doomsday.

[5] The "Kunáfah" (vermicelli-cake) is a favourite dish of wheaten flour, worked somewhat finer than our vermicelli, fried with samn (butter melted and clarified) and sweetened with honey or sugar. See vol. v. 300.

[6] i.e. Will send us aid. The Shrew's rejoinder is highly impious in Moslem opinion.

[7] Arab. Asal Katr; "a fine kind of black honey, treacle" says Lane; but it is afterwards called cane-honey ('Asal Kasab). I have never heard it applied to "the syrup which exudes from ripe dates, when hung up."

[8] Arab. "'Aysh," lit.=that on which man lives: "Khubz" being the more popular term. "Hubz and Joobn" is well known at Malta.

[9] Insinuating that he had better make peace with his wife by knowing her carnally. It suggests the story of the Irishman who brought over to the holy Catholic Church three several Protestant wives, but failed with the fourth on account of the decline of his "Convarter."

[10] Arab. "Asal Kasab," i.e. Sugar, possibly made from sorgho-stalks

Holcus sorghum of which I made syrup in Central Africa.

[11] For this unpleasant euphemy see vol. iv. 215.

[12] This is a true picture of the leniency with which women were treated in the Kazi’s court at Cairo; and the effect was simply deplorable. I have noted that matters have grown even worse since the English occupation, for history repeats herself; and the same was the case in Afghanistan and in Sind. We govern too much in these matters, which should be directed not changed, and too little in other things, especially in exacting respect for the conquerors from the conquered.

[13] Arab. “Báb al-’Áli”=the high gate or Sublime Porte; here used of the Chief Kazi’s court: the phrase is a descendant of the Coptic “Per-ao” whence “Pharaoh.”

[14] “Abú Tabak,” in Cairene slang, is an officer who arrests by order of the Kazi and means “Father of whipping” (=tabaka, a low word for beating, thrashing, whopping) because he does his duty with all possible violence in terrorem.

[15] Bab al-Nasr the Eastern or Desert Gate: see vol. vi. 234.

[16] This is a mosque outside the great gate built by Al-Malik al-’Ádil Tuman Bey in A.H. 906 (=1501). The date is not worthy of much remark for these names are often inserted by the scribe — for which see Terminal Essay.

[17] Arab. “‘Ámir” lit.=one who inhabiteth, a peopler; here used in technical sense. As has been seen, ruins and impure places such as privies and Hammám-baths are the favourite homes of the Jinn. The fire-drake in the text was summoned by the Cobbler’s exclamation and even Marids at times do a kindly action.

[18] The style is modern Cairene jargon.

[19] Purses or gold pieces see vol. ix. 313.

[20] i.e. I am a Cairene.

[21] Arab. “Darb al-Ahmar,” a street still existing near to and outside the noble Bab Zuwaylah, for which see vol. i. 269.

[22] Arab. “‘Attár,” perfume-seller and druggist; the word is connected with our “Ottar” (‘Atr).

[23] Arab. “Mudarris” lit.=one who gives lessons or lectures (dars) and pop. applied to a professor in a collegiate mosque like Al-Azhar of Cairo.

[24] This thoroughly dramatic scene is told with a charming naïveté. No wonder that The Nights has been made the basis of a national theatre amongst the Turks.

[25] Arab. “Taysh” lit.=vertigo, swimming of head.

[26] Here Trébutien (iii. 265) reads “la ville de Khaïtan (so the Mac. Edit. iv. 708) capital du royaume de Sohatan.” Ikhtiyán Lane suggests to be fictitious: Khatan is a district of Tartary east of Káshgar, so called by Sádik al-Isfaháni .

[27] This is a true picture of the tact and savoir faire of the Cairenes. It was a study to see how, under the late Khedive they managed to take precedence of Europeans who found themselves in the background before they knew it. For instance, every Bey, whose degree is that of a Colonel was made an “Excellency” and ranked accordingly at Court whilst his father, some poor Fellah, was ploughing the ground. Tanfík Pasha began his ill-omened rule by always placing natives close to him in the place of honour, addressing them first and otherwise snubbing Europeans who, when English, were often too obtuse to notice the petty insults lavished upon them.

[28] Arab. “Kathír” (pron. Katir)=much: here used in its slang sense, “no end.”

[29] i.e. “May the Lord soon make thee able to repay me; but

meanwhile I give it to thee for thy own free use.”

[30] Punning upon his name. Much might be written upon the significance of names as ominous of good and evil; but the subject is far too extensive for a footnote.

[31] Lane translates “Ánisa-kum” by “he hath delighted you by his arrival”; Mr. Payne “I commend him to you.”

[32] Arab. “Fatúrát,”=light food for the early breakfast of which the “Fatírah”-cake was a favourite item. See vol. i. 300.

[33] A dark red dye (Lane).

[34] Arab. “Jadíd,” see vol. viii. 121.

[35] Both the texts read thus, but the reading has little sense. Ma’aruf probably would say, “I fear that my loads will be long coming.”

[36] One of the many formulas of polite refusal.

[37] Each bazar, in a large city like Damascus, has its tall and heavy wooden doors which are locked every evening and opened in the morning by the Ghafir or guard. The “silver key,” however, always lets one in.

[38] Arab. “Wa lá Kabbata hámiyah,” a Cairene vulgarism meaning, “There came nothing to profit him nor to rid the people of him.”

[39] Arab. “Kammir,” i.e. brown it before the fire, toast it.

[40] It is insinuated that he had lied till he himself believed the lie to be truth — not an uncommon process, I may remark.

[41] Arab. “Rijál”=the Men, equivalent to the Walis, Saints or Santons; with perhaps an allusion to the Rijál al-Ghayb, the Invisible Controls concerning whom I have quoted Herklots in vol. ii. 211.

[42] A saying attributed to Al-Hariri (Lane). It is good enough to be his: the Persians say, “Cut not down the tree thou plantedst,” and the idea is universal throughout the East.

[43] A quotation from Al-Hariri (Ass. of the Badawin). Ash’ab (ob. A.H. 54), a Medinite servant of Caliph Osman, was proverbial for greed and sanguine, Micawber-like expectation of “windfalls.” The Scholiast Al-Sharíshi (of Xeres) describes him in Theophrastic style. He never saw a man put hand to pocket without expecting a present, or a funeral go by without hoping for a legacy, or a bridal procession without preparing his own house, hoping they might bring the bride to him by mistake. * * * When asked if he knew aught greedier than himself he said “Yes; a sheep I once kept upon my terrace-roof seeing a rainbow mistook it for a rope of hay and jumping to seize it broke its neck!” Hence “Ash’ab’s sheep” became a by-word (Preston tells the tale in full,).

[44] i.e. “Show a miser money and hold him back, if you can.”

[45] He wants £40,000 to begin with.

[46] i.e. Arab. “Sabíhat al-’urs” the morning after the wedding. See vol. i. 269.

[47] Another sign of modern composition as in Kamar al-Zaman

II.

[48] Arab. “Al-Jink” (from Turk.) are boys and youths mostly Jews, Armenians, Greeks and Turks, who dress in woman’s dress with long hair braided. Lane (M. E. chapts. xix. and xxv.) gives same account of the customs of the “Gink” (as the Egyptians call them) but cannot enter into details concerning these catamites. Respectable Moslems often employ them to dance at festivals in preference to the Ghawázi-women, a freak of Mohammedan decorum. When they grow old they often preserve their costume, and a glance at them makes a European’s blood run cold.

[49] Lane translates this, “May Allah and the Rijal retaliate upon thy temple!”

[50] Arab. “Yá aba ‘l-lithámayn,” addressed to his member. Lathm the root means kissing or breaking; so he would say, “O thou who canst take her maidenhead whilst my tongue does away with the virginity of her mouth.” “He breached the citadel” (which is usually square) “in its four corners” signifying that he utterly broke it down.

[51] A mystery to the Author of Proverbs (xxx. 18-19),

There be three things which are too wondrous for me,
The way of an eagle in the air;
The way of a snake upon a rock;
And the way of a man with a maid.

[52] Several women have described the pain to me as much resembling the drawing of a tooth.

[53] As we should say, “play fast and loose.”

[54] Arab. “Náhí-ka” lit.=thy prohibition but idiomatically used=let it suffice thee!

[55] A character-sketch like that of Princess Dunya makes ample amends for a book full of abuse of women. And yet the superficial say that none of the characters have much personal individuality.

[56] This is indeed one of the touches of nature which makes all the world kin.

[57] As we are in Tartary “Arabs” here means plundering nomades, like the Persian “Iliyát” and other shepherd races.

[58] The very cruelty of love which hates nothing so much as a rejected lover. The Princess, be it noted, is not supposed to be merely romancing, but speaking with the second sight, the clairvoyance, of perfect affection. Men seem to know very little upon this subject,

though every one has at times been more or less startled by the abnormal introvision and divination of things hidden which are the property and prerogative of perfect love.

[59] The name of the Princess meaning "The World," not unusual amongst Moslem women.

[60] Another pun upon his name, "Ma'aruf."

[61] Arab. "Naká," the mound of pure sand which delights the eye of the Badawi leaving a town. See vol. i. 217, for the lines and explanation in Night cmlxiv. vol. ix. .

[62] Euphemistic: "I will soon fetch thee food." To say this bluntly might have brought misfortune.

[63] Arab. "Kafr"=a village in Egypt and Syria e.g. Capernaum (Kafr Nahum).

[64] He has all the bonhomie of the Cairene and will do a kindness whenever he can.

[65] i.e. the Father of Prosperities: pron. Aboosa'ádát; as in the Tale of Hasan of Bassorah.

[66] Koran lxxxix. "The Daybreak" which also mentions Thamud and Pharaoh.

[67] In Egypt the cheapest and poorest of food, never seen at a hotel table d'hôte.

[68] The beautiful girls who guard ensorcelled hoards: See vol. vi. 109.

[69] Arab. "Asákir," the ornaments of litters, which are either plain balls of metal or tapering cones based on crescents or on balls and crescents. See in Lane (M. E. chapt. xxiv.) the sketch of the Mahmal.

[70] Arab. "Amm"=father's brother, courteously used for "father-in-law," which suggests having slept with his daughter, and which is

indecent in writing. Thus by a pleasant fiction the husband represents himself as having married his first cousin.

[71] i.e. a calamity to the enemy: see vol. ii. 87 and passim.

[72] Both texts read “Asad” (lion) and Lane accepts it: there is no reason to change it for “Hásid” (Envier), the Lion being the Sultan of the Beasts and the most majestic.

[73] The Cairene knew his fellow Cairene and was not to be taken in by him.

[74] Arab. “Hizám”: Lane reads “Khizám”=a nose-ring for which see appendix to Lane’s M. E. The untrained European eye dislikes these decorations and there is certainly no beauty in the hoops which Hindu women insert through the nostrils, camel-fashion, as if to receive the cord-acting bridle. But a drop-pearl hanging to the septum is at least as pretty as the heavy pendants by which some European women lengthen their ears.

[75] Arab. “Shamtá,” one of the many names of wine, the “speckled” alluding to the bubbles which dance upon the freshly filled cup.

[76] i.e. in the cask. These “merry quips” strongly suggest the dismal toasts of our not remote ancestors.

[77] Arab. “A’láj” plur. of “‘Ilj” and rendered by Lane “the stout foreign infidels.” The next line alludes to the cupbearer who was generally a slave and a non-Moslem.

[78] As if it were a bride. See vol. vii. 198. The stars of
Jauzá (Gemini) are the cupbearer’s eyes.

[79] i.e. light-coloured wine.

[80] The usual homage to youth and beauty.

[81] Alluding to the cup.

[82] Here Abu Nowas whose name always ushers in some abomination alluded to the “Ghulámiyah” or girl dressed like boy to act cupbearer. Civilisation has everywhere the same devices and the Bordels of London and Paris do not ignore the “she-boy,” who often opens the door.

[83] Abdallah ibn al-Mu’tazz, son of Al-Mu’tazz bi ‘llah, the 13th Abbaside, and great-great-grandson of Harun al-Rashid. He was one of the most renowned poets of the third century (A.H.) and died A.D. 908, strangled by the partisans of his nephew Al-Muktadir bi ‘llah, 18th Abbaside.

[84] Jazírat ibn Omar, an island and town on the Tigris north of Mosul. “Some versions of the poem, from which these verses are quoted, substitute El-Mutireh, a village near Samara (a town on the Tigris, 60 miles north of Baghdad), for El-Jezireh, i.e. Jeziret ibn Omar.” (Payne.)

[85] The Convent of Abdun on the east bank of the Tigris opposite the Jezirah was so called from a statesman who caused it to be built. For a variant of these lines see Ibn Khallikan, vol. ii. 42; here we miss “the shady groves of Al-Matírah.”

[86] Arab. “Ghurrah” the white blaze on a horse’s brow. In Ibn Khallikan the bird is the lark.

[87] Arab. “Táy’i”=thirsty used with Jáy’i=hungry.

[88] Lit. “Kohl’d with Ghunj” for which we have no better word than “coquetry.” But see vol. v. 80. It corresponds with the Latin crissare for women and cevere for men.

[89] i.e. gold-coloured wine, as the Vino d’Oro.

[90] Compare the charming song of Abu Miján translated from the German of Dr. Weil in Bohn’s Edit. of Ockley (),

When the Death-angel cometh mine eyes to close,

Dig my grave ‘mid the vines on the hill’s fair side;
For though deep in earth may my bones repose,
The juice of the grape shall their food provide.
Ah, bury me not in a barren land,
Or Death will appear to me dread and drear!
While fearless I’ll wait what he hath in hand I
An the scent of the vineyard my spirit cheer.

The glorious old drinker!

[91] Arab. “Rub’a al-Kharáb” in Ibn al-Wardi Central Africa south of the Nile-sources, one of the richest regions in the world. Here it prob. alludes to the Rub’a al-Kháli or Great Arabian Desert: for which see Night dclxxvi. In rhetoric it is opposed to the “Rub’a Maskún,” or populated fourth of the world, the rest being held to be ocean.

[92] This is the noble resignation of the Moslem. What a dialogue there would have been in a European book between man and devil!

[93] Arab. “Al-’iddah” the period of four months and ten days which must elapse before she could legally marry again. But this was a palpable wile: she was not sure of her husband’s death and he had not divorced her; so that although a “grass widow,” a “Strohwitwe” as the Germans say, she could not wed again either with or without interval.

[94] Here the silence is of cowardice and the passage is a fling at the “timeserving” of the Olema, a favourite theme, like “banging the bishops” amongst certain Westerns.

[95] Arab. “Umm al-raas,” the poll, crown of the head, here the place where a calamity coming down from heaven would first alight.

[96] From Al-Hariri (Lane): the lines are excellent.

[97] When the charming Princess is so ready at the voie de faits, the reader will understand how common is such energetic action among women of lower degree. The “fair sex” in Egypt has a horrible way

of murdering men, especially husbands, by tying them down and tearing out the testicles. See Lane M. E. chapt. xiii.

[98] Arab. “Sijn al-Ghazab,” the dungeons appropriated to the worst of criminals where they suffer penalties far worse than hanging or guillotining.

[99] According to some modern Moslems Munkar and Nakir visit the graves of Infidels (non-Moslems) and Bashshir and Mubashshir (“Givers of glad tidings”) those of Mohammedans. Petis de la Croix (Les Mille et un Jours vol. iii. 258) speaks of the “Zoubanya,” black angels who torture the damned under their chief Dabilah.

[100] Very simple and pathetic is this short sketch of the noble-minded Princess’s death.

[101] In sign of dismissal (vol. iv. 62) I have noted that “throwing the kerchief” is not an Eastern practice: the idea probably arose from the Oriental practice of sending presents in richly embroidered napkins and kerchiefs.

[102] Curious to say both Lane and Payne omit this passage which appears in both texts (Mac. and Bul.). The object is evidently to prepare the reader for the ending by reverting to the beginning of the tale; and its prolixity has its effect as in the old Romances of Chivalry from Amadis of Ghaul to the Seven Champions of Christendom. If it provoke impatience, it also heightens expectation; “it is like the long elm-avenues of our forefathers; we wish ourselves at the end; but we know that at the end there is something great.”

[103] Arab. “alà malákay bayti ‘l-ráhah;” on the two slabs at whose union are the round hole and longitudinal slit. See vol. i. 221.

[104] Here the exclamation wards off the Evil Eye from the Sword and the wearer: Mr. Payne notes, “The old English exclamation Cock’s ‘ill!’ (i.e., God’s will, thus corrupted for the purpose of evading the statute of 3 Jac. i. against profane swearing) exactly corresponds to

the Arabic" — with a difference, I add.

[105] Arab. "Mustahakk"=deserving (Lane) or worth (Payne) the cutting.

[106] Arab. "Mashhad" the same as "Sháhid"=the upright stones at the head and foot of the grave. Lane mistranslates, "Made for her a funeral procession."

[107] These lines have occurred before. I quote Lane.

[108] There is nothing strange in such sudden elevations amongst Moslems and even in Europe we still see them occasionally. The family in the East, however humble, is a model and miniature of the state, and learning is not always necessary to wisdom.

[109] Arab. "Fárid" which may also mean "union-pearl."

[110] Trébutien (iii. 497) cannot deny himself the pleasure of a French touch making the King reply, "C'est assez; qu'on lui coupe la tête, car ces dernières histoires surtout m'ont causé un ennui mortel." This reading is found in some of the MSS.

[111] After this I borrow from the Bresl. Edit. inserting passages from the Mac. Edit.

[112] i.e. whom he intended to marry with regal ceremony.

[113] The use of coloured powders in sign of holiday-making is not obsolete in India. See Herklots for the use of "Huldee" (Haldí) or turmeric-powder, p-65.

[114] Many Moslem families insist upon this before giving their girls in marriage, and the practice is still popular amongst many Mediterranean peoples.

[115] i.e. Sumatran.

[116] i.e. Alexander, according to the Arabs; see vol. v. 252.

[117] These lines are in vol. i. 217.

[118] I repeat the lines from vol. i. 218.

[119] All these coquetries require as much inventiveness as a cotillon; the text alludes to fastening the bride's tresses across her mouth giving her the semblance of beard and mustachios.

[120] Repeated from vol. i. 218.

[121] Repeated from vol. i. 218.

[122] See vol. i. 219.

[123] Arab. Sawád=the blackness of the hair.

[124] Because Easterns build, but never repair.

[125]i.e. God only knows if it be true or not.

[126] Ouseley's Orient. Collect. I, vii.

[127] This three-fold distribution occurred to me many years ago and when far beyond reach of literary authorities, I was, therefore, much pleased to find the subjoined three-fold classification with minor details made by Baron von Hammer- Purgstall (Preface to Contes Inédits etc. of G. S. Trébutien, Paris, mdcccxxviii.) (1) The older stories which serve as a base to the collection, such as the Ten Wazirs ("Malice of Women") and Voyages of Sindbad (?) which may date from the days of Mahommed. These are distributed into two sub-classes; (a) the marvellous and purely imaginative (e.g. Jamasp and the Serpent Queen) and (b) the realistic mixed with instructive fables and moral instances. (2) The stories and anecdotes peculiarly Arab, relating to the Caliphs and especially to Al- Rashíd; and (3) The tales of Egyptian provenance, which mostly date from the times of the puissant "Aaron the Orthodox." Mr. John Payne (Villon Translation vol. ix. p-73) distributes the stories roughly under five chief heads as follows: (1) Histories or long Romances, as King

Omar bin Al-Nu'man (2) Anecdotes or short stories dealing with historical personages and with incidents and adventures belonging to the every-day life of the period to which they refer: e.g. those concerning Al-Rashíd and Hátim of Tayy. (3) Romances and romantic fictions comprising three different kinds of tales; (a) purely romantic and supernatural; (b) fictions and nouvelles with or without a basis and background of historical fact and (c) Contes fantastiques. (4) Fables and Apologues; and (5) Tales proper, as that of Tawaddud.

[128] Journal Asiatique (Paris, Dondoy-Dupré, 1826) "Sur l'origine des Mille et une Nuits."

[129] Baron von Hammer-Purgstall's château is near Styrian Graz, and, when I last saw his library, it had been left as it was at his death.

[130] At least, in Trébutien's Preface, pp. xxx.-xxxi., reprinted from the Journ. Asiat. August, 1839: for corrections see De Sacy's "Mémoire." .

[131] Vol. iv. p-90, Paris mdccclxv. Trébutien quotes, chapt. lii. (for lxviii.), one of Von Hammer's manifold inaccuracies.

[132] Alluding to Iram the Many-columned, etc.

[133] In Trébutien "Síhá," for which the Editor of the Journ.
Asiat. and De Sacy rightly read "Sabíl-há."

[134] For this some MSS. have "Fahlawiyah" = Pehlevi

[135] i.e. Lower Roman, Grecian, of Asia Minor, etc., the word is still applied throughout
Marocco, Algiers and Northern Africa to Europeans in general.

[136] De Sacy (Dissertation prefixed to the Bourdin Edition) notices the "thousand and one," and in his Mémoire "a thousand:" Von Hammer's MS. reads a thousand, and the French translation a thousand and one. Evidently no stress can be laid upon the numerals.

[137] These names are noticed in my vol. i. 14, and vol. ii. 3. According to De Sacy some MSS. read “History of the Wazir and his Daughters.”

[138] Lane (iii. 735) has Wizreh or Wardeh which guide us to Wird Khan, the hero of the tale. Von Hammer’s MS. prefers Djilkand (Jilkand), whence probably the Isegil or Isegild of Langlés (1814), and the Tséqyl of De Sacy (1833). The mention of “Simás” (Lane’s Shemmas) identifies it with “King Jalí’ád of Hind,” etc. (Night dcccxcix.) Writing in A.D. 961 Hamzah Isfaháni couples with the libri Sindbad and Schimas, the libri Baruc and Barsinas, four nouvelles out of nearly seventy. See also Al-Makri’zi’s Khitat or Topography (ii. 485) for a notice of the Thousand or Thousand and one Nights.

[139] alluding to the “Seven Wazirs” alias “The Malice of Women” (Night dlxxviii.), which Von Hammer and many others have carelessly confounded with Sindbad the Seaman We find that two tales once separate have now been incorporated with The Nights, and this suggests the manner of its composition by accretion.

[140] Arabised by a most “elegant” stylist, Abdullah ibn al- Mukaffá (the shrivelled), a Persian Guebre named Roz-bih (Day good), who islamised and was barbarously put to death in A.H. 158 (= 775) by command of the Caliph al-Mansur (Al-Siyuti). “He also translated from Pehlevi the book entitled Sekiserán, containing the annals of Isfandiyar, the death of Rustam, and other episodes of old Persic history,” says Al-Mas’udi chapt. xxi. See also Ibn Khallikan (1, 43) who dates the murder in A.H. 142 (= 759-60).

[141] “Notice sur Le Schah-namah de Firdoussi,” a posthumous publication of M. de Wallenbourg, Vienna, 1810, by M. A. de Bianchi. In sect. iii. I shall quote another passage of Al-Mas’udi (viii. 175) in which I find a distinct allusion to the “Gaboriaudetective tales” of The Nights.

[142] Here Von Hammer shows his customary inexactitude. As we

learn from Ibn Khallikan (Fr. Tr. I. 630), the author's name was Abu al-Faraj Mohammed ibn Is'hak pop. known as Ibn Ali Ya'kúb al-Warrák, the bibliographe, librarian, copyist. It was published (vol. i Leipzig, 1871) under the editorship of G. Fluegel, J. Roediger, and A. Müller.

[143] See also the Journ. Asiat., August, 1839, and Lane iii. 736-37

[144] Called "Afsánah" by Al-Mas'udi, both words having the same sense = tale story, parable, "facetiæ." Moslem fanaticism renders it by the Arab "Khuráfah" = silly fables, and in Hindostan it = a jest: "Bát-kí bát, khurafát-ki khurafát" (a word for a word, a joke for a joke).

[145] Al-Mas'údi (chapt. xxi.) makes this a name of the Mother of Queen Humái or Humáyah, for whom see below.

[146] The preface of a copy of the Shah-nameh (by Firdausi, ob. A.D. 1021), collated in A.H. 829 by command of Bayisunghur Bahadur Khán (Atkinson p. x.), informs us that the Hazar Afsanah was composed for or by Queen Humái whose name is Arabised to Humáyah This Persian Marguerite de Navarre was daughter and wife to (Ardashir) Bahman, sixth Kayanian and surnamed Diraz-dast (Artaxerxes Longimanus), Abu Sásán from his son, the Eponymus of the Sassanides who followed the Kayanians when these were extinguished by Alexander of Macedon. Humái succeeded her husband as seventh Queen, reigned thirty-two years and left the crown to her son Dárá or Dáráb 1st = Darius Codomanus. She is better known to Europe (through Herodotus) as Parysatis = Peri-zádeh or the Fairy-born.

[147] i.e. If Allah allow me to say sooth.

[148] i.e. of silly anecdotes: here speaks the good Moslem!

[149] No. 622 Sept. 29, 39, a review of Torrens which appeared shortly after Lane's vol. i. The author quotes from a MS. in the British Museum, No. 7334 fol. 136.

[150] There are many Spaniards of this name: Mr. Payne (ix. 302) proposes Abu Ja'afar ibn Abd al-Hakk al-Khazraji, author of a History of the Caliphs about the middle of the twelfth century.

[151] The well-known Rauzah or Garden-island, of old Al- Saná'ah (Al-Mas'udi chapt. xxxi.) which is more than once noticed in The Nights. The name of the pavilion Al-Haudaj = a camel- litter, was probably intended to flatter the Badawi girl.

[152] He was the Seventh Fatimite Caliph of Egypt: regn. A.H. 495-524 (= 1101 1129).

[153] Suggesting a private pleasaunce in Al-Rauzah which has ever been and is still a succession of gardens.

[154] The writer in The Athenæum calls him Ibn Miyvah, and adds that the Badawiyah wrote to her cousin certain verses complaining of her thraldom, which the youth answered abusing the Caliph. Al-Ámir found the correspondence and ordered Ibn Miyah's tongue to be cut out, but he saved himself by a timely flight.

[155] In Night dccclxxxv. we have the passage "He was a wily thief: none could avail against his craft as he were Abu Mohammed Al-Battál": the word etymologically means The Bad; but see infra.

[156] Amongst other losses which Orientals have sustained by the death of Rogers Bey, I may mention his proposed translation of Al-Makrízí's great topographical work.

[157] The name appears only in a later passage.

[158] Mr. Payne notes (viii. 137) "apparently some famous brigand of the time" (of Charlemagne). But the title may signify The Brave, and the tale may be much older.

[159] In his "Mémoire sur l'origine du Recueil des Contes intitulé Les Mille et une Nuits" (Mém. d'Hist. et de Littér. Orientale, extrait des tomes ix., et x. des Mémoires de l'Inst. Royal Acad. des Inscriptions

et Belles Lettres, Paris, Imprimerie Royale, 1833). He read the Memoir before the Royal Academy on July 31, 1829. Also in his Dissertation "Sur les Mille et une Nuits" (pp. i. viii.) prefixed to the Bourdin Edit. When first the Arabist in Europe landed at Alexandria he could not exchange a word with the people the same is told of Golius the lexicographer at Tunis.

[160] Lane, Nights ii. 218.

[161] This origin had been advocated a decade of years before by Shaykh Ahmad al-Shirawáni; Editor of the Calc. text (1814-18): his Persian preface opines that the author was an Arabic speaking Syrian who designedly wrote in a modern and conversational style, none of the purest withal, in order to instruct non-Arabists. Here we find the genus "Professor" pure and simple.

[162] Such an assertion makes us enquire, Did De Sacy ever read through The Nights in Arabic?

[163] Dr. Jonathan Scott's "translation" vi. 283.

[164] For a note on this world-wide Tale see vol. i. 52.

[165] In the annotated translation by Mr. I. G. N. Keith- Falconer, Cambridge University Press. I regret to see the wretched production called the "Fables of Pilpay" in the "Chandos Classics" (London, F. Warne). The words are so mutilated that few will recognize them, e.g. Carchenas for Kár-shínás, Chaschmanah for Chashmey-e-Máh (Fountain of the Moon), etc.

[166] Article Arabia in Encyclop. Brit., 9th Edit., , colt 2. I do not quite understand Mr. Palgrave, but presume that his "other version" is the Bresl. Edit., the MS. of which was brought from Tunis; see its Vorwort (vol. i.).

[167] There are three distinct notes according to De Sacy (Mém.,). The first (in MS. 1508) says "This blessed book was read by the weak slave, etc. Wahabah son of Rizkallah the Kátib (secretary, scribe) of

Tarábulus al-Shám (Syrian Tripoli), who prayeth long life for its owner (li máliki-h). This tenth day of the month First Rabí'a A.H. 955 (= 1548)." A similar note by the same Wahabah occurs at the end of vol. ii. (MS. 1507) dated A.H. 973 (= 1565) and a third (MS. 1506) is undated. Evidcntly M. Caussin has given undue weight to such evidence. For further information see "Tales of the East" to which is prefixed an Introductory Dissertation (vol. i. p-26, note) by Henry Webber, Esq., Edinburgh, 1812, in 3 vols.

[168] "Notice sur les douze manuscrits connus des Milles et une Nuits, qui existent en Europe." Von Hammer in Trébutien, Notice, vol. i.

[169] Printed from the MS. of Major Turner Macan, Editor of the Shahnamah: he bought it from the heirs of Mr. Salt, the historic Consul-General of England in Egypt and after Macan's death it became the property of the now extinct Allens, then of Leadenhall Street (Torrens, Preface, i.). I have vainly enquired about what became of it.

[170] The short paper by "P. R." in the Gentleman's Magazine (Feb. 19th, 1799, vol. lxix.) tells us that MSS. of The Nights were scarce at Aleppo and that he found only two vols. (280 Nights) which he had great difficulty in obtaining leave to copy. He also noticed (in 1771) a MS., said to be complete, in the Vatican and another in the "King's Library" (Bibliothèque Nationale), Paris.

[171] Aleppo has been happy in finding such monographers as Russell and Maundrell while poor Damascus fell into the hands of Mr. Missionary Porter, and suffered accordingly.

[172] Vol. vi. Appendix, p.452.

[173] The numbers, however, vary with the Editions of Galland: some end the formula with Night cxcvii; others with the ccxxxvi. : I adopt that of the De Sacy Edition.

[174] Contes Persans, suivis des Contes Turcs. Paris; Béchet Ainé, 1826.

[175] In the old translation we have “eighteen hundred years since the prophet Solomon died,” (B.C. 975) = A.D. 825.

[176] Meaning the era of the Seleucides. Dr. Jonathan Scott shows (vol. ii. 324) that A.H. 653 and A.D. 1255 would correspond with 1557 of that epoch; so that the scribe has here made a little mistake of 5,763 years. Ex uno disce.

[177] The Saturday Review (Jan. 2nd ‘86) writes, “Captain Burton has fallen into a mistake by not distinguishing between the names of the by no means identical Caliphs Al-Muntasir and Al-Mustansir.” Quite true: it was an ugly confusion of the melancholy madman and parricide with one of the best and wisest of the Caliphs. I can explain (not extenuate) my mistake only by a misprint in Al-Siyúti ().

[178] In the Galland MS. and the Bresl. Edit. (ii. 253), we find the Barber saying that the Caliph (Al-Mustansir) was at that time (yaumaizin) in Baghdad, and this has been held to imply that the Caliphate had fallen. But such conjecture is evidently based upon insufficient grounds.

[179] De Sacy makes the “Kalandar” order originate in A.D. 1150, but the Shaykh Sharíf bú Ali Kalandar died in A.D. 1323-24. In Sind the first Kalandar, Osmán-i-Marwándí surnamed Lál Sháhbáz, the Red Goshawk, from one of his miracles, died and was buried at Sehwán in A D. 1274: see my “History of Sindh” chapt. viii. for details. The dates therefore run wild.

[180] In this same tale H. H. Wilson observes that the title of Sultan of Egypt was not assumed before the middle of the xiith century.

[181] Popularly called Vidyanagar of the Narsingha.

[182] Time-measurers are of very ancient date. The Greeks had clepsydræ and the Romans gnomons, portable and ring-shaped, besides large standing town-dials as at Aquileja and San Sabba near Trieste. The “Saracens” were the perfecters of the clepsydra: Bosseret () and the Chronicon Turense (Beckmann ii. 340 et seq.)

describe the water-clock sent by Al-Rashid to Karl the Great as a kind of "cockoo-clock." Twelve doors in the dial opened successively and little balls dropping on brazen bells told the hour: at noon a dozen mounted knights paraded the face and closed the portals. Trithonius mentions an horologium presented in A.D. 1232 by Al-Malik al-Kámil the Ayyubite Soldan to the Emperor Frederick II: like the Strasbourg and Padua clocks it struck the hours, told the day, month and year, showed the phases of the moon, and registered the position of the sun and the planets. Towards the end of the fifteenth century Gaspar Visconti mentions in a sonnet the watch proper (certi orologii piccioli e portativi); and the "animated eggs" of Nurembourg became famous. The earliest English watch (Sir Ashton Lever's) dates from 1541: and in 1544 the portable chronometer became common in France.

[183] An illustrated History of Arms and Armour etc. ();
London: Bell and Sons, 1877. The best edition is the Guide des Amateurs d'Armes, Paris: Renouard, 1879.

[184] Chapt. iv. Dr. Gustav Oppert "On the Weapons etc. of the Ancient Hindus;" London: Trübner and Co., 1880. :

[185] I have given other details on this subject in p- 637 of "Camoens, his Life and his Lusiads."

[186] The morbi venerei amongst the Romans are obscure because "whilst the satirists deride them the physicians are silent." Celsus, however, names (De obscenarum partium vitiis, lib. xviii.) inflammatio coleorum (swelled testicle), tubercula glandem (warts on the glans penis), cancri carbunculi (chancre or shanker) and a few others. The rubigo is noticed as a lues venerea by Servius in Virg. Georg.

[187] According to David Forbes, the Peruvians believed that syphilis arose from connection of man and alpaca; and an old law forbade bachelors to keep these animals in the house. Francks explains by the introduction of syphilis wooden figures found in the Chinchas guano;

these represented men with a cord round the neck or a serpent devouring the genitals.

[188] They appeared before the gates of Paris in the summer of 1427, not “about July, 1422”: in Eastern Europe, however, they date from a much earlier epoch. Sir J. Gilbert’s famous picture has one grand fault, the men walk and the women ride: in real life the reverse would be the case.

[189] Rabelais ii. c. 30.

[190] I may be allowed to note that syphilis does not confine itself to man: a charger infected with it was pointed out to me at Baroda by my late friend, Dr. Arnott (18th Regiment, Bombay N.I.) and Tangier showed me some noticeable cases of this hippic syphilis, which has been studied in Hungary. Eastern peoples have a practice of “passing on” venereal and other diseases, and transmission is supposed to cure the patient; for instance a virgin heals (and catches) gonorrha. Syphilis varies greatly with climate. In Persia it is said to be propagated without contact: in Abyssinia it is often fatal and in Egypt it is readily cured by sand baths and sulphur-unguents. Lastly in lands like Unyamwezi, where mercurials are wholly unknown, I never saw caries of the nasal or facial bones.

[191] For another account of the transplanter and the casuistical questions to which coffee gave rise, see my “First Footsteps in East Africa” ().

[192] The first mention of coffee proper (not of Kahwah or old wine in vol. ii. 260) is in Night cdxxvi. vol. v. 169, where the coffee-maker is called Kahwahjiyyah, a mongrel term showing the modern date of the passage in Ali the Cairene. As the work advances notices become thicker, e.g. in Night dccclxvi. where Ali Nur al-Din and the Frank King’s daughter seems to be a modernisation of the story “Ala al-Din Abu al-Shámát” (vol. iv. 29); and in Abu Kir and Abu Sir (Nights cmxxx. and cmxxxvi.) where coffee is drunk with sherbet after present fashion. The use culminates in Kamar al-Zaman II. where it

is mentioned six times (Nights cmlxvi. cmlxx. cmlxxi. twice; cmlxxiv. and cmlxxvii.), as being drunk after the dawn-breakfast and following the meal as a matter of course. The last notices are in Abdullah bin Fazil, Nights cmlxxviii. and cmlxxix.

[193] It has been suggested that Japanese tobacco is an indigenous growth and sundry modern travellers in China contend that the potato and the maize, both white and yellow, have there been cultivated from time immemorial.

[194] For these see my "City of the Saints," .

[195] Lit. meaning smoke: hence the Arabic "Dukhán," with the same signification.

[196] Unhappily the book is known only by name: for years I have vainly troubled friends and correspondents to hunt for a copy. Yet I am sanguine enough to think that some day we shall succeed: Mr. Sidney Churchill, of Teheran, is ever on the look-out.

[197] In § 3 I shall suggest that this tale also is mentioned by Al-Mas'udi.

[198] I have extracted it from many books, especially from Hoeffer's Biographie Générale, Paris, Firmin Didot, mdccclvii.; Biographie Universelle, Paris, Didot, 1816, etc. etc. All are taken from the work of M. de Boze, his "Bozzy."

[199] As learning a language is an affair of pure memory, almost without other exercise of the mental faculties, it should be assisted by the ear and the tongue as well as the eyes. I would invariably make pupils talk, during lessons, Latin and Greek, no matter how badly at first; but unfortunately I should have to begin with teaching the pedants who, as a class, are far more unwilling and unready to learn than are those they teach.

[200] The late Dean Stanley was notably trapped by the wily Greek who had only political purposes in view. In religions as a rule the

minimum of difference breeds the maximum of disputation, dislike and disgust.

[201] See in Trébutien (Avertissement iii.) how Baron von Hammer escaped drowning by the blessing of The Nights.

[202] He signs his name to the Discours pour servir de Préface.

[203] I need not trouble the reader with their titles, which fill up nearly a column and a half in M. Hoeffer. His collection of maxims from Arabic, Persian and Turkish authors appeared in English in 1695.

[204] Galland's version was published in 1704-1717 in 12 vols. 12mo., (Hoeffer's Biographie; Grasse's Trésor de Livres rares and Encyclop. Britannica, ixth Edit.)

[205] See also Leigh Hunt "The Book of the Thousand Nights and one Night," etc., etc. London and Westminster Review Art. iii., No. 1xiv. mentioned in Lane, iii., 746.

[206] Edition of 1856 vol. xv.

[207] To France England also owes her first translation of the Koran, a poor and mean version by Andrew Ross of that made from the Arabic (No. iv.) by André du Reyer, Consul de France for Egypt. It kept the field till ousted in 1734 by the learned lawyer George Sale whose conscientious work, including Preliminary Discourse and Notes (4to London), brought him the ill-fame of having "turned Turk."

[208] Catalogue of Printed Books, 1884, , col. i. I am ashamed to state this default in the British Museum, concerning which Englishmen are apt to boast and which so carefully mulcts modern authors in unpaid copies. But it is only a slight specimen of the sad state of art and literature in England, neglected equally by Conservatives, Liberals and Radicals. What has been done for the endowment of research? What is our equivalent for the Prix de Rome? Since the death of Dr.

Birch, who can fairly deal with a Demotic papyrus? Contrast the Société Anthropologique and its palace and professors in Paris with our "Institute" au second in a corner of Hanover Square and its skulls in the cellar!

[209] Art. vii. p-168, "On the Arabian Nights and translators, Weil, Torrens and Lane (vol. i.) with the Essai of A. Loisseleur Deslongchamps." The Foreign Quarterly Review, vol. xxiv., Oct. 1839-Jan. 1840. London, Black and Armstrong, 1840.

[210] Introduction to his Collection "Tales of the East," 3 vols. Edinburgh, 1812. He was the first to point out the resemblance between the introductory adventures of Shahryar and Shah Zaman and those of Astolfo and Giacondo in the Orlando Furioso (Canto xxviii.). M. E. Lévêque in Les Mythes et les Légendes de l'Inde et la Perse (Paris, 1880) gives French versions of the Arabian and Italian narratives, side by side in ff. (Clouston).

[211] Notitiæ Codicis MI. Noctium. Dr. Pusey studied Arabic to familiarise himself with Hebrew, and was very different from his predecessor at Oxford in my day, who, when applied to for instruction in Arabic, refused to lecture except to a class.

[212] This nephew was the author of "Recueil des Rits et Cérémonies des Pilgrimages de La Mecque," etc. etc. Paris and Amsterdam, 1754, in 12mo.

[213] The concluding part did not appear, I have said, till 1717: his "Comes et Fables Indiennes de Bidpaï et de Lokman," were first printed in 1724, 2 vols. in 12mo. Hence, I presume, Lowndes' mistake.

[214] M. Caussin (de Perceval), Professeur of Arabic at the Imperial Library, who edited Galland in 1806, tells us that he found there only two MSS., both imperfect. The first (Galland's) is in three small vols. 4to. each of about p. The stories are more detailed and the style, more correct than that of other MS., is hardly intelligible to many Arabs, whence he presumes that it contains the original (an early?)

text which has been altered and vitiated. The date is supposed to be circa A.D. 1600. The second Parisian copy is a single folio of some 800 pages, and is divided into 29 sections and cmv. Nights, the last two sections being reversed. The MS. is very imperfect, the 12th, 15th, 16th, 18th, 20th, 21st-23rd, 25th and 27th parts are wanting; the sections which follow the 17th contain sundry stories repeated, there are anecdotes from Bidpai, the Ten Wazirs and other popular works, and lacunæ everywhere abound.

[215] Mr. Payne (ix. 264) makes eleven, including the Histoire du Dormeur éveillé = The Sleeper and the Waker, which he afterwards translated from the Bresl. Edit. in his "Tales from the Arabic" (vol. i. 5, etc.)

[216] Mr. E. J. W. Gibb informs me that he has come upon this tale in a Turkish storybook, the same from which he drew his "Jewád."

[217] A littérateur lately assured me that Nos. ix. and x. have been found in the Bibliothèque Nationale (du Roi) Paris; but two friends were kind enough to enquire and ascertained that it was a mistake. Such Persianisms as Codadad (Khudadad), Baba Cogia (Khwájah) and Peri (fairy) suggest a Persic MS.

[218] Vol. vi. 212. "The Arabian Nights' Entertainments (London: Longmans, 1811) by Jonathan Scott, with the Collection of New Tales from the Wortley Montagu MS. in the Bodleian." I regret to see that Messieurs Nimmo in reprinting Scott have omitted his sixth Volume.

[219] Dr. Scott who uses Fitnah (iv. 42) makes it worse by adding "Alcolom (Al-Kulúb?) signifying Ravisher of Hearts" and his names for the six slave-girls (vol. iv. 37) such as "Zohorob Bostan" (Zahr al-Búftán), which Galland rightly renders by "Fleur du Jardin," serve only to heap blunder upon blunder. Indeed the Anglo-French translations are below criticism: it would be waste of time to notice them. The characteristic is a servile suit paid to the original e.g. rendering hair "accomodé en boucles" by "hair festooned in buckles"

(Night ccxiv.), and Île d'Ébène (Jazírat al-Abnús, Night xliii.) by "the Isle of Ebene." A certain surly old littérateur tells me that he prefers these wretched versions to Mr. Payne's. Padrone! as the Italians say: I cannot envy his taste or his temper.

[220] De Sacy (Mémoire) notes that in some MSS., the Sultan, ennuyé by the last tales of Shahrázad, proposes to put her to death, when she produces her three children and all ends merrily without marriage-bells. Von Hammer prefers this version as the more dramatic, the Frenchman rejects it on account of the difficulties of the accouchements. Here he strains at the gnat — a common process.

[221] See Journ. Asiatique, iii. série, vol. viii., Paris, 1839.

[222] "Tausend und Eine Nacht: Arabische Erzählungen. Zum ersten mal aus einer Tunisischen Handschrift ergänzt und vollstandig übersetzt," Von Max Habicht, F. H. von der Hagen und Karl Schatte (the offenders?).

[223] Dr. Habicht informs us (Vorwort iii., vol. ix. 7) that he obtained his MS. with other valuable works from Tunis, through a personal acquaintance, a learned Arab, Herr M. Annagar (Mohammed Al-Najjár?) and was aided by Baron de Sacy, Langlès and other savants in filling up the lacunæ by means of sundry MSS. The editing was a prodigy of negligence: the corrigenda (of which brief lists are given) would fill a volume; and, as before noticed, the indices of the first four tomes were printed in the fifth, as if the necessity of a list of tales had just struck the dense editor. After Habicht's death in 1839 his work was completed in four vols. (ix.-xii.) by the well-known Prof. H. J. Fleischer who had shown some tartness in his "Dissertatio Critica de Glossis Habichtianis." He carefully imitated all the shortcomings of his predecessor and even omitted the Verzeichniss etc., the Varianten and the Glossary of Arabic words not found in Golius, which formed the only useful part of the first eight volumes.

[224] Die in Tausend und Eine Nacht noch nicht übersetzten Nächte, Erzählungen und Anekdoten, zum erstenmal aus dem Arabischen in

das Französische übersetzt von J. von Hammer, und aus dem Französischen in das Deutsche von A. E. Zinserling, Professor, Stuttgart und Tubingen, 1823. Drei Bde. 80 . Trébutien's, therefore, is the translation of a translation of a translation.

[225] Tausend und Eine Nacht Arabische Erzählungen. Zum erstenmale aus dem Urtexte vollständig und treu uebersetze von Dr. Gustav Weil. He began his work on return from Egypt in 1836 and completed his first version of the Arabische Meisterwerk in 1838-42 (3 vols. roy. oct.). I have the Zweiter Abdruck der dritten (2d reprint of 3d) in 4 vols. 8vo., Stuttgart, 1872. It has more than a hundred woodcuts.

[226] My learned friend Dr. Wilhelm Storck, to whose admirable translations of Camoens I have often borne witness, notes that this Vorhalle, or Porch to the first edition, a rhetorical introduction addressed to the general public, is held in Germany to be valueless and that it was noticed only for the Bemerkung concerning the offensive passages which Professor Weil had toned down in his translation. In the Vorwort of the succeeding editions (Stuttgart) it is wholly omitted.

[227] The most popular are now "Mille ed una notte. Novelle Arabe." Napoli, 1867, 8vo illustrated, 4 francs; and "Mille ed une notte. Novelle Arabe, versione italiana nuovamente emendata e corredata di note"; 4 vols. in 32 (dateless) Milano, 8vo, 4 francs.

[228] These are; (l) by M. Caussin (de Perceval), Paris, 1806, 9 vols. 8vo. (2) Edouard Gauttier, Paris, 1822-24: 7 vols. 12mo; (3) M. Destain, Paris, 1823-25, 6 vols. 8vo, and (4) Baron de Sacy, Paris. 1838 (?) 3 vols. large 8vo, illustrated (and vilely illustrated).

[229] The number of fables and anecdotes varies in the different texts, but may be assumed to be upwards of four hundred, about half of which were translated by Lane.

[230] I have noticed these points more fully in the beginning of chapt. iii. "The Book of the Sword."

[231] A notable instance of Roman superficiality, incuriousness and ignorance. Every old Egyptian city had its idols (images of metal, stone or wood), in which the Deity became incarnate as in the Catholic host; besides its own symbolic animal used as a Kiblah or prayer-direction (Jerusalem or Meccah), the visible means of fixing and concentrating the thoughts of the vulgar, like the crystal of the hypnotist or the disk of the electro-biologist. And goddess Diana was in no way better than goddess Pasht. For the true view of idolatry see Koran xxxix. 4. I am deeply grateful to Mr. P. le Page Renouf (Soc. of Biblic. Archæology, April 6, 1886) for identifying the Manibogh, Michabo or Great Hare of the American indigenes with Osiris Unnefer ("Hare God"). These are the lines upon which investigation should run. And of late years there is a notable improvement of tone in treating of symbolism or idolatry: the Lingam and the Yoni are now described as "mystical representations, and perhaps the best possible impersonal representatives of the abstract expressions paternity and maternity" (Prof. Monier Williams in "Folk-lore Record" vol. iii. part i.).

[232] See Jotham's fable of the Trees and King Bramble (Judges lxi. 8) and Nathan's parable of the Poor Man and his little ewe Lamb (2 Sam. ix. 1).

[233] Herodotus (ii. c. 134) notes that "Æsop the fable-writer ( ) was one of her (Rhodopis) fellow slaves". Aristophanes (Vespæ, 1446) refers to his murder by the Delphians and his fable beginning, "Once upon a time there was a fight;" while the Scholiast finds an allusion to The Serpent and the Crab in Pax 1084; and others in Vespæ 1401, and Aves 651.

[234] There are three distinct Lokmans who are carefully confounded in Sale (Koran chapt. xxxi.) and in Smith's Dict. of Biography etc. art. Æsopus. The first or eldest Lokman, entitled Al-Hakim (the Sage) and the hero of the Koranic chapter which bears his name, was son of Bá'úrá of the Children of Azar, sister's son of Job or son of Job's maternal aunt; he witnessed David's miracles of mail-making and when the tribe of 'Ád was destroyed, he became King of the country.

The second, also called the Sage, was a slave, an Abyssinian negro, sold to the Israelites during the reign of David or Solomon, synchronous with the Persian Kay Káús and Kay Khusrau, also Pythagoras the Greek (!) His physique is alluded to in the saying, “Thou resemblest Lokman (in black ugliness) but not in wisdom” (Ibn Khallikan i. 145). This negro or negroid, after a godly and edifying life, left a volume of “Amsál,” proverbs and exempla (not fables or apologues); and Easterns still say, “One should not pretend to teach Lokmán” — in Persian, “Hikmat ba Lokman ámokhtan.” Three of his apothegms dwell in the public memory: “The heart and the tongue are the best and worst parts of the human body.” “I learned wisdom from the blind who make sure of things by touching them” (as did St. Thomas); and when he ate the colocynth offered by his owner, “I have received from thee so many a sweet that ’twould be surprising if I refused this one bitter.” He was buried (says the Tárikh Muntakhab) at Ramlah in Judæa, with the seventy Prophets stoned in one day by the Jews. The youngest Lokman “of the vultures” was a prince of the tribe of Ad who lived 3,500 years, the age of seven vultures (Tabari). He could dig a well with his nails; hence the saying, “Stronger than Lokman” (A. P. i. 701); and he loved the arrow-game, hence, “More gambling than Lokman” (ibid. ii. 938). “More voracious than Lokman” (ibid i. 134) alludes to his eating one camel for breakfast and another for supper. His wife Barákish also appears in proverb, e.g. “Camel us and camel thyself” (ibid. i. 295) i.e. give us camel flesh to eat, said when her son by a former husband brought her a fine joint which she and her husband relished. Also, “Barákish hath sinned against her kin” (ibid. ii. 89). More of this in Chenery’s Al-Hariri ; but the three Lokmans are there reduced to two.

[235] I have noticed them in vol. ii. 47-49. “To the Gold Coast for Gold.”

[236] I can hardly accept the dictum that the Katha Sarit Sagara, of which more presently, is the “earliest representation of the first collection.”

[237] The Pehlevi version of the days of King Anushirwan (A.D. 531-72) became the Humáyun-námeh ("August Book") turned into Persian for Bahram Shah the Ghaznavite: the Hitopadesa ("Friendship-boon") of Prakrit, avowedly compiled from the "Panchatantra," became the Hindu Panchopakhyan, the Hindostani Akhlák-i-Hindi ("Moralities of Ind") and in Persia and Turkey the Anvar-i-Suhayli ("Lights of Canopus"). Arabic, Hebrew and Syriac writers entitle their version Kalilah wa Damnah, or Kalilaj wa Damnaj, from the name of the two jackal-heroes, and Europe knows the recueil as the Fables of Pilpay or Bidpay (Bidyá-pati, Lord of learning?) a learned Brahman reported to have been Premier at the Court of the Indian King Dabishlím.

[238] Diet. Philosoph. S. V. Apocrypha.

[239] The older Arab writers, I repeat, do not ascribe fables or beast-apologues to Lokman; they record only "dictes" and proverbial sayings.

[240] Professor Taylor Lewis: Preface to Pilpay.

[241] In the Katha Sarit Sagara the beast-apologues are more numerous, but they can be reduced to two great nuclei; the first in chapter lx. (Lib. x.) and the second in the same book chapters lxii-lxv. Here too they are mixed up with anecdotes and acroamata after the fashion of The Nights, suggesting great antiquity for this style of composition.

[242] Brugsch, History of Egypt, vol. i. 266 et seq. The fabliau is interesting in more ways than one. Anepu the elder (Potiphar) understands the language of cattle, an idea ever cropping up in Folk-lore; and Bata (Joseph), his "little brother," who becomes a "panther of the South (Nubia) for rage" at the wife's impudique proposal, takes the form of a bull — metamorphosis full blown. It is not, as some have called it, the "oldest book in the world;" that name was given by M. Chabas to a MS. of Proverbs, dating from B.C. 2200. See also the "Story of Saneha," a novel earlier than the popular date of Moses, in the Contes Populaires of Egypt.

[243] The fox and the jackal are confounded by the Arabic dialects not by the Persian, whose “Rubáh” can never be mistaken for “Shaghál.” “Sa’lab” among the Semites is locally applied to either beast and we can distinguish the two only by the fox being solitary and rapacious, and the jackal gregarious and a carrion-eater. In all Hindu tales the jackal seems to be an awkward substitute for the Grecian and classical fox, the Giddar or Kolá (Cants aureus) being by no means sly and wily as the Lomri (Vulpes vulgaris). This is remarked by Weber (Indische Studien) and Prof. Benfey’s retort about “King Nobel” the lion is by no means to the point. See Katha Sarit Sagara, ii. 28.

I may add that in Northern Africa jackal’s gall, like jackal’s grape (Solanum nigrum = black nightshade), ass’s milk and melted camel-hump, is used aphrodisiacally as an unguent by both sexes. See. , etc., of Le Jardin parfumé du Cheikh Nefzaoui, of whom more presently.

[244] Rambler, No. lxvii.

[245] Some years ago I was asked by my old landlady if ever in the course of my travels I had come across Captain Gulliver.

[246] In “The Adventurer” quoted by Mr. Heron, “Translator’s Preface to the Arabian Tales of Chaves and Cazotte.”

[247] “Life in a Levantine Family” chapt. xi. Since the able author found his “family” firmly believing in The Nights, much has been changed in Alexandria; but the faith in Jinn and Ifrit, ghost and vampire is lively as ever.

[248] The name dates from the second century A. H. or before A. D. 815.

[249] Dabistan i. 231 etc.

[250] Because Si = thirty and Murgh = bird. In McClenachan’s Addendum to Mackay’s Encyclopædia of Freemasonry we find the

following definition: “Simorgh. A monstrous griffin, guardian of the Persian mysteries.”

[251] For a poor and inadequate description of the festivals commemorating this “Architect of the Gods” see vol. iii. 177, “View of the History etc. of the Hindus” by the learned Dr. Ward, who could see in them only the “low and sordid nature of idolatry.” But we can hardly expect better things from a missionary in 1822, when no one took the trouble to understand what “idolatry” means.

[252] Rawlinson (ii. 491) on Herod. iii. c. 102. Nearchus saw the skins of these formicæ Indicæ, by some rationalists explained as “jackals,” whose stature corresponds with the text, and by others as “pengolens” or ant-eaters (manis pentedactyla). The learned Sanskritist, H. H. Wilson, quotes the name Pippilika = ant-gold, given by the people of Little Thibet to the precious dust thrown up in the emmet heaps.

[253] A writer in the Edinburgh Review (July, ‘86), of whom more presently, suggests that The Nights assumed essentially their present shape during the general revival of letters, arts and requirements which accompanied the Kurdish and Tartar irruptions into the Nile Valley, a golden age which embraced the whole of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and ended with the Ottoman Conquest in A. D. 1527.

[254] Let us humbly hope not again to hear of the golden prime of

“The good (fellow?) Haroun Alrasch’id,”

a mispronunciation which suggests only a rasher of bacon. Why will not poets mind their quantities, in lieu of stultifying their lines by childish ignorance? What can be more painful than Byron’s

“They laid his dust in Ar’qua (for Arqua) where he died?”

[255] See De Sacy’s Chrestomathie Arabe (Paris, 1826), vol. i.

[256] See Le Jardin Parfumé du Cheikh Nefzaoui Manuel d'Erotologie Arabe Traduction revue et corrigée Edition privée, imprimé à deux cent.-vingt exemplaires, par Isidore Liseux et ses Amis, Paris, 1866. The editor has forgotten to note that the celebrated Sidi Mohammed copied some of the tales from The Nights and borrowed others (I am assured by a friend) from Tunisian MSS. of the same work. The book has not been fairly edited: the notes abound in mistakes, the volume lacks an index, &c., &c. Since this was written the Jardin Parfumé has been twice translated into English as "The Perfumed Garden of the Cheikh Nefzaoui, a Manual of Arabian Erotology (sixteenth century). Revised and corrected translation, Cosmopoli: mdccclxxxvi.: for the Kama Shastra Society of London and Benares and for private circulation only." A rival version will be brought out by a bookseller whose Committee, as he calls it, appears to be the model of literary pirates, robbing the author as boldly and as openly as if they picked his pocket before his face.

[257] Translated by a well-known Turkish scholar, Mr. E. J. W. Gibb (Glasgow, Wilson and McCormick, 1884).

[258] D'Herbelot (s. v. "Asmai"): I am reproached by a dabbler in Orientalism for using this admirable writer who shows more knowledge in one page than my critic does in a whole volume.

[259] For specimens see Al-Siyuti, p and 304, and the Shaykh al Nafzawi, p-35

[260] The word "nakh" (to make a camel kneel) is explained in vol. ii. 139.

[261] The present of the famous horologium-clepsydra-cuckoo clock, the dog Becerillo and the elephant Abu Lubabah sent by Harun to Charlemagne is not mentioned by Eastern authorities and consequently no reference to it will be found in my late friend Professor Palmer's little volume "Haroun Alraschid," London, Marcus Ward, 1881. We have allusions to many presents, the clock and elephant, tent and linen hangings, silken dresses, perfumes, and

candelabra of auricalch brought by the Legati (Abdalla Georgius Abba et Felix) of Aaron Amiralmumminim Regis Persarum who entered the Port of Pisa (A. D. 801) in (vol. v. 178) Recueil des Histor. des Gaules et de la France, etc., par Dom Martin Bouquet, Paris, mdccxliv. The author also quotes the lines: —

Persarum Princeps illi devinctus amore
Præcipuo fuerat, nomen habens Aaron.
Gratia cui Caroli præ cunctis Regibus atque
Illis Principibus tempora cara funit.

[262] Many have remarked that the actual date of the decease is unknown.

[263] See Al-Siyuti () and Dr. Jonathan Scott's "Tales, Anecdotes, and Letters," ().

[264] I have given (vol. i. 188) the vulgar derivation of the name; and D'Herbelot (s. v. Barmakian) quotes some Persian lines alluding to the "supping up." Al-Mas'udi's account of the family's early history is unfortunately lost. This Khálid succeeded Abu Salámah, first entitled Wazir under Al-Saffah (Ibn Khallikan i. 468).

[265] For his poetry see Ibn Khallikan iv. 103.

[266] Their flatterers compared them with the four elements.

[267] Al-Mas'udi, chapt. cxii.

[268] Ibn Khallikan (i. 310) says the eunuch Abu Háshim Masrúr, the Sworder of Vengeance, who is so pleasantly associated with Ja'afar in many nightly disguises; but the Eunuch survived the Caliph. Fakhr al-Din () adds that Masrur was an enemy of Ja'afar; and gives further details concerning the execution.

[269] Bresl. Edit., Night dlxvii. vol. vii. p-260; translated in the Mr. Payne's "Tales from the Arabic," vol. i. 189 and headed "Al-Rashid and the Barmecides." It is far less lively and dramatic than the

account of the same event given by Al-Mas'udi, chapt. cxii., by Ibn Khallikan and by Fakhr al-Din.

[270] Al-Mas'udi, chapt. cxi.

[271] See Dr. Jonathan Scott's extracts from Major Ouseley's "Tarikh-i-Barmaki."

[272] Al-Mas'udi, chapt. cxii. For the liberties Ja'afar took see Ibn Khallikan, i. 303.

[273] Ibid. chapt. xxiv. In vol. ii. 29 of The Nights, I find signs of Ja'afar's suspected heresy. For Al-Rashid's hatred of the Zindiks see Al-Siyuti, p, 301; and as regards the religious troubles ibid. and passim.

[274] Biogr. Dict. i. 309.

[275] This accomplished princess had a practice that suggests the Dame aux Camélias.

[276] i. e. Perdition to your fathers, Allah's curse on your ancestors.

[277] See vol. iv. 159, "Ja'afar and the Bean-seller;" where the great Wazir is said to have been "crucified;" and vol. iv. p, 181. Also Roebuck's Persian Proverbs, i. 2, 346, "This also is through the munificence of the Barmecides."

[278] I especially allude to my friend Mr. Payne's admirably written account of it in his concluding Essay (vol. ix.). From his views of the Great Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah I must differ in every point except the destruction of the Barmecides.

[279] Bresl. Edit., vol. vii. 261-62.

[280] Mr. Grattan Geary, in a work previously noticed, informs us (i. 212) "The Sitt al-Zobeide, or the Lady Zobeide, was so named from the great Zobeide tribe of Arabs occupying the country East and

West of the Euphrates near the Hindi'ah Canal; she was the daughter of a powerful Sheik of that Tribe." Can this explain the "Kásim"?

[281] Vol. viii. 296.

[282] Burckhardt, "Travels in Arabia" vol. i. 185.

[283] The reverse has been remarked by more than one writer; and contemporary French opinion seems to be that Victor Hugo's influence on French prose, was on the whole, not beneficial.

[284] Mr. W. S. Clouston, the "Storiologist," who is preparing a work to be entitled "Popular Tales and Fictions; their Migrations and Transformations," informs me the first to adapt this witty anecdote was Jacques de Vitry, the crusading bishop of Accon (Acre) who died at Rome in 1240, after setting the example of "Exempla" or instances in his sermons. He had probably heard it in Syria, and he changed the day-dreamers into a Milkmaid and her Milk-pail to suit his "flock." It then appears as an "Exemplum" in the Liber de Donis or de Septem Donis (or De Dono Timoris from Fear the first gift) of Stephanus de Borbone, the Dominican, ob. Lyons, 1261: it treated of the gifts of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah xi. 2 and 3), Timor, Pietas, Scientia, Fortitudo, Consilium, Intellectus et Sapientia; and was plentifully garnished with narratives for the use of preachers.

[285] The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register (new series, vol. xxx. Sept.-Dec. 1830, London, Allens, 1839); Review of the Arabian Nights, the Mac. Edit. vol. i., and H. Torrens.

[286] As a household edition of the "Arabian Nights" is now being prepared, the curious reader will have an opportunity of verifying this statement.

[287] It has been pointed out to me that in vol. ii. , line 18 "Zahr Shah" is a mistake for Sulayman Shah.

[288] I have lately found these lovers at Schloss Sternstein near Cilli in Styria, the property of my excellent colleague, Mr.

Consul Faber, dating from A. D. 1300 when Jobst of Reichenegg and Agnes of Sternstein were aided and abetted by a Capuchin of Seikkloster.

[289] In page 226 Dr. Steingass sensibly proposes altering the last hemistich (lines 11-12) to

At one time showing the Moon and Sun.

[290] Omitted by Lane for some reason unaccountable as usual.
A correspondent sends me his version of the lines which occur in The Nights (vol. v. 106 and 107): —

Behold the Pyramids and hear them teach
What they can tell of Future and of Past:
They would declare, had they the gift of speech,
The deeds that Time hath wrought from first to last

* * * *

My friends, and is there aught beneath the sky
Can with th' Egyptian Pyramids compare?
In fear of them strong Time hath passed by
And everything dreads Time in earth and air.

[291] A rhyming Romance by Henry of Waldeck (flor. A. D. 1160) with a Latin poem on the same subject by Odo and a prose version still popular in Germany. (Lane's Nights iii. 81; and Weber's "Northern Romances.")

[292] e. g. 'Ajáib al-Hind (= Marvels of Ind) ninth century, translated by J. Marcel Devic, Paris, 1878; and about the same date the Two Mohammedan Travellers, translated by Renaudot. In the eleventh century we have the famous Sayyid al-ldrisi, in the thirteenth the 'Ajáib al-Makhlúkat of Al-Kazwini and in the fourteenth the Kharídat al-Ajáib of Ibn Al-Wardi. Lane (in loco) traces most of Sindbad to the two latter sources.

[293] So Hector France proposed to name his admirably realistic

volume “Sous le Burnous” (Paris, Charpentier, 1886).

[294] I mean in European literature, not in Arabic where it is a lieu commun. See three several forms of it in one page (505) of Ibn Kallikan, vol. iii.

[295] My attention has been called to the resemblance between the half-lie and Job (i. 13- 19).

[296] Boccaccio (ob. Dec. 2, 1375), may easily have heard of The Thousand Nights and a Night or of its archetype the Hazár Afsánah. He was followed by the Piacevoli Notti of Giovan Francisco Straparola (A. D. 1550), translated into almost all European languages but English: the original Italian is now rare. Then came the Heptameron ou Histoire des amans fortunez of Marguerite d’Angoulême, Reyne de Navarre and only sister of Francis I. She died in 1549 before the days were finished: in 1558 Pierre Boaistuan published the Histoire des amans fortunez and in 1559 Claude Guiget the “Heptameron.” Next is the Hexameron of A. de Torquemada, Rouen, 1610; and, lastly, the Pentamerone or El Cunto de li Cunte of Giambattista Basile (Naples 1637), known by the meagre abstract of J. E. Taylor and the caricatures of George Cruikshank (London 1847-50). I propose to translate this Pentamerone direct from the Neapolitan and have already finished half the work.

[297] Translated and well annotated by Prof. Tawney, who, however, affects asterisks and has considerably bowdlerised sundry of the tales, e. g. the Monkey who picked out the Wedge (vol. ii. 28). This tale, by the by, is found in the Khirad Afroz (i. 128) and in the Anwar-i-Suhayli (chapt. i.) and gave rise to the Persian proverb, “What has a monkey to do with carpentering?” It is curious to compare the Hindu with the Arabic work whose resemblances are as remarkable as their differences, while even more notable is their correspondence in impressioning the reader. The Thaumaturgy of both is the same: the Indian is profuse in demonology and witchcraft; in transformation and restoration; in monsters as wind-men, fire-men and water-men, in air-going elephants and flying horses (i. 541-43);

in the wishing cow, divine goats and laughing fishes (i. 24); and in the speciosa miracula of magic weapons. He delights in fearful battles (i. 400) fought with the same weapons as the Moslem and rewards his heroes with a "turband of honour" (i. 266) in lieu of a robe. There is a quaint family likeness arising from similar stages and states of society: the city is adorned for gladness, men carry money in a robe-corner and exclaim "Ha! good!" (for "Good, by Allah!"), lovers die with exemplary facility, the "soft-sided" ladies drink spirits (i. 61) and princesses get drunk (i. 476); whilst the Eunuch, the Hetaira and the bawd (Kuttini) play the same preponderating parts as in The Nights. Our Brahman is strong in love-making; he complains of the pains of separation in this phenomenal universe; he revels in youth, "twin-brother to mirth," and beauty which has illuminating powers; he foully reviles old age and he alternately praises and abuses the sex, concerning which more presently. He delights in truisms, the fashion of contemporary Europe (see Palmerin of England chapt. vii), such as "It is the fashion of the heart to receive pleasure from those things which ought to give it," etc. etc. What is there the wise cannot understand? and so forth. He is liberal in trite reflections and frigid conceits (i. 19, 55, 97, 103, 107, in fact everywhere); and his puns run through whole lines; this in fine Sanskrit style is inevitable. Yet some of his expressions are admirably terse and telling, e. g. Ascending the swing of Doubt: Bound together (lovers) by the leash of gazing: Two babes looking like Misery and Poverty: Old Age seized me by the chin: (A lake) first assay of the Creator's skill: (A vow) difficult as standing on a sword-edge: My vital spirits boiled with the fire of woe: Transparent as a good man's heart: There was a certain convent full of fools: Dazed with scripture-reading: The stones could not help laughing at him: The Moon kissed the laughing forehead of the East: She was like a wave of the Sea of Love's insolence (ii. 127), a wave of the Sea of Beauty tossed up by the breeze of Youth: The King played dice, he loved slave-girls, he told lies, he sat up o' nights, he waxed wroth without reason, he took wealth wrongously, he despised the good and honoured the bad (i. 562); with many choice bits of the same kind. Like the Arab the Indian is profuse in personification; but the doctrine of pre-existence, of incarnation and emanation and an excessive spiritualism ever aiming at the infinite, makes his imagery run mad. Thus we have Immoral Conduct embodied; the God of Death; Science; the Svarga-heaven; Evening; Untimeliness, and the Earth-bride, while the Ace and Deuce of dice are turned into a brace of Demons. There is also that grotesqueness which the French detect even in Shakespeare, e. g. She drank in his ambrosial form with thirsty eyes like partridges (i. 476) and it often results from the comparison of incompatibles, e. g. a row of birds likened to a garden of nymphs; and from forced allegories, the favourite figure of contemporary Europe. Again, the rhetorical Hindu style differs greatly from the sobriety, directness and simplicity of the Arab, whose motto is Brevity combined with precision, except where the latter falls into "fine writing." And, finally, there is a something in the atmosphere of these Tales which is unfamiliar to the West and which makes them, as more than one has remarked to me, very hard reading.

[298] The Introduction (i. 1-5) leads to the Curse of Pushpadanta and Mályaván who live on Earth as Vararúchi and Gunádhya and this runs through lib. i. Lib. ii. begins with the Story of Udáyana to whom we must be truly grateful as our only guide: he and his son Naraváhanadatta fill up the rest and end with lib. xviii. Thus the want of the clew or plot compels a division into books, which begin for instance with "We worship the elephantine proboscis of Ganesha" (lib. x. i.) a reverend and awful object to a Hindu but to Englishmen mainly suggesting the "Zoo." The "Bismillah" of The Nights is much more satisfactory.

[299] See p-6 Avertissement des Éditeurs, Le Cabinet des Fées, vol. xxxviii: Geneva 1788. Galland's Edit. of mdccxxvi ends with Night ccxxxiv and the English translations with ccxxxvi and cxcvii. See retro .

[300] There is a shade of difference in the words; the former is also used for Reciters of Traditions — a serious subject. But in the case of Hammád surnamed Al-Ráwiyah (the Rhapsode) attached to the Court of Al-Walid, it means simply a conteur. So the Greeks had

Homeristæ = reciters of Homer, as opposed to the Homeridæ or School of Homer.

[302] Vol. i, Preface p. v. He notes that Mr. Dallaway describes the same scene at Constantinople where the Story-teller was used, like the modern "Organs of Government" in newspaper shape, for "reconciling the people to any recent measure of the Sultan and Vizier." There are women Ráwiyahs for the Harems and some have become famous like the Mother of Hasan al-Basri (Ibn Khall. i, 370).

[302] Hence the Persian proverb, "Báki-e-dastán fardá = the rest of the tale to-morrow," said to askers of silly questions.

[303] The scene is excellently described in, "Morocco: Its People and Places," by Edmondo de Amicis (London: Cassell, 1882), a most refreshing volume after the enforced platitudes and commonplaces of English travellers.

[304] It began, however, in Persia, where the celebrated Darwaysh Mukhlis, Chief Sofi of Isfahan in the xviith century, translated into Persian tales certain Hindu plays of which a MS. entitled Alfaraga Badal-Schidda (Al-faraj ba'd al-shiddah = Joy after annoy) exists in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. But to give an original air to his work, he entitled it "Hazár o yek Ruz" = Thousand and One Days, and in 1675 he allowed his friend Petis de la Croix, who happened to be at Isfahan, to copy it. Le Sage (of Gil Blas) is said to have converted many of the tales of Mukhlis into comic operas, which were performed at the Théâtre Italien. I still hope to see The Nights at the Lyceum.

[305] This author, however, when hazarding a change of style which is, I think, regretable, has shown abundant art by filling up the frequent deficiencies of the text after the fashion of Baron McGuckin de Slane in Ibn Khallikan. As regards the tout ensemble of his work, a noble piece of English, my opinion will ever be that expressed in my Foreword. A carping critic has remarked that the translator, "as may be seen in every page, is no Arabic scholar." If I be a judge, the

reverse is the case: the brilliant and beautiful version thus traduced is almost entirely free from the blemishes and carelessness which disfigure Lane’s, and thus it is far more faithful to the original. But it is no secret that on the staff of that journal the translator of Villon has sundry enemies, vrais diables enjupponés, who take every opportunity of girding at him because he does not belong to the clique and because he does good work when theirs is mostly sham. The sole fault I find with Mr. Payne is that his severe grace of style treats an unclassical work as a classic, when the romantic and irregular would have been a more appropriate garb. But this is a mere matter of private judgment.

[306] Here I offer a few, but very few, instances from the Breslau text, which is the greatest sinner in this respect. Mas. for fem., vol. i. , and three times in seven pages, Ahná and nahná for nahnú (iv. 370, 372); Aná ba-ashtarí = I will buy (iii. 109): and Aná ‘Ámíl = I will do (v. 367). Alaykí for Alayki (i. 18), Antí for Anti (iii. 66) and generally long í for short . ‘Ammál (from ‘amala = he did) tahlam = certainly thou dreamest, and ‘Ammálín yaakulú = they were about to eat (ix. 315): Aywá for Ay wa’lláhí = yes, by Allah (passim). Bitá’ = belonging to, e.g. Sára bitá’k = it is become thine (ix. 352) and Matá’ with the same sense (iii. 80). Dá ‘l-khurj = this saddle-bag (ix. 336) and Dí (for hazah) = this woman (iii. 79) or this time (ii. 162). Fayn as ráha fayn = whither is he gone? (iv. 323). Kamá badri = he rose early (ix. 318): Kamán = also, a word known to every European (ii. 43): Katt = never (ii. 172): Kawám (pronounced ‘awám) = fast, at once (iv. 385) and Rih ásif kawí (pron. ‘awí) = a wind, strong very. Laysh, e.g. bi tasalní laysh (ix. 324) = why do you ask me? a favourite form for li ayya shayyin: so Máfish = má fihi shayyun (there is no thing) in which Herr Landberg () makes “Sha, le présent de pouvoir.” Min ajali = for my sake; and Li ajal al-taudí’a = for the sake of taking leave (Mac. Edit. i. 384). Rijál nautiyah = men sailors when the latter word would suffice: Shuwayh (dim. of shayy) = a small thing, a little (iv. 309) like Moyyah (dim. of Má) a little water: Waddúní = they carried me (ii. 172) and lastly the abominable Wáhid gharíb = one (for a) stranger. These few must suffice: the tale of Judar and his brethren, which in style is mostly Egyptian, will supply

a number of others. It must not, however, be supposed, as many have done, that vulgar and colloquial Arabic is of modern date: we find it in the first century of Al-Islam, as is proved by the tale of Al-Hajjáj and Al-Shabi (Ibn Khallikan, ii. 6). The former asked "Kam ataa-k?' (= how much is thy pay?) to which the latter answered, "Alfayn!" (= two thousand!). "Tut," cried the Governor, "Kam atau-ka?" to which the poet replied as correctly and classically, "Alfáni."

[307] In Russian folk-songs a young girl is often compared with this tree e.g. —

Ivooshka, ivooshka zelonaia moia!
(O Willow, O green Willow mine!)

[308] So in Hector France ("La vache enragée") "Le sourcil en accent circonflexe et l'oeil en point d'interrogation."

[309] In Persian "Áb-i-rú" in India pronounced Ábrú.

FN#310] For further praises of his poetry and eloquence see the extracts from Fakhr al-Din of Rayy (an annalist of the xivth century A.D.) in De Sacy's Chrestomathie Arabe, vol. i.

[311] After this had been written I received "Babylonian, das reichste Land in der Vorzeit und das lohnendste Kolonisationsfeld für die Gegenwart," by my learned friend Dr. Aloys Sprenger, Heidelberg, 1886.

[312] The first school for Arabic literature was opened by Ibn Abbas, who lectured to multitudes in a valley near Meccah; this rude beginning was followed by public teaching in the great Mosque of Damascus. For the rise of the "Madrasah," Academy or College' see Introduct. to Ibn Khallikan pp. xxvii-xxxii.

[313] When Ibn Abbád the Sáhib (Wazir) was invited to visit one of the Samanides, he refused, one reason being that he would require 400 camels to carry only his books.

[314] This "Salmagondis" by Francois Beroalde de Verville was afterwards worked by Tabarin , the pseudo-Bruscambille d'Aubigné and Sorel.

[315] I prefer this derivation to Strutt's adopted by the popular, "mumm is said to be derived from the Danish word mumme, or momme in Dutch (Germ. = larva), and signifies disguise in a mask, hence a mummer." In the Promptorium Parvulorum we have "Mummynge, mussacio, vel mussatus": it was a pantomime in dumb show, e.g. "I mumme in a mummynge;" "Let us go mumme (mummer) to nyghte in women's apparayle." "Mask" and "Mascarade," for persona, larva or vizard, also derive, I have noticed, from an Arabic word — Maskharah.

[316] The Pre-Adamite doctrine has been preached with but scant success in Christendom. Peyrere, a French Calvinist, published (A.D. 1655) his "Praadamitæ, sive exercitatio supra versibus 12, 13, 14, cap. v. Epist. Paul. ad Romanos," contending that Adam was called the first man because with him the law began. It brewed a storm of wrath and the author was fortunate to escape with only imprisonment.

[317] According to Socrates the verdict was followed by a free fight of the Bishop-voters over the word "consubstantiality."

[318] Servetus burnt (in A.D. 1553 for publishing his Arian tractate) by Calvin, whom half-educated Roman Catholics in England firmly believe to have been a pederast. This arose I suppose, from his meddling with Rabelais who, in return for the good joke Rabie læsus, presented a better anagram, "Jan (a pimp or cuckold) Cul" (Calvinus).

[319] There is no more immoral work than the "Old Testament." Its deity is an ancient Hebrew of the worst type, who condones, permits or commands every sin in the Decalogue to a Jewish patriarch, quâ patriarch. He orders Abraham to murder his son and allows Jacob to swindle his brother; Moses to slaughter an Egyptian and the Jews to

plunder and spoil a whole people, after inflicting upon them a series of plagues which would be the height of atrocity if the tale were true. The nations of Canaan are then extirpated. Ehud, for treacherously disembowelling King Eglon, is made judge over Israel. Jael is blessed above women (Joshua v. 24) for vilely murdering a sleeping guest; the horrid deeds of Judith and Esther are made examples to mankind; and David, after an adultery and a homicide which deserved ignominious death, is suffered to massacre a host of his enemies, cutting some in two with saws and axes and putting others into brick-kilns. For obscenity and impurity we have the tales of Onan and Tamar, Lot and his daughters, Amnon and his fair sister (2 Sam. xiii.), Absalom and his father's concubines, the "wife of whoredoms" of Hosea and, capping all, the Song of Solomon. For the horrors forbidden to the Jews who, therefore, must have practiced them, see Levit. viii. 24, xi. 5, xvii. 7, xviii. 7, 9, 10, 12, 15, 17, 21, 23, and xx. 3. For mere filth what can be fouler than 1st Kings xviii. 27; Tobias ii. 11; Esther xiv. 2, Eccl. xxii. 2; Isaiah xxxvi. 12, Jeremiah iv. 5, and (Ezekiel iv. 12-15), where the Lord changes human ordure into "Cow-chips!" Ce qui excuse Dieu, said Henri Beyle, c'est qu'il n'existe pas, — I add, as man has made him.

[320] It was the same in England before the "Reformation," and in France where, during our days, a returned priesthood collected in a few years "Peter-pence" to the tune of five hundred millions of francs. And these men wonder at being turned out!

[321] Deutsch on the Talmud: Quarterly Review, 1867.

[322] Evidently. Its cosmogony is a myth read literally: its history is, for the most part, a highly immoral distortion, and its ethics are those of the Talmudic Hebrews. It has done good work in its time; but now it shows only decay and decrepitude in the place of vigour and progress. It is dying hard, but it is dying of the slow poison of science.

[323] These Hebrew Stoics would justly charge the Founder of Christianity with preaching a more popular and practical doctrine,

but a degradation from their own far higher and more ideal standard.

[324] Dr. Theodore Christlieb (“Modern Doubt and Christian Belief,” Edinburgh: Clark 1874) can even now write:— “So then the ‘full age’ to which humanity is at present supposed to have attained, consists in man’s doing good purely for goodness sake! Who sees not the hollowness of this bombastic talk. That man has yet to be born whose practice will be regulated by this insipid theory (dieser grauen theorie). What is the idea of goodness per se? * * * The abstract idea of goodness is not an effectual motive for well-doing” (). My only comment is c’est ignolile! His Reverence acts the part of Satan in Holy Writ, “Does Job serve God for naught?” Compare this selfish, irreligious, and immoral view with Philo Judæus (On the Allegory of the Sacred Laws, caviii.), to measure the extent of the fall from Pharisaism to Christianity. And the latter is still infected with the “bribe-and-threat doctrine:” I once immensely scandalised a Consular Chaplain by quoting the noble belief of the ancients, and it was some days before he could recover mental equanimity. The degradation is now inbred.

[325] Of the doctrine of the Fall the heretic Marcion wrote: “The Deity must either be deficient in goodness if he willed, in prescience if he did not foresee, or in power if he did not prevent it.”

[326] In his charming book, “India Revisited.”

[327] This is the answer to those who contend with much truth that the moderns are by no means superior to the ancients of Europe: they look at the results of only 3000 years instead of 30,000 or 300,000.

[328] As a maxim the saying is attributed to the Duc de Lévis, but it is much older.

[329] There are a few, but only a few, frightful exceptions to this rule, especially in the case of Khálid bin Walíd, the Sword of Allah, and his ferocious friend, Darár ibn al-Azwar. But their cruel excesses were loudly blamed by the Moslems, and Caliph Omar only obeyed the popular voice in superseding the fierce and furious Khalid by the

mild and merciful Abú Obaydah.

[330] This too when St. Paul sends the Christian slave
Onesimus back to his unbelieving (?) master, Philemon; which in
Al-Islam would have created a scandal.

[331] This too when the Founder of Christianity talks of "Eating and drinking at his table!" (Luke xxn. 29.) My notes have often touched upon this inveterate prejudice the result, like the soul-less woman of Al-Islam, of ad captandum, pious fraud. "No soul knoweth what joy of the eyes is reserved for the good in recompense for their works" (Koran xxxn. 17) is surely as "spiritual" as St. Paul (I Cor. ii., 9). Some lies, however are very long-lived, especially those begotten by self interest.

[332] I have elsewhere noted its strict conservatism which, however, it shares with all Eastern faiths in the East. But progress, not quietism, is the principle which governs humanity and it is favoured by events of most different nature. In Egypt the rule of Mohammed Ali the Great and in Syria the Massacre of Damascus (1860) have greatly modified the constitution of Al- Islam throughout the nearer East.

[333] Chapt. viii. "Narrative of a Year's Journey through
Central and Eastern Arabia;" London, Macmillan, 1865.

[334] The Soc. Jesu has, I believe, a traditional conviction that converts of Israelitic blood bring only misfortune to the Order.

[335] I especially allude to an able but most superficial book, the "Ten Great Religions" by James F. Clarke (Boston, Osgood, 1876), which caricatures and exaggerates the false portraiture of Mr. Palgrave. The writer's admission that, "Something is always gained by learning what the believers in a system have to say in its behalf," clearly shows us the man we have to deal with and the "depths of his self-consciousness."

[336] But how could the Arabist write such hideous grammar as
"La Il h illa All h" for "Lá iláha (accus.) ill' Allah"?

[337] “Muhammad” in vol. iii. Dictionary of Christian Biography. See also the Illustration of the Mohammedan Creed, etc., from Al-Ghazáli introduced (p-77) into Bell and Sons’ “History of the Saracens” by Simon Ockley, B.D. (London, 1878). I regret some Orientalist did not correct the proofs: everybody will not detect “Al-Lauh al-Mahfúz” (the Guarded Tablet) in “Allauh ho’hnehphoud” (); and this but a pinch out of a camel-load.

[338] The word should have been Arianism. This “heresy” of the early Christians was much aided by the “Discipline of the Secret,” supposed to be of apostolic origin, which concealed from neophytes, catechumens and penitents all the higher mysteries, like the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Metastoicheiosis (transubstantiation), the Real Presence, the Eucharist and the Seven Sacraments; when Arnobius could ask, Quid Deo cum vino est? and when Justin, fearing the charge of Polytheism, could expressly declare the inferior nature of the Son to the Father. Hence the creed was appropriately called Symbol i.e., Sign of the Secret. This “mental reservation” lasted till the Edict of Toleration, issued by Constantine in the fourth century, held Christianity secure when divulging her “mysteries”; and it allowed Arianism to become the popular creed.

[339] The Gnostics played rather a fantastic rôle in Christianity with their Demiurge, their Æonogony, their Æons by syzygies or couples, their Maio and Sabscho and their beatified bride of Jesus, Sophia Achamoth, and some of them descended to absolute absurdities, e.g., the Tascodrugitæ and the Pattalorhinchitæ who during prayers placed their fingers upon their noses or in their mouths, &c., reading Psalm cxli. 3.

[340] “Kitáb al-’Unwán fí Makáid al-Niswán” = The Book of the Beginnings on the Wiles of Womankind (Lane i. 38).

[341] This person was one of the Amsál or Exampla of the Arabs. For her first thirty years she whored; during the next three decades she pimped for friend and foe, and, during the last third of her life, when bed-ridden by age and infirmities, she had a buckgoat and a nanny

tied up in her room and solaced herself by contemplating their amorous conflicts.

[342] And modern Moslem feeling upon the subject has apparently undergone a change. Ashraf Khan, the Afghan poet, sings,

Since I, the parted one, have come the secrets of the world to ken,
Women in hosts therein I find, but few (and very few) of men.

And the Osmanli proverb is, “Of ten men nine are women!”

[343] His Persian paper “On the Vindication of the Liberties of the Asiatic Women” was translated and printed in the Asiatic Annual Register for 1801 (p-107); it is quoted by Dr. Jon. Scott (Introd. vol. i. p. xxxiv. et seq.) and by a host of writers. He also wrote a book of Travels translated by Prof. Charles Stewart in 1810 and re-issued (3 vols. 8vo.) in 1814.

[344] The beginning of which I date from the Hijrah, lit.= the separation, popularly “The Flight.” Stating the case broadly, it has become the practice of modern writers to look upon Mohammed as an honest enthusiast at Meccah and an unscrupulous despot at Al-Medinah, a view which appears to me eminently unsound and unfair. In a private station the Meccan Prophet was famed as a good citizen, teste his title Al-Amín =The Trusty. But when driven from his home by the pagan faction, he became de facto as de jure a king: nay, a royal pontiff; and the preacher was merged in the Conqueror of his foes and the Commander of the Faithful. His rule, like that of all Eastern rulers, was stained with blood; but, assuming as true all the crimes and cruelties with which Christians charge him and which Moslems confess, they were mere blots upon a glorious and enthusiastic life, ending in a most exemplary death, compared with the tissue of horrors and havock which the Law and the Prophets attribute to Moses, to Joshua, to Samuel and to the patriarchs and prophets by express command of Jehovah.

[345] It was not, however, incestuous: the scandal came from its

ignoring the Arab “pundonor.”

[346] The “opportunism” of Mohammed has been made a matter of obloquy by many who have not reflected and discovered that time-serving is the very essence of “Revelation.” Says the Rev. W. Smith (“Pentateuch,” chaps. xiii.), “As the journey (Exodus) proceeds, so laws originate from the accidents of the way,” and he applies this to successive decrees (Numbers xxvi. 32-36; xxvii. 8-11 and xxxvi. 1-9), holding it indirect internal evidence of Mosaic authorship (?). Another tone, however, is used in the case of Al-Islam. “And now, that he might not stand in awe of his wives any longer, down comes a revelation,” says Ockley in his bluff and homely style, which admits such phrases as, “the imposter has the impudence to say.” But why, in common honesty, refuse to the Koran the concessions freely made to the Torah? It is a mere petitio principii to argue that the latter is “inspired” while the former is not, moreover, although we may be called upon to believe things beyond Reason, it is hardly fair to require our belief in things contrary to Reason.

[347] This is noticed in my wife’s volume on The Inner Life of Syria, chaps. xii. vol. i. 155.

[348] Mirza preceding the name means Mister and following it Prince. Addison’s “Vision of Mirza” (Spectator, No. 159) is therefore “The Vision of Mister.”

[349] And women. The course of instruction lasts from a few days to a year and the period of puberty is fêted by magical rites and often by some form of mutilation. It is described by Waitz, Réclus and Schoolcraft, Páchue-Loecksa, Collins, Dawson, Thomas, Brough Smyth, Reverends Bulmer and Taplin, Carlo Wilhelmi, Wood, A. W. Howitt, C. Z. Muhas (Mem. de la Soc. Anthrop. Allemande, 1882,) and by Professor Mantegazza (chaps. i.) for whom see infra.

[350] Similarly certain Australian tribes act scenes of rape and pederasty saying to the young, If you do this you will be killed.

[351] “Báh,” is the popular term for the amatory appetite: hence such

works are called Kutub al-Báh, lit. = Books of Lust.

[352] I can make nothing of this title nor can those whom I have consulted: my only explanation is that they may be fanciful names proper.

[353] Amongst the Greeks we find erotic specialists (1) Aristides of the Libri Milesii; (2) Astyanassa, the follower of Helen who wrote on androgvnisation; (3) Cyrene, the artist of amatory Tabellæ or ex-votos offered to Priapus; (4) Elephantis, the poetess who wrote on Varia concubitus genera; (5) Evemerus, whose Sacra Historia, preserved in a fragment of Q. Eunius, was collected by Hieronymus Columnar (6) Hemitheon of the Sybaritic books, (7) Musæus, the Iyrist; (8) Niko, the Samian girl; (9) Philænis, the poetess of Amatory Pleasures, in Athen. viii. 13, attributed to Polycrates the Sophist; (10) Protagorides, Amatory Conversations; (11) Sotades, the Mantinæan who, says Suidas, wrote the poem "Cinædica"; (12) Sphodrias the Cynic, his Art of Love; and (13) Trepsicles, Amatory Pleasures. Amongst the Romans we have Aedituus, Annianus (in Ausonius), Anser, Bassus Eubius, Helvius Cinna, Lævius (of Io and the Erotopægnion), Memmius, Cicero (to Cerellia), Pliny the Younger, Sabellus (de modo coeundi); Sisenna, the pathic Poet and translator of Milesian Fables and Sulpitia, the modest erotist. For these see the Dictionnaire Érotique of Blondeau pp. ix. and x. (Paris, Liseux, 1885).

[354] It has been translated from the Sanskrit and annotated by A.F.F. and B.F.R. Reprint Cosmopoli: mdccclxxxv.: for the Kama Shastra Society, London and Benares, and for private circulation only. The first print has been exhausted and a reprint will presently appear.

[355] The local press has often proposed to abate this nuisance of erotic publication which is most debasing to public morals already perverted enough. But the "Empire of Opinion" cares very little for such matters and, in the matter of the "native press," generally seems to seek only a quiet life. In England if erotic literature were not forbidden by law, few would care to sell or to buy it, and only the

legal pains and penalties keep up the phenomenally high prices.

[356] The Spectator (No. 119) complains of an “infamous piece of good breeding,” because “men of the town, and particularly those who have been polished in France, make use of the most coarse and uncivilised words in our language and utter themselves often in such a manner as a clown would blush to hear.”

[357] See the Novelle of Bandello the Bishop (Tome 1, Paris, Liseux, 1879, small in 18) where the dying fisherman replies to his confessor, “Oh! Oh! your reverence, to amuse myself with boys was natural to me as for a man to eat and drink; yet you asked me if I sinned against nature!” Amongst the wiser ancients sinning contra naturam was not marrying and begetting children.

[358] Avis au Lecteur “L’Amour dans l’Humanité,” par P. Mantegazza, traduit par Emilien Chesneau, Paris, Fetscherin et Chuit, 1886.

[359] See “H. B.” (Henry Beyle, French Consul at Civita Vecchia) par un des Quarante H. B.” (Prosper Mérimee), Elutheropolis, An mdccclxiv. De l’Imposture du Nazaréen.

[360] This detail especially excited the veteran’s curiosity. The reason proved to be that the scrotum of the unmutilated boy could be used as a kind of bridle for directing the movements of the animal. I find nothing of the kind mentioned in the Sotadical literature of Greece and Rome; although the same cause might be expected everywhere to the same effect. But in Mirabeau (Kadhésch) a grand seigneur moderne, when his valet-de-chambre de confiance proposes to provide him with women instead of boys, exclaims, “Des femmes! eh! c’est comme si tu me servais un gigot sans manche.” See also infra for “Le poids du tisserand.”

[361] See Falconry in the Valley of the Indus, London, John Van Voorst, 1852.

[362] Submitted to Government on Dec. 3’, ‘47, and March 2, ‘48, they

were printed in “Selections from the Records of the Government of India.” Bombay. New Series. No. xvii. Part 2, 1855. These are (1) Notes on the Population of Sind, etc., and (2) Brief Notes on the Modes of Intoxication, etc., written in collaboration with my late friend Assistant-Surgeon John E. Stocks, whose early death was a sore loss to scientific botany.

[363] Glycon the Courtesan in Athen. xiii. 84 declares that “boys are handsome only when they resemble women,” and so the Learned Lady in The Nights (vol. v. 160) declares “Boys are likened to girls because folks say, Yonder boy is like a girl.” For the superior physical beauty of the human male compared with the female, see The Nights, vol. iv. 15; and the boy’s voice before it breaks excels that of any diva.

[364] “Mascula,” from the priapiscus, the over-development of clitoris (the veretrum muliebre, in Arabic Abu Tartúr, habens cristam), which enabled her to play the man. Sappho (nat. B.C. 612) has been retoillée like Mary Stuart, La Brinvilliers, Marie Antoinette and a host of feminine names which have a savour not of sanctity. Maximus of Tyre (Dissert. xxiv.) declares that the Eros of Sappho was Socratic and that Gyrinna and Atthis were as Alcibiades and Chermides to Socrates: Ovid who could consult documents now lost, takes the same view in the Letter of Sappho to Phaon and in Tristia ii. 265.

Lesbia quid docuit Sappho nisi amare puellas?

Suidas supports Ovid. Longinus eulogises the (a term applied only to carnal love) of the far-famed Ode to Atthis: —

Ille mî par esse Deo videtur * * *

(Heureux! qui près de toi pour toi seule soupire * * *

Blest as th’ immortal gods is he, etc.)

By its love symptoms, suggesting that possession is the sole cure for passion, Erasistratus discovered the love of Antiochus for Stratonice. Mure (Hist. of Greek Literature, 1850) speaks of the Ode to Aphrodite (Frag. 1) as “one in which the whole volume of Greek literature offers the most powerful concentration into one brilliant focus of the modes in which amatory concupiscence can display itself.” But Bernhardy, Bode, Richter, K. O. Müller and esp. Welcker have made Sappho a model of purity, much like some of our dull wits who have converted Shakespeare, that most debauched genius, into a good British bourgeois.

[365] The Arabic Sabhákah, the Tractatrix or Subigitatrix who has been noticed in vol. iv. 134. Hence to Lesbianise ( ) and tribassare ( ); the former applied to the love of woman for woman and the latter to its mecanique: this is either natural, as friction of the labia and insertion of the clitoris when unusually developed, or artificial by means of the fascinum, the artificial penis (the Persian “Mayájang”); the patte de chat, the banana-fruit and a multitude of other succedanea. As this feminine perversion is only glanced at in The Nights I need hardly enlarge upon the subject.

[366] Plato (Symp.) is probably mystical when he accounts for such passions by there being in the beginning three species of humanity, men, women and men-women or androgynes. When the latter were destroyed by Zeus for rebellion, the two others were individually divided into equal parts. Hence each division seeks its other half in the same sex, the primitive man prefers men and the primitive woman women. C’est beau, but — is it true? The idea was probably derived from Egypt which supplied the Hebrews with androgynic humanity, and thence it passed to extreme India, where Shiva as Ardhanárí was male on one side and female on the other side of the body, combining paternal and maternal qualities and functions. The first creation of humans (Gen. i. 27) was hermaphrodite (=Hermes and Venus), masculum et fminam creavit eos — male and female created He them — on the sixth day, with the command to increase and multiply (ibid. v. 28), while Eve the woman was created subsequently. Meanwhile, say certain Talmudists, Adam carnally copulated with all races of animals. See L’Anandryne in Mirabeau’s

Erotika Biblion, where Antoinette Bourgnon laments the undoubling which disfigured the work of God, producing monsters incapable of independent self-reproduction like the vegetable kingdom.

[367] De la Femme, Paris, 1827.

[368] Die Lustseuche des Alterthum's, Halle, 1839.

[369] See his exhaustive article on (Grecian) "Paederastie" in the Allgemeine Encyclopædie of Ersch and Gruber, Leipzig, Brockhaus, 1837. He carefully traces it through the several states, Dorians, Æolians, Ionians, the Attic cities and those of Asia Minor. For these details I must refer my readers to M. Meier; a full account of these would fill a volume not the section of an essay.

[370] Against which see Henri Estienne, Apologie pour Hérodote, a society satire of xvith century, lately reprinted by Liseux.

[371] In Sparta the lover was called or x and the beloved as in Thessaly or x.

[372] The more I study religions the more I am convinced that man never worshipped anything but himself. Zeus, who became Jupiter, was an ancient king, according to the Cretans, who were entitled liars because they showed his burial-place. From a deified ancestor he would become a local god, like the Hebrew Jehovah as opposed to Chemosh of Moab; the name would gain amplitude by long time and distant travel, and the old island chieftain would end in becoming the Demiurgus. Ganymede (who possibly gave rise to the old Lat. "Catamitus") was probably some fair Phrygian boy ("son of Tros") who in process of time became a symbol of the wise man seized by the eagle (perspicacity) to be raised amongst the Immortals; and the chaste myth simply signified that only the prudent are loved by the gods. But it rotted with age as do all things human. For the Pederastía of the Gods see Bayle under Chrysippe.

[373] See Dissertation sur les idées morales des Grecs et sur les dangers

de lire Platon. Par M. Audé, Bibliophile, Rouen, Lemonnyer, 1879. This is the pseudonym of the late Octave Delepierre, who published with Gay, but not the Editio Princeps — which, if I remember rightly, contains much more matter.

[374] The phrase of J. Matthias Gesner, Comm. Reg. Soc. Gottingen i. 1-32. It was founded upon Erasmus' "Sancte Socrate, ore pro nobis," and the article was translated by M. Alcide Bonmaire, Paris, Liseux, 1877.

[375] The subject has employed many a pen, e.g.,Alcibiade Fanciullo a Scola, D. P. A. (supposed to be Pietro Aretino — ad captandum?), Oranges, par Juann Wart, 1652: small square 8vo of p, including 3 preliminary pp. and at end an unpaged leaf with 4 sonnets, almost Venetian, by V. M. There is a re-impression of the same date, a small 12mo of longer format, p with p for sonnets: in 1862 the Imprimerie Racon printed 102 copies in 8vo of pp. iv.-108, and in 1863 it was condemned by the police as a liber spurcissimus atque execrandus de criminis sodomici laude et arte. This work produced "Alcibiade Enfant à l'école," traduit pour la première fois de l'Italien de Ferrante Pallavicini, Amsterdam, chez l'Ancien Pierre Marteau, mdccclxvi. Pallavicini (nat. 1618), who wrote against Rome, was beheaded, aet. 26 (March 5, 1644), at Avignon in 1644 by the vengeance of the Barberini: he was a bel esprit déréglé, nourri d'études antiques and a Memb. of the Acad. Degl' Incogniti. His peculiarities are shown by his "Opere Scelte," 2 vols. 12mo, Villafranca, mdclxiii.; these do not include Alcibiade Fanciullo, a dialogue between Philotimus and Alcibiades which seems to be a mere skit at the Jesuits and their Péché philosophique. Then came the "Dissertation sur l'Alcibiade fanciullo a scola," traduit de l'Italien de Giambattista Baseggio et accompagnée de notes et d'une post-face par un bibliophile francais (M. Gustave Brunet, Librarian of Bordeaux), Paris. J. Gay, 1861 — an octavo of p (paged), 254 copies. The. same Baseggio printed in 1850 his Disquisizioni (23 copies) and claims for F. Pallavicini the authorship of Alcibiades which the Manuel du Libraire wrongly attributes to M. Girol. Adda in 1859. I have heard of but not seen the "Amator fornaceus, amator ineptus"

(Palladii, 1633) supposed by some to be the origin of Alcibiade Fanciullo; but most critics consider it a poor and insipid production.

[376] The word is from numbness, torpor, narcotism: the flowers, being loved by the infernal gods, were offered to the Furies. Narcissus and Hippolytus are often assumed as types of morose voluptas, masturbation and clitorisation for nymphomania: certain mediæval writers found in the former a type of the Saviour, and ‘Mirabeau a representation of the androgynous or first Adam: to me Narcissus suggests the Hindu Vishnu absorbed in the contemplation of his own perfections.

[377] The verse of Ovid is parallel’d by the song of Al-Záhir al-Jazari (Ibn Khall. iii. 720).

> Illum impuberem amaverunt mares; puberem feminæ.
> Gloria Deo! nunquam amatoribus carebit.

[378] The venerable society of prostitutes contained three chief classes. The first and lowest were the Dicteriads, so called from Diete (Crete), who imitated Pasiphaë, wife of Minos, in preferring a bull to a husband; above them was the middle class, the Aleutridæ, who were the Almahs or professional musicians, and the aristocracy was represented by the Hetairai, whose wit and learning enabled them to adorn more than one page of Grecian history. The grave Solon, who had studied in Egypt, established a vast Dicterion (Philemon in his Delphica), or bordel whose proceeds swelled the revenue of the Republic.

[379] This and Saint Paul (Romans i. 27) suggested to
Caravaggio his picture of St. Rosario (in the museum of the Grand Duke of Tuscany), showing a circle of thirty men turpiter ligati.

[380] Properly speaking, “Medicus” is the third or ring finger, as shown by the old Chiromantist verses,

> Est pollex Veneris; sed Jupiter indice gaudet,
> Saturnus medium; Sol medicumque tenet.

[381] So Seneca uses digito scalpit caput. The modern Italian does the same by inserting the thumb-tip between the index and medius to suggest the clitoris.

[382] What can be wittier than the now trite Tale of the Ephesian Matron, whose dry humour is worthy of The Nights? No wonder that it has made the grand tour of the world. It is found in the neo-Phædrus, the tales of Musæus and in the Septem Sapientes as the "Widow which was comforted." As the "Fabliau de la Femme qui se fist putain sur la fosse de son Mari," it tempted Brantôme and La Fontaine; and Abel Rémusat shows in his Contes Chinois that it is well known to the Middle Kingdom. Mr. Walter K. Kelly remarks, that the most singular place for such a tale is the "Rule and Exercise of Holy Dying" by Jeremy Taylor, who introduces it into his chapt. v.— "Of the Contingencies of Death and Treating our Dead." But in those days divines were not mealy-mouthed.

[383] Glossarium eroticum linguæ Latinæ, sive theogoniæ, legum et morum nuptialium apud Romanos explanatio nova, auctore P. P. (Parisiis, Dondey-Dupré, 1826, in 8vo). P. P. is supposed to be Chevalier Pierre Pierrugues, an engineer who made a plan of Bordeaux and who annotated the Erotica Biblion. Gay writes, "On s'est servi pour cet ouvrage des travaux inédits de M. Ie Baron de Schonen, etc. Quant au Chevalier Pierre Pierrugues qu'on désignait comme l'auteur de ce savant volume, son existence n'est pas bien avérée, et quelques bibliographes persistent à penser que ce nom cache la collaboration du Baron de Schonen et d'Eloi Johanneau." Other glossicists as Blondeau and Forberg have been printed by Liseux, Paris.

[384] This magnificent country, which the petty jealousies of Europe condemn, like the glorious regions about Constantinople, to mere barbarism, is tenanted by three Moslem races. The Berbers, who call themselves Tamazight (plur. of Amazigh), are the Gætulian indigenes speaking an Africo-Semitic tongue (see Essai de Grammaire Kabyle, etc., par A. Hanoteau, Paris, Benjamin Duprat). The Arabs, descended from the conquerors in our eighth century, are

mostly nomads and camel-breeders. Third and last are the Moors proper, the race dwelling in towns, a mixed breed originally Arabian but modified by six centuries of Spanish residence and showing by thickness of feature and a parchment-coloured skin, resembling the American Octaroon's, a negro innervation of old date. The latter are well described in "Morocco and the Moors," etc. (Sampson Low and Co., 1876), by my late friend Dr. Arthur Leared, whose work I should like to see reprinted.

[385] Thus somewhat agreeing with one of the multitudinous modern theories that the Pentapolis was destroyed by discharges of meteoric stones during a tremendous thunderstorm. Possible, but where are the stones?

[386] To this Iranian domination I attribute the use of many Persic words which are not yet obsolete in Egypt. "Bakhshísh," for instance, is not intelligible in the Moslem regions west of the Nile-Valley, and for a present the Moors say Hadíyah, regalo or favor.

[387] Arnobius and Tertullian, with the arrogance of their caste and its miserable ignorance of that symbolism which often concealed from vulgar eyes the most precious mysteries, used to taunt the heathen for praying to deities whose sex they ignored "Consuistis in precibus 'Seu tu Deus seu tu Dea,' dicere!" These men would know everything; they made God the merest work of man's brains and armed him with a despotism of omnipotence which rendered their creation truly dreadful.

[388] Gallus lit. = a cock, in pornologic parlance is a capon, a castrato.

[389] The texts justifying or enjoining castration are Matt. xviii. 8-9; Mark ix. 43-47; Luke xxiii. 29 and Col. iii. 5. St. Paul preached (1 Corin. vii. 29) that a man should live with his wife as if he had none. The Abelian heretics of Africa abstained from women because Abel died virginal. Origen mutilated himself after interpreting too rigorously Matt. xix. 12, and was duly excommunicated. But his disciple, the Arab Valerius founded (A.D. 250) the castrated sect

called Valerians who, persecuted and dispersed by the Emperors Constantine and Justinian, became the spiritual fathers of the modern Skopzis. These eunuchs first appeared in Russia at the end of the xith century, when two Greeks, John and Jephrem, were metropolitans of Kiew: the former was brought thither in A.D. 1089 by Princess Anna Wassewolodowna and is called by the chronicles Nawjè or the Corpse. But in the early part of the last century (1715-1733) a sect arose in the circle of Uglitseh and in Moscow, at first called Clisti or flagellants, which developed into the modern Skopzi. For this extensive subject see De Stein (Zeitschrift für Ethn. Berlin, 1875) and Mantegazza, chaps. vi.

[390] See the marvellously absurd description of the glorious
“Dead Sea” in the Purchas v. 84.

[391] Jehovah here is made to play an evil part by destroying men instead of teaching them better. But, “Nous faisons les Dieux à notre image et nous portons dans le ciel ce que nous voyons sur la terre.” The idea of Yahweh, or Yah, is palpably Egyptian, the Ankh or ever-living One: the etymon, however, was learned at Babylon and is still found amongst the cuneiforms.

[392] The name still survives in the Shajarát al-Ashará, a clump of trees near the village Al-Ghájar (of the Gypsies?) at the foot of Hermon.

[393] I am not quite sure that Astarte is not primarily the planet Venus; but I can hardly doubt that Prof. Max Müller and Sir G. Cox are mistaken in bringing from India Aphrodite the Dawn and her attendants, the Charites identified with the Vedic Harits. Of Ishtar in Accadia, however, Roscher seems to have proved that she is distinctly the Moon sinking into Amenti (the west, the Underworld) in search of her lost spouse Izdubar, the Sun-god. This again is pure Egyptianism.

[394] In this classical land of Venus the worship of Ishtar-Ashtaroth is by no means obsolete. The Metáwali heretics, a people of Persian descent and Shiite tenets, and the peasantry of “Bilád B’sharrah,”

which I would derive from Bayt Ashirah, still pilgrimage to the ruins and address their vows to the Sayyidat al-Kabírah, the Great Lady. Orthodox Moslems accuse them of abominable orgies and point to the lamps and rags which they suspend to a tree entitled Shajarat al-Sitt — the Lady's tree — an Acacia Albida which, according to some travellers, is found only here and at Sayda (Sidon) where an avenue exists. The people of Kasrawán, a Christian province in the Libanus, inhabited by a peculiarly prurient race, also hold high festival under the far-famed Cedars, and their women sacrifice to Venus like the Kadashah of the Phnicians. This survival of old superstition is unknown to missionary "Handbooks," but amply deserves the study of the anthropologist.

[395] Some commentators understand "the tabernacles sacred to the reproductive powers of women;" and the Rabbis declare that the emblem was the figure of a setting hen.

[396] Dog" is applied by the older Jews to the Sodomite and the Catamite, and thus they understand the "price of a dog" which could not be brought into the Temple (Deut. xxiii. 18). I have noticed it in one of the derivations of cinædus and can only remark that it is a vile libel upon the canine tribe.

[397] Her name was Maachah and her title, according to some, "King's mother": she founded the sect of Communists who rejected marriage and made adultery and incest part of worship in their splendid temple. Such were the Basilians and the Carpocratians followed in the xith century by Tranchelin, whose sectarians, the Turlupins, long infested Savoy.

[398] A noted exception is Vienna, remarkable for the enormous development of the virginal bosoni, which soon becomes pendulent.

[399] Gen. xxxviii. 2-11. Amongst the classics Mercury taught the "Art of le Thalaba" to his son Pan who wandered about the mountains distraught with love for the Nymph Echo and Pan passed it on to the pastors. See Thalaba in Mirabeau.

[400] The reader of The Nights has remarked how often the “he” in Arabic poetry denotes a “she”; but the Arab, when uncontaminated by travel, ignores pederasty, and the Arab poet is a Badawi.

[401] So Mohammed addressed his girl-wife Ayishah in the masculine.

[402] So amongst the Romans we have the Iatroliptæ, youths or girls who wiped the gymnast’s perspiring body with swan-down, a practice renewed by the professors of “Massage”; Unctores who applied perfumes and essences; Fricatrices and Tractatrices or shampooers; Dropacistæ, corn-cutters; Alipilarii who plucked the hair, etc., etc., etc.

[403] It is a parody on the well-known song (Roebuck i. sect. 2, No. 1602):

The goldsmith knows the worth of gold, jewellers worth of
  jewelry;
The worth of rose Bulbul can tell and Kambar’s worth his lord,
  Ali.

[404] For “Sindí” Roebuck (Oriental Proverbs Part i.) has Kunbu (Kumboh) a Panjábi peasant, and others vary the saying ad libitum. See vol. vi. 156.

[405] See “Sind Revisited” i. 133-35.

[406] They must not be confounded with the grelots lascifs, the little bells of gold or silver set by the people of Pegu in the prepuce-skin, and described by Nicolo de Conti who however refused to undergo the operation.

[407] Relation des découvertes faites par Colomb, etc., : Bologna 1875; also Vespucci’s letter in Ramusio (i. 131) and Paro’s Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains.

[408] See Mantegazza loc. cit. who borrows from the Thèse de Paris of Dr. Abel Hureau de Villeneuve, “Frictiones per coitum productæ

magnum mucosæ membranæ vaginalis turgorem, ac simul hujus cuniculi coarctationem tam maritis salacibus quæritatam afferunt.”

[409] Fascinus is the Priapus-god to whom the Vestal Virgins of Rome, professed tribades, sacrificed, also the neck-charm in phallus-shape. Fascinum is the male member.

[410] Captain Grose (Lexicon Balatronicum) explains merkin as “counterfeit hair for women’s privy parts. See Bailey’s Dict.” The Bailey of 1764, an “improved edition,” does not contain the word which is now generally applied to a cunnus succedaneus.

[411] I have noticed this phenomenal cannibalism in my notes to Mr. Albert Tootle’s excellent translation of “The Captivity of Hans Stade of Hesse:” London, Hakluyt Society, mdccclxxiv.

[412] The Ostreiras or shell mounds of the Brazil, sometimes 200 feet high, are described by me in Anthropologia No. i. Oct. 1873.

[413] The Native Races of the Pacific States of South America, by Herbert Howe Bancroft, London, Longmans, 1875.

[414] All Peruvian historians mention these giants, who were probably the large-limbed Gribs (Caraíbes) of the Brazil: they will be noticed in page 211.

[415] This sounds much like a pious fraud of the missionaries, a Europeo-American version of the Sodom legend.

[416] Les Races Aryennes du Perou, Paris, Franck, 1871.

[417] O Brazil e os Brazileiros, Santos, 1862.

[418] Aethiopia Orientalis, Purchas ii. 1558.

[419] Purchas iii. 243.

[420] For a literal translation see 1re Série de la Curiosité Littéraire et Bibliographique, Paris, Liseux, 1880.

[421] His best-known works are (1) Praktisches Handbuch der Gerechtlichen Medecin, Berlin, 1860; and (2) Klinische Novellen zur Gerechtlichen Medecin, Berlin, 1863.

[422] The same author printed another imitation of Petronius Arbiter, the “Larissa” story of Théophile Viand. His cousin, the Sévigné, highly approved of it. See Bayle’s objections to Rabutin’s delicacy and excuses for Petronius’ grossness in his “Éclaircissement sur les obscénités” (Appendice au Dictionnaire Antique).

[423] The Boulgrin of Rabelais, which Urquhart renders Ingle for Boulgre, an “indorser,” derived from the Bulgarus or Bulgarian, who gave to Italy the term bugiardo — liar. Bougre and Bougrerie date (Littré) from the xiiith century. I cannot, however, but think that the trivial term gained strength in the xvith, when the manners of the Bugres or indigenous Brazilians were studied by Huguenot refugees in La France Antartique and several of these savages found their way to Europe. A grand Fête in Rouen on the entrance of Henri II. and Dame Katherine de Medicis (June 16, 1564) showed, as part of the pageant, three hundred men (including fifty “Bugres” or Tupis) with parroquets and other birds and beasts of the newly explored regions. The procession is given in the four-folding woodcut “Figure des Brésiliens” in Jean de Prest’s Edition of 1551.

[424] Erotika Biblion, chaps. Kadésch (p et seq.), Edition de Bruxelles, with notes by the Chevalier P. Pierrugues of Bordeaux, before noticed.

[425] Called Chevaliers de Paille because the sign was a straw in the mouth, à la Palmerston.

[426] I have noticed that the eunuch in Sind was as meanly paid and have given the reason.

[427] Centuria Librorum Absconditorum (by Pisanus Fraxi) 4to, p. Ix. and 593. London. Privately printed, mdccclxxix.

[428] A friend learned in these matters supplies me with the following list of famous pederasts. Those who marvel at the wide diffusion of such erotic perversion, and its being affected by so many celebrities, will bear in mind that the greatest men have been some of the worst: Alexander of Macedon, Julius Cæsar and Napoleon Buonaparte held themselves high above the moral law which obliges common-place humanity. All three are charged with the Vice. Of Kings we have Henri iii., Louis xiii. and xviii., Frederick ii. Of Prussia Peter the Great, William ii. of Holland and Charles ii. and iii. of Parma. We find also Shakespeare (i., xv., Edit. Francois Hugo) and Moliere, Theodorus Beza, Lully (the Composer), D'Assoucy, Count Zintzendorff, the Grand Condé, Marquis de Villette, Pierre Louis Farnese, Duc de la Vallière, De Soleinne, Count D'Avaray, Saint Mégrin, D'Epernon, Admiral de la Susse La Roche-Pouchin Rochfort S. Louis, Henne (the Spiritualist), Comte Horace de Viel Castel, Lerminin, Fievée, Théodore Leclerc, Archi-Chancellier Cambacèrés, Marquis de Custine, Sainte-Beuve and Count D'Orsay. For others refer to the three volumes of Pisanus Fraxi, Index Librorum Prohibitorum (London, 1877), Centuria Librorum Absconditorum (before alluded to) and Catena Librorum Tacendorum, London, 1885. The indices will supply the names.

[429] 0f this peculiar character Ibn Khallikan remarks (ii. 43), "There were four poets whose works clearly contraried their character. Abú al-Atahíyah wrote pious poems himself being an atheist; Abú Hukayma's verses proved his impotence, yet he was more salacious than a he-goat, Mohammed ibn Házim praised contentment, yet he was greedier than a dog, and Abú Nowás hymned the joys of sodomy, yet he was more passionate for women than a baboon."

[430] A virulently and unjustly abusive critique never yet injured its object: in fact it is generally the greatest favour an author's unfriends can bestow upon him. But to notice a popular Review books which have been printed and not published is hardly in accordance with the established courtesies of literature. At the end of my work I propose to write a paper "The Reviewer Reviewed" which will, amongst other things, explain the motif of the writer of the critique and the

editor of the Edinburgh.

[431] 1 For detailed examples and specimens see of
Gladwin's "Dissertations on Rhetoric," etd., Calcutta, 1801.

[432] For instance: I, M. | take thee N. | to my wedded wife, | to have and to hold, | from this day forward, | for better for worse, | for richer for poorer, | in sickness and in health, | to love and to cherish, | till death do us part, etc. Here it becomes mere blank verse which is, of course, a defect in prose style. In that delightful old French the Saj'a frequently appeared when attention was solicited for the titles of books: e.g. Lea Romant de la Rose, ou tout lart damours est enclose.

[433] See Gladwin loc. cit. : it also is = alliteration
(Ibn Khall. ii., 316).

[434] He called himself "Nabiyun ummí" = illiterate prophet; but only his most ignorant followers believe that he was unable to read and write. His last words, accepted by all traditionists, were "Aatíní dawáta wa kalam" (bring me ink-case and pen); upon which the Shi'ah or Persian sectaries base, not without probability, a theory that Mohammed intended to write down the name of Ali as his Caliph or successor when Omar, suspecting the intention, exclaimed, "The Prophet is delirious; have we not the Koran?" thus impiously preventing the precaution. However that may be, the legend proves that Mohammed could read and write even when not "under inspiration." The vulgar idea would arise from a pious intent to add miracle to the miraculous style of the Koran.

[435] I cannot but vehemently suspect that this legend was taken from much older traditions. We have Jubal the semi-mythical who, "by the different falls of his hammer on the anvil, discovered by the ear the first rude music that pleased the antediluvian fathers." Then came Pythagoras, of whom Macrobius (lib. ii) relates how this Græco-Egyptian philosopher, passing by a smithy, observed that the sounds were grave or acute according to the weights of the hammers; and he ascertained by experiment that such was the case when different

weights were hung by strings of the same size. The next discovery was that two strings of the same substance and tension, the one being double the length of the other, gave the diapason-interval, or an eighth; and the same was effected from two strings of similar length and size, the one having four times the tension of the other. Belonging to the same cycle of invention-anecdotes are Galileo's discovery of the pendulum by the lustre of the Pisan Duomo; and the kettle-lid, the falling apple and the copper hook which inspired Watt, Newton and Galvani.

[436] To what an absurd point this has been carried we may learn from Ibn Khallikán (i. 114). A poet addressing a single individual does not say "My friend!" or "My friends!" but "My two friends!" (in the dual) because a Badawi required a pair of companions, one to tend the sheep and the other to pasture the camels.

[437] For further details concerning the Sabab, Watad and
Fasilah, see at the end of this Essay the learned remarks of Dr.
Steingass.

[438] e.g., the Mu'allakats of "Amriolkais," Tarafah and Zuhayr compared by Mr. Lyall (Introduction to Translations) with the metre of Abt Vogler, e.g.,

Ye know why the forms are fair, ye hear how the tale is told

[439] e.g., the Poem of Hareth which often echoes the hexameter

[440] Gladwin, .

[441] Gladwin () gives only eight, omitting F ' l which he or his author probably considers the Muzáhaf, imperfect or apocopêd form of F ' l n, as M f ' l of M f ' l n. For the infinite complications of Arabic prosody the Khafíf (soft breathing) and Sahíh (hard breathing); the Sadr and Arúz (first and last feet), the Ibtidá and Zarb (last foot of every line); the Hashw (cushion-stuffing) or body part of verse, the 'Amúd al-Kasídah or Al-Musammat (the strong) and other details I must refer readers to such specialists as Freytag and Sam. Clarke

(Prosodia Arabica), and to Dr. Steingass's notes infra.

[442] The Hebrew grammarians of the Middle Ages wisely copied their Arab cousins by turning Fa'la into Pael and so forth.

[443] Mr. Lyall, whose "Ancient Arabic Poetry" (Williams and Norgate, 1885) I reviewed in The Academy of Oct. 3, '85, did the absolute reverse of what is required: he preserved the metre and sacrificed the rhyme even when it naturally suggested itself. For instance in the last four lines of No. xii. what would be easier than to write,

Ah sweet and soft wi' thee her ways: bethink thee well! The day shall be
When some one favoured as thyself shall find her fair and fain and free;
And if she swear that parting ne'er shall break her word of constancy,
When did rose-tinted finger-tip with pacts and pledges e'er agree?

[444] See Grammatik des Arabischen Vulgär Dialekts von Ægyptian, by Dr. Wilhelm Spitta Bey, Leipzig, 1880. In p-493 he gives specimens of eleven Mawáwíl varying in length from four to fifteen lines. The assonance mostly attempts monorhyme: in two tetrastichs it is aa + ba, and it does not disdain alternates, ab + ab + ab.

[445] Al-Siyuti, , from Ibn Khallikan. Our knowledge of oldest Arab verse is drawn chiefly from the Katáb al-Aghání (Song-book) of Abu al-Faraj the Isfaháni who flourished A.H. 284-356 (= 897- 967): it was printed at the Bulak Press in 1868.

[446] See Lyall loc. cit. .

[447] His Diwán has been published with a French translation, par R. Boucher, Paris, Labitte, 1870.

[448] I find also minor quotations from the Imám Abu al-Hasan al-

Askari (of Sarra man raa) ob. A.D. 868; Ibn Makúla (murdered in A.D. 862?), Ibn Durayd (ob. A.D. 933) Al-Zahr the Poet (ob. A.D. 963); Abu Bakr al-Zubaydi (ob. A.D. 989), Kábús ibn Wushmaghir (murdered in A.D. 1012-13); Ibn Nabatah the Poet (ob. A.D. 1015), Ibn al-Sa'ati (ob. A.D. 1028); Ibn Zaydun al-Andalusi who died at Hums (Emessa, the Arab name for Seville) in A.D. 1071; Al-Mu'tasim ibn Sumadih (ob. A.D. 1091), Al-Murtaza ibn al-Shahrozuri the Sufi (ob. A.D. 1117); Ibn Sara al-Shantaráni (of Santarem) who sang of Hind and died A.D. 1123; Ibn al-Kházin (ob. A.D. 1124), Ibn Kalakis (ob. A D. 1172) Ibn al-Ta'wizi (ob. A.D. 1188); Ibn Zabádah (ob. A.D. 1198), Bahá al-Dín Zuhayr (ob A.D. 1249); Muwaffak al-Din Muzaffar (ob. A.D. 1266) and sundry others. Notices of Al-Utayyah (vol. i. 11), of Ibn al-Sumám (vol. i. 87) and of Ibn Sáhib al-Ishbíli, of Seville (vol. i. 100), are deficient. The most notable point in Arabic verse is its savage satire, the language of excited "destructiveness" which characterises the Badawi: he is "keen for satire as a thirsty man for water:" and half his poetry seems to consist of foul innuendo, of lampoons, and of gross personal abuse.

[449] If the letter preceding Wáw or Yá is moved by Fathah, they produce the diphthongs au (aw), pronounced like ou in "bout'" and se, pronounced as i in "bite."

[450] For the explanation of this name and those of the following terms, see Terminal Essay, .

[451] This Fásilah is more accurately called sughrá, the smaller one, there is another Fásilah kubrà, the greater, consisting of four moved letters followed by a quiescent, or of a Sabab sakíl followed by a Watad majmú'. But it occurs only as a variation of a normal foot, not as an integral element in its composition, and consequently no mention of it was needed in the text.

[452] It is important to keep in mind that the seemingly identical feet 10 and 6, 7 and 3, are distinguished by the relative positions of the constituting elements in either pair. For as it will be seen that Sabab

and Watad are subject to different kinds of alterations it is evident that the effect of such alterations upon a foot will vary, if Sabab and Watad occupy different places with regard to each other.

[453] i.e. vertical to the circumference.

[454] This would be a Fásilah kubrá spoken of in the note .

[455] In pause that is at the end of a line, a short vowel counts either as long or is dropped according to the exigencies of the metre. In the Hashw the u or i of the pronominal affix for the third person sing., masc., and the final u of the enlarged pronominal plural forms, humu and kumu, may be either short or long, according to the same exigencies. The end-vowel of the pronoun of the first person aná, I, is generally read short, although it is written with Alif.

[456] On the word akámú, as read by itself, was identified with the foot Fa'úlun. Here it must be read together with the following syllable as "akámulwaj," which is Mafá'ílun.

[457] Prof. Palmer, of his Grammar, identifies this form of the Wáfir, when every Mufá' alatum of the Hashw has become Mafá'ílun, with the second form of the Rajaz It should be Hazaj. Professor Palmer was misled, it seems, by an evident misprint in one of his authorities, the Muhít al-Dáirah by Dr. Van Dayk, .

[458] Calcutta (1839-42) and Boulac 134b "The Merchant's Wife and the Parrot."

[459] This will be found translated in my "Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night," vol. vii. , as an Appendix to the Calcutta (1839-42) and Boulac version of the story, from which it differs in detail.

[460] Called "Bekhit" in Calcutta (1839-42) and Boulac Editions.

[461] Yehya ben Khalid (Calcutta (1839-42) and Boulac),

[462] “Shar” (Calcutta (1839-42) and Boulac).

[463] “Jelyaad” (Calcutta (1839-42) and Boulac.)

[464] Calcutta (1839-42) and Boulac, No. 63. See my “Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night,” vol. iv., .

[465] Calcutta (1839-42) and Boulac, “Jaafar the Barmecide.”

[466] Calcutta (1839-42) and Boulac, “The Thief turned Merchant and the other Thief,” No. 88.

[467] This story will be found translated in my “Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night,” vol. v., .

[468] After this I introduce the Tale of the Husband and the Parrot.

[469] The Bulak Edition omits this story altogether.

[470] After this I introduce How Abu Hasan brake wind.

[471] Probably Wakksh al-Falák=Feral of the Wild.

[472] This is the date of the Paris edition. There was an earlier edition published at La Haye in 1743.

[473] There are two other Oriental romances by Voltaire; viz., Babouc, and the Princess of Babylon.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

SUPPLEMENTAL NIGHTS VOLUME I.

General Studholme J. Hodgson

My Dear General,

To whom with more pleasure or propriety can I inscribe this volume than to my preceptor of past times; my dear old friend, whose deep study and vast experience of such light literature as The Nights made me so often resort to him for good counsel and right direction? Accept this little token of gratitude, and believe me, with the best of wishes and the kindest of memories,

Ever your sincere and attached
Richard F. Burton.

London, July 15, 1886.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

“To the pure all things are pure”
(Puris omnia pura)
ЧArab Proverb.

“Niuna corrotta mente intese mai sanamente parole.”
Ч”Decameron” Чconclusion.

“Erubuit, posuitque meum Lucretia librum
sed coram Bruto. Brute! recede, leget.”
ЧMartial.

“Mieulx est de ris que de larmes escripre,
Pour ce que rire est le propre des hommes.”
ЧRabelais.

“The pleasure we derive from perusing the Thousand-and-One Stories makes us regret that we possess only a comparatively small part of these truly enchanting fictions.”
ЧCrichton’s “History of Arabia.”

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

The Translator’s Foreword.

After offering my cordial thanks to friends and subscribers who have honoured “The Thousand Nights and a Night” (Kama Shastra Society) with their patronage and approbation, I would inform them that my “Anthropological Notes” are by no means exhausted, and that I can produce a complete work only by means of a somewhat extensive Supplement. I therefore propose to print (not publish), for private circulation only, five volumes, bearing titleЧ

This volume and its successor (Nos. i. and ii.) contain Mr. John Payne’s Tales from the Arabic; his three tomes being included in my two. The stories are taken from the Breslau Edition where they are distributed among the volumes between Nos. iv and xii., and from the Calcutta fragment of 1814. I can say little for the style of the story-stuff contained in this Breslau text, which has been edited with phenomenal incuriousness. Many parts are hopelessly corrupted, whilst at present we have no means of amending the commissions and of supplying the omissions by comparison with other manuscripts. The Arabic is not only faulty, but dry and jejune, comparing badly with that of the “Thousand Nights and a Night,” as it appears in the Macnaghten and the abridged Bulak Texts. Sundry of the tales are futile; the majority has little to recommend it, and not a few require a diviner rather than a translator. Yet they are valuable to students as showing the different sources and the heterogeneous materials from and of which the great Saga-book has been compounded. Some are, moreover, striking and novel, especially parts of the series entitled King Shah Bakht and his Wazir Al-Rahwan (p-355). Interesting also is the Tale of the “Ten Wazirs” (p-155), marking the transition of the Persian Bakhtiyбr-Nбmeh into Arabic. In this text also and in this only is found Galland’s popular tale “Abou-Hassan; or, the Sleeper Awakened,” which I have entitled “The Sleeper and the Waker.”

In the ten volumes of “The Nights” proper, I mostly avoided parallels of folk-lore and fabliaux which, however interesting and valuable to scholars, would have over-swollen the bulk of a work especially devoted to Anthropology. In the “Supplementals,” however, it is otherwise; and, as Mr. W.A. Clouston, the "Storiologist," has obligingly agreed to collaborate with me, I shall pay marked attention to this subject, which will thus form another raison d'κtre for the additional volumes.

Richard F. Burton

Junior Travellers' Club,
December 1, 1886

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

The Sleeper and the Waker.[1]

It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that there was once at Baghdad, in the Caliphate of Harun al-Rashid, a man and a merchant, who had a son Abъ al-Hasan-al-Khalн’a by name.[2] The merchant died leaving great store of wealth to his heir who divided it into two equal parts, whereof he laid up one and spent of the other half; and he fell to companying with Persians[3] and with the sons of the merchants and he gave himself up to good drinking and good eating, till all the wealth[4] he had with him was wasted and wantoned; whereupon he betook himself to his friends and comrades and cup-companions and expounded to them his case, discovering to them the failure of that which was in his hand of wealth. But not one of them took heed of him or even deigned answer him. So he returned to his mother (and indeed his spirit was broken) and related to her that which had happened to him and what had befallen him from his friends, how they had neither shared with him nor requited him with speech. Quoth she, “O Abu al-Hasan, on this wise are the sons[5] of this time: an thou have aught, they draw thee near to them,[6] and if thou have naught, they put thee away from them.” And she went on to condole with him, what while he bewailed himself and his tears flowed and he repeated these lines:Ч

“An wane my wealth, no mane will succour me, * When my wealth
waxeth all men friendly show:
How many a friend, for wealth showed friendliness * Who, when my
wealth departed, turned to foe!”

Then he sprang up and going to the place wherein was the other half of his good, took it and lived with it well; and he sware that he would never again consort with a single one of those he had known, but would company only with the stranger nor entertain even him but one night and that, when it morrowed, he would never know him more. Accordingly he fell to sitting every eventide on the bridge over Tigris and looking at each one who passed by him; and if he saw him to be a stranger, he made friends with him and carried him to his house, where he conversed and caroused with him all night till morning. Then he dismissed him and would never more salute him with the Salam nor ever more drew near unto him neither invited him again. Thus he continued to do for the space of a full year, till, one day, while he sat on the bridge, as was his wont, expecting who should come to him so he might take him and pass the night with him, behold, up came the Caliph and Masrur, the Sworder of his vengeance[7] disguised in merchants' dress, according to their custom. So Abu al-Hasan looked at them and rising, because he knew them not, asked them, "What say ye? Will ye go with me to my dwelling-place, so ye may eat what is ready and drink what is at hand, to wit, platter- bread[8] and meat cooked and wine strained?" The Caliph refused this, but he conjured him and said to him, "Allah upon thee, O my lord, go with me, for thou art my guest this night, and baulk not my hopes of thee!" And he ceased not to press him till he consented; whereat Abu al-Hasan rejoiced and walking on before him, gave not over talking with him till they came to his house and he carried the Caliph into the saloon. Al-Rashid entered a hall such as an thou sawest it and gazedst upon its walls, thou hadst beheld marvels; and hadst thou looked narrowly at its water-conduits thou would have seen a fountain cased with gold. The Caliph made his man abide at the door; and, as soon as he was seated, the host brought him somewhat to eat; so he ate, and Abu al-Hasan ate with him that eating might be grateful to him. Then he removed the tray and they washed their hands and the Commander of the Faithful sat down again; whereupon Abu al- Hasan set on the drinking vessels and seating himself by his side, fell to filling and giving him to drink[9] and entertaining him with discourse. And when they had drunk their sufficiency the host called for a slave-girl like a branch of Bбn who took a lute and sang to it these two couplets:Ч

"O thou aye dwelling in my heart, * Whileas thy form is far from sight,
Thou art my sprite by me unseen, * Yet nearest near art thou, my sprite."

His hospitality pleased the Caliph and the goodliness of his manners, and he said to him, “O youth, who art thou? Make me acquainted with thyself, so I may requite thee thy kindness.” But Abu al-Hasan smiled and said, “O my lord, far be it, alas! that what is past should again come to pass and that I company with thee at other time than this time!” The Prince of True Believers asked, “Why so? and why wilt thou not acquaint me with thy case?” and Abu al-Hasan answered, “Know, O my lord, that my story is strange and that there is a cause for this affair.” Quoth Al-Rashid, “And what is the cause?” and quoth he, “The cause hath a tail.” The Caliph[10] laughed at his words and Abu al-Hasan said, “I will explain to thee this saying by the tale of the Larrikin and the Cook. So hear thou, O my lord, the

Story of the Larrikin[11] and the Cook

One of the ne’er-do-wells found himself one fine morning without aught and the world was straightened upon him and patience failed him; so he lay down to sleep and ceased not slumbering till the sun stang him and the foam came out upon his mouth, whereupon he arose, and he was penniless and had not even so much as a single dirham. Presently he arrived at the shop of a Cook, who had set his pots and pans over the fire and washed his saucers and wiped his scales and swept his shop and sprinkled it; and indeed his fats and oils were clear and clarified and his spices fragrant and he himself stood behind his cooking-pots ready to serve customers. So the Larrikin, whose wits had been sharpened by hunger, went in to him and saluting him, said to him, “Weigh me half a dirham’s worth of meat and a quarter of a dirham’s worth of boiled grain[12] and the like of bread.” So the Kitchener weighed it out to him and the good-for-naught entered the shop, whereupon the man set the food before him and he ate till he had gobbled up the whole and licked the saucers and sat perplexed, knowing not how he should do with the Cook concerning the price of that he had eaten, and turning his eyes about upon everything in the shop; and as he looked, behold, he caught sight of an earthen pan lying arsy-versy upon its mouth; so he raised it from the ground and found under it a horse’s tail, freshly cut off and the blood oozing from it; whereby he knew that the Cook adulterated his meat with horseflesh. When he discovered this default, he rejoiced therein and washing his hands, bowed his head and went out; and when the Kitchener saw that he went and gave him naught, he cried out, saying, "Stay, O pest, O burglar!" So the Larrikin stopped and said to him, "Dost thou cry out upon me and call to me with these words, O cornute?" Whereat the Cook was angry and coming down from the shop, cried, "What meanest thou by thy speech, O low fellow, thou that devourest meat and millet and bread and kitchen and goest forth with 'the Peace[13] be on thee!' as it were the thing had not been, and payest down naught for it?" Quoth the Lackpenny, "Thou liest, O accursed son of a cuckold!" Whereupon the Cook cried out and laying hold of his debtor's collar, said, "O Moslems, this fellow is my first customer[14] this day and he hath eaten my food and given me naught." So the folk gathered about them and blamed the Ne'er-do-well and said to him, "Give him the price of that which thou hast eaten." Quoth he, "I gave him a dirham before I entered the shop;" and quoth the Cook, "Be everything I sell this day forbidden to me, if he gave me so much as the name of a coin! By Allah, he gave me naught but ate my food and went out and would have made off, without aught said." Answered the Larrikin, "I gave thee a dirham," and he reviled the Kitchener, who returned his abuse; whereupon he dealt him a buffet and they gripped and grappled and throttled each other. When the folk saw them fighting, they came up to them and asked them, "What is this strife between you and no cause for it?" and the Lackpenny answered, "Ay, by Allah, but there is a cause for it, and the cause hath a tail!" Whereupon, cried the Cook, "Yea, by Allah, now thou mindest me of thyself and thy dirham! Yes, he gave me a dirham and but a quarter of the coin is spent. Come back and take the rest of the price of thy dirham." For he understood what was to do, at the mention of the tail; "and I, O my brother" (added Abu al-Hasan), "my story hath a cause, which I will tell thee." The Caliph laughed at his speech and said, "By Allah, this is none other than a pleasant tale! Tell me thy story and the cause." Replied the host, "With love and goodly gree! Know, O my lord, that my name is Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a and that my father died and left me abundant wealth, of which I made two parts. One I laid up and with the other I betook myself to enjoying the pleasures of friendship and conviviality and consorting with intimates and boon-companions and with the sons of the merchants, nor did I leave one but I caroused with him and he with me, and I lavished all my money on comrades and good cheer, till there remained with me naught;[15] whereupon I betook myself to the friends and fellow-topers upon whom I had wasted my wealth, so perhaps they might provide for my case; but, when I visited them and went round about to them all, I found no vantage in one of them, nor would any so much as break a bittock of bread in my face. So I wept for myself and repairing to my mother, complained to her of my case. Quoth she:Ч'Such are friends; an thou have aught, they frequent thee and devour thee, but, an thou have naught, they cast thee off and chase thee away.' Then I brought out the other half of my money and bound myself to an oath that I would never entertain any save one single night, after which I would never again salute him nor notice him; hence my saying to thee:Ч'Far be it, alas! that what is past should again come to pass, for I will never again company with thee after this night.'" When the Commander of the Faithful heard this, he laughed a loud laugh and said, "By Allah, O my brother, thou art indeed excused in this matter, now that I know the cause and that the cause hath a tail. Nevertheless, Inshallah, I will not sever myself from thee." Replied Abu al- Hasan, "O my guest, did I not say to thee, 'Far be it, alas! that what is past should again come to pass? For indeed I will never again foregather with any!'" Then the Caliph rose and the host set before him a dish of roast goose and a bannock of first- bread[16] and sitting down, fell to cutting off morsels and morselling the Caliph therewith. They gave not over eating till they were filled, when Abu al-Hasan brought basin and ewer and potash[17] and they washed their hands. Then he lighted three wax-candles and three lamps, and spreading the drinking-cloth, brought strained wine, clear, old and fragrant, whose scent was as that of virgin musk. He filled the first cup and saying, "O my boon-companion, be ceremony laid aside between us by thy leave! Thy slave is by thee; may I not be afflicted with thy loss!" drank it off and filled a second cup, which he handed to the Caliph with due reverence. His fashion pleased the Commander of the Faithful, and the goodliness of his speech and he said to himself, "By Allah, I will assuredly requite him for this!" Then Abu al-Hasan filled the cup again and handed it to the Caliph, reciting these two couplets:[18] Ч

“Had we thy coming known, we would for sacrifice * Have poured
thee out heart’s blood or blackness of the eyes;
Ay, and we would have spread our bosoms in thy way, * That so thy
feet might fare on eyelids, carpet-wise.”

When the Caliph heard his verses, he took the cup from his hand and kissed it and drank it off and returned it to Abu al-Hasan, who make him an obeisance and filled it and drank. Then he filled again and kissing the cup thrice, recited these lines:Ч

“Your presence honoureth the base, * And we confess the deed of
grace;
An you absent yourself from us, * No freke we find to fill your
place.”

Then he gave the cup to the Caliph, saying, “Drink it in health and soundness! It doeth away malady and bringeth remedy and setteth the runnels of health to flow free.” So they ceased not carousing and conversing till middle-night, when the Caliph said to his host, “O my brother, hast thou in they heart a concupiscence thou wouldst have accomplished or a contingency thou wouldst avert?” Said he, “By Allah, there is no regret in my heart save that I am not empowered with bidding and forbidding, so I might manage what is in my mind!” Quoth the Commander of the Faithful, “By Allah, and again by Allah,[19] O my brother, tell me what is in thy mind!” And quoth Abu al- Hasan, “Would Heaven I might be Caliph for one day and avenge myself on my neighbors, for that in my vicinity is a mosque and therein four shaykhs, who hold it a grievance when there cometh a guest to my, and they trouble me with talk and worry me in words and menace me that they will complain of me to the Prince of True Believers, and indeed they oppress me exceedingly, and I crave of Allah the Most High power for one day, that I may beat each and every of them with four hundred lashes, as well as the Im6m of the mosque, and parade them round about the city of Baghdad and bid cry before them: ‘This is the reward and the least of the reward of whoso exceedeth in talk and vexeth the folk and turneth their joy to annoy.’ This is what I wish, and no more.” Said the Caliph, “Allah grant thee that thou seekest! Let us crack one last cup and rise ere the dawn draw near, and to-morrow night I will be with thee again." Said Abu al-Hasan, "Far be it!" Then the Caliph crowned a cup, and putting therein a piece of Cretan Bhang,[20] gave it to his host and said to him, "My life on thee, O my brother, drink this cup from my hand!" and Abu al-Hasan answered, "Ay, by thy life, I will drink it from thy hand." So he took it and drank it off; but hardly had it settled in his stomach, when his head forewent his heels and he fell to the ground like one slain; whereupon the Caliph went out and said to his slave Masrur, "Go in to yonder young man, the house master, and take him up and bring him to me at the palace; and when thou goest, shut the door." So saying, he went away, whilst Masrur entered, and taking up Abu al-Hasan, shut the door behind him, and made after his master, till he reached with him the palace what while the night drew to an end and the cocks began crowing,[21] and set him down before the Commander of the Faithful, who laughed at him.[22] Then he sent for Ja'afar the Barmecide and when he came before him, said to him, "Note thou yonder young man" (pointing to Abu al-Hasan), "and when thou shalt see him to-morrow seated in my place of estate and on the throne[23] of my Caliphate and clad in my royal clothing, stand thou in attendance upon him and enjoin the Emirs and Grandees and the folk of my household and the officers of my realm to be upon their feet, as in his service and obey him in whatso he shall bid them do; and thou, if he speak to thee of aught, do it and hearken unto his say and gainsay him not in anything during this coming day." Ja'afar acknowledged the order with "Hearkening and obedience" and withdrew, whilst the Prince of True Believers went in to the palace women, who came up to him, and he said to them, "When this sleeper shall awake to- morrow, kiss ye the ground between his hands, and do ye wait upon him and gather round about him and clothe him in the royal clothing and serve him with the service of the Caliphate and deny not aught of his estate, but say to him, 'Thou art the Caliph.'" Then he taught them what they should say to him and how they should do with him and withdrawing to a retired room,[24] let down a curtain before himself and slept. Thus fared it with the Caliph; but as regards Abu al-Hasan, he gave not over snoring in his sleep till the day brake clear, and the rising of the sun drew near, when a woman in waiting came up to him and said to him, “O our lord, the morning prayer!” Hearing these words he laughed and opening his eyes, turned them about the palace and found himself in an apartment whose walls were painted with gold and lapis lazuli and its ceiling dotted and starred with red gold. Around it were sleeping chambers, with curtains of gold-embroidered silk let down over their doors, and all about vessels of gold and porcelain and crystal and furniture and carpets dispread and lamps burning before the niche wherein men prayed, and slave-girls and eunuchs and Mamelukes and black slaves and boys and pages and attendants. When he saw this he was bewildered in his wit and said, “By Allah, either I am dreaming a dream, or this is Paradise and the Abode of Peace!”[25] And he shut his eyes and would have slept again. Quoth one of the eunuchs, “O my lord, this is not of thy wont, O Commander of the Faithful!” Then the rest of the handmaids of the palace came up to him and lifted him into a sitting posture, when he found himself upon a mattrass raised a cubit’s height from the ground and all stuffed with floss silk. So they seated him upon it and propped his elbow with a pillow, and he looked at the apartment and its vastness and saw those eunuchs and slave-girls in attendance upon him and standing about his head, whereupon he laughed at himself and said, “By Allah, ’tis not as I were on wake, yet I am not asleep! And in his perplexity he bowed his chin upon his bosom and then opened his eyes, little by little, smiling and saying, “What is this state wherein I find myself?” Then he arose and sat up, whilst the damsels laughed at him privily; and he was bewildered in his wit, and bit his finger; and as the bite pained him, he cried, “Oh!” and was vexed; and the Caliph watched him, whence he saw him not, and laughed. Presently Abu al-Hasan turned to a damsel and called to her; whereupon she answered, “At thy service, O Prince of True Believers!” Quoth he, “what is thy name?” and quoth she, “Shajarat al-Durr.”[26] Then he said to her, “By the protection of Allah, O damsel, am I Commander of the Faithful?” She replied, “Yes, indeed, by the protection of Allah thou in this time art Commander of the Faithful.” Quoth he, “By Allah, thou liest, O thousandfold whore!”[27] Then he glanced at the Chief Eunuch and called to him, whereupon he came to him and kissing the ground before him, said, “Yes, O Commander of the Faithful.” Asked Abu al-Hasan, “Who is Commander of the Faithful?” and the Eunuch answered “Thou.” And Abu al-Hasan said, “Thou liest, thousandfold he-whore that thou art!” Then he turned to another eunuch and said to him, “O my chief,[28] by the protection of Allah, am I Prince of the True Believers?” Said he, “Ay, by Allah, O my lord, thou art in this time Commander of the Faithful and Viceregent of the Lord of the three Worlds.” Abu al-Hasan laughed at himself and doubted of his reason and was bewildered at what he beheld, and said, “In one night do I become Caliph? Yesterday I was Abu al-Hasan the Wag, and to-day I am Commander of the Faithful.” Then the Chief Eunuch came up to him and said, “O Prince of True Believers (the name of Allah encompass thee!) thou art indeed Commander of the Faithful and Viceregent of the Lord of the three Worlds!” And the slave-girls and eunuchs flocked round about him, till he arose and abode wondering at his case. Hereupon the Eunuch brought him a pair of sandals wrought with raw silk and green silk and purfled with red gold, and he took them and after examining them set them in his sleeve; whereat the Castrato cried out and said, “Allah! Allah! O my lord, these are sandals for the treading of thy feet, so thou mayst wend to the wardrobe.” Abu al-Hasan was confounded, and shaking the sandals from his sleeve, put them on his feet, whilst the Caliph died[29] of laughter at him. The slave forewent him to the chapel of ease, where he entered and doing his job,[30] came out into the chamber, whereupon the slave-girls brought him a basin of gold and an ewer of silver and poured water on his hands[31] and he made the Wuzъ-ablution. Then they spread him a prayer-carpet and he prayed. Now he knew not how to pray[32] and gave not over bowing and prostrating for twenty inclinations,[33] pondering in himself the while and saying, “By Allah, I am none other than the Commander of the Faithful in very truth! This is assuredly no dream, for all these things happen not in a dream.” And he was convinced and determined in himself that he was Prince of True Believers, so he pronounced the Salбm[34] and finished his prayers; whereupon the Mamelukes and slave-girls came round about him with bundled suits of silken and linen stuffs and clad him in the costume of the Caliphate and gave the royal dagger in his hand. Then the Chief Eunuch came in and said, “O Prince of True

Believers, the Chamberlain is at the door craving permission to enter.” Said he, “Let him enter!” whereupon he came in and after kissing ground offered the salutation, “Peace be upon thee, O Commander of the Faithful!” At this Abu al-Hasan rose and descended from the couch to the floor; whereupon the official exclaimed, “Allah! Allah! O Prince of True Believers, wottest thou not that all men are thy lieges and under thy rule and that it is not meet for the Caliph to rise to any man?” Presently the Eunuch went out before him and the little white slaves behind him, and they ceased not going till they raised the curtain and brought him into the hall of judgment and the throne-room of the Caliphate. There he saw the curtains and the forty doors and Al- ‘Ijlн and Al-Rakбshн the poet, and ‘Ibdбn and Jadнm and Abu Ishбk[35] the cup-companion and beheld swords drawn and the lions[36] compassing the throne as the white of the eye encircleth the black, and gilded glaives and death-dealing bows and Ajams and Arabs and Turks and Daylamites and folk and peoples and Emirs and Wazirs and Captains and Grandees and Lords of the land and men of war in band, and in very sooth there appeared the might of the house of Abbas[37] and the majesty of the Prophet’s family. So he sat down upon the throne of the Caliphate and set the dagger[38] on his lap, whereupon all present came up to kiss ground between his hands and called down on him length of life and continuance of weal. Then came forward Ja’afar the Barmecide and kissing the ground, said, “Be the wide world of Allah the treading of thy feet and may Paradise be thy dwelling-place and the Fire the home of thy foes! Never may neighbor defy thee nor the lights of fire die out for thee,[39] O Caliph of all cities and ruler of all countries!” Therewithal Abu al-Hasan cried out at him and said, “O dog of the sons of Barmak, go down forthright, thou and the chief of the city police, to such a place in such a street and deliver an hundred dinars of gold to the mother of Abu al-Hasan the Wag and bear her my salutation. Then, go to such a mosque and take the four Shaykhs and the Imбm and scourge each of them with a thousand[40] lashes and mount them on beasts, face to tail, and parade them round about all the city and banish them to a place other than this city; and bid the crier make cry before them, saying: ‘This is the reward and the least of the reward of whoso multiplieth words and molesteth his neighbors and damageth their delights and stinteth their eating and drinking!'" Ja'afar received the command and answered, "With obedience"; after which he went down from before Abu al-Hasan to the city and did all he had ordered him to do. Meanwhile, Abu al-Hasan abode in the Caliphate, taking and giving, bidding and forbidding, and carrying out his command till the end of the day, when he gave leave and permission to withdraw, and the Emirs and Officers of state departed to their several occupations and he looked towards the Chamberlain and the rest of the attendants and said, "Begone!" Then the Eunuchs came to him and calling down on him length of life and continuance of weal, walked in attendance upon him and raised the curtain, and he entered the pavilion of the Harem, where he found candles lighted and lamps burning and singing-women smiting on instruments, and ten slave-girls, high- bosomed maids. When he saw this, he was confounded in his wit and said to himself, "By Allah, I am in truth Commander of the Faithful!" presently adding, "or haply these are of the J6nn and he who was my guest yesternight was one of their kings who saw no way to requite my favours save by commanding his Ifrits to address me as Prince of True Believers. But an these be of the Jann may Allah deliver me in safety from their mischief!" As soon as he appeared, the slave-girls rose to him and carrying him up on to the daпs,[41] brought him a great tray, bespread with the richest viands. So he ate thereof with all his might and main, till he had gotten his fill, when he called one of the handmaids and said to her, "What is thy name?" Replied she, "My name is Miskah,"[42] and he said to another, "What is thy name?" Quoth she, "My name is Tarkah."[43] Then he asked a third, "What is thy name?" who answered, "My name is Tohfah;"[44] and he went on to question the damsels of their names, one after other, till he had learned the ten, when he rose from that place and removed to the wine-chamber. He found it every way complete and saw therein ten great trays, covered with all fruits and cakes and every sort of sweetmeats. So he sat down and ate thereof after the measure of his competency, and finding there three troops of singing-girls, was amazed and made the girls eat. Then he sat and the singers also seated themselves, whilst the black slaves and the white slaves and the eunuchs and pages and boys stood, and of the slave-girls some sat and some stood. The damsels sang and warbled all varieties of melodies and the place rang with the sweetness of the songs, whilst the pipes cried out and the lutes with them wailed, till it seemed to Abu al-Hasan that he was in Paradise and his heart was heartened and his breast broadened. So he sported and joyance grew on him and he bestowed robes of honour on the damsels and gave and bestowed, challenging this girl and kissing that and toying with a third, plying one with wine and morselling another with meat, till nightfall. All this while the Commander of the Faithful was diverting himself with watching him and laughing, and when night fell he bade one of the slave-girls drop a piece of Bhang in the cup and give it to Abu al-Hasan to drink. So she did his bidding and gave him the cup, which no sooner had he drunk than his head forewent his feet.[45] Therewith the Caliph came forth from behind the curtain, laughing, and calling to the attendant who had brought Abu al-Hasan to the palace, said to him, "Carry[46] this man to his own place." So Masrur took him up and carrying him to his own house, set him down in the saloon. Then he went forth from him, and shutting the saloon- door upon him, returned to the Caliph, who slept till the morrow. As for Abu al-Hasan, he gave not over slumbering till Almighty Allah brought on the morning, when he recovered from the drug and awoke, crying out and saying, "Ho, Tuffбhah! Ho, Rбhat al-Kulъb! Ho, Miskah! Ho, Tohfah!"[47] and he ceased not calling upon the palace handmaids till his mother heard him summoning strange damsels, and rising, came to him and said, "Allah's name encompass thee! Up with thee, O my son, O Abu al-Hasan! Thou dreamest." So he opened his eyes and finding an old woman at his head, raised his eyes and said to her, "Who art thou?" Quoth she, "I am thy mother;" and quoth he, "Thou liest! I am the Commander of the Faithful, the Viceregent of Allah." Whereupon his mother shrieked aloud and said to him, "Heaven preserve thy reason! Be silent, O my son, and cause not the loss of our lives and the wasting of thy wealth, which will assuredly befal us if any hear this talk and carry it to the Caliph." So he rose from his sleep, and finding himself in his own saloon and his mother by him, had doubts of his wit, and said to her, "By Allah, O my mother, I saw myself in a dream in a palace, with slave-girls and Mamelukes about me and in attendance upon me, and I sat upon the throne of the Caliphate and ruled. By Allah, O my mother, this is what I saw, and in very sooth it was no dream!" then he bethought himself awhile and said, "Assuredly,[48] I am Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a, and this that I saw was only a dream when I was made Caliph and bade and forbade." Then he bethought himself again and said, "Nay, but 'twas not a dream, and I am none other than the Caliph, and indeed I gave gifts and bestowed honour- robes." Quoth his mother to him, "O my son, thou sportest with thy reason: thou wilt go to the mad-house[49] and become a gazing-stock. Indeed, that which thou hast seen is only from the foul Fiend, and it was an imbroglio of dreams, for at times Satan sporteth with men's wits in all manner of ways."[50] Then said she to him, "O my son, was there any one with thee yesternight?" And he reflected and said, "Yes; one lay the night with me and I acquainted him with my case and told him my tale. Doubtless, he was of the Devils and I, O my mother, even as thou sayst truly, am Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a." She rejoined, "O my son, rejoice in tidings of all good, for yesterday's record is that there came the Wazir Ja'afar the Barmecide and his many, and beat the Shaykhs of the mosque and the Imam, each a thousand lashes; after which they paraded them round about the city, making proclamation before them and saying: 'This is the reward and the least of the reward of whoso faileth in goodwill to his neighbours and troubleth on them their lives!' And he banished them from Baghdad. Moreover, the Caliph sent me an hundred dinars and sent to salute me." Whereupon Abu al-Hasan cried out and said to her, "O ill-omened crone, wilt thou contradict me and tell me that I am not the Prince of True Believers? 'Twas I who commanded Ja'afar the Barmecide to beat the Shaykhs and parade them about the city and make proclamations before them, and 'twas I, very I, who sent thee the hundred dinars and sent to salute thee, and I, O beldam of ill-luck, am in very deed the Commander of the Faithful, and thou art a liar, who would make me out an idiot." So saying, he rose up and fell upon her, and beat her with a staff of almond-wood, till she cried out, "Help, O Moslems!" and he increased the beating upon her, till the folk heard her cries and coming to her, found Abu al-Hasan bashing his mother and saying to her, "O old woman of ill-omen, am I not the Commander of the Faithful? Thou hast ensorcelled me!" When the folk heard his words, they said, “This man raveth,” and doubted not of his madness. So they came in upon him, and seizing him, pinioned his elbows, and bore him to the Bedlam. Quoth the Superintendent, “What aileth this youth?” and quoth they, “This is a madman, afflicted of the Jinn.” “By Allah, cried Abu al- Hasan, “they lie against me! I am no madman, but the Commander of the Faithful.” And the Superintendent answered him, saying, “None lieth but thou, O foulest of the Jinn-maddened!” Then he stripped him of his clothes, and clapping on his neck a heavy chain,[51] bound him to a high lattice and fell to beating him two bouts a day and two anights; and he ceased not abiding on this wise the space of ten days. Then his mother came to him and said, “O my son, O Abu al-Hasan, return to thy right reason, for this is the Devil’s doing.” Quoth he, “Thou sayst sooth, O my mother, and bear thou witness of me that I repent me of that talk and turn me from my madness. So do thou deliver me, for I am nigh upon death.” Accordingly his mother went out to the Superintendent[52] and procured his release and he returned to his own house. Now this was at the beginning of the month, and when it ended, Abu al-Hasan longed to drink liquor and, returning to his former habit, furnished his saloon and made ready food and bade bring wine; then, going forth to the bridge, he sat there, expecting one whom he should converse and carouse with, according to his custom. As he sat thus, behold, up came the Caliph and Masrur to him; but Abu al-Hasan saluted them not and said to Al- Rashid, “No friendly welcome to thee, O King of the J6nn!” Quoth Al-Rashid, “What have I done to thee?” and quoth Abu al-Hasan, “What more couldst thou do than what thou hast done to me, O foulest of the Jann? I have been beaten and thrown into Bedlam, where all said I was Jinn-mad and this was caused by none save thyself. I brought thee to my house and fed thee with my best; after which thou didst empower thy Satans and Marids to disport themselves with my wits from morning to evening. So avaunt and aroynt thee and wend thy ways!” The Caliph smiled and, seating himself by his side said to him, “O my brother, did I not tell thee that I would return to thee?” Quoth Abu al-Hasan, “I have no need of thee; and as the byword sayeth in verse:Ч

‘Fro’ my friend, ‘twere meeter and wiser to part, * For what eye sees not born shall ne'er sorrow heart.'

And indeed, O my brother, the night thou camest to me and we conversed and caroused together, I and thou, 'twas as if the Devil came to me and troubled me that night." Asked the Caliph, "And who is he, the Devil?" and answered Abu al-Hasan, "He is none other than thou;" whereat the Caliph laughed and coaxed him and spake him fair, saying, "O my brother, when I went out from thee, I forgot the door and left it open and perhaps Satan came in to thee."[53] Quoth Abu al-Hasan, "Ask me not of that which hath betided me. What possessed thee to leave the door open, so that the Devil came in to me and there befel me with him this and that?" And he related to him all that had betided him, first and last (and in repetition is no fruition); what while the Caliph laughed and hid his laughter. Then said he to Abu al- Hasan, "Praised be Allah who hath done away from thee whatso irked thee and that I see thee once more in weal!" And Abu al- Hasan said, "Never again will I take thee to cup-companion or sitting-comrade; for the proverb saith, 'Whoso stumbleth on a stone and thereto returneth, upon him be blame and reproach.' And thou, O my brother, nevermore will I entertain thee nor company with thee, for that I have not found thy heel propitious to me."[54] But the Caliph coaxed him and said, "I have been the means of thy winning to thy wish anent the Imam and the Shaykhs." Abu al-Hasan replied, "Thou hast;" and Al-Rashid continued, "And haply somewhat may betide thee which shall gladden thy heart yet more." Abu al-Hasan asked, "What dost thou require of me?" and the Commander of the Faithful answered, "Verily, I am thy guest; reject not the guest." Quoth Abu al-Hasan, "On condition that thou swear to me by the characts on the seal of Solomon David's son (on the twain be the Peace!), that thou wilt not suffer thine Ifrits to make fun of me." He replied, "To hear is to obey!" Whereupon the Wag took him and brought him into the saloon and set food before him and entreated him with friendly speech. Then he told him all that had befallen him, whilst the Caliph was like to die of stifled laughter; after which Abu al-Hasan removed the tray of food and bringing the wine-service, filled a cup and cracked it three times, then gave it to the Caliph, saying, "O boon-companion mine, I am thy slave and let not that which I am about to say offend thee, and be thou not vexed, neither do thou vex me.” And he recited these verses:Ч

“Hear one that wills thee well! Lips none shall bless * Save
those who drink for drunk and all transgress.
Ne’er will I cease to swill while night falls dark * Till lout my
forehead low upon my tasse:
In wine like liquid sun is my delight * Which clears all care and
gladdens allegresse.”

When the Caliph heard these his verses and saw how apt he was at couplets, he was delighted with exceeding delight and taking the cup, drank it off, and the twain ceased not to converse and carouse till the wine rose to their heads. Then quoth Abu al- Hasan to the Caliph, “O boon-companion mine, of a truth I am perplexed concerning my affair, for meseemed I was Commander of the Faithful and ruled and gave gifts and largesse, and in very deed, O my brother, it was not a dream.” Quoth the Caliph, “These were the imbroglios of sleep,” and crumbling a bit of Bhang into the cup, said to him, “By my life, do thou drink this cup;” and said Abu al-Hasan, “Surely I will drink it from thy hand.” Then he took the cup and drank it off, and no sooner had it settled in his stomach than his head fell to the ground before his feet. Now his manners and fashions pleased the Caliph and the excellence of his composition and his frankness, and he said in himself, “I will assuredly make him my cup-companion and sitting-comrade.” So he rose forthright and saying to Masrur, “Take him up,” returned to the palace. Accordingly, the Eunuch took up Abu al-Hasan and carrying him to the palace of the Caliphate, set him down before Al-Rashid, who bade the slaves and slave-girls compass him about, whilst he himself hid in a place where Abu al-Hasan could not see him. Then he commanded one of the hand-maidens to take the lute and strike it over the Wag’s head, whilst the rest smote upon their instruments. So they played and sang, till Abu al-Hasan awoke at the last of the night and heard the symphony of lutes and tambourines and the sound of the flutes and the singing of the slave-girls, whereupon he opened his eyes and finding himself in the palace, with the hand- maids and eunuchs about him, exclaimed, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the

Glorious, the Great! Come to my help this night which meseems more unlucky than the former! Verily, I am fearful of the Madhouse and of that which I suffered therein the first time, and I doubt not but the Devil is come to me again, as before. O Allah, my Lord, put thou Satan to shame!" Then he shut his eyes and laid his head in his sleeve, and fell to laughing softly and raising his head bytimes, but still found the apartment lighted and the girls singing. Presently, one of the eunuchs sat down at his head and said to him, "Sit up, O Prince of True Believers, and look on thy palace and thy slave-girls." Said Abu al-Hasan, "Under the veil of Allah, am I in truth Commander of the Faithful, and dost thou not lie? Yesterday I rode not forth neither ruled, but drank and slept, and this eunuch cometh to make me rise." Then he sat up and recalled to thought that which had betided him with his mother and how he had beaten her and entered the Bedlam, and he saw the marks of the beating, wherewith the Superintendant had beaten him, and was perplexed concerning his affair and pondered in himself, saying, "By Allah, I know not how my case is nor what is this that betideth me!" Then, gazing at the scene around him, he said privily, "All these are of the Jann in human shape, and I commit my case to Allah." Presently he turned to one of the damsels and said to her, "Who am I?" Quoth she, "Thou art the Commander of the Faithful;" and quoth he, "Thou liest, O calamity![55] If I be indeed the Commander of the Faithful, bite my finger." So she came to him and bit it with all her might, and he said to her, "It doth suffice." Then he asked the Chief Eunuch, "Who am I?" and he answered, "Thou art the Commander of the Faithful." So he left him and returned to his wonderment: then, turning to a little white slave, said to him, "Bite my ear;" and he bent his head low down to him and put his ear to his mouth. Now the Mameluke was young and lacked sense; so he closed his teeth upon Abu al-Hasan's ear with all his might, till he came near to sever it; and he knew not Arabic, so, as often as the Wag said to him, "It doth suffice," he concluded that he said, "Bite like a vice," and redoubled his bite and made his teeth meet in the ear, whilst the damsels were diverted from him with hearkening to the singing-girls, and Abu al-Hasan cried out for succour from the boy and the Caliph lost his sense for laughter. Then he dealt the boy a cuff, and he let go his ear, whereupon all present fell down with laughter and said to the little Mameluke, “Art mad that thou bitest the Caliph’s ear on this wise?” And Abu al-Hasan cried to them, “Sufficeth ye not, O ye wretched Jinns, that which hath befallen me? But the fault is not yours: the fault is of your Chief who transmewed you from Jinn shape to mortal shape. I seek refuge against you this night by the Throne-verse and the Chapter of Sincerity[56] and the Two Preventives!”[57] So saying the Wag put off his clothes till he was naked, with prickle and breech exposed, and danced among the slave-girls. They bound his hands and he wantoned among them, while they died of laughing at him and the Caliph swooned away for excess of laughter. Then he came to himself and going forth the curtain to Abu al-Hasan, said to him, “Out on thee, O Abu al-Hasan! Thou slayest me with laughter.” So he turned to him and knowing him, said to him, “By Allah, ’tis thou slayest me and slayest my mother and slewest the Shaykhs and the Imam of the Mosque!” After which he kissed ground before him and prayed for the permanence of his prosperity and the endurance of his days. The Caliph at once robed him in a rich robe and gave him a thousand dinars; and presently he took the Wag into especial favour and married him and bestowed largesse on him and lodged him with himself in the palace and made him of the chief of his cup-companions, and indeed he was preferred with him above them and the Caliph advanced him over them all. Now they were ten in number, to wit, Al-’IjlH and Al-Rak6shi and ‘Ibd6n and Hasan al-Farazdak and Al-Lauz and Al-Sakar and Omar al-TartHs and Abu Nowas and Abu Ishak al-NadHm and Abu al-Hasan al-Khali’a, and by each of them hangeth a story which is told in other than this book.[58] And indeed Abu al-Hasan became high in honour with the Caliph and favoured above all, so that he sat with him and the Lady Zubaydah bint al-Kasim, whose treasuress Nuzhat al- Fu6d[59] hight, was given to him in marriage. After this Abu al-Hasan the Wag abode with his wife in eating and drinking and all delight of life, till whatso was with them went the way of money, when he said to her, “Harkye, O Nuzhat al-Fuad!” Said she, “At they service;” and he continued, “I have it in mind to play a trick on the Caliph[60] and thou shalt do the same with the Lady Zubaydah, and we will take of them at once, to begin with, two hundred dinars and two pieces of silk. She rejoined, “As thou willest, but what thinkest thou to do?” And he said, “We will feign ourselves dead and this is the trick. I will die before thee and lay myself out, and do thou spread over me a silken napkin and loose my turban over me and tie my toes and lay on my stomach a knife and a little salt.[61] Then let down thy hair and betake thyself to thy mistress Zubaydah, tearing thy dress and slapping thy face and crying out. She will ask thee, ‘What aileth thee?’ and do thou answer her, ‘May thy head outlive Abu al-Hasan the Wag; for he is dead.’ She will mourn for me and weep and bid her new treasuress give thee an hundred dinars and a piece of silk[62] and will say to thee, ‘Go, lay him out and carry him forth.’ So do thou take of her the hundred dinars and the piece of silk and come back, and when thou returnest to me, I will rise up and thou shalt lie down in my place, and I will go to the Caliph and say to him, ‘May thy head outlive Nuzhat al Fuad,’ and rend my raiment and pluck out my beard. He will mourn for thee and say to his treasurer, ‘Give Abu al-Hasan an hundred dinars and a piece of silk.’ Then he will say to me, ‘Go; lay her out and carry her forth;’ and I will come back to thee.” Therewith Nuzhat al-Fuad rejoiced and said, “Indeed, this is an excellent device.” Then Abu al-Hasan stretched himself out forthright and she shut his eyes and tied his feet and covered him with the napkin and did whatso her lord had bidden her; after which she tare her gear and bared her head and letting down her hair, went in to the Lady Zubaydah, crying out and weeping. When the Princess saw her in this state, she cried, “What plight is this? What is thy story and what maketh thee weep?” And Nuzhat al-Fuad answered, weeping and loud-wailing the while, “O my lady, may thy head live and mayst thou survive Abu al-Hasan al-Khali’a; for he is dead!” The Lady Zubaydah mourned for him and said, “Alas, poor Abu al-Hasan the Wag!” and she shed tears for him awhile. Then she bade her treasuress give Nuzhat al-Fuad an hundred dinars and a piece of silk and said to her, “O Nuzhat al- Fuad, go, lay him out and carry him forth.” So she took the hundred dinars and the piece of silk and returned to her dwelling, rejoicing, and went in to her spouse and acquainted him what had befallen, whereupon he arose and rejoiced and girdled his middle and danced and took the hundred dinars and the piece of silk and laid them up. Then he laid out Nuzhat al-Fuad and did with her as she had done with him; after which he rent his raiment and plucked out his beard and disordered his turban and ran out nor ceased running till he came in to the Caliph, who was sitting in the judgment-hall, and he in this plight, beating his breast. The Caliph asked him, “What aileth thee, O Abu al- Hasan?” and he wept and answered, “Would heaven thy cup-companion had never been and would his hour had never come!”[63] Quoth the Caliph, “Tell me thy case:” and quoth Abu al-Hasan, “O my lord, may thy head outlive Nuzhat al-Fuad!” The Caliph exclaimed, “There is no god but God;” and smote hand upon hand. Then he comforted Abu al-Hasan and said to him, “Grieve not, for we will bestow upon thee a bedfellow other than she.” And he ordered the treasurer to give him an hundred dinars and a piece of silk. Accordingly the treasurer did what the Caliph bade him, and Al-Rashid said to him, “Go, lay her out and carry her forth and make her a handsome funeral.” So Abu al-Hasan took that which he had given him and returning to his house, rejoicing, went in to Nuzhat al-Fuad and said to her, “Arise, for our wish is won.” Hereat she arose and he laid before her the hundred ducats and the piece of silk, whereat she rejoiced, and they added the gold to the gold and the silk to the silk and sat talking and laughing each to other. Meanwhile, when Abu al-Hasan fared forth the presence of the Caliph and went to lay out Nuzhat al-Fuad, the Commander of the Faithful mourned for her and dismissing the divan, arose and betook himself, leaning upon Masrur, the Sworder of his vengeance, to the Lady Zubaydah, that he might condole with her for her hand-maid. He found her sitting weeping and awaiting his coming, so she might condole with him for his boon-companion Abu al-Hasan the Wag. So he said to her, “May thy head outlive thy slave-girl Nuzhat al-Fuad!” and said she, “O my lord, Allah preserve my slave-girl! Mayst thou live and long survive thy boon-companion Abu al-Hasan al-Khali’a; for he is dead.” The Caliph smiled and said to his eunuch, “O Masrur, verily women are little of wit. Allah upon thee, say, was not Abu al-Hasan with me but now?”[64] Quoth the Lady Zubaydah, laughing from a heart full of wrath, “Wilt thou not leave thy jesting? Sufficeth thee not that Abu al-Hasan is dead, but thou must put to death my slave-girl also and bereave us of the twain, and style me little of wit?” The Caliph answered, “Indeed, ’tis

Nuzhat al-Fuad who is dead.” And the Lady Zubaydah said, “Indeed he hath not been with thee, nor hast thou seen him, and none was with me but now save Nuzhat al-Fuad, and she sorrowful, weeping, with her clothes torn to tatters. I exhorted her to patience and gave her an hundred dinars and a piece of silk; and indeed I was awaiting thy coming, so I might console thee for thy cup-companion Abu al-Hasan al-Khali’a, and was about to send for thee.”[65] The Caliph laughed and said, “None is dead save Nuzhat al-Fuad;” and she, “No, no, good my lord; none is dead but Abu al-Hasan the Wag.” With this the Caliph waxed wroth, the Hбshimн vein[66] started out from between his eyes and throbbed: and he cried out to Masrur and said to him, “Fare thee forth to the house of Abu al-Hasan the Wag and see which of them is dead.” So Masrur went out, running, and the Caliph said to the Lady Zubaydah, “Wilt thou lay me a wager?” And said she, “Yes, I will wager, and I say that Abu al-Hasan is dead.” Rejoined the Caliph, “And I wager and say that none is dead save Nuzhat al-Fuad; and the stake between me and thee shall be the Garden of Pleasance[67] against thy palace and the Pavilion of Pictures.”[68] So they agreed upon this and sat awaiting Masrur’s return with the news. As for the Eunuch, he ceased not running till he came to the by-street, wherein was the stead of Abu al-Hasan al-Khali’a. Now the Wag was comfortably seated and leaning back against the lattice,[69] and chancing to look round, saw Masrur running along the street and said to Nuzhat al- Fuad, “Meseemeth the Caliph, when I went forth from him dismissed the Divan and went in to the Lady Zubaydah, to condole with her; whereupon she arose and condoled with him, saying, ‘Allah increase thy recompense for the loss of Abu al-Hasan al-Khali’a!’ And he said to her, ‘None is dead save Nuzhat al-Fuad, may thy head outlive her!’ Quoth she, ‘’Tis not she who is dead, but Abu al-Hasan al-Khali’a, thy boon-companion.’ And quoth he, ‘None is dead save Nuzhat al-Fuad.’ And they waxed so obstinate that the Caliph became wroth and they laid a wager, and he hath sent Masrur the Sworder to see who is dead. Now, therefore, ‘twere best that thou lie down, so he may sight thee and go and acquaint the Caliph and confirm my saying.”[70] So Nuzhat al-Fuad stretched herself out and Abu al-Hasan covered her with her mantilla and sat weeping at her head. Presently, Masrur the eunuch suddenly came in to him and saluted him, and seeing Nuzhat al-Fuad stretched out, uncovered her face and said, “There is no god but God! Our sister Nuzhat al-Fuad is dead indeed. How sudden was the stroke of Destiny! Allah have ruth on thee and acquit thee of all charge!” Then he returned and related what had passed before the Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah, and he laughing as he spoke. “O accursed one,” cried the Caliph, “this is no time for laughter! Tell us which is dead of them.” Masrur replied, “By Allah, O my lord, Abu al-Hasan is well, and none is dead but Nuzhat al-Fuad.” Quoth the Caliph to Zubaydah, “Thou hast lost thy pavilion in thy play,” and he jeered at her and said, “O Masrur, tell her what thou sawest.” Quoth the Eunuch, “Verily, O my lady, I ran without ceasing till I came in to Abu al-Hasan in his house and found Nuzhat al-Fuad lying dead and Abu al-Hasan sitting tearful at her head. I saluted him and condoled with him and sat down by his side and uncovered the face of Nuzhat al-Fuad and saw her dead and her face swollen.[71] So I said to him, ‘Carry her out forthwith, so we may pray over her.’ He replied, ‘’Tis well’; and I left him to lay her out and came hither, that I might tell you the news.” The Prince of True Believers laughed and said, “Tell it again and again to thy lady Little-wits.” When the Lady Zubaydah heard Masrur’s words and those of the Caliph she was wroth and said, “None is little of wit save he who believeth a black slave.” And she abused Masrur, whilst the Commander of the Faithful laughed: and the Eunuch, vexed at this, said to the Caliph, “He spake sooth who said, “Women are little of wits and lack religion.”[72] Then said the Lady Zubaydah to the Caliph, “O Commander of the Faithful, thou sportest and jestest with me, and this slave hoodwinketh me, the better to please thee; but I will send and see which of them be dead.” And he answered, saying, “Send one who shall see which of them is dead.” So the Lady Zubaydah cried out to an old duenna, and said to her, “Hie thee to the house of Nuzhat al-Fuad in haste and see who is dead and loiter not.” And she used hard words to her.[73] So the old woman went out running, whilst the Prince of True Believers and Masrur laughed, and she ceased not running till she came into the street. Abu al-Hasan saw her, and knowing her, said to his wife, “O Nuzhat al-Fuad, meseemeth the Lady Zubaydah hath sent to us to see who is dead and hath not given credit to Masrur’s report of thy death:

accordingly, she hath despatched the old crone, her duenna, to discover the truth. So it behoveth me to be dead in my turn for the sake of thy credit with the Lady Zubaydah." Hereat he lay down and stretched himself out, and she covered him and bound his eyes and feet and sat in tears at his head. Presently the old woman came in to her and saw her sitting at Abu al-Hasan's head, weeping and recounting his fine qualities; and when she saw the old trot, she cried out and said to her, "See what hath befallen me! Indeed Abu al-Hasan is dead and hath left me lone and lorn!" Then she shrieked out and rent her raiment and said to the crone, "O my mother, how very good he was to me!"[74] Quoth the other, "Indeed thou art excused, for thou wast used to him and he to thee." Then she considered what Masrur had reported to the Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah and said to her, "Indeed, Masrur goeth about to cast discord between the Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah." Asked Nuzhat al-Fuad, "And what is the cause of discord, O my mother?" and the other replied, "O my daughter, Masrur came to the Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah and gave them news of thee that thou wast dead and that Abu al-Hasan was well." Nuzhat al-Fuad said to her, "O naunty mine,[75] I was with my lady just now and she gave me an hundred dinars and a piece of silk; and now see my case and that which hath befallen me! Indeed, I am bewildered, and how shall I do, and I lone, and lorn? Would heaven I had died and he had lived!" Then she wept and with her wept the old woman, who, going up to Abu al-Hasan and uncovering his face, saw his eyes bound and swollen for the swathing. So she covered him up again and said, "Indeed, O Nuzhat al-Fuad, thou art afflicted in Abu al-Hasan!" Then she condoled with her and going out from her, ran along the street until she came in to the Lady Zubaydah and related to her the story; and the Princess said to her, laughing, "Tell it over again to the Caliph, who maketh me out little of wit, and lacking of religion, and who made this ill-omened liar of a slave presume to contradict me." Quoth Masrur, "This old woman lieth; for I saw Abu al-Hasan well and Nuzhat al-Fuad it was who lay dead." Quoth the duenna, "'Tis thou that liest, and wouldst fain cast discord between the Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah." And Masrur cried, "None lieth but thou, O old woman of ill-omen and thy lady believeth thee and she must be in her dotage." Whereupon Lady

Zubaydah cried out at him and in very sooth she was enraged with him and with his speech and shed tears. Then said the Caliph to her, "I lie and my eunuch lieth, and thou liest and thy waiting-woman lieth; so 'tis my rede we go, all four of us together, that we may see which of us telleth the truth." Masrur said, "Come, let us go, that I may do to this ill-omened old woman evil deeds[76] and deal her a sound drubbing for her lying." And the duenna answered him, "O dotard, is thy wit like unto my wit? Indeed, thy wit is as the hen's wit." Masrur was incensed at her words and would have laid violent hands on her, but the Lady Zubaydah pushed him away from her and said to him, "Her truth-speaking will presently be distinguished from thy truth-speaking and her leasing from thy leasing." Then they all four arose, laying wagers one with other, and went forth a-foot from the palace-gate and hied on till they came in at the gate of the street where Abu al-Hasan al-Khali'a dwelt. He saw them and said to his wife Nuzhat al-Fuad, "Verily, all that is sticky is not a pancake[77] they cook nor every time shall the crock escape the shock. It seemeth the old woman hath gone and told her lady and acquainted her with our case and she has disputed with Masrur the Eunuch and they have laid wagers each with other about our death and are come to us, all four, the Caliph and the Eunuch and the Lady Zubaydah and the old trot." When Nuzhat al- Fuad heard this, she started up from her outstretched posture and asked, "How shall we do?" whereto he answered, "We will both feign ourselves dead together and stretch ourselves out and hold our breath." So she hearkened unto him and they both lay down on the place where they usually slept the siesta[78] and bound their feet and shut their eyes and covered themselves with the veil and held their breath. Presently, up came the Caliph, Zubaydah, Masrur and the old woman and entering, found Abu al-Hasan the Wag and wife both stretched out as dead; which when the Lady saw, she wept and said, "They ceased not to bring ill-news of my slave-girl till she died,[79] methinketh Abu al-Hasan's death was grievous to her and that she died after him."[80] Quoth the Caliph, "Thou shalt not prevent me with thy prattle and prate. She certainly died before Abu al-Hasan, for he came to me with his raiment rent and his beard plucked out, beating his breast with two bits of unbaked brick,[81] and I gave him an hundred dinars and a piece of silk and said to him, “Go, bear her forth and I will give thee a bed-fellow other than she and handsomer, and she shall be in stead of her. But it would appear that her death was no light matter to him and he died after her;[82] so it is who have beaten thee and gotten thy stake.” The Lady Zubaydah answered him in words galore and the dispute between them waxed sore. At last the Caliph sat down at the head of the pair and said, “By the tomb of the Apostle of Allah (whom may He save and assain!) and the sepulchres of my fathers and forefathers, whoso will tell me which of them died before the other, I will willingly give him a thousand dinars!” when Abu al-Hasan heard the Calipih’s words, he sprang up in haste and said, “I died first, O Commander of the Faithful! Here with the thousand dinars and acquit thee of thine oath and the swear thou sworest.” Nuzhat al-Fuad rose also and stood up before the Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah, who both rejoiced in this and in their safety, and the Pricess chid her slave-girl. Then the Caliph and Zubaydah gave them joy of their well-being and knew that this death was a trick to get the gold; and the Lady said to Nuzhat al-Fuad, “Thou shouldst have sought of me that which thou needest, without this fashion, and not have burned[83] my heart for thee.” And she, “Verily, I was ashamed, O my lady.” As for the Caliph, he swooned away for laughing and said, “O Abu al-Hasan, thou wilt never cease to be a wag and do peregrine things and prodigious!” Quoth he, “O Commander of the Faithful, this trick I played off for that money which thou gavest me was exhausted, and I was ashamed to ask of thee again. When I was single, I could never keep money in hand; but since thou marriedst me to this damsel, if I possessed even thy wealth, I should lay it waste. Wherefore when all that was in my hand was spent, I wrought this sleight, so I might get of thee the hundred dinars and the piece of silk; and all this is an alms from our lord. But now make haste to give me the thousand dinars and acquit thee of thine oath.” The Caliph and the Lady Zubaydah laughed and returned to the palace; and he gave Abu al-Hasan the thousand dinars saying, “Take them as a douceur[84] for thy preservation from death,” whilst her mistress did the like with Nuzhat al-Fuad, honouring her with the same words. Moreover, the Caliph increased the Wag in his solde and supplies, and he and his wife ceased not to live in joy and contentment, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and Severer of societies, the Plunderer of palaces, and the Garnerer of Graves.

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THE CALIPH OMAR BIN ABD AL-AZIZ AND THE POETS[85]

It is said that, when the Caliphate devolved on Omar bin Abd al-Aziz[86] (of whom Allah accept), the poets resorted to him, as they had been used to resort to the Caliphs before him, and abode at his door days and days, but he suffered them not to enter, till there came to him ‘Adн bin Artah,[87] who stood high in esteem with him. Jarнr[88] accosted him and begged him to crave admission for them to the presence; so Adi answered, “’Tis well;” and, going in to Omar, said to him, “The poets are at thy door and have been there days and days; yet hast thou not given them leave to enter, albeit their sayings abide[89] and their arrows from mark never fly wide.” Quoth Omar, “What have I to do with the poets?” and quoth Adi, “O Commander of the Faithful, the Prophet (Abhak!)[90] was praised by a poet[91] and gave him largesse, and in him[92] is an exemplar to every Moslem.” Quoth Omar, “And who praised him?” and quoth Adi, “‘Abbбs bin Mirdбs[93] praised him, and he clad him with a suit and said, O Generosity,[94] cut off from me his tongue!” Asked the Caliph, “Dost thou remember what he said?” and Adi answered, “Yes.” Rejoined Omar, “Then repeat it;” so Adi repeated,[95]

“I saw thee, O thou best of human race, * Bring out a Book which
brought to graceless Grace.
Thou showedst righteous road to men astray * From Right, when
darkest Wrong had ta’en its place;Ч
Thou with Islбm didst light the gloomiest way, *Quenching with
proof live coals of frowardness;
I own for Prophet mine Mohammed’s self; * And man’s award upon his
word we base;
Thou madest straight the path that crooked ran, * Where in old
days foul growth o’ergrew its face.
Exalt be thou in Joy’s empyrean * And Allah’s glory ever grow
apace.

“And indeed” (continued Adi), “this Elegy on the Prophet (Abhak!) is well known and to comment it would be tedious.” Quoth Omar “Who is at the door?” and quoth Adi, “Among them is Omar ibn Abi Rabн’ah, the Korashн;[96] whereupon the Caliph cried, “May Allah show him no favour neither quicken him! Was it not he who said these verses,

‘Would Heaven what day Death shall visit me * I smell as thy
    droppings and drippings[97] smell!
Could I in my clay-bed on Salmб lie * There to me were better
    than Heaven or Hell!’

“Had he not been” (continued the Caliph) “the enemy of Allah, he had wished for her in this world, so he might after repent and return to righteous dealing. By Allah, he shall not come in to me! Who is at the door other than he?” Quoth Adi, “Jamнl bin Ma’mar al-Uzri[98] is at the door;” and quoth Omar, “’Tis he who saith in one of his elegies,

‘Would Heaven conjoint we lived, and if I die * Death only grant
    me a grave within her grave:
For I’d no longer deign to live my life * If told upon her head
    is laid the pave.’”[99]

Quoth Omar, “Away with him from me! Who is at the door?” and quoth Adi, “Kuthayyir ‘Azzah”[100] ; whereupon Omar cried, “’Tis he who saith in one of his odes,

‘Some talk of faith and creed and nothing else * And wait for
    pains of Hell in prayer-seat;[101]
But did they hear what I from Azzah heard, * They’d make
    prostration, fearfull at her feet.’

“Leave the mention of him. Who is at the door?” Quoth Adi, “Al-Ahwas al-’Ansбrн.”[102] Cried Omar, “Allah Almighty put him away and estrange him from His mercy! Is it not he who said, berhyming on a Medinite’s slave-girl, so she might outlive her lord,

‘Allah be judge betwixt me and her lord! * Who ever flies with her and I pursue.’

“He shall not come in to me. who is at the door, other than he?” Adi replied, “Hammбm bin Ghбlib al-Farazdak;”[103] and Omar said, “’Tis he who saith, glorying in whoring,

‘Two girls let me down eighty fathoms deep, * As low sweeps a
falcon wi’ pinions spread;
And cried; as my toes touched the ground, ‘Dost live * To return,
or the fall hath it done thee dead?

“He shall not come in to me. who is at the door, other than he?” Adi replied, “Al-Akhtal al-Taghlibн”[104] and Omar said, “He is the Miscreant who saith in his singing,

‘Ramazan I ne’er fasted in life-time; nay * I ate flesh in public
at undurn day;[105]
Nor chide I the fair, save in way of love, * Nor seek Meccah’s
plain[106] in salvation-way:
Nor stand I praying like rest who cry * ‘Hie
salvationwards’[107] at the dawn’s first ray.
But I drink her cooled[108] by fresh Northern breeze * And my
head at dawn to her prone I lay.’[109]

“By Allah, he treadeth no carpet of mine! who is at the door, other than he?” Said Adi, “Jarнr ibn al-Khatafah”; and Omar cried, “’Tis he who saith,

‘But for ill-spying glances had our eyes espied * Eyne of the
antelope and ringlets of the Reems.[110]
A huntress of the eyes[111] by night-tide came and I * Cried,
‘Turn in peace, no time for visit this, meseems!’

“An it must be and no help, admit Jarir.” So Adi went forth and admitted Jarir, who entered, saying.

“Yea, he who sent Mohammed unto man, * A just successor for
Imбm[112] assigned.
His ruth and justice all mankind embrace, * To daunt the bad and

stablish well-designed.
Verily now I look to present good, * For man hath ever-transient
weal in mind."

Quoth Omar, "O Jarir, keep the fear of Allah before thine eyes and say naught save the sooth." And Jarir recited these couplets,

"How many widows loose the hair in far Yam6mah-land[113] * How
many an orphan there abides feeble of voice and eye,
Since faredst thou who wast to them instead of father lost * When
they like nested fledglings were sans power to creep or fly!
And now we hope, since brake the clouds their word and troth with
us, * Hope from the Caliph's grace to gain a rain[114]
that ne'er shall dry."

When the Caliph heard this, he said, "By Allah, O Jarir, Omar possesseth but an hundred dirhams.[115] Ho, boy! do thou give them to him." Moreover he gifted him with the ornaments of his sword; and Jarir went forth to the other poets, who asked him, "What is behind thee?"[116] and he answered, "A man who giveth to the poor and denieth the poets, and with him I am well- pleased."

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AL-HAJJAJ AND THE THREE YOUNG MEN[117]

They tell that Al-Hajjбj[118] once bade the Chief of Police go his rounds about Bassorah city by night, and whomsoever he found abroad after supper-tide that he should smite his neck. So he went round one night of the nights and came upon three youths swaying and staggering from side to side, and on them signs of wine-bibbing. So the watch laid hold of them and the captain said to them, “Who be you that ye durst transgress the commandment of the Commander of the Faithful[119] and come abroad at this hour?” quoth one of the youths, “I am the son of him to whom all necks[120] abase themselves, alike the nose- pierced of them and the breaker; they come to him in their own despite, abject and submissive, and he taketh of their wealth and of their blood.” The Master of Police held his hand from him,, saying, “Belike he is of the kinsman of the Prince of True Believers,” and said to the second, “Who art thou?” Quoth he, “I am the son of him whose rank[121] Time abaseth not, and if it be lowered one day, ‘twill assuredly return to its former height; thou seest the folk crowd in troops to the light of his fire, some standing around it and some sitting.” So the Chief of Police refrained from slaying him and asked the third, “Who art thou?” He answered, “I am the son of him who plungeth through the ranks[122] with his might and levelleth them with the sword, so that they stand straight: his feet are not loosed from the stirrup, whenas the horsemen on the day of the battle are a- weary.” So the Master of the Police held his hand from him also, saying, “Belike, he is the son of a Brave of the Arabs.” Then he kept them under guard, and when the morning morrowed, he referred their case to Al-Hajjaj, who caused bring them before him and enquiring into their affair, when behold, the first was the son of a barber-surgeon, the second of a bean-seller, and the third of a weaver. So he marvelled at their eloquent readiness of speech and said to the men of his assembly, “Teach your sons the rhetorical use of Arabic:[123] for, by Allah, but for their ready wit, I had smitten off their heads!”

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HARUN AL-RASHID AND THE WOMAN OF THE BARMECIDES[124]

They tell[125] that Harun Al-Rashid was sitting one day to abate grievances, when there came up to him a woman and said, "O Commander of the Faithful, may Allah perfect thy purpose and gladden thee in whatso He hath given thee and increase thee in elevation! Indeed, thou hast done justice and wrought equitably." [126] Quoth the Caliph to those who were present with him, "Know ye what this one means by her saying?" and quoth they, "Of a surety, she meaneth not otherwise than well, O Prince of True Believers." Al-Rashid rejoined: "Nay, in this she purposeth only to curse me. As for her saying, 'Allah perfect thy purpose,' she hath taken it from the saying of the poet,

'When thy purpose is effected beginneth its decay; * when they
say 'Thy wish is won' feel thou sure 'twill pass away.'

As for her saying 'Allah gladden thee in whatso He hath given thee,' she took it from the saying of Almighty Allah,[127] 'Till, whenas they were gladdened in that they were given, We suddenly laid hold of them and lo, they were in despair!' As for her saying, 'Allah increase thee in elevation!' she took it from the saying of the poet:Ч

'No flier flieth however tall * but as he flieth shall come to fall.'

And as for her saying, 'Indeed, thou hast done justice and wrought equitably, 'tis from the saying of the Almighty, 'If ye swerve[128] or lag behind or turn aside, verily, Allah of that which ye do is well aware;' and 'As for the swervers[129] they are fuel for Hell.'" Then he turned to the woman and asked her, "Is it not thus?" answered she, "Yes, O Commander of the Faithful," and quoth he, "What prompted thee to this?" Quoth she, "Thou slewest my parents and my kinsfolk and despoiledst their good." Enquired the Caliph, "Whom meanest thou?" and she replied, "I am of the House of Barmak." Then said he to her, "As for the dead, they are of those who are past away, and it booteth not to speak of them; but, as for that which I took of wealth, it shall forthright be restored to thee, yea, and more than it." And he was bountiful to her to the uttermost of his bounties.

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THE TEN WAZIRS: OR THE HISTORY OF KING AZADBAKHT AND HIS SON.[130]

There was once, of old days, a king of the kings, whose name was Azбdbakht; his capital was hight Kunaym Madъd[131] and his kingdom extended to the confines of Sнstбn[132] and from the confines of Hindostan to the Indian Ocean. He had ten Wazirs, who ordered his kingship and his dominion, and he was possessed of judgment and exceeding wisdom. One day he went forth with certain of his guards to the chase and fell in with an Eunuch riding a mare and hending in hand the halter of a she-mule, which he led along. On the mule's back was a domed litter of brocade purfled with gold and girded with an embroidered band set with pearls and gems, and about it was a company of Knights. When King Azadbakht saw this, he separated himself from his suite and, making for the horsemen and that mule, questioned them, saying, "To whom belongeth this litter and what is therein?" The Eunuch answered (for he knew not that the speaker was King Azadbakht), saying, "This litter belongeth to Isfahand, Wazir to King Azadbakht, and therein is his daughter, whom he is minded to marry to the King hight Zбd Shбh."

As the Eunuch was speaking with the king, behold, the maiden raised a corner of the curtain that shut in the litter, so she might look upon the speaker, and saw the king. When Azadbakht beheld her and noted her fashion and her loveliness (and indeed never did seer[133] espy her like), his soul inclined to her and she took hold upon his heart and he was ravished by her sight. So he said to the Eunuch, "Turn the mule's head and return, for I am King Azadbakht and in very sooth I will marry her myself, inasmuch as Isfahand her sire is my Wazir and he will accept of this affair and it will not be hard to him." Answered the Eunuch, "O king, Allah prolong thy continuance, have patience till I acquaint my lord her parent, and thou shalt wed her in the way of consent, for it besitteth thee not, neither is it seemly for thee, to seize her on this wise, seeing that it will be an affront to her father an if thou take her without his knowledge." Quoth Azadbakht, 'I have not patience to wait till thou repair to her sire and return, and no shame will betide him, if I marry her." And quoth the eunuch, "O my lord, naught that in haste is done long endureth nor doth the heart rejoice therein; and indeed it behoveth thee not to take her on this unseemly wise. Whatsoever betideth thee, destroy not thyself with haste, for I know that her sire's breast will be straitened by this affair and this that thou dost will not win thy wish." But the king said, "Verily, Isfahand is my Mameluke and a slave of my slaves, and I reck not of her father, an he be fain or unfain." So saying, he drew the reins of the mule and carrying the damsel, whose name was Bahrjaur,[134] to his house married her. Meanwhile, the Eunuch betook himself, he and the knights, to her sire and said to him, "O my lord, thou hast served the king a many years' service and thou hast not failed him a single day; and now he hath taken thy daughter without thy consent and permission." And he related to him what had passed and how the king had seized her by force. When Isfahand heard the eunuch's words, he was wroth with exceeding wrath and assembling many troops, said to them, "Whenas the king was occupied with his women[135] we took no reck of him; but now he putteth out his hand to our Harim; wherefore 'tis my rede that we look us out a place wherein we may have sanctuary." Then he wrote a letter to King Azadbakht, saying to him, "I am a Mameluke of thy Mamelukes and a slave of thy slaves and my daughter at thy service is a hand-maid, and Almighty Allah prolong thy days and appoint thy times to be in joy and gladness! Indeed, I went ever waist-girded in thy service and in caring to conserve thy dominion and warding off from thee all thy foes; but now I abound yet more than erewhile in zeal and watchfulness, because I have taken this charge upon myself, since my daughter is become thy wife." And he despatched a courier to the king with the letter and a present. When the messenger came to King Azadbakht and he read the letter and the present was laid before him, he rejoiced with joy exceeding and occupied himself with eating and drinking, hour after hour. But the chief Wazir of his Wazirs came to him and said, "O king, know that Isfahand the Wazir is thine enemy, for that his soul liketh not that which thou hast done with him, and this message he hath sent thee is a trick; so rejoice thou not therein, neither be thou misled by the sweets of his say and the softness of his speech." The king hearkened to his Wazir's speech, but presently made light of the matter and busied himself with that which he was about of eating and drinking, pleasuring and merrymaking. Meanwhile, lsfahand the Wazir wrote a letter and sent it to all the Emirs, acquainting them with that which had betided him from King Azadbakht and how he had forced his daughter, adding, “And indeed he will do with you more than he hath done with me.” When the letter reached the chiefs,[136] they all assembled together to Isfahand and said to him, “What was his affair?”[137] Accordingly he discovered to them the matter of his daughter and they all agreed, of one accord, to strive for the slaughter of the king; and, taking horse with their troops, they set out to seek him. Azadbakht knew naught till the noise of the revolt beset his capital city, when he said to his wife Bahrjaur, “How shall we do?” She answered, “Thou knowest best and I am at thy commandment;” so he bade fetch two swift horses and bestrode one himself, whilst his wife mounted the other. Then they took what they could of gold and went forth, flying through the night to the desert of Karmбn;[138] while Isfahand entered the city and made himself king. Now King Azadbakht’s wife was big with child and the labour pains took her in the mountain; so they alighted at the foot, by a spring of water, and she bare a boy as he were the moon. Bahrjaur his mother pulled off a coat of gold-woven brocade and wrapped the child therein, and they passed the night in that place, she giving him the breast till morning. Then said the king to her, “We are hampered by this child and cannot abide here nor can we carry him with us; so methinks we had better leave him in this stead and wend our ways, for Allah is able to send him one who shall take him and rear him.” So they wept over him with exceeding sore weeping and left him beside the fountain, wrapped in that coat of brocade: then they laid at his head a thousand gold pieces in a bag and mounting their horses, fared forth and fled. Now, by the ordinance of the Most High Lord, a company of highway robbers fell upon a caravan hard by that mountain and despoiled them of what was with them of merchandise. Then they betook themselves to the highlands, so they might share their loot, and looking at the foot thereof, espied the coat of brocade: so they descended to see what it was, and behold, it was a boy wrapped therein and the gold laid at his head. They marvelled and said, “Praised be Allah! By what misdeed cometh this child here?”

Thereupon they divided the money between them and the captain[139] of the highwaymen took the boy and made him his son and fed him with sweet milk and dates,[140] till he came to his house, when he appointed a nurse for rearing him. Meanwhile, King Azadbakht and his wife stayed not in their flight till they came to the court of the King of Fars, whose name was Kisra[141] . When they presented themselves to him, he honoured them with all honour and entertained them with handsomest entertainment, and Azadbakht told him his tale from incept to conclusion. So he gave him a mighty power and wealth galore and he abode with him some days till he was rested, when he made ready with his host and setting out for his own dominions, waged war with Isfahand and falling in upon the capital, defeated the whilome Minister and slew him. Then he entered the city and sat down on the throne of his kingship; and whenas he was rested and his kingdom waxed peaceful for him, he despatched messengers to the mountain aforesaid in search of the child; but they returned and informed the king that they had not found him. As time ran on, the boy, the son of the king, grew up and fell to cutting the way[142] with the highwaymen, and they used to carry him with them, whenever they went banditing. They sallied forth one day upon a caravan in the land of Sistan, and there were in that caravan strong men and valiant, and with them a mighty store of merchandise. Now they had heard that in that land banditti abounded: so they gathered themselves together and gat ready their weapons and sent out spies, who returned and gave them news of the plunderers. Accordingly, they prepared for battle, and when the robbers drew near the caravan, they fell upon them and the twain fought a sore fight. At last the caravan-folk overmastered the highwaymen by dint of numbers, and slew some of them, whilst the others fled. They also took the boy, the son of King Azadbakht, and seeing him as he were the moon, a model of beauty and loveliness, bright of face and engraced with grace, asked him, “Who is thy father, and how camest thou with these banditti?” And he answered, saying, “I am the son of the Captain of the highwaymen.” So they seized him and carried him to the capital of his sire, King Azadbakht. When they reached the city, the king heard of their coming and commanded that they should attend him with what befitted of their goods. Accordingly they presented themselves before him, and the boy with them, whom when the king saw, he asked them, “To whom belongeth this boy?” and they answered, “O King, we were going on such a road, when there came out upon us a sort of robbers; so we fought them and beat them off and took this boy prisoner. Then we questioned him, saying, Who is thy sire? and he replied, I am the son of the robber-captain.” Quoth the king, “I would fain have this boy;” and quoth the captain of the caravan, “Allah maketh thee gift of him, O king of the age, and we all are thy slaves.” Then the king (who was not aware that the boy was his son) dismissed the caravan and bade carry the lad into his palace, and he became as one of the pages, while his sire the king still knew not that he was his child. As the days rolled on, the king observed in him good breeding and understanding and handiness galore and he pleased him; so he committed his treasuries to his charge and shortened the Wazir’s hand therefrom, commanding that naught should be taken forth save by leave of the youth. On this wise he abode a number of years and the king saw in him only good conduct and the habit of righteousness. Now the treasuries had been aforetime in the hands of the Wazirs to do with them whatso they would, and when they came under the youth’s hand, that of the Ministers was shortened from them, and he became dearer than a son to the king, who could not support being separated from him. When the Wazirs saw this, they were jealous of him and envied him and sought a device against him whereby they might oust him from the King’s eye,[143] but found no means. At last, when Fate descended,[144] it chanced that the youth one day of the days drank wine and became drunken and wandered from his right wits; so he fell to going round about within the king’s palace and Destiny led him to the lodging of the women, in which there was a little sleeping chamber, where the king lay with his wife. Thither came the youth and entering the dormitory, found there a spread couch, to wit, a sleeping place: so he cast himself on the bed, marvelling at the paintings that were in the chamber, which was lighted by one waxen taper. Presently he fell asleep and slumbered heavily till eventide, when there came a handmaid, bringing with her as of wont all the dessert, eatables and drinkables, usually made ready for the king and his wife, and seeing the youth lying on his back (and none knowing of his case and he in his drunkenness unknowing where he was), thought that he was the king asleep on his couch; so she set the censing-vessel and laid the perfumes by the bedding, then shut the door and went her ways. Soon after this, the king arose from the wine-chamber and taking his wife by the hand, repaired with her to the chamber in which he slept. He opened the door and entered when, lo and behold! he saw the youth lying on the bed, whereupon he turned to his wife and said to her, “What doth this youth here? This fellow cometh not hither save on thine account.” Said she. “I have no knowledge of him.” Hereupon the youth awoke and seeing the king, sprang up and prostrated himself before him, and Azadbakht said to him, “O vile of birth,[145] O traitor of unworth, what hath driven thee to my dwelling?” And he bade imprison him in one place and the Queen in another.

The First Day

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Of the Uselessness of Endeavour Against Persistent Ill Fortune.

When the morning morrowed and the king sat on the throne of his kingship, he summoned his Grand Wazir, the Premier of all his Ministers, and said to him, "How seest thou the deed this robber-youth hath done?[146] He hath entered my Harim and lain down on my couch and I fear lest there be an object between him and the woman. What deemest thou of the affair?" Said the Wazir, "Allah prolong the king's continuance! What sawest thou in this youth?[147] Is he not ignoble of birth, the son of thieves? Needs must a thief revert to his vile origin, and whoso reareth the serpent's brood shall get of them naught but biting. As for the woman, she is not at fault; since from time ago until now, nothing appeared from her except good breeding and modest bearing; and at this present, an the king give me leave, I will go to her and question her, so I may discover to thee the affair." The king gave him leave for this and the Wazir went to the Queen and said to her, "I am come to thee, on account of a grave shame, and I would fain have thee soothfast with me in speech and tell me how came the youth into the sleeping-chamber." Quoth she, "I have no knowledge whatsoever of it, no, none at all," and sware to him a binding oath to that intent, whereby he knew that the woman had no inkling of the affair, nor was in fault and said to her, "I will show thee a sleight, wherewith thou mayst acquit thyself and thy face be whitened before the king." Asked she, "What is it?" and he answered, "When the king calleth for thee and questioneth thee of this, say thou to him, 'Yonder youth saw me in the boudoir-chamber and sent me a message, saying, 'I will give thee an hundred grains of gem for whose price money may not suffice, so thou wilt suffer me to enjoy thee.' I laughed at him who bespake me with such proposal and rebuffed him; but he sent again to me, saying, 'An thou consent not thereto, I will come one of the nights, drunken, and enter and lie down in the sleeping-chamber, and the king will see me and slay me; so wilt thou be put to shame and thy face shall be blackened with him and thine honour dishonoured.' Be this thy saying to the king, and I will fare to him forthright and repeat this to him." Quoth the Queen, "And I also will say thus." Accordingly, the Minister returned to the king and said to him, "Verily, this youth hath merited grievous pains and penalties after the abundance of thy bounty, and no kernel which is bitter can ever wax sweet;[148] but, as for the woman, I am certified that there is no default in her." Thereupon he repeated to the king the story which he had taught the Queen, which when Azadbakht heard, he rent his raiment and bade the youth be brought. So they fetched him and set him before the king, who bade summon the Sworder, and the folk all fixed their eyes upon the youth, to the end that they might see what the Sovran should do with him. Then said Azadbakht to him (and his words were words of anger and the speech of the youth was reverent and well-bred), "I bought thee with my money and looked for fidelity from thee, wherefore I chose thee over all my Grandees and Pages and made thee Keeper of my treasuries. Why, then, hast thou outraged mine honour and entered my house and played traitor with me and tookest thou no thought of all I have done thee of benefits?" Replied the youth, "O king, I did this not of my choice and freewill and I had no business in being there; but, of the lack of my luck, I was driven thither, for that Fate was contrary and fair Fortune failed me. Indeed, I had endeavoured with all endeavour that naught of foulness should come forth me and I kept watch and ward over myself, lest default foreshow in me; and none may withstand an ill chance, nor doth striving profit against adverse Destiny, as appeareth by the example of the merchant who was stricken with ill luck and his endeavour availed him naught and he fell by the badness of his fortune." The king asked, "What is the story of the merchant and how was his luck changed upon him by the sorriness of his doom?" Answered the youth, "May Allah prolong the king's continuance!" and began

The Story of the Merchant Who Lost his Luck.[149]

There was once a merchant man, who prospered in trade, and at one time his every dirham won him fifty. Presently, his luck turned against him and he knew it not; so he said to himself, "I have wealth galore, yet do I toil and travel from country to country; so better had I abide in my own land and rest myself in my own house from this travail and trouble and sell and buy at home." Then he made two parts of his money, and with one bought wheat in summer, saying, "Whenas winter cometh, I shall sell it at a great profit." But, when the cold set in wheat fell to half the price for which he had purchased it, whereat he was concerned with sore chagrin and left it till the next year. However, the price then fell yet lower and one of his intimates said to him, "Thou hast no luck in this wheat; so do thou sell it at whatsoever price." Said the merchant, "Ah, long have I profited! so 'tis allowable that I lose this time. Allah is all-knowing! An it abide with me ten full years, I will not sell it save for a gaining bargain."[150] Then he walled up in his anger the granary-door with clay, and by the ordinance of Allah Almighty, there came a great rain and descended from the terrace-roofs of the house wherein was the wheat so that the grain rotted; and the merchant had to pay the porters from his purse five hundred dirhams for them to carry it forth and cast it without the city, the smell of it having become fulsome. So his friend said to him, "How often did I tell thee thou hadst no luck in wheat? But thou wouldst not give ear to my speech, and now it behoveth thee to go to the astrologer[151] and question him of thine ascendant." Accordingly the trader betook himself to the astrologer and questioned him of his star, and astrophil said to him, "Thine ascendant is adverse. Put not forth thy hand to any business, for thou wilt not prosper thereby." However, he paid no heed to the astrologer's words and said in himself, "If I do my business, I am not afraid of aught." Then he took the other half of his money, after he had spent the first in three years, and builded him a ship, which he loaded with a cargaison of whatso seemed good to him and all that was with him and embarked on the sea, so he might voyage questing gain. The ship remained in port some days, till he should be certified whither he would wend, and he said, “I will ask the traders what this merchandise profiteth and in what land ’tis wanted and how much can it gain.” They directed him to a far country, where his dirham should produce an hundredfold. So he set sail and made for the land in question; but, as he went, there blew on him a furious gale, and the ship foundered. The merchant saved himself on a plank and the wind cast him up, naked as he was, on the sea-shore, where stood a town hard by. He praised Allah and gave Him thanks for his preservation; then, seeing a great village nigh hand, he betook himself thither and saw, seated therein, a very old man, whom he acquainted with his case and that which had betided him. The Shaykh grieved for him with sore grieving, when he heard his tale and set food before him. He ate of it and the old man said to him, “Tarry here with me, so I may make thee my overseer[152] and factor over a farm I have here, and thou shalt have of me five dirhams a day.” Answered the merchant, “Allah make fair thy reward, and requite thee with His boons and bounties.” So he abode in this employ, till he had sowed and reaped and threshed and winnowed, and all was clean in his hand and the Shaykh appointed neither agent nor inspector, but relied utterly upon him. Then the merchant bethought himself and said, “I doubt me the owner of this grain will never give me my due; so the better rede were to take of it after the measure of my wage; and if he give me my right, I will return to him that I have taken.” So he laid hands upon the grain, after the measure of that which fell to him, and hid it in a hiding place. Then he carried the rest and meted it out to the old man, who said to him “Come, take thy wage, for which I conditioned with thee, and sell the grain and buy with the price clothes and what not else; and though thou abide with me ten years, yet shalt thou still have this hire and I will acquit it to thee on this wise.” Quoth the merchant in himself, “Indeed, I have done a foul deed by taking it without his permission.” Then he went to fetch that which he had hidden of the grain, but found it not and returned, perplexed, sorrowful, to the Shaykh, who asked him, “What aileth thee to be mournful?” and he answered, “Methought thou wouldst not pay me my due; so I took of the grain, after the measure of my hire; and now thou hast paid me all my right and I went to bring back to thee that which I had hidden from thee, but found it gone, for those who had come upon it have stolen it." The Shaykh was wroth, when he heard these words, and said to the merchant, "There is no device against ill luck! I had given thee this but, of the sorriness of thy doom and thy fortune, thou hast done this deed, O oppressor of thine own self! Thou deemedst I would not fulfil to thee thy wage; but, by Allah, nevermore will I give thee aught." Then he drove him away from him. So the merchant went forth, woeful, grieving, weeping-eyed, and wandered along the sea-shore, till he came to a sort of duckers[153] diving in the sea for pearls. They saw him weeping and wailing and said to him, "What is thy case and what garreth thee shed tears?" So he acquainted them with his history, from incept to conclusion, whereby the duckers knew him and asked him "Art thou Such-an-one, son of Such-an-one?" He answered "Yes;" whereupon they condoled with him and wept sore for him and said to him, "Abide here till we dive upon thy luck this next time and whatso betideth us shall be between us and thee."[154] Accordingly, they ducked and brought up ten oyster-shells, in each two great unions: whereat they marvelled and said to him,"By Allah, thy luck hath re-appeared and thy good star is in the ascendant!" Then the pearl-fishers gave him the ten pearls and said to him, "Sell two of them and make them thy stock-in-trade: and hide the rest against the time of thy straitness." So he took them, joyful and contented, and applied himself to sewing eight of them in his gown, keeping the two others in his mouth; but a thief saw him and went and advertised his fellows of him; whereupon they gathered together upon him, and took his gown and departed from him. When they were gone away, he arose, saying, "The two unions I have will suffice me," and made for the nearest city, where he brought out the pearls for sale. Now as Destiny would have it, a certain jeweller of the town had been robbed of ten unions, like those which were with the merchant; so, when he saw the two pearls in the broker's hand, he asked him, "To whom do these belong?" and the broker answered, "To yonder man." The jeweller, seeing the merchant in pauper case and clad in tattered clothes, suspected him and said to him, "Where be the other eight pearls?" The merchant thought he asked him of those which were in the gown, whenas the man had purposed only to surprise him into confession, and replied, "The thieves stole them from me." When the jeweller heard his reply, he was certified that it was the wight who had taken his good; so he laid hold of him and haling him before the Chief of Police, said to him, “This is the man who stole my unions: I have found two of them upon him and he confesseth to the other eight.” Now the Wali knew of the theft of the pearls; so he bade throw the merchant into jail. Accordingly they imprisoned him and whipped him, and he lay in trunk a whole year, till, by the ordinance of Allah Almighty, the Chief of Police arrested one of the divers aforesaid, and imprisoned him in the prison where the merchant was jailed. The ducker saw him and knowing him, questioned him of his case; whereupon he told them his tale, and that which had befallen him; and the diver marvelled at the lack of his luck. So, when he came forth of the prison, he acquainted the Sultan with the merchant’s case and told him that it was he who had given him the pearls. The Sultan bade bring him forth of the jail, and asked him of his story, whereupon he told him all that had befallen him, and the Sovran pitied him and assigned him a lodging in his own palace, together with pay and allowances for his support. Now the lodging in question adjoined the king’s house, and whilst the merchant was rejoicing in this and saying, “Verily, my luck hath returned, and I shall live in the shadow of this king the rest of my life,” he espied an opening walled up with clay and stones. So he cleared the opening the better to see what was behind it, and behold, it was a window giving upon the lodging of the king’s women. When he saw this, he was startled and affrighted and rising in haste, fetched clay and stopped it up again. But one of the eunuchs[155] saw him, and suspecting him, repaired to the Sultan, and told him of this. So he came and seeing the stones pulled out, was wroth with the merchant and said to him, “Be this my reward from thee, that thou seekest to unveil my Harim?” Thereupon he bade pluck out his eyes; and they did as he commanded. The merchant took his eyes in his hand and said, “How long, O star of ill-omen, wilt thou afflict me? First my wealth and now my life!” And he bewailed himself, saying, “Striving profiteth me naught against evil fortune. The Compassionate aided me not, and effort was worse than useless.”[156] “On like wise, O king,” continued the youth, “whilst fortune was favourable to me, all that I did came to good; but now that it hath turned against me, everything turneth to mine ill.” When the youth had made an end of his tale, the king’s anger subsided a little, and he said, “Return him to the prison, for the day draweth to an end, and to-morrow we will look into his affair, and punish him for his ill-deeds.”

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The Second Day.

Of Looking to the Ends of Affairs.

Whenit was the next day, the second of the king’s Wazirs, whose name was Baharъn, came in to him and said, “Allah advance the king! This deed which yonder youth hath done is a grave matter, and a foul misdeed and a heinous against the household of the king.” So Azadbakht bade fetch the youth, because of the Minister’s speech; and when he came into the presence, said to him, “Woe to thee, O youth! There is no help but that I do thee die by the dreadest of deaths, for indeed thou hast committed a grave crime, and I will make thee a warning to the folk.” The youth replied, “O king, hasten not, for the looking to the ends of affairs is a column of the kingdom, and a cause of continuance and assurance for the kingship. Whoso looketh not to the issues of actions, there befalleth him that which befel the merchant, and whoso looketh to the consequences of actions, there betideth him of joyance that which betideth the merchant’s son.” The king asked, “And what is the story of the merchant and his sons?” and the youth answered, “Hear, O king,

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The Tale of the Merchant and his Sons.[157]

There was once a merchant, who had abundant wealth, and a wife to boot. He set out one day on a business journey, leaving his wife big with child, and said to her, “Albeit, I now leave thee, yet I will return before the birth of the babe, Inshallah!” Then he farewelled her and setting out, ceased not faring from country to country till he came to the court of one of the kings and foregathered with him. Now this king needed one who should order his affairs and those of his kingdom and seeing the merchant wellbred and intelligent, he required him to abide at court and entreated him honourably. After some years, he sought his Sovran’s leave to go to his own house, but the king would not consent to this; whereupon he said to him, “O king, suffer me go and see my children and come again.” So he granted him permission for this and, taking surety of him for his return, gave him a purse, wherein were a thousand gold dinars. Accordingly, the merchant embarked in a ship and set sail, intending for his mother-land. On such wise fared it with the trader; but as regards his wife, news had reached her that her husband had accepted service with King Such-an-one; so she arose and taking her two sons (for she had borne twins in his absence), set out seeking those parts. As Fate would have it, they happened upon an island, and her husband came thither that very night in the ship. So the woman said to her children, “The ship cometh from the country where your father is: hie ye to the sea-shore, that ye may enquire of him.” Accordingly, they repaired to the sea-shore and going up into the ship, fell to playing about it and busied themselves with their play till evening evened. Now the merchant their sire lay asleep in the ship, and the noisy disport of the boys troubled him; whereupon he rose to call out to them “Silence” and let the purse with the thousand dinars fall among the bales of merchandise. He sought for it and finding it not, buffeted his head and seized upon the boys, saying, “None took the purse but you: ye were playing all about the bales, so ye might steal somewhat, and there was none here but you twain.” Then he took his staff, and laying hold of the children, fell to beating them and flogging them, whilst they wept, and the crew came round about them saying, “The boys of this island are all rogues and robbers.” Then, of the greatness of the merchant’s anger, he swore an oath that, except they brought out the purse, he would drown them in the sea; so when by reason of their denial his oath demanded the deed, he took the two boys and binding them each to a bundle of reeds, cast them into the water. Presently, finding that they tarried from her, the mother of the two boys went searching for them, till she came to the ship and fell to saying,”Who hath seen two boys of mine? Their fashion is so and so and their age thus and thus.” When the crew heard her words, they said, “This is the description of the two boys who were drowned in the sea but now.” Their mother hearing this began calling on them and crying, “Alas, my anguish for your loss, O my sons! Where was the eye of your father this day, that it might have seen you?” Then one of the sailors asked her, “Whose wife art thou?” and she answered, “I am the wife of Such-an-one the trader. I was on my way to him, and there hath befallen me this calamity.” When the merchant heard her words, he knew her and rising to his feet, rent his raiment and beat his head and said to his wife, “By Allah, I have destroyed my children with mine own hand! This is the end of whoso looketh not to the endings of affairs. This is his reward who taketh not time to reflect.” Then he took to wailing and weeping over them, he and his wife, and he said to his shipmates, “By Allah, I shall never enjoy my life, till I light upon news of them!” And he began to go round about the sea, in quest of his sons, but found them not. Meanwhile, the wind carried the two children from the ship towards the land, and cast them up on the sea-shore. As for one of them, a company of the guards of the king of those parts found him and carried him to their lord, who marvelled at him with exceeding marvel and adopted him, giving out to the folk that he was his own son, whom he had hidden,[158] of his love for him. So the folk rejoiced in him with joy exceeding, for their lord’s sake, and the king appointed him his heir-apparent and the inheritor of his kingdom. On this wise a number of years passed, till the king died and they enthroned the youth sovran in his stead, when he sat down on the seat of his kingship and his estate flourished and his affairs prospered with all regularity. Meanwhile, his father and mother had gone round about, in quest of him and his brother, all the islands of the sea, hoping that the tide might have cast them up, but found no trace of them; so they despaired of them and took up their abode in a certain of the islands. One day, the merchant, being in the market, saw a broker, and in his hand a boy he was crying for sale, and said in himself, "I will buy yonder boy, so I may solace myself with him for my sons."[159] So he bought him and bore him to his house; and, when his wife saw him, she cried out and said, "By Allah, this is my son!" Accordingly his father and mother rejoiced in him with exceeding joy and asked him of his brother; but he answered, "The waves parted us and I knew not how it went with him." Therewith his father and mother consoled themselves with him and on this wise a number of years passed by. Now the merchant and his wife had homed them in a city of the land where their other son was king, and when the boy they had recovered grew up, his father assigned unto him merchandise, to the end that he might travel therewith. Upon this he fared forth and entered the city wherein his brother ruled and anon news reached the king that a merchant had come thither with merchandise befitting royalties; so he sent for him and the young trader obeyed the summons and going in to him, sat down before him. Neither of them knew the other; but blood moved between them[160] and the king said to the merchant youth, "I desire of thee that thou tarry with me and I will exalt thy station and give thee all that thou requirest and cravest." Accordingly, he abode with him awhile, never quitting him; and when he saw that he would not suffer him to depart from him, he sent to his father and mother and bade them remove thither to him. Hereat they resolved upon moving to that island, and their son still increased in honour with the king, albeit he knew not that he was his brother. Now it chanced one night that the king sallied forth without the city and drank and the wine got the mastery of him and he became drunken. So, of the youth's fear for his safety, he said, "I will keep watch myself over the king this night, seeing that he deserveth this from me, for that which he hath done with me of kindly deeds;" and he arose forthright and baring his brand, stationed himself at the door of the king's pavilion. But one of the royal pages saw him standing there, with the drawn sword in his hand, and he was of those who envied him his favour with the king; therefore, he said to him. "Why dost thou on this wise at this time and in the like of this place?” Said the youth, “I am keeping watch and ward over the king myself, in requital of his bounties to me.” The page said no more to him; however, when it was morning, he acquainted a number of the king’s servants with the matter, and they said, “This is an opportunity for us. Come, let us assemble together and acquaint the king therewith, so the young merchant may lose regard with him[161] and he rid us of him and we be at rest from him.” So they assembled together and going in to the king, said to him, “We have a warning wherewith we would warn thee.” Quoth he, “And what is your warning?” and quoth they, “This youth, the trader, whom thou hast taken into favour and whose rank thou hast exalted above the chiefest of thy lords, we saw yesterday bare his brand and design to fall upon thee, to the end that he might slay thee.” Now when the king heard this, his colour changed and he said to them, “Have ye proof of this?” They rejoined, “What proof wouldst thou have? An thou desirest this, feign thyself drunken again this night and lie down as if asleep, and privily watch him and thou wilt see with thine eyes all that we have mentioned to thee.” Then they went to the youth and said to him, “Know that the king thanketh thee for thy dealing yesternight and exceedeth in commendation of thy good deed;” and they prompted him again to do the like. Accordingly, when the next night came, the king abode on wake, watching the youth; and as for the latter, he went to the door of the pavilion and unsheathing his scymitar, stood in the doorway. When the king saw him do thus, he was sore disquieted and bade seize him and said to him, “Is this my reward from thee? I showed thee favour more than any else and thou wouldst do with me this abominable deed.” Then arose two of the king’s pages and said to him, “O our lord, an thou order it, we will smite his neck.” But the king said, “Haste in killing is a vile thing, for ’tis a grave[162] matter; the quick we can kill, but the killed we cannot quicken, and needs must we look to the end of affairs. The slaying of this youth will not escape us.”[163] Therewith he bade imprison him, whilst he himself went back to the city and, his duties done, fared forth to the chase. Then he returned to town and forgot the youth; so the pages went in to him and said to him, “O king, an thou keep silence concerning yonder youth, who designed to slaughter thee, all thy servants will presume upon the king’s majesty, and indeed the folk talk of this matter." Hereat the king waxed wroth and cried, "Fetch him hither;" and bade the headsman strike off his head. So they brought the youth and bound his eyes; and the sworder stood at his head and said to the king, "By thy leave, O my lord, I will smite his neck." But the king cried, "Stay, till I look into his affair. Needs must I put him to death and the dispatching of him will not escape me." Then he restored him to the prison and there he abode till it should be the king's will to do him die. Presently, his parents heard of the matter; whereupon his father arose and going up to the palace, wrote a letter and presented it to the king, who read it, and behold, therein was written, saying, "Have ruth on me, so may Allah have ruth on thee, and hasten not in the slaughter of my son; for indeed I acted hastily in a certain affair and drowned his brother in the sea, and to this day I bemourn him. An thou must needs kill him, kill me in his stead." Therewith the old merchant, weeping bitterly, prostrated himself before the king, who said to him, "Tell me thy tale." Said the merchant, "O my lord, this youth had a brother and I in my haste cast the twain into the sea." And he related to him his story, first and last, whereupon the king cried with a mighty loud cry and casting himself down from the throne, embraced his father and brother and said to the merchant, "By Allah, thou art my very father and this is my brother and thy wife is our mother." And they abode weeping, all three of them. Then the king acquainted his people with the matter and said to them, "O folk, how deem ye of my looking to the consequences of action?" and they all marvelled at his wisdom and foresight. Then he turned to his sire and said to him, "Hadst thou looked to the issue of thine affair and made due delay in whatso thou didst, there had not betided thee this repentance and chagrin all this time." Thereupon he sent for his mother and they rejoiced one in other and lived all their days in joy and gladness. "What then" (continued the young treasurer), "is more grievous than the lack of looking to the ends of things? Wherefore hasten thou not in the slaying of me, lest penitence betide thee and sore chagrin." When the king heard this, he said, "Return him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his affair; for that deliberation in such is advisable and the slaughter of this youth shall not escape us."

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The Third Day.

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Of the Advantages of Patience.[164]

When it was the third day, the third Wazir came in to the king and said to him, “O king, delay not the matter of this youth, because his deed hath caused us fall into the mouths of folk, and it behoveth that thou slay him forthright, that the talk may be cut from us and it be not said, ‘The king saw on his bed a man with his wife and spared him.’” The king was chagrined by these words and bade bring the youth. Accordingly, they fetched him in fetters, and indeed the king’s anger was upstirred against him by the Minister’s speech and he was troubled; so he said to him, “O base of birth, thou hast dishonoured us and marred our mention, and needs must I do away thy life from the world.” Quoth the youth, “O king, make use of patience in all thine affairs, so wilt thou win to thy wish, for that Allah Almighty hath appointed the issue of long-suffering to be in abounding good, and indeed by patience Abъ Sбbir ascended from the pit and sat down upon the throne.” Asked the king, “Who was Abъ Sбbir, and what is his tale?” and the youth answered, saying, “Hear thou, O king,

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The Story of Abu Sabir.

There was once a man, a village headman,[165] Abъ Sabнr hight, and he had much black cattle and a buxom wife, who had borne him two sons. They abode in a certain hamlet and there used to come thither a lion and rend and devour Abu Sabir’s herd, so that the most part thereof was wasted and his wife said to him one day, “This lion hath wasted the greater part of our property. Arise, mount thy horse and take thy host and do thy best to kill him, so we may be at rest from him.” But Abu Sabir said, “Have patience, O woman, for the issue of patience is praised. This lion it is which transgresseth against us, and the transgressor, perforce must Almighty Allah destroy him. Indeed, ’tis our long-suffering that shall slay him,[166] and he that doth evil needs must it recoil upon him.” A few days after, the king went forth one morning to hunt and falling in with the lion, he and his host, gave chase to him and ceased not pursuit till they slew him. This news reached Abъ Sбbir who improved the occasion to his wife, “Said I not to thee, O woman, that whoso doth evil, it shall recoil upon him? Haply an I sought to slay the lion myself, I had not prevailed against him, and this is the issue of patience.” It befel, after this, that a man was slain in Abъ Sбbir’s village; wherefore the Sultan bade plunder the village, and they spoiled the patient one’s goods with the rest. Thereupon his wife said to him, “All the king’s officers know thee; so do thou prefer thy plaint to the sovran, that he may bid thy beasts to be restored to thee.” But he said to her, “O woman, said I not to thee that he who worketh wrong shall be wronged? Indeed, the king hath done evil, and right soon he shall suffer the issues of his deed, for whoso taketh the goods of the folk, needs must his goods be taken.” A man of his neighbours heard his speech, and he was an envier of his; so he went to the Sultan and acquainted him therewith, whereupon the king sent and plundered all the rest of his goods and drave him forth from the village, and his wife and family with him. They went wandering in the waste grounds about the hamlet and his wife said to him, “All that hath befallen us cometh of thy slowness in affairs and thy helplessness.” But he said to her, “Have patience, for the issue of patience is good.”

Then they walked on a little way, and thieves met them and despoiling them of whatso remained with them, stripped them of their raiment and took from them the two children; whereupon the woman wept and said to her husband, “Hearkye, my good man, put away from thee this folly and up with us to follow the thieves, so, peradventure they may have compassion on us and restore the children to us.” He replied, “O woman, have patience, for he who doth evil shall be requited with evil and his frowardness shall revert upon him. Were I to follow them, belike one of them would take his sword and smite my neck and slay me; but have patience, for the issue of patience is praised.” Then they fared on till they made a village[167] in the land of Kirman, and by it a river of water; so the man said to his wife, “Tarry thou here, whilst I enter the village and look us out a place wherein we may home ourselves.” And he left her by the water and entered the village. Presently, up came a horseman in quest of water, wherewith to water his horse: he saw the woman and she was pleasing in his eyes; so quoth he to her, “Arise, mount with me and I will take thee to wife and entreat thee kindly.” Quoth she, “Spare me, so may Allah spare thee! Indeed I have a husband.” But he drew his dudgeon and said to her, “An thou obey me not, I will smite thee and slay thee.” When she saw his frowardness, she wrote on the ground in the sand with her finger, saying, “O Abъ Sбbir, thou hast not ceased to be patient, till thy good is gone from thee and thy children and now thy wife, who was more precious in thy sight than everything and than all thy monies, and indeed thou abidest in thy sorrow the whole of thy life long, so thou mayest see what thy patience will profit thee.” Then the horseman took her, and setting her behind him, went his way. As for Abъ Sбbir, when he returned, he saw not his wife but he read what was writ upon the ground, wherefore he wept and sat awhile sorrowing. Then said he to himself, “O Abъ Sбbir, it behoveth thee to be patient, for haply there shall betide thee an affair yet sorer than this and more grievous;” and he went forth a-following his face,[168] like to one love-distraught and passion-madded, till he came to a gang of labourers working upon the palace of the king, by way of forced labour.[169] When the overseers saw him, they laid hold of him and said to him, “Work thou with these folk at the palace of the king; else we will imprison thee for life.” So he fell to working with them as a labourer and every day they gave him a bannock of bread. He wrought with them a month’s space, till it chanced that one of the labourers mounted a ladder and falling, brake his leg; whereupon he cried out and shed tears. Quoth Abъ Sбbir to him, “Have patience and weep not; for in thine endurance thou shalt find ease.” But the man said to him, “How long shall I have patience?” And he answered, saying, “Long-suffering bringeth a man forth of the bottom of the pit and seateth him on the throne of the kingdom.” It so fortuned that the king was seated at the lattice, hearkening to their talk, and Abъ Sбbir’s words angered him for the moment; wherefore he bade bring him before him and they brought him forthright. Now there was in the king’s palace an underground dungeon and therein a vast silo[170] and a deep, into which the king caused cast Abъ Sбbir, saying to him, “O little of wit, soon shall we see how thou wilt come forth of the pit to the throne of the kingdom.” Then he used continuously to come and stand at the mouth of the pit and say, “O little of wit, O Abъ Sбbir,[171] I see thee not come forth of the pit and sit down on the king’s throne!” And he assigned him each day two bannocks of bread, whilst Abъ Sбbir kept silence and spake not, but patiently bore whatso betided him. Now the king had a brother, whom he had imprisoned in that pit of old time, and he had died there; but the folk of the realm deemed him still alive, and when his durance grew long, the courtiers of the king used to talk of this and of the tyranny of their liege Lord, and the bruit spread abroad that the sovran was a tyrant, so they fell upon him one day and slew him. Then they sought the silo and brought out therefrom Abъ Sбbir, deeming him the king’s brother, for that he was the nearest of folk to him in favour and the likest, and he had been long in the pit. So they doubted not but that he was the Prince and said to him, “Reign thou in thy brother’s room, for we have slain him and thou art sovran in his stead.” But Abъ Sбbir was silent and spoke not a word;[172] and he knew that this was the result of his patience. Then he arose and sitting down on the king’s throne, donned the royal dress and dispensed justice and equity, and affairs prospered; wherefore the lieges obeyed him and the subjects inclined to him and many were his soldiers. Now the king, who erst had plundered Abъ Sбbir’s goods and driven him forth of his village, had an enemy; and the foe mounted horse against him and overcame him and captured his capital; wherefore he betook him to flight and came to Abъ Sбbir's city, craving support of him and seeking that he should succour him. He knew not that the king of the city was the headman whom he had spoiled; so he presented himself before him and made complaint to him; but Abъ Sбbir knew him and said to him, "This is somewhat of the issue of patience. Allah the Most High hath given me power over thee." Then he commanded his guards to plunder the unjust king and his suite; so they spoiled them and stripping them of their clothes, put them forth of his country. When Abъ Sбbir's troops saw this, they marvelled and said, "What be this deed the king doth? There cometh a king to him, craving protection, and he spoileth him! This is not the fashion of kings." But they dared not speak of this. Presently, news came to the king of highwaymen in his land; so he set out in quest of them and ceased not to follow after them, till he seized on them all. and behold, they were the very thieves who had plundered him and his wife by the way and had carried off his children. Accordingly he bade bring them before him, and when they came into his presence, he questioned them, saying, "Where are the two boys ye took on such a day?" Said they, "They are with us and we will present them to our lord the king for Mamelukes to serve him and give him wealth galore that we have gotten together and doff all we own and repent from lawlessness and fight in thy service." Abъ Sбbir, however, paid no heed to their words, and seized all their good and bade put them all to death. Furthermore. he took his two boys and rejoiced in them with exceeding joy, whereat the troops murmured among themselves, saying, "Verily, this is a greater tyrant than his brother! There cometh to him a gang of thieves, and they seek to repent and proffer two boys by way of peace-offering, and he taketh the two lads and all their good and slayeth them! Indeed this be violent oppression." After this came the horseman, who had seized Abъ Sбbir's wife, and complained of her to the king that she would not give him possession of her person, and solemnly declared that she was his wife. The king bade bring her before him, that he might hear her plea and pronounce judgment upon her. So the horseman came with her before him, and when the king saw her, he knew her and taking her from her ravisher, bade put him to death. Then he became aware of the troops, that they murmured against him and spake of him as a tyrant; so he turned to his courtiers and ministers and said to them, “As for me, by Allah of All-might,[173] I am not the king’s brother! Nay, I am but one whom the king imprisoned upon a word he heard from me and he used every day to come and taunt me therewith. Ye deem me the king’s brother; but I am Abъ Sabir and the Lord hath given me the kingship in virtue of my patience. As for the king who sought protection of me and I plundered him, ’twas he who first wronged me, for that he plundered me aforetime and drave me forth of my native land and banished me, without due cause; wherefore I requited him with that which he had done to me, in the way of lawful retribution. As for the highwaymen who proffered repentance, there was no repentance for them with me, because they began upon me with foul dealing and waylaid me by the road and despoiled me and seized my good and my sons, the two boys that I took of them, and those ye deemed Mamelukes are my very sons; so I avenged myself on the thieves of that which they did with me whilome and requited them with strict justice. As for the horseman whom I slew, this woman I took from him was my wife and he seized her by force, but Allah the Most High hath restored her to me; so this was my right, and my deed that I have done was righteous, albeit ye, judging by the externals of the matter, deemed that I had done this by way of tyranny.” When the folk heard these words, they marvelled and fell prostrate before him; and they redoubled in esteem for him and exceeding affection and sued pardon of him, admiring that which Allah had done with him and how He had given him the kingship by reason of his longsuffering and his patience and how he had raised himself by his endurance from the bottom of the pit to the throne of the kingdom, what while Allah cast down the late king from the throne into the pit.[174] Then Abъ S6bir foregathered with his wife and said to her, “How deemest thou of the fruit of patience and its sweetness and the fruit of haste and its bitterness? Verily, all that a man doth of good and evil, he shall assuredly encounter the same.” “On like wise, O king” (continued the young treasurer), “it besitteth thee to practice patience, whenever it is possible to thee, for that longsuffering is the wont of the noble, and it is the chiefest of their reliance, especially for kings.” When the king heard this from the youth, his wrath subsided; so he bade return him to the prison, and the folk dispersed that day.

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The Fourth Day.

Of the Ill Effects of Impatience.

When it was the fourth day, the fourth Wazir, whose name was Zъshбd,[175] made his appearance, and prostrating himself to his liege lord, said to him, “O king, let not the talk of yonder youth delude thee, for that he is not a truth-teller. As long as he shall remain alive, the folk will not leave talking nor will thy heart cease to be occupied with him.” Cried the king, “By Allah, thou sayst sooth and I will cause fetch him this day and slay him between my hands.” Then bade he bring the youth; so they fetched him in fetters and he said to him, “Woe to thee! Thinkest thou to appease my heart with thy prate, whereby the days are spent in talk? I mean to do thee die this day and be quit of thee.” Said the youth, “O king, ’tis in thy power to put me out of the world whenso thou wilt, but haste is the wont of the ignoble and patience the sign of the noble. An thou do me to death, thou wilt repent, and when thou desire to bring me back to life, thou wilt not be able. Indeed, whoso acteth hastily in an affair, there befalleth him what befel Bihzбd, son of the king.” Quoth the king, “And what is his tale?” Replied the treasurer, “O king, hear

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The Story of Prince Bihzad.[176]

There was once, of olden time, a king and he had a son Bihzad hight, there was not in his tide a fairer than he and he loved to fellow with the folk and to mix with the merchants and sit and talk with them. One day, as he was seated in an assembly, amongst a number of people, he heard them talking of his own beauty and loveliness, and saying, "There be not in his time a fairer than he." But one of the company said, "Indeed, the daughter of King Such-an-one is seemlier than he." When Bihzad heard this saying, his reason fled and his heart fluttered and he called the last speaker and said to him, "Repeat to me that which thou saidst and tell me the truth concerning her whom thou avouchest to be goodlier than I and whose daughter she is." Quoth the man, "She is the daughter of King Such-an-one;" whereupon Bihzad's heart clave to her and his colour changed. Presently the news reached his sire, who said to him, "O my son, this maiden to whom thy heart cleaveth is at thy command and we have power over her; so wait till I demand her in wedlock for thee." But the Prince said, "I will not wait." So the king hastened in the matter and sent to demand her of her sire, who required of him an hundred thousand dinars paid down to his daughter's dowry. Quoth Bihzad's father, "So be it," and weighed out what was in his treasuries, and there remained to his charge but a little of the dower.[177] So he said, "Have patience, O my son, till we gather together the rest of the money and send to fetch her for thee, since now she is become thine." Therewith the Prince waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and cried, "I will not have patience;" so he took his sword and his lance[178] and mounting his horse, went forth and fell to cutting the way.[179] It chanced one day that he fell upon a company of folk who overcame him by dint of numbers and taking him prisoner, pinioned him and carried him to the lord of that land wherein he was a-highwaying. This king saw his semblance and loveliness and misdoubting of him, said, "This be no robber's favour. Tell me truly, O youth, who thou art." Bihzad was ashamed to acquaint him with his condition and preferred death for himself; so he answered, "I am naught but a thief and a bandit." Quoth the king, "It behoveth us not to act hastily in the matter of this youth, but that we look into his affair, for that impatience gendereth penitence.” So he imprisoned him in his palace and assigned him one to serve him. Meanwhile the news spread abroad that Bihzad, son of the sovran, was lost, whereupon his father sent letters in quest of him to all the kings including him with whom he was imprisoned. When the letter reached the latter, he praised Almighty Allah for that he had not anyways hastened in Bihzad’s affair and bidding them bring him before himself, said to him, “Art thou minded to destroy thy life?” Quoth Bihzad, “I did this for fear of shame;” and the king said, “An thou fear shame, thou shouldst not practise haste in thy doings; knowest thou not that the fruit of impatience is repentance? Had we hasted, we also, like thee, had repented.” Then he conferred on him a robe of honour and engaged to him for the completion of the dowry and sent to his father, giving him the glad tidings and comforting his heart with news of his son’s safety; after which he said to Bihzad, “Arise, O my son, and go to thy sire.” Rejoined the Prince, “O king, complete thy kindness to me by hastening my going-in to my wife; for, an I go back to my sire, the time will be long till he send a messenger and he return, promising me dispatch.” The king laughed and marvelled at him and said to him, “I fear for thee from this precipitancy, lest thou come to shame and win not thy wish.” Then he gave him muchel of wealth and wrote him letters, commending him to the father of the Princess, and despatched him to them. When he drew near their country, the king came forth to meet him with the people of his realm and assigned him a fine lodging and bade hasten the going-in of his daughter to him, in compliance with the other king’s letter. He also advised the Prince’s father of his son’s coming and they busied themselves with the affair of the young lady. When it was the day of the bride’s going-in[180] Bihzad, of his impetuosity and lack of patience, betook himself to the wall, which was between himself and her lodging and wherein was a hole pierced, and of his haste looked through it, so he might see his bride. But her mother espied him[181] and this was grievous to her; so she took from one of the pages two red-hot iron spits and thrust them into the hole through which the Prince was looking. The spits ran into his eyes and put them out and he fell down fainting and the wedding-festival was changed to mourning and sore concern. “See, then, O king” (continued the youth), “the issue of the Prince’s haste and lack of deliberation, for indeed his impatience bequeathed him long penitence and his joy turned to annoy; and on like wise was it with the woman who hastened to put out his eyes and delayed not to deliberate. All this was the doing of haste; wherefore it behoveth the king not to be hasty in putting me to death, for that I am under the hold of his hand, and whatso time thou desirest my slaughter, it shall not escape thee.” When the king heard this his anger subsided and he said, “Return him back to the prison till to-morrow, so we may look into his case.”

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The Fifth Day.

Of the Issues of Good and Evil Actions.

When it was the fifth day, the fifth Wazir, whose name was Jahrbaur,[182] came in to the king and prostrating himself before him. said, “O king, it behoveth thee, an thou see or hear one look on thy house,[183] that thou pluck out his eyes. How then should it be with him whom thou sawest a-middlemost thy palace and on thy royal bed, and he suspected with thy Harim, and not of thy lineage or of thy kindred? So do thou away this shame by putting him to death. Indeed, we urge thee not to this, except for the assurance of thine empire and of our zeal for thy loyal counselling and of our affection to thee. How can it be lawful that this youth should live for a single hour?” Therewith the king was filled with fury and cried, “Bring him forthright.” So they fetched the youth whom they set before him in fetters, and the king said to him, “Woe to thee! Thou hast sinned a great sin and the time of thy survival hath been long;[184] but needs must we put thee to death, because there is no ease for us in thy life till we take it.” Quoth the youth, “Know O king, that I, by Allah, am guiltless, and by reason of this I hope for life, for that he who is innocent of all offence goeth not in fear of pains and penalties, neither greateneth his mourning and his concern; but whoso hath sinned, needs must his sin be expiated upon him, though his life be prolonged, and it shall overtake him, even as it overtook Dбdbнn the king and his Wazir.” Asked Azadbakht, “How was that?” and the youth said, “Hear, O king (whose days may Allah increase!),

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The Story of King Dadbin[185] and his Wazirs.

There was once a king in the land of Tabaristan,[186] by name Dбdbнn, and he had two Wazirs, one called Zorkhan and the other Kбrdбn.[187] The Minister Zorkhan had a daughter, there was not in her day a fairer than she nor yet a chaster or a more pious, for she was a faster, a prayer and an adorer of Allah the Almighty, and her name was Arwa.[188] Now Dadbin, the king, heard tell of her praises; so his heart clave to her and he called the Wazir her sire and said to him, "I desire of thee that thou marry me to thy daughter." Quoth Zorkhan, "O my liegest lord, suffer me to consult her, and if she consent, I will marry thee with her." And the king, said, "Haste thee with this." So the Minister went in to his daughter and said to her, "O my daughter, the king seeketh thee of me and desireth to marry thee." She said. "O my father, I desire not a husband, and if thou wilt marry me, marry me not but with a mate who shall be mine inferior in rank and I nobler than he, so he may not turn to other than myself nor lift his eyes upon me,[189] and marry me not to one who is nobler than I, lest I be with him as a slave-girl and a serving-woman." Accordingly the Wazir returned to the king and acquainted him with that which his daughter had said, whenas he redoubled in desire and love-longing for her, and said to her sire, "An thou marry me not to her of good grace, I will take her in thy despite and by force." The Minister again betook himself to his daughter and repeated to her the king's words, but she replied, "I want no husband." So he returned to the king and told him what she said, and he was wroth and threatened him, whereupon the father took his daughter and fled with her. When this came to the king's knowledge, he despatched troops in pursuit of Zorkhan, to stop the road upon him, whilst he himself went out and overtaking the Wazir, smote him on the head with his mace[190] and slew him. Then he took his daughter by force and returning to his dwelling-place, went in to her and married her. Arwa resigned herself with patience to that which betided her and committed her case to Allah Almighty; and indeed she was used to serve Him night and day with a goodly service in the house of King Dadbin her husband. It befel one day that the king had occasion to make a journey; so he called his second Wazir Kardan and said to him, “I have a charge to commit to thy care, and it is yonder lady, my wife, the daughter of the Wazir Zorkhan, and I desire that thou keep her and guard her thy very self, because I have not in the world aught dearer than she.” Quoth Kardan in his mind, “Of a truth, the king honoureth me with an exceeding honour in entrusting me with this lady.” And he answered, “With love and all gladness.” When the king had departed on his journey, Kardan said in himself, “Needs must I look upon this lady whom the king loveth with all this love.” So he hid himself in a place, that he might espy her, and saw her surpassing description; wherefor he was confounded at her and his wit was wildered and love gat the lordship of him, so that he sent to her, saying, “Have pity on me, for indeed I perish for the love of thee.” She sent back to him and replied, “O Wazir, thou art in the place of faith and confidence, so do not thou betray thy trust, but make thine inward life like unto thine outward[191] and occupy thyself with thy wife and that which is lawful to thee. As for this, ’tis mere lust and women are all of one and the same taste.[192] And if thou wilt not be forbidden from this talk, I will make thee a byword and a reproach among folk.” When the Minister heard her answer, he knew that she was chaste of soul and body; wherefore he repented with the utmost of repentance and feared for himself from the king and said, “Needs must I devise a device whereby I may destroy her; else shall I be disgraced with the king.” Now when the king returned from his journey, he questioned Kardan of the affairs of his kingdom, and the Wazir answered, “All is right well, O king, save a vile matter, which I have espied here and with which I am ashamed to confront the sovran; but, if I hold my peace thereof, I fear lest other than I discover it and I shall have played traitor to the king in the matter of my warning and my trust.” Quoth Dadbin, “Speak, for to me thou art none other than a truth-teller, a trustworthy and a loyal counsellor in whatso thou sayest, undistrusted in aught.” And the Minister said, “O king, this woman to whose love thy heart cleaveth and of whose piety thou talkest and her fasting and her praying, I will plainly prove to thee that this is craft and guile.” Hereat the king was troubled and said, “What may be the matter?” and the Wazir replied, “I would have thee wot that some days after thy departure, one came to me and said to me, Come, O Wazir, and look. So I went to the door of the queen's sleeping-chamber and behold, she was sitting with Abu al-Khayr, her father's page, whom she favoureth, and she did with him what she did, and such is the manner of that which I saw and heard." When Dadbin heard this, he burnt with rage and said to one of his eunuchs,[193] "Go and slay her in her chamber." But the eunuch said to him, "O king, Allah prolong thy life! Indeed, the killing of her may not be in this way neither at this time; but do thou bid one of thine Castratos take her up on a camel and carry her to one of the trackless wolds and cast her down there; so, if she be guilty, Allah shall cause her to perish, and if she be innocent, He will deliver her, and the king shall be free from default against her; for that this lady is dear to thee and thou slewest her father by reason of thy love for her." Quoth the king, "By Allah, thou sayst sooth!" Then he bade one of his eunuchs carry her on a camel to one of the far-off wilds and cut-off wolds and there leave her and wend his ways, and he forbad her torment to be prolonged. So he took her up and betaking himself with her to the desert, left her there without provaunt or water and returned, whereupon she made for one of the hills, and ranging stones before her in form of prayer-niche, stood praying. Now it chanced that a camel-driver, belonging to Kisra[194] the king, lost certain camels, and his lord threatened him, if he found them not, that he would slay him. Accordingly he set out and plunged into the wastes till he came to the place where the lady was, and seeing her standing at prayer utterly alone, waited till she had made an end of her orisons, when he went up to her and saluted her with the salam, saying, "Who art thou?" Quoth she, "I am a hand-maid of the Almighty." He asked, "What doest thou in this desolate place?" and she answered, "I serve Allah the Most High." When he saw her beauty and loveliness, he fell in love with her, and said to her, "Harkye! Do thou take me to mate and I will be tender to thee and use thee with exceeding ruth, and I will further thee in obedience to Allah Almighty." But she answered, saying, "I have no need of wedlock and I desire to abide here alone with my Lord and His worship; but an thou wouldst have ruth upon me and further me in the obedience of Allah the Most High, carry me to a place where there is water and thou wilt have done me a kindness." Thereupon he took her to a place wherein was running water and setting her down on the ground, left her and went his ways, marvelling at her. After he left her, he found his camels, by her blessing, and when he returned, King Kisra asked him, “Hast thou found the camels?” He answered “Yes,” and acquainted him with the affair of the damsel, and detailed to him her beauty and loveliness: whereupon the king’s heart clave to her and he mounted with a few men and betook himself to that place, where he found the lady and was amazed at her, because he saw her surpassing the description wherewith the camel-driver had described her to him. So he accosted her and said to her, “I am King Kisra, greatest of the kings. Wilt thou not have me to husband?” Quoth she, “What wilt thou do with me, O king, and I a woman abandoned in the waste?” And quoth he, “Needs must this be, and if thou wilt not consent to me, I will take up my abode here and devote myself to Allah’s service and thy service, and with thee worship the Almighty.” Then he bade set up for her a tent and another for himself, facing hers, so he might adore Allah with her, and fell to sending her food; and she said in herself, “This is a king, and ’tis not lawful for me that I suffer him for my sake to forsake his lieges and his land.” Presently she said to the servingwoman, who used to bring her the food, “Speak the king that he return to his women, for he hath no need of me, and I desire to abide in this place, so I may worship therein Allah the Most High.” The slave-girl returned to the king and told him this, whereupon he sent back to her, saying, “I have no need of the kingship and I also desire to tarry here and worship Allah with thee in this waste.” When she found this earnestness in him, she fell in with his wishes, and said, “O king, I will consent to that which thou desirest and will be to thee a wife, but on condition that thou bring me Dadbin the king and his Wazir Kardan and his Chamberlain the chief Eunuch, and that they be present in thine assembly, so I may speak a word with them in thy presence, to the intent that thou mayst redouble in affection for me.” Quoth Kisra, “And what is thy want unto this?” So she related to him her story from first to last, how she was the wife of Dadbin the king and how the Wazir Kardan had misspoken of her honour. When King Kisra heard this, he redoubled in love-longing for her and affection and said to her, “Do whatso thou willest:” then he let bring a litter[195] and carrying her therein to his dwelling-place, entreated her with the utmost honour and espoused her. Presently he sent a great army to King Dadbin and fetching him and his Wazir Kardan and the Eunuch-chamberlain, caused bring them before him, they unknowing the while what he might purpose to do with them. Moreover, he caused set up for Arwa a pavilion[196] in the courtyard of his palace, and she entered it and let down the curtain before herself. When the servants had set their seats and they had seated themselves, Arwa raised a corner of the curtain and said, "O Kardan, rise to thy feet, for it besitteth not that thou sit in the like of this assembly, before this mighty King Kisra." When the Wazir heard these words, his heart fluttered and his joints were loosened and he rose to his feet of his fear. Then said she to him, "By the virtue of Him who hath made thee stand up to judgment in this standing-stead, and thou abject and humiliated, I conjure thee speak the truth and say what egged thee on to lie against me and drive me from my home and from the land of my husband and made thee practise thus against a man and a Moslem so as to slay him.[197] This is no place wherein lying availeth nor may artifice be herein." When the Wazir was 'ware that she was Arwa and heard her speech, he knew that it behoved him not to lie and that naught would avail him save truth; so he bowed his head groundwards and wept and said, "Whoso doth evil, needs must he incur it, albe his day be prolonged. By Allah, I am he who hath sinned and transgressed, and naught prompted me unto this but fear and overmastering desire and the misery writ upon my brow.[198] And indeed this woman is pure and chaste and free from all fault." When King Dadbin heard this, he beat his face and said to Kardan, his Wazir, "Allah slay thee![199] 'Tis thou that hast parted me and my wife and wronged me!" But Kisra the king said to him, "Allah shall assuredly slay thee, because thou hastenedst and lookedst not into thine affair, and knewest not the guilty from the guiltless. Hadst thou wrought deliberately, the unright had been made manifest to thee from the right; so when this villain Wazir purposed thy ruin, where was thy judgment and whither went thy sight?" Then he asked Arwa, "What wilt thou that I do with them?" and she answered, "Accomplish on them the ordinance of Almighty Allah:[200] let the slayer be slain and the transgressor transgressed against, even as he transgressed against us;

yea, and to the well-doer weal shall be done even as he did unto us." So she gave her officers order concerning Dadbin and they smote him on the head with a mace and slew him, and she said, "This is for the slaughter of my sire." Then she bade set the Wazir on a beast and bear him to the desert whither he had caused her to be borne, and leave him there without provaunt or water; and she said to him, "An thou be guilty, thou shalt suffer the punishment of thy guilt and die in the desert of hunger and thirst; but an there be no guilt in thee, thou shalt be delivered, even as I was delivered." As for the Eunuch-chamberlain, who had counselled King Dadbin not to slay her, but to cause carry her to the desert, she bestowed on him a costly robe of honour and said to him, "The like of thee it befitteth kings to hold in favour and promote to high place, for that thou spakest loyally and well, and a man is requited according to his deed." And Kisra the King made him Wali in a certain province of his empire. "Know, therefore, O king" (continued the youth), "that whoso doeth good is requited with good, and he who is guiltless of sin and offence feareth not the issue of his affair. And I, O my liege lord, am free from guilt, wherefore I hope in Allah that He will show forth the truth to mine auspicious king, and vouchsafe me the victory over enemies and enviers." When the king heard this, his wrath subsided and he said, "Return him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his case."

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The Sixth Day.

Of Trust in Allah.

When it was the sixth day, the wrath of the Wazirs redoubled, because they had not won their will of the youth and they feared for their lives from the liege lord; so three of them went in to him and prostrating themselves between his hands, said to him, “O king, indeed we are loyal counsellors to thy dignity and fondly solicitous for thy weal. Verily, thou persistest long in leaving this youth alive and we know not what is thine advantage therein. Every day findeth him yet on life and the talk of folk redoubleth suspicion on thee; so do thou do him dead, that the talk may be made an end of.” When the king heard this speech, he said, “By Allah, verily ye say sooth and speak rightly!” Then he bade them bring the young treasurer and when he came into the presence said to him, “How Iong shall I look into thy case, and find no helper for thee and see them athirst for thy blood?” The youth answered, “O king, I hope for succour only from Allah, not from created beings: an He aid me, none shall have power to harm me, and if He be with me and on my side, because of the truth, from whom shall I fear, because of untruth? Indeed, I have made my intent with Allah a pure intent and a sincere, and I have severed my expectation from the help of the creature; and whoso seeketh aid of Allah findeth of his desire that which Bakhtzam6n found.” Quoth the king, “Who was Bakhtzaman and what is his story?” and quoth the youth, “Hear, O king,

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The Story of King Bakhtzaman.[201]

There was once a king of the kings, whose name was Bakhtzaman, and he was a great eater and drinker and carouser. Now enemies of his made their appearance in certain parts of his realm, which they coveted; and one of his friends said to him, “O king, the foe intendeth for thee: be on thy guard against him.” Quoth Bakhtzaman, “I reck not of him, for that I have weapons and wealth and warmen and am not afraid of aught.” Then said his friends to him, “Ask aid of Allah, O king, for He will help thee more than thy wealth and thy weapons and thy warriors.” But he turned a deaf ear to the speech of his loyal counsellors, and presently the enemy came upon him and waged war upon him and got the victory over him and profited him naught his trust in other than Allah the Most High. So he fled from him and seeking one of the sovrans, said to him, “I come to thee and lay hold upon thy skirts and take refuge with thee, so thou mayst help me against my foe.” The king gave him money and men and a mighty many and Bakhtzaman said in himself, “Now am I fortified with this force and needs must I conquer my foe with such combatants and overcome him;” but he said not, “With the aid of Allah Almighty.” So his enemy met him and overcame him again and he was defeated and put to the rout and fled at random: his troops were dispersed from him and his money lost and the enemy pursued him. Thereupon he sought the sea and passing over to the other side, saw a great city and therein a mighty citadel. He asked its name and that of its owner, and they said to him, “It belongeth to Khadнdбn[202] the king.” So he fared on till he came to the royal palace and concealing his condition, passed himself off for a horseman[203] and sought service with King Khadidan, who attached him to his attendance and entreated him with honour; but his heart still clung to his mother-land and his home. Presently, it chanced that an enemy came out against King Khadidan; so he sent his troops to meet him and made Bakhtzaman head of the host. Then they went forth to the field and Khadidan also came forth and ranged his troops and levelled lance and sallied out in person and fought a sore fight and overcame his foe, who with his troops ignominiously fled. When the king and his army returned in triumph, Bakhtzaman said to him, “Harkye, O king! This be a strange thing I see in thee that thou art compassed about with this mighty great army, yet dost thou apply thyself in person to battle and adventurest thy life.” Quoth the king, “Dost thou call thyself a knight and a learned wight and deemest that victory is in the many of men?” Quoth Bakhtzaman, “Such is indeed my belief.” And Khadidan the king cried, “By Allah, then, thou errest in this thy belief!” presently adding, “woe and again woe to him whose trust is in other than Allah! Indeed, this army is appointed only for phantasy and majesty, and victory is from Allah alone. I too, O Bakhtzaman, whilome believed that victory was in the number of men,[204] and an enemy came out against me with eight hundred head, whilst I had eight hundred thousand. I trusted in the tale of my troops, whilst my foe trusted in Allah, so he defeated me and routed me and I was put to a shameful flight and hid myself in one of the mountains, where I met with a Religious who had withdrawn himself from the world. So I joined myself to him and complained to him of my case and acquainted him with all that had befallen me. Quoth the Recluse, ‘Wottest thou why this befel thee and thou wast defeated?’ Quoth I, ‘I know not;’ and he said, ‘Because thou didst put thy trust in the multitude of thy warmen and reliedst not upon Allah the Most High. Hadst thou put thy trust in the Almighty and believed of Him that it is He alone who advantageth and endamageth thee, never had thy foe availed to cope with thee. Return unto Allah.’ So I returned to my right senses, and repented at the hands of that Religious, who said to me, ‘Turn back with what remaineth to thee of troops and confront thy foes, for, if their intents be changed and turned away from Allah, thou wilt overcome them, e’en wert thou alone.’ When I heard the Solitary’s words, I put my trust in Allah of All-Might; and, gathering together those who remained with me, fell upon mine enemies at unawares in the night. They deemed us many and fled with the shamefullest flight, whereupon I entered my city and repossessed myself of my place by the might of Almighty Allah, and now I fight not but trusting in His aid.” When Bakhtzaman heard these words he awoke from his heedlessness and cried, “Extolled be the perfection of God the Great! O king, this is my case and my story, nothing added and naught subtracted, for I am King

Bakhtzaman and all this happened to me: wherefore I will seek the gate of Allah's mercy and repent unto Him." So he went forth to one of the mountains and worshipped Allah there awhile, till one night, as he slept, a personage appeared to him in a dream and said to him, "O Bakhtzaman, Allah accepteth thy repentance and openeth on thee the door of succour and will aid thee against thy foe." When he was assured of this in the dream, he arose and turned back, intending for his own city; and when he drew near thereunto, he saw a company of the king's retainers, who said to him, "Whence art thou? We see that thou art a foreigner and fear for thee from this king, for that every stranger who entereth this city, he destroyeth him, of his dread of King Bakhtzaman." Said Bakhtzaman, "None shall prejudice him nor profit him save Allah the Most High." And they replied. "Indeed, he hath a vast army and his heart is fortified in the multitude of his many." When King Bakhtzaman heard this, his mind was comforted and he said to himself, "I place my trust in Allah. An He will, I shall overcome mine enemy by the might of the Lord of Omnipotence." So he said to the folk, "Wot ye not who I am?" and they said, "No, by Allah." Cried he, "I am King Bakhtzaman." When they heard this and knew that it was indeed he, they dismounted from their horses and kissed his stirrup, to do him honour, and said to him, "O king, why thus risk thy life?" Quoth he, "Indeed, my life is a light matter to me and I set my trust in Almighty Allah, looking to Him for protection." And quoth they, "May that suffice thee!" presently adding, "We will do with thee that which is in our power and whereof thou art worthy: hearten thy heart, for we will succour thee with our substance and our existence, and we are his chief officers and the most in favour with him of all folk. So we will take thee with us and cause the lieges follow after thee, because the inclination of the people, all of them, is theewards." Said he, "Do whatso Allah Almighty enableth you to do." So they carried him into the city and hid him with them. Then they agreed with a company of the king's chief officers, who had aforetime been those of Bakhtzaman, and acquainted them with this; whereat they rejoiced with joy exceeding. Then they assembled together to Bakhtzaman, and made a covenant and handfast of fealty with him and fell upon the foe and slew him and seated King Bakhtzaman again on the throne of his kingship.

And his affairs prospered and Allah amended his estate and restored to him His bounty, and he ruled his subjects justly and abode in the obedience of the Almighty. "On this wise, O king" (continued the young treasurer), "he with whom Allah is and whose intent is pure, meeteth naught save good. As for me, I have no helper other than the Almighty, and I am content to submit myself to His ordinance, for that He knoweth the purity of my intent." With this the king's wrath subsided and he said, "Return him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his case."

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The Seventh Day.

Of Clemency.

When it was the seventh day, the seventh Wazir, whose name was Bihkamбl,[205] came in to the king and prostrating himself to him, said, “O king, what doth thy long-suffering with this youth profit thee? Indeed the folk talk of thee and of him. Why, then, dost thou postpone the putting him to death?” The Minister’s words aroused the anger of the king, and he bade bring the youth. So they fetched him before him in fetters and Azadbakht said to him, “Ho, woe to thee! By Allah, after this day there abideth no deliverance for thee from my hand, by reason that thou hast outraged mine honour, and there can be no forgiveness for thee.” The youth replied, “O king, there is no great forgiveness save in case of a great default, for according as the offence is great in so much magnified is mercy; and it is no grace to the like of thee if he spare the like of me. Verily, Allah knoweth that there is no crime in me, and indeed He commandeth to clemency, and no clemency is greater than that which spareth from slaughter, for that thy pardon of him whom thou purposest to put to death is as the quickening of a dead man; and whoso doth evil shall find it before him, even as it was with King Bihkard.” Asked the king, “And what is the story of King Bihkard?” And the youth answered, “Hear, O king,

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The Story of King Bihkard.[206]

There was once a king named Bihkard, and he had mickle of wealth and many troops; but his deeds were evil and he would punish for a slight offence, and he never forgave any offender. He went forth one day to hunt and a certain of his pages shot a shaft, which lit on the king's ear and cut it off. Bihkard cried, "Who shot that arrow?" So the guards brought him in haste the misdemeanant, whose name was Yatrъ,[207] and he of his fear fell down on the ground in a fainting fit. Then quoth the king, "Slay him;" but Yatru said, "O king, this which hath befallen was not of my choice nor of my knowledge; so do thou pardon me, in the hour of thy power over me, for that mercy is of the goodliest of deeds and belike it shall be in this world a provision and a good work for which thou shalt be repaid one of these days, and a treasure laid up to thine account with Allah in the world to come. Pardon me, therefore, and fend off evil from me, so shall Allah fend off from thee the like evil." When the king beard this, it pleased him and he pardoned the page, albeit he had never before pardoned any. Now this page was of the sons of the kings and had fled from his sire on account of a sin he had committed: then he went and took service with Bihkard the king, and there happened to him what happened. After a while, it chanced that a man recognised him and went and told his father, who sent him a letter, comforting his heart and mind and calling upon him to return to him. Accordingly he returned to his father, who came forth to meet him and rejoiced in him, and the Prince's affairs were set right with his sire. Now it befel, one day of the days, that king Bihkard shipped him in a ship and put out to sea, so he might fish: but the wind blew on them and the craft sank. The king made the land upon a plank, unknown of any, and came forth, mother-naked, on one of the coasts; and it chanced that he landed in the country whereof the father of the page aforesaid was king. So he came in the night to the gate of the sovran's capital, and finding it shut, lodged him in a burying-place there. When the morning morrowed and the folk came forth of the city, behold, they found a man lately murthered and cast down in a corner of the burial ground, and seeing Bihkard there, doubted not but it was he who had slain him during the night; so they laid hands on him and carried him up to the king and said to him, “This fellow hath slain a man.” The king bade imprison him; whereupon they threw him in jail, and he fell to saying in himself, what while he was in the prison, “All that hath befallen me is of the abundance of my sins and my tyranny, for, indeed, I have slain much people unrighteously and this is the requital of my deeds and that which I have wrought whilome of oppression.” As he was thus pondering in himself, there came a bird and lighted down on the pinnacle of the prison, whereupon, of his passing eagerness in the chase, he took a stone and threw it at the bird. Now the king’s son was playing in the exercise-ground with the ball and the bat,[208] and the stone lit on his ear and cut it off, whereupon the Prince fell down in a fit. So they enquired who had thrown the stone and finding that it was Bihkard, took him and carried him before the king’s son, who bade do him die. Accordingly, they cast the turband from his head and were about to fillet his eyes, when the Prince looked at him and seeing him cropped of an ear, said to him, “But for thy villainies thine ear had not been cut off.” Said Bihkard, “Not so, by Allah! Nay, but the story of the loss of my ear is so and so, and I pardoned him who smote me with an arrow and cut off my ear.” When the prince heard this, he looked in his face and knowing him, cried out and said, “Art thou not Bihkard the king?” “Yes,” replied he, and the Prince said to him, “What ill chance threw thee here?” Thereupon he told him all that had betided him and the folk wondered and extolled the perfection of the Almighty, crying “Subhбna ‘llah!Чlaud to the Lord!” Then the Prince rose to him and embraced him and kissed him and, entreating him with respect, seated him in a chair and bestowed on him a robe of honour; and he turned to his sire and said to him, “This be the king who pardoned me and this be his ear which I cut off with a shaft; and indeed he deserveth my pardon by having pardoned me.” Then said he to Bihkard, “Verily, the issue of mercy hath been a provision for thee in such hour as this.” And they entreated him with the utmost kindness and sent him back to his own country in all honour. “Know, then, O king” (continued the youth), “that there is no goodlier quality than mercy and that all thou dost of clemency, thou shalt find before thee a treasure for thee treasured up.” When the king heard this, his wrath subsided and he said, “Return him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his case.

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The Eighth Day.

Of Envy and Malice.

When it was the eighth day, the Wazirs all assembled and had speech together and said, “How shall we do with this youth, who overcometh us with his much talk? Indeed, we fear lest he be saved and we fall into destruction. So, let us all go in to the king and unite our efforts to gain our cause, ere he appear without guilt and come forth and get the better of us.” Accordingly they all went in to the king and prostrating themselves before him, said to him, “O king, beware lest this youth ensorcell thee with his sorcery and beguile thee with his wiles. An thou heardest what we hear, thou wouldst not suffer him live; no, not a single day. Wherefore heed not his speech, for we are thy Ministers, who endeavour for thy permanence, and if thou hearken not to our word, to whose word wilt thou hearken? See, we are ten Wazirs who testify against this youth that he is guilty and entered not the king’s sleeping chamber save with ill intent, so he might put the king to shame and outrage his honour; and if the king slay him not, let him banish him his realm, that the tongue of the folk may desist from him.” When the king heard his Ministers’ words, he was wroth with exceeding wrath and bade bring the youth, and when he came in to the king, the Wazirs all cried out with one voice, saying, “O Lack-wits, thinkest thou to save thyself from slaughter by guile and sleight, that thou wilest the king with thy talk and hopest pardon for the like of this mighty great crime thou hast committed?” Then the king bade fetch the sworder, so he might smite his neck; whereupon each of the Wazirs fell to saying, “I will slay him;” and they sprang upon him. Quoth the youth, “O king, consider and ponder the eagerness of these thy Ministers. Is this of envy or is it not? They would fain make severance between me and thee, so there may fall to them what they shall plunder, as aforetime.” And the king said to him, “Consider their witness against thee.” The young man said, “O king, how shall they testify of that which they saw not?[209] This is but envy and despight; and thou, an thou slay me, wilt indeed regret me, and I fear lest there betide thee of repentance that which betided Ayl6n Sh6h, by reason of the malice of his Wazirs.” Asked

Azadbakht, “And what is his story?” and the youth answered, “Hear, O king,

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The Story of Aylan Shah and Abu Tammam.[210]

Whilome there was a merchant named Abu Tamm6m, and he was a clever man and a well-bred, quick-witted and truthful in all his affairs, and he was monied to boot. Now there was in his land a king as unjust as he was jealous, and Abu Tammam feared for his wealth from this king and said, “I will remove hence to another place where I shall not be in dread.” So he made for the city of Ayl6n Sh6h and built himself a palace therein and transporting his wealth thither, took up his abode there. Presently, the news of him reached King Aylan Shah; so he sent to invite him to his presence and said to him, “We know of thy coming to us and thine entering under our allegiance, and indeed we have heard of thine excellence and wit and generosity; so welcome to thee and fair welcome! The land is thy land and at thy command, and whatsoever need thou needest of us, ’tis already accomplished to thee; and it behoveth that thou be near our person and of our assembly.” Abu Tammam prostrated himself before the king, and said to him, “O king, I will serve thee with my monies and with my life, but do thou excuse me from nearness to thee, for that an I took office about thee, I should not be safe from enemies and enviers.” Then he applied himself to the royal service with presents and largesses, and the king saw him to be intelligent, well-bred and of good counsel; so his heart inclined to him and he committed to him the ordinance of his affairs and the power to bind and to loose was in his hand. Now Aylan Shah had three Wazirs, in whose hands public affairs were wont to be and they had been accustomed not to quit the king night or day; but they became shut out from him by reason of Abu Tammam and the king was occupied with him to their exclusion. Herewith the Ministers took counsel together upon the matter and said, “What is your rede we should do, seeing that the king is occupied from us with yonder man, and indeed he honoureth him with more honour than us? But now come, let us devise some device whereby we may alienate him from the king.” So each of them spoke forth that which was in his mind, and one of them said, “The king of the Turks hath a daughter, whose like there is not in the world, and whatso messenger goeth to demand her in marriage, him her father slaughtereth. Now our king hath no knowledge of this; so, come, let us foregather with him and bring up the mention of her: when his heart is taken with her, we will advise him to dispatch Abu Tammam to seek her hand in marriage; whereupon her father will slay him and we shall be quit of him and settle his affair once for all.” Accordingly, they went in to the king one day (Abu Tammam being present among them), and mentioned the affair of the damsel, the daughter of the Turks’ king, and enlarged upon her charms, till the king’s heart was taken with her and he said to them, “We will send one to demand her to wife for us; but who shall be our messenger?” Quoth the Wazirs, “There is none fit for this business but Abu Tammam, by reason of his wit and good breeding;” and the king said, “Indeed, even as ye say, none is fitting for this affair save he.” Then he turned to Abu Tammam and said to him, “Wilt thou not go with my message and seek me in marriage the daughter of the Turks’ king?” and he answered, “To hear is to obey, O my Sovran!” So they made ready his affair and the king conferred on him a robe of honour, and he took with him a present and a letter under the king’s hand and setting out, fared on till he came to the capital city of Turkistan. When the king of the Turks knew of his coming, he despatched his officers to receive him and entreated him with honour and lodged him as befitted his rank. Then he guested him three days, after which time he summoned him to his presence and Abu Tammam went in to him; and, prostrating himself as beseemeth before kings, laid that present before him and gave him the letter. The king read the writ and said to Abu Tammam, “We will do what behoveth in the matter; but, O Abu Tammam, needs must thou view my daughter and she view thee, and needs must thou hear her speech and she hear thine.” So saying, he sent him to the lodging of the Princess, who had had notice of this; so that they had adorned her sitting-room with the costliest that might be of vessels of gold and silver and the like, and she seated herself on a chair of gold, clad in the richest of royal robes and ornaments. When Abu Tammam entered, he took thought and said, “The wise declare that whoso governeth his sight shall suffer naught unright and he who guardeth his tongue shall hear naught of foul taunt, and he who keepeth watch over his hand, it shall be lengthened and not shortened.”[211] So he entered and seating himself on the floor, cast down his eyes and covered his hands and feet with his dress.[212] Quoth the king's daughter to him, "Raise thy head, O Abu Tammam, and look on me and speak with me." But he spake not neither raised his head, and she continued, "They sent thee only to view me and talk with me, and yet behold thou sayest not a word;" presently adding, "Take of these union-pearls that be round thee and of these jewels and gold and silver." But he put not forth his hand to aught, and when she saw that he paid no heed to anything, she was angry and cried, "They have messaged me with a messenger, blind, dumb, deaf." Then she sent to acquaint her father with this; whereupon the king called Abu Tammam to him and said to him, "Thou camest not save to view my daughter: why, then, hast thou not looked upon her?" Quoth Abu Tammam, "I saw everything;" and quoth the king, "Why didst thou not take somewhat of that which thou sawest of jewels and the like? Indeed they were set out for thee." But he answered, "It behoveth me not to put out my hand to aught that is not mine." When the king heard his speech, he gave him a sumptuous robe of honour and loved him muchly[213] and said to him, "Come, look at this well." So Abu Tammam went up to the pit-mouth and looked, and behold, it was full of heads of the sons of Adam, and the king said to him, "These are the heads of envoys whom I slew, because I saw them without loyalty to their lords, and I was used, whenas I beheld an envoy without good manners, to say, 'He who sent him is worsemannered than he, because the messenger is the tongue of him who sendeth him and his breeding is of his master's breeding; and whoso is after this fashion, it befitteth not that he be akin to me.'[214] For this reason I used to put the envoys to death; but, as for thee, thou hast overcome us and won my daughter, of the excellence of thy manners; so hearten thy heart, for she is thy lord's." Then he sent him back to King Aylan Shah with presents and rarities and a letter, saying, "This that I have done is in honour of thee and of thine envoy." When Abu Tammam returned after accomplishing his mission and brought the presents and the letter, King Aylan Shah rejoiced in this and redoubled all his favours and showed him honour the highest. Some days after, the King of Turkistan sent his daughter and she went in to King Aylan Shah, who rejoiced in her with exceeding joy and Abu

Tammam’s worth was exalted in the royal sight. When the Wazirs saw this, they redoubled in envy and despite and said, “‘An we contrive us not a contrivance to rid us of this man, we shall die of rage.” So they bethought them and agreed upon a device they should practise. Then they betook themselves to two boys, pages affected to the service of the king, who slept not but on their knee,[215] and they lay at his head, for that they were his bed-chamber pages. So the Ministers gave them each a thousand dinars of gold, saying, “We desire of you that ye do somewhat we require and take this gold as a provision against your time of need.” Quoth the lads, “What is it ye would have us do?” and quoth the Wazirs, “This Abu Tammam hath marred matters for us, and if his case abide in this way, he will remove us all from the king’s favour; and what we want of you twain is that, when ye are alone with the king and he leaneth back, as he were asleep, one of you say to his fellow, ‘Verily, the king hath taken Abu Tammam into high favour and hath advanced him to exalted rank, yet he is a transgressor against the king’s honour and an accursed wight.’ Then let the other of you ask, ‘And what is his transgression?’ and let the first answer, ‘He outrageth the king’s honour and saith, the King of Turkistan was used, when a messenger went to him to seek his daughter in marriage, to slay him; but me he spared, because she liked me, and by reason of this her sire sent her hither, for that she loved me.’ Then let the other say, ‘Knowest thou this for truth?’ and let the first reply, ‘By Allah, this is familiar to all the folk, but, of their fear of the king, they dare not divulge it to him; and as often as the king is absent a-hunting or a-wayfaring, Abu Tammam cometh to her and is private with her.’” Whereupon the boys answered, “We will say this.” Accordingly, one night, when they were alone with the king and he leant back, as he were asleep, they said these words and the king heard all and was like to die of fury and despite and said to himself, “These are young boys, not come to years of discretion, and have no business with any; and unless they had heard these words from some one, they had not spoken thereof each with other.” When it was morning wrath overmastered him, so that he stayed not neither deliberated, but summoned Abu Tammam and taking him apart, said to him, “Whoso guardeth not the honour of his liege lord,[216] what deserveth he?” Said

Abu Tammam, “He deserveth that his lord guard not his honour.” Aylan Shah continued, “And whoso entereth the king’s house and playeth traitor with him, what behoveth unto him?” and Abu Tammam replied, “He shall not be left alive.” Whereupon the king spat in his face and said to him, “Both these deeds hast thou done.” Then he drew his poinard on him in haste and smiting him in the belly, slit it and Abu Tammam died forthright; whereupon the king dragged him along and cast him into a well that was in his palace. After he had slain him, he fell into repentance and mourning increased and chagrin waxed sore upon him, and he would acquaint none who questioned him with the cause, nor, of his love for his wife, did he tell her of this, and whenever she asked him wherefore he grieved, he answered her not. When the Wazirs knew of Abu Tammam’s death, they rejoiced with exceeding joy and knew that the king’s sorrow arose from regret for him. As for Aylan Shah, after this he used to betake himself by night to the sleeping-chamber of the two boys and spy upon them, that he might hear what they said concerning his wife. As he stood one night privily at the door of their chamber, he saw them spread out the gold between their hands and play with it and heard one of them say, “Woe to us! What doth this gold profit us? Indeed we cannot buy therewith any thing nor spend it upon ourselves. Nay, but we have sinned against Abu Tammam and done him dead unjustly.” And said the other, “Had we known that the king would slay him on the spot, we had not done what we did.” When the king heard that, he could not contain himself, but rushed in upon them and said to them, “Woe to you! What did ye? Tell me.” And they cried, “Aмбn,[217] O king!” He cried, “An ye would have pardon from Allah and me, you are bound to tell me the truth, for nothing shall save you from me but soothfastness.” Hereat they prostrated themselves before him and said, “By Allah, O king, the Wazirs gave us this gold and taught us to lie against Abu Tammam, so thou mightest kill him, and what we said was their speech.” When the king heard this, he plucked at his beard, till he was like to tear it up by the roots and bit upon his fingers, till he well nigh cut them in twain, for repentance and sorrow that he had wrought hastily and had not delayed with Abu Tammam, so he might consider his case. Then he sent for the Ministers and said to them, “O villainous Wazirs, ye deemed that Allah was heedless of your deed, but right soon shall your wickedness revert upon you. Know ye not that whoso diggeth for his brother a pit shall himself fall into it?[218] Take from me the punishment of this world and to-morrow ye shall receive the punishment of the next world and requital from Allah." Then he bade put them to death; so the headsman smote off their heads before the king, and he went in to his wife and acquainted her with whatso he had misdone to Abu Tammam; whereupon she grieved for him with mighty great grief and the king and his household ceased not weeping and repenting all their lives. Moreover, they brought Abu Tammam forth of the well and the king built him a dome[219] in his palace and buried him therein. "See, then, O auspicious king" (continued the youth), "what jealousy doth and injustice and how Allah caused the Wazirs' malice to revert upon their own necks; and I trust in the Almighty that He will empower me over all who envy me my favour with the king and show forth the truth unto him. Indeed, I dread naught for my life from death; only I fear lest the king repent of my slaughter, for that I am guiltless of offence, and if I knew that I were guilty on any wise, my tongue would be dumb-struck." When the king heard this, he bowed his head groundwards in perplexity and confusion and said, "Restore him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his case."

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The Ninth Day.

Of Destiny or That Which is Written on the Forehead.

Now when it was the ninth day, the Wazirs met and said one to other, “Verily, this youth baffleth us, for as often as the king is minded to kill him, he beguileth him and bewitcheth him with a story; so what be your rede we should do, that we may slay him and be at rest from him?” Then they advised together and agreed that they should go to the king’s wife.[220] So they betook themselves to her and said to her, “Thou art careless of this affair wherein thou art and this uncare shall not profit thee; whilst the king, occupied with eating and drinking and diversion, forgetteth that the folk beat upon tambourines and sing of thee and say, The wife of the king loveth the youth; and as long as he abideth alive the talk will increase and not diminish.” Quoth she, “By Allah, ’twas ye egged me on against him, and what shall I do now?” and quoth they, “Go thou in to the king and weep and say to him, ‘Verily, the women come to me and inform me that I am dishonoured throughout the city, and what is thine advantage in the sparing of this youth? An thou wilt not slay him, slay me to the end that this talk may be cut off from us.’” So the woman arose and rending her raiment, went in to the king, in the presence of the Wazirs, and cast herself upon him, saying, “O king, is my shame not upon thee or fearest thou not shame? Indeed, this is not the fashion of kings that their jealousy over their women should be such as this.[221] Thou art heedless and all the folk of the realm prate of thee, men and women. Either slay him, that the talk may be cut off, or slay me, if thy soul will not consent to his slaughter.” Thereupon the king’s wrath waxed hot and he said to her, “I have no pleasure in his continuance and needs must I slay him this very day. So return to thy palace and solace thy heart.” Then he bade fetch the youth; whereupon they brought him before him and the Wazirs said, “O base of base, fie upon thee! Thy life-term is at hand and earth hungereth for thy flesh, so it may make a meal of it.” But he said to them, “Death is not in your word or in your envy; nay, it is a destiny written upon the forehead: wherefore, if aught be writ upon my front, there is no help but it come to pass, and neither striving nor thought-taking nor precaution-seeking shall deliver me therefrom; even as happened to King Ibrahim and his son." Quoth the king, "Who was King Ibrahim and who was his son?" and quoth the youth "Hear, O king,

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The Story of King Ibrahim and his Son.[222]

There was once a king of the kings, Sultan Ibrahim hight, to whom the sovrans abased themselves and did obedience; but he had no son and was straitened of breast because of that, fearing lest the kingship go forth of his hand. He ceased not to long for a son and to buy slave-girls and lie with them, till one of them conceived, whereat he rejoiced with passing joy and gave great gifts and the largest largesse. When the girl's months were complete and the time of her lying-in drew near, the king summoned the astrologers and they watched for the hour of child-bearing and raised their astrolabes and carefully noted the time. The hand-maid gave birth to a man-child, whereat the king rejoiced exceedingly, and the people congratulated one another with this glad news. Then the astrophils made their calculations and looked into his nativity and his ascendant, whereupon their colour changed and they were confounded. Quoth the king to them, "Acquaint me with his horoscope and ye shall have assurance of pardon and have naught to fear."[223] They replied, "O king, this princely child's nativity denoteth that, in the seventh year of his age, there is fearful danger for him from a lion, which shall attempt to rend him: and if he be saved from the lion, there will betide a matter yet sorer and more grievous even than that." Asked the king, "What is it?" and they answered, "We will not speak, except the king command us and give us assurance from fear." Quoth the king, "Allah assure you!" and quoth they, "An he be saved from the lion, the king's destruction shall be at his hand." When the king heard this, his complexion changed and his breast was straitened; but he said to himself, "I will be watchful and do my endeavour and suffer not the lion to eat him. It cannot be that he will kill me, and indeed 'The astrologers lied.'"[224] Then he caused rear him among the wet-nurses and the noble matrons;[225] but withal he ceased not to ponder the prediction of the astrophils and verily his life was troubled. So he betook himself to the top of a high mountain and hollowed there a deep excavation[226] and made in it many dwelling-places and rooms and filled it with all that was needful of rations and raiment and what not else and laid in it pipe-conduits of water from the mountain and lodged the boy therein, with a nurse who should rear him. Moreover, at the first of each month he used to go to the mountain and stand at the mouth of the hollow and let down a rope he had with him and draw up the boy to him and strain him to his bosom and kiss him and play with him awhile, after which he would let him down again to his place and return; and he was wont to count the days till the seven years should pass by. Now when arrived the time of the Fate foreordered and the Fortune graven on the forehead and there remained for the boy but ten days till the seven years should be complete, there came to that mountain hunters chasing wild beasts and, seeing a lion, they attacked him. He fled from them and seeking refuge in the mountain, fell into the hollow in its midst. The nurse saw him forthwith and escaped from him into one of the chambers; upon which the lion made for the lad and seizing upon him, tare his shoulder, after which he sought the room wherein was the nurse and falling upon her, devoured her, whilst the boy lay in a swoon. Meanwhile, when the huntsmen saw that the lion had fallen into the pit, they came to the mouth and heard the shrieking of the boy and the woman; and after awhile the cries died away, whereby they knew that the lion had slain them. Presently, as they stood by the mouth of the excavation behold, the lion came scrambling up the sides and would have issued forth: but, as often as he showed his head, they pelted him with stones, till they beat him down and he fell; whereupon one of the hunters descended into the pit and despatched him and saw the boy wounded; after which he went to the chamber, where he found the woman dead, and indeed the lion had eaten his fill of her. Then he noted that which was therein of clothes and what not else, and notifying his mates, fell to passing the stuff up to them: lastly, he took up the boy and bringing him forth of the pit, carried him to their dwelling-place where they dressed his wounds. He grew up with them, but acquainted them not with his affair; and indeed, when they questioned him, he knew not what he should say, because they let him down into the pit when he was a little one. The hunters marvelled at his speech and loved him with exceeding love and one of them took him to son and abode rearing him by his side and training him in hunting and horse-riding, till he reached the age of twelve and became a brave, going forth with the folk to the chase and to the cutting of the way. Now it chanced one day that they sallied forth to stop the road and fell in with a caravan during the night: but its stout fellows were on their guard; so they joined battle with the robbers and overcame them and slew them and the boy fell wounded and tarried cast down in that place till the morrow, when he opened his eyes and finding his comrades slain, lifted himself up and arose to walk the road. Presently, there met him a man, a treasure-seeker, and asked him, "Whither away, O lad?" So he told him what had betided him and the other said, "Be of good heart, for that the tide of thy good fortune is come and Allah bringeth thee joy and gladness. I am one who am in quest of a hidden treasure, wherein is a mighty mickle of wealth. So come with me that thou mayst help me, and I will give thee monies with which thou shalt provide thyself all thy life long." Then he carried the youth to his dwelling and dressed his wounds, and he tarried with him some days till he was rested; when the treasure-seeker took him and two beasts and all that he needed, and they fared on till they came to a towering highland. Here the man brought out a book and reading therein, dug in the crest of the mountain five cubits deep, whereupon there appeared to him a stone. He pulled it up and behold it was a trap-door covering the mouth of a pit. So he waited till the foul air[227] was come forth from the midst of the pit, when he bound a rope about the lad's middle and let him down bucket-wise to the bottom, and with him a lighted waxen taper. The boy looked and beheld, at the upper end of the pit, wealth abundant; so the treasure-seeker let down a rope and a basket and the boy fell to filling and the man to drawing up, till the fellow had got his sufficiency, when he loaded his beasts and ceased working, whilst the boy looked for him to let down the rope and draw him up; but he rolled a great stone to the mouth of the pit and went his ways. When the boy saw what the treasure-seeker had done with him, he relied upon Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) and abode perplexed concerning his case and said, "How bitter be this death!" for indeed the world was darkened on him and the pit was blinded to him. So he fell a-weeping and saying, "I escaped the lion and the robbers and now is my death to be in this pit, where I shall die by slow degrees." And he abode perplexed and looked for nothing but death. But as he stood pondering, behold, he heard a sound of water rushing with a thunderous noise; so he arose and walked in the pit, following the sound, till he came to a corner and heard the mighty coursing of water. Then he laid his ear to the sound of the current and hearing it rushing in great strength, said to himself, “This is the flowing of a mighty watercourse and needs must I depart life in this place, be it to-day or to-morrow; so I will throw myself into the stream and not die a slow death in this pit.” Thereupon he called up his courage and gathering up his skirts, cast himself into the water, and it bore him along with force exceeding and carrying him under the earth, stayed not till it brought him out into a deep Wady, adown which ran a great river, that welled up from under the ground. When he found himself on the face of earth, he abode dazed and a-swoon all that day; after which he came to himself and rising, fared on along that valley; and he ceased not his wayfare, praising Almighty Allah the while, till he came to an inhabited land and a great village in the reign of the king his sire. So he entered and foregathered with the villagers, who questioned him of his case; whereupon he told them his tale, and they admired how Allah had delivered him from all those dangers. Then he took up his abode with them and they loved him much. On this wise happened it to him; but as regards the king, his father, when he went to the pit, as was his wont, and called the nurse, she returned him no answer, whereat his breast was straitened and he let down a man who found the woman dead and the boy gone and acquainted therewith the king, who when he heard this, buffeted his head and wept with sore weeping and descended into the midst of the pit that he might see how the case stood. There he espied the nurse slain and the lion dead, but beheld not the boy; so he returned and acquainted the astrologers with the soothfastness of their saying, and they replied, “O king, the lion hath eaten him; destiny hath been wroughten upon him and thou art delivered from his hand; for, had he been saved from the lion, we indeed, by Allah, had feared for thee from him, because the king’s destruction would have been at his hand.” So the king ceased to sorrow for this and the days passed by and the affair was forgotten. Meanwhile the boy grew up and abode with the people of the village, and when Allah willed the accomplishing of His commandment, which no endeavour availeth to avert, he went forth with a party of the villagers to cut the way. The folk complained to King Ibrahim his father, who sallied out with a company of his men and surrounded the highwaymen. Now that boy was with them, and he drew forth an arrow and launched it at them, and it smote the king and wounded him in a mortal place. So they carried him to his palace, after they had laid hands upon the youth and his comrades and brought them before the sovran, saying, “What biddest us to do with them?” Quoth he, “I am presently in trouble for myself, so bring me the astrologers.” Accordingly, they brought them before him and he said to them, “Ye said to me Thy death shall be by slaying at the hand of thy son: how, then, befalleth it that I have got my death-hurt by yonder thieves?” The astrologers marvelled and said to him, “O king, ’tis not beyond the lore of the stars, together with the doom of Allah, that he who hath smitten thee should be thy son.” When King Ibrahim heard this, he bade fetch the thieves and said to them, “Tell me truly, which of you shot the shaft that wounded me.” Said they, “’Twas this youth that is with us.” Whereupon the king fell to considering him and said, “O youth, acquaint me with thy case and tell me who was thy father and thou shalt have assurance of safety from Allah.” The youth replied, “O my lord, I know no father; as for me, my father lodged me in a pit, with a nurse to rear me, and one day, there fell in upon us a lion, which tare my shoulder, then left me and occupied himself with the nurse and rent her in pieces; and Allah vouchsafed me one who brought me forth the pit.” Then he related to him all that had befallen him, first and last; which when King Ibrahim heard, he cried out and said, “By Allah, this is my son!” presently adding, “Bare thy shoulder.” So he uncovered it, and behold, it was scarred. Then the king assembled his lords and lieges and the astrologers and said to them, “Know that what Allah hath writ upon the forehead, be it fair fortune or misfortune, none may efface, and all that is decreed to a man must perforce befal him. Indeed, this my care-taking and my endeavour profited me naught, for what weird Allah decreed for my son, he hath dreed and whatso He decreed to me I have endured. Nevertheless, I praise Allah and thank Him because this was at my son’s hand, and not at the hand of another, and AlhamdolillahЧlaud to the LordЧfor that the kingship is come to my son!” And he strained the youth to his bosom and embraced him and kissed him, saying “O my son, this matter was after such fashion, and of my watchfulness over thee from Fate, I lodged thee in that pit; but caretaking availed not.” Then he took the crown of the kingship and set it on his son’s head and caused the lieges and the people do homage to him and commended the subjects to his care and enjoined to him justice and equity. And he farewelled him that night and died and his son reigned in his stead.[228] “On like wise, O king” (continued the young treasurer), “’tis with thee. If Allah have written aught on my forehead, needs must it befal me and my speech to the king shall not avail me; no, nor my illustrating it to him with instances, against the doom of Allah. And so it is with these Wazirs, for all their eagerness and endeavour for my destruction, this shall not profit them; because, if Allah determine to save me, He will give me the victory over them.” When the king heard these words he became perplexed and said, “Return him to the prison till the morrow, so we may look into his affair, for the day draweth to an end and I mean to do him dead in foulest sort, and to-morrow we will visit him with that which he meriteth.”

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The Tenth Day.

Of the Appointed Term,[229] Which, if it be Advanced, may not be Deferred, and if it be Deferred, may not be Advanced.

When it was the tenth day (now this day was called Al-Mihrjбn[230] and it was the day of the coming in of the folk, gentle and simple, to the king, so they might give him joy and salute him and go forth), the council of the Wazirs agreed that they should speak with a company of the city notables. So they said to them, “When ye go in today to the king and salute him, do ye say to him, ‘O king, (to the Lord be the laud!) thou art praiseworthy of policy and procedure and just to all thy subjects; but respecting this youth whom thou hast favoured and who nevertheless hath reverted to his base origin and done this foul deed, what is thy purpose in his continuance? Indeed, thou hast prisoned him in thy palace, and every day thou hearest his palaver and thou knowest not what the folk say.’” And they answered, “Hearing is obeying.” Accordingly, when they entered with the folk and had prostrated themselves before the king and congratulated his majesty, he raised their several degrees. Now it was the custom of the folk to salute and go forth; but they took seat, and the king knew that they had a word they would fain address to him: so he turned to them (the Wazirs being also present) and said, “Ask your need.” Therefore they repeated to him all that the Ministers had taught them and the Wazirs also spoke with them; and Azadbakht said to them, “O folk, I would have it known to you that there is no doubt with me concerning this your speech proceeding from love and loyal counsel to me, and ye ken that, were I inclined to kill half these folk, I could do them die and this would not be hard to me; so how shall I not slay this youth and he in my power and in the hending of my hand? Indeed, his crime is manifest and he hath incurred death penalty; and I have deferred it only by reason of the greatness of the offence; for, an I do this with him and my proof against him be strengthened, my heart is healed and the heart of my whole folk; and if I slay him not to-day, his slaying shall not escape me to-morrow.” Then he bade fetch the youth who, when present between his hands, prostrated to him and blessed him; whereupon quoth the king, “Woe to thee! How long shall the folk upbraid me on thine account and blame me for delaying thy death? Even the people of my city reproach me because of thee, so that I am grown a prating-stock amongst them, and indeed they come in to me and reproach me for not putting thee to death. How long shall I delay this? Verily, this very day I mean to shed thy blood and rid the folk of thy prattling.” The youth replied, “O king, an there have betided thee talk because of me, by Allah, and again by Allah the Great, those who have brought on thee this talk from the folk are none but these wicked Wazirs, who chatter with the crowd and tell them foul tales and ill things in the king’s house, but I hope in the Most High that He will cause their malice to recoil upon their own heads. As for the king’s menace of slaying me, I am in the grip of his hand; so let not the king occupy his mind with my slaughter, because I am like the sparrow in the grasp of the fowler; if he will, he cutteth his throat, and if he will, he letteth him go. As for the delaying of my death, ’tis not from the king, but from Him in whose hand is my life; for, by Allah, O king, an the Almighty willed my slaughter, thou couldst not postpone it; no, not for a single hour. And, indeed, man availeth not to fend off evil from himself, even as it was with the son of King Sulayman Shah, whose anxiety and carefulness for the winning of his wish in the matter of the new-born child availed him naught, for his last hour was deferred how many a time! and Allah saved him until he had accomplished his period and had fulfilled his life-term.” Cried the king, “Fie upon thee, how great is thy craft and thy talk! Tell me, what was their tale.” And the youth said, “Hear, O king,

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The Story of King Sulayman Shah and his Niece.[231]

There was once a king named Sulayman Shбh, who was goodly of policy and rede, and he had a brother who died and left a daughter; so Sulayman Shah reared her with the best of rearing and the girl became a model of reason and perfection, nor was there in her time a more beautiful than she. Now the king had two sons, one of whom he had appointed in his mind to wed her, while the other purposed to take her. The elder son's name was Bahluwбn[232] and that of the younger Malik Shбh[233] , and the girl was called Shбh Khбtъn. Now one day, King Sulayman Shah went in to his brother's daughter and kissing her head, said to her, "Thou art my daughter and dearer to me than a child, for the love of thy late father who hath found mercy; wherefore I purpose espousing thee to one of my sons and appointing him my heir apparent, so he may be king after me. Look, then, which thou wilt have of my sons,[234] for that thou hast been reared with them and knowest them." The maiden arose and kissing his hand, said to him, "O my lord, I am thine hand-maid and thou art the ruler over me; so whatever liketh thee do that same, inasmuch as thy wish is higher and honourabler and holier than mine and if thou wouldst have me serve thee as a hand-maid for the rest of my life, 'twere fairer to me than any mate." The king commended her speech and conferred on her a robe of honour and gave her magnificent gifts; after which, his choice having fallen upon his younger son, Malik Shah, he wedded her with him and made him his heir apparent and bade the folk swear fealty to him. When this reached his brother Bahluwan and he was ware that his younger brother had by favour been preferred over him, his breast was straitened and the affair was sore to him and envy entered into him and hate; but he hid this in his heart, whilst fire raged therein because of the damsel and the dominion. Meanwhile Shah Khatun went in bridal splendour to the king's son and conceived by him and bare a son, as he were the illuming moon. When Bahluwan saw this betide his brother, envy and jealousy overcame him; so he went in one night to his father's palace and coming to his brother's chamber, saw the nurse sleeping at the door, with the cradle before her and therein his brother's child asleep. Bahluwan stood by him and fell to looking upon his face, whose radiance was as that of the moon, and Satan insinuated himself into his heart, so that he bethought himself and said, "Why be not this babe mine? Verily, I am worthier of him than my brother; yea, and of the damsel and the dominion." Then the idea got the mastery of him and anger drave him, so that he took out a knife, and setting it to the child's gullet, cut his throat and would have severed his windpipe. So he left him for dead and entering his brother's chamber, saw him asleep, with the Princess by his side, and thought to slay her, but said to himself, "I will leave the girl-wife for myself." Then he went up to his brother and cutting his throat, parted head from body, after which he left him and went away. But now the world was straitened upon him and his life was a light matter to him and he sought the lodging of his sire Sulayman Shah, that he might slay him also, but could not get admission to him. So he went forth from the palace and hid himself in the city till the morrow, when he repaired to one of his father's fortalices and therein fortified himself. On this wise it was with him; but as regards the nurse, she presently awoke that she might give the child suck, and seeing the cradle running with blood, cried out; whereupon the sleepers started up and the king was aroused and making for the place, found the child with his throat cut and the bed running over with blood and his father dead with a slit weasand in his sleeping chamber. They examined the child and found life in him and his windpipe whole and they sewed up the place of the wound: then the king sought his son Bahluwan, but found him not and saw that he had fled; so he knew that it was he who had done this deed, and this was grievous to the king and to the people of his realm and to the lady Shah Khatun. Thereupon the king laid out his son Malik Shah and buried him and made him a mighty funeral and they mourned with passing sore mourning; after which he applied himself to rearing the infant. As for Bahluwan, when he fled and fortified himself, his power waxed amain and there remained for him but to make war upon his father, who had cast his fondness upon the child and used to rear him on his knees and supplicate Almighty Allah that he might live, so he might commit the command to him. When he came to five years of age, the king mounted him on horseback and the people of the city rejoiced in him and prayed for him length of life, that he might take vengeance for his father[235] and heal his grandsire's heart. Meanwhile, Bahluwan the rebel[236] addressed himself to pay court to Cæsar, king of the Roum[237] and crave aid of him in debelling his father, and he inclined unto him and gave him a numerous army. His sire the king hearing of this sent to Cæsar, saying, "O glorious king of might illustrious, succour not an evil doer. This is my son and he hath done so and so and cut his brother's throat and that of his brother's son in the cradle." But he told not the king of the Roum that the child had recovered and was alive. When Cæsar heard the truth of the matter, it was grievous to him as grievous could be, and he sent back to Sulayman Shah, saying, "An it be thy wish, O king, I will cut off his head and send it to thee." But he made answer, saying, "I care naught for him: soon and surely the reward of his deed and his crimes shall overtake him, if not to-day, then tomorrow." And from that date he continued to exchange letters and presents with Cæsar. Now the king of the Roum heard tell of the widowed Princess[238] and of the beauty and loveliness wherewith she was endowed, wherefore his heart clave to her and he sent to seek her in wedlock of Sulayman Shah, who could not refuse him. So he arose and going in to Shah Khatun, said to her, "O my daughter, the king of the Roum hath sent to me to seek thee in marriage. What sayst thou?" She wept and replied, "O king, how canst thou find it in thy heart to address me thus? As for me, abideth there husband for me, after the son of my uncle?" Rejoined the king, "O my daughter, 'tis indeed as thou sayest; but here let us look to the issues of affairs. I must now take compt of death, for that I am a man shot in years and fear not save for thee and for thy little son; and indeed I have written to the king of the Roum and others of the kings and said, His uncle slew him, and said not that he had recovered and is living, but concealed his affair. Now the king of the Roum hath sent to demand thee in marriage, and this is no thing to be refused and fain would we have our back strengthened with him."[239] And she was silent and spake not. So King Sulayman Shah made answer to Cæsar with "Hearing and obeying." Then he arose and despatched her to him, and Cæsar went in to her and found her passing the description wherewith they had described her; wherefore he loved her every day more and more and preferred her over all his women and his affection for Sulayman Shah was increased; but Shah Khatun's heart still clave to her child and she could say naught. As for Sulayman Shah's son, the rebel Bahluwan, when he saw that Shah Khatun had married the king of the Roum, this was grievous to him and he despaired of her. Meanwhile, his father Sulayman Shah watched over the child and cherished him and named him Malik Shah, after the name of his sire. When he reached the age of ten, he made the folk do homage to him and appointed him his heir apparent, and after some days, the old king's time for paying the debt of nature drew near and he died. Now a party of the troops had banded themselves together for Bahluwan; so they sent to him, and bringing him privily, went in to the little Malik Shah and seized him and seated his uncle Bahluwan on the throne of kingship. Then they proclaimed him king and did homage to him all, saying, "Verily, we desire thee and deliver to thee the throne of kingship; but we wish of thee that thou slay not thy brother's son, because we are still bounden by the oaths we sware to his sire and his grandsire and the covenants we made with them." So Bahluwan granted this to them and imprisoned the boy in an underground dungeon and straitened him. Presently, the grievous news reached his mother and this was to her a fresh grief; but she could not speak and committed her affair to Allah Almighty, for that she durst not name this to King Cжsar her spouse, lest she should make her uncle King Sulayman Shah a liar. But as regards Bahluwan the Rebel, he abode king in his father's place and his affairs prospered, while young Malik Shah lay in the souterrain four full-told years, till his favour faded and his charms changed. When He (extolled and exalted be He!) willed to relieve him and to bring him forth of the prison, Bahluwan sat one day with his chief Officers and the Lords of his land and discoursed with them of the story of his sire, King Sulayman Shah and what was in his heart. Now there were present certain Wazirs, men of worth, and they said to him, "O king, verily Allah hath been bountiful to thee and hath brought thee to thy wish, so that thou art become king in thy father's place and hast won whatso thou wishedst. But, as for this youth, there is no guilt in him, because he, from the day of his coming into the world, hath seen neither ease nor pleasure, and indeed his favour is faded and his charms changed. What is his crime that he should merit such pains and penalties? Indeed, others than he were to blame, and hereto Allah hath given thee the victory over them, and there is no fault in this poor lad." Quoth Bahluwan, "Verily, 'tis as ye say; but I fear his machinations and am not safe from his mischief; haply the most part of the folk will incline unto him." They replied, "O king, what is this boy and what power hath he? An thou fear him, send him to one of the frontiers." And Bahluwan said, "Ye speak sooth; so we will send him as captain of war to reduce one of the outlying stations." Now over against the place in question was a host of enemies, hard of heart, and in this he designed the slaughter of the youth; so he bade bring him forth of the underground dungeon and caused him draw near to him and saw his case. Then he robed him, whereat the folk rejoiced, and bound for him the banners[240] and, giving him a mighty many, despatched him to the quarter aforesaid, whither all who went or were slain or were taken. Accordingly Malik Shah fared thither with his force and when it was one of the days, behold, the enemy attacked them in the night; whereupon some of his men fled and the rest the enemy captured; and they seized Malik Shah also and cast him into a pit with a company of his men. His fellows mourned over his beauty and loveliness and there he abode a whole twelvemonth in evillest plight. Now at the beginning of every year it was the enemy's wont to bring forth their prisoners and cast them down from the top of the citadel to the bottom; so at the customed time they brought them forth and cast them down, and Malik Shah with them. However, he fell upon the other men and the ground touched him not, for his term was God-guarded. But those who were cast down there were slain upon the spot and their bodies ceased not to lie there till the wild beasts ate them and the winds scattered their bones. Malik Shah abode strown in his place and aswoon, all that day and that night, and when he revived and found himself safe and sound, he thanked Allah the Most High for his safety and rising, left the place. He gave not over walking, unknowing whither he went and dieting upon the leaves of the trees; and by day he hid himself where he might and fared on at hazard all his night; and thus he did for some days, till he came to a populous part and seeing folk there, accosted them. He acquainted them with his case, giving them to know that he had been prisoned in the fortress and that they had thrown him down, but Almighty Allah had saved him and brought him off alive. The people had ruth on him and gave him to eat and drink and he abode with them several days; then he questioned them of the way that led to the kingdom of his uncle Bahluwan, but told them not that he was his father's brother. So they showed him the road and he ceased not to go barefoot, till he drew near his uncle's capital, naked, anhungered, and indeed his limbs were lean and his colour changed. He sat down at the city gate, when behold, up came a company of King Bahluwan's chief officers, who were out a-hunting and wished to water their horses. They lighted down to rest and the youth accosted them, saying, "I would ask you of somewhat that ye may acquaint me therewith." Quoth they, "Ask what thou wilt;" and quoth he, "Is King Bahluwan well?" They derided him and replied, "What a fool art thou, O youth! Thou art a stranger and a beggar, and whence art thou that thou should'st question concerning the king?"[241] Cried he, "In very sooth, he is my uncle;" whereat they marvelled and said, "'Twas one catch-question[242] and now 'tis become two." Then said they to him, "O youth, it is as if thou wert Jinn-mad. Whence comest thou to claim kinship with the king? Indeed, we know not that he hath any kith and kin save a nephew, a brother's son, who was prisoned with him, and he despatched him to wage war upon the infidels, so that they slew him." Said Malik Shah, "I am he and they slew me not, but there befel me this and that." They knew him forthwith and rising to him, kissed his hands and rejoiced in him and said to him, "O our lord, thou art indeed a king and the son of a king, and we desire thee naught but good and we pray for thy continuance. Look how Allah hath rescued thee from this wicked uncle, who sent thee to a place whence none ever came off safe and sound, purposing not in this but thy destruction; and indeed thou fellest upon death from which Allah delivered thee. How, then, wilt thou return and cast thyself again into thine foeman's hand? By Allah, save thyself and return not to him this second time. Haply thou shalt abide upon the face of the earth till it please Almighty Allah to receive thee; but, an thou fall again into his hand, he will not suffer thee to live a single hour." The Prince thanked them and said to them, "Allah reward you with all weal, for indeed ye give me loyal counsel; but whither would ye have me wend?” Quoth they, “To the land of the Roum, the abiding place of thy mother.” “But,” quoth he, “My grandfather Sulayman Shah, when the king of the Roum wrote to him demanding my mother in marriage, hid my affair and secreted my secret; and she hath done the same, and I cannot make her a liar.” Rejoined they, “Thou sayst sooth, but we desire thine advantage, and even wert thou to take service with the folk, ‘twere a means of thy continuance.” Then each and every of them brought out to him money and gave him a modicum and clad him and fed him and fared on with him the length of a parasang, till they brought him far from the city, and letting him know that he was safe, departed from him, whilst he journeyed till he came forth of his uncle’s reign and entered the dominion of the Roum. Then he made a village and taking up his abode therein, applied himself to serving one there in earing and seeding and the like. As for his mother, Shah Khatun, great was her longing for her child and she thought of him ever and news of him was cut off from her, so her life was troubled and she foresware sleep and could not make mention of him before King Cжsar her spouse. Now she had a Castrato who had come with her from the court of her uncle King Sulayman Shah, and he was intelligent, quick-witted, right-reded. So she took him apart one day and said to him, shedding tears the while, “Thou hast been my Eunuch from my childhood to this day; canst thou not therefore get me tidings of my son, seeing that I cannot speak of his matter?” He replied, “O my lady, this is an affair which thou hast concealed from the commencement, and were thy son here, ’twould not be possible for thee to entertain him, lest[243] thine honour be smirched with the king; for they would never credit thee, since the news hath been bruited abroad that thy son was slain by his uncle.” Quoth she, “The case is even as thou sayst and thou speaketh sooth; but, provided I know that my son is alive, let him be in these parts pasturing sheep and let me not sight him nor he sight me.” He asked, “How shall we manage in this matter?” and she answered, “Here be my treasures and my wealth: take all thou wilt and bring me my son or else tidings of him.” Then they devised a device between them, which was that they should feign some business in their own country, to wit that she had wealth there buried from the time of her husband, Malik Shah, and that none knew of it but this Eunuch who was with her, so it behoved him to go fetch it. Accordingly she acquainted the king her husband with that and sought his permit for the Eunuch to fare: and the king granted him leave of absence for the journey and charged him devise a device, lest he come to grief. The Castrato, therefore, disguised himself in merchant's habit and repairing to Bahluwan's city, began to make espial concerning the youth's case; whereupon they told him that he had been prisoned in a souterrain and that his uncle had released him and despatched him to such a place, where they had slain him. When the Eunuch heard this, the mishap was grievous to him and his breast was straitened and he knew not what to do. It chanced one day of the days that a certain of the horsemen, who had fallen in with the young Malik Shah by the water and clad him and given him spending-money, saw the Eunuch in the city, habited as a merchant, and recognising him, questioned him of his case and of the cause of his coming. Quoth he, "I came to sell merchandise;" and quoth the horseman, "I will tell thee somewhat, an thou canst keep it secret." Answered the Neutral, "That I can! What is it?" and the other said, "We met the king's son Malik Shah, I and sundry of the Arabs who were with me, and saw him by such a water and gave him spending-money and sent him towards the land of the Roum, near his mother, for that we feared for him lest his uncle Bahluwan slay him." Then he told him all that had passed between them, whereat the Eunuch's countenance changed and he said to the cavalier "Thou art safe!" The knight replied, "Thou also art safe though thou come in quest of him." And the Eunuch rejoined, saying, "Truly, that is my errand: there is no rest for his mother, lying down or rising up, and she hath sent me to seek news of him." Quoth the cavalier, "Go in safety, for he is in a quarter of the land of the Roum, even as I said to thee." The Castrato thanked him and blessed him and mounting, returned upon his road, following the trail, whilst the knight rode with him to a certain highway, when he said to him, "This is where we left him." Then he took leave of him and returned to his own city, whilst the Eunuch fared on along the road, enquiring in every village he entered of the youth, by the description which the rider had given him, and he ceased not thus to do till he came to the village wherein was young

Malik Shah. So he entered, and dismounting, made enquiry after the Prince, but none gave him news of him; whereat he abode perplexed concerning his affair and made ready to depart. Accordingly he mounted his horse; but, as he passed through the village, he saw a cow bound with a rope and a youth asleep by her side, hending the halter in hand; so he looked at him and passed on and heeded him not in his heart; but presently he halted and said to himself, "An the youth whom I am questing have become the like of this sleeping youth whom I passed but now, how shall I know him? Alas, the length of my travail and travel! How shall I go about in search of a somebody I know not, one whom, if I saw him face to face I should not know?" So saying he turned back, musing anent that sleeping youth, and coming to him, he still sleeping, dismounted from his mare and sat down by his side. He fixed his eyes upon his face and considered him awhile and said in himself, "For aught I wot, this youth may be Malik Shah;" then he began hemming and saying, "Harkye, O youth!" Whereupon the sleeper awoke and sat up; and the Eunuch asked him, "Who be thy father in this village and where be thy dwelling?" The youth sighed and replied, "I am a stranger;" and quoth the Castrato, "From what land art thou and who is thy sire?" Quoth the other, "I am from such a land," and the Eunuch ceased not to question him and he to answer his queries, till he was certified of him and knew him. So he rose and embraced him and kissed him and wept over his case: he also told him that he was wandering about in search of him and informed him that he was come privily from the king, his mother's husband, and that his mother would be satisfied to weet that he was alive and well, though she saw him not. Then he re-entered the village and buying the Prince a horse, mounted him and they ceased not going till they came to the frontier of their own country, where there fell robbers upon them by the way and took all that was with them and pinioned them; after which they threw them in a pit hard by the road and went their ways and left them to die there; and indeed they had cast many folk into that pit and they had perished. The Eunuch fell a-weeping in the pit and the youth said to him, "What is this weeping and what shall it profit here?" Quoth the Castrato, "I weep not for fear of death, but of ruth for thee and the cursedness of thy case and because of thy mother's heart and for that which thou hast suffered of horrors and that thy death should be this ignoble death, after the endurance of all manner dire distresses." But the youth said, "That which hath betided me was writ to me and that which is written none hath power to efface; and if my life-term be advanced, none may defer it."[244] Then the twain passed that night and the following day and the next night and the next day in the hollow, till they were weak with hunger and came nigh upon death and could but groan feebly. Now it fortuned by the decree of Almighty Allah and His destiny, that Cжsar, king of the Greeks, the spouse of Malik Shah's mother Shah Khatun, went forth a-hunting that morning. He flushed a head of game, he and his company, and chased it, till they came up with it by that pit, whereupon one of them lighted down from his horse, to slaughter it, hard by the mouth of the hollow. He heard a sound of low moaning from the sole of the pit; whereat he arose and mounting his horse, waited till the troops were assembled. Then he acquainted the king with this and he bade one of his servants descend into the hollow: so the man climbed down and brought out the youth and the Eunuch in fainting condition. They cut their pinion-bonds and poured wine down their throats, till they came to themselves, when the king looked at the Eunuch and recognising him, said, "Harkye, Suchan-one!" The Castrato replied, "Yes, O my lord the king," and prostrated himself to him; whereat the king wondered with exceeding wonder and asked him, "How camest thou to this place and what hath befallen thee?" The Eunuch answered, "I went and took out the treasure and brought it thus far; but the evil eye was behind me and I unknowing. So the thieves took us alone here and seized the money and cast us into this pit that we might die the slow death of hunger, even as they had done with others; but Allah the Most High sent thee, in pity to us." The king marvelled, he and his, and praised the Lord for that he had come thither; after which he turned to the Castrato and said to him, "What is this youth thou hast with thee?" He replied, "O king, this is the son of a nurse who belonged to us and we left him when he was a little one. I saw him to-day and his mother said to me, 'Take him with thee;' so this morning I brought him that he might be a servant to the king, for that he is an adroit youth and a clever." Then the king fared on, he and his company, and with them the Eunuch and the youth, who questioned his companion of Bahluwan and his dealing with his subjects, and he replied, saying, “As thy head liveth, O my lord the king, the folk are in sore annoy with him and not one of them wisheth a sight of him, be they high or low.” When the king returned to his palace, he went in to his wife Shah Khatun and said to her, “I give thee the glad tidings of thine Eunuch’s return;” and he told her what had betided and of the youth whom he had brought with him. When she heard this, her wits fled and she would have screamed, but her reason restrained her, and the king said to her, “What is this? Art thou overcome with grief for the loss of the monies or for that which hath befallen the Eunuch?” Said she, “Nay, as thy head liveth, O king, but women are weaklings.” Then came the Castrato and going in to her, told her all that had happened to him and also acquainted her with her son’s case and with that which he had suffered of distresses and how his uncle had exposed him to slaughter, and he had been taken prisoner and they had cast him into the pit and hurled him from the highmost of the citadel and how Allah had delivered him from these perils, all of them; and whilst he recounted to her all this, she wept. Then she asked him, “When the king saw him and questioned thee of him, what was it thou saidst him?” and he answered, “I said to him, ‘This is the son of a nurse who belonged to us. We left him a little one and he grew up; so I brought him, that he might be servant to the king.’” Cried she, “Thou didst well;” and she charged him to serve the Prince with faithful service. As for the king, he redoubled in kindness to the Castrato and appointed the youth a liberal allowance and he abode going in to and coming out of the king’s house and standing in his service, and every day he waxed better with him. As for Shah Khatun, she used to station herself at watch for him at the windows and in the balconies and gaze upon him, and she frying on coals of fire on his account; yet could she not speak. In such condition she abode a long while and indeed yearning for him was killing her; so she stood and watched for him one day at the door of her chamber and straining him to her bosom, bussed him on the breast and kissed him on either cheek. At this moment, behold, out came the major-domo of the king’s household and seeing her embracing the youth, started in amazement. Then he asked to whom that chamber belonged and was answered, “To Shah Khatun, wife of the king,” whereupon he turned back, quaking as one smitten by a leven-bolt. The king saw him in a tremor and said to him, “Out on thee! what is the matter?” Said he, “O king, what matter can be more grievous than that which I see?” Asked the king, “What seest thou?” and the officer answered, “I see that the youth, who came with the Eunuch, was not brought with him save on account of Shah Khatun; for I passed but now by her chamber door, and she was standing, watching; and when the youth came up, she rose to him and clipped him and kissed him on his cheek.” When the king heard this, he bowed his head amazed, perplexed, and sinking into a seat, clutched at his beard and shook it until he came nigh upon plucking it out. Then he arose forthright and laid hands on the youth and clapped him in jail. He also took the Eunuch and cast them both into a souterrain under his palace. After this he went in to Shah Khatun and said to her, “Brava, by Allah, O daughter of nobles. O thou whom kings sought to wed, for the purity of thy repute and the fairness of the fame of thee! How seemly is thy semblance! Now may Allah curse her whose inward contrarieth her outward, after the likeness of thy base favour, whose exterior is handsome and its interior fulsome, face fair and deeds foul! Verily, I mean to make of thee and of yonder ne’er-do-well an example among the lieges, for that thou sentest not thine Eunuch but of intent on his account, so that he took him and brought him into my palace and thou hast trampled[245] my head with him; and this is none other than exceeding boldness; but thou shalt see what I will do with you all.” So saying, he spat in her face and went out from her; whilst Shah Khatun said nothing, well knowing that, an she spoke at that time, he would not credit her speech. Then she humbled herself in supplication to Allah Almighty and said, “O God the Great, Thou knowest the things by secrecy ensealed and their outwards revealed and their inwards concealed! If an advanced life-term be appointed to me, let it not be deferred, and if a deferred one, let it not be advanced!” On this wise she passed some days, whilst the king fell into bewilderment and forsware meat and drink and sleep, and abode knowing not what he should do and saying to himself, “An I slay the Eunuch and the youth, my soul will not be solaced, for they are not to blame, seeing that she sent to fetch him, and my heart careth not to kill them all three. But I will not be hasty in doing them die, for that I fear repentance.” Then he left them, so he might look into the affair. Now he had a nurse, a foster-mother, on whose knees he had been reared, and she was a woman of understanding and suspected him, yet dared not question him. So she went in to Shah Khatun and finding her in yet sadder plight than he, asked her what was to do; but she refused to answer. However, the nurse gave not over coaxing and questioning her, till she swore her to concealment. Accordingly, the old woman made oath that she would keep secret all that she should say to her, whereupon the Queen to her related her history, first and last, and told her that the youth was her son. With this the old woman prostrated herself before her and said to her, “This is a right easy matter.” But the Queen replied, “By Allah, O my mother, I prefer my destruction and that of my son to defending myself by a plea which they will not believe; for they will say, ‘She pleadeth this only that she may fend off shame from herself.’ And naught will profit me save long-suffering.” The old woman was moved by her speech and her wisdom and said to her, “Indeed, O my daughter, ’tis as thou sayest, and I hope in Allah that He will show forth the truth. Have patience and I will presently go in to the king and hear his words and machinate somewhat in this matter, Inshallah!” Thereupon the ancient dame arose and going into the king, found him with his head between his knees in sore pain of sorrow. She sat down by him awhile and bespake him with soft words and said to him,[246] “Indeed, O my son, thou consumest my vitals, for that these many days thou hast not mounted horse, and thou grievest and I know not what aileth thee.” He replied, “O my mother, all is due to yonder accursed, of whom I deemed so well and who hath done this and that.” Then he related to her the whole story from beginning to end, and she cried to him, “This thy chagrin is on account of a no-better-than-she-should-be!” Quoth he, “I was but considering by what death I should slay them, so the folk may take warning and repent.” And quoth she, “O my son, ‘ware precipitance, for it gendereth repentance and the slaying of them shall not escape thee. When thou art assured of this affair, do whatso thou willest.” He rejoined, “O my mother, there needeth no assurance anent him for whom she despatched her Eunuch and he fetched him.” But she retorted, “There is a thing wherewith we will make her confess,[247] and all that is in her heart shall be discovered to thee.” Asked the king, “What is that?” and she answered, “I will bring thee the heart of a hoopoe,[248] which, when she sleepeth, do thou lay upon her bosom and question her of everything thou wouldst know, and she will discover the same unto thee and show forth the truth to thee.” The king rejoiced in this and said to his nurse, “Hasten thou and let none know of thee.” So she arose and going in to the Queen, said to her, “I have done thy business and ’tis as follows. This night the king will come in to thee and do thou seem asleep; and if he ask thee of aught, do thou answer him, as if in thy sleep.” The Queen thanked her and the old dame went away and fetching the bird’s heart, gave it to the king. Hardly was the night come, when he went in to his wife and found her lying back, a-slumbering; so he sat down by her side and laying the hoopoe’s heart on her breast, waited awhile, so he might be assured that she slept. Then said he to her, “Shah Khatun,[249] Shah Khatun, is this my reward from thee?” Quoth she, “What offence have I committed?” and quoth he, “What offence can be greater than this? Thou sentest after yonder youth and broughtest him hither, on account of the lust of thy heart, so thou mightest do with him that for which thou lustedst.” Said she, “I know not carnal desire. Verily, among thy pages are those who are comelier and seemlier than he; yet have I never desired one of them.” He asked “Why, then, didst thou lay hold of him and kiss him?” And she answered, “This youth is my son and a piece of my liver; and of my longing and affection for him, I could not contain myself, but sprang upon him and kissed him.” When the king heard this, he was dazed and amazed and said to her, “Hast thou a proof that this youth is thy son? Indeed, I have a letter from thine uncle King Sulayman Shah, informing me that his uncle Bahluwan cut his throat.” Said she “Yes, he did indeed cut his throat, but severed not the wind-pipe; so my uncle sewed up the wound and reared him, for that his life-term was not come.” When the king heard this, he said, “This proof sufficeth me,” and rising forthright in the night, bade bring the youth and the Eunuch. Then he examined his stepson’s throat with a candle and saw the scar where it had been cut from ear to ear, and indeed the place had healed up and it was like a thread stretched out. Thereupon the king fell down prostrate before Allah, who had delivered the Prince from all these perils and from the distresses he had suffered, and rejoiced with joy exceeding because he had delayed and had not made haste to slay him, in which case mighty sore repentance had betided him.[250] "As for the youth," continued the young treasurer, "he was not saved but because his life-term was deferred, and in like manner, O king, 'tis with me: I too have a deferred term, which I shall attain, and a period which I shall accomplish, and I trust in Almighty Allah that He will give me the victory over these villain Wazirs." When the youth had made an end of his speech, the king said, "Restore him to the prison;" and when they had done this, he turned to the Ministers and said to them, "Yonder youth lengtheneth his tongue upon you, but I know your tenderness for the weal of mine empire and your loyal counsel to me; so be of good heart, for all that ye advise me I will do." They rejoiced when they heard these words, and each of them said his say. Then quoth the king, "I have not deferred his slaughter but to the intent that the talk might be prolonged and that words might abound, yet shall he now be slain without let or stay, and I desire that forthright ye set up for him a gibbet without the town and that the crier cry among the folk bidding them assemble and take him and carry him in procession to the gibbet, with the crier crying before him and saying, 'This is the reward of him whom the king delighted to favour and who hath betrayed him!'" The Wazirs rejoiced when they heard this, and for their joy slept not that night; and they made proclamation in the city and set up the gallows.

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The Eleventh Day.

Of the Speedy Relief of Allah.

When it was the eleventh day, the Wazirs repaired in early morning to the king’s gate and said to him, “O king, the folk are assembled from the portals of the palace to the gibbet, to the end they may see the king’s order carried out on the youth.” So Azadbakht bade fetch the prisoner and they brought him; whereupon the Ministers turned to him and said to him, “O vile of birth, can any lust for life remain with thee and canst thou hope for deliverance after this day?” Said he, “O wicked Wazirs, shall a man of understanding renounce all esperance in Almighty Allah? Howsoever a man be oppressed, there cometh to him deliverance from the midst of distress and life from the midst of death, as in the case of the prisoner and how Allah delivered him.” Asked the king, “What is his story?” and the youth answered, saying, “O king, they tell

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

The Story of the Prisoner and How Allah Gave Him Relief.[251]

There was once a king of the kings, who had a high palace, overlooking his prison, and he used to hear in the night one saying, "O Ever-present Deliverer, O Thou whose deliverance is aye present, relieve Thou me!" One day the king waxed wroth and said, "Yonder fool looketh for relief from the pains and penalties of his crime." Then said he to his officers, "Who is in yonder jail?" and said they, "Folk upon whom blood hath been found."[252] Hearing this the king bade bring that man before him and said to him, "O fool, O little of wit, how shalt thou be delivered from this prison, seeing that thy crime is mortal?" Then he committed him to a company of his guards and said to them, "Take this wight and crucify him within sight of the city." Now it was the night season. So the soldiers carried him without the city, thinking to crucify him, when behold, there came out upon them robbers and fell upon them with swords and other weapons. Thereat the guards left him whom they purposed to slay and fled whilst the man who was going to slaughter also took to flight and plunging deep into the desert, knew not whither he went before he found himself in a copse and there came out upon him a lion of terrible aspect, who snatched him up and cast him under him. Then he went up to a tree and uprooting it, covered the man therewithal and made off into the thicket, in quest of the lioness.[253] As for the man, he committed his affair to Allah the Most High, relying upon Him for deliverance, and said to himself, "What is this affair?" Then he removed the leaves from himself and rising, saw great plenty of men's bones there, of those whom the lion had devoured. He looked again and behold, he saw a heap of gold lying alongside a purse-belt;[254] whereat he marvelled and gathering up the gold in the breast of his gaberdine, went forth of the copse and fled at hap-hazard, turning neither to the right nor to the left, in his fear of the lion; nor did he cease flying till he came to a village and cast himself down, as he were dead. He lay there till the day appeared and he was rested from his travail, when he arose and burying the gold, entered the village. Thus Allah gave him relief and he got the gold.

Then said the king, “How long wilt thou beguile us, O youth, with thy prate? But now the hour of thy slaughter is come.” So he bade crucify him upon the gibbet. But as they were about to hoist him up, lo and behold! the Captain of the thieves, who had found him and reared him, came up at that moment and asked, “What be this assembly and the cause of the crowds here gathered together?” They informed him that a page of the king had committed a mighty great crime and that he was about to do him die; so the Captain of the thieves pressed forward and looking upon the prisoner, knew him, whereupon he went up to him and strained him to his bosom and threw his arms round his neck, and fell to kissing him upon his mouth.[255] Then said he, “This is a boy I found under such a mountain, wrapped in a gown of brocade, and I reared him and he fell to cutting the way with us. One day, we set upon a caravan, but they put us to flight and wounded some of us and took the lad and ganged their gait. From that day to this I have gone round about the lands seeking him, but have not found news of him till now; and this is he.” When the king heard this, he was assured that the youth was his very son; so he cried out at the top of his voice and casting himself upon him, embraced him and kissed him and shedding tears, said, “Had I put thee to death, as was mine intent, I should have died of regret for thee.” Then he cut his pinion-bonds and taking his crown from his head, set it on the head of his son, whereupon the people raised cries of joy, whilst the trumpets blared and the kettledrums beat and there befel a mighty great rejoicing. They decorated the city and it was a glorious day; even the birds stayed their flight in the welkin, for the greatness of the greeting and the clamour of the crying. The army and the folk carried the prince to the palace in splendid procession, and the news came to his mother Bahrjaur, who fared forth and threw herself upon him. Moreover, the king bade open the prison and bring forth all who were therein, and they held high festival seven days and seven nights and rejoiced with a mighty rejoicing. Thus it betided the youth; but as regards the Ministers, terror and silence, shame and affright fell upon them and they gave themselves up for lost. After this the king sat, with his son by his side and the Wazirs on their knees before him, and summoned his chief officers and the subjects of the city. Then the prince turned to the Ministers and said to them, “See, O villain Wazirs, the work of Allah and his speedy relief.” But they answered ne’er a syllable and the king said, “It sufficeth me that there is nothing alive but rejoiceth with me this day, even to the birds in the sky, but ye, your breasts are straitened. Indeed, this is the greatest of hostility in you me-wards, and had I hearkened to you, my regret had been prolonged and I had died miserably of sorrow.” Quoth the prince, “O my father, but for the fairness of thy thought and thy perspicacity and thy longanimity and deliberation in affairs, there had not betided thee this great joy. Hadst thou slain me in haste, repentance would have been sore on thee and longsome annoy, and on this wise whoso preferreth haste shall rue.” Presently the king sent for the Captain of the robbers and bade indue him with a robe of honour, commanding that all who loved the king should doff their dresses and cast them upon him.[256] So there fell robes of honour on him, till he was a-wearied with their weight, and Azadbakht invested him with the mastership of the police of his city. Then he bade set up other nine gibbets by the side of the first and said to his son, “Thou art innocent, and yet these villain Wazirs strave for thy slaughter.” Replied the prince, “O my sire, I had no fault in their eyes but that I was a loyal counsellor to thee and still kept watch over thy wealth and withdrew their hands from thy hoards and treasuries; wherefore they were jealous and envied me and plotted against me and planned to slay me.” Quoth the king, “The time of retribution is at hand, O my son; but what be thy rede we should do with them in requital of that they did with thee? And indeed they have striven for thy slaughter and exposed thee to disgrace and smirched mine honour among the kings.” Then he turned to the Wazirs and said to them, “Woe to you! What liars ye are! And is aught of excuse left to you?” Said they, “O king, there remaineth no excuse for us and we are houghed[257] by the deed we would have done to him. Indeed we planned evil to this youth and it hath reverted upon us, and we plotted mischief against him and it hath overtaken us; yea, we digged for him a pit and we ourselves have fallen into it.” So the king bade hoist up the Wazirs upon the gibbets and crucify them there, because Allah is just and decreeth that which is due. Then Azadbakht and his wife and son abode in joyance and gladness, till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and they died all; and extolled be the Living One, who dieth not, to whom be glory and whose mercy be upon us for ever and ever! Amen.

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JA’AFAR BIN YAHYA AND ABD AL-MALIK BIN SALITH THE ABBASIDE[258]

It is told of Ja’afar bin Yahya the Barmecide that he sat down one day to wine and, being minded to be private, sent for his boon-companions, with whom he was most familiar, and charged the chamberlain that he suffer none of the creatures of Almighty Allah to enter, save a man of his cup-mates, by name Abd al-Malik bin Sбlih, who was behindhand with them. Then they donned brightly-dyed dresses.[259] for it was their wont, as often as they sat in the wine-sйance, to endue raiment of red and yellow and green silk, and they sat down to drink, and the cups went round the lutes thrilled and shrilled. Now there was a man of the kinsfolk of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, by name Abd al-Malik bin Salih[260] bin Ali bin Abdallah bin al-Abbas,[261] who was great of gravity and sedateness, piety and propriety, and Al- Rashid used instantly to require that he should company him in converse and carouse and drink with him and had offered him to such end abounding wealth, but he never would. It fortuned that this Abd al-Malik bin Salih came to the door of Ja’afar bin Yahya, so he might bespeak him of certain requisitions of his, and the chamberlain, doubting not but he was the Abd al-Malik bin Salih aforesaid (whom Ja’afar had permitted him admit and that he should suffer none but him to enter), allowed him to go in to his master. Accordingly Abd al-Malik went in, garbed in black, with his Rusбfiyah[262] on his head. When Ja’afar saw him, his reason was like to depart for shame and he understood the case, to wit, that the chamberlain had been deceived by the likeness of the name; and Abd al-Malik also perceived how the matter stood and perplexity was manifest to him in Ja’afar’s face. So he put on a cheery countenance and said, “No harm be upon you![263] Bring us of these dyed clothes.” Thereupon they brought him a dyed robe[264] and he donned it and sat discoursing gaily with Ja’afar and jesting with him. Then said he, “Allow us to be a partaker in your pleasures, and give us to drink of your Nabнz.”[265] So they brought him a silken robe and poured him out a pint, when he said, “We crave your indulgence, for we have no wont of this.” Accordingly Ja’afar ordered a flagon of Nabнz be set before him, that he might drink whatso he pleased. Then, having anointed himself with perfumes, he chatted and jested with them till Ja’afar’s bosom broadened and his constraint ceased from him and his shame, and he rejoiced in this with joy exceeding and asked Abd al-Malik, “What is thine errand? Inform me thereof, for I cannot sufficiently acknowledge thy courtesy.” Answered the other, “I come (amend thee Allah!) on three requirements, of which I would have thee bespeak the Caliph; to wit, firstly, I have on me a debt to the amount of a thousand thousand dirhams,[266] which I would have paid: secondly, I desire for my son the office of Wali or governor of a province,[267] whereby his rank may be raised: and thirdly, I would fain have thee marry him to Al-’Sliyah, the daughter of the Commander of the Faithful, for that she is his cousin and he is a match for her.” Ja’afar said, “Allah accomplisheth unto thee these three occasions. As for the money, it shall be carried to thy house this very hour: as for the government, I make thy son Viceroy of Egypt; and as for the marriage, I give him to mate Such-an-one, the daughter of our lord the Prince of True Believers, at a dowry of such and such a sum. So depart in the assurance of Allah Almighty.” Accordingly Abd al-Malik went away much astonished at Ja’afar’s boldness in undertaking such engagements. He fared straight for his house, whither he found that the money had preceded him, and in the morrow Ja’afar presented himself before Al-Rashid and acquainted him with what had passed, and that he had appointed Abd al-Malik’s son Wali of Egypt[268] and had promised him his daughter, Al-’Aliyah to wife. The Caliph was pleased to approve of this and he confirmed the appointment and the marriage. Then he sent for the young man and he went not forth of the palace of the Caliphate till Al- Rashid wrote him the patent of investiture with the government of Egypt; and he let bring the Kazis and the witnesses and drew up the contract of marriage.

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AL-RASHID AND THE BARMECIDES[269]

It is said that the most wondrous of matters which happened to Al-Rashid was this. His brother Al-Hбdн,[270] when he succeeded to the Caliphate, enquired of a seal-ring of great price, which had belonged to his father Al-Mahdi,[271] and it reached him that Al-Rashid had taken it. So he required it of him, but he refused to give it up, and Al-Hadi insisted upon him, yet he still denied the seal-ring of the Caliphate. Now this was on Tigris-bridge, and he threw the ring into the river.[272] When Al-Hadi died and Al-Rashid succeeded to the Caliphate, he went in person to that very place with a seal-ring of lead, which he cast into the stream at the same stead, and bade the divers seek it. So the duckers did his bidding and brought up the first ring, and this was counted an omen of Al-Rashid’s good fortune and of the continuance of his reign.[273] When Al-Rashid came to the throne, he invested Ja’afar bin Yahya bin Khбlid al- Barmaki[274] with the Wazirate. Now Ja’afar was eminently noted for generosity and munificence, and the histories of him to this purport are renowned and have been documented. None of the Wazirs rose to the rank and favour whereto he attained with Al- Rashid, who was wont to call him brother[275] and used to carry him with him into his house. The period of his Wazirate was nineteen[276] years, and Yahya one day said to his son Ja’afar, “O my son, as long as thy reed trembleth,[277] water it with kindness.” Men differ concerning the reason of Ja’afar’s slaughter, but the better opinion of it is follows. Al-Rashid could not bear to be parted from Ja’afar nor from his own sister ‘Abbбsah, daughter of Al-Mahdi, a single hour, and she was the loveliest woman of her day; so he said to Ja’afar, “I will marry thee to her, that it may be lawful to thee to look upon her, but thou shalt not touch her.” After this time the twain used to be present in Al-Rashid’s sitting chamber. Now the Caliph would get up bytimes and leave the chamber, and they being filled with wine as well as being young, Ja’afar would rise to her and know her carnally.[278] She conceived by him and bare a handsome boy; and, fearing Al-Rashid, she dispatched the new-born child by one of her confidants to Meccah the Magnified (May Allah Almighty greaten it in honor and increase it in venerance and nobility and magnification!). The affair abode concealed till there befel a brabble between Abbasah and one of her hand-maidens whereupon the slave-girl discovered the affair of the child to Al-Rashid and acquainted him with its abiding-place. So, when the Caliph pilgrimaged, he sent one who brought him the boy and found the matter true, where he caused befal the Barmecides whatso befel.[279]

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IBN AL-SAMMAK AND AL-RASHID[280]

It is related that Ibn al-Sammбk[281] went in one day to Al- Rashid, and the Caliph, being athirst, called for drink. So his cup was brought him, and when he took it, Ibn al-Sammak said to him, “Softly, O Prince of True Believers! An thou wert denied this draught, with how much wouldst thou buy it?” He replied, “With the half of my reign;” and Ibn al-Sammak said, “Drink and Allah make it grateful to thee!” Then, when he had drunken; he asked him, “An thou wert denied the issuing forth of the draught from thy body, with what wouldst thou buy its issue?” Answered Al-Rashid, “With the whole of my reign;” and Ibn al-Sammak said, “O Commander of the Faithful, verily, a realm that weigheth not in the balance against a draught of water or a voiding of urine is not worth the striving for.” And Harun wept.

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AL-MAAMUN AND ZUBAYDAH[282]

It is said that Al-Maamъn[283] came one day upon Zubaydah, mother of Al-Amнn,[284] and saw her moving her lips and muttering somewhat he understood not; so he said to her, “O mother mine, art thou cursing me because I slew thy son and spoiled him of his realm?” Said she, “Not so, by Allah, O Commander of the Faithful!” and quoth he, “What then was it thou saidest?” Quoth she, “Let the Prince of True Believers excuse me.” But he was urgent with her, saying, “There is no help but that thou tell it.” And she replied, “I said, Allah confound importunity!” He asked, “How so?” and she answered, “I played one day at chess with the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al- Rashid, and he imposed on me the condition of forfeits.[285] He won and made me doff my dress and walk round about the palace, stark naked; so I did this, and I felt incensed against him. Then we fell again to playing and I won; whereat I made him go to the kitchen and lie with the foulest and fulsomest wench of the wenches thereof; but I found not a slave-girl fouler and filthier than thy mother;[286] so I so bade him tumble her. He did my bidding and she conceived by him of thee, and thus was I the cause of the slaying of my son and the spoiling of him of his realm.” When Al-Maamъn heard this, he turned away, saying, “Allah curse the importunate!” that is, himself, who had importuned her till she acquainted him with that affair.

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AL-NU’UMAN AND THE ARAB OF THE BANU TAY[287]

It is said that Al-Nu’umбn[288] had two boon-companions, one of whom was hight Ibn Sa’ad and the other Amrъ bin al-Malik, and he became one night drunken and bade bury them alive; so they buried him. When he arose on the morrow, he asked for them and was acquainted with their affair, whereupon he built over them a building and appointed to himself a day of ill-luck and a day of good fortune. If any met him on his unlucky day, he slew him and with his blood he washed that monument, which is a place well known in Kufah; and if any met him on his day of good fortune he enriched him. Now there accosted him once, on his day of ill- omen, an Arab of the Banъ Tay[289] and Al-Nu’uman would have done him dead; but the Arab said, “Allah quicken the king! I have two little girls and have made none guardian over them; wherefore, and the king see fit to grant me leave to go to them, I will give him the covenant of Allah[290] that I will return to him, as soon as I shall have appointed unto them a guardian.” Al-Nu’uman had ruth on him and said to him, “An a man will be surety for thee of those who are with us, I will let thee go, and if thou return not I will slay him.” Now there was with Al- Nu’uman his Wazir Sharik bin Amru: so the Tбн[291] looked at him and said,

“Ho thou, Sharik, O Amru-son is there fro’ Death repair? * O brother to men brotherless, brother of all in care!
O brother of Al-Nu’uman an old man this day spare, * An old man slain and Allah deign fair meed for thee prepare!”

Quoth Sharik, “On me be his warranty, Allah assain the king!” So the Tбн departed, after a term had been assigned him for his returning. Now when the appointed day arrived, Al-Nu’uman sent for Sharik and said to him, “Verily the high noon of this day is past;” and Sharik answered, “the king hath no procedure against me till it be eventide.” Whenas evened the evening there appeared one afar off and Al-Nu’uman fell to looking upon him and on Sharik who said to him, “Thou hast no right over me till yonder person come, for haply he is my man.” As he spake, up came the Tбн in haste and Al-Nu’uman said, “By Allah, never saw I any more generous than you two! I know not which of you be the nobler, whether this one who became warrant for thee in death-risk or thou who returnest to thy slaughter.” Then quoth he to Sharik, “What drave thee to become warrant for him, knowing the while it was death?” and quoth he, “I did this lest it be said, Generosity hath departed from Wazirs.” Then Al-Nu’uman asked the Tбн, “And thou, what prompted thee to return, knowing that therein was death and thine one destruction?” and the Arab answered, “I did this lest it be said, Fidelity hath departed from the folk; for such thing would be a shame to mine issue and to my tribe.” And Al-Nu’uman cried, “By Allah, I will be the third of you, lest it be said, Mercy hath departed from the kings.” So he pardoned him and bade abolish the day of ill-luck; whereupon the Arab began to say,

“A many urged me that I false my faith, * But I refused whatso
the wights could plead;
For I’m a man in whom Faith dwells for aye, * And every true
man’s word is pledge of deed.”

Quoth Al-Nu’uman, “What prompted thee to keep faith, the case being as thou sayest?” Quoth he, “O king, it was my religion.” Al-Nu’uman asked, “What is thy religion?” and he answered “The Nazarene!” The king said, “Expound it to me.” So the Tбн expounded it to him and Al-Nu’uman became a Christian.[292]

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FIRUZ AND HIS WIFE[293]

They relate that a certain king sat one day on the terrace-roof of his palace, solacing himself with the view, and presently, his wandering glances espied, on a house-top over against his palace, a woman seer never saw her like. So he turned to those present and asked them, “To whom belongeth yonder house?” when they answered, “To thy servant Fнrъz, and that is his spouse.” So he went down (and indeed passion had made him drunken as with wine, and he was deeply in love of her), and calling Firuz, said to him, “Take this letter and go with it to such a city and bring me the reply.” Firuz took the letter and going to his house, laid it under his head and passed that night; and when the morning morrowed, he farewelled his wife and fared for that city, unknowing what his sovran purposed against him. As for the king, he arose in haste after the husband had set out and repairing to the house of Firuz in disguise, knocked at the entrance. Quoth Firuz’s wife, “Who’s at the door?” and quoth he, saying, “I am the king, thy husband’s master.” So she opened and he entered and sat down, saying, “We are come to visit thee.” She cried, “I seek refuge[294] from this visitation, for indeed I deem not well of it;” but the king said, “O desire of hearts, I am thy husband’s master and methinks thou knowest me not.” She replied, “Nay, I know thee, O my lord and master, and I wot thy purpose and whatso thou wantest and that thou art my husband’s lord. I understand what thou wishest, and indeed the poet hath forestalled thee in his saying of the verses referring to thy case,

‘Now will I leave your water-way untrod; * For many treading that same way I see:
When fall the clustering flies upon the food, * I raise my hand whate’er my hunger be:
And lions eke avoid the water-way * When dogs to lap at fountain-side are free.’”

Then said she, “O king, comest thou to a watering-place whereat thy dog hath drunk and wilt thou drink thereof?” The king was abashed at her and at her words and fared forth from her but forgot his sandal in the house. Such was his case; but as regards Firuz, when he went forth from his house, he sought the letter, but found it not in pouch; so he returned home. Now his return fell in with the king's going forth and he came upon the sandal in his house, whereat his wit was wildered and he knew that the king had not sent him away save for a device of his own. However, he kept silence and spake not a word, but, taking the letter, went on his mission and accomplished it and returned to the king, who gave him an hundred dinars. So Firuz betook himself to the bazar and bought what beseemeth women of goodly gifts and returning to his wife, saluted her and gave her all he had purchased, and said to her, "Arise and hie thee to thy father's home." Asked she, "Wherefore?" and he answered, "Verily, the king hath been bountiful to me and I would have thee make this public, so thy father may joy in that which he seeth upon thee." She rejoined "With love and gladness," and arising forthwith, betook herself to the house of her father, who rejoiced in her coming and in that which he saw upon her; and she abode with him a month's space, and her husband made no mention of her. Then came her brother to him and said, "O Firuz, an thou wilt not acquaint me with the reason of thine anger against thy wife, come and plead with us before the king." Quoth he, "If ye will have me plead with you, I will e'en plead." So they went to the king and found the Kazi sitting with him; whereupon the damsel's brother began, "Allah assist our lord the Kazi! I let this man on hire a flower-garden, high-walled, with a well well-conditioned and trees fruit-laden; but he beat down its walls and ruined its well and ate its fruits, and now he desireth to return it to me." The Kazi turned to Firuz and asked him, "What sayest thou, O youth?" when he answered, "Indeed, I delivered him the garden in better case than it was before." So the Kazi said to the brother, "Hath he delivered to thee the garden, as he avoucheth?" And the pleader replied, "No; but I desire to question him of the reason of his returning it." Quoth the Kazi, "What sayest thou, O youth?" And quoth Firuz, "I returned it willy nilly, because I entered it one day and saw the trail of the lion; so I feared lest an I entered it again, the lion should devour me. Wherefore that which I did, I did of reverence to him and for fear of him." Now the king was leaning back upon the cushion, and when he heard the young man's words, he comprehended the purport thereof; so he sat up and said, "Return to thy flower-garden in all ease of heart; for, by Allah, never saw I the like of thy garth nor stronger of guard than its walls over its trees!" So Firuz returned to his wife, and the Kazi knew not the truth of the affair, no, nor any of those who were in that assembly, save the king and the husband and the wife's brother.

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KING SHAH BAKHT AND HIS WAZIR AL-RAHWAN.[295]

They relate that there was once, in days of yore and in bygone ages and times long gone before, a king of the kings of the time, Shah Bakht hight, who had troops and servants and guards in hosts and a Wazir called Al-Rahw6n, who was learned, understanding, a loyal counsellor and a cheerful acceptor of the commandments of Almighty Allah, to whom belong Honour and Glory. The king committed to this Minister the affairs of his kingdom and his lieges and spake according to his word, and in this way he abode a long space of time. Now this Wazir had many foes, who envied his position and sought to do him harm, but thereunto found no way and the Lord, in His immemorial fore-knowledge and His fore-ordinance decreed that the king dreamt that the Minister Al-Rahwan gave him a fruit from off a tree and he ate it and died. So he awoke, startled and troubled, and when the Wazir had presented himself before him and had retired and the king was alone with those in whom he trusted, he related to them his vision and they advised him to send for the astrologers and interpreters and commended to him a Sage, whose skill and wisdom they attested. Accordingly the king bade him be brought and entreated him with honour and made him draw near to himself. Now there had been in private intercourse with that Sage a company of the Wazir's enemies, who besought him to slander the Minister to the king and counsel him to do him dead, in view of what they promised him of much wealth; and he made agreement with them on this and acquainted the king that the Minister would slay him within the coming month and bade him hasten to put him to death, else would he surely be killed. Presently, the Wazir entered and the king signed to him to clear the place. So he signed to those who were present to withdraw, and they withdrew; whereupon quoth the king to him, "How deemest thou, O Minister of loyal counsel in all manner of contrivance, concerning a vision I have seen in my sleep?" "What is it, O king?" asked the Wazir, and Shah Bakht related to him his dream, adding, "And indeed the Sage interpreted it to me and said to me, 'An thou do not the Wazir dead within a month, assuredly he will slay thee.’ Now to put the like of thee to death, I am loath exceedingly, yet to leave thee on life do I sorely fear. How then dost thou advise me act in this affair?” The Wazir bowed his head earthwards awhile, then raised it and said, “Allah prosper the king! Verily, it availeth not to continue him on life of whom the king is afraid, and my counsel is that thou hasten to put me out of the world.” When the king heard his speech and dove into the depths of his meaning, he turned to him and said, “’Tis grievous to me, O Wazir of good rede;” and he told him that the other sages had attested the wit and wisdom of the astrophil. Now hearing these words Al-Rahwan sighed and knew that the king went in fear of him; but he showed him fortitude and said to him, “Allah assain the sovran! My rede is that the king carry out his commandment and his decree be dight, for that needs must death be and ’tis fainer to me that I die oppressed, than that I die an oppressor. But, an the king judge proper to postpone the putting of me to death till the morrow and will pass this night with me and farewell me whenas the morning cometh, the king shall do whatso he willeth.” Then he wept tell he wetted his gray hairs and the king was moved to ruth for him and granted him that which he craved and vouchsafed him a respite for that night.[296]

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The First Night of the Month.

When it was eventide, the king caused clear his sitting chamber and summoned the Wazir, who presented himself and making his obeisance to the king, kissed ground before him and related to him

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The Tale of the Man of Khorasan, his Son and his Tutor.

There was once a man of Khorasan and he had a son, whose moral weal he ardently wished; but the young man sought to be alone and far from the eye of his father, so he might give himself up to pleasuring and pleasance. Accordingly he sought of his sire leave to make the pilgrimage to the Holy House of Allah and to visit the tomb of the Prophet (whom Allah save and assain!). Now between them and Meccah was a journey of five hundred parasangs; but his father could not contrary him, for that the Holy Law had made pilgrimage[297] incumbent on him and because of that which he hoped for him of improvement. So he joined unto him a tutor, in whom he trusted, and gave him much money and took leave of him. The son set out with his governor on the holy pilgrimage,[298] and abode on the like wise, spending freely and using not thrift. Also there was in his neighbourhood a poor man, who had a slave-girl of passing beauty and grace, and the youth conceived a desire for her and suffered sore cark and care for the love of her and her loveliness, so that he was like to perish for passion; and she also loved him with a love yet greater than his love for her. Accordingly, the damsel summoned an old woman who used to visit her and acquainted her with her case, saying, "An I foregather not with him, I shall die." The crone promised her that she would do her best to bring her to her desire; so she veiled herself and repairing to the young man, saluted him with the salam and acquainted him with the girl's case, saying, "Her master is a greedy wight; so do thou invite him and lure him with lucre, and he will sell thee the hand-maiden." Accordingly, he made a banquet, and standing in the man's way, invited him[299] and brought him to his house, where they sat down and ate and drank and abode in talk. Presently, the young man said to the other, "I hear thou hast with thee a slave-girl, whom thou desirest to sell;" but he said, "By Allah, O my lord, I have no mind to sell her!" Quoth the youth, "I have heard that she cost thee a thousand dinars, and I will give thee six hundred over and above that sum;" and quoth the other, "I sell her to thee at that price." So they fetched notaries who wrote out the contract of sale, and the young man weighed to the girl's master half the purchase money, saying, "Let her be with thee till I complete to thee the rest of the price and take my hand-maid." The owner consented to this and took of him a written bond for the rest of the money, and the girl abode with her master, on deposit.[300] As for the youth, he gave his governor a thousand dirhams and sent him to his sire, to fetch money from him, so he might pay the rest of the handmaid's price, saying to him, "Be not long away." But the tutor said in his mind, "How shall I fare to his father and say to him, 'Thy son hath wasted thy money and made love with it?'[301] With what eye shall I look on him and, indeed, I am he in whom he confided and to whom he hath entrusted his son? Verily, this were ill rede. Nay, I will fare on with this pilgrimage-caravan[302] in despite of my fool of a youth; and when he is weary of waiting, he will demand back his money and return to his father, and I shall be quit of travail and trouble." So he went on with the pilgrimage caravan[303] and took up his abode there.[304] Meanwhile, the youth tarried expecting his tutor's return, but he returned not; wherefore concern and chagrin grew upon him because of his mistress, and his yearning for her redoubled and he was like to kill himself. She became aware of this and sent him a messenger, bidding him visit her. Accordingly he went to her, and she questioned him of the case; when he told her what was to do of the matter of his tutor, and she said to him, "With me is longing the like of that which is with thee, and I doubt me thy messenger hath perished or thy father hath slain him; but I will give thee all my jewellery and my dresses, and do thou sell them and weigh out the rest of my price, and we will go, I and thou, to thy sire." So she handed to him all she had and he sold it and paid the rest of her price; after which there remained to him for spending-money an hundred dirhams. These he spent and lay that night with the damsel in all delight of life, and his sprite was like to fly for joy: but when he arose in the morning, he sat weeping and the damsel said to him, "What causeth thee to weep?" Said he, "I know not an my father be dead, and he hath none other heir save myself; but how shall I get to him, seeing I own not a dirham?" Quoth she, "I have a bangle; sell it and buy seed-pearls with the price: then round them and fashion them into great unions[305] and thereby thou shalt gain much money, with the which we may find our way to thy country." So he took the bangle and repairing to a goldsmith, said to him, "Break up this bracelet and sell it;" but he said, "The king seeketh a perfect bracelet: I will go to him and bring thee its price." Presently he bore the bangle to the Sultan and it pleased him greatly by reason of its goodly workmanship. Then he called an old woman, who was in his palace, and said to her, "Needs must I have the mistress of this bracelet though but for a single night, or I shall die;" and the old woman replied, "I will bring her to thee." Thereupon she donned a devotee's dress and betaking herself to the goldsmith, said to him, "To whom belongeth the bangle which is now with the king?" and said he, "It belongeth to a stranger, who hath bought him a slave-girl from this city and lodgeth with her in such a place." Upon this the old woman repaired to the young man's house and knocked at the door. The damsel opened to her and seeing her clad in devotee's garb,[306] saluted her with the salam and asked her saying, "Haply thou hast some need of us?" Answered the old woman, "Yes, I desire a private place, where I can perform the Wuzu-ablution;" and quoth the girl, "Enter." So she entered and did her requirement and made the ablution and prayed:[307] then she brought out a rosary and began to tell her beads thereon, and the damsel said to her, "Whence comest thou, O pilgrimess?"[308] Said she, "From visiting the Idol of the Absent in such a church.[309] There standeth up no woman before him,[310] who hath a distant friend and discloseth to him her desire, but he acquainteth her with her case and giveth her news of her absent one." Said the damsel, "O pilgrimess, we have an absent one, and my lord's heart cleaveth to him and I desire to go question the Idol of him." Quoth the crone, "Do thou wait till to-morrow and ask leave of thy spouse, and I will come to thee and fare with thee in weal and welfare." Then she went away, and when the girl's master came, she sought his permission to go with the old trot, and he gave her leave. So the beldame came and took her and carried her to the king's door, she, unknowing whither she went. The damsel entered with her and beheld a goodly house and decorated apartments which were no idol's chamber. Then came the king and seeing her beauty and loveliness, went up to her to buss her; whereupon she fell down in a fainting fit and struck out with her hands and feet.[311] When he saw this, he held aloof from her in ruth and left her; but the matter was grievous to her and she refused meat and drink, and as often as the king drew near to her, she fled from him in fear, so he swore by Allah that he would not approach her save with her consent and fell to presenting her with ornaments and raiment; but her aversion to him only increased. Meanwhile, the youth her master abode expecting her; but she returned not and his heart already tasted the bitter draught of separation; so he went forth at hap-hazard, distracted and knowing not what he should do, and began strewing dust upon his head and crying out, "The old woman hath taken her and gone away!" The little boys followed him with stones and pelted him, crying, "A madman! A madman!" Presently, the king's Chamberlain, who was a personage of years and worth, met him, and when he saw this youth, he forbade the boys and drave them away from him, after which he accosted him and asked him of his affair. So he told him his tale and the Chamberlain said to him, "Fear not! I will deliver thy slavegirl for thee; so calm thy concern." And he went on to speak him fair and comfort him, till he had firm reliance on his word. Then he carried him to his home and stripping him of his clothes, clad him in rags; after which he called an old woman, who was his housekeeper,[312] and said to her, "Take this youth and bind on his neck yon iron chain and go round about with him in all the great thoroughfares of the city, and when thou hast done this, go up with him to the palace of the king." And he said to the youth, "In whatsoever stead thou seest the damsel, speak not a syllable, but acquaint me with her place and thou shalt owe her deliverance to none save to me." The youth thanked him and went with the old woman in such fashion as the Chamberlain bade him. She fared on with him till they entered the city, and walked all about it; after which she went up to the palace of the king and fell to saying, "O fortune's favourites, look on a youth whom the devils take twice in the day and pray to be preserved from such affliction!" And she ceased not to go round with him till she came to the eastern wing[313] of the palace, whereupon the slave-girls hurried out to look upon him and when they saw him they were amazed at his beauty and loveliness and wept for him. Then they informed the damsel, who came forth and considered him and knew him not; but he knew her;

so he drooped his head and shed tears. She was moved to pity for him and gave him somewhat and went back to her place, whilst the youth returned with the housekeeper to the Chamberlain and told him that she was in the king's mansion, whereat he was chagrined and said, "By Allah, I will assuredly devise a device for her and deliver her!" Whereupon the youth kissed his hands and feet. Then he turned to the old woman and bade her change her habit and her semblance. Now this ancient dame was sweet of speech and winsome of wit; so he gave her costly and delicious ottars and said to her, "Get thee to the king's slave-girls and sell them these essences and win thy way to the damsel and ask her if she desire her master or not." So the old woman went out and making her way to the palace, went in to the hand-maid and drew near her and recited these couplets,

"Allah preserve our Union-days and their delights. * Ah me! How sweet was life! how joys were ever new!
May he not be who cursed us twain with parting day; * How many a bone he brake, how many a life he slew!
He shed my faultless tear-floods and my sinless blood; * And beggaring me of love himself no richer grew."

When the damsel heard the old woman's verses, she wept till her clothes were drenched and drew near the speaker, who asked her, "Knowest thou such-an-one?" And she wept and answered, "He is my lord. Whence knowest thou him?" Rejoined the old woman, "O my lady, sawest thou not the madman who came hither yesterday with the old woman? He was thy lord," presently adding, "But this is no time for talk. When 'tis night, get thee to the top of the palace and wait on the terrace till thy lord come to thee and compass thy deliverance." Then she gave her what she would of perfumes and returning to the Chamberlain, acquainted him with whatso had passed, and he told the youth. Now as soon as it was evening, the Chamberlain bade bring two hackneys and great store of water and provaunt and a riding-camel and a fellow to show them the way. These he ambushed without the town whilst he and the young man, taking with them a long rope, made fast to a staple, went and stood below the palace. Whenas they came thither, they looked and behold, the damsel was standing on the terrace-roof, so they threw her the rope and the staple, which she made fast, and tucking up her sleeves above her wrists, slid down and landed with them. They carried her without the town, where they mounted, she and her lord, and fared on, with the guide in front,[314] directing them on the way, and they ceased not faring night and day till they entered his father's house. The young man greeted his sire, who was gladdened in him, and to whom he related all that had befallen him, whereupon he rejoiced in his safety. As for the tutor, he wasted whatso was with him and returned to the city, where he saw the youth and excused himself. Then he questioned him of what had betided him and he told him, whereat he admired and returned to companionship with him; but the youth ceased to have regard for him and gave him nor solde nor ration as was his wont, neither discovered to him aught of his secrets. When the tutor saw that there was no profit from him he returned to the king, the ravisher of the slave-girl, and recounted to him what the Chamberlain had done and counselled him to slay that official and egged him on to recover the damsel, promising to give his friend a poison-draught and return. Accordingly the king sent for the Chamberlain and chid him for the deed he had done; whereat the king's servants incontinently fell upon the Chamberlain and put him to death. Meanwhile the tutor returned to the youth, who asked him of his absence, and he told him that he had been in the city of the king who had taken the slave-girl. When the youth heard this, he misdoubted of his governor and never again trusted him in anything but was always on his guard against him. Then the tutor without stay or delay caused prepare great store of sweetmeats and put in them deadly poison and presented them to the youth, who, when he saw those sweetmeats, said to himself, "This is an extraordinary thing of the tutor! Needs must there be in this sweetmeat some mischief, and I will make proof of his confectionery upon himself." Accordingly he got ready food and set amongst it a portion of the sweetmeat, and inviting the governor to his house placed the provaunt before him. He ate, and amongst the rest which they brought him, the poisoned sweetmeat; so while in the act of eating he died; whereby the youth knew that this was a plot against himself and said, Whoso seeketh his fortune by his own force[315] attaineth a failure." "Nor," continued the

Wazir, “is this, O king of the age, stranger than the story of the Druggist and his Wife and the Singer.” When King Shah Bakht heard the tale of Al-Rahwan he gave him leave to withdraw to his own house and he tarried there the rest of the night and the next day till eventide evened.

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The Second Night of the Mouth.

When the even evened, the king sat private in his sitting-chamber and his mind was occupied with the story of the Singer and the Druggist. So he called the Wazir and bade him tell the tale. Answered he, “I will well. They recount, O my lord, the following

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Tale of the Singer and the Druggist.

There was once in the city of Hamadбn[316] a young man of seemly semblance and skilled in singing to the lute; wherefore he was well seen of the citizens. He went forth one day of his home with intent to travel, and gave not over journeying till his travel brought him to a town and a goodly. Now he had with him a lute and its appurtenance,[317] so he entered and went round about the streets till he happened upon a druggist who, when he espied him, called to him. So he went up to him and bade him sit down; accordingly, the youth sat down by his side, and the druggist questioned him of his case. The singer told him what was in his mind, and the pharmacist took him up into his shop and bought him food and fed him. Then said he to him, "Rise and take up thy lute and beg about the streets, and whenas thou smellest the reek of wine, break in upon the drinkers and say to them, I am a singer. They will laugh and cry, Come in to us. And when thou singest, the folk will know thee and speak one to other of thee; so shalt thou become known about town, and thou shalt better thy business." He went round about, as the druggist bade him, till the sun waxed hot, but found none drinking. Then he entered a lane, that he might take rest, and seeing there a handsome house and a lofty, stood in its shade and fell to observing the excellence of its edification. Now while he was thus engaged, behold, a casement opened and there appeared thereat a face, as it were the moon. Quoth the owner of the face, "What aileth thee to stand there? Dost thou want aught?" And quoth he, "I am a stranger," and acquainted her with his adventure; whereupon asked she, "What sayst thou to meat and drink and the enjoyment of a fair face and getting thee spending-money?" And he answered, "O mistress mine, this is my desire whereof I am going about in quest!" So she opened the door to him and brought him in: then she seated him at the upper end of the room and served him with food. He ate and drank and lay with her and futtered her. This ended, she sat down in his lap and they toyed and laughed and exchanged kisses till the day was half done, when her husband came home and she had no recourse but to hide the singer in a mat,[318] in which she rolled him up. The husband entered and seeing the battle-place[319] disordered and smelling the reek of liquor questioned her of this. Quoth she, “I had with me a bosom friend of mine and I conjured her to crack a cup with me; and so we drank a jar full, I and she, and but now, before thy coming in, she fared forth.” Her husband deemed her words true and went away to his shop, he being none other than the singer’s friend the druggist, who had invited him and fed him; whereupon the lover came forth and he and the lady returned to their pleasant pastime and abode on this wise till evening, when she gave him money and said to him, “To-morrow in the forenoon come hither to me.” He replied, “Yes,” and departed; and at nightfall he went to the Hammam-bath. On the morrow, he betook himself to the shop of his friend the druggist, who welcomed him as soon as he saw him, and questioned him of his case and how he had fared that day. Quoth the singer, “Allah requite thee with welfare, O my brother, for indeed thou hast directed me to a restful life!” Then he acquainted him with his adventure and told him the tale of the woman, till he came to the mention of her husband, when he said, “And at midday came the horned cuckold,[320] her husband, and knocked at the door. So she wrapped me in the mat, and when he had wended his ways I came forth and we returned to our pleasant play.” This was grievous to the druggist, and he repented of having taught him how he should do and suspected his wife. Accordingly he asked the singer, “And what said she to thee at thy going away?” and the other answered, “She said, Come back to me on the morrow. So, behold, I am off to her and I came not hither but that I might acquaint thee with this, lest thy thoughts be preoccupied with me.” Then he farewelled him, and walked out. As soon as the druggist was assured that he had reached the house, he cast the net[321] over his shop and made for his home, in some suspicion of his wife, and knocked at the door. Now the singer had entered and the druggist’s wife said to him, “Up with thee and enter this chest.” Accordingly he entered it and she shut it down on him and opened to her husband, who came in all distraught, and searched the house but found none and overlooked the chest. Hereat he said in his mind “The house[322] is one which favoureth my house and the woman is one who favoureth my wife,” and returned to his shop; whereupon the singer came forth of the chest and falling upon the druggist's wife, had his wicked will of her and spent upon her what was her due, and weighed down the scale for her with full measure. Then they ate and drank and kissed and clipped necks, and in this way they abode till the evening, when she gave him money, because she found his weaving nice and good,[323] and made him promise to come to her on the morrow. So he left her and slept his night and on the morrow he returned to the shop of his friend the druggist and saluted him. The other welcomed him and questioned him of his case; whereat he told his tale till he ended with the mention of the woman's husband, when he said, "Then came the horned cuckold, her mate and she stowed me away in the chest and shut down the lid upon me, whilst her addlepated pander[324] of a husband went about the house, top and bottom; and when he had gone his way, we returned to our pleasant pastime." With this, the druggist was assured that the house was his house and the wife his wife, and quoth he, "Now what wilt thou do to-day?" Quoth the singer, "I shall return to her and weave for her and full her yarn[325] , and I came not[326] save to thank thee for thy dealing with me." Then he went away, whilst the fire was loosed in the heart of the druggist and he shut his shop and returning to his house, rapped at the door. Said the singer, "Let me jump into the chest, for he saw me not yesterday;" but said she, "No! wrap thyself up in the mat." So he wrapped himself up and stood in a corner of the room, whilst the druggist entered and went no whither else save to the chest, but found naught inside. Then he walked round about the house and searched it, top and bottom, but came upon nothing and no one and abode between belief and disbelief, and said to himself, "Haply, I suspect my wife of what is not in her." So he was certified of her innocence and going forth content, returned to his shop, whereupon out came the singer and they resumed their former little game, as was their wont, till eventide when she gave him one of her husband's shirts and he took it and going away, nighted in his own lodging. Next morning he repaired to the druggist, who saluted him with the salam and came to meet him and rejoiced in him and smiled in his face, deeming his wife innocent. Then he questioned him of his case on yesterday and he told him how he had fared, saying, "O my brother, when the cornute knocked at the door, I would have jumped into the chest; but his wife forbade me and rolled me up in the mat. The man entered and thought of nothing save the chest; so he brake it open and woned like one jinn-mad, going up and coming down. Then he went about his business and I came out and we abode on our accustomed case till eventide, when she gave me this shirt of her husband's; and behold, I am now off to her." When the druggist heard the singer's words, he was assured of the adventure and knew that the calamity, all of it, was in his own house and that the wife was his wife; and he considered the shirt, whereupon he redoubled in assuredness and said to the singer, "Art thou now going to her?" Said he, "Yes, O my brother," and taking leave of him, went away; whereupon the druggist started up, as he were stark mad, and dismantled his shop.[327] Whilst he was thus doing, the singer won to the house, and presently up came the druggist and knocked at the door. The lover would have wrapped himself up in the mat, but she forbade him and said, "Get thee down to the ground floor of the house and enter the oven-jar[328] and close the cover upon thyself." So he did her bidding and she went down to her husband and opened the door to him, whereupon he came in and went round the house, but found no one and overlooked the oven-jar. Then he stood musing and sware that he would not again go forth of the house till the morrow. As for the singer, when his stay in the oven-jar grew longsome upon him, he came forth therefrom, thinking that her husband had gone away; and he went up to the terrace-roof and looking down, beheld his friend the druggist: whereat he was sore concerned and said in himself, "Alas, the disgrace, ah! This is my friend the druggist, who of me was fain and dealt me fair and I have paid him with foul." He feared to return to the druggist; so he stepped down and opened the first door and would have gone out at a venture, unseen of the husband; but, when he came to the outer door, he found it locked and saw not the key. Hereat he returned to the terrace and began dropping from roof to roof till the people of the house heard him and hastened to fall upon him, deeming him a thief. Now that house belonged to a Persian man; so they laid hands on him and the house-master fell to beating him, saying to him, "Thou art a thief." He replied, "No I am not a thief, but a singing-man, a stranger who, hearing your voices, came to sing to you." When the folk heard his words, they talked of letting him go; but the Persian said, “O folk, let not his speech cozen you. This one is none other than a thief who knoweth how to sing, and when he cometh upon the like of us, he is a singer.” Said they, “O our lord, this man is a stranger, and needs we must release him.” Quoth he, “By Allah, my heart heaveth at this fellow! Let me kill him with beating;” but quoth they, “Thou mayst no ways do that.” So they delivered the singer from the Persian, the master of the house, and seated him amongst them, whereupon he began singing to them and they rejoiced in him. Now the Persian had a Mameluke,[329] as he were the full moon, and he arose and went out, and the singer followed him and wept before him, professing lustful love to him and kissing his hands and feet. The Mameluke took compassion on him and said to him, “When the night cometh and my master entereth the Harim and the folk fare away, I will grant thee thy desire; and I sleep in such a place.” Then the singer returned and sat with the cup-companions, and the Persian rose and went out with the Mameluke by his side. Now[330] the singer knew the place which the Mameluke occupied at the first of the night; but it chanced that the youth rose from his stead and the waxen taper went out. The Persian, who was drunk, fell over on his face, and the singer supposing him to be the Mameluke, said, “By Allah, ’tis good!” and threw himself upon him and began to work at his bag-trousers till the string was loosed; then he brought out[331] his prickle upon which he spat and slipped it into him. Thereupon the Persian started up, crying out and, laying hands on the singer, pinioned him and beat him a grievous beating, after which he bound him to a tree that stood in the house-court. Now there was in the house a beautiful singing-girl and when she saw the singer tight pinioned and tied to the tree, she waited till the Persian lay down on his couch, when she arose and going up to the singer, fell to condoling with him over what had betided him and making eyes at him and handling his yard and rubbing it, till it rose upright. Then said she to him, “Do with me the deed of kind and I will loose thy pinion-bonds, lest he return and beat thee again; for he purposeth thee an ill purpose.” Quoth he, “Loose me and I will do it;” but quoth she, “I fear that, an I loose thee, thou wilt not do it. But I will do it and thou have me standing; and when I have done, I will loose thee.” So saying, she opened her clothes and introducing the singer’s prickle, fell to toing and froing.[332] Now there was in the house a fighting-ram, which the Persian had trained to butting,[333] and when he saw what the woman was doing, he thought she wished to do battle with him; so he broke his halter and running at her, butted her and split her skull. She fell on her back and shrieked; whereupon the Persian started up hastily from sleep and seeing the singing-girl on her back and the singer with yard on end, cried to him, “O accursed, doth not what thou hast erewhile done suffice thee?” Then he beat him a shrewd beating and opening the door, thrust him out in the middle of the night. He lay the rest of the dark hours in one of the ruins, and when he arose in the morning, he said, “None is in fault! I, for one, sought my own good, and he is no fool who seeketh good for himself; and the druggist’s wife also sought good for herself; but Predestination overcometh Precaution and for me there remaineth no tarrying in this town.” So he went forth from the place. “Nor” (continued the Wazir), “is this story, strange though it be, stranger than that of the King and his Son and that which betided them of wonders and rare marvels.” When the king heard this story, he deemed it pretty and pleasant and said, “This tale is near unto that which I know and ’tis my rede I should do well to have patience and hasten not to slay my Minister, so I may get of him the profitable story of the King and his Son.” Then he gave the Wazir leave to go away to his own house; so he thanked him and tarried in his home all that day.

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The Third Night of the Month.

When it was supper-time the king sought the sitting-chamber; and, summoning the Wazir, sought of him the story he had promised him; and the Minister said, “They tell, O king,

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The Tale of the King who Kenned the Quintessence[334] of Things.

There came to a king of the kings, in his old age, a son, who grew up comely, quickwitted, clever: and, when he reached years of discretion and became a young man, his father said to him, “Take this realm and rule it in lieu of me, for I desire to flee from the sin of sovranty[335] to Allah the Most High and don the woollen dress and devote all my time to devotion.” Quoth the Prince, “And I am another who desireth to take refuge with the Almighty.” So the king said, “Arise, let us flee forth and make for the mountains and there worship in shame before God the Most Great.” Accordingly, the twain gat them gear of wool and clothing themselves therewith, fared forth and wandered in the wolds and wastes; but, when some days had passed over them, both became weak for hunger and repented them of that they had done whenas penitence profited them not, and the Prince complained to his father of weariness and hunger. Cried the king, “Dear my son, I did with thee that which behoved me,[336] but thou wouldst not hearken to me, and now there is no means of returning to thy former estate, for that another hath taken the kingdom and defendeth it from all foes: but indeed I will counsel thee of somewhat, wherein do thou pleasure me by compliance.” The Prince asked, “What is it?” and his father answered, “Take me and go with me to the market-street and sell me and receive my price and do with it whatso thou willest, and I shall become the property of one who shall provide for my wants.” The Prince enquired, “Who will buy thee of me, seeing thou art a very old man? Nay, do thou rather sell me, inasmuch as the demand for me will be more.” But the king replied, “An thou wert king, thou wouldest require service of me.” Accordingly the youth obeyed his father’s bidding and taking him, carried him to the slave-dealer and said, “Sell me this old man.” Said the dealer, “Who will buy this wight, and he a son of eighty years?”[337] Then quoth he to the king, “In what crafts art thou cunning?” and quoth he, “I ken the quintessence of jewels and I ken the quintessence of horses and I ken the quintessence of men; brief, I ken the quintessence of all things.” So the slave-dealer took him and went about, offering him for sale to the folk; but none would buy. Presently, up came the Chef of the Sultan’s kitchen and asked, “What is this man?” and the dealer answered, “This be a Mameluke for sale.” The kitchener marvelled at this and bought the king, after questioning him of what he could do, for ten thousand dirhams. Then he weighed out the money and carried him to his house, but dared not employ him in aught of service; so he appointed him an allowance, a modicum sufficient for his maintenance, and repented him of having bought him, saying, “What shall I do with the like of this wight?” Presently, the king of the city was minded to go forth to his garden,[338] a-pleasuring, and bade the cook precede him and appoint in his stead one who should dress the royal meat, so that, when he returned, he might find the meal ready. The Chef fell to thinking of whom he should appoint and was perplexed concerning his affair. As he was thus, the Shaykh came to him, and seeing him distraught as to how he should do, said to him, “Tell me what is in thy mind; haply I may bring thee relief.” So he acquainted him with the king’s wishes and he said, “Have no care for this, but leave me one of the serving-men and do thou go companying thy lord in peace and surety, for I will suffice thee of this.” Hereat the cook departed with the king, after he had brought the old man what he needed and left him a man of the guards; and when he was gone, the Shaykh bade the trooper wash the kitchen-battery and made ready food exceedingly fine. When the king returned he set the meat before him, and he tasted dishes whose like he had never savoured; whereat he was startled and asked who had dressed it. Accordingly they acquainted him with the Shaykh’s case and he summoned him to his presence and asking him anent the mystery, increased his allowance of rations;[339] moreover, he bade that they should cook together, he and the kitchener, and the old man obeyed his bidding. Some time after this, there came two merchants to the king with two pearls of price and each of them declared that his pearl was worth a thousand dinars, but the folk was incompetent to value them. Then said the cook, “Allah prosper the king! Verily, the Shaykh whom I bought affirmed that he knew the quintessence of jewels and that he was skilled in cookery. We have tried him in his cuisine, and have found him the most knowing of men; and now, if we send after him and prove him on jewels, his second claim will be made manifest to us, whether true or false." So the king bade fetch the Shaykh and he came and stood before the Sultan, who showed him the two pearls. Quoth he, "Now for this one, 'tis worth a thousand dinars;" and quoth the king, "So saith its owner." "But for this other," continued the old man, "'tis worth only five hundred." The people laughed and admired his saying, and the merchant who owned the second pearl asked him, "How can this, which is bigger of bulk and worthier for water and righter of rondure, be less of value than that?" and the old man answered, "I have said what is with me."[340] Then quoth the king to him, "Indeed, the outer semblance thereof is like that of the other pearl; why then is it worth but the half of its price?" and quoth the old man, "Yes, but its inward is corrupt." Asked the merchant, "Hath a pearl then an inward and an outward?" and the Shaykh answered, "Yea! In its interior is a teredo, a boring worm; but the other pearl is sound and secure against breakage." The merchant continued, "Give us approof of this thy knowledge and confirm to us the truth of thy saying;" and the old man rejoined, "We will break it: an I prove a liar, here is my head, and if I speak sooth, thou wilt have lost thy pearl;" and the merchant said, "I agree to that." So they brake the pearl and it was even as the old man had declared, to wit, in the heart of it was a boring worm. The king marvelled at what he saw and questioned him of how he came by the knowledge of this. The Shaykh replied, "O king, this kind of jewel is engendered in the belly of a creature called the oyster[341] and its origin is a drop of rain and it resisteth the touch and groweth not warm whilst hent in hand:[342] so, when its outer coat became tepid to my touch, I knew that it harboured some living thing, for that things of life thrive not save in heat." Therefore the king said to the cook, "Increase his allowance;" and the Chef appointed to him fresh rations. Now some time after this, two merchants presented themselves to the king with two horses, and one said, "I ask a thousand ducats for my horse," and the other, "I seek five thousand ducats for mine." Quoth the cook, "We are now familiar with the old man's just judgment; what deemeth the king of fetching him?" So the king bade fetch him, and when he saw the two horses[343] he said, "This is worth a thousand and that two thousand ducats." Quoth the folk, "This horse thou misjudgest is evidently a thoroughbred and he is younger and faster and compacter of limb and finer of head and clearer of colour and skin than the other;" presently adding, "What assurance hast thou of the sooth of thy saying?" And the old man said, "This ye state is true, all true; but his sire is old and this other is the son of a young horse. Now, when the son of an old horse standeth still a-breathing, his breath returneth not to him and his rider falleth into the hand of him who followeth after him; but the son of a young horse, an thou put him to speed and after making him run, alight from him, thou wilt find him, by reason of his robustness, untired." Quoth the merchant, "'Tis even as the Shaykh avoucheth and he is an excellent judge." And the king said, "Increase his allowance." But the Shaykh stood still and did not go away; so the king asked him, "Why dost thou not go about thy business?" and he answered, "My business is with the king." Said the king, "Name what thou wouldest have," and the other replied, "I would have thee question me of the quintessence of men, even as thou hast questioned me of the quintessence of horses." Quoth the king, "We have no occasion to question thee thereof;" but quoth the old man, "I have occasion to acquaint thee." "Say what thou wilt," rejoined the king, and the Shaykh said, "Verily, the king is the son of a baker." Cried the king, "How and whereby kennest thou that?" and the Shaykh replied, "Know, O king, that I have examined into degrees and dignities[344] and have learned this." Thereupon the king went in to his mother and asked her anent his sire, and she told him that the king her husband was impotent;[345] "So," quoth she, "I feared for the kingdom, lest it pass away, after his death; wherefore I yielded my person to a young man, a baker, and conceived by him and bare a man-child;[346] and the kingship came into the hand of my son, that is, thyself." So the king returned to the Shaykh and said to him, "I am indeed the son of a baker; so do thou expound to me the means whereby thou knewest me for this." Quoth the other, "I knew that, hadst thou been the son of a king, thou wouldst have gifted me with things of price, such as rubies and the like; and wert thou the son of a Kazi, thou hadst given largesse of a dirham or two dirhams, and wert thou the son of any of the merchants, thou hadst given me muchel of money. But I saw that thou bestowedst upon me naught save two bannocks of bread and other rations, wherefore I knew thee to be the son of a baker;” and quoth the king, “Thou hast hit the mark.” Then he gave him wealth galore and advanced him to high estate. The tale aforesaid pleased King Shah Bakht and he marvelled thereat; but the Wazir said to him, “This story is not stranger than that of the Richard who married his beautiful daughter to the poor Shaykh.” The king’s mind was occupied with the promised tale and he bade the Wazir withdraw to his lodging; so he went and abode there the rest of the night and the whole of the following day.

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The Fourth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king sat private in his sitting-chamber and bade fetch the Wazir. When he presented himself before him, he said to him, “Tell me the tale of the Richard.” The Minister replied, “I will. Hear, O puissant king,

The Tale of the Richard who Married his Beautiful Daughter to the Poor Old Man.

A certain rich merchant had a beautiful daughter, who was as the full moon, and when she attained the age of fifteen, her father betook himself to an old man and spreading him a carpet in his sitting-chamber, gave him to eat and conversed and caroused with him. Then said he to him, “I desire to marry thee to my daughter.” The other drew back, because of his poverty, and said to him, “I am no husband for her nor am I a match for thee.” The merchant was urgent with him, but he repeated his answer to him, saying, “I will not consent to this till thou acquaint me with the cause of thy desire for me. An I find it reasonable, I will fall in with thy wish; and if not, I will not do this ever.” Quoth the merchant, “Thou must know that I am a man from the land of China and was in my youth well-favoured and well-to-do. Now I made no account of womankind, one and all, but followed after youths,[347] and one night I saw, in a dream, as it were a balance set up, and hard by it a voice said, ‘This is the portion of Such-an-one.’ I listened and presently I heard my own name; so I looked and behold, there stood a woman loathly to the uttermost; whereupon I awoke in fear and cried, ‘I will never marry, lest haply this fulsome female fall to my lot.’ Then I set out for this city with merchandise and the journey was pleasant to me and the sojourn here, so that I took up my abode in the place for a length of time and gat me friends and factors. At last I sold all my stock-in-trade and collected its price and there was left me nothing to occupy me till the folk[348] should depart and I depart with them. One day, I changed my clothes and putting gold into my sleeve, sallied forth to inspect the holes and corners of this city, and as I was wandering about, I saw a handsome house: its seemliness pleased me; so I stood looking on it and beheld a lovely woman at the window. When she saw me, she made haste and descended, whilst I abode confounded. Then I betook myself to a tailor there and questioned him of the house and anent whose it was. Quoth he, 'It belongeth to Such-an-one the Notary,[349] God damn him!' I asked, 'Is he her sire?' and he answered, 'Yes.' So I repaired in great hurry to a man, with whom I had been wont to deposit my goods for sale, and told him I desired to gain access to Such-an-one the Notary. Accordingly he assembled his friends and we betook ourselves to the Notary's house. When we came in to him, we saluted him and sat with him, and I said to him, 'I come to thee as a suitor, desiring in marriage the hand of thy daughter.' He replied, 'I have no daughter befitting this man;' and I rejoined, 'Allah aid thee! My desire is for thee and not for her.'[350] But he still refused and his friends said to him, 'This is an honourable match and a man thine equal, nor is it lawful to thee that thou hinder the young lady of her good luck.' Quoth he to them, 'She will not suit him!' nevertheless they were instant with him till at last he said, 'Verily, my daughter whom ye seek is passing ill-favoured and in her are all blamed qualities of person.' And I said, 'I accept her, though she be as thou sayest.' Then said the folk, 'Extolled be Allah! Cease we to talk of a thing settled; so say the word, how much wilt thou have to her marriagesettlement?' Quoth he, 'I must have four thousand sequins;' and I said, 'To hear is to obey!' Accordingly the affair was concluded and we drew up the contract of marriage and I made the bride-feast; but on the wedding-night I beheld a thing[351] than which never made Allah Almighty aught more fulsome. Methought her folk had devised this freak by way of fun; so I laughed and looked for my mistress, whom I had seen at the window, to make her appearance; but saw her not. When the affair was prolonged and I found none but her, I was like to lose my wits for vexation and fell to beseeching my Lord and humbling myself in supplication before Him that He would deliver me from her. When I arose in the morning, there came the chamberwoman and said to me, 'Hast thou need of the bath?'[352] I replied, 'No;' and she asked, 'Art thou for breakfast?' But I still answered 'No;' and on this wise I abode three days, tasting neither meat nor drink. When the young woman my wife saw me in this plight, she said to me, 'O man, tell me thy tale, for, by Allah, if I may effect thy deliverance, I will assuredly further thee thereto.' I gave ear to her speech and put faith in her sooth and acquainted her with the adventure of the damsel whom I had seen at the window and how 1 had fallen in love with her; whereupon quoth she, ‘An that girl belong to me, whatso I possess is thine, and if she belong to my sire, I will demand her of him and detain her from him and deliver her to thee.’ Then she fell to summoning hand-maid after hand-maid and showing them to me, till I saw the damsel whom I loved and said, ‘This is she.’ Quoth my wife, ‘Let not thy heart be troubled, for this is my slave-girl. My father gave her to me and I give her to thee:[353] so comfort thyself and be of good cheer and of eyes cool and clear.’ Then, when it was night, she brought the girl to me, after she had adorned her and perfumed her, and said to her, ‘Cross not this thy lord in aught and every that he shall seek of thee.’ When she came to bed with me, I said in myself, ‘Verily, this my spouse is more generous than I!’ Then I sent away the slave-girl and drew not near her, but arose forthwith and betaking myself to my wife, lay with her and abated her maidenhead. She conceived by me at the first bout; and, accomplishing the time of her pregnancy, gave birth to this dear little daughter; in whom I rejoiced, for that she was beautiful exceedingly, and she hath inherited her mother’s sound sense and the comeliness of her sire. Indeed, many of the notables of the people have sought her of me in wedlock, but I would not wed her to any, because I saw in a dream, one night, that same balance set up and men and women being therein weighed, one against other, and meseemed I saw thee and her and the voice said to me, ‘This is such a man, the portion of such a woman.’[354] Wherefore I knew that Almighty Allah had allotted her unto none other than thyself, and I choose rather to marry thee to her in my lifetime than that thou shouldst marry her after my death.” When the poor man heard the merchant’s story, he became desirous of wedding his daughter: so he took her to wife and was blessed of her with exceeding love. “Nor” (continued the Wazir), “is this story on any wise stranger or this tale rarer than that of the Sage and his three Sons.” When the king heard his Minister’s story, he was assured that he would not slay him and said, “I will have patience with him, so I may get of him the story of the Sage and his three Sons.” And he bade him depart to his own house.

The Fifth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king sat private in his chamber and summoning the Wazir, required of him the promised story. So Al-Rahwan said, “Hear, O king,

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The Tale of the Sage and his Three Sons.[355]

There was once a Sage of the sages, who had three sons and sons' sons, and when they waxed many and their, seed multiplied, there befel dissension between them. So he assembled them and said to them, "Be ye single-handed against all others and despise not one another lest the folk despise you, and know that your case is the case of the man and the rope which he cut easily, when it was single; then he doubled it and could not cut it: on this wise is division and union.[356] And beware lest ye seek help of others against your own selves or ye will fall into perdition, for by what means soever ye win your wish at his hand, his word will rank higher than your word. Now I have money which I will presently bury in a certain place, that it may be a store for you against the time of your need." Then they left him and dispersed and one of the sons fell to spying upon his sire, so that he saw him hide the hoard outside the city. When he had made an end of burying it, the Sage returned to his house; and as soon as the morning morrowed, his son repaired to the place where he had seen his father bury the treasure and dug and took all the wealth he found and fared forth. When the old man felt that his death[357] drew nigh, he called his sons to him and acquainted them with the place where he had hidden his hoard. As soon as he was dead, they went and dug up the treasure and came upon much wealth, for that the money, which the first son had taken singly and by stealth, was on the surface and he knew not that under it were other monies. So they carried it off and divided it and the first son claimed his share with the rest and added it to that which he had before taken, behind the backs of his father and his brethren. Then he married his cousin, the daughter of his father's brother, and was blessed through her with a male-child, who was the goodliest of the folk of his time. When the boy grew up, his father feared for him poverty and decline of case, so he said to him, "Dear my son, know that during my green days I wronged my brothers in the matter of our father's good, and I see thee in weal; but, an thou come to want, ask not one of them nor any other than they, for I have laid up for thee in yonder chamber a treasure; but do not thou open it until thou come to lack thy daily bread.” Then the man died, and his money, which was a great matter, fell to his son. The young man had not patience to wait till he had made an end of that which was with him, but rose and opened the chamber, and behold, it was empty and its walls were whitened, and in its midst was a rope hanging down as for a bucket and ten bricks, one upon other, and a scroll, wherein was written, “There is no help against death; so hang thyself and beg not of any, but kick away the bricks with thy toes, that there may be no escape for thy life, and thou shalt be at rest from the exultation of enemies and enviers and the bitterness of beggary.” Now when the youth saw this, he marvelled at that which his father had done and said, “This is an ill treasure.” Then he went forth and fell to eating and drinking with the folk, till naught was left him and he passed two days without tasting food, at the end of which time he took a handkerchief and selling it for two dirhams, bought bread and milk with the price and left it on the shelf and went out. Whilst he was gone, a dog came and seized the bread and polluted the milk, and when the young man returned and saw this, he beat his face, and fared forth distraught. Presently, he met a friend, to whom he discovered his case, and the other said to him, “Art thou not ashamed to talk thus? How hast thou wasted all this wealth and now comest telling lies and saying, The dog hath mounted on the shelf, and talking such nonsense?” And he reviled him. So the youth returned to his house, and verily the world had waxed black in his eyes and he cried, “My sire said sooth.” Then he opened the chamber door and piling up the bricks under his feet, put the rope about his neck and kicked away the bricks and swung himself off; whereupon the rope gave way with him and he fell to the ground and the ceiling clave asunder and there poured down on him a world of wealth. So he knew that his sire meant to chasten him by means of this and he invoked Allah’s mercy on him. Then he got him again that which he had sold of lands and houses and what not else and became once more in good case; his friends also returned to him and he entertained them for some time. Then said he to them one day “There was with us bread and the locusts ate it; so we set in its place a stone, one cubit long and the like broad, and the locusts came and nibbled away the stone, because of the smell of the bread.” Quoth one of his friends (and it was he who had given him the lie concerning the dog and the bread and milk), "Marvel not at this, for rats and mice do more than that." Thereupon he said, "Get ye home! In the days of my poverty I was a liar when I told you of the dogs jumping upon the shelf and eating the bread and defiling the milk; and to-day, because I am rich again, I say sooth when I tell you that locusts devoured a stone one cubit long and one cubit broad." They were abashed by his speech and departed from him; and the youth's good prospered and his case was amended. "Nor" (continued the Wazir), "is this stranger or more seld-seen than the story of the Prince who fell in love with the picture." Quoth the king, Shah Bakht, "Haply, an I hear this story, I shall gain wisdom from it: so I will not hasten in the slaying of this Minister, nor will I do him die before the thirty days have expired." Then he gave him leave to withdraw, and he hied away to his own house.

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The Sixth Night of the Month.

When the day absconded and the evening arrived, the king sat private in his chamber and, summoning the Wazir, who presented himself to him, questioned him of the story. So the Minister said, “Hear, O auspicious king,

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The Tale of the Prince who Fell in Love with the Picture.

There was once, in a province of Persia, a king of the kings, who was great of degree, a magnifico, endowed with majesty and girt by soldiery; but he was childless. Towards the end of his life, his Lord vouchsafed him a male-child, and that boy grew up and was comely and learned all manner of lere. He made him a private place, which was a towering palace, edified with coloured marbles and jewels and paintings. When the Prince entered the palace, he saw in its ceiling the picture of a maiden, than whom he had never beheld a fairer of aspect, and she was surrounded by slave-girls; whereupon he fell down in a fainting fit and became distracted for love of her. Then he sat under the picture till his father came in to him one day, and finding him lean of limb and changed of complexion (which was by reason of his continual looking on that picture), imagined that he was ill and summoned the sages and the leaches, that they might medicine him. He also said to one of his cup-companions, “An thou canst learn what aileth my son, thou shalt have of me the white hand.”[358] Thereupon he went in to him and spake him fair and cajoled him, till he confessed to him that his malady was caused by the picture. Then the courtier returned to the king and told him what ailed his son, whereupon he transported the Prince to another palace and made his former lodging the guest-house; and whoso of the Arabs was entertained therein, him he questioned of the picture, but none could give him tidings thereof, till one day, when there came a wayfarer who seeing the picture, cried, “There is no god but the God! My brother painted this portrait.” So the king sent for him and questioned him of the affair of the picture and where was he who had painted it. He replied, “O my lord, we are two brothers and one of us went to the land of Hind and fell in love with the Indian king’s daughter, and ’tis she who is the original of the portrait. He is wont in every city he entereth to limn her likeness, and I follow him, and longsome is my way.” When the king’s son heard this, he said, “Needs must I travel to this damsel.” So he took all manner rare store and riches galore and journeyed days and nights till he entered the land of Hind, nor did he reach it save after sore travail. Then he asked of the King of Hind who also heard of him, and invited him to the palace. When the Prince came before him, he sought of him his daughter in marriage, and the king said, “Indeed, thou art her match, but there is one objection, to wit, none dare name a male before her because of her hate for men.” So he pitched his tents under her palace windows, till one day of the days he gat hold of a girl, one of her favourite slave-girls, and gave her a mint of money. Quoth she to him, “Hast thou a need?” and quoth he, “Yes,” and presently acquainted her with his case; when she said, “In very sooth, thou puttest thyself in peril.” Then he tarried, flattering himself with false hopes, till all that he had with him was gone and the servants fled from him; whereupon he said to one in whom he trusted, “I am minded to repair to my country and fetch what may suffice me and return hither.” The other answered, “’Tis for thee to judge.” So they set out to return, but the way was long to them and all that the Prince had with him was spent and his company died and there abode but one with him whom he loaded with the little that remained of the victual and they left the rest and fared on. Then there came out a lion and devoured the servant, and the king’s son found himself alone. He went on, till his hackney stood still, whereupon he left it and walked till his feet swelled. Presently he came to the land of the Turks,[359] and he naked, hungry, nor having with him aught but somewhat of jewels, bound about his fore-arm.[360] So he went to the bazar of the goldsmiths and calling one of the brokers gave him the gems. The broker looked and seeing two great rubies, said to him, “Follow me.” Accordingly, he followed him, till he brought him to a goldsmith, to whom he gave the jewels, saying, “Buy these.” He asked, “Whence hadst thou these?” and the broker answered, “This youth is the owner of them.” Then said the goldsmith to the Prince, “Whence hadst thou these rubies?” and he told him all that had befallen him and that he was a king’s son. The goldsmith sat astounded at his adventures and bought of him the rubies for a thousand gold pieces. Then said the Prince to him, “Equip thyself to go with me to my country.” So he made ready and went with him till the king’s son drew near the frontiers of his sire’s kingdom, where the people received him with most honourable reception and sent to acquaint his father with his son's arrival. The king came out to meet him and they entreated the goldsmith with respect and regard. The Prince abode a while with his sire, then set out, he and the goldsmith, to return to the country of the fair one, the daughter of the king of Hind; but there met him highwaymen by the way and he fought the sorest of fights and was slain. The goldsmith buried him and set a mark[361] on his grave and returned to his own country sorrowing and distraught, without telling any of the Prince's violent death. Such was the case of the king's son and the goldsmith; but as regards the Indian king's daughter of whom the Prince went in quest and on whose account he was slain, she had been wont to look out from the topmost terrace of her palace and to gaze on the youth and on his beauty and loveliness; so she said to her slave-girl one day, "Out on thee! What is become of the troops which were camped beside my palace?" The maid replied, "They were the troops of the youth, son to the Persian king, who came to demand thee in wedlock, and wearied himself on thine account, but thou hadst no ruth on him." Cried the Princess, "Woe to thee! Why didst thou not tell me?" and the damsel replied, "I feared thy fury." Then she sought an audience of the king her sire and said to him, "By Allah, I will go in quest of him, even as he came in quest of me; else should I not do him justice as due." So she equipped herself and setting out, traversed the wastes and spent treasures till she came to Sistan, where she called a goldsmith to make her somewhat of ornaments. Now as soon as the goldsmith saw her, he knew her (for that the Prince had talked with him of her and had depictured her to him), so he questioned her of her case, and she acquainted him with her errand, whereupon he buffeted his face and rent his raiment and hove dust on his head and fell a-weeping. Quoth she, "Why dost thou all this?" And he acquainted her with the Prince's case and how he was his comrade and told her that he was dead; whereat she grieved for him and faring on to his father and mother, acquainted them with the case. Thereupon the Prince's father and his uncle and his mother and the lords of the land repaired to his grave and the Princess made mourning over him, crying aloud. She abode by the tomb a whole month; then she caused fetch painters and bade them limn her likeness and the portraiture of the king's son. She also set down in writing their story and that which had befallen them of perils and afflictions and placed it, together with the pictures, at the head of the grave; and after a little, they departed from the spot. “Nor” (continued the Wazir), “is this stranger, O king of the age, than the story of the Fuller and his Wife and the Trooper and what passed between them.” With this the king bade the Minister hie away to his lodging, and when he arose in the morning, he abode his day in his house.

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The Seventh Night of the Month.

At eventide the king sat in his wonted seat and sending for the Wazir, said to him, “Tell me the story of the Fuller and his Wife.” The Minister replied, “With joy and goodly gree!” So he came forward and said, “Hear, O king of the age,

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The Tale of the Fuller and his Wife and the Trooper.[362]

There was once in a city of the cities a woman fair of favour, who took to lover a trooper wight. Her husband was a fuller, and when he went out to his work, the trooper used to come to her and tarry with her till the time of the fuller's return, when he would go away. After this fashion they abode awhile, till one day the trooper said to his mistress, "I mean to take me a tenement close to thine and dig a Sardбbsouterrain from my house to thy house, and do thou say to thy spouse, 'My sister hath been absent with her husband and now they have returned from their travels; and I have made her home herself in my neighbourhood, in order that I may foregather with her at all times. So go thou to her mate the trooper and offer him thy wares for sale, and thou wilt see my sister with him and wilt see that she is I and I am she, without a doubt. Now, Allah, Allah,[363] go to my sister's husband and give ear to that which he shall say to thee.'" So the trooper bought him a house near hand and made therein a tunnel abutting upon his mistress's house. When he had accomplished his affair, the wife bespoke her husband as her lover had lessoned her and he went out to go to the trooper's house, but turned back by the way, whereupon said she to him, "By Allah, go at once, for my sister asketh of thee." The fool of a fuller went out and made for the trooper's house, whilst his wife forewent him thither by the underground passage, and going up, sat down beside the soldier her leman. Presently, the fuller entered and saluted the trooper and salamed to his own wife and was confounded at the coincidence of the case.[364] Then, doubt befalling him, he returned in haste to his dwelling; but she preceded him by the Sardab to her chamber and donning her wonted clothes, sat awaiting him and said to him, "Did I not bid thee go to my sister and greet her husband and make friends with them?" Quoth he, "I did this, but I misdoubted of my affair, when I saw his wife;" and quoth she, "Did I not tell thee that she favoureth me and I her, and there is naught to distinguish between us but our clothes? Go back to her and make sure." Accordingly, of the heaviness of his wit, he believed her, and returning on his way, went in to the trooper; but she had foregone him, and when he saw her by the side of her lover, he began looking on her and pondering. Then he saluted her and she returned him the salam; and when she spoke he was clean bewildered. So the trooper asked him, “What aileth thee to be thus?” and he answered, “This woman is my wife, and the speech is her speech.” Then he rose in haste and, returning to his own house, saw his wife, who had preceded him by the secret passage. So he went back to the trooper’s house and found her sitting as before; whereupon he was abashed in her presence and seating himself in the trooper’s sitting-chamber, ate and drank with him and became drunken and abode senseless all that day till nightfall, when the trooper arose and, the fuller’s hair being long and flowing, he shaved off a portion of it after the fashion of the Turks,[365] clipped the rest short and clapped a Tarbъsh on his head. Then he thrust his feet into walking-boots and girt him with a sword and a girdle and bound about his middle a quiver and a bow and arrows. He also put some silvers in his poke and thrust into his sleeve letters-patent addressed to the governor of Ispahan, bidding him assign to Rustam Khamбrtakani a monthly allowance of an hundred dirhams and ten pounds of bread and five pounds of meat and enrol him among the Turks under his commandment. After which he took him up and carrying him forth, left him in one of the mosques. The fuller ceased not sleeping till sunrise, when he awoke and finding himself in this plight, misdoubted of his affair and fancied that he was a Turk and fell a-putting one foot forward and drawing the other back. Then said he in himself, “I will go to my dwelling, and if my wife know me, then am I Ahmad the fuller; but an she know me not, I am a Turk.” So he betook himself to his house; but when his wife, the cunning witch, saw him, she cried out in his face, saying, “Whither now, O trooper? Wilt thou break into the house of Ahmad the fuller, and he a man of repute, having a brother-in-law a Turk, a man of rank with the Sultan? An thou depart not, I will acquaint my husband and he will requite thee thy deed.” When he heard her words, the dregs of his drink wobbled in his brain and he fancied that he was indeed a Turk. So he went out from her and putting his hand to his sleeve, found therein a writ and gave it to one who read it to him. When he heard that which was in the scroll, his mind was confirmed in his phantasy; but he said to himself, “My wife may be seeking to put a cheat on me; so I will go to my fellows the fullers; and if they recognise me not, then am I for sure Khamartakani the Turk.” So he betook himself to the fullers and when they espied him afar off, they thought that he was really Khamartakani or one of the Turks, who used to send their washing to them without payment and give them never a stiver. Now they had complained of them aforetime to the Sultan, and he said, “If any one of the Turks come to you, pelt him with stones.” Accordingly, when they saw the fuller, they fell upon him with sticks and stones and pelted him; whereupon quoth he, “Verily, I am a Turk and knew it not.” Then he took of the dirhams in his pouch and bought him victual for the way and hired a hackney and set out for Ispahan, leaving his wife to the trooper. “Nor,” continued the Wazir, “is this stranger than the story of the Merchant and the Crone and the King.” The Minister’s tale pleased King Shah Bakht and his heart clave to the story of the merchant and the old woman; so he bade Al-Rahwan withdraw to his lodging, and he went away to his house and abode there the next day till he should be summoned to the presence.

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The Eighth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the king sat private in his chamber and bade fetch the Wazir, who presented himself before him, and the king required of him the story. So the Wazir answered “With love and gladness. Hear, O king,

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The Tale of the Merchant, the Crone and the King.

There was once a family of affluence and distinction, in a city of Khorasan, and the townsfolk used to envy them for that which Allah had vouchsafed them. As time went on, their fortune ceased from them and they passed away, till there remained of them but one old woman. When she grew feeble and decrepit, the townsfolk succoured her not with aught, but thrust her forth of the city, saying, "This old woman shall not neighbour with us, for that we do good to her and she requiteth us with evil."[366] So she took shelter in a ruined place and strangers used to bestow alms upon her, and in this way she tarried a length of time. Now the king of that city had aforetime contended for the kingship with his uncle's son, and the people disliked the king; but Allah Almighty decreed that he should overcome his cousin. However, jealousy of him abode in his heart and he acquainted the Wazir, who hid it not and sent him money. Furthermore, he fell to summoning all strangers who came to the town, man after man, and questioning them of their creed and their goods, and whoso answered him not satisfactory, he took his wealth.[367] Now a certain wealthy man of the Moslems was wayfaring, without knowing aught of this, and it befel that he arrived at that city by night, and coming to the ruin, gave the old woman money and said to her, "No harm upon thee." Whereupon she lifted up her voice and blessed him: so he set down his merchandise by her and abode with her the rest of the night and the next day. Now highwaymen had followed him that they might rob him of his monies, but succeeded not in aught: wherefore he went up to the old woman and kissed her head and exceeded in bounty to her. Then she warned him of that which awaited strangers entering the town and said to him, "I like not this for thee and I fear mischief for thee from these questions that the Wazir hath appointed for addressing the ignorant." And she expounded to him the case according to its conditions: then said she to him, "But have thou no concern: only carry me with thee to thy lodging, and if he question thee of aught enigmatical, whilst I am with thee, I will expound the answers to thee." So he carried the crone with him to the city and lodged her in his lodging and entreated her honourably. Presently, the Wazir heard of the merchant's coming; so he sent to him and bade bring him to his house and talked with him awhile of his travels and of whatso had befallen him therein, and the merchant answered his queries. Then said the Minister, "I will put certain critical questions to thee, which an thou answer me, 'twill be well for thee," and the merchant rose and made him no answer. Quoth the Wazir, "What is the weight of the elephant?" The merchant was perplexed and returned him no reply, giving himself up for lost; however, at last he said, "Grant me three days of delay." The minister granted him the time he sought and he returned to his lodging and related what had passed to the old woman, who said, "When the morrow cometh, go to the Wazir and say to him, 'Make a ship and launch it on the sea and put in it an elephant, and when it sinketh in the water, mark the place whereunto the water riseth. Then take out the elephant and cast in stones in its place, till the ship sink to that same mark; whereupon do thou take out the stones and weigh them and thou wilt presently know the weight of the elephant.'"[368] Accordingly, when he arose in the morning, he went to the Wazir and repeated to him that which the old woman had taught him; whereat the Minister marvelled and said to him, "What sayest thou of a man, who seeth in his house four holes, and in each hole a viper offering to sally out upon him and slay him, and in his house are four sticks and each hole may not be stopped but with the ends of two sticks? How, then, shall he stop all the holes and deliver himself from the vipers?" When the merchant heard this, there befel him such concern that it garred him forget the first and he said to the Wazir, "Grant me delay, so I may reflect on the reply"; and the Minister cried, "Go out, and bring me the answer, or I will seize thy monies." The merchant fared forth and returned to the old woman who, seeing him changed of complexion, said to him, "What did his hoariness ask thee?" So he acquainted her with the case and she cried, "Fear not; I will bring thee forth of this strait." Quoth he, "Allah requite thee with weal!" Then quoth she, "To-morrow go to him with a stout heart and say, 'The answer to that whereof thou asketh me is this. Put the heads of two sticks into one of the holes; then take the other two sticks and lay them across the middle of the first two and stop with their two heads the second hole and with their ferrules the fourth hole. Then take the ferrules of the first two sticks and stop with them the third hole.'"[369] So he repaired to the Wazir and repeated to him the answer; and he marvelled at its justness and said to him, "Go; by Allah; I will ask thee no more questions, for thou with thy skill marrest my foundation."[370] Then he treated him as a friend and the merchant acquainted him with the affair of the old woman; whereupon quoth the Wazir, "Needs must the intelligent company with the intelligent." Thus did this weak woman restore to that man his life and his monies on the easiest wise; "Nor," continued the Wazir, "is this stranger than the story of the Simpleton Husband." When the king heard this, he said, "How like it must be to this our own case!" Then he bade the Minister retire to his lodging; so he withdrew and on the morrow he abode at home till the king should summon him to his presence.

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The Ninth Night of the Month.

When the night came, the king sat private in his chamber and sending after the Wazir, sought of him the story; and he said “Hear, O august king,

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The Tale of the Simpleton Husband.[371]

There was once in olden time a foolish man and an ignorant, who had abounding wealth, and his wife was a beautiful woman, who loved a handsome youth. The Cicisbeo used to watch for her husband's absence and come to her, and on this wise he abode a long while. One day of the days, as the woman was closeted with her lover, he said to her, "O my lady and my beloved, an thou desire me and love me, give me possession of thy person and, satisfy my need in the presence of thy husband; otherwise I will never again come to thee nor draw near thee while I live my life." Now she loved him with exceeding love and could not suffer his separation an hour nor could endure to anger him; so, when she heard his words, she said to him, "Bismillah, so be it, in Allah's name, O my darling and coolth of mine eyes: may he not live who would vex thee!" Quoth he, "To-day?" and quoth she, "Yes, by thy life," and made an appointment with him for this. When her husband came home, she said to him, "I want to go a-pleasuring," and he said, "With all my heart." So he went, till he came to a goodly place, abounding in vines and water, whither he carried her and pitched her a tent by the side of a tall tree; and she betook herself to a place alongside the tent and made her there a Sardób, in which she hid her lover. Then said she to her husband, "I want to climb this tree;"[372] and he said, "Do so." So she clomb it and when she came to the tree-top, she cried out and slapped her face, saying, "O thou lecher, are these thy lewd ways? Thou swarest faith to me, and thou liedest." And she repeated her speech twice and thrice. Then she came down from the tree and rent her raiment and said, "O lecher, an these be thy dealings with me before my eyes, how dost thou when thou art absent from me?" Quoth he, "What aileth thee?" and quoth she, "I saw thee futter the woman before my very eyes." Cried he, "Not so, by Allah! But hold thy peace till I go up and see." So he clomb the tree and no sooner did he begin to do so than out came the lover from his hiding-place and taking the woman by the legs, fell to shagging her. When the husband came to the top of the tree, he looked and beheld a man futtering his wife; so he called out, "O whore, what doings are these?" and he made haste to come down from the tree to the ground. But meanwhile the lover had returned to his hiding-place and his wife asked him, "What sawest thou?" and he answered, "I saw a man shag thee;" but she said, "Thou liest; thou sawest naught and sayst this only by way of phantasy." The same they did three several times, and every time he clomb the tree the lover came up out of the underground place and mounted her, whilst her husband looked on and she still said, "Seest thou aught, O liar?" "Yes," would he answer, and came down in haste, but saw no one and she said to him, "By my life, look and speak naught but sooth!" Then he cried to her, "Arise, let us depart this place, for 'tis full of Jinn and Marids."[373] Accordingly, they returned to their house and nighted there, and the man arose in the morning, assured that this was all but phantasy and fascination. And so the lover won his wicked will. "Nor, O king of the age," continued the Wazir, "is this stranger than the story of the King and the Tither." When the king heard this from the Minister, he bade him go away, and he went.

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The Tenth Night of the Month.

When it was eventide, the king summoned the Wazir and sought of him the story of the King and the Tither, and he said, “Hear, O king,

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The Tale of the Unjust King and the Tither.

There was once a king of the kings of the earth, who dwelt in a flourishing city, abounding in good; but he wronged its people and entreated them foully, so that he ruined the city; and he was named naught else but tyrant and oppressor. Now he was wont, whenas he heard of a violent man in another land, to send after him and lure him with lucre to take service with him; and there was a certain Tither, who exceeded all other Tithers in oppression of the people and foul dealing. So the king sent after him and when he stood before him, he found him a man of mighty fine presence and said to him, "Thou hast been described to me, but I see thou surpassest the description. Set out to me some of thy doings and sayings, so I may be dispensed therewith from enquiring into the whole of thy case." Answered the other, "With all my heart! Know, O King, that I oppress the folk and people the land, whilst other than I ruineth it and peopleth it not." Now the king was leaning back: but presently he sat upright and said, "Tell me of this." The Tither replied, "'Tis well: I go to the man whom I purpose to tithe and cozen him and feign to be busied with certain business, so that I seclude myself therewith from the people; and meanwhile the man is squeezed with the foulest of extortion, till naught of money is left him. Then I appear and they come in to me and questions arise concerning him and I say, 'Indeed, I was ordered worse than this, for some one (may Allah curse him!) hath slandered him to the king.' Presently I take half of his good and return him the rest publicly before the folk and dismiss him to his house, in all honour and worship, and he garreth the money returned be carried before him, whilst he blesseth me and all who are with him also bless me. So is it bruited abroad in the city that I have restored to him his monies and he himself notifieth the like, to the intent that he may have a claim on me for the favour due to those who praise me. On this wise I keep half his property. Then I seem to forget him till the year[374] hath passed over him, when I send for him and recall to him somewhat of that which hath befallen aforetime and require of him somewhat of money in secret; accordingly he doth this and hasteneth to his house and forwardeth whatso I bid him, with a contented heart.

Then I send to another man, between whom and the first is enmity, and lay hands upon him and feign to the other man that it is he who hath slandered him to the king and hath taken the half of his good; and the people praise me."[375] The King wondered at this and at his wily dealing and clever contrivance and made him controller of all his affairs and of his kingdom and the land was placed under his governance, and he said to him, "Take and people." [376] One day, the Tither went out and saw an old man, a woodcutter, and with him wood; so he said to him, "Pay a dirham tithe for thy load." Quoth the Shaykh, "Behold, thou killest me and killest my family;" and quoth the Tither, "What? Who killeth the folk?" And the oldster answered, "An thou let me enter the city, I shall there sell the load for three dirhams, whereof I will give thee one and buy with the other two silvers what will support my family; but, an thou press me for the tithe outside the city, the load will sell but for one dirham and thou wilt take it and I shall abide without food, I and my family. Indeed, thou and I in this circumstance are like unto David and Solomon (on the twain be the Peace!)" "How so?" asked the Tither, and the woodcutter answered, "Do thou hear

The Story of David and Solomon.

Certain husbandmen once made complaint to David (on whom be the Peace!) against some sheep-owners, whose flocks had come down upon their crops by night and had devoured them, and he bade value the crops and that the shepherds should make good the damage. But Solomon (on whom be the Peace!) rose and said, “Nay, but let the sheep be delivered to the husbandmen, so they may take their milk and wool, till they have recouped the value of their crops; then let the sheep return to their owners.” Accordingly David reversed his own decision and caused execute that of Solomon; yet was David no oppressor; but Solomon’s judgment was the juster and he showed himself therein better versed in jurisprudence and Holy Law.[377] When the Tither heard the old man’s speech, he felt ruthful and said to him, “O Shaykh, I make thee a gift of that which is due from thee, and do thou cleave to me and leave me not, so haply I may get of thee gain which shall do away from me my wrongousness and guide me on the path of righteousness.” So the old man followed him, and there met him another with a load of wood. Quoth the Tither to him, “Pay me that which thou owest me;” and quoth he, “Have patience with me till to-morrow, for I owe the hire of a house, and I will sell another load of fuel and pay thee two days’ tithe.” But he refused him this and the Shaykh said to him, “An thou constrain him unto this, thou wilt compel him quit thy country, because he is a stranger here and hath no domicile; and if he remove on account of one dirham, thou wilt forfeit of him three hundred and sixty dirhams a year.[378] Thus wilt thou lose the mickle in keeping the little.” Quoth the Tither, “Verily[379] will I give him a dirham every month to the rent of his lodging.” Then he went on and presently there met him a third woodcutter and he said to him, “Pay thy due;” but he said, “I will pay thee a dirham, when I enter the city; or take of me four dбniks[380] now.” Quoth the Tither, “I will not do it,” but the Shaykh said to him, “Take of him the four daniks presently, for ’tis easy to take and hard to give back.” Exclaimed the Tither, “By Allah ’tis good!” and he arose and hied on, crying out at the top of his voice and saying, “I have no power this day to do evil.”[381] Then he doffed his dress and went forth wandering at a venture, repenting unto his Lord. “Nor” (continued the Wazir), “is this story stranger than that of the Robber who believed the Woman and sought refuge with Allah against falling in with her like, by reason of her cunning contrivance for herself.” When the king heard this, he said to himself, “Since the Tither repented, in consequence of the woodcutter’s warnings, it behoveth I leave this Wazir on life so I may hear the story of the Robber and the Woman.” And he bade Al-Rahwan return to his lodging.

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The Eleventh Night of the Month.

When the evening came and the king had taken his seat, he summoned the Wazir and required of him the story of the Robber and the Woman. Quoth the Minister, “Hear, O king,

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The Tale of the Robber and the Woman.

A certain Robber was a cunning workman and used not to steal aught, till he had wasted all that was with him; moreover, he stole not from his neighbours, neither companied with any of the thieves, for fear lest some one should betray him, and his case become public. After this fashion he abode a great while, in flourishing condition, and his secret was concealed, till Almighty Allah decreed that he broke in upon a beggar, a poor man whom he deemed rich. When he gained access to the house, he found naught, whereat he was wroth, and necessity prompted him to wake that man, who lay asleep alongside of his wife. So he aroused him and said to him, “Show me thy treasure.” Now he had no treasure to show; but the Robber believed him not and was instant upon him with threats and blows. When he saw that he got no profit of him, he said to him, “Swear by the oath of divorce[382] from thy wife that thou hast nothing.” So he sware and his wife said to him, “Fie on thee! Wilt thou divorce me? Is not the hoard buried in yonder chamber?” Then she turned to the Robber and conjured him to be weightier of blows upon her husband, till he should deliver to him the treasure, anent which he had forsworn himself. So he drubbed him with a grievous drubbing, till he carried him to a certain chamber, wherein she signed to him that the hoard was and that he should take it up. So the Robber entered, he and the husband; and when they were both in the chamber, she locked on them the door, which was a stout and strong, and said to the Robber, “Woe to thee, O fool! Thou hast fallen into the trap and now I have but to cry out and the officers of police will come and take thee and thou wilt lose thy life, O Satan!” Quoth he, “Let me go forth;” and quoth she, “Thou art a man and I am a woman; and in thy hand is a knife, and I am afraid of thee.” He cried, “Take the knife from me.” So she took it and said to her husband, “Art thou a woman and he a man? Pain his neck-nape with tunding, even as he tunded thee; and if he put out his hand to thee, I will cry out a single cry and the policemen will come and take him and hew him in two.” So the husband said to him, “O thousand-horned,[383] O dog, O dodger, I owe thee a deposit[384] wherefor thou hast dunned me.” And he fell to bashing him grievously with a stick of holm-oak,[385] whilst he called out to the woman for help and prayed her to deliver him: but she said, “Keep thy place till the morning, and thou shalt see queer things.” And her husband beat him within the chamber, till he killed[386] him and he swooned away. Then he left beating him and when the Robber came to himself, the woman said to her husband, “O man, this house is on hire and we owe its owners much money, and we have naught; so how wilt thou do?” And she went on to bespeak him thus. The Robber asked “And what is the amount of the rent?” ‘The husband answered, “‘Twill be eighty dirhams;” and the thief said, “I will pay this for thee and do thou let me go my way.” Then the wife enquired, “O man, how much do we owe the baker and the greengrocer?” Quoth the Robber, “What is the sum of this?” And the husband said, “Sixty dirhams.” Rejoined the other, “That makes two hundred dirhams; let me go my way and I will pay them.” But the wife said, O my dear, and the girl groweth up and needs must we marry her and equip her and do what else is needful.” So the Robber said to the husband, “How much dost thou want?” and he rejoined, “An hundred dirhams in a modest way.”[387] Quoth the Robber, “That maketh three hundred dirhams.” Then the woman said, “O my dear, when the girl is married, thou wilt need money for winter expenses, charcoal and firewood and other necessaries.” The Robber asked “What wouldst thou have?” And she answered, “An hundred dirhams.” He rejoined, “Be it four hundred dirhams.” And she continued, “O my dear and O coolth of mine eyes, needs must my husband have capital in hand,[388] wherewith he may buy goods and open him a shop.” Said he, “How much will that be?” And she, “An hundred dirhams.” Quoth the Robber, “That maketh five hundred dirhams; I will pay it; but may I be triply divorced from my wife if all my possessions amount to more than this, and they be the savings of twenty years! Let me go my way, so I may deliver them to thee.” Cried she, “O fool, how shall I let thee go thy way? Utterly impossible! Be pleased to give me a right token.”[389] So he gave her a token for his wife and she cried out to her young daughter and said to her, “Keep this door.” Then she charge her husband to watch over the Robber, till she should return, and repairing to his wife, acquainted her with his case and told her that her husband the thief had been taken and had compounded for his release, at the price of seven hundred dirhams, and named to her the token. Accordingly, she gave her the money and she took it and returned to her house. By this time, the dawn had dawned; so she let the thief go his way, and when he went out, she said to him, “O my dear, when shall I see thee come and take the treasure?” And he, “O indebted one,[390] when thou needest other seven hundred dirhams, wherewith to amend thy case and that of thy children and to pay thy debts.” And he went out, hardly believing in his deliverance from her. “Nor,” continued the Wazir, “is this stranger than the story of the Three Men and our Lord Ḱsa.” So the king bade him hie to his own home.

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The Twelfth Night of the Month.

When it was eventide, the king summoned the Minister and bade him tell the promised tale. He replied, “Hearing and obeying. Give ear, O glorious king, to

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The Tale of the Three Men and our Lord Isa.

Three men once went out questing treasure and came upon a nugget of gold, weighing fifty maunds.[391] When they saw it, they took it up on their shoulders and carried it till they drew near a certain city, when one of them said, “Let us sit in the cathedral-mosque,[392] whilst one of us shall go and buy us what we may eat.” So they sat down in the mosque and one of them arose and entered the city. When he came therein, his soul prompted him to false his two fellows and get the gold to himself alone. Accordingly, he bought food and poisoned it: but, when he returned to his comrades, they sprang upon him and slew him, in order that they might enjoy the gold without him. Then they ate of the poisoned food and died, and the gold lay cast down over against them. Presently, Ḱsa bin Maryam (on whom be the Peace!) passed by and seeing this, besought Allah Almighty for tidings of their case; so He told him what had betided them, whereat great was his surprise and he related to his disciples[393] what he had seen. Quoth one of them, “O Spirit of Allah,[394] naught resembleth this but my own adventure.” Quoth Isa, “How so?” and the other began to tell

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The Disciple’s Story.

Once I was in such a city, where I hid a thousand dirhams in a monastery. After a while, I went thither and taking the money, bound it about my waist. Then I set out to return and when I came to the Saharб[395] -waste, the carrying of the money was heavy upon me. Presently, I espied a horseman pushing on after me; so I waited till he came up and said to him, “O rider, carry this money for me and earn reward and recompense in Heaven.” Said he, “No, I will not do it, for I should tire myself and tire out my horse.” Then he went on but, before he had gone far, he said in his mind, “An I take up the money and put my steed to speed and devance him, how shall he overtake me?” And I also said in my mind, “Verily, I erred; for, had he taken the money and made off, what could I have done?” Then he turned back to me and cried to me, “Hand over the money, that I may carry it for thee.” But I replied to him, “That which hath occurred to thy mind hath occurred to mine also; so go thou and go safe.” Quoth Isa (on whom be the Peace!), “Had these done prudently, they had taken thought for themselves; but they unheeded the issues of events; for that whoso acteth cautiously is safe and winneth his wish, and whoso neglecteth precaution is lost and repenteth.”[396] “Nor,” continued the Wazir, “is this stranger or rarer than the story of the King, whose kingdom was restored to him and his wealth, after he had become poor, possessing not a single dirham.” When the king heard this, he said in himself, “How like is this to my own story in the matter of the Minister and his slaughter! Had I not used deliberation, I had done him dead.” And he bade AlRahwan hie to his own home.

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The Thirteenth Night of the Month.

When the even evened, the king sent for the Wazir to his sitting-chamber and bade him tell the promised tale. So he said, “Hearkening and obedience. They relate, O king,

The Tale of the Dethroned Ruler Whose Reign and Wealth Were Restored to Him.

There was once, in a city of the cities of Al-Hind, a just king and a beneficent, and he had a Wazir, a man of understanding, upright in his rede, and praiseworthy in his policy, a Minister in whose hand was the handling of all the affairs of the realm; for he was firmly based on the Sultan’s favour and high in esteem with the folk of his time, and the king set great store by him and entrusted himself to him in all his transactions, by reason of his excellent management of the lieges, and he had guards[397] who were content with him and grateful to him. Now that king had a brother, who envied him and would lief have taken his place; and when he was a-weary of looking for his death and the term of his life seemed distant, he took counsel with certain of his partisans and they said, “The Minister is the monarch’s counsellor and but for this Wazir the king were kingdomless.” So the pretender cast about for the ruin of the defender, but could find no means of furthering his design; and when the affair grew longsome upon him, he said to his wife, “What deemest thou will gar us gain herein?” “What is it?” “I mean in the matter of yonder Minister, who inciteth my brother to worship with all his might and biddeth him unto devoutness, and indeed the king doteth upon his counsel and stablisheth him governor of all monies and matters.” “True; but how shall we devise with him?” “I have a device, so thou wilt help me in that which I shall say to thee.” “Thou shalt have my help in whatsoever thou desirest.” “I mean to dig him a pit in the vestibule and conceal it artfully.” Accordingly, he did this, and when it was night, he covered the pit with a light covering, so that, when the Wazir trod upon it, it would give way under his tread. Then he sent to him and summoned him to the Court in the king’s name, and the messenger bade him enter by the private wicket-way. So he came in alone, and when he stepped upon the covering of the pit, it caved in with him and he fell to the bottom; whereupon the king's brother fell to pelting him with stones. When the Minister beheld what had betided him he gave himself up for lost; so he stirred not for a while and lay still. The Prince, seeing him make no sign, deemed him dead; so he took him forth and wrapping him up in his robes, cast him into the surges of the sea in the middle night. When the Wazir felt the water, he awoke from the swoon and swam for an hour or so, till a ship passed by him, whereupon he shouted to the sailors and they took him up. Now when the morning morrowed, the people went seeking for him, but found him not; and the king learning this, was perplexed concerning his affair and abode unknowing whatso he should do. Then he sought for a Minister to stand in his stead, and the king's brother said, "I have for Wazir an efficient man." Said the king, "Bring him to me." So he brought him a man, whom he set at the head of affairs; but he seized upon the kingdom and threw the king in fetters and made his brother king in lieu of him. The new ruler gave himself up to all manner of frowardness, whereat the folk murmured and his Minister said to him, "I fear lest the Hindians take the old king and restore him to the kingship and we both come to ruin: so, if we seize him and cast him into the sea, we shall be at rest from him; and we will publish among the folk that he is dead." And they, agreeing upon this, took him up and carrying him out to sea, cast him in. When he felt the water, he struck out, and ceased not swimming till he landed upon an island, where he tarried five days finding nothing which he might eat or drink; but, on the sixth day, when he despaired of his life, behold, there passed a ship; so he made signals to the crew and they came and took him up and fared on with him to an inhabited country, where they set him ashore, mother-naked as he was. There, seeing a man seeding, he sought guidance of him and the husbandman asked, "Art thou a foreigner?" "Yes," answered the king and sat with him and they talked. The peasant found him clever and quick-witted and said to him, "An thou beheld a comrade of mine, thou wouldst see him the like of what I see thee, for his case is even as thy case, and he is at this present my friend." Quoth the king, "Verily, thou makest me long to look at him. Canst thou not bring us together, me and him?" Quoth the husbandman, "With joy and goodly gree;" and the king sat with him till he had made an end of his seeding, when he carried him to his homestead and brought him in company with the other stranger, and behold it was his Wazir. When each saw other, the twain wept and embraced, and the sower wept for their weeping; but the king hid their affair and said to him, "This man is from my mother-land and he is as my brother." So they homed with the husbandman and helped him for a hire, wherewith they supported themselves a long spell. Meanwhile, they sought news of their patrial stead and learned that which its people suffered of straitness and severity. One day there came a ship and in it a merchant from their own country, who knew them and rejoiced in them with joy exceeding and clad them in goodly clothing. He also acquainted them with the manner of the treachery that had been practised upon them, and counselled them to return to their own land, they and he with whom they had made friends,[398] assuring them that Almighty Allah would restore them to their former rank. So the king returned and the folk joined themselves to him and he fell upon his brother and his Wazir and took them and threw them into jail. Then he sat down again upon the throne of his kingship, whilst the Minister stood between his hands and they returned to their former estate, but they had naught of worldly wealth. Presently the king said to his Wazir, "How shall we continue tarrying in this city, and we thus poorly conditioned?" and he answered, "Be at thine ease and have no concern." Then he singled out one of the soldiers[399] and said to him, "Send us thy service[400] for the year." Now there were in the city fifty thousand subjects[401] and in the hamlets and villages[402] a like number; and the Minister sent to each of these, saying, "Let each and every of you get an egg and set it under a hen." They did this and it was neither burden nor grievance to them; and when twenty days had passed by, each egg was hatched, and the Wazir bade them pair the chickens, male with female, and rear them well. They did accordingly and it was found a charge unto no one. Then they waited for them awhile and after this the Minister asked of the chickens and was answered that they were become fowls. Furthermore, they brought him all their eggs and he bade set them; and after twenty days there were hatched from each pair of them thirty or five-and-twenty or fifteen chickens at the least. The Wazir bade note against each man the number of chickens which pertained to him, and after two months, he took the old partlets and the cockerels, and there came to him from each man some half a score, and he left the young partlets with them. Even so he sent to the country folk and let the cocks remain with them. Thus he got him whole broods of young poultry and appropriated to himself the sale of the fowls, and on this wise he gained for him, in the course of a year, that which the kingly estate required of the King, and his affairs were set right for him by the cunning contrivance of the Minister. And he caused the country to thrive and dealt justly by his subjects and returned to them all that he took from them and lived a grateful and prosperous life. Thus right counsel and prudence are better than wealth, for that understanding profiteth at all times and seasons. “Nor,” continued the Wazir, “is this stranger than the story of the Man whose caution slew him.” When the king heard the words of his Wazir, he wondered with the uttermost wonder and bade him retire to his lodging.

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The Fourteenth Night of the Month.

When the Minister returned to the presence, the King sought of him the story of the Man whose caution slew him and he said, “Hear, O auspicious King,

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The Tale of the Man whose Caution Slew Him.

There was once a man who was cautious exceedingly concerning himself, and he set out one day on a journey to a land abounding in wild beasts. The caravan wherewith he fared came by night to the gate of a city; but the warders would not open to them, for there were lions there; so they nighted without the walls. Now that man, of the excess of his caution, could not determine a place wherein he should pass the night, for fear of the wild beasts and reptiles; so he went about seeking an empty stead wherein he might lie. At last, as there was a ruined building hard by, he climbed up on to a high wall and ceased not clambering hither and thither, of the excess of his carefulness, till his feet betrayed him and he slipped and fell to the bottom and died, whilst his companions arose in the morning safe and sound. Now, had he overmastered his wrongous rede and had he submitted himself to Fate and Fortune, it had been safer and better for him; but he made light of the folk and belittled their wit and was not content to take example by them; for his soul whispered him that he was a man of wits and he fancied that, an he abode with them, he would perish; so his folly cast him into perdition. “Nor,” continued the Wazir, “is this stranger than the story of the Man who was lavish of his house and his provision to one he knew not.” When the King heard this, he said, “I will not separate myself from the folk and slay my Minister.” And he bade him hie to his own house.

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The Fifteenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King bade fetch the Wazir and required of him the story. So he said, “Hear, O King,

The Tale of the Man who was Lavish of his House and his Provision to One Whom He Knew Not.

There was once an Arab of high rank and noble presence, a model of magnanimity and exalted generosity, and he had brethren, with whom he consorted and caroused, and they were wont to assemble by rotation at one another’s homes. When it came to his turn, he gat ready in his house all manner goodly meats and pleasant and dainty drinks and the fairest flowers and the finest fruits, and he provided all kinds of instruments of music and store of wondrous dictes and marvellous stories and pleasant instances and histories and witty anecdotes and verses and what not else, for there was none among those with whom he was wont to company but enjoyed this in every goodly fashion, and the entertainment he had provided contained all whereof each had need. Then he sallied forth in quest of his friends, and went round about the city, so he might assemble them; but found none of them at home. Now in that town was a man of pleasant conversation and large generosity, a merchant of condition, young of years and bright of blee, who had come to that place from his own country with merchandise in great store and wealth galore. He took up his abode therein and the town was pleasant to him and he was large in lavishing, so that he came to the end of all this wealth and there remained in his hand naught save what was upon him of raiment. So he left the lodging which had homed him in the days of his prosperity; after he had wasted that which was therein of furniture, and fell to finding refuge in the houses of the townsfolk from night to night. One day, as he went wandering about the streets, he beheld a woman of the uttermost beauty and loveliness, and what he saw of her charms amazed him and there happened to him what made him forget his sorry plight. She accosted him and jested with him and he besought her of union and intimacy; so she consented to this and said to him, “Let us go to thy lodging.” Herewith he repented and was perplexed concerning his procedure and grieved for that which must escape him of her company by reason of the straitness of his hand, for that he had not a whit of spending-money. But he was ashamed to say “No,” after he had sued and wooed her; wherefore he went on before her, bethinking him how he should rid himself of her and seeking some excuse which he might put off on her, and gave not over going from street to street, till he entered one that had no issue and saw, at the farther end, a door, whereon was a padlock.[403] Then said he to her, “Do thou excuse me, for my lad hath locked the door and how shall we open it?” Said she, “O my lord, the padlock is worth only some ten dirhams;” and presently she tucked up her sleeves from forearms as they were crystal and taking a stone, smote the padlock and broke it; and, opening the door, said to him, “Enter, O my lord.” Accordingly he went in, committing his affair to Allah (to whom belong Honour and Glory), and she entered after him and locked the door from within. They found themselves in a pleasant house, collecting all good and gladness; and the young man fared forwards, till he came to the sitting-chamber, and, behold, it was furnished with the finest of furniture as hath before been set out.[404] He seated himself and leant upon a cushion, whilst she put out her hand to her veil and doffed it. Then she threw off her heavy outer clothes till she was clad in the thinnest which showed her charms, whereupon the young man embraced her and kissed her and enjoyed her; after which they washed with the Ghusl-ablution and returned to their place and he said to her, “Know that I have little knowledge of what goeth on in my own house, for that I trust to my servant: so arise thou and see what the lad hath made ready in the kitchen.” Accordingly, she arose and going down into the kitchen, saw cooking pots over the fire, wherein were all manner of dainty viands, and firstsbread[405] and fresh almond cakes.[406] So she set bread on a dish and ladled out what she would from the pots and brought it to him. They ate and drank and played and made merry a while of the day; and as they were thus engaged, suddenly up came the master of the house, with his friends, whom he had brought with him, that they might converse together, as of wont. He saw the door opened and knocked a light knock, saying to his company, “Have patience with me, for some of my family are come to visit me: wherefore excuse belongeth first to Allah Almighty, and then to you."[407] So they farewelled him and fared their ways, whilst he rapped another light rap at the door. When the young man heard this, he changed colour and the woman said to him, "Methinks thy lad hath returned." He answered, "Yes;" and she arose and opening the door to the master of the house, said to him, "Where hast thou been? Indeed, thy master is angry with thee!" and he said, "O my lady, I have not been save about his business." Then he girt his waist with a kerchief and entering, saluted the young merchant, who said to him, "Where hast thou been?" Quoth he, "I have done thine errands;" and quoth the youth, "Go and eat and come hither and drink." So he went away, as he bade him, and ate; then he washed hands and returning to the sitting-room, sat down on the carpet and fell to talking with them; whereupon the young merchant's heart was heartened and his breast broadened and he applied himself to pleasure. They were in all joyance of life and the most abounding pleasance till a third part of the night was past, when the house-master arose, and spreading them a bed, invited them to take their rest. So they lay down and the youth wide awake, pondering their affair till daybreak, when the woman roused herself from sleep and said to her companion, "I wish to go." He farewelled her and she departed; whereupon the master of the house followed her with a purse of silver and gave it to her, saying, "Blame not my lord," and made his excuse to her for his master. Then he returned to the youth and said to him, "Arise and come to the Hammam;"[408] and he fell to shampooing his hands and feet, whilst the youth called down blessings on him and said "O my lord, who art thou? Methinks there is not in the world the like of thee; no, nor a pleasanter in thy disposition." Then each of the twain acquainted the other with his case and condition and they went to the bath; after which the master of the house conjured the young merchant to return with him and summoned his friends. So they ate and drank and he told them the tale, wherefore they thanked the house-master and praised him; and their friendship was complete while the young merchant abode in the town, till Allah made easy to him a means of travel, whereupon they farewelled him and he departed; and this is the end of his tale. "Nor," continued the Wazir, “O king of the age, is this stranger than the story of the Richard who lost his wealth and his wit.” When the king heard the Minister’s story, it pleased him and he bade him hie to his home.

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The Sixteenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King sat in his sitting-chamber and sending for his Wazir, bade him relate the story of the Wealthy Man who lost his wealth and his wit. So he said, “Hear, O King,

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The Tale of the Melancholist and the Sharper.[409]

There was once a Richard hight ‘Ajlбn, the Hasty, who wasted his wealth, and concern and chagrin gat the mastery of him, so that he became a Melancholist[410] and lost his wit. There remained with him of his monies about twenty dinars and he used to beg alms of the folk, and whatso they gave him in charity he would gather together and add to the gold pieces that were left him. Now there was in that town a Sharper, who made his living by roguery, and he knew that the Melancholist had somewhat of money; so he fell to spying upon him and ceased not watching him till he saw him put into an earthen pot that which he had with him of silvers and enter a deserted ruin, where he sat down, as if to make water, and dug a hole, wherein he laid the pot and covering it up, smoothed the ground as it had been. Then he went away and the Sharper came and taking what was in the pot, restored it to its former place. Presently ‘Ajlan returned, with somewhat to add to his hoard, but found it not; so he bethought him of who had followed him and remembered that he had found that Sharper assiduous in sitting with him and questioning him. So he went in search of him, assured that he had taken the pot, and gave not over looking for him till he saw him sitting; whereupon he ran to him and the Sharper saw him. Then the Melancholist stood within earshot and muttered[411] to himself and said, “In the pot are sixty ducats and I have with me other twenty in such a place and to-day I will unite the whole in the pot.” When the Sharper heard him say this to himself, muttering and mumbling, repeating and blundering in his speech, he repented him of having taken the sequins and said, “He will presently return to the pot[412] and find it empty; wherefore that for which I am on the look-out will escape me; and meseemeth ‘twere best I replace the dinars, so he may see them and leave all which is with him in the pot, and I can take the whole.” Now he feared to return to the pot at once, lest the Melancholist should follow him to the place and find nothing and on this wise his arrangements be marred; so he said to him, “O ‘Ajlan,[413] I would have thee come to my lodging and eat bread with me.” Thereupon the Melancholist went with him to his quarters and he seated him there and going to the market, sold somewhat of his clothes and pawned somewhat from his house and bought the best of food. Then he betook himself to the ruin and replacing the money in the pot, buried it again; after which he returned to his lodging and gave the Melancholist to eat and drink, and they went out together. The Sharper walked away and hid himself, lest his guest should see him, whilst ‘Ajlan repaired to his hiding-place and took the pot. Presently, the Sharper returned to the ruin, rejoicing in that which he deemed he should get, and dug in the place, but found naught and knew that the Melancholist had outwitted him. So he began buffetting his face for regret, and fell to following the other whitherso he went, to the intent that he might win what was with him, but he failed in this, because the Melancholist knew what was in his mind and was assured that he spied upon him; so he kept watch over himself. Now, had the Sharper considered the consequences of haste and that which is begotten of loss therefrom, he had not done on such wise. “Nor,” continued the Wazir, “is this tale, O king of the age, rarer or stranger or daintier than the story of Khalbas[414] and his Wife and the learned man and that which befel between the three.” When the king heard this story, he left his purpose of putting the Minister to death and his soul bade him to continue him on life. So he ordered him off to his house.

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The Seventeenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King summoned the Minister, and as soon as he presented himself, he required of him the story. So he said, “Hearkening and obedience. Hear, O august King,

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The Tale of Khalbas and his Wife and the Learned Man.

There was once a man called Khalbas, who was a fulsome fellow, a calamity, notorious for this note, and he had a charming wife, renowned for beauty and loveliness. A man of his townsfolk fell in love with her and she also loved him. Now Khalbas was a wily wight and full of guile, and there was in his neighbourhood a learned man, to whom the folk used to resort every day and he told them histories and admonished them with moral instances; and Khalbas was wont to be present in his assembly, for the sake of making a show before the folk. This learned man also had a wife famed for comeliness and seemlihead and quickness of wit and understanding and the lover sought some device whereby he might manage to meet Khalbas's wife; so he came to him and told him as a secret what he had seen of the learned man's wife and confided to him that he was in love with her and besought his assistance in this. Khalbas told him that she was known as a model of chastity and continence and that she exposed herself not to ill doubts; but the other said, "I cannot renounce her, in the first place because the woman inclineth to me and coveteth my wealth, and secondly, because of the greatness of my fondness for her; and naught is wanting but thy help." Quoth Khalbas, "I will do thy will;" and quoth the other, "Thou shalt have of me every day two silvern dirhams, on condition that thou sit with the learned man and that, when he riseth from the assembly, thou speak a word which shall notify to me the breaking up of the meeting." So they agreed upon that and Khalbas entered and sat in the session, whilst the lover was assured in his heart that the secret was safe and secure with him, wherefore he rejoiced and was content to pay the two dirhams. Then Khalbas used to attend the learned man's assembly, whilst the other would go in to his wife and be very much with her, on such wise as he thought good, till the learned man arose from his meeting; and when Khalbas saw that he proposed rising, he would speak a word for the lover to hear, whereupon he went forth from the wife of Khalbas who knew not that doom was in his own home. But when the learned man saw Khalbas do the same thing every day, he began to suspect him, especially on account of that which he knew of his bad name, and suspicion grew upon him; so, one day, he resolved to advance the time of his rising ere the wonted hour and hastening up to Khalbas, seized him and said to him, “By Allah, an thou say a single syllable, I will do thee a damage!” Then he went in to his wife, with Khalbas in his grip, and behold, she was sitting, as of her wont, nor was there about her aught of suspicious or unseemly. The learned man bethought him awhile of this, then made for Khalbas’s house, which adjoined his own, still holding his man; and when they entered, they found the young lover lying on the bed with Khalbas’s wife; whereupon quoth the learned man to him, “O accursed, the doom is with thee and in thine own home!” So Khalbas divorced his wife and went forth, fleeing, and returned not to his own land. “This, then” (continued the Wazir), “is the consequence of lewdness, for whoso purposeth in himself wile and perfidious guile, they get possession of him, and had Khalbas conceived of himself that dishonour and calamity which he conceived of the folk, there had betided him nothing of this. Nor is this tale, rare and curious though it be, stranger or rarer than the story of the Devotee whose husband’s brother accused her of lewdness.” When the king heard this, wonderment gat hold of him and his admiration for the Wazir redoubled; so he bade him hie to his home and return to him on the morrow, according to his custom. So the Minister withdrew to his lodging, where he passed the night and the ensuing day.

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The Eighteenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King summoned the Wazir and required of him the story; so he said, "'Tis well. Hear O King,

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The Tale of the Devotee Accused of Lewdness.[415]

There was once a man of Nнshбbъr[416] who, having a wife of the uttermost beauty and piety, yet was minded to set out on the pilgrimage. So before leaving home he commended her to the care of his brother and besought him to aid her in her affairs and further her wishes till he should return, for the brothers were on the most intimate terms.[417] Then he took ship and departed and his absence was prolonged. Meanwhile, the brother went to visit his brother’s wife, at all times and seasons, and questioned her of her circumstances and went about her wants; and when his calls were prolonged and he heard her speech and saw her face, the love of her gat hold upon his heart and he became passionately fond of her and his soul prompted him to evil. So he besought her to lie with him, but she refused and showed him how foul was his deed, and he found him no way to win what he wished;[418] wherefore he wooed her with soft speech and gentle ways. Now she was righteous in all her doings and never swerved from one saying;[419] so, when he saw that she consented not to him, he had no doubts but that she would tell his brother, when he returned from his journey, and quoth he to her, “An thou consent not to whatso I require of thee, I will cause a scandal to befal thee and thou wilt perish.” Quoth she, “Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) judge betwixt me and thee, and know that, shouldst thou hew me limb from limb, I would not consent to that thou biddest me to do.” His ignorance[420] of womankind persuaded him that she would tell her spouse; so he betook himself of his exceeding despite, to a company of people in the mosque and informed them that he had witnessed a man commit adultery with his brother’s wife. They believed his word and documented his charge and assembled to stone her.[421] Then they dug her a pit outside the city and seating her therein, stoned her, till they deemed her dead, when they left her. Presently a Shaykh of a village passed by the pit and finding her alive, carried her to his house and cured her of her wounds. Now he had a youthful son, who, as soon as he saw her, loved her and besought her of her person; but she refused and consented not to him, whereupon he redoubled in love and longing and his case prompted him to suborn a youth of the people of his village and agree with him that he should come by night and take somewhat from his father's house and that, when he was seized and discovered, he should say that she was his accomplice in this and avouch that she was his mistress and had been stoned on his account in the city. Accordingly he did this, and, coming by night to the villager's house, stole therefrom goods and clothes; whereupon the owner awoke and seizing the thief, pinioned him straitly and beat him to make him confess; and he confessed against the woman that she was a partner in the crime and that he was her lover from the city. The news was bruited abroad and the citizens assembled to put her to death; but the Shaykh with whom she was forbade them and said, "I brought this woman hither, coveting the recompense of Allah, and I know not the truth of that which is said of her and will not empower any to hurt or harm her." Then he gave her a thousand dirhams, by way of alms, and thrust her forth of the village. As for the thief, he was imprisoned for some days; after which the folk interceded for him with the old man, saying, "This is a youth and indeed he erred;" and he released him from his bonds. Meanwhile the woman went out at hap-hazard and donning a devotee's dress, fared on without ceasing, till she came to a city and found the king's deputies dunning the townsfolk for the tribute, out of season. Presently, she saw a man, whom they were pressing for the tribute; so she asked of his case and being acquainted with it, paid down the thousand dirhams for him and delivered him from the bastinado; whereupon he thanked her and those who were present. When he was set free, he walked with her and besought her to go with him to his dwelling: accordingly, she accompanied him thither and supped with him and passed the night. When the dark hours gloomed on him, his soul prompted him to evil, for that which he saw of her beauty and loveliness, and he lusted after her, and required her of her person; but she rejected him and threatened him with Allah the Most High and reminded him of that which she had done with him of kindness and how she had delivered him from the stick and its disgrace. However, he would not be denied, and when he saw her persistent refusal of herself to him, he feared lest she should tell the folk of him. So, when he arose in the morning, he wrote on a paper what he would of forgery and falsehood and going up to the Sultan's palace, said, "I have an advisement for the King." So he bade admit him and he delivered him the writ he had forged, saying, "I found this letter with the woman, the devotee, the ascetic, and indeed she is a spy, a secret informer against the sovran to his foe; and I deem the King's due more incumbent on me than any other claim and warning him to be the first duty, for that he uniteth in himself all the subjects, and but for the King's existence, the lieges would perish; wherefore I have brought thee good counsel." The King gave credit to his words and sent with him those who should lay hands upon the Devotee and do her to death; but they found her not. As for the woman, when the man went out from her, she resolved to depart; so she fared forth, saying to herself, "There is no wayfaring for me in woman's habit." Then she donned men's dress, such as is worn of the pious, and set out and wandered over the earth; nor did she cease wandering till she entered a certain city. Now the king of that city had an only daughter, in whom he gloried and whom he loved, and she saw the Devotee and deeming her a pilgrim youth, said to her father, "I would fain have this youth take up his lodging with me, so I may learn of him lere and piety and religion." Her father rejoiced in this and commanded the pilgrim to take up his abode with his daughter in his palace. So they were in one place and the Princess was strenuous to the uttermost in continence and chastity and nobility of mind and magnanimity and devotion; but the ignorant tattled anent her and the folk of the realm said, "The king's daughter loveth the pilgrim youth and he loveth her." Now the king was a very old man and destiny decreed the ending of his life-term; so he died and when he was buried, the lieges assembled and many were the sayings of the people and of the king's kinsfolk and officers, and they counselled together to slay the Princess and the young pilgrim, saying, "This fellow dishonoureth us with yonder whore and none accepteth shame save the base." So they fell upon them and slew the king's daughter in her mosque, without asking her of aught; whereupon the pious woman (whom they deemed a youth) said to them, "Woe to you, O miscreants! Ye have slain the pious lady." Quoth they, "O thou fulsome fellow, dost thou bespeak us thus? Thou lovedst her and she loved thee, and we will assuredly slay thee." And quoth she, "Allah forfend. Indeed, the affair is the clear reverse of this." They asked, "What proof hast thou of that?" and she answered, "Bring me women." They did so, and when the matrons looked on her, they found her a woman. As soon as the townsfolk saw this, they repented of that they had done and the affair was grievous to them; so they sought pardon of Allah and said to her, "By the virtue of Him whom thou servest, do thou crave pardon for us." Said she, "As for me, I may no longer tarry with you and I am about to depart from you." Then they humbled themselves before her and shed tears and said to her, "We conjure thee, by the might of Allah the Most High, that thou take upon thyself the rule of the realm and of the lieges." But she refused and drew her back; whereupon they came up to her and wept and ceased not supplicating her, till she consented and undertook the kingship. Her first commandment to them was that they bury the Princess and build over her a dome and she abode in that palace, worshipping the Almighty and dealing judgment between the people with justice, and Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) vouchsafed her, for the excellence of her piety and her patience and renunciation, the acceptance of her prayers, so that she sought not aught of Him (to whom belong Might and Majesty), but He granted her petition; and her fame was bruited abroad in all lands. Accordingly, the folk resorted to her from all parts and she used to pray Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty) for the oppressed and the Lord granted him relief, and against his oppressor, and He brake him asunder; and she prayed for the sick and they were made sound; and in this goodly way she tarried a great space of time. So fared it with the wife; but as for her husband, when he returned from the pilgrimage, his brother and the neighbours acquainted him with the affair of his spouse, whereat he was sore concerned and suspected their story, for that which he knew of her chastity and prayerfulness; and he shed tears for the loss of her. Meanwhile, she prayed to Almighty Allah that He would stablish her innocence in the eyes of her spouse and the folk, and He sent down upon her husband's brother a sickness so sore that none knew a cure for him. Wherefore he said to his brother, "In such a city is a Devotee, a worshipful woman and a recluse whose prayers are accepted; so do thou carry me to her, that she may pray for my healing and Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty) may give me ease of this disease." Accordingly, he took him up and journeyed with him, till they came to the village where dwelt the Shaykh, the grey-beard who had rescued the devout woman from the pit and carried her to his dwelling and healed her in his home. Here they halted and lodged with the old man, who questioned the husband of his case and that of his brother and the cause of their journey, and he said, "I purpose to go with my brother, this sick wight, to the holy woman, her whose petitions are answered, so she may pray for him, and Allah may heal him by the blessing of her orisons." Quoth the villager, "By Allah, my son is in parlous plight for sickness and we have heard that this Devotee prayeth for the sick and they are made sound. Indeed, the folk counsel me to carry him to her, and behold,[422] I will go in company with you." And they said, "'Tis well." So they all nighted in that intent and on the morrow they set out for the dwelling of the Devotee, this one carrying his son and that one bearing his brother. Now the man who had stolen the clothes and had forged against the pious woman a lie, to wit, that he was her lover, sickened of a sore sickness, and his people took him up and set out with him to visit the Devotee and crave her prayers, and Destiny brought them altogether by the way. So they fared forward in a body till they came to the city wherein the man dwelt for whom she had paid the thousand dirhams to deliver him from torture, and found him about to travel to her by reason of a malady which had betided him. Accordingly, they all journeyed on together, unknowing that the holy woman was she whom they had so foully wronged, and ceased not going till they came to her city and foregathered at the gates of her palace, that wherein was the tomb of the Princess. Now the folk used to go in to her and salute her with the salam, and crave her orisons; and it was her custom to pray for none till he had confessed to her his sins, when she would ask pardon for him and pray for him that he might be healed, and he was straightway made whole of sickness, by permission of Almighty Allah. When the four sick men were brought in to her, she knew them forthright, though they knew her not, and said to them "Let each of you confess and specify his sins, so I may sue pardon for him and pray for him." And the brother said, "As for me, I required my brother's wife of her person and she refused;

whereupon despite and ignorance prompted me and I lied against her and accused her to the townsfolk of adultery; so they stoned her and slew her wrongously and unrighteously; and this my complaint is the issue of unright and falsehood and of the slaying of the innocent soul, whose slaughter Allah hath made unlawful to man.” Then said the youth, the old villager’s son, “And I, O holy woman, my father brought to us a woman who had been stoned, and my people nursed her till she recovered. Now she was rare of beauty and loveliness; so I required of her her person; but she refused and clave in chastity to Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty), wherefore ignorance prompted me, so that I agreed with one of the youths that he should steal clothes and coin from my father’s house. Then I laid hands on him and carried him to my sire and made him confess. He declared that the woman was his mistress from the city and had been stoned on his account and that she was his accomplice in the theft and had opened the doors to him; but this was a lie against her, for that she had not yielded to me in that which I sought of her. So there befel me what ye see of requital.” And the young man, the thief, said, “I am he with whom thou agreedst concerning the theft, and to whom thou openedst the door, and I am he who accused her falsely and calumniously and Allah (extolled be He!) well knoweth that I never did evil with her; no, nor knew her in any way before that time.” Then said he whom she had delivered from torture by paying down a thousand dirhams and who had required of her her person in his house, for that her beauty pleased him, and when she refused had forged a letter against her and treacherously denounced her to the Sultan and requited her graciousness with ingratitude, “I am he who wronged her and lied against her, and this is the issue of the oppressor’s affair.” When she heard their words, in the presence of the folk, she cried, “Alhamdolillah, praise be to Allah, the King who over all things is omnipotent, and blessing upon His prophets and apostles!” Then quoth she to the assembly, “Bear testimony, O ye here present, to these men’s speech, and know ye I am that woman whom they confess to having wronged.” And she turned to her husband’s brother and said to him, “I am thy brother’s wife and Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) delivered me from that whereinto thou castedst me of calumny and suspicion, and from the folly and frowardness whereof thou hast spoken, and now hath He shown forth my innocence, of His bounty and generosity. Go, for thou art quit of the wrong thou didst me.” Then she prayed for him and he was made sound of his sickness. Thereupon she said to the son of the village Shaykh, “Know that I am the woman whom thy father delivered from strain and stress and whom there betided from thee of calumny and ignorance that which thou hast named.” And she sued pardon for him and he was made sound of his sickness. Then said she to the thief, “I am the woman against whom thou liedst, avouching that I was thy leman who had been stoned on thine account, and that I was thine accomplice in robbing the house of the village Shaykh and had opened the doors to thee.” And she prayed for him and he was made whole of his malady.[423] Then said she to the townsman, him of the tribute, “I am the woman who gave thee the thousand dirhams and thou didst with me what thou didst.” And she asked pardon for him and prayed for him and he was made whole; whereupon the folk marvelled at her enemies who had all been afflicted alike, so Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) might show forth her innocence upon the heads of witnesses.[424] Then she turned to the old man who had delivered her from the pit and prayed for him and gave him presents manifold and among them a myriad, a Badrah;[425] and the sick made whole departed from her. When she was alone with her husband, she made him draw near unto her and rejoiced in his arrival, and gave him the choice of abiding with her. Presently, she assembled the citizens and notified to them his virtue and worth and counselled them to invest him with management of their rule and besought them to make him king over them. They consented to her on this and he became king and made his home amongst them, whilst she gave herself up to her orisons and cohabited with her husband as she was with him aforetime. “Nor,” continued the Wazir, “is this tale, O king of the time, stranger or pleasanter than that of the Hireling and the Girl whose maw he slit and fled.” When King Shah Bakht heard this, he said, “Most like all they say of the Minister is leasing, and his innocence will be made manifest even as that of the Devotee was manifested.” Then he comforted the Wazir’s heart and bade him hie to his house.

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The Nineteenth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King bade fetch the Wazir and sought of him the story of the Hireling and the Girl. So he said, “Hearkening and obedience. Give ear, O auspicious King, to

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The Tale of the Hireling and the Girl.

There was once, of old time, in one of the tribes of the Arabs, a woman pregnant by her husband, and they had a hired servant, a man of insight and understanding. When the woman came to her delivery-time, she gave birth to a girl-child in the night and they sought fire of the neighbours.[426] So the Hireling went in quest of fire. Now there was in the camp a Divineress,[427] and she questioned him of the new-born child, an it was male or female. Quoth he, "'Tis a girl;" and quoth she, "That girl will whore with an hundred men and a hireling shall wed her and a spider shall slay her." When the hired man heard this, he returned upon his steps and going in to the woman, took the child from her by wily management and slit its maw: then he fled forth into the wold at hap-hazard and abode in strangerhood while Allah so willed.[428] He gained much money; and, returning to his own land, after twenty years' absence, alighted in the neighbourhood of an old woman, whom he wheedled and treated with liberality, requiring of her a young person whom he might enjoy without marriage. Said she, "I know none but a certain fair woman, who is renowned for this industry." Then she described her charms to him and made him lust after her, and he said, "Hasten to her this minute and lavish upon her whatso she asketh." So the crone betook herself to the girl and discovered his wishes to her and invited her to him; but she answered, "'Tis true that I was in the habit of whoredom, but now I have repented to Almighty Allah and have no more longing to this: nay, I desire lawful wedlock; so, if he be content with that which is legal, I am between his hands."[429] The old woman returned to the man and told him what the damsel said; and he lusted after her, because of her beauty and her penitence; so he took her to wife, and when he went in to her, he loved her and after like fashion she loved him. Thus they abode a great while, till one day he questioned her of the cause of a scar[430] he espied on her body, and she said, "I wot naught thereof save that my mother told me a marvellous thing concerning it." Asked he, "What was that?" and she answered, "My mother declared that she gave birth to me one night of the wintry nights and despatched a hired man, who was with us, in quest of fire for her. He was absent a little while and presently returning, took me and slit my maw and fled. When my mother saw this, chagrin seized her and compassion possessed her; so she sewed up my stomach and nursed me till the wound healed by the ordinance of Allah (to whom belong Might and Majesty).” When her husband heard this, he said to her, “What is thy name and what may be the name of thy mother and who may be thy father?” She told him their names and her own, whereby he knew that it was she whose maw he had slit and said to her, “And where are thy father and mother?” “They are both dead.” “I am that Hireling who slit thy stomach.” “Why didst thou that?” “Because of a saying I heard from the wise woman.” “What was it?” “She declared thou wouldst play the whore with an hundred men and that I after that should wed thee.” “Ay, I have whored with an hundred men, no more and no less, and behold, thou hast married me.” “The Divineress also foresaid that thou shouldst die, at the last of thy life, of the bite of a spider. Indeed, her saying hath been verified of the fornication and the marriage, and I fear lest her word come true no less in the death.” Then they betook themselves to a place without the city, where he builded him a mansion of solid stone and white stucco and stopped its inner walls and plastered them; leaving not therein or cranny or crevice, and he set in it two slavegirls whose services were sweeping and wiping, for fear of spiders. Here he abode with his wife a great while, till one day the man espied a spider on the ceiling and beat it down. When his wife saw it, she said, “This is that which the wise woman foresaid would slay me; so, by thy life, suffer me to kill it with mine own hand.” Her husband forbade her from this, but she conjured him to let her destroy the spider; then, of her fearfulness and her eagerness, she took a piece of wood and smote it. The wood brake of the force of the blow, and a splinter from it entered her hand and wrought upon it, so that it swelled. Then her fore-arm also swelled and the swelling spread to her side and thence grew till it reached her heart and she died. “Nor” (continued the Wazir), “is this stranger or more wondrous than the story of the Weaver who became a Leach by commandment of his wife.” When the King heard this, his admiration redoubled and he said, “In very truth, Destiny is written to all creatures, and I will not accept aught that is said against my

Minister the loyal counsellor." And he bade him hie to his home.

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The Twentieth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King bade summon his Minister and he presented himself before him, whereupon he required of him the hearing of the story. So the Wazir said, “Hearkening and obedience. Give ear, O King, to

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The Tale of the Weaver who Became a Leach by Order of his Wife.

There was once, in the land of Fars,[431] a man who wedded a woman higher than himself in rank and nobler of lineage, but she had no guardian to preserve her from want. She loathed to marry one who was beneath her; yet she wived with him because of need, and took of him a bond in writing to the effect that he would ever be under her order to bid and forbid and would never thwart her in word or in deed. Now the man was a Weaver and he bound himself in writing to pay his wife ten thousand dirhams in case of default. Atfer such fashion they abode a long while till one day the wife went out to fetch water, of which she had need, and saw a leach who had spread a carpet hard by the road, whereon he had set out great store of simples[432] and implements of medicine and he was speaking and muttering charms, whilst the folk flocked to him from all quarters and girt him about on every side. The Weaver's wife marvelled at the largeness of the physician's fortune[433] and said in herself, "Were my husband thus, he would lead an easy life and that wherein we are of straitness and poverty would be widened to him." Then she returned home, cark-full and care-full, and when her husband saw her in this condition, he questioned her of her case and she said to him, "Verily, my breast is harrowed by reason of thee and of the very goodness of thine intent," presently adding, "Narrow means suit me not and thou in thy present craft gainest naught; so either do thou seek out a business other than this or pay me my rightful due[434] and let me wend my ways." Her husband chid her for this and advised her to take patience; but she would not be turned from her design and said to him, "Go forth and watch yonder physician how he doth and learn from him what he saith." Said he, "Let not thy heart be troubled," and added, "I will go every day to the session of the leach." So he began resorting daily to the physician and committing to memory his answers and that which he spoke of jargon,[435] till he had gotten a great matter by rote, and all this he learned and thoroughly digested it. Then he returned to his wife and said to her, “I have stored up the physician’s sayings in memory and have mastered his manner of muttering and diagnoses and prescribing remedies and I wot by heart the names of the medicines[436] and of all the diseases, and there abideth of thy bidding naught undone: so what dost thou command me now to do?” Quoth she, “Leave the loom and open thyself a leach’s shop;” but quoth he, “My fellow-townsmen know me and this affair will not profit me, save in a land of strangerhood; so come, let us go out from this city and get us to a foreign land and there live.” And she said, “Do whatso thou willest.” Accordingly, he arose and taking his weaving gear, sold it and bought with the price drugs and simples and wrought himself a carpet, with which they set out and journeyed to a certain village, where they took up their abode. Then the man fell to going round about the hamlets and villages and outskirts of towns, after donning leach’s dress; and he began to earn his livelihood and make much gain. Their affairs prospered and their circumstances were bettered; wherefore they praised Allah for their present ease and the village became to them a home. In this way he lived for a long time, but at length he wandered anew,[437] and the days and the nights ceased not to transport him from country to country, till he came to the land of the Roum and lighted down in a city of the cities thereof, wherein was Jбlinъs[438] the Sage; but the Weaver knew him not, nor was aware who he was. So he fared forth, as was his wont, in quest of a place where the folk might be gathered together, and hired the courtyard[439] of Jalinus. There he spread his carpet and setting out on it his simples and instruments of medicine, praised himself and his skill and claimed a cleverness such as none but he might claim.[440] Jalinus heard that which he affirmed of his understanding and it was certified unto him and established in his mind that the man was a skilled leach of the leaches of the Persians and he said in himself, “Unless he had confidence in his knowledge and were minded to confront me and contend with me, he had not sought the door of my house neither had he spoken that which he hath spoken.” And care and doubt gat hold upon Jalinus: so he drew near the Weaver and addressed himself to see how his doings should end, whilst the folk began to flock to him and describe to him their ailments,[441] and he would answer them thereof, hitting the mark one while and missing it another while, so that naught appeared to Jalinus of his fashion whereby his mind might be assured that he had justly estimated his skill. Presently, up came a woman with a urinal,[442] and when the Weaver saw the phial afar off, he said to her, "This is the water of a man, a stranger." Said she, "Yes;" and he continued, "Is he not a Jew and is not his ailment flatulence?" "Yes," replied the woman, and the folk marvelled at this; wherefore the man was magnified in the eyes of Jalinus, for that he heard speech such as was not of the usage of doctors, seeing that they know not urine but by shaking it and looking straitly thereon, neither wot they a man's water from a woman's water, nor a stranger's from a countryman's, nor a Jew's from a Sharif's.[443] Then the woman asked, "What is the remedy?" and the Weaver answered, "Bring the honorarium."[444] So she paid him a dirham and he gave her medicines contrary to that ailment and such as would only aggravate the complaint. When Jalinus saw what appeared to him of the man's incapacity, he turned to his disciples and pupils and bade them fetch the mock doctor, with all his gear and drugs. Accordingly they brought him into his presence without stay or delay, and when Jalinus saw him before him, he asked him, "Knowest thou me?" and the other answered, "No, nor did I ever set eyes on thee before this day." Quoth the Sage, "Dost thou know Jalinus?" and quoth the Weaver, "No." Then said Jalinus, "What drave thee to do that which thou dost?" So he acquainted him with his adventure, especially with the dowry and the obligation by which he was bound with regard to his wife whereat the Sage marvelled and certified himself anent the matter of the marriage-settlement. Then he bade lodge him near himself and entreated him with kindness and took him apart and said to him, "Expound to me the story of the urine-phial and whence thou knewest that the water therein was that of a man, and he a stranger and a Jew, and that his ailment was flatulence?" The Weaver replied, "'Tis well. Thou must know that we people of Persia are skilled in physiognomy,[445] and I saw the woman to be rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed and tall-statured. Now these qualities belong to women who are enamoured of a man and are distracted for love of him;[446] moreover, I saw her burning with anxiety; so I knew that the patient was her husband.[447] As for his strangerhood, I noted that the dress of the woman differed from that of the townsfolk, wherefore I knew that she was a foreigner; and in the mouth of the phial I saw a yellow rag,[448] which garred me wot that the sick man was a Jew and she a Jewess. Moreover, she came to me on first day;[449] and 'tis the Jews' custom to take meat puddings[450] and food that hath passed the night[451] and eat them on the Saturday their Sabbath, hot and cold, and they exceed in eating; wherefore flatulence and indigestion betide them. Thus I was directed and guessed that which thou hast heard." Now when Jalinus heard this, he ordered the Weaver the amount of his wife's dowry and bade him pay it to her and said to him, "Divorce her." Furthermore, he forbade him from returning to the practice of physic and warned him never again to take to wife a woman of rank higher than his own; and he gave him his spending money and charged him return to his proper craft. "Nor" (continued the Wazir), "is this tale stranger or rarer than the story of the Two Sharpers who each cozened his Compeer." When King Shah Bakht heard this, he said to himself, "How like is this story to my present case with this Minister, who hath not his like!" Then he bade him hie to his own house and come again at eventide.

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The Twenty-first Night of the Month.

Whenas nighted the night, the Wazir presented himself before the King, who bade him relate the promised story. So he said, “Hearkening and obedience. Give ear, O king, to

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The Tale of the Two Sharpers who each Cozened his Compeer.

There was once, in the city of Baghdad, a man hight Al-Marwazh,[452] who was a sharper and ruined the folk with his rogueries and he was renowned in all quarters for knavery. He went out one day, carrying a load of sheep's droppings, and sware to himself that he would not return to his lodging till he had sold it at the price of raisins. Now there was in another city a second sharper, hight Al-R6zh,[453] one of its worst, who went out the same day, bearing a load of goat's droppings,[454] anent which he had sworn to himself that he would not sell it but at the price of sundried figs. So the twain fared on with that which was by them and ceased not going till they met in one of the khans[455] and one complained to other of what he had suffered on travel in quest of gain and of the little demand for his wares. Now each of them had it in mind to cheat his fellow; so the man of Marw said to the man of Rayy, "Wilt thou sell me that?" He said, "Yes," and the other continued, "And wilt thou buy that which is with me?" The man of Rayy consented; so they agreed upon this and each of them sold to his mate that which was with him in exchange for the other's; after which they bade farewell and both fared forth. As soon as the twain were out of sight, they examined their loads, to see what was therein, and one of them found that he had a load of sheep's droppings and the other that he had a load of goat's droppings; whereupon each of them turned back in quest of his fellow. They met again in the khan and laughing at each other cancelled their bargain; then they agreed to enter into partnership and that all they had of money and other good should be in common, share and share alike. Then quoth Al-Razi to Al-Marwazi, "Come with me to my city, for that 'tis nearer than thine." So he went with him, and when he arrived at his quarters, he said to his wife and household and neighbours, "This is my brother, who hath been absent in the land of Khorasan and is come back." And he abode with him in all honour for a space of three days. On the fourth day, Al-Razi said to him, “Know, O my brother, that I purpose to do something.” The other asked, “What is it?” and the first answered, “I mean to feign myself dead and do thou go to the bazar and hire two porters and a bier. Then take me up and go about the streets and markets with my body and collect alms on my account.”[456] Accordingly the Marw man repaired to the market and, fetching that which he sought, returned to the Rayy man’s house, where he found his fellow cast down in the entrance-passage, with his beard tied and his eyes shut, and his complexion was paled and his belly was blown and his limbs were loose. So he deemed him really dead and shook him but he spoke not; then he took a knife and pricked his feet, but he budged not. Presently said Al-Razi, “What is this, O fool?” and said Al-Marwazi, “I deemed thou wast dead in very deed.” Al-Razi cried, “Get thee to business, and leave funning.” So he took him up and went with him to the market and collected alms for him that day till eventide, when he bore him back to his abode and waited till the morrow. Next morning, he again took up the bier and walked round with it as before, in quest of charity. Presently, the Chief of Police, who was of those who had given him alms on the previous day, met him; so he was angered and fell on the porters and beat them and took the dead body, saying, “I will bury him and win reward in Heaven.”[457] So his followers took him up and carrying him to the Police-officer, fetched grave-diggers, who dug him a grave. Then they brought him a shroud and perfumes[458] and fetched an old man of the quarter, to wash him: so the Shaykh recited over him the appointed prayers[459] and laying him on the bench, washed him and shrouded him. After he had been shrouded he skited;[460] so the greybeard renewed the washing and went away to make the Wuzu-ablution, whilst all the folk departed to do likewise, before the orisons of the funeral. When the dead man found himself alone, he sprang up, as he were a Satan; and, donning the corpse-washer’s dress,[461] took the cups and water-can[462] and wrapped them up in the napkins; then he clapped his shroud under his armpit and went out. The doorkeepers thought that he was the washer and asked him, “Hast thou made an end of the washing, so we may acquaint the Emir?” The sharper answered “Yes,” and made off to his abode, where he found the Marw man a-wooing his wife and saying to her, "By thy life, thou wilt never again look upon his face for the best reason that by this time he is buried: I myself escaped not from them but after toil and trouble, and if he speak, they will do him to death." Quoth she, "And what wouldst thou have of me?" and quoth he, "Satisfy my desire and heal my disorder, for I am better than thy husband." And he began toying with her as a prelude to possession. Now when the Rayy man heard this, he said, "Yonder wittol-pimp lusteth after my wife; but I will at once do him a damage." Then he rushed in upon them, and when Al-Marwazi saw him, he wondered at him and said to him, "How didst thou make thine escape?" Accordingly he told him the trick he had played and they abode talking of that which they had collected from the folk, and indeed they had gotten great store of money. Then said the man of Marw, "In very sooth, mine absence hath been prolonged and lief would I return to my own land." Al-Razi said, "As thou willest;" and the other rejoined, "Let us divide the monies we have made and do thou go with me to my home, so I may show thee my tricks and my works." Replied the man of Rayy, "Come to-morrow, and we will divide the coin." So the Marw man went away and the other turned to his wife and said to her, "We have collected us great plenty of money, and the dog would fain take the half of it; but such thing shall never be, for my mind hath been changed against him, since I heard him making love to thee; now, therefore, I propose to play him a trick and enjoy all the money; and do thou not oppose me." She replied, "'Tis well;" and he said to her, "To-morrow, at peep o' day I will feign myself dead, and do thou cry aloud and tear thy hair, whereupon the folk will flock to me. Then lay me out and bury me; and, when the folk are gone away from the grave, dig down to me and take me; and fear not for me, as I can abide without harm two days in the tomb-niche."[463] Whereto she made answer, "Do e'en whatso thou wilt." Accordingly, when it was the dawn-hour, she bound his beard and spreading a veil over him, shrieked aloud, whereupon the people of the quarter flocked to her, men and women. Presently, up came Al-Marwazi, for the division of the money, and hearing the keening asked, "What may be the news?" Quoth they, "Thy brother is dead;" and quoth he in himself, "The accursed fellow cozeneth me, so he may get all the coin for himself, but I will presently do with him what shall soon re-quicken him." Then he tare the bosom of his robe and bared his head, weeping and saying, "Alas, my brother, ah! Alas, my chief, ah! Alas, my lord, ah!" Then he went in to the men, who rose and condoled with him. Then he accosted the Rayy man's wife and said to her, "How came his death to occur?" Said she, "I know nothing except that, when I arose in the morning, I found him dead." Moreover, he questioned her of the money which was with her, but she cried, "I have no knowledge of this and no tidings." So he sat down at his fellow-sharper's head, and said to him, "Know, O Razi, that I will not leave thee till after ten days with their nights, wherein I will wake and sleep by thy grave. So rise and don't be a fool." But he answered him not, and the man of Marw drew his knife and fell to sticking it into the other's hands and feet, purposing to make him move; but he stirred not and he presently grew weary of this and determined that the sharper was really dead. However, he still had his suspicions and said to himself, "This fellow is falsing me, so he may enjoy all the money." Therewith he began to prepare the body for burial and bought for it perfumes and whatso was needed. Then they brought him to the washing-place and Al-Marwazi came to him; and, heating water till it boiled and bubbled and a third of it was evaporated, fell to pouring it on his skin, so that it turned bright red and lively blue and was blistered; but he abode still on one case.[464] Presently they wrapped him in the shroud and set him on the bier, which they took up and bearing him to the burial-place, placed him in the grave-niche and filled in the earth; after which the folk dispersed. But the Marw man and the widow abode by the tomb, weeping, and ceased not sitting till sundown, when the woman said to him, "Come, let us hie us home, for this weeping will not profit us, nor will it restore the dead." He replied to her, "By Allah, I will not budge hence till I have slept and waked by this tomb ten days with their nights!" When she heard this his speech, she feared lest he should keep his word and his oath, and so her husband perish; but she said in her mind, "This one dissembleth: an I leave him and return to my house, he will tarry by him a little while and go away." And Al-Marwazi said to her, "Arise, thou, and hie thee home." So she arose and repaired to her house, whilst the man of Marw abode in his place till the night was half spent, when he said to himself, “How long? Yet how can I let this knavish dog die and lose the money? Better I open the tomb on him and bring him forth and take my due of him by dint of grievous beating and torment.” Accordingly, he dug him up and pulled him forth of the grave; after which he betook himself to a garden hard by the burial-ground and cut thence staves and palmfronds.[465] Then he tied the dead man’s legs and laid on to him with the staff and beat him a grievous beating; but the body never budged. When the time grew longsome on him, his shoulders became a-weary and he feared lest some one of the watch passing on his round should surprise and seize him. So he took up Al-Razi and carrying him forth of the cemetery, stayed not till he came to the Magians’ mortuary-place and casting him down in a Tower of Silence,[466] rained heavy blows upon him till his shoulders failed him, but the other stirred not. Then he seated him by his side and rested; after which he rose and renewed the beating upon him; and thus he did till the end of the night, but without making him move. Now, as Destiny decreed, a band of robbers whose wont it was, when they had stolen anything, to resort to that place and there divide their loot, came thither in early-dawn, according to their custom; they numbered ten and they had with them much wealth which they were carrying. When they approached the Tower of Silence, they heard a noise of blows within it and their captain cried, “This is a Magian whom the Angels[467] are tormenting.” So they entered the cemetery and as soon as they arrived over against him, the man of Marw feared lest they should be the watchmen come upon him, therefore he fled and stood among the tombs.[468] The robbers advanced to the place and finding a man of Rayy bound by the feet and by him some seventy sticks, wondered at this with exceeding wonder and said, “Allah confound thee! This was a miscreant, a man of many crimes; for earth hath rejected him from her womb, and by my life, he is yet fresh! This is his first night in the tomb and the Angels were tormenting him but now; so whoso of you hath a sin upon his soul, let him beat him, by way of offering to Almighty Allah.” The robbers said, “We be sinners one and all;” so each of them went up to the corpse and dealt it about an hundred blows, one saying the while, “This is for my father!”[469] and another laid on to him crying, “This is for my grandfather!” whilst a third muttered, “This is for my brother!” and a fourth exclaimed, “This is for my mother!” And they gave not over taking turns at him and beating him till they were weary, whilst Al-Marwazi stood laughing and saying in self, “’Tis not I alone who have entered into default against him. There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!”[470] Then the robbers applied themselves to sharing their loot wherein was a sword which caused them to fall out anent the man who should take it. Quoth the Captain, “’Tis my rede that we make proof of it; so, an it be a fine blade, we shall know its worth, and if it be worthless we shall know that;” whereto they said, “Try it on this corpse, for it is fresh.” So the Captain took the sword, and drawing it, brandished and made a false cut with it; but, when the man of Rayy saw this, he felt sure of death and said in his mind, “I have borne the washing-slab and the boiling water and the pricking with the knife-point and the grave-niche and its straitness and all this, trusting in Allah that I might be delivered from death, and indeed I have been delivered; but the sword I may not suffer seeing that one stroke of it will make me a dead man.” So saying, he sprang to his feet and seizing a thigh-bone of one departed, shouted at the top of his voice, “O ye dead ones, take them to yourselves!” And he smote one of them, whilst his mate of Marw smote another and they cried out at them and buffeted them on their neck-napes: whereupon the robbers left that which was with them of loot and ran away; and indeed their wits took flight for terror and they ceased not running till they came forth of the Magians’ mortuary-ground and left it a parasang’s length behind them, when they halted, trembling and affrighted for the muchness of that which had befallen them of fear and awe of the dead.[471] As for Al-Razi and Al-Marwazi, they made peace each with other and sat down to share the spoil. Quoth the man of Marw, “I will not give thee a dirham of this money, till thou pay me my due of the monies that be in thy house.” And quoth the man of Rayy, “I will do naught of the kind,[472] nor will I withdraw this from aught of my due.” So they fell out thereupon and disputed each with other and either of the twain went saying to his fellow, “I will not give thee a dirham!” Wherefore words ran high between them and the brawl was prolonged. Meanwhile, when the robbers halted, one of them said to the others, “Let us go back and see;” and the Captain said, “This thing is impossible of the dead: never heard we that they came to life in such way. Return we and take our monies, for that the dead have no need of money.” And they were divided in opinion as to returning: but presently one said, “Indeed, our weapons are gone and we may not prevail against them and will not draw near the place: only let one of us go look at it, and if he hear no sound of them, let him suggest to us what we shall do.” At this they agreed that they should send a man of them and assigned him for such mission two parts of the plunder. Accordingly he returned to the burial-ground and gave not over going till he stood at the door of the Tower of Silence, when he heard the words of Al-Marwazi to his fellow, “I will not give thee a single dirham of the money!” The other said the same and they were occupied with brawling and abuse and talk. So the robber returned in haste to his mates, who said, “What is behind thee?”[473] Quoth he, “Get you gone and run for your lives, O fools, and save yourselves: much people of the dead are come to life and between them are words and brawls.” Hereat the robbers fled, whilst the two sharpers returned to the man of Rayy’s house and made peace and added the robbers’ spoil to the monies they had gained and lived a length of time. “Nor, O king of the age” (continued the Wazir), “is this stranger or rarer than the story of the Four Sharpers with the Shroff and the Ass.” When the king heard this story, he smiled and it pleased him and he bade the Minister to his own house.

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The Twenty-second Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, King Shah Bakht summoned the Wazir and required of him the hearing of the story. So Al-Rahwan said, “Hearkening and obedience. Give ear, O King, to

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The Tale of the Sharpers with the Shroff[474] and the Ass.

Four sharpers once plotted against a Shroff, a man of much wealth, and agreed upon a sleight for securing some of his coins. So one of them took an ass and laying on it a bag, wherein were dirhams, lighted down at the shop of the Shroff and sought of him small change. The man of monies brought out to him the silver bits and bartered them with him, whilst the sharper was easy with him in the matter of exchange, so he might gar him long for more gain. As they were thus, up came the other three sharpers and surrounded the donkey; and one of them said, "'Tis he," and another said, "Wait till I look at him." Then he took to considering the ass and stroking him from crest[475] to tail; whilst the third went up to him and handled him and felt him from head to rump, saying, "Yes, 'tis in him." Said another, "No, 'tis not in him;" and they left not doing the like of this for some time. Then they accosted the donkey's owner and chaffered with him and he said, "I will not sell him but for ten thousand dirhams." They offered him a thousand dirhams; but he refused and swore that he would not vend the ass but for that which he had said. They ceased not adding to their offer till the price reached five thousand dirhams, whilst their mate still said, "I'll not vend him save for ten thousand silver pieces." The Shroff advised him to sell, but he would not do this and said to him, "Ho, shaykh! Thou wottest not the case of this donkey. Stick to silver and gold and what pertaineth thereto of exchange and small change; because indeed the virtue of this ass is a mystery to thee. For every craft its crafty men and for every means of livelihood its peculiar people." When the affair was prolonged upon the three sharpers, they went away and sat down aside; then they came up privily to the money-changer and said to him, "An thou can buy him for us, do so, and we will give thee twenty dirhams." Quoth he, "Go away and sit down at a distance from him." So they did as he bade and the Shroff went up to the owner of the ass and ceased not luring him with lucre and saying, "Leave these wights and sell me the donkey, and I will reckon him a present from thee," till he sold him the animal for five thousand and five hundred dirhams. Accordingly the ,money-changer weighed out to him that sum of his own monies, and the owner of the ass took the price and delivered the beast to him, saying, “Whatso shall betide, though he abide a deposit upon thy neck,[476] sell him not to yonder cheats for less than ten thousand dirhams, for that they would fain buy him because of a hidden hoard they know, whereto naught can guide them save this donkey. So close thy hand on him and cross me not, or thou shalt repent.” With these words he left him and went away, whereupon up came the three other sharpers, the comrades of him of the ass, and said to the Shroff, “God requite thee for us with good, in that thou hast bought him! How can we reward thee?” Quoth he, “I will not sell him but for ten thousand dirhams.” When they heard that they returned to the ass and fell again to examining him like buyers and handling him. Then said they to the money-changer, “Indeed we were deceived in him. This is not the ass we sought and he is not worth to us more than ten nusfs.”[477] Then they left him and offered to go away, whereat the Shroff was sore chagrined and cried out at their speech, saying, “O folk, ye asked me to buy him for you and now I have bought him, ye say, we were deceived in him, and he is not worth to us more than ten nusfs.” They replied, “We thought that in him was whatso we wanted; but, behold, in him is the contrary of that which we wish; and indeed he hath a blemish, for that he is short of back.” Then they made long noses[478] at him and went away from him and dispersed. The money-changer deemed they did but play him off, that they might get the donkey at their own price; but, when they walked away from him and he had long awaited their return, he cried out saying, “Well-away!” and “Ruin!” and “Sorry case I am in!” and shrieked aloud and rent his raiment. So the market-people assembled to him and questioned him of his case; whereupon he acquainted them with his condition and told them what the knaves had said and how they had cozened him and how they had cajoled him into buying an ass worth fifty dirhams[479] for five thousand and five hundred.[480] His friends blamed him and a gathering of the folk laughed at him and admired his folly and over-faith in believing the talk of the sharpers without suspicion, and meddling with that which he understood not and thrusting himself into that whereof he had no sure knowledge. “On this wise, O King Shah Bakht” (continued the Wazir), “is the issue of greed for the goods of the world and indeed coveting that which our knowledge containeth not shall lead to ruin and repentance. Nor, O King of the age” (added he), “is this story stranger than that of the Cheat and the Merchants.” When the King heard these words, he said in himself, “Indeed, had I given ear to the sayings of my courtiers and inclined to their idle prate in the matter of my Minister, I had repented to the utterest of penitence, but AlhamdolillahЧlaud be to the LordЧwho hath disposed me to endurance and long-suffering and hath vouchsafed to me patience!” Then he turned to the Wazir and dismissed him to his dwelling and gave congй to those who were present, according to his custom.

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The Twenty-third Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King summoned the Minister and when he presented himself before him, he required of him the hearing of the story. So he said, “Hearing and obeying. Give ear, O illustrious lord, to

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The Tale of the Cheat and the Merchants.

There was once in olden time a certain Cheat, who could turn the ear inside out by his talk, and he was a model of cleverness and quick wit and skill and mischief. It was his wont to enter a town and make a show of being a trader and engage in intimacy with people of worth and sit in session with the merchants, for his name was noted as a man of virtue and piety. Then he would put a sleight on them and take of them what he might spend and fare forth to another stead; and he ceased not to do thus for a while of time. It chanced one day that he entered a certain city and sold somewhat that was with him of merchandise and made friends of the merchants of the place and took to sitting with them and entertaining them and inviting them to his quarters and his assembly, whilst they also invited him to their houses. He abode after such fashion a long time until he was minded to quit the city; and this was bruited among his intimates, who grieved for parting from him. Then he betook himself to one of them who was the richest in substance and the most conspicuous for generosity, and sat with him and borrowed his goods; and when rising to depart, he bade him return the deposit that he had left with him. Quoth the merchant, "And what is the deposit?" and quoth the Cheat, "'Tis such a purse, with the thousand dinars therein." The merchant asked, "And when didst thou give me that same?" and the Cheat answered, "Extolled be Allah of All Might! Was it not on such a day, by such a token which is thus and thus?" The man rejoined, "I know naught of this," and words were bandied about between them, whilst the folk who heard them disputed together concerning their sayings and doings, till their voices rose high and the neighbours had knowledge of that which passed between them.[481] Then said the Cheat, "O people, this is my friend and I deposited with him a deposit which he denieth having received: so in whom shall men put trust after this?" And they said, "This person is a man of worth and we have known in him naught but trustiness and good faith and the best of breeding, and he is endowed with sense and manliness.[482] Indeed, he affirmeth no false claim, for that we have consorted and associated with him and he with us and we know the sincerity of his religion." Then quoth one of them to the merchant, "Ho, Such-an-one! Bethink thee of the past and refresh thy memory. It cannot be that thou hast forgotten." But quoth he, "O people, I wot nothing of what he saith, for indeed he deposited naught with me:" and the matter was prolonged between them. Then said the Cheat to the merchant, "I am about to travel and I have, praised be Allah Almighty, much wealth, and this money shall not escape me; but do thou make oath to me." And the folk said, "Indeed, this man doth justice upon himself."[483] Whereupon the merchant fell into that which he disliked[484] and came nigh upon loss and ill fame. Now he had a friend, who pretended to sharpness and intelligence; so he came up to him secretly and said to him, "Let me do so I may cheat this Cheat, for I know him to be a liar and thou art near upon having to weigh out the gold; but I will parry off suspicion from thee and say to him, The deposit is with me and thou erredst in suspecting that it was with other than myself; and so I will divert him from thee." The other replied, "Do so, and rid the people of such pretended debts." Accordingly the friend turned to the Cheat and said to him, "O my lord, I am Such-an-one, and thou goest under a delusion. The purse is with me, for it was with me that thou depositedst it, and this Shaykh is innocent of it." But the Cheat answered him with impatience and impetuosity, saying, "Extolled be Allah! As for the purse that is with thee, O noble and faithful man, I know 'tis under Allah's charge and my heart is easy anent it, because 'tis with thee as it were with me; but I began by demanding the purse which I deposited with this man, of my knowledge that he coveteth the goods of folk." At this the friend was confounded and put to silence and returned not a reply; and the only result of his meddling was that each of them- -merchant and friendЧhad to pay a thousand gold pieces. So the Cheat took the two thousand dinars and made off; and when he was gone, the merchant said to his friend, the man of pretended sharpness and intelligence, "Ho, Such-an-one! Thou and I are like the Falcon and the Locust." The friend asked, "What was their case?" and the merchant answered with

The Story of the Falcon and the Locust.[485]

There was once, of old time, a Falcon who made himself a nest hard by the home of a Locust, and his neighbour gloried in such neighbourhood and betaking herself to him, saluted him with the salam and said, “O my lord and lord of all the birds, indeed the nearness to thee delighteth me and thou honourest me with thy vicinity and my soul is fortified with thee.” The Falcon thanked her for this and friendship between them followed. One day, the Locust said to the bird, “O prince of the flying race, how is it that I see thee alone, solitary, having with thee no friend of thy kind, the volatiles, on whom thou mayst repose in time of gladness and of whom thou mayst seek aid in tide of sadness? Indeed, ’tis said, ‘Man goeth about seeking ease of body and ward of strength,’ and there is naught in this more necessary to him than a true friend who shall be the crown of his comfort and the column of his career and on whom shall be his dependence in his distress and in his delight. Now I, although ardently desiring thy weal in that which befitteth thy rank and degree, yet am weak in that which the soul craveth; but, an thou deign give me leave, I will seek out for thee one of the birds who shall fellow thee in body and strength.” And the Falcon said, “I commit this to thee and rely upon thee herein.” Thereupon, O my brother (quoth the merchant), the Locust began going round the company of the birds, but saw naught resembling the Falcon in bulk and body save the Kite and thought well of her. So she brought the twain together and counselled the Falcon to foregather with the Kite. Presently it fortuned that the Falcon fell sick and the Kite tarried with and tended him a long while till he recovered and became sound and strong, wherefore he thanked her and she fared from him. But after some days the Falcon’s sickness returned to him and he needed succour of the Kite; so the Locust went out from him and was absent from him a day; after which she returned to him with another locust,[486] saying, “I have brought thee this one.” When the Falcon saw her, he said, “God requite thee with good! Indeed, thou hast done well in the quest and thou hast shown subtlety and discrimination in the choice.” All this befel because the Locust had no knowledge of the essence which lurketh in the outer semblance of bodies. “As for thee, O my brother (Allah requite thee with weal!), thou wast subtle in device and usedst precaution; but forethought availeth not against Fate, and Fortune foreordained baffleth force of fence. How excellent is the saying of the poet when he spake these couplets:Ч[487]

‘It chances whiles that the blind man escapes a pit, * Whilst he
who is clear of sight falls into it.
The ignorant man may speak with impunity * A word that is death
to the wise and the ripe of wit.
The true believer is pinched for his daily bread, * Whilst
infidel rogues enjoy all benefit.
Where is a man’s resource and what can he do? * It is the
Almighty’s will: we must submit.’”

“Nor” (continued the Wazir) “is this, O king of the age, rarer or stranger than the story of the King and his Chamberlain’s wife; nay, this is more wondrous than that and more delectable.” When the king heard this story, he was strengthened in his resolve to spare the Minister and to eschew haste in an affair whereof he was not certified; so he comforted him and bade him hie to his home.

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The Twenty-fourth Night of the Month.

When it was night, the King summoned the Wazir and sought of him the hearing of the story. Al-Rahwan replied, “Hearkening and obedience! Listen, O august sovran, to

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The Tale of the King and his Chamberlain's Wife.[488]

There was once, in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, a King of the kings of the Persians, who was much addicted to the love of fair women. His courtiers spoke him of the wife of a certain of his Chamberlains, a model of beauty and loveliness and perfect grace, and this egged him on to go in to her. When she saw him, she knew him and said to him, "What urgeth the King to this that he doeth?" and he replied, saying, "Verily, I long for thee with excess of longing and there is no help but that I enjoy thy favours." And he gave her of wealth that after whose like women lust; but she said, "I cannot do the deed whereof the king speaketh, for fear of my husband; "[489] and she refused herself to him with the most rigorous of refusals and would not suffer him to win his wish. So the king went out in wrath, and forgot his girdle in the place. Now it chanced that her husband entered immediately after his lord had departed, and saw the girdle and knew it. He was aware of the king's love for women; so quoth he to his wife, "What be this I see with thee?" Quoth she, "I'll tell thee the truth," and recounted to him the occurrence; but he believed her not and suspicion entered his heart. As for the King, he passed that night in care and concern, and when the morning morrowed, he summoned that Chamberlain and made him governor of one of his provinces; then he bade him betake himself thither, purposing, after he should have departed and fared afar, to foregather with his wife. The Chamberlain perceived his project and kenned his intent; so he answered, saying, "To hear is to obey!" presently adding, "I will go and order my affairs and give such injunctions as may be needed for the well-doing of my affairs; then will I go about the sovran's commission." And the King said, "Do this and make haste." So the Chamberlain went about that which he needed and assembling his wife's kinsfolk, said to them, "I am determined to dismiss my wife." They took this ill of him and complained of him and summoning him before the sovereign, sat prosecuting him. Now the King had no knowledge of that which had passed; so he said to the Chamberlain, "Why wilt thou put her away and how can thy soul consent to this and why takest thou unto thyself a fine and fertile piece of land and presently forsakest it?” Answered the husband, “Allah amend the king! By the Almighty, O my King, I saw therein the trail of the lion and fear to enter that land, lest the lion devour me; and the like of my affair with her is that which befel between the Crone and the Draper’s Wife. The king asked, “What is their adventure?” and the Chamberlain answered, “Hear, O king,

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The Story of the Crone and the Draper's Wife.[490]

There was once a man of the Drapers, who had a beautiful wife, and she was curtained[491] and chaste. A certain young man saw her coming forth of the Hammam and loved her and his heart was engrossed with her. So he devised for access to her all manner of devices, but availed not to foregather with her; and when he was a-weary and his patience failed for travail and trouble and his fortitude betrayed and forsook him and he was at an end of his resources against her, he complained of this to an ill-omened crone,[492] who promised him to bring about union between him and his beloved. He thanked her for this and promised her all manner of douceurs; and she said to him, "Hie thee to her husband and buy of him a turband-cloth of fine linen, and let it be of the very best of stuff." So he repaired to the Draper and buying of him a turband-cloth of lawn, returned and gave it to the old woman, who took it and burned it in two places. Then she donned the dress of a devotee and taking the turband-cloth with her, went to the Draper's house and knocked at the door. When the Draper's wife saw her thus habited as a holy woman, she opened to her and admitted her with kindly reception, and made much of her and welcomed her: so the crone went in to her and conversed with her awhile. Then said she to her, "I want to make the Wuzu-ablution preparatory to prayer."[493] At these words the wife brought the water and she made the ablution and standing up to pray, prayed and satisfied herself; and when she had ended her orisons, she left the turband-cloth in the place of prayer and fared forth. Presently, in came the Draper, at the hour of night-devotions, and sitting down in the prayer-place where the old woman had prayed, looked about him and espied the turband. He knew it and suspected foul play; so wrath showed in his face and he was furious with his wife and reviled her and abode his day and his night without speaking to her, during all which while she knew not the cause of his rage. Then she looked and seeing the turband-cloth before him and noting the traces of burning thereon, understood that his anger was on account of this and concluded that he was in ill-temper because it was burnt. When the morning morrowed, the Draper went out, still wroth with his wife, and the crone returned to her and found her changed of colour, pale of complexion, dejected and heart-broken. So she questioned her of the cause, and the wife told her how her husband was angered against her on account of the burns in the turband-cloth.[494] Rejoined the old woman, “O my daughter, be not chagrined; for I have a son, a fine-drawer, and he, by thy life, shall fine-draw the holes and restore the turband-cloth as it was.” The wife rejoiced in her saying and asked her, “And when shall this be?” The crone answered, “To-morrow, InshallahЧan it please Allah the Most HighЧI will bring him to thee, at the time of thy husband’s going forth from thee, and he shall fine-draw it and depart forthwith.” Then she comforted her heart and going away from her, returned to the young man and acquainted him with what had passed. Now when the Draper saw the turband-cloth, he determined to divorce his wife and waited only till he could collect that which was obligatory on him of the contingent dowry and what not else,[495] for fear of her people. When the crone arose in the morning, she took the young man and carried him into the Draper’s house. The wife opened the door to her and the ill-omened old woman entered with him and said to the lady, “Go, fetch that which thou wouldest have fine-drawn and give it to my son.” So saying, she bolted the door on her, whereupon the young man raped[496] her against her will and did his want of her and went forth. Then cried the crone, “Know that this is my son and that he loved thee with exceeding love and was like to lose his life for longing after thee; so I devised for thee with this device and came to thee with this turband-cloth, which is not thy husband’s, but my son’s. Now have I won to my wish; so do thou trust in me and I will put a sleight on thy husband for setting thee right with him, and thou wilt be subject to me and to him and to my son.”[497] And the wife replied, “’Tis well. Do so.” Presently the old woman returned to the lover and said, “Know thou that I have engineered the affair for thee with her; and now we must mend that we have marred. Hie thee and sit with the Draper and mention to him the turband-cloth, saying, ‘The turband I bought of thee I chanced to burn in two places; so I gave it to a certain old woman, to have fine-drawn, and she took it and went away, and I know not her dwelling-place.’[498] When thou seest me pass by, rise and lay hold of me, and demand of me the cloth, to the intent that I may arrange her affair with her spouse and that matters go right with thee in her regard." Accordingly he repaired to the Draper's shop and sat down by him and asked him, "Thou knowest the turband-cloth I bought of thee?" "Yes." "Knowest thou what is come of it?" "No." "After I bought it of thee, I fumigated myself[499] and it fortuned that the turband-cloth was burnt in two places; so I gave it to a woman, whose son, they said, was a fine-drawer, and she took it and fared forth with it; and I know not her home." When the Draper heard this, he was startled by the thought that he had suspected his wife wrongfully, and marvelled at the story of the turband-cloth, and his mind was made easy anent her. After a short while up came the old woman, whereupon the young man sprang to his feet and seizing her, demanded of her the turband-cloth. Said she, "Know that I entered one of the houses and wuzu'd and prayed in the prayer-place;[500] and I forgot the turband-cloth there and went out. Now I weet not the house in which I prayed, nor have I been divinely directed[501] thereto, and I go round about every day till the night, so haply I may light on the dwelling, for I know not its owner." When the Draper heard these words, he said to the old woman, "Verily, Allah restoreth to thee what thing thou hast lost. Be gladdened by good news, for the turband-cloth is with me and in my house." And he arose forthright and handed to her the turband-cloth, as it was, and she handed it to the young man. Then the Draper made peace with his wife and gave her raiment and jewellery, till she was content and her heart was appeased.[502] When the king heard his Chamberlain's story, he was dazed and amazed and said to him, "Abide on thy service and ear thy field for that the lion entered it, but marred it not, and he will never more return thither." [503] Then he bestowed on him an honourable robe and made him a costly present; and the man returned to his wife and people, rejoicing, his heart having been set at rest concerning his wife. "Nor" (continued the Wazir), "O King of the age, is this rarer or stranger than the story of the beautiful wife, a woman gifted of amorous grace, with the ugly Man, her husband." When King Shah Bakht heard the Minister's speech, he deemed it delectable and it pleased him; so he bade him hie to his house, and there he tarried his day long.

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The Twenty-fifth Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King summoned his Wazir and bade him tell the tale. So he said, “’Tis well. Hear, O King,

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The Tale of the Ugly Man and his Beautiful Wife.

There was once a man of the Arabs who had a number of children, and amongst them a boy, never was seen a fairer than he of favour nor a more complete in comeliness; no, nor a more perfect of prudence. When he came to man’s estate, his father married him to his first cousin, the daughter of one of his paternal uncles, and she excelled not in beauty, neither was she laudable for qualities; wherefore she pleased not the youth, but he bore with her for the sake of kinship. One day, he fared forth in quest of certain camels[504] of his which had strayed and hied him on all his day and night till eventide, when he was fain to seek hospitality in an Arab camp. So he alighted at one of the tents of the tribesmen and there came forth to him a man short of stature and foul of favour, who saluted him with the salam; and, lodging him in a corner of the tent, sat entertaining him with chat, the cheeriest that might be. When his food was dressed, the Arab’s wife brought it to the guest, and he looked at the mistress of the tent and saw a semblance than which no seemlier might be. Indeed, her beauty and loveliness, her symmetry and perfect grace amazed him and he was struck with astonishment, gazing now at her and then at her mate. When his looking grew long, the man said to him, “Ho, thou son of the worthy! Busy thyself with thine own business, for by me and this woman hangeth a wondrous tale, which is even better than that thou seest of her beauty; and I will tell it to thee when we have made a finish of our food.” So, when they had ended eating and drinking, the young man asked his host for the story, and he said, “Know that in my youth I was the same as thou seest me in the matter of loathliness and foul favour; and I had brethren of the fairest of the folk; wherefore my father preferred them over me and used to show them kindness, to my exclusion, and made me serve in their stead, like as a master employeth slaves. One day, a dromedary of his strayed from the herd of camels, and he said to me, ‘Go thou forth in quest of her and return not but with her.’ I replied, ‘Send other than I of thy sons.’ But he would not consent to this and scolded me and insisted upon me, till the matter came to such a pass with him that he took a thong-whip and fell to beating me. So I arose and saddling a riding-camel, mounted her and sallied forth at random, purposing to go out into the wolds and the wilds and return to him never more. I fared on all my night and the next day and coming at eventide[505] to the encampment of this my wife's people, alighted down with and became the guest of her father, who was a Shaykh well stricken in years. Now when it was the noon of night, I arose and went forth the tent at a call of nature, and none knew of my case save this woman. The dogs followed me as a suspected stranger and ceased not worrying me[506] till I fell on my back into a pit, wherein was water, a deep hollow and a steep; and a dog of those dogs fell in with me. The woman, who was then a girl in the bloom of youth, full of strength and spirit, was moved to ruth on me, for the calamity whereinto I was fallen, and coming to me with a rope, said to me, 'Catch hold of the rope,' So I hent it and clung to it and she haled me up; but, when I was half-way up, I pulled her down and she fell with me into the pit; and there we abode three days, she and I and the hound. When her people arose in the morning and did not see her, they sought her in the camp, but, finding her not and missing me also, never doubted but she had fled with me.[507] Now she had four brothers, as they were Saker-hawks, and they took horse and dispersed in search of us. When the day yellowed on the fourth dawn, the dog began to bark and the other hounds answered him and coming to the mouth of the pit, stood howling to him. The Shaykh, my wife's father, hearing the howling of the hounds, came up and standing at the brink of the hollow, looked in and beheld a marvel. Now he was a brave man and a sensible, an elder experienced in affairs, so he fetched a cord and bringing forth the three, questioned us twain of our case. I told him all that had betided and he fell a-pondering the affair. Presently, her brothers returned, whereupon the old man acquainted them with the whole case and said to them, 'O my sons, know that your sister intended not aught but good, and if ye kill this man, ye will earn abiding shame and ye will wrong him, and wrong your own souls and eke your sister: for indeed there appeareth no cause such as calleth for killing, and it may not be denied that this accident is a thing whose like may well occur and that he may easily have been the victim of suchlike chance.' Then he addressed me and questioned me of my lineage; so I set forth to him my genealogy and he, exclaiming, ‘A man of her match, honourable, understanding,’ offered me his daughter in wedlock. I consented to this and marrying her, took up my abode with him and Allah hath opened on me the gates of weal and wealth, so that I am become the richest in monies of the tribesmen; and the Almighty hath stablished me in that which He hath given me of His bounties.” The young man marvelled at his tale and lay the night with him; and when he arose in the morning, he found his estrays. So he took them and returning to his folk, acquainted them with what he had seen and all that had befallen him. “Nor” (continued the Wazir) “is this stranger or rarer than the story of the King who lost kingdom and wealth and wife and children and Allah restored them to him and requited him with a realm more magnificent than that which he had forfeited and better and finer and greater of wealth and degree.” The Minister’s story pleased the King and he bade him depart to his abode.

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The Twenty-sixth Night of the Month.

When came the night, the king summoned his Wazir and bade him tell the story of the King who lost kingdom and wife and wealth. He replied, “Hearing and obeying! Give ear, O sovran, to

The Tale of the King who lost Kingdom and Wife and Wealth and Allah restored them to Him.[508]

There was once a king of the kings of Hind, who was a model of morals, praiseworthy in policy, lief of justice to his lieges, lavish to men of learning and piety and abstinence and devoutness and worship and shunning mischief-makers and froward folk, fools and traitors. After such goodly fashion he abode in his kingship what Allah the Most High willed of watches and days and twelvemonths,[509] and he married the daughter of his father’s brother, a beautiful woman and a winsome, endowed with brightness and perfection, who had been reared in the king’s house in delicacy and delight. She bare him two sons, the most beauteous that might be of boys, when came Destiny from whose decree is no deliverance and Allah the Most High raised up against the King another king, who came forth upon his realm, and was joined by all the folk of the city that had a mind to lewdness and frowardness. So he strengthened himself by means of them against the King and compassed his kingdom, routing his troops and killing his guards. The King took his wife, the mother of his sons, and what he might of monies and saved his life and fled in the darkness of the night, unknowing whither he should wend. Whenas wayfare grew sore upon them, there met them highwaymen on the way, who took all that was with them, so that naught remained to each of them save a shirt and trousers; the robbers left them without even provaunt or camels or other riding-cattle, and they ceased not to fare on afoot, till they came to a copse, which was an orchard of trees on the ocean shore.[510] Now the road which they would have followed was crossed by a sea-arm, but it was shallow and scant of water; wherefore, when they reached that place, the king took up one of his children and fording the water with him, set him down on the further bank and returned for his other son, whom also he seated by his brother. Lastly, returning for their mother, he took her up and passing the water with her, came to the place where he had left his children, but found them not. Thereupon he looked at the midst of the island and saw an old man and an old woman, engaged in making themselves a reed-hut: so he set down his wife over against them and started off in quest of his children, but none gave him news of them and he went round about right and left, yet found not the whereabouts they were. On this wise fared it with him; but as to the children, they had entered the copse to make water, and they found there a forest of trees, wherein, if a sturdy horseman[511] strayed, he might wander by the week, and never know its first from its last. So the boys pushed into it and wotted not how they should return and went astray in that wood, for a purpose willed of Allah Almighty, whilst their father sought them, but found them not. So he returned to their mother and they abode weeping for their children; as for whom, when they entered the forest, it swallowed them up and they fared at hap-hazard, wandering in it many days, knowing not whence they came or whither they went, till they issued forth, at another side, upon the open country. Meanwhile, their parents, the king and queen, tarried in the island, over against the old man and his old woman, and ate of the fruits and drank of the rills that were in it till, one day of the days, as they sat, behold, up came a ship and made fast to the island-side, for provisioning with water, whereupon they[512] looked one at other and spoke. The master of the craft was a Magian man and all that was therein, both crew and goods, belonged to him, for he was a trader and went round about the world. Now greed of gain deluded the old man, the owner of the island, and he fared to the ship and gave the Guebre news of the King's wife, setting out to him her charms, till he made him long for her and his soul moved[513] him to practise treachery and cozenage upon her and take her from her husband. Accordingly, he sent to her, saying, "Aboard with us is a woman with child, and we dread lest she be delivered this night: hast thou aught of skill in midwifery?" She replied, "Yes." Now it was the last of the day; so he sent to her to come up into the ship and deliver the woman, for that the labour-pangs were come upon her; and he promised her clothes and spending-money. Hereat, she embarked confidently, with heart at ease for herself, and transported her gear to the ship; but no sooner had she come thither than the sails were hoisted and the canvas was loosed[514] and the ship set sail. When the King saw this, he cried out and his wife wept in the ship and would have cast herself into the waves; but the Magian bade his men lay hands on her. So they seized her and it was but a little while ere the night darkened and the ship vanished from the King's eyes; whereupon he fainted away for excess of weeping and lamentation and passed his night bewailing his wife and his children. And when the morning morrowed he began improvising these couplets:Ч[515]

"O World, how long, this spite, this enmity?
Say me, dost ever spare what spared can be?
And look! my friends have farиd fain and free!
They went and went wi' them my dear delight
E'en from the day when friends to part were dight
And turbid made their lost life's clarity.
By Allah, ne'er I wist their worth aright
Nor ever wot I worth of friends unite
Till fared they, leaving flame in heart of me!

I'll ne'er forget them since what day each wight
Hied and withdrew fro' me his well-loved sight
And yet I weep this parting-blow to dree.
I vow an Heaven deign my friends return
And cry the crier in mine ears that yearn
"The far is near, right soon their sight shalt see!"
Upon their site my cheeks I'll place, to sprite
I'll say, "Rejoice, thy friends return to thee!"
Nor blame my heart when friends were lief to flee:
I rent my heart ere rent my raimentry."

He sat weeping for the severance of his wife and children till the morning, when he went forth wandering at a venture, unweeting what he should do, and ceased not walking along the sea-shore days and nights, unknowing whither he went and taking no food save the herbs of the earth and seeing neither man nor wildling nor other living thing, till his wayfare brought him to a mountain-top. He sojourned in the highland and abode awhile there alone, eating of its fruits and drinking of its founts; then he came down thence and trudged along the high road three days, when he hit upon tilled fields and villages and gave not over going till he made a great city on the shore of the salt sea and came to its gate at the last of the day. The gatekeepers allowed him no admission; so he spent his night anhungered, and when he arose in the morning, he sat down hard by the portal. Now the king of the city was dead and had left no son, and the citizens fell out anent who should be ruler over them: and their words and redes differed, so that civil war was like to befal them thereupon. But it came to pass that, after long jangle, they agreed to leave the choice to the late king's elephant and that he unto whom he consented should be king and that they would not contest with him the sway. So to this they sware and on the morrow, they brought out their elephant and fared forth to a site within sight of the city; nor was there man or woman but was present at that moment. Then they adorned the elephant and raising the throne on his back, gave him the crown in his trunk; and he went round about examining the countenances of the folk, but stopped not over against any of them till he came at last to the forlorn King, the exile who had lost his children and his wife, when the beast prostrated himself to him and placing the crown on his head, took him up and set him upon his back. Thereupon the people all prostrated themselves and gave mutual joy of this and the drums[516] of good tidings beat before him, and he entered the city and went on till he reached the House of Justice and the Audience-hall of the Palace and sat down upon the throne of the kingdom, crown on head; whereat the lieges entered to congratulate him and to bless him. Then he addressed himself, as was his wont in the kingship, to forwarding the affairs of the folk and ranging the troops according to their ranks and looking into their affairs and those of all the Ryots. He also released those who were in the dungeons and abolished the custom-dues and gave honourable robes and lavished great gifts and bestowed largesse and conferred favours on the Emirs and Wazirs and Lords of the realm, and the Chamberlains'[517] and Nabobs presented themselves before him and did him homage. So the city people rejoiced in him and said, "Indeed, this be none other than a King of the greatest of the kings."

And presently he assembled the sages and the theologians and the sons of the Sovrans and conversed with them and asked them subtile questions and casuistical problems and talked over with them things manifold of all fashions that might direct him to rectitude in the kingship; and he questioned them also of mysteries and religious obligations and of the laws of the land and the regulations of rule and of that which it beseemeth the liege lord to do of looking into the affairs of the lieges and repelling the foe and fending off his malice with force and fight; so the subjects' contentment redoubled and their exultation in that which Allah Almighty had vouchsafed them of his kingship over them. On such wise he upheld the ordinance of the realm, and the affairs abode stablished upon the accepted custom and local usage. Now the late king had left a wife and two daughters, and the people would fain have married the Princess royal to the new king that the rule might not pass clean away from the old rulers. Accordingly, they proposed to him that he should wed her or the other of the deceased king's daughters, and he promised them this, but he put them off from him, of his respect for the covenant he had made with his former wife, his cousin, that he would marry none other than herself. Then he betook himself to fasting by day and praying through the night, multiplying his alms-deeds and beseeching Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) to reunite him with his children and his wife, the daughter of his father's brother. When a year had elapsed, there came to the city a ship, wherein were many merchants and much merchandise. Now it was their custom from time immemorial that the king, whenever a ship made the port, sent to it such of his pages as he trusted in, who took agency of the goods, to the end that they might be first shown to the Sovran, who bought as much of them as befitted him and gave the merchants leave to sell whatso he wanted not. So he commissioned, according to his custom, a man who should fare to the ship and seal up the bales and set over them one who could watch and ward them. Meanwhile the Queen his wife, when the Magian fled with her and proffered himself to her and lavished upon her abounding wealth, rejected him and was like to kill herself[518] for chagrin at that which had befallen and for concern anent her separation from her husband. She also refused meat and drink and resolved to cast herself into the sea; but the Magian chained her and straitened her and clothed her in a coat of wool and said to her, “I will continue thee in wretchedness and humiliation till thou obey me and accept me.” So she took patience and looked for the Almighty to deliver her from the hand of that accursed; and she ceased not travelling with him from country to country till he came with her in fine to the city wherein her husband was king and his goods were put under seal. Now the woman was in a chest and two youths of the late king’s pages, who were now in the new King’s service, were those who had been charged with the watch and ward of the craft and her cargaison. When the evening evened on them, the twain began talking and recounted that which had befallen them in their days of childhood and the manner of the faring forth of their father and mother from their country and kingdom when the wicked overcame their realm, and how they had gone astray in the forest and how Fate had severed them from their parents; for short, they told their tale from first to last. When the woman heard their talk, she knew that they were her sons and cried out to them from the chest, “I am your mother, Such-an-one, and the token between you twain and me is thus and thus.” The young men knew the token and falling upon the chest, brake the lock and brought out their mother, who seeing them, strained them to her bosom, and they fell upon her and fainted away, all three. When they came to themselves, they wept awhile and the people assembled about them, marvelling at that they saw, and questioned them of their case. So the young Princes vied each with other who should be the first to discover the story to the folk; and when the Magian saw this, he came up, crying out, “Alack!” and “Ruin!” and said to them, “Why and wherefore have ye broken open my chest? Verily, I had in it jewels and ye have stolen them, and this damsel is my slave-girl and she hath agreed with you both upon a device to take my wealth.” Then he rent his raiment and cried for aid, saying, “I appeal to Allah and to the just King, so he may quit me of these wrongous youths!” They both replied, “This is our mother and thou stolest her:” whereupon words waxed manifold between them and the folk plunged into talk with many a “he said” and “’twas said” concerning their affair and that of the pretended slave-girl, and the strife increased between them, so that at last they carried them all four to the King’s court. When the two young men presented themselves between his hands and stated their case to him and to the folk and the sovran heard their speech, he knew them and his heart was like to fly for joy: the tears poured from his eyes at their sight and the sight of his wife, and he thanked Allah Almighty and praised Him for that He had deigned reunite them. Then he bade the folk who were present about him be dismissed and commanded the Magian and the woman and the two youths be to morrow committed to his armoury[519] for the night, ordering that they should keep guard over them all until the Lord should make the morning to morrow, so he might assemble the Kazis and the Justiciaries and Assessors and determine between them, according to Holy Law, in the presence of the four judges. So they did this and the King passed the night praying and praising Allah of All-might for that which he had vouchsafed him of kingship and power and victory over the wight who had wronged him and thanking Him who had reunited him with his own. When the morning morrowed, he assembled the Kazis and Deputies and Assessors[520] and summoning the Magian and the two youths and their mother, questioned them of their case; whereupon the two young men began and said, "We are the sons of King Such-an-one and foemen and lewd fellows gat the mastery of our realm; so our sire fled forth with us and wandered at haphazard, for fear of the foe." And they recounted to him all that had betided them, from beginning to end.[521] Quoth he, "Ye tell a marvel-tale; but what hath Fate done with your father?" Quoth they, "We know not how Fortune dealt with him after our loss." And he was silent. Then he bespake the woman, "And thou, what sayst thou?" So she set forth to him her case and all that had betided her and her husband, from the beginning of their hardships to the end, and recounted to him their adventures up to the time when they took up their abode with the old man and woman who dwelt on the sea-shore. Then she reported that which the Magian had practised on her of fraud and how he had carried her off in the craft and everything that had betided her of humiliation and torment; all this while the Kazis and judges and Deputies hearkening to her speech as they had lent ear to the others' adventures. When the King heard the last of his wife's tale, he said, "Verily, there hath betided thee a mighty grievous matter; but hast thou knowledge of what thy husband did and what came of his affair?” She replied, “Nay, by Allah; I have no knowledge of him, save that I leave him no hour unremembered in righteous prayer, and never, whilst I live, will he cease to be to me the father of my children and my cousin and my flesh and my blood.” Then she wept and the King bowed his head, whilst his eyes welled tears at her tale. Presently he raised his head to the Magian and cried to him, “Say thy say, thou also.” So the Magian replied, “This is my slave-girl, whom I bought with my money from such a land and for so many dinars, and I made her my betrothed[522] and loved her exceedingly and gave my monies into her charge; but she falsed me in my substance and plotted with one of my lads to slay me, tempting him by a promise that she would kill me and become his wife. When I knew this of her and was assured that she purposed treason against me, I awoke from my dream of happiness and did with her that which I did, fearing for my life from her craft and perfidy; for indeed she is a trickstress with her tongue and she hath taught these two youths this pretence, by way of sleight and of her guile and her malice: so be you not deluded by her and by her talk.” “Thou liest, O accursed,” cried the King and bade lay hands on him and iron him. Then he turned to the two youths, his sons, and strained them to his breast, weeping sore and saying, “O all ye people who are present of Kazis and Assessors and Lords of the land, know that these twain are my sons and that this is my wife and the daughter of my father’s brother; for that whilome I was king in such a realm.” And he recounted to them his history from commencement to conclusion, nor is there aught of fruition in repetition; whereupon the folk cried out with weeping and wailing for the stress of what they heard of marvellous chances and that wondrous story. As for the king’s wife, he bade carry her into his palace and lavished upon her and upon her sons all that befitted and beseemed them of bounties, whilst the lieges flocked to offer up prayers for him and give him joy of his reunion with his wife and children. When they had made an end of blessings and congratulations, they besought the king to hasten the punishment of the Magian and heal their hearts with tormenting and abasing him. So he appointed them for a day on which they should assemble to witness his requitement and that which should betide him of torment, and shut himself up with his wife and two sons and abode thus private with them three days, during which they were veiled from the folk. On the fourth day the King entered the Hammam, and faring forth, sat down on the throne of his kingship, crown on head, whereupon the folk came in to him, according to their custom and after the measure of their several dignities and degrees, and the Emirs and Wazirs entered, and eke the Chamberlains and Nabobs and Captains of war and the Falconers and Armbearers and Commanders of the body-guard. Then he seated his two sons, one on his right and the other on his left hand, whilst the subjects all stood before him and lifted up their voices in thanksgiving to Allah the Most High and glorification of Him and were instant in orisons for the king and in setting forth his virtues and excellent qualities. He answered them with the most gracious of answers and bade carry the Magian outside the city and set him on a high scaffold which had been builded for him there; and he said to the folk, "Behold, I will torture him with torments of all kinds and fashions." Then he began telling them that which he had wrought of villainy with his cousin-wife and what he had caused her of severance between her and her husband and how he had required her person of her, but she had sought refuge for her chastity against him with Allah (to whom belong honour and glory) and chose abasement rather than obedience to him, despite stress of torture: neither recked she aught of that which he lavished to her of monies and raiment, jewels and ornaments. When the King had made an end of his story, he bade the bystanders spit in the Magian's face and curse him; and they did this. Then he bade cut out his tongue and on the next day he bade lop off his ears and nose and pluck out both his eyes. On the third day he bade hew off his hands and on the fourth his feet; and they ceased not to dismember him, limb after limb, and each member they cast into the fire, after its amputation, before his face, till his soul departed, after he had endured torments of all kinds and fashions. Then the King bade crucify his trunk on the city wall for three days; after which he gave orders to burn it and reduce its ashes to powder and scatter them abroad in air. And when this was done, the King summoned the Kazi and the Witnesses and commanded them marry the old king's daughter and her sister to his own sons; so the youths wedded them, after the King had made a bride-feast three days and displayed their brides to them from nightfall to day-dawn. Then the two Princes went in unto their brides and abated their maidenheads and loved them and were vouchsafed issue by them. As for the King their sire, he abode with his cousin-wife, their mother, what while Allah (to whom be honour and glory) willed, and they rejoiced in reunion each with other. The kingship endured unto them and high degree and victory, and the sovran continued to rule with justice and equity, so that the lieges loved him and prayed for him and for his sons length of life and durance of days; and they lived the most delightsome of existences till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and Severer of societies, the Depopulator of palaces and Garnerer of graves; and this is all that hath come down to us of the story of the King and his Wife and Sons. "Nor," continued the Wazir, "if this story be a solace and a diversion, is it pleasanter or more diverting than the tale of the Youth of Khorasan and his mother and sister." When King Shah Bakht heard this story, it pleased him and he bade the Minister hie away to his own house.

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The Twenty-seventh Night of the Month.

When evening came, the king Shah Bakht bade fetch the Wazir; so he presented himself before him and the King ordered him to tell the tale. So he said, “Hearkening and obedience. Give ear, O sovran, to

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

The Tale of Salim, the Youth of Khorasan, and Salma, his Sister.

Know, O king (but Allah alone knoweth His secret purpose and is versed in the past and the foredone among folk bygone) that there was once, in the parts of Khorasan, a man of its affluent, who was a merchant of the chiefest of the merchants[523] and was blessed with two children, a son and a daughter.[524] He was diligent exceedingly in rearing them and they were educated with the fairest of education; for he used to teach the boy, who taught his sister all that he learnt, so that, by means of her brother, the damsel became perfect in the knowledge of the Traditions of the Prophet and in polite letters. Now the boy’s name was Salнm and that of the girl Salmб. When they grew up and were fully grown, their father built them a mansion beside his own and lodged them apart therein and appointed them slave-girls and servants to tend them and assigned to each of them pay and allowances and all that they needed of high and low; meat and bread; wine, dresses, and vessels and what not else. So Salim and Salma abode in that palace, as they were one soul in two bodies, and they used to sleep on one couch and rise amorn with single purpose, while firmly fixed in each one’s heart were fond affection and familiar friendship for the other. One night, when the half was spent, as Salim and Salma sat recounting and conversing, they heard a noise on the ground floor; so they looked out from a latticed casement which gave upon the gate of their father’s mansion and saw a man of fine presence, whose clothes were hidden under a wide cloak. He came straight up to the gate and laying hold of the door-ring, rapped a light rap; whereupon the door opened and behold, out came their sister, with a lighted taper, and after her their mother, who saluted the stranger and embraced him, saying, “O dearling of my heart and light of mine eyes and fruit of my vitals, enter.” So he went in and shut the door, whilst Salim and Salma abode amazed. The youth turned to the girl and said to her, “O sister mine, how deemest thou of this trouble and what advice hast thou to offer?” She replied, "O my brother, indeed I know not what I shall say anent the like of this; but he is not disappointed who divine direction seeketh, nor doth he repent who counsel taketh. One getteth not the better of the traces of burning by haste, and know that this is an affliction that hath descended[525] on us and a calamity foreordained to us; so we have need of wise rede to do it away and contrivance which shall wash our shame from our faces." And they ceased not watching the gate till daybreak, when the young man opened the door and their mother farewelled him; after which he went his way and she entered, she and her handmaid. Hereat said Salim to his sister, "Know thou I am resolved to slay this man, an he return the next night, and I will say to the folk, He was a robber, and none shall weet that which hath befallen. Then I will address myself to the slaughter of whosoever knoweth what is between the fellow and my mother." But Salma said, "I fear lest an thou slay him in our dwelling-place and he be not convicted of robberhood, suspicion and ill-fame will revert upon ourselves, and we cannot be assured that he belongeth not to a tribe whose mischief is to be feared and whose enmity is to be dreaded, and thus wilt thou have fled from hidden shame to open shame and to disgrace public and abiding." Asked Salim: "What then is it thy rede to do?" And she answered, "Is there no help but thou kill him? Let us not hasten unto slaughter, for that the slaughter of a soul without just cause is a mighty grave matter." When Shahbбn[526] heard this, he said within himself, "By Allah, I have indeed been hasty and reckless in the slaying of women and girls, and AlhamdolillahЧlauded be the LordЧwho hath occupied me with this damsel from the slaughter of souls, for that the slaughter of souls is a grave matter and a grievous! By the Almighty if Shah Bakht spare the Wazir, I will assuredly spare Shбhrбzбd!"[527] Then he gave ear to the story and heard her say to her sister:ЧQuoth Salma to Salim, "Hasten not to slay him, but overthink the matter and consider the issue whereto it may tend; for whoso considereth not of actions the end hath not Fortune to friend." Then they arose on the morrow and busied themselves with contriving how they should turn away their parent from that man, and the mother forefelt mischief from them, for what she saw in their eyes of change, she being wily and keen of wit. So she took precaution for herself against her children and Salma said to Salim, “Thou seest what we have fallen upon through this woman, and very sooth she hath sensed our purpose and wotteth that we have discovered her secret. So, doubtless, she will plot against us the like of that which we plot for her; for indeed up to now she had concealed her affair, and from this time forth she will become harsh to us; wherefore, methinks, there is a thing forewritten to us, whereof Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) knew in His foreknowledge and wherein He carrieth out His commandments.” He asked, “What is that?” and she answered, “It is that we arise, I and thou, and go forth this night from this land and seek us a town wherein we may wone and witness naught of the doings of yonder traitress; for whoso is absent from the eye is absent from the heart, and quoth one of the poets in the following couplet:[528] Ч

’Tis happiest, best for thee, the place to leave, * For then no eye can see, nor heart can grieve.”

Quoth Salim to her,[529] “’Tis for thee to decide and right is thy rede; so let us do this, in the name of Allah the Almighty, trusting in Him for guiding and grace.” Accordingly they arose and took the richest of their raiment and the lightest of that which was in their treasuries of gems and things of price and gathered together much matter. Then they equipped them ten mules and hired them servants of other than the people of the country; and Salim bade his sister Salma don man’s dress. Now she was the likest of all creatures to him, so that, when she was clad in man’s clothing, the folk knew no difference between them:Ч extolled be the perfection of Him who hath no like, there is no god but He! Then he told her to mount a mare, whilst he himself took another, and they set out under cover of the night; nor did any of their family or household know of them. So they fared on into Allah’s wide world and gave not over going night and day for a space of two months, at the end of which they came to a city on the sea-shore of the land of Makran,[530] by name Al-Sharr, and it is the first city in Sind.[531] They lighted down within sight of the place and when they arose in the morning, they saw a populous city and a goodly, seemly of semblance and great, abounding in trees and rills and fruits and wide of suburbs which stretched to the neighbouring villages. So the young man said to his sister Salma, “Tarry thou here in thy place, till I enter the city and make proof of it and its people and seek us out a stead which we may buy and whereto we may remove. An it befit us, we will make us a home therein, otherwise will we take counsel of departing elsewhere." Quoth she, "Do this, trusting in the bounty of Allah (to whom belong honour and glory) and in His blessing." Accordingly he took a belt, wherein were a thousand gold pieces, and girding it about his waist, entered the city and ceased not going round about its streets and bazars and gazing upon its houses and sitting with those of its citizens whose aspect showed signs of worth and wealth, till the day was half spent, when he resolved to return to his sister and said to himself, "Needs must I buy what we may eat of ready-cooked food; I and my sister." Hereupon he addressed a man who sold roast meat and who was clean of person, albe foul in his way of getting a living, and said to him, "Take the price of this dishful and add thereto of fowls and chickens and what not else is in your market of meats and sweetmeats and bread and arrange it in the plates." So the Kitchener took the money and set apart for him what he desired, then calling a porter, he laid it in the man's crate, and Salim, after paying the price of provisions and porterage in fullest fashion, was about to go away, when the Cook said to him, "O youth, doubtless thou art a stranger?" He replied, "Yes;" and the other rejoined, "'Tis reported in one of the Traditions that the Apostle said, Loyal admonition is a part of religion; and the wise and ware have declared counsel is of the characteristics of True Believers. And verily that which I have seen of thy ways pleaseth me and I would fain give thee a warning." Rejoined Salim, "Speak out thy warning, and may Allah strengthen thy purpose!" Then said the Cook, "Know, O my son, that in this our city, when a stranger entereth and eateth of flesh-meat and drinketh not old wine upon it, 'tis harmful to him and disturbeth his body with disorders which be dangerous. Wherefore, an thou have provided thee somewhat of wine it is well, but, if not, haste to procure it, ere thou take the meat and carry it away." Quoth Salim, "Allah requite thee with wealЧ Canst thou shew me where liquor is sold?" and quoth the Cook, "With me is all thou seekest. The youth asked, "Is there a way for me to see it?" and the Cook sprang up and answered, "Pass on." So he entered and the man showed him somewhat of wine; but he said, "I desire better than this;" whereupon he opened a door and entering, said to Salim, “Come in, and follow me.” Accordingly Salim followed him till he brought him to an underground chamber and showed him somewhat of wine that suited him. So he occupied him with looking at it and taking him unawares, sprang upon him from behind and threw him to the ground and sat upon his breast. Then he drew a knife and set it to his jugular; whereupon there betided Salim that wherewith Allah made him forget all that He had decreed to him,[532] and he cried to the Cook, “Why dost thou this thing, O good fellow? Be mindful of the Almighty and fear Him. Seest thou not I am a stranger man? And knowest thou not I have behind me a forlorn defenceless[533] woman? Wherefore wilt thou kill me?” Quoth the Kitchener, “Needs must I kill thee, so I may take thy money;” and quoth Salim, “Take my money, but kill me not, neither enter into sin against me; and do with me kindness, for indeed the taking of my coin is more venial than the taking of my life.” The Cook replied, “This is nonsense. Thou canst not deliver thyself herewith, O youth, because in thy deliverance is my destruction.” Cried Salim, “I swear to thee and give thee the bond of Allah (to whom belong honour and glory) and His covenant, which He took of His prophets that I will not discover thy secret; no, never.” But the Kitchener replied, “Away! Away! Alas! Alas! To this there is no path.” However, Salim ceased not to conjure him and humble himself to him and weep, while the Cook persisted in his intent to cut his throat: then he shed tears and recited these couplets;[534]

“Haste not to that thou dost desire, for haste is still unblest;

* Be merciful to men, as thou on mercy reckonest:
For no hand is there but the hand of God is over it * And no
oppressor but shall be with worse than he opprest.”

Quoth the Kitchener, “There is no help save that I slay thee, O fellow; for an I spare thee, I shall myself be slain.” But Salim said, “O my brother, I will advise thee somewhat[535] other than this.” Asked the Cook, “What is it? Say and be brief, ere I cut thy throat;” and Salim answered, “Suffer me to live and keep me as thy

Mameluke, thy white slave, and I will work at a craft of the skilled workmen, wherefrom there shall result to thee every day two dinars." Quoth the Kitchener, "What is the craft?" and quoth Salim, "The cutting of gems and jewels." When the man heard this, he said to himself, "'Twill do me no hurt if I imprison him and fetter him and bring him that whereat he may work. An he tell truth, I will let him live, and if he prove a liar, I will kill him." So he took a pair of stout shackles and fitting them on Salim's legs, jailed him within his house and charged a man to guard him. Then he asked him what tools he needed for work; and Salim described to him whatso he required, and the Cook went out from him awhile and brought him all he wanted. Then Salim sat and wrought at his craft; and he used every day to earn two dinars; and this was his wont and custom with the Kitchener, who fed him not but half his fill. Thus befel it with Salim; but returning to his sister Salma, she awaited him till the last of the day, yet he appeared not; and she expected him a second day and a third and a fourth, yet there came no news of him. So she wept and beat hand on breast and bethought her of her affair and her strangerhood and the disappearance of her brother; and she improvised these couplets,Ч

"Salam t'you! Would I could see you again, * To the joy of my
heart and the coolth of my eyes:
You are naught but my hope and the whole of my hope * And under
my ribs[536] love for you buried lies."

She tarried on this wise awaiting him till the end of the month, but no tidings of him came nor happened she upon aught of his trace; wherefore she was troubled with exceeding trouble and sending her servants hither and thither in search of him, abode in the sorest that might be of chagrin and concern. When it was the beginning of the new month, she arose in the morning and bidding one of her men cry her brother throughout the city, sat to receive visits of condolence, nor was there any in town but made act of presence to condole with her; and they were all sorry for her, doubting not her being a man. When three nights had passed over her with their days of the second month, she despaired of him and her tears never dried: then she resolved to take up her abode in that city, and making choice of a dwelling, removed thither. The folk resorted to her from all parts, to sit with her and hear her speech and witness her fine breeding; nor was it but a little while ere the king died and the folk differed anent whom they should invest with the kingship after him, so that civil war was like to befal them. However, the men of judgment and the folk of understanding and the people of experience directed them to crown the youth who had lost his brother, for that they still held Salma to be a man. They consented to this one and all; and, betaking themselves to her, offered the kingship.[537] She refused, but they were urgent with her, till she consented, saying within herself, "My sole desire in the kingship is to find my brother." Then they seated her upon the throne of the realm and set the crown upon her head, after which she undertook the business of governance and ordinance of affairs; and they rejoiced in her with the utmost joy. On such wise fared it with her; but as for Salim he abode with the Cook a whole year's space, bringing him two dinars a day; and when his affair waxed longsome, the man felt for him and pitied him. Presently he promised him release on condition that, if he let him go, he should not discover his ill-deeds to the Sultan; for that it was his wont now and then to entrap a man and carry him to his house and slay him and take his money and cook his flesh and give it to the folk to eat.[538] So he asked him, "O youth, wilt thou that I release thee from this thy misery, on condition that thou be reasonable and never discover aught of thine affair?" Salim answered, "I will swear to thee by whatsoever oath thou wilt administer that I will keep thy secret and will not speak one syllable anent thee, what while I am in the land of the living." Quoth the Kitchener, "I purpose to send thee forth with my brother and cause thee voyage with him over the sea, on condition that thou be to him a Mameluke, a boughten slave; and when he cometh to the land of Hind, he shall sell thee and thus wilt thou be delivered from prison and slaughter." And quoth Salim, "'Tis well: be it as thou sayst, may Allah the Most High requite thee with weal!" Accordingly the Cook equipped his brother and freighting him a craft, stowed therein a cargaison of merchandise. Then he committed Salim to him and they set out with the ship. The Lord decreed them safety, so that they arrived at the first city of Hind, which is known as Al-Mansъrah,[539] and cast anchor there. Now the king of that city had died, leaving a daughter and a widow who, being the quickest-witted of women and cleverest of the folk of her day, gave out that the girl was a boy, so that the kingship might be established unto them. The troops and the Emirs gave credit that the case was as she avouched and that the Princess was a Prince; wherefore they obeyed her bidding and the Queen-mother took order for the matter and used to dress the girl in man's habit and seat her on the throne of the kingship, so that the Lords of the land and the chief officers of the realm used to go in to her and salute her and do her service and depart, nothing doubting but she was a boy. After this fashion they fared for months and years and the Queen-mother ceased not to do thus till the Cook's brother came to the town in his ship, and with him Salim. He landed with the youth and displayed him for sale to the Queen who, when she saw him, prognosticated well of him; presently she bought him and was kind to him and entreated him with honour. Then began she to prove him in his moral parts and make assay of him in his affairs, and she found in him all that is in kings' sons of understanding and fine breeding and good manners and qualities. Thereupon she sent for him in private and said to him, "I am minded to do thee a service, so thou canst keep a secret."[540] He promised her all that she desired and she discovered to him her mystery in the matter of her daughter, saying, "I will marry thee to her and commit to thee the governance and constitute thee king and ruler over this city." He thanked her and promised to carry out all she should order him, and she said to him, "Go forth to such-an-one of the neighbouring provinces privily." So he went forth and on the morrow she made ready loads and gear and gifts and bestowed on him abundant substance, all of which they loaded on the backs of baggage-camels. Then she gave out among the folk that the nephew of the king, the son of his brother, was come and bade the Grandees and troops go forth to meet him in a body: she also decorated the city in his honour and the kettle-drums of good tidings beat for him whilst all the king's household went out and dismounting before him, escorted him into, and lodged him with the Queen-mother in the palace. Then she bade the Headmen of the state attend his assembly; so they obeyed and witnessed of his breeding and good parts that which amazed them and made them forget the breeding of the kings who had preceded him. When they were grown to like him, the Queenmother began sending privily for the Emirs and Councillors, one by one, and swearing them to conceal her project; and when she was assured of their discretion, she discovered to them that the king had left naught save a daughter and that she had done this only that she might continue the kingship in his family and that the rule should not go forth from them; after which she informed them that she was minded to marry her daughter with her nephew, the new-comer; and that he should be the holder of the kingship. They approved her proposal and when she had discovered the secret to the last of them and assured herself of their aid, she published the news abroad and threw off all concealment. Then she sent for the Kazis and Assessors, who drew up the contract of marriage between Salim and the Princess, and they lavished gifts upon the soldiery and overwhelmed them with largesse. The bride was incontinently carried in procession to the young man and the kingship was established to him. They tarried after this fashion a whole year when Salim said to the Queenmother, “Know that my life is not pleasing to me nor can I abide with you in content till I get me tidings of my sister and learn how her affair hath ended and how she hath fared after me. So I will go forth and be absent from you a year’s space; then will I return to you, InshallahЧan it please God the Most HighЧand I win of this that which I hope.” Quoth she, “I will not trust to thy word, but will go with thee and help thee to whatso thou wishest and further thee myself therein.” Then she took a ship and loaded it with all manner things of price, goods and monies and the like. Furthermore, she appointed one of the Wazirs, a man in whom she trusted for his conduct and contrivance, to rule the realm, saying to him, “Abide in governance a full year and ordain all thou needest.” Presently the Queenmother and her daughter and son-in-law Salim went down to the ship and sailed on till they made the land of Makran. Their arrival there befel at the last of the day; so they nighted in their ship, and when the morn was near to dawn, the young king landed, that he might go to the Hammam, and walked marketwards. As he drew near the bath, the Cook met him on the way and knew him; so he seized him and pinioning him straitly, carried him to his house, where he clapped the old fetters on his feet and cast him back into his former place of durance vile.[541] Salim, finding himself in that sorry condition and considering that wherewith he was afflicted of tribulation and the reverses of his fair fortune, in that he had been a king and was now returned to fetters and prison and hunger, wept and groaned and lamented and improvised these couplets,

"My God, no patience now can aid afford; * Strait is my breast, O
  Thou of Lords the Lord:
My God, who in resource like thine hath force? * And Thou, the
  Subtle, dost my case record."

On this wise fared it with Salim; but as regards his wife and her mother, when she awoke in the morning and her husband returned not to her with break of dawn, she forebode all manner of calamity and, straightway arising, she despatched her servants and all who were with her in quest of her spouse; but they happened not on any trace of him nor could they hear aught of his news. So she bethought herself concerning the case and plained and wept and groaned and sighed and blamed Fortune the fickle, bewailing the changes of Time and reciting these couplets,[542]

"God keep the days of love-delight! How passing sweet they were!

* How joyous and how solaceful was life in them whilere!
Would he were not, who sundered us upon the parting-day! * How
  many a body hath he slain, how many a bone laid bare!
Sans fault of mine, my blood and tears he shed and beggared me *
  Of him I love yet for himself gained nought thereby
  whate'er."

When she had made an end of her verses, she considered her affair and said within herself, "By Allah, all these things have betided by the predestination of Almighty Allah and His decree and this upon the forehead was written in lines." Then she landed and walked on till she came to a spacious place, and an open, where she asked of the folk and hired a house. Thither she transported forthright all that was in the ship of goods and sending after brokers, sold all that was with her. Presently she took part of the price and began enquiring of the folk, so haply she might scent out tidings of the lost one; and she addressed herself to lavishing alms and preparing medicines for the sick, clothing the naked and watering the dry ground[543] of the forlorn. She ceased not so doing a whole year, and little by little she sold off her goods and gave charitable gifts to the sick and sorry; whereby her report was bruited abroad in the city and the folk abounded in her praise. All this while Salim lay in fetters and strait prison, and melancholy gat hold of him by reason of that whereinto he had fallen of this affliction. At last, when care waxed on him and calamity grew longsome, he fell sick of a sore sickness. Then the Kitchener, seeing his plight (and verily he was like to sink for much suffering), loosed him from the fetters and bringing him forth of the prison, committed him to an old woman, who had a nose the bigness of a gugglet,[544] and bade her nurse him and medicine him and serve him and entreat him kindly, so haply he might be made whole of that his sickness. Accordingly the old woman took him and carrying him to her lodging, began nursing him and giving him to eat and drink; and when he was delivered of that torment, he recovered from the malady which had afflicted him. Now the old woman had heard from the folk of the lady who gave alms to the sick, and indeed the news of her bounties reached both poor and rich; so she arose and bringing out Salim to the door of her house, laid him upon a mat and wrapped him in an Ab6-gown and sat over against him. Presently, it befel that the lady passed by them, and the old woman seeing her rose to her and blessed her, saying, “O my daughter, O thou to whom belong goodness and beneficence and charity and almsdoing,[545] know that this young man is a foreigner, and indeed lack and lice and hunger and nakedness and cold slay him.” When the lady heard this, she gave her alms and presented her with a part of that which was with her; and indeed her charitable heart inclined to Salim, but she knew him not for her spouse. The old woman received the alms from her and carrying it to Salim, took part for herself and with the rest bought him an old shirt,[546] in which she clad him, after she had stripped him of that he had on. Then she threw away the frock she had taken from off him and arising forthwith, washed his body of that which was thereon of grime and scented him with somewhat of scent. She also bought chickens and made him broth; so he ate and his life returned to him and he abode with her in all comfort of condition till the morrow. Next morning the old woman said to Salim, "When the lady cometh to thee, arise and buss her hand and say to her, 'I am a homeless man and indeed cold and hunger kill me;' so haply she may give thee somewhat that thou mayest expend upon thy case." And he answered, "To hear is to obey." Then she took him by the hand and carrying him without her house, seated him at the door; and as he sat, behold, the lady came up to him, whereupon the old woman rose to her and Salim kissed her hand and, looking at her the while, blessed her. But when he saw her, he knew her for his wife; so he shrieked and shed tears and groaned and plained, at which she came up to him and threw herself upon him; for indeed she knew him with all knowledge, even as he knew her. So she hung to him and embraced him and called to her serving-men and attendants and those who were about her; and they took him up and carried him forth of that stead. When the old woman saw this, she cried out to the Cook within the house, and he said to her, "Fare thou before me." So she forewent him and he ran after her and ceased not running till he overtook the party and seizing Salim, exclaimed "What aileth you to take my slave-lad?" Whereupon the Queen cried out at him, saying, "Know that this is my husband, whom I had lost;" and Salim also cried out, saying, "Mercy! Mercy! I appeal to Allah and to the Sultan against this Satan!" Therewith a world of folk straightway gathered together and loud rose the cries and the clamours between them; but the most part of them said, "Carry their case up to the Sultan." So they referred the matter to the king, who was none other than Salim's sister Salma. Then they repaired to the palace and the dragoman went in to Salma and said to her, "O king of the age, here is a Hindi woman, who cometh from the land of Hind, and she hath laid hands on a servant, a young man, claiming him as her husband, who hath been lost to her these two years, and she journeyed not hither save for his sake, and in very sooth these many days she hath done almsdeeds in thy city. And here is a fellow, a Kitchener, who declareth that the young man is his slave."[547] When the Queen heard these words, her vitals quivered and she groaned from a grieving heart and called to mind her brother and that which had betided him. Then she bade those around her bring them between her hands, and when she saw them, she knew her brother and was about to cry aloud; but her reason restrained her; yet she could not prevent herself rising up and sitting down.[548] At last, however, she enforced her soul to patience and said to them, "Let each and every of you acquaint me with his case." So Salim came forward and kissing ground before the king, lauded him and related to him his story from first to last, until the time of their coming to that city, he and his sister, telling him how he had entered the place and had fallen into the hands of the Cook and that which had betided him and whatso he had suffered from him of beating and collars, of fetters and pinioning, till the man had made him his brother's Mameluke, a boughten slave, and how the brother had sold him in Hind and he had become king by marrying the Princess: and how life was not lovesome to him till he should foregather with his sister and now the same Cook had fallen in with him a second time and had pinioned and fettered him. Brief, he acquainted her with that which had betided him of sickness and sorrow for the space of a whole year. When he had made an end of his speech, his wife straightways came forward and told her story, from incept to termination, how her mother bought him[549] from the Cook's partner and the people of the kingdom came under his rule; nor did she cease telling till she came, in her history, to that city and acquainted the king with the manner of her meeting her husband. When she had made an end of her adventure, the Kitchener exclaimed, "Alack, what befals us from lying rascals. By Allah, O king, this woman lieth against me, for this youth is my rearling[550] and he was born of one of my slave-girls. He fled from me and I found him again." When the Queen heard the last of the talk, she said to the Cook, "The decree between you shall not be save in accordance with justice." Then she dismissed all those who were present and turning to her brother, said to him, "Indeed thy truth is stablished with me and the sooth of thy speech, and praised be Allah who hath brought about reunion between thee and thy wife! So now begone with her to thy country and cease to seek thy sister Salma and depart in peace." But, hearing this, Salim replied, "By Allah, by the might of the All-knowing King, I will not turn back from seeking my sister till I die or I find her, Inshallah!” Then he called his sister to mind and improvised from a heart disappointed, troubled, afflicted these couplets,

“O thou who blam’st me for my heart, in anger twitting me, *
Hadst tasted what my heart did taste, thou wouldst be
pitying me!
By Allah, O my chider for my sister leave, ah! leave * My heart
to moan its grief and feel the woes befitting me.
Indeed I grew to hold her dear privily, publicly; * And in my
bosom bides a pang at no time quitting me;
And in my vitals burns a flame that ne’er was equalled by * The
fire of hell and blazeth high to Death committing me.”

Now when his sister Salma heard what he said, she could no longer restrain her soul, but threw herself upon him and discovered to him her case. When he knew her, he threw himself upon her swooning awhile; after which he came to himself and cried, “Lauded be the Lord, the Bountiful, the Beneficent!” Then they plained each to other of that they had suffered from the pangs of parting, whilst Salim’s wife wondered at this and Salma’s patience and endurance pleased her. So she saluted her with the Salam, and thanked her for her fair boons, saying, “By Allah, O my lady, all that we are in of gladness never befel us save by thy blessing; so praised be Allah who deigned vouchsafe us thy sight!” Then they tarried all three, Salma, Salim and his wife, in joy and happiness and delight three days, veiled from the folk; and it was bruited abroad in the city that the king had found his brother, who was lost for many a year, and had saved him from the Cook’s house. On the fourth day, all the troops and the lieges assembled together to see the King and standing at his gate, craved leave to enter. Salma bade admit them; so they entered and paid her royal suit and service and gave her joy of her brother’s safe return. She bade them do homage to Salim, and they consented and sware fealty to him; after which they kept silence awhile, so they might hear what the king should command. Then quoth Salma, “Ho, ye gathering of soldiers and subjects, ye wot that ye forced me willy-nilly to accept the kingship and besought me thereof and I consented to your desires anent my being raised to rule over you; and I did this against my will; for I would have you know that I am a woman and that I disguised myself and donned man's dress, so peradventure my case might be concealed when I lost my brother. But now Allah hath deigned reunite me with my brother, and it is no longer lawful to me that I be king and Sultan over the people, and I a woman; because there is no Sultanate for women, whenas men are present.[551] For this reason, an it suit you, set my brother on the throne of the kingdom, for this is he; and I will busy myself with the worship of Allah the Most High and thanksgiving to Him for my reunion with my brother. Or, an ye prefer it, take your kingship and make whom ye will ruler and liege lord thereof." Upon this the folk all cried out, saying, "We accept him to king over us;" and they did him suit and service and gave him joy of the kingship. So the preachers preached the sermon[552] in his name and the court-poets praised him; and he lavished largesse upon the soldiery and the suite and overwhelmed them with favours and bounties and was prodigal to the Ryots of justice and equity, with goodly policy and polity. When he had effected this much of his affect, he caused bring forth the Cook and his household to the divan, but spared the old woman who had nursed him, because she had been the cause of his deliverance. Then all assembled without the town and he tormented the Cook and those who were with him with all manner torments, after which he did him to die by the foulest of deaths[553] and burning him with fire, scattered his ashes far and wide in the air. After this Salim abode in the governance, invested with the Sultanate, and ruled the people a whole year, when he returned to Al-Mansъrah and sojourned there another year. And he and his wife ceased not to go from city to city and tarry in this a year and that a year, till he was vouchsafed children and they grew up, whereupon he appointed him of his sons, who was found fitting, to be his deputy in one kingdom and he ruled in the other; and he lived, he and his wife and children, what while Almighty Allah willed.[554] "Nor" (continued the Wazir), "O King of the age, is this story rarer or stranger than the King of Hind and his wronged and envied Minister." When the King heard this, his mind was occupied,[555] and he bade the Wazir hie to his own house.

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The Twenty-eighth and Last Night of the Month.

When the evening evened, the King summoned the Minister and bade him tell the story of the King of Hind and his Wazir. So he said, “Hearkening and obedience. Give ear, O auspicious King, to

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The Tale of the King of Hind and his Wazir.

There was once in the Hind-land a king illustrious of worth, endowed with understanding and policy, and his name was Shah Bakht. He had a Minister, a godly man and a sagacious, right prudent in rede, conformable to him in governance and just in judgment; for which cause his enviers were many and many were the hypocrites who sought faults in him and set snares for him, so that they insinuated into King Shah Bakht's eyes hatred against him and sowed in his heart despite towards him; and plot followed plot, and their rancour waxed until the king was brought to arrest him and lay him in jail and to confiscate his wealth and degrade him from his degree. When they knew that there was left him no possession for which the king might lust, they feared lest the sovran release him, by the influence of the Wazir's good counsel upon the king's heart, and he return to his former case, so should their machinations be marred and their degrees degraded, for that they knew that the king would need whatso he had known from that man nor would forget aught wherewith he was familiar in him. Now it came to pass that a certain person of perverted belief[556] found a way to the adorning of falsehood with a semblance of fair-seeming and there proceeded from him that whereby the hearts of the folk were occupied, and their minds were corrupted by his lying tales; for that he made use of Indian quiddities[557] and forged them into proof for the denial of the Maker, the Creator, extolled be His might and exalted be He and glorified and magnified above the speech of the deniers. He avouched that it is the planets which order all worldly affairs and he set down twelve mansions[558] to twelve Zodiacal signs and made each sign thirty degrees,[559] after the number of the days of the month, so that in twelve mansions there are three hundred and sixty, after the number of the days of the year; and he wrought a work, wherein he lied and was an infidel and denied the Deity, be He for ever blessed! Then he laid hold of the king's heart and the enviers and haters aided him against the Minister and won the royal favour and corrupted his intent against the Wazir, so that he got of him that which he got and at last his lord banished him and thrust him away. By such means the wicked man obtained that which he sought of the Minister and the case was prolonged till the affairs of the kingdom became disordered, by dint of ill government, and the most part of the king's reign fell off from him and he came nigh unto ruin. On this wise he was assured of the loyalty of his whilome sagacious Wazir and the excellence of his ordinance and the rectitude of his rede. So he sent after him and brought him and the wicked man before him and summoning to his presence the Lords of his land and the Chiefs of his chieftainship, gave them leave to talk and dispute and forbade the wicked man from his perverted belief. [560] Then arose that wise Minister and skilful and praised Allah Almighty and lauded Him and glorified Him and hallowed Him and attested His unity and disputed with the miscreant and overcame him and silenced him; nor did he cease from him till he compelled him to make confession of repentance from that which he had misbelieved. Therewith King Shah Bakht rejoiced with exceeding great joy and cried, "Praise be to the Lord who hath saved me from this man and hath preserved me from the loss of my kingship and my prosperity!" So the affair of the Wazir returned to order and stablishment and the king restored him to his place and raised him to higher rank. Lastly, he assembled the folk who had striven against him and destroyed them all, to the last man. "And how like" (continued the Wazir), "is this story to that of myself and King Shah Bakht, with regard to that which befel me of the changing of the King and his crediting others against me; but now is the fairness of my fashion fulfilled in thine eyes, for that Allah Almighty hath inspired thee with wisdom and endowed thee with longanimity and patience to hear from me whatso He allotted to those who forewent us, till He hath shown forth my innocence and made manifest unto thee the truth. For lo and behold! the days are now past, wherein it was declared to the king that I should labour for the loss of my soul,[561] that is within the month; and lookye, the probation-time is gone by, and past is the season of evil and it hath ceased by the protection of the King and his good fortune." Then he bowed his head and was silent. When King Shah Bakht heard his Wazir's speech, he was abashed before him and confounded, and he marvelled at the gravity of his intellect and his long-suffering. So he sprang up to him and embraced him and the Minister kissed his feet.

Then the King called for a costly robe of honour and cast it over Al-Rahwan and honoured him with the highmost honour and showed him especial favour and restored him to his degree and Wazirate. Furthermore he imprisoned those who had devised his destruction with lies and leasing and gave him full leave and license to pass judgment upon the Interpreter who had expounded to him the dream. So the Wazir abode in the ordering of the realm until Death came to them; “And this” (added Shahrazad) “is all, O king of the age, that hath come down to us of King Shah Bakht and his Wazir.”

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SHAHRAZAD AND SHAHRYAR.

As for King Shahryar, he wondered at Shahrazad with the utmost wonder and drew her near to his heart of his abounding affection for her; and she was magnified in his eyes and he said within himself, "By Allah, the like of this is not deserving of slaughter, for indeed the time favoureth us not with her equal. By the Almighty, I have been reckless of mine affair, and had not the Lord overcome me with His ruth and put this one at my service so she might recount to me instances manifest and cases truthful and admonitions goodly and traits edifying, such as should restore me to the right road, I had come to ruin! Wherefore to Allah be the praise herefor and I beseech the Most High to make my end with her like that of the Wazir and Shah Bakht." Then sleep overcame the king and glory be unto Him who sleepeth not![562] When it was the Nine hundred and thirtieth Night, Shahrazad said, "O king, there is present in my thought a tale which treateth of women's trickery and wherein is a warning to whoso will be warned and an admonishment to whoso will be admonished and whoso hath sight and insight; but I fear lest the hearing of this belittle me with the liege-lord and lower my degree in his esteem; yet I hope that this will not be, because 'tis a rare tale. Women are indeed mischief-makers; their craft and their cunning may not be told nor may their wiles be known; while men enjoy their company and are not instant to uphold them in the right way, neither are they vigilant over them with all vigilance, but relish their society and take whatso is winsome and regard not that which is other than this. Indeed, they are like unto the crooked rib, which an thou go about to straighten, thou distortest it, and which an thou persist in straightening, thou breakest it,[563] so it behoveth the wise man to be silent concerning them." Thereupon quoth Dinarzad, "O sister mine, bring forth that which is with thee and that which is present to thy mind of the story concerning the guile of women and their wiles, and have no fear lest this lessen thee with the king; for that women are, like jewels, of all kinds and colours. When a gem falleth into the hand of an expert, he keepeth it for himself and leaveth all beside it. Eke he preferreth some of them over others, and in this he is like the potter,[564] who filleth his kiln with all the vessels he hath moulded and under them kindleth his fire. When the baking is done and he taketh out that which is in the kiln, he findeth no help for it but that he must break some of them, whilst others are what the folk need and whereof they make use, while yet others there are which return to be as they were. So fear thou not nor deem it a grave matter to adduce that which thou knowest of the craft of women, for that in this is profit for all folk.” Then said Shahrazad, “Then relate, O king (but Allah alone knoweth the secret things) the Tale ofЧ

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FOOTNOTES SUPPLEMENTAL VOLUME I.

[1] Arab. “Al-Nбim wa al-Yakzбn.” This excellent story is not in the Mac. or Bresl. Edits.; but is given in the Breslau Text, iv. 134-189 (Nights cclxxii.-ccxci.). It is familiar to readers of the old “Arabian Nights Entertainments” as “Abou-Hassan or the Sleeper Awakened;” and as yet it is the only one of the eleven added by Galland whose original has been discovered in Arabic: the learned Frenchman, however, supplied it with embellishments more suo, and seems to have taken it from an original fuller than our text as is shown by sundry poetical and other passages which he apparently did not invent. Lane (vol. ii. cha), noting that its chief and best portion is an historical anecdote related as a fact, is inclined to think that it is not a genuine tale of The Nights. He finds it in Al-Ishбкн who finished his history about the close of Sultan Mustafб the Osmanli’s reign, circa A.H. 1032 (= 1623), and he avails himself of this version as it is “narrated in a simple and agreeable manner.” Mr. Payne remarks, “The above title (Asleep and Awake) is of course intended to mark the contrast between the everyday (or waking) hours of Aboulhusn and his fantastic life in the Khalif’s palace, supposed by him to have passed in a dream;” I may add that amongst frolicsome Eastern despots the adventure might often have happened and that it might have given a hint to Cervantes.

[2] i.e., The Wag. See vol. i. 311: the old version calls him “the Debauchee.”

[3] Arab. “Al-Fбrs”; a people famed for cleverness and debauchery. I cannot see why Lane omitted the Persian, unless he had Persian friends at Cairo.

[4] i.e., the half he intended for spending-money.

[5] i.e., “men,” a characteristic Arab idiom: here it applies to the sons of all time.

[6] i.e., make much of thee.

[7] In Lane the Caliph is accompanied by “certain of his domestics.”

[8] Arab. “Khubz Mutabbak,” = bread baked in a platter, instead of an oven, an earthen jar previously heated, to the sides of which the scones or bannocks of dough are applied: “it is lighter than oven-bread, especially if it be made thin and leavened.” See Al-Shakъrн, a medical writer quoted by Dozy.

[9] In other parts of The Nights Harun al-Rashid declines wine-drinking.

[10] The ‘All6mah (doctissimus) Sayce (, Comparative Philology, London, Trьbner, 1885) goes far back for Khalнfah = a deputy, a successor. He begins with the Semitic (Hebrew?) root “Khaliph” = to change, exchange: hence “Khaleph” = agio. From this the Greeks got their {kyllybos} and Cicero his “Collybus,” a money-lender.

[11] Arab. “Harfъsh” (in Bresl. Edit. iv. 138, “Kharfъsh”), in popular parlance a “blackguard.” I have to thank Mr. Alexander J. Cotheal, of New York, for sending me a MS. Copy of this tale.

[12] Arab. “Ta’6m,” in Egypt and Somaliland = millet seed (Holcus Sorghum) cooked in various ways. In Barbary it is applied to the local staff of life, Kuskusъ, wheaten or other flour damped and granulated by hand to the size of peppercorns, and lastly steamed (as we steam potatoes), the cullender-pot being placed over a long-necked jar full of boiling water. It is served with clarified butter, shredded onions and meat; and it represents the Risotto of Northern Italy. Europeans generally find it too greasy for digestion. This Barbary staff of life is of old date and is thus mentioned by Leo Africanus in early sixth century. “It is made of a lump of Dow, first set upon the fire, in a vessel full of holes and afterwards tempered with Butter and Pottage.” So says good Master John Pory, “A Geographical Historie of Africa, by John Leo, a Moor,” London, 1600, impensis George Bishop.

[13] Arab. “Bi al-Sal6m” (pron. “Bissal6m”) = in the Peace (of Allah).

[14] And would bring him bad luck if allowed to go without paying.

[15] i.e., of the first half, as has been shown.

[16] Arab. “Kumбjah” from the Persian Kumбsh = bread unleavened and baked in ashes. Egyptians use the word for bannocks of fine flour.

[17] Arab. “Kalн,” our “alcali” ; for this and other abstergents see vol. i. 279.

[18] These lines have occurred twice in vol. i. 117 (Night xii.); I quote Mr. Payne.

[19] Arab. “Yб ‘llah, yб ‘llбh;” vulg. used for “Look sharp!” e.g., “Yб ‘llah jбri, yб walad” = Be off at once, boy.”

[20] Arab. “Banj akrнtashн,” a term which has occurred before.

[21] A natural clock, called by West Africans Cokkerapeek = Cock-speak. All the world over it is the subject of superstition: see Giles’s “Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio” (i. 177), where Miss Li, who is a devil, hears the cock crow and vanishes.

[22] In Lane Al-Rashid “found at the door his young men waiting for him and ordered them to convey Abu-l-Hasan upon a mule and returned to the palace; Abu-l-Hasan being intoxicated and insensible. And when the Khaleefah had rested himself in the palace, he called for,” etc.

[23] Arab. “Kursi,” Assyrian “Kussъ” = throne; and “Korsбi” in Aramaic (or Nabathean as Al-Mas’udi calls it), the second growth-period of the “Semitic” family, which supplanted Assyrian and Babylonian, and became, as Arabic now is, the common speech of the “Semitic” world.

[24] Arab. “Makбn mahjъb,” which Lane renders by “a private closet,” and Payne by a “privy place,” suggesting that the Caliph slept in a

numйro cent. So, when starting for the “Trakki Campaign,” Sir Charles Napier (of Sind), in his zeal for lightening officers’ baggage, inadvertently chose a water-closet tent for his head-quartersЧmagno cum risu not of the staff, who had a strange fear of him, but of the multitude who had not.

[25] Arab. “Dar al-Salam,” one of the seven “Gardens” into which the Mohammedan Paradise is divided. Man’s fabled happiness began in a Garden (Eden) and the suggestion came naturally that it would continue there. For the seven Heavens, see vol. viii., 111.

[26] Branch of Pearl, see vol. ii. 57.

[27] Arab. “Kahbah,” the lowest word (vol. i. 70), effectively used in contrast with the speaker’s surroundings.

[28] Arab. “Yб kabнгн,” = mon brave, my good man.

[29] This exaggeration has now become familiar to English poets.

[30] Like an Eastern he goes to the water-closet the first thing in the morning, or rather dawn, and then washes ceremonially before saying the first prayer. In Europe he would probably wait until after breakfast. See vol. iii. 242.

[31] I have explained why an Eastern does not wash in the basin as Europeans do in vol. i. .

[32] i.e., He was confused that he forgot. All Moslems know how to pray, whether they pray or not.

[33] The dawn-prayer consists of only four inclinations (raka’at); two “Farz” (divinely appointed), and two Sunnah (the custom of the Apostle). For the Raka’бh see Lane, M.E. chapt. iii.; it cannot be explained without illustrations.

[34] After both sets of prayers, Farz and Sunnah, the Moslem looks over his right shoulder and says, “The Peace (of Allah) be upon you

and the ruth of Allah,” and repeats the words over the left shoulder. The salutation is addressed to the Guardian Angels or to the bystanders (Moslems), who, however, do not return it.

[35] i.e., Ibrahim of Mosul the musician. See vol. iv. 108.

[36] Arab. “Lнyъth” plur. of “layth,” a lion: here warriors are meant.

[37] The Abbasides traced their descent from Al-Abbas, Mohammed’s uncle, and justly held themselves as belonging to the family of the Prophet. See vol. ii. 61.

[38] Arab. “Nнmshah” = “half-sword.” See vol. ii. .

[39] i.e., May thy dwelling-place never fall into ruin. The prayer has, strange to say, been granted. “The present city on the eastern bank of the Tigris was built by Haroun al-Rashid, and his house still stands there and is an object of reverent curiosity.” So says my friend Mr. Grattan Geary (vol. i. , “Through Asiatic Turkey,” London: Low, 1878). He also gives a sketch of Zubaydah’s tomb on the western bank of the Tigris near the suburb which represents old Baghdad; it is a pineapple dome springing from an octagon, both of brick once revetted with white stucco.

[40] In the Bresl. Edit. four hundred. I prefer the exaggerated total.

[41] i.e., the raised recess at the upper end of an Oriental saloon, and the place of honour, which Lane calls by its Egyptian name “Lнwбn.” See his vol. i. 312 and his M.E. chapt. i.: also my vol. iv. .

[42] “Bit o’Musk.”

[43] “A gin,” a snare.

[44] “A gift,” a present. It is instructive to compare Abu al-Hasan with Sancho Panza, sprightly Arab wit with grave Spanish humour.

[45] i.e., he fell down senseless. The old version has “his head knocked

against his knees.”

[46] Arab. “Waddi” vulg. Egyptian and Syrian for the classical “Addн” (ii. of Adъ = preparing to do). No wonder that Lane complains (iii. 376) of the vulgar style, abounding in errors.”

[47] O Apple, O Repose o’ Hearts, O Musk, O Choice Gift.

[48] Arab. “Doghrн,” a pure Turkish word, in Egypt meaning “truly, with truth,” straightforwardly; in Syria = straight (going), directly.

[49] Arab. “Mбristбn,” see vol. i. 288.

[50] The scene is a rechauffй of Badr al-Din Hasan and his wife, i. 247.

[51] Arab. “Janzнr,” another atrocious vulgarism for “Zanjнr,” which however, has occurred before.

[52] Arab. “Arafshah.”

[53] In the “Mishkбt al-Masбbih” (ii. 341), quoted by Lane, occurs the Hadis, “Shut your doors anights and when so doing repeat the Basmalah; for the Devil may not open a door shut in Allah’s name.” A pious Moslem in Egypt always ejaculates, “In the name of Allah, the Compassionating,” etc., when he locks a door, covers up bread, doffs his clothes, etc., to keep off devils and dжmons.

[54] An Arab idiom meaning, “I have not found thy good fortune (Ka’b = heel, glory, prosperity) do me any good.”

[55] Arab. “Yб Nakbah” = a calamity to those who have to do with thee!

[56] Koran cxii., the “Chapter of Unity.” See vol. iii. 307

[57] See vol. iii. 222.

[58] Here the author indubitably speaks for himself, forgetting that he ended Night cclxxxi. (Bresl. iv. 168), and began that following with

Shahrazad’s usual formula.

[59] i.e., “Delight of the vitals” (or heart).

[60] The trick is a rechauffй of the trick played on Al-Rashid and Zubaydah.

[61] “Kalb” here is not heart, but stomach. The big toes of the Moslem corpse are still tied in most countries, and in some a sword is placed upon the body; but I am not aware that a knife and salt (both believed to repel evil spirits) are so used in Cairo.

[62] The Moslem, who may not wear unmixed silk during his lifetime, may be shrouded in it. I have noted that the “Shukkah,” or piece, averages six feet in length.

[63] A vulgar ejaculation; the “hour” referring either to birth or to his being made one of the Caliph’s equerries.

[64] Here the story-teller omits to say that Masrъr bore witness to the Caliph’s statement.

[65] Arab. “Wa kuntu rбihah ursil warбk,” the regular Fellah language.

[66] Arab. “‘Irk al-Hбshimн.” See vol. ii. 19. Lane remarks, “Whether it was so in Hashim himself (or only in his descendants), I do not find; but it is mentioned amongst the characteristics of his great-grandson, the Prophet.”

[67] Arab. “Bostбn al-Nuzhah,” whose name made the stake appropriate. See vol. ii. 81.

[68] Arab. “Tamбsнl” = generally carved images, which, amongst Moslem, always suggest idols and idolatry.

[69] The “Shubbбk” here would be the “Mashrabiyah,” or latticed balcony, projecting from the saloon-wall, and containing room for three or more sitters. It is Lane’s “Meshrebeeyeh,” sketched in M.E.

(Introduction) and now has become familiar to Englishmen.

[70] This is to show the cleverness of Abu al-Hasan, who had calculated upon the difference between Al-Rashid and Zubaydah. Such marvels of perspicacity are frequent enough in the folk-lore of the Arabs.

[71] An artful touch, showing how a tale grows by repetition. In Abu al-Hasan's case (infra) the eyes are swollen by the swathes.

[72] A Hadis attributed to the Prophet, and very useful to Moslem husbands when wives differ overmuch with them in opinion.

[73] Arab. "Masarat fн-hб," which Lane renders, "And she threw money to her."

[74] A saying common throughout the world, especially when the afflicted widow intends to marry again at the first opportunity.

[75] Arab. "Yб Khбlati" = O my mother's sister; addressed by a woman to an elderly dame.

[76] i.e., That I may put her to shame.

[77] Arab. "Zalбbiyah."

[78] Arab. "'Alб al-Kaylah," which Mr. Payne renders by "Siesta-carpet." Land reads "Kiblah" ("in the direction of the Kiblah") and notes that some Moslems turn the corpse's head towards Meccah and others the right side, including the face. So the old version reads "feet towards Mecca." But the preposition "Alб" requires the former sig.

[79] Many places in this text are so faulty that translation is mere guess-work; e.g. "Bashбrah" can hardly be applied to ill- news.

[80] i.e. of grief for his loss.

[81] Arab. "Tobбni" which Lane renders "two clods." I have noted that

the Tob (Span. Adobe = Al-Tob) is a sunbaked brick. Beating the bosom with such material is still common amongst Moslem mourners of the lower class, and the hardness of the blow gives the measure of the grief.

[82] i.e. of grief for her loss.

[83] Arab. “Ihtirбk” often used in the metaphorical sense of consuming, torturing.

[84] Arab. “Halбwat,” lit.=a sweetmeat, a gratuity, a thank- offering.

[85] Bresl. Edit., vol. vi. p-188, Nights ccccxxxii.- ccccxxxiv.

[86] “The good Caliph” and the fifth of the Orthodox, the other four being Abu Bakr, Omar, Osman and Ali; and omitting the eight intervening, Hasan the grandson of the Prophet included. He was the 13th Caliph and 8th Ommiade A.H. 99-101 (=717-720) and after a reign of three years he was poisoned by his kinsmen of the Banu Umayyah who hated him for his piety, asceticism, and severity in making them disgorge their ill-gotten gains. Moslem historians are unanimous in his praise. Europeans find him an anachorиte couronnй, a froide et respectable figure, who lacked the diplomacy of Mu’awiyah and the energy of Al-Hajjбj. His principal imitator was Al-Muhtadi bi’llбh, who longed for a return to the rare old days of Al-Islam.

[87] Omar ‘Adi bin Artah; governor of Kufah and Basrah under “the good Caliph.”

[88] Jarнr al-Khatafah, one of the most famous of the “Islбmн” poets, i.e. those who wrote in the first century (A.H.) before the corruption of language began. (See Terminal Essay,). Ibn Khallikan notices him at full length i. 294.

[89] Arab. “Bбkiyah,” which may also mean eternal as opposed to “Fбniyah” = temporal. Omar’s answer shows all the narrow- minded fanaticism which distinguished the early Moslems: they were

puritanical as any Praise-God-Barebones, and they hated “boetry and bainting” as hotly as any Hanoverian.

[90] The Saturday Review (Jan. 2, ‘86), which has honoured me by the normal reviling in the shape of a critique upon my two first vols., complains of the “Curious word Abhak” as “a perfectly arbitrary and unusual group of Latin letters.” May I ask Aristarchus how he would render “Sal’am” (vol ii. 24), which apparently he would confine to “Arabic MSS.”(!). Or would he prefer A(llah) b(less) h(im) a(nd) k(eep) “W.G.B.” (whom God bless) as proposed by the editor of Ockley? But where would be the poor old “Saturnine” if obliged to do better than the authors it abuses?

[91] He might have said “by more than one, including the great Labнd.”

[92] Fн-hi either “in him” (Mohammed) or “in it” (his action).

[93] Chief of the Banu Sulaym. According to Tabari, Abbas bin Mirdas (a well-known poet), being dissatisfied with the booty allotted to him by the Prophet, refused it and lampooned Mohammed, who said to Ali, “Cut off this tongue which attacketh me,” i.e. “Silence him by giving what will satisfy him.” Thereupon Ali doubled the Satirist’s share.

[94] Arab. “Yб Bilбl”: Bilal ibn Rabah was the Prophet’s freedman and crier: see vol. iii. 106. But bilal also signifies “moisture” or “beneficence,” “benefits”: it may be intended for a double entendre but I prefer the metonymy.

[95] The verses of this Kasidah are too full of meaning to be easily translated: it is fine old poetry.

[96] i.e. of the Koraysh tribe. For his disorderly life see Ibn Khallikan ii. 372: he died, however, a holy death, battling against the Infidels in A.H. 93 (= 711-12), some five years before Omar’s reign.

[97] Arab. “Bayn farsi-k wa ‘l-damн” = lit. between fжces and menses,

i.e., the foulest part of his mistress's person. It is not often that The Nights are "nasty"; but here is a case. See vol. v. 162.

[98] "Jamil the Poet," and lover of Buthaynah: see vol. ii. 102, Ibn Khallikan (i.331), and Al-Mas'udi vi. 381, who quotes him copiously. He died A.H. 82 (= 701), or sixteen years before Omar's reign.

[99] Arab. "Safнh" = the slab over the grave.

[100] A contemporary and friend of Jamнl and the famous lover of Azzah. See vol. ii. 102, and Al-Mas'udi, vi. 426. The word "Kuthayyir" means "the dwarf." Term. Essay, 231.

[101] i.e. in the attitude of prayer.

[102] In Bresl. Edit. "Al-Akhwass," clerical error, noticed in Ibn Khallikan i. 526. His satires banished him to Dahlak Island in the Red Sea, and he died A.H. 179 (= 795-96).

[103] Another famous poet Abъ Firбs Hammбm or Humaym (dimin. form), as debauched as Jarir, who died forty days before him in A.H. 110 (= 728-29), as Basrah. Cf. Term. Essay, 269.

[104] A famous Christian poet. See C. de Perceval, Journ.
Asiat. April, 1834, Ibn Khallikan iii. 136, and Term. Essay, 231.

[105] The poet means that unlike other fasters he eats meat openly. See Pilgrimage (i. 110), for the popular hypocrisy.

[106] Arab. "Bathб" the lowlands and plains outside the Meccan Valley. See al-Mas'udi, vi. 157. Mr. (now Sir) W. Muir in his Life of Mahomet, vol. i., p. ccv., remarks upon my Pilgrimage (iii.252) that in placing Arafat 12 miles from Meccah, I had given 3 miles to Muna, + 3 to Muzdalifah + 3 to Arafat = 9. But the total does not include the suburbs of Meccah and the breadth of the Arafat-Valley.

[107] The words of the Azбn, vol. i. 306.

[108] Wine in Arabic is feminine, “Shamъl” = liquor hung in the wind to cool, a favourite Arab practice often noticed by the poets.

[109] i.e. I will fall down dead drunk.

[110] Arab. “Srбm,” plur. of Irm, a beautiful girl, a white deer. The word is connected with the Heb. Reem (Deut. xxxiii. 17), which has been explained unicorn, rhinoceros, and aurochs. It is the Ass. Rimu, the wild bull of the mountains, provided with a human face, and placed at the palace-entrance to frighten away foes, demon or human.

[111] i.e. she who ensnares [all] eyes.

[112] Imam, the spiritual title of the Caliph, as head of the Faith and leader (lit. “foreman,” Antistes) of the people at prayer. See vol. iv. 111.

[113] For Yamбmah see vol. ii. 104. Omar bin Abd-al-Aziz was governor of the province before he came to the Caliphate. To the note on Zarkб, the blue-eyed Yamamite, I may add that Marwan was called Ibn Zarkб, son of “la femme au drapeau bleu,” such being the sign of a public prostitute. Al-Mas’udi, v. 509.

[114] Rain and bounty, I have said, are synonymous.

[115] About £2 10s.

[116] i.e. what is thy news.

[117] Bresl. Edit., vol. vi. p-9, Night ccccxxxiv.

[118] Of this masterful personage and his йnergie indomptable I have spoken in vol. iv. 3, and other places. I may add that he built Wбsit city A.H. 83 and rendered eminent services to literature and civilization amongst the Arabs. When the Ommiade Caliph Abd al-Malik was dying he said to his son Walid, “Look to Al-Hajjaj and honour him for, verily, he it is who hath covered for you the pulpits; and he is thy sword and thy right hand against all opponents; thou

needest him more than he needeth thee, and when I die summon the folk to the covenant of allegiance; and he who saith with his headЧthus, say thou with thy swordЧthus" (Al-Siyuti, p 225) yet the historian simply observes, "the Lord curse him."

[119] i.e. given through his lieutenant.

[120] "Necks" per synecdochen for heads. The passage is a description of a barber-surgeon in a series of double-entendres the "nose-pierced" (Makhzъm) is the subject who is led by the nose like a camel with halter and ring and the "breaker" (hбshim) may be a breaker of bread as the word originally meant, or breaker of bones. Lastly the "wealth" (mбl) is a recondite allusion to the hair.

[121] Arab. "Kadr" which a change of vowel makes "Kidr" = a cooking-pot. The description is that of an itinerant seller of boiled beans (Fъl mudammas) still common in Cairo. The "light of his fire" suggests a double-entendre some powerful Chief like masterful King Kulayb. See vol. ii. 77.

[122] Arab. "Al-Sufъf," either ranks of fighting-men or the rows of thread on a loom. Here the allusion is to a weaver who levels and corrects his threads with the wooden spate and shuttle governing warp and weft and who makes them stand straight (behave aright). The "stirrup" (rikбb) is the loop of cord in which the weaver's foot rests.

[123] "Adab." See vols. i. 132, and ix. 41.

[124] Bresl. Edit., vol. vi. p-191, Night ccccxxxiv.

[125] Arab. "Za'mъ," a word little used in the Cal., Mac. or Bul. Edit.; or in the Wortley Montague MS.; but very common in the Bresl. text.

[126] More double-entendres. "Thou hast done justice" ('adalta) also means "Thou hast swerved from right;" and "Thou hast wrought equitably" (Akasta iv. of Kast) = "Thou hast transgressed."

[127] Koran vi. 44. Allah is threatening unbelievers, “And when they had forgotten their warnings We set open to them the gates of all things, until, when they were gladdened,” etc.

[128] Arab. “Ta’dilъ,” also meaning, “Ye do injustice”: quoted from Koran iv. 134.

[129] Arab. “Al-Kбsitъna,” before explained. Koran lxxii. 15.

[130] Bresl. Edit. vol. vi. p-343, Nights ccccxxxv- cccclxxxvii. This is the old Persian Bakhtyбr Nбmeh, i.e., the Book of Bakhtyar, so called from the prince and hero “Fortune’s Friend.” In the tale of Jili’ad and Shimas the number of Wazirs is seven, as usual in the Sindibad cycle. Here we have the full tale as advised by the Imбm al-Jara’н: “it is meet for a man before entering upon important undertakings to consult ten intelligent friends; if he have only five to apply twice to each; if only one, ten times at different visits, and if none, let him repair to his wife and consult her; and whatever she advises him to do let him do the clear contrary” (quoting Omar), or as says Tommy Moore,

> Whene’er you’re in doubt, said a sage I once knew,
> ‘Twixt two lines of conduct which course to pursue,
> Ask a woman’s advice, and whate’er she advise
> Do the very reverse, and you’re sure to be wise.

The Romance of the Ten Wazirs occurs in dislocated shape in the “Nouveaux Contes Arabes, ou Supplйment aux Mille et une Nuits,” etc., par M. l’Abbй * * * Paris, 1788. It is the “Story of Bohetzad (Bakht-zбd=Luck-born, v.p.), and his Ten Viziers,” in vol. iii., p-30 of the “Arabian Tales,” etc., published by Dom Chavis and M. Cazotte, in 1785; a copy of the English translation by Robert Heron, Edinburgh, 1792, I owe to the kindness of Mr. Leonard Smithers of Sheffield. It appears also in vol. viii. of M. C. de Perceval’s Edition of The Nights; in Gauttier’s Edition (vol. vi.), and as the “Historia Decem Vizirorum et filii Regis Azad-bacht,” text and translation by Gustav Knцs, of Goettingen (1807). For the Turkish, Malay and other versions see (p. xxxviii. etc.) “The Bakhtiy?r N?ma,” etc. Edited (from the Sir William. Ouseley version of 1801) by Mr. W. A. Clouston and privately printed, London, 1883. The notes are valuable but their worth is sadly injured by the want of an index. I am pleased to see that Mr. E. J. W. Gibb is publishing the “History of the Forty Vezirs; or, the Story of the Forty Morns and Eves,” written in Turkish by “Sheykh-Zadah,” evidently a nom de plume (for Ahmad al-Misri?), and translated from an Arabic MS. which probably dated about the xvth century.

[131] In Chavis and Cazotte, the “kingdom of Dineroux (comprehending all Syria and the isles of the Indian Ocean) whose capital was Issessara.” An article in the Edinburgh Review (July, 1886), calls the “Supplement” a “bare-faced forgery”; but evidently the writer should have “read up” his subject before writing.

[132] The Persian form; in Arab. Sijistбn, the classical Drangiana or province East of Fars=Persia proper. It is famed in legend as the feof of hero Rustam.

[133] Arab. Rбwi=a professional tale-teller, which Mr. Payne justly holds to be a clerical error for “Rбi, a beholder, one who seeth.”

[134] In Persian the name would be Bahr-i-Jaur=“luck” (or fortune, “bahr”) of Jaur- (or Jъr-) city.

[135] Supply “and cared naught for his kingdom.”

[136] Arab. “Atrбf,” plur. of “Tarf,” a great and liberal lord.

[137] Lit. “How was,” etc. Kayf is a favourite word not only in the Bresl. Edit., but throughout Egypt and Syria. Classically we should write “Mб;” vulgarly “Aysh.”

[138] Karmania vulg. and fancifully derived from Kirmбn Pers.=worms because the silkworm is supposed to have been bred there; but the name is of far older date as we find the Asiatic Aethiopians of Herodotus (iii. 93) lying between the Germanii

(Karman) and the Indus. Also Karmanнa appears in Strabo and Sinus Carmanicus in other classics.

[139] Arab. “Ka’нd”; lit.=one who sits with, a colleague, hence the Span. Alcayde; in Marocco it is=colonel, and is prefixed e.g. Ka’нd Maclean.

[140] A favourite food; Al-Hariri calls the dates and cream, which were sold together in bazars, the “Proud Rider on the desired Steed.”

[141] In Bresl. Edit. vi. 198 by misprint “Kutrъ”: Chavis and Cazotte have “Kassera.” In the story of Bihkard we find a P.N. “Yatrъ.”

[142] i.e. waylaying travellers, a term which has often occurred.

[143] i.e. the royal favour.

[144] i.e. When the fated hour came down (from Heaven).

[145] As the Nights have proved in many places, the Asl (origin) of a man is popularly held to influence his conduct throughout life. So the Jeweller’s wife (vol. ix.) was of servile birth, which accounted for her vile conduct; and reference is hardly necessary to a host of other instances. We can trace the same idea in the sayings and folk-lore of the West, e.g. Bon sang ne peut mentir, etc., etc.

[146] i.e. “What deemest thou he hath done?”

[147] The apodosis wanting “to make thee trust in him?”

[148] In the Braj Bбkhб dialect of Hindi, we find quoted in the Akhlбk-i-Hindi, “Tale of the old Tiger and the Traveller”:Ч

Jo jбko paryo subhбo jбe nб jнo-sun;
Nнm na mitho hoe sichh gur ghio sun.

Ne’er shall his nature fail a man whate’er that nature be,
The Nнm-tree bitter shall remain though drenched with Gur

and Ghн.

The Nнm (Melia Azadirachta) is the “Persian lilac,” whose leaves, intensely bitter, are used as a preventive to poison: Gur is the Anglo-Indian Jaggeri = raw sugar and Ghi = clarified butter. Roebuck gives the same proverb in Hindostani.

149 In Chavis and Cazotte “Story of Kaskas; or the Obstinate Man.” For ill-luck, see Miss Frere’s “Old Deccan Days” (), and Giles’s “Strange Stories,” &c. (), where the young lady says to Ma, “You often asked me for money; but on account of your weak luck I hitherto refrained from giving it.”

150 True to life in the present day, as many a standing hay-rick has shown.

151 The “Munajjim” is a recognised authority in Egyptian townlets, and in the village-republics of Southern India the “Jyoshi” is one of the paid officials.

152 Arab. “Amнn” sub. and adj. In India it means a Government employй who collects revenue; in Marocco a commissioner sent by His Sharifian Majesty.

153 Our older word for divers=Arab “Ghawwбsъn”: a single pearl (in the text Jauhar=the Port. AIjofar) is called “habbah”=grain or seed.

154 The kindly and generous deed of one Moslem to another, and by no means rare in real life.

155 “Eunuch,” etymologically meaning chamberlain ({eynи + йchein}), a bed-chamber-servant or slave, was presently confined to castrated men found useful for special purposes, like gelded horses, hounds, and cockerels turned to capons. Some writers hold that the creation of the semivir or apocopus began as a punishment in Egypt and elsewhere; and so under the Romans amputation of the “peccant part” was frequent: others trace the Greek “invalid,” i.e., impotent man, to marital jealousy, and not a few to the wife who wished to use

the sexless for hard work in the house without danger to the slave-girls. The origin of the mutilation is referred by Ammianus Marcellinus (lib. iv. cha), and the Classics generally, to Semiramis, an "ancient queen" of decidedly doubtful epoch, who thus prevented the propagation of weaklings. But in Genesis (xxxvii. 36; xxxix. 1, margin) we find Potiphar termed a "SarHm" (castrato), an "attenuating circumstance" for Mrs. P. Herodotus (iii. cha) tells us that Periander, tyrant of Corinth, sent three hundred Corcyrean boys to Alyattes for castration {epм кt ektomк}, and that Panionios of Chios sold caponised lads for high prices (viii. 105): he notices (viii. 104 and other places) that eunuchs "of the Sun, of Heaven, of the hand of God," were looked upon as honourable men amongst the Persians whom Stephanus and Brissonius charge with having invented the name (Dabistan i. 171). Ctesias also declares that the Persian kings were under the influence of eunuchs. In the debauched ages of Rome the women found a new use for these effeminates, who had lost only the testes or testiculi=the witnesses (of generative force): it is noticed by Juvenal (i. 22; ii. 365-379; vi. 366)

Чsunt quos imbelles et mollia semper
Oscula delectant.

So Martial,

Чvult futui Gallia, non parere,

And Mirabeau knew (see KadHsah) "qu'ils mordent les femmes et les liment avec une prйcieuse continuitй." (Compare my vol. ii. 90; v. 46.) The men also used them as catamites (Horace i. Od. xxxvii.).

"Contaminato cum grege turpium,
Morbo virorum."

In religion the intestabilis or intestatus was held ill-omened, and not permitted to become a priest (Seneca Controv. ii. 4), a practice perpetuated in the various Christian churches. The manufacture was forbidden, to the satisfaction of Martial, by Domitian, whose edict Nero confirmed; and was restored by the Byzantine empire, which advanced eunuchs, like Eutropius and Narses, to the highest dignities of the realm. The cruel custom to the eternal disgrace of mediжval Christianity was revived in Rome for providing the choirs in the Sistine Chapel and elsewhere with boys' voices. Isaiah mentions the custom (lvi. 3-6). Mohammed, who notices in the Koran (xxiv. 31), "such men as attend women and have no need of women," i.e. "have no natural force," expressly forbade (iv. 118), "changing Allah's creatures," referring, say the commentators, to superstitious ear-cropping of cattle, tattooing, teeth-sharpening, sodomy, tribadism, and slave-gelding. See also the "Hidбyah," vol. iv. 121; and the famous divine Al-Siyъti, the last of his school, wrote a tractate Fi 'l-Tahrнmi Khidmati 'l-Khisyбn=on the illegality of using eunuchs. Yet the Harem perpetuated the practice throughout AI-Islam and African jealousy made a gross abuse of it. To quote no other instance, the Sultan of Dбr-For had a thousand eunuchs under a Malik or king, and all the chief offices of the empire, such as Ab (father) and Bбb (door), were monopolised by these neutrals. The centre of supply was the Upper Nile, where the operation was found dangerous after the age of fifteen, and when badly performed only one in four survived. For this reason, during the last century the Coptic monks of Girgah and Zawy al-Dayr, near Assiout, engaged in this scandalous traffic, and declared that it was philanthropic to operate scientifically (Prof. Panuri and many others). Eunuchs are now made in the Sudбn, Nubia, Abyssinia, Kordofбn, and Dбr-For, especially the Messalmiyah district: one of those towns was called "Tawбshah" (eunuchry) from the traffic there conducted by Fukahб or religious teachers. Many are supplied by the district between Majarah (Majarash?) and the port Masawwah; there are also depфts at Mbadr, near Tajurrah-harbour, where Yusuf Bey, Governor in 1880, caponised some forty boys, including the brother of a hostile African chief: here also the well-known Abu Bakr was scandalously active. It is calculated that not less than eight thousand of these unfortunates are annually exported to Arabia, Egypt, and Turkey. Article IV. of the AngIo-Egyptian Convention punishes the offense with death, and no one would object to hanging the murderer under whose mutilating razor a boy dies. Yet this, like most of our modern "improvements" in Egypt, is a mere brutum fulmen. The crime is committed under our very eyes, but we will not see it.

The Romans numbered three kinds of eunuchs:Ч1. Castrati, clean-shaved, from Gr. {kйstros}; 2. Spadones, from {spбoo}, when the testicles are torn out, not from "Spada," town of Persia; and, 3. Thlibii, from {thliboo}, to press, squeeze, when the testicles are bruised, &c. In the East also, as I have stated (v. 46), eunuchs are of three kinds:Ч1. Sandali, or the clean-shaved, the classical apocopus. The parts are swept off by a single cut of a razor, a tube (tin or wooden) is set in the urethra, the wound is cauterised with boiling oil, and the patient is planted in a fresh dunghill. His diet is milk; and if under puberty, he often survives. This is the eunuque aqueduc, who must pass his water through a tube. 2. The eunuch whose penis is removed: he retains all the power of copulation and procreation without the wherewithal; and this, since the discovery of caoutchouc, has often been supplied. 3. The eunuch, or classical Thlibias and Semivir, who has been rendered sexless by removing the testicles (as the priests of Cybele were castrated with a stone knife), or by bruising (the Greek Thlбsias), twisting, searing, or bandaging them. A more humane process has lately been introduced: a horsehair is tied round the neck of the scrotum and tightened by slow degrees till the circulation of the part stops and the bag drops off without pain. This has been adopted in sundry Indian regiments of Irregular Cavalry, and it succeeded admirably: the animals rarely required a day's rest. The practice was known to the ancients. See notes on Kadнsah in Mirabeau. The Eunuchata virgo was invented by the Lydians, according to their historian Xanthus. Zachias (Quaest. medico-legal.) declares that the process was one of infibulation or simple sewing up the vulva; but modern experience has suggested an operation like the "spaying" of bitches, or mutilation of the womb, in modern euphuism "baby-house." Dr. Robert ("Journey from Delhi to Bombay, Mьller's Archiv. 1843") speaks of a eunuch'd woman who after ovariotomy had no breasts, no pubes, no rotundities, and no desires. The Australians practice exsection of the ovaries systematically to make women barren. Miklucho Maclay learned from the traveller Retsch that about Lake Parapitshurie men's urethras were split, and the girls were spayed: the latter showing two scars in the groin. They have flat bosoms, but feminine forms, and are slightly bearded; they mix with the men, whom they satisfy mechanically, but without enjoyment (?). MacGillivray, of the “Rattlesnake,” saw near Cape York a woman with these scars: she was a surdo-mute, and had probably been spayed to prevent increase. The old Scandinavians, from Norway to Iceland, systematically gelded “sturdy vagrants” in order that they might not beget bastards. The Hottentots before marriage used to cut off the left testicle, meaning by such semi-castration to prevent the begetting of twins. This curious custom, mentioned by the Jesuit Tochard, Boeving, and Kolbe, is now apparently obsoleteЧ at least, the traveller Fritsch did not find it.

[156] Arab. “Harбm”=“forbidden,” sinful.

[157] In Chavis and Cazotte, who out-galland’d Galland in transmogrifying the Arabic, this is the “Story of Illage (AI-Hбjj) Mahomet and his sons; or, the Imprudent Man.” The tale occurs in many forms and with great modifications. See, for instance, the Gesta Romanorum “Of the miraculous recall of sinners and of the consolation which piety offers to the distressed,” the adventures of the knight Placidus, vol. ii. 99. Charles Swan, London. Rivington, 1824.

[158] i.e. For fear of the “eye”; see vol. i. 123 and passim. In these days the practice is rare; but, whenever you see at Cairo an Egyptian dame daintily dressed and leading by the hand a grimy little boy whose eyes are black with flies and whose dress is torn and unclean, you see what has taken its place. And if you would praise the brat you must not say “Oh, what a pretty boy!” but “Inshallah!”Чthe Lord doth as he pleaseth.

[159] The adoption of slave lads and lasses was and is still common among Moslems.

[160] I have elsewhere noted this “pathetic fallacy” which is a lieu commun of Eastern folk-lore and not less frequently used in the

mediжval literature of Europe before statistics were invented.

[161] Arab. “Yaskut min ‘Aynayh,” lit.=fall from his two eyes, lose favour.

[162] i.e. killing a man.

[163] i.e. we can slay him whenever we will.

[164] In Chavis and Cazotte “Story of Abosaber the Patient.” “Abъ-Sбbir” would mean “Father of the Patient (one).”

[165] Arab. “Dihkбn,” in Persian a villager; but here something more, a village-elder or chief. Al-Mas’udi (chap. xxiv.), and other historians apply the term to a class of noble Persians descended from the ten sons of Wahkert, the first “Dihkбn,” the fourth generation from King Kayomars.

[166] Reminding one not a little of certain anecdotes anent Quakers, current in England and English-speaking lands.

[167] Arab. “Karyah,” a word with a long history. The root seems to be Karaha, he met; in Chald. Karih and Kбria (emphatic Kбrita)=a town or city; and in Heb. Kirjath, Kiryбthayim, etc. We find it in Carthage= Kartб hбdisah, or New Town as opposed to Utica (Atнkah)=Old Town; in Carchemish and in a host of similar compounds. In Syria and Egypt Kariyah, like Kafr, now means a hamlet, a village.

[168] i.e. wandering at a venture.

[169] Arab. “Sakhrah,” the old French Corvйe, and the “Begбr” of India.

[170] Arab. “Matmъrah:” see vol. ii. 39, where it was used as an “underground cell.” The word is extensively used in the Maghrib or Western Africa.

[171] Arab. “Yб Abб Sбbir.” There are five vocative particles in Arabic; “Yб,” common to the near and far; “Ayб” (ho!) and “Hayб” (holla!) addressed to the far, and “Ay” and “A” (A-’Abda-llбhi, O Abdullah), to those near. All govern the accusative of a noun in construction in the literary language only; and the vulgar use none but the first named. The English-speaking races neglect the vocative particle, and I never heard it except in the Southern States of the AngloAmerican Union=Oh, Mr. Smith.

[172] He was not honest enough to undeceive them; a neat Quaker-like touch.

[173] Here the oath is justified; but the reader will have remarked that the name of Allah is often taken in vain. Moslems, however, so far from holding this a profanation deem it an acknowledgment of the Omnipotence and Omnipresence. The Jews from whom the Christians have borrowed had an interest in concealing the name of their tribal divinity; and therefore made it ineffable.

[174] i.e. the grave, the fosse commune of slain men.

[175] A fancy name; “Zawash” in Pers. is = the planet Jupiter, either borrowed from Greece, or both descended from some long forgotten ancestor.

[176] In Chavis and Cazotte “Story of Bhazad (!) the Impatient.” The name is Persian, Bih (well, good) Zбd (born). In the adj. bih we recognize a positive lost in English and German which retain the comparative (bih-tar = better) and superlative (bih-tarin=best).

[177] i.e. the moiety kept by the bridegroom, a contingent settlement paid at divorce or on the death of the husband.

[178] Arab. “Rumh”=the horseman’s lance not the footman’s spear.

[179] i.e. became a highwayman (a time-honoured and honourable career) in order to collect money for completing the dowry.

[180] i.e. to the bride, the wedding-day; not to be confounded with “going in unto” etc.

[181] Probably meaning that she saw the eyes espying through the crevice without knowing whose they were.

[182] A fancy name intended to be Persian

[183] i.e. thy Harem, thy women.

[184] i.e. thy life hath been unduly prolonged.

[185] See Chavis and Cazotte, “Story of Ravia (Arwa!) the Resigned.” Dбdbнn (Persian) = one who looks to justice, a name hardly deserved in this case.

[186] For this important province and city of Persia, see Al-Mas’ъdi, ii. 2; iv. 86, etc. It gave one of many names to the Caspian Sea. The adjective is Tabari, whereas Tabarбni = native of Tiberias (Tabariyah).

[187] Zor-khбn = Lord Violence, and Kбr-dбn = Business-knower; both Persian.

[188] “Arwa” written with a terminal of yб is a woman’s P.N. in Arabic.

[189] i.e. Not look down upon me with eyes of contempt. This “marrying below one” is still an Eastern idea, very little known to women in the West.

[190] Chavis and Cazotte call the Dabbъs a “dabour” and explain it as a “sort of scepter used by Eastern Princes, which serves also as a weapon.” For the Dabbъs, or mace, see vol. vi. 249.

[191] i.e. Let thy purposes be righteous as thine outward profession.

[192] See vol. vi. 130. This is another lieu commun amongst Moslems; and its unfact requires only statement.

[193] Afterwards called his “chamberlain,” i.e. guardian of the Harem-door.

[194] i.e. Chosroлs, whom Chavis and Cazotte make “Cyrus.”

[195] Arab. “Тбkiyah,” used for the Persian Takhtrawбn, common in The Nights.

[196] Arab. “Kubbah,” a dome-shaped tent, as elsewhere.

[197] This can refer only to Abu al-Khayr’s having been put to death on Kardan’s charge, although the tale-teller, with characteristic inconsequence, neglected to mention the event.

[198] Not referring to skull sutures, but to the forehead, which is poetically compared with a page of paper upon which Destiny writes her irrevocable decrees.

[199] Said in the grimmest earnest, not jestingly, as in vol. iv. 264.

[200] i.e. the lex talionis, which is the essence of Moslem, and indeed, of all criminal jurisprudence. We cannot wonder at the judgment of Queen Arwa: even Confucius, the mildest and most humane of lawgivers, would not pardon the man who allowed his father’s murderer to live. The Moslem lex talionis (Koran ii. 173) is identical with that of the Jews (Exod. xxi. 24), and the latter probably derives from immemorial usage. But many modern Rabbins explain away the Mosaical command as rather a demand for a pecuniary mulct than literal retaliation. The well-known Isaac Aburbanel cites many arguments in proof of this position: he asks, for instance, supposing the accused have but one eye, should he lose it for having struck out one of another man’s two? Moreover, he dwells upon the impossibility of inflicting a punishment the exact equivalent of the injury; like Shylock’s pound of flesh without drawing blood. Moslems, however, know nothing of these frivolities, and if retaliation be demanded the judge must grant it. There is a legend in Marocco of an English merchant who was compelled to forfeit tooth for tooth at the instance of an old woman, but a profitable concession

gilded the pill.

[201] In Chavis and Cazotte “Story of Bhazmant (!); or the Confident Man.” “Bakht (-i-) Zamбn” in Pers. would=Luck of the Time.

[202] Chavis and Cazotte change the name to “Abadid,” which, like “Khadнdбn,” is nonsignificant.

[203] Arab. “Fбris,” here a Reiter, or Dugald Dolgetti, as mostly were the hordes led by the mediжval Italian Condottieri.

[204] So Napoleon the Great also believed that Providence is mostly favorable to “gros bataillons.”

[205] Pers. and Arab.=“Good perfection.”

[206] In Chavis and Cazotte “Story of Baharkan.” Bihkard (in Shiraz pronounced “Kyard”)=“Well he did.”

[207] See “Katrъ” in the Introduction to the Bakhtiyбr-nбmah.

[208] The text has “Jaukalбn” for Saulajбn, the Persian “Chaugбn”=the crooked bat used in Polo. See vol. 1. 46.

[209] Amongst Moslems, I have noted, circumstantial evidence is not lawful: the witness must swear to what he has seen. A curious consideration, how many innocent men have been hanged by “circumstantial evidence.” See vol. v. 97.

[210] In Chavis and Cazotte “Story of Abattamant (!), or the Prudent Man;” also Aylбn Shah becomes Olensa after Italian fashion.

[211] In Arab. idiom a long hand or arm means power, a phrase not wholly unused in European languages. Chavis and Cazotte paraphrase “He who keeps his hands crossed upon his breast, shall not see them cut off.”

[212] Arab. “Jama’a atrбfah,” lit.=he drew in his extremities, it being

contrary to "etiquette" in the presence of a superior not to cover hands and feet. In the wild Argentine Republic the savage Gaucho removes his gigantic spurs when coming into the presence of his master.

[213] About the equivalent to the Arab. or rather Egypto-Syrian form "Jiddan," used in the modern slang sense.

[214] i.e. that he become my son-in-law.

[215] For the practice of shampooing often alluded to in The Nights, see vol. iii. 17. The king "sleeping on the boys' knees" means that he dropped off whilst his feet were on the laps of the lads.

[216] Meaning the honour of his Harem.

[217] Pardon, lit.=security; the cry for quarter already introduced into English

"Or raise the craven cry Aman."

It was Mohammed's express command that this prayer for mercy should be respected even in the fury of fight. See vol. i. 342.

[218] A saying found in every Eastern language beginning with Hebrew; Proverbs xxvi. 27, "Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein."

[219] i.e. a domed tomb where prayers and perlections of the Koran could be made. "Kubbah" in Marocco is still the term for a small square building with a low medianaranja cupola under which a Santon lies interred. It is the "little Waly" of our "blind travellers" in the unholy "Holy Land."

[220] i.e. to secure her assistance in arousing the king's wrath.

[221] i.e. so slow to avenge itself.

[222] Story of Sultan Hebriam (!), and his Son" (Chavis and Cazotte). Unless they greatly enlarged upon the text, they had a much fuller

copy than that found in the Bresl. Edit.

[223] A right kingly king, in the Eastern sense of the word, would strike off their heads for daring to see omens threatening his son and heir: this would be constructive treason of the highest because it might be expected to cause its own fulfilment.

[224] Mohammed's Hadнs "Kazzibъ 'l-Munajjimъna bi Rabbi 'I-Ka'abah"=the Astrologers lied, by the Ka'abah's Lord!

[225] Arab. "Khawбtнn," plur. of Khбtъn, a matron, a lady, vol. iv. 66.

[226] See Al-Mas'udi, chapt. xvii. (Fr. Transl. ii. 48-49) of the circular cavity two miles deep and sixty in circuit inhabited by men and animals on the Caucasus near Derbend.

[227] Arab. "Nafas" lit.=breath. Arabs living in a land of caverns know by experience the danger of asphyxiation in such places.

[228] This simple tale is told with much pathos not of words but of sense.

[229] Arab. "Ajal" = the appointed day of death; also used for sudden death. See vol. i. 74.

[230] i.e. the Autumnal Equinox, one of the two great festival days (the other being the New Year) of the Persians, and surviving in our Michaelmas. According to Al-Mas'udн (chap. xxi.), it was established to commemorate the capture of Zahhбk (Azhi-Dahбka), the biting snake (the Hindu Ahi) of night and darkness, the Greek Astyages, by Furaydun or Feridun. Prof. Sayce (Principles of Comparative Philology,) connects the latter with the Vedic deity Trita, who harnessed the Sun-horse (Rig. v. i. 163, 2, 3), the {tritogйneia} of Homer, a title of Athene, the Dawn-goddess, and Burnouf proved the same Trita to be Thraйtaona, son of Athwya, of the Avesta, who finally became Furaydъn, the Greek Kyrus. See vol. v. 1.

[231] In Chavis and Cazotte, "Story of Selimansha and his Family."

[232] Arab. for Pers. Pahluwбn (from Pahlau) a brave, a warrior, an athlete, applied in India to a champion in any gymnastic exercise, especially in wrestling. The Frenchman calls him "Balavan"; and the Bresl. text in more than one place () calls him "Bahwбn."

[233] i.e. King (Arab.) King (Persian): we find also Sultan Malik Shah=King King King.

[234] Arab. "Aulбd-н," a vulgarism, plural for dual.

[235] Mr. Payne translates, "so he might take his father's leavings" i.e. heritage, reading "Ssбr" which I hold to be a clerical error for Sбr=Vendetta, blood revenge (Bresl. Edit. vi. 310).

[236] Arab. "Al-'Ssн" the pop. term for one who refuses to obey a constituted authority and syn. with Pers. "Yбghн." "Ant 'Ssн?" Wilt thou not yield thyself? says a policeman to a refractory Fellah.

[237] i.e. of the Greeks: so in Kor. xxx. 1. "Alif Lam Mim, the Greeks (Al-Roum) have been defeated." Mr. Rodwell curiously remarks that "the vowel-points for 'defeated' not being originally written, would make the prophecy true in either event, according as the verb received an active or passive sense in pronunciation." But in discovering this mare's nest, a rank piece of humbug like Aio te Aeacida, etc., he forgets that all the Prophet's "Companions," numbering some 5000, would pronounce it only in one way and that no man could mistake "ghalabat" (active) for "ghulibat" (passive).

[238] The text persistently uses "Jбriyah"=damsel, slave-girl, for the politer "Sabiyah"=young lady, being written in a rude and uncourtly style.

[239] So our familiar phrase "Some one to back us."

[240] Arab. "'Akkada lahu rбy," plur. of rбyat, a banner. See vol. iii.

[241] i.e. “What concern hast thou with the king’s health?” The question is offensively put.

[242] Arab. “Masalah,” a question; here an enigma.

[243] Arab. “Liallб” (i.e. li, an, lб) lest; but printed here and elsewhere with the yб as if it were “laylan,”=for a single night.

[244] i.e. if my death be fated to befal to-day, none may postpone it to a later date.

[245] Arab. “Dustн”: so the ceremony vulgarly called “Doseh” and by the ItaloEgyptians “Dosso,” the riding over disciples’ backs by the Shaykh of the Sa’diyah Darwayshes (Lane M.E. chapt. xxv.) which took place for the last time at Cairo in 1881.

[246] In Chavis and Cazotte she conjures him “by the great Maichonarblatha Sarsourat” (Mнat wa arba’at ashar Sъrat)=the 114 chapters of the Alcoran.

[247] I have noted that Moslem law is not fully satisfied without such confession which, however, may be obtained by the bastinado. It is curious to compare English procedure with what Moslem would be in such a case as that of the famous Tichborne Claimant. What we did need hardly be noticed. An Arab judge would in a case so suspicious at once have applied the stick and in a quarter of an hour would have settled the whole business; but then what about the “Devil’s own,” the lawyers and lawyers’ fees? And he would have remarked that the truth is not less true because obtained by such compulsory means.

[248] The Hudhud, so called from its cry “Hood! Hood!” It is the Lat. upupa, Gr. {йpops} from its supposed note epip or upup; the old Egyptian Kukufa; Heb. Dukiphath and Syriac Kikuphб (Bochart Hierozoicon, part ii. 347). The Spaniards call it Gallo de Marzo (March-Cock) from its returning in that month, and our old writers

"lapwing" (Deut. xiv. 18). This foul-feeding bird derives her honours from chapt. xxvii. of the Koran (q.v.), the Hudhud was sharp-sighted and sagacious enough to discover water underground which the devils used to draw after she had marked the place by her bill.

[249] Here the vocative Yб is designedly omitted in poetical fashion (e.g., KhalнliyyaЧmy friend!) to show the speaker's emotion. See of Captain A. Lockett's learned and curious work the "Miet Amil" (=Hundred Regimens), Calcutta, 1814.

[250] The story-teller introduces this last instance with considerable art as a preface to the dйnouement.

[251] See Chavis and Cazotte "Story of the King of Haram and the slave."

[252] i.e. men caught red-handed.

[253] Arab. "Libwah," one of the multitudinous names for the king of beasts, still used in Syria where the animal has been killed out, soon to be followed by the bear (U. Syriacus). The author knows that lions are most often found in couples.

[254] Arab. "Himyбn or Hamyбn," = a girdle.

[255] As he would kiss a son. I have never yet seen an Englishman endure these masculine kisses, formerly so common in France and Italy, without showing clearest signs of his disgust.

[256] A cheap way of rewarding merit, not confined to Eastern monarchs, but practised by all contemporary Europe.

[257] Arab. "Kasf," = houghing a camel so as to render it helpless. The passage may read, "we are broken to bits (Kisн) by our own sin."

[258] Bresl. Edit., vol. vii. p-4, Night dlxv.

[259] See vol. vi. 175. A Moslem should dress for public occasions, like

the mediжval student, in vestibus (quasi) nigris aut subfuscis; though not, except amongst the Abbasides, absolutely black, as sable would denote Jewry.

[260] A well-known soldier and statesman, noted for piety and austerity. A somewhat fuller version of this story, from which I have borrowed certain details, is given in the Biographical Dictionary of Ibn Khallikбn (i. 303-4). The latter, however, calls the first Abd al-Malik "Ibn Bahrбn" (in the index Ibn Bahrбm), which somewhat spoils the story. "Ibn Khallikan," by-the-by, is derived popularly from "Khalli" (let go), and "Kбna" (it was, enough), a favourite expression of the author, which at last superseded his real name, Abu al-Abbбs Ahmad. He is better off than the companion nicknamed by Mohammed Abъ Horayrah = Father of the She-kitten (not the cat), and who in consequence has lost his true name and pedigree.

[261] In Ibn Khallikбn (i. 303) he is called the "Hashimite," from his ancestor, Hashim ibn Abd Manбf. The Hashimites and Abbasides were fine specimens of the Moslem "Pharisee," as he is known to Christians, not the noble Purushi of authentic history.

[262] Meaning a cap, but of what shape we ignore. Ibn Khallikan afterwards calls it a "Kalansъa," a word still applied to a mitre worn by Christian priests.

[263] Arab. "Lб baas," equivalent in conversation to our "No matter," and "All right."

[264] As a member of the reigning family, he wore black clothes, that being the especial colour of the Abbasides, adopted by them in opposition to the rival dynasty of the Ommiades, whose family colour was white, that of the Fatimites being green. The Moslems borrowed their sacred green, "the hue of the Pure," from the old Nabatheans and the other primitive colours from the tents of the captains who were thus distinguished. Hence also amongst the Turks and Tartars, the White Horde and the Black Horde.

[265] The word has often occurred, meaning date-wine or grape-wine.

Ibn Khaldъn contends that in Ibn Khallikan it here means the former.

[266] ¬£25,000. Ibn Khallikan (i. 304) makes the debt four millions of dirhams or ¬£90,000-¬£100,000.

[267] In the Biographer occurs the equivalent phrase, “That a standard be borne over his head.”

[268] Here again we have a suggestion that Ja’afar presumed upon his favour with the Caliph; such presumption would soon be reported (perhaps by the austиre intrigant himself) to the royal ears, and lay the foundation of ill-will likely to end in utter destruction.

[269] Bresl. Edit., vol. vii. p-60, Night dlxvii.

[270] Fourth Abbaside, A.D. 785-786, vol. v. 93. He was a fantastic tyrant who was bent upon promoting to the Caliphate his own son, Ja’afar; he cast Harun into prison and would probably have slain him but for the intervention of the mother of the two brothers, Khayzarбn widow of Al-Mahdi, and Yahya the Barmecide.

[271] Third Abbaside, A.D. 775-785, vol. vii. 136; ix. 334.

[272] This reminds us of the Bir Al-Khбtim (Well of the Signet) at Al-Medinah; in which Caliph Osman during his sixth year dropped from his finger the silver ring belonging to the founder of Al-Islam, engraved in three lines with “Mohammed / Apostle (of) / Allah /.” It had served to sign the letters sent to neighboring kings and had descended to the first three successors (Pilgrimage ii. 219). Mohammed owned three seal- rings, the golden one he destroyed himself; and the third, which was of carnelian, was buried with other objects by his heirs. The late Subhi Pasha used to declare that the latter had been brought to him with early Moslem coins by an Arab, and when he died he left it to the Sultan.

[273] Mr. Payne quotes Al-Tabari’s version of this anecdote. “El-Mehdi had presented his son Haroun with a ruby ring, worth a hundred thousand dinars, and the latter being one day with his brother (the

then reigning Khalif), El Hadi saw the ring on his finger and desired it. So, when Haroun went out from him, he sent after him, to seek the ring of him. The Khalif’s messenger overtook Er Reshid on the bridge over the Tigris and acquainted him with his errand; whereupon the prince, enraged at the demand, pulled off the ring and threw it into the river. When El Hadi died and Er Rashid succeeded to the throne, he went with his suite to the bridge in question and bade his Vizier Yehya ben Khalid send for divers and cause them make search for the ring. It had then been five months in the water and no one believed it would be found. However, the divers plunged into the river and found the ring in the very place where he had thrown it in, whereat Haroun rejoiced with an exceeding joy, regarding it as a presage of fair fortune.”

[274] Not historically correct. Al-Rashid made Y6hya, father of Ja’afar, his Wazir; and the minister’s two sons, Fazl and Ja’afar, acted as his lieutenants for seventeen years from A.D. 786 till the destruction of the Barmecides in A.D. 803. The tale-teller quotes Ja’afar because he was the most famous of the house.

[275] Perhaps after marrying Ja’afar to his sister. But the endearing name was usually addressed to Ja’afar’s elder brother Fazl, who was the Caliph’s foster-brother.

[276] Read seventeen: all these minor inaccuracies tend to invalidate the main statement.

[277] Arab. “Yar’ad” which may mean “thundereth.” The dark saying apparently means, Do good whilst thou art in power and thereby strengthen thyself.

[278] The lady seems to have made the first advances and Bin Abъ H6jilah quotes a sixaine in which she amorously addresses her spouse. See D’Herbelot, s.v. Abbassa.

[279] The tale-teller passes with a very light hand over the horrors of a massacre which terrified and scandalised the then civilised world, and which still haunt Moslem history. The Caliph, like the eking, can

do no wrong; and, as Viceregent of Allah upon Earth, what would be deadly crime and mortal sin in others becomes in his case an ordinance from above. These actions are superhuman events and fatal which man must not judge nor feel any sentiment concerning them save one of mysterious respect. For the slaughter of the Barmecides, see my Terminal Essay, vol. x.

[280] Bresl. Edit., vol. vii. p-1, Night dlxviii.

[281] Ibn al-Sammбk (Son of the fisherman or fishmonger), whose name was Abъ al-Abbбs Mohammed bin Sabнh, surnamed Al-Mazkъr (Ibn al-Athir says Al-Muzakkar), was a native of Kufah (where he died in A.H. 183 = 799-80), a preacher and professional tale-teller famed as a stylist and a man of piety. Al-Siyuti () relates of him that when honoured by the Caliph with courteous reception he said to him, “Thy humility in thy greatness is nobler than thy greatness.” He is known to have been the only theologician who, ex cathedr√ґ, promised Al-Rashid a place in Paradise.

[282] Bresl. Edit., vol. vii. p-2, Night dlxviii.

[283] Seventh Abbaside, A.H. 198-227 = 813-842. See vol. iv. 109. He was a favourite with his father, who personally taught him tradition; but he offended the Faithful by asserting the creation of the Koran, by his leaning to Shi’ah doctrine, and by changing the black garments of the Banu Abbas into green. He died of a chill at Budandun, a day’s march from Tarsus, where he was buried: for this Podendon = = stretch out thy feet, see Al-Siyuti, p-27.

[284] Sixth Abbaside, A.D. 809-13. See vol. v. 93: 152. He was of pure Abbaside blood on the father’s side and his mother Zubaydah’s. But he was unhappy in his Wazir Al-Fazl bin Rabн, the intriguer against the Barmecides, who estranged him from his brothers Al-Kбsim and Al-Maamъn. At last he was slain by a party of Persians, “who struck him with their swords and cut him through the nape of his neck and went with his head to Tahir bin al-Husayn, general to Al-Maamъn, who set it upon a garden-wall and made proclamation, This is the

head of the deposed Mohammed (Al-Amнn).” Al-Siyuti, p-311. It was remarked by Moslem annalists that every sixth Abbaside met with a violent death: the first was this Mohammed al-Amin surnamed Al-Makhlъ’ = The Deposed; the second sixth was Al-Musta’нn; and the last was Al- Muktadн bi’llбh.

[285] Lit. “Order and acceptance.” See the Tale of the
Sandal-wood Merchant and the Sharpers: vol. vi. 202.

[286] This is not noticed by Al-Siyuti () who says that his mother was a slave-concubine named Marбjil who died in giving him birth. The tale in the text appears to be a bit of Court scandal, probably suggested by the darkness of the Caliph’s complexion.

[287] Bresl. Edit., vol. viii. p-9, Nights dclx-i.

[288] King of the Arab kingdom of Hirah, for whom see vol. v. 74. This ancient villain rarely appears in such favourable form when tales are told of him.

[289] The tribe of the chieftain and poet, Hбtim Tбн, for whom see vol. iv. 94.

[290] i.e. I will make a covenant with him before the Lord.
Here the word “Allah” is introduced among the Arabs of The
Ignorance.

[291] i.e. the man of the Tribe of Tay.

[292] A similar story of generous dealing is told of the
Caliph Omar in The Nights. See vol. v. 99 et seq.

[293] Bresl. Edit., vol. viii. p-8, Nights dclxxv-vi. In Syria and Egypt Firъz (the Persian “Pнroz”) = victorious, triumphant, is usually pronounced Fayrъz. The tale is a rechauffй of the King and the Wazir’s Wife in The Nights. See vol. vi. 129.

[294] i.e. I seek refuge with Allah = God forfend.

[295] Bresl. Edit., vol. xi. pЧ318, Nights dccclxxvЧdccccxxx. Here again the names are Persian, showing the provenance of the tale; Shah Bakht is=King Luck and Rahwбn is a corruption of Rahbбn=one who keeps the (right) way; or it may be Ruhbбn=the Pious. Mr. W. A. Clouston draws my attention to the fact that this tale is of the Sindibad (Seven Wise Masters) cycle and that he finds remotely allied to it a Siamese collection, entitled Nonthuk Pakaranam in which Princess Kankras, to save the life of her father, relates eighty or ninety tales to the king of Pataliput (Palibothra). He purposes to discuss this and similar subjects in extenso in his coming volumes, “Popular Tales and Fictions: their Migrations and Transformations,” to which I look forward with pleasant anticipations.

[296] So far this work resembles the Bakhtiyбr-nбmeh, in which the ten Wazirs are eager for the death of the hero who relates tales and instances to the king, warning him against the evils of precipitation.

[297] One pilgrimage (Hajjat al-Islam) is commanded to all Moslems. For its conditions see The Nights, vol. v. 202, et seq.

[298] Arab. “Hajj al-Shбrif.” For the expenses of the process see my Pilgrimage iii. 12. As in all “Holy Places,” from Rome to Benares, the sinner in search of salvation is hopelessly taken in and fleeced by the “sons of the sacred cities.”

[299] Here a stranger invites a guest who at once accepts the invitation; such is the freedom between Moslems at Meccah and Al-Medinah, especially during pilgrimagetime.

[300] i.e. the master could no longer use her carnally.

[301] i.e. wantoned it away.

[302] Here “Al-Hajj”=the company of pilgrims, a common use of the term.

[303] The text says, “He went on with the caravan to the Pilgrimage,”

probably a clerical error. “Hajj” is never applied to the Visitation (Ziyбrah) at Al-Medinah.

[304] Arab. “Jбwar,” that is, he became a mujбwir, one who lives in or near a collegiate mosque. The Egyptian proverb says, “He pilgrimaged: quoth one, Yes, and for his villainy lives (yujawir) at Meccah,” meaning that he found no other place bad enough for him.

[305] I have often heard of this mysterious art in the East, also of similarly making rubies and branch-coral of the largest size; but, despite all my endeavours, I never was allowed to witness the operation. It was the same with alchemy, which, however, I found very useful to the “smasher.” See my History of Sindh, chapt. vii.

[306] Elsewhere in The Nights specified as white woollen robes.

[307] Whilst she was praying the girl could not address her; but the use of the rosary is a kind of “parergon.”

[308] Arab. “Yб Hбjjah” (in Egypt pronounced “Hбggeh”), a polite address to an elderly woman, who is thus supposed to have “finished her faith.”

[309] Arab. “Kanнsah” (from Kans=sweeping) a pagan temple, a Jewish synagogue, and especially a Christian church.

[310] i.e. standeth in prayer or supplication.

[311] i.e. fell into hysterics, a very common complaint amongst the highly nervous and excitable races of the East.

[312] Arab. “Kahramбnah,” a word which has often occurred in divers senses, nurse, duenna, chamberwoman, stewardess, armed woman defending the Harem, etc.

[313] Which is supposed to contain the Harem.

[314] Especially mentioned because the guide very often follows his

charges, especially when he intends to play them an ugly trick. I had an unpleasant adventure of the kind in Somaliland; but having the fear of the “Aborigines Protection Society” before my eyes, refrained from doing more than hinting at it.

[315] i.e. otherwise than according to ordinance of Allah.

[316] A well-known city of lrбk ‘Ajamн (or Persian).

[317] i.e. spare pegs and strings, plectra, thumb-guards, etc.

[318] Arab. “Hasнr,” the fine matting used for sleeping on during the hot season in Egypt and Syria.

[319] i.e. The bed where the “rough and tumble” had taken place.

[320] This word, which undoubtedly derives from cuculus, cogul, cocu, a cuckoo, has taken a queer twist, nor can I explain how its present meaning arose from a shebird which lays her egg in a strange nest. Wittol, on the other hand, from Witan, to know, is rightly applied to one whom La Fontaine calls “cocu et content,” the Arab Dayyъs.

[321] Arab. “Shabakah,” here a net like a fisherman’s, which is hung over the hole in the wall called a shop, during the temporary absence of the shopkeeper. See my Pilgrimage, i. 100.

[322] i.e. of which the singer speaks.

[323] i.e., she found him good at the to-and-fro movement; our corresponding phrase is “basket-making.”

[324] Arab. “Mu’arris”: in vol. i. 338, I derived the word from ‘Ars marriage, like the Germ. Kupplerin. This was a mere mistake; the root is ‘Ars (with a Sбd not a Sнn) and means a pimp who shows off or displays his wares.

[325] Arab. “Akhmitu Ghazla-hб” lit.=thicken her yarn or thread.

[326] I must again warn the reader that the negative, which to us

appears unnecessary, is emphatic in Arabic.

[327] i.e. By removing the goods from the “but” to the “ben.” Pilgrimage i. 99.

[328] Arab. “Tannъr,” here the large earthern jar with a cover of the same material, round which the fire is built.

[329] Being a musician the hero of the tale was also a pederast.

[330] Here Mr. Payne supplies “Then they returned and sat down” (apparently changing places). He is quite correct in characterising the Bresl. Edit. as corrupt and “fearfully incoherent.” All we can make certain of in this passage is that the singer mistook the Persian for his white slave (Mameluke).

[331] Arab. “Bazaka,” normally used in the sense of spitting; here the saliva might be applied for facilitating insertion.

[332] In Persian “Sward o burd,”=brought and bore away, gen. applied to the movement of the man as in the couplet,

Chenнn burd o бward o бward o burd,
Kih dбyeh pas-i-pardeh zi ghussah murd.

He so came and went, went and came again,
That Nurse who lay curtained to faint was fain.

[333] Alluding to the fighting rams which are described by every Anglo-Indian traveller. They strike with great force, amply sufficient to crush the clumsy hand which happens to be caught between the two foreheads. The animals are sometimes used for Fбl or consulting futurity: the name of a friend is given to one and that of a foe to the other; and the result of the fight suggests victory or defeat for the men.

[334] Arab. “Jauhar”=the jewel, the essential nature of a substance. Compare M. Alcofribas’ “Abstraction of the Quintessence.”

[335] In parts of the Moslem world Al-Jabr=the tyranny, is the equivalent of what we call “civil law,” as opposed to Al-Sharн’ah, or Holy Law, the religious code; Diwan al-Jabr (Civil Court) being the contrary of the Mahkamah or Kazi’s tribunal. See “First Footsteps in East Africa,” .

[336] i.e. in offering thee the kingship.

[337] i.e. “a man of fourscore.”

[338] i.e. outside the city.

[339] See the conclusion of the story.

[340] i.e. I have said my say.

[341] Arab. “Al-Mutabattil,” usually=one who forsakes the world. The Katarбt alNaysбn or rain-drops in the month Naysбn (April) produce pearls when falling into the oyster-shells and poison in the serpent’s mouth. The allusions to them are innumerable in Persian poetry, and the idea gives rise to a host of moralities more or less insipid.

[342] This is the general idea concerning the diamond in all countries where the gem is dug, but I never heard it of the pearl.

[343] Arab. “Faras,” properly a mare; but the writer begins by using the feminine, and then employs the masculine. It is an abominable text.

[344] Arab. “Rutab wa manбzil,” may also mean “stations and mansions (of the moon and planets).” The double entendre was probably intended.

[345] Arab. “Za’нf,” still a popular word, meaning feeble, sick, ailing, but especially, weak in venery.

[346] See the original of this tale in King Al-Af’б:
Al-Mas’udi, chap. xlvi.

[347] He says this without any sense of shame, coolly as

Horace or Catullus wrote.

[348] i.e. of the caravan with which he came.

[349] Arab. “Al-’Adl.” In the form of Zъ ‘adl it = a legal witness, a man of good repute; in Marocco and other parts of the Moslem world ‘Adul (plur. ‘Udъl) signifies an assessor of the Kazi, a notary. Padre Lerchundy (loc. cit.) renders it notario.

[350] i.e. I would marry thy daughter, not only for her own sake, but for alliance with thy family.

[351] i.e. the bride’s face.

[352] The Ghusl or complete ablution after car. cop.

[353] Thus the girl was made lawful to him as a concubine by the “loathly ladye,” whose good heart redeemed her ill-looks.

[354] Meaning the poor man and his own daughter.

[355] Mr. Payne changes the Arab title to the far more appropriate heading, “Story of the Rich Man and his Wasteful Son.” The tale begins with Δsop’s fable of the faggot; and concludes with the “Heir of Linne,” in the famous Scotch ballad. Mr. Clouston refers also to the Persian Tale of Murchlis (The Sorrowful Wazir); to the Forty Vezirs (23rd Story) to Cinthio and to sundry old English chap-books.

[356] Arab. “Tafrнk wa’l-jam’a.”

[357] Arab. “Wafбt” pop. used as death, decease, departure; but containing the idea of departing to the mercy of Allah and “paying the debt of nature.” It is not so ill-omened a word as Maut = death.

[358] i.e. gifts and presents. See vol. iv. 185.

[359] i.e. Turcomans; presently called Sнstбn, for which see vol. ii. 218.

[360] In my Pilgrimage (i. 38), I took from Mr. Galton’s Art of Travel,

the idea of opening with a lancet the shoulder or other fleshy part of the body and inserting into it a precious stone. This was immensely derided by not a few including one who, then a young man from the country, presently became a Cabinet Minister. Despite their omniscience, however, the "dodge" is frequently practised. See how this device was practised by Jeshua Nazarenus, vol. v. 238.

[361] Arab. "'Alam," a pile of stones, a flag or some such landmark. The reader will find them described in "The Sword of Midian," i. 98, and passim.

[362] Mr. Clouston refers to the "Miles Gloriosus" (Plautus); to "Orlando Innamorato" of Berni (the Daughter of the King of the Distant Isles); to the "Seven Wise Masters" ("The Two Dreams," or "The Crafty Knight of Hungary"); to his Book of Sindibad, ff.; to Miss Busk's Folk-Lore of Rome, ("The Grace of the Hunchback"); to Prof. Crane's "Italian Popular Tales," , and "The Elopement," from Pitrи's Sicilian collection.

[363] In sign of impatience; "Look sharp!"

[364] i.e. the resemblance of the supposed sister to his wife. This is a rechauffй of Kamar al-Zamбn iid.

[365] This leaving a long lock upon the shaven poll is a very ancient practice: we find it amongst the old Egyptians. For the Shъshah or top-knot of hair, see vol. i. 308. It is differently worn in the several regions of the Moslem world: the Maroccans of the Rнf country grow it not on the poll but on one side of the head. As a rule, however, it is confined to boys, and is shaved off at puberty.

[366] Suspecting her to be a witch because she was old and poor. The same was the case in Europe when these unfortunates were burned during the early part of the last century and even now the country-folk are often ready to beat or drown them. The abominable witchcraft acts, which arose from bibliolatry and belief in obsolete superstitions, can claim as many victims in "Protestant" countries, England and the Anglo-American States as the Jesuitical Inquisition.

[367] It is not easy to make sense of this passage especially when the Wazir is spoken of.

[368] This is a rechauffй of the Sandal-Wood Merchant and the Sharpers. Vol. vi. 202.

[369] I have followed Mr. Payne's adaptation of the text as he makes sense, whilst the Arabic does not. I suppose that the holes are disposed crosswise.

[370] i.e. Thy skill is so great that thou wilt undermine my authority with the king.

[371] This famous tale is first found in a small collection of Latin fables (Adolphi Fabulж apud Leyser Hist. Poet. Medii Δvi, Ч8), beginning

Cжcus erat quidam, cui pulcra virago, etc.

The date is 1315, and Caxton printed it in English in 1483; hence it was adopted by Boccaccio, Day vii., Novella 9; whence Chaucer's "Marchaundes Tale": this, by-the-by, was translated by Pope in his sixteenth or seventeenth year, and christened "January and May." The same story is inserted in La Fontaine (Contes, lib. ii., No. 8), "La Gageure des trois Commиres," with the normal poirier; and lastly it appears in Wieland's "Oberon," canto vi.; where the Fairy King restores the old husband's sight, and Titania makes the lover on the pear-tree invisible. Mr. Clouston refers me also to the Bahбr-i-Dбnish, or Prime of Knowledge (Scott's translation, vol. ii., pЧ68); "How the Brahman learned the Tirrea Bede"; to the Turkish "Kirk Wazir" (Forty Wazirs) of the Shaykh-Zadeh (xxivth Wazir's story); to the "ComЬdia Lydiж," and to Barbazan's "Fabliaux et Contes" t. iii. , "La Saineresse," the cupping-woman.

[372] In the European versions it is always a pear-tree.

[373] This supernatural agency, ever at hand and ever credible to Easterns, makes this the most satisfactory version of the world-wide tale.

[374] i.e. till next harvest time.

[375] The “‘Ashshбr,” or Tither, is most unpopular in the Nile-valley as in Wales; and he generally merits his ill-repute. Tales concerning the villainy of these extortioners abound in Egypt and Syria. The first step in improvement will be so to regulate the tithes that the peasants may not be at the mercy of these “publicans and sinners” who, however, can plead that they have paid highly for appointment to office and must recoup themselves.

[376] Arab. “‘Ammir”=cause to flourish.

[377] Arab. “Afkah,” a better Fakнh or theologian; all Moslem law being based upon the Koran, the Sayings (Hadis) and Doings (Sunnat) of the Prophet; and, lastly, the Rasm or immemorial custom of the country provided that it be not opposed to the other three.

[378] If the number represent the days in the Moslem year it should be 354=6 months of 29 days and the rest of 30).

[379] The affirmative particle “kad” preceding a verb in the past gives it a present and at times a future signification.

[380] A danik, the Persian “Dбng,” is one-sixth of a dirham, i.e. about one penny. See vol. ii. 204.

[381] It would mightily tickle an Eastern audience to hear of a Tither being unable to do any possible amount of villainy.

[382] i.e. The oath of triple divorce which is, I have said, irrevocable, and the divorcйe may not be taken again by her husband till her marriage with another man (the Mustahill of The Nights) has been consummated. See vol. iv., 48.

[383] i.e. thousandfold cuckold.

[384] Arab. “Wadн’ah” = the blows which the Robber had given him.

[385] Arab. “Sindiyбn” (from the Persian) gen. used for the holm-oak, the Quercus pseudococcifera, vulgarly termed ilex, or native oak, and forming an extensive scrub in Syria. For this and other varieties of Quercus, as the Mallъl and the Ballъt, see Unexplored Syria, i. 68.

[386] Hiberniси.

[387] Lit. “In the way of moderation” = at least, at the most moderate reckoning.

[388] Arab. “Rasmбl,” the vulg. Syrian and Egyptian form of
Raas al-mбl = stock-in-trade.

[389] Usually a ring or something from his person to show that all was fair play; here however, it was a watchword.

[390] Arab. “Ya Madyъbah,” prob. a clerical error for “Madyъnah,” alluding to her many debts which he had paid. Here, however, I suspect the truly Egyptian term “Yб Manyъkah!”=O thou berogered; a delicate term of depreciation which may be heard a dozen times a day in the streets of Cairo. It has also a masculine form, “Yб Manyъk!”

[391] About=100 lb. Mr. Sayce (Comparative Philol.) owns that Mn is old Egyptian but makes it a loan from the “Semites,” like Sъs (horse), Sar (prince), Sepet (lip) and Murcabutha (chariot), and goes to its origin in the Acratan column, because “it is not found before the times when the Egyptians borrowed freely from Palestine.” But surely it is premature to draw such conclusion when we have so much still to learn concerning the dates of words in Egyptian.

[392] Arab. Jбmi’. This anachronism, like many of the same kind, is only apparent. The faith preached by Sayyidnб Isa was the Islam of his day and dispensation, and it abrogated all other faiths till itself abrogated by the mission of Mahommed. It is therefore logical to apply to it terms which we should hold to be purely Moslem. On the other hand it is not logical to paint the drop-curtain of the Ober-Ammergau “Miracle-play” with the Mosque of Omar and the

minarets of Al-Islam. I humbly represented this fact to the mechanicals of the village whose performance brings them in so large a sum every decade; but Snug, Snout and Bottom turned up the nose of contempt and looked upon me as a mere “shallow sceptic.”

[393] Arab. “Talбmizah,” plur. of Tilmнz, a disciple, a young attendant. The word is Syriac <Arabic letters> and there is a Heb. root <Hebrew letters> but no Arabic. In the Durrat al-Ghawwбs, however, Tilmнz, Bilkнs, and similar words are Arabic in the form of Fa’lнl and Fi’lнl

[394] Rъh Allah, lit.=breath of Allah, attending to the miraculous conception according to the Moslems. See vol. v. 238.

[395] Readers will kindly pronounce this word “Sahrб” not Sahбrб.

[396] Mr. Clouston refers for analogies to this tale to his “Oriental Sources of some of Chaucer’s Tales” (Notes and Queries, 1885Ч86), and he finds the original of The Pardoner’s Tale in one of the Jбtakas or Buddhist Birth-stories entitled Vedabbha Jataka. The story is spread over all Europe; in the Cento Novelle Antiche; Morlini; Hans Sachs, etc. And there are many Eastern versions, e.g. a Persian by Farнd al-Dнn “‘Attar” who died at a great age in A.D. 1278; an Arabic version in The Orientalist (Kandy, 1884); a Tibetan in Rollston’s Tibetan Tales; a Cashmirian in Knowles’ Dict. of Kashmнrн Proverbs, etc., etc., etc.

[397] Arab. “‘Awбn” lit.=aids, helpers; the “Aun of the Jinn” has often occurred.

[398] i.e. the peasant.

[399] i.e. those serving on the usual feudal tenure; and bound to suit and service for their fiefs.

[400] i.e. the yearly value of his fief.

[401] i.e. men who paid taxes.

[402] Arab. “Rasбtнk” plur. of Rustбk. See vol. vi. 289.

[403] This adventure is a rechauffй of Amjad’s adventure (vol. iii. 333) without, however, its tragic catastrophe.

[404] The text is so concise as to be enigmatical. The house was finely furnished for a feast, as it belonged to the Man who was lavish, etc.

[405] Arab. “Khubz Samнz;” the latter is the Arabisation of the Pers. Samнd, fine white bread, simnel, Germ. semmel.

[406] The text has “Bakъlбt”=pot-herbs; but it is probably a clerical error for “Baklбwбt.” See vol. ii. 311.

[407] Egyptian-like he at once calls upon Allah to witness a lie and his excuse would be that the lie was well-intentioned.

[408] i.e. The private bagnio which in old days every grand house possessed.

[409] This is a fancy title, but it suits the tale better than that in the text (xi. 183) “The Richard who lost his wealth and his wits.” Mr. Clouston refers to similar stories in Sacchetti and other early Italian novelists.

[410] Arab. “Al-Muwaswis”: for “Wiswбs” see vol. i. 106. This class of men in stories takes the place of our “cunning idiot,” and is often confounded with the Saudбwi, the melancholist proper.

[411] Arab. “Hamhama,” an onomapЬic, like our hum, hem, and haw.

[412] Arab. “Barniyah,” a vessel either of glass or pottery like that in which the manna was collected (Exod. xvi. 33).

[413] A hasty man, as Ghazbбn=an angry man.

[414] The Bresl. Edit. misprint. “Khablas” in more places than one, now

with a Sнn, then with a Sбd. Khalbas suggests "Khalbъs," a buffoon, for which see vol. ii. 143. In Egypt, however, the latter generally ends in a Sad (see Lane's "Khalboos," M. E. chap. xxvii).

[415] This story is a rechauffй of the Jewish Kazi and his pious wife; see vol. v. 256.

[416] The Arab form of "Nayshбpъr"=reeds of (King) Shapъr: see vol. ix. 230.

[417] Arab. "Ala Tarнk al-Satr wa al-Salбmah," meaning that each other's wives did not veil before their brothers-in-law as is usually done. It may also mean that they were under Allah's protection and in best of condition.

[418] i.e. he dared not rape her.

[419] i.e. her "yes" meant "yes" and her "no" meant "no."

[420] "Ignorance" (Jahl) may, here and elsewhere, mean wickedness, forwardness, folly, vicious folly or uncalled-for wrath. Here Arabic teaches a good lesson, for ignorance, intemperance and egoism are, I repeat, the roots of all evil.

[421] So Mohammed said of a child born in adultery "The babe to the blanket (i.e. let it be nursed and reared) and the adultress to the stone."

[422] Arab. "Wa hб," etc., an interjection corresponding with the Syriac "ho" lo! (i.e., look) behold! etc.

[423] This paragraph is supplied by Mr. Payne: something of the kind has evidently fallen out of the Arab text.

[424] i.e. in the presence of witnesses, legally.

[425] Lit. a myriad, ten thousand dirhams. See vol. iv. 281.

[426] The fire was intended to defend the mother and babe from Jinns,

bad spirits, the evil eye, etc. Romans lit candles in the room of the puerpara; hence the goddess Candelifera, and the term Candelaria applied to the B.V. In Brand's Popular Antiquities (ii. 144) we find, "Gregory mentions an ordinary superstition of the old wives who dare not trust a child in a cradle by itself alone without a candle;" this was for fear of the "night-hag" (Milton, P. L., ii. 662). The same idea prevailed in Scotland and in Germany: see the learned Liebrecht (who translated the Pentamerone) "Zur Volkskunde," . In Sweden if the candle go out, the child may be carried off by the Trolls (Weckenstedt, Wendische Sagen,). The custom has been traced to the Malay peninsula, whither it was probably imported by the Hindus or the Moslems, and amongst the Tajiks in Bokhara. For the Hindu practice, see Katha S. S. 305, and Prof. Tawney's learned note analysed above.

[427] Arab. "Kбhinah," fem. of Kбhin (Cohen): see Kahбnah, vol. i. 28.

[428] i.e. for a long time, as has been before explained.

[429] i.e. at his service. Arabia was well provided with Hetairж and public women long before the days of Al-Islam.

[430] Arab. "Athar"=sign, mark, trail.

[431] i.e. Persia. See vol. v. 26.

[432] Arab. "'Akбкнr" plur. of 'Akkбr prop.=aromatic roots; but applied to vulgar drugs or simples, as in the Tale of the Sage Duban, i. 46.

[433] Arab. "Si'at rizki-h" i.e., the ease with which he earned his copious livelihood.

[434] i.e. the ten thousand dirhams of the bond, beside the unpaid and contingent portion of her "Mahr" or marriage-settlement.

[435] Arab. "Al-Hбzъr" from Hazr=loquacity, frivolous garrulity. Every craft in the East has a jargon of its own and the goldsmith

(Zargar) is famed for speaking a language made unintelligible by the constant insertion of a letter or letters not belonging to the word. It is as if we rapidly pronounced How d’ye do=Howth doth yeth doth?

[436] Arab. “Asmб al-Adwiyah,” such as are contained in volumes like the “Alfбz al-Adwi-yah” (Nomenclature of Drugs).

[437] I am compelled to insert a line in order to make sense.

[438] “Galen,” who is considered by Moslems as a kind of pre-Islamitic Saint; and whom Rabelais (iii. c. 7) calls Le gentil Falot Galen, is explained by Eustathius as the Serene {Galenтs} from {gelбoo} =rideo.

[439] Arab. “Sбhah” the clear space before the house as opposed to the “Bathah” (Span. Patio) the inner court.

[440] A naпve description of the naпve style of rйclame adopted by the Eastern Bob Sawyer.

[441] Which they habitually do, by the by, with an immense amount of unpleasant detail. See Pilgrimage i. 18.

[442] The old French name for the phial or bottle in which the patient’s water is sent.

[443] A descendant from Mohammed, strictly through his grandson Husayn. See vol. iv. 170.

[444] Arab. “Al-Futъh” lit. the victories; a euphemistic term for what is submitted to the “musculus guineaorum.”

[445] Arab. “Firбsah” lit. judging the points of a mare (faras). Of physiognomy, or rather judging by externals, curious tales are told by the Arabs. In Al-Mas’udi’s (chapt. lvi.) is the original of the camel blind of one eye, etc., which the genius of Voltaire has made famous throughout Europe.

[446] I here quote Mr. Payne's note. "Sic in the text; but the passage is apparently corrupt. It is not plain why a rosy complexion, blue eyes and tallness should be peculiar to women in love. Arab women being commonly short, swarthy and blackeyed, the attributes mentioned appear rather to denote the foreign origin of the woman; and it is probable, therefore, that this passage has by a copyist's error, been mixed up with that which relates to the signs by which the mock physician recognised her strangerhood, the clause specifying the symptoms of her love-lorn condition having been crowded out in the process, an accident of no infrequent occurrence in the transcription of Oriental works."

[447] Most men would have suspected that it was her lover.

[448] The sumptuary laws, compelling for instance the Jews to wear yellow turbans, and the Christians to carry girdles date from the Capture of Jerusalem in A.D. 636 by Caliph Omar. See vol. i. 77; and Terminal Essay ¬I 11.

[449] i.e. Our Sunday: the Jewish week ending with the Sabbath (Saturday). I have already noted this term for Saturn's day, established as a God's rest by Commandment No. iv. How it lost its honours amongst Christians none can say: the text in Col. ii. 16, 17, is insufficient to abolish an order given with such pomp and circumstance to, and obeyed, so strictly and universally by, the Hebrews, including the Founder of Christianity. The general idea is that the Jewish Sabbath was done away with by the Christian dispensation (although Jesus kept it with the usual scrupulous care), and that sundry of the Councils at Colossж and Laodicea anathematised those who observed the Saturday after Israelitish fashion. With the day its object changed; instead of "keeping it holy," as all pious Jews still do, the early Fathers converted it into the "Feast of the Resurrection," which could not be kept too joyously. The "Sabbatismus" of the Sabbatarian Protestant who keeps holy the wrong day is a marvellous perversion and the Sunday feast of France, Italy, and Catholic countries generally is far more logical than the mortification day of England and the so-called

Reformed countries.

[450] Harбis, plur. of Harнsah: see vol. i. 131.

[451] It would have been cooked on our Thursday night, or the Jewish Friday night and would be stale and indigestible on the next day.

[452] Marw (Margiana), which the Turkomans pronounce “Mawr,” is derived by Bournouf from the Sansk. Maru or Marw; and by Sir H. Rawlinson from Marz or Marj, the Lat. Margo; Germ. Mark; English March; Old French Marche and Neo-Lat. Marca. So Marzbбn, a Warden of the Marches: vol. iii. 256. The adj. is not Marбzн, as stated in vol. iii. 222; but Marwazi, for which see Ibn Khallikan, vol. i. , etc.: yet there are good writers who use “Marбzн” as Rбzн for a native of Rayy.

[453] i.e. native of Rayy city. See vol. iv. 104.

[454] Normally used for fuel and at times by funny men to be put into sweetmeats by way of practical joke: these are called “Nukl-i-Pishkil”=goat-dung bonbons. The tale will remind old Anglo-Indians of the two Bengal officers who were great at such “sells” and who “swopped” a spavined horse for a broken-down “buggy.”

[455] In the text “khanбdik,” ditches, trenches; probably (as Mr. Payne suggests) a clerical or typographical error for “Fanбdik,” inns or caravanserais; the plural of “Funduk” (Span. Fonda), for which see vol. viii. 184.

[456] This sentence is supplied by Mr. Payne to remedy the incoherence of the text. Moslems are bound to see True Believers decently buried and the poor often beg alms for the funeral. Here the tale resembles the opening of Hajji Baba by Mr. Morier, that admirable picture of Persian manners and morals.

[457] Arab. “Al-ajr” which has often occurred.

[458] Arab. “Hanъt,” i.e., leaves of the lotus-tree to be infused as a

wash for the corpse; camphor used with cotton to close the mouth and other orifices; and, in the case of a wealthy man, rose-water, musk, ambergris, sandal-wood, and lign-aloes for fumigation.

[459] Which always begin with four “Takbнrs” and differ in many points from the usual orisons. See Lane (M. E. chapt. xxviii.) who is, however, very superficial upon an intricate and interesting subject. He even neglects to mention the number of Ruk’бt (bows) usual at Cairo and the absence of prostration (sujъd) for which see vol. ii. 10.

[460] Thus requiring all the ablutional offices to be repeated. The Shaykh, by handling the corpse, became ceremonially impure and required “Wuzu” before he could pray either at home or in the Mosque.

[461] The Shaykh had left it when he went out to perform Wuzu.

[462] Arab. “Satl”=the Lat. and Etruscan “Situla” and “Situlus,” a water-pot.

[463] Arab. “Lahd, Luhd,” the niche or cell hollowed out in the side of the oblong trench: here the corpse is deposited and covered with palm-fronds etc. to prevent the earth touching it. See my Pilgrimage ii. 304.

[464] For the incredible amount of torture which Eastern obstinacy will sometimes endure, see Al-Mas’udi’s tale of the miserable little old man who stole the ten purses, vol. viii. 153 et seq.

[465] Arab. “Jarнdah” (whence the Jarнd-game) a palm-frond stripped of its leaves and used for a host of purposes besides flogging, chairs, sofas, bedsteads, cages, etc. etc. Tales of heroism in “eating stick” are always highly relished by the lower orders of Egyptians who pride themselves upon preferring the severest bastinado to paying the smallest amount of “rint.”

[466] Arab. “Nбwъs,” the hollow tower of masonry with a grating over

the central well upon which the Magian corpse is placed to be torn by birds of prey: it is kept up by the Parsi population of Bombay and is known to Europeans as the “Tower of Silence.” Nбнs and Nбwъs also mean a Pyrethrum, a fire-temple and have a whimsical resemblance to the Greek .

[467] For Munkar and Nakir, the Interrogating Angels, see vol. v. 111. According to Al-Mas’udi (chapt. xxxi.) these names were given by the Egyptians to the thirteenth and fourteenth cubits marked on the Nilometer which, in his day, was expected to show seventeen.

[468] The text (xi. 227) has “Tannъr”=an oven, evidently a misprint for “Kubъr”=tombs.

[469] Arab. “‘An Abн”=(a propitiatory offering) for my father. So in Marocco the “Powder-players” dedicate a shot to a special purpose or person, crying “To my sweetheart!” “To my dead!” “To my horse!” etc.

[470] For this formula see vol. i. 65. It is technically called “Haukalah” and “Haulakah,” words in the third conjugation of increased triliterals, corresponding with the quadriliteral radicals and possessing the peculiar power of Kasr=abbreviation. Of this same class is Basmalah (vol. v. 206; ix. 1).

[471] This scene with the watch would be relished in the coffee-house, where the tricks of robbers, like a gird at the police, are always acceptable.

[472] Arab. “Lб af’al”; more commonly Mб af’al. Mб and Lб are synonymous negative particles, differing, however, in application. Mб (Gr. {mи}) precedes definites, or indefinites: Lб and Lam (Gr. {oy}) only indefinites as “Lб ilбha” etc.

[473] Alluding to the proverb, “What hast thou left behind thee, O Asбm?” i.e., what didst thou see?

[474] Arab. “Sayrafi,” s.s. as “Sarrбf”: see vol. i. 210.

[475] Arab. “Al-Ma’rafah”=the place where the mane grows.

[476] i.e. though the ass remain on thy hands.

[477] “Halves,” i.e. of dirhams: see vol. ii. 37.

[478] Arab. “Taannafъ,”=the Germ. lange Nase.

[479] About forty shillings.

[480] About £220.

[481] Characteristically Eastern and Moslem is this action of the neighbours and bystanders. A walk through any Oriental city will show a crowd of people screaming and gesticulating, with thundering yells and lightning glances, as if about to close in mortal fight, concerning some matter which in no way concerns them. Our European cockneys and badauds mostly content themselves with staring and mobbing.

[482] Arab. “Muruwwah,” lit. manliness, especially in the sense of generosity. So the saying touching the “Miyбn,” or Moslem of India:Ч

Fн ‘l-ruz Kuwwah:
Fн ‘l Hindн muruwwah.

When rice have strength, you’ll haply find,
In Hindi man, a manly mind.

[483] i.e. His claim is just and reasonable.

[484] I have noted (vol. i. 17) that good Moslems shun a formal oath, although “by Allah!” is ever on their tongues. This they seem to have borrowed from Christianity, which expressly forbade it, whilst Christians cannot insist upon it too much. The scandalous scenes lately enacted in a certain legislative assembly because an M.P. did not believe in a practice denounced by his creed, will be the wonder

and ridicule of our descendants.

[485] Most Arabs believe that the black cloud which sometimes produces, besides famine, contagious fevers and pestilence, like that which in 1799 depopulated the cities and country of Barbary, is led by a king locust, the Sultan Jarбd.

[486] The text is hopelessly corrupt, and we have no other with which to collate. Apparently a portion of the tale has fallen out, making a non-sens of its ending, which suggests that the kite gobbled up the two locusts at her ease, and left the falcon to himself.

[487] The lines have occurred in vol. i. 265. I quote Mr. Payne.

[488] The fabliau is a favourite in the East; this is the third time it has occurred with minor modifications. Of course the original was founded on fact, and the fact was and is by no means uncommon.

[489] This would hardly be our Western way of treating a proposal of the kind; nor would the European novelist neglect so grand an opportunity for tall-talk.

[490] This is a rechauffй of “The House with the Belvedere;” see vol. vi. 188.

[491] Arab. “Mastъrah,”=veiled, well-guarded, confined in the Harem.

[492] Arab. “‘Ajъz nahs”=an old woman so crafty that she was a calamity to friends and foes.

[493] Here, as in many places the text is painfully concise: the crone says only, “The Wuzu for the prayer!”

[494] I have followed Mr. Payne who supplies this sentence to make the Tale run smoothly.

[495] i.e. the half of the marriage-settlement due to the wife on divorcement and whatever monies he may have borrowed of her.

[496] Here we find the vulgar idea of a rape, which is that a man can, by mere force, possess a woman against her will. I contend that this is impossible unless he use drugs like chloroform or violence, so as to make the patient faint or she be exceptionally weak. “Good Queen Bess” hit the heart of the question when she bade Lord High Chancellor sheath his sword, she holding the scabbard-mouth before him and keeping it in constant motion. But it often happens that the woman, unless she have a loathing for her violator, becomes infected with the amorous storge, relaxes her defense, feels pleasure in the outer contact of the parts and almost insensibly allows penetration and emission. Even conception is possible in such cases as is proved in that curious work, “The Curiosities of Medical Experience.”

[497] i.e. thou wilt have satisfied us all three.

[498] Here I follow Mr. Payne who has skilfully fine-drawn the holes in the original text.

[499] See vol. vii. 363; ix. 238.

[500] Arab. “Musalla,” which may be either a praying carpet, a pure place in a house, or a small chapel like that near Shiraz which Hafiz immortalised,

“Bring, boy, the sup that’s in the cup; in highest Heaven man
ne’er shall find
Such watery marge as Ruknбbбd, MusalIa’s mazes rose entwined.”

[501] Arab. “Ihtidб,”=divine direction to Huda or salvation. The old bawd was still dressed as a devotee, and keeps up the cant of her caste. No sensible man in the East ever allows a religious old woman to pass his threshold.

[502] In this tale “poetical justice” is neglected, but the teller skilfully caused the wife to be ravished and not to be a particeps criminis. The

lover escapes scot-free because Moslems, as well as Hindus, hold that the amourist under certain conditions is justified in obtaining his object by fair means or foul. See of "Early Ideas, a Group of Hindoo Stories," collected and collated by Anaryan: London, Allens, 1881.

[503] This is supplied from the "Tale of the King and his
Wazir's Wife," vol. vi. 129.

[504] Arab. "Ibl," a specific name: it is presently opposed to "Nбkah," a she-dromedary, and "Rбhilah," a riding-camel.

[505] Here "Amsaytu" is used in its literal sense "I evened" (came at evening), and this is the case with seven such verbs, Asbaha, Amsб, Azhб, Azhara, A'tama, Zalla, and Bбta, which either conjoin the sense of the sentence with their respective times, morning, evening, forenoon, noon and the first sundown watch, all day and all night or are used "elegantly," as grammarians say, for the simple "becoming" or "being."

[506] The Badawi dogs are as dangerous as those of Montenegro but not so treacherous: the latter will sneak up to the stranger and suddenly bite him most viciously. I once had a narrow escape from an ignoble death near the slaughter-house of Alexandria-Ramlah, where the beasts were unusually ferocious. A pack assailed me at early dawn and but for an iron stick and a convenient wall I should have been torn to pieces.

[507] These elopements are of most frequent occurrence: see
Pilgrimage iii. 52.

[508] The principal incidents, the loss and recovery of wife and children, occur in the Story of the Knight Placidus (Gesta Romanorum, cx.). But the ecclesiastical tale-teller does not do poetical justice upon any offenders, and he vilely slanders the great Сжsar, Trajan.

[509] i.e. a long time: the idiom has already been noticed. In the original we have "of days and years and twelvemonths" in order that

“A’wбm” (years) may jingle with “Ayyбm” (days).

510 Nothing can be more beautiful than the natural parks which travellers describe on the coasts of tropical seas.

511 Arab. “Khayyбl” not only a rider but a good and a hard rider. Hence the proverb “Al-Khayyбl” kabr maftъh=uomo a cavallo sepoltura aperta.

512 i.e. the crew and the islanders.

513 Arab. “Hadas,” a word not easy to render. In grammar Lumsden renders it by “event” and the learned Captain Lockett (Miut Amil) in an awful long note (p to 224) by “mode,” grammatical or logical. The value of his disquisition is its proving that, as the Arabs borrowed their romance from the Persians, so they took their physics and metaphysics of grammar and syntax; logic and science in general, from the Greeks.

514 We should say the anchors were weighed and the canvas spread.

515 The rhymes are disposed in the quaintest way, showing extensive corruption. Mr. Payne has ordered them into couplets with a “bob” or refrain. I have followed suit, preserving the original vagaries of rhymes.

516 Arab. “Nuwab,” broken plur. (that is, noun of multitude) of Naubah, the Anglo-Indian Nowbut. This is applied to the band playing at certain intervals before the gate of a Rajah or high official.

517 Arab. “Hбjib”; Captain Trotter (“Our Mission to the Court of Morocco in 1880”: Edinburgh, Douglas, 1881) speaks, passim, of the “cheery little Hбjeb or Eyebrow.” Really this is too bad: why cannot travellers consult an Orientalist when treating of Oriental subjects?

518 Suicide is rare in Moslem lands, compared with India, China, and similar “pagan” countries; for the Mussulman has the same objection as the Christian “to rush into the presence of his Creator,” as if he

could do so without the Creator’s permission. The Hindu also has some curious prejudices on the subject; he will hang himself, but not by the neck, for fear lest his soul be defiled by exiting through an impure channel. In England hanging is the commonest form for men; then follow in due order drowning, cutting or stabbing, poison, and gun-shot: women prefer drowning (except in the cold months) and poison. India has not yet found a Dr. Ogle to tabulate suicide; but the cases most familiar to old Anglo-Indians are leaping down cliffs (as at Giruar), drowning, and starving to death. And so little is life valued that a mother will make a vow obliging her son to suicide himself at a certain age.

[519] Arab. “Zarad-Khбnah,” before noticed: vol. vii. 363. Here it would mean a temporary prison for criminals of high degree. De Sacy, Chrestom, ii. 179.

[520] Arab. “‘Adъl,” I have said, means in Marocco, that land of lies and subterfuges, a public notary.

[521] This sentence is inserted by Mr. Payne to complete the sense.

[522] i.e. he intended to marry her when time served.

[523] Arab. from Pers. Khwбjah and Khawбjбt: see vol. vi. 46.

[524] Probably meaning by one mother whom he loved best of all his wives: in the next page we read of their sister.

[525] Come down, i.e. from heaven.

[526] This is the Bresl. Edit.’s form of Shahryбr=city-keeper (like Marzbбn, guardian of the Marches), for city-friend. The learned Weil has preferred it to Shahryбr.

[527] Sic: in the Mac. Edit. “Shahrбzбd” and here making nonsense of the word. It is regretable that the king’s reflections do not run at times as in this text: his compunctions lead well up to the dйnouement.

[528] The careless text says “couplets.” It has occurred in vol. i. 149: so I quote Torrens ().

[529] In the text Salma is made to speak, utterly confusing the dialogue.

[530] The well-known Baloch province beginning west of Sind: the term is supposed to be a corruption of Мбнн-Khorбn=Ichthyophagi. The reader who wishes to know more about it will do well to consult “Unexplored Baluchistan,” etc. (Griffith and Farran, 1882), the excellent work of my friend Mr. Ernest A. Floyer, long Chief of the Telegraphic Department, Cairo.

[531] Meaning the last city in Makran before entering Sind.
Al-Sharr would be a fancy name, “The Wickedness.”

[532] i.e. think of nothing but his present peril.

[533] Arab. “Munkati’ah”=lit. “cut off” (from the weal of the world). See Pilgrimage i. 22.

[534] The lines are in vol. i. 207 and iv. 189. 1 here quote
Mr. Payne.

[535] i.e. I have another proposal to make.

[536] i.e. In my heart’s core: the figure has often occurred.

[537] These sudden elevations, so common in the East and not unknown to the West in the Napoleonic days, explain how the legend of “Joanna Papissa” (Pope John XIII), who succeeded Leo IV. in A.D. 855 and was succeeded by Benedict III., found ready belief amongst the enemies of papacy. She was an English woman born in Germany who came to Rome and professed theology with йclat, wherefore the people enthroned her. “Pope Joan” governed with exemplary wisdom, but during a procession on Rogation Sunday she was delivered of a fine boy in the street: some make her die on the spot; others declare that she perished in prison.

[538] That such things should happen in times of famine is only natural; but not at other seasons. This abomination on the part of the butcher is, however, more than once alluded toin The Nights: see vol. i. 332.

[539] Opinions differ as to the site of this city, so celebrated in the mediжval history of Al-Islam: most probably it stood where Hyderabad of Sind now is. The question has been ably treated by Sir Henry M. Elliot in his “History of India,” edited from his posthumous papers by Professor Dowson.

[540] Which, by-the-by, the average Eastern does with even more difficulty than the average European. For the most part the charge to secrecy fixes the matter in his mind even when he has forgotten that it is to be kept secret. Hence the most unpleasant results.

[541] Such an act appears impossible, and yet history tells us of a celebrated Sufi, Khayr al-Nassбj (the Weaver), who being of dark complexion was stopped on return from his pilgrimage at Kufah by a stranger that said, “Thou art my negro slave and thy name is Khayr.” He was kept at the loom for years, till at last the man set him free, and simply said, “Thou wast not my slave” (Ibn Khall. i. 513).

[542] These lines have occurred before. I quote Mr. Payne for variety.

[543] Arab. “Tasill sallata ‘l-Munkati’нn” = lit. “raining on the drouth-hardened earth of the cut-off.” The metaphor is admissible in the eyes of an Arab who holds water to be the chiefest of blessings, and makes it synonymous with bounty and beneficence.

[544] Possibly this is said in mere fun; but, as Easterns are practical physiognomists, it may hint the fact that a large nose in womankind is the sign of a masculine nature.

[545] Arab. “Zakбt wa Sadakat,” = lit. paying of poor rate and purifying thy property by almsdeeds. See vol. i. 339.

[546] I have noted (i. 293) that Kamнs ({chityon}, Chemise, Cameslia, Camisa) is used in the Hindostani and Bengali dialects. Like its

synonyms prжtexta and shift, it has an equivocal meaning and here probably signifies the dress peculiar to Arab devotees and devout beggars.

[547] I omit here and elsewhere the parenthetical formula “Kбla al-Rбwi,” etc. = The Story-teller sayeth, reminding the reader of its significance in a work collected from the mouths of professional Tale-tellers and intended mainly for their use.

[548] The usual sign of emotion, already often mentioned.

[549] It being no shame to Moslems if a slave become King.

[550] Arab. “Tarbiyatн,” i.e., he was brought up in my house.

[551] There is no Salic law amongst Moslems; but the Rasm or custom of AlIslam, established by the succession of the four first Caliphs, to the prejudice of Ayishah and other masterful women would be a strong precedent against queenly rule. It is the reverse with the Hindus who accept a Rani as willingly as a Rajah and who believe with Europeans that when kings reign women rule, and vice versa. To the vulgar Moslem feminine government appears impossible, and I was once asked by an Afghan, “What would happen if the queen were in childbed?”

[552] Arab. “Khutbah,” the sermon preached from the pulpit (Mimbar) after the congregational prayers on Friday noon. It is of two kinds, for which see Lane, M.E., chap. iii. This public mention of his name and inscribing it upon the newly-minted money are the special prerogatives of the Moslem king: hence it often happens that usurpers cause a confusion of Khutbah and coinage.

[553] For a specimen of which, blowing a man up with bellows, see Al-Mas’udi, chap. cxxiii.

[554] i.e. a long time: the idiom has been noted before more than once.

[555] i.e. with what he had heard and what he was promised.

[556] Arab. “Shakhs mafsъd,” i.e. an infidel.

[557] Arab. “Bunъd,” plur. of Persian “band” = hypocrisy, deceit.

[558] Arab. “Burъj” pl. of Burj. lit. = towers, an astrological term equivalent to our “houses” or constellations which form the Zodiacal signs surrounding the heavens as towers gird a city; and applied also to the 28 lunar Mansions. So in Al-Hariri (Ass. of Damascus) “I swear by the sky with its towers,” the incept of Koran chapt. lxxxv.; see also chapts. xv. 26 and xxv. 62. “Burj” is a word with a long history: {pэrgos} burg, burgh, etc.

[559] Arab. “Bundukah”=a little bunduk, nut, filbert, pellet, rule, musket bullet.

[560] See John Raister’s “Booke of the Seven Planets; or,
Seven Wandering Motives,” London, 1598.

[561] i.e. for the king whom I love as my own soul.

[562] The Bresl. Edit. (xi. 318-21) seems to assume that the tales were told in the early night before the royal pair slept. This is no improvement; we prefer to think that the time was before peep of day when Easterns usally awake and have nothing to do till the dawn-prayer.

[563] See vol. ii. 161.

[564] Arab. Al-Fбkhir. No wonder that the First Hand who moulded the Man-mud is a lieu commun in Eastern thought. The Pot and the Potter began with the old Egyptians. “Sitting as a potter at the wheel, god Cneph (in Philж) moulds clay, and gives the spirit of life (the Genesitic “breath”) to the nostrils of Osiris.” Then we meet him in the Vedas, the Being, “by whom the fictile vase is formed; the clay out of which it is fabricated.” We find him next in Jeremiah (xviii. 2) “Arise and go down unto the Potter’s house,” etc., and in Romans (ix. 20), “Hath not the Potter power over the clay?” He appears in full force in Omar-i- Khayyбm (No. xxxvii.):Ч

For I remember stopping by the way
To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:
An with its all obliterated Tongue
It murmur’dЧ”Gently, Brother, gently, pray!”

Lastly the Potter shows in the Kasidah of Hajн Abdъ al-Yezid (p.4):Ч

“The first of pots the Potter made by Chrysorrhoas’ blue-green wave;
Methinks I see him smile to see what guerdon to the world he gave.

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SUPPLEMENTAL NIGHTS VOLUME II.

To Henry Irving, Esq.

My Dear Irving,

To a consummate artist like yourself I need hardly suggest that The Nights still offers many a virgin mine to the Playwright; and I inscribe this volume to you, not only in admiration of your genius but in the hope that you will find means of exploiting the hidden wealth which awaits only your “Open Sesame!”

Every yours sincerely,
Richard F. Burton.

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AL-MALIK AL-ZAHIR RUKN AL-DIN BIBARS AL-BUNDUKDARI AND THE SIXTEEN CAPTAINS OF POLICE.[1]

There was once in the climes[2] of Egypt and the city of Cairo, under the Turks, a king of the valiant kings and the exceeding mighty Soldans, hight Al-Malik al-Záhir Rukn al-Din Bibars al-Bundukdári,[3] who was used to storm the Islamite sconces and the strongholds of “The Shore”[4] and the Nazarene citadels. His Chief of Police in the capital of his kingdom{} was just to the folk, all of them; and Al-Malik al-Zahir delighted in stories of the common sort and of that which men purposed in thought; and he loved to see this with his own eyes and to hear their sayings with his own ears. Now it fortuned that he heard one night from a certain of his nocturnal reciters[5] that among women are those who are doughtier than the doughtiest men and prower of prowess, and that among them are some who will engage in fight singular with the sword and others who beguile the quickest-witted of Walis and baffle them and bring down on them all manner of miseries; wherefore said the Soldan, “I would lief hear this of their legerdemain from one of those who have had to do with it, so I may hearken unto him and cause him discourse.” And one of the story-tellers said, “O king, send for the Chief of Police of this thy city.” Now ‘Alam al-Din[6] Sanjar was at that time Wali and he was a man of experience, in affairs well versed; so the king sent for him and when he came before him, he discovered to him that which was in his mind. Quoth Sanjar, “I will do my endeavour for that which our lord seeketh.” Then he arose and returning to his house, summoned the Captains of the watch and the Lieutenants of the ward and said to them, “Know that I purpose to marry my son and make him a bridal banquet, and I desire that ye assemble, all of you, in one place. I also will be present, I and my company, and do ye relate that which you have heard of rare occurrences and that which hath betided you of experiences.” And the Captains and Runners and Agents of Police answered him, “’Tis well: Bismillah — in the name of Allah! We will make thee see all this with thine own eyes and hear it with thine own ears.” Then the Chief of Police arose and going up to Al-Malik al-Zahir, informed him that the assembly would meet on such a day at his house; and the Soldan said, “’Tis well,” and gave him somewhat of coin for his spending-money. When the appointed day came the Chief of Police set apart for his officers and constables a saloon, which had latticed casements ranged in order and giving upon the flower-garden, and Al-Malik al-Zahir came to him, and he seated himself and the Soldan, in the alcove. Then the tables were spread for them with food and they ate: and when the bowl went round amongst them and their souls were gladdened by meat and drink, they mutually related that which was with them and, revealed their secrets from concealment. The first to discourse was a man, a Captain of the Watch, hight Mu’ín al-Din[7] whose heart was wholly occupied with the love of fair women; and he said, “Harkye, all ye people of high degree, I will acquaint you with an extraordinary affair which fortuned me aforetime.” Then he began to tell

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The First Constable’s History.[8]

Know ye that when I entered the service of this Emir,[9] I had a great repute and every low fellow and lewd feared me most of all mankind, and when I rode through the city, each and every of the folk would point at me with their fingers and sign at me with their eyes. It happened one day, as I sat in the palace of the Prefecture, back-propped against a wall, considering in myself, suddenly there fell somewhat in my lap, and behold, it was a purse sealed and tied. So I hent it in hand and lo! it had in it an hundred dirhams,[10] but I found not who threw it and I said, “Lauded be the Lord, the King of the Kingdoms!”[11] Another day, as I sat in the same way, somewhat fell on me and startled me, and lookye, ’twas a purse like the first: I took it and hiding the matter, made as though I slept, albeit sleep was not with me. One day as I thus shammed sleep, I suddenly sensed in my lap a hand, and in it a purse of the finest; so I seized the hand and behold, ’twas that of a fair woman. Quoth I to her, “O my lady, who art thou?” and quoth she, “Rise and come away from here, that I may make myself known to thee.” Presently I rose up and following her, walked on, without tarrying, till we stopped at the door of a high-builded house, whereupon I asked her, “O my lady, who art thou? Indeed, thou hast done me kindness, and what is the reason of this?” She answered, “By Allah, O Captain[12] Mu’in, I am a woman on whom love and longing are sore for desire of the daughter of the Kazi Amín al-Hukm.[13] Now there was between me and her what was and fondness for her fell upon my heart and I agreed upon an assignation with her, according to possibility and convenience; but her father Amin al-Hukm took her and went away, and my heart cleaveth to her and yearning and distraction waxed sore upon me for her sake.” I said to her, marvelling the while at her words, “What wouldst thou have me do?” and said she, “O Captain Mu’in, I would have thee lend me a helping hand.” Quoth I, “Where am I and where is the daughter of the Kazi Amin al-Hukm?”[14] and quoth she “Be assured that I would not have thee intrude upon the Kazi’s daughter, but I would fain work for the winning of my wishes. This is my will and my want which may not be wroughten save by thine aid.” Then she added, “I mean this night to go with heart enheartened and hire me bracelets and armlets and anklets of price; then will I hie me and sit in the street wherein is the house of Amin al-Hukm; and when ’tis the season of the round and folk are asleep, do thou pass, thou and those who are with thee of the men, and thou wilt see me sitting and on me fine raiment and ornaments and wilt smell on me the odour of Ottars; whereupon do thou question me of my case and I will say, ‘I hail from the Citadel and am of the daughters of the deputies[15] and I came down into the town for a purpose; but night overtook me all unawares and the Zuwaylah Gate[16] was shut against me and all the other portals and I knew not whither I should wend this night. Presently I saw this street and noting the goodly fashion of its ordinance and its cleanliness, I sheltered me therein against break of day.’ When I speak these words to thee with complete self-possession,[17] the Chief of the watch will have no ill suspicion of me, but will say, ‘There’s no help but that we leave her with one who will take care of her till morning.’ Thereto do thou rejoin, ‘‘Twere best that she night with Amin al-Hukm and lie with his wives[18] and children until dawn of day.’ Then straightway knock at the Kazi’s door, and thus shall I have secured admission into his house, without inconvenience, and won my wish; and — the Peace!” I said to her, “By Allah, this is an easy matter.” So, when the night was blackest, we rose to make our round, followed by men with girded swords, and went about the ways and compassed the city, till we came to the street[19] where was the woman, and it was the middle of the night. Here we smelt mighty rich scents and heard the clink of rings: so I said to my comrades, “Methinks I espy a spectre;” and the Captain of the watch cried, “See what it is.” Accordingly, I undertook the work and entering the thoroughfare presently came out again and said, “I have found a fair woman and she telleth me that she is from the Citadel and that dark night surprised her and she saw this street and noting its cleanness and goodly fashion of ordinance, knew that it belonged to a great man[20] and that needs must there be in it a guardian to keep watch over it, so she sheltered her therein.” Quoth the Captain of the watch to me, “Take her and carry her to thy house;” but quoth I, “I seek refuge with Allah![21] My house is no strong box[22] and on this woman are trinkets and fine clothing. By

Allah, we will not deposit the lady save with Amin al-Hukm, in whose street she hath been since the first starkening of the darkness; therefore do thou leave her with him till the break of day." He rejoined, "Do whatso thou willest." So I rapped at the Kazi's gate and out came a black slave of his slaves, to whom said I, "O my lord, take this woman and let her be with you till day shall dawn, for that the lieutenant of the Emir Alam al-Din hath found her with trinkets and fine apparel on her, sitting at the door of your house, and we feared lest her responsibility be upon you;[23] wherefore I suggested 'twere meetest she night with you." So the chattel opened and took her in with him. Now when the morning morrowed, the first who presented himself before the Emir was the Kazi Amin al-Hukm, leaning on two of his negro slaves; and he was crying out and calling for aid and saying, "O Emir, crafty and perfidious, yesternight thou depositedst with me a woman and broughtest her into my house and home, and she arose in the dark and took from me the monies of the little orphans my wards,[24] six great bags, each containing a thousand dinars,[25] and made off; but as for me, I will say no syllable to thee except in the Soldan's presence."[26] When the Wali heard these words, he was troubled and rose and sat down in his agitation; then he took the Judge and placing him by his side, soothed him and exhorted him to patience, till he had made an end of talk, when he turned to the officers and questioned them of that. They fixed the affair on me and said, "We know nothing of this matter but from Captain Mu'in al-Din." So the Kazi turned to me and said, "Thou wast of accord to practice upon me with this woman, for she said she came from the Citadel." As for me, I stood, with my head bowed ground-wards, forgetting both Sunnah and Farz,[27] and remained sunk in thought, saying, "How came I to be the dupe of that randy wench?" Then cried the Emir to me, "What aileth thee that thou answerest not?" Thereupon I replied, "O my lord, 'tis a custom among the folk that he who hath a payment to make at a certain date is allowed three days' grace: do thou have patience with me so long, and if, at the end of that time, the culprit be not found, I will be responsible for that which is lost." When the folk heard my speech they all approved it as reasonable and the Wali turned to the Kazi and sware to him that he would do his utmost to recover the stolen monies adding, “And they shall be restored to thee.” Then he went away, whilst I mounted without stay or delay and began to-ing and fro-ing about the world without purpose, and indeed I was become the underling of a woman without honesty or honour; and I went my rounds in this way all that my day and that my night, but happened not upon tidings of her; and thus I did on the morrow. On the third day I said to myself, “Thou art mad or silly;” for I was wandering in quest of a woman who knew me[28] and I knew her not, she being veiled when I met her. Then I went round about the third day till the hour of mid-afternoon prayer, and sore waxed my cark and my care for I kenned that there remained to me of my life but the morrow, when the Chief of Police would send for me. However, as sundown-time came, I passed through one of the main streets, and saw a woman at a window; her door was ajar and she was clapping her hands and casting sidelong glances at me, as who should say, “Come up by the door.” So I went up, without fear or suspicion, and when I entered, she rose and clasped me to her breast. I marvelled at the matter and quoth she to me, “I am she whom thou depositedst with Amin al-Hukm.” Quoth I to her, “O my sister, I have been going round and round in request of thee, for indeed thou hast done a deed which will be chronicled and hast cast me into red death[29] on thine account.” She asked me, “Dost thou speak thus to me and thou a captain of men?” and I answered, “How should I not be troubled, seeing that I be in concern for an affair I turn over and over in mind, more by token that I continue my day long going about searching for thee and in the night I watch its stars and planets?”[30] Cried she, “Naught shall betide save weal, and thou shalt get the better of him.”[31] So saying, she rose and going to a chest, drew out therefrom six bags full of gold and said to me, “This is what I took from Amin al-Hukm’s house. So an thou wilt, restore it; else the whole is lawfully[32] thine; and if thou desire other than this, thou shalt obtain it; for I have monies in plenty and I had no design herein save to marry thee.” Then she arose and opening other chests, brought out therefrom wealth galore and I said to her, “O my sister, I have no wish for all this, nor do I want aught except to be quit of that wherein I am.” Quoth she, “I came not forth of the Kazi’s house without preparing for thine acquittance.” Then said she to me, “When the morrow shall morn and Amin al-Hukm shall come to thee bear with him till he have made an end of his speech, and when he is silent, return him no reply; and if the Wali ask, ‘What aileth thee that thou answerest me not?’ do thou rejoin, ‘O lord and master[33] know that the two words are not alike, but there is no helper for the conquered one[34] save Allah Almighty.’ The Kazi will cry, ‘What is the meaning of thy saying, The two words are not alike?’ And do thou retort, ‘I deposited with thee a damsel from the palace of the Sultan, and most likely some enemy of hers in thy household hath transgressed against her or she hath been secretly murdered. Verily, there were on her raiment and ornaments worth a thousand ducats, and hadst thou put to the question those who are with thee of slaves and slave-girls, needs must thou have litten on some traces of the crime.’ When he heareth this from thee, his trouble will redouble and he will be amated and will make oath that thou hast no help for it but to go with him to his house: however, do thou say, ‘That will I not do, for I am the party aggrieved, more especially because I am under suspicion with thee.’ If he redouble in calling on Allah’s aid and conjure thee by the oath of divorce saying, ‘Thou must assuredly come,’ do thou reply, ‘By Allah, I will not go, unless the Chief also go with me.’ Then, as soon as thou comest to the house, begin by searching the terrace-roofs; then rummage the closets and cabinets; and if thou find naught, humble thyself before the Kazi and be abject and feign thyself subjected, and after stand at the door and look as if thou soughtest a place wherein to make water,[35] because there is a dark corner there. Then come forward, with heart harder than syenite-stone, and lay hold upon a jar of the jars and raise it from its place. Thou wilt find there under it a mantilla-skirt; bring it out publicly and call the Wali in a loud voice, before those who are present. Then open it and thou wilt find it full of blood, exceeding for freshness, and therein a woman’s walking-boots and a pair of petticoat-trousers and somewhat of linen.” When I heard from her these words, I rose to go out and she said to me, “Take these hundred sequins, so they may succour thee; and such is my guest-gift to thee.” Accordingly I took them and leaving her door ajar returned to my lodging. Next morning, up came the Judge, with his face like the ox-eye,[36] and asked, “In the name of Allah, where is my debtor and where is my property?” Then he wept and cried out and said to the Wali, “Where is that ill-omened fellow, who aboundeth in robbery and villainy?” Thereupon the Chief turned to me and said, “Why dost thou not answer the Kazi?” and I replied, “O Emir, the two heads[37] are not equal, and I, I have no helper;[38] but, an the right be on my side ‘twill appear.” At this the Judge grew hotter of temper and cried out, “Woe to thee, O ill-omened wight! How wilt thou make manifest that the right is on thy side?” I replied “O our lord the Kazi, I deposited with thee and in thy charge a woman whom we found at thy door, and on her raiment and ornaments of price. Now she is gone, even as yesterday is gone;[39] and after this thou turnest upon us and suest me for six thousand gold pieces. By Allah, this is none other than a mighty great wrong, and assuredly some foe[40] of hers in thy household hath transgressed against her!” With this the Judge’s wrath redoubled and he swore by the most solemn of oaths that I should go with him and search his house. I replied, “By Allah I will not go, unless the Wali go with us; for, an he be present, he and the officers, thou wilt not dare to work thy wicked will upon me.” So the Kazi rose and swore an oath, saying, “By the truth of Him who created mankind, we will not go but with the Emir!” Accordingly we repaired to the Judge’s house, accompanied by the Chief, and going up, searched it through, but found naught; whereat fear fell upon me and the Wali turned to me and said, “Fie upon thee, O ill-omened fellow! thou hast put us to shame before the men.” All this, and I wept and went round about right and left, with the tears running down my face, till we were about to go forth and drew near the door of the house. I looked at the place which the woman had mentioned and asked, “What is yonder dark place I see?” Then said I to the men, “Pull up[41] this jar with me.” They did my bidding and I saw somewhat appearing under the jar and said, “Rummage and look at what is under it.” So they searched, and behold, they came upon a woman’s mantilla and petticoat-trousers full of blood, which when I espied, I fell down in a fainting-fit. Now when the Wali saw this, he said, “By Allah, the Captain is excused!” Then my comrades came round about me and sprinkled water on my face till I recovered, when I arose and accosting the Kazi (who was covered with confusion), said to him, “Thou seest that suspicion is fallen on thee, and indeed this affair is no light matter, because this woman's family will assuredly not sit down quietly under her loss." Therewith the Kazi's heart quaked and fluttered for that he knew the suspicion had reverted upon him, wherefore his colour yellowed and his limbs smote together; and he paid of his own money, after the measure of that he had lost, so we would quench that fire for him.[42] Then we departed from him in peace, whilst I said within myself, "Indeed, the woman falsed me not." After that I tarried till three days had passed, when I went to the Hammam and changing my clothes, betook myself to her home, but found the door shut and covered with dust. So I asked the neighbours of her and they answered, "This house hath been empty of habitants these many days; but three days agone there came a woman with an ass, and at supper-time last night she took her gear and went away." Hereat I turned back, bewildered in my wit, and for many a day after I inquired of the dwellers in that street concerning her, but could happen on no tidings of her. And indeed I wondered at the eloquence of her tongue and the readiness of her talk; and this is the most admirable of all I have seen and of whatso hath betided me. When Al-Malik al-Zahir heard the tale of Mu'in al-Din, he marvelled thereat. Then rose another constable and said, "O lord, hear what befel me in bygone days."

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The Second Constable's History.

I was once an overseer in the household of the Emir Jamál al-Din al-Atwash al-Mujhidi, who was made governor of the two provinces, Sharkíyah and Gharbíyah,[43] and I was dear to his heart and he hid from me naught of whatso he desired to do; and he was eke master of his reason.[44] It came to pass one day of the days that it was reported to him how the daughter of Such-an-one had a mint of monies and raiment and ornaments and at that present she loved a Jewish man, whom every day she invited to be private with her, and they passed the light hours eating and drinking in company and he lay the night with her. The Wali feigned not to believe a word of this story, but he summoned the watchmen of the quarter one night and questioned them of this tittle-tattle. Quoth one of them, "As for me, O my lord, I saw none save a Jew[45] enter the street in question one night; but I have not made certain to whom he went in;" and quoth the Chief, "Keep thine eye on him from this time forward and note what place he entereth." So the watchman went out and kept his eye on the Judaean. One day as the Prefect sat in his house, the watchman came in to him and said, "O my lord, in very sooth the Jew goeth to the house of Such-an-one." Whereupon Al-Atwash sprang to his feet and went forth alone, taking with him none save myself."[46] As he went along, he said to me, "Indeed, this girl is a fat piece of meat."[47] And we gave not over going till we came to the door of the house and stood there until a hand-maid came out, as if to buy them something wanted. We waited till she opened the door, whereupon, without question or answer, we forced our way into the house and rushed in upon the girl, whom we found seated with the Jew in a saloon with four daĂŻses, and cooking-pots and candles therein. When her eyes fell on the Wali, she knew him and rising to her feet, said, "Well come and welcome and fair cheer! By Allah, great honour hath betided me by my lord's visit and indeed thou dignifiest my dwelling." Hereat she carried him up to the dais and seating him on the couch, brought him meat and wine and gave him to drink; after which she put off all that was upon her of raiment and ornaments and tying them up in a kerchief, said to him, "O my lord, this is thy portion, all of it." Then she turned to the Jew and said to him, "Rise, thou also, and do even as I:" so he arose in haste and went out very hardly crediting his deliverance.[48] When the girl was assured of his escape, she put out her hand to her clothes and jewels and taking them, said to the Chief, "O Emir, is the requital of kindness other than kindness? Thou hast deigned to visit me and eat of my bread and salt; so now arise and depart from us without ill-doing; or I will give a single outcry and all who are in the street will come forth." So the Emir went out from her, without having gotten a single dirham; and on this wise she delivered the Jew by the seemliness of her stratagem. The company admired this tale, and as for the Wali and Al-Malik al-Zahir, they said, "Ever devised any the like of this device?" and they marvelled with the utterest of marvel. Then arose a third constable and said, "Hear what betided me, for it is yet stranger and rarer."

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The Third Constable's History.

I was one day abroad on business with certain of my comrades; and, as we walked along behold, we fell in with a company of women, as they were moons, and among them one, the tallest of them and the handsomest. When I saw her and she saw me, she lagged behind her companions and waited for me till I came up to her and bespake her. Quoth she, "O my lord (Allah favour thee!) I saw thee prolong thy looking on me and I fancied that thou knewest me. An it be thus, let me learn more of thee." Quoth I, "By Allah, I know thee not, save that the Most High Lord hath cast the love of thee into my heart and the goodliness of thy qualities hath confounded me; and that wherewith the Almighty hath gifted thee of those eyes that shoot with shafts hath captivated me." And she rejoined, "By Allah, indeed I feel the like of that which thou feelest; ay, and even more; so that meseemeth I have known thee from childhood." Then said I, "A man cannot well effect all whereof he hath need in the market-places." She asked me, "Hast thou a house?" and I answered, "No, by Allah, nor is this city my dwelling-place." Rejoined she, "By Allah, nor have I a place; but I will contrive for thee." Then she went on before me and I followed her till she came to a lodging-house[49] and said to the Housekeeper, "Hast thou an empty room?" The other replied, "Yes:"[50] and my mistress said, "Give us the key." So we took the key and going up to see the room, entered to inspect it; after which she went out to the Housekeeper and giving her a dirham, said to her "Take the douceur of the key[51] for the chamber pleaseth us, and here is another dirham for thy trouble. Go, fetch us a gugglet of water, so we may refresh ourselves and rest till siesta-time pass and the heat decline, when the man will depart and bring our bag and baggage." Therewith the Housekeeper rejoiced and brought us a mat, two gugglets of water on a tray, a fan and a leather rug. We abode thus till the setting-in of mid-afternoon, when she said, "Needs must I make the Ghusl-ablution ere I fare."[52] Said I, "Get water wherewith we may both wash," and drew forth from my pocket a score or so of dirhams, thinking to give them to her; but she cried, "Refuge with Allah!" and brought out of her pocket a handful of silver, saying, "But for destiny and that the Almighty hath caused the love of thee fall into my heart, there had not happened that which hath happened." Quoth I, "Accept this in requital of that which thou hast spent;" and quoth she, "O my lord, by and by, whenas mating is prolonged between us, thou wilt see if the like of me looketh unto money and means or no." Then the lady took a jar of water and going into the lavatory, made the Ghusl-ablution[53] and presently coming forth, prayed the mid-afternoon prayer and craved pardon of Allah Almighty for the sin into which she had fallen. Now I had asked her name and she answered, "Rayhánah,"[54] and described to me her dwelling-place. When I saw her make the ablution, I said within myself, "This woman doth on this wise, and shall I not do the like of her doing?" Then quoth I to her, "Peradventure[55] thou wilt seek us another jar of water?" Accordingly she went out to the Housekeeper and said to her, "O my sister, take this Nusf and fetch us for it water wherewith we may wash the flags."[56] So the Housekeeper brought two jars of water and I took one of them and giving her my clothes, entered the lavatory and bathed. When I had made an end of bathing, I cried out, saying, "Harkye, my lady Rayhanah!" However none answered me. So I went out and found her not; but I did find that she had taken my clothes and all that was in them of silver, to wit, four hundred dirhams. She had also carried off my turband and my kerchief and I lacked the wherewithal to veil my shame; so I suffered somewhat than which death is less grievous and abode looking about the place, hoping that haply I might espy a rag wherewith to hide my nakedness. Then I sat a little and presently going up to the door, smote upon it; whereat up came the Housekeeper and I said to her, "O my sister, what hath Allah done with the woman who was here?" She replied, "The lady came down just now and said, 'I'm going to cover the boys with the clothes,' adding, 'and I have left him sleeping; an he awake, tell him not to stir till the clothes come to him.'" Then cried I, "O my sister, secrets are safe with the fair-dealing and the freeborn. By Allah, this woman is not my wife, nor ever in my life have I seen her before this day!" And I recounted to her the whole affair and begged of her to cover me, informing her that my private parts were clean unconcealed. She laughed and cried out to the women of the lodging-house, saying, "Ho, Fátimah! Ho, Khadíjah! Ho, Harífah! Ho, Sanínah!” Whereupon all those who were in the place of women and neighbours flocked to me and fell a-mocking me and saying, “O pimp,[57] what hadst thou to do with gallantry?” Then one of them came and looked in my face and laughed, and another said, “By Allah, thou mightest have known that she lied, from the time she said she liked thee and was in love with thee! What is there in thee to love?” A third said, “This is an old man without wisdom;” and all vied one with other in exercising their wits upon me, I suffering mighty sore chagrin. However, one of the women took compassion on me after a while, and brought me a rag of thin stuff and cast it on me. With this I covered my shame, and no more, and abode awhile thus: then said I in myself, “The husbands of these women will presently gather together upon me and I shall be disgraced.” So I went out by another door of the lodging-house, and young and old crowded about me, running after me and crying, “A madman! A madman![58] till I came to my house and knocked at the door; whereupon out came my wife and seeing me naked, tall, bare of head, cried out and ran in again, saying, “This is a maniac, a Satan!” But, when my family and spouse knew me, they rejoiced and said to me, “What aileth thee?” I told them that thieves had taken my clothes and stripped me and had been like to slay me; and when I assured them that the rogues would have slaughtered me, they praised Allah Almighty and gave me joy of my safety. So consider the craft this woman practised upon me, and I pretending to cleverness and wiliness. Those present marvelled at this story and at the doings of women; then came forward a fourth constable and said, “Now that which hath betided me of strange adventures is yet stranger than this, and ’twas after the following fashion.”

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The Fourth Constable’s History.

We were sleeping one night on the terrace-roof, when a woman made her way through the darkness into the house and, gathering into a bundle all that was therein, took it up that she might go away with it. Now she was big with child and nigh upon her time of delivery; so, when she packed up the bundle and prepared to shoulder it and make off with it, she hastened the coming of the labour-pangs and bare a child in the dark. Then she sought for the fire-sticks and when they burned, kindled the lamp and went round about the house with the little one, and it was weeping. The wail awoke us, as we lay on the roof, and we marvelled. So we rose to see what was to do, and looking down through the opening of the saloon,[59] saw a woman, who had lit the lamp, and heard the little one crying. As we were peering, she heard our words and raising her head to us, said, “Are ye not ashamed to deal thus with us and bare our shame? Wist ye not that the day belongeth to you and the night to us? Begone from us! By Allah, were it not that ye have been my neighbours these many years, I would assuredly[60] bring down the house upon you!” We doubted not but that she was of the Jinn and drew back our heads; but, when we rose on the morrow, we found that she had taken all that was with us and made off with it;[61] wherefore we knew that she was a thief and had practised on us a device, such as was never before practised; and we repented, whenas repentance availed us naught. The company, hearing this tale, marvelled thereat with the utmost marvelling. Then the fifth constable, who was the lieutenant of the bench,[62] came forward and said, “This is no wonder and there befel me a story which is rarer and stranger than this.”

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The Fifth Constable's History.

As I sat one day at the door of the Prefecture, behold, a woman suddenly entered and said as though consulting me. "O my lord, I am the wife of Such-an-one the Leach, and with him is a company of the notables[63] of the city, drinking fermented drinks in such a place." When I heard this, I misliked to make a scandal; so I bluffed her off and sent her away unsatisfied. Then I rose and walked alone to the place in question and sat without till the door opened, when I rushed in and entering, found the company even as the woman aforesaid had set out, and she herself with them. I saluted them and they returned my salam and rising, treated me with honour and seated me and served me with meat. Then I informed them how one had denounced them to me, but I had driven him away and had come to them by myself; so they thanked me and praising me for my kindness, brought out to me from among them two thousand dirhams[64] and I took them and went away. Now two months after this adventure, there came to me one of the Kazi's officers, with a paper, wherein was the judge's writ, summoning me to him. So I accompanied the officer and went in to the Kazi, whereupon the plaintiff, he who had taken out the summons, sued me for two thousand dirhams, declaring I had borrowed them of him as the agent or guardian of the woman. I denied the debt, but he produced against me a bond for that sum, attested by four of those who were in company on the occasion; and they were present and bore witness to the loan. I reminded them of my kindness and paid the amount, swearing that I would never again follow a woman's counsel. Is not this marvellous? The company admired the goodliness of his tale and it pleased Al-Malik al-Zahir; and the Wali said, "By Allah, this is a strange story!" Then came forward the sixth constable and said to those present, "Hear my adventure and that which befel me, to wit, that which befel Such-an-one the Assessor, for 'tis rarer than this and finer."

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The Sixth Constable’s History.

A certain Assessor one day of the days was taken with a woman and much people assembled before his house and the Lieutenant of police and his posse came to him and rapped at the door. The Assessor peered from house-top and seeing the folk, said, “What do ye want?” Replied they, “Speak with the Lieutenant of police Such-an-one.” So he came down and as he opened the door they cried to him, “Bring forth the woman who is with thee.” “Are ye not ashamed? How shall I bring forth my wife?” “Is she thy wife by book[65] or without marriage-lines?” “She is my wife according to the Book of Allah and the Institutes of His Apostle.” “Where is the contract?” “Her lines are in her mother’s house.” “Arise thou and come down and show us the writ.” “Go from her way, so she may come forth.” Now, as soon as he got wind of the matter, he had written the bond and fashioned it after the fashion of his wife,[66] to suit with the case, and he had written therein the names of certain of his friends to serve as witnesses and forged the signatures of the drawer and the wife’s next friend and made it a contract of marriage with his wife and a legal deed.[67] Accordingly, when the woman was about to go out from him, he gave her the contract he had forged, and the Emir sent with her a servant of his, to carry her home to her father. So the servant went with her and when she was inside she said to him, “I will not return to the citation of the Emir: but let the Assessors present themselves and take my contract.” Hereupon the servant carried this message to the Lieutenant of police, who was standing at the Assessor’s door, and he said, “This is permissible.” Then said the Assessor to the servant, “Fare, O eunuch, and fetch us Such-an-one the Notary;” for that he was his friend and ’twas he whose name he had forged as the drawer-up of the contract.[68] So the Lieutenant sent after him and fetched him to the Assessor, who, when he saw him, said to him, “Get thee to Such-an-one, her with whom thou marriedst me, and cry out upon her, and when she cometh to thee,[69] demand of her the contract and take it from her and bring it to us.” And he signed to him, as much as to say, “Bear me out in the lie and screen me, for that she is a strange woman and I[70] am in fear of the Lieutenant who standeth at the door; and we beseech Allah Almighty to screen us and you from the woes of this world. Amen." So the Notary went up to the Lieutenant, who was among the witnesses, and said, " 'Tis well. Is she not Such-an- one whose marriage-contract we drew up in such a place?" Then he betook himself to the woman's house and cried out upon her; whereat she brought him the forged contract and he took it and returned with it to the Lieutenant of police.[71] When the officer had taken cognizance of the document and professed himself satisfied, the Assessor said to the Notary, "Go to our lord and master, the Kazi of the Kazis, and acquaint him with that which befalleth his Assessors." The Notary rose to go, but the Lieutenant feared for himself and was urgent in beseeching the Assessor and in kissing his hands till he forgave him; whereupon the Lieutenant went away in the utmost concern and affright. On such wise the Assessor ordered the case and carried out the forgery and feigned marriage with the woman; and thus escaped calumny and calamity by the seemliness of his stratagem.[72] The folk marvelled at this with the uttermost marvel and the seventh constable said, "There befel me in Alexandria the God-guarded a wondrous thing, and 'twas this."[73]

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The Seventh Constable's History.

There came one day an old woman to the stuff-bazar, with a casket of mighty fine workmanship, containing trinkets, and she was accompanied by a young baggage big with child. The crone sat down at the shop of a draper and giving him to know that the girl was pregnant by the Prefect[74] of Police of the city, took of him, on credit, stuffs to the value of a thousand dinars and deposited with him the casket as security. She opened the casket and showed him that which was therein and he found it full of trinkets of price; so he trusted her with the goods and she farewelled him and carrying the stuffs to the girl who was with her, went her way. Then the old woman was absent from him a great while, and when her absence was prolonged, the draper despaired of her; so he went up to the Prefect's house and asked anent the woman of his household who had taken his stuffs on credit; but could obtain no tidings of her nor happen on any trace of her. Then he brought out the casket of jewellery and showed it to experts, who told him that the trinkets were gilt and that their worth was but an hundred dirhams. When he heard this, he was sore concerned thereat and presenting himself before the Deputy of the Sultan made his complaint to him; whereupon the official knew that a sleight had been served upon him and that the sons of Adam[75] had cozened him and conquered him and cribbed his stuffs. Now the magistrate in question was a man of experience and judgment, well versed in affairs; so he said to the draper, "Remove somewhat from thy shop, including the casket, and to- morrow morning break the lock and cry out and come to me and complain that they have plundered all thy shop.[76] Also mind thou call upon Allah for aid and wail aloud and acquaint the people, so that a world of folk may flock to thee and sight the breach of the lock and that which is missing from thy shop: and on this wise display it to every one who presenteth himself that the news may be noised abroad, and tell them that thy chief concern is for a casket of great value, deposited with thee by a great man of the town and that thou standest in fear of him. But be thou not afraid and still say ever and anon in thy saying, 'My casket was the casket of Such-an-one, and I fear him and dare not bespeak him; but you, O company and all ye who are present, I call you to witness of this for me.’ And if there be with thee more than this saying, say it; and the old woman will assuredly come to thee.” The draper answered with “To hear is to obey” and going forth from the Deputy’s presence, betook himself to his shop and brought out thence the casket and a somewhat making a great display, which he removed to his house. At break of day he arose and going to his shop, broke the lock and shouted and shrieked and called on Allah for aid, till each and every of the folk assembled about him and all who were in the city were present, whereupon he cried out to them, saying even as the Prefect had bidden him; and this was bruited abroad. Then he made for the Prefecture and presenting himself before the Chief of Police, cried out and complained and made a show of distraction. After three days, the old woman came to him and bringing him the thousand dinars, the price of the stuffs, demanded the casket.[77] When he saw her, he seized her and carried her to the Prefect of the city; and when she came before the Kazi, he said to her, “Woe to thee O Sataness; did not thy first deed suffice thee, but thou must come a second time?” She replied, “I am of those who seek their salvation[78] in the cities, and we foregather every month: and, yesterday we foregathered.” He asked her, “Canst thou cause me to catch them?” and she answered, “Yes; but, an thou wait till to-morrow, they will have dispersed; so I will deliver them to thee to-night.” The Emir said to her, “Go;” and said she, “Send with me one who shall go with me to them and obey me in whatso I shall say to him, and all that I bid him he shall not gainsay and therein conform to my way.” Accordingly, he gave her a company of men and she took them and bringing them to a certain door, said to them, “Stand ye here, at this door, and whoso cometh out to you seize him; and I will come out to you last of all.” “Hearing and obeying,” answered they and stood at the door, whilst the crone went in. They waited a whole hour, even as the Sultan’s deputy had bidden them, but none came out to them and their standing waxed longsome, and when they were weary of waiting, they went up to the door and smote upon it a heavy blow and a violent, so that they came nigh to break the wooden bolt. Then one of them entered and was absent a long while, but found naught; so he returned to his comrades and said to them, “This is the door of a dark passage, leading to such a thoroughfare; and indeed she laughed at you and left you and went away.”[79] When they heard his words, they returned to the Emir and acquainted him with the case, whereby he knew that the old woman was a cunning craft-mistress and that she had mocked at them and cozened them and put a cheat on them, to save herself. Witness, then, the wiles of this woman and that which she contrived of guile, for all her lack of foresight in presenting herself a second time to the draper and not suspecting that his conduct was but a sleight; yet, when she found herself hard upon calamity, she straightway devised a device for her deliverance. When the company heard the seventh constable’s story, they were moved to mirth galore, than which naught could be more; and Al-Malik al Zahir Bíbars rejoiced in that which he heard and said, “Verily, there betide things in this world wherefrom kings are shut out, by reason of their exalted degree!” Then came forward another person from amongst the company and said, “There hath reached me through one of my friends a similar story bearing on the malice of women and their wiles, and it is more wondrous and marvellous, more diverting and more delectable than all that hath been told to you.” Quoth the company there present, “Tell us thy tale and expound it unto us, so we may see that which it hath of extraordinary.” And he began to relate

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The Eighth Constable's History.

Ye must know that a company, amongst whom was a friend of mine, once invited me to an entertainment; so I went with him, and when we came into his house and sat down on his couch, he said to me, "This is a blessed day and a day of gladness, and who is he that liveth to see the like of this day? I desire that thou practice with us and disapprove not our proceedings, for that thou hast been accustomed to fall in with those who offer this."[80] I consented thereto and their talk happened upon the like of this subject.[81] Presently, my friend, who had invited me, arose from among them and said to them, "Listen to me and I will acquaint you with an adventure which happened to me. There was a certain person who used to visit me in my shop, and I knew him not nor he knew me, nor ever in his life had he seen me; but he was wont, whenever he wanted a dirham or two, by way of loan, to come to me and ask me, without acquaintance or introduction between me and him, and I would give him what he required. I told none of him, and matters abode thus between us a long while till he began a-borrowing at a time ten or twenty dirhams, more or less. One day, as I stood in my shop, behold, a woman suddenly came up to me and stopped before me; and she was a presence as she were the full moon rising from among the constellations, and the place was a-light by her light. When I saw her, I fixed my eyes on her and stared in her face; and she fell to bespeaking me with soft voice. When I heard her words and the sweetness of her speech, I lusted after her; and as soon as she saw that I longed for her, she did her errand and promising me an assignation, went away, leaving my thoughts occupied with her and fire a-flame in my heart. Accordingly I abode, perplexed and pondering my affair, the fire still burning in my heart, till the third day, when she came again and I could hardly credit her coming. When I saw her, I talked with her and cajoled her and courted her and craved her favour with speech and invited her to my house; but, hearing all this, she only answered, "I will not go up into any one's house." Quoth I, "I will go with thee" and quoth she, "Arise and come with me." So I rose and putting into my sleeve a kerchief, wherein was a fair sum of silver and a considerable, followed the woman, who forwent me and ceased not walking till she brought me to a lane and to a door, which she bade me unlock. I refused and she opened it and led me into the vestibule. As soon as I had entered, she bolted the entrance door from within and said to me, “Sit here till I go in to the slave-girls and cause them enter a place whence they shall not see me.” “’Tis well,” answered I and sat down: whereupon she entered and was absent from me an eye-twinkling, after which she returned to me, without a veil, and straightway said, “Arise and enter in the name of Allah.” So I arose and went in after her and we gave not over going till we reached a saloon. When I examined the place, I found it neither handsome nor pleasant, but desolate and dreadful without symmetry or cleanliness; indeed, it was loathsome to look upon and there was in it a foul smell. After this inspection I seated myself amiddlemost the saloon, misdoubting; and lo and behold! as I sat, there came down on me from the dais a body of seven naked men, without other clothing than leather belts about their waists. One of them walked up to me and took my turband, whilst another seized my kerchief that was in my sleeve, with my money, and a third stripped me of my clothes; after which a forth came and bound my hands behind my back with his belt. Then they all took me up, pinioned as I was, and casting me down, fell a-haling me towards a sink-hole that was there and were about to cut my throat, when suddenly there came a violent knocking at the door. As they heard the raps, they were afraid and their minds were diverted from me by affright; so the woman went out and presently returning, said to them, “Fear not; no harm shall betide you this day. ’Tis only your comrade who hath brought you your dinner.” With this the new-comer entered, bringing with him a roasted lamb; and when he came in to them, he asked, “What is to do with you, that ye have tucked up sleeves and bag-trousers?” Replied they, “This is a head of game we’ve caught.” As he heard these words, he came up to me and peering in my face, cried out and said, “By Allah, this is my brother, the son of my mother and father! Allah! Allah!” Then he loosed me from my pinion-bonds and bussed my head, and behold it was my friend who used to borrow silver of me. When I kissed his head, he kissed mine and said, “O my brother, be not affrighted;” and he called for my clothes and coin and restored all to me nor was aught missing. Also, he brought me a porcelain bowl full of sherbet of sugar, with lemons therein, and gave me to drink; and the company came and seated me at a table. So I ate with them and he said to me, "O my lord and my brother, now have bread and salt passed between us and thou hast discovered our secret and our case; but secrets with the noble are safe." I replied, 'As I am a lawfully-begotten child and a well-born, I will not name aught of this nor denounce you!" They assured themselves of me by an oath; then they brought me out and I went my way, very hardly crediting but that I was of the dead. I lay ill in my house a whole month; after which I went to the Hammam and coming out, opened my shop and sat selling and buying as was my wont, but saw no more of that man or that woman till, one day, there stopped before my shop a young Turkoman,[82] as he were the full moon; and he was a sheep-merchant and had with him a leathern bag, wherein was money, the price of sheep he had sold. He was followed by the woman, and when he stopped over against my shop, she stood by his side and cajoled him, and indeed he inclined to her with great inclination. As for me, I was dying of solicitude for him and began casting furtive glances at him and winked at him, till he chanced to look round and saw me signing to him; whereupon the woman gazed at me and made a signal with her hand and went away. The Turkoman followed her and I deemed him dead without a doubt; wherefore I feared with exceeding fear and shut my shop. Then I journeyed for a year's space and returning, opened my shop; whereupon, behold, the woman as she walked by came up to me and said, "This is none other than a great absence." I replied, "I have been on a journey;" and she asked, "Why didst thou wink at the Turkoman?" I answered, "Allah forfend! I did not wink at him." Quoth she, "Beware lest thou thwart me;" and went away. Awhile after this a familiar of mine invited me to his house and when I came to him, we ate and drank and chatted. Then he asked me, "O my friend, hath there befallen thee aught of sore trouble in the length of thy life?" Answered I, "Tell me first, hath there befallen thee aught?" He rejoined, "Know that one day I espied a fair woman; so I followed her and sued her to come home with me. Quoth she, 'I will not enter any one's house but my own; so come thou to my home, an thou wilt, and be it on such a day.' Accordingly, on the appointed day, her messenger[83] came to me, proposing to carry me to her; and when he announced his purpose I arose and went with him, till we arrived at a goodly house and a great door. He opened the door and I entered, whereupon he bolted it behind me and would have gone in; but I feared with exceeding fear and foregoing him to the second door, whereby he would have had me enter, bolted it and cried out at him, saying, 'By Allah, an thou open not to me, I will slay thee;[84] for I am none of those whom thou canst readily cozen!' 'What deemest thou of cozening?' 'Verily, I am startled by the loneliness of the house and the lack of any keeper at its door; for I see none appear.' 'O my lord, this is a private door.' 'Private or public, open to me.' So he opened to me and I went out and had gone but a little way from the door when I met a woman, who said to me, 'A long life was foreordained to thee; else hadst thou never come forth of yonder house.' I asked, 'How so?' and she answered, 'Enquire of thy friend Such-an-one,' (naming thee), 'and he will acquaint thee with strange things.' So, Allah upon thee, O my friend, tell me what befel thee of wondrous and marvellous, for I have told thee what befel me." "O my brother, I am bound by a solemn oath." "O my friend, false thine oath and tell me."[85] "Indeed, I dread the issue of this." But he urged me till I told him all, whereat he marvelled. Then I went away from him and abode a long while, without further news. One day, I met another of my friends who said to me, "A neighbour of mine hath invited me to hear singers" but I said:— "I will not foregather with any one." However, he prevailed upon me; so we repaired to the place and found there a person, who came to meet us and said, "Bismillah!"[86] Then he pulled out a key and opened the door, whereupon we entered and he locked the door after us. Quoth I, "We are the first of the folk; but where be the singers' voices?" He replied, "They're within the house: this is but a private door; so be not amazed at the absence of the folk." My friend said to me, "Behold, we are two, and what can they dare to do with us?" Then he brought us into the house, and when we entered the saloon, we found it desolate exceedingly and dreadful of aspect. Quoth my friend, "We are fallen into a trap; but there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" And quoth I, "May God never requite thee for me with good!"[87] Then we sat down on the edge of the dais and suddenly I espied a closet beside me; so I peered into it and my friend asked me, "What seest thou?" I answered, "I see there wealth in store and corpses of murdered men galore. Look." So he looked and cried, "By Allah, we are down among the dead!" and we fell a-weeping, I and he. As we were thus, behold, four men came in upon us, by the door at which we had entered, and they were naked, wearing only leather belts about their waists, and made for my friend. He ran at them and dealing one of them a blow with his swordpommel, knocked him down, whereupon the other three rushed upon him. I seized the opportunity to escape while they were occupied with him, and espying a door by my side, slipped into it and found myself in an underground room, without issue, even a window. So I made sure of death, and said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" Then I looked at the top of the vault and saw in it a range of glazed and coloured lunettes;[88] so I clambered up for dear life, till I reached the lunettes, and I out of my wits for fear. I made shift to remove the glass and scrambling out through the setting, found behind them a wall which I bestrode. Thence I saw folk walking in the street; so I cast myself down on the ground and Allah Almighty preserved me, and when I reached the face of earth, unhurt, the folk flocked round me and I acquainted them with my adventure. Now as Destiny decreed, the Chief of Police was passing through the market-street; so the people told him what was to do and he made for the door and bade raise it off its hinges. We entered with a rush and found the thieves, as they had thrown my friend down and cut his throat; for they occupied not themselves with me, but said, "Whither shall yonder fellow wend? Verily, he is in our grasp." So the Wali hent them with the hand[89] and questioned them of their case, and they confessed against the woman and against their associates in Cairo. Then he took them and went forth, after he had locked up the house and sealed it; and I accompanied him till he came without the first house. He found the door bolted from within; so he bade raise it and we entered and found another door. This also he caused pull up, enjoining his men to silence till the doors should be lifted, and we entered and found the band occupied with new game, whom the woman had just brought in and whose throat they were about to cut. The Chief released the man and gave him back whatso the thieves had taken from him; and he laid hands on the woman and the rest and took forth of the house a mint of money, with which they found the purse of the Turkoman sheep-merchant. They at once nailed up the thieves against the house-wall, whilst, as for the woman, they wrapped her in one of her mantillas and nailing her to a board, set her upon a camel and went round about the town with her. Thus Allah razed their dwelling-places and did away from me that which I feared from them. All this befel, whilst I looked on, and I saw not my friend who had saved me from them the first time, whereat I wondered to the utterest of wonderment. However, some days afterward, he came up to me, and indeed he had renounced the world and donned a Fakir's dress; and he saluted me and went away.[90] Then he again began to pay me frequent visits and I entered into conversation with him and questioned him of the band and how he came to escape, he alone of them all. He replied, "I left them from the day on which Allah the Most High delivered thee from them, for that they would not obey my say; so I sware I would no longer consort with them." Quoth I, "By Allah, I marvel at thee, for that assuredly thou wast the cause of my preservation!" Quoth he, "The world is full of this sort; and we beseech the Almighty to send us safety, for that these wretches practice upon men with every kind of malpractice." Then I said to him, "Tell me the rarest adventure of all that befel thee in this villainy thou wast wont to work." And he answered, "O my brother, I was not present when they did such deeds, for that my part with them was to concern myself with selling and buying and feeding them; but it hath reached me that the rarest thing which befel them was on this wise."

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The Thief's Tale.

The woman who acted decoy for them and trapped their game and used to inveigle damsels from marriage-banquets, once caught them a woman from a bride-feast, under pretence that she had a wedding in her own house, and fixed for her a day when she should come to her. As soon as the appointed time arrived, the woman presented herself and the other carried her into the house by a door, declaring that it was a private wicket. When she entered the saloon, she saw men and braves[91] and knew that she had fallen into a snare; so she looked at them and said, "Harkye, my fine fellows![92] I am a woman and in my slaughter there is no glory, nor have ye against me any feud of blood-wite wherefor ye should pursue me; and that which is upon me of raiment and ornaments ye are free to take as lawful loot." Quoth they, "We fear thy denunciation;" but quoth she, "I will abide with you, neither coming in nor going out." So they said, "We grant thee thy life." Then the Captain looked on her and she pleased him; so he took her for himself, and she abode with him a whole year doing her very best in their service, till they became familiar with her and felt assured of her faith. One night of the nights she plied them with drink and they drank till they became drunken; whereupon she arose and took her clothes and five hundred dinars from the Captain; after which she fetched a razor and shaved off all their beards. Then she took soot from the cooking-pots and blackening their faces[93] opened the doors and fared forth; and when the thieves recovered from their drink, they abode confounded and knew that the woman had practiced upon them. All present marvelled at this his story and the ninth constable came forward and said, "I will tell you a right pleasant tale I heard at a wedding."

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The Ninth Constable's History.

A certain singing-girl was fair of favour and bruited of repute, and it happened one day that she fared forth to a garden a-pleasuring. As she sat in the summer-house, behold, a man lopped of the hand stopped to beg of her, and suddenly entered in at the door. Then he touched her with his stump, saying, "An alms, for the love of Allah!"[94] but she answered, "Allah open!" and insulted him. Many days after this, there came to her a messenger and gave her the hire of her going forth.[95] So she took with her a hand-maid and an accompanyist;[96] and when she came to the place appointed, the messenger brought her into a long passage, at the end whereof was a saloon. "So" (quoth she) "we entered therein and found nobody, but we saw the room made ready for an entertainment with candles, dried fruits and wine, and in another place we saw food and in a third beds. Thereupon we sat down and I looked at him who had opened the door to us, and behold he was lopped of the hand. I misliked this, and when I sat a little longer, there entered a man, who filled the candelabra in the saloon and lit the waxen candles; and behold, he also was handlopped. Then flocked the folk and there entered none except he were lopped of the hand, and indeed the house was full of these companions.[97] When the session was complete, the host came in and the company rose to him and seated him in the place of honour. Now he was none other than the man who had fetched me, and he was clad in sumptuous clothes, but his hands were in his sleeves, so that I knew not how it was with them. They brought him food and he ate, he and the company; after which they washed hands and the host began casting at me furtive glances. Then they drank till they were drunken, and when they had taken leave of their wits, the host turned to me and said, 'Thou dealtest not in friendly fashion with him who sought an alms of thee, and thou saidst to him, "How loathsome art thou!"'Â´ I considered him and behold, he was the lophand who had accosted me in my pleasance.[98] So I asked, 'O my lord, what is this thou sayest?' and he answered, 'Wait; thou shalt remember it.' So saying, he shook his head and stroked his beard, whilst I sat down for fear. Then he put out his hand to my mantilla and walking-boots and laying them by his side, cried to me, ‘Sing, O accursed!’ Accordingly, I sang till I was tired out, what while they occupied themselves with their case and drank themselves drunk and the heat of their drink redoubled. Presently, the doorkeeper came to me and said, ‘O my lady, fear not; but when thou hast a mind to go, let me know.’ Quoth I, ‘Thinkest thou to delude me?’ and quoth he, ‘Nay, by Allah! But I have ruth on thee for that our Captain and chief purposeth thee no good and methinketh he will kill thee this night.’ Said I to him, ‘An thou be minded to do me a favour, now is its time;’ and said he, ‘When our Chief riseth to his need and goeth to the Chapel of Ease, I will precede him with the light and leave the door open; and do thou wend whithersoever thou wiliest.’ Then I sang and the Captain cried, ‘’Tis good.’ Replied I, ‘Nay, but thou’rt loathsome.’ He looked at me and rejoined, ‘By Allah, thou shalt never more scent the odour of the world!’ But his comrades said to him, ‘Do it not,’ and gentled him, till he added, ‘An it must be so, and there be no help for it, she shall tarry here a whole year and not fare forth.’ My answer was, ‘I am content to submit to whatso pleaseth thee: if I have failed in respect to thee, thou art of the clement.’ He shook his head and drank, then arose and went out to do his need, whilst his comrades were occupied with what they were about of merry-making and drunkenness and sport. So I winked to my friends and we all slipped out into the corridor. We found the door open and fled forth, unveiled[99] and unknowing whither we went; nor did we halt till we had fared afar from the house and happened on a Cook cooking, of whom I asked, ‘Hast thou a mind to quicken the dead?’ He said, ‘Come up;’ so we went up into the shop, and he whispered, ‘Lie down.’ Accordingly, we lay down and he covered us with the Halfah grass,[100] wherewith he was used to kindle the fire under the food. Hardly had we settled ourselves in the place when we heard a noise of kicking at the door and people running right and left and questioning the Cook and asking, ‘Hath any one passed by thee?’ Answered he, ‘None hath passed by me.’ But they ceased not to go round about the shop till the day broke, when they turned back, disappointed. Then the Cook removed the reeds and said to us, ‘Rise, for ye are delivered from death.’ So we arose, and we were uncovered, sans veil or mantilla; but the Cook carried us up into his house and we sent to our homes and fetched us veils; and we repented to Allah Almighty and renounced singing, for indeed this was a mighty narrow escape after stress."[101] Those present marvelled at this, and the tenth constable came forward and said, "As for me, there befel me that which was yet rarer than all ye have yet heard." Quoth Al-Malik al-Zahir, "What was that?" And quoth he, "Deign give ear to me."

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The Tenth Constable's History.

A robbery of stuffs had been committed in the city and as it was a great matter I was cited,[102] I and my fellows: they[103] pressed hard upon us: but we obtained of them some days' grace and dispersed in search of the stolen goods. As for me, I sallied forth with five men and went round about the city that day; and on the morrow we fared forth into the suburbs. When we found ourselves a parasang or two parasangs away from the city, we waxed athirst; and presently we came to a garden. There I went in alone and going up to the waterwheel,[104] entered it and drank and made the Wuzu-ablution and prayed. Presently, up came the keeper of the garden and said to me, "Woe to thee! Who brought thee to this water-wheel?" and he smote me and squeezed my ribs[105] till I was like to die. Then he bound me with one of his bulls and made me work the water-wheel, flogging me as I walked round with a cattle-whip[106] he had with him, till my heart was a-fire; after which he loosed me and I went out, knowing not the way. Now when I came forth, I fainted: so I sat down till my trouble subsided; then I made for my comrades and said to them, "'I have found money and malefactor, and I affrighted him not neither troubled him, lest he should flee; but now, come, let us go to him, so we may contrive to lay hold upon him." Then I took them and we repaired to the keeper of the garden, who had tortured me with tunding, with the intent to make him taste the like of that which he had done with me and lie against him and cause him eat many a stick. So we rushed to the waterwheel and seized the keeper. Now there was with him a youth and, as we were pinioning the gardener, he said, "By Allah, I was not with him and indeed 'tis six months since I entered this city, nor did I set eyes on the stuffs until they were brought hither." Quoth we, "Show us the stuffs;" upon which he carried us to a place wherein was a pit, beside the waterwheel, and digging there, brought out the stolen goods with not a thread or a stitch of them missing. So we took them and carried the keeper to the Prefecture of Police where we stripped him and beat him with palm-rods till he confessed to thefts manifold. Now I did this by way of mockery against my comrades, and it succeeded. The company marvelled at this story with the utmost marvelling, and the eleventh constable rose and said, “I know a story yet stranger than this: but it happened not to myself.”

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The Eleventh Constable's History.

There was once in times of yore a Chief Officer of Police and there passed by him one day of the days a Jew, hending in hand a basket wherein were five thousand dinars; whereupon quoth that officer to one of his slaves, "Art able to take that money from yonder Jew's basket?" "Yes," quoth he, nor did he tarry beyond the next day ere he came to his lord, bringing the basket. "So" (said the officer) "I bade him 'Go, bury it in such a place;' whereupon he went and buried it and returned and told me. Hardly had he reported this when there arose a clamour like that of Doomsday and up came the Jew, with one of the King's officers, declaring that the gold pieces belonged to the Sultan and that he looked to none but us for it. We demanded of him three days' delay, according to custom and I said to him who had taken the money, 'Go and set in the Jew's house somewhat that shall occupy him with himself.' Accordingly he went and played a mighty fine trick, which was, he laid in a basket a dead woman's hand, painted with henna and having a gold seal-ring on one of the fingers, and buried that basket under a slab in the Jew's home. Then we came and searched and found the basket, whereupon without a moment of delay we clapped the Jew in irons for the murder of a woman. As soon as it was the appointed time, there entered to us the man of the Sultan's guards, who had accompanied the Jew, when he came to complain of the loss of the money,[107] and said, 'The Sultan sayeth to you, Nail up[108] the Jew and bring the money, for there is no way by which five thousand gold pieces can be lost.' Wherefore we knew that our device did not suffice. So I went forth and finding a young man, a Hauráni,[109] passing along the road, laid hands on him forthright and stripped him, and whipped him with palm-rods. Then I threw him in jail, ironed, and carrying him to the Prefecture, beat him again, saying to them, 'This be the robber who stole the coin.' And we strove to make him confess; but he would not. Accordingly, we beat him a third and a fourth time, till we were aweary and exhausted and he became unable to return a reply; but, when we had made an end of beating and tormenting him, he said, 'I will fetch the money this very moment.' Presently we went with him till he came to the place where my slave had buried the gold and he dug there and brought it out; whereat I marvelled with the utmost marvel and we carried it to the Prefect's house. When the Wali saw the money and made sure of it with his own eyes, he rejoiced with joy exceeding and bestowed on me a robe of honour. Then he restored the coin straightway to the Sultan and we left the youth in durance vile; whilst I said to my slave who had taken the money, 'Say me, did yonder young man see thee, what time thou buriedst the money?' and he replied, 'No, by Allah the Great!' So I went in to the young man, the prisoner, and plied him with wine[110] till he recovered, when I said to him, 'Tell me how thou stolest the money?' Answered he, 'By Allah, I stole it not, nor did I ever set eyes on it till I brought it forth of the earth!' Quoth I, 'How so?' and quoth he, 'Know that the cause of my falling into your hands was my parent's imprecation against me; because I entreated her evilly yesternight and beat her and she said to me, 'By Allah, O my son, the Lord shall assuredly gar the oppressor prevail over thee!' Now she is a pious woman. So I went out forthright and thou sawest me on my way and didst that which thou didst; and when beating was prolonged on me, my senses failed me and I heard a voice saying to me, 'Fetch it.' So I said to you what I said and the Speaker[111] guided me till I came to the place and there befel what befel of the bringing out of the money.' I admired this with the utmost admiration and knew that he was of the sons of the pious. So I bestirred myself for his release and cured him and besought him of acquittance and absolution of responsibility." All those who were present marvelled at this story with the utmost marvel, and the twelfth constable came forward and said, "I will tell you a pleasant trait that I heard from a certain person, concerning an adventure which befel him with one of the thieves.

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The Twelfth Constable's History.

I was passing one day in the market, when I found that a robber had broken into the shop of a shroff, a changer of monies, and thence taken a casket, wherewith he had made off to the burial-ground. Accordingly I followed him thither and came up to him, as he opened the casket and fell a-looking into it; whereupon I accosted him, saying, "Peace be on you!"[112] And he was startled at me; so I left him and went away from him. Some months after this, I met him again under arrest, in the midst of the guards and "men of violence,"[113] and he said to them, "Seize this man." So they laid hands on me and carried me to the Chief of Police, who said, "What hast thou to do with this wight?" The robber turned to me and looking a long while in my face, asked, "Who took this man?" and the officer answered, "Thou badest us take him; so we took him." And he cried, "I ask refuge of Allah! I know not this man, nor knoweth he me; and I said not that to you but of a person other than this." So they released me, and a while after the thief met me in the street and saluted me with the salam, saying, "O my lord, fright for fright! Hadst thou taken aught from me, thou hadst a part in the calamity."[114] I replied to him, "Allah be the judge between thee and me!"[115] And this is what I have to recount. Then came forward the thirteenth constable and said, "'I will tell you a tale which a man of my friends told me."

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The Thirteenth Constable’s History.

I went out one night of the nights to the house of a friend and when it was the middle of the night, I sallied forth alone to hie me home. When I came into the road, I espied a sort of thieves and they espied me, whereupon my spittle dried up; but I feigned myself drunken and staggered from side to side, crying out and saying, “I am drunken.” And I went up to the walls right and left and made as if I saw not the thieves, who followed me afoot till I reached my home and knocked at the door, when they went away. Some few days after this, as I stood at the door of my house, behold, there came up to me a young man, with a chain about his neck and with him a trooper, and he said to me, “O my lord, an alms for the love of Allah!” I replied, “Allah open!” and he looked at me a long while and cried, “That which thou shouldst give me would not come to the worth of thy turband or thy waistcloth or what not else of thy habit, to say nothing of the gold and the silver which were about thy person.” I asked, “And how so?” and he answered, “On such a night, when thou fellest into peril and the thieves would have stripped thee, I was with them and said to them, Yonder man is my lord and my master who reared me. So was I and only I the cause of thy deliverance and thus I saved thee from them.” When I heard this, I said to him, “Stop ;” and entering my house, brought him that which Allah Almighty made easy to me.[116] So he went his way; and this is all I have to say. Then came forward the fourteenth constable and said, “Know that the tale I have to tell is rarer and pleasanter than this; and ’tis as follows.”

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The Fourteenth Constable's History.

I had a draper's shop before I entered this corporation,[117] and there used to come to me a person whom I knew not, save by his face, and I would give him whatso he sought and have patience with him, till he could pay me. One night, I foregathered with certain of my friends and we sat down to liquor: so we drank and were merry and played at Táb;[118] and we made one of us Wazir and another Sultan and a third Torchbearer or Headsman.[119] Presently, there came in upon us a spunger, without bidding, and we went on playing, whilst he played with us. Then quoth the Sultan to the Wazir, "Bring the Parasite who cometh in to the folk, without leave or license, that we may enquire into his case; after which I will cut off his head;" so the headsmen arose and dragged the spunger before the Sultan who bade cut off his head. Now there was with them a sword, that would not cut clotted curd;[120] so the headsmen smote him therewith and his head flew from his body. When we saw this, the wine fled from our brains and we became in the foulest of plights. Then my friends lifted up the corpse and went out with it, that they might hide it, whilst I took the head and made for the river. Now I was drunken and my clothes were drenched with the blood; and as I passed along the road, I met a robber. When he saw me, he knew me and cried to me, "Such-an-one!" "Well?" said I, and he rejoined, "What is that thou hast with thee?" So I acquainted him with the case and he took the head from me. Then we fared on till we came to the river, where he washed the head and considering it straitly, exclaimed, "By Allah, verily this be my brother, the son of my sire, and he used to spunge upon the folk;" after which he threw that head into the river. As for me, I was like a dead man for dread; but he said to me, "Fear not, neither do thou grieve, for I acquit thee of my brother's blood." Presently, he took my clothes and washed them and dried them and put them on me; after which he said to me, "Get thee gone to thy house." So I returned to my house and he accompanied me, till I came thither, when he said to me, "Allah never desolate thee! I am thy friend Such-an-one, who used to take of thee goods on credit, and I owe thee a kindness; but henceforward thou wilt never see me more."

Then he went his ways. The company marvelled at the manliness of this man and his clemency[121] and courtesy, and the Sultan said, “Tell us another of thy stories, O Shahrazad.”[122] She replied, “ ’Tis well! They set forth[123]

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A Merry Jest of a Clever Thief.

A thief of the thieves of the Arabs went one night to a certain man's house, to steal from a heap of wheat there, and the people of the house surprised him. Now on the heap was a great copper tasse, and the thief buried himself in the corn and covered his head with the tasse, so that the folk found him not and went their ways; but, as they were going, behold, there came a mighty great fart[124] forth of the corn. So they went up to the tasse and raising it, discovered the thief and laid hands on him. Quoth he, "I have saved you the trouble of seeking me: for I purposed, in breaking wind, to direct you to my hiding-place; wherefore do you be easy with me and have ruth on me, so may Allah have ruth on you!" Accordingly they let him go and harmed him not. "And for another story of the same kind" (she continued), "hearken to

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The Tale of the Old Sharper.

There was once an old man renowned for clever roguery, and he went, he and his mates, to one of the markets and stole thence a quantity of stuffs: then they separated and returned each to his quarter. Awhile after this, the old man assembled a company of his fellows and, as they sat at drink, one of them pulled out a costly piece of cloth and said, “Is there any one of you will dare sell this in its own market whence it was stolen, that we may confess his superior subtlety?” Quoth the old man, “I will;” and they said, “Go, and Allah Almighty open to thee the door!” So early on the morrow, he took the stuff and carrying it to the market whence it had been stolen, sat down at the very shop out of which it had been purloined and gave it to the broker, who hent it in hand and cried it for sale. Its owner knew it and bidding for it, bought it and sent after the Chief of Police, who seized the Sharper and seeing him an old man of grave presence and handsomely clad said to him, “Whence hadst thou this piece of stuff?” Quoth he, “I had it from this market and from yonder shop where I was sitting.” Quoth the Wali, “Did its owner sell it to thee?” and quoth the robber, “Not so; I stole it, this and other than it.” Then said the Chief, “How camest thou to bring it for sale to the place whence thou stolest it?” “I will not tell my tale save to the Sultan, for that I have a profitable counsel wherewith I would lief bespeak him.” “Name it!” “Art thou the Sultan?” “No!” “I’ll not tell it save to himself.” Accordingly the Wali carried him up to the Sultan and he said, “I have a counsel for thee, O my lord.” Asked the Sultan, “What is thy counsel?” And the thief said, “I repent and will deliver into thy hand all who are evildoers, and whomsoever I bring not, I will stand in his stead.” Cried the Sultan, “Give him a robe of honour and accept his profession of penitence.” So he went down from the presence and returning to his comrades, related to them that which had passed, when they confessed his subtlety and gave him that which they had promised him. Then he took the rest of the booty and went up therewith to the Sultan, who, seeing him, recognised him and he was magnified in the royal eyes and the king commanded that naught should be taken from him. After this, when he went down, the Sultan’s attention was diverted from him, little by little, till the case was forgotten, and so he saved the booty for himself. Those present marvelled at this and the fifteenth constable came forward and said, “Know that among those who make a trade of trickery are those whom Allah Almighty taketh on their own testimony against themselves.” It was asked him, “How so?” and he began to relate

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The Fifteenth Constable's History.[125]

It is told of a thieving person, one of the braves, that he used to rob and cut the way by himself upon caravans, and whenever the Chief of Police and the Governors sought him, he would flee from them and fortify himself in the mountains. Now it came to pass that a certain man journeyed along the road wherein was that robber, and this man was single-handed and knew not the sore perils besetting his way. So the highwayman came out upon him and said to him, "Bring out that which is with thee, for I mean to kill thee and no mistake." Quoth the traveller, "Kill me not, but annex these saddle-bags and divide that which is in them and take to thee the fourth part." And the thief answered, "I will not take aught but the whole."[126] Rejoined the traveller, "Take half, and let me go;" but the robber replied, "I will have naught but the whole, and eke I will kill thee." So the wayfarer said, "Take it." Accordingly the highwayman took the saddle-bags and offered to slay the traveller, who said, "What is this? Thou hast against me no blood-feud that should make my slaughter incumbent." Quoth the other, "Needs must I kill thee;" whereupon the traveller dismounted from his horse and grovelled before him, beseeching the thief and bespeaking him fair. The man hearkened not to his prayers, but cast him to the ground; whereupon the traveller raised his eyes and seeing a francolin flying over him, said, in his agony, "O Francolin,[127] bear testimony that this man slayeth me unjustly and wickedly; for indeed I have given him all that was with me and entreated him to let me go, for my children's sake; yet would he not consent. But be thou witness against him, for Allah is not unmindful of deeds which the oppressors do." The highwayman paid no heed to what he heard, but smote him and cut off his head. After this, the rulers compounded with the highwayman for his submission, and when he came before them, they enriched him and he became in such favour with the lieutenant of the Sultan that he used to eat and drink with him and there befel between them familiar converse which lasted a long while till in fine there chanced a curious chance. The lieutenant of the Sultan one day of the days made a banquet, and therein was a roasted francolin, which when the robber saw, he laughed a loud laugh. The lieutenant was angered against him and said to him, “What is the meaning of thy laughter? Seest thou any fault or dost thou mock at us, of thy lack of good manners?” Answered the highwayman, “Not so, by Allah, O my lord; but I saw yonder francolin, which brought to my mind an extraordinary thing; and ’twas on this wise. In the days of my youth, I used to cut the way, and one day I waylaid a man, who had with him a pair of saddle-bags and money therein. So I said to him, ‘Leave these saddle-bags, for I mean to slay thee.’ Quoth he, ‘Take the fourth part of that which is in them and leave me the rest;’ and quoth I, ‘Needs must I take the whole and kill thee without mistake.’ Then said he, ‘Take the saddle bags and let me wend my way;’ but I answered, ‘There is no help but that I slay thee.’ As we were in this contention, behold, he saw a francolin and turning to it, said, ‘Bear testimony against him, O Francolin, that he slayeth me unjustly and letteth me not go to my children, for all he hath taken my money.’ However, I had no pity on him neither hearkened to that which he said, but smote him and slew him and concerned not myself with the evidence of the francolin.” His story troubled the lieutenant of the Sultan and he was enraged against him with sore rage; so he drew his sword and smiting him, cut off his head while he sat at table; whereupon a voice recited these couplets —

“An wouldst not be injurĕd, injure not; * But do good and from
Allah win goodly lot,
For what happeth by Allah is doomed to be * Yet thine acts are
the root I would have thee wot.”[128]

Now this voice was the francolin which bore witness against him. The company present marvelled at this tale and all cried, “Woe to the oppressor!” Then came forward the sixteenth constable and said, “And I for another will tell you a marvellous story which is on this wise.”

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The Sixteenth Constable's History.

I went forth one day of the days, intending to travel, and suddenly fell upon a man whose wont it was to cut the way. When he came up with me he offered to slay me and I said to him, "I have naught with me whereby thou mayst profit." Quoth he, "My profit shall be the taking of thy life." I asked, "What is the cause of this? Hath there been enmity between us aforetime?" and he answered, "Nay; but needs must I slay thee." Thereupon I ran away from him to the river side; but he caught me up and casting me to the ground, sat down on my breast. So I sought help of the Shaykh of the Pilgrims[129] and cried to him, "Protect me from this oppressor!" And indeed he had drawn a knife to cut my throat when, lo and behold! there came a mighty great crocodile forth of the river and snatching him up from off my breast plunged into the water, with him still hending knife in hand, even within the jaws of the beast: whilst I abode extolling Almighty Allah, and rendering thanks for my preservation to him who had delivered me from the hand of that wrong-doer.[130]

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TALE OF HARUN AL-RASHID AND ABDULLAH BIN NAFI’.[131]

Know thou, O King of the Age, that there was in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, in the city of Baghdad, the Abode of Peace, a Caliph Harun al-Rashid hight, and he had cup-companions and tale-tellers to entertain him by night. Among his equerries was a man named Abdullah bin Náfi’, who stood high in favour with him and dear to him, so that he did not forget him a single hour. Now it came to pass, by the decree of Destiny, that it became manifest to Abdullah how he was grown of small account with the Caliph, who paid no heed unto him nor, if he absented himself, did he ask after him, as had been his habit. This was grievous to Abdullah and he said within himself, “Verily, the soul of the Commander of the Faithful and his Wazir are changed towards me and nevermore shall I see in him that cordiality and affection wherewith he was wont to treat me.” And this was chagrin-full to him and concern grew upon him, so that he recited these couplets: —

“Whoso’s contemned in his home and land * Should, to better his
case, in self-exile hie:
So fly the house where contempt awaits, * Nor on fires of grief
for the parting fry;
Crude Ambergris[132] is but offal where * ’Tis born; but
abroad on our necks shall stye;
And Kohl at home is a kind of stone, * Cast on face of earth and
on roads to lie;
But when borne abroad it wins highest worth * And thrones between
eyelid and ball of eye.”

(Quoth the sayer,) Then he could brook this matter no longer; so he went forth from the dominions of the Prince of True Believers, under presence of visiting certain of his kith and kin, and took with him nor servant nor comrade, neither acquainted any with his intent, but betook himself to the road and fared deep into the wold and the sandwastes, unknowing whither he went. After awhile, he unexpectedly fell in with travellers who were making the land of Hind and journeyed with them. When he came thither, he lighted down in a city of that country and housed him in one of the lodging-houses; and there he abode a while of days, relishing not food neither solacing himself with sleep; nor was this for lack of dirhams or dinars, but for that his mind was occupied with musing upon the shifts of Destiny and bemoaning himself for that the revolving sphere had turned against him in enmity, and the days had decreed unto him the disfavour of our lord the Imam.[133] After such fashion he abode a space of days, and presently he homed him in the land and took to himself friends and got him many familiars, with whom he addressed himself to diversion and good cheer. He used also to go a-pleasuring with his companions and their hearts were solaced by his company and he entertained them every evening with stories and displays of his manifold accomplishments[134] and diverted them with delectable verses and told them abundance of stories and histories. Presently, the report of him reached King Jamhúr, lord of Kashgar of Hind, who sent in quest of him, and great was his desire to see him. So Abdullah repaired to his court and going in to him, kissed ground before him; and Jamhur welcomed him and treated him with kindness and bade lodge him in the guest-house, where he abode three days, at the end of which the king sent to him a chamberlain of his chamberlains and bade bring him to the presence. When he came before him, he greeted him, and the truchman accosted him, saying, “Verily, King Jamhur hath heard of thy report, that thou art a pleasant cup-companion and an eloquent teller of night-tales, and he would have thee company with him o’ nights and entertain him with that which thou knowest of histories and pleasant stories and verses.” And he made answer, ‘ To hear is to obey!” (Quoth Abdullah bin Nafi’,) So I became his boon-companion and entertained him by night with tales and talk; and this pleased him with the utmost pleasure and he took me into favour and bestowed on me robes of honour and set apart for me a lodging; indeed he was bountiful exceedingly to me and could not brook to be parted from me a single hour. So I sojourned with him a while of time and every night I caroused and conversed with him till the most part of the dark hours was past; and when drowsiness overcame him, he would rise and betake himself to his sleeping-place, saying to me, ‘Forsake not my service and forego not my presence.’ And I made answer with ‘Hearing and obeying.’ Now the king had a son, a nice child, called the Emir Mohammed, who was winsome of youth and sweet of speech: he had read books and had perused histories and he loved above all things in the world the telling and hearing of verses and tales and anecdotes. He was dear to his father King Jamhur, for that he owned no other son than he on life, and indeed he had reared him in the lap of love and he was gifted with exceeding beauty and loveliness, brilliancy and perfect grace: he had also learnt to play upon the lute and upon all manner instruments and he was used to converse and company with friends and brethren. Now it was his wont when the king arose seeking his sleeping-chamber, to sit in his place and require me to entertain him with tales and verses and pleasant anecdotes; and on this wise I abode with them both a great while in all joyance and delight, and the Prince still loved me with mighty great love and treated me with the utmost tenderness. It fortuned one day that the king’s son came to me, after his sire had withdrawn, and cried, ‘O Ibn Nafi’!’ ‘At thy service, O my lord;’ ‘I would have thee tell me a wondrous story and a marvellous matter, which thou hast never related either to me or to my father Jamhur.’ ‘O my lord, what story is this that thou desirest of me and of what kind shall it be of the kinds?’ ‘It mattereth little, so it be a goodly story, whether it befel of olden tide or in these times.’ ‘O my lord, I know by rote many stories of various kinds; so which of the kinds preferrest thou, and wilt thou have a story of mankind or of Jinn kind?’ ‘ ’Tis well! An thou have espied aught with thine eyes and heard it with thine ears, tell it me.’ Then he bethought himself and said to me, ‘I conjure thee by my life, tell me a tale of the tales of the Jinn and that which thou hast heard of them and seen of them!’ I replied, ‘O my son, indeed thou conjurest me by a mighty conjuration; so lend an ear to the goodliest of stories, ay, and the strangest of them and the pleasantest and rarest.’ Quoth the Prince, ‘Say on, for I am attentive to thy speech;’ and quoth I, ‘Hear then, O my son,

The Tale of the Damsel Tohfat al-Kulub and the Caliph Harun al-Rashid.

The Viceregent of the Lord of the three Worlds, Harun al-Rashid, had a boon-companion of the number of his boon-companions, by name Ishak bin Ibrahim al-Nadim al-Mausili,[135] who was the most accomplished of the folk of his time in smiting upon the lute; and of the Commander of the Faithful's love for him, he set apart for him a palace of the choicest of his palaces, wherein he was wont to instruct hand-maidens in the arts of singing and of lute playing. If any slave-girl became, by his instruction, clever in the craft, he carried her before the Caliph, who bade her perform upon the lute; and if she pleased him, he would order her to the Harim; else would he restore her to Ishak's palace. One day, the Commander of the Faithful's breast was straitened; so he sent after his Wazir Ja'afar the Barmecide and Ishak the cup-companion and Masrur the eunuch, the Sworder of his vengeance; and when they came, he changed his habit and disguised himself, whilst Ja'afar and Ishak and Masrur and Al-Fazl[136] and Yúnus[137] (who were also present) did the like. Then he went out, he and they, by the postern, to the Tigris and taking boat fared on till they came to near Al-Táf,[138] when they landed and walked till they came to the gate of the high street. Here there met them an old man, handsome in his hoariness and of a venerable bearing and a dignified, agreeable of aspect and apparel. He kissed the earth before Ishak al-Mausili (for that he knew only him of the company, the Caliph being disguised, and deemed the others certain of his friends), and said to him, "O my lord, there is presently with me a hand-maid, a lutanist, never saw eyes the like of her nor the like of her grace, and indeed I was on my way to pay my respects to thee and give thee to know of her, but Allah, of His favour, hath spared me the trouble. So now I desire to show her to thee, and if she take thy fancy, well and good; otherwise I will sell her." Quoth Ishak, "Go before me to thy quarters,[139] till I come to thee and see her." The old man kissed his hand and went away; whereupon quoth Al-Rashid to him, “O Ishak, who is yonder man and what is his want?” The other replied, “O my lord, this is a man Sa’íd the Slave-dealer hight, and ’tis he that buyeth us maidens and Mamelukes. He declareth that with him is a fair slave, a lutanist, whom he hath withheld from sale, for that he could not fairly sell her till he had passed her before me in review.” Quoth the Caliph, “Let us go to him so we may see her, by way of solace, and sight what is in the slave-dealer’s quarters of slave-girls;” and quoth Ishak, “Command belongeth to Allah and to the Commander of the Faithful.” Then he forewent them and they followed in his track till they came to the slave-dealer’s quarters and found a building tall of wall and large of lodgment, with sleeping-cells and chambers therein, after the number of the slave-girls, and folk sitting upon the wooden benches. So Ishak entered, he and his company and seating themselves in the place of honour, amused themselves by looking at the hand-maids and Mamelukes and watching how they were bought and sold, till the vending came to an end, when some of the folk went away and some remained seated. Then cried the slave-dealer, “Let none sit with us except whoso purchaseth by the thousand dinars and upwards.” Accordingly those present withdrew and there remained none but Al-Rashid and his suite; whereupon the slave-dealer called the damsel, after he had caused set her a chair of Fawwák,[140] lined with Grecian brocade, and she was like the sun shining high in the shimmering sky. When she entered, she saluted and sitting down, took the lute and smote upon it, after she had touched its strings and tuned it, so that all present were amazed. Then she sang thereto these couplets:

“Breeze o’ Morn, an thou breathe o’er the loved one’s land, *
    Deliver my greeting to all the dear band!
And declare to them still I am pledged to their love * And my
    longing excels all that lover unmanned:
O ye who have blighted my heart, ears and eyes, * My passion and
    ecstasy grow out of hand;
And torn is my sprite every night with desire, * And nothing of
    sleep can my eyelids command.”

Ishak exclaimed, “Brava, O damsel! By Allah, this is a fair hour!”

Whereupon she sprang up and kissed his hand, saying, ‘O my lord, in very sooth the hands stand still before thy presence and the tongues at thy sight, and the loquent when confronting thee wax dumb; but thou art the looser of the veil.”[141] Then she clung to him and cried, “Stand;” so he stood and said to her, “Who art thou and what is thy need?” She raised a corner of the veil, and behold she was a damsel as she were the full moon rising or the levee glancing, with two side-locks of hair which fell down to her anklets. She kissed his hand and said to him, “O my lord, know that I have been in these quarters some five months, during which I have withheld myself from sale till thou shouldst be present and see me; and yonder slave-dealer also made thy coming a pretext for not vending me, and forbade me for all I sought of him night and day that he should cause thee come hither and vouchsafe me thy company and gar me and thee forgather.” Quoth Ishak, “Tell me what thou wouldst have;” and quoth she, “I beseech thee, by Allah Almighty, that thou buy me, so I may be with thee by way of service.” He asked, “Is that thy desire?” and she answered, “Yes.” So Ishak returned to the slave-dealer and said to him, “Ho thou, Shaykh Sa’íd!” Said the old man, “At thy service, O my lord,” and Ishak continued, “In the corridor is a chamber and therein wones a damsel pale and wan. What is her price in dirhams and how much dost thou ask for her?” Quoth the slave-dealer, “She whom thou mentionest, O my lord, is called Tohfat al-Humaká?”[142] Ishak asked, “What is the meaning of Al-Humaka?” and the old man answered, “Her price hath been weighed and paid an hundred times and she still saith, Show me him who would buy me; and when I show her to him she saith, This one I mislike; he hath in him such and such a default. And in every one who would fain buy her she noteth some defect or other, so that none careth now to purchase her and none seeketh her, for fear lest she find some fault in him.” Quoth Ishak, “She seeketh at this present to sell herself; so go thou to her and inquire of her and see her price and send her to the palace.” Quoth Sa’id, “O my lord, her price is an hundred dinars, though, were she free of this paleness that is upon her face, she would be worth a thousand gold pieces; but wanton folly and wanness have diminished her value; and behold I will go to her and consult her of this.” So he betook himself to her and enquired of her, “Wilt thou be sold to Ishak bin Ibrahim al-Mausili?” She replied, “Yes,” and he said, “Leave folly, for to whom doth it happen to be in the house of Ishak the cup-companion?”[143] Thereupon Ishak went forth the slave-dealer’s quarters and overtook Al- Rashid who had preceded him; and they ceased not walking till they came to their landing-place, where they embarked in the boat and fared on to Thaghr al-Khánakah.[144] As for the slave- dealer, he sent the damsel to the house of Ishak al-Nadim, whose slave-girls took her and carried her to the Hammam. Then each damsel gave her somewhat of her gear and they decked her with earrings and bracelets, so that she redoubled in beauty and became as she were the moon on the night of its full. When Ishak returned home from the Caliph’s palace, Tohfah rose to him and kissed his hand; and he saw that which the hand-maids had done with her and thanked them for so doing and said to them, “Let her home in the house of instruction and bring her instruments of music, and if she be apt at song teach her; and may Allah Almighty vouchsafe her health and weal!” So there passed over her three months, while she homed with him in the house of instruction, and they brought her the instruments of music. Furthermore, as time went on she was vouchsafed health and soundness and her beauty waxed many times brighter than before and her pallor was changed to white and red, so that she became a seduction to all who saw her. One day, Ishak bade summon all who were with him of slave-girls from the house of instruction and carried them up to Al-Rashid’s palace, leaving none in his house save Tohfah and a cookmaid; for that he thought not of Tohfah, nor did she come to his memory, and none of the damsels reminded him of her. When she saw that the house was empty of the slave- girls, she took the lute (now she was singular in her time for smiting upon the lute, nor had she her like in the world, no, not Ishak himself, nor any other) and sang thereto these couplets: —

“When soul desireth one that is its mate * It never winneth dear
desire of Fate:
My life for him whose tortures tare my frame, * And dealt me pine
he can alone abate!
He saith (that only he to heal mine ill, * Whose sight is

medicine to my doleful state),
‘O scoffer-wight, how long wilt mock my woe * As though did Allah nothing else create?’”

Now Ishak had returned to his house on an occasion that called for him; and when he entered the vestibule, he heard a sound of singing, the like whereof he had never heard in the world, for that it was soft as the breeze and more strengthening than oil[145] of almonds. So the pleasure of it get hold of him and delight so seized him, that he fell down fainting in the vestibule. Tohfah heard the noise of footfalls and laying the lute from her hand, went out to see what was the matter. She found her lord Ishak lying aswoon in the entrance; so she took him up and strained him to her bosom, saying, “I conjure thee in Allah’s name, O my lord, tell me, hath aught of ill befallen thee?” When he heard her voice, he recovered from his fainting and asked her, “Who art thou?” She answered, “I am thy slave- girl Tohfah;” and he said to her, “Art thou indeed Tohfah?” “Yes,” replied she; and he, “By Allah, I had indeed forgotten thee and remembered thee not till this moment!” Then he looked at her and said, “Verily, thy case is altered to other case and thy wanness is changed to rosiness and thou hast redoubled in beauty and loveliness. But was it thou who was singing just now?” She was troubled and affrighted and answered, “Even I, O my lord;” whereupon Ishak seized upon her hand and carrying her into the house, said to her, “Take the lute and sing; for never saw I nor heard thy like in smiting upon the lute; no, not even myself!” Quoth she, “O my lord, thou mockest me. Who am I that thou shouldst say all this to me? Indeed, this is but of thy kindness.” Quoth he, “Nay, by Allah, I said but the truth to thee and I am not of those on whom pretence imposeth. For these three months nature hath not moved thee to take the lute and sing thereto, and this is naught save a rare thing and a strange. But all this cometh of strength in the art and thy self-restraint.” Then he bade her sing; and she said, “Hearkening and obedience.” So she took the lute and tightening its strings to the sticking point, smote thereon a number of airs, so that she confounded Ishak’s wit and for delight he was like to fly. Then she returned to the first mode and sang thereto these couplets: —

“By your ruined stead aye I stand and stay, * Nor shall change or
dwelling depart us tway!
No distance of homestead shall gar me forget * Your love, O
friends, but yearn alway:
Ne’er flies your phantom the babes of these eyne * You are moons
in Nighttide’s murkest array:
And with growing passion mine unrest grows * And each morn I find
union dissolved in woes.”

When she had made an end of her song and laid down the lute, Ishak looked fixedly on her, then took her hand and offered to kiss it; but she snatched it from him and said to him, “Allah, O my lord, do not that!”[146] Cried he, “Be silent. By Allah, I had said that there was not in the world the like of me; but now I have found my dinár in the art but a dánik,[147] for thou art more excellent of skill than I, beyond comparison or approximation or calculation! This very day will I carry[148] thee up to the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, and when his glance lighteth on thee, thou wilt become a Princess of womankind. So Allah, Allah upon thee, O my lady, whenas thou becomest of the household of the Prince of True Believers, do not thou forget me!” She replied, “Allah, O my lord, thou art the root of my fortunes and in thee is my heart fortified.” Thereat he took her hand and made a covenant with her of this and she swore to him that she would not forget him. Then said he to her, “By Allah, thou art the desire of the Commander of the Faithful! Now take the lute and sing a song which thou shalt sing to the Caliph, when thou goest in to him.” So she took the lute and tuning it, improvised these couplets:—

“His lover hath ruth on his woeful mood * And o’erwept him as
still by his couch he[149] stood:
And garred him drink of his lip-dews and wine[150] * Ere he
died and this food was his latest good.”

Ishak stared at her and seizing her hand, said to her, “Know that I am bound by an oath that, when the singing of a damsel pleaseth me, she shall not end her song but before the Prince of True Believers.

But now tell me, how came it that thou tarriedst with the slave-dealer five months and wast not sold to any one, and thou of this skill, especially when the price set on thee was no great matter?" Hereat she laughed and answered, "O my lord, my story is a wondrous and my case a marvellous. Know that I belonged aforetime to a Maghribi merchant,who bought me when I was three years old, and there were in his house many slave-girls and eunuchs; but I was the dearest to him of them all. So he kept me with him and used not to address me otherwise than, 'O daughterling,' and indeed to this moment I am a clean maid. Now there was with him a damsel, a lutanist, and she reared me and taught me the art, even as thou seest. Then was my master removed to the mercy of Allah Almighty[151] and his sons divided his monies. I fell to the lot of one of them; but 'twas only a little while ere he had wasted all his wealth and there was left him naught of coin. So I gave up the lute, fearing lest I should fall into the hand of a man who knew not my worth, for well I wot that needs must my master sell me; and indeed but a few days passed ere he carried me forth to the quarters of the slave-merchant who buyeth damsels and displayeth them to the Commander of the Faithful. Now I desired to learn the art and mystery; so I refused to be sold to other than thou, until Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) vouchsafed me my desire of thy presence; whereupon I came out to thee, as soon as I heard of thy coming, and besought thee to buy me. Thou heartenedst my heart and boughtest me; and since I entered thy house, O my lord, I have not taken up the lute till now; but to-day, when I was left private by the slave-girls, I took it; and my purpose in this was that I might see if my hand were changed[152] or not. As I was singing, I heard a footfall in the vestibule; so springing up, I laid the lute from my hand and going forth to see what was to do, found thee, O my lord, after this fashion." Quoth Ishak, "Indeed, this was of thy fair fortune. By Allah, I know not that which thou knowest in this art!" Then he arose and opening a chest, brought out therefrom striped clothes,[153] netted with jewels and great pearls and other costly gems and said to her, "In the name of Allah, don these, O my lady Tohfah." So she arose and donned that dress and veiled herself and went up with Ishak to the palace of the Caliphate, where he made her stand without, whilst he himself went in to the Prince of True

Believers (with whom was Ja'afar the Barmaki) and kissing the ground before him, said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, I have brought thee a damsel, never saw eyes of seer her like for excellence in singing and touching the lute; and her name is Tohfah." Al-Rashid asked, "And where be this Tohfah[154] who hath not her like in the world?" Answered Ishak, "Yonder she standeth, O Commander of the Faithful ;" and he acquainted the Caliph with her case from first to last. Then said Al-Rashid, " 'Tis a marvel to hear thee praise a slave-girl after this fashion. Admit her that we may look upon her, for verily the morning may not be hidden." Accordingly, Ishak bade admit her; so she entered, and when her eyes fell upon the Prince of True Believers, she kissed ground before him and said, "The Peace be upon thee, O Commander of the faithful Fold and Asylum of all who the true Creed hold and Quickener of justice in the Worlds threefold! Allah make thy feet tread on safest wise and give thee joy of what He gave thee in generous guise and make thy harbourage Paradise and Hell-fire that of thine enemies!" Quoth Al-Rashid, "And on thee be the Peace, O damsel! Sit." So she sat down and he bade her sing; whereupon she took the lute and tightening its strings, played thereon in many modes, so that the Prince of True Believers and Ja'afar were confounded in sprite and like to fly for delight. Then she returned to the first mode and improvised these couplets: —

"O mine eyes! I swear by him I adore, * Whom pilgrims seek
    thronging Arafát;
An thou call my name on the grave of me, * I'll reply to thy call
    tho' my bones go rot:
I crave none for friend of my heart save thee; * So believe me,
    for true are the well-begot."

Al-Rashid considered her comeliness and the goodliness of her singing and her eloquence and what other qualities she comprised and rejoiced with joy exceeding; and for the stress of that which overcame him of delight, he descended from the couch and sitting down with her upon the floor, said to her, "Thou hast done well, O Tohfah. By Allah, thou art indeed a choice gift!"[155] Then he turned to

Ishak and said to him, “Thou dealtest not justly, O Ishak, in the description of this damsel, nor didst thou fairly set forth all that she comprised of charms and art; for that, by Allah, she is inconceivably more skilful than thou; and I know of this craft that which none knoweth save I!” Exclaimed the Wazir Ja’afar, “By Allah, thou sayst sooth, O my lord, O Commander of the Faithful. Indeed, she hath done away my wit, hath this damsel.” Quoth Ishak, “By Allah, O Prince of True Believers, I had said that there was not on the face of the earth one who knew the art of the lute like myself; but when I heard her, my skill became nothing worth in mine eyes.” Then said the Caliph to her, “Repeat thy playing, O Tohfah.” So she repeated it and he cried to her, “Well done!” Moreover, he said to Ishak, “Thou hast indeed brought me a marvellous thing, one which is worth in mine eyes the empire of the world.” Then he turned to Masrur the eunuch and said to him, “Carry Tohfah to the chamber of honour.” Accordingly, she went away with the Castrato and the Caliph looked at her raiment and ornaments and seeing her clad in clothing of choice, asked Ishak, “O Ishak, whence hath she these robes?” Answered he, “O my lord, these are somewhat of thy bounties and thy largesse, and they are a gift to her from me. By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, the world, all of it, were little in comparison with her!” Then the Caliph turned to the Wazir Ja’afar and said to him, “Give Ishak fifty thousand dirhams and a robe of honour of the choicest apparel.” “Hearing and obeying,” replied Ja’afar and gifted him with that which the Caliph ordered him. As for Al-Rashid, he was private with Tohfah that night and found her a pure virgin and rejoiced in her; and she took high rank in his heart, so that he could not suffer her absence a single hour and committed to her the keys of the affairs of the realm, for that which he saw in her of good breeding and fine wit and leal will. He also gave her fifty slave-girls and two hundred thousand dinars and a quantity of raiment and ornaments, gems and jewels worth the kingdom of Egypt; and of the excess of his love for her, he would not entrust her to any of the hand-maids or eunuchs; but, whenever he went out from her, he locked the door upon her and took the key with him, against he should return to her, forbidding the damsels to go in to her, of his fear lest they should slay her or poison her or practice on her with the knife; and in this way he abode awhile. One day, as she sang before the Commander of the Faithful, he was delighted with exceeding delight, so that he offered to kiss her hand;[156] but she drew it away from him and smote upon her lute and broke it and wept. Al-Rashid wiped away her tears and said, "O desire of the heart, what is it maketh thee weep? May Allah not cause an eye of thine to shed tears!" Said she, "O my lord, what am I that thou shouldst kiss my hand? Wilt thou have Allah punish me for this and my term come to an end and my felicity pass away? For this is what none ever attained unto." He rejoined, "Well said, O Tohfah. Know that thy rank in my esteem is high and for that which delighted me of what I saw in thee, I offered to do this, but I will not return unto the like thereof; so be of good cheer, with eyes cool and clear, for I have no desire to other than thyself and will not die but in the love of thee, and thou to me art queen this day, to the exclusion of al! humankind." Therewith she fell to kissing his feet; and this her fashion pleased him, so that his love for her redoubled and he became unable to brook severance from her a single hour. Now Al-Rashid one day went forth to the chase and left Tohfah in her pavilion. As she sat perusing a book, with a candle-branch of gold before her, wherein was a perfumed candle, behold, a musk-apple fell down before her from the top of the saloon.[157] So she looked up and beheld the Lady Zubaydah bint al-Kasim,[158] who saluted her with a salam and acquainted her with herself, whereupon Tohfah sprang to her feet and said, "O my lady, were I not of the number of the new,[159] I had daily sought thy service; so do not thou bereave me of those noble steps."[160] The Lady Zubaydah called down blessings upon her and replied, "I knew this of thee; and, by the life of the Commander of the Faithful, but that it is not of my wont to go forth of my place, I had come out to do my service to thee." Then quoth she to her, "Know, O Tohfah, that the Commander of the Faithful hath deserted all his concubines and favourites on thine account, even myself hath he abandoned on this wise, and I am not content to be as one of the mistresses; yet hath he made me of them and forsaken me, and I have sought thee, so thou mayst beseech him to come to me, though it be but once a month, in order that I may not be the like of the hand- maids and concubines nor take rank with the slave-girls; and this is my need of thee."

Answered Tohfah, “Hearkening and obedience! By Allah, O my lady, I would that he might be with thee a whole month and with me but one night, so thy heart might be heartened, for that I am one of thy hand-maids and thou in every case art my lady.” The Princess Zubaydah thanked her for this and taking leave of her, returned to her palace. When the Caliph came back from the chase and course, he betook himself to Tohfah’s pavilion and bringing out the key, opened the lock and went in to her. She rose to receive him and kissed his hand, and he gathered her to his breast and seated her on his knee.[161] Then food was brought to them and they ate and washed their hands; after which she took the lute and sang, till Al-Rashid was moved to sleep. When aware of this, she ceased singing and told him her adventure with the Lady Zubaydah, saying, “O Prince of True Believers, I would have thee favour me with a favour and hearten my heart and accept my intercession and reject not my supplication, but fare thee forthright to the Lady Zubaydah.” Now this talk befel after he had stripped himself naked and she also had doffed her dress; and he said, “Thou shouldst have named this ere we stripped ourselves naked, I and thou!” But she answered, saying, “O Commander of the Faithful, I did this not except in accordance with the saying of the poet in these couplets,

“Of all intercessions can none succeed, * Save whatso Tohfah bint
    Marján sue’d:
No intercessor who comes enveiled;[162] * She sues the best
    who sues mother-nude.”

When Al-Rashid heard this, her speech pleased him and he strained her to his bosom. Then he went forth from her and locked the door upon her, as before; whereupon she took the book and sat perusing it awhile. Presently, she set it aside and taking the lute, tightened its strings; and smote thereon, after a wondrous fashion, such as would have moved inanimate things to dance, and fell to singing marvellous melodies and chanting these couplets: —

“Cease for change to wail,* The world blames who rail;
Bear patient its shafts * That for aye prevail.

How often a joy * Grief-garbed thou shalt hail:
How oft gladding bliss * Shall appear amid bale!”

Then she turned and saw within the chamber an old man, handsome in his hoariness and stately of semblance, who was dancing in goodly and winning wise, a dance whose like none might dance. So she sought refuge with Allah Almighty from Satan the Stoned and said, “I will not give over what I am about, for whatso the Lord willeth, He fulfilleth.” Accordingly, she went on singing till the Shaykh came up to her and kissed ground before her, saying, “Well done, O Highmost of the East and the West! May the world be not bereaved of thee! By Allah, indeed thou art perfect of manners and morals, O Tohfat al-Sudúr![163] Dost thou know me?” Cried she, “Nay, by Allah, but methinks thou art of the Jann.” Quoth he, “Thou sayst sooth; I am Abú al-Tawáif[164] Iblis, and I come to thee every night, and with me thy sister Kamariyah, for that she loveth thee and sweareth not but by thy life; and her pastime is not pleasant to her, except she come to thee and see thee whilst thou seest her not. As for me, I approach thee upon an affair, whereby thou shalt gain and rise to high rank with the kings of the Jann and rule them, even as thou rulest mankind; and to that end I would have thee come with me and be present at the festival of my daughter’s wedding and the circumcision of my son;[165] for that the Jann are agreed upon the manifestation of thy command. And she answered, “Bismillah; in the name of the Lord.”[166] So she gave him the lute and he forewent her, till he came to the Chapel of Ease,[167] and behold, therein was a door and a stairway. When Tohfah saw this, her reason fled; but Iblis cheered her with chat. Then he descended the steps and she followed him to the bottom of the stair, where she found a passage and they fared on therein, till they came to a horse standing, ready saddled and bridled and accoutred. Quoth Iblis, “Bismillah, O my lady Tohfah;” and he held the stirrup for her. So she mounted and the horse heaved like a wave under her and putting forth wings soared upwards with her, while the Shaykh flew by her side; whereat she was affrighted and clung to the pommel of the saddle;[168] nor was it but an hour ere they came to a fair green meadow, fresh- flowered as if the soil thereof were a fine robe, purfled with all manner bright hues.

Amiddlemost that mead was a palace towering high in air, with crenelles of red gold, set with pearls and gems, and a two-leaved door; and about the gateway were much people of the chiefs of the Jann, clad in costliest clothing. When they saw the Shaykh, they all cried out, saying, “The Lady Tohfah is come!” And as soon as she reached the palace-gate, they pressed forward in a body, and dismounting her from the horse’s back, carried her into the palace and fell to kissing her hands. When she entered, she beheld a palace whereof seers ne’er saw the like; for therein were four halls, one facing other, and its walls were of gold and its ceilings of silver. It was high- builded of base, wide of space, and those who descried it would be posed to describe it. At the upper end of the hall stood a throne of red gold set with pearls and jewels, up to which led five steps of silver, and on its right and on its left were many chairs of gold and silver. Quoth Tohfah, “The Shaykh led me to the estrade and seated me on a chair of gold beside the throne, and over the dais was a curtain let down, gold and silver wrought and broidered with pearls and jewels.” And she was amazed at that which she beheld in that place and magnified her Lord (extolled and exalted be He!) and hallowed Him. Then the kings of the Jann came up to that throne and seated themselves thereon; and they were in the semblance of Adam’s sons, excepting two of them, who appeared in the form and aspect of the Jann, each with one eye slit endlong and jutting horns and projecting tusks.[169] After this there came up a young lady, fair of favour and seemly of stature, the light of whose face outshone that of the waxen flambeaux; and about her were other three women, than whom none fairer abode on face of earth. They saluted Tohfah with the salam and she rose to them and kissed ground before them whereupon they embraced her after returning her greeting[170] and sat down on the chairs aforesaid. Now the four women who thus accosted Tohfah were the Princess Kamariyah, daughter of King Al-Shísbán, and her sisters; and Kamariyah loved Tohfah with exceeding love. So, when she came up to her, she fell to kissing and embracing her, and Shaykh Iblis cried, “Fair befal the accolade! Take me between you.” At this Tohfah laughed and Kamariyah said, “O my sister, I love thee, and doubtless hearts have their witnesses,[171] for, since I saw thee, I have loved thee.” Replied Tohfah, “By Allah, hearts have sea-like deeps, and thou, by Allah, art dear to me and I am thy hand-maid." Kamariyah thanked her for this and kissing her once more said, "These be the wives of the kings of the Jann: greet them with the salam! This is Queen Jamrah,[172] that is Queen Wakhímah and this other is Queen Sharárah, and they come not but for thee." So Tohfah rose to her feet and bussed their hands, and the three queens kissed her and welcomed her and honoured her with the utmost honour. Then they brought trays and tables and amongst the rest a platter of red gold, inlaid with pearls and gems; its raised rims were of or and emerald, and thereon were graven[173] these couplets: —

To bear provaunt assigned, * By hands noble designed,
For the gen'rous I'm made * Not for niggardly hind!
So eat safe all I hold * And praise God of mankind.

After reading the verses they ate and Tohfah looked at the two kings who had not changed shape and said to Kamariyah, "O my lady, what be this feral and that other like unto him? By Allah, mine eye may not suffer the sight of them." Kamariyah laughed and answered, "O my sister, that is my sire Al-Shisban and the other is hight Maymun the Sworder; and of the arrogance of their souls and their insolence, they consented not to change their created shapes. Indeed, all whom thou seest here are nature-fashioned like them; but on thine account they have changed favour, for fear lest thou be disquieted and for the comforting of thy mind, so thou mightest become familiar with them and be at thine ease." Quoth Tohfah, "O my lady, verily I cannot look at them. How frightful is this Maymun, with his monocular face! Mine eye cannot brook the sight of him, and indeed I am in affright of him." Kamariyah laughed at her speech, and Tohfah continued, "By Allah, O my lady, I cannot fill my eye with the twain!"[174] Then cried her father Al-Shisban to her, "What be this laughing?" So she bespoke him in a tongue none understood but they two and acquainted him with that which Tohfah had said; whereat he laughed a prodigious loud laugh, as it were the roaring thunder. Presently they ate and the tables were removed and they washed their hands; after which Iblis the Accursed came up to

Tohfah and said to her, “O my lady, thou gladdenest the place and enlightenest and embellishest it with thy presence; but now fain would these kings hear somewhat of thy singing, for Night hath dispread her pinions for departure and there abideth of it but a little.” Quoth she, “Hearing and obeying.” So she took the lute and touching its strings with rare touch, played thereon after wondrous wise, so that it seemed to those who were present as if the palace surged like a wave with them for the music. Then she began singing and chanting these couplets,

“Folk of my faith and oath, Peace with you be! * Quoth ye not I shall meet you you meet me?
I’ll chide you softerwise than breeze o’ morn, * Sweeter than spring of coolest clarity.
I’ faith mine eyelids are with tears chafed sore: * My vitals plain to you some cure to see.
My friends! Our union to disunion changed * Was aye my fear for ’twas my certainty.
I’ll plain to Allah of all ills I bore; * For pine and yearning misery still I dree.”

The kings of the Jann were moved to delight by that sweet singing and seemly speech and thanked Tohfah therefore; and Queen Kamariyah rose to her and threw her arms round her neck and kissed her between the eyes, saying, “By Allah, ’tis good, O my sister and coolth of mine eyes and core of my heart!” Then said she, “I conjure thee by Allah, give us more of this lovely singing;” and Tohfah answered with “To hear is to obey.” So she took the lute and playing thereon in a mode different from the former fashion, sang these couplets: —

“I, oft as ever grows the pine of me, * Console my soul with hope thy sight to see. Haply shall Allah join our parted lives, * E’en as my fortunes far from thee cast He! Then oh! who thrallest me by force of love — * Seizčd by fond affection’s mastery All hardships easy wax when thou art nigh; * And all the far draws near when near thou be. Ah! be the Ruthful light to lover fond, * Love-lorn, frame- wasted, ready Death to dree! Were hope of seeing thee cut off, my loved; *

After thine absence sleep mine eyes would flee! I mourn no worldly joyance, my delight * Is but to sight thee while thou seest my sight."

At this the accursed Iblis was hugely pleased and thrust his finger up his fundament,[175] whilst Maymun danced and said, "O Tohfat al-Sudur, soften the sound;[176] for, as pleasure entereth into my heart, it arresteth my breath and blood." So she took the lute and altering the tune, played a third air; then she returned to the first and sang these couplets: —

"The waves of your[177] love o'er my life have rolled; * I
sink while I see you all aid withhold:
You have drowned my vitals in deeps of your love, * Nor can heart
and sprite for your loss be consoled:
Deem not I forget my troth after you: * How forget what Allah
decreed of old?[178]
Love clings to the lover who nights in grief, * And 'plains of
unrest and of woes ensouled.

The kings and all those who were present rejoiced in this with joy exceeding and the accursed Iblis came up to Tohfah and kissing her hand, said to her, "Verily there abideth but little of the night; so tarry with us till the morrow, when we will apply ourselves to the wedding[179] and the circumcision."[180] Then all the Jann went away, whereupon Tohfah rose to her feet and Iblis said, "Go ye up with Tohfah to the garden for the rest of the night." So Kamariyah took her and went with her into the garden, which contained all manner birds, nightingale and mocking-bird and ringdove and curlew[181] and other than these of all the kinds. Therein were all manner of fruits: its channels[182] were of gold and silver and the water thereof, as it broke forth of its conduits, was like the bellies of fleeing serpents, and indeed it was as it were the Garden of Eden.[183] When Tohfah beheld this, she called to mind her lord and wept sore and said, "I beseech Allah the Most High to vouchsafe me speedy deliverance and return to my palace and to my high estate and queendom and glory, and reunion with my lord and master Al-Rashid." Then she walked about that garden and saw in its midst a dome of white marble, raised on columns of black teak whereto hung curtains purfled with pearls and gems. Amiddlemost this pavilion was a founfain, inlaid with all kinds of jacinths, and thereon a golden statue of a man and beside it a little door. She opened the door and found herself in a long corridor: so she followed it and entered a Hammam-bath walled with all kinds of costly marbles and floored with a mosaic of pearls and jewels. Therein were four cisterns of alabaster, one facing other, and the ceiling of the bath was of glass coloured with all varieties of colours, such as confounded the understanding of those who have insight and amazed the wit of every wight. Tohfah entered the bath, after she had doffed her dress, and behold the Hammam-basin was overlaid with gold set with pearls and red balasses and green emeralds and other jewels: so she extolled Allah Almighty and hallowed Him for the magnificence of that which she saw of the appointments of that bath. Then she made her Wuzu-ablution in that basin and pronouncing the Prohibition,[184] prayed the dawn-prayer and what else had escaped her of orisons;[185] after which she went out and walked in that garden among jessamine and lavender and roses and chamomile and gillyflowers and thyme and violets and basil royal, till she came to the door of the pavilion aforesaid. There she sat down, pondering that which would betide Al-Rashid after her, when he should come to her apartment and find her not; and she plunged into the sea of her solicitude, till slumber overtook her and soon she slept. Presently she felt a breath upon her face; whereupon she awoke and found Queen Kamariyah kissing her, and with her her three sisters, Queen Jamrah, Queen Wakhímah and Queen Sharárah. So she arose and kissed their hands and rejoiced in them with the utmost joy and they ceased not, she and they, to talk and converse, what while she related to them her history, from the time of her purchase by the Maghrabi to that of her coming to the quarters of the slave- dealer, where she besought Ishak al-Nadim to buy her,[186] and how she won union with Al-Rashid, till the moment when Iblis came to her and brought her to them. They gave not over talking till the sun declined and yellowed and the hour of its setting drew near and the day departed, whereupon Tohfah was urgent in supplication[187] to Allah Almighty, on the occasion of the sundown-prayer, that he would reunite her with her lord Al-Rashid. After this, she abode with the four queens, till they arose and entered the palace, where she found the waxen tapers lit and ranged in candlesticks of gold and silver, and censing vessels of silver and gold filled with lign-aloes and ambergris, and there were the kings of the Jann sitting. So she saluted them with the salam, kissing the earth before them and doing them service; and they rejoiced in her and in her sight. Then she ascended the estrade and sat down upon her chair, whilst King Al- Shisban and King Al-Muzfir[188] and Queen Lúlúah and other kings of the Jann sat on chairs, and they brought choice tables, spread with all manner meats befitting royalties. They ate their fill; after which the tables were removed and they washed their hands and wiped them with napkins. Then they brought the wine- service and set on tasses and cups and flagons and beakers of gold and silver and bowls of crystal and gold; and they poured out the wines and they filled the flagons. Then Iblis took the bowl and signed to Tohfah to sing: and she said, "To hear is to obey!" So she hent the lute in hand and tuning it, sang these couplets,

"Drink wine, O ye lovers, I rede you alwŕy, * And praise his
worth who loves night and day;
'Mid the myrtle, narcissus and lavender, * And the scented herbs
that bedeck the tray."

So Iblis the Damned drank and said, "Brava, O desire of hearts! But thou owest me still another aria." Then he filled the cup and signed to her to sing. Quoth she, "Hearkening and obedience," and chanted these couplets,

"Ye wot, I am whelmed in despair and despight, * Ye dight me
blight that delights your sight:
Your wone is between my unrest and my eyes; * Nor tears to melt
you, nor sighs have might.
How oft shall I sue you for justice, and you * With a pining
death my dear love requite?
But your harshness is duty, your farness near; * Your hate is
Union, your wrath is delight:
Take your fill of reproach as you will: you claim * All my heart,
and I reck not of safety or blame."

All present were delighted and the sitting-chamber was moved like a wave with mirth, and Iblis said, “Brave, O Tohfat al-Sudur!” Then they left not liquor-bibbing and rejoicing and making merry and tambourining and piping till the night waned and the dawn waxed near; and indeed exceeding delight entered into them. The most of them in mirth was the Shaykh Iblis, and for the stress of that which befel him of joyance, he doffed all that was on him of coloured clothes and cast them over Tohfah, and among the rest a robe broidered with jewels and jacinths, worth ten thousand dinars. Then he kissed the earth and danced and he thrust his finger up his fundament and hending his beard in hand, said to her, “Sing about this beard and endeavour after mirth and pleasance, and no blame shall betide thee for this.” So she improvised and sang these couplets: —

“Barbe of the olden, the one eyed goat! * What words shall thy
foulness o’ deed denote?
Be not of our praises so pompous-proud: * Thy worth for a dock-tail dog’s I wot.
By Allah, to-morrow shall see me drub * Thy nape with a
cow-hide[189] and dust thy coat!”

All those present laughed at her mockery of Iblis and wondered at the wittiness of her visnomy[190] and her readiness in versifying, whilst the Shaykh himself rejoiced and said to her, “O Tohfat al-Sudur, verily, the night be gone; so arise and rest thyself ere the day; and to-morrow there shall be naught save weal.” Then all the kings of the Jinn departed, together with those who were present of guards; and Tohfah abode alone, pondering the case of Al-Rashid and bethinking her of how it went with him after her going, and of what had betided him for her loss, till the dawn lightened, when she arose and walked about the palace. Suddenly she saw a handsome door; so she opened it and found herself in a flower-garden finer than the first — ne’er saw eyes of seer a fairer than it. When she beheld this garth, she was moved to delight and she called to mind her lord Al- Rashid and wept with sore weeping and cried, “I crave of the bounty of Allah Almighty that my return to him and to my palace and to my home may be nearhand!" Then she walked about the parterres till she came to a pavilion, high-builded of base and wide of space, never espied mortal nor heard of a grander than it. So she entered and found herself in a long corridor, which led to a Hammam goodlier than that aforetime described, and its cisterns were full of rose-water mingled with musk. Quoth Tohfah, "Extolled be Allah! Indeed, this[191] is none other than a mighty great king." Then she pulled off her clothes and washed her body and made her Ghusl-ablution of the whole person[192] and prayed that which was due from her of prayer from the evening of the previous day.[193] When the sun rose upon the gate of the garden and she saw the wonders thereof, with that which was therein of all manner blooms and streams, and heard the voices of its birds, she marvelled at what she beheld of the rareness of its ordinance and the beauty of its disposition and sat musing over the case of Al-Rashid and pondering what was come of him after her. Her tears coursed down her cheeks and the Zephyr blew on her; so she slept and knew no more till she suddenly felt a breath on her side-face, whereat she awoke in affright and found Queen Kamariyah kissing her, and she was accompanied by her sisters, who said, "Rise, for the sun hath set." So Tohfah arose and making the Wuzu-ablution, prayed her due of prayers[194] and accompanied the four queens to the palace, where she saw the wax candles lighted and the kings sitting. She saluted them with the salam and seated herself upon her couch; and behold, King Al- Shisban had shifted his semblance, for all the pride of his soul. Then came up Iblis (whom Allah damn!) and Tohfah rose to him and kissed his hands. He also kissed her hand and blessed her and asked, "How deemest thou? Is not this place pleasant, for all its desertedness and desolation?" Answered she, "None may be desolate in this place;" and he cried, "Know that this is a site whose soil no mortal dare tread;" but she rejoined, "I have dared and trodden it, and this is one of thy many favours." Then they brought tables and dishes and viands and fruits and sweetmeats and other matters, whose description passeth powers of mortal man, and they ate their sufficiency; after which the tables were removed and the dessert-trays and platters set on, and they ranged the bottles and flagons and vessels and phials, together with all manner fruits and sweet-scented flowers. The first to raise the bowl was Iblis the Accursed, who said, "O Tohfat al- Sudur, sing over my cup." So she took the lute and touching it, carolled these couplets,

"Wake ye, Ho sleepers all! and take your joy * Of Time, and boons
he deignčd to bestow;
Then hail the Wine-bride, drain the wine-ptisane * Which, poured
from flagon, flows with flaming glow:
O Cup-boy, serve the wine, bring round the red[195] * Whose
draught gives all we hope for here below:
What's worldly pleasure save my lady's face, * Draughts of pure
wine and song of musico?"

So Iblis drained his bowl and, when he had made an end of his draught, waved his hand to Tohfah; then, throwing off that which was upon him of clothes, delivered them to her. The suit would have brought ten thousand dinars and with it was a tray full of jewels worth a mint of money. Presently he filled again and gave the cup to his son Al-Shisban, who took it from his hand and kissing it, stood up and sat down again. Now there was before him a tray of roses; so he said to her, "O Tohfah, sing thou somewhat upon these roses." She replied, "Hearkening and obedience," and chanted these two couplets,

"It proves my price o' er all the flowers that I * Seek you each
year, yet stay but little stound:
And high my vaunt I m dyčd by my lord * Whom Allah made the
best
e'er trod on ground.[196] "

So Al-Shisban drank off the cup in his turn and said, "Brava, O desire of hearts!" and he bestowed on her that was upon him, to wit, a dress of cloth-of-pearl, fringed with great unions and rubies and purfled with precious gems, and a tray wherein were fifty thousand dinars. Then Maymun the Sworder took the cup and began gazing intently upon Tohfah. Now there was in his hand a pomegranate-flower and he said to her, "Sing thou somewhat, O queen of mankind and Jinn kind upon this pomegranate-flower; for indeed thou hast dominion over all hearts.” Quoth she, “To hear is to obey;” and she improvised and sang these couplets,

“Breathes sweet the zephyr on fair partčrre; * Robing lute in the
flamings that fell from air:
And moaned from the boughs with its cooing rhyme * Voice of
ring-doves plaining their love and care:
The branch dresses in suit of fine sendal green* And in wine-hues
borrowed from bloom Gulnare.”[197]

Maymun the Sworder drained his bowl and said to her, “Brava, O perfection of qualities!” Then he signed to her and was absent awhile, after which he returned and with him a tray of jewels worth an hundred thousand ducats, which he gave to Tohfah. Thereupon Kamariyah arose and bade her slave-girl open the closet behind the Songstress, wherein she laid all that wealth; and committed the key to her, saying, “Whatso of riches cometh to thee, lay thou in this closet that is by thy side, and after the festivities, it shall be borne to thy palace on the heads of the Jinn.” Tohfah kissed her hand and another king, by name Munír,[198] took the bowl and filling it, said to her, “O ferly Fair, sing to me over my bowl somewhat upon the jasmine.” She replied with, “Hearkening and obedience,” and improvised these couplets,

“‘Twere as though the Jasmine (when self she enrobes * On her
boughs) doth display to my wondering eyne;
In sky of green beryl, which Beauty enclothes, * Star-groups like
studs of the silvern mine.”

Munir drank off his cup and ordered her eight hundred thousand dinars, whereat Kamariyah rejoiced and rising to her feet, kissed Tohfah on her face and said to her, “Be the world never bereaved of thee, O thou who lordest it over the hearts of Jinn-kind and mankind!” Then she returned to her place and the Shaykh Iblis arose and danced, till all present were confounded; after which the Songstress {sic!} said, “Verily, thou embellishest my festivities, O thou who commandest men and Jinn and rejoicest their hearts with thy loveliness and the beauty[199] of thy faithfulness to thy lord. All that thy hands possess shall be borne to thee in thy palace and placed at thy service; but now the dawn is nearhand; so do thou rise and rest thee according to thy custom." Tohfah turned and found with her none of the Jinn; so she laid her head on the floor and slept till she had gotten her repose; after which she arose and betaking herself to the lakelet, made the Wuzu-ablution and prayed. Then she sat beside the water awhile and meditated the matter of her lord Al-Rashid and that which had betided him after her loss and wept with sore weeping. Presently, she heard a blowing behind her;[200] so she turned and behold, a Head without a body and with eyes slit endlong: it was of the bigness of an elephant's skull and bigger and had a mouth as it were an oven and projecting canines as they were grapnels, and hair which trailed upon the ground. So Tohfah cried, "I take refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned!" and recited the Two Preventives;[201] what while the Head drew near her and said, "Peace be with thee, O Princess of Jinn and men and union-pearl of her age and her time! Allah continue thee on life, for all the lapsing of the days, and reunite thee with thy lord the Imam!"[202] She replied, "And upon thee be Peace; O thou whose like I have not seen among the Jann!" Quoth the Head, "We are a folk who may not change their favours and we are hight Ghuls: mortals summon us to their presence, but we cannot present ourselves before them without leave. As for me, I have gotten leave of the Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif to appear before thee and I desire of thy favour that thou sing me a song, so I may go to thy palace and question its Haunters[203] concerning the plight of thy lord after thee and return to thee; and know, O Tohfat al- Sudur, that between thee and thy lord be a distance of fifty years' journey for the bonâ-fide traveller." She rejoined, "Indeed, thou grievest me anent him between whom and me is fifty years' journey;" but the Head[204] cried to her, "Be of good cheer and of eyes cool and clear, for the sovrans of the Jann will restore thee to him in less than the twinkling of an eye." Quoth she, "I will sing thee an hundred songs, so thou wilt bring me news of my lord and that which betided him after me." And quoth the Head, "Do thou favour me and sing me a song, so I may go to thy lord and fetch thee tidings of him, for that I desire, before I go, to hear thy voice, so haply my thirst[205] may be quenched." So she took the lute and tuning it, sang these couplets: —

“They have marched, yet no empty stead left they: * They are
gone, nor heart grieves me that fled be they:
My heart forebode the bereaval of friends; * Allah ne’er bereave
steads wherefrom sped be they!
Though they hid the stations where led were they, * I’ll follow
till stars fall in disarray!
Ye slumber, but wake shall ne’er fly these lids; * ’Tis I bear
what ye never bore — well-away!
It had irked them not to farewell who fares * With the parting-
fires that my heart waylay.
My friends,[206] your meeting to me is much * But more is the
parting befel us tway:
You’re my heart’s delight, or you present be * Or absent, with
you is my soul for aye!”

Thereupon the Head wept exceeding sore and cried, “O my lady, indeed thou hast solaced my heart, and I have naught but my life; so take it.” She replied, “Nay, an I but knew that thou wouldst bring me news of my lord Al-Rashid, ‘twere fainer to me than the reign of the world;” and the Head answered her, “It shall be done as thou desirest.” Then it disappeared and returning to her at the last of the night, said, “O my lady, know that I have been to thy palace and have questioned one of its Haunters of the case of the Commander of the Faithful and that which befel him after thee; and he said, ‘When the Prince of True Believers came to Tohfah’s apartment and found her not and saw no sign of her, he buffeted his face and head and rent his raiment.’ Now there was in thy chamber the Castrato, the chief of thy household, and the Caliph cried out at him, saying, ‘Bring me Ja’afar the Barmaki and his father and brother at this very moment!’ The Eunuch went out, bewildered in his wit for fear of the King, and when he stood in the presence of Ja’afar, he said to him, ‘Come to the Commander of the Faithful, thou and thy father and thy brother.’ So they arose in haste and betaking themselves to the presence, said, ‘O Prince of True Believers what may be the matter?’ Quoth he, ‘There is a matter which passeth description. Know that I locked the door and taking the key with me, betook myself to my uncle’s daughter, with whom I lay the night; but, when I arose in the morning and came and opened the door, I found no sign of Tohfah.’ Quoth Ja’afar, ‘O Commander of the Faithful have patience, for that the damsel hath been snatched away, and needs must she return, seeing that she took the lute with her, and ’tis her own lute. The Jinns have assuredly carried her off, and we trust in Allah Almighty that she will return.’ Cried the Caliph, ‘This[207] is a thing which may nowise be!’ And he abode in her apartment, nor eating nor drinking, while the Barmecides besought him to fare forth to the folk; and he weepeth and tarrieth on such fashion till she shall return. This, then, is that which hath betided him after thee.” When Tohfah heard his words, they were grievous to her and she wept with sore weeping; whereupon quoth the Head to her, “The relief of Allah the Most High is nearhand; but now let me hear somewhat of thy speech.” So she took the lute and sang three songs, weeping the while. The Head exclaimed, “By Allah, thou hast been bountiful to me, the Lord be with thee!” Then it disappeared and the season of sundown came: so she rose and betook herself to her place in the hall; whereupon behold, the candles sprang up from under the earth and kindled themselves. Then the kings of the Jann appeared and saluted her and kissed her hands and she greeted them with the salam. Presently appeared Kamariyah and her three sisters and saluted Tohfah and sat down; whereupon the tables were brought and they ate; and when the tables were removed there came the wine-tray and the drinking-service. So Tohfah took the lute and one of the three queens filled the cup and signed to the Songstress. Now she had in her hand a violet, so Tohfah improvised these couplets: —

“I’m clad in a leaf-cloak of green; * In an honour-robe
ultramarine:
I’m a wee thing of loveliest mien * But all flowers as my vassals
are seen:
An Rose title her ‘Morn-pride,’ I ween * Nor before me nor after
she’s Queen.”

The queen drank off her cup and bestowed on Tohfah a dress of cloth-of-pearl, fringed with red rubies, worth twenty thousand ducats, and a tray whereon were ten thousand sequins. All this while Maymun's eye was upon her and presently he said to her, "Harkye, Tohfah! Sing to me." But Queen Zalzalah cried out at him, and said "Desist,[208] O Maymun. Thou sufferest not Tohfah to pay heed to us." Quoth he, "I will have her sing to me:" and many words passed between them and Queen Zalzalah cried aloud at him. Then she shook and became like unto the Jinns and taking in her hand a mace of stone, said to him, "Fie upon thee! What art thou that thou shouldst bespeak us thus? By Allah, but for the respect due to kings and my fear of troubling the session and the festival and the mind of the Shaykh Iblis, I would assuredly beat the folly out of thy head!" When Maymun heard these her words, he rose, with the fire shooting from his eyes, and said, "O daughter of Imlák, what art thou that thou shouldst outrage me with the like of this talk?" Replied she, "Woe to thee, O dog of the Jinn, knowest thou not thy place?" So saying, she ran at him, and offered to strike him with the mace, but the Shaykh Iblis arose and casting his turband on the ground cried, "Out on thee, O Maymun! Thou dost always with us on this wise. Wheresoever thou art present, thou troublest our pleasure! Canst thou not hold thy peace until thou go forth of the festival and this bride-feast be accomplished? When the circumcision is at an end and ye all return to your dwellings, then do as thou willest. Fie upon thee, O Maymun! Wottest thou not that Imlak is of the chiefs of the Jinn? But for my good name, thou shouldst have seen what would have betided thee of humiliation and chastisement; yet on account of the festival none may speak. Indeed thou exceedest; dost thou not ken that her sister Wakhimah is doughtier[209] than any of the Jann? Learn to know thyself: hast thou no regard for thy life?" So Maymun was silent and Iblis turned to Tohfah and said to her, "Sing to the kings of the Jinns this day and to- night until the morrow, when the boy will be circumcised and each shall return to his own place." Accordingly she took the lute and Kamariyah said to her (now she had a citron in hand), "O my sister, sing to me somewhat on this citron." Tohfah replied, "To hear is to obey," and improvising, sang these couplets,

"I'm a dome of fine gold and right cunningly dight; * And my

sweetness of youth gladdeth every sight:
My wine is ever the drink of kings * And I'm fittest gift to the
friendliest sprite.

At this Queen Kamariyah rejoiced with joy exceeding and drained her cup, crying, "Brava! O thou choice Gift of hearts!" Furthermore, she took off a sleeved robe of blue brocade, fringed with red rubies, and a necklace of white jewels worth an hundred thousand ducats, and gave them to Tohfah. Then she passed the cup to her sister Zalzalah, who hent in her hand herb basil, and she said to Tohfah, "Sing to me somewhat on this basil." She replied, "Hearing and obeying," and improvised and sang these couplets,

"I'm the Queen of herbs in the séance of wine * And in Heaven
Na'ím are my name and sign:
And the best are promised, in garth of Khuld, * Repose, sweet
scents and the peace divine:[210]
What prizes then with my price shall vie? * What rank even mine,
in all mortals' eyne?"

Thereat Queen Zalzalah rejoiced with joy exceeding and bidding her treasuress bring a basket, wherein were fifty pairs of bracelets and the same number of earrings, all of gold, crusted with jewels of price, whose like nor mankind nor Jinn-kind possessed, and an hundred robes of vari-coloured brocades and an hundred thousand ducats, gave the whole to Tohfah. Then she passed the cup to her sister Shararah, who had in her hand a stalk of narcissus; so she took it from her and turning to the Songstress, said to her, "O Tohfah, sing to me somewhat on this." She replied, "Hearkening and obedience," and improvised these couplets,

"With the smaragd wand doth my form compare; * 'Mid the finest
flowers my worth's rarest rare:
My eyes are likened to Beauty's eyne, * And my gaze is still on
the bright partčrre."

When she had made an end of her song, Shararah was moved to delight exceeding, and drinking off her cup, said to her, “Brava, O thou choice Gift of hearts!” Then she ordered her an hundred dresses of brocade and an hundred thousand ducats and passed the cup to Queen Wakhimah. Now she had in her hand somewhat of Nu’uman’s bloom, the anemone; so she took the cup from her sister and turning to the Songstress, said to her, “O Tohfah, sing to me on this.” Quoth she, “I hear and I obey,” and improvised these couplets,

“I’m a dye was dyed by the Ruthful’s might; * And all confess me
the goodliest sight:
I began in the dust and the clay, but now * On the cheeks of fair
women I rank by right.”

Therewith Wakhimah rejoiced with joy exceeding and drinking off the cup, ordered her twenty dresses of Roumí brocade and a tray, wherein were thirty thousand ducats. Then she gave the cup to Queen Shu’á’ah,[211] Regent of the Fourth Sea, who took it and said, “O my lady Tohfah, sing to me on the gillyflower.” She replied, “Hearing and obeying,” and improvised these couplets,

“The time of my presence ne’er draws to a close, * Amid all whose
joyance with mirth o’erflows;
When topers gather to sit at wine * Or in nightly shade or when
morning shows,
I filch from the flagon to fill the bowls * And the crystal cup
where the wine-beam glows.”

Queen Shu’a’ah rejoiced with joy exceeding and emptying her cup, gave Tohfah an hundred thousand ducats. Then up sprang Iblis (whom Allah curse!) and cried, “Verily, the dawn lighteneth;” whereupon the folk arose and disappeared, all of them, and there abode not one of them save the Songstress, who went forth to the garden and entering the Hamman made her Wuzu-ablutions and prayed whatso lacked her of prayers. Then she sat down and when the sun rose, behold, there came up to her near an hundred thousand green birds, which filled the branches of the trees with their multitudes and they warbled in various voices, whilst Tohfah marvelled at their fashion. Suddenly, appeared eunuchs, bearing a throne of gold, studded with pearls and gems and jacinths, both white and red, and having four steps of gold, together with many carpets of sendal and brocade and Coptic cloth of silk sprigged with gold; and all these they spread in the centre of the garden and setting up the throne thereon, perfumed the place with virgin musk, Nadd[212] and ambergris. After that, there came a queen; never saw eyes a fairer than she nor than her qualities; she was robed in rich raiment, broidered with pearls and gems, and on her head was a crown set with various kinds of unions and jewels. About her were five hundred slave-girls, high-bosomed maids, as they were moons, screening her, right and left, and she among them like the moon on the night of its full, for that she was the most worthy of them in majesty and dignity. She ceased not walking till she came to Tohfah, whom she found gazing on her in amazement; and when the Songstress saw her turn to her, she rose to her, standing on her feet, and saluted her and kissed ground between her hands. The queen rejoiced in her and putting out her hand to her, drew her to herself and seated her by her side on the couch; whereupon the Songstress kissed her hands and the queen said to her, “Know, O Tohfah, that all which thou treadest of these carpets belongeth not to any of the Jinn, who may never tread them without thy leave,[213] for that I am the queen of them all and the Shaykh Abu al-Tawaif Iblis sought my permission to hold festival[214] and prayed me urgently to be present at the circumcision of his son. So I despatched to him, in my stead, a slave-girl of my slave-girls, namely, Shu’á’ah Queen of the Fourth Sea, who is vice-reine of my reign. When she was present at the wedding and saw thee and heard thy singing, she sent to me, informing me of thee and setting forth to me thy grace and amiability and the beauty of thy breeding and thy courtesy.[215] So I am come to thee, for that which I have heard of thy charms, and hereby I do thee a mighty great favour in the eyes of all the Jann.”[216] Thereupon Tohfah arose and kissed the earth and the queen thanked her for this and bade her sit. So she sat down and the queen called for food; when they brought a table of gold, inlaid with pearls and jacinths and jewels and bearing kinds manifold of birds and viands of various hues, and the queen said, “O Tohfah, in the name of Allah! Let us eat bread and salt together, I and thou." Accordingly the Songstress came forward and ate of those meats and found therein somewhat the like whereof she had never eaten; no, nor aught more delicious than it, while the slave-girls stood around the table, as the white compasseth the black of the eye, and she sat conversing and laughing with the queen. Then said the lady, "O my sister, a slave-girl told me of thee that thou saidst, 'How loathly is what yonder Jinni Maymun eateth!'"[217] Tohfah replied, "By Allah, O my lady, I have not any eye that can look at him,[218] and indeed I am fearful of him." When the queen heard this, she laughed till she fell backwards and said "O my sister, by the might of the graving upon the seal-ring of Solomon, prophet of Allah, I am queen over all the Jann, and none dare so much as cast on thee a glance of the eye;" whereat Tohfah kissed her hand. Then the tables were removed and the twain sat talking. Presently up came the kings of the Jinn from every side and kissed ground before the queen and stood in her service; and she thanked them for this, but moved not for one of them.[219] Then appeared the Shaykh Abu al-Tawáif Iblis (Allah curse him!) and kissed the earth before her, saying, "O my lady, may I not be bereft of these steps!"[220] She replied, "O Shaykh Abu al-Tawáif, it behoveth thee to thank the bounty of the Lady Tohfah, who was the cause of my coming." Rejoined he, "Thou sayest sooth," and kissed ground. Then the queen fared on towards the palace and there arose and alighted upon the trees an hundred thousand birds of manifold hues. The Songstress asked, "How many are these birds?" and Queen Wakhimah answered her, "Know, O my sister, that this queen is hight Queen al-Shahbá[221] and that she is queen over all the Jann from East to West. These birds thou seest are of her host, and unless they appeared in this shape, earth would not be wide enough for them. Indeed, they came forth with her and are present with her presence at this circumcision. She will give thee after the measure of that which hath been given to thee from the first of the festival to the last thereof;[222] and indeed she honoureth us all with her presence." Then the queen entered the palace and sat down on the couch of the circumcision[223] at the upper end of the hall, whereupon Tohfah took the lute and pressing it to her breast, touched its strings suchwise that the wits of all present were bewildered and Shaykh Iblis cried to her, "O my lady Tohfah, I conjure thee, by the life of this noble queen, sing for me and praise thyself, and cross me not." Quoth she, "To hear is to obey; still, but for thine adjuration, I had not done this. Say me, doth any praise himself? What manner thing is this?" Then she improvised these couplets:

"In all fętes I'm Choice Gift[224] to the minstrel-race;
Folk attest my worth, rank and my pride of place,
While Fame, merit and praises with honour engrace."

Her verses pleased the kings of the Jann and they cried, "By Allah, thou sayst sooth!" Then she rose to her feet, hending lute in hand, and played and sang, whilst the Jinns and the Shaykh Abu al-Tawáif danced. Presently the Father of the Tribes came up to her bussing her bosom, and gave her a Bráhmani[225] carbuncle he had taken from the hidden hoard of Yáfis bin Núh[226] (on whom be the Peace), and which was worth the reign of the world; its light was as the sheen of the sun and he said to her, "Take this and be equitable therewith to the people of the world." [227] She kissed his hand and rejoiced in the jewel and said, "By Allah, this befitteth none save the Commander of the Faithful." Now Queen Al-Shahba laughed with delight at the dancing of Iblís and she said to him, "By Allah, this is a goodly pavane!" He thanked her for this and said to the Songstress, "O Tohfah, there is not on earth's face a skilfuller than Ishak al-Nadim;[228] but thou art more skilful than he. Indeed, I have been present with him many a time and have shown him positions[229] on the lute, and there has betided me with him that which betided. Indeed, the story of my dealings with him is a long one but this is no time to repeat it; for now I would show thee a shift on the lute, whereby thou shalt be exalted over all folk." Quoth she, "Do what seemeth good to thee." So he took the lute and played thereon a wondrous playing, with rare divisions and marvellous modulations, and showed her a passage she knew not; and this was goodlier to her than all that she had gotten. Then she took the lute from him and playing thereon, sang and presently returned to the passage which he had shown her; and he said, "By Allah, thou singest better than I!" As for Tohfah, it became manifest to her that her former practice was all of it wrong and that what she had learnt from the Shaykh Abu al-Tawáif Iblis was the root and foundation of all perfection in the art and its modes. So she rejoiced in that which she had won of skill in touching the lute far more than in all that had fallen to her lot of wealth and honour-robes and kissed the Master's hand. Then said Queen Al-Shahba, "By Allah, O Shaykh, my sister Tohfah is indeed singular among the folk of her time, and I hear that she singeth upon all sweet-smelling blooms." Iblis replied, "Yes, O my lady, and I am in extremest wonderment thereat. But there remaineth somewhat of sweet-scented flowers, which she hath not besung, such as myrtle and tuberose and jessamine and the moss-rose and the like." Then the Shaykh signed to her to sing somewhat upon the rest of the flowers, that Queen Al-Shahba might hear, and she said, "Hearing and obeying." So she took the lute and played thereon in many modes, then returned to the first and sang these couplets,

"I'm one of the lover-retinue * Whom long pine and patience have
doomĕd rue:
And sufferance of parting from kin and friends * Hath clothed me,
O folk, in this yellow hue:
Then, after the joyance had passed away, * Heart-break, abasement
and cark I knew,
Through the long, long day when the lift is light, * Nor, when
night is murk, my pangs cease pursue:
So, 'twixt fairest hope and unfailing fear, * My bitter tears
ever flow anew."

Thereat Queen Al-Shahba rejoiced with joy exceeding and cried, "Brava, O queen of delight! No one is able to describe thee. Sing to us on the Apple." Quoth Tohfah, "Hearkening and obedience." Then she recited these couplets,

"I surpass all forms in my coquetry* For mine inner worth and
mine outer blee;
Tend me noble hands in the sight of all * And slake with pure
waters the thirst of me;
My robe is of sendal, and eke my veil * Is of sunlight the

Ruthful hath bidden be:
When my fair companions are marched afar, * In sorrow fro’ home
they are forced to flee:
But noble hands deign hearten my heart * With beds where I sit in
my high degree;[230]
And where, like full moon at its rise, my light * ‘mid the
garden-fruits thou shalt ever see.”

Queen Al-Shahba rejoiced in this with exceeding joy and cried “Brava! By Allah, there is none excelleth thee.” Tohfah kissed the ground, then returned to her place and versified on the Tuberose, saying,

“I’m a marvel-bloom to be worn on head! * Though a stranger among
you fro’ home I fled:
Make use of wine in my company * And flout at Time who in
languish sped.
E’en so doth camphor my hue attest, * O my lords, as I stand in
my present stead.
So gar me your gladness when dawneth day, * And to highmost seat
in your homes be I led:
And quaff your cups in all jollity, * And cheer and ease shall
ne’er cease to be.”

At this Queen Al-Shahba rejoiced with exceeding joy and cried, “Brava, O queen of delight! By Allah, I know not how I shall do to give thee thy due! May the Most High grant us the grace of thy long continuance!” Then she strained her to her breast and bussed her on the cheek; whereupon quoth Iblis (on whom be a curse!), “This is a mighty great honour!” Quoth the queen, “Know that this lady Tohfah is my sister and that her biddance is my biddance and her forbiddance my forbiddance. So all of you hearken to her word and render her worshipful obedience.” Therewith the kings rose in a body and kissed ground before Tohfah, who rejoiced in this. Moreover, Queen Al-Shahba doffed dress and habited her in a suit adorned with pearls, jewels and jacinths, worth an hundred thousand ducats, and wrote for her on a slip of paper[231] a patent appointing her to be her deputy. So the Songstress rose and kissed ground before the Queen, who said to her, “Of thy favour, sing to us somewhat concerning the rest of the sweet-scented flowers and herbs, so I may hear thy chant and solace myself with witnessing thy skill.” She replied, “To hear is to obey, O lady mine,” and, taking the lute, improvised these couplets,

“My hue excelleth all hues in light, * And I would all eyes
should enjoy my sight:
My site is the site of fillets and pearls * Where the fairest
brows are with jasmine dight:
My light’s uprist (and what light it shows!) * Is a silvern zone
on the waist of Night.”

Then she changed the measure and improvised these couplets,

“I’m the gem of herbs, and in seasons twain * My tryst I keep
with my lovers-train:
I stint not union for length of time * Nor visits, though some be
of severance fain;
The true one am I and my troth I keep, * And, easy of plucking,
no hand disdain.”

Then, changing measure and the mode, she played so that she bewildered the wits of those who were present, and Queen Al-Shahba, moved to mirth and merriment, cried, “Brava, O queen of delight!” Presently she returned to the first mode and improved these couplets on Nenuphar,

“I fear me lest freke espy me, * In air when I fain deny me; So I root me beneath the wave, * And my stalks to bow down apply me.”

Hereat Queen Al-Shahba rejoiced with exceeding joy, and cried, “Brava, O Tohfah! Let me hear more of thy chant.” Accordingly, she smote the lute and changing the mode, recited on the Moss- rose these couplets,

“Look on Nasrín[232] those branchy shoots surround; * With

greenest leafery ’tis deckt and crowned:
Its graceful bending stem draws every gaze * While beauteous
bearing makes their love abound.”

Then she changed measure and mode and sang these couplets on the Water-lily,

“O thou who askest Súsan[233] of her scent, * Hear thou my
words and beauty of my lay.
‘Emir am I whom all mankind desire’ * (Quoth she) ‘or present or
when ta’en away.’”

When Tohfah had made an end of her song, Queen Al-Shahba rose and said, “I never heard from any the like of this;” and she drew the Songstress to her and fell to kissing her. Then she took leave of her and flew away; and on like wise all the birds took flight with her, so that they walled the horizon; whilst the rest of the kings tarried behind. Now as soon as it was the fourth night, there came the boy who was to be circumcised, adorned with jewels such as never saw eye nor heard ear of, and amongst the rest a crown of gold crusted with pearls and gems, the worth whereof was an hundred thousand sequins. He sat down upon the couch and Tohfah sang to him, till the chirurgeon[234] came and they snipped his foreskin in the presence of all the kings, who showered on him a mighty great store of jewels and jacinths and gold. Queen Kamariyah bade her Eunuchs gather up all this and lay it in Tohfah’s closet and it was as much in value as all that had fallen to her, from the first of the festivities to the last thereof. Moreover, the Shaykh Iblis (whom Allah curse!) bestowed upon the Songstress the crown worn by the boy and gave the circumcisee another, whereat Tohfah’s reason took flight. Then the Jinn departed, in order of rank, whilst Iblis farewelled them, band after band. Seeing the Shaykh thus occupied with taking leave of the kings, Maymun seized his opportunity, the place being empty, and taking up Tohfah on his shoulders, soared aloft with her to the confines of the lift, and flew away with her. Presently, Iblis came to look for the Songstress and see what she purposed, but found her not and sighted the slave-girls slapping their faces: so he said to them, “Fie on you! What may be the matter?” They replied, “O our lord, Maymun hath snatched up Tohfah and flown away with her.” When Iblis heard this, he gave a cry whereto earth trembled and said, “What is to be done?” Then he buffetted his face and head, exclaiming, “Woe to you! This be none other than exceeding insolence. Shall he carry off Tohfah from my very palace and attaint mine honour? Doubtless, this Maymun hath lost his wits.” Then he cried out a second time, so that the earth quaked, and rose on his wings high in air. The news came to the rest of the kings; so they flew after him and overtaking him, found him full of anxiety and affright, with fire issuing from his nostrils, and said to him, “O Shaykh al-Tawaif,[235] what is to do?” He replied, “Know ye that Maymun hath carried off Tohfah from my palace and attainted mine honour.” When they heard this, they cried, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah the Glorious, the Great. By God he hath ventured upon a grave matter and verily he destroyeth self and folk!” Then Shaykh Iblis ceased not flying till he fell in with the tribes of the Jann, and they gathered together a world of people, none may tell the tale of them save the Lord of All-might. So they came to the Fortress of Copper and the Citadel of Lead,[236] and the people of the sconces saw the tribes of the Jann issuing from every deep mountain-pass[237] and said, “What be the news?” Then Iblis went in to King Al-Shisban and acquainted him with that which had befallen; whereupon quoth he, “Verily, Allah hath destroyed Maymun and his many! He pretendeth to possess Tohfah, and she is become queen of the Jann! But have patience till we devise that which befitteth in the matter of Tohfah.” Iblis asked, “And what befitteth it to do?” And Al-Shisban answered, “We will fall upon him and kill him and his host with cut of brand.” Then quoth Shaykh Iblis, “‘Twere better to acquaint Queen Kamariyah and Queen Zalzalah and Queen Shararah and Queen Wakhimah; and when they are assembled, Allah shall ordain whatso He deemeth good in the matter of her release.” Quoth Al-Shisban, “Right is thy rede” and they despatched to Queen Kamariyah an Ifrit hight Salhab who came to her palace and found her sleeping, so he roused her and she said, “What is to do, O Salhab?” Cried he, “O my lady, come to the succour of thy sister the Songstress, for Maymun hath carried her off and attainted thine honour and that of Shaykh Iblis." Quoth she, "What sayst thou?" and she sat up straight and cried out with a great cry. And indeed she feared for Tohfah and said, "By Allah, in very sooth she used to say that he gazed at her and prolonged the gaze; but ill is that whereto his soul hath prompted him." Then she rose in haste and mounting a Sataness of her Satans, said to her, "Fly." So she flew off with her and alighted in the palace of her sister Shararah, whereupon she sent for her sisters Zalzalah and Wakhimah and acquainted them with the tidings, saying, "Know that Maymun hath snatched up Tohfah and flown off with her swiftlier than the blinding leven." Then they all flew off in haste and lighting down in the place where were their father Al-Shisban and their grandfather the Shaykh Abu al-Tawáif, found the folk on the sorriest of situations. When their grandfather Iblis saw them, he rose to them and wept, and they all wept for the Songstress. Then said Iblis to them, "Yonder hound hath attainted mine honour and taken Tohfah, and I think not other wise[238] but that she is like to die of distress for herself and her lord Al-Rashid and saying, 'The whole that they said and did was false.'"[239] Quoth Kamariyah, "O grandfather mine, nothing is left for it but stratagem and device for her deliverance, for that she is dearer to me than everything; and know that yonder accursed when he waxeth ware of your coming upon him, will ken that he hath no power to cope with you, he who is the least and meanest of the Jann; but we dread that he, when assured of defeat, will slay Tohfah; wherefore nothing will serve but that we contrive a sleight for saving her; else will she perish." He asked, "And what hast thou in mind of device?" and she answered, "Let us take him with fair means, and if he obey, all will be well;[240] else will we practice stratagem against him; and expect not her deliverance from other than myself." Quoth Iblis, "The affair is thine; contrive what thou wilt, for that Tohfah is thy sister and thy solicitude for her is more effectual than that of any other." So Kamariyah cried out to an Ifrit of the Ifrits and a calamity of the calamities,[241] by name Al-Asad al-Tayyár, the Flying Lion, and said to him, "Hie with my message to the Crescent Mountain,[242] the wone of Maymun the Sworder, and enter and say to him, My lady saluteth thee with the salam and asketh thee, 'How canst thou be assured for thyself of safety, after what thou hast done, O Maymun? Couldst thou find none to maltreat in thy drunken humour save Tohfah, she too being a queen? But thou art excused, because thou didst not this deed, but ’twas thy drink, and the Shaykh Abu al-Tawáif pardoneth thee, because thou wast drunken. Indeed, thou hast attainted his honour; but now restore her to her palace, for that she hath done well and favoured us and rendered us service, and thou wottest that she is this day our queen. Belike she may bespeak Queen Al-Shahba, whereupon the matter will become grievous and that wherein there is no good shall betide thee; and thou wilt get no tittle of gain. Verily, I give thee good counsel, and so the Peace!’” Al-Asad answered “Hearing and obeying,” and flew till he came to the Crescent Mountain, when he sought audience of Maymun, who bade admit him. So he entered and kissing ground before him, gave him Queen Kamariyah’s message, which when he heard, he cried to the Ifrit, “Return whence thou comest and say to thy mistress, ‘Be silent and thou wilt show thy good sense.’ Else will I come and seize upon her and make her serve Tohfah; and if the kings of the Jinn assemble together against me and I be overcome by them, I will not leave her to scent the wind of this world and she shall be neither mine nor theirs, for that she is presently my sprite [243] from between my ribs; and how shall any part with his sprite?” When the Ifrit heard Maymun’s words, he said to him, “By Allah, O Maymun, art thou a changeling in thy wits, that thou speakest these words of my lady, and thou one of her page-boys?” Whereupon Maymun cried out and said to him, “Woe to thee, O dog of the Jinns! Wilt thou bespeak the like of me with these words?” Then he bade those who were about him bastinado Al-Asad, but he took flight and soaring high in air, betook himself to his mistress and told her the tidings: when she said, “Thou hast done well, O good knight!” Then she turned to her sire and said to him, “Hear that which I shall say to thee.” Quoth he, “Say on;” and quoth she, “I rede thee take thy troops and go to him, for when he heareth this, he will in turn levy his many and come forth to thee; whereupon do thou offer him battle and prolong the fight with him and make a show to him of weakness and giving way. Meantime, I will devise me a device for getting at Tohfah and delivering her, what while he is busied with you in battle; and when my messenger cometh to thee and informeth thee that I have gotten possession of Tohfah and that she is with me, return thou upon Maymun forthwith and overthrow him and his hosts, and take him prisoner. But, an my device succeed not with him and we fail to deliver Tohfah, he will assuredly practice to slay her, without recourse, and regret for her will remain in our hearts.” Quoth Iblis, “This is the right rede” and bade call a march among the troops, whereupon an hundred thousand knights, doughty wights of war, joined themselves to him and set out for the country of Maymun. As for Queen Kamariyah, she flew off to the palace of her sister Wakhimah, and told her what deed Maymun had done and how he declared that, whenas he saw defeat nearhand, he would slay Tohfah; adding, “And indeed, he is resolved upon this; otherwise had he not dared to work such sleight. So do thou contrive the affair as thou see fit, for in rede thou hast no superior.” Then they sent for Queen Zalzalah and Queen Shararah and sat down to take counsel, one with other, concerning what they had best do in the matter. Presently said Wakhimah, “ ‘Twere advisable we fit out a ship in this our island home and embark therein, disguised as Adam’s sons, and fare on till we come to anchor under a little island that lieth over against Maymun’s palace. There will we sit drinking and smiting the lute and singing; for Tohfah will assuredly be seated there overlooking the sea, and needs must she see us and come down to us, whereupon we will take her by force and she will be under our hands, so that none shall be able to molest her any more. Or, an Maymun be gone forth to do battle with the Jinns, we will storm his stronghold and take Tohfah and raze his palace and slay all therein. When he hears of this, his heart will be broken and we will send to let our father know, whereat he will return upon him with his troops and he will be destroyed and we shall have rest of him.” They answered her, saying, “This is a good counsel.” Then they bade fit out a ship from behind the mountain,[244] and it was fitted out in less than the twinkling of an eye; so they launched it on the sea and embarking therein, together with four thousand Ifrits, set out, intending for Maymun’s palace. They also bade other five thousand Ifrits betake themselves to the island under the Crescent Mountain and there lie in wait for them ambushed well. Thus fared it with the kings of the Jann; but as regards Shaykh Abu al-Tawáif Iblis and his son Al-Shisban the twain set out, as we have said, with their troops, who were of the doughtiest of the Jinn and the prowest of them in wing-flying and horsemanship, and fared on till they drew near the Crescent Mountain. When the news of their approach reached Maymun, he cried out with a mighty great cry to the troops, who were twenty thousand riders, and bade them make ready for departure. Then he went in to Tohfah and kissing her, said, “Know that thou art this day my life of the world, and indeed the Jinns are gathered together to wage war on me for thy sake. An I win the day from them and am preserved alive, I will set all the kings of the Jann under thy feet and thou shalt become queen of the world.” But she shook her head and shed tears; and he said, “Weep not, for I swear by the virtue of the mighty inscription borne on the seal-ring of Solomon, thou shalt never again see the land of men; no, never! Say me, can any one part with his life? Give ear, then, to my words; else will I slay thee.” So she was silent. And forthright he sent for his daughter, whose name was Jamrah,[245] and when she came, he said to her, “Harkye, Jamrah! Know that I am going to fight the clans of Al-Shisban and Queen Kamariyah and the Kings of the Jann. An I be vouchsafed the victory over them, to Allah be the laud and thou shalt have of me largesse;[246] but, an thou see or hear that I am worsted and any come to thee with ill news of me, hasten to kill Tohfah, so she may fall neither to me nor to them.” Then he farewelled her and mounted, saying, “When this cometh about, pass over to the Crescent Mountain and take up thine abode there, and await what shall befal me and what I shall say to thee.” And Jamrah answered “Hearkening and obedience.” Now when the Songstress heard these words, she fell to weeping and wailing and said, “By Allah, naught irketh me but severance from my lord Al-Rashid; however, when I am dead, let the world be ruined after me!”[247] And she was certified in herself that she was assuredly lost. Then Maymun set forth with his army and departed in quest of the hosts of the Jinn, leaving none in the palace save his daughter Jamrah and Tohfah and an Ifrit which was dear to him. They fared on till they met with the army of Al-Shisban; and when the two hosts came face to face, they fell each upon other and fought a fight, a passing sore than which naught could be more. After a while, Al-Shisban’s troops began to give way, and when Maymun saw them do thus, he despised them and made sure of victory over them. On this wise it befel them; but as regards Queen Kamariyah and her company they sailed on without ceasing, till they came under the palace wherein was Tohfah, to wit, that of Maymun the Sworder; and by the decree of the Lord of destiny, the Songstress herself was at that very time sitting on the belvedere of the palace, pondering the affair of Harun al-Rashid and her own and that which had befallen her and weeping for that she was doomed to death. She saw the vessel and what was therein of those we have named, and they in mortal guise, and said, "Alas, my sorrow for this ship and for the men that be therein!" As for Kamariyah and her many, when they drew near the palace, they strained their eyes and seeing the Songstress sitting, cried, "Yonder sitteth Tohfah. May Allah not bereave us of her!" Then they moored their craft and, making for the island which lay over against the palace, spread carpets and sat eating and drinking; whereupon quoth Tohfah, "Well come and welcome to yonder faces! These be my kinswomen and I conjure thee by Allah, O Jamrah, that thou let me down to them, so I may sit with them awhile and enjoy kindly converse with them and return." Quoth Jamrah, "I may on no wise do that;" and Tohfah wept. Then the folk brought out wine and drank, while Kamariyah took the lute and sang these couplets,

"By Allah, had I never hoped to greet you * Your guide had failed
 on camel to seat you!
Far bore you parting from friend would greet you * Till meseems
 mine eyes for your wone entreat you."

When Tohfah heard this, she cried out so great a cry, that the folk heard her and Kamariyah said, "Relief is nearhand." Then the Songstress looked out to them and called to them, saying, "O daughters of mine uncle, I am a lonely maid, an exile from kin and country: so for the love of Allah Almighty, repeat that song!" Accordingly Kamariyah repeated it and Tohfah swooned away. When she came to herself, she said to Jamrah, "By the rights of the Apostle of Allah (whom may He save and assain!) unless thou suffer me go down to them and look on them and sit with them for a full hour, I will hurl myself headlong from this palace, for that I am aweary of my life and know that I am slain to all certainty; wherefore will I kill myself, ere you pass sentence upon me.” And she was instant with her in asking. When Jamrah heard her words, she knew that, an she let her not down, she would assuredly destroy herself. So she said to her, “O Tohfah, between thee and them are a thousand cubits, but I will bring the women up to thee.” The Songstress replied, “Nay, there is no help but that I go down to them and solace me in the island and look upon the sea anear; then will we return, I and thou; for that, an thou bring them up to us, they will be affrighted and there will betide them neither joy nor gladness. As for me, I wish but to be with them, that they may cheer me with their company neither give over their merrymaking, so peradventure I may broaden my breast with them, and indeed I swear that needs must I go down to them; else I will cast myself upon them.” And she cajoled Jamrah and kissed her hands, till she said, “Arise and I will set thee down beside them.” Then she took Tohfah under her armpit and flying up swiftlier than the blinding leven, set her down with Kamariyah and her company; whereupon she went up to them and accosted them, saying, “Fear ye not: no harm shall befal you; for I am a mortal, like unto you, and I would fain look on you and talk with you and hear your singing.” So they welcomed her and kept their places whilst Jamrah sat down beside them and fell a-snuffing their odours and saying, “I smell the scent of the Jinn![248] Would I wot whence it cometh!” Then said Wakhimah to her sister Kamariyah, “Yonder foul slut smelleth us and presently she will take to flight; so what be this inaction concerning her?”[249] Thereupon Kamariyah put out an arm long as a camel’s neck, and dealt Jamrah a buffet on the head, that made it fly from her body and cast it into the sea. Then cried she, “Allah is All-great!”[250] And they uncovered their faces, whereupon Tohfah knew them and said to them, “Protection!” Queen Kamariyah embraced her, as also did Queen Zalzalah and Queen Wakhimah and Queen Shararah, and the first-named said to her, “Receive the good tidings of assured safety, for there abideth no harm for thee; but this is no time for talk.” Then they cried out, whereupon up came the Ifrits ambushed in that island, hending swords and maces in hand, and taking up Tohfah, flew with her to the palace and made themselves masters of it, whilst the Ifrit aforesaid, who was dear to Maymun and whose name was Dukhán,[251] fled like an arrow and stinted not flying till he came to Maymun and found him fighting a sore fight with the Jinn. When his lord saw him, he cried out at him, saying, “Fie upon thee! Whom hast thou left in the palace?” Dukhan answered, saying, “And who abideth in the palace? Thy beloved Tohfah they have captured and Jamrah is slain and they have taken the palace, all of it.” At these ill tidings Maymun buffeted his face and head and said, “Oh! Out on it for a calamity!” Then he cried aloud. Now Kamariyah had sent to her sire and reported to him the news, whereat the raven of the wold[252] croaked for the foe. So, when Maymun saw that which had betided him (and indeed the Jinn smote upon him and the wings of eternal severance overspread his host), he planted the heel of his lance in the earth and turning its head to his heart, urged his charger thereat and pressed upon it with his breast, till the point came forth gleaming from his back. Meanwhile the messenger had made the friendly host with the news of Tohfah’s deliverance, whereat the Shaykh Abu al-Tawáif rejoiced and bestowed on the bringer of lief tidings a sumptuous robe of honour and made him commander over a company of the Jann. Then they charged home upon Maymun’s host and wiped them out to the last man; and when they came to Maymun, they found that he had slain himself and was even as we have said. Presently Kamariyah and her sister Wakhimah came up to their grandfather and told him what they had done; whereupon he came to Tohfah and saluted her with the salam and congratulated her on deliverance. Then he made over Maymun’s palace to Salhab; and, taking all the rebel’s wealth gave it to the Songstress, while the troops encamped upon the Crescent Mountain. Furthermore, the Shaykh Abu al-Tawáif said to Tohfah, “Blame me not,” and she kissed his hands, when behold, there appeared to them the tribes of the Jinn, as they were clouds, and Queen Al-Shahba flying in their van, drawn sword in grip. As she came in sight of the folk, they kissed ground between her hands and she said to them, “Tell me what hath betided Queen Tohfah from yonder dog Maymun and why did ye not send to me and report to me?” Quoth they, “And who was this dog that we should send to thee on his account? Indeed he was the least and lowest of the Jinn.” Then they told her what Kamariyah and her sisters had done and how they had practiced upon Maymun and delivered the Songstress from his hand, fearing lest he should slay her when he found himself defeated; and she said, "By Allah, the accursed was wont to lengthen his looking upon her!" And Tohfah fell to kissing Al-Shahba's hand, whilst the queen strained her to her bosom and kissed her, saying, "Trouble is past; so rejoice in assurance of deliverance." Then they rose and went up to the palace whereupon the trays of food were brought and they ate and drank; after which quoth Queen Al-Shahba, "O Tohfah, sing to us, by way of sweetmeat[253] for thine escape, and favour us with that which shall solace our minds, for that indeed my thoughts have been occupied with thee." And quoth Tohfah, "Hearkening and obedience, O my lady." So she improvised and sang these couplets,

"Breeze of East[254] an thou breathe o'er the dear ones' land

* Speed, I pray thee, my special salute and salam:
And say them I'm pledged to love them and * In pine that passeth
all pine I am."

Thereat Queen Al-Shahba rejoiced and with her all who were present; and they admired her speech and fell to kissing her; and when she had made an end of her song, Queen Kamariyah said to her, "O my sister, ere thou go to thy palace, I would fain bring thee to look upon Al-'Anká,[255] daughter of Bahram Júr, whom Al-'Anka, daughter of the wind, carried off, and her beauty; for that there is not her fellow on earth's face." And Queen Al-Shahba said, "O Kamariyah, I also think it were well an I beheld her." Quoth Kamariyah, "I saw her three years ago; but my sister Wakhimah seeth her at all times, for she is near to her people, and she saith that there is not in the world fairer than she. Indeed, this Queen Al-Anka is become a byword for beauty and comeliness." And Wakhimah said, "By the mighty inscription on the seal-ring of Solomon, there is not her like for loveliness here below." Then said Queen Al-Shahba, "An it needs must be and the affair is as ye say, I will take Tohfah and go with her to Al-Anka, so she may look upon her!" So they all arose and repaired to Al-Anka, who abode in the Mountain Kaf. When she saw them, she drew near to them and saluted them, saying, “O my ladies, may I not be bereaved of you!” Quoth Wakhimah to her, “Who is like unto thee, O Anka? Behold, Queen Al-Shahba is come to thee.” So Al-Anka kissed the Queen’s feet and lodged them in her palace; whereupon Tohfah came up to her and fell to kissing her and saying, “Never saw I a seemlier than this semblance.” Then she set before them somewhat of food and they ate and washed their hands; after which the Songstress took the lute and smote it well; and Al-Anka also played, and they fell to improvising verses in turns, whilst Tohfah embraced Al-Anka every moment. Al-Shahba cried, “O my sister, each kiss is worth a thousand dinars;” and Tohfah replied, “And a thousand dinars were little therefor;” whereat Al-Anka laughed and after nighting in her pavilion on the morrow they took leave of her and went away to Maymun’s palace. Here Queen Al-Shahba farewelled them and taking her troops, returned to her capital, whilst the kings also went away to their abodes and the Shaykh Abu al-Tawáif applied himself to diverting Tohfah till nightfall, when he mounted her on the back of one of the Ifrits and bade other thirty gather together all that she had gotten of treasure and raiment, jewels and robes of honour. Then they flew off, whilst Iblis went with her, and in less than the twinkling of an eye he set her down in her sleeping room, where he and those who were with him bade adieu to her and went away. When Tohfah found herself in her own chamber[256] and on her couch, her reason fled for joy and it seemed to her as if she had never stirred thence: then she took the lute and tuned it and touched it in wondrous fashion and improvised verses and sang. The Eunuch heard the smiting of the lute within the chamber and cried, “By Allah, that is the touch of my lady Tohfah!” So he arose and went, as he were a madman, falling down and rising up, till he came to the Castrato on guard at the gate of the Commander of the Faithful and found him sitting. When his fellow neutral saw him, and he like a madman, slipping down and stumbling up, he asked him, “What aileth thee and what bringeth thee hither at this hour?” The other answered, “Wilt thou not make haste and awaken the Prince of True Believers?” And he fell to crying out at him; whereupon the Caliph awoke and heard them bandying words together and Tohfah's slave crying to the other, "Woe to thee! Awaken the Commander of the Faithful in haste." So quoth he, "O Sawab, what hast thou to say?" and quoth the Chief Eunuch, "O our lord, the Eunuch of Tohfah's lodging hath lost his wits and crieth, 'Awaken the Commander of the Faithful in haste!' " Then said Al-Rashid to one of the slave-girls, "See what may be the matter." Accordingly she hastened to admit the Castrato, who entered at her order; and when he saw the Commander of the Faithful, he salamed not neither kissed ground, but cried in his hurry, "Quick: up with thee! My lady Tohfah sitteth in her chamber, singing a goodly ditty. Come to her in haste and see all that I say to thee! Hasten! She sitteth awaiting thee." The Caliph was amazed at his speech and asked him, "What sayst thou?" He answered, "Didst thou not hear the first of the speech? Tohfah sitteth in the sleeping-chamber, singing and lute-playing. Come thy quickest! Hasten!" Accordingly Al-Rashid sprang up and donned his dress; but he believed not the Eunuch's words and said to him, "Fie upon thee! What is this thou sayst? Hast thou not seen this in a dream?" Quoth the Eunuch, "By Allah, I wot not what thou sayest, and I was not asleep;" and quoth Al-Rashid, "An thy speech be soothfast, it shall be for thy good luck, for I will free thee and give thee a thousand gold pieces; but, an it be untrue and thou have seen this in dream-land, I will crucify thee." The Eunuch said within himself, "O Protector, let me not have seen this in vision!" then he left the Caliph and running to the chamber-door, heard the sound of singing and lute-playing; whereupon he returned to Al-Rashid and said to him, "Go and hearken and see who is asleep." When the Prince of True Believers drew near the door of the sleeping-chamber, he heard the sound of the lute and Tohfah's voice singing; whereat he could not restrain his reason and was like to faint for excess of delight. Then he pulled out the key, but his hand refused to draw the bolt: however, after a while, he took heart and applying himself, opened the door and entered, saying, "Methinks this is none other than a vision or an imbroglio of dreams." When Tohfah saw him, she rose and coming to meet him, pressed him to her breast; and he cried out a cry wherein his sprite was like to depart and fell down in a fit. She again strained him to her bosom and sprinkled on him rose-water mingled with musk, and washed his face, till he came to himself, as he were a drunken man, and shed tears for the stress of his joy in Tohfah's return to him, after he had despaired of her returning. Then she took the lute and smote thereon, after the fashion she had learnt from Shaykh Iblis, so that Al-Rashid's wit was bewildered for excess of joy and his understanding was confounded for exultation; after which she improvised and sang these couplets,

"That I left thee my heart to believe is unlief; * For the life that's in it ne'er leaveth; brief,
An thou say 'I went,' saith my heart 'What a fib!' * And I bide 'twixt believing and unbelief."

When she had made an end of her verses, Al-Rashid said to her, "O Tohfah, thine absence was wondrous, yet is thy presence still more marvellous." She replied, "By Allah, O my lord, thou sayst sooth;" then, taking his hand, she said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, see what I have brought with me." So he looked and spied treasures such as neither words could describe nor registers could document, pearls and jewels and jacinths and precious stones and unions and gorgeous robes of honour, adorned with margarites and jewels and purfled with red gold. There he beheld what he never had beheld all his life long, not even in idea; and she showed him that which Queen Al-Shahba had bestowed on her of those carpets, which she had brought with her, and that throne, the like whereof neither Kisrŕ possessed nor Cćsar, and those tables inlaid with pearls and jewels and those vessels which amazed all who looked on them, and that crown which was on the head of the circumcised boy, and those robes of honour, which Queen Al-Shahba and Shaykh Abu al-Tawáif had doffed and donned upon her, and the trays wherein were those treasures; brief, she showed him wealth whose like he had never in his life espied and which the tongue availeth not to describe and whereat all who looked thereon were bewildered, Al-Rashid was like to lose his wits for amazement at this spectacle and was confounded at that he sighted and witnessed. Then said he to Tohfah, "Come, tell me thy tale from beginning to end, and let me know all that hath betided thee, as if I had been present." She answered, "Hearkening and obedience," and acquainting him with all that had betided her first and last, from the time when she first saw the Shaykh Abu al-Tawáif, how he took her and descended with her through the side of the Chapel of Ease; and she told him of the horse she had ridden, till she came to the meadow aforesaid and described it to him, together with the palace and that was therein of furniture, and related to him how the Jinn rejoiced in her, and whatso she had seen of their kings, masculine and feminine, and of Queen Kamariyah and her sisters and Queen Shu'a'ah, Regent of the Fourth Sea, and Queen Al-Shahba, Queen of Queens, and King Al-Shisban, and that which each one of them had bestowed upon her. Moreover, she recited to him the story of Maymun the Sworder and described to him his fulsome favour, which he had not deigned to change, and related to him that which befel her from the kings of the Jinn, male and female, and the coming of the Queen of Queens, Al-Shahba, and how she had loved her and appointed her her vice-reine and how she was thus become ruler over all the kings of the Jann; and she showed him the writ of investiture which Queen Al-Shahba had written her and told him what had betided her with the Ghulish Head, when it appeared to her in the garden, and how she had despatched it to her palace, beseeching it to bring her news of the Commander of the Faithful and of what had betided him after her. Then she described to him the flower-gardens, wherein she had taken her pleasure, and the Hammam-baths inlaid with pearls and jewels and told him that which had befallen Maymun the Sworder, when he bore her off, and how he had slain himself; in fine, she related to him everything she had seen of wonders and marvels and that which she had beheld of all kinds and colours among the Jinn. Then she told him the story of Al-Anka, daughter of Bahram Jur, with Al-Anka, daughter of the wind, and described to him her dwelling-place and her island, whereupon quoth Al-Rashid, "O Tohfat al-Sadr,[257] tell me of Al-Anka, daughter of Bahram Jur; is she of the Jinn-kind or of mankind or of the bird-kind? For this long time have I desired to find one who should tell me of her." Tohfah replied, "'Tis well, O Commander of the Faithful. I asked the queen of this and she acquainted me with her case and told me who built her the palace." Quoth Al-Rashid, "Allah upon thee, tell it me;" and quoth Tohfah, "I will well," and proceeded to tell him. And he was amazed at that which he heard from her and what she reported to him and at that which she had brought back of jewels and jacinths of various hues and precious stones of many sorts, such as amazed the beholder and confounded thought and mind. As for this, Tohfah was the means of the enrichment of the Barmecides and the Abbasides, and they had endurance in their delight. Then the Caliph went forth and bade decorate the city: so they decorated it and the drums of glad tidings were beaten; and they made banquets to the people for whom the tables were spread seven days. And Tohfah and the Commander of the Faithful ceased not to enjoy the most delightsome of life and the most prosperous till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies; and this is all that hath come down to us of their story.

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WOMEN'S WILES[258]

On the following night Dunyazad said to her sister Shahrazad, "O sister mine, an thou incline not unto sleep, prithee tell us a tale which shall beguile our watching through the dark hours." She replied: — With love and gladness.[259] It hath reached me, O magnificent King, that whilome there was in the city of Baghdad, a comely youth and a well-bred, fair of favour, tall of stature, and slender of shape. His name was Alá al-Dín and he was of the chiefs of the sons of the merchants and had a shop wherein he sold and bought. One day, as he sat in his shop, there passed by him a merry girl[260] who raised her head and casting a glance at the young merchant, saw written in a flowing hand on the forehead[261] of his shop door these words, "THERE BE NO CRAFT SAVE MEN'S CRAFT, FORASMUCH AS IT OVERCOMETH WOMEN'S CRAFT." When she beheld this, she was wroth and took counsel with herself, saying, As my head liveth, there is no help but I show him a marvel-trick of the wiles of women and put to naught this his inscription!" Thereupon she hied her home; and on the morrow she made her ready and donning the finest of dress, adorned herself with the costliest of ornaments and the highest of price and stained her hands with Henna. Then she let down her tresses upon her shoulders and went forth, walking with coquettish gait and amorous grace, followed by her slave-girl carrying a parcel, till she came to the young merchant's shop and sitting down under pretext of seeking stuffs, saluted him with the salam and demanded of him somewhat of cloths. So he brought out to her various kinds and she took them and turned them over, talking with him the while. Then said she to him, "Look at the shapeliness of my shape and my semblance! Seest thou in me aught of default?" He replied, "No, O my lady;" and she continued, "Is it lawful in any one that he should slander me and say that I am humpbacked?" Then she discovered to him a part of her bosom, and when he saw her breasts his reason took flight from his head and his heart clave to her and he cried, "Cover it up,[262] so may Allah veil thee!" Quoth she, "Is it fair of any one to decry my charms?" and quoth he, "How shall any decry thy charms, and thou the sun of loveliness?” Then said she, “Hath any the right to say of me that I am lophanded?” and tucking up her sleeves, she showed him forearms as they were crystal; after which she unveiled to him a face, as it were a full moon breaking forth on its fourteenth night, and said to him, “Is it lawful for any to decry me and declare that my face is pitted with smallpox or that I am one-eyed or crop-eared?” and said he, “O my lady, what is it moveth thee to discover unto me that lovely face and those fair limbs, wont to be so jealously veiled and guarded? Tell me the truth of the matter, may I be thy ransom!” And he began to improvise,[263]

“White Fair now drawn from sheath of parted hair, * Then in the
blackest tresses hid from sight,
Flasheth like day irradiating Earth * While round her glooms the
murk of nightliest night.”

— And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say. Whereupon cried Dunyazad her sister, “O sister mine, how delectable is this tale and how desirable!” She replied, saying, “And where is this compared with that which I will recount to thee next night, Inshallah?”

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The Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night.

Now when came the night, quoth Dunyazad to her sister Shahrazad, “O sister mine, an thou incline not unto sleep, prithee finish thy tale which shall beguile our watching through the dark hours.” She replied: — With love and gladness! It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the girl said to the young merchant, “Know, O my lord, that I am a maid oppressed of my sire, who speaketh at me and saith to me, Thou art loathly of looks and semblance and it besitteth not that thou wear rich raiment; for thou and the slave-girls are like in rank, there is no distinguishing thee from them. Now he is a richard, having a mighty great store of money and saith not thus save because he is a pinchpenny, and grudgeth the spending of a farthing; wherefore he is loath to marry me, lest he be put to somewhat of expense in my marriage, albeit Almighty Allah hath been bounteous to him and he is a man puissant in his time and lacking naught of worldly weal.” The youth asked, “Who is thy father and what is his condition?” and she answered, “He is the Chief Kazi of the well-known Supreme Court, under whose hands are all the Kazis who administer justice in this city.” The merchant believed her and she farewelled him and fared away, leaving in his heart a thousand regrets, for that the love of her had prevailed over him and he knew not how he should win to her; wherefore he woned enamoured, love-distracted, unknowing if he were alive or dead. As soon as she was gone, he shut up shop and walked straightway to the Court, where he went in to the Chief Kazi and saluted him. The magistrate returned his salam and treated him with distinction and seated him by his side. Then said Ala al-Din to him, “I come to thee seeking thine alliance and desiring the hand of thy noble daughter.” Quoth the Kazi, “O my lord merchant, welcome to thee and fair welcome; but indeed my daughter befitteth not the like of thee, neither beseemeth she the goodliness of thy youth and the pleasantness of thy compostition and the sweetness of thy speech;” but Ala al-Din replied, “This talk becometh thee not, neither is it seemly in thee; if I be content with her, how should this vex thee?” So the Kazi was satisfied and they came to an accord and concluded the marriage contract at a dower precedent of five purses[264] ready money and a dower contingent of fifteen purses, so it might be hard for him to put her away, her father having given him fair warning, but he would not be warned. Then they wrote out the contract document and the merchant said, “I desire to go in to her this night.” Accordingly they carried her to him in procession that very evening, and he prayed the night prayer and entered the private chamber prepared for him; but, when he lifted the head gear from the bride’s head and the veil from her face and looked, he saw a foul face and a favour right fulsome; indeed he beheld somewhat whereof may Allah never show thee the like! loathly, dispensing from description, inasmuch as there were reckoned in her all legal defects.[265] So he repented, when repentance availed him naught, and knew that the girl had cheated him. — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say. Whereupon cried Dunyazad, her sister, “O sister mine, how delectable is thy story and how sweet!” She replied, saying, “And where is this compared with that which I will recount to thee next night an I be spared and suffered to live by the King, whom Almighty Allah preserve?”

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The Hundred and Ninety-eight Night.

Now whenas came the night, quoth Dunyazad to her sister Shahrazad, “O sister mine, an thou incline not unto sleep, prithee finish thy story which shall beguile our watching through the dark hours, for indeed ’tis a fine tale and a wondrous.” She replied: — With love and gladness! It hath reached me, O generous King, that the unhappy merchant carnally knew the loathly bride, sore against the grain, and abode that night troubled in mind, as he were in the prison of Al-Daylam.[266] Hardly had the day dawned when he arose from her side and betaking himself to one of the Hammams, dozed there awhile, after which he made the Ghusl-ablution of ceremonial impurity[267] and donned his every day dress. Then he went out to the coffee house and drank a cup of coffee; after which he returned to his shop and opening the door, sat down, with concern and chagrin manifest on his countenance. After an hour or so, his friends and intimates among the merchants and people of the market began to come up to him, by ones and twos; to give him joy, and said to him, laughing, “A blessing! a blessing! Where be the sweetmeats? Where be the coffee?[268] ’Twould seem thou hast forgotten us; and nothing made thee oblivious save that the charms of the bride have disordered thy wit and taken thy reason, Allah help thee! We give thee joy, we give thee joy.” And they mocked at him whilst he kept silence before them, being like to rend his raiment and shed tears for rage. Then they went away from him, and when it was the hour of noon, up came his mistress, the crafty girl, trailing her skirts and swaying to and fro in her gait, as she were a branch of Ban in a garden of bloom. She was yet more richly dressed and adorned and more striking and cutting[269] in her symmetry and grace than on the previous day, so that she made the passers stop and stand in espalier to gaze upon her. When she came to Ala al-Din’s shop, she sat down thereon and said to him, “Blessed be the day to thee, O my lord Ala al-Din! Allah prosper thee and be good to thee and perfect thy gladness and make it a wedding of weal and welfare!” He knitted his brows and frowned in answer to her; then asked her, “Wherein have I failed of thy due, or what have I done to harm thee, that thou shouldst requite me after this fashion?” She answered, “Thou hast been no wise in default; but ’tis yonder inscription written on the door of thy shop that irketh me and vexeth my heart. An thou have the courage to change it and write up the contrary thereof, I will deliver thee from thine evil plight.” And he answered, “Thy requirement is right easy: on my head and eyes!” So saying, he brought out a sequin[270] and summoning one of his Mamelukes, said to him, “Get thee to Such-an-one the Scribe and bid him write us an epigraph, adorned with gold and lapis lazuli, in these words, “THERE BE NO CRAFT SAVE WOMEN’S CRAFT, FOR INDEED THEIR CRAFT IS A MIGHTY CRAFT[271] AND OVERCOMETH AND HUMBLETH THE FALSES OF MEN.” And she said to the white slave “Fare thee forthright.” So he repaired to the Scribe, who wrote him the scroll, and he brought it to his master, who set it on the door and asked the damsel, “Is thy heart satisfied?” She answered, “Yes! Arise forthwith and get thee to the place before the citadel, where do thou foregather with all the mountebanks and ape-dancers and bear-leaders and drummers and pipers and bid them come to thee to-morrow early, with their kettle-drums and flageolets, whilst thou art drinking coffee with thy father-in-law the Kazi, and congratulate thee and wish thee joy, saying, ‘A blessing, O son of our uncle! Indeed, thou art the vein[272] of our eye! We rejoice for thee, and if thou be ashamed of us, verily we pride ourselves upon thee; so, although thou banish us from thee, know that we will not forsake thee, albeit thou forsake us.’ And do thou fall to throwing dinars and dirhams amongst them; whereupon the Kazi will question thee, and do thou answer him, saying, My father was an ape-dancer and this is our original condition; but our Lord opened on us the gate of fortune and we have gotten us a name amongst the merchants and with their provost.’ Upon this he will say to thee, Then thou art an ape-leader of the tribe of the mountebanks?’ and do thou rejoin, I may in nowise deny my origin, for the sake of thy daughter and in her honour.’ The Kazi will say, It may not be that thou shalt be given the daughter of a Shaykh who sitteth upon the carpet of the Law and whose descent is traceable by genealogy to the loins of the Apostle of Allah,[273] nor is it meet that his daughter be in the power of a man who is an ape-dancer, a minstrel.’ Then do thou reply, Nay, O Efendi, she is my lawful wife, and every hair of her is worth a thousand lives, and I will not put her away though I be given the kingship of the world.' At last be thou persuaded to speak the word of divorce and so shall the marriage be voided and ye be saved each from other." Quoth Ala al-Din, "Right is thy rede," and locking up his shop, betook himself to the place — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say. Whereupon cried Dunyazad, her sister, "O sister mine, how goodly is thy story and how sweet!" She replied, saying, "And where is this compared with that which I will recount to thee next night, Inshallah!"

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The Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night.

And whenas came the night, quoth Dunyazad to her sister, “O sister mine, an thou incline not unto sleep, pray finish thy tale which shall beguile our watching through the dark hours.” She replied: — With love and gladness! It hath reached me, O generous King, that the young merchant betook himself to the place before the citadel, where he foregathered with the dancers, the drummers and pipers and instructed them how they should do, promising them a mighty fine reward. They received his word with “Hearing and obeying;” and he betook himself on the morrow, after the morning prayer, to the presence of the Judge, who received him with humble courtesy and seated him by his side. Then he addressed him and began questioning him of matters of selling and buying and of the price current of the various commodities which were carried to Baghdad from all quarters, whilst his son-in-law replied to all whereof he was questioned. As they were thus conversing, behold, up came the dancers and drummers with their drums and pipers with their pipes, whilst one of their number preceded them, with a long pennon-like banner in his hand, and played all manner antics with voice and limbs. When they came to the Court-house, the Kazi cried, “I seek refuge with Allah from yonder Satans!” and the young merchant laughed but said naught. Then they entered and saluting his worship the Kazi, kissed Ala al-Din’s hands and said, “A blessing on thee, O son of our uncle! Indeed, thou coolest our eyes in whatso thou doest, and we beseech Allah for the enduring greatness of our lord the Kazi, who hath honoured us by admitting thee to his connection and hath allotted to us a portion in his high rank and degree.” When the Judge heard this talk, it bewildered his wit and he was dazed and his face flushed with rage, and quoth he to his son-in-law, “What words are these?” Quoth the merchant, “Knowest thou not, O my lord, that I am of this tribe? Indeed this man is the son of my maternal uncle and that other the son of my paternal uncle, and if I be reckoned of the merchants, ’tis but by courtesy!” When the Kazi heard these words his colour changed — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day, whereupon cried Dunyazad her sister, “O sister mine, how delectable is thy story and how desirable!” She replied, saying, “And where is its first compared with its last? But I will forthwith relate it to you an I be spared and suffered to live by the King, whom may Allah the Most High keep!” Quoth the King within himself, “By the Almighty, I will not slay her until I hear the end of her tale!”

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The Two Hundredth Night.

Now whenas came the night, quoth Dunyazad to her sister, “O sister mine, an thou incline not unto sleep, prithee finish thy tale which shall beguile our watching through the dark hours.” She replied: — With love and gladness! It hath reached me, O auspicious king, that the Kazi’s colour changed and he was troubled and waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and was like to burst for stress of rage. Then said he to the young merchant, “Allah forfend that this should last! How shall it be permitted that the daughter of the Kazi of the Moslems cohabit with a man of the dancers and vile of origin? By Allah, unless thou repudiate her forthright, I will bid beat thee and cast thee into prison and there confine thee till thou die. Had I foreknown that thou wast of them, I had not suffered thee near me, but had spat in thy face, for that thou art more ill-omened than a dog or a hog.”[274] Then he kicked him down from his place and commanded him to divorce; but he said, “Be ruthful to me, O Efendi, for that Allah is ruthful, and hasten not: I will not divorce my wife, though thou give me the kingdom of Al-Irak.” The judge was perplexed and knew that compulsion was not permitted of Holy Law;[275] so he bespake the young merchant fair and said to him, “Veil me,[276] so may Allah veil thee. An thou divorce her not, this dishonour shall cleave to me till the end of time.” Then his fury gat the better of his wit and he cried, “An thou divorce her not of thine own will, I will forthright bid strike off thy head and slay myself; Hell-flame but not shame.”[277] The merchant bethought himself awhile, then divorced her with a manifest divorce and a public[278] and on this wise he won free from that unwelcome worry. Then he returned to his shop and presently sought in marriage of her father her who had done with him what she did[279] and who was the daughter of the Shaykh of the guild of the blacksmiths. So he took her to wife and they abode each with other and lived the pleasantest of lives and the most delightsome, till the day of death: and praise be to Allah the Lord of the Three Worlds.

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NUR AL-DIN ALI OF DAMASCUS AND THE DAMSEL SITT AL-MILAH.[280]

There was once, in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, a merchant of the merchants of Damascus, by name Abu al-Hasan, who had money and means, slave-blacks and slave-girls, lands and gardens, houses and Hammams in that city; but he was not blessed with boon of child and indeed his age waxed great. So he addressed himself to supplicate[281] Allah Almighty in private and in public and in his bows and his prostrations and at the season of prayer-call, beseeching Him to vouchsafe him, before his decease, a son who should inherit his wealth and possessions. The Lord answered his prayer; his wife conceived and the days of her pregnancy were accomplished and her months and her nights; and the travail-pangs came upon her and she gave birth to a boy, as he were a slice of Luna. He had not his match for beauty and he put to shame the sun and the resplendent moon; for he had a beaming face and black eyes of Bábilí witchery[282] and aquiline nose and carnelian lips; in fine, he was perfect of attributes, the loveliest of folk of his time, sans dubitation or gainsaying. His father joyed in him with exceeding joy and his heart was solaced and he was at last happy: he made banquets to the folk and he clad the poor and the widows. Presently he named the boy Sídí Nur al-Din Ali and reared him in fondness and delight among the hand-maids and thralls. When he had passed his seventh year, his father put him to school, where he learned the sublime Koran and the arts of writing and reckoning; and when he reached his tenth year, he was taught horsemanship and archery and to occupy himself with arts and sciences of all kinds, part and parts.[283] He grew up pleasant and polite, winsome and lovesome; a ravishment to all who saw him, and he inclined to companying with brethren and comrades and mixing with merchants and travelled men. From these he heard tell of that which they had witnessed of the wonders of the cities in their wayfare and heard them say, “Whoso journeyeth not enjoyeth naught;[284] especially of the city of Baghdad.” So he was concerned with exceeding concern for his lack of travel and disclosed this to his sire, who said to him, "O my son, why do I see thee chagrined?" Quoth he, "I would fain travel;" and quoth Abu al-Hasan, "O my son, none travelleth save those whose need is urgent and those who are compelled thereto by want. As for thee, O my son, thou enjoyest ample means; so do thou content thyself with that which Allah hath given thee and be bounteous to others, even as He hath been bountiful to thee; and afflict not thyself with the toil and tribulation of travel, for indeed it is said that travel is a piece of Hell-torment."[285] But the youth said, "Needs must I journey to Baghdad, the House of Peace." When his father saw the strength of his resolve to travel he fell in with his wishes and fitted him out with five thousand dinars in cash and the like in merchandise and sent with him two serving-men. So the youth fared forth, on the blessing of Allah Almighty;[286] and his parent went out with him, to take leave of him, and returned to Damascus. As for Nur al-Din Ali, he ceased not travelling days and nights till he entered Baghdad city, and laying up his loads in the Wakálah,[287] made for the Hammam-bath, where he did away that which was upon him of the soil of the road and doffing his travelling clothes, donned a costly suit of Yamaní stuff, worth an hundred dinars. Then he loaded his sleeve with a thousand miskals of gold and sallied forth a-walking and swaying gracefully as he paced along. His gait confounded all those who gazed upon him, as he shamed the branches with his shape and belittled the rose with the redness of his cheeks and his black eyes of Babilí witchcraft: thou wouldst deem that whoso looked on him would surely be preserved from bane and bale;[288] for he was even as saith of him one of his describers in these couplets: —

"Thy haters and enviers say for jeer * A true say that profits
what ears will hear;
'No boast is his whom the gear adorns; * The boast be his who
adorns the gear!'"

So Sidi Nur al-Din went walking in the highways of the city and viewing its edifices and its bazars and thoroughfares and gazing on its folk. Presently, Abú Nowás met him. (Now he was of those of whom it is said, "They love fair lads," and indeed there is said what is said concerning him.)[289] When he saw Nur al-Din Ali, he stared at him in amazement and exclaimed, "Say, I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak!" Then he accosted the youth and saluting him, asked him, "Why do I see my lord lone and lorn? Meseemeth thou art a stranger and knowest not this country; so, with leave of my lord, I will put myself at his service and acquaint him with the streets, for that I know this city." Nur al-Din answered, "This will be of thy favour, O nuncle." Abu Nowas rejoiced at this and fared on with him, showing him the streets and bazars, till they came to the house of a slave-dealer, where he stopped and said to the youth, "From what city art thou?" "From Damascus," replied Nur al-Din; and Abu Nowas said, "By Allah, thou art from a blessed city, even as saith of it the poet in these couplets,

'Now is Damascus a garth adorned * For her seekers, the Houris and Paradise-boys.'"

Sidi Nur al-Din thanked him and the twain entered the mansion of the slave-merchant. When the people of the house saw Abu Nowas, they rose to do him reverence, for that which they knew of his rank with the Commander of the Faithful; and the slave-dealer himself came up to them with two chairs whereon they seated themselves. Then the slave-merchant went inside and returning with a slave-girl, as she were a branch of Ban or a rattan-cane, clad in a vest of damask silk and tired with a black and white headdress whose ends fell down over her face, seated her on a chair of ebony; after which he cried to those who were present, "I will discover to you a favour as it were a full moon breaking forth from under a cloud-bank." They replied, "Do so;" whereupon he unveiled the damsel's face and behold, she was like the shining sun, with shapely shape and dawn-bright cheeks and thready waist and heavy hips; brief, she was endowed with an elegance, whose description is unfound, and was even as saith of her the poet,[290]

"A fair one, to idolaters if she herself should show, They'd
    leave their idols and her face for only Lord would know;
And if into the briny sea one day she chanced to spit, Assuredly
    the salt sea's floods straight fresh and sweet would grow."

The dealer stood at the hand-maid's head and one of the merchants said, "I bid a thousand dinars for her." Quoth another, "I bid one thousand one hundred dinars;" and a third, "I bid twelve hundred." Then said a fourth merchant, "Be she mine for fourteen hundred ducats." And the biddings standing still at that sum, her owner said, "I will not sell her save with her consent: an if she desire to be sold, I will sell her to whom she willeth." The slave-dealer asked him, "What is her name?" Answered the other, "Her name is Sitt al-Miláh;"[291] whereupon the dealer said to her, "With thy leave, I will sell thee to yonder merchant for this price of fourteen hundred dinars." Quoth she, "Come hither to me." So the man-vendor came up to her and when he drew near, she gave him a kick with her foot and cast him to the ground, saying, "I will not have that oldster." The slave-dealer arose, shaking the dust from his dress and head, and cried, "Who biddeth more of us? Who is desirous?"[292] Said one of the merchants, "I," and the dealer said to her, "O Sitt al-Milah, shall I sell thee to this merchant?" She replied, "Come hither to me;" but he rejoined, "Nay; speak and I will hear thee from my place, for I will not trust myself to thee nor hold myself safe when near thee." So she cried, "Indeed I will not have him." Then the slave-dealer looked at her and seeing her fix eyes on the young Damascene, for that in very deed he had fascinated her with his beauty and loveliness, went up to him and said to him, "O my lord, art thou a looker-on or a buyer? Tell me." Quoth Nur al-Din, "I am both looker-on and buyer. Wilt thou sell me yonder slave-girl for sixteen hundred ducats?" And he pulled out the purse of gold. Hereupon the dealer returned, dancing and clapping his hands and saying, "So be it, so be it, or not at all!" Then he came to the damsel and said to her, "O Sitt al-Milah, shall I sell thee to yonder young Damascene for sixteen hundred dinars?" But she answered, "No," of bashfulness before her master and the bystanders; whereupon the people of the bazar and the slave-merchant departed, and Abu Nowas and Ali Nur al-Din arose and went each his own way, whilst the damsel returned to her owner's house, full of love for the young Damascene. When the night darkened on her, she called him to mind and her heart hung to him and sleep visited her not; and on this wise she abode days and nights, till she sickened and abstained from food. So her lord went in to her and asked her, “O Sitt al-Milah, how findest thou thyself?” Answered she, “O my lord, dead without chance of deliverance and I beseech thee to bring me my shroud, so I may look upon it ere I die.” Therewith he went out from her, sore concerned for her, and betaking himself to the bazar, found a friend of his, a draper, who had been present on the day when the damsel was cried for sale. Quoth his friend to him, “Why do I see thee troubled?” and quoth he, “Sitt al-Milah is at the point of death and for three days she hath neither eaten nor drunken. I questioned her to-day of her case and she said, ‘O my lord, buy me a shroud so I may look upon it ere I die.’” The draper replied, “Methinks naught aileth her but that she is in love with the young Damascene, and I counsel thee to mention his name to her and declare to her that he hath foregathered with thee on her account and is desirous of coming to thy quarters, so he may hear somewhat of her singing. An she say, ‘I reck not of him, for there is that to do with me which distracteth me from the Damascene and from other than he,’ know that she saith sooth concerning her sickness; but, an she say thee other than this, acquaint me therewith.” So the man returned to his lodging and going in to his slave-girl said to her, “O Sitt al-Milah, I went out for thy need and there met me the young man of Damascus, and he saluted me with the salam and saluteth thee; he seeketh to win thy favour and prayed me to admit him as a guest in our dwelling, so thou mayst let him hear somewhat of thy singing.” When she heard speak of the young Damascene, she gave a sob, that her soul was like to leave her body, and answered, “He knoweth my plight and how these three days past I have not eaten nor drunken, and I beseech thee, O my lord, by Allah of All-Might, to do thy duty by the stranger and bring him to my lodging and make excuse to him for me.” When her master heard this, his reason fled for joy, and he went to his familiar the draper and said to him, “Thou wast right in the matter of the damsel, for that she is in love with the young Damascene; so how shall I manage?” Said the other, “Go to the bazar and when thou seest him, salute him, and say to him, ‘Thy departure the other day, without winning thy wish, was grievous to me; so, an thou be still minded to buy the maid, I will abate thee of that which thou badest for her an hundred sequins by way of gaining thy favour; seeing thou be a stranger in our land.’ If he say to thee, ‘I have no desire for her,’ and hold off from thee, be assured that he will not buy; in which case, let me know, so I may devise thee another device; and if he say to thee other than this, conceal not from me aught.” So the girl’s owner betook himself to the bazar, where he found the youth seated at the upper end of the place where the merchants mostly do meet, selling and buying and taking and giving, as he were the moon on the night of its full, and saluted him. The young man returned his salam and he said to him, “O my lord, be not offended at the damsel’s speech the other day, for her price shall be lowered to the intent that I may secure thy favour. An thou desire her for naught, I will send her to thee or an thou wouldst have me abate to thee her price, I will well, for I desire nothing save what shall content thee; seeing thou art a stranger in our land and it behoveth us to treat thee hospitably and have consideration for thee.” The youth replied, “By Allah, I will not take her from thee but at an advance on that which I bade thee for her afore; so wilt thou now sell her to me for one thousand and seven hundred dinars?” And the other rejoined, “O my lord, I sell her to thee, may Allah bless thee in her!” Thereupon the young man went to his quarters and fetching a purse, sent for the girl’s owner and weighed out to him the price aforesaid, whilst the draper was between the twain. Then said he, “Bring her forth;” but the other replied, “She cannot come forth at this present; but be thou my guest the rest of this day and night, and on the morrow thou shalt take thy slave-girl and go in the ward of Allah.” The youth agreed with him on this and he carried him to his house, where, after a little, he bade meat and wine be brought, and they ate and drank. Then said Nur al-Din to the girl’s owner, “I would have thee bring me the damsel, because I bought her not but for the like of this time.” So he arose and going in to the girl, said to her, “O Sitt al-Milah, the young man hath paid down thy price and we have bidden him hither; so he hath come to our quarters and we have entertained him, and he would fain have thee be present with him.” Therewith the damsel rose deftly and doffing her dress, bathed and donned sumptuous apparel and perfumed herself and went out to him, as she were a branch of Ban or a cane of rattan, followed by a black slave-girl, bearing the lute. When she came to the young man, she saluted him and sat down by his side. Then she took the lute from the slave-girl and screwing up its pegs,[293] smote thereon in four-and-twenty modes, after which she returned to the first and sang these couplets,

“My joy in this world is to see and sit near thee. * Thy love’s
  my religion; thy Union my pleasure.
Attest it these tears when in memory I speer thee, * And
  unchecked down my cheeks pours the flood without measure.
By Allah, no rival in love hast to fear thee; * I’m thy slave as
  I sware, and this troth is my treasure.
Be not this our last meeting: by Allah I swear thee * Thy
  severance to me were most bitter displeasure!”

The young man was moved to delight and cried, “By Allah, thou sayest well, O Sitt al-Milah! Let me hear more.” Then he largessed her with fifty gold pieces and they drank and the cups made circuit among them; and her seller said to her, “O Sitt al-Milah, this is the season of farewelling; so let us hear somewhat thereon.” Accordingly she struck the lute and touching upon that which was in her heart, improvised these couplets,

“I thole longing, remembrance and sad repine, * Nor my heart can
  brook woes in so lengthened line.
O my lords think not I forget your love; * My case is sure case
  and cure shows no sign.
If creature could swim in the flood of his tears, * I were first
  to swim in these floods of brine:
O Cup-boy withhold cup and bowl from a wretch * Who ne’er
ceaseth
  to drink of her tears for wine!
Had I known that parting would do me die, * I had shirked to
  part, but— ’twas Fate’s design.”

Now whilst they were thus enjoying whatso is most delicious of ease and delight, and indeed the wine was to them sweet and the talk a treat, behold, there came a knocking at the door. So the house-master went out, that he might see what might be the matter, and found ten head of the Caliph's eunuchs at the entrance. When he saw this, he was startled and said, "What is to do?" "The Commander of the Faithful saluteth thee and requireth of thee the slave-girl whom thou hast exposed for sale and whose name is Sitt al-Milah." "By Allah, I have sold her." "Swear by the head of the Commander of the Faithful that she is not in thy quarters." The slaver made oath that he had sold her and that she was no longer at his disposal: yet they paid no heed to his word and forcing their way into the house, found the damsel and the young Damascene in the sitting-chamber. So they laid hands upon her, and the youth said, "This is my slave-girl, whom I have bought with my money;" but they hearkened not to his speech and taking her, carried her off to the Prince of True Believers. Therewith Nur al-Din's pleasure was troubled: he arose and donned his dress, and his host said, "Whither away this night, O my lord?" Said he, "I purpose going to my quarters, and to-morrow I will betake myself to the palace of the Commander of the Faithful and demand my slave-girl." The other replied, "Sleep till the morning, and fare not forth at the like of this hour." But he rejoined, "Needs must I go;" and the host said to him, "Go in Allah his safeguard." So the youth went forth and, drunkenness having got the mastery of his wits, he threw himself down on a bench before one of the shops. Now the watchmen were at that hour making their rounds and they smelt the sweet scent of essences and wine that reeked from him; so they made for it and suddenly beheld the youth lying on the bench, without sign of recovering. They poured water upon him, and he awoke, whereupon they carried him off to the office of the Chief of Police and he questioned him of his case. He replied "O my lord, I am an alien in this town and have been with one of my friends: I came forth from his house and drunkenness overcame me." The Wali bade carry him to his lodging; but one of those in attendance upon him, Al-Murádi hight, said to him, "What wilt thou do? This man is robed in rich raiment and on his finger is a golden ring, whose bezel is a ruby of great price; so we will carry him away and slay him and take that which is upon him of clothes and bring to thee all we get; for that thou wilt not often see profit the like thereof, especially as this fellow is a foreigner and there is none to ask after him."[294] Quoth the Chief, "This wight is a thief and that which he saith is leasing."

Nur al-Din said, “Allah forfend that I should be a thief!” but the Wali answered, “Thou liest.” So they stripped him of his clothes and taking the seal-ring from his finger, beat him with a grievous beating, what while he cried out for succour, but none succoured him, and besought protection, but none protected him. Then said he to them, “O folk, ye are quit[295] of that which ye have taken from me; but now restore me to my lodging.” They replied, “Leave this knavery, O rascal! thine intent is to sue us for thy clothes on the morrow.” The youth cried, “By the truth of the One, the Eternal One, I will not sue any for them!” but they said, “We find no way to this.” And the Prefect bade them bear him to the Tigris and there slay him and cast him into the stream. So they dragged him away, while he wept and said the words which shall nowise shame the sayer: “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” When they came to the Tigris, one of them drew the sword upon him and Al-Muradi said to the sworder, “Smite off his head;” but one of them, hight Ahmad, cried, “O folk, deal softly with this poor wretch and slay him not unjustly and wickedly, for I stand in fear of Allah Almighty, lest He burn me with his fire.” Quoth Al-Muradi, “A truce to this talk!” and quoth the Ahmad aforesaid, “An ye do with him aught, I will acquaint the Commander of the Faithful.” They asked, “How, then, shall we do with him?” and he answered, “Let us deposit him in prison and I will be answerable to you for his provision; so shall we be quit of his blood, for indeed he is a wronged man.” Accordingly they agreed to this and taking him up cast him into the Prison of Blood,[296] and then went their ways. So far as regards them; but returning to the damsel, they carried her to the Commander of the Faithful and she pleased him; so he assigned her a chamber of the chambers of choice. She tarried in the palace, neither eating nor drinking, and weeping sans surcease night and day, till, one night, the Caliph sent for her to his sitting-hall and said to her, “O Sitt al-Milah, be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool of tear, for I will make thy rank higher than any of the concubines and thou shalt see that which shall rejoice thee.” She kissed ground and wept; whereupon the Prince of True Believers called for her lute and bade her sing: so in accordance with that which was in her heart, she sang these improvised couplets,

“By the sheen of thy soul and the sheen of thy smile,[297] *
Say, moan’st thou for doubt or is’t ring-dove’s moan?
How many have died who by love were slain! * Fails my patience but blaming my blamers wone.”

Now when she had made an end of her song, she threw the lute from her hand and wept till she fainted away, whereupon the Caliph bade carry her to her chamber. But he was fascinated by her and loved her with exceeding love; so, after a while, he again commanded to bring her in to the presence, and when she came, he ordered her to sing. Accordingly, she took the lute and chanted to it that which was in her heart and improvised these couplets,

“Have I patience and strength to support this despair? * Ah, how couldst thou purpose afar to fare?
Thou art swayed by the spy to my cark and care: * No marvel an branchlet sway here and there![298]
With unbearable load thou wouldst load me, still * Thou loadest with love which I theewards bear.”

Then she cast the lute from her hand and fainted away; so she was carried to her sleeping-chamber and indeed passion grew upon her. After a long while the Prince of True Believers sent for her a third time and commanded her to sing. So she took the lute and chanted these couplets,

“O of piebald wild ye dunes sandy and drear, * Shall the teenful lover ‘scape teen and tear?
Shall ye see me joined with a lover, who * Still flies or shall meet we in joyful cheer?
O hail to the fawn with the Houri eye, * Like sun or moon on horizon clear!
He saith to lovers, ‘What look ye on?’ * And to stony hearts, ‘Say, what love ye dear?’[299]
I pray to Him who departed us * With severance-doom, ‘Be our union near!’”

When she had made an end of her verse, the Commander of the Faithful said to her, "O damsel, thou art in love." She replied, "Yes;" and he asked, "With whom?" Answered she, "With my lord and sovran of my tenderness, for whom my love is as the love of the earth for rain, or as the desire of the female for the male; and indeed the love of him is mingled with my flesh and my blood and hath entered into the channels of my bones. O Prince of True Believers, whenever I call him to mind my vitals are consumed, for that I have not yet won my wish of him, and but that I fear to die, without seeing him, I had assuredly slain myself." Thereupon quoth he, "Art thou in my presence and durst bespeak me with the like of these words? Forsure I will gar thee forget thy lord." Then he bade take her away; so she was carried to her pavilion and he sent her a concubine, with a casket wherein were three thousand ducats and a collar of gold set with seed-pearls and great unions, and jewels, worth other three thousand, saying to her, "The slave-girl and that which is with her are a gift from me to thee." When she heard this, she cried, "Allah forfend that I be consoled for the love of my lord and my master, though with an earth-full of gold!" And she improvised and recited these couplets,

"By his life I swear, by his life I pray; * For him fire I'd
enter unful dismay!
'Console thee (cry they) with another fere * Thou lovest!' and I,
'By 's life, nay, NAY!'
He's moon whom beauty and grace array; * From whose cheeks and
brow shineth light of day."

Then the Commander of the Faithful summoned her to his presence a fourth time and said, "O Sitt al-Milah, sing." So she recited and sang these couplets,

"The lover's heart by his beloved is oft disheartenčd * And by
the hand of sickness eke his sprite dispiritčd,
One asked, 'What is the taste of love?'"[300] and I to him
replied, * 'Love is a sweet at first but oft in fine
unsweetened.'

I am the thrall of Love who keeps the troth of love to
them[301] * But oft they proved themselves ‘Urkúb[302]
in pact with me they made.
What in their camp remains? They bound their loads and fared
away; * To other feres the veilĕd Fairs in curtained litters
sped;
At every station the beloved showed all of Joseph’s charms: * The
lover wone with Jacob’s woe in every shift of stead.”

When she had made an end of her song, she threw the lute from her hand and wept herself a-swoon. So they sprinkled on her musk-mingled rose-water and willow-flower water; and when she came to her senses, Al-Rashid said to her, “O Sitt al-Milah, this is not just dealing in thee. We love thee and thou lovest another.” She replied, “O Commander of the Faithful, there is no help for it.” Thereupon he was wroth with her and cried, “By the virtue of Hamzah[303] and ‘Akíl[304] and Mohammed, Prince of the Apostles, an thou name in my presence one other than I, I will assuredly order strike off thy head!” Then he bade return her to her chamber, whilst she wept and recited these couplets,

‘Oh brave!’ I’d cry an I my death could view; * My death were
better than these griefs to rue,
Did sabre hew me limb by limb; this were * Naught to affright a
lover leal-true.”

Then the Caliph went in to the Lady Zubaydah, complexion-altered with anger, and she noted this in him and said to him, “How cometh it that I see the Commander of the Faithful changed of colour?” He replied, “O daughter of my uncle, I have a beautiful slave-girl, who reciteth verses by rote and telleth various tales, and she hath taken my whole heart; but she loveth other than myself and declareth that she affecteth her former lord; so I have sworn a great oath that, if she come again to my sitting- hall and sing for other than for me, I will assuredly shorten her highest part by a span.”[305] Quoth Zubaydah, “Let the Commander of the Faithful favour me by presenting her, so I may look on her and hear her singing.”

Accordingly he bade fetch her and she came, upon which the Lady Zubaydah withdrew behind the curtain,[306] where the damsel saw her not, and Al-Rashid said to her, "Sing to us." So she took the lute and tuning it, recited these couplets,

"O my lord! since the day when I lost your sight, * My life was
ungladdened, my heart full of teen;
The memory of you kills me every night; * And by all the worlds
is my trace unseen;
All for love of a Fawn who hath snared my sprite * By his love
and his brow as the morning sheen.
Like a left hand parted from brother right * I became by parting
thro' Fortune's spleen.
On the brow of him Beauty deigned indite * 'Blest be Allah, whom
best of Creators I ween!'
And Him I pray, who could disunite * To re-unite us. Then cry
'Ameen!'"[307]

When Al-Rashid heard the end of this, he waxed exceeding wroth and said, "May Allah not reunite you twain in gladness!" Then he summoned the headsman, and when he presented himself, he said to him, "Strike off the head of this accursed slave-girl." So Masrur took her by the hand and led her away; but, when she came to the door, she turned and said to the Caliph, "O Commander of the Faithful, I conjure thee, by thy fathers and forefathers, behead me not until thou give ear to that I shall say!" Then she improvised and recited these couplets,

"Emir of Justice, be to lieges kind * For Justice ever guides thy
generous mind;
And, oh, who blamest love to him inclining! * Are lovers blamed
for lâches undesigned?
By Him who gave thee rule, deign spare my life * For rule on
earth He hath to thee assigned."

Then Masrur carried her to the other end of the sitting-hall and bound her eyes and making her sit, stood awaiting a second order:

whereupon quoth the Lady Zubaydah, “O Prince of True Believers, with thy permission, wilt thou not vouchsafe this damsel a portion of thy clemency? An thou slay her, ‘twere injustice.” Quoth he, “What is to be done with her?” and quoth she, “Forbear to slay her and send for her lord. If he be as she describeth him in beauty and loveliness, she is excused, and if he be not on this wise then kill her, and this shall be thy plea against her.”[308] Al-Rashid replied, “No harm in this rede;” and caused return the damsel to her chamber, saying to her, “The Lady Zubaydah saith thus and thus.” She rejoined, “God requite her for me with good! Indeed, thou dealest equitably, O Commander of the Faithful, in this judgment.” And he retorted, “Go now to thy place, and tomorrow we will bid them bring thy lord.” So she kissed ground and recited these couplets,

“I indeed will well for whom love I will: * Let chider chide and
 let blamer blame:
All lives must die at fixt tide and term * But I must die ere my
 life-term came:
Then Oh whose love hath afflicted me * Well I will but thy
 presence in haste I claim.”

Then she arose and returned to her chamber. Now on the morrow, the Commander of the Faithful sat in his hall of audience and his Wazir Ja’afar bin Yahya the Barmecide came in to him; whereupon he called to him, saying, “I would have thee bring me a youth who is lately come to Baghdad, hight Sidi Nur al-Din Ali the Damascene.” Quoth Ja’afar, “Hearing and obeying,” and going forth in quest of the youth, sent to the bazars and Wakalahs and Khans for three successive days, but discovered no trace of him, neither happened upon the place of him. So on the fourth day he presented himself before the Caliph and said to him, “O our lord, I have sought him these three days, but have not found him.” Said Al-Rashid, “Make ready letters to Damascus. Peradventure he hath returned to his own land.” Accordingly Ja’afar wrote a letter and despatched it by a dromedary-courier to the Damascus-city; and they sought him there and found him not. Meanwhile, news was brought that Khorasan had been conquered;[309] whereupon Al-Rashid rejoiced and bade decorate

Baghdad and release all in the gaol, giving each of them a ducat and a dress. So Ja'afar applied himself to the adornment of the city and bade his brother Al-Fazl ride to the prison and robe and set free the prisoners. Al-Fazl did as his brother commanded and released all save the young Damascene, who abode still in the Prison of Blood, saying, "There is no Majesty, and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Verily, we are God's and to Him are we returning." Then quoth Al-Fazl to the gaoler, "Is there any left in the prison?" Quoth he, "No," and Al-Fazl was about to depart, when Nur al-Din called out to him from within the prison, saying, "O our lord, tarry awhile, for there remaineth none in the prison other than I and indeed I am wronged. This is a day of pardon and there is no disputing concerning it." Al-Fazl bade release him; so they set him free and he gave him a dress and a ducat. Thereupon the young man went out, bewildered and unknowing whither he should wend, for that he had sojourned in the gaol a year or so and indeed his condition was changed and his favour fouled, and he abode walking and turning round, lest Al-Muradi come upon him and cast him into another calamity. When Al-Muradi learnt his release, he betook himself to the Wali and said, "O our lord, we are not assured of our lives from that youth, because he hath been freed from prison and we fear lest he complain of us." Quoth the Chief, "How shall we do?" and quoth Al-Muradi, "I will cast him into a calamity for thee." Then he ceased not to follow the Damascene from place to place till he came up with him in a narrow stead and cul-de-sac; whereupon he accosted him and casting a cord about his neck, cried out, "A thief!" The folk flocked to him from all sides and fell to beating and abusing Nur al-Din,[310] whilst he cried out for aidance but none aided him, and Al-Muradi kept saying to him, "But yesterday the Commander of the Faithful released thee and to-day thou robbest!" So the hearts of the mob were hardened against him and again Al-Muradi carried him to the Chief of Police, who bade hew off his hand. Accordingly, the hangman took him and bringing out the knife, proceeded to cut off his hand, while Al-Muradi said to him, "Cut and sever the bone and fry[311] not in oil the stump for him, so he may lose all his blood and we be at rest from him." But Ahmad, he who had before been the cause of his deliverance, sprang up to him and cried, "O folk, fear

Allah in your action with this youth, for that I know his affair, first and last, and he is clear of offence and guiltless: he is of the lords of houses,[312] and unless ye desist from him, I will go up to the Commander of the Faithful and acquaint him with the case from beginning to end and that the youth is innocent of sin or crime." Quoth Al-Muradi, "Indeed, we are not assured from his mischief;" and quoth Ahmad, "Set him free and commit him to me and I will warrant you against his doings, for ye shall never see him again after this." So they delivered Nur al-Din to him and he took him from their hands and said to him, "O youth, have ruth on thyself, for indeed thou hast fallen into the hands of these folk twice and if they prevail over thee a third time, they will make an end of thee; and I in doing thus with thee, aim at reward for thee and recompense in Heaven and answer of prayer."[313] So Nur al-Din fell to kissing his hand and blessing him said, "Know that I am a stranger in this your city and the completion of kindness is better than its commencement; wherefore I pray thee of thy favour that thou make perfect to me thy good offices and generosity and bring me to the city-gate. So will thy beneficence be accomplished unto me and may God Almighty requite thee for me with good!" Ahmad replied, "No harm shall betide thee: go; I will bear thee company till thou come to thy place of safety." And he left him not till he brought him to the city-gate and said to him, "O youth, go in Allah's guard and return not to the city, for, an they fall in with thee again, they will make an end of thee." Nur al-Din kissed his hand and going forth the city, gave not over walking, till he came to a mosque that stood in one of the suburbs of Baghdad and entered therein with the night. Now he had with him naught wherewith he might cover himself; so he wrapped himself up in one of the mats of the mosque and thus abode till dawn, when the Muezzins came and finding him seated in such case, said to him, "O youth, what is this plight?" Said he, "I cast myself on your protection, imploring your defence from a company of folk who seek to slay me unjustly and wrongously, without cause." And one of the Muezzins said, "I will protect thee; so be of good cheer and keep thine eyes cool of tear." Then he brought him old clothes and covered him therewith; he also set before him somewhat of victual and seeing upon him signs of fine breeding, said to him, "O my son, I grow old and desiring help from thee, I will do away thy necessity." Nur al-Din replied, "To hear is to obey;" and abode with the old man, who rested and took his ease, while the youth did his service in the mosque, celebrating the praises of Allah and calling the Faithful to prayer and lighting the lamps and filling the spout-pots[314] and sweeping and cleaning out the place of worship. On this-wise it befel the young Damascene; but as regards Sitt al-Milah, the Lady Zubaydah, the wife of the Commander of the Faithful, made a banquet in her palace and assembled her slave-girls. And the damsel came, weeping-eyed and heavy-hearted, and those present blamed her for this, whereupon she recited these couplets,

"Ye blame the mourner who weeps his woe; * Needs must the mourner
sing, weeping sore;
An I see not some happy day I'll weep * Brine-tears till followed
by gouts of gore."

When she had made an end of her verses, the Lady Zubaydah bade each damsel sing a song, till the turn came round to Sitt al-Milah, whereupon she took the lute and tuning it, carolled thereto four-and-twenty carols in four-and-twenty modes; then she returned to the first and sang these couplets,

"The World hath shot me with all her shafts * Departing friends
parting-grief t' aby:
So in heart the burn of all hearts I bear * And in eyes the
tear-drops of every eye."

When she had made an end of her song, she wept till she garred the bystanders weep and the Lady Zubaydah condoled with her and said to her, "Allah upon thee, O Sitt al-Milah, sing us somewhat, so we may hearken to thee." The damsel replied, "Hearing and obeying," and sang these couplets,

"People of passion, assemble ye! * This day be the day of our
agony:

The Raven o' severance croaks at our doors; * Our raven which
nigh to us aye see we.
The friends we love have appointed us * The grievousest
parting-dule to dree.
Rise, by your lives, and let all at once * Fare to seek our
friends where their sight we see."

Then she threw the lute from her hand and shed tears till she drew tears from the Lady Zubaydah who said to her, "O Sitt al-Milah, he whom thou lovest methinks is not in this world, for the Commander of the Faithful hath sought him in every place, but hath not found him." Whereupon the damsel arose and kissing the Princess's hands, said to her, "O my lady, an thou wouldst have him found, I have this night a request to make whereby thou mayst win my need with the Caliph." Quoth the Lady, "And what is it?" and quoth Sitt al-Milah, "'Tis that thou get me leave to fare forth by myself and go round about in quest of him three days, for the adage saith, Whoso keeneth for herself is not like whoso is hired to keen![315] An if I find him, I will bring him before the Commander of the Faithful, so he may do with us what he will, and if I find him not, I shall be cut off from hope of him and the heat of that which is with me will be cooled." Quoth the Lady Zubaydah, "I will not get thee leave from him but for a whole month; so be of good cheer and eyes cool and clear." Whereat Sitt al-Milah rejoiced and rising, kissed ground before her once more and went away to her own place, and right glad was she. As for Zubaydah, she went in to the Caliph and talked with him awhile; then she fell to kissing him between the eyes and on his hand and asked him for that which she had promised to Sitt al-Milah, saying, "O Commander of the Faithful, I doubt me her lord is not found in this world; but, an she go about seeking him and find him not, her hopes will be cut off and her mind will be set at rest and she will sport and laugh; and indeed while she nourisheth hope, she will never take the right direction." And she ceased not cajoling him till he gave Sitt al-Milah leave to fare forth and make search for her lord a month's space and ordered a riding-mule and an eunuch to attend her and bade the privy purse give her all she needed, were it a thousand dirhams a day or even more. So the Lady Zubaydah arose and returning to her palace bade summon Sitt al-Milah and, as soon as she came, acquainted her with that which had passed; whereupon she kissed her hand and thanked her and called down blessings on her. Then she took leave of the Princess and veiling her face with a mask,[316] disguised herself;[317] after which she mounted the she-mule and sallying forth, went round about seeking her lord in the highways of Baghdad three days' space, but happed on no tidings of him; and on the fourth day, she rode forth without the city. Now it was the noon-hour and fierce was the heat, and she was aweary and thirst came upon her. Presently, she reached the mosque of the Shaykh who had lodged the young Damascene, and dismounting at the door, said to the old Muezzin, "O Shaykh, hast thou a draught of cold water? Verily, I am overcome with heat and thirst." Said he, "'Tis with me in my house." So he carried her up into his lodging and spreading her a carpet, seated her; after which he brought her cold water and she drank and said to the eunuch, "Go thy ways with the mule and to-morrow come back to me here." Accordingly he went away and she slept and rested herself. When she awoke, she asked the old man, "O Shaykh, hast thou aught of food?" and he answered, "O my lady, I have bread and olives." Quoth she, "That be food which befitteth only the like of thee. As for me, I will have naught save roast lamb and soups and reddened fowls right fat and ducks farcis with all manner stuffing of pistachio-nuts and sugar." Quoth the Muezzin, "O my lady, I have never heard of this chapter[318] in the Koran, nor was it revealed to our lord Mohammed, whom Allah save and assain!"[319] She laughed and said, "O Shaykh, the matter is even as thou sayest; but bring me pen-case and paper." So he brought her what she sought and she wrote a note and gave it to him, together with a seal-ring from her finger, saying, "Go into the city and enquire for Such-an-one the Shroff and give him this my note." Accordingly the oldster betook himself to the city, as she bade him, and asked for the money-changer, to whom they directed him. So he gave him ring and writ, seeing which, he kissed the letter and breaking it open, read it and apprehended its contents. Then he repaired to the bazar and buying all that she bade him, laid it in a porter's crate and made him go with the Shaykh. The old man took the Hammál and went with him to the mosque, where he relieved him of his burden and carried the rich viands in to Sitt al-Milah. She seated him by her side and they ate, he and she, of those dainty cates, till they were satisfied, when the Shaykh rose and removed the food from before her. She passed that night in his lodging and when she got up in the morning, she said to him, “O elder, may I not lack thy kind offices for the breakfast! Go to the Shroff and fetch me from him the like of yesterday’s food.” So he arose and betaking himself to the money-changer, acquainted him with that which she had bidden him. The Shroff brought him all she required and set it on the heads of Hammals; and the Shaykh took them and returned with them to the damsel, when she sat down with him and they ate their sufficiency, after which he removed the rest of the meats. Then she took the fruits and the flowers and setting them over against herself, wrought them into rings and knots and writs, whilst the Shaykh looked on at a thing whose like he had never in his life seen and rejoiced in the sight. Presently said she to him “O elder, I would fain drink.” So he arose and brought her a gugglet of water; but she cried to him, “Who said to thee, Fetch that?” Quoth he, “Saidst thou not to me, I would fain drink?” and quoth she, “‘I want not this; nay, I want wine, the solace of the soul, so haply, O Shaykh, I may refresh myself therewith.” Exclaimed the old man, “Allah forfend that strong drink be drunk in my house, and I a stranger in the land and a Muezzin and an Imam, who leadeth the True Believers in prayer, and a servant of the House of the Lord of the three Worlds!” “Why wilt thou forbid me to drink thereof in thy house?” “Because ’tis unlawful.” “O elder, Allah hath forbidden only the eating of blood and carrion[320] and hog’s flesh: tell me, are grapes and honey lawful or unlawful?” “They are lawful.” “This is the juice of grapes and the water of honey.” “Leave this thy talk, for thou shalt never drink wine in my house.” “O Shaykh, people eat and drink and enjoy themselves and we are of the number of the folk and Allah is indulgent and merciful.”[321] “This is a thing that may not be.” “Hast thou not heard what the poet saith?” And she recited these couplets,

“Cease thou to hear, O Sim’án-son,[322] aught save the say of
me; * How bitter ’twas to quit the monks and fly the
monast’ry!

When, on the Fęte of Palms there stood, amid the hallowed
fane,[323] * A pretty Fawn whose lovely pride garred me
sore wrong to dree.
May Allah bless the night we spent when he to us was third, *
While Moslem, Jew, and Nazarene all sported fain and free.
Quoth he, from out whose locks appeared the gleaming of the morn,

* 'Sweet is the wine and sweet the flowers that joy us
comrades three.
The garden of the garths of Khuld where roll and rail amain, *
Rivulets 'neath the myrtle shade and Bán's fair branchery;
And birds make carol on the boughs and sing in blithest lay, *
Yea, this indeed is life, but, ah! how soon it fades away.'"

She then asked him, "O Shaykh, an Moslems and Jews and Nazarenes drink wine, who are we that we should reject it?" Answered he, "By Allah, O my lady, spare thy pains, for this be a thing whereto I will not hearken." When she knew that he would not consent to her desire, she said to him, "O Shaykh, I am of the slave-girls of the Commander of the Faithful and the food waxeth heavy on me and if I drink not, I shall die of indigestion, nor wilt thou be assured against the issue of my case.[324] As for me, I acquit myself of blame towards thee, for that I have bidden thee beware of the wrath of the Commander of the Faithful, after making myself known to thee." When the Shaykh heard her words and that wherewith she threatened him, he sprang up and went out, perplexed and unknowing what he should do, and there met him a Jewish man, which was his neighbour, and said to him, "How cometh it that I see thee, O Shaykh, strait of breast? Eke, I hear in thy house a noise of talk, such as I am unwont to hear with thee." Quoth the Muezzin, "'Tis of a damsel who declareth that she is of the slave-girls of the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid; and she hath eaten meat and now would drink wine in my house, but I forbade her. However she asserteth that unless she drink thereof, she will die, and indeed I am bewildered concerning my case." Answered the Jew, "Know, O my neighbour, that the slave-girls of the Commander of the Faithful are used to drink wine, and when they eat and drink not, they die; and I fear lest happen some mishap to her, when thou wouldst not be safe from the Caliph's fury." The Shaykh asked, "What is to be done?" and the Jew answered, "I have old wine that will suit her." Quoth the Shaykh, "By the right of neighbourship, deliver me from this descent[325] of calamity and let me have that which is with thee!" Quoth the Jew, "Bismillah, in the name of Allah," and passing to his quarters, brought out a glass flask of wine, wherewith the Shaykh returned to Sitt al-Milah. This pleased her and she cried to him, "Whence hadst thou this?" He replied, "I got it from the Jew, my neighbour: I set forth to him my case with thee and he gave me this." Thereupon Sitt al-Milah filled a cup and emptied it; after which she drank a second and a third. Then she crowned the cup a fourth time and handed it to the Shaykh, but he would not accept it from her. However, she conjured him, by her own head and that of the Prince of True Believers, that he take the cup from her, till he received it from her hand and kissed it and would have set it down; but she sware him by her life to smell it. Accordingly he smelt it and she said to him, "How deemest thou?" Said he, "I find its smell is sweet;" and she conjured him by the Caliph's life to taste thereof. So he put it to his mouth and she rose to him and made him drink; whereupon quoth be, "O Princess of the Fair,[326] this is none other than good." Quoth she, "So deem I: hath not our Lord promised us wine in Paradise?" He answered, "Yes! The Most High saith, 'And rivers of wine, delicious to the drinkers.'[327] And we will drink it in this world and in the next world." She laughed and emptying the cup, gave him to drink, and he said, "O Princess of the Fair, indeed thou art excusable in thy love for this." Then he hent in hand from her another and another, till he became drunken and his talk waxed great and his prattle. The folk of the quarter heard him and assembled under the window; and when the Shaykh was ware of them, he opened the window and said to them, "Are ye not ashamed, O pimps? Every one in his own house doth whatso he willeth and none hindereth him; but we drink one single day and ye assemble and come, panders that ye are! To-day, wine, and to-morrow business;[328] and from hour to hour cometh relief." So they laughed together and dispersed. Then the girl drank till she was drunken, when she called to mind her lord and wept, and the Shaykh said to her, "What maketh thee weep, O my lady?” Said she, “O elder, I am a lover and a separated.” He cried, “O my lady, what is this love?” Cried she, “And thou, hast thou never been in love?” He replied, “By Allah, O my lady, never in all my life heard I of this thing, nor have I ever known it! Is it of the sons of Adam or of the Jinn?” She laughed and said, “Verily, thou art even as those of whom the poet speaketh, in these couplets,

“How oft shall they admonish and ye shun this nourishment; * When
e’en the shepherd’s bidding is obeyčd by his flocks?
I see you like in shape and form to creatures whom we term *
Mankind, but in your acts and deeds you are a sort of
ox”[329]

The Shaykh laughed at her speech and her verses pleased him. Then cried she to him, “I desire of thee a lute.” So he arose and brought her a bit of fuel.[330] Quoth she, “What is that?” and quoth he “Didst thou not say: Bring me fuel?” Said she, “I do not want this,” and said he, “What then is it that is hight fuel, other than this?” She laughed and replied, “The lute is an instrument of music, whereunto I sing.” Asked he, “Where is this thing found and of whom shall I get it for thee?” and answered she, “Of him who gave thee the wine.” So he arose and betaking himself to his neighbour the Jew, said to him, “Thou favouredst us before with the wine; so now complete thy favours and look me out a thing hight lute, which be an instrument for singing; for she seeketh this of me and I know it not.” Replied the Jew, “Hearkening and obedience,” and going into his house, brought him a lute. The old man carried it to Sitt al-Milah, whilst the Jew took his drink and sat by a window adjoining the Shaykh’s house, so he might hear the singing. The damsel rejoiced, when the old man returned to her with the lute, and taking it from him, tuned its strings and sang these couplets,

“Remains not, after you are gone, or trace of you or sign, * But
hope to see this parting end and break its lengthy line:
You went and by your wending made the whole world desolate; *
And

none may stand this day in stead to fill the yearning eyne.
Indeed, you've burdened weakling me, by strength and force of you

* With load no hill hath power t'upheave nor yet the plain
low li'en:
And I, whenever fain I scent the breeze your land o'erbreathes, *
Lose all my wits as though they were bemused with heady
wine.
O folk no light affair is Love for lover woe to dree * Nor easy
'tis to satisfy its sorrow and repine.
I've wandered East and West to hap upon your trace, and when *
Spring-camps I find the dwellers cry, 'They've marched,
those friends o' thine!'
Never accustomed me to part these intimates I love; * Nay, when I
left them all were wont new meetings to design."

Now when she had ended her song, she wept with sore weeping, till presently sleep overcame her and she slept. On the morrow, she said to the Shaykh, "Get thee to the Shroff and fetch me the ordinary;" so he repaired to the money-changer and delivered him the message, whereupon he made ready meat and drink, according to his custom, with which the old man returned to the damsel and they ate their sufficiency. When she had eaten, she sought of him wine and he went to the Jew and fetched it. Then the twain sat down and drank; and when she waxed drunken, she took the lute and smiting it, fell a-singing and chanted these couplets,

"How long ask I the heart, the heart drowned, and eke * Refrain
my complaint while I my tear-floods speak?
They forbid e'en the phantom to visit me, * (O marvel!) her
phantom my couch to seek."[331]

And when she had made an end of her song, she wept with sore weeping. All this time, the young Damascene was listening, and now he likened her voice to the voice of his slave-girl and then he put away from him this thought, and the damsel had no knowledge whatever of his presence. Then she broke out again into song and chanted these couplets,

"Quoth they, 'Forget him! What is he?' To them I cried, * 'Allah
forget me when forget I mine adored!'
Now in this world shall I forget the love o' you? * Heaven grant
the thrall may ne'er forget to love his lord!
I pray that Allah pardon all except thy love * Which, when I meet
Him may my bestest plea afford."

After ending this song she drank three cups and filling the old man other three, improvised these couplets,

"His love he hid which tell-tale tears betrayed; * For burn of
coal that 'neath his ribs was laid:
Giv'n that he seek his joy in spring and flowers * Some day, his
spring's the face of dear-loved maid.
O ye who blame me for who baulks my love! * What sweeter thing
than boon to man denayed?
A sun, yet scorcheth he my very heart! * A moon, but riseth he
from breasts a-shade!"

When she had made an end of her song, she threw the lute from her hand and wept, whilst the Shaykh wept for her weeping. Then she fell down in a fainting fit and presently recovering, crowned the cup and drinking it off, gave the elder to drink, after which she took the lute and breaking out into song, chanted these couplets,

"Thy parting is bestest of woes to my heart, * And changed my
case till all sleep it eschewed:
The world to my being is desolate; * Then Oh grief! and O
lingering solitude!
Maybe The Ruthful incline thee to me * And join us despite what
our foes have sued!"

Then she wept till her voice rose high and her wailing was discovered to those without; after which she again began to drink and plying the Shaykh with wine, sang these couplets,

"An they hid thy person from eyen-sight, * They hid not thy name
fro' my mindful sprite:
Or meet me; thy ransom for meeting I'll be[332] * Or fly me;
and ransom I'll be for thy flight!
Mine outer speaks for mine inner case, * And mine inner speaks
for mine outer plight."

When she had made an end of her verses, she threw the lute from her hand and wept and wailed. Then she slept awhile and presently awaking, said, "O Shaykh, say me, hast thou what we may eat?" He replied, "O my lady, I have the rest of the food;" but she cried, "I will not eat of the orts I have left. Go down to the bazar and fetch us what we may eat." He rejoined, "Excuse me, O my lady, I cannot rise to my feet, because I am bemused with wine; but with me is the servant of the mosque, who is a sharp youth and an intelligent. I will call him, so he may buy thee whatso thou wantest." Asked she, "Whence hast thou this servant?" and he answered, "He is of the people of Damascus." When she heard him say "of the people of Damascus," she sobbed such a sob that she swooned away; and when she came to herself, she said, "Woe is me for the people of Damascus and for those who are therein! Call him, O Shaykh, that he may do our need." Accordingly, the old man put his head forth of the window and called the youth, who came to him from the mosque and sought leave to enter. The Muezzin bade him come in, and when he appeared before the damsel, he knew her and she knew him; whereupon he turned back in bewilderment and would have fled at hap-hazard; but she sprang up to him and held him fast, and they embraced and wept together, till they fell to the floor in a fainting fit. When the Shaykh saw them in this condition, he feared for himself and fared forth in fright, seeing not the way for drunkenness. His neighbour the Jew met him and asked him, "How is it that I behold thee astounded?" Answered the old man, "How should I not be astounded, seeing that the damsel who is with me is fallen in love with the mosque servant and they have embraced and slipped down in a swoon? Indeed, I fear lest the Caliph come to know of this and be wroth with me; so tell me thou what is thy device for that wherewith I am afflicted in the matter of this damsel." Quoth the

Jew, “For the present, take this casting-bottle of rose-water and go forthright and sprinkle them therewith: an they be aswoon for this their union and embrace, they will recover, and if otherwise, then take to flight.” The Shaykh snatched the casting-bottle from the Jew and going up to the twain, sprinkled their faces, whereupon they came to themselves and fell to relating each to other that which they had suffered, since both had been parted, for the pangs of severance. Nur al-Din also acquainted Sitt al-Milah with that which he had endured from the folk who would have killed[333] him and utterly annihilated him; and she said to him, “O my lord, let us for the nonce leave this talk and praise Allah for reunion of loves, and all this shall cease from us.” Then she gave him the cup and he said, “By Allah, I will on no wise drink it, whilst I am in this case!” So she drank it off before him and taking the lute, swept the strings and sang these couplets,

“O absent fro’ me and yet present in place, * Thou art far from
mine eyes and yet ever nigh!
Thy farness bequeathed me all sorrow and care * And my troublous
life can no joy espy:
Lone, forlorn, weeping-eyelidded, miserablest, * I abide for thy
sake as though banisht I:
Then (ah grief o’ me!) far thou hast fared from sight * Yet canst
no more depart me than apple of eye!”

When she had made an end of her verse, she wept and the young man of Damascus, Nur al-Din, wept also. Then she took the lute and improvised these couplets,

“Well Allah wots I never namĕd you * But tears o’erbrimming eyes
in floods outburst;
And passion raged and pine would do me die, * Yet my heart rested
wi’ the thought it nurst;
O eye-light mine, O wish and O my hope! * Your face can never
quench mine eyes’ hot thirst.”

When Nur al-Din heard these his slave-girl’s verses, he fell a-weeping, while she strained him to her bosom and wiped away his tears with her sleeve and questioned him and comforted his mind. Then she took the lute and sweeping its strings, played thereon with such performing as would move the staidest to delight and sang these couplets,

"Indeed, what day brings not your sight to me, * That day I
    rem'mber not as dight to me!
And, when I vainly long on you to look, * My life is lost, Oh
    life and light o' me!"

After this fashion they fared till the morning, tasting not the nourishment of sleep;[334] and when the day lightened, behold the eunuch came with the she-mule and said to Sitt al-Milah, "The Commander of the Faithful calleth for thee." So she arose and taking by the hand her lord, committed him to the Shaykh, saying, "This is the deposit of Allah, then thy deposit,[335] till this eunuch cometh to thee; and indeed, O elder, my due to thee is the white hand of favour such as filleth the interval betwixt heaven and earth." Then she mounted the mule and repairing to the palace of the Commander of the Faithful, went in to him and kissed ground before him. Quoth he to her, as who should make mock of her, "I doubt not but thou hast found thy lord;" and quoth she, "By thy felicity and the length of thy continuance on life, I have indeed found him!" Now Al-Rashid was leaning back; but, when he heard this, he sat upright and said to her "By my life, true?" She replied, "Ay, by thy life!" He said, "Bring him into my presence, so I may see him;" but she said, "O my lord, there have happened to him many hardships and his charms are changed and his favour faded; and indeed the Prince of True Believers vouchsafed me a month; wherefore I will tend him the rest of the month and then bring him to do his service to the Commander of the Faithful." Quoth Al-Rashid, "Sooth thou sayest: the condition certainly was for a month; but tell me what hath betided him." Quoth she, "O my lord (Allah prolong thy continuance and make Paradise thy place of returning and thine asylum and the fire the abiding-place of thy foes!), when he presenteth himself to serve thee, he will assuredly expound to thee his case and will name to thee his wrongdoers; and indeed this is an arrear that is due to the Prince of True Believers, by whom may Allah fortify the Faith and vouchsafe him the victory over rebel and froward wretch!" Thereupon he ordered her a fine house and bade furnish it with carpets and vessels of choice and commanded them to give all she needed. This was done during the rest of the day, and when the night came, she sent the eunuch with a suit of clothes and the mule, to fetch Nur al-Din from the Muezzin's lodging. So the young man donned the dress and mounting, rode to the house, where he abode in comfort and luxury a full-told month, while she solaced him with four things, the eating of fowls and the drinking of wine and the sleeping upon brocade and the entering the bath after horizontal refreshment.[336] Furthermore, she brought him six suits of linen stuffs and took to changing his clothes day by day; nor was the appointed time of delay accomplished ere his beauty and loveliness returned to him; nay, his favour waxed tenfold fairer and he became a seduction to all who looked upon him. One day of the days Al-Rashid bade bring him to the presence; so his slave-girl changed his clothes and robing him in sumptuous raiment, mounted him on the she-mule. Then he rode to the palace and presenting himself before the Caliph, saluted him with the goodliest of salutations and bespake him with Truchman's[337] speech eloquent and deep-thoughted. When Al-Rashid saw him, he marvelled at the seemliness of his semblance and his loquence and eloquence and asking of him, was told that he was Sitt al-Milah's lord; whereupon quoth he, "Indeed, she is excusable in her love for him, and if we had put her to death wrongfully, as we were minded to do, her blood would have been upon our heads." Then he accosted the young man and entering into discourse with him, found him well-bred, intelligent, clever, quick-witted, generous, pleasant, elegant, excellent. So he loved him with exceeding love and questioned him of his native city and of his sire and of the cause of his journey to Baghdad. Nur al-Din acquainted him with that which he would know in the goodliest words and concisest phrases; and the Caliph asked him, "And where hast thou been absent all this while? Verily, we sent after thee to Damascus and Mosul and all other cities, but happened on no tidings of thee." Answered the young man, "O my lord, there betided thy slave in thy capital that which never yet betided any.” Then he acquainted him with his case, first and last, and told him that which had befallen him of evil from Al-Muradi and the Chief of Police. Now when Al-Rashid heard this, he was chagrined with sore chagrin and waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and cried, “Shall this thing happen in a city wherein I am?” And the Háshimí vein [338] started out between his eyes. Then he bade fetch Ja’afar, and when he came between his hands, he acquainted him with the adventure and said to him, “Shall this thing come to pass in my city and I have no news of it?” Thereupon he bade Ja’afar fetch all whom the young Damascene had named,and when they came, he bade smite their necks: he also summoned him whom they called Ahmad and who had been the means of the young man’s deliverance a first time and a second, and thanked him and showed him favour and bestowed on him a costly robe of honour and made him Chief of Police in his city.[339] Then he sent for the Shaykh, the Muezzin, and when the messenger came to him and told him that the Commander of the Faithfull summoned him, he feared the denunciation of the damsel and walked with him to the palace, farting for fear as he went, whilst all who passed him by laughed at him. When he came into the presence of the Commander of the Faithful, he fell a-trembling and his tongue was tied,[340] so that he could not speak. The Caliph smiled at him and said, “O Shaykh, thou hast done no offence; so why fearest thou?” Answered the old man (and indeed he was in the sorest of that which may be of fear), “O my lord, by the virtue of thy pure forefathers, indeed I have done naught, and do thou enquire of my manners and morals.” The Caliph laughed at him and ordering him a thousand dinars, bestowed on him a costly robe of honour and made him headman of the Muezzins in his mosque. Then he called Sitt al-Milah and said to her, “The house wherein thou lodgest with all it containeth is a largesse to thy lord: so do thou take him and depart with him in the safeguard of Allah Almighty; but absent not yourselves from our presence.” Accordingly she went forth with the young Damascene and when she came to the house, she found that the Prince of True Believers had sent them gifts galore and good things in store. As for Nur al-Din, he sent for his father and mother and appointed for himself agents in the city of Damascus, to receive the rent of the houses and gardens and Wakalahs and

Hammams; and they occupied themseves with collecting that which accrued to him and sending it to him every year. Meanwhile, his father and mother came to him, with that which they had of monies and merchandise of price and, foregathering with their son, found that he was become of the chief officers and familiars of the Commander of the Faithful and of the number of his sitting-companions and nightly entertainers, wherefore they rejoiced in reunion with him and he also rejoiced in them. The Caliph assigned them solde and allowances; and as for Nur al-Din, his father brought him those riches and his wealth waxed and his estate was stablished, till he became the richest of the folk of his time in Baghdad and left not the presence of the Commander of the Faithful or by night or by day. He was vouchsafed issue by Sitt al-Milah, and he ceased not to live the goodliest of lives, he and she and his father and his mother, a while of time, till Abu al-Hasan sickened of a sore sickness and departed to the mercy of Allah Almighty. Presently, his mother also died and he carried them forth and shrouded them and buried and made them expiations and funeral ceremonies.[341] In due course his children grew up and became like moons, and he reared them in splendour and affection, while his wealth waxed and his case never waned. He ceased not to pay frequent visits to the Commander of the Faithful, he and his children and his slave-girl Sitt al-Milah, and they abode in all solace of life and prosperity till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies; and laud to the Abiding, the Eternal! This is all that hath come down to us of their story.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

TALE OF KING INS BIN KAYS AND HIS DAUGHTER WITH THE SON OF KING AL-’ABBAS.[342]

There was once, in days of yore and in ages and times long gone before, in the city of Baghdad, the House of Peace, a king mighty of estate, lord of understanding and beneficence and generosity and munificence, and he was strong of sultanate and endowed with might and majesty and magnificence. His name was Ins bin Kays bin Rabí’ al-Shaybání,[343] and when he took horse, there rode about him riders from the farthest parts of the two Iraks.[344] Almighty Allah decreed that he should take to wife a woman hight ‘Afífah, daughter of Asad al-Sundúsi, who was endowed with beauty and loveliness and brightness and perfect grace and symmetry of shape and stature; her face was like the crescent moon and she had eyes as they were gazelle’s eyes and an aquiline nose like Luna’s cymb. She had learned cavalarice and the use of arms and had mastered the sciences of the Arabs; eke she had gotten by heart all the dragomanish[345] tongues and indeed she was a ravishment to mankind. She abode with Ins bin Kays twelve years, during which time he was not blessed with children by her; so his breast was straitened by reason of the failure of lineage, and he besought his Lord to vouchsafe him a son. Accordingly the queen conceived, by permission of Allah Almighty; and when the days of her pregnancy were accomplished, she gave birth to a maid-child, than whom never saw eyes fairer, for that her face was as it were a pearl pure-bright or a lamp raying light or a candle gilt with gold or a full moon breaking cloudy fold, extolled be He who her from vile water dight and made her to the beholders a delight! When her father saw her in this fashion of loveliness, his reason fled for joy, and when she grew up, he taught her writing and belles-lettres and philosophy and all manner of tongues. So she excelled the folk of her time and surpassed her peers; and the sons of the kings heard of her and all of them longed to look upon her. The first who sought her to wife was King Nabhán[346] of Mosul, who came to her with a great company, bringing an hundred she-camels, laden with musk and lign-aloes and ambergris and five score loaded with camphor and jewels and other hundred laden with silver monies and yet other hundred loaded with raiment of silken stuffs, sendal and brocade, besides an hundred slave-girls and a century of choice steeds of swift and generous breeds, completely housed and accoutred, as they were brides; and all this he had laid before her father, demanding her of him in wedlock. Now King Ins bin Kays had bound himself by an oath that he would not marry his daughter save to him whom she should choose; so, when King Nabhan sought her in marriage, her father went in to her and consulted her concerning his affair. She consented not and he repeated to Nabhan that which she said, whereupon he departed from him. After this came King Bahrám, lord of the White Island, with treasures richer than the first; but she accepted not of him and he returned disappointed; nor did the kings cease coming to her sire, on her account, one after other, from the farthest of the lands and the climes, each glorying in bringing more than those who forewent him; but she heeded not any one of them. Presently, Al-'Abbás, son of King Al-'Azíz, lord of the land of Al-Yaman and Zabídún[347] and Meccah (which Allah increase in honour and brightness and beauty!) heard of her; and he was of the great ones of Meccah and Al-Hijáz,[348] and was a youth without hair on his side-face. So he presented himself one day in his sire's assembly, whereupon the folk made way for him and the king seated him on a chair of red gold, crusted with pearls and gems. The Prince sat, with his head bowed ground-wards, and spake not to any: whereby his father knew that his breast was straitened and bade the cup-companions and men of wit relate marvellous histories, such as beseem the sessions of kings; nor was there one of them but spoke forth the goodliest of that which was with him; but Al-'Abbás still abode with his head bowed down. Then the king bade his sitting-companions withdraw, and when the chamber was private, he looked at his son and said to him, "By Allah, thou cheerest me with thy coming in to me and chagrinest me for that thou payest no heed to any of the familiars nor of the cup-companions. What is the cause of this?" Answered the Prince, "O my papa, I have heard tell that in the land of Al-Irák is a woman of the daughters of the kings, and her father is called King Ins bin Kays, lord of Baghdad; she is famed for beauty and loveliness and brightness and perfect grace, and indeed many of the kings have sought her in marriage; but her soul consented not unto any one of them. Wherefore my thought prompteth me to travel herwards, for that my heart cleaveth to her, and I beseech thee suffer me to go to her." His sire replied, "O my son, thou knowest that I have none other than thyself of children and thou art the coolth of mine eyes and the fruit of my vitals; nay, I cannot brook to be parted from thee a single hour and I purpose to seat thee on the throne of the kingship and espouse thee to one of the daughters of the kings, who shall be fairer than she." Al-Abbas gave ear to his father's word and dared not gainsay him; wherefore he abode with him awhile, whilst the love-fire raged in his vitals. Then the king took rede with himself to build his son a Hammam and adorn it with various paintings, so he might display it to him and divert him with the sight thereof, to the intent that his body might be solaced thereby and that the accident of travel might cease from him and he be turned from his purpose of removal from his parents. Presently he addressed himself to the building of the bath and assembling architects and artisans from all his cities and citadels and islands, assigned them a foundation-site and marked out its boundaries. Then the workmen occupied themselves with the building of the Hammam and the ordinance and adornment of its cabinets and roofs. They used paints and precious minerals of all kinds, according to the contrast of their colours, red and green and blue and yellow and what not else of all manner tincts; and each artisan wrought at his craft and each painter at his art, whilst the rest of the folk busied themselves with transporting thither vari-coloured stones. One day, as the Master-painter wrought at his work, there came in to him a poor man, who looked long upon him and observed his mystery; whereupon quoth the artist to him, "Knowest thou aught of painting?" Quoth the stranger, "Yes;" so he gave him tools and paints and said to him, "Limn for us a rare semblance." Accordingly the pauper stranger entered one of the bath-chambers and drew on its walls a double border, which he adorned on both sides, after a fashion than which eyes never saw a fairer. Moreover, amiddlemost the chamber he limned a picture to which there lacked but the breath,[349] and it was the portraiture of Mariyah, daughter to the king of Baghdad. Then, when he had finished the portrait, he went his way and told none of what he had done, nor knew any wight the chambers and doors of the bath and the adornment and ordinance thereof. Presently the chief artisan came to the palace and sought audience of the king who bade admit him. So he entered and kissing the earth, saluted him with a salam beseeming Sultans and said, "O king of the time and lord of the age and the tide, may prosperity endure to thee and acceptance and eke thy degree over all the kings both morning and evening[350] exalted be! The work of the bath is accomplished, by the king's fair fortune and the purity of his purpose, and indeed, we have done all that behoved us and there remaineth but that which behoveth the king." Al-Aziz ordered him a costly robe of honour and expended monies galore, giving unto each who had wroughten after the measure of his work. Then he assembled in the Hammam all the Lords of his realm, Emirs and Wazirs and Chamberlains and Nabobs, and the chief officers of his kingdom and household, and sending for his son Al-Abbas, said to him, "O my son, I have builded thee a bath, wherein thou mayst take thy pleasance; so enter that thou mayst see it and divert thyself by gazing upon it and viewing the beauty of its ordinance and decoration." "With love and gladness," replied the Prince and entered the bath, he and the king and the folk about them, so they might divert themselves with viewing that which the workmen's hands had worked. Al-Abbas went in and passed from place to place and chamber to chamber, till he came to the room aforesaid and espied the portrait of Mariyah, whereupon he fell down in a fainting-fit and the workmen went to his father and said to him, "Thy son Al-Abbas hath swooned away." So the king came and finding his son cast down, seated himself at his head and bathed his face with rose-water. After awhile he revived and the king said to him, "I seek refuge with Allah for thee, O my son! What accident hath befallen thee?" The Prince replied, "O my father, I did but look on yonder picture and it bequeathed me a thousand qualms and there befel me that which thou beholdest." Therewith the king bade fetch the Master-painter, and when he stood before him, he said to him, "Tell me of yonder portrait and what girl is this of the daughters of the kings; else I will take thy head." Said the painter, "By Allah, O king, I limned it not, neither know I who she is; but there came to me a poor man and looked hard at me. So I asked him, Knowest thou the art of painting? and he answered, Yes. Whereupon I gave him the gear and said to him, Limn for us a rare semblance. Accordingly he painted yonder portrait and went away and I wot him not neither have I ever set eyes on him save that day." Hearing this, the king ordered all his officers to go round about in the thoroughfares and colleges and to bring before him all strangers they found there. So they went forth and brought him much people, amongst whom was the pauper who had painted the portrait. When they came into the presence, the Sultan bade the crier make public proclamation that whoso wrought the portrait should discover himself and have whatso he wished. Thereupon the poor man came forward and kissing the ground before the king, said to him, "O king of the age, I am he who limned yonder likeness." Quoth Al-Aziz, "And knowest thou who she is?" and quoth the other, "Yes, this is the portrait of Mariyah, daughter of the king of Baghdad." The king ordered him a robe of honour and a slave-girl and he went his way. Then said Al-Abbas, "O my papa, give me leave to seek her, so I may look upon her: else shall I farewell the world, withouten fail." The king his father wept and answered, "O my son, I builded thee a Hammam, that it might turn thee from leaving me, and behold, it hath been the cause of thy going forth; but the behest of Allah is a determinate decree."[351] Then he wept again and Al-Abbas said to him, "Fear not for me, for thou knowest my prowess and puissance in returning answers in the assemblies of the land and my good breeding and accomplishments together with my skill in rhetoric; and indeed for him whose father thou art and whom thou hast reared and bred and in whom thou hast united praiseworthy qualities, the repute whereof hath traversed the East and the West, thou needest not fear aught, more especially as I purpose but to seek pleasuring and return to thee, an it be the will of Allah Almighty." Quoth the king, "Whom wilt thou take with thee of attendants and what of monies?" Replied Al-Abbas, "O my papa, I have no need of horses or camels or weapons, for I purpose not warfare, and I will have none go forth with me save my page 'Amir and no more." Now as he and his father were thus engaged in talk, in came his mother and caught hold of him; and he said to her, "Allah upon thee, let me gang my gait and strive not to divert me from what purpose I have purposed, for needs must I go.” She replied, “O my son, if it must be so and there be no help for it, swear to me that thou wilt not be absent from me more than a year.” And he sware to her. Then he entered his father’s treasuries and took therefrom what he would of jewels and jacinths and everything weighty of worth and light of load: he also bade his servant Amir saddle him two steeds and the like for himself, and whenas the night beset his back,[352] he rose from his couch and mounting his horse, set out for Baghdad, he and Amir, whilst the page knew not whither he intended.[353] He gave not over going and the journey was joyous to him, till they came to a goodly land, abounding in birds and wild beasts, whereupon Al-Abbas started a gazelle and shot it with a shaft. Then he dismounted and cutting its throat, said to his servant, “Alight thou and skin it and carry it to the water.” Amir answered him with “Hearkening and obedience” and going down to the water, built a fire and broiled the gazelle’s flesh. Then they ate their fill and drank of the water, after which they mounted again and fared on with diligent faring, and Amir still unknowing whither Al-Abbas was minded to wend. So he said to him, “O my lord, I conjure thee by Allah of All-might, wilt thou not tell me whither thou intendest?” Al-Abbas looked at him and in reply improvised these couplets,

“In my vitals are fires of desire and repine; * And naught I
reply when they flare on high:
Baghdad-wards I hie me on life-and-death work, * Loving one who
distorts my right judgment awry:
A swift camel under me shortcuts the wold * And deem it a cloud
all who nearhand espy:
O ‘Ámir make haste after model of her * Who would heal mine ill
and Love’s cup drain dry:
For the leven of love burns the vitals of me; * So with me seek
my tribe and stint all reply.”

When Amir heard his lord’s verses, he knew that he was a slave of love and that she whom he loved abode in Baghdad. Then they fared on night and day, traversing plain and stony way, till they sighted Baghdad and lighted down in its environs[354] and there lay their night. When they arose in the morning, they removed to the bank of the Tigris where they encamped and sojourned a second day and a third. As they abode thus on the fourth day, behold, a company of folk giving their beasts the rein and crying aloud and saying, "Quick! Quick! Haste to our rescue, Ho thou the King!" Therewith the King's chamberlains and officers accosted them and said, "What is behind you and what hath betided you?" Quoth they, "Bring us before the King." So they carried them to Ins bin Kays; and when they saw him, they said to him, "O king, unless thou succour us, we are dead men; for that we are a folk of the Banú Shaybán,[355] who have taken up our abode in the parts of Bassorah, and Hodhayfah the wild Arab hath come down on us with his steeds and his men and hath slain our horsemen and carried off our women and children; nor was one saved of the tribe but he who fled; wherefore we crave help first by Allah Almighty, then by thy life." When the king heard their speech, he bade the crier proclaim in the highways of the city that the troops should busk them to march and that the horsemen should mount and the footmen fare forth; nor was it but the twinkling of the eye ere the kettle-drums beat and the trumpets blared; and scarce was the forenoon of the day passed when the city was blocked with horse and foot. Presently, the king reviewed them and behold, they were four-and-twenty thousand in number, cavalry and infantry. He bade them go forth to the enemy and gave the command of them to Sa'ad ibn al-Wákidí, a doughty cavalier and a dauntless champion; so the horsemen set out and fared on along the Tigris-bank. Al-Abbas, son of King Al-Aziz, looked at them and saw the flags flaunting and the standards stirring and heard the kettle-drums beating; so he bade his page saddle him a blood-steed and look to the surcingles and bring him his harness of war, for indeed horsemanship[356] was rooted in his heart. Quoth Amir, "And indeed I saw Al-Abbas his eyes waxed red and the hair of his hands on end." So he mounted his charger, whilst Amir also bestrode a destrier, and they went forth with the commando and fared on two days. On the third day, after the hour of the mid-afternoon prayer, they came in sight of the foe and the two armies met and the two ranks joined in fight. The strife raged amain and sore was the strain, whilst the dust rose in clouds and hung in vaulted shrouds, so that all eyes were blinded; and they ceased not from the battle till the night overtook them,[357] when the two hosts drew off from the mellay and passed the night, perplexed concerning themselves. When Allah caused the morning to morrow, the two hosts were aligned in line and their thousands fixed their eyne and the troops stood looking one at other. Then sallied forth Al-Háris ibn Sa'ad between the two lines and played with his lance and cried out and improvised these couplets,

"You are in every way this day our prey; * And ever we prayčd
your sight to see:
The Ruthful drave you Hodhayfah-wards * To the Brave, the Lion
who sways the free:
Say, amid you's a man who would heal his ills, * With whose lust
of battle shrewd blows agree?
Then by Allah meet me who come to you * And whoso is wronged
shall the wronger be."[358]

Thereupon there sallied forth to him Zuhayr bin Habíb, and they wheeled about and wiled a while, then they exchanged strokes. Al-Haris forewent his foe in smiting and stretched him weltering in his gore; whereupon Hodhayfah cried out to him, "Gifted of Allah[359] art thou, O Haris! Call out another of them." So he cried aloud, "I say, who be a champion?" But they of Baghdad held back from him; and when it appeared to Al-Haris that consternation was amongst them, he charged down upon them and overrolled the first of them upon the last of them and slew of them twelve men. Then the evening caught him and the Baghdadis began addressing themselves to flight. No sooner had the morning morrowed than they found themselves reduced to a fourth part of their number and there was not one of them had dismounted from his horse. Wherefore they made sure of destruction and Hodhayfah rushed out between the two lines (now he was reckoned good for a thousand knights) and cried out, "Harkye, my masters of Baghdad! Let none come forth to me but your Emir, so I may talk with him and he with me; and he shall meet me in combat singular and I will meet him, and may he who is clear of offence come off safe." Then he repeated his words and said, "How is it I see your Emir refuse me a reply?" But Sa'ad, the Emir of the army of Baghdad, answered him not, and indeed his teeth chattered in his mouth, when he heard him summon him to the duello. Now when Al-Abbas heard Hodhayfah's challenge and saw Sa'ad in this case, he came up to the Emir and asked him, "Wilt thou suffer me to answer him and I will be thy substitute in replying him and in monomachy with him and will make my life thy sacrifice?" Sa'ad looked at him and seeing knighthood shining from between his eyes, said to him, "O youth, by the virtue of Mustafŕ the Chosen Prophet (whom Allah save and assain), tell me who thou art and whence thou comest to bring us victory."[360] Quoth the Prince, "This is no place for questioning;" and quoth Sa'ad to him, "O Knight, up and at Hodhayfah! Yet, if his Satan prove too strong for thee, afflict not thyself on thy youth."[361] Al-Abbas cried, "Allah is He of whom help is to be sought;"[362] and, taking his arms, fortified his purpose and went down into the field, as he were a fort of the forts or a mountain's contrefort. Thereupon Hodhayfah cried out to him, saying, "Haste thee not, O youth! Who art thou of the folk?" He replied, "I am Sa'ad ibn al-Wakidi, commander of the host of King Ins, and but for thy pride in challenging me, I had not come forth to thee; for thou art no peer for me to front nor as mine equal dost thou count nor canst thou bear my brunt. Wherefore get thee ready for the last march[363] seeing that there abideth but a little of thy life." When Hodhayfah heard this speech, he threw himself backwards,[364] as if in mockery of him, whereat Al-Abbas was wroth and called out to him, saying, "O Hodhayfah, guard thyself against me." Then he rushed upon him, as he were a swooper of the Jinn,[365] and Hodhayfah met him and they wheeled about a long while. Presently, Al-Abbas cried out at Hodhayfah a cry which astounded him and struck him a stroke, saying, "Take this from the hand of a brave who feareth not the like of thee." Hodhayfah met the sabre-sway with his shield, thinking to ward it off from him; but the blade shore the target in sunder and descending upon his shoulder, came forth gleaming from the tendons of his throat and severed his arm at the armpit; whereupon he fell down, wallowing in his blood, and Al-Abbas turned upon his host; not had the sun departed the dome of the welkin ere Hodhayfah's army was in full flight before Al-Abbas and the saddles were empty of men. Quoth Sa’ad, “By the virtue of Mustafa the Chosen Prophet, whom Allah save and assain, I saw Al-Abbas with the blood upon his saddle-pads, in clots like camels’ livers, smiting with the sword right and left, till he scattered them abroad in every gorge and wold; and when he hied him back to the camp, the men of Baghdad were fearful of him.” But as soon as they saw this victory which had betided them over their foes, they turned back and gathering together the weapons and treasures and horses of those they had slain, returned to Baghdad, victorious, and all by the knightly valour of Al-Abbas. As for Sa’ad, he foregathered with his lord, and they fared on in company till they came to the place where Al-Abbas had taken horse, whereupon the Prince dismounted from his charger and Sa’ad said to him, “O youth, wherefore alightest thou in other than thy place? Indeed, thy rights be incumbent upon us and upon our Sultan; so go thou with us to the dwellings, that we may ransom thee with our souls.” Replied Al-Abbas, “O Emir Sa’ad, from this place I took horse with thee and herein is my lodging. So, Allah upon thee, mention not me to the king, but make as if thou hadst never seen me because I am a stranger in the land.” So saying, he turned away from him and Sa’ad fared on to his palace, where he found all the courtiers in attendance on the king and recounting to him that which had betided them with Al-Abbas. Quoth the king, “Where is he?” and quoth they, “He is with the Emir Sa’ad.” So, when the Emir entered, the king looked, but found none with him; and Sa’ad, seeing at a glance that he longed to look upon the youth, cried out to him, saying, “Allah prolong the king’s days! Indeed, he refuseth to present himself before thee, without order or leave.” Asked the king, “O Sa’ad, whence cometh this man?” and the Emir answered, “O my lord, I know not; but he is a youth fair of favour, amiable of aspect, accomplished in address, ready of repartee, and valour shineth from between his eyes.” Quoth the king, “O Sa’ad, fetch him to me, for indeed thou describest to me at full length a mighty matter.”[366] And he answered, saying, “By Allah, O my lord, hadst thou but seen our case with Hodhayfah, when he challenged me to the field of fight and the stead of cut-and-thrust and I held back from doing battle with him! Then, as I thought to go forth to him, behold, a knight gave loose to his bridle-rein and called out to me, saying, ‘O Sa’ad, wilt thou suffer me to be thy substitute in waging war with him and I will ransom thee with myself?' and quoth I, 'By Allah, O youth, whence comest thou?' and quoth he, 'This be no time for thy questions, while Hodhayfah standeth awaiting thee.'" Thereupon he repeated to the king all that had passed between himself and Al-Abbas from first to last; whereat cried Ins bin Kays, "Bring him to me in haste, so we may learn his tidings and question him of his case." "'Tis well," replied Sa'ad, and going forth of the king's presence, repaired to his own house, where he doffed his war-harness and took rest for himself. On this wise fared it with the Emir Sa'ad, but as regards Al-Abbas, when he dismounted from his destrier, he doffed his war-gear and reposed himself awhile; after which he brought out a body-dress of Venetian[367] silk and a gown of green damask and donning them, bound about his head a turband of Damietta stuff and zoned his waist with a kerchief. Then he went out a-walking in the highways of Baghdad and fared on till he came to the bazar of the traders. There he found a merchant, with chess before him; so the Prince stood watching him, and presently the other looked up at him and asked him, "O youth, what wilt thou bet upon the game?" He answered, "Be it thine to decide." Said the merchant, "Then be it an hundred dinars," and Al-Abbas consented to him; whereupon quoth he, "Produce the money, O youth, so the game may be fairly stablished." Accordingly Al-Abbas brought out a satin purse, wherein were a thousand dinars, and laid down an hundred dinars therefrom on the edge of the carpet, whilst the merchant produced the like, and indeed his reason fled for joy when he saw the gold in possession of Al-Abbas. The folk flocked about them, to divert themselves with watching the play, and they called the bystanders to witness the wager and after the stakes were duly staked, the twain fell a-playing. Al-Abbas forebore the merchant, so he might lead him on, and dallied with him a full hour; and the merchant won and took of him the hundred dinars. Then said the Prince, "Wilt thou play another partie?" and the other said, "O youth, I will not play again, save for a thousand dinars." Quoth the youth, 'Whatsoever thou stakest, I will match thy stake with its like." So the merchant brought out a thousand dinars and the Prince covered them with other thousand. Then the game began, but Al-Abbas was not long with him ere he beat him in the house of the elephant[368] nor did he cease to do thus till he had beaten him four times and won of him four thousand dinars. This was all the merchant had of money; so he said, "O youth, I will play thee another game for the shop." Now the value of the shop was four thousand dinars; so they played and Al-Ahbas beat him and won his shop, with whatso was therein; upon which the other arose, shaking his clothes,[369] and said to him, "Up, O youth, and take thy shop." Accordingly Al-Abbas arose and repairing to the shop, took possession thereof, after which he returned to the place where he had left his servant 'Amir, and found there the Emir Sa'ad, who was come to bid him to the presence of the king. The Prince consented to this and accompanied him till they came before King Ins bin Kays, whereupon he kissed the ground and saluted him and exaggerated[370] the salutation. So the king asked him, "Whence comest thou, O youth, and whither goest thou?" and he answered, "I come from Al-Yaman." Then said the king, "Hast thou a need we may fulfil to thee; for indeed thou hast strong claims to our favour after that which thou didst in the matter of Hodhayfah and his folk." And he commanded to cast over him a mantle of Egyptian satin, worth an hundred dinars. He also bade his treasurer give him a thousand dinars and said to him, "O youth, take this in part of that which thou deservest of us; and if thou prolong thy sojourn with us, we will give thee slaves and servants." Al-Abbas kissed ground and said, "O king, Allah grant thee abiding weal, I deserve not all this." Then he put his hand to his pouch and pulling out two caskets of gold, in each of which were rubies whose value none could estimate, gave them to the king, saying, "O king, Allah cause thy welfare to endure, I conjure thee by that which the Almighty hath vouchsafed thee, heal my heart by accepting these two caskets, even as I have accepted thy present." So the king accepted the two caskets and Al-Abbas took his leave and went away to the bazar. Now when the merchants saw him, they accosted him and said, "O youth, wilt thou not open thy shop?" As they were addressing him, up came a woman, having with her a boy bare of head, and stood looking at Al-Abbas, till he turned to her, when she said to him, "O youth, I conjure thee by Allah, look at this boy and have ruth on him, for that his father hath forgotten his skull-cap in the shop he lost to thee; so, an thou see fit to give it him, thy reward be with Allah! For indeed the child maketh our hearts ache with his excessive weeping, and the Lord be witness for us that, had they left us aught wherewith to buy him a cap in its stead, we had not sought it of thee." Replied Al-Abbas, "O adornment of womankind,[371] indeed, thou bespeakest me with thy fair speech and supplicatest me with thy goodly words! But bring me thy husband." So she went and fetched the merchant, whilst a crowd collected to see what Al-Abbas would do. When the man came, he returned him the gold he had won of him, art and part, and delivered him the keys of the shop, saying, "Requite us with thy pious prayers." Therewith the woman came up to him and kissed his feet, and in like fashion did the merchant her husband: and all who were present blessed him, and there was no talk but of Al-Abbas. Thus fared it with him; but as for the merchant, he bought him a head of sheep[372] and slaughtering it, roasted it and dressed birds and other meats of various kinds and colours and purchased dessert and sweetmeats and fresh fruits; then he repaired to Al-Abbas and conjured him to accept of his hospitality and visit his home and eat of his provaunt. The Prince consented to his wishes and went with him till they came to his house, when the merchant bade him enter: so Al-Abbas went in and saw a goodly house, wherein was a handsome saloon, with a vaulted ceiling. When he entered the saloon, he found that the merchant had made ready food and dessert and perfumes, such as may not be described; and indeed he had adorned the table with sweet-scented flowers and sprinkled musk and rose-water upon the food; and he had smeared the saloon walls with ambergris and had burned aloes-wood therein and Nadd. Presently, Al-Abbas looked out of the window of the saloon and saw by its side a house of goodly ordinance, tall of base and wide of space, with rooms manifold and two upper stories crowning the whole; but therein was no sign of inhabitants. So he said to the merchant, "Verily, thou exaggeratest in doing us honour; but, by Allah, I will not eat of thy meat until thou tell me what hath caused the voidance of yonder house." Said he, "O my lord, that was Al-Ghitrif's house and he passed away to the mercy of the Almighty and left no heir save myself; whereupon the mansion became mine, and by Allah, an thou have a mind to sojourn in Baghdad, take up thine abode in this house, whereby thou mayst be in my neighbourhood; for that verily my heart inclineth unto thee with affection and I would have thee never absent from mine eyes, so I may still have my fill of thee and hearken to thy speech." Al-Abbas thanked him and said to him, "By Allah, thou art indeed friendly in thy converse and thou exaggeratest in thy discourse, and needs must I sojourn in Baghdad. As for the house, if it please thee to lodge me, I will abide therein; so accept of me its price." Therewith he put hand to his pouch and bringing out from it three hundred dinars, gave them to the merchant, who said in himself, "Unless I take his dirhams, he will not darken my doors." So he pocketed the monies and sold him the mansion, taking witnesses against himself of the sale. Then he arose and set food before Al-Abbas and they sat down to his good things; after which he brought him dessert and sweetmeats whereof they ate their sufficiency, and when the tables were removed they washed their hands with musked rose-water and willow-water. Then the merchant brought Al-Abbas a napkin scented with the smoke of aloes-wood, on which he wiped his right hand, and said to him, "O my lord, the house is become thy house; so bid thy page transport thither the horses and arms and stuffs." The Prince did this and the merchant rejoiced in his neighbourhood and left him not night nor day,[373] so that Al-Abbas said to him, "By the Lord, we distract thee from thy livelihood." He replied, "Allah upon thee, O my lord, name not to me aught of this, or thou wilt break my heart, for the best of traffic art thou and the best of livelihood." So there befel straight friendship between them and all ceremony was laid aside. Meanwhile[374] the king said to his Wazir, "How shall we do in the matter of yonder youth, the Yamáni, on whom we thought to confer gifts, but he hath gifted us with tenfold our largesse and more, and we know not an he be a sojourner with us or not?" Then he went into the Harim and gave the rubies to his wife Afifah, who asked him, "What is the worth of these with thee and with other of the kings?" Quoth he, "They are not to be found save with the greatest of sovrans nor can any price them with monies." Quoth she, "Whence gottest thou them?" So he recounted to her the story of Al-Abbas from beginning to end, and she said, "By Allah, the claims of honour are imperative on us and the King hath fallen short of his devoir; for that we have not seen him bid the youth to his assembly, nor hath he seated him on his left hand." When the king heard his wife's words, it was as if he had been asleep and awoke; so he went forth the Harim and bade kill poultry and dress meats of every kind and colour. Moreover, he assembled all his courtiers and let bring sweetmeats and dessert and all that beseemeth the tables of kings. Then he adorned his palace and despatched after Al-Abbas a man of the chief officers of his household, who found him coming forth of the Hammam, clad in a jerkin[375] of fine goats' hair and over it a Baghdádi scarf; his waist was girt with a Rustaki[376] kerchief and on his head he wore a light turband of Damietta[377] stuff. The messenger wished him joy of the bath and exaggerated in doing him honour: then he said to him, "The king biddeth thee in weal."[378] "To hear is to obey," quoth Al-Abbas and accompanied the officer to the king's palace. Now Afifah and her daughter Mariyah were behind the curtain, both looking at him; and when he came before the sovran he saluted him and greeted him with the greeting of kings, whilst all present gazed at him and at his beauty and loveliness and perfect grace. The king seated him at the head of the table; and when Afifah saw him and considered him straitly, she said, "By the virtue of Mohammed, prince of the Apostles, this youth is of the sons of the kings and cometh not to these parts save for some noble purpose!" Then she looked at Mariyah and saw that her favour was changed, and indeed her eye-balls were as dead in her face and she turned not her gaze from Al-Abbas a twinkling of the eyes, for that the love of him had sunk deep into her heart. When the queen saw what had befallen her daughter, she feared for her from reproach concerning Al-Abbas; so she shut the casement-wicket that the Princess might not look upon him any more. Now there was a pavilion set apart for Mariyah, and therein were boudoirs and bowers, balconies and lattices, and she had with her a nurse, who served her as is the fashion with the daughters of the Kings. When the banquet was ended and the folk had dispersed, the King said to Al-Abbas, "I would fain have thee abide with me and I will buy thee a mansion, so haply we may requite thee for thy high services; and indeed imperative upon us is thy due and magnified in our eyes is thy work; and soothly we have fallen short of thy deserts in the matter of distance."[379] When the youth heard the king's speech, he rose and sat down[380] and kissing ground, returned thanks for his bounty and said, "I am the King's thrall, wheresoever I may be, and under his eye." Then he told him the tale of the merchant and the manner of the buying of the house, and the king said, "In very truth I would fain have had thee in my neighbourhood and by side of me." Presently Al-Abbas took leave of the king and went away to his own house. Now it chanced that he passed under the palace of Mariyah, the king's daughter, and she was sitting at a casement. He happened to look round and his eyes met those of the Princess, whereupon his wit departed and he was ready to swoon away, whilst his colour changed, and he said, "Verily, we are Allah's and unto Him are we returning!" But he feared for himself lest severance betide him; so he concealed his secret and discovered not his case to any of the creatures of Allah Almighty. When he reached his quarters, his page Amir said to him, "I seek refuge for thee with Allah, O my lord, from change of colour! Hath there betided thee a pain from the Lord of All-might or aught of vexation? In good sooth, sickness hath an end and patience doeth away trouble." But the Prince returned him no answer. Then he brought out ink-case[381] and paper and wrote these couplets:

I cry (and mine's a frame that pines alwŕy), * A mind which fires
of passion e'er waylay;
And eyeballs never tasting sweets of sleep; * Yet Fortune spare
its cause I ever pray!
While from world-perfidy and parting I * Like Bishram with
Hind,[382] that well-loved may; —
Yea, grown a bye-word 'mid the folk but aye * Spend life
unwinning wish or night or day.
"Ah say, wots she my love when her I spied * At the high lattice
shedding sunlike ray?"
Her glances, keener than the brand when bared * Cleave soul of
man nor ever 'scapes her prey:
I looked on her in lattice pierced aloft * When bare her cheat of
veil that slipped away;
And shot me thence a shaft my liver pierced * When thrall to care
and dire despair I lay
Knowst thou, O Fawn o' the palace, how for thee * I fared from

farness o’er the lands astray?
Then read my writ, dear friends, and show some ruth * To wight
who wones black-faced, distraught, sans stay!

And when he ended inditing, he folded up the letter. Now the merchant’s wife aforesaid, who was the nurse of the king’s daughter, was watching him from a window, unknown of him, and when she saw him writing and reciting, she knew that some rare tale attached to him; so she went in to him and said, “Peace be with thee, O afflicted wight, who acquaintest not leach with thy plight! Verily, thou exposest thy life to grievous blight. I conjure thee by the virtue of Him who hath afflicted thee and with the constraint of love-liking hath stricken thee, that thou acquaint me with thine affair and disclose to me the truth of thy secret; for that indeed I have heard from thee verses which trouble the mind and melt the body.” Accordingly he acquainted her with his case and enjoined her to secrecy, whereof she consented, saying, “What shall be the recompense of whoso goeth with thy letter and bringeth thee its reply?” He bowed his head for shame before her and was silent; and she said to him, “Raise thy head and give me thy writ”: so he gave her the letter and she hent it and carrying it to the Princess, said to her, “Take this epistle and give me its answer.” Now the dearest of all things to Mariyah was the recitation of poesy and verses and linked rhymes and the twanging of lute-strings, and she was versed in all tongues; wherefore she took the writ and opening it, read that which was therein and understood its purport. Then she threw it to the ground and cried, “O nurse, I have no answer to make to this letter.” Quoth the nurse, “Indeed, this is weakness in thee and a reproach to thee, for that the people of the world have heard of thee and commend thee for keenness of wit and understanding; so do thou return him an answer, such as shall trick his heart and tire his soul.” Quoth she, “O nurse, who may be the man who presumeth upon me with this correspondence? Haply ’tis the stranger youth who gave my father the rubies.” The woman said, “It is himself,” and Mariyah said, “I will answer his letter in such fashion that thou shalt not bring me other than it.” Cried the nurse, “So be it.”[383] Thereupon the Princess called for ink-case and paper and wrote these couplets: —

Thou art bold in the copy thou sentest! May be * ‘Twill increase the dule foreign wight must dree!
Thou hast spied me with glance that bequeaths thee woe * Ah! far is thy hope, a mere foreigner’s plea!
Who art thou, poor freke, that wouldst win my love * Wi’ thy verse? What seeks thine insanity?
An thou hope for my favours and greed therefor; * Where find thee a leach for such foolish gree?
Then rhyme-linking leave and fool-like be not * Hanged to Cross at the doorway of ignomy!
Deem not that to thee I incline, O youth! * ‘Mid the Sons of the Path[384] is no place for me.
Thou art homeless waif in the wide wide world; * So return thee home where they keen for thee:[385]
Leave verse-spouting, O thou who a-wold dost wone, * Or minstrel shall name thee in lay and glee:
How many a friend who would meet his love * Is baulked when the goal is right clear to see!
So begone and ne’er grieve for what canst not win * Albe time be near, yet thy grasp ‘twill flee.
Now such is my say and the tale I’d tell; * So master my meaning and — fare thee well!

When Mariyah had made an end of her verses, she folded the letter and delivered it to the nurse, who hent it and went with it to Al-Abbas. When she gave it to him, he took it and breaking it open, read it and comprehended its contents; and when he reached the end of it, he swooned away. After awhile, he came to himself and cried, “Praise be to Allah who hath caused her return a reply to my writ! Canst thou carry her another missive, and with Allah Almighty be thy requital?” Said she, “And what shall letters profit thee, seeing that such is her reply;” but he said, “Peradventure, she may yet be softened.” Then he took ink-case and paper and wrote these couplets: —

Reached me the writ and what therein didst write, * Whence grew my pain and bane and blight:

I read the marvel-lines made wax my love * And wore my body out
till slightest slight.[386]
Would Heaven ye wot the whole I bear for love * Of you, with
vitals clean for you undight!
And all I do t’ outdrive you from my thought * ‘Vails naught and
‘gainst th’ obsession loses might:
Couldst for thy lover feel ’twould ease his soul; * E’en thy dear
Phantom would his sprite delight!
Then on my weakness lay not coyness-load * Nor in such breach of
troth be traitor-wight:
And, weet ye well, for this your land I fared * Hoping to ‘joy
the union-boon forthright:
How many a stony wold for this I spanned; * How oft I waked when
men kept watch o’night!
To fare fro’ another land for sight of you * Love bade, while
length of way forbade my sprite:
So by His name[387] who molt my frame, have ruth, * And quench
the flames thy love in me did light:
Thou fillest, arrayed with glory’s robes and rays, * Heaven’s
stars with joy and Luna with despight.
Then who dare chide or blame me for my love * Of one that can all
Beauty’s boons unite?

When Al-Abbas had made an end of his verses, he folded the letter and delivering it to the nurse, charged her keep the secret. So she took it and carrying it to Mariyah, gave it to her. The Princess broke it open and read it and apprehended its purport; then cried she, “By Allah, O nurse, my heart is chagrined with exceeding chagrin, never knew I a sorer, because of this correspondence and of these verses.” And the nurse made answer to her, “O my lady, thou art in thy dwelling and thy palace and thy heart is void of care; so return to him a reply and reck not.” Accordingly, the Princess called for ink-case and paper and wrote these couplets: —

Ho thou who wouldst vaunt thee of cark and care; * How many
love-molten, tryst-craving be there?
An hast wandered the wold in the murks of night * Bound afar and

anear on the tracks to fare,
And to eyne hast forbidden the sweets of sleep, * Borne by Devils
and Marids to dangerous lair;
And beggest my boons, O in tribe-land[388] homed * And to urge
thy wish and desire wouldst dare;
Now, woo Patience fair, an thou bear in mind * What The Ruthful
promised to patient prayer![389]
How many a king for my sake hath vied, * Craving love and in
marriage with me to pair.
Al-Nabhan sent, when a-wooing me, * Camels baled with musk and
Nadd scenting air.
They brought camphor in boxes and like thereof * Of pearls and
rubies that countless were;
Brought pregnant lasses and negro-lads, * Blood steeds and arms
and gear rich and rare;
Brought us raiment of silk and of sendal sheen, * And came
courting us but no bride he bare:
Nor could win his wish, for I ‘bode content * To part with far
parting and love forswear;
So for me greed not, O thou stranger wight * Lest thou come to
ruin and dire despair!

When she had made an end of her verses, she folded the letter and delivered it to the nurse, who took it and carried it to Al-Abbas. He broke it open and read it and comprehended its contents; then took ink-case and paper and wrote these improvised couplets: —

Thou hast told me the tale of the Kings, and of them * Each was
rending lion, a furious foe:
And thou stolest the wits of me, all of them * And shotst me with
shaft of thy magic bow:
Thou hast boasted of slaves and of steeds and wealth; * And of
beauteous lasses ne’er man did know;
How presents in mighty store didst spurn, * And disdainedst
lovers both high and low:
Then I followed their tracks in desire for thee, * With naught
save my scymitar keen of blow;

Nor slaves nor camels that run have I; * Nor slave-girls the litters enveil, ah, no!
But grant me union and soon shalt sight * My trenchant blade with the foeman’s woe;
Shalt see the horsemen engird Baghdad * Like clouds that wall the whole world below,
Obeying behests which to them I deal * And hearing the words to the foes I throw.
An of negro chattels ten thousand head * Wouldst have, or Kings who be proud and prow
Or chargers led for thee day by day * And virgin girls high of bosom, lo!
Al-Yaman land my command doth bear * And my biting blade to my foes I show.
I have left this all for the sake of thee, * Left Aziz and my kinsmen for ever-mo’e;
And made Al-Irák making way to thee * Under nightly murks over rocks arow;
When the couriers brought me account of thee * Thy beauty, perfection, and sunny glow,
Then I sent thee verses whose very sound * Burns the heart of shame with a fiery throe;
Yet the world with falsehood hath falsčd me, * Though Fortune was never so false as thou,
Who dubbest me stranger and homeless one * A witless fool and a slave-girl’s son!

Then he folded the letter and committed it to the nurse and gave her five hundred dinars, saying, “Accept this from me, for by Allah thou hast indeed wearied thyself between us.” She replied, “By Allah, O my lord, my aim is to bring about forgathering between you, though I lose that which my right hand possesseth.” And he said, “May the Lord of All-might requite thee with good!” Then she carried the letter to Mariyah and said to her, “Take this letter; haply it may be the end of the correspondence.” So she took it and breaking it open, read it, and when she had made an end of it, she turned to the nurse and said to her, “This one foisteth lies upon me and asserteth unto me that he hath cities and horsemen and footmen at his command and submitting to his allegiance; and he wisheth of me that which he shall not win; for thou knowest, O nurse, that kings' sons have sought me in marriage, with presents and rarities; but I have paid no heed unto aught of this; how, then, shall I accept of this fellow, who is the ignoramus of his time and possesseth naught save two caskets of rubies, which he gave to my sire, and indeed he hath taken up his abode in the house of Al-Ghitrif and abideth without silver or gold? Wherefore, Allah upon thee, O nurse, return to him and cut off his hope of me." Accordingly the nurse rejoined Al-Abbas, without letter or answer; and when she came in to him, he looked at her and saw that she was troubled, and he noted the marks of anger on her face; so he said to her, "What is this plight?" Quoth she, "I cannot set forth to thee that which Mariyah said; for indeed she charged me return to thee without writ or reply." Quoth he, "O nurse of kings, I would have thee carry her this letter and return not to her without it." Then he took ink-case and paper and wrote these couplets: —

My secret now to men is known though hidden well and true * By
me: enough is that I have of love and love of you:
I left familiars, friends, and kin to weep the loss of me * With
floods of tears which like the tide aye flowed and flowed
anew:
Then, left my home myself I bore to Baghdad-town one day, * When
parting drave me there his pride and cruelty to rue:
I have indeed drained all the bowl whose draught
repression[390] was * Handed by friend who bitter
gourd[391] therein for drinking threw.
And, oft as strove I to enjoin the ways of troth and faith, * So
often on refusal's path he left my soul to sue.
Indeed my body molten is with care I'm doomčd dree; * And yet I
hoped relenting and to win some grace, my due.
But wrong and rigour waxed on me and changed to worse my case; *
And love hath left me weeping-eyed for woes that aye pursue.
How long must I keep watch for you throughout the nightly gloom?

* How many a path of pining pace and garb of grief endue?
And you, what while you joy your sleep, your restful pleasant
sleep, * Reck naught of sorrow and of shame that to your
friend accrue:
For wakefulness I watched the stars before the peep o' day, *
Praying that union with my dear in bliss my soul imbrue;
Indeed the throes of long desire laid waste my frame and I * Rise
every morn in weaker plight with hopes e'er fewer few:
"Be not" (I say) "so hard of heart!" for did you only deign * In
phantom guise to visit me 'twere joy enough to view.
But when ye saw my writ ye grudged to me the smallest boon * And
cast adown the flag of faith though well my troth ye knew;
Nor aught of answer you vouchsafe, albe you wot full well * The
words therein address the heart and pierce the spirit
through.
You deemed yourself all too secure for changes of the days * And
of the far and near alike you ever careless grew.
Hadst thou (dear maid) been doomed like me to woes, forsure hadst
felt * The lowe of love and Laza-hell which parting doth
enmew;
Yet soon shalt suffer torments such as those from thee I bear *
And storm of palpitation-pangs in vitals thine shall brew:
Yea, thou shalt taste the bitter smack of charges false and foul,

* And public make the privacy best hid from meddling crew;
And he thou lovest shall approve him hard of heart and soul * And
heedless of the shifts of Time thy very life undo.
Then hear the fond Salam I send and wish thee every day * While
swayeth spray and sparkleth star all good thy life ensue!

When Al-Abbas had made an end of his verses, he folded the scroll and gave it to the nurse, who took it and carried it to Mariyah. When she came into the Princess's presence, she saluted her; but Mariyah returned not her salutation and she said, "O my lady, how hard is thy heart that thou grudgest to return the salam! Accept this letter, because 'tis the last that shall come to thee from him." Quoth Mariyah, "Take my warning and never again enter my palace, or ‘twill be the cause of thy destruction; for I am certified that thou purposest my disgrace. So get thee gone from me.” And she bade beat the nurse who went forth fleeing from her presence, changed of colour and ‘wildered of wits, and gave not over going till she came to the house of Al-Abbas. When the Prince saw her in this plight, he became like a sleeper awakened and cried to her, “What hath befallen thee? Acquaint me with thy case.” She replied, “Allah upon thee, nevermore send me to Mariyah, and do thou protect me, so the Lord protect thee from the fires of Gehenna!” Then she related to him that which had betided her with Mariyah which when Al-Abbas heard, there took him the pride and high spirit of the generous and this was grievous to him. The love of Mariyah fled forth of his heart and he said to the nurse, “How much hadst thou of Mariyah every month?” Quoth she, “Ten dinars” and quoth he, “Be not concerned.” Then he put hand to pouch and bringing out two hundred ducats, gave them to her and said,”Take this wage for a whole year and turn not again to serve anyone of the folk. When the twelvemonth shall have passed away, I will give thee a two years’ wage, for that thou hast wearied thyself with us and on account of the cutting off the tie which bound thee to Mariyah.” Also he gifted her with a complete suit of clothes and raising his head to her, said, “When thou toldest me that which Mariyah had done with thee, Allah uprooted the love of her from out my heart, and never again will she occur to my thought; so extolled be He who turneth hearts and eyes! ’Twas she who was the cause of my coming out from Al-Yaman, and now the time is past for which I engaged with my folk and I fear lest my father levy his forces and ride forth in quest of me, for that he hath no child other than myself nor can he brook to be parted from me; and in like way ’tis with my mother.” When the nurse heard his words, she asked him, “O my lord, and which of the kings is thy sire?” He answered, saying, “My father is Al-Aziz, lord of Al-Yaman, and Nubia and the Islands[392] of the Banu Kahtán, and the Two Sanctuaries[393] (Allah of All-might have them in His keeping!), and whenever he taketh horse, there ride with him an hundred and twenty and four thousand horsemen, each and every smiters with the sword, besides attendants and servants and followers, all of whom give ear to my word and obey my bidding.” Asked the nurse, “Why, then, O my lord, didst thou conceal the secret of thy rank and lineage and passedst thyself off for a foreigner and a wayfarer? Alas for our disgrace before thee by reason of our shortcoming in rendering thee thy due! What shall be our excuse with thee, and thou of the sons of the kings?" But he rejoined, "By Allah, thou hast not fallen short! Indeed, 'tis incumbent on me to requite thee, what while I live, though from thee I be far distant." Then he called his man Amir and said to him, "Saddle the steeds." When the nurse heard his words and indeed she saw that Amir brought him the horses and they were resolved upon departure, the tears ran down upon her cheeks and she said to him, "By Allah, thy separation is saddening to me, O coolth of the eye!" Then quoth she, "Where is the goal of thine intent, so we may know thy news and solace ourselves with thy report?" Quoth he, "I go hence to visit 'Akíl, the son of my paternal uncle, for that he hath his sojourn in the camp of Kundah bin Hishám, and these twenty years have I not seen him nor hath he seen me; so I purpose to repair to him and discover his news and return. Then will I go hence to Al-Yaman, Inshallah!" So saying, he took leave of the nurse and her husband and set out, intending for 'Akil, the son of his father's brother. Now there was between Baghdad and 'Akíl's abiding-place forty days' journey; so Al-Abbas settled himself on the back of his steed and his servant Amir mounted also and they fared forth on their way. Presently, Al-Abbas turned right and left and recited these couplets,

"I'm the singular knight and my peers I slay! * I lay low the foe
and his whole array:
I fare me to visit my friend Al-Akíl, * And in safety and
Allah-lauds,[394] shorten the way;
And roll up the width of the wold while still * Hears 'Amir my
word or in earnest or play.[395]
I spring with the spring of a lynx or a pard * Upon whoso dareth
our course to stay;
O'erthrow him in ruin and abject shame, * Make him drain the
death-cup in fatal fray.
My lance is long with its steely blade; * A brand keen-grided,
thin-edged I sway:

With a stroke an it fell on a towering hill * Of the hardest
stone, this would cleave in tway:
I lead no troops, nor seek aid save God's, * The creating Lord
(to whom laud alwŕy!)
On Whom I rely in adventures all * And Who pardoneth lâches of
freeman and thrall."

Then they fell a-faring night and day, and as they went, behold, they sighted a camp of the camps of the Arabs. So Al-Abbas enquired thereof and was told that it was the camp of the Banu Zohrah. Now there were around them herds and flocks, such as filled the earth, and they were enemies to Al-Akil, the cousin of Al-Abbas, upon whom they made daily raids and took his cattle, wherefore he used to pay them tribute every year because he lacked power to cope wth them. When Al-Abbas came to the skirts of the camp, he dismounted from his destrier and his servant Amir also dismounted; and they set down the provaunt and ate their sufficiency and rested an hour of the day. Then said the Prince to his page, "Fetch water from the well and give the horses to drink and draw up a supply for us in thy bag,[396] by way of provision for the road." So Amir took the water-skin and made for the well; but, when he came there, behold, two young men slaves were leading gazelles, and when they saw him, they said to him, "Whither wendest thou, O youth, and of which of the Arabs art thou?" Quoth he, "Harkye, lads, fill me my water-skin, for that I am a stranger astray and a farer of the way, and I have a comrade who awaiteth me." Quoth the thralls, "Thou art no wayfarer, but a spy from Al-Akíl's camp." Then they took him and carried him to their king Zuhayr bin Shabib; and when he came before him, he said to him, "Of which of the Arabs art thou?" Quoth Amir, "I am a wayfarer." So Zuhayr said, "Whence comest thou and whither wendest thou?" and Amir replied, "I am on my way to Al-Akíl." When he named Al-Akíl, those who were present were excited; but Zuhayr signed to them with his eyes and asked him, "What is thine errand with Al-Akíl?" and he answered, "We would fain see him, my friend and I." As soon as Zuhayr heard his words, he bade smite his neck;[397] but his Wazir said to him, "Slay him not, till his friend be present." So he commanded the two slaves to fetch his friend; whereupon they repaired to Al-Abbas and called to him, saying, “O youth, answer the summons of King Zuhayr.” He enquired, “What would the king with me?” and they replied, “We know not.” Quoth he, “Who gave the king news of me?” and quoth they, “We went to draw water, and found a man by the well. So we questioned him of his case, but he would not acquaint us therewith, wherefore we carried him willy-nilly to King Zuhayr, who asked him of his adventure and he told him that he was going to Al-Akíl. Now Al-Akíl is the king’s enemy and he intendeth to betake himself to his camp and make prize of his offspring, and cut off his traces.” Said Al-Abbas, “And what hath Al-Akíl done with King Zuhayr?” They replied. “He engaged for himself that he would bring the King every year a thousand dinars and a thousand she-camels, besides a thousand head of thoroughbred steeds and two hundred black slaves and fifty hand-maids; but it hath reached the king that Al-Akíl purposeth to give naught of this; wherefore he is minded to go to him. So hasten thou with us, ere the King be wroth with thee and with us.” Then said Al-Abbas to them, “O youths, sit by my weapons and my stallion till I return.” But they said, “By Allah, thou prolongest discourse with that which beseemeth not of words! Make haste, or we will go with thy head, for indeed the King purposeth to slay thee and to slay thy comrade and take that which is with you.” When the Prince heard this, his skin bristled with rage and he cried out at them with a cry which made them tremble. Then he sprang upon his horse and settling himself in the saddle, galloped till he came to the King’s assembly, when he shouted at the top of his voice, saying, “To horse, O horsemen!” and couched his spear at the pavilion wherein was Zuhayr. Now there were about the King a thousand smiters with the sword; but Al-Abbas charged home upon them and dispersed them from around him; and there abode none in the tent save Zuhayr and his Wazir. Then Al-Abbas came up to the door of the tent wherein were four-and-twenty golden doves; so he took them, after he had tumbled them down with the end of his lance. Then he called out saying, “Ho, Zuhayr! Doth it not suffice thee that thou hast abated Al-Akil’s repute, but thou art minded to abate that of those who sojourn round about him? Knowest thou not that he is of the lieutenants of Kundah bin Hisham of the Banu Shayban, a man renowned for prowess? Indeed, greed of his gain hath entered into thee and envy of him hath gotten the mastery of thee. Doth it not suffice thee that thou hast orphaned his children[398] and slain his men? By the virtue of Mustafa, the Chosen Prophet, I will make thee drain the cup of death!" So saying. he bared his brand and smiting Zuhayr on his shoulder-blade caused the steel issue gleaming from his throat tendons; then he smote the Wazir and clove his crown asunder. As he was thus, behold, Amir called out to him and said, "O my lord, come help me, or I be a dead man!" So Al-Abbas went up to him guided by his voice, and found him cast down on his back and chained with four chains to four pickets of iron.[399] He loosed his bonds and said to him, "Go in front of me, O Amir." So he fared on before him a little, and presently they looked, and, behold, horsemen were making to Zuhayr's succour, and they numbered twelve thousand riders led by Sahl bin Ka'ab bestriding a coal-black steed. He charged upon Amir, who fled from him, then upon Al-Abbas, who said, "O Amir, hold fast to my horse and guard my back." The page did as he bade him, whereupon Al-Abbas cried out at the folk and falling upon them, overthrew their braves and slew of them some two thousand riders, whilst not one of them knew what was to do nor with whom he fought. Then said one of them to other, "Verily, the King is slain; so with whom do we wage war? Indeed ye flee from him; but 'twere better ye enter under his banners, or not one of you will be saved." Thereupon all dismounted and doffing that which was upon them of war-gear, came before Al-Abbas and proffered him allegiance and sued for his protection. So he withheld his brand from them and bade them gather together the spoils. Then he took the riches and the slaves and the camels, and they all became his lieges and his retainers, to the number (according to that which is reported) of fifty thousand horses. Furthermore, the folk heard of him and flocked to him from all sides; whereupon he divided the loot amongst them and gave largesse and dwelt thus three days, and there came gifts to him. After this he bade march for Al-Akil's abiding place; so they fared on six days and on the seventh they sighted the camp. Al-Abbas bade his man Amir precede him and give Al-Akil the good news of his cousin's coming; so he rode on to the camp and, going in to Al-Akil, acquainted him with the glad tidings of Zuhayr's slaughter and the conquest of his clan.[400] Al-Akil rejoiced in the coming of Al-Abbas and the slaughter of his enemy and all in his camp rejoiced also and cast robes of honour upon Amir; while Al-Akil bade go forth to meet Al-Abbas, and commanded that none, great or small, freeman or slave, should tarry behind. So they did his bidding and going forth all, met Al-Abbas at three parasangs' distance from the camp; and when they met him, they dismounted from their horses and Al-Akil and he embraced and clapped palm to palm.[401] Then rejoicing in the coming of Al-Abbas and the killing of their foeman, they returned to the camp, where tents were pitched for the new-comers and skin-rugs spread and game slain and beasts slaughtered and royal guest-meals spread; and after this fashion they abode twenty days in the enjoyment of all delight of life. On this wise fared it with Al-Abbas and his cousin Al-Akil; but as regards King Al-Aziz, when his son left him, he was desolated for him with exceeding desolation, both he and his mother; and when tidings of him tarried long and the tryst-time passed without his returning, the king caused public proclamation to be made, commanding all his troops to get ready to mount and ride forth in quest of his son Al-Abbas, at the end of three days, after which no cause of hindrance or excuse would be admitted to any. So on the fourth day, the king bade muster the troops who numbered four-and-twenty thousand horse, besides servants and followers. Accordingly, they reared the standards and the kettle-drums beat the general and the king set out with his power intending for Baghdad; nor did he cease to press forward with all diligence, till he came within half a day's journey of the city, when he bade his army encamp on the Green Meadow. There they pitched the tents, till the lowland was straitened with them, and set up for the king a pavilion of green brocade, purfled with pearls and precious stones. When Al-Aziz had sat awhile, he summoned the Mamelukes of his son Al-Abbas, and they were five-and-twenty in number besides ten slave-girls, as they were moons, five of whom the king had brought with him and other five he had left with the prince's mother. When the Mamelukes came before him, he cast over each and every of them a mantle of green brocade and bade them mount similar horses of one and the same fashion and enter Baghdad and ask after their lord Al-Abbas. So they rode into the city and passed through the market-streets and there remained in Baghdad nor old man nor boy but came forth to gaze on them and divert himself with the sight of their beauty and loveliness and the seemliness of their semblance and the goodliness of their garments and horses, for all were even as moons. They gave not over going till they came to the palace,[402] where they halted, and the king looked at them and seeing their beauty and the brilliancy of their apparel and the brightness of their faces, said, "Would Heaven I knew of which of the tribes these are!" And he bade the Eunuch bring him news of them. The castrato went out to them and questioned them of their case, whereto they replied, "Return to thy lord and enquire of him concerning Prince Al-Abbas, an he have come unto him, for that he left his sire King Al-Aziz a full-told year ago, and indeed longing for him troubleth the King and he hath levied a division of his army and his guards and is come forth in quest of his son, so haply he may light upon tidings of him." Quoth the Eunuch, "Is there amongst you a brother of his or a son?" and quoth they, "Nay, by Allah, but we are all his Mamelukes and the purchased of his money, and his sire Al-Aziz hath sent us to make enquiry of him. Do thou go to thy lord and question him of the Prince and return to us with that which he shall answer thee." Asked the Eunuch, "And where is King Al-Aziz?" and they answered, "He is encamped in the Green Meadow."[403] The Eunuch returned and told the king, who said, "Indeed we have been unduly negligent with regard to Al-Abbas. What shall be our excuse with the King? By Allah, my soul suggested to me that the youth was of the sons of the kings!" His wife, the Lady Afifah saw him lamenting for his neglect of Al-Abbas, and said to him, "O King, what is it thou regrettest with this mighty regret?" Quoth he, "Thou knowest the stranger youth, who gifted us with the rubies?" Quoth she, "Assuredly;" and he, "Yonder youths, who have halted in the palace court, are his Mamelukes, and his father, King Al-Aziz, lord of Al-Yaman, hath pitched his camp on the Green Meadow; for he is come with his army to seek him, and the number of his troops is four-and-twenty thousand horsemen." Then he went out from her, and when she heard his words, she wept sore for him and had compassion on his case and sent after him, counselling him to summon the Mamelukes and lodge them in the palace and entertain them. The king hearkened to her rede and despatching the Eunuch for the Mamelukes, assigned unto them a lodging and said to them, “Have patience, till the King give you tidings of your lord Al-Abbas.” When they heard his words, their eyes ran over with a rush of tears, of their mighty longing for the sight of their lord. Then the King bade the Queen enter the private chamber opening upon the throne-room and let down the curtain before the door, so she might see and not be seen. She did this and he summoned them to his presence; and, when they stood before him, they kissed ground to do him honour, and showed forth their courtly breeding and magnified his dignity. He ordered them to sit, but they refused, till he conjured them by their lord Al-Abbas: accordingly they sat down and he bade set before them food of various kinds and fruits and sweetmeats. Now within the Lady Afifah’s palace was a souterrain communicating with the pavilion of the Princess Mariyah: so the Queen sent after her and she came to her, whereupon she made her stand behind the curtain and gave her to know that Al-Abbas was son to the King of Al-Yaman and that these were his Mamelukes: she also told her that the Prince’s father had levied his troops and was come with his army in quest of him and that he had pitched his camp on the Green Meadow and had despatched these Mamelukes to make enquiry of their lord. Then Mariyah abode looking upon them and upon their beauty and loveliness and the goodliness of their raiment, till they had eaten their fill of food and the tables were removed; whereupon the King recounted to them the story of Al-Abbas and they took leave of him and went their ways. So fortuned it with the Mamelukes; but as for the Princess Mariyah, when she returned to her palace, she bethought herself concerning the affair of Al-Abbas, repenting her of what she had done; and the love of him took root in her heart. And, when the night darkened upon her, she dismissed all her women and bringing out the letters, to wit, those which Al-Abbas had written her, fell to reading them and weeping. She left not weeping her night long, and when she arose in the morning, she called a damsel of her slave-girls, Shafíkah by name, and said to her, “O damsel, I purpose to discover to thee mine affair and I charge thee keep my secret, which is that thou betake thyself to the house of the nurse, who used to serve me, and fetch her to me, for that I have grave need of her.” Accordingly, Shafikah went out and repairing to the nurse's house, entered and found her clad in clothing other and richer than what she had whilome been wont to wear. So she saluted her and asked her, "Whence hadst thou this dress, than which there is no goodlier?" Answered the nurse, "O Shafikah, thou deemest that I have seen no good save of thy mistress; but, by Allah, had I endeavoured for her destruction, I had acted righteously, seeing that she did with me what she did and bade the Eunuch beat me, without offence by me offered: so tell her that he, on whose behalf I bestirred myself with her, hath made me independent of her and her humours, for he hath habited me in this habit and given me two hundred and fifty dinars and promised me the like every year and charged me to serve none of the folk." Quoth Shafikah, "My mistress hath a need for thee; so come thou with me and I will engage to restore thee to thy dwelling in safety and satisfaction." But quoth the nurse, "Indeed her palace is become unlawful and forbidden to me[404] and never again will I enter therein, for that Allah (extolled and exalted be He!) of His favour and bounty hath rendered me independent of her." Presently Shafikah returned to her mistress and acquainted her with the nurse's words and that wherein she was of prosperity; whereupon Mariyah confessed her unmannerly dealing with her and repented when repentance profited her not; and she abode in that her case days and nights, whilst the fire of longing flamed in her heart. On this wise happened it to her; but as regards Al-Abbas, he tarried with his cousin Al-Akil twenty days, after which he made ready for the journey to Baghdad and bidding bring the booty he had taken from King Zuhayr, divided it between himself and his cousin. Then he sent out a-marching Baghdad-wards and when he came within two days' journey of the city, he summoned his servant Amir and said to him, "Mount thy charger and forego me with the caravan and the cattle." So Amir took horse and fared on till he came to Baghdad, and the season of his entering was the first of the day; nor was there in the city little child or old greybeard but came forth to divert himself with gazing on those flocks and herds and upon the beauty of those slave-girls; and their wits were wildered at what they saw. Soon afterwards the news reached the king that the young man Al-Abbas, who had gone forth from him, was come back with booty and rarities and black slaves and a conquering host and had taken up his sojourn without the city, whilst his servant Amir was presently come to Baghdad, so he might get ready for his lord dwelling-places wherein he should take up his abode. When the King heard these tidings of Amir, he sent for him and caused bring him before him; and when he entered his presence, he kissed the ground and saluted with the salam and showed his fine breeding and greeted him with the goodliest of greetings. The King bade him raise his head and, this done, questioned him of his lord Al-Abbas; whereupon he acquainted him with his adventures and told him that which had betided him with King Zuhayr and of the army that was become at his command and of the spoil he had secured. He also gave him to know that Al-Abbas was to arrive on the morrow, and with him more than fifty thousand cavatiers, obedient to his orders. When the king heard his words, he bade decorate Baghdad and commanded the citizens to equip themselves with the richest of their apparel, in honour of the coming of Al-Abbas. Furthermore, he sent to give King Al-Aziz the glad tidings of his son's return and informed him of all which he had heard from the Prince's servant. When the news reached King Al-Aziz, he joyed with exceeding joy in the approach of his son and straightway took horse, he and all his host, while the trumpets blared and the musicians played, so that the earth quaked and Baghdad also trembled, and it was a notable day. When Mariyah beheld all this, she repented in all possible penitence of that which she had done against Al-Abbas and the fires of desire raged in her vitals. Meanwhile, the troops[405] sallied forth of Baghdad and went out to meet those of Al-Abbas, who had halted in a garth called the Green Island. When he espied the approaching host, he strained his sight and, seeing horsemen coming and troops and footmen he knew not, said to those about him, "Among yonder troops are flags and banners of various kinds; but, as for the great green standard that ye see, 'tis the standard of my sire, the which is reserved to him and never displayed save over his head, and thus I know that he himself is come out in quest of me." And he was certified of this, he and his troops. So he fared on towards them and when he drew near them, he knew them and they knew him; whereupon they lighted down from their horses and saluting him, gave him joy of his safety and the folk flocked to him. When he came to his father, they embraced and each greeted other a long time, whilst neither of them could utter a word, for the greatness of that which betided them of joy in reunion. Then Al-Abbas bade the folk take horse; so they mounted and his Mamelukes surrounded him and they entered Baghdad on the most splendid wise and in the highest honour and glory. Now the wife of the shopkeeper, that is, the nurse, came out, with the rest of those who flocked forth, to divert herself with gazing upon the show, and when she saw Al-Abbas and beheld his beauty and the beauty of his host and that which he had brought back with him of herds and slave-girls, Mamelukes and negroes, she improvised and recited these couplets,

“Al-Abbás from the side of Akíl is come; * Caravans and steeds he
hath plunderčd:
Yea; horses he brought of pure blood, whose necks * Ring with
collars like anklets wher’er they are led.
With domčd hoofs they pour torrent-like, * As they prance through
dust on the level stead:
And bestriding their saddles come men of war, * Whose fingers
play on the kettle-drum’s head:
And couched are their lances that bear the points * Keen grided,
which fill every soul with dread:
Who wi’ them would fence draweth down his death * For one deadly
lunge soon shall do him dead:
Charge, comrades, charge ye and give me joy, * Saying, ‘Welcome
to thee, O our dear comrŕde!’
And who joys at his meeting shall ‘joy delight * Of large gifts
when he from his steed shall ‘light.”

When the troops entered Baghdad, each of them alighted in his tent, whilst Al-Abbas encamped apart on a place near the Tigris and issued orders to slaughter for the soldiers, each day, that which should suffice them of oxen and sheep and to bake them bread and spread the tables: so the folk ceased not to come to him and eat of his banquet. Furthermore, all the country-people flocked to him with presents and rarities and he requited them many times the like of their gifts, so that the lands were filled with his renown and the fame of him was bruited abroad among the habitants of wold and town. Then, as soon as he rode to the house he had bought, the shopkeeper and his wife came to him and gave him joy of his safety; whereupon he ordered them three head of swift steeds and thoroughbred and ten dromedaries and an hundred head of sheep and clad them both in costly robes of honour. Presently he chose out ten slave-girls and ten negro slaves and fifty mares and the like number of she-camels and three hundred of sheep, together with twenty ounces of musk and as many of camphor, and sent all this to the King of Baghdad. When the present came to Ins bin Kays, his wit fled for joy and he was perplexed wherewith to requite him. Al-Abbas also gave gifts and largesse and bestowed robes of honour upon noble and simple, each after the measure of his degree, save only Mariyah; for to her indeed he sent nothing. This was grievous to the Princess and it irked her sore that he should not remember her; so she called her slave-girl Shafikah and said to her, "Hie thee to Al-Abbas and salute him and say to him, 'What hindereth thee from sending my lady Mariyah her part of thy booty?'" So Shafikah betook herself to him and when she came to his door, the chamberlains refused her admission, until they should have got for her leave and permission. When she entered, Al-Abbas knew her and knew that she had somewhat of speech with him; so he dismissed his Mamelukes and asked her, "What is thine errand, O hand-maid of good?" Answered she, "O my lord, I am a slave-girl of the Princess Mariyah, who kisseth thy hands and offereth her salutation to thee. Indeed, she rejoiceth in thy safety and blameth thee for that thou breakest her heart, alone of all the folk, because thy largesse embraceth great and small, yet hast thou not remembered her with anything of thy plunder, as if thou hadst hardened thy heart against her." Quoth he, "Extolled be He who turneth hearts! By Allah, my vitals were consumed with the love of her; and, of my longing after her I came forth to her from my motherland and left my people and my home and my wealth, and it was with her that began the hardheartedness and the cruelty. Natheless, for all this, I bear her no malice and there is no help but that I send her somewhat whereby she may remember me; for that I sojourn in her country but a few days, after which I set out for the land of Al-Yaman." Then he called for a chest and thence bringing out a necklace of Greek workmanship, worth a thousand dinars, wrapped it in a mantle of Greek silk, set with pearls and gems and purfled with red gold, and joined thereto a couple of caskets containing musk and amber-gris. He also put off upon the girl a mantle of Greek silk, striped with gold, wherein were divers figures and portraitures depictured, never saw eyes its like. Therewithal the girl's wit fled for joy and she went forth from his presence and returned to her mistress. When she came in to her, she acquainted her with that which she had seen of Al-Abbas and that which was with him of servants and attendants and set out to her the loftiness of his station and gave her that which was with her. Mariyah opened the mantle, and when she saw that necklace (and indeed the place was illumined with the lustre thereof), she looked at her slave-girl and said to her, "By Allah, O Shafikah, one look at him were dearer to me than all that my hand possesseth! Oh, would Heaven I knew what I shall do, when Baghdad is empty of him and I hear of him no news!" Then she wept and calling for ink-case and paper and pen of brass, wrote these couplets:

Longsome my sorrows are; my liver's fired with ecstasy; * And
 severance-shaft hath shot me through whence sorest pangs I
 dree:
And howso could my soul forget the love I bear to you? *
 You-wards my will perforce returns nor passion sets me free:
I 'prison all desires I feel for fear of spies thereon * Yet
 tears that streak my cheek betray for every eye to see.
No place of rest or joy I find to bring me life-delight; * No
 wine tastes well, nor viands please however savoury:
Ah me! to whom shall I complain of case and seek its cure * Save
 unto thee whose Phantom deigns to show me sight of thee?
Then name me not or chide for aught I did in passion-stress, *
 With vitals gone and frame consumed by yearning-malady!
Secret I keep the fire of love which aye for severance burns; *
 Sworn slave[406] to Love who robs my rest and wakes me
 cruelly:
And ceaseth not my thought to gaze upon your ghost by night, *
 Which falsing comes and he I love still, still unloveth me.

Would Heaven ye wist the blight that I for you are doomed to bear

* For love of you, which tortures me with parting agony!
Then read between the lines I wrote, and mark and learn their
sense * For such my tale, and Destiny made me an outcast be:
Learn eke the circumstance of Love and lover's woe nor deign *
Divulge its mysteries to men nor grudge its secrecy.

Then she folded the scroll and givng it to her slave-girl, bade her bear it to Al-Abbas and bring back his reply. So Shafikah took the letter and carried it to the Prince, after the doorkeeper had sought leave of him to admit her. When she came in to him, she found with him five damsels, as they were moons, clad in rich raiment and ornaments; and when he saw her, he said to her, "What is thy need, O hand-maid of good?" Presently she put out her hand to him with the writ, after she had kissed it, and he bade one of his slave-girls receive it from her.[407] Then he took it from the girl and breaking the seal, read it and comprehended its contents; whereupon he cried, "Verily, we be Allah's and unto Him we shall return!" and calling for ink-case and paper, wrote these improvised couplets: —

I wonder seeing how thy love to me * Inclined, while I in heart
from love declined:
Eke wast thou wont to say in verseful writ, * "Son of the
Road[408] no road to me shall find!
How oft kings flocked to me with mighty men * And bales on back
of Bukhti[409] beast they bind:
And noble steeds of purest blood and all * They bore of choicest
boons to me consigned;
Yet won no favour!" Then came I to woo * And the long tale o'
love I had designed,
I fain set forth in writ of mine, with words * Like strings of
pearls in goodly line aligned: —
Set forth my sev'rance, griefs, tyrannic wrongs, * And ill device
ill-suiting lover-kind.
How oft love-claimant, craving secrecy, * How oft have lovers
'plained as sore they pined,

How many a brimming bitter cup I've quaffed, * And wept my woes
when speech was vain as wind!
And thou:— "Be patient, 'tis thy bestest course * And choicest
medicine for mortal mind!"
Then unto patience worthy praise cleave thou; * Easy of issue and
be lief resigned:
Nor hope thou aught of me lest ill alloy * Or aught of dross
affect my blood refined:
Such is my speech. Read, mark, and learn my say! * To what thou
deemest ne'er I'll tread the way.

Then he folded the scroll and sealing it, entrusted it to the damsel, who took it and bore it to her mistress. When the Princess read the letter and mastered its meaning, she said, "Meseemeth he recalleth bygones to me." Then she called for pens, ink, and paper, and wrote these couplets:

Love thou didst show me till I learnt its woe * Then to the
growth of grief didst severance show:
I banisht joys of slumber after you * And e'en my pillow garred
my wake to grow.
How long in parting shall I pine with pain * While
severance-spies[410] through night watch every throe?
I've left my kingly couch and self withdrew * Therefrom, and
taught mine eyelids sleep t'unknow:
'Twas thou didst teach me what I ne'er can bear: * Then didst
thou waste my frame with parting-blow.
By oath I swear thee, blame and chide me not: * Be kind to
mourner Love hath stricken low!
For parting-rigours drive him nearer still * To narrow home, ere
clad in shroud for clo':
Have ruth on me, since Love laid waste my frame, * 'Mid thralls
enrolled me and lit fires that flame.

Mariyah rolled up the letter and gave it to Shafikah, bidding her bear it to Al-Abbas. Accordingly she took it and going with it to his door, proceeded to enter; but the chamberlains and serving-men forbade her, till they had obtained her leave from the Prince. When she went into him, she found him sitting in the midst of the five damsels before mentioned, whom his father had brought for him; so she gave him the letter and he tare it open and read it. Then he bade one of the damsels, whose name was Khafifah and who came from the land of China, tune her lute and sing anent separation. Thereupon she came forward and tuning her lute, played thereon in four-and-twenty modes: after which she returned to the first and sang these couplets,

"Our friends, when leaving us on parting-day, * Drave us in wolds
of severance-grief to stray:
When bound the camels' litters bearing them, * And cries of
drivers urged them on the way,
Outrusht my tears, despair gat hold of me * And sleep betrayed
mine eyes to wake a prey.
The day they went I wept, but showed no ruth * The severance-spy
and flared the flames alwŕy:
Alas for lowe o' Love that fires me still! * Alack for pine that
melts my heart away!
To whom shall I complain of care, when thou * Art gone, nor fain
a-pillow head I lay?
And day by day Love's ardours grow on me, * And far's the tent
that holds my fondest may:
O Breeze o' Heaven, bear for me a charge * (Nor traitor-like my
troth in love betray!),
Whene'er thou breathest o'er the loved one's land * Greet him
with choice salam fro' me, I pray:
Dust him with musk and powdered ambergris * While time endures!
Such is my wish for aye."

When the damsel had made an end of her song, Al-Abbas swooned away and they sprinkled on him musked rose-water, till he recovered from his fainting-fit, when he called another damsel (now there was on her of linen and raiment and ornaments that which undoeth description, and she was a model of beauty and brightness and loveliness and symmetry and perfect grace, such as shamed the crescent moon, and she was a Turkish girl from the land of the Roum and her name was Háfizah) and said to her, "O Hafizah, close thine eyes and tune thy lute and sing to us upon the days of severance." She answered him, "To hear is to obey" and taking the lute, tightened its strings and cried out from her head,[411] in a plaintive voice, and sang these couplets,

"My friends! tears flow in painful mockery, * And sick my heart
from parting agony:
My frame is wasted and my vitals wrung * And love-fires grow and
eyes set tear-floods free:
And when the fire burns high beneath my ribs * With tears I
quench it as sad day I see.
Love left me wasted, baffled, pain-begone, * Sore frighted, butt
to spying enemy:
When I recal sweet union wi' their loves * I chase dear sleep
from the sick frame o' me.
Long as our parting lasts the rival joys * And spies with fearful
prudence gain their gree.
I fear me for my sickly, langourous frame * Lest dread of parting
slay me incontinently."

When Hafizah had ended her song, Al-Abbas cried to her, "Brava! Verily, thou quickenest hearts from griefs." Then he called another maiden of the daughters of Daylam by name Marjánah, and said to her, "O Marjanah, sing to me upon the days of parting." She said, "Hearing and obeying," and recited these couplets,

"'Cleave to fair Patience! Patience 'gendereth weal': * Such is
the rede to us all sages deal:
How oft I plained the lowe of grief and love * Mid passions cast
my soul in sore unheal.
How oft I waked and drained the bitter cup * And watched the
stars, nor sleep mine eyes would seal!
Enough it were an deal you grace to me * In writ a-morn and
garred no hope to feel.
But Thoughts which probed its depths would sear my heart * And

start from eye-brows streams that ever steal:
Nor cease I suffering baleful doom and nights * Wakeful, and
heart by sorrows rent piece-meal:
But Allah purged my soul from love of you * When all knew secrets
cared I not reveal.
I march to-morrow from your country and * Haply you'll speed me
nor fear aught unweal;
And, when in person you be far from us, * Would heaven we knew
who shall your news reveal.
Who kens if home will e'er us two contain * In dearest life with
union naught can stain!"

When Marjanah had made an end of her song, the Prince said to her, "Brava, O damsel! Indeed, thou sayest a thing which had occurred to my mind and my tongue was near to speaking it." Then he signed to the fourth damsel, who was a Cairene, by name Sitt al-Husn, and bade her tune her lute and sing to him upon the same theme. So the Lady of Beauty tuned her lute and sang these couplets,

"Patience is blest for weal comes after woe * And all things
stated time and ordinance show;
Haps the Sultan, hight Fortune, prove unjust * Shifting the
times, and man excuse shall know:
Bitter ensueth sweet in law of change * And after crookedness
things straightest grow.
Then guard thine honour, nor to any save * The noble knowledge of
the hid bestow:
These be vicissitudes the Lord commands * Poor men endure, the
sinner and the low."

When Al-Abbas heard her make an end of her verses, they pleased him and he said to her, "Brava, O Sitt al-Husn! Indeed, thou hast done away with anxiety from my heart and hast banished the things which had occurred to my thought." Then he sighed and signing to the fifth damsel, who was from the land of the Persians and whose name was Marzíyah (now she was the fairest of them all and the sweetest of speech and she was like unto a lustrous star, a model of beauty and loveliness and perfection and brightness and justness of shape and symmetric grace and had a face like the new moon and eyes as they were gazelle's eyes) and said to her, "O Marziyah, come forward and tune thy lute and sing to us on the same theme, for indeed we are resolved upon faring to the land of Al-Yaman." Now this maiden had met many of the monarchs and had foregathered with the great; so she tuned her lute and sang these couplets,

"Friend of my heart why leave thou lone and desolate these eyne?

* Fair union of our lots ne'er failed this sitting-stead of
mine!
And ah! who dwellest singly in the heart and sprite of me, * (Be
I thy ransom!) desolate for loss of friend I pine!
By Allah! O thou richest form in charms and loveliness, * Give
alms to lover who can show of patience ne'er a sign!
Alms of what past between us tway (which ne'er will I divulge) *
Of privacy between us tway that man shall ne'er divine:
Grant me approval of my lord whereby t' o'erwhelm the foe * And
let my straitness pass away and doubtful thoughts malign:
Approof of thee (an gained the meed) for me high rank shall gain

* And show me robed in richest weed to eyes of envy fain."

When she had ended her song, all who were in the assembly wept for the daintiness of her delivery and the sweetness of her speech and Al-Abbas said to her, "Brava, O Marzíyah! Indeed, thou bewilderest the wits with the beauty of thy verse and the polish of thy speech."[412] All this while Shafikah abode gazing upon her, and when she beheld the slave-girls of Al-Abbas and considered the charms of their clothing and the subtlety of their senses and the delicacy of their delivery her reason flew from her head. Then she sought leave of Al-Abbas and returning to her mistress Mariyah, sans letter or reply, acquainted her with what she had espied of the damsels and described to her the condition wherein he was of honour and delight, majesty, venerance and loftiness of rank. Lastly, she enlarged upon what she had seen of the slave-girls and their case and that which they had said and how they had incited Al-Abbas anent returning to his own country by the recitation of songs to the sound of the strings. When the Princess heard this her slave-girl's report, she wept and wailed and was like to leave the world. Then she took to her pillow and said, "O Shafikah, I will inform thee of a something which is not hidden from Allah the Most High, and 'tis that thou watch over me till the Almighty decree the accomplishment of His destiny, and when my days are ended, take thou the necklace and the mantle with which Al-Abbas gifted me and return them to him. I deem not he will survive me, and if the Lord of All-might determine against him and his days come to an end, do thou give one charge to shroud us and entomb us both in one tomb." Then her case changed and her colour waxed wan; and when Shafikah saw her mistress in this plight, she repaired to her mother and told her that the lady Mariyah refused meat and drink. Asked the Queen, "Since when hath this befallen her?" and Shafikah answered, "Since yesterday's date;" whereat the mother was confounded and betaking herself to her daughter, that she might inquire into her case, lo and behold! found her as one dying. So she sat down at her head and Mariyah opened her eyes and seeing her mother sitting by her, sat up for shame before her. The Queen questioned her of her case and she said, "I entered the Hammam and it stupefied me and prostrated me and left in my head an exceeding pain; but I trust in Allah Al-mighty that it will cease." When her mother went out from her, Mariyah took to chiding the damsel for that which she had done and said to her, "Verily, death were dearer to me than this; so discover thou not my affair to any and I charge thee return not to the like of this fashion." Then she fainted and lay swooning for a whole hour, and when she came to herself, she saw Shafikah weeping over her; whereupon she pluckt the necklace from her neck and the mantle from her body and said to the damsel, "Lay them in a damask napkin and bear them to Al-Abbas and acquaint him with that wherein I am for the stress of severance and the strain of forbiddance." So Shafikah took them and carried them to Al-Abbas, whom she found in readiness to depart, being about to take horse for Al-Yaman. She went in to him and gave him the napkin and that which was therein, and when he opened it and saw what it contained, namely, the mantle and the necklace, his chagrin was excessive and his eyes turned in his head[413] and his rage shot out of them. When Shafikah saw that which betided him, she came forward and said to him, "O bountiful lord, verily my mistress returneth not the mantle and the necklace for despite; but she is about to quit the world and thou hast the best right to them." Asked he, "And what is the cause of this?" and Shafikah answered, "Thou knowest. By Allah, never among the Arabs nor the Ajams nor among the sons of the kings saw I a harder of heart than thou! Can it be a slight matter to thee that thou troublest Mariyah's life and causest her to mourn for herself and quit the world for the sake of thy youth?[414] Thou wast the cause of her acquaintance with thee and now she departeth this life on thine account, she whose like Allah Almighty hath not created among the daughters of the kings." When Al-Abbas heard from the damsel these words, his heart burned for Mariyah and her case was not light to him, so he said to Shafikah, "Canst thou bring me in company with her; so haply I may discover her concern and allay whatso aileth her?" Said she, "Yes, I can do that, and thine will be the bounty and the favour." So he arose and followed her, and she preceded him, till they came to the palace. Then she opened and locked behind them four-and-twenty doors and made them fast with padlocks; and when he came to Mariyah, he found her as she were the downing sun, strown upon a Táif rug of perfumed leather,[415] surrounded by cushions stuffed with ostrich down, and not a limb of her quivered. When her maid saw her in this state, she offered to cry out; but Al-Abbas said to her, "Do it not, but have patience till we discover her affair; and if Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) have decreed her death, wait till thou have opened the doors to me and I have gone forth. Then do what seemeth good to thee." So saying, he went up to the Princess and laying his hand upon her bosom, found her heart fluttering like a doveling and the life yet hanging to her breast.[416] So he placed his hand on her cheek, whereat she opened her eyes and beckoning to her maid, said to her by signs, "Who is this that treadeth my carpet and transgresseth against me?"[417] "O my lady," cried Shafikah, "this is Prince Al-Abbas, for whose sake thou forsakest the world." When Mariyah heard speak of Al-Abbas, she raised her hand from under the coverlet and laying it upon his neck, inhaled awhile his scent. Then she sat up and her complexion returned to her and they abode talking till a third part of the night was past. Presently, the Princess turned to her handmaid and bade her fetch them somewhat of food, sweetmeats, and fruits, fresh and dry. So Shafikah brought what she desired and they ate and drank and abode on this wise without lewdness, till night went and light came. Then said Al-Abbas, "Indeed, the morn breaketh. Shall I hie to my sire and bid him go to thy father and seek thee of him in wedlock for me, in accordance with the book of Allah Almighty and the practice of His Apostle (whom may He save and assain!) so we may not enter into transgression?" And Mariyah answered, saying, "By Allah, 'tis well counselled of thee!" So he went away to his lodging and naught befel between them; and when the day lightened, she recited these couplets,

"O friends, morn-breeze with Morn draws on amain: * A
Voice[418] bespeaks us, gladding us with 'plain.
Up to the convent where our friend we'll sight * And wine more
subtile than the dust[419] we'll drain;
Whereon our friend spent all the coin he owned * And made the
nursling in his cloak contain;[420]
And, when we oped the jar, light opalline * Struck down the
singers in its search waylain.
From all sides flocking came the convent-monks * Crying at top o'
voices, 'Welcome fain!'
And we carousing sat, and cups went round, * Till rose the
Venus-star o'er Eastern plain.
No shame in drinking wine, which means good cheer * And love and
promise of prophetic strain![421]
Ho thou, the Morn, our union sundering, * These joyous hours to
fine thou dost constrain.
Show grace to us until our pleasures end, * And latest drop of
joy fro' friends we gain:
You have affection candid and sincere * And Love and Joy are best
of Faiths for men."

Such was the case with Mariyah; but as regards Al-Abbas, he betook himself to his father's camp, which was pitched on the Green Meadow, by the Tigris-side, and none might thread his way between the tents, for the dense network of the tent ropes. When the Prince reached the first of the pavilions, the guards and servants came out to meet him from all sides and walked in his service till he drew near the sitting-place of his sire, who knew of his approach. So he issued forth his marquee and coming to meet his son, kissed him and made much of him. Then they returned together to the royal pavilion and when they had seated themselves therein and the guards had taken up their station in attendance on them, the King said to Al-Abbas, "O my son, get ready thine affair, so we may go to our own land, for that the lieges in our absence are become as they were sheep lacking shepherd." Al-Abbas looked at his father and wept till he fainted, and when he recovered from his fit, he improvised and recited these couplets,

"I embraced him,[422] and straight I waxt drunk wi' the smell

* Of a fresh young branch wont in wealth to dwell.
Yea, drunken, but not by the wine; nay, 'twas * By draughts from
his lips that like wine-cups well:
For Beauty wrote on his cheek's fair page * 'Oh, his charms! take
refuge fro' danger fell!'[423]
Mine eyes, be easy, since him ye saw; * Nor mote nor blearness
with you shall mell:
In him Beauty showeth fro' first to fine * And bindeth on hearts
bonds unfrangible:
An thou kohl thyself with his cheek of light * Thou'll find but
jasper and or in stelle:[424]
The chiders came to reproach me when * For him longing and pining
my heart befel:
But I fear not, I end not, I turn me not * From his life, let
tell-tale his tale e'en tell:
By Allah, forgetting ne'er crossed my thought * While by life-tie
bound, or when ends my spell:
An I live I will live in his love, an I die * Of love and
longing, I'll cry, ''Tis well!'"

Now when Al-Abbas had ended his verses, his father said to him, “I seek refuge for thee with Allah, O my son! Hast thou any want thou art powerless to win, so I may endeavour for thee therein and lavish my treasures in its quest.” Cried Al-Abbas, “O my papa, I have, indeed, an urgent need, on whose account I came forth of my mother-land and left my people and my home and affronted perils and horrors and became an exile, and I trust in Allah that it may be accomplished by thy magnanimous endeavour.” Quoth the King, “And what is thy want?” and quoth Al-Abbas, “I would have thee go and ask for me to wife Mariyah, daughter of the King of Baghdad, for that my heart is distracted with love of her.” Then he recounted to his father his adventure from first to last. When the King heard this from his son, he rose to his feet and calling for his charger of parade, took horse with four-and-twenty Emirs of the chief officers of his empire. Then he betook himself to the palace of the King of Baghdad who, when he saw him coming, bade his chamberlains open the doors to them and going down himself to meet them, received him with all honour and hospitality and carried him and his into the palace; then causing make ready for them carpets and cushions, sat down upon his golden throne and seated the guest by his side upon a chair of gold, framed in juniper-wood set with pearls and jewels. Presently he bade bring sweetmeats and confections and scents and commanded to slaughter four and-twenty head of sheep and the like of oxen and make ready geese and chickens and pigeons stuffed and boiled, and spread the tables; nor was it long before the meats were served up in vessels of gold and silver. So they ate their sufficiency and when they had eaten their fill, the tables were removed and the wine-service set on and the cups and flagons ranged in ranks, whilst the Mamelukes and the fair slave-girls sat down, with zones of gold about their waists, studded with all manner pearls, diamonds, emeralds, rubies and other jewels. Moreover, the king bade fetch the musicians; so there presented themselves before him twenty damsels with lutes and psalteries[425] and viols, and smote upon instruments of music playing and performing on such wise that they moved the assembly to delight. Then said Al-Aziz to the King of Baghdad, “I would fain speak a word to thee; but do thou not exclude from us those who are present. An thou consent unto my wish thine is ours and on thee shall be whatso is on us;[426] and we will be to thee a mighty forearm against all unfriends and foes." Quoth Ins bin Kays, "Say what thou wilt, O King, for indeed thou excellest in speech and in whatso thou sayest dost hit the mark." So Al-Aziz said to him, "I desire that thou marry thy daughter Mariyah to my son Al-Abbas, for thou knowest what he hath of beauty and loveliness, brightness and perfect grace and his frequentation of the valiant and his constancy in the stead of cut-and-thrust." Said Ins bin Kays, "By Allah, O King, of my love for Mariyah, I have appointed her mistress of her own hand; accordingly, whomsoever she chooseth of the folk, to him will I wed her." Then he arose to his feet and going in to his daughter, found her mother with her; so he set out to them the case and Mariyah said, "O my papa, my wish followeth thy word and my will ensueth thy will; so whatsoever thou chooseth, I am obedient to thee and under thy dominion." Therewith the King knew that Mariyah inclined to Al-Abbas; he therefore returned forthright to King Al-Aziz and said to him, "May Allah amend the King! Verily, the wish is won and there is no opposition to that thou commandest." Quoth Al-Aziz, "By Allah's leave are wishes won. How deemest thou, O King, of fetching Al-Abbas and documenting the marriage-contract between Mariyah and him?" and quoth Ins bin Kays, "Thine be the rede." So Al-Aziz sent after his son and acquainted him with that which had passed; whereupon Al-Abbas called for four-and-twenty mules and ten horses and as many camels and loaded the mules with fathom-long pieces of silk and rugs of leather and boxes of camphor and musk and the camels and horses with chests of gold and silver. Eke, he took the richest of the stuffs and wrapping them in wrappers of gold-purfled silk, laid them on the heads of porters,[427] and they fared on with the treasures till they reached the King of Baghdad's palace, whereupon all who were present dismounted in honour of Al-Abbas and escorting him in a body to the presence of Ins bin Kays, displayed to the King all that they had with them of things of price. The King bade carry all this into the store rooms of the Harim and sent for the Kazis and the witnesses, who wrote out the contract and married Mariyah to Al-Abbas, whereupon the Prince commanded slaughter one thousand head of sheep and five hundred buffaloes. So they spread the bride-feast and bade thereto all the tribes of the

Arabs, men of tents and men of towns, and the banquet continued for the space of ten days. Then Al-Abbas went into Mariyah in a commendable and auspicious hour and lay with her and found her a pearl unthridden and a goodly filly no rider had ridden;[428] wherefore he rejoiced and was glad and made merry, and care and sorrow ceased from him and his life was pleasant and trouble departed and he ceased not abiding with her in most joyful case and in the most easeful of life, till seven days were past, when King Al-Aziz resolved to set out and return to his realm and bade his son seek leave of his father-in-law to depart with his wife to his own country. So Al-Abbas spoke of this to King Ins, who granted him the permission he sought; whereupon he chose out a red camel,[429] taller and more valuable than the rest of the camels, and loading it with apparel and ornaments, mounted Mariyah in a litter thereon. Then they spread the ensigns and the standards, whilst kettle-drums beat and the trumpets blared, and set out upon the homewards way. The King of Baghdad rode forth with them and companied them three days' journey on their route, after which he farewelled them and returned with his troops to Baghdad. As for King Al-Aziz and his son, they fared on night and day and gave not over going till there remained but three days' journey between them and Al-Yaman, when they despatched three men of the couriers to the Prince's mother to report that they were bringing with them Mariyah, the King's daughter of Baghdad, and returning safe and laden with spoil. When the Oueen-mother heard this, her wit took wings for joy and she adorned the slave-girls of Al-Abbas after the finest fashion. Now he had ten hand-maids, as they were moons, whereof his father had carried five with him to Baghdad, as hath erst been set forth, and the remaining five abode with his mother. When the dromedary-posts[430] came, they were certified of the approach of Al-Abbas, and when the sun easted and their flags were seen flaunting, the Prince's mother came out to meet her son; nor on that day was there great or small, boy or grey-beard, but went forth to greet the king. Then the kettle-drums of glad tidings beat and they entered in the utmost of pomp and the extreme of magnificence; so that the tribes and the townspeople heard of them and brought them the richest of gifts and the rarest of presents and the Prince's mother rejoiced with joy exceeding. They butchered beasts and spread mighty bride-feasts for the people and kindled fires,[431] that it might be visible afar to townsman and tribesman that this was the house of hospitality and the stead of the wedding-festival, to the intent that, if any passed them by, it should be of his own sin against himself. So the folk came to them from all districts and quarters and in this way they abode days and months. Presently the Prince's mother bade fetch the five slave-girls to that assembly; whereupon they came and the ten damsels met. The queen seated five of them on her son's right hand and the other five on his left and the folk gathered about them. Then she bade the five who had remained with her speak forth somewhat of poesy, so they might entertain therewith the seance and that Al-Abbas might rejoice thereat. Now she had clad them in the costliest of clothes and adorned them with trinkets and ornaments and moulded work of gold and silver and collars of gold, wrought with pearls and gems. So they paced forward, with harps and lutes and zithers and recorders and other instruments of music before them, and one of them, a damsel who came from the land of China and whose name was Bá'úthah, advanced and screwed up the strings of her lute. Then she cried out from the top of her head and recited these couplets,

"Indeed your land returned, when you returned, * To whilom light
    which overgrew its gloom:
Green grew the land that was afore dust-brown. * And fruits that
    failed again showed riping bloom:
And clouds rained treasures after rain had lacked, * And plenty
    poured from earth's re-opening womb.
Then ceased the woes, my lords, that garred us weep, * With tears
    like dragons' blood, our severance-doom,
Whose length, by Allah, made me yeam and pine, * Would Heaven, O
    lady mine, I were thy groom!"

When she had ended her song, all who were present were delighted and Al-Abbas rejoiced in this. Then he bade the second damsel sing somewhat on the same theme. So she came forward and tightening the strings of her harp, which was of balass ruby,[432] raised her voice in a plaintive air and improvised these couplets,

"Brought the Courier glad news of our absentees,[433] * To
please us through those who had wrought us unease:
Cried I, 'My life ransom thee, messenger man, * Thou hast kept
thy faith and thy boons are these.'
An the nightlets of union in you we joyed * When fared you naught
would our grief appease;
You sware that folk would to folk be true, * And you kept your
oaths as good faith decrees.
To you made I oath true lover am I * Heaven guard me when sworn
from all perjuries:
I fared to meet you and loud I cried, * 'Aha, fair welcome when
come you please!"
And I joyed to meet you and when you came, * Deckt all the
dwelling with tapestries,
And death in your absence to us was dight, * But your presence
bringeth us life and light."

When she had made an end of her verse, Al-Abbas bade the third damsel (who came from Samarkand of Ajam-land and whose name was Rummánah) sing, and she answered, "To hear is to obey." Then she took the zither and crying out from the midst of her head, recited and sang these couplets,[434]

"My watering mouth declares thy myrtle-cheek my food to be * And
cull my lips thy side-face rose, who lily art to me!
And twixt the dune and down there shows the fairest flower that
blooms * Whose fruitage is granado's fruit with all
granado's blee.[435]
Forget my lids of eyne their sleep for magic eyes of him; *
Naught since he fared but drowsy charms and languorous air I
see.[436]
He shot me down with shaft of glance from bow of eyebrow sped: *
What Chamberlain[437] betwixt his eyes garred all my
pleasure flee?
Haply shall heart of me seduce his heart by weakness' force *

E’en as his own seductive grace garred me love-ailment dree.
For an by him forgotten be our pact and covenant * I have a King
who never will forget my memory.
His sides bemock the bending charms of waving Tamarisk,[438] *
And in his beauty-pride he walks as drunk with coquetry:
His feet and legs be feather-light whene’er he deigns to run *
And say, did any ride the wind except ‘twere
Solomon?”[439]

Therewith Al-Abbas smiled and her verses pleased him. Then he bade the fourth damsel come forward and sing (now she was from the Sundown-land[440] and her name was Balakhshá); so she came forward and taking the lute and the zither, tuned the strings and smote them in many modes; then she returned to the first and improvising, sang these couplets,

“When to the séance all for pleasure hied * Thy lamping eyes
illumined its every side;
While playing round us o’er the wine-full bowl * Those
necklace-pearls old wine with pleasure plied,[441]
Till wits the wisest drunken by her grace * Betrayed for joyance
secrets sages hide;
And, seen the cup, we bade it circle round * While sun and moon
spread radiance side and wide.
We raised for lover veil of love perforce * And came glad tidings
which new joys applied:
Loud sang the camel-guide; won was our wish * Nor was the secret
by the spy espied:
And, when my days were blest by union-bliss * And to all-parting
Time was aid denied,
Each ‘bode with other, clear of meddling spy * Nor feared we hate
of foe or neighbour-pride.
The sky was bright, friends came and severance fared * And
Love-in-union rained boons multiplied:
Saying ‘Fulfil fair union, all are gone * Rivals and fears lest
shaming foe deride:’
Friends now conjoinčd are: wrong passed away * And meeting-cup

goes round and joys abide:
On you be Allah’s Peace with every boon * Till end the dooming
years and time and tide.”

When Balakhsha had ended her verse, all present were moved to delight and Al-Abbas said to her, “Brava, O damsel!” Then he bade the fifth damsel come forward and sing (now she was from the land of Syria and her name was Rayhánah; she was passing of voice and when she appeared in an assembly, all eyes were fixed upon her), so she came forward and taking the viol (for she was used to play upon all instruments) recited and sang these couplets,

“Your me-wards coming I hail to sight; * Your look is a joy
driving woe from sprite:
With you love is blest, pure and white of soul; * Life’s sweet
and my planet grows green and bright:
By Allah, you-wards my pine ne’er ceased * And your like is rare
and right worthy hight.
Ask my eyes an e’er since the day ye went * They tasted sleep,
looked on lover-wight:
My heart by the parting-day was broke * And my wasted body
betrays my plight:
Could my blamers see in what grief am I, * They had wept in
wonder my loss, my blight!
They had joined me in shedding torrential tears * And like me
a-morn had shown thin and slight:
How long for your love shall your lover bear * This weight o’er
much for the hill’s strong height?
By Allah what then for your sake was doomed * To my heart, a
heart by its woes turned white!
An showed I the fires that aye flare in me, * They had ‘flamed
Eastern world and earth’s Western site.
But after this is my love fulfilled * With joy and gladness and
mere delight;
And the Lord who scattered hath brought us back * For who doeth
good shall of good ne’er lack.”

When King Al-Aziz heard the damsel’s song, both words and verses pleased him and he said to Al-Abbas, “O my son, verily long versifying hath tired these damsels, and indeed they make us yearn after the houses and the homesteads with the beauty of their songs. These five have adorned our meeting with the charm of their melodies and have done well in that which they have said before those who are present; so we counsel thee to free them for the love of Allah Almighty.” Quoth Al-Abbas, “There is no command but thy command;” and he enfranchised the ten damsels in the assembly; whereupon they kissed the hands of the King and his son and prostrated themselves in thanksgiving to the Lord of All-might. Then they put off that which was upon them of ornaments and laying aside the lutes and other instruments of music, kept to their houses like modest women and veiled, and fared not forth.[442] As for King Al-Aziz, he lived after this seven years and was removed to the mercy of Almighty Allah; when his son Al-Abbas bore him forth to burial as beseemeth kings and let make for him perlections and professional recitations of the Koran. He kept up the mourning for his father during four successive weeks, and when a full-told month had elapsed he sat down on the throne of the kingship and judged and did justice and distributed silver and gold. He also loosed all who were in the jails and abolished grievances and customs dues and righted the oppressed of the oppressor; so the lieges prayed for him and loved him and invoked on him endurance of glory and continuance of kingship and length of life and eternity of prosperity and happiness. The troops submitted to him, and the hosts from all parts of the kingdom, and there came to him presents from each and every land: the kings obeyed him and many were his warriors and his grandees, and his subjects lived with him the most easeful of lives and the most delightsome. Meanwhile, he ceased not, he and his beloved, Queen Mariyah, in the most enjoyable of life and the pleasantest, and he was vouchsafed by her children; and indeed there befel friendship and affection between them and the longer their companionship was prolonged, the more their love waxed, so that they became unable to endure each from other a single hour, save the time of his going forth to the Divan, when he would return to her in the liveliest that might be of longing. And after this fashion they abode in all solace of life and satisfaction till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies. So extolled be the Eternal whose sway endureth for ever and aye, who never unheedeth neither dieth nor sleepeth! This is all that hath come down to us of their tale, and so the Peace!

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SHAHRAZAD AND SHAHRYAR.[443]

King Shahryar marveled at this history[444] and said, “By Allah, verily, injustice slayeth its folk!”[445] And he was edified by that, wherewith Shahrazad bespoke him and sought help of Allah the Most High. Then said he to her, “Tell me another of thy tales, O Shahrazad; supply me with a pleasant story and this shall be the completion of the story-telling.”Shahrazad replied, “With love and gladness! It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that a man once declared to his mates, ‘I will set forth to you a means of security against annoy.’ A friend of mine once related to me and said, “We attained to security against annoy, and the origin of it was other than this; that is, it was the following’”[446]

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TALE OF THE TWO KINGS AND THE WAZIR’S DAUGHTERS.[447]

I overtravelled whilome lands and climes and towns and visited the cities of high renown and traversed the ways of dangers and hardships. Towards the last of my life, I entered a city of the cities of China,[448] wherein was a king of the Chosroës and the Tobbas[449] and the Cćsars.[450] Now that city had been peopled with its inhabitants by means of justice and equity; but its then king was a tyrant dire who despoiled lives and souls at his desire; in fine, there was no warming oneself at his fire, [451] for that indeed he oppressed the believing band and wasted the land. Now he had a younger brother, who was king in Samarkand of the Persians, and the two kings sojourned a while of time, each in his own city and stead, till they yearned unto each other and the elder king despatched his Wazir to fetch his younger brother. When the Minister came to the King of Samarkand and acquainted him with his errand, he submitted himself to the bidding of his brother and answered, “To hear is to obey.” Then he equipped himself and made ready for wayfare and brought forth his tents and pavilions. A while after midnight, he went in to his wife, that he might farewell her, and found her with a strange man, lying by her in one bed. So he slew them both and dragging them out by the feet, cast them away and set forth on his march. When he came to his brother’s court, the elder king rejoiced in him with joy exceeding and lodged him in the pavilion of hospitality beside his own palace. Now this pavilion overlooked a flower-garden belonging to the elder brother and there the younger abode with him some days. Then he called to mind that which his wife had done with him and remembered her slaughter and bethought him how he was a king, yet was not exempt from the shifts of Time; and this affected him with exceeding affect, so that it drave him to abstain from meat and drink, or, if he ate anything, it profited him naught. When his brother saw him on such wise, he deemed that this had betided him by reason of severance from his folk and family, and said to him, “Come, let us fare forth a-coursing and a-hunting.” But he refused to go with him; so the elder brother went to the chase, while the younger abode in the pavilion aforesaid. Now, as he was diverting himself by looking out upon the flower-garden from the latticed window of the palace, behold, he saw his brother's wife and with her ten black slaves and ten slave-girls. Each slave laid hold of a damsel and another slave came forth and did the like with the queen; and when they had their wills one of other they all returned whence they came. Hereat there betided the King of Samarkand exceeding surprise and solace and he was made whole of his malady, little by little. After a few days, his brother returned, and finding him cured of his complaint, said to him, "Tell me, O my brother, what was the cause of thy sickness and thy pallor, and what is the reason of the return of health to thee and of rosiness to thy face after this?" So he acquainted him with the whole case and this was grievous to him; but they hid their affair and agreed to leave the kingship and fare forth a-pilgrimaging and adventuring at hap-hazard, for they deemed that there had befallen none the like of what had befallen them. Accordingly, they went forth and as they journeyed, they saw by the way a woman imprisoned in seven chests, whereon were five padlocks, and sunken deep in the midst of the salt sea, under the guardianship of an Ifrit; yet for all this that woman issued out of the ocean and opened those padlocks and coming forth of those chests, did what she would with the two brothers, after she had practised upon the Ifrit. When the two kings saw that woman's fashion and how she circumvented the Ifrit, who had lodged her in the abyss of the main, they turned back to their kingdoms and the younger betook himself to Samarkand, whilst the elder returned to China and contrived for himself a custom in the slaughter of damsels, which was, his Wazir used to bring him every night a girl, with whom he lay that night, and when he arose in the morning, he gave her to the Minister and bade him do her die. After this fashion he abode a long time, whilst the folk murmured and God's creatures were destroyed and the commons cried out by reason of that grievous affair into which they were fallen and feared the wrath of Allah Almighty, dreading lest He destroy them by means of this. Still the king persisted in that practice and in his blameworthy intent of the killing of damsels and the despoilment of maidens concealed by veils,[452] wherefore the girls sought succour of the Lord of All-might, and complained to Him of the tyranny of the king and of his oppression. Now the king's Wazir had two daughters, sisters german, the elder of whom had read the books and made herself mistress of the sciences and studied the writings of the sages and the stories of the cup- companions,[453] and she was a maiden of abundant lore and knowledge galore and wit than which naught can be more. She heard that which the folk suffered from that king in his misuage of their children; whereupon ruth for them gat hold of her and jealousy and she besought Allah Almighty that He would bring the king to renounce that his new and accursed custom,[454] and the Lord answered her prayer. Then she consulted her younger sister and said to her, "I mean to devise a device for freeing the children of folk; to wit, I will go up to the king and offer myself to marry him, and when I come to his presence, I will send to fetch thee. When thou comest in to me and the king had his carnal will of me, do thou say to me, 'O my sister, let me hear a story of thy goodly stories, wherewith we may beguile the waking hours of our night, till the dawn, when we take leave of each other; and let the king hear it likewise!'" The other replied, "'Tis well; forsure this contrivance will deter the king from this innovation he practiseth and thou shalt be requited with favour exceeding and recompense abounding in the world to come, for that indeed thou perilest thy life and wilt either perish or win to thy wish." So she did this and Fortune favoured her and the Divine direction was vouchsafed to her and she discovered her design to her sire, the Wazir, who thereupon forbade her, fearing her slaughter. However, she repeated her words to him a second time and a third, but he consented not. Then he cited to her a parable, which should deter her, and she cited to him a parable of import contrary to his, and the debate was prolonged between them and the adducing of instances, till her father saw that he was powerless to turn her from her purpose and she said to him, "There is no help but that I marry the King, so haply I may be a sacrifice for the children of the Moslems: either I shall turn him from this his heresy or I shall die." When the Minister despaired of dissuading her, he went up to the king and acquainted him with the case, saying, "I have a maiden daughter and she desireth to give herself in free gift to the King." Quoth the King, "How can thy soul consent to this, seeing that thou knowest I abide but a single night with a girl and when I arise on the morrow, I do her dead, and ’tis thou who slayest her, and again and again thou hast done this?” Quoth the Wazir, “Know, O king, that I have set forth all this to her, yet consented she not to aught, but needs must she have thy company and she chooseth to come to thee and present herself before thee, albeit I have cited to her the sayings of the sages; but she hath answered me with more than that which I said to her and contrariwise.” Then quoth the king, “Suffer her visit me this night and to-morrow morning come thou and take her and kill her; and by Allah, an thou slay her not, I will slay thee and her also!” The Minister obeyed the king’s bidding and going out from the presence returned home. When it was night, he took his elder daughter and carried her up to the king; and when she came before him she wept;[455] whereupon he asked her, “What causeth thee to weep? Indeed, ’twas thou who willedst this.” She answered, “I weep not but of longing after my little sister; for that, since we grew up, I and she, I have never been parted from her till this day; so, an it please the King to send for her, that I may look on her, and listen to her speech and take my fill of her till the morning, this were a boon and an act of kindness of the King.” So he bade fetch the damsel and she came. Then there befel that which befel of his union with the elder sister,[456] and when he went up to his couch, that he might sleep, the younger sister said to her elder, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be not asleep, tell us a tale of thy goodly tales, wherewith me may beguile the watches of our night, ere day dawn and parting.” Said she, “With love and gladness;” and fell to relating to her, whilst the king listened. Her story was goodly and delectable, and whilst she was in the midst of telling it, the dawn brake. Now the king’s heart clave to the hearing of the rest of the story; so he respited her till the morrow; and, when it was the next night, she told him a tale concerning the marvels of the land and the wonders of Allah’s creatures which was yet stranger and rarer than the first. In the midst of the recital, appeared the day and she was silent from the permitted say. So he let her live till the following night, that he might hear the end of the history and after that slay her. On this wise it fortuned with her; but as regards the people of the city, they rejoiced and were glad and blessed the Wazir’s daughters, marvelling for that three days had passed and that the king had not put his bride to death and exulting in that he had returned to the ways of righteousness and would never again burthen himself with blood-guilt against any of the maidens of the city. Then, on the fourth night, she related to him a still more extraordinary adventure, and on the fifth night she told him anecdotes of Kings and Wazirs and Notables. Brief, she ceased not to entertain him many days and nights, while the king still said to himself, “Whenas I shall have heard the end of the tale, I will do her die,” and the people redoubled their marvel and admiration. Also, the folk of the circuits and cities heard of this thing, to wit, that the king had turned from his custom and from that which he had imposed upon himself and had renounced his heresy, wherefor they rejoiced and the lieges returned to the capital and took up there abode therein, after they had departed thence; and they were constant in prayer to Allah Almighty that He would stablish the king in his present stead.” “And this,” said Shahrazad, “is the end of that which my friend related to me.” Quoth Shahryar,[457] “O Shahrazad, finish for us the tale thy friend told thee, inasmuch as it resembleth the story of a King whom I knew; but fain would I hear that which betided the people of this city and what they said of the affair of the King, so I may return from the case wherein I was.” She replied, “With love and gladness!” Know, O auspicious king and lord of right rede and praiseworthy meed and prowest of deed, that, when the folk heard how the king had put away from him his malpractice and returned from his unrighteous wont, they rejoiced in this with joy exceeding and offered up prayers for him. Then they talked one with other of the cause of the slaughter of the maidens, and the wise said, “Women are not all alike, nor are the fingers of the hand alike.” Now when King Shahryar heard this story he came to himself and awakening from his drunkenness,[458] said, “By Allah, this story is my story and this case is my case, for that indeed I was in reprobation and danger of judgment till thou turnedst me back from this into the right way, extolled be the Causer of causes and the Liberator of necks!” presently adding, “Indeed, O Shahrazad, thou hast awakened me to many things and hast aroused me from mine ignorance of the right.” Then said she to him, “O chief of the kings, the wise say, ‘The kingship is a building, whereof the troops are the base, and when the foundation is strong, the building endureth;’ wherefore it behoveth the king to strengthen the foundation, for that they say, ‘Whenas the base is weak, the building falleth.’ In like fashion it befitteth the king to care for his troops and do justice among his lieges, even as the owner of the garden careth for his trees and cutteth away the weeds that have no profit in them; and so it befitteth the king to look into the affairs of his Ryots and fend off oppression from them. As for thee, O king, it behoveth thee that thy Wazir be virtuous and experienced in the requirements of the people and the peasantry; and indeed Allah the Most High hath named his name[459] in the history of Musŕ (on whom be the Peace!) when he saith, ‘And make me a Wazir of my people, Aaron.’ Now could a Wazir have been dispensed withal, Moses son of Imrán had been worthier than any to do without a Minister. As for the Wazir, the Sultan discovereth unto him his affairs, private and public; and know, O king, that the likeness of thee with the people is that of the leach with the sick man; and the essential condition of the Minister is that he be soothfast in his sayings, reliable in all his relations, rich in ruth for the folk and in tenderness of transacting with them. Verily, it is said, O king, that good troops be like the druggist; if his perfumes reach thee not, thou still smellest the fragrance of them; and bad entourage be like the blacksmith; if his sparks burn thee not, thou smellest his evil smell. So it befitteth thee to take to thyself a virtuous Wazir, a veracious counsellor, even as thou takest unto thee a wife displayed before thy face, because thou needest the man’s righteousness for thine own right directing, seeing that, if thou do righteously, the commons will do right, and if thou do wrongously, they will also do wrong.” When the King heard this, drowsiness overcame him and he slept and presently awaking, called for the candles; so they were lighted and he sat down on his couch and seating Shahrazad by him, smiled in her face. She kissed the ground before him and said, “O king of the age and lord of the time and the years, extolled be the Forgiving, the Bountiful, who hath sent me to thee, of His grace and good favour, so I have incited thee to longing after Paradise; for verily this which thou wast wont do was never done of any of the kings before thee. Then laud be to the Lord who hath directed thee into the right way, and who from the paths of frowardness hath diverted thee! As for women, Allah Almighty maketh mention of them also when He saith in His Holy Book, ‘Truly, the men who resign themselves to Allah[460] and the women who resign themselves, and the true-believing men and the true-believing women and the devout men and the devout women and truthful men and truthful women, and long-suffering men and long-suffering women, and the humble men and the humble women, and charitable men and charitable women, and the men who fast and the women who fast, and men who guard their privities and women who guard their privities, and men who are constantly mindful of Allah and women who are constantly mindful, for them Allah hath prepared forgiveness and a rich reward.’[461] As for that which hath befallen thee, verily, it hath befallen many kings before thee and their women have falsed them, for all they were more majestical of puissance than thou, and mightier of kingship and had troops more manifold. If I would, I could relate unto thee, O king, concerning the wiles of women, that whereof I should not make an end all my life long; and indeed, in all these my nights that I have passed before thee, I have told thee many tales of the wheedling of women and of their craft; but soothly the things abound on me;[462] so, an thou please, O king, I will relate to thee somewhat of that which befel olden kings of perfidy from their women and of the calamities which overtook them by reason of these deceivers.”“ Asked the king, “How so? Tell on;” and she answered, “Hearkening and obedience. It hath been told me, O king, that a man once related to a company the following tale of

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THE CONCUBINE AND THE CALIPH."[463]

One day of the days, as I stood at the door of my house, and the heat was excessive, behold, I saw a fair woman approaching, and with her a slave-girl carrying a parcel. They gave not over going till they came up to me, when the woman stopped and asked me, "Hast thou a draught of water?" answered I, "Yes, enter the vestibule, O my lady, so thou mayst drink." Accordingly she came in and I went up into the house and fetched two gugglets of earthenware, smoked with musk[464] and full of cold water. She took one of them and discovered her face, the better to drink; whereupon I saw that she was as the rising moon or the resplendent sun and said to her, "O my lady, wilt thou not come up into the house, so thou mayst rest thyself till the air cool and afterwards fare thee to thine own place?" quoth she, "Is there none with thee?" and quoth I, "Indeed I am a bachelor and have none belonging to me, nor is there a wight in the site;[465] whereupon she said, "An thou be a stranger, thou art he in quest of whom I was going about." So she went up into the house and doffed her walking dress and I found her as she were the full moon. I brought her what I had by me of food and drink and said to her, "O my lady, excuse me: this is all that is ready;" and said she, "This is right good[466] and indeed 'tis what I sought." Then she ate and gave the slave-girl that which was left; after which I brought her a casting-bottle of musked rose-water, and she washed her hands and abode with me till the season of mid-afternoon prayer, when she brought out of the parcel she had with her a shirt and trousers and an upper garment[467] and a gold-worked kerchief and gave them to me; saying, "Know that I am one of the concubines of the Caliph, and we be forty concubines, each of whom hath a cicisbeo who cometh to her as often as she would have him; and none is without a lover save myself, wherefore I came forth this day to get me a gallant and now I have found thee. Thou must know that the Caliph lieth each night with one of us, whilst the other nine- and-thirty concubines take their ease with the nine-and-thirty masculines, and I would have thee company with me on such a day, when do thou come up to the palace of the Caliph and sit awaiting me in such a place, till a little eunuch come out to thee and say to thee a certain watch-word which is, 'Art thou Sandal?' Answer 'Yes,' and wend thee with him." Then she took leave of me and I of her, after I had strained her to my bosom and thrown my arms round her neck and we had exchanged kisses awhile. So she fared forth and I abode patiently expecting the appointed day, till it came, when I arose and went out, intending for the trysting-place; but a friend of mine met me by the way and made me go home with him. I accompanied him and when I came up into his sitting- chamber he locked the door on me and walked out to fetch what we might eat and drink. He was absent until midday, then till the hour of mid-afternoon prayer, whereat I was chagrined with sore concern. Then he was missing until sundown, and I was like to die of vexation and impatience; and indeed he returned not and I passed my night on wake, nigh upon death, for the door was locked on me, and my soul was like to depart my body on account of the assignation. At daybreak, my friend returned and opening the door, came in, bringing with him meat-pudding[468] and fritters and bees' honey, and said to me, "By Allah, thou must needs excuse me, for that I was with a company and they locked the door on me and have let me go but this very moment." I returned him no reply; however, he set before me that which was with him and I ate a single mouthful and went out running at speed so haply I might overtake the rendezvous which had escaped me. When I came to the palace, I saw over against it eight-and- thirty gibbets set up, whereon were eight-and-thirty men crucified, and under them eight-and-thirty[469] concubines as they were moons. So I asked the cause of the crucifixion of the men and concerning the women in question, and it was said unto me, "The men thou seest crucified the Caliph found with yonder damsels, who be his bed-fellows." When I heard this, I prostrated myself in thanksgiving to Allah and said, "The Almighty require thee with all good, O my friend!" For had he not invited me and locked me up in his house that night, I had been crucified with these men, wherefore Alhamdolillah — laud to the Lord! "On this wise" (continued Shahrazad), "none is safe from the calamities of the world and the vicissitudes of Time, and in proof of this, I will relate unto thee yet another story still rarer and stranger than this. Know, O king, that one said to me: A friend of mine, a merchant, told me the following tale of

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THE CONCUBINE OF AL-MAAMUN[470]

As I sat one day in my shop, there came up to me a fair woman, as she were the moon at its rising, and with her a hand-maid. Now I was a handsome man in my time; so that lady sat down on my shop[471] and buying stuffs of me, paid the price and went her ways. I asked the girl anent her and she answered, "I know not her name." Quoth I, "Where is her abode?" Quoth she, "In heaven;" and I, "She is presently on the earth; so when doth she ascend to heaven and where is the ladder by which she goeth up?"[472] The girl retorted, "She hath her lodging in a palace between two rivers,[473] that is, in the palace of Al- Maamún al-Hákim bi-Amri 'llah."[474] Then said I, "I am a dead man, without a doubt;" but she replied, "Have patience, for needs must she return to thee and buy other stuffs of thee." I asked, "And how cometh it that the Commander of the Faithful trusteth her to go out?" and she answered, "He loveth her with exceeding love and is wrapped up in her and crosseth her not." Then the slave-girl went away, running after her mistress; whereupon I left the shop and followed them, so I might see her abiding-place. I kept them in view all the way, till she disappeared from mine eyes, when I returned to my place, with heart a-fire. Some days after, she came to me again and bought stuffs of me: I refused to take the price and she cried, "We have no need of thy goods." Quoth I, "O my lady, accept them from me as a gift;" but quoth she, "Wait till I try thee and make proof of thee." Then she brought out of her pocket a purse and gave me therefrom a thousand dinars, saying, "Trade with this till I return to thee." So I took the purse and she went away and returned not till six months had passed. Meanwhile, I traded with the money and sold and bought and made other thousand dinars profit on it. At last she came to me again and I said to her, "Here is thy money and I have gained with it other thousand ducats;" and she, "Let it lie by thee and take these other thousand dinars. As soon as I have departed from thee, go thou to Al-Rauzah, the Garden-holm, and build there a goodly pavilion, and when the edifice is accomplished, give me to know thereof. So saying, she left me and went away. As soon as she was gone, I betook myself to Al-Rauzah and fell to building the pavilion, and when it was finished, I furnished it with the finest of furniture and sent to tell her that I had made an end to the edifice; whereupon she sent back to me, saying, “Let him meet me to-morrow about day-break at the Zuwaylah gate and bring with him a strong ass.” I did as she bade and, betaking myself to the Zuwaylah gate, at the appointed time, found there a young man on horseback, awaiting her, even as I awaited her. As we stood, behold, up she came, and with her a slave-girl. When she saw that young man, she asked him, “Art thou here?” and he answered, “Yes, O my lady.” Quoth she, “To- day I am invited by this man: wilt thou wend with us?” and quoth he, “Yes.” Then said she, “Thou hast brought me hither against my will and parforce. Wilt thou go with us in any case?”[475] He cried, “Yes, yes,” and we fared on, all three, till we came to Al-Rauzah and entered the pavilion. The dame diverted herself awhile with viewing its ordinance and furniture, after which she doffed her walking-dress and sat down with the young man in the goodliest and chiefest place. Then I fared forth and brought them what they should eat at the first of the day; presently I again went out and fetched them what they should eat at the end of the day and brought for the twain wine and dessert and fruits and flowers. After this fashion I abode in their service, standing on my feet, and she said not unto me, “Sit,” nor “Take, eat” nor “Take, drink,” while she and the young man sat toying and laughing, and he feel to kissing her and pinching her and hopping over the ground[476] and laughing. They remained thus awhile and presently she said, “Hitherto we have not become drunken; let me pour out.” So she took the cup, and crowning it, gave him to drink and plied him with wine, till he lost his wits, when she took him up and carried him into a closet. Then she came out, with the head of that youth in her hand, while I stood silent, fixing not mine eyes on her eyes neither questioning her of the case; and she asked me, “What be this?” “I wot not,” answered I; and she said, “Take it and throw it in the river.” I accepted her commandment and she arose and stripping herself of her clothes, took a knife and cut the dead man’s body in pieces, which she laid in three baskets, and said to me, “Throw them into the river.” I did her bidding and when I returned, she said to me, “Sit, so I may relate to thee yonder fellow’s case, lest thou be affrighted at what accident hath befallen him. Thou must know that I am the Caliph's favourite concubine, nor is there any higher in honour with him than I; and I am allowed six nights in each month, wherein I go down into the city and tarry with my whilome mistress who reared me; and when I go down thus, I dispose of myself as I will. Now this young man was the son of certain neighbours of my mistress, when I was a virgin girl. One day, my mistress was sitting with the chief officers of the palace and I was alone in the house, and as the night came on, I went up to the terrace-roof in order to sleep there, but ere I was ware, this youth came up from the street and falling upon me knelt on my breast. He was armed with a dagger and I could not get free of him till he had taken my maidenhead by force; and this sufficed him not, but he must needs disgrace me with all the folk for, as often as I came down from the palace, he would stand in wait for me by the way and futtered me against my will and follow me whithersoever I went. This, then, is my story, and as for thee, thou pleasest me and thy patience pleaseth me and thy good faith and loyal service, and there abideth with me none dearer than thou." Then I lay with her that night and there befel what befel between us till the morning, when she gave me abundant wealth and took to meeting me at the pavilion six days in every month. After this wise we passed a whole year, at the end of which she cut herself off from me a month's space, wherefore fire raged in my heart on her account. When it was the next month, behold , a little eunuch presented himself to me and said, "I am a messenger to thee from Such-an- one, who giveth thee to know that the Commander of the Faithful hath ordered her to be drowned, her and those who are with her, six- and-twenty slave-girls, on such a day at Dayr al-Tin,[477] for that they have confessed of lewdness, one against other and she sayeth to thee, 'Look how thou mayst do with me and how thou mayst contrive to deliver me, even an thou gather together all my money and spend it upon me, for that this be the time of manhood.'"[478] Quoth I, "I know not this woman; belike it is other than I to whom this message is sent; so beware, O Eunuch, lest thou cast me into a cleft." Quoth he, "Behold, I have told thee that I had to say," and went away, leaving me in sore concern on her account. Now when the appointed day came, I arose and changing my clothes and favour, donned sailor's apparel; then I took with me a purse full of gold and buying a right good breakfast, accosted a boatman at Dayr al-Tin and sat down and ate with him; after which I asked him, "Wilt thou hire me thy boat?" Answered he, "The Commander of the Faithful hath commanded me to be here;" and he told me the tale of the concubines and how the Caliph purposed to drown them that day. When I heard this from him, I brought out to him ten gold pieces and discovered to him my case, whereupon he said to me, "O my brother, get thee empty gourds, and when thy mistress cometh, give me to know of her and I will contrive the trick." So I kissed his hand and thanked him and, as I was walking about, waiting, up came the guards and eunuchs escorting the women, who were weeping and shrieking and farewelling one another. The Castratos cried out to us, whereupon we came with the boat, and they said to the sailor, "Who be this?" Said he, "This be my mate whom I have brought to help me, so one of us may keep the boat, whilst another doth your service." Then they brought out to us the women, one by one, saying "Throw them in by the Island;" and we replied, "'Tis well." Now each of them was shackled and they had made fast about her neck a jar of sand. We did as the neutrals bade us and ceased not to take the women, one after other, and cast them in, till they gave us my mistress and I winked to my mate. So we took her and carried her out into mid-stream, where I threw to her the empty gourds[479] and said to her, "Wait for me at the mouth of the Canal."[480] Then we cast her in alongside the boat, after we had loosed the jar of sand from her legs480a] and done off her shackles, and returned. Now there remained one woman after her: so we took her and drowned her and the eunuchs went away, whilst we dropped down the river with the craft till we came to the mouth of Khalij, where I saw my mistress awaiting me. We haled her into the canoe and returned to our pavilion on Al-Rauzah. Then I rewarded the sailor and he took his boat and went away; whereupon quoth she to me, "Thou art indeed the friend ever faithful found for the shifts of Fortune."[481] and I sojourned with her some days; but the shock wrought upon her so that she sickened and fell to wasting away and redoubled in langour and weakness till she died. I mourned for her with exceeding mourning and buried her; after which I removed all that was in the pavilion and abandoned the building. Now she had brought to that pavilion a little coffer of copper and laid it in a place whereof I knew not; so, when the Inspector of Inheritances[482] came, he rummaged the house and found the coffer, with the key in the lock. Presently he opened it and seeing it full of jewels and jacinths and earrings and seal-rings and precious stones (and 'twas a matter such as is not found save with kings and sultans), took it, and me with it, and he and his men ceased not to put me to the question with beating and torment till I confessed to them the whole affair, from beginning to end. Thereupon they carried me to the Caliph and I told him all that had passed between me and her; and he said to me, "O man, depart this city, for I release thee on account of thy courage and because of thy constancy in keeping thy secret and thy daring in exposing thyself to death." So I arose forthwith and fared from his city; and this is what befel me.

Variants and Analogues
of
Some of the Tales
in
Volumes XI. and XII.

By. W. A. Clouston.

Author of "Popular Tales and Fictions: Their Migrations and Transformations," Etc.

Appendix

Variants and Analogues of Some of the Tales in Volumes XI and XII

By W. A. Clouston.

THE SLEEPER AND THE WAKER — Vol. XI. .

Few if the stories in the "Arabian Nights" which charmed our marvelling boyhood were greater favourites than this one, under the title of "Abou Hassan; or, the Sleeper Awakened." What recked we in those days whence it was derived? — the story — the story was the thing! As Sir R. F. Burton observes in his first note, this is "the only one of the eleven added by Galland, whose original has been discovered in Arabic;"[483] and it is probable that Galland heard it recited in a coffee-house during his residence in Constantinople. The plot of the Induction to Shakspeare's comedy of "The Taming of the Shrew" is similar to the adventure of Abú al-Hasan the Wag, and is generally believed to have been adapted from a story entitled "The Waking Man's Fortune" in Edward's collection of comic tales, 1570, which were retold somewhat differently in Goulart's "Admirable and Memorable Histories," 1607; both versions are reprinted in Mr. Hazlitt's "Shakspeare Library," vol. iv., part I, p-414. In Percy's "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry" we find the adventure told in a ballad entitled "The Frolicksome Duke; or, the Tinker's Good Fortune," from the Pepys collection: "whether it may be thought to have suggested the hint to Shakspeare or is not rather of latter date," says Percy, "the reader must determine:"

Now as fame does report, a young duke keeps a court,
One that pleases his fancy with frolicksome sport:
But amongst all the rest, here is one, I protest,
Which will make you to smile when you hear the true jest:
A poor tinker he found lying drunk on the ground,
As secure in a sleep as if laid in a swownd.

The duke said to his men, William, Richard, and Ben,
Take him home to my palace, we'll sport with him then.
O'er a horse he was laid, and with care soon convey'd
To the palace, altho' he was poorly arrai'd;
Then they stript off his cloaths, both his shirt, shoes, and
hose,
And they put him in bed for to take his repose.

Having pull'd off his shirt, which was all over durt,
They did give him clean holland, this was no great hurt:
On a bed of soft down, like a lord of renown,
They did lay him to sleep the drink out of his crown.
In the morning when day, then admiring[484] he lay,
For to see the rich chamber both gaudy and gay.

Now he lay something late, in his rich bed of state,
Till at last knights and squires they on him did wait;

And the chamberling bare, then did likewise declare,
He desired to know what apparel he'd ware:
The poor tinker amaz'd, on the gentleman gaz'd,
And admired how he to this honour was rais'd.

Tho' he seem'd something mute, yet he chose a rich suit,
Which he straitways put on without longer dispute;
With a star on his side, which the tinker offt ey'd,
And it seem'd for to swell him no little with pride;
For he said to himself, Where is Joan my sweet wife?
Sure she never did see me so fine in her life.

From a convenient place, the right duke his good grace
Did observe his behavior in every case.
To a garden of state, on the tinker they wait,
Trumpets sounding before him: thought he this is great:
Where an hour or two, pleasant walks he did view,
With commanders and squires in scarlet and blew.

A find dinner was drest, both for him and his guests,
He was placed at the table above all the rest,
In a rich chair, or bed, lin'd with fine crimson red,
With a rich golden canopy over his head:
As he sat at his meat, the musick play'd sweet,
With the choicest of singing his joys to compleat.

While the tinker did dine, he had plenty of wine.
Rich canary with sherry and tent superfine,
Like a right honest soul, faith, he took off his bowl,
Till at last he began for to tumble and roul
From his chair to the floor, where he sleeping did snore,
Being seven times drunker than ever before.

Then the duke did ordain, they should strip him amain,
And restore him his old leather garments again:
'Twas a point next the worst, yet perform it they must,
And they carry'd him strait, where they found him at first;

Then he slept all the night, as indeed well he might,
But when he did waken, his joys took their flight.

For his glory to him so pleasant did seem,
That he thought it to be but a meer golden dream;
Till at length he was brought to the duke, where he sought
For a pardon as fearing he had set him at nought;
But his highness he said, Thou'rt a jolly bold blade,
Such a frolick before I think never was plaid.

Then his highness bespoke him a new suit and cloak,
Which he gave for the sake of this frolicksome joak;
Nay, and five hundred pound, with ten acres of ground
Thou shalt never, said he, range the counteries round,
Crying old brass to mend, for I'll be thy good friend,
Nay, and Joan thy sweet wife shall my duchess attend.

Then the tinker reply'd, What! must Joan my sweet bride
Be a lady in chariots of pleasure to ride?
Must we have gold and land ev'ry day at command?
Then I shall be a squire I well understand:
Well I thank your good grace, and your love I embrace,
I was never before in so happy a case.

The same story is also cited in the "Anatomy of Melancholy," part 2, sec. 2, memb. 4, from Ludovicus Vives in Epist.[485] and Pont. Heuter in Rerum Burgund., as follows:

"It is reported of Philippus Bonus, that good Duke of Burgundy, that the said duke, at the marriage of Eleonora, sister to the King of Portugal, at Bruges in Flanders, which was solemnized in the deep of winter, when as by reason of the unseasonable (!) weather he could neither hawk nor hunt, and was now tyred with cards, dice, &c., and such other domestical sports, or to see ladies dance, with some of his courtiers, he would in the evening walk disguised all about the town. It so fortuned as he was walking late one night, he found a country fellow dead drunk, snorting on a bulk; he caused his followers to bring him to his palace, and there stripping him of his old clothes, and attiring him after the court fashion, when he waked, he and they were all ready to attend upon his excellency, persuading him that he was some great duke. The poor fellow, admiring how he came there, was served in state all the day long; after supper he saw them dance, heard musick, and the rest of those court-like pleasures; but late at night, when he was well tipled, and again fast asleep they put on his old robes, and so conveyed him to the place where they first found him. Now the fellow had not made them so good sport the day before, as he did when he returned to himself; all the jest was to see how he looked upon it. In conclusion, after some little admiration, the poor man told his friends he had seen a vision, constantly beleeved it, would not otherwise be perswaded; and so the jest ended."

I do not think that this is a story imported from the East: the adventure is just as likely to have happened in Bruges as in Baghdád; but the exquisite humor of the Arabian tale is wanting- -even Shakspeare's Christopher Sly is not to be compared with honest Abú al-Hasan the Wag.

This story of the Sleeper and the Waker recalls the similar device practised by the Chief of the Assassins — that formidable, murderous association, the terror of the Crusades — on promising novices. Von Hammer, in his "History of the Assassins," end of Book iv., gives a graphic description of the charming gardens into which the novices were carried while insensible from hashish:

In the center of the Persian as well as the Assyrian territory of the Assassins, that is to say, both at Alamut and Massiat, were situated, in a space surrounded by walls, splendid gardens — true Eastern paradises. There were flower-beds and thickets of fruit-trees, intersected by canals, shady walks, and verdant glades, where the sparkling stream bubbled at every step; bowers of roses and vineyards; luxurious halls and porcelain kiosks, adorned with Persian carpets and Grecian stuffs, where drinking-vessels of gold, silver, and crystal glittered on trays of the same costly materials; charming maidens and handsome boys of Muhammed's Paradise, soft as the cushions on which they reposed, and intoxicating as the wine which they presented. The music of the harp was mingled with the songs of birds, and the melodious tones of the songstress harmonized with the murmur of the brooks. Everything breathed pleasure, rapture, and sensuality. A youth, who was deemed worthy by his strength and resolution to be initiated into the Assassin service, was invited to the table and conversation of the grand master, or grand prior, he was then intoxicated with hashish and carried into the garden, which on awaking he believed to be Paradise; everything around him, the houris in particular, contributing to confirm the delusion. After he had experienced as much of the pleasures of Paradise, which the Prophet has promised to the faithful, as his strength would admit; after quaffing enervating delight from the eyes of the houris and intoxicating wine from the glittering goblets; he sank into the lethargy produced by debility and the opiate, on awakening from which, after a few hours, he again found himself by the side of his superior. The latter endeavoured to convince him that corporeally he had not left his side, but that spiritually he had been wrapped into Paradise and had there enjoyed a foretaste of the bliss which awaits the faithful who devote their lives to the service of the faith and the obedience of their chiefs.

THE TEN WAZIRS; OR, THE HISTORY OF KING ÁZÁDBAKHT AND HIS SON

Vol. XI. .

The precise date of the Persian original of this romance ("Bakhtyár Náma") has not been ascertained, but it was probably composed before the beginning of the fifteenth century, since there exists in the Bodleian Library a unique Turkí version, in the Uygur language and characters, which was written in 1434. Only three of the tales have hitherto been found in other Asiatic storybooks. The Turkí version, according to M. Jaubert, who gives an account of the MS. and a translation of one of the tales in the Journal Asiatique, tome x. 1827, is characterised by "great sobriety of ornament and extreme simplicity of style, and the evident intention on the part of the translator to suppress all that may not have appeared to him sufficiently probable, and all that might justly be taxed with exaggeration;" and he adds that "apart from the interest which the writing and phraseology of the work may possess for those who study the history of languages, it is rather curious to see how a Tátár translator sets to work to bring within the range of his readers stories embellished in the original with descriptions and images familiar, doubtless, to a learned and refined nation like the Persians, but foreign to shepherds."

At least three different versions are known to the Malays- - different in the frame, or leading story, if not in the subordinate tales. One of those is described in the second volume of Newbold's work on Malacca, the frame of which is similar to the Persian original and its Arabian derivative, excepting that the name of the king is Zádbokhtin and that of the minister's daughter (who is nameless in the Persian) is Mahrwat. Two others are described in Van den Berg's account of Malay, Arabic, Javanese and other MSS. published at Batavia, 1877: , No. 132 is entitled "The History of Ghulám, son of Zádbukhtán, King of Adán, in Persia," and the frame also corresponds with our version, with the important difference that the robber-chief who had brought up Ghulám, "learning that he had become a person of consequence, came to his residence to visit him, but finding him imprisoned, he was much concerned, and asked the king's pardon on his behalf, telling him at the same time how he had formerly found Ghulám in the jungle; from which the king knew that Ghulám was his son." The second version noticed by Van den Berg (, No. 179), though similar in title to the Persian original, "History of Prince Bakhtyár," differs very materially in the leading story, the outline of which is as follows: This prince, when his father was put to flight by a younger brother, who wished to dethrone him, was born in a jungle, and abandoned by his parents. A merchant named Idrís took charge of him and brought him up. Later on he became one of the officers of state with his own father, who had in the meanwhile found another kingdom, and decided with fairness, the cases brought before him. He was, however, put in prison on account of a supposed attempt on the king's life, and would have been put to death had he not stayed the execution by telling various beautiful stories. Even the king came repeatedly to listen to him. At one of these visits Bakhtyár's foster-father Idrís was present, and related to his adopted son how he had found him in the jungle. The king, on hearing this, perceived that it was his son who had been brought up by Idrís, recognised Bakhtyár as such, and made over to him the kingdom." — I have little doubt that this romance is of Indian extraction.

STORY OF KING DADBIN AND HIS WAZIRS. — Vol. XI. .

This agrees pretty closely with the Turkí version of the same story (rendered into French by M. Jaubert), though in the latter the names of the characters are the same as in the Persian, King Dádín and the Wazírs Kámgár and Kárdár. In the Persian story, the damsel is tied hands and feet and placed upon a camel, which is then turned into a dreary wilderness. "Here she suffered from the intense heat and from thirst; but she resigned herself to the will of Providence, conscious of her own innocence. Just then the camel lay down, and on the spot a fountain of delicious water suddenly sprang forth; the cords which bound her hands and feet dropped off; she refreshed herself by a draught of the water, and fervently returned thanks to Heaven for this blessing and her wonderful preservation." This two-fold miracle does not appear in the Turkí and Arabian versions. It is not the cameleer of the King of Persia, but of King Dádín, who meets with the pious damsel in the wilderness. He takes her to his own house and one day relates his adventure to King Dádín, who expresses a wish to see such a prodigy of sanctity. The conclusion of the Persian story is quite dramatic: The cameleer, having consented, returned at once to his house, accompanied by the king, who waited at the door of the apartment where the daughter of Kámgár was engaged in prayer. When she had concluded he approached, and with astonishment recognised her. Having tenderly embraced her, he wept, and entreated her forgiveness. This she readily granted, but begged that he would conceal himself in the apartment while she should converse with Kárdár, whom she sent for. When he arrived, and beheld her with a thousand expressions of fondness, he inquired how she had escaped, and told her that on the day the king had banished her into the wilderness, he had sent people to seek her and bring her to him. "How much better would it have been," he added, "had you followed my advice, and agreed to my proposal of poisoning the king, who, I said, would one day destroy you as he had done your father! But you rejected my advice, and declared yourself ready to submit to whatever Providence should decree. Hereafter you will pay more attention to my words. But now let us not think of what is past. I am your slave, and you are dearer to me than my own eyes.” So saying, he attempted to clasp the daughter of Kámgár in his arms, when the king, who was concealed behind the hangings, rushed furiously on him and put him to death. After this he conducted the damsel to his palace, and constantly lamented his precipitancy in having killed her father. — This tale seems to have been taken from the Persian “Tútí Náma,” or Parrot-book, composed by Nahkshabí about the year 1306;[486] it occurs in the 51st Night of the India Office MS. 2573, under the title of “Story of the Daughter of the Vazír Khássa, and how she found safety through the blessing of her piety:” the name of the king is Bahram, and the Wazírs are called Khássa and Khalássa.

STORY OF AYLAN SHAH AND ABÚ TAMMÁM — Vol. XI .

The catastrophe of this story forms the subject of the Lady’s 37th tale in the text of the Turkish “Forty Vezírs,” translated by Mr. E. J. W. Gibb. This is how it goes:

In the palace of the world there was a king, and that king had three vezírs, but there was rivalry between them. Two of them day and night incited the king against the third, saying, “He is a traitor.” But the king believed them not. At length they promised two pages much gold, and instructed them thus: “When the king has lain down, ere he yet fall asleep, do ye feign to think him asleep, and while talking with each other, say at a fitting time, ‘I have heard from such a one that yon vezír says this and that concerning the king, and that he hates him; many people say that vezír is an enemy to our king.’” So they did this, and when the king heard this, he said in his heart, “What those vezírs said is then true; when the very pages have heard somewhat it must indeed have some foundation. Till now, I believed not those vezírs, but it is then true.” And the king executed that vezír. The other vezírs were glad and gave the pages the gold they had promised. So they took it and went to a private place, and while they were dividing it one of them said, “I spake first; I want more.” The other said, “If I had not said he was an enemy to our king, the king would not have killed him; I shall take more.” And while they were quarrelling with one another the king passed by there, and he listened attentively to their words, and when he learned of the matter, he said, “Dost thou see, they have by a trick made us kill that hapless vezír.” And he was repentant.

STORY OF KING SULAYMAN SHAH AND HIS NIECE. — Vol. XI. .

The Persian original has been very considerably amplified by the Arabian translator. In the "Bakhtyár Náma" there is not a word about the two brothers and their fair cousin, the attempted murder of the infant, and the adventures of the fugitive young prince. This story has also been taken from the "Tútí Náma" of Nakhshabí, Night the 50th of the India Office MS. 2573, where, under the title of "Story of the Daughter of the Kaysar of Roum, and her trouble by reason of her son," it is told somewhat as follows:

In former times there was a great king, whose army was numerous and whose treasury was full to overflowing; but, having no enemy to contend with, he neglected to pay his soldiers, in consequence of which they were in a state of destitution and discontent. At length one day the soldiers went to the prime minister and made their condition known to him. The vazír promised that he would speedily devise a plan by which they should have employment and money. Next morning he presented himself before the king, and said that it was widely reported the Kaysar of Roum had a daughter unsurpassed for beauty — one who was fit only for such a great monarch as his Majesty; and suggested that it would be advantageous if an alliance were formed between two such great potentates. The notion pleased the king well, and he forthwith despatched to Roum an ambassador with rich gifts, and requested the Kaysar to grant him his daughter in marriage. But the Kaysar waxed wroth at this, and refused to give his daughter to the king. When the ambassador returned thus unsuccessful, the king, enraged at being made of no account, resolved to make war upon the Kaysar; so, opening the doors of his treasury, he distributed much money among his troops, and then, "with a woe-bringing host, and a blood-drinking army, he trampled Roum and the folk of Roum in the dust." And when the Kaysar was become powerless, he sent his daughter to the king, who married her according to the law of Islam.

Now that princess had a son by a former husband, and the Kaysar had said to her before she departed, "Beware that thou mention not thy son, for my love for his society is great, and I cannot part with him."[487] But the princess was sick at heart for the absence of her son, and she was ever pondering how she should speak to the king about him, and in what manner she might contrive to bring him to her. It happened one day the king gave her a string of pearls and a casket of jewels. She said, “With my father is a slave who is well skilled in the science of jewels.” The king replied, “If I should ask that slave of thy father, would he give him to me?” “Nay,” said she, “for he holds him in the place of a son. But if the king desire him, I will send a merchant to Roum, and I myself will give him a token, and with pleasant wiles and fair speeches will bring him hither.” Then the king sent for a clever merchant who knew Arabic eloquently and the language of Roum, and gave him goods for trading and sent him to Roum with the object of procuring the slave. But the daughter of the Kaysar said privily to the merchant, “That slave is my son; I have, for a good reason, said to the king that he is a slave; so thou must bring him as a slave, and let it be thy duty to take care of him.” In due course the merchant brought the youth to the king’s service; and when the king saw his fair face, and discovered in him many pleasing and varied accomplishments, he treated him with distinction and favour, and conferred on the merchant a robe of honour and gifts. His mother saw him from afar, and was pleased with receiving a secret salutation from him.

One day the king had gone to the chase, and the palace remained void of rivals; so the mother called in her son, kissed his fair face, and told him the tale of her great sorrow. A chamberlain became aware of the secret, and another suspicion fell upon him, and he said to himself, “The harem of the king is the sanctuary of security and the palace of protection. If I speak not of this, I shall be guilty of treachery and shall have wrought unfaithfulness.” When the king returned from the chase, the chamberlain related to him what he had seen, and the eking was angry and said, “This woman hath deceived me with words and deeds, and has brought hither her desire by craft and cunning. This conjecture must be true, else why did she play such a trick? And why did she hatch such a plot? And why did she send the merchant?” Then the king, enraged, went into the harem, and the queen saw from his countenance that the occurrence of the night before had become known to him, and she said, “Be it not that I see the king angry?” He said, “How should I not be angry? Thou, by craft and trickery, and intrigue, and plotting, hast brought thy desire from Roum — what wantonness is this that thou hast done?” And then he thought to slay her, but he forbore, because of his great love for her. But he ordered the chamberlain to carry the youth to some obscure place, and straightway sever his head from his body. When the poor mother saw this, she well-nigh fell on her face, and her soul was near leaving her body. But she knew that sorrow would not avail, and so she restrained herself.

And when the chamberlain took the youth into his own house, he said to him, “O youth, knowest thou not that the harem of the king is the sanctuary of security? What great treachery is this that thou hast perpetrated?” The youth replied, “That queen is my mother, and I am her true son. Because of her natural delicacy, she said not to the king that she had a son by another husband. And when yearning came over her, she contrived to bring me here from Roum; and while the king was engaged in the chase, maternal love stirred in her, and she called me to her and embraced me.” On hearing this, the chamberlain said to himself, “What is passing in his mother’s breast? What I have not done I can yet do, and it were better that I preserve this youth some days, for such a rose may not be wounded through idle words, and such a bough may not be broken by a breath. For some day the truth of this matter will be disclosed, and it will become known to the king when repentance may be of no avail.” So he went before the king and said, “That which was commanded have I fulfilled.” On hearing this the king’s wrath was to some extent removed, but his trust in the Kaysar’s daughter was departed; while she, poor creature, was grieved and dazed at the loss of her son.

Now in the palace-harem there was an old woman, who said to the queen, “How is it that I find thee sorrowful?” And the queen told the whole story, concealing nothing. This old woman was a heroine in the field of craft, and she answered, “Keep thy mind at ease; I will devise a stratagem by which the heart of the king will be pleased with thee, and every grief he has will vanish from his heart.” The queen said that, if she did so, she should be amply rewarded. One day the old woman, seeing the king alone, said to him, “Why is thy former aspect altered? And why are there traces of care and anxiety visible on thy countenance?” The king then told her all. Then said the old woman, “I have an amulet of the charms of Sulayman, in the Syriac language, and in the writing of the jinn (genii). When the queen is asleep, do thou place it on her breast, and whatever it may be, she will tell the truth of it. But take care, fall not asleep, but listen well to what she says.” The king wondered at this and said, “Give me that amulet, that the truth of this matter may be learned.” So the old woman gave him the amulet, and then went to the queen and explained what she had done, and said, “Do thou feign to be asleep, and relate the whole of thy story faithfully.”

When a watch of the night was past, the king laid the amulet upon his wife’s breast, and she thus began: “By a former husband I had a son, and when my father gave me to this king, I was ashamed to say I had a tall son. When my yearning passed all bounds, I brought him here by an artifice. One day that the king was gone to the chase I called him into the house, when, after the way of mothers, I took him in my arms and kissed him. This reached the king’s ears; he unwittingly gave it another construction, and cut off the head of that innocent boy, and withdrew from me his own heart. Alike is my son lost to me and the king angry.” When the king heard these words he kissed her and exclaimed, “O my life, what an error is this thou hast committed! Thou hast brought calumny upon thyself, and hast given such a son to the winds, and hast made me ashamed!” Straightway he called the chamberlain, and said, “That boy whom thou hast killed is the son of my beloved and the darling of my beauty! Where is his grave, that we may make there a guest-house?” The chamberlain said, “That youth is yet alive. When the king commanded his death, I was about to kill him, but he said, ‘That queen is my mother. Through modesty before the king, she revealed not the secret that she has a tall son. Kill me not; it may be that some day the truth will become known, and repentance profiteth not, and regret is useless.” The king commanded them to bring the youth; so they brought him forthwith. And when the mother saw the face of her son, she thanked God and praised the Most High, and became one of the Muslims, and from the sect of unbelievers came into the faith of Islam. And the king favoured the chamberlain in the highest degree, and they passed the rest of their lives in comfort and ease.

FIRUZ AND HIS WIFE. — Vol. XI. .

This tale, as Sir R. F. Burton remarks, is a rechauffé of that of the King and the Wazir's Wife in the "Malice of Women," or the Seven Wazírs (vol. vi. 129); and at we have yet another variant.[488] It occurs in all the Eastern texts of the Book of Sindibád, and it is commonly termed by students of that cycle of stories "The Lion's Track," from the parabolical manner in which the husband justifies his conduct before the king. I have cited some versions in the Appendix to my edition of the Book of Sindibád (ff.), and to these may be added the following Venetian variant, from Crane's "Italian Popular Tales," as an example of how a story becomes garbled in passing orally from one generation unto another generation:

A king, averse from marriage, commanded his steward to remain single. The latter, however, one day saw a beautiful girl named Vigna and married her secretly. Although he kept her closely confined in her chamber, the king became suspicious, and sent the steward on an embassy. After his departure the king entered the apartment occupied by him, and saw his wife asleep. He did not disturb her, but in leaving the room accidentally dropped one of his gloves on the bed. When the husband returned he found the glove, but kept a discreet silence, ceasing, however, all demonstration of affection, believing his wife had been unfaithful. The king, desirous to see again the beautiful woman, made a feast and ordered the steward to bring his wife. He denied that he had one, but brought her at last, and while every one else was talking gaily at the feast she was silent. The king observed it and asked the cause of her silence, and she answered with a pun on her own name, "Vineyard I was, and Vineyard I am. I was loved and no longer am. I know not for what reason the Vineyard has lost its season." Her husband, who heard this, replied, "Vineyard thou wast, and Vineyard thou art: the Vineyard lost its season, for the lion's claw." The king, who understood what he meant, answered, "I entered the Vineyard; I touched the leaves; but I swear by my crown that I have not tasted the fruit." Then the steward understood that his wife was innocent, and the two made peace, and always after lived happy and contented.

So far as I am aware, this tale of "The Lion's Track" is not popularly known in any European country besides Italy; and it is not found in any of the Western versions of the Book of Sindibád, generally known under the title of the "History of the Seven Wise Masters," how, then, did it reach Venice, and become among the people "familiar in their mouths as household words?" I answer, that the intimate commercial relations which long existed between the Venetian Republic and Egypt and Syria are amply sufficient to account for the currency of this and scores of other Eastern tales in Italy. This is not one of those fictions introduced into the south of Europe through the Ottomans, since Boccaccio has made use of the first part of it in his "Decameron," Day I. nov. 5; and it is curious to observe that the garbled Venetian popular version has preserved the chief characteristic of the Eastern story — the allegorical reference to the king as a lion and his assuring the husband that the lion had done no injury to his "Vineyard."

KING SHAH BAKHT AND HIS WAZIR AL-RAHWAN. — Vol. XI. .

While the frame-story of this interesting group is similar to that of the Ten Wazírs (vol. i.), insomuch as in both a king's favourite is sentenced to death in consequence of the false accusations of his enemies, and obtains a respite from day to day by relating stories to the king, there is yet a very important difference: Like those of the renowned Shahrazad, the stories which Al-Rahwan tells have no particular, at least no uniform, "purpose," his sole object being to prolong his life by telling the king an entertaining story, promising, when he has ended his recital, to relate one still "stranger" the next night, if the king will spare his life another day. On the other hand, Bakhtyár, while actuated by the same motive, appeals to the king's reason, by relating stories distinctly designed to exhibit the evils of hasty judgements and precipitate conduct — in fact, to illustrate the maxim,

Each order given by a reigning king,
  Should after long reflection be expressed;
For it may be that endless woe will spring
  From a command he paused not to digest.

And in this respect they are consistent with the circumstances of the case, like the tales of the Book of Sindibád, from which the frame of the Ten Wazírs was imitated, and in which the Wazírs relate stories showing the depravity and profligacy of women and that no reliance should be placed on their unsupported assertions, and to these the lady opposes equally cogent stories setting forth the wickedness and perfidy of men. Closely resembling the frame-story of the Ten Wazírs, however, is that of a Tamil romance entitled, "Alakeswara Kathá," a copy of which, written on palm leaves, was in the celebrated Mackenzie collection, of which Dr. H. H. Wilson published a descriptive catalogue; it is "a story of the Rájá of Alakepura and his four ministers, who, being falsely accused of violating the sanctity of the inner apartments, vindicate their innocence and disarm the king's wrath by relating a number of stories." Judging by the specimen given by Wilson, the well-known tale of the Lost Camel, it seems probable that the ministers' stories, like those of Bakhtyár, are suited to their own case and illustrate the truth of the adage that "appearances are often deceptive." Whether in the Siamese collection "Nonthuk Pakkaranam" (referred to in vol. i.) the stories related by the Princess Kankras to the King of Pataliput (Palibothra), to save her father's life, are similarly designed, does not appear from Benfey's notice of the work in his paper in "Orient and Occident," iii. 171 ff. He says that the title of the book, "Nonthuk Pakkaranam," is taken from the name of a wise ox, Nonthuk, that plays the principal part in the longest of the tales, which are all apparently translated from the Sanskrit, in which language the title would be Nandaka Prakaranam, the History of Nandaka.

Most of the tales related by the wazir Al-Rahwan are not only in themselves entertaining, but are of very considerable importance from the story-comparer's point of view, since in this group occur Eastern forms of tales which were known in Italy in the 14th century, and some had spread over Europe even earlier. The reader will have seen from Sir R. F. Burton's notes that not a few of the stories have their parallels or analogues in countries far apart, and it is interesting to find four of them which properly belong to the Eastern texts of the Book of Sindibad, with the frame-story of which that of this group has so close an affinity.

THE ART OF ENLARGING PEARLS. — Vol. XI. p.197.

"Quoth she, I have a bangle; sell it and buy seed pearls with the
price; then round them
and fashion them into great pearls."

For want of a more suitable place, I shall here reproduce an account of the "Method of making false pearls" (nothing else being meant in the above passage), cited, from Postl. Com. Dict., in vol. xxvi. of Rees' Cyclopćdia," London, 1819:

"Take of thrice distilled vinegar two pounds, Venice turpentine one pound, mix them together into a mass and put them into a cucurbit, fit a head and receiver to it, and after you have luted the joints set it when dry on a sand furnace, to distil the vinegar from it; do not give it too much heat, lest the stuff swell up. After this put the vinegar into another glass cucurbit in which there is a quantity of seed pearls wrapped in a piece of thin silk, but so as not to touch the vinegar; put a cover or head upon the cucurbit, lute it well and put it in bal. Marić, where you may let it remain a fortnight. The heat of the balneum will raise the fumes of the vinegar, and they will soften the pearls in the silk and bring them to the consistence of a paste, which being done, take them out and mould them to what bigness, form, and shape you please. Your mould must be of fine silver, the inside gilt; you must also refrain from touching the paste with your fingers, but use silver-gilt utensils, with which fill your moulds. When they are moulded, bore them through with a hog's bristle or gold wire, and then tread them again on gold wire, and put them into a glass, close it up, and set them in the sun to dry. After they are thoroughly dry, put them in a glass matrass into a stream of running water and leave them there twenty days; by that time they will contract the natural hardness and solidity of pearls. Then take them out of the matrass and hang them in mercurial water, where they will moisten, swell, and assume their Oriental beauty; after which shift them into a matrass hermitically closed to prevent any water coming to them, and let it down into a well, to continue there about eight days. Then draw the matrass up, and in opening it you will find pearls exactly resembling Oriental ones." (Here follows a recipe for making the mercurial water used in the process, with which I need not occupy more space.)

A similar formula, “To make of small pearls a necklace of large ones,” is given in the “Lady’s Magazine” for 1831, vol. iv., , which is said to be extracted from a scarce old book. Thus, whatever mystery may surround the art is Asiatic countries there is evidently none about it in Europe. The process appears to be somewhat tedious and complicated, but is doubtless profitable.

In Philostratus’ Life of Appolonius there is a curious passage about pearl-making which has been generally considered as a mere “traveller’s tale”: Apollonious relates that the inhabitants of the shores of the Red Sea, after having calmed the water by means of oil, dived after the shell-fish, enticed them with some bait to open their shells, and having pricked the animals with a sharp-pointed instrument, received the liquor that flowed from them in small holes made in an iron vessel, in which it hardened into real pearls. — It is stated by several reputable writers that the Chinese do likewise at the present day. And Sir R. F. Burton informs me that when he was on the coast of Midian he found the Arabs were in the habit of “growing” pearls by inserting a grain of sand into the shells.

THE SINGER AND THE DRUGGIST. — Vol. XI. .

The diverting adventures related in the first part of this tale should be of peculiar interest to the student of Shakspeare as well as to those engaged in tracing the genealogy of popular fiction. Jonathan Scott has given — for reasons of his own — a meagre abstract of a similar tale which occurs in the “Bahár-i- Dánish” (vol. iii. App.,), as follows:

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PERSIAN VERSION

A young man, being upon business in a certain city, goes on a hunting excursion, and, fatigued with the chase, stops at a country house to ask refreshment. The lady of the mansion receives him kindly, and admits him as her lover. In the midst of their dalliance the husband comes home, and the young man had no recourse to escape discovery but to jump into a basin which was in the court of the house, and stand with head in a hollow gourd that happened to be in the water. The husband, surprised to see the gourd stationary in the water, which was itself agitated by the wind, throws a stone at it, when the lover slips from beneath it and holds his breath till almost suffocated. Fortunately, the husband presently retires with his wife into an inner room of the house, and thus the young man was enabled to make good his escape.

The next day he relates his adventure before a large company at a coffee-house. The husband happens to be one of the audience, and, meditating revenge, pretends to admire the gallantry of the young man and invites him to his house. The lover accompanies him, and on seeing his residence is overwhelmed with confusion; but, recovering himself, resolves to abide all hazards, in hopes of escaping by some lucky stratagem. His host introduces him to his wife, and begs him to relate his merry adventure before her, having resolved, when he should finish, to put them both to death. The young man complies, but with an artful presence of mind exclaims at the conclusion, “Glad was I when I awoke from so alarming a dream.” The husband upon this, after some questions, is satisfied that he had only told his dream, and, having entertained him nobly, dismisses him kindly.

The story is told in an elaborate form by Ser Giovanni Fiorentino, in “Il Pecorone” (The Big Sheep, or, as Dunlop has it, The Dunce), which was begun in 1378 but not published till 1554 (at Milan). It is the second novel of the First Day and has been thus translated by Roscoe:

SER GIOVANNI'S VERSION

There were once two very intimate friends, both of the family of Saveli, in Rome; the name of one of whom was Bucciolo; that of the other Pietro Paolo, both of good birth and easy circumstances. Expressing a mutual wish to study for a while together at Bologna they took leave of their relatives and set out. One of them attached himself to the study of the civil law, the other to that of the canon law, and thus they continued to apply themselves for some length of time. But the subject of Decretals takes a much narrower range than is embraced by the common law, so Bucciolo, who pursued the former, made greater progress than did Pietro Paolo, and, having taken a licentiate's degree, he began to think of returning to Rome. "You see, my dear fellow student," he observed to his friend Paolo, "I am now a licentiate, and it is time for me to think of moving homewards." "Nay, not so," replied his companion; "I have to entreat you will not think of leaving me here this winter. Stay for me till spring, and we can return together. In the meantime you may pursue some other study, so that you need not lose any time;" and to this Bucciolo at length consented, promising to await his relative's own good time.

Having thus resolved, he had immediate recourse to his former tutor, informing him of his determination to bear his friend company a little longer, and entreating to be employed in some pleasant study to beguile the period during which he had to remain. The professor begged him to suggest something he should like, as he should be very happy to assist him in its attainment. "My worthy tutor," replied Bucciolo, "I think I should like to learn the way in which one falls in love, and the best manner to begin." "O very good!" cried the tutor, laughing. "You could not have hit upon anything better, for you must know that, if such be your object I am a complete adept in the art. To lose no time, in the first place go next Sunday to the church of the Frati Minori (Friars Minor of St. Francis), where all the ladies will be clustered together, and pay proper attention during service in order to discover if any one of them in particular happens to please you. When you have done this, keep your eye upon her after service, to see the way she takes to her residence, and then come back to me. And let this be the first lesson — the first part — of that in which it is my intention to instruct you.” Bucciolo went accordingly, and taking his station the next Sunday in the church, as he had been directed, his eyes, wandering in every direction, were fixed upon all the pretty women in the place, and upon one in particular, who pleased him above all the rest. She was by far the most beautiful and attractive lady he could discover, and on leaving church he took care to obey his master and follow her until he had made himself acquainted with her residence. Nor was it long before the young lady began to perceive that the student was smitten with her; upon which Bucciolo returned to his master and informed him of what he had done. “I have,” said he, “learned as much as you ordered me, and have found somebody I like very well.” “So far, good,” cried the professor, not a little amused at the sort of science to which his pupil had thus seriously devoted himself— “so far, good! And now observe what I have next to say to you: Take care to walk two or three times a day very respectfully before her house, casting your eyes about you in such a way that no one may catch you staring in her face; look in a modest and becoming manner, so that she cannot fail to notice and be struck with it. And then return to me; and this, sir, will be the second lesson in this gay science.”

So the scholar went and promenaded with great discretion before the lady’s door, who observed that he appeared to be passing to and fro out of respect to one of the inhabitants. This attracted her attention, for which Bucciolo very discreetly expressed his gratitude by looks and bows, which being as often returned, the scholar began to be aware that the lady liked him. He immediately went and told the professor all that had passed, who replied, “Come, you have done very well. I am hitherto quite satisfied. It is now time for you to find some way of speaking to her, which you may easily do by means of those gipsies who haunt the streets of Bologna, crying ladies’ veils, purses and other articles for sale. Send word by her that you are the lady’s most faithful, devoted servant, and that there is no one in the world you so much wish to please. In short, let her urge your suit, and take care to bring the answer to me as soon as you have received it. I will then tell you how you are to proceed.”

Departing in all haste, he soon found a little old pedlar woman, quite perfect in the trade, to whom he said he should take it as a particular favour if she would do one thing, for which he would reward her handsomely. Upon this she declared her readiness to serve him in anything he pleased. "For you know," she added, "it is my business to get money in every way I can." Bucciolo gave her two florins, saying, "I wish you to go for me to-day as far as the Via Maccarella, where resides a young lady of the name of Giovanna, for whom I have the very highest regard. Pray tell her so, and recommend me to her most affectionately, so as to obtain for me her good graces by every means in your power. I entreat you to have my interest at heart, and to say such pretty things as she cannot refuse to hear." "O leave that to me, sir," said the little old woman, "I will not fail to say a good word for you at the proper time." "Delay not," said Bucciolo, "but go now, and I will wait for you here;" and she set off at once, taking her basket of trinkets under her arm. On approaching the place, she saw the lady before the door, enjoying the air, and curtseying to her very low, "Do I happen to have anything here you would fancy?" she said, displaying her wares. "Pray, take something, madam — whatever pleases you best." Veils, stays, purses, and mirrors were now spread in the most tempting way before the lady's eyes. Out of all these things her attention seemed to be most attracted by a beautiful purse, which, she observed, if she could afford, she should like to purchase. "Nay, madam," exclaimed the crone, "do not think anything about the price — take anything yo please, since they are all paid for already, I assure you." Surprised at hearing this, and perceiving the very respectful manner of the speaker, the lady rejoined, "Do you know what you are saying? What do you mean by that?" The old woman, pretending now to be much affected, said, "Well, madam, if it must be so, I shall tell you. It is very true that a young gentleman of the name of Bucciolo sent me hither; one who loves you better than all the world besides. There is nothing he would not do to please you, and indeed he appears to very wretched because he cannot speak to you, and he is so very good, that it is quite a pity. I think it will be the death of him, and then he is such a fine — such an elegant — young man, the more is the pity!" on hearing this, the lady, blushing deeply, turned sharply round upon the little old woman, exclaiming, “O you wicked creature! were it not for the sake of my own reputation, I would give you such a lesson that you should remember it to the latest day of your life! A pretty story to come before decent people with! Are you not ashamed of yourself to let such words come out of your mouth?” Then seizing an iron bar that lay across the doorway, “Ill betide you, little wretch!” she cried, as she brandished it. “If you ever come this way again, depend on it, you will never go back alive!” The trembling old trot, quickly bundling up her wares, scampered off, in dread of feeling that cruel weapon on her shoulders, nor did she think of stopping till she had reached the place where Bucciolo stood waiting her return. Eagerly inquiring the news and how she succeeded, “O very badly — very badly,” answered the crone. “I was never in such a fright in all my life. Why, she will neither see nor listen to you, and if I had not run away, I should have felt the weight of a great iron bar upon my shoulders. For my own part, I shall go there no more; and I advise you, signor, to look to yourself how you proceed in such affairs in future.”

Poor Bucciolo became quite disconsolate, and returned in all haste to acquaint the professor with this unlucky result. But the professor, not a whit cast down, consoled him, saying, “Do not despair; a tree is not levelled at a single stroke, you know. I think you must have a repetition of your lesson to-night. So go and walk before her door as usual; notice how she eyes you, and whether she appears angry or not, and then come back again to me.” Bucciolo accordingly proceeded without delay to the lady’s house. The moment she perceived him she called her maid and said to her, “Quick, quick — hasten after the young man — that is he, and tell him from me that he must come and speak with me this evening without fail — without fail.” The girl soon came up with Bucciolo, and thus addressed him: “My lady, signor, my lady, Giovanna, would be glad of your company this evening, she would be very glad to speak with you.” Greatly surprised at this, Bucciolo replied, “Tell your lady I shall be most happy to wait upon her,” so saying, he set off once more to the professor, and reported the progress of the affair. But this time the master looked a little more serious; for, from some trivial circumstances put together, he began to entertain suspicions that the lady was (as it really turned out) no other than his own wife. So he rather anxiously inquired of Bucciolo whether he intended to accept the invitation. "To be sure I do," replied his pupil. "Then," said the professor, "promise that you will come here before you set off." "Certainly I will," answered Bucciolo readily, and took his leave.

Now Bucciolo was far from suspecting that the lady bore so near a relationship to his respected tutor, although the latter began to be rather uneasy as to the result, feeling some twinges of jealousy which were by no means pleasant. For he passed most of his winter evenings at the college where he gave lectures, and not unfrequently remained there for the night. "I should be sorry," said he to himself, "if this young gentleman were learning these things at my expense, and I must therefore know the real state of the case." In the evening his pupil called according to promise, saying, "Worthy master, I am now ready to go." "Well, go," replied the professor; "but be wise, Signor Bucciolo — be wise and think more than once what you are about." "Trust me for that," said the scholar, a little piqued: "I shall go well provided, and not walk into the mouth of danger unarmed." And away he went, furnished with a good cuirass, a rapier, and a stiletto in his belt. He was no sooner on his way than the professor slipped out quietly after him, dogging his steps closely, until, trembling with rage, he saw him stop at his own house-door, which, on a smart tap being given, was quickly opened by the lady herself and the pupil admitted. When the professor saw that it was indeed his own wife, he was quite overwhelmed and thought, "Alas, I fear this young fellow has learned more than he confesses at my expense;" and vowing to be revenged, he ran back to the college, where arming himself with sword and dagger, he then hastened to his house in a terrible passion. Arriving at his own door, he knocked loudly, and the lady, sitting before the fire with Bucciolo, instantly knew it was her husband, so taking hold of Bucciolo, she concealed him hurriedly under a heap of damp clothes lying on a table near the window for ironing, which done, she ran to the door and inquired who was there. "Open quickly," exclaimed the professor. "You vile woman, you shall soon know who is here!" On opening the door, she beheld him with a drawn sword, and cried in well-affected alarm, "O my dearest life, what means this?" "You know very well what it means," said he.

"The villain is now in the house." "Good Heaven! what is that you say?" exclaimed the lady. "Are you gone out of your wits? Come and search the house, and if you find anybody, I will give you leave to kill me on the spot. What! do you think I should now begin to misconduct myself as I never before did Â as none of my family ever did before? Beware lest the Evil One should be tempting you, and, suddenly depriving you of your senses, draw you to perdition!" But the professor, calling for candles, began to search the house from the cellar upwards — among the tubs and casks — in every place but the right place — running his sword through the beds and under the beds, and into every inch of the bedding — leaving no corner or crevice of the whole house untouched. The lady accompanied him with a candle in her hand, frequently interrupting him with, "Say your beads — say your beads, good signor; it is certain that the Evil One is dealing with you, for were I half so bad as you esteem me, I would kill myself with my own hands. But I entreat you not to give way to this evil suggestion: oppose the adversary while you can." Hearing these virtuous observations of his wife, and not being able to discover any one after the strictest search, the professor began to think that he must, after all, be possessed, and presently extinguished the lights and returned to the college. The lady, on shutting the door after him, called out to Bucciolo to come from his hiding place, and then, stirring the fire, began to prepare a fine capon for supper, with some delicious wines and fruits. And thus they regaled themselves, highly entertained with each other, nor was it their least satisfaction that the professor had just left them, apparently convinced that they had learned nothing at his expense.

Proceeding to the college the next morning, Bucciolo, without the least suspicion of the truth, informed his master that he had something for his ear which he was sure would make him laugh. "How so?" demanded the professor. "Why," said his pupil, "you must know that last night, just as I had entered the lady's house, who should come in but her husband, and in such a rage! He searched the whole house from top to bottom, without being able to find me. I lay under a heap of newly-washed clothes, which were not half dry. In short, the lady played her part so well that the poor gentleman forthwith took his leave, and we afterwards ate a fine capon for supper and drank such wines — and with such zest! It was really one of the pleasantest evenings I ever spent in my life. But I think I’ll go and take a nap, for I promised to return this evening about the same hour.” “Then be sure before you go,” said the professor, trembling with suppressed rage, “be sure to come and tell me when you set out.” “O certainly,” responded Bucciolo, and away he went. Such was now the unhappy tutor’s condition as to render him incapable of delivering a single lecture during the whole day, and such was his extreme vexation and eagerness for evening, that he spent his time in arming himself with sword and dagger and cuirass, meditating only upon deeds of blood. At the appointed time came Bucciolo, with the utmost innocence, saying, “My dear master, I am going now.” “Yes, go,” replied the professor, “and come back to-morrow morning, if you can, and tell me how you have fared.” “I intend doing so,” said Bucciolo, and departed at a brisk pace for the house of the lady.

Armed cap-ŕ-pie, the professor ran out after him, keeping pretty close to his heels, with the intention of catching him just as he entered. But the lady, being on the watch, opened the door suddenly for the pupil and shut it in her husband’s face. The professor began to knock and to call out with a furious noise. Extinguishing the light in a moment, the lady placed Bucciolo behind the door, and throwing her arms round her husband’s neck as he entered, motioned to her lover while thus she held his enemy to make his escape, and he, upon the husband’s rushing forward, slipped out from behind the door unperceived. She then began to scream as loud as she could, “Help! Help! The professor has gone mad! Will nobody help me?” for he was in an ungovernable rage, and she clung faster to him than before. The neighbours running to her assistance and seeing the peaceable professor armed with deadly weapons, and his wife crying out, “Help, for the love of Heaven! — too much study hath driven him mad!”{ they readily believed such to be the fact. “Come, good signor,” they said, “what is all this about? Try to compose yourself — nay, do not struggle so hard, but let us help you to your couch.” “How can I rest, think you,” he replied, “while this wicked woman harbours paramours in my house? I saw him come in with my own eyes.” “Wretch that I am!” cried his wife. “inquire of all my friends and neighbours whether any one of them ever saw anything the least unbecoming in my conduct.” The whole party with one voice entreated the professor to lay such thoughts aside, for there was not a better lady breathing, or one who set a higher value upon her reputation. “But how can that be,” said he, “when I saw him enter the house, and he is in it now?” In the meanwhile the lady’s two brothers arrived, when she began to weep bitterly, exclaiming, “O my dear brothers, my poor husband has gone mad, quite mad — and he even says there is a man in the house. I believe he would kill me if he could; but you know me too well to listen for a moment to such a story,” and she continued to weep.

The brothers then accosted the professor in no gentle terms: “We are surprised, signor — we are shocked to find that you dare bestow such epithets on our sister. What can have led you, after living so amicably together, to bring these charges against her now?” “I can only tell you,” answered the professor, “that there is a man in the house. I saw him enter.” “Then come, and let us find him. Show him to us,” retorted the incensed brothers, “for we will sift this matter to the bottom. Show us the man, and we will then punish her in such a way as will satisfy you.” One of the brothers, taking his sister aside, said, “First tell me, have you really got any one hidden in the house? Tell the truth.” “Heavens!” cried his sister, “I tell you, I would rather suffer death. Should I be the first to bring a scandal on our house? I wonder you are not ashamed to mention such a thing.” Rejoiced to hear this, the brothers, directed by the professor, at once commenced a search. Half frantic, he led them at once to the great bundle of linen, which he pierced through and through with his sword, firmly believing that he was killing Bucciolo, all the while taunting him at every blow. “There! I told you,” cried his wife, “that he was mad. To think of destroying your own property thus! It is plain he did not help to get them up,” she continued, whimpering— “all my best clothes!”

Having now sought everywhere in vain, one of the brothers observed, “He is indeed mad,” to which the other agreed, while he again attacked the professor in the bitterest terms: “You have carried matters too far, signor; your conduct to our sister is shameful, and nothing but insanity can excuse it.” Vexed enough before, the professor upon this flew into a violent passion, and brandished his naked sword in such a way that the others were obliged to use their sticks, which they did so very effectively that, after breaking them over his head, they chained him down like a maniac upon the floor, declaring he had lost his wits by excessive study, and taking possession of his house, they remained with their sister all night. Next morning they sent for a physician, who ordered a couch to be placed as near as possible to the fire, that no one should be allowed to speak or reply to the patient, and that he should be strictly dieted until he recovered his wits; and this regimen was diligently enforced.[489]

A report immediately spread through Bologna that the good professor had become insane, which caused very general regret, his friends observing to each other, "It is indeed a bad business; but I suspected yesterday how it was — he could scarcely get a word out as he was delivering his lecture, did you not perceive?" "Yes," said another, "I saw him change colour, poor fellow." And by everybody, everywhere, it was decided that the professor was mad. In this situation numbers of his scholars went to see him, and among the rest Bucciolo, knowing nothing of what had happened, agreed to accompany them to the college, desirous of acquainting his master with last night's adventure. What was his surprise to learn that he had actually taken leave of his senses, and being directed on leaving the college to the professor's house, he was almost panic-struck on approaching the place, beginning to comprehend the whole affair. Yet, in order that no one might be led to suspect the truth, he walked into the house along with the rest, and on reaching a certain apartment which he knew, he beheld his poor tutor almost beaten to a mummy, and chained down upon his bed, close to the fire. His pupils were standing round condoling with him and lamenting his piteous case. At length it came to Bucciolo's turn to say something to him, which he did as follows: "My dear master, I am as truly concerned for you as if you were my own father, and if there is anything in which I can be of service to you, command me as your own son." To this the poor professor only replied, "No, Bucciolo, depart in peace, my pupil; depart, for you have learned much, very much, at my expense." Here his wife interrupted him: "You see how he wanders — heed not what he says — pay no attention to him, signor." Bucciolo, however, prepared to depart, and taking a hasty leave of the professor, he proceeded to the lodging of his friend Pietro Paolo, and said to him, “Fare you well. God bless you, my friend. I must away; and I have lately learned so much at other people’s expense that I am going home.” So saying, he hurried away, and in due course arrived in safety in Rome.

The affliction of the professor of Giovanni’s sprightly tale will probably be considered by most readers as well-merited punishment; the young gallant proved an apt scholar in the art of love, and here was the inciter to evil repaid with the same coin!

Straparola also tells the story, but in a different form, in his “Pleasant Nights” (Piacevoli Notti), First Day, second novella; and his version is taken into a small collection entitled “Tarlton’s Newes out of Purgatorie,” first published in or before 1590 — a catchpenny tract in which, of course, Dick Tarlton had never a hand, any more than he had in the collection of jests which goes under his name.

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STRAPAROLA’S VERSION[490]

In Pisa, a famous cittie of Italye, there lived a gentleman of good linage and landes, feared as well for his wealth, as honoured for his vertue, but indeed well thought on for both; yet the better for his riches. This gentleman had one onelye daughter, called Margaret, who for her beauty was liked of all, and desired of many. But neither might their sutes nor her owne prevaile about her father’s resolution, who was determyned not to marrye her, but to such a man as should be able in abundance to maintain the excellency of her beauty. Divers yong gentlemen proffered large feoffments, but in vaine, a maide shee must bee still: till at last an olde doctor in the towne, that professed phisicke, became a sutor to her, who was a welcome man to her father, in that he was one of the welthiest men in all Pisa; a tall stripling he was and a proper youth, his age about foure score, his heade as white as milke, wherein for offence sake there was left never a tooth. But it is no matter, what he wanted in person he had in the purse, which the poore gentlewoman little regarded, wishing rather to tie herself to one that might fit her content, though they lived meanely, then to him with all the wealth in Italye. But shee was yong, and forcst to follow her father’s direction, who, upon large covenants, was content his daughter should marry with the doctor, and whether she likte him or no, the match was made up, and in short time she was married. The poore wench was bound to the stake, and had not onely an olde impotent man, but one that was so jealous, as none might enter into his house without suspition, nor shee doo any thing without blame; the least glance, the smallest countenance, any smile was a manifest instance to him that she thought of others better than himselfe. Thus he himselfe lived in a hell, and tormented his wife in as ill perplexitie.

At last it chaunced that a young gentleman of the citie, comming by her house, and seeing her looke out at her window, noting her rare and excellent proportion, fell in love with her, and that so extreamelye, as his passions had no meanes till her favour might mittigate his heart sicke discontent. The yong man that was ignorant in amorous matters, and had never beene used to courte anye gentlewoman, thought to reveale his passions to some one freend that might given him counsaile for the winning of her love, and thinking experience was the surest maister, on a daye seeing the olde doctor walkinge in the churche that was Margaret's husband, little knowing who he was, he thought this the fittest man to whom he might discover his passions, for that hee was olde and knew much, and was a phisition that with his drugges might helpe him forward in his purposes, so that seeing the olde man walke solitary, he joinde unto him, and after a curteous salute, tolde him that he was to impart a matter of great import to him, wherein, if hee would not onely be secrete, but indevour to pleasure him, his pains should bee every way to the full considered. You must imagine, gentleman, quoth Mutio, for so was the doctor's name, that men of our profession are no blabs, but hold their secrets in their hearts bottome, and therefore reveale what you please, it shall not onely be concealed, but cured, if either my art or counsaile may doo it. Upon this, Lyonell, so was the young gentleman called, told and discourst unto him from point to point, how he was falne in love with a gentlewoman that was married to one of his profession, discovered her dwelling and the house, and for that he was unacquainted with the woman, and a man little experienced in love matters, he required his favour to further him with his advice. Mutio at this motion was stung to the hart, knowing it was his wife hee was fallen in love withall, yet to conceale the matter, and to experience his wive's chastity, and that if she plaide false, he might be revenged on them both, he dissembled the matter, and answered that he knewe the woman very well, and commended her highly: but said she had a churle to her husband, and therefore he thought shee would bee the more tractable: Trye her, man, quoth hee, fainte harte never wonne faire lady, and if shee will not be brought to the bent of your bowe, I will provide such a potion as shall dispatch all to your owne content: and to give you further instructions for oportunitie, knowe that her husband is foorth every after-noone from three till sixe. Thus farre I have advised you, because I pitty your passions, as my selfe being once a lover, but now I charge thee reveale it to none whomsoever, least it doo disparage my credit to meddle in amorous matters.

The yong gentleman not onely promised all carefull secrecy, but gave him harty thanks for his good counsell, promising to meete him there the next day, and tell him what newes. Then hee left the old man, who was almost mad for feare his wife any way should play false; he saw by experience brave men came to besiege the castle, and seeing it was in a woman's custodie, and had so weeke a governor as himselfe, he doubted it would in time be delivered up: which feare made him almost franticke, yet he drivde of the time great torment, till he might heare from his rival. Lionello he hastes him home and sutes him in his braverye, and goes downe toward the house of Mutio, where he sees her at the windowe, whome he courted with a passionate looke, with such humble salute as shee might perceive how the gentleman was affectionate. Margaretta, looking earnestlye upon him, and noting the perfection of his proportion, accounted him in her eye the flower of all Pisa, thinkte herselfe fortunate if shee might have him for her freend, to supply the defaultes that she found in Mutio. Sundry times that afternoone he past by her window, and he cast not up more loving lookes, then he received gratious favours, which did so incourage him that the next daye betweene three and sixe hee went to her house, and knocking at the doore, desired to speake with the mistris of the house, who hearing by her maid's description what he was, commaunded him to come in, where she intertained him with all courtesie.

The youth that never before had given the attempt to court a ladye, began his exordium with a blushe; and yet went forward so well, that hee discourst unto her howe hee loved her, and that if it might please her to accept of his service, as of a freende ever vowde in all dutye to bee at her commaunde, the care of her honour should bee deerer to him than his life, and hee would be ready to prise her discontent with his bloud at all times. The gentlewoman was a little coye, but, before they part, they concluded that the next daye at foure of the clock hee should come thither and eate a pound of cherries, which was resolved on with a succado des labras, and so with a loath to depart they tooke their leaves. Lionello as joyfull a man as might be, hyed him to the church to meete his olde doctor, where he found him in his olde walke: What newes, syr, quoth Mutio, how have you sped? Even as I can wishe, quoth Lionello, for I have been with my mistrisse, and have found her so tractable, that I hope to make the olde peasant, her husband, looke broadheaded by a paire of browantlers. How deepe this strooke into Mutio's hart, let them imagine that can conjecture what jelousie is; insomuch that the olde doctor askte when should be the time. Marry, quoth Lionello, tomorrow, at foure of the clocke in the afternoone, and then Maister Doctor, quoth hee, will I dub the old squire knight of the forked order.

Thus they past on in that, till it grew late, and then Lyonello went home to his lodging and Mutio to his house, covering all his sorrows with a merrye countenance, with full resolution to revenge them both the next daye with extremitie. He past the night as patiently as he could, and the next daye, after dinner, awaye hee went, watching when it should bee foure of the clocke. At the hour justly came Lyonello and was intertained with all curtesie; but scarce had they kist, ere the maide cryed out to her mistresse that her maister was at the doore; for he hasted, knowing that a horne was but a litle while in grafting. Margaret, at this alarum, was amazed, and yet for a shift chopt Lionello into a great driefatte[491] full of feathers,[492] and sat her downe close to her woorke. By that came Mutio in blowing, and as though hee came to looke somewhat in haste, called for the keyes of his chamber, and looked in everye place, searching so narrowlye in everye corner of the house, that he left not the very privie unsearcht. Seeing he could not finde him, hee said nothing, but fayning himselfe not well at ease, staide at home; so that poor Lionello was faine to staye in the drifatte till the olde churle was in bed with his wife; and then the maide let him out at a backe doore, who went home with a flea in his eare to his lodging.

Well, the next day he went againe to meete his doctor, whome he founde in his wonted walke. What newes? Quoth Mutio, how have you sped? A poxe of the olde slave, quoth Lyonello; I was no sooner in and had given my mistresse one kisse, but the jelous asse was at the doore; the maide spied him, and cryed her maister; so that the poore gentlewoman, for very shifte, was faine to put me in a driefatte of feathers that stoode in an olde chamber, and there I was faine to tarry while[493] he was in bed and a-sleepe, and then the maide let me out, and I departed. But it is no matter; 'twas but a chaunce, and I hope to crye quittance with him ere it be long. As how? Quoth

Mutio. Marry, thus, quoth Lionello: shee sent me woord by her maide this daye that upon Thursday next the olde churle suppeth with a patient of his a mile out of Pisa, and then I feare not but to quitte[494] him for all. It is well, quoth Mutio; fortune bee your frende. I thanke you, quoth Lionello: and so, after a little more prattle, they departed.

To bee shorte, Thursdaye came, and about sixe of the clocke, foorth goes Mutio no further than a freendes house of his, from whence he might descrye who went into his house; straight hee saw Lionello enter in, and after goes hee, insomuche that hee was scarcelye sitten downe, before the mayde cryed out againe, my maister comes. The goodwife, that before had provided for after-claps,[495] had found out a privie place between two seelings of a plauncher,[496] and there she thrust Lionello, and her husband came sweting. What news, quoth shee, drives you home againe so soone, husband? Marry, sweete wife, quoth he, a fearfull dream that I had this night, which came to my remembrance, and that was this: me thought there was a villaine that came secretlye into my house, with a naked poinard in his hand, and hid himselfe, but I could not finde the place; with that mine nose bled, and I came backe; and, by the grace of God, I will seeke every corner in the house for the quiet of my minde. Marry, I pray you doo, husband, quoth she. With that he lockt in all the doors, and began to search every chamber, every hole, every chest, every tub, the very well; he stabd every feather bed through, and made havocke like a mad man, which made him thinke all was in vaine; and hee began to blame his eies that thought they saw that which they did not. Upon this he rest halfe lunaticke, and all night he was very wakefull, that towards the morning he fell into a dead sleepe, and then was Lionello conveighed away.

In the morning when Mutio wakened, hee thought how by no meanes hee should be able to take Lionello tardy: yet he laid in his head a most dangerous plot; and that was this: Wife, quoth he, I must the next Monday ride to Vycensa, to visit an olde patient of mine; till my returne, which will be some ten dayes, I will have thee staye at our little graunge house in the countrey. Marry, very well content, quoth she. With that he kist her, and was verye pleasant, as though he had suspected nothing, and away hee flings to the church, where he meetes Lionello. What, sir, quoth he, what news? is your mistresse yours in possession? No, a plague of the olde slave, quoth hee. I think he is either a witch or els woorkes by magick; for I can no sooner enter into the doores, but he is at my backe, and so he was againe yesternight; for I was not warm in my seate before the maide cryed, my maister comes; and then was the poore soule faine to conveigh me betweene two seelings of a chamber, in a fit place for the purpose, wher I laught hartely to myself too see how he sought every corner, ransakt every tub, and stabd every feather bed, but in vaine; I was safe enough until the morning, and then, when he was fast asleepe, I lept out. Fortune frownes on you, quoth Mutio. I,[497] but I hope, quoth Lionello, this is the last time, and now shee will begin to smile; for on Monday next he rides to Vicensa, and his wife lyes at the grange house a little (out) of the towne, and there in his absence I will revenge all forepast misfortunes. God sent it be so, quoth Mutio; and so took his leave.

These two lovers longd for Monday, and at last it came. Early in the morning Mutio horst himselfe and his wife, his maide and a man, and no more, and away he rides to his grange house, wher, after he had brok his fast, he took his leave, and away towards Vicensa. He rode not far ere, by a false way, he returned into a thicket, and there, with a company of cuntry peasants, lay in an ambuscade to take the young gentleman. In the afternoon comes Lionello galloping, and as soon as he came within sight of the house, he sent back his horse by his boy, and went easily afoot, and there, at the very entry, was entertained by Margaret, who led him up the staires, and convaid him into her bedchamber, saying he was welcome into so mean a cottage. But, quoth she, now I hope fortun shall not envy the purity of our loves. Alas! alas! mistris, cried the maid, heer is my maister, and 100 men with him, with bils and staves. We are betraid, quoth Lionel, and I am but a dead man. Feare not, quoth she, but follow me: and straight she carried him downe into a low parlor, where stoode an olde rotten chest full of writinges; she put him into that, and covered him with olde papers and evidences, and went to the gate to meet her husband.

Why, Signor Mutio, what meanes this hurly burly? quoth she. Vile and shameless strumpet as thou art, thou shalt know by and by, quoth he. Where is thy love? All we have watcht him and seen him enter in. Now, quoth he, shall neither thy tub of feathers or thy seeling serve, for perish he shall with fire, or els fall into my handes. Doo thy worst, jealous foole, quoth she, I ask thee no favour. With that, in a rage, he beset the house round, and then set fire on it. Oh, in what perplexitie was poore Lionello in that he was shut in a chest, and the fire about his eares! and how was Margaret passionat, that knew her lover was in such danger! Yet she made light of the matter, and, as one in a rage, called her maid to her and said: Come on, wench, seeing thy maister, mad with jelousie, hath set the house and al my living on fire, I will be revengd on him: help me heer to lift this old chest where all his writings and deeds are; let that burne first, and as soon as I see that on fire I will walke towards my freends, for the olde foole will be beggard, and I will refuse him. Mutio, that knew al his obligations and statutes lay there, puld her back and bad two of his men carry the chest into the field, and see it were safe, himselfe standing by and seeing his house burned downe sticke and stone. Then, quieted in his mind, he went home with his wife and began to flatter her, thinking assuredly that he had burnt her paramour, causing his chest to be carried in a cart to his house in Pisa. Margaret, impatient, went to her mother's and complained to her and her brethren of the jealousie of her husband, who maintaned her it to be true, and desired but a daies respite to proove it.

Wel, hee was bidden to supper the next night at her mother's, she thinking to make her daughter and him freends againe. In the meane time he to his woonted walk in the church, and there, prćter expectationem, he found Lionello walking. Wondring at this, he straight enquires what newes. What newes, Maister Doctor, quoth he, and he fell in a great laughing; in faith yesterday, I scapt a scouring, for syrrha, I went to the grange- house, where I was appointed to come, and I was no sooner gotten up the chamber, but the magicall villeine, her husband, beset the house with bils and staves, and that he might be sure no seeling nor corner should shrowde me, he set the house on fire, and so burnt it downe to the ground. Why, quoth Mutio, and how did you escape? Alas, quoth he, wel fare a woman's wit; she conveighed me into an old chest full of writings, which she knew her husband durst not burne, and so I was saved and brought to

Pisa, and yesternight, by her maide, let home to my lodging. This, quoth he, is the pleasantest jest that ever I heard; and upon this I have a sute to you: I am this night bidden foorth to supper, you shall be my guest, onely I will crave so much favour, as after supper for a pleasant sporte, to make relation what successe you have had in your loves. For that I will not sticke, quoth he, and so he conveyed Lionello to his mother-in-law's house with him, and discovered to his wive's brethren who he was, and how at supper he would disclose the whole matter; For, quoth he, he knowes not that I am Margaret's husband. At this all the brethren bad him welcome, and so did the mother to, and Margaret, she was kept out of sight. Supper time being come they fell to their victals, and Lionello was carrowst unto by Mutio, who was very pleasant, to drawe him into a merry humour, that he might to the ful discourse the effect and fortunes of his love. Supper being ended, Mutio requested him to tel to the gentlemen what had hapned between him and his mistresse. Lionello, with a smiling countenance, began to describe his mistresse, the house and street where she dwelt, how he fell in love with her, and how he used the councell of this doctor, who in all his affaires was his secretarye. Margaret heard all this with a great feare, and when he came to the last point, she caused a cup of wine to be given him by one of her sisters, wherein was a ring that he had given Margaret. As he had told how he had escapt burning, and was ready to confirme all for a troth, the gentlewoman drunke to him, who taking the cup and seeing the ring, having a quick wit and a reaching head, spide the fetch, and perceived that all this while this was his lover's husband to whome hee had revealed these escapes; at this drinking the wine and swallowing the ring into his mouth he went forward. Gentlemen, quoth he, how like you of my loves and my fortunes? Wel, quoth the gentlemen; I pray you is it true? As true, quoth he, as if I would be so simple as to reveal what I did to Margaret's husband; for, know you, gentlemen, that I knew this Mutio to be her husband whom I notified to be my lover; and for that he was generally known throughout Pisa to be a jealous fool, therefore, with these tales I brought him into paradice, which are follies of mine owne braine; for, trust me, by the faith of a gentleman, I never spake to the woman, was never in her companye, neyther doo I know her if I see her. At this they all fell in a laughing at Mutio, who was ashamde that Lionello had so scoft him. But all was well; they were made friends, but the jest went so to his hart that he shortly after died, and Lionello enjoyed the ladye.

Ser Giovanni's story, Roscoe observes, is "curious as having through the medium of translation suggested the idea of those amusing scenes in which the renowned Falstaff acquaints Master Ford, disguised under the name of Brooke, with his progress in the good graces of Mrs. Ford. The contrivances likewise by which he eludes the vengeance of the jealous husband are similar to those recounted in the novel, with the addition of throwing the unweildy knight into the river. Dunlop says that the same story has been translated is a collection entitled 'The Fortunate, Deceived, and Unfortunate Lovers,' and that Shakspeare may probably also have seen it in 'Tarlton's Newes out of Purgatorie,' where the incidents related in the Lovers of Pisa are given according to Straparola's story. Moličre made a happy use of it in his 'Ecole des Femmes,' where the humour of the piece turns upon a young gentleman confiding his progress in the affections of a lady to the ear of her guardian, who believed he was on the point of espousing her himself." Two other French plays were based upon the story, one of which was written by La Fontaine under the title of "Le Maître en Droit." Readers of "Gil Blas" will also recollect how Don Raphael confides to Balthazar the progress of his amour with his wife, and expresses his vexation at the husband's unexpected return.

It is much to be regretted that nothing is known as to the date and place of the composition of the Breslau edition of The Nights, which alone contains this and several other tales found in the collections of the early Italian novelists.

THE KING WHO KENNED THE QUINTESSENCE OF THINGS. — Vol. XI. .

Although we may find, as already stated, the direct source of this tale in the forty-sixth chapter of Al-Mas'údi's "Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems," which was written about A.D. 943, yet there exists a much older version — if not the original form — in a Sanskrit collection entitled, "Vetálapanchavinsatí," or Twenty- five Tales of a Vampyre. This ancient work is incorporated with the "Kathá Sarit Ságara," or Ocean of the Streams of Story, composed in

Sanskrit verse by Somadeva in the 11th century, after a similar work, now apparently lost, entitled “Vrihat Kathá,” or Great Story, written by Gunadhya, in the 6th century.[498] In the opinion of Benfey all the Vampyre Tales are of Buddhist extraction (some are unquestionably so), and they probably date from before our era. As a separate work they exist, more or less modified, in many of the Indian vernaculars; in Hindí, under the title of “Baital Pachísí”; in Tamil, “Vedala Kadai”; and there are also versions in Telegu, Mahratta, and Canarese. The following is from Professor C. H. Tawney’s complete translation of the “Kathá Sarit Ságara” (it is the 8th recital of the Vetála):

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INDIAN VERSION

There is a great tract of land assigned to Bráhmans in the country of Anga, called Vrikshaghata. In it there lived a rich sacrificing Bráhman named Vishnusvámin. And he had a wife equal to himself in birth. And by her he had three sons born to him, who were distinguished for preternatural acuteness. In course of time they grew up to be young men. One day, when he had begun a sacrifice, he sent those three brothers to the sea to fetch a turtle. So off they went, and when they had found a turtle, the eldest said to his two brothers, “Let one of you take the turtle for our father’s sacrifice; I cannot take it, as it is all slippery with slime.” When the eldest said this, the two younger ones answered him, “If you hesitate about taking it, why should not we?” When the eldest heard that, he said, “You two must take the turtle; if you do not, you will have obstructed your father’s sacrifice, and then you will certainly sink down to hell.” When he told the younger brothers this, they laughed and said to him, “If you see our duty so clearly, why do you not see that your own is the same?” Then the eldest said, “What, do you not know how fastidious I am? I am very fastidious about eating, and I cannot be expected to touch what is repulsive.” The middle brother, when he heard this speech of his, said to his brother, “Then I am a more fastidious person than you, for I am a most fastidious connoisseur of the fair sex.” When the middle one said this, the eldest went on to say, “Then let the younger of you two take the turtle.” Then the youngest brother frowned, and in his turn said to the two elder, “You fools, I am very fastidious about beds; so I am the most fastidious of the lot.”

So the three brothers fell to quarrelling with one another, and being completely under the dominion of conceit, they left that turtle and went off immediately to the court of the king of that country, whose name was Prasenajit, and who lived in a city named Vitankapura, in order to have the dispute decided. There they had themselves announced by the warder, and went in, and gave the king a circumstantial account of their case. The king said, “Wait here, and I will put you all in turn to the proof;” so they agreed and remained there. And at the time that the king took his meal, he had them conducted to a seat of honour, and given delicious food fit for a king, possessing all the six flavours. And while all were feasting around him, the Bráhman who was fastidious about eating along of the company did not eat, but sat there with his face puckered up with disgust. The king himself asked the Bráhman why he did not eat his food, though it was sweet and fragrant, and he slowly answered him, "I perceive in this food an evil smell of the reek from corpses, so I cannot bring myself to eat it, however delicious it may be." When he said this before the assembled multitude, they all smelled it by the king's orders, and said, "This food is prepared from white rice and is good and fragrant." But the Bráhman who was so fastidious about eating would not touch it, but stopped his nose. Then the king reflected, and proceeded to inquire into the matter, and found out from his officers that the food had been made from rice which had been grown in a field near the burning ghát of a certain village. Then the king was much astonished, and, being pleased, he said to him, "In truth you are very particular as to what you eat; so eat of some other dish."

And after they had finished their dinner, the king dismissed the Bráhmans to their apartments and sent for the loveliest lady of his court. And in the evening he sent that fair one, all whose limbs were of faultless beauty, splendidly adorned, to the second Bráhman, who was so squeamish about the fair sex. And that matchless kindler of Cupid's flame, with a face like the full moon of midnight, went, escorted by the king's servants, to the chamber of the Bráhman. But when she entered, lighting up the chamber with her brightness, that gentleman who was so fastidious about the fair sex felt quite faint, and stopping his nose with his left hand, said to the king's servants, "Take her away; if you do not, I am a dead man: a smell comes from her like that of a goat." When the king's servants heard this, they took the bewildered fair one to their sovereign, and told him what had taken place. And the king immediately had the squeamish gentleman sent for, and said to him, "How can this lovely woman, who has perfumed herself with sandal-wood, camphor, black aloes, and other splendid scents, so that she diffuses exquisite fragrance through the world, smell like a goat?" But though the king used this argument to the squeamish gentleman he stuck to his point; and then the king began to have his doubts on the subject, and at last, by artfully framed questions, he elicited from the lady herself that, having been separated in her childhood from her mother and nurse, she had been brought up on goat's milk.

Then the king was much astonished, and praised highly the discernment of the man who was fastidious about the fair sex, and immediately had given to the third Bráhman, who was fastidious about beds, in accordance with his taste, a bed composed of seven mattresses placed upon a bedstead. White smooth sheets and coverlets were laid upon the bed, and the fastidious man slept upon it in a splendid room. But, before half a watch of the night had passed, he rose up from that bed, with his hand pressed to his side, screaming in an agony of pain. And the king's officers, who were there, saw a red crooked mark on his side, as if a hair had been pressed deep into it. And they went and told the king, and the king said to them, "Look and see if there is not something under the mattress." So they went and examined the bottom of the mattresses one by one, and they found a hair in the middle of the bedstead underneath them all. And they took it and showed it to the king, and they also brought the man who was fastidious about beds, and when the king saw the state of his body, he was astonished. And he spent the whole night in wondering how a hair could make so deep an impression on his skin through seven mattresses.[499]

And the next morning the king gave three hundred thousand gold pieces to those fastidious men, because they were persons of wonderful discernment and refinement. And they remained in great comfort in the king's court, forgetting all about the turtle, and little did they reck of the fact that they had incurred sin by obstructing their father's sacrifice.[500]

The story of the brothers who were so very "knowing" is common to most countries, with occasional local modifications. It is not often we find the knowledge of the "quintessence of things" concentrated in a single individual, as in the case of the ex- king of our tale, but we have his exact counterpart — and the circumstance is significant — in No. 2 of the "Cento Novelle Antiche," the first Italian collection of short stories, made in the 13th century, where a prisoner informs the king of Greece that a certain horse has been suckled by a she-ass, that a jewel contains a flaw, and that the king himself is a baker. Mr. Tawney, in a note on the Vetála story, as above, refers also to the decisions of Hamlet in Saxo Grammaticus, 1839, , in Simrock's "Quellen des Shakespeare," I, 81-85; 5, 170; he lays down that some bread tastes of blood (the corn was grown on a battlefield); that some liquor tastes of iron (the malt was mixed with water taken from a well in which some rusty swords had lain); that some bacon tastes of corpses (the pig had eaten a corpse); lastly, that the king is a servant and his wife a serving-maid. But in most versions of the story three brothers are the gifted heroes.

In "Mélusine"[501] for 5 Nov. 1885, M. René Basset cites an interesting variant (in which, as is often the case, the "Lost Camel" plays a part, but we are not concerned about it at present) from Radloff's "Proben der Volksliteratur der türkischen Stämme Süd-Sibiriens," as follows:

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SIBERIAN VERSION

Meat and bread were set before the three brothers, and the prince went out. The eldest said, “The prince is a slave;” the second, “This is dog’s flesh;” the youngest, “This bread has grown over the legs of a dead body.” The prince heard them. He took a knife and ran to find his mother. “Tell me the truth,” cried he- -”were you unfaithful to my father during his absence? A man who is here has called me a slave.” “My son,” replied she, “If I don’t tell the truth, I shall die; if I tell it, I shall die. When thy father was absent, I gave myself up to a slave.” The prince left his mother and ran to the house of the shepherd: “The meat which you have cooked to-day — what is it? Tell the truth, otherwise I’ll cut your head off.” “Master, if I tell it, I shall die; if I don’t, I shall die. I will be truthful. It was a lamb whose mother had no milk; on the day of its birth, it was suckled by a bitch: that is to-day’s ewe.” The prince left the shepherd and ran to the house of the husbandman: “Tell the truth, or else I’ll cut off your head. Three young men have come to my house. I have placed bread before them, and they say that the grain has grown over the limbs of a dead man.” “I will be frank with you. I ploughed with my plough in a place where were (buried) the limbs of a man; without knowing it, I sowed some wheat, which grew up.” The prince quitted his slave and returned to his house, where were seated the strangers. He said to the first, “Young man, how do you know that I am a slave?” “Because you went out as soon as the repast was brought in.” He asked the second, “How do you know that the meat which was served was that of a dog?” “Because it has a disagreeable taste like the flesh of a dog.” Then to the third: “How come you to know that this bread was grown over the limbs of a dead person?” “What shall I say? It smells of the limbs of a dead body; that is why I recognised it. If you do not believe me, ask your slave; he will tell you that what I say is true.”

In the same paper (col. 516) M. René Basset cites a somewhat elaborate variant, from Stier’s “Ungarische Sagen und MĂ¤rchen,” in which, once more, the knowledge of the “quintessence of things” is concentrated in a single individual.

HUNGARIAN VERSION

A clever Magyar is introduced with his companions in disguise into the camp of the king of the Tátárs, who is menacing his country. The prince, suspicious, causes him to be carefully watched by his mother, a skilful sorceress. They brought in the evening's repast. "What good wine the prince has!" said she. "Yes," replied one, "but it contains human blood." The sorceress took note of the bed from whence these words proceeded, and when all were asleep she deftly cut a lock of hair from him who had spoken, crept stealthily out of the room, and brought this mark to her son. The strangers started up, and when our hero discovered what had been done to him, he cut a lock from all, to render his detection impossible. When they came to dinner, the king knew not from whom the lock had been taken. The following night the mother of the prince again slipped into the room, and said, "What good bread has the prince of the Tátárs!" "Very good," replied one, "it is made with the milk of a woman." When all were asleep, she cut a little off the moustache of him who was lying in the bed from which the voice proceeded. This time the Magyars were still more on the alert, and when they were apprised of the matter, they all cut a little from their moustaches, so that next morning the prince found himself again foiled. The third night the old lady hid herself, and said in a loud voice, "What a handsome man is the prince of the Tátárs!" "Yes," replied one, "but he is a bastard." When all were asleep, the old lady made a mark on the visor of the helmet of the one from whence had come the words, and then acquainted her son of what she had done. In the morning the prince perceived that all the helmets were similarly marked.[502] At length he refrained, and said, "I see that there is among you a master greater than myself; that is why I desire very earnestly to know him. He may make himself known; I should like to see and know this extraordinary man, who is more clever and powerful than myself." The young man started up from his seat and said, "I have not wished to be stronger or wiser than yourself. I have only wished to find out what you had preconcerted for us. I am the person who has been marked three nights." "It is well, young man. But prove now your words: How is there human blood in the wine?"

“Call your butler and he will tell you.” The butler came in trembling all over, and confessed that when he corked the wine he had cut his finger with the knife, and a drop of blood had fallen into the cask. “But how is there woman’s milk in the bread?” asked the king. “Call the bakeress,” he replied, “and she will tell it you.” When they questioned her, she confessed that she was kneading the bread and at the same time suckling her baby, and that on pressing it to her breast some milk flowed and was mixed with the bread. The sorceress, the mother of the king, when they came to the third revelation of the young man, confessed in her turn that the king was illegitimate.

Mr. Tawney refers to the Chevalier de Mailly’s version of the Three Princes of Serendip (Ceylon): The three are sitting at table, and eating a leg of lamb, sent with some splendid wine from the table of the emperor Bahrám. The eldest maintains that the wine was made of grapes that grew in a cemetery; the second, that the lamb was brought up on dog’s milk; while the third asserts that the emperor had put to death the son of the wazír. And that the latter is bent on vengeance. All these statements turn out to be well-grounded. Mr. Tawney also refers to parallel stories in the Breslau edition of The Nights; namely, in Night 458, it is similarly conjectured that the bread was baked by a sick woman; that the kid was suckled by a bitch, and that the sultan is illegitimate; and in Night 459, a gem-cutter guesses that a jewel has an internal flaw, a man skilled in the pedigrees of horses divines that a horse is the offspring of a female buffalo, and a man skilled in human pedigrees that the mother of the favourite queen was a rope-dancer. Similar incidents occur in “The Sultan of Yemen and his Three Sons,” one of the Additional Tales translated by Scott, from the Wortley-Montague MS., now in the Bodleian Library, and comprised in vol. vi. of his edition of “The Arabian Nights Entertainments,” published at London in 1811.

An analogous tale occurs in Mr. E. J. W. Gibb’s recently-published translation of the “History of the Forty Vezirs (the Lady’s Fourth Story, ff.), the motif of which is that “all things return to their origin:”

TURKISH ANALOGUE.

There was in the palace of the world a king who was very desirous of seeing Khizr[503] (peace on him!), and he would even say, "If there be any one who will show me Khizr, I will give him whatsoever he may wish." Now there was at that time a man poor of estate, and from the stress of his poverty he said to himself, "Let me go and speak to the king, that if he provide for me during three years, either I shall be dead, or the king will be dead, or he will forgive me my fault, or I shall on somewise win to escape, and in this way shall I make merry for a time." So he went to the king and spake these words to him.[504] The king said, "An thou show him not, then I will kill thee," and that poor man consented. Then the king let give him much wealth and money, and the poor man took that wealth and money and went to his house. Three years he spent in merriment and delight, and he rested at ease till the term was accomplished. At the end of that time he fled and hid himself in a trackless place and he began to quake for fear. Of a sudden he saw a personage with white raiment and shining face, who saluted him. The poor man returned the salutation, and the radiant being asked, "Why art thou thus sad?" but he gave no answer. Again the radiant being asked him and sware to him, saying, "Do indeed tell to me thy plight, that I may find thee some remedy." So that hapless one narrated his story from its beginning to its end, and the radiant being said, "Come, I will go with thee to the king, and I will answer for thee." So they arose.

Now the king wanted that hapless one, and while they were going some of the king's officers who were seeking met them, and they straightway seized the poor man and brought him to the king. Quoth the king, "Lo, the three years are accomplished; come now, and show me Khizr." The poor man said, "My king, grace and bounty are the work of kings — forgive my sin." Quoth the king, "I made a pact; till I have killed thee, I shall not have fulfilled it." And he looked to his chief vezír and said, "How should this be done?" Quoth the vezír, "This man should be hewn in many pieces and then hung up on butchers' hooks, that others may see and lie not before the king." Said that radiant being, "True spake the vezír; — all things return to their origin." Then the king looked to the second vezír and said, "What sayest thou?" He replied, "This man should be boiled in a cauldron." Said that radiant being, "True spake the vezír; — all things return to their origin." The king looked to the third vezir and said, "What sayest though?" The vezír replied, "This man should be hewn in small pieces and baked in an oven." Again said that elder, "True spake the vezír; — all things return to their origin." Then quoth the king to the fourth vezír, "Let us see what sayest thou?" The vezír replied, "O king, the wealth thou gavest this poor creature was for the love of Khizr (peace on him!). he, thinking to find him, accepted it; now that he has not found him he seeks pardon. This were befitting, that thou set free this poor creature for the love of Khizr." Said that elder, "True spake the vezír; — all things return to their origin." Then the king said to the elder, "O elder, my vezírs have said different things contrary the one to the other, and thou hast said concerning each of them, 'True spake the vezír; - all things return to their origin.' What is the reason thereof?" That elder replied, "O king, thy first vezír is a butcher's son; therefore did he draw to his origin. Thy second vezír is a cook's son, and he likewise proposed a punishment as became his origin. Thy third vezír is a baker's son; he likewise proposed a punishment as became his origin. But thy fourth vezír is of gentle birth; compassion therefore becomes his origin, so he had compassion on that hapless one, and sought to do good and counselled liberation. O king, all things return to their origin."[505] And he gave the king much counsel, and at last said, "Lo, I am Khizr," and vanished.[506]

The discovery of the king's illegitimate birth, which occurs in so many versions, has its parallels in the story of the Nephew of Hippocrates in the "Seven Wise Masters," and the Lady's 2nd Story in Mr. Gibb's translation of the "Forty Vezírs." The extraordinary sensitiveness of the third young Bráhman, in the Vetála story, whose side was scratched by a hair that was under the seventh of the mattresses on which he lay, Rohde (says Tawney), in his "Griechische Novellistik," , compares with a story told by Aelian of the Sybarite Smindyrides, who slept on a bed of rose-leaves and got up in the morning covered with blisters. He also quotes from the Chronicle of Tabari a story of a princess who was made to bleed by a rose-leaf lying in her bed.[507]

The eleventh recital of the Vetála is about a king's three sensitive wives: As one of the queens was playfully pulling the hair of the king, a blue lotus leaped from her ear and fell on her lap; immediately a wound was produced on the front of her thigh by the blow, and the delicate princess exclaimed, "Oh! oh!" and fainted. At night, the second retired with the king to an apartment on the roof of the palace exposed to the rays of the moon, which fell on the body of the queen, who was sleeping by the king's side, where it was exposed by her garment blowing aside; immediately she woke up, exclaiming, "Alas! I am burnt," and rose up from the bed rubbing her limbs. The king woke up in a state of alarm, crying out, "What is the meaning of this?" Then he got up and saw that blisters had been produced on the queen's body. In the meanwhile the king's third wife heard of it and left her palace to come to him. And when she got into the open air, she heard distinctly, as the night was still, the sound of a pestle pounding in a distant house. The moment the gazelle-eyed one heard it, she said, "Alas! I am killed," and she sat down on the path, shaking her hands in an agony of pain. Then the girl turned back, and was conducted by her attendants to her own chamber, where she fell on her bed and groaned. And when her weeping attendants examined her, they saw that her hands were covered with bruises, and looked like lotuses upon which black beetles had settled.

To this piteous tale of the three very sensitive queens Tawney appends the following note: Rohde, in his "Griechische Novellistik," , compares with this a story told by Timćus, of a Sybarite who saw a husbandman hoeing a field, and contracted rupture from it. Another Sybarite, to whom he told the tale of his sad mishap, got ear-ache from hearing it. Oesterley, in his German translation of the Baitál Pachísí, points out that Grimm, in his "KindermĂ¤rchen," iii. , quotes a similar incident from the travels of the Three sons of Giaffar: out of four princesses, one faints because a rose-twig is thrown into her face among some roses; a second shuts her eyes in order not to see the statue of a man; a third says, "Go away; the hairs in your fur cloak run into me;" and the fourth covers her face, fearing that some of the fish in a tank may belong to the male sex. He also quotes a striking parallel from the "Elites des contes du Sieur d’Onville:” Four ladies dispute as to which of them is the most delicate. One has been lame for three months owing to a rose-leaf having fallen on her foot; another has had three ribs broken by a sheet in her bed having been crumpled; a third has held her head on one side for six weeks owing to one half of her head having three more hairs on it than the other; a fourth has broken a blood-vessel by a slight movement, and the rupture cannot be healed without breaking the whole limb.[Poor things!]

THE PRINCE WHO FELL IN LOVE WITH THE PICTURE. — Vol. XI. .

In the Persian tales of “The Thousand and One Days,” a young prince entered his father’s treasury one day, and saw there a little cedar chest “set with pearls, diamonds, emeralds, and topazes;” on opening it (for the key was in the lock) he beheld the picture of an exceedingly beautiful woman, with whom he immediately fell in love. Ascertaining the name of the lady from an inscription on the back of the portrait, he set off with a companion to discover her, and having been told by an old man at Baghdad that her father at one time reigned in Ceylon, he continued his journey thither, encountering many unheard-of adventures by the way. Ultimately he is informed that the lady with whose portrait he had become enamoured was one of the favourites of King Solomon. One should suppose that his would have effectually cured the love-sick prince; but no: he “could never banish her sweet image from his heart.”[508]

Two instances of falling in love with the picture of a pretty woman occur in the “Kathá Sarít Ságara.” In Book ix., cha, a painter shows King Prithvirúpa the “counterfeit presentment” of the beauteous Princess Rapalatá, and “as the king gazed on it his eye was drowned in that sea of beauty her person, so that he could not draw it out again. For the king, whose longing was excessive, could not be satisfied with devouring her form, which poured forth a stream of the nectar of beauty, as the partridge cannot be satisfied with devouring the moonlight.” In Book xii., cha, a female ascetic shows a wandering prince the portrait of the Princess Mandáravatí, “and Sundarasena when he beheld that maiden, who, though she was present there only in a picture, seemed to be of romantic beauty and like a flowing forth of joy, immediately felt as if he had been pierced with the arrows of the god of the flowery bow [i.e. Káma].” In chapter 35 of Scott’s translation of the “Bahár-i-Dánish,” Prince Ferokh-Faul opens a volume, “which he had scarcely done when the fatal portrait of the fair princess who, the astrologers had foretold, was to occasion him so many perils, presented itself to his view. He instantly fainted, when the slave, alarmed, conveyed intelligence of his condition to the sultan, and related the unhappy cause of the disorder.” In Gomberville’s romance of Polexandre, the African prince, Abd-el-Malik, falls in love with the portrait of Alcidiana, and similar incidents occur in the romance of Agesilaus of Colchos and in the Story of the Seven Wazírs (vol. vi.); but why multiply instances? Nothing is more common in Asiatic fictions.

THE FULLER, HIS WIFE, AND THE TROOPER. — Vol. XI. .

In addition to the versions of this amusing story referred to on — all of which will be found in the second volume of my work on “Popular Tales and Fictions,” p-228 — there is yet another in a Persian story-book, of unknown date, entitled, “Shamsa ú Kuhkuha,” written by Mirza Berkhorder Turkman, of which an account, together with specimens, is given in a recently- published little book (Quaritch), “Persian Portraits: a sketch of Persian History, Literature, and Politics,” by Mr. F. F. Arbuthnot, author of “Early Ideas: a Group of Hindoo Stories.”

This version occurs in a tale of three artful wives — or, to employ the story-teller’s own graphic terms, “three whales of the sea of fraud and deceit: three dragons of the nature of thunder and the quickness of lightning; three defamers of honour and reputation; namely, three men-deceiving, lascivious women, each of whom had from the chicanery of her cunning issued the diploma of turmoil to a hundred cities and countries, and in the arts of fraud they accounted Satan as an admiring spectator in the theatre of their stratagems.[509] One of them was sitting in the court of justice of the kazi’s embrace; the second was the precious gem of the bazaar-master’s diadem of compliance; and the third was the beazle and ornament of the signet-ring of the life and soul of the superintendent of police. They were constantly entrapping the fawns of the prairie of deceit within the grasp of cunning, and plundered the wares of the caravans of tranquillity of hearts of strangers and acquaintances, by means of the edge of the scimitar of fraud. One day this trefoil of roguery met at the public bath, and, according to their homogeneous nature they intermingled as intimately as the comb with the hair; they tucked up their garment of amity to the waist of union, entered the tank of agreement, seated themselves in the hot-house of love, and poured from the dish of folly, by means of the key of hypocrisy, the water of profusion upon the head of intercourse; they rubbed with the brush of familiarity and the soap of affection the stains of jealousies from each other's limbs. After a while, when they had brought the pot of concord to boil by the fire of mutual laudation, they warmed the bath of association with the breeze of kindness, and came out. In the dressing-room all three of them happened simultaneously to find a ring, the gem of which surpassed the imagination of the jeweler of destiny, and the like of which he had never beheld in the storehouse of possibility. In short, these worthy ladies contended with each other for possession of the ring, until at length the mother of the bathman came forward and proposed that they should entrust the ring to her in the meanwhile, and it should be the prize of the one who most cleverly deceived and befooled her husband, to which they all agreed, and then departed for their respective domiciles.[510]

Mr. Arbuthnot's limits pertained only of abstracts of the tricks played upon their husbands by the three ladies — which the story-teller gives at great length — and that of the kazi's wife is as follows:

The kazi's wife knows that a certain carpenter, who lived close to her, was very much in love with her. She sends her maid to him with a message to say that the flame of his love had taken effect upon her heart, and that he must make an underground passage between his house and her dwelling, so that they might communicate with each other freely by means of the mine. The carpenter digs the passage, and the lady pays him a visit, and says to him, "To-morrow I shall come here, and you must bring the kazi to marry me to you." The next day the kazi goes to his office; the lady goes to the carpenter's house, and sends him to bring her husband, the kazi, to marry them. The carpenter fetches him, and, as the kazi hopes for a good present, he comes willingly enough, but is much surprised at the extreme likeness between the bride and his own wife. The more he looks at her, the more he is in doubt; and at last, offering an excuse to fetch something, he rushes off to his own house, but is forestalled by his spouse, who had gone thither by the passage, and on his arrival is lying on her bed. The kazi makes some excuses for his sudden entry into her room, and, after some words, goes back to the carpenter's house; but his wife had preceded him, and is sitting in her place. Again he begins the ceremony, but is attracted by a black mole on the corner of the bride's lip, which he could have sworn was the same as that possessed by his wife. Making more excuses, and in spite of the remonstrances of the carpenter, he hurries back to his house once more; but his wife had again got there before him, and he finds her reading a book, and much astonished at his second visit. She suggests that he is mad, and he admits that his conduct is curious, and returns to the carpenter's house to complete the ceremony. This is again frequently interrupted, but finally he marries his own wife to the carpenter, and, having behaved in such an extraordinary manner throughout, is sent off to a lunatic asylum.

For the tricks of the two other ladies, and for many other equally diverting tales, I refer the reader to Mr. Arbuthnot's pleasing and instructive little book, which is indeed an admirable epitome of the history and literature of Persia, and one which was greatly wanted in these days, when most men, "like the dogs in Egypt for fear of the crocodiles, must drink of the waters of information as they run, in dread of the old enemy Time."

I have discussed the question of the genealogy of this tale elsewhere, but, after a somewhat more minute comparative analysis of the several versions, am disposed to modify the opinion which I then entertained. I think we must consider as the direct or indirect source of the versions and variants the "Miles Gloriosus" of Plautus, the plot of which, it is stated in the prologue to the second act, was taken from a Greek play. It is, however, not very clear whether Berni adapted his story from Plautus or the "Seven Wise Masters"; probably from the former, since in both the lady is represented, to the captain and the cuckold, as a twin sister, while in the S. W. M. the crafty knight pretends that she is his leman, come from Hungary with tidings that he may now with safety return home. On the other hand, in the S. W. M., as in Plautus, the lovers make their escape by sea, an incident which Berni has altered to a journey by land — no doubt, in order to introduce further adventures for the development of his main plot. But then we find a point of resemblance between Berni and the S. W. M., in the incident of the cuckold accompanying the lovers part of their way — in the latter to the sea-shore; while in Plautus the deceived captain remains at home to prosecute an amour and get a thrashing for his reward (in Plautus, instead of a wife, it is the captain's slave- girl). It is curious that amidst all the masquerade of the Arabian story the cuckold's wife also personates her supposititious twin-sister, as in Plautus and Berni. In Plautus the houses of the lover and the captain adjoin, as is also the case in the modern Italian and Sicilian versions; while in Berni, the S. W. M., the Arabian, and the Persian story cited in this note they are at some distance. With these resemblances and variations it is not easy to say which version was derived from another. Evidently the Arabian story has been deliberately modified by the compiler, and he has, I think, considerably improved upon the original: the ludicrous perplexity of the poor fuller when he awakes, to find himself apparently transformed into a Turkish trooper, recalls the nursery rhyme of the little woman "who went to market her eggs for to sell," and falling asleep on the king's highway a pedlar cut off her petticoats up to the knees, and when she awoke and saw her condition she exclaimed, "Lawk-a-mercy me, this is none of I!" and so on. And not less diverting is the pelting the blockhead receives from his brother fullers — altogether, a capital story.

TALE OF THE SIMPLETON HUSBAND. — Vol. XI. .

The "curious" reader will find European and Asiatic versions of this amusing story in "Originals and Analogues of some of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales," published for the Chaucer Society, p-188 and (in a paper contributed by me: "The Enchanted Tree") -364.

TALE OF THE THREE MEN AND OUR LORD ISA. — Vol XI.

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Under the title of "The Robbers and the Treasure-Trove" I have brought together many European and Asiatic versions of this wide-spread tale in "Chaucer Analogues," p-436.

THE MELANCHOLIST AND THE SHARPER. — Vol. XI. .

A similar but much shorter story is found in Gladwin's "Persian Moonshee," and story-books in several of the Indian vernaculars which have been rendered into English:

A miser said to a friend, "I have now a thousand rupees, which I will bury out of the city, and I will not tell the secret to any one besides yourself." They went out of the city together, and buried the money under a tree. Some days after the miser went alone to the tree and found no signs of his money. He said to himself, "Excepting that friend, no other has taken it away; but if I question him he will never confess." He therefore went to his (the friend's) house and said, "A great deal of money is come into my hands, which I want to put in the same place; if you will come to-morrow, we will go together." The friend, by coveting this large sum, replaced the former money, and the miser next day went there alone and found it. He was delighted with his own contrivance, and never again placed any confidence in friends.

One should suppose a miser the last person to confide the secret of his wealth to any one; but the Italian versions bear a closer resemblance to the Arabian story. From No. 74 of the "Cento Novelle Antiche" Sacchetti, who was born in 1335 and is ranked by Crescimbini as next to Boccaccio, adapted his 198th novella, which is a most pleasing version of the Asiatic story:

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ITALIAN VERSION.

A blind man of Orvieto, of the name of Cola, hit upon a device to recover a hundred florins he had been cheated of, which showed he was possessed of all the eyes of Argus, though he had unluckily lost his own. And this he did without wasting a farthing either upon law or arbitration, by sheer dexterity; for he had formerly been a barber, and accustomed to shave very close, having then all his eyes about him, which had been now closed for about thirty years. Alms seemed then the only resource to which he could betake himself, and such was the surprising progress he in a short time made in his new trade that he counted a hundred florins in his purse, which he secretly carried about him until he could find a safer place. His gains far surpassed anything he had realised with his razor and scissors; indeed, they increased so fast that he no longer knew where to bestow them; until one morning happening to remain the last, as he believed, in the church, he thought of depositing his purse of a hundred florins under a loose tile in the floor behind the door, knowing the situation of the place perfectly well. After listening some time without hearing a foot stirring, he very cautiously laid it in the spot; but unluckily there remained a certain Juccio Pezzichernolo, offering his adoration before an image of San Giovanni Boccadoro, who happened to see Cola busily engaged behind the door. He continued his adorations until he saw the blind man depart, when, not in the least suspecting the truth, he approached and searched the place. He soon found the identical tile, and on removing it with the help of his knife, he found the purse, which he very quietly put into his pocket, replacing the tiles just as they were, and, resolving to say nothing about it, he went home.

At the end of three days the blind mendicant, desirous of inspecting his treasure, took a quiet time for visiting the place, and removing the tile searched a long while in great perturbation, but all in vain, to find his beloved purse. At last, replacing things just as they were, he was compelled to return in no very enviable state of mind to his dwelling; and there meditating on his loss, the harvest of the toil of so many days, by dint of intense thinking a bright thought struck him (as frequently happens by cogitating in the dark), how he had yet a kind of chance of redeeming his lost spoils. Accordingly in the morning he called his young guide, a lad about nine years old, saying, "My son, lead me to church," and before setting out he tutored him how he was to behave, seating himself at his side before the entrance, and particularly remarking every person who should enter into the church. "Now, if you happen to see any one who takes particular notice of me, and who either laughs or makes any sign, be sure you observe it and tell me." The boy promised he would; and they proceeded accordingly and took their station before the church

When the dinner-hour arrived, the father and son prepared to leave the place, the former inquiring by the way whether his son had observed any one looking hard at him as he passed along. "That I did," answered the lad, "but only one, and he laughed as he went past us. I do not know his name, but he is strongly marked with the small-pox and lives somewhere near the Frati Minori." "Do you think, my dear lad," said his father, "that you could take me to his shop, and tell me when you see him there?" "To be sure I could," said the lad. "Then come, let us lose no time," replied the father, "and when we are there tell me, and while I speak to him you can step on one side and wait for me." So the sharp little fellow led him along the way until he reached a cheesemonger's stall, when he acquainted his father, and brought him close to it. No sooner did the blind man hear him speaking with his customers than he recognised him for the same Juccio with whom he had formerly been acquainted during his days of light. When the coast was a little clear, our blind hero entreated some moments' conversation, and Juccio, half suspecting the occasion took him on one side into a little room, saying, "Cola, friend, what good news?" "Why," said Cola, "I am come to consult you, in great hopes you will be of use to me. You know it is a long time since I lost my sight, and being in a destitute condition, I was compelled to earn my subsistence by begging alms. Now, by the grace of God, and with the help of you and of other good people of Orvieto, I have saved a sum of two hundred florins, one hundred of which I have deposited in a safe place, and the other is in the hands of my relations, which I expect to receive with interest in the course of a week. Now if you would consent to receive, and to employ for me to the best advantage, the whole sum of two hundred florins it would be doing me a great kindness, for there is no one besides in all Orvieto in whom I dare to confide; nor do I like to be at the expense of paying a notary for doing business which we can as well transact ourselves. Only I wish you would say nothing about it, but receive the two hundred florins from me to employ as you think best. Say not a word about it, for there would be an end of my calling were it known I had received so large a sum in alms." Here the blind mendicant stopped; and the sly Juccio, imagining he might thus become master of the entire sum, said he should be very happy to serve him in every way he could and would return an answer the next morning as to the best way of laying out the money. Cola then took his leave, while Juccio, going directly for the purse, deposited it in its old place being in full expectation of soon receiving it again with the addition of the other hundred, as it was clear that Cola had not yet missed the money. The cunning old mendicant on his part expected that he would do no less, and trusting that his plot might have succeeded, he set out the very same day to the church, and had the delight, on removing the tile, to find his purse really there. Seizing upon it with the utmost eagerness, he concealed it under his clothes, and placing the tiles exactly in the same position, he hastened home whistling, troubling himself very little about his appointment of the next day.

The sly thief Juccio set out accordingly the next morning to see his friend Cola, and actually met him on the road. "Whither are you going?" inquired Juccio. "I was going," said Cola, "to your house." The former, then taking the blind man aside, said, "I am resolved to do what you ask; and since you are pleased to confide in me, I will tell you of a plan that I have in hand for laying out your money to advantage. If you will put the two hundred florins into my possession, I will make a purchase in cheese and salt meat, a speculation which cannot fail to turn to good account." "Thank you," quoth Cola, "I am going to-day for the other hundred, which I mean to bring, and when you have got them both, you can do with them what you think proper." Juccio said, "Then let me have them soon, for I think I can secure this bargain; and as the soldiers are come into the town, who are fond of these articles, I think it cannot fail to answer; so go, and Heaven speed you." And Cola went; but with very different intentions from those imagined by his friend — Cola being now clear-sighted, and Juccio truly blind. The next day Cola called on his friend with very downcast and melancholy looks, and when Juccio bade him good day, he said, "I wish from my soul it were a good, or even a middling, day for me." "Why, what is the matter?" "The matter?" echoed Cola; "why, it is all over with me: some rascal has stolen a hundred florins from the place where they were hidden, and I cannot recover a penny from my relations, so that I may eat my fingers off or anything I have to expect." Juccio replied, "This is like all the rest of my speculations. I have invariably lost where I expected to make a good hit. What I shall do I know not; for if the person should choose to keep me to the agreement I made for you, I shall be in a pretty dilemma indeed." "Yet," said Cola, "I think my condition is still worse than yours. I shall be sadly distressed and shall have to amass a fresh capital, which will take me ever so long. And when I have got it, I will take care not to conceal it in a hole in the floor, or trust it, Juccio, into any friend's hands." "But," said Juccio, "if we could contrive to recover what is owing by your relations, we might still make some pretty profit of it, I doubt not." For he thought, if he could only get hold of the hundred he had returned it would still be something in his way. "Why," said Cola, "to tell the truth, if I were to proceed against my relations I believe I might get it; but such a thing would ruin my business, my dear Juccio, for ever: the world would know I was worth money, and I should get no more money from the world; so I fear I shall hardly be able to profit by your kindness, though I shall always consider myself as much obliged as if I had actually cleared a large sum. Moreover, I am going to teach another blind man my profession, and if we have luck you shall see me again, and we can venture a speculation together." So far the wily mendicant, to whom Juccio said, "Well, go and try to get money soon, and bring it; you know where to find me, but look sharp about you and the Lord speed you; farewell." "Farewell," said Cola; "and I am well rid of thee," he whispered to himself, and going upon his way, in a short time he doubled his capital; but he no longer went near his friend Juccio to know how he should invest it. He had great diversion in telling the story to his companions during their feasts, always concluding, “By St. Lucia! Juccio is the blinder man of the two: he thought it was a bold stroke to risk his hundred to double the amount.”

For my own part, I think the blind must possess a more acute intellect than other people, inasmuch as the light, exhibiting such a variety of objects to view, is apt to distract the attention, of which many examples might be adduced. For instance, two gentlemen may be conversing together on some matter of business, and in the middle of a sentence a fine woman happens to pass by, and they will suddenly stop, gazing after her; or a fine equipage or any other object is enough to turn the current of their thoughts. And then we are obliged to recollect ourselves, saying, “Where was I?” “What was it that I was observing?” — a thing which never occurs to a blind man. The philosopher Democritus very properly on this account knocked his eyes out in order to catch objects in a juster light with his mind’s eye.

It is impossible to describe Juccio’s vexation on going to church and finding the florins were gone. His regret was far greater than if he had actually lost a hundred of his own; as is known to be the case with all inveterate rogues, half of whose pleasure consists in depriving others of their lawful property.

There are many analogous stories, one of which is the well-known tale of the merchant who, before going on a journey, deposited with a dervish 1,000 sequins, which he thought it prudent to reserve in case of accidents. When he returned and requested his deposit, the dervish flatly denied that he ever had any of his money. Upon this the merchant went and laid his case before the kazi, who advised him to return to the dervish and speak pleasantly to him, which he does, but receives nothing but abuse. He informed the kazi of this, and was told not to go near the dervish for the present, but to be at ease for he should have his money next day. The kazi then sent for the dervish, and after entertaining him sumptuously, told him that, for certain reasons, he was desirous of removing a considerable sum of money from his house; that he knew of no person in whom he could confide so much as himself; and that if he would come the following evening at a late hour, he should have the precious deposit. On hearing this, the dervish expressed his gratification that so much confidence should be placed in his integrity, and agreed to take charge of the treasure. Next day the merchant returned to the kazi, who bade him go back to the dervish and demand his money once more, and should he refuse, threaten to complain to the kazi. The result may be readily guessed: no sooner did the merchant mention the kazi than the rascally dervish said, “My good friend, what need is there to complain to the kazi? Here is your money; it was only a little joke on my part.” But in the evening, when he went to receive the kazi’s pretended deposit, he experienced the truth of the saw, that “covetousness sews up the eyes of cunning.”

A variant of this is found in the continental “Gesta Romanorum” (ch. cxviii. of Swan’s translation), in which a knight deposits ten talents with a respectable old man, who when called upon to refund the money denies all knowledge of it. By the advice of an old woman the knight has ten chests made, and employs a person to take them to the old man and represent them as containing treasure; and while one of them is being carried into his house the knight enters and in the stranger’s presence demands his money, which is at once delivered to him.

In Mr. Edward Rehatsek’s translated selections from the Persian story-book “Shamsa ú Kuhkuha” (see ante,), printed at Bombay in 1871, under the title of “Amusing Stories,” there is a tale (No. xviii.) which also bears some resemblance to that of the Melancholist and the Sharper; and as Mr. Rehatsek’s little work is exceedingly scarce, I give it in extenso as follows:

There was in Damascus a man of the name of Zayn el-Arab, with the honey of whose life the poison of hardships was always mixed. Day and night he hastened like the breeze from north to south in the world of exertion, and he was burning brightly like straw, from his endeavours in the oven of acquisition in order to gain a loaf of bread and feed his family. In course of time, however, he succeeded in accumulating a considerable sum of money, but as he had tasted the bitter poison of destitution, and had for a very long time carried the heavy load of poverty upon his back, and fearing to lose his property by the chameleon-like changes of fortune, he took up his money on a certain night, carried it out of the city, and buried it under a tree. After some time had passed be began sorely to miss the presence of his treasure, and betook himself to the tree to refresh his eyes with the sight of it. But when he dug up the ground at the foot of the tree he discovered that his soul-exhilarating deposit was refreshing the palate of some one else. The morning of his prosperity was suddenly changed into the evening of bitterness and disappointment. He was perplexed to what friend to confide his secret, and to what remedy to fly for the recovery of his treasure. The lancet of grief had pierced the liver of his peace, and the huntsman of distress had tied up the wings and feet of the bird of his serenity. One day he went on some business to a learned and wise man of the city with whom he was on a footing of intimacy. This man said to him, "It is some time since I perceived the glade of your circumstances to have been destroyed by the burning coals of restlessness, and a sad change to have taken place in your health. I do not know the reason, nor what thorn of misfortune has pierced the foot of your heart, nor what hardship has dawned from the east of your mind." Zayn el-Arab wept tears of sadness and said, "O thou standard coin from the mint of love! the treachery of misfortune has brought a strange accident upon me, and the bow of destiny has let fly an unpropitious arrow upon my feeble target. I have a heavy heart and great sorrow, and were I to reveal it to you perhaps it would be of no use and would plunge you also into grief." The learned man said, "Since the hearts of intimate friends are like looking- glasses and are receiving the figures of mutual secrets, it is at all times necessary that they should communicate to each other any difficulties which they have fallen into, that they may remove them by taking in common those steps which prudence and foresight should recommend." Zayn el-Arab replied, "Dear friend, I had some gold, and fearing lest it should be stolen, I carried it to such and such a place and buried it under a tree, and when I again visited the place, I perceived the garment of my beloved Joseph to be sprinkled with the blood of the wolf of deception." The learned man said, "This is a grave accident, and it will be difficult to get on the track of your gold. Perhaps some one saw you bury it: he who has taken it will have to give an account of it in the next world, for God is omniscient. Give me ten days' delay, that I may study the book of expedients and stratagems, when mayhap somewhat will occur to me."

That knowing man sat down for ten days in the school of meditation, and how much so ever he turned over the leaves of the volume of his mind from the preface to the epilogue, he could hit upon no plan. On the tenth day they again met in the street, and he said to Zayn el-Arab, “Although the diver of my mind has plunged deeply and searched diligently in this deep sea, he has been unable to seize the precious pearl of a wise plan of operation: may God recompense you from the stores of His hidden treasury!” They were conversing in this way when a lunatic met them and said, “Well, my boys, what secret- mongering have you got between you?” The learned man said to Zayn el-Arab, “Come, let us relate our case to this crazy fellow, to see the flower of the plant that may bloom from his mind.” Zayn el-Arab replied, “Dear friend, you, with all your knowledge, cannot devise anything during ten days: what information are we likely to gain from a poor lunatic who does not know whether it is now day or night?” The learned man said, “There is no telling what he may say to us. But you know that the most foolish as well as the most wise have ideas, and a sentence uttered at random has sometimes furnished a clue by which the desired object may be attained.” Meanwhile a little boy also came up, and perceiving the lunatic stopped to see his tricks. The two friends explained their case to the lunatic, who then seemed immersed in thought for some time, after which he said, “He who took the root of that tree for a medicine also took the gold,” and having thus spoken, he turned his back upon them and went his way. They consulted with each other what indication this remark might furnish, when the little boy who had overheard the conversation, asked what kind of tree it was. Zayn el-Arab replied that it was a jujube tree. The boy said, “This is an easy matter: you ought to inquire of all the doctors of this town for whom a medicine has been prescribed of the roots of this tree.” They greatly admired the boy’s acuteness and also of the lunatic’s lucky thought.[511] The learned man was well acquainted with all the physicians of the city and made his enquiries, till he met with one who informed him that about twenty days ago he had prescribed for a merchant of the name of Khoja Semender, who suffered from asthma, and that one of the remedies was the root of that jujube tree. The learned man soon discovered the merchant’s house, found him enjoying excellent health, and said to him, “Ah, Khoja, all the goods of this world ought to be surrendered to procure health. By the blessing of God, you have recovered your health, and you ought to give up what you found at the root of that tree, because the owner of it is a worthy man and possesses nothing else.” The honest merchant answered, “It is true, I have found it, and it is with me. If you will describe it I will deliver it into your hands.” The exact sum being stated, the merchant at once delivered up the gold.

In the “Kathá Sarit Ságara,” Book vi. ch. 33, we have probably the original of this last story: A wealthy merchant provided a Bráhman with a lodging near his own house, and every day gave him a large quantity of unhusked rice and other presents and in course of time he received like gifts from other great merchants. In this way the miserly fellow gradually accumulated a thousand dínárs, and going into the forest he dug a hole and buried it in the ground, and he went daily to carefully examine the spot. One day, however, he discovered that his hoard had been stolen, and he went to his friend the merchant near whose house he lived, and, weeping bitterly, told him of his loss, and that he had resolved to go to a holy bathing-place and there starve himself to death. The merchant tried to console him and dissuade him from his resolution, saying, “Bráhman, why do you long to die for the loss of your wealth? Wealth, like an unseasonable cloud, suddenly comes and goes.” But the Bráhman would not abandon his fixed determination to commit suicide, for wealth is dearer to the miser than life itself. When he was about to depart for the holy place, the king, having heard of it, came and asked him, “Bráhman, do you know of any mark by which you can distinguish the place where you buried your dínárs?” He replied, “There is a small tree in the wood, at the foot of which I buried that money.” Then said the king, “I will find the money and give it back to you, or I will give it you from my own treasury; — do not commit suicide, Bráhman.”

When the king returned to his palace, he pretended to have a headache, and summoned all the physicians in the city by proclamation with beat of drum. And he took aside every one of them singly and questioned them privately, saying, “What patients have you, and what medicines have you prescribed for each?” And they thereupon, one by one, answered the king's questions. At length a physician said, "The merchant Mátridatta has been out of sorts, O king, and this is the second day I have prescribed for him nágabalá (the plant Uraria Lagopodioides)." Then the king sent for the merchant, and said to him, "Tell me, who fetched you the nágabalá?" The merchant replied, "My servant, your highness." On hearing this, the king at once summoned the servant and said to him, "Give up that treasure belonging to a Bráhman, consisting of a store of dínárs, which you found when you were digging at the foot of the tree for nágabalá." When the king said this to him the servant was frightened, and confessed immediately; and bringing the money left it there. Then the king summoned the Bráhman and gave him, who had been fasting meanwhile, the dínárs, lost and found again, like a second soul external to his body. Thus did the king by his wisdom recover to the Bráhman his wealth which had been taken away from the root of the tree, knowing that that simple grew in such spots.

TALE OF THE DEVOUT WOMAN ACCUSED OF LEWDNESS. — Vol. XI. .

This is one of three Arabian variants of Chaucer's Man of Law's Tale (the Story of Constance), of which there are numerous versions — see my paper entitled "The Innocent Persecuted Wife," p-414 of "Originals and Analogues of some of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales."

THE WEAVER WHO BECAME A LEACH BY ORDER OF HIS WIFE. — Vol. XI. .

Somewhat resembling this, but much more elaborate, is the amusing story of Ahmed the Cobbler, in Sir John Malcolm's "Sketches of Persia," ch. xx., the original of which is probably found in the tale of Harisarman, book vi. ch. 30, of the "Kathá Sarit Ságara," and it has many European variants, such as the German story of Doctor Allwissend, in Grimm's collection, and that of the Charcoal Burner in Sir George Dasent's "Tales from the Fjeld. — According to the Persian story, Ahmed the Cobbler had a young and pretty wife, of whom he was very fond. She was ever forming grand schemes of riches and splendour, and was firmly persuaded that she was destined to great fortune. It happened one evening, while in this frame of mind, that she went to the public baths, where she saw a lady retiring dressed in a magnificent robe, covered with jewels, and surrounded by slaves. This was the very condition she had always longed for, and she eagerly inquired the name of the happy person who had so many attendants and such fine jewels. She learned it was the wife of the chief astrologer to the king. With this information she returned home. Ahmed met her at the door, but was received with a frown, nor could all his caresses obtain a smile or a word; for several hours she continued silent, and in apparent misery; at length she said, "Cease your caresses, unless you are ready to give me a proof that you do really and sincerely love me." "What proof of love," exclaimed poor Ahmed, "can you desire that I will not give?" "Give over cobbling, it is a vile, low trade, and never yields more than ten or twelve dínárs a day. Turn astrologer; your fortune will be made, and I shall have all I wish and be happy." "Astrologer!" cried Ahmed — "astrologer! Have you forgotten who I am — a cobbler, without any learning — that you want me to engage in a profession which requires so much skill and knowledge?" "I neither think nor care about your qualifications," said the enraged wife; "all I know is that if you do not turn astrologer immediately, I will be divorced from you to-morrow." The cobbler remonstrated, but in vain. The figure of the astrologer's wife, with her jewels and her slaves, took complete possession of her imagination. All night it haunted her: she dreamt of nothing else, and on awakening declared that she would leave the house if her husband did not comply with her wishes. What could poor Ahmed do? He was no astrologer; but he was dotingly fond of his wife, and he could not bear the idea of losing her. He promised to obey, and having sold his little stock, bought an astrolabe, an astronomical almanac, and a table of the twelve signs of the zodiac. Furnished with these, he went to the market-place, crying, "I am an astrologer! I know the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the twelve signs of the zodiac; I can calculate nativities; I can foretell everything that is to happen." No man was better known than Ahmed the Cobbler. A crowd soon gathered round him. "What, friend Ahmed," said one, "have you worked till your head is turned?" "Are you tired of looking down at your last," cried another, "that you are now looking up at the stars?" These and a thousand other jokes assailed the ears of the poor cobbler, who notwithstanding continued to exclaim that he was an astrologer, having resolved on doing what he could to please his beautiful wife.

It so happened that the king's jeweller was passing by. He was in great distress, having lost the richest ruby belonging to the king. Every search had been made to recover this inestimable jewel, but to no purpose; and as the jeweller knew he could no longer conceal its loss from the king, he looked forward to death as inevitable. In this hopeless state, while wandering about the town, he reached the crowd around Ahmed, and asked what was the matter. "Don't you know Ahmed the Cobbler?" said one of the bystanders, laughing. "He has been inspired and is become an astrologer." A drowning man will catch at a broken reed: the jeweller no sooner heard the sound of the word astrologer than he went up to Ahmed, told him what had happened, and said, "If you understand your art, you must be able to discover the king's ruby. Do so, and I will give you two hundred pieces of gold. But if you do not succeed within six hours, I will use my influence at court to have you put to death as an impostor." Poor Ahmed was thunderstruck. He stood long without being able to speak, reflecting on his misfortunes, and grieving, above all, that his wife, whom he so loved, had, by her envy and selfishness, brought him to such a fearful alternative. Full of these sad thoughts, he exclaimed aloud, "O woman! woman! thou art more baneful to the happiness of man than the poisonous dragon of the desert!" Now the lost ruby had been secreted by the jeweller's wife, who, disquieted by those alarms which ever attend guilt, sent one of her female slaves to watch her husband. This slave, on seeing her master speak to the astrologer, drew near; and when she heard Ahmed, after some moments of abstraction, compare a woman to a poisonous dragon, she was satisfied that he must know everything. She ran to her mistress, and, breathless with fear, cried, "You are discovered by a vile astrologer! Before six hours are past the whole story will be known, and you will become infamous, if you are even so fortunate as to escape with life, unless you can find some way of prevailing on him to be merciful." She then related what she had seen and heard; and Ahmed's exclamation carried as complete conviction to the mind of the terrified lady as it had done to that of her slave. The jeweller's wife hastily throwing on her veil, went in search of the dreaded astrologer. When she found him, she cried, "Spare my honour and my life, and I will confess everything." "What can you have to confess to me?" said Ahmed, in amazement. "O nothing — nothing with which you are not already acquainted. You know too well that I stole the king's ruby. I did so to punish my husband, who uses me most cruelly; and I thought by this means to obtain riches for myself and have him put to death. But you, most wonderful man, from whom nothing is hidden, have discovered and defeated my wicked plan. I beg only for mercy, and will do whatever you command me." An angel from heaven could not have brought more consolation to Ahmed than did the jeweller's wife. He assumed all the dignified solemnity that became his new character, and said, "Woman! I know all thou hast done, and it is fortunate for thee that thou hast come to confess thy sin and beg for mercy before it was too late. Return to thy house; put the ruby under the pillow of the couch on which thy husband sleeps; let it be laid on the side farthest from the door; and be satisfied thy guilt shall never be even suspected." The jeweller's wife went home and did as she was instructed. In an hour Ahmed followed her, and told the jeweller he had made his calculations, and found by the aspect of the sun and moon, and by the configuration of the stars, that the ruby was at that moment lying under the pillow of his couch on the side farthest from the door. The jeweller thought Ahmed must be crazy; but as a ray of hope is like a ray from heaven to the wretched, he ran to his couch, and there, to his joy and wonder, found the ruby in the very place described. He came back to Ahmed, embraced him, called him his dearest friend and the preserver of his life, gave him two hundred pieces of gold, declaring that he was the first astrologer of the age.

Ahmed returned home with his lucky gains, and would gladly have resumed his cobbling but his wife insisting on his continuing to practice his new profession, there was no help but to go out again next day and proclaim his astrological accomplishments. By mere chance he is the means of a lady recovering a valuable necklace which she had lost at the bath, and forty chests of gold stolen from the king's treasury, and is finally rewarded with the hand of the king's daughter in marriage.

STORY OF THE KING WHO LOST KINGDOM, WIFE AND WEALTH. — Vol. XI. .

In the “Indian Antiquary” for June 1886 the Rev. J. Hinton Knowles gives a translation of what he terms a Kashmírí Tale, under the title of “Pride Abased,” which, he says, was told him by “a Brahman named Mukund Báyú, who resides at Suthú, Srínagar,” and which is an interesting variant of the Wazír Er-Rahwan’s second story of the King who lost his Realm and Wealth:

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

KASHMIRI VERSION.[512]

There was once a king who was noted throughout his dominions for daily boasting of his power and riches. His ministers at length became weary of this self-glorification, and one day when he demanded of them, as usual, whether there existed in the whole world another king as powerful as he, they plainly told him that there was such another potentate; upon which he assembled his troops and rode forth at their head, challenging the neighbouring kings to fight with him. Ere long he met with more than his match, for another king came with a great army and utterly defeated him, and took possession of his kingdom. Disguising himself, the humbled king escaped with his wife and two boys, and arriving at the sea shore, found a ship about to sail. The master agreed to take him and his family and land them at the port for which he was bound. But when he beheld the beauty of the queen, he became enamoured of her, and determined to make her his own. The queen was the first to go on board the ship, and the king and his two sons were about to follow, when they were seized by a party of ruffians, hired by the shipmaster, and held back until the vessel had got fairly under way. The queen was distracted on seeing her husband and children left behind, and refused to listen to the master's suit, who, after having tried to win her love for several days without success, resolved to sell her as a slave. Among the passengers was a merchant, who, seeing that the lady would not accept the shipmaster for her husband, thought that if he bought her, he might in time gain her affection. Accordingly he purchased her of the master for a large sum of money, and then told her that he had done so with a view of making her his wife. The lady replied that, although the shipman had no right thus to dispose of her, yet she would consent to marry him at the end of two years, if she did not during that period meet with her husband and their two sons; and to this condition the merchant agreed. In the meanwhile the king, having sorrowfully watched the vessel till it was out of sight, turned back with his two boys, who wept and lamented as they ran beside him. After walking a great distance, he came to a shallow but rapid river, which he wished to cross, and, as there was no boat or bridge, he was obliged to wade through the water. Taking up one of his sons he contrived to reach the other side in safety, and was returning for the other when the force of the current overcame him and he was drowned.

When the two boys noticed that their father had perished, they wept bitterly. Their separation, too, was a further cause for grief. There they stood, one on either side of the river, with no means of reaching each other. They shouted, and ran about hither and thither in their grief, till they had almost wearied themselves into sleep, when a fisherman came past, who, seeing the great distress of the boys, took them into his boat, and asked them who they were, and who were their parents; and they told him all that had happened. When he had heard their story, he said, “You have not a father or mother, and I have not a child. Evidently God has sent you to me. Will you be my own children and learn to fish, and live in my house?” Of course, the poor boys were only too glad to find a friend and shelter. “Come,” said the fisherman kindly, leading them out of the boat to a house close by, “I will look after you.” The boys followed most happily, and went into the fisherman’s house, and when they saw his wife they were still better pleased, for she was very kind to them, and treated them as if they had been her own children. The two boys went to school, and when they had learned all that the master could teach them, they began to help their adoptive father, and in a little while became most expert and diligent young fishermen.

Thus time was passing with them, when it happened that a great fish threw itself on to the bank of the river and could not get back again into the water. Everybody in the village went to see the monstrous fish, and cut a slice of its flesh and took it home. A few people also went from the neighbouring villages, and amongst them was a maker of earthernware. His wife had heard of the great fish and urged him to go and get some of the flesh. So he went, although the hour was late. On his arrival he found that all the people had returned to their homes. The potter had taken an axe with him, thinking that the bones would be so great and strong as to require its use in breaking them. When he struck the first blow a voice came out of the fish, like that of some one in pain, at which the potter was greatly surprised. “Perhaps,” thought he, “the fish is possessed by a bhút.[513]

I'll try again," whereupon he struck another blow with his axe. Again the voice came forth from the fish, saying, "Woe is me! woe is me!" On hearing this, the potter thought, "Well, this is evidently not a bhút, but the voice of an ordinary man. I'll cut the flesh carefully. May be that I shall find some poor distressed person." So he began to cut away the flesh carefully, and presently he perceived a man's foot, then the legs appeared, and then the entire body. "Praise be to God," he cried, "the soul is yet in him." He carried the man to his house as fast as he could, and on arriving there did everything in his power to recover him. A large fire was soon got ready, and tea and soup given the man, and great was the joy of the potter and his wife when they saw him reviving.[514] For some months the stranger lived with those good people, and learnt how to make pots and pans and other articles and thereby helped them considerably. Now it happened that the king of that country died and it was the custom of the people to take for their sovereign whomsoever the late king's elephant and hawk should select. And so on the death of the king the royal elephant was driven all over the country, and the hawk was made to fly about, in search of a successor and it came to pass that the person before whom the elephant saluted and on whom the hawk alighted was considered as the divinely-chosen one. Accordingly the elephant and the hawk went about the country, and in the course of their wanderings came by the house of the potter who had so kindly succoured the poor man whom he found in the belly of the monstrous fish; and it chanced that as they passed the place the stranger was standing by the door, and behold, no sooner did the elephant and hawk see him than the one bowed down before him and the other perched on his hand. "Let him be king! let him be king!" shouted the people who were in attendance on the elephant, and they prostrated themselves before the stranger and begged him to accompany them to the palace.[515]

The ministers were glad when they heard the news, and most respectfully welcomed their new king. As soon as the rites and ceremonies necessary for the installation of a king had been observed, his majesty entered on his duties. The first thing he did was to send for the potter and his wife and grant them some land and money. In this and other ways, such as just judgments, proper laws, and kindly notices of all who were clever and good, he won for himself the good opinion and affection of his subjects and prospered in consequence thereof. After a few months, however, his health was impaired, and his physicians advised him to take out-door exercise. Accordingly, he alternately rode, hunted and fished. He was especially fond of fishing, and whenever he indulged in this amusement, he was attended by two sons of a fisherman, who were clever and handsome youths.

About this time the merchant who bought the wife of the poor king that was carried away by the rapid river visited that country for purposes of trade. He obtained an interview with the king, and displayed before him all his precious stones and stuffs. The king was much pleased to see such treasures, and asked many questions about them and the countries whence they had been brought. The merchant satisfied the king's curiosity, and then begged permission to trade in that country, under his majesty's protection, which the king readily granted, and ordered that some soldiers should be placed on guard in the merchant's courtyard, and sent the fisherman's two sons to sleep in the premises.

One night those two youths not being able to sleep, the younger asked his brother to tell him a story to pass the time, so he replied, "I will tell you one out of our own experience: Once upon a time there lived a great and wealthy king, who was very proud, and his pride led him to utter ruin and caused him the sorest afflictions.. One day when going about with his army, challenging other kings to fight with him, a great and powerful king appeared and conquered him. He escaped with his wife and two sons to the sea, hoping to find a vessel, by which he and his family might reach a foreign land. After walking several miles they reached the sea-shore and found a ship ready to sail. The master of the vessel took the queen, but the king and his two sons were held back by some men, who had been hired by the master for this purpose, until the ship was under way. The poor king after this walked long and far till he came to a rapid river. As there was no bridge or boat near, he was obliged to wade across. He took one of his boys and got over safely, and was returning for the other when he stumbled over a stone, lost his footing, and was carried down the stream; and he has not been heard of since. A fisherman came along, and, seeing the two boys crying, took them into his boat, and afterwards to his house, and became very fond of them, as did also his wife, and they were like father and mother to them. All this happened a few years ago, and the two boys are generally believed to be the fisherman's own sons. O brother, we are these two boys! And there you have my story."

The tale was so interesting and its conclusion so wonderful that the younger brother was more awake than before. It had also attracted the attention of another. The merchant's promised wife, who happened to be lying awake at the time, and whose room was separated from the warehouse by a very thin partition, overheard all that had been said, and she thought within herself, "Surely these two boys must be my own sons." Presently she was sitting beside them and asking them many questions. Two years or more had made great difference in the persons of both the boys, but there were certain signs which a hundred years could not efface from a mother's memory. These, together with the answers which she elicited from them, assured her that she had found her own sons again. Tears streamed down her face as she embraced them, and revealed to them that she was the queen, their mother, about whom they had just been speaking. She then told them all that had happened to her since she had been parted from them and their poor father, the king; after which she explained that although the merchant was a good man and very wealthy yet she did not like him well enough to become his wife, and proposed a plan for her getting rid of him. "My device," said she, "is to pretend to the merchant that you attempted my honour. I shall affect to be very angry and not give him any peace until he goes to the king and complains against you. Then will the king send for you in great wrath and inquire into this matter. In reply you may say it is all a mistake, for you regard me as your own mother, and in proof of this you will beg the king to summon me into his presence, that I may corroborate what you say. Then I will declare that you are really my own sons, and beseech the king to free me from the merchant and allow me to live with you in any place I may choose for the rest of my days."

The sons agreed to this proposal, and next night, when the merchant was also sleeping in the house, the woman raised a great cry, so that everybody was awakened by the noise. The merchant came and asked the cause of the outcry, and she answered, “The two youths who look after your warehouse have attempted to violate me, so I screamed in order to make them desist.” On hearing this the merchant was enraged. He immediately bound the two youths, and, as soon as there was any chance of seeing the king, took them before him preferred his complaint. “What have you to say in your defence?” said the king, addressing the youths; “because, if what this merchant charges against you be true, I will have you at once put to death. Is this the gratitude you manifest for all my kindness and condescension towards you? Say quickly what you have to say.” “O king, our benefactor,” replied the elder brother, “we are not affrighted by your words and looks, for we are true servants. We have not betrayed your trust in us, but have always tried to fulfil your wishes to the utmost of our power. The charges brought against us by this merchant are unfounded. We have not attempted to dishonour his wife; we have rather always regarded her as our own mother. May it please your majesty to send for the woman and inquire further into this matter.”

The king consented, and the woman was brought before him. “Is it true,” he asked her “what the merchant, your affianced husband, witnesses against these two youths?” “O king,” she replied, “the youths whom you gave to help the merchant have most carefully tried to carry out your wishes. But the night before last I heard their conversation. The elder was telling the younger a tale, from his own experience, he said. It was a story of a conceited king who had been defeated by another more powerful than he, and obliged to fly with his wife and two children to the sea. There, through the vile trickery of the master of a vessel, the wife was stolen and taken away to far distant lands, where she became engaged to a wealthy trader; while the exiled king and his two sons wandered in another direction, till they came to a river, in which the king was drowned. The two boys were found by a fisherman and brought up as his own sons. These two boys, O king, are before you, and I am their mother, who was taken away and sold to the trader, and who after two days must be married to him. For I promised that if within a certain period I should not meet with my husband and two sons I would be his wife. But I entreat your majesty to free me from this man. I do not wish to marry again, now that I have found my two sons. In order to obtain an audience of your majesty, this trick was arranged with the two youths."

By the time the woman had finished her story the king's face was suffused with tears and he was trembling visibly. When he had somewhat recovered he rose from the throne and going up to the woman and the two youths embraced them long and fervently. "You are my own dear wife and children," he cried. "God has sent you back to me. I, the king, your husband, your father, was not drowned as you supposed; but was swallowed by a great fish and nourished by it for some time, and then the monster threw itself upon the river's bank and I was extricated. A potter and his wife had pity on me and taught me their trade, and I was just beginning to earn my living by making earthen vessels when the late king of this country died, and I was chosen king by the royal elephant and hawk — I who am now standing here." Then his majesty ordered the queen and her two sons to be taken into the inner apartments of the palace, and explained his conduct to the people assembled. The merchant was politely dismissed from the country. And as soon as the two princes were old enough to govern the kingdom, the king committed to them the charge of all affairs, while he retired with his wife to a sequestered spot and passed the rest of his days in peace.

The tale of Sarwar and Nír, "as told by a celebrated Bard from Baraut, in the Merath district," in vol. iii. of Captain R. C. Temple's "Legends of the Panjáb" (p-125), though differing in form somewhat from the Kashmírí version, yet possesses the leading incidents in common with it, as will be seen from the following abstract:

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PANJÁBÍ VERSION.

Ambá the rájá of Púná had a beautiful wife named Amlí and two young sons, Sarwar and Nír. There came to his court one day a fakír. The rájá promised to give him whatsoever he should desire. The fakir required Ambá to give up to him all he possessed, or lose his virtue, and the rájá gave him all, save his wife and two children, receiving in return the blessings of the fakír, Then the rájá and the rání went away; he carrying Sarwar in his bosom, and she with Nír in her lap. For a time they lived on the fruits and roots of the forest. At length the raní gave her husband her (jewelled) bodice to sell in the bazar, in order to procure food. He offered it to Kundan the merchant, who made him sit down, and asked him where he had left the raní, and why he did not bring her with him. Ambá told him that he had left her with their two boys under the banyan-tree. Then Kundan, leaving Ambá in the shop, went and got a litter, and proceeding to the banyan-tree showed the rání the bodice, and said, "Thy husband wishes thee to come to him." Nothing doubting, the rání entered the litter, and the merchant sent it off to his own house. Leaving the boys in the forest, he returned to Ambá, and said to him that he had not enough money to pay the price of the bodice, so the rájá must take it back. Ambá took the bodice, and coming to the boys, learned from Sarwar how their mother had been carried away in a litter, and he was sorely grieved in his heart, but consoled the children, saying that their mother had gone to her brother's house, and that he would take them to her at once. Placing the two boys on his shoulders he walked along till he came to a river. He set down Nír and carried Sarwar safely across, but as he was going back for the other, behold, an alligator seized him. It was the will of God: what remedy is there against the writing of Fate? The two boys, separated by the river, sat down and wept in their sorrow. In the early morning a washerman was up and spreading his clothes. He heard the two boys weeping and came to see. He had pity on them and brought them together. Then he took them to his house, and washed their faces and gave them food. He put them into a separate house and a Brahman cooked for them and gave them water.[516] He caused the brothers to be taught all kinds of learning, and at the end of twelve years they both set out together to seek their living. They went to the city of Ujjain, and told the rájá their history — how they had left their home and kingdom. The rájá gave them arms and suitable clothing, and appointed them guards over the female apartments.[517] One day a fisherman caught an alligator in his net. When he cut open its body, he found in it Rájá Ambá, alive.[518] So he took him to the rájá of Ujjain, and told how he had found him in the stomach of an alligator. Ambá related his whole history to the rájá; how he gave up all his wealth and his kingdom to a fakír; how his wife had been stolen from him; and how after safely carrying one of his young sons over the river in returning for the other he had been swallowed by an alligator. On hearing of all these misfortunes the rájá of Ujjain pitied him and loved him in his heart: he adopted Ambá as his son; and they lived together twenty years, when the rájá died and Ambá obtained the throne.

Meanwhile the beautiful Rání Amlí, the wife of Ambá, had continued to refuse the merchant Kundan's reiterated proffers of love. At length he said to her, "Many days have passed over thee, live now in my house as my wife." And she replied, "Let me bathe in the Ganges, and then I will dwell in thy house." So he took elephants and horses and lakhs of coin, and set the rání in a litter and started on the journey. When he reached the city of Ujjain, he made a halt and pitched his tents. Then he went before Rájá Ambá and said, "Give me a guard, for the nights are dark. Hitherto I have had much trouble and no ease at nights. I am going to bathe in the Ganges, to give alms and much food to Brahmans. I am come, rájá, to salute thee, bringing many things from my house."

The rájá sent Sarwar and Nír as guards. They watched the tents, and while the rain was falling the two brothers began talking over their sorrows, saying "What can our mother be doing? Whither hath our father gone?" Their mother overheard them talking, and by the will of God she recognised the princes; then she tore open the tent, and cried aloud, "All my property is gone! Who brought this thief to my tent?" The rání had both Sarwar and Nír seized, and brought before Rájá Ambá on the charge of having stolen her property. The rájá held a court, and began to ask questions, saying, "Tell me what hath passed during the night. How much of thy property hath gone, my friend? I will do thee justice, according to thy desire: my heart is grieved that thy goods are gone.” Then said the raní, “Be careful of the young elephant! The lightning flashes and the heavy rain is falling. Said Nír, ‘Hear, brother Sarwar, who knows whither our mother hath gone?’ And I recognised my son; so I made all this disturbance, raja [in order to get access to thee]”. [519] Hearing this, Rájá Ambá rose up and took her to his breast — Amlí and Ambá met again through the mercy of God. The rájá gave orders to have Kundan hanged, saying, “Do it at once; he is a scoundrel; undo him that he may not live.” They quickly fetched the executioners and put on the noose; and then was Kundan strangled. The rání dwelt in the palace and all her troubles passed far away. She fulfilled all her obligations, and obtained great happiness through her virtue.

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TIBETAN VERSION.

Under the title of “Krisa Gautami” in the collection of “Tibetan Tales from Indian Sources,” translated by Mr. Ralston from the German of Von Schiefner, we have what appears to be a very much garbled form of an old Buddhist version of our story. The heroine is married to a young merchant, whose father gives him some arable land in a hill district, where he resides with Krisa Guatami his wife.

When the time came for her to expect her confinement, she obtained leave of her husband to go to her parents’ house in order that she might have the attendance of her mother. After her confinement and the naming of the boy, she returned home. When the time of her second confinement drew near, she again expressed to her husband a desire to go to her parents. Her husband set out with her and the boy in a waggon; but by the time they had gone half way she gave birth to a boy. When the husband saw that this was to take place he got out of the waggon, sat under a tree, and fell asleep. While he was completely overcome by slumber a snake bit him and he died. When his wife in her turn alighted from the waggon, and went up to the tree in order to bring him the joyful tidings that a son was born unto him, he, as he had given up the ghost, made no reply. She seized him by the hand and found that he was dead. Then she began to weep. Meantime a thief carried off the oxen. After weeping for a long time, and becoming very mournful, she looked around on every side, pressed the new-born babe to her bosom, took the elder child by the hand, and set out on her way. As a heavy rain had unexpectedly fallen, all the lakes, ponds, and springs were full of water, and the road was flooded by the river. She reflected that if she were to cross the water with both the children at once, she and they might meet with a disaster, and therefore the children had better be taken over separately. So she seated the elder boy on the bank of the river, and took the younger one in her arms, walked across to the other side and laid him down upon the bank. Then she went back for the elder boy. But while she was in the middle of the river, the younger boy was carried off by a jackal. The elder boy thought that his mother was calling him, and sprang into the water. The bank was very steep, so he fell down and was killed. The mother hastened after the jackal, who let the child drop and ran off. When she looked at it, she found that it was dead. So after she had wept over it, she threw it into the water. When she saw that the elder was being carried along by the stream, she became still more distressed. She hastened after him, and found that he was dead. Bereft of both husband and children, she gave way to despair, and sat down alone on the bank, with only the lower part of her body covered. There she listened to the howling of the wind, the roaring of the forest and of the waves, as well as the singing of various kinds of birds. Then wandering to and fro, with sobs and tears of woe, she lamented the loss of her husband and her two children.

She meets with one of her father's domestics, who informs her that her parents and their servants had all been destroyed by a hurricane, and that "he only had escaped" to tell her the sad tidings. After this she is married to a weaver, who ill-uses her, and she escapes from him one night. She attaches herself to some travellers returning from a trading expedition in the north, and the leader of the caravan takes her for his wife. The party are attacked by robbers and the leader is killed. She then becomes the wife of the chief of the robbers, who in his turn finds death at the hands of the king of that country, and she is placed in his zenana.

The king died, and she was buried alive in his tomb, after having had great honour shown to her by the women, the princes, the ministers, and a vast concourse of people. Some men from the north who were wont to rob graves broke into this one also. The dust they raised entered into Krisa Gautami's nostrils, and made her sneeze. The grave-robbers were terrified, thinking that she was a demon (vetála), and they fled; but Krisa Gautami escaped from the grave through the opening which they had made. Conscious of all her troubles, and affected by the want of food, just as a violent storm arose, she went out of her mind. Covered with merely her underclothing, her hands and feet foul and rough, with long locks and pallid complexion, she wandered about until she reached Sravastí. There, at the sight of Bhagavant, she recovered her intellect. Bhagavant ordered Ananda to give her an overrobe, and he taught her the doctrine, and admitted her into the ecclesiastical body, and he appointed her the chief of the Bhikshunís who had embraced discipline.[520]

This remarkable story is one of those which reached Europe long anterior to the Crusades. It is found in the Greek martyr acts, which were probably composed in the eighth century, where it is told of Saint Eustache, who was before his baptism a captain of Trajan, named Placidus, and the same legend reappears, with modifications of the details, in many medićval collections and forms the subject of several romances. In most versions the motif is similar to that of the story of Job. The following is the outline of the original legend, according to the Greek martyr acts:

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LEGEND OF ST. EUSTACHE.

As Placidus one day hunted in the forest, the Saviour appeared to him between the antlers of a hart, and converted him. Placidus changed his name into Eustache, when he was baptised with his wife and sons. God announced to him by an angel his future martyrdom. Eustache was afflicted by dreadful calamities, lost all his estate, and was compelled to go abroad as a beggar with his wife and his children. As he went on board a ship bound for Egypt, his wife was seized by the shipmaster and carried off. Soon after, when Eustache was travelling along the shore, his two children were borne off by a lion and a leopard. Eustache then worked for a long time as journeyman, till he was discovered by the emperor Trajan, who had sent out messengers for him, and called him to court. Reappointed captain, Eustache undertook an expedition against the Dacians. During this war he found his wife in a cottage as a gardener — the shipmaster had fallen dead to the ground as he ventured to touch her — and in the same cottage he found again his two sons as soldiers: herdsmen had rescued them from the wild beasts and brought them up. Glad was their meeting again! But as they returned to Rome they were all burnt in a glowing bull of brass by the emperor's order, because they refused to sacrifice to the heathen gods.[521]

The story of Placidus, which forms chapter 110 of the continental "Gesta Romanorum," presents few and unimportant variations from the foregoing: Eustatius came to a river the water of which ran so high that it seemed hazardous to attempt to cross it with both the children at the same time; one therefore he placed upon the bank, and then passed over with the other in his arms, and having laid it on the ground, he returned for the other child. But in the midst of the river, looking back, he beheld a wolf snatch up the child he had just carried over and run with it into the adjoining wood. He turned to rescue it, but at that instant a huge lion approached the other child and disappeared with it. After the loss of his two boys Eustatius journeyed on till he came to a village, where he remained for fifteen years, tending sheep as a hired servant, when he was discovered by Trajan's messengers, and so on.

The story is so differently told in one of the Early English translations of the “Gesta Romanorum” in the Harleian MSS. 7333 (re-edited by Herrtage for the E.E.T. Soc., p-91) that it is worth while, for purposes of comparison, reproducing it here in full:

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OLD ENGLISH "GESTA" VERSION.

Averios was a wise emperour regnyng in the cite of Rome; and he let crye a grete feste, and who so ever wold come to that feste, and gete victory in the tournement, he shuld have his doughter to wyf, after his decesse. So there was a doughti knyght, and hardy in armys, and specially in tournement, the which hadde a wyf, and two yong children, of age of thre yere; and when this knyght had herd this crye, in a clere morowenyng[522] he entred in to a forest, and there he herd a nyghtingale syng upon a tre so swetly, that he herd never so swete a melody afore that tyme. The knyght sette him doun undre the tre, and seid to him self, "Now, Lord, if I myght knowe what this brid[523] shold bemene!"[524] There come an old man, and seid to him, "That thou shalt go within thes thre daies to the emperours feste, and thou shalt suffre grete persecution or thou come there; and if thou be constant, and pacient in all thi tribulacion, thy sorowe shal turne the[525] to grete joy; and, ser, this is the interpretacion of his song." When this was seid, the old man vanysshed, and the brid fly away. Tho[526] the knyght had grete merveill; he yede[527] to his wif, and told her the cas.[528] "Ser." quod she, "the will of God be fulfilled, but I counsell that we go to the feste of the emperour and that ye thynk on the victory in the tournement, by the which we may be avaunced[529] and holpen."[530] When the knyght had made all thing redy, there come a grete fire in the nyght; and brent[531] up all his hous and all his goodis, for which he had grete sorowe in hert; nevertheles, notwithstondyng all this, he yede forthe toward the see, with his wife, and with his two childryn; and there he hired a ship, to passe over. When thei come to londe, the maister of the shippe asked of the knyght his hire for his passage, for him, and for his wif and for his two childryn. "Dere frend," said the knyght to him, "dere freed, suffre me, and thou shalt have all thyn, for I go now to the feste of the emperour, where I trust to have the victory in turnement, and then thou shalt be wele ypaied." "Nay, by the feith that I owe to the emperour," quod that other, "hit shal not be so, for but if [532] you pay now, I shal holde thi wif to wed,[533] tyll tyme that I be paied fully my salary." And he seid that, for he desired the love of the lady. Tho the knyght profren his two childryn to wed, so that he myght have his wif; and the shipman seid, "Nay, such wordis beth[534] vayn, for," quod he, "or[535] I wol have my mede, or els I wolle holde thi wif." So the knyght lefte his wif with him, and kyst her with bitter teris; and toke the two childryn, scil. oon on his arme, and that othir in his nek, and so he yede forth to the turnement. Aftir, the maister of the shippe wolde have layn by the lady, but she denyed hit, and seid, that she had lever dey[536] than consente therto. So within short tyme, the maister drew to a fer[537] lond, and there he deied; and the lady beggid her brede fro dore to dore, and knew not in what lond her husbond was duellinge. The knyght was gon toward the paleis, and at the last he come by a depe water, that was impossible to be passid, but[538] hit were in certein tyme, when hit was at the lowist. The knyght sette doun oo[539] child, and bare the othir over the water; and aftir that he come ayen[540] to fecche over the othir, but or[541] he myght come to him, there come a lion, and bare him awey to the forest. The knyght pursued aftir, but he myght not come to the lion; and then he wept bitterly, and yede ayen over the water to the othir child; and or he were ycome, a bere had take the child, and ran therwith to the forest. When the knyght saw that, sore he wepte, and seid, "Alias! that ever I was bore, for now have I lost wif and childryn. O thou brid! thi song that was so swete is yturned in to grete sorowe, and hath ytake away myrth fro my hert." Aftir this he turned toward the feste, and made him redy toward the turnement; and there he bare him so manly, and so doutely in the turnement and that twies or thries, that he wan the victory, and worship, and wynnyng of that day. For the emperour hily avauncid him, and made him maister of his oste,[542] and commaundid that all shuld obey to him; and he encresid, and aros from day to day in honure and richesse. And he went aftirward in a certain day in the cite, [and] he found a precious stone, colourid with thre maner of colours, as in oo partie[542] white, in an othir partie red, and in the thrid partie blak. Anon he went to a lapidary, that was expert in the vertue of stonys; and he seid, that the vertue of thilke[544] stone was this, who so ever berith the stone upon him, his hevynesse[545] shall turne in to joy; and if he be povere,[546] he shal be made riche; and if he hath lost anything, he shall fynde hit ayen with grete joy. And when the knyght herd this, he was glad and blith, and thought in him self, "I am in grete hevynesse and poverte, for I have lost all that I had, and by this stone I shal recovere all ayen, whether hit be so or no, God wote!" Aftir, when he must go to bataile of the emperour he gadrid togidre[547] all the oste, and among them he found two yong knyghtis, semely in harneis,[548] and wele i-shape, the which he hired for to go with him yn bataill of the emperour. And when thei were in the bataill, there was not oon in all the batail that did so doutely,[549] as did tho[550] two knyghtis that he hired; and therof this knyght, maister of the ost, was hily gladid. When the bataill was y-do,[551] thes two yong knyghtes yede to her oste[552] in the cite; and as they sat to-gidir, the elder seid to the yonger, "Dere frend, hit is long sithen[553] that we were felawys,[554] and we have grete grace of God, for in every batail we have the victory; and therfore I pray you, telle me of what contre ye were ybore, and in what nacion? For I askid never this of the or now; and if thou wilt telle me soth,[555] I shall telle my kynrede and where I was borne." And when oo felawe spak thus to the othir, a faire lady was loggid[556] in the same ostry;[557] and when she herd the elder knyght speke, she herkened to him; but she knew neither of hem,[558] and yit she was modir of both, and wyf of the maister of the oste,[559] the which also the maister of the shippe withheld for ship-hire, but ever God kept her fro synne. Then spake the yonger knyght, "Forsoth, good man, I note[560] who was my fader or who was my modir, ne[561] in what stede[562] I was borne; but I have this wele in mynde that my fader was a knyght, and that he bare me over the water, and left my eldir brothir in the lond; and as he passid over ayen to fecche him, there come a lion, and toke me up, but a man of the cite come with houndis, and when he saw him, he made him to leve me with his houndis."[563] "Now sothly," quod that othir, "and in the same maner hit happid vith me. For I was the sone of a knyght, and had only a brothir; and my fader brought me and my brothir, and my modir, over the see toward the emperour; and for my fader had not to pay to the maister of the ship for the fraught, he left my modir to wed; and then my fader toke me with my yong brothir, and brought us on his bak, and in his armys, tyll that we come unto a water, and there left me in a side of the water, and bare over my yong brothir; and or my fader myght come to me ayene, to bare me over, ther come a bere, and bore me to wode;[564] and the people that saw him, make grete cry, and for fere the bere let me falle, and so with thelke[565] poeple I duellid x. yere, and ther I was y-norisshed.” When the modir herd thes wordis, she seid, “Withoute doute thes ben my sonys,” and ran to hem anon, and fil upon her[566] nekkes, and wepte sore for joy, and seid, “A! dere sonys, I am your modir, that your fader left with the maister of the shippe; and I know wele by your wordis and signes that ye beth true brethern. But how it is with your fader, that I know not, but God, that all seth,[567] yeve[568] me grace to fynd my husbond.” And alle that nyght thes thre were in gladnes. On the morow the modir rose up, and the childryn, scil. the knyghtis, folowid; and as thei yede, the maister of the oste mette with hem in the strete, and though he were her fader, he knew hem not, but[569] as thei had manli fought the day afore; and therfor he salued hem honurably, and askid of hem what feir lady that was, that come with hem? Anon as his lady herd his voys, and perceyved a certeyn signe in his frount,[570] she knew fully therby that it was her husbond; and therfore she ran to him, and clypt him, and kyst him, and for joy fille doun to the erth, as she had be ded. So aftir this passion, she was reised up; and then the maister seid to her, “Telle me, feir woman, whi thou clippest me, and kyssist me so?” She seid, “I am thi wif, that thou leftist with the maister of the ship; and thes two knyghtis bene your sonys. Loke wele on my front, and see.” Then the knyght byheld her wele, with a good avisement,[571] and knew wele by diverse tokyns that she was his wif; and anon kyst her, and the sonys eke; and blessid hiely God, that so had visited hem. Tho went he ayen to his fond, with his wif, and with his children, and endid faire his lif.

From the legend of St. Eustache the romances of Sir Isumbras, Octavian, Sir Eglamour of Artois, and Sir Torrent of Portugal are derived. In the last, while the hero is absent, aiding the king of Norway with his sword, his wife Desonelle is delivered of twins, and her father, King Calamond, out of his hatred of her, causes her and the babes to be put to sea in a boat; but a favourable wind saves them from destruction, and drives the boat upon the coast of Palestine. As she is wandering aimlessly along the shore, a huge griffin appears, and seizes one of her children, and immediately after a leopard drags away the other. With submission she suffers her miserable fate, relying on the help of the Holy Virgin. The king of Jerusalem, just returning from a voyage, happened to find the leopard with the child, which he ordered to be saved and delivered to him. Seeing from the foundling's golden ring that the child was of noble descent, and pitying its helpless state, he took it into his palace, and brought him up as if he were his own son, at his court. The dragon with the other child was seen by a pious hermit, St. Antony, who, though son of the king of Greece, had in his youth forsaken the world. Through his prayer St. Mary made the dragon put down the infant. Antony carried him to his father, who adopted him and ordered him to be baptised. Desonelle wandered up and down, after the loss of her children, till she happened to meet the king of Nazareth hunting. He, recognising her as the king of Portugal's daughter, gave her a kind welcome and assistance, and at his court she lived several years in happy retirement. Ultimately she is re-united to her husband and her two sons, when they have become famous knights.

The following is an epitome of "Sir Isumbras," from Ellis's "Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances" (Bohr's ed. ff.):

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

ROMANCE OF SIR ISUMBRAS.

There was once a knight, who, from his earliest infancy, appeared to be the peculiar favourite of Fortune. His birth was noble; his person equally remarkable for strength and beauty; his possessions so extensive as to furnish the amusements of hawking and hunting in the highest perfection. Though he had found no opportunity of signalising his courage in war, he had borne away the prize at numberless tournaments; his courtesy was the theme of general praise; his hall was the seat of unceasing plenty; it was crowded with minstrels, whom he entertained with princely liberality, and the possession of a beautiful wife and three lovely children completed the sum of earthly happiness.

Sir Isumbras had many virtues, but he had one vice. In the pride of his heart he forgot the Giver of all good things, and considered the blessings so abundantly showered upon him as the proper and just reward of his distinguished merit. Instances of this overweening presumption might perhaps be found in all ages among the possessors of wealth and power; but few sinners have the good fortune to be recalled, like Sir Isumbras, by a severe but salutary punishment, to the pious sentiments of Christian humility.

It was usual with knights to amuse themselves with hawking or hunting whenever they were not occupied by some more serious business; and, as business seldom intervened, they thus amused themselves every day in the year. One morning, being mounted on his favourite steed, surrounded by his dogs, and with a hawk on his wrist, Sir Isumbras cast his eyes on the sky, and discovered an angel, who, hovering over him, reproached him with his pride, and announced the punishment of instant and complete degradation. The terrified knight immediately fell on his knees; acknowledged the justice of his sentence; returned thanks to Heaven for deigning to visit him with adversity while the possession of youth and health enabled him to endure it; and, filled with contrition, prepared to return from the forest. But scarcely had the angel disappeared when his good steed suddenly fell dead under him, the hawk dropped from his wrist; his hounds wasted and expired; and, being thus left alone, he hastened on foot towards his palace, filled with melancholy forebodings, but impatient to learn the whole extent of his misfortune.

He was presently met by a part of his household, who, with many tears, informed him that his horses and oxen had been suddenly struck dead with lightning, and that his capons were all stung to death with adders. He received the tidings with humble resignation, commanded his servants to abstain from murmurs against Providence, and passed on. He was next met by a page, who related that his castle was burned to the ground, that many of his servants had lost their lives, and that his wife and children had with great difficulty escaped from the flames. Sir Isumbras, rejoiced that Heaven had yet spared those who were most dear to him, bestowed upon the astonished page his purse of gold as a reward for the intelligence.

> A doleful sight then gan he see;
> His wife and children three
>   Out of the fire were fled:
> There they sat, under a thorn,
> Bare and naked as they were born,
>   Brought out of their bed.
> A woful man then was he,
> When he saw them all naked be,
>   The lady said, all so blive,
> "For nothing, sir, be ye adrad."
> He did off his surcoat of pallade,[572]
>   And with it clad his wife.
> His scarlet mantle then shore[573] he;
> Therein he closed his children three
>   That naked before him stood.

He then proposed to his wife that, as an expiation of their sins, they should at once under take a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; so, cutting with his knife a sign of the cross on his bare shoulder, he set off with the four companions of his misery, resolving to beg his bread till they should arrive at the Holy Sepulchre. After passing through “seven lands,” supported by the scanty alms of the charitable, they arrived at length at a forest, where they wandered during three days without meeting a single habitation. Their food was reduced to the few berries which they were able to collect; and the children, unaccustomed to such hard fare, began to sink under the accumulated difficulties of their journey. In this situation they were stopped by a wide and rapid though shallow river. Sir Isumbras, taking his eldest son in his arms, carried him over to the opposite bank, and placing him under a bush of broom, directed him to dry his tears, and amuse himself by playing with the blossoms till his return with his brothers. But scarcely had he left the place when a lion, starting from a neighbouring thicket, seized the child and bore him away into the recesses of the forest. The second son became, in like manner, the prey of an enormous leopard; and the disconsolate mother, when carried over with her infant to the fatal spot, was with difficulty persuaded to survive the loss of her two elder children. Sir Isumbras, though he could not repress the tears extorted by this cruel calamity, exerted himself to console his wife and humbly confessing his sins, contented himself with praying that his present misery might be accepted by Heaven as a partial expiation.

Through forest they went days three,
Till they came to the Greekish sea;
  They grette,[574] and were full wo!
As they stood upon the land,
They saw a fleet sailand,[575]
  Three hundred ships and mo.[576]
With top-castels set on-loft,
Richly then were they wrought,
  With joy and mickle[577] pride:
A heathen king was therein,
That Christendom came to win;
  His power was full wide.

It was now seven days since the pilgrims had tasted bread or meat, the soudan’s[578] galley, therefore, was no sooner moored to the beach than the hastened on board to beg for food. The soudan, under the apprehension that they were spies, ordered them to be driven back on shore; but his attendants observed to him that these could not be common beggars; that the robust limbs and tall stature of the husband proved him to be a knight in disguise, and that the delicate complexion of the wife, who was "bright as blossom on tree," formed a striking contrast to the ragged apparel with which she was very imperfectly covered. They were now brought into the royal presence; and the soudan, addressing Sir Isumbras, immediately offered him as much treasure as he should require, on condition that he should renounce Christianity and consent to fight under the Saracen banners. The answer was a respectful but peremptory refusal, concluded by an earnest petition for a little food; but the soudan, having by this time turned his eyes from Sir Isumbras to the beautiful companion of his pilgrimage, paid no attention to his request.

The soudan beheld that lady there,
Him thought an angel that she were,
  Comen a-down from heaven;
"Man! I will give thee gold and fee,
An thou that woman will sellen me,
  More than thou can neven.[579]
I will give thee an hundred pound
Of pennies that been whole and round,
  And rich robes seven:
She shall be queen of my land,
And all men bow unto her hand,
  And none withstand her steven."[580]
Sir Isumbras said, "Nay!
My wife I will nought sell away,
  Though ye me for her sloo![581]
I weddid her in Goddislay,
To hold her to mine ending day,
  Both for weal and wo."

It evidently would require no small share of casuistry to construe this declaration into an acceptance of the bargain, but the Saracens, having heard the offer of their sovereign, deliberately counted out the stipulated sum on the mantle of Sir Isumbras; took possession of the lady, carried the knight with his infant son on shore; beat him till he was scarcely able to move, and then returned for further orders. During this operation, the soudan, with his own hand, placed the regal crown on the head of his intended bride; but recollecting that the original project of the voyage to Europe was to conquer it, which might possibly occasion a loss of some time, he delayed his intended nuptial, and ordered a fast-sailing vessel to convey her to his dominions, providing her at the same time with a charter addressed to his subjects, in which he enjoined them to obey her, from the moment of her landing, as their legitimate sovereign.

The lady, emboldened by these tokens of deference on the part of her new lord, now fell on her knees and entreated his permission to pass a few moments in private with her former husband, and the request was instantly granted by the complaisant Saracen. Sir Isumbras, still smarting from his bruises, was conducted with great respect and ceremony to his wife, who, embracing him with tears, earnestly conjured him to seek her out as soon as possible in her new dominions, to slay his infidel rival, and to take possession of a throne which was probably reserved to him by Heaven as an indemnification for his past losses. She then supplied him with provisions for a fortnight; kissed him and her infant son; swooned three times, and then set sail for Africa.

Sir Isumbras, who had been set on shore quite confounded by this quick succession of strange adventures, followed the vessel with his eyes till it vanished from his sight, and then taking his son by the hand led him up to some rocky woodlands in the neighbourhood. Here they sat down under a tree, and after a short repast, which was moistened with their tears, resumed their journey. But they were again bewildered in the forest, and, after gaining the summit of the mountain without being able to descry a single habitation, lay down on the bare ground and resigned themselves to sleep. The next morning Sir Isumbras found that his misfortunes were not yet terminated. He had carried his stock of provisions, together with his gold, the fatal present of the soudan, enveloped in a scarlet mantle; and scarcely had the sun darted its first rays on the earth when an eagle, attracted by the red cloth, swooped down upon the treasure and bore it off in his talons. Sir Isumbras, waking at the moment, perceived the theft, and for some time hastily pursued the flight of the bird, who, he expected, would speedily drop the heavy and useless burthen; but he was disappointed; for the eagle, constantly towering as he approached the sea, at length directed his flight towards the opposite shore of Africa. Sir Isumbras slowly returned to his child, whom he had no longer the means of feeding; but the wretched father only arrived in time to behold the boy snatched from him by a unicorn. The knight was now quite disheartened. But his last calamity was so evidently miraculous that even the grief of the father was nearly absorbed by the contrition of the sinner. He fell on his knees and uttered a most fervent prayer to Jesus and the Virgin, and then proceeded on his journey.

His attention was soon attracted by the sound of a smith's bellows: he quickly repaired to the forge and requested the charitable donation of a little food; but was told by the labourers that he seemed as well able to work as they did, and they had nothing to throw away in charity.

> Then answered the knight again,
> "For meat would I swink[582] fain."
> Fast he bare and drow,[583]
> They given him meat and drink anon.
> And taughten him to bear stone:
> Then had he shame enow.

This servitude lasted a twelvemonth, and seven years expired before he had fully attained all the mysteries of his new profession. He employed his few leisure hours in fabricating a complete suit of armour: every year had brought him an account of the progress of the Saracens; and he could not help entertaining a hope that his arm, though so ignobly employed, was destined at some future day to revenge the wrongs of the Christians, as well as the injury which he had personally received from the unbelievers.

At length he heard that the Christian army had again taken the field; that the day was fixed for a great and final effort; and that a plain at an inconsiderable distance from his shop was appointed for the scene of action. Sir Isumbras rose before day, buckled on his armour, and mounting a horse which had hitherto been employed in carrying coals, proceeded to the field and took a careful view of the disposition of both armies. When the trumpets gave the signal to charge, he dismounted, fell on his knees, and after a short but fervent prayer to Heaven, again sprang into his saddle and rode into the thickest ranks of the enemy. His uncouth war-horse and awkward armour had scarcely less effect than his wonderful address and courage in attracting the attention of both parties; and when after three desperate charges, his sorry steed was slain under him, one of the Christian chiefs make a powerful effort for his rescue, bore him to a neighbouring eminence, and presented to him a more suitable coat of armour, and a horse more worthy of the heroic rider.

When he was armed on that stead,
It is seen where his horse yede,[584]
And shall be evermore.
As sparkle glides off the glede,[585]
In that stour he made many bleed,
And wrought hem wonder sore.
He rode up into the mountain,
The soudan soon hath he slain,
And many that with him were.
All that day lasted the fight;
Sir Isumbras, that noble knight,
Wan the battle there.
Knights and squires have him sought,
And before the king him brought;
Full sore wounded was he.
They asked what was his name;
He said, “Sire, a smith’s man;
What will ye do with me?”
The Christian king said, than,
“I trow never smith’s man
In war was half so wight.”
“I bid[586] you, give me meat and drink

And what that I will after think,
  Till I have kevered[587] my might."
The king a great oath sware,
As soon as he whole were,
  That he would dub him knight.
In a nunnery they him leaved,
To heal the wound in his heved,[588]
  That he took in that fight.
The nuns of him were full fain,
For he had the soudan slain,
  And many heathen hounds;
For his sorrow they gan sore rue;
Every day they salved him new,
  And stoppĕd well his wounds.

We may fairly presume, without derogating from the merit of the holy sisters or from the virtue of their salves and bandages, that the knight's recovery was no less accelerated by the pleasure of having chastised the insolent possessor of his wife and the author of his contumelious beating. In a few days his health was restored; and having provided himself with a "scrip and pike" and the other accoutrements of a palmer, he took his leave of the nuns, directed his steps once more to the "Greekish Sea," and, embarking on board of a vessel which he found ready to sail, speedily arrived at the port of Acre.

During seven years, which were employed in visiting every part of the Holy Land, the penitent Sir Isumbras led a life of continued labour and mortification: fed during the day by the precarious contributions of the charitable, and sleeping at night in the open air, without any addition to the scanty covering which his pilgrim's weeds, after seven years service, were able to afford. At length his patience and contrition were rewarded. After a day spent in fruitless applications for a little food,

Beside the burgh of Jerusalem
He set him down by a well-stream,
  Sore wepand[589] for his sin.

And as he sat, about midnight,
There came an angel fair and bright,
  And brought him bread and wine;
He said, “Palmer, well thou be!
The King of Heaven greeteth well thee;
  Forgiven is sin thine.”

Sir Isumbras accepted with pious gratitude the donation of food, by which his strength was instantly restored, and again set out on his travels; but he was still a widower, still deprived of his children, and as poor as ever; nor had his heavenly monitor afforded him any hint for his future guidance. He wandered therefore through the country, without any settled purpose, till he arrived at a “rich burgh,” built round a “fair castle,” the possessor of which, he was told, was a charitable queen, who daily distributed a florin of gold to every poor man who approached her gates, and even condescended to provide food and lodging within her palace for such as were distinguished by superior misery. Sir Isumbras presented himself with the rest; and his emaciated form and squalid garments procured him instant admittance.

The rich queen in hall was set;
Knights her served, at hand and feet,
  In rich robes of pall:
In the floor a cloth was laid;
“The poor palmer,” the steward said,
  “Shall sit above you all.”
Meat and drink forth they brought;
He sat still, and ate right nought,
  But looked about the hall.
So mickle he saw of game and glee
(Swiche mirthis he was wont to see)
  The tears he let down fall.

Conduct so unusual attracted the attention of the whole company, and even of the queen, who, ordering “a chair with a cushion” to be placed near the palmer, took her seat in it, entered into conversation with him on the subject of his long and painful pilgrimage, and was much edified by the moral lessons which he interspersed in his narrative. But no importunity could induce him to taste food: he was sick at heart, and required the aid of solitary meditation to overcome the painful recollections which continually assailed him The queen was more and more astonished, but at length left him to his reflections, after declaring that, "for her lord's soul, or for his love, if he were still alive," she was determined to retain the holy palmer in her palace, and to assign him a convenient apartment, together with a servant to attend him.

An interval of fifteen years, passed in the laborious occupations of blacksmith and pilgrim, may be supposed to have produced a very considerable alteration in the appearance of Sir Isumbras; and even his voice, subdued by disease and penance, may have failed to discover the gallant knight under the disguise which he had so long assumed. But that his wife (for such she was) should have been equally altered by the sole operation of time; that the air and gestures and action of a person once so dear and so familiar to him should have awakened no trace of recollection in the mind of a husband, though in the midst of scenes which painfully recalled the memory of his former splendour, is more extraordinary. Be this as it may, the knight and the queen, though lodged under the same roof and passing much of their time together, continued to bewail the miseries of their protracted widowhood. Sir Isumbras, however, speedily recovered, in the plentiful court of the rich queen, his health and strength, and with these the desire of returning to his former exercises. A tournament was proclaimed; and the lists, which were formed immediately under the windows of the castle, were quickly occupied by a number of Saracen knights, all of whom Sir Isumbras successively overthrew. So dreadful was the stroke of his spear, that many were killed at the first encounter; some escaped with a few broken bones; others were thrown headlong into the castle ditch; but the greater number consulted their safety by a timely flight; while the queen contemplated with pleasure and astonishment the unparalleled exploits of her favourite palmer.

Then fell it, upon a day,

The Knight went him for to play,
  As it was ere his kind;
A fowl's nest he found on high;
A red cloth therein he seygh[590]
  Wavand[591] in the wind.
To the nest he gan win;[592]
His own mantle he found therein;
  The gold there gan he find.

The painful recollection awakened by this discovery weighed heavily on the soul of Sir Isumbras. He bore the fatal treasure to his chamber, concealed it under his bed, and spent the remainder of the day in tears and lamentations. The images of his lost wife and children now began to haunt him continually; and his altered demeanour attracted the attention and excited the curiosity of the whole court, and even of the queen, who could only learn from the palmer's attendant that his melancholy seemed to originate in the discovery of something in a bird's nest. With this strange report she was compelled to be satisfied, till Sir Isumbras, with the hope of dissipating his grief, began to resume his usual exercises in the field; but no sooner had he quitted his chamber than the "squires" by her command broke open the door, discovered the treasure, and hastened with it to the royal apartment. The sight of the gold and the scarlet mantle immediately explained to the queen the whole mystery of the palmer's behaviour. She burst into tears; kissed with fervent devotion the memorial of her lost husband; fell into a swoon; and on her recovery told the story to her attendants, and enjoined them to go in quest of the palmer, and to bring him at once before her. A short explanation removed her few remaining doubts; she threw herself into the arms of her husband, and the reunion of this long separated couple was immediately followed by the coronation of Sir Isumbras and by a protracted series of festivities.

The Saracen subjects of the Christian sovereign continued, with unshaken loyalty, to partake of the plentiful entertainments provided for all ranks of people on this solemn occasion; but no sooner had the pious Sir Isumbras signified to them the necessity of their immediate conversion, than his whole "parliament" adopted the resolution of deposing and committing to the flames their newly-acquired sovereign, as soon as they should have obtained the concurrence of the neighbouring princes. Two of these readily joined their forces for the accomplishment of this salutary purpose, and invading the territories of Sir Isumbras with an army of thirty thousand men, sent him, according to usual custom, a solemn defiance. Sir Isumbras boldly answered the defiance, issued the necessary orders, called for his arms, sprang upon his horse, and prepared to march out against the enemy; when he discovered that his subjects had, to a man, abandoned him, and that he must encounter singly the whole host of the invaders.

Sir Isumbras was bold and keen,
And took his leave at the queen,
  And sighed wonder sore:
He said, "Madam, have good day!
Sickerly, as you I say,
  For now and evermore!"
"Help me, sir, that I were dight
In arms, as it were a knight;
  I will with you fare:
Gif God would us grace send,
That we may together end,
  Then done were all my care."
Soon was the lady dight
In arms, as it were a knight;
  He gave her spear and shield:
Again[593] thirty thousand Saracens and mo.[594]
There came no more but they two,
  When they met in field.

Never, probably, did a contest take place between such disproportioned forces. Sir Isumbras was rather encumbered than assisted by the presence of his beautiful but feeble helpmate; and the faithful couple were upon the point of being crushed by the charge of the enemy, when three unknown knights suddenly made their appearance, and as suddenly turned the fortune of the day. The first of these was mounted on a lion, the second on a leopard, and the third on a unicorn. The Saracen cavalry, at the first sight of these unexpected antagonists, dispersed in all directions. But flight and resistance were equally hopeless: three and twenty thousand unbelievers were soon laid lifeless on the plain by the talons of the lion and leopard and by the resistless horn of the unicorn, or by the swords of their young and intrepid riders; and the small remnant of the Saracen army who escaped from the general carnage quickly spread, through every corner of the Mohammedan world, the news of this signal and truly miraculous victory.

Sir Isumbras, who does not seem to have possessed the talent for unravelling mysteries, had never suspected that his three wonderful auxiliaries were his own children, whom Providence had sent to his assistance at the moment of his greatest distress; but he was not the less thankful when informed of the happy termination of all his calamities. The royal family were received in the city with every demonstration of joy by his penitent subjects; whose loyalty had been completely revived by the recent miracle. Magnificent entertainments were provided; after which Sir Isumbras, having easily overrun the territories of his two pagan neighbours, who had been slain in the last battle, proceeded to conquer a third kingdom for his youngest son; and the four monarchs, uniting their efforts for the propagation of the true faith, enjoyed the happiness of witnessing the baptism of all the inhabitants of their respective dominions.

They lived and died in good intent;
Unto heaven their souls went,
When that they dead were.
Jesu Christ, heaven’s king,
Give us, aye, his blessing,
And shield us from care!

On comparing these several versions it will be seen that, while they differ one from another m some of the details, yet the fundamental outline is identical, with the single exception of the Tibetan story, which, in common with Tibetan tales generally, has departed very considerably from the original. A king, or knight, is suddenly deprived of all his possessions, and with his wife and two children becomes a wanderer on the face of the earth; his wife is forcibly taken from him; he afterwards loses his two sons; he is once more raised to affluence; his sons, having been adopted and educated by a charitable person, enter his service; their mother recognises them through overhearing their conversation; finally husband and wife and children are happily re-united. Such is the general outline of the story, though modifications have been made in the details of the different versions — probably through its being transmitted orally in some instances. Thus in the Arabian story, the king is ruined apparently in consequence of no fault of his own; in the Panjábí version, he relinquishes his wealth to a fakír as a pious action; in the Kashmírí and in the romance of Sir Isumbras, the hero loses his wealth as a punishment for his overweening pride; in the legend of St. Eustache, as in the story of Job, the calamities which overtake the Christian convert are designed by Heaven as a trial of his patience and fortitude; while even in the corrupted Tibetan story the ruin of the monarch is reflected in the destruction of the parents of the heroine by a hurricane. In both the Kashmírí and the Panjábí versions, the father is swallowed by a fish (or an alligator) in re-crossing the river to fetch his second child; in the Tibetan story the wife loses her husband, who is killed by a snake, and having taken one of her children over the river, she is returning for the other when, looking back, she discovers her babe in the jaws of a wolf: both her children perish: in the European versions they are carried off by wild beasts and rescued by strangers — the romance of Sir Isumbras is singular in representing the number of children to be three. Only in the Arabian story do we find the father carrying his wife and children in safety across the stream, and the latter afterwards lost in the forest. The Kashmírí and "Gesta" versions correspond exactly in representing the shipman as seizing the lady because her husband could not pay the passage-money: in the Arabian she is entrapped in the ship, owned by a Magian, on the pretext that there is on board a woman in labour; in Sir Isumbras she is forcibly "bought" by the Soudan. She is locked up in a chest by the Magian; sent to rule his country by the Soudan; respectfully treated by the merchant in the Kashmírí story, and, apparently, also by Kandan in the Panjábí legend; in the story of St. Eustache her persecutor dies and she is living in humble circumstances when discovered by her husband. — I think there is internal evidence, apart from the existence of the Tibetan version, to lead to the conclusion that the story is of Buddhist extraction, and if such be the fact, it furnishes a further example of the indebtedness of Christian hagiology to Buddhist tales and legends.

AL-MALIK AL-ZAHIR AND THE SIXTEEN CAPTAINS OF POLICE. — Vol. XII. .

We must, I think, regard this group of tales as being genuine narratives of the exploits of Egyptian sharpers. From the days of Herodotus to the present time, Egypt has bred the most expert thieves in the world. The policemen don't generally exhibit much ability for coping with the sharpers whose tricks they so well recount; but indeed our home-grown "bobbies" are not particularly quick-witted.

THE THIEF'S TALE. — Vol. XII. .

A parallel to the woman's trick of shaving off the beards and blackening the faces of the robbers is found in the well-known legend, as told by Herodotus (Euterpe, 121), of the robbery of the treasure-house of Rhampsinitus king of Egypt, where the clever thief, having made the soldiers dead drunk, shaves off the right side of their beards and then decamps with his brother's headless body.

THE NINTH CONSTABLE'S STORY. — Vol. XII. .

The narrow escape of the singing-girl hidden under a pile of halfah grass may be compared with an adventure of a fugitive Mexican prince whose history, as related by Prescott, is as full of romantic daring and hair's-breadth 'scapes as that of Scanderbeg or the "Young Chevalier." This prince had just time to turn the crest of a hill as his enemies were climbing it on the other side, when he fell in with a girl who was reaping chian, a Mexican plant, the seed of which is much used in the drinks of the country. He persuaded her to cover him with the stalks she had been cutting. When his pursuers came up and inquired if she had seen the fugitive, the girl coolly answered that she had, and pointed out a path as the one he had taken.

THE FIFTEENTH CONSTABLE'S STORY. — Vol. XII. .

The concluding part of this story differs very materially from that of the Greek legend of Ibycus (fl. B.C. 540), which is thus related in a small MS. collection of Arabian and Persian anecdotes in my possession, done into English from the French:

It is written in the history of the first kings that in the reign of a Grecian king there lived a philosopher named Ibycus, who surpassed in sagacity all other sages of Greece. Ibycus was once sent by the king to a neighbouring court. On the way he was attacked by robbers who, suspecting him to have much money, formed the design of killing him. “Your object in taking my life,” said Ibycus, “is to obtain my money; I give it up to you, but allow me to live.” The robbers paid no attention to his words, and persisted in their purpose. The wretched Ibycus, in his despair, looked about him to see if any one was coming to his assistance, but no person was in sight. At that very moment a flock of cranes flew overhead. “O cranes!” cried Ibycus, “know that I have been seized in this desert by these wicked men, and I die from their blows. Avenge me, and demand from them my blood.” At these words the robbers burst into laughter: “To take away life from those who have lost their reason,” they observed, “is to add nothing to their hurt.” So saying, they killed Ibycus and divided his money. On receipt of the news that Ibycus had been murdered, the inhabitants of the town were exasperated and felt great sorrow. They caused strict inquiries to be made for the murderers, but they could not be found. After some time the Greeks were celebrating a feast. The inhabitants of the adjoining districts came in crowds to the temples. The murderers of Ibycus also came, and everywhere showed themselves. Meanwhile a flock of cranes appeared in the air and hovered above the people, uttering cries so loud and prolonged that the prayers and ceremonies were interrupted. One of the robbers looked with a smile at his comrades, saying, by way of joke, “These cranes come without doubt to avenge the blood of Ibycus.” Some one of the town, who was near them, heard these words, repeated them to his neighbour, and they together reported them to the king. The robbers were taken, strictly cross-examined, confessed their crime, and suffered for it a just punishment. In this way the cranes inflicted vengeance on the murderers of Ibycus. But we ought to see in this incident a matter which is concealed in it: This philosopher, although apparently addressing his words to the cranes, was really imploring help from their Creator; he hoped, in asking their aid, that He would not suffer his blood to flow unavenged. So God accomplished his hopes, and willed that cranes should be the cause that his death was avenged in order that the sages of the world should learn from it the power and wisdom of the Creator.

This ancient legend was probably introduced into Arabian literature in the 9th century, when translations of so many of the best Greek works were made; and, no doubt, it was adapted in the following Indian (Muslim) story:[595]

There was a certain pir, or saint, of great wisdom, learning, and sanctity, who sat by the wayside expounding the Kurán to all who would listen to him. He dwelt in the out-buildings of a ruined mosque close by, his only companion being a maina, or hill-starling, which he had taught to proclaim the excellence of the formula of his religion, saying, "The Prophet is just!" It chanced that two travellers passing that way beheld the holy man at his devotions, and though far from being religious persons yet tarried a while to hear the words of truth. Evening now drawing on, the saint invited his apparently pious auditors to his dwelling, and set before them such coarse food as he had to offer. Having eaten and refreshed themselves, they were astonished at the wisdom displayed by the bird, who continued to repeat holy texts from the Kurán. The meal ended, they all lay down to sleep, and while the good man reposed, his treacherous guests, who envied him the possession a bird that in their hands might be the means of enriching them, determined to steal the treasure and murder its master. So they stabbed the sleeping devotee to the heart and then seized hold of the bird's cage. But, unperceived by them, the door of it had been left open and the bird was not to be found. After searching for the bird in vain, they considered it necessary to dispose of the body, since, if discovered, suspicion would assuredly fall upon them; and carrying it away to what they deemed a safe distance they buried it. Vexed to be obliged to leave the place without obtaining the reward of their evil deeds, they again looked carefully for the bird, but without success; it was nowhere to be seen, and so they were compelled to go forward without the object of their search. The maina had witnessed the atrocious deed, and unseen had followed the murderers to the place were they had buried the body; it then perched upon the tree beneath which the saint had been wont to enlighten the minds of his followers, and when they assembled flew into their midst, exclaiming, “The Prophet is just!” making short flights and then returning. These unusual motions, together with the absence of their preceptor, induced the people to follow it, and directing its flight to the grave of its master, it uttered a mournful cry over the newly-covered grave. The villagers, astonished, began to remove the earth, and soon discovered the bloody corse. Surprised and horror-stricken, they looked about for some traces of the murderers, and perceiving that the bird had resumed the movements which had first induced them to follow it, they suffered it to lead them forward. Before evening fell, the avengers came up with two men, who no sooner heard the maina exclaim, “The Prophet is just’” and saw the crowd that accompanied it, than they fell upon their knees, confessing that the Prophet had indeed brought their evil deeds to light; so, their crime being thus made manifest, summary justice was inflicted upon them.

TALE OF THE DAMSEL TUHFAT AL-KULUB. — Vol. XII. .

An entertaining story, but very inconsistent in the character of Iblis, who is constantly termed, in good Muslim fashion, “the accursed,” yet seems to be somewhat of a follower of the Prophet, and on the whole a good-natured sort of fellow. His mode of expressing his approval of the damsel’s musical “talent” is, to say the least, original.

WOMEN’S WILES. — Vol. XII. .

A variant — perhaps an older form — of this story occurs in the
tale of Prince Fadlallah, which is interwoven with the History of
Prince Calaf and the Princess of China, in the Persian tales of
“The Thousand and One Days”:

The prince, on his way to Baghdad, is attacked by robbers, his followers are all slain, and himself made prisoner, but he is set at liberty by the compassionate wife of the robber-chief during his absence on a plundering expedition. When he reaches Baghdad he has no resource but to beg his bread, and having stationed himself in front of a large mansion, an old female slave presently comes out and gives him a loaf. At this moment a gust of wind blew aside the curtain of a window and discovered to his admiring eyes a most beautiful damsel, of whom he became immediately enamoured. He inquired of a passerby the name of the owner of the mansion, and was informed that it belonged to a man called Mouaffac, who had been lately governor of the city, but having quarrelled with the kází, who was of a revengeful disposition, the latter had found means to disgrace him with the khalíf and to have him deprived of his office. After lingering near the house in vain till nightfall, in hopes of once more obtaining a glimpse of this beauty, he retired for the night to a burying-ground, where he was soon joined by two thieves, who pressed upon him a share of the good cheer with which they had provided themselves, but while the thieves were feasting and talking over a robbery which they had just accomplished, the police suddenly pounced upon them, and took all three and cast them into prison.

In the morning they were examined by the kází, and the thieves, seeing it was useless to deny it, confessed their crime. The prince then told the kází how he chanced to fall into company of the thieves, who confirmed all he said, and he was set at liberty. Then the kází began to question him as to how he had employed his time since he came to Baghdád, to which he answered very frankly but concealed his rank. On his mentioning the brief glance he had of the beautiful lady at the window of the ex-governor's house, the kází's eyes sparkled with apparent satifaction, and he assured the prince that he should have the lady for his bride; for, believing the prince to be a mere beggarly adventurer, he resolved to foist him on Mouaffac as the son of a great monarch. So, having sent the prince to the bath and provided him with rich garments, the kází despatched a messenger to request Mouaffac to come to him on important business. When the ex-governor arrived, the kází told him blandly that there was now an excellent opportunity for doing away the ill will that had so long existed between them. "It is this," continued he: "the prince of Basra, having fallen in love with your daughter from report of her great beauty, has just come to Baghdád, unknown to his father, and intends to demand her of you in marriage. He is lodged in my house, and is most anxious that this affair should be arranged by my interposition, which is the more agreeable to me, since it will, I trust, be the means of reconciling our differences.” Mouaffac expressed his surprise that the prince of Basra should think of marrying his daughter, and especially that the proposal should come through the kází, of all men. But the kází begged him to forget their former animosity and consent to the immediate celebration of the nuptials. While they were thus talking, the prince entered, in a magnificent dress, and was not a little astonished to be presented to Mouaffac by the treacherous kází as the prince of Basra, who had come as a suitor for his daughter in marriage. The ex-governor saluted him with every token of profound respect, and expressed his sense of the honour of such an alliance: his daughter was unworthy to wait upon the meanest of the prince’s slaves. In brief, the marriage is at once celebrated, and the prince duly retires to the bridal chamber with the beauteous daughter of Mouaffac. But in the morning, at an early hour, a servant of the kází knocks at his door, and, on the prince opening it, says that he brings him his rags of clothes and is required to take back the dress which the kází had lent him yesterday to personate the prince of Basra. The prince, having donned his tattered garments, said to his wife, “The kází thinks he has married you to a wretched beggar, but I am no whit inferior in rank to the prince of Basra — I am also a prince, being the only son of the king of Mosel,” and then proceeded to recount all his adventures. When he had concluded his recital, the lady despatched a servant to procure a suitable dress for the prince, which when he had put on, she said, “I see it all: the kází, no doubt, believes that by this time we are all overwhelmed with shame and grief. But what must be his feelings when he learns that he has been a benefactor to his enemies! Before you disclose to him your real rank, however, we must contrive to punish him for his malicious intentions. There is a dyer in this town who has a frightfully ugly daughter — but leave this affair in my hands.”

The lady then dressed herself in plain but becoming apparel, and went out of the house alone. She proceeded to the court of the kází, who no sooner cast his eyes upon her than he was struck with her elegant form. He sent an officer to inquire of her who she was and what she had come about. She made answer that she was the daughter of an artisan in the city. and that she desired to have some private conversation with the kází. When the officer reported the lady's reply, the kází directed her to be conducted into a private chamber, where he presently joined her, and gallantly placed his services at her disposal. The lady now removed her veil, and asked him whether he saw anything ugly or repulsive in her features. The kází on seeing her beautiful face was suddenly plunged in the sea of love, and declared that her forehead was of polished silver, her eyes were sparkling diamonds, her mouth a ruby casket containing a bracelet of pearls. Then she displayed her arms, so white and plump, the sight of which threw the kází into ecstasies and almost caused him to faint. Quoth the lady, "I must tell you, my lord, that with all the beauty I possess, my father, a dyer in the city, keeps me secluded, and declares to all who come to ask me in marriage that I am an ugly, deformed monster, a mere skeleton, lame, and full of diseases." On this the kází burst into a tirade against the brutal father who could thus traduce so much beauty, and vowed that he would make her his wife that same day. The lady, after expressing her fears that he would not find it easy to gain her father's consent, took her leave and returned home.

The kází lost no time in sending for the dyer, and, after complimenting him upon his reputation for piety, said to him, "I am informed that behind the curtain of chastity you have a daughter ripe for marriage. Is not this true?" Replied the dyer, "My lord, you have been rightly informed. I have a daughter who is indeed fully ripe for marriage, for she is more than thirty years of age; but the poor creature is not fit to be a wife to any man. She is very ugly, lame, leprous, and foolish. In short, she is such a monster that I am obliged to keep her out of all people's sight." "Ha!" exclaimed the kází, "you can't impose on me with such a tale. I was prepared for it. But let me tell you that I myself am ready and willing to marry that same ugly and leprous daughter of yours, with all her defects." When the dyer heard this, he looked the kází full in the face and said, "My lord, you are welcome to divert yourself by making a jest of my daughter." No," replied the kází "I am quite in earnest. I demand your daughter in marriage." The dyer broke into laughter, saying, 'By Allah, some one has meant to play you a trick, my lord. I forewarn you that she is ugly, lame, and leprous." "True," responded the kází, with a knowing smile; "I know her by these tokens. I shall take her notwithstanding." The dyer, seeing him determined to marry his daughter, and being now convinced that he had been imposed upon by some ill-wisher, thought to himself, "I must demand of him a round sum of money which may cause him to cease troubling me any further about my poor daughter." So he said to the kází, "My lord, I am ready to obey your command; but I will not part with my daughter unless you pay me beforehand a dowry of a thousand sequins." Replied the kází, "Although, methinks, your demand is somewhat exorbitant, yet I will pay you the money at once." which having done, he ordered the contract to be drawn up. But when it came to be signed the dyer declared that he would not sign save in the presence of a hundred men of the law. "Thou art very distrustful," said the kází, "but I will comply in everything, for I am resolved to make sure of thy daughter." So he sent for all the men of law in the city, and when they were assembled at the house of the kází, the dyer said that he was now willing to sign the contract; "But I declare," he added, "in the presence of these honourable witnesses, that I do so on the condition that if my daughter should not prove to your liking when you have seen her, and you should determine to divorce her, you shall oblige yourself to give her a thousand sequins of gold in addition to the same amount which I have already received from you. "Agreed," said the kází, "I oblige myself to it, and call this whole assembly to be witnesses. Art thou now satisfied?" "I am," replied the dyer, who then went his way, saying that he would at once send him his bride.

As soon as the dyer was gone, the assembly broke up, and the kází was left alone in his house. He had been two years married to the daughter of a merchant of Baghdád, with whom he had hitherto lived on very amicable terms. When she heard that he was arranging for a second marriage, she came to him in a great rage. "How now," said she, "two hands in one glove! two swords in one scabbard! two wives in one house! Go, fickle man! Since the caresses of a young and faithful wife cannot secure your constancy, I am ready to yield my place to my rival and retire to my own family. Repudiate me — return my dowry — and you shall never see me more." "I am glad you have thus anticipated me," answered the kází, "for I was somewhat perplexed how to acquaint you of my new marriage." So saying, he opened a coffer and took out a purse of five hundred sequins of gold, and putting it into her hands, "There, woman," said he, "thy dowry is in that purse: begone, and take with you what belongs to you. I divorce thee once; I divorce thee twice, three times I divorce thee. And that thy parents may be satisfied thou art divorced from me, I shall give thee a certificate signed by myself and my nayb." This he did accordingly, and his wife went to her father's house, with her bill of divorce and her dowry.

The kází then gave orders to furnish an apartment sumptuously for the reception of his bride. The floor was spread with velvet carpets, the walls were hung with rich tapestry, and couches of gold and silver brocade were placed around the room. The bridal chamber was decked with caskets filled with the most exquisite perfumes. When everything was in readiness, the kází impatiently expected the arrival of his bride, and at last was about to despatch a messenger to the dyer's when a porter entered, carrying a wooden chest covered with a piece of green taffeta. "What hast thou brought me there, friend?" asked the kází. "My lord," replied the porter, setting the chest on the floor, "I bring your bride." The kází opened the chest, and discovered a woman of three feet and a half, defective in every limb and feature. He was horrified at the sight of this object, and throwing the covering hastily over it, demanded of the porter, "What wouldst thou have me do with this frightful creature?" "My lord," said the porter, "this is the daughter of Omar the dyer, who told me that you had espoused her out of pure inclination." "O Allah!" exclaimed the kází, "is it possible to marry such a monster as this?" Just then, the dyer, well knowing that the kází must be surprised, came in. "Thou wretch," cried the kází, "how dost thou dare to trifle with me? In place of this hideous object, send hither your other daughter, whose beauty is beyond comparison; otherwise thou shalt soon know what it is to insult me." Quoth the dyer, "My lord, I swear, by Him who out of darkness produced light, that I have no other daughter but this. I told you repeatedly that she was not for your purpose, but you would not believe my words. Who, then, is to blame?" Upon this the kází began to cool, and said so the dyer, "I must tell you, friend Omar, that this morning there came to me a most beautiful damsel, who pretended that you were her father, and that you represented her to everybody as a monster, on purpose to deter all suitors that came to ask her in marriage." "My lord," answered the dyer, "this beautiful damsel must be an impostor; some one, undoubtedly, owes you a grudge." Then the kází, having reflected for a few minutes, said to the dyer, "Bid the porter carry thy daughter home again. Keep the thousand sequins of gold which I gave thee, but ask no more of me, if thou desirest that we should continue friends." The dyer, knowing the implacable disposition of the kází, thought it advisable to content himself with what he had already gained, and the kází, having formally divorced his hideous bride, sent her away with her father. The affair soon got wind in the city and everybody was highly diverted with the trick practiced on the kází.

It will be observed that in the Arabian story there are two clever devices: that of the lady who tricks the boastful merchant, whose motto was that men's craft is superior to women's craft, into marrying the ugly daughter of the kází; and that of the merchant to get rid of his bad bargain by disgusting the kází with the alliance. The scene at the house of the worthy judge — the crowd of low rascals piping, drumming, and capering, and felicitating themselves on their pretended kinsman the merchant's marriage — is highly humorous. This does not occur in the Persian story, because it is the kází, who has been duped into marrying the dyer's deformed daughter, and she is therefore simply packed off again to her father's house.

That the tales of the "Thousand and One Days" are not (as is supposed by the writer of an article on the several English versions of The Nights in the "Edinburgh Review" for July 1886,) mere imitations of Galland[596] is most certain, apart from the statement in the preface to Petis' French translation, which there is no reason to doubt — see vol. x. of The Nights, , note 1. Sir William Ouseley, in his Travels, vol. ii., , note, states that he brought from Persia a manuscript which comprised, inter alia, a portion of the "Hazár ú Yek Rúz," or the Thousand and One Days, which agreed with Petis' translation of the same stories. In the Persian collection entitled

"Shamsa ú Kuhkuha" occur several of the tales and incidents, for example, the Story of Nasiraddoli King of Mousel, the Merchant of Baghdád, and the Fair Zeinib, while the Story of the King of Thibet and the Princess of the Naimans has its parallel in the Turkish "Kirk Vazír," or Forty Vazírs. Again, the Story of Couloufe and the Beautiful Dilara reminds us of that of Haji the Cross-grained in Malcolm's "Sketches of Persia." But of the French translation not a single good word can be said — the Oriental "costume" and phraseology have almost entirely disappeared, and between Petis de la Croix and the author of "Gil Blas" — who is said to have had a hand in the work — the tales have become ludicrously Frenchified. The English translation made from the French is, if possible, still worse. We there meet with "persons of quality," "persons of fashion," with "seigneurs," and a thousand and one other inconsistencies and absurdities. A new translation is much to be desired. The copy of the Persian text made by Petis is probably in the Paris Library and Ouseley's fragment is doubtless among his other Oriental MSS. in the Bodleian. But one should suppose that copies of the "Hazár ú Yek Rúz" may be readily procured at Ispahán or Tehrán, and at a very moderate cost, since the Persians now-a-days are so poor in general that they are eager to exchange any books they possess for the "circulating medium."

NUR AL-DIN AND THE DAMSEL SITT AL-MILAH. — Vol. XII. .

This is an excellent tale; the incidents occur naturally and the reader's interest in the fortunes of the hero and heroine never flags. The damsel's sojourn with the old Muezzin — her dispatching him daily to the shroff — bears some analogy to part of the tale of Ghanim the Slave of Love (vol. ii. of The Nights), which, by the way, finds close parallels in the Turkish "Forty Vazírs" (the Lady's 18th story in Mr. Gibb's translation), the Persian "Thousand and One Days" (story of Aboulcasem of Basra), and the "Bagh o Bahár" (story of the First Dervish). This tale is, in fact, a compound of incidents occurring in a number of different Arabian fictions.

TALE OF KING INS BIN KAYS AND HIS DAUGHTER. — Vol. XII. .

Here we have another instance of a youth falling in love with the portrait of a pretty girl (see ante,). The doughty deeds performed by the young prince against thousands of his foes throw into the shade the exploits of the Bedouin hero Antar, and those of our own famous champions Sir Guy of Warwick and Sir Bevis of Hampton.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

FIRUZ AND HIS WIFE, .

I find yet another variant of this story in my small MS. collection of Arabian and Persian anecdotes, translated from the French (I have not ascertained its source):

They relate that a lord of Basra, while walking one day in his garden, saw the wife of his gardener, who was very beautiful and virtuous. He gave a commission to his gardener which required him to leave his home. He then said to his wife, “Go and shut all the doors.” She went out and soon returned, saying, “I have shut all the doors except one, which I am unable to shut.” The lord asked, “And where is that door?” She replied “That which is between you and the respect due to your Maker: there is no way of closing it.” When the lord heard these words, he asked the woman’s pardon, and became a better and a wiser man.

We have here a unique form of the wide-spread tale of “The Lion’s Track,” which, while it omits the husband’s part, yet reflects the virtuous wife’s rebuke of the enamoured sultan.

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THE SINGER AND THE DRUGGIST, .

If Straparola's version is to be considered as an adaptation of Ser Giovanni's novella — which I do not think very probable — it must be allowed to be an improvement on his model. In the Arabian story the singer is first concealed in a mat, next in the oven, and again in the mat, after which he escapes by clambering over the parapet of the druggist's roof to that of an adjoining house, and his subsequent adventures seem to be added from a different story. In Ser Giovanni's version the lover is first hid beneath a heap of half-dried clothes, and next behind the street door, from which he escapes the instant the husband enters, and the latter is treated as a madman by the wife's relatives and the neighbours — an incident which has parallels in other tales of women's craft and its prototype, perhaps, in the story of the man who compiled a book of the Wiles of Woman, as told in "Syntipas," the Greek version of the Book of Sindibad. In Straparola the lover — as in the Arabian story — is concealed three times, first in a basket, then between two boardings, and lastly in a chest containing law papers; and the husband induces him to recount his adventures in presence of the lady's friends, which having concluded, the lover declares the story to be wholly fictitious: this is a much more agreeable ending than that of Giovanni's story, and, moreover, it bears a close analogy to the latter part of the Persian tale, where the lover exclaims he is right glad to find it all a dream. Straparola's version has another point of resemblance in the Persian story — so far as can be judged from Scott's abstract — and also in the Arabian story: the lover discovers the lady by chance, and is not advised to seek out some object of love, as in Giovanni; in the Arabian the singer is counselled by the druggist to go about and entertain wine parties. Story-comparers have too much cause to be dissatisfied with Jonathan Scott's translation of the "Bahár-i-Dánish" — a work avowedly derived from Indian sources — although it is far superior to Dow's garbled version. The abstracts of a number of the tales which Scott gives in an appendix, while of some use, are generally tantalising: some stories he has altogether omitted "because they are similar to tales already well known" (unfortunately the comparative study of popular fictions was hardly begun in his time); while of others bare outlines are furnished, because he considered them “unfit for general perusal.” But his work, even as it is, has probably never been “generally” read, and he seems to have had somewhat vague notions of “propriety,” to judge by his translations from the Arabic and Persian. A complete English rendering of the “Bahár-i-Dánish” would be welcomed by all interested in the history of fiction.

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THE FULLER, HIS WIFE AND THE TROOPER, .

The trick played on the silly fuller of dressing him up as a Turkish soldier resembles that of the Three Deceitful Women who found a gold ring in the public bath, as related in the Persian story-book, “Shamsa ú Kuhkuha:”

When the wife of the superintendent of police was apprised that her turn had come, she revolved and meditated for some time what trick she was to play off on her lord, and after having come to a conclusion she said one evening to him, “To-morrow I wish that we should both enjoy ourselves at home without interruptions, and I mean to prepare some cakes.” He replied, “Very well, my dear; I have also longed for such an occasion.” The lady had a servant who was very obedient and always covered with the mantle of attachment to her. The next morning she called this youth and said to him, “I have long contemplated the hyacinth grove of thy symmetrical stature; and I know that thou travellest constancy and faithfully on the road of compliance with all my wishes, and that thou seekest to serve me. I have a little business which I wish thee to do for me.” The servant answered, “I shall be happy to comply. Then the lady gave him a thousand dinars and said, “Go to the convent which is in our vicinity; give this money to one of the kalandars there and say to him, ‘A prisoner whom the Amír had surrendered to the police has escaped last night. He closely resembles thee, and as the superintendent of the police is unable to account to the Amír, he has sent a man to take thee instead of the escaped criminal. I have compassion for thee and mean to rescue thee. Take this sum of money; give me thy dress; and flee from the town; for if thou remainest in it till the morning thou wilt be subjected to torture and wilt lose thy life.’” The servant acted as he was bid, and brought the garments to his mistress. When it was morning she said to her husband, “I know you have long wished to eat sweetmeats, and I shall make some to-day.” He answered, “Very well.” His wife made all her preparations and commenced to bake the sweetmeats. He said to her, “Last night a theft was committed in a certain place, and I sat up late to extort confessions; and as I have spent a sleepless night, I feel tired and wish to repose a little.” The lady replied, “Very well.”

Accordingly the superintendent of the police reclined on the pillow of rest; and when the sweetmeat was ready his wife took a little and putting an opiate into it she handed it to him, saying, “How long will you sleep? To-day is a day of feasting and pleasure, not of sleep and laziness. Lift up your head and see whether I have made the sweets according to your taste.” He raised his head, swallowed a piece of the hot cake and lay down again. The morsel was still in his throat when consciousness left and a deep sleep overwhelmed him. His wife immediately undressed him and put on him the garments of the kalandar. The servant shaved his head and made some tattoo marks on his body. When the night set in the lady called her servant and said, “Hyacinth, be kind enough to take the superintendent on thy back, and carry him to the convent instead of that kalandar, and if he wishes to return to the house in the morning, do not let him.” The servant obeyed. Towards dawn the superintendent recovered his senses a little; but as the opiate had made his palate very bitter, he became extremely thirsty. He fancied that he was in his own house, and so he exclaimed, “Narcissus, bring water.” The kalandars awoke from sleep, and after hearing several shouts of this kind, they concluded that he was under the influence of bang, and said, “Poor fellow! the narcissus is in the garden; this is the convent of sufferers, and there are green garments enough here. Arise and sober thyself, for the morning and harbinger of benefits as well as of the acquisition of the victuals for subsistence is approaching.” When the superintendent heard these words he thought they were a dream, for he had not yet fully recovered his senses. He sat quietly, but was amazed on beholding the walls and ceiling of the convent: he got up, looked at the clothes in which he was dressed and at the marks tattooed on his body, and began to doubt whether he was awake or asleep. He washed his face, and perceived that the caravan of his mustachios had likewise departed from the plain of his countenance.

In this state of perplexity he went out of the convent and proceeded to his house. There his wife, with her male and female servants, was expecting his arrival. He approached the house and placed his hand on the knocker of the door, but was received by Hyacinth, who said, “Kalandar, whom seekest thou?” The superintendent rejoined, "I want to enter the house." Hyacinth continued, "Thou hast to-day evidently taken thy morning draught of bang earlier and more copiously than usual, since thou hast foolishly mistaken the road to thy convent. Depart! This is not a place in which vagabond kalandars are harboured. This is the palace of the superintendent of the police. and if the symurgh looks with incivility from the fastness of the west of Mount Káf at this place, the wings of its impertinence will at once become singed." The superintendent said, "What nonsense art thou speaking? Go out of my way, for I do not relish thy imbecile prattle." But when he wanted to enter, Hyacinth struck him with a bludgeon on the shoulder, which the superintendent returned with a box on the ear, and both began to wrestle together. At that moment the lady and her maid-servants rushed forth from the rear and assailed him with sticks and stones, shouting, "This kalandar wishes in plain daylight to force his way into the house of the superintendent. What a pity that the superintendent is sick, or else this crime would have to be expiated on the gallows!" In the meantime all the neighbours assembled, and on seeing the shameless kalandar's proceedings they cried, "Look at that impudent kalandar who wants forcibly to enter the house of the superintendent." Ultimately the crowd amounted to more than five hundred persons, and the gentleman was put to flight and pursued by all the little boys, who pelted him with stones till they expelled him from the town.

At the distance of three farsangs from the town there was a village where the superintendent concealed himself in the corner of a mosque. During the evenings he went from house to house and begged for food to sustain life, until his mustachios again grew and the tattooed scars gradually began to disappear. Whenever anyone inquired for the superintendent at his house, he was informed by the servants that the gentleman was sick. After one month had expired, the grief of separation and the misery of his condition had again driven him back to the city. He went to the convent because fear hindered him from going to the house. His wife happened one day to catch a glimpse of him from her window, and perceived him sitting in the same dress with a company of kalandars. She felt compassion for him, called the servant and said, "The superintendent has had enough of this!” She made a loaf of bread and put some opiate into it, and said, “When the kalandars are asleep, you must go and place this loaf under the pillow of the superintendent.” The servant obeyed, and when the gentleman awoke in the middle of the night he was surprised to find the loaf. He fancied that when his companions had during the night returned from begging, they had placed it there, and so he ate some of it. During the same night the servant went there by the command of the lady, took his master on his back and carried him home. When it was morning, the lady took off the kalandar’s clothes from her husband and dressed him in his own garments, and began to make sweetmeats as on the former occasion. After some time he began to move, and his wife exclaimed, “O superintendent, do not sleep so much. I have told you that we shall spend this day in joy and pleasure, and it was not fair of you to pass the time in this lazy way. Lift up your head and see what beautiful sweetmeats I have baked for you.” When he opened his eyes, and saw himself dressed in his own clothes and at home, the rosebush of his amazement again brought forth the flowers of astonishment, and he said, “God be praised! What has happened to me?” He sat up, and exclaimed, “Wife, things have happened to me which I can scarcely describe.” She replied, “From the uneasy motions which you have made in your sleep, it appears you must have had extraordinary dreams.” “Dreams, forsooth,” said he, “since the moment I lay down I have experienced the most strange adventures.” “Certainly,” rejoined the lady, “last night you have been eating food disagreeing with your constitution, and to-day the vapours of it have ascended into your brains, and have caused you all this distress.” The superintendent said, “Yes last night we went to a party in the house of Serjeant Bahman, and there was roasted pillau, of which I ate somewhat more than usual, and the vapour of it has occasioned me all this trouble.”[597]

Strikingly similar to this story is the trick of the first lady on her husband in the “Fabliau des Trois Dames qui trouverent un Anel.” Having made him drunk, she causes his head to be shaved, dresses him in the habit of a monk, and carries him, assisted by her lover, to the entrance of a convent. When he awakes and sees himself thus transformed he imagines that God by a miraculous exercise of His grace had called him to the monastic life. He presents himself before the abbot and requests to be received among the brethren. The lady hastens to the convent in well-feigned despair, and is exhorted to be resigned and to congratulate her husband on the saintly vow he has taken. “Many a good man, ‘ says the poet, “has been betrayed by woman and by her harlotry. This one became a monk in the abbey, where he abode a very long time. Wherefore, I counsel all people who hear this story told, that they ought not to trust in their wives, nor in their households, if they have not first proved that they are full of virtues. Many a man has been deceived by women and by their treachery. This one became monk against right, who would never have been such in his life, if his wife had not deceived him.’’[598]

The second lady’s trick in the fabliau is a very close parallel to the story in The Nights, vol. v. .[599] She had for dinner on a Friday some salted and smoked eels, which her husband bade her cook, but there was no fire in the house. Under the pretext of going to have them cooked at a neighbour’s fire she goes out and finds her lover, at whose house she remains a whole week. On the following Friday, at the hour of dinner, she enters a neighbour’s house and asks leave to cook the eels, saying that her husband is angry with her for having no fire, and that she did not dare to go back, lest he should take off her head. As soon as the eels are cooked she carries them piping hot to her own house. The husband asks her where she has been for eight days, and commences to beat her. She cries for help and the neighbours come in, and amongst them the one at whose fire the eels had been cooked, who swears that the wife had only just left her house and ridicules the husband for his assertion that she had been away a whole week. The husband gets into a great rage and is locked up for a madman.

The device of the third lady seems a reflection of the “Elopement,” but without the underground tunnel between the houses of the wife and the lover. The lady proposes to her lover to marry him, and he believes that she is only jesting, seeing that she is already married, but she assures him that she is quite in earnest, and even undertakes that her husband will consent. The lover is to come for her husband and take him to the house of Dan Eustace, where he has a fair niece, whom the lover is to pretend he wishes to espouse, if he will give her to him. The wife will go thither, and she will have done her business with Eustace before they arrive. Her husband cannot but believe that he has left her at home, and she will be so apparelled that he cannot recognise her. This plan is accordingly carried out. The lover asks the husband for the hand of his niece in marriage, to which he joyously consents, and without knowing it makes a present of his own wife. “All his life long the lover possessed her, because the husband gave and did not lend her; nor could he ever get her back.”

Le Grand mentions that this fabliau is told at great length in the tales of the Sieur d’Ouville, tome iv. . In the “Facetić Bebelianć,” , three women wager which of them will play the best trick on her husband. One causes him to believe he is a monk, and he goes and sings mass, the second husband believed himself to be dead, and allows himself to be carried to that mass on a bier; and the third sings in it quite naked. (There is a very similar story in Campbell’s “Popular Tales of the West Highlands.”) It is also found, says Le Grand, in the “Convivales Sermones,” tome i. , in the “Delices de Verboquet,” ; and in the Facetić of Lod. Doménichi, . In the “Contes pour Rire,” , three women find a diamond, and the arbiter whom they select promises it, as in the fabliau, to her who concocts the best device for deceiving her husband, but their ruses are different.

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FOOTNOTES SUPPLEMENTAL VOLUME II.

[1] Bresi. Edit., vol. xi. p-99, Nights dccccxxx-xl.

[2] Arab. “Iklím” from the Gr. {klíma}, often used as amongst us (e.g. “other climes”) for land.

[3] Bibars whose name is still famous and mostly pronounced “Baybars,” the fourth of the Baharite Mamelukes whom I would call the “Soldans.” Originally a slave of Al-Sálih, seventh of the Ayyubites, he rose to power by the normal process, murdering his predecessor, in A. D. 1260; and he pushed his conquests from Syria to Armenia. In his day “Saint” Louis died before Tunis (A. D. 1270).

[4] There are sundry Sáhils or shore-lands. “Sahil Misr” is the River-side of Cairo often extended to the whole of Lower Egypt (vol. i. 290): here it means the lowlands of Palestine once the abode of the noble Philistines; and lastly the term extends to the sea-board of Zanzibar, where, however, it is mostly used in the plur. “Sawáhil”=the Shores.

[5] Arab. “Sammár” (from Samar, = conversatio nocturna), = the story-teller who in camp or house whiles away the evening hours.

[6] “Flag of the Faith:” Sanjar in old Persian=a Prince, a King.

[7] “Aider of the Faith.”

[8] These policemen’s tales present a curious contrast with the detective stories of M. Gaboriau and his host of imitators. In the East the police, like the old Bow Street runners, were and are still recruited principally amongst the criminal classes on the principle of “Set a thief,” &c. We have seen that the Barmecide Wazirs of Baghdad “anticipated Fourier’s doctrine of the passionel treatment of lawless inclinations,” and employed as subordinate officers, under the Wali or Prefect of Police, accomplished villains like Ahmad al-

Danaf (vol. iv. 75), Hasan Shuuman and Mercury Ali (ibid.) and even women (Dalilah the Crafty) to coerce and checkmate their former comrades. Moreover a gird at the police is always acceptable, not only to a coffee-house audience, but even to a more educated crowd; witness the treatment of the "Charley" and the "Bobby" in our truly English pantomimes.

[9] i.e. the Chief of Police, as the sequel shows.

[10] About ÂŁ4.

[11] i.e. of the worlds visible and invisible.

[12] Arab. "Mukaddam:" see vol. iv, 42.

[13] "Faithful of Command;" it may be a title as well as a P.
N. For "Al-Amín," see vol. iv. 261.

[14] i. e. "What have I to do with, etc.?" or "How great is the difference between me and her." The phrase is still popular in Egypt and Syria; and the interrogative form only intensifies it. The student of Egyptian should always try to answer a question by a question. His labours have been greatly facilitated by the conscientious work of my late friend Spitta Bey. I tried hard to persuade the late Rogers Bey, whose knowledge of Egyptian and Syrian (as opposed to Arabic) was considerable, that a simple grammar of Egyptian was much wanted; he promised to undertake it, but death cut short the design.

[15] Arab. "Nawwáb," plur. of Náib (lit. deputies, lieutenants)=a Nabob. Till the unhappy English occupation of Egypt, the grand old Kil'ah (Citadel) contained the palace of the Pasha and the lodgings and offices of the various officials. Foreign rulers, if they are wise, should convert it into a fort with batteries commanding the town, like that of Hyderabad, in Sind.

[16] For this famous and time-honoured building, see vol. i. 269.

[17] Arab. "Tamkín," gravity, assurance.

[18] Arab. " Iyál-hu" lit. his family, a decorous circumlocution for his wives and concubines.

[19] Arab. "Darb," lit. a road; here a large thoroughfare.

[20] When Mohammed Ali Pasha (the "Great") began to rule, he found Cairo "stifled" with filth, and gave orders that each householder, under pain of confiscation, should keep the street before his house perfectly clean. This was done after some examples had been made and the result was that since that time Cairo never knew the plague. I am writing at Tangier where a Mohammed Ali is much wanted.

[21] i.e. Allah forfend!

[22] Arab. "Mustauda'" = a strong place where goods are deposited and left in charge.

[23] Because, if she came to grief, the people of the street, and especially those of the adjoining houses would get into trouble. Hence in Moslem cities, like Damascus and Fez, the Hárát or quarters are closed at night with strong wooden doors, and the guards will not open them except by means of a silver key. Mohammed Ali abolished this inconvenience, but fined and imprisoned all night-walkers who carried no lanterns. See Pilgrimage, vol. i. 173,

[24] As Kazi of the quarter he was ex-officio guardian of the orphans and their property, and liable to severe punishment (unless he could pay for the luxury) in case of fraud or neglect.

[25] Altogether six thousand dinars = Ł3000. This sentence is borrowed from the sequel and necessary to make the sense clear.

[26] i.e. "I am going at once to complain of thee before the king unless thou give me due satisfaction by restoring the money and finding the thief."

[27] The Practice (of the Prophet) and the Holy Law (Koranic): see vols. v. 36, 167 and i. 169.

[28] In the corrupt text “Who knew me not;” thus spoiling the point.

[29] Arab. “Maut Ahmar” = violent or bloody death. For the various coloured deaths, see vol. vi. 250.

[30] i.e. for lack of sleep.

[31] i.e. of the Kazi.

[32] Arab. “Mubáh,” in the theologic sense, an action which is not sinful (harám) or quasi-sinful (makrúh); vulgarly “permitted, allowed”; so Shahrazad “ceased to say her say permitted” (by Shahryar).

[33] Arab. “Yá Khawand”; see vol. vii. 315.

[34] i.e. we both make different statements equally credible, but without proof, and the case will go against me, because thou art the greater man.

[35] Arab. “Irtiyád” = seeking a place where to stale, soft and sloping, so that the urine spray may not defile the dress. All this in one word!

[36] Arab. “Bahár,” the red buphthalmus sylvester often used for such comparisons. In Algeria it is called ‘Aráwah: see the Jardin Parfumé, , note 144.

[37] i.e. parties.

[38] i.e. amongst men.

[39] Almost as neat as “oů sont les neiges d’autan?”

[40] Arab. “ Ádí,” one transgressing, an enemy, a scoundrel.

[41] It was probably stuck in the ground like an amphora.

[42] i.e. hush up the matter.

[43] In Egypt; the former being the Eastern of the Seven Provinces extending to the Pelusium branch, and the latter to the Canobic. The "Barári" or deserts, i.e. grounds not watered by the Nile, lie scattered between the two and both are bounded South by the Kalúbíyah Province and Middle Egypt.

[44] i.e. a man ready of wit and immediate of action, as opposed to his name Al-Atwash = one notable for levity of mind.

[45] The negative is emphatic, "I certainly saw a Jew," etc.

[46] The "Irish bull" is in the text; justified by —

> They hand-in-hand, with wand'ring steps and slow
> Through Eden took their solitary way,

[47] As we should say, "There are good pickings to be had out of this job." Even in the last generation a Jew or a Christian intriguing with an Egyptian or Syrian Moslemah would be offered the choice of death or Al-Islam. The Wali dared not break open the door because he was not sure of his game.

[48] The Jew rose seemingly to fetch his valuables and ran away, thus leaving the Wali no proof that he had been there in Moslem law which demands ocular testimony, rejects circumstantial evidence and ignores such partial witnesses as the policeman who accompanied his Chief. This I have before explained.

[49] Arab. "Raba'," lit. = spring-quarters. See Marba', iii. 79.

[50] Arab. "Ni'am," an exception to the Abbé Sicard's rule. "La consonne N est l'expression naturelle du doute chez toutes les nations, par ce que le son que rend la touche nasale, quand l'homme incertain examine s'il fera ce qu'on lui demande; ainsi NE ON, NE OT, NE EC, NE IL, d'oů l'on a fait non, not, nec, nil.

[51] For this "Haláwat al-Miftáh," or sweetmeat of the key-money, the French denier a Dieu, Old English "God's penny," see vol. vii. 212,

and Pilgrimage i. 62.

[52] Showing that car. cop. had taken place. Here we find the irregular use of the inn, perpetuated in not a few of the monster hotels throughout Europe.

[53] For its rules and right performance see vol. vi. 199.

[54] i.e. the “Basil(issa),” mostly a servile name, see vol. i. 19.

[55] Arab. “La’alla,” used to express the hope or expectation of some event of possible occurrence; thus distinguished from “Layta” — Would heaven! utinam! O si! etc. — expressing desire or volition.

[56] Arab. “Balát,” in Cairo the flat slabs of limestone and sandstone brought from the Turah quarries, which supplied stone for the Jízah Pyramids.

[57] Arab. “Yá Mu’arras!” here = O fool and disreputable; see vol. i. 338.

[58] These unfortunates in hot climates enjoy nothing so much as throwing off the clothes which burn their feverish skins: see Pilgrimage iii. 385. Hence the boys of Eastern cities, who are perfect imps and flibbertigibbets, always raise the cry “Majnún” when they see a man naked whose sanctity does not account for his nudity.

[59] Arab. “Daur al-Ká’ah” = the round opening made in the ceiling for light and ventilation.

[60] Arab. “La-nakhsifanna” with the emphatic termination called by grammarians “Nún al-taakid” — the N of injunction. Here it is the reduplicated form, the Nun al-Sakílah or heavy N. The addition of Lá (not) e.g. “Lá yazrabanna” = let him certainly not strike answers to the intensive or corroborative negative of the Greek effected by two negations or even more. In Arabic as in Latin and English two negatives make an affirmative.

[61] Parturition and death in warm climates, especially the damp-hot like Egypt are easy compared with both processes in the temperates of Europe. This is noticed by every traveller. Hence probably Easterns have never studied the artificial Euthanasia which is now appearing in literature. See “My Path to Atheism,” by Annie Besant, London: Freethought Publishing Company, 28, Stonecutter Street, E. C., 1877, based upon the Utopia of the highly religious Thomas Moore. Also “Essay on Euthanasia,” by P. D. Williams, Jun., and Mr. Tollemache in the “Nineteenth Century.”

[62] i.e. he whose turn it is to sit on the bench outside the police-office in readiness for emergencies.

[63] Arab. “‘Udúl” (plur. of ‘Ádil), gen. men of good repute, qualified as witnesses in the law-court, see vol. iv. 271. It is also used (as below) for the Kazi’s Assessors.

[64] About Ƚ80.

[65] Arab. “Kitáb” = book, written bond. This officiousness of the neighbours is thoroughly justified by Moslem custom; and the same scene would take place in this our day. Like the Hindú’s, but in a minor degree, the Moslem’s neighbours form a volunteer police which oversees his every action. In the case of the Hindú this is required by the exigencies of caste, an admirable institution much bedevilled by ignorant Mlenchhas, and if “dynamiting” become the fashion in England, as it threatens to become, we shall be obliged to establish “Vigilance Committees” which will be as inquisitorial as caste

[66] e.g. writing The contract of A. with B., daughter of Such-an-one, etc.

[67] Arab. “Hujjat,” which may also mean an excuse.

[68] The last clause is supplied by Mr. Payne to stop a gap in the broken text.

[69] The text idiotically says “To the King.”

[70] In the text “Nahnu”=we, for I, a common vulgarism in Egypt and Syria.

[71] This clause has required extensive trimming; the text making the Notary write out the contract (which was already written) in the woman’s house.

[72] Arab. “Husn tadbír” = lit. “beauty of his contrivance.” Husn, like {kalňs}, pulcher, beau and bello, is applied to moral and intellectual qualities as well as to physical and material. Hence the {kalň géroon} or old gentleman which in Romaic becomes Calogero, a monk.

[73] i.e. that some one told me the following tale.

[74] Arab. “Mutawallí”: see vol. i. 259.

[75] i.e. his Moslem neighbours.

[76] In the text is a fearful confusion of genders.

[77] Her object was to sue him for the loss of the pledge and to demand fabulous damages.

[78] Arab. “Ya’tamidúna hudŕ-hum” = purpose the right direction, a skit at the devotees of her age and sex; and an impudent comment upon the Prefect’s address “O she-devil!”

[79] The trick has often been played in modern times at fairs, shows, etc. Witness the old Joe Miller of the “Moving Multitude.”

[80] Apparently meaning the forbidden pleasures of wine and wassail, loose talk and tales of women’s wiles, a favourite subject with the lewder sort of Moslem.

[81] i.e. women’s tricks.

[82] The “Turkoman” in the text first comes in afterwards.

[83] Arab. “Kásid,” the old Anglo-Indian “Cossid”; see vol. vii. 340.

[84] Being a merchant he wore dagger and sword, a safe practice as it deters attack and far better than carrying hidden weapons, derringers and revolvers which, originating in the United States, have now been adopted by the most civilised nations in Europe.

[85] I have noted (vol. ii. 186, iv. 175) the easy expiation of perjury amongst Moslems, an ugly blot in their moral code.

[86] i.e. Enter in the name of Allah.

[87] i.e. Damn your soul for leading me into this danger!

[88] Arab. “Saff Kamaríyát min al-Zujáj.” The Kamaríyah is derived by Lane (Introd. M.E.) from Kamar=moon; by Baron Von Hammer from Khumárawayh, second of the Banu-Tulún dynasty, at the end of the ixth century A.D., when stained glass was introduced into Egypt. N.B. — It must date from many centuries before. The Kamariyah are coloured glass windows about 2 feet high by 18 inches wide, placed in a row along the upper part of the Mashrabíyah or projecting lattice-window, and are formed of small panes of brightly-stained glass set in rims of gypsum-plaster, the whole framed in wood. Here the allusion is to the “Mamrak” or dome-shaped skylight crowning the room. See vol. viii. 156.

[89] i.e. easily arrested them.

[90] The reader will not forget the half-penitent Captain of Bandits in Gil Blas.

[91] Arab. “Abtál” = champions, athletes, etc., plur. of Batal, a brave: so Batalat = a virago. As the root Batala = it was vain, the form “Battál” may mean either a hero or a bad lot: see vol. viii. 335; x. 74,75.

[92] Arab. “Fityán;” plur. of Fatŕ; see vol. i, 67.

[93] This was in popular parlance "adding insult to injury:" the blackening their faces was a promise of Hell-fire.

[94] Arab. "Shayyan li 'lláh!" lit.=(Give me some) Thing for (the love of) Allah. The answer in Egypt. is "Allah ya'tík:"=Allah will give it thee (not I), or, "Yaftah 'Allah,"= Allah open (to thee the door of subsistence): in Marocco "Sir fí hálik" (pron. Sirf hák)= Go about thy business. In all cities there is a formula which suffices the asker; but the Ghashím (Johny Raw) who ignores it, is pestered only the more by his protestations that "he left his purse at home," etc.

[95] i.e. engaged her for a revel and paid her in advance.

[96] Arab. "Rasílah"=a (she) partner, to accompany her on the lute.

[97] Suggesting that they are all thieves who had undergone legal mutilation.

[98] Arab. "Nuzhat-í:" see vol. ii. 81.

[99] Arab. "Muhattakát;" usually "with torn veils" (fem. plur.) here "without veils," metaphor. meaning in disgrace, in dishonour.

[100] For this reedy Poa, see vol. ii. 18.

[101] I have repeatedly noticed that singing and all music are, in religious parlance, "Makrúh," blameable though not actually damnable; and that the first step after "getting religion" is to forswear them.

[102] i.e. to find the thief or make good the loss.

[103] i.e. the claimants.

[104] Arab. "Sakiyah:" see vol. i. 123.

[105] The lower orders of Egypt and Syria are addicted to this bear-like attack; so the negroes imitate fighting-rams by butting with their stony heads. Let me remark that when Herodotus (iii. 12), after

Psammenitus' battle of Pelusium in B.C. 524, made the remark that the Egyptian crania were hardened by shaving and insolation and the Persians were softened by wearing head-cloths, he tripped in his anthropology. The Iranian skull is naturally thin compared with that of the negroid Egyptian and the negro.

[106] Arab. "Farkalah," {phragéllion} from flagellum; cattle-whip with leathern thongs. Lane, M.E.; Fleischer Glos. 83-84; Dozy s.v.

[107] This clause is supplied to make sense.

[108] i.e. to crucify him by nailing him to an upright board.

[109] i.e. a native of the Hauran, Job's country east of Damascus, now a luxuriant waste, haunted only by the plundering Badawin and the Druzes of the hills, who are no better; but its stretches of ruins and league-long swathes of stone over which the vine was trained, show what it has been and what it will be again when the incubus of Turkish mis-rule shall be removed from it. Herr Schuhmacher has lately noted in the Hauran sundry Arab traditions of Job; the village Nawá, where he lived; the Hammam 'Ayyúb, where he washed his leprous skin; the Dayr Ayyúb, a monastery said to date from the third century; and the Makan Ayyub at Al-Markáz, where the semi-mythical patriarch and his wife are buried. The "Rock of Job", covered by a mosque, is a basaltic monolith 7 feet high by 4, and is probably connected with the solar worship of the old Phnicians.

[110] This habit "torquere mero," was a favourite with the medićval Arabs. Its effect varies greatly with men's characters, making some open-hearted and communicative, and others more cunning and secretive than in the normal state. So far it is an excellent detection of disposition, and many a man who passes off well when sober has shown himself in liquor a rank snob. Among the lower orders it provokes what the Persians call Bad-mastí (le vin méchant) see Pilgrimage iii. 385.

[111] This mystery is not unfamiliar to the modern "spiritualist;" and all Eastern tongues have a special term for the mysterious Voice. See

vol. i. 142.

[112] Arab. “Alaykum:” addressed to a single person. This is generally explained by the “Salam” reaching the ears of Invisible Controls, and even the Apostle. We find the words cruelly distorted in the Pentamerone of Giambattista Basile (partly translated by John E. Taylor, London: Bogue, 1848), “The Prince, coming up to the old woman heard an hundred Licasalemme,” .

[113] Arab. “Al-Zalamah”; the policeman; see vol. vi. 214.

[114] i.e. in my punishment.

[115] i.e. on Doomsday thou shalt get thy deserts.

[116] i.e. what I could well afford.

[117] Arab. Hirfah=a trade, a guild, a corporation: here the officers of police.

[118] Gen. “tip-cat” (vol. ii. 314.) Here it would mean a rude form of tables or backgammon, in which the players who throw certain numbers are dubbed Sultan and Wazir, and demean themselves accordingly. A favourite bit of fun with Cairene boys of a past generation was to “make a Pasha;” and for this proceeding, see Pilgrimage, vol. i. 119.

[119] In Marocco there is great difficulty about finding an executioner who becomes obnoxious to the Thár, vendetta or blood-revenge. For salting the criminal’s head, however, the soldiers seize upon the nearest Jew and compel him to clean out the brain and to prepare it for what is often a long journey. Hence, according to some, the local name of the Ghetto, Al-Malláh,=the salting-ground.

[120] Mr. Payne suspects that “laban,” milk, esp. artificially soured (see vol. vi, 201), is a clerical error for “jubn”=cheese. This may be; but I follow the text as the exaggeration is greater

[121] i.e. in relinquishing his blood-wite for his brother.

[122] The Story-teller, probably to relieve the monotony of the Constables' histories, here returns to the original cadre. We must not forget that in the Bresl. Edit. the Nights are running on, and that the charming queen is relating the adventure of Al-Malik al-Zahir.

[123] Arab. "Za'amu"=they opine, they declare, a favourite term with the Bresl. Edit.

[124] Arab. "Zirtah" the coarsest of terms for what the French nuns prettily termed un sonnet; I find ung sonnet also in Nov. ii. of the Cent nouvelles Nouvelles. Captain Lockett () quotes Strepsiades in The Clouds {brontâ komidę pappáx} "because he cannot express the bathos of the original (in the Tale of Ja'afar and the old Badawi) without descending to the oracular language of Giacoma Rodogina, the engastrymythian prophetess." But Sterne was by no means so squeamish. The literature of this subject is extensive, beginning with "Peteriana, ou l'art de peter," which distinguishes 62 different tones. After dining with a late friend en garçon we went into his sitting-room and found on the table 13 books and booklets upon the Crepitus Ventris, and there was some astonishment as not a few of the party had never seen one.

[125] This tale is a replica of the Cranes of Ibycus. This was a Rhegium man who when returning to Corinth, his home, was set upon by robbers and slain. He cast his dying eyes heavenwards and seeing a flight of cranes called upon them to avenge him and this they did by flying over the theatre of Corinth on a day when the murderers were present and one cried out, "Behold the avengers of Ibycus!" Whereupon they were taken and put to death. So says Paulus Hieronymus, and the affecting old tale has newly been sung in charming verse by Mr. Justin H. McCarthy ("Serapion." London: Chatto and Windus).

[126] This scene is perfectly true to Badawi life; see my Pilgrimage iii. 68.

[127] Arab. "Durráj": so it is rendered in the French translation of Al-Masudi, vii. 347.

[128] A fair friend found the idea of Destiny in The Nights become almost a night-mare. Yet here we suddenly alight upon the true Johnsonian idea that conduct makes fate. Both extremes are as usual false. When one man fights a dozen battles unwounded and another falls at the first shot we cannot but acknowledge the presence of that mysterious "luck" whose laws, now utterly unknown to us, may become familiar with the ages. I may note that the idea of an appointed hour beyond which life may not be prolonged, is as old as Homer (Il. vi. 487).

The reader has been told (vol. vii. 135) that "Kazá" is Fate in a general sense, the universal and eternal Decree of Allah, while "Kadar" is its special and particular application to man's lot, that is Allah's will in bringing forth events at a certain time and place. But the former is popularly held to be of two categories, one Kazá al-Muham which admits of modification and Kazá al-Muhkam, absolute and unchangeable, the doctrine of irresistible predestination preached with so much energy by St. Paul (Romans ix. 15-24); and all the world over men act upon the former while theoretically holding to the latter. Hence "Chinese Gordon" whose loss to England is greater than even his friends suppose, wrote "It is a delightful thing to be a fatalist," meaning that the Divine direction and pre-ordination of all things saved him so much trouble of forethought and afterthought. In this tenet he was not only a Calvinist but also a Moslem whose contradictory ideas of Fate and Freewill (with responsibility) are not only beyond Reason but are contrary to Reason; and although we may admit the argumentum ad verecundiam, suggesting that there are things above (or below) human intelligence, we are not bound so to do in the case of things which are opposed to the common sense of mankind. Practically, however, the Moslem attitude is to be loud in confessing belief of "Fate and Fortune" before an event happens and after it wisely to console himself with the conviction that in no way could he have escaped the occurrence. And the belief that this destiny was in the hands of Allah gives him a certain dignity especially in the presence of disease and death which is wanting in his rival religionist the Christian. At the same time the fanciful picture of the Turk sitting stolidly under a shower of bullets because Fate will not find him out unless it be so written is a freak of fancy rarely found in real life.

There are four great points of dispute amongst the schoolmen in Al-Islam; (1) the Unity and Attributes of Allah, (2) His promises and threats, (3) historical as the office of Imám; and (4) Predestination and the justice thereof. On the latter subject opinions range over the whole cycle of possibilities. For instance, the Mu'tazilites, whom the learned Weil makes the Protestants and Rationalists of Al-Islam, contend that the word of Allah was created in subjecto, ergo, an accident and liable to perish, and one of their school, the Kádiriyah (= having power) denies the existence of Fate and contends that Allah did not create evil but left man an absolutely free agent. On the other hand, the Jabariyah (or Mujabbar = the compelled) is an absolute Fatalist who believes in the omnipotence of Destiny and deems that all wisdom consists in conforming with its decrees. Al-Mas'udi (chapt. cxxvii.) illustrates this by the saying of a Moslem philosopher that chess was the invention of a Mu'tazil, while Nard (backgammon with dice) was that of a Mujabbar proving that play can do nothing against Destiny. Between the two are the Ashariyah; trimmers whose stand-point is hard to define; they would say, "Allah creates the power by which man acts, but man wills the action," and care not to answer the query, "Who created the will ?" (See Pocock, Sale and the Dabistan ii. 352). Thus Sa'adi says in the Gulistan (iii. 2), "The wise have pronounced that though daily bread be allotted, yet it is so conditionally upon using means to acquire it, and although calamity be predestined, yet it is right to secure oneself against the portals by which it may have access." Lastly, not a few doctors of Law and Religion hold that Kaza al-Muhkam, however absolute, regards only man's after or final state; and upon this subject they are of course as wise as other people, and — no wiser. Lane has treated the Moslem faith in Destiny very ably and fully (Arabian Nights, vol. i. p-61), and he being a man of moderate and orthodox views gives valuable testimony.

[129] Arab. “Shaykh al-Hujjáj.” Some Santon like Hasan al- Marábit, then invoked by the Meccan pilgrims: see Pilgrimage, i. 321. It can hardly refer to the famous Hajjáj bin Yúsuf al-Sakafí (vol. iv. 3).

[130] Here the Stories of the Sixteen Constables abruptly end, after the fashion of the Bresl. Edit. They are summarily dismissed even without the normal “Bakhshísh.”

[131] Bresl. Edit. vol xi. p-473 and vol. xii. p-50,
Nights dccccxli.-dcccclvii. For Kashghar, see vol. i. 255.

[132] Mr. Payne proposes to translate “‘Anbar” by amber, the semi-fossilised resin much used in modern days, especially in Turkey and Somaliland, for bead necklaces. But, as he says, the second line distinctly alludes to the perfume which is sewn in leather and hung about the neck, after the fashion of our ancient pomanders (pomme d’ ambre).

[133] i.e. The Caliph: see vol. i. .

[134] Arab. “Adab :” see vol. i. 132, etc. In Moslem dialects which borrow more or less from Arabic, “Bí-adabí” = being without Adab, means rudeness, disrespect, “impertinence” (in its modern sense).

[135] i.e. Isaac of Mosul, the greatest of Arab musicians: see vol. iv. 119.

[136] The elder brother of Ja’afar, by no means so genial or fitted for a royal frolic. See Terminal Essay.

[137] Ibn Habíb, a friend of Isaac, and a learned grammarian who lectured at Basrah.

[138] A suburb of Baghdad, mentioned by Al Mas’údi.

[139] Containing the rooms in which the girl or girls were sold. See Pilgrimage i. 87.

[140] Dozy quotes this passage but cannot explain the word Fawwák.

[141] “A passage has apparently dropped out here. The Khalif seems to have gone away without buying, leaving Ishac behind, whereupon the latter was accosted by another slave-girl, who came out of a cell in the corridor.” So says Mr. Payne. vol. ii. 207. The “raiser of the veil” means a fitting purchaser.

[142] i.e. “Choice gift of the Fools,” a skit upon the girl’s name “Tohfat al-Kulúb” = Choice gift of the Hearts. Her folly consisted in refusing to be sold at a high price, and this is often seen in real life. It is a Pundonor amongst good Moslems not to buy a girl and not to sleep with her, even when bought, against her will.

[143] “Every one cannot go to Corinth.” The question makes the assertion emphatic.

[144] i.e. The Narrows of the (Dervishes’) convent.

[145] Arab. “Akwŕ min dahni ‘l-lauz.” These unguents have been used in the East from time immemorial whilst the last generation in England knew nothing of anointing with oil for incipient consumption. A late friend of mine, Dr. Stocks of the Bombay Establishment, and I proposed it as long back as 1845; but in those days it was a far cry from Sind to London.

[146] The sequel will explain why she acted in this way.

[147] i.e. Thou hast made my gold piece (10 shill.) worth only a doit by thy superiority in the art and mystery of music.

[148] Arab. “Uaddíki,” Taadiyah (iid. of Adá, he assisted) means sending, forwarding. In Egypt and Syria we often find the form “Waddi” for Addi, imperative.

[149] Again “he” for “she”.

[150] i.e. Honey and wine.

[151] i.e. he died.

[152] i.e. if my hand had lost its cunning.

[153] Arab. “Thiyáb ‘Amúdiyah”: ‘Amud = tent prop or column, and Khatt ‘Amúd = a perpendicular line.

[154] i.e. a choice gift. The Caliph speaks half ironically. “Where’s this wonderful present etc?” So further on when he compares her with the morning.

[155] Again the usual pun upon the name.

[156] Throughout the East this is the action of a servant or a slave, practised by freemen only when in danger of life or extreme need and therefore humiliating.

[157] It had been thrown down from the Mamrak or small dome built over such pavilions for the purpose of light by day and ventilation by night. See vol. i. 257, where it is called by the Persian term “Bádhanj.”

[158] The Nights have more than once applied this patronymic to Zubaydah. See vol. viii. 56, 158.

[159] Arab. “Mutahaddisín” = novi homines, upstarts.

[160] i.e. thine auspicious visits.

[161] He being seated on the carpet at the time.

[162] A quotation from Al-Farazdat who had quarrelled with his wife Al-Howár (see the tale in Ibn Khallikan, i. 521), hence “the naked intercessor” became proverbial for one who cannot be withstood.

[163] i.e. Choice Gift of the Breasts, that is of hearts, the continens for the contentum.

[164] Pron. “Abuttawáif,” the Father of the (Jinn-)tribes. It is one of the Moslem Satan’s manifold names, alluding to the number of his servants and worshippers, so far agreeing with that amiable Christian doctrine, “Few shall be saved.”

[165] Mr. Payne supplies this last clause from the sequence.

[166] i.e. “Let us go,” with a euphemistic formula to defend her from evil influences. Iblis uses the same word to prevent her being frightened.

[167] Arab. “Al-Mustaráh,” a favourite haunting place of the Jinn, like the Hammám and other offices for human impurity. For its six names Al-Khalá, Al-Hushsh, Al-Mutawazzá, Al-Kaníf, Al-Mustaráh, and Mirház, see Al-Mas’udi, chap. cxxvii., and Shiríshi’s commentary to Hariri’s 47, Assembly.

[168] Which, in the East, is high and prominent whilst the cantle forms a back to the seat and the rider sits as in a baby’s chair. The object is a firm seat when fighting: “across country” it is exceedingly dangerous.

[169] In Swedenborg’s “Arcana Clestia” we read, “When man’s inner sight is opened, which is that of his spirit; then there appear the things of another life which cannot be made visible to the bodily sight.” Also “Evil spirits, when seen by eyes other than those of their infernal associates, present themselves by correspondence in the beast (fera) which represents their particular lust and life, in aspect direful and atrocious.” These are the Jinns of Northern Europe.

[170] This exchange of salams was a sign of her being in safety.

[171] Arab. “Shawáhid,” meaning that heart testifies to heart.

[172] i.e. A live coal, afterwards called Zalzalah, an earthquake; see post . “Wakhímah” = an unhealthy land, and “Sharárah” = a spark.

[173] I need hardly note the inscriptions upon the metal trays sold to

Europeans. They are usually imitation words so that infidel eyes may not look upon the formulć of prayer; and the same is the case with table-cloths, etc., showing a fancy Tohgra or Sultanic sign-manual.

[174] i.e. I cannot look at them long.

[175] Evidently a diabolical way of clapping his hands in applause. This description of the Foul Fiend has an element of grotesqueness which is rather Christian than Moslem.

[176] Arab. "Rikkí al-Saut," which may also mean either "lower thy voice," or "change the air to one less touching."

[177] "Your" for "thy."

[178] i.e. written on the "Guarded Tablet" from all eternity.

[179] Arab. "Al-'Urs w'al-Tuhúr" which can only mean, "the wedding (which does not drop out of the tale) and the circumcision."

[180] I here propose to consider at some length this curious custom which has prevailed amongst so many widely separated races. Its object has been noted (vol. v. 209), viz. to diminish the sensibility of the glans, no longer lubricated with prostatic lymph; thus the part is hardened against injury and disease and its work in coition is prolonged. On the other hand, "prćputium in coitu voluptatem (of the woman) auget, unde femina prćputiatis concubitum malunt quam cum Turcis ac Judćis " says Dimerbroeck (Anatomie). I vehemently doubt the fact. Circumcision was doubtless practised from ages immemorial by the peoples of Central Africa, and Welcker found traces of it in a mummy of the xvith century B.C. The Jews borrowed it from the Egyptian priesthood and made it a manner of sacrament, "uncircumcised" being = "unbaptised," that is, barbarian, heretic; it was a seal of reconciliation, a sign of alliance between the Creator and the Chosen People, a token of nationality imposed upon the body politic. Thus it became a cruel and odious protestation against the brotherhood of man, and the cosmopolitan Romans derided the verpć ac verpi. The Jews also used the term figuratively as the

"circumcision of fruits" (Lev. xix. 23), and of the heart (Deut. x. 16); and the old law gives copious historical details of its origin and continuance. Abraham first amputated his horny "calotte" at ćt. 99, and did the same for his son and household (Gen. xvii. 24-27). The rite caused a separation between Moses and his wife (Exod. iv. 25). It was suspended during the Desert Wanderings and was resumed by Joshua (v. 3-7), who cut off two tons weight of prepuces. The latter became, like the scalps of the Scythians and the North-American "Indians," trophies of victory; Saul promised his daughter Michol to David for a dowry of one hundred, and the son-in-law brought double tale.

Amongst the early Christians opinions concerning the rite differed. Although the Founder of Christianity was circumcised, St. Paul, who aimed at a cosmopolitan faith discouraged it in the physical phase. St. Augustine still sustained that the rite removed original sin despite the Fathers who preceded and followed him, Justus, Tertullian, Ambrose and others. But it gradually lapsed into desuetude and was preserved only in the outlying regions. Paulus Jovius and Munster found it practised in Abyssinia, but as a mark of nobility confined to the descendants of "Nicaules, queen of Sheba." The Abyssinians still follow the Jews in performing the rite within eight days after the birth and baptise boys after forty and girls after eighty days. When a circumcised man became a Jew he was bled before three witnesses at the place where the prepuce had been cut off and this was called the "Blood of alliance." Apostate Jews effaced the sign of circumcision: so in 1 Matt. i. 16, fecerunt sibi prćputia et recesserunt a Testamento Sancto. Thus making prepuces was called by the Hebrews Meshookim = recutiti{s}, and there is an allusion to it in 1 Cor. vii. 18, 19, {mč epispásthai} (Farrar, Paul ii. 70). St. Jerome and others deny the possibility; but Mirabeau (Akropodie) relates how Father Conning by liniments of oil, suspending weights, and wearing the virga in a box gained in 43 days 7ź lines. The process is still practiced by Armenians and other Christians who, compelled to Islamise, wish to return to Christianity. I cannot however find a similar artifice applied to a circumcised clitoris. The simplest form of circumcision is mere amputation of the prepuce and I have noted (vol. v. 209) the difference between the Moslem and the Jewish rite, the latter according to some being supposed to heal in kindlier way. But the varieties of circumcision are immense. Probably none is more terrible than that practiced in the Province Al-Asír, the old Ophir, lying south of Al-Hijáz, where it is called Salkh, lit. = scarification. The patient, usually from ten to twelve years old, is placed upon raised ground holding m right hand a spear, whose heel rests upon his foot and whose point shows every tremour of the nerves. The tribe stands about him to pass judgment on his fortitude, and the barber performs the operation with the Jumbiyah-dagger, sharp as a razor. First he makes a shallow cut, severing only the skin across the belly immediately below the navel, and similar incisions down each groin; then he tears off the epidermis from the cuts downwards and flays the testicles and the penis, ending with amputation of the foreskin. Meanwhile the spear must not tremble and in some clans the lad holds a dagger over the back of the stooping barber, crying, "Cut and fear not!" When the ordeal is over, he exclaims, "Allaho Akbar!" and attempts to walk towards the tents soon falling for pain and nervous exhaustion, but the more steps he takes the more applause he gains. He is dieted with camel's milk, the wound is treated with salt and turmeric, and the chances in his favour are about ten to one. No body-pile or pecten ever grows upon the excoriated part which preserves through life a livid ashen hue. Whilst Mohammed Ali Pasha occupied the province he forbade "scarification" under pain of impalement, but it was resumed the moment he left Al-Asir. In Africa not only is circumcision indigenous, the operation varies more or less in the different tribes. In Dahome it is termed Addagwibi, and is performed between the twelfth and twentieth year. The rough operation is made peculiar by a double cut above and below; the prepuce being treated in the Moslem, not the Jewish fashion (loc. cit.). Heated sand is applied as a styptic and the patient is dieted with ginger-soup and warm drinks of ginger-water, pork being especially forbidden. The Fantis of the Gold Coast circumcise in sacred places, e.g., at Accra on a Fetish rock rising from the sea. The peoples of Sennaar, Taka, Masawwah and the adjacent regions follow the Abyssinian custom. The barbarous Bissagos and Fellups of North Western Guinea make cuts on the prepuce without amputating it; while the Baquens and Papels circumcise like Moslems. The blacks of Loango are all "verpé," otherwise they would be rejected by the women. The Bantu or Caffre tribes are circumcised between the ages of fifteen and eighteen; the "Fetish boys," as we call them, are chalked white and wear only grass belts; they live outside the villages in special houses under an old "medicine-man," who teaches them not only virile arts but also to rob and fight. The "man-making" may last five months and ends in fętes and dances: the patients are washed in the river, they burn down their quarters, take new names, and become adults, donning a kind of straw thimble over the prepuce. In Madagascar three several cuts are made causing much suffering to the children; and the nearest male relative swallows the prepuce. The Polynesians circumcise when childhood ends and thus consecrate the fecundating organ to the Deity. In Tahiti the operation is performed by the priest, and in Tonga only the priest is exempt. The Maories on the other hand fasten the prepuce over the glans, and the women of the Marquesas Islands have shown great cruelty to shipwrecked sailors who expose the glans. Almost all the known Australian tribes circumcise after some fashion: Bennett supposes the rite to have been borrowed from the Malays, while Gason enumerates the "Kurrawellie wonkauna" among the five mutilations of puberty. Leichhardt found circumcision about the Gulf of Carpentaria and in the river-valleys of the Robinson and Macarthur: others observed it on the Southern Coast and among the savages of Perth, where it is noticed by Salvado. James Dawson tells us "Circumciduntur pueri," etc., in Western Victoria. Brough Smyth, who supposes the object is to limit population (?), describes on the Western Coast and in Central Australia the "Corrobery"-dance and the operation performed with a quartz-flake. Teichelmann details the rite in Southern Australia where the assistants — all men, women, and children being driven away — form a "manner of human altar" upon which the youth is laid for circumcision. He then receives the normal two names, public and secret, and is initiated into the mysteries proper for men. The Australians also for Malthusian reasons produce an artificial hypospadias, while the Karens of New Guinea only split the prepuce longitudinally (Cosmos , Oct. 1876); the indigens of Port Lincoln on the West Coast split the virga: — Fenditur usque ad urethram a parte infera penis between the ages of twelve and fourteen, says E. J. Eyre in 1845. Missionary Schürmann declares that they open the urethra. Gason describes in the Dieyerie tribe the operation ‘Kulpi” which is performed when the beard is long enough for tying. The member is placed upon a slab of tree-bark, the urethra is incised with a quartz-flake mounted in a gum handle and a splinter of bark is inserted to keep the cut open. These men may appear naked before women who expect others to clothe themselves. Miklucho Maclay calls it “Mika” in Central Australia: he was told by a squatter that of three hundred men only three or four had the member intact in order to get children, and that in one tribe the female births greatly outnumbered the male. Those mutilated also marry: when making water they sit like women slightly raising the penis, this in coition becomes flat and broad and the semen does not enter the matrix. The explorer believes that the deed of kind is more quickly done (?). Circumcision was also known to the New World. Herrera relates that certain Mexicans cut off the ears and prepuce of the newly born child, causing many to die. The Jews did not adopt the female circumcision of Egypt described by Huet on Origen— “Circumcisio feminarum fit resectione {tęs nymphęs} (sive clitoridis) quć pars in Australium mulieribus ita crescit ut ferro est coërcenda.” Here we have the normal confusion between excision of the nymphć (usually for fibulation) and circumcision of the clitoris. Bruce notices this clitoridectomy among the Abyssinians. Werne describes the excision on the Upper White Nile and I have noted the complicated operation among the Somali tribes. Girls in Dahome are circumcised by ancient sages femmes, and a woman in the natural state would be derided by every one (See my Mission to Dahome, ii. 159) The Australians cut out the clitoris, and as I have noted elsewhere extirpate the ovary for Malthusian purposes (Journ Anthrop. Inst., vol. viii. of 1884).

[181] Arab. “Kayrawán” which is still the common name for curlew; the peewit and plover being called (onomatopoetically) “Bíbat” and in Marocco Yahúdi, certain impious Jews having been turned into the Vanellus Cristatus which still wears the black skullcap of the Hebrews.

[182] Arab. "Sawáki," the leats which irrigate the ground and are opened and closed with the foot.

[183] The eighth (in altitude) of the many-storied Heavens.

[184] Arab. "Ihramat li al-Salát," i.e. she pronounced the formula of Intention (Niyat) without which prayer is not valid, ending with Allaho Akbar = Allah is All-great. Thus she had clothed herself, as it were, in prayer and had retired from the world pro temp.

[185] i.e.. the prayers of the last day and night which she had neglected while in company with the Jinns. The Hammam is not a pure place to pray in; but the Farz or Koranic orisons should be recited there if the legal term be hard upon its end.

[186] Slaves, male as well as female, are as fond of talking over their sale as European dames enjoy looking back upon the details of courtship and marriage.

[187] Arab. "Du'á," = supplication, prayer, as opposed to "Salát" = divine worship, "prayers." For the technical meaning of the latter see vol. iv. 65. I have objected to Mr. Redhouse's distinction without a difference between Moslems' worship and prayer: voluntary prayers are not prohibited to them and their praises of the Lord are mingled, as amongst all worshippers, with petitions.

[188] Al-Muzfir = the Twister; Zafáir al-Jinn = Adiantum capillus veneris. Lúlúah = The Pearl, or Wild Heifer; see vol. ix. 218.

[189] Arab. "Bi jildi 'l-baker." I hope that captious critics will not find fault with my rendering, as they did in the case of Fals ahmar = a red cent, vol. i. 321.

[190] Arab. "Farásah" = lit. knowing a horse. Arabia abounds in tales illustrating abnormal powers of observation. I have noted this in vol. viii. 326.

[191] i.e. the owner of this palace.

[192] She made the Ghusl not because she had slept with a man, but because the impurity of Satan's presence called for the major ablution before prayer.

[193] i.e. she conjoined the prayers of nightfall with those of dawn.

[194] i.e. those of midday, mid-afternoon and sunset.

[195] Arab. "Sahbá" red wine preferred for the morning draught.

[196] The Apostle who delighted in women and perfumes. Persian poetry often alludes to the rose which, before white, was dyed red by his sweat.

[197] For the etymology of Julnár — Byron's "Gulnare" — see vol. vii. 268. Here the rhymer seems to refer to its origin; Gul (Arab. Jul) in Persian a rose; and Anár, a pomegranate, which in Arabic becomes Nár = fire.

[198] i.e. "The brilliant," the enlightened.

[199] i.e. the moral beauty.

[200] A phenomenon well known to spiritualists and to "The House and the Haunter." An old Dutch factory near Hungarian Fiume is famed for this mode of "obsession": the inmates hear the sound of footfalls, etc., behind them, especially upon the stairs; and see nothing.

[201] The two short Koranic chapters, The Daybreak (cxiii.) and The Men (cxiv. and last) evidently so called from the words which occur in both (versets i., "I take refuge with"). These "Ma'úzatáni," as they are called, are recited as talismans or preventives against evil, and are worn as amulets inscribed on parchment; they are also often used in the five canonical prayers. I have translated them in vol. iii. 222.

[202] The antistes or fugleman at prayer who leads off the orisons of the congregation; and applied to the Caliph as the head of the faith. See

vol. ii. 203 and iv. 111.

[203] Arab. " 'Ummár" i.e. the Jinn, the "spiritual creatures" which walk this earth, and other non-humans who occupy it.

[204] A parallel to this bodiless Head is the Giant Face, which appears to travellers (who expect it) in the Lower Valley of the Indus. See Sind Re-visited, ii. 155.

[205] Arab. "Ghalílí" = my yearning.

[206] Arab. "Ahbábu-ná" plur. for singular = my beloved.

[207] i.e. her return.

[208] Arab. "Arja'" lit. return! but here meaning to stop. It is much used by donkey-boys from Cairo to Fez in the sense of "Get out of the way." Hence the Spanish arre! which gave rise to arriero = a carrier, a muleteer.

[209] Arab. "Afras" lit.=a better horseman.

[210] A somewhat crippled quotation from Koran lvi. 87-88, "As for him who is of those brought near unto Allah, there shall be for him easance and basil and a Garden of Delights (Na'ím)."

[211] i.e. Queen Sunbeam.

[212] See vol. i. 310 for this compound perfume which contains musk, ambergris and other essences.

[213] I can hardly see the sequence of this or what the carpets have to do here.

[214] Here, as before, some insertion has been found necessary.

[215] Arab. "Dukhúlak" lit.=thy entering, entrance, becoming familiar.

[216] Or "And in this there shall be to thee great honour over all the

Jinn."

[217] Mr. Payne thus amends the text, "How loathly is yonder Genie Meimoun! There is no eating (in his presence);" referring back to .

[218] i.e. "I cannot bear to see him!"

[219] This assertion of dignity, which is permissible in royalty, has been absurdly affected by certain "dames" in Anglo-Egypt who are quite the reverse of queenly; and who degrade "dignity" to the vulgarest affectation.

[220] i.e. "May thy visits never fail me!"

[221] i.e. Ash-coloured, verging upon white.

[222] i.e. "She will double thy store of presents."

[223] The Arab boy who, unlike the Jew, is circumcised long after infancy and often in his teens, thus making the ceremony conform after a fashion with our "Confirmation," is displayed before being operated upon, to family and friends; and the seat is a couch covered with the richest tapestry. So far it resembles the bride-throne.

[224] Tohfah.

[225] i.e. Hindu, Indian.

[226] Japhet, son of Noah.

[227] Mr. Payne translates "Take this and glorify thyself withal over the people of the world." His reading certainly makes better sense, but I do not see how the text can carry the meaning. He also omits the bussing of the bosom, probably for artistic reasons.

[228] A skit at Ishák, making the Devil praise him. See vol. vii. 113.

[229] Arab. "Mawázi" (plur. of Mauza')=lit. places, shifts, passages.

[230] The bed (farsh), is I presume, the straw-spread (?) store-room where the apples are preserved.

[231] Arab. “Farkh warak”, which sounds like an atrocious vulgarism.

[232] The Moss-rose; also the eglantine, or dog-rose, and the sweet-briar, whose leaf, unlike other roses, is so odorous.

[233] The lily in Heb., derived by some from its six (shash) leaves, and by others from its vivid cheerful brightness. “His lips are lilies” (Cant. v. 13), not in colour, but in odoriferous sweetness.

[234] The barber is now the usual operator; but all operations began in Europe with the “barber-surgeon.”

[235] Sic in text xii. 20. It may be a misprint for Abú al-Tawaif, but it can also mean “O Shaykh of the Tribes (of Jinns)!”

[236] The capital of King Al-Shisban.

[237] Arab “Fajj”, the Spanish “Vega” which, however, means a mountain-plain, a plain.

[238] i.e. I am quite sure: emphatically.

[239] i.e. all the Jinn’s professions of affection and promises of protection were mere lies.

[240] In the original this apodosis is wanting: see vol. vi. 203, 239.

[241] Arab. “Dáhiyat al-Dawáhí;” see vol. ii. 87.

[242] Arab. “Al-Jabal al-Mukawwar”= Chaîne de montagnes de forme demi circulaire, from Kaur, a park, an enceinte.

[243] Arab. “Rúhí” lit. my breath, the outward sign of life.

[244] i.e. Káf.

[245] i.e. A bit of burning charcoal.

[246] Arab. “Al-yad al-bayzá,”=lit. The white hand: see vol. iv. 185.

[247] Showing the antiquity of “Aprčs moi le déluge,” the fame of all old politicians and aged statesmen who can expect but a few years of life. These “burning questions” (e.g. the Bulgarian) may be smothered for a time, but the result is that they blaze forth with increased violence. We have to thank Lord Palmerston (an Irish landlord) for ignoring the growth of Fenianism and another aged statesman for a sturdy attempt to disunite the United Kingdom. An old notion wants young blood at its head.

[248] Suggesting the nursery rhyme:

> Fee, fo, fum
> I smell the blood of an Englishman.

[249] i.e. why not at once make an end of her.

[250] The well-known war-cry.

[251] Lit. “Smoke” pop. applied, like our word, to tobacco. The latter, however, is not here meant.

[252] Arab. “Ghuráb al-bayn,” of the wold or of parting. See vol. vii. 226.

[253] Arab. “Haláwah”; see vol. iv. 60.

[254] Here the vocative particle “Yá” is omitted.

[255] Lit. “The long-necked (bird)” before noticed with the Rukh (Roc) in vol. v. 122. Here it becomes a Princess, daughter of Bahrám-i-Gúr (Bahram of the Onager, his favourite game), the famous Persian king in the fifth century, a contemporary of Theodosius the younger and Honorius. The “Anká” is evidently the Iranian Símurgh.

[256] "Chamber" is becoming a dangerous word in English. Roars of laughter from the gods greeted the great actor's declamation, "The bed has not been slept in! Her little chamber is empty!"

[257] Choice Gift of the breast (or heart).

[258] From the Calc. Edit. (1814Â18), Nights cxcvi.cc., vol. ii., p78. The translation has been compared and collated with that of Langlčs (Paris, 1814), appended to his Edition of the Voyages of Sindbad. The story is exceedingly clever and well deserves translation.

[259] It is regretable that this formula has not been preserved throughout The Nights: it affords, I have noticed, a pleasing break to the long course of narrative.

[260] Arab. "Banát-al-hawá" lit. daughters of love, usually meaning an Anonyma, a fille de joie; but here the girl is of good repute, and the offensive term must be modified to a gay, frolicsome lass.

[261] Arab. "Jabhat," the lintel opposed to the threshold.

[262] Arab. "Ghattí," still the popular term said to a child showing its nakedness, or a lady of pleasure who insults a man by displaying any part of her person.

[263] She is compared with a flashing blade (her face) now drawn from its sheath (her hair) then hidden by it.

[264] The "Muajjalah" or money paid down before consummation was about Ł25; and the "Mu'ajjalah" or coin to be paid contingent on divorce was about Ł75. In the Calc. Edit ii. 371, both dowers are Ł35.

[265] i.e. All the blemishes which justify returning a slave to the slave-dealer.

[266] Media: see vol. ii. 94. The "Daylamite prison" was one of many in Baghdad.

[267] See vol. v. 199. I may remark that the practice of bathing after copulation was kept up by both sexes in ancient Rome. The custom may have originated in days when human senses were more acute. I have seen an Arab horse object to be mounted by the master when the latter had not washed after sleeping with a woman.

[268] On the morning after a happy night the bridegroom still offers coffee and Halwá to friends.

[269] i.e. More bewitching.

[270] Arab. "Sharífí" more usually Ashrafi, the Port. Xerafim, a gold coin = 6s.Â7s.

[271] The oft-repeated Koranic quotation.

[272] Arab. "'Irk": our phrase is "the apple of the eye."

[273] Meaning that he was a Sayyid or a Sharíf.

[274] i.e. than a Jew or a Christian. So the Sultan, when appealed to by these religionists, who were as usual squabbling and fighting, answered, "What matter if the dog tear the hog or the hog tear the dog"?

[275] The "Sharí'at" forbidding divorce by force.

[276] i.e. protect my honour.

[277] For this proverb see vol. v. 138. 1 have remarked that "Shame" is not a passion in Europe as in the East; the Western equivalent to the Arab. "Hayá' 'would be the Latin "Pudor."

[278] Arab. "Talákan báinan," here meaning a triple divorce before witnesses, making it irrevocable.

[279] i.e. who had played him that trick.

[280] The Bresl. Edit. (vol. xii. p-116, Nights dcccclviii- dcccclxv.)

entitles it "Tale of Abu al-Hasan the Damascene and his son Sídí Nur al-Dín ' Alí." Sídí means simply, "my lord," but here becomes part of the name, a practice perpetuated in Zanzibar. See vol. v.283.

[281] i.e. at the hours of canonical prayers and other suitable times he made an especial orison (du'á) for issue.

[282] See vol. i.85, for the traditional witchcraft of Babylonia.

[283] i.e. More or less thoroughly.

[284] i.e. "He who quitteth not his native country diverteth not himself with a sight of the wonders of the world."

[285] For similar sayings, see vol. ix. 257, and my Pilgrimage i. 127.

[286] i.e. relying upon, etc.

[287] The Egyptian term for a khan, called in Persia caravanserai (karwán-serái); and in Marocco funduk, from the Greek; whence the Spanish "fonda." See vol. i. 92.

[288] Arab. "Baliyah," to jingle with "Bábiliyah."

[289] As a rule whenever this old villain appears in The Nights, it is a signal for an outburst of obscenity. Here, however, we are quittes pour la peur. See vol. v. 65 for some of his abominations.

[290] The lines are in vols. viii. 279 and ix. 197. I quote Mr. Payne.

[291] Lady or princess of the Fair (ones).

[292] i.e. of buying.

[293] Arab. "Ázán-hú" = lit. its ears.

[294] Here again the policeman is made a villain of the deepest dye; bad

enough to gratify the intelligence of his deadliest enemy, a lodging-keeper in London.

[295] i.e. You are welcome to it and so it becomes lawful (halál) to you.

[296] Arab. “Sijn al-Dam,” the Carcere duro inasprito (to speak Triestine), where men convicted or even accused of bloodshed were confined.

[297] Arab. “Mabásim”; plur. of Mabsim, a smiling mouth which shows the foreteeth.

[298] The branchlet, as usual, is the youth’s slender form.

[299] Subaudi, “An ye disdain my love.”

[300] In the text “sleep.”

[301] “Them” and “him” for “her.”

[302] ‘Urkúb, a Jew of Yathrib or Khaybar, immortalised in the A.P. (i. 454) as “more promise-breaking than ‘Urkúb.”

[303] Uncle of Mohammed. See vol. viii. 172.

[304] First cousin of Mohammed. See ib.

[305] This threat of “‘Orf with her ‘ead” shows the Caliph’s lordliness.

[306] Arab. “Al-Bashkhánah.”

[307] i.e. Amen. See vol. ix. 131.

[308] When asked, on Doomsday, his justification for having slain her.

[309] Khorasan which included our Afghanistan, turbulent then as now, was in a chronic state of rebellion during the latter part of Al-Rashid’s reign.

[310] The brutality of a Moslem mob on such occasions is phenomenal: no fellow-feeling makes them decently kind. And so at executions even women will take an active part in insulting and tormenting the criminal, tearing his hair, spitting in his face and so forth. It is the instinctive brutality with which wild beasts and birds tear to pieces a wounded companion.

[311] The popular way of stopping hemorrhage by plunging the stump into burning oil which continued even in Europe till Ambrose Paré taught men to take up the arteries.

[312] i.e. folk of good family.

[313] i.e. the result of thy fervent prayers to Allah for me.

[314] Arab. “Al-Abárík” plur. of lbrik, an ewer containing water for the Wuzu-ablution. I have already explained that a Moslem wishing to be ceremonially pure, cannot wash as Europeans do, in a basin whose contents are fouled by the first touch.

[315] Arab. “Náihah”, the prćfica or myriologist. See vol. i. 311. The proverb means, “If you want a thing done, do it yourself.”

[316] Arab. “Burka’,” the face veil of Egypt, Syria, and Arabia with two holes for the eyes, and the end hanging to the waist, a great contrast with the “Lithám” or coquettish fold of transparent muslin affected by modest women in Stambul.

[317] i.e. donned petticoat-trousers and walking boots other than those she was wont to wear.

[318] “Surah” (Koranic chapter) may be a clerical error for “Súrah” (with a Sád) = sort, fashion (of food).

[319] This is solemn religious chaff; the Shaykh had doubtless often dipped his hand abroad in such dishes; but like a good Moslem, he contented himself at home with wheaten scones and olives, a kind of sacramental food like bread and wine in southern Europe. But his

retort would be acceptable to the True Believer who, the strictest of conservatives, prides himself on imitating in all points, the sayings and doings of the Apostle.

[320] i.e. animals that died without being ceremonially killed.

[321] Koran ii. 168. This is from the Chapter of the Cow where “that which dieth of itself (carrion), blood, pork, and that over which other name but that of Allah (i.e. idols) hath been invoked” are forbidden. But the verset humanely concludes:
“Whoso, however, shall eat them by constraint, without desire, or as a transgressor, then no sin shall be upon him.”

[322] i.e. son of Simeon = a Christian.

[323] Arab. and Heb. “Haykal,” suggesting the idea of large space, a temple, a sanctuary, a palace which bear a suspicious likeness to the Accadian Ę-kal or Great House = the old Egyptian Perao (Pharaoh?), and the Japanese “Mikado.”

[324] Wine, carrion and pork being lawful to the Moslem if used to save life. The former is also the sovereignest thing for inward troubles, flatulence, indigestion, etc. See vol. v. 2, 24.

[325] Arab. “Názilah,” i.e., a curse coming down from Heaven.

[326] Here and below, a translation of her name.

[327] “A picture of Paradise which is promised to the God-fearing! Therein are rivers of water which taint not; and rivers of milk whose taste changeth not; and rivers of wine, etc.” — Koran xlvii. 16.

[328] Let us have wine and women, mirth and laughter,
Sermons and soda-water the day after.
Don Juan ii. 178.

[329] The ox (Bakar) and the bull (Taur, vol. i. 16) are the Moslem emblems of stupidity, as with us are the highly intelligent ass and the

most sagacious goose.

[330] In Arab. "'Ud" means primarily wood; then a lute. See vol. ii. 100. The Muezzin, like the schoolmaster, is popularly supposed to be a fool.

[331] I have noticed that among Arab lovers it was the fashion to be jealous of the mistress's nightly phantom which, as amongst mesmerists, is the lover's embodied will.

[332] i.e. I will lay down my life to save thee from sorrow — a common-place hyperbole of love.

[333] Arab. "Katl." I have noticed the Hibernian "kilt" which is not a bull but, like most provincialisms and Americanisms, a survival, an archaism. In the old Frisian dialect, which agrees with English in more words than "bread, butter and cheese," we find the primary meaning of terms which with us have survived only in their secondary senses, e.g. killen = to beat and slagen = to strike. Here is its great value to the English philologist. When the Irishman complains that he is "kilt" we know through the Frisian what he really means.

[334] The decency of this description is highly commendable and I may note that the Bresl. Edit. is comparatively free from erotic pictures.

[335] i.e. "I commit him to thy charge under God."

[336] This is an Americanism, but it translates passing well
"Al-iláj" = insertion.

[337] Arab. (and Heb.) "Tarjumán" = a dragoman, for which see vol. i. 100. In the next tale it will occur with the sense of polyglottic.

[338] See vol. i. .

[339] After putting to death the unjust Prefect.

[340] Arab. “Lajlaj.” See vol. ix. 322.

[341] Arab. “Mawálid” lit. = nativity festivals (plur. of Maulid). See vol. ix. 289.

[342] Bresl. Edit., vol. xii. p-237, Nights dcccclxvi-dcccclxxix. Mr. Payne entitles it “El Abbas and the King’s Daughter of Baghdad.”

[343] “Of the Shayban tribe.” I have noticed (vol. ii. 1) how loosely the title Malik (King) is applied in Arabic and in medićval Europe. But it is ultra-Shakespearean to place a Badawi King in Baghdad, the capital founded by the Abbasides and ruled by those Caliphs till their downfall.

[344] i.e. Irák Arabí (Chaldća) and ‘Ajami (Western Persia). For the meaning of Al-Irák, which always, except in verse, takes the article, see vol. ii. 132.

[345] See supra, . Mr. Payne suspects a clerical error for “Turkumániyah” = Turcomanish; but this is hardly acceptable.

[346] As fabulous a personage as “King Kays.”

[347] Possibly a clerical error for Zabíd, the famous capital of the Tahámah or lowlands of Al-Yaman.

[348] The Moslem’s Holy Land whose capital is Meccah.

[349] A hinted protest against making a picture or a statue which the artist cannot quicken; as this process will be demanded of him on Doomsday. Hence also the Princess is called Máriyah (Maria, Mary), a non-Moslem name.

[350] i.e. day and night, for ever.

[351] Koran xxxiii. 38; this concludes a “revelation” concerning the divorce and marriage to Mohammed of the wife of his adopted son Zayd. Such union, superstitiously held incestuous by all Arabs, was a

terrible scandal to the rising Faith, and could be abated only by the "Commandment of Allah." It is hard to believe that a man could act honestly after such fashion; but we have seen in our day a statesman famed for sincerity and uprightness honestly doing things the most dishonest possible. Zayd and Abu Lahab (chap. cxi. i.) are the only contemporaries of Mohammed named in the Koran.

[352] i.e. darkened behind him.

[353] Here we have again, as so common in Arab romances, the expedition of a modified Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.

[354] Arab. "Arzi-há" = in its earth, its outlying suburbs.

[355] The king's own tribe.

[356] i.e. he was always "spoiling for a fight."

[357] In the text the two last sentences are spoken by Amir and the story-teller suddenly resumes the third person.

[358] Mr. Payne translates this "And God defend the right" (of plunder according to the Arabs).

[359] Arab. "Lilláhi darruk"; see vol. iv. 20. Captain Lockett (p.28) justly remarks that "it is a sort of encomiastic exclamation of frequent occurrence in Arabic and much easier to comprehend than translate." Darra signifies flowing freely (as milk from the udder) and was metaphorically transferred to bounty and to indoles or natural capacity. Thus the phrase means "your flow of milk is by or through Allah." i.e., of unusual abundance.

[360] The words are euphemistic: we should say "comest thou to our succour."

[361] i.e. If his friend the Devil be overstrong for thee, flee him rather than be slain; as

He who fights and runs away
Shall live to fight another day.

[362] i.e. I look to Allah for aid (and keep my powder dry).

[363] i.e. to the next world.

[364] This falling backwards in laughter commonly occurs during the earlier tales; it is, however, very rare amongst the Badawin.

[365] i.e. as he were a flying Jinni, swooping down and pouncing falcon-like upon a mortal from the upper air.

[366] This may be (reading Imraan = man, for Amran = matter) "a masterful man"; but I can hardly accept it.

[367] Arab. "Bundukí," the adj. of Bunduk, which the Moslems evidently learned from Slav sources; Venedik being the Dalmatian corruption of Venezia. See Dubrovenedik in vol. ii. 219.

[368] i.e. the castle's square.

[369] In sign of quitting possession. Chess in Europe is rarely played for money, with the exception of public matches: this, however, is not the case amongst Easterns, who are also for the most part as tricky as an old lady at cribbage rightly named.

[370] i.e. he was as eloquent and courtly as he could be.

[371] Arab. "Ya Zínat al-Nisá," which may either be a P.N. or a polite address as Bella fé (Handsome woman) is to any feminine in Southern Italy.

[372] Arab. "Raas Ghanam": this form of expressing singularity is common to Arabic and the Eastern languages, which it has influenced.

[373] This most wearisome form of politeness is common in the Moslem world, where men fondly think that the more you see of

them the more you like of them. Yet their Proverbial Philosophy ("the wisdom of many and the wit of one") strongly protests against the practice: I have already quoted Mohammed's saying, "Zur ghibban, tazid Hibban" — visits rare keep friendship fair.

[374] This clause in the text is evidently misplaced (vol. xii.144).

[375] Arab. Dara' or Dira'=armour, whether of leather or metal; here the coat worn under the mail.

[376] Called from Rustak, a quarter of Baghdad. For Rusták town see vol. vi. 289.

[377] From Damietta comes our "dimity." The classical name was Tamiáthis apparently Coptic grćcised: the old town on the shore famed in Crusading times was destroyed in A.H. 648 = 1251.

[378] Easterns are always startled by a sudden summons to the presence either of King or Kazi: here the messenger gives the youth to understand that it is in kindness, not in anger.

[379] i.e. in not sending for thee to court instead of allowing thee to live in the city without guest-rite.

[380] In sign of agitation: the phrase has often been used in this sense and we find it also in Al-Mas'udi.

[381] I would remind the reader that the "Dawát" (ink-case) contains the reed-pens.

[382] Two well-known lovers.

[383] On such occasions the old woman (and Easterns are hard de dolo vetularum) always assents to the sayings of her prey, well knowing what the doings will inevitably be.

[384] Travellers, Nomads, Wild Arabs.

[385] Whither they bear thee back dead with the women crying and

keening.

[386] Arab. Aznání = emaciated me.

[387] Either the Deity or the Love-god.

[388] Arab. “Himŕ” = the tribal domain, a word which has often occurred.

[389] “O ye who believe! seek help through patience and prayer: verily, Allah is with the patient.” Koran ii. 148. The passage refers to one of the battles, Bedr or Ohod.

[390] Arab. “Sirr” (a secret) and afterwards “Kitmán” (concealment) i.e. Keeping a lover down-hearted.

[391] Arab. “‘Alkam” = the bitter gourd, colocynth; more usually “Hanzal.”

[392] For “Jazírah” = insula, island, used in the sense of “peninsula,” see vol. i. 2.

[393] Meccah and Al-Medinah. Pilgrimage i. 338 and ii. 57, used in the proverb “Sharr fi al-Haramayn” = wickedness in the two Holy Places.

[394] Arab. Al-hamd (o li’llah).

[395] i.e. play, such as the chase, or an earnest matter, such as war, etc.

[396] Arab. “Mizwad,” or Mizwád = lit. provision-bag, from Zád = viaticum; afterwards called Kirbah (pron. Girbah, the popular term), and Sakl. The latter is given in the Dictionaries as Askálah = scala, échelle, stage, plank.

[397] Those blood-feuds are most troublesome to the traveller, who may be delayed by them for months: and, until a peace be patched up, he will never be allowed to pass from one tribe to their enemies. A quarrel of the kind prevented my crossing Arabia from Al-

Medinah to Maskat (Pilgrimage, ii. 297), and another in Africa from visiting the head of the Tanganyika Lake. In all such journeys the traveller who has to fight against Time is almost sure to lose.

[398] i.e. his fighting-men.

[399] The popular treatment of a detected horse-thief, for which see Burckhardt, Travels in Arabia (1829), and Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys (1830).

[400] Arab "Ashírah": see vol. vii. 121.

[401] Arab. "Musáfahah" -. see vol. vi. 287.

[402] In the text, "To the palace of the king's daughter."

[403] Arab. "Marj Salí'" = cleft meadow (here and below). Mr. Payne suggests that this may be a mistranscription for Marj Salí' (with a Sád) = a treeless champaign. It appears to me a careless blunder for the Marj akhzar (green meadow) before mentioned.

[404] The palace, even without especial and personal reasons, not being the place for a religious and scrupulous woman.

[405] "i.e. those of El Aziz, who had apparently entered the city or passed through it on their way to the camp of El Abbas." This is Mr. Payne's suggestion.

[406] Arab "Hatif"; gen. = an ally.

[407] Not wishing to touch the hand of a strange woman.

[408] i.e. a mere passer-by, a stranger; alluding to her taunt.

[409] The Bactrian or double-humped dromedary. See vol. iii. 67. Al-Mas'udi (vii. 169) calls it "Jamal fálij," lit. = the palsy-camel.

[410] i.e. Stars and planets.

[411] i.e. Sang in tenor tones which are always in falsetto.

[412] Arab. Tahzíb = reforming morals, amending conduct, chastening style.

[413] i.e. so as to show only the whites, as happens to the “mesmerised.”

[414] i.e. for love of and longing for thy youth.

[415] i.e. leather from Al-Táif: see vol. viii. 303. The text has by mistake Tálifí.

[416] i.e. she was at her last breath, when cured by the magic of love.

[417] i.e. violateth my private apartment.

[418] The voice (Sh± ázz) is left doubtful: it may be girl’s, nightingale’s, or dove’s.

[419] Arab. “Hibá” partly induced by the rhyme. In desert countries the comparison will be appreciated: in Sind the fine dust penetrates into a closed book.

[420] i.e. he smuggled it in under his ‘Abá-cloak: perhaps it was a better brand than that made in the monastery.

[421] i.e. the delights of Paradise promised by the Prophet.

[422] Again, “he” for “she,” making the lover’s address more courtly and delicate.

[423] i.e. take refuge with Allah from the evil eye of her charms.

[424] i.e. an thou prank or adorn thyself: I have translated literally, but the couplet strongly suggests “nonsense verses.”

[425] Arab. “Santír:” Lane (M.E., chapt. xviii.) describes it as resembling the Kanún (dulcimer or zither) but with two oblique peg-

pieces instead of one and double chords of wire (not treble strings of lamb's gut) and played upon with two sticks instead of the little plectra. Dozy also gives Santir from {psaltérion}, the Fsaltrún of Daniel.

[426] i.e. That which is ours shall be thine, and that which is incumbent on thee shall be incumbent on us = we will assume thy debts and responsibilities.

[427] This passage is sadly disjointed in the text: I have followed Mr. Payne's ordering.

[428] The Arab of noble tribe is always the first to mount his own mare: he also greatly fears her being put out to full speed by a stranger, holding that this should be reserved for occasions of life and death; and that it can be done to perfection only once during the animal's life.

[429] The red (Ahmar) dromedary like the white-red (Sabah) were most valued because they are supposed best to bear the heats of noon; and thus "red camels" is proverbially used for wealth. When the head of Abu Jahl was brought in after the Battle of Bedr, Mahommed exclaimed, "'Tis more acceptable to me than a red camel!"

[430] i.e. Couriers on dromedaries, the only animals used for sending messages over long distances.

[431] These guest-fires are famous in Arab poetry. So
Al-Harírí (Ass. of Banu Haram) sings: —

A beacon fire I ever kindled high;

i.e. on the hill-tops near the camp, to guide benighted travellers. Also the Lamíyat al-Ajam says: —

The fire of hospitality is ever lit on the high
stations.

This natural telegraph was used in a host of ways by the Arabs of The Ignorance; for instance, when a hated guest left the camp they lighted the "Fire of Rejection," and cried, "Allah, bear him far from us!" Nothing was more ignoble than to quench such fire: hence in obloquy of the Fazár tribe it was said: —

Ne'er trust Fazár with an ass, for they
Once roasted ass-pizzle, the rabble rout:
And, when sight they guest, to their dams they say,
"Piss quick on the guest-fire and put it out!"
(Al-Mas"udi vi. 140.)

[432] i.e. of rare wood, set with rubies.

[433] i.e. whose absence pained us.

[434] Mr. Payne and I have long puzzled over these enigmatical and possibly corrupt lines: he wrote to me in 1884, "This is the first piece that has beaten me." In the couplet above (vol. xii. 230) "Rayhání" may mean "my basil-plant" or "my food" (the latter Koranic), "my compassion," etc.; and Súsání is equally ancipitous "My lilies" or "my sleep": see Bard al-Susan = les douceurs du sommeil in Al-Mas'údi vii. 168.

[435] The "Niká" or sand hill is the swell of the throat: the Ghaur or lowland is the fall of the waist: the flower is the breast anent which Mr. Payne appropriately quotes the well-known lines of Fletcher:

"Hide, O hide those hills of snow,
That thy frozen bosom bears,
On whose tops the pinks that grow
Are of those that April wears."

[436] Easterns are right in regarding a sleepy languorous look as one of the charms of women, and an incitement to love because suggestive only of bed. Some men also find the same pleasure in a lacrymose expression of countenance, seeming always to call for consolation: one of the most successful women I know owes her exceptional good

fortune to this charm.

[437] Arab. "Hájib,"eyebrow or chamberlain; see vol. iii. 233.
The pun is classical used by a host of poets including Al-Harírí.

[438] Arab. "Tarfah." There is a Tarfia Island in the Guadalquivir and in Gibraltar a "Tarfah Alto" opposed to "Tarfah bajo." But it must not be confounded with Tarf = a side, found in the Maroccan term for "The Rock" Jabal al-Tarf = Mountain of the Point (of Europe).

[439] For Solomon and his flying carpet see vol. iii. 267.

[440] Arab. "Bilád al-Maghrib (al-Aksa," in full) = the Farthest Land of the setting Sun, shortly called Al-Maghrib and the people "Maghribi." The earliest occurrence of our name Morocco or Marocco I find in the "Marákiyah" of Al-Mas'udi (iii. 241), who apparently applies it to a district whither the Berbers migrated.

[441] The necklace-pearls are the cup-bearer's teeth.

[442] In these unregenerate days they would often be summoned to the houses of the royal family; but now they had "got religion" and, becoming freed women, were resolved to be "respectable." In not a few Moslem countries men of wealth and rank marry professional singers who, however loose may have been their artistic lives, mostly distinguish themselves by decency of behaviour often pushed to the extreme of rigour. Also jeune coquette, vieille dévote is a rule of the world, Eastern and Western.

[443] Bresl. Edit., vol. xii (Night mi). The king is called as usual "Shahrbán," which is nearly synonymous with
Shahryár.

[444] i.e. the old Sindibad-Námeh (see vol. vi. 122), or "The Malice of Women" which the Bresl. Edit. entitles, "Tale of the King and his Son and his Wife and the Seven Wazirs." Here it immediately follows the Tale of Al-Abbas and Mariyah and occupies p-383 of vol. xii. (Nights dcccclxxix-m).

[445] i.e. Those who commit it.

[446] The connection between this pompous introduction and the story which follows is not apparent. The “Tale of the Two Kings and the Wazir’s Daughters” is that of Shahrazad told in the third person, in fact a rechauffé of the Introduction. But as some three years have passed since the marriage, and the dénoűement of the plot is at hand, the Princess is made, with some art I think, to lay the whole affair before her husband in her own words, the better to bring him to a “sense of his duty.”

[447] Bresl. Edit., vol. xii. p-412.

[448] This clause is taken from the sequence, where the elder brother’s kingdom is placed in China.

[449] For the Tobbas = “Successors” or the Himyaritic kings, see vol. i. 216.

[450] Kayásirah, opp. to Akásirah, here and in many other places.

[451] See vol. ii. 77. King Kulayb (“little dog”) al-Wá’il, a powerful chief of the Banu Ma’ad in the Kasín district of Najd, who was connected with the war of Al-Basús. He is so called because he lamed a pup (kulayb) and tied it up in the midst of his Himŕ (domain, place of pasture and water), forbidding men to camp within sound of its bark or sight of his fire. Hence “more masterful than Kulayb,” A.P. ii. 145, and Al-Hariri Ass. xxvi. (Chenery,). This angry person came by his death for wounding in the udder a trespassing camel (Sorab) whose owner was a woman named Basús. Her friend (Jasús) slew him; and thus arose the famous long war between the tribes Wá’il Bakr and Taghlib. It gave origin to the saying, “Die thou and be an expiation for the shoe-latchet of Kulayb.”

[452] Arab. “Mukhaddarát,” maidens concealed behind curtains and veiled in the Harem.

[453] i.e. the professional Ráwis or tale-reciters who learned stories by

heart from books like “The Arabian Nights.” See my Terminal Essay, vol. x. 163.

[454] Arab. “Bid’ah,” lit. = an innovation, a new thing, an invention, any change from the custom of the Prophet and the universal practice of the Faith, whether it be in the cut of the beard or a question of state policy. Popularly the word = heterodoxy, heresy; but theologically it is not necessarily used in a bad sense. See vol. v. 167.

[455] About three parts of this sentence have been supplied by Mr. Payne, the careless scribe having evidently omitted it.

[456] Here, as in the Introduction (vol. i. 24), the king consummates his marriage in presence of his virgin sister-in-law, a process which decency forbids amongst Moslems.

[457] Al-Mas’udi (vol. iv. 213) uses this term to signify viceroy in “Shahryár Sajastán.”

[458] i.e. his indifference to the principles of right and wrong, which is a manner of moral intoxication.

[459] i.e. hath mentioned the office of Wazir (in Koran xx. 30).

[460] i.e. Moslems, who practice the Religion of Resignation.

[461] Koran xxxiii. 35. This is a proemium to the “revelation” concerning Zayd and Zaynab.

[462] i.e. I have an embarras de richesse in my repertory.

[463] The title is from the Bresl. Edit. (vol. xii. p-402). Mr. Payne calls it “The Favourite and her Lover.”

[464] The practice of fumigating gugglets is universal in Egypt (Lane, M. E., chapt. v.); but I never heard of musk being so used.

[465] Arab. “Laysa fi ‘l-diyári dayyár” — a favourite jingle.

[466] Arab. “Khayr Kathir” (pron. Katír) which also means “abundant kindness.”

[467] Dozy says of “Hunayní” (Haíní), Il semble ętre le nom d’un vętement. On which we may remark, Connu!

[468] Arab. Harísah: see vol. i. 131. Westerns make a sad mess of this dish when they describe it as une sorte d’olla podrida (the hotch-pot), une pâtée de viandes, de froment et de légumes secs (Al-Mas’udi viii. 438). Whenever I have eaten it, it was always a meat-pudding, for which see vol. i. 131.

[469] Evidently one escaped because she was sleeping with the Caliph, and a second because she had kept her assignation.

[470] Mr. Payne entitles it, “The Merchant of Cairo and the Favourite of the Khalif el Mamoun el Hakim bi Amrillah.”

[471] See my Pilgrimage (i. 100): the seat would be on the same bit of boarding where the master sits or on a stool or bench in the street.

[472] This is true Cairene chaff, give and take; and the stranger must accustom himself to it before he can be at home with the people.

[473] i.e. In Rauzah-Island: see vol. v. 169.

[474] There is no historical person who answers to these name, “The Secure, the Ruler by Commandment of Allah.” The cognomen applies to two soldans of Egypt, of whom the later Abu al-Abbas Ahmad the Abbaside (A.D. 1261-1301) has already been mentioned in The Nights (vol. v. 86). The tale suggests the earlier Al-Hakim (Abu Ali al-Mansúr, the Fatimite, A.D. 995-1021), the God of the Druze “persuasion;” and the tale-teller may have purposely blundered in changing Mansúr to Maamún for fear of offending a sect which has been most dangerous in the matter of assassination and which is capable of becoming so again.

[475] Arab. “‘Alŕ kulli hál” = “whatever may betide,” or “willy-nilly.”

The phrase is still popular.

[476] The dulce desipere of young lovers, he making a buffoon of himself to amuse her.

[477] "The convent of Clay," a Coptic monastery near Cairo.

[478] i.e. this is the time to show thyself a man.

[479] The Eastern succedaneum for swimming corks and other "life-preservers." The practice is very ancient; we find these gourds upon the monuments of Egypt and Babylonia.

[480] Arab. "Al-Khalíj," the name, still popular, of the Grand Canal of Cairo, whose banks, by-the-by, are quaint and picturesque as anything of the kind in Holland.

480a] A few lines higher up it was "her neck"; but the jar may have slipped down.

[481] We say more laconically "A friend in need."

[482] Arab. "Názir al-Mawárís," the employé charged with the disposal of legacies and seizing escheats to the Crown when Moslems die intestate. He is usually a prodigious rascal as in the text. The office was long kept up in Southern Europe, and Camoens was sent to Macao as "Provedor dos defuntos e ausentes."

[483] Sir R. F. Burton has since found two more of "Galland's" tales in an Arabic text of The Nights, namely, Aladdin and Zeyn al-Asnam.

[484] i.e. wondering; thus Lady Macbeth says:

> "You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
> With most admired disorder." — Macbeth, iii. 4

[485] Ludovicus Vives, one of the most learned of Spanish authors, was born at Valentia in 1492 and died in 1540.

[486] There was an older "Tútí Náma," which Nakhshabí modernised, made from a Sanskrit story-book, now lost, but its modern representative is the "Suka Saptatí," or Seventy (Tales) of a Parrot in which most of Nakhshabi's tales are found.

[487] According to Lescallier's French translation of the "Bakhtyár Náma," made from two MSS. = "She had previously had a lover, with whom, unknown to her father, she had intimate relations, and had given birth to a beautiful boy, whose education she secretly confided to some trusty servants."

[488] There is a slight mistake in the passage in supplied from the story in vol. vi. It is not King Shah Bakht, but the other king, who assures his chamberlain that "the lion" has done him no injury.

[489] Such was formerly the barbarous manner of treating the insane.

[490] From "Tarlton's Newes out of Purgatorie."

[491] A basket

[492] In the fabliau "De la Dame qui atrappa un Prętre, un
Prévôt, et un Forestier" (or Constant du Hamel), the lady, on the pretext that her husband is at the door, stuffs her lovers, as they arrive successively, unknown to each other, into a large tub full of feathers and afterwards exposes them to public ridicule.

[493] Until.

[494] Requite.

[495] Accidents.

[496] A boarding.

[497] The letter I is very commonly substituted for "ay" in 16th century English books.

[498] Oesterley mentions a Sanskrit redaction of the Vampyre Tales

attributed to Sivadása, and another comprised in the "Kathárnava."

[499] And well might his sapient majesty "wonder"! The humour of this passage is exquisite.

[500] In the Tamil version (Babington's translation of the "Vedála Kadai") there are but two brothers, one of whom is fastidious in his food, the other in beds: the latter lies on a bed stuffed with flowers, deprived of their stalks. In the morning he complains of pains all over his body, and on examining the bed one hair is found amongst the flowers. In the Hindí version, the king asks him in the morning whether he had slept comfortably. "O great King," he replied; "I did not sleep all night." "How so?" quoth he. "O great King, in the seventh fold of the bedding there is a hair, which pricked me in the back, therefore I could not sleep." The youth who was fastidious about the fair sex had a lovely damsel laid beside him, and he was on the point of kissing her, but on smelling her breath he turned away his face, and went to sleep. Early in the morning the king (who had observed through a lattice what passed) asked him, "Did you pass the night pleasantly?" He replied that he did not, because the smell of a goat proceeded from the girl's mouth, which made him very uneasy. The king then sent for the procuress and ascertained that the girl had been brought up on goat's milk.

[501] Mélusine: Revue de Mythologie, Littérature Populaire, Traditions, et Usages. Dirigée par H. Gaidoz et E. Rolland. — Paris.

[502] The trick of the clever Magyar in marking all the other sleepers as the king's mother had marked himself occurs in the folk-tales of most countries, especially in the numerous versions of the Robbery of the King's Treasury, which are brought together in my work on the Migrations of Popular Tales and Fictions (Blackwood), vol. ii., p-165.

[503] A mythical saint, or prophet, who, according to the Muslim legend, was despatched by one of the ancient kings of

Persia to procure him some of the Water of Life. After a tedious journey, Khizr reached the Fountain of Immortality, but having drank of its waters, it suddenly vanished. Muslims believe that Khizr still lives, and sometimes appears to favoured individuals, always clothed in green, and acts as their guide in difficult enterprises.

[504] "Spake these words to the king" — certainly not those immediately preceding! but that, if the king would provide for him during three years, at the end of that period he would show Khizr to the king.

[505] Mr. Gibb compares with this the following passage from Boethius, "De Consolatione Philosophić," as translated by Chaucer: "All thynges seken ayen to hir propre course, and all thynges rejoysen on hir retourninge agayne to hir nature."

[506] In this tale, we see, Khizr appears to the distressed in white raiment.

[507] In an old English metrical version of the "Seven Sages," the tutors of the prince, in order to test his progress in general science, secretly place an ivy leaf under each of the four posts of his bed, and when he awakes in the morning —

> "Par fay!" he said, "a ferli cas!
> Other ich am of wine y-drunk,
> Other the firmament is sunk,
> Other wexen is the ground,
> The thickness of four leavčs round!
> So much to-night higher I lay,
> Certes, than yesterday."

[508] See also the same story in The Nights, vols. vii. and viii., which Mr. Kirby considers as probably a later version. (App. vol. x. of The Nights,).

[509] So, too, in the "Bahár-i-Dánish" a woman is described as being so able a professor in the school of deceit, that she could have instructed

the devil in the science of stratagem: of another it is said that by her wiles she could have drawn the devil's claws; and of a third the author declares, that the devil himself would own there was no escaping from her cunning!

[510] There is a similar tale by the Spanish novelist Isidro de Robles (circa 1660), in which three ladies find a diamond ring in a fountain; each claims it; at length they agree to refer the dispute to a count of their acquaintance who happened to be close by. He takes charge of the ring and says to the ladies, "Whoever in the space of six weeks shall succeed in playing off on her husband the most clever and ingenious trick (always having due regard to his honour) shall possess the ring; in the meantime it shall remain in my hands." (See Roscoe's "Specimens of the Spanish Novelists," Chandos edition, ff.) This story was probably brought by the Moors to Spain, whence it may have passed into France, since it is the subject of a faliau, by Haisiau the trouvčre, entitled "Des Trois Dames qui trouverent un Anel," which is found in Méon's edition of Barbazan, 1808, tome iii. p-229, and in Le Grand, ed. 1781, tome iv. p-165.

[511] Idiots and little boys often figure thus in popular tales: readers of Rabelais will remember his story of the Fool and the Cook; and there is a familiar example of a boy's precocity in the story of the Stolen Purse— "Craft and Malice ofWomen," or the Seven Wazirs, vol. vi. of The Nights.

[512] I have considerably abridged Mr. Knowles' story in several places.

[513] A species of demon.

[514] This is one of the innumerable parallels to the story of Jonah in the "whale's" belly which occur m Asiatic fictions. See, for some instances, Tawney's translation of the "Kathá Sarit Ságara," ch. xxxv. and lxxiv.; "Indian Antiquary," Sept. 1885, Legend of Ahlá; Miss Stokes' "Indian Fairy Tales," p, 76; and Steel and Temple's "Wide-Awake Stories from the Panjáb and Kashmír," . In Lucian's

“Vera Historia,” a monster fish swallows a ship and her crew, who live a long time in the extensive regions comprised in its internal economy. See also Herrtage’s “Gesta Romanorum” (Early English Text Society), .

[515] In the Arabian version the people resolve to leave the choice of a new king to the royal elephant because they could not agree among themselves (vol. i.,), but in Indian fictions such an incident frequently occurs as a regular custom. In the “Sivandhi Sthala Purana,” a legendary account of the famous temple at Trichinopoli, as supposed to be told by Gautama to Matanga and other sages, it is related that a certain king having mortally offended a holy devotee, his capital and all its inhabitants were, in consequence of a curse pronounced by the enraged saint, buried beneath a shower of dust. “Only the queen escaped, and in her flight she was delivered of a male-child. After some time, the chiefs of the Chola kingdom, proceeding to elect a king, determined, by the advice of the saint, to crown whomsoever the late monarch’s elephant should pitch upon. Being turned loose for this purpose, the elephant discovered and brought to Trisira-málí the child of his former master, who accordingly became the Chola king.” (Wilson’s Desc. Catal. of Mackenzie MSS., i. 17.) In a Manipurí story of two brothers, Turi and Basanta— “Indian Antiquary,” vol. iii. — the elder is chosen king in like manner by an elephant who meets him in the forest, and takes him on his back to the palace, where he is immediately placed on the throne. See also “Wide-Awake Stories from the Panjáb and Kashmír,” by Mrs. Steel and Captain Temple, ; and Rev. Lal Behari Day’s “Folk-Tales of Bengal,” for similar instances. The hawk taking part, in this story, with the elephant in the selection of a king does not occur in any other tale known to me.

[516] So that their caste might not be injured. A dhobí, or washerman, is of much lower caste than a Bráhman or a Khshatriya.

[517] A responsible position in a rájá’s palace.

[518] “And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three

nights.” Rájá Ambá must have been fully twelve years in the stomach of the alligator.

[519] This device of the mother to obtain speech of the king is much more natural than that adopted in the Kashmiri version.

[520] The story of Abú Sábir (see vol. i. ff.) may also be regarded as an analogue. He is unjustly deprived of all his possessions, and, with his wife and two young boys, driven forth of his village. The children are borne off by thieves, and their mother forcibly carried away by a horseman. Abú Sábir, after many sufferings, is raised from a dungeon to a throne. He regains his two children and his wife, who had steadfastly refused to cohabit with her captor.

[521] Introduction to the romance of “Torrent of Portingale,” re-edited (for the Early English Text Society, 1886) by E. Adam, Ph.D., pp. xxi. xxii.

[522] Morning.

[523] Bird.

[524] Mean; betoken.

[525] Thee.

[526] Tho: then.

[527] Yede: went.

[528] Case.

[529] Avaunced: advanced; promoted.

[530] Holpen: helped.

[531] Brent: burnt.

[532] But if: unless.

[533] To wed: in pledge, in security.

[534] Beth: are.

[535] Or: either.

[536] Lever dey: rather die.

[537] Far, distant.

[538] Unless.

[539] Oo: one.

[540] Ayen: again.

[541] Or: ere, before.

[542] Army; host.

[543] Part.

[544] That.

[545] Grief, sorrow.

[546] Poor.

[547] Gathered, or collected, together.

[548] Arms; accoutrements; dress.

[549] Bravely.

[550] Those.

[551] Done, ended.

[552] Their lodgings, inn.

[553] Since.

[554] Comrades.

[555] Truly.

[556] Lodged.

[557] Inn.

[558] Hem: them.

[559] Chief of the army.

[560] I note: I know not.

[561] Nor.

[562] Place.

[563] That is by means of his hounds.

[564] A wood.

[565] Those.

[566] Her: their.

[567] Looks towards; attends to.

[568] Give.

[569] Excepting; unless.

[570] Face; countenance.

[571] Care; close examination.

[572] Palata, Lat. (Paletot, O. Fr.), sometimes signifying a particular stuff, and sometimes a particular dress. See Du

Cange.

[573] Cut; divided

[574] Wept.

[575] Sailing.

[576] More.

[577] Much.

[578] Sultan.

[579] Name.

[580] Voice, i.e., command.

[581] Slew.

[582] Labour.

[583] Drew.

[584] Went.

[585] Burning coal.

[586] Pray; beg.

[587] Recovered.

[588] Head.

[589] Weeping.

[590] Saw.

[591] Waving.

[592] Began to climb.

[593] Against.

[594] More.

[595] From an early volume of the "Asiatic Journal," the number of which I did not "make a note of — thus, for once at least, disregarding the advice of the immortal Captain Cuttle.

[596] "It was no wonder," says this writer, "that his (i.e. Galland's) version of the 'Arabian Nights' achieved a universal popularity, and was translated into many languages, and that it provoked a crowd of imitations, from 'Les Mille et Un Jours' to the 'Tales of the Genii.'"

[597] This is a version of The Sleeper and the Waker — with a vengeance! Abú Hasan the Wag, the Tinker, and the Rustic, and others thus practiced upon by frolic-loving princes and dukes, had each, at least, a most delightful "dream." But when a man is similarly handled by the "wife of his bosom" — in stories, only, of course — the case is very different as the poor chief of police experienced. Such a "dream" as his wife induced upon him we may be sure he would remember "until that day that he did creep into his sepulchre!"

[598] I call this "strikingly similar" to the preceding Persian story, although it has fewer incidents and the lady's husband remains a monk; she could not have got him back even had she wished; for, having taken the vows, he was debarred from returning to "the world " which a kalandar or dervish may do as often as he pleases.

[599] "The Woman's trick against her Husband."

SUPPLEMENTAL NIGHTS VOLUME III.

To Henry Edward John, Lord Stanley

of Alderley

This
The Most Innocent Volume of the Nights

is Inscribed by His Old Companion,

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

The Translator's Foreword.

The peculiar proceedings of the Curators, Bodleian Library,[1] Oxford, of which full particulars shall be given in due time, have dislocated the order of my volumes. The Prospectus had promised that Tome III. should contain detached extracts from the MS. known as the Wortley-Montague, and that No. IV. and part of No. V. should comprise a reproduction of the ten Tales (or eleven, including "The Princess of Daryßbßr"), which have so long been generally attributed to Professor Galland. Circumstances, however, wholly beyond my control have now compelled me to devote the whole of this volume to the Frenchman's stories.

It will hardly be doubted that for a complete recueil of The Nights a retranslation of the Gallandian histoires is necessary. The learned Professor Gustav Weil introduced them all, Germanised literally from the French, into the Dritter Band of his well-known version — Tausend und eine Nacht; and not a few readers of Mr. John Payne's admirable translation (the Villon) complained that they had bought it in order to see Ali Baba, Aladdin, and others translated into classical English and that they much regretted the absence of their old favourites.

But the modus operandi was my prime difficulty. I disliked the idea of an unartistic break or change in the style, ever

"TÔchnat de rendre mien cet air d'antiquitÚ,"

and I aimed at offering to my readers a homogeneous sequel. My first thought for securing uniformity of treatment was to tender the French text into Arabic, and then to retranslate it into English. This process, however, when tried was found wanting; so I made inquiries in all directions for versions of the Gallandian histories which might have been published in Persian, Turkish, or Hindustani. Though assisted by the Prince of London Bibliopoles, Bernard Quaritch, I long failed to find my want: the vernaculars in Persian and Turkish are translated direct from the Arabic texts, and all ignore the French stories. At last a friend, Cameron McDowell, himself well known to the world of letters, sent me from Bombay a quaint lithograph with quainter illustrations which contained all I required. This was a version of Totßrßm Shßyßn (No. III.), which introduced the whole of the Gallandian Tales: better still, these were sufficiently orientalised and divested of their inordinate Gallicism, especially their lonesome dialogue, by being converted into Hindustani, the Urdu Zabßn (camp or court language) of Upper India and the Lingua Franca of the whole Peninsula.

During one of my sundry visits to the British Museum, I was introduced by Mr. Alexander G. Ellis to Mr. James F. Blumhardt, of Cambridge, who pointed out to me two other independent versions, one partly rhymed and partly in prose.

Thus far my work was done for me. Mr. Blumhardt, a practical Orientalist and teacher of the modem Prakrit tongues, kindly undertook, at my request, to English the Hindustani, collating at the same time, the rival versions; and thus, at a moment when my health was at its worst, he saved me all trouble and labour except that of impressing the manner with my own sign manual, and of illustrating the text, where required, with notes anthropological and other.

Meanwhile, part of my plan was modified by a visit to Paris in early 1887. At the BibliothÞque Nationale I had the pleasure of meeting M. Hermann Zotenberg, keeper of Eastern manuscripts, an Orientalist of high and varied talents, and especially famous for his admirable Chronique de Tabari. Happily for me, he had lately purchased for the National Library, from a vendor who was utterly ignorant of its history, a MS. copy of The Nights, containing the Arabic originals of Zayn al-Asnam and Alaeddin. The two volumes folio are numbered and docketed SupplÚment Arabe, Nos. 2522-23;" they measure 31 cent. by 20; Vol. i. contains 411 folios (822 pages) and Vol. ii. 402 (p); each page numbers fifteen lines, and each folio has its catchword. The paper is French, English and Dutch, with four to five different marks, such as G. Gautier; D. and C. Blaew; Pro PatrÔ and others. The highly characteristic writing, which is the same throughout the two folios, is easily recognised as that of Michel (MikhaÝl) Sabbßgh, the Syrian, author of the Colombe MessagÞre, published in Paris A.D. 1805, and accompanied by a translation by the celebrated Silvestre de Sacy (Chrestomathie iii. 365). This scribe also copied, about 1810, for the same Orientalist, the Ikhwßn al-Safß.

I need say nothing more concerning this MS., which M.

Zotenberg purposes to describe bibliographically in volume xxviii. of Notices et extraits des Manuscrits de la BibliothÞque rationale publiÚs par l'Academie des inscriptions et belles lettres. And there will be a tirage Ó part of 200-300 copies entitled Histoire d' 'Alß al-D¯n ou La Lampe Merveilleuse, Texte Arabe, publiÚ par H. Zotenberg, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1888; including a most important contribution: — Sur quelques Manuscrits des Mille et une Nuits et la traduction de Galland.[1]

The learned and genial author has favoured me with proof sheets of his labours: it would be unfair to disclose the discoveries, such as the Manuscript Journals in the BibliothÞque Nationale (Nos. 15277 to 15280), which the illustrious Garland kept regularly till the end of his life, and his conversations with "M. Hanna, Maronite d'Halep," alias Jean Dipi (Dippy, a corruption of Diab): suffice it to say that they cast a clear and wholly original light upon the provenance of eight of the Gallandian histories. I can, however, promise to all "Aladdinists" a rich harvest of facts which wholly displace those hitherto assumed to be factual. But for the satisfaction of my readers I am compelled to quote the colophon of M. Zotenberg's great "find" (vol. ii.), as it bears upon a highly important question.

"And the finishing thereof was during the first decade of Jamßdi the Second, of the one thousand and one hundred and fifteenth year of the Hegirah (= A.D. 1703) by the transcription of the neediest of His slaves unto Almighty Allah, Ahmad bin Mohammed al-TarßdÝ, in Baghdad City: he was a Shßfi'Ý of school, and a Mosuli by birth, and a Baghdadi by residence, and he wrote it for his own use, and upon it he imprinted his signet. So Allah save our lord Mohammed and His Kin and Companions and assain them! KabÝkaj."[2]

Now as this date corresponds with A.D. 1703, whereas Galland did begin publishing until 1705-1705 the original MS. of Ahmad al-TarßdÝ could not have been translated or adapted from the French; and although the transcription by Mikhail Sabbagh, writing in 1805-10, may have introduced modification borrowed from Galland, yet the scrupulous fidelity of his copy, shown by sundry marginal and other notes, lays the suspicion that changes of importance have been introduced by him. Remains now only to find the original codex of Al-TarßdÝ.

I have noticed in my translation sundry passages which appear to betray the Christian hand; but these are mostly of scanty consequence in no wise affecting the genuineness of the text.

The history of Zayn al Asnam was copied from the Sabbßgh MS. and sent to me by M. Houdas, Professeur d'Arabe vulgaire a l'Ecole des langues orientales vivantes; an Arabist, whose name is favourably quoted in the French Colonies of Northern Africa M. Zotenberg kindly lent me his own transcription of Alaeddin before sending it to print; and I can only regret that the dilatory proceedings of the Imprimerie Nationale, an establishment supported by the State, and therefore ignoring the trammels of private industry, have prevented my revising the version now submitted to the public. This volume then begins with the two Gallandian Tales, "Zeyn Alasnam" and "Aladdin," whose Arabic original was discovered by M. Zotenberg during the last year: although separated in the French version, I have brought them together for the sake of uniformity. The other eight (or nine, including the Princess of Daryabar), entitled History of Khudadad and his Brothers, and the Princess of Daryabar;

History of Khudadad and his Brothers, and the Princess of Daryabar;
History of the Blind Man, Baba Abdullah;
History of Sidi Nu'uman;
History of Khwajah Hasan al-Habbal;
History of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves;
History of Ali Khwajah and the Merchant of Baghdad;
History of Prince Ahmad and the Fairy Peri-banu;
History of the two Sisters who envied their Cadette,

are borrowed mainly from the Indian version of Totßrßm Shßyßn.

And here I must quote the bibliographical notices concerning the sundry versions into Urdu or Hindustani which have been drawn up with great diligence by Mr. Blumhardt.

"The earliest attempt to translate the Arabian Nights was made by Munshi Shams al-DÝn Ahmad Shirwßni. A prose version of the first two hundred Nights made by him æfor the use of the College at Fort St. George' was lithographed at Madras in the year A.H. 1252 (A.D.

1836) and published in 8vo volumes (p, 426) under the title ‘Hikayat ool jaleeah’[3] (Hikßyßt al-jalÝlah). The translation was made from an Arabic original but it does not appear what edition was made use of. The translator had intended to bring out a version of the entire work, but states in his preface that, being unable to procure the Arabic of the other Nights, he could not proceed with the translation, and had to be content to publish only two hundred Nights. This version does not appear to have become popular, for no other edition seems to have been published. And the author must not be confounded with Shaykh Ahmad Shirwßni, who, in A.D. 1814, printed an Arabic edition of the Arabian Nights Entertainments (Calcutta, Pereira) which also stopped at No. CC.

“The next translation was made by Munshi al-KarÝm, likewise in prose. From the preface and colophon to this work it appears that ‘Abd al-KarÝm obtained a copy of Edward Foster’s English version of the Arabian Nights, and after two years’ labour completed a translation of the whole work in A.H. 1258 (A.D. 1842). It was lithographed at the Mustafai Press at Kanp·r (Cawnpore) in the year A.H. 1263 (A.D. 1847) and published in four vols., in two royal 8vos, lithographed; each containing two Jilds (or parts, p, 274; 214 and 195).

“A second edition appeared from the same press in A.H. 1270 (A.D. 1853) also in two vols. 8vo of two Jilds each (p, 245; 192, 176). Since then several other editions have been published at Cawnpore, at Lakhnau[4] and also at Bombay. This translation is written in an easy fluent style, omitting all coarseness of expression or objectionable passages, in language easily understood, and at the same time in good and elegant Hindustani. It is therefore extremely popular, and selections from the 4th Jild have been taken as text books for the Indian Civil Service examinations. A Romanised Urdu version of the first two Jilds according to Duncan Forbes’ system of transliteration, was made ‘under the superintendence of T. W. H. Tolbort,’ and published under the editorship of F. Pincott in London, by W. H. Allen and Co. in 1882.[5] There has been no attempt to divide this translation into Nights: there are headings to the several tales and nothing more. To supply this want, and also to furnish the public with a translation closer to the original, and one more intelligible to Eastern readers, and in accordance with Oriental thought and feeling, a third translation was taken in hand by Totßrßm Shßyßn, at the instance of Nawal Kishore, the well-known bookseller and publisher of Lucknow. The first edition of this translation was lithographed at Lucknow in the year A.H. 1284 (A.D. 1868) and published in a 4to vol. of 1,080 pages under the title of Hazßr Dastßn.[6] Totßrßm Shßyßn has followed ‘Abd al-Karim’s arrangement of the whole work into four Jilds, each of which has a separate pagination (p; 320, 232, and 224.) The third Jild has 251 Nights: the other three 250 each. The translation is virtually in prose, but it abounds in snatches of poetry, songs and couplets taken from the writings of Persian poets, and here and there a verse-rendering of bits of the story. This translation, though substantially agreeing in the main with that of ‘Abd al-Karim, yet differs widely from it in the treatment. It is full of flowery metaphors and is written in a rich, ornate style full of Persian and Arabic words and idioms, which renders it far less easy to understand than the simple language of ‘Abd al-Karim. Some passages have been considerably enlarged and sometimes contain quite different reading from that of ‘Abd al-Karim with occasional additional matter. In other places descriptions have been much curtailed so that although the thread of the story may be the same in both translations it is hard to believe that the two translators worked from the same version. Unfortunately Totßrßm Shßyßn makes no mention at Ali the source whence he made his translation whether English or Arabic. This translation reached its fourth edition in 1883, and has been published with the addition of several badly executed full-page illustrations evidently taken from English prints.

“Yet another translation of The Nights has been made into Hindustani, and this a versified paraphrase, the work of three authors whose takhallus or noms de plume, were as follows: “NasÝm” (Muhammad Asghar Ali Khßn), translator of the first Jild, “Shßyßn” (Totßrßm Shßyßn), who undertook the second and third Jilds, and “Chaman” (ShßdÝ Lßl) by whom the fourth and last Jild was translated. The work is complete in 1,244 pages 4to, and was lithographed at Lucknow; Jilds i.-iii. in A.H. 1278 (A.D. 1862) and Jild iv. in 1285 (A.D. 1869). This translation is also divided into

Nights, differing slightly from the prose translation of Totßrßm Shßyßn, as the first Jild has 251 Nights and the others 250 each."

And now I have only to end this necessarily diffuse Foreword with my sincerest thanks to Mr. Clouston, the Storiologist, who has brought his wide experience of Folk-lore to bear upon the tales included in my Third Supplemental Volume; and to Dr. Steingass, who during my absence from England kindly passed my proofs through the press.

RICHARD F. BURTON.

Sauerbrunn-Rohitsch, Styria.
September 15, '87.

Supplemental Nights
To The Book Of The
Thousand Nights And A Night

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night,[7]

Quoth Dunyßzßd, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night;" and Shahrßzßd replied, "With love and good will! I will relate to you

THE TALE OF ZAYN AL-ASNAM.[8]

It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that in Bassorah-city[9] reigned a puissant Sultan, who was opulent exceedingly and who owned all the goods of life; but he lacked a child which might inherit his wealth and dominion. So, being sorely sorrowful on this account, he arose and fell to doing abundant alms-deeds to FakÝ́rs and the common poor, to the Hallows and other holy men and prayed their recourse to Allah Almighty, in order that the Lord (to whom belong Might and Majesty!) might of His grace bless him with issue. And the Compassionate accepted his prayer for his alms to the Religious and deigned grant his petition; and one night of the nights after he lay with the Queen she went away from him with child. Now as soon as the Sultan heard of the conception he rejoiced with exceeding great joyance, and when the days of delivery drew near he gathered together all the astrologers and sages who strike the sand-board,[10] and said to them, "'Tis our desire that ye disclose and acquaint us anent the birth which is to be born during the present month whether it shall be male or female, and what shall befal it from the shifts of Time, and what shall proceed from it." Thereupon the geomantists struck their sand-boards and the astrophils ascertained their ascendants and they drew the horoscope of the babe unborn, and said to the sovran, "O King of the Age and Lord of the Time and the Tide, verily the child to which the Queen shall presently give birth will be a boy and 't will be right for thee to name him Zayn al-Asnßm — Zayn of the Images." Then spake the geomantists, saying, "Know then, Ho though the King, that this little one shall approve him when grown to man's estate valiant and intelligent; but his days shall happen upon sundry troubles and travails, and yet if he doughtily fight against all occurrence he shall become the most opulent of the Kings of the World." Exclaimed the Sultan, "An the child approve himself valorous, as ye have announced, then the toil and moil which shall be his lot may be held for naught, inasmuch as calamities but train and strengthen the songs of the Kings."[11] Shortly after this the Queen gave birth to a man-child, and Glory be to Him who fashioned the babe with such peerless beauty and loveliness! The King named his son Zayn al-Asnam, and presently he became even as the poets sang of one of his fellows in semblance,

"He showed; and they cried, 'Be Allah blest!'* And who made him
and formed him His might attest!
This be surely the lord of all loveliness; * And all others his
lieges and thralls be confest."

Then Zayn al-Asnam grew up and increased until his age attained its fifteenth year, when his sire the Sultan appointed for him an experienced governor, one versed in all the sciences and philosophies;[12] who fell to instructing him till such times as he waxed familiar with every branch of knowledge, and in due season he became an adult. Thereupon the Sultan bade summon his son and heir to the presence together with the Lords of his land and the Notables of his lieges and addressed him before them with excellent counsel saying, "O my son, O Zayn al-Asnam, seeing that I be shotten in years and at the present time sick of a sickness which haply shall end my days in this world and which anon shall seat thee in my stead, therefore, I bequeath unto thee the following charge. Beware, O my son, lest thou wrong any man, and incline not to cause the poor complain; but do justice to the injured after the measure of thy might. Furthermore, have a care lest thou trust to every word spoken to thee by the Great; but rather lend thou ever an ear unto the voice of the general; for that thy Grandees will betray thee as they seek only whatso suiteth them, not that which suiteth thy subjects." A few days after this time the old Sultan's distemper increased and his lifeterm was fulfilled and he died; whereupon his son, Zayn al-Asnam, arose and donned mourning-dress for his father during six days; and on the seventh he went forth to the Divan and took seat upon the throne of his Sultanate. He also held a levee wherein were assembled all the defenders of the realm, and the Ministers and the Lords of the land came forward and condoled with him for the loss of his parent and wished him all good fortune and gave him joy of his kingship and dominion and prayed for his endurance in honour and his permanence in prosperity. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninety-eighth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night;" and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Zayn al-Asnam seeing himself in this high honour and opulence[13] and he young in years and void of experience, straightway inclined unto lavish expenditure and commerce with the younglings, who were like him and fell to wasting immense wealth upon his pleasures; and neglected his government, nor paid aught of regard to his subjects.[14] Thereupon the Queen-mother began to counsel him, and forbid him from such ill courses, advising him to abandon his perverse inclinations and apply his mind to rule and commandment, and to further the policy of his kingdom, lest the lieges repudiate him and rise up against him and depose him. But he would on no wise hearken to a single of her words and persisted in his ignorant folly; whereat the folk murmured, inasmuch as the Lords of the land had put forth their hands to tyranny and oppression when they saw the King lacking in regard for his Ryots. And presently the commons rose up against Zayn al-Asnam and would have dealth harshly with him had not his mother been a woman of wits and wisdom and contrivance, dearly loved of the general. So she directed the malcontents aright and promised them every good: then she summoned her son Zayn al-Asnam and said to him, "Behold, O my child, that which I foretold for thee, to wit that thou wastest thy realm and lavishest thy life to boot by persevering in what ignorance thou art; for that thou hast placed the governance of thy Kingdom in the hands of inexperienced youth and hast neglected the elders and hast dissipated thy moneys and the moneys of the monarchy, and thou hast lavished all thy treasure upon wilfulness and carnal pleasuring." Zayn al-Asnam, awaking from the slumber of negligence, forthright accepted his mother's counsel and, faring forth at once to the Diwan,[15] he entrusted the management of the monarchy to certain old officers, men of intelligence and experience. But he acted on this wise only after Bassorah-town was ruined, inasmuch as he had not turned away from his ignorant folly before he had wasted and spoiled all the wealth of the Sultanate, and he had become utterly impoverished. Thereupon the Prince fell to repenting and regretting that which had been done by him, until the repose of sleep was destroyed for him and he shunned meat and drink; nor did this cease until one night of the nights which had sped in such grief and thoughtfulness and vain regret until dawn drew nigh and his eyelids closed for a little while. Then an old and venerable Shaykh appeared to him in a vision[16] and said to him, "O Zayn al-Asnam, sorrow not; for after sorrow however sore cometh naught but joyance; and, would'st thou win free of this woe, up and hie thee to Egypt where thou shalt find hoards of wealth which shall replace whatso thou hast wasted and will double it more than twofold." Now when the Prince was aroused from his sleep he recounted to his mother all he had seen in his dream; but his parent began to laugh at him, and he said to her, "Mock me not: there is no help but that I wend Egypt-wards." Rejoined she, "O my son, believe not in swevens which be mere imbroglios of sleep and lying phantasies;" and retorted saying, "In very sooth my vision is true and the man whom I saw therein is of the Saints of Allah and his words are veridical." Then on a night of the nights mounting horse alone and privily, he abandoned his Kingdom; and took the highway to Egypt; and he rode day and night until he reached Cairo-city. He entered it and saw it to be a mighty fine capital; then, tethering his steed he found shelter in one of its Cathedral-mosques, and he worn out by weariness; however, when he had rested a little he fared forth and bought himself somewhat of food. After eating, his excessive fatigue caused him fall asleep in the mosque; nor had he slept long ere the Shaykh[17] appeared to him a second time in vision and said to him, "O Zayn al-Asnam," — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Four Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night," and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Shaykh again appeared to the Prince in a vision and said to him, "O Zayn al-Asnam, though hast obeyed me in whatso I bade thee and I only made trial of thee to test an thou be valiant or a craven. But now I wot thy worth, inasmuch as thou hast accepted my words and thou hast acted upon my advice: so do thou return straightway to thy capital and I will make thee a wealthy ruler, such an one that neither before thee was any king like unto thee nor shall any like unto thee come after thee.” Hereat Zayn al-Asnam awoke and cried “Bismillah, — in the name of Allah, the Compassionating, the Compassionate — what be this Shaykh who verily persecuted me until I travelled to Cairo; and I having faith in him and holding that he was either the Apostle (whom Allah save and assain!) or one of the righteous Hallows of God; and there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! By the Lord, but I did right well in not relating my dream to any save to my mother, and in warning none of my departure. I had full faith in this oldster; but now, meseemeth, the man is not of those who know the Truth (be He extolled and exalted!); so by Allah I will cast off all confidence in this Shaykh and his doings.” With this resolve the Prince slept that night in the Mosque and on the morrow took horse and after a few days of strenuous travel arrived at his capital Bassorah. Herein he entered by night, and forthright went in to his mother who asked him, “Say me, hast thou won aught of whatso the Shaykh promised thee?” and he answered her by acquainting her with all his adventure. Then she applied her to consoling and comforting him, saying, “Grieve not, O my son; if Almighty Allah have apportioned unto thee aught thou shalt obtain it without toil and travail.[18] But I would see thee wax sensible and wise, abandoning all these courses which have landed thee in poverty, O my son; and shunning songstresses and commune with the inexperienced and the society of loose livers, male and female. All such pleasures as these are for the sons of the ne’er-do-well, not for the scions of the Kings thy peers.” Herewith Zayn al-Asnam sware an oath to bear in mind all she might say to him, never to gainsay her commandments, nor deviate from them a single hair’s breadth; to abandon all she should forbid him, and to fix his thoughts upon rule and goverance. Then he addrest himself to sleep, and as he slumbered, the Shaykh appeared to him a third time in vision, and said, “O Zayn al-Asnam, O thou valorous Prince; this very day, as soon as thou shalt have shaken off thy drowsiness, I will fulfil my covenant with thee. So take with thee a pickaxe, and hie to such a palace of thy sire, and turn up the ground, searching it well in such a place where thou wilt find that which shall enrich thee." As soon as the Prince awoke, he hastened to his mother in huge joy and told her his tale; but she fell again to laughing at him, and saying, "O my child, indeed this old man maketh mock of thee and naught else; so get thyself clear of him." But Zayn al-Asnam replied, "O mother mine, verily this Shaykh is soothfast and no liar: for the first time he but tried me and now he proposeth to perform his promise." Whereto his mother, "At all events, the work is not wearisome; so do thou whatso thou willest even as he bade thee. Make the trial and Inshallah — God willing — return to me rejoicing; yet sore I fear lest thou come back to me and say, 'Sooth thou hast spoken in thy speech, O my mother!" However Zayn al-Asnam took up a pickaxe and, descending to that part of the palace where his sire lay entombed, began to dig and to delve; nor had he worked a long while[19] ere, lo and behold! there appeared to him a ring bedded in a marble slab. He removed the stone and saw a ladder-like flight of steps whereby he descended until he found a huge souterrain all pillar'd and propped with columns of marble and alabaster. And when he entered the inner recesses he saw within the cave-like souterrain a pavilion which bewildered his wits, and inside the same stood eight jars[20] of green jasper. So he said in his mind, "What may be these jars and what may be stored therein?" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the full Five Hundredth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night," and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when Zayn al-Asnam saw the jars, he came forwards and unlidding them found each and every full of antique[21] golden pieces; so he hent a few in hand seen and going to his mother gave of them to her saying, "Hast thou seen, O my mother?" She marvelled at the matter and made answer, "Beware, O my son, of wasting this wealth as thou dissipatedst otheraforetime;" whereupon her son sware to her an oath saying, "Have no care, O my mother, nor be thy heart other than good before me; and I desire that thou also find satisfaction in mine actions." Presently she arose and went forth with him, and the twain descended into the cavern-like souterrain and entered the pavilion, where the Queen saw that which wildereth the wits; and she made sure with her own eyes that the jars were full of gold. But while they enjoyed the spectacle of the treasure behold, they caught sight of a smaller jar wondrously wrought in green jasper; so Zayn al-Asnam opened it and found therein a golden key; whereupon quoth the Queen-mother, “O my son, needs must this key have some door which it unlocketh.” Accordingly they sought all about the souterrain and the pavilion to find if there be a door or aught like thereto, and presently, seeing a wooden lock fast barred, they knew wherefor the key was intended. Presently the Prince applied it and opened the lock, whereupon the door of a palace gave admittance, and when the twain entered they found it more spacious than the first pavilion and all illumined with a light which dazed the sight; yet not a wax-candle lit it up nor indeed was there a recess for lamps. Hereat they marvelled and meditated and presently they discovered eight images[22] of precious stones, all seated upon as many golden thrones, and each and every was cut of one solid piece; and all the stones were pure and of the finest water and most precious of price. Zayn al-Asnam was confounded hereat and said to his mother, “Whence could my sire have obtained all these rare things?” And the twain took their pleasure in gazing at them and considering them and both wondered to see a ninth throne unoccupied, when the Queen espied a silken hanging whereon was inscribed, “O my son, marvel not at this mighty wealth which I have acquired by sore stress and striving travail. But learn also that there existeth a Ninth Statue whose value is twenty-fold greater than these thou seest and, if thou would win it, hie thee again to Cairo-city. There thou shalt find a whilome slave of mine Mubßrak[23] hight and he will take thee and guide thee to the Statue; and ‘twill be easy to find him on entering Cairo: the first person thou shalt accost will point out the house to thee, for that Mubarak is known throughout the place.” When Zayn al-Asnam had read this writ he cried: “O my mother, ’tis again my desire to wend my way Cairo-wards and seek out this image; so do thou say how seest thou my vision, fact or fiction, after thou assuredst me saying, ‘This be an imbroglio of sleep?’ However, at all events, O my mother, now there is no help for it but that I travel once more to Cairo.” Replied she, “O my child, seeing that thou be under the protection of the Apostle of Allah (whom may He save and assain!) so do thou fare in safety, while I and thy Wazir will order thy reign in thine absence till such time as thou shalt return.” Accordingly the Prince went forth and gat him ready and rode on till he reached Cairo where he asked for Mubarak’s house. The folk answered him saying, “O my lord, this be a man than whom none is wealthier or greater in boon deeds and bounties, and his home is ever open to the stranger.” Then they showed him the way and he followed it till he came to Mubarak’s mansion where he knocked at the door and a slave of the black slaves opened to him. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and First Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night;” and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Zayn al-Asnam knocked at the door when a slave of Mubarak’s black slaves came out to him and opening asked him, “Who[24] art thou and what is it thou wantest?” The Prince answered, “I am a foreigner from a far country, and I have heard of Mubarak thy lord that he is famed for liberality and generosity; so that I come hither purposing to become his guest.” Thereupon the chattel went in to his lord and, after reporting the matter to him, came out and said to Zayn al-Asnam, “O my lord, a blessing hath descended upon us by thy footsteps. Do thou enter, for my master Mubarak awaiteth thee.” Therewith the Prince passed into a court spacious exceedingly and all beautified with trees and waters, and the slave led him to the pavilion wherein Mubarak was sitting. As the guest came in the host straightway rose up and met him with cordial greeting and cried, “A benediction hath alighted upon us and this night is the most benedight of the nights by reason of thy coming to us! So who are thou, O youth, and whence is thine arrival and whither is thine intent?” He replied, “I am Zayn al-Asnam and I seek one Mubarak, a slave of the Sultan of Bassorah who deceased a year ago, and I am his son.” Mubarak rejoined, “What sayest thou? Thou the son of the King of Bassorah?” and the other retorted, “Yea, verily I am his son.”[25] Quoth Mubarak, “In good sooth my late lord the

King of Bassorah left no son known to me! But what may be thine age, O youth?" "Twenty years or so," quoth the Prince, presently adding, "But thou, how long is it since thou leftest my sire?" "I left him eighteen years ago," said the other; "but, O my shild Zayn al-Asnam, by what sign canst thou assure me of thy being the son of my old master, the Sovran of Bassorah?" Said the Prince, "Thou alone knowest that my father laid out beneath his palace a souterrain,[26] and in this he placed forty jars of the finest green jasper, which he filled with pieces of antique gold, also that within a pavilion he builded a second palace and set therein eight images of precious stones, each one of a single gem, and all seated upon royal seats of placer-gold.[27] He also wrote upon a silken hanging a writ which I read and which bade me repair to thee and thou wouldst inform me concerning the Ninth Statue whereabouts it may be, assuring me that it is worth all the eight." Now when Mubarak heard these words, he fell at the feet of Zayn al-Asnam and kissed them exclaiming, "Pardon me, O my lord, in very truth thou art the son of my old master;" adding, presently, "I have spread, O my lord, a feast[28] for all the Grandess of Cairo and I would that thy Highness honour it by thy presence." The Prince replied, "With love and the best will." Thereupon Mubarak arose and forewent Zayn al-Asnam to the saloon which was full of the Lords of the land there gathered together, and here he seated himself after stablishing Zayn al-Asnam in the place of honour. Then he bade the tables be spread and the feast be served and he waited upon the Prince with arms crossed behind his back[29] and at times falling upon his knees. So the Grandees of Cairo marvelled to see Mubarak, one of the great men of the city, serving the youth and wondered with extreme wonderment, unknowing whence the stranger was. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Second Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night," and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Mubarak fell to waiting upon Zayn al-Asnam the son of his old lord, and the Grandees of Cairo there sitting marvelled to see Mubarak, one of the great men of the city, serving the youth and wondered with extreme wonderment, unknowing whence the stranger was. After this they ate and drank and supped well and were cheered till at last Mubarak turned towards them and said, “O folk, admire not that I wait upon this young man with all worship and honour, for that he is the son of my old lord, the Sultan of Bassorah, who bought me with his money and who died without manumitting me. I am, therefore, bound to do service to his son, this my young lord, and all that my hand possesseth of money and munition belongeth to him nor own I aught thereof at all, at all.” When the Grandees of Cairo heard these words, they stood up before Zayn al-Asnam and salamed to him with mighty great respect and entreated him with high regard and blessed him. Then said the Prince, “O assembly, I am in the presence of your worships, and be ye my witnesses. O Mubarak, thou art now freed and all thou hast of goods, gold and gear erst belonging to us becometh henceforth thine own and thou art endowed with them for good each and every. Eke do thou ask whatso of importance thou wouldst have from me, for I will on no wise let or stay thee in thy requiring it.” With this Mubarak arose and kissed the hand of Zayn al-Asnam and thanked him for his boons, saying, “O my lord, I wish for thee naught save thy weal, but the wealth that is with me is altogether overmuch for my wants.” Then the Prince abode with the Freedman four days, during which all the Grandees of Cairo made act of presence day by day to offer their salams as soon as they heard men say, “This is the master of Mubarak and the monarch of Bassorah.” And whenas the guest had taken his rest he said to his host, “O Mubarak, my tarrying with thee hath been long; whereto said the other, “Thou wottest, O my lord, that the matter whereinto thou comest to enquire is singular-rare, but that it also involveth risk of death, and I know not if thy valour can make the attainment thereto possible to thee.” Rejoined Zayn al-Asnam, “Know, O Mubarak, that opulence is gained only by blood; nor cometh aught upon mankind save by determination and predestination of the Creator (be He glorified and magnified!); so look to thine own stoutness of heart and take thou no thought of me.” Thereupon Mubarak forthright bade his slaves get them ready for wayfare; so they obeyed his bidding in all things and mounted horse and travelled by light and dark over the wildest of wolds, every day seeing matters and marvels which bewildered their wits, sights they had never seen in all their years, until they drew near unto a certain place. There the party dismounted and Mubarak bade the negro slaves and eunuchs abide on the spot saying to them, “Do ye keep watch and ward over the beasts of burthen and the horses until what time we return to you.” After this the twain set out together afoot and quoth the Freedman to the Prince, “O my lord, here valiancy besitteth, for that now thou art in the land of the Image[30] thou camest to seek.” And they ceased not walking till they reached a lake, a long water and a wide, where quoth Mubarak to his companion, “Know, O my lord, that anon will come to us a little craft bearing a banner of azure tinct and all its planks are of chaunders and lign-aloes of Comorin, the most precious of woods. And now I would charge thee with a charge the which must thou most diligently observe.” Asked the other, “Thou wilt see in that boat a boatman[31] whose fashion is the reverse of man’s; but beware, and again I say beware, lest thou utter a word, otherwise he will at once drown us.[32] Learn also that this stead belongeth to the King of the Jinns and that everything thou beholdest is the work of the Jann.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Third Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night,” and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Mubarak and Zayn al-Asnam came upon a lake where, behold, they found a little craft whose planks were of chaunders and lign-aloes of Comorin and therein stood a ferryman with the head of an elephant while the rest of his body wore the semblance of a lion.[33] Presently he approached them and winding his trunk around them[34] lifted them both into the boat and seated them beside himself: then he fell to paddling till he passed through the middle of the lake and he ceased not so doing until he had landed them on the further bank. Here the twain took ground and began to pace forwards, gazing around them the while and regarding the trees which bore for burthen ambergris and lign-aloes, sandal, cloves, and gelsamine,[35] all with flowers and fruits bedrest whose odours broadened the breast and excited the sprite. There also the birds warbled, with various voices, notes ravishing and rapturing the heart by the melodies of their musick. So Mubarak turned to the Prince and asked him saying, “How seest thou this place, O my lord?” and the other answered, “I deem, O Mubarak, that in very truth this be the Paradise promised to us by the Prophet (whom Allah save and assain!).” Thence they fared forwards till they came upon a mighty fine palace all builded of emeralds and rubies with gates and doors of gold refined: it was fronted by a bridge one hundred and fifty cubits long to a breadth of fifty, and the whole was one rib of a fish.[36] At the further end thereof stood innumerous hosts of the Jann, all frightful of favour and fear-inspiring of figure and each and every hent in hand javelins of steel which flashed to the sun like December leven. Thereat quoth the Prince to his companion, “This be a spectacle which ravisheth the wits;” and quoth Mubarak, “It now behoveth that we abide in our places nor advance further lest there happen to us some mishap; and may Allah vouchsafe to us safety!” Herewith he brought forth his pouch four strips of a yellow silken stuff and zoning himself with one threw the other over his shoulders;[37] and he gave the two remaining pieces to the Prince that he might do with them on like wise. Next he dispread before either of them a waist shawl[38] of white sendal and then he pulled out of his poke sundry precious stones and scents and ambergris and eagle-wood;[39] and, lastly, each took his seat upon his sahs, and when both were ready Mubarak repeated the following words to the Prince and taught him to pronounce them before the King of the Jann, “O my lord, Sovran of the Spirits, we stand within thy precincts and we throw ourselves on thy protection;” whereto Zayn al-Asnam added, “And I adjure him earnestly that he accept of us.” But Mubarak rejoined, “O my lord, by Allah I am in sore fear. Hear me! An he determine to accept us without hurt or harm he will approach us in the semblance of a man rare of beauty and comeliness but, if not, he will assume a form frightful and terrifying. Now an thou see him in his favourable shape do thou arise forthright and salam to him and above all things beware lest thou step beyond this thy coth.” The Prince replied, “To hear is to obey,” and the other continued, “And let thy salam to him be thy saying, O King of the Sprites and Sovran of the Jann and Lord of Earth, my sire, the whilome Sultan of Bassorah, whom the Angel of

Death hath removed (as is not hidden from thy Highness) was ever taken under thy protection and I, like him, come to thee sueing the same safeguard." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fourth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night," and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Mubarak fell to lessoning Zayn al-Asnam how he should salute the King of the Jinns, and pursued, "Likewise, O my lord, if he hail us with gladsome face of welcome he will doubtless say thee, 'Ask whatso thou wantest of me!' and the moment he giveth thee his word do thou at once prefer thy petition saying, O my lord, I require of thy Highness the Ninth Statue than which is naught more precious in the world, and thou didst promise my father to vouchsafe me that same." And after this Mubarak instructed his master how to address the King and crave of him the boon and how to bespeak him with pleasant speech. Then he began his conjurations and fumigations and adjurations and recitations of words not understanded of any and but little time elapsed before cold rain down railed and lightning flashed and thunder roared and thick darkness veiled earth's face. Presently came forth a mighty rushing wind and a voice like an earthquake, the quake of earth on Judgment Day.[40] The Prince, seeing these horrors and sighting that which he had never before seen or heard, trembled for terror in every limb; but Mubarak fell to laughing at him and saying, "Fear not, O my lord: for that which thou dreadest is what we seek, for to us it is an earnest of glad tidings and success; so be thou satisfied and hold thyself safe."[41] After this the skies waxed clear and serene exceedingly while perfumed winds and the purest scents breathed upon them; nor did a long time elapse ere the King of the Jann presented himself under the semblance of a beautiful man who had no peer in comeliness save and excepting Him who lacketh likeness and to Whom be honour and glory! He gazed at Zayn al-Asnam with a gladsome aspect and a riant, whereat the Prince arose forthright and recited the string of benedictions taught to him by his companion and the King said to him with a smiling favour, "O Zayn al-Asnam, verily I was wont to love thy sire, the Sultan of Bassorah and, when he visited me ever, I used to give him an image of those thou sawest, each cut of a single gem; and thou also shalt presently become to me honoured as thy father and yet more. Ere he died I charged him to write upon the silken curtain the writ thou readest and eke I gave promise and made covenant with him to take thee like thy parent under my safeguard and to gift thee as I gifted him with an image, to wit, the ninth, which is of greater worth than all those viewed by thee. So now 'tis my desire to stand by my word and to afford thee my promised aid." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night," and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Lord of the Jann said to the Prince, "I will take thee under my safeguard and the Shaykh thou sawest in thy swevens was myself and I also 'twas who bade thee dig under thy palace down to the souterrain wherein thou sawest the crocks of gold and the figures of fine gems. I also well know wherefore thou art come hither and I am he who caused thee to come and I will give thee what thou seekest, for all that I would not give it to thy sire. But 'tis on condition that thou return unto me bringing a damsel whose age is fifteen, a maiden without rival or likeness in loveliness; furthermore she must be a pure virgin and a clean maid who hath never lusted for male nor hath ever been solicited of man;[42] and lastly, thou must keep faith with me in safeguarding the girl whenas thou returnest hither and beware lest thou play the traitor with her whilst thou bringest her to me." To this purport the Prince sware a mighty strong oath adding, "O my lord, thou hast indeed honoured me by requiring of me such service, but truly 'twill be right hard for me to find a fair one like unto this; and, grant that I find one perfectly beautiful and young in years after the requirement of thy Highness, how shall I weet if she ever longed for mating with man or that male ever lusted for her?" Replied the King, "Right thou art, O Zayn al-Asnam, and verily this be a knowledge whereunto the sons of men may on no wise attain. However, I will give thee a mirror[43] of my own whose virtue is this. When thou shalt sight a young lady whose beauty and loveliness please thee, do thou open the glass,[44] and, if thou see therein her image clear and undimmed, do thou learn forthright that she is a clean maid without aught of defect or default and endowed with every praiseworthy quality. But if, contrariwise, the figure be found darkened or clothed in uncleanness, do thou straightway know that damsel is sullied by soil of sex. Shouldst thou find her pure and gifted with all manner good gifts, bring her to me but beware not to offend with her and do villainy, and if thou keep not faith and promise with me bear in mind that thou shalt lose thy life." Hereupon the Prince made a stable and solemn pact with the King, a covenant of the sons of the Sultans which may never be violated. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night," and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Prince Zayn al-Asnam made a stable and trustworthy compact to keep faith with the King of the Jann and never to play traitor thereto, but to bring the maid en tout bien et tout honneur to that potentate who made over to him the mirror saying, "O my son, take this looking-glass whereof I bespake thee and depart straightway." Thereupon the Prince and Mubarak arose and, after blessing him, fared forth and journeyed back until they made the lakelet, where they sat but a little ere appeared the boat which had brought them bearing the Jinni with elephantine head and leonine body, and he was standing up ready for paddling.[45] The twain took passage with him (and this by command of the King of the Jann) until they reached Cairo and returned to their quarters, where they abode whilst they rested from the travails of travel. Then the Prince turned to his companion and said, "Arise with us and wend we to Baghdad[46] -city that we may look for some damsel such as the King describeth!" and Mubarak replied, "O my lord, we be in Cairo, a city of the cities, a wonder of the world, and here no doubt there is but that I shall find such a maiden, nor is there need that we fare therefor to a far country." Zayn al-Asnam rejoined, "True for thee, O

Mubarak, but what be the will and the way whereby to hit upon such a girl, and who shall go about to find her for us?" Quoth the other, "Be not beaten and broken down, O my lord, by such difficulty: I have by me here an ancient dame (and cursed be the same!) who maketh marriages, and she is past mistress in wiles and guiles; nor will she be hindered by the greatest of obstacles."[47] So saying, he sent to summon the old trot, and informed her that he wanted a damsel perfect of beauty and not past her fifteenth year, whom he would marry to the son of his lord; and he promised her sumptuous Bakhshish and largesse if she would do her very best endeavour. Answered she, "O my lord, be at rest: I will presently contrive to satisfy thy requirement even beyond thy desire; for under my hand are damsels unsurpassable in beauty and loveliness, and all be the daughters of honourable men." But the old woman, O Lord of the Age, knew naught anent the mirror. So she went forth to wander about the city and work on her well-known ways. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventh Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night," and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the old woman went forth to work on her well-known ways, and she wandered about town to find a maiden for the Prince Zayn al-Asnam. Whatever notable beauty she saw she would set before Mubarak; but each semblance as it was considered in the mirror showed exceedingly dark and dull, and the inspector would dismiss the girl. This endured until the crone had brought to him all the damsels in Cairo, and not one was found whose reflection in the mirror showed clear-bright and whose honour was pure and clean, in fact such an one as described by the King of the Jann. Herewith Mubarak, seeing that he had not found one in Cairo to please him, or who proved pure and unsullied as the King of the Jann had required, determined to visit Baghdad: so they rose up and equipped them and set out and in due time they made the City of Peace where they hired them a mighty fine mansion amiddlemost the capital. Here they settled themselves in such comfort and luxury that the Lords of the land would come daily to eat at their table, even the thirsty and those who went forth betimes,[48] and what remained of the meat was distributed to the mesquin and the miserable; also every poor stranger lodging in the Mosques would come to the house and find a meal. Therefore the bruit of them for generosity and liberality went abroad throughout the city and won for them notable name and the fairest of fame; nor did any ever speak of aught save the beneficence of Zayn al-Asnam and his generosity and his opulence. Now there chanced to be in one of the cathedral-mosques and Imßm,[49] Abu Bakr hight, a ghostly man passing jealous and fulsome, who dwelt hard by the manion wherein the Prince and Mubarak abode; and he, when he heard of their lavish gifts and alms deeds, and honourable report, smitten by envy and malice and hatred, fell to devising how he might draw them into some calamity that might despoil the goods they enjoyed and destroy their lives, for it is the wont of envy to fall not save upon the fortunate. So one day of the days, as he lingered in the Mosque after mid-afternoon prayer, he came forwards amidst the folk and cried, “O ye, my brethren of the Faith which is true and who bear testimony to the unity of the Deity, I would have you to weet that housed in this our quarter are two men which be strangers, and haply ye have heard of them how they lavish and waste immense sums of money, in fact moneys beyond measure, and for my part I cannot but suspect that they are cutpurses and brigands who commit robberies in their own country and who came hither to expend their spoils.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night,” and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Imam in his jealousy of Zayn al-Asnam and Mubarak said to the congregation, “Verily they be brigands and cutpurses;” adding, “O believers of Mohammed, I counsel you in Allah’s name that ye guard yourselves against such accurseds; for haply the Caliph shall in coming times hear of these twain and ye also shall fall with them into calamity.[50] I have hastened to caution you, and having warned you I wash my hands of your business, and after this do ye as ye judge fit.” All those present replied with one voice, “Indeed we will do whatso thou wishest us to do, O Abu Bakr!” But when the Imam heard this from them he arose and, bringing forth ink-case and reed-pen and a sheet of paper, began inditing an address to the Commander of the Faithful, recounting all that was against the two strangers. However, by decree of Destiny, Mubarak chanced to be in the Mosque amongst the crowd when he heard the address of the blameworthy Imam and how he purposed applying by letter to the Caliph. So he delayed not at all but returned home forthright and, taking an hundred dinars and packing up a parcel of costly clothes, silverwrought all, repaired in haste to the reverend’s quarters and knocked at the door. The preacher came and opened to him, but sighting Mubarak he asked him in anger, “What is’t thou wantest and who art thou?” Whereto the other answered, “I am Mubarak and at thy service, O my master the Imam Abu Bakr; and I come to thee from my lord the Emir Zayn al-Asnam who, hearing of and learning thy religious knowledge and right fair repute in this city, would fain make acquaintance with thy Worship and do by thee whatso behoveth him. Also he hath sent me to thee with these garments and this spending-money, hoping excuse of thee for that this be a minor matter compared with your Honour’s deserts; but, Inshallah, after this he will not fail in whatever to thee is due.” As soon as Abu Bakr saw the coin and gold[51] and the bundle of clothes, he answered Mubarak saying, “I crave pardon, O my lord, of thy master the Emir for that I have been ashamed of waiting upon him and repentance is right hard upon me for that I have failed to do my devoir by him; wherefore I hope that thou wilt be my deputy in imploring him to pardon my default and, the Creator willing, to-morrow I will do what is incumbent upon me and fare to offer my services and proffer the honour which beseemeth me.” Rejoined Mubarak, “The end of my master’s wishes is to see thy worship, O my lord Abu Bakr, and be exalted by thy presence and therethrough to win a blessing.” So saying he bussed the reverend’s hand and returned to his own place. On the next day, as Abu Bakr was leading the dawn-prayer of Friday, he took his station amongst the folk amiddlemost the Mosque and cried, “O, our brethren the Moslems great and small and folk of Mohammed one and all, know ye that envy falleth not save upon the wealthy and praiseworthy and never descendeth upon the mean and miserable. I would have you wot, as regards the two strangers whom yesterday I misspake, that one of them is an Emir high in honour and son of most reputable parents, in lieu of being (as I was informed by one of his enviers) a cutpurse and a brigand. Of this matter I have made certain that 'tis a lying report, so beware lest any of you say aught against him or speak evil in regard to the Emir even as I heard yesterday; otherwise you will cast me and cast yourselves into the sorest of calamities with the Prince of True Believers. For a man like this of exalted degree may not possibly take up his abode in our city of Baghdad unbeknown to the Caliph." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night," and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Abu Bakr the Imam uprooted on such wise from the minds of men the evil which he had implanted by his own words thrown out against the Emir Zayn al-Asnam. But when he had ended congregational prayers and returned to his home, he donned his long gaberdine[52] and made weighty his skirts and lengthened his sleeves, after which he took the road to the mansion of the Prince; and, when he went in, he stood up before the stranger and did him honour with the highmost distinction. Now Zayn al-Asnam was by nature conscientious albeit young in years; so he returned the Imam Abu Bakr's civilities with all courtesy and, seating himself beside him upon his high-raised divan, bade bring for him ambergris'd[53] coffee. Then the tables were spread for breakfast and the twain ate and drank their sufficiency, whereafter they fell to chatting like boon companions. Presently the Imam asked the Prince, saying, "O my lord Zayn al-Asnam, doth thy Highness design residing long in this our city of Baghdad?" and the other answered, "Yes indeed,[54] O our lord the Imam; 'tis my intention to tarry here for a while until such time as my requirement shall be fulfilled." The Imam enquired, "And what may be the requirement of my lord the Emir? Haply when I hear it I may devote my life thereto until I can fulfil it." Quoth the

Prince, “My object is to marry a maiden who must be comely exceedingly, aged fifteen years; pure, chaste, virginal, whom man hath never soiled and who during all her days never lusted for male kind: moreover, she must be unique for beauty and loveliness.” The Imam rejoined, “O my lord, this be a thing hard of finding indeed, hard exceedingly; but I know a damsel of that age who answereth to thy description. Her father, a Wazir who resigned succession and office of his own freewill, now dwelleth in his mansion jealously overwatching his daughter and her education; and I opine that this maiden will suit the fancy of thy Highness, whilst she will rejoice in an Emir such as thyself and eke her parents will be equally well pleased.” The Prince replied, “Inshallah, this damsel whereof thou speakest will suit me and supply my want, and the furtherance of my desire shall be at thy hands. But, O our lord the Imam, ’tis my wish first of all things to look upon her and see if she be pure or otherwise; and, as regarding her singular comeliness, my convicion is that thy word sufficeth and thine avouchment is veridical. Of her purity, however, even thou canst not bear sure and certain testimony in respect to that condition.” Asked the Imam, “How is it possible for you, O my lord the Emir, to learn from her face aught of her and her honour; also whether she be pure or not: indeed, if this be known to your Highness you must be an adept in physiognomy.[55] However, if your Highness be willing to accompany me, I will bear you to the mansion of her sire and make you acquainted with him, so shal he set her before you.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Tenth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith me may cut short the waking hours of this our night,” and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Imam Abu Bakr took the Prince and passed with him into the mansion of the Wazir; and, when they entered, both salam’d to the housemaster and he rose and received them with greetings especially when he learned that an Emir had visited him and he understood from the Imam that Zayn al-Asnam inclined to wed his daughter. So he summoned her to his presence and she came, whereupon he bade her raise her face-veil; and, when she did his bidding, the Prince considered her and was amazed and perplexed at her beauty and loveliness, he never having seen aught that rivalled her in brightness and brilliancy. So quoth he in his mind, "Would to Heaven I could win a damsel like this, albeit this one be to me unlawful." Thinking thus he drew forth the mirror from his pouch and considered her image carefully when, lo and behold! the crystal was bright and clean as virgin silver and when he eyed her semblance in the glass he saw it pure as a white dove's. THen sent he forthright for the Kazi and witnesses and they knotted the knot and wrote the writ and the bride was duly throned. Presently the Prince took the Wazir his father-in-law into his own mansion, and to the young lady he sent a present of costly jewels and it was a notable marriage-festival, none like it was ever seen; no, never. Zayn al-Asnam applied himself to inviting the folk right royally and did honour due to Abu Bakr the Imam, giving him abundant gifts, and forwarded to the bride's father offerings of notable rarities. As soon as the wedding ended, Mubarak said to the Prince, "O my lord, let us arise and wend our ways lest we lose our time in leisure, for that we sought is now found." Said the Prince, "Right thou art;" and, arising with his companion, the twain fell to equipping them for travel and gat ready for the bride a covered litter[56] to be carried by camels and they set out. Withal Mubarak well knew that the Prince was deep in love to the young lady. So he took him aside and said to him, "O my lord Zayn al-Asnam, I would warn thee and enjoin thee to keep watch and ward upon thy senses and passions and to observe and preserve the pledge by thee plighted to the King of the Jann." "O Mubarak," replied the Prince, "an thou knew the love-longing and ecstasy which have befallen me of my love to this young lady, thou wouldst feel ruth for me! indeed I never think of aught else save of taking her to Bassorah and of going in unto her." Mubarak rejoined. "O my lord, keep thy faith and be not false to thy pact, lest a sore harm betide thee and the loss of thy life as well as that of the young lady.[57] Remember the oath thou swarest nor suffer lust[58] to lay thy reason low and despoil thee of all thy gains and thine honour and thy life." "Do thou, O Mubarak," retorted the Prince, "become warden over her nor allow me ever to look upon her." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eleventh Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night,” and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Mubarak, after warning Zayn al-Asnam to protect the virgin-bride against himself, fell also to defending her as his deputy: also he prevented the Prince from even looking upon her. They then travelled along the road unto the Island of the Jann, after[59] they had passed by the line leading unto Misr.[60] But when the bride saw that the wayfare had waxed longsome nor had beheld her bridegroom for all that time since the wedding-night, she turned to Mubarak and said, “Allah upon thee; inform me, O Mubarak, by the life of thy lord the Emir, have we fared this far distance by commandment of my bridegroom Prince Zayn al-Asnam?” Said he, “Ah, O my lady, sore indeed is thy case to me, yet must I disclose to thee the secret thereof which be this. Thou imaginest that Zayn al-Asnam, the King of Bassorah, is thy bridegroom; but, alas! ’tis not so. He is no husband of thine; nay, the deed he drew up was a mere pretext in the presence of thy parents and thy people; and now thou art going as a bride to the King of the Jann who required thee of the Prince.” When the young lady heard these words, she fell to shedding tears and Zayn al-Asnam wept for her, weeping bitter tears from the excess of his love and affection. Then quoth the young lady, “Ye have nor pity in you nor feeling for me; neither fear ye aught of Allah that, seeing in me a stranger maiden ye cast me into a calamity like this. What reply shall ye return to the Lord on the Day of Reckoning for such treason ye work upon me?” However her words and her weeping availed her naught, for that they stinted not wayfaring with her until they reached the King of the Jann, to whom they forthright on arrival made offer of her. When he considered the damsel she pleased him, so he turned to Zayn al-Asnam and said to him, “Verily the bride thou broughtest me is exceeding beautiful and passing of loveliness; yet lovelier and more beautiful to me appear thy true faith and the mastery of thine own passions, thy marvellous purity and valiance of heart. So hie thee to thy home and the Ninth Statue, wherefor thou askedst me, by thee shall be found beside the other images, for I will send it by one of my slaves of the Jann.”

Hereupon Zayn al-Asnam kissed his hand and marched back with Mubarak to Cairo, where he would not abide long with his companion, but, as soon as he was rested, of his extreme longing and anxious yearning to see the Ninth Statue, he hastened his travel homewards. Withal he ceased not to be thoughtful and sorrowful concerning his maiden-wife and on account of her beauty and loveliness, and he would fall to groaning and crying, "O for my lost joys whose cause wast thou, O singular in every charm and attraction, thou whom I bore away from thy parents and carried to the King of the Jann. Alas, and woe worth the day!" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twelfth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night," and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Zayn al-Asnam fell to chiding himself for the deceit and treason which he had practised upon the young lady's parents and for bringing and offering her to the King of the Jann. Then he set out nor ceased travelling till such time as he reached Bassorah, when he entered his palace; and, after saluting his mother, he apprised her of all things that had befallen him. She replied, "Arise, O my son, that we may look upon the Ninth Statue, for I rejoice with extreme joy at its being in our possession." So both descended into the pavilion where stood the eight images of precious gems and here they found a mighty marvel. 'Twas this. In lieu of seeing the Ninth Statue upon the golden throne, they found seated thereon the young lady whose beauty suggested the sun. Zayn al-Asnam knew her at first sight and presently she addressed him saying, "Marvel not for that here thou findest me in place of that wherefor thou askedst; and I deem that thou shalt not regret nor repent when thou acceptest me instead of that thou soughtest." Said he, "No, by Allah, O life-blood of my heart, verily thou art the end of every wish of me nor would I exchange thee for all the gems of the universe. Would thou knew what was the sorrow which surcharged me on account of our separation and of my reflecting that I took thee from thy parents by fraud and I bore thee as a present to the King of the Jann. Indeed I had well nigh determined to forfeit all my profit of the Ninth Statue and to bear thee away to Bassorah as my own bride, when my comrade and councillor dissuaded me from so doing lest I bring about my death and thy death." Nor had Zayn al-Asnam ended his words ere they heard the roar of thunderings that would rend a mount and shake the earth, whereat the Queen-mother was seized with mighty fear and affright. But presently appeared the King of the Jinns who said to her, "O my lady, fear not! 'Tis I, the protector of thy son whom I fondly affect for the affection borne to me by his sire. I also am he who manifested myself to him in his sleep; and my object therein was to make trial of his valiance and to learn an he could do violence to his passions for the sake of his promise, or whether the beauty of this lady would so tempt and allure him that he could not keep his promise to me with due regard." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirteenth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, tell us one of thy fair tales, so therewith we may cut short the waking hours of this our night," and quoth Shahrazad: — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the King of the Jann said to the Queen-mother, "Indeed Zayn al-Asnam hath not kept faith and covenant with all nicety as regards the young lady, in that he longed for her to become his wife. However, I am assured that this lapse befel him from man's natural and inherent frailty albeit I repeatedly enjoined him to defend and protect her until he concealed from her his face. I now accept[61] this man's valour and bestow her upon him to wife, for she is the Ninth Statue by me promised to him and she is fairer than all these jewelled images, the like of her not being found in the whole world of men save by the rarest of chances." Then the King of the Jann turned to the Prince and said to him, "O Emir Zayn al-Asnam, this is thy bride: take her and enjoy her upon the one condition that thou love her only nor choose for thyself another one in addition to her; and I pledge myself that her faith theewards will be of the fairest." Hereupon the King of the Jann disappeared and the Prince, gladdened and rejoicing, went forth with the maiden and for his love and affection to her he paid to her the first cermonious visit that same night[62] and he made bride-feasts and banquets throughout his realm and in due time he formally wedded her and went in unto her. Then he stablished himself upon the throne of his kingship and ruled it, bidding and forbidding, and his consort became Queen of Bassorah. His mother left this life a short while afterwards and they both mourned and lamented their loss. Lastly he lived with his wife in all joyance of life till there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Separator of societies. — And Shahrazad ceased to say her pleasant[63] say. Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, how rare is thy tale and delectable!" whereto quoth Shahrazad, "And what is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night concerning Alaeddin[64] and the Enchanted Lamp, an this my lord the King leave me on life?" The King said to himself, "By Allah, I will not slay her until she tell me the whole tale."

When it was the Five Hundred and Fourteenth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad,[65] to Shahrazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales;" and Shahrazad began to relate the story of

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ALAEDDIN; OR, THE WONDERFUL LAMP.

It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that there dwelt in a city of the cities of China a man which was a tailor, withal a pauper, and he had one son, Alaeddin hight. Now this boy had been from his babyhood a ne'er-do-well, a scapegrace; and, when he reached his tenth year, his father inclined to teach him his own trade; and, for that he was over indigent to expend money upon his learning other work or craft or apprenticeship, he took the lad into his shop that he might be taught tailoring. But, as Alaeddin was a scapegrace and a ne'er-do-well and wont to play at all times with the gutter boys of the quarter, he would not sit in the shop for a single day; nay, he would await his father's leaving it for some purpose, such as to meet a creditor, when he would run off at once and fare forth to the gardens with the other scapegraces and low companions, his fellows. Such was his case; counsel and castigation were of no avail, nor would he obey either parent in aught or learn any trade; and presently, for his sadness and sorrowing because of his son's vicious indolence, the tailor sickened and died. Alaeddin continued in his former ill courses and, when his mother saw that her spouse had deceased, and that her son was a scapegrace and good for nothing at all[66] she sold the shop and whatso was to be found therein and fell to spinning cotton yarn. By this toilsome industry she fed herself and found food for her son Alaeddin the scapegrace who, seeing himself freed from bearing the severities of his sire, increased in idleness and low habits; nor would he ever stay at home save at meal-hours while his miserable wretched mother lived only by what her hands could spin until the youth had reached his fifteenth year. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifteenth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when Alaeddin had come to his fifteenth year, it befel, one day of the days, that as he was sitting about the quarter at play with the vagabond boys behold, a Darwaysh from the Maghrib, the Land of the Setting Sun, came up and stood gazing for solace upon the lads and he looked hard at Alaeddin and carefully considered his semblance, scarcely noticing his companions the while. Now this Darwaysh was a Moorman from Inner Marocco and he was a magician who could upheap by his magic hill upon hill, and he was also an adept in astrology. So after narrowly considering Alaeddin he said in himself, “Verily, this is the lad I need and to find whom I have left my natal land.” Presently he led one of the children apart and questioned him anent the scapegrace saying, “Whose[67] son is he?” And he sought all information concerning his condition and whatso related to him. After this he walked up to Alaeddin and drawing him aside asked, “O my son, haply thou art the child of Such-an-one the tailor?” and the lad answered, “Yes, O my lord, but ’tis long since he died.” The Maghrabi,[68] the Magician, hearing these words threw himself upon Alaeddin and wound his arms around his neck and fell to bussing him, weeping the while with tears trickling adown his cheeks. But when the lad saw the Moorman’s case he was seized with surprise thereat and questioned him, saying, “What causeth thee weep, O my lord: and how camest thou to know my father?” “How canst thou, O my son,” replied the Moorman, in a soft voice saddened by emotion, “question me with such query after informing me that thy father and my brother is deceased; for that he was my brother-german and now I come from my adopted country and after long exile I rejoiced with exceeding joy in the hope of looking upon him once more and condoling with him over the past; and now thou hast announced to me his demise. But blood hideth not from blood[69] and it hath revealed to me that thou art my nephew, son of my brother, and I knew thee amongst all the lads, albeit thy father, when I parted from him, was yet unmarried.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixteenth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Maghrabi, the Magician, said to the tailor’s orphan, “O my son Alaeddin and I have now failed in the mourning ceremonies and have lost the delight I expected from meeting thy father, my brother, whom after my long banishment I had hoped to see once more ere I die; but far distance wrought me this trouble nor hath the creature aught of asylum from the Creator or artifice against the commandments of Allah Al-mighty.” Then he again clasped Alaeddin to his bosom crying, “O my son, I have none to condole with now save thyself; and thou standest in stead of thy sire, thou being his issue and representative and æwhoso leaveth issue dieth not,’[70] O my child!” So saying, the Magician put hand to purse and pulling out ten gold pieces gave them to the lad asking, “O my son, where is your house and where dwelleth she, thy mother, and my brother’s widow?” Presently Alaeddin arose with him and showed him the way to their home and meanwhile Quoth the Wizard, “O my son, take these moneys and give them to thy mother, greeting her from me, and let her know that thine uncle, thy father’s brother, hath reappeared from his exile and that Inshallah ûGod willingû on the morrow I will visit her to salute her with the salam and see the house wherein my brother was homed and look upon the place where he lieth buried.” Thereupon Alaeddin kissed the Maghrabi’s hand, and, after running in his joy at fullest speed to his mother’s dwelling, entered to her clean contrariwise to his custom, inasmuch as he never came near her save at meal-times only. And when he found her, the lad exclaimed in his delight, “O my mother, I give thee glad tidings of mine uncle who hath returned from his exile and who now sendeth me to salute thee.” “O my son,” she replied, “meseemeth thou mockest me! Who is this uncle and how canst thou have an uncle in the bonds of life?” He rejoined, “How sayest thou, O my mother, that I have nor living uncles nor kinsmen, when this man is my father’s own brother? Indeed he embraced me and bussed me, shedding tears the while, and bade me acquaint thee herewith.” She retorted, “O my son, well I wot thou haddest an uncle, but he is now dead nor am I ware that thou hast other eme.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventeenth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Maroccan Magician fared forth next morning and fell to finding out Alaeddin, for his heart no longer permitted him to part from the lad; and, as he was to-ing and fro-ing about the city-highways, he came face to face with him disporting himself, as was his wont, amongst the vagabonds and the scapegraces. So he drew near to him and, taking his hand, embraced him and bussed him, then pulled out of his poke two dinars and said, "Hie thee to thy mother and give her these couple of ducats and tell her that thine uncle would eat the evening-meal with you; so do thou take these two gold pieces and prepare for us a succulent supper. But before all things show me once more the way to your home." "On my head and mine eyes be it, O my uncle," replied the lad and forewent him, pointing out the street leading to the house. Then the Moorman left him and went his ways and Alaeddin ran home and, giving the news and the two sequins to his parent, said, "My uncle would sup with us." So she arose straightway and going to the market-street bought all she required; then, returning to her dwelling she borrowed from the neighbours whatever was needed of pans and platters and so forth and when the meal was cooked and supper time came she said to Alaeddin "O my child, the meat is ready but peradventure thine uncle wotteth not the way to our dwelling; so do thou fare forth and meet him on the road."

He replied, "To hear is to obey," and before the twain ended talking a knock was heard at the door. Alaeddin went out and opened when, behold, the Maghrabi, the Magician, together with an eunuch carrying the wine and the dessert fruits; so the lad led them in and the slave went about his business. The Moorman on entering saluted his sister-in-law with the salami then began to shed tears and to question her saying, "Where be the place whereon my brother went to sit?" She showed it to him, whereat he went up to it and prostrated himself in prayer[71] and kissed the floor crying, "Ah, how scant is my satisfaction and how luckless is my lot, for that I have lost thee, O my brother, O vein of my eye!" And after such fashion he continued weeping and wailing till he swooned away for excess of sobbing and lamentation; wherefor Alaeddin's mother was certified of his soothfastness. So coming up to him she raised him from the floor and said, “What gain is there in slaying thyself?” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

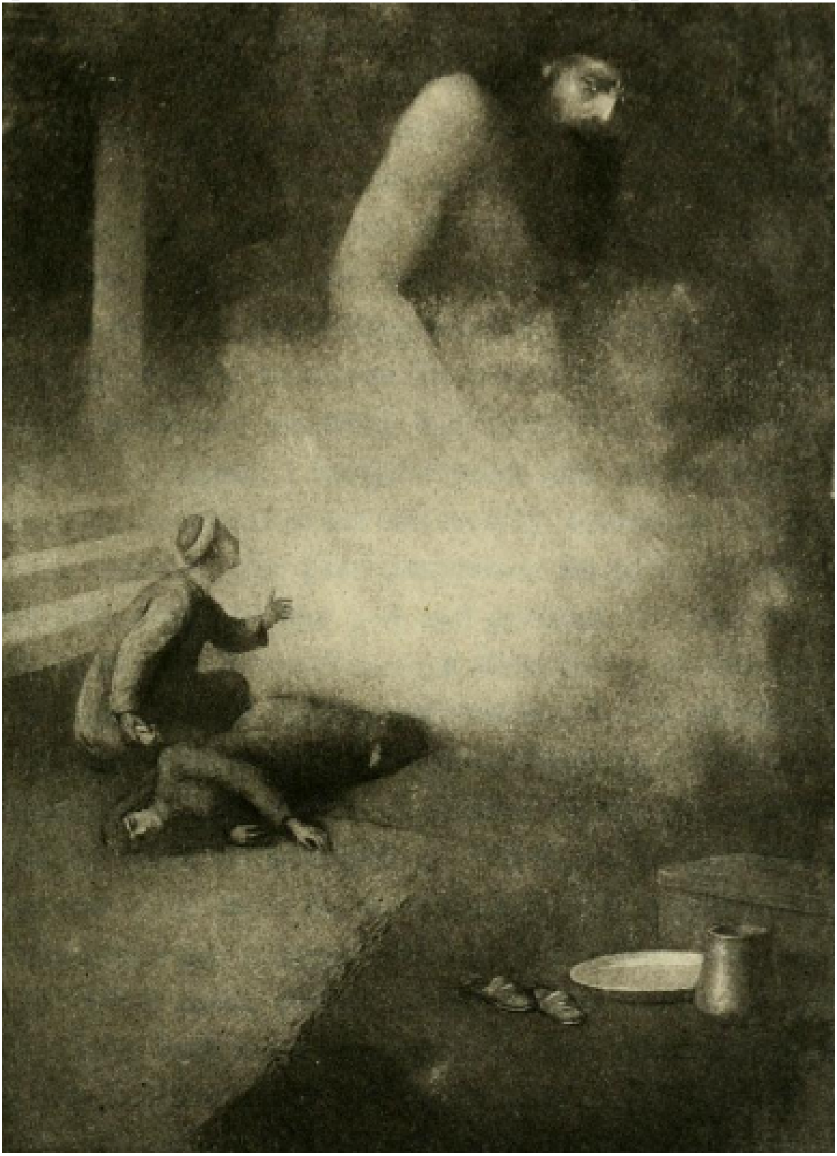

When it was ad the Five Hundred and Eighteenth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin’s mother began consoling the Maghrabi, the

Magician, and placed him upon the divan; and, as soon as he was seated at his ease and before the food-trays were served up, he fell to talking with her and saying, “O wife of my brother, it must be a wonder to thee how in all thy days thou never sawest me nor learnedst thou aught of me during the life-time of my brother who hath found mercy.[72] Now the reason is that forty years ago I left this town and exiled myself from my birth-place and wandered forth over all the lands of Al-Hind and Al-Sind and entered Egypt and settled for a long time in its magnificent city,[73] which is one of the world-wonders, till at last I fared to the regions of the Setting Sun and abode for a space of thirty years in the Maroccan interior. Now one day of the days, O wife of my brother, as I was sitting alone at home, I fell to thinking of mine own country and of my birth place and of my brother (who hath found mercy); and my yearning to see him waxed excessive and I bewept and bewailed my strangerhood and distance from him. And at last my longings drave me home-wards until I resolved upon travelling to the region which was the falling-place of my head[74] and my homestead, to the end that I might again see my brother. Then Quoth I to myself, æO man,[75] how long wilt thou wander like a wild Arab from thy place of birth and native stead? Moreover, thou hast one brother and no more; so up with thee and travel and look upon him[76] ere thou die; for who wotteth the woes of the world and the changes of the days? ’Twould be saddest regret an thou lie down to die without beholding thy brother and Allah (laud be to the Lord!) hath vouchsafed thee ample wealth; and belike he may be straitened and in poor case, when thou wilt aid thy brother as well as see him.’ So I arose at once and equipped me for wayfare and recited the Fßtihah; then, whenas Friday prayers ended, I mounted and travelled to this town, after suffering manifold toils and travails which I patiently endured whilst the Lord (to whom be honour and glory!) veiled me with the veil of His protection. So I entered and whilst wandering about the streets, the day before yesterday, I beheld my brother’s son Alaeddin disporting himself with the boys and, by God the Great, O wife of my brother, the moment I saw him this heart of mine went forth to him (for blood yearneth unto blood!), and my soul felt and informed me that he was my very nephew. So I forgot all my travails and troubles at once on sighting him and I was like to fly for joy; but, when he told me of the dear one’s departure to the ruth of Allah Almighty, I fainted for stress of distress and disappointment. Perchance, however, my nephew hath informed thee of the pains which prevailed upon me; but after a fashion I am consoled by the sight of Alaeddin the legacy bequeathed to us by him who hath found mercy for that æwhoso leaveth issue is not wholly dead.’”[77] — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Nineteenth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Maghrabi, the Magician, said to Alaeddin’s mother, “Whoso leaveth issue is not wholly dead.” And when he looked at his sister-in-law she wept at these his words; so he turned to the lad that he might cause her forget the mention of her mate, as a means of comforting her and also of completing his deceit, and asked him, saying, “O my son Alaeddin what hast thou learned in the way of work and what is thy business? Say me, hast thou mastered any craft whereby to earn a livelihood for thyself and for thy mother?” The lad was abashed and put to shame and he hung down his head and bowed his brow groundwards; but his parent spake out, “How, forsooth? By Allah, he knoweth nothing at all, a child so ungracious as this I never yet saw; no, never! All the day long he idleth away his time with the sons of the quarter, vagabonds like himself, and his father (O regret of me!) died not save of dolour for him. And I also am now in piteous plight: I spin cotton and toil at my distaff, night and day, that I may earn a couple of scones of bread which we eat together. This is his condition, O my brother-in-law; and, by the life of thee, he cometh not near me save at meal-times and none other. Indeed, I am thinking to lock the house-door nor ever open to him again but leave him to go and seek a livelihood whereby he can live, for that I am now grown a woman in years and have no longer strength to toil and go about for a maintenance after this fashion. O Allah, I am compelled to provide him with daily bread when I require to be provided!” Hereat the Moorman turned to Alaeddin and said, “Why is this, O son of my brother, thou goest about in such ungraciousness? ’tis a disgrace to thee and unsuitable for men like thyself. Thou art a youth of sense, O my son, and the child of honest folk, so ’tis for thee a shame that thy mother, a woman in years, should struggle to support thee. And now that thou hast grown to man’s estate it becometh thee to devise thee some device whereby thou canst live, O my child. Look around thee and Alhamdolillah — praise be to Allah — in this our town are many teachers of all manner of crafts and nowhere are they more numerous; so choose thee some calling which may please thee to the end that I establish thee therein; and, when thou growest up, O my son, thou shalt have some business whereby to live. Haply thy father’s industry may not be to thy liking; and, if so it be, choose thee some other handicraft which suiteth thy fancy; then let me know and I will aid thee with all I can, O my son.” But when the Maghrabi saw that Alaeddin kept silence and made him no reply, he knew that the lad wanted none other occupation than a scapegrace-life, so he said to him, “O son of my brother, let not my words seem hard and harsh to thee, for, if despite all I say, thou still dislike to learn a craft, I will open thee a merchant’s store[78] furnished with costliest stuffs and thou shalt become famous amongst the folk and take and give and buy and sell and be well known in the city.” Now when Alaeddin heard the words of his uncle the Moorman, and the design of making him a Khwßjah[79] — merchant and gentleman, — he joyed exceedingly knowing that such folk dress handsomely and fare delicately. So he looked at the Maghrabi smiling and drooping his head groundwards and saying with the tongue of the case that he was content. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twentieth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Maghrabi, the Magician, looked at Alaeddin and saw him smiling, whereby he understood that the lad was satisfied to become a trader. So he said to him, “Since thou art content that I open thee a merchant’s store and make thee a gentleman, do thou, O son of my brother, prove thyself a man and Inshallah — God willing

— to-morrow I will take thee to the bazar in the first place and will have a fine suit of clothes cut out for thee, such gear as merchants wear; and, secondly, I will look after a store for thee and keep my word.” Now Alaeddin’s mother had somewhat doubted the Maroccan being her brother-in-law; but as soon as she heard his promise of opening a merchant’s store for her son and setting him up with stuffs and capital and so forth, the woman decided and determined in her mind that this Maghrabi was in very sooth her husband’s brother, seeing that no stranger man would do such goodly deed by her son. So she began directing the lad to the right road and teaching him to cast ignorance from out his head and to prove himself a man; moreover she bade him ever obey his excellent uncle as though he were his son and to make up for the time he had wasted in frowardness with his fellows. After this she arose and spread the table, then served up supper; so all sat down and fell to eating and drinking, while the Maghrabi conversed with Alaeddin upon matters of business and the like, rejoicing him to such degree that he enjoyed no sleep that night. But when the Moorman saw that the dark hours were passing by, and the wine was drunken, he arose and sped to his own stead; but, ere going, he agreed to return next morning and take Alaeddin and look to his suit of merchant’s clothes being cut out for him. And as soon as it was dawn, behold, the Maghrabi rapped at the door which was opened by Alaeddin’s mother: the Moorman, however, would not enter, but asked to take the lad with him to the market-street. Accordingly Alaeddin went forth to his uncle and, wishing him good morning, kissed his hand; and the Maroccan took him by the hand and fared with him to the Bazar. There he entered a clothier’s shop containing all kinds of clothes and called for a suit of the most sumptuous; whereat the merchant brought him out his need, all wholly fashioned and ready sewn, and the Moorman said to the lad, “Choose, O my child, whatso pleaseth thee.” Alaeddin rejoiced exceedingly seeing that his uncle had given him his choice, so he picked out the suit most to his own liking and the Maroccan paid to the merchant the price thereof in ready money. Presently he led the lad to the Hammßm-baths where they bathed; then they came out and drank sherbets, after which Alaeddin arose and, donning his new dress in huge joy and delight, went up to his uncle and kissed his hand and thanked him for his favours. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-first Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It has reached me, O King of the Age, that the Maghrabi, the Magician, after leaving the Hammßm with Alaeddin, took him and trudged with him to the Merchants’ bazar; and, having diverted him by showing the market and its sellings and buyings, said to him, “O my son, it besitteth thee to become familiar with the folk, especially with the merchants, so thou mayest learn of them merchant-craft, seeing that the same hath now become thy calling.” Then he led him forth and showed him the city and its cathedral-mosques together with all the pleasant sights therein; and, lastly, made him enter a cook’s shop. Here dinner was served to them on platters of silver and they dined well and ate and drank their sufficiency, after which they went their ways. Presently the Moorman pointed out to Alaeddin the pleasances and noble buildings, and went in with him to the Sultan’s Palace and diverted him with displaying all the apartments which were mighty fine and grand; and led him finally to the Khßn of stranger merchants where he himself had his abode. Then the Maroccan invited sundry traders which were in the Caravanserai; and they came and sat down to supper, when he notified to them that the youth was his nephew, Alaeddin by name. And after they had eaten and drunken and night had fallen, he rose up and taking the lad with him led him back to his mother, who no sooner saw her boy as he were one of the merchants[80] than her wits took flight and she waxed sad for very gladness. Then she fell to thanking her false connection, the Moorman, for all his benefits and said to him, “O my brother-in-law, I can never say enough though I expressed my gratitude to thee during the rest of thy days and praised thee for the good deeds thou hast done by this my child.” Thereupon Quoth the Maroccan, “O wife of my brother, deem this not mere kindness of me, for that the lad is mine own son and ’tis incumbent on me to stand in the stead of my brother, his sire. So be thou fully satisfied!” And Quoth she, “I pray Allah by the honour of the Hallows, the ancients and the moderns, that He preserve thee and cause thee to continue, O my brother-in-law and prolong for me thy life; so shalt thou be a wing over-shadowing this orphan lad; and he shall ever be obedient to thine orders nor shall he do aught save whatso thou biddest him thereunto." The Maghrabi replied, "O wife of my brother, Alaeddin is now a man of sense and the son of goodly folk, and I hope to Allah that he will follow in the footsteps of his sire and cool thine eyes. But I regret that, to- morrow being Friday, I shall not be able to open his shop, as 'tis meeting day when all the merchants, after congregational prayer, go forth to the gardens and pleasances. On the Sabbath,[81] however, Inshallah! — an it please the Creator — we will do our business. Meanwhile to-morrow I will come to thee betimes and take Alaeddin for a pleasant stroll to the gardens and pleasances without the city which haply he may hitherto not have beheld. There also he shall see the merchants and notables who go forth to amuse themselves, so shall he become acquainted with them and they with him." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-second Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Maghrabi went away and lay that night in his quarters; and early next morning he came to the tailor's house and rapped at the door. Now Alaeddin (for stress of his delight in the new dress he had donned and for the past day's enjoyment in the Hammam and in eating and drinking and gazing at the folk; expecting furthermore his uncle to come at dawn and carry him off on pleasuring to the gardens) had not slept a wink that night, nor closed his eyelids, and would hardly believe it when day broke. But hearing the knock at the door he went out at once in hot haste, like a spark of fire, and opened and saw his uncle, the Magician, who embraced him and kissed him. Then, taking his hand, the Moorman said to him as they fared forth together, "O son of my brother, this day will I show thee a sight thou never sawest in all thy life," and he began to make the lad laugh and cheer him with pleasant talk. So doing they left the city-gate, and the Maroccan took to promenading with Alaeddin amongst the gardens and to pointing out for his pleasure the mighty fine pleasances and the marvellous high-builded[82] pavilions. And whenever they stood to stare at a garth or a mansion or a palace the Maghrabi would say to his companion, “Doth this please thee, O son of my brother?” Alaeddin was nigh to fly with delight at seeing sights he had never seen in all his born days; and they ceased not[83] to stroll about and solace themselves until they waxed aweary, when they entered a mighty grand garden which was nearhand, a place that the heart delighted and the sight belighted; for that its swift-running rills flowed amidst the flowers and the waters jetted from the jaws of lions moulded in yellow brass like unto gold. So they took seat over against a lakelet and rested a little while, and Alaeddin enjoyed himself with joy exceeding and fell to jesting with his uncle and making merry with him as though the Magician were really his father’s brother. Presently the Maghrabi arose and loosing his girdle drew forth from thereunder a bag full of victual, dried fruits and so forth, saying to Alaeddin, “O my nephew, haply thou art become anhungered; so come forward and eat what thou needest.” Accordingly the lad fell upon the food and the Moorman ate with him and they were gladdened and cheered by rest and good cheer. Then Quoth the Magician, “Arise, O son of my brother, an thou be reposed and let us stroll onwards a little and reach the end of our walk.” Thereupon Alaeddin arose and the Maroccan paced with him from garden to garden until they left all behind them and reached the base of a high and naked hill; when the lad who, during all his days, had never issued from the city-gate and never in his life had walked such a walk as this, said to the Maghrabi, “O uncle mine, whither are we wending? We have left the gardens behind us one and all and have reached the barren hill- country;[84] and, if the way be still long, I have no strength left for walking: indeed I am ready to fall with fatigue. There are no gardens before us, so let us hark back and return to town.” Said the Magician, “No, O my son; this is the right road, nor are the gardens ended for we are going to look at one which hath ne’er its like amongst those of the Kings and all thou hast beheld are naught in comparison therewith. Then gird thy courage to walk; thou art now a man, Alhamdolillah — praise be to Allah!” Then the Maghrabi fell to soothing Alaeddin with soft words and telling him wondrous tales, lies as well as truth, until they reached the site intended by the African Magician who had travelled from the Sunset-land to the regions of China for the sake thereof. And when they made the place, the Moorman said to Alaeddin, "O son of my brother, sit thee down and take thy rest, for this is the spot we are now seeking and, Inshallah, soon will I divert thee by displaying marvel-matters whose like not one in the world ever saw; nor hath any solaced himself with gazing upon that which thou art about to behold." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-third Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Maghrabi wizard said to Alaeddin, "No one of created beings hath enjoyed the sights thou art about to see. But when thou art rested, arise and seek some wood-chips and fuel sticks[85] which be small and dry, wherewith we may kindle a fire: then will I show thee, O son of my brother, matters beyond the range of matter."[86] Now, when the lad heard these words, he longed to look upon what his uncle was about to do and, forgetting his fatigue, he rose forthright and fell to gathering small wood-chips and dry sticks, and continued until the Moorman cried to him, "Enough, O son of my brother!" Presently the Magician brought out from his breast-pocket a casket which he opened, and drew from it all he needed of incense; then he fumigated and conjured and adjured, muttering words none might understand. And the ground straightway clave asunder after thick gloom and quake of earth and bellowings of thunder. Hereat Alaeddin was startled and so affrighted that he tried to fly; but, when the African Magician saw his design, he waxed wroth with exceeding wrath, for that without the lad his work would profit him naught, the hidden hoard which he sought to open being not to be opened save by means of Alaeddin. So noting this attempt to run away, the Magician arose and raising his hand smote Alaeddin on the head a buffet so sore that well nigh his back-teeth were knocked out, and he fell swooning to the ground. But after a time he revived by the magic of the Magician, and cried, weeping the while, "O my uncle, what have I done that deserveth from thee such a blow as this?" Hereat the

Maghrabi fell to soothing him, and said, “O my son, ’tis my intent to make thee a man; therefore, do thou not gainsay me, for that I am thine uncle and like unto thy father. Obey me, therefore, in all I bid thee, and shortly thou shalt forget all this travail and toil whenas thou shalt look upon the marvel-matters I am about to show thee.” And soon after the ground had cloven asunder before the Maroccan it displayed a marble slab wherein was fixed a copper ring. The Maghrabi, striking a geomantic table[87] turned to Alaeddin, and said to him, “An thou do all I shall bid thee, indeed thou shalt become wealthier than any of the kings, and for this reason, O my son, I struck thee, because here lieth a hoard which is stored in thy name; and yet thou designedst to leave it and to levant. But now collect thy thoughts, and behold how I opened earth by my spells and adjurations.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-fourth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Maghrabi, the Magician, said to Alaeddin, “O my son, now collect thy thoughts! under yon stone wherein the ring is set lieth the treasure wherewith I acquainted thee: so set thy hand upon the ring and raise the slab, for that none other amongst the folk, thyself excepted, hath power to open it, nor may any of mortal birth, save thyself, set foot within this Enchanted Treasury which hath been kept for thee. But ’tis needful that thou learn of me all wherewith I would charge thee; nor gainsay e’en a single syllable of my words. All this, O my child, is for thy good; the hoard being of immense value, whose like the kings of the world never accumulated, and do thou remember that ’tis for thee and me.” So poor Alaeddin forgot his fatigue and buffet and tear-shedding, and he was dumbed and dazed at the Maghrabi’s words and rejoiced that he was fated to become rich in such measure that not even the Sultans would be richer than himself. Accordingly, he cried, “O my uncle, bid me do all thou pleasest, for I will be obedient unto thy bidding.” The Maghrabi replied, “O my nephew, thou art to me as my own child and even dearer, for being my brother’s son and for my having none other kith and kin except thyself; and thou, O my child, art my heir and successor.” So saying, he went up to Alaeddin and kissed him and said, “For whom do I intend these my labours? Indeed, each and every are for thy sake, O my son, to the end that I may leave thee a rich man and one of the very greatest. So gainsay me not in all I shall say to thee, and now go up to yonder ring and uplift it as I bade thee.” Alaeddin answered, “O uncle mine, this ring is over heavy for me: I cannot raise it single-handed, so do thou also come forward and lend me strength and aidance towards uplifting it, for indeed I am young in years.” The Moorman replied, “O son of my brother, we shall find it impossible to do aught if I assist thee, and all our efforts would be in vain. But do thou set thy hand upon the ring and pull it up, and thou shalt raise the slab forth-right, and in very sooth I told thee that none can touch it save thyself. But whilst haling at it cease not to pronounce thy name and the names of thy father and mother, so ‘twill rise at once to thee nor shalt thou feel its weight.” Thereupon the lad mustered up strength and girt the loins of resolution and did as the Maroccan had bidden him, and hove up the slab with all ease when he pronounced his name and the names of his parents, even as the Magician had bidden him. And as soon as the stone was raised he threw it aside. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-fifth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that after Alaeddin had raised the slab from over the entrance to the Hoard there appeared before him a Sardßb, a souterrain, whereunto led a case of some twelve stairs and the Maghrabi said, “O Alaeddin, collect thy thoughts and do whatso I bid thee to the minutest detail nor fail in aught thereof. Go down with all care into yonder vault until thou reach the bottom and there shalt thou find a space divided into four halls,[88] and in each of these thou shalt see four golden jars[89] and others of virgin or and silver. Beware, however, lest thou take aught therefrom or touch them, nor allow thy gown or its skirts even to brush the jars or the walls. Leave them and fare forwards until thou reach the fourth hall without lingering for a single moment on the way; and, if thou do aught contrary thereto thou wilt be at once transformed and become a black stone. When reaching the fourth hall thou wilt find therein a door which do thou open, and pronouncing the names thou spakest over the slab, enter there through into a garden adorned everywhere with fruit- bearing trees. This thou must traverse by a path thou wilt see in front of thee measuring some fifty cubits long, beyond which thou wilt come upon an open saloon[90] and therein a ladder of some thirty rungs. And thou shalt also see hanging from its ceiling" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-sixth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Maghrabi, the Magician, fell to teaching Alaeddin how he should descend into the Hoard and continued, "On reaching the saloon thou shalt there find a Lamp hanging from its ceiling; so mount the ladder and take that Lamp and place it in thy breast-pocket after pouring out its contents; nor fear evil from it for thy clothes because its contents are not common oil.[91] And on return thou art allowed to pluck from the trees whatso thou pleasest, for all is thine so long as the Lamp is in thy hand." Now when the Moorman ended his charge to Alaeddin, he drew off a seal-ring[92] and put it upon the lad's forefinger saying, "O my son, verily this signet shall free thee from all hurt and fear which may threaten thee, but only on condition that thou bear in mind all I have told thee.[93] So arise straightway and go down the stairs, strengthening thy purpose and girding the loins of resolution: moreover fear not for thou art now a man and no longer a child. And in shortest time, O my son, thou shalt win thee immense riches and thou shalt become the wealthiest of the world." Accordingly, Alaeddin arose and descended into the souterrain, where he found the four halls, each containing four jars of gold and these he passed by, as the Maroccan had bidden him, with the utmost care and caution. Thence he fared into the garden and walked along its length until he entered the saloon, where he mounted the ladder and took the Lamp which he extinguished, pouring out the oil which was therein, and placed it in his breast-pocket. Presently, descending the ladder he returned to the garden where he fell to gazing at the trees whereupon sat birds glorifying with loud voices their great Creator. Now he had not observed them as he went in, but all these trees bare for fruitage costly gems; moreover each had its own kind of growth and jewels of its peculiar sort; and these were of every colour, green and white; yellow, red and other such brilliant hues and the radiance flashing from these gems paled the rays of the sun in forenoon sheen. Furthermore the size of each stone so far surpassed description that no King of the Kings of the world owned a single gem equal to the larger sort nor could boast of even one half the size of the smaller kind of them. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-seventh Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin walked amongst the trees and gazed upon them and other things which surprised the sight and bewildered the wits; and, as he considered them, he saw that in lieu of common fruits the produce was of mighty fine jewels and precious stones,[94] such as emeralds and diamonds; rubies, spinels and balasses, pearls and similar gems astounding the mental vision of man. And forasmuch as the lad had never beheld things like these during his born days nor had reached those years of discretion which would teach him the worth of such valuables (he being still but a little lad), he fancied that all these jewels were of glass or crystal. So he collected them until he had filled his breast-pockets and began to certify himself if they were or were not common fruits, such as grapes, figs and such like edibles. But seeing them of glassy substance, he, in his ignorance of precious stones and their prices, gathered into his breast-pockets every kind of growth the trees afforded; and, having failed of his purpose in finding them food, he said in his mind, “I will collect a portion of these glass fruits for playthings at home.” So he fell to plucking them in quantities and cramming them in his pokes and breast-pockets till these were stuffed full; after which he picked others which he placed in his waist-shawl and then, girding himself therewith, carried off all he availed to, purposing to place them in the house by way of ornaments and, as hath been mentioned, never imagining that they were other than glass. Then he hurried his pace in fear of his uncle, the Maghrabi, until he had passed through the four halls and lastly on his return reached the souterrain where he cast not a look at the jars of gold, albeit he was able and allowed to take of the contents on his way back. But when he came to the souterrain-stairs[95] and clomb the steps till naught remained but the last; and, finding this higher than all the others, he was unable alone and unassisted, burthened moreover as he was, to mount it. So he said to the Maghrabi, "O my uncle, lend me thy hand and aid me to climb;" but the Moorman answered, "O my son, give me the Lamp and lighten thy load; belike 'tis that weigheth thee down." The lad rejoined, "O my uncle, 'tis not the Lamp downweigheth me at all; but do thou lend me a hand and as soon as I reach ground I will give it to thee." Hereat the Maroccan, the Magician, whose only object was the Lamp and none other, began to insist upon Alaeddin giving it to him at once; but the lad (forasmuch as he had placed it at the bottom of his breast-pocket and his other pouches being full of gems bulged outwards)[96] could not reach it with his fingers to hand it over, so the wizard after much vain persistency in requiring what his nephew was unable to give, fell to raging with furious rage and to demanding the Lamp whilst Alaeddin could not get at it. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-eighth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin could not get at the Lamp so as to hand it to his uncle the Maghrabi, that false felon, so the Magician waxed foolish with fury for that he could not win to his wish. Yet had the lad promised truthfully that he would give it up as soon as he might reach ground, without lying thought or ill-intent. But when the Moorman saw that he would not hand it over, he waxed wroth with wrath exceeding and cut off all his hopes of winning it; so he conjured and adjured and cast incense amiddlemost the fire, when forthright the slab made a cover of itself, and by the might of magic ridded the entrance; the earth buried the stone as it was aforetime and

Alaeddin, unable to issue forth, remained underground. Now the Sorcerer was a stranger, and, as we have mentioned, no uncle of Alaeddin's, and he had misrepresented himself and preferred a lying claim, to the end that he might obtain the Lamp by means of the lad for whom his Hoard had been upstored. So the Accursed heaped the earth over him and left him to die of hunger. For this Maghrabi was an African of AfrikÝyah proper, born in the Inner Sunset-land, and from his earliest age upwards he had been addicted to witchcraft and had studied and practiced every manner of occult science, for which unholy lore the city of Africa[97] is notorious. And he ceased not to read and hear lectures until he had become a past-master in all such knowledge. And of the abounding skill in spells and conjurations which he had acquired by the perusing and the lessoning of forty years, one day of the days he discovered by devilish inspiration that there lay in an extreme city of the cities of China, named Al-Kal'ßs,[98] an immense Hoard, the like whereof none of the Kings in this world had ever accumulated: moreover, that the most marvellous article in this Enchanted Treasure was a wonderful Lamp which, whoso possessed, could not possibly be surpassed by any man upon earth, either in high degree or in wealth and opulence; nor could the mightiest monarch of the universe attain to the all-sufficiency of this Lamp with its might of magical means. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Twenty-ninth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales." whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the Maghrabi assured himself by his science and saw that this Hoard could be opened only by the presence of a lad named Alaeddin, of pauper family and abiding in that very city, and learnt how taking it would be easy and without hardships, he straightway and without stay or delay equipped himself for a voyage to China (as we have already told) and he did what he did with Alaeddin fancying that he would become Lord of the Lamp. But his attempt and his hopes were baffled and his work was clean wasted; whereupon, determining to do the lad die, he heaped up the earth over him by gramarye to the end that the unfortunate might perish, reflecting that

“The live man hath no murtherer.”[99] Secondly, he did so with the design that, as Alaeddin could not come forth from underground, he would also be impotent to bring out the Lamp from the souterrain. So presently he wended his ways and retired to his own land, Africa, a sadder man and disappointed of all his expectations. Such was the case with the Wizard; but as regards Alaeddin when the earth was heaped over him, he began shouting to the Moorman whom he believed to be his uncle, and praying him to lend a hand that he might issue from the souterrain and return to earth’s surface; but, however loudly he cried, none was found to reply. At that moment he comprehended the sleight which the Maroccan had played upon him, and that the man was no uncle but a liar and a wizard. Then the unhappy despaired of life, and learned to his sorrow that there was no escape for him; so he fell to beweeping with sore weeping the calamity had befallen him; and after a little while he stood up and descended the stairs to see if Allah Almighty had lightened his grief-load by leaving a door of issue. So he turned him to the right and to the left but he saw naught save darkness and four walls closed upon him, for that the Magician had by his magic locked all the doors and had shut up even the garden, wherethrough the lad erst had passed, lest it offer him the means of issuing out upon earth’s surface, and that he might surely die. Then Alaeddin’s weeping waxed sorer, and his wailing louder whenas he found all the doors fast shut, for he had thought to solace himself awhile in the garden. But when he felt that all were locked, he fell to shedding tears and lamenting like unto one who hath lost his every hope, and he returned to sit upon the stairs of the flight whereby he had entered the souterrain. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirtieth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin sat down upon the stair of the vault weeping and wailing and wanting all hopes. But it is a light matter for Allah (be He exalted and extolled !) whenas He designeth aught to say, “Be” and it becometh; for that He createth joy in the midst of annoy; and on this wise it was with Alaeddin. Whilst the Maghrabi, the Magician, was sending him down into the souterrain he set upon his finger by way of gift, a seal ring and said, “Verily, this signet shall save thee from every strait an thou fall into calamity and ill shifts of time; and it shall remove from thee all hurt and harm, and aid thee with a strong arm whereso thou mayest be set.”[100] Now this was by destiny of God the Great, that it might be the means of Alaeddin’s escape; for whilst he sat wailing and weeping over his case and cast away all hope of life, and utter misery overwhelmed him, he rubbed his hands together for excess of sorrow, as is the wont of the woeful; then, raising them in supplication to Allah, he cried, “I testify that there is no God save Thou alone, The Most Great, the Omnipotent, the All-Conquering, Quickener of the dead, Creator of man’s need and Granter thereof, Resolver of his difficulties and duresse and Bringer of joy not of annoy. Thou art my sufficiency and Thou art the Truest of Trustees. And I bear witness that Mohammed is Thy servant and Thine Apostle and I supplicate Thee, O my God, by his favour with Thee to free me from this my foul plight.” And whilst he implored the Lord and was chafing his hands in the soreness of his sorrow for that had befallen him of calamity, his fingers chanced to rub the Ring when, lo and behold! forthright its Familiar rose upright before him and cried, “Adsum; thy slave between thy hands is come! Ask whatso thou wantest, for that I am the thrall of him on whose hand is the Ring, the Signet of my lord and master.” Hereat the lad looked at him and saw standing before him a Mßrid like unto an IfrÝt[101] of our lord Solomon’s Jinns. He trembled at the terrible sight; but, hearing the Slave of the Ring say, “Ask whatso thou wantest, verily, I am thy thrall, seeing that the signet of my lord be upon thy finger,” he recovered his spirits and remembered the Moorman’s saying when giving him the Ring So he rejoiced exceedingly and became brave and cried, “Ho thou; Slave of the Lord of the Ring, I desire thee to set me upon the face of earth.” And hardly had he spoken this speech when suddenly the ground clave asunder and he found himself at the door of the Hoard and outside it in full view of the world. Now for three whole days he had been sitting in the darkness of the Treasury underground and when the sheen of day and the thine of sun smote his face he found himself unable to keep his eyes open; so he began to unclose the lids a little and to close them a little until his eyeballs regained force and got used to the light and were purged of the noisome murk. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-first Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell me some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin, issuing from the Treasury, opened his eyes after a short space of time and saw himself upon earth's surface, the which rejoiced him exceedingly, and withal he was astounded at finding himself without the Hoard-door whereby he had passed in when it was opened by the Maghrabi, the Magician; especially as the adit had been lidded and the ground had been smoothed, showing no sign whatever of entrance. Thereat his surprise increased until he fancied himself in another place, nor was his mind convinced that the stead was the same until he saw the spot whereupon they had kindled the fire of wood-chips and dried sticks, and where the African Wizard had conjured over the incense. Then he turned him rightwards and leftwards and sighted the gardens from afar and his eyes recognized the road whereby he had come. So he returned thanks to Allah Almighty who had restored him to the face of earth and had freed him from death after he had cut off all hopes of life. Presently he arose and walked along the way to the town, which now he well knew, until he entered the streets and passed on to his own home. Then he went in to his mother and on seeing her, of the overwhelming stress of joy at his escape and the memory of past affright and the hardships he had borne and the pangs of hunger, he fell to the ground before his parent in a fainting-fit. Now his mother had been passing sad since the time of his leaving her and he found her moaning and crying about him; however on sighting him enter the house she joyed with exceeding joy, but soon was overwhelmed with woe when he sank upon the ground swooning before her eyes. Still,[102] she did not neglect the matter or treat it lightly, but at once hastened to sprinkle water upon his face and after she asked of the neighbours some scents which she made him snuff up. And when he came round a little, he prayed her to bring him somewhat of food saying, “O my mother ’tis now three days since I ate anything at all.” Thereupon she arose and brought him what she had by her; then, setting it before him, said, “Come forward, O my son; eat and be cheered[103] and, when thou shalt have rested, tell me what hath betided and affected thee, O my child; at this present I will not question thee for thou art aweary in very deed.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-second Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell me some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin ate and drank and was cheered and after he had rested and had recovered spirits he cried, “Ah, O my mother, I have a sore grievance against thee for leaving me to that accursed wight who strave to compass my destruction and designed to take my life.[104] Know that I beheld Death with mine own eyes at the hand of this damned wretch, whom thou didst certify to be my uncle; and, had not Almighty Allah rescued me from him, I and thou, O my mother, had been cozened by the excess of this Accursed’s promises to work my welfare, and by the great show of affection which he manifested to us. Learn, O my mother, that this fellow is a sorcerer, a Moorman, an accursed, a liar, a traitor, a hypocrite;[105] nor deem I that the devils under the earth are damnable as he. Allah abase him in his every book! Hear then, O my mother, what this abominable one did, and all I shall tell thee will be soothfast and certain. See how the damned villain brake every promise he made, certifying that he would soon work all good with me; and do thou consider the fondness which he displayed to me and the deeds which he did by me; and all this only to win his wish, for his design was to destroy me; and Alhamdolillah — laud to the Lord — for my deliverance. Listen and learn, O my mother, how this Accursed entreated me.” Then Alaeddin informed his mother of all that had befallen him (weeping the while for stress of gladness); how the Maghrabi had led him to a hill wherein was hidden the Hoard and how he had conjured and fumigated, adding,[106] “After which, O my mother, mighty fear get hold of me when the hill split and the earth gaped before me by his wizardry; and I trembled with terror at the rolling of thunder in mine ears and the murk which fell upon us when he fumigated and muttered spells. Seeing these horrors I in mine affright designed to fly; but, when he understood mine intent he reviled me and smote me a buffet so sore that it caused me to swoon. However, inasmuch as the Treasury was to be opened only by means of me, O my mother, he could not descend therein himself, it being in my name and not in his; and, for that he is an ill-omened magician, he understood that I was necessary to him and this was his need of me." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-third Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell me some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin acquainted his mother with all that had befallen him from the Maghrabi, the Magician, and said, "After he had buffetted me, he judged it advisable to soothe me in order that he might send me down into the Enchanted Treasury; and first he drew from his finger a Ring which he placed upon mine. So I descended and found four halls all full of gold and silver which counted as naught, and the Accursed had charged me not to touch aught thereof. Then I entered a mighty fine flower-garden everywhere bedecked with tall trees whose foliage and fruitage bewildered the wits, for all, O my mother, were of vari-coloured glass, and lastly I reached the Hall wherein hung this Lamp. So I took it straightway and put it out[107] and poured forth its contents." And so saying Alaeddin drew the Lamp from his breast- pocket and showed it to his mother, together with the gems and jewels which he had brought from the garden; and there were two large bag-pockets full of precious stones, whereof not one was to be found amongst the kings of the world. But the lad knew naught anent their worth deeming them glass or crystal; and presently he resumed, "After this, O mother mine, I reached the Hoard-door carrying the Lamp and shouted to the accursed Sorcerer, which called himself my uncle, to lend me a hand and hale me up, I being unable to mount of myself the last step for the over weight of my burthen. But he would not and said only, æFirst hand me the Lamp!’ As, however, I had placed it at the bottom of my breast-pocket and the other pouches bulged out beyond it, I was unable to get at it and said, æO my uncle, I cannot reach thee the Lamp, but I will give it to thee when outside the Treasury.’ His only need was the Lamp and he designed, O my mother, to snatch it from me and after that slay me, as indeed he did his best to do by heaping the earth over my head. Such then is what befel me from this foul Sorcerer.” Hereupon Alaeddin fell to abusing the Magician in hot wrath and with a burning heart and crying, “Well- away! I take refuge from this damned wight, the ill-omened, the wrongdoer, the for-swearer, the lost to all humanity, the arch- traitor, the hypocrite, the annihilator of ruth and mercy.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-fourth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when Alaeddin’s mother heard his words and what had befallen him from the Maghrabi, the Magician, she said, “Yea, verily, O my son, he is a miscreant, a hypocrite who murthereth the folk by his magic; but ’twas the grace of Allah Almighty, O my child, that saved thee from the tricks and the treachery of this accursed Sorcerer whom I deemed to be truly thine uncle.”[108] Then, as the lad had not slept a wink for three days and found himself nodding, he sought his natural rest, his mother doing on like wise; nor did he awake till about noon on the second day. As soon as he shook off slumber he called for somewhat of food being sore anhungered, but said his mother, “O my son, I have no victual for thee inasmuch as yesterday thou atest all that was in the house. But wait patiently a while: I have spun a trifle of yarn which I will carry to the market- street and sell it and buy with what it may be worth some victual for thee.” “O my mother,” said he, “keep your yarn and sell it not; but fetch me the Lamp I brought hither that I may go vend it and with its price purchase provaunt, for that I deem ‘twill bring more money than the spinnings.” So Alaeddin’s mother arose and fetched the Lamp for her son; but, while so doing, she saw that it was dirty exceedingly; so she said, “O my son, here is the Lamp, but ’tis very foul: after we shall have washed it and polished it ‘twill sell better.” Then, taking a handful of sand she began to rub therewith, but she had only begun when appeared to her one of the Jßnn whose favour was frightful and whose bulk was horrible big, and he was gigantic as one of the Jabßbirah.[109] And forthright he cried to her, “Say whatso thou wantest of me? Here am I, thy Slave and Slave to whoso holdeth the Lamp; and not I alone, but all the Slaves of the Wonderful Lamp which thou hendest in hand.” She quaked and terror was sore upon her when she looked at that frightful form and her tongue being tied she could not return aught reply, never having been accustomed to espy similar semblances. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin’s mother could not of her terror return a reply to the Mßrid; nay she fell to the ground oppressed by her affright.[110] Now her son was standing afar off and he had already seen the JinnÝ of the Ring which he had rubbed within the Treasury; so when he heard the Slave speaking to his parent, he hastened forwards and snatching the Lamp from her hand, said, “O Slave of the Lamp, I am unhungered and ’tis my desire that thou fetch me somewhat to eat and let it be something toothsome beyond our means.” The Jinni disappeared for an eye-twinkle and returned with a mighty fine tray and precious of price, for that ’twas all in virginal silver and upon it stood twelve golden platters of meats manifold and dainties delicate, with bread snowier than snow; also two silvern cups and as many black jacks[111] full of wine clear-strained and long-stored. And after setting all these before Alaeddin, he evanished from vision. Thereupon the lad went and sprinkled rose water upon his mother’s face and caused her snuff up perfumes pure and pungent and said to her when she revived, “Rise, O mother mine, and let us eat of these meats wherewith Almighty Allah hath eased our poverty.” But when she saw that mighty fine silvern tray she fell to marvelling at the matter and Quoth she, “O my son, who be this generous, this beneficent one who hath abated our hunger-pains and our penury? We are indeed under obligation to him and, meseemeth, 'tis the Sultan who, hearing of our mean condition and our misery, hath sent us this food tray." Quoth he, "O my mother, this be no time for questioning: arouse thee and let us eat for we are both a- famished." Accordingly, they sat down to the tray and fell to feeding when Alaeddin's mother tasted meats whose like in all her time she had never touched; so they devoured them with sharpened appetites and all the capacity engendered by stress of hunger; and, secondly, the food was such that marked the tables of the Kings. But neither of them knew whether the tray was or was not valuable, for never in their born days had they looked upon aught like it. As soon as they had finished the meal (withal leaving victual enough for supper and eke for the next day), they arose and washed their hands and sat at chat, when the mother turned to her son and said, "Tell me, O my child, what befel thee from the Slave, the JinnÝ, now that Alhamdolillah — laud to the Lord! — we have eaten our full of the good things wherewith He hath favoured us and thou hast no pretext for saying to me, æI am anhungered.' " So Alaeddin related to her all that took place between him and the Slave what while she had sunk upon the ground aswoon for sore terror; and at this she, being seized with mighty great surprise, said, " 'tis true; for the Jinns do present themselves before the Sons of Adam[112] but I, O my son, never saw them in all my life and meseemeth that this be the same who saved thee when thou west within the Enchanted Hoard." "This is not he, O my mother: this who appeared before thee is the Slave of the Lamp!" "Who may this be, O my son?" "This be a Slave of sort and shape other than he; that was the Familiar of the Ring and this his fellow thou sawest was the Slave of the Lamp thou hentest in hand." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin said, "Verily, O my mother, the Jinni who appeared to thee was the Slave of the Lamp." And when his parent heard these words she cried, “There! there![113] so this Accursed, who showed himself to me and went nigh unto killing me with affright, is attached to the Lamp.” “Yes,” he replied, and she rejoined, “Now I conjure thee, O my son, by the milk wherewith I suckled thee, to throw away from thee this Lamp and this Ring; because they can cause us only extreme terror and I especially can never abear a second glance at them. Moreover all intercourse with them is unlawful, for that the Prophet (whom Allah save and assain!) warned us against them with threats.” He replied, “Thy commands, O my mother, be upon my head[114] and mine eyes; but, as regards this saying thou saidest, ’tis impossible that I part or with Lamp or with Ring. Thou thyself hast seen what good the Slave wrought us whenas we were famishing; and know, O my mother, that the Maghrabi, the liar, the Magician, when sending me down into the Hoard, sought nor the silver nor the gold wherewith the four halls were fulfilled, but charged me to bring him only the Lamp (naught else), because in very deed he had learned its priceless value; and, had he not been certified of it, he had never endured such toil and trouble nor had he travelled from his own land to our land in search thereof; neither had he shut me up in the Treasury when he despaired of the Lamp which I would not hand to him. Therefore it besitteth us, O my mother, to keep this Lamp and take all care thereof nor disclose its mysteries to any; for this is now our means of livelihood and this it is shall enrich us. And likewise as regards the Ring, I will never withdraw it from my finger inasmuch as but for this thou hadst nevermore seen me on life nay I should have died within the Hoard underground. How then can I possibly remove it from my finger? And who wotteth that which may betide me by the lapse of Time, what trippings or calamities or injurious mishaps wherefrom this Ring may deliver me? However, for regard to thy feelings I will stow away the Lamp nor ever suffer it to be seen of thee hereafter.” Now when his mother heard his words and pondered them she knew they were true and said to him, “Do, O my son, whatso thou wiliest for my part I wish never to see them nor ever sight that frightful spectacle I erst saw.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night, Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be not sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin and his mother continued eating of the meats brought them by the Jinni for two full told days till they were finished; but when he learned that nothing of food remained for them, he arose and took a platter of the platters which the Slave had brought upon the tray. Now they were all of the finest gold but the lad knew naught thereof; so he bore it to the Bazar and there, seeing a man which was a Jew, a viler than the Satans,[115] offered it to him for sale. When the Jew espied it he took the lad aside that none might see him, and he looked at the platter and considered it till he was certified that it was of gold refined. But he knew not whether Alaeddin was acquainted with its value or he was in such matters a raw laddie,[116] so he asked him, "For how much, O my lord, this platter?" and the other answered, "Thou wottest what be its worth." The Jew debated with himself as to how much he should offer, because Alaeddin had returned him a craftsman-like reply; and he thought of the smallest valuation; at the same time he feared lest the lad, haply knowing its worth, should expect a considerable sum. So he said in his mind, "Belike the fellow is an ignoramous in such matters nor is ware of the price of the platter." Whereupon he pulled out of his pocket a diner, and Alaeddin eyed the gold piece lying in his palm and hastily taking it went his way; whereby the Jew was certified of his customer's innocence of all such knowledge, and repented with entire repentance that he had given him a golden diner in lieu of a copper carat,[117] a bright-polished groat. However, Alaeddin made no delay but went at once to the baker's where he bought him bread and changed the ducat; then, going to his mother, he gave her the scones and the remaining small coin and said, "O my mother, hie thee and buy thee all we require." So she arose and walked to the Bazar and laid in the necessary stock; after which they ate and were cheered. And whenever the price of the platter was expended, Alaeddin would take another and carry it to the accursed Jew who bought each and every at a pitiful price; and even this he would have minished but, seeing how he had paid a diner for the first, he feared to offer a lesser sum, lest the lad go and sell to some rival in trade and thus lose his usurious gains. Now when all the golden platters were sold, there remained only the silver tray whereupon they stood; and, for that it was large and weighty, Alaeddin brought the Jew to his house and produced the article, when the buyer, seeing its size gave him ten dinars and these being accepted went his ways. Alaeddin and his mother lived upon the sequins until they were spent; then he brought out the Lamp and rubbed it and straightway appeared the Slave who had shown himself aforetime. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Jinni, the Slave of the Lamp, on appearing to Alaeddin said, "Ask, O my lord, whatso thou wantest for I am thy Slave and the thrall of whoso hath the Lamp;" and said the lad, "I desire that thou bring me a tray of food like unto that thou broughtest me erewhiles, for indeed I am famisht." Accordingly, in the glance of an eye the Slave produced a similar tray supporting twelve platters of the most sumptuous, furnished with requisite cates; and thereon stood clean bread and sundry glass bottles[118] of strained wine. Now Alaeddin's mother had gone out when she knew he was about to rub the Lamp that she might not again look upon the Jinni; but after a while she returned and, when she sighted the tray covered with silvern[119] platters and smelt the savour of the rich meats diffused over the house, she marvelled and rejoiced. Thereupon Quoth he, "Look, O my mother! Thou badest me throw away the Lamp, see now its virtues;" and Quoth she, "O my son, Allah increase his[120] weal, but I would not look upon him." Then the lad sat down with his parent to the tray and they ate and drank until they were satisfied; after which they removed what remained for use on the morrow. As soon as the meats had been consumed, Alaeddin arose and stowed away under his clothes a platter of the platters and went forth to find the Jew, purposing to sell it to him; but by fiat of Fate he passed by the shop of an ancient jeweller, an honest man and a pious who feared Allah. When the Shaykh saw the lad, he asked him saying, "O my son, what dost thou want? for that times manifold have I seen thee passing hereby and having dealings with a Jewish man; and I have espied thee handing over to him sundry articles; now also I fancy thou hast somewhat for sale and thou seekest him as a buyer thereof. But thou wottest not, O my child, that the Jews ever hold lawful to them the good of Moslems,[121] the Confessors of Allah Almighty's unity, and, always defraud them; especially this accursed Jew with whom thou hast relations and into whose hands thou hast fallen. If then, O my son, thou have aught thou wouldest sell show the same to me and never fear, for I will give thee its full price by the truth of Almighty Allah." Thereupon Alaeddin brought out the platter which when the ancient goldsmith saw, he took and weighed it in his scales and asked the lad saying, "Was it the fellow of this thou soldest to the Jew?" "Yes, its fellow and its brother," he answered, and Quoth the old man, "What price did he pay thee?" Quoth the lad, "One diner." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the ancient goldsmith, hearing from Alaeddin how the Jew used to give only one diner as the price of the platter, cried, "Ah! I take refuge from this Accursed who cozeneth the servants of Allah Almighty!" Then, looking at the lad, he exclaimed, "O my son, verily yon tricksy Jew hath cheated thee and laughed at thee, this platter being pure silver and virginal. I have weighed it and found it worth seventy diners; and, if thou please to take its value, take it." Thereupon the Shaykh counted out to him seventy gold pieces, which he accepted and presently thanked him for his kindness in exposing the Jew's rascality. And after this, whenever the price of a platter was expended, he would bring another, and on such wise he and his mother were soon in better circumstances; yet they ceased not to live after their olden fashion as middle class folk[122] without spending on diet overmuch or squandering money. But Alaeddin had now thrown off the ungraciousness of his boyhood; he shunned the society of scapegraces and he began to frequent good men and true, repairing daily to the market-street of the merchants and there companying with the great and the small of them, asking about matters of merchandise and learning the price of investments and so forth; he likewise frequented the Bazars of the Goldsmiths and the Jewellers[123] where he would sit and divert himself by inspecting their precious stones and by noting how jewels were sold and bought therein. Accordingly, he presently became ware that the tree-fruits, wherewith he had filled his pockets what time he entered the Enchanted Treasury, were neither glass nor crystal but gems rich and rare; and he understood that he had acquired immense wealth such as the Kings never can possess. He then considered all the precious stones which were in the Jewellers' Quarter, but found that their biggest was not worth his smallest. On this wise he ceased not every day repairing to the Bazar and making himself familiar with the folk and winning their loving will;[124] and enquiring anent selling and buying, giving and taking, the dear and the cheap, until one day of the days when, after rising at dawn and donning his dress he went forth, as was his wont, to the Jewellers' Bazar; and, as he passed along it he heard the crier crying as follows: "By command of our magnificent master, the King of the Time and the Lord of the Age and the Tide, let all the folk lock up their shops and stores and retire within their houses, for that the Lady Badr al- Budur,[125] daughter of the Sultan, designeth to visit the Hammßm; and whoso gainsayeth the order shall be punished with death-penalty and be his blood upon his own neck!" But when Alaeddin heard the proclamation, he longed to look upon the King's daughter and said in his mind, "Indeed all the lieges talk of her beauty and loveliness and the end of my desires is to see her." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fortieth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin fell to contriving some means whereby he might look upon the Princess Badr al-Budur and at last judged best to take his station behind the Hammam door whence he might see her face as she entered.[126] Accordingly, without stay or delay he repaired to the Baths before she was expected and stood a-rear of the entrance, a place whereat none of the folk happened to be looking. Now when the Sultan's daughter had gone the rounds of the city and its main streets and had solaced herself by sight- seeing, she finally reached the Hammam and whilst entering she raised her veil, when her face rose before sight as it were a pearl of price or a sheeny sun, and she was as one of whom the describer sang,

"Magic Kohl enchanteth the glances so bright of her: * We pluck
roses in posies from cheeks rosy bright of her:
Of night's gloomiest hue is the gloom of the hair of her * And
her bright brow uplighteth the murks of the night of
her."[127]

(Quoth the reciter) when the Princess raised from her face the veil and Alaeddin saw her favour he said, "In very truth her fashion magnifieth her Almighty Fashioner and glory be to Him who created her and adorned her with this beauty and loveliness." His strength was struck down from the moment he saw her and his thoughts were distraught; his gaze was dazed, the love of her get hold of the whole of his heart; and, when he returned home to his mother, he was as one in ecstasy. His parent addressed him, but he neither replied nor denied; and, when she set before him the morning meal he continued in like case; so Quoth she, "O my son, what is't may have befallen thee? Say me, doth aught ail thee? Let me know what ill hath betided thee for, unlike thy custom, thou speakest not when I bespeak thee." Thereupon Alaeddin (who used to think that all women resembled his mother[128] and who, albeit he had heard of the charms of Badr al-Budur, daughter of the Sultan, yet knew not what "beauty" and "loveliness" might signify) turned to his parent and exclaimed, "Let me be!" However, she persisted in praying him to come forwards and eat, so he did her bidding but hardly touched food; after which he lay at full length on his bed all the night through in cogitation deep until morning morrowed. The same was his condition during the next day, when his mother was perplexed for the case of her son and unable to learn what had happened to him. So, thinking that belike he might be ailing she drew near him and asked him saying, "O my son, an thou sense aught of pain or such like, let me know that I may fare forth and fetch thee the physician; and to-day there be in this our city a leech from the Land of the Arabs whom the Sultan hath sent to summon and the bruit abroad reporteth him to be skillful exceedingly. So, an be thou ill let me go and bring him to thee." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-first Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin, hearing his parent's offer to summon the mediciner, said, "O my mother, I am well in body and on no wise ill. But I ever thought that all women resembled thee until yesterday, when I beheld the Lady Badr al-Budur daughter of the Sultan, as she was faring for the Baths." Then he related to her all and everything that had happened to him adding, "Haply thou also hast heard the crier a-crying, æLet no man open shop or stand in street that the Lady Badr al-Budur may repair to the Hammam without eye seeing her.' But I have looked upon her even as she is, for she raised her veil at the door and, when I viewed her favour and beheld that noble work of the Creator, a sore fit of ecstasy, O my mother, fell upon me for love of her and firm resolve to win her hath opened its way into every limb of me, nor is repose possible for me except I win her. Wherefor I purpose asking her to wife from the Sultan her sire in lawful wedlock." When Alaeddin's mother heard her son's words, she belittled his wits and cried, "O my child, the name of Allah upon thee! meseemeth thou hast lost thy senses. But be thou rightly guided, O my son, nor be thou as the men Jinn-maddened!" He replied, "Nay, O mother mine, I am not out of my mind nor am I of the maniacs; nor shall this thy saying alter one jot of what is in my thoughts, for rest is impossible to me until I shall have won the dearling of my heart's core, the beautiful Lady Badr al-Budur. And now I am resolved to ask her of her sire the Sultan." She rejoined, "O my son, by my life upon thee speak not such speech, lest any overhear thee and say thou be insane: so cast away from thee such nonsense! Who shall undertake a matter like this or make such request to the King? Indeed, I know not how, supposing this thy speech to be soothfast, thou shalt manage to crave such grace of the Sultan or through whom thou desirest to propose it.” He retorted, “Through whom shall I ask it, O my mother, when thou art present? And who is there fonder and more faithful to me than thyself? So my design is that thou thy self shalt proffer this my petition.” Quoth she, “O my son, Allah remove me far therefrom! What! have I lost my wits like thyself? Cast the thought away and a long way from thy heart. Remember whose son thou art, O my child, the orphan boy of a tailor, the poorest and meanest of the tailors toiling in this city; and I, thy mother, am also come of pauper folk and indigent. How then durst thou ask to wife the daughter of the Sultan, whose sire would not deign marry her with the sons of the Kings and the Sovrans, except they were his peers in honour and grandeur and majesty; and, were they but one degree lower, he would refuse his daughter to them.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-second Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin took patience until his parent had said her say, when Quoth he, “O my mother, everything thou hast called to mind is known to me; moreover ’tis thoroughly well known to me that I am the child of pauper parents; withal do not these words of thee divert me from my design at all, at all Nor the less do I hope of thee, an I be thy son and thou truly love me, that thou grant me this favour, otherwise thou wilt destroy me; and present Death hovereth over my head except I win my will of my heart’s dearling; and I, O my mother, am in every case thy child.” Hearing these words, his parent wept of her sorrow for him and said, “O my child! Yes, in very deed I am thy mother, nor have I any son or life’s blood of my liver except thyself, and the end of my wishes is to give thee a wife and rejoice in thee. But suppose that I would seek a bride of our likes and equals, her people will at once ask an thou have any land or garden, merchandise or handicraft, wherewith thou canst support her; and what is the reply I can return? Then, if I cannot possibly answer the poor like ourselves, how shall I be bold enough, O my son, to ask for the daughter of the Sultan of China-land who hath no peer or behind or before him? Therefore do thou weigh this matter in thy mind. Also who shall ask her to wife for the son of a snip? Well indeed I wot that my saying aught of this kind will but increase our misfortunes; for that it may be the cause of our incurring mortal danger from the Sultan; peradventure even death for thee and me. And, as concerneth myself, how shall I venture upon such rash deed and perilous, O my son? and in what way shall I ask the Sultan for his daughter to be thy wife; and, indeed, how ever shall I even get access to him? And should I succeed therein, what is to be my answer an they ask me touching thy means? Haply the King will hold me to be a madwoman. And, lastly, suppose that I obtain audience of the Sultan, what offering is there I can submit to the King's majesty?"[129] — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-third Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales;" whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin's mother continued to her son, " 'tis true, O my child, that the Sultan is mild and merciful, never rejecting any who approach him to require justice or ruth or protection, nor any who pray him for a present; for he is liberal and lavisheth favour upon near and far. But he dealeth his boons to those deserving them, to men who have done some derring-do in battle under his eyes or have rendered as civilians great service to his estate. But thou! do thou tell me what feat thou hast performed in his presence or before the public that thou meritest from him such grace? And, secondly, this boon thou ambitionest is not for one of our condition, nor is it possible that the King grant to thee the bourne of thine aspiration; for whoso goeth to the Sultan and craveth of him a favour, him it besitteth to take in hand somewhat that suiteth the royal majesty, as indeed I warned thee aforetime. How, then, shalt thou risk thyself to stand before the Sultan and ask his daughter in marriage, when thou hast with thee naught to offer him of that which beseemeth his exalted station?" Hereto Alaeddin replied, "O my mother, thou speakest to the point and hast reminded me aright and 'tis meet that I revolve in mind the whole of thy remindings. But, O my mother, the love of Princess Badr al-Budur hath entered into the core of my heart; nor can I rest without I win her. However, thou hast also recalled to me a matter which I forgot and 'tis this emboldeneth me to ask his daughter of the King. Albeit thou, O my mother, declarest that I have no gift which I can submit to the Sultan, as is the wont of the world, yet in very sooth I have an offering and a present whose equal, O my mother, I hold none of the Kings to possess; no, nor even aught like it." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-fourth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin said to his mother, "Because verily that which I deemed glass or crystal was nothing but precious stones and I hold that all the Kings of the World have never possessed any thing like one of the smallest thereof. For, by frequenting the jeweller-folk, I have learned that they are the costliest gems and these are what I brought in my pockets from the Hoard, whereupon, an thou please, compose thy mind. We have in our house a bowl of China porcelain; so arise thou and fetch it, that I may fill it with these jewels, which thou shalt carry as a gift to the King, and thou shalt stand in his presence and solicit him for my requirement. I am certified that by such means the matter will become easy to thee; and, if thou be unwilling, O my mother, to strive for the winning of my wish as regards the lady Badr al- Budur, know thou that surely I shall die. Nor do thou imagine that this gift is of aught save the costliest of stones and be assured, O my mother, that in my many visits to the Jewellers' Bazar I have observed the merchants selling for sums man's judgment may not determine jewels whose beauty is not worth one quarter carat of what we possess; seeing which I was certified that ours are beyond all price. So arise, O my mother, as I bade thee and bring me the porcelain bowl aforesaid, that I may arrange therein some of these gems and we will see what semblance they show." So she brought him the China bowl saying in herself, "I shall know what to do when I find out if the words of my child concerning these jewels be soothfast or not;” and she set it before her son who pulled the stones out of his pockets and disposed them in the bowl and ceased not arranging therein gems of sorts till such time as he had filled it. And when it was brimful she could not fix her eyes firmly upon it; on the contrary, she winked and blinked for the dazzle of the stones and their radiance and excess of lightning like glance; and her wits were bewildered thereat; only she was not certified of their value being really of the enormous extent she had been told. Withal she reflected that possibly her son might have spoken aright when he declared that their like was not to be found with the Kings. Then Alaeddin turned to her and said, “Thou hast seen, O my mother, that this present intended for the Sultan is magnificent, and I am certified that it will procure for thee high honour with him and that he will receive thee with all respect. And now, O my mother, thou hast no excuse; so compose thy thoughts and arise; take thou this bowl and away with it to the palace.” His mother rejoined, “O my son, ’tis true that the present is high-priced exceedingly and the costliest of the costly; also that according to thy word none owneth its like. But who would have the boldness to go and ask the Sultan for his daughter, the Lady Badr al-Badur? I indeed dare not say to him, æI want thy daughter!’ when he shall ask me, æWhat is thy want?’ for know thou, O my son, that my tongue will be tied. And, granting that Allah assist me and I embolden myself to say to him, æMy wish is to become a connection of thine through the marriage of thy daughter, the Lady Badr al-Budur, to my son Alaeddin,’ they will surely decide at once that I am demented and will thrust me forth in disgrace and despised. I will not tell thee that I shall thereby fall into danger of death, for ‘twill not only be I but thou likewise. However, O my son, of my regard for thine inclination, I needs must embolden myself and hie thither; yet, O my child, if the King receive me and honour me on account of the gift and enquire of me what thou desirest,” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the

Age, that Alaeddin's mother said to her son, "And in reply I ask of him that which thou desirest in the matter of thy marriage with his daughter, how shall I answer him an he ask me, as is man's wont, What estates hast thou, and what income? And perchance, O my son, he will question me of this before questioning me of thee." Alaeddin replied, " 'tis not possible that the Sultan should make such demand what time he considereth the jewels and their magnificence; nor is it meet to think of such things as these which may never occur. Now do thou but arise and set before him this present of precious stones and ask of him his daughter for me, and sit not yonder making much of the difficulty in thy fancy. Ere this thou hast learned, O mother mine, that the Lamp which we possess hath become to us a stable income and that whatso I want of it the same is supplied to me; and my hope is that by means thereof I shall learn how to answer the Sultan should he ask me of that thou sayest."[130] Then Alaeddin and his mother fell to talking over the subject all that night long and when morning morrowed, the dame arose and heartened her heart, especially as her son had expounded to her some little of the powers of the Lamp and the virtues thereof; to wit, that it would supply all they required of it. Alaeddin, however, seeing his parent take courage when he explained to her the workings of the Lamp, feared lest she might tattle to the folk thereof;[131] so he said to her, "O my mother, beware how thou talk to any of the properties of the Lamp and its profit, as this is our one great good. Guard thy thoughts lest thou speak over much concerning it before others, whoso they be; haply we shall lose it and lose the boon fortune we possess and the benefits we expect, for that 'tis of him."[132] His mother replied, "Fear not, therefor, O my son," and she arose and took the bowl full of jewels, which she wrapped up in a fine kerchief, and went forth betimes that she might reach the Divan ere it became crowded. When she passed into the Palace, the levÚe not being fully attended, she saw the Wazirs and sundry of the Lords of the land going into the presence-room and after a short time, when the Divan was made complete by the Ministers and high Officials and Chieftains and Emirs and Grandees, the Sultan appeared and the Wazirs made their obeisance and likewise did the Nobles and the Notables. The King seated himself upon the throne of his kingship, and all present at the levÚe stood before him with crossed arms awaiting his commandment to sit; and, when they received it, each took his place according to his degree; then the claimants came before the Sultan who delivered sentence, after his wonted way, until the Divan was ended, when the King arose and withdrew into the palace[133] and the others all went their ways. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-sixth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin’s mother, having come the earliest of all, found means of entering without any addressing her or offering to lead her to the presence; and she ceased not standing there until the Divan ended, when the Sultan arose and withdrew into the palace and the others all went about their business. And when she saw the throne empty and the King passing into his Harem, she also wended her ways and returned home. But as soon as her son espied her, bowl in hand, he thought that haply something untoward had befallen her, but he would not ask of aught until such time as she had set down the bowl, when she acquainted him with that which had occurred and ended by adding, “Alhamdolillah, — laud to the Lord! — O my child, that I found courage enough and secured for myself standing place in the levÚe this day; and, albe I dreaded to bespeak the King yet (Inshallah!) on the morrow I will address him. Even to-day were many who, like myself, could not get audience of the Sultan. But be of good cheer, O my son, and to-morrow needs must I bespeak him for thy sake; and what happened not may happen.” When Alaeddin heard his parent’s words, he joyed with excessive joy; and, although he expected the matter to be managed hour by hour, for excess of his love and longing to the Lady Badr al-Budur, yet he possessed his soul in patience. They slept well that night and betimes next morning the mother of Alaeddin arose and went with her bowl to the King’s court which she found closed. So she asked the people and they told her that the Sultan did not hold a levÚe every day but only thrice in the se’nnight; wherefor she determined to return home; and, after this, whenever she saw the court open she would stand before the

King until the reception ended and when it was shut she would go to make sure thereof; and this was the case for the whole month. The Sultan was wont to remark her presence at every levÚe, but, on the last day when she took her station, as was her wont, before the Council, she allowed it to close and lacked boldness to come forwards and speak even a syllable. Now as the King having risen was making for his Harem accompanied by the Grand Wazir, he turned to him and said, "O Wazir, during the last six or seven levÚe days I see yonder old woman present herself at every reception and I also note that she always carrieth a something under her mantilla. Say me, hast thou, O Wazir, any knowledge of her and her intention?" "O my lord the Sultan, said the other, "verily women be weakly of wits, and haply this goodwife cometh hither to complain before thee[134] against her goodman or some of her people." But this reply was far from satisfying the Sultan; nay, be bade the Wazir, in case she should come again, set her before him; and forthright the Minister placed hand on head and exclaimed, "To hear is to obey, O our lord the Sultan!" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-seventh Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the mother of Alaeddin, as she made a practice of repairing to the Divan every day and passing into the room and standing opposite the King, albeit she was sorrowful and sore aweary, withal for her son's sake she endeavored to make easy all her difficulties. Now one day of the days, when she did according to her custom, the Sultan cast his eyes upon her as she stood before him, and said to his Grand Wazir, "This be the very woman whereof I spake to thee yesterday, so do thou straightway bring her before me, that I may see what be her suit and fulfil her need." Accordingly, the Minister at once introduced her and when in the presence she saluted the King by kissing her finger tips and raising them to her brow;[135] and, praying for the Sultan's glory and continuance and the permanence of his prosperity, bussed ground before him. Thereupon, Quoth he "O woman,[136] for sundry days I have seen thee attend the levÚe sans a word said; so tell me an thou have any requirement I may grant." She kissed ground a second time and after blessing him, answered, "Yea, verily, as thy head liveth, O King of the Age, I have a want; but first of all, do thou deign grant me a promise of safety that I may prefer my suit to the ears of our lord the Sultan; for haply thy Highness[137] may find it a singular." The King, wishing to know her need, and being a man of unusual mildness and clemency, gave his word for her immunity and bade forthwith dismiss all about him, remaining without other but the Grand Wazir. Then he turned towards his suppliant and said, "Inform me of thy suit: thou hast the safeguard of Allah Al- mighty." "O King of the Age," replied she, "I also require of thee pardon;" and Quoth he, "Allah pardon thee even as I do." Then, Quoth she, "O our lord the Sultan, I have a son, Alaeddin hight; and he, one day of the days, having heard the crier commending all men to shut shop and shun the streets, for that the Lady Badr al-Budur, daughter of the Sultan, was going to the Hammam, felt an uncontrollable longing to look upon her, and hid himself in a stead whence he could sight her right well, and that place was behind the door of the Baths. When she entered he beheld her and considered her as he wished, and but too well; for, since the time he looked upon her, O King of the Age, unto this hour, life hath not been pleasant to him. And he hath required of me that I ask her to wife for him from thy Highness, nor could I drive this fancy from his mind because love of her hath mastered his vitals and to such degree that he said to me, æKnow thou, O mother mine, that an I win not my wish surely I shall die.' Accordingly I hope that thy Highness will deign be mild and merciful and pardon this boldness on the part of me and my child and refrain to punish us therefor." When the Sultan heard her tale he regarded her with kindness and, laughing aloud, asked her, "What may be that thou carriest and what be in yonder kerchief?" And she seeing the Sultan laugh in lieu of waxing wroth at her words, forthright opened the wrapper and set before him the bowl of jewels, whereby the audience-hall was illumined as it were by lustres and candelabra;[138] and he was dazed and amazed at the radiance of the rare gems, and he fell to marvelling at their size and beauty and excellence. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-eighth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, if thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the King saw the gems he was seized by surprise and cried, “Never at all until this day saw I anything like these jewels for size and beauty and excellence: nor deem I that there be found in my treasury a single one like them.” Then he turned O Wazir? Tell me hast thou to his Minister and asked, “What sayest thou, seen in thy time such mighty fine jewels as these?” The other answered, “Never saw I such, O our lord the Sultan, nor do I think that there be in the treasures of my lord the Sultan the fellow of the least thereof.” The King resumed, “Now indeed whoso hath presented to me such jewels meriteth to become bridegroom to my daughter, Badr al-Budur; because, as far as I see, none is more deserving of her than he.” When the Wazir heard the Sultan’s words he was tongue-tied with concern and he grieved with sore grief, for the King had promised to give the Princess in marriage to his son; so after a little while he said, “O King of the Age, thy Highness deigned promise me that the Lady Badr al-Budur should be spouse to my son; so ’tis but right that thine exalted Highness vouchsafe us a delay of three months, during which time, Inshallah! my child may obtain and present an offering yet costlier than this.” Accordingly the King, albeit he knew that such a thing could not be done, or by the Wazir or by the greatest of his Grandees, yet of his grace and kindness granted him the required delay. Then he turned to the old woman, Alaeddin’s mother, and said, “Go to thy son and tell him I have pledged my word that my daughter shall be in his name;[139] only ’tis needful that I make the requisite preparations of nuptial furniture for her use; and ’tis only meet that he take patience for the next three months.” Receiving this reply, Alaeddin’s mother thanked the Sultan and blessed him; then, going forth in hottest haste, as one flying for joy, she went home; and when her son saw her entering with a smiling face, he was gladdened at the sign of good news, especially because she had returned without delay as on the Fast days, and had not brought back the bowl. Presently he asked her saying, “Inshallah, thou bearest me, O my mother, glad tidings; and peradventure the jewels and their value have wrought their work and belike thou hast been kindly received by the King and he hath shown thee grace and hath given ear to thy request?" So she told him the whole tale, how the Sultan had entreated her well and had marvelled at the extraordinary size of the gems and their surpassing water as did also the Wazir, adding, "And he promised that his daughter should be thine. Only, O my child, the Wazir spake of a secret contract made with him by the Sultan before he pledged himself to me and, after speaking privily, the King put me off to the end of three months: therefore I have become fearful lest the Wazir be evilly disposed to thee and perchance he may attempt to change the Sultan's mind." And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Forty-ninth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when Alaeddin heard his mother's words and how the Sultan had promised him his daughter, deferring, however, the wedding until after the third month, his mind was gladdened and he rejoiced exceedingly and said, "Inasmuch as the King hath given his word after three months (well, it is a long time!), at all events my gladness is mighty great." Then he thanked his parent, showing her how her good work had exceeded her toil and travail; and said to her, "By Allah, O my mother, hitherto I was as 'twere in my grave and therefrom thou hast withdrawn me; and I praise Allah Almighty because I am at this moment certified that no man in the world is happier than I or more fortunate." Then he took patience until two of the three months had gone by. Now one day of the days his mother fared forth about sundown to the Bazar that she might buy somewhat of oil; and she found all the market shops fast shut and the whole city decorated, and the folk placing waxen tapers and flowers at their casements; and she beheld the soldiers and household troops and Aghßs[140] riding in procession and flambeaux and lustres flaming and flaring, and she wondered at the marvellous sight and the glamour of the scene. So she went in to an oilman's store which stood open still and bought her need of him and said, "By thy life, O uncle, tell me what be the tidings in town this day, that people have made all these decorations and every house and market-street are adorned and the troops all stand on guard?" The oilman asked her, "O woman, I suppose thou art a stranger and not one of this city?" and she answered, "Nay, I am thy townswoman." He rejoined, "Thou a towns-woman, and yet wottest not that this very night the son of the Grand Wazir goeth in to the Lady Badr al-Budur, daughter of the Sultan! He is now in the Hammam and all this power of soldiery is on guard and standing under arms to await his coming forth, when they will bear him in bridal procession to the palace where the Princess expecteth him." As the mother of Alaeddin heard these words, she grieved and was distraught in thought and perplexed how to inform her son of this sorrowful event, well knowing that the poor youth was looking, hour by hour, to the end of the three months. But she returned straightway home to him and when she had entered she said, "O my son, I would give thee certain tidings, yet hard to me will be the sorrow they shall occasion thee." He cried, "Let me know what be thy news;" and she replied, "Verily the Sultan hath broken his promise to thee in the matter of the Lady Badr al-Budur, and this very night the Grand Wazir's son goeth in to her. And for some time, O my son, I have suspected that the Minister would change the King's mind, even as I told thee how he had spoken privily to him before me." Alaeddin[141] asked, "How learnedst thou that the Wazir's son is this night to pay his first visit to the Princess?" So she told him the whole tale, how when going to buy oil she had found the city decorated and the eunuch-officials and Lords of the land with the troops under arms awaiting the bridegroom from the Baths; and that the first visit was appointed for that very night. Hearing this Alaeddin was seized with a fever of jealousy brought on by his grief: however, after a short while he remembered the Lamp and, recovering his spirits said, "By thy life, O my mother, do thou believe that the Wazir's son will not enjoy her as thou thinkest. But now leave we this discourse and arise thou and serve up supper[142] and after eating let me retire to my own chamber and all will be well and happy." And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fiftieth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin after he had supped retired to his chamber and, locking the door, brought out the Lamp and rubbed it, whenas forthright appeared to him its Familiar who said, "Ask whatso thou wantest, for I am thy Slave and Slave to him who holdeth the Lamp in hand; I and all the Slaves of the Lamp." He replied, "Hear me! I prayed the Sultan for his daughter to wife and he plighted her to me after three months; but he hath not kept his word; nay, he hath given her to the son of the Wazir and this very night the bridegroom will go in to her. Therefore I command thee (an thou be a trusty Servitor to the Lamp) when thou shalt see bride and bridegroom bedded together this night,[143] at once take them up and bear them hither abed; and this be what I want of thee." The Marid replied, "Hearing and obeying; and if thou have other service but this, do thou demand of me all thou desirest." Alaeddin "At the present time I require naught save that I bade thee do." Here upon the Slave disappeared and Alaeddin returned to pass the rest of the evening with his mother. But at the hour when he knew that the Servitor would be coming, he arose and refired to his chamber and after a little while, behold, the Marid came bringing to him the newly-wedded couple upon their bridal-bed. Alaeddin rejoiced to see them with exceeding joy; then he cried to the Slave, "Carry yonder gallows- bird hence and lay him at full length in the privy."[144] His bidding was done straightway; but, before leaving him, the Slave blew upon the bridegroom a blast so cold that it shrivelled him and the plight of the Wazir's son became piteous. Then the Servitor returning to Alaeddin said to him, "An thou require aught else, inform me thereof;" and said the other, "Return a- morn that thou mayest restore them to their stead;" whereto, "I hear and obey," Quoth the Marid and evanished. Presently Alaeddin arose, hardly believing that the affair had been such a success for him; but whenas he looked upon the Lady Badr al-Budur lying under his own roof, albeit he had long burned with her love yet he preserved respect for her and said, "O Princess of fair ones, think not that I brought thee hither hither to minish thy honour. Heaven forfend! Nay 'twas only to prevent the wrong man enjoying thee, for that thy sire the Sultan promised thee to me. So do thou rest in peace." — And

Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-first Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy do tell us some of thy pleasant tales.” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the Lady Badr al-Budur, daughter of the Sultan, saw herself in that mean and darksome lodging, and heard Alaeddin’s words, she was seized with fear and trembling and waxed clean distraught; nor could she return aught of reply. Presently the youth arose and stripping off his outer dress placed a scymitar between them and lay upon the bed beside the Princess;[145] and he did no villain deed, for it sufficed him to prevent the consummation of her nuptials with the Wazir’s son. On the other hand the Lady Badr al-Budur passed a night the evillest of all nights; nor in her born days had she seen a worse; and the same was the case with the Minister’s son who lay in the chapel of ease and who dared not stir for the fear of the Jinni which overwhelmed him. As soon as it was morning the Slave appeared before Alaeddin, without the Lamp being rubbed, and said to him, “O my lord, an thou require aught, command me therefor, that I may do it upon my head and mine eyes.” Said the other, “Go, take up and carry the bride and bridegroom to their own apartment;” so the Servitor did his bidding in an eye-glance and bore away the pair, and placed them in the palace as whilome they were and without their seeing any one; but both died of affright when they found themselves being transported from stead to stead.[146] And the Marid had barely time to set them down and wend his ways ere the Sultan came on a visit of congratulation to his daughter; and, when the Wazir’s son heard the doors thrown open, he sprang straightway from his couch and donned his dress[147] for he knew that none save the King could enter at that hour. Yet it was exceedingly hard for him to leave his bed wherein he wished to warm himself a trifle after his cold night in the water closet which he had lately left. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-second Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Sultan went in to his daughter Badr al-Budur and kissing her between the eyes gave her good morning and asked her of her bridegroom and whether she was pleased and satisfied with him. But she returned no reply whatever and looked at him with the eye of anger and, although he repeated his words again and again, she held her peace nor bespake him with a single syllable. So the King quitted her and, going to the Queen, informed her of what had taken place between him and his daughter; and the mother, unwilling to leave the Sultan angered with their child, said to him, "O King of the Age, this be the custom of most newly-married couples at least during their first days of marriage, for that they are bashful and somewhat coy. So deign thou excuse her and after a little while she will again become herself and speak with the folk as before, whereas now her shame, O King of the Age, keepeth her silent. However 'tis my wish to fare forth and see her." Thereupon the Queen arose and donned her dress; then, going to her daughter, wished her good morning and kissed her between the eyes. Yet would the Princess make no answer at all, whereat Quoth the Queen to herself, "Doubtless some strange matter hath occurred to trouble her with such trouble as this." So she asked her saying "O my daughter, what hath caused this thy case? Let me know what hath betided thee that, when I come and give thee good morning, thou hast not a word to say to me?" Thereat the Lady Badr al-Budur raised her head and said, "Pardon me O my mother, 'twas my duty to meet thee with all respect and worship, seeing that thou hast honoured me by this visit. However, I pray thee to hear the cause of this my condition and see how the night I have just spent hath been to me the evillest of the nights. Hardly had we lain down, O my mother, than one whose form I wot not uplifted our bed and transported it to a darksome place, fulsome and mean." Then the Princess related to the Queen-mother all that had befallen her that night; how they had taken away her bridegroom, leaving her lone and lonesome, and how after a while came another youth who lay beside her, in lieu of her bridegroom, after placing his scymitar between her and himself; "and in the morning" (she continued) "he who carried us off returned and bore us straight back to our own stead. But at once when he arrived hither he left us and suddenly my sire the Sultan entered at the hour and moment of our coming and I I had nor heart nor tongue to speak him withal, for the stress of the terror and trembling which came upon me. Haply such lack of duty may have proved sore to him, so I hope, O my mother, that thou wilt acquaint him with the cause of this my condition and that he will pardon me for not answering him and blame me not, but rather accept my excuses." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-third Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the Queen heard these words of Princess Badr al-Budur, she said to her, "O my child, compose thy thoughts. An thou tell such tale before any, haply shall he say, æVerily, the Sultan's daughter hath lost her wits.' And thou hast done right well in not choosing to recount thine adventure to thy father; and beware and again I say beware, O my daughter, lest thou inform him thereof." The Princess replied, "O my mother, I have spoken to thee like one sound in senses nor have I lost my wits: this be what befel me and, if thou believe it not because coming from me, ask my bridegroom." To which the Queen replied, "Rise up straightway, O my daughter, and banish from thy thoughts such fancies as these; and robe thyself and come forth to glance at the bridal feasts and festivities they are making in the city for the sake of thee and thy nuptials; and listen to the drumming and the singing and look at the decorations all intended to honour thy marriage, O my daughter." So saying, the Queen at once summoned the tirewomen who dressed and prepared the Lady Badr al- Budur; and presently she went in to the Sultan and assured him that their daughter had suffered during all her wedding-night from swevens and nightmare and said to him, "Be not severe with her for not answering thee." Then the Queen sent privily for the Wazir's son and asked of the matter, saying, "Tell me, are these words of the Lady Badr al-Budur soothfast or not?" But he, in his fear of losing his bride out of hand, answered, "O my lady, I have no knowledge of that whereof thou speakest." Accordingly the mother made sure that her daughter had seen visions and dreams. The marriage-feasts lasted throughout that day with Almahs[148] and singers and the smiting of all manner instruments of mirth and merriment, while the Queen and the Wazir and his son strave right strenuously to enhance the festivities that the Princess might enjoy herself; and that day they left nothing of what exciteth to pleasure unrepresented in her presence, to the end that she might forget what was in her thoughts and derive increase of joyance. Yet did naught of this take any effect upon her; nay, she sat in silence, sad of thought, sore perplexed at what had befallen her during the last night. It is true that the Wazir's son had suffered even more because he had passed his sleeping hours lying in the water- closet: he, however, had falsed the story and had cast out remembrance of the night in the first place for his fear of losing his bride and with her the honour of a connection which brought him such excess of consideration and for which men envied him so much; and, secondly, on account of the wondrous loveliness of the Lady Badr al-Budur and her marvellous beauty. Alaeddin also went forth that day and looked at the merry-makings which extended throughout the city as well as the palace and he fell a- laughing, especially when he heard the folk prating of the high honour which had accrued to the son of the Wazir and the prosperity of his fortunes in having become son-in-law to the Sultan and the high consideration shown by the wedding fÛtes. And he said in his mind, "Indeed ye wot not, O ye miserables, what befel him last night that ye envy him!" But after darkness fell and it was time for sleep, Alaeddin arose and, retiring to his chamber, rubbed the Lamp, whereupon the Slave incontinently appeared. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-fourth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the Slave appeared in presence of Alaeddin, he was bidden to bring him the Sultan's daughter together with her bridegroom as on the past night ere the Wazir's son could abate her maidenhead. So the Marid without stay or delay evanished for a little while until the appointed time, when he returned carrying the bed whereon lay the Lady Badr al-Budur and the Wazir's son; and he did with the bridegroom as he had done before, to wit, he took him up and lay him at full length in the jakes and there left him dried up for excess of fear and trembling. Then Alaeddin arose, and placing the scymitar between himself and the Princess, lay down beside her; and when day broke the Slave restored the pair to their own place, leaving Alaeddin filled with delight at the state of the Minister's son. Now when the Sultan woke up amorn he resolved to visit his daughter and see if she would treat him as on the past day; so shaking off his sleep he sprang up and arrayed himself in his raiment and, going to the apartment of the Princess bade open the door. Thereat the son of the Wazir arose forthright and came down from his bed and began donning his dress whilst his ribs were wrung with cold; for when the King entered the Slave had but just brought him back. The Sultan, raising the arras,[149] drew near his daughter as she lay abed and gave her good morning; then kissing her between the eyes, he asked her of her case. But he saw her looking sour and sad and she answered him not at all, only glowering at him as one in anger and her plight was pitiable. Hereat the Sultan waxed wroth with her for that she would not reply and he suspected that something evil had befallen her,[150] whereupon he bared his blade and cried to her, brand in hand, saying, "What be this hath betided thee? Either acquaint me with what happened or this very moment I will take thy life! Is such conduct the token of honour and respect I expect of thee, that I address thee and thou answerest me not a word?" When the Lady Badar al- Badur saw her sire in high dudgeon and the naked glaive in his grip, she was freed from her fear of the past, so she raised her head and said to him, "O my beloved father, be not wroth with me nor be hasty in thy hot passion for I am excusable in what thou shalt see of my case. So do thou lend an ear to what occurred to me and well I wot that after hearing my account of what befel to me during these two last nights, thou wilt pardon me and thy Highness will be softened to pitying me even as I claim of thee affection for thy child." Then the Princess informed her father of all that had betided her adding, "O my sire, an thou believe me not, ask my bridegroom and he will recount to thy Highness the whole adventure, nor did I know either what they would do with him when they bore him away from my side or where they would place him." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the Sultan heard his daughter's words, he was saddened and his eyes brimmed with tears, then he sheathed his sabre and kissed her saying, "O my daughter wherefore[151] didst thou not tell me what happened on the past night that I might have guarded thee from this torture and terror which visited thee a second time? But now 'tis no matter. Rise and cast out all such care and to-night I will set a watch to ward thee nor shall any mishap again make thee miserable." Then the Sultan returned to his palace and straightway bade summon the Grand Wazir and asked him, as he stood before him in his service, "O Wazir how dost thou look upon this matter? Haply thy son hath informed thee of what occurred to him and to my daughter." The Minister replied, "O King of the Age, I have not seen my son or yesterday or to-day." Hereat the Sultan told him all that had afflicted the Princess, adding, " 'tis my desire that thou at once seek tidings of thy son concerning the facts of the case: peradventure of her fear my daughter may not be fully aware of what really befel her; withal I hold all her words to be truthful." So the Grand Wazir arose and, going forth, bade summon his son and asked him anent all his lord had told him whether it be true or untrue. The youth replied, "O my father the Wazir, Heaven forbid that the Lady Badr al-Budur speak falsely: indeed all she said was sooth and these two nights proved to us the evillest of our nights instead of being nights of pleasure and marriage-joys. But what befel me was the greater evil because, instead of sleeping abed with my bride, I lay in the wardrobe, a black hole, frightful, noisome of stench, truly damnable; and my ribs were bursten with cold." In fine the young man told his father the whole tale, adding as he ended it, "O dear father mine, I implore thee to speak with the Sultan that he may set me free from this marriage. Yes, indeed 'tis a high honour for me to be the Sultan's son-in-law and especially the love of the Princess hath gotten hold of my vitals; but I have no strength left to endure a single night like unto these two last." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-sixth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Wazir, hearing the words of his son, was saddened and sorrowful exceedingly, for it was his design to advance and promote his child by making him son-in-law to the Sultan. So he became thoughtful and perplexed about the affair and the device whereby to manage it, and it was sore grievous for him to break off the marriage, it having been a rare enjoyment to him that he had fallen upon such high good fortune. Accordingly he said, "Take patience, O my son, until we see what may happen this night, when we will set watchmen to ward you; nor do thou give up the exalted distinction which hath fallen to none save to thyself." Then the Wazir left him and, returning to the sovran, reported that all told to him by the Lady Badr al-Budur was a true tale; whereupon Quoth the Sultan, "Since the affair is on this wise, we require no delay," and he at once ordered all the rejoicings to cease and the marriage to be broken off. This caused the folk and the citizen to marvel at the matter, especially when they saw the Grand Wazir and his son leaving the palace in pitiable plight for grief and stress of passion; and the people fell to asking, "What hath happened and what is the cause of the wedding being made null and void?" Nor did any know aught of the truth save Alaeddin the lover who claimed the Princess's hand, and he laughed in his sleeve. But even after the marriage was dissolved, the Sultan forgot nor even recalled to mind his promise made to Alaeddin's mother; and the same was the case with the Grand Wazir, while neither had any inkling of whence befel them that which had befallen. So Alaeddin patiently awaited the lapse of the three months after which the Sultan had pledged himself to give him to wife his daughter; but, as soon as ever the term came, he sent his mother to the Sultan for the purpose of requiring him to keep his covenant. So she went to the palace and when the King appeared in the Divan and saw the old woman standing before him, he remembered his promise to her concerning the marriage after a term of three months, and he turned to the Minister and said "O Wazir, this be the ancient dame who presented me with the jewels and to whom we pledged our word that when the three months had elapsed we would summon her to our presence before all others." So the Minister went forth and fetched her[152] and when she went in to the Sultan's presence she saluted him and prayed for his glory and permanence of prosperity. Hereat the King asked her if she needed aught, and she answered, "O King of the Age, the three months' term thou assignedst to me is finished, and this is thy time to marry my son Alaeddin with thy daughter, the Lady Badr al-Budur." The Sultan was distraught at this demand, especially when he saw the old woman's pauper condition, one of the meanest of her kind; and yet the offering she had brought to him was of the most magnificent, far beyond his power to pay the price. Accordingly, he turned to the Grand Wazir and said, "What device is there with thee? In very sooth I did pass my word, yet meseemeth that they be pauper folk and not persons of high condition." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-seventh Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Grand Wazir who was dying of envy and who was especially saddened by what had befallen his son, said to himself, "How shall one like this wed the King's daughter and my son lose this highmost honour?" Accordingly, he answered his Sovran speaking privily, "O my lord, 'tis an easy[153] matter to keep off a poor devil such as this, for he is not worthy that thy Highness give his daughter to a fellow whom none knoweth what he may be." "By what means," enquired the Sultan, "shall we put off the man when I pledged my promise; and the word of the Kings is their bond?" Replied the Wazir, "O my lord, my rede is that thou demand of him forty platters made of pure sand-gold[154] and full of gems (such as the woman brought thee aforetime), with forty white slave-girls to carry the platters and forty black eunuch-slaves." The King rejoined, "By Allah, O Wazir, thou hast spoken to the purpose, seeing that such thing is not possible and by this way we shall be freed.” Then Quoth he to Alaeddin’s mother, “Do thou go and tell thy son that I am a man of my word even as I plighted it to him, but on condition that he have power to pay the dower of my daughter; and that which I require of him is a settlement consisting of two score platters of virgin gold, all brimming with gems the like of those thou broughtest to me, and as many white handmaids to carry them and two score black eunuch-slaves to serve and escort the bearers. An thy son avail hereto I will marry him with my daughter.” Thereupon she returned home wagging her head and saying in her mind, “Whence can my poor boy procure these platters and such jewels? And granted that he return to the Enchanted Treasury and pluck them from the trees which, however, I hold impossible; yet given that he bring them whence shall he come by the girls and the blacks?” Nor did she leave communing with herself till she reached her home, where she found Alaeddin awaiting her, and she lost no time in saying “O my son, did I not tell thee never to fancy that thy power would extend to the Lady Badr al-Budur, and that such a matter is not possible to folk like ourselves?” “Recount to me the news,” Quoth he; so Quoth she, “O my child, verily the Sultan received me with all honour according to his custom and, meseemeth his intentions towards us be friendly. But thine enemy is that accursed Wazir; for, after I addressed the King in thy name as thou badest me say, æIn very sooth the promised term is past,’ adding æ ‘Twere well an thy Highness would deign issue commandment for the espousals of thy daughter the Lady Badr al-Budur to my son Alaeddin he turned to and addressed the Minister who answered privily, after which the Sultan gave me his reply.” Then she enumerated the King’s demands and said, “O my son, he indeed expecteth of thee an instant reply but I fancy that we have no answer for him.” And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-eighth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when Alaeddin heard these words he laughed and said, “O my mother, thou affirmeth that we have no answer and thou deemest the case difficult exceedingly; but compose thy thoughts and arise and bring me somewhat we may eat; and, after we have dined, an the Compassionate be willing, thou shalt see my reply. Also the Sultan thinketh like thyself that he hath demanded a prodigious dower in order to divert me from his daughter, whereas the fact is that he hath required of me a matter far less than I expected. But do thou fare forth at once and purchase the provision and leave me to procure thee a reply." So she went out to fetch her needful from the Bazar and Alaeddin retired to his chamber and taking the Lamp rubbed it, when forthright appeared to him its Slave and said, "Ask, O my lord, whatso thou wantest." The other replied, "I have demanded of the Sultan his daughter to wife and he hath required of me forty bowls of purest gold each weighing ten pounds[155] and all to be filled with gems such as we find in the Gardens of the Hoard; furthermore, that they be borne on the heads of as many white handmaids, each attended by her black eunuch-slave, also forty in full rate; so I desire that thou bring all these into my presence." "Hearkening and obeying, O my lord," Quoth the Slave and, disappearing for the space of an hour or so, presently returned bringing the platters and jewels, handmaids and eunuchs; then, setting them before him the Marid cried, "This be what thou demandest of me: declare now an thou want any matter or service other than this." Alaeddin rejoined, "I have need of naught else; but, an I do, I will summon thee and let thee know." The Slave now disappeared and, after a little while, Alaeddin's mother returned home and, on entering the house, saw the blacks and the handmaids.[156] Hereat she wondered and exclaimed, "All this proceedeth from the Lamp which Allah perpetuate to my son!" But ere she doffed her mantilla Alaeddin said to her, "O my mother, this be thy time before the Sultan enter his Serraglio-palace;[157] do thou carry to him what he required and wend thou with it at once, so may he know that I avail to supply all he wanteth and yet more; also that he is beguiled by his Grand Wazir and the twain imagined vainly that they would baffle me." Then he arose forthright and opened the house-door, when the handmaids and blackamoors paced forth in pairs, each girl with her eunuch beside her, until they crowded the quarter, Alaeddin's mother foregoing them. And when the folk of that ward sighted such mighty fine sight and marvellous spectacle, all stood at gaze and they considered the forms and figures of the handmaids marvelling at their beauty and loveliness, for each and every wore robes inwrought with gold and studded with jewels, no dress being worth less than a thousand dinars.[158] They stared as intently at the bowls and albeit these were covered with pieces of brocade, also orfrayed and dubbed with precious stones, yet the sheen outshot from them dulled the thine of sun. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Fifty-ninth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the folk and especially the people of the quarter stood a marvelling at this singular scene. Then Alaeddin's mother walked forwards and all the handmaids and eunuchs paced behind her in the best of ordinance and disposition, and the citizens gathered to gaze at the beauty of the damsels, glorifying God the Most Great, until the train reached the palace and entered it accompanied by the tailor's widow. Now when the Aghas and Chamberlains and Army-officers beheld them, all were seized with surprise, notably by seeing the handmaids who each and every would ravish the reason of an anchorite. And albeit the royal Chamberlains and Officials were men of family, the sons of Grandees and Emirs, yet they could not but especially wonder at the costly dresses of the girls and the platters borne upon their heads; nor could they gaze at them open eyed by reason of the exceeding brilliance and radiance. Then the Nabobs went in and reported to the King who forthright bade admit them to the presence chamber, and Alaeddin's mother went in with them. When they stood before the Sultan, all saluted him with every sign of respect and worship and prayed for his glory and prosperity; then they set down from their heads the bowls at his feet and, having removed the brocade covers, rested with arms crossed behind them. The Sultan wondered with exceeding wonder and was distraught by the beauty of the handmaids and their loveliness which passed praise; and his wits were wildered when he considered the golden bowls brimful of gems which captured man's vision, and he was perplexed at the marvel until he became, like the dumb, unable to utter a syllable for the excess of his wonder. Also his sense was stupefied the more when he bethought him that within a hour or so all these treasures had been collected. Presently he commended the slave-girls to enter, with what loads they bore, the dower of the Princess; and, when they had done his bidding Alaeddin's mother came forward and said to the Sultan, "O my lord, this be not much wherewith to honour the Lady Badr al-Budur, for that she meriteth these things multiplied times manifold." Hereat the Sovran turned to the Minister and asked, "What sayest thou, O Wazir? is not he who could produce such wealth in a time so brief, is he not, I say, worthy to become the Sultan's son-in-law and take the King's daughter to wife?" Then the Minister (although he marvelled at these riches even more than did the Sultan), whose envy was killing him and growing greater hour by hour, seeing his liege lord satisfied with the moneys and the dower and yet being unable to fight against fact, made answer, " 'tis not worthy of her." Withal he fell to devising a device against the King that he might withhold the Lady Badr al-Budur from Alaeddin and accordingly he continued, "O my liege, the treasures of the universe all of them are not worth a nail-paring of thy daughter: indeed thy Highness hath prized these things overmuch in comparison with her." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixtieth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the King heard the words of his Grand Wazir, he knew that the speech was prompted by excess of envy; so turning to the mother of Alaeddin he said, "O woman, go to thy son and tell him that I have accepted of him the dower and stand to my bargain, and that my daughter be his bride and he my son-in-law: furthermore, bid him at once make act of presence that I may become familiar with him: he shall see naught from me save all honour and consideration, and this night shall be the beginning of the marriage-festivities. Only, as I said to thee, let him come to me and tarry not." Thereupon Alaeddin's mother returned home with the speed of the stormwinds that she might hasten her utmost to congratulate her son; and she flew with joy at the thought that her boy was about to become[159] son-in-law to the Sultan. After her departure the King dismissed the Divan and, entering the palace of the Princess, bade them bring the bowls and the handmaids before him and before her, that she also might inspect them. But when the Lady Badr al-Budur considered the jewels, she waxed distraught and cried, “Meseemeth that in the treasuries of the world there be not found one jewel rivalling these jewels.” Then she looked at the handmaids and marvelled at their beauty and loveliness, and knew that all this came from her new bridegroom who had sent them in her service. So she was gladdened, albeit she had been grieved and saddened on account of her former husband, the Wazir’s son, and she rejoiced with exceeding joy when she gazed upon the damsels and their charms; nor was her sire, the Sultan, less pleased and inspirited when he saw his daughter relieved of all her mourning and melancholy and his own vanished at the sight of her enjoyment. Then he asked her, “O my daughter, do these things divert thee? Indeed I deem that this suitor of thine be more suitable to thee than the son of the Wazir; and right soon (Inshallah!), O my daughter, shalt thou have fuller joy with him.” Such was the case with the King; but as regards Alaeddin, as soon as he saw his mother entering the house with face laughing for stress of joy he rejoiced at the sign of glad tidings and cried, “To Allah alone be lauds! Perfected is all I desired.” Rejoined his mother, “Be gladdened at my good news, O my son, and hearten thy heart and cool thine eyes for the winning of thy wish. The Sultan hath accepted thine offering, I mean the moneys and the dower of the Lady Badr al- Budur, who is now thine affianced bride; and, this very night, O my child, is your marriage and thy first visit to her; for the King, that he might assure me of his word, hath proclaimed to the world thou art his son-in-law and promised this night to be the night of going in. But he also said to me, æLet thy son come hither forthright that I may become familiar with him and receive him with all honour and worship.’ And now here am I, O my son, at the end of my labours; happen whatso may happen the rest is upon thy shoulders.” Thereupon Alaeddin arose and kissed his mother’s hand and thanked her, enhancing her kindly service: then he left her and entering his chamber took the Lamp and rubbed it when, lo and behold! its Slave appeared and cried, “Adsum! Ask whatso thou wantest.” The young man replied, “ ’tis my desire that thou take me to a Hammam whose like is not in the world; then, fetch me a dress so costly and kingly that no royalty ever owned its fellow.” The Marid replied, “I hear and I obey,” and carried him to Baths such as were never seen by the Kings of the ChosroÙs, for the building was all of alabaster and carnelian and it contained marvellous limnings which captured the sight; and the great hall[160] was studded with precious stones. Not a soul was therein but, when Alaeddin entered, one of the Jann in human shape washed him and bathed[161] him to the best of his desire. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-first Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin, after having been washed and bathed, left the Baths and went into the great hall where he found that his old dress had been removed and replaced by a suit of the most precious and princely. Then he was served with sherbets and ambergris’d coffee[162] and, after drinking, he arose and a party of black slaves came forwards and clad him in the costliest of clothing, then perfumed and fumigated him. It is known that Alaeddin was the son of a tailor, a pauper, yet now would none deem him to be such; nay, all would say, “This be the greatest that is of the progeny of the Kings: praise be to Him who changeth and who is not changed!” Presently came the Jinni and lifting him up bore him to his home and asked, “O my lord, tell me hast thou aught of need?” He answered, “Yes, ’tis my desire that thou bring me eight and forty Mamelukes, of whom two dozen shall forego me and the rest follow me, the whole number with their war-chargers and clothing and accoutrements; and all upon them and their steeds must be of naught save of highest worth and the costliest, such as may not be found in treasuries of the Kings. Then fetch me a stallion fit for the riding of the ChosroÙs and let his furniture, all thereof, be of gold crusted with the finest gems:[163] fetch me also eight and forty thousand dinars that each white slave may carry a thousand gold pieces. ’tis now my intent to fare to the Sultan, so delay thou not, for that without all these requisites whereof I bespake thee I may not visit him. Moreover set before me a dozen slave-girls unique in beauty and dight with the most magnificent dresses, that they wend with my mother to the royal palace; and let every handmaid be robed in raiment that befitteth Queen’s wearing.” The Slave replied, “To hear is to obey;” and, disappearing for an eye-twinkling, brought all he was bidden bring and led by hand a stallion whose rival was not amongst the Arabian Arabs,[164] and its saddle cloth was of splendid brocade gold-inwrought. Thereupon, without stay or delay, Alaeddin sent for his mother and gave her the garments she should wear and committed to her charge the twelve slave-girls forming her suite to the palace. Then he sent one of the Mamelukes, whom the Jinni had brought, to see if the Sultan had left the Serraglio or not. The white slave went forth lighter than the lightning and returning in like haste, said, “O my lord, the Sultan awaiteth thee!” Hereat Alaeddin arose and took horse, his Mamelukes riding a-van and a- rear of him, and they were such that all must cry, “Laud to the Lord who created them and clothed them with such beauty and loveliness.” And they scattered gold amongst the crowd in front of their master who surpassed them all in comeliness and seemlihead nor needst thou ask concerning the sons of the Kings,- -praise be to the Bountiful, the Eternal! All this was of the virtues of the Wonderful Lamp,[165] which, whoso possessed, him it gifted with fairest favour and finest figure, with wealth and with wisdom. The folk admired Alaeddin’s liberality and exceeding generosity and all were distraught seeing his charms and elegance, his gravity and his good manners, they glorified the Creator for this noble creation, they blessed him each and every and, albeit they knew him for the son of Such-an-one, the tailor, yet no man envied him; nay, all owned that he deserved his great good fortune. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-second Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the people were bewildered at Alaeddin and his liberality and generosity; and all blessed and prayed for him, high and low, as he rode palace-wards with the Mamelukes before and behind him, scattering gold upon the heads of the folk. Now the Sultan had assembled the Lords of the land and, informing them of the promise he had passed to Alaeddin, touching the marriage of his daughter, had bidden them await his approach and then go forth, one and all, to meet him and greet him. Hereupon the Emirs and Wazirs, the Chamberlains, the Nabobs and the Army- officers took their stations expecting him at the palace gate. Alaeddin would fain have dismounted at the outer entrance; but one of the Nobles, whom the King had deputed for such duty, approached him and said, "O my lord, 'tis the Royal Command that thou enter riding thy steed nor dismount except at the Divan- door."[166] Then they all forewent him in a body and conducted him to the appointed place where they crowded about him, these to hold his stirrup and those supporting him on either side whilst others took him by the hands and helped him dismount; after which all the Emirs and Nobles preceded him into the Divan and led him close up to the royal throne. Thereupon the Sultan came down forthright from his seat of estate and, forbidding him to buss the carpet, embraced and kissed and seated him to the right[167] of and beside himself. Alaeddin did whatso is suitable, in the case of the Kings, of salutation and offering of blessings, and said, "O our lord the Sultan, indeed the generosity of thy Highness demanded that thou deign vouchsafe to me the hand of thy daughter, the Lady Badr al-Budur, albeit I undeserve the greatness of such gift, I being but the humblest of thy slaves I pray Allah grant thee prosperity and perpetuance; but in very sooth, O King, my tongue is helpless to thank thee for the fullness of the favour, passing all measure, which thou hast bestowed upon me. And I hope of thy Highness that thou wilt give me a piece of ground fitted for a pavilion which shall besit thy daughter, the Lady Badr al-Budur." The Sultan was struck with admiration when he saw Alaeddin in his princely suit and looked upon him and considered his beauty and loveliness, and noted the Mamelukes standing to serve him in their comeliness and seemlihead; and still his marvel grew when the mother of Alaeddin approached him in costly raiment and sumptuous, clad as though she were a Queen, and when he gazed upon the twelve handmaids standing before her with crossed arms and with all worship and reverence doing her service. He also considered the eloquence of Alaeddin and his delicacy of speech and he was astounded thereat, he and all his who were present at the levÚe. Thereupon fire was kindled in the Grand Wazir's heart for envy of Alaeddin until he was like to die: and it was worse when the Sultan, after hearing the youth's succession of prayers and seeing his high dignity of demeanour, respectful withal, and his eloquence and elegance of language, clasped him to his bosom and kissed him and cried, "Alas, O my son, that I have not enjoyed thy converse before this day!" And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the Sultan beheld Alaeddin after such fashion, he rejoiced in him with mighty great joy and straightway bade the music[168] and the bands strike up; then he arose and, taking the youth led him into the palace where supper had been prepared and the Eunuchs at once laid the tables. So the Sovran sat down and seated his son-in-law on his right side and the Wazirs and high officials and Lords of the land took places each according to his degree, whereupon the bands played and a mighty fine marriage-feast was dispread in the palace. The King now applied himself to making friendship with Alaeddin and conversed with the youth, who answered him with all courtesy and eloquence, as though he had been bred in the palaces of the kings or he had lived with them his daily life. And the more the talk was prolonged between them, the more did the Sultan's pleasure and delight increase, hearing his son-in-law's readiness of reply and his sweet flow of language. But after they had eaten and drunken and the trays were removed, the King bade summon the Kazis and witnesses who presently attended and knitted the knot and wrote out the contract-writ between Alaeddin and the Lady Badr al- Budur. And presently the bridegroom arose and would have fared forth, when his father in law withheld him and asked, "Whither away, O my child? The bride-fÛtes have begun and the marriage is made and the tie is tied and the writ is written.” He replied, “O my lord the King, ’tis my desire to edify, for the Lady Badr al- Budur, a pavilion befitting her station and high degree, nor can I visit her before so doing. But, Inshallah! the building shall be finished within the shortest time, by the utmost endeavor of thy slave and by the kindly regard of thy Highness, and, although I do (yes indeed!) long to enjoy the society of the Lady Badr al- Budur, yet ’tis incumbent on me first to serve her and it becometh me to set about the work forthright.” “Look around thee, O my son,” replied the Sultan, “for what ground thou deemest suitable to thy design and do thou take all things into thy hands; but I deem the best for thee will be yonder broad plain facing my palace; and, if it please the build thy pavilion thereupon.” “And this,” answered Alaeddin “is the sum of my wishes that I may be nearhand to thy Highness. So saying he farewelled the King and took horse, with his Mamelukes riding before him and behind him, and all the world blessed him and cried, “By Allah he is deserving,” until such time as he reached his home. Then he alighted from his stallion and repairing to his chamber, rubbed the Lamp and be hold, the Slave stood before him and said, “Ask, O my lord whatso thou wantest;” and Alaeddin rejoined, “I require thee of a service grave and important which thou must do for me, and ’tis that thou build me with all urgency a pavilion fronting the palace of the Sultan; and it must be a marvel for it shall be provided with every requisite, such as royal furniture and so forth.” The Slave replied, “To hear is to obey.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-fourth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Slave evanished and, before the next dawn brake, returned to Alaeddin and said, “O my lord, the pavilion is finished to the fullest of thy fancy; and, if thou wouldst inspect it, arise forthright and fare with me.” Accordingly, he rose up and the Slave carried him in the space of an eye-glance to the pavilion which, when Alaeddin looked upon it struck him with surprise at such building, all its stones being of jasper and alabaster, SumßkÝ[169] marble and mosaic-work. Then the Slave led him into the treasury which was full of all manner of gold and silver and costly gems, not to be counted or computed, priced or estimated. Thence to another place, where Alaeddin saw all requisites for the tables, plates and dishes, spoons and ladles, basins and covers, cups and tasses, the whole of precious metal: thence to the kitchen, where they found the kitcheners provided with their needs and cooking batteries, likewise golden and silvern; thence to a warehouse piled up with chests full-packed of royal raiment, stuffs that captured the reason, such as gold-wrought brocades from India and China and kimcobs[170] or orfrayed cloths; thence to many apartments replete with appointments which beggar description; thence to the stables containing coursers whose like was not to be met with amongst the kings of the universe; and, lastly, they went to the harness- rooms all hung with housings, costly saddles and other furniture, everywhere studded with pearls and precious stones. And all this was the work of one night. Alaeddin was wonder-struck and astounded by that magnificent display of wealth which not even the mightiest monarch on earth could produce; and more so to see his pavilion fully provided with eunuchs and handmaids whose beauty would seduce a saint. Yet the prime marvel of the pavilion was an upper kiosque or belvedere of four-and-twenty windows all made of emeralds and rubies and other gems; [171] and one window remained unfinished at the requirement of Alaeddin that the Sultan might prove him impotent to complete it. When the youth had inspected the whole edifice, he was pleased and gladdened exceedingly: then, turning to the Slave he said, “I require of thee still one thing which is yet wanting and whereof I had forgotten to tell thee.” “Ask, O my lord, thy want,” Quoth the Servitor; and Quoth the other, “demand of thee a carpet of the primest brocade all gold-inwrought which, when unrolled and outstretched, shall extend hence to the Sultan’s palace in order that the Lady Badr al-Budur may, when coming hither, pace upon it[172] and not tread common earth.” The Slave departed for a short while and said on his return, “O my lord verily that which thou demandest is here.” Then he took him and showed him a carpet which wildered the wits, and it extended from palace to pavilion; and after this the Servitor bore off Alaeddin and set him down in his own home. And

Shahrazed was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine; an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Slave, after displaying the Carpet to Alaeddin, bore him home. Now day was brightening so the Sultan rose from his sleep and throwing open the casement looked out[173] and espied, opposite his palace, a palatial pavilion ready edified. Thereupon he fell to rubbing his eyes and opening them their widest and considering the scene, and he soon was certified that the new edifice was mighty fine and grand enough to be-wilder the wits. Moreover, with amazement as great he saw the carpet dispread between palace and pavilion: like their lord also the royal door- keepers and the household, one and all, were dazed and amazed at the spectacle. Meanwhile[174] the Wazir came in and, as he entered, espied the newly builded pavilion and the carpet, whereat he also wondered; and, when he went in to the Sultan the twain fell to talking on this marvellous matter with great surprise at a sight which distracted the gazer and attracted the heart. They said finally, “In very truth, of this pavilion we deem that none of the royalties could build its fellow;” and the King, turning to the Minister, asked him, “Hast thou seen now that Alaeddin is worthy to be the husband of the Princess my daughter? Hast thou looked upon and considered this right royal building, this magnificence of opulence, which thought of man can not contain?” But the Wazir in his envy of Alaeddin replied, æO King of the Age, indeed this foundation and this building and this opulence may not be save by means of magic nor can any man in the world, be he the richest in good or the greatest in governance, avail to found and finish in a single night such edifice as this.” The Sultan rejoined, “I am surprised to see in thee how thou dost continually harp on evil opinion of Alaeddin; but I hold that ’tis caused by thine envy and jealousy. Thou west present when I gave him the ground at his own prayer for a place whereon he might build a pavilion wherein to lodge my daughter, and I myself favoured him with a site for the same and that too before thy very face. But however that be, shall one who could send me as dower for the Princess such store of such stones whereof the kings never obtained even a few, shall he, I say, be unable to edify an edifice like this?” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-sixth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the Wazir heard the Sultan’s words, he knew that his lord loved Alaeddin exceedingly; so his envy and malice increased; only, as he could do nothing against the youth, he sat silent and impotent to return a reply. But Alaeddin seeing that it was broad day, and the appointed time had come for his repairing to the palace (where his wedding was being celebrated and the Emirs and Wazirs and Grandees were gathered together about the Sultan to be present at the ceremony), arose and rubbed the Lamp, and when its Slave appeared and said, O my lord, ask whatso thou wantest, for I stand before thee and at thy service,” said he, “I mean forthright to seek the palace, this day being my wedding-festival and I want thee to supply me with ten thousand dinars.” The Slave evanished for an eye-twinkling and returned bringing the moneys, when Alaeddin took horse with his Mamelukes a-van and a-rear and passed on his way, scattering as he went gold pieces upon the lieges until all were fondly affected towards him and his dignity was enhanced. But when he drew near the palace, and the Emirs and Aghas and Army-officers who were standing to await him noted his approach, they hastened straightway to the King and gave him the tidings thereof; whereupon the Sultan rose and met his son-in-law and after embracing and kissing him, led him still holding his hand into his own apartment where he sat down and seated him by his right side. The city was all decorated and music rang through the palace and the singers sang until the King bade bring the noon- meal, when the eunuchs and Mamelukes hastened to spread the tables and trays which are such as are served to the kings. Then the Sultan and Alaeddin and the Lords of the land and the Grandees of the realm took their seats and ate and drank until they were satisfied. And it was a mighty fine wedding in city and palace and the high nobles all rejoiced therein and the commons of the kingdom were equally gladdened, while the Governors of provinces and Nabobs of districts flocked from far regions to witness Alaeddin's marriage and its processions and festivities. The Sultan also marvelled in his mind to look at Alaeddin's mother[175] and recall to mind how she was wont to visit him in pauper plight, while her son could command all this opulence and magnificence. And when the spectators, who crowded the royal palace to enjoy the wedding-feasts, looked upon Alaeddin's pavilion and the beauties of the building, they were seized with an immense surprise that so vast an edifice as this could be reared on high during a single night; and they blessed the youth and cried, "Allah gladden him! By Allah, he deserveth all this! Allah bless his days!" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her per misted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when dinner was done, Alaeddin rose and, farewelling the Sultan, took horse with his Mamelukes and rode to his own pavilion that he might prepare to receive therein his bride, the Lady Badr al-Budur. And as he passed, all the folk shouted their good wishes with one voice and their words were, "Allah gladden thee! Allah increase thy glory. Allah grant thee length of life!" while immense crowds of people gathered to swell the marriage procession and they conducted him to his new home, he showering gold upon them during the whole time. When he reached his pavilion, he dismounted and walked in and sat him down on the divan, whilst his Mamelukes stood before him with arms afolded; also after a short delay they brought him sherbets and, when these were drunk, he ordered his white slaves and handmaids and eunuchs and all who were in the pavilion to make ready for meeting the Lady Badr al-Budur. Moreover, as soon as mid- afternoon came and the air had cooled and the great heat of the sun was abated, the Sultan bade his Army-officers and Emirs and Wazirs go down into the Maydßn plain[176] whither he likewise rode. And Alaeddin also took horse with his Mamelukes, he mounting a stallion whose like was not among the steeds of the Arab al-Arbß,[177] and he showed his horsemanship in the hippodrome and so played with the JarÝd[178] that none could withstand him, while his bride sat gazing upon him from the latticed balcony of her bower and, seeing in him such beauty and cavalarice, she fell headlong in love of him and was like to fly for joy. And after they had ringed their horses on the Maydan and each had displayed whatso he could of horsemanship, Alaeddin proving himself the best man of all, they rode in a body to the Sultan's palace and the youth also returned to his own pavilion. But when it was evening, the Wazirs and Nobles took the bridegroom and, falling in, escorted him to the royal Hammam (known as the SultßnÝ), when he was bathed and perfumed. As soon as he came out he donned a dress more magnificent than the former and took horse with the Emirs and the soldier-officers riding before him and forming a grand cortÚge, wherein four of the Wazirs bore naked swords round about him.[179] All the citizens and the strangers and the troops marched before him in ordered throng carrying wax-candles and kettle drums and pipes and other instruments of mirth and merriment, until they conducted him to his pavilion. Here he alighted and walking in took his seat and seated the Wazirs and Emirs who had escorted him, and the Mamelukes brought sherbets and sugared drinks, which they also passed to the people who had followed in his train. It was a world of folk whose tale might not be told; withal Alaeddin bade his Mamelukes stand without the pavilion-doors and shower gold upon the crowd. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-eighth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the Sultan returned from the Maydan-plain to his palace he ordered the household, men as well as women, straightway to form a cavalcade for his daughter, with all ceremony, and bear her to her bridegroom's pavilion. So the nobles and soldier-officers, who had followed and escorted the bridegroom, at once mounted, and the handmaids and eunuchs went forth with wax-candles and made a mighty fine procession for the Lady Badr al-Budur and they paced on preceding her till they entered the pavilion of Alaeddin whose mother walked beside the bride. In front of the Princess also fared the wives of the Wazirs and Emirs, Grandees and Notables, and in attendance on her were the eight and forty slave-girls presented to her aforetime by her bridegroom, each hending in hand a huge cierge scented with camphor and ambergris and set in a candlestick of gem-studded gold. And reaching Alaeddin’s pavilion they led her to her bower in the upper storey and changed her robes and enthroned her; then, as soon as the displaying was ended, they accompanied her to Alaeddin’s apartments and presently he paid her the first visit. Now his mother was with the bride and, when the bridegroom came up and did off her veil, the ancient dame fell to considering the beauty of the Princess and her loveliness; and she looked around at the pavilion which was all litten up by gold and gems besides the manifold candelabra of precious metals encrusted with emeralds and jacinths; so she said in her mind, “Once upon a time I thought the Sultan’s palace mighty fine, but this pavilion is a thing apart; nor do I deem that any of the greatest Kings of ChosroÙs attained in his day to aught like thereof; also am I certified that all the world could not build anything evening it.” Nor less did the lady Badr al-Budur fall to gazing at the pavilion and marvelling for its magnificence. Then the tables were spread and they all ate and drank and were gladdened; after which fourscore damsels came before them each holding in hand an instrument of mirth and merriment; then they deftly moved their finger tips and touched the strings smiting them into song, most musical, most melancholy, till they rent the hearts of the hearers. Hereat the Princess increased in marvel and Quoth she to herself, “In all my life ne’er heard I songs like these,’’[180] till she forsook food, the better to listen. And at last Alaeddin poured out for her wine and passed it to her with his own hand; so great joy and jubilee went round amongst them and it was a notable night, such an one as Iskander, Lord of the Two Horns,[181] had never spent in his time. When they had finished eating and drinking and the tables were removed from before them, Alaeddin arose and went in to his bride.[182] As soon as morning morrowed he left his bed and the treasurer brought him a costly suit and a mighty fine, of the most sumptuous robes worn by the kings. Then, after drinking coffee devoured with ambergris, he ordered the horses be saddled and, mounting with his Mamelukes before and behind him, rode to the Sultan's palace and on his entering its court the eunuchs went in and reported his coming to their lord. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, æWith love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the Sultan heard of Alaeddin's approach, he rose up forthright to receive him and embraced and kissed him as though he were his own son: then, seating him on his right, he blessed and prayed for him, as did the Wazirs and Emirs, the Lords of the land and the Grandees of the realm. Presently, the King commanded bring the morning-meal which the attendants served up and all broke their fast together, and when they had eaten and drunken their sufficiency and the tables were removed by the eunuchs, Alaeddin turned to the Sultan and said, "O my lord, would thy Highness deign honour me this day at dinner, in the house of the Lady Badr al-Budur thy beloved daughter, and come accompanied by all thy Ministers and Grandees of the reign?" The King replied (and he was delighted with his son-in-law), "Thou art surpassing in liberality, O my son!" Then he gave orders to all invited and rode forth with them (Alaeddin also riding beside him) till they reached the pavilion and as he entered it and considered its construction, its architecture and its stonery, all jasper and carnelian, his sight was dazed and his wits were amazed at such grandeur and magnificence of opulence. Then turning to the Minister he thus addressed him, "What sayest thou? Tell me hast thou seen in all thy time aught like this amongst the mightiest of earth's monarchs for the abundance of gold and gems we are now beholding?" The Grand Wazir replied, "O my lord the King, this be a feat which cannot be accomplished by might of monarch amongst Adam's sons; [183] nor could the collected peoples of the universal world build a palace like unto this; nay, even builders could not be found to make aught resembling it, save (as I said to thy Highness) by force of sorcery." These words certified the King that his Minister spake not except in envy end jealousy of Alaeddin, and would stablish in the royal mind that all this splendour was not made of man but by means of magic and with the aid of the Black Art. So Quoth he to him, “Suffice thee so much, O Wazir: thou hast none other word to speak and well I know what cause urgeth thee to say this say.” Then Alaeddin preceded the Sultan till he conducted him to the upper Kiosque where he saw its skylights, windows and latticed casements and jalousies wholly made of emeralds and rubies and other costly gems; whereat his mind was perplexed and his wits were bewildered and his thoughts were distraught. Presently he took to strolling round the Kiosque and solacing himself with these sights which captured the vision, till he chanced to cast a glance at the window which Alaeddin by design had left unwrought and not finished like the rest; and, when he noted its lack of completion, he cried, “Woe and well away for thee, O window, because of thine imperfection;”[184] and, turning to his Minister he asked, “Knowest thou the reason of leaving incomplete this window and its framework?” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventieth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Wazir said to the Sultan, “O my lord, I conceive that the want of finish in this window resulteth from thy Highness having pushed on Alaeddin’s marriage and he lacked the leisure to complete it.” Now at that time, Alaeddin had gone in to his bride, the Lady Badr al-Budur, to inform her of her father’s presence; and, when he returned, the King asked him, “O my son what is the reason why the window of this Kiosque was not made perfect?” “O King of the Age, seeing the suddenness of my wedding,” answered he, “I failed to find artists for finishing it.” Quoth the Sultan, “I have a mind to complete it myself;” and Quoth Alaeddin, “Allah perpetuate thy glory, O thou the King; so shall thy memory endure in thy daughter’s pavilion.” The Sultan forthright bade summon jewellers and goldsmiths and ordered them be supplied from the treasury with all their needs of gold and gems and noble ores; and, when they were gathered together he commanded them to complete the work still wanting in the Kiosque- window. Meanwhile the Princess came forth to meet her sire the Sultan who noticed, as she drew near, her smiling face; so he embraced her and kissed her, then led her to the pavilion and all entered in a body. Now this was the time of the noon day meal and one table had been spread for the Sovran, his daughter and his son-in-law and a second for the Wazirs, the Lords of the land, the Grandees of the realm, the Chief Officers of the host, the Chamberlains and the Nabobs. The King took seat between the Princess and her husband; and, when he put forth his hand to the food and tasted it, he was struck with surprise by the flavour of the dishes and their savoury and sumptuous cooking. Moreover, there stood before him the fourscore damsels each and every saying to the full moon, "Rise that I may seat myself in thy stead!"[185] All held instruments of mirth and merriment and they tuned the same and deftly moved their finger-tips and smote the strings into song most musical, most melodious, which expanded the mourner's heart. Hereby the Sultan was gladdened and time was good to him and for high enjoyment he exclaimed, "In very sooth the thing is beyond the compass of King and Kaysar." Then they fell to eating and drinking; and the cup went round until they had drunken enough, when sweetmeats and fruits of sorts and other such edibles were served, the dessert being laid out in a different salon whither they removed and enjoyed of these pleasures their sufficiency. Presently the Sultan arose that he might see if the produce of his jewellers and goldsmiths favoured that of the pavilion; so he went upstairs to them and inspected their work and how they had wrought; but he noted a mighty great difference and his men were far from being able to make anything like the rest of Alaeddin's pavilion. And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-first Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that after the King had inspected the work of his jewellers and goldsmiths, they informed him how all the gems stored in the Lesser Treasury had been brought to them and used by them but that the whole had proved insufficient; wherefor he bade open the Greater Treasury and gave the workmen all they wanted of him. Moreover he allowed them, an it sufficed not, to take the jewels wherewith Alaeddin had gifted him. They carried off the whole and pushed on their labours but they found the gems fail them, albeit had they not yet finished half the part wanting to the Kiosque- window. Herewith the King commended them to seize all the precious stones owned by the Wazirs and Grandees of the realm; but, although they did his bidding, the supply still fell short of their requirements. Next morning Alaeddin arose to look at the jeweller's work and remarked that they had not finished a moiety of what was wanting to the Kiosque-window: so he at once ordered them to undo all they had done and restore the jewels to their owners. Accordingly, they pulled out the precious stones and sent the Sultan's to the Sultan and the Wazirs' to the Wazirs. Then the jewellers went to the King and told him of what Alaeddin had bidden; so he asked them, "What said he to you, and what was his reason and wherefore was he not content that the window be finished and why did he undo the work ye wrought?" They answered, "O our lord, we know not at all, but he bade us deface whatso we had done." Hereupon the Sultan at once called for his horse, and mounting, took the way pavilion-wards, when Alaeddin, after dismissing the goldsmiths and jewellers had retired into his closet and had rubbed the Lamp. Hereat straightway its Servitor appeared to him and said, "Ask whatso thou wantest: thy Slave is between thy hands;" and said Alaeddin, " 'tis my desire that thou finish the window which was left unfinished." The Marid replied, "On my head be it and also upon mine eyes!" then he vanished and after a little while returned saying, "O my lord, verily that thou commandedst me do is completed." So Alaeddin went upstairs to the Kiosque and found the whole window in wholly finished state; and, whilst he was still considering it, behold, a castrato came in to him and said, "O my lord, the Sultan hath ridden forth to visit thee and is passing through the pavilion- gate." So Alaeddin at once went down and received his father-in- law. And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-second Night, Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Sultan, on sighting his son-in-law, cried to him, “Wherefore, O my child, hast thou wrought on this wise and sufferedst not the jewellers to complete the Kiosque-window leaving in the pavilion an unfinished place?” Alaeddin replied “O King of the Age, I left it not imperfect save for a design of mine own; nor was I incapable of perfecting it nor could I purpose that thy Highness should honour me with visiting a pavilion wherein was aught of deficiency. And, that thou mayest know I am not unable to make it perfect, let thy Highness deign walk upstairs with me and see if anything remain to be done therewith or not.” So the Sultan went up with him and, entering the Kiosque, fell to looking right and left, but he saw no default at all in any of the windows; nay, he noted that all were perfect. So he marvelled at the sight and embraced Alaeddin and kissed him, saying, “O my son, what be this singular feat? Thou canst work in a single night what in months the jewellers could not do. By Allah, I deem thou hast nor brother nor rival in this world.” Quoth Alaeddin, “Allah prolong thy life and preserve thee to perpetuity! thy slave deserveth not this encomium;” and Quoth the King, “By Allah, O my child, thou meritest all praise for a feat whereof all the artists of the world were incapable.” Then the Sultan came clown and entered the apartments of his daughter the Lady Badr al-Budur, to take rest beside her, and he saw her joyous exceedingly at the glory and grandeur wherein she was; then, after reposing awhile he returned to his palace. Now Alaeddin was wont every day to thread the city-streets with his Mamelukes riding a-van and a-rear of him showering rightwards and leftwards gold upon the folk; and all the world, stranger and neighbour, far and near, were fulfilled of his love for the excess of his liberality and generosity. Moreover he increased the pensions of the poor Religious and the paupers and he would distribute alms to them with his own hand; by which good deed, he won high renown throughout the realm and most of the Lords of the land and Emirs would eat at his table; and men swore not at all save by his precious life. Nor did he leave faring to the chase and the Maydan-plain and the riding of horses and playing at javelin-play[186] in presence of the Sultan; and, whenever the Lady Badr al-Budur beheld him disporting himself on the backs of steeds, she loved him much the more, and thought to herself that Allah had wrought her abundant good by causing to happen whatso happened with the son of the Wazir and by preserving her virginity intact for her true bridegroom, Alaeddin. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-third Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales." whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin won for himself day by day a fairer fame and a rarer report, while affection for him increased in the hearts of all the lieges and he waxed greater in the eyes of men. Moreover it chanced that in those days certain enemies took horse and attacked the Sultan, who armed and accoutred an army to repel them and made Alaeddin commander thereof. So he marched with his men nor ceased marching until he drew near the foe whose forces were exceeding many; and, presently, when the action began he bared his brand and charged home upon the enemy. Then battle and slaughter befel and violent was the hurry-burly, but at last Alaeddin broke the hostile host and put all to flight, slaying the best part of them and pillaging their coin and cattle, property and possessions; and he despoiled them of spoils that could not be counted nor computed. Then he returned victorious after a noble victory and entered the capital which had decorated herself in his honour, of her delight in him; and the Sultan went forth to meet him and giving him joy embraced him and kissed him; and throughout the kingdom was held high festival with great joy and gladness. Presently, the Sovran and his son-in-law repaired to the pavilion where they were met by the Princess Badr al-Budur who rejoiced in her husband and, after kissing him between the eyes, led him to her apartments. After a time the Sultan also came and they sat down while the slave-girls brought them sherbets and confections which they ate and drank. Then the Sultan commanded that the whole kingdom be decorated for the triumph of his son-in-law and his victory over the invader; and the subjects and soldiery and all the people knew only Allah in heaven and Alaeddin on earth;

for that their love, won by his liberality, was increased by his noble horsemanship and his successful battling for the country and putting to flight the foe. Such then was the high fortune of Alaeddin; but as regards the Maghrabi, the Magician, after returning to his native country, he passed all this space of time in bewailing what he had borne of toil and travail to win the Lamp and mostly that his trouble had gone vain and that the morsel when almost touching his lips had flown from his grasp. He pondered all this and mourned and reviled Alaeddin for the excess of his rage against him and at times he would exclaim, "For this bastard's death underground I am well satisfied and hope only that some time or other I may obtain the Lamp, seeing how 'tis yet safe." Now one day of the days he struck a table of sand and dotted down the figures and carefully considered their consequence; then he transferred them to paper that he might study them and make sure of Alaeddin's destruction and the safety of the Lamp preserved beneath the earth. Presently, he firmly stablished the sequence of the figures, mothers as well as daughters,[187] but still he saw not the Lamp. Thereupon rage overrode him and he made another trial to be assured of Alaeddin's death; but he saw him not in the Enchanted Treasure. Hereat his wrath still grew, and it waxed greater when he ascertained that the youth had issued from underground and was now upon earth's surface alive and alert: furthermore, that he had become owner of the Lamp, for which he had himself endured such toil and travail and troubles as man may not bear save for so great an object. Accordingly Quoth he to himself, "I have suffered sore pains and penalties which none else could have endured for the Lamp's sake in order that other than I may carry it off; and this Accursed hath taken it without difficulty. And who knoweth an he wot the virtues of the Lamp, than whose owner none in the world should be wealthier?" And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Maghrabi, the Magician, having considered and ascertained that Alaeddin had escaped from the souterrain and had gotten the boon of the Lamp, said to himself, “There is no help but that I work for his destruction.” He then struck another geomantic table and examining the figures saw that the lad had won for himself unmeasurable riches and had wedded the daughter of his King; so of his envy and jealousy he was fired with the flame of wrath; and, rising without let or stay, he equipped himself and set forth for China-land, where he arrived in due season. Now when he had reached the King’s capital wherein was Alaeddin, he alighted at one of the Khßns; and, when he had rested from the weariness of wayfare, he donned his dress and went down to wander about the streets, where he never passed a group without hearing them prate about the pavilion and its grandeur and vaunt the beauty of Alaeddin and his lonesomeness, his liberality and generosity, his fine manners and his good morals. Presently he entered an establishment wherein men were drinking a certain warm beverage;[188] and, going up to one of those who were loud in their lauds, he said to him, “O fair youth, who may be the man ye describe and commend?” “Apparently thou art a foreigner, O man,” answered the other, “and thou comest from a far country; but, even this granted, how happeneth it thou hast not heard of the Emir Alaeddin whose renown, I fancy, hath filled the universe and whose pavilion, known by report to far and near, is one of the Wonders of the World? How, then, never came to thine ears aught of this or the name of Alaeddin (whose glory and enjoyment our Lord increase!) and his fame?” The Moorman replied, “The sum of my wishes is to look upon this pavilion and, if thou wouldest do me a favour, prithee guide me thereunto, for I am a foreigner.” The man rejoined, “To hear is to obey;” and, foregoing him pointed out Alaeddin’s pavilion, whereupon the Maroccan fell to considering it and at once understood that it was the work of the Lamp. So he cried, “Ah! Ah! needs must I dig a pit for this Accursed, this son of a snip, who could not earn for himself even an evening meal: and, if the Fates abet me, I will assuredly destroy his life and send his mother back to spinning at her wheel, e’en as she was wont erewhiles to do.” So saying, he returned to his caravanserai in a sore state of grief and melancholy and regret bred by his envy and hate of Alaeddin. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the, Five Hundred and Seventy-fifth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the Maghrabi, the Magician, reached his caravanserai, he took his astrological gear[189] and geomantic table to discover where might be the Lamp; and he found that it was in the pavilion and not upon Alaeddin’s person. So he rejoiced thereat with joy exceeding and exclaimed, “Now indeed ‘twill be an easy task to take the life of this Accursed and I see my way to getting the Lamp.” Then he went to a coppersmith and said to him, “Do thou make me a set of lamps and take from me their full price and more; only I would have thee hasten to finish them.” Replied the smith, “Hearing and obeying,” and fell aworking to keep his word; and when they were ready the Moorman paid him what price he required; then taking them he carried them to the Khan and set them in a basket. Presently he began wandering about the highways and market-streets of the capital crying aloud, “Ho! who will exchange old lamps for new lamps?’’[190] But when the folk heard him cry on this wise, they derided him and said, “Doubtless this man is Jinn-mad, for that he goeth about offering new for old;” and a world followed him and the children of the quarter caught him up from place to place, laughing at him the while, nor did he forbid them or care for their maltreatment. And he ceased not strolling about the streets till he came under Alaeddin’s pavilion,[191] where he shouted with his loudest voice and the boys screamed at him, “A madman! A madman!” Now Destiny had decreed that the Lady Badr al- Budur be sitting in her Kiosque whence she heard one crying like a crier, and the children bawling at him; only she understood not what was going on; so she gave orders to one of her slave-girls saying,[192] “Go thou and see who ’tis that crieth and what be his cry?” The girl fared forth and looked on when she beheld a man crying, “Ho! who will exchange old lamps for new lamps?” and the little ones pursuing and laughing at him; and as loudly laughed the Princess when this strange case was told to her. Now Alaeddin had carelessly left the Lamp in his pavilion without hiding it and locking it up in his strong box;[193] and one of the slave-girls who had seen it said, “O my lady, I think to have noticed, in the apartment of my lord Alaeddin, an old lamp: so let us give it in change for a new lamp to this man, and see if his cry be truth or lie." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

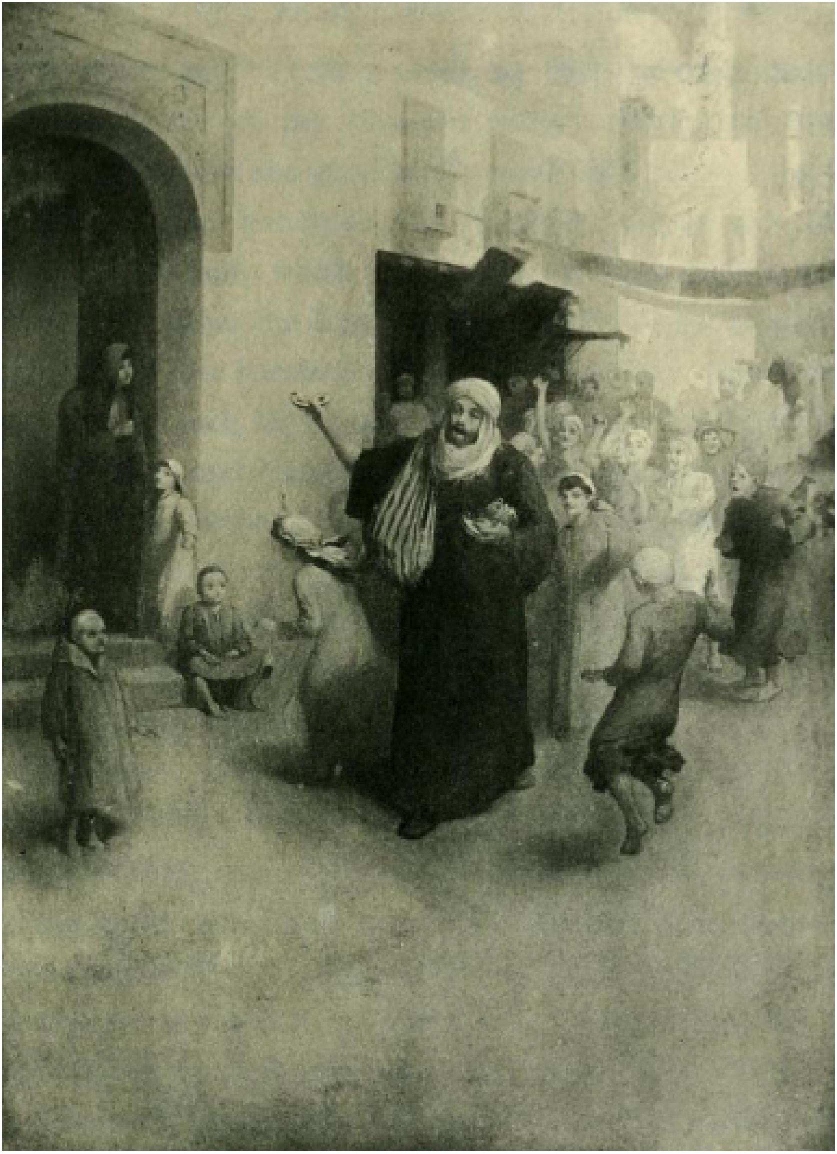

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, æWith love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that hereupon the Princess said to the slave-girl, æBring the old lamp which thou saidst to have seen in thy lord’s apartment.” Now the Lady Badr al-Budur knew naught of the Lamp and of the specialties thereof which had raised Alaeddin her spouse to such high degree and grandeur; and her only end and aim was to understand by experiment the mind of a man who would give in exchange the new for the old. So the handmaid fared forth and went up to Alaeddin’s apartment and returned with the Lamp to her lady who, like all the others, knew nothing of the Maghrabi’s cunning tricks and his crafty device. Then the Princess bade an Aghß of the eunuchry go down and barter the old Lamp for a new lamp. So he obeyed her bidding and, after taking a new lamp from the man, he returned and laid it before his lady who looking at it and seeing that it was brand-new, fell to laughing at the Moorman’s wits. But the Maroccan, when he held the article in hand and recognised it for the Lamp of the Enchanted Treasury,[194] at once placed it in his breast-pocket and left all the other lamps to the folk who were bartering of him. Then he went forth running till he was clear of the city, when he walked leisurely over the level grounds and he took patience until night fell on him in desert ground where was none other but himself. There he brought out the Lamp when suddenly appeared to him the Marid who said, “Adsum! thy slave between thy hands is come: ask of me whatso thou wantest.” “ ’tis my desire,” the Moorman replied, “that thou upraise from its present place Alaeddin’s pavilion with its inmates and all that be therein, not forgetting myself, and set it down upon my own land, Africa. Thou knowest my town and I want the building placed in the gardens hard by it.” The Marid-slave replied, “Hearkening and obedience: close thine eyes and open thine eyes whenas thou shalt find thyself together with the pavilion in thine own country.” This was done; and, in an eye-twinkling, the Maroccan and the pavilion with all therein were transported to the African land. Such then was the work of the Maghrabi, the Magician; but now let us return to the Sultan and his son-in-law. It was the custom of the King, because of his attachment to and his affection for his daughter, every morning when he had shaken off sleep, to open the latticed casement and look out therefrom that he might catch sight of her abode. So that day he arose and did as he was wont. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-seventh Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the Sultan drew near the latticed casement of his palace and looked out at Alaeddin’s pavilion he saw naught; nay, the site was smooth as a well-trodden highway and like unto what it had been aforetime; and he could find nor edifice nor offices. So astonishment clothed him as with a garment, and his wits were wildered and he began to rub his eyes, lest they be dimmed or darkened, and to gaze intently; but at last he was certified that no trace of the pavilion remained nor sign of its being; nor wist he the why and the wherefore of its disappearance. So his surprise increased and he smote hand upon hand and the tears trickled down his cheeks over his beard, for that he knew not what had become of his daughter. Then he sent out officials forthright and summoned the Grand Wazir who at once attended; and, seeing him in this piteous plight said, æPardon, O King of the Age, may Allah avert from thee every ill! Wherefore art thou in such sorrow?” Exclaimed the Sovran, “Methinketh thou wottest not my case?” and Quoth the Minister, “On no wise. O our lord: by Allah, I know of it nothing at all.” “Then,” resumed the Sultan, “ ’tis manifest thou hast not looked this day in the direction of Alaeddin’s pavilion.” “True, O my lord,” Quoth the Wazir, “it must still be locked and fast shut;” and Quoth the King, “Forasmuch as thou hast no inkling of aught,[195] arise and look out at the window and see Alaeddin’s pavilion whereof thou sayest ’tis locked and fast shut.” The Minister obeyed his bidding but could not see anything, or pavilion or other place; so with mind and thoughts sore perplexed he returned to his liege lord who asked him, “Hast now learned the reason of my distress and noted yon locked-up palace and fast shut?” Answered the Wazir, “O King of the Age erewhile I represented to thy Highness that this pavilion and these matters be all magical.” Hereat the Sultan, fired with wrath, cried, “Where be Alaeddin?” and the Minister replied, “He hath gone a-hunting," when the King commanded without stay or delay sundry of his Aghas and Army- officers to go and bring to him his son-in-law chained and with pinioned elbows. So they fared forth until they found Alaeddin when they said to him, "O our lord Alaeddin, excuse us nor be thou wroth with us; for the King hath commanded that we carry thee before him pinioned and fettered, and we hope pardon from thee because we are under the royal orders which we cannot gainsay." Alaeddin, hearing these words, was seized with surprise and not knowing the reason of this remained tongue-tied for a time, after which he turned to them and asked, "O assembly, have you naught of knowledge concerning the motive of the royal mandate? Well I wot my soul to be innocent and that I never sinned against king or against kingdom." "O our lord," answered they, "we have no inkling whatever." So Alaeddin alighted from his horse and said to them, "Do ye whatso the Sultan bade you do, for that the King's command is upon the head and the eyes."[196] — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-eighth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Aghas, having bound Alaeddin in bonds and pinioned his elbows behind his back, haled him in chains and carried him into the city. But when the lieges saw him pinioned and ironed, they understood that the Sultan purposed to strike off his head; and, forasmuch as he was loved of them exceedingly, all gathered together and seized their weapons; then, swarming out of their houses, followed the soldiery to see what was to do. And when the troops arrived with Alaeddin at the palace, they went in and informed the Sultan of this, whereat he forthright commanded the Sworder to cut off the head of his son-in-law. Now as soon as the subjects were aware of this order, they barricaded the gates and closed the doors of the palace and sent a message to the King saying, "At this very moment we will level thine abode over the heads of all it containeth and over thine own,[197] if the least hurt or harm befal Alaeddin." So the Wazir went in and reported to the Sultan, "O King of the Age, thy commandment is about to seal the roll of our lives; and 'twere more suitable that thou pardon thy son-in-law lest there chance to us a sore mischance; for that the lieges do love him far more than they love us." Now the Sworder had already dispread the carpet of blood and, having seated Alaeddin thereon, had bandaged his eyes; moreover he had walked round him several times awaiting the last orders of his lord, when the King looked out of the window and saw his subjects, who had suddenly attacked him, swarming up the walls intending to tear them down. So forthright he bade the Sworder stay his hand from Alaeddin and commanded the crier fare forth to the crowd and cry aloud that he had pardoned his son-in- law and received him back into favour. But when Alaeddin found himself free and saw the Sultan seated on his throne, he went up to him and said, "O my lord, inasmuch as thy Highness hath favoured me throughout my life, so of thy grace now deign let me know the how and the wherein I have sinned against thee?" "O traitor, cried the King, "unto this present I knew not any sin of thine;" then, turning to the Wazir he said, "Take him and make him look out at the window and after let him tell us where be his pavilion." And when the royal order was obeyed Alaeddin saw the place level as a well trodden road, even as it had been ere the base of the building was laid, nor was there the faintest trace of edifice. Hereat he was astonished and perplexed knowing not what had occurred; but, when he returned to the presence, the King asked him, "What is it thou hast seen? Where is thy pavilion and where is my daughter, the core of my heart, my only child, than whom I have none other?" Alaeddin answered "O King of the Age, I wot naught thereof nor aught of what hath befallen," and the Sultan rejoined, "Thou must know, O Alaeddin, I have pardoned thee only that thou go forth and look into this affair and enquire for me concerning my daughter; nor do thou ever show thyself in my presence except she be with thee; and, if thou bring her not, by the life of my head, I will cut off the head of thee." The other replied, "To hear is to obey: only vouchsafe me a delay and respite of some forty days; after which, an I produce her not, strike off my head[198] and do with me whatso thou wishes"." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say,

When it was the Five Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night, Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Sultan said to Alaeddin, “Verily I have granted thee thy request, a delay of forty days; but think not thou canst fly from my hand, for I would bring thee back even if thou wert above the clouds instead of being only upon earth’s surface.” Replied Alaeddin, “O my lord the Sultan, as I said to thy Highness, an I fail to bring her within the term appointed, I will present myself for my head to be stricken off.” Now when the folk and the lieges all saw Alaeddin at liberty, they rejoiced with joy exceeding and were delighted for his release; but the shame of his treatment and bashfulness before his friends and the envious exultation of his foes had bowed down Alaeddin’s head; so he went forth a wandering through the city ways and he was perplexed concerning his case and knew not what had befallen him. He lingered about the capital for two days, in saddest state, wotting not what to do in order to find his wife and his pavilion, and during this time sundry of the folk privily brought him meat and drink. When the two days were done he left the city to stray about the waste and open lands outlying the walls, without a notion as to whither he should wend; and he walked on aimlessly until the path led him beside a river where, of the stress of sorrow that overwhelmed him, he abandoned himself to despair and thought of casting himself into the water. Being, however, a good Moslem who professed the unity of the God-head, he feared Allah in his soul; and, standing upon the margin he prepared to perform the Wuz·-ablution. But as he was baling up the water in his right hand and rubbing his fingers,[199] it so chanced that he also rubbed the Ring. Hereat its Marid appeared and said to him, “Adsum! thy thrall between thy hands is come: ask of me whatso thou wantest.” Seeing the Marid, Alaeddin rejoiced with exceeding joy and cried,[200] “O Slave, I desire of thee that thou bring before me my pavilion and therein my wife, the Lady Badr al-Budur, together with all and everything it containeth.” “O my lord,” replied the Marid, “ ’tis right hard upon me that thou demandest a service whereto I may not avail: this matter dependeth upon the Slave of the Lamp nor dare I even attempt it.” Alaeddin rejoined, “Forasmuch as the matter is beyond thy competence, I require it not of thee, but at least do thou take me up and set me down beside my pavilion in what land soever that may be." The Slave exclaimed, "Hearing and obeying, O my lord ;" and, uplifting him high in air, with in the space of an eye-glance set him down beside his pavilion in the land of Africa and upon a spot facing his wife's apartment. Now this was at fall of night yet one look enabled him to recognise his home; whereby his cark and care were cleared away and he recovered trust in Allah after cutting off all his hope to look upon his wife once more. Then he fell to pondering the secret and mysterious favours of the Lord (glorified be His omnipotence!); and how, after despair had mastered him, the Ring had come to gladden him and how, when all his hopes were cut off Allah had deigned bless him with the services of its Slave. So he rejoiced and his melancholy left him; then, as he had passed four days without sleep for the excess of his cark and care and sorrow and stress of thought, he drew near his pavilion and slept under a tree hard by the building which (as we mentioned) had been set down amongst the gardens outlying the city of Africa. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eightieth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin lay that night under a tree beside his pavilion in all restfulness; but whoso weareth head hard by the headsman may not sleep o' nights save whenas slumber prevail over him. He slumbered till Morning showed her face and, when awakened by the warbling of the small birds, he arose and went down to the bank of the river which flowed thereby into the city; and here he again washed hands and face[201] and after finished his Wuz·- ablution. Then he prayed the dawn-prayer, and when he had ended his orisons he returned and sat down under the windows of the Princess's bower. Now the Lady Badr al-Budur, of her exceeding sorrow for severance from her husband and her sire the Sultan, and for the great mishap which had happened to her from the Maghrabi, the Magician, the Accursed, was wont to rise during the murk preceding dawn and to sit in tears inasmuch as she could not sleep o' nights, and had forsworn meat and drink. Her favourite slave-girl would enter her chamber at the hour of prayer- salutation in order to dress her; and this time, by decree of Destiny, when she threw open the window to let her lady comfort and console herself by looking upon the trees and rills, and she herself peered out of the lattice, she caught sight of her master sitting below, and informed the Princess of this, saying, "O my lady! O my lady! here's my lord Alaeddin seated at the foot of the wall." So her mistress arose hurriedly and gazing from the casement saw him; and her husband raising his head saw her; so she saluted him and he saluted her, both being like to fly for joy. Presently Quoth she, "Up and come in to me by the private postern, for now the Accursed is not here;" and she gave orders to the slave-girl who went down and opened for him. Then Alaeddin passed through it and was met by his wife, when they embraced and exchanged kisses with all delight until they wept for overjoy. After this they sat down and Alaeddin said to her, "O my lady, before all things 'tis my desire to ask thee a question. 'Twas my wont to place an old copper lamp in such a part of my pavilion, what became of that same?" When the Princess heard these words she sighed and cried, "O my dearling, 'twas that very Lamp which garred us fall into this calamity!" Alaeddin asked her, "How befel the affair?" and she answered by recounting to him all that passed, first and last, especially how they had given in exchange an old lamp for a new lamp, adding, "And next day we hardly saw one another at dawn before we found ourselves in this land, and he who deceived us and took the lamp by way of barter informed me that he had done the deed by might of his magic and by means of the Lamp; that he is a Moorman from Africa, and that we are now in his native country." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-first Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the Lady Badr al-Budur ceased speaking, Alaeddin resumed, "Tell me the intent of this Accursed in thy respect, also what he sayeth to thee and what be his will of thee?” She replied, “Every day he cometh to visit me once and no more: he would woo me to his love and he sueth that I take him to spouse in lieu of thee and that I forget thee and be consoled for the loss of thee. And he telleth me that the Sultan my sire hath cut off my husband’s head, adding that thou, the son of pauper parents, wast by him enriched. And he sootheth me with talk, but he never seeth aught from me save weeping and wailing; nor hath he heard from me one sugar-sweet word.”[202] Quoth Alaeddin, “Tell me where he hath placed the Lamp an thou know anything thereof:” and Quoth she, “He beareth it about on his body alway, nor is it possible that he leave it for a single hour; moreover once when he related what I have now recounted to thee, he brought it out of his breast-pocket and allowed me to look upon it.” When Alaeddin heard these words, he joyed with exceeding joy and said, “O my lady, do thou lend ear to me. ’Tis my design to go from thee forthright and to return only after doffing this my dress; so wonder not when thou see me changed, but direct one of thy women to stand by the private pastern alway and, whenever she espy me coming, at once to open. And now I will devise a device whereby to slay this damned loon.” Herewith he arose and, issuing from the pavilion door, walked till he met on the way a Fellah to whom he said, “O man, take my attire and give me thy garments.” But the peasant refused, so Alaeddin stripped him of his dress perforce[203] and donned it, leaving to the man his own rich gear by way of gift. Then he followed the highway leading to the neighbouring city and entering it went to the Perfumers’ Bazar where he bought of one some rarely potent Bhang, the son of a minute,[204] paying two dinars for two drachms thereof and he returned in disguise by the same road till he reached the pavilion. Here the slave-girl opened to him the private pastern wherethrough he went in to the Lady Badr al-Budur. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it Was the Five Hundred and Eighty-second Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when Alaeddin went in disguised to his wife he said, “Hear me! I desire of thee that thou dress and dight thyself in thy best and thou cast off all outer show and semblance of care; also when the Accursed, the Maghrabi, shall visit thee, do thou receive him with a æWelcome and fair welcome,' and meet him with smiling face and invite him to come and sup with thee. Moreover, let him note that thou hast forgotten Alaeddin thy beloved, likewise thy father; and that thou hast learned to love him with exceeding love, displaying to him all manner joy and pleasure. Then ask him for wine which must be red and pledge him to his secret in a significant draught; and, when thou hast given him two to three cups full and hast made him wax careless, then drop these drops into his cup and fill it up with wine: no sooner shall he drink of it than he will fall upon his back senseless as one dead." Hearing these words, the Princess exclaimed," 'Tis exceedingly sore to me that I do such deed;[205] withal must I do it that we escape the defilement of this Accursed who tortured me by severance from thee and from my sire. Lawful and right therefore is the slaughter of this Accursed." Then Alaeddin ate and drank with his wife what hindered his hunger; then, rising without stay or delay, fared forth the pavilion. So the Lady Badr al-Budur summoned the tirewoman who robed and arrayed her in her finest raiment and adorned her and perfumed her; and, as she was thus, behold, the accursed Maghrabi entered. He joyed much seeing her in such case and yet more when she confronted him, contrary to her custom, with a laughing face; and his love-longing increased and his desire to have her. Then she took him and, seating him beside her, said, "O my dearling, do thou (an thou be willing) come to me this night and let us sup together. Sufficient to me hath been my sorrow for, were I to sit mourning through a thousand years or even two thousand, Alaeddin would not return to me from the tomb; and I depend upon thy say of yesterday, to wit, that my sire the Sultan slew him in his stress of sorrow for severance from me. Nor wonder thou an I have changed this day from what I was yesterday; and the reason thereof is I have determined upon taking thee to friend and playfellow in lieu of and succession to Alaeddin, for that now I have none other man but thyself. So I hope for thy presence this night, that we may sup together and we may carouse and drink somewhat of wine each with other; and especially 'tis my desire that thou cause me taste the wine of thy natal soil, the African land, because belike ’tis better than aught of the wine of China we drink: I have with me some wine but ’tis the growth of my country and I vehemently wish to taste the wine produced by thine.” And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-third Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that when the Maghrabi saw the love lavisht upon him by the Lady Badr al-Budur, and noted her change from the sorrowful, melancholy woman she was wont to be, he thought that she had cut off her hope of Alaeddin and he joyed exceedingly and said to her, “I hear and obey, O my lady, whatso thou wishest and all thou biddest. I have at home a jar of our country wine, which I have carefully kept and stored deep in earth for a space of eight years; and I will now fare and fill from it our need and will return to thee in all haste.” But the Princess, that she might wheedle him the more and yet more, replied “O my darling, go not thou, leaving me alone, but send one of the eunuchs to fill for us thereof and do thou remain sitting beside me, that I may find in thee my consolation.” He rejoined, “O my lady, none wotteth where the jar be buried save myself nor will I tarry from thee.” So saying, the Moorman went out and after a short time he brought back as much wine as they wanted whereupon Quoth the Princess to him, “Thou hast been at pains and trouble to serve me and I have suffered for thy sake, O my beloved.” Quoth he, “On no wise, O eyes of me; I hold myself enhonoured by thy service.” Then the Lady Badr al-Budur sat with him at table, and the twain fell to eating and presently the Princess expressed a wish to drink, when the handmaid filled her a cup forthright and then crowned another for the Maroccan. So she drank to his long life and his secret wishes and he also drank to her life; then the Princess, who was unique in eloquence and delicacy of speech, fell to making a cup companion of him and beguiled him by addressing him in the sweetest terms full of hidden meaning. This was done only that he might become more madly enamoured of her, but the Maghrabi thought that it resulted from her true inclination for him; nor knew that it was a snare set up to slay him. So his longing for her increased, and he was dying of love for her when he saw her address him in such tenderness of words and thoughts, and his head began to swim and all the world seemed as nothing in his eyes. But when they came to the last of the supper and the wine had mastered his brains and the Princess saw this in him, she said, “With us there be a custom throughout our country, but I know not an it be the usage of yours or not.” The Moorman replied, “And what may that be?” So she said to him, “At the end of supper each lover in turn taketh the cup of the beloved and drinketh it off;” and at once she crowned one with wine and bade the handmaid carry to him her cup wherein the drink was blended with the Bhang. Now she had taught the slave-girl what to do and all the handmaids and eunuchs in the pavilion longed for the Sorcerer’s slaughter and in that matter were one with the Princess. Accordingly the damsel handed him the cup and he, when he heard her words and saw her drinking from his cup and passing hers to him noted all that show of love, fancied himself Iskander, Lord of the Two Horns. Then said she to him, the while swaying gracefully to either side and putting her hand within his hand, “O my life, here is thy cup with me and my cup with thee, and on this wise [206] do lovers drink from each other’s cups.” Then she bussed the brim and drained it to the dregs and again she kissed its lip and offered it to him. Thereat he hew for joy and meaning to do the like, raised her cup to his mouth and drank off the whole contents, without considering whether there was therein aught harmful or not. And forthright he rolled upon his back in deathlike condition and the cup dropped from his grasp, whereupon the Lady Badr al-Budur and the slave-girls ran hurriedly and opened the pavilion door to their lord Alaeddin who, disguised as a Fellah, entered therein. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-fourth Night, Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin entering his pavilion, went up to the apartment of his wife, whom he found still sitting at table; and facing her lay the Maghrabi as one slaughtered; so he at once drew near to her and kissed her and thanked her for this. Then rejoicing with joy exceeding he turned to her and said “Do thou with thy handmaids betake thyself to the inner-rooms and leave me alone for the present that I may take counsel touching mine affair.” The Princess hesitated not but went away at once, she and her women; then Alaeddin arose and after locking the door upon them, walked up to the Moorman and put forth his hand to his breast-pocket and thence drew the Lamp; after which he unsheathed his sword and slew the villain.[207] Presently he rubbed the Lamp and the Marid-slave appeared and said, “Adsum, O my lord, what is it thou wantest?” “I desire of thee,” said Alaeddin, “that thou take up my pavilion from this country and transport it to the land of China and there set it down upon the site where it was whilome, fronting the palace of the Sultan.” The Marid replied, “Hearing and obeying, O my lord.’ The Alaeddin went and sat down with his wife and throwing his arms round her neck kissed her and she kissed him, and they sat in converse, what while the Jinni transported the pavilion and all therein to the place appointed. Presently Alaeddin bade the handmaids spread the table before him and he and the Lady Badr al-Budur took seat thereat and fell to eating and drinking, in all joy and gladness, till they had their sufficiency when, removing to the chamber of wine and cup-converse, they sat there and caroused in fair companionship and each kissed other with all love-liesse. The time had been long and longsome since they enjoyed aught of pleasure; so they ceased not doing thus until the wine-sun arose in their heads and sleep get hold of them, at which time they went to their bed in all ease and comfort.[208] Early on the next morning Alaeddin woke and awoke his wife, and the slave- girls came in and donned her dress and prepared her and adorned her whilst her husband arrayed himself in his costliest raiment and the twain were ready to fly for joy at reunion after parting. Moreover the Princess was especially joyous and gladsome because on that day she expected to see her beloved father. Such was the case of Alaeddin and the Lady Badr al-Budur; but as regards the Sultan, after he drove away his son-in-law he never ceased to sorrow for the loss of his daughter; and every hour of every day he would sit and weep for her as women weep, because she was his only child and he had none other to take to heart. And as he shook off sleep, morning after morning, he would hasten to the window and throw it open and peer in the direction where formerly stood Alaeddin's pavilion and pour forth tears until his eyes were dried up and their lids were ulcered. Now on that day he arose at dawn and, according to his custom, looked out when, lo and behold! he saw before him an edifice; so he rubbed his eyes and considered it curiously when he became certified that it was the pavilion of his son-in-law. So he called for a horse [209] without let or delay; and as soon as his beast was saddled, he mounted and made for the place; and Alaeddin, when he saw his father-in-law approaching, went down and met him half way: then, taking his hand, aided him to step upstairs to the apartment of his daughter. And the Princess, being as earnestly desirous to see her sire, descended and greeted him at the door of the staircase fronting the ground-floor hall. Thereupon the King folded her in his arms and kissed her, shedding tears of joy; and she did likewise till at last Alaeddin led them to the upper saloon where they took seats and the Sultan fell to asking her case and what had betided her. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-fifth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Lady Badr al-Budur began to inform the Sultan of all which had befallen her, saying, "O my father, I recovered not life save yesterday when I saw my husband, and he it was who freed me from the thraldom of that Maghrabi, that Magician, that Accursed, than whom I believe there be none viler on the face of earth; and, but for my beloved, I had never escaped him nor hadst thou seen me during the rest of my days. But mighty sadness and sorrow get about me, O my father, not only for losing thee but also for the loss of a husband, under whose kindness I shall be all the length of my life, seeing that he freed me from that fulsome sorcerer.” Then the Princess began repeating to her sire every thing that happened to her, and relating to him how the Moorman had tricked her in the guise of a lamp-seller who offered in exchange new for old; how she had given him the Lamp whose worth she knew not, and how she had bartered it away only to laugh at the lampman’s folly. “And next morning, O my father,” she continued, “we found ourselves and whatso the pavilion contained in Africa-land, till such time as my husband came to us and devised a device whereby we escaped: and, had it not been for Alaeddin’s hastening to our aid, the Accursed was determined to enjoy me perforce.” Then she told him of the Bhang-drops administered in wine to the African and concluded, “Then my husband returned to me and how I know not, but we were shifted from Africa land to this place.” Alaeddin in his turn recounted how, finding the wizard dead drunken, he had sent away his wife and her women from the polluted place into the inner apartments; how he had taken the Lamp from the Sorcerer’s breast-pocket whereto he was directed by his wife; how he had slaughtered the villain and, finally how, making use of the Lamp, he had summoned its Slave and ordered him to transport the pavilion back to its proper site, ending his tale with, “And, if thy Highness have any doubt anent my words, arise with me and look upon the accursed Magician.” The King did accordingly and, having considered the Moorman, bade the carcase be carried away forthright and burned and its ashes scattered in air. Then he took to embracing Alaeddin and kissing him said, “Pardon me, O my son, for that I was about to destroy thy life through the foul deeds of this damned enchanter, who cast thee into such pit of peril; and I may be excused, O my child, for what I did by thee, because I found myself forlorn of my daughter; my only one, who to me is dearer than my very kingdom. Thou knowest how the hearts of parents yearn unto their offspring, especially when like myself they have but one and none other to love.” And on this wise the Sultan took to excusing himself and kissing his son-in- law. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say, When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-sixth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin said to the Sultan, “O King of the Time, thou didst naught to me contrary to Holy Law, and I also sinned not against thee; but all the trouble came from that Maghrabi, the impure, the Magician.” Thereupon the Sultan bade the city be decorated and they obeyed him and held high feast and festivities. He also commanded the crier to cry about the streets saying, “This day is a mighty great fÛte, wherein public rejoicings must be held throughout the realm, for a full month of thirty days, in honour of the Lady Badr al-Budur and her husband Alaeddin’s return to their home.” On this wise befel it with Alaeddin and the Maghrabi; but withal the King’s son-in-law escaped not wholly from the Accursed, albeit the body had been burnt and the ashes scattered in air. For the villain had a brother yet more villainous than himself, and a greater adept in necromancy, geomancy and astromancy; and, even as the old saw saith “A bean and ’twas split;”[210] so each one dwelt in his own quarter of the globe that he might fill it with his sorcery, his fraud and his treason.[211] Now, one day of the days it fortuned that the Moorman’s brother would learn how it fared with him, so he brought out his sandboard and dotted it and produced the figures which, when he had considered and carefully studied them, gave him to know that the man he sought was dead and housed in the tomb. So he grieved and was certified of his decease, but he dotted a second time seeking to learn the manner of the death and where it had taken place; so he found that the site was the China-land and that the mode was the foulest of slaughter; furthermore, that he who did him die was a young man Alaeddin hight. Seeing this he straightway arose and equipped himself for wayfare; then he set out and cut across the wilds and words and heights for the space of many a month until he reached China and the capital of the Sultan wherein was the slayer of his brother. He alighted at the so-called Strangers’ Khan and, hiring himself a cell, took rest therein for a while; then he fared forth and wandered about the highways that he might discern some path which would aid him unto the winning of his ill-minded wish, to wit, of wreaking upon Alaeddin blood-revenge for his brother.[212] Presently he entered a coffee-house, a fine building which stood in the market-place and which collected a throng of folk to play, some at the mankalah,[213] others at the backgammon[214] and others at the chess and what not else. There he sat down and listened to those seated beside him and they chanced to be conversing about an ancient dame and a holy, by name Fatimah,[215] who dwelt alway at her devotions in a hermitage without the town, and this she never entered save only two days each month. They mentioned also that she had performed many saintly miracles[216] which, when the Maghrabi, the Necromancer, heard he said in himself, "Now have I found that which I sought: Inshallah — God willing — by means of this crone will I win to my wish." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-seventh Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Maghrabi, the Necromancer, went up to the folk who were talking of the miracles performed by the devout old woman and said to one of them, "O my uncle, I heard you all chatting about the prodigies of a certain saintess named Fatimah: who is she and where may be her abode? "Marvellous!"[217] exclaimed the man: "How canst thou be in our city and yet never have heard about the miracles of the Lady Fatimah? Evidently, O thou poor fellow, thou art a foreigner, since the fastings of this devotee and her asceticism in worldly matters and the beauties of her piety never came to thine ears." The Moorman rejoined, " 'tis true, O my lord: yes, I am a stranger and came to this your city only yesternight; and I hope thou wilt inform me concerning the saintly miracles of this virtuous woman and where may be her wone, for that I have fallen into a calamity, and 'tis my wish to visit her and crave her prayers, so haply Allah (to whom be honour and glory!) will, through her blessings, deliver me from mine evil." Hereat the man recounted to him the marvels of Fatimah the Devotee and her piety and the beauties of her worship; then, taking him by the hand went with him without the city and showed him the way to her abode, a cavern upon a hillock's head. The Necromancer acknowledged his kindness in many words and, thanking him for his good offices, returned to his cell in the caravanserai. Now by the fiat of Fate on the very next day Fatimah came down to the city, and the Maghrabi, the Necromancer, happened to leave his hostelry a-morn, when he saw the folk swarming and crowding; wherefore he went up to discover what was to do and found the Devotee standing amiddlemost the throng, and all who suffered from pain or sickness flocked to her soliciting a blessing and praying for her prayers; and each and every she touched became whole of his illness.[218] The Maroccan, the Necromancer, followed her about until she returned to her antre; then, awaiting till the evening evened, he arose and repaired to a vintner's store where he drank a cup of wine. After this he fared forth the city and finding the Devotee's cavern, entered it and saw her lying prostrate[219] with her back upon a strip of matting. So he came for ward and mounted upon her belly; then he drew his dagger and shouted at her; and, when she awoke and opened her eyes, she espied a Moorish man with an unsheathed poniard sitting upon her middle as though about to kill her. She was troubled and sore terrified, but he said to her, "Hearken! an thou cry out or utter a word I will slay thee at this very moment: arise now and do all I bid thee." Then he sware to her an oath that if she obeyed his orders, whatever they might be, he would not do her die. So saying, he rose up from off her and Fatimah also arose, when he said to her, "Give me thy gear and take thou my habit ;" whereupon she gave him her clothing and head-fillets, her face-kerchief and her mantilla. Then Quoth he, " 'tis also requisite that thou anoint me with somewhat shall make the colour of my face like unto thine." Accordingly she went into the inner cavern and, bringing out a gallipot of ointment, spread somewhat thereof upon her palm and with it besmeared his face until its hue favoured her own; then she gave him her staff[220] and, showing him how to walk and what to do when he entered the city, hung her rosary around his neck. Lastly she handed to him a mirror and said, "Now look! Thou differest from me in naught;" and he saw himself Fatimah's counterpart as though she had never gone or come.[221] But after obtaining his every object he falsed his oath and asked for a cord which she brought to him; then he seized her and strangled her in the cavern; and presently, when she was dead, haled the corpse outside and threw it into a pit hard by. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-eighth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Maghrabi, after murthering Fatimah, threw her body into a pit and went back to sleep in her cavern; and, when broke the day, he rose and repairing to the town took his stand under the walls of Alaeddin’s pavilion. Hereupon flocked the folk about him, all being certified that he was Fatimah the Devotee and he fell to doing whatso she was wont to do: he laid hands on these in pain and recited for those a chapter of the Koran and made orisons for a third. Presently the thronging of the folk and the clamouring of the crowd were heard by the Lady Badr al-Budur, who said to her handmaidens, “Look what is to do and what be the cause of this turmoil!” Thereupon the Agha of the eunuchry fared forth to see what might be the matter and presently returning said, “O my lady, this clamour is caused by the Lady Fatimah, and if thou be pleased to command, I will bring her to thee; so shalt thou gain through her a blessing.” The Princess answered, “Go bring her, for since many a day I am always hearing of her miracles and her virtues, and I do long to see her and get a blessing by her intervention, for the folk recount her manifestations in many cases of difficulty.” The Agha went forth and brought in the Maroccan, the Necromancer, habited in Fatimah’s clothing; and, when the wizard stood before the Lady Badr al-Budur, he began at first sight to bless her with a string of prayers; nor did any one of those present doubt at all but that he was the Devotee herself. The Princess arose and salam’d to him then seating him beside her, said, “O my Lady Fatimah, ’tis my desire that thou abide with me alway, so might I be blessed through thee, and also learn of thee the paths[222] of worship and piety and follow thine example making for salvation.” Now all this was a foul deceit of the accursed African and he designed furthermore to complete his guile, so he continued, “O my Lady, I am a poor woman and a religious that dwelleth in the desert; and the like of me deserveth not to abide in the palaces of the kings.” But the Princess replied, “Have no care whatever, O my Lady Fatimah; I will set apart for thee an apartment of my pavilion, that thou mayest worship therein and none shall ever come to trouble thee; also thou shalt avail to worship Allah in my place better than in thy cavern.” The Maroccan rejoined,” Hearkening and obedience, O my lady; I will not oppose thine order for that the commands of the children of the kings may not be gainsaid nor renounced. Only I hope of thee that my eating and drinking and sitting may be within my own chamber which shall be kept wholly private; nor do I require or desire the delicacies of diet, but do thou favour me by sending thy handmaid every day with a bit of bread and a sup of water;[223] and, when I feel fain of food, let me eat by myself in my own room.” Now the Accursed hereby purposed to avert the danger of haply raising his face-kerchief at meal-times, when his intent might be baffled by his beard and mustachios discovering him to be a man. The Princess replied, “O my Lady Fatimah, be of good heart; naught shall happen save what thou wishest. But now arise and let me show thee the apartment in the palace which I would prepare for thy sojourn with us.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Eighty-ninth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, “O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales,” whereupon Shahrazad replied, “With love and good will.” — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Lady Badr al-Budur arose and taking the Necromancer who had disguised himself as the Devotee, ushered him in to the place which she had kindly promised him for a home and said, “O my Lady Fatimah, here thou shalt dwell with every comfort about thee and in all privacy and repose; and the place shall be named after thy name;” whereupon the Maghrabi acknowledged her kindness and prayed for her. Then the Princess showed him the jalousies and the jewelled Kiosque with its four and twenty windows[224] and said to him, “What thinkest thou, O my Lady Fatimah, of this marvellous pavilion?” The Moorman replied, “By Allah, O my daughter, ’tis indeed passing fine and wondrous exceedingly; nor do I deem that its fellow is to be found in the whole universe; but alas for the lack of one thing which would enhance its beauty and decoration !" The Princess asked her, "O my Lady Fatimah, what lacketh it and what be this thing would add to its adornment? Tell me thereof, inasmuch as I was wont to believe it wholly perfect." The Maroccan answered, "O my lady, all it wanteth is that there be hanging from the middle of the dome the egg of a fowl called the Rukh;[225] and, were this done, the pavilion would lack its peer all the world over." The Princess asked, "What be this bird and where can we find her egg?" and the Maroccan answered, "O my lady, the Rukh is indeed a giant fowl which carrieth off camels and elephants in her pounces and flieth away with them, such is her stature and strength; also this fowl is mostly found in Mount Kßf; and the architect who built this pavilion is able to bring thee one of her eggs." They then left such talk as it was the hour for the noon day meal and, when the handmaid had spread the table, the Lady Badr al-Budur sent down to invite the Accursed African to eat with her. But he accepted not and for a reason he would on no wise consent; nay, he rose and retired to the room which the Princess had assigned to him and whither the slave-girls carried his dinner. Now when evening evened, Alaeddin returned from the chase and met his wife who salam'd to him and he clasped her to his bosom and kissed her. Presently, looking at her face he saw thereon a shade of sadness and he noted that contrary to her custom, she did not laugh; so he asked her, "What hath betided thee, O my dearling? tell me, hath aught happened to trouble thy thoughts!" "Nothing whatever," answered she, "but, O my beloved, I fancied that our pavilion lacked naught at all; however, O eyes of me, O Alaeddin, were the dome of the upper story hung with an egg of the fowl called Rukh, there would be naught like it in the universe." Her husband rejoined, "And for this trifle thou art saddened when 'tis the easiest of all matters to me! So cheer thyself; and, whatever thou wantest, 'tis enough thou inform me thereof, and I will bring it from the abysses of the earth in the quickest time and at the earliest hour." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninetieth Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that Alaeddin after refreshing the spirits of his Princess by promising her all she could desire, repaired straight way to his chamber and taking the Lamp[226] rubbed it, when the Marid appeared without let or delay saying, "Ask whatso thou wantest." Said the other, "I desire thee to fetch me an egg of the bird Rukh and do thou hang it to the dome-crown of this my pavilion." But when the Marid heard these words, his face waxed fierce and he shouted with a mighty loud voice and a frightful, and cried, "O denier of kindly deeds, sufficeth it not for thee that I and all the Slaves of the Lamp are ever at thy service, but thou must also require me to bring thee our Liege Lady[227] for thy pleasure, and hang her up at thy pavilion dome for the enjoyment of thee and thy wife! Now by Allah, ye deserve, thou and she, that I reduce you to ashes this very moment and scatter you upon the air; but, inasmuch as ye twain be ignorant of this matter, unknowing its inner from its outer significance, I will pardon you for indeed ye are but innocents. The offence cometh from that accursed Necromancer, brother to the Maghrabi, the Magician, who abideth here representing himself to be Fatimah, the Devotee, after assuming her dress and belongings and murthering her in the cavern: indeed he came hither seeking to slay thee by way of blood-revenge for his brother; and 'tis he who taught thy wife to require this matter of me.''[228] So saying the Marid evanished. But when Alaeddin heard these words, his wits fled his head and his joints trembled at the Marid's terrible shout; but he empowered his purpose and, rising forthright, issued from his chamber and went into his wife's. There he affected an ache of head, for that he knew how famous was Fatimah for the art and mystery of healing all such pains; and, when the Lady Badr al- Budur saw him sitting hand to head and complaining of unease, she asked him the cause and he answered, "I know of none other save that my head acheth exceedingly." Hereupon she straightway bade summon Fatimah that the Devotee might impose her hand upon his head;[229] and Alaeddin asked her, "Who may this Fatimah be?" So she informed him that it was Fatimah the Devotee to whom she had given a home in the pavilion. Meanwhile the slave-girls had fared forth and summoned the Maghrabi, and when the Accursed made act of presence, Alaeddin rose up to him and, acting like one who knew naught of his purpose, salam'd to him as though he had been the real Fatimah and, kissing the hem of his sleeve, welcomed him and entreated him with honour and said, "O my Lady Fatimah, I hope thou wilt bless me with a boon, for well I wot thy practice in the healing of pains: I have gotten a mighty ache in my head." The Moorman, the Accursed, could hardly believe that he heard such words, this being all that he desired. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninety-first Night,

Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, an thou be other than sleepy, do tell us some of thy pleasant tales," whereupon Shahrazad replied, "With love and good will." — It hath reached me, O King of the Age, that the Maghrabi, the Necromancer, habited as Fatimah the Devotee, came up to Alaeddin that he might place hand upon his head and heal his ache; so he imposed one hand and, putting forth the other under his gown, drew a dagger wherewith to slay him. But Alaeddin watched him and, taking patience till he had wholly unsheathed the weapon, seized him with a forceful grip; and, wrenching the dagger from his grasp plunged it deep into his heart. When the Lady Badr al-Budur saw him do on this wise, she shrieked and cried out, "What hath this virtuous and holy woman done that thou hast charged thy neck with the heavy burthen of her blood shed wrongfully? Hast thou no fear of Allah that thou killest Fatimah, this saintly woman, whose miracles are far- famed?" "No," replied Alaeddin "I have not killed Fatimah. I have slain only Fatimah's slayer, he that is the brother of the Maghrabi, the Accursed, the Magician, who carried thee off by his black art and transported my pavilion to the Africa-land; and this damnable brother of his came to our city and wrought these wiles, murthering Fatimah and assuming her habit, only that he might avenge upon me his brother's blood; and he also 'twas who taught thee to require of me a Rukh's egg, that my death might result from such requirement. But, an thou doubt my speech, come forwards and consider the person I have slain." Thereupon Alaeddin drew aside the Moorman's face-kerchief and the Lady Badr al-Budur saw the semblance of a man with a full beard that well nigh covered his features. She at once knew the truth and said to her husband, "O my beloved, twice have I cast thee into death- risk!" but he rejoined, "No harm in that, O my lady, by the blessing of your loving eyes: I accept with all joy all things thou bringest me." The Princess, hearing these words, hastened to fold him in her arms and kissed him saying, "O my dearling, all this is for my love to thee and I knew naught thereof; but indeed I do not deem lightly of thine affection." So Alaeddin kissed her and strained her to his breast; and the love between them waxed but greater. At that moment the Sultan appeared and they told him all that had happened, showing him the corpse of the Maghrabi, the Necromancer, when the King commanded the body to be burned and the ashes scattered on air, even as had befallen the Wizard's brother. And Alaeddin abode with his wife, the Lady Badr al- Budur, in all pleasure and joyance of life and thenceforward escaped every danger; and, after a while, when the Sultan deceased, his son-in-law was seated upon the throne of the Kingdom; and he commanded and dealt justice to the lieges so that all the folk loved him, and he lived with his wife in all solace and happiness until there came to him the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies.[230] Quoth Dunyazad, "O sister mine, how rare is thy tale and delectable!" and Quoth Shahrazad, "And what is this compared with that I could relate to you after the coming night, an this my lord the King deign leave me on life?" So Shahryar said to himself, "Indeed I will not slay her until she tell me the whole tale."

When it was the Five Hundred and Ninety-second Night,[231]
Shahrazad began to relate the adventures of

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KHUDADAD[232] AND HIS BROTHERS.

Said she, O auspicious King, this my tale relateth to the Kingdom of Diyßr Bakr[233] in whose capital-city of Harrßn[234] dwelt a Sultan of illustrious lineage, a protector of the people, a lover of his lieges, a friend of mankind and renowned for being gifted with every good quality. Now Allah Almighty had bestowed upon him all that his heart could desire, save boon of child, for though he had lovely wives within his Harem-door and fair concubines galore, he had been not blessed with a son; wherefor he offered up incessant worship to the Creator. One night there appeared to him in a dream a man of comely visage and holy of semblance like unto a prophet, who addressed him, saying, "O puissant King, thy vows are at length heard. Arise to-morrow at day-dawn, pray a two-bow prayer and offer up thy petitions; then haste thee to the Chief Gardener of thy palace and require of him a pomegranate whereof do thou eat as many seeds as seemeth best to thee; after which perform another two-bow prayer, and Allah will shower favours and graces upon thy head." The King, awaking at peep of day, called to mind the vision of the night, and returning thanks to the Almighty, made his orisons and kneeling invoked a benedicite. Then he rose and repaired to the garth, and receiving a pomegranate from the Head-Gardener, counted out and ate fifty grains thereof; to wit, one for each of his wives. After this he lay the night in turn with them all and by the omnipotence of the Creator all gave in due time signs of pregnancy, save one Fir·zah[235] hight. So the King conceived a grudge against her, saying in his soul, "Allah holdeth this woman vile and accursed and He willeth not that she become the mother of a Prince, and on this wise hath the curse of barrenness become her lot." He would have had her done to death but the Grand Wazir made intercession for her and suggested to the Sultan that perchance Firuzah might prove with child and withal not show outward signal thereof, as is the manner of certain women; wherefore to slay her might be to destroy a Prince with the mother. Quoth the King, "So be it! slay her not, but take heed that she abide no longer or at court or in the city, for I cannot support the sight of her." Replied the Minister, "It shall be done even as thy Highness biddeth: let her be conveyed to the care of thy brother's son, Prince SamÝr." The King did according to the counsel of his Wazir and despatched his loathed Queen to Samaria[236] accompanied by a writ with the following purport, to his nephew, "We forward this lady to thy care: entreat her honourably and, shouldest thou remark tokens of pregnancy in her, see that thou acquaint us therewith without stay or delay." So Firuzah journeyed to Samaria, and when her time was fulfilled she gave birth to a boy babe, and became the mother of a Prince who in favour was resplendent as the sheeny day. Hereat the lord of Samaria sent message by letter to the Sultan of Harran saying, "A Prince hath been borne by the womb of Firuzah: Allah Almighty give thee permanence of prosperity!" By these tidings the King was filled with joy; and presently he replied to his cousin, Prince Samir, "Each one of my forty-and-nine spouses hath been blessed with issue and it delighteth me beyond bounds that Firuzah hath also given me a son. Let him be named Khudadad — God's gift — do thou have due care of him and whatsoever thou mayest need for his birth-ceremonies shall be counted out to thee without regard to cost." Accordingly Prince Samir took in hand with all pleasure and delight the charge of Prince Khudadad; and, as soon as the child reached the age for receiving instruction, he caused him to be taught cavalarice and archery and all such arts and sciences which it behoveth the sons of the Kings to learn, so that he became perfect in all manner knowledge. At eighteen years of age he waxed seemly of semblance and such were his strength and valiance that none in the whole world could compare with him. Presently, feeling himself gifted with unusual vigour and virile character he addressed one day of the days Firuzah his parent, saying, "O mother mine, grant me thy leave to quit Samaria and fare in quest of fortune, especially of some battle-field where I may prove the force and prowess of me. My sire, the Sultan of Harran, hath many foes, some of whom are lusting to wage war with him; and I marvel that at such time he doth not summon me and make me his aid in this mightiest of matters. But seeing that I possess such courage and Allah-given strength it behoveth me not to remain thus idly at home. My father knoweth not of my lustihood, nor forsooth doth he think of me at all; nevertheless 'tis suitable that at such a time I present myself before him, and tender my services until my brothers be fit to fight and to front his foes.” Hereto his mother made answer, “O my dear son, thine absence pleaseth me not, but in truth it becometh thee to help thy father against the enemies who are attacking him on all sides, provided that he send for thine aidance.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Five Hundred and Ninety-third Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Khudadad replied to his mother Firuzah, “Indeed I am unable to brook delay; moreover such longing have I in heart to look upon the Sultan, my sire, that an I go not and visit him and kiss his feet I shall assuredly die. I will enter his employ as a stranger and all unknown to him, nor will I inform him that I am his son; but I shall be to him as a foreigner or as one of his hired knaves, and with such devotion will I do him suit and service that, when he learneth that I am indeed his child, he may grant me his favour and affection.” Prince Samir also would not suffer him to depart and forbade him therefrom; but one day of the days the Prince suddenly set out from Samaria under pretext that he was about to hunt and chase. He mounted a milk-white steed, whose reins and stirrups were of gold and the saddle and housings were of azure satin dubbed with jewels and fringed with pendants of fresh pearls. His scymitar was hilted with a single diamond, the scabbard of chaunders-wood was crested with rubies and emeralds and it depended from a gemmed waist-belt; while his bow and richly wrought quiver hung by his side. Thus equipped and escorted by his friends and familiars he presently arrived at Harran-city after the fairest fashion; and, when occasion offered itself, he made act of presence before the King and did his obeisance at Darbar. The Sultan, remarking his beauty and comeliness, or haply by reason of an outburst of natural affection, was pleased to return his salam; and, graciously calling him to his side, asked of him his name and pedigree, whereto Khudadad answered, “O my liege, I am the son of an Emir of Cairo. A longing for travel hath made me quit my native place and wander from clime to clime till at length I have come hither; and, hearing that thou hast matters of importance in hand, I am desirous of approving to thee my valiancy.” The King joyed with exceeding joy to hear this stout and doughty speech, and forthwith gave him a post of command in his army; and Khudadad by careful supervision of the troops soon won the esteem of his officers by his desire to satisfy them and the hearts of his soldiers by reason of his strength and courage, his goodly nature and his kindly disposition. He also brought the host and all its equipments and munitions of warfare into such excellent order and method that the King on inspecting them was delighted and created the stranger Chief Commandant of the forces and made him an especial favourite; while the Wazirs and Emirs, also the Nabobs and the Notables, perceiving that he was highly reputed and regarded, showed him abundant good will and affection. Presently, the other Princes, who became of no account in the eyes of the King and the lieges, waxed envious of his high degree and dignity. But Khudadad ceased not to please the Sultan his sire, at all times when they conversed together, by his prudence and discretion, his wit and wisdom, and gained his regard ever more and more; and when the invaders, who had planned a raid on the realm, heard of the discipline of the army and of Khudadad's provisions for materials of war, they abstained from all hostile intent. After a while the King committed to Khudadad the custody and education of the forty-nine Princes, wholly relying on his sagesse and skill; and thus, albeit Khudadad was of age like his brothers, he became their master by reason of his sapience and good sense. Whereupon they hated him but the more; and, when taking counsel one day, quoth one to the other, "What be this thing our sire hath done that he should make a stranger-wight his cup-companion and set him to lord it over us? We can do naught save by leave of this our governor, and our condition is past bearing; so contrive we to rid ourselves of this foreigner and at least render him vile and contemptible in the eyes of our sire the Sultan." Said one, "Let us gather together and slay him in some lonely spot;" and said another, "Not so! to kill him would benefit us naught, for how could we keep the matter hidden from the King? He would become our enemy and Allah only wotteth what evil might befal us. Nay, rather let us crave permission of him and fare a-hunting and then tarry we in some far-off town; and after a while the King will marvel at our absence, then grief will be sore upon him and at length, waxing displeased and suspicious, he will have this fellow expelled the palace or haply done to death. This is the only sure and safe way of bringing about his destruction." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Five Hundred and Ninety-fourth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the forty-and-nine brothers agreed to hold this plan wisest and, presently going together to Khudadad, asked leave of him to ride about the country awhile or fare to the chase, promising they would return by set of sun. He fell into the snare and allowed them to go; whereupon they sallied forth a-hunting but did not come back that day or the next. On the third morning the King who missed them asked Khudadad wherefore it was that none of his sons were to be seen; and he answered that three days before they had gotten leave from him to go a-hunting and had not returned. Hereat the father was perplexed with sore perplexity; and, when sundry days more had passed by and still the Princes appeared not, the old Sultan was much troubled in mind and hardly restraining his rage summoned Khudadad and in hot wrath exclaimed, "O thou neglectful stranger, what courage and over-daring is this of thine that thou didst suffer my sons fare to the chase and didst not ride with them! And now 'tis but right that thou set out and search for them and bring them back; otherwise thou shalt surely die." Khudadad, hearing these harsh words, was startled and alarmed; however he got him ready and mounted his horse forthwith and left the city in quest of the Princes his brethren, wandering about from country to country, like unto a herd seeking a straying flock of goats. Presently, not finding any trace of them in homestead or on desert-ground, he became sad and sorrowful exceedingly, saying in his soul, "O my brothers, what hath befallen you and where can ye be dwelling? Perchance some mighty foeman hath made you prisoners so that ye cannot escape; and I may never return unto Harran till I find you; for this will be a matter of bitter regret and repine to the King." So he repented more and more having suffered them to go without his escort and guidance. At length whilst searching for them from plain to plain and forest to forest he chanced come upon a large and spacious prairie in the middlemost whereof rose a castle of black marble; so he rode on at a foot pace and when close under the walls he espied a lady of passing beauty and loveliness who was seated at a window in melancholy plight and with no other ornament than her own charms. Her lovely hair hung down in dishevelled locks; her raiment was tattered and her favour was pale and showed sadness and sorrow. Withal she was speaking under her breath and Khudadad, giving attentive ear, heard her say these words, “O youth, fly this fatal site, else thou wilt fall into the hands of the monster who dwelleth here: a man-devouring Ethiopian[237] is lord of this palace; and he seizeth all whom Fate sendeth to this prairie and locketh them up in darksome and narrow cells that he may preserve them for food.”

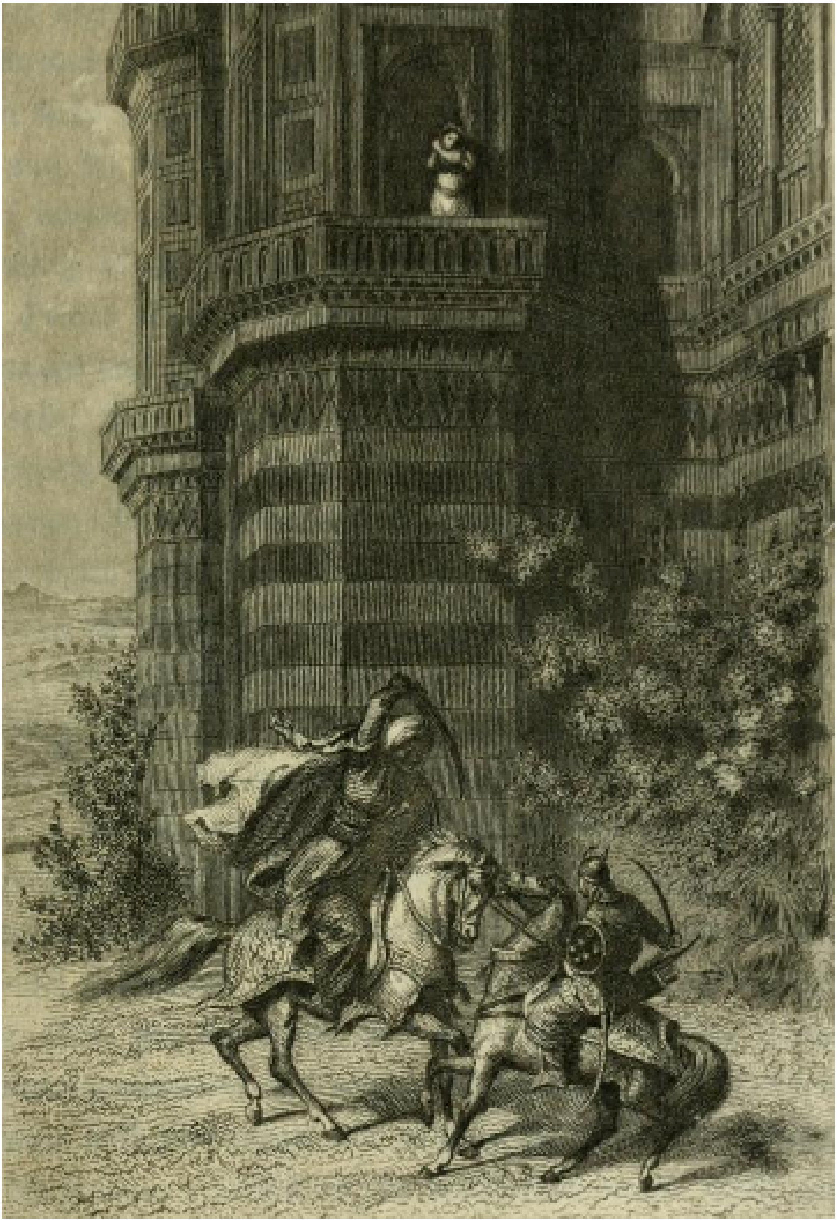

Khudadad exclaimed, “O my lady, tell me I pray thee who thou art and whereabouts was thy home;” and she answered, “I am a daughter of Cairo and of the noblest thereof. But lately, as I wended my way to Baghdad, I alighted upon this plain and met that Habashi, who slew all my servants and carrying me off by force placed me in this palace. I no longer cared to live, and a thousand times better were it for me to die; for that this Abyssinian lusteth to enjoy me and albeit to the present time I have escaped the caresses of the impure wretch, to-morrow an I still refuse to gratify his desire he will surely ravish me and do me dead. So I have given up all hope of safety; but thou, why hast thou come hither to perish? Escape without stay or delay, for he hath gone forth in quest of wayfarers and right soon will he return. Moreover he can see far and wide and can descry all who traverse this wold." Now hardly had the lady spoken these words when the Abyssinian drew in sight; and he was as a Gh·l of the Wild, big of bulk, and fearsome of favour and figure, and he mounted a sturdy Tartar steed, brandishing, as he rode, a weighty blade which none save he could wield. Prince Khudadad seeing this monstrous semblance was sore amazed and prayed Heaven that he might be victorious over that devil: then unsheathing his sword he stood awaiting the Abyssinian's approach with courage and steadfastness; but the blackamoor when he drew near deemed the Prince too slight and puny to fight and was minded to seize him alive. Khudadad, seeing how his foe had no intent to combat, struck him with his sword on the knee a stroke so dour that the negro foamed with rage and yelled a yell so loud that the whole prairie resounded with the plaint. Thereupon the brigand, fiery with fury, rose straight in his shovel-stirrups and struck fiercely at Khudadad with his huge sword and, but for the Prince's cunning of fence and the cleverness of his courser, he would have been sliced in twain like unto a cucumber. Though the scymitar whistled through the air, the blow was harmless, and in an eye-twinkling Khudadad dealt him a second cut and struck off his right hand which fell to the ground with the sword hilt it gripped, when the blackamoor losing his balance rolled from the saddle and made earth resound with the fall. Thereupon the Prince sprang from his steed and deftly severing the enemy's head from his body threw it aside. Now the lady had been looking down at the lattice rigid in prayer for the gallant youth; and, seeing the Abyssinian slain and the Prince victorious, she was overcome with exceeding joy and cried out to her deliverer, "Praise be to Almighty Allah, O my lord, who by thy hand hath defeated and destroyed this fiend. Come now to me within the castle, whose keys are with the

Abyssinian; so take them and open the door and deliver me." Khudadad found a large bunch of keys under the dead man's girdle wherewith he opened the portals of the fort and entered a large saloon in which was the lady; and, no sooner did she behold him than running to meet him she was about to cast herself at his feet and kiss them when Khudadad prevented her. She praised him with highest praise and extolled him for valiancy above all the champions of the world, and he returned the salam to her who, when seen near hand seemed endued with more grace and charms than had appeared from afar. So the Prince joyed with extreme joy and the twain sat down in pleasant converse. Presently, Khudadad heard shrieks and cries and weeping and wailing with groans and moans and ever loudening lamentations; so he asked the lady, saying, "whence are these clamours and from whom come these pitiful complaints?" And, she pointing to a wicket in a hidden corner of the court below, answered, saying, "O my lord, these sounds come therefrom. Many wretches driven by Destiny have fallen into the clutches of the Abyssinian Ghul and are securely locked up in cells, and each day he was wont to roast and eat one of the captives." "'Twill please me vastly," quoth Khudadad, "to be the means of their deliverance: come, O my lady, and show me where they are imprisoned." Thereupon the twain drew near to the place and the Prince forthright tried a key upon the lock of the dungeon but it did not fit; then he made essay of another wherewith they opened the wicket. As they were so doing the report of the captives' moaning and groaning increased yet more and more until Khudadad, touched and troubled at their impatience, asked the cause of it. The lady replied, "O my lord, hearing our footsteps and the rattling of the key in the lock they deem that the cannibal, according to his custom, hath come to supply them with food and to secure one of them for his evening meal. Each feareth lest his turn for roasting be come, so all are affrighted with sore affright and redouble their shouts and cries." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Five Hundred and Ninety-fifth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the sounds from that secret place seemed to issue from under ground or from the depths of a draw-well. But when the Prince opened the dungeon door, he espied a steep staircase and descending thereby found himself in a deep pit, narrow and darksome, wherein were penned more than an hundred persons with elbows pinioned and members chained; nor saw he aught of light save through one bull's-eye. So he cried to them, "O ye unfortunates, fear ye no more! I have slain the Abyssinian; and render ye praise to Allah Almighty who hath rid you of your wrong-doer: also I come to strike off your fetters and return you to freedom." Hearing these glad tidings the prisoners were in raptures of delight and raised a general cry of joy and jubilee. Hereupon Khudadad and the lady began to loose their hands and feet; and each, as he was released from his durance, helped to unchain his fellows: brief, after a moment of time all were delivered from their bonds and bondage. Then each and every kissed Khudadad's feet and gave thanks and prayed for his welfare; and when those whilom prisoners entered the court-yard whereupon the sun was shining sheen, Khudadad recognised amongst them his brothers, in quest of whom he had so long wandered. He was amazed with exceeding amazement and exclaimed, "Laud be to the Lord, that I have found you one and all safe and sound: your father is sorely sad and sorrowful at your absence; and Heaven forfend that this devil hath devoured any from amongst you." He then counted their number, forty-and-nine, and set them apart from the rest; and all in excess of joy fell upon one another's necks and ceased not to embrace their saviour. After this the Prince spread a feast for the captives, each and every, whom he had delivered; and, when they had eaten and drunken their full, he restored to them the gold and silver, the Turkey carpets and pieces of Chinese silk and brocade and other valuables innumerable which the Abyssinian had plundered from the caravans, as also their own personal goods and chattels, directing each man to claim his own; and what remained he divided equally amongst them.

"But," quoth he, "by what means can ye convey these bales to your own countries, and where can ye find beasts of burden in this wild wold?" Quoth they, "O our Lord, the Abyssinian robbed us of our camels with their loads and doubtless they are in the stables of the castle." Hereupon Khudadad fared forth with them to the stables and there found tethered and tied not only the camels but also the forty-nine horses of his brothers the princes, and accordingly he gave to each one his own animal. There were moreover in the stables hundreds of Abyssinian slave-boys who, seeing the prisoners released, were certified that their lord the cannibal was slain and fled in dismay to the forest and none thought of giving chase to them. So the merchants loaded their merchandise upon the camels' backs and farewelling the Prince set out for their own countries. Then quoth Khudadad to the lady, "O thou rare in beauty and chastity, whence camest thou when the Abyssinian seized thee and whither now wouldst thou wend? Inform me thereof that I may restore thee to thy home; haply these Princes, my brethren, sons of the Sultan of Harran, know thine abode; and doubtless they will escort thee thither." The lady turning to Khudadad presently made answer, "I live far from here and my country, the land of Egypt, is over distant for travel. But thou, O valorous Prince, hast delivered mine honour and my life from the hands of the Abyssinian and hast shown me such favour that 'twould ill become me to conceal from thee my history. I am the daughter of a mighty king; reigning over the Sa'Ýd or upper Nile-land; and when a tyrant foeman seized him and, reaving him of life as well as of his realm, usurped his throne and seized his kingdom, I fled away to preserve my existence and mine honour." Thereupon Khudadad and his brothers prayed the lady to recount all that had befallen her and reassured her, saying, "Henceforth thou shalt live in solace and luxury: neither toil nor trouble shall betide thee." When she saw that there was no help for her but to tell all her tale, she began in the following words to recount the

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History of the Princess of Daryabar.[238]

In an island of the islands standeth a great city called Daryßbßr, wherein dwelt a king of exalted degree. But despite his virtue and his valour he was ever sad and sorrowful having naught of offspring, and he offered up without surcease prayers on that behalf. After long years and longsome supplications a half boon was granted to him; to wit, a daughter (myself) was born. My father who grieved sore at first presently rejoiced with joy exceeding at the unfortunate ill-fated birth of me; and, when I came of age to learn, he bade me be taught to read and write; and caused me to be instructed in court-ceremonial and royal duties and the chronicles of the past, to the intent that I might succeed him as heiress to his throne and his kingship. Now it happened one day that my sire rode out a-hunting and gave chase to a wild ass[239] with such hot pursuit that he found himself at eventide separated from his suite; so, wearied with the chase, he dismounted from his steed and seating himself by the side of a forest-path, he said to himself "The onager will doubtless seek cover in this copse." Suddenly he espied a light shining bright amidst the trees and, thinking that a hamlet might be hard by, he was minded to night there and at day-dawn to determine his further course. Hereupon he arose and walking towards the light he found that it issued from a lonely hut in the forest; then peering into the inside he espied an Abyssinian burly of bulk and in semblance like unto a Satan, seated upon a divan. Before him were ranged many capacious jars full of wine and over a fire of charcoal he was roasting a bullock whole and eating the flesh and ever and anon drinking deep draughts from one of the pitchers. Furthermore the King sighted in that hut a lady of exquisite beauty and comeliness sitting in a corner direly distressed: her hands were fast bound with cords, and at her feet a child of two or three years of age lay beweeping his mother's sorry plight. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Five Hundred and Ninety-sixth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that seeing the doleful state of these twain, my sire was filled with ruth and longed to fall upon the ogre sword in hand; however, not being able to cope with him he restrained his wrath and remained on stealthy watch. The giant having drained all the pitchers of wine and devoured half of the barbacued bullock presently addressed himself to the lady and said, “O loveliest of Princesses, how long wilt thou prove thee coy and keep aloof from me? Dost thou not see how desirous I am of winning thy heart and how I am dying for the love of thee? ’Tis therefore only right that thou also shouldst return my affection and know me as thine own, when I will become to thee the kindest of mankind.” “O thou Ghul of the waste,” cried the lady, “what be this whereof thou pratest? Never; no, never shalt thou win thy wish of me, however much thou mayest lust therefor. Torment me or, an thou wilt, destroy me downright, but for my part I will on no wise yield me to thy lusts.” At these words the infuriated savage roared aloud, “’Tis enough and more than enough: thy hate breedeth hatred in me and now I desire less to have and hold thee than to do thee die.” Then he seized her with one hand, and drawing his sabre with the other, would have struck off her head from her body when my father shot at him a shaft so deftly that it pierced his heart and came out gleaming at his back and he fell to the ground and found instant admission into Jahannam. Hereupon my sire entered the hut and unbinding the lady’s bonds enquired of her who she was and by what means that ogre had brought her thither. Answered she, “Not far from this site there liveth on the sea-shore a race of Saracens, like unto the demons of the desert. Sorely against my will I was wedded to their Prince and the fulsome villain thou hast now slain was one of my husband’s chief officers. He fell madly in love to me and he longed with excessive longing to get me into his power and to carry me off from my home. Accordingly, one day of the days when my husband was out of the way and I was in privacy, he carried me off with this my babe from the palace to this wild wood wherein is none save He[240] and where well he wot that all search and labour would be baffled; then, hour after hour he designed guilty designs against me, but by the mercy of Almighty Allah I have ever escaped all carnal soil of that foul monster. This evening, in despair of my safety, I was rejecting his brutal advances when he attempted to take my life and in the attempt he was slain by thy valorous hand. This is then my story which I have told thee." My father reassured the Princess, saying, "O my lady, let thy heart be at ease; at day-break I will take thee away from this wilderness and escort thee to Daryabar, of which city I am the Sultan; and, shouldst thou become fain of that place, then dwell therein until thy husband shall come in quest of thee." Quoth the lady, "O my lord, this plan doth not displease me." So with the earliest light next morning my father took mother and child away from that forest and set forth homewards when suddenly he fell in with his Sirdars and officers who had been wandering hither and thither during the livelong night in search of him. They rejoiced with great joy on seeing the King and marvelled with exceeding marvel at the sight of a veiled one with him, admiring much that so love-some a lady should be found dwelling in a wold so wild. Thereupon the King related to them the tale of the ogre and of the Princess and how he had slain the blackamoor. Presently they set forth on their homeward way; one of the Emirs seating the dame behind him on his horse's crupper while another took charge of the child. They reached the royal city, where the King ordered a large and splendid mansion to be built for his guest, the babe also received a suitable education; and thus the mother passed her days in perfect comfort and happiness. After the lapse of some months, when no tidings, however fondly expected, came of her husband, she resigned herself to marrying my father whom she had captivated by her beauty and loveliness and amorous liveliness,[241] whereupon he wedded her, and when the marriage-contract was drawn up (as was customary in those days), they sojourned together in one stead. As time went on the lad grew up to be a lusty youth of handsome mien; moreover he became perfect in courtly ceremonial and in every art and science that befit Princes. The King and all the Ministers and Emirs highly approved of him, and determined that I should be married to him, and that he should succeed the sovereign as heir to throne and kingship. The youth also was well pleased with such tokens of favour from my father, but chiefly he rejoiced with exceeding joy to hear talk of his union with his protector's only daughter. One day my sire desired to place my hand in his to the intent that the marriage ceremony should at once take place, but first he would impose upon my suitor certain conditions, whereof one was that he should wed none other but his wife's daughter, that is, myself. This pledge displeased the haughty youth, who forthwith refused his consent thereto, deeming himself by the demand of such condition a despised and contemptible suitor of villain birth. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Five Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that, the lady continued: — On this wise the wedding was deferred, and this delay became a matter of sore displeasure to the young man, who thought in his heart that my father was his foe. Therefore he ever strove to lure him into his power till one day in a frenzy of rage he slew him and proclaimed himself King of Daryabar. Moreover the murtherer would have entered my chamber to kill me also had not the Wazir, a true and faithful servant of the crown, at the tidings of his liege lord's death speedily taken me away, and hidden me in the house of a friend where he bade me remain concealed. Two days afterwards, having fitted out a ship, he embarked me therein with a Kahramßnah — an old duenna — and set sail for a country whose King was of my father's friends, to the intent that he might consign me to his charge, and obtain from him the aid of an army wherewith he might avenge himself upon the ungrateful and ungracious youth who had proved himself a traitor to the salt.[242] But a few days after our weighing anchor a furious storm began to blow making the captain and crew sore confounded and presently the waves beat upon the vessel with such exceeding violence that she brake up, and the Wazir and the duenna and all who were therein (save myself) were drowned in the billows. But I, albeit well nigh a-swoon, clung to a plank and was shortly after washed ashore by the send of the sea, for Allah of His mighty power had preserved me safe and sound from death-doom by the raging of the ocean, to the end that further troubles might befal me. When I returned to sense and consciousness, I found myself alive on the strand and offered up grateful thanks to Almighty Allah; but not seeing the Wazir or any one of the company I knew that they had perished in the waters. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Five Hundred and Ninety-eighth Night.

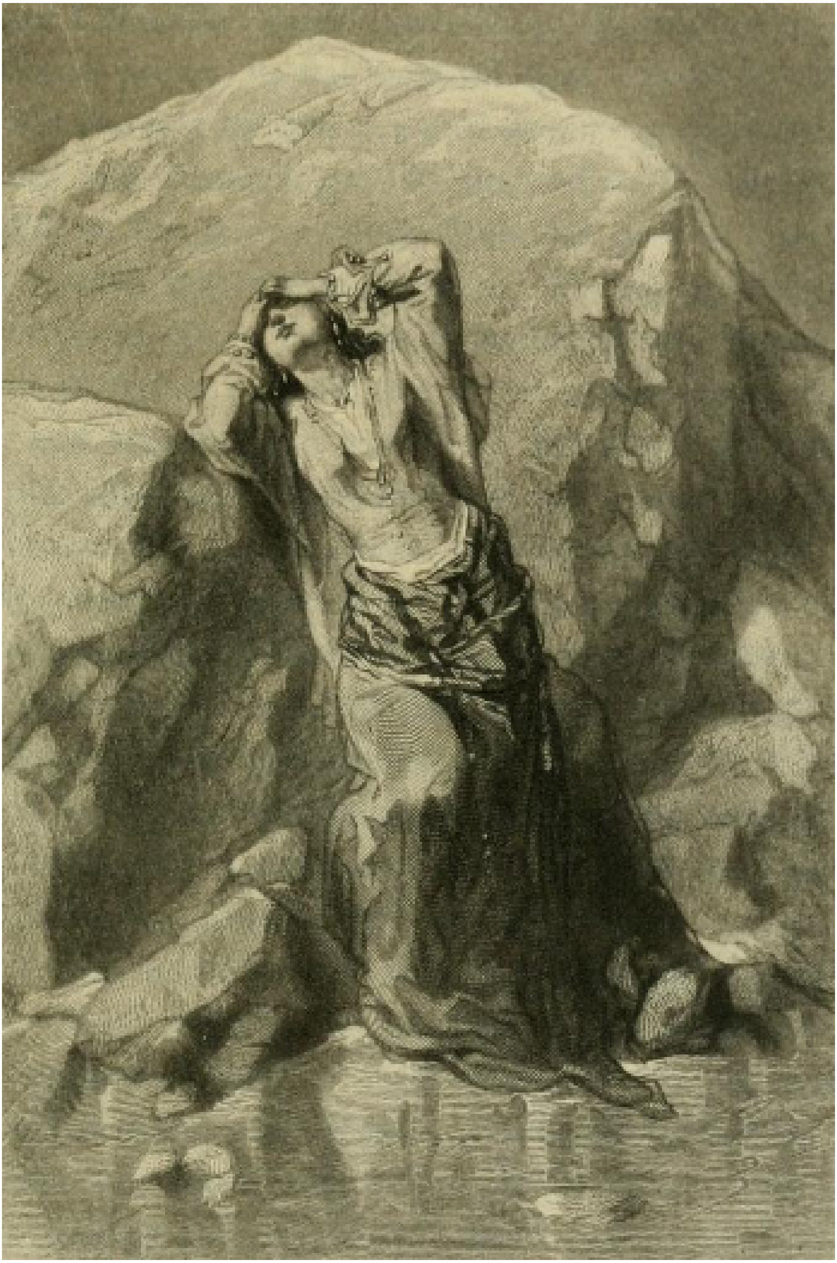

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Princess of Daryabar continued: — Presently, calling to remembrance the murther of my father I cried aloud with an exceeding bitter cry and was sore afraid at my lonesome plight, insomuch that I would fain have cast myself again into the sea, when suddenly the voice of man and tramp of horse-hooves fell upon my ears. Then looking about I descried a band of cavaliers in the midst of whom was a handsome prince: he was mounted upon a steed of purest Rabite[243] blood and was habited in a gold-embroidered surcoat; a girdle studded with diamonds girt his loins and on his head was a crown of gold; in fine it was evident from his garb as from his aspect that he was a born ruler of mankind. Thereupon, seeing me all alone on the sea-shore, the knights marvelled with exceeding marvel; then the Prince detached one of his captains to ascertain my history and acquaint him there-with; but albeit the officer plied me with questions I answered him not a word and shed a flood of tears in the deepest silence. So noting the waifage on the sand they thought to themselves, "Perchance some vessel hath been wrecked upon this shore and its planks and timber have been cast upon the land, and doubtless this lady was in that ship and hath been floated ashore on some plank." Whereupon the cavaliers crowded around me and implored me to relate unto them what had befallen me; nevertheless I still answered them not a word. Presently the Prince himself drew near to me and, much amazed, sent away his suite from about me and addressed me in these words, "O my lady, fear naught of ill from me nor distress thyself by needless affright. I would convey thee to my home and under my mother's care; wherefore I am curious to know of thee who thou art. The Queen will assuredly befriend thee and keep thee in comfort and happiness." And now understanding that his heart was drawn towards me, I told him all that had betided me, and he on hearing the story of my sad destiny became moved with the deepest emotion and his eyes brimmed with tears. Then he comforted me and carried me with him and committed me to the Queen his mother, who also lent kindly ear to my tale of the past, first and last, and hearing it she also was greatly grieved, and wearied not day or night in tending me and (as far as in her lay) striving to make me happy. Seeing, moreover, that her son was deeply enamoured of me and love-distraught she agreed to my becoming his wife, while I also consented when I looked upon his handsome and noble face and figure and to his proved affection for me and his goodness of heart. Accordingly, in due time the marriage was celebrated with royal pomp and circumstance. But what escape is there from Fate? On that very night, the night of the wedding, a King of Zanzibar who dwelt hard by that island, and had erewhile practised against the kingdom, seizing his opportunity, attacked us with a mighty army, and having put many to death, bethought him to take me and my husband alive. But we escaped from his hands and fleeing under the murks of night to the sea-shore found there a fisherman's boat, which we entered thanking our stars and launched it and floated far away on the current, unknowing whither Destiny was directing us. On the third day we espied a vessel making us, whereat we rejoiced with joy excessive, deeming her to be some merchantman coming to our aidance. No sooner had it lain alongside, however, than up there sprang five or six pirates,[244] each brandishing a naked brand in hand, and boarding us tied our arms behind us and carried us to their craft. They then tare the veil from my face and forthwith desired to possess me, each saying to other, "I will enjoy this wench." On this wise wrangling and jangling ensued till right soon it turned to battle and bloodshed, when moment by moment and one by one the ravishers fell dead until all were slain save a single pirate, the bravest of the band. Quoth he to me, "Thou shalt fare with me to Cairo where dwelleth a friend of mine and to him will I give thee, for erewhile I promised him that on this voyage I would secure for him a fair woman for handmaid." Then seeing my husband, whom the pirates had left in bonds he exclaimed, "Who may be this hound? Is he to thee a lover or a friend?" and I made answer, "He is my wedded husband." "'Tis well," cried he: "in very sooth it behoveth me to release him from the bitter pangs of jealousy and the sight of thee enfolded in another's fond embrace." Whereat the ruffian raised aloft the ill-fated Prince, bound foot and hand, and cast him into the sea, while I shrieked aloud and implored his mercy, but all in vain. Seeing the Prince struggling and drowning in the waves I cried out and screamed and buffetted my face and tare my hair and would fain have cast myself into the waters but I could not, for he held me fast and lashed me to the mainmast. Then, pursuing our course with favouring winds we soon arrived at a small port-village where he bought camels and boy-slaves and journeyed on towards Cairo; but when several stages of the road were left behind us, the Abyssinian who dwelt in this castle suddenly overtook us. From afar we deemed him to be a lofty tower, and when near us could hardly believe him to be a human being. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Five Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Princess of Daryabar continued: — At once unsheathing his huge sword the Habashi made for the pirate and ordered him to surrender himself prisoner, with me and all his slaves, and with pinioned elbows to accompany him. Hereat the robber with hot courage and heading his followers rushed fiercely on the Abyssinian, and for a long time the fight raged thick and fast, till he and his lay dead upon the field; whereupon the Abyssinian led off the camels and carried me and the pirate's corpse to this castle, and devoured the flesh of his foe at his evening meal. Then turning to me as I wept with bitter weeping he said, "Banish from thy breast this woe and this angry mood; and abide in this castle at perfect ease and in comfort, and solace thyself with my embraces. However, since thou appearest at this present to be in dire distress, I will excuse thee for to-night, but without fail I shall require thee of thyself on the morrow." He then led me into a separate chamber and locking fast the gates and doors, fell asleep alone in another place. Arising early on the next morning he searched the castle round about, unlocked the wicket which he closed again and sallied forth, according to his custom, in quest of wayfarers. But the caravan escaped him and anon he returned empty-handed when thou didst set upon him and slay him." On this wise the Princess of Daryabar related her history to Prince Khudadad who was moved with ruth for her: then comforting her he said, "Henceforth fear naught nor be on any wise dismayed. These princes are the sons of the King of Harran; and if it please thee, let them lead thee to his court and stablish thee in comfort and luxury: the King also will guard thee from all evil. Or, shouldest thou be loath to fare with them, wilt thou not consent to take for spouse him who hath rescued thee from so great calamity?" The Princess of Daryabar consented to wed with him and forthwith the marriage was celebrated with grand display in the castle and here they found meats and drinks of sundry sorts, and delicious fruits and fine wines wherewith the cannibal would regale himself when a-weary of man's flesh. So Khudadad made ready dishes of every colour and feasted his brothers. Next day taking with them such provaunt as was at hand, all set forth for Harran, and at the close of each stage they chose a suitable stead for nighting; and, when but one day's journey lay before them, the Princes supped that night off what was left to them of their viaticum and drained all the wine that remained. But when the drink had mastered their wits, Khudadad thus addressed his brothers, saying, "Hitherto have I withheld from you the secret of my birth, which now I must disclose. Know ye then that I am your brother, for I also am a son of the King of Harran, whom the Lord of Samaria-land brought up and bade educate; and lastly, my mother is the Princess Firuzah." Then to the Princess of Daryabar, "Thou didst not recognize my rank and pedigree and, had I discovered myself erewhile, haply thou hadst been spared the mortification of being wood by a man of vulgar blood. But now ease thy mind for that thy husband is a Prince." Quoth she, "Albeit thou discoveredst to me naught until this time, still my heart felt assured that thou wast of noble birth and the son of some potent sovereign." The Princes one and all appeared outwardly well pleased and offered each and every warm congratulations whilst the wedding was celebrating; but inwardly they were filled with envy and sore annoy at such unwelcome issue of events, so much so that when Khudadad retired with the Princess of Daryabar to his tent and slept, those ingrates, forgetful of the service rendered to them by their brother in that he had rescued them when prisoners in the hands of the man-devouring Abyssinian, remained deep in thought and seeking a safe place took counsel one with other to kill him. Quoth the foremost of them, "O my brethren, our father showed him the liveliest affection when he was to us naught save a vagrant and unknown, and indeed made him our ruler and our governor; and now, hearing of his victory won from the ogre and learning that the stranger is his son, will not our sire forthwith appoint this bastard his only heir and give him dominion over us so that we must all be forced to fall at his feet and bear his yoke? My rede is this that we make an end of him in this very spot." Accordingly they stole softly into his tent and dealt him from every side strokes with their swords, so that they slashed him in every limb and fondly thought that they had left him dead on the bed without their awaking the Princess. Next morning they entered the city of Harran and made their salams to the King, who despaired of sighting them again, so he rejoiced with exceeding joy on seeing them restored to him safe and sound and sane, and asked why they had tarried from him so long. In reply they carefully concealed from him their being thrown into the dungeon by the Ghul of Abyssinia and how Khudadad had rescued them: on the contrary all declared that they had been delayed whilst a-hunting and a-visiting the adjacent cities and countries. So the Sultan gave full credence to their account and held his peace. Such was their case; but as regards Khudadad, when the Princess of Daryabar awoke in the morning she found her bridegroom lying drowned in blood gashed and pierced with a score of wounds. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the full Six Hundredth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that, the Princess, deeming her bridegroom dead, wept at this sight right sore; and, calling to mind his youth and beauty, his valour and his many virtues, she washed his face with her tears and exclaimed, “Well-away and woe is me, O my lover, O Khudadad, do these eyes look upon thee in sudden and violent death? Are these thy brothers (the devils!) whom thy courage hath saved, the destroyers of thee? Nay ’tis I am thy murtheress; I who suffered thee to ally thy Fate with my hapless destiny, a lot that doometh to destruction all who befriend me.” Then considering the body attentively she perceived that breath was slowly coming and going through his nostrils, and that his limbs were yet warm. So she made fast the tent-door and ran city-wards to seek a surgeon, and anon having found a skilful leech, she returned with him, but lo and behold! Khudadad was missing. She wist not what had become of him, but thought in her mind that some wild beast had carried him off; then she wept bitterly and bemoaned her mishap, so that the surgeon was moved to ruth and with words of comfort and consolation offered her house and service; and lastly he bore her to the town and assigned to her a separate dwelling. He also appointed two slave-girls to wait upon her, and albeit he knew naught of her condition he was ever in attendance on her with the honour and homage due to the kings. One day, she being somewhat less sad of heart, the surgeon, who had now informed himself of her condition, asked her, saying, “O my lady, be pleased to acquaint me with thine estate and thy misfortunes, and as far as in me lieth I will strive to aid and succour thee.” And she, observing the leech to be shrewd and trustworthy withal, made known to him her story. Quoth the surgeon, “An it be thy wish, I would gladly escort thee to thy father-in-law the King of Harran, who is indeed a wise sovereign and a just; and he will rejoice to see thee and will take vengeance on the unnatural Princes, his sons, for the blood of thy husband unjustly shed.” These words pleased well the Princess; so the surgeon hired two dromedaries which they mounted and the twain set forth for the city of Harran. Alighting that same evening at a caravanserai the leech asked what news had come from town; and the Keeper answered, “The King of Harran had a son passing valiant and accomplished who abode with him for some years as a stranger; but lately he was lost, nor doth any know of him whether he be dead or alive. The Princess Firuzah his mother hath sent allwheres in search of him, yet hath she found nor trace nor tidings of him. His parents and indeed all the folk, rich and poor, weep and wail for him and albeit the Sultan hath other forty and nine sons, none of them can compare with him for doughty deeds and skilful craft, nor from any one of them deriveth he aught of comfort or consolation. Full quest and search have been made but hitherto all hath been in vain.” The surgeon thereupon made known these words to the Princess of Daryabar, who was minded to go straightway and acquaint the mother of Khudadad with everything that had befallen her husband; but the surgeon, after full reflection, said, “O Princess, shouldst thou fare with this intent, haply ere thou arrive thither the forty-nine Princes may hear of thy coming; and they, by some means or other, will assuredly do thee die, and thy life will be spent to no purpose. Nay, rather let me go first to Prince Khudadad’s mother: I will tell her all thy tale and she doubtless will send for thee. Until such time do thou remain secret in this Serai.” Accordingly the leech rode on leisurely for the city and on the road he met a lady mounted upon a she-mule[245] whose housings were of the richest and finest, while behind her walked confidential servants, followed by a band of horsemen and foot- soldiers and Habashi slaves; and, as she rode along, the people formed espalier, standing on either side to salute her while she passed. The leech also joined the throng and made his obeisance, after which quoth he to a bystander, which was a Darwaysh, “Methinks this lady must be a queen?” “’Tis even so,” quoth the other, “she is the consort of our Sultan and all the folk honour and esteem her above her sister-wives for that in truth she is the mother of Prince Khudadad and of him thou surely hast heard.” Hereupon the surgeon accompanied the cavalcade; and, when the lady dismounted at a cathedral-mosque and gave alms of Ashrafis[246] and gold coins to all around (for the King had enjoined her that until Khudadad’s return she should deal charity to the poor with her own hand, and pray for the youth’s being restored to his home in peace and safety), the mediciner also mingled with the throng which joined in supplications for their favourite and whispered to a slave saying, “O my brother, it behoveth me that I make known without stay or delay to Queen Firuzah a secret which is with me.” Replied he, “An it be aught concerning Prince Khudadad ’tis well: the King’s wife will surely give ear to thee; but an it be other, thou wilt hardly win a hearing, for that she is distraught by the absence of her son and careth not for aught beside.” The surgeon, still speaking low, made reply, “My secret concerneth that which is on her mind.” “If this be so,” returned the slave, “do thou follow her train privily till it arrive at the palace gate.” Accordingly, when the Lady Firuzah reached her royal apartments, the man made petition to her, saying, “A stranger would fain tell somewhat to thee in private;” and she deigned give permission and command, exclaiming, “’Tis well, let him be brought hither.” Hereupon the slave presented to her the surgeon whom the Queen with gracious mien bade approach; and he, kissing ground between her hands, made his petition in these words: “I have a long tale to tell thy Highness whereat thou shalt greatly marvel.” Then he described to her Khudadad’s condition, the villainy of his brothers and his death at their hands and of his corpse having been carried off by wild beasts. Queen Firuzah hearing of her son’s murther fell straight- way a-swooning to the ground, and the attendants ran up and, raising her, besprinkled her face with rose-water until she recovered sense and consciousness. Then she gave orders to the surgeon saying, “Hie thee straightway to the Princess of Daryabar and convey to her greetings and expressions of sympathy both from myself and from his sire;” and as the leech departed she called to mind her son and wept with sore weeping. By chance the Sultan, who was passing by that way, seeing Firuzah in tears and sobs and breaking out into sore and bitter lamentation, asked of her the reason thereof. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and First Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that when her husband enquired of Queen Firuzah why and wherefore she wept and wailed, and moaned and groaned, she told him all she had heard from the leech, and her husband was filled with hot wrath against his sons. So he rose up and went straightway to the audience-chamber, where the townsfolk had gathered together to petition him and to pray for justice and redress; and they, seeing his features working with rage, were all sore afraid. Presently the Sultan seated himself on the throne of his kingship and gave an order to his Grand Wazir, saying, "O Wazir Hasan, take with thee a thousand men of the guard which keepeth watch and ward over the palace and do thou bring hither the forty-and- nine Princes, my unworthy sons, and cast them into the prison appointed unto man-slayers and murtherers; and have a heed that none of them escape." The Wazir did as he was bidden, and seizing the Princes one and all cast them into gaol with the murtherers and other criminals, then reported his action to his liege lord. Hereat the Sultan dismissed sundry claimants and suppliants, saying, "For the space of one full-told month henceforth it besitteth me not to sit in the justice-hall. Depart hence, and, when the thirty days shall have passed away, do ye return hither again." After this rising from the throne he took with him the Wazir Hasan, and entering the apartment of Queen Firuzah, gave command to the Minister that he bring in all haste and with royal state and dignity from the caravanserai, the Princess of Daryabar and the mediciner. The Wazir straightway took horse accompanied by the Emirs and soldiers; and, leading a fine white she-mule richly adorned with jewelled trappings from out of the royal stables, he rode to the caravanserai wherein abode the Princess of Daryabar. Having told her all that the King had done, he seated her upon the animal and, mounting the surgeon upon a steed of Turcoman[247] blood, all three proceeded with pomp and grandeur to the palace. The shop-keepers and townsfolk ran out to greet the lady as the cavalcade wound its way through the streets; and, when they heard say that she was the wife of Prince Khudadad, they rejoiced with exceeding joy for that they should now receive tidings of his whereabouts. As soon as the procession reached the palace gates the Princess of Daryabar saw the Sultan, who had come forth to greet her, and she alighted from the mule and kissed his feet. The King then raised her by the hand and conducted her to the chamber wherein sat Queen Firuzah awaiting her visit, and all three fell on one another's necks and wept sore and could on no wise control their grief. But whenas their sorrow was somewhat assuaged, the Princess of Daryabar said to the King, "O my lord the Sultan, I would proffer humble petition that full vengeance may fall upon those, one and all, by whom my husband hath been so foully and cruelly murthered." Replied the King, "O my lady, rest assured that I will assuredly put to death all those villains in requital for the blood of Khudadad;" presently adding, "'Tis true that the dead body of my brave son hath not been found, still it seemeth but right to me that a tomb be built, a cenotaph whereby his greatness and goodness may be held in everlasting remembrance." Thereupon he summoned the Grand Wazir and bade that a great Mausoleum of white marble be edified amiddlemost the city and the Minister straightway appointed workmen and made choice of a suitable spot in the very centre of the capital. So there they built a gorgeous cenotaph crowned with a noble dome under which was sculptured a figure of Khudadad; and, when the news of its completion reached the King, he appointed a day for ceremonious mourning and perlections of the Koran. At the appointed time and term the townsfolk gathered together to see the funeral procession and the obsequies for the departed; and the Sultan went in state to the Mausoleum together with all the Wazirs, the Emirs and Lords of the land, and took seat upon carpets of black satin purfled with flowers of gold which were dispread over the marble floor. After a while a bevy of Knights rode up, with downcast heads and half-closed eyes; and twice circuiting the dome[248] they halted the third time in front of the door, and cried out aloud, "O Prince, O son of our Sultan, could we by the sway of our good swords and the strength of our gallant arms restore thee to life, nor heart nor force would fail us in the endeavour; but before the fiat of Almighty Allah all must bow the neck." Then the horsemen rode away to the place whence they came, followed by one hundred hermits hoar of head and dwellers of the caves who had passed their lives in solitude and abstinence nor ever held converse with man or womankind, neither did they appear in Harran at any time save for the obsequies of the reigning race. In front came one of these greybeards steadying with one hand a huge and ponderous tome which he bore upon his head. Presently all the holy men thrice compassed the Mausoleum, then standing on the highway the eldest cried with a loud voice, “O Prince, could we by dint of orisons and devotions bring thee back to life, these hearts and souls of ours would be devoted to quickening thee, and on seeing thee arise once again we would wipe thy feet with our own age-white beards.” And when they also retired came one hundred maidens of wondrous beauty and loveliness, mounted on white barbs whose saddles were richly embroidered and set with jewels: their faces were bare and on their heads they bore golden canisters filled with precious stones, rubies and diamonds. They also rode in circuit round the cenotaph and, halting at the door, the youngest and fairest of them, speaking in the name of her sisterhood, exclaimed, “O Prince, could our youth and our charms avail thee aught, we would present ourselves to thee and become thy handmaids; but alas! thou knowest full well that our beauties are here all in vain nor can our love now warm thy clay.” Then they also departed in the deepest grief. As soon as they had disappeared the Sultan and all with him rose up and walked thrice round the figure that had been set up under the dome; then standing at its feet the father said, “O my beloved son, enlighten these eyes which tears for the stress of separation have thus bedimmed.” He then wept bitterly and all his Ministers and Courtiers and Grandees joined in his mourning and lamentations; and, when they had made an end of the obsequies, the Sultan and his suite returned palace-wards and the door of the dome was locked. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Second Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Sultan commanded congregational prayers in all the mosques for a full told week and he ceased not to mourn and weep and wail before the cenotaph of his son for eight days. And as soon as this term was passed he commanded the Grand Wazir that vengeance be meted out for the murther of Prince Khudadad, and that the Princes be brought out from their dungeons and be done to death. The tidings were bruited about the city, and preparations were made for executing the assassins and crowds of folk collected to gaze upon the scaffold, when suddenly came a report that an enemy whom the King had routed in bygone times was marching upon the city with a conquering army. Hereat the Sultan was sore troubled and perplexed and the ministers of state said one to other, “Alas! had Prince Khudadad been on life he would forthwith have put to flight the forces of the foe however fierce and fell.” Natheless the Sovran set out from the city with his suite and host, and eke he made ready for flight to some other land by way of the river should the enemy’s force prove victorious. Then the two powers met in deadly combat; and the invader, surrounding the King of Harran’s many on every side, would have cut him to pieces with all his warriors, when behold, an armed force hitherto unseen rode athwart the plain at a pace so swift and so sure that the two hostile Kings gazed upon them in uttermost amazement, nor wist any one whence that host came. But when it drew near, the horsemen charged home on the enemies and in the twinkling of an eye put them to flight; then hotly pursuing felled them with the biting sword and the piercing spear. Seeing this onslaught the King of Harran marvelled greatly and rendering thanks to heaven said to those around him, “Learn ye the name of the Captain of yonder host, who he may be and whence came he.” But when all the foemen had fallen upon the field save only a few who escaped hither and thither and the hostile sultan who had been taken prisoner, the Captain of the friendly forces returned from pursuit well pleased to greet the King. And, lo and behold! as the twain drew near one to other the Sultan was certified that the Captain was none other than his beloved child, Khudadad, whilome lost and now found. Accordingly, he rejoiced with joy unspeakable that his enemy had thus been vanquished and that he had again looked upon his son, Khudadad, who stood before him alive and safe and sound. "O my sire," presently exclaimed the Prince, "I am he whom thou deemest to have been slain; but Allah Almighty hath kept me on life that I might this day stand thee in good stead and destroy these thine enemies." "O my beloved son," replied the King, "surely I had despaired and never hoped again to see thee with these mine eyes." So father and son dismounted and fell upon each other's necks and quoth the Sultan, clasping the youth's hand, "Long since have I known of thy valiant deeds, and how thou didst save thine ill-omened brothers from the hands of the man-devouring Abyssinian, and of the evil wherewith they requited thee. Go now to thy mother, of whom naught remaineth, through bitter tears for thee, save skin and bone: be thou the first to gladden her heart and give her the good tidings of this thy victory." As they rode along, the Prince enquired of the Sultan, his sire, how he had heard tell of the Habashi and of the rescue of the Princes from the cannibal's clutches. "Hath one of my brothers," added he, "informed thee of this adventure?" "Not so, O my son," replied the King, "not they, but the Princess of Daryabar told me the miserable tale thereof: she hath dwelt for many days with me and 'twas she who first and foremost demanded vengeance for thy blood." when Khudadad heard that the Princess his spouse was his father's guest, he rejoiced with exceeding joy and cried, "Suffer me first to see my mother;[249] then will I go to the Princess of Daryabar." The King of Harran hereat struck off the head of his chief enemy and exposed it publicly throughout the streets of his capital, and all the people exulted mightily not only at the victory but also for the return of Khudadad safe and sound; and dancing and feasting were in every household. Presently Queen Firuzah and the Princess of Daryabar presented themselves before the Sultan and offered their congratulations to him, then they went to see Khudadad both hand in hand and the three falling on one another's necks wept for very joy. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Third Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that after this the King and his Queen and daughter-in-law sat long conversing, and they marvelled much how Khudadad, albeit he was sorely gashed and pierced with the sword, had escaped alive from that wildest of wolds, whereupon the Prince at the bidding of his sire told his tale in these words: “A peasant mounted on a camel chanced to pass by my pavilion and seeing me sore wounded and weltering in my blood, set me upon his beast and conveyed me to his house; then, choosing some roots of desert-herbs he placed them on the hurts so that they kindly healed, and I speedily recovered strength. After returning thanks to my benefactor and giving him liberal largesse, I set out for the city of Harran and on the road I saw the forces of the foe in countless numbers marching upon thy city. Wherefore I made the matter known to the folk of the townships and villages round about and besought their aid; then collecting a large force I placed myself at the head thereof, and arriving in the nick of time destroyed the invading hosts.” Hereupon the Sultan gave thanks to Allah Almighty and said, “Let all the Princes who conspired against thy life be put to death;” and sent forthright for the Sworder of his vengeance; but Khudadad made request to his sire and said, “In good sooth, O my lord the King, they all deserve the doom thou hast ordained, yet be not these my brethren and eke thine own flesh and blood? I have freely forgiven them their offence against me and I humbly pray thy pardon also, that thou grant them their lives, for that blood ever calleth unto blood.” The Sultan at length consented and forgave their offence. Then, summoning all the Ministers, he declared Khudadad his heir and successor, in presence of the Princes whom he bade bring from the prison house. Khudadad caused their chains and fetters to be stricken off and embraced them one by one, showing them the same fondness and affection as he had shown to them in the castle of the cannibal Habashi. All the folk on hearing of this noble conduct of Prince Khudadad raised shouts of applause and loved him yet more than before. The surgeon who had done such good service to the Princess of Daryabar received a robe of honour and much wealth; and on this wise that which began with mishap had issue in all happiness. When Queen Shahrazad ended this story she said to Shahryar, “O my lord, thou art doubtless astonished to find that the Caliph Har·n al-Rashid changed his wrath against Ghßnim[250] and his mother and sister to feelings of favour and affection, but I am assured that thou wilt be the more surprised on hearing the story of the curious adventures of that same Caliph with the blind man, Bßbß Abdullah.” Quoth Dunyazad, as was her way, to her sister Shahrazad, “O sister mine, what a rare and delectable tale hast thou told and now prithee favour us with another.” She replied, “It is well nigh dawn but, if my life be spared, I will tell thee as the morrow morrows a strange and wonderful history of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid.”[251] — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Fourth Night,
When she began to relate the History of

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THE CALIPH’S NIGHT ADVENTURE.

I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Caliph Harun al-Rashid was one night wakeful exceedingly and when he rose in the morning restlessness gat hold of him. Wherefore all about him were troubled for that “Folk aye follow Prince’s fashion;” they rejoice exceedingly with his joy and are sorrowful with his sorrows albeit they know not the cause why they are so affected. Presently the Commander of the Faithful sent for Masr·r the Eunuch, and when he came to him cried, “Fetch me my Wazir, Ja’afar the Barmaki, without stay or delay.” Accordingly, he went out and returned with the Minister who, finding him alone, which was indeed rare, and seeing as he drew near that he was in a melancholic humour, never even raising his eyes, stopped till his lord would vouchsafe to look upon him. At last the Prince of True Believers cast his glance upon Ja’afar, but forthright turned away his head and sat motionless as before. The Wazir descrying naught in the Caliph’s aspect that concerned him personally, strengthened his purpose and bespake him on this wise, “O Commander of the Faithful, wilt thine Highness deign suffer me to ask whence cometh this sadness?” and the Caliph answered with a clearer brow, “Verily, O Wazir, these moods have of late become troublesome to me, nor are they to be moved save by hearing strange tales and verses; and, if thou come not hither on a pressing affair, thou wilt gladden me by relating somewhat to dispel my sadness.” Replied the Wazir, “O Commander of the Faithful, my office compelleth me to stand on thy service, and I would fain remind thee that this is the day appointed for informing thyself of the good governance of thy capital and its environs, and this matter shall, Inshallah, divert thy mind and dispel its gloom.” The Caliph answered, “Thou dost well to remind me, for that I had wholly forgotten it; so fare forth and change thy vestments while I do the same with mine.” Presently the twain donned habits of stranger merchants and issued out by a private postern of the palace-garden, which led them into the fields. After they had skirted the city, they reached the Euphrates’ bank at some distance from the gate opening on that side, without having observed aught of disorder; then they crossed the river in the first ferry-boat they found, and, making a second round on the further side, they passed over the bridge that joined the two halves of Baghdad-town. At the bridge-foot they met with a blind old man who asked alms of them; and the Caliph turned about and crossed his palm with a diner, whereupon the beggar caught hold of his hand, and held him fast, saying, “O beneficent man, whoso thou ever may be, whom Allah hath inspired to bestow an alms upon me, refuse not the favour I crave of thee, which is, to strike me a buffet upon the ear, for that I deserve such punishment and a greater still.” After these words he quitted his hold of the Caliph’s hand that it might smite him, yet for fear lest the stranger pass on without so doing he grasped him fast by his long robe. And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Fifth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Caliph, surprised by the blind man's words and deeds said, "I may not grant thy request nor will I minish the merit of my charity, by treating thee as thou wouldst have me entreat thee." Saying these words, he strove to get away from the blind man, but he who after his long experience expected this refusal of his benefactor, did his utmost to keep hold of him, and cried, "O my lord, forgive my audacity and my persistency; and I implore thee either give me a cuff on the ear, or take back thine alms, for I may not receive it save on that condition, without falsing a solemn oath I have sworn before the face of Allah; and, if thou knew the reason, thou wouldst accord with me that the penalty is light indeed." Then the Caliph not caring to be delayed any longer, yielded to the blind man's importunity, and gave him a slight cuff: whereupon he loosed him forthright and thanked him and blessed him. When the Caliph and his Wazir, had walked some way from the blind man, the former exclaimed, "This blind beggar must assuredly have some right good cause for behaving himself in such manner to all who give him alms, and I would fain know it. Do thou return to him and tell him who I am, and bid him fail not to appear at my palace about mid-afternoon prayer time that I may converse with him, and hear whatso he hath to say." Hereupon Ja'afar went back and bestowed alms on the blind man giving him another cuff on the ear and apprised him of the Caliph's command, and returned forthright to his lord. Presently, when the twain reached the town, they found in a square a vast crowd of folk gazing at a handsome youth and a well shaped, who was mounted on a mare which he rode at fullest speed round the open space, spurring and whipping the beast so cruelly that she was covered with sweat and blood. Seeing this the Caliph, amazed at the youth's brutality, stopped to ask the by-standers an they knew why he tortured and tormented the mare on such wise; but he could learn naught save that for some while past, every day at the same time, he had entreated her after the same fashion. Hereat as they walked along, the Caliph bid his Wazir especially notice the place and order the young man to come without failing on the next day, at the hour appointed for the blind man. But ere the Caliph reached his palace, he saw in a street, which he had not passed through for many months, a newly built mansion, which seemed to him the palace of some great lord of the land. He asked the Wazir, an he knew its owner; and Ja'afar answered he did not but would make inquiry. So he consulted a neighbour who told him that the house owner was one Khwßjah Hasan surnamed Al-Habbßl from his handicraft, rope-making; that he himself had seen the man at work in the days of his poverty, that he knew not how Fate and Fortune had befriended him, yet that the same Khwajah had gotten such exceeding wealth that he had been enabled to pay honourably and sumptuously all the expenses he had incurred when building his palace. Then the Wazir, returned to the Caliph, and gave him a full account of whatso he had heard, whereat cried the Prince of True Believers, "I must see this Khwajah Hasan al-Habbal: do thou therefore, O Wazir, go and tell him to come to my palace, at the same hour thou hast appointed for the other twain." The Minister did his lord's bidding and the next day, after mid-afternoon prayers, the Caliph retired to his own apartment and Ja'afar introduced the three persons whereof we have been speaking and presented them to the Caliph. All prostrated themselves at his feet and when they rose up, the Commander of the Faithful asked his name of the blind man, who answered he was hight Baba Abdullah. "O Servant of Allah," cried the Caliph, "thy manner of asking alms yesterday seemed so strange to me that, had it not been for certain considerations I should not have granted thy petition; nay, I would have prevented thy giving further offence to the folk. And now I have bidden thee hither that I may know from thyself what impelled thee to swear that rash oath whereof thou toldest me, that I may better judge whether thou have done well or ill, and if I should suffer thee to persist in a practice which meseemeth must set so pernicious an example. Tell me openly how such mad thought entered into thy head, and conceal not aught, for I will know the truth and the full truth." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Sixth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Baba Abdullah terrified by these words, cast himself a second time at the Caliph's feet with his face prone to the ground, and when he rose again, said, "O Commander of the Faithful, I crave pardon of thy Highness for my audacity, in that I dared require, and well nigh compelled thee to do a thing which verily seemeth contrary to sound sense. I acknowledge mine offence; but as I knew not thy Highness at that time, I implore thy clemency, and I pray thou wilt consider my ignorance of thine exalted degree. And now as to the extravagance of my action, I readily admit that it must be strange to the sons of Adam; but in the eye of Allah 'tis but a slight penance wherewith I have charged myself for an enormous crime of which I am guilty, and wherefor, an all the people in the world were each and every to give me a cuff on the ear 'twould not be sufficient atonement. Thy Highness shall judge of it thyself, when I, in telling my tale according to thy commandment, will inform thee of what was my offence." And here he began to relate

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The Story of the Blind Man, Baba Abdullah.[252]

O my lord the Caliph, I, the humblest of thy slaves, was born in Baghdad, where my father and mother, presently dying within a few days of each other, left me a fortune large enough to last me throughout my lifetime. But I knew not its value and soon I had squandered it in luxury and loose living and I cared naught for thrift or for increasing my store. But when little was left to me of my substance, I repented of my evil courses and toiled and laboured hard by day and night to increase my remaining stock of money. It is truly said, “After waste cometh knowledge of worth.” Thus little by little I got together fourscore camels, which I let on hire to merchants, and thus I made goodly gain each time I found occasion: moreover I was wont to engage myself together with my beasts and on this wise I journeyed over all the dominions and domains of thy Highness. Brief, I hoped ere long to reap an abundant crop of gold by the hiring out of my baggage animals. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Seventh Night.

Then said she: I have heard, O auspicious King, that Baba Abdullah continued his tale in these words: Once I had carried merchants' stuffs to Bassorah for shipping India-wards and I was returning to Baghdad with my beasts unladen. Now as I fared homewards I chanced pass across a plain of excellent pasturage lying fallow and far from any village, and there unsaddled the camels which I hobbled and tethered together that they might crop the luxuriant herbs and thorns and yet not fare astray. Presently appeared a Darwaysh who was travelling afoot for Bassorah, and he took seat beside me to enjoy ease after unease; whereat I asked him whence he wayfared and whither he was wending. He also asked me the same question and when we had told each to other our own tales, we produced our provisions and brake our fast together, talking of various matters as we ate. Quoth the Darwaysh, "I know a spot hard by which enholdeth a hoard and its wealth is so wonder-great that shouldst thou load upon thy fourscore camels the heaviest burthens of golden coins and costly gems from that treasure there will appear no minishing thereof." Hearing these words I rejoiced with exceeding joy and gathering from his mien and demeanour that he did not deceive me, I arose forthright and falling upon his neck, exclaimed, "O Hallow of Allah, who caress naught for this world's goods and hast renounced all mundane lusts and luxuries, assuredly thou hast full knowledge of this treasure, for naught remaineth hidden from holy men as thou art. I pray thee tell me where it may be found that I may load my fourscore beasts with bales of Ashrafis and jewels: I wot full well that thou hast no greed for the wealth of this world, but take, I pray thee, one of these my fourscore camels as recompense and reward for the favour." Thus spake I with my tongue but in my heart I sorely grieved to think that I must part with a single camel-load of coins and gems; withal I reflected that the other three-score and nineteen camel-loads would contain riches to my heart's content. Accordingly, as I wavered in mind, at one moment consenting and at the next instant repenting, the Darwaysh noting my greed and covetise and avarice, replied, "Not so, O my brother: one camel doth not suffice me that I should shew thee all this hoard. On a single condition only will I tell thee of the place; to wit, that we twain lead the animals thither and lade them with the treasure, then shalt thou give me one half thereof and take the other half to thyself. With forty camels’ load of costly ores and minerals forsure thou canst buy thousands more of camels.” Then, seeing that refusal was impossible, I cried “So be it! I agree to thy proposal and I will do as thou desires”;” for in my heart I had conned the matter over and well I wist that forty camel-loads of gold and gems would suffice me and many generations of my descendants; and I feared lest an I gain say him I should repent for ever and ever having let so great a treasure slip out of hand. Accordingly, giving full consent to all be said, I got together every one of my beasts and set me a-wayfaring along with the FakÝr.[253] After travelling over some short distance we came upon a gorge between two craggy mountain-walls towering high in crescent form and the pass was exceeding narrow so that the animals were forced to pace in single file, but further on it flared out and we could thread it without difficulty into the broad Wady below. No human being was anywhere to be seen or heard in this wild land, so we were undisturbed and easy in our minds nor feared aught. Then quoth the Darwaysh, “Leave here the camels and come with me.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Eighth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the blind man Baba Abdullah pursued his tale on this wise: — I did as the Darwaysh had bidden me; and, nakhing[254] all the camels, I followed in wake of him. After walking a short way from the halting-place he produced a flint and steel and struck fire therewith and lit some sticks he had gotten together; then, throwing a handful of strong-smelling incense upon the flames, he muttered words of incantation which I could by no means understand. At once a cloud of smoke arose, and spireing upwards veiled the mountains; and presently, the vapour clearing away, we saw a huge rock with pathway leading to its perpendicular face. Here the precipice showed an open door, wherethrough appeared in the bowels of the mountain a splendid palace, the workmanship of the Jinns, for no man had power to build aught like it. In due time, after sore toil, we entered therein and found an endless treasure, ranged in mounds with the utmost ordinance and regularity. Seeing a heap of Ashrafis I pounced upon it as a vulture swoopeth upon her quarry, the carrion, and fell to filling the sacks with golden coin to my heart's content. The bags were big, but I was constrained to stuff them only in proportion to the strength of my beasts. The Darwaysh, too, busied himself in like manner, but he charged his sacks with gems and jewels only, counselling me the while to do as he did. So I cast aside the ducats and filled my bags with naught save the most precious of the stonery. When we had wrought our best, we set the well-stuffed sacks upon the camels' backs and we made ready to depart; but, before we left the treasure-house wherein stood ranged thousands of golden vessels, exquisite in shape and workmanship, the Darwaysh went into a hidden chamber and brought from out a silvern casket a little golden box full of some unguent, which he showed to me, and then he placed it in his pocket. Presently, he again threw incense upon the fire and recited his incantations and conjurations, whereat the door closed and the rock became as before. We then divided the camels, he taking one half and I the other; and, passing through the strait and gloomy gorge in single file, we came out upon the open plain. Here our way parted, he wending in the direction of Bassorah and I Baghdad-wards; and when about to leave him I showered thanks upon the Darwaysh who had obtained me all this wealth and riches worth a thousand thousand of gold coins; and farewelled him with deep emotions of gratitude; after which we embraced and wended our several ways. But hardly had I bidden adieu to the Fakir and had gone some little distance from him with my file of camels than the Shaytan tempted me with greed of gain so that I said to myself, “The Darwaysh is alone in the world, without friends or kinsman, and is wholly estranged from matters mundane. What will these camel-loads of filthy lucre advantage him? Moreover, engrossed by the care of the camels, not to speak of the deceitfulness of riches, he may neglect his prayer and worship: therefore it behoveth me to take back from him some few of my beasts.” With this resolve I made the camels halt and tying up their forelegs ran back after the holy man and called out his name. He heard my loud shouts and awaited me forthright; and, as soon as I approached him I said, “When I had quitted thee a thought came into my mind; to wit, that thou art a recluse who keepest thyself aloof from earthly things, pure in heart and busied only with orison and devotion Now care of all these camels will cause thee only toil and moil and trouble and waste of precious time: ‘twere better then to give them back and not run the risk of these discomforts and dangers. The Darwaysh replied, “O my son, thou speakest sooth. The tending of all these animals will bring me naught save ache of head, so do thou take of them as many as thou listest. I thought not of the burthen and posher till thou drewest my attention thereto; but now I am forewarned thereof; so may Almighty Allah keep thee in His holy keeping!” Accordingly, I took ten camels of him and was about to gang my gait when suddenly it struck me, “This Fakir was unconcerned at giving up ten camels, so ‘twere better I ask more of him.” Thereupon I drew nearer to him and said, “Thou canst hardly manage thirty camels; do give me, I pray thee, other ten.” Said he, “O my son, do whatso thou wishest! Take thee other ten camels; twenty will suffice me.” I did his bidding and driving off the twenty added them to my forty. Then the spirit of concupiscence possessed me, and I bethought me more and more to get yet other ten camels from his share; so I retraced my steps for the third time and asked him for another ten, and of these, as also the remaining ten, I wheedled him. The Darwaysh gladly gave up the last of his camels, and, shaking out his skirts,[255] made ready to depart; but still my accursed greed stuck to me. Albeit I had got the fourscore beasts laden with Ashrafis and jewels, and I might have gone home happy and content, with wealth for fourscore generations, Satan tempted me still more, and urged me also to take the box of ointment, which I supposed to contain something more precious than rubies. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Ninth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Baba Abdullah continued his tale in these words: — So when I had again farewelled and embraced him I paused awhile and said, “What wilt thou do with the little box of salve thou hast taken to thy portion? I pray thee give me that also.” The Fakir would by no means part with it, whereupon I lusted the more to possess it, and resolved in my mind that, should the holy man give it up of his free will, then well and good, but if not I would force it from him. Seeing my intent he drew the box from out his breast- pocket[256] and handed it to me saying, “O my son, an thou wouldst have this box of ointment, then freely do I give it to thee; but first it behoveth thee to learn the virtue of the unguent it containeth.” Hearing these words I said, “Forasmuch as thou hast shown me all this favour, I beseech thee tell me of this ointment and what of properties it possesseth.” Quoth he, “The wonders of this ointment are passing strange and rare. An thou close thy left eye and rub upon the lid the smallest bit of the salve then all the treasures of the world now concealed from thy gaze will come to sight; but an thou rub aught thereof upon thy right eye thou shalt straightway become stone blind of both.” Thereat I bethought me of putting this wondrous unguent to the test and placing in his hand the box I said, “I see thou understandest this matter right well; so now I pray thee apply somewhat of the ointment with thine own hand to my left eyelid.” The Darwaysh thereupon closed my left eye and with his finger rubbed a little of the unguent over the lid; and when I opened it and looked around I saw the hidden hoards of the earth in countless quantities even as the Fakir had told me I should see them. Then closing my right eyelid, I bade him apply some of the salve to that eye also. Said he, “O my son, I have forewarned thee that if I rub it upon thy right eyelid thou shalt become stone blind of both. Put far from thee this foolish thought: why shouldst thou bring this evil to no purpose on thyself?” He spake sooth indeed, but by reason of my accursed ill-fate I would not heed his words and considered in my mind, “If applying the salve to the left eyelid hath produced such effect, assuredly far more wondrous still shall be the result when rubbed on the right eye. This fellow doth play me false and keepeth back from me the truth of the matter." When I had thus determined in my mind I laughed and said to the holy man, "Thou art deceiving me to the intent that I should not advantage myself by the secret, for that rubbing the unguent upon the right eyelid hath some greater virtue than applying it to the left eye, and thou wouldst withhold the matter from me. It can never be that the same ointment hath qualities so contrary and virtues so diverse." Replied the other, "Allah Almighty is my witness that the marvels of the ointment be none other save these whereof I bespake thee; O dear my friend, have faith in me, for naught hath been told thee save what is sober sooth." Still would I not believe his words, thinking that he dissembled with me and kept secret from me the main virtue of the unguent. Wherefore filled with this foolish thought I pressed him sore and begged that he rub the ointment upon my right eyelid; but he still refused and said, "Thou seest how much of favour I have shown to thee: wherefore should I now do thee so dire an evil? Know for a surety that it would bring thee lifelong grief and misery; and I beseech thee, by Allah the Almighty, abandon this thy purpose and believe my words." But the more he refused so much the more did I persist; and in fine I made oath and sware by Allah, saying, "O Darwaysh, what things soever I have asked of thee thou gayest freely unto me and now remaineth only this request for me to make. Allah upon thee, gainsay me not and grant me this last of thy boons: and whatever shall betide me I will not hold thee responsible therefor. Let Destiny decide for good or for evil." When the holy man saw that his denial was of no avail and that I irked him with exceeding persistence, he put the smallest bit of ointment on my right lid and, as I opened wide my eyes, lo and behold! both were stone-blind: naught could I see for the black darkness before them and ever since that day have I been sightless and helpless as thou foundest me. When I knew that I was blinded, I exclaimed, "O Darwaysh of ill-omen, what thou didst fore tell hath come to pass;" and I fell to cursing him and saying "O would to Heaven thou hadst never brought me to the hoard or hadst given me such wealth. What now avail me all this gold and jewels? Take back thy forty camels and make me whole again." Replied he, "What evil have I done to thee? I showed thee favours more than any man hath ever dealt to another. Thou wouldst not heed my rede, but didst harden thy heart and lustedst to obtain this wealth and to pry into the hidden treasures of the earth. Thou wouldst not be content with what thou hadst and thou didst misdoubt my words thinking that I would play thee false. Thy case is beyond all hope, for never more wilt thou regain thy sight; no, never. Then said I with tears and lamentations, “O Fakir, take back thy fourscore camels laden with gold and precious stones and wend thy way: I absolve thee from all blame, natheless I beseech thee by Allah Almighty to restore my sight an thou art able.” He answered not a word, but leaving me in miserable plight presently took the load to Bassorah, driving before him the fourscore camels laden with wealth. I cried aloud and besought him to lead me with him away from the life destroying wilderness, or to put me on the path of some caravan, but he regarded not my cries and abandoned me there. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Tenth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Baba Abdullah the blind man resumed his story, saying: — So when the Darwaysh departed from me, I had well nigh died of grief and wrath at the loss of my sight and of my riches, and from the pangs of thirst[257] and hunger. Next day by good fortune a caravan from Bassorah passed that way; and, seeing me in such a grievous condition, the merchants had compassion on me and made me travel with them to Baghdad. Naught could I do save beg my bread in order to keep myself alive; so I became a mendicant and made this vow to Allah Almighty that, as a punishment for this my unlucky greed and cursed covetise, I would require a cuff upon my ear from everyone who might take pity on my case and give an alms. On this wise it was that yesterday I pursued thee with such pertinacity. — When the blind man made an end of his story the Caliph said, “O Baba Abdullah! thine offence was grievous; may Allah have mercy on thee therefor. It now remaineth to thee to tell thy case to devotees and anchorites that they may offer up their potent prayers in thy behalf. Take no thought for thy daily wants: I have determined that for thy living thou shalt have a dole of four dirhams a day from my royal treasury according to thy need as long as thou mayest live. But see that thou go no more to ask for alms about my city.” So Baba Abdullah returned thanks to the Prince of True Believers, saying, “I will do according to thy bidding.” Now when the Caliph Harun al-Rashid had heard the story of Baba Abdullah and the Darwaysh, he turned to and addressed the young man whom he had seen riding at fullest speed upon the mare and savagely lashing and ill-treating her. “What is thy name?” quoth he, and quoth the youth, bowing his brow groundwards, “My name, O Commander of the Faithful, is SÝdÝ Nu’umßn.”[258] Then said the Caliph, “Hearken now, O Sidi Nu’uman! Ofttimes have I watched the horsemen exercise their horses, and I myself have often done likewise, but never saw I any who rode so mercilessly as thou didst ride thy mare, for thou didst ply both whip and shovel-iron in cruellest fashion. The folk all stood to gaze with wonderment, but chiefly I, who was constrained against my wish to stop and ask the cause of the bystanders. None, however, could make clear the matter, and all men said that thou art wont each day to ride the mare in this most brutal fashion, whereat my mind marvelled all the more. I now would ask of thee the cause of this thy ruthless savagery, and see that thou tell me every whit and leave not aught unsaid.” Sidi Nu’uman, hearing the order of the Commander of the Faithful, became aware he was fully bent upon hearing the whole matter and would on no wise suffer him to depart until all was explained. So the colour of his countenance changed and he stood speechless like a statue through fear and trepidation; whereat said the Prince of True Believers, “O Sidi Nu’uman, fear naught but tell me all thy tale. Regard me in the light of one of thy friends and speak without reserve, and explain to me the matter fully as thou wouldst do hadst thou been speaking to thy familiars. Moreover, an thou art afraid of any matter which thou shalt confide to me and if thou dread my indignation, I grant thee immunity and a free pardon.” At these comforting words of the Caliph, Sidi Nu’uman took courage, and with clasped hands replied, “I trust I have not in this matter done aught contrary to thy Highness’s law and custom, and therefore will I willingly obey thy bidding and relate to thee all my tale. If I have offended in anything then am I worthy of thy punishment. ’Tis true that I have daily exercised the mare and ridden her at speed around the hippodrome as thou sawest me do; and I lashed and gored her with all my might. Thou hadst compassion on the mare and didst deem me cruel hearted to entreat her thus, but when thou shalt have heard all my adventure thou wilt admit, Inshallah — God willing — that this be only a trifling penalty for her offence, and that not she but I deserve thy pity and pardon! With thy permission I will now begin my story.”ûAnd as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of The Six Hundred and Eleventh Night.

Then said she: I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Caliph Harun al-Rashid accorded the youth permission to speak and that the rider of the mare began in these words the

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History of Sidi Nu'uman.

O Lord of beneficence and benevolence, my parents were possessed of wealth and riches sufficient to provide their son when they died with ample means for a life long livelihood so that he might pass his days like a Grandee of the land in ease and joyance and delight. I — their only child — had nor care nor trouble about any matter until one day of the days, when in the prime of manhood, I was a minded to take unto me a wife, a woman winsome and comely to look upon, that we might live together in mutual love and double blessedness. But Allah Almighty willed not that a model helpmate become mine; nay, Destiny wedded me to grief and the direst misery. I married a maid who in outward form and features was a model of beauty and loveliness without, however, one single gracious gift of mind or soul; and on the very second day after the wedding her evil nature began to manifest itself. Thou art well aware, O Prince of True Believers, that by Moslem custom none may look upon the face of his betrothed before the marriage contract? nor after wedlock can he complain should his bride prove a shrew or a fright: he must needs dwell with her in such content as he may and be thankful for his fate, be it fair or unfair. When I saw first the face of my bride and learnt that it was passing comely, I joyed with exceeding joy and gave thanks to Almighty Allah that He had bestowed on me so charming a mate. That night I slept with her in joy and love-delight; but next day when the noon meal was spread for me and her I found her not at table and sent to summon her; and after some delay, she came and sat her down. I dissembled my annoyance and forbore for this late coming to find fault with her which I soon had ample reason to do. It so happened that amongst the many dishes which were served up to us was a fine pilaff,[259] of which I, according to the custom in our city, began to eat with a spoon; but she, in lieu of it pulled out an ear pick from her pocket and therewith fell to picking up the rice and ate it grain by grain. Seeing this strange conduct I was sore amazed and fuming inwardly said in sweet tones, "O my Aminah,[260] what be this way of eating? hast thou learnt it of thy people or art thou counting grains of rice purposing to make a hearty meal here after? Thou hast eaten but ten or twenty during all this time. Or haply thou art practicing thrift: if so I would have thee know that Allah Almighty hath given me abundant store and fear not on that account; but do thou, O my dearling, as all do and eat as thou seest thy husband eat." I fondly thought that she would assuredly vouchsafe some words of thanks, but never a syllable spake she and ceased not picking up grain after grain: nay more, in order to provoke me to greater displeasure, she paused for a long time between each. Now when the next course of cakes came on she idly brake some bread and tossed a crumb or two into her mouth; in fact she ate less than would satisfy the stomach of a sparrow. I marvelled much to see her so obstinate and self-willed but I said to myself, in mine innocence, "May be she hath not been accustomed to eat with men, and especially she may be too shame faced to eat heartily in presence of her husband: she will in time do whatso do other folk." I thought also that perchance she hath already broken her fast and lost appetite, or haply it hath been her habit to eat alone. So I said nothing and after dinner went out to smell the air and play the JarÝd[261] and thought no more of the matter. When, however, we two sat again at meat my bride ate after the same fashion as before; nay, she would ever persist in her perversity; whereat I was sore troubled in mind, and marvelled how without food she kept herself alive. One night it chanced that deeming me fast asleep she rose up in stealth from my side, I being wide awake: when I saw her step cautiously from the bed as one fearing lest she might disturb me. I wondered with exceeding wonder why she should arise from sleep to leave me thus and methought I would look into the matter. Wherefore I still feigned sleep and snored but watched her as I lay, and presently saw her dress herself and leave the room; I then sprang off the bed and throwing on my robe and slinging my sword across my shoulder looked out of the window to spy whither she went. Presently she crossed the courtyard and opening the street-door fared forth; and I also ran out through the entrance which she had left unlocked; then followed her by the light of the moon until she entered a cemetery hard by our home. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Twelfth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Sidi Nu’uman continued his story saying: — But when I beheld Aminah my bride enter the cemetery, I stood without and close to the wall over which I peered so that I could espy her well but she could not discover me. Then what did I behold but Aminah sitting with a Ghul! [262] Thy Highness wotteth well that Ghuls be of the race of devils; to wit, they are unclean spirits which inhabit ruins and which terrify solitary wayfarers and at times seizing them feed upon their flesh; and if by day they find not any traveller to eat they go by night to the graveyards and dig out and devour dead bodies. So I was sore amazed and terrified to see my wife thus seated with a Ghul. Then the twain dug up from the grave a corpse which had been newly buried, and the Ghul and my wife Aminah tore off pieces of the flesh which she ate making merry the while and chatting with her companion but inasmuch as I stood at some distance I could not hear what it was they said. At this sight I trembled with exceeding fear. And when they had made an end of eating they cast the bones into the pit and thereover heaped up the earth e’en as it was before. Leaving them thus engaged in their foul and fulsome work, I hastened home; and, allowing the street-door to remain half-open as my bride had done, I reached my room, and throwing myself upon our bed feigned sleep. Presently Aminah came and doffing her dress calmly lay beside me, and I knew by her manner that she had not seen me at all, nor guessed that I had followed her to the cemetery. This gave me great relief of mind, withal I loathed to bed beside a cannibal and a corpse-eater; howbeit I lay still despite extreme misliking till the Muezzin’s call for dawn-prayers, when getting up I busied myself with the Wuz·-ablution and set forth mosque- wards. Then having said my prayers and fulfilled my ceremonial duties,[263] I strolled about the gardens, and during this walk having turned over the matter in my mind, determined that it behoved me to remove my bride from such ill companionship, and wean her from the habit of devouring dead bodies. With these thoughts I came back home at dinner-time, when Aminah on seeing me return bade the servants serve up the noontide meal and we twain sat at table; but as before she fell to picking up the rice grain by grain. Thereat said I to her, “O my wife, it irketh me much to see thee picking up each grain of rice like a hen. If this dish suit not thy taste see there are, by Allah’s grace and the Almighty’s favour, all kinds of meats before us. Do thou eat of that which pleaseth thee most; each day the table is bespread with dishes of different kinds and if these please thee not, thou hast only to order whatsoever food thy soul desireth. Yet I would ask of thee one question: Is there no meat upon the table as rich and toothsome as man’s flesh, that thou refuseth every dish they set before thee?” Ere I had finished speaking my wife became assured that I was aware of her night adventure: she suddenly waxed wroth with exceeding wrath, her face flushed red as fire, her eyeballs started out from their sockets and she foamed at the mouth with ungovernable fury. Seeing her in this mood I was terrified and my sense and reason fled by reason of my affright; but presently in the madness of her passion she took up a tasse of water which stood beside her and dipping her fingers in the contents muttered some words which I could not understand; then sprinkling some drops over me, cried, Accursed that thou art! for this thine insolence and betrayal do thou be straightway turned into a dog.” At once I became transmewed and she, picking up a staff began to ribroast me right mercilessly and well nigh killed me. I ran about from room to room but she pursued me with the stick, and tunded and belaboured me with might and main, till she was clean exhausted. She then threw the street-door half open and, as I made for it to save my life, attempted violently to close it, so as to squeeze my soul out of my body; but I saw her design and baffled it, leaving behind me, however, the tip of my tail; and piteously yelping hereat I escaped further basting and thought myself lucky to get away from her without broken bones. When I stood in the street still whining and ailing, the dogs of the quarter seeing a stranger, at once came rushing at me barking and biting;[264] and I with tail between my legs tore along the market place and ran into the shop of one who sold sheeps’ and goats’ heads and trotters; and there crouching low hid me in a dark corner. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Thirteenth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Sidi Nu'uman continued his story as follows — The shopkeeper, despite his scruples of conscience, which caused him to hold all dogs impure,[265] hath ruth upon my sorry plight and drove away the yelling and grinning curs that would have followed me into his shop; and I, escaping this danger of doom, passed all the night hid in my corner. Early next morning the butcher sallied forth to buy his usual wares, sheeps' heads and hooves, and, coming back with a large supply, he began to lay them out for sale within the shop, when I, seeing that a whole pack of dogs had gathered about the place attracted by the smell of flesh, also joined them. The owner noticed me among the ragged tykes and said to himself, "This dog hath tasted naught since yesterday when it ran yelping hungrily and hid within my shop." He then threw me a fair sized piece of meat, but I refused it and went up to him and wagged my tail to the end that he might know my wish to stay with him and be protected by his stall: he, however, thought that I had eaten my sufficiency, and, picking up a staff frightened me away. So when I saw how the butcher heeded not my case, I trotted off and wandering to and fro presently came to a bakery and stood before the door wherethrough I espied the baker at breakfast. Albeit I made no sign as though I wanted aught of food, he threw me a bittock of bread; and I, in lieu of snapping it up and greedily swallowing it, as is the fashion with all dogs the gentle and simple of them, approached him with it and gazed in his face and wagged my tail by way of thanks. He was pleased by this my well bred behaviour and smiled at me; whereat I albeit not one whit anhungered, but merely to humour him, fell to eating the bread, little by little and leisurely, to testify my respect. He was yet more satisfied with my manners and wished to keep me in his shop; and I, noting his intent, sat by the door and looked wistfully at him, whereby he knew that I desired naught of him save his protection. He then caressed me and took charge of me and kept me to guard his store, but I would not enter his house till after he had led the way; he also showed me where to lie o'nights and fed me well at every meal and entreated me right hospitably. I likewise would watch his every movement and always lay down or rose up even as he bade me; and whenas he left his lodging or walked anywhither he took me with him. If ever when I lay asleep he went outside and found me not, he would stand still in the street and call to me crying, “Bakht!’ Bakht!’”[266] an auspicious name he had given to me; and straightway on hearing him I would rush about and frisk before the door; and when he set out to taste the air I paced beside him now running on ahead, now following at his heels and ever and anon looking up in his face. Thus some time passed during which I lived with him in all comfort; till one day of the days it so chanced that a woman came to the bakery to buy her bread and gave the owner several dirhams to its price, whereof one was bad coin whilst the others were good. My master tested all the silvers and, finding out the false bit, returned it demanding a true dirham in exchange; but the woman wrangled and would not take it back and swore that it was sound. Quoth the baker, “The dirham is beyond all doubt a worthless: see yonder dog of mine, he is but a beast, yet mark me he will tell thee whether it be true or false silver.” So he called me by my name, “Bakht! Bakht!” whereat I sprang up and ran towards him and he, throwing all the moneys upon the ground before me, cried, “Here, look these dirhams over and if there be a false coin among them separate it from all the others.” I inspected the silvers each by each and found the counterfeit: then, putting it on one side and all the others on another, I placed my paw upon the false silver and wagging what remained of my tail looked up at my master’s face. The baker was delighted with my sagacity, and the woman also, marvelling with excessive marvel at what had happened, took back her bad dirham and paid another in exchange. But when the buyer fared forth, my master called together his neighbours and gossips and related to them this matter; so they threw down on the ground before me coins both good and bad, in order that they might test me and see with their own eyes an I were as clever as my master had said I was. Many times in succession I picked out the false coins from amongst the true and placed my paw upon them without once failing; so all went away astounded and related the case to each and every one they saw and thus the bruit of me spread abroad throughout the city. That live long day I spent in testing dirhams fair and foul. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Fourteenth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Sidi Nu'uman continued his story saying: — From that day forwards the baker honoured me yet more highly, and all his friends and familiars laughed and said, "Forsooth thou hast in this dog a mighty good Shroff."[267] And some envied my master his luck in having me within the shop, and tried ofttimes to entice me away, but the baker kept me with him nor would he ever allow me to leave his side; for the fame of me brought him a host of customers from every quarter of the town even the farthest. Not many days after there came another woman to buy loaves at our shop and paid the baker six dirhams whereof one was worthless. My master passed them over to me for test and trial, and straightway I picked out the false one, and placing paw thereon looked up in the woman's face. Hereat she waxed confused and confessed that it was miscoined and praised me for that I had found it out; then, going forth the same woman made signs to me that I should follow her unbeknown to the baker. Now I had not ceased praying Allah that somehow He would restore me to my human form and hoped that some good follower of the Almighty would take note of this my sorry condition and vouchsafe me succour. So as the woman turned several times and looked at me, I was persuaded in my mind that she had knowledge of my case; I therefore kept my eyes upon her; which seeing she came back ere she had stepped many paces, and beckoned me to accompany her. I understood her signal and sneaking out of the presence of the baker, who was busy heating his oven, followed in her wake. Pleased beyond all measure to see me obey her, she went straight way home with me, and entering she locked the door and led me into a room where sat a fair maid in embroidered dress whom I judged by her favour to be the good woman's daughter. The damsel was well skilled in arts magical; so the mother said to her, "O my daughter, here is a dog which telleth bad dirhams from good dirhams. When first I heard the marvel I bethought me that the beastie must be a man whom some base wretch and cruel hearted had turned into a dog. Methought that to day I would see this animal and test it when buying loaves at the booth of yonder baker and behold, it hath acquitted itself after the fairest of fashions and hath stood the test and trial. Look well, O my daughter, at this dog and see whether it be indeed an animal or a man transformed into a beast by gramarye." The young lady, who had veiled her face,[268] hereupon considered me attentively and presently cried, "O my mother, 'tis even as thou sayest, and this I will prove to thee forthright." Then rising from her seat she took a basin of water and dipping hand therein sprinkled some drops upon me saying, "An thou wert born a dog then do thou abide a dog, but an thou wert born a man then, by virtue of this water, resume thine human favour and figure." Immediately I was transformed from the shape of a dog to human semblance and I fell at the maiden's feet and kissed the ground before her giving her thanks; then, bussing the hem of her garment, I cried, "O my lady, thou hast been exceeding gracious unto one unbeknown to thee and a stranger. How can I find words wherewith to thank thee and bless thee as thou deserves"? Tell me now, I pray thee, how and whereby I may shew my gratitude to thee? From this day forth I am beholden to thy kindness and am become thy slave." Then I related all my case and told her of Aminah's wickedness and what of wrongs she had wrought me; and I made due acknowledgment to her mother for that she had brought me to her home. Herewith quoth the damsel to me, "O Sidi Nu'uman, I pray thee bestow not such exceeding thanks upon me, for rather am I glad and grateful in conferring this service upon one so well-deserving as thou art. I have been familiar with thy wife Aminah for a long time before thou didst marry her; I also knew that she had skill in witchcraft and she likewise knoweth of my art, for we twain learnt together of one and the same mistress in the science. We met ofttimes at the Hammam as friends but, in asmuch as she was ill-mannered and ill- tempered, I declined further intimacy with her. Think not that it sufficeth me to have made thee recover thy form as it was aforetime; nay, verily needs must I take due vengeance of her for the wrong she hath done thee. And this will I do at thy hand, so shalt thou have mastery over her and find thyself lord of thine own house and home.[269] Tarry here awhile until I come again." So saying the damsel passed into another room and I remained sitting and talking with her mother and praised her excellence and kindness towards me. The ancient dame also related strange and rare deeds of wonder done by her with pure purpose and lawful means, till the girl returned with an ewer in hand and said, “O Sidi Nu’uman, my magical art doth tell me that Aminah is at this present away from home but she will return thither presently. Meanwhile she dissembleth with the domestics and feigneth grief at severance from thee; and she hath pretended that, as thou sattest at meat with her, thou didst suddenly arise and fare forth on some weighty matter, when presently a dog rushed through the open door into the room and she drove it away with a staff.” Then giving me a gugglet full of the water the maiden resumed, “O Sidi Nu’uman, go now to thine own house and, keeping this gugglet by thee, await patiently Aminah’s coming. Anon she will return and seeing thee will be sore perplexed and will hasten to escape from thee; but before she go forth sprinkle some drops from this gugglet upon her and recite these spells which I shall teach thee. I need not tell thee more; thou wilt espy with thine own eyes what shall happen.” Having said these words the young lady taught me magical phrases which I fixed in my memory full firmly, and after this I took my leave and farewelled them both. When I reached home it happened even as the young magician had told me; and I had tarried but a short time in the house when Aminah came in. I held the gugglet in hand and she seeing me trembled with sore trembling and would fain have run away; but I hastily sprinkled some drops upon her and repeated the magical words, whereat she was turned into a mare — the animal thy Highness deigned remark but yesterday. I marvelled greatly to sight this transformation and seizing the mare’s mane led her to the stable and secured her with a halter. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hudred and Fifteenth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Sidi Nu’uman continued his story saying: — When I had secured the mare, I loaded her with reproaches for her wickedness and her base behaviour, and lashed her with a whip till my forearm was tired.[270] Then I resolved within myself that I would ride her at full speed round the square each day and thus inflict upon her the justest penalty. — Herewith Sidi Nu’uman held his peace, having made an end of telling his tale; but presently he resumed, “O Commander of the Faithful, I trow thou art not displeased at this my conduct, nay rather thou wouldst punish such a woman with a punishment still greater than this.” He then kissed the hem of the Caliph’s robe and kept silence; and Harun al-Rashid, perceiving that he had said all his say, exclaimed, “In very sooth thy story is exceeding strange and rare. The wrong doing of thy wife hath no excuse and thy requital is methinks in due measure and just degree, but I would ask thee one thing — How long wilt thou chastise her thus, and how long will she remain in bestial guise? æTwere better now for thee to seek the young lady by whose magical skill thy wife was transformed and beg that she bring her back to human shape. And yet I fear me greatly lest perchance whenas this sorceress, this Ghulah, shall find herself restored to woman’s form and resumeth her conjurations and incantations she may — who knoweth?. — requite thee with far greater wrong than she hath done thee heretofore, and from this thou wilt not be able to escape.” After this the Prince of True Believers forbore to urge the matter, albeit he was mild and merciful by nature,[271] and addressing the third man whom the Wazir had brought before him said, “As I was walking in such a quarter I was astonished to see thy mansion, so great and so grand is it; and when I made enquiry of the townsfolk they answered each and every, that the palace belongeth to one (thyself) whom they called Khwßjah Hasan. They added that thou west erewhile exceeding poor and in straitened case, but that Allah Almighty had widened thy means and had now sent thee wealth in such store that thou hast builded the finest of buildings; moreover, that albeit thou hast so princely a domicile and such abundance of riches, thou art not unmindful of thy former estate, and thou dost not waste thy substance in riotous living but thou addest thereto by lawful trade. The neighbourhood all speaketh well of thee and not a wight of them hath aught to say against thee; so I now would know of thee the certainty of these things and hear from thine own lips how thou didst gain this abundant wealth. I have summoned thee before me that I might be assured of all such matters by actual hearsay: so fear not to tell me all thy tale; I desire naught of thee save knowledge of this thy case. Enjoy thou to thy heart's content the opulence that Almighty Allah deigned bestow upon thee, and let thy soul have pleasure therein. Thus spake the Caliph and the gracious words reassured the man. Then Khwajah Hasan threw himself before the Commander of the Faithful and, kissing the carpet at the foot of the throne, exclaimed, "O Prince of True Believers, I will relate to thee a faithful relation of my adventure, and Almighty Allah be my witness that I have not done aught contrary to thy laws and just commandments, and that all this my wealth is by the favour and goodness of Allah alone." Harun al-Rashid hereupon again bade him speak out boldly and forthwith he began to recount in the following words the

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History of Khwajah Hasan al-Habbal.[272]

O Lord of beneficence! obedient to thy royal behest, I will now inform thy Highness of the means and the measures whereby Destiny cowered me with such wealth; but first I would thou hear somewhat of two amongst my friends who abode in the House of Peace, Baghdad. They twain are yet alive and both well know the history which thy slave shall now relate. One of them, men call Sa'd, the other Sa'dÝ.[273] Now Sa'di opined that without riches no one in this world could be happy and independent; moreover that without hard toil and trouble and wariness and wisdom withal it were impossible to become wealthy. But Sa'd differing therefrom would affirm that affluence cometh not to any save by decree of Destiny and fiat of Fate and Fortune. Sa'd was a poor man while Sa'di had great store of good; yet there sprang up a firm friendship between them and fond affection each for other; nor were they ever wont to differ upon any matter save only upon this; to wit, that Sa'di relied solely upon deliberation and forethought and Sa'd upon doom and man's lot. It chanced one day that, as they sat talking together on this matter, quoth Sa'di, "A poor man is he who either is born a pauper and passeth all his days in want and penury, or he who having been born to wealth and comfort, doth in the time of manhood squander all he hath and falleth into grievous need; then lacketh he the power to regain his riches and to live at ease by wit and industry." Sa'd made answer, saying, "Nor wit nor industry availeth aught to any one, but Fate alone enableth him to acquire and to preserve riches. Misery and want are but accidents and deliberation is naught. Full many a poor man hath waxed affluent by favour of Fate and richards manifold have, despite their skill and store, been reduced to misery and beggary." Quoth Sa'di, "Thou speakest foolishly. Howbeit put we the matter to fair test and find out for ourselves some handicraftsman scanty of means and living upon his daily wage; him let us provide with money, then will he without a doubt increase his stock and abide in ease and comfort, and so shalt thou be persuaded that my words be true." Now as they twain were walking on, they passed through the lane wherein stood my lodging and saw me a twisting ropes, which craft my father and grandfather and many generations before me had followed. By the condition of my home and dress they judged that I was a needy man; where upon Sa’d pointing me out to Sa’di said, “An thou wouldst make trial of this our matter of dispute, see yonder wight. He hath dwelt here for many years and by this trade of rope making cloth gain a bare subsistence for himself and his. I know his case right well of old; he is a worthy subject for the trial; so do thou give him some gold pieces and test the matter.” “Right willingly,” replied Sa’di, “but first let us take full cognizance of him.” So the two friends came up to me, whereat I left my work and saluted them. They returned my salam after which quoth Sa’di, “Prithee what be thy name?” Quoth I, “My name is Hasan, but by reason of my trade of rope making all men call me Hasan al-Habbßl.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Sixteenth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Hasan al-Habbal (the Rope-maker) continued his story, saying. — Thereupon Sa'di asked me, "How farest thou by this industry? Me thinks thou art blithe and quite content therewith. Thou hast worked long and well and doubtless thou hast laid by large store of hemp and other stock. Thy forbears carried on this craft for many years and must have left thee much of capital and property which thou hast turned to good account and on this wise thou hast largely increased thy wealth." Quoth I, "O my lord, no money have I in pouch whereby I may live happy or even buy me enough to eat. This is my case that every day, from dawn till eve I spend in making ropes, nor have I one single moment wherein to take rest; and still I am sore straitened to provide even dry bread for myself and family. A wife have I and five small children, who are yet too young to help me ply this business: and 'tis no easy matter to supply their daily wants; how then canst thou suppose that I am enabled to put by large store of hemp and stock? What ropes I twist each day I sell straightway, and of the money earned thereby I spend part upon our needs and with the rest I buy hemp wherewith I twist ropes on the next day. However, praise be to Almighty Allah that, despite this my state of penury He provideth us with bread sufficing our necessity." When I had made known all my condition Sa'di replied, "O Hasan, now I am certified of thy case and indeed 'tis other than I had supposed; and, given that I gave thee a purse of two hundred Ashrafis, assuredly thou shalt therewith greatly add to thy gains and be enabled to live in ease and affluence: what sayest thou thereto?" Said I, "An thou favour me with such bounty I should hope to grow richer than all and every of my fellow-craftsmen, albeit Baghdad-town is prosperous as it is populous." Then Sa'di, deeming me true and trustworthy, pulled out of his pocket a purse of two hundred gold pieces and handing them to me said "Take these coins and trade therewith. May Allah advance thee but see to it that thou use this money with all heed, and waste it not in folly and ungraciousness. I and my friend Sa'd will rejoice with all joy to hear of thy well being; and, if hereafter we come again and find thee in flourishing condition, ‘twill be matter of much satisfaction to us both.” Accordingly, O Commander of the Faithful, I took the purse of gold with much gladness and a grateful heart and, placing it in my pocket, thanked Sa’di kissing his garment-hem, whereupon the two friends fared forth. And I, O Prince of True Believers, seeing the twain depart, went on working, but was sore puzzled and perplexed as to where I might bestow the purse; for my house contained neither cupboard nor locker. Howbeit I took it home and kept the matter hidden from my wife and children and when alone and unobserved I drew out ten gold coins by way of spending money; then, binding the purse mouth with a bit of string I tied it tightly in the folds of my turband and wound the cloth around my head. Presently, I went off to the market street and bought me a stock of hemp and coming homewards I laid in some meat for supper, it being now a long while since we had tasted flesh. But as I trudged along the road, meat in hand, a kite[274] came suddenly swooping down, and would have snatched the morsel from out my hand had I not driven off the bird with the other hand. Then it had fain pounced upon the flesh on the left side but again I scared it away and thus, whilst exerting myself with frantic efforts to ward off the bird, by ill luck my turband fell to the ground. At once that accursed kite swooped down and flew off with it in its talons; and I ran pursuing it and shouted aloud. Hearing my cries the Bazar-folk, men and women and a rout of children, did what they could to scare it away and make the beastly bird drop its prey, but they shouted and cast stones in vain: the kite would not let drop the turband and presently flew clean out of sight. I was sore distressed and heavy hearted to lose the Ashrafis as I tried me home bearing the hemp and what of food I had bought, but chiefly was I vexed and grieved in mind, and ready to die of shame at the thought of what Sa’di would say; especially when I reflected how he would misdoubt my words, nor deem the tale true when I should tell him that a kite had carried off my turband with the gold pieces, but rather would he think that I had practised some deceit and had devised some amusing fable by way of excuse. Howbeit I hugely enjoyed what had remained of the ten Ashrafis and with my wife and children fared sumptuously for some days. Presently, when all the gold was spent and naught remained thereof, I became as poor and needy as before, withal I was content and thankful to Almighty Allah nor blamed my lot. He had sent in his mercy this purse of gold to me unawares and now He had taken it away, wherefore I was grateful and satisfied, for what He doeth is ever well done. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Seventeenth Night.

Then said she: I have heard, O auspicious King, that Master Hasan the Ropemaker continued his story in these words: — My wife, who knew not of the matter of the Ashrafis, presently perceived that I was ill at ease and I was compelled for a quiet life to let her know my secret; moreover the neighbours came round to ask me of my case: but I was right loath to tell them all that had betided; they could not bring back what was gone and they would assuredly rejoice at my calamity. However, when they pressed me close I told them every whit; and some thought that I had spoken falsely and derided me and others that I was daft and hare-brained and my words were the wild pratings of an idiot or the drivel of dreams. The youngsters made abundant fun of me and laughed to think that I, who never in my born days had sighted a golden coin, should tell how I had gotten so many Ashrafis, and how a kite had flown away with them. My wife, however, gave full credence to my tale and wept and beat her breast for sorrow. Thus six months passed over us, when it chanced one day that the two friends, to wit, Sa'di and Sa'd, came to my quarter of the town, when quoth Sa'd to Sa'di, “Lo, yonder is the street where dwelleth Hasan al-Habbal. Come let us go and see how he hath added to his stock and how far he hath prospered by means of the two hundred Ashrafis thou gavest him.” Sa'di rejoined, ’Tis well said; indeed, we have not seen him for many days: I would fain visit him and I should rejoice to hear that he hath prospered.” So the twain walked along towards my house, Sa'd saying to Sa'di, “Forsooth I perceive that he appeareth the same in semblance, poor and ill-conditioned as before; he weareth old and tattered garments, save that his turband seemeth somewhat newer and cleaner. Look well and judge thyself and ’tis even as I said.” Thereupon Sa'di came up closer to me and he also understood that my condition was unaltered; and presently the two friends addressed me. After the usual salutetion Sa'd asked, O Hasan, how fareth it with thee, and how goeth it with thy business and have the two hundred Ashrafis stood thee in good stead and amended thy trade?” To this answered I, “O my lords, how can I tell you of the sad mishap that hath befallen me? I dare not speak for very shame, yet cannot I keep the adventure concealed. Verily a marvellous matter and a wondrous hath happened to me, the tale whereof will fill you with wonderment and suspicion, for I wot full well that ye will not believe it, and that I shall be to you as one that dealeth in lies; withal needs must I tell you the whole however unwillingly." Hereat I recounted to them every whit that had betided me first and last, especially that which had befallen me from the kite; but Sa'di misdoubted me and mistrusted me and cried, "O Hasan, thou speakest but in jest and dost dissemble with us. 'Tis hard to believe the tale thou tellest. Kites are not wont to fly off with turbands, but only with such things as they can eat. Thou wouldst but outwit us and thou art of those who, when some good fortune cometh to them unforeseen, do straightways abandon their work or their business and, wasting all in pleasuring, become once more poor and thereafter must nilly-willy eke out a living as best they may. This methinks be especially the case with thee; thou hast squandered our gift with all speed and now art needy as before." "O good my lord, not so," cried I; "this blame and these hard words ill befit my deserts, for I am wholly innocent of all thou imputest to me. The strange mishap whereof I told thee is the truest of truths; and to prove that it is no lie all the town-folk have knowledge thereof and in good sooth I do not play thee false. æTis certain that kites do not fly away with turbands; but such mishaps, wondrous and marvellous, may betide mankind especially the miserable of lot." Sa'd also espoused my cause and said, "O Sa'di, ofttimes have we seen and heard how kites carry off many things besides comestibles; and his tale may not be wholly contrary to reason." Then Sa'di pulled out from his pocket a purseful of gold pieces and counted out and gave me another two hundred, saying, "O Hasan, take these Ashrafis, but see that thou keep them with all heed and diligence and beware, and again I say beware, lest thou lose them like the others. Expend them in such fashion that thou mayst reap full benefit therefrom and prosper even as thou seest thy neighbours prosper." I took the money from him and poured out thanks and blessings upon his head, and when they went their ways I returned to my rope-walk and thence in due time straight home. My wife and children were abroad, so again I took ten gold coins of the two hundred and securely tied up the remainder in a piece of cloth then I looked around to find a spot wherein to hide my hoard so that my wife and youngsters might not come to know of it and lay hands thereon. Presently, I espied a large earthen jar full of bran standing in a corner of the room, so herein I hid the rag with the gold coins and I misdeemed that it was safely concealed from wife and wees. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Eighteenth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Hasan al-Habbal thus continued his story: — When I had put the Ashrafis a bottom the jar of bran, my wife came in and I said naught to her of the two friends or of aught had happened, but I set out for the Bazar to buy hemp. Now as soon as I had left the house there came, by evil fate impelled, a man who sold Tafl, or fuller's earth,[275] wherewith the poorer sort of women are wont to wash their hair. My wife would fain have bought some but not a single Kauri[276] or almond had she. Then she took thought and said to herself, "This jar of bran is here to no purpose, I will exchange it for the clay," and he also, the Tafl seller, agreed to this proposal and went off taking the jar of bran as the price of the washing earth. Anon I came back with a load of hemp upon my head and other five on the heads of as many porters who accompanied me; and I helped them off with their burthens and, after storing the stuff in a room, I paid and dismissed them. Then I stretched me out upon the floor to take rest awhile and looking towards the corner where once stood the jar of bran I found it gone. Words fail me, O Prince of True Believers, to describe the tumult of feelings which filled my heart at the sight. I sprang up with all speed and calling to my wife enquired of her whither the jar had been carried; and she replied that she had exchanged its contents for a trifle of washing clay. Then cried I aloud, "O wretched, O miserable, what hast thou done? thou hast ruined me and thy children; thou hast given away great wealth to that clay selling fellow!" Then I told her all that had betided me, of the coming of the two friends and how I had hidden the hundred and ninety Ashrafis within the bran-jar; and she, on hearing this wept sore and beat her breast and tore her hair crying, "Where now shall I find that clay- seller? The wight is a stranger, never before did I see him about this quarter or this street. Then turning to me she continued, "Herein thou hast dealt right foolishly, for that thou didst not tell me of the matter, nor didst place any trust in me; otherwise this mishap would never have happened to us; no, never." And she lamented with loud lamentation and bitter whereat I said, "Make not such hubbub nor display such trouble, lest our neighbours overhear thee, and learning of our mishap peradventure laugh at us and call us fools. It behoveth us to rest content with the will of Almighty Allah." However the ten Ashrafis which I had taken from the two hundred sufficed me to carry on my trade and to live with more of ease for some short while; but I ever grieved and I marvelled much anent what could be said to Sa'di when he should come again; for inasmuch as he believed me not the first time I was assured in my mind that now he would denounce me aloud as a cheat and a liar. One day of the days the twain, to wit, Sa'd and Sa'di, came strolling towards my house conversing and, as usual, arguing about me and my case; and I seeing them from afar left off working that I might hide myself, as I could not for very shame come forth and accost them. Seeing this and not guessing the reason they entered my dwelling and, saluting me with the salam, asked me how I had fared. I durst not raise my eyes so abashed and mortified was I, and with bended brow returned the greeting; when they, noting my sorry plight, marvelled saying, "Is all well with thee? Why art thou in this state? Hast thou not made good use of the gold or hast thou wasted thy wealth in lewd living?" Quoth I, "O my lords, the story of the Ashrafis is none other than this. When ye departed from me I went home with the purse of money and, finding no one was in the house for all had gone out somewhere, I took out therefrom ten gold pieces. Then I put the rest together with the purse within a large earthen jar filled full of bran which had long stood in one corner of the room, so might the matter be kept privy from my wife and children. But whilst I was in the market buying me some hemp, my wife returned home; and at that moment there came in to her a man which sold fuller's earth for washing hair. She had need thereof withal naught to pay with; so she went out to him and said, 'I am clean without coin, but I have a quantity of bran; say me, wilt thou have that in change for thy clay?' The man agreed and accordingly my wife took the earth of him, and gave him in exchange the jarful of bran which he carried away with him and ganged his gait. An ye ask, 'Wherefore didst thou not confide the matter to thy spouse and tell her that thou hadst put the money in the jar?' I on my side answer, that ye gave me strict injunctions to keep the money this time with the utmost heed and caution. Methought that stead was the safest wherein to store the gold and I was loath to trust my wife lest haply she take some coin therefrom and expend it upon her household. O my lords, I am certified of your goodness and graciousness, but poverty and penury are writ in my Book of Fate; how then can I aspire to possessions and prosperity? Withal, never while I breathe the breath of life, shall I be forgetful of this your generous favour." Quoth Sa'di, "Meseemeth I have disbursed four hundred Ashrafis to no purpose in giving them to thee; yet the intent wherewith they were given was that thou shouldst benefit thereby, not that I claim thy praise and thanksgiving." So they twain compassionated and condoled with me in my misfortune; and presently Sa'd, an upright man and one who had acquaintance with me since many a year, produced a leaden coin[277] which he had picked up from the path and was still carrying in his pocket; and, after shewing it to Sa'di, said to me, "Seest thou this bit of lead? Take it and by favour of Fate thou shalt find out what blessings it will bring to thee." Sa'di on espying it laughed aloud and made jest of the matter and flouting said, "What advantage will there be to Hasan from this mite of lead and in what way shall he use it?" Sa'd handing me the leaden coin retorted in reply, "Give no heed to whatso Sa'di may say, but keep this by thee. Let him laugh an he please. One day haply shall come to pass, Inshallah — an it be the will of Almighty Allah — that thou shalt by means thereof become a wealthy man and a magnifico." I took the bit of lead and put it in my pocket, and the twain bade me farewell and went their way. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Nineteenth Night.

Then said she — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Hasan al-Habbal thus continued his story: — As soon as Sa'd and Sa'di had departed, I went on rope-twisting until night came and when doffing my dress to go to bed the bit of lead which Sa'd had given me fell out of my pocket; so I picked it up and set it carelessly in a small niche in the wall.[278] Now that very night so it happened that a fisherman, one of my neighbours, stood in need of a small coin[279] wherewith to buy some twine for mending his drag-net, as he was wont to do during the dark hours, in order that he might catch the fish ere dawn of day and selling his quarry, buy victuals for himself and his household. So, as he was accustomed to rise while yet somewhat of night remained, he bade his wife go round about to all the neighbours and borrow a copper that he might buy the twine required; and the woman went everywhere, from house to house, but nowhere could she get loan of a farthing, and at last she came home weary and disappointed. Quoth the fisherman to her, "Hast thou been to Hasan al-Habbal?" and quoth she, "Nay, I have not tried at his place. It is the furthest of all the neighbours' houses and fanciest thou, even had I gone there, I could thence have brought back aught?" "Off with thee, O laziest of hussies and good for nothing of baggages," cried the fisherman, "away with thee this instant; perchance he hath a copper to lend us." Accordingly the woman, grumbling and muttering, fared forth and coming to my dwelling knocked at the door, saying, "O Hasan al-Habbal, my husband is in sore need of a pice wherewith to buy some twine for mending his nets." Minding me of the coin which Sa'd had given me and where it had been put away, I shouted out to her, "Have patience, my spouse will go forth to thee and give thee what thou needest." My wife, hearing all this hubbub, woke from sleep, and I told her where to find the bit of money, whereupon she fetched it and gave it to the woman, who joyed with exceeding joy, and said, "Thou and thy husband have shown great kindness to my man, wherefore I promise thee that whatsoever fish he may chance to catch at the first throw of the net shall be thine; and I am assured that my goodman, when he shall hear of this my promise, will consent thereto.” Accordingly when the woman took the money to her husband and told him of what pledge she had given, he was right willing, and said to her, “Thou hast done well and wisely in that thou madest this covenant.” Then having bought some twine and mended all the nets he rose before dawn and hastened riverwards to catch fish according to his custom. But when he cast the net into the stream for the first throw and haled it in, he found that it contained but one fish and that a full span[280] or so in thickness, which he placed apart as my portion. Then he threw the net again and again and at each cast he caught many fishes both small and great, but none reached in size that he first had netted. As soon as he returned home the fisherman came at once to me and brought the fish he had netted in my name, and said, O our neighbour, my wife promised over night that thou shouldst have whatever fishes should come to ground at the first net throw; and this fish is the only one I caught. Here it is, prithee take it as a thanks offering for the kindness of last night, and as fulfilment of the promise. If Allah Almighty had vouchsafed to me of fish a seine-full, all had been thine but ’tis thy fate that only this one was landed at the first cast.” Said I, “The mite I gave thee yesternight was not of such value that I should look for somewhat in return;” and refused to accept it. But after much “say and said” he would not take back the fish, and he insisted that it was mine: wherefore I agreed to keep it and gave it to my wife, saying, “O woman, this fish is a return for the mite I gave last night to the fisherman our neighbour. Sa’d hath declared that by means of that coin I shall attain to much riches and abundant opulence.” Then I recounted to my wife how my two friends had visited me and what they said and did, and all concerning the leaden coin which Sa’d had given to me. She wondered at seeing but a single fish and said, “How shall I cook it? Meseemeth ‘twere best to cut it up and broil it for the children, especially as we have naught of spices and condiments wherewith to dress it otherwise.” Then, as she sliced and cleansed the fish she found within its belly a large diamond which she supposed to be a bit of glass or crystal; for she oft had heard tell of diamonds[281] but never with her own eyes had she beheld one. So she gave it to the youngest of the children for a plaything and when the others saw it, by reason of its brightness and brilliancy all desired to have it and each kept it in turn awhile; moreover when night came and the lamp was lighted they crowded round the stone and gazed upon its beauty, and screamed and shouted with delight.[282] When my wife had spread the table we sat down to supper and the eldest boy set the diamond upon the tray, and as soon as we all had finished eating, the children fought and scrambled as before for it. At first I paid no heed to their noise and hubbub, but when it waxed exceeding loud and irksome I asked my eldest lad the cause why they quarrelled and made such turmoil. Quoth he, “The trouble and dispute are about a piece of glass which giveth forth a light as bright as the lamp.” Whereat I told him to produce it and marvelled greatly to see its sparkling water, and enquired of my wife whence she had gotten the piece of crystal. Quoth she, “This I found within the belly of the fish as I was gutting it.” Still I did not suppose it to be aught but glass. Presently I bade my wife hide the lamp behind the hearth. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Twentieth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Hasan al-Habbal thus continued his story: — And when my wife had hidden the lamp from view, such was the brightness of the diamond that we could see right well without other light; wherefore I placed it upon the hearth[283] that we might work by it, and said within myself, “The coin that Sa’d left with me hath produced this benefit that we no longer stand in need of a lamp: at least it saveth us oil.” When the youngsters saw me put out the lamp and use the glass in its stead they jumped and danced for joy, and screamed and shouted with glee so that all the neighbours round about could hear them when I chid them and sent them to bed; we also went to rest and right soon fell asleep. Next day I woke betimes and went on with my work and thought not of the piece of glass. Now there dwelt hard by us a wealthy Jew, a jeweller who bought and sold all kinds of precious stones; and, as he and his wife essayed to sleep that night, by reason of the noise and clamour of the children they were disturbed for many hours and slumber visited not their eyes. And when morn appeared, the jeweller’s wife came to our house to make complaint both for herself and her husband anent the hubbub and shouting. Ere she could say a word of blame my wife, guessing the intent wherewith she came, addressed her saying, “O RahÝl,[284] I fear me that my children pestered thee last night with their laughing and crying. I crave thine indulgence in this matter; well thou must wot how children now cry now laugh at trifles. Come in and see the cause of all their excitement wherefor thou wouldst justly call me to account.” She did accordingly and saw the bit of glass about which the youngsters had made such din and uproar; and when she, who had long experience of all manner precious stones, beheld the diamond she was filled with wonderment. My wife then told her how she had found it in the fish’s belly, whereupon quoth the Jewess, “This bit of glass is more excellent than all other sorts of glass. I too have such an one as this which I am wont to wear sometimes; and wouldst thou sell it I will buy this thing of thee.” Hearing her words the children began to cry and said, “O mother dear, an thou wilt not sell it we promise henceforth to make no noise.” Understanding that they would by no means part with it, the women held their peace and presently the Jewess fared forth, but ere she took her leave she whispered my wife, “See that thou tell the matter to none; and, if thou have a mind to sell it at once send me word.” Now the Jew was sitting in his shop when his wife went to him and told him of the bit of glass. Quoth he, “Go straightway back and offer a price for it, saying that ’tis for me. Begin with some small bidding, then raise the sum until thou get it.” The Jewess thereupon returned to my house and offered twenty Ashrafis, which my wife deemed a large sum to give for such a trifle; however, she would not close the bargain. At that moment I happened to leave my work and, coming home to our noon meal, saw the two women talking on the threshold; and my wife stopped me, saying, “This neighbour biddeth twenty Ashrafis to price for the piece of glass, but I have as yet given her no reply. What sayest thou?” Then I bethought me of what Sa’d had told me; to wit, that much wealth would come to me by virtue of his leaden coin. The Jewess seeing how I hesitated bethought her that I would not consent to the price; so quoth she, “O neighbour, an thou wilt not agree to part with the bit of glass for twenty pieces of gold, I will e’en give thee fifty.” Hereat I reflected that whereas the Jewess raised her offer so readily from twenty golden pieces to fifty, this glass must surely be of great value; so I kept silence and answered her not a word. Then noting that I still held my peace she cried, “Take then one hundred: this be its full value; nay I know not in very deed if my husband will consent to so high a price.” Said I in reply, “O my good woman, why talk so foolishly? I will not sell it for aught less than an hundred thousand[285] gold coins; and thou mayest take it at that price but only because thou art neighbour to us.” The Jewess raised her offer coin by coin to fifty thousand Ashrafis and said, “I pray thee wait till morning and sell it not till then, so that my man may come round and see it.” “Right willingly,” quoth I; “by all manner of means let thy husband drop in and inspect it.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Twenty-first Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Hasan al-Habbal thus continued his story. — Next day the Jew came to my house and I drew forth and showed to him the diamond which shone and glittered in my palm with light as bright as any lamp's. Presently, assured that all which his wife had told him of its water and lustre was strictly true, he took it in hand and, examining it and turning it about, marvelled with mighty marvel at its beauty saying, "My wife made offer of fifty thousand gold pieces: see now I will give thee yet another twenty thousand." Said I, "Thy wife hath surely named to thee what sum I fixed to wit, one hundred thousand Ashrafis and naught less: I shall not abate one jot or tittle of this price." The Jew did all he could to buy it for a lesser sum; but I answered only, "It mattereth naught; an thou desire not to come to my terms I must needs sell it to some other jeweller." At length he consented and weighed me out two thousand gold pieces by way of earnest-money, saying, "To-morrow I will bring the amount of my offer and carry off my diamond." To this I gave assent and so, on the day following, he came to me and weighed out the full sum of one hundred thousand Ashrafis, which he had raised amongst his friends and partners in business. Then I gave him the diamond which had brought me such exceeding wealth, and offered thanks to him and praises unto Almighty Allah for this great good Fortune gotten unawares, and much I hoped soon to see my two friends, Sa'd and Sa'di, and to thank them likewise. So first I set my house in order and gave spending-money to my wife for home necessaries and for clothing herself and children; moreover, I also bought me a fine mansion and furnished it with the best. Then said I to my wife, who thought of nothing save rich clothes and high diet and a life of ease and enjoyment, "It behoveth us not to give up this our craft: we must needs put by some coin and carry on the business." Accordingly, I went to all the rope-makers of the city and buying with much money several manufactories put them to work, and over each establishment I set an overseer, an intelligent man and a trustworthy, so that there is not now throughout Baghdad-city a single ward or quarter that hath not walks and workshops of mine for rope making. Nay, further, I have in each town and every district of Al-Irak warehouses, all under charge of honest supervisors; and thus it is that I have amassed such a muchel of wealth. Lastly, for my own especial place of business I bought another house, a ruined place with a sufficiency of land adjoining; and, pulling down the old shell, I edified in lieu thereof the new and spacious edifice which thy Highness hath deigned yesterday to look upon. Here all my workmen are lodged and here also are kept my office-books and accounts; and besides my warehouse it containeth apartments fitted with furniture in simple style all sufficient for myself and my family. After some time I quitted my old home, wherein Sa'd and Sa'di had seen me working, and went and lived in the new mansion and not long after this removal my two friends and benefactors bethought them that they would come and visit me They marvelled much when, entering my old workshop, they found me not, and they asked the neighbours, "Where dwelleth such and such a rope-maker? Is he alive or dead?" Quoth the folk "He now is a rich merchant; and men no longer call him simply 'Hasan,' but entitle him 'Master Hasan the Rope-maker.' He hath built him a splendid building and he dwelleth in such and such a quarter." Whereupon the two familiars set forth in search of me; and they rejoiced at the good report; albeit Sa'di would by no means be convinced that all my wealth had sprung (as Sa'd contended) from its root, that small leaden coin. Presently, conning the matter over in his mind he said to his comrade, "It delighteth me much to hear of all this good fortune which hath betided Hasan, despite that he twice deceived me and took from me four hundred gold pieces, whereby he hath gotten to himself these riches; for it is absurd to think that it hath come from the leaden coin thou gavest him. Withal I do forgive him and owe him no grudge." Replied the other, "Thou art mistaken. I know Hasan of old to be a good man and true: he would not delude thee and what he told us is simple sooth. I am persuaded in my mind that he hath won all his wealth and opulence by the leaden coin: however we shall hear anon what he may have to say." Conversing thus they came into the street wherein I now dwell and, seeing a large and magnificent mansion and a new made, they guessed it was mine. So they knocked and, on the porter opening, Sa'di marvelled to see such grandeur and so many folk sitting within, and feared lest haply they had unwittingly entered the house of some Emir. Then plucking courage he enquired of the porter, "Is this the dwelling place of Khwajah Hasan al- Habbal?" — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazed held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Twenty-second Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Hasan al-Habbal continued thus his story: — The porter made reply, “This is verily the house of Khwajah Hasan al-Habbal; he is within and he sitteth in his office. I pray thee enter and one of the slaves will make known thy coming to him.” Hereupon the two friends walked in, and as soon as I saw them I recognised them, and rising up to them I ran and kissed the hems of their garments. They would fain have fallen on my neck and embraced me, but with meekness of mind I would not suffer them so to do; and presently I led them into a large and spacious saloon, and bade them sit upon the highmost seats of honour. They would have constrained me to take the best place, but I exclaimed “O my lords, I am on no wise better than the poor rope-maker Hasan, who not unmindful of your worth and goodness ever prayeth for your welfare, and who deserveth not to sit in higher stead than you.” Then they took seat and I opposite them, when quoth Sa’di, “My heart rejoiceth with exceeding joy to see thee in this condition, for that Allah hath given thee all even as thou wishedst. I doubt not thou has gotten all this abundance and opulence by means of the four hundred gold pieces which I gave to thee; but say me truly wherefore didst thou twice deceive me and bespeak me falsely?” Sa’d listened to these words with silent indignation, and ere I could make reply he broke out saying, “O Sa’di, how often have I assured thee that all which Hasan said aforetime anent the losing of the Ashrafis is very sooth and no leasing?” Then they began to dispute each with other; when I, recovering from my surprise, exclaimed, “O my lords, of what avail is this contention? Be not at variance, I beseech you, on my account. All that had befallen me I made known to you; and, whether ye believe my words or ye believe them not, it mattereth but little. Now hearken to the whole truth of my tale.” Then I made known to them the story of the piece of lead which I had given to the fisherman and of the diamond found in the fish’s belly; brief, I told them every whit even as I have now related to thy Highness. On hearing all my adventure Sa’di said, “O

Khwajah Hasan, it seemeth to me passing strange that so great a diamond should be found in the belly of a fish; and I deem it a thing impossible that a kite should fly off with thy turband, or that thy wife should give away the jar of bran in exchange for fuller's earth. Thou sayest the tale is true, still can I not give credit to thy words, for I know full well that the four hundred gold pieces have gotten thee all this wealth." But when they twain rose up to take their leave, I also arose and said, "O my lords, ye have shown favour to me in that ye have thus deigned visit me in my poor home. I beseech you now to taste of my food and to tarry here this night under your servant's roof; as to-morrow I would fain take you by the way of the river to a country house which I have lately bought." Hereto they consented with some objections; and I, after giving orders for the evening meal, showed them about the house and displayed the furniture and entertained them with pleasing words and pleasant converse, till a slave came and announced that supper was served. So I led them to the saloon wherein were ranged the trays loaded with many kinds of meats; on all sides stood camphorated wax candles,[286] and before the table were gathered musicians singing and playing on various instruments of mirth and merriment, whilst in the upper part of the saloon men and women were dancing and making much diversion. When we had supped we went to bed, and rising early we prayed the dawn- prayer, and presently embarked on a large and well-appointed boat, and the rowers rowing with a flowing tide soon landed us at my country seat. Then we strolled in a body about the grounds and entered the house, when I showed them our new buildings and displayed to them all that appertained thereto; and hereat they marvelled with great marvel. Thence we repaired to the garden and saw, planted in rows along the walks, fruit-trees of all kinds with ripe fruit bowed down, and watered with water from the river by means of brick-work channels. All round were flowering shrubs whose perfume gladdened the Zephyr; here and there fountains and jets of water shot high in air; and sweet-voiced birds made melody amid the leafy branches hymning the One, the Eternal; in short, the sights and scents on every side filled the soul with joy and gladness. My two friends walked about in joyance and delight, and thanked me again and again for bringing them to so lovely a site and said, "Almighty

Allah prosper thee in house and garth.” At last I led them to the foot of a tall tree near to one of the garden walls and shewed them a little summer-house wherein I was wont to take rest and refreshment; and the room was furnished with cushions and divans and pillows purfled with virgin gold. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of The Six Hundred and Twenty-third Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Hasan al-Habbal thus pursued his tale: — Now so it happened that, as we sat at rest within that summer house, two sons of mine, whom I had sent together with their governor to my country place for change of water and air,[287] were roaming about the garden seeking birds' nests. Presently they came across a big one upon the top most boughs and tried to swarm up the trunk and carry it off, but by reason of their lack of strength and little practice they durst not venture so high; whereupon they bade a slave boy who ever attended on them, climb the tree. He did their bidding, but when looking into the nest he was amazed with exceeding amazement to see it mainly made of an old turband. So he brought down the stuff and handed it to the lads. My eldest son took it from his hands and carried it to the arbour for me to see, and set it at my feet saying in high glee, "O my father, look here; this nest is made of cloth." Sa'd and Sa'di wondered with all wonderment at the sight and the marvel grew the greater when I, after considering it closely, recognised it for the very turband whereon the kite had swooped and which had been borne off by the bird. Then quoth I to my two friends "Examine well this turband and certify yourselves that it is the selfsame one worn upon my head when first ye honoured me with your presence." Quoth Sa'd, "I know it not," and quoth Sa'di, "An thou find within it the hundred and ninety gold pieces, then shalt thou be assured that is thy turband in very sooth." I said, "O my lord, this is, well I wot, that very turband." And as I held it in my hand, I found it heavy of weight, and opening out the folds felt somewhat tied up in one of the corners of the cloth;[288] so I unrolled the swathes when lo and behold! I came upon the purse of gold pieces. Hereat, shewing it to Sa'di, I cried, "Canst thou not recognise this purse?" and he replied, "'Tis in truth the very purse of Ashrafis which I gave thee when first we met." Then I opened the mouth and, pouring out the gold in one heap upon the carpet, bade him count his money; and he turned it over coin by coin and made the sum there of one hundred and ninety Ashrafis. Hereat waxing sore ashamed and confounded, he exclaimed, “Now do I believe thy words: nevertheless must thou admit that thou hast earned one half of this thy prodigious wealth with the two hundred gold pieces I gave thee after our second visit, and the other half by means of the mite thou gottest from Sa’d.” To this I made no answer, but my friends ceased not to dispute upon the matter. We then sat down to meat and drink, and when we had eaten our sufficiency, I and my two friends went to sleep in the cool arbour; after which when the sun was well nigh set we mounted and rode off to Baghdad leaving the servants to follow. However, arrived at the city we found all the shops shut and nowhere could we get grain and forage for the horses, and I sent off two slave boys who had run alongside of us to search for provender. One of them found a jar of bran in the shop of a corn-dealer and paying for the provision brought it, together with the jar, under promise that on the morrow he would carry back the vessel. Then he began to take out the bran by handfuls in the dark and to set it before the horses.ûAnd as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Twenty-fourth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious king, that Hasan al-Habbal thus continued his story: — So as the slave boy took out the bran by handfuls and set it before the horses, suddenly his hand came upon a piece of cloth wherein was somewhat heavy. He brought it to me even as he found it and said, “See, is not this cloth the very one of whose loss thou hast ofttimes spoken to us?” I took it and wondering with great wonder knew it was the self same piece of stuff wherein I had tied up the hundred and four-score and ten Ashrafis before hiding them in the jar of bran. Then said I to my friends, “O my lords, it hath pleased Almighty Allah, ere we parted, I and you, to bear me witness of my words and to stablish that I told you naught save whatso was very sooth.” And I resumed, addressing Sa’di, “See here the other sum of money, that is, the hundred and ninety Ashrafis which thou gayest me and which I tied up in this very piece of cloth I now recognise.” Then I sent for the earthen jar that they might see it, and also bade carry it to my wife that she also might bear witness, an it be or be not the very bran-jar which she gave in exchange for fuller’s earth. Anon she sent us word and said, “Yea verily I know it well. ’Tis the same jar which I had filled with bran.” Accordingly Sa’di owned that he was wrong and said to S’ad, “Now I know that thou speakest truth, and am convinced that wealth cometh not by wealth; but only by the grace of Almighty Allah doth a poor man become a rich man.” And he begged pardon for his mistrust and unbelief. We accepted his excuses whereupon we retired to rest and early on the morrow my two friends bade me adieu and journeyed home wards with full persuasion that I had done no wrong and had not squandered the moneys they had given me. — Now when the Caliph Harun al-Rashid had heard the story of Khwajah Hasan to the end, he said, “I have known thee of old by fair report of thee from the folk who, one and all, declare that thou art a good man and true. Moreover the self same diamond whereby thou hast attained to so great riches is now in my treasury; so I would fain send for Sa’di forthright that he may see it with his own eyes, and weet for certain that not by means of money do men become or rich or poor.” The Prince of True Believers said moreover to Khwajah Hasan al-Habbal, “Go now and tell thy tale to my treasurer that he may take it down in writing for an everlasting memorial, and place the writ in the treasury together with the diamond.” Then the Caliph with a nod dismissed Khawajah Hasan; and Sidi Nu’uman and Baba Abdullah also kissed the foot of the throne and departed. So when Queen Shahrazad had made an end of relating this history she was about to begin the story of ‘All Baba and the Forty Thieves, but King Shahryar prevented her, saying, “O Shahrazad I am well pleased with this thy tale, but now the dawn appeareth and the chanticleer of morn doth sound his shrill clarion. This day also I spare thy life, to the intent that I may listen at my ease to this new history of thine at the end of the coming night.” Hereupon the three took their rest until the fittest time drew near. — And as the morning morrowed Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Twenty-fifth Night.

With the dawn Dunyazad awoke Queen Shahrazad from slumber sweet and said, “Arise, O my sister, but alas! ’tis a bitter thing to stand in awe of coming doom.” Replied Shahrazad, “O dear my sister, be not thou downhearted: if life’s span be spent naught can avert the sharp edged sword. Yet place thy trust in Allah Almighty and put far from thee all such anxious thoughts: my tales are tokens of life prolonged.” Whereupon Queen Shahrazad began to tell in these words the story of

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ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES.[289]

In days of yore and in times and tides long gone before there dwelt in a certain town of Persia two brothers one named Kßsim and the other æAlÝ Bßbß, who at their father's demise had divided the little wealth he had left to them with equitable division, and had lost no time in wasting and spending it all. The elder, however, presently took to himself a wife, the daughter of an opulent merchant; so that when his father-in-law fared to the mercy of Almighty Allah, he became owner of a large shop filled with rare goods and costly wares and of a storehouse stocked with precious stuffs; likewise of much gold that was buried in the ground. Thus was he known throughout the city as a substantial man. But the woman whom Ali Baba had married was poor and needy; they lived, therefore, in a mean hovel and Ali Baba eked out a scanty livelihood by the sale of fuel which he daily collected in the jungle[290] and carried about the town to the Bazar upon his three asses. Now it chanced one day that Ali Baba had cut dead branches and dry fuel sufficient for his need, and had placed the load upon his beasts when suddenly he espied a dust-cloud spireing high in air to his right and moving rapidly towards him; and when he closely considered it he descried a troop of horsemen riding on amain and about to reach him. At this sight he was sore alarmed, and fearing lest perchance they were a band of bandits who would slay him and drive off his donkeys, in his affright he began to run; but forasmuch as they were near hand and he could not escape from out the forest, he drove his animals laden with the fuel into a bye-way of the bushes and swarmed up a thick trunk of a huge tree to hide himself therein; and he sat upon a branch whence he could descry everything beneath him whilst none below could catch a glimpse of him above; and that tree grew close beside a rock which towered high above head. The horsemen, young, active, and doughty riders, came close up to the rock-face and all dismounted; whereat Ali Baba took good note of them and soon he was fully persuaded by their mien and demeanour that they were a troop of highwaymen who, having fallen upon a caravan had despoiled it and carried off the spoil and brought their booty to this place with intent of concealing it safely in some cache. Moreover he observed that they were forty in number. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Twenty-sixth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious king, that Ali Baba saw the robbers, as soon as they came under the tree, each unbridle his horse and hobble it; then all took off their saddle-bags which proved to be full of gold and silver. The man who seemed to be the captain presently pushed forwards, load on shoulder, through thorns and thickets, till he came up to a certain spot where he uttered these strange words, "Open, O Simsim!"[291] and forthwith appeared a wide doorway in the face of the rock. The robbers went in and last of all their Chief and then the portal shut of itself. Long while they stayed within the cave whilst Ali Baba was constrained to abide perched upon the tree, refleeting that if he came down peradventure the band might issue forth that very moment and seize him and slay him. At last he had determined to mount one of the horses and driving on his asses to return townwards, when suddenly the portal dew open. The robber-chief was first to issue forth; then, standing at the entrance, he saw and counted his men as they came out, and lastly he spake the magical words, "Shut, O Simsim!" whereat the door closed of itself. When all had passed muster and review, each slung on his saddle-bags and bridled his own horse and as soon as ready they rode off, led by the leader, in the direction whence they came. Ali Baba remained still perched on the tree and watched their departure; nor would he descend until what time they were clean gone out of sight, lest perchance one of them return and look around and descry him. Then he thought within himself, "I too will try the virtue of those magical words and see if at my bidding the door will open and close." So he called out aloud, "Open, O Simsim!" And no sooner had he spoken than straightway the portal flew open and he entered within. He saw a large cavern and a vaulted, in height equalling the stature of a full-grown man and it was hewn in the live stone and lighted up with light that came through air-holes and bullseyes in the upper surface of the rock which formed the roof. He had expected to find naught save outer gloom in this robbers' den, and he was surprised to see the whole room filled with bales of all manner stuffs, and heaped up from sole to ceiling with camel-loads of silks and brocades and embroidered cloths and mounds on mounds of vari-coloured carpetings; besides which he espied coins golden and silvern without measure or account, some piled upon the ground and others bound in leathern bags and sacks. Seeing these goods and moneys in such abundance, Ali Baba determined in his mind that not during a few years only but for many generations thieves must have stored their gains and spoils in this place. When he stood within the cave, its door had closed upon him, yet he was not dismayed since he had kept in memory the magical words; and he took no heed of the precious stuffs around him, but applied himself only and wholly to the sacks of Ashrafis. Of these he carried out as many as he judged sufficient burthen for the beasts; then he loaded them upon his animals, and covered this plunder with sticks and fuel, so none might discern the bags, but might think that he was carrying home his usual ware. Lastly he called out, “Shut, O Simsim!” and forthwith the door closed, for the spell so wrought that whensoever any entered the cave, its portal shut of itself behind him; and, as he issued therefrom, the same would neither open nor close again till he had pronounced the words, “Shut, O Simsim!” Presently, having laden his asses Ali Baba urged them before him with all speed to the city and reaching home he drove them into the yard; and, shutting close the outer door, took down first the sticks and after the bags of gold which he carried in to his wife. She felt them and finding them full of coin suspected that Ali Baba had been robbing and fell to berating and blaming him for that he should do so ill a thing. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Twenty-seventh Night,

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that quoth Ali Baba to his wife: “Indeed I am no robber and rather do thou rejoice with me at our good fortune.” Hereupon he told her of his adventure and began to pour the gold from the bags in heaps before her, and her sight was dazzled by the sheen and her heart delighted at his recital and adventures. Then she began counting the gold, whereat quoth Ali Baba, “O silly woman how long wilt thou continue turning over the coin? now let me dig a hole wherein to hide this treasure that none may know its secret.” Quoth she, “Right is thy rede! still would I weigh the moneys and have some inkling of their amount;" and he replied, "As thou pleasest", but see thou tell no man." So she went off in haste to Kasim's home to borrow weights and scales wherewith she might balance the Ashrafis and make some reckoning of their value; and when she could not find Kasim she said to his wife, "Lend me, I pray thee, thy scales for a moment." Replied her sister-in-law,[292] "Hast thou need of the bigger balance or the smaller?" and the other rejoined, "I need not the large scales, give me the little;" and her sister-in-law cried, "Stay here a moment whilst I look about and find thy want." With this pretext Kasim's wife went aside and secretly smeared wax and suet over the pan of the balance, that she might know what thing it was Ali Baba's wife would weigh, for she made sure that whatso it be some bit thereof would stick to the wax and fat. So the woman took this opportunity to satisfy her curiosity, and Ali Baba's wife suspecting naught thereof carried home the scales and began to weigh the gold, whilst Ali Baba ceased not digging; and, when the money was weighed, they twain stowed it into the hole which they carefully filled up with earth. Then the good wife took back the scales to her kinswoman, all unknowing that an Ashrafi had adhered to the cup of the scales; but when Kasim's wife espied the gold coin she fumed with envy and wrath saying to herself, "So ho ! they borrowed my balance to weigh out Ashrafis?" and she marvelled greatly whence so poor a man as Ali Baba had gotten such store of wealth that he should be obliged to weigh it with a pair of scales. Now after long pondering the matter, when her husband returned home at eventide, she said to him, "O man, thou deemest thyself a wight of wealth and substance, but lo, thy brother Ali Baba is an Emir by the side of thee and richer far than thou art. He hath such heaps of gold that he must needs weigh his moneys with scales, whilst thou, forsooth, art satisfied to count thy coin." "Whence knowest thou this?" asked Kasim, and in answer his wife related all anent the pair of scales and how she found an Ashrafi stuck to them, and shewed him the gold coin which bore the mark and superscription of some ancient king. No sleep had Kasim all that night by reason of his envy and jealousy and covetise; and next morning he rose betimes and going to Ali Baba said, "O my brother, to all appearance thou art poor and needy; but in effect thou hast a store of wealth so abundant that perforce thou must weigh thy gold with scales." Quoth Ali Baba, "What is this thou sayest? I understand thee not; make clear thy purport;" and quoth Kasim with ready rage, "Feign not that thou art ignorant of what I say and think not to deceive me." Then showing him the Ashrafi he cried, "Thousands of gold coins such as these thou hast put by; and meanwhile my wife found this one stuck to the cup of the scales." Then Ali Baba understood how both Kasim and his wife knew that he had store of Ashrafis, and said in his mind that it would not avail him to keep the matter hidden, but would rather cause ill-will and mischief; and thus he was induced to tell his brother every whit concerning the bandits[293] and also of the treasure trove in the cave. When he had heard the story, Kasim exclaimed, æI would fain learn of thee the certainty of the place where thou foundest the moneys; also the magical words whereby the door opened and closed; and I forewarn thee an thou tell me not the whole truth, I will give notice of those Ashrafis to the Wali;[294] then shalt thou forfeit all thy wealth and be disgraced and thrown into gaol." Thereupon Ali Baba told him his tale not forgetting the magical words; and Kasim who kept careful heed of all these matters next day set out, driving ten mules he had hired, and readily found the place which Ali Baba had described to him. And when he came to the afore said rock and to the tree whereon Ali Baba had hidden himself and he had made sure of the door he cried in great joy, "Open, O Simsim!" The portal yawned wide at once and Kasim went within and saw the piles of jewels and treasures lying ranged all around; and, as soon as he stood amongst them the door shut after him as wont to do. He walked about in ecstasy marvelling at the treasures, and when weary of admiration he gathered together bags of Ashrafis, a sufficient load for his ten mules, and placed them by the entrance in readiness to be carried outside and set upon the beasts. But by the will of Allah Almighty he had clean forgotten the cabalistic words and cried out, "Open, O Barley!" whereat the door refused to move. Astonished and confused beyond measure he named the names of all manner of grains save sesame, which had slipped from his memory as though he had never heard the word; whereat in his dire distress he heeded not the Ashrafis that lay heaped at the entrance and paced to and fro, backwards and forwards, within the cave sorely puzzled and perplexed. The wealth whose sight had erewhile filled his heart with joy and gladness was now the cause of bitter grief and sadness. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Twenty-eighth Night,

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Kasim gave up all hope of the life which he by his greed and envy had so sore imperilled. It came to pass that at noontide the robbers, returning by that way, saw from afar some mules standing beside the entrance and much they marvelled at what had brought the beasts to that place; for, inasmuch as Kasim by mischance had failed to tether or hobble them, they had strayed about the jungle and were browsing hither and thither. However, the thieves paid scant regard to the estrays nor cared they to secure them, but only wondered by what means they had wandered so far from the town. Then, reaching the cave the Captain and his troop dismounted and going up to the door repeated the formula and at once it flew open. Now Kasim had heard from within the cave the horse hooves drawing nigh and yet nigher; and he fell down to the ground in a fit of fear never doubting that it was the clatter of the banditti who would slaughter him without fail. Howbeit he presently took heart of grace and at the moment when the door flew open he rushed out hoping to make good his escape. But the unhappy ran full tilt against the Captain who stood in front of the band, and felled him to the ground; where upon a robber standing near his chief at once bared his brand and with one cut crave Kasim clean in twain. Thereupon the robbers rushed into the cavern, and put back as they were before the bags of Ashrafis which Kasim had heaped up at the doorway ready for taking away; nor recked they aught of those which Ali Baba had removed, so dazed and amazed were they to discover by what means the strange man had effected an entrance. All knew that it was not possible for any to drop through the skylights so tall and steep was the rock's face, withal slippery of ascent; and also that none could enter by the portal unless he knew the magical words whereby to open it. However they presently quartered the dead body of Kasim and hung it to the door within the cavern, two parts to the right jamb and as many to the left[295] that the sight might be a warning of approaching doom for all who dared enter the cave. Then coming out they closed the hoard door and rode away upon their wonted work. Now when night fell and Kasim came not home, his wife waxed uneasy in mind and running round to Ali Baba said, “O my brother, Kasim hath not returned: thou knowest whither he went, and sore I fear me some misfortune hath betided him.” Ali Baba also divined that a mishap had happened to prevent his return; not the less, however, he strove to comfort his sister-in-law with words of cheer and said, “O wife of my brother, Kasim haply exerciseth discretion and, avoiding the city, cometh by a roundabout road and will be here anon. This, I do believe, is the reason why he tarrieth.” Thereupon comforted in spirit Kasim’s wife fared homewards and sat awaiting her husband’s return; but when half the night was spent and still he came not, she was as one distraught. She feared to cry aloud for her grief, lest haply the neighbours hearing her should come and learn the secret; so she wept in silence and upbraiding herself fell to thinking, “Wherefore did I disclose this secret to him and beget envy and jealousy of Ali Baba? this be the fruit thereof and hence the disaster that hath come down upon me.” She spent the rest of the night in bitter tears and early on the morrow tried in hottest hurry to Ali Baba and prayed that he would go forth in quest of his brother; so he strove to console her and straightway set out with his asses for the forest. Presently, reaching the rock he wondered to see stains of blood freshly shed and not finding his brother or the ten mules he forefelt a calamity from so evil a sign. He then went to the door and saying, “Open, O Simsim!” he pushed in and saw the dead body of Kasim, two parts hanging to the right, and the rest to the left of the entrance. Albeit he was affrighted beyond measure of affright he wrapped the quarters in two cloths and laid them upon one of his asses, hiding them care fully with sticks and fuel that none might see them. Then he placed the bags of gold upon the two other animals and likewise covered them most carefully; and, when all was made ready he closed the cave door with the magical words, and set him forth wending homewards with all ward and watchfulness. The asses with the load of Ashrafis he made over to his wife and bade her bury the bags with diligence; but he told her not the condition in which he had come upon his brother Kasim. Then he went with the other ass, to wit, the beast whereon was laid the corpse to the widow's house and knocked gently at the door. Now Kasim had a slave-girl shrewd and sharp witted, Morgiana[296] highs. She as softly undid the bolt and admitted Ali Baba and the ass into the courtyard of the house, when he let down the body from the beast's back and said, "O Morgiana, haste thee and make thee ready to perform the rites for the burial of thy lord: I now go to tell the tidings to thy mistress and I will quickly return to help thee in this matter." At that instant Kasim's widow seeing her brother in law, exclaimed, "O Ali Baba, what news bringest thou of my spouse? Alas, I see grief tokens written upon thy countenance. Say quickly what hath happened." Then he recounted to her how it had fared with her husband and how he had been slain by the robbers and in what wise he had brought home the dead body. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazed held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Twenty-ninth Night,

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Ali Baba pursued: "O my lady, what was to happen hath happened but it behoveth us to keep this matter secret, for that our lives depend upon privacy." She wept with sore weeping and made answer, "It hath fared with my husband according to the fiat of Fate; and now for thy safety's sake I give thee my word to keep the affair concealed." He replied, "Naught can avail when Allah hath decreed. Rest thee in patience; until the days of thy widow-hood[297] be accomplisht"; after which time I will take thee to wife, and thou shalt live in comfort and happiness; and fear not lest my first spouse vex thee or show aught of jealousy, for that she is kindly and tender of heart." The widow lamenting her loss noisily, cried, "Be it as e'en thou please." Then Ali Baba farewelled her, weeping and wailing for her husband; and joining Morgiana took counsel with her how to manage the burial of his brother. So, after much consultation and many warnings, he left the slave-girl and departed home driving his ass before him. As soon as Ali Baba had fared forth Morgiana went quickly to a druggist's shop; and, that she might the better dissemble with him and not make known the matter, she asked of him a drug often administered to men when diseased with dangerous dis-temper. He gave it saying, "Who is there in thy house that lieth so ill as to require this medicine?" and said she, "My Master Kasim is sick well nigh unto death: for many days he hath nor spoken nor tasted aught of food, so that almost we despair of his life.” Next day Morgiana went again and asked the druggist for more of medicine and essences such as are adhibited to the sick when at door of death, that the moribund may haply rally before the last breath. The man gave the potion and she taking it sighed aloud and wept, saying’ “I fear me he may not have strength to drink this draught: methinks all will be over with him ere I return to the house.” Meanwhile Ali Baba was anxiously awaiting to hear sounds of wailing and lamentation in Kasim’s home that he might at such signal hasten thither and take part in the ceremonies of the funeral. Early on the second day Morgiana went with veiled face to one Bßbß Mustafß,[298] a tailor well shotten in years whose craft was to make shrouds and cerecloths; and as soon as she saw him open his shop she gave him a gold piece and said, “Do thou bind a bandage over thine eyes and come along with me.” Mustafa made as though he would not go, whereat Morgiana placed a second gold coin in his palm and entreated him to accompany her. The tailor presently consented for greed of gain, so tying a kerchief tightly over his eyes she led him by the hand to the house wherein lay the dead body of her master. Then, taking off the bandage in the darkened room she bade him sew together the quarters of the corpse, limb to its limb; and, casting a cloth upon the body, said to the tailor “Make haste and sew a shroud according to the size of this dead man and I will give thee therefor yet another ducat.” Baba Mustafa quickly made the cerecloth of fitting length and breadth, and Morgiana paid him the promised Ashrafi; then once more bandaging his eyes led him back to the place whence she had brought him. After this she returned hurriedly home and with the help of Ali Baba washed the body in warm water and donning the shroud lay the corpse upon a clean place ready for burial. This done Morgiana went to the mosque and gave notice to an Imam[299] that a funeral was awaiting the mourners in a certain household, and prayed that he would come to read the prayers for the dead; and the Imam went back with her. Then four neighbours took up the bier[300] and bore it on their shoulders and fared forth with the Imam and others who were wont to give assistance at such obsequies. After the funeral prayers were ended four other men carried off the coffin; and Morgiana walked before it bare of head, striking her breast and weeping and wailing with exceeding loud lament, whilst Ali Baba and the neighbours came behind. In such order they entered the cemetery and buried him; then, leaving him to Munkar and Nakir[301] the Questioners of the Dead all wended their ways. Presently the women of the quarter, according to the custom of the city, gathered together in the house of mourning and sat an hour with Kasim's widow comforting and condoling, presently leaving her somewhat resigned and cheered. Ali Baba stayed forty days at home in ceremonial lamentation for the loss of his brother; so none within the town save himself and his wife (Kasim's widow) and Morgiana knew aught about the secret. And when the forty days of mourning were ended Ali Baba removed to his own quarters all the property belonging to the deceased and openly married the widow; then he appointed his nephew, his brother's eldest son, who had lived a long time with a wealthy merchant and was perfect of knowledge in all matters of trade, such as selling and buying, to take charge of the defunct's shop and to carry on the business. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Thirtieth Night,

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, it so chanced one day when the robbers, as was their wont, came to the treasure-cave that they marvelled exceedingly to find nor sign nor trace of Kasim's body whilst they observed that much of gold had been carried off. Quoth the Captain, "Now it behoveth us to make enquiry in this matter; else shall we suffer much of loss and this our treasure, which we and our forefathers have amassed during the course of many years, will little by little be wasted and spoiled." Hereto all assented and with single mind agreed that he whom they had slain had knowledge of the magical words whereby the door was made to open; moreover that some one beside him had cognizance the spell and had carried off the body, and also much of gold; wherefore they needs must make diligent research and find out who the man ever might be. They then took counsel and determined that one amongst them, who should be sagacious and deft of wit, must don the dress of some merchant from foreign parts; then, repairing to the city he must go about from quarter to quarter and from street to street, and learn if any townsman had lately died and if so where he wont to dwell, that with this clue they might be enabled to find the wight they sought. Hereat said one of the robbers, “Grant me leave that I fare and find out such tidings in the town and bring thee word a; and if I fail of my purpose I hold my life in forfeit.” Accordingly that bandit, after disguising himself by dress, pushed at night into the town and next morning early he repaired to the market square and saw that none of the shops had yet been opened, save only that of Baba Mustafa the tailor, who thread and needle in hand sat upon his working stool. The thief bade him good day and said, “ æTis yet dark: how canst thou see to sew?” Said the tailor, “I perceive thou art a stranger. Despite my years my eyesight is so keen that only yesterday I sewed together a dead body whilst sitting in a room quite darkened.” Quoth the bandit thereupon to himself, “I shall get somewhat of my want from this snip;” and to secure a further clue he asked, “Meseemeth thou wouldst jest with me and thou meanest that a cerecloth for a corpse was stitched by thee and that thy business is to sew shrouds.” Answered the tailor, “It mattereth not to thee: question me no more questions.” Thereupon the robber placed an Ashrafi in his hand and continued, “I desire not to discover aught thou hidest, albeit my breast like every honest man’s is the grave of secrets; and this only would I learn of thee, in what house didst thou do that job? Canst thou direct me thither, or thyself conduct me thereto?” The tailor took the gold with greed and cried, “I have not seen with my own eyes the way to that house. A certain bondswoman led me to a place which I know right well and there she bandaged my eyes and guided me to some tenement and lastly carried me into a darkened room where lay the dead body dismembered. Then she unbound the kerchief and bade me sew together first the corpse and then the shroud, which having done she again blindfolded me and led me back to the stead whence she had brought me and left me there. Thou seest then I am not able to tell thee where thou shalt find the house.” Quoth the robber, “Albeit thou knowest not the dwelling whereof thou speakest, still canst thou take me to the place where thou west blindfolded; then I will bind a kerchief over thine eyes and lead thee as thou west led: on this wise per chance thou mayest hit upon the site. An thou wilt do this favour by me, see here another golden ducat is thine.” There upon the bandit slipped a second Ashrafi into the tailor’s palm, and Baba Mustafa thrust it with the first into his pocket; then, leaving his shop as it was, he walked to the place where Morgiana had tied the kerchief around his eyes, and with him went the robber who, after binding on the bandage, led him by the hand. Baba Mustafa, who was clever and keen-witted, presently striking the street whereby he had fared with the handmaid, walked on counting step by step; then, halting suddenly, he said, “Thus far I came with her;” and the twain stopped in front of Kasim’s house wherein now dwelt his brother Ali Baba. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Thirty-first Night,

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the robber then made marks with white chalk upon the door to the end that he might readily find it at some future time, and removing the bandage from the tailor’s eyes said, “O Baba Mustafa, I thank thee for this favour: and Almighty Allah guerdon thee for thy goodness. Tell me now, I pray thee, who dwelleth in yonder house?” Quoth he, “In very sooth I wot not, for I have little knowledge concerning this quarter of the city;” and the bandit, understanding that he could find no further clue from the tailor, dismissed him to his shop with abundant thanks, and hastened back to the tryst place in the jungle where the band awaited his coming. Not long after it so fortuned that Morgiana, going out upon some errand, marvelled exceedingly at seeing the chalk-marks showing white in the door; she stood awhile deep in thought and presently divined that some enemy had made the signs that he might recognize the house and play some sleight upon her lord. She therefore chalked the doors of all her neighbours in like manner and kept the matter secret, never entrusting it or to master or to mistress. Meanwhile the robber told his comrades his tale of adventure and how he had found the clue; so the Captain and with him all the band went one after other by different ways till they entered the city; and he who had placed the mark on Ali Baba’s door accompanied the Chief to point out the place. He conducted him straightway to the house and strewing the sign exclaimed, “Here dwelleth he of whom we are in search!” But when the Captain looked around him he saw that all the dwellings bore chalk-marks after like fashion and he wondered saying, “By what manner of means knowest thou which house of all these houses that bear similar signs is that whereof thou spakest?” Hereat the robber-guide was confounded beyond measure of confusion, and could make no answer; then with an oath he cried, “I did assuredly set a sign upon a door, but I know not whence came all the marks upon the other entrances; nor can I say for a surety which it was I chalked.” Thereupon the Captain returned to the marketplace and said to his men, “We have toiled and laboured in vain, nor have we found the house we went forth to seek. Return we now to the forest our rendezvous: I also will fare thither.” Then all trooped off and assembled together within the treasure-cave; and, when the robbers had all met, the Captain judged him worthy of punishment who had spoken falsely and had led them through the city to no purpose. So he imprisoned him in presence of them all;[302] and then said he, “To him amongst you will I show special favour who shall go to town and bring me intelligence whereby we may lay hands upon the plunderer of our property.” Hereat another of the company came forward and said, “I am ready to go and enquire into the case, and ætis I who will bring thee to thy wish.” The Captain after giving him presents and promises despatched him upon his errand; and by the decree of Destiny which none may gainsay, this second robber went first to the house of Baba Mustafa the tailor, as had done the thief who had foregone him. In like manner he also persuaded the snip with gifts of golden coin that he be led hood-winked and thus too he was guided to Ali Baba’s door. Here noting the work of his predecessor, he affixed to the jamb a mark with red chalk the better to distinguish it from the others whereon still showed the white. Then tried he back in stealth to his company; but Morgiana on her part also descried the red sign on the entrance and with subtle forethought marked all the others after the same fashion; nor told she any what she had done. Meanwhile the bandit rejoined his band and vauntingly said, “O our Captain, I have found the house and thereon put a mark whereby I shall distinguish it clearly from all its neighbours.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Thirty-second Night,

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the

Captain despatched another of his men to the city and he found the place, but, as aforetime, when the troop repaired thither they saw each and every house marked with signs of red chalk. So they returned disappointed and the Captain, waxing displeased exceedingly and distraught, clapped also this spy into gaol. Then said the chief to himself, “Two men have failed in their endeavour and have met their rightful meed of punishment; and I trow that none other of my band will essay to follow up their research; so I myself will go and find the house of this wight.” Accordingly he fared along and aided by the tailor Baba Mustafa, who had gained much gain of golden pieces in this matter, he hit upon the house of Ali Baba; and here he made no outward show or sign, but marked it on the tablet[303] of his heart and impressed the picture upon the page of his memory. Then returning to the jungle he said to his men, “I have full cognizance of the place and have limned it clearly in my mind; so now there will be no difficulty in finding it. Go forth straightways and buy me and bring hither nineteen mules together with one large leathern jar of mustard oil and seven and thirty vessels of the same kind clean empty. Without me and the two locked up in gaol ye number thirty-seven souls; so I will stow you away armed and accoutred each within his jar and will load two upon each mule, and upon the nineteenth mule there shall be a man in an empty jar on one side, and on the other the jar full of oil. I for my part, in guise of an oil-merchant, will drive the mules into the town, arriving at the house by night, and will ask permission of its master to tarry there until morning. After this we shall seek occasion during the dark hours to rise up and fall upon him and slay him.” Furthermore the Captain spake saying, “When we have made an end of him we shall recover the gold and treasure whereof he robbed us and bring it back upon the mules.” This counsel pleased the robbers who went forthwith and purchased mules and huge leathern jars, and did as the Captain had bidden them. And after a delay of three days shortly before nightfall they arose; and over smearing all the jars with oil of mustard, each hid him inside an empty vessel. The Chief then disguised himself in trader’s gear and placed the jars upon the nineteen mules; to wit, the thirty-seven vessels in each of which lay a robber armed and accoutred, and the one that was full of oil. This done, he drove the beasts before him and presently he reached Ali Baba's place at nightfall; when it chanced that the house-master was strolling after supper to and fro in front of his home. The Captain saluted him with the salam and said, "I come from such and such a village with oil; and ofttimes have I been here a selling oil, but now to my grief I have arrived too late and I am sore troubled and perplexed as to where I shall spend the night. An thou have pity on me I pray thee grant that I tarry here in thy court yard and ease the mules by taking down the jars and giving the beasts somewhat of fodder." Albeit Ali Baba had heard the Captain's voice when perched upon the tree and had seen him enter the cave, yet by reason of the disguise he knew him not for the leader of the thieves, and granted his request with hearty welcome and gave him full license to halt there for the night. He then pointed out an empty shed wherein to tether the mules and bade one of the slave-boys go fetch grain and water. He also gave orders to the slave-girl Morgiana saying," A guest hath come hither and tarrieth here to night. Do thou busy thyself with all speed about his supper and make ready the guest bed for him." Presently, when the Captain had let down all the jars and had fed and watered his mules, Ali Baba received him with all courtesy and kindness, and summoning Morgiana said in his presence, "See thou fail not in service of this our stranger nor suffer him to lack for aught. To-morrow early I would fare to the Hammam and bathe; so do thou give my slave-boy Abdullah a suit of clean white clothes which I may put on after washing; moreover make thee ready a somewhat of broth overnight that I may drink it after my return home." Replied she, "I will have all in readiness as thou hast bidden." So Ali Baba retired to his rest, and the Captain, having supped, repaired to the shed and saw that all the mules had their food and drink for the night. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Thirty-third Night,

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Captain, after seeing to the mules and the jars which Ali Baba and his household held to be full of oil, finding utter privacy, whispered to his men who were in ambush, "This night at midnight when ye hear my voice, do you quickly open with your sharp knives the leathern jars from top to bottom and issue forth without delay." Then passing through the kitchen he reached the chamber wherein a bed had been dispread for him, Morgiana showing the way with a lamp. Quoth she, "An thou need aught beside I pray thee command this thy slave who is ever ready to obey thy say!" He made answer, "Naught else need I;" then, putting out the light, he lay him down on the bed to sleep awhile ere the time came to rouse his men and finish off the work. Meanwhile Morgiana did as her master had bidden her: she first took out a suit of clean white clothes and made it over to Abdullah who had not yet gone to rest; then she placed the pipkin upon the hearth to boil the broth and blew the fire till it burnt briskly. After a short delay she needs must see an the broth be boiling, but by that time all the lamps had gone out and she found that the oil was spent and that nowhere could she get a light. The slave-boy Abdullah observed that she was troubled and perplexed hereat, and quoth he to her, "Why make so much ado? In yonder shed are many jars of oil: go now and take as much soever as thou listest." Morgiana gave thanks to him for his suggestion; and Abdullah, who was lying at his ease in the hall, went off to sleep so that he might wake betimes and serve Ali Baba in the bath. So the hand-maiden rose[304] and with oil-can in hand walked to the shed where stood the leathern jars all ranged in rows. Now, as she drew nigh unto one of the vessels, the thief who was hidden therein hearing the tread of footsteps bethought him that it was of his Captain whose summons he awaited; so he whispered, "Is it now time for us to sally forth?" Morgiana started back affrighted at the sound of human accents; but, inasmuch as she was bold and ready of wit, she replied, "The time is not yet come," and said to herself, These jars are not full of oil and herein I perceive a manner of mystery. Haply the oil-merchant hatcheth some treacherous plot against my lord; so Allah, the Compassionating, the Compassionate, protect us from his snares!" Wherefore she answered in a voice made like to the Captain's, "Not yet, the time is not come. Then she went to the next jar and returned the same reply to him who was within, and so on to all the vessels one by one. Then said she in herself, "Laud to the Lord! my master took this fellow in believing him to be an oil-merchant, but lo, he hath admitted a band of robbers, who only await the signal to fall upon him and plunder the place and do him die." Then passed she on to the furthest jar and finding it brimming with oil, filled her can, and returning to the kitchen, trimmed the lamp and lit the wicks; then, bringing forth a large cauldron, she set it upon the fire, and filling it with oil from out the jar heaped wood upon the hearth and fanned it to a fierce flame the readier to boil its contents. When this was done she baled it out in potfuls and poured it seething hot into the leathern vessels one by one while the thieves unable to escape were scalded to death and every jar contained a corpse.[305] Thus did this slave-girl by her subtle wit make a clean end of all noiselessly and unknown even to the dwellers in the house. Now when she had satisfied herself that each and every of the men had been slain, she went back to the kitchen and shutting to the door sat brewing Ali Baba's broth. Scarce had an hour passed before the Captain woke from sleep; and, opening wide his window, saw that all was dark and silent; so he clapped his hands as a signal for his men to come forth but not a sound was heard in return. After awhile he clapped again and called aloud but got no answer; and when he cried out a third time without reply he was perplexed and went out to the shed wherein stood the jars. He thought to himself, "Perchance all are fallen asleep whenas the time for action is now at hand, so I must e'en awaken them without stay or delay." Then approaching the nearest jar he was startled by a smell of oil and seething flesh; and touching it outside he felt it reeking hot; then going to the others one by one, he found all in like condition. Hereat he knew for a surety the fate which had betided his band and, fearing for his own safety, he clomb on to the wall, and thence dropping into a garden made his escape in high dudgeon and sore disappointment. Morgiana awaited awhile to see the Captain return from the shed but he came not; whereat she knew that he had scaled the wall and had taken to flight, for that the street-door was double locked; and the thieves being all disposed of on this wise Morgiana laid her down to sleep in perfect solace and ease of mind. When two hours of darkness yet remained, Ali Baba awoke and went to the Hammam knowing naught of the night adventure, for the gallant slave-girl had not aroused him, nor indeed had she deemed such action expedient, because had she sought an opportunity of reporting to him her plan, she might haply have lost her chance and spoiled the project. The sun was high over the horizon when Ali

Baba walked back from the Baths; and he marvelled exceedingly to see the jars still standing under the shed and said, “How cometh it that he, the oil-merchant my guest, hath not carried to the market his mules and jars of oil?” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred ante Thirty-fourth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Ali Baba presently asked Morgiana what had befallen the oil-merchant his guest whom he had placed under her charge; and she answered, “Allah Almighty vouchsafe to thee six score years and ten of safety! I will tell thee in privacy of this merchant.” So Ali Baba went apart with his slave-girl, who taking him with out the house first locked the court-door; then showing him a jar she said, “Prithee look into this and see if within there be oil or aught else.” Thereupon peering inside it he perceived a man at which sight he cried aloud and fain would have fled in his fright. Quoth Morgiana, “Pear him not, this man hath no longer the force to work thee harm, he lieth dead and stone dead.” Hearing such words of comfort and reassurance Ali Baba asked “O Morgiana, what evils have we escaped and by what means hath this wretch become the quarry of Fate?” She answered “Alhamdolillah ûPraise be to Almighty Allah!û I will inform thee fully of the case; but hush thee, speak not aloud, lest haply the neighbours learn the secret and it end in our confusion. Look now into all the jars, one by one from first to last.” So Ali Baba examined them severally and found in each a man fully armed and accoutred and all lay scalded to death. Hereat speechless for sheer amazement he stared at the jars, but presently re covering himself he asked, “And where is he, the oil-merchant?” Answered she, “Of him also I will inform thee. The villain was no trader but a traitorous assassin whose honied words would have ensnared thee to thy doom; and now I will tell thee what he was and what hath happened; but, meanwhile thou art fresh from the Hammam and thou shouldst first drink somewhat of this broth for thy stomach’s and thy health’s sake.” So Ali Baba went within and Morgiana served up the mess; after which quoth her master, “I fain would hear this wondrous story: prithee tell it to me and set my heart at ease.” Hereat the handmaid fell to relating whatso had betided in these words, “O my master, when thou badest me boil the broth and retiredst to rest, thy slave in obedience to thy command took out a suit of clean white clothes and gave it to the boy Abdullah;

then kindled the fire and set on the broth. As soon as it was ready I had need to light a lamp so that I might see to skim it, but all the oil was spent, and, learning this I told my want to the slave-boy Abdullah, who advised me to draw somewhat from the jars which stood under the shed. Accordingly, I took a can and went to the first vessel when suddenly I heard a voice within whisper with all caution, æIs it now time for us to sally forth?’ I was amazed thereat and judged that the pretended merchant had laid some plot to slay thee; so I replied, æThe time is not yet come.’ Then I went to the second jar and heard another voice to which I made the like answer, and so on with all of them. I now was certified that these men awaited only some signal from their Chief whom thou didst take to guest within thy walls supposing him to be a merchant in oil; and that after thou receivedst him hospitably the miscreant had brought these men to murther thee and to plunder thy good and spoil thy house. But I gave him no opportunity to win his wish. The last jar I found full of oil and taking somewhat therefrom I lit the lamp; then, putting a large cauldron upon the fire, I filled it up with oil which I brought from the jar and made a fierce blaze under it; and, when the contents were seething hot, I took out sundry cansful with intent to scald them all to death, and going to each jar in due order, I poured within them one by one boiling oil. On this wise having destroyed them utterly, I returned to the kitchen and having extinguished the lamps stood by the window watching what might happen, and how that false merchant would act next. Not long after I had taken my station, the robber captain awoke and oft-times signalled to his thieves. Then getting no reply he came downstairs and went out to the jars, and finding that all his men were slain he fled through the darkness I know not whither. So when he had clean disappeared I was assured that, the door being double locked, he had scaled the wall and dropped into the garden and made his escape. Then with my heart at rest I slept.” And Morgiana, after telling her story to her master, presently added, “This is the whole truth I have related to thee. For some days indeed have I had inkling of such matter, but withheld it from thee deeming it inexpedient to risk the chance of its meeting the neighbours’ ears; now, however, there is no help but to tell thee thereof. One day as I came to the house-door I espied thereon a white chalk-mark, and on the next day a red sign beside the white. I knew not the intent wherewith the marks were made, nevertheless I set others upon the entrances of sundry neighbours, judging that some enemy had done this deed whereby to encompass my master's destruction. Therefore I made the marks on all the other doors in such perfect conformity with those I found, that it would be hard to distinguish amongst them." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Morgiana continued to Ali Baba: “Judge now and see if these signs and all this villainy be not the work of the bandits of the forest, who marked our house that on such wise they might know it again. Of these forty thieves there yet remain two others concerning whose case I know naught; so beware of them, but chiefly of the third remaining robber, their Captain, who fled hence alive. Take good heed and be thou cautious of him, for, shouldst thou fall into his hands, he will in no wise spare thee but will surely murther thee. I will do all that lieth in me to save from hurt and harm thy life and property, nor shall thy slave be found wanting in any service to my lord.” Hearing these words Ali Baba rejoiced with exceeding joyance and said to her, “I am well pleased with thee for this thy conduct; and say me what wouldst thou have me do in thy behalf; I shall not fail to remember thy brave deed so long as breath in me remaineth.” Quoth she, “It behoveth us before all things forthright to bury these bodies in the ground, that so the secret be not known to any one.” Hereupon Ali Baba took with him his slave-boy Abdullah into the garden and there under a tree they dug for the corpses of the thieves a deep pit in size proportionate to its contents, and they dragged the bodies (having carried off their weapons) to the fosse and threw them in; then, covering up the remains of the seven and thirty robbers they made the ground appear level and clean as it wont to be. They also hid the leathern jars and the gear and arms and presently Ali Baba sent the mules by ones and twos to the bazar and sold them all with the able aid of his slave-boy Abdullah. Thus the matter was hushed up nor did it reach the ears of any; Ali Baba ceased not to be ill at ease lest haply the Captain or the surviving two robbers should wreak their vengeance on his head. He kept himself private with all caution and took heed that none learn a word of what happened and of the wealth which he had carried off from the bandits’ cave. Meanwhile the Captain of the thieves having escaped with his life, fled to the forest in hot wrath and sore irk of mind, and his senses were scattered and the colour of his visage vanished like ascending smoke. Then he thought the matter over again and again, and at last he firmly resolved that he needs must take the life of Ali Baba, else he would lose all the treasure which his enemy, by knowledge of the magical words, would take away and turn to his own use. Furthermore, he determined that he would undertake the business singlehanded; and, that after getting rid of Ali Baba, he would gather together another band of banditti and would pursue his career of brigandage, as indeed his forbears had done for many generations. So he lay down to rest that night, and rising early in the morning donned a dress of suitable appearance; then going to the city alighted at a caravanserai, thinking to himself, "Doubtless the murther of so many men hath reached the Wali's ears, and Ali Baba hath been seized and brought to justice, and his house is levelled and his good is confiscated. The townfolk must surely have heard tidings of these matters." So he straightway asked of the keeper of the Khan, "What strange things have happened in the city during the last few days?" and the other told him all that he had seen and heard, but the Captain could not learn a whit of that which most concerned him. Hereby he understood that Ali Baba was ware and wise, and that he had not only carried away such store of treasure but he had also destroyed so many lives and withal had come off scatheless; furthermore, that he himself must needs have all his wits alert not to fall into the hands of his foe and perish. With this resolve the Captain hired a shop in the Bazar, whither he bore whole bales of the finest stuffs and goodly merchandise from his forest treasure house; and presently he took his seat within the store and fell to doing merchant's business. By chance his place fronted the booth of the defunct Kasim where his son, Ali Baba's nephew, now traded; and the Captain, who called himself Khwajah Hasan, soon formed acquaintance and friendship with the shop keepers around about him and treated all with profuse civilities, but he was especially gracious and cordial to the son of Kasim, a handsome youth and a well-dressed, and oft-times he would sit and chat with him for a long while. A few days after it chanced that Ali Baba, as he was sometimes wont to do, came to see his nephew, whom he found sitting in his shop. The Captain saw and recognised him at sight and one morning he asked the young man, saying, "Prithee tell me, who is he that ever and anon cometh to thee at thy place of sale?” whereto the youth made answer, “He is my uncle, the brother of my father.” Whereupon the Captain showed him yet greater favour and affection the better to deceive him for his own devices, and gave him presents and made him sit at meat with him and fed him with the daintiest of dishes. Presently Ali Baba’s nephew bethought him it was only right and proper that he also should invite the merchant to supper, but whereas his own house was small, and he was straitened for room and could not make a show of splendour, as did Khwajah Hasan, he took counsel with his uncle on the matter. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Ali Baba replied to his nephew: “Thou sayest well: it behoveth thee to entreat thy friend in fairest fashion even as he hath entreated thee. On the morrow, which is Friday, shut thy shop as do all merchants of repute; then, after the early meal, take Khwajah Hasan to smell the air,[306] and as thou walkest lead him hither unawares; meanwhile I will give orders that Morgiana shall make ready for his coming the best of viands and all necesseries for a feast. Trouble not thyself on any wise, but leave the matter in my hands.” Accordingly on the next day, to wit, Friday, the nephew of Ali Baba took Khwajah Hasan to walk about the garden; and, as they were returning he led him by the street wherein his uncle dwelt. When they came to the house the youth stopped at the door and knocking said, “O my lord, this is my second home: my uncle hath heard much of thee and of thy goodness me-wards and desireth with exceeding desire to see thee; so, shouldst thou consent to enter and visit him, I shall be truly glad and thankful to thee.” Albeit Khwajah Hasan rejoiced in heart that he had thus found means whereby he might have access to his enemy’s house and household, and although he hoped soon to attain his end by treachery, yet he hesitated to enter in and stood to make his excuses and walk away But when the door was opened by the slave-porter, Ali Baba’s nephew seized his companion’s hand and after abundant persuasion led him in, whereat he entered with great show of cheerfulness as though much pleased and honoured. The house-master received him with all favour and worship and asked him of his welfare, and said to him “O my lord, I am obliged and thankful to thee for that thou hast strewn favour to the son of my brother and I perceive that thou regardest him with an affection even fonder than my own.” Khwajah Hasan replied with pleasant words and said, “Thy nephew vastly taketh my fancy and in him I am well pleased, for that although young in years yet he hath been endued by Allah with much of wisdom.” Thus they twain conversed with friendly conversation and presently the guest rose to depart and said, “O my lord, thy slave must now farewell thee; but on some future day — Inshallah he will again wait upon thee." Ali Baba, however, would not let him leave and asked, "Whither wendest thou, O my friend? I would invite thee to my table and I pray thee sit at meat with us and after hie thee home in peace. Perchance the dishes are not as delicate as those whereof thou art wont to eat, still deign grant me this request I pray thee and refresh thyself with my victual." Quoth Khwajah Hasan, "O my lord I am beholden to thee for thy gracious invitation, and with pleasure would I sit at meat with thee, but for a special reason must I needs excuse myself; suffer me therefore to depart for I may not tarry longer nor accept thy gracious offer." Hereto the host made reply, "I pray thee, O my lord, tell me what may be the reason so urgent and weighty?" And Khwajah Hasan answered, "The cause is this: I must not, by order of the physician, who cured me lately of my complaint, eat aught of food prepared with salt." Quoth Ali Baba, "An this be all, deprive me not, I pray thee, of the honour thy company will confer upon me: as the meats are not yet cooked, I will forbid the kitchener to make use of any salt. Tarry here awhile and I will return anon to thee." So saying Ali Baba went in to Morgiana and bade her not put salt into any one of the dishes; and she, while busied with her cooking, fell to marvelling greatly at such order and asked her master, "Who is he that eateth meat wherein is no salt?" He answered, "What to thee mattereth it who he may be? only do thou my bidding." She rejoined, " 'Tis well: all shall be as thou wishest;" but in mind she wondered at the man who made such strange request and desired much to look upon him. Wherefore, when all the meats were ready for serving up, she helped the slave-boy Abdullah to spread the table and set on the meal; and no sooner did she see Khwajah Hasan than she knew who he was, albeit he had disguised himself in the dress of a stranger merchant; furthermore, when she eyed him attentively she espied a dagger hidden under his robe. "So ho!" quoth she to herself, "this is the cause why the villain eateth not of salt, for that he seeketh an opportunity to slay my master whose mortal enemy he is; howbeit I will be beforehand with him and despatch him ere he find a chance to harm my lord." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Morgiana, having spread a white cloth upon the table and served up the meal, went back to the kitchen and thought out her plot against the robber Captain. Now when Ali Baba and Khwajah Hasan had eaten their sufficiency, the slave-boy Abdullah brought Morgiana word to serve the dessert, and she cleared the table and set on fruit fresh and dried in salvers, then she placed by the side of Ali Baba a small tripod for three cups with a flagon of wine, and lastly she went off with the slave-boy Abdullah into another room, as though she would herself eat supper. Then Khwajah Hasan, that is, the Captain of the robbers, perceiving that the coast was clear, exulted mightily saying to himself, “The time hath come for me to take full vengeance; with one thrust of my dagger I will despatch this fellow, then escape across the garden and wend my ways. His nephew will not adventure to stay my hand, for an he do but move a finger or toe with that intent another stab will settle his earthly account. Still must I wait awhile until the slave-boy and the cook-maid shall have eaten and lain down to rest them in the kitchen.” Morgiana, however, watched him wistfully and divining his purpose said in her mind, “I must not allow this villain advantage over my lord, but by some means I must make void his project and at once put an end to the life of him.” Accordingly, the trusty slave-girl changed her dress with all haste and donned such clothes as dancers wear; she veiled her face with a costly kerchief; around her head she bound a fine turband, and about her middle she tied a waist cloth worked with gold and silver wherein she stuck a dagger, whose hilt was rich in filigree and jewelry. Thus disguised she said to the slave-boy Abdullah, “Take now thy tambourine that we may play and sing and dance in honour of our master’s guest.” So he did her bidding and the twain went into the room, the lad playing and the lass following. Then, making a low congÚe, they asked leave to perform and disport and play; and Ali Baba gave permission, saying, “Dance now and do your best that this our guest may be mirthful and merry.” Quoth Khwajah Hasan, “O my lord, thou dost indeed provide much pleasant entertainment." Then the slave-boy Abdullah standing by began to strike the tambourine whilst Morgiana rose up and showed her perfect art and pleased them vastly with graceful steps and sportive motion; and suddenly drawing the poniard from her belt she brandished it and paced from side to side, a spectacle which pleased them most of all. At times also she stood before them, now clapping the sharp-edged dagger under her armpit and then setting it against her breast. Lastly she took the tambourine from the slave-boy Abdullah, and still holding the poniard in her right she went round for largesse as is the custom amongst merry makers. First she stood before Ali Baba who threw a gold coin into the tambourine, and his nephew likewise put in an Ashrafi; then Khwajah Hasan, seeing her about to approach him, fell to pulling out his purse, when she heartened her heart and quick as the blinding levee she plunged the dagger into his vitals, and forthwith the miscreant fell back stone dead. Ali Baba was dismayed and cried in his wrath, "O unhappy, what is this deed thou hast done to bring about my ruin!" But she replied, "Nay, O my lord, rather to save thee and not to cause thee harm have I slain this man: loosen his garments and see what thou wilt discover thereunder." So Ali Baba searched the dead man's dress and found concealed therein a dagger. Then said Morgiana, "This wretch was thy deadly enemy. Consider him well: he is none other than the oil-merchant, the Captain of the band of robbers. Whenas he came hither with intent to take thy life, he would not eat thy salt; and when thou toldest me that he wished not any in the meat I suspected him and at first sight I was assured that he would surely do thee die; Almighty Allah be praised ætis even as I thought." Then Ali Baba lavished upon her thanks and expressions of gratitude, saying, "Lo, these two times hast thou saved me from his hand," and falling upon her neck he cried, "See thou art free, and as reward for this thy fealty I have wedded thee to my nephew." Then turning to the youth he said, "Do as I bid thee and thou shalt prosper. I would that thou marry Morgiana, who is a model of duty and loyalty: thou seest now yon Khwajah Hasan sought thy friendship only that he might find opportunity to take my life, but this maiden with her good sense and her wisdom hath slain him and saved us." And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Ali Baba’s nephew straightway consented to marry Morgiana. After which the three, raising the dead body bore it forth with all heed and vigilance and privily buried it in the garden, and for many years no one knew aught thereof. In due time Ali Baba married his brother’s son to Morgiana with great pomp, and spread a bride-feast in most sumptuous fashion for his friends and neighbours, and made merry with them and enjoyed singing and all manner of dancing and amusements. He prospered in every undertaking and Time smiled upon him and a new source of wealth was opened to him. For fear of the thieves he had not once visited the jungle-cave wherein lay the treasure, since the day he had carried forth the corpse of his brother Kasim. But some time after, he mounted his hackney one morning and journeyed thither, with all care and caution, till finding no signs of man or horse, and reassured in his mind he ventured to draw near the door. Then alighting from his beast he tied it up to a tree, and going to the entrance pronounced the words which he had not forgotten, “Open, O Simsim!” Hereat, as was its wont, the door flew open, and entering thereby he saw the goods and hoard of gold and silver untouched and lying as he had left them. So he felt assured that not one of all the thieves remained alive, and, that save himself there was not a soul who knew the secret of the place. At once he bound in his saddle-cloth a load of Ashrafis such as his horse could bear and brought it home; and in after days he showed the hoard to his sons and sons’ sons and taught them how the door could be caused to open and shut. Thus Ali Baba and his household lived all their lives in wealth and joyance in that city where erst he had been a pauper, and by the blessing of that secret treasure he rose to high degree and dignities. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and thirty-ninth Night.

Then by the command of King Shahryar Queen Shahrazad began to tell in these words the story of

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ALI KHWAJAH AND THE MERCHANT OF BAGHDAD

Under the reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid there dwelt in the city of Baghdad a certain merchant, æAlÝ Khwßjah hight, who had a small stock of goods wherewith he bought and sold and made a bare livelihood, abiding alone and without a family in the house of her forbears. Now so it came to pass that each night for three nights together he saw in a vision a venerable Shaykh who bespake him thus, “Thou art beholden to make a pilgrimage to Meccah; why abidest thou sunk in heedless slumber and farest not forth as it behoveth thee?”[307] Hearing these words he became sore startled and affrighted, so that he sold shop and goods and all that he had; and, with firm intent to visit the Holy House of Almighty Allah, he let his home on hire and joined a caravan that was journeying to Meccah the Magnified. But ere he left his natal city he placed a thousand gold pieces, which were over and above his need for the journey, within an earthen jar filled up with AsßfÝrÝ[308] or Sparrow-olives; and, having made fast the mouth thereof, he carried the jar to a merchant-friend of many years standing and said, “Belike, O my brother, thou hast heard tell that I purpose going with a caravan on pilgrimage to Meccah, the Holy City; so I have brought a jar of olives the which, I pray thee, preserve for me in trust against my return.” The merchant at once arose and handing the key of his warehouse to Ali Khwajah said, “Here, take the key and open the store and therein place the jar anywhere thou choosest, and when thou shalt come back thou wilt find it even as thou leftest it.” Hereupon Ali Khwajah did his friend’s bidding and locking up the door returned the key to its master. Then loading his travelling goods upon a dromedary and mounting a second beast he fared forth with the caravan. They came at length to Meccah the Magnified, and it was the month Z· al-Hijjah wherein myriads of Moslems hie thither on pilgrimage and pray and prostrate before the Ka’abah- temple. And when he had circuited the Holy House and fulfilled all the rites and ceremonies required of palmers, he set up a shop for sale of merchandise.[309] By chance two merchants passing along that street espied the fine stuffs and goods in Ali

Khwajah’s booth and approved much of them and praised their beauty and excellence. Presently quoth one to other, “This man bringeth here most rare and costly goods: now in Cairo, the capital of Egypt-land would he get full value for them, and far more than in the markets of this city.” Hearing mention of Cairo, Ali Khwajah conceived a sore longing to visit that famous capital, so he gave up his intent of return Baghdad-wards and purposed wayfaring to Egypt. Accordingly he joined a caravan and arriving thither was well-pleased with the place, both country and city; and selling his merchandise he made great gain therefrom. Then buying other goods and stuffs he purposed to make Damascus; but for one full month he tarried at Cairo and visited her sanctuaries and saintly places and after leaving her walls he solaced himself with seeing many famous cities distant several days’ journey from the capital along the banks of the River Nilus. Presently, bidding adieu to Egypt he arrived at the Sanctified House,[310] Jerusalem and prayed in the Temple of Banu Isra’Ýl which the Moslems had re-edified. In due time he reached Damascus and observed that the city was well builded and much peopled, and that the fields and meads were well-watered with springs and channels and that the gardens and vergiers were laden with flowers and fruits. Amid such delights Ali Khwajah hardly thought of Baghdad; withal he ceased not to pursue his journey through Aleppo, Mosul and Shirßz, tarrying some time at all of these towns, especially at Shirßz, till at length after seven years of wayfaring he came back to Baghdad. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Fortieth Night.

Then said she: — It behoveth thee now, O auspicious King, to hear of the Baghdad merchant and his lack of probity. For seven long years he never once thought of Ali Khwajah or of the trust committed to his charge; till one day as his wife sat at meat with him at the evening meal, their talk by chance was of olives. Quoth she to him, “I would now fain have some that I may eat of them;” and quoth he, “As thou speakest thereof I bethink me of that Ali Khwajah who seven years ago fared on a pilgrimage to Meccah, and ere he went left in trust with me a jar of Sparrow- olives which still cumbereth the store-house. Who knoweth where he is or what hath betided him? A man who lately returned with the Hajj-caravan brought me word that Ali Khwajah had quitted Meccah the Magnified with intent to journey on to Egypt. Allah Almighty alone knoweth an he be still alive or he be now dead; however, if his olives be in good condition I will go bring some hither that we may taste them: so give me a platter and a lamp that I may fetch thee somewhat of them.” His wife, an honest woman and an upright, made answer, “Allah forbid that thou shouldst do a deed so base and break thy word and covenant. Who can tell? Thou art not assured by any of his death; perchance he may come back from Egypt safe and sound tomorrow or the day after; then wilt thou, an thou cannot deliver unharmed to him what he hath left in pledge, be ashamed of this thy broken troth and we shall be disgraced before man and dishonoured in the presence of thy friend. I will not for my part have any hand in such meanness nor will I taste the olives; furthermore, it standeth not to reason that after seven years’ keeping they should be fit to eat. I do implore thee to forswear this ill purpose.” On such wise the merchant’s wife protested and prayed her husband that he meddle not with Ali Khwajah’s olives, and shamed him of his intent so that for the nonce he cast the matter from his mind. However, although the trader refrained that evening from taking Ali Khwajah’s olives, yet he kept the design in memory until one day when, of his obstinacy and unfaith, he resolved to carry out his project; and rising up walked towards the store-room dish in hand. By chance he met his wife who said, “I am no partner with thee in this ill-action: in very truth some evil shall befal thee an thou do such deed.” He heard her but heeded her not; and, going to the store-room opened the jar and found the olives spoiled and white with mould; but presently he tilted up the jar and pouring some of its contents into the dish, suddenly saw an Ashrafi fall from the vessel together with the fruit. Then, filled with greed, he turned out all that was within into another jar and wondered with exceeding wonder to find the lower half full of golden coins. Presently, putting up the moneys and the olives he closed the vessel and going back said to his wife, “Thou spakest sooth, for I have examined the jar and have found the fruit mouldy and foul of smell; wherefore I returned it to its place and left it as it was aforetime.” That night the merchant could not sleep a wink for thinking of the gold and how he might lay hands thereon; and when morning morrowed he took out all the Ashrafis and buying some fresh olives in the Bazar filled up the jar with them and closed the mouth and set it in its usual place. Now it came to pass by Allah’s mercy that at the end of the month Ali Khwajah returned safe and sound to Baghdad; and he first went to his old friend, to wit, the merchant who, greeting him with feigned joy, fell on his neck, but withal was sore troubled and perplexed at what might happen. After salutations and much rejoicing on either part Ali Khwajah bespake the merchant on business and begged that he might take back his jar of Asafiri-olives which he had placed in charge of his familiar. Quoth the merchant to Ali Khwajah, “O my friend, I wot not where thou didst leave thy jar of olives; but here is the key, go down to the store-house and take all that is thine own.” So Ali Khwajah did as he was bidden and carrying the jar from the magazine took his leave and hastened home; but, when he opened the vessel and found not the gold coins, he was distracted and overwhelmed with grief and made bitter lamentation. Then he returned to the merchant and said, “O my friend, Allah, the All-present and the All-seeing, be my witness that, when I went on my pilgrimage to Meccah the Magnified, I left a thousand Ashrafis in that jar, and now I find them not. Canst thou tell me aught concerning them? An thou in thy sore need have made use of them, it mattereth not so thou wilt give them back as soon as thou art able.” The merchant, apparently pitying him, said, “O good friend, thou didst thyself with thine hand set the jar inside the store-room. I wist not that thou hadst aught in it save olives; yet as thou didst leave it, so in like manner didst thou find it and carry it away; and now thou chargest me with theft of Ashrafis. It seemeth strange and passing strange that thou shouldst make such accusation. When thou wentest thou madest no mention of any money in the jar, but saidst that it was full of olives, even as thou hast found it. Hadst thou left gold coins therein, then surely thou wouldst have recovered them." Hereupon Ali Khwajah begged hard with much entreaty, saying, "Those thousand Ashrafis were all I owned, the money earned by years of toil: I do beseech thee have pity on my case and give them back to me." Replied the merchant, waxing wroth with great wrath, "O my friend, a fine fellow thou art to talk of honesty and withal make such false and lying charge. Begone: hie thee hence and come not to my house again; for now I know thee as thou art, a swindler and imposter." Hearing this dispute between Ali Khwajah and the merchant all the people of the quarter came crowding to the shop. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Forty-first Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the multitude which thronged about the merchant’s shop warmly took up the matter; and thus it became well known to all, rich and poor, within the city of Baghdad how that one Ali Khwajah had hidden a thousand Ashrafis within a jar of olives and had placed it on trust with a certain merchant; moreover how, after pilgrimaging to Meccah and seven years of travel the poor man had returned, and that the rich man had gainsaid his words anent the gold and was ready to make oath that he had not received any trust of the kind. At length, when naught else availed, Ali Khwajah was constrained to bring the matter before the Kazi, and to claim one thousand Ashrafis of his false friend. The Judge asked, “What witnesses hast thou who may speak for thee?” and the plantiff answered, “O my lord the Kazi, I feared to tell the matter to any man lest all come to know of my secret. Allah Almighty is my sole testimony. This merchant was my friend and I recked not that he would prove dishonest and unfaithful.” Quoth the Judge, “Then must I needs send for the merchant and hear what he saith on oath;” and when the defendant came they made him swear by all he deemed holy, facing Ka’abah-wards with hands uplifted, and he cried, “I swear that I know naught of any Ashrafis belonging to Ali Khwajah.”[311] Hereat the Kazi pronounced him innocent and dismissed him from court; and Ali Khwajah went home sad at heart and said to himself, “Alas, what justice is this which hath been meted out to me, that I should lose my money, and my just cause be deemed unjust! It hath been truly said, æHe loseth the lave who sueth before a knave.’ “ On the next day he drew out a statement of his case; and, as the Caliph Harun al-Rashid was on his way to Friday-prayers, he fell down on the ground before him and presented to him the paper. The Commander of the Faithful read the petition and having understood the case deigned give order saying, “To-morrow bring the accuser and the accused to the audience-hall and place the petition before my presence, for I myself will enquire into this matter.” That night the Prince of True Believers, as was his wont, donned disguise to walk about the squares of Baghdad and its streets and lanes and, accompanied by Ja'afar the Barmaki and Masr·r the Sworder of his vengeance, proceeded to espy what happened in the city. Immediately on issuing forth he came upon an open place in the Bazar when he heard the hubbub of children a-playing and saw at scanty distance some ten or dozen boys making sport amongst themselves in the moonlight; and he stopped awhile to watch their diversion. Then one amongst the lads, a goodly and a fair-complexioned, said to the others, "Come now and let us play the game of Kazi: I will be the Judge; let one of you be Ali Khwajah, and another the merchant with whom he placed the thousand Ashrafis in pledge before faring on his pilgrimage: so come ye before me and let each one plead his plea." When the Caliph heard the name of Ali Khwajah he minded him of the petition which had been presented to him for justice against the merchant, and bethought him that he would wait and see how the boy would perform the part of Kazi in their game and upon what decision he would decide. So the Prince watched the mock-trial with keen interest saying to himself, "This case hath verily made such stir within the city that even the children know thereof and re-act it in their sports." Presently, he amongst the lads who took the part of Ali Khwajah the plaintiff and his playmate who represented the merchant of Baghdad accused of theft, advanced and stood before the boy who as the Kazi sat in pomp and dignity. Quoth the Judge, "O Ali Khwajah, what is thy claim against this merchant?" and the complainant preferred his charge in a plea of full detail. Then said the Kazi to the boy who acted merchant, "What answerest thou to this complaint and why didst thou not return the gold pieces?" The accused made reply even as the real defendant had done and denied the charge before the Judge, professing himself ready to take oath thereto. Then said the boy-Kazi, "Ere thou swear on oath that thou hast not taken the money, I would fain see for myself the jar of olives which the plaintiff deposited with thee on trust." Then turning to the boy who represented Ali Khwajah he cried, "Go thou and instantly produce the jar that I may inspect it." And when the vessel was brought the Kazi said to the two contentious, "See now and say me: be this the very jar which thou, the plaintiff, leftest with the defendant?" and both answered that it was and the same. Then said the self- constituted Judge, “Open now the jar and bring hither some of the contents that I may see the state in which the Asafiri-olives actually are.” Then tasting of the fruit, “How is this? I find their flavour is fresh and their state excellent. Surely during the lapse of seven twelvemonths the olives would have become mouldy and rotten. Bring now before me two oil-merchants of the town that they may pass opinion upon them.” Then two other of the boys assumed the parts commanded and coming into court stood before the Kazi, who asked, “Are ye olive-merchants by trade?” They answered, “We are and this hath been our calling for many generations and in buying and selling olives we earn our daily bread.” Then said the Kazi, “Tell me now, how long do olives keep fresh and well-flavoured?” and said they, “O my lord, however carefully we keep them, after the third year they change flavour and colour and become no longer fit for food, in fact they are good only to be cast away.” Thereupon quoth the boy- Kazi, “Examine me now these olives that are in this jar and say me how old are they and what is their condition and savour.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Forty-second Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the two boys who played the parts of oil-merchants pretended to take some berries from the jar and taste them and presently they said, “O our lord the Kazi, these olives are in fair condition and full- flavoured.” Quoth the Kazi, “Ye speak falsely, for ætis seven years since Ali Khwajah put them in the jar as he was about to go a-pilgrimaging;” and quoth they, “Say whatso thou wilt those olives are of this year’s growth, and there is not an oil- merchant in all Baghdad but who will agree with us.” Moreover the accused was made to taste and smell the fruits and he could not but admit that it was even so as they had avouched. Then said the boy-Kazi to the boy-defendant, “ æTis clear thou art a rogue and a rascal, and thou hast done a deed wherefor thou richly deservest the gibbet.” Hearing this the children frisked about and clapped their hands with glee and gladness, then seizing hold of him who acted as the merchant of Baghdad, they led him off as to execution. The Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, was greatly pleased at this acuteness of the boy who had assumed the part of judge in the play, and commanded his Wazir Ja’afar saying, “Mark well the lad who enacted the Kazi in this mock-trial and see that thou produce him on the morrow: he shall try the case in my presence substantially and in real earnest, even as we have heard him deal with it in play. Summon also the Kazi of this city that he may learn the administration of justice from this child. Moreover send word to Ali Khwajah bidding him bring with him the jar of olives, and have also in readiness two oil-merchants of the town.” Thus as they walked along the Caliph gave orders to the Wazir and then returned to his palace. So on the morrow Ja’afar the Barmaki went to that quarter of the town where the children had enacted the mock-trail and asked the schoolmaster where his scholars might be, and he answered, “They have all gone away, each to his home.” So the minister visited the houses pointed out to him and ordered the little ones to appear in his presence. Accordingly they were brought before him, when he said to them, “Who amongst you is he that yesternight acted the part of Kazi in play and passed sentence in the case of Ali Khwajah?" The eldest of them replied, " æTwas I, O my lord the Wazir;" and then he waxed pale, not knowing why the question was put. Cried the Minister, "Come along with me; the Commander of the Faithful hath need of thee." At this the mother of the lad was sore afraid and wept; but Ja'afar comforted her and said, "O my lady, have no fear and trouble not thyself. Thy son will soon return to thee in safety, Inshallah — God willing — and methinks the Sultan will show much favour unto him." The woman's heart was heartened on hearing these words of the Wazir and she joyfully dressed her boy in his best attire and sent him off with the Wazir, who led him by the hand to the Caliph's audience-hall and executed all the other commandments which had been issued by his liege lord. Then the Commander of the Faithful, having taken seat upon the throne of justice, set the boy upon a seat beside him, and as soon as the contending parties appeared before him, that is Ali Khwajah and the merchant of Baghdad, he commanded them to state each man his case in presence of the child who should adjudge the suit. So the two, plaintiff and defendant recounted their contention before the boy in full detail; and when the accused stoutly denied the charge and was about to swear on oath that what he said was true, with hands uplifted and facing Ka'abah-wards, the child-Kazi prevented him, saying, "Enough! swear not on oath till thou art bidden; and first let the jar of olives be produced in Court." Forthwith the jar was brought forward and placed before him; and the lad bade open it; then, tasting one he gave also to two oil-merchants who had been summoned, that they might do likewise and declare how old was the fruit and whether its savour was good or bad. They did his bidding and said, "The flavour of these olives hath not changed and they are of this year's growth." Then said the boy, "Methinks ye are mistaken, for seven years ago Ali Khwajah put the olives into the jar: how then could fruit of this year find their way therein?" But they replied, " æTis even as we say: an thou believe not our words send straightway for other oil-merchants and make enquiry of them, so shalt thou know if we speak sooth or lies." But when the merchant of Baghdad saw that he could no longer avail to prove his innocence, he confessed everything; to wit, how he had taken out the Ashrafis and filled the jar with fresh olives. Hearing this the boy said to the Prince of True Believers, “O gracious sovereign, last night in play we tried this cause, but thou alone has power to apply the penalty. I have adjudged the matter in thy presence and I humbly pray that thou punish this merchant according to the law of the Koran and the custom of the Apostle; and thou decree the restoring of his thousand gold pieces to Ali Khwajah, for that he hath been proved entitled to them.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Forty-third Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Caliph ordered the merchant of Baghdad to be taken away and be hanged, after he should have made known where he had put the thousand Ashrafis and that these should have been restored their rightful owner, Ali Khwajah. He also turned to the Kazi who had hastily adjudged the case, and bade him learn from that lad to do his duty more sedulously and conscientiously. More-over the Prince of True Believers embraced the boy, and ordered that the Wazir give him a thousand pieces of gold from the royal treasury and conduct him safely to his home and parents.[312] And after, when the lad grew to man's estate, the Commander of the Faithful made him one of his cup-companions and furthered his fortunes and ever entreated him with the highmost honour. But when Queen Shahrazad had ended the story of Ali Khwajah and the merchant of Baghdad she said, "Now, O auspicious King, I would relate a more excellent history than any, shouldst thou be pleased to hear that I have to say;" and King Shahryar replied, "By Allah! what an admirable tale is this thou hast told: my ears do long to hear another as rare and commendable." So Shahrazad began forthright to recount the adventures of[313]

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PRINCE AHMAD AND THE FAIRY PERI-BANU.[314]

In days of yore and times long gone before there was a Sultan of India who begat three sons; the eldest hight Prince Husayn, the second Prince Ali, and the youngest Prince Ahmad; moreover he had a niece, named Princess Nur al-Nihßr,[315] the daughter of his cadet brother who, dying early, left his only child under her uncle's charge. The King busied himself with abundant diligence about her instruction and took all care that she should be taught to read and write, sew and embroider, sing and deftly touch all instruments of mirth and merriment. This Princess also in beauty and loveliness and in wit and wisdom far excelled all the maidens of her own age in every land. She was brought up with the Princes her cousins in all joyance; and they ate together and played together and slept together; and the king had determined in his mind that when she reached marriageable age he would give her in wedlock to some one of the neighbouring royalties; but, when she came to years of discretion, her uncle perceived that the three Princes his sons were all three deep in love of her, and each desired in his heart to woo and to win and to wed her. Wherefore was the King sore troubled in mind and said to himself, "An I give the Lady Nur al-Nihar in wedlock to any one of her cousins, the other twain will be dissatisfied and murmur against my decision; withal my soul cannot endure to see them grieved and disappointed. And should I marry her to some stranger the three Princes my sons will be sore distressed and saddened in soul; nay, who knoweth that they may not slay themselves or go forth and betake them to some far and foreign land? The matter is a troublous and a perilous; so it behoveth me their sire to take action on such wise that if one of them espouse her, the other two be not displeased thereat." Long time the Sultan revolved the matter in his mind; and at length he devised a device; and, sending for the three princes, addressed them saying, "O my sons, ye are in my opinion of equal merit one with other; nor can I give preference to any of you and marry him to the Princess Nur al-Nihar; nor yet am I empowered to wed her with all three. But I have thought of one plan whereby she shall be wife to one of you, and yet shall not cause aught of irk or envy to his brethren; so may your mutual love and affection remain unabated, and one shall never be jealous of the other's happiness. Brief, my device is this: — Go ye and travel to distant countries, each one separating himself from the others; and do ye bring me back the thing most wondrous and marvellous of all sights ye may see upon your wayfarings; and he who shall return with the rarest of curiosities shall be husband to the Princess Nur al-Nihar. Consent ye now to this proposal; and whatso of money ye require for travel and for the purchase of objects seld-seen and singular, take ye from the royal treasury as much as ye desire." The three Princes, who were ever submissive to their sire, consented with one voice to this proposal, and each was satisfied and confident that he would bring the King the most extraordinary of gifts and thereby win the Princess to wife. So the Sultan bade give to each what moneys he wanted without stint or account, and counselled them to make ready for the journey without stay or delay and depart their home in the Peace of Allah. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Forty-fourth Night

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the three princely brothers forthright made them ready for journey and voyage. So they donned disguise, preferring the dress of wandering merchants; and, buying such things as they needed and taking with them each his suite they mounted steeds of purest blood and rode forth in a body from the palace. For several stages they travelled the same road until, reaching a place where it branched off in three different ways, they alighted at a Khan and ate the evening meal. Then they made compact and covenant, that whereas they had thus far travelled together they should at break of day take separate roads and each wend his own way and all seek different and distant regions, agreeing to travel for the space of one year only, after which, should they be in the land of the living, all three would rendezvous at that same caravanserai and return in company to the King their sire. Furthermore, they determined that the first who came back to the Khan should await the arrival of the next, and that two of them should tarry there in expectancy of the third. Then, all this matter duly settled, they retired to rest, and when the morning morrowed they fell on one another's necks and bade farewell; and, lastly, mounting their horses, they rode forth each in his own direction. Now Prince Husayn, the eldest, had oft heard recount the wonders of the land Bishangarh[316] , and for a long while had wished to visit it; so he took the road which led thither, and, joining himself to a caravan journeying that way, accompanied it by land and by water and traversed many regions, desert wilds and stony wolds, dense jungles and fertile tracts, with fields and hamlets and gardens and townships. After three months spent in wayfare at length he made Bishangarh, a region over-reigned by manifold rulers, so great was its extent and so far reaching was its power. He put up at a Khan built specially for merchants who came from the farthest lands, and from the folk who dwelt therein he heard tell that the city contained a large central market[317] wherein men bought and sold all manner of rarities and wondrous things. Accordingly, next day Prince Husayn repaired to the Bazar and on sighting it he stood amazed at the prospect of its length and width. It was divided into many streets, all vaulted over but lit up by skylights; and the shops on either side were substantially builded, all after one pattern and nearly of the same size, while each was fronted by an awning which kept off the glare and made a grateful shade. Within these shops were ranged and ordered various kinds of wares; there were bales of "woven air"[318] and linens of finest tissue, plain-white or dyed or adorned with life-like patterns wherefrom beasts and trees and blooms stood out so distinctly that one might believe them to be very ferals, bosquets and gardens. There were moreover silken goods, brocaded stuffs, and finest satins from Persia and Egypt of endless profusion; in the China warehouses stood glass vessels of all kinds, and here and there were stores wherein tapestries and thousands of foot-carpets lay for sale. So Prince Husayn walked on from shop to shop and marvelled much to see such wondrous things whereof he had never even dreamt: and he came at length to the Goldsmiths' Lane and espied gems and jewels and golden and silvern vessels studded with diamonds and rubies, emeralds, pearls and other precious stones, all so lustrous and dazzling bright that the stores were lit up with their singular brilliancy. Hereat he said to himself, "If in one street only there be such wealth and jewels so rare, Allah Almighty and none save He knoweth what may be the riches in all this city." He was not less astonished to behold the Brahmins, how their women-kind for excess of opulence bedecked themselves with the finest gems and were ornamented with the richest gear from front to foot: their very slave-boys and handmaids wore golden necklaces and bracelets and bangles studded with precious stones. Along the length of one market street were ranged hosts of flower-sellers; for all the folk, both high and low, wore wreaths and garlands: some carried nosegays in hand, other some bound fillets round their heads, while not a few had ropes and festoons surrounding and hanging from their necks. The whole place seemed one huge parterre of bloomery; even traders set bouquets in every shop and stall, and the scented air was heavy with perfume. Strolling to and fro Prince Husayn was presently tired and would fain have sat him down somewhere to rest awhile, when one of the merchants, noting his look of weariness, with kindly courtesy prayed him be seated in his store. After saluting him with the salam the stranger sat down; and anon he saw a broker come that way, offering for sale a carpet some four yards square, and crying, "This be for sale; who giveth me its worth; to wit, thirty thousand gold pieces?" — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Forty-fifth Night

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Prince marvelled with excessive marvel at the price, and, beckoning the dealer, examined his wares right well; then said he, "A carpet such as this is selleth for a few silverlings. What special virtue hath it that thou demand therefor the sum of thirty thousand gold coins?" The broker, believing Husayn to be a merchant man lately arrived at Bishangarh, answered him saying, "O my lord, thinkest thou I price this carpet at too high a value? My master hath bidden me not to sell it for less than forty thousand Ashrafis." Quoth the Prince, "It surely cloth possess some wondrous virtue, otherwise wouldst thou not demand so prodigious a sum;" and quoth the broker, "'Tis true, O my lord, its properties are singular and marvellous. Whoever sitteth on this carpet and willeth in thought to be taken up and set down upon other site will, in the twinkling of an eye, be borne thither, be that place nearhand or distant many a day's journey and difficult to reach."[319] The Prince hearing these words said to himself, "Naught so wonder-rare as this rug can I carry back to the Sultan my sire to my gift, or any that afford him higher satisfaction and delight. Almighty Allah be praised, the aim of my wayfare is attained and hereby, Inshallah! I shall win to my wish. This, if anything, will be to him a joy for ever." Wherefore the Prince, with intent to buy the Flying Carpet, turned to the broker and said, If indeed it have properties such as thou describest, verily the price thou askest therefor is not over much, and I am ready to pay thee the sum required." The other rejoined, "An thou doubt my words I pray thee put them to the test and by such proof remove thy suspicions. Sit now upon this square of tapestry, and at thy mere wish and will it shall transport us to the caravanserai wherein thou abidest: on this wise shalt thou be certified of my words being sooth, and when assured of their truth thou mayest count out to me, there and then, but not before, the value of my wares." Accordingly, the man spread out the carpet upon the ground behind his shop and seated the Prince thereupon, he sitting by his side. Then, at the mere will[320] and wish of Prince Husayn, the twain were at once transported as though borne by the throne of Solomon to the Khan. So the eldest of the brothers joyed with exceeding joy to think that he had won so rare a thing, whose like could nowhere be found in the lands nor amongst the Kings; and his heart and soul were gladdened for that he had come to Bishangarh and hit upon such a prodigy. Accordingly he counted out the forty thousand Ashrafis as payment for the carpet, and gave, moreover, another twenty thousand by way of sweetmeat to the broker. Furthermore, he ceased not saying to himself that the King on seeing it would forthright wed him to the Princess Nur al-Nihar; for it were clear impossible that either of his brothers, e'en though they searched the whole world over and over, could find a rarity to compare with this. He longed to take seat upon the carpet that very instant and fly to his own country, or, at least, to await his brothers at the caravanserai where they had parted under promise and covenant, pledged and concluded, to meet again at the year's end. But presently he bethought him that the delay would be long and longsome, and much he feared lest he be tempted to take some rash step; wherefore he resolved upon sojourning in the country whose King and subjects he had ardently desired to behold for many a day, and determined that he would pass the time in sight-seeing and in pleasuring over the lands adjoining. So Prince Husayn tarried in Bishangarh some months. Now the King of that country was wont to hold a high court once every week for hearing disputes and adjudging causes which concerned foreign merchants; and thus the Prince ofttimes saw the King, but to none would he tell a word of his adventure. However, inasmuch as he was comely of countenance, graceful of gait, and courteous of accost, stout hearted and strong, wise and ware and witty, he was held by the folk in higher honour than the Sultan; not to speak of the traders his fellows; and in due time he be came a favourite at court and learned of the ruler himself all matters concerning his kingdom and his grandeur and greatness. The Prince also visited the most famous Pagodas[321] of that country. The first he saw was wrought in brass and orichalch of most exquisite workmanship: its inner cell measured three yards square and contained amiddlemost a golden image in size and stature like unto a man of wondrous beauty; and so cunning was the workmanship that the face seemed to fix its eyes, two immense rubies of enormous value, upon all beholders no matter where they stood.[322] He also saw another idol-temple, not less strange and rare than this, builded in a village on a plain surface of some half acre long and broad, wherein bloomed lovely rose-trees and jasmine and herb-basil and many other sweet-scented plants, whose perfume made the air rich with fragrance. Around its court ran a wall three feet high, so that no animal might stray therein; and in the centre was a terrace well-nigh the height of a man, all made of white marble and wavy alabaster, each and every slab being dressed so deftly and joined with such nice joinery that the whole pavement albeit covering so great a space, seemed to the sight but a single stone. In the centre of the terrace stood the domed fane towering some fifty cubits high and conspicuous for many miles around: its length was thirty cubits and its breadth twenty, and the red marbles of the revetment were clean polished as a mirror, so that every image was reflected in it to the life. The dome was exquisitely carved and sumptuously ornamented without; and within were ranged in due rank and sequence rows and rows of idols. To this, the Holy of Holies, from morn till eve thousands of Brahmins, men and women, came docking for daily worship. They had sports and diversions as well as rites and ceremonies: some feasted and others danced, some sang, others played on instruments of mirth and merriment, while here and there were plays and revels and innocent merry-makings. And hither at every season flocked from distant lands hosts of pilgrims seeking to fulfil their vows and to perform their orisons; all bringing gifts of gold and silver coin and presents rare and costly which they offered to the gods in presence of the royal officers. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Forty-sixth Night

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Prince Husayn also saw a fÛte once a year within the city of Bishangarh and the Ryots all, both great and small, gathered together and circumambulated the Pagodas; chiefly circuiting one which in size and grandeur surpassed all others. Great and learned Pandits versed in the Shßstras[323] made journeys of four or five months and greeted one another at that festival; thither too the folk from all parts of India pilgrimaged in such crowds that Prince Husayn was astounded at the sight; and, by reason of the multitudes that thronged around the temples, he could not see the mode in which the gods were worshipped. On one side of the adjacent plain which stretched far and wide, stood a new-made scaffolding of ample size and great magnificence, nine storeys high, and the lower part supported by forty pillars; and here one day in every week the King assembled his Wazirs for the purpose of meting out justice to all strangers in the land. The palace within was richly adorned and furnished with costly furniture: without, upon the wall faces were limned homely landscapes and scenes of foreign parts and notably all manner beasts and birds and insects even gnats and flies, portrayed with such skill of brain and cunning of hand that they seemed real and alive and the country-folk and villagers seeing from afar paintings of lions and tigers and similar ravenous beasts, were filled with awe and dismay. On the other three sides of the scaffolding were pavilions, also of wood, built for use of the commons, illuminated and decorated inside and outside like the first, and wroughten so cunningly that men could turn them round, with all the people in them, and moving them about transfer them to whatsoever quarter they willed. On such wise they shifted these huge buildings by aid of machinery;[324] and the folk inside could look upon a succession of sports and games. Moreover, on each side of the square elephants were ranged in ranks, the number amounting to well nigh one thousand, their trunks and ears and hinder parts being painted with cinnabar and adorned with various lively figures; their housings were of gold brocade and their howdahs purfled with silver, carrying minstrels who performed on various instruments, whilst buffoons delighted the crowd with their jokes and mimes played their most diverting parts. Of all the sports, however, which the Prince beheld, the elephant-show amused him most and Wiled him with the greatest admiration. One huge beast, which could be wheeled about where the keepers ever listed, for that his feet rested upon a post which travelled on casters, held in his trunk a flageolet whereon he played so sweetly well that all the people were fain to cry Bravo! There was another but a smaller animal which stood upon one end of a beam laid crosswise upon, and attached with hinges to, a wooden block eight cubits high, and on the further end was placed an iron weight as heavy as the elephant, who would press down for some time upon the beam until the end touched the ground, and then the weight would raise him up again.[325] Thus the beam swung like a see saw aloft and adown; and, as it moved, the elephant swayed to and fro and kept time with the bands of music, loudly trumpeting the while. The people moreover could wheel about this elephant from place to place as he stood balanced on the beam; and such exhibitions of learned elephants were mostly made in presence of the King. Prince Husayn spent well nigh a year in sight-seeing amongst the fairs and festivals of Bishangarh; and, when the period of the fraternal compact drew near, he spread his carpet upon the court-ground behind the Khan wherein he lodged, and sitting thereon, together with his suite and the steeds and all he had brought with him, mentally wished that he might be transported to the caravanserai where the three brothers had agreed to meet. No sooner had he formed the thought than straightway, in the twinkling of an eye, the carpet rose high in air and sped through space and carried them to the appointed stead where, still garbed as a merchant he remained in expectation of his brothers' coming. Hearken now, O auspicious King, to what befel Prince Ali, the second brother of Prince Husayn. On the third day after he had parted from the two others, he also joined a caravan and journeyed towards Persia; then, after a march of four months arriving at Shiraz, the capital of Iran-land, he alighted at a Khan, he and his fellow-travellers with whom he had made a manner of friendship; and, passing as a jeweller, there took up his abode with them. Next day the traders fared forth to buy wares and to sell their goods; but Prince Ali, who had brought with him naught of vendible, and only the things he needed, presently doffed his travelling dress, and in company with a comrade of the caravan entered the chief Bazar, known as the Bazistßn,[326] or cloth-market. Ali strolled about the place, which was built of brick and where all the shops had arched roofs resting on handsome columns; and he admired greatly to behold the splendid store-houses exposing for sale all manner goods of countless value. He wondered much what wealth was in the town if a single market street contained riches such as these. And as the brokers went about crying their goods for sale, he saw one of them hending in hand an ivory tube in length about a cubit, which he was offering for sale at the price of thirty thousand Ashrafis. Hearing such demand Prince Ali thought to himself, “Assuredly this fellow is a fool who asketh such a price for so paltry a thing.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Forty-seventh Night

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Prince Ali presently asked one of the shopkeepers with whom he had made acquaintance, saying, “O my friend, is this man a maniac that he asketh a sum of thirty thousand Ashrafis for this little pipe of ivory? Surely none save an idiot would give him such a price and waste upon it such a mint of money.” Said the shop man, “O my lord, this broker is wiser and warier than all the others of his calling, and by means of him I have sold goods worth thousands of sequins. Until yesterday he was in his sound senses; but I cannot say what state is his to day and whether or no he have lost his wits; but this wot I well, that if he ask thirty thousand for yon ivory tube, ‘twill be worth that same or even more. Howbeit we shall see with our own eyes. Sit thee here and rest within the shop until he pass this way.” So Prince Ali abode where he was bidden and presently the broker was seen coming up the street. Then the shopman calling to him said, "O man, rare merit hath yon little pipe; for all the folk are astounded to hear thee ask so high a price therefor; nay more, this friend of mine thinketh that thou art crazy." The broker, a man of sense, was on no wise chafed at these words but answered with gentle speech, "O my lord, I doubt not but that thou must deem me a madman to ask so high a price, and set so great a value upon an article so mean; but when I shall have made known to thee its properties and virtues, thou wilt most readily consent to take it at that valuation. Not thou alone but all men who have heard me cry my cry laugh and name me ninny." So saying, the broker showed the Spying Tube to Prince Ali and handing it to him said, "Examine well this ivory, the properties of which I will explain to thee. Thou seest that it is furnished with a piece of glass at either end;[327] and, shouldst thou apply one extremity thereof to thine eye, thou shalt see what thing soe'er thou listest and it shall appear close by thy side though parted from thee by many an hundred of miles." Replied the Prince, "This passeth all conception, nor can I believe it to be veridical until I shall have tested it and I become satisfied that 'tis even as thou sayest." Hereupon the broker placed the little tube in Prince Ali's hand, and showing him the way to handle it said, "Whatso thou mayest wish to descry will be shown to thee by looking through this ivory." Prince Ali silently wished to sight his sire, and when he placed the pipe close to his eye forthwith he saw him hale and hearty, seated on his throne and dispensing justice to the people of his dominion. Then the youth longed with great longing to look upon his lady love the Princess Nur al-Nihar; and straightway he saw her also sitting upon her bed, sound and sane, talking and laughing, whilst a host of handmaids stood around awaiting her commands. The Prince was astonished exceedingly to behold this strange and wondrous spectacle, and said to himself, "An I should wander the whole world over for ten years or more and search in its every corner and cranny, I shall never find aught so rare and precious as this tube of ivory." Then quoth he to the broker, "The virtues of thy pipe I find are indeed those thou hast described, and right willingly I give to thee its price the thirty thousand Ashrafis." Replied the sales- man, "O my lord, my master hath sworn an oath that he will not part with it for less than forty thousand gold pieces." Here-upon the Prince, understanding that the broker was a just man and a true, weighed out to him the forty thousand sequins and became master of the Spying Tube, enraptured with the thought that assuredly it would satisfy his sire and obtain for him the hand of Princess Nur al-Nihar. So with mind at ease Ali journeyed through Shiraz and over sundry parts of Persia; and in fine, when the year was well nigh spent he joined a caravan and, travelling back to India, arrived safe and sound at the appointed caravanserai whither Prince Husayn had foregone him. There the twain tarried awaiting the third brother's safe return. Such, O King Shahryar, is the story of the two brothers; and now I beseech thee incline thine ear and hearken to what befel the youngest, to wit Prince Ahmad; for indeed his adventure is yet more peregrine and seld-seen of all. When he had parted from his brothers, he took the road leading to Samarkand; and, arriving there after long travel, he also like his brothers alighted at a Khan. Next day he fared forth to see the market square, which folk call the Bazistan, and he found it fairly laid out, the shops wroughten with cunning workmanship and filled with rare stuffs and precious goods and costly merchandise. Now as he wandered to and fro he came across a broker who was hawking a Magical Apple and crying aloud, "Who will buy this fruit, the price whereof be thirty-five thousand gold pieces?" Quoth Prince Ahmad to the man, "Prithee let me see the fruit thou holdest in hand, and explain to me what hidden virtue it possesseth that thou art asking for it so high a value." Quoth the other, smiling and handing to him the apple, "Marvel not at this, O good my lord: in sooth I am certified that when I shall have explained its properties and thou shalt see how it advantageth all mankind, thou wilt not deem my demand exorbitant; nay, rather thou wilt gladly give a treasure house of gold so thou may possess it." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Forty-eighth Night

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the broker said moreover to Prince Ahmad, "Now hearken to me, O my lord, and I will tell thee what of virtue lieth in this artificial apple. If anyone be sick of a sickness however sore, nay more if he be ill nigh unto death, and perchance he smell this pome, he will forthwith recover and become well and whole of whatsoever disease he had, plague or pleurisy, fever or other malignant distemper, as though he never had been attacked; and his strength will return to him forthright, and after smelling this fruit he will be free from all ailment and malady so long as life shall remain to him." Quoth Prince Ahmad, "How shall I be assured that what thou speakest is truth? If the matter be even as thou sayest, then verily I will give thee right gladly the sum thou demandest." Quoth the broker, "O my lord, all men who dwell in the parts about Samarkand know full well how there once lived in this city a sage of wondrous skill who, after many years of toil and travail, wrought this apple by mixing medicines from herbs and minerals countless in number. All his good, which was great, he expended upon it, and when he had perfected it he made whole thousands of sick folk whom he directed only to smell the fruit. But, alas! his life presently came to an end and death overtook him suddenly ere he could save himself by the marvellous scent; and, as he had won no wealth and left only a bereaved wife and a large family of young children and dependents manifold, his widow had no help but provide for them a maintenance by parting with this prodigy." While the salesman was telling his tale to the Prince a crowd of citizens gathered around them and one amongst the folk, who was well known to the broker, came forward and said, "A friend of mine lieth at home sick to the death: the doctors and surgeons all despair of his life; so I beseech thee let him smell this fruit that he may live." Hearing these words, Prince Ahmad turned to the salesman and said, "O my friend, if this sick man of whom thou hearest can recover strength by smelling the apple, then will I straightway buy it of thee at a valuation of forty thousand Ashrafis." The man had permission to sell it for a sum of thirty-five thousand; so he was satisfied to receive five thousand by way of brokerage, and he rejoined, "'Tis well, O my lord, now mayest thou test the virtues of this apple and be persuaded in thy mind: hundreds of ailing folk have I made whole by means of it." Accordingly the Prince accompanied the people to the sick man's house and found him lying on his bed with the breath in his nostrils; but, as soon as the dying man smelt the fruit, at once recovering strength he rose in perfect health, sane and sound. Hereupon Ahmad bought the Magical Apple of the dealer and counted out to him the forty thousand Ashrafis. Presently, having gained the object of his travels, he resolved to join some caravan marching Indiawards and return to his father's home; but meanwhile he resolved to solace himself with the sights and marvels of Samarkand. His especial joy was to gaze upon the glorious plain highs Soghd,[328] one of the wonders of this world: the land on all sides was a delight to the sight, emerald-green and bright, with crystal rills like the plains of Paradise; the gardens bore all manner flowers and fruits and the cities and palaces gladdened the stranger's gaze. After some days Prince Ahmad joined a caravan of merchants wending Indiawards; and, when his long and longsome travel was ended, he at last reached the caravanserai where his two brothers, Husayn and Ali, impatiently awaited his arrival. The three rejoiced with exceeding joy to meet once more and fell on one another's necks; thanking Allah who had brought them back safe and sound, hale and hearty, after such prolonged and longsome absence. Then Prince Husayn, being the eldest, turned to them and said, "Now it behoveth us each to recount what hath betided him and announce what rare thing he hath brought back and what be the virtues thereof; and I, being the first-born, will be the foremost to tell my adventures. I bring with me from Bishangarh, a carpet, mean to look at, but such are its properties that should any sit thereon and wish in mind to visit country or city, he will at once be carried thither in ease and safety although it be distant months, nay years of journey. I have paid forty thousand gold pieces to its price; and, after seeing all the wonders of Bishangarh-land, I took seat upon my purchase and willed myself at this spot. Straightway I found myself here as I wished and have tarried in this caravanserai three months awaiting your arrival. The flying carpet is with me; so let him who listeth make trial of it." When the senior Prince had made an end of telling his tale, Prince Ali spake next and said, "O my brother, this carpet which thou hast brought is marvel-rare and hath most wondrous gifts; nor according to thy statement hath any in all the world seen aught to compare with it." Then bringing forth the Spying Tube, he pursued, "Look ye here, I too have bought for forty thousand Ashrafis somewhat whose merits I will now show forth to you." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Forty-ninth Night

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Prince Ali enlarged upon the virtues of his purchase and said, "Ye see this ivory pipe? By means of it man may descry objects hidden from his sight and distant from him many a mile. 'Tis truly a most wondrous matter and right worthy your inspection, and you two may try it an ye will. Place but an eye close to the smaller glass and form a wish in mind to see what thing soe'er your soul desireth; and, whether it be near hand or distant many hundreds of miles, this ivory will make the object look clear and close to you." At these words Prince Husayn took the pipe from Prince Ali and, applying his eye to one end as he had been directed, then wished in his heart to behold the Princess Nur al-Nihar;[329] and the two brothers watched him to learn what he would say. Suddenly they saw his face change colour and wither as a wilted flower, while in his agitation and distress a flood of tears gushed from his eyes; and, ere his brothers recovered from their amazement and could enquire the cause of such strangeness, he cried aloud, "Alas! and well away. We have endured toil and travail, and we have travelled so far and wide hoping to wed the Princess Nur al-Nihar. But 'tis all in vain: I saw her lying on her bed death-sick and like to breathe her last and around her stood her women all weeping and wailing in the sorest of sorrow. O my brothers, an ye would see her once again for the last time, take ye one final look through the glass ere she be no more." Hereat Prince Ali seized the Spying Tube and peered through it and found the condition of the Princess even as his brother Husayn had described; so he presently passed it over to Prince Ahmad, who also looked and was certified that the Lady Nur al-Nihar was about to give up the ghost. So he said to his elder brothers, "We three are alike love distraught for the Princess and the dearest wish of each one is to win her. Her life is on the ebb, still I can save her and make her whole if we hasten to her without stay or delay." So saying he pulled from his pocket the Magical Apple and showed it to them crying, "This thing is not less in value than either the Flying Carpet or the Spying Tube. In Samarkand I bought it for forty thousand gold pieces and here is the best opportunity to try its virtues. The folk told me that if a sick man hold it to his nose, although on the point of death, he will wax at once well and hale again: I have myself tested it, and now ye shall see for yourselves its marvel-cure when I shall apply it to the case of Nur al-Nihar. Only, let us seek her presence ere she die.” Quoth Prince Husayn, “This were an easy matter: my carpet shall carry us in the twinkling of an eye straight to the bedside of our beloved. Do ye without hesitation sit down with me thereupon, for there is room sufficient to accommodate us three; we shall instantly be carried thither and our servants can follow us.” Accordingly, the three Princes disposed themselves upon the Flying Carpet and each willed in his mind to reach the bedside of Nur al-Nihar, when instantly they found themselves within her apartment. The handmaids and eunuchs in waiting were terrified at the sight and marvelled how these stranger men could have entered the chamber; and, as the Castratos were fain fall upon them, brand in hand, they recognised the Princes and drew back still in wonderment at their intrusion. Then the brothers rose forthright from the Flying Carpet and Prince Ahmad came forwards and put the Magical Apple to the nostrils of the lady, who lay stretched on the couch in unconscious state; and as the scent reached her brain the sickness left her and the cure was complete. She opened wide her eyes and sitting erect upon her bed looked all around and chiefly at the Princes as they stood before her; for she felt that she had waxed hale and hearty as though she awoke after the sweetest of slumber. Presently she arose from her couch and bade her tire-women dress her the while they related to her the sudden coming of the three Princes, her uncle’s sons, and how Prince Ahmad had made her smell something whereby she had recovered of her illness. And after she had made the Ablution of Health she joyed with exceeding joy to see the Princes and returned thanks to them, but chiefly to Prince Ahmad in that he had restored her to health and life. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Fiftieth Night.

Then she said: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the brothers also were gladdened with exceeding gladness to see the Princess Nur al-Nihar recover so suddenly from mortal malady and, presently taking leave of her, they fared to greet their father. Meanwhile the Eunuchs had reported the whole matter to the Sultan, and when the Princes came before him he rose and embraced them tenderly and kissed them on their foreheads, filled with satisfaction to see them again and to hear from them the welfare of the Princess, who was dear to him as she had been his daughter. Then the three brothers produced each one the wondrous thing he had brought from his wayfare; and Prince Husayn first showed the Flying Carpet which in the twinkling of an eye had transported them home from far distant exile and said, “For outward show this carpet hath no merit, but inasmuch as it possesseth such wondrous virtue, methinks ’tis impossible to find in all the world aught that can compare to it for rarity.” Next, Prince Ali presented to the King his Spying Tube and said, “The mirror of JamshÝd[330] is as vain and naught beside this pipe, by means whereof all things from East to West and from North to South are made clearly visible to the ken of man.” Last of all, Prince Ahmad produced the Magical Apple which wondrously saved the dear life of Nur al-Nihar and said, “By means of this fruit all maladies and grievous distempers are at once made whole.” Thus each presented his rarity to the Sultan, saying, “O our lord, deign examine well these gifts we have brought and do thou pronounce which of them all is most excellent and admirable; so, according to thy promise, he amongst us on whom thy choice may fall shall marry the Princess Nur al-Nihar.” When the King had patiently listened to their several claims and had understood how each gift took part in restoring health to his niece, for a while he dove deep in the sea of thought and then answered, “Should I award the palm of merit to Prince Ahmad, whose Magical Apple cured the Princess, then should I deal unfairly by the other two. Albeit his rarity restored her to life and health from mortal illness, yet say me how had he known of her condition save by the virtue of Prince Ali’s Spying Tube? In like manner, but for the Flying Carpet of Prince Husayn, which brought you three hither in a moment's space, the Magical Apple would have been of no avail. Wherefore 'tis my rede all three had like part and can claim equal merit in healing her; for it were impossible to have made her whole if any one thing of the three were wanting; furthermore all three objects are wondrous and marvellous without one surpassing other, nor can I, with aught of reason, assign preference or precedence to any. My promise was to marry the Lady Nur al-Nihar to him who should produce the rarest of rarities, but although strange 'tis not less true that all are alike in the one essential condition. The difficulty still remaineth and the question is yet unsolved, whilst I fain would have the matter settled ere the close of day, and without prejudice to any. So needs must I fix upon some plan whereby I may be able to adjudge one of you to be the winner, and bestow upon him the hand of Princess Nur al-Nihar, according to my plighted word; and thus absolve myself from all responsibility. Now I have resolved upon this course of action; to wit, that ye should mount each one his own steed and all of you be provided with bow and arrows; then do ye ride forth to the Maydßn — the hippodrome — whither I and my Ministers of State and Grandees of the kingdom and Lords of the land will follow you. There in my presence ye shall each, turn by turn, shoot a shaft with all your might and main; and he amongst you whose arrow shall fly the farthest will be adjudged by me worthiest to win the Princess Nur al-Nihar to wife." Accordingly the three Princes, who could not gainsay the decision of their sire nor question its wisdom and justice, backed their coursers, and each taking his bow and arrows made straight for the place appointed. The King also, when he had stored the presents in the royal treasury, arrived there with his Wazirs and the dignitaries of his realm; and as soon as all was ready, the eldest son and heir, Prince Husayn, essayed his strength and skill and shot a shaft far along the level plain. After him Prince Ali hent his bow in hand and, discharging an arrow in like direction, overshot the first; and lastly came Prince Ahmad's turn. He too aimed at the same end, but such was the decree of Destiny, that although the knights and courtiers urged on their horses to note where his shaft might strike ground, withal they saw no trace thereof and none of them knew if it had sunk into the bowels of earth or had flown up to the confines of the sky. Some, indeed, there were who with evil mind held that Prince Ahmad had not shot any bolt, and that his arrow had never left his bow. So at last the King bade no more search be made for it and declared himself in favour of Prince Ali and adjudged that he should wed the Princess Nur al-Nihar, forasmuch as his arrow had outsped that of Prince Husayn. Accordingly, in due course the marriage rites and ceremonies were performed after the law and ritual of the land with exceeding pomp and grandeur. But Prince Husayn would not be present at the bride-feast by reason of his dis appointment and jealousy, for he had loved the Lady Nur al-Nihar with a love far exceeding that of either of his brothers; and he doffed his princely dress and donning the garb of a Fakir fared forth to live a hermit's life. Prince Ahmad also burned with envy and refused to join the wedding-feast; he did not, however, like Prince Husayn, retire to a hermitage, but he spent all his days in searching for his shaft to find where it had fallen. Now it so fortuned that one morning he went again, alone as was his wont, in quest thereof, and starting from the stead whence they had shot their shafts reached the place where the arrows of Princes Husayn and Ali had been found. Then going straight forwards he cast his glances on every side over hill and dale to his right and to his left. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Fifty-first Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Prince Ahmad went searching for his shaft over hill and dale when, after covering some three parasangs, suddenly he espied it lying flat upon a rock.[331] Hereat he marvelled greatly, wondering how the arrow had flown so far, but even more so when he went up to it and saw that it had not stuck in the ground but appeared to have rebounded and to have fallen flat upon a slab of stone. Quoth he to himself, “There must assuredly be some mystery in this matter: else how could anyone shoot a shaft to such a distance and find it fallen after so strange a fashion.” Then, threading his way amongst the pointed crags and huge boulders, he presently came to a hollow in the ground which ended in a subterraneous passage, and after pacing a few paces he espied an iron door. He pushed this open with all ease, for that it had no bolt, and entering, arrow in hand, he came upon an easy slope by which he descended. But whereas he feared to find all pitch-dark, he discovered at some distance a spacious square, a widening of the cave, which was lighted on every side with lamps and candelabra. Then advancing some fifty cubits or more his glance fell upon a vast and handsome palace, and presently there issued from within to the portico a lovely maiden lovesome and lovable, a fairy-form robed in princely robes and adorned from front to foot with the costliest of jewels. She walked with slow and stately gait, withal graceful and blandishing, whilst around her ranged her attendants like the stars about a moon of the fourteenth night. Seeing this vision of beauty, Prince Ahmad hastened to salute her with the salam and she returned it; then coming forwards greeted him graciously and said in sweetest accents, “Well come and welcome, O Prince Ahmad: I am pleased to have sight of thee. How fareth it with thy Highness and why hast thou tarried so long away from me?” The King’s son marvelled greatly to hear her name him by his name; for that he knew not who she was, as they had never seen each other aforetime — how then came she to have learnt his title and condition? Then kissing ground before her he said, “O my lady, I owe thee much of thanks and gratitude for that thou art pleased to welcome me with words of cheer in this strange place where I, alone and a stranger, durst enter with exceeding hesitation and trepidation. But it perplexeth me sorely to think how thou camest to learn the name of thy slave." Quoth she with a smile, "O my lord, come hither and let us sit at ease within yon belvedere; and there I will give an answer to thine asking." So they went thither, Prince Ahmad following her footsteps; and on reaching it he was filled with wonder to see its vaulted roof of exquisite workmanship and adorned with gold and lapis lazuli[332] and paintings and ornaments, whose like was nowhere to be found in the world. The lady seeing his astonishment said to the Prince, "This mansion is nothing beside all my others which now, of my free will, I have made thine own; and when thou seest them thou shalt have just cause for wonderment. Then that sylph-like being took seat upon a raised dais and with abundant show of affection seated Prince Ahmad by her side. Presently quoth she, "Albeit thou know me not, I know thee well, as thou shalt see with surprise when I shall tell thee all my tale. But first it behoveth me disclose to thee who I am. In Holy Writ belike thou hast read that this world is the dwelling-place not only of men, but also of a race hight the Jann in form likest to mortals. I am the only daughter of a Jinn chief of noblest strain and my name is PerÝ-Bßn·. So marvel not to hear me tell thee who thou art and who is the King thy sire and who is Nur al-Nihar, the daughter of thine uncle. I have full knowledge of all concerning thyself and thy kith and kin; how thou art one of three brothers who all and each were daft for love of Princess Nur al-Nihar and strave to win her from one another to wife. Furthermore thy sire deemed it best to send you all far and wide over foreign lands, and thou faredest to far Samarkand and broughtest back a Magical Apple made with rare art and mystery which thou boughtest for forty thousand Ashrafis; then by means whereof thou madest the Princess thy lady-love whole of a grievous malady, whilst Prince Husayn, thine elder brother, bought for the same sum of money a Flying Carpet at Bishangarh, and Prince Ali also brought home a Spying Tube from Shiraz-city. Let this suffice to show thee that naught is hidden from me of all thy case; and now do thou tell me in very truth whom dost thou admire the more, for beauty and loveliness, me or the lady Nur al-Nihar thy brother's wife? My heart longeth for thee with excessive longing and desireth that we may be married and enjoy the pleasures of life and the joyance of love. So say me, art thou also willing to wed me, or pinest thou in preference for the daughter of thine uncle? In the fulness of my affection for thee I stood by thy side unseen during the archery meeting upon the plain of trial, and when thou shottest thy shaft I knew that it would fall far short of Prince Ali's,[333] so I hent it in hand ere it touched ground and carried it away from sight, and striking it upon the iron door caused it rebound and lie flat upon the rock where thou didst find it. And ever since that day I have been sitting in expectancy, wotting well that thou wouldst search for it until thou find it, and by such means I was certified of bringing thee hither to me." Thus spake the beautiful maiden Peri-Banu who with eyes full of love-longing looked up at Prince Ahmad; and then with modest shame bent low her brow and averted her glance. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Fifty-Second Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that when Prince Ahmad heard these words of Peri-Banu he rejoiced with joy exceeding, and said to himself, “The Princess Nur al-Nihar is not within my power to win, and Peri-Banu doth outvie her in comeliness of favour and in loveliness of form and in gracefulness of gait.” In short so charmed was he and captivated that he clean forgot his love for his cousin; and, noting that the heart of his new enchantress inclined towards him, he replied, “O my lady, O fairest of the fair, naught else do I desire save that I may serve thee and do thy bidding all my life long. But I am of human and thou of non-human birth. Thy friends and family, kith and kin, will haply be displeased with thee an thou unite with me in such union.” But she made answer, “I have full sanction of my parents to marry as I list and whomsoever I may prefer. Thou sayest that thou wilt be my servant, nay, rather be thou my lord and master; for I myself and my life and all my good are very thine, and I shall ever be thy bondswoman. Consent now, I beseech thee, to accept me for thy wife: my heart doth tell me thou wilt not refuse my request.” Then Peri-Banu added, “I have told thee already that in this matter I act with fullest authority. Besides all this there is a custom and immemorial usage with us fairy-folk that, when we maidens come to marriageable age and years of understanding, each one may wed, according the dictates of her heart, the person that pleaseth her most and whom she judgeth likely to make her days happy Thus wife and husband live with each other all their lives in harmony and happiness. But if a girl be given away in marriage by the parents, according to their choice and not hers, and she be mated to a helpmate unmeet for her, because ill-shapen or ill- conditioned or unfit to win her affection, then are they twain likely to be at variance each with other for the rest of their days; and endless troubles result to them from such ill-sorted union. Nor are we bound by another law which bindeth modest virgins of the race of Adam; for we freely announce our preference to those we love, nor must we wait and pine to be wooed and won.” When Prince Ahmad heard these words of answer, he rejoiced with exceeding joy and stooping down essayed to kiss the skirt of her garment, but she prevented him, and in lieu of her hem gave him her hand. The Prince clasped it with rapture and according to the custom of that place, he kissed it and placed it to his breast and upon his eyes. Hereat quoth the Fairy, smiling a charming smile, “With my hand locked in thine plight me thy troth even as I pledge my faith to thee, that I will alway true and loyal be, nor ever prove faithless or fail of constancy.” And quoth the Prince, “O loveliest of beings, O dearling of my soul, thinkest thou that I can ever become a traitor to my own heart, I who love thee to distraction and dedicate to thee my body and my sprite; to thee who art my queen, the very empress of me? Freely I give myself to thee, do thou with me whatso thou wilt.” Hereupon Peri-Banu said to Prince Ahmad, “Thou art my husband and I am thy wife.[334] This solemn promise made between thee and me standeth in stead of marriage-contract: no need have we of Kazi, for with us all other forms and ceremonies are superfluous and of no avail. Anon I will show thee the chamber where we shall pass the bride-night; and methinks thou wilt admire it and confess that there is none like thereto in the whole world of men.” Presently her handmaidens spread the table and served up dishes of various kinds, and the finest wines in flagons and goblets of gold dubbed with jewels. So they twain sat at meat and ate and drank their sufficiency. Then Peri-Banu took Prince Ahmad by the hand and led him to her private chamber wherein she slept; and he stood upon the threshold amazed to see its magnificence and the heaps of gems and precious stones which dazed his sight, till recovering himself he cried, “Methinks there is not in the universe a room so splendid and decked with costly furniture and gemmed articles such as this.” Quoth Peri-Banu, “An thou so admire and praise this palace what wilt thou say when sighting the mansions and castles of my sire the Jann-King? Haply too when thou shalt behold my garden thou wilt be filled with wonder and delight; but now ’tis over late to lead thee thither and night approacheth.” Then she ushered Prince Ahmad into another room where the supper had been spread, and the splendour of this saloon yielded in naught to any of the others; nay, rather it was the more gorgeous and dazzling.

Hundreds of wax candles set in candelabra of the finest amber[335] and the purest crystal, ranged on all sides, rained floods of light, whilst golden flowerpots and vessels of finest workmanship and priceless worth, of lovely shapes and wondrous art, adorned the niches and the walls. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Fifty-third Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that tongue of man can never describe the magnificence of that room in which bands of virgin Peris, loveliest of forms and fairest of features, garbed in choicest garments played on sweet-toned instruments of mirth and merriment or sang lays of amorous significance to strains of heart bewitching music. Then they twain, to wit the bride and bridegroom, sat down at meat, ever and anon delaying to indulge in toyings and bashful love-play and chaste caresses. Peri-Banu with her own hands passed the choicest mouthfuls to Prince Ahmad and made him taste of each dish and dainty, telling him their names and whereof they were composed. But how shall I, O auspicious King Shahryar, avail to give thee any notion of those Jinn-made dishes or to describe with due meed of praise the delicious flavour of meats such as no mortal ever tasted or ever beheld? Then, when both had supped, they drank the choicest wines, and ate with relish sweet conserves and dry fruit and a dessert of various delicacies. At length, when they had their requirement of eating and drinking, they retired into another room which contained a raised dais of the grandest, bedecked with gold-purfled cushions and pillows wrought with seed-pearl and Ach menian tapestries, whereupon they took seat side by side for converse and solace. Then came in a troop of Jinns and fairies who danced and sang before them with wondrous grace and art; and this pretty show pleased Peri-Banu and Prince Ahmad, who watched the sports and displays with ever-renewed delight. At last the newly wedded couple rose and retired, weary of revelry, to another chamber, wherein they found that the slaves had dispread the genial bed, whose frame was gold studded with jewels and whose furniture was of satin and sendal flowered with the rarest embroidery. Here the guests who attended at the marriage festival and the handmaids of the palace, ranged in two lines, hailed the bride and bridegroom as they went within; and then, craving dismissal, they all departed leaving them to take their joyance in bed. On such wise the marriage-festival and nuptial merry-makings were kept up day after day, with new dishes and novel sports, novel dances and new music;

and, had Prince Ahmad lived a thousand years with mortal kind, never could he have seen such revels or heard such strains or enjoyed such love-liesse. Thus six months soon passed in the Fairy-land beside Peri-Banu, whom he loved with a love so fond that he would not lose her from his sight for a moment's space; but would feel restless and ill-at-ease whenas he ceased to look upon her. In like manner Peri-Banu was fulfilled with affection for him and strove to please her bridegroom more and more every moment by new arts of dalliance and fresh appliances of pleasure, until so absorbing waxed his passion for her that the thought of home and kindred, kith and kin, faded from his thoughts and fled his mind. But after a time his memory awoke from slumber and at times he found himself longing to look upon his father, albeit well did he wot that it were impossible to find out how the far one fared unless he went himself to visit him. So one day quoth he to Peri-Banu, "An it be thy pleasure, I pray thee give me thy command that I may leave thee for a few days to see my sire, who doubtless grieveth at my long absence and suffereth all the sorrows of separation from his son." Peri-Banu, hearing these words was dismayed with sore dismay, for that she thought within herself that this was only an excuse whereby he might escape and leave her after enjoyment and possession had made her love pall upon the palate of his mind. So quoth she in reply, "Hast thou forgotten thy vows and thy plighted troth, that thou wishest to leave me now? Have love and longing ceased to stir thee, whilst my heart always throbbeth in raptures as it hath ever done at the very thought of thee?" Replied the Prince, "O dearling of my soul, my queen, my empress, what be these doubts that haunt thy mind, and why such sad misgivings and sorrowful words? I know full well that the love of thee and thine affection me-wards are even as thou sayest; and did I not acknowledge this truth or did I prove unthankful or fail to regard thee with a passion as warm and deep, as tender and as true as thine own, I were indeed an ingrate and a traitor of the darkest dye. Far be it from me to desire severance from thee nor hath any thought of leaving thee never to return at any time crossed my mind. But my father is now an old man well shotten in years and he is sore grieved in mind at this long separation from his youngest son. If thou wilt deign command, I would fain go visit him and with all haste return to thine arms; yet I would not do aught in this matter against thy will; and such is my fond affection for thee that I would fain be at all hours of the day and watches of the night by thy side nor leave thee for a moment of time.” Peri-Banu was somewhat comforted by this speech; and from his looks, words and acts she was certified that Prince Ahmad really loved her with fondest love and that his heart was true as steel to her as was his tongue. Whereupon she granted him leave and liberty to set forth and see his sire, whilst at the same time she gave him strict commandment not to tarry long with his kith and kin. Hearken now, O auspicious King Shahryar, to what befel the Sultan of Hindostan and how it fared with him after the marriage of Prince Ali to Princess Nur al-Nihar. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Fifty-fourth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that not seeing Prince Husayn and Prince Ahmad for the space of many days the Sultan waxed exceeding sad and heavy-hearted, and one morning after Darbar,[336] asked his Wazirs and Ministers what had betided them and where they were. Hereto the councillors made answer saying, "O our lord, and shadow of Allah upon earth, thine eldest son and fruit of thy vitals and heir apparent to thine Empire the Prince Husayn, in his disappointment and jealousy and bitter grief hath doffed his royal robes to become a hermit, a devotee, renouncing all worldly lusts and gusts. Prince Ahmad thy third son also in high dudgeon hath left the city; and of him none knoweth aught, whither he hath fled or what hath befallen him." The King was sore distressed and bade them write without stay or delay and forthright despatch firmans and commands to all the Nabobs and Governors of the provinces, with strict injunctions to make straight search for Prince Ahmad and to send him to his sire the moment he was found. But, albeit the commandments were carried out to the letter and all the seekers used the greatest diligence none came upon any trace of him. Then, with increased sadness of heart, the Sultan ordered his Grand Wazir to go in quest of the fugitive and the Minister replied, "Upon my head be it and mine eyes! Thy servant hath already caused most careful research to be made in every quarter, but not the smallest clue hath yet come to hand: and this matter troubleth me the more for that he was dear to me as a son." The Ministers and Grandees now understood that the King was overwhelmed with woe, tearful-eyed and heavy-hearted by reason of the loss of Prince Ahmad; whereupon bethought the Grand Wazir of a certain witch famed for the Black Art who could conjure down the stars from heaven; and who was a noted dweller in the capital. So going to the Sultan he spake highly of her skill in knowledge of the abstruse,[337] saying "Let the King, I pray thee, send for this sorceress and enquire of her concerning his lost son." And the King replied, "'Tis well said: let her be brought hither and haply she shall give me tidings of the Prince and how he fareth." So they fetched the Sorceress and set her before the Sultan, who said, “O my good woman, I would have thee know that ever since the marriage of Prince Ali with the Lady Nur al-Nihar, my youngest son Prince Ahmad,[338] who was disappointed in her love, hath disappeared from our sight and no man knoweth aught of him. Do thou forthright apply thy magical craft and tell me only this: — Is he yet alive or is he dead? An he live I would learn where is he and how fareth he; moreover, I would ask, Is it written in my book of Destiny that I shall see him yet again?” To this the Witch made reply, “O Lord of the Age and ruler of the times and tide, ’tis not possible for me at once to answer all these questions which belong to the knowledge of Hidden Things; but, if thy Highness deign grant me one day of grace, I will consult my books of gramarye and on the morrow will give thee a sufficient reply and a satisfactory.” The Sultan to this assented, saying, “An thou can give me detailed and adequate answer, and set my mind at ease after this sorrow, thou shalt have an exceeding great reward and I will honour thee with highmost honour.” Next day the Sorceress, accompanied by the Grand Wazir, craved permission to appear before the presence, and when it was granted came forward and said, “I have made ample investigation by my art and mystery and I have assured myself that Prince Ahmad is yet in the land of the living. Be not therefore uneasy in thy mind on his account; but at present, save this only, naught else can I discover regarding him, nor can I say for sure where he be or how he is to be found.” At these words the Sultan took comfort, and hope sprang up within his breast that he should see his son again ere he died. Now return we to the story of Prince Ahmad. Whenas Peri-Banu understood that he was bent upon visiting his sire and she was convinced that his love her-wards remained firm and steadfast as before, she took thought and determined that it would ill become her to refuse him leave and liberty for such purpose; so she again pondered the matter in her mind and debated with herself for many an hour till at length, one day of the days, she turned to her husband and said, “Albeit my heart consenteth not to part from thee for a moment or to lose sight of thee for a single instant, still inasmuch as thou hast ofttimes made entreaty of me and hast shown thyself so solicitous to see thy sire, I will no longer baffle thy wish. But this my favour will depend upon one condition; otherwise I will never grant thy petition and give thee such permission. Swear to me the most binding of oaths that thou wilt haste thee back hither with all possible speed, and thou wilt not by long absence cause me yearning grief and anxious waiting for thy safe return to me.” Prince Ahmad, well pleased to win his wish, thanked her saying, “O my beloved, fear not for me after any fashion and rest assured I will come back to thee with all haste as soon as I shall have seen my sire; and life hath no charms for me away from thy presence. Although I must needs be severed from thee for a few days, yet will my heart ever turn to thee and to thee only.” These words of Prince Ahmad gladdened the heart of Peri-Banu and drove away the darksome doubts and mysterious misgivings which ever haunted her nightly dreams and her daily musings. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Peri-Banu gladdened by these premises addressed her husband, Prince Ahmad, “So now, as soon as thy heart desireth, go thou and pay thy respects to thy sire; but ere thou set out I would charge thee with one charge and look that on no wise thou forget my rede and my counsel. Speak not to any a single word of this thy marriage nor of the strange sights thou hast seen and the wonders thou hast witnessed; but keep them carefully concealed from thy father and thy brethren and from thy kith and kin, one and all. This only shalt thou tell thy sire, so his mind may be set at ease that thou art buxom and happy; also that thou hast returned home for a while only with the object of seeing him and becoming assured of his welfare.” Then she gave orders to her people bidding them make ready for the journey without delay; and when all things were prepared she appointed twenty horsemen, armed cap-a-pie and fully accoutred, to accompany her husband, and gave him a horse of perfect form and proportions, swift as the blinding leven or the rushing wind; and its housings and furniture were bedeckt with precious ores and studded with jewels. Then she fell on his neck and they embraced with warmest love; and as the twain bade adieu, Prince Ahmad, to set her mind at rest, renewed his protestations and sware to her again his solemn oath. Then mounting his horse and followed by his suite (all Jinn-born cavaliers) he set forth with mighty pomp and circumstance, and riding diligently he soon reached his father’s capital. Here he was received with loud acclamations, the like of which had never been known in the land. The Ministers and Officers of State, the citizens and the Ryots all rejoiced with exceeding joy to see him once more, and the folk left their work and with blessings and low obeisances joined the cavalcade; and, crowding around him on every side, escorted him to the palace gates. When the Prince reached the threshold he dismounted and, entering the audience-hall, fell at his father’s feet and kissed them in a transport of filial affection. The Sultan, well nigh distraught for delight at the unexpected sight of Prince Ahmad, rose from his throne and threw himself upon his son’s neck weeping for very joy and kissed his forehead saying, "O dear my child, in despair at the loss of the Lady Nur al-Nihar thou didst suddenly fly from thy home, and, despite all research, nor trace nor sign of thee was to be found however sedulously we sought thee; and I, distracted at thy disappearance, am reduced to this condition in which thou seest me. Where hast thou been this long while, and how hast thou lived all this time?" Replied Prince Ahmad, "'Tis true, O my lord the King, that I was downhearted and distressed to see Prince Ali gain the hand of my cousin, but that is not the whole cause of my absence. Thou mayest remember how, when we three brothers rode at thy command to yonder plain for a trial of archery, my shaft, albeit the place was large and flat, disappeared from sight and none could find where it had fallen. Now so it fortuned that one day in sore heaviness of mind I fared forth alone and unaccompanied to examine the ground thereabout and try if haply I could find my arrow. But when I reached the spot where the shafts of my brothers, Princes Husayn and Ali, had been picked up, I made search in all directions, right and left, before and behind, thinking that thereabouts mine also might come to hand; but all my trouble was in vain: I found neither shaft nor aught else. So walking onwards in obstinate research, I went a long way, and at last despairing, I would have given up the quest, for full well I knew that my bow could not have carried so far, and indeed that 'twere impossible for any marksman to have driven bolt or pile to such distance, when suddenly I espied it lying flat upon a rock some four parasangs[339] distant from this place." The Sultan marvelled with much marvel at his words and the Prince presently resumed, "So when I picked up the arrow, O my lord, and considered it closely I knew it for the very one I had shot, but admired in my mind how it had come to fly so far, and I doubted not but that there was a somewhat mysterious about the matter. While I thus reflected I came upon the place where I have sojourned ever since that day in perfect solace and happiness. I may not tell thee more of my tale than this; for I came only to ease thy mind on my account, and now I pray thee deign grant me thy supreme permission that I return forthright to my home of delights. From time to time I will not cease to wait upon thee and to enquire of thy welfare with all the affection of a son." Replied the King, "O my child, the sight of thee hath gladdened mine eyes; and I am now satisfied; and not unwillingly I give thee leave to go, since thou art happy in some place so near hand; but shouldst thou at any time delay thy coming hither, say me, how shall I be able to get tidings of thy good health and welfare?” And quoth Prince Ahmad, “O my lord the King, that which thou requirest of me is part of my secret and this must remain deep hidden in my breast: as I said before, I may not discover it to thee nor say aught that might lead to its discovery. However, be not uneasy in thy soul, for I will appear before thee full many a time and haply I may irk thee with continual coming.” “O my son,” rejoined the Sultan, “I would not learn thy secret an thou would keep it from me, but there is one only thing I desire of thee, which is, that ever and anon I may be assured of thine enduring health and happiness. Thou hast my full permission to hie thee home, but forget not at least once a month to come and see me even as now thou dost, lest such forgetfulness cause me anxiety and trouble, cark and care.” So Prince Ahmad tarried with his father three days full-told, but never for a moment did the memory of the Lady Peri-Banu fade from his mind; and on the fourth day he mounted horse and returned with the same pomp and pageantry wherewith he came. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Fifty-sixth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Peri-Banu joyed with exceeding joy at the sight of Prince Ahmad as he returned to his home; and it seemed to her as though they had been parted for three hundred years: such is love that moments of separation are longsome and weary as twelvemonths. The Prince offered much of excuses for his short absence and his words delighted Peri-Banu yet the more. So these twain, lover and beloved, passed the time in perfect happiness, taking their pleasure one with other. Thus a month went by and Prince Ahmad never once mentioned the name of his sire nor expressed a wish to go visit him according to his promise. Noting this change, the Lady Peri-Banu said to him one day, "Thou toldest me aforetime that once in the beginning of each month thou wouldst fare forth and travel to thy father's court and learn news of his welfare: why then neglectest thou so to do, seeing that he will be distressed and anxiously expecting thee?" Replied Prince Ahmad, "'Tis even as thou sayest, but, awaiting thy command and thy permission, I have forborne to propose the journey to thee." And she made answer, "Let thy faring and thy returning rest not on my giving thee liberty of leave. At the beginning of each month as it cometh round, do thou ride forth, and from this time forwards thou hast no need to ask permission of me. Stay with thy sire three days full-told and on the fourth come back to me without fail." Accordingly, on the next day betimes in the morning Prince Ahmad took his departure and as aforetime rode forth with abundant pomp and parade and repaired to the palace of the Sultan his sire, to whom he made his obeisance. On like manner continued he to do each month with a suite of horsemen larger and more brilliant than before, whilst he himself was more splendidly mounted and equipped. And whenever the Crescent appeared in the Western sky he fondly farewelled his wife and paid his visit to the King, with whom he tarried three whole days, and on the fourth returned to dwell with Peri-Banu. But, as each and every time he went, his equipage was greater and grander than the last, at length one of the Wazirs, a favourite and cup-companion of the King, was filled with wonderment and jealousy to see Prince Ahmad appear at the palace with such opulence and magnificence. So he said in himself, “None can tell whence cometh this Prince, and by what means he hath obtained so splendid a suite.” Then of his envy and malice that Wazir fell to plying the King with deceitful words and said, “O my liege lord and mighty sovran, it ill becometh thee to be thus heedless of Prince Ahmad’s proceedings. Seest thou not how day after day his retinue increaseth in numbers and puissance? What an he should plot against thee and cast thee into prison, and take from thee the reins of the realm? Right well thou wottest that inasmuch as thou didst wed Prince Ali to the Lady Nur al-Nihar thou provokedest the wrath of Prince Husayn and Prince Ahmad; so that one of them in the bitterness of his soul renounced the pomps and vanities of this world and hath become a Fakir, whilst the other, to wit; Prince Ahmad, appeareth before thy presence in such inordinate power and majesty. Doubtless they both seek their revenge; and, having gotten thee into their power, the twain will deal treacherously with thee. So I would have thee beware, and again I say beware; and seize the forelock of opportunity ere it be too late; for the wise have said,

‘Thou canst bar a spring with a sod of clay * But when grown ‘twill bear a big host away.’”

Thus spake that malicious Wazir; and presently he resumed, “Thou knowest also that when Prince Ahmad would end his three days’ visits he never asketh thy leave nor farewelleth thee nor biddeth adieu to any one of his family. Such conduct is the beginning of rebellion and proveth him to be rancorous of heart. But ’tis for thee in thy wisdom to decide.” These words sank deep in the heart of the simple-minded Sultan and grew a crop of the direst suspicions. He presently thought within himself, “Who knoweth the mind and designs of Prince Ahmad, whether they be dutiful or undutiful towards me? Haply he may be plotting vengeance; so it besitteth me to make enquiries concerning him, to discover where he dwelleth and by what means he hath attained to such puissance and opulence.” Filled with these jealous thoughts, he sent in private one day, unbeknown to the Grand Wazir who would at all times befriend Prince Ahmad, to summon the Witch; and, admitting her by a secret postern to his private chamber, asked of her saying, “Thou didst aforetime learn by thy magical art that Prince Ahmad was alive and didst bring me tidings of him. I am beholden to thee for this good office, and now I would desire of thee to make further quest into his case and ease my mind, which is sore disturbed. Albeit my son still liveth and cometh to visit me every month, yet am I clean ignorant of the place wherein he dwelleth and whence he setteth out to see me; for that he keepeth the matter close hidden from his sire. Go thou forthright and privily, without the knowledge of any, my Wazirs and Nabobs, my courtiers and my household; and make thou diligent research and with all haste bring me word whereabouts he liveth. He now sojourneth here upon his wonted visit; and, on the fourth day, without leave-taking or mention of departure to me or to any of the Ministers and Officers, he will summon his suite and mount his steed; then will he ride to some little distance hence and suddenly disappear. Do thou without stay or delay forego him on the path and lie perdue in some convenient hollow hard by the road whence thou mayest learn where he hometh; then quickly bring me tidings thereof." Accordingly, the Sorceress departed the presence of the King; and, after walking over the four parasangs, she hid herself within a hollow of the rocks hard by the place where Prince Ahmad had found his arrow, and there awaited his arrival. Early on the morrow the Prince, as was his wont, set out upon his journey without taking leave of his sire or fare welling any of the Ministers. So when they drew nigh, the Sorceress caught sight of the Prince and of the retinue that rode before and beside him; and she saw them enter a hollow way which forked into a many of by-ways; and so steep and dangerous were the cliffs and boulders about the track that hardly could a footman safely pace that path. Seeing this the Sorceress bethought her that it must surely lead to some cavern or haply to a subterraneous passage, or to a souterrain the abode of Jinns and fairies; when suddenly the Prince and all his suite vanished from her view. So she crept out of the hiding-place wherein she had ensconced herself and wandered far and wide seeking, as dillgently as she was able, but never finding the subterraneous passage nor yet could she discern the iron door which Prince Ahmad had espied, for none of human flesh and blood had power to see this save he alone to whom it was made visible by the Fairy Peri-Banu; furthermore it was ever concealed from the prying eyes of womankind. Then said the Sorceress to herself, This toil and moil have I undertaken to no purpose; yea, verily, I have failed to find out that wherefor I came." So she went forthright back to the Sultan and reported to him all that had betided her, how she had lain in wait amid the cliffs and boulders and had seen the Prince and suite ride up the most perilous of paths and, having entered a hollow way, disappear in an eyetwinkling from her sight. And she ended by saying, "Albeit I strove my utmost to find out the spot wherein the Prince abideth, yet could I on no wise succeed; and I pray thy Highness may grant me time to search further into the matter and to find out this mystery which by skill and caution on my part shall not long abide concealed." Answered the Sultan, "Be it as thou wilt: I grant thee leisure to make enquiry and after a time I shall await thy return hither." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Fifty-seventh Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that moreover the King largessed the Witch with a diamond of large size and of great price, saying, “Take this stone to guerdon for thy trouble and travail and in earnest of future favours; so, when thou shalt return and bring me word that thou hast searched and found out the secret, thou shalt have a Bakhshish of far greater worth and I will make thy heart rejoice with choicest joy and honour thee with highmost honour.” So the Sorceress looked forwards to the coming of the Prince, for well she knew that at the sight of each crescent he rode home to visit his sire and was bound to abide with him three days, even as the Lady Peri-Banu had permitted and had enjoined him. Now when the moon had waxed and waned, on the day before the Prince would leave home upon his monthly visit, the Witch betook her to the rocks and sat beside the place whence she imagined he would issue forth; and next morning early he and his suite, composed of many a mounted knight with his esquire a-foot, who now always accompanied him in increasing numbers, rode forth gallantly through the iron doorway and passed hard by the place where she lay in wait for him. The Sorceress crouched low upon the ground in her tattered rags; and, seeing a heap by his way, the Prince at first supposed that a slice of stone had fallen from the rocks across his path. But as he drew nigh she fell to weeping and wailing with might and main as though in sore dolour and distress, and she ceased not to crave his countenance and assistance with increase of tears and lamentations. The Prince seeing her sore sorrow had pity on her, and reining in his horse, asked her what she had to require of him and what was the cause of her cries and lamentations. At this the cunning crone but cried the more, and the Prince was affected with compassion still livelier at seeing her tears and hearing her broken, feeble words. So when the Sorceress perceived that Prince Ahmad had ruth on her and would fain show favour to her, she heaved a heavy sigh and in woeful tones, mingled with moans and groans, addressed him in these false words, withal holding the hem of his garment and at times stopping as if convulsed with pain, “O my lord and lord of all loveliness, as I was journeying from my home in yonder city upon an errand to such a place, behold, when I came thus far upon my way, suddenly a hot fit of fever seized me and a shivering and a trembling, so that I lost all strength and fell down helpless as thou seest me; and still no power have I in hand or foot to rise from the ground and to return to my place.” Replied the Prince, “Alas, O good woman, there is no house at hand where thou mayest go and be fitly tended and tendered. Howbeit I know a stead whither, an thou wilt, I can convey thee and where by care and kindness thou shalt (Inshallah!) soon recover of thy complaint. Come then with me as best thou canst.” With loud moans and groans the Witch made answer, “So weak am I in every limb and helpless that I can by no means rise off the ground or move save with the help of some friendly hand.” The Prince then bade one of his horsemen lift up the feeble and ailing old woman and set her upon his steed; and the cavalier did his lord’s bidding forthright and mounted her astraddle upon the crupper of his courser: then, Prince Ahmad rode back with her and entering by the iron door carried her to his apartment and sent for Peri-Banu. His wife hurriedly coming forth to the Prince asked him in her flurry, “Is all well and wherefore hast thou come back and what wouldst thou that thou hast sent for me?” Prince Ahmad then told her of the old woman who was healthless and helpless, adding, “Scarce had I set out on my journey when I espied this ancient dame lying hard by the roadside, suffering and in sore distress. My heart felt pity for her to see her in such case and constrained me to bring her hither as I could not leave her to die among the rocks; and I pray thee of thy bounty take her in and give her medicines that she may soon be made whole of this her malady. An thou wilt show this favour I shall not cease to thank thee and be beholden to thee.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Fifty-eighth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Peri-Banu looked at the old woman and charged a twain of her handmaidens that they carry her into a room apart and tend her with the tenderest care and the uttermost of diligence. The attendants did as she bade them and transported the Sorceress to the place she had designed. Then Peri-Banu addressed Prince Ahmad saying, “O my lord, I am pleased to see thy pitiful kindness towards this ancient dame, and I surely will look to her case even as thou hast enjoined me; but my heart misgiveth me and much I fear some evil will result from thy goodness. This woman is not so ill as she doth make believe, but practiseth deceit upon thee and I ween that some enemy or envier hath plotted a plot against me and thee. Howbeit go now in peace upon thy journey.” The Prince, who on no wise took to heart the words of his wife, presently replied to her, “O my lady, Almighty Allah forfend thee from all offence! With thee to help and guard me I fear naught of ill: I know of no foeman who would compass my destruction, for I bear no grudge against any living being, and I foresee no evil at the hands of man or Jann.” Thereupon the Prince again took leave of Peri-Banu and repaired with his attendants to the palace of his sire who, by reason of the malice of his crafty Minister, was inwardly afraid to see his son; but not the less he welcomed him with great outward show of love and affection. Meanwhile the two fairy handmaidens, to whom Peri-Banu had given charge of the Witch, bore her away to a spacious room splendidly furnished; and laid her on a bed having a mattress of satin and a brocaded coverlet. Then one of them sat by her side whilst the other with all speed fetched, in a cup of porcelain, an essence which was a sovereign draught for ague and fever. Presently they raised her up and seated her on the couch saying, “Drain thou this drink. It is the water of the Lions’ Fount and whoso tasteth of the same is forthwith made whole of what disease soever he hath.” The Sorceress took the cup with great difficulty and after swallowing the contents lay back on the bed; and the handmaidens spread the quilt over her saying, “Now rest awhile and thou shalt soon feel the virtues of this medicine." Then they left her to sleep for an hour or so; but presently the Witch, who had feigned sickness to the intent only that she might learn where Prince Ahmad abode and might inform the Sultan thereof, being assured that she had discovered all that she desired, rose up and summoning the damsels said to them, "The drinking of that draught hath restored to me all my health and strength: I now feel hale and hearty once more and my limbs are filled with new life and vigour. So at once acquaint your lady herewith, that I may kiss the hem of her robe and return my thanks for her goodness me-wards, then depart and hie me home again." Accordingly, the two handmaidens took the Sorceress with them and showed her as they went along the several apartments, each more magnificent and kingly than the other; and at length they reached the belvedere which was the noblest saloon of all, and fitted and filled with furniture exceeding costly and curious. There sat Peri-Banu upon a throne which was adorned with diamonds and rubies, emeralds, pearls and other gems of unwonted size and water, whilst round about her stood fairies of lovely form and features, robed in the richest raiments and awaiting with folded hands her commandments. The Sorceress marvelled with extreme marvel to see the splendour of the chambers and their furniture, but chiefly when she beheld the Lady Peri-Banu seated upon the jewelled throne; nor could she speak a word for confusion and awe, but she bent down low and placed her head upon Peri-Banu's feet. Quoth the Princess in soft speech and reassuring tones, "O good woman, it pleaseth me greatly to see thee a guest in this my palace, and I joy even more to learn that thou be wholly quit of thy sickness. So now solace thy spirits with walking all round about the place and my servants will accompany thee and show thee what there is worthy of thine inspection." Hereat the Witch again louted low and kissed the carpet under Peri-Banu's feet, and took leave of her hostess in goodly phrase and with great show of gratitude for her favours. The handmaids then led her round the palace and displayed to her all the rooms, which dazed and dazzled her sight so that she could not find words to praise them sufficiently. Then she went her ways and the fairies escorted her past the iron doorway whereby Prince Ahmad had brought her in, and left her, bidding her God-speed and blessing her; and the foul crone with many thanks took the road to her own home. But when she had walked to some distance she was minded to see the iron door, so might she with ease know it again; so she went back, but lo and behold! the entrance had vanished and was invisible to her as to all other women. Accordingly, after searching on all sides and pacing to and fro and finding nor sign nor trace of palace or portal, she repaired in despair to the city and, creeping along a deserted path-way, entered the palace, according to her custom, by the private postern. When safely within she straightway sent word by an eunuch to the Sultan, who ordered that she be brought before him. She approached him with troubled countenance, whereat, perceiving that she had failed to carry out her purpose, he asked, “What news? Hast thou accomplished thy design or hast thou been baffled therein?” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Fifty-ninth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Sorceress, who was a mere creature of the malicious Wazir, replied, “O King of kings, this matter have I fully searched out even as thou gavest command, and I am about to tell thee all that hath betided me. The signs of sorrow and marks of melancholy thou notest upon my countenance are for other cause which narrowly concerneth thy welfare.” Then she began to recount her adventure in these terms, “Now when I had reached the rocks I sat me down feigning sickness; and, as Prince Ahmad passed that way and heard my complaining and saw my grievous condition, he had compassion on me. After some ‘said and say’ he took me with him by a subterranean passage and through an iron door to a magnificent palace and gave me in charge of a fairy, Peri-Banu hight, of passing beauty and loveliness, such as human eye hath never yet seen. Prince Ahmad bade her make me her guest for some few days and bring me a medicine which would complete my cure, and she to please him at once appointed handmaidens to attend upon me. So I was certified that the twain were one flesh, husband and wife. I feigned to be exceeding frail and feeble and made as though I had not strength to walk or even to stand; whereat the two damsels supported me, one on either side, and I was carried into a room where they gave me somewhat to drink and put me upon a bed to rest and sleep. Then thought I to myself:— ‘Verily I have gained the object wherefor I had feigned sickness’; and I was assured that it availed no more to practise deceit. Accordingly, after a short while I arose and said to the attendants that the draught which they had given me to drink had cut short the fever and had restored strength to my limbs and life to my frame. Then they led me to the presence of the Lady Peri-Banu, who was exceeding pleased to see me once more hale and hearty, and bade her handmaidens conduct me around the palace and show each room in its beauty and splendour; after which I craved leave to wend my ways and here am I again to work thy will.” When thus she had made known to the King all that had betided her, she resumed, “Perchance, on hearing of the might and majesty, opulence and magnificence of the Lady Peri-Banu, thou wilt be gladdened and say within thyself, ‘’Tis well that Prince Ahmad is wedded to this Fairy and hath gotten for himself such wealth and power;’ but to the thinking of this thy slave the matter is quite other. It is not well, I dare avouch, that thy son should possess such puissance and treasures, for who knoweth but that he may by good aid of Peri-Banu bring about division and disturbance in the realm? Beware of the wiles and malice of women. The Prince is bewitched with love of her, and peradventure at her incitement he may act towards thee otherwise than right, and lay hands on thy hoards and seduce thy subjects and become master of thy kingdom; and albeit he would not of his own free will do aught to his father and his forbears save what was pious and dutiful, yet the charms of his Princess may work upon him little by little and end by making him a rebel and what more I may not say. Now mayest thou see that the matter is a weighty, so be not heedless but give it full consideration.” Then the Sorceress made ready to gang her gait when spake the King, saying, “I am beholden to thee in two things; the first, that thou tookest upon thyself much toil and travail, and on my behalf riskedst thy life to learn the truth anent my son Prince Ahmad. Secondly, I am thankful for that thou hast given me a rede so sound and such wholesome counsel.” So saying, he dismissed her with the highmost honour; but no sooner had she left the palace than he, sore distraught, summoned his second Wazir, the malicious Minister who had incited him against Prince Ahmad, and when he and his friends appeared in the presence he laid before them the whole matter and asked of them, saying, “What is your counsel, and what must I do to protect myself and my kingdom against the wiles of this Fairy?” Replied one of his councillors, “’Tis but a trifling matter and the remedy is simple and nearhand. Command that Prince Ahmad, who is now within the city if not in the palace, be detained as one taken prisoner. Let him not be put to death, lest haply the deed may engender rebellion; but at any rate place him under arrest and if he prove violent clap him in irons.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Sixtieth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that this felon counsel pleased the malicious Minister and all his fautors and flatterers highly approved his rede. The Sultan kept silence and made no reply, but on the morrow he sent and summoned the Sorceress and debated with her whether he should or should not cast Prince Ahmad into prison. Quoth she, “O King of kings, this counsel is clean contrary to sound sense and right reason. An thou throw Prince Ahmad into gaol, so must thou also do with all his knights and their esquires; and inasmuch as they are Jinns and Mßrids, who can tell their power of reprisals? Nor prison-cells nor gates of adamant can keep them in; they will forthwith escape and report such violence to the Fairy who, wroth with extreme wrath to find her husband doomed to durance vile like a common malefactor, and that too for no default or crime but by a treacherous arrest, will assuredly deal the direst of vengeance on thy head and do us a damage we shall not be able to forfend. An thou wilt confide in me, I will advise thee how to act, whereby thou mayest win thy wish and no evil will come nigh thee or thy kingship. Thou knowest well that to Jinns and Fairies is power given of doing in one short moment deeds marvellous and wondrous, which mortals fail to effect after long years of toil and trouble. Now whenas thou goest a-hunting or on other expedition, thou requirest pavilions for thyself and many tents for thy retinue and attendants and soldiery; and in making ready and transporting such store much time and wealth are wastefully expended. I would advise, O King of kings, that thou try Prince Ahmad by the following test: do thou bid him bring to thee a Shßhmiyßnah[340] so long and so broad that it will cover and lodge the whole of thy court and men-at-arms and camp-followers, likewise the beasts of burthen; and yet it must be so light that a man may hold it in the hollow of his hand and carry it whithersoever he listeth.” Then, after holding her peace for a while, she added, still addressing the Sultan, “And as soon as Prince Ahmad shall acquit himself of this commission, do thou demand of him a somewhat still greater and more wondrous wherewith I will make thee ware, and which he will find grievous of execution. On this wise shalt thou fill thy treasury with rare inventions and strange, the handicraft of Jßnn, nor will this cease till such time in fine when thy son shall be at his wits' end to carry out thy requirements. Then, humbled and abashed, he will never dare to enter thy capital or even thy presence; and thus shalt thou be saved from fear of harm at his hands, and thou shalt not have need to put him in gaol or, worse still, to do him dead." Hearing these words of wisdom, the Sultan made known the Witch's device to his advisers and asked them what they deemed thereof. They held their peace and answered not a word or good or ill; while he himself highly approved it and said no more. Next day Prince Ahmad came to visit the King, who welcomed him with overflowing affection and clasping him to his bosom kissed him on eyes and forehead. Long time they sat conversing on various subjects, till at length the Sultan finding an occasion spake thus, "O dear my son, O Ahmad, for many a day have I been sad at heart and sorrowful of soul because of separation from thee, and when thou camest back I was gladdened with great gladness at sight of thee, and albeit thou didst and dost still withhold from me the knowledge of thy whereabouts, I refrained from asking thee or seeking to find out thy secret, since it was not according to thy mind to tell me of thine abode. Now, however, I have heard say that thou art wedded to a mighty JinnÝyah[341] , of passing beauty; and the tidings please me with the highmost possible pleasure. I desire not to learn aught from thee concerning thy Fairy-wife save whatso thou wouldst entrust to me of thine own free will; but, say me, should I at any time require somewhat of thee, canst thou obtain it from her? Doth she regard thee with such favour that she will not deny thee anything thou askest of her?" Quoth the Prince, "O my lord, what dost thou demand of me? My wife is devoted to her husband in heart and soul, so prithee let me learn what it is thou wouldst have of me and her." Replied the Sultan, Thou knowest that ofttimes I fare a-hunting or on some foray and fray, when I have great need of tents and pavilions and Shahmiyanahs, with herds and troops of camels and mules and other beasts of burden to carry the camp from place to place. I would, therefore, that thou bring me a tent so light that a man may carry it in the hollow of his hand, and yet so large that it may contain my court and all my host and camp and suttlers and bÔt-animals. An thou wouldst ask the Lady for this gift I know full well that she can give it; and hereby shalt thou save me much of trouble in providing carriage for the tentage and spare me much waste and loss of beasts and men.” The Prince replied, “O my sire the Sultan, trouble not thy thought. I will at once make known thy wish to my wife, the Lady Peri-Banu; and, albeit little I wot an fairies have the faculty of making a pavilion such as thou describest, or indeed (supposing that they have such power), an she will grant me or not grant me her aidance; and, moreover, although I cannot promise thee such present, yet whatsoever lieth in my ability to do, that will I gladly do for thy service.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Sixty-first Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that quoth the King to Prince Ahmad, "Shouldst thou perchance fail in this matter and bring me not the gift required, O my son, I will never see thy face again. A sorry husband thou, in good sooth, if thy wife refuse so mean a thing and hasten not to do all thou biddest her do; giving thee to see that thou art of small value and consequence in her eyes, and that her love for thee is a quantity well nigh to naught. But do thou, O my child, go forth and straightway ask her for the tent. An she give it thee know thou she desireth thee and thou art the dearest of all things to her; and I have been informed that she loveth thee with all her heart and soul and will by no means refuse thee aught thou requirest, were it even the balls of her eyes." Now Prince Ahmad was ever wont to tarry three days each month with the Sultan his sire, and return to his spouse on the fourth; but this time he stayed two days only and farewelled his father on the third. As he passed into the palace Peri-Banu could not but note that he was sad at heart and downcast of face; so she asked of him, "Is all well with thee? Why hast thou come to-day and not tomorrow from the presence of the King thy father, and why carriest thou so triste a countenance?" Whereupon, after kissing her brow and fondly embracing her, he told her the whole matter, first to last, and she made answer, "I will speedily set thy mind at rest, for I would not see thee so saddened for a moment longer. Howbeit, O my love, from this petition of the Sultan thy sire I am certified that his end draweth nigh, and he will soon depart this world to the mercy of Allah the Almighty.[342] Some enemy hath done this deed and much of mischief hath made for thee; and the result is that thy father, all unmindful of his coming doom, cloth seek diligently his own destruction." The Prince, anxious and alarmed, thus answered his wife, "Almighty Allah be praised, the King my liege lord is in the best of health and showeth no sign of disorder or decrepitude: 'tis but this morning I left him hale and hearty, and in very sooth I never saw him in better case. Strange, indeed, that thou shouldst ken what shall betide him before I have told thee aught concerning him, and especially how he hath come to learn of our marriage and of our home." Quoth Peri-Banu, "O my Prince, thou knowest what I said to thee whenas I saw the old dame whom thou broughtest hither as one afflicted with the ague and fever. That woman, who is a Witch of Satan's breed, hath disclosed to thy father all he sought to learn concerning this our dwelling-place. And notwithstanding that I saw full clearly she was nor sick nor sorry, but only feigning a fever, I gave her medicine to drink which cureth complaints of all kinds, and she falsely made believe that by its virtues she had recovered health and strength. So when she came to take leave of me, I sent her with two of my damsels and bid them display to her every apartment in the palace together with its furniture and decorations, that she might better know the condition of me and thee. Now all this did I on thy account only, for thou badest me show compassion to the ancient woman and I was rejoiced to see her departing safe and sound and in the best of spirits. Save her alone, no human being had ever power to know aught of this place, much less to come hither." Prince Ahmad hearing these words thanked and praised her and said, "O sun-faced beauty, I would beg of thee to grant me a boon whereof my father hath made request of me; to wit, a Shahmiyanah of such dimensions that it may shelter him and his many, his camp and bat-cattle and withal may be carried in the hollow of the hand. An such marvel exist I wot not, yet would I do my utmost to procure it, and carry it to him right loyally." Quoth she, "Why trouble thyself for so small a matter? I will forthright send for it and give it thee." Then she summoned one of her handmaids who was treasurer to her and said, "O Nur Jehßn,[343] go thou at once and bring me a pavilion of such and such a fashion." So she fared forth without delay and as quickly came back with the pavilion which, at her lady's bidding, she placed in the palm of Prince Ahmad's hand. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Sixty-second Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Prince Ahmad hent the pavilion in hand and thought to himself, “What is this Peri-Banu giveth me? Surely she doth make a mock of me.” His wife, however, reading his mind in his face fell to laughing aloud, and asked, “What is it, O my dearling Prince? Dost thou think that I am jesting and jibing at thee?” Then she continued, addressing the treasurer Nur Jehan, “Take now yon tent from Prince Ahmad and set it upon the plain that he may see its vast size and know if it be such an one as required by the Sultan his sire.” The handmaid took the pavilion and pitched it afar from the Palace; and yet one end thereof reached thereto from the outer limit of the plain; and so immense was its size that (as Prince Ahmad perceived) there was room therein for all the King’s court; and, were two armies ranged under it with their camp-followers and bÔt-animals, one would on no wise crowd or inconvenience the other. He then begged pardon of Peri-Banu saying, “I wot not that the Shahmiyanah was so prodigious of extent and of so marvellous a nature; wherefore I misdoubted when first I saw it.” The Treasurer presently struck the tent and returned it to the palm of his hand; then, without stay or delay, he took horse and followed by his retinue rode back to the royal presence, where after obeisance and suit and service he presented the tent. The Sultan also, at first sight of the gift, thought it a small matter, but marvelled with extreme marvel to see its size when pitched, for it would have shaded his capital and its suburbs. He was not, however, wholly satisfied, for the size of the pavilion now appeared to him superfluous; but his son assured him that it would always fit itself to its contents. He thanked the Prince for bringing him so rare a present, saying, “O my son, acquaint thy consort with my obligation to her and offer my grateful thanks for this her bounteous gift. Now indeed know I of a truth that she doth love thee with the whole of her heart and soul and all my doubts and fears are well nigh set at rest.” Then the King commanded they should pack up the tent and store it with all care in the royal treasury. Now strange it is but true, that when the Sultan received this rare present from the Prince, the fear and doubt, the envy and jealousy of his son, which the Witch and the malicious Wazir and his other illadvisers had bred in his breast, waxed greater and livelier than before; because he was now certified that in very truth the Jinniyah was gracious beyond measure to her mate and that, notwithstanding the great wealth and power of the sovereign, she could outvie him in mighty deeds for the aidance of her husband. Accordingly, he feared with excessive fear lest haply she seek opportunity to slay him in favour of the Prince whom she might enthrone in his stead. So he bade bring the Witch who had counselled him aforetime, and upon whose sleight and malice he now mainly relied. When he related to her the result of her rede, she took thought for a while; then, raising her brow said, "O King of kings, thou troublest thyself for naught: thou needest only command Prince Ahmad to bring thee of the water of the Lions' Spring. He must perforce for his honour's sake fulfil thy wish, and if he fail he will for very shame not dare to show his face again at court. No better plan than this canst thou adopt; so look to it nor loiter on thy way." Next day at eventide, as the Sultan was seated in full Darbar surrounded by his Wazirs and Ministers, Prince Ahmad came forwards and making due obeisance took seat by his side and below him. Hereat, the King addressed him, as was his wont, with great show of favour saying, "It delighteth me mightily that thou hast brought me the tent I required of thee; for surely in my Treasury there be naught so rare and strange. Yet one other thing lack I, and couldst thou bring it me I shall rejoice with joy exceeding. I have heard tell that the Jinniyah, thy consort, maketh constant use of a water which floweth from the Lions' Spring, the drinking whereof doeth away with fevers and all other deadly diseases. I know thou art anxious that I live in health; and thou wilt gladden me by bringing somewhat of that water, so I may drink thereof when occasion shall require, and well I wot that, as thou valuest my love and affection thee wards, thou wilt not refuse to grant me my request." Prince Ahmad on hearing this demand was struck with surprise that his sire should so soon make a second demand. So he kept silence awhile, thinking within himself, I have managed by some means to obtain the tent from the Lady Peri-Banu, but Allah only knoweth how she will now act, and whether this fresh request will or will not rouse her wrath. Howbeit I know that she will on no wise deny me any boon I may ask of her.” So after much hesitation Prince Ahmad made reply, “O my lord the King, I have no power to do aught in this matter, which resteth only with my spouse the Princess; yet will I petition her to give the water; and, if she vouchsafe consent I will bring it straight to thee. Indeed I cannot promise thee such boon with all certainty: I would gladly do my endeavour in all and everything that can benefit thee, but to ask her for this water is a work more weighty than asking for the tent.” Next day the Prince took his departure and returned to Peri-Banu; and after loving embraces and greetings quoth he, “O my lady and light of my eyes, the Sultan my sire sendeth thee his grateful thanks for the granting of his wish; to wit, the pavilion; and now he adventureth himself once more and, certified of thy bounty and beneficence, he would pray from thy hand the boon of a little water from the Lions’ Spring. Withal I would assure thee that an the giving of this water please thee not, let the matter be clean forgotten; for to do all thou willest is my one and only wish.” Peri-Banu made reply, “Methinks the Sultan, thy sire, would put both me and thee to the test by requiring such boons as those suggested to him by the Sorceress.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Sixty-third Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Peri-Banu said further to Prince Ahmad, “Natheless I will grant this largesse also as the Sultan hath set his mind upon it, and no harm shall come therefrom to me or to thee, albe ’tis a matter of great risk and danger, and it is prompted by not a little of malice and ungraciousness. But give careful heed to my words, nor neglect thou aught of them, or thy destruction is certain-sure. I now will tell thee what to do. In the hall of yonder castle which riseth on that mountain is a fountain sentinelled by four lions fierce and ravening; and they watch and ward the path that leadeth thereto, a pair standing on guard whilst the other two take their turn to rest, and thus no living thing hath power to pass by them. Yet will I make known to thee the means whereby thou mayest win thy wish without any hurt or harm befalling thee from the furious beasts.” Thus saying she drew from an ivory box a clew of thread and, by means of a needle one of those wherewith she had been plying her work, made thereof a ball. This she placed in the hands of her husband, and said, “First, be thou careful that thou keep about thee with all diligence this ball, whose use I shall presently explain to thee. Secondly, choose for thyself two horses of great speed, one for thine own riding, whilst on the other thou shalt load the carcass of a freshly slaughtered sheep cut into four quarters. In the third place, take with thee a phial wherewith I will provide thee, and this is for carrying the water which thou, Inshallah — God willing — shalt bring back. As soon as the morn shall morrow do thou arise with the light and go forth riding thy chosen steed and leading the other alongside of thee by the reins. When thou shalt reach the iron portals which open upon the castle-court, at no great distance from the gate, do thou cast the ball of thread upon the ground before thee. Forthwith it will begin rolling onwards of its own will towards the castle door; and do thou follow it through the open entrance until such time as it stop its course. At this moment thou shalt see the four lions; and the two that wake and watch will rouse the twain that sleep and rest. All four will turn their jaws to the ground and growl and roar with hideous howlings, and make as though about to fall upon thee and tear thee limb from limb. However, fear not nor be dismayed, but ride boldly on and throw to the ground from off the led-horse the sheep's quarters, one to each lion. See that thou alight not from thy steed, but gore his ribs with thy shovel stirrup[344] and ride with all thy might and main up to the basin which gathereth the water. Here dismount and fill the phial whilst the lions will be busied eating. Lastly, return with all speed and the beasts will not prevent thy passing by them." Next day, at peep of morn, Prince Ahmad did according to all that Peri-Banu had bidden him and rode forth to the castle. Then, having passed through the iron portals and crossed the court and opened the door, he entered the hall, where he threw the quarters of the sheep before the lions, one to each, and speedily reached the Spring. He filled his phial with water from the basin and hurried back with all haste. But when he had ridden some little distance he turned about and saw two of the guardian lions following upon his track; however, he was on no wise daunted but drew his sabre from the sheath to prepare him for self-protection. Hereat one of the twain seeing him bare his brand for defence, retired a little way from the road and, standing at gaze, nodded his head and wagged his tail, as though to pray the Prince to put up his scymitar and to assure him that he might ride in peace and fear no peril. The other lion then sprang forwards ahead of him and kept close him, and the two never ceased to escort him until they reached the city, nay even the gate of the Palace. The second twain also brought up the rear till Prince Ahmad had entered the Palace-door; and, when they were certified of this, all four went back by the way they came. Seeing such wondrous spectacle, the towns-folk all fled in dire dismay, albeit the enchanted beasts molested no man; and presently some mounted horsemen espying their lord riding alone and unattended came up to him and helped him alight. The Sultan was sitting in his audience-hall conversing with his Wazirs and Ministers when his son appeared before him; and Prince Ahmad, having greeted him and blessed him and, in dutiful fashion, prayed for his permanence of existence and prosperity and opulence, placed before his feet the phial full of the water from the Lions' Spring, saying, "Lo, I have brought thee the boon thou desiredst of me. This water is most rare and hard to obtain; nor is there in all thy Treasure-house aught so notable and of such value as this. If ever thou fall ill of any malady (Almighty Allah forfend this should be in thy Destiny!) then drink a draught thereof and forthwith thou shalt be made whole of whatso distemper thou hast.” When Prince Ahmad had made an end of speaking, the Sultan, with all love and affection, grace and honour, embraced him and kissed his head; then, seating him on his right said, “O my son, I am beholden to thee, beyond count and measure, for that thou hast adventured thy life and brought this water with great irk and risk from so perilous a place.” Now the Witch had erewhile informed the King concerning the Lions’ Spring and of the mortal dangers which beset the site; so that he knew right well how gallant was his son’s derring-do; and presently he said, “Say me, O my child, how couldst thou venture thither and escape from the lions and broughtest back the water, thyself remaining safe and sound?” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Sixty-fourth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Prince replied, “By thy favour, O my lord the Sultan, have I returned in safety from that stead mainly because I did according to the bidding of my spouse, the Lady Peri-Banu; and I have brought the water from the Lions’ Spring only by carrying out her commands.” Then he made known to his father all that had befallen him in going and returning; and when the Sultan noted the pre-eminent valiance and prowess of his son he only feared the more, and the malice and the rancour, envy and jealousy which filled his heart waxed tenfold greater than before. However, dissembling his true sentiments he dismissed Prince Ahmad and betaking him to his private chamber at once sent word to bid the Witch appear in the presence; and when she came, he told her of the Prince’s visit and all about the bringing of the water from the Lions’ Spring. She had already heard somewhat thereof by reason of the hubbub in the city at the coming of the lions; but, as soon as she had given ear to the whole account, she marvelled with mighty marvel and, after whispering in the Sultan’s ear her new device, said to him in triumph, “O King of kings, this time thou shalt lay a charge on the Prince and such commandment methinks will trouble him and it shall go hard with him to execute aught thereof.” “Thou sayest well,” replied the Sovran, “now indeed will I try this plan thou hast projected for me.” Wherefore, next day whenas Prince Ahmad came to the presence of his sire, the King said to him, “O dear my child, it delighteth me exceedingly to see thy virtue and valour and the filial love wherewith thou art fulfilled, good gifts chiefly shown by obtaining for me the two rarities I asked of thee. And now one other and final requirement I have of thee; and, shouldst thou avail to satisfy my desire, I shall be wellpleased in my beloved son and render thanks to him for the rest of my days.” Prince Ahmad answered, “What is the boon thou requirest? I will for my part do thy bidding as far as in me lieth.” Then quoth the King in reply to the Prince, “I would fain have thee bring me a man of size and stature no more than three feet high, with beard full twenty ells in length, who beareth on his shoulder a quarter staff of steel, thirteen score pounds in weight, which he wieldeth with ease and swingeth around his head without wrinkle on brow, even as men wield cudgels of wood.” On this wise the Sultan, led astray by the Doom of Destiny and heedless alike of good and evil, asked that which should bring surest destruction upon himself. Prince Ahmad also, with blind obedience out of pure affection to his parent, was ready to supply him with all he required unknowing what was prepared for him in the Secret Purpose. Accordingly he said, “O my sire the Sultan, I trow me ‘twill be hard to find, all the world over, a man such as thou desirest, still I will work my best to do thy bidding.” Thereupon the Prince retired from the presence and returned, as usual, to his palace where he greeted Peri-Banu with love and gladness; but his face was troubled and his heart was heavy at the thought of the King’s last behest. Perceiving his preoccupation the Princess asked him, saying, “O dear my lord, what tidings bringest thou for me to-day?” Hereto replied he, “The Sultan at each visit requireth of me some new thing and burtheneth me with his requests; and to-day he purposeth to try me and, in the hopes of putting me to shame, he asketh somewhat which ‘twere vain to hope I can find in all the world.” Thereupon Prince Ahmad told her all the King had said to him. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Peri-Banu hearing these words said to the Prince, “Trouble not thyself at all in this matter. Thou didst venture at great risk to carry off for thy father water from the Lions’ Spring and thou succeededst in winning thy wish. Now this task is on no wise more difficult or dangerous than was that: nay ’tis the easier for that he thou describest is none other than Shabbar, my brothergerman. Although we both have the same parents, yet it pleased Almighty Allah to enform us in different figures and to make him unlike his sister as being in mortal mould can be. Moreover he is valiant and adventurous, always seeking some geste and exploit whereby to further my interest, and right willingly doth he carry out whatso he undertaketh. He is shaped and formed as the Sultan thy sire hath described, nor useth he any weapons save the Nabb·t[345] or quarter staff of steel. And see now I will send for him, but be not thou dismayed at sighting him.” Replied Prince Ahmad, “If he be in truth thine own brother what matter how he looketh? I shall be pleased to see him as when one welcometh a valued friend or a beloved kinsman. Wherefore should I fear to look upon him?” Hearing these words Peri-Banu despatched one of her attendants who brought to her from her private treasury a chafing-dish of gold; then she bade a fire be lit therein, and sending for a casket of noble metals studded with gems, the gift of her kinsmen, she took therefrom some incense and cast it upon the flames. Herewith issued a dense smoke spireing high in air and spreading all about the palace; and a few moments after, Peri-Banu who had ceased her conjurations cried, “Lookye my brother Shabbar cometh! canst thou distinguish his form?” The Prince looked up and saw a mannikin in stature dwarfish and no more than three feet high, and with a boss on breast and a hump on back; withal he carried himself with stately mien and majestic air. On his right shoulder was borne his quarter staff of steel thirteen score pounds in weight. His beard was thick and twenty cubits in length but arranged so skilfully that it stood clear off from the ground; he wore also a twisted pair of long mustachios curling up to his ears, and all his face was covered with long pile. His eyes were not unlike unto pig's eyes; and his head, on which was placed a crown-like coiffure, was enormous of bulk, contrasting with the meanness of his stature. Prince Ahmad sat calmly beside his wife, the Fairy, and felt no fear as the figure approached; and presently Shabbar walked up and glancing at him asked Peri-Banu saying, "Who be this mortal who sitteth hard by thee?" Hereto she replied, "O my brother, this is my beloved husband, Prince Ahmad, son of the Sultan of Hindostan. I sent thee not an invitation to the wedding as thou wast then engaged on some great expedition; now, however, by the grace of Almighty Allah thou hast returned triumphant and victorious over thy foes, wherefore I have summoned thee upon a matter which nearly concerneth me." Hearing these words Shabbar looked graciously at Prince Ahmad, saying, "O my beloved sister, is there any service I can render to him?" and she replied, "The Sultan his sire desireth ardently to see thee, and I pray thee go forthright to him and take the Prince with thee by way of guide." Said he, "This instant I am ready to set forth;" but said she, "Not yet, O my brother. Thou art fatigued with journeying; so defer until the morrow thy visit to the King, and this evening I will make known to thee all that concerneth Prince Ahmad." Presently the time came; so Peri-Banu informed her brother Shabbar concerning the King and his ill-counsellors; but she dwelt mainly upon the misdeeds of the old woman, the Witch; and how she had schemed to injure Prince Ahmad and despitefully prevent his going to city or court, and she had gained such influence over the Sultan that he had given up his will to hers and ceased not doing whatso she bade him. Next day at dawn Shabbar the Jinn and Prince Ahmad set out together upon a visit to the Sultan; and when they had reached the city gates, all the folk, nobles and commons, were struck with consternation at the dwarf's hideous form; and, flying on every side in affright and running into shops and houses, barred the doors and closed the casements and hid themselves therein. So panic-stricken indeed was their flight that many feet lost shoes and sandals in running, while from the heads of others their loosened turbands fell to earth. And when they twain approached the palace through streets and squares and market-places desolate as the Desert of Samßwah,[346] all the keepers of the gates took to their heels at sight of

Shabbar and fled, so there was none to hinder their entering. They walked straight on to the audience-chamber where the Sultan was holding Darbar, and they found in attendance on him a host of Ministers and Councillors, great and small, each standing in his proper rank and station. They too on seeing Shabbar speedily took flight in dire dismay and hid themselves; also the guards had deserted their posts nor cared in any way to let or stay the twain. The Sovran still sat motionless on his throne, where Shabbar went up to him with lordly mien and royal dignity and cried, “O King, thou hast expressed a wish to see me; and lo, I am here. Say now what wouldst thou have me do?” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Sixty-sixth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the King made no reply to Shabbar, but held up his hands before his eyes that he might not behold that frightful figure, and turning his head would fain have fled in terror. Shabbar was filled with fury at this rudeness on the part of the Sultan, and was wroth with exceeding wrath to think that he had troubled himself to come at the bidding of such a craven, who now on seeing him would fain run away. So the Jinn, without an instant's delay, raised his quarter staff of steel, and, swinging it twice in air, before Prince Ahmad could reach the throne or on any wise interfere, struck the Sultan so fiercely upon the poll that his skull was smashed and his brains were scattered over the floor. And when Shabbar had made an end of this offender, he savagely turned upon the Grand Wazir who stood on the Sultan's right and incontinently would have slain him also, but the Prince craved pardon for his life and said, "Kill him not: he is my friend and hath at no time said one evil word against me. But such is not the case with the others, his fellows." Hearing these words the infuriated Shabbar fell upon the Ministers and ill-counsellors on either side, to wit, all who had devised evil devices against Prince Ahmad, and slew them each and every and suffered none to escape save only those who had taken flight and hidden themselves. Then, going from the hall of justice to the courtyard, the Dwarf said to the Wazir whose life the Prince had saved, "Harkye, there is a Witch who beareth enmity against my brother, the husband of my sister. See that thou produce her forthright; likewise the villain who filled his father's mind with hate and malice, envy and jealousy against him, so may I quite them in full measure for their misdeeds." The Grand Wazir produced them all, first the Sorceress, and then the malicious minister with his rout of fautors and flatterers, and Shabbar felled them one after the other with his quarter staff of steel and killed them pitilessly, crying to the Sorceress, "This is the end of all thy machinations with the King, and this is the fruit of thy deceit and treachery; so learn not to feign thyself sick." And in the blindness of his passion he would have slain all the inhabitants of the city, but

Prince Ahmad prevented him and pacified him with soft and flattering words. Hereupon Shabbar habited his brother in the royal habit and seated him on the throne and proclaimed him Sultan of Hindostan. The people all, both high and low, rejoiced with exceeding joy to hear these tidings, for Prince Ahmad was beloved by every one; so they crowded to swear fealty and bring presents and Nazarßnahs[347] and raised shouts of acclamation crying out, “Long live King Ahmad!” When all this was done, Shabbar sent for his sister, Peri-Banu, and made her Queen under the title of Shahr-Banu;[348] and in due time taking leave of her and of King Ahmad, the Jinni returned to his own home. And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that after these things King Ahmad summoned Prince Ali his brother and Nur al-Nihar and made him governor of a large city hard by the capital, and dismissed him thither in high state and splendour. Also he commissioned an official to wait upon Prince Husayn and tell him all the tidings, and sent word saying, “I will appoint thee ruler over any capital or country thy soul desireth; and, if thou consent, I will forward thee letters of appointment.” But inasmuch as the Prince was wholly content and entirely happy in Darwaysh-hood, he cared naught for rule or government or aught of worldly vanities; so he sent back the official with his duty and grateful thanks, requesting that he might be left to live his life in solitude and renunciation of matters mundane. Now when Queen Shahrazad had made an end of telling her story and yet the night was not wholly spent, King Shahryar spake saying, “This thy story, admirable and most wonderful, hath given me extreme delight; and I pray thee do thou tell us another tale till such time as the last hours of this our night be passed.” She replied, “Be it as thou wilt, O auspicious King: I am thy slave to do as thou shalt bid.” Then she began to relate the tale of

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THE TWO SISTERS WHO ENVIED THEIR CADETTE[349]

In days of yore and in times long gone before there lived a king of Persia, Khusrau Shßh hight, renowned for justice and righteousness. His father, dying at a good old age, had left him sole heir to all the realm and, under his rule, the tiger and the kid drank side by side at the same Ghßt;[350] and his treasury was ever full and his troops and guards were numberless. Now it was his wont to don disguise and, attended by a trusty Wazir, to wander about the street at night-time. Whereby things seld-seen and haps peregrine became known to him, the which, should I tell thee all thereof, O auspicious King, would weary thee beyond measure. So he took seat upon the throne of his forbears and when the appointed days of mourning were ended, according to the custom of that country, he caused his exalted name, that is Khusrau Shah, be struck upon all the coins of the kingdom and entered into the formula of public prayer.[351] And when stablished in his sovranty he went forth as aforetime on one evening accompanied by his Grand Wazir, both in merchant's habit, walking the streets and squares, the markets and lanes, the better to note what might take place both of good and of bad. By chance they passed, as the night darkened, through a quarter where dwelt people of the poorer class; and as they walked on, the Shah heard inside a house women talking with loud voices; then going near, he peeped in by the door-chink, and saw three fair sisters who having supped together were seated on a divan talking one to other. The King thereupon applied his ear to the crack and listened eagerly to what they said, and heard each and every declaring what was the thing she most desired.[352] Quoth the eldest, "I would I were married to the Shah's head Baker for then should I ever have bread to eat, the whitest and choicest in the city, and your hearts would be fulfilled with envy and jealousy and malice at my good luck." Quoth the second, "I would rather wive with the Shah's chief Kitchener and eat of dainty dishes that are placed before his Highness, wherewith the royal bread which is common throughout the Palace cannot compare for gust and flavour." And quoth the third and youngest of the three, and by far the most beautiful and lively of them all, a maiden of charming nature, full of wit and humour; sharp-witted, wary and wise, when her turn came to tell her wish, “O sisters, my ambition is not as ordinary as yours. I care not for fine bread nor glutton-like do I long for dainty dishes. I look to somewhat nobler and higher: indeed I would desire nothing less than to be married by the King and become the mother of a beautiful Prince, a model of form and in mind as masterful as valorous. His hair should be golden on one side and silvern on the other: when weeping he should drop pearls in place of tears, and when laughing his rosy lips should be fresh as the blossom new-blown.” The Shah was amazed with exceeding amazement to hear the wishes of the three sisters, but chiefly of the youngest and determined in himself that he would gratify them all. Wherefore quoth he to the Grand Wazir, “Mark well this house And on the morrow bring before me these maidens whom we Heard discoursing;” and quoth the Wazir, “O Asylum of the Universe, I hear but to obey.” Thereupon the twain walked back to the palace and laid them down to rest. When morning morrowed, the Minister went for the sisters and brought them to the King, who, after greeting them and heartening their hearts, said to them in kindly tone, “O ye maidens of weal, last night what was it that in merry word and jest ye spake one to other? Take heed ye tell the Shah every whit in full detail, for all must become known to us; something have we heard, but now the King would have ye recount your discourse to his royal ears.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Sixty-eighth Night

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that at these words of the Shah the sisters, confused and filled with shame, durst not reply but stood before him silent with heads bent low; and despite all questioning and encouragement they could not pluck up courage. However, the youngest was of passing comeliness in form and feature and forthwith the Shah became desperately enamoured of her; and of his live began reassuring them and saying, “O ye Princesses of fair ones, be not afraid nor troubled in thought; nor let bashfulness or shyness prevent you telling the Shah what three wishes you wished, for fain would he fulfil them all.” Thereat they threw themselves at his feet and, craving his pardon for their boldness and freedom of speech, told him the whole talk, each one repeating the wish she had wished; and on that very day Khusrau Shah married the eldest sister to his chief Baker, and the second sister to his head Cook, and bade make all things ready for his own wedding with the youngest sister. So when the preparations for the royal nuptials had been made after costliest fashion, the King's marriage was celebrated with royal pomp and pageantry, and the bride received the titles of Light of the Harem and Bßn· of Irßn-land. The other two maidens were likewise married, one to the King's Baker the other to his Cook, after a manner according to their several degrees in life and with little show of grandeur and circumstance. Now it had been only right and reasonable that these twain having won each her own wish, should have passed their time in solace and happiness, but the decree of Destiny doomed otherwise; and, as soon as they saw the grand estate whereto their youngest sister had risen, and the magnificence of her marriage-festival, their hearts were fired with envy and jealousy and sore despite and they resolved upon giving the rein to their hatred and malignancy and to work her some foul mischief. On this wise they remained for many months consumed with rancour, day and night; and they burned with grief and anger whenever they sighted aught of her superior style and state. One morning as the two met at the Hammßm and found privacy and opportunity, quoth the eldest sister to the second, "A grievous thing it is indeed that she, our youngest sister, no lovelier than ourselves, should thus be raised to the dignity and majesty of Queendom and indeed the thought is overhard to bear." Quoth the other, "O sister mine, I also am perplexed and displeased at this thing, and I know not what of merit the Shah could have seen in her that he was tempted to choose her for his consort. She ill befitteth that high estate with that face like a monkey's favour; and, save her youth, I know nothing that could commend her to his Highness that he should so exalt her above her fellows. To my mind thou and not she art fit to share the royal bed; and I nurse a grudge against the King for that he hath made this jade his Queen." And the eldest sister rejoined, "I likewise marvel beyond all measure; and I swear that thy youth and beauty, thy well-shaped figure and lovely favour and goodliness of gifts past challenge or compare, might well have sufficed to win the King and have tempted him to wed and bed with thee and make thee his crowned Queen and Sovran Lady in lieu of taking to his arms this paltry strumpet. Indeed he hath shown no sense of what is right and just in leaving thee disappointed; and on this account only the matter troubleth me with exceeding trouble.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the two sisters took counsel each with other how they might abase their youngest sister in the Shah's sight and cause her downfall and utter ruin. Day and night they conned over the matter in their minds and spoke at great length about it when they ever met together, and pondered endless plans to injure the Queen their sister, and if possible bring about her death; but they could fix upon none. And, whilst they bore this despite and hatred towards her and diligently and deliberately sought the means of gratifying their bitter envy, hatred and malice, she on the other hand regarded them with the same favour and affection as she had done before marriage and thought only how to advantage their low estate. Now when some months of her wedded life had passed, the fair Queen was found to be with child whereof the glad tidings filled the Shah with joy; and straightway he commanded all the people of the capital and throughout the while Empire keep holiday with feasts and dancing and every manner jollity as became so rare and important an occasion. But as soon as the news came to the ears of the two Envious Sisters they were constrained perforce to offer their congratulations to the Queen; and, after a long visit, as the twain were about to crave dismissal they said, "Thanks be to Almighty Allah, O our sister, who hath shown us this happy day. One boon have we to ask of thee: to wit, that when the time shall come for thee to be delivered of a child, we may assist as midwives at thy confinement, and be with thee and nurse thee for the space of forty days." The Queen in her gladness made reply, "O sisters mine, I fain would have it so; for at a time of such need I know f none on whom to rely with such dependence as upon you. During my coming trial your presence with me will be most welcome and opportune; but I can do only what thing the Shah biddeth anor can I do aught save by his leave. My advice is thus: — Make known this matter to your mates who have always access to the royal presence, and let them personally apply for your attendance as midwives; I doubt not but that the Shah will give you leave to assist me and remain by my side, considering the fond relationship between us three.” Then the two sisters returned home full of evil thoughts and malice, and told their wishes to their husbands who, in turn, bespake Khusrau Shah, and proffered their petition with all humility, little knowing what was hidden from them in the Secret Purpose. The King replied, “When I shall have thought the matter over in my mind, I will give you suitable orders.” So saying he privately visited the Queen and to her said, “O my lady, an it please thee, methinks ætwould be well to summon thy sisters and secure their aidance, when thou shalt be labouring of child, in lieu of any stranger: and if thou be of the same mind as myself let me at once learn and take steps to obtain their consent and concert ere thy time arriveth. They will wait on thee with more loving care than any hired nurse and thou wilt find thyself the safer in their hands.” Replied the Queen, “O my lord the Shah, I also venture to think that ætwould be well to have my sisters by my side and not mere aliens at such an hour.” Accordingly he sent sword to them and from that day they dwelt within the palace to make all ready for the expected confinement; and on this wise they found means to carry out their despiteful plot which during so many days they had devised to scanty purpose. When her full tale of months had been told, the Banu was brought to bed of a man-child marvellous in beauty, whereat the fire of envy and hatred was kindled with redoubled fury in the sisters’ breasts. So they again took counsel not suffered ruth nor natural affection to move their cruel hearts; and presently, with great care and secrecy, they wrapped the new-born in a bit of blanket and putting him into a basket cast him into a canal which flowed hard by the Queen’s apartment.[353] They then placed a dead puppy in the place of the prince and showed it to the other midwives and nurses, averring that the Queen had given birth to such abortion. When these untoward tidings reached the King’s ear he was sore discomforted and waxed wroth with exceeding wrath. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Seventieth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the King, enflamed with sudden fierceness, drew his sword and would have slain his Queen had not the Grand Wazir, who happened to be in his presence at the time, restrained his rage and diverted him from his unjust design and barbarous purpose. Quoth he, “O Shadow of Allah upon earth, this mishap is ordained of the Almighty Lord whose will no man hath power to gainsay. The Queen is guiltless of offence against thee, for what is born of her is born without her choice, and she indeed hath no hand therein.” With this and other sage counsels he dissuaded his lord from carrying out his fell purpose and saved the guiltless Queen from a sudden and cruel death. Meanwhile the basket wherein lay the newly-born Prince was carried by the current into a rivulet which flowed through the royal gardens; and, as the Intendant of the pleasure grounds and pleasaunces chanced to walk along the bank, by the decree of Destiny he caught sight of the basket floating by, and he called a gardener, bidding him lay hold of it and bring it to him that he might see what was therein. The man ran along the rivulet side; and, with a long stick drawing the basket to land, showed it to the Intendant who opened it and beheld within a new-born babe, a boy of wondrous beauty wrapped in a bit of blanket; at which sight he was astounded beyond measure of surprise. Now it chanced that the Intendant, who was one of the Emirs and who stood high in favour with the Sovran, had no children: withal he never ceased offering prayers and vows to Almighty Allah that he might have a son to keep alive his memory and continue his name. Delighted at the sight he took home the basket with the babe and giving it to his wife said, “See how Allah hath sent to us this man-child which I just now found floating upon the waters; and do thou apply thee forthright and fetch a wet-nurse to give him milk and nourish him; and bring him up with care and tenderness as though he were thine own.” So the Intendant’s wife took charge of the child with great gladness and reared him with her whole heart, diligently as though born of her own womb; nor did the Intendant say aught to any, or seek to find out whose might be the child lest haply some one claim and take it from him. He was certified in his mind that the boy came from the Queen's quarter of the palace, but deemed inexpedient to make too strict enquiry concerning the matter; and he and his spouse kept the secret with all secrecy. A year after this the Queen gave birth to a second son, when her sisters, the Satanesses full of spite, did with this babe, even as they had done by the first: they wrapped it in a cloth and set it in a basket which they threw into the stream, then gave out that the Queen had brought forth a kitten. But once more, by the mercy of Allah Almighty, this boy came to the hands of that same Intendant of the gardens who carried him to his wife and placed him under her charge with strict injunctions to take care of the second foundling sedulously as she had done with the first. The Shah, enraged to hear the evil tidings, again rose up to slay the Queen; but as before the Grand Wazir prevented him and calmed his wrath with words of wholesome rede and a second time saved the unhappy mother's life. And after another year had gone by the Banu was brought to bed and this time bore a daughter by whom the sisters did as they had done by her brothers: they set the innocent inside a basket and threw her into the stream; and the Intendant found her also and took her to his wife and bade her rear the infant together with the other two castaways. Hereupon the Envious Sisters, wild with malice, reported that the Queen had given birth to a musk-ratling;[354] whereat King Khusrau could no longer stay his wrath and indignation. So he cried in furious rage to the Grand Wazir, "What, shall the Shah suffer this woman, who beareth naught but vermin and abortions, to share the joys of his bed? Nay more, the King can no longer allow her to live, else she will fill the palace with monstrous births: in very sooth, she is herself a monster, and it behoveth us to rid this place of such unclean creature and accursed." So saying the Shah commanded them do her to death; but the ministers and high officers of estate who stood before the presence fell at the royal feet and besought pardon and mercy for the Queen. The Grand Wazir also said with folded hands, "O Shßhihshßh[355] — O King of the kings — thy slave would fain represent that ætis not in accordance with the course of justice or the laws of the land to take the life of a woman for no fault of her own. She cannot interfere with Destiny, nor can she prevent unnatural births such as have thrice betided her;

and such mishaps have oftentimes befallen other women, whose cases call for compassion and not punishment. An the King be displeased with her then let him cease to live with her, and the loss of his gracious favour will be a penalty dire enough; and, if the Shah cannot suffer the sight of her, then let her be confined in some room apart, and let her expiate her offence by alms deed and charity until æIzrßÝl, the Angel of Death, separate her soul from her flesh." Hearing these words of counsel from his aged Councillor, Khusrau Shah recognised that it had been wrong to slay the Queen, for that she could on no wise do away with aught that was determined by Fate and Destiny; and presently he said to the Grand Wazir, "Her life is spared at thine intercession, O wise man and ware; yet will the King doom her to a weird which, haply, is hardly less hard to bear than death. And now do thou forthright make ready, by the side of the Cathedral-mosque, a wooden cage with iron bars and lock the Queen therein as one would confine a ferocious wild beast.[356] Then every Mussulman who wendeth his way to public prayers Shall spit in her face ere he set foot within the fane, and if any fail to carry out this command he shall be punished in like manner. So place guards and inspectors to enforce obedience and let me hear if there be aught of gainsaying." The Wazir durst not make reply but carried out the Shah's commandments; and this punishment inflicted upon the blameless Queen had far better befitted her Envious Sisters. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The End of the Six Hundred and Seventy-first Night.

Then said she — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the cage was made ready with all speed; and, when the forty days after purification of child-bed[357] had come to an end, the Banu was locked therein; and, according to the King's commandment, all who came to prayer in the Great Mosque would first spit in her face. The hapless woman, well knowing that she as not worthy of this ignominy, bore her sufferings with all patience and fortitude; nor were they few who deemed her blameless and undeserving to endure these torments and tortures inflicted upon her by the Shah; and they pitied her and offered prayers and made vows for her release. Meanwhile the Intendant of the gardens and his wife brought up the two Princes and the Princess with all love and tenderness; and, as the children grew in years, their love for these adopted ones increased in like proportion. They gave the eldest Prince the name Bahman,[358] , and to his brother Parwez,[359] , and as the maiden was of rare of beauty and passing of loveliness and graciousness, they called her PerÝzßdah.[360] When the Princes became of years to receive instruction, the Intendant of the gardens appointed tutors and masters to teach them reading and writing and all the arts and sciences: the Princess also, showing like eagerness to acquire knowledge, was taught letters by the same instructors, and soon could read and write with as perfect fluency and fluency as could her brothers. Then they were placed under the most learned of the Philosophers and the Olema, who taught them the interpretation of the Koran and the sayings of the Apostle; the science of geometry as well as poetry and history, and even the abstruse sciences and the mystic doctrines of the Enlightened; and their teachers were astonished to find how soon and how far all three made progress in their studies and bid fair to outstrip even the sages however learned. Moreover, they all three were reared to horsemanship and skill in the chase, to shooting with shafts and lunging with lance and sway with sabre and jerking the JerÝd, with other manly and warlike sports. Besides all this the Princess Perizadah was taught to sing and play on various instruments of mirth and merriment, wherein she became the peerless pearl of her age and time. The Intendant was exceeding glad of heart to find his adopted children prove themselves such proficients in every branch of knowledge; and presently, forasmuch as his lodging was small and unfit for the growing family, he bought at a little distance from the city a piece of land sufficiently large to contain fields and meadows and copses. Here he fell to building a mansion of great magnificence; and busied himself day and night with supervising the architects and masons and other artificers. He adorned the walls inside and out with sculptural work of the finest and paintings of the choicest, and he fitted every apartment with richest furniture. In the front of his mansion he bade lay out a garden and stocked it with scented flowers and fragrant shrubs and fruit trees whose produce was as that of Paradise. There was moreover a large park girt on all sides by a high wall wherein he reared game, both fur and feather, as sport for the two Princes and their sister. And when the mansion was finished and fit for habitation, the Intendant, who had faithfully served the Shah for many generations of men, craved leave of his lord that he might bid adieu to the city and take up his abode in his new country seat; and the King, who had always looked upon him with the eye of favour, granted to him the required boon right heartily; furthermore, to prove his high opinion of his old servant and his services, he inquired of him if he had aught to request that it might granted to him. Replied the other, “O my liege lord, thy slave desireth naught save that he may spend the remnant of his days under the shadow of the Shah’s protection, with body and soul devoted to his service, even as I served the side before the son,” The Shah dismissed him with words of thanks and comfort, when he left the city and taking with him the two Princes and their sister, he carried them to his newly-built mansion. Some years before this time his wife had departed to the mercy of Allah, and he had passed only five or six months in his second home when he too suddenly felt sick and was admitted into the number of those who have found ruth. Withal he had neglected every occasion of telling his three foundlings the strange tale of their birth and how he had carried them to his home as castaways and had reared them as rearlings and had cherished them as his own children. But he had time to charge them, ere he died, that they three should never cease to live together in love and honour and affection and respect one towards other. The loss of their protector caused them to grieve with bitter grief for they all thought he was their real father; so they bewailed them and buried him as befitted; after which the two brothers and their sister dwelt together in peace and plenty. But one day of the days the Princes, who were full of daring and of the highest mettle, rode forth a-hunting and Princess Perizadah was left alone at home when an ancient woman — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Seventy-second Night.

Then said she — I have heard, O auspicious King, that perchance an ancient woman of the Moslems, a recluse and a devotee, came to the door and begged leave to enter within and repeat her prayers, as it was then the canonical hour and she had but time to make the Wuz·-ablution. Perizadah bade being her and saluted her with the salam and kindly welcomed her; then, when the holy woman had made an end of her orisons, the handmaids of the Princess, at her command, conducted her all through the house and grounds, and displayed to her the rooms with their furniture and fittings, and lastly the garden and orchard and game-park. She was well pleased with all she saw and said within herself, “The man who built this mansion and laid out these parterres and vergiers was verily an accomplished artist and a wight of marvellous skill.” At last the slaves led her back to the Princess who, awaiting her return, was sitting in the belvedere; and quoth she to the devotee, “Come, O good my mother, do thou sit beside me and make me happy by the company of a pious recluse whom I am fortunate enough to have entertained unawares, and suffer I listen to thy words of grace and thereby gain no small advantage in this world and the next. Thou hast chosen the right path and straight whereon to walk, and that which all men strive for and pine for.” The holy woman would fain have seated herself at the feet of the Princess, but she courteously arose and took her by the hand and constrained her to sit beside her. Quoth she, “O my lady, mine eyes never yet beheld one so well-mannered as thou art: indeed, I am unworthy to sit with thee, natheless, as thou biddest, I will e’en do thy bidding.” As they sat conversing each with other the slave-girls set before them a table whereon were placed some platters of bread and cakes with saucers full of fruits both fresh and dried, and various kinds of cates and sweetmeats. The Princess took one of the cakes and giving it to the good woman said, “O my mother, refresh thyself herewith and eat of the fruits such as thou likest. æTis now long since thou didst leave thy home and I trow thou hast not tasted aught of food upon the road.” Replied the holy woman, “O lady of gentle birth, I am not wont to taste of dainty dishes such as these, but I can ill refuse thy provision, since Allah the Almighty deigneth send me food and support by so liberal and generous a hand as thine." And when they twain had eaten somewhat and cheered their hearts, the Princess asked the devotee concerning the manner of her worship and of her austere life; whereto she made due answer and explained according to her knowledge. The Princess then exclaimed, "Tell me, I pray thee, what thou thinkest of this mansion and the fashion of its building and the furniture and the appurtenances; and say me is all perfect and appropriate, or is aught still lacking in mansion or garden?" And she replied, "Since thou deignest ask my opinion, I confess to thee that both the buildings and the parterres are finished and furnished to perfection; and the belongings are in the best of taste and in the highest of ordinance. Still to my thinking there be three things here wanting, which if thou hadst the place would be most complete." The Princess Perizadah adjured her saying, "O my aunt, I beseech thee tell me what three articles yet are lacking, that I may lose no pains nor toil to obtain them;" and as the maiden pressed her with much intreaty, the devotee was constrained to tell her. Quoth she, "O gentle lady, the first thing is the Speaking-Bird, called Bulbul-i- hazßr-dßstßn;[361] he is very rare and hard to find but, whenever he poureth out his melodious notes, thousands of birds fly to him from every side and join him in his harmony. The next thing is the Singing-Tree, whose smooth and glossy leaves when shaken by the wind and rubbed against one another send forth tuneful tones which strike the ear like the notes of sweet-voices minstrels ravishing the heart of all who listen. The third thing is the Golden-Water of transparent purity, whereon should but one drop be dripped into a basin and this be placed inside the garden it presently will fill the vessel brimful and will spout upwards in gerbes playing like a fountain that jets: moreover it never ceaseth playing, and all the water as it shooteth up falleth back again inside the basin, not one gout thereof being lost." Replied the Princess, "I doubt not but thou knowest for a certainty the very spot where these wondrous things are to be found; and I pray thee tell me now the place and means whereby I may take action to obtain them." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Seventy-third Night.

Then said she — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the holy woman thus answered the Princess, “These three rarities are not to be found, save on the boundary-line that lieth between the land of Hind and the confining countries, a score of marches along the road that leadeth Eastwards from this mansion. Let him who goeth forth in quest of them ask the first man he meeteth on the twentieth stage concerning the spot where he may find the Speaking-Bird, the Singing-Tree and the Golden-Water; and he will direct the seeker where to come upon all three.” When she had made an end of speaking the Devotee, with many blessings and prayers and vows for her well-being, farewelled the lady Perizadah and fared forth homewards. The Princess, however, ceased not to ponder her words and ever to dwell in memory upon the relation of the holy woman who, never thinking that her hostess had asked for information save by way of curiosity, nor really purposed in mind to set forth with intent of finding the rarities, ahd heedlessly told all she knew and had given a clue to the discovery. But Perizadah kept these matters deeply graven on the tablets of her heart with firm resolution to follow the directions and, by all means in her power, to gain possession of these three wonders. Withal, the more she reflected the harder appeared the enterprise, and her fear of failing only added to her unease. Now whilst she sat perplexed with anxious thought and anon terrified with sore affright, her brothers rode back from the hunting-ground; and they marvelled much to see her sad of semblance and low-spirited, wondering the while what it was that troubles her. Presently quoth Prince Bahman, “O sister mine, why art thou so heavy of heart this day? Almighty Allah forbid thou ill in health or that aught have betided thee to cause thy displeasure or to make thee melancholy. Tell us I beseech thee what it is, that we may be sharers in thy sorrow and be alert to aid thee.” The Princess answered not a word, but after long silence raised her head and looked up at her brothers; then casting down her eyes she said in curt phrase that naught was amiss with her. Quoth Prince Bahman, “Full well I wot that there is a somewhat on my mind which thou hesitateth to tell us; and now hear me swear a strong oath that I will never leave thy side till thou shalt have told us what cause it is that troubleth thee. Haply thou art aweary of our affection and thou wouldest undo the fraternal tie which hath united us from our infancy.” When she saw her brothers so distressed and distraught, she was compelled to speak and said, “Albeit, O my dearlings, to tell you wherefore I am sad and sorrowful may cause you grief, still there is no help but I explain the matter to you twain. This mansion, which our dear father (who hath found ruth) builded for us, is perfect in every attribute nor lacketh it any condition of comfort or completion. Howbeit I have found out by chance this day that there are yet three things which, were they set within these walls, of the house and grounds, would make our place beyond compare, and in the wide world there would be naught with it to pair. These three things are the Speaking-Bird an the Singing-Tree and the Golden- Water; and ever since I heard of them my heart is filled with extreme desire to place them within our domain and excessive longing to obtain them by any means within my power. It now behoveth you to help me with your best endeavour and to consider what person will aid me in getting possession of these rarities.” Replied Prince Bahman, “My life and that of my brother are at thy service to carry out thy purpose with heart and soul; and, couldst thou give me but a clue to the place where these strange things are found, I would sally forth in quest of them at day-break as soon as the morning shall morrow.” When Prince Parwez understood that his brother was about to make this journey, he spake saying, “O my brother, thou art eldest of us, so do thou stay at home while I go forth to seek for these three things and bring them to our sister. And indeed it were more fitting for me to undertake a task which may occupy me for years.” Replied Prince Bahman, “I have full confidence in thy strength and prowess, and whatso I am able to perform thou canst do as well as I can. Still it is my firm resolve to fare forth upon this adventure alone and unaided, and thou must stay and take care of our sister and our house.” So next day Prince Bahman learned from the Princess the road whereon he was to travel and the marks and signs whereby to find the place. Presently, he donned armour and arms and bidding the twain adieu, he took horse and was about to ride forth with the stoutest of hearts, whereat Princess Perizadah’s eyes brimmed with tears and in faltering accents she addressed him saying, “O dear my brother, this bitter separation is heart-breaking; and sore sorrowful am I to see thee part from us. This disunion and thine absence in a distant land cause me grief and woe far exceeding that wherewith I mourned and pined for the rarities wherefor thou quittest us. If only we might have some news of thee from day to day then would I fell somewhat comforted and consoled; but not ætis clear otherwise and regret is of none avail.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night.

Then she said — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Prince Bahman made answer in these words: “O sister mine, I am fully determined in mind to attempt this derring-do; be thou not however anxious or alarmed, for Inshallah — God willing — I shall return successful and triumphant. After my departure shouldst thou at any time feel in fear for my safety, then by this token which I leave thee thou shalt know of my fate and lot, good or evil.” Then, drawing from his waist-shawl a little hunting-knife like a whittle, he gave it to Princess Perizadah, saying, “Take now this blade and keep it ever by thee; and shouldst thou at any day or hour be solicitous concerning my condition, draw it from its sheath; and if the steel be clean and bright as ætis now then know that I am alive and safe and sound; but an thou find stains of blood thereon then shalt thou know that I am slain, and naught remaineth for thee to do save to pray for me as for one dead.” With these words of solace the Prince departed on his journey, and travelled straight along the road to India, turning nor to right hand nor to left but ever keeping the same object in view. Thus a score of days was spent in journeying from the land of Iran, and upon the twentieth he reached the end of his travel. Here he suddenly sighted an ancient man of frightful aspect sitting beneath a tree hard by his thatched hut wherein he was wont to shelter himself from the rains of spring and the heats of summer and the autumnal miasmas and the wintry frosts. So shotten in years was this Shaykh that hair and beard, mustachios and whiskers were white as snow, and the growth of his upper lip was so long and so thick that it covered and concealed his mouth, while his beard swept the ground and the nails of his hands and feet had grown to resemble the claws of a wild beast. Upon his head he wore a broad-brimmed hat of woven palm-leaves like that of a Malßbßr fisherman, and all his remaining habit was a strip of matting girded around his waist. Now this Shaykh was a Darwaysh who for many years had fled the world and all worldly pleasures; who lived a holy life of poverty and chastity and other-worldliness whereby his semblance had become such as I, O auspicious King, have described to thee. From early dawn that day Prince Bahman had been watchful and vigilant, ever looking on all sides to descry some one who could supply him with information touching the whereabouts of the rarities he sought; and this was the first human being he had sighted on that stage, the twentieth and last of his journey. So he rode up to him, being assured that the Shaykh must be the wight of whom the holy woman had spoken. Then Prince Bahman dismounting and making low obeisance to the Darwaysh, said, “I my father, Allah Almighty prolong thy years and grant thee all thy wishes!” Whereto the Fakir made answer but in accents so indistinct that the Prince could not distinguish a single word he said; and presently Bahman understood that his moustache was on such wise closed and concealed his mouth that his utterance became indistinct and he only muttered when he would have spoken. He therefore haltered his horse to a tree and pulling out a pair of scissors said, “O holy man, thy lips are wholly hidden by this overlong hair; suffer me, I pray thee, clip the bristling growth which overspreadeth thy face and which is so long and thick that thou art fearsome to behold; nay, more like to a bear than to a human being.” The Darwaysh with a nod consented, and when the Prince had clipped it and trimmed the growth, his face once more looked young and fresh as that of a man in the prime of youth. Presently quoth Bahman to him, “Would Heaven that I had a mirror wherein to show thee thy face, so wouldst thou see how youthful thou seemest, and how thy favour hath become far more like that of folk than whilom it was.” These flattering words pleased the Darwaysh who smiling said, “I thank thee much for this thy goodly service and kindly offices; and, if in return, I can do aught of favour for thee, I pray thee let me know, and I will attempt to satisfy thee in all things with my very heart and soul.” Then said the Prince, “O holy man, I have come hither from far distant lands along a toilsome road in quest of three things; to wit, a certain Speaking-Bird, a Singing-Tree and a Golden-Water; and this know I for certain that they are all to be found hard by this site.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Seventy-Fifth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Prince, turning to the Darwaysh, continued, “O Devotee, albeit well I wot that the three things I seek are in this land and nearhand, yet I know not the exact spot wherein to find them. An thou have true information concerning the place and will inform me thereof, I on my part will never forget thy kindness, and I shall have the satisfaction of feeling that this long and toilsome wayfare hath not been wholly vain.” Hearing these words of the Prince, the Darwaysh changed countenance and his face waxed troubled and his colour wan; then he bent his glance downwards and sat in deepest silence. Whereat the other said, “O holy father, dost thou not understand the words wherewith I have bespoken thee? An thou art ignorant of the matter prithee let me know straightway that I may again fare onwards until such time as I find a man who can inform me thereof.” After a long pause the Darwaysh made reply, “O stranger, ætis true I ken full well the site whereof thou are in search; but I hold thee dear in that thou hast been of service to me; and I am loath for thine own sake to tell thee where to find that stead.” And the Prince rejoined, “Say me, O Fakir, why dost thou withhold this knowledge from me, and wherefore art thou not lief to let me learn it?” Replied the other, “’Tis a hard road to travel and full of perils and dangers. Besides thyself many have come hither and have asked the path of me, and I refused to tell them, but they heeded not my warning and pressed me sore and compelled me to disclose the secret which I would have buried in my breast. Know, O my son, that all those braves have perished in their pride and not one of them hath returned to me safe and sound. Now, an thy life be dear to thee, follow my counsel and fare no further, but rather turn thee back without stay or delay and make for house and home and family.” Hereto Prince Bahman, stern in resolution, made reply, “Thou hast after kindly guise and friendly fashion advised me with the best of advice; and I, having heard all thou hast to day, do thank thee gratefully. But I reck not one jot or tittle of what dangers affront me, nor shall thy threats however fatal deter me from my purpose: moreover, if thieves or foemen haply fall upon me, I am armed at point and can and will protect myself, for I am certified that none can outvie me in strength and stowre." To this the Fakir made reply, "The beings who will cut thy path and bar thy progress to that place are unseen of man, nor will they appear to thee on any wise: how then canst thou defend thyself against them?" And he replied, "So be it, still I fear not and I pray thee only show me the road thither." When the Darwaysh was assured that the Prince had fully determined in mind to attempt the exploit and would by no means turn or be turned back from carrying out his purpose, he thrust his hand into a bag which lay hard by and took therefrom a ball, and said, "Alas, O my son, thou wilt not accept my counsel and I needs must let thee follow thy wilful way. Take this ball and, mounting thy horse, throw it in front of thee, and as long as it shall roll onwards do thou ride after it, but when it shall stop at the hill-foot dismount from thy horse and throw the reins upon his neck and leave him alone, for he will stay there without moving until such time as thou return. Then manfully breast the ascent, and on either side of the path, right and left, thou shalt see a scatter of huge black boulders. Here the sound of many voices in confused clamour and frightful will suddenly strike thine ears, to raise thy wrath and to fill thee with fear and hinder thy higher course uphill. Have a heed that thou be not dismayed, also beware, and again say I beware, lest thou turn they head at any time, and cast a look backwards. An thy courage fail thee, or thou allow thyself one glance behind thee, thou shalt be transformed that very moment into a black rock; for know thou, O Prince, that all those stones which thou shalt see strewn upon thy way were men whilome and braves like thyself, who went forth with intent to gain the three things thou seekest, but frightened at those sounds lost human shape and became black boulders. However, shouldst thou reach the hill-top sae and sound, thou shalt find on the very summit a cage and perched therein the Speaking-Bird ready to answer all thy queries. So ask of him where thou mayest find the Singing-Tree and the Golden-Water, and he will tell thee all thou requirest. When thou shalt safely have seized all three thou wilt be free from further danger; yet, inasmuch as thou hast not yet set out upon this journey give ear to my counsel. I beg of thee to desist from this thy purpose and return home in peace whilst thou hast yet the power.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Prince made answer to the Darwaysh, “Until, O thou holy man, such time as I win to my purpose I will not go back; no, never; therefore adieu.” So he mounted his horse and threw the ball in front of him; and it rolled forward at racing-speed and he, with gaze intent thereupon, rode after it and did not suffer it to gain upon him. When it had reached the hill whereof the Darwaysh spake, it ceased to make further way, whereupon the Prince dismounted and throwing the reins on his horse’s neck left him and fared on afoot to the slope. As far as he could see, the line of his path from the hill-foot to the head was strown with a scatter of huge black boulders; withal his heart felt naught of fear. He had not taken more than some four or five paces before a hideous din and a terrible hubbub of many voices arose, even as the Darwaysh had forewarned him. Prince Bahman, however, walked on valiantly with front erect and fearless tread, but he saw no living thing and heard only the Voices[362] sounding all around him. Some said, “Who is yon fool man and whence hath he come?” Stop him, let him not pass!” Others shouted out, “Fall on him, seize this zany and slay him!” Then the report waxed louder and louder still, likest to the roar of thunder, and many Voices yelled out, “Thief! Assassin! Murderer!” Another muttered in taunting undertones, “Let him be, fine fellow that he is! Suffer him to pass on, for he and he only shall get the cage and the Speaking-Bird.” The Prince feared naught but advanced hot foot with his wonted verve and spirit; presently, however, when the Voices kept approaching nearer and nearer to him and increased in number on every side, he was sore perplexed. His legs began to tremble, he staggered and in fine overcome by fear he clean forgot the warning of the Darwaysh and looked back, whereat he was incontinently turned to stone like the scores of knights and adventurers who had foregone him. Meantime the Princess Perizadah ever carried the hunting-knife, which Bahman her brother had given her, sheathed as it was in her maiden zone. She had kept it there ever since he set out upon his perilous expedition, and whenever she felt disposed she would bare the blade and judge by its sheen how fared her brother. Now until that day when he was transmewed to stone she found it, as often as she looked at it, clean and bright; but on the very evening when that evil fate betided him perchance Prince Parwez said to Perizadah, "O sister mine, give me I pray thee the hunting-knife that I may see how goeth it with our brother." She took it from her waist-belt and handed it to him; and as soon as he unsheathed the knife lo and behold! he saw gouts of gore begin to drop from it. Noting this he dashed the hunting-knife down and burst out into loud lamentations, whilst the Princess who divined what had happened shed a flood of bitter tears and cried with sighs and sobs, "Alas, O my brother, thou hast given thy life for me. Ah, woe is me and well-away! why did I tell thee of the Speaking-Bird and the Singing-Tree and the Golden- Water? Wherefore did I ask that holy woman how she liked our home, and hear of those three things in answer to my question? Would to Heaven she had never crossed our threshold and darkened our doors! Ungrateful hypocrite, dost thou requite me on such wise for the favour and the honour I was fain to show thee; and what made me ask of thee the means whereby to win these things? If now I obtain possession of them what will they advantage me, seeing that my brother Bahman is no more? What should I ever do with them?" Thus did Perizadah indulge her grief bewailing her sad fate; while Parwez in like manner moaned for his brother Bahman with exceeding bitter mourning. At last the Prince, who despite his sorrow was assured that his sister still ardently desired to possess the three marvels, turned to Perizadah and said, "It behoveth me, O my sister, to set out forthright and to discover whether Bahman our brother met his death by doom of Destiny, or whether some enemy have slain him; and if he hath been killed then must I take full vengeance on his murtherer." Perizadah besought him with much weeping and wailing not to leave her, and said, "O joy of my heart, Allah upon thee, follow not in the footsteps of our dear departed brother or quit me in order to attempt a journey so rife in risks. I care naught for those things in my fear lest I lose thee also while attempting such enterprise." But Prince Parwez would in no wise listen to her lament and next day took leave of her, but ere he fared she said to him, "The hunting-knife which Bahman left with me was the means of informing us concerning the mishap which happened to him; but, say me how I shall know what happeneth to thee?" Then he produced a string of pearls which numbered one hundred and said, "As long as thou shalt see these pearls all parted one from other and each running loose upon the string, then do thou know that I am alive; but an thou shouldst find them fixed and adhering together then be thou ware that I am dead." The Princess taking the string of pearls hung it around her neck, determined to observe it hour after hour and find out how it fared with her second brother. After this Prince Parwez set out upon his travels and at the twentieth stage came to the same spot where Bahman had found the Darwaysh and saw him there in like condition. Then, after saluting him with the salam, the Prince asked, "Canst thou tell me where to find the Speaking-Bird and the Singing-Tree and the Golden-Water; and by what manner of means I may get possession of them? An thou can I pray thee inform me of this matter." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Seventy-seventh Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Darwaysh strave to stay Prince Parwez from his design and shewed him all the dangers on the way. Quoth he, “Not many days ago one like unto thee in years and in features came hither and enquired of me concerning the matter you now seekest. I warned him of the perils of the place and would have weaned him from his wilful ways, but he paid no wise heed to my warnings and refused to accept my counsel. He went off with full instructions from me on how to find those things he sought; but as yet he hath not returned, and doubtless he also hath perished like the many who preceded him upon that perilous enterprise.” Then said Prince Parwez, “O holy father, I know the man of whom thou speakest, for that he was my brother; and I learned that he was dead, but have no inkling of the cause whereby he died.” Replied the Darwaysh, “O my lord, I can inform thee on this matter; he hath been transmewed into a black stone, like the others of whom I just now spake to thee. If thou wilt not accept my advice and act accordingly to my counsel thou also shalt perish by the same means as did thy brother; and I solemnly forewarn thee to desist from this endeavour.” Prince Parwez having pondered these words, presently made reply, “O Darwaysh, I thank thee again and again and am much beholden to thee that thou art fain of my welfare and thou hast given me the kindest of counsel and the friendliest of advice; nor am I worthy of such favours bestowed upon a stranger. But now remaineth naught for me to beseech that thou wilt point out the path, for I am fully purposed to fare forwards and in no wise to desist from my endeavour. I pray thee favour me with full instructions for the road even as thou favouredst my brother.” Then said the Darwaysh, “An thou wilt not lend ear to my warnings and do as I desire thee, it mattereth to me neither mickle nor little. Choose for thyself and I by doom of Destiny must perforce forward thy attempt and albeit, by reason of my great age and infirmities, I may not conduct thee to the place I will not grudge thee a guide.” Then Prince Parwez mounted his horse and the Darwaysh taking one of many balls from out his scrip placed it in the youth's hands, directing him the while what to do, as he had counselled his brother Bahman; and, after giving him much advice and many warnings he ended with saying, "O my lord, have a heed not to be perplexed and terrified by the threatening Voices[363] , and sounds from unseen beings, which shall strike thine ear; but advance dauntless to the hill-top where thou shalt find the cage with the Speaking-Bird and the Singing-Tree and the Golden-Water." The Fakir then bid him adieu with words of good omen and the Prince set forth. He threw the ball upon the ground before him and, as it rolled up the path, he urged his horse to keep pace with it. But when he reached the hill-foot and saw that the ball had stopped and lay still, he dismounted forthright and paused awhile ere he should begin to climb and conned well in his mind the directions, one and all, given to him by the Darwaysh. Then, with firm courage and fast resolve, he set out afoot to reach the hill-top. But hardly had he begun to climb before he heard a voice beside him threatening him in churlish tongue and crying, "O youth of ill-omen, stand still that I may trounce thee for this thine insolence." Hearing these insulting words of the Invisible Speaker, Prince Parwez felt his blood boil over; he could not refrain his rage and in his passion he clean forgot the words of wisdom wherewith the Fakir was warned him. He seized his sword and drawing it from the scabbard, turned about to slay the man who durst insult him in such wise; but he saw no one and, in the act of looking back both he and his horse became black stones. Meanwhile the Princess ceased not at all hours of the day and watches of the night to consult the string of pearls which Parwez had left her; she counted them overnight when she retired to rest, she slept with them around her neck during the hours of darkness, and when she awoke at the dawn of day she first of all consulted them and noted their condition. Now at the very hour when her second brother was turned to stone she found the pearls sticking one to other so close together that she might not move a single bead apart from its fellows and she knew thereby that Prince Parwez also was lost to her for ever. — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Seventy-eight Night.

Then said she:ûI have heard, O auspicious King, that the Princess Perizadah was sore grieved at so sudden a blow and said to herself, “Ah! Woe is me and well-away! How bitter will be living without the love of such brothers whose youthtide was sacrificed for me! æTis but right that I share their fate whate’er be my lot; else what shall I have to say on the Day of Doom and the Resurrection of the Dead and the Judgment of Mankind?” Wherefore next morning, without further let or stay, she donned disguise of man’s attire; and, warning her women and slaves that she would be absent on an errand for a term of days during which they would be in charge of the house and goods, she mounted her hackney and set out alone and unattended. Now, inasmuch as she was skilled in horsemanship and had been wont to accompany her brothers when hunting and hawking, she was better fitted than other women to bear the toils and travails of travel. So on the twentieth day she arrived safe and sound at the hermitage-hut where, seeing the same Shaykh, she took seat beside him and after salaaming to him and greeting him she asked him, “O holy father, suffer me to rest and refresh myself awhile in this site of good omen; then deign point out to me, I pray thee, the direction of the place, at no far distance herefrom, wherein are found a certain Speaking-Bird and a Singing-Tree and a Golden-Water. An thou wilt tell me I shall deem this the greatest of favour.” Replied the Darwaysh, “Thy voice revealeth to me that thou art a woman and no man, albeit attired in male’s apparel. Well I wot the stead whereof thou speakest and which containeth the marvellous things thou hast named. But say me, what is thy purpose in asking me?” The Princess made reply, “I have been told many a tale anent these rare and wondrous things, and I would fain get possession of them and bear them to my home and make them its choicest adornments.” And said the Fakir, “O my daughter, in very truth these matters are exceeding rare and admirable: right fit are they for fair ones like thyself to win and take back with thee, but thou hast little inkling of the dangers manifold and dire that encompass them. Better far were it for thee to cast away this vain thought and go back by the road thou camest." Replied the Princess, "O holy father and far-famed anchorite, I come from a distant land whereto I will nevermore return, except after winning my wish; no, never! I pray thee tell me the nature of those dangers and what they be, that hearing thereof my heart may judge if I have or have not the strength and the spirit to meet them." Then the Shaykh described to the Princess all the risks of the road as erst he had informed Princes Bahman and Parwez; and he ended with saying, "The dangers will display themselves as soon as thou shalt begin to climb the hill-head where is the home of the Speaking-Bird. Then, if thou be fortunate enough to seize him, he will direct thee where to find the Singing-Tree and the Golden- Water. All the time thou climbest the hill, Voices from throats unseen and accents fierce and fell shall resound in thine ears. Furthermore, thou shalt see black rocks and boulders strewn upon thy path; and these, thou must know, are the transformed bodies of men who with exceeding courage attempted the same enterprise, but filled with sudden fear and tempted to turn and to look backwards were changed into stones. Now do thou steadily bear in mind what was their case. At the first the listened to those fearful sounds and cursings with firm souls, but anon their hearts and minds misgave them, or, haply, they fumed with fury to hear the villain words addressed to them and they turned about and gazed behind them, whereat both men and horses became black boulders." But when the Darwaysh had told her every whit, the Princess made reply, "From what thou sayest it seemeth clear to me that these Voices can do nothing but threaten and frighten by their terrible din; furthermore that there is naught to prevent a man climbing up the hill, nor is there any fear of any one attacking him; all he hath to do is on no account to look behind him." And after a short pause she presently added, "O Fakir, albeit a woman yet I have both nerve and thews to carry me through this adventure. I shall not heed the Voices not be enraged thereat, neither will they have any power to dismay me: moreover, I have devised a device whereby my success on this point is assured." "And what wilt thou do?" asked he, and she answered, "I will stop mine ears with cotton so may not my mind be disturbed and reason perturbed by hearing those awesome sounds." The Fakir marvelled with great marvel and presently exclaimed, “O my lady, methinks thou art destined to get possession of the things thou seekest. This plan hath not occurred to any hitherto[364] and hence it is haply that one and all have failed miserably and have perished in the attempt. Take good heed to thyself, however, not run any risk other than the enterprise requireth.” She replied, “I have no cause for fear since this one and only danger is before me to prevent happy issue. My heart doth bear me witness that I shall surely gain the guerdon wherefor I have undertaken such toil and trouble, But now do thou tell me what I must do, and whither to win my wish I must wend.” The Darwaysh once more besought her to return home, but Perizadah refused to listen and remained as firm and resolute as before; so when he saw that she was fully bent upon carrying out her purpose he exclaimed, “Depart, O my daughter, in the peace of Almighty Allah and His blessing; and may He defend thy youth and beauty from all danger.” Then taking from his bag a ball he gave it her and said, “When thou art seated in saddle throw this before thee and follow it whitherso it lead thee; and when it shall stop at the hill-foot then dismount and climb the slope. What will happen after I have already told thee.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Princess after farewelling the Fakir straightway bestrode her steed and threw the ball in front of his hooves as she had been bidden do. It rolled along before her in the direction of the hill and she urged her hackney to keep up with it, until reaching the hill it suddenly stopped. Hereat the Princess dismounted forthwith and having carefully plugged both her ears with cotton, began to breast the slope with fearless heart and dauntless soul; and as soon as she had advanced a few steps a hubbub of voices broke out all around her, but she heard not a sound, by reason of her hearing being blunted by the cotton-wool. Then hideous cries arose with horrid din, still she heard them not; and at last they grew to a storm of shouts and shrieks and groans and moans flavoured with foul language such as shameless women use when railing one at other. She caught now and then an echo of the sounds but recked naught thereof and only laughed and said to herself, “What care I for their scoffs and jeers and fulsome taunts? Let them hoot on and bark and bay as they may: this at least shall not turn me from my purpose.” As she approached the goal the path became perilous in the extreme and the air was so filled with an infernal din and such awful sounds that even Rustam would have quailed thereat and the bold spirit of Asfandiyar[365] have quaked with terror. The Princess, however, pressed on with uttermost speed and dauntless heart till she neared the hill-top and espied above her the cage in which the Speaking-Bird was singing with melodious tones; but, seeing the Princess draw nigh, he broke out despite his puny form in thundering tones and cried, “Return, O fool: hie thee back not dare come nearer.” Princess Perizadah heeded not his clamour a whit but bravely reached the hill-top, and running over the level piece of ground made for the cage and seized it saying, “At last I have thee and thou shalt not escape me.” She then pulled out the cotton-wool wherewith she had stopped her ears, and heard the Speaking-Bird reply in gentle accents, “O lady valiant and noble, be of good cheer for no harm or evil shall betide thee, as hath happened to those who essayed to make me their prize. Albeit I am encaged I have much secret knowledge of what happeneth in the world of men and I an content to become thy slave, and for thee to be my liege lady. Moreover I am more familiar with all that concerneth thee even than thou art thyself; and one day of the days I will do thee a service which shall deserve thy gratitude. What is now thy command? Speak that I may fulfil thy wish." Princess Perizadah was gladdened by these words, but in the midst of her joy she grieved at the thought of how she had lost her brothers whom she loved with a love so dear, and anon she said to the Speaking-Bird, "Full many a thing I want, but first tell me of the Golden-Water, of which I have heard so much, be nigh unto this place and if so do thou show me where to find it." The Bird directed her accordingly and the Princess took a silver flagon she had brought with her and filled it brimful from the magical fount. Then quoth she to the Bird, "The third and last prize I have come to seek is the Singing- Tree; discover to me where that also can be found." The Bird replied, "O Princess of fair ones, behind thy back in yonder clump that lieth close at hand groweth the Tree;" so she went forthright to the copse and found the Tree she sought singing with sweetest toned voice. But inasmuch as it was huge in girth she returned to her slave the Bird and said, "The Tree indeed I found but ætis lofty and bulky; how then shall I pull it up?" and he made answer, "Pluck but a branchlet of the Tree and plant it in thy garden; ætwill at once take root and in shortest time be as gross and fair a growth as that in yonder copse." So the Princess broke off a twig, and now that she had secured the three things, whereof the holy woman spake to her, she was exceeding joyful and turning to the Bird said, "I have in very deed won my wish, but one thing is yet wanting to my full satisfaction. My brothers who ventured forth with this same purpose are lying hereabouts turned into black stones; and I fain would have them brought to life again and the twain return with me in all satisfaction and assurance of success. Tell me now some plan whereby mine every desire may be fulfilled." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

The end of the Six Hundred and Eightieth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Speaking-Bird replied, “O Princess, trouble not thyself, the thing is easy. Sprinkle some of the Golden-Water from the flagon upon the black stones lying round about, and by virtue thereof each and every shall come to life again, thy two brothers as well as the others.” So Princess Perizadah’s heart was set at rest and taking the three prizes with her she fared forth and scattered a few drops from the silver flagon upon each black stone as she passed it when, lo and behold! they came to life as men and horses. Amongst them were her brothers who she at once knew and falling on their necks she embraced them, and asked in tones of surprise, “O my brothers, what do ye here?” To this they answered, “We lay fast asleep.” Quoth she, “Strange indeed that ye take delight in slumber away from me and ye forget the purpose wherefor ye left me; to wit, the winning of the Speaking-Bird and the Singing-Tree and the Golden-Water. Did ye not see this place all bestrown with dark hued rocks? Look now and say if there be aught left of them. These men and horses now standing around us were all black stones as ye yourselves also were; but, by the boon of Almighty Allah, all have come to life again and await the signal to depart. And if now ye wish to learn by what strange miracle both ye and they have recovered human shape, know ye that it hath been wrought by virtue of a water contained in this flagon which I sprinkled in the rocks with leave of the Lord of all Living. When I had gained possession of this cage and its Speaking-Bird, and also of the Singing-Tree, a wand whereof ye see in my hand, and lastly of the Golden-Water, I would not take them home with me unless ye twain could also bear me company; so I asked of this Bird the means whereby ye could be brought to life again. He made me drop some drops of the Golden-Water on the boulders and when I had done this ye two like all the others returned to life and to your proper forms.” Hearing these her words the Princes Bahman and Parwez thanked and praised their sister Perizadah; and all the other she had saved showered thanks and blessings on her hear saying with one accord, “O our lady, we are now thy slaves; nor can a lifelong service repay the debt of gratitude we owe thee for this favour thou hast shown us. Command and we are ready to obey thee with our hearts and our souls.” Quoth Perizadah, “The bringing back to life of these my brothers were my aim and purpose, and in so doing ye too have profited thereby; and I accept your acknowledgements as another pleasure. But now do ye mount each and every man his horse and ride back by the way ye came to your homes in Allah’s peace.” On this wise the Princess dismissed them and made herself ready to depart; but, as she was about to bestride her steed, Prince Bahman asked permission of her that he might hold in hand the cage and ride in front of her. She answered, “Not so, O brother mine; this Bird is now my slave and I will carry him myself. An thou wilt, take thou this twig with thee, but hold the cage only till I am seated in saddle.” She then mounted her hackney and, placing the cage before her on the pommel, bade her brother Parwez take charge of the Golden-Water in the silver flagon and carry it with all ease and the Prince did her bidding without gainsaying. And when they were all ready to ride forth, including the knights and the squires whom Perizadah had brought to life by sprinkling the Water the Princess turned to them and said, “Why delay we our departure and how is it that none offereth to lead us?” Bur as all hesitated she gave command, “Now let him amongst you number whose noblesse and high degree entitle him to such distinction fare before us and show us the way.” Then all with one accord replied, “O Princes of fair ones, there be none amongst us worthy of such honour, nor may any wight dare to ride before thee.” So when she saw that none amongst them claimed preeminence or right of guidance, and none desired to take precedence of the rest, she made excuse and said, “O my lords, ætis not for me by right to lead the way, but since ye order I must needs obey.” Accordingly she pushed on to the front, and after came her brothers and behind them the rest. And as they journeyed on all desired to see the holy man, and thank him for his favours and friendly rede, but when they reached the spot where he dwelt they found him dead, and they knew not if old age had taken him away, or if he perished in his prise because the Princess Perizadah had found and carried off the three things whereof he had been appointed by Destiny guard and guide. — And as the morn began to dawn

Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Eighty-first Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that all the company rode on, and as each one arrived at the road which led him to his natal land he took leave of the Lady Perizadah and went his way, until all were gone and the Princess and her brothers were the only left. At last they reached their journey's end safe and sound, and on entering their mansion Perizadah hung the cage inside the garden hard by the belvedere and no sooner did the Speaking-Bird begin to sing than flights of ring-doves and bulbuls and nightingales and skylarks and parrots and other songsters came flocking around him from afar and anear. Likewise she set the twig, which she had taken from the Singing-Tree, in a choice parterre also hard by the belvedere, and forthright it took root and put forth boughs and buds and grew goodly in growth, till it became a trunk as large as that from which she had plucked the twig, whilst from its leafage went forth bewitching sounds rivalling the music of the parent tree. She lastly bid them carve her a basin of pure white marble and set it in the centre of the pleasure grounds; then she poured therein the Golden-Water and forthright it filled the bowl and sot upwards like a spouting fountain some twenty feet in height; moreover the gerbes and jets fell back whence they came and not one drop was lost: whereby the working of the waters was unbroken and ever similar. Now but few days passed ere the report of these three wonders was bruited abroad and flocked the folk daily from the city to solace themselves with the sight, and the gates stood always open wide and all who came had entrance to the house and gardens and free leave to walk about at will and see these rarities which affected them with admiration and delight. Then also, as soon as both the Princes had recovered from the toils of travel, they began to go a-hunting as heretofore; and it chanced one day they rode forth several miles from home and were both busies in the chase, when the Shah of Iran-land came by decree of Destiny to the same place for the same purpose. The Princes, seeing a band of knights and huntsmen drawing near, were fain to ride home and to avoid such meeting; so they left the hunting- grounds and turned them homewards. But as Fate and lot would have it they hit upon the very road whereby King Khusrau Shah was coming, and so narrow was the path that they could not avoid the horsemen by wheeling round and wending another way. So they drew rein perforce and dismounting the salaamed and did obeisance to the Shah and stood between his hands with heads held low. The Sovran, seeing the horses' fine trappings and the Princes' costly garments, thought that the two youths were in the suite of his Wazirs and his Ministers of state and much wished to look upon their faces; he therefore bade them raise their heads and stand upright in the presence and they obeyed his bidding with modest mien and downcast eyes. He was charmed to behold their comeliness of favour and their graceful forms and their noble air and their courtly mien; and, after gazing at them for some time in not a little wonder and admiration, he asked them who they were and when might be their names and where they abode. Hereto Prince Bahman made reply, "O Asylum of the Universe, we are the sons of one whose life was spent in serving the Shah, the Intendant of the royal gardens and pleasaunces. As his days grew to a close he builded him a home without the town for us to dwell in till we should grow to man's estate and become fit to do thy Highness suit and service and carry out thy royal commands." The Shah furthermore asked them, "How is it that ye go a-hunting? This is a special sport of Kings and is not meant for the general of his subjects and dependants." Prince Bahman rejoined, "O Refuge of the World, we are yet young in years and being brought up at home we know little of courtly customs; but, as we look to bear arms in the armies of the Shah we fain would train our bodies to toil and moil." This answer was honoured by the royal approof and the King rejoined, "The Shah would see how ye deal with noble game; so choose ye whatever quarry ye will and bring it down in the presence." The Princes hereat remounted their horses and joined the Sovran; and when they reached the thickmost of the forest, Prince Bahman started a tiger and Prince Parwez rode after a bear; and the twain used their spears with such skill and good will that each killed his quarry and laid it at the Shah's feet. Then entering the wood again Prince Bahman slew a bear, and Prince Parwez, a tiger[366] and did as before; but when they would have ridden off the third time the King forbade them saying, "What!

would ye strip the royal preserve of all the game? This be enough and more than enough, that Shah wished only to put your valour to the proof and having seen it with his own eyes he is fully satisfied. Come now with us and stand before us as we sit at meat.” Prince Bahman made reply, “We are not worthy of the high honour and dignity wherewith thou favourest us thy humble servants. We dutifully and humbly petition thy Highness to hold us excused for this day; but if the Asylum of the Universe deign appoint some other time thy slaves will right gladly execute thy auspicious orders.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Eighty-Second Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that Khusrau Shah, astonished at their refusal, asked the cause thereof when Prince Bahman answered, “May I be thy sacrifice,[367] O King of kings, we have at home an only sister; and all three are bound together with bonds of the fondest affection; so we brothers go not anywhere without consulting her nor doth she aught save according to our counsel.” The King was pleased to see such fraternal love and union and presently quoth he, “By the head of the Shah,[368] he freely giveth you leave to go to-day: consult your sister and meet the Shadow of Allah[369] to- morrow at this hunting-ground, and tell him what she saith and if she content to let to twain and wait upon the Shah at meat.” So the Princes farewelled and prayed for him; then rode back home; but they both forgot to tell their sister how they had fallen in with the King; and of all that passed between them they remembered not one word.[370] Next day again they went ahunting and on returning from the chase the Shah enquired of them, “Have ye consulted with your sister if ye may serve the King, and what saith she thereto? Have ye obtained permission from her?” On hearing these words the Princes waxed aghast with fear; the colour of their faces changed, and each began to look into the other’s eyes. Then Bahman said, “Pardon, O Refuge of the World, this our transgression. We both forgot the command and remembered not to tell her sister.” Replied the King, “It mattereth not! ask her to-day and bring me word tomorrow.” But it so happened that on that day also they forgot the message yet the King was not annoyed at their shortness of memory, but taking from his pocket three little balls of gold, and tying them in a kerchief of sillk he handed them to Prince Bahman saying, “Put these balls in thy waist shawl, so shalt thou not forget to ask thy sister; and if perchance the matter escape thy memory, when thou shalt go to bed and take off thy girdle, haply the sound of them falling to the ground will remind thee of thy promise.” Despite this strict injunction of the Shadow of Allah the Princes on that day also clean forgot the order and the promise they had made to the King.

When, however, night came on, and Prince Bahman went to his bedchamber for sleep, he loosed his girdle and down fell the golden balls and at the sound the message of the Shah flashed across his thought. So he and his brother Parwez at once hastened to Perizadah's bower, where she was about retiring to rest; and, with many excuses for troubling her at so unseasonable an hour, reported to her all that happened. She lamented their thoughtlessness which for three successive days had caused them to forget the royal behest and ended with saying, "Fortune hath favoured you, O my brothers, and brought you suddenly to the notice of the Asylum of the Universe, a chance which often hath led to the height of good. It grieveth me sore that on your over regard for our fraternal love and union ye did not take service with the King when he deigned command you. Moreover ye have far greater cause for regret and repentance than I in that ye failed to plead a sufficient excuse and that which ye offered must have sounded rude and churlish. A right dangerous thing it is to thwart Kingly wishes. In his extreme condescension the Shah commandeth you to take service with him and ye, in rebelling against his exalted orders have done foolishly and ye have caused me much trouble of mind. Howbeit I will sue counsel from my slave the Speaking-Bird and see what he may say; for when I have ever any hard and weighty question to decide I fail not to ask his advice." Hereupon the Princess set the cage by her side and after telling her slave all that her brothers have made known to her, asked admonition of him regarding what they should do. The Speaking-Bird made answer, "It behoveth the Princes to gratify the Shah in all things he requireth of them; moreover, let them make ready a feast for the King and humbly pray them to visit this house, and thereby testify to him loyalty and devotion to his royal person." Then said the Princess, "O Bird, my brothers are most dear to me nor would I suffer them leave my sight for one moment if it were possible; and Allah forfend that this daring on their part do injury to our love and affection." Said the Speaking-Bird, "I have counselled thee for the best and have offered thee the right rede; nor do thou fear aught in following it, for naught save good shall come therefrom." "But," quoth the Princess, "an the Shadow of Allah honour us by crossing the threshold of this house needs must I present myself before him with face unveiled?"[371] "By all means," quoth the Speaking- Bird, "this will not harm thee, nay rather ætwill be to thine advantage." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Eighty-third Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that early next day the two Princes Bahman and Parwez rode as aforetime to the hunting-ground and met Khusrau Shah, who asked them, saying, “What answer bring ye from your sister?” Hereupon the elder brother advancing said, “O shadow of Allah, verily we are thy slaves and whatever thou deign bid that we are ready to obey. These less than the least have referred the matter to their sister and have obtained their consent; nay more, she blamed and chided them for that they did not hurry to carry out the commands of the Refuge of the World the moment they were delivered. Therefore being sore displeased at us, she desireth us on her behalf to plead forgiveness with the Shßhinshah[372] for this offence by us offered.” Replied the King, “No crime have ye committed to call forth the royal displeasure: nay more, it delighteth the Shadow of Allah exceedingly to see the love ye twain bear towards your sister.” Hearing such words of condescension and kindliness from the Shah, the Princes held their peace and hung their heads for shame groundwards; and the King who that day was not keen, according to his custom, after the chase, whenever he saw the brothers hold aloof, called them to his presence and heartened their hearts with words of favour; and presently, when a-weary of sport, he turned the head of his steed palace-ward and deigned order the Princes to ride by his side. The Wazirs and Councillors and Courtiers one and all fumed with envy and jealousy to see two unknowns entreated with such especial favour; and as they rode at the head of the suite adown the market-street all eyes were turned upon the youths and men asked one of other, “Who be the two who ride beside the Shah? Belong they to this city, or come they from some foreign land?” And the folk praised and blessed them saying, “Allah send our King of kings two Princes as godly and gallant as are these twain who ride beside him. If our hapless Queen who languisheth in durance had brought forth sons, by Allah’s favour they would now be of the same age as these young lords.” But as soon as the cavalcade reached the palace the King alighted from his horse and led the Princes to his private chamber, a splendid retreat magnificently furnished, wherein a table had been spread with sumptuous meats and rarest cates; and having seated himself thereat he motioned them to do likewise. Hereupon the brothers making low obeisance also took their seats and ate in well-bred silence with respectful mien. Then the Shah, desiring to warm then into talk[373] and thereby to test their wit and wisdom, addressed them on themes galore and asked of them many questions; and, inasmuch as they had been taught well and trained in every art and science, they answered with propriety and perfect ease. The Shah struck with admiration bitterly regretted that Almighty Allah had not vouchsafed to him sons so handsome in semblance and so apt and so learned as these twain; and, for the pleasure of listening to them, he lingered at meat longer than he was wont to do. And when he rose from table and retired with them to his private apartment he still sat longwhile talking with them and at last in his admiration he exclaimed, "Never until this day have I set eyes on youths so well brought up and so comely and so capable as are these, and methinks ætwere hard to find their equals anywhere." In fine quoth he, "The time waxeth late, so now let us cheer our hearts with music." And forthright the royal band of minstrels and musicians began to sing and perform upon instruments of mirth and merriment, whilst dancing-girls and boys displayed their skill, and mimes and mummers played their parts. The Princes enjoyed the spectacle with extreme joy and the last hours of the afternoon passed in royal revelry and regale. But when the sun had set and evening came on, the youths craved dismissal from the Shah with many expressions of gratitude for the exalted favours he had deigned bestow on them; and ere they fared forth the King of kings bespake them, saying, "Come ye again on the morrow to our hunting-ground as heretofore, and thence return to the palace. By the beard of the Shah, he fain would have you always with him, and solace him with your companionship and converse." Prince Bahman, prostrating himself before the presence, answered, "'Tis the very end and aim of all our wishes, O Shadow of Allah upon Earth, that on the morrow when thou shalt come from the chase and pass by our poor house, thou graciously deign enter and rest in it awhile, thereby conferring the highmost of honours upon ourselves and upon our sister. Albeit the place is not worthy of the Shahinshah's exalted presence, yet at times do mighty Kings condescend to visit the huts of their slaves." The King, ever more and more enchanted with their comeliness and pleasant speech, vouchsafed a most gracious answer, saying, "The dwelling place of youths in your estate and degree will certainly be goodly and right worthy of you; and the Shah willingly consenteth for the morrow to become the guest of you twain and of your sister whom, albeit he have not yet seen, he is assured to find perfect in all gifts of body and mind. Do ye twain therefore about early dawn-tide expect the Shah at the usual trysting-place." The Princes then craved leave to wend their ways; and going home said to their sister, "O Perizadah, the Shah hath decreed that to-morrow he will come to our house and rest here awhile after the hunt." Said she, "An so it be, needs must we see to it that all be made ready for a royal banquet and we may not be put to shame when the Shadow of Allah shall deign shade us. There is no help but that in this matter I ask of my slave, the Speaking-Bird, what counsel he would give; and that I prepare according thereto such meats as are meet for him and are pleasing to the royal palate." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Eighty-fourth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Princes both approved of her plan and went to seek repose; whereupon Perizadah sent for the cage and setting it before her said, "O Bird, the Shah hath made a promise and hath decreed that he will deign honour this our house on the morrow, wherefore we must needs make ready for our liege lord the best of banquets and I bid thee say me what dishes should the kitcheners cook for him?" The Speaking-Bird replied, "O my lady, thou hast the most skilful of cooks and confectioners. Do thou bid them dress for thee the choicest dainties, but above all others see thou with thine own eyes that they set before the Shah a dish of new green cucumbers stuffed with pearls." Quoth the Princess in utter wonderment, "Never until this time heard I of such a dainty! How? Cucumbers with a filling of pearls! And what will the King, who cometh to eat bread and not to gaze on stones, say to such meat? Furthermore, I have not in my possession pearls enough to serve for even a single cucumber." Replied the Speaking-Bird, "This were an easy matter: do thou dread naught but only act as I shall advise thee. I seek not aught save thy welfare and would on no wise counsel thee to thy disadvantage. As for the pearls thou shalt collect them on this wise: go thou to-morrow betimes to the pleasure-gardens and bid a hole be dug at the foot of the first tree in the avenue by thy right hand, and there shalt thou find of pearls as large a store as thou shalt require." So after dawn on the next day Princess Perizadah bade a gardener-lad accompany her and fared to the sire within the pleasure-gardens whereof the Speaking-Bird had told her. Here the boy dug a hole both deep and wide when suddenly his spade struck upon somewhat hard, and he removed with his hands the earth and discovered to view a golden casket well nigh one foot square. Hereupon the young gardener showed it to the Princess who explained, "I brought thee with me for this very reason. Take heed and see that no harm come to it, but dig it out and bring it to me with all care." When the lad did her bidding she opened it forthright and found it filled with pearls and unions fresh from the sea, round as rings and all of one and the same size perfectly fitted for the purpose which the Speaking-Bird had proposed. Perizadah rejoiced with extreme joy at the sight and taking up the box walked back with it to the house; and the Princes who had seen their sister faring forth betimes with the gardener-lad and had wondered why she went to the park thus early unaccording to her wonted custom, catching sight of her from the casement quickly donned their walking dresses and came to meet her. And as the two brothers walked forwardes they saw the Princess approaching them with somewhat unusual under her arm, which when they met, proved to be a golden casket whereof they knew naught. Quoth they, "O our sister at early light we espied thee going to the pleasure- grounds with a gardener-lad empty handed, but now thou bringest back this golden casket; so disclose to us where and how thou hast found it; and haply there may be some hoard close hidden in the parterre?" Perizadah replied, "Sooth ye say, O my brothers: I took this lad with me and made him dig under a certain tree where we came upon this box of pearls, at the sight whereof methinks your hearts will be delighted." The Princess straightway opened the box and her brothers sighting the pearls and unions were amazed with extreme amazement and rejoiced greatly to see them. Quoth the Princess, "Come now ye twain with me, for that I have in hand a weighty matter;" and quoth Prince Bahman, "What is there to do? I pray thee tell us without delay for never yet hast thou kept aught of thy life from us." She made reply, "O my brothers, I have naught to hide from you, nor think ye any ill of me, for I am now about to tell you all the tale." Then she made known to them what advice the Speaking-Bird had given to her; and they, conning the matter over in this minds, marvelled much why her slave had bidden them set a dish of green cucumbers stuffed with pearls before the Shah, nor could they devise any reason for it. Presently the Princess resumed, "The Speaking-Bird indeed is wise and ware; so methinks this counsel must be for our advantage; and at any rate it cannot be without some object and purpose. It therefore behoveth us to do even as he hath commanded." Hereupon the Princess went to her own chamber and summoning the head cook said to him, "This day the Shah, the Shadow of Allah upon Earth, will condescend here to eat the noon-meal. So do thou take heed that the meats be of choiest flavour and fittest to set before the Asylum of the World, but of all the dishes there is one thou alone must make and let not another have a hand therein. This shall be of the freshest green cucumbers with a stuffing of unions and pearls.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Eighty-fifth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the head Cook listened to this order of the Princess with wonderment and said in himself, "Who ever heard of such a dish or dreamed of ordering such a one." The Lady seeing his astonishment betrayed in his semblance without the science of thought-reading,[374] said to him, "It seemeth from thy countenance that thou deemest me daft of wit to give thee such order. I know that no one ever tasted a dish of the kind, but what is that to thee? Do thou e'en as thou art bidden. Thou seest this box brimful on pearls; so take of them as many as thou needest for the dish, and what remaineth over leave in the box." The Kitchener who could answer nothing in his confusion and amazement, chose as many precious stones as he required, and presently fared away to superintend the meats being cooked and made ready for the feast. Meanwhile the Princess when over the house and grounds and gave directions to the slaves about the ordinance thereof, leading especial attention to the carpets and divans, the lamps and all other furniture. Next day at break of dawn Princes Bahman and Parwez rode forth in rich attire to the appointed place where they first met the Shah, who was also punctual to his promise and vouchsafed to join them in the hunt. Now when the sun had risen high and its rays waxed hot, the King gave up the chase, and set forth with the Princes to their house; and as they drew nigh thereto the cadet pushed forwards and sent word to the Princess that the Asylum of the World was coming in all good omen. Accordingly, he hastened to receive him and stood waiting his arrival at the inner entrance; and after, when the King rode up to the gate and dismounting within the court stepped over the threshold of the house-door, she fell down at his feet and did worship. Hereat her brothers said, "O Asylum of the World, this is our sister of whom we spake;" and the Shah with gracious kindness and condescension raised her by the hand, and when he saw her face he marvelled much at its wondrous comeliness and loveliness. He thought in himself, "How like she is to her brothers in favour and form, and I trow there be none of all my lieges in city or country who can compare with them for beauty and noble bearing. This country- house also exceedeth all that I have ever seen in splendour and grandeur.” The Princess then led the Shah through the house and showed him all the magnificence thereof, while he rejoiced with extreme joy at everything that met his sight. So when King Khusrau had considered whatso was in the mansion he said to the Princess, “This home of thine is far grander than any palace owned by the Shah, who would now stroll about the pleasure- garden, never doubting but that it will be delightsome at the house.” Hereat the Princess threw wide open the door whence the grounds could be seen; and at once the King beheld before and above all other things, the fountain which cast up incessantly, in gerbes and jets, water clear as crystal withal golden of hue. Seeing such prodigy he cried, “This is indeed a glorious gusher: never before saw I one so admirable. But say me where is its source, and by what means doth it shoot up in spurts so high? Whence cometh this constant supply and in what fashion was it formed? The Shah would fain see it near hand.” “O King of kings, and Lord of the lands,” quoth the Princess, “be pleased to do whatso thou desirest.” Thereupon they went up to the fountain and the Shah stood gazing upon it with delight when behold, he heard a concert of sugar-sweet voices choiring with the harmony and melody of wit-ravishing music. So he turned him around and gazed about him to discover the singers, but no one was in sight; and albeit he looketh both hard and near all was in vain, he heard the voices but he could descry no songster. At length completely baffled he exclaimed, “Whence come these most musical of sounds; and rise they from the bowels of earth or are they floating in the depths of air? They fill the heart with rapture, but strangely surprise the senses to see that no one singer is in sight.” Replied the Princess with a smile “O Lord of lords, there are no minstrels here and the strains which strike the Shah’s ear come from yonder tree. Deign walk on, I pray thee, and examine it well.” So be advanced thereto, ever more and more enchanted with the music, and he gazed now at the Golden-Water and now at the Singing-Tree till lost in wonderment and amazement; then, “O Allah,” said he to himself, “is all this Nature-made or magical, for in very deed the place is full of mystery?” Presently, turning to the Princess quoth he, “O my lady, prithee whence came ye by this wondrous tree which hath been planted in the middlemost of this garden: did anyone bring it from some far distant land as a rare gift, and by what name is it known?” Quoth Perizadah in reply, “O King of kings, this marvel hight Singing- Tree groweth not in our country. æTwere long to recount whence and by what means I obtained it; and suffice it for the present to say that the Tree, together with the Golden-Water and the Speaking-Bird, were all found by me at one and the same time. Deign now accompany thy slave and look upon this third rarity; and when the Shah shall have rested and recovered from the toils and travails of hunting, the tale of these three strange things shall be told to the Asylum of the World in fullest detail.” Hereto the King replied, “All the Shah’s fatigue hath gone for gazing upon these wonders; and now to visit the Speaking-Bird.” — And as the morning began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Eighty-sixth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Princess took the King and when she had shown to him the Speaking-Bird, they returned to the garden where he never ceased considering the fountain with extreme surprise and presently exclaimes, “How is this? No spring whence cometh all this water meeteth the Shah’s eye, and no channel; nor is there any reservoir large enough to contain it.” She replied, “Thou speakest sooth, O King of kings! This jetting font hath no source; and it springeth from a small marble basin which I filled from a single flagon of the Golden-Water; and by the might of Allah Almighty it increased and waxed copious until it shot up in this huge gerbe which the Shah seeth. Furthermore it ever playeth day and night; and, marvellous to relate, the water falling back from that height into the basin minisheth not in quantity nor is aught of it spilt or wasted.” Hereat the King, filled with wonder and astonishment, bade go back to the Speaking-Bird; whereupon the Princess led him to the belvedere whence he looked out upon thousands of all manner fowls carolling in the trees and filling air with their hymns and prises of the Creator; so he asked his guide, “O my lady, whence come these countless songsters which haunt yonder tree and make the welkin resound with their melodious notes; yet they affect none other of the trees?” Quoth Perizadah, “O King of kings, they are all attracted by the Speaking-Bird and flock hither to accompany his song; and for that his cage hangeth to the window of this belvedere they prefer only the nearest of the trees; and here he may be heard singing sweeter notes than any of the others, nay in a plaint more musical than that of any nightingale.” And as the Shah drew nigh the cage and gave ear to the Bird’s singing, the Princess called to her captive saying, “Ho, my slave the Bird, dost thou not perceive the Asylum of the Universe is here that thou payest him not due homage and worship?” Hearing these words the Speaking- Bird forthright ceased his shrilling and at the same moment all the other songsters sat in deepest silence; for they were loyal to their liege lord nor durst any one utter a note when he held his peace. The Speaking-Bird then spake in human voice saying, “O great King, may Almighty Allah by His Might and Majesty accord thee health and happiness;” so the Shah returned the salutation and the Slave of Princess Perizadah ceased not to shower blessings upon his head. Meanwhile the tables were spread after sumptuous fashion and the choicest meats were set before the company which was seated in due order and degree, the Shah placing himself hard by the Speaking-Bird and close to the casement where the cage was hung. Then the dish of green cucumbers having been set before him, he put forth his hand to help himself, but drew it back in wonderment when he saw that the cucumbers, ranged in order upon the plate, were stuffed with pearls which appeared at either end. He asked the Princess and her brothers, “What is this dish? It cannot be meant for food; then wherefore is it placed before the Shah? Explain to me, I command you, what this thing meaneth.” They could not give an answer unknowing what reply to make, and as all held their peace the Speaking-Bird answered for them saying, “O King of the Age and the Time, dost thou deem it strange to see a dish of cucumbers stuffed with pearls? How much stranger then it is that thou wast not astonished to hear that the Queen thy Consort had, contrary to the laws of Allah’s ordinance, given birth to such animals as dog and cat and musk-rat. This should have caused thee far more of wonder, for who hath ever heard of woman bearing such as these?” Hereat the Shah made answer to the Speaking-Bird, “All that thou sayest is right indeed and I know that such things are not after the law of Almighty Allah; but I believed the reports of the midwives, the wise women who were with the Queen such time she was brought to bed, for they were not strangers but her own sisters, born of the same parents as herself. How then could I do otherwise than trust their words?” Quoth the Speaking-Bird, “O King of kings, indeed the truth of the matter is not hidden from me. Albeit they be the sisters of thy Queen, yet seeing the royal favours and affection towards their cadette they were consumed with anger and hatred and despite by reason of their envy and jealousy. So they devised evil devices against her and their deceits at last succeeded in diverting thy thoughts from her, and in hiding her virtues from thy sight. Now are their malice and treason made manifest to thee; and, if thou require further proof, do thou summon them and question them of the case. They cannot hide it from thee and will be reduced to confess and crave thy pardon." — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Eighty-seventh Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King, that the Speaking-Bird also said to Khusrau Shah, “These two royal brothers so comely and stalwart and this lovely Princess, their sister, are thine own lawful children to whom the Queen thy Consort gave birth. The midwives, thy sisters-in-law, by reason of the blackness of their hearts and faces bore them away as soon as they were born: indeed every time a child was given to thee they wrapped it in a bit of blanket and putting it in a basket committed it to the stream which floweth by the palace to the intent that it might die an obscure death. But it so fortuned that the Intendant of thy royal gardens espied these baskets one and all as they floated past his grounds, and took charge of the infants he found therein. He then caused them to be nursed and reared with all care and, whilst they were growing up to man’s estate, he looked to their being taught every art and science; and whilst his life endured he dealt with them and brought them up in love and tenderness as though they had been his very own. And now, O Khusrau Shah, wake from thy sleep of ignorance and heedlessness, and know that these two Princes Bahman and Parwez and the Princess Perizadah their sister are thine own issue and thy rightful heirs.” When the King heard these words and was assured of the purport being true and understood the evil doing of those Satans, his sisters-in-law, he said, “O Bird, I am indeed persuaded of thy soothfastness, for when I first saw these youths at the hunting-ground my bowels yearned with affection towards them and my heart felt constrained to love them as though they had been my own seed. Both they and their sister have drawn my affections to them as a magnet draweth iron: and the voice of blood crieth to me and compelleth me to confess the tie and to acknowledge that they are my true children, borne in the womb of my Queen, whose direful Destiny I have been the means of carrying out.” Then turning to the Princes and their sister he said with tearful eyes and broken voice, “Ye are my children and henceforth do ye regard me as your father.” At this they ran to him with rare delight and falling on his neck embraced him. Then they all sat down to meat and when they had finished eating, Khusrau Shah said to them, “O my children, I must now leave you, but Inshallah — Allah willing — I will come again to-morrow and bring with me the Queen your mother.” So saying he farewelled them fondly and mounting his horse departed to his palace; and no sooner had he seated himself upon his throne than he summoned the Grand Wazir and commanded him saying, “Do thou send this instant and bind in heaviest bonds those vile women, the sisters of my Queen; for their ill deeds have at last come to light and they deserve to die the death of murtherers. Let the Sworder forthright make sharp his sword; for the ground thirsteth for their blood. Go see thyself that they are beheaded without stay or delay: await not other order, but instantly obey my commandment.” The Grand Wazir went forth at one and in his presence the Envious Sisters were decapitated and this underwent fit punishment for their malice and their evil doing. After this, Khusrau Shah with his retinue walked afoot to the Cathedral-mosque whereby the Queen had been imprisoned for so many years in bitter grief and tenderly embraced her. Then seeing her sad plight and her careworn countenance and wretched attire he wept and cried, “Allah Almighty forgive me this mine unjust and wrongful dealing towards thee. I have put to death thy sisters who deceitfully and despitefully raised my wrath and anger against thee, the innocent, the guiltless; and they have received due retribution for their misdeeds.” — And as the morn began to dawn Shahrazad held her peace till

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The end of the Six Hundred and Eighty-eighth Night.

Then said she: — I have heard, O auspicious King that the King spake kindly and fondly to his Consort, and told her all that had betided him, and what the Speaking-Bird had made known to him, ending with these words, “Come now with me to the palace where thou shalt thee thy two sons and daughter grown up to become the loveliest of things. Hie with me and embrace them and take them to thy bosom, for they are our children, the light of our etes. But first do thou repair to the Hammam and don thy royal robes and jewels.” Meanwhile tidings of these events were noised about the city how the King had at length shown due favour to the Queen, and had released her from bondage with his own hands and prayed forgiveness for the wrongs he had done to her; and how the Princes and the Princess had been proved to be her true-born children, and also how Khusrau Shah had punished her sisters who conspired against her; so joy and gladness prevailed both in city and kingdom, and all the folk blessed the Shah’s Bßn· and cursed the Satanesses her sisters. And next day when the Queen had bathed in the Hammam and had donned royal dress and regal jewels, she went to meet her children together with the King who led up to her the Princes Bahman and Parwez and the Princess Perizadah and said, “See, here are thy children, fruit of thy womb and core of thy heart, thine own very sons and thy daughter: embrace them with all a mother’s love and extend thy favour and affection to them even as I have done. When thou didst give them birth, thine illomened sisters bore them away from thee and cast them into yonder stream and said that thou hadst been delivered first of a puppy, then of a kitten and lastly of a musk-ratling. I cannot console myself for having credited their calumnies and the only recompense I can make is to place in thine embrace these three thou broughtest forth, and whom Allah Almighty hath restored to us and hath made right worthy to be called our children.” Then the Princes and Princess fell upon their mother’s neck and fondly embraced her weeping tear-floods of joy. After this the Shah and the Banu sai down to meat together with their children;

and when they had made an end of eating, King Khusrau Shah repaired to the garden with his Consort that he might show her the Singing-Tree and the fountain of Golden-Water, whereat the Queen was filled with wonder and delight. Next they turned to the belvedere and visited the Speaking-Bird of whom, as they sat at meat, the King had spoken to her in highest praise, and the Queen rejoiced in his sweet voice and melodious singing. And when they had seen all these things, the King mounted horse, Prince Bahman riding on his right hand and on his left Prince Parwez, while the Queen took Princess Perizadah with her inside her litter, and thus they set forth for the palace. As the royal cavalcade passed the city walls and entered the capital with royal pomp and circumstance, the subjects who had heard the glad tidings thronged in multitudes to see their progress and volleyed shouts of acclamation; and as the lieges had grieved aforetime to see the Queen-consort imprisoned, so now the rejoiced with exceeding joy to find her free once more. But chiefly they marvelled to look upon the Speaking-Bird, for the Princess carried the cage with her, and as they rode along thousands of sweet-toned songsters came swarming round them from every quarter, and flew as an escort to the cage, filling the air with marvellous music; while flocks of others, perching upon the trees and the housetops, carolled and warbled as it were to greet their lord's cage accompanying the royal cavalcade. And when the palace was reached, the Shah and his Queen and his children sat down to a sumptuous banquet; and the city was illuminated, and everywhere dancings and merry-makings testified to the joy of the lieges; and for many days these revels and rejoicings prevailed throughout the capital and the kingdom where every man was blithe and happy and had feastings and festivities in his house, After these festivals King Khusrau Shah made his elder son Bahman heir to his throne and kingdom and committed to his hands the affairs of state in their entirety, and the Prince administered affairs with such wisdom and success that the greatness and glory of the realm were increased twofold. The Shah also entrusted to his youngest son Parwez the charge of his army, both of horsemen and foot-soldiers; and Princess Perizadah was given by her sire in marriage to a puissant King who reigned over a mighty country; and lastly the Queen-mother forgot in perfect joy and happiness the pangs of her captivity. Destiny ever afterwards endowed them, one and all, with days the most delectable and they led the liefest of lives until at last there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Sunderer of societies and the Depopulator of palaces and the Garnerer of graveyards and the Reaper for Resurrection-day, and they became as though they had never been. So laud be to the Lord who dieth not and who knoweth no shadow of change.

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APPENDIX. VARIANTS AND ANALOGUES OF THE TALES IN VOLUME XIII.

By W. A. Clouston.

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The Tale of Zayn Al-Asnam.

This story is a compound of two distinct tales, namely, the Dream of Riches and the Quest of the Ninth Image. It has always been one of the most popular of the tales in our common version of the "Arabian Nights," with this advantage, that it is perhaps the only one of the whole collection in which something like a moral purpose may be discovered— "a virtuous woman is more precious than fine gold." Baron de Sacy has remarked of The Nights, that in the course of a few years after Galland's version appeared "it filled Europe with its fame, though offering no object of moral or philosophical interest, and detailing stories merely for the pleasure of relating them." But this last statement is not quite accurate: Shahrazad relates her stories merely to prolong her own life.

It is a curious fact — and one perhaps not very generally known — that the Tale of Zayn al-Asnßm is one of two (the other being that of Khudßdßd) which Galland repudiated, as having been foisted into his 8th volume without his knowledge, as he expressly asserts in the "Avertissement" to the 9th vol., promising to remove them in a second edition, which, however, he did not live to see. I understand that M. Herrmann Zotenberg purposes showing, in his forthcoming edition of "Aladdin," that these two histoires (including that of the Princess of Daryßbßr, which is interwoven with the tale of Khudßdßd and his Brothers) were Turkish tales translated by M. Petis de la Croix and were intended to appear in his "Mille et un Jours," which was published, after his death, in 1710; and that, like most of the tales in that work, they were derived from the Turkish collection entitled "Al-Farßj ba'd al-Shiddah," or Joy after Affliction. But that Turkish story-book is said to be a translation of the Persian collection entitled "Hazßr · Yek R·z" (the Thousand and One Days), which M. Petis rendered into French.

In the preface to Petis' work it is stated that during his residence in Persia, in 1675, he made a transcript of the "Hazßr · Yek R·z," by permission of the author, a dervish named Mukhlis, of Isfahßn. That transcript has not, I understand, been found; but Sir William Ouseley brought a manuscript from Persia which contained a portion of the

“Hazßr · Yek R·z,” and which he says (“Travels” vol. ii. , note) agreed so far with the French version. And it does seem strange that Petis should go to the Turkish book for tales to include in his “Mille et un Jours” when he had before him a complete copy of the Persian original, and even if he did so, how came his French rendering of the tales in question into the hands of Galland’s publisher? The tales are not found in Petis’ version, which is regularly divided into 1001 Days, and the Turkish work, judging from the titles of the eleven first tales, of which I have seen a transcript by M. Zotenberg, has a number of stories which do not occur in the Persian.[375] But I think it very unlikely that the tales of Khudßdßd and the Princess foisted into Galland’s 8th volume, were translated from the Turkish collection. In Galland the story of the Princess Daryßbßr is inserted in that of Khudßdßd; while in the Turkish story-book they are separate tales, the 6th recital being under the title, “Of the VazÝr with the Daughter of the Prince of Daryßbßn,” and the 9th story is “Of the Sons of the Sovereign of Harrßn with Khudßdßd.” This does not seem to support the assertion that these tales in Galland were derived from the Turkish versions: and it is not to be supposed, surely, that the translator of the versions in Galland conceived the idea of fusing the two stories together?

The first part of the tale of Zaun al-Asnam — the Dream of Riches — is an interesting variant of the tale in The Nights, vol. iv. , where (briefly to recapitulate, for purposes of comparison by-and-by) a man of Baghdad, having lost all his wealth and become destitute, dreams one night that a figure appeared before him and told him that his fortune was in Cairo. To that city he went accordingly, and as it was night when he arrived, he took shelter in a mosque. A party of thieves just then had got into an adjacent house from that same mosque, and the inmates, discovering them, raised such an outcry as to bring the police at once on the spot. The thieves contrive to get away, and the walÝ, finding only the man of Baghdad in the mosque, causes him to be seized and severely beaten after which he sends him to prison, where the poor fellow remains thirty days, when the walÝ sends for him and begins to question him. The man tells his story, at which the walÝ laughs, calls him an ass for coming so far because of a dream, and adds that he himself had had a similar dream of a great treasure buried in the garden of such a house in Baghdad, but he was not so silly as to go there. The poor man recognises his own house and garden from the walÝ’s description, and being set at liberty returns to Baghdad, and finds the treasure on the very spot indicated.

Lane, who puts this story (as indeed he has done with much better ones) among his notes, states that it is also related by El-IshßkÝ, who flourished during the reign of the KhalÝf El-Ma’m·n (9th century), and his editor Edward Stanley Poole adds that he found it also in a MS. of Lane’s entitled “Murshid ez-Z·war ilß el-Abrar,” with the difference that it is there related of an Egyptian saint who travelled to Baghdad, and was in the same manner directed to his own house in El-Fustßt.

The same story is told in the 6th book of the “MasnavÝ,” an enormously long sufÝ poem, written in Persian, by Jelßd ed-Din, the founder of the sect of Muslim devotees generally known in Europe as the Dancing Dervishes, who died in 1272. This version differs from the Arabian in but a few and unimportant details: Arriving at Cairo, destitute and hungry, he resolves to beg when it is dark, and is wandering about, “one foot forward, one foot backwards,” for a third of the night, when suddenly a watchman pounces on him and beats him with fist and stick — for the people having been plagued with robbers, the KhalÝf had given orders to cut off the head of any one found abroad at night. The wretched man begs for mercy till he has told his story, and when he has finished the watchman acquaints him of a similar dream he had had of treasure at Baghdad.[376]

A Turkish variant occurs in the “History of the Forty VazÝrs,” where a poor water-carrier of Cairo, named Nu’mßn, presents his son’s teacher with his only camel, which he used daily for carrying his skins of water, as a reward for instructing the lad in the Kurßn, and his wife rails at him for his folly in no measured terms. In his sleep a white haired old man appears to him in a dream and tells him to go to Damascus, where he would find his portion. After this has occurred three times in succession, poor Nu’mßn, spite of his wife’s remonstrances, sets out for Damascus, enters a mosque there, and receives a loaf of bread from a man who had been baking, and having eaten it falls asleep. Returning home, his wife reviles him for giving away a camel and doing other mad things. But again the venerable old man appears to him thrice in a dream, and bids him dig close by himself, and there he would find his provision. When he takes shovel and pick-axe to dig, his wife's tongue is more bitter than before, and after he had laboured a while and begins to feel somewhat fatigued, when he asks her to take a short spell at the work, she mocks him and calls him anything but a wise man. But on his laying bare a stone slab, she thinks there must be something beneath it, and offers to relieve him. "Nu'mßn," quoth she "thou'rt weary now." "No, I'm rested, says he. In the end he discovers a well, goes down into it, and finds a jar full of sequins, upon seeing which his wife clasps him lovingly round the neck, exclaiming, "O my noble little hubby! Blessed be God for thy luck and thy fortune!" Her tune changes, however, when the honest water-carrier tells her that he means to carry the treasure to the King, which he does, and the King having caused the money to be examined, the treasure is found to have the following legend written on it: "This is an alms from God to Nu'mßn, by reason of his respect for the Kurßn."[377]

This curious story, which dates, as we have seen, at least as far back as the 9th century appears to be spread over Europe. Mr. E. Sidney Hartland, in an able paper treating of several of its forms in "The Antiquary" for February, 1887, p-48, gives a Sicilian version from Dr. Pitre's collection, which is to this effect:

A poor fellow at Palermo, who got his living by salting tunny and selling it afterwards dreamt one night that a person came to him and said that if he wished to find his fortune he would find it under the bridge of the Teste. Thither he goes and sees a man in rags and is beginning to retire when the man calls him back, informs him that he is his fortune and bids him go at midnight of that same night to the place where he had deposited his casks of tunny, dig there, and whatever he found was his own. The tunny-seller gets a pick-axe and at midnight begins to dig. He comes upon a large flat stone, which he raises and discovers a staircase; he descends, and at the bottom finds an immense treasure of gold. In brief, he becomes so rich that he lends the King of Spain "a million," to enable him to carry on his wars; the King makes him Viceroy of Sicily, and by-and by, being unable to repay the loan, raises him to the highest royal dignities.

Johannes Fungerus, in his "Etymologicon Latino-Gr cum," published at Leyden in 1607, in art. Somnus, gravely relates the story, with a young Dutchman for the hero and as having happened "within the memory of our fathers, both as it has been handed down in truthful and honourable fashion as well as frequently told to me."[378] His "true story" may thus be rendered:

A certain young man of Dort, in Holland, had squandered his wealth and all his estate and having contracted a debt, was unable to pay it. A certain one appeared to him in a dream, and advised him to betake himself to Kempen, and there on the bridge he would receive information from some one as to the way in which he should be extricated from his difficulties. He went there, and when he was in a sorrowful mood and thinking upon what had been told him and promenaded almost the whole day, a common beggar, who was asking alms, pitying his condition, sat down and asked him, "Why so sad?" Thereupon the dreamer explained to him his sad and mournful fate, and why he had come there forsooth, under the impulse of a dream, he had set out thither, and was expecting God as if by a wonder, to unravel this more than Gordian knot. The mendicant answered "Good Heaven! are you so mad and foolish as to rely on a dream, which is emptier than nothing, and journey hither? I should betake myself to Dort, to dig up a treasure buried under such a tree in such a man's garden (now this garden had belonged to the dreamer's father), likewise revealed to me in a dream." The other remained silent and pondering all that had been said to him, then hastened with all speed to Dort, and under the aforesaid tree found a great heap of money, which freed him from his obligations, and having paid off all his debts, he set up in a more sumptuous style than before.

The second part of the tale, or novelette, of "The Spectre Barber," by Musaeus (1735-1788), is probably an elaboration of some German popular legend closely resembling the last-cited version, only in this instance the hero does not dream, but is told by a ghost, in reward for a service he had done it (or him), to tarry on the great bridge over the Weser, at the time when day and night are equal, for a friend who would instruct him what he must do to retrieve his fortune. He goes there at dawn, and walks on the bridge till evening comes, when there remained no one but himself and a wooden legged soldier to whom he had given a small coin in the early morning, and who ventured at length to ask him why he had promenaded the bridge all day. The youth at first said he was waiting for a friend, but on the old soldier remarking that he could be no friend who would keep him waiting so long, he said that he had only dreamt he was to meet some friend (for he did not care to say anything about his interview with the ghost), the old fellow observed that he had had many dreams, but put not the least faith in them. “But my dream,” quoth the youth, “was a most remarkable one.” “It couldn’t have been so remarkable as one I had many years ago,” and so on, as usual, with this addition, that the young man placed the old soldier in a snug little cottage and gave him a comfortable annuity for life — taking care, we may be sure, not to tell him a word as to the result of acting upon his dream.

To what extent Musaeus has enlarged his original material it is impossible to say; but it is well known that, like Hans Andersen in later times, he did “improve and add to such popular tales and traditions as he dealt with — a circumstance which renders him by no means trustworthy for folk-lore purposes.

In Denmark our well-travelled little tale does duty in accounting for the building of a parish church, as we learn from Thorpe, in his “Northern Mythology,” vol. ii. :

Many years ago there lived in Errits÷, near Frederica, a very poor man who one day said, “If I had a large sum of money, I would build a church for the parish.” The following night he dreamed that if he went to the south bridge at Veile he would make his fortune. He followed the intimation and strolled backwards and forwards on the bridge until it grew late, but without seeing any sign of good fortune. When just on the point of returning, he was accosted by an officer, who asked him why he had spent a whole day so on the bridge. He told him his dream, on hearing which the officer related to him in return that he also on the preceding night had dreamed that in a barn in Errits÷, belonging to a man whose name he mentioned, a treasure lay buried. Now the name he mentioned was the man’s own, who prudently kept his own counsel, hastened home, and found the treasure in a barn. The man was faithful to his word, and built the church.[379]

Equally at home, as we have seen, in Sicily, Holland, Germany, and Denmark, the identical legend is also domiciled in Scotland and England. Thus Robert Chambers, in his "Popular Rhymes of Scotland," ed. 1826, , speaking of Dundonald Castle, in Ayrshire, the ancient seat of King Robert II., relates the following local tradition:

Donald, the builder, was originally a poor man, but had the faculty of dreaming lucky dreams. Upon one occasion he dreamed thrice in one night that if he were to go to London Bridge he would make a fortune. He went accordingly, and saw a man looking over the parapet of the bridge, whom he accosted courteously, and after a little conversation, intrusted him with the secret of the occasion of his visiting London Bridge. The stranger told him that he had made a very foolish errand, for he had himself once had a similar vision, which directed him to go to a certain spot in Ayrshire, in Scotland, where he would find a vast treasure, and for his part he had never once thought of obeying the injunction. From his description of the spot, however, the sly Scot at once perceived that the treasure in question must be concealed nowhere but in his own humble kail-yard at home, to which he immediately repaired, in full expectation of finding it. Nor was he disappointed; for after destroying many good and promising cabbages, and completely cracking credit with his wife, who considered him as mad, he found a large potful of gold coin, with which he built a stout castle for himself, and became the founder of a flourishing family.

"This absurd story," adds Chambers, "is localised in almost every district of Scotland always referring to London Bridge, and Hogg (the Ettrick Shepherd) has worked up the fiction in a very amusing manner in one of his 'Winter Evening Tales,' substituting the Bridge at Kelso for that of London."

But the legend of the Chapman, or Pedlar, of Swaffam, in Norfolk, handed down, as it has been, from one credulous generation to another, with the most minute details and perfect local colour, throws quite into the shade all other versions or variants of the ancient tale of the poor man of Baghdad. Blomfield, in his "History of Norfolk," 8vo ea., vol. vi. 211-213, reproduces it as follows, from Sir Roger Twysden's "Reminiscences":

"The story of the Pedlar of Swaffam Market is in substance this: That dreaming one night, if he went to London, he should certainly meet with man upon London Bridge which should tell him good news; he was so perplexed in his mind that till he set upon his journey he could have no rest. To London therefore he hastes, and walked upon the Bridge for some hours, where being espied by a shopkeeper and asked what he wanted, he answered, 'You may well ask me that question, for truly (quoth he) I am come hither upon a very vain errand,' and so told the story of his dream which occasioned his journey. Whereupon the shopkeeper replied, 'Alas, good friend, should I have heeded dreams I might have proved myself as very a fool as thou hast; for 'tis not long since that I dreamt that at a place called Swaffam Market, in Norfolk, dwells one John Chapman, a pedlar, who hath a tree in his back yard, under which is buried a pot of money. Now, therefore if I should have made a journey thither to dig for such hidden treasure, judge you whether I should not have been counted a fool.' To whom the Pedlar cunningly said, 'Yes, truly: I will therefore return home and follow my business, not heeding such dreams hence-forward.' But when he came home (being satisfied that his dream was fulfilled), he took occasion to dig in that place, and accordingly found a large pot full of money, which he prudently concealed, putting the pot among the rest of his brass. After a time, it happened that one who came to his house, and beholding the pot, observed an inscription upon it, which being in Latin he interpreted it, that under that there was another twice as good.[380] Of this inscription the Pedlar was before ignorant, or at least minded it not; but when he heard the meaning of it, he said, ' 'Tis very true, in the shop where I bought this pot stood another under it which was twice as big'; but considering that it might tend to his further profit to dig deeper in the same place where he found that, he fell again to work and discovered such a pot as was intimated by the inscription, full of old coin; notwithstanding all which, he so concealed his wealth that the neighbours took no notice of it. But not long after the inhabitants of Swaffam resolving to re-edify their church, and having consulted the workmen about the charge, they made a levy, wherein they taxed the Pedlar according to no other rate but what they had formerly done. But he, knowing his own ability, came to the church and desired the workmen to show him their model and to tell him what they esteemed the charge of the north aisle would amount to, which when they told him, he presently undertook to pay them for building it, and not only that, but for a very tall and beautiful tower steeple.

"This is the tradition of the inhabitants, as it was told me there. And in testimony thereof, there was then his picture, with his wife and three children, in every window of the aisle, with an inscription running through the bottom of all those windows, viz., 'Orate pro bono statu Johannis Chapman…. Uxoris ejus, et Liberorum quorum, qui quidem Johannes hanc alam cum fenestris tecto et . . . fieri fecit.' It was in Henry the Seventh's time, but the year I now remember not, my notes being left with Mr. William Sedgwicke, who trickt the pictures, he being then with me. In that aisle is his seat, of an antique form, and on each side the entrance, the statue of the Pedlar of about a foot in length, with pack on his back, very artificially [?artistically] cut. This was sent me from Mr. William Dugdale, of Blyth Hall, in Warwickshire, in a letter dated Jan. 29th, 1652-3, which I have since learned from others to have been most True.ûRoger Twysden."

Mr. William E. A. Axon, in "The Antiquary," vol. xi. , gives the same version, with some slight variations, from a work entitled "New Help to Discourse," which he says was often printed between 1619 and 1696: The dream was "doubled and tripled," and the Pedlar stood on the bridge for two or three days; but no mention is made of his finding a second pot of money: "he found an infinite mass of money, with part of which he re-edified the church, having his statue therein to this day, cut out in stone, with his pack on his back and his dog at his heels, his memory being preserved by the same form or picture in most of the glass windows in taverns and alehouses in that town to this day." The story is also told of a cobbler in Somersetshire (in an article on Dreams, "Saturday Review," Dec. 28, 1878), who dreamt three nights in succession that if he went to London Bridge he would there meet with something to his advantage. For three days he walked over the bridge, when at length a stranger came up to him, and asked him why he had been walking from end to end of the bridge for these three days, offering nothing for sale nor purchasing aught. The man having told him of his strange dream, the stranger said that he too had dreamt of a lot of gold buried in a certain orchard in such a place in Somersetshire. Upon this the cobbler returned home and found the pot of gold under an apple-tree. He now sent his son to school, where he learnt Latin, and when the lad had come home for his holidays, he happened to look at the pot that had contained the gold and seeing some writing on it he said, "Father, I can show you what I have learnt at school is of some use." He then translated the Latin inscription on the pot thus: "Look under and you will find better " They did look under and a large quantity of gold was found. Mr. Axon gives a version of the legend in the Yorkshire dialect in "The Antiquary," vol. xii. p-2, and there is a similar story connected with the parish church of Lambeth.[381]

Regarding the Norfolk tradition of the lucky and generous Pedlar, Blomfield says that the north side of the church of Swaffam (or Sopham) was certainly built by one John Chapman, who was churchwarden in 1462; but he thinks that the figures of the pedlar, etc., were only put "to set forth the name of the founder: such rebuses are frequently met with on old works." The story is also told in Abraham de la Prynne's Diary under date Nov. 10, 1699, as "a constant tradition" concerning a pedlar in Soffham.

Such is the close resemblance between the Turkish version of the Dream and that in the tale of Zayn al-Asnam that I am disposed to consider both as having been derived from the same source, which, however, could hardly have been the story told by El-Ishßki. In Zayn al-Asnam a shaykh appears to the prince in a dream and bids him hie to Egypt, where he will find heaps of treasure; in the Turkish story the shaykh appears to the poor water-carrier three times and bids him go to Damascus for the like purpose. The prince arrives at Cairo and goes to sleep in a mosque, when the shayka again presents himself before him in a dream and tells him that he has done well in obeying him — he had only made a trial of his courage: "now return to thy capital and I will make thee wealthy," — in the Turkish story the water-carrier also goes into a mosque at Damascus and receives a loaf of bread there from a baker. When the prince returns home the shaykh appears to him once more and bids him take a pickaxe and go to such a palace of his sire and dig in such a place, where he should find riches, — in the Turkish story the water-carrier having returned to his own house, the shaykh comes to him three times more and bids him search near to where he is and he should find wealth. The discovery by Zayn al-Asnam of his father's hidden treasure, after he had recklessly squandered all his means, bears some analogy to the well-known ballad of the "Heir of Linne," who, when reduced to utter poverty, in obedience to his dying father's injunction, should such be his hap, went to hang himself in the "lonely lodge" and found there concealed a store of gold.

With regard to the second part of the tale of Zayn al-Asnam — the Quest of the Ninth Image — and the Turkish version of which my friend Mr. Gibb has kindly furnished us with a translation from the mystical work of 'AlÝ 'AzÝz Efendi, the Cretan, although no other version has hitherto been found,[382] I have little doubt that the story is of either Indian or Persian extraction, images and pictures being abhorred by orthodox (or sunni) Muslims generally; and such also, I think, should we consider all the Arabian tales of young men becoming madly enamoured of beautiful girls from seeing their portraits — though we can readily believe that an Arab as well as a Persian or Indian youth might fall in love with a pretty maid from a mere description of her personal charms, as we are told of the Bedouin coxcomb Amarah in the Romance of Antar. If the Turkish version, which recounts the adventures of the Prince Abd es-Samed in quest of the lacking image (the tenth, not the ninth, as in the Arabian) was adapted from Zayn al-Asnam, the author has made considerable modifications in re-telling the fascinating story, and, in my opinion, it is not inferior to the Arabian version. In the Turkish, the Prince's father appears to him in a vision of the night,[383] and conducts him to the treasure-vault, where he sees the vacant pedestal and on it the paper in which his father directs him to go to Cairo and seek counsel of the Shaykh Mubarak, who would instruct him how to obtain the lacking image; and the prince is commissioned by the shaykh to bring him a spotless virgin who has never so much as longed for the pleasures of love, when he should receive the image for his reward. The shaykh gives him a mirror which should remain clear when held before such a virgin, but become dimmed when reflecting the features of another sort of girl; also a purse which should be always full of money.[384] In the Arabian story the Shaykh Mubarak accompanies Zayn al-Asnam in his quest of the image to the land of Jinnistßn, the King whereof it is who requires the prince to procure him a pure virgin and then he would give him the lacking image. In the Turkish version the prince Abd es-Samed proceeds on the adventure alone, and after visiting many places without success he goes to Baghdad, where by means of the Imam he at last finds the desiderated virgin, whom he conducts to Mubarak. In the Arabian story the Imam, Abu Bakr (Haji Bakr in the Turkish), is at first inimical towards the prince and the shaykh but after being propitiated by a present of money he is all complaisance, and, as in the Turkish, introduces the prince to the fallen vazÝr, the father of the spotless virgin. The sudden conversion of the Imam from a bitter enemy to an obliging friend is related with much humour: one day denouncing the strangers to the folk assembled in the mosque as cutpurses and brigands, and the next day withdrawing his statement, which he says had been made on the information of one of the prince's enviers, and cautioning the people against entertaining aught but reverence for the strangers. This amusing episode is omitted in the Turkish version. In one point the tale of Zayn al-Asnam has the advantage of that of Abd es-Samed: it is much more natural, or congruous, that the King of the Genii should affect to require the chaste maiden and give the prince a magical mirror which would test her purity, and that the freed slave Mubarak should accompany the prince in his quest.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

Aladdin; Or, the Wonderful Lamp — .

Those scholars who declared a number of the tales in Galland’s “Mille et une Nuits” to be of his own invention, because they were not found in any of the Arabic MS. texts of The Nights preserved in European libraries, were unconsciously paying that learned and worthy man a very high compliment, since the tales in question are among the best in his work and have ever been, and probably will continue to be, among the most popular favourites. But that fact that Galland seized the first opportunity of intimating that two of those tales were not translated or inserted by himself ought to have been alone amply sufficient presumptive evidence of his good faith with regard to the others.

A friendly reviewer of my “Popular Tales and Fictions” etc. states that modern collectors of European Mõrchen, though “working from 100 to 150 years after the appearance of the ‘Thousand and One Nights,’ in European literature, have not found the special versions therein contained distributed widely and profusely throughout Europe,” and that my chapter on Aladdin is proof sufficient that they have not done so. The reviewer goes on to say that I cite “numerous variants, but, save one from Rome, variants of the theme, not of the version; some again, such as the Mecklenburg and Danish forms, are more primitive in tone; and all lack those effective and picturesque details which are the charm of the Arabian story, and which a borrower only interested in the story as a story might just be expected to retain.’’[385]

But it is not contended that the folk-tales of Europe owe much, if indeed anything at all, to the “Arabian Nights,” which is not only as it now exists a comparatively modern work — Baron de Sacy has adduced good reasons for placing the date of its composition in the middle of the 9th century of the Hijra, or about 1446 A.D. but was first made known in Europe so late as the first quarter of the last century. Several of the tales, and incidents of the tales, in the “Thousand and One Nights” were current in Europe in the 12th century — imported by the Moors of Spain, and by European travellers, pilgrims, and minstrels from the East. Thus the Arabian tale of the Ebony (or Enchanted) Horse is virtually identical with the Hispano-French romance of Cleomades and Claremonde; that of Prince Kamar al Zaman is fairly represented by the romance of Peter of Provence and the Fair Maguelone. The episode of Astolphy and Joconde in Ariosto's "Orlando Furioso" is identical with the opening story of The Nights which constitutes the frame of the collection.[386] The Magnetic Rock (or rock of adamant) which figures in the adventures of Sindbßd occurs in the popular German story of "Herzog Ernst von Baiern," which is extant in a Latin poem that cannot be later than the 13th century and is probably a hundred years earlier.[387] The Valley of Diamonds in the History of Sindbßd is described by Marco Polo who travelled in the East in the 13th century; moreover, it had been known in Europe from the 4th century, when the story connected with it was related by Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, who lays the scene in Scythia, while Marco Polo and the author of Sindbßd's Voyages both place it in India, where the fiction probably had its origin

When we find a popular (i.e. oral) European tale reproduce the most minute details of a story found in The Nights, we should conclude that it has been derived therefrom and within quite recent times, and such I am now disposed to think is the case of the Roman version of Aladdin given by Miss Busk under the title of "How Cajusse was Married," notwithstandtng the circumstance that the old woman from whom it was obtained was almost wholly illiterate. A child who could read might have told the story out of Galland to his or her nurse, through whom it would afterwards assume local colour, with some modifications of the details. But stories having all the essential features of the tale of Aladdin were known throughout Europe long before Galland's work was published, and in forms strikingly resembling other Asiatic versions, from one of which the Arabian tale must have been adapted. The incidents of the Magician and Aladdin at the Cave, and the conveying of the Princess and the vazÝr's son three nights in succession to Aladdin's house (which occurs, in modified forms, in other tales in The Nights), I consider as the work of the Arabian author. Stripped of these particulars, the elements of the tale are identical in all versions, Eastern and Western: a talisman, by means of which its possessor can command unlimited wealth, &c.; its loss and the consequent disappearance of the magnificent palace erected by supernatural agents who are subservient to the owner of the talisman, and finally its recovery together with the restoration of the palace to its original situation. The Arabian tale is singular in the circumstance of the talisman (the Lamp) being recovered by human means — by the devices of the hero himself, in fact, since in all the European and the other Asiatic forms of the story it is recovered by, as it was first obtained from, grateful animals. To my mind, this latter is the pristine form of the tale, and points to a Buddhist origin — mercy to all hying creatures being one of the leading doctrines of pure Buddhism.

The space at my disposal does not admit of the reproduction in extenso of the numerous versions or variants of Aladdin: a brief outline of their features will however serve my purpose. In the tale of Mar·f the Cobbler, which concludes the B·lßk and Calcutta printed texts of The Nights, we have an interesting version of Aladdin. The hero runs away from his shrewish wife and under false presences is married to a king's daughter. He confesses his imposture to the princess, who loves him dearly, and she urges him to flee from her father's vengeance and not to return until his death should leave the throne vacant, and having furnished him with money, he secretly quits the city at daybreak. After riding some distance, he begins to feel hungry, and seeing a peasant ploughing a field he goes up to him and asks for some food. The peasant sets off to his house for eatables and meanwhile Mar·f begins to plough a furrow, when presently the ploughshare strikes against something hard, which he finds to be an iron ring. He tugs at the ring and raises a slab, which discovers a number of steps, down which he goes and comes into a cavern filled with gold and precious stones, and in a box made of a single diamond he finds a talismanic ring, on placing which on his finger a monstrous figure appears and expresses his readiness and ability to obey all his commands. In brief, by means of this genie, the hero obtains immense wealth in gold and jewels, and also rich merchandise, which enable him to return to the city in the capacity of a merchant, which he had professed himself when he married the princess. The vazÝr, who had from the first believed him to be an arrant impostor, lays a plot with the King to worm out of him the secret of his wealth, and succeeds so well at a private supper, when Mar·f is elevated with wine, that he obtains possession of the ring, summons the genie, and causes him to carry both the King and Mar·f into a far distant desert. He then compels the other ministers and the people to acknowledge him as king, and resolves to marry the princess. She temporises with him; invites him to sup with her; plies him with wine, induces him to throw the ring into a corner of the room, pretending to be afraid of the demon who is held captive in it; and when he has become insensible (in plain English, dead drunk), she seizes the ring, summons the genie, and commands him to secure the vazÝr and bring back her father and husband, which he does "in less than no time." The vazÝr is of course put to death, and the princess takes charge of the ring for the future, alleging that neither the King nor her husband is to be trusted with the custody of such a treasure.

Another Arabian version is found — as Sir Richard Burton points out, note 1, — in "The Fisherman's Son," one of the tales translated by Jonathan Scott from the Wortley Montague MS. text of The Nights, where the hero finds a magic ring inside a cock: like Aladdin, he marries the King's daughter and has a grand palace built for him by the genii. The ring is afterwards disposed of to a Jew, in the same manner as was the Lamp to the Magician, and the palace with the princess is conveyed to a distant desert island. The fisherman's son takes to flight. He purchases of a man who offered them for sale a dog, a cat, and a rat, which turn out to be well-disposed magicians, and they recover the ring from the Jew's mouth while he is asleep. The ring is dropped into the sea accidentally while the animals are crossing it to rejoin their master, but is brought to the hero by a fish which he had returned to the sea out of pity in his fisherman days. The genie conveys the palace back again, and so on. — In a Mongolian version ("SiddhÝ K·r") a young merchant parts with all his wares to save a mouse, an ape, and a bear from being tortured to death by boys. One of those creatures procures for him a wishing-stone, by means of which he has a grand palace built and obtains much treasure. He foolishly exchanges his talisman with the chief of a caravan for all their gold and merchandise, and it is afterwards restored to him by the grateful and ingenious animals. — In a Tamil version — referred to by Sir Richard, , note 2 — which occurs in the “Madanakßmarßjankadai,” a poor wandering young prince buys a cat and a serpent; at his mother’s suggestion, he sets the serpent at liberty and receives from his father a wishing ring. He gets a city built in the jungle — or rather where the jungle was — and marries a beautiful princess. An old hag is employed by another king to procure him the princess for his wife. She wheedles herself into the confidence of the unsuspecting young lady, and learning from her the properties of the ring, induces her to borrow it of her husband for a few minutes, in order that she (the old trot) might apply it to her head to cure a severe headache. No sooner has she got possession of the ring than she disappears, and having delivered it to the other King, he “thought” of the princess, and in the twinkling of an eye she is carried through the air and set down before him. The ring is recovered by means of the cat which the hero had fostered, and so on.

Sir Richard has referred to a number of Italian versions (, note 2), which will be found epitomised in a most valuable and interesting paper, by my late friend Mr. H. C. Coote, on the sources of some of M. Galland’s Tales, in the First Part of the Folk-Lore Record for 1880, and, in conclusion, I may briefly glance at a few other European variants. Among those which not only bear a close analogy one to another but also to the Asiatic versions cited above are the following: No. 15 of M. Leger’s French collection of Slav Tales is a Bohemian version, in which the hero, Jenik, saves a dog, a cat, and a serpent from being killed. From the serpent’s father he gets an enchanted watch (evidently a modern substitute for a talismanic stone, or ring), which procures him a splendid palace and the King’s daughter for his bride. But the young lady, unlike the Princess Badr al-Badur with Aladdin, does not love Jenik, and having learned from him the secret of his great wealth, she steals the talisman and causes a palace to be built in the middle of the sea, where she goes to live, after making Jenik’s palace disappear. Jenik’s faithful dog and cat recover the talisman, which, as in the Arabian story of the Fisherman’s Son, is dropped in the sea while they are swimming back and restored by a fish. — In No. 9 of M. and so “Comes Albanais” the hero saves a serpent’s life and gets in return a wishing-stone and so on. The talisman is stolen by a rascally Jew on the night of the wedding, and the palace with the princess is transported to the distant sea-shore. The hero buys a cat and feeds it well. He and his cat arrive at the spot where the palace now stands, and the cat compels the chief of a colony of mice to steal the talisman from the Jew while he is asleep. — A popular Greek version in Hahn's collection combines incidents found in Aladdin and in the versions in which grateful animals play prominent parts: The hero rescues a snake which some boys are about to kill and gets in reward from the snake's father a seal-ring, which he has only to lick and a black man will present himself, ready to obey his orders. As in Aladdin, the first use he makes of the talisman is to have his mother's cupboard filled with dainty food. Then he bids his mother "go to the King, and tell him he must give me his daughter in marriage." After many objections, she goes to deliver her message to the King, who replies that if her son build a castle larger than his, he shall have the princess to wife. The castle is built that same night, and when the mother goes next morning to require the King's performance of his promise, he makes a further stipulation that her son should first pave the way between the two castles with gold. This is done at once, and the King gives the hero his daughter. Here the resemblance to the Aladdin story ceases and what follows (as well as what precedes) is analogous to the other Asiatic forms. The princess has a black servant of whom she is enamoured. She steals the ring and elopes with her sable paramour to an island in the sea, where she has a castle erected by the power of the ring. The black man sleeps with the ring under his tongue, but the hero's dog takes the cat on his back and swims to the island; and the cat contrives to get the ring and deliver it to her master, who straightway causes the castle to be removed from the island, then kills the black man, and afterwards lives happily with the princess. — In a Danish version (Prof. Grundtvig's "Danske Folkeõventyr") a peasant gets from an aged man a wishing-box, and henceforward lives in grand style. After his death the steward and servants cheat his son and heir, so that in ten years he is ruined and turned out of house and home. All the property he takes with him is an old sheepskin jacket, in which he finds the wishing-box, which had been, unknown to him, the cause of his father's prosperity. When the "slave" of the box appears, the hero merely asks for a fiddle that when played upon makes everybody who hears it to dance.[388] He hires himself to the King, whose daughter gives him, in jest, a written promise to marry him, in exchange for the fiddle. The King, when the hero claims the princess, insists on her keeping her promise, and they are married. Then follows the loss of the wishing-box, as in the Greek version, only in place of a black man it is a handsome cavalier who is the lady's paramour. The recovery of the box is accomplished by very different means, and may be passed over, as belonging to another cycle of tales.[389]

It is perhaps hardly worth while to make a critical analysis of the tale of Aladdin, since with all its gross inconsistencies it has such a hold of the popular fancy that one would not wish it to be otherwise than it is. But it must have occurred to many readers that the author has blundered in representing the Magician as closing the Cave upon Aladdin because he refused to give up the Lamp before he had been helped out. As the lad was not aware of the properties of the Lamp, he could have had no object in retaining it for himself, while the Magician in any case was perfectly able to take it by force from him. And if he wished to do away with Aladdin, yet incur no "blood-guiltiness" (see ante, and note), he might surely have contrived to send him down into the Cave again and then close it upon him. As to the Magician giving his ring to Aladdin, I can't agree with Sir Richard in thinking (, note 1) that he had mistaken its powers; this seems to me quite impossible. The ring was evidently a charm against personal injury as well as a talisman to summon an all-powerful and obedient genie. It was only as a charm that the Magician placed it on Aladdin's finger, and, as the Hindustani Version explains, he had in his rage and vexation forgot about the ring when he closed the entrance to the Cave. It appears to me also incongruous that the Lamp, which Aladdin found burning, should afterwards only require to be rubbed in order to cause the genie to appear. One should have supposed that the lighting of it would have been more natural or appropriate; and it is possible that such was in the original form of the Aladdin version before it was reduced to writing, since we find something of the kind in a Mecklenburg version given in Grimm under the title of “Des blaue Licht.” A soldier who had long served his King is at last discharged without any pay. In the course of his wanderings he comes to the hut of an old woman, who proves to be a witch, and makes him work for her in return for his board and lodging. One day she takes him to the edge of a dry well, and bids him go down and get her the Blue Light which he would find at the bottom. He consents, and she lets him down by a rope. When he has secured the Light he signals to the old witch to draw him up, and when she has pulled him within her reach, she bids him give her the Light, he refuses to do so until he is quite out of the well, upon which she lets him fall to the bottom again. After ruminating his condition for some time he bethinks him of his pipe, which is in his pocket — he may as well have a smoke if he is to perish. So he lights his pipe at the Blue Light, when instantly there appears before him a black dwarf, with a hump on his back and a feather in his cap, who demands to know what he wants, for he must obey the possessor of the Blue Light. The soldier first requires to be taken out of the well, and next the destruction of the old witch, after which he helps himself to the treasures in the hag’s cottage, and goes off to the nearest town, where he puts up at the best inn and gets himself fine clothes. Then he determines to requite the King, who had sent him away penniless, so he summons the Dwarf[390] and orders him to bring the King’s daughter to his room that night, which the Dwarf does, and very early in the morning he carries her back to her own chamber in the palace. The princess tells her father that she has had a strange dream of being borne through the air during the night to an old soldier’s house. The King says that if it was not a dream, she should make a hole in her pocket and put peas into it, and by their dropping out the place where she was taken to could be easily traced. But the Dwarf when he transports her the second night discovers the trick, and strews peas through all the other streets, and the only result was the pigeons had a rare feast. Then the King bids the princess hide one of her shoes in the soldier’s room, if she is carried there again. A search is made for the shoe in every house the next day, and when it is found in the soldier’s room he runs off, but is soon caught and thrown into prison. In his haste to escape he forgot to take the Blue Light with him. He finds only a ducat in his pocket, and with this he bribes an old comrade whom he sees passing to go and fetch him a parcel he had left at the inn, and so he gets the Blue Light once more. He summons the Dwarf, who tells him to be of good cheer, for all will yet be well, only he must take the Blue Light with him when his trial comes on. He is found guilty and sentenced to be hung upon the gallows-tree. On his way to execution he asks as a last favour to be allowed to smoke, which being granted, he lights his pipe and the Dwarf appears. “Send,” says the soldier— “send all these people to the right about; as for the King, cut him into three pieces.” The Dwarf lays about him with a will, and soon makes the crowd scuttle off. The King begs hard for his life, and agrees to let the soldier have the princess for his wife and the kingdom afterwards.

Thus, it will be seen, popular tales containing all the essential elements of the story of Aladdin are spread over Europe, though hardly any of the versions was probably derived from it; and the conclusion at which I have arrived is that those elements, or incidents have been time out of mind the common property of European and Asiatic peoples, and that the tale of Aladdin may be considered as an almost unique version. The Mecklenburg legend is the only variant which has the incident of the Magician requiring the Lamp before helping the hero out of the Cave and that of the transporting of the princess from her palace to the hero’s house during the night, but these are not, I think, sufficient evidence that it was adapted from Galland.

The royal command that all shops are to be closed and everybody must keep within doors while the Princess Badr al-Bad·r proceeds to the bath and Aladdin’s playing the part of Peeping Tom of Coventry occur in many Eastern stories and find a curious analogue in the Adventures of Kurrogl·, the celebrated robber-poet, as translated by Dr. Alexander Chodzko m his “Popular Poetry of Persia,” printed for the Oriental Translation Fund, and copies of that work being somewhat scarce, I daresay the story will be new to most of my readers:

Listen now to the tale about the Princess Nighara, daughter of the Turkish sultan Murßd. In the neighbourhood of Constantinople lived a man who was known there under the name of Belli Ahmad. One day the Princess Nighara went out for a walk through the bazßrs of Constantinople. At the same time Kurrogl·'s fame spread all over Turkey; everybody was telling stories about him, and all were struck with wonder. The Princess Nighara's fond heart particularly was filled with an ardent wish of seeing this extraordinary hero, and she often thought in her mind, "O my God, when will you allow me to behold Kurrogl·?" It happened that while Belli Ahmad was taking a walk in the bazßrs of Istamb·l, he looked and beheld on the platform of the building daroghs beating drums, whilst all the inmates of the bazßr, the workmen as well as the merchants, were flying in a great hurry after having left their shops ajar. "Why are they thus running;" inquired Belli Ahmad of a Turk. "Doss thou know nothing? Then listen: Our king, Sultan Murad, is gone on a pilgrimage to Mecca. His son Burji Sultan reigns until his father's return. He has a sister whose name is the Princess Nighara. Every Friday she goes to pray in the great mosque. The Sultan's will is that during the passage of the princess through the bazßrs, no man should remain there, but that all the shops be left open. This is the reason of this panic and flight. As soon as the princess has passed, the merchants and workmen will return to their shops again."

Belli Ahmad said in his heart, "Thy name is Belli Ahmad, and shalt thou not see this beautiful Princess Nighara? If not, thou art unworthy of the name of Belli[391] Ahmad " He then looked to the right and left and entered stealthily into a greengrocer's shop enclosed within a few boards. The train of the princess now appeared. First passed with their whips farashes and yassßls, who led the procession and were followed by eunuchs with canes of office (chogan) in their hands. At last appeared the Princess Nighara, surrounded by a score of waiting-women. She walked with a downcast countenance in front of them, and bending her head towards the ground said to herself, "O thou earth on which my foot is treading, I beseech thee, receive my prayer!"[392] Belli Ahmad saw and heard her through the chinks of the boards behind which he sat concealed When Nighara saw the shop with vegetables she wondered why it should be the only shop enclosed with boards whilst all the other shops were standing open. She then said to her waiting-women, "What is the reason of this? Whilst goldsmiths who possess a capital of a hundred thousand tomans have left their shops open, how is it that this petty merchant of vegetables, whose poor shop used always to be open, has shut it up to-day? There must be something extraordinary in all this. Break down the enclosure, my girls, and throw the boards aside.”

Belli Ahmad heard, and his soul was on the point of making its exit. He threw himself with his face downwards as if he was prostrated by a severe illness. When her orders had been executed Nighara entered the shop. Perceiving a fellow stretched out his whole length and embracing the floor with both hands, she kicked him with her foot,[393] exclaiming, “Who art thou that wallowest in the dirt?” Belli Ahmad sprang to his feet and bowing to the Princess said, “Lady, I am a stranger here. God preserve you from being in a strange land anywhere! I saw that the merchants of the bazar were beaten and driven away, and I was frightened. But what was I to do? If I should hide myself in some rich shop I might be taken for a thief. I have therefore chosen this miserable hovel, where nothing can be found except greens, onions, and mouldy biscuits. And even if there were in it a few copper pieces, the owner at his departure must have taken them away. Pardon me, Princess; my soul was at stake and I hid myself.”

Nighara inquired, “Stranger, what countryman art thou?” “I am a native of Erzer·m.” “Hast thou seen in those parts the Castle of Chamley-bill?”[394] “Yes, lady, I have seen it.” “In that valley lives a man named Kurrogl·: didst thou see him?” “O my Princess, I am one of his servants, I am a slave purchased with his gold.” “Canst thou delver him a letter from me?” “And wherefore not, fairest? Thou hast only to write and entrust it to me.” The Princess Nighara immediately wrote a letter to Kurrogl· with her own hand. And what did she write? Here it is: “O thou who art called Kurrogl·, the glory of thy name has thrown a spell over the countries of Turkey. I have heard that thou hast carried away Ayvaz from the town of Orfah. My name is Princess Nighara, Sultan Murad’s daughter. I tell thee, that thou mayest learn if thou dost not know it, that for a long time I have felt an ardent desire of seeing thee. If thou art distinguished by courage, come to Istambul and carry me away.”

And the bold Kurrogl·, when he read the lady’s billet, assumed the dress of a Haji, gained access to the seraglio gardens on the presence that he was entrusted with a private message to the Princess Nighara from her father the Sultan, whom he had met on the road to Mecca, and carried the amorous young lady to his fortress of Chamley-bill. — The story, together with the scene between the princess and Kurrogl· in the gardens and the palace, is, no doubt, a true picture of the “ways” of Turkish ladies of high degree in former times, and confirms much that Sir Richard has stated regarding Eastern women in his notes to The Nights and his Terminal Essay.

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figures in a story which in the first part bears some analogy to the celebrated Arabian tale, and which occurs in an interesting little work, now apparently forgotten, entitled "The Orientalist, or, Letters of a Rabbi (see Vol. 16, Ap). With Notes by James Noble, Oriental Master in the Scottish Naval and Military Academy," Edinburgh, 1831. The substance of the story is as follows (ff.):

An aged Dervish falls ill in the house of a poor widow, who tends him with great care, with which he is so touched that he offers to take charge of her only son Abdallah. The good woman gladly consents, and the Dervish sets out accompanied by his young ward, having intimated to his mother that they must perform a journey which would last about two years. One day they arrived at a solitary place, and the Dervish said to Abdallah, "My son, we are now at the end of our journey. I shall employ my prayers to obtain from Allah that the earth shall open and make an entrance wide enough to permit thee to descend into a place where thou shalt find one of the greatest treasures that the earth contains. Hast thou courage to descend into the subterranean vault?" Abdallah swore he might depend upon his obedience and zeal. Then the Dervish lighted a small fire, into which he cast a perfume; he read and prayed for some moments, after which the earth opened, and he said to the young man, "Thou mayest now enter. Remember that it is in thy power to do me a great service, and that this is perhaps the only opportunity thou shalt ever have of testifying to me that thou art not ungrateful. Do not let thyself be dazzled by all the riches that thou shalt find there: think only of seizing upon an iron candlestick with twelve branches, which thou shalt find close to the door. That is absolutely necessary to me; come up immediately and bring it to me."

Abdallah descended, and, neglecting the advice of the Dervish, filled his vest and sleeves with the gold and jewels which he found heaped up in the vault, whereupon the opening by which he had entered closed of itself. He had, however, sufficient presence of mind to seize the iron candlestick, and endeavoured to find some other means of escape from the vault. At length he discovers a narrow passage, which he follows until he reaches the surface of the earth, and looking about for the Dervish saw him not, but to his surprise found that he was close to his mother's house. On showing his wealth to his mother it all suddenly vanished. But the candlestick remained. He lighted one of the branches, upon which a dervish appeared, and after turning round for an hour, he threw down an asper (about 3 farthings) and vanished. Next night he put a light in each of the branches, when twelve dervishes appeared, and after continuing their gyrations an hour, each threw down an asper and vanished.

Thus Abdallah and his mother contrived to live for a time, till at length he resolved to carry the candlestick to the Dervish, hoping to obtain from him the treasure which he had seen in the vault. He remembered his name and city, and on reaching his dwelling he found the Dervish living in a magnificent palace with fifty porters at the gate. Quoth the Dervish, when Abdallah appeared before him, "Thou art an ungrateful wretch! Hadst thou known the value of the candlestick, thou wouldst never have brought it to me. I will show thee its true use." Then the Dervish placed a light in each branch, whereupon twelve dervishes appeared and began to whirl, but on his giving each a blow with a cane in an instant they were changed into twelve heaps of sequins, diamonds and other precious stones.

Ungrateful as Abdallah had shown himself, yet the Dervish gave him two camels laden with gold and a slave, telling him he must depart the next morning. During the night Abdallah stole the candlestick and placed it at the bottom of one of his sacks. In the morning he took his leave of the generous Dervish and set off. When about half a day's journey from his own city he sold the slave, that there should be no witness to his former poverty and bought another in his stead. Arriving home, he carefully placed his loads of treasure in a private chamber, and then put a light in each branch of the candlestick, and when the twelve dervishes appeared, as usual, he dealt each a blow with a cane. But he had not observed that the Dervish employed his left hand, and he had naturally used his right in consequence of which the twelve dervishes each drew from under their robes a heavy club and beat him till he was nearly dead, and then vanished, as did also the treasure, the camels, the slave, and the wonder-working candlestick.

It is to be regretted that the author has not stated the sources whence he drew his stories, but that they are without exception of Eastern extraction does not admit of any doubt: some are taken from the “Panchatantra,” “Hitopadesa,” or “Anvßr-i-SuhaylÝ,” and others are found in other Asiatic story-books. I have however not met with the foregoing elsewhere than in Noble’s little volume. The beginning of the story is near akin to that of Aladdin: for the wicked magician who pretends to take the tailor’s son under his care we have a dervish who in good faith takes charge of the son of a poor widow who had nursed him through a severe illness. The cave scene is very similar in both, only the magician performs diabolical incantations, while the dervish practices “white magic” and prays to Allah for assistance. The twelve-branched candlestick takes the place of the Wonderful Lamp. Like Aladdin, young Abdallah is shut in the cavern, though not because he refused to give up the candlestick until he was safe above ground again, but because his cupidity induced him to pocket some of the treasures which filled the cave.

There is a strong Indian — even Buddhistic — flavour in the story of Abdallah and the Dervish, and the apparition of the twelve whirling fakirs, who when struck with a cane held in the left hand fall into so many heaps of gold coin, has its analogue in the “Hitopadesa” and also in the Persian Tales of a Parrot (“T·tÝ Nßma”). The 10th Fable of Book iii. of the “Hitopadesa’ goes thus: In the city of Ayodhya (Oude) there was a soldier named Churamani, who, being anxious for money, for a long time with pain of body worshipped the deity the jewel of whose diadem is the lunar crescent.[395] Being at length purified from his sins, in his sleep he had a vision in which, through the favour of the deity, he was directed by the lord of the Yakshas[396] to do as follows: ‘Early in the morning, having been shaved, thou must stand, club in hand, concealed behind the door of thy house; and the beggar whom thou seest come into the court thou wilt put to death without mercy by blows of thy staff. Instantly the beggar will become a pot full of gold, by which thou wilt be comfortable the rest of thy life.” These instructions being followed, it came to pass accordingly. But the barber who had been brought to shave him, having witnessed it all, said to himself, “O, is this the mode of gaining treasure? Why, then, may not I also do the same?” From that day forward the barber in like manner, with club in hand, day after day awaited the coming of the beggar. One day a beggar being so caught was attacked by him and killed with the stick, for which offence the barber himself was beaten by the King’s officers and died.

The same story is differently told, at greater length and with considerable humour, in NakhshabÝ’s Parrot-Book, but the outline of it only can be given here: A rich merchant named Abd-el-Malik resolved to give all his substance to the poor and needy before he departed this life. At midnight an apparition stood before him in the habit of a fakÝr and thus addressed him: “I am the apparition of thy good fortune and the genius of thy future happiness.[397] When thou, with such unbounded generosity, didst bequeath all thy wealth to the poor, I determined not to pass by thy door unnoticed, but to enrich thee with an inexhaustible treasure, suitable to the greatness of thy capacious soul. To accomplish which I will every morning in this shape appear to thee; thou shalt strike me a few blows on the head, and I shall instantly fall at thy feet, transformed into an image of gold. From this take as much as thou shalt have occasion for; and every member that shall be separated from the image shall instantly be replaced by another of the same precious metal.”[398] In the morning a covetous neighbour named Hajm visited the merchant, and soon after the apparition presented itself. Abd-el-Malik at once arose and after striking it several blows on the head with a stick, it fell down and was changed into an image of gold. He took what sufficed for the day’s needs and gave the larger portion to his visitor. When Hajm the covetous returned to his own house he pondered what he had seen, and concluding it would be as easy for him to convert fakÝrs into gold, invited to a feast at his house all the fakÝrs of the province. When they had feasted to their hearts’ content, Hajm seized a heavy club and began to unmercifully belabour his guests till he broke their heads and “the crimson torrent stained the carpet of hospitality.” The cries of the fakÝrs soon brought the police to their assistance, and a great crowd of people gathered outside the house. Hajm was immediately haled before the magistrate, and attempted to justify his conduct by giving an account of what he had seen done in the house of Abd-el-Malik. The merchant was sent for and declared Hajm to be mad, no better proof of which could be desired than his treatment of the fakÝrs. So Hajm the covetous was sent forthwith to the hospital for lunatics.

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Khudadad and His Brothers — .

Readers of The Nights must have observed that a large number of the tales begin with an account of a certain powerful king, whose dominions were almost boundless, whose treasury overflowed, and whose reign was a blessing to his people; but he had one all-absorbing care — he had no son. Thus in the tale of Khudadad we read that in the city of Harrßn there dwelt a sultan "of illustrious lineage, a protector of the people, a lover of his lieges, a friend of mankind, and renowned for being gifted with every good quality. Allah Almighty had bestowed upon him all that his heart could desire, save the boon of a child, for though he had lovely wives within his harem-door and concubines galore [far too many, no doubt!], he had not been blessed with a son," and so forth. This is the "regulation" opening of by far the greater number of Asiatic stories, even as it was de rigueur for the old pagan Arab poets to begin their kasÝdas with a lamentation for the departure of a fair one, whether real or imaginary. The Sultan of our story is constantly petitioning Heaven for the boon of a son (who among Easterns is considered as the "light of the house"), and at length there appears to him in his slumbers a comely man who bids him go on the morrow to his chief gardener and get from him a pomegranate, of which he should eat as many seeds as he pleases, after which his prayers for offspring should be granted. This remedy for barrenness is very common in Indian fictions (to which I believe Khudadad belongs), only it is usually the king's wives who eat the seeds or fruit.[399] A few parallels to the opening of our tale from Indian sources may prove somewhat interesting, both to students of popular fictions and to those individuals who are vaguely styled "general readers."

A Kashmiri tale, entitled "The Four Princes," translated by the Rev. J. Hinton Knowles, in the "Indian Antiquary," 1886,[400] thus begins: In days long since gone by there lived a king most clever, most holy, and most wise, who was a pattern king. His mind was always occupied with plans for the improvement of his country and people; his darbßr was open to all; his ear was ever ready to listen to the petition of the humblest subject, he afforded every facility for trade; he established hospitals for the sick, inns (sarß'e) for travellers, and large schools for those who wished to learn. These and many other such things he did. Nothing was left undone that ought to be done, and nothing was done that ought not to have been done. Under such a wise, just, and beneficent ruler the people of course lived very happily. Few poor or unenlightened or wicked persons were to be found in the country. But the great and good king had not a son. This was an intense sorrow to him — the one dark cloud that now and again overshadowed his otherwise happy and glorious life. Every day he prayed earnestly to Siva to grant him an heir to sit upon the throne after him. One day Siva appeared to him in the garb of a yogi,[401] and bade him ask a boon and it should be granted. "Take these four fruits," said Siva, "and give them to your wife to eat on such a day before sunrise. Then shall your wife give birth to four sons who will be exceedingly clever and good." The king follows these instructions and in due course his wife is delivered of four sons at one birth and thereupon dies. The rest of the story is a variant of the Tamil romance "AlakÚsa KathÓ,''[402] and of "Strike, but hear!" in Rev. Lal Behari Day's "Folk-Tales of Bengal."

This is how the Tamil story of The Four Good Sisters begins ("Folk-Lore in Southern India," Part iii., by Pandit S. M. NatÚsa Sßstri[403]): In the town of Ta±jai there reigned a king named Hariji, who was a very good and charitable sovereign. In his reign the tiger and the bull drank out of the same pool, the serpent and the peacock amused themselves under the same tree; and thus even birds and beasts of a quarrelsome and inimical disposition lived together like sheep of the same flock. While the brute creation of the great God was thus living in friendship and happiness, need it be said that this king's subjects led a life of peace and prosperity unknown in any other country under the canopy of heaven? But for all the peace which his subjects enjoyed, Hariji himself had no joy: his face was always drooping, his lips never moved in laughter, and he was as sad as sad could be because he had no son. — After trying in vain the distribution of charitable gifts which his ministers and the priests recommended, the king resolves to retire into the wilderness and there endeavour to propitiate MahÚsvara [i.e. Siva], hoping thus to have his desire fulfilled. He appoints his ministers to order the realm during his absence, and doffing his royal robes clothes himself in the bark of trees and takes up his abode in the desert. After practising the most severe austerities for the space of three years, Siva, mounted on his bull, with his spouse PßrvatÝ by his side, appears before the hermit, who is overjoyed at the sight of the deity. Siva bids him ask any boon and it should be granted. The royal ascetic desires to have a son. Then says Siva: "For thy long penance we grant thy request. Choose then — a son who shall always be with thee till death, but shall be the greatest fool in the whole world, or four daughters who shall live with thee for a short time, then leave thee and return before thy death, but who shall be the incarnation of learning. To thee is left to choose which thou wilt have," and so saying, the deity gives him a mango fruit for his wife to eat, and then disappears. The king elects to have the four learned daughters, whose history is very entertaining.

Another tale in the Pandit's collection (No. 4) informs us that once upon a time in a town named Va±jaimßnagar there ruled a king named Sivßchar. He was a most just king and ruled so well that no stone thrown up fell down, no crow pecked at the new-drawn milk, the lion and the bull drank water from the same pond, and peace and prosperity reigned throughout the kingdom. Notwithstanding all these blessings, care always sat on his face. His days and nights he spent in praying that God might bless him with a son. Wherever he saw pÝpal trees he ordered Brahmans to circumambulate them.[404] Whatever medicines the doctors recommended he was ever ready to swallow, however bitter they might be. At last fortune favoured Sivßchßr; for what religious man fails to obtain his desire? The king in his sixtieth year had a son, and his joy knew no bounds.

In like fashion does the Persian "Sindibßd Nßma" begin: There reigned in India a sage and mighty monarch, the bricks of whose palace were not of stone or marble but of gold; the fuel of whose kitchen was fresh wood of aloes; who had brought under the signet of his authority the kingdoms of R·m and Abyssinia; and to whom were alike tributary the Ethiop Maharßj and the Roman Kaysar. He was distinguished above all monarchs for his virtue clemency, and justice. But although he was the refuge of the KhalÝfate, he was not blessed with an heir: life and the world appeared profitless to him, because he had no fruit of the heart in the garden of his soul. One night, while reclining on his couch, sad and thoughtful, consumed with grief like a morning taper, he heaved a deep sigh upon which one of his favourite wives (he had a hundred in his harem), advancing towards him and kissing the ground, inquired the cause of his distress. He discloses it. His wife consoles him, encourages him to hope, and assures him that if he prayed, his prayers would be answered, but that at all events it was his duty to be resigned to the will of God. “Prayer is the only key that will open the door of difficulty.” The king fasted for a whole week and was assiduous in his devotions. One night he prayed with peculiar earnestness and self-abasement till morning. The companion of his couch was one of his wives, fairer than the sun and the envy of a pert. He clasped her in his embrace, exclaiming, “There is no strength, no power, save in God!” and he felt assured in his heart that his prayer was granted. In due time a son was born to him, and, eager to show his gratitude, he bestowed munificent gifts and lavished his treasures on all his subjects.

The seventh of Lal Behari Day’s “Folk-Tales of Bengal” opens as follows: Once on a time there reigned a king who had seven queens. He was very sad, for the seven queens were all barren. A holy mendicant, however, one day told the king that in a certain forest there grew a tree, on a branch of which hung seven mangoes; if the king himself plucked those mangoes and gave one to each of the queens they would all become mothers. So the king went to the forest, plucked the seven mangoes that grew upon one branch, and gave a mango to each of the queens to eat. In a short time the king’s heart was filled with joy as he heard that the seven queens were pregnant. — In Miss Stokes’ “Indian Fairy Tales,’ , Rßjß Barbßl receives from an ascetic 160 lichÝ fruits, one of which he is to give to each of his 160 wives, who would have each a son. — Similar instances occur in Steel and Temple’s “Wide Awake Stories,” from the Panjßb and KashmÝr, p and 290, and in NatÚsa SßstrÝ’s “Dravidian Nights’ Entertainments” (a translation of the Tamil romance entitled “Madanakßmarßjankadai”), p, 56. — Among biblical instances of women having offspring after being long barren are: Sarah, the wife of Abraham (Gen. ch. xv. 2 4, xxi. 1, 2); Rachel, the wife of Jacob (Gen. ch. xxx., 1, 22, 23); and Elisabeth, the wife of Zacharias, the high-priest, who were the parents of John the Baptist (Luke, ch. i.). Whether children be a "blessing," notwithstanding all that has been said and sung about the exquisite joys of paternity and maternity, is perhaps doubtful, generally speaking: one thing is certain, that many an honest fellow has had too much cause to "wonder why the devil he got an heir!"[405]

Although no version or variant of the story of Khudadad and his Brothers has yet been found besides the one in the Turkish collection "Al-Farßj ba'd al-Shiddah," yet the elements of which it is composed occur in many European and Asiatic tales. As we have in Galland a story of sisters who envied their cadette, so, by way of justice to the "fair sex," we have likewise this tale of envious brothers, which is a favourite theme of popular fictions, only in the story of Khudadad, the brothers were not at first aware of the hero's kinship to them, though they had been informed of it when they most ungratefully cut and slashed him with their swords as he lay asleep by the side of his beauteous bride the Princess of Daryabßr.

Sometimes it is not a brother, or brothers, but a treacherous friend or a secret, cowardly rival, who attempts the life of the hero and claims the credit and reward for his bold achievement. Many examples must occur to readers familiar with Icelandic, Norwegian, and German folk-tales which need not here be cited. In the old French romance of the Chevalier Berinus and his gallant son Aigres de l'Aimant, the King of Loquiferne is in love with the Princess Melia, daughter of a king named Absalon, who would give her only to the prince who should bring with him two knights prepared to combat with and slay two fierce lions, or would attempt this feat himself. None of the barons of the King of Loquiferne offering themselves for the adventure, Aigres undertakes it very readily, and is accompanied by a knight named Aþars, who has charge of a casket of jewels destined for the princess as a wedding-gift. Young Aigres encounters and kills the lions singlehanded, and the lily-livered and faithless Aþars envies him the glory of his exploit. On their way back to Loquiferne with the Princess Melia, as they pass near a deep well Aþars purposely allows the casket of jewels to fall into it and pretends to be distracted at the misfortune. But the gallant Aigres securing one end of his horse's reins to the top of the well descends by this improvised rope, and when he dives into the water to recover the casket the rascal Aþars cuts the reins and compels the princess and her maid to follow him. His triumph is brief, however, for Melia and her maid are taken from him, without his striking a blow in their defence, by a king who is in love with the princess. Aþars proceeds to the court of the King of Loquiferne and tells him how the lady had been snatched out of his hands by a king who attacked him with a great army while Aigres had fled like a craven. Meanwhile Aigres contrives to get out of the well, and finds his steed and armour close by: he is fortunate in rescuing the princess and her maid from the king who had taken them from Aþars, and arriving at the court of Loquiferne denounces Aþars as a coward and traitor, and the princess Melia confirms his assertions; so the carpet-knight is for ever disgraced.

Another example not very generally known is found in the Urd· romance, "Gul-Ý BakßwalÝ:" When the hero, Taj al-Mal·k, the youngest son of King Zayn al-Mal·k, is born, the astrologers cast his horoscope and predict that the king will lose his sight as soon as he looks upon him. In order to prevent such a calamity, the king causes the child and his mother to be placed in a house far distant from the city, where Zayn al-Mal·k grows up into a handsome, courageous youth. By chance he meets his father, the king, while the latter is hunting, and the king no sooner casts his eyes on the youth than he becomes blind. The royal physicians tell him that only the Rose of BakßwalÝ can restore his sight, and the four other sons of the king set out together to procure this wonderful flower. They fall victims to the wiles of a courtesan, who wins all their money at play and ultimately imprisons them in her house. In the meantime Taj al-Mal·k has started on the same errand; he outwits the courtesan, obtains the liberation of his brothers, and then journeys to Jinnistßn, where, by the help of a friendly demon, he plucks the Rose in the garden of the beauteous fairy BakßwalÝ, and retraces his way homeward. Meeting with his four brothers on the road, he acquaints them of his success, and on their doubting the virtue of the flower, it is applied to the eyes of a blind man, and his sight is instantly restored. Upon this the brothers take the flower from Taj al-Mal·k by force and hasten with it to their father. But the hero’s friends the demons build for him a splendid palace, and the fame of his wealth soon reaches the court of his father, who, with the four brothers and the ministers of state, visits him, and after a great feast Taj al-Mal·k makes himself known to the king and relates the whole story of how he procured the flower that had restored his sight. The king falls upon his son’s neck and weeps tears of joy, saying, “You have restored the light of my eyes by the Rose of BakßwalÝ, and by the sight of you the door of cheerfulness has been opened in my sorrowful heart. It is incumbent on me to make known this enlivening news to your mother, who has looked out for you with anxiety and I must cause her, who has been afflicted with grief at your absence, to drink the sherbet of the glad tidings of your safety.” Then the king went to Taj al-Mal·k’s mother, made many apologies for his ill treatment of her, exalted her higher than she was previously, and gave her the joyful news of her son’s arrival. The remainder of the romance recounts the marvellous adventures of the hero in fairyland, whither he proceeds to rejoin BakßwalÝ, and where he undergoes many strange transformations; but ultimately all is “merry as marriage beds.” — Nothing is said about the punishment or pardon of the treacherous brothers, but doubtless in the original form of the story the hero acted as generously towards them as did Khudadad when his father would have put the forty brothers to death. It seems somewhat strange that after Khudadad’s brothers had killed him (as they believed) they did not take the Princess Daryabßr away with them, which generally happens in stories of this kind.

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The Story of the Blind Man, Baba Abdullah — .

An incident in the Muhammedan version of the legend of the Seven Sleepers may have furnished a hint for this well-told tale. When the evil-minded Dekianus views the Hid Treasure, which he had covenanted with the aged man who read the Tablet for him and conducted him to the spot should be equitably divided betwixt them — when he had beheld with wonder and astonishment the incalculable riches contained in the seven chambers, he says within himself, “And must I share this with the old man?” Then he ponders and thinks, “Nay, but I will give him a goodly portion ;” but finally he resolves to give him nothing — nay more, to take away his life so that there should be none on earth besides himself acquainted with the source of his wealth. In vain does the old man bid him take all the treasure and swear that he will ever preserve the secret: Dekianus smote him with his sword so that he died.

There is a tale in the Persian story-book “Shamsah wa Kahkahah” (also entitled “Mahb·b al-Kal·b”) which bears some analogy to the story of the Blind Man, Baba Abdullah. A skilful geomancer is desired by a tradesman to cast his horoscope. He does so, and informs the tradesman that he is to find a treasure. The man is incredulous, but after the operation is repeated with the same result at length becomes convinced of the accuracy of the geomancer’s calculations, locks his door, and forthwith they both begin to dig the floor. They come upon a large stone which on removal is found to have covered a well. The geomancer lowers the tradesman down it in a basket, which the latter fills with gold and silver and precious stones, and it is drawn up by the geomancer. When this has been repeated several times and the geomancer views the immense quantity of glittering treasure heaped up beside him, covetous thoughts enter his mind, and he determines to leave the tradesman to his fate at the bottom of the well, take all the wealth for himself, and live in comfort and luxury the rest of his days. Accordingly he does not again let the basket down, and the poor tradesman, suspecting his iniquitous design, calls out piteously to his perfidious friend, imploring him not to leave him there to perish, and swearing that the treasure should be equally shared as between brothers. But the covetous geomancer is deaf to his appeal, and begins to consider how the treasure might be conveyed to his own house without attracting the notice of any of the folk of the quarter, and in the midst of his cogitatious he falls asleep. Now it happened that the poor tradesman had an enemy who had long waited for an opportunity to do him a personal injury, and that very night he came to the house, and by means of a rope with a hook which he fastened to the wall he climbed on to the roof and descended into the place where the geomancer was sleeping. The man, mistaking him for the tradesman, seized the geomancer and with a sharp awl pierced his eyes, blinding him for ever. But, having thus effected his revenge as he thought, in groping his way out of the house he stumbled into the well and broke his foot. The tradesman, taking him for the geomancer, come for more gold, upbraided him for his insatiable avarice, and the man, in his turn, supposing him to have been thrown into the well by the tradesman, replied, “Be satisfied; I have punished him who cast you into this place,” but as he began to howl from the pain of his broken foot, the tradesman knew that he was not the geomancer. Next morning the tradesman’s son arrives from a long trading journey, with much gold and merchandise and many slaves. On entering his father’s house he is astounded to perceive the open well and by the side of it a vast heap of treasure and a man holding both hands to his eyes and wailing bitterly, lamenting the covetousness which had caused him the loss of his eyesight. The young man sends a slave down into the well and the first person drawn up is the tradesman, who is both surprised and overjoyed to behold his son once more, and tells him the whole story. His enemy is then taken out and is dismayed to find that he has blinded the wrong man. Both the geomancer and the tradesman’s enemy are pardoned, but the latter dies soon after, while the geomancer retires to a cave in the mountains, where every morning and evening two small loaves are thrown in to him by an unknown hand, and during the rest of his life he never ceased to repeat this distich:

> If you possess one barley grain of justice,
> You will never have half a grain of sorrow.

But much more closely resembling the story of Baba Adbullah is a tale in the Persian romance which recounts the imaginary adventures of Hatim Ta’Ý. A blind man is confined in a cage which is suspended from a branch of a tree, and constantly exclaims, “Do evil to none; if you do, evil will overtake you.” Hatim having promised to mend his condition and relieve him, he relates his history as follows:

“I am by occupation a merchant, and my name is HamÝr. When I became of age my father had finished the building of this city, and he called the same after my name. Shortly after, my father departed on a sea-voyage, and left me in charge of the city. I was a free hearted and social young man, and so in a short time expended all the property left under my care by my father. Thus I became surrounded with poverty and want, and as I knew that my father had hidden treasures somewhere in the house, I resolved to discover them if possible. I searched everywhere, but found nothing, and, to complete my woe, I received the news of my father’s death, the ship in which he sailed being wrecked.

“One day as I was sauntering, mournful and dejected, through the bazßr, I espied a learned man who cried out, ‘If any one has lost his money by theft or otherwise, my knowledge of the occult sciences enables me to recover the same, but on condition that I receive one fourth of the amount.’ When I heard this seasonable proclamation, I immediately approached the man of science, and stated to him my sad condition and how I had been reduced from affluence to poverty. The sage undertook to restore my wealth, and above all to discover the treasures concealed in my father’s house. I conducted him to the house and showed him every apartment, which he carefully examined one after another. At length by his art he discovered the stores we were in search of; and when I saw the gold and silver and other valuables, which exceeded calculation, the demon of fraud entered my heart, and I refused to fulfil my promise of giving a fourth of the property to the man of wisdom. I offered him only a few small pieces of silver; instead of accepting which, he stood for a few moments in silent meditation, and with a look of scorn said, ‘Do I thus receive the fourth part of your treasure which you agreed to give me? Base man, of what perjury are you guilty?’ On hearing this I became enraged, and having struck him several blows on the face, I expelled him from my house. In a few days however he returned. and so far ingratiated himself into my confidence that we became intimate friends; and night and day he displayed before my sight the various hidden treasures contained within the bowels of the earth. One day I asked him to instruct me in this wonderful science, to which he answered that no instruction was requisite. 'Here,' said he, 'is a composition of surma and whoever applies the same to his eyes, to him will all the wealth of this world become visible.'[406] 'Most learned sir,' I replied, 'if you will anoint mine eyes with this substance I promise to share with you the half of all such treasures as I may discover.' 'I agree,' said my friend; 'meanwhile let us retire to the desert, where we shall be free from interruption.'

"We immediately set out, and when we arrived there I was surprised at seeing this cage and asked my companion whose it was. I received for answer, that it belonged to no one. In short, we both sat down at the foot of this tree, and the sage, having produced the surma from his pocket, began to apply it to my eyes. But, alas! no sooner had he applied this composition than I became totally deprived of sight. In a voice of sorrow I asked him why he had thus treated me, and he replied, 'Such is the reward of treachery; and if you wish to recover your sight, you must for some time undergo penance in this cage. You must utter no complaint and you shall exclaim from time to time, 'Do no evil to any one; if you do, evil will befall you.' I entreated the sage to relieve me, saying, 'You are a mere mortal like myself, and dare you thus torment a fellow-creature? How will you account for your deeds to the Supreme Judge?' He answered, 'This is the reward of your treachery.' Seeing him inexorable, I begged of him to inform me when and how my sight was to be restored, and he told me, that a noble youth should one day visit me, and to him I was to make known my condition, and farther state, that in the desert of Himyar there is a certain herb called the Flower of Light, which the youth was to procure and apply to my eyes, by means of which my sight should be restored."

When the man in the cage had ended his story, the magnanimous Hatim bade him be of good cheer, for he would at once endeavour to relieve him. By the aid of the fairies, who carry him through the air for the space of seven days, he arrives in the desert where the Flowers of Light shine brilliant as lamps on a festival night, diffusing the sweetest perfume far and wide; and recking naught for the serpents, scorpions, and beasts of prey which infested the place (for he had a talisman that protected him), he advances and plucks three of the largest and most brilliant flowers. Returning in the same manner as he had gone thither, he reaches the spot where the blind man Hamir is imprisoned; taking down the cage, he releases the wretched man, compresses the stalk of the flower so that the juice drops upon his sightless eyeballs, and when this has been repeated three times Hamir opens his eyes, and seeing Hatim falls prostrate at his feet with a profusion of thanks.

Although there are some differences in the details of the story of Baba Abdullah and that of Hamir, as above, yet the general similarity between them is sufficient to warrant the conclusion that if one was not adapted from the other, both must have been derived from the same source; and here we have, I think, clear evidence of the genuineness of another of the tales which Galland was believed to have invented himself.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

History of Sidi Nu’man — .

It is curious to find this current as a folk-tale at Palena, in the Abruzzi, without any material variation except in the conclusion. My friend, Mr. E. Sidney Hartland, has favoured me with the following abstract of the Italian version, as given in vol. iii. of the “Archivio per lo studio delle Tradizioni Popolari” (Palermo, 1882), :

There was once a husband and wife. The wife says that she cannot eat anything, and only picks a few grains of rice with a large pin. Her husband asks why she eats nothing, and she answers that she does not want to eat. Meantime she goes out secretly every night, and the husband begins to have suspicions of her. One night he follows her softly and finds she goes to the burial ground, where she meets with certain female companions. They open a grave and feed on the flesh of the dead. The next morning the husband cooks rice again, and the wife picks up a few grains of it with a pin as before. The husband exclaims, “What! you enjoy the flesh of dead men, and over rice you are so finical as to eat it with a pin!” The wife is so enraged at learning that her husband knows of her doings that she goes to the water-bucket, fills a small bottle from it, and having muttered certain words over the water flings it upon him and he instantly becomes transformed into a dog. A provision merchant sees him running about, and takes and sets him on his counter. When the people come to buy provisions the dog examines the money to see if it be good, and the false coin he throws on the ground. One day a man comes to buy bacon and offers false coin. The provision merchant refuses to take it; they dispute over the matter, and it is referred to the dog, who throws the money on the ground. The man is astonished, and returning home tells his wife, who at once says that the dog is not a dog, and desires her husband to bring her the animal that she may see it. The man returns to the provision merchant and begs him to lend him the dog for a little while, and takes it home. The wife, who is a companion of the wife of him who has been changed into a dog, and understands witchcraft, fills a bottle with water, pronounces certain words over it, and throws the water upon the dog, who immediately becomes a man again, and she advises him to do to his wife as she had done to him, and imparts the secret to him. As soon as he returns home he fills the bottle with water from the bucket, says the words he had learned, and throws the water over his wife, who becomes a mare. He drives her out of the house and beats her as flax is beaten. To every one who asks why he is thrashing the mare he tells his story, and the people say, “Serve her right!” This goes on for some time. At last, when the husband sees that his wife has voided enough foam from the mouth, with another dash of water he changes her back to her proper form, and henceforward she eats whatever is set before her, obeys her husband in all things, and never goes out by night again. So they live long, happy and contented.

This version from the Abruzzi so closely resembles the story of Sidi Nu’mßn that we should perhaps be justified in concluding it to have been directly derived from Galland’s Nights, in the absence of any Venetian version, which might well have been imported independently from the East, but however this may be, the story in Galland bears unquestionable internal evidence that it is a genuine Arabian narrative, having nothing peculiarly European in its details.

A somewhat similar story is quite familiar to me, but I cannot at present call to mind whether it occurs in a Persian collection or in The Nights, in which the woman going out when she thinks her husband asleep, the latter follows her to a hut at some distance which she enters, and peeping into the hut, he sees a hideous black give her a severe beating for not coming sooner, while she pleads that she could not venture to quit the house until her husband was sound asleep. The two carouse together, and by-and-by the black going outside for a purpose, the husband strikes off his head with his sword and then conceals himself close by. The woman, after waiting some time, goes out to see what is detaining her paramour, and finding his headless body, she moans over it in great sorrow, and then taking the corpse on her back carries it away and throws it into the river. Her husband hastens home before her, and so she suspects nothing. Some days after, when she refuses to do some light work because of her physical weakness, her husband can no longer control himself, and tells her that she had strength enough to carry on her back the body of her black paramour, and so on.[407]

The ghoul-wife of Arabian tales, who eats little or nothing at home, has her in the rßkshasÝ of Indian fictions, who secretly devours antelopes, etc. There are many parallels in The Nights and other Asiatic story-books to the incident of Sidi Nu'man being changed back into his proper form, the most noteworthy being perhaps the case of the Second Calender in the shape of a monkey, or ape, whom the princess, an adept in white magic, at once recognizes as a man and veils her face, as does the young woman in the case of Sidi Nu'man: but while the Calender is restored to his own form, the princess, alas! perishes in her encounter with the genie who had transformed him. — In most of the Arabian tales of magical transformations of men and women into beasts the victims are ultimately restored to their natural forms, but in the Indian romance of the princess Somasekhara and Chitrasekhara, a wicked king named Ugrabßhu is permanently changed by some water taken from a magic fountain into a monkey and sold to a beggar, who compels him to perform tricks in public for his benefit. Heywood, in his "History of Women" (Book viii.), cites some curious European stories of men being transformed into donkeys by eating a certain kind of cheese,

History of Khwajah Hasan Al-habbal — .

How this entertaining story found its way into North Germany — and nowhere else in Europe, so far as I am aware — it is not easy to say, but its twin-brother seems to be orally current there, in all essential details, excepting the marvellous conclusion. For the poor ropemaker, however, a struggling weaver and for the two gentlemen, Sa’d and Sa’dÝ, three rich students are substituted. There does not appear (according to the version given by Thorpe in his “Yule Tide Stories,” which he entitles, not inaptly, The Three Gifts) to be any difference of opinion among the students regarding the influence of Destiny, or Fate, upon men’s fortunes: they simply give the poor weaver a hundred dollars “to assist him in his housekeeping.” The weaver hides the money in a heap of rags, unknown to his wife, who sells them to a rag-collector for a trifling sum. A year afterwards the students are again passing the house of the weaver and find him poorer than ever. He tells them of his mishap and they give him another hundred dollars warning him to be more careful with the money this time. The weaver conceals the dollars in the ash-tub, again without the cognisance of his wife, who disposes of the ashes for a few pieces of soap. At the end of the second year the students once more visit the wretched weaver, and on being informed of his loss, they throw a bit of lead at his feet, saying it’s of no use to give such a fool money, and go away in a great huff. The weaver picks up the lead and places it on the window sill. By-and-by a neighbour, who is a fisherman, comes in and asks for a bit of lead or some other heavy thing, for his net, and on receiving the lead thrown down by the students promises to give him in return the first large fish he catches. The weaver does get a fine fish, which he immediately cuts open, and finds in its stomach a “large stone,” which he lays on the window-sill, where, as it becomes dark, the stone gives forth a brighter and brighter light, “just like a candle,” and then he places it so that it illuminates the whole apartment. “That’s a cheap lamp,” quoth he to his wife: “wouldst not like to dispose of it as thou didst the two hundred dollars?” The next evening a merchant happening to ride past the weaver’s house perceives the brilliant stone, and alighting from his horse, enters and looks at it, then offers ten dollars for it, but the weaver says the stone is not for sale. “What! not even for twenty dollars?” “Not even for that.” The merchant keeps on increasing his offers till he reaches a thousand dollars, which was about half its real value, for the stone was a diamond, and which the weaver accepts, and thus he becomes the richest man in all the village. His wife, however, took credit to herself for his prosperity, often saying to him, “How well it was that I threw away the money twice, for thou hast me to thank for thy good luck!” — and here the German story ends. For the turban of the ropemaker and the kite that carried it off, with its precious lining, we have the heap of rags and the rag-collector; but the ashes exchanged for soap agrees with the Arabian story almost exactly.

The incident of the kite carrying off the poor ropemaker’s turban in which he had deposited the most part of the gold pieces that he received from the gentleman who believed that “money makes money” — an unquestionable fact, in spite of our story — is of very frequent occurrence in both Western and Eastern fictions. My readers will recollect its exact parallel in the abstract of the romance of Sir Isumbras, cited in Appendix to the preceding volumes: how the Knight, with his little son, after the soudan’s ship has sailed away with his wife, is bewildered in a forest, where they fall asleep, and in the morning at sunrise when he awakes, an eagle pounces down and carries off his scarlet mantle, in which he had tied up his scanty store of provisions together with the gold he had received from the soudan; and how many years after he found it in a bird’s nest (Supp. Nights, vol. ii. and). — And, not to multiply examples, a similar incident occurs in the “Kathß Sarit Sßgara,” Book ix. ch. 54, where a merchant named Samudras·ra is shipwrecked and contrives to reach the land, where he perceives the corpse of a man, round the loins of which is a cloth with a knot in it. On unfastening the cloth he finds in it a necklace studded with jewels. The merchant proceeds towards a city called Kalasapuri, carrying the necklace in his hand. Overpowered by the heat, he sits down in a shady place and falls asleep. The necklace is recognised by some passing policemen as that of the king’s daughter, and the merchant is at once taken before the king and accused of having stolen it. While the merchant is being examined, a kite swoops down and carries off the necklace. Presently a voice from heaven declares that the merchant is innocent, explains how the necklace came into his possession, and orders the king to dismiss him with honour. This celestial testimony in favour of the accused satisfies the king, who gives the merchant much wealth and sends him on his way. The rest of the story is as follows: “And after he had crossed the sea, he travelled with a caravan, and one day, at evening time, he reached a wood. The caravan encamped in the wood for the night, and while Samudras·ra was awake a powerful host of bandits attacked it. While the bandits were massacring the members of the caravan, Samudras·ra left his wares and fled, and climbed up a banyan-tree without being discovered. The host of bandits departed, after they had carried off all the wealth, and the merchant spent that night there, perplexed with fear and distracted with grief. In the morning he cast his eves towards the top of the tree, and saw, as fate would have it, what looked like the light of a lamp, trembling among the leaves. And in his astonishment he climbed up the tree and saw a kite’s nest, in which there was a heap of glittering priceless jewelled ornaments. He took them all out of it, and found among the ornaments that necklace which he had found in SvarnadvÝpa and the kite had carried off. He obtained from that nest unlimited wealth, and descending from the tree, he went off delighted, and reached in course of time his own city of Harshap·ra. There the merchant Samudras·ra remained, enjoying himself to his heart’s content, with his family, free from the desire of any other wealth.”

There is nothing improbable — at all events, nothing impossible — in the History of Khwajah Hasan al-Habbßl. That he should lose the two sums of money in the manner described is quite natural, and the incidents carry with them the moral: “Always take your wife into your confidence” (but the Khwajah was a Muslim), notwithstanding the great good luck which afterwards befell, and which, after all, was by mere chance. There is nothing improbable in the finding of the turban with the money intact in the bird’s nest, but that this should occur while the Khwajah’s benefactors were his guests is — well, very extraordinary indeed! As to the pot of bran — why, some little license must be allowed a story-teller, that is all that need be said! The story from beginning to end is a most charming one, and will continue to afford pleasure to old and young — to "generations yet unborn."

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves — p.219

I confess to entertaining a peculiar affection for this tale. It was the first of the tales of the "Arabian Nights Entertainments" which I read in the days of my "marvelling boyhood" eheu! fugaces, &c, etc. I may therefore be somewhat prejudiced in its favour, just as I still consider Scott's "Waverley" as the best of his long series of fascinating fictions, that being the first of them which I read — as it was the first he wrote. But "All Baba and the Forty Thieves" — the "open, sesame!" "shut, sesame!" — the sackfuls of gold and silver and the bales of rich merchandise in the robbers' cave — the avaricious brother forgetting the magical formula which would open the door and permit him to escape with his booty — his four quarters hung up in terrorem — and above all, the clever, devoted slave girl Morgiana, who in every way outwitted the crafty robber-chief, — these incidents remain stamped in my memory ineffaceably: like the initials of lovers' names cut into the bark of a growing tree, which, so far from disappearing, become larger by the lapse of time. To me this delightful tale will ever be, as Hafiz sings of something, "freshly fresh and newly new." I care not much though it never be found in an Arabic or any other Oriental dress — but that it is of Asiatic invention is self-evident; there is, in my poor opinion nothing to excel it, if indeed to equal it, for intense interest and graphic narrative power in all The Nights proper.

Sir Richard Burton has remarked, in note 1, , that Mr. Coote could only find in the south of Europe, or in the Levant, analogues of two of the incidents of this tale, yet one of those may be accepted as proof of its Eastern extraction, namely, the Cyprian story of "Three Eyes," where the ogre attempts to rescue his wife with a party of blacks concealed in bales: "The King's jester went downstairs, in order to open the bales and takes something out of them. Directly he approached one of the sacks, the black man answered from the inside,'Is it time, master?' In the same manner he tried all the sacks, and then went upstairs and told them that the sacks were full of black men. Directly the King's bride heard this, she made the jester and the company go downstairs. They take the executioner with them, and go to the first sack. The black man says from the inside, ‘Is it time ?’ ‘Yes,’ say they to him, and directly he came out they cut his head off. In the same manner they go to the other sacks and kill the other black men.’’[408]

The first part of the tale of Ali Baba — ending with the death of his greedy brother — is current in North Germany, to this effect:

A poor woodcutter, about to fell a beech at the back of the scattered ruins of the castle of Dummburg, seeing a monk approach slowly through the forest, hid himself behind a tree. The monk passed by and went among the rocks. The woodcutter stole cautiously after him and saw that he stopped at a small door which had never been discovered by the villagers. The monk knocks gently and cries, “Little door, open!” and the door springs open. He also cries, “Little door, shut!” and the door is closed. The woodcutter carefully observes the place, and next Sunday goes secretly and obtains access to the vault by the same means as that employed by the monk. He finds in it “large open vessels and sacks full of old dollars and fine guilders, together with heavy gold pieces, caskets filled with jewels and pearls, costly shrines and images of saints, which lay about or stood on tables of silver in corners of the vault.” He takes but a small quantity of the coin, and as he is quitting the vault a voice cries, “Come again!” First giving to the church, for behoof of the poor, a tenth of what he had taken, he goes to the town and buys clothes for his wife and children, giving out to his neighbours that he had found an old dollar and a few guilders under the roots of a tree that he had felled. Next Sunday he again visits the vault, this time supplying himself somewhat more liberally from the hoard, but still with moderation and discretion, and “Come again!” cries a voice as he is leaving. He now gives to the church two tenths, and resolves to bury the rest of the money he had taken in his cellar. But he can’t resist a desire to first measure the gold, for he could not count it. So he borrows for this purpose a corn-measure of a neighbour — a very rich but penurious man, who starved himself, hoarded up corn, cheated the labourer of his hire, robbed the widow and the orphan, and lent money on pledges. Now the measure had some cracks in the bottom, through which the miser shook some grains of corn into his own heap when selling it to the poor labourer, and into these cracks two or three small coins lodged, which the miser was not slow to discover. He goes to the woodcutter and asks him what it was he had been measuring. “Pine-cones and beans. But the miser holds up the coins he had found in the cracks of the measure, and threatens to inform upon him and have him put to the question if he will not disclose to him the secret of his money. So the woodcutter is constrained to tell him the whole story and much against his will, but not before he had made the miser promise that he would give one-tenth to the church, he conducts him to the vault. The miser enters, with a number of sacks, the woodcutter waiting outside to receive them when filled with treasure. But while the miser is gloating over the enormous wealth before him — even “wealth beyond the dreams of avarice” — a great black dog comes and lays himself down on the sacks. Terrified at the flaming eyes of the dog, the miser crept towards the door but in his fear forgot the proper words, and instead of saying, “Little door, open!” he cried!, “Little door, shut!” The woodcutter, having waited a long time, approached the door, and knocking gently and crying “Little door, open!” the door sprang open and he entered. There lay the bleeding body of his wicked neighbour, stretched on his sacks, but the vessels of gold and silver, and diamonds and pearls, sank deeper and deeper into the earth before his eyes, till all had completely vanished.[409]

The resemblance which this North German tale bears to the first part of “All Baba” is striking, and is certainly not merely fortuitous; the fundamental outline of the latter is readily recognisable in the legend of The Dummburg, notwithstanding differences in the details. In both the hero is a poor woodcutter, or faggot-maker; for the band of robbers a monk is substituted in the German legend, and for the “open, sesame” and “shut, sesame,” we have “little door, shut,” and “little door, open.” In both the borrowing of a corn-measure is the cause of the secret being revealed — in the one case, to Kasim, the greedy brother of Ali Baba and in the other, to a miserly old hunks; the fate of the latter and the disappearance of all the treasure are essentially German touches. The subsequent incidents of the tale of Ali Baba, in which the main interest of the narrative is concentrated; — Ali Baba’s carrying off the four quarters of his brother’s body and having them sewed together, the artifices by which the slave-girl checkmates the robber-chief and his followers in their attempts to discover the man who had learned the secret of the treasure-cave — her marking all the doors in the street and her pouring boiling oil on the robbers concealed in the oil-skins in the courtyard; — these incidents seem to have been adapted, or imitated, from some version of the world-wide story of the Robbery of the Royal Treasury, as told by Herodotus, of Rhampsinitus, King of Egypt, in which the hero performs a series of similar exploits to recover the headless body of his brother and at the same time escape detection. Moreover, the conclusion of the tale of Ali Baba, where we are told he lived in comfort and happiness on the wealth concealed in the robbers' cave, and "in after days he showed the hoard to his sons and his sons' sons, and taught them how the door could be caused to open and shut" — this is near akin to the beginning of Herodotus' legend of the treasury: the architect who built it left a stone loose, yet so nicely adjusted that it could not be discovered by any one not in the secret, by removing which he gained access to the royal stores of gold, and having taken what he wanted replaced the stone as before; on his deathbed he revealed the secret to his two sons as a legacy for their future maintenance. The discovery of Ali Baba's being possessed of much money from some coins adhering to the bottom of the corn-measure is an incident of very frequent occurrence in popular fictions; for instance, in the Icelandic story of the Magic Queen that ground out gold or whatever its possessor desired (Powell and Magnusson's collection, second series); in the Indian tale of the Six Brothers (Vernieux's collection) and its Irish analogue "Little Fairly;" in the modern Greek popular tale of the Man with Three Grapes (Le Grand's French collection), and a host of other tales, both Western and Eastern. The fate of Ali Baba's rich and avaricious brother, envious of his good luck, finds also many parallels — mutatis mutandis — as in the story of the Magic Queen, already referred to, and the Mongolian tale of the poor man and the Dakinis, the 14th relation of SiddhÝ K·r. Morgiana's counter-device of marking all the doors in the street, so that her master's house should not be recognised, often occurs, in different forms: in my work on Popular Tales and Fictions, vol. ii. p, 165, a number of examples are cited. The pretended merchant's objecting to eat meat cooked with salt, which fortunately aroused Morgiana’s suspicions of his real characterûfor robber and murderer as he was, he would not be “false to his salt’’[410] — recalls an anecdote related by D’Herbelot, which may find a place here, in conclusion: The famous robber Yac·b bin Layth, afterwards the founder of a dynasty of Persian monarchs called Soffarides, in one of his expeditions broke into the royal palace and having collected a large quantity of plunder, was on the point of carrying it off when his foot struck against something which made him stumble. Supposing it not to be an article of value, he put it to his mouth, the better to distinguish it. From the taste he found it was a lump of salt, the symbol and pledge of hospitality, on which he was so touched that he retired immediately without carrying away any part of his booty. The next morning the greatest astonishment was caused throughout the palace on the discovery of the valuables packed up and ready for removal. Yacub was arrested and brought before the prince, to whom he gave a faithful account of the whole affair, and by this means so ingratiated himself with his sovereign that he employed him as a man of courage and ability in many arduous enterprises, in which he was so successful as to be raised to the command of the royal troops, whose confidence in and affection for their general induced them on the prince’s death to prefer his interest to that of the heir to the throne, from whence he afterwards spread his extensive conquests.

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Since the foregoing was in type I discovered that I had overlooked another German version, in Grimm, which preserves some features of the Arabian tale omitted in the legend of The Dummburg:

There were two brothers, one rich, the other poor. The poor brother, one day wheeling a barrow through the forest, had just come to a naked looking mountain, when he saw twelve great wild men approaching, and he hid himself in a tree, believing them to be robbers. “Semsi mountain, Semsi mountain, open!” they cried, and the mountain opened, and they went in. Presently they came out, carrying heavy sacks. “Semsi mountain, Semsi mountain, shut thyself!” they cried; and the mountain closed and they went away.

The poor man went up then and cried. “Semsi mountain Semsi mountain, open!” the mountain opens, he goes in, finds a cavern full of gold, silver, and jewels, fills his pockets with gold only, and coming out cries, “Semsi mountain, Semsi mountain, shut thyself!” He returns home and lives happily till his gold is exhausted. Then “he went to his brother to borrow a measure that held a bushel, and brought himself some more.” This he does again, and this time the rich brother smears the inside of the bushel with pitch and when he gets it back finds a gold coin sticking to it, so he taxes his poor brother with having treasure and learns the secret. Off he drives, resolved to bring back, not gold, but jewels. He gets in by saying, “Semsi mountain, Semsi mountain, open!” He loads himself with precious stones, but has forgotten the word, and cries only, “Simeli mountain, Simeli mountain, open!” The robbers return and charge him with having twice stolen from them. He vainly protests, “It was not I “ and they cut his head off.

Here the twelve wild men represent the forty robbers, and, as in Ali Baba, it is the hero’s brother who falls a victim to his own cupidity. In the Arabian tale the hero climbs up into a tree when he sees the robbers approach, in The Dummburg he hides himself behind a tree to watch the proceedings of the monk; and in Grimm’s version he hides in a tree. On this last-cited story W. Grimm has the following note: “It is remarkable that this story, which is told in the province of Munster, is told also in the Hartz, about The Dummburg, and closely resembles the Eastern story of ‘The Forty Thieves,’ where even the rock Sesam, which falls open at the words Semsi and Semeli, recalls the name of the mountain in the German saga. This name for a mountain is, according to a document in Pistorius (3, 642), very ancient in Germany. A mountain in Grabfeld is called Similes and in a Swiss song a Simeliberg is again mentioned. This makes us think of the Swiss word ‘Sine!,’ for ‘sinbel,’ round. In Meier, No. 53, we find ‘Open, Simson.’ In Prohle’s ‘Marcher fur die Jugend,’ No. 30, where the story is amplified, it is Simsimseliger Mountain. There is also a Polish story which is very like it.” Dr. Grimm is mistaken in saying that in the Arabian tale the “rock Sesam” falls open at the words Semsi and Semeli: even in his own version, as the brother finds to his cost, the word Simeli does not open the rock. In Ali Baba the word is “Simsim” (Fr. Sesame), a species of grain, which the brother having forgot, he cries out “Barley.” The “Open, Simson” in Meier’s version and the “Semsi” in Grimm’s story are evidently corruptions of “Simsim,” or “Samsam,” and seem to show that the story did not become current in Germany through Galland’s work.

Dr. N. B. Dennys, in his “Folk-Lore of China, and its Affinities with that of the Aryan and Semitic Races,” , cites a legend of the cave Kwang-sio-foo in Kiang-si, which reflects part of the tale of Ali Baba: There was in the neighbourhood a poor herdsman named Chang, his sole surviving relative being a grandmother with whom he lived. One day, happening to pass near the cave, he overheard some one using the following words: “Shih mun kai, Kwai Ku hsen shÛng lai,” Stone door, open; Mr. Kwai Ku is coming. Upon this the door of the cave opened and the speaker entered. Having remained there for some time he came out, and saying, “Stone door, close; Mr. Kwai Ku is going,” the door again opened and the visitor departed. Chang’s curiosity was naturally excited, and having several times heard the formula repeated, he waited one day until the genie (for such he was) had taken his departure and essayed to obtain an entrance. To his great delight the door yielded, and having gone inside he found himself in a romantic grotto of immense extent. Nothing however in the shape of treasure met his eye, so having fully explored the place he returned to the door, which shut at his bidding, and went home. Upon telling his grandmother of his adventure she expressed a strong wish to see the wonderful cavern; and thither they accordingly went together the next day. Wandering about in admiration of the scenery, they became separated, and Chang at length, supposing that his grandmother had left, passed out of the door and ordered it to shut. Reaching home, he found to his dismay that she had not yet arrived. She must of course have been locked up in the cave, so back he sped and before long was using the magic sentence to obtain access. But alas! the talisman had failed, and poor Chang fell into an agony of apprehension as he reflected that his grandmother would either be starved to death or killed by the enraged genie. While in this perplexity the genie appeared and asked him what was amiss. Chang frankly told him the truth and implored him to open the door. This the genie refused to do, but told him that his grandmother's disappearance was a matter of fate. The cave demanded a victim. Had it been a male, every succeeding generation of his family would have seen one of its members arrive at princely rank. In the case of a woman her descendants would in a similar way possess power over demons. Somewhat comforted to know that he was not exactly responsible for his grandmother's death, Chang returned home and in process of time married. His first son duly became Chang tien shih (Chang, the Master of Heaven), who about A.D. 25 was the first holder of an office which has existed uninterruptedly to the present day.

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Ali Khwajah and the Merchant of Baghdad — .

Precocious Children. — See note at end of the Tale, . — In the (apocryphal) Arabic Gospel of the Saviour's Infancy is the following passage:

"Now in the month of Adar, Jesus, after the manner of a King, assembled the boys together. They spread their clothes on the ground and he sat down upon them. Then they put on his head a crown made of flowers, and like chamber-servants stood in his presence, on the right and on the left, as if he was a king. And whoever passed by that way was forcibly dragged by the boys, saying, 'Come hither and adore the king; then go away.'"

A striking parallel to this is found in the beginning of the Mongolian Tales of Ardshi Bordshi — i.e., the celebrated Indian monarch, Rßjß Bhoja, as given in Miss Busk's "Sagas from the Far East," .

"Long ages ago there lived a mighty king called Ardshi Bordshi.[411] In the neighbourhood of his residence was a hill where the boys who were tending the calves were wont to pass the time by running up and down. But they had also another custom, and it was that whichever of them won the race was king for the day — an ordinary game enough, only that when it was played in this place the Boy-King thus constituted was at once endowed with such extraordinary importance and majesty that everyone was constrained to treat him as a real king. He had not only ministers and dignitaries among his playfellows, who prostrated themselves before him, and fulfilled all his behests, but whoever passed that way could not choose but pay him homage also."[412]

This is followed by an analogous story to that of Ah Khwajah and the Merchant of Baghdad, under the title of "The False Friend," in which a merchant on a trading journey entrusts a friend with a valuable jewel to give to his wife on his return home, and the friend retaining it for his own use suborns two men to bear witness that they saw him deliver it to the merchant's wife, so the King dismisses the suit. But the Boy-King undertakes to try the case de novo; causes the two witnesses to be confined in separate places, each with a piece of clay which he is required to make into the form of the jewel, and the models are found to be different one from the other, and both from the shape of the jewel as described by the false friend. A similar story occurs in several Indian collections, with a KßzÝ instead of the Boy-King.

A curious instance of precocity is related in the Third Book of the "Masnavi" (see ante), of which Mr. E. H. Whinfield gives an outline in his admirable and most useful abridgment of that work: The boys wished to obtain a holiday, and the sharpest of them suggested that when the master came into school each boy should condole with him on his alleged sickly appearance. Accordingly, when he entered, one said, "O master, how pale you are looking! and another said, You are looking very ill to-day, and so on. The master at first answered that there was nothing the matter with him, but as one boy after another continued assuring him that he looked very ill, he was at length deluded into imagining that he must really be ill. So he returned to his house, making the boys follow him there, and told his wife that he was not well, bidding her mark how pale he was. His wife assured him he was not looking pale, and offered to convince him by bringing a mirror, but he refused to look at it, and took to his bed. He then ordered the boys to begin their lessons; but they assured him that the noise made his head ache, and he believed them, and dismissed them to their homes, to the annoyance of their mothers.

Another example of juvenile cleverness is found in a Persian collection of anecdotes entitled "Latß'yif At-Taw'ßyif," by 'AlÝ ibn Husain Al-Va'iz Al-KßshifÝ: One day N·rshÝrvßn saw in a dream that he was drinking with a frog out of the same cup. When he awoke he told this dream to his vazÝr, but he knew not the interpretation of it. The king grew angry and said, "How long have I maintained thee, that if any difficulty should arise thou mightest unloose the knot of it, and if any matter weighed on my heart thou shouldst lighten it? Now I give thee three days, that thou mayest find out the meaning of this dream, and remove the trouble of my mind; and if, within that space, thou art not successful, I will kill thee." The vazÝr went from the presence of N·rshÝrvßn confounded and much in trouble. He gathered together all the sages and interpreters of dreams, and told the matter to them, but they were unable to explain it; and the vazÝr resigned his soul to death. But this story was told in the city, and on the third day he heard that there was a mountain, ten farsangs distant from the city, in which was a cave, and in this cave a sage who had chosen the path of seclusion, and lived apart from mankind, and had turned his face to the wall. The vazÝr set out for this place of retirement, saying to himself, “Perhaps he will be able to lay a plaster on my wound, and relieve it from the throbbings of care.” So he mounted his horse, and went to find the sage. At the moment he arrived at the hill a company of boys were playing together. One of them cried out with a loud voice, “The vazÝr is running everywhere in search of an interpreter, and all avails him nothing; now the interpretation of the dream is with me, and the truth of it is clear to me.” When these words reached the ears of the vazÝr he drew in the reins, and calling the boy to him asked him, “What is thy name? He replied, “Buzurjmibr.” The vazÝr said “All the sages and interpreters have failed in loosing the knot of this difficulty — how dost thou, so young in years, pretend to be able to do it? He replied, “All the world is not given to every one.” The vazÝr said, “If thou speakest truth, explain.” Said the boy “Take me to the monarch, that I may there unloose the knot of this difficulty.” The vazÝr said, “If thou shouldst fail, what then will come of it?” The boy replied, “I will give up my own blood to the king, that they may slay me instead of thee.” The vazÝr took the boy with him, returned, and told the whole matter to the king and produced the boy in his presence. The king was very angry, and said, “All the wise men and dream interpreters of the court were unable to satisfy me, and thou bringest me a child, and expectest that he shall loose the knot of the difficulty.” The vazÝr bowed his head. And Buzurjmihr said, “Look not upon his youth, but see whether he is able to expound the mystery or not.” The king then said, “Speak.” He replied, “I cannot speak in this multitude.” So those who were present retired, and the monarch and the youth were left alone. Then said the youth, “A stranger has found entrance into thy seraglio, and is dishonouring thee, along with a girl who is one of thy concubines.” The king was much moved at this interpretation, and looked from one of the wise men to another, and at length said to the boy, “This is a serious matter thou hast asserted; how shall this matter be proceeded in, and in what way fully known?” The boy replied, “Command that every beautiful woman in thy seraglio pass before thee unveiled, that the truth of this matter may be made apparent.” The king ordered them to pass before him as the boy had said, and considered the face of each one attentively. Among them came a young girl extremely beautiful, whom the king much regarded. When she came opposite to him, a shuddering as of palsy, fell upon her, and she shook from head to foot, so that she was hardly able to stand. The king called her to him, and threatening her greatly, bade her speak the truth. She confessed that she loved a handsome slave and had privately introduced him into the seraglio. The king ordered them both to be impaled, and turning to the rewarding of Buzurjmihr, he made him the object of his special bounty.

This story has been imported into the “History of the Seven Wise Masters of Rome,” the European form of the Book of Sindibßd, where the prince discovers to his father the paramour of his step-mother, the empress, in the person of a young man disguised as one of her maid-servants, and its presence in the work is quite inconsistent with the lady’s violent lust after the young prince. There is a similar tale in the Hebrew version, “MishlÚ Sandabar,” but the disguised youth is not detected. Vatsyayana, in his “Kßma Sutra” (or Aphorisms of Love), speaks of it as a common practice in India thus to smuggle men into the women’s apartments in female attire. In the Introduction to the “Kathß Sarit Sßgara,” Vararuchi relates how King Yogananda saw his queen leaning out of a window and asking questions of a Bßhman guest that was looking up. That trivial circumstance threw the king into a passion, and he gave orders that the Brßhman should be put to death) for jealousy interferes with discernment. Then as that Brßhman was being led off to the place of execution in order that he should be put to death, a fish in the market laughed aloud, though it was dead. The king hearing it immediately prohibited for the present the execution of the Brßhman, and asked Vararuchi the reason why the fish laughed. He desired time to think over the matter and learned from the conversation of a rßkshasÝ with her children that the fish said to himself, “All the king’s wives are dissolute, for in every part of his harem there are men dressed up as women, and nevertheless while those escape, an innocent Brahmßn is to be put to death;” and this tickled the fish so that he laughed. Mr.

Tawney says that Dr. Liebrecht, in “Orient und Occident,” vol. i. , compares this story with one in the old French romance of Merlin. There Merlin laughs because the wife of Julius C sar had twelve young men disguised as ladies-in-waiting. Benfey, in a note on Liebrecht’s article, compares with the story of Merlin one by the Countess d’Aulnois, No. 36 of Basile’s “Pentamerone,” Straparola, iv. 1, and a story in the “Suka Saptati.” In this some cooked fish laugh so that the whole town hears them; the reason being the same as in the above story and in that of Merlin. In a KashmÝrÝ version, which has several other incidents and bears a close resemblance to No. 4 of M. Legrand’s “Recueil de Contes Populaires Grecs,” to the story of “The Clever Girl” in Professor T. F. Crane’s “Italian Popular Tales,” and to a fable in the Talmud, the king requires his vazÝr to inform him within six months why the fish laughed in presence of the queen. The vazÝr sends his son abroad until the king’s anger had somewhat cooled — for himself he expects nothing but death. The vazÝr’s son learns from the clever daughter of a farmer that the laughing of the fish indicates that there is a man in the palace unknown to the king. He hastens home and tells his father the secret, who at once communicates it to the king. All the female attendants in the palace are called together and ordered to jump across the mouth of a pit which he has caused to be dug: the man would betray his sex in the trial. Only one person succeeded and he was found to be a man.[413] Thus was the queen satisfied, and the faithful old vazÝr saved, and his son, of course, married the farmer’s clever daughter.

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Prince Ahmad and the Peri Banu — .

How, in the name of all that is wonderful — how has it happened that this ever-delightful tale is not found in any text of The Nights? And how could it be supposed for a moment that Galland was capable of conceiving such a tale — redolent, as it is, of the East and of Fairyland? Not that Fairyland where “True Thomas,” otherwise ycleped Thomas the Rymer, otherwise Thomas of Erceldoune, passed several years in the bewitching society of the Fairy Queen, years which appeared to him as only so many moments: but Eastern Fairyland, with all its enchanting scenes; where priceless gems are as plentiful as “autumnal leaves which strong the brooks in Vallombrosa;” where, in the royal banqueting hall, illuminated with hundreds of wax candles, in candelabra of the finest amber and the purest crystal are bands of charming damsels, fairest of form and feature, who play on sweet- toned instruments which discourse heart-ravishing strains of melody; — meanwhile the beauteous PerÝ Bßn· is seated on a throne adorned with diamonds and rubies and emeralds, and pearls and other gems, and by her side is the thrice-happy Prince Ahmad, who feels himself amply indemnified for the loss of his fair cousin Princess N·r-en-Nihßr. Auspicious was that day when he shot the arrow which the enamoured PerÝ Bßn· caused to be wafted through the air much farther than arm of flesh could ever send the feathered messenger! And when the Prince feels a natural longing to visit his father in the land of mortals from time to time, behold the splendid cavalcade issue from the portals of the fairy palace — the gallant jinn-born cavaliers, mounted on superb steeds with gorgeous housings, who accompany him to his father’s capital. But alas! the brightest sky is sooner or later overcast — human felicity is — etc., etc. The old king’s mind is poisoned against his noble son by the whisperings of a malignant and envious minister — a snake in the grass — a fly in the ointment of Prince Ahmad’s beatitude! And to think of the old witch gaining access to the fairy palace — it was nothing less than an atrocity! And the tasks which she induces the king to set Prince Ahmad to perform — but they are all accomplished for him by his fairy bride. The only thing to regret

— the fatal blemish in the tale — is the slaughter of the old king. Shabbar did right well to dash into the smallest pieces the wicked vazÝr and the foul witch and all who aided and abetted them, but "to kill a king!" and a well-meaning if soft-headed king, who was, like many better men, led astray by evil counsellors!

Having thus blown off the steam — I mean to say, having thus ventilated the enthusiasm engendered by again reading the tale of Prince Ahmad and the PerÝ Bßn·, I am now in a fitter frame of mind for the business of examining some versions and variants of it, for though the tale has not yet been found in Arabic, it is known from the banks of Ganga to the snow-clad hills and vales of Iceland — that strange land whose heart is full of the fiercest fires. This tale, like that of Zayn al-Asnßm, comprises two distinct stories, which have no necessary connection, to wit, (1) the adventures of the Three Princes, each in quest of the rarest treasure, wherewith to win the beautiful Princess N·r-en-Nihßr; and (2) the subsequent history of the third Prince and the PerÝ Bßn·. The oldest known form of the story concludes with the recovery of the lady — not from death's door, but from a giant who had carried her off, and the rival claims of the heroes to the hand of the lady are left undecided: certainly a most unsatisfactory ending, though it must be confessed the case was, as the priest found that of Paddy and the stolen pullet, somewhat "abstruse." In the "Vetßlapanchavinsati," or Twenty-five Tales of a Vampyre (concerning which collection see Appendix to the preceding volumes,), the fifth recital is to this purpose:

There was a Brßhman in Ajjayini (Oojein) whose name was Harisvamin; he had a son named Devasvamin and a daughter far famed for her wondrous beauty and rightly called Somaprabha (Moonlight). When the maiden had attained marriageable age, she declared to her parents that she was only to be married to a man who possessed heroism, or knowledge, or magic power. It happened soon after this that Harisvamin was sent by the king on state business to the Dekkan, and while there a young Brßhman, who had heard the report of Somaprabha's beauty, came to him as a suitor for the hand of his daughter. Harisvamin informed him of the qualifications which her husband must possess, and the Brßhman answered that he was endowed with magic power, and having shown this to the father's satisfaction, he promised to give him his daughter on the seventh day from that time. In like manner, at home, the son and the wife of Harisvamin had, unknown to each other, promised Somaprabha to a young man who was skilled in the use of missile weapons and was very brave, and to a youth who possessed knowledge of the past, the present, and the future; and the marriage was also fixed to take place on the seventh day. When Harisvamin returned home he at once told his wife and son of the contract he has entered into with the young Brßhman, and they in their turn acquainted him of their separate engagements, and all were much perplexed what course to adopt in the circumstances.

On the seventh day the three suitors arrived, but Somaprabha was found to have disappeared in some inexplicable manner. The father then appealed to the man of knowledge, saying, “Tell me where my daughter is gone?” He replied, “She has been carried off by a rßkshasa to his habitation in the Vindhya forest.” Then quoth the man of magic power “Be of good cheer, for I will take you in a moment where the possessor of knowledge says she is.” And forthwith he prepared a magic chariot that could fly through the air, provided all sorts of weapons, and made Harisvamin, the man of knowledge, and the brave man enter it along with himself, and in a moment carried them to the dwelling of the rßkshasa. Then followed a wonderful fight between the brave man and the rßkshasa, and in a short time the hero cut off his head, after which they took Somaprabha into the chariot and quickly returned to Harisvamin’s house. And now arose a great dispute between the three suitors. Said the man of knowledge, “If I had not known where the maiden was how could she have been discovered?” The man of magic argued, “If I had not made this chariot that can fly through the air, how could you all have come and returned in a moment?” Then the brave man said, “If I had not slain the rßkshasa, how could the maiden have been rescued?” While they were thus wrangling Harisvamin remained silent, perplexed in mind. The Vampyre, having told this story to the King, demanded to know to whom the maiden should have been given. The King replied, “She ought to have been given to the brave man; for he won her by the might of his arm and at the risk of his life, slaying that rßkshasa in combat. But the man of knowledge and the man of magic power were appointed by the Creator to serve as his instruments." The perplexed Harisvamin would have been glad, no doubt, could he have had such a logical solution of the question as this of the sagacious King Trivikramasena — such was his six-syllabled name.

The HindÝ version ("Baytßl PachÝsi") corresponds with the Sanskrit, but in the Tamil version the father, after hearing from each of the three suitors an account of his accomplishments, promises to give his daughter to "one of them." Meanwhile a giant comes and carries off the damsel. There is no difference in the rest of the story.

In the Persian Parrot-Book ("T·tÝ Nßma") where the tale is also found [414] — it is the 34th recital of the loquacious bird in the India Office MS. No. 2573, the 6th in B. Gerrans' partial translation, 1792, and the 22nd in Kßderi's abridgment — the first suitor says that his art is to discover anything lost and to predict future events; the second can make a horse of wood which would fly through the air; and the third was an unerring archer.

In the Persian "Sindibßd Nßma," a princess, while amusing herself in a garden with her maidens, is carried away by a demon to his cave in the mountains. The king proclaims that he will give his daughter in marriage to whoever should bring her back. Four brothers offer themselves for the undertaking: one is a guide who has travelled over the world; the second is a daring robber, who would take the prey even from the lion's mouth; the third is a brave warrior; and the fourth is a skilful physician. The guide leads the three others to the demons' cave, the robber steals the damsel while the demon is absent; the physician, finding her at death's door, restored her to perfect health; while the warrior puts to flight a host of demons who sallied out of the cave.

The Sanskrit story has undergone a curious transformation among the Kalmuks. In the 9th Relation of SiddhÝ K·r (a Mongolian version of the Vampyre Tales) six youths are companions: an astrologer, a smith, a doctor, a mechanic, a painter, and a rich man's son. At the mouth of a great river each plants a tree of life and separates, taking different roads, having agreed to meet again at the same spot, when if the tree of any of them is found to be withered it will be a token that he is dead. The rich man's son marries a beautiful girl, who is taken from him by the Khan, and the youth is at the same time put to death by the Khan's soldiers and buried under a great rock. When the four other young men meet at the time and place appointed they find the tree of the rich youth withered. Thereupon the astrologer by his art discovers where the youth is buried; the smith breaks the rock asunder; the physician restores the youth to life, and he tells them how the Khan had robbed him of his wife and killed him. The mechanic then constructs a flying chariot in the form of Garuda — the bird of Vishnu; the counterpart of the Arabian rukh — which the painter decorates, and when it is finished the rich youth enters it and is swiftly borne through the air to the roof of the Khan's dwelling, where he alights. The Khan, supposing the machine to be a real Garuda, sends the rich youth's own wife to the roof with some food for it. Could anything have been more fortunate? The youth takes her into the wooden Garuda and they quickly arrive at the place where his companions waited for his return. When they beheld the marvellous beauty of the lady the five skilful men instantly fell in love with her, and began to quarrel among themselves, each claiming the lady as his by right, and drawing their knives they fought and slew one another. So the rich youth was left in undisputed possession of his beautiful bride.

Coming back to Europe we find the primitive form of the story partly preserved in a Greek popular version given in Hahn's collection: Three young men are in love with the same girl, and agree to go away and meet again at a given time, when he who shall have learned the best craft shall marry the girl. They meet after three years' absence. One has become a famous astronomer; the second is so skilful a physician that he can raise the dead, and the third can run faster than the wind. The astronomer looks at the girl's star and knows from its trembling that she is on the point of death. The physician prepares a medicine which the third runs off with at the top of his speed, and pours it down the girl's throat just in time to save her life — though, for the matter of that, she might as well have died, since the second suitor was able to resuscitate the dead!

But the German tale of the Four Clever Brothers, divested of the preliminary incidents which have been brought into it from different folk-tales, more nearly approaches the form of the original, as we may term the Sanskrit story for convenience' sake: A poor man sends his four sons into the world, each to learn some craft by which he might gain his own livelihood. After travelling together for some time they came to a place where four roads branched off and there they separated, each going along one of the roads, having agreed to meet at the same spot that day four years. One learns to be an excellent astronomer and, on quitting, his master gives him a telescope,[415] saying, "With this thou canst see whatever takes place either on earth or in heaven, and nothing can remain concealed from thee." Another becomes a most expert thief. The third learns to be a sharpshooter and gets from his master a gun which would never fail him: whatever he aimed at he was sure to hit. And the youngest becomes a very clever tailor and is presented by his master with a needle, which could sew anything together, hard or soft. At the end of the four years they met according to agreement, and returning together to their father's house, they satisfied the old man with a display of their abilities Soon after this the king's daughter was carried off by a dragon, and the king proclaimed that whoever brought her back should have her to wife. This the four clever brothers thought was a fine chance for them, and they resolved to liberate the king's daughter. The astronomer looked through his telescope and saw the princess far away on a rock in the sea and the dragon watching beside her. Then they went and got a ship from the king, and sailed over the sea till they came to the rock, where the princess was sitting and the dragon was asleep with his head in her lap. The hunter feared to shoot lest he should kill the princess. Then the thief crept up the rock and stole her from under the dragon so cleverly that the monster did not awake. Full of joy, they hurried off with her and sailed away. But presently the dragon awoke and missing the princess flew after them through the air. Just as he was hovering above the ship to swoop down upon it, the hunter shot him through the heart and he tumbled down dead, but falling on the vessel his carcase smashed it into pieces. They laid hold of two planks and drifted about till the tailor with his wonderful needle sewed the planks together, and then they collected the fragments of the ship which the tailor also sewed together so skilfully that their ship was again sea-worthy, and they soon got home in safety. The king was right glad to see his daughter and told the four brothers they must settle among themselves which of them should have her to wife. Upon this they began to wrangle with one another. The astronomer said, “If I had not seen the princess, all your arts would have been useless, so she is mine.” The thief claimed her, because he had rescued her from the dragon; the hunter, because he had shot the monster; and the tailor, because he had sewn the ship together and saved them all from drowning. Then the king decreed: “Each of you has an equal right, and as all of you cannot have her, none of you shall; but I will give to each as a reward half a kingdom,” with which the four clever brothers were well contented.

The story has assumed a droll form among the Albanians, in which no fewer than seven remarkably endowed youths play their parts in rescuing a king’s daughter from the Devil, who had stolen her out of the palace. One of the heroes could hear far off; the second could make the earth open; the third could steal from any one without his knowing it; the fourth could throw an object to the end of the world; the fifth could erect an impregnable tower; the sixth could bring down anything however high it might be in the air and the seventh could catch whatever fell from any height. So they set off together, and after travelling along way, the first lays his ear to the ground. “I hear him,” he says. Then the second causes the earth to open, and down they go, and find the Devil sound asleep, snoring like thunder, with the princess clasped to his breast. The third youth steals her without waking the fiend. Then the fourth takes off the Devil’s shoes and flings them to the end of the world, and off they all go with the princess. The Devil wakes and goes after them, but first he must find his shoes — though what need he could have for shoes it is not easy to say; but mayhap the Devil of the Albanians is minus horns, hoof and tail! This gives the fifth hero time to erect his impregnable tower before the fiend returns from the end of the world. When he comes to the tower he finds all his skill is naught, so he has recourse to artifice, which indeed has always been his forte. He begs piteously to be allowed one last look of his beloved princess. They can’t refuse him so slight a favour, and make a tiny hole in the tower wall, but, tiny as it is, the Devil is able to pull the princess through it and instantly mounts on high with her. Now is the marksman’s opportunity: he shoots at the fiend and down he comes, “like a hundred of bricks” (as we don’t say in the classics), at the same time letting go the princess, who is cleverly caught by the seventh hero, and is none the worse for her aerial journey. The princess chooses the seventh for her husband, as he is the youngest and best looking, but her father the king rewards his companions handsomely and all are satisfied.

The charming history of Prince Ahmad and his fairy bride is “conspicuous from its absence” in all these versions, but it re-appears in the Italian collection of Nerucci: “Novelle Popolari Montalesi,” No. xl., , with some variations from Galland’s story:

A certain king had three daughters, and a neighbouring king had three sons, who were much devoted to the chase. They arrived at the city of the first king, and all fell in love with his daughter[416] and wanted to marry her. Her father said it was impossible to content them all, but if one of them would ask her, and if he pleased her, he would not oppose the marriage. They could not agree which it was to be, and her father proposed that they should all travel, and the one who at the end of six months brought the most beautiful and wonderful present should marry her. They set out in different directions and at the end of six months they meet by appointment at a certain inn. The eldest brings a magic carpet on which he is wafted whithersoever he will. (It goes a hundred miles in a day.) The second brings a telescope which shows whatever is happening a hundred miles away. The youngest brings three stones of a grape, one of which put into the mouth of a person who is dying restores him to life. They at once test the telescope by wishing to see the princess, and they find her dying — at the last gasp indeed. By means of the carpet they reach the palace m time to save her life with one of the grape-stones. Each claims the victory. Her father, almost at his wits’ end to decide the question, decrees that they shall shoot with the crossbow, and he who shoots farthest shall win the princess. The second brother shoots farther than the first; but the youngest shoots so far that they cannot find where kits arrow has fallen. He persists in the search and falls down a deep hole, from the bottom of which he can scarcely see a speck of the sky. There an ogre (mago) appears to him and also a bevy of young fairy maidens of extreme beauty. They lead him to a marvellous palace, give him refreshments and provide him with a room and a bed, where every night one of the fairies bears him company. He spends his days in pleasure until the king's daughter is almost forgotten. At last he begins to think he ought to learn what has become of his brothers, his father, and the lady. The chief fairy however, tries to dissuade him warning him that evil will befall him if he return to his brothers. He persists, and she tells him that the princess is given to his eldest brother, who reigns in his father-in-law's stead the latter having died, and that his own father is also dead; and she warns him again not to go. But he goes. His eldest brother says that he thought he was dead "in that hole." The hero replies that, on the contrary, he fares so well with a bevy of young and beautiful fairies that he does not even envy him, and would not change places with him for all the treasures in the world. His brother, devoured by rage, demands that the hero bring him within eight days a pavilion of silk which will lodge three hundred soldiers, otherwise he will destroy his palace of delights. The hero, affrighted, returns to the fairies and relates his brother's threats. The chief fairy says, "Didn't I tell you so? You deserve that I should leave you to your fate; but, out of pity for your youth, I will help you." And he returns to his brother within eight days with the required pavilion. But his brother is not satisfied: he demands another silk pavilion for 600 soldiers, else he will lay waste the abode of the fairies. This pavilion he also receives from the fairies, and it was much finer and richer than the first. His brother's demands rise when he sees that the hero does not find any difficulty in satisfying him. He now commands that a column of iron 12 cubits (braccia) high be erected in the midst of a piazza. The chief of the fairies also complies with this requirement. The column is ready in a moment, and as the hero cannot carry it himself, she gives it to the guardian ogre, who carries it upon his shoulders, and presents himself, along with the hero, before the eldest brother. As soon as the latter comes to see the column set in the piazza the ogre knocks him down and reduces him to pulp (cofaccino, lit., a cake), and the hero marries his brother's widow and becomes king in his stead.

Almost suspiciously like the story in Galland in many of the details is an Icelandic version in Powell and Magn·sson's collection, yet I cannot conceive how the peasantry of that country could have got it out of “Les Mille et une Nuits.” There are two ways by which the story might have reached them independently of Galland’s work: the Arabs and Persians traded extensively in former times with Scandinavia, through Russia, and this as well as other Norse tales of undoubtedly Eastern extraction may have been communicated by the same channel;[417] or the Norsemen may have taken it back with them from the South of Europe. But however this may be, the Icelandic version is so quaint in its diction, has such a fresh aroma about it, and such novel particulars, that I feel justified in giving it here in full:

It is said that once, in the days of old, there was a good and wealthy king who ruled over a great and powerful realm; but neither his name nor that of his kingdom is given, nor the latter’s whereabouts in the world. He had a queen, and by her three sons, who were all fine youths and hopeful, and the king loved them well. The king had taken, too, a king’s daughter from a neighbouring kingdom, to foster her, and she was brought up with his sons. She was of the same age as they, and the most beautiful and accomplished lady that had ever been seen in those days, and the king loved her in no way less than his own sons. When the princess was of age, all the king’s sons fell in love with her, and things even went so far that they all of them engaged her at once, each in his own name. Their father, being the princess’s foster-father, had the right of bestowing her in marriage, as her own father was dead. But as he was fond of all his sons equally the answer he gave them was, that he left it to the lady’s own choice to take for a husband whichever of the brothers she loved the most. On a certain day he had the princess called up to him and declared his will to her, telling her that she might choose for a husband whichever she liked best of his sons. The princess answered, “Bound I am in duty to obey your words. But as to this choice of one of your sons to be my husband I am in the greatest perplexity; for I must confess they are all equally dear to me, and I cannot choose one before the other.” When the king heard this answer of the princess he found himself in a new embarrassment, and thought a long while what he could do that should be equally agreeable to all parties, and at last hit upon the following decision of the matter: that all his sons should after a year’s travel return each with a precious thing, and that he who had the finest thing should be the princess's husband. This decision the king's sons found to be a just one and they agreed to meet after one year at a certain castle in the country, whence they should go all together, to the town, in order to lay their gifts before the princess. And now their departure from the country was arranged as well as could be.

First the tale tells of the eldest, that he went from one land to another, and from one city to another, in search of a precious thing, but found nowhere anything that at all suited his ideas. At last the news came to his ears that there was a princess who had so fine a spy-glass that nothing so marvellous had ever been seen or heard of before. In it one could see all over the world, every place, every city, every man, and every living being that moved on the face of the earth, and what every living thing in the world was doing. Now the prince thought that surely there could be no more precious thing at all likely to turn up for him than this telescope; he therefore went to the princess, in order to buy the spy-glass if possible. But by no means could he prevail upon the king's daughter to part with her spy-glass, till he had told her his whole story and why he wanted it, and used all his powers of entreaty. As might be expected, he paid for it well. Having got it he returned home, glad at his luck, and hoping to wed the king's daughter.

The story next turns to the second son. He had to struggle with the same difficulties as his elder brother. He travelled for a long while over the wide world without finding anything at all suitable, and thus for a time he saw no chance of his wishes being fulfilled. Once he came into a very well-peopled city; and went about in search of precious things among the merchants, but neither did he find nor even see what he wanted. He heard that there lived a short way from the town a dwarf, the cleverest maker of curious and cunning things. He therefore resolved to go to the dwarf in order to try whether he could be persuaded to make him any costly thing. The dwarf said that he had ceased to make things of that sort now and he must beg to be excused from making anything of the kind for the prince. But he said that he had a piece of cloth, made in his younger days, with which however, he was very unwilling to part. The king's son asked the nature and use of the cloth The dwarf answered, "On this cloth one can go all over the world, as well through the air as on the water. Runes are on it, which must be understood by him who uses it." Now the prince saw that a more precious thing than this could scarcely be found, and therefore asked the dwarf by all means to let him have the cloth. And although the dwarf would not at first part with his cloth at all, yet at last, hearing what would happen if the king's son did not get it, he sold it to him at a mighty high price. The prince was truly glad to have got the cloth, for it was not only a cloth of great value, but also the greatest of treasures m other respects, having gold-seams and jewel-embroidery. After this he returned home, hoping to get the best of his brothers in the contest for the damsel.

The youngest prince left home last of all the three brethren.[418] First he travelled from one village to another in his own country, and went about asking for precious things of every merchant he met on his way, as also on all sides where there was the slightest hope of his getting what he wanted. But all his endeavours were in vain, and the greater part of the year was spent in fruitless search till at last he waxed sad in mind at his lot. At this time he came into a well-peopled city, whereto people were gathered from all parts of the world. He went from one merchant to another till at last he came to one who sold apples.[419] This merchant said he had an apple that was of so strange a nature that if it was put into the arm-hole of a dying man he would at once return to life. He declared that it was the property of his family and had always been used in the family as a medicine. As soon as the king's son heard this he would by all means have the apple, deeming that he would never be able to find a thing more acceptable to the king's daughter than this. He therefore asked the merchant to sell him the apple and told him all the story of his search, and that his earthly welfare was based upon his being in no way inferior to his brethren in his choice of precious things for the princess. The merchant felt pity for the prince when he had told him his story, so much so that he sold him the apple, and the prince returned home, glad and comforted at his happy luck.

Now nothing more is related of the three brothers till they met together at the place before appointed. When they were all together each related the striking points in his travelling. All being here, the eldest brother thought that he would be the first to see the princess and find out how she was and therefore he took forth his spy-glass and turned it towards the city. But what saw he? The beloved princess lying in her bed, in the very jaws of death! The king, his father, and all the highest nobles of the court were standing round the bed in the blackness of sorrow, sad in their minds, and ready to receive the last sigh of the fair princess. When the prince saw this lamentable sight he was grieved beyond measure. He told his brothers what he had seen and they were no less struck with sorrow than himself. They began bewailing loudly, saying that they would give all they had never to have undertaken this journey, for then at least they would have been able to perform the last offices for the fair princess. But in the midst of these bewailings the second brother bethought him of his cloth, and remembered that he could get to the town on it in a moment. He told this to his brothers and they were glad at such good and unexpected news. Now the cloth was unfolded and they all stepped on to it, and in one of moment it was high in the air and in the next inside the town. When they were there they made all haste to reach the room of the princess, where everybody wore an air deep sadness. They were told that the princess's every breath was her last. Then the youngest brother remembered his wonderful apple, and thought that it would never be more wanted to show its healing power than now. He therefore went straight into the bed-room of the princess and placed the apple under her right arm. And at the same moment it was as if a new breath of life flushed through the whole body of the princess; her eyes opened, and after a little while she began to speak to the folk around her. This and the return of the king's sons caused great joy at the court of the king.

Now some time went by until the princess was fully recovered. Then a large meeting was called together, at which the brothers were bidden to show their treasures. First the eldest made his appearance, and showing his spy-glass told what a wonderful thing it was, and also how it was due to this glass that the life of the fair princess had ever been saved, as he had seen through it how matters stood in the town. He therefore did not doubt for a moment that his gift was the one which would secure him the fair princess.

Next stepped forward the second brother with the cloth. Having described its powers, he said, "I am of opinion that my brother's having seen the princess first would have proved of little avail had I not had the cloth, for thereupon we came so quickly to the place to save the princess; and I must declare that to my mind, the cloth is the chief cause of the king's daughter's recovery."

Next stepped forward the youngest prince and said, as he laid the apple before the people, "Little would the glass and the cloth have availed to save the princess's live had I not had the apple. What could we brothers have profited in being only witnesses of the beloved damsel's death? What would this have done, but awaken our grief and regret? It is due alone to the apple that the princess is yet alive; wherefore I find myself the most deserving of her."

Then a long discussion arose in the meeting, and the decision at last came out, that all the three things had worked equally towards the princess's recovery, as might be seen from the fact that if one had been wanting the others would have been worthless. It was therefore declared that, as all gifts had equal claim to the prize, no one could decide to whom the princess should belong.

After this the king planned another contrivance in order to come to some end of the matter. He soon should try their skill in shooting, and he who proved to be the ablest shooter of them should have the princess. So a mark was raised and the eldest brother stepped forward with his bow and quiver. He shot, and no great distance from the mark fell his arrow. After that stepped forward the second brother, and his arrow well-nigh reached the mark. Last of all stepped forward the third and youngest brother, and his arrow seemed to go farther than the others, but in spite of continued search for many days it could not be found. The king decided in this matter that his second son should marry the princess They were married accordingly, and as the king, the father of the princess, was dead, his daughter now succeeded him, and her husband became king over his wife's inheritance. They are now out of this tale, as is also the eldest brother, who settled in life abroad.

The youngest brother stayed at home with his father, highly displeased at the decision the latter had given concerning the marriage of the princess. He was wont to wander about every day where he fancied his arrow had fallen, and at last he found it fixed in an oak in the forest, and saw that it had by far outstripped the mark.

He now called together witnesses to the place where the arrow was, with the intention of bringing about some justice in his case. But of this there was no chance, for the king said he could by no means alter his decision. At this the king's son was so grieved that he went well-nigh out of his wits. One day he busked for a journey, with the full intention of never again setting foot in his country. He took with him all he possessed of fine and precious things, nobody knowing his rede, not even his father, the king.

He went into a great forest and wandered about there many days, without knowing whither he was going, and at last, yielding to hunger and weariness, he found himself no longer equal to travelling; so he sat down under a tree, thinking that his sad and sorrowful life would here come to a close. But after he had sat thus awhile he saw ten people, all in fine attire and bright armour, come riding towards the stone. On arriving there they dismounted, and having greeted the king's son begged him to go with them, and mount the spare horse they had with them, saddled and bridled in royal fashion. He accepted this offer and mounted the horse, and after this they rode on their way till they came to a large city. The riders dismounted and led the prince into the town, which was governed by a young and beautiful maiden-queen. The riders led the king's son at once to the virgin-queen, who received him with great kindness. She told him that she had heard of all the ill-luck that had befallen him and also that he had fled from his father. "Then," quoth she, "a burning love for you was kindled in my breast and a longing to heal your wounds. You must know that it was I who sent the ten riders to find you out and bring you hither. I give you the chance of staying here; I offer you the rule of my whole kingdom, and I will try to sweeten your embittered life; — this is all that I am able to do." Although the prince was in a sad and gloomy state of mind, he saw nothing better than to accept this generous offer and agree to the marriage with the maiden-queen. A grand feast was made ready, and they were married according to the ways of that country. And the young king took at once in hand the government, which he managed with much ability.

Now the story turns homewards, to the old king. After the disappearance of his son he became sad and weary of life, being, as he was, sinking in age. His queen also had died sometime since. One day it happened that a wayfaring woman came to the palace. She had much knowledge about many things and knew how to tell tales.[420] The king was greatly delighted with her story-telling and she got soon into his favour. Thus some time passed. But in course of time the king fell deeply in love with this woman, and at last married her and made her his queen, in spite of strong dissent from the court. Shortly this new queen began meddling in the affairs of the government, and it soon turned out that she was spoiling everything by her redes, whenever she had the chance. Once it happened that the queen spoke to the king and said, "Strange indeed it seems to me that you make no inquiry about your youngest son's running away: smaller faults have been often chastised than that. You must have heard that he has become king in one of the neighbouring kingdoms, and that it is a common tale that he is going to invade your dominions with a great army whenever he gets the wished-for opportunity, in order to avenge the injustice he thinks he has suffered in that bygone bridal question. Now I want you to be the first in throwing this danger off-hand." The king showed little interest in the matter and paid to his wife's chattering but little attention. But she contrived at length so to speak to him as to make him place faith in her words, and he asked her to give him good redes, that this matter might be arranged in such a way as to be least observed by other folk. The queen said, "You must send men with gifts to him and pray him to come to you for an interview, in order to arrange certain political matters before your death, as also to strengthen your friendship with an interchange of marks of kindred. And then I will give you further advice as to what to do." The king was satisfied with this and equipped his messengers royally.

Then the messengers came before the young king, saying they were sent by his father, who wished his son to come and see him without delay. To this the young king answered well, and lost no time in bushing his men and himself. But when his queen knew this she said he would assuredly rue this journey. The king went off, however, and nothing is said of his travels till he came to the town where his father lived. His father received him rather coldly, much to the wonder and amazement of his son. And when he had been there a short while his father gave him a good chiding for having run away.

“Thereby,” said the old king, “you have shown full contempt of myself and caused me such sorrow as well-nigh brought me to the grave. Therefore, according to the law, you have deserved to die; but as you have delivered yourself up into my power and are, on the other hand, my son, I have no mind to have you killed. But I have three tasks for you which you must have performed within a year, on pain of death. The first is that you bring me a tent which will hold one hundred men but can yet be hidden in the closed hand;[421] the second, that you shall bring me water that cures all ailments;[422] and the third, that you shall bring me hither a man who has not his like in the whole world.” “Show me whither I shall go to obtain these things,” said the young king. “That you must find out for yourself,” replied the other.

Then the old king turned his back upon his son and went off. Away went also the young king, no farewells being said, and nothing is told of his travels till he came home to his realm. He was then very sad and heavy-minded, and the queen seeing this asked him earnestly what had befallen him and what caused the gloom on his mind. He declared that this did not regard her. The queen answered, “I know that tasks must have been set you which it will not prove easy to perform. But what will it avail you to sit sullen and sad on account of such things? Behave as a man, and try if these tasks may not indeed be accomplished.”

Now the king thought it best tell the queen all that had happened and how matters stood. “All this,” said the queen, “is the rede of your stepmother, and it would be well indeed if she could do you no more harm by it than she has already tried to do. She has chosen such difficulties she thought you would not easily get over, but I can do something here. The tent is in my possession, so there is that difficulty over. The water you have to get is a short way hence but very hard of approach. It is in a well and the well is in a cave hellishly dark. The well is watched by seven lions and three serpents, and from these monsters nobody has ever returned alive; and the nature of the water is that it has no healing power whatever unless it be drawn when all these monsters are awake. Now I will risk the undertaking of drawing the water.” So the queen made herself ready to go to the cave, taking with her seven oxen and three pigs. When she came before the cave she ordered the oxen to be killed and thrown before the lions and the pigs before the serpents. And while these monsters tore and devoured the carcases the queen stepped down into the well and drew as much water as she wanted. And she left the cave just in time as the beasts finished devouring their bait. After this the queen went home to the palace having thus got over the second trial.

Then she came to her husband and said, “Now two of the tasks are done, but the third and indeed the hardest, of them is left. Moreover, this is one you must perform yourself, but I can give you some hints as to whither to go for it. I have got a half brother who rules over an island not far from hence. He is three feet high, and has one eye in the middle of his forehead. He has a beard thirty ells long, stiff and hard as a hog’s bristles. He has a dog’s snout and cat’s ears, and I should scarcely fancy he has his like in the whole world. When he travels he flings himself forward on a staff of fifty ells’ length, with a pace as swift as a bird’s flight. Once when my father was out hunting he was charmed by an ogress who lived in a cave under a waterfall, and with her he begat this bugbear. The island is one-third of my father’s realm, but his son finds it too small for him. My father had a ring the greatest gem, which each of us would have, sister and brother, but I got it, wherefore he has been my enemy ever since. Now I will write him a letter and send him the ring in the hope that that will soften him and turn him in our favour. You shall make ready to go to him, with a splendid suite, and when you come to his palace-door you shall take off your crown and creep bareheaded over the floor up to his throne. Then you shall kiss his right foot and give him the letter and the ring. And if he orders you to stand up, you have succeeded in your task; if not, you have failed.”

So he did everything that he was bidden by the queen, and when he appeared before the one-eyed king he was stupefied at his tremendous ugliness and his bugbear appearance; but he plucked up courage as best he could and gave him the letter and the ring. When the king saw the letter and the ring his face brightened up, and he said, “Surely my sister finds herself in straits now, as she sends me this ring.” And when he had read the letter he bade the king, his brother-in-law, stand up, and declared that he was ready to comply with his sister's wish and to go off at once without delay. He seized his staff and started away, but stopped now and then for his brother-in-law and his suite, to whom he gave a good chiding for their slowness.[423] They continued thus their march until they came to the palace of the queen, the ugly king's sister; but when they arrived there the one-eyed king cried with a roaring voice to his sister, and asked her what she wished, as she had troubled him to come so far from home. She then told him all the matter as it really was and begged him to help her husband out of the trial put before him. He said he was ready to do so, but would brook no delay.

Now both kings went off, and nothing is told of their journey until they came to the old king. The young king announced to his father his coming and that he brought with him what he had ordered last year. He wished his father to call together a ting[424] in order that he might show openly how he had performed his tasks. This was done, and the king and the queen and other great folk were assembled. First the tent was put forward and nobody could find fault with it. Secondly the young king gave the wondrous healing water to his father. The queen was prayed to taste it and see if it was the right water, taken at the right time. She said that both things were as they should be. Then said the old king, "Now the third and heaviest of all the tasks is left: come, and have it off your hands quickly." Then the young king summoned the king with one eye, and as he appeared on the ting he waxed so hideous that all the people were struck with fright and horror, and most of all the king. When this ugly monarch had shown himself for a while there he thrust his staff against the breast of the queen and tilted her up into the air on the top of it, and then thrust her against the ground with such force that every bone in her body was broken. She turned at once into the most monstrous troll ever beheld. After this the one eyed king rushed away from the ting and the people thronged round the old king in order to help him, for he was in the very jaws of death from fright. The healing water was sprinkled on him and refreshed him.

After the death of the queen, who was killed of course when she turned into a troll, the king confessed that all the tasks which he had given his son to perform were undeserved and that he had acted thus, egged on by the queen. He called his son to him and humbly begged his forgiveness for what he had done against him. He declared he would atone for it by giving into his hand all that kingdom, while he himself only wished to live in peace and quiet for the rest of his days. So the young king sent for his queen and for the courtiers whom he loved most. And, to make a long story short, they gave up their former kingdom to the king with one eye, as a reward, for his lifetime, but governed the realm of the old king to a high age, in great glee and happiness,

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The Two Sisters Who Envied Their Cadette — .

Legends of castaway infants are common to the folk-lore of almost all countries and date far back into antiquity. The most usual mode of exposing them — to perish or be rescued, as chance might direct — is placing them in a box and launching them into a river. The story of Moses in the bulrushes, which must of course be familiar to everybody, is not only paralleled in ancient Greek and Roman legends (e.g. Perseus, Cyrus, Romulus), but finds its analogue in Babylonian folk-lore.[425] The leading idea of the tale of the Envious Sisters, who substituted a puppy, a kitten, and a rat for the three babes their young sister the queen had borne and sent the little innocents away to be destroyed, appealing, as it does to the strongest of human instincts, is the theme of many popular fictions from India to Iceland. With a malignant mother-in-law in place of the two sisters, it is the basis of a medi val European romance entitled “The Knight of the Swan,” and of a similar tale which occurs in “Dolopathus,” the oldest version of the “Seven Wise Masters,” written in Latin prose about the year 1180: A king while hunting loses his way in a forest and coming to a fountain perceives a beautiful lady, whom he carries home and duly espouses much against the will of his mother, Matabrun. Some time after, having to lead his knights and men-at-arms against an enemy, he commits the queen, now far advanced in pregnancy to the care of his mother, who undertakes that no harm shall befall her during his absence. The queen is delivered at one birth of seven lovely children, six boys and one girl, each of whom has a silver chain around its neck.[426] The king’s mother plots with the midwife to do away with the babes and place seven little dogs in bed beside the poor queen. She gives the children to one of her squires, charging him either to slay them or cast them into the river. But when the squire enters the forest his heart relents and laying the infants wrapped in his mantle, on the ground, he returns and tells his mistress that he has done her behest. When the king returns, the wicked Matabrun accuses his wife to him of having had unnatural commerce with a dog, and shows him the seven puppies. The scene which follows presents a striking likeness to that in the Arabian story after the birth of the third child. King Oriant is full of wrath, and at once assembles his counsellors, “dukes, earls knights and other lords of the realm, with the bishop and prelate of the church,” and having stated the case, the bishop pleads in favour of the queen, and finally induces him not to put her to death, but confine her in prison for the rest of her life. Meanwhile the children are discovered by an aged hermit, who takes them to his dwelling, baptises them and brings them up. After some years it happens that a yeoman in the service of the king’s mother, while hunting in the forest, perceives the seven children with silver chains round their necks seated under a tree. He reports this to Matabrun, who forthwith sends him back to kill the children and bring her their silver chains. He finds but six of them one being absent with the hermit, who was gone alms seeking; and, touched by their innocent looks, he merely takes off the silver chains, whereupon they become transformed into pretty white swans and fly away. How the innocence of the queen is afterwards vindicated by her son Helyas — he who escaped being changed into a swan — and how his brethren and sister are restored to their proper forms would take too long to tell, and indeed the rest of the romance has no bearing on the Arabian tale.[427]

In another mediaeval work, from which Chaucer derived his Man of Law’s Tale, the Life of Constance, by Nicholas Trivet, an English Dominican monk, the saintly heroine is married to a king, in whose absence at the wars his mother plots against her daughter-in- law. When Constance gives birth to a son, the old queen causes letters to be written to the king, in which his wife is declared to be an evil spirit in the form of a woman and that she had borne, not a human child, but a hideous monster. The king, in reply, commands Constance to be tended carefully until his return. But the traitress contrives by means of letters forged in the king’s name to have Constance and her son sent to sea in a ship, where she meets with strange adventures. Needless to say, the old queen’s wicked devices come to naught.

The story of the Envious Sisters as told by Galland was known in Italy (as Dr. W. Grimm points out in the valuable notes to his K. u. H.M.) many generations before the learned Frenchman was born, through the “Pleasant Nights” of Straparola. That Galland took his story from the Italian novelist it is impossible to believe, since, as Mr. Coote has observed, Straparola’s work “was already known in France for a couple of centuries through a popular French translation,” and Galland would at once have been an easily convicted copyist. Moreover the story, imitated from Straparola, by Madame d’Aulnois, under the title of “La Belie Etoile et Le Prince Cheri,” had been published before Galland’s last two volumes appeared, and both those writers had the same publisher. It is clear, therefore, that Galland neither invented the story nor borrowed it from Straparola or Madame d’Aulnois. Whence, then, did he obtain it? — that is the question. His Arabic source has not yet been discovered, but a variant of the world-wide story is at the present day orally current in Egypt and forms No. xi. of “Comes Arabes Modernes. Recueillis et Traduits par Guillaume Spitta Bey” (Paris, 1883), of which the following is a translation:

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MODERN ARABIC VERSION.

There was once a King who said to his vazÝr, “Let us take a walk through the town during the night.” In walking about they came to a house where they heard people talking, and stopping before it they heard a girl say, “If the King would marry me, I would make him a tart (or pie) so large that it would serve for him and his army.” And another said, “If the King would marry me, I would make him a tent that would shelter him and his whole army.” Then a third said, “If the King would marry me, I would present him with a daughter and a son, with golden hair, and hair of hyacinth colour alternately; if they should weep, it would thunder, and if they should laugh, the sun and moon would appear.” The King on hearing these words went away, and on the following day he sent for the three girls and made the contract of marriage with them. He passed the first night with the one who had spoken first, and said to her, “Where is the tart that would be sufficient for me and my army?” She answered him, “The words of the night are greased with butter: when day appears they melt away.” The next night he slept with the second, saying to her, “Where is the tent which would be large enough for me and my army?” She answered him, “It was an idea that came into my mind.” So the King ordered them to go down into the kitchen among the slaves. He passed the third night with the tattle one, saying, “Where are the boy and girl whose hair is to be like gold and hyacinth?” She replied, “Tarry with me nine months and nine minutes.” In due time she became pregnant, and on the night of her confinement the midwife was sent for. Then the other wife of the King went and met her in the street and said to her, “When she has been delivered, how much will the King give you ?” She answered, “He will issue orders to give me fifteen mahb·bs.[428] The other said, “Behold, here are forty mahh·bs from me. Take these two little blind puppies, and when she has given birth to a son and a daughter, take them and place them in a box and put these two puppies in their stead, and remove the children.” The midwife took the money and the little dogs and went away. When the King’s new wife was safely delivered, the midwife did according to her agreement with the other wife of the King, and then went before him and said, “I fear to speak.” He answered, “Speak; I grant you pardon.” Then said she, “Your wife has been delivered of two dogs.” Then the King gave orders, saying, “Take and cover her with tar, and bind her to the staircase, and let any who may go up or down spit upon her,” which was done accordingly. And the midwife carried away the children and threw them into the river.

Now there was a fisherman who lived on an island with his wife, and they had no children. On the morrow he went to the water-side to fish and found a box driven on to the shore He carried it home to his wife, and placing it between them, he said, “Listen, my dear, I am going to make a bargain with you: if this contains money, it will be for me, if it contains children, they will be for you.” She replied, “Very well, I am quite content.” They then opened the box and found in it a baby boy and girl. The baby boy had his finger in the baby girl’s mouth and the latter had her finger in his mouth, and they were sucking one another’s fingers. The woman took them out of the box and prayed to Heaven, “Make milk come into my breasts, for the sake of these little ones.” And by the Almighty power the milk came into her breasts, and she continued to bring them up until they had reached the age of twelve years.

One day the fisherman caught two large white fish, and the youth said to him, “These two white fish are pretty, my father; I will take and sell them, or carry them as a present to the King.” So the boy took them and went away. He sat down with them in the Fish Market: people gathered about him, and those who did not look at the fish looked at the boy. The King also came past, and seeing the two white fish and the boy he called to him saying, “What is the price, my lad?” The boy answered, “They are a present for you, my prince.” Thereupon the King took him to the palace and said to him, “What is your name?” and he replied, “My name is Muhammed, and my father is the fisherman who lives on the island.” Then the King gave him thirty mahb·bs, saying, “Go away, discreet one, and every day return here to my house.” So the lad returned home and gave the money to his father. The next morning two more white fish were caught and Muhammed carried them to the King, who took him into his garden and made him sit down opposite him. The King remained there drinking his wine and looking on the beauty of the youth: love for the lad entered his heart and he remained with him two hours.[429] Then he gave orders to provide the youth with a horse for his use in coming to and returning from his house, and Muhammed mounted the horse and rode home.

When he visited the King the following day he was again led into the garden, and the other wife of the King, looking from her window saw the lad and recognised him. She at once sent for the old midwife, and said to her, "I bade you kill the children, yet they are still living upon the earth." Replied the old woman, "Have patience with me, O Queen for three days, and I will kill him." Then she went away, and having procured a pitcher tied it to her girdle, bewitched it, mounted on it, and struck it with a whip, and forthwith the pitcher flew away with her and descended upon the island near the fisherman's cottage.[430] She found the young girl, Muhammed's sister, sitting alone, and thus addressed her: "My dear, why are you thus alone and sad? Tell your brother to fetch you the rose of Arab Zandyk, that it may sing to you and amuse you, instead of your being thus lonely and low-spirited." When her brother came home, he found her displeased and asked her, "Why are you vexed, my sister?" She replied, "I should like the rose of Arab Zandyk, that it may sing to me and amuse me." "At your command," said he; "I am going to bring it to you."

He mounted his horse and travelled into the midst of the desert, where he perceived an ogress seated and pounding wheat with a millstone on her arm. Alighting, he came up to her and saluted her saying, "Peace be with you, mother ogress." She replied, "If your safety did not prevail over your words, I would eat the flesh from off your bones." Then she asked, "Where are you going, Muhammed the Discreet?" He answered, "I am in quest of the singing rose of Arab Zandyk." She showed him the way, saying, "You will find before the palace a kid and a dog fastened, and before the kid a piece of meat and before the dog a bunch of clover: lift the meat and throw it to the dog, and give the clover to the kid.[431] Then the door will open for you: enter and pluck the rose; return immediately without looking behind you, because, if you do so, you will be bewitched and changed into stone, like the enchanted ones who are there." Muhammed the Discreet carefully followed the instructions of the ogress: plucked the rose, went out by the door, put back the meat before the kid and the clover before the dog, and carried the rose home to his sister.

Then he again went to the house of the King, who saluted him and said, “Where hast thou been, discreet one? Why hast thou absented thyself so long from my house?” And he answered, “I was sick, O King.” Then the King took him by the hand and entered the garden, and both sat down. The wife of the King saw them seated together, and sending for the midwife she angrily asked, “Why do you befool me, old woman?” She replied “Have patience with me for three days more, O Queen.” Then she mounted her pitcher and arriving at the house of the young girl, she said, “Has thy brother fetched thee the rose?” “Yes,” answered the girl, “but it does not sing.” Quoth the old woman, “It only sings with its looking-glass,” and then went away. When the youth returned he found his sister vexed, and he asked, “Why are you so sad, my sister?” She replied, “I should like the looking-glass of the rose, by means of which it sings.” Quoth he, “I obey your orders, and will bring it to you.”

Muhammed the Discreet rode on till he came to the ogress, who asked him what he wanted. “I wish,” said he, “the looking-glass of the rose.” “Well, go and do with the dog and kid as you did before. When you have entered the garden you will find some stairs go up them, and in the first room you come to you will find the mirror suspended. Take it, and set out directly, without looking behind you. If the earth shake with you, keep a brave heart, otherwise you will have gone on a fruitless errand.” He went and did according to the instructions of the ogress. In taking away the mirror the earth shook under him, but he made his heart as hard as an anvil and cared nothing for the shaking. But when he brought the mirror to his sister and she had placed it before the rose of Arab Zandyk, still the rose sang not.

When he visited the King, he excused his absence, saying, “I was led on a journey with my father, but here am I, returned once more.” The King led him by the hand into the garden, and the wife of the King again perceiving him she sent for the midwife and demanded of her, “Why do you mock me again, old woman?” Quoth she, “Have patience with me for three days, O Queen; this time will be the beginning and the end.” Then she rode on her pitcher to the island, and asked the young girl, “Has thy brother brought thee the mirror?” “Yes, but still the rose sings not.” “Ah, it only sings with its mistress, who is called Arab Zandyk,” and so saying she departed. Muhammed the Discreet on his return home again found his sister disconsolate, and in answer to his inquiries, she said, “I desire Arab Zandyk, mistress of the rose and of the mirror, that I may amuse myself with her when you are absent.”

He at once mounted his horse and rode on till he came to the house of the ogress. “How fares it with you, mother ogress?” “What do you want now, Muhammed the Discreet?” “I wish Arab Zandyk, mistress of the rose and of the mirror.” Quoth the ogress, “Many kings and pashas have not been able to bring her: she hath changed them all into stone; and thou art small and poor — what will become of thee?” “Only, my dear mother ogress show me the way, and I shall bring her, with the permission of God.” Said the ogress, “Go to the west side of the palace; there you will find an open window. Bring your horse under the window and then cry in a loud voice, ‘Descend, Arab Zandyk!’” Muhammed the Wary went accordingly, halted beneath the window, and cried out, “Descend, Arab Zandyk!” She looked from her window scornfully and said,” Go away, young man.” Muhammed the Discreet raised his eyes and found that half of his horse was changed into stone. A second time cried he in a loud voice, “Descend, Arab Zandyk!” She insulted him and said, “I tell you, go away, young man.’ He looked again and found his horse entirely enchanted and half of himself as well. A third time he cried in a loud voice, “I tell you, descend, Arab Zandyk!” She inclined herself half out of the window, and her hair fell down to the ground. Muhammed the Discreet seized it, twined it round his hand pulled her out, and threw her on the earth. Then said she, “Thou art my fate, Muhammed the Wary; relinquish thy hold of my hair, by the life of thy father the King.” Quoth he “My father is a fisherman.” “Nay,” she replied, “thy father is the King, by-and-by I will tell thee his history.” Quoth he, “I will leave hold of your hair when you have set at liberty the enchanted men.” She made a sign with her right arm and they were at once set free. They rushed headlong towards Muhammed the Prudent to take her from him but some of them said

“Thanks to him who hath delivered us: do you still wish to take her from him?” So they left him and went their several ways.

Arab Zandyk then took him by the hand and led him into her castle. She gave her servants orders to build a palace in the midst of the isle of the fisherman, which being accomplished, she took Muhammed the Discreet and her soldiers and proceeded thither and then she said to him, “Go to the King, and when he asks you where you have been reply, ‘I have been preparing my nuptials and invite you, with your army.’” He went to the King and spoke as Arab Zandyk had instructed him, upon which the King laughed and said to his vazÝr, “This young man is the son of a fisherman and comes to invite me with my army!” Quoth the vazÝr, “On account of your love for him, command that the soldiers take with them food for eight days, and we also will take our provender for eight days.” The King having issued orders to that effect, and all being ready, they all set out and arriving at the house of the fisherman’s son, they found a large number of beautiful tents erected for the soldiers’ accommodation and the King was astonished. Then came the feasting — one dainty dish being quickly followed by another still more delicious and the soldiers said among themselves, “We should like to remain here for two years to eat meat and not be obliged to eat only beans and lentils.” They continued there forty days until the nuptials were completed, well content with their fare. Then the King departed with his army. The King sent a return invitation, and Arab Zandyk commanded her soldiers to set out in order to precede her to the capital. When the soldiers arrived they filled the town so that there was scarcely sufficient house-room for them. Then Arab Zandyk set out accompanied by Muhammed and his sister. They entered the royal palace, and as they ascended the staircase, Arab Zandyk perceived the mother of Muhammed covered with tar and in chains, so she threw over her a cashmere shawl and covered her. The servants who were standing about said to Arab Zandyk, “Why do you cover her with a shawl? Spit upon her when you go up and also when you come down.” She asked, “Why so?” Said they, “Because she gave birth to two dogs.” Then they went to the King and said, “A lady amongst the strangers has thrown a cashmere shawl over her who is fastened to the staircase, and has covered her without spitting upon her." The King went and met Arab Zandyk and asked, "Why have you covered her?" Said she, "Give orders that she be conducted to the bath, cleansed, and dressed in a royal robe, after which I will relate her history." The King gave the required orders, and when she was decked in a royal robe they conducted her into the divan. Then said the King to Arab Zandyk, "Tell me now the history." Said she, "Listen, O King, the fisherman will speak," and then Arab Zandyk said to the fisherman, "Is it true that your wife gave birth to Muhammed and his sister at one time or at separate times?" He replied, "My wife has no children." "Where, then did you get them?" Quoth he, "I went one morning to fish, and found them in a box on the bank of the river. I took them home, and my wife brought them up." Arab Zandyk then said, "Hast thou heard, O King?" and turning to his wife, "Are these thy children, O woman?" Said she, "Tell them to uncover their heads that I may see them." When they uncovered their heads, they were seen to have alternately hair of gold and hair of hyacinth. The King then asked her, "Are these thy children?" "Tell them to weep: if it thunders and rains, they are my children, and if it does not thunder or rain, they are not mine." The children wept, and it thundered and rained. Then he asked her again, "Are these thy children?" And she said, "Tell them to laugh: if the sun and moon appear, they are my children." They told them to laugh, and the sun and moon appeared. Then he asked her once more, "Are these thy children?" and she said, "They are my children!" Then the King appointed the fisherman vazÝr of his right hand, and commanded that the city be illuminated for forty whole days; on the last day he caused his other wife and the old witch (the midwife) to be led out and burnt, and their ashes to be dispersed to the winds.

The variations between this and Galland's story are very considerable, it must be allowed, and though the fundamental outline is the same in both, they should be regarded as distinct versions of the same tale, and both are represented by Asiatic and European stories. Here the fairy Arab Zandyk plays the part of the Speaking-Bird, which, however, has its equivalent in the preceding tale (No. x.) of Spitta Bey's collection:

A man dies, leaving three sons and one daughter. The sons build a palace for their sister and mother. The girl falls in love with some one who is not considered as an eligible parti by the brothers. By the advice of an old woman, the girl asks her brothers to get her the singing nightingale, in hope that the bird would throw sand on them and thus send them down to the seventh earth. The eldest before setting out on this quest leaves his chaplet with his younger brother, saying that if it shrank it would be a token that he was dead. Journeying through the desert some one tells him that many persons have been lost in their quest of the singing nightingale: he must hide himself till he sees the bird go into its cage and fall asleep, then shut the cage and carry it off. But he does not wait long enough, and tries to shut the cage while the bird's feet are still outside, so the bird takes up sand with its feet and throws it on him, and he descends to the seventh earth. The second brother, finding the chaplet shrunk, goes off in his turn, leaving his ring with the youngest brother — if it contract on the finger it will betoken his death. He meets with the same fate as his elder brother, and now the youngest, finding the ring contract, sets out, leaving with his mother a rose, which will fade if he dies. He waits till the singing nightingale is asleep, and then shuts him in the cage. The bird in alarm implores to be set at liberty, but the youth demands first the restoration of his brothers, and the bird tells him to scatter on the ground some sand from beneath the cage, which he does, when only a crowd of negroes and Turks (? Tßtßrs) appear, and confess their failure to capture the singing nightingale. Then the bird bids him scatter white sand, which being done, 500 whites and the two lost brothers appear and the three return home with the bird, which sings so charmingly in the palace that all the people come to listen to it outside. — The rest of this story tells of the amours of the girl and a black, who, at her instigation, kills her eldest brother, but he is resuscitated by the Water of Life.

Through the Moors, perhaps, the story found its way among the wandering tribes (the Kabail) of Northern Africa, who have curiously distorted its chief features, though not beyond recognition, as will be seen from the following abstract of their version, from M. Riviere's collection of "Comes Populaires de la Kabylie du Djurdjura" (Paris, 1882):

KABA’IL VERSION.

A man has two wives, one of whom is childless, the other bears in succession seven sons and a daughter. The childless wife cuts off the little finger of each and takes them one by one into the forest, where they are brought up. An old woman comes one day and tells the daughter that if her brothers love her they will give her a bat. The girl cries to her brothers for a bat, and one of them consults an aged man, who sends him to the sea shore. He puts down his gun under a tree, and a bat from above cries out, “What wild beast is this ?” The youth replies, “You just go to sleep, old fellow.” The bat comes down, touches the gun and it becomes a piece of wood; touches the youth and he becomes microscopic. This in turn happens to all the brothers, after which the girl goes to the sea-shore, and when she is under the tree the bat calls out, “What wild beast is this?” But she does not answer she waits till the bat is asleep, then climbs the tree, and catching the “bird” (sic), asks it where her brothers are, and on her promising to clothe the bat in silver and gold, the creature touches the guns and the brothers, and they are restored to their proper forms. The bat then conducts them to their father’s house, where he asks lodgings and is refused by the childless wife. The husband takes them in however and kills a sheep for their entertainment. The childless wife poisons the meat, and the bat warns the children, bidding them try a cock, a dog, and a cat with it, which is done, and the animals die. The brothers now decline the food and ask that their sister be allowed to prepare somewhat for them to eat. Then the bat touches the eyes of the children, who immediately recognise their parents, and great is the rejoicing. The childless wife is torn in pieces by being dragged at the tail of a wild horse, and the bat, having been dressed in silver and gold, is sent back to his tree.

Sir Richard has given (, note) some particulars of the version in Hahn’s collection of modern Greek tales, which generally corresponds with Galland’s story. There is a different version in M. Legrand’s “Recueil de Contes Populaires Grecs” (Paris, 1881), which combines incidents in the modern Arabic story of Arab Zandyk with some of those in Galland and some which it has exclusively:

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MODERN GREEK VERSION.

Three daughters of an old woman disobey the order of the King, not to use a light at night because of the scarcity of oil, and work on as usual. The King in going round the town to see if his order is obeyed comes to their house, and overhears the eldest girl express a wish that she were married to the royal baker, so that she should have plenty of bread. The second wishes the King's cook for her husband, to have royal meals galore. The youngest wishes to have the King himself, saying she would bear him as children, "Sun," "Moon," and "Star." Next day the King sends for them and marries each as she had wished. When the youngest brings forth the three children, in successive years, her mother-in-law, on the advice of a "wise woman," (? the midwife) substitutes a dog, a cat and a serpent, and causes the infants to be put in a box and sent down the river, and the queen is disgraced.

An old monk, in the habit of going down to the river and taking one fish daily, one day gets two fishes, and asks God the reason. In reply he is told that he will henceforth have two mouths to feed. Presently, he finds the box with the infant "Sun" in it and takes him home. Next year he gets one day three fishes, and finds the infant "Moon", and the third year he has four fishes one day and finds the baby-girl, "Star." When the children have grown up the monk sends them to town in order that they should learn the ways of the world. The eldest hearing a Jew offering a box for sale, saying, "Whoever buys this box will be sorry for it, and he who does not buy it will be equally sorry," purchases it and on taking it home finds his sister weeping for the golden apple which the "wise woman" (who had found them out) told her she must get. He opens the Jew's box and finds a green and winged horse in it. The horse tells him how to get the golden apple from the forty guardian dragons. They go and get it. After this the old woman comes again and tells the sister that she must get the golden bough, on which all the birds in the world sing, and this also is procured by the help of the green and winged horse. A third time the old trot comes and says to the girl, "You must get Tzitzin na to explain the language of birds." The eldest brother starts off on the horse, and arriving at the dwelling of Tzitzinæna he calls her name, whereupon he, with the horse, is turned to stone up to the knees; and calling again on her they become marble to the waist. Then the youth burns a hair he had got from the monk, who instantly appears, calls out “Tzitzinaena,” and she comes forth, and with the water of immortality the youth and horse are disenchanted. After the youth has returned home with Tzitzinæna, the King sees the three children and thinks them like those his wife had promised to bear him. He invites them to dinner, at which Tzitzinæna warns them of poisoned meats, some of which they give to a dog they had brought with them, and the animal dies on the spot. They ask the King to dine at their house and he goes. Tzitzinæna by clapping her hands thrice procures a royal feast for him; then, having induced the King to send for his wife, she tells the whole story of the mother-in-law’s evil doings, and shows the King that “Sun,” “Moon” and “Star” are his own children. The King’s mother and the old woman are torn to pieces.

In Albania, as might be expected, our story is orally current in a form which resembles both the Greek version, as above, and the tale of Arab Zandyk, more especially the latter; and it may have been derived from the Turks, though I am not aware that the story has been found in Turkish. This is an abstract of the second of M. Dozon’s “Comes Albanais” (Paris, 1881), a most entertaining collection:

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ALBANIAN VERSION.

There was a King who had three daughters. When he died, his successor proclaimed by the crier an order prohibiting the use of lights during the night of his accession. Having made this announcement, the King disguised himself and went forth alone. After walking about from place to place he came to the abode of the daughters of the late King, and going up close to it he overheard their conversation. This is what the eldest was saying, “If the King took me for his wife, I would make him a carpet upon which the whole of his army could be seated and there would still be room to spare.” Then said the second, “If the King would take me for his wife, I would make him a tent under which the whole army could be sheltered, and room would still remain.” Lastly, the youngest said, “If the King should espouse me, I would bring him a son and a daughter with a star on their foreheads and a moon on their shoulders.”

The King, who had not lost a word of this conversation, sent for the sisters on the morrow and married all three.[432] The eldest, as she had declared, made a carpet on which the whole army was seated, and yet there was room to spare. The second, in her turn, made a tent under which all the army found shelter. As to the youngest, after a time, she grew great, and her confinement approached. The day she was delivered the King was absent, and on his return he inquired what she had given birth to. The two elder sisters replied, “A little cat and a little mouse.” On hearing this the King ordered the mother to be placed upon the staircase, and commanded every one who entered to spit upon her.

Now she had given birth to a boy and a girl, but her two sisters, after having shut them up in a box, sent them away by a servant to be exposed on the bank of the river, and a violent wind afterwards arising, the box was drifted to the other side. There was a mill on that side, where dwelt an old man and his wife. The old man having found the box brought it home. They opened it, and discovered the boy and girl, with a star on their foreheads and a moon on their shoulders. Astonished thereat, they took them out and brought the children up as well as they could.

Time passed away; the old woman died, and soon after came the turn of the old man. Before dying he called the youth to him and said, “Know, my son, that in such a place is a cave where there is a bridle which belongs to me. That bridle is thine, but avoid opening the cave before forty days have elapsed, if you wish the bridle to do whatever you command.” The forty days having expired, the young man went to the cave, and on opening it found the bridle. He took it in his hand and said to it, “I want two horses,” and in a moment two horses appeared. The brother and sister mounted them, and in the twinkling of an eye they arrived in their father’s country. There the young man opened a cafÚ, and his sister remained secluded at home.

As the cafÚ was the best in the country, the King came to hear of it, and when he entered it he saw the youth, who had a star on his forehead. He thought him so beautiful [and lingered so long] that he returned late to the palace, when he was asked why he had tarried so late. He replied, that a young lad had opened a cafÚ, and was so beautiful that he had never seen his equal; and, what was most extraordinary, there was a star on his brow. The sisters no sooner heard these words of the King than they understood that he referred to their younger sister’s son. Full of rage and spite, they quickly devised a plan of causing his death. What did they do? They sent to his sister an old woman, who said to her, “Thy brother, O my daughter, can hardly love thee, for he is all day at the cafÚ and has a good time of it, while he leaves thee here alone. If he truly loves thee, tell him to bring thee a flower from the Belle of the Earth, so that thou too mayest have something to divert thyself with.” On returning home that evening the young man found his sister quite afflicted, and asked the cause of her grief. “Why should I not grieve?” said she “You leave me alone, secluded here, while you go about as your fancy directs. If you love me, go to the Belle of the Earth and bring a flower, so that I too may be amused.” “Console yourself,” replied he, and at once gave orders to the bridle. An enormous horse appeared, which he mounted and set off.

As he journeyed, a lamia presented herself before him, and said, “I have a great desire to eat thee, but thou also excitest pity, and so I leave thee thy life.” The young man then inquired of her how he could find the Belle of the Earth. “I know nothing about it, my son,” replied the lamia; “but go ask my second sister.” So he rode off and came to her, and she drew near, intending to devour him, but seeing him so beautiful, she asked where he was going. He told his story and said, “Do you know the way to the Belle of the Earth’” But she in her turn sent him to her elder sister, who on seeing him rushed out to eat him, but like the others, was touched by his comeliness and spared him; and when he inquired after the Belle of the Earth, “Take this handkerchief,” said she, “and when thou arrivest at her abode, use it to open the door. Inside thou wilt see a lion and a lamb; throw brains to the lion and grass to the lamb.” So he went forward and did all the lamia advised. He tried the door and it opened; threw brains to the lion and grass to the lamb, and they allowed him to pass. He went in and pulled a flower, and he had no sooner done so than he found himself at his own door.

Great was his sister’s joy as she began playing with the flower. But on the morrow the two sisters sent the old woman to her again. “Has he brought thee the flower?” she asked. “Yes, he has.” Thou art content,” said the old hag; “but if thou hadst the handkerchief of the Belle of the Earth, it would be quite another thing.” When her brother came home he found her in tears, and in reply to his inquiries, “What pleasure,” said she— “what pleasure can this flower give me? So long as I have not the handkerchief of the Belle of the Earth I shall not be happy.” Then he, desirous that his sister should have no cause for grief, mounted his horse, and in the same manner as he had obtained the flower, possessed himself of the handkerchief and brought it home to his sister.

On the morrow, when the young man had gone to his cafÚ, the old witch again visited his sister, who informed her that her brother had brought her the handkerchief. “How happy,” said the sorceress— “how happy thou art in having a brother who brings thee whatever thou desirest! But if thou cost wish to spend thy life like a pasha’s wife, thou must also obtain the owner of that handkerchief.”

To please his sister, the young man once more sets out, and coming to the eldest of the lamiae and telling her his errand, “O my son,” said she, “thou canst go there, but as to carrying away the mistress of the handkerchief, that is not so easy. However, try in some way to obtain possession of her ring, for therein lies all her power.” So he continues his journey, and after passing the lion and the lamb he comes to the chamber of the Belle of the Earth. He finds her asleep, and approaching her noiselessly draws the ring from her finger, upon which she awakes and discovering that she had not her ring, there was no alternative but to submit to his will. They set out together and in the twinkling of an eye arrived at the young man’s house. On perceiving them the sister was overcome with joy.

It happened next day that the King again went to the cafÚ, and on his return home ordered supper to be prepared, saying that he had invited the young man and all his friends. The sisters instructed the cooks to put poison in the food, which they did accordingly. At nightfall the young man arrived, accompanied by the Belle of the Earth, whom he had married, and his sister. But none of them, notwithstanding the entreaties of the King, would touch any food, for the Belle of the Earth had revealed to them that the meats were poisoned: they merely ate a few mouthfuls out of the King’s mess.

Supper over, the King invited each one to tell a story, and when it came to the young man’s turn, he recounted the whole story of his adventures. Then the King recognised in him the son of his fairest wife, whom, deceived by the lies of her sisters, he had exposed on the staircase. So he instantly ordered the two sisters to be seized and cut to pieces, and he took back his wife. As for the young man, he became his heir. He grew old and prospered.

The points of difference between, and the relative merits of, Galland’s story and Straparola’s

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ITALIAN VERSION,

and whence both were probably obtained, will be considered later on, as several other versions or variants remain to be noticed or cited, before attempting a comparative analysis, not the least interesting of which is a

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BRETON VERSION.

In “Melusine,” for 1878, colt 206 ff., M. Luzel gives a Breton version, under the title of “Les Trois Filles du Boulanger; ou, L’Eau qui dense, la Pomme qui chante, et l’Oiseau de VÚritÚ,” which does not appear to have been derived from Galland’s story, although it corresponds with it closely in the first part. A prince overhears the conversation of three daughters of an old baker, who is a widower. The eldest says that she loves the king’s gardener, the second, that she loves the king’s valet, and the youngest says the prince is her love, to whom she would bear two boys, each with a star of gold on his brow, and a girl, with a star of silver. The father chides them for talking nonsense and sends them to bed. The following day the prince sends for the girls to come to the palace one after the other, and having questioned them, tells the youngest that he desires to see her father. When she delivers the royal message the old baker begins to shake in his shoes, and exclaims, “I told you that your frivolous remarks would come to the ears of the prince, and now he sends for me to have me punished, without a doubt.” “No, no, dear father; go to the palace and fear nothing.” He goes, and, to be brief, the three marriages duly take place. The sisters married to the royal gardener and valet soon become jealous of the young queen, and when they find she is about to become a mother they consult a fairy, who advises them to gain over the midwife and get her to substitute a little dog and throw the child into the river, which is done accordingly, when the first son with the gold star is born. For the second son, a dog is also substituted, and the king, as on the former occasion, says, “God’s will be done: take care of the poor creature.” But when the little girl with the silver star is smuggled away and the king is shown a third puppy as the queen’s offspring, he is enraged. “They’ll call me the father of dogs!” he exclaims, “and not without cause.” He orders the queen to be shut up in a tower and fed on bread and water. The children are picked up by a gardener, who has a garden close to the river, and brought up by his wife as their own. In course of time the worthy couple die, and the king causes the children to be brought to the palace (how he came to know of them the story-teller does not inform us), and as they were very pretty and had been well brought up, he was greatly pleased with them. Every Sunday they went to grand mass in the church, each having a ribbon on the brow to conceal the stars. All the folk were astonished at their beauty.

One day, when the king was out hunting, an old woman came into the kitchen of the palace, where the sister happened to be, and exclaimed, "O how cold I am," and she trembled and her teeth chattered. "Come near the fire, my good mother," said the little girl. "Blessings on you, my child! How beautiful you are! If you had but the Water that dances, the Apple that sings, and the Bird of Truth, you'd not have your equal on the earth." "Yes, but how to obtain these wonders?" "You have two brothers who can procure them for you," and so saying, the old woman went away. When she told her brothers what the old woman had said, the eldest before setting out in quest of the three treasures leaves a poignard which as long as it can be drawn out of its sheath would betoken his welfare. One day it can't be drawn out, so the second brother goes off, leaving with his sister a rosary, as in Galland. When she finds the beads won't run on the string, she goes herself, on horseback, as a cavalier. She comes to a large plain, and in a hollow tree sees a little old man with a beard of great length, which she trims for him. The old man tells her that 60 leagues distant is an inn by the roadside; she may enter it, and having refreshed herself with food and drink leave her horse there, and promise to pay on her return After quitting the inn she will see a very high mountain, to climb which will require hands and feet, and she'll have to encounter a furious storm of hail and snow, it will be bitterly cold: take care and not lose courage, but mount on. She'll see on either side a number of stone pillars — persons like herself who have been thus transformed because they lost heart. On the summit is a plain, bordered with flowers, blooming as in May. She will see a gold seat under an apple-tree and should sit down and make it appear as if asleep; presently the bird will descend from branch to branch and enter the cage; quickly close it on the bird, for it is the Bird of Truth. Cut a branch of the tree, with an apple on it, for it is the Apple that sings. Lastly, there is also the fountain of water which dances: fill a flask from the fountain and in descending the hill sprinkle a few drops of the water on the stone pillars and the enchanted young princes and knights will come to life again. Such were the instructions of the little old man, for which the princess thanked him and went on her way. Arriving at the summit of the mountain, she discovered the cage and sitting down under the tree feigned to be asleep, when presently the merle entered and she at once rose up and closed it. The merle, seeing that he was a prisoner, said, "You have captured me, daughter of the King of France. Many others have tried to seize me, but none has been able till now, and you must have been counselled by some one." The princess then cut a branch of the tree with an apple on it, filled her flask with water from the fountain that danced, and as she went down the hill sprinkled a few drops on the stone pillars, which were instantly turned into princes, dukes, barons, and knights, and last of all her two brothers came to life, but they did not know her. All pressed about the princess, some saying, "Give me the Water which dances," others, "Give me the Apple which sings," and others, "Give me the Bird of Truth." But she departed quickly, carrying with her the three treasures, and passing the inn where she had left her horse she paid her bill and returned home, where she arrived long before her brothers. When at length they came home she embraced them, saying, "Ah, my poor brothers! How much anxiety you have caused me! How long your journey has lasted! But God be praised that you are back here again." "Alas, my poor sister, we have indeed remained a long time away, and after all have not succeeded in our quest. But we may consider ourselves fortunate in having been able to return." "How!" said the princess, "do you not bring me the Water which dances, the Apple which sings, and the Bird of Truth?" "Alas! my poor sister, a young knight who was a stranger to us carried them all away — curse the rascal." The old king who had no children (or rather, who believed he had none) loved the two brothers and the sister very much and was highly delighted to see them back again. He caused a grand feast to be prepared, to which he invited princes, dukes, marquises, barons, and generals. Towards the end of the banquet the young girl placed on the table the Water, the Apple, and the Bird, and bade each do its duty, whereupon the Water began to dance, and the Apple began to sing, and the Bird began to hop about the table, and all present, in ecstasy, mouth and eyes wide open, looked and listened to these wonders. Never before had they seen such a sight. "To whom belong these marvels?" said the king when at length he was able to speak. "To me, sire," replied the young girl. "Is that so?" said the King. "And from whom did you get them?" "I myself procured them with much trouble," answered she. Then the two brothers knew that it was their sister who had delivered them. As to the king, he nearly lost his head in his joy and admiration. "My crown and my kingdom for your wonders, and you yourself, my young girl, shall be my queen," he exclaimed. "Patience for a little, sire," said she, "until you have heard my bird speak — the Bird of Truth, for he has important things to reveal to you. My little bird, now speak the truth." "I consent," replied the bird; "but let no one go out of this room," and all the doors were closed. The old sorceress of a midwife and one of the king's sisters- in-law were present, and became very uneasy at hearing these words. "Come now, my bird," then said the girl, "speak the truth," and this is what the bird said: "Twenty years ago, sire, your wife was shut up in a tower, abandoned by everybody, and you have long believed her to be dead. She has been accused unjustly." The old midwife and the king's sister-in-law now felt indisposed and wished to leave the room. "Let no one depart hence," said the king. "Continue to speak the truth, my little bird." "You have had two sons and a daughter, sire," the bird went on to say— "all three born of your lady, and here they are! Remove their bandages and you will see that each of them has a star on the forehead." They removed the bandages and saw a gold star on the brow of each of the boys and a silver star on the girl's brow. "The authors of all the evil," continued the bird, "are your two sisters-in-law and this midwife — this sorceress of the devil. They have made you believe that your wife only gave birth to little dogs, and your poor children were exposed on the Seine as soon as they were born. When the midwife — that sorceress of hell — learned that the children had been saved and afterwards brought to the palace, she sought again to destroy them. Penetrating one day into the palace, disguised as a beggar, and affecting to be perishing from cold and hunger, she incited in the mind of the princess the desire to possess the Dancing-Water, the Singing Apple, and the Bird of Truth- -myself. Her two brothers went, one after the other, in quest of these things, and the sorceress took very good care that they should never return. Nor would they have returned, if their sister had not succeeded in delivering them after great toil and trouble.” As the bird ended his story, the king became unconscious, and when he revived he went himself to fetch the queen from the tower. He soon returned with her to the festive chamber, holding her by the hand. She was beautiful and gracious as ever, and having ate and drank a little, she died on the spot. The king, distraught with grief and anger, ordered a furnace to be heated, and threw into it his sister-in-law and the midwife— “ce tison de l’enfer!” As to the princess and her two brothers, I think they made good marriages all three, and as to the bird, they do not say if it continues still to speak the truth;— “mats je prÚsume que oui, puisque ce n’Útait pas un homme!”

It would indeed be surprising did we not find our story popularly known throughout Germany in various forms. Under the title of “The Three Little Birds” a version is given in Grimm’s K. u. H. M. (No. 96, vol. i. of Mrs. Hunt’s English translation), which reproduces the chief particulars of Galland’s tale with at least one characteristic German addition;

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GERMAN VERSION.

A king, who dwelt on the Keuterberg, was out hunting one day, when he was seen by three young girls who were watching their cows on the mountain, and the eldest, pointing to him, calls out to the two others, “If I do not get that one, I’ll have none;” the second, from another part of the hill, pointing to the one who was on the king’s right hand, cries “If I don’t get that one, I’ll have none;” and the youngest, pointing to the one who was on the king’s left hand, shouts, “And if I don’t get him, I’ll have none.” When the king has returned home he sends for the three girls, and after questioning them as to what they had said to each other about himself and his two ministers, he takes the eldest girl for his own wife and marries the two others to the ministers. The king was very fond of his wife, for she was fair and beautiful of face, and when he had to go abroad for a season he left her in charge of the two sisters who were the wives of his ministers, as she was about to become a mother. Now the two sisters had no children, and when the queen gave birth to a boy who “brought a red star into the world with him,” they threw him into the river, whereupon a little bird flew up into the air, singing:

“To thy death art thou sped,
Until God’s word be said.
In the white lily bloom,
Brave boy, is thy tomb.”

When the king came home they told him his queen had been delivered of a dog, and he said, “What God does is well done.” The same thing happens the two following years: when the queen had another little boy, the sisters substituted a dog and the king said “What God does is well done;” but when she was delivered of a beautiful little girl, and they told the king she had this time borne a cat, he grew angry and ordered the poor queen to be thrown into prison. On each occasion a fisherman who dwelt near the river drew the child from the water soon after it was thrown in, and having no children, his wife lovingly reared them. When they had grown up, the eldest once went with some other boys to fish, and they would not have him with them, saying to him, “Go away, foundling.” The boy, much grieved, goes to the fisherman and asks whether he is a foundling, and the old man tells him the whole story, upon which the youth, spite of the fisherman’s entreaties, at once sets off to seek his father. After walking for many days he came to a great river, by the side of which was an old woman fishing. He accosted her very respectfully, and she took him on her back and carried him across the water. When a year had gone by, the second boy set out in search of his brother, and the same happened to him as to the elder one. Then the girl went to look for her two brothers, and coming to the water she said to the old woman, “Good day, mother. May God help you with your fishing.” (The brothers had said to her that she would seek long enough before she caught any fish, and she replied, “And thou wilt seek long enough before thou findest thy father” — hence their failure in their quest.)

When the old woman heard that, she became quite friendly, and carried her over the water, gave her a wand, and said to her, “Go, my daughter, ever onwards by this road and when you come to a great black dog, you must pass it silently and boldly, without either laughing or looking at it. Then you will come to a great high castle, on the threshold of which you must let the wand fall, and go straight through the castle and out again on the other side. There you will see an old fountain out of which a large tree has grown whereon hangs a bird in a cage, which you must take down. Take likewise a glass of water out of the fountain, and with these two things go back by the same way. Pick up the wand again from the threshold and take it with you, and when you again pass by the dog strike him in the face with it, but be sure that you hit him, and then just come back here to me.” The maiden found everything exactly as the old woman had said, and on her way hack she found her two brothers who had sought each other over half the world. They went together where the black dog was lying on the road; she struck it in the face and it turned into a handsome prince, who went with them to the river. There the old woman was still standing. She rejoiced much to see them again, and carried them all over the water, and then she too went away, for now she was freed. The others, however, went to the old fisherman, and all were glad that they had found each other again, and they hung the bird in its cage on the wall. But the second son could not settle at home, and took his cross-bow and went a-hunting. When he was tired he took his flute and played on it. The king happened to be also hunting, and hearing the music went up to the youth and said, “Who has given thee leave to hunt here?” “O. no one.” “To whom dost thou belong, then?” “I am the fisherman’s son.” “But he has no children.” “If thou wilt not believe it, come with me.” The king did so, and questioned the fisherman, who told the whole story, and the little bird on the wall began to sing:

“The mother sits alone
There in the prison small;
O King of the royal blood,
These are thy children all.

The sisters twain, so false,
They wrought the children woe,
There in the waters deep,
Where the fishers come and go.”

Then the king took the fisherman, the three little children, and the bird back with him to the castle, and ordered his wife to be taken out of prison and brought before him. She had become very ill and weak, but her daughter gave her some of the water of the fountain to drink and she became strong and healthy. But the two false sisters were burnt, and the maiden was married to the Prince.

Even in Iceland, as already stated, the same tale has long cheered the hardy peasant’s fire-side circle, while the “wind without did roar and rustle.” That it should have reached that out-of-the-way country through Galland’s version is surely inconceivable, notwithstanding the general resemblance which it bears to the “Histoire des S£urs jalouses de leur Cadette.” It is found in Powell and Magn·sson’s “Legends of Iceland,” second series, and as that excellent work is not often met with (and why so, I cannot understand), moreover, as the story is told with much na´vetÚ, I give it here in full:

ICELANDIC VERSION.

Not very far from a town where dwelt the king lived once upon a time a farmer. He was well to do and had three daughters; the eldest was twenty years of age, the two others younger, but both marriageable. Once, when they were walking outside their father's farm, they saw the king coming riding on horseback with two followers, his secretary and his bootmaker. The king was unmarried, as were also those two men. When they saw him, the eldest of the sisters said, "I do not wish anything higher than to be the wife of the king's shoemaker." Said the second, "And I of the king's secretary." Then the youngest said? "I wish that I were the wife of the king himself." Now the king heard that they were talking together, and said to his followers, "I will go to the girls yonder and know what it is they were talking about. It seemed to me that I heard one of them say, 'The king himself.'" His followers said that what the girls had been chattering about could hardly be of much importance. The king did not heed this, however, but declared that they would all go to the girls and have a talk with them. This they did. The king then asked what they had been talking about a moment ago, when he and his men passed them. The sisters were unwilling to tell the truth, but being pressed hard by the king, did so at last. Now as the damsels pleased the king, and he saw that they were both handsome and fair-spoken particularly the youngest of them, he said that all should be as they had wished it. The sisters were amazed at this, but the king's will must be done.

So the three sisters were married, each to the husband she had chosen. But when the youngest sister had become queen, the others began to cast on her looks of envy and hatred, and would have her, at any cost, dragged down from her lofty position. And they laid a plot for the accomplishment of this their will. When the queen was going to be confined for the first time, her sisters got leave to act as her midwives. But as soon as the child was born they hid it away, and ordered it to be thrown into a slough into which all the filth was cast. But the man to whom they had entrusted this task could not bring himself to do it, so put the child on the bank of the slough, thinking that some one might find it and save its life. And so it fell out; for an old man chanced to pass the slough soon afterwards and finding a crying child on the bank, thought it a strange find, took it up and brought it to his home, cherishing it as he could. The queen's sisters took a whelp and showed it to the king as his queen's offspring. The king was grieved at this tale, but, being as fond of the queen as of his own life, he restrained his anger and punished her not.

At the second and third confinement of the queen her sisters played the same trick: they exposed the queen's children in order to have them drowned in the slough. The man however, always left them on the bank, and it so happened that the same old earl always passed by and took up the children, and carried them home, and brought them up as best he could. The queen's sisters said that the second time the queen was confined she had given birth to a kitten, and the third time, to a log of wood. At this the king waxed furiously wroth, and ordered the queen to be thrown into the house where he kept a lion as he did not wish this monster to fill his kingdom with deformities. And the sisters thought that they had managed their boat well and were proud of their success. The lion, however, did not devour the queen, but even gave her part of his food and was friendly towards her and thus the queen lived with the lion, a wretched enough life without anybody's knowing anything about it.

Now the story turns to the old man who fostered the king's children. The eldest of these, a boy, he called Vilhjßmr, the second, also a boy, Sigurdr; the third child was a girl and her name was unknown. All that came to him, or with whom he met, the old man would ask if they knew nothing of the children he had found on the bank of the slough. But no one seemed to have the faintest notion about their birth or descent. As the children grew up they were hopeful and fine-looking. The earl had now waxed very old, and, expecting his end, he gave the children this rede, always to ask every one to whom they spoke for news of their family and birth, in order that they might perchance be able at last to trace out the truth. He himself told them all he knew about the matter. After this the old man died, and the children followed closely his advice. Once there came to them an old man, of whom they asked the same questions as of all others. He said he could not give them any hints on the matter himself, but that he could point out one to them who was able to do so. He told them that a short way from their farm was a large stone, whereupon was always sitting a bird which could both understand and speak the tongue of men. It would be best for them, he went on, to find this bird; but there was a difficulty in the matter to be got over first, for many had gone there but none had ever returned. He said that many king's children had gone to this bird in order to know their future fate, but they had all come short in the very thing needed. He told them that whosoever wanted to mount the stone must be so steady as never to look back, whatever he might hear or see, or whatever wonders seemed to take place around the rock. All who did not succeed in this were changed into stones, together with everything they had with them. This steadiness no one had had yet, but whosoever had it could easily mount the rock, and having once done so would be able to quicken all the others who have been turned to stone there. For the top of the rock was flat, and there was a trap-door on it, wherein the bird was sitting. Underneath the trap-door was water, the nature of which was that it would turn all the stones back to life again. The old man ended by saying, "Now he who succeeds in getting to the top is allowed by the bird to take the water and sprinkle the stone-changed folk, and call them to life again, just as they were before." This the king's children thought no hard task. The brothers, however, were the most outspoken about the easiness of the thing. They thanked the old man much for his story and took leave of him.

Not long after this, Vilhjßmr, the eldest brother, went to the rock. But before he left he said to his brother, that if three drops of blood should fall on his knife at table while he was away, Sigurdr should at once come to the rock, for then it would be sure that he fared like the others. So Vilhjßmr went away, following the old man's directions, and nothing further is told of him for a while. But after three days, or about the time when his brother should have reached the stone, three drops of blood fell upon Sigurdr's knife, once, while at table. He was startled at this and told his sister that he must needs leave her, in order to help his brother. He made the same agreement with his sister as Vilhjßmr had before made with him. Then he went away, and, to make the story short, all came to the same issue with him as with his brother, and the blood-drops fell on his sister's knife, at the time when Sigurdr should have reached the stone.

Then the damsel went herself, to see what luck she might have. She succeeded in finding the rock, and when she came there she was greatly struck with the number of stones that surrounded it, in every shape and position. Some had the form of chests, others of various animals, while some again were in other forms. She paid no heed to all this, but going straight forward to the great rock began climbing it. Then she heard, all of a sudden, behind her a loud murmur of human voices, all talking, one louder than another, and amongst the number she heard those of her brothers. But she paid no heed to this, and took good care never to look back, in spite of all she heard going on behind her. Then she got at last to the top of the rock, and the bird greatly praised her steadiness and constancy and promised both to tell her anything she chose to ask him and to assist her in every way he could. First, she would have the surrounding stones recalled to their natural shapes and life. This the bird granted her, pointing to one of the stones and saying, "Methinks you would free that one from his spell, if you knew who he was." So the king's daughter sprinkled water over all the stones and they returned to life again, and thanked her for their release with many fair words. Next she asked the bird who were the parents of herself and her brothers, and to whom they might trace their descent. The bird said that they were the children of the king of that country, and told her how the queen's sisters had acted by them at their birth, and last of all told her how her mother was in the lion's den, and how she was nearer dead than alive from sorrow and want of good food and comfort.

The stone which the bird had pointed out to the princess was a king's son, as noble as he was handsome. He cast affectionate looks to his life-giver and it was plain that each loved the other. It was he who had brought the greater part of the chest-shaped stones thither, the which were coffers full of gold and jewels. When the bird had told to every one that which each wanted to know, all the company of the disenchanted scattered, the three children and the wealthy prince going together. When they came home the first thing they did was to break into the lion's den. They found their mother lying in a swoon, for she had lost her senses on hearing the house broken into.

They took her away, and she soon afterwards recovered. Then they dressed her in fitting attire, and taking her to the palace asked audience of the king. This granted, Vilhjßmr, Sigurdr, and their sister declared to the king that they were his children and that they had brought with them their mother from the lion's den. The king was amazed at this story and at all that had happened. The sisters of the queen were sent for and questioned, and, having got into scrapes by differing in accounts, confessed at last their misdeed and told the truth. They were thrown before the same lion that the queen had been given to, and it tore them to pieces immediately and ate them up, hair and all.

Now the queen took her former rank, and a banquet was held in joy at this happy turn of affairs, and for many days the palace resounded with the glee of the feast. And at the end of it the foreign prince wooed the king's daughter and gained easily her hand, and thus the banquet was begun afresh and became the young people's marriage-feast. Such glee has never been witnessed in any other kingdom. After the feast the strange prince returned to his home with his bride and became king after his father. Vilhjßmr also married and took the kingdom after his father. Sigurdr married a king's daughter abroad, and became king after the death of his father-in-law; and all of them lived in luck and prosperity. And now is the story ended.

From bleak Iceland to sunny India is certainly a "far cry," but we had already got half-way thither in citing the Egypto-Arabian versions, and then turned westwards and northwards. We must now, however, go all the way to Bengal for our next form of the story, which is much simpler in construction than any of the foregoing versions, and may be considered as a transition stage of the tale in its migration to Europe. This is an abridgment of the story — not of Envious Sisters but of jealous co-wives — from the Rev. Lal Bahari Day's "Folk-Tales of Bengal,''[434] a work of no small value to students of the genealogy of popular fictions:

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BENGALI VERSION.

A certain King had six wives, none of whom had children, in spite of doctors and all sorts of doctors' stuff. He was advised by his ministers to take a seventh wife. There was in the city a poor woman who earned her livelihood by gathering cow-dung from the fields kneading it into cakes, which, after drying in the sun, she sold for fuel. She had a very beautiful daughter, who had contracted friendship with three girls much above her rank namely, the daughter of the King's minister, the daughter of a rich merchant, and the daughter of the King's chaplain. It happened one day that all four were bathing together in a tank near the palace, and the King overheard them conversing as follows: Said the minister's daughter, "The man who marries me won't need to buy me any clothes, for the cloth I once put on never gets soiled, never gets old, and never tears." The merchant's daughter said, "And my husband will also be a happy man, for the fuel which I use in cooking never turns to ashes, but serves from day to day, and from year to year." Quoth the chaplain's daughter, "My husband too will be a happy man, for when once I cook rice it never gets finished; no matter how much we may eat, the original quantity always remains in the pot."[434] Then said the poor woman's daughter, "And the man who marries me will also be happy, for I shall give birth to twin children, a son and a daughter; the girl will be divinely beautiful, and the boy will have a moon on his forehead and stars on the palms of his hands."

The King didn't care to have any of the three young ladies, but resolved at once to marry the fourth girl, who would present him with such extraordinary twin children, notwithstanding her humble birth, and their nuptials were celebrated in due form, much to the chagrin of his six wives. Some time after the King had occasion to go for six months to another part of his dominions, and when about to set out he told his new wife that he expected her to be confined before the period of his absence was expired, and that he would like to be present with her at the time, lest her enemies (her co-wives) might do her some injury. So giving her a golden bell he bade her hang it in her room, and when the pains of labour came on to ring it, and he would be with her in a moment, no matter where he might be at the time; but she must only ring it when her labour pains began. The six other wives had overheard all this, and the day after the King had departed went to the new wife's room and affected to admire the golden bell, and asked her where she got it and what was its use. The unsuspecting creature told them its purpose, upon which they all exclaimed that it was impossible the King could hear it ring at the distance of hundreds of miles, and besides, how could the King travel such a distance in the twinkling of an eye? They urged her to ring the bell and convince herself that what the King had said to her was all nonsense. So she rang the bell, and the King instantly appeared, and seeing her going about as usual, he asked her why she had summoned him before her time. Without saying anything about the six other wives, she replied that she had rung the bell merely out of curiosity to know if what he had said was true. The King was angry, and, telling her distinctly she was not to ring the bell until the labour pains came upon her, went away again. Some weeks after the six wives once more induced her to ring the bell, and when the King appeared and found she was not about to be confined and that she had been merely making another trial of the bell (for, as on the former occasion, she did not say that her co-wives had instigated her), he was greatly enraged, and told her that even should she ring when in the throes of childbirth he should not come to her, and then went away. At last the day of her confinement arrived, and when she rang the bell the King did not come.[435] The six jealous wives seeing this went to her and said that it was not customary for the ladies of the palace to be confined in the royal apartments, and that she must go to a hut near the stables. They then sent for the midwife of the palace, and heavily bribed her to make away with the infant the moment it was born. The seventh wife gave birth, as she had promised, to a son who had a moon on his forehead and stars on the palms of his hands, and also to an uncommonly beautiful girl. The midwife had come provided with a couple of newly-littered pups, which she set before the mother, saying, "You have given birth to these," and took away the twin-children in an earthen vessel, while the mother was insensible. The King, though he was angry with his seventh wife, yet recollecting that she was to give birth to an heir to his throne, changed his mind, and came to see her the next morning. The pups were produced before the King as the offspring of his new wife, and great was his anger and vexation. He gave orders that she should be expelled from the palace, clothed in leather, and employed in the market-place to drive away crows and keep off dogs, all of which was done accordingly.

The midwife placed the vessel containing the twins along with the unburnt clay vessels which a potter had set in order and then gone to sleep, intending to get up during the night and light his furnace; in this way she thought the little innocents would be reduced to ashes. It happened, however, that the potter and his wife overslept themselves that night, and it was near daybreak when the woman awoke and roused her husband. She then hastened to the furnace, and to her surprise found all the pots thoroughly baked, although no fire had been applied to them. Wondering at such good luck, she summoned her husband, who was equally astonished and pleased, and attributed it all to some benevolent deity. In turning over the pots he came upon the one in which the twins were placed, and the wife looking on them as a gift from heaven (for she had no children) carried them into the house and gave out to the neighbours that they had been borne by herself. The children grew in stature and in strength and when they played in the fields were the admiration of every one that saw them. They were about twelve years of age when the potter died, and his wife threw herself on the pyre and was burnt with her husband’s body. The boy with the moon on his forehead (which he always kept concealed with a turban, lest it should attract notice) and his beautiful sister now broke up the potter’s establishment, sold his wheel and pots and pans, and went to the bazar in the King’s city, which they had no sooner entered than it was lit up brilliantly. The shopkeepers thought them divine beings and built a house for them in the bazar. And when they used to ramble about they were always followed at a distance by the woman clothed in leather who was appointed by the King to drive away the crows, and by some strange impulse, she also used to hang about their house.

The youth presently bought a horse and went hunting in the neighbouring jungles. It happened one day, while following the chase, that the King met him, and, struck with his beauty, felt an unaccountable yearning for him.[436] As a deer went past the youth shot an arrow and in so doing his turban fell off, on which a bright light, like that of the moon, was seen shining on his forehead. When the King perceived this, it brought to his mind the son with the moon on his forehead and stars on the palms of his hands who was to have been born of his seventh queen, and would have spoken with the youth, but he immediately galloped off. When the King reached home his six wives observing his sadness asked him its cause, and he told them of the youth he had seen in the forest with a moon on his forehead. They began to wonder if the twins were not still alive, and sending for the midwife closely questioned her as to the fate of the children. She stoutly declared that she had herself seen them burnt to ashes, but she would find out who the youth was whom the King had met while hunting. She soon ascertained that two strangers were living in a house in the bazar which the shopkeepers had built for them, and when she entered the house the girl was alone, her brother having gone into the jungle to hunt. Pretending to be her aunt, the old woman said to her, “My dear child, you are so beautiful, you require only the kataki[437] flower to properly set off your charms. You should tell your brother to plant a row of that flower in your courtyard.” “I never saw that flower,” said the girl “Of course not; how could you? It does not grow in this country, but on the other side of the ocean. Your brother may try and get it for you, if you ask him.” This suggestion the old trot made in the hope that the lad would lose his life in venturing to obtain the flower. When he returned and his sister told him of the visit of their aunt and asked him to get her the kataki flower, on which she had set her heart, he at once consented, albeit he thought the woman had imposed upon his sister by calling herself their aunt.

Next morning he rode off on his fleet horse, and arriving on the borders of an immense forest he saw a number of rßkshasÝ[438] roaming about, he went aside and shot with his arrows some deer and rhinoceroses and then approaching the rßkshasÝs called out, “O auntie dear, your nephew is here.” A huge rßkshasÝ strode towards him and said, “O. you are the youth with the moon on your forehead and stars on the palms of your hands. We were all expecting you, but as you have called me aunt, I will not eat you. What is it you want?

Have you brought anything for me to eat?" The youth gave her the game he had killed, and she began devouring it. After swallowing all the carcases she said, "Well, what do you want?" He answered, "I want some kataki flowers for my sister." She told him it would be very difficult for him to get them, as they were guarded by seven hundred rßkshasas, but if he was determined to attempt it, he had better first go to his uncle on the north side of the Jungle. He goes, and greets the rßkshasa, calling him uncle, and having regaled him with deer and rhinoceroses as he had done his "aunt," the rßkshasa tells him that in order to obtain the flower he must go through an impenetrable forest of kachiri,[439] and say to it "O mother kachiri, make way for me, else I perish," upon which a passage will be opened for him. Next he will come to the ocean, which he must petition in the same terms, and it would make a way for him. After crossing the ocean he'll come to the gardens where the kataki blooms. The forest opens a passage for the youth, and the ocean stands up like two walls on either side of him, so that he passes over dryshod.[440] He enters the gardens and finds himself in a grand palace which appeared unoccupied. In one of the apartments he sees a young damsel of more than earthly beauty asleep on a golden bed, and going near discovers a stick of gold lying near her head and a stick of silver near her feet. Taking them in his hand, by accident the gold stick fell upon the feet of the sleeping beauty, when she instantly awoke, and told him she knew that he was the youth with the moon on his forehead and stars on the palms of his hands; that the seven hundred rßkshasas who guarded the kataki flowers were then out hunting, but would return by sundown, and should they find him they'd eat him. A rßkshasÝ had brought her from her father's palace, and is so fond of her that she will not allow her to return home. By means of the gold and silver sticks the rßkshasÝ kills her when she goes off in the morning, and by means of them also she is revived when she comes back in the evening. He had better flee and save his life. But the youth told her he would not go away without the kataki flower, moreover, that he would take her also with him. They spent the day in walking about the gardens, and when it was drawing near the time for the return of the rßkshasas, the youth concealed himself under a great heap of the kataki flower which was in one of the rooms, having first “killed” the damsel by touching her head with the golden stick. The return of the seven hundred rßkshasas was like the noise of a mighty tempest. One of them entered the damsel’s room and revived her, saying at the same time, “I smell a human being!”[441] The damsel replied, “How can a human being come to this place?” and the rßkshasa was satisfied. During the night the damsel worms out of the rßkshasÝ who was her mistress the secret that the lives of the seven hundred rßkshasas depended on the lives of a male and female bee, which were in a wooden box at the bottom of a tank, and that the only person who could seize and kill those bees was a youth with a moon on his forehead and stars on the palms of his hands — but there could be no such youth, and so their lives were safe.[442] When the rßkshasas had all gone out as usual next morning, the damsel, having been revived by the youth, told him how the demons could be killed, and, to be brief, he was not slow to put her directions into practice. After the death of the seven hundred rßkshasas, the youth took some of the kataki flowers and left the palace accompanied by the beautiful damsel, whose name was Pushpavati. They passed through the ocean and forest of kachiri in safety, and arriving at the house in the bazßr the youth with the moon on his forehead presented the kataki flower to his sister. Going out to hunt the next day, he met the king, and his turban again falling off as he shot an arrow, the King saw the moon on his forehead and desired his friendship. The youth invited the King to his house, and he went thither at midday. Pushpavati then told the King (for she knew the whole story from first to last) how his seventh wife had been induced by his six other wives to ring the bell twice needlessly; how she gave birth to a boy and a girl, and pups were substituted for them, how the twins were miraculously saved and brought up in the house of a potter, and so forth. When she had concluded the King was highly enraged, and next day caused his six wicked wives to be buried alive. The seventh queen was brought from the market-place and reinstated in the palace, and the youth with a moon on his forehead and stars on the palms of his hands lived happily with his beautiful twin-sister.

In two other Hind· versions known to me — but the story is doubtless as widely spread over India as we have seen it to be over Europe — only the leading idea of Galland’s tale reappears, though one of them suggests the romance of “Helyas, the Knight of the Swan,” namely, the story called “Truth’s Triumph,” in Miss Frere’s “Old Deccan Days,” ff. Here a rßjß and his minister walking together come to a large garden, where is a bringal- tree bearing 100 fruits but having no leaves, and the minister says to the rßjß that whosoever should marry the gardener’s daughter should have by her 100 boys and one girl. The rßjß espoused the maiden, much to the vexation of the 12 wives he had already, and then follows a repetition of the golden bell affair! as in the Bengali version. Drapadi Bai, the gardener’s daughter and the new rßnÝ, gives birth “right off” to 100 sons and a daughter, all of whom are thrown by the nurse on a dust-heap in which are a great number of rat-holes, the jealous co-wives fully expecting that the voracious rodents would quickly eat them up. The nurse tells the young rßnÝ that her children had turned into stones; such is also the story the 12 co-wives tell the rßjß on his return, and he orders the poor Drapadi Bai to be imprisoned for life. But the rats, so far from devouring the children, nourished them with the utmost care. It comes to the knowledge of the 12 co-wives that the children are still alive, they are discovered and turned into crows — all save the little girl, who luckily escapes the fate of her 100 brothers, gets married to a great rßjß, and has a son named Ramchandra, who effected the restoration to human form of his crow-uncles by means of magic water which he obtained from a rßkshasÝ.

The other story referred to is No. xx of Miss Stokes’ “Indian Fairy Tales,” which Mr. Coote could not have read, else he would not have been at the trouble to maintain it was impossible that Galland derived his tale from it: “so long,” says he, “as that story remained in the country of its birth — India — it was absolutely inaccessible to him, for great traveller as he was, he never visited that far-off portion of the East.” The fact is, this Hindu story only resembles Galland’s, and that remotely, in the opening portion Seven daughters of a poor man played daily under the shady trees in the king’s garden with the gardener’s daughter, and she used to say to them, “When I am married I shall have a son — such a beautiful boy as he will be has never been seen. He will have a moon on his forehead and a star on his chin,” and they all laughed at her. The king, having overheard what she so often repeated, married her, though he had already four wives. Then follows the golden bell affair again, with a kettledrum substituted. When the young queen is about to be confined her co-wives tell her it is the custom to bind the eyes of women in her condition, to which she submits, and after she has borne the wonderful boy she promised to do, they tell her she has been delivered of a stone. The king degraded her to the condition of a kitchen servant and never spoke to her. The nurse takes the baby in a box and buries it in the jungle. But the king's dog had followed her, and when she went off he took the box out of the earth and swallowed the baby. Six months after the dog brings him up, caresses him and swallows him again. He does likewise at the end of the year, and the dog's keeper, having seen all told the four wives. They say to the king the dog had torn their clothes, and he replies, he'll have the brute shot to-morrow. The dog overhears this and runs off to the king's cow; he induces her to save the child by swallowing him, and the cow consents. Next day the dog is shot, and so on: the cow is to be killed and induces the king's horse to swallow the child, and so on. — There may have been originally some mystical signification attached to this part of the tale, but it has certainly no connection with our story.[443]

I had nearly omitted an Arabian version of the outcast infants which seems to have hitherto escaped notice by story-comparers. Moreover, it occurs in a text of The Nights, to wit, the Wortley-Montague MS., Nights 472-483, in the story of Abou Neut and Abou Neeuteen = Ab· Niyyet and Ab· Niyyeteyn, according to Dr. Redhouse; one of those translated by Jonathan Scott in vol. vi. of his edition of the "Arabian Nights," where, at , the hero marries the King's youngest daughter and the King in dying leaves him heir to his throne, a bequest which is disputed by the husbands of the two elder daughters. The young queen is brought to bed of a son, and her sisters bribe the midwife to declare that she has given birth to a dog and throw the infant at the gate of one of the royal palaces. The same occurs when a second son is born. But at the third lying-in of the princess her husband takes care to be present, and the beautiful daughter she brings forth is saved from the clutches of her vindictive sisters. The two little princes are taken up by a gardener and reared as his own children. In course of time, it happened that the King (Ab·Neeut) and his daughter visited the garden and saw the two little boys playing together and the young princess felt an instinctive affection for them, and the King, finding them engaged in martial play, making clay-horses, bows and arrows, &c., had the curiosity to inquire into their history. The dates when they were found agreed with those of the queen's delivery; the midwife also confessed; and the King left the guilty parties to be punished by the pangs of their own consciences, being convinced that envy is the worst of torments. The two young princes were formally acknowledged and grew up to follow their father's example.

We must go back to India once more if we would trace our tale to what is perhaps its primitive form, and that is probably of Buddhist invention; though it is quite possible this may be one of the numerous fiction which have been time out of mind the common heritage of nearly all peoples, and some of which the early Buddhists adapted to their own purposes. Be this as it may, in the following tale, from Dr. Mitra's "Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepßl" (Calcutta: 1882), p, 66, we seem to have somewhat like the germ of the Envious Sisters:

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BUDDHIST VERSION.

King Brahmadatta picked up in Kampilla a destitute girl named Padmßvati, who scattered lotuses at every step she moved, and made her his favourite queen. She was very simple-minded. Other queens used to play tricks upon her, and at the time of her first delivery cheated her most shamefully. The wicked ladies said to her on that occasion, “Dear Padma, you are a rustic girl; you do not know how to give birth to a royal child. Let us help you.” She yielded. They covered her eyes, threw into the river the twin boys she had brought forth, and smeared her face with blood. They deceived her by telling her that it was only a lump of flesh that she had given birth to, and it had been thrown into the river. At the same time they informed her husband that Padma had eaten up her two new-born sons. The King enraged at her inhuman conduct, ordered her to instant execution. But there was a shrewd man in the court who privately saved her life. A divinity appeared to the King in a dream, and revealed the whole truth to him. The King made a strict investigation in the harem, and found that Padmßvati had been perfectly innocent. He became disconsolate, and gave vent to loud lamentations. Soon after some fishermen appeared at court and presented the King with two infants, who betrayed their royal lineage by the resemblance which their features bore to those of the King. They were reported to have been found in a vessel floating on the river. The courtier who saved Padma’s life now wished to produce her before the King, but she refused to return and proceeded to her father’s hermitage. After the death of her father she travelled through various places in the habit of a devotee; and in the course of her peregrinations she stopped at Banßres, from whence Brahmadatta conducted her to his capital with great honour.

I am of opinion that this Buddhist tale is the original form of the “Envious Sisters” — that it ended with the restoration of the children and the vindication of the innocence of their mother. The second part of our story has no necessary connection with the first, the elements of which it is composed being found in scores — nay, hundreds — of popular fictions in every country: the quest of wonderful or magical objects; one brother setting out, and by neglecting to follow the advice tendered him by some person he meets on his way, he comes to grief; a second brother follows, with the same result; and it is reserved for the youngest, and the least esteemed, to successfully accomplish the adventure. In the second part of the "Envious Sisters," the girl, the youngest of the three children, plays the part of the usual hero of folk-tales of this class. There is, generally, a seemingly wretched old man — a hideous, misshapen dwarf — or an ugly, decrepit old woman — who is treated with rudeness by the two elder adventurers, so they do not speed in their enterprise; but the youngest addresses the person in respectful terms — shares his only loaf with him — and is rewarded by counsel which enables him to bring his adventure to a successful end. In the "Envious Sisters," which I cannot but think Galland has garbled from his original, the eldest clips the beard of the hermit, and presumably the second does the same, since we are told he found the hermit in the like condition (albeit, his beard had been trimmed but a few days before). Each of them receives the same instructions. In a true folk-tale the two elder brothers would treat the old man with contempt and suffer accordingly, while the youngest would cut his nails and his beard, and make him more comfortable in his person. We do not require to go to Asiatic folk-lore for tales in which the elements of the second part of the "Envious Sisters" are to be found. In the German story of the Fox's Brush there is a quest of a golden bird. The first brother sets off in high hope, on the road he sees a fox, who calls out to him not to shoot at it, and says that farther along the road are two inns, one of which is bright and cheerful looking, and he should not go into it, but rather into the other, even though it does not look very inviting. He shoots at the fox and misses it, then continues his journey, and puts up at the fine inn, where amidst riot and revel he forgets all about the business on which he had set out. The same happens to the second brother. But the youngest says to the fox that he will not shoot it and the fox takes him on its tail to the small inn, where he passes a quiet night, and in the morning is conveyed by the fox to the castle, wherein is the golden bird in a wooden cage, and so on. Analogous stories to this are plentiful throughout Europe and Asia; there is one, I think, in the Wortley Montague MS. of The

Nights.

In Straparoia's version of the "Envious Sisters," when the children's hair is combed pearls and precious stones fall out of it, whereby their foster-parents become rich; this is only hinted at in Galland's story: the boy's hair "should be golden on one side and silvern on the other; when weeping he should drop pearls in place of tears, and when laughing his rosy lips should be fresh as the blossom new-blown," not another word is afterwards said of this, while in the modern Arabic version the children are finally identified by their mother through such peculiarities. The silver chains with which the children are born in the romance of "Helyas, the Knight of the Swan," correspond with the "gold star" etc. on the forehead in other stories. It only remains to observe that the Bird of our tale who in the end relates the history of the children to their father, is represented in the modern Arabic version by the fairy Arab Zandyk in the modern Greek by Tzitzin na, and in the Albanian by the Belle of the Earth.

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ADDITIONAL NOTES.

The Tale of Zayn Al-asnam,

The Dream of Riches. In Croker's Irish Fairy Legends there is a droll version, of this story, entitled "Dreaming Tim Jarvis." Honest Tim, we are told, "took to sleeping, and the sleep set him dreaming, and he dreamed all night, and night after night, about crock full of gold. . . . At last he dreamt that he found a mighty great crock of gold and silver, and where, do you think ? Every step of the way upon London Bridge itself! Twice Tim dreamt it, and three times Tim dreamt the same thing; and at last he made up his mind to transport himself, and go over to London, in Pat Mahoney's coaster and so he did!" Tim walks on London Bridge day after day until he sees a man with great black whiskers and a black cloak that reached down to the ground, who accosts him, and he tells the strange man about his dream. "Ho! Ho!" says the strange man, "is that all, Tim? I had a dream myself and I dreamed that I found a crock of gold in the Fort field, on Jerry Driscoll's ground at Balledehob, and, by the same token, the pit where it lay was close to a large furze bush, all full of yellow blossom." Tim hastens back to his old place, sells his cabin and garden, and buys the piece of waste ground so minutely described by the man with black whiskers, finds the pit, jumps into it, and is among the fairies, who give him leave to stuff his pockets with gold; but when he returns to upper earth he discovers that he has got only a handful of small stones mixed with yellow furze blossoms.

In a note appended to this tale, Croker cites the following from Grimm's "Deutsche Sagan," vol. i. : A man once dreamed that if he went to Regensburg and walked on the bridge he should become rich. He went accordingly; and when he had spent near a fortnight walking backwards and forwards on the bridge, a rich merchant came up to him wondering what he was doing here every day, and asked him what he was looking for. He answered that he had dreamed if he would go to the bridge of Regensburg he should become rich. "Ha!" said the merchant, "what do you say about dreams? — Dreams are but froth (Trõume sind Schaume). I too have dreamed that there is buried under yonder large tree (pointing to it) a great kettle full of money; but I gave no heed to this, for dreams are froth.” The man went immediately and dug under the tree, and there he got a treasure, which made a rich man of him, and so his dream was accomplished. — The same story is told of a baker’s boy at Lubeck, who dreamed that he should find a treasure on the bridge; there he met a beggar, who said he had dreamed there was one under a lime-tree in the churchyard of Mollen, but he would not take the trouble of going there. The baker’s boy went, and got the treasure. — It is curious to observe that all the European versions of the story have reference to a bridge, and it must have been brought westward in this form.

The Quest of the Image. — It has only now occurred to my mind that there is a very similar story in the romance of the Four Dervishes (“Kissa-i-Chehßr- Darwesh”), a Persian work written in the 13th century, and rendered into Urd· about 80 years ago, under the title of “Bagh o Bahßr” (Garden of Spring), of which an English translation was made by L. F. Smith, which was afterwards improved by Duncan Forbes. There the images are of monkeys — circumstance which seems to point to an Indian origin of the story — but the hero falls in love with the spotless girl, and the jinn-king takes possession of her, though he is ultimately compelled to give her up. — The fact of this story of the quest of the lacking image being found in the Persian language is another proof that the tales in The Nights were largely derived from Persian story-books.

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Aladdin; Or, the Wonderful Lamp.

There is a distorted reflection of the story in M. Rene Basset’s recently published “Contes Populaires BerbÞres,” No. xxix., which is to this effect: A taleb proclaims, “Who will sell himself for 100 mitqals?” One offers, the KßdÝ ratifies the sale; the (now) slave gives the money to his mother, and follows the taleb. Away they go. The taleb repeats certain words, upon which the earth opens, and he sends down the slave for “the candlestick, the reed, and the box.” The slave hides the box in his pocket and says he did not find it. They go off, and after a time the slave discovers that his master has disappeared. He returns home, hires a house, opens the box, and finds a cloth of silk with seven folds; he undoes one of them, whereupon genii swarm about the room, and a girl appears who dances till break of day. This occurs every night. The king happens to be out on a nocturnal adventure, and hearing a noise, enters the house and is amused till morning. He sends for the box to be brought to the palace, gives the owner his daughter in marriage, and continues to divert himself with the box till his death, when his son-in-law succeeds him on the throne.

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Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves.

My obliging friend, Mr. W. F. Kirby, who contributed to the 10th volume of Sir Richard's Nights proper the very able Bibliographical Essay, has drawn my attention to an analogue of this tale in Geldart's Folk-Lore of Modern Greece: There were two brothers, one of whom was wealthy and had four children, who were in feeble health, the other was poor and had seven children, who were in robust health. The poor brother's wife, begging relief was allowed to come twice a week to the house of the rich brother to bake bread. Her children were starving, but the rich people gave the mother nothing for several days, and all she could do was to wash the dough off her hands for the children, who thrived, and the rich man, discovering the cause, made his wife compel the poor woman to wash her hands before she left the house. The father found his children crying for food, and pretended to go to the wood for herbs, but really purposing to kill himself by falling from a crag. But seeing a great castle, he determined first to ascertain what it was, so he went near, and having climbed a tree, saw forty-nine dragons come out. When they were gone he entered, and found a treasure, filled his bag and hurried away. On his return home he found his wife weeping bitterly, but when he showed her the treasure, she said the first thing was to buy oil to light a lamp to our Lady. Next day they bought a house, and moved into it, but agreed only to buy what they needed for each day's use and nothing they could do without. For two months they went often to church and helped the poor, till, one day, the wife of the rich man, who had met with losses lately, called for them and was hospitably received. She heard the story of the treasure, and the poor man offered to show his brother the place. The rich brother miscounted the dragons as they left the castle, and the one left to watch killed and quartered him. Two days afterwards his brother went to look for him, brought home the severed body, and got a tailor to sew the quarters together. Next day the dragons called on the tailor to make them coats and shoes (sic), and heard of his sewing together the body. He showed them the house, and forty-eight dragons got into chests, which the forty-ninth deposited with the poor man. The children, playing about he chests, heard the dragons say, “Would that it were night, that we might eat them all!” So the father took forty-eight spits and made them red hot, and thrust them into the chests, and then said that a trick had been played upon him, and sent his servant to throw them one by one into the sea. As often as the servant returned he pretended to him that he did not throw the chest far enough and it had come back and thus he disposed of the whole number. In the morning when the last dragon came, the poor man told him one chest was found open: he was seized with fear, pushed in and spitted like the others and the poor man became the possessor of the dragons’ castle.

There can be no doubt, I think, that this story owes nothing to Galland, but that it is a popular Greek version of the original Asiatic tale, of which Galland’s “Ali Baba” is probably a fair reflection. The device of pretending to the servant that the dragon he had thrown into the sea was returned has its exact analogue in the humorous fabliau of “Les Trois Bossus,” where a rustic is made to believe that each of the hunchbacks had come back again, with the addition that, on returning from the river the third time, he seizes the lady’s hunchbacked husband and effectually disposes of him.

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The Tale of Prince Ahmad.

Though my paper on this tale is of considerable length, it would perhaps have been deemed intolerably long had I cited all the versions of the first part — the quest of the most wonderful thing — which are current in Europe, for it is found everywhere, though with few variations of importance. There are two, however, of which I may furnish the outlines in this place.

In the "Pentamerone" of Basile,[444] , a man sends his five sons into the world to learn something. The eldest becomes a master-thief; the second has learned the trade of shipwright; the third has become a skilful archer; the fourth has found an herb which brings the dead to life, and the youngest has learned the speech of birds. Soon after they have returned home, they set out with their father to liberate a princess who had been stolen by a wild man, and by the exercise of their several arts succeed in their adventure. While they quarrel as to which of them had by his efforts done most to deserve the princess for wife, the king gives her to the father, as the stock of all those branches.

In the 45th of Laura Gonzenbach's "Sicilianische Mõrchen," the king's daughter is stolen by a giant and recovered by the seven sons of a poor woman. The eldest can run like the wind, the second can hear, when he puts his ear to the ground, all that goes on in the world; the third can with a blow of his fist break through seven iron doors; the fourth is a thief; the fifth can build an iron tower with a blow of his fist; the sixth is an unfailing shot, the seventh has a guitar which can awaken the dead. Youths thus wonderfully endowed figure in many tales, but generally as the servants of the hero.

By comparing the different European versions it will be found that some are similar to the first part of the tale of Prince Ahmad, insomuch as the brothers become possessed of certain wonderful things which are each instrumental in saving the damsel's life; while others more closely approach the oldest known form of the story, in representing the heroes as being endowed with some extraordinary kind of power, by means of which they rescue the damsel from a giant who had carried her off. It is curious to observe that in the

“Sindibßd Nßma” version the damsel is both carried off by a demon and at death’s door, which is not the case of any other Asiatic form of the story.

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FOOTNOTES SUPPLEMENTAL VOLUME III.

[1] M. Zotenberg empowered me to offer his "Aladdin" to an "Oriental" publishing-house well-known in London, and the result was the "no-public" reply. The mortifying fact is that Oriental studies are now at their nadir in Great Britain, which is beginning to show so small in the Eastern World.

[2] P.N. of a Jinni who rules the insect-kingdom and who is invoked by scribes to protect their labours from the worm.

[3] Both name and number suggest the "Calc. Edit." of 1814. See "Translator's Foreword" vol. i., x)x.-xx. There is another version of the first two hundred Nights, from the "Calc. Edit." into Urdu by one Haydar Ali 1 vol. roy. 8vo lithog. Calc. 1263 (1846). — R.F.B.

[4] "Alf Leilah" in Hindostani 4 vols. in 2, royal 8vo, lithographed, Lakhnau, 1263 (1846). — R. F. B.

[5] This is the "Alif" (!) Leila, Tarjuma-i Alif (!) Laila ba-Zuban-i-Urdu (Do Jild, baharfßt-i-Yurop), an Urdu translation of the Arabian Nights, printed entirely in the Roman character, etc., etc. — R.F.B.

[6] i.e., The Thousand Tales.

[7] From the MS, in the BibliochÞque Nationale (Supplement
Arab. No. 2523) vol. ii., , verso to , verso. The
Sisters are called DÝnßrzßd and Shahrßzßd, a style which I have
not adopted.

[8] THe old versions read "Ornament (Adornment?) of the Statues," Zierde der Pildsõulen (Weil). I hold the name to be elliptical, Zayn (al-Din = Adornment of The Faith and owner of) al-Asnßm = the Images. The omission of Al-Din in proper names is very common; e.g., Fakhr (Al-Din) Al-Iftakhßri (Iftikhßr-al-Din) and many others given by De Sacy (Chrest.i. 30, and in the Treatise on Coffee by Abdal-Kßdir). So Al-Kamßl, Al-Imßd, Al-Baha are = Kamal al-DÝn,

etc. in Jbn Khallikan, iii 493. Sanam properly = an idol is popularly applied to all artificial figures of man and beast. I may note that we must not call the hero, after Galland's fashion, unhappily adopted by Weil, tout bonnement "Zayn."

[9] Galland persistently writes "Balsorah," a European corruption common in his day, the childhood of Orientalism in Europe. The Hindostani versions have "Bansrß," which is worse.

[10] For notes on Geomancy (Zarb Raml) see vol. iii. 269.

[11] THe Hindostani Version enlarges upon this:— "Besides this, kings cannot escape perils and mishaps which serve as warnings and examples to them when dealing their decrees."

[12] In the XIXth century we should say "All the — ologies."

[13] In the Hindostani Version he begins by "breaking the seal which had been set upon the royal treasury."

[14] "Three things" (says Sa'di in the Gulistan) "lack permanency, Wealth without trading, Learning without disputation, Government without justice." (chap. viii. max. 8). The Bakhtiyßr-nßmeh adds that "Government is a tree whose root is legal punishment (Siyßsat); its root-end is justice; its bough, mercy; its flower, wisdom; its leaf, liberality; and its fruit, kindness and benevolence. The foliage of every tree whose root waxeth dry (lacketh sap) taketh a yellow tint and beareth no fruit."

[15] For this word, see vol. ix. 108. It is the origin of the
Fr. "Douane" and the Italian "Dogana" through the Spanish Aduana
(Ad-DÝwßn) and the Provencal "Doana." MÚnage derives it from
the
Gr. {Greek} =a place where goods are received, and others from
"Doge" (Dux) for whom a tax on merchandise was levied at Venice.
LittrÚ (s.v.) will not decide, but rightly inclines to the
Oriental origin.

[16] A Hadis says, "The dream is the inspiration of the True Believer;" but also here, as the sequel shows, the Prince believed the Shaykh to be the Prophet, concerning whom a second Hadis declares, "Whoso seeth me in his sleep seeth me truly, for Satan may not assume my semblance." See vol. iv. 287. The dream as an inspiration shows early in literature, e.g.

— {Greek} (Il. i. 63).
and
— {Greek} (Il. ii 55).

in which the Dream is {Greek}.

[17] In the Hindostani Version he becomes a PÝr = saint, spiritual guide.

[18] A favourite sentiment. In Sir Charles Murray's excellent novel, "Hassan: or, the Child of the Pyramid," it takes the form, "what's past is past and what is written is written and shall come to pass."

[19] In the H. V. the Prince digs a vat or cistern-shaped hole a yard deep. Under the ringed slab he also finds a door whose lock he breaks with his pickaxe and seeing a staircase of white marble lights a candle and reaches a room whose walls are of porcelain and its floor and ceiling are of crystal.

[20] Arab. Khawßbi (plur. of Khßbiyah) large jars usually of pottery. In the H. V. four shelves of mother o' pearl support ten jars of porphyry rangeed in rows and the Prince supposes (with Galland) that the contents are good old wine.

[21] Arab. "'AtÝk": the superficial similiarity of the words have produced a new noun in Arabic, e.g. Ab· AntÝkß = father of antiquities, a vendor of such articles mostly modern, "brand-new and intensely old."

[22] In the text "Ashkhßs" (plural of Shakhs) vulgarly used, throughout India, Persia and other Moslem realms, in the sense of persons or

individuals. For its lit. sig. see vols. iii. 26; and viii. 159. The H. V. follows Galland in changing to pedestals the Arab thrones, and makes the silken hanging a “piece of white satin” which covers the unoccupied base.

[23] The blessed or well-omened: in these days it is mostly a servile name, e.g. Sidi Mubßrak Bombay. See vol. ix. 58,330.

[24] In the test “MÝn” for “Man,” a Syro-Egyptian form common throughout this MS.

[25] “Ay Ni’am,” an emphatic and now vulgar expression.

[26] The MS. here has “‘Imßrah” = a building, probably a clerical error for Maghßrah,” a cave, a souterrain.

[27] Arab, “Zahab-ramlÝ,” explained in “Alaeddin.” So
Al-Mutanabbi sang: —

“I become not of them because homed in their ground: * Sandy
earth is the gangue wherein gold is found.”

[28] WalÝmah prop. = a marriage-feast. For the different kinds of entertainments see vols. vi. 74; viii. 231.

[29] Arab. MukattaÝ al-Yadayn, a servile posture: see vols. iii. 218; ix. 320.

[30] Here the Arabic has the advantage of the English;
“Shakhs” meaning either a person or an image. See supra, .

[31] Arab. “KawßrijÝ = one who uses the paddle, a paddler, a rower.

[32] In the Third Kalandar’s Tale (vol. i. 143) Prince ‘AjÝb is forbidden to call upon the name of Allah, under pain of upsetting the skiff paddled by the man of brass. Here the detail is omitted.

[33] Arab. “Wahsh,” which Galland translates “Tiger,” and is followed by his Hind. translator.

[34] Arab. “Laffa ‘l-isnayn bi-zul·mati-h,” the latter word = Khurt·m, the trunk of an elephant, from Zalm = the dewlap of sheep or goat.

[35] In the text “Yßmin,” a copyist’s error, which can mean nothing else but “YasimÝn.”

[36] The H. V. rejects this detail for “a single piece of mother-o’-pearl twelve yards long,” etc. Galland has une seule ecaille de poisson. In my friend M. Zotenberg’s admirable translation of Tabara (i. 52) we read of a bridge at Baghdad made of the ribs of Og bin ‘Unk (= Og of the Neck), the fabled King of Bashan.

[37] I have noted that this is the primitive attire of Eastern man in all hot climates, and that it still holds its ground in that grand survival of heathenry, the Meccan Pilgrimage. In Galland the four strips are of taffetas jaune, the Hind. “TaftÝ.”

[38] The word is Hizßm = girdle, sash, waist-belt, which Galland turns into nappes. The object of the cloths edged with gems and gums was to form a barrier excluding hostile Jinns: the European magician usually drew a magic circle.

[39] This is our corruption of the Malay Aigla = sandal wood. See vol. ix. 150.

[40] Lit. = the Day of Assembly, “Yaum al-Mahshar.” These lines were translated at Cannes on Feb. 22n, 1886, the day before the earthquake which brought desolation upon the Riviera. It was a second curious coincidence. On Thursday, July 10th, 1863 — the morning when the great earthquake at Accra laid in ruins the town and the stout old fort built in the days of James II — I had been reading the Koranic chapter entitled “Earthquakes” (No. XCIX.) to some Moslem friends who had visited my quarters. Upwards of a decade afterwards I described teh accident in “Ocean Highways” (New Series, No. II., Vol. I, p-461), owned by Trubner & Co., and edited by my friend Clements Markham, and I only regret that this able Magazine has been extinguished by that dullest of Journals,

“Porceedings of the R. S. S. and monthly record of Geography.”

[41] Galland has un tremblement pareil Ó celui qu’Israfyel (IsrßfÝl) doit causer le jour du jugement.

[42] The idea is Lady M. W. Montague’s (“The Lady’s Resolve.”)

> In part she is to blame that has been tried:
> He comes too near that comes to be denied.

As an unknown correspondent warns me the sentiment was probably suggested by Sir Thomas Overbury (“A Wife.” St. xxxvi): —

> — In part to blame is she
> Which hath without consent bin only tride:
> He comes too near that comes to be denide.

[43] These highly compromising magical articles are of many kinds. The ballad of The Boy and the Mantle is familiar to all, how in the case of Sir Kay’s lady: —

> When she had tane the mantle
> With purpose for to wear;
> It shrunk up to her shoulder
> And left her backside bare.
> Percy, Vol. I., i and Book III.

Percy derives the ballad from “Le COurt Mantel,” an old French piece and Mr. Evans (Specimens of Welsh Poetry) from an ancient MS, of Tegan Earfron, one of Arthur’s mistresses, who possessed a mantle which would not fit immodest women. See also in Spenser, Queen Florimel’s Girdle (F.Q. iv. 5,3), and the detective is a horn in the Morte d’Arthur, translated from the French, temp. Edward IV., and first printed in A. D. 1484. The Spectator (No. 579) tells us “There was a Temple upon Mount Etna which was guarded by dogs of so exquisite a smell, that they could discover whether the Persons who came thither were chaste or not;” and that they caused, as might be expected, immense trouble. The test-article becomes in the Tuti-nßmeh the Tank of Trial at Agra; also a nosegay which remains fresh or withers; in the Kathß Sarit Sßgara, the red lotus of Shiva; a shirt in Story lxix. Gesta Romanorum; a cup in Ariosto; a rose-garland in "The Wright's Chaste WIfe," edited by Mr. Furnival for the Early English Text Society; a magic picture in Bandello, Part I., No. 21; a ring in the Pentamerone, of Basile; and a distaff in "L'Adroite Princesse," a French imitation of the latter.

[44] Looking glasses in the East are mostly made, like our travelling mirrors, to open and shut.

[45] In Eastern countries the oarsman stands to his work and lessens his labour by applying his weight which cannot be done so forcibly when sitting even upon the sliding-seat. In rowing as in swimming we have forsaken the old custom and have lost instead of gaining.

[46] I have explained this word in vol. iii. 100; viii. 51, etc., and may add the interpretation of Mr. L. C. Casartelli () "La Philosophie Religieuse du MazdÚisme, etc., Paris Maisonneuve, 1884." "A divine name, which has succeeded little (?) is the ancient title Bagh, the O. P. Baga of the Cuneiforms (Baga vazraka Auramazda, etc.) and the Bagha of the Avesta, whose memory is preserved in Baghdad — the city created by the Gods (?). The Pahlevi books show the word in the compound Bagh¶bakht, lit. = what is granted by the Gods, popularly, Providence."

[47] The H. V. makes the old woman a "finished procuress whose skill was unrivalled in that profession."

[48] In the text "Al-SßdÝ w'al-GhßdÝ:" the latter may mean those who came for the morning meal.

[49] An antistes, a leader in prayer (vols. ii. 203, and iv. 227); a reverend, against whom the normal skit is directed. The H. V. makes him a Muezzin, also a Mosque-man; and changes his name to Murad. Imßm is a word with a host of meanings, e.g., model (and master), a Sir-Oracle, the Caliph, etc., etc.

[50] i.e. being neighbours they would become to a certain extent answerable for the crimes committed within the quarter.

[51] Arab. “Nakshat” and “Sifrat.”

[52] Arab. “FarajÝyah,” for which see vol. i. 210, 321.

[53] For this aphrodisiac see vol. vi. 60.

[54] In the text “Ay ni’am,” still a popular expression.

[55] Arab. “‘Ilm al-HÝah,” gen. translated Astrology, but here meaning scientific Physiognomy. All these branches of science, including Palmistry, are nearly connected; the features and the fingers, mounts, lines, etc. being referred to the sun, moon and planets.

[56] Arab. “Mihaffah bi-takhtrawßn”: see vols. ii. 180; v. 175.

[57] The H. V. is more explicit: “do not so, or the King of the Jann will slay thee even before thou canst enjoy her and will carry her away.”

[58] Arab. “Shahwah” the rawest and most direct term. The Moslem religious has no absurd shame of this natural passion. I have heard of a Persian Imam, who, suddenly excited as he was sleeping in a friend’s house, awoke the master with, “Shahwah dßram” = “I am lustful” and was at once gratified by a “Mut’ah,” temporary and extempore marriage to one of the slave-girls. These morganatic marriages are not, I may note, allowed to the Sunnis.

[59] Arab. “Min ba’di an” for “Min ba’di mß” = after that, still popular in the latter broad form.

[60] The word has been used in this tale with a threefold sense Egypt, old Cairo (Fostat) and new Cairo, in fact to the land and to its capital for the time being.

[61] Arab. “Kabbaltu” = I have accepted, i.e., I accept emphatically. Arabs use this form in sundry social transactions, such as marriages,

sales, contracts, bargains, and so forth, to denote that the engagement is irrevocable and that no change can be made. De Sacy neglected to note this in his Grammar, but explains it in his Chrestomathy (i. 44, 53), and rightly adds that the use of this energetic form peut-Ûtre serait susceptible d'applications plus Útendues.

[62] La nuit de l'entrÚe, say the French: see Lane "Leylet ed-dukhlah" (M.E. chapt. vi.).

[63] This MS. uses "Milßh" (pleasant) for "Mubßh" (permitted). I must remark, before parting with Zayn al-Asnam, that its object is to inculcate that the price of a good wife is "far above rubies" (Prov. xxxi. 10: see the rest of this fine chapter), a virtuous woman being "a crown to her husband" (ibid. xxii. 4); and "a prudent wife is from the Lord" (Prov. xix. 4). The whole tale is told with extreme delicacy and the want of roughness and energy suggests a European origin.

[64] i.e. the "Height or Glory ('Alß) of the Faith (al-DÝn)" pron. Alßaddeen; which is fairly represented by the old form "Aladdin;" and better by De Sacy's "Ala-eddin." The name has occurred in The Nights, vol. iv. 29-33; it is a household word in England and who has not heard of THomas Hood's "A-lad-in?" Easterns write it in five different ways and in the Paris MS. it is invariably "æAlÝ al-dÝn," which is a palpable mistake. The others are (1) 'Alß al-DÝn, (2) 'Alß yadÝn, (3) 'Alah DÝn in the H. V. and (4) 'Alßa al-DÝn (with the Hamzah), the last only being grammatical. In Galland the Histoire de la Lampe merveilleuse is preceded by the Histoire du Dormeur EveillÚ which, being "The Story of Ab· al-Hasan the Wag, or the Sleeper awakened," of the Bresl. Edit. (Nights cclxxi.-ccxc.), is here omitted. The Alaeddin Story exists in germ in Tale ii. of the "Dravidian Nights Entertainments," (Madana Kamara-Sankßdßj), by Pandit S. M. Natisa Shastri (Madras, 1868, and London, Tr³bner). We are told by Mr. Coote that it is well represented in Italy. The Messina version is by PittÞ, "La Lanterna Magica," also the Palermitan "Lanterne;" it is "Il Matrimonio di Cajussi" of Rome (R. H. Busk's Folk-lore); "Il Gallo e il Mago," of Visentini's "Fiabe Mantovane," and the "Pesciolino," and "Il Contadino che aveva tre

FÝgli," of Imbriana. In "La Fanciulla c il Mago," of De Gubernatis ("Novelline di Sante Stefano de Calcenaja,"), occurs the popular incident of the original. "The Magician was not a magician for nothing. He feigned to be a hawker and fared through the streets, crying out, 'Donne, donne, chi baratta anelli di ferro contra anelli di argento?'"

Alaeddin has ever been a favourite with the stage. Early in the present century it was introduced to the Parisian opera by M. Etienne, to the Feydeau by ThÚaulon's La Clochette: to the Gymnase by La Petite-Lampe of M. Scribe and Melesville, and to teh Panorama Dramatique by MM. Merle, Cartouche and Saintine (Gauttier, vii. 380).

[65] This MS. always uses DÝnßrzßd like Galland.

[66] Arab. "æAbadan," a term much used in this MS. and used correctly. It refers always and only to future time, past being denoted by "Kattu" from Katta = he cut (in breadth, as opposed to Kadda=he cut lengthwise). See De Sacy, Chrestom. ii. 443.

[67] In the text "Ibn mÝn," a vulgarism for "man." Galland adds that the tailor's name was Mustapha — i y avait un tailleur nommÚ Mustafa.

[68] In classical Arabic the word is "Maghribi," the local form of the root Gharaba= he went far away (the sun), set, etc., whence "Maghribi"=a dweller in the Sunset-land. The vulgar, however, prefer "Maghrab" and "Maghrabi," of which foreigners made "Mogrebin." For other information see vols. vi. 220; ix. 50. The "Moormen" are famed as magicians; so we find a Maghrabi Sahhßr=wizard, who by the by takes part in a transformation scene like that of the Second Kalandar (vol. i. , The Nights), in of Spitta Bey's "Contes Arabes Modernes," etc. I may note that "Sihr," according to Jauhari and Firozßbßdi=anything one can hold by a thin or subtle place, i.e., easy to handle. Hence it was applied to all sciences, "Sahhßr" being=to 'Alim (or sage) . and the older Arabs

called poetry “Sihar al-halßl” — lawful magic.

[69] i.e. blood is thicker than water, as the Highlanders say.

[70] A popular saying amongst Moslems which has repeatedly occurred in The Nights. The son is the “lamp of a dark house.” Vol. ii 280.

[71] Out of respect to his brother, who was probably the senior: the H. V. expressly says so.

[72] Al-Marh·m = my late brother. See vol. ii. 129, 196.

[73] This must refer to Cairo not to Al-Medinah whose title is “Al-Munawwarah” = the Illumined.

[74] A picturesque term for birth-place.

[75] In text “Yß Rßjul” (for Rajul) = O man, an Egypto-Syrian form, broad as any Doric.

[76] Arab. Sh·f-hu, the colloquial form of Shuf-hu

[77] For the same sentiment see “Julnßr” the “Sea born,”
Nights dccxliii.-xliv.

[78] “I will hire thee a shop in the Chauk” — Carfax or market-street says the H. V.

[79] The MS. writes the word Khwßjß (for Khwßjah see vol. vi. 46). Here we are at once interested in the scapegrace who looked Excelsior. In fact the tale begins with a strong inducement to boyish vagabondage and scampish indolence; but the Moslem would see in it the hand of Destiny bringing good out of evil. Amongst other meanings of “Khwßjah “ it is a honorific title given by Khorßsßnis to their notables. In Arab. the similarity of the word to “Khuwßj”=hunger, has given rise to a host of conceits, more or less frigid (Ibn Khallikßn, iii. 45).

[80] Arab. “Wßhid min al-Tujjßr,” the very vulgar style.

[81] i.e., the Saturday (see vol. ii. 305) established as a God's rest by the so-called "Mosaic" commandment No. iv. How it gradually passed out of observance, after so many centuries of most stringent application, I cannot discover: certainly the text in Cor. ii. 16-17 is insufficient to abolish or supersede an order given with such singular majesty and impressiveness by God and so strictly obeyed by man. The popular idea is that the Jewish Sabbath was done away with in Christ, and that sundry of the 1604 councils, e.g., Laodicea, anathematized those who kept it holy after such fashion. With the day the aim and object changed; and the early Fathers made it the "Feast of the Resurrection" which could not be kept too joyously. The "Sabbatismus" of our Sabbatarians, who return to the Israelitic practice and yet honour the wrong day, is heretical and vastly illogical; and the Sunday is better kept in France, Italy and other "Catholic" countries than in England and Scotland.

[82] For "Mushayyadßt" see vol. viii. 23.

[83] All these words sßr·, dakhal·, jalas·, &c. are in the plur. for the dual — popular and vulgar speech. It is so throughout the MS.

[84] The Persians apply the Arab word "Sahrß"=desert, to the waste grounds about a town.

[85] Arab. KashßkÝsh from the quadril, kashkasha = he gathered fuel.

[86] In text "Shayy bi-lßsh" which would mean lit. a thing gratis or in vain.

[87] In the text "Sabba raml" = cast in sand. It may be a clerical error for "Zaraba Raml" = he struck sand, i.e., made geomantic figures.

[88] Arab. Mauza'= a place, an apartment, a saloon.

[89] Galland makes each contain quatre vases de bronze, grands comme des cuves.

[90] The Arab. is "LÝwßn," for which see vols. iv. 71 and vii. 347.

Galland translates it by a "terrace" and "niche."

[91] The idea is borrowed from the lume eterno of the Rosicrucians. It is still prevalent throughout Syria where the little sepulchral lamps buried by the Hebrews, Greeks and Romans are so called. Many tales are told of their being found burning after the lapse of centuries; but the traveller will never see the marvel.

[92] The first notice of the signet-ring and its adventures is by Herodotus in the Legend of the Samian Polycrates; and here it may be observed that the accident is probably founded on fact; every fisherman knows that fish will seize and swallow spoon-bait and other objects that glitter. The text is the Talmudic version of Solomon's seal-ring. The king of the demons after becoming a "Bottle-imp," prayed to be set free upon condition of teaching a priceless secret, and after cajoling the Wise One flung his signet into the sea and cast the owner into a land four hundred miles distant. Here David's son begged his bread till he was made head cook to the King of Ammon at Mash KernÝn. After a while, he eloped with Na'·zah, the daughter of his master, and presently when broiling a fish found therein his missing property. In the Moslem version, Solomon had taken prisoner AmÝnah, the daughter of a pagan prince, and had homed her in his Harem, where she taught him idolatry. One day before going to the Hammam he entrusted to her his signet- ring presented to him by the four angelic Guardians of sky, air, water and earth when the mighty Jinni Al-Sakhr (see vol. i. 41; v. 36), who was hovering about unseen, snatching away the ring, assumed the king's shape, whereby Solomon's form became so changed that his courtiers drove him from his own doors. Thereupon Al-Sakhr, taking seat upon the throne, began to work all manner of iniquity, till one of the Wazirs, suspecting the transformation, read aloud from a scroll of the law: this caused the demon to fly shrieking and to drop the signet into the sea. Presently Solomon, who had taken service with a fisherman, and received for wages two fishes a day, found his ring and made Al-Sakhr a "Bottle-imp." The legend of St. Kentigern or Mungo of Glasgow, who recovered the Queen's ring from the stomach of a salmon, is a palpable imitation of the Biblical

incident which paid tribute to C sar.

[93] The Magician evidently had mistaken the powers of the Ring. This is against all probability and possibility, but on such abnormal traits are tales and novels founded.

[94] These are the Gardens of the Hesperides and of King Isope (Tale of Beryn, Supplem. Canterbury Tales, Chaucer Soc.): —

> In mydward of this gardyn stant a feirÚ tre
> Of alle manner levis that under sky be
> I-forgit and i- fourmyd, eche in his degre
> Of sylver, and of golde fyne, that lusty been to see.

So in the Kathß (S. S.) there are trees with trunks of gold, branches of pearls, and buds and flowers of clear white pearls.

[95] The text causes some confusion by applying "Sullam" to staircase and ladder, hence probably the latter is not mentioned by Galland and Co., who speak only of an escalier de cinquante marches. "Sullam" (plur. "Salßlim") in modern Egyptian is popularly used for a flight of steps: see Spitta-Bey's "Contes Arabes Modernes," . The H. V. places under the slab a hollow space measuring four paces (kadam = 2.5 feet), and at one corner a wicket with a ladder. This leads to a vault of three rooms, one with the jars of gold; the second not to be swept by the skirts, and the third opening upon the garden of gems. "There thou shalt see a path, whereby do thou fare straight forwards to a lofty palace with a flight of fifty steps leading to a flat terrace: and here shalt thou find a niche wherein a lamp burneth."

[96] In the H.V. he had thrust the lamp into the bosom of his dress, which, together with his sleeves, he had filled full of fruit, and had wound his girdle tightly around him lest any fall out.

[97] Africa (Arab. AfrikÝyah) here is used in its old and classical sense for the limited tract about Carthage (Tunis) net, Africa Propria. But the scribe imagines it to be the P. N. of a city: so m J·dar (vol. vi. 222) we find Fßs and Miknßs (Fez and Mequinez) converted into one

settlement. The Maghribi, Mauritanian or Maroccan is famed for sorcery throughout the Moslem world: see vol. vi. 220. The Moslem "Kingdom of Afrikiyah" was composed of four provinces, Tunis, Tripoli, Constantina, and Bugia: and a considerable part of it was held by the Berber tribe of Sanhßja or Sinhßga, also called the Zenag whence our modern "Senegal." Another noted tribe which held Bajaiyah (Bugia) in Afrikiyah proper was the "Zawßwah," the European "Zouaves," (Ibn Khall. iv. 84).

[98] Galland omits the name, which is outlandish enough.

[99] Meaning that he had incurred no blood-guiltiness, as he had not killed the lad and only left him to die.

[100] The H. V. explains away the improbability of the Magician forgetting his gift. "In this sore disquietude he bethought him not of the ring which, by the decree of Allah, was the means of Alaeddin's escape; and indeed not only he but oft times those who practice the Black Art are baulked of their designs by Divine Providence."

[101] See vol. vii. 60. The word is mostly derived from " 'afar" = dust, and denotes, according to some, a man coloured like the ground or one who "dusts" all his rivals. " 'Ifr" (fem. 'Ifrah) is a wicked and dangerous man. Al-Jannabi, I may here notice, is the chief authority for Afrikus son of Abraha and xviiith Tobba being the eponymus of "Africa."

[102] Arab. "Ghayr an" = otherwise that, except that, a favourite form in this MS. The first word is the Syriac "Gheir" = for, a conjunction which is most unneccessarily derived by some from the Gr. {Greek}.

[103] Galland and the H.V. make the mother deliver a little hygienic lecture about not feeding too fast after famine: exactly what an Eastern parent would not dream of doing.

[104] The lad now turns the tables upon his mother and becomes her master, having "a crow to pick" with her.

[105] Arab. “Munßfik” for whose true sense, “an infidel who pretendeth to believe in Al-Islam,” see vol. vi. . Here the epithet comes last being the climax of abuse, because the lowest of the seven hells (vol. viii. 111) was created for “hypocrites,” i.e., those who feign to be Moslems when they are Miscreants.

[106] Here a little abbreviation has been found necessary to avoid the whole of a twice-told tale; but nothing material has been omitted.

[107] Arab. “Taffaytu-hu.” This is the correct term = to extinguish. They relate of the great scholar FirozßbßdÝ, author of the “Kßm·s” (ob. A. H. 817 = A. D. 1414), that he married a Badawi wife in order to study the purest Arabic and once when going to bed said to her, “Uktuli’s-sirßj,” the Persian “Chirßgh- rß bi-kush” = Kill the lamp. “What,” she cried, “Thou an ‘ lim and talk of killing the lamp instead of putting it out!”

[108] In the H. V. the mother takes the “fruits” and places them upon the ground, “but when darkness set in, a light shone from them like the rays of a lamp or the sheen of the sun.”

[109] For these fabled Giant rulers of Syria, Og King of Bashan, etc., see vols. vii. 84; ix. 109, 323. D’Herbelot (s. v. Giabbar= Giant) connects “Jabßbirah” with the Heb. Ghibbor Ghibborim and the Pers. DÝv, Divßn: of these were ‘ d and Shaddßd, Kings of Syria: the Falast”in (Philistines) ‘Auj, Amßlik and Ban· Shayth or Seth’s descendants, the sons of God (Benu-Elohim) of the Book of Genesis (vi. 2) who inhabited Mount Hermon and lived in purity and chastity.

[110] The H. V. explains that the Jinni had appeared to the mother in hideous aspect, with noise and clamour, because she had scoured the Lamp roughly; but was more gentle with Alaeddin because he had rubbed it lightly. This is from Galland.

[111] Arab. Musawwadatayn = lit. two black things, rough copies, etc.

[112] Arab. Ban· Adam, as opposed to Ban· Elohim (Sons of the Gods),

B. al-Jßnn etc The Ban· al-Asfar = sons of the yellow, are Esau's posterity in Edom, also a term applied by Arab historians to the Greeks and Romans whom Jewish fable derived from Idum a: in my vol. ii. 220, they are the people of the yellow or tawny faces. For the legend see Ibn Khall. iii. 8, where the translator suggests that the by-name may be = the "sees of the Emperor" Flavius, confounded with "flavus," a title left by Vespasian to his successors The Ban· al Khashkhash = sons of the (black) poppy are the Ethiopians.

[113] Arab, Hß! hß! so Hßka (fem. Haki) = Here for thee!

[114] So in Medieval Europe Papal bulls and Kings' letters were placed for respect on the head. See Duffield's "Don Quixote," Part i. xxxi.

[115] Galland makes the Juif only rusÚ et adroit.

[116] Arab. "GhashÝm" = a "Johnny Raw" from the root "Ghashm" = iniquity: Builders apply the word to an unhewn stone; addressed to a person it is considered slighting, if not insulting. See vol. ii. 330.

[117] The carat (KÝrßt) being most often, but not always, one twenty-fourth of the diner. See vols. iii. 239; vii. 289.

[118] KanßnÝ, plur. of KinnÝnah.

[119] Here and below silver is specified, whenas the platters in Night dxxxv. were of gold This is one of the many changes' contradictions and confusions which are inherent in Arab stones. See Spitta-Bey's "Contes Arabes," Preface.

[120] i.e., the Slave of the Lamp.

[121] This may be true, but my experience has taught me to prefer dealing with a Jew than with a Christian. The former will "jew" me perhaps, but his commercial cleverness will induce him to allow me some gain in order that I may not be quite disheartened: the latter will strip me of my skin and will grumble because he cannot gain more.

[122] Arab. “Hßlah mutawassitah,” a phrase which has a European Touch.

[123] In the text “JauharjÝyyah,” common enough in Egypt and Syria, an Arab. plur. of an Arabised Turkish sing. — ji for — chÝ = (crafts-) man.

[124] We may suppose some years may have passed in this process and that Alaeddin from a lad of fifteen had reached the age of manhood. The H. V. declares that for many a twelve month the mother and son lived by cotton spinning and the sale of the plate

[125] i.e. Full moon of full moons: See vol. iii. 228. It is pronounced “Badroo’l- Budoor,” hence Galland’s “ Badr-oul- boudour.”

[126] In the H. V. Alaeddin “bethought him of a room adjacent to the Baths where he might sit and see the Princess through the door-chinks, when she raised her veil before the handmaids and eunuchs.”

[127] This is the common conceit of the brow being white as day and the hair black as night.

[128] Such a statement may read absurdly to the West but it is true in the East. “Selim” had seen no woman’s face unveiled, save that of his sable mother Rosebud in Morier’s Tale of Yeldoz, the wicked woman (“The Mirza,” vol. iii. 135). The H. V. adds that Alaeddin’s mother was old and verily had little beauty even in her youth. So at the sight of the Princess he learnt that Allah had created women exquisite in loveliness and heart- ensnaring; and at first glance the shaft of love pierced his heart and he fell to the ground afaint He loved her with a thousand lives and, when his mother questioned him, “his lips formed no friendship with his speech.”

[129] “There is not a present (Teshurah) to bring to the Man of God” (1 Sam. ix. 7), and Menachem explains Teshurah as a gift offered with the object of being admitted to the presence. See also the offering of oil to the King in Isaiah lvii. 9. Even in Maundriell’s Day Travels () it was counted uncivil to visit a dignitary without an offering in hand.

[130] As we shall see further on, the magical effect of the Ring and the Lamp extend far and wide over the physique and morale of the owner: they turn a “raw laddie” into a finished courtier, warrior, statesman, etc.

[131] In Eastern states the mere suspicion of having such an article would expose the suspected at least to torture. Their practical system of treating “treasure trove,” as I saw when serving with my regiment in Gujarßt (Guzerat), is at once to imprison and “molest” the finder, in order to make sure that he has not hidden any part of his find.

[132] Here the MS. text is defective, the allusion is, I suppose, to the Slave of the Lamp.

[133] In the H. V. the King retired into his private apartment; and, dismissing all save the Grand Wazir, “took cognisance of special matters” before withdrawing to the Harem.

[134] The levÚe, Divan or Darbßr being also a lit de justice and a Court of Cassation: See vol. i. 29.

[135] All this is expressed by the Arabic in one word “Tamannß.” Galland adds pour marquer qu’il etait prÛt ß perdre s’il y manquait; and thus he conveys a wrong idea.

[136] This would be still the popular address, nor is it considered rude or slighting. In John (ii. 4) “Atto,” the Heb. Eshah, is similarly used, not complimentarily, but in popular speech.

[137] This sounds ridiculous enough in English, but not in German, e.g. Deine K÷nigliche Hoheit is the formula de rigueur when an Austrian officer, who always addresses brother-soldiers in the familiar second person, is speaking to a camarade who is also a royalty.

[138] “Surßyyßt (lit. = the Pleiades) and “Sham’ßdÝn” a would-be Arabic plur. of the Persian “Sham’adßn”=candlestick, chandelier, for which more correctly Sham’adßnßt is used.

[139] i.e., betrothed to her — j’agrÚe la proposition, says Galland.

[140] Here meaning Eunuch-officers and officials. In the cdlxxvith Night of this volume the word is incorrectly written ghßt in the singular.

[141] In the H. V. Alaeddin on hearing this became as if a thunderbolt had stricken him, and losing consciousness, swooned away.

[142] These calls for food at critical times, and oft- recurring allusions to eating are not yet wholly obsolete amongst the civilised of the xixth century. The ingenious M. Jules Verne often enlivens a tedious scene by Dejeunons! And French travellers, like English, are not unready to talk of food and drink, knowing that the subject is never displeasing to their readers.

[143] The H. V. gives a sketch of the wedding. “And when the ceremonies ended at the palace with pomp and parade and pageant, and the night was far spent, the eunuchs led the Wazir’s son into the bridal chamber. He was the first to seek his couch; then the Queen his mother-in-law, came into him leading the bride, and followed by her suite. She did with her virgin daughter as parents are wont to do, removed her wedding-raiment, and donning a night-dress, placed her in her bridegroom’s arms. Then, wishing her all joy, she with her ladies went away and shut the door. At that instant came the Jinni,” etc.

[144] The happy idea of the wedding night in the water-closet is repeated from the tale of Nur-al-DÝn Ali Hasan (vol. i. 221), and the mishap of the Hunchback bridegroom.

[145] For the old knightly practice of sleeping with a drawn sword separating man and maid see vol. vii. 353 and Mr. Clouston’s “Popular Tales and Fictions,” vol. i. 316. In Poland the intermediary who married by procuration slept alongside the bride in all his armour. The H. V. explains, “He (Alaeddin) also lay a naked sword between him and the Princess so she might perceive that he was

ready to die by that blade should he attempt to do aught of villainy by the bride."

146 Galland says: Ils ne s'aperþurent que de l'Úbranlement du lit et que de leur transport d'un lieu ß l'autre: c'Útait bien assez pour leur donner une frayeur qu'il est aisÚ d'imaginer.

147 Galland very unnecessarily makes the Wazir's son pass into the wardrobe (garderobe) to dress himself.

148 Professional singing and dancing girls: Properly the word is the fem. Of ' lim = a learned man; but it has been anglicised by Byron's

> "The long chibouque's dissolving cloud supply
> Where dance the Almahs to wild minstrelsy."
> — (The Corsair, ii. 2.)

They go about the streets with unveiled faces and are seldom admitted into respectable Harems, although on festal occasions they perform in the court or in front of the house, but even this is objected to by the Mrs. Grundy of Egypt. Lane (M.E. chap. xviii.) derives with Saint Jerome the word from the Heb. or Phoenician Almah = a virgin, a girl, a singing- girl; and thus explains "Alßmoth" in Psalms xlvi. and I Chron. xv. 20. Parkhurst (s.v. 'Alamah = an undeflowered virgin) renders Job xxxix. 30, "the way of a man with a maid" (bi-ßlmah). The way of a man in his virgin state, shunning youthful lust and keeping himself "pure and unspotted."

149 The text reads "Rafa' " (he raised) "al-Bashkhßnah" which in Suppl. Nights (ii. 119) is a hanging, a curtain. Apparently it is a corruption of the Pers. "Paskhkhßnah," a mosquito-curtain.

150 The father suspected that she had not gone to bed a clean maid.

151 Arab. Aysh = Ayyu Shayyin and Laysh = li ayyi Shayyin.
This vulgarism, or rather popular corruption, is of olden date
and was used by such a purist as Al-Mutanabbi in such a phrase as
"Aysh Khabara-k?" = how art thou? See Ibn Khallikan, iii. 79.

152 In the H. V. the Minister sends the Chob-dßr= = rod- bearer, mace-bearer, usher, etc.

153 In the text Sßhal for Sahal, again the broad “Doric” of
Syria.

154 Arab. Dahab ramli = gold dust washed out of the sand, placer-gold. I must excuse myself for using this Americanism, properly a diluvium or deposit of sand, and improperly (Bartlett) a find of drift gold. The word, like many mining terms in the Far West, is borrowed from the Spaniards; it is not therefore one of the many American vulgarisms which threaten hopelessly to defile the pure well of English speech.

155 Abra. “Ratl,” by Europeans usually pronounced “Rotl”
(Rotolo).

156 In the H. V. she returns from the bazar; and, “seeing the house filled with so many persons in goodliest attire, marvelled greatly. Then setting down the meat lately bought she would have taken off her veil, but Alaeddin prevented her and said,” etc.

157 The word is popularly derived from Serai in Persian = a palace; but it comes from the Span. and Port. Cerrar = to shut up, and should be written with the reduplicated liquid.

158 In the H. V. the dresses and ornaments of the slaves were priced at ten millions (Kar·r a crore) of gold coins. I have noticed that Messer Marco “Milione” did not learn his high numerals in Arabia, but that India might easily have taught them to him.

159 Arab. “Rßih yasÝr,” peasant’s language.

160 Arab. Kß’ah, the apodyterium or undressing room upon which the vestibule of the Hammam opens. See the plan in Lane’s M. E. chaps. xvi. The Kßr’ah is now usually called “Maslakh” = stripping-room.

161 Arab. “Hammam-hu” = went through all the operations of the

Hammam, scraping, kneading, soaping, wiping and so forth.

[162] For this aphrodisiac see vol. vi. 60. The subject of aphrodisiacs in the East would fill a small library: almost every medical treatise ends in a long disquisition upon fortifiers, provocatives' etc. We may briefly divide them into three great classes. The first is the medicinal, which may be either external or internal. The second is the mechanical, such as scarification' flagellation, and the application of insects as practiced by certain savage races. There is a venerable Joe Miller of an old Brahmin whose young wife always insisted, each time before he possessed her, upon his being stung by a bee in certain parts. The third is magical superstitious and so forth

[163] This may sound exaggerated to English ears, but a petty Indian Prince, such as the Gßikwßr, or Rajah of Baroda, would be preceded in state processions by several led horses all whose housings and saddles were gold studded with diamonds. The sight made one's mouth water.

[164] i.e. the æArab al-'Arbß; for which see vols. i. 112; v. 101.

[165] Arab. "Al-KandÝl al-'ajÝb:" here its magical virtues are specified and remove many apparent improbabilities from the tale.

[166] This was the highest of honours. At Abyssinian Harar even the Grandees were compelled to dismount at the door of the royal "compound." See my "First Footsteps in East Africa," .

[167] "The right hand" seems to me a European touch in Galland's translation, leur chef mit Aladdin a sa droite. Amongst Moslems the great man sits in the sinistral corner of the Divan as seen from the door, so the place of honour is to his left.

[168] Arab. "M·sikß," classically "MusikÝ" ={Greek}: the Pers. form is M·sikßr; and the Arab. equivalent is Al-Lahn. In the H. V. the King made a signal and straightway drums (dhol) and trumpets (trafÝr) and all manner wedding instruments struck up on every side.

[169] Arab. Marmar Sumßki=porphyry of which ancient Egypt supplied the finest specimens. I found a vein of it in the Anti- Libanus. Strange to say, the quarries which produced the far- famed giallo antico, verd' antico (serpentine limestone) and rosso antico (mostly a porphyry) worked by the old Nilotes, are now unknown to us.

[170] i.e. velvets with gold embroidery: see vol. viii. 201.

[171] The Arabic says, "There was a kiosque with four-and- twenty alcoves (LÝwßn, for which see vols. iv. 71, vi. 347) all builded of emerald, etc., and one remained with the kiosque (kushk) unfinished." I adopt Galland's reading salon ß vingt- quatre croisÚes which are mentioned in the Arab. text towards the end of the tale, and thus avoid the confusion between kiosque and window. In the H. V. there is a domed belvedere (bßrah-dari-i- gumbaz-dßr), four-sided, with six doors on each front (i. e. twenty-four), and all studded with diamonds, etc.

[172] In Persia this is called "Pß-andßz," and must be prepared for the Shah when he deigns to visit a subject. It is always of costly stuffs, and becomes the perquisite of the royal attendants.

[173] Here the European hand again appears to me: the Sultan as a good Moslem should have made the Wuz·-ablution and prayed the dawn-prayers before doing anything worldly.

[174] Arab. FÝ ghuz·ni zßlika," a peculiar phrase, Ghazn=a crease, a wrinkle.

[175] In the H. V. the King "marvelled to see Alaeddin's mother without her veil and magnificently adorned with costly jewels and said in his mind, æMethought she was a grey-haired crone, but I find her still in the prime of life and comely to look upon, somewhat after the fashion of Badr al-Bud·r.' " This also was one of the miracles of the Lamp.

[176] For this word see vols. i. 46, vii. 326. A Joe Miller is told in Western India of an old General Officer boasting his knowledge of

Hindostani. “How do you say, Tell a plain story, General?” asked one of the hearers, and the answer was, “Maydßn kÝ bßt bolo!” = “speak a word about the plain” (or level space).

[177] The prehistoric Arabs: see supra .

[178] Popularly, JerÝd, the palm-frond used as javelin: see vol. vi. 263.

[179] In order to keep off the evil eye, one of the functions of iron and steel: see vol. ii. 316.

[180] The H. V. adds, “Little did the Princess know that the singers were fairies whom the Slave of the Lamp had brought together.”

[181] Alexander the Great: see v. 252, x. 57. The H. V. adds, “Then only one man and one woman danced together, one with other, till midnight, when Alaeddin and the Princess stood up, for it was the wont of China in those days that bride and bridegroom perform together in presence of the wedding company.”

[182] The exceptional reserve of this and other descriptions makes M. H. Zotenberg suspect that the tale was written for one of the Mameluke Princesses: I own to its modesty but I doubt that such virtue would have recommended it to the dames in question. The H. V. adds a few details:— “Then, when the bride and bridegroom had glanced and gazed each at other’s face, the Princess rejoiced with excessive joy to behold his comeliness, and he exclaimed, in the courtesy of his gladness, æO happy me, whom thou deignest, O Queen of the Fair, to honour despite mine unworth, seeing that in thee all charms and graces are perfected.’”

[183] The term has not escaped ridicule amongst Moslems. A common fellow having stood in his way the famous wit Ab· al-’Aynß asked “What is that?” “A man of the Sons of Adam” was the reply. “Welcome, welcome,” cried the other, “Allah grant thee length of days. I deemed that all his sons were dead.” See Ibn Khallikan iii. 57.

[184] This address to an inanimate object (here a window) is highly

idiomatic and must be cultivated by the practical Arabist. In the H. V. the unfinished part is the four-and-twentieth door of the fictitious (ja'alÝ) palace.

185 This is true Orientalism, a personification or incarnation which Galland did not think proper to translate.

186 Arab. "La'ab al-Andßb;" the latter word is from "Nadb" = brandishing or throwing the javelin.

187 The "mothers" are the prime figures, the daughters being the secondary. For the " 'Ilm al-Ram!" = (Science of the sand) our geomancy, see vol. iii. 269, and D'Herbelot's sub. v. Raml or Reml.

188 This is from Galland, whose certaine boisson chaude evidently means tea. It is preserved in the H.V.

189 i.e. his astrolabe, his "ZÝj" or table of the stars, his almanack, etc. For a highly fanciful derivation of the "Arstable" see Ibn Khallikan (iii. 580). He makes it signify "balance or lines (Pers. æAstur') of the sun," which is called "Lßb" as in the case of wicked Queen Lßb (The Nights, vol. vii. 296). According to him the Astrolabe was suggested to Ptolemy by an armillary sphere which had accidentally been flattened by the hoof of his beast: this is beginning late in the day, the instrument was known to the ancient Assyrians. Chardin (Voyages ii. 149) carefully describes the Persian variety of —

"The cunning man highs Sidrophil

(as Will. Lilly was called). Amongst other things he wore at his girdle an astrolabe not bigger than the hollow of a man's hand, often two to three inches in diameter and looking at a distance like a medal." These men practiced both natural astrology = astronomy, as well as judicial astrology which foretells events and of which Kepler said that "she, albeit a fool, was the daughter of a wise mother, to whose support and life the silly maid was indispensable." Isidore of Seville (A. D. 600-636) was the first to distinguish between the two branches, and they flourished side by side till Newton's day. Hence the many astrological terms in our tongue, e.g. consider, contemplate, disaster, jovial, mercurial, saturnine, etc.

[190] In the H. V. “New brass lamps for old ones! who will exchange ?” So in the story of the Fisherman’s son, a Jew who had been tricked of a cock, offers to give new rings for old rings. See Jonathan Scott’s excerpts from the Wortley-Montague MSS. vol. vi. p 12 This is one of the tales which I have translated for vol. iv.

[191] The H. V. adds that Alaeddin loved to ride out a- hunting and had left the city for eight days whereof three had passed by.

[192] Galland makes her say, HÚ bien folle, veux-tu me dire pourqoui tu ris? The H. V. renders “Cease, giddy head, why laughest thou?” and the vulgate “Well, giggler,” said the Princess, etc.

[193] Nothing can be more improbable than this detail, but upon such abnormal situations almost all stones, even in our most modern “Society-novels,” depend and the cause is clear — without them there would be no story. And the modern will, perhaps, suggest that “the truth was withheld for a higher purpose, for the working out of certain ends.” In the H. V Alaeddin, when about to go a-hunting, always placed the Lamp high up on the cornice with all care lest any touch it.

[194] The H. V. adds, “The Magician, when he saw the Lamp, at once knew that it must be the one he sought; for he knew that all things, great and small, appertaining to the palace

[195] In truly Oriental countries the Wazir is expected to know everything, and if he fail in this easy duty he may find himself in sore trouble.

[196] i.e. must he obeyed.

[197] We see that “China” was in those days the normal
Oriental “despotism tempered by assassination.”

[198] In the H. V. Alaeddin promises, “if I fail to find and fetch the Princess, I will myself cut off my head and cast it before the throne.” Hindus are adepts in suicide and this self- decapitation, which sounds absurd further West, is quite possible to them.

[199] In Galland Alaeddin unconsciously rubbed the ring against un petit roc, to which he clung in order to prevent falling into the stream. In the H. V. “The bank was high and difficult of descent and the youth would have rolled down headlong had he not struck upon a rock two paces from the bottom and remained hanging over the water. This mishap was of the happiest for during his fall he struck the stone and rubbed his ring against it,” etc.

[200] In the H. V. he said, “First save me that I fall not into the stream and then tell me where is the pavilion thou builtest for her and who hath removed it.”

[201] Alluding to the preparatory washing, a mere matter of cleanliness which precedes the formal Wuz·-ablution.

[202] In the H. V. the Princess ends with, “I had made this resolve that should he approach me with the design to win his wish perforce, I would destroy my life. By day and by night I abode in fear of him; but now at the sight of thee my heart is heartened.”

[203] The Fellah had a natural fear of being seen in fine gear, which all would have supposed to be stolen goods; and Alaeddin was justified in taking it perforce, because necessitas non habet legem. See a similar exchange of dress in Spitta-Bey’s “Contes Arabes Modernes,” . In Galland the peasant when pressed consents; and in the H. V. Alaeddin persuades him by a gift of money.

[204] i.e. which would take effect in the shortest time.

[205] Her modesty was startled by the idea of sitting: at meat with a strange man and allowing him to make love to her.

[206] In the text KidÝ, pop. for Ka-zßlika. In the H. V. the Magician

replies to the honeyed speech of the Princess, “O my lady, we in Africa have not so gracious customs as the men of China. This day I have learned of thee a new courtesy which I shall ever keep in mind.”

[207] Galland makes the Princess poison the Maghrabi, which is not gallant. The H. V. follows suit and describes the powder as a mortal poison.

[208] Contrast this modesty with the usual scene of reunion after severance, as in the case of Kamar al-Zamßn and immodest Queen Bud·r, vol. iii. p-304.

[209] His dignity forbade him to walk even the length of a carpet: see vol. vii. for this habit of the Mameluke Beys. When Harun al-Rashid made his famous pilgrimage afoot from Baghdad to Meccah (and he was the last of the Caliphs who performed this rite), the whole way was spread with a “Pß-andßz” of carpets and costly cloths.

[210] The proverb suggests our “par nobile fratrum,” a pair resembling each other as two halves of a split bean.

[211] In the H. V. “If the elder Magician was in the East, the other was in the West; but once a year, by their skill in geomancy, they had tidings of each other.”

[212] The act was religiously laudable, but to the Eastern, as to the South European mind, fair play is not a jewel; moreover the story-teller may insinuate that vengeance would be taken only by foul and unlawful means — the Black Art, perjury, murder and so forth

[213] For this game, a prime favourite in Egypt, see vol. vi. 145, De Sacy (Chrestomathie i. 477) and his authorities Hyde, Syntagma Dissert. ii. 374, P. Labat, “Memoires du Chev d’Arvieux,” iii. 321; Thevenot, “Voyage du Levant,” , and Niebuhr, “Voyages,” i. 139, Plate 25, fig. H.

[214] Evidently=“(jeu de) dames” (supposed to have been invented in

Paris during the days of the Regency: see LittrÚ); and, although in certain Eastern places now popular, a term of European origin. It is not in Galland. According to Ibn Khallikan (iii. 69) “Nard” = tables, arose with King ArdashÝr son of Babuk, and was therefore called NardashÝr (Nard ArdashÝr?). He designed it as an image of the world and its people, so the board had twelve squares to represent the months; the thirty pieces or men represented the days, and the dice were the emblems of Fate and Lot.

[215] i.e. a weaner, a name of good omen for a girl-child: see vol. vi. 145. The Hindi translator, Totßrßm Shayyßn, calls her HamÝdah = the Praiseworthy.

[216] Arab. Kirßmßt: see vols. ii. 237; iv. 45. The Necromancer clearly smells a rat holding with Diderot:

> De par le Roi! Defense ß Dieu
> De faire miracle en ce lieu;

and the stage properties afterwards found with the holy woman, such as the gallipot of colouring ointment, justify his suspicion.

[217] “ ‘Ajßib” plur. of “ ‘AjÝb,” a common exclamation amongst the populace. It is used in Persian as well as in Arabic.

[218] Evidently la force de l’imagination, of which a curious illustration was given in Paris during the debauched days of the Second Empire. Before a highly “fashionable” assembly of men appeared a youth in fleshings who sat down upon a stool, bared his pudenda and closed his eyes when, by “force of fancy,” erection and emission took place. But presently it was suspected and proved that the stool was hollow and admitted from below a hand whose titillating fingers explained the phenomenon.

[219] a Moslems are curious about sleeping postures and the popular saying is: — Lying upon the right side is proper to Kings; upon the left to Sages, to sleep supine is the position of Allah’s Saints and prone upon the belly is peculiar to the Devils.

[220] This “ æAsß,” a staff five to six feet long, is one of the properties of Moslem Saints and reverends who, imitating that furious old Puritan, Caliph Omar, make and are allowed to make a pretty liberal distribution of its caresses.

[221] i.e. as she was in her own home.

[222] Arab. “Sul·k” a Sufistical expression, the road to salvation, &c.

[223] In the H. V. her diet consisted of dry bread and fruits.

[224] This is the first mention of the windows in the Arabic MS.

[225] For this “Roc” of the older writers see vols. v. 122; vi. 16-49. I may remind the reader that the O. Egyptian “Rokh,” or “Rukh,” by some written “Rekhit,” whose ideograph is a monstrous bird with one claw raised, also denotes pure wise Spirits, the Magi, &c. I know a man who derives from it our “rook” = beak and parson.

[226] In the H. V he takes the Lamp from his bosom, where he had ever kept it since his misadventure with the African Magician

[227] Here the mythical Rukh is mixed up with the mysterious bird SÝmurgh, for which see vol. x. 117.

[228] The H. V. adds, “hoping thereby that thou and she and all the household should fall into perdition.”

[229] Rank mesmerism, which has been practiced in the East from ages immemorial. In Christendom Santa Guglielma worshipped at Brunate, “works many miracles, chiefly healing aches of head.” In the H. V. Alaeddin feigns that he is ill and fares to the Princess with his head tied up.

[230] Mr. Morier in “The Mirza” (vol. i. 87) says, “Had the Arabian Nights’ Entertainments, with all their singular fertility of invention and never-ending variety, appeared as a new book in the present day,

translated literally and not adapted to European taste in the manner attempted in M. Galland's translation, I doubt whether they would have been tolerated, certainly not read with the avidity they are, even in the dress with which he has clothed them, however imperfect that dress maybe." But in Morier's day the literal translation was so despised that an Eastern book was robbed of half its charms, both of style and idea.

[231] In the MS. Of the BibliothÞque National, Supplement Arabe (No. 2523, vol. ii. fol. 147), the story which follows "Aladdin" is that of the Ten Wazirs, for which see Supp. Nights ii. In Galland the Histoire de Codadad et des ses FrÞres comes next to the tale of Zayn al-Asnam: I have changed the sequence in order that the two stories directly translated from the Arabic may be together.

[232] M. Hermann Zotenberg lately informed me that "Khudadad and his Brothers" is to be found in a Turkish MS., "Al-Faraj ba'd al-Shiddah" — Joy after Annoy — in the BibliothÞque Nationale of Paris. But that work is a mere derivation from the Persian "Hazßr o yek Roz" for which see my vol. x. p.441. The name Khudadad is common to most Eastern peoples, the Sansk. Devadatta, the Gr. {Greek} and Dorotheus; the Lat. Deodatus, the Ital. Diodato, and Span. Diosdado, the French Dieu-donnÚ, and the Arab.-Persic Alladßd, DÝvdßd and Khudßbaksh. Khudß is the mod. Pers. form of the old KhudßÝ=sovereign, king, as in Mßh-i-KhudßÝ=the sovereign moon, Kßm-KhudßÝ=master of his passions, etc.

[233] Lit. Homes (or habitations) of Bakr (see vol. v. 66), by the Turks pronounced "Diyßr-i-BekÝr." It is the most famous of the four provinces into which Mesopotamia (Heb. Naharaym, Arab. Al-JazÝrah) is divided by the Arabs; viz: Diyßr Bakr (capital AmÝdah); Diyßr Modhar (cap. Rakkah or Aracta); Diyßr RabÝ'ah (cap. Nisibis) and Diyßr al-JazÝrah or Al-JazÝrah (cap. Mosul). As regards the "King of Harrßn," all these ancient cities were at some time the capitals of independent chiefs who styled themselves royalties.

[234] The Heb. Charran, the Carrh of the classics where, according to the Moslems, Abraham was born, while the Jews and Christians make him emigrate thither from “Ur (hod. Mughayr) of the Chaldees.” Hence his Arab. title “Ibrahim al-Harrßni.” My late friend Dr. Beke had a marvellous theory that this venerable historic Harrßn was identical with a miserable village to the east of Damascus because the Fellahs call it Harrßn al-’AwßmÝd — of the Columns — from some Gr co-Roman remnants of a paltry provincial temple. See “Jacob’s Flight,” etc., London, Longmans, 1865.

[235] PÝrozah=turquoise, is the Persian, Fir·zah and Firuzakh (De Sacy, Chrest. ii. 84) the Arab. forms. The stone is a favourite in the East where, as amongst the Russians (who affect to despise the Eastern origin of their blood to which they owe so much of its peculiar merit), it is supposed to act talisman against wounds and death in battle; and the Persians, who hold it to be a guard against the Evil Eye, are fond of inscribing “turquoise of the old rock” with one or more of the “Holy Names.” Of these talismans a modern Spiritualist asks, “Are rings and charms and amulets magnetic, to use an analogue for what we cannot understand, and has the immemorial belief in the power of relics a natural not to say a scientific basis?”

[236] Samaria is a well-known name amongst Moslems, who call the city ShamrÝn and Shamr·n. It was built, according to Ibn Batrik, upon Mount Samir by Amri who gave it the first name; and the TarÝkh SamÝrÝ, by Aba al-Fath Ab· al-Hasan, is a detailed account of its garbled annals. As Nabl·s (Neapolis of Herod., also called by him Sebaste) it is now familiar to the Cookite.

[237] In the text Zangi-i-Adam-kh’wßr afterwards called Habashi=an Abyssinian. Galland simply says un negre. In India the “HabshÝ” (chief) of Jinjirah (=Al-Jazirah, the Island) was admiral of the Grand Moghul’s fleets. These negroids are still dreaded by Hind·s and HindÝs and, when we have another “Sepoy Mutiny,” a few thousands of them bought upon the Zanzibar coast, dressed, drilled and officered by Englishmen, will do us yeomans’ service.

[238] This seems to be a fancy name for a country: the term is Persian=the Oceanland or a seaport town: from “Daryß” the sea and bßr=a region, tract, as in Zanzibßr=Black-land. The learned Weil explains it (in loco) by Gegend der Brunnen, brunnengleicher ort, but I cannot accept Scott’s note (iv. 400), “Signifying the seacoast of every country; and hence the term is applied by Oriental geographers to the coast of Malabar.”

[239] The onager, confounded by our older travellers with the zebra, is the G·r-i-khßr of Persia, where it is the noblest game from which kings did not disdain to take a cognomen, e.g., Bahrßm-i-G·r. It is the “wild ass” of Jeremiah (ii. 24: xiv. 6). The meat is famous in poetry for combining the flavours peculiar to all kinds of flesh (Ibn Khallikan iii. 117; iii. 239, etc.) and is noticed by Herodotus (Clio. cxxxiii.) and by Xenophon (Cyro. lib. 1) in sundry passages: the latter describes the relays of horses and hounds which were used in chasing it then as now. The traveller Olearius (A. D. 1637) found it more common than in our present day: Shah Abbas turned thirty-two wild asses into an enclosure where they were shot as an item of entertainment to the ambassadors at his court. The skin of the wild ass’s back produces the famous shagreen, a word seemingly derived from the Pers. “SaghrÝ,” e.g. “Kyafash-i-Saghri”=slippers of shagreen, fine wear fit for a “young Duke”. See in Ibn Khallikan (iv. 245) an account of a “J·r” (the Arabised “G·r”) eight hundred years old.

[240] “Dasht-i-lß-siwß-H·”=a desert wherein is none save He (Allah), a howling wilderness.

[241] Per. “Nßz o andßz”=coquetry, in a half-honest sense. The Persian “Kßkß Siyßh,” i.e. “black brother” (a domestic negro) pronounces NßzÝ-n·zÝ.

[242] In the text Nimak-harßm: on this subject see vol. viii. 12.

[243] i.e., an Arab of noble strain: see vol. iii. 72.

[244] In the text “Kazzßk”=Cossacks, bandits, mounted highwaymen;

the word is well known in India, where it is written in two different ways, and the late Mr. John Shakespear in his excellent Dictionary need hardly have marked the origin "U" (unknown).

[245] Here and below the Hindostani version mounts the lady upon a camel ("Ushtur" or "Unth") which is not customary in India except when criminals are led about the bazar. An elephant would have been in better form.

[246] The AshrafÝ (Port. Xerafim) is a gold coin whose value has greatly varied with its date from four shillings upwards. In The (true) Nights we find (passim) that, according to the minting of the VIth Ommiade, 'Abd al-Malik bin Marwßn (A.H. 65-86=A.D. 685-703), the coinage of Baghdad consisted of three metals. "Ita quoque peregrina suis nummis nomina posuit, aureum Dinar denarium, argentem Dirhen (lege dirham), Drachma, reum fols (fuls), follem appellans. * * * Nam Vera moneta aurea nomine follis lignabatur, ut reorum sub Aarone Raschido cussorum qui hoc nomen servavit." (O. G. Tychsen . Introduct. in Rem numariam Muhammedanorum.) For the dinar, daric or miskßl see The Nights, vol i. 32; ix. 294; for the dirham, i. 33, ii. 316, etc.; and for the Fals or Fils=a fish scale, a spangle of metal, vol. i. 321. In the debased currency of the Maroccan Empire the Fals of copper or iron, a substantial coin, is worth 2,160 to the French five-franc piece.

[247] In the Hindi, as in Galland's version, the horse is naturally enough of Turcoman blood. I cannot but think that in India we have unwisely limited ourselves for cavalry remounts to the Western market that exports chiefly the mongrel "Gulf Arab" and have neglected the far hardier animal, especially the G·tdßn blood of the Tartar plains, which supply "excellent horses whose speed and bottom are" say travellers in general, "so justly celebrated throughout Asia." Our predecessors were too wise to "put all the eggs in one basket."

[248] An act of worship, see my Pilgrimage in which "Tawßf"=circuiting, is described in detail, ii. 38; iii. 2O1 et seqq. A counterpart of this scene is found in the Histoire du Sultan Aqchid

(Ikhshid) who determined to witness his own funeral. Gauttier vol. i. p-139. Another and similar incident occurs in the “Nineteenth Vezir’s Story” (p-18 of the History of the Forty Vezirs, before alluded to): here Hasan of Basrah, an ‘Alim who died in A.H. 110 (=A.D. 728) saw in vision (the “drivel of dreams?”) folk of all conditions, sages, warriors and moon-faced maids seeking, but in vain, to release the sweet soul of the Prince who had perished.

[249] Here, after Moslem fashion, the mother ranks before the wife: “A man can have many wives but only one mother.” The idea is old amongst Easterns: see Herodotus and his Christian commentators on the history of Intaphernes’ wife (Thalia, cap. cxix). “O King,” said that lady of mind logical, “I may get me another mate if God will and other children an I lose these; but as my father and my mother are no longer alive, I may not by any means have another brother,” etc., etc.

[250] In Galland the Histoire de Ganem, fils d’Abu A´oub, surnommÚ l’esclave d’Amour, precedes Zayn al-Asnßm. In the Arab texts Ghanim bin Ayy·b, the Thrall o’ Love, occurs much earlier: see The Nights vol. ii. 45.

It is curious to compare the conclusions of these tales with the formula of the latest specimens, the Contes Arabes Modernes of Spitta-Bey, e.g. “And the twain lived together (p. iii.) and had sons and daughters (p. ii.), cohabiting with perfect harmony (fÝ al-Kamßl pp.42, 79); and at last they died and were buried and so endeth the story” (wa khalßs p.161).

[251] In Galland and his translators the Adventures of Khudadad and his Brothers is followed by the Histoire du Dormeur EveillÚ which, as “The Sleeper and the Waker,” is to be found in the first of my Supplemental Volumes, p-29. After this the learned Frenchman introduced, as has been said, the Histoire de la Lampe merveilleuse or “Alaeddin” to which I have assigned, for reasons given in loco, a place before Khudadad.

[252] i.e. Daddy Abdullah, the former is used in Pers., Turk. and

Hindostani for dad! dear! child! and for the latter, see vol. v. 141.

[253] Here the Arab. syn. of the Pers. “Darwaysh,” which Egyptians pronounce “DarwÝsh.” In the Nile-valley the once revered title has been debased to an insult = “poor devil” (see Pigrimage i., p-22); “FakÝr” also has come to signify a Koran-chaunter.

[254] To “Nakh” is to make the camel kneel. See vo!. ii. 139, and its references.

[255] As a sign that he parted willingly with all his possessions.

[256] Arab. “‘Ubb” prop.=the bulge between the breast and the outer robe which is girdled round the waist to make a pouch. See vol. viii. 205.

[257] Thirst very justly takes precedence of hunger: a man may fast for forty days, but with out water in a tropical country he would die within a week. For a description of the horrors of thirst see my “First Footsteps in East Africa,” p-8.

[258] In Galland it is Sidi Nouman; in many English translations, as in the “Lucknow” (Newul Kishore Press, 1880), it has become “Sidi Nonman.” The word has occurred in King Omar bin al-Nu’uman, vol. ii. 77 and 325, and vol. v. 74. For SÝdÝ = my lord, see vol. v. 283; Byron, in The Corsair, ii. 2, seems to mistake it for “Sayyid.”

High in his hall reclines the turban’d Seyd,
Around — the bearded chiefs he came to lead.

[259] The Turco-English form of the Persian “Pulßo.”

[260] i.e. the secure (fem.). It was the name of the famous concubine of Solomon to whom he entrusted his ring (vol. vi. 84), also of the mother of Mohammed who having taken her son to Al-Medinah (Yathrib) died on the return journey. I cannot understand why the Apostle of Al-Islam, according to his biographers and commentators,

refused to pray for his parent's soul, she having been born in Al-Fitrah (the interval between the fall of Christianity and the birth of Al-Islam), when he had not begun to preach his "dispensation."

[261] The cane-play: see vol. vi. 263.

[262] Galland has une Goule, i.e., a Gh·lah, a she-Gh·l, an ogress. But the lady was supping with a male of that species, for which see vols. i. 55; vi. 36.

[263] In the text "WazÝfah" prop. = a task, a stipend, a salary, but here = the "Farz" devotions which he considered to be his duty. In Spitta-Bey (loc. cit.) it is = duty,

[264] For this scene which is one of every day in the East; see Pilgrimage ii. p-54.

[265] This hate of the friend of man is inherited from Jewish ancestors; and, wherever the Hebrew element prevails, the muzzle, which has lately made its appearance in London, is strictly enforced, as at Trieste. Amongst the many boons which civilisation has conferred upon Cairo I may note hydrophobia; formerly unknown in Egypt the dreadful disease has lately caused more than one death. In India sporadic cases have at rare times occurred in my own knowledge since 1845.

[266] In Galland "Rougeau" = (for Rougeaud?) a red-faced (man), etc., and in the English version "Chance": "Bakht" = luck, good fortune.

[267] In the text "Sarrßf" = a money-changer. See vols. i. 210; iv. 270.

[268] Galland has forgotten this necessary detail: see vol. i. 30 and elsewhere. In Lane's story of the man metamorphosed to an ass, the old woman, "quickly covering her face, declared the fact."

[269] In the normal forms of this story, which Galland has told very badly, the maiden would have married the man she saved.

[270] In other similar tales the injured one inflicts such penalty by the express command of his preserver who takes strong measures to ensure obedience.

[271] In the more finished tales of the true “Nights” the mare would have been restored to human shape after giving the best security for good conduct in time to come.

[272] i.e. Master Hasan the Rope-maker. Galland writes, after European fashion, “Hassan,” for which see vol. i. 251; and for “Khwßjah” vol. vi. 146. “Al-Habbßl” was the cognomen of a learned “Hßfiz” (= traditionist and Koran reader), Ab· Ishßk Ibrahim, in Ibn Khall. ii. 262; for another see iv. 410.

[273] “Sa’d” = prosperity and “Sa’dÝ’ ‘= prosperous, the surname of the “Persian moralist,” for whom see my friend F. F. Arbuthnot’s pleasant booklet, “Persian Portraits” (London Quaritch, 1887).

[274] This is true to nature as may be seen any day at Bombay The crows are equally audacious, and are dangerous to men Iying wounded in solitary places.

[275] The Pers. “Gil-i-sar-sh·Ý” (=head-washing clay), the Sindi “Met,” and the Arab “Tafl,” a kind of clay much used in Persian, Afghanistan, Sind, etc. Galland turns it into terre Ó decrasser and his English translators into “scouring sand which women use in baths.” This argillaceous earth mixed with mustard oil is locally used for clay and when rose-leaves and perfumes are used, it makes a tolerable wash-ball. See “Scinde or The Unhappy Valley,” i. 31.

[276] For the “Cowrie” (Cypr£a moneta) see vol. iv. 77. The Bßdßm or BÝdßm (almond) used by way of small change in India, I have noted elsewhere.

[277] Galland has “un morceau de plomb,” which in the HindÝ text becomes “ShÝshahkßpaysß” = a (pice) small coin of glass: the translator also terms it a “Faddah,” for which see Nusf (alias

“Nuss”), vols. ii. 37, vi. 214 and ix. 139, 167. Glass tokens, by way of coins, were until late years made at Hebron, in Southern Syria.

[278] For the “Tßk” or “Tßkah” = the little wall-niche, see vol. vii. 361.

[279] In the French and English versions the coin is a bit of lead for weighting the net. For the “Paysß” (pice) = two farthings, and in weight = half an ounce, see Herklot’s Glossary, p. xcviii.

[280] In the text “bilisht” = the long span between thumb-tip and minimus-tip. Galland says long plus d’une coudÚe et gros Ó proportion.

[281] For the diamond (Arab. “Almßs” from {Greek}, and in Hind. “HÝra” and “Pannß”) see vols. vi. 15, i. ix. 325, and in latter correct, “Euritic,” a misprint for “dioritic.” I still cannot believe diamond-cutting to be an Indian art, and I must hold that it was known to the ancients. It could not have been an unpolished stone, that “Adamas notissimus” which according to Juvenal (vi. 156) Agrippa gave to his sister. Maundeville (A.D. 1322) has a long account of the mineral, “so hard that no man can polish it,” and called Hamese (“Almßs?”). For Mr. Petrie and his theory, see vol. ix. 325. In most places where the diamond has been discovered of late years it had been used as a magic stone, e.g., by the PagÚs or medicine-men of the Brazil, or for children’s playthings, which was the case with the South-African “Caffres.”

[282] These stones, especially the carbuncle, which give out dight in darkness are a commonplace of Eastern folk-lore. For luminous jewels in folk-lore, see Mr. Clouston (i. 412): the belief is not wholly extinct in England, and I have often heard of it in the Brazil and upon the African Gaboon. It appears to me that there may be a basis of fact to tints fancy, the abnormal effect of precious stones upon mesmeric “sensitives.”

[283] The chimney and chimney-piece of Galland are not Eastern: the H. V. uses “BukhßrÝ” = a place for steaming.

[284] i.e. “Rachel.”

[285] In the text “lakh,” the Anglicised “lac” = 100,000.

[286] This use of camphor is noted by Gibbon (D. and F. iii. 195).

[287] “ b o hawß” = climate: see vol. ii. 4.

[288] Galland makes this article a linen cloth wrapped about the skull-cap or core of the turban.

[289] Mr. Coote (loc. cit.) is unable to produce a puramythe containing all of “Ali Bßba;” but, for the two leading incidents he quotes from Prof. Sakellarios two tales collected in Cyprus One is Morgiana marking the village doors (), which has occurred doubtless a hundred times. The other, in the “Story of Drakos,” is an ogre, hight “Three Eyes,” who attempts the rescue of his wife with a party of blackamoors packed in bales and these are all discovered and slain.

[290] Dans la forÛt, says Galland.

[291] Or “Samsam,” The grain = Sesamum Orientale: hence the French, Sesame, ouvre-toi! The term is cabalistical, like S·lem, S·lam or Sh·lam in the Directorium Vit Human of Johannes di CapuÔ: Inquit vir: Ibam in nocte plenilunii et ascendebam super domum ubi furari intendebam, et accedens ad fenestram ubi radii lune ingrediebantur, et dicebam hanc coniurationem, scilicet sulem sulem, septies, deinde amplectebar lumen lune et sine lesione descendebam ad domum, etc. (p-25) par Joseph Derenbourg, Membre de l’Institut 1re Fascicule, Paris, F. Vieweg, 67, Rue de Richelieu, 1887.

[292] In the text “Jathßni” = the wife of an elder brother. Hindostani, like other Eastern languages, is rich in terms for kinship whereof English is so exceptionally poor. Mr. Francis Galtson, in his well-known work, “Hereditary Genius,” a misnomer by the by for “HeredTalent,” felt this want severely and was at pains to supply it.

[293]In the text “Thag,” our English “Thug,” often pronounced

moreover by the Briton with the sibilant “th.” It means simply a cheat: you say to your servant “T· barß Thag hai” = thou art a precious rascal; but it has also the secondary meaning of robber, assassin, and the tertiary of Bhawßni-worshippers who offer indiscriminate human sacrifices to the DeÙss of Destruction. The word and the thing have been made popular in England through the “Confessions of a Thug” by my late friend Meadows Taylor; and I may record my conviction that were the English driven out of India, “Thuggee,” like piracy in Cutch and in the Persian Gulf, would revive at the shortest possible time.

[294] i.e. the Civil Governor, who would want nothing better.

[295]This is in Galland and it is followed by the H. V.; but it would be more natural to suppose that of the quarters two were hung up outside the door and the others within. VOL. XIII

[296] I am unwilling to alter the time honoured corruption: properly it is written Marjßnah = the “Coralline,” from Marjßn = red coral, for which see vols. ii. 100; vii. 373.

[297] i.e. the “ æIddah.” during which she could not marry.
See vol. iii. 292.

[298] In Galland he is a savetier * * * naturellement gai, et qui avait toujours le mot pour rire: the H. V. naturally changed him to a tailor as the Chßmßr or leather-worker would be inadmissible to polite conversation.

[299] i.e. a leader of prayer; the Pers. “PÝsh-namßz” = fore-prayer, see vols. ii. 203; iv. 111 and 227. Galland has “Ýmßn,” which can mean only faith, belief, and in this blunder he is conscientiously followed by his translators — servum pecus

[300] Galland nails down the corpse in the bier — a Christian practice — and he certainly knew better. Moreover, prayers for the dead are mostly recited over the bier when placed upon the brink of the grave; nor is it usual for a woman to play so prominent a part in the

ceremony.

[301] See vols. v. 111; ix. 163 and x. 47.

[302] Galland is less merciful, “Aussit¶[t le conducteur fut dÚclarÚ digne de mort tout d’une voix, et il s’y condamna lui-mÛme,” etc. The criminal, indeed, condemns himself and firmly offers his neck to be stricken.

[303] In the text “Lauh,” for which see vol. v. 73.

[304] In Arab. “Kama” = he rose, which, in vulgar speech especially in Egypt, = he began. So in Spitta-Bey’s “Contes Arabes Modernes” () “Kßmat al-Sibhah dhßkat fi yad akhÝ-h” = the chaplet began (lit. arose) to wax tight in his brother’s hand. This sense is shadowed forth in classical Arabic.

[305] So in old Arabian history “KasÝr” (the Little One), the Arab Zopyrus, stows away in huge camel-bags the 2,000 warriors intended to surprise masterful Queen Zebba. Chronique de TabarÝ, vol. ii., 26. Also the armed men in boxes by which Shamar, King of Al-Yaman, took Shamar-kand = Shamar’s-town, now Samarkand. (Ibid. ii. 158.)

[306] i.e. for a walk, a “constitutional”: the phrase is very common in Egypt, and has occurred before.

[307] These visions are frequent in Al-Islam; see Pilgrimage iii. 254-55. Of course Christians are not subject to them, as Moslems also are never favoured with glimpses of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints; the best proof of their “Subjectivity.”

[308] For this word see De Sacy, Chrest. ii. 421. It has already occurred in The Nights, vol. iii. 295.

[309] Not a few pilgrims settle for a time or for life in the two Holy Places, which are thus kept supplied with fresh blood. See Pilgrimage ii. 260.

[310] i.e. Bayt al-Mukaddas, for which see vol. ii. 132.

[311] An affidavit amongst Moslems is “litis decisio,” as in the jurisprudence of medi val Europe.

[312] In Arab folk-lore there are many instances of such precocious boys — enfants terribles they must be in real life. In Ibn Khall. (iii. 104) we find notices of a book “Kitßb Nujabß al-Abnß” = Treatise on Distinguished Children, by Ibn Zakar al- Sakalli (the Sicilian), ob. A. D. 1169-70. And the boy-Kazi is a favourite role in the plays of peasant-lads who enjoy the irreverent “chaff” almost as much as when “making a Pasha.” This reminds us of the boys electing Cyrus as their King in sport (Herodotus, i. 114). For the cycle of “Precocious Children” and their adventures, see Mr. Clouston (Popular Tales, etc., ii. 1- 14), who enters into the pedigree and affiliation. I must, however, differ with that able writer when he remarks at the end, “And now we may regard the story of Valerius Maximus with suspicion, and that of Lloyd as absolutely untrue, so far as William Noy’s alleged share in the ‘case.’ “ The jest or the event happening again and again is no valid proof of its untruth; and it is often harder to believe in derivation than in spontaneous growth.

[313] In Galland Ali Cogia, Marchand de Bagdad, is directly followed by the Histoire du Cheval EnchantÚ. For this “Ebony Horse,” as I have called it, see vol. v. .

[314] “Bßn·” = a lady, a dame of high degree generally, e.g. the (Shah’s) Banu-i-Harem in James Morier (“The Mirza,” iii. 50), who rightly renders Pari Banu = Pari of the first quality. “Peri” (ParÝ) in its modern form has a superficial resemblance to “Fairy;” but this disappears in the “Pairika” of the Avesta and the “Pairik” of the modern Parsee. In one language only, the MultßnÝ, there is a masculine form for the word “Parß” = a he-fairy (Scinde, ii. 203). In Al-Islam these Peris are beautiful feminine spirits who, created after the “DÝvs” (Tabari, i. 7), mostly believe in Allah and the Koran and desire the good of mankind: they are often attacked by the said DÝvs, giants or demons, who imprison them in cages hung to the

highest trees, and here the captives are visited by their friends who feed them with the sweetest of scents. I have already contrasted them with the green-coated pygmies to which the grotesque fancy of Northern Europe has reduced them. Bßn· in Pers. = a princess, a lady, and is still much used, e.g. Bßn·-Ý-Harim, the Dame of the Serraglio, whom foreigners call “Queen of Persia,” and rßm-Banu=“the calm Princess,” a nickname. A Greek story equivalent of Prince Ahmad is told by Pio in Contes Populaires Grecs (No. ii.) and called {Greek}, the Golden box. Three youths ({Greek}) love the same girl and agree that whoever shall learn the best craft ({Greek}) shall marry her; one becomes an astrologer, the second can raise the dead, and the third can run faster than air. They find her at death’s door, and her soul, which was at her teeth ready to start, goes down ({Greek}).

[315] Light of the Day.

[316] Galland has “Bisnagar,” which the H. V. corrupts to Bishan-Garh = Vishnu’s Fort, an utter misnomer. Bisnagar, like Bijnagar, Beejanuggur, Vizianuggur, etc., is a Prakrit corruption of the Sanskrit Vijßyanagara = City of Victory, the far-famed Hindu city and capital of the Narasingha or Lord of Southern India, mentioned in The Nights, vols. vi. 18; ix. 84. Nicolo de’ Conti in the xvth century found it a magnificent seat of Empire some fifteen marches south of the pestilential mountains which contained the diamond mines. Accounts of its renown and condition in the last generation have been given by James Grant (“Remarks on the Dekkan”) and by Captain Moore (“Operations of Little’s Detachment against Tippoo Sultan”). The latest description of it is in “The Indian Empire,” by Sir William W. Hunter. Vijßyanagar, village in Bellary district, Madras, lat. 15 degrees 18’ N., long. 76 degrees 30’ E., pop. (1871), 437, inhabiting 172 houses. The proper name of this village is Hampi, but Vijßyanagar was the name of the dynasty (?) and of the kingdom which had its capital here and was the last great Hindu power of the South. Founded by two adventurers in the middle of the xivth century, it lasted for two centuries till its star went down at Tßlikot in A. D. 1565. For a description of the ruins of the old city of

Vijßyanagar, which covers a total area of nine square miles, see “Murray’s Handbook for Madras,” by E. B. Eastwick (1879), vol. ix. . Authentic history in Southern India begins with the Hindu kingdom of Vijßyanagar, or Narsinha, from A. D. 1118 to 1565. The capital can still be traced within the Madras district of Bellary, on the right bank of the Tungabhadra river — vast ruins of temples, fortifications, tanks and bridges, haunted by hy nas and snakes. For at least three centuries Vijßyanagar ruled over the southern part of the Indian triangle. Its Rajas waged war and made peace on equal terms with the Mohamadan sultans of the Deccan. See vol. iv. , Sir W. W. Hunter’s “Imperial Gazetteer of India,” Edit. 1881.

[317] The writer means the great Bazar, the Indian “Chauk,” which = our English Carfax or Carfex (Carrefour) and forms the core of ancient cities in the East. It is in some places, as Damascus, large as one of the quarters, and the narrow streets or lanes, vaulted over or thatched, are all closed at night by heavy doors well guarded by men and dogs. Trades are still localised, each owning its own street, after the fashion of older England, where we read of Drapers’ Lane and Butchers’ Row; Lombard Street, Cheapside and Old Jewry.

[318] The local name of the Patna ganzes. The term was originally applied to the produce of the Coan looms, which, however, was anticipated in ancient Egypt. See of “L’ArchÚologie gyptienne” (Paris, A. Quantin) of the learned Professor G. Maspero, a most able popular work by a savant who has left many regrets on the banks of Nilus.

[319] The great prototype of the Flying Carpet is that of Sulayman bin Dß·d, a fable which the Koran (chap. xxi. 81) borrowed from the Talmud, not from “Indian fictions.” It was of green sendal embroidered with gold and silver and studded with precious stones, and its length and breadth were such that all the Wise King’s host could stand upon it, the men to the left and the Jinns to the right of the throne; and when all were ordered, the Wind, at royal command, raised it and wafted it whither the Prophet would, while an army of birds flying overhead canopied the host from the sun. In the Middle

Ages the legend assumed another form. “Duke Richard, surnamed ‘Richard sans peur,’ walking with his courtiers one evening in the forest of Moulineaux, near one of his castles on the banks of the Seine, hearing a prodigious noise coming towards him, sent one of his esquires to know what was the matter, who brought him word that it was a company of people under a leader or King. Richard, with five hundred of his bravest Normans, went out to see a sight which the peasants were so accustomed to that they viewed it two or three times a week without fear. The sight of the troop, preceded by two men, who spread a cloth on the ground, made all the Normans run away, and leave the Duke alone. He saw the strangers form themselves into a circle on the cloth, and on asking who they were, was told that they were the spirits of Charles V., King of France, and his servants, condemned to expiate their sins by fighting all night against the wicked and the damned. Richard desired to be of their party, and receiving a strict charge not to quit the cloth, was conveyed with them to Mount Sinai, where, leaving them without quitting the cloth, he said his prayers in the Church of St. Catherine’s Abbey there, while they were fighting, and returned with them. In proof of the truth of this story, he brought back half the wedding-ring of a knight in that convent, whose wife, after six years, concluded him dead, and was going to take a second husband.” (Note in the Lucknow Edition of The Nights.)

[320] Amongst Eastern peoples, and especially adepts, the will of man is not a mere term for a mental or cerebral operation, it takes the rank of a substance; it becomes a mighty motive power, like table-turning and other such phenomena which, now looked upon as child’s play, will perform a prime part in the Kinetics of the century to come. If a few pair of hands imposed upon a heavy dinner-table can raise it in the air, as I have often seen, what must we expect to result when the new motive force shall find its Franklin and be shown to the world as real “Vril”? The experiment of silently willing a subject to act in a manner not suggested by speech or sign has been repeatedly tried and succeeded in London drawing-rooms; and it has lately been suggested that atrocious crimes have resulted from overpowering volition. In cases of paralysis the Faculty is agreed upon the fact that

local symptoms disappear when the will-power returns to the brain. And here I will boldly and baldly state my theory that, in sundry cases, spectral appearances (ghosts) and abnormal smells and sounds are simply the effect of a Will which has, so to speak, created them.

[321] The text has “But-Khanah” = idol-house (or room) syn. with “But-Kadah” = image-cuddy, which has been proposed as the derivation of the disputed “Pagoda.” The word “Khßnah” also appears in our balcony, origin. “balcony,” through the South-European tongues, the Persian being “Bßlß-khßnah” = high room. From “Kadah” also we derive “cuddy,” now confined to nautical language.

[322] Europe contains sundry pictures which have, or are supposed to have, this property; witness the famous Sundarium bearing the head of Jesus. The trick, for it is not Art, is highly admired by the credulous.

[323] i.e. the Hindu Scripture or Holy Writ, e.g.
“Kßma-Shastra” = the Cupid-gospel.

[324] This shifting theatre is evidently borrowed by Galland from Pliny (N. H. xxxvi., 24) who tells that in B. C. 50, C. Curio built two large wooden theatres which could be wheeled round and formed into an amphitheatre. The simple device seems to stir the bile of the unmechanical old Roman, so unlike the Greek in powers of invention.

[325] This trick is now common in the circuses and hippodromes of Europe, horses and bulls being easily taught to perform it: but India has as yet not produced anything equal to the “Cyclist elephant” of Paris.

[326] This Arab.-Pers. compound, which we have corrupted to “Bezestein” or “Bezettein” and “Bezesten,” properly means a market-place for Baz or Bazz = cloth, fine linen; but is used by many writers as = Bazar, see “Kaysariah,” vol. i. 266.

[327] The origin of the lens and its applied use to the telescope and the microscope are "lost" (as the Castle-guides of Edinburgh say) "in the glooms of antiquity." Well ground glasses have been discovered amongst the finds of Egypt and Assyria: indeed much of the finer work of the primeval artists could not have been done without such aid. In Europe the "spy-glass" appears first in the Opus Majus of the learned Roger Bacon (circa A. D. 1270); and his "optic tube" (whence his saying "all things are known by perspective"), chiefly contributed to make his wide-spread fame as a wizard. The telescope was popularised by Galileo who (as mostly happens) carried off and still keeps, amongst the vulgar, all the honours of invention. Some "Illustrators" of The Nights confound this "Nazzßrah," the Pers. "D·r-bÝn," or far-seer, with the "Magic Mirror," a speculum which according to Gower was set up in Rome by Virgilius the Magician hence the Mirror of Glass in the Squire's tale; Merlin's glassie Mirror of Spenser (F. Q. ii. 24); the mirror in the head of the monstrous fowl which forecast the Spanish invasion to the Mexicans; the glass which in the hands of Cornelius Agrippa (A. D. 1520) showed to the Earl of Surrey fair Geraldine "sick in her bed;" to the globe of glass in The Lusiads; Dr. Dee's show-stone, a bit of cannel-coal; and lastly the zinc and copper disk of the absurdly called "electro-biologist." I have noticed this matter at some length in various places.

[328] D'Herbelot renders Soghd Samarkand = plain of Samarkand. Hence the old "Sogdiana," the famed and classical capital of Mßwarßnnahr, our modern Transoxiana, now known as Samarkand. The Hindi translator has turned "Soghd" into "Sadß" and gravely notes that "the village appertained to Arabia." He possibly had a dim remembrance of the popular legend which derives "Samarkand" from Shamir or Samar bin Afrik·s, the Tobba King of Al-Yaman, who lay waste Soghd-city ("Shamir kand" = Shamir destroyed); and when rebuilt the place was called by the Arab. corruption Samarkand. See Ibn Khallikan ii. 480. Ibn Haukal (Kitßb al Mamßlik wa al-Masßlik = Book of Realms and Routes), whose Oriental Geography (xth century) was translated by Sir W. Ouseley (London, Oriental Press, 1800), followed by Ab· 'l-Fidß, mentions the

Himyaritic inscription upon an iron plate over the Kash portal of Samarkand (Appendix No. iii.).

[329] The wish might have been highly indiscreet and have exposed the wisher to the resentment of the two other brothers. In parts of Europe it is still the belief of the vulgar that men who use telescopes can see even with the naked eye objects which are better kept hidden; and I have heard of troubles in the South of France because the villagers would not suffer the secret charms of their women to become as it were the public property of the lighthouse employÚs.

[330] “Jßm-i-JamshÝd” is a well worn commonplace in Moslem folk-lore; but commentators cannnot agree whether “Jßm” be = a mirror or a cup. In the latter sense it would represent the Cyathomantic cup of the Patriarch Joseph and the symbolic bowl of Nestor. JamshÝd may be translated either Jam the Bright or the Cup of the Sun: this ancient King is Solomon of the grand old Guebres.

[331] This passage may have suggested to Walter Scott one of his descriptions in “The Monastery.”

[332] In the text “LßjawardÝ,” for which see vols. iii. 33, and ix. 190.

[333] In Galland and the H. V. “Prince Husayn’s.”

[334] This is the “Gandharba-lagana” (fairy wedding) of the Hindus; a marriage which lacked only the normal ceremonies. For the Gandharbas = heavenly choristers see Moor’s “Hind· Pantheon,” , etc.

[335] “Perfumed with amber” (-gris?) says Galland.

[336] The Hind term for the royal levÚe, as “Selßm” is the Persian.

[337] Arab. “‘Ilm al-Ghayb” = the Science of Hidden Things which, says the Hadis, belongeth only to the Lord. Yet amongst Moslems, as with other faiths, the instinctive longing to pry into the Future has

produced a host of pseudo-sciences, Geomancy, Astrology, Prophecy and others which serve only to prove that such knowledge, in the present condition of human nature, is absolutely unattainable.

[338] In folk-lore and fairy tales the youngest son of mostly three brothers is generally Fortune's favourite: at times also he is the fool or the unlucky one of the family, Cinderella being his counterpart (Mr. Clouston, i. 321).

[339] The parasang (Gr. {Greek}), which Ibn Khall. (iii. 315) reduces to three miles, has been derived wildly enough from Fars or Pars (Persia proper) sang = (mile) stone. Chardin supports the etymology, "because leagues are marked out with great tall stones in the East as well as the West, e.g., ad primam (vel secundam) lapidem."

[340] A huge marquee or pavilion-tent in India.

[341] The Jinn feminine; see vol. i. 10. The word hardly corresponds with the Pers. "Peri" and Engl. "Fairy," a creation, like the "DÝv," of the so-called "Aryan," not "Semitic," race.

[342] Galland makes the Fairy most unjustifiably fear that her husband is meditating the murder of his father; and the HindÝ in this point has much the advantage of the Frenchman.

[343] Pers. = "Light of the World"; familiar to Europe as the name of the Grand Moghul JehßngÝr's principal wife.

[344] The Arab stirrup, like that of the Argentine Gaucho, was originally made of wood, liable to break, and forming a frail support for lancer and sworder. A famous chief and warrior, Ab· Sa'Ýd al-Muhallab (ob. A. H. 83 = 702) first gave orders to forge foot-rests of iron.

[345] For this Egyptian and Syrian weapon see vol. i. 234.

[346] See vol. vii. 93, where an error of punctuation confounds it with Kerbela, — a desert with a place of pilgrimage. "Samßwah" in Ibn

Khall. (vol. i. 108) is also the name of a town on the Euphrates.

[347] Nazarßnah prop. = the gift (or gifts) offered at visits by a Moslem noble or feoffee in India to his feudal superior; and the Kalichah of Hind·, Malabar, Goa and the Blue Mountains (). Hence the periodical tributes and especially the presents which represent our “legacy-duty” and the “succession-duty” for Rajahs and Nabobs, the latter so highly lauded by “The Times,” as the logical converse of the Corn-laws which ruined our corn. The Nazarßnah can always be made a permanent and a considerable source of revenue, far more important than such unpopular and un-Oriental device as an income-tax. But our financiers have yet to learn the A. B. C. of political economy in matters of assessment, which is to work upon familiar lines; and they especially who, like Mr. Wilson “mad as a hatter,” hold and hold forth that “what is good for England is good for the world.” These myopics decide on theoretical and sentimental grounds that a poll-tax is bad in principle, which it may be, still public opinion sanctions it and it can be increased without exciting discontent. The same with the “Nazarßnah;” it has been the custom of ages immemorial, and a little more or a little less does not affect its popularity.

[348] Pers. = City-queen.

[349] Compare with this tale its modern and popular version Histoire du Rossignol Chanteur (Spitta-Bey, No. x,): it contains the rosary (and the ring) that shrinks, the ball that rolls and the water that heals; etc. etc. Mr. Clouston somewhere asserts that the History of the Envious Sisters, like that of Prince Ahmad and the PerÝ-Banu, are taken from a MS. still preserved in the “King’s Library,” Paris; but he cannot quote his authority, De Sacy or LanglÞs. Mr. H. C. Coote (loc. Cit. P. 189) declares it to be, and to have been, “an enormous favourite in Italy and Sicily: no folk-tale exists in those countries at all comparable to it in the number of its versions and in the extent of its distribution.” He begins two centuries before Galland, sith Straparola (Notti Piacevoli), proceeds to Imbriani (Novajella Fiorentina), Nerucci (Novelle Montalesi), Comparetti (Nivelline Italiane) and Pitre (Fiabe Novelle e Racconti popolari Italiani, vol. I.); and informs

us that “the adventures of the young girl, independently of the joint history of herself and her brother, are also told in a separate “Fiaba” in Italy. A tale called La Favenilla Coraggiosa is given by Visentini in his Fiabe Mantovane and it is as far as it is a counterpart of the second portion of Galland’s tale.” Mr. Coote also finds this story in Hahn’s “Griechische Mõrchen” entitled “Sun, Moon and Morning Star” — the names of the royal children. The King overhears the talk of three girls and marries the youngest despite his stepmother, who substitutes for her issue a puppy, a kitten and a mouse. The castaways are adopted by a herdsman whilst the mother is confined in a henhouse; and the King sees his offspring and exclaims, “These children are like those my wife promised me.” His stepmother, hearing this, threatens the nurse, who goes next morning disguised as a beggar-woman to the girl and induces her to long for the Bough that makes music, the Magic Mirror, and the bird Dickierette. The brothers set out to fetch them leaving their shirts which become black when the mishap befalls them. The sister, directed by a monk, catches the bird and revives the stones by the River of Life and the denouement is brought about by a sausage stuffed with diamonds. In Miss Stokes’ Collection of Hindu Stories (No. xx.) “The Boy who had a moon on his brow and a star on his chin” also suggests the “Envious Sisters.”

[350] Pop. “Ghaut” = The steps (or path) which lead down to a watering-place. Hence the HindÝ saying concerning the “rolling stone” — Dhobi-ka kuttß; na Gharkß na Ghßt-kß, = a washerwoman’s tyke, nor of the house nor of the Ghßt-dyke.

[351] Text “KhatÝbah” more usually “Khutbah” = the Friday sermon preached by the KhatÝb: in this the reigning sovereign is prayed for by name and his mention together with the change of coinage is the proof of his lawful rule. See Lane, M. F., chap. iii.

[352] This form of eaves-dropping, in which also the listener rarely hears any good of himself is, I need hardly now say, a favourite incident of Eastern Storiology and even of history, e.g. Three men met together; one of them expressed the wish to obtain a thousand

pieces of gold, so that he might trade with them; the other wished for an appointment under the Emir of the Moslems; the third wished to possess Yusuf's wife, who was the handsomest of women and had reat political influence. Yusuf, being informed of what they said, sent for the men, bestowed one thousand dinars on him who wished for that sum, gave an appointment to the other and said to him who wished to possess the lady: "Foolish man! What induced you to wish for that which you can never obtain?" He then sent him to her and she placed him in a tent where he remained three days, receiving, each day, one and the same kind of food. She had him brought to her and said, "What did you eat these days past?" He replied: "Always the same thing!"— "Well," said she, "all women are the same thing." She then ordered some money and a dress to be given him, after which, she dismissed him. (Ibn Khallikan iii. 463-64.)

[353] This ruthless attempt at infanticide was in accordance with the manners of the age nor has it yet disappeared from Rajput-land, China and sundry over-populous countries. Indeed it is a question if civilisation may not be compelled to revive the law of Lycurgus which forbade a child, male or female, to be brought up without the approbation of public officers appointed ad hoc. One of the curses of the XIXth century is the increased skill of the midwife and physician, who are now able to preserve worthless lives and to bring up semi-abortions whose only effect upon the breed is increased degeneracy. Amongst the Greeks and ancient Arabs the Malthusian practice was carried to excess. Poseidippus declares that in his day —

> A man, although poor, will not expose his son;
> But however rich, will not preserve his daughter.

See the commentators' descriptions of the Wa'd al-Banßt or burial of Mau·dßt (living daughters), the barbarous custom of the pagan Arabs (Koran, chaps. Xvi. And lxxxi.) one of the many abominations, like the murderous vow of Jephtha, to which Al- Islam put a summary stop. (Ibn Khallikan, iii. 609-606) For such outcast children reported to be monsters, see p-412 of Mr. Clouston's "Asiatic and European versions of four of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales," printed by the

Chaucer Society.

[354] Hind. Chhuchhundar (Sorex c£rulescens) which occurs repeatedly in verse; e.g., when speaking of low men advanced to high degree, the people say: —

Chhuchh·ndar-ke sir-par ChambelÝ-ka tel.
The Jasmine-oil on the musk-rat's head.

In Galland the Sultßnah is brought to bed of un morceau de bois; and his Indian translator is more consequent, Hahn, as has been seen, also has the mouse but Hahn could hardly have reached Hindostan.

[355] This title of Shßhinshah was first assumed by ArdashÝr, the great Persian conqueror, after slaying the King of Ispahßn, Ardawßn. (Tabari ii. 73.)

[356] This imprisonment of the good Queen reminds home readers of the "Cage of Clapham" wherein a woman with child was imprisoned in A.D. 1700, and which was noted by Sir George Grove as still in existence about 1830.

[357] Arab. Ayyßm al-Nifßs = the period of forty days after labour during which, according to Moslem law, a woman may not cohabit with her husband.

[358] A clarum et venerabile nomen in Persia; meaning one of the Spirits that preside over beasts of burden; also a king in general, the P.N. of an ancient sovereign, etc.

[359] This is the older pronunciation of the mod. (Khusrau) "ParvÝz"; and I owe an apology to Mr. C.J. Lyall (Ancient Arabian Poetry) for terming his "Khusrau ParvÛz" an "ugly Indianism" (The Academy, No. 100). As he says (Ibid. vol. x. 85), "the Indians did not invent for Persian words the sounds Û and ¶, called majh·l (i.e. ænot known in Arabic') by the Arabs, but received them at a time when these wounds were universally used in Persia. The substitution by Persians of ¯ and ¹ for Û and ¶ is quite modern."

[360] i.e. Fairy-born, the {Greek} (Parysatis) of the Greeks which some miswrite {Greek}.

[361] In Arab. Usually shortened to “Hazßr” (bird of a thousand tales = the Thousand), generally called “‘AndalÝb:” Galland has Bulbulhezer and some of his translators debase it to Bulbulkezer. See vol. v. 148, and the Hazßr-dastßn of KazwÝnÝ (De Sacy, Chrest. iii. 413). These rarities represent the Rukh’s egg in “Alaeddin.”

[362] These disembodied “voices” speaking either naturally or through instruments are a recognized phenomenon of the so-called “Spiritualism,” See of “Supra-mundane Facts,” &c., edited by T.J. Nichols, M.D., &c., London, Pitman, 1865. I venture to remark that the medical treatment by Mesmerism, Braidism and hypnotics, which was violently denounced and derided in 1850, is in 1887 becoming a part of the regular professional practice and forms another item in the long list of the Fallacies of the Faculty and the Myopism of the “Scientist.”

[363] I may also note that the “Hßtif,” or invisible Speaker, which must be subjective more often than objective, is a common- place of Moslem thaumaturgy.

[364] It may have been borrowed from Ulysses and the Sirens.

[365] Two heroes of the Shahnßmeh and both the types of reckless daring. The monomachy or duel between these braves lasted through two days.

[366] The “Bßgh” or royal tiger, is still found in the jungles of Mßzenderßn and other regions of Northern Persia.

[367] In addressing the Shah every Persian begins with the formula “Kurbßn-at bßsham” = may I become thy Corban or sacrifice. For this word (Kurbßn) see vol. viii. 16.

[368] The King in Persia always speaks of himself in the third person and swears by his own blood and head, soul, life and death. The form

of oath is ancient: Joseph, the first (but not the last) Jew-financier of Egypt, emphasises his speech “by the life of Pharaoh.” (Gen. xiii. 15, 16.)

[369] Another title of the Shah, making him quasi-divine, at any rate the nearest to the Almighty, like the Czar and the Emperor of China. Hence the subjects bow to him with the body at right angles as David did to Saul (I Sam. xxiv, 8) or fall upon the face like Joshua (v. 14).

[370] A most improbable and absurd detail: its sole excuse is the popular superstition of “blood speaking to blood.” The youths being of the royal race felt that they could take unwarrantable liberties.

[371] This is still a Persian custom because all the subjects, women as well as men, are virtually the King’s slaves.

[372] i.e. King of kings, the {Greek}.

[373] Majlis garm karna, i.e. to give some life to the company.

[374] In Arabic “‘Ilm al-Mukßshafah” = the science by which Eastern adepts discover man’s secret thoughts. Of late years it has appeared in England but with the same quackery and imposture which have ruined “Spiritualism” as the Faith of the Future.

[375] Nor are those which do occur all in the same order: The first in the Turkish book “Of ‘Eb·--’l-Kßsim of Basra, of the ‘EmÝr of Basra, and of ‘Eb·--’l-Faskh of Wßsit,” is probably similar to the first of Petis, “History of Aboulcasem of Basra.” The second “Of Fadzlu-‘llah of Mawsil (Moser), of ‘Eb·--’l-Hasan, and of Mßhyßr of Wßsit,” is evidently the seventh in Petis, “History of Fadlallah, Son of Bin Ortoc, King of Moussel.” The fourth, “Of Ridzwßn-Shah of China and the Shahristßni Lady,” is the second in Petis, “History of King Razvanschad and of the Princess Cheheristany.” The eleventh, “Of the Sovereign without a care and of the VazÝr full of care,” is the eighth in Petis History of King Bedreddin Lolo and of his Vizier Altalmulc.” The third, “Of the Builder of Bemm with the two VazÝrs of the king of Kawßshar,” the seventh, “Of the Rogue Nasr

and the son of the king of Khurßsßn," and the tenth, "The Three Youths, the Old Man, and the Daughter of the King," I cannot, from these titles, recognise in Petis; while the fifth, "Farrukh-Shßd, Farrukh-R·z, and Farrukh-Nßz," may be the same as the frame story of the "Hazßr · Yek R·z," where the king is called Togrul-bey, his son Farrukrouz, and his daughter Farruknaz, and if this be the case, the Turkish book must differ considerably from the Persian in its plan. — Although "The Thousand and One Nights" has not been found in Persian, there exists a work in that language of which the plan is somewhat similar — but adapted from an Indian source. It is thus described by Dr. Rieu, in his Catalogue of Persian MSS. in the British Museum, vol. ii. : Tale of ShÝrzßd, son of Gurgahan, emperor of China, and Gulshßd, daughter of the vazÝr Farrukhzßd (called the Story of the Nine Belvideres). Nine tales told by Gulshad to ShÝrzßd, each in one of the nine belvideres of the royal palace, in order to save the forfeited life of her father.

[376] A translation of this version, omitting the moral reflections interspersed, is given by Professor E. B. Cowell in the "Journal of Philology," 1876, vol. vi. . The great Persian mystic tells another story of a Dream of Riches, which, though only remotely allied to our tale, is very curious:

The Fakir and the Hidden Treasure.

Notwithstanding the clear evidence of God's bounty, engendering those spiritual tastes in men, philosophers and learned men, wise in their own conceit, obstinately shut their eyes to it, and look afar off for what is really close to them, so that they incur the penalty of being "branded on the nostrils" [Kurßn, lxviii. 16], adjudged against unbelievers. This is illustrated by the story of the poor FakÝr who prayed to God that he might be fed without being obliged to work for his food. A divine voice came to him in his sleep and directed him to go to the house of a certain scribe and take a certain writing he should find there. He did so, and on reading the writing found that it contained directions for discovering a hidden treasure. The directions were as follows: "Go outside the city to the dome which covers the tomb of the martyr, turn your back to the tomb and face towards Mecca, place an arrow in your bow, and where the arrow falls dig for the treasure.” But before the FakÝr had time to commence the search the rumour of the writing and its purport had reached the King, who at once sent and took it away from the FakÝr, and began to search for the treasure on his own account. After shooting many arrows and digging in all directions the King failed to find the treasure, and got weary of searching, and returned the writing to the FakÝr. Then the FakÝr tried what he could do, but failed to hit the spot where the treasure was buried. At last despairing of success by his own unaided efforts, he cast his care upon God, and implored the divine assistance. Then a voice from heaven came to him saying, “You were directed to fix an arrow in your bow, but not to draw your bow with all your might, as you have been doing. Shoot as gently as possible, that the arrow may fall close to you, for hidden treasure is indeed ‘nearer to you than your neck-vein’” [Kurßn, l. 15]. Men overlook the spiritual treasures close to them, and for this reason it is that prophets have no honour in their own countries. — Mr. F: H. Whinfield’s Abridgment of “The Masnavi-i Ma’navi.” (London, 1887.)

[377] See Mr. Gibb’s translation (London: Redway),

[378] “Rem qu contigit patrum memoriÔ ut veram ita dignam relatu et s penumero mihi assertam ab hominibus fide dignis apponam.”

[379] Thorpe says that a nearly similar legend is current at Tanslet, on the island of Alsen.

[380] The common tradition is, it was in English rhyme, viz.

> “Where this stood
> Is another as good;”

or, as some will have it:

> “Under me doth lie
> Another much richer than I.”

[381] Apropos to dreams, there is a very amusing story, entitled "Which was the Dream ?" in Mr. F. H. Balfour's "Leaves from my Chinese Scrap Book," -7 (London: Tr³bner, 1887).

[382] The story in the Turkish collection, "Al-Faraj ba'd al-Shiddah," where it forms the 8th recital, is doubtless identical with our Arabian version, since in both the King of the Genie figures, which is not the case in Mr. Gibb's story.

[383] Although this version is not preceded, as in the Arabian, by the Dream of Riches, yet that incident occurs, I understand, in separate form in the work of 'AlÝ AzÝz.

[384] Sir Richard has referred, in note 1, , to numerous different magical tests of chastity, etc., and I may here add one more, to wit, the cup which Oberon, King of the Fairies, gave to Duke Huon of Bordeaux (according to the romance which recounts the marvellous adventures of that renowned Knight), which filled with wine in the hand of any man who was out of "deadly sin" and attempted to drink out of it, but was always empty in the hands of a sinful man. Charlemagne was shown to be sinful by this test, while Duke Huon, his wife, and a companion were proved to be free from sin. — In my "Popular Tales and Fictions" the subject of inexhaustible purses etc. is treated pretty fully — they frequently figure in folk-tales, from Iceland to Ceylon, from Japan to the Hebrides.

[385] "The Athenaeum," April 23,1887, .

[386] See M. Eugene LÚvÛque's "Les Mythes et les LÚgendes de l'Inde et la Perse" (Paris, 1880), , where the two are printed side by side. This was pointed out more than seventy years ago by Henry Weber in his Introduction to "Tales of the East," edited by him.

[387] Also in the romance of Duke Huon of Bordeaux and the old French romance of the Chevalier Berinus. The myth was widely spread in the Middle Ages.

[388] Cf. the magic horn that Duke Huon of Bordeaux received from

Oberon, King of the Fairies, which caused even the Soudan of Babylon to caper about in spite of himself, and similar musical instruments in a hundred different tales, such as the old English poem of "The Friar and the Boy," the German tale (in Grimm) of "The Jew among Thorns," the "Pied Piper of Hamelin," &c.

[389] Not distantly related to stories of this class are those in which the hero becomes possessed of some all-bestowing object — a purse, a box, a table-cloth, a sheep, a donkey, etc. — which being stolen from him he recovers by means of a magic club that on being commended rattles on the pate and ribs of the thief and compels him to restore the treasure.

[390] The Dwarf had told the soldier, on leaving him after killing the old witch, that should his services be at any other time required, he had only to light his pipe at the Blue Light and he should instantly appear before him. The tobacco-pipe must be considered as a recent and quite unnecessary addition to the legend: evidently all the power of summoning the Dwarf was in the Blue Light, since he tells the soldier when he first appears before him in the well that he must obey its lord and master.

[391] Belli signifies famous, or notorious.

[392] This young lady's notion of the "function" of Prayer was, to say the least peculiar, in thus addressing her petition to the earth instead of to Heaven.

[393] The gentle, amiable creature!

[394] Chamley-bill was, says Dr. Chodzko, a fort built by Kurrogl·, the ruins of which are still to be seen in the valley of Salmas, a district in the province of Aderbaijan.

[395] i.e. Kuvera, the god of wealth.

[396] The attendants of Kuvera. a Buddhistic idea.

[397] That every man has his “genius” of good or evil fortune is, I think, essentially idea.

[398] Such being the case, what need was there for the apparition presenting itself every morning? — but no matter!

[399] Pandit S. M. NatÚsa SßstrÝ, in “Indian Notes and Queries,” for March, 1887, says that women swallow large numbers of an insect called pillai-puchchi (son-insect: gryllas) in the hope of bearing sons, they will also drink the water squeezed from the loin-cloth of a sanyßsÝ [devotee] after washing it for him! — Another correspondent in the same periodical. Pandit PutlÝbßi K. RaghunathjÚ, writes that Hindu women, for the purpose of having children, especially a son, observe the fourth lunar day of every dark fortnight as a fast and break their fast only after seeing the moon, generally before 9 or 10 p.m. A dish of twenty-one small, marble-like balls of rice is prepared, in one of which is put some salt. The whole dish is then served up to the woman, and while eating it she should first lay her hands on the ball containing salt, as it is believed to be a positive sign that she will be blessed with a son. In that case she should give up eating the rest, but otherwise she should go on eating till she lays her hands on the salted ball. The Pandit adds, that the observance of this ball depends on the wish of the woman. She may observe it on only one, five, seven, eleven, or twenty-one lunar fourth days, or chaturthÝ. Should she altogether fail in picking out the salted ball first, she may be sure of remaining barren all her life long.

[400] I am glad to see among Messrs. Tr³bner & Co.’s announcements of forthcoming publications Mr. Knowles’ collection of “Folk-Tales of KashmÝr” in popular handy volume form.

[401] A holy man whose austerities have obtained for him supernatural powers.

[402] Also called “Story of the King and his Four Ministers.” There is another but wholly different Tamil romance entitled the “AlakÚsa

Kathß," in which a king's daughter becomes a disembodied evil spirit, haunting during the night a particular choultry (or serai) for travellers, and if they do not answer aright to her cries she strangles them and vampyre-like sucks their blood.

[403] The Pandit informs me that his "Folk-Lore in Southern
India" will be completed at press and issued shortly at Bombay.
(London agents, Messrs. Tr³bner & Co.)

[404] In the "Kathß Sarit Sßgara," Book ii., ch. 14, when the King of Vatsa receives the hand of Vasavadatta, "like a beautiful shoot lately budded on the creeper of love," she walks round the fire, keeping it to the right, on which Prof. Tawney remarks that "the practice of walking round an object of reverence, with the right hand towards it, has been exhaustively discussed by Dr. Samuel Fergusson in his paper 'On the ceremonial turn called Desiul,' published in the Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, for March 1877 (vol. i., series ii., No. 12). He shows it to have existed among the ancient Romans as well as the Celts…. Dr. Fergusson is of opinion that this movement was a symbol of the cosmical rotation, an imitation of the apparent course of the sun in the heavens."

[405] The affection of parents for their children is often a blind instinct, and sometimes selfish, though, after all, there is doubtless truth in these lines:

> "A mother's love!
> If there be one thing pure,
> Where all beside is sullied,
> That can endure
> When all else pass away:
> If there be aught
> Surpassing human deed, or word, or thought,
> It is a mother's love!"

[406] Surma is a collyrium applied to the edges of the eyelids to increase the lustre of the eyes. A Persian poet, addressing the damsel

of whom he is enamoured, says, “For eyes so intoxicated with love’s nectar what need is there of surma?” — This part of the story seems to be garbled; in another text of the romance of Hatim Ta’Ý it is only after the surma has been applied to the covetous man’s eyes that he beholds the hidden treasures.

407 The first part of the story of the Young King of the Black Isles, in The Nights, bears some analogy to this, but there the paramour is only “half-killed” and the vindictive queen transforms her husband from the waist downwards into marble.

408 On the Sources of some of Galland’s Tales. By Henry Charles Coote, F.S.A. “Folklore Record,” 1881, vol. iii. Part 2, .

409 See Thorpe’s “Yule Tide Stories,” Bohn’s ed., p- 486.ûThorpe says that “for many years the Dummburg was the abode of robbers, who slew the passing travellers and merchants whom they perceived on the road from Leipsig to Brunswick, and heaped together the treasures of the plundered churches and the surrounding country, which they concealed in subterranean caverns.” The peasantry would therefore regard the spot with superstitious awe, and once such a tale as that of Ali Baba got amongst them, the robbers’ haunt in their neighbourhood would soon become the scene of the poor woodcutter’s adventure.

410 A Persian poet says:

> “He who violates the rights of the bread and salt
> Breaks, for his wretched self, head and neck.”

411 Miss Busk reproduces the proper names as they are transliterated in J³lg’s German version of those Kalmuk and Mongolian Tales — from which a considerable portion of her book was rendered — thus: Ardschi Bordschi, Rakschasas, etc., but drollest of all is “Ramajana” (Ramayana), which is right in German but not in English.

412 The apocryphal gospels and the Christian hagiology are largely indebted to Buddhism, e.g., the Descent into Hell, of which there is

such a graphic account in the Gospel of Nicodemus, seems to have been adapted from ancient Buddhist legends, now embodied in the opening chapters of a work entitled, "Kßranda-vy·ha," which contain a description of the Boddhisattva Avalokiteswara's descent into the hell AvÝchi, to deliver the souls there held captive by Yama, the lord of the lower world. (See a paper by Professor E. R. Cowell, LL.D., in the "Journal of Philology," 1876, vol. vi. p-231.) This legend also exists in Telugu, under the title of "Sßnanda Charitra," of which the outline is given in Taylor's "Catalogue RaisonnÚ of Oriental MSS. in the Government Library, Madras," vol. ii. : Sßnanda, the son of Purna Vitta and Bhadra Datta, heard from munis accounts of the pains of the wicked, and wishing to see for himself, went to Yama-puri. His coming had been announced by Nßrada. Yama showed the stranger the different lots of mankind in a future state, in details. Sßnanda was touched with compassion for the miseries that he witnessed, and by the use of the five and six lettered spells he delivered those imprisoned souls and took them with him to Kailasa. Yama went to Siva and complained, but Siva civilly dismissed the appeal. — Under the title of "The Harrowing of Hell," the apocryphal Christian legend was the theme of a Miracle Play in England during the Middle Ages, and indeed it seems to have been, in different forms, a popular favourite throughout Europe. Thus in a German tale Strong Hans goes to the Devil in hell and wants to serve him, and sees the pains in which souls are imprisoned standing beside the fire. Full of pity, he lifts up the lids and sets the souls free, on which the Devil at once drives him away. A somewhat similar notion occurs in an Icelandic tale of the Sin Sacks, in Powell and Magn·sson's collection (second series,). And in T. Crofton Croker's "Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland," ed. 1828, Part. ii. ff., we read of Soul Cages at the bottom of the sea, containing the spirits of drowned sailors, which the bold hero Jack Docherty set free.

[413] The Rabbins relate that among the Queen of Sheba's tests of Solomon's sagacity she brought before him a number of boys and girls apparelled all alike, and desired him to distinguish those of one sex from those of the other, as they stood in his presence. Solomon

caused a large basin of water to be fetched in, and ordered them all to wash their hands. By this expedient he discovered the boys from the girls, since the former washed merely their hands, while the latter washed also their arms.

[414] Dr. W. Grimm, in the notes to his “Kinder und Hausmõrchen,” referring to the German form of the story (which we shall come to by and-by), says, “The Parrot, which is the fourth story in the Persian Touti Nameh, bears some resemblance to this” — the Parrot is the reciter of all the stories in the collection, not the title of this particular tale.

[415] To Sir Richard Burton’s interesting note on the antiquity of the lens and its applied use to the telescope and microscope may be added a passage or two from Sir William Drummond’s “Origines; or, Remarks on the Origin of several Empires, States, and Cities,” 1825, vol. ii. p-250. This writer appears to think that telescopes were not unknown to the ancients and adduces plausible evidence in support of his opinion. “Moschopalus,” he says, “an ancient grammarian, mentions four instruments with which the astronomers of antiquity were accustomed to observe the stars — the catoptron, the dioptron, the eisoptron and the enoptron.” He supposes the catoptron to have been the same with the astrolabe. “The dioptron seems to have been so named from a tube through which the observer looked. Were the other two instruments named from objects being reflected in a mirror placed within them? Aristotle says that the Greeks employed mirrors when they surveyed the celestial appearances. May we not conclude from this circumstance that astronomers were not always satisfied with looking through empty tubes?” He thinks the ancients were acquainted with lenses and has collected passages from various writers which corroborate his opinion, besides referring to the numerous uses to which glass was applied in the most remote ages. He goes on to say:

“Some of the observations of the ancients must appear very extraordinary, if magnifying glasses had never been known among them. The boldness with which the Pythagoreans asserted that the surface of the moon was diversified by mountains and valleys can hardly be accounted for, unless Pythagoras had been convinced of the fact by the help of telescopes, which might have existed in the observatories of Egypt and Chaldea before those countries were conquered and laid waste by the Persians. Pliny (L. 11) says that 1600 stars had been counted in the 72 constellations, and by this expression I can only understand him to mean the 72 dodecans into which the Egyptians and Chaldeans divided the zodiac. Now this number of stars could never have been counted in the zodiac without the assistance of glasses. Ptolemy reckoned a much less number for the whole heavens The missionaries found many more stars marked in the Chinese charts of the heavens than formerly existed in those which were in use in Europe. Suidas, at the word {Greek} (glass), indicates, in explaining a passage in Aristophanes, that burning mirrors were occasionally made of glass. Now how can we suppose burning mirrors to have been made of glass without supposing the magnifying powers of glass to have been known? The Greeks, as Plutarch affirms, employed metallic mirrors, either plane, or convex, or concave, according to the use for which they were intended. If they could make burning mirrors of glass, they could have given any of these forms to glass. How then could they have avoided observing that two glasses, one convex and the other concave, placed at a certain distance from each other, magnified objects seen through them? Numerous experiments must have been made with concave and convex glasses before burning mirrors made of glass could have been employed. If astronomers never knew the magnifying powers of glass, and never placed lenses in the tubes of the dioptrons, what does Strabo (L. 3, c. 138) mean when he says: ‘Vapours produce the same effects as the tubes in magnifying objects of vision by refraction?’”

Mr. W. F. Thompson, in his translation of the “Ahlak-i-Jalaly,” from the Persian of FakÝ́r JßnÝ́ Muhammad (15th century), has the following note on the Jßm-i-Jßmshid and other magical mirrors: “JßmshÝ́d, the fourth of the Kaianian dynasty, the Soloman of the Persians. His cup was said to mirror the world, so that he could observe all that was passing elsewhere — a fiction of his own for state purposes, apparently, backed by the use of artificial mirrors. NizßmÝ tells that Alexander invented the steel mirror, by which he means, of course, that improved reflectors were used for telescopy in the days of Archimedes, but not early enough to have assisted JßmshÝd, who belongs to the fabulous and unchronicled age. In the romance of Beyjan and Manija, in the "Shah Nßma," this mirror is used by the great Khosr· for the purpose of discovering the place of the hero's imprisonment:

"The mirror in his hand revolving shook,
And earth's whole surface glimmered in his look;
Nor less the secrets of the starry sphere,
The what, the when, the bow depicted clear,
From orbs celestial to the blade of grass,
All nature floated in the magic glass."

[416] We have been told this king had three daughters.

[417] See in "Blackwood's Magazine," vol. iv., 1818, 1819, a translation, from the Danish of J. L. Rasmussen, of "An Historical and Geographical Essay on the trade and commerce of the Arabians and Persians with Russia and Scandinavia during the Middle Ages. — But learned Icelanders, while England was still semi-civilized, frequently made very long journeys into foreign lands: after performing the pilgrimage to Rome, they went to Syria, and some penetrated into Central Asia.

[418] This, of course, is absurd, as each was equally interested in the business; but it seems to indicate a vague reminiscence of the adventures of the Princes in the story of The Envious Sisters.

[419] There is a naivete about this that is particularly refreshing.

[420] This recalls the fairy Meliora, in the romance of Partenopex de Blois. who "knew of ancient tales a countless store."

[421] In a Norwegian folk-tale the hero receives from a dwarf a magic ship that could enlarge itself so as to contain any number of men, yet

could be earned m the pocket.

422 The Water of Life, the Water of Immortality, the Fountain of Youth — a favourite and wide-spread myth during the Middle Ages. In the romance of Sir Huon of Bordeaux the hero boldly encounters a griffin, and after a desperate fight, in which he is sorely wounded, slays the monster. Close at hand he discovers a clear fountain, at the bottom of which is a gravel of precious stones. "Then he dyde of his helme and dranke of the water his fyll, and he had no sooner dranke therof but incontynent he was hole of all his woundys." Nothing more frequently occurs in folk tales than for the hero to be required to perform three difficult and dangerous tasks — sometimes impossible, without supernatural assistance.

423 "Say, will a courser of the Sun
All gently with a dray-horse run?"

424 Ting: assembly of notables — of udallers, &c. The term survives in our word hustings; and in Ding-wall — Ting-val; where tings were held.

425 The last of the old Dublin ballad-singers, who assumed the respectable name of Zozimus, and is said to have been the author of the ditties wherewith he charmed his street auditors, was wont to chant the legend of the Finding of Moses in a version which has at least the merit of originality:

"In Egypt's land, upon the banks of Nile,
King Pharaoh's daughter went to bathe in style;
She took her dip, then went unto the land,
And, to dry her royal pelt, she ran along the strand.

A bulrush tripped her, whereupon she saw
A smiling baby in a wad of straw;
She took it up, and said, in accents mild —
Tare an' agurs, girls! which av yez owns this child?"

The Babylonian analogue, as translated by the Rev. Prof. A. H.

Sayce, in the first vol. of the “Folk-Lore Journal” (1883), is as follows:

“Sargon, the mighty monarch, the King of AganÞ, am I. My mother was a princess; my father I knew not, my father’s brother loved the mountain-land. In the city of Azipiranu, which on the bank of the Euphrates lies, my mother, the princess, conceived me, in an inaccessible spot she brought me forth. She placed me in a basket of rushes, with bitumen the door of my ark she closed. She launched me on the river, which drowned me not. The river bore me along, to Akki, the irrigator, it brought me. Akki, the irrigator, in the tenderness of his heart, lifted me up. Akki, the irrigator, as his own child brought me up. Akki, the irrigator, as his gardener appointed me, and in my gardenership the goddess Istar loved me. For 45 years the kingdom I have ruled, and the black headed (Accadian) race have governed.”

[426] This strange notion may have been derived from some Eastern source, since it occurs in Indian fictions; for example, in Dr. Rßjendralßla Mitra’s “Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepßl,” , we read that “there lived in the village of Vßsava a rich householder who had born unto him a son with a jewelled ring in his ear.” And in the “Mahßbhßrata” we are told of a king who had a son from whose body issued nothing but gold — the prototype of the gold-laying goose.

[427] Connected with this romance is the tale of “The Six Swans,” in Grimm’s collection — see Mrs. Hunt’s English translation, vol. i. .

[428] Mahb·b. a piece of gold, value about 10 francs, replaces the dinßr of old tales. Those in Egypt are all since the time of the Turks: 9, 7, or 6 1/2 frs. according to issue. — Note by Spitta Bey.

[429] Here again we have the old superstition of “blood speaking to blood,” referred to by Sir Richard, ante, , note 1. It often occurs in Asiatic stories. Thus in the Persian “Bakhtyßr Nßma,” when the adopted son of the robber chief is brought with other captives, before

the king (he is really the king's own son, whom he and the queen abandoned in their flight through the desert), his majesty's bowels strangely yearned towards the youth, and in the conclusion this is carried to absurdity: when Bakhtyßr is found to be the son of the royal pair, "the milk sprang from the breasts of the queen," as she looked on him — albeit she must then have been long past child-bearing!

[430] The enchanted pitcher does duty here for the witches' broomstick and the fairies' rush of European tales, but a similar conveyance is, I think, not unknown to Western folk-lore.

[431] In a Norse story the hero on entering a forbidden room in a troll's house finds a horse with a pan of burning coals under his nose and a measure of corn at his tail, and when he removes the coals and substitutes the corn, the horse becomes his friend and adviser.

[432] M. Dozon does not think that Muslim customs allow of a man's marrying three sisters at once; but we find the king does the same in the modern Arab version.

[433] London: Macmillan and Co., ff.

[434] This recalls the biblical legend of the widow's cruse, which has its exact counterpart in Singhalese folk-lore.

[435] This recalls the story of the herd-boy who cried "Wolf! wolf!"

[436] Again the old notion of maternal and paternal instincts; but the children don't often seem in folk-tales, to have a similar impulsive affection for their unknown parents.

[437] Colotropis gigantea.

[438] Rßkshashas and rßkshasÝs are male and female demons or ogres, in the Hind· mythology.

[439] Literally, the king of birds, a fabulous species of horse remarkable

for swiftness, which plays an important part in Tamil stories and romances.

[440] Here we have a parallel to the biblical legend of the passage of the Israelites dryshod

[441] Demons, ogres, trolls, giants, et hoc genus omne, never fail to discover the presence of human beings by their keen sense of smelling. “Fee, faw, fum! I smell the blood of a British man,” cries a giant when the renowned hero Jack is concealed in his castle. “Fum! fum! sento odor christianum,” exclaims an ogre in Italian folk tales. “Femme, je sens la viande fra¯che, la chair de chrÚtien!” says a giant to his wife in French stories.

[442] In my popular “Tales and Fictions” a number of examples are cited of life depending on some extraneous object — vol. i. p-351.

[443] In the Tamil story-book, the English translation of which is called “The Dravidian Nights’ Entertainments,” a wandering princess, finding the labour-pains coming upon her, takes shelter in the house of a dancing-woman, who says to the nurses, “If she gives birth to a daughter, it is well [because the woman could train her to follow her own profession’], but if a son, I do not want him; — close her eyes, remove him to a place where you can kill him, and throwing a bit of wood on the ground tell her she has given birth to it.” — I daresay that a story similar to the Bengali version exists among the Tamils.

[444] It is to be hoped we shall soon have Sir Richard Burton’s promised complete English translation of this work, since one half is, I understand, already done.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

SUPPLEMENTAL NIGHTS VOLUME IV.

To William H. Chandler, Esq,.

Pembroke College, Oxford.

My Dear Mr. Chandler,

As without your friendly and generous aid this volume could never have seen the light, I cannot resist the temptation of inscribing it to you-and without permission, for your modesty would have refused any such acknowledgment.

I am, ever,
Yours sincerely,
Richard F. Burton.

Trieste, March 10th, 1888.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

The Translator’s Foreword.

As my first and second volumes (Supplemental) were composed of translated extracts from the Breslau Edition of The Nights, so this tome and its successor (vols. iv. and v.) comprise my version from the (Edward) Wortley Montague Codex immured in the old Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Absence from England prevents for the present my offering a satisfactory description of this widely known manuscript; but I may safely promise that the hiatus shall be filled up in vol. v., which is now ready for the press.

The contents of the Wortley Montague text are not wholly unfamiliar to Europe. In 1811 Jonathan Scott, LL.D. Oxon. (for whom see my vols. i., ix. and x. 434), printed with Longmans and Co. his “Arabian Nights Entertainments” in five substantial volumes 8vo, and devoted a sixth and last to excerpts entitled

TALES SELECTED FROM THE MANUSCRIPT COPY OF THE 1001 NIGHTS

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

BROUGHT TO EUROPE BY EDWARD WORTLEY MONTAGUE, ESQ.

Translated from the Arabic
BY JONATHAN SCOTT, LL.D.

Unfortunately for his readers Scott enrolled himself amongst the acolytes of Professor Galland, a great and original genius in the line Raconteur, and a practical Orientalist whose bright example was destined to produce disastrous consequences. The Frenchman, however unscrupulous he might have been about casting down and building up in order to humour the dead level of Gallican bon goűt, could, as is shown by his “Aladdin,” translate literatim and verbatim when the story-stuff is of the right species and acceptable to the average European taste. But, as generally happens in such cases, his servile suite went far beyond their master and model. Petis de la Croix (“Persian and Turkish Tales”), Chavis and Cazotte (“New Arabian Nights”), Dow (“Ináyatu llah”) and Morell (“Tales of the Genii”), with others manifold whose names are now all but forgotten, carried out the Gallandian liberties to the extreme of licence and succeeded in producing a branchlet of literature, the most vapid, frigid and insipid that can be imagined by man,?a bastard Europeo-Oriental, pseudo-Eastern world of Western marionettes garbed in the gear which Asiatic are (or were) supposed to wear, with sentiments and opinions, manners and morals to match; the whole utterly lacking life, local colour, vraisemblance, human interest. From such abortions, such monstrous births, libera nos, Domine!

And Scott out-gallanded Galland:?

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Diruit, ćdificat, mutat quadrata rotundis.

It is hard to quote a line which he deigned textually to translate. He not only commits felony on the original by abstracting whole sentences and pages ad libitum, but he also thrusts false goods into his author’s pocket and patronises the unfortunate Eastern story-teller by foisting upon him whatever he, the “translator and traitor,” deems needful. On this point no more need be said: the curious reader has but to compare any one of Scott’s “translations” with the original or, for that matter, with the present version.

I determined to do that for Scott which Lane had done partly and imperfectly, and Payne had successfully and satisfactorily done for Galland. But my first difficulty was about the text. It was impossible to face without affright the prospect of working for months amid the discomforts and the sanitary dangers of Oxford’s learned atmosphere and in her obsolete edifices the Bodleian and the Radcliffe. Having ascertained, however, that in the so-called “University” not a scholar could be found to read the text, I was induced to apply for a loan?not to myself personally for I should have shunned the responsibility?but in the shape of a temporary transfer of the seven-volumed text, tome by tome, to the charge of Dr. Rost, the excellent Librarian of the India Office.

My hopes, however, were fated to be deferred. Learned bodies, Curators and so forth, are ponderous to move and powerless to change for

The trail of the slow-worm is over them all.

My official application was made on September 13th, 1886. The tardiest steps were taken as if unwillingly and, when they could no longer decently be deferred, they resulted in the curtest and most categorical but not most courteous of refusals, under circumstances of peculiar disfavour, on November 1st of the same year. Here I shall say no more: the correspondence has been relegated to Appendix A. My subscribers, however, will have no reason to complain of these “Ineptić Bodleianć.” I had pledged myself in case of a loan “not to translate Tales that might be deemed offensive to propriety:” the Curators have kindly set me free from that troublesome condition and I thank them therefor.

Meanwhile I had not been idle. Three visits to Oxford in September and October had enabled me to reach the DIVth Night. But the laborious days and inclement evenings, combined with the unsanitary state of town and libraries?the Bodleian and the Rotunda? brought on a serious attack of “lithiasis” as it is now called, and prostrated me for two months, until it was time to leave England en route for my post.

Under these circumstances my design threatened to end in failure. As often befalls to men out of England, every move ventured by me menaced only check-mate. I began by seeking a copyist at Oxford, one who would imitate the text as an ignoramus might transcribe music: an undergraduate volunteered for the task and after a few days dropped it in dumb disgust. The attempt was presently repeated by a friend with the unsatisfactory result that three words out of four were legible. In London several Easterns were described as able and willing for the work; but they also were found wanting; one could not be trusted with the MS. and another was marriage-mad. Photography was lastly proposed, but considerations of cost seemed to render it unavailable. At last, when matters were at the worst, the proverbial amendment appeared. Mr. Chandler, whose energetic and conscientious opposition to all “Bodleian loans,” both of books and of manuscripts, had mainly caused the passing of the prohibitory statute, came forward in the most friendly and generous way: with no small trouble to himself he superintended the “sun- pictures,” each page of the original being reduced to half-size, and he insisted upon the work being done wholly and solely at his own expense. I know not how to express my gratitude.

The process was undertaken by Mr. Percy Notcutt, of Kingsbury and Notcutt, 45, St. George’s Place, Knightsbridge, and the four hundred and odd pages were reproduced in most satisfactory style.

Being relegated to a port-town which never possessed even an Arabic lexicon, I have found some difficulty with the Wortley Montague MS. as it contains a variety of local words unknown to the common dictionaries. But I have worked my best to surmount the obstacle by consulting many correspondents, amongst whom may be mentioned the name of my late lamented friend, the Reverend George Percy Badger; and, finally, by submitting my proofs to the corrections and additions of the lexicologist Dr. Steingass.

Appendix B will require no apology to the numerous admirers of Mr. E. J. W. Gibb’s honest and able work, “The History of the Forty Vezirs” (London, Redway, MDCCCLXXXVI). The writer in a book intended for the public was obliged to leave in their original Turkish, and distinguished only by italics, three “facetious” tales which, as usual, are some of the best in the book. These have been translated for me and I offer them to my readers on account of their curious analogies with many in The Nights.

Richard F. Burton.

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TRIESTE, April 10th, 1888.

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Story of the Sultan of Al-Yaman and His three Sons.[1]

There was erewhile in the land of Al-Yaman a man which was a Sultan and under him were three Kinglets whom he overruled. He had four children; to wit, three sons and a daughter: he also owned wealth and treasures greater than reed can pen or page may contain; as well as animals such as horses and camels, sheep and black cattle; and he was held in awe by all the sovrans. But when his reign had lasted for a length of time, Age[2] brought with it ailments and infirmities and he became incapable of faring forth his Palace to the Divan, the hall of audience; whereupon he summoned his three sons to the presence and said to them, “As for me, ’tis my wish to divide among you all my substance ere I die, that ye may be equal in circumstance and live in accordance with whatso I shall command.” And they said, “Hearkening and obedience.” Then quoth the Sultan, “Let the eldest of you become sovereign after me: let the cadet succeed to my moneys and treasures[3] and as for the youngest let him inherit my animals of every kind. Suffer none to transgress against other; but each aid each and assist his co-partner.” He then caused them to sign a bond and agreement to abide by his bequeathal; and, after delaying a while, he departed to the mercy of Allah. Thereupon his three sons got ready the funeral gear and whatever was suited to his estate for the mortuary obsequies such as cerements and other matters: they washed the corpse and enshrouded it and prayed over it: then, having committed it to the earth they returned to their palaces where the Wazirs and the Lords of the Land and the city-folk in their multitudes, high and low, rich and poor, flocked to condole with them on the loss of their father. And the news of his decease was soon bruited abroad in all the provinces; and deputations from each and every city came to offer condolence to the King’s sons. These ceremonies duly ended, the eldest Prince demanded that he should be seated as Sultan on the stead of his sire in accordance with the paternal will and testament; but he could not obtain it from his two brothers as both and each said, “I will become ruler in room of my father.” So enmity and disputes for the government now arose amongst them and it was not to be won by any; but at last quoth the eldest Prince, “Wend we and submit ourselves to the arbitration of a Sultan of the tributary sultans; and let him to whom he shall adjudge the realm take it and reign over it.” Quoth they “’Tis well!” and thereto agreed, as did also the Wazirs; and the three set out without suite seeking the capital of one of the subject Sovrans.??And Shahrázád[4] was surprised by the dawn of day[5] and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyázád, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Thirtieth Night,

Dunyázád said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deed fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the three Princes fared seeking a Sultan of the sultans who had been under the hands of their sire, in order that they might take him to arbitrator. And they stinted not faring till the middle way, when behold, they came upon a mead abounding in herbage and in rain-water lying sheeted.[6] So they sat them down to rest and to eat of their victual, when one of the brothers, casting his eye upon the herbage, cried, “Verily a camel hath lately passed this way laden half with Halwá-sweetmeats and half with Hámiz-pickles.”[7] “True,” cried the second, “and he was blind of an eye.” Exclaimed the third, “’Tis sooth; and indeed he hath lost his tail.” Hardly, however, had they ended their words when lo! the owner of the camel came upon them (for he had overheard their speech and had said to himself, “By Allah, these three fellows have driven off my property, inasmuch as they have described the burthen and eke the beast as tail-less and one-eyed”), and cried out, “Ye three have carried away my camel!”[8] “By Allah we have not seen him,” quoth the Princes, “much less have we touched him;” but quoth the man, “By the Almighty, who can have taken him except you? and if you will not deliver him to me, off with us, I and you three, to the

Sultan.” They replied, “By all manner of means; let us wend to the Sovran.” So the four hied forth, the three Princes and the Cameleer, and ceased not faring till they reached the capital of the King. There they took seat without the wall to rest for an hour’s time and presently they arose and pushed into the city and came to the royal Palace. Then they craved leave of the Chamberlains, and one of the Eunuchs caused them enter and signified to the sovereign that the three sons of Such-and-such a Sultan had made act of presence. So he bade them be set before him and the four went in and saluted him, and prayed for him and he returned their salams. He then asked them, “What is it hath brought you hither and what may ye want in the way of enquiry?” Now the first to speak was the Cameleer and he said, “O my lord the Sultan; verily these three men have carried off my camel by proof of their own speech.”?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Thirty-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Cameleer came forward between the Sultan’s hands and said, “O my lord, verily these men have carried away the camel which belongeth to me,[9] for they have indeed described him and the burthen he bore! And I require of our lord the Sultan that he take from these wights and deliver to me the camel which is mine as proved by their own words.” Presently asked the Sultan, “What say ye to the claims of this man and the camel belonging to him?” Hereto the Princes made answer, “By Allah, O King of the Age, we have not seen the camel, much less have we stolen him.” Thereupon the Cameleer exclaimed, “O my lord, I heard yonder one say that the beast was blind of an eye; and the second said that he was tail-less, and the third said that half his load was of sour stuff and the other half was of sweet stuff." They replied, "True, we spake these words;" and the Sultan cried to them, "Ye have purloined the beast by this proof." They rejoined, "No, by Allah, O my lord. We sat us in such a place for repose and refreshment and we remarked that some of the pasture had been grazed down, so we said, 'This is the grazing of a camel; and he must have been blind of one eye as the grass was eaten only on one side.' But as for our saying that he was tail-less, we noted the droppings lying heaped[10] upon the ground which made us agree that the tail must have been cut off, it being the custom of camels at such times to whisk their tails and scatter the dung abroad. So 'twas evident to us that the camel had lost his tail. But as for our saying that the load was half Halwá and half Hámiz, we saw on the place where the camel had knelt the flies gathering in great numbers while on the other were none: so the case was clear to us (as flies settle on naught save the sugared) that one of the panniers must have contained sweets and the other sours." Hearing this the Sultan said to the Cameleer, "O man, fare thee forth and look after thy camel; for these signs and tokens prove not the theft of these men, but only the power of their intellect and their penetration."[11] And when the Cameleer heard this, he went his ways. Presently the Sultan cleared a place in the Palace and allotted to it the Princes for their entertainment: he also directed they be supplied with a banquet and the eunuchs did his bidding. But when it was eventide and supper was served up, the trio sat down to it purposing to eat; the eldest, however, having hent in hand a bannock of bread exclaimed, "By Allah, verily this cake was baked by a woman in blood, to wit, one with the menses." The cadet tasting a bit of kid exclaimed, "This kid was suckled by a bitch"; and the youngest exclaimed, "Assuredly this Sultan must be a son of shame, a bastard." All this was said by the youths what while the Sultan had hidden himself in order to hear and to profit by the Princes' words. So he waxed wroth and entered hastily crying, "What be these speeches ye have spoken?" They replied, "Concerning all thou hast heard enquire within and thou wilt find it wholly true." The Sultan then entered his women's apartments and after inquisition found that the woman who had kneaded the bread was sick with her monthly courses. He then went forth and summoned the head-shepherd and asked him concerning the kid he had butchered. He replied, “By Allah, O my lord, the nanny-goat that bare the kid died and we found none other in milk to suckle him; but I had a bitch that had just pupped and her have I made nourish him.” The Sultan lastly hent his sword in hand and proceeded to the apartments of the Sultánah-mother and cried, “By Allah, unless thou avert my shame[12] we will cut thee down with this scymitar! Say me whose son am I?” She replied, “By Allah, O my child, indeed falsehood is an excuse, but fact and truth are more saving and superior. Verily thou art the son of a cook!”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Thirty-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan’s mother said to him, “Verily thou art a cook’s son. Thy sire could not beget boy-children and I bare him only a single daughter. But it so fortuned that the kitchener’s wife lay in of a boy (to wit, thyself); so we gave my girl-babe to the cook and took thee as the son of the Sultan, dreading for the realm after thy sire’s death.” The King went forth from his mother in astonishment at the penetration of the three youths and, when he had taken seat in his Palace, he summoned the trio and as soon as they appeared he asked them; “Which of you was it that said, ‘She who kneaded the bread was in blood’?” Quoth the eldest, “That was I;” and quoth the King, “What led thee to suspect that she was menstruous?” He replied, “O my lord, when I took the bannock and broke off a bittock, the flour fell out in lumps.[13] Now had the kneader been well, her strength of hand would have remained and the bread would have been wrought by all the veins; but, when the blood came, her powers were minished for women's force is in their hands; and as soon as the monthly period cometh upon them their strength is lost. Their bodies contain three hundred and sixty veins all lying hard by one another and the blood of the catamenia floweth from them all; hence their force becometh feebleness. And this was my proof of the woman which was menstruous." Quoth the Sultan, "'Tis well. We accept as certain thy saying upon this evidence, for it is agreeable to man's understanding nor can any challenge it; this being from the power of insight into the condition of womankind. And we are assured of its soothfastness, for 'tis evident to us without concealment. But which is he who said of the kid's meat that the beast was suckled by a bitch? What proof had he of this? How did he learn it and whence did his intelligence discover it to him?" Now when the deceased Sultan's second son heard these words, he made answer. "I, O King of the Age, am he who said that say!" The King replied, "'Tis well;" and the Prince resumed, "O my lord, that which showed me the matter of the meat which was to us brought is as follows. I found the fat of the kid all hard by the bone, and I knew that the beast had sucked bitch's milk; for the flesh of dogs lieth outside and their fat is on their bones, whereas in sheep and goats the fat lieth upon the meat. Such, then, was my proof wherein there is nor doubt nor hesitation; and when thou shalt have made question and inquiry thou wilt find this to be fact." Quoth the Sultan, "'Tis well; thou hast spoken truth and whatso thou sayest is soothfast. But which is he who declared that I am a bastard and what was his proof and what sign in me exposed it to him?" Quoth the youngest Prince, "I am he who said it;" and the Sultan rejoined, "There is no help but that thou provide me with a proof." The Prince rejoined, "'Tis well!"?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Thirty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youngest Prince said to the Sultan, “O my lord, I have evidence that thou art the son of a cook and a base-born, in that thou didst not sit at meat with us and this was mine all-sufficient evidence. Every man hath three properties which he inheriteth at times from his father, at times from his maternal uncle and at times from his mother.[14] From his sire cometh generosity or niggardness; from his uncle courage or cowardice; from his mother modesty or immodesty; and such is the proof of every man.” Then quoth to him the Sultan, “Sooth thou speakest; but say me, men who like you know all things thoroughly by evidence and by your powers of penetration, what cause have they to come seeking arbitration at my hand? Beyond yours there be no increase of intelligence. So fare ye forth from me and manage the matter amongst yourselves, for ’tis made palpable to me by your own words that naught remaineth to you save to speak of mysterious subjects;[15] nor have I the capacity to adjudge between you after that which I have heard from you. In fine an ye possess any document drawn up by your sire before his decease, act according to it and contrary it not.” Upon this the Princes went forth from him and made for their own country and city and did as their father had bidden them do on his death-bed. The eldest enthroned himself as Sultan; the cadet assumed possession and management of the moneys and treasures and the youngest took to himself the camels and the horses and the beeves and the muttons. Then each and every was indeed equal with his co-partner in the gathering of good. But when the new year came, there befel a drought among the beasts and all belonging to the youngest brother died nor had he aught of property left: yet his spirit brooked not to take anything from his brethren or even to ask of them aught. This then is the Tale of the King of Al-Yaman in its entirety; yet is the Story of the Three Sharpers[16] more wondrous and marvellous than that just recounted.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the King suffer me to survive.” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Thirty-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will! It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating;” and she began to recount

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THE STORY OF THE THREE SHARPERS.[17]

Saying, "Verily their adventure is wondrous and their actions delightsome and marvellous," presently adding?There were in time of yore three Sharpers who were wont every day in early morning to prowl forth and to prey, rummaging[18] among the mounds which outlay the city. Therein each would find a silver bit of five parahs or its equivalent, after which the trio would for- gather and buy whatso sufficed them for supper: they would also expend two Nusfs[19] upon Bast,[20] which is Bhang, and purchase a waxen taper with the other silver bit. They had hired a cell in the flank of a Wakálah, a caravanserai without the walls, where they could sit at ease to solace themselves and eat their Hashísh after lighting the candle and enjoy their intoxication and consequent merriment till the noon o' night. Then they would sleep, again awaking at day-dawn when they would arise and seek for spoil, according to their custom, and ransack the heaps where at times they would hit upon a silverling of five dirhams and at other times a piece of four; and at eventide they would meet to spend together the dark hours, and they would expend everything they came by every day. For a length of time they pursued this path until, one day of the days, they made for the mounds as was their wont and went round searching the heaps from morning to evening without finding even a half-parah; wherefore they were troubled and they went away and nighted in their cell without meat or drink. When the next day broke they arose and repaired for booty, changing the places wherein they were wont to forage; but none of them found aught; and their breasts were straitened for lack of a find of dirhams wherewith to buy them supper. This lasted for three full-told and following days until hunger waxed hard upon them and vexation; so they said one to other, "Go we to the Sultan and let us serve him with a sleight, and each of us three shall claim to be a past master of some craft: haply Allah Almighty may incline his heart uswards and he may largesse us with something to expend upon our necessities." Accordingly all three agreed to do on this wise and they sought the Sultan whom they found in the palace-garden. They asked leave to go in to him, but the Chamberlains refused admission: so they stood afar off unable to approach the presence. Then quoth they one to other, "'Twere better we fall to and each smite his comrade and cry aloud and make a clamour,[21] and as soon as he shall hear us he will send to summon us." Accordingly they jostled one another and each took to frapping his fellow, making the while loud outcries. The Sultan hearing this turmoil said, "Bring me yonder wights;" and the Chamberlains and Eunuchs ran out to them and seized them and set them between the hands of the Sovran. As soon as they stood in the presence he asked them, "What be the cause of your wrath one against other?" They answered, "O King of the Age, we are past masters of crafts, each of us weeting an especial art." Quoth the Sultan, "What be your crafts?" and quoth one of the trio, "O our lord, as for my art I am a jeweller by trade." The King exclaimed, "Passing strange! a sharper and a jeweller:[22] this is a wondrous matter." And he questioned the second?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night which was

The Three Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan asked the second Sharper saying, "And thou, the other, what may be thy craft?" He answered, "I am a genealogist[23] of the horse-kind." So the King glanced at him in surprise and said to himself, "A sharper yet he claimeth an astounding knowledge!" Then he left him and put the same question to the third who said to him, "O King of the Age, verily my art is more wondrous and marvellous than aught thou hast heard from these twain: their craft is easy but mine is such that none save I can discover the right direction thereto or know the first of it from the last of it." The Sultan enquired of him, "And what be thy craft?” Whereto he replied, “My craft is the genealogy of the sons of Adam.” Hearing these words the Sovran wondered with extreme wonderment and said in himself, “Verily He informeth with His secrets the humblest of His creatures! Assuredly these men, an they speak truth in all they say and it prove soothfast, are fit for naught except kingship. But I will keep them by me until the occurrence of some nice contingency wherein I may test them; then, if they approve themselves good men and trustworthy of word, I will leave them on life; but if their speech be lying I will do them die.” Upon this he set apart for them apartments and rationed them with three cakes of bread and a dish of roast meat[24] and set over them his sentinels dreading lest they fly. This case continued for a while till behold, there came to the Sultan from the land of ‘Ajam a present of rarities, amongst which were two gems whereof one was clear of water and the other was clouded of colour.[25] The Sultan hent them in hand for a time and fell to considering them straitly for the space of an hour; after which he called to mind the first of the three Sharpers, the self-styled jeweller, and cried, “Bring me the jeweller-man.” Accordingly they went and brought him and set him before the Sovran who asked him, “O man, art thou a lapidary?” And when the Sharper answered “Yes” he gave him the clear-watered stone, saying, “What may be the price of this gem?”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sharper took the jewel in hand and turned it rightwards and leftwards and considered the outside and pried into the inside; after which he said to the Sultan, "O my lord, verily this gem containeth a worm[26] bred within the heart thereof." Now when the King heard these words he waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and commanded the man's head to be stricken off, saying, "This jewel is clear of colour and free of flaw or other default; yet thou chargest it falsely with containing a worm!" Then he summoned the Linkman[27] who laid hands on the Sharper and pinioned his elbows and trussed up his legs[28] like a camel's and was about to smite his neck when behold, the Wazir entered the presence and, seeing the Sovran in high dudgeon and the Sharper under the scymitar, asked what was to do. The Sultan related to him what had happened when he drew near to him and said, "O my lord, act not after this fashion! An thou determine upon the killing of yonder man, first break the gem and, if thou find therein a worm, thou wilt know the wight's word to have been veridical; but an thou find it sound then strike off his head." "Right is thy rede," quoth the King: then he took in hand the gem and smote it with his mace[29] and when it brake behold, he found therein the worm amiddlemost thereof. So he marvelled at the sight and asked the man, "What proved to thee that it harboured a worm?" "The sharpness of my sight," answered the Sharper. Then the Sultan pardoned him and, admiring his power of vision, addressed his attendants saying, "Bear him back to his comrades and ration him with a dish of roast meat and two cakes of bread." And they did as he bade them. After some time, on a day of the days, there came to the King the tribute of 'Ajam-land accompanied with presents amongst which was a colt whose robe black as night[30] showed one shade in the sun and another in the shadow. When the animal was displayed to the Sultan he fell in love with it and set apart for it a stall and solaced himself at all times by gazing at it and was wholly occupied with it and sang its praises till they filled the whole country side. Presently he remembered the Sharper who claimed to be a genealogist of the horse-kind and bade him be summoned. So they fared forth and brought him and set him between the hands of the Sovran who said to him, "Art thou he who knoweth the breed and descent of horses?" "Yea verily," said the man. Then cried the King, "By the truth of Him who set me upon the necks of His servants and who sayeth to a thing 'Be' and it becometh, an I find aught of error or confusion in thy words, I will strike off thy head.” “Hearkening and obedience,” quoth the Sharper. Then they led him to the colt that he might consider its genealogy. He called aloud to the groom[31] ?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sharper called aloud to the stirrup-holder and when they brought him he bade the man back the colt for his inspection. So he mounted the animal and made it pace to the right and to the left causing it now to prance and curvet and then to step leisurely, while the connoisseur looked on and after a time quoth he to the groom, “’Tis enough!” Then he went in to the presence and stood between the hands of the King who enquired, “What hast thou seen in the colt, O Kashmar?”[32] Replied the Sharper, “By Allah, O King of the Age, this colt is of pure and noble blood on the side of the sire: its action is excellent and all its qualities are praiseworthy save one; and but for this one it had been perfect in blood and breed nor had there been on earth’s face its fellow in horseflesh. But its blemish remaineth a secret.” The Sultan asked, “And what is the quality which thou blamest?” and the Sharper answered, “Its sire was noble, but its dam was of other strain: she it was that brought the blemish and if thou, O my lord, allow me I will notify it to thee.” “’Tis well, and needs must thou declare it,” quoth the Sultan. Then said the Sharper, “Its dam is a buffalo-cow.”[33] When the King heard these words he was wroth with wrath exceeding and he bade the Linkman take the Sharper and behead him, crying, “O dog! O accursed! How can a buffalo-cow bear a horse?” The Sharper replied, “O my lord, the Linkman is in the presence; but send and fetch him who brought thee the colt and of him make enquiry. If my words prove true and rightly placed, my skill shall be stablished; but an they be lies let my head pay forfeit for my tongue. Here standeth the Linkman and I am between thy hands: thou hast but to bid him strike off my head!" Thereupon the King sent for the owner and breeder of the colt and they brought him to the presence.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth the sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan sent for the owner and breeder of the colt and asked him saying, "Tell me the truth anent the blood of this colt. Didst thou buy it or breed it so that it was a rearling of thy homestead?" Said he, "By Allah, O King of the Age, I will speak naught which is not sooth, for indeed there hangeth by this colt the strangest story: were it graven with graver-needles upon the eye-corners it had been a warning to whoso would be warned. And this it is. I had a stallion of purest strain whose sire was of the steeds of the sea;[34] and he was stabled in a stall apart for fear of the evil eye, his service being entrusted to trusty servants. But one day in springtide the Syce took the horse into the open and there picquetted him when behold, a buffalo-cow walked into the enclosed pasture where the stallion was tethered, and seeing her he brake his heel-ropes and rushed at her and covered her. She conceived by him and when her days were completed and her throwing-time came she suffered sore pains and bare yonder colt. And all who have seen it or have heard of it were astounded," said he, presently adding, "by Allah, O King of the Age, had its dam been of the mare-kind the colt would have had no equal on earth's surface or aught approaching it."

Hereat the Sultan took thought and marvelled; then, summoning the Sharper he said to him when present, “O man, thy speech is true and thou art indeed a genealogist in horseflesh and thou wottest it well. But I would know what proved to thee that the dam of this colt was a buffalo-cow?” Said he, “O King, my proof thereof was palpable nor can it be concealed from any wight of right wits and intelligence and special knowledge; for the horse’s hoof is round whilst the hooves of buffaloes are elongated and duck-shaped,[35] and hereby I kenned that this colt was a jumart, the issue of a cow-buffalo.” The Sultan was pleased with his words and said, “Ration him with a plate of roast meat and two cakes of bread;” and they did as they were bidden. Now for a length of time the third Sharper was forgotten till one day the Sultan bethought him of the man who could explain the genealogy of Adam’s sons. So he bade fetch him and when they brought him into the presence he said, “Thou art he that knowest the caste and descent of men and women?” and the other said, “Yes.” Then he commanded the Eunuchs take him to his wife[36] and place him before her and cause him declare her genealogy. So they led him in and set him standing in her presence and the Sharper considered her for a while looking from right to left; then he fared forth to the Sultan who asked him, “What hast thou seen in the Queen?” Answered he, “O my lord, I saw a somewhat adorned with loveliness and beauty and perfect grace, with fair stature of symmetrical trace and with modesty and fine manners and skilful case; and she is one in whom all good qualities appear on every side, nor is aught of accomplishments or knowledge concealed from her and haply in her centre all desirable attributes. Natheless, O King of the Age, there is a curious point that dishonoureth her from the which were she free none would outshine her of all the women of her generation.” Now when the Sultan heard the words of the Sharper, he sprang hastily to his feet and clapping hand upon hilt bared his brand and fell upon the man purposing to slay him;?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and

that was

The Three Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan fell upon the Sharper with his sword purposing to slay him; but the Chamberlains and the Eunuchs prevented him saying, “O our lord, kill him not until his falsehood or his fact shall have been made manifest to thee.” The Sultan said to him, “What then appeared to thee in my Queen?” “He[37] is ferly fair,” said the man, “but his mother is a dancing-girl, a gypsey.”[38] The fury of the King increased hereat and he sent to summon the inmates of his Harem and cried to his father-in-law, “Unless thou speak me sooth concerning thy daughter and her descent and her mother I”?[39] He replied, “By Allah, O King of the Age, naught saveth a man save soothfastness! Her mother indeed was a Gháziyah: in past time a party of the tribe was passing by my abode when a young maid strayed from her fellows and was lost. They asked no questions concerning her; so I lodged her and bred her in my homestead till she grew up to be a great girl and the fairest of her time. My heart would not brook her wiving with any other; so I wedded her and she bare me this daughter whom thou, O King, hast espoused.” When the Sultan heard these words the flame in his heart was quenched[40] and he wondered at the subtlety of the Sharper man; so he summoned him and asked him saying, “O wily one, tell me what certified to thee that my Queen had a dancing girl, a gypsey, to mother?” He answered, “O King of the Age, verily the Ghaziyah race hath eye-balls intensely black and bushy brows whereas other women than the Ghaziyah have the reverse of this.” On such wise the King was convinced of the man’s skill and he cried, “Ration him with a dish of roast meat and two scones.” They did as he bade and the three Sharpers tarried with the Sultan a long time till one day when the King said to himself, “Verily these three men have by their skill solved every question of genealogy which I proposed to them: first the jeweller proved his perfect knowledge of gems; secondly the genealogist of the horse-kind showed himself as skilful, and the same was the case with the genealogist of mankind, for he discovered the origin of my Queen and the truth of his words appeared from all quarters. Now ’tis my desire that he do the same with me that I also may know my provenance.” Accordingly they set the man between his hands and he said to him, “O fellow, hast thou the power to tell me mine origin?” Said the Sharper, “Yes, O my lord, I can trace thy descent, but I will so do only upon a condition; to wit, that thou promise me safety[41] after what I shall have told thee; for the saw saith, ‘Whilst Sultan sitteth on throne ‘ware his despite, inasmuch as none may be contumacious when he saith ‘Smite.’” Thereupon the Sultan told him, “thou hast a promise of immunity, a promise which shall never be falsed.”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent, and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night, and that was

The Three Hundred and Fortieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan pledged his word for the safety of the Sharper with the customary kerchief[42] and the man said, “O King of the Age, whenas I acquaint thee with thy root and branch, let it be between us twain lest these present hear us.” “Wherefore O man?” asked the Sultan, and the Sharper answered, “O my lord, Allah of Allmight hath among His names ‘The Veiler’;”[43] wherefore the King bade his Chamberlains and Eunuchs retire so that none remained in the place save those two. Then the Sharper came forward and said, “O my lord, thou art a son of shame and an issue of adultery.” As soon as the King heard these words his case changed and his colour waxed wan and his limbs fell loose:[44] he foamed at the mouth;[45] he lost hearing and sight; he became as one drunken without wine and he fell fainting to the ground. After a while he recovered and said to the Sharper, “Now by the truth of Him who hath set me upon the necks of His servants, an thy words be veridical and I ascertain their sooth by proof positive, I will assuredly abdicate my Kingdom and resign my realm to thee, because none deserveth it save thou and it becometh us least of all and every. But an I find thy speech lying I will slay thee.” He replied, “Hearing and obeying;” and the Sovran, rising up without stay or delay, went inside to his mother with grip on glaive, and said to her, “By the truth of Him who uplifted the lift above the earth, an thou answer me not with the whole truth in whatso I ask thee, I will cut thee to little bits with this blade.” She enquired, “What dost thou want with me?” and he replied, “Whose son am I, and what may be my descent?” She rejoined, “Although falsehood be an excuse, fact and truth are superior and more saving. Thou art indeed the very son of a cook. The Sultan that was before thee took me to wife and I cohabited with him a while of time without my becoming pregnant by him or having issue; and he would mourn and groan from the core of his heart for that he had no seed, nor girl nor boy; neither could he enjoy aught of sweet food or sleep. Now we had about the Palace many caged birds; and at last, one day of the days, the King longed to eat somewhat of poultry, so he went into the court and sent for the Kitchener to slaughter[46] one of the fowls; and the man applied himself to catching it. At that time I had taken my first bath after the monthly ailment and quoth I to myself, ‘If this case continue with the King he will perish and the Kingdom pass from us.’ And the Shaytan tempted me to that which displeased Allah”?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Forty-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Queen continued, “And Satan tempted me and made the sin fair in my sight. So I went up to the Kitchener, attired and adorned as I was in my finest apparel and I fell a-jesting with him and provoking him and disporting with him till his passions were excited by me: so he tumbled me at that very hour, after which he arose and slaughtered one of the birds and went his ways. Then I bade the handmaids sprinkle water on the fowl and clean it and cook it; and they did my bidding. After a while symptoms of pregnancy declared themselves in me and became evident; and when the King heard that his Queen was with child, he waxed gladsome and joyful and gave alms and scattered gifts and bestowed robes upon his Officers of State and others till the day of my delivery and I bare a babe?which is thyself. Now at that time the Sultan was hunting and birding and enjoying himself about the gardens all of his pleasure at the prospect of becoming a father; and when the bearer of good news went to him and announced the birth of a man-child he hurried back to me and forthright bade them decorate the capital and he found the report true; so the city adorned itself for forty days in honour of its King. Such is my case and my tale.”[47] Thereupon the King went forth from her to the Sharper and bade him doff his dress and when this had been done he doffed his own raiment and habited the man in royal gear and hooded him with the Taylasán[48] and asked him saying, “What proof hast thou of my being a son of adultery?” The Sharper answered, “O my lord, my proof was thy bidding our being rationed, after showing the perfection of our skill, with a dish of roast meat and two scones of bread; whereby I knew thee to be of cook’s breed, for the Kings be wont in such case to make presents of money and valuables, not of meat and bread as thou didst, and this evidenced thee to be a bastard King.” He replied, “Sooth thou sayest,” and then robed him with the rest of his robes including the Kalansuwah or royal head-dress under the hood[49] and seated him upon the throne of his estate.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive." Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Forty-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan enthroned the Sharper upon the throne of estate and went forth from him after abandoning all his women to him and assumed the garb of a Darwaysh who wandereth about the world and formally abdicated his dominion to his successor. But when the Sharper- king saw himself in this condition, he reflected and said to himself, "Summon thy whilome comrades and see whether they recognize thee or not." So he caused them be set before him and conversed with them; then, perceiving that none knew him he gifted them and sent them to gang their gait. And he ruled his realm and bade and forbade and gave and took away and was gracious and generous to each and every of his lieges; so that the people of that region who were his subjects blessed him and prayed for him. Such was the case with the Sharper; but as for

The Sultan who Fared Forth in the Habit of a Darwaysh,[50]

He ceased not wayfaring, as become a wanderer, till he came to Cairo[51] city whose circuit was a march of two and a half days and which then was ruled by her own King Mohammed hight. He found the folk in safety and prosperity and good ordinance; and he solaced himself by strolling about the streets to the right and left and he diverted his mind by considering the crowds and the world of men contained in the capital, until he drew near the palace when suddenly he sighted the Sultan returning from the chase and from taking his pleasure. Seeing this the Darwaysh retired to the wayside, and the King happening to glance in that direction, saw him standing and discerned in him the signs of former prosperity. So he said to one of his suite, “Take yon man with thee and entertain him till I send for him.” His bidding being obeyed he entered the Palace and, when he had rested from the fatigues of the way, he summoned the Fakír to the presence and questioned him of his condition, saying, “Thou, from what land art thou?” He responded, “O my lord, I am a beggar man;” and the other rejoined, “There is no help but that thou tell me what brought thee hither.” The Darwaysh retorted, “O my lord, this may not be save in privacy,” and the other exclaimed, “Be it so for thee.” The twain then arose and repaired to a retired room in the Palace and the Fakir recounted to the Sultan all that had befallen him since the loss of his kingship and also how he, a Sultan, had given up the throne of his realm and had made himself a Darwaysh. The Sovran marvelled at his self-denial in yielding up the royal estate and cried, “Laud be to Him who degradeth and upraiseth, who honoureth and humbleth by the wise ordinance of His All-might,” presently adding, “O Darwaysh, I have passed through an adventure which is marvellous; indeed ’tis one of the Wonders of the World[52] which I needs must relate to thee nor from thee withhold aught thereof.” And he fell to telling?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Forty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King fell to telling the beggar man

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

The History of Mohammed, Sultan of Cairo.

I began my career in the world as a Darwaysh, an asker, owning naught of the comforts and conveniences of life, till at length, one day of the days, I became possessor of just ten silverlings[53] (and no more) which I resolved to expend upon myself. Accordingly I walked into the Bazar purposing to purchase somewhat of provaunt. While I was looking around, I espied a man passing by and leading in an iron chain a dog-faced baboon and crying "Haraj![54] this ape is for sale at the price of ten faddahs." The folk jibed at the man and jeered at his ape; but quoth I to myself, "Buy this beast and expend upon it the ten silverlings." Accordingly I drew near the seller and said to him, "Take these ten faddahs;" whereupon he took them and gave me the ape which I led to the cell wherein I dwelt. Then I opened the door and went in with my bargain but began debating in my mind what to do and said, "How shall I manage a meal for the baboon and myself?" While I was considering behold, the beast was suddenly transformed, and became a young man fair of favour who had no equal in loveliness and stature and symmetric grace, perfect as the moon at full on the fourteenth night; and he addressed me saying, "O Shaykh Mohammed, thou hast bought me with ten faddahs, being all thou hadst and art debating how we shall feed, I and thou." Quoth I, "What art thou?" and quoth he, "Query me no questions, concerning whatso thou shalt see, for good luck hath come to thee." Then he gave me an Ashrafi[55] and said, "Take this piece of gold and fare thee forth to the Bazar and get us somewhat to eat and drink." I took it from him and repairing to the market purchased whatso food our case required; then returning to the cell set the victual before him and seated myself by his side. So we ate our sufficiency and passed that night, I and he, in the cell, and, when Allah caused the morn to dawn, he said to me, "O man, this room is not suitable to us: hie thee and hire a larger lodging." I replied, "To hear is to obey;" and, rising without stay or delay, went and took a room more roomy in the upper part of the Wakálah.[56] Thither we removed, I and the youth, and presently he gave me ten dinars more and said, "Go to the Bazar and buy thee furniture as much as is wanted.” Accordingly, I went forth and bought what he ordered and on my return I found before him a bundle containing a suit of clothes suitable for the Kings. These he gave to me desiring that I hie me to the Hammam and don them after bathing, so I did his bidding and washed and dressed myself and found in each pocket of the many pockets an hundred gold pieces; and presently when I had donned the dress I said to myself, “Am I dreaming or wide awake?”[57] Then I returned to the youth in the room and when he saw me he rose to his feet and commended my figure and seated me beside him. Presently he brought up a bigger bundle and bade me take it and repair to the Sultan of the City and at the same time ask his daughter in marriage for myself.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Forty-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan of Cairo continued:[58] ?So I took it and repaired with it to the King of that city, and a slave whom the youth had bought bore the bundle. Now when I approached the Palace I found thereabout the Chamberlains and Eunuchs and Lords of the Land: so I drew near them and when they saw me in that suit they approved my appearance and questioned me saying, “What be thy business and what dost thou require?” I replied, “My wish is to have audience of the King,” and they rejoined, “Wait a little while till we obtain for thee his permission.” Then one of the ushers went in and reported the matter to the Sultan who gave orders to admit me; so the man came out and led me within and on entering the presence I salamed to the Sovran and wished him welfare and presently set before him the bundle, saying, “O King of the Age, this be in the way of a gift which besitteth my station not thine estate.”

The Sultan bade the package be spread out, and he looked into it and saw a suit of royal apparel whose like he never had owned. So he was astonished at the sight and said in his mind, “By Allah, I possess naught like this, nor was I ever master of so magnificent a garment;” presently adding, “It shall be accepted, O Shaykh, but needs must thou have some want or requisition from me.” I replied, “O King of the Age, my wish is to become thy connection through that lady concealed and pearl unrevealed, thy daughter.” When the Sultan heard these words, he turned to his Wazir and said, “Counsel me as to what I should do in the matter of this man?” Said he, “O King of the Age, show him thy most precious stone and say him, ‘An thou have a jewel evening this one it shall be my daughter’s marriage-dowry.’” The King did as he was advised, whereat I was wild with wonderment and asked him, “An I bring thee such a gem wilt thou give me the Princess?” He answered, “Yea, verily!” and I took my leave bearing with me the jewel to the young man who was awaiting me in the room.[59] He enquired of me, “Hast thou proposed for the Princess?” and I replied, “Yes: I have spoken with the Sultan concerning her, when he brought out this stone, saying to me, ‘An thou have a jewel evening this one, it shall be my daughter’s marriage dowry;’ nor hath the Sultan power to false his word.” The youth rejoined, “This day I can do naught, but to-morrow (Inshallah!) I will bring thee ten jewels like it and these thou shalt carry and present to the Sovran.” Accordingly when the morning dawned he arose and fared forth and after an hour or so he returned with ten gems which he gave me. I took them and repaired with them to the Sultan and, entering the presence, I presented to him all the ten. When he looked upon the precious stones he wondered at their brilliant water and turning to the Wazir again asked him how he should act in this matter. Replied the Minister, “O King of the Age, thou requiredst of him but one jewel and he hath brought thee ten; ’tis therefore only right and fair to give him thy daughter.”?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Minister said to the Monarch, “Give him thy daughter.” Accordingly the Sultan summoned the Kazis and the Efendis[60] who wrote out the marriage-contract between me and the Princess. Then I returned to the youth who had remained in the room and told him all that had occurred when he said, “‘Twere best to conclude the wedding-ceremony and pay the first visit to thy bride at once; but thou shalt on no wise consummate the nuptials until I bid thee go in unto her, after somewhat shall have been done by me.” “Hearing and obeying,” replied I; and, when the night of going in[61] came, I visited the Sultan’s daughter but sat apart from her by the side of the room during the first night and the second and the third; nor did I approach her although every day her mother came and asked her the usual question[62] and she answered, “He hath never approached me.” So she grieved with sore grief for that ’tis the wont of womankind, when a maid is married and her groom goeth not in unto her, to deem that haply folk will attribute it to some matter which is not wholly right. After the third night the mother reported the case to her father who cried, “This night except he abate her pucelage I will slay him!” The tidings reached my bride who told all to me, so I repaired to the young man and acquainted him therewith. He cried, “When thou shalt visit her say, ‘By Allah, I will not enjoy thee unless thou give me the amulet-bracelet hanging to thy right shoulder.’” I replied, “To hear is to obey;” and, when I went in to her at nightfall, I asked her, “Dost thou really desire me to futter thee?” She answered, “I do indeed;” so I rejoined, “Then give me the amulet-bracelet hanging over thy right shoulder.” She arose forthright and unbound it and gave it to me, whereupon I bled her of the hymeneal blood[63] and going to the young man gave him the jewel. Then I returned to my bride and slept by her side till the morning when I awoke and found myself lying outstreched in my own caravanserai-cell. I was wonderstruck and asked myself, “Am I on wake or in a dream?” and I saw my whilome garments, the patched gabardine[64] and tattered shirt alone with my little drum;[65] but the fine suit given to me by the youth was not on my body nor did I espy any sign of it anywhere. So with fire burning in my heart after what had befallen me, I wandered about crowded sites and lone spots and in my distraction I knew not what to do, whither to go or whence to come; when lo and behold! I found sitting in an unfrequented part of the street a Maghrabi,[66] a Barbary man, who had before him some written leaves and was casting omens for sundry bystanders. Seeing this state of things, I came forward and drew near him and made him a salam which he returned; then, after considering my features straitly, he exclaimed, “O Shaykh, hath that Accursed done it and torn thee from thy bride?” “Yes,” I replied. Hereupon he said to me, “Wait a little while,” and seated me beside him; then, as soon as the crowd dispersed he said, “O Shaykh, the baboon which thou boughtest for ten silver bits and which was presently transformed into a young man of Adam’s sons, is not a human of the sons of Adam but a Jinni who is enamoured of the Princess thou didst wed. However, he could not approach her by reason of the charmed bracelet hanging from her right shoulder, wherefore he served thee this sleight and won it and now he still weareth it. But I will soon work his destruction to the end that Jinnkind and mankind may be at rest from his mischief; for he is one of the rebellious and misbegotten imps who break the law of our lord Solomon (upon whom be the Peace!).” Presently the Maghrabi took a leaf and wrote upon it as it were a book.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Forty-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Maghrabi wrote a writ and signed his name within and sealed it; after which he handed it to me saying, “O Shaykh, take this missive and hie thee herewith to a certain spot where thou must wait and observe those who pass by. Hearten thy heart and when thou shalt see approaching thee a man attended by a numerous train, present to him this scroll for ’tis he who will win for thee thy wish.” I took the note from the Barbary man and fared forth to the place which he had described and ceased not faring till I reached it after travelling all that night and half the next day; then I sat down until darkness set in to await whatso might befal me. When a fourth part of the night had passed, a dazzling glare of lights suddenly appeared from afar advancing towards me; and as it shone nearer, I made out men bearing flambeaux[67] and lanthorns, also a train of attendants befitting the Kings. They looked on and considered me whilst my heart fluttered with fear, and I was in sore affright. But the procession defiled and drew off from before me, marching two after two, and presently appeared the chief cortčge wherein was a Sultan[68] of the Jánn. As he neared me I heartened my heart and advanced and presented to him the letter which he, having halted, opened and read aloud; and it was:?”Be it known to thee, O Sultan of the Jann, that the bearer of this our epistle hath a need which thou must grant him by destroying his foe; and if opposition be offered by any we will do the opponent die. An thou fail to relieve him thou wilt know to seek from me relief for thyself.” When the King of the Jann had read the writ and had mastered its meaning and its mysteries, he forthwith called out to one of his serjeants[69] who at once came forward and bade him bring into his presence without delay such-and-such a Jinni who by his spells had wrought round the daughter of the Cairene Sultan. The messenger replied, “Hearing and obeying,” and departed from him and disappearing was absent an hour or thereabouts; after which he and others returned with the Jinni and set him standing before the King who exclaimed, “Wherefore, O Accurst, hast thou wrought ill to this man and done on this wise and on that wise?” He replied, “O my lord, all came of my fondness for the Princess who wore a charm in her armlet which hindered my approaching her and therefore I made use of this man to effect my purpose. I became master of the talisman and won my wish but I love the maiden and never will I harm her." Now when the Sultan heard these words he said, "Thy case can be after one of two fashions only. Either return the armlet that the man may be reunited with his wife and she with her husband as whilome they were; or contrary me and I will command the headsman strike thy neck." Now when the Jinni heard this speech (and 'twas he who had assumed the semblance of a dog-faced baboon), he refused and was rebellious to the King and cried, "I will not return the armlet nor will I release the damsel, for none can possess her save myself." And having spoken in this way he attempted to flee.?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Forty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale, that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Márid would fain have fled from before the King of the Jann, but the Sovran bade other Marids and more forceful arrest him; so they seized him and pinioned him and bound him in chains and collar and dragged him behind the King of the Jann till the latter had reached his place and had summoned him and had taken from him the armlet. Then the Sultan gave order for him to be slain and they slew him. When this was done, I prayed for the charm-armlet and I recovered it after the Marid's death; they also restored to me my fine suit. So I proceeded to the city which I entered, and as soon as the guards and courtiers saw me, they cried out for joy and said, "This is the son-in-law of the Sultan who was lost!" Hereat all the lieges hurried up to me and received me with high respect and greeted me. But after entering the Palace I proceeded forthright till I reached the apartment set apart by them for myself and my spouse whom I found in a deep sleep and stupefied, as it were; a condition in which she had lain ever since I took from her the talismanic armlet. So I replaced the jewel upon her right shoulder and she awoke and arose and ordered herself; whereat her father and family and the Lords of the Land and all the folk joyed with exceeding joy. After this we lived together in all happiness till the death of her sire who, having no son, named me his successor so that I became what I am. Now when the Darwaysh-Sultan heard all this he was astounded at what happeneth in this world of marvels and miracles; upon which I said to him, "O my brother wonder not; for whatso is predetermined shall perforce be carried out. But thou needs must become my Wazir; because thou art experienced in rule and governance and, since what time my sire-in-law the Sultan died, I have been perplexed in my plight being unable to find me a Minister who can administer the monarchy. So do thou become my Chief Counsellor in the realm." Thereupon the Darwaysh replied, "Hearkening and obedience." The Sultan then robed him in a sumptuous robe of honour and committed to him his seal-ring and all other matters pertinent to his office, at the same time setting apart for him a palace, spacious of corners, which he furnished with splendid furniture and wadded carpets and vaiselle and other such matters. So the Wazir took his seat of office and held a Divan or Council of State forthright and commanded and countermanded, and bade and forbade according as he saw just and equitable; and his fame for equity and justice was dispread abroad; insomuch that whoever had a cause or request or other business he would come to the Wazir for ordering whatso he deemed advisable. In this condition he continued for many years till, on a day of the days, the Sultan's mind was depressed. Upon this he sent after the Minister who attended at his bidding, when he said, "O Wazir, my heart is heavy!" "Enter then," replied the Minister, "O King, into thy treasury of jewels and rubies and turn them over in thy hands and thy breast will be broadened." The Sultan did accordingly but it took no effect upon his ennui; so he said, "O Wazir, I cannot win free of this melancholic humour and nothing pleasureth me in my palace; so let us fare forth, I and thou, in disguise." "Hearing is obeying," quoth the Minister. The twain then retired into a private chamber to shift their garb and habited themselves as Darwayshes, the Darwayshes of Ajam-land, and went forth and passed through the city right and left till they reached a Máristán, a hospital for lunatics.[70] Here they found two young men, one reading the Koran[71] and the other hearkening to him, both being in chains like men Jinn-mad; and the Sultan said in his mind, “By Allah, this is a marvel-case,” and bespake the men asking, “Are ye really insane?” They answered saying, “No, by Allah; we are not daft but so admirable are our adventures that were they graven with needle-gravers upon the eye-corners they had been warners to whoso would be warned.” “What are they?” quoth the King, and quoth they, “Each of us, by Allah, hath his own story;” and presently he who had been reading exclaimed, “O King of the Age, hear my tale.”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night, and that was

The Three Hundred and Forty-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth began relating to the Sultan

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

The Story of the First Lunatic.[72]

I was a merchant and kept a shop wherein were Hindi goods of all kinds and colours, highmost priced articles; and I sold and bought with much profit. I continued in this condition a while of time till one day of the days as I, according to my custom, was sitting in my shop an old woman came up and gave me the good morning and greeted me with the salam. I returned her salute when she seated her upon the shopboard and asked me saying, “O master, hast thou any pieces of choice Indian stuffs?” I replied, “O my mistress, I have with me whatso thou wantest;” and she rejoined, “Bring me forth one of them.” Accordingly I arose and fetched her a Hindi piece of the costliest price and placed it in her hands. She took it and examining it was greatly pleased by its beauty and presently said to me, “O my lord, for how much is this?” Said I, “Five hundred dinars;” whereupon she pulled forth her purse and counted out to me the five hundred gold pieces. Then she took the stuff and went her ways; and I, O our lord the Sultan, had sold to her for five hundred sequins a piece of cloth worth at cost price three hundred and fifty gold pieces. She came to me again, O my lord, on the next day and asked me for another piece; so I rose up and brought her the bundle and she paid me once more five hundred dinars: then she took up her bargain and ganged her gait. She did the same, O my lord, on the third and the fourth day and so on to the fifteenth, taking a piece of stuff from me and paying me regularly five hundred golden pieces for each bargain. On the sixteenth behold, she entered my shop as was her wont, but she found not her purse; so she said to me, “O Khwájah,[73] I have left my purse at home.” Said I, “O my lady, an thou return ’tis well and if not thou art welcome to it.” She sware she would not take it and I, on the other hand, sware her to carry it off as a token of love and friendship.[74] Thereupon debate fell between us, and I, O our lord the Sultan, had made muchel of money by her and, had she taken two pieces gratis, I would not have asked questions anent them. At last she cried, “O Khwajah, I have sworn an oath and thou hast sworn an oath, and we shall never agree except thou favour me by accompanying me to my house so thou mayest receive the value of the stuff, when neither of us will have been forsworn: therefore lock up thy shop lest anything be lost in thine absence." Accordingly I bolted my door and went with her, O our lord the Sultan, and we ceased not walking, conversing the while we walked, I and she, until we neared her abode when she pulled out a kerchief from her girdle and said, "'Tis my desire to bind this over thine eyes." Quoth I, "For what cause?" and quoth she, "For that on our way be sundry houses whose doors are open and the women are sitting in the vestibules of their homes, so that haply thy glance may alight upon some one of them, married or maid, and thy heart become engaged in a love-affair and thou abide distraught, because in this quarter of the town be many fair faces, wives and virgins, who would fascinate even a religious, and therefore we are alarmed for thy peace of mind." Upon this I said in myself, "By Allah, this old woman is able of advice;" and I consented to her requirement, when she bound the kerchief over my eyes and blindfolded me. Then we walked on till we came to the house she sought; and when she rapped with the door-ring a slave-girl came out and opening the door let us in. The old body then approached me and unbound the kerchief from over my eyes; whereupon I looked around me, holding myself to be a captive, and I found me in a mansion having sundry separate apartments in the wings and 'twas richly decorated resembling the palaces of the Kings.?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this com- pared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Forty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth pursued:?By Allah, O our lord the Sultan, of that house I never saw the fellow. She then bade me hide within a room and I did her bidding in a corner place where beside me I beheld heaped together and cast down in that private site all the pieces of stuff which the ancient dame had purchased of me. Seeing this I marvelled in my mind and lo! appeared two damsels as they were moons and came down from an upper story till they stood on the ground-floor; after which they cut a piece of cloth into twain and each maiden took one and tucked up her sleeves. They then sprinkled the court of that palace with water of the rose and of the orange-flower,[75] wiping the surface with the cloth and rubing it till it became as silver; after which the two girls retired into an inner room and brought out some fifty chairs[76] which they set down, and placed over each seat a rug[77] with cushions of brocade. They then carried in a larger chair of gold and placed upon it a carpet with cushions of orfrayed work and after a time they withdrew. Presently, there descended from the staircase, two following two, a host of maidens in number till they evened the chairs and each one of them sat down upon her own, and at last suddenly appeared a young lady in whose service were ten damsels, and she walked up to and they seated her upon the great chair. When I beheld her, O my lord the Sultan, my right senses left me and my wits fled me and I was astounded at her loveliness and her stature and her symmetric grace as she swayed to and fro in her pride of beauty and gladsome spirits amongst those damsels and laughed and sported with them. At last she cried aloud, “O mother mine!” when the ancient dame answered her call and she asked her, “Hast thou brought the young man?” The old woman replied, “Yes, he is present between thy hands;” and the fair lady said, “Bring him hither to me!” But when I heard these words I said to myself, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might, save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Doubtless when this damsel shall have discovered my being in such hiding place she will bid them do me die.” The old woman then came forwards to me and led me before the young lady seated on the great chair; and, when I stood in her presence, she smiled in my face and saluted me with the salam and welcomed me; after which she signed for a seat to be brought and when her bidding was obeyed set it close beside her own. She then commanded me to sit and I seated me by her side.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Fiftieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth pursued:?She seated me beside her, O our lord the Sultan, and fell to talking and joking with me for an hour or so when she said, "O youth, what sayest thou of me and of my beauty and my loveliness? Would Heaven that I could occupy thy thought and please thee so that I might become to thee wife and thou be to me man." When I heard these her words I replied, "O my lady, how dare I presume to attain such honour? Indeed I do not deem myself worthy to become a slave between thy hands." Hereupon said she, "Nay, O young man, my words have in them nor evasion nor alteration; so be not disheartened or fearful of returning me a reply, for that my heart is fulfilled of thy love." I now understood, O our lord the Sultan, that the damsel was desirous of marrying me; but I could not conceive what was the cause thereof or who could have given her intelligence concerning me. She continued to enjoy herself in the gladsomest way till at length I was emboldened to say to her, "O my lady, an thy words to me be after the fashion of thy will, remember the proverb, 'When a kindness is to be done, this is its time.'" "By Allah, O youth, there cannot be a more fortunate day than this present." "O my lady, what shall I apportion to thee for dowry?" "The dowry hath been paid to me in the value of the stuffs which thou entrustedst to this ancient dame who is my mother!" "That cannot suffice." "By Allah, naught shall be added; but, O youth, 'tis my intention forthright to send after the Kazi and his Assessors and I will choose me a trustee[78] that they may tie together us twain without delay; and thou shalt come in to me this coming evening. But all such things be upon one condition." "And what may be thy condition?" "This, that thou swear never to address or to draw near any woman save myself.” And I, O our lord the Sultan, being unmarried and eager to possess so beautiful a bride, said to her, “This be thine; and I will never contrary thee by word or by deed.” She then sent to summon the Kazi and his witnesses and appointed an agent; upon which they knotted the knot. After the marriage ceremony was ended she ordered coffee[79] and sherbets and gave somewhat of dirhams to the Kazi and a robe of honour to her trustee; and this done, all went their several ways. I was lost in astonishment and said in my mind, “Do I dream or am I on wake?” She then commanded her damsels to clear the Hammam-bath and cleanse it and fill it afresh and get ready towels and waist-cloths and silken napkins[80] and scented woods and essences, as virgin ambergris and ottars and perfumes of vari-coloured hues and kinds. And when they had executed her orders, she ordered the Eunuchry standing in her service to take me and bear me to the Bath, largessing each one with a sumptuous dress. They led me into a Hammam which had been made private and I saw a place tongue is powerless to portray. And as we arrived there they spread vari-coloured carpets upon which I sat me down and doffed what clothing was upon me: then I entered the hot rooms and smelt delicious scents diffused from the sides of the hall, sandal-wood, Comorin lign-aloes and other such fragrant substances. Here they came up to me and seated me, lathering me with perfumed soaps and shampoo’d me till my body became silver-bright; when they fetched the metal tasses and I washed with water luke-warm after which they brought me cold water mingled with rose water and I sprinkled it over me. After this they supplied me with silken napkins and drying-towels of palm-fibre[81] wherewith I rubbed me and then repaired to the cool room outside the calidarium[82] where I found a royal dress. The Eunuchry arrayed me therein and after fumigating me with the smoke of lign-aloes served up somewhat of confections[83] and coffee and sherbets of sundry sorts; so I drank after eating the Ma’jun. About eventide I left the Baths with all the Eunuchry in attendance on me and we walked till we entered the Palace and they led me into a closet spread with kingly carpets and cushions. And behold, she came up to me attired in a new habit more sumptuous than that I had seen her wearing erewhile.?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Fifty-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth continued:?And I, O our lord the Sultan, went into the closet and behold, she met me wearing a habit of the most sumptuous: so when I sighted her she seemed to me from the richness of her ornaments like an enchanted hoard wherefrom the talisman had been newly removed. She sat down beside me and bent lovingly over me and I rose up for I could no longer contain my passion and wrought that work which was to be worked.[84] Presently she again disappeared but soon returned in vestments even richer than the last and she did with me as before and I embraced her once more. In short, O our lord the Sultan, we ceased not dwelling together, I and she, in joyaunce and enjoyment, laughter and disport and delicious converse for a space of twenty days. At the end of this time I called to mind my lady-mother, and said to the dame I had espoused, "O my lady, 'tis long since I have been absent from home and 'tis long since my parent hath seen me or wotteth aught concerning me: needs must she be pining and grieving for my sake. So do thou give me leave to visit her and look after my mother and also after my shop." Quoth she, "No harm in that: thou mayst visit thy mother daily and busy thyself about thy shop-business; but this ancient dame (my mother) is she who must lead thee out and bring thee back." Whereto I replied, "'Tis well." Upon this the old woman came in and tied a kerchief over my eyes according to custom and fared forth with me till we reached the spot where she had been wont to remove the bandage. Here she unbound it saying, "We will expect thee to-morrow about noontide and when thou comest to this place, thou shalt see me awaiting thee." I left her and repaired to my mother whom I found grieving and weeping at my absence; and upon seeing me she rose up and threw her arms round my neck with tears of joy. I said, “Weep not, O my mother, for the cause of my absence hath been a certain matter which be thus and thus.” I then related to her my adventure and she on hearing it was rejoiced thereby and exclaimed, “O my son, may Allah give thee gladness; but I pray thee solace me[85] at least every two days with a visit that my longing for thee may be satisfied.” I replied, “This shall be done;” and thenceforth, O our lord the Sultan, I went to my shop and busied myself as was my wont till noontide, when I returned to the place appointed and found the old woman awaiting me. Nor did I ever fare forth from the mansion without her binding my eyes with the kerchief which she loosed only when we reached my own house; and whenever I asked her of this she would answer, “On our way be sundry houses whose doors are open and the women sitting in the vestibules of their homes, so that haply thy glance may alight upon some one of them, matron or maid: all sniff up love like water,[86] and we fear for thee lest thy heart be netted in the net of amours.” For thirty days, a whole month, I continued to go and come after this fashion but, O our lord the Sultan, at all times and tides I was drowned in thought and wondered in my mind, saying, “What chance caused me forgather with this damsel? What made me marry her? Whence this wealth which is under her hand? How came I to win union with her?” For I knew not the cause of all this. Now, on a day of the days, I found an opportunity of being private with one of her black slave girls[87] and questioned her of all these matters that concerned her mistress. She replied, “O my lord, the history of my lady is marvellous; but I dare not relate it to thee in fear lest she hear thereof and do me die.” So I said to her, “By Allah, O handmaid of good, an thou wilt say me sooth I will veil it darkly for in the keeping of secrets there is none like myself: nor will I reveal it at any time.” Then I took oath of secrecy when she said, “O my lord,”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Fifty-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth continued:?Then the handmaiden said to me, "O my lord, my lady went forth one day of the days to the Hammam with the object of pleasuring and of diverting herself, for which purpose she made goodly preparation including gifts and presents,[88] matters worth a mint of money.[89] After leaving the baths she set out upon an excursion to eat the noon-day meal in a flower garden where she enjoyed herself with exceeding joy and enjoyment, eating and drinking till the evening; and when she designed to depart she collected the fragments of the feast and distributed them amongst the mean and the mesquin. On her return she passed through the Bazar-street wherein standeth thy shop, and it was a Friday when thou wast sitting, adorned with thy finest dress, in converse with the nearest neighbour. And suddenly as she fared by, she beheld thee in such state and her heart was stricken with sore stroke of love albeit none of us observed her condition and what affection she had conceived for thee. However, no sooner had she reached her palace than her melancholy began to grow upon her with groans and her cark and care, and her colour left her: she ate and drank little and less and her sleep forsook her and her frame was sorely enfeebled till at last she took to her bed. Upon this her mother went to summon a learned man[90] or a mediciner that he might consider the condition of her daughter and what sickness had gotten about her: she was absent for an hour and returned with an ancient dame who took seat beside her and putting forth her hand felt the patient's pulse. But she could perceive in her no bodily ailment or pain, upon which the old woman understood her case, but she durst not bespeak her of it nor mention to her mother that the girl's heart was distraught by love. So she said, 'There is no harm to thee! and (Inshallah!) to-morrow I will return hither to thee and bring with me a certain medicine.' She then went forth from us and leading the mother to a place apart, said to her, ‘O my lady, Allah upon thee, pardon me for whatso I shall mention and be thou convinced that my words are true and keep them secret nor divulge them to any.’ The other replied, ‘Say on and fear not for aught which hath become manifest to thee of my daughter’s unweal: haply Allah will vouchsafe welfare.’ She rejoined, ‘Verily, thy daughter hath no bodily disorder or malady of the disease kind but she is in love and there can be no cure for her save union with her beloved.’ Quoth the mother, ‘And how about the coming of her sweetheart? This is a matter which may not be managed except thou show us some contrivance whereby to bring this youth hither and marry him to her. But contrivance is with Allah.’ Then the old lady went her ways forthright and the girl’s mother sought her daughter and said to her after kindly fashion, ‘O my child, as for thee thy disorder is a secret and not a bodily disease. Tell me of him thou requirest and fear naught from me; belike Allah will open to us the gate of contrivance whereby thou shalt win to thy wish.’ Now when the maiden heard these words she was abashed before her parent and kept silence, being ashamed to speak; nor would she return any reply for the space of twenty days. But during this term her distraction increased and her mother ceased not to repeat the same words, time after time, till it became manifest to the parent that the daughter was madly in love with a young man; so at last quoth she, ‘Describe him to me.’ Quoth the other, ‘O mother mine, indeed he is young of years and fair of favour; also he woneth in such a Bazar, methinks on its southern side.’ Therewith the dame arose without stay or delay and fared forth to find the young man and ’tis thyself, O youth! And when the mother saw thee she took from thee a piece of cloth and brought it to her daughter and promised thou shouldst visit her. Thence- forwards she ceased not repeating her calls to thee for the period thou wottest well until by her cunning she brought thee hither; and that happened which happened and thou didst take the daughter to wife. Such is her tale and beware lest thou reveal my disclosure.” “No, by Allah,” replied I. Then the lunatic resumed speaking to the Sultan:?O my lord, I continued to cohabit with her for the space of one month, going daily to see my mother and to sell in my shop and I returned to my wife every evening blindfolded and guided as usual by my mother-in-law. Now one day of the days as I was sitting at my business, a damsel came into the Bazar-street?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Fifty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth continued:?A damsel came into the Bazar-street bearing the image of a cock made of precious ore and crusted with pearls and rubies and other gems; and she offered it to the goodmen[91] of the market for sale. So they opened the biddings at five hundred dinars and they ceased not contending[92] thereanent till the price went up to nine hundred and fifty gold pieces. All this time and I looked on nor did I interfere by speaking a syllable or by adding to the biddings a single bit of gold. At last, when none would offer aught more, the girl came up to me and said, “O my lord, all the gentlemen have increased their biddings for the cock; but thou hast neither bidden nor heartened my heart by one kind word.” Quoth I, “I have no need thereof;” and quoth she, “By Allah, needs must thou bid somewhat more than the others.” I replied, “Since there is no help for it, I will add fifty dinars which will fill up the thousand.” She rejoined, “Allah gar thee gain!”[93] So I fared into my shop to fetch the money, saying in my mind, “I will present this curiosity to my Harím: haply ‘twill pleasure her.” But when I was about, O my lord the Sultan, to count out the thousand ducats, the damsel would not accept aught of me but said, “I have a request to make of thee, O youth! to wit, that I may take one kiss from thy cheek.” I asked her, “For what purpose?” and she answered, “I want one kiss of thy cheek which shall be the price of my cock, for I need of thee naught else.” I thought to myself, “By Allah, a single kiss of my cheek for the value of a thousand sequins were an easy price;” and I gave my consent thereto, O my lord. Then she came up to me and leaned over me and bussed my cheek, but after the kiss she bit me with a bite which left its mark:[94] then she gave me the cock and went her ways in haste. Now when it was noon I made for my wife’s house and came upon the old woman awaiting me at the customed stead and she bound the kerchief over my eyes and after blindfolding them fared with me till we reached our home when she unbound it. I found my wife sitting in the saloon dressed from head to foot in cramoisy[95] and with an ireful face, whereupon I said to myself, “O Saviour,[96] save me!” I then went up to her and took out the cock which was covered with pearls and rubies, thinking that her evil humour would vanish at the sight of it and said, “O my lady, accept this cock for ’tis curious and admirable to look upon; and I bought it to pleasure thee.” She put forth her hand and taking it from me examined it by turning it rightwards and leftwards; then exclaimed, “Didst thou in very sooth buy this on my account?” Replied I, “By Allah, O my lady, I bought it for thee at a thousand gold pieces.” Hereupon she shook her head at me, O my lord the Sultan, and cried out after a long look at my face, “What meaneth that bite on thy cheek?” Then with a loud and angry voice she called to her women who came down the stairs forthright bearing the body of a young girl with the head cut off and set upon the middle of the corpse;[97] and I looked and behold, it was the head of the damsel who had sold me the cock for a kiss and who had bitten my cheek. Now my wife had sent her with the toy by way of trick, saying to her, “Let us try this youth whom I have wedded and see if he hold himself bound by his plighted word and pact or if he be false and foul.” But of all this I knew naught. Then she cried a second cry and behold, up came three handmaids bearing with them three cocks like that which I had brought for her and she said, “Thou bringest me this one cock when I have these three cocks; but inasmuch as, O youth, thou hast broken the covenant that was between me and thee, I want thee no more: go forth! wend thy ways forthright!” And she raged at me and cried to her mother, “Take him away!”[98] ?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Fifty-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Youth continued to the King:?Hereupon the old woman, O my lord, hent me by the hand and bound the kerchief over my eyes as was her wont and led me to the customed place when she loosed the bandage saying, “Begone!” and disappeared. But I, O my lord, became like a madman and ran through the streets as one frantic crying, “Ah her loveliness! Ah her stature! Ah her perfect grace! Ah her ornaments!” Hereupon the folk seeing me and hearing me say these words shouted out, “Yonder is a lunatic;” so they seized me perforce and jailed me in the madhouse as thou hast seen me, O our lord the Sultan. They say, “This man is Jinn-mad;” but, by Allah, I am no maniac, O my lord, and such is my tale. Hereat the King marvelled and bowed his brow groundwards for a while in deep thought over this affair: then he raised his head and turning to his Minister said, “O Wazir, by the truth of Him who made me ruler of this realm, except thou discover the damsel who married this youth, thy head shall pay forfeit.” The Wazir was consterned to hear the case of the young man; but he could not disobey the royal commandment so he said, “Allow me three days of delay, O our lord the Sultan;” and to this much of grace the King consented. Then the Wazir craved dismissal and would have taken the Youth with him; when the Sultan cried, “As soon as thou shalt have hit upon the house, the young man will go into it and come forth it like other folk.” He replied, “Hearkening and obedience.” So he took the Youth and went out with aching head and giddy as a drunken man, perplexed and unknowing whither he should wend; and he threaded the city streets from right to left and from east to west, tarrying at times that he might privily question the folk. But naught discovered itself to him and he made certain of death. In this condition he continued for two days and the third till noontide, when he devised him a device and said to the Youth, “Knowest thou the spot where the old woman was wont to blindfold thine eyes?” He replied, “Yes.” So the Minister walked on with him till the young man exclaimed, “Here, ’tis this!”[99] The Wazir then said, “O Youth, knowest thou the door-ring wherewith she was wont to rap and canst thou distinguish its sound?” He said “I can.” Accordingly, the Wazir took him and went the round of all the houses in that quarter and rapped with every door-ring asking him, “Is’t this?” and he would answer, “No.” And the twain ceased not to do after such fashion until they came to the door where the appointment had taken place without risk threatened;[100] and the Wazir knocked hard at it and the Youth, hearing the knock, exclaimed, “O my lord, verily this be the ring without question or doubt or uncertainty.” So the Minister knocked again with the same knocker and the slave-girls threw open the door and the Wazir, entering with the youth, found that the palace belonged to the daughter of the Sultan who had been succeeded by his liege lord.[101] But when the Princess saw the Minister together with her spouse, she adorned herself and came down from the Harem and salam’d to him. Thereupon he asked her, “What hath been thy business with this young man?” So she told him her tale from first to last and he said, “O my lady, the King commandeth that he enter and quit the premises as before and that he come hither without his eyes being bandaged with the kerchief.” She obeyed and said, “The commandments of our lord the Sultan shall be carried out.” Such was the history of that youth whom the Sultan heard reading the Koran in the Máristán, the public madhouse: but as regards the second Lunatic who sat listening, the Sultan asked him, “And thou, the other, what be thy tale?” So he began to relate the

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

Story of the Second Lunatic.[102]

"O my lord," quoth the young man, "my case is marvellous, and haply thou wilt desire me to relate it in order continuous;" and quoth the Sultan, "Let me hear it."?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the second youth said:?O my lord the Sultan, I am by calling a merchant man and none of the guild was younger, I having just entered my sixteenth year. Like my fellows I sold and bought in the Bazar every day till, one day of the days, a damsel came up to me and drew near and handed to me a paper which I opened; and behold, it was full of verses and odes in praise of myself, and the end of the letter contained the woman's name professing to be enamoured of me. When I read it I came down from my shopboard, in my folly and ignorance, and putting forth my hand seized the girl and beat her till she swooned away.[103] After this I let her loose and she went her ways and then I fell into a brown study saying to myself, "Would Heaven I wot whether the girl be without relations or if she have kith and kin to whom she may complain and they will come and bastinado me." And, O our lord the Sultan, I repented of what I had done whenas repentance availed me naught and this lasted me for twenty days. At the end of that time as I was sitting in my shop according to my custom, behold, a young lady entered and she was sumptuously clad and sweetly scented and she was even as the moon in its fullness on the fourteenth night. When I gazed upon her my wits fled and my sane senses and right judgment forsook me and I was incapable of attending to aught save herself. She then came up and said, “O youth, hast thou by thee a variety of metal ornaments?” and said I, “O my lady, of all kinds thou canst possibly require.” Hereupon she wished to see some anklets which I brought out for her, when she put forth her feet to me and showing me the calves of her legs said, “O my lord, try them on me.” This I did. Then she asked for a necklace[104] and I produced one when she unveiled her bosom and said, “Take its measure on me:” so I set it upon her and she said, “I want a fine pair of bracelets,” and I brought to her a pair when, extending her hands and displaying her wrists to me she said, “Put them on me.” I did so and presently she asked me, “What may be the price of all these?” when I exclaimed, “O my lady, accept them from me in free gift;” and this was of the excess of my love to her, O King of the Age, and my being wholly absorbed in her. Then quoth I to her, “O my lady, whose daughter art thou?” and quoth she, “I am the daughter of the Shaykh al-Islám.”[105] I replied, “My wish is to ask thee in marriage of thy father,” and she rejoined, “’Tis well: but, O youth, I would have thee know that when thou askest me from my sire he will say, ‘I have but one daughter and she is a cripple and deformed even as Satíh was.[106] Do thou, however, make answer that thou art contented to accept her and if he offer any remonstrance cry, ‘I’m content, content!’” I then enquired, “When shall that be?” and she replied, “Tomorrow about undurn hour[107] come to our house and thou wilt find my sire, the Shaykh al-Islam, sitting with his companions and intimates. Then ask me to wife.” So we agreed upon this counsel and on the next day, O our lord the Sultan, I went with several of my comrades and we repaired, I and they, to the house of the Shaykh al-Islam, whom I found sitting with sundry Grandees about him. We made our salams which they returned and they welcomed us and all entered into friendly and familiar conversation. When it was time for the noon-meal the tablecloth[108] was spread and they invited us to join them, so we dined with them and after dinner drank coffee. I then stood up saying, “O my lord, I am come hither to sue and solicit thee for the lady concealed and the pearl unrevealed, thy daughter.” But when the Shaykh al-Islam heard from me these words he bowed his head for awhile groundwards?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Fifty-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth resumed:?Now when the Shaykh al-Islam heard from me those words he bowed his brow groundwards for a while in deep thought concerning the case of his daughter who was a cripple and wondrously deformed. For the damsel who had told me of her had played me a trick and served me a sleight, I all the time knowing nothing about her guile. Presently he raised his head and said to me, “By Allah, O my son, I have a daughter but she is helpless.” Quoth I, “I am content;” and quoth he, “An thou take her to wife after this description, ’tis on express condition that she be not removed from my house and thou also shalt pay her the first visit and cohabit with her in my home.” I replied, “To hear is to obey;” being confident, O King of the Age, that she was the damsel who had visited my shop and whom I had seen with my own eyes. Thereupon the Shaykh al-Islam married his daughter to me and I said in my mind, “By Allah, is it possible that I am become master of this damsel and shall enjoy to my full her beauty and loveliness?” But when night fell they led me in procession to the chamber of my bride; and when I beheld her I found her as hideous as her father had described her, a deformed cripple. At that moment all manner of cares mounted my back and I was full of fury and groaned with grief from the core of my heart; but I could not say a word, for that I had accepted her to wife of my own free will and had declared myself contented in presence of her sire. So I took seat silently in a corner of the room and my bride in another, because I could not bring myself to approach her, she being unfit for the carnal company of man and my soul could not accept cohabitation with her. And at dawntide, O my lord the Sultan, I left the house and went to my shop which I opened according to custom and sat down with my head dizzy like one drunken without wine; when lo! there appeared before me the young lady who had caused happen to me that mishap. She came up and salam'd to me but I arose with sullenness and abused her and cried, "Wherefore, O my lady, hast thou put upon me such a piece of work?" She replied, "O miserable,[109] recollect such a day when I brought thee a letter and thou after reading it didst come down from thy shop and didst seize me and didst trounce me and didst drive me away." I replied, "O my lady, prithee pardon me for I am a true penitent;" and I ceased not to soften her with soothing[110] words and promised her all weal if she would but forgive me. At last she deigned excuse me and said, "There is no harm for thee; and, as I have netted thee, so will I unmesh thee." I replied, "Allah! Allah![111] O my lady, I am under thy safeguard;" and she rejoined, "Hie thee to the Aghá of the Janákilah,[112] the gypsies, give him fifty piastres and say him, 'We desire thee to furnish us with a father and a mother and cousins and kith and kin, and do thou charge them to say of me, This is our cousin and our blood relation.' Then let him send them all to the house of the Shaykh al-Islam and repair thither himself together with his followers, a party of drummers and a parcel of pipers. When they enter his house and the Shaykh shall perceive them and exclaim, 'What's this we've here?' let the Agha reply, 'O my lord, we be kinsmen with thy son-in-law and we are come to gladden his marriage with thy daughter and to make merry with him.' He will exclaim, 'Is this thy son a gypsey musician?' and do thou explain, saying, 'Aye, verily I am a Jankali;' and he will cry out to thee, 'O dog, thou art a gypsey and yet durst thou marry the daughter of the Shaykh al-Islam?' Then do thou make answer, 'O my lord, 'twas my ambition to be ennobled by thine alliance and I have espoused thy daughter only that the mean name of Jankali may pass away from me and that I may be under the skirt of thy protection.'" Hereat, O my lord the Sultan, I arose without stay and delay and did as the damsel bade me and agreed with the Chiefs of the Gypsies for fifty piastres.[113] On the second day about noon lo and behold! all the Janákilah met before the house of the Shaykh al-Islam and they, a tom-toming and a-piping and a-dancing, crowded into the courtyard of the mansion.?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Fifty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth continued:?So the Janákilah entered the house of the Shaykh al-Islam all a-drumming and a-dancing. Presently the family came out and asked, "What is to do? And what be this hubbub?" The fellows answered, "We are gypsey-folk and our son is in your house having wedded the daughter of the Shaykh al-Islam." Hearing these words the family went up and reported to its head, and he, rising from his seat, descended to the courtyard which he found full of Jankalis. He enquired of them their need and they told him that the youth, their kinsman, having married the daughter of the house, they were come to make merry at the bride-feast. Quoth the Shaykh, "This indeed be a sore calamity that a gypsey should espouse the daughter of the Shaykh al-Islam. By Allah, I will divorce her from him." So he sent after me, O our lord the Sultan, and asked me saying, "What is thy breed and what wilt thou take to be off with thyself?" Said I, "A Jankali; and I married thy daughter with one design namely to sink the mean name of a gypsey drummer in the honour of connection and relationship with thee." He replied, "'Tis impossible that my daughter can cohabit with thee: so up and divorce her." I rejoined, "Not so: I will never repudiate her." Then we fell to quarrelling but the folk interposed between us and arranged that I should receive forty purses[114] for putting her away. And when he paid me the moneys I gave her the divorce and took the coin and went to my shop, rejoicing at having escaped by this contrivance. On the next day, behold, came the damsel who had taught me the sleight and saluted me and wished me good morning. I returned her salam and indeed, O our lord the Sultan, she was a model of beauty and loveliness, stature and symmetrical grace and my heart was enmeshed in her love for the excess of her charms and the limpid flow of her speech and the sweetness of her tongue. So I said to her, "And when this promise?" and said she, "I am the daughter of Such-andsuch, a cook in such a quarter; and do thou go ask me in marriage of him." So I rose up with all haste and went to her father and prayed that he would give her to me. And presently I wedded her and went in unto her and found her as the full moon of the fourteenth night and was subjugated by her seemlihead. Such, then, is the adventure which befel me; but, O my lord the Sultan, the Story of the Sage Such-an-one and his Scholar is more wonderful and delectable; for indeed 'tis of the marvels of the age and among the miracles which have been seen by man. Thereupon the Sovran bade him speak, and the Second Lunatic proceeded to recount the

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

Story of the Sage and the Scholar.[115]

There was in times of yore and in ages long gone before a learned man who had retired from the world secluding himself in an upper cell of a Cathedral-mosque, and this place he left not for many days save upon the most pressing needs. At last a beautiful boy whose charms were unrivalled in his time went in to him and salam'd to him. The Shaykh returned the salute and welcomed him with the fairest welcome and courteously entreated him seating him beside himself. Then he asked him of his case and whence he came and the boy answered, "O my lord, question me not of aught nor of my worldly matters, for verily I am as one who hath fallen from the heavens upon the earth[116] and my sole object is the honour of tending thee." The Sage again welcomed him and the boy served him assiduously for a length of time till he was twelve years old. Now on one day of the days[117] the lad heard certain of his fellows saying that the Sultan had a daughter endowed with beauty whose charms were unequalled by all the Princesses of the age. So he fell in love with her by hearsay.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night, and that was

The Three Hundred and Fifty-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the lad who served the Sage fell in love with the Sultan's daughter by hearsay. Presently he went in to his master and told him thereof adding, "O my lord, verily the King hath a daughter beautiful and lovesome and my soul longeth to look upon her an it be only a single look." The Shaykh asked him saying, "Wherefore, O my son? What have the like of us to do with the daughters of Sovrans or others? We be an order of eremites and selfcontained and we fear the Kings for our own safety." And the Sage continued to warn the lad against the shifts of Time and to divert him from his intent; but the more words he uttered to warn him and to deter him, the more resolved he became to win his wish, so that he abode continually groaning and weeping. Now this was a grievous matter to the good Shaykh who loved him with an exceeding love passing all bounds; and when he saw him in this condition he exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great." And his heart was softened and he had ruth upon the case of his scholar and pitied his condition, and at last said to him, "O my son, dost thou truly long to look but a single look at the Sultan's daughter?" Quoth he, "Yes, O my lord," and quoth the other, "Come hither to me." Accordingly he came up to him and the Shaykh produced a Kohl-pot and applied the powder to one of his scholar's eyes, who behold, forthright became such that all who saw him cried out, "This is a half-man."[118] Then the Sage bade him go about the city and the youth obeyed his commands and fared forth; but whenas the folk espied him they cried out, "A miracle! a miracle! this be a half-man!" And the more the youth walked about the streets the more the folk followed him and gazed upon him for diversion and marvelled at the spectacle; and as often as the great men of the city heard of him they sent to summon him and solaced themselves with the sight and said, "Laud to the Lord! Allah createth whatso He wisheth and commandeth whatso He willeth as we see in the fashioning of this half-man." The youth also looked freely upon the Harims of the Grandees, he being fairer than any of them; and this case continued till the report reached the Sultan who bade him be brought into the presence, and on seeing him marvelled at the works of the Almighty. Presently the whole court gathered together to gaze at him in wonderment and the tidings soon reached the Queen who sent an Eunuch to fetch him and introduce him into the Serraglio. The women all admired the prodigy and the Princess looked at him and he looked at her; so his fascination increased upon him and he said in his secret soul, "An I wed her not I will slay myself!" After this the youth was dismissed by the Sultan's Harim and he, whose heart burned with love for the King's daughter, returned home. The Shaykh asked him, “Hast thou, O my son, seen the Princess?” and he answered, “I have, O my master; but this one look sufficeth me not, nor can I rest until I sit by her side and fill myself with gazing upon her.” Quoth he, “O my child, we be an ascetic folk that shun the world nor have we aught to do with enmeshing ourselves in the affairs of the Sultan, and we fear for thee, O my son.” But the youth replied, “O my lord, except I sit by her side and stroke her neck and shoulders with these my hands, I will slay myself.” Hereupon the Sage said in his mind, “I will do whatso I can for this good youth and perchance Allah may enable him to win his wish.” He then arose and brought out the Kohl-pot and applied the powder to his scholar’s either eye; and, when it had settled therein, it made him invisible to the ken of man. Then he said, “Go forth, O my son, and indulge thy desire; but return again soon and be not absent too long.” Accordingly the youth hastened to the Palace and entering it looked right and left, none seeing him the while, and proceeded to the Harem where he seated himself beside the daughter of the Sultan. Still none perceived him until, after a time, he put forth his hand and softly stroked her neck. But as soon as the Princess felt the youth’s touch, she shrieked a loud shriek heard by all ears in the Palace and cried “I seek refuge with Allah from Satan the stoned!” At this proceeding on the girl’s part all asked her saying, “What is to do with thee?” Whereto she answered, “Verily some Satan hath this instant touched me on the neck.” Upon this her mother was alarmed for her and sent for her nurse[119] and when informed of what had befallen the girl the old woman said, “If there be aught of Satans here naught is so sovereign a specific to drive them away and keep them off as the smoke of camel’s dung.”[120] Then she arose and brought thereof a quantity which was thrown into the fire and presently it scented and pervaded the whole apartment. All this and the Youth still sat there without being seen. But when the dung-smoke thickened, his eyes brimmed and he could not but shed tears, and the more smoke there was the more his eyes watered and big drops flowed till at last all the Kohl was washed off and trickled down with the tears. So he became visible a-middlemost the royal Harem; and, when the dames descried him, all shrieked one shriek, each at other, upon which the Eunuchry rushed in; then, finding the young man still seated there, they laid hands upon him and haled him before the Sultan to whom they reported his crime and how he had been caught lurking in the King's Serraglio a-sitting beside the Princess. Hearing this, the Sovran bade summon the Headsman and committed to him the criminal bidding him take the youth and robe him in a black habit bepatched with flamecolour;[121] then, to set him upon a camel and, after parading him through Cairo city and all the streets, to put him to death. Accordingly the executioner took the Youth.?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Fifty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Linkman took the youth and fared forth with him from the palace: then he looked at him and found him fair of form and favour, a sans peer in loveliness, and he observed that he showed no fear nor shrinking from death. So he had pity upon him and his heart yearned to him and he said in his mind, "By Allah, attached to this young man is a rare history." Then he brought a leathern gown which he put upon him, and the flamey black habit which he passed over his arms: and setting him upon a camel as the Sultan had commanded, at last carried him in procession crying out the while, "This is the award and the least award of him who violateth the Harem of the King;" and he threaded the streets till they came to the square before the great Mosque wherein was the Shaykh. Now as all the folk were enjoying the spectacle, the Sage looked out from the window of his cell and beheld the condition of his scholar. He was moved to ruth and reciting a spell he summoned the Jánn and bade them snatch the young man off the camel's back with all care and kindness and bring him to his cell; and he also commanded an ‘Aun of the ‘Auns[122] to seize some oldster and set him upon the beast in lieu of the Youth. They did as he bid them for that he had taken fealty of the Jánn and because of his profound studies in the Notaricon[123] and every branch of the art magical. And when all the crowd saw the youth suddenly transformed into a greybeard they were awe-stricken and cried, “Alhamdolillah?laud to the Lord?the young man hath become an old man!” They then looked again and behold, they saw a person well-known amongst the lieges, one who had long been wont to sell greens and colocasia at the hostelry gate near the Cathedral-mosque. Now the headsman noting this case was confounded with sore affright; so he returned to the palace with the oldster seated on the camel and went in to the Sultan followed by all the city-folk who were gazing at the spectacle. Then he stood before the King and the eunuchry and did homage and prayed for the Sovran and said, “O our lord the Sultan, verily the Youth hath vanished, and in lieu of him is this Shaykh well known to the whole city.” Hearing these words the King was startled; sore fear entered his heart and he said to himself, “Whoso hath been able to do this deed can do e’en more: he can depose me from my kingship or he can devise my death.” So his affright increased and he was at a loss how to contrive for such case. Presently he summoned his Minister and when he came into the presence said to him, “O Wazir, advise me how to act in the affair of this Youth and what measures should be taken.” The Minister bowed his brow groundwards in thought for a while, then raising it he addressed the Sultan and said, “O King of the Age, this be a thing beyond experience, and the doer must be master of a might we comprehend not and haply he may work thee in the future some injury and we fear from him for thy daughter. Wherefore the right way is that thou issue a royal autograph and bid the Crier go round about the city and cry saying, ‘Let him who hath wrought this work appear before the King under promise of safety and again safety?safety on the word of a Sultan which shall never be falsed.’ Should the Youth then surrender himself, O King of the Age, marry him to thy daughter when perhaps his mind may be reconciled to thee by love of her. He hath already cast eyes upon her and he hath seen the inmates of thy Harem unrobed, so that naught can save their honour but his being united with the Princess.” Hereupon the Sultan indited an autographic rescript and placed it in the Crier’s hands even as the Wazir had counselled: and the man went about the streets proclaiming, “By Command of the just King! whoso hath done this deed let him discover himself and come to the Palace under promise of safety and again safety, the safety of sovereigns?safety on the word of a Sultan which shall never be falsed.” And the Crier ceased not crying till in fine he reached the square fronting the great Mosque. The Youth who was standing there heard the proclamation and returning to his Shaykh said, “O my lord, the Crier hath a rescript from the Sultan and he crieth saying, ‘Whoso hath done this deed let him discover himself and come to the Palace under promise of safety and again safety?safety on the word of a Sultan which shall never be falsed.’ And, I must go to him perforce.” Said the Sage, “O my son, why shouldst thou do on such wise? Hast thou not already suffered thy sufficiency?” But the young man exclaimed, “Nothing shall prevent my going;” and at this the Shaykh replied, “Go then, O my son, and be thy safeguarding with the Living, the Eternal.” Accordingly, the Youth repaired to the Hammam and having bathed attired himself in the richest attire he owned, after which he went forth and discovered himself to the Crier who led him to the Palace and set him before the Sovran. He salamed to the Sultan and did him obeisance and prayed for his long life and prosperity in style the most eloquent, and proffered his petition in verse the most fluent. The Sultan looked at him (and he habited in his best and with all of beauty blest), and the royal mind was pleased and he enquired saying, “Who art thou, O Youth?” The other replied, “I am the Half-man whom thou sawest and I did the deed whereof thou wottest.” As soon as the King heard this speech he entreated him with respect and bade him sit in the most honourable stead, and when he was seated the twain conversed together. The Sultan was astounded at his speech and they continued their discourse till they touched upon sundry disputed questions of learning, when the Youth proved himself as superior to the Sovran as a dinar is to a dirham: and to whatever niceties of knowledge the monarch asked, the young man returned an all-sufficient answer, speaking like a book. So the Sultan abode confounded at the eloquence of his tongue and the purity of his phrase and the readiness of his replies; and he said in his mind, “This Youth is as worthy to become my daughter’s mate as she is meet to become his helpmate.” Then he addressed him in these words, “O Youth, my wish is to unite thee with my daughter and after thou hast looked upon her and her mother none will marry her save thyself.” The other replied, “O King of the Age, I am ready to obey thee, but first I must take counsel of my friends.” The King rejoined, “No harm in that: hie thee home and ask their advice.” The Youth then craved leave to retire and repairing to his Shaykh,?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Sixtieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Youth then craved leave to retire and, repairing to his Shaykh, informed him of what had passed between himself and the Sultan and said to him, “’Tis also my wish, O my lord, to marry his daughter.” The Sage replied, “There be no fault herein if it be lawful wedlock: fare thee forth and ask her in marriage.” Quoth the Youth, “But I, O my lord, desire to invite the King to visit us;” and quoth the Sage, “Go invite him, O my son, and hearten thy heart.” The Youth replied, “O my lord, since I first came to thee and thou didst honour me by taking me into thy service, I have known none other home save this narrow cell wherein thou sittest, never stirring from it by night or by day. How can we invite the King hither?” The Sage rejoined, “O my son, do thou go invite him relying upon Allah, the Veiler who veileth all things, and say to him, ‘My Shaykh greeteth thee with the salam and inviteth thee to visit him next Friday.’” Accordingly, the Youth repaired to the King and saluted him and offered his service and blessed him with most eloquent tongue and said, “O King of the Age, my Shaykh greeteth thee and sayeth to thee, ‘Come eat thy pottage[124] with us next Friday,’” whereto the Sultan replied, “Hearing is consenting.” Then the Youth returned to the Sage and waited upon him according to custom, longing the while for the coming of Friday. On that day the Sage said to the Youth, “O my son, arise with me and I will show thee what house be ours, so thou mayst go fetch the King.” Then he took him and the two walked on till they came upon a ruin in the centre of the city and the whole was in heaps, mud, clay, and stones. The Sage looked at it and said, “O my son, this is our mansion; do thou hie thee to the King and bring him hither.” But the Youth exclaimed, “O my lord, verily this be a ruinous heap! How then can I invite the Sultan and bring him to such an ill place? This were a shame and a disgrace to us.” Quoth the Sage, “Go and dread thou naught.” Upon this the Youth departed saying in himself, “By Allah, my Shaykh must be Jinn-mad and doubtless he confoundeth in his insanity truth and untruth.” But he stinted not faring till he reached the Palace and went in to the Sultan whom he found expecting him; so he delivered the message, “Deign honour us, O my lord, with thy presence.”[125] Hereupon the King arose without stay or delay and took horse, and all the lords of the land also mounted, following the Youth to the place where he told them his Shaykh abode. But when they drew near it they found a royal mansion and eunuchry standing at the gates in costliest gear as if robed from a talismanic hoard. When the young man saw this change of scene, he was awe-struck and confounded in such way that hardly could he keep his senses, and he said to himself, “But an instant ago I beheld with mine own eyes this very place a ruinous heap: how then hath it suddenly become on this same site a Palace such as belongeth not to our Sultan? But I had better keep the secret to myself.” Presently the King alighted as also did his suite, and entered the mansion, and whenas he inspected it he marvelled at the splendour of the first apartment, but the more narrowly he looked the more magnificent he found the place, and the second more sumptuous than the first. So his wits were bewildered thereat till he was ushered into a spacious speak-room where they found the Shaykh sitting on one side of the chamber[126] to receive them. The Sultan salam’d to him whereupon the Sage raised his head and returned his greeting but did not rise to his feet. The King then sat him down on the opposite side when the Shaykh honoured him by addressing him and was pleased to converse with him on various themes; all this while the royal senses being confounded at the grandeur around him and the rarities in that Palace. Presently the Shaykh said to his Scholar, “Knock thou at this door and bid our breakfast be brought in.” So the young man arose and rapped and called out, “Bring in the breakfast;” when lo! the door was opened and there came out of it an hundred Mamelukes[127] of the Book, each bearing upon his head a golden tray, whereon were set dishes of precious metals; and these, which were filled with breakfast-meats of all kinds and colours, they ranged in order before the Sultan. He was surprised at the sight for that he had naught so splendid in his own possession; but he came forwards and ate, as likewise did the Shaykh and all the courtiers until they were satisfied. And after this they drank coffee and sherbets, and the Sultan and the Shaykh fell to conversing on questions of lore: the King was edified by the words of the Sage who on his part sat respectfully between the Sovran’s hands. Now when it was well nigh noon, the Shaykh again said to his Scholar, “Knock thou at that door and bid our noonday-meal be brought in.” He arose and rapped and called out, “Bring in the dinner;” when lo! the door opened of itself and there came out of it an hundred white slaves all other than the first train and each bearing a tray upon his head. They spread the Sufrah-cloth before the Sultan and ranged the dishes, and he looked at the plates and observed that they were of precious metals and stones; whereat he was more astonished than before and he said to himself, “In very deed this be a miracle!” So all ate their sufficiency when basins and ewers, some of gold and others of various noble ores, were borne round and they washed their hands, after which the Shaykh said, “O King, at how much hast thou valued for us the dower of thy daughter?” The Sovran replied, “My daughter’s dower is already in my hands.” This he said of his courtesy and respect, but the Shaykh replied, “Marriage is invalid save with a dower.” He then presented to him a mint of money and the tie of wedlock was duly tied; after which he rose and brought for his guest a pelisse of furs such as the Sultan never had in his treasury and invested him therewith and he gave rich robes to each and every of his courtiers according to their degree. The Sultan then took leave of the Shaykh and accompanied by the Scholar returned to the Palace.?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Sixty-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan took with him the Scholar and they fared till they reached the citadel and entered the Palace, during which time the King was pondering the matter and wondering at the affair. And when night came he bade them get ready his daughter that the first visit might be paid to her by the bridegroom. They did his bidding and carried the Youth in procession to her and he found the apartment bespread with carpets and perfumed with essences; the bride, however, was absent. So he said in his mind, “She will come presently albeit now she delayeth;” and he ceased not expecting her till near midnight, whilst the father and the mother said, “Verily the young man hath married our daughter and now sleepeth with her.” On this wise the Youth kept one reckoning and the Sultan and his Harem kept another till it was hard upon dawn?all this and the bridegroom watched in expectation of the bride. Now when the day brake, the mother came to visit her child expecting to see her by the side of her mate; but she could not find a trace of her, nor could she gather any clear tidings of her. Accordingly she asked the Youth, her son-in-law, who answered that since entering the apartment he had expected his bride but she came not to him nor had he seen a sign of her. Hereupon the Queen shrieked and rose up calling aloud upon her daughter, for she had none other child save that one. The clamour alarmed the Sultan who asked what was to do and was informed that the Princess was missing from the Palace and had not been seen after she had entered it at eventide. Thereupon he went to the Youth and asked him anent her, but he also told him that he had not found her when the procession led him into the bridal chamber. Such was the case with these; but as regards the Princess, when they conducted her to the bridal room before the coming of the bridegroom, a Jinni[128] of the Márids, who often visited the royal Harem, happened to be there on the marriage-night and was so captivated by the charms of the bride that he took seat in a corner, and upon her entering and before she was ware snatched her up and soared with her high in air. And he flew with her till he reached a pleasant place of trees and rills some three months' journey from the city, and in that shady place he set her down. But he wrought her no bodily damage and every day he would bring her whatso she wanted of meat and drink and solaced her by showing her the rills and trees. Now this Jinni had changed his shape to that of a fair youth fearing lest his proper semblance affright her, and the girl abode in that place for a space of forty days. But the father, after failing to find his daughter, took the Youth and repaired to the Shaykh in his cell, and he was as one driven mad as he entered and complained of the loss of his only child. The Shaykh hearing these words dove into the depths of meditation for an hour: then he raised his head and bade them bring before him a chafing-dish of lighted charcoal. They fetched all he required and he cast into the fire some incenses over which he pronounced formulć of incantation, and behold! the world was turned topsy-turvy and the winds shrieked and the earth was canopied by dust-clouds whence descended at speed winged troops bearing standards and colours.[129] And amiddlemost of them appeared three Sultans of the Jánn all crying out at once, "Labbayka! Labbayk! Adsumus, hither we speed to undertake thy need." The Shaykh then addressed them, saying, "My commandment is that forthright ye bring me the Jinni who hath snatched away the bride of my son," and they said, "To hear is to obey," and at once commanded fifty of their dependent Jinns to reconduct the Princess to her chamber and to hale the culprit before them. These orders were obeyed: they disappeared for an hour or so and suddenly returned, bringing the delinquent Jinni in person; but as for the Sultan's daughter, ten of them conveyed her to her Palace, she wotting naught of them and not feeling aught of fear. And when they set the Jinni before the Shaykh, he bade the three Sultans of the Jann burn him to death and so they did without stay or delay. All this was done whilst the Sovran sat before the Shaykh, looking on and listening and marvelling at the obedience of that host and its Sultans and their subjection and civil demeanour in presence of the Elder. Now as soon as the business ended after perfectest fashion, the Sage recited over them a spell and all went their several ways; after which he bade the King take the Youth and conduct him to his daughter. This bidding was obeyed and presently the bridegroom abated the maidenhead of the bride, what while her parents renewed their rejoicings over the recovery of their lost child. And the Youth was so enamoured of the Princess that he quitted not the Harem for seven consecutive days. On the eighth the Sultan was minded to make a marriage-banquet and invited all the city-folk to feast for a whole month and he wrote a royal rescript and bade proclaim with full publicity that, according to the commands of the King's majesty, the wedding-feast should continue for a month, and that no citizen, be he rich or be he poor, should light fire or trim lamp in his own domicile during the wedding of the Princess; but that all must eat of the royal entertainment until the expiry of the fęte. So they slaughtered beeves and stabbed camels in the throat and the kitcheners and carpet-spreaders were commanded to prepare the stables, and the officers of the household were ordered to receive the guests by night and by day. Now one night King Mohammed of Cairo said to his Minister, "O Wazir, do thou come with me in changed costume and let us thread the streets and inspect and espy the folk: haply some of the citizens have neglected to appear at the marriage-feast." He replied, "To hear is to obey." So the twain after exchanging habits for the gear of Persian Darwayshes went down to the city and there took place

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The Night-Adventure of Sultan Mohammed of Cairo.[130]

The Sultan and the Wazir threaded the broadways of the city and they noted the houses and stood for an hour or so in each and every greater thoroughfare, till they came to a lane, a cul-de-sac wherethrough none could pass, and behold, they hit upon a house containing a company of folk. Now these were conversing and saying, "By Allah, our Sultan hath not acted wisely nor hath he any cause to be proud, since he hath made his daughter's bride-feast a vanity and a vexation and the poor are excluded therefrom. He had done better to distribute somewhat of his bounty amongst the paupers and the mesquin, who may not enter his palace nor can they obtain aught to eat." Hearing this the Sultan said to the Wazir, "By Allah, needs must we enter this place;" and the Minister replied, "Do whatso thou willest." Accordingly the King went up to the door and knocked, when one came out and asked, "Who is at the door?" The Sultan answered, "Guests;" and the voice rejoined, "Welcome to the guests;" and the door was thrown open. Then they went in till they reached the sitting-room where they found three men of whom one was lame, the second was broken-backed and the third was split-mouthed.[131] And all three were sitting together in that place. So he asked them, "Wherefore sit ye here, ye three, instead of going to the Palace?" and they answered him, "O Darwaysh, 'tis of the weakness of our wits!" The King then turned to his Minister and said, "There is no help but thou must bring these three men into my presence, as soon as the wedding-fętes be finished, that I may enquire into what stablished their imbecility."?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Sixty-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be

other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan said to the Wazir, “Needs must thou bring these three men into my presence, as soon as the wedding-fętes be finished, and we will enquire into what proved their imbecility.” Then quoth the King to them, “Wherefore fare ye not, ye three, and eat of the royal banquet day by day?” and quoth they, “O Darwaysh, we are crippled folk who cannot go and come, for this be grievous to us; but, an the Sultan would assign to us somewhat of victual, and send it hither, we would willingly eat thereof.” He rejoined, “What knoweth the Sultan that ye sit in this place?” and they retorted, “Ye be Darwayshes who enter everywhere: so when ye go in to him, tell him our tale; haply shall Almighty Allah incline his heart uswards.” The King asked them, “Be you three ever sitting together in this stead?” and they answered, “Yea, verily: we never leave one another by night or by day.” Then the King and the Minister rose up and having presented them with a few silvers took leave and departed. Now it was midnight when they reached a tenement wherein sat three girls with their mother spinning and eating; and each one appeared fairer than her fellows, and at times they sang and then they laughed and then they talked. The Sultan said to the Wazir, “There is no help but we enter to these damsels;” whereto the Minister replied “What have we to do with going near them? Let them be as they are!” The Sultan, however, rejoined, “Needs must we enter,” and the Wazir retorted, “Hearkening and obedience;” and he rapped at the door when one of the sisterhood cried out, “Who knocketh in this gloom of the night?” The Minister answered, “We are two Darwayshes, guests and strangers;” and the girl rejoined, “We are maidens with our mother and we have no men in our house who can admit you; so fare ye to the marriage-feast of the Sultan and become ye his guests.” The Minister continued, “We are foreigners and we know not the way to the Palace and we dread lest the Chief of Police happen upon us and apprehend us at this time o’ night. We desire that you afford us lodging till daylight when we will go about our business and you need not expect from us aught save respect and honourable treatment." Now when the mother heard this, she pitied them and bade one daughter open the door. So the damsel threw it open and the Sultan and Wazir entered and salam'd and sat down to converse together; but the King gazed upon the sisters and marvelled at their beauty and their loveliness, and said in his mind, "How cometh it that these maidens dwell by themselves unmated and they in such case?" So quoth he to them, "How is it ye lack husbands, you being so beautiful, and that ye have not a man in the house?" Quoth the youngest, "O Darwaysh, hold thy tongue[132] nor ask us of aught, for our story is wondrous and our adventures marvellous. But 'ware thy words and shorten thy speech; verily hadst thou been the Sultan and thy companion the Wazir an you heard our history haply ye had taken compassion upon our case." Thereupon the King turned to the Minister and said, "Up with us and wend we our ways; but first do thou make sure of the place and affix thy mark upon the door." Then the twain rose up and fared forth but the Wazir stood awhile and set a sign upon the entrance and there left his imprint; after which the twain returned to the Palace. Presently the youngest sister said to her mother, "By Allah, I fear lest the Darwayshes have made their mark upon our door to the end that they may recognise it by day; for haply the twain may be the King and his Minister." "What proof hast thou of this?" asked the mother, and the daughter answered, "Their language and their questioning which were naught save importunity!" And saying this she went to the door where she found the sign and mark. Now besides the two houses to the right and to the left were fifteen doors, so the girl marked them all with the same mark set by the Wazir.[133] But when Allah had caused the day to dawn, the King said to the Minister, "Go thou and look at the sign and make sure of it." The Wazir went as he was commanded by the Sultan, but he found all the doors marked in the same way, whereat he marvelled and knew not nor could he distinguish the door he sought. Presently he returned and reported the matter of the door-marks to the King who cried, "By Allah, these girls must have a curious history! But when the bride-feast is finished we will enquire into the case of the three men who are weak-witlings and then we will consider that of the damsels who are not." As soon as the thirtieth feast-day passed by, he invested with robes of honour all the Lords of his land and the high Officers of his estate and matters returned to their customed course. Then he sent to summon the three men who had professed themselves weak of wits and they were brought into the presence, each saying of himself, “What can the King require of us?” When they came before him he bade them be seated and they sat; then he said to them, “My requirement is that ye relate to me proofs of the weakness of your minds and the reason of your maims.” Now the first who was questioned was he of the broken back, and when the enquiry was put to him he said, “Deign to favour me with an answer O our Lord the Sultan, on a matter which passed through my mind.” He replied, “Speak out and fear not!” So the other enquired, “How didst thou know us and who told thee of us and of our weakly wits?” Quoth the King, “’Twas the Darwaysh who went in to you on such a night;” and quoth the broken-backed man, “Allah slay all the Darwayshes who be tattlers and tale-carriers!” Thereupon the Sultan turned to the Wazir and laughing said, “We will not reproach them for aught: rather let us make fun of them,” adding to the man, “Recite, O Shaykh.” So he fell to telling

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The Story of the Broke-Back Schoolmaster.[134]

I began life, O King of the Age, as a Schoolmaster and my case was wondrous.?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Shaykh continued.?I began life, O my lord, as a Schoolmaster, and my tale with the boys was wondrous. They numbered from sixty to seventy, and I taught them to read and I inculcated due discipline and ready respect esteeming these a part of liberal education; nor did I regard, O King of the Age, the vicissitudes of Time and Change; nay, I held them with so tight a rein that whenever the boys heard me sneeze[135] they were expected to lay down their writing-tablets and stand up with their arms crossed and exclaim, "Allah have ruth upon thee, O our lord!" whereto I would make reply, "Allah deign pardon us and you!" And if any of the lads failed or delayed to join in this prayer I was wont to bash him with a severe bashing. One day of the days they asked leave to visit the outskirts of the town for liberty and pleasuring[136] and when I granted it they clubbed their pittances for a certain sum of money to buy them a noonday meal. So we went forth to the suburbs and there found verdure and water, and we enjoyed ourselves that day with perfect enjoyment until mid-afternoon when we purposed to return homewards. Accordingly, the boys collected their belongings and laded them upon an ass and we walked about half-way when behold, the whole party, big and little, stood still and said to me, "O our lord, we are athirst and burning with drowthiness, nor can we stir from this spot and if we leave it without drinking we shall all die.” Now there was in that place a draw-well, but it was deep and we had nor pitcher nor bucket nor aught wherein to draw water and the scholars still suffered from exceeding thirst. We had with us, however, cooking-gear such as chauldrons and platters; so I said to them, “O boys, whoso carrieth a cord or hath bound his belongings with one let him bring it hither!” They did my bidding and I tied these articles together and spliced them as strongly as I could: then said I to the lads, “Bind me under the arm-pits.” Accordingly they made me fast by passing the rope around me and I took with me a chauldron, whereupon they let me down bucket-wise into the well till I reached the water. Then I loosed the bandage from under my armpits and tied it to the chauldron which I filled brim-full and shook the rope for a signal to the boys above. They haled at the vessel till they pulled it up and began drinking and giving drink; and on this wise they drew a first chauldron and a second and a third and a fourth till they were satisfied and could no more and cried out to me, “We have had enough, quite enough.” Hereupon I bound the bandage under my armpits, as it was when I went down, and I shook it as a signal and they haled me up till I had well-nigh reached the kerbstone of the well when a fit of sneezing seized me and I sneezed violently. At this all let go their hold and carrying their arms over their breasts, cried aloud, “Allah have ruth upon thee, O our lord!” but I, as soon as they loosed hold, fell into the depths of the well and brake my back. I shrieked for excess of agony and all the boys ran on all sides screaming for aid till they were heard by some wayfaring folk; and these haled at me and drew me out. They placed me upon the ass and bore me home: then they brought a leach to medicine me and at last I became even as thou seest me, O Sultan of the Age. Such, then, is my story showing the weakness of my wits; for had I not enjoined and enforced over-respect the boys would not have let go their hold when I happened to sneeze nor would my back have been broken. “Thou speakest sooth, O Shaykh,” said the Sultan, “and indeed thou hast made evident the weakness of thy wit.” Then quoth he to the man who was cloven of mouth. “And thou, the other, what was it split thy gape?” “The weakness of my wit, O my lord the Sultan,” quoth he, and fell to telling the

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Story of the Split-Mouthed Schoolmaster.[137]

I also began life, O King of the Age, as a Schoolmaster and had under my charge some eighty boys. Now I was strict with such strictness that from morning to evening I sat amongst them and would never dismiss them to their homes before sundown. But ’tis known to thee, O our lord the King, that boys’ wits be short after the measure of their age, and that they love naught save play and forgathering in the streets and quarter. Withal, I took no heed of this and ever grew harder upon them till one day all met and with the intervention of the eldest Monitor they agreed and combined to play me a trick. He arranged with them that next morning none should enter the school until he had taught them, each and every, to say as they went in, “Thy safety, O our lord, how yellow is thy face!” Now the first who showed himself was the Monitor and he spoke as had been agreed; but I was rough with him and sent him away; then a second came in and repeated what the first had said; then a third and then a fourth, until ten boys had used the same words. So quoth I to myself, “Ho, Such-an-one! thou must be unwell without weeting it:” then I arose and went into the Harem and lay down therein when the Monitor, having collected from his school-fellows some hundred-and-eighty Nusfs,[138] came in to me and cried, “Take this, O our lord, and expend the money upon thy health.” Thereupon I said to myself, “Ho, Such-an-one! every Thursday[139] thou dost not collect sixty Faddahs from the boys,” and I cried to him, “Go, let them forth for a holiday.” So he went and dismissed them from school to the playground. On the next day he collected as much as on the first and came in to me and said, “Expend these moneys, O our lord, upon thy health.” He did the same on the third day and the fourth, making the boys contribute much coin and presenting it to me; and on such wise he continued till the tenth day, when he brought the money as was his wont. At that time I happened to hold in my hand a boiled egg which I purposed eating, but on sighting him I said in myself, “An he see thee feeding he will cut off the supplies.” So I crammed the egg into my chops?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister

Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Sixty-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah, upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Schoolmaster said to himself, “If the Monitor see me eating the egg now in thy hand he will cut off the supplies and assert thee to be sound.” So (continued he) I crammed the egg into my chops and clapped my jaws together. Hereupon the lad turned to me and cried, “O my lord, thy cheek is much swollen;” and I, “’Tis only an imposthume.” But he drew a whittle[140] forth his sleeve and coming up to me seized my cheek and slit it, when the egg fell out and he said, “O my lord, this it was did the harm and now ’tis passed away from thee.” Such was the cause of the splitting of my mouth, O our lord the Sultan. Now had I cast away greed of gain and eaten the egg in the Monitor’s presence, what could have been the ill result? But all this was of the weakness of my wit; for also had I dismissed the boys every day about mid-afternoon, I should have gained naught nor lost aught thereby. However the Dealer of Destiny is self-existent, and this is my case. Then the Sultan turned to the Wazir and laughed and said, “The fact is that whoso schooleth boys is weak of wit;” and said the other, “O King of the Age, all pedagogues lack perceptives and reflectives; nor can they become legal witnesses before the Kazi because verily they credit the words of little children without evidence of the speech being or factual or false. So their reward in the world to come must be abounding!”[141] Then the Sultan asked the limping man, saying, “And thou, the other, what lamed thee?” So he began to tell

The Story of the Limping Schoolmaster.[142]

My tale, O my lord the Sultan, is marvellous and 'twas as follows. My father was by profession a schoolmaster and, when he fared to the ruth of Almighty Allah, I took his place in the school and taught the boys to read after the fashion of my sire. Now over the schoolroom was an upper lattice whereto planks had been nailed and I was ever casting looks at it till one chance day I said to myself, "By Allah, this lattice thus boarded up needs must contain hoards or moneys or manuscripts which my father stored there before his decease; and on such wise I am deprived of them." So I arose and brought a ladder and lashed it to another till the two together reached the lattice and I clomb them holding a carpenter's adze[143] wherewith I prized up the planks until all were removed. And behold, I then saw a large fowl, to wit, a kite,[144] setting upon her nestlings. But when she saw me she flew sharply in my face and I was frightened by her and thrown back; so I tumbled from the ladder-top to the ground and brake both knee-caps. Then they bore me home and brought a leach to heal me; but he did me no good and I fell into my present state. Now this, O our lord the Sultan, proveth the weakness of my wit and the greatness of my greed; for there is a saw amongst men that saith "Covetise aye wasteth and never gathereth: so 'ware thee of covetise." Such, O lord of the Age and the Time, is my tale. Hereupon the King bade gifts and largesse be distributed to the three old schoolmasters, and when his bidding was obeyed they went their ways. Then the Sultan turned to the Minister and said, "O Wazir, now respecting the matter of the three maidens and their mother, I would have thee make enquiry and find out their home and bring them hither; or let us go to them in disguise and hear their history, for indeed it must he wonderful. Otherwise how could they have understood that we served them that sleight by marking their door and they on their part set marks of like kind upon all the doors of the quarter that we might lose the track and touch of them. By Allah, this be rare intelligence on the part of these damsels; but we, O Wazir, will strive to come upon their traces." Then the Minister fared forth, after changing his dress and demeanour, and walked to the quarter in question, but found all the doors similarly marked. So he was sore perplext concerning his case and fell to questioning all the folk wont to pass by these doors but none could give him any information; and he walked about sore distraught until even-tide, when he returned to the Sultan without aught of profit. As he went in to the presence, his liege lord asked him saying, "What bringest thou of tidings?" and he answered, "O King, I have not found the property,[145] but there passed through my mind a stratagem which, an we carry it out, peradventure shall cause us to happen upon the maidens." Quoth the Sultan, "What be that?" and quoth he, "Do thou write me an autograph-writ and give it to the Crier that he may cry about the city, 'Whoso lighteth wick after supper-tide shall have his head set under his heels.'" The Sultan rejoined, "This thy rede is right." Accordingly, on the next day the King wrote his letter and gave it to the Crier bidding him fare through the city and forbid the lighting of lamps after night-prayers; and the man took the royal rescript and set it in a green bag. Then he went forth and cried about the street saying, "According to the commandment of our King, the Lord of prosperity and Master of the necks of God's servants, if any light wick after night-prayers his head shall be set under his heels, his good shall be spoiled and his women shall be cast into jail." And the Crier stinted not crying through the town during the first day and the second and the third, until he had gone round the whole place; nor was there a citizen but who knew the ordinance. Now the King waited patiently till after the proclamation of the third day; but on the fourth night he and his Minister went down from the palace in disguise after supper-tide to pry about the wards and espy into the lattices of the several quarters. They found no light till they came to the ward where the three damsels lived, and the Sultan, happening to glance in such a direction, saw the gleam of a lamp in one of the tenements. So he said to the Wazir, "Ho! there is a wick alight." Presently they drew near it and found that it was within one of the marked houses; wherefore they came to a stand and knocked at the door,?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the Sultan and the Wazir stood over against the door behind which was the light and knocked at it, the youngest of the sisters cried out, “Who is at the door?” and they replied, “Guests and Darwayshes.” She rejoined, “What can you want at this hour and what can have belated you?” And they, “We be men living in a Khan; but we have lost our way thither and we fear to happen upon the Chief of Police. So of your bountiful kindness open ye to us and house us for the remnant of the night; and such charity shall gain you reward in Heaven.” Hereto the mother added, “Go open to them the door!” and the youngest of the maidens came forward and opened to them and admitted them. Then the parent and her children rose up and welcomed them respectfully and seated them and did them honour and set before them somewhat of food which they ate and were gladdened. Presently the King said, “O damsels, ye cannot but know that the Sultan proclaimed forbiddal of wick-burning; but ye have lighted your lamps and have not obeyed him when all the citizens have accepted his commandment.” Upon this the youngest sister accosted him saying, “O Darwaysh, verily the Sultan’s order should not be obeyed save in commandments which be reasonable; but this his proclamation forbidding lights is sinful to accept; and indeed the right direction[146] wherein man should walk is according to Holy Law which saith, ‘No obedience to the creature in a matter of sin against the Creator.’ The Sultan (Allah make him prevail!) herein acteth against the Law and imitateth the doings of Satan. For we be three sisters with our mother, making four in the household, and every night we sit together by lamp-light and weave a half-pound weight of linen web[147] which our mother taketh in the morning for sale to the Bazar and buyeth us therewith half a pound of raw flax and with the remainder what sufficeth us of victual.” The

Sultan now turned to his Minister and said, “O Wazir, this damsel astonisheth me by her questions and answers. What case of casuistry can we propose to her and what disputation can we set up? Do thou contrive us somewhat shall pose and perplex her.” “O my lord,” replied the Wazir, “we are here in the guise of Darwayshes and are become to these folk as guests: how then can we disturb them with troublesome queries in their own home?” Quoth the Sultan, “Needs must thou address them;” so the Wazir said to the girl, “O noble one, obedience to the royal orders is incumbent upon you as upon all lieges.” Said she, “True, he is our Sovran; but how can he know whether we be starving or full-fed?” “Let us see,” rejoined the Wazir, “when he shall send for you and set you before the presence and question you concerning your disobeying his orders, what thou wilt say?” She retorted, “I would say to the Sultan, ‘Thou hast contraried Holy Law.’” At this the Minister resumed, “An he ask thee sundry questions wilt thou answer them?” and she replied, “Indeed I will.” Hereat the Minister turned to the King and said, “Let us leave off question and answer with this maiden on points of conscience and Holy Law and ask if she understand the fine arts.” Presently the Sultan put the question when she replied, “How should I not understand them when I am their father and their mother?” Quoth he, “Allah upon thee, O my lady, an thou wouldst favour us, let us hear one of thine airs and its words.” So she rose and retired but presently returning with a lute sat down and set it upon her lap and ordered the strings and smote it with a masterly touch: then she fell to singing amongst other verses these ordered couplets:?

“Do thou good to men and so rule their necks: * Long reigns who
by benefit rules mankind:
And lend aid to him who for aidance hopes: * For aye grateful is
man with a noble mind:
Who brings money the many to him will incline * And money for
tempting of man was designed:
Who hindereth favour and bounties, ne’er * Or brother or friend
in creation shall find:
With harsh looks frown not in the Sage’s face; * Disgusteth the
freeman denial unkind:

Who frequenteth mankind all of good unknow'th: * Man is lief of
rebellion, of largesse loath."

When the Sultan heard these couplets, his mind was distraught and he was perplext in thought; then turning to his Wazir, he said, "By Allah, these lines were surely an examination of and an allusion to our two selves; and doubtless she weeteth of us that I am the Sultan and thou art the Wazir, for the whole tenor of her talk proveth her knowledge of us." Then he turned to the maiden and said, "Right good are thy verse and thy voice, and thy words have delighted us with exceeding delight." Upon this she sang the following two couplets:?

"Men seek for them sorrow, and toil * Thro' long years as they
brightly flow;
But Fate, in the well like the tank[148] * Firm-fixt, ruleth
all below."

Now as soon as the Sultan heard these last two couplets he made certain that the damsel was aware of his quality. She did not leave off her lute-playing till near daylight, when she rose and retired and presently brought in a breakfast befitting her degree (for indeed she was pleased with them); and when she had served it up they ate a small matter which sufficed them. After this she said, "Inshallah, you will return to us this night before supper-tide and become our guests;" and the twain went their ways marvelling at the beauty of the sisters and their loveliness and their fearlessness in the matter of the proclamation; and the Sultan said to the Wazir, "By Allah, my soul inclineth unto that maiden." And they stinted not walking until they had entered the palace. But when that day had gone by and evening drew nigh, the Monarch made ready to go, he and the Minister, to the dwelling of the damsels?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive." Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Sixty-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King and the Councillor made ready to go to the dwelling of the damsels taking with them somewhat of gold pieces, the time being half an hour after set of sun; and presently they repaired to the house of the sisters whither they had been invited on the past night. So they rapped at the door when the youngest maiden came to it and opened and let them in: then she salam'd to them and greeted them and entreated them with increased respect saying, "Welcome to our lords the Darwayshes." But she eyed them with the eye of the physiognomist[149] and said in herself, "Verily these two men are on no wise what they seem and, unless my caution and intelligence and power of knowledge have passed away from me, this must be the Sultan and that his Wazir, for grandeur and majesty are evident on them." Then she seated them and accosted them even more pleasantly and set before them supper, and when they had eaten enough, she brought basins and ewers for handwashing and served up coffee causing them to enjoy themselves and to give and take in talk till their pleasure was perfect. At the time of night-orisons they arose and, after performing the Wuzú-ablution, prayed, and when their devotions were ended the Sultan hent in hand his purse and gave it to the youngest sister saying, "Expend ye this upon your livelihood." She took the bag which held two thousand dinars and kissed his right hand, feeling yet the more convinced that he must be the Sultan: so she proved her respect by the fewness of her words as she stood between his hands to do him service. Also she privily winked at her sisters and mother and said to them by signs, "Verily this be the Monarch and that his Minister." The others then arose and followed suit as the sister had done, when the Sultan turned to the Wazir and said, "The case is changed: assuredly they have comprehended it and ascertained it;" presently adding to the girl, "O damsel, we be only Darwaysh folk and yet you all stand up in our service as if we were sovrans. I beseech you do not on this wise." But the youngest sister again came forwards and kissed the ground before him and blessed him and recited this couplet:

"Fair fate befal thee to thy foe's despite: * White be thy days and his be black as night.[150]

By Allah, O King of the Age, thou art the Sultan and that is the Minister." The Sovran asked, "What cause hast thou for supposing this?" and she answered, "From your grand demeanour and your majestic mein; for such be the qualities of Kings which cannot be concealed." Quoth the Monarch, "Thou hast spoken sooth; but, tell me, how happeneth it that you wone here without men protectors?" and quoth she, "O my lord the King, our history is wondrous and were it graven with graver-needles upon the eye-corners it were a warning to whoso would be warned." He rejoined, "What is it?" and she began the

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

Story of the Three Sisters and Their Mother.[151]

I and my sisters and my mother are not natives of this city but of a capital in the land Al-Irák where my father was Sovran having troops and guards, Wazirs and Eunuch-chamberlains; and my mother was the fairest woman of her time insomuch that her beauty was a proverb throughout each and every region. Now it chanced that when I and my sisters were but infants, our father would set out to hunt and course and slay beasts of raven and take his pleasure in the gardens without the city. So he sent for his Wazir and appointed and constituted him Viceregent in his stead with full authority to command and be gracious to his lieges: then he got him ready and marched forth and the Viceroy entered upon his office. But it happened that it was the hot season and my mother betook herself to the terrace-roof of the palace in order to smell the air and sniff up the breeze. At that very hour, by the decree of the Decreer, the Wazir was sitting in the Kiosk or roofed balcony hanging to his upper mansion and holding in hand a mirror; and, as he looked therein, he saw the reflection of my mother, a glance of eyes which bequeathed him a thousand sighs. He was forthright distracted by her beauty and loveliness and fell sick and took to his pillow. Presently a confidential nurse came in and feeling his pulse, which showed no malady, said to him, “No harm for thee! thou shalt soon be well nor ever suffer from aught of sorrow.” Quoth he, “O my nurse, canst thou keep a secret?” and quoth she, “I can.” Then he told her all the love he had conceived for my mother and she replied, “This be a light affair nor hath it aught of hindrance: I will manage for thee such matter and I will soon unite thee with her.” Thereupon he packed up for her some of the most sumptuous dresses in his treasury and said, “Hie thee to her and say, ‘The Wazir hath sent these to thee by way of love-token and his desire is either that thou come to him and converse, he and thou, for a couple of hours,[152] or that he be allowed to visit thee.’” The nurse replied with “Hearkening and obedience,” and fared forth and found my mother (and we little ones were before her) all unknowing aught of that business. So the old woman saluted her and brought forwards the dresses, and my mother arose and opening the bundle beheld sumptuous raiment and, amongst other valuables, a necklace of precious stones. So she said to the nurse, “This is indeed ornamental gear, especially the collar;” and said the nurse, “O my lady, these are from thy slave the Wazir by way of love-token, for he doteth on thee with extreme desire and his only wish is to forgather with thee and converse, he and thou, for a couple of hours, either in his own place or in thine whither he will come.” Now when my mother heard these words from the nurse she arose and drew a scymitar which lay hard by and of her angry hastiness made the old woman’s head fall from her body and bade her slave-girls pick up the pieces and cast them into the common privy of the palace. So they did her bidding and wiped away the blood. Now the Wazir abode expecting his nurse to return to him but she returned not; so next day he despatched another handmaid who went to my mother and said to her, “O my lady, our lord the Wazir sent thee a present of dress by his nurse; but she hath not come back to him.” Hereupon my mother bade her Eunuchs take the slave and strangle her, then cast the corpse into the same house of easement where they had thrown the nurse. They did her bidding; but she said in her mind, “Haply the Wazir will return from the road of unright:” and she kept his conduct a secret. He however fell every day to sending slave-girls with the same message and my mother to slaying each and every, nor deigned show him any signs of yielding. But she, O our lord the Sultan, still kept her secret and did not acquaint our father therewith, always saying to herself, “Haply the Wazir will return to the road of right.” And behold my father presently came back from hunting and sporting and pleasuring, when the Lords of the land met him and salam’d to him, and amongst them appeared the Minister whose case was changed. Now some years after this, O King of the Age, our sire resolved upon a Pilgrimage to the Holy House of Meccah?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable.” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night, Dunyazad said to her "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night." She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youngest sister continued to the Sultan:?So our sire, O King of the Age, resolved upon a Pilgrimage to the Holy House of Meccah and stablished the same Wazir Viceregent in his stead to deal commandment and break off and carry out. So he said in his heart, "Now have I won my will of the Sultan's Harem." So the King gat him ready and fared forth to Allah's Holy House after committing us to the charge of his Minister. But when he had been gone ten days, and the Wazir knew that he must be far from the city where he had left behind him me and my sisters and my mother, behold, an Eunuch of the Minister's came in to us and kissed ground before the Queen and said to her "Allah upon thee, O my lady, pity my lord the Wazir, for his heart is melted by thy love and his wits wander and his right mind; and he is now become as one annihilated. So do thou have ruth upon him and revive his heart and restore his health." Now when my mother heard these words, she bade her Eunuchs seize that Castrato and carry him from the room to the middle of the Divan-court and there slay him; but she did so without divulging her reasons. They obeyed her bidding; and when the Lords of the land and others saw the body of a man slain by the eunuchry of the palace, they informed the Wazir, saying, "What hateful business is this which hath befallen after the Sultan's departure?" He asked, "What is to do?" and they told him that his Castrato had been slain by a party of the palace eunuchry. Thereupon he said to them, "In your hand abideth testimony of this whenas the Sultan shall return and ye shall bear witness to it." But, O King, the Wazir's passion for our mother waxed cool after the deaths of the nurse and the slave-girls and the eunuch; and she also held her peace and spake not a word there anent. On this wise time passed and he sat in the stead of my sire till the Sultan's return drew near when the Minister dreaded lest our father, learning his ill deeds, should do him die. So he devised a device and wrote a letter to the King saying, "After salutation be it known to thee that thy Harem hath sent to me, not only once but five several times during thine absence, soliciting of me a foul action, to which I refused consent and replied, By Allah, however much she may wish to betray my Sovran, I by the Almighty will not turn traitor; for that I was left by thee guardian of the realm after thy departure.” He added words upon words; then he sealed the scroll and gave it to a running courier with orders to hurry along the road. The messenger took it and fared with it to the Sultan’s camp when distant eight days’ journey from the capital; and, finding him seated in his pavilion,[153] delivered the writ. He took it and opened it and read it and when he understood its secret significance, his face changed, his eyes turned backwards and he bade his tents be struck for departure. So they fared by forced marches till between him and his capital remained only two stations. He then summoned two Chamberlains with orders to forego him to the city and take my mother and us three girls a day’s distance from it and there put us to death. Accordingly, they led us four to the open country purposing to kill us, and my mother knew not what intent was in their minds until they reached the appointed spot. Now the Queen had in times past heaped alms-deeds and largesse upon the two Chamberlains, so they held the case to be a grievous and said each to other, “By Allah we cannot slaughter them; no, never!” Then they told my mother of the letter which the Wazir had written to our father saying such-and-such, upon which she exclaimed, “He hath lied, by Allah, the arch-traitor; and naught happened save so-and-so.” Then she related to them all she had done with the exactest truth. The men said, “Sooth thou hast spoken;” then arising without stay or delay they snared a gazelle and slaughtered it and filled with its blood four flasks; after which they broiled some of the flesh over the embers and gave it to my mother that we might satisfy our hunger. Presently they farewelled us saying, “We give you in charge of Him who never disappointed those committed to His care;” and, lastly, they went their ways leaving us alone in the wild and the wold. So we fell to eating the desert-grasses and drinking of the remnants of the rain, and we walked awhile and rested awhile without finding any city or inhabited region; and we waxed tired, O King of the Age, when suddenly we came upon a spot on a hill-flank abounding in vari-coloured herbs and fair fountains. Here we abode ten days and behold, a caravan drew near us and encamped hard by us, but they did not sight us for that we hid ourselves from their view until night fell. Then I went to them and asked of sundry eunuchs and ascertained that there was a city at the distance of two days' march from us; so I returned and informed my mother who rejoiced at the good tidings. As soon as it was morn the caravan marched off, so we four arose and walked all that day through at a leisurely pace, and a second day and so forth; until, on the afternoon of the fifth, a city rose before our sight fulfilling all our desires[154] and we exclaimed, "Alhamdolillah, laud be to the Lord who hath empowered us to reach it." We ceased not faring till sunset when we entered it and we found it a potent capital. Such was our case and that of our mother;[155] but as regards our sire the Sultan, as he drew near his home after the return-journey from the Hajj, the Lords of the land and the Chiefs of the city flocked out to meet him, and the town-folk followed one another like men riding on pillions[156] to salute him, and the poor and the mesquin congratulated him on his safety and at last the Wazir made his appearance. The Sultan desired to be private with the Minister? And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Sixty-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King desired to be private with the Minister and when they were left alone he said, "O Wazir, how was it between thee and that Harim of mine?" Said the other, "O King of the Age, she sent to me not only once but five several times and I refrained from her and whatsoever eunuch she despatched I slew, saying, Haply she may cease so doing and abandon her evil intent. But she did not repent, so I feared for thine honour and sent to acquaint thee with the matter." The Sultan bowed his head groundwards for a while, then raising it he bade summon the two Chamberlains whom he had sent to slay his wife and three children. On their appearing he asked them, "What have you done in fulfilling my commandment?" They answered, "We did that which thou badest be done," and showed him the four flasks they had filled with the blood and said, "This be their blood, a flask-full from each." The Sultan hent them in hand and mused over what had taken place between him and his wife of love and affection and union; so he wept with bitter weeping and fell down in a fainting fit. After an hour or so he recovered and turning to the Wazir said, "Tell me, hast thou spoken sooth?" and the other replied, "Yes, I have." Then the Sultan addressed the two Chamberlains and asked them, "Have ye put to death my daughters with their mother?" But they remained silent nor made aught of answer or address. So he exclaimed, "What is on your minds that ye speak not?" They rejoined, "By Allah, O King of the Age, the honest man cannot tell an untruth for that lying and leasing are the characteristics of hypocrites and traitors." When the Wazir heard the Chamberlains' speech his colour yellowed, his frame was disordered and a trembling seized his limbs, and the King turned to him and noted that these symptoms had been caused by the words of the two officials. So he continued to them, "What mean ye, O Chamberlains, by your saying that lies and leasing are the characteristics of hypocrites and traitors? Can it be that ye have not put them to death? And as ye claim to be true men either ye have killed them and ye speak thus or you are liars. Now by Him who hath set me upon the necks of His lieges, if ye declare not to me the truth I will do you both die by the foulest of deaths." They rejoined, "By Allah, O King of the Age, whenas thou badest us take them and slay them, we obeyed thy bidding and they knew not nor could they divine what was to be until we arrived with them at the middlemost and broadest of the desert; and when we informed them of what had been done by the Wazir, thy Harem exclaimed, 'There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great. Verily we are Allah's and unto Him are we returning. But an ye kill us you will kill us wrongfully and ye wot not wherefor. By the Lord, this Wazir hath foully lied and hath accused us falsely before the

Almighty.’ So we said to her, O King of the Age, ‘Inform us of what really took place,’ and said the mother of the Princesses, ‘Thus and thus it happened.’ Then she fell to telling us the whole tale from first to last of the nurse who was sent to her and the handmaids and the Eunuch.”[157] Hereupon the Sultan cried, “And ye, have ye slain them or not?” and the Chamberlains replied, “By Allah, O King of the Age, whenas the loyalty of thy Harem was made manifest to us we snared a gazelle and cut its throat and filled these four flasks with its blood; after which we broiled some of the flesh upon the embers and offered it to thy Harem and her children saying to them, ‘We give thee in charge to Him who never disappointeth those committed to His care,’ and we added, ‘Your truth shall save you.’ Lastly we left them in the midmost of the waste and we returned hither.” When the Sultan heard these words he turned to the Wazir and exclaimed, “Thou hast estranged from me my wife and my children;” but the Minister uttered not a word nor made any address and trembled in every limb like one afflicted with an ague. And when the King saw the truth of the Chamberlains and the treachery of the Minister he bade fuel be collected and set on fire and they did his bidding. Then he commanded them to truss up the Wazir, hand tied to foot, and bind him perforce upon a catapult[158] and cast him into the middle of the fiery pyre which made his bones melt before his flesh. Lastly he ordered his palace to be pillaged, his good to be spoiled and the women of his Harem to be sold for slaves. After this he said to the Chamberlains, “You must know the spot wherein you left the Queen and Princesses;” and said they, “O King of the Age, we know it well; but when we abandoned them and returned home they were in the midst of the wolds and the wilds nor can we say what befel them or whether they be now alive or dead.” On this wise fared it with them; but as regards us three maidens and our mother, when we entered the city?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable?” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night, Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youngest sister continued her tale:?So when we three maidens and our mother entered the city about sunset I the youngest said to them, “We be three Princesses and a Queen-mother: so we cannot show ourselves in this our condition and needs must we lodge us in a Khan: also ’tis my rede that we should do best by donning boys’ dress.” All agreeing hereto we did accordingly and, entering a Caravanserai, hired us a retired chamber in one of the wings. Now every day we three fared forth to service and at eventide we forgathered and took what sufficed us of sustenance; but our semblance had changed with the travails of travel and all who looked at us would say, These be lads. In this plight we passed the space of a year full-told till, one day of the days, we three fared forth to our chares, as was our wont, and behold, a young man met us upon the way and turning to me asked, “O lad, wilt thou serve in my house?” Quoth I, “O my uncle,[159] I must ask advice,” and quoth he, “O my lad, crave counsel of thy mother and come and serve in our home.” He then looked at my sisters and enquired, “Be these thy comrades, O lad?” and I replied “No, they are my brothers.” So we three went to our mother in the Khan and said to her, “This young man wisheth to hire the youngest of us for service,” and said she, “No harm in that.” Thereupon the youth arose and taking me by the hand guided me to his home and led me in to his mother and his wife, and when the ancient dame saw me, her heart was opened to me. Presently quoth the young man to his parent, “I have brought the lad to serve in our house and he hath two brothers and his mother dwelling with them.” Quoth she, “May it be fortunate to thee, O my son.”[160] So I tarried there serving them till sunset and when the evening-meal was eaten, they gave me a dish of meat and three large bannocks of clean bread. These I took and carried to my mother whom I found sitting with my sisters and I set before them the meat and bread; but when my parent saw this she wept with sore weeping and cried, “Time hath overlooked us; erst we gave food to the folk and now the folk send us food." And cried I, "Marvel not at the works of the Creator; for verily Allah hath ordered for us this and for others that and the world endureth not for any one;" and I ceased not soothing my mother's heart till it waxed clear of trouble and we ate and praised Almighty Allah. Now every day I went forth to serve at the young man's house and at eventide bore to my mother and sisters their sufficiency of food for supper,[161] breakfast and dinner; and when the youth brought eatables of any kind for me I would distribute it to the family. And he looked well after our wants and at times he would supply clothing for me and for the youths, my sisters, and for my parent; so that all hearts in our lodgings were full of affection for him. At last his mother said, "What need is there for the lad to go forth from us every eventide and pass the night with his people? Let him lie in our home and every day about afternoon-time carry the evening meal to his mother and brothers and then return to us and keep me company." I replied, "O my lady, let me consult my mother, to whom I will fare forthright and acquaint her herewith." But my parent objected saying, "O my daughter, we fear lest thou be discovered, and they find thee out to be a girl." I replied, "Our Lord will veil our secret;" and she rejoined, "Then do thou obey them." So I lay with the young man's mother nor did any divine that I was a maid, albeit from the time when I entered into that youth's service my strength and comeliness had increased. At last, one night of the nights, I went after supper to sleep at my employer's and the young man's mother chanced to glance in my direction when she saw my loosed hair which gleamed and glistened many-coloured as a peacock's robe. Next morning I arose and gathering up my locks donned the Tákiyah[162] and proceeded, as usual, to do service about the house never suspecting that the mother had taken notice of my hair. Presently she said to her son, "'Tis my wish that thou buy me a few rose-blossoms which be fresh." He asked, "To make conserve?" and she answered, "No." Then he enquired; "Wherefore wantest thou roses?" and she replied, "By Allah, O my son, I wish therewith to try this our servant whom I suspect to be a girl and no boy; and under him in bed I would strew rose-leaves, for an they be found wilted in the morning he is a lad, and if they remain as they were he is a lass."[163] So he fared forth and presently returned to his mother with the rose-blossoms; and, when the sleeping-hour came, she went and placed them in my bed. I slept well and in the morning when I arose she came to me and found that the petals had not changed for the worse; nay, they had gained lustre. So she made sure that I was a girl.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Seventieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the damsel continued:?So the young man's mother made certain that her servant lad was a virgin lass. But she concealed her secret from her son and was kind to me and showed me respect and, of the goodness of her heart, sent me back early to my mother and sisters. Now one day of the days the youth came home about noon as was his wont; and he found me with sleeves tucked up to the elbows engaged in washing a bundle of shirts and turbands; and I was careless of myself so he drew near me and noted my cheeks that flushed rosy red and eyes which were as those of the thirsty gazelle and my scorpion locks hanging adown my side face. This took place in summertide; and when he saw me thus his wits were distraught and his sound senses were as naught and his judgment was in default: so he went in to his parent and said to her, "O my mother, indeed this servant is no boy, but a maiden girl and my wish is that thou discover for me her case and make manifest to me her condition and marry me to her, for that my heart is fulfilled of her love." Now by the decree of the Decreer I was privily listening to all they said of me; so presently I arose, after washing the clothes and what else they had given me; but my state was changed by their talk and I knew and felt certified that the youth and his mother had recognised me for a girl. I continued on this wise till eventide when I took the food and returned to my family and they all ate till they had eaten enough, when I told them my adventure and my conviction. So my mother said to me, "What remaineth for us now to do?" and said I, "O my mother, let us arise, we three, before night shall set in and go forth ere they lock the Khan upon us;[164] and if the door-keeper ask us aught let us answer, 'We are faring to spend the night in the house of the youth where our son is serving.'" My mother replied, "Right indeed is thy rede." Accordingly, all four of us went forth at the same time and when the porter asked, "This is night-tide and whither may ye be wending?" we answered, "We have been invited by the young man whom our son serveth for he maketh a Septena-festival[165] and a bridal-feast: so we purpose to night with him and return a-morn." Quoth he, "There is no harm in that." So we issued out and turned aside and sought the waste lands, the Veiler veiling us, and we ceased not walking till the day brake and we were sore a-wearied. Then we sat for rest till the rise of sun and when it shone we four sprang up and strave with our wayfare throughout the first day and the second and the third until the seventh. (Now all this was related to Mohammed the Sultan of Cairo and his Wazir by the youngest Princess and they abode wondering at her words.) On the seventh day we reached this city and here we housed ourselves; but to this hour we have no news of our sire after the Minister was burnt nor do we know an he be whole or dead. Yet we yearn for him: so do thou, of thine abundant favour, O King of the Age, and thy perfect beneficence, send a messenger to seek tidings of him and to acquaint him with our case, when he will send to fetch us." Here she ceased speaking and the Monarch and Minister both wondered at her words and exclaimed, "Exalted be He who decreeth to His servants severance and reunion." Then the Sultan of Cairo arose without stay or delay and wrote letters to the King of Al-Irák, the father of the damsels, telling him that he had taken them under his safeguard, them and their mother, and gave the writ to the Shaykh of the Cossids[166] and appointed for it a running courier and sent him forth with it to the desert. After this the King took the three maidens and their mother and carried them to his Palace where he set apart for them an apartment and he appointed for them what sufficed of appointments. Now, as for the Cossid who fared forth with the letter, he stinted not spanning the waste for the space of two months until he made the city of the bereaved King of Al-Irák, and when he asked for the royal whereabouts they pointed out to him a pleasure-garden. So he repaired thither and went in to him, kissed ground before him, offered his services, prayed for him and lastly handed to him the letter. The King took it and brake the seal and opened the scroll; but when he read it and comprehended its contents, he rose up and shrieked a loud shriek and fell to the floor in a fainting fit. So the high officials flocked around him and raised him from the ground, and when he recovered after an hour or so they questioned him concerning the cause of this. He then related to them the adventures of his wife and children; how they were still in the bonds of life whole and hearty; and forthright he ordered a ship to be got ready for them and stored therein gifts and presents for him who had been the guardian of his Queen and her daughters. But he knew not what lurked for them in the future. So the ship sailed away, all on board seeking the desired city, and she reached it without delay, the winds blowing light and fair. Then she fired the cannon of safe arrival[167] and the Sultan sent forth to enquire concerning her,?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Seventy-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan made enquiries concerning that ship, when behold! the Rais[168] came forth from her to the land and accosting the King handed to him the letter and acquainted him with the arrival of the gifts and presents. Whereupon he bade all on board her come ashore and be received in the guest-house for a space of three days until the traces of travel should disappear from them. After that time the Sultan gat ready whatso became his high degree of offerings evening those despatched to him by the father of the damsels and stowed them in the vessel, where he also embarked as much of victual and provaunt as might suffice for all the voyagers. On the fourth day after sunset the damsels and their mother were borne on board and likewise went the master after they had taken leave of the King and had salam'd to him and prayed for his preservation. Now in early morning the breeze blew free and fair so they loosed sail and made for the back[169] of the sea and voyaged safely for the first day and the second. But on the third about mid-afternoon a furious gale came out against them; whereby the sails were torn to tatters and the masts fell overboard; so the crew made certain of death, and the ship ceased not to be tossed upwards and to settle down without mast or sail till midnight, all the folk lamenting one to other, as did the maidens and their mother, till the wreck was driven upon an island and there went to pieces. Then he whose life-term was short died forthright and he whose life-term was long survived; and some bestrode planks and others butts and others again bulks of timber whereby all were separated each from other. Now the mother and two of the daughters clomb upon planks they chanced find and sought their safety; but the youngest of the maidens, who had mounted a keg,[170] and who knew nothing of her mother and sisters, was carried up and cast down by the waves for the space of five days till she landed upon an extensive sea-board where she found a sufficiency to eat and drink. She sat down upon the shore for an hour of time until she had taken rest and her heart was calmed and her fear had flown and she had recovered her spirits: then she rose and paced the sands, all unknowing whither she should wend, and whenever she came upon aught of herbs she would eat of them. This lasted through the first day and the second till the forenoon of the third, when lo and behold! a Knight advanced towards her, falcon on fist and followed by a greyhound. For three days he had been wandering about the waste questing game either of birds or of beasts, but he happened not upon either when he chanced to meet the maiden, and seeing her said in his mind, "By Allah, yon damsel is my quarry this very day." So he drew near her and salam'd to her and she returned his salute; whereupon he asked her of her condition and she informed him of what had betided her; and his heart was softened towards her and taking her up on his horse's crupper he turned him homewards. Now of this youngest sister (quoth Shahrazad) there is much to say, and we will say it when the tale shall require the telling. But as regards the second Princess, she ceased not floating on the plank for the space of eight days, until she was borne by the set of the sea close under the walls of a city; but she was like one drunken with wine when she crawled up the shore and her raiment was in rags and her colour had wanned for excess of affright. However, she walked onwards at a slow pace till she reached the city and came upon a house of low stone walls. So she went in and there finding an ancient dame sitting and spinning yarn, she gave her good evening and the other returned it adding, "Who art thou, O my daughter, and whence comest thou?" She answered, "O my aunt, I'm fallen from the skies and have been met by the earth: thou needest not question me of aught, for my heart is clean molten by the fire of grief. An thou take me in for love and kindness 'tis well and if not I will again fare forth on my wanderings." When the old woman heard these words she compassioned the maiden and her heart felt tender towards her, and she cried, "Welcome to thee, O my daughter, sit thee down!" Accordingly she sat her down beside her hostess and the two fell to spinning yarn whereby to gain their daily bread: and the old dame rejoiced in her and said, "She shall take the place of my daughter." Now of this second Princess (quoth Shahrazad) there is much to say and we will say it when the tale shall require the telling. But as regards the eldest sister, she ceased not clinging to the plank and floating over the sea till the sixth day passed, and on the seventh she was cast upon a stead where lay gardens distant from the town six miles. So she walked into them and seeing fruit close-clustering she took of it and ate and donned the cast-off dress of a man she found nearhand. Then she kept on faring till she entered the town and here she fell to wandering about the Bazars till she came to the shop of a Kunáfah[171] -maker who was cooking his vermicelli; and he, seeing a fair youth in man's habit, said to her, "O younker, wilt thou be my servant!" "O my uncle," she said, "I will well;" so he settled her wage each day a quarter farthing,[172] not including her diet. Now in that town were some fifteen shops wherein Kunafah was made. She abode with the confectioner the first day and the second and the third to the full number of ten, when the traces of travel left her and fear departed from her heart, and her favour and complexion were changed for the better and she became even as the moon, nor could any guess that the lad was a lass. Now it was the practice of that man to buy every day half a quartern[173] of flour and use it for making his vermicelli; but when the so-seeming youth came to him he would lay in each morning three quarterns; and the townsfolk heard of this change and fell to saying, "We will never dine without the Kunafah of the confectioner who hath in his house the youth." This is what befel the eldest Princess of whom (quoth Shahrazad) there is much to say and we will say it when the tale shall require the telling. But as regards the Queen-mother,?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Seventy-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that as regards the mother of the maidens, when the ship broke up under them and she bestrode the bulk of timber, she came upon the Rais in his boat manned by three of the men; so he took her on board and they ceased not paddling for a space of three days when they sighted a lofty island which fulfilled their desire, and its summit towered high in air. So they made for it till they drew near it and landed on a low side-shore where they abandoned their boat; and they ceased not walking through the rest of that day and those that followed till one day of the days behold, a dust-cloud suddenly appeared to them spireing up to the skies. They fared for it and after a while it lifted, showing beneath it a host with swords glancing and lance-heads' gleams lancing and war steeds dancing and prancing, and these were ridden by men like unto eagles and the host was under the hands of a Sultan around whom ensigns and banners were flying. And when this King saw the Rais and the sailors and the woman following, he wheeled his charger themwards to learn what tidings they brought and rode up to the strangers and questioned them; and the castaways informed them that their ship had broken up under them. Now the cause of this host's taking the field was that the King of Al-Irak, the father of the three maidens, after he appointed the ship and saw her set out, felt uneasy at heart, presaging evil, and feared with sore fear the shifts of Time. So he went forth, he and his high Officials and his host, and marched adown the longshore till, by decree of the Decreer, he suddenly and all unexpectedly came upon his Queen who was under charge of the ship's captain. Presently, seeing the cavalcade and its ensigns the Rais went forward and recognising the King hastened up to him and kissed his stirrup and his feet. The Sultan turned towards him and knew him; so he asked him of his state and the Rais answered by relating all that had befallen him. Thereupon the King commanded his power to alight in that place and they did so and set up their tents and pavilions. Then the Sultan took seat in his Shámiyánah[174] and bade them bring his Queen and they brought her, and when eye met eye the pair greeted each other fondly and the father asked concerning her three children. She declared that she had no tidings of them after the shipwreck and she knew not whether they were dead or alive. Hereat the King wept with sore weeping and exclaimed, "Verily we are Allah's and unto Him we are returning!" after which he gave orders to march from that place upon his capital. Accordingly they stinted not faring for a space of four days till they reached the city and he entered his citadel-palace. But every time and every hour he was engrossed in pondering the affair of the three Princesses and kept saying, "Would heaven I wot are they drowned or did they escape the sea; and, if they were saved, Oh, that I knew whether they were scattered or abode in company one with other and whatever else may have betided them!" And he ceased not brooding over the issue of things and kept addressing himself in speech; and neither meat was pleasant to him nor drink. Such were his case and adventure; but as regards the youngest sister whenas she was met by the Knight and seated upon the crupper of his steed, he ceased not riding with her till he reached his city and went into his citadel-palace. Now the Knight was the son of a Sultan who had lately deceased, but a usurper had seized the reins of rule in his stead and Time had proved a tyrant to the youth, who had therefore addicted himself to hunting and sporting. Now by the decree of the Decreer he had ridden forth to the chase where he met the Princess and took her up behind him, and at the end of the ride, when he returned to his mother, he was becharmed by her charms; so he gave her in charge to his parent and honoured her with the highmost possible honour and felt for her a growing fondness even as felt she for him. And when the girl had tarried with them a month full-told she increased in beauty and loveliness and symmetrical stature and perfect grace; then, the heart of the youth was fulfilled with love of her and on like wise was the soul of the damsel who, in her new affection, forgot her mother and her sisters. But from the moment that maiden entered his Palace the fortunes of the young Knight amended and the world waxed propitious to him nor less did the hearts of the lieges incline to him; so they held a meeting and said, “There shall be over us no Sovran and no Sultan save the son of our late King; and he who at this present ruleth us hath neither great wealth nor just claim to the sovereignty.” Now all this benefit which accrued to the young King was by the auspicious coming of the Princess. Presently the case was agreed upon by all the citizens of the capital that on the morning of the next day they would make him ruler and depose the usurper.?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Seventy-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the citizens in early morning held a meeting whereat were present the Lords of the land and the high Officials, and they went in to the usurping Sultan determined to remove and depose him. But he refused and forswore consent, saying, “By Allah, such thing may not be except after battle and slaughter.” Accordingly they fared forth and acquainted the young King who held the matter grievous and was overridden by cark and care: however he said to them, “If there must perforce be fighting and killing, I have treasures sufficient to levy a host.” So saying he went away and disappeared; but presently he brought them the moneys which they distributed to the troops. Then they repaired to the Maydán, the field of fight outside the city, and on like guise the usurping Sultan rode out with all his power. And when the two opposing hosts were ranged in their forces, each right ready for the fray, the usurper and his men charged home upon the young King and either side engaged in fierce combat and sore slaughter befel. But the usurper had the better of the battle and purposed to seize the young King amidst his many when, lo and behold! appeared a Knight backing a coal-black mare; and he was armed cap-ŕ-pie in a coat of mail, and he carried a spear and a mace. With these he bore down upon the usurper and shore off his right forearm so that he fell from his destrier, and the Knight seeing this struck him a second stroke with the sword and parted head from body. When his army saw the usurper fall, all sought safety in flight and sauve qui peut; but the army of the young King came up with them and caused the scymitar to fall upon them so that were saved of them only those to whom length of life was foreordained. Hereupon the victors lost no time in gathering the spoils and the horses together; but the young King stood gazing at the Knight and considering his prowess; yet he failed to recognise him and after an hour or so the stranger disappeared leaving the conqueror sorely chafed and vexed for that he knew him not and had failed to forgather with him. After this the young King returned from the battle-field with his band playing behind him and he entered the seat of his power, and was raised by the lieges to the station of his sire. Those who had escaped the slaughter dispersed in all directions and sought safety in flight and the partizans who had enthroned the young King thronged around him and gave him joy as also did the general of the city, whose rejoicings were increased thereby. Now the coming of the aforesaid Knight was a wondrous matter. When the rightful King made ready for battle the Princess feared for his life and, being skilled in the practice of every weapon, she escaped the notice of the Queen-dowager and after donning her war-garb and battle-gear she went forth to the stable and saddled her a mare and mounted her and pushed in between the two armies. And as soon as she saw the usurper charge down upon the young King as one determined to shed his life's blood, she forestalled him and attacked him and tore out the life from between his ribs. Then she returned to her apartment nor did any know of the deed she had done. Presently, when it was eventide the young King entered the Palace after securing his succession to royalty; but he was still chafed and vexed for that he knew not the Knight. His mother met him and gave him joy of his safety and his accession to the Sultanate, whereto he made reply, "Ah! O my mother, my length of days was from the hand of a horseman who suddenly appearing joined us in our hardest stress and aided me in my straitest need and saved me from Death." Quoth she, "O my son, hast thou recognised him?" and quoth he, "'Twas my best desire to discover him and to stablish him as my Wazir, but this I failed to do." Now when the Princess heard these words she laughed and rejoiced and still laughing said, "To whoso will make thee acquainted with him what wilt thou give?" and said he, "Dost thou know him?" So she replied, "I wot him not" and he rejoined, "Then what is the meaning of these thy words?" when she answered him in these prosaic rhymes:[175] ?

"O my lord, may I prove thy sacrifice * Nor exult at thy sorrows thine enemies!
Could unease and disease by others be borne * The slave should bear load on his lord that lies:
I'll carry whatever makes thee complain * And be my body the first that dies."

When he heard these words he again asked, "Dost thou know him?" and she answered, "He? Verily we wot him not;"[176] and repeated the saying to him a second time: withal he by no means understood her. So quoth she, “How canst thou administer the Sultanate and yet fail to comprehend my simple words? For indeed I have made the case clear to thee.” Hereupon he fathomed the secret of the saying and flew to her in his joy and clasped her to his bosom and kissed her upon the cheeks. But his mother turned to him and said, “O my son, do not on this wise, for everything hath its time and season;”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan’s mother said, “O my son, everything hath its time and season; and whoso hurrieth a matter before opportunity befit shall be punished with the loss of it.” But he replied, “By Allah, O my mother, thy suspicion be misplaced: I acted thus only on my gratitude to her, for assuredly she is the Knight who came to my aidance and who saved me from death.” And his mother excused him. They passed that night in converse and next day at noontide the King sought the Divan in order to issue his commandments; but when the assembly filled the room and became as a garden of bloom the Lords of the land said to him, “O King of the Age, ‘twere not suitable that thou become Sultan except thou take to thee a wife; and Alhamdolillah?laud to the Lord who hath set thee on the necks of His servants and who hath restored the realm to thee as successor of thy sire. There is no help but that thou marry.” Quoth he, “To hear is to consent;” then he arose without stay or delay and went in to his mother and related to her what had happened. Quoth she, “O my son, do what becometh thee and Allah prosper thy affairs!” He said to her, “O my mother, retire thou with the maiden and persuade her to marriage for I want none other and I love not aught save herself," and said she, "With joy and gladness." So he went from her and she arose and was private with the damsel when she addressed her, "O my lady, the King desireth to wed thee and he wanteth none other and he seeketh not aught save thee." But the Princess hearing this exclaimed, "How shall I marry, I who have lost my kith and kin and my dear ones and am driven from my country and my birth-place? This were a proceeding opposed to propriety! But if it need must be and I have the fortune to forgather with my mother and sisters and father, then and then only it shall take place." The mother replied, "Why this delay, O my daughter? The Lords of the land have stood up against the King in the matter of marriage, and in the absence of espousals we fear for his deposition. Now maidens be many and their relations long to see each damsel wedded to my son and become a Queen in virtue of her husband's degree: but he wanteth none other and loveth naught save thyself. Accordingly, an thou wouldst take compassion on him and protect him by thy consent from the insistence of the Grandees, deign accept him to mate." Nor did the Sultan's mother cease to speak soothing words to the maiden and to gentle her with soft language until her mind was made up and she gave consent.[177] Upon this they began to prepare for the ceremony forthright, and summoned the Kazi and witnesses who duly knotted the knot of wedlock and by eventide the glad tidings of the espousals were bruited abroad. The King bade spread bride-feasts and banqueting tables and invited his high Officials and the Grandees of the kingdom and he went in to the maiden that very night and the rejoicings grew in gladness and all sorrows ceased to deal sadness. Then he proclaimed through the capital and all the burghs that the lieges should decorate the streets with rare tapestries and multiform in honour of the Sultanate. Accordingly, they adorned the thoroughfares in the city and its suburbs for forty days and the rejoicings increased when the King fed the widows and the Fakirs and the mesquin and scattered gold and robed and gifted and largessed till all the days of decoration were gone by. On this wise the sky of his estate grew clear by the loyalty of the lieges and he gave orders to deal justice after the fashion of the older Sultans, to wit, the Chosroës and the Cćsars; and this condition endured for three years, during which Almighty Allah blessed him by the

Princess with two men-children as they were moons. Such was the case with the youngest Princess; but as regards the cadette, the second sister,?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Seventy-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that as regards the case of the cadette, the second damsel, when she was adopted to daughter by the ancient dame she fell to spinning with her and living by the work of their hands. Now there chanced to govern that city a Báshá[178] who had sickened with a sore sickness till he was near unto death; and the wise men and leaches had compounded for him of medicines a mighty matter which, however, availed him naught. At last the tidings came to the ears of the Princess who lived with the old woman and she said to her, “O my mother, I desire to prepare a tasse of broth and do thou bear it to the Basha and let him drink of it; haply will Almighty Allah vouchsafe him a cure whereby we shall gain some good.” Said the other, “O my daughter, and how shall I obtain admittance and who shall set the broth before him?” The maiden replied, “O my mother, at the Gate of Allah Almighty!”[179] and the dame rejoined, “Do thou whatso thou willest.” So the damsel arose and cooked a tasse of broth and mingled with it sundry hot spices such as pimento[180] and she had certain leaflets taken from the so-called Wind-tree,[181] whereof she inserted a small portion deftly mingling the ingredients. Then the old woman took it and set forth and walked till she reached the Basha’s mansion where the servants and eunuchs met her and asked her of what was with her. She answered, “This is a tasse of broth which I have brought for the Basha that he drink of it as much as he may fancy: haply Almighty

Allah shall vouchsafe healing to him." They went in and reported that to the Basha who exclaimed, "Bring her to me hither." Accordingly, they led her within and she offered to him the tasse of broth, whereupon he rose and sat upright and removed the cover from the cup which sent forth a pleasant savour: so he took it and sipped of it a spoonful and a second and a third, when his heart opened to her and he drank of it till he could no more. Now this was in the forenoon and after finishing the soup he gave the old woman a somewhat of dinars which she took and returned therewith to the damsel rejoicing, and handed to her the gold pieces. But the Basha immediately after drinking the broth felt drowsy and he slept a restful sleep till mid-afternoon and when he awoke health had returned to his frame beginning from the time he drank. So he asked after the ancient dame and sent her word to prepare for him another tasse of broth like the first; but they told him that none knew her dwelling-place. Now when the old woman returned home the maiden asked her whether the broth had pleased the Basha or not; and she said that it was very much to his liking; so the girl got ready a second portion but without all the stronger ingredients[182] of the first. Then she gave it to the dame who took it and went forth with it and whilst the Basha was asking for her behold, up she came and the servants took her and led her in to the Governor. On seeing her he rose and sat upright and called for other food and when it was brought he ate his sufficiency, albeit for a length of time he could neither rise nor walk. But from the hour he drank all the broth he sniffed the scent of health and he could move about as he moved when hale and hearty. So he asked the old dame saying, "Didst thou cook this broth?" and she answered, "O my lord, my daughter made it and sent me with it to thee." He exclaimed, "By Allah this maiden cannot be thy daughter, O old woman; and she can be naught save the daughter of Kings. But bid her every day at morning-tide cook me a tasse of the same broth." The other replied, "To hear is to obey," and returned home with this message to the damsel who did as the Basha bade the first day and the second to the seventh day. And the Basha waxed stronger every day and when the week was ended he took horse and rode to his pleasure-garden. He increased continually in force and vigour till, one day of the days, he sent for the dame and questioned her concerning the damsel who lived with her; so she acquainted him with her case and what there was in her of beauty and loveliness and perfect grace. Thereupon the Basha fell in love with the girl by hearsay and without eye-seeing[183] :?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Basha fell in love with the girl by hearsay and without eye-seeing: so he changed his habit and donning a dress of Darwaysh-cut left his mansion and threaded the streets passing from house to house until he reached that of the old woman. He then knocked at the entrance and she came behind it and asked "Who's at the door?" "A Darwaysh and a stranger," answered he, "who knoweth no man in this town and who is sore anhungered." Now the ancient dame was by nature niggardly and she had lief put him off, but the damsel said to her, "Turn him not away," and quoting "Honour to the foreigner is a duty," said, "So do thou let him in." She admitted him and seated him when the maiden brought him a somewhat of food and stood before him in his service. He ate one time and ten times he gazed at the girl until he had eaten his sufficiency when he washed his hands and rising left the house and went his ways. But his heart flamed with love of the Princess and he was deeply enamoured of her and he ceased not walking until he reached his mansion whence he sent for the old woman. And when they brought her, he produced a mint of money and a sumptuous dress in which he requested and prayed her to attire the damsel: then the old woman took it and returned to her protegée, saying to herself, "By Allah, if the girl accept the Basha and marry him she will prove sensible as fortunate; but an she be not content so to do I will turn her out of my door.” When she went in she gave her the dress and bade her don it, but the damsel refused till the old woman coaxed her and persuaded her to try it on. Now when the dame left the Basha, he privily assumed a woman’s habit and followed in her footsteps; and at last he entered the house close behind her and beheld the Princess in the sumptuous dress. Then the fire of his desire flamed higher in his heart and he lacked patience to part from her, so he returned to his mansion with mind preoccupied and vitals yearning. Thither he summoned the old woman and asked her to demand the girl in marriage and was instant with her and cried, “No help but this must be.” Accordingly she returned home and acquainted the girl with what had taken place adding, “O my daughter, verily the Basha loveth thee and his wish is to wed thee: he hath been a benefactor to us, and thou wilt never meet his like; for that he is deeply enamoured of thee and the byword saith, ‘Reward of lover is return of love.’” And the ancient dame ceased not gentling her and plying her with friendly words till she was soothed and gave consent. Then she returned to the Basha and informed him of her success, so he joyed with exceeding joy, and without stay or delay bade slaughter beeves and prepare bridal feasts and spread banquets whereto he invited the notables of his government: after which he summoned the Kazi who tied the knot and he went in to her that night. And of the abundance of his love he fared not forth from her till seven days had sped; and he ceased not to cohabit with her for a span of five years during which Allah vouchsafed to him a man-child by her and two daughters. Such was the case with the cadette Princess; but as regards the eldest sister, when she entered the city in youth’s attire she was accosted by the Kunáfah-baker and was hired for a daily wage of a Mídí of silver besides her meat and drink in his house. Now ’twas the practice of that man every day to buy half a quartern of flour and thereof make his vermicelli; but when the so-seeming youth came to him he would buy and work up three quarterns; and all the folk who bought Kunafah of him would flock to his shop with the view of gazing upon the beauty and loveliness of the Youth and said, “Exalted be He who created and perfected what He wrought in the creation of this young man!” Now by the decree of the Decreer the baker's shop faced the lattice-windows of the Sultan's Palace and one day of the days the King's daughter chanced to look out at the window and she saw the Youth standing with sleeves tucked up from arms which shone like ingots[184] of silver. Hereat the Princess fell in love with the Youth,?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Seventy-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the Sultan's daughter looked out at the window she fell in love with the youth, and she knew not how to act that she might forgather with him: so desire afflicted her and extreme fondness and presently she took to her pillow all for her affection to that young man. Thereupon her nurse went in to her and found her lying upon the carpet-bed a-moaning and a-groaning "Ah!" So she exclaimed, "Thy safety from all whereof thou hast to complain!" Then she took her hand and felt her pulse but could find in it no symptoms of sickness bodily, whereupon she said, "O my lady, thou hast no unease save what eyesight hath brought thee." She replied, "O my mother, do thou keep sacred my secret, and if thy hand can reach so far as to bring me my desire, prithee do so;" and the nurse rejoined, "O my lady, like me who can keep a secret? therefore confide to me thy longing and Allah vouchsafe thee thy dearest hope." Said the Princess, "O my mother, my heart is lost to the young man who worketh in the vermicelli-baker's shop and if I fail to be united with him I shall die of grief." The nurse replied, "By Allah, O my lady, he is the fairest of his age and indeed I lately passed by him as his sleeves were tucked up above his forearms and he ravished my wits: I longed to accost him but shame overcame me in presence of those who were round him, some buying Kunafah and others gazing on his beauty and loveliness, his symmetric stature and his perfect grace. But I, O my lady, will do thee a service and cause thee forgather with him ere long." Herewith the heart of the Princess was solaced and she promised the nurse all good. Then the old woman left her and fell to devising how she should act in order to bring about a meeting between her and the youth or carry him into the Palace. So she went to the baker's shop and bringing out an Ashrafi[185] said to him, "Take, O Master, this gold piece and make me a platter[186] of vermicelli meet for the best and send it for me by this Youth who shall bring it to my home that be near hand: I cannot carry it myself." Quoth the baker in his mind, "By Allah, good pay is this gold piece and a Kunafah is worth ten silverlings; so all the rest is pure profit." And he replied, "On my head and eyes be it, O my lady;" and taking the Ashrafi made her a plate of vermicelli and bade his servant bear it to her house. So he took it up and accompanied the nurse till she reached the Princess's palace when she went in and seated the Youth in an out-of-the-way closet. Then she repaired to her nursling and said, "Rise up, O my lady, for I have brought thee thy desire." The Princess sprang to her feet in hurry and flurry and fared till she came to the closet; then, going in she found the Youth who had set down the Kunafah and who was standing in expectation of the nurse's return that he and she might wend homewards. And suddenly the Sultan's daughter came in and bade the Youth be seated beside her, and when he took seat she clasped him to her bosom of her longing for him and fell to kissing him on the cheeks and mouth ever believing him to be a male masculant, till her hot desire for him was quenched.[187] Then she gave to him two golden dinars and said to him, "O my lord and coolth of my eyes, do thou come hither every day that we may take our pleasure, I and thou." He said, "To hear is to obey," and went forth from her hardly believing in his safety, for he had learnt that she was the Sultan's daughter, and he walked till he reached the shop of his employer to whom he gave the twenty dinars. Now when the baker saw the gold, affright and terror entered his heart and he asked his servant whence the money came; and, when told of the adventure, his horror and dismay increased and he said to himself, "An this case of ours continue, either the Sultan will hear that this youth practiseth upon his daughter, or she will prove in the family way and ‘twill end in our deaths and the ruin of our country. The lad must quit this evil path.” Thereupon quoth he to the Youth, “From this time forwards do thou cease faring forth thereto,” whereat quoth the other, “I may not prevent myself from going and I dread death an I go not.” So the man cried, “Do whatso may seem good to thee.” Accordingly, the Princess in male attire fell to going every morning and meeting the Sultan’s daughter, till one day of the days she went in and the twain sat down and laughed and enjoyed themselves, when lo and behold! the King entered. And as soon as he espied the youth and saw him seated beside his daughter, he commanded him be arrested and they arrested him;?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Seventy-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the Sultan entered and saw the youth sitting beside his daughter he commanded him to be arrested and they arrested him; they also seized the Princess and bound her forearms to her sides with straitest bonds. Then the King summoned the Linkman and bade him smite off both their heads: so he took them and went down with them to the place of execution. But when the tidings reached the Kunáfáni he shut up shop without stay and delay and fled. Presently the Sultan said in his mind, “Fain would I question the Youth touching his object in entering hither, and ask him who conducted him to my daughter and how he won access to her.” Accordingly he sent to bring back the twain and imprisoned them till night-fall: then he went in to his Harem and caused his daughter’s person to be examined, and when they inspected her she proved to be a pure maid. This made the King marvel, for he supposed that the Youth must have undone her maidenhead;[188] so he sent for him to the presence, and when he came he considered him and found him fairer even than his daughter; nay, far exceeding her in beauty and loveliness. So he cried, “By Allah this be a wondrous business! Verily my daughter hath excuse for loving this Youth nor to my judgment doth she even him in charms: not the less this affair is a shame to us, and the foulest of stains and needs must the twain be done to death to-morrow morning!” Herewith he commanded the jailer to take the Youth and to keep him beside him and he shut up the girl with her nurse. The jailer forthwith led his charge to the jail; but it so happened that its portal was low; and, when the Youth was ordered to pass through it, he bent his brow downwards for easier entrance, when his turband struck against the lintel and fell from his head. The jailer turned to look at him, and behold, his hair was braided and the plaits being loosed gleamed like an ingot of gold. He felt assured that the youth was a maiden so he returned to the King in all haste and hurry and cried, “Pardon, O our lord the Sultan!” “Allah pardon us and thee;” replied the King, and the man rejoined, “O King of the Age, yonder Youth is no boy; nay, he be a virgin girl.” Quoth the Sultan, “What sayest thou?” and quoth the other, “By the truth of Him who made thee ruler of the necks of His worshippers, O King of the Age, verily this is a maiden.” So he bade the prison-keeper bring her and set her in his presence and he returned with her right soon, but now she paced daintily as the gazelle and veiled her face, because she saw that the jailer had discovered her sex. The King then commanded them carry her to the Harem whither he followed her and presently, having summoned his daughter, he questioned her concerning the cause of her union with the so-seeming Youth. Herewith she related all that had happened with perfect truth: he also put questions to the Princess in man’s habit, but she stood abashed before him and was dumb, unable to utter a single word. As soon as it was morning, the Sultan asked of the place where the Youth had dwelt and they told him that he lodged with a Kunáfah-baker, and the King bade fetch the man, when they reported that he had fled. However, the Sultan was instant in finding him, so they went forth and sought him for two days when they secured him and set him between the royal hands. He enquired into the Youth's case and the other replied, "By Allah, O King of the Age, between me and him were no questionings and I wot not whence may be his origin." The Monarch rejoined, "O man, thou hast my plighted word for safety, so continue thy business as before and now gang thy gait." Then he turned to the maiden and repeated his enquiries, when she made answer saying, "O my lord, my tale is wondrous and my adventures marvellous." "And what may they be?" he asked her.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Princess said to the Sultan, "In very sooth my tale is passing strange," and he besought her to recount it. So she began to disclose the whole of her history and the adventures which had befallen her and her sisters and their mother; especially of the shipwreck in middle-most ocean and of her coming to land; after which she told the affair of the Wazir burnt by her sire, that traitor who had separated children from father and, brief, all that had betided them from first to last. Hearing her soft speech and her strange story the Sultan marvelled and his heart inclined herwards; then he gave her in charge to the Palace women and conferred upon her favours and benefits. But when he looked upon her beauty and loveliness, her brilliancy and perfect grace he fell deeply in love with her, and his daughter hearing the accidents which had happened to the Princess's father cried, "By Allah, the story of this damsel should be chronicled in a book, that it become the talk of posterity and be quoted as an instance of the omnipotence of Allah Almighty; for He it is who parteth and scattereth and re-uniteth." So saying she took her and carried her to her own apartment where she entreated her honourably; and the maiden, after she had spent a month in the Palace, showed charms grown two-fold and even more. At last one day of the days, as she sat beside the King's daughter in her chamber about eventide, when the sun was hot after a sultry summer day and her cheeks had flushed rosy red, behold, the Sultan entered passing through the room on his way to the Harem and his glance undesignedly[189] fell upon the Princess who was in home gear, and he looked a look of eyes that cost him a thousand sighs. So he was astounded and stood motionless knowing not whether to go or to come; and when his daughter sighted him in such plight she went up to him and said, "What hath betided thee and brought thee to this condition?" Quoth he, "By Allah, this girl hath stolen my senses from my soul: I am fondly enamoured of her and if thou aid me not by asking her in marriage and I fail to wed her 'twill make my wits go clean bewildered." Thereupon the King's daughter returned to the damsel and drawing near her said, "O my lady and light of my eyes, indeed my father hath seen thee in thy deshabille and he hath hung[190] all his hopes upon thee, so do not thou contrary my words nor the counsel I am about to offer thee." "And what may that be, O my lady?" asked she, and the other answered, "My wish is to marry thee to my sire and thou be to him wife and he be to thee man." But when the maiden heard these words she wept with bitter weeping till she sobbed aloud and cried, "Time hath mastered us and decreed separation: I know nothing of my mother and sisters and father, an they be dead or on life, and whether they were drowned or came to ground; then how should I enjoy a bridal fęte when they may be in mortal sadness and sorrow?" But the other ceased not to soothe her and array fair words against her and show her fondly friendship till her soul consented to wedlock. Presently the other brought out to her what habit befitted the occasion still comforting her heart with pleasant converse,[191] after which she carried the tidings to her sire. So he sent forthright to summon his Lords of the reign and Grandees of the realm and the knot was tied between them twain; and, going in unto her that night, he found her a hoard wherefrom the spell had freshly been dispelled; and of his longing for her and his desire to her he abode with her two se'nnights never going forth from her or by night or by day. Hereat the dignitaries of his empire were sore vexed for that their Sultan ceased to appear at the Divan and deal commandment between man and man, and his daughter went in and acquainted him therewith. He asked her how long he had absented himself and she answered saying, “Knowest thou how long thou hast tarried in the Palace?” whereto he replied, “Nay.” “Fourteen whole days,” cried she, whereupon he exclaimed, “By Allah, O my daughter, I thought to myself that I had spent with her two days and no more.” And his daughter wondered to hear his words. Such was the case of the cadette Princess; but as regards the King, the father of the damsel, when he forgathered with the mother of his three daughters and she told him of the shipwreck and the loss of her children he determined to travel in search of the three damsels, he and the Wazir habited as Darwayshes.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Eightieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan resolved to travel in search of his children (the three damsels) he and his Wazir habited as Darwayshes. So leaving the government in charge of his wife he went forth and the twain in their search first visited the cities on the seaboard beginning with the nearest; but they knew not what was concealed from them in the world of the future. They stinted not travelling for the space of a month till they came to a city whose Sultan had a place hight Al-Dijlah[192] whereupon he had built a Palace. The Darwayshes made for it and found the King sitting in his Kiosque[193] accompanied by two little lads, the elder eight years old and the second six. They drew near to him and saluting him offered their services and blessed him, wishing him length of life as is the fashion when addressing royalties; and he returned their greetings and made them draw near and showed them kindness; also, when it was eventide he bade his men serve them with somewhat of food. On the next day the King fared forth to Tigris-bank and sat in his Kiosque together with the two boys. Now the Darwayshes had hired them a cell in the Khan whence it was their daily wont to issue forth and wander about the city asking for what they sought; and this day they again came to the place wherein sat the Sultan and they marvelled at the fair ordinance of the Palace. They continued to visit it every day till one day of the days the two went out, according to their custom, and when entering the Palace one of the King's children, which was the younger, came up to them and fell to considering them as if he had forgotten his own existence. This continued till the Darwayshes retired to their cell in the caravanserai whither the boy followed them to carry out the Secret Purpose existing in the All-knowledge of Allah. And when the two sat down the Sultan's son went in to them and fell to gazing upon them and solacing himself with the sight, when the elder Darwaysh clasped him to his bosom and fell to kissing his cheeks, marvelling at his semblance and at his beauty; and the boy in his turn forgot his father and his mother and took to the old man. Now whenas night fell the Sultan retired homewards fancying that his boy had foregone him to his mother while the Sultánah fancied that her child was with his father, and this endured till such time as the King had entered the Harem. But only the elder child was found there so the Sultan asked, "Where is the second boy?" and the Queen answered, "Day by day thou takest them with thee to Tigris-bank and thou bringest them back; but to-day only the elder hath returned." Thereupon they sought him but found him not and the mother buffeted her face in grief for her child and the father lost his right senses. Then the high Officials fared forth to search for their King's son and sought him from early night to the dawn of day, but not finding him they deemed that he had been drowned in Tigris-water. So they summoned all the fishermen and divers and caused them to drag the river for a space of four days. All this time and the boy abode with the Darwayshes, who kept saying to him, "Go to thy father and thy mother;" but he would not obey them and he would sit with the Fakirs upon whom all his thoughts were fixed while theirs were fixed upon him. This lasted till the fifth day when the door-keeper unsummoned entered the cell and found the Sultan's son sitting with the old men; so he went out hurriedly and repairing to the King cried, "O my Sovran, thy boy is with those Darwayshes who were wont daily to visit thee." Now when the Sultan heard the porter's words, he called aloud to his Eunuchs and Chamberlains and gave them his orders; when they ran a race, as it were, till they entered upon the holy men and carried them from their cell together with the boy and set all four[194] before the Sultan. The King exclaimed, "Verily these Darwayshes must be spies and their object was to carry off my boy;" so he took up his child and clasped him to his bosom and kissed him again and again of his yearning fondness to him, and presently he sent him to his mother who was well-nigh frantic. Then he committed the two Fakirs (with commands to decapitate them) to the Linkman who took them and bound their hands and bared their heads and fell to crying, "This be his reward and the least of awards who turneth traitor and kidnappeth the sons of the Kings;" and as he cried all the citizens great and small flocked to the spectacle. But when the boy heard the proclamation, he went forth in haste till he stood before the elder Darwaysh who was still kneeling upon the rug of blood and threw himself upon him at full length till the Grandees of his father forcibly removed him. Then the executioner stepped forward purposing to strike the necks of the two old men and he raised his sword hand till the dark hue of his arm-pit showed[195] and he would have dealt the blow when the boy again made for the elder Fakir and threw himself upon him not only once but twice and thrice, preventing the Sworder's stroke and abode clinging to the old man. The Sultan cried, "This Darwaysh is a Sorcerer:" but when the tidings reached the Sultanah, the boy's mother, she exclaimed, "O King, needs must this Darwaysh have a strange tale to tell, for the boy is wholly absorbed in him. So it is not possible to slay him on this wise till thou summon him to the presence and question him: I also will listen to him behind the curtain and thus none shall hear him save our two selves." The King did her bidding and commanded the old man to be brought: so they took him from under the sword and set him before the King?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Eighty-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that at the King’s bidding they took up the Fakir who was still kneeling under the glaive and set him before the King who bade him be seated. And when he sat him down the Sultan commanded all who were in the presence of Eunuchs and Chamberlains to withdraw, and they withdrew leaving the Sovran with the old religious. But the second Darwaysh still knelt in his bonds under the sword of the Sworder who, standing over against his head, kept looking for the royal signal to strike. Then cried the King, “O Mendicant, what drove thee to take my son, the core of my heart?” He replied, “By Allah, O King, I took him not for mine own pleasure; but he would not go from me and I threatened him, withal he showed no fear till this destiny descended upon us.” Now when the Sultan heard these words his heart softened to the old man and he pitied him while the Sultanah who sat behind the curtain fell to weeping aloud. Presently the King said, “O Darwaysh, relate to us thy history, for needs must it be a singular;” but the old man began to shed tears and said, “O King of the Age, I have a marvellous adventure which were it graven with needle-gravers upon the eye-corners were a warning to whoso would be warned.” The Sultan was surprised and replied, “What then may be thy history, O Mendicant?” and the other rejoined, “O King of the Age, I will recount it to thee.”[196] Accordingly he told him of his kingship and the Wazir tempting his wife and of her slaying the nurse, the slave-girls, and the Eunuch; but when he came to this point the Sultanah ran out in haste and hurry from behind the curtain and rushing up to the

Darwaysh threw herself upon his bosom. The King seeing this marvelled and in a fury of jealousy clapped hand to hilt crying to the Fakir, "This be most unseemly behaviour!" But the Queen replied, "Hold thy hand, by Allah, he is my father and I am his loving daughter;" and she wept and laughed alternately[197] all of the excess of her joy. Hereat the King wondered and bade release the second religious and exclaimed, "Sooth he spake who said:?

Allah joineth the parted when think the twain * With firmest thought ne'er to meet again."

Then the Sultanah began recounting to him the history of her sire and specially what befel him from his Wazir; and he, when he heard her words, felt assured of their truth. Presently he bade them change the habits of her father and of his Wazir and dress them with the dress of Kings; and he set apart for them an apartment and allotted to them rations of meat and drink; so extolled be He who disuniteth and reuniteth! Now the Sultanah in question was the youngest daughter of the old King who had been met by the Knight when out hunting, the same that owed all his fair fortunes to her auspicious coming. Accordingly the father was assured of having found the lost one and was delighted to note her high degree; but after tarrying with her for a time he asked permission of his son-in-law to set out in quest of her two sisters and he supplicated Almighty Allah to reunite him with the other twain as with this first one. Thereupon quoth the Sultan, "It may not be save that I accompany thee, for otherwise haply some mishap of the world may happen to thee." Then the three sat down in council debating what they should do and in fine they agreed to travel, taking with them some of the Lords of the land and Chamberlains and Nabobs. They made ready and after three days they marched out of the city?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Eighty-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be

other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the old King marched forth the city accompanied by his son-in-law and his Wazir after the Sultan had supplied his own place by a Vice-regent who would carry out his commandments. Then they turned to travelling in quest of the two lost daughters and stinted not their wayfare for a space of twenty days, when they drew near a city lofty of base, and, finding a spacious camping plain, thereon pitched their tents. The time was set of sun, so the cooks applied themselves to getting ready the evening meal and when supper was served up all ate what sufficed them, and it was but little because of the travails of travel, and they nighted in that site until morn was high. Now the ruler of that city was a Sultan mighty of might, potent of power and exceeding in energy; and he was surprised to hear a Chamberlain report to him saying, "O King of the Age, after an eventless night early this morning we found outside thy capital tents and pavilions with standards and banners planted overagainst them and all this after the fashion of the Kings." The Sovran replied, "There is no help but that to these creations of Allah some requirement is here: however, we will learn their tidings." So he took horse with his Grandees and made for the ensigns and colours, and drawing near he noted gravity and majesty in the array and eunuchs and followers and serving-men standing ready to do duty. Then he dismounted and walked till he approached the bystanders whom he greeted with the salam. They salam'd in return and received him with most honourable reception and highmost respect till they had introduced him into the royal Shahmiyánah; when the two Kings rose to him and welcomed him and he wished them long life in such language as is spoken by Royalties; and all sat down to converse one with other. Now the Lord of the city had warned his people before he fared forth that dinner must be prepared; so when it was mid-forenoon the Farrásh-folk[198] spread the tables with trays of food and the guests came forward, one and all, and enjoyed their meal and were gladdened. Then the dishes were carried away for the servants and talk went round till sun-set, at which time the King again ordered food to be brought and all supped till they had their sufficiency. But the Sultan kept wondering in his mind and saying, "Would Heaven I wot the cause of these two Kings coming to us!" and when night fell the strangers prayed him to return home and to revisit them next morning. So he farewelled them and fared forth. This lasted three days, during which time he honoured them with all honour, and on the fourth he got ready for them a banquet and invited them to his Palace. They mounted and repaired thither when he set before them food; and as soon as they had fed, the trays were removed and coffee and confections and sherbets were served up and they sat talking and enjoying themselves till supper-tide when they sought permission to hie campwards. But the Sultan of the city sware them to pass the night with him; so they returned to their session till the father of the damsels said, "Let each of us tell a tale that our waking hours may be the more pleasant." "Yes," they replied and all agreed in wishing that the Sultan of the city would begin. Now by the decree of the Decreer the lattice-window of the Queen opened upon the place of session and she could see them and hear every word they said. He began, "By Allah I have to relate an adventure which befel me and 'tis one of the wonders of our time." Quoth they, "And what may it be?"?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Eighty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan of the city said:?In such a year I had a malady which none availed to medicine until at last an old woman came to me bearing a tasse of broth which when I drank caused health return to me. So I bade her bring me a cupful every day and I drank it till, after a time, I chanced to ask her who made that broth and she answered that it was her daughter. And one day I assumed a disguise and went to the ancient dame's house and there saw the girl who was a model of beauty and loveliness, brilliancy, symmetric stature and perfect grace, and seeing her I lost my heart to her, and asked her to wife. She answered, "How can I wed; I separated from my sisters and parents and all unknowing what hath become of them?" Now when the father of the damsels heard these words, tears rolled down his cheeks in rills and he remembered his two lost girls and wept and moaned and complained, the Sultan looking on in astonishment the while; and when he went to his Queen he found her lying in a fainting fit. Hereupon he cried out her name and seated her and she on coming to exclaimed, "By Allah, he who wept before you is my very father: by Him who created me I have no doubt thereof!" So the Sultan went down to his father-in-law and led him up to the Harem, and the daughter rose and met him and they threw their arms round each other's necks, and fondly greeted each other. After this the old King passed the night relating to her what had befallen him while she recounted to him whatso hath betided her, from first to last, whereupon their rejoicings increased and the father thanked Almighty Allah for having found two of his three children. The old King and his sons-in-law and his Wazir ceased not to enjoy themselves in the city, eating and drinking[199] and making merry for a space of two days when the father asked aidance of his daughters' husbands to seek his third child that the general joy might be perfected. This request they granted and resolved to journey with him; so they made their preparations for travel and issued forth the city together with sundry Lords of the land and high Dignitaries, all taking with them what was required of rations. Then travelling together in a body they faced the march. This was their case; but as regards the third daughter (she who in man's attire had served the Kunáfah-baker), after being married to the Sultan his love for her and desire to her only increased and she cohabited with him for a length of time. But one day of the days she called to mind her parents and her kith and kin and her native country, so she wept with sorest weeping till she swooned away and when she recovered she rose without stay or delay and taking two suits of Mameluke's habits patiently awaited the fall of night. Presently she donned one of the dresses and went down to the stables where, finding all the grooms asleep, she saddled her a stallion of the noblest strain and clinging to the near side mounted him. Then, having supplicated the veiling of the Veiler, she fared under cover of the glooms for her own land, all unweeting the way, and when night gave place to day she saw herself amidst mountains and sands; nor did she know what she should do. However she found on a hill-flank some remnants of the late rain which she drank; then, loosing the girths of her horse she gave him also to drink and she was about to take her rest in that place when, lo and behold! a lion big of bulk and mighty of might drew near her and he was lashing his tail[200] and roaring thunderously.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Eighty-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the lion advanced to spring upon the Princess who was habited as a Mameluke, and rushed to rend her in pieces, she, seeing her imminent peril, sprang up in haste and bared her blade and met him brand in hand saying, "Or he will slay me or I slay him." But as she was hearty of heart she advanced till the two met and fell to fight and struck each at other, but the lion waxed furious and gnashed his tusks, now retreating and now circuiting around her and then returning to front his foe purposing to claw her, when she heartened her heart and without giving ground she swayed her sabre with all the force of her forearm and struck the beast between the eyes and the blade came out gleaming between his thighs and he sank on earth life-forlore and weltering in his gore. Presently she wiped her scymitar and returned it to its sheath; then, drawing a whittle she came up to the carcass intending to skin it for her own use, when behold, there towered from afar two dust-clouds, one from the right and the other from the left, whereat she withdrew from flaying the lion's fell and applied herself to looking out. Now by the decree of the Decreer the first dust-cloud approaching her was that raised by the host of her father and his sons-in-law who, when they drew near all stood to gaze upon her and consider her, saying in wonderment one to other, "How can this white slave (and he a mere lad) have slain this lion single-handed? Walláhi, had that beast charged down upon us he had scattered us far and wide, and haply he had torn one of us to pieces. By Allah, this matter is marvellous!" But the Mameluke looked mainly at the old King whom he knew to be his sire for his heart went forth to him. Meanwhile the second dust-cloud approached until those beneath it met the others who had foregone them, and behold, under it was the husband of the disguised Princess and his many. Now the cause of this King marching forth and coming thither was this. When he entered the Palace intending for the Harem, he found not his Queen, and he fared forth to seek her and presently by the decree of the Decreer the two hosts met at the place where the lion had been killed. The Sultan gazed upon the Mameluke and marveiled at his slaying the monster and said to himself, "Now were this white slave mine I would share with him my good and stablish him in my kingdom." Herewith the Mameluke came forward and flayed the lion of his fell and gutted him; then, lighting a fire he roasted somewhat of his flesh until it was sufficiently cooked all gazing upon him the while and marvelling at the heartiness of his heart. And when the meat was ready, he carved it and setting it upon a Sufrah[201] of leather said to all present, "Bismillah, eat, in the name of Allah, what Fate hath given to you!" Thereupon all came forward and fell to eating of the lion's flesh except the Princess's husband who was not pleased to join them and said, "By Allah, I will not eat of this food until I learn the case of this youth."[202] Now the Princess had recognised her spouse from the moment of his coming, but she was concealed from him by her Mameluke's clothing; and he disappeared time after time then returned to gaze upon the white slave, eyeing now his eyes now his sides and now the turn of his neck and saying privily in his mind, “Laud to the Lord who created and fashioned him! By Allah this Mameluke is the counterpart of my wife in eyes and nose, and all his form and features are made likest-like unto hers. So extolled be He who hath none similar and no equal!” He was drowned in this thought but all the rest ate till they had eaten enough; then they sat down to pass the rest of their day and their night in that stead. When it was dawn each and every craved leave to depart upon his own business; but the Princess’s husband asked permission to wander in quest of her while the old King, the father of the damsels, determined to go forth with his two sons-in-law and find the third and last of his lost daughters. Then the Mameluke said to them, “O my lords, sit we down, I and you, for the rest of the day in this place and to-morrow I will travel with you.” Now the Princess for the length of her wanderings (which began too when she was a little one) had forgotten the semblance of her sire; but when she looked upon the old King her heart yearned unto him and she fell to talking with him, while he on his part whenever he gazed at her felt a like longing and sought speech of her. So the first who consented to the Mameluke’s proposal was the sire whose desire was naught save to sit beside her; then the rest also agreed to pass the day reposing in that place, for that it was a pleasant mead and a spacious, garnished with green grass and bright with bourgeon and blossom. So they took seat there till sundown when each brought out what victual he had and all ate their full and then fell to conversing; and presently said the Princess, “O my lords, let each of you tell us a tale which he deemeth strange.” Her father broke in saying, “Verily this rede be right and the first to recount will be I, for indeed mine is a rare adventure.” Then he began his history telling them that he was born a King and that such-and-such things had befallen him and so forth until the end of his tale; and the Princess hearing his words was certified that he was her sire. So presently she said, “And I too have a strange history.”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Eighty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Princess in Mameluke’s habit said, “And I too have a strange history.” Then she fell to relating all that had betided her from the very beginning to that which hath before been described; and when her father heard it he felt assured that she was his daughter. So he arose and threw himself upon her and embraced her and after he veiled her face with a kerchief was with him, and her husband exclaimed, “Would to Heaven that I also could forgather with my wife.” Quoth she, “Inshallah, and that soon,” and she inclined to him after kindly fashion and said to herself, “Indeed this be my true husband.” Herewith all resolved to march from that stead and they departed, the Princess’s spouse still unknowing that she was his wife; and they stinted not faring till they entered the Sultan’s city and all made for the Palace. Then the Princess slipped privily into the Harem without the knowledge of her mate and changed her semblance, when her father said to her husband, “Hie thee to the women’s apartment: haply Allah may show to thee thy wife.” So he went in and found her sitting in her own apartment and he marvelled as he espied her and drew near her and threw his arms round her neck of his fond love to her and asked her concerning her absence. Thereupon she told him the truth saying, “I went forth seeking my sire and habited in a Mameluke’s habit and ’twas I slew the lion and roasted his flesh over the fire, but thou wouldest not eat thereof.” At these words the Sultan rejoiced and his rejoicings increased and all were in the highmost of joy and jolliment; he and her father with the two other sons-in-law, and this endured for a long while. But at last all deemed it suitable to revisit their countries and capitals and each farewelled his friends and the whole party returned safe and sound to their own homes.[203] Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Eighty-sixth Night,

Shahrazad began to relate

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE STORY OF THE KAZI WHO BARE A BABE.[204]

It hath been related that in Tarábulus-town[205] of Syria was a Kází appointed under orders of the Caliph Hárún al-Rashíd to adjudge law-suits and dissolve contracts and cross-examine witnesses; and after taking seat in his Mahkamah[206] his rigour and severity became well known to all men. Now this judge kept a black hand-maiden likest unto a buffalo-bull and she cohabited with him for a lengthened while; for his nature was ever niggardly nor could anyone wrest from him half a Faddah or any alms-gift or aught else; and his diet was of biscuit[207] and onions. Moreover, he was ostentatious as he was miserly: he had an eating-cloth bordered with a fine bell fringe,[208] and when any person entered about dinner-time or supper-tide he would cry out, "O handmaid, fetch the fringed table-cloth;" and all who heard his words would say to themselves, "By Allah, this must needs be a costly thing." Presently one day of the days his assessors and officers said to him, "O our lord the Kazi, take to thyself a wife, for yon negress becometh not a dignitary of thy degree." Said he, "An this need be, let any who hath a daughter give her to me in wedlock and I will espouse her." Herewith quoth one present, "I have a fair daughter and a marriageable," whereto quoth the Kazi, "An thou wouldst do me a favour this is the time." So the bride was fitted out and the espousals took place forthright and that same night the Kazi's father-in-law came to him and led him in to his bride saying in his heart, "I am now connected with the Kazi." And he took pleasure in the thought for he knew naught of the judge's stinginess and he could not suppose but that his daughter would be comfortable with her mate and well-to-do in the matter of diet and dress and furniture. Such were the fancies which occurred to him; but as for the Kazi, he lay with the maid and abated her maidenhead; and she in the morning awaited somewhat wherewith to break her fast and waited in vain. Presently the Kazi left her and repaired to his court- house whither the city folk came and gave him joy of his marriage and wished him good morning, saying in themselves, "Needs must he make a mighty fine bride feast." But they sat there to no purpose until past noon when each went his own way privily damning the judge’s penuriousness. As soon as they were gone he returned to his Harem and cried out to his black wench, “O handmaiden, fetch the fringed table-cloth;” and his bride hearing this rejoiced, saying to herself, “By Allah, his calling for this cloth requireth a banquet which befitteth it, food suitable for the Kings.” The negress arose and faring forth for a short time returned with the cloth richly fringed and set upon it a Kursi- stool,[209] and a tray of brass whereon were served three biscuits and three onions. When the bride saw this, she prayed in her heart saying, “Now may my Lord wreak my revenge upon my father!” but her husband cried to her, “Come hither, my girl,” and the three sat down to the tray wherefrom each took a biscuit and an onion. The Kazi and the negress ate all their portions, but the bride could not swallow even a third of the hard bread apportioned to her; so she rose up, heartily cursing her father’s ambition in her heart. At supper-tide it was the same till the state of things became longsome to her and this endured continuously for three days, when she was ready to sink with hunger. So she sent for her sire and cried aloud in his face. The Kazi hearing the outcries of his bride asked, “What is to do?” whereupon they informed him that the young woman was not in love with this style of living.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Eighty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the bride was not in love with the Kazi’s mode of living; so he took her and cut off her nose and divorced her, falsely declaring that she had behaved frowardly. On the next day he proposed for another wife and married her and entreated her in like fashion as the first; and when she demanded a divorce, he shredded off her nostrils and put her away; and whatever woman he espoused he starved by his stinginess and tortured with hunger, and when any demanded a divorce he would chop off her nose on false presences and put her away without paying aught either of her marriage settlement or of the contingent dowry. At last the report of that Kazi's avarice came to the ears of a damsel of Mosul-city, a model of beauty and loveliness who had insight into things hidden and just judgment and skilful contrivance. Thereupon, resolved to avenge her sex, she left her native place and journeyed till she made Tarabulus; and by the decree of the Decreer at that very time the judge, after a day spent in his garden, purposed to return home so he mounted his mule and met her half-way between the pleasance and the town. He chanced to glance at her and saw that she was wondrous beautiful and lovely, symmetrical and graceful and the spittle ran from his mouth wetting his mustachios; and he advanced and accosting her said, "O thou noble one, whence comest thou hither?" "From behind me!" "Connu. I knew that; but from what city?" "From Mosul." "Art thou single and secluded or femme couverte with a husband alive?" "Single I am still!" "Can it be that thou wilt take me and thou become to me mate and I become to thee man?" "If such be our fate 'twill take place and I will give thee an answer to-morrow;" and so saying the damsel went on to Tarabulus. Now the Kazi after hearing her speech felt his love for her increase; so next morning he sent to ask after her, and when they told him that she had alighted at a Khan, he despatched to her the negress his concubine with a party of friends to ask her in marriage, notifying that he was Kazi of the city. Thereupon she demanded a dower of fifty dinars and naming a deputy caused the knot be knotted and she came to him about evening time and he went in to her. But when it was the supper-hour he called as was his wont to his black handmaiden saying "Fetch the fringed table-cloth," and she fared forth and fetched it bringing also three biscuits and three onions, and as soon as the meal was served up all three sat down to it, the Kazi, the slave-girl, and the new bride. Each took a biscuit and an onion and ate them up and the bride exclaimed "Allah requite thee with wealth. By Allah, this be a wholesome supper." When the judge heard this he was delighted with her and cried out, "Extolled be the

Almighty for that at last He hath vouchsafed to me a wife who thanketh the Lord for muchel or for little!” But he knew not what the Almighty had decreed to him through the wile and guile, the malice and mischief of women. Next morning the Kazi repaired to the Mahkamah and the bride arose and solaced herself with looking at the apartments, of which some lay open whilst others were closed. Presently she came to one which was made fast by a door with a wooden bolt and a padlock of iron: she considered it and found it strong but at the threshold was a fissure about the breadth of a finger; so she peeped through and espied gold and silver coins heaped up in trays of brass which stood upon Kursi-stools and the nearest about ten cubits from the door. She then arose and fetched a long wand, the mid-rib of a date-palm,[210] and arming the end with a lump of leaven she pushed it through the chink under the door and turned it round and round upon the money-trays as if sewing or writing. At last two dinars stuck to the dough and she drew them through the fissure and returned to her own chamber; then, calling the negress, she gave her the ducats saying, “Go thou to the Bazar and buy us some mutton and rice and clarified butter; and do thou also bring us some fresh bread and spices and return with them without delay.” The negress took the gold and went to the market, where she bought all that her lady bade her buy and speedily came back, when the Kazi’s wife arose and cooked a notable meal, after which she and the black chattel ate whatso they wanted. Presently the slave brought basin and ewer to her lady and washed her hands and then fell to kissing her feet, saying, “Allah feed thee, O my lady, even as thou hast fed me, for ever since I belonged to this Kazi I have lacked the necessaries of life.” Replied the other, “Rejoice, O handmaiden, for henceforth thou shalt have every day naught but the bestest food of manifold kinds;” and the negress prayed Allah to preserve her and thanked her. At noon the Kazi entered and cried, “O handmaid fetch the fringed cloth,” and when she brought it he sat down and his wife arose and served up somewhat of the food she had cooked and he ate and rejoiced and was filled and at last he asked, “Whence this provision?” She answered, “I have in this city many kinsfolk who hearing of my coming sent me these meats and quoth I to myself, When my lord the Kazi shall return home he shall make his dinner thereof." On the next day she did as before and drawing out three ducats called the slave-girl and gave her two of them bidding her go to the Bazar and buy a lamb ready skinned and a quantity of rice and clarified butter and greens and spices and whatso was required for dressing the dishes. So the handmaid went forth rejoicing, and bought all her lady had ordered and forthwith returned when her mistress fell to cooking meats of various kinds and lastly sent to invite all her neighbours, women and maidens. When they came she had got ready the trays garnished with dainty food[211] and served up to them all that was suitable and they ate and enjoyed themselves and made merry. Now this was about mid-forenoon, but as mid-day drew near they went home carrying with them dishes full of dainties which they cleared and washed and sent back till everything was returned to its place.?And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Eighty-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the guests of the Kazi's wife fared from her before turn of sun; and, when it was noon, behold, the Kazi entered his Harem and said, "O hand-maiden, fetch the fringed tablecloth," when the wife arose and set before him viands of various sorts. He asked whence they came and she answered saying, "This is from my maternal aunt who sent it as a present to me." The judge ate and was delighted and abode in the Harem till set of sun. But his wife ceased not daily to draw money from his hoard and to expend it upon entertaining her friends and gossips, and this endured for a whole year. Now beside her mansion dwelt a poor woman in a mean dwelling and every day the wife would feed her and her husband and babes; moreover she would give them all that sufficed them. The woman was far gone with child and the other charged her saying, “As soon as ’tis thy time to be delivered, do thou come to me for I have a mind to play a prank upon this Kazi who feareth not Allah and who, whenever he taketh to himself a wife, first depriveth her of food till she is well nigh famished, then shreddeth off her nose under false pretences and putteth her away taking all her belongings and giving naught of dower either the precedent or the contingent.” And the poor woman replied, “To hear is to obey.” Then the wife persisted in her lavish expenditure till her neighbour came to her already overtaken by birth-pains, and these lasted but a little while when she was brought to bed of a boy. Hereupon the Kazi’s wife arose and prepared a savoury dish called a Baysárah,[212] the base of which is composed of beans and gravied mallows[213] seasoned with onions and garlic. It was noon when her husband came in and she served up the dish; and he being anhungered ate of it and ate greedily and at supper time he did likewise. But he was not accustomed to a Baysarah, so as soon as night came on his paunch began to swell; the wind bellowed in his bowels; his stress was such that he could not be more distressed and he roared out in his agony. Herewith his wife ran in and cried to him, “No harm shall befal thee, O my lord!” and so saying she passed her hand over his stomach and presently exclaimed “Extolled be He, O my lord; verily thou art pregnant and a babe is in thy belly.”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Eighty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Kazi’s wife came up to him and passing her palm over his paunch presently cried, “Extolled be He, O my lord: verily thou art pregnant and a babe is in thy belly.”

Quoth the Kazi, “How shall a man bear a child?” and quoth she, “Allah createth whatso He willeth.” And as they two sat at talk the flatulence and belly- ache increased and violent colic[214] set in and the torments waxed still more torturing. Then the wife rose up and disappeared but presently she returned with her pauper neighbour’s newly-born babe in her sleeve, its mother accompanying it: she also brought a large basin of copper and she found her husband rolling from right to left and crying aloud in his agony. At last the qualms[215] in his stomach were ready to burst forth and the rich food to issue from his body, and when this delivery was near hand the wife privily set the basin under him like a close stool and fell to calling upon the Holy Names and to shampooing and rubbing down his skin while she ejaculated, “The name of Allah be upon thee!”[216] But all this was of her malice. At last the prima via opened and the Kazi let fly, whereat his wife came quickly behind and setting the babe upon its back gently pinched it so that it began to wail, and said, “O man, Alhamdolillah,? laud to the Lord, who hath so utterly relieved thee of thy burthen,” and she fell to muttering Names over the newborn. Then quoth he, “Have a care of the little one and keep it from cold draughts;” for the trick had taken completely with the Kazi and he said in his mind, “Allah createth whatso He willeth: even men if so predestined can bring forth.” And presently he added, “O woman, look out for a wet nurse to suckle him;” and she replied, “O my lord, the nurse is with me in the women’s apartments.” Then having sent away the babe and its mother she came up to the Kazi and washed him and removed the basin from under him and made him lie at full length. Presently after taking thought he said, “O woman, be careful to keep this matter private for fear of the folk who otherwise might say, ‘Our Kazi hath borne a babe.’ “ She replied, “O my lord, as the affair is known to other than our two selves how can we manage to conceal it?” and after she resumed, “O my husband, this business can on no wise be hidden from the people for more than a week or at most till next month.” Herewith he cried out, “O my calamity; if it reach the ears of folk and they say, ‘Our Kazi hath borne a babe,’ then what shall we do?” He pondered the matter until morning when he rose before daylight and, taking some provaunt secretly, made ready to depart the city, saying, “O Allah, suffer none to see me!”

Then, after giving his wife charge of the house and bidding her take care of his effects and farewelling her, he went forth secretly from her and journeyed that day and a second and a third until the seventh, when he entered Damascus of Syria where none knew him. But he had no spending money for he could not persuade himself to take even a single dinar from his hoard and he had provided himself with naught save the meagrest provision. So his condition was straitened and he was compelled to sell somewhat of his clothes and lay out the price upon his urgent needs; and when the coin was finished he was forced to part with other portions of his dress till little or nothing of it remained to him. Then, in his sorest strait, he went to the Shaykh of the Masons and said to him, "O master, my wish is to serve in this industry;''[217] and said he, "Welcome to thee." So the Kazi worked through every day for a wage of five Faddahs. Such was his case; but as regards his wife,?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on this coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Ninetieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the Kazi went forth from his wife she threw a sherd[218] behind him and muttered, "Allah never bring thee back from thy journey." Then she arose and threw open the rooms and noted all that was in them of moneys and moveables and vaiselle and rarities, and she fell to feeding the hungry and clothing the naked and doling alms to Fakirs saying, "This be the reward of him who mortifieth the daughters of folk and devoureth their substance and shreddeth off their nostrils." She also sent to the women he had married and divorced, and gave them of his good the equivalent of their dowers and a solatium for losing their noses. And every day she assembled the goodwives of the quarter and cooked for them manifold kinds of food because her spouse the Kazi was possessed of property approaching two Khaznahs[219] of money, he being ever loath to expend what his hand could hend and unprepared to part with aught on any wise, for the excess of his niggardness and his greed of gain. Nor did she cease from so doing for a length of time until suddenly she overheard folk saying, "Our Kazi hath borne a babe." And such bruit spread abroad and was reported in sundry cities, nor ceased the rumour ere it reached the ears of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid in Baghdad city. Now hearing it he marvelled and cried, "Extolled be Allah! this hap, by the Lord, never can have happened save at the hand of some woman, a wise and a clever at contrivance; nor would she have wrought after such fashion save to make public somewhat erst proceeding from the Kazi, either his covetous intent or his high-handedness in commandment. But needs must this goodwife be summoned before me and recount the cunning practice she hath practiced;?Allah grant her success in the prank she hath played upon the Judge." Such was her case; but as concerns the Kazi, he abode working at builders' craft till his bodily force was enfeebled and his frame became frail; so presently quoth he to himself, "Do thou return to thy native land, for a long time hath now passed and this affair is clean forgotten." Thereupon he returned to Tarabulus, but as he drew near thereto he was met outside the city by a bevy of small boys who were playing at forfeits, and lo and behold! cried one to his comrades, "O lads, do ye remember such and such a year when our Kazi was brought to bed?"[220] But the Judge hearing these words returned forthright to Damascus by the way he came, saying to himself, "Hie thee not save to Baghdad city for 'tis further away than Damascus!" and set out at once for the House of Peace. However he entered it privily, because he was still in the employ of the Prince of True Believers, Harun al-Rashid; and, changing semblance and superficials, he donned the dress of a Persian Darwaysh and fell to walking about the streets of the capital. Here met he sundry men of high degree who showed him favour, but he could not venture himself before the Caliph albe sundry of the subjects said to him, "O Darwaysh, why dost thou not appear in the presence of the Commander of the Faithful? Assuredly he would bestow upon thee many a boon, for he is a true Sultan; and, specially, an thou panegyrise him in poetry, he will largely add to his largesse." Now by the decree of Destiny the viceregent of Allah upon His Earth had commanded the Kazi's wife be brought from Tarabulus: so they led her into the presence and when she had kissed ground before him and salam'd to him and prayed for the perpetuity of his glory and his existence, he asked her anent her husband and how he had borne a child and what was the prank she had played him and in what manner she had gotten the better of him. She hung her head groundwards awhile for shame nor could she return aught of reply for a time, when the Commander of the Faithful said to her, "Thou hast my promise of safety and again safety, the safety of one who betrayeth not his word." So she raised her head and cried, "By Allah, O King of the Age, the story of this Kazi is a strange"?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Ninety-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that quoth the Kazi's wife, "By Allah, O King of the Age, the story of this Kazi is a strange and of the wonders of the world and 'tis as follows. My spouse is so niggardly of nature and greedy of gain that whatso wife he weddeth he starveth her with hunger and, whenas she loseth patience, he shreddeth her nostrils and putteth her away, taking all her good and what not. Now this case continued for a while of time. Also he had a black slave-wench and a fine eating-cloth and when dinner-time came he would cry, O handmaid, fetch the fringed table-cloth! whereupon she would bring it and garnish it with three biscuits and three onions, one to each mouth. Presently accounts of this conduct came to me at Mosul, whereupon I removed me to Tarábulus, and there played him many a prank amongst which was the dish of Baysar by me seasoned with an over quantity of onions and garlic and such spices as gather wind in the maw and distend it like a tom-tom and breed borborygms.[221] This I gave him to eat and then befel that which befel. So I said to him, Thou art in the family way and tricked him, privily bringing into the house a new-born babe. When his belly began to drain off I set under him a large metal basin and after pinching the little one I placed it in the utensil and recited Names over it. Presently quoth he, Guard my little stranger from the draught and bring hither a wet-nurse; and I did accordingly. But he waxed ashamed of the birth and in the morning he fared forth the city nor knew we what Allah had done with him. But as he went I bespake him with the words which the poet sang when the Ass of Umm Amr[222] went off:?

Ass and Umm Amr bewent their way; * Nor Ass nor Umm Amr returned for aye,

and then I cited the saying of another:?

When I forced him to fare I bade him hie, * Where Umm
Kash'am[223] caused her selle to fly."

Now as the Caliph Harun al-Rashid heard these words he laughed so hearty a laugh that he fell backwards and bade the goodwife repeat her history till he waxed distraught for excess of merriment, when lo and behold! a Darwaysh suddenly entered the presence. The wife looked at her husband and recognised him; but the Caliph knew not his Kazi, so much had time and trouble changed the Judge's cheer. However, she signalled to the Commander of the Faithful that the beggar was her mate and he taking the hint cried out, "Welcome to thee, O Darwaysh, and where be the babe thou barest at Tarabulus?" The unfortunate replied, "O King of the Age, do men go with child?" and the Prince of True Believers rejoined, "We heard that the Kazi bare a babe and thou art that same Kazi now habited in Fakir's habit. But who may be this woman thou seest?" He made answer "I wot not;" but the dame exclaimed, "Why this denial, O thou who fearest Allah so little? I conjure thee by the life of the King to recount in his presence all that betided thee." He could deny it no longer so he told his tale before the Caliph, who laughed at him aloud; and at each adventure the King cried out, "Allah spare thee and thy child, O Kazi!" Thereupon the Judge explained saying, "Pardon, O King of the Age, I merit even more than what hath betided me."?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Ninety-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that quoth the Kazi to the King, "I deserve even more than what hath betided me for my deeds were unrighteous, O Ruler of the Time. But now the twain of us be present between thy hands; so do thou, of thy generous grace and the perfection of thy beneficence, deign reconcile me unto my wife and from this moment forwards I repent before the face of Allah nor will I ever return to the condition I was in of niggardise and greed of gain. But 'tis for her to decide and on whatever wise she direct me to act, therein will I not gainsay her; and do thou vouchsafe to me the further favour of restoring me to the office I whilome held." When the Prince of True Believers, Harun al-Rashid, heard the Kazi's words he turned to the Judge's wife and said, "Thou also hast heard what thy mate hath averred: so do thou become to him what thou wast before and thou hast command over all which thy husband requireth." She replied, "O King of the Age, even as thou hast the advantage of knowing, verily the Heavens and the son of Adam change not; for that man's nature is never altered except with his existence nor doth it depart from him save when his life departeth. However, an he speak the truth let him bind himself by a deed documented under thy personal inspection and thine own seal; so that if he break his covenant the case may be committed to thee." The Caliph rejoined, "Sooth thou sayest that the nature of Adam's son is allied to his existence;" but the Kazi exclaimed, "O our lord the Sultan, bid write for me the writ even as thou hast heard from her mouth and do thou deign witness it between us twain." Thereupon the King reconciled their differences and allotted to them a livelihood which would suffice and sent them both back to Tarabulus-town. This is all that hath come down to us concerning the Kazi who bare a babe: yet 'tis as naught compared with the tale of the Bhang-eaters, for their story is wondrous and their adventures delectable and marvellous. "What may it be?" asked Shahryar; so Shahrazad began to recount

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THE TALE OF THE KAZI AND THE BHANG-EATER.[224]

There was a certain eater of Bhang?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Ninety-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that there was a certain eater of Bhang whose wont it was every day to buy three Faddahs’ worth of hemp and he would eat one third thereof in the morning and a second at noon and the rest about sundown. He was by calling a fisherman; and regularly as dawn appeared he would take hook and line and go down to the river a-fishing; then he would sell of his catch a portion, expending half a Faddah on bread and eat this with the remaining part of the fish broiled. He would also provide himself day by day with a waxen taper and light it in his cell and sit before it, taking his pleasure and talking to himself after his large dose of Bhang. In such condition he abode a while of time until one fine spring-night, about the middle of the month when the moon was shining sheeniest, he sat down to bespeak himself and said, “Ho, Such-an-one! hie thee forth and solace thy soul with looking at the world, for this be a time when none will espy thee and the winds are still.” Herewith he went forth intending for the river; but as soon as he issued from his cell-door and trod upon the square, he beheld the moonbeams bestrown upon the surface and, for the excess of his Bhang, his Fancy said to him, “By Allah, soothly the stream floweth strong and therein needs must be much store of fish. Return, O Such-an-one, to thy cell, bring hook and line and cast them into these waters; haply Allah our Lord shall vouchsafe thee somewhat of fish, for men say that by night the fisherwight on mighty fine work shall alight." He presently brought out his gear and, having baited the hook, made a cast into the moonlit square, taking station in the shadow of the walls where he believed the river bank to be. Then he bobbed[225] with his hook and line and kept gazing at the waters, when behold! a big dog sniffed the bait and coming up to it swallowed the hook till it stuck in his gullet.[226] The beast feeling it prick his throttle yelped with pain and made more noise every minute, rushing about to the right and the left: so the line was shaken in the man's hand and he drew it in, but by so doing the hook pierced deeper and the brute howled all the louder; and it was pull Bhang-eater and pull cur. But the man dared not draw near the moonlight, holding it to be the river, so he tucked up his gown to his hip-bones, and as the dog pulled more lustily he said in his mind, "By Allah this must be a mighty big fish and I believe it to be a ravenous."[227] Then he gripped the line firmly and haled it in but the dog had the better of him and dragged him to the very marge of the moonlight; so the fisherman waxed afraid and began to cry, "Alack! Alack! Alack![228] To my rescue ye braves![229] Help me for a monster of the deep would drown me! Yállah, hurry ye, my fine fellows, hasten to my aid!" Now at that hour people were enjoying the sweets of sleep and when they heard these unseasonable outcries they flocked about him from every side and accosting him asked, "What is it? What maketh thee cry aloud at such an hour? What hath befallen thee?" He answered, "Save me, otherwise a river-monster will cause me fall into the stream and be drowned." Then, finding him tucked up to the hips, the folk approached him and enquired, "Where is the stream of which thou speakest?" and he replied, "Yonder's the river; be ye all blind?" Thereat they understood that he spoke of the moonbeams, whose sheen was dispread upon earth, deeming it a river-surface, and they told him this; but he would not credit them and cried, "So ye also desire to drown me; be off from me! our Lord will send me other than you to lend me good aid at this hour of need." They replied, "O well-born one, this be moonshine;" but he rejoined, "Away from me, ye low fellows,[230] ye dogs!" They derided him and the angrier he grew the more they laughed, till at last they said one to other, “Let us leave him and wend our ways,” and they quitted him in such condition?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her Sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Ninety-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the folk who flocked to the assistance of the Bhang-eater left him in such condition, he crying aloud in affright, the dog being now before him in a phrenzy of pain for the hook sticking in his gullet and being unable to rid himself of it, while the man dreaded to draw near the moonshine, still deeming (albeit he stood upon terra firma) that he was about to step into the stream. So he hugged the wall shadow which to him represented the river-bank. In this case he continued until day brake and light shone and the to-ing and fro-ing of the folk increased; withal he remained as he was, crying out for affright lest he be drowned. Suddenly a Kazi rode by him and seeing him with gown kilted up and the hound hanging on to the hook, asked, “What may be the matter with thee, O man?” He answered saying, “O my lord, I dread lest I be drowned in this stream, whither a monster of the deep is a-dragging me.” The judge looked at him and knew him for a Bhang-eater, so he dismounted from his monture and cried to one of his attendants, “Catch hold of yon dog and unhook him!” Now this Kazi was also one who was wont to use Hashísh; so quoth he to himself, “By Allah, take this fellow with thee and feed him in thy house and make a mocking-stock of him; and, as each night cometh on do thou and he eat together a portion of the drug and enjoy each other’s company.” Accordingly he took him and carrying him to his quarters seated him in a private stead until nightfall when the twain met and supped together; then they swallowed a large dose of Bhang and they lit candles and sat in their light to enjoy themselves.[231] Presently from excess of the drug they became as men Jinn-mad, uttering words which befit not to intend or to indite,[232] amongst which were a saying of the Bhang-eater to the Kazi, "By Allah, at this season I'm as great as the King;" and the Judge's reply, "And I also at such time am as great as the Basha, the Governor." Thereupon quoth to him the Bhang-eater, "I'm high above thee and if the King would cut off the Governor's head what would happen to hinder him?" And quoth the Kazi, "Yea, verily; naught would hinder him; but 'tis the customs of Kings to appoint unto Governors a place wherein they may deal commandment." Then they fell to debating the affairs of the Government and the Sultanate, when by decree of the Decreer the Sultan of the city went forth his palace that very night, accompanied by the Wazir (and the twain in disguise); and they ceased not traversing the town till they reached the house wherein sat the Bhang-eater and the Kazi. So they stood at the door and hear their talk from first to last when the King turned to the Minister and asked, "What shall we do with these two fellows?" "Be patient, O King of the Age," answered the Wazir, "until they make an end of their talk, after which whatso thou wilt do with them that will they deserve." "True indeed,"[233] quoth the ruler, "nevertheless, instead of standing here let us go in to them." Now that night the boon-companions had left the door open forgetting to padlock it; so the visitors entered and salam'd to them and they returned the greeting and rose to them and bade them be seated. Accordingly they sat down and the Sultan said to the Bhang-eater, "O man, fearest thou not aught from the Sovran, thou and thy friend; and are ye sitting up until this hour?" He replied, "The Sultan himself often fareth forth at such untimely time, and as he is a King even so am I, and yonder man is my Basha: moreover, if the ruler think to make japery of us, we are his equals and more." Thereupon the Sultan turned to his Wazir and said by signals, "I purpose to strike off the heads of these fellows;" and said the Minister in the same way, "O King, needs must they have a story, for no man with his wits in his head would have uttered such utterance. But patience were our bestest plan." Then cried the Bhang-eater to the Sultan, "O man, whenever we say a syllable, thou signallest to thine associate. What is it thou wouldst notify to him and we not understanding it? By Allah, unless thou sit respectfully in our presence we will bid our Basha strike off thy pate!”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Ninety-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the Sultan heard the Bhang-eater’s words he waxed the more furious and would have arisen and struck off his head; but the Wazir winked at him and whispered, “O King of the Age, I and thou are in disguise and these men imagine that we are of the commons: so be thou pitiful even as Almighty Allah is pitiful and willeth not the punishment of the sinner. Furthermore, I conceive that the twain are eaters of Hashísh, which drug when swallowed by man, garreth him prattle of whatso he pleaseth and chooseth, making him now a Sultan then a Wazir and then a merchant, the while it seemeth to him that the world is in the hollow of his hand.” Quoth the Sultan, “And what may be thy description of Hashísh?” and quoth the Wazir, “’Tis composed of hemp leaflets, whereto they add aromatic roots and somewhat of sugar: then they cook it and prepare a kind of confection which they eat;[234] but whoso eateth it (especially an he eat more than enough), talketh of matters which reason may on no wise represent. If thou wouldst know its secret properties, on the coming night (Inshallah!) we will bring some with us and administer it to these two men; and when they eat it the dose will be in addition to their ordinary.” After this the Sultan left them and went forth, when the Bhang-eater said to the Kazi, “By Allah, this night we have enjoyed ourselves and next night (if Allah please!) we will enjoy ourselves yet more.” The other replied, "Yes, but I fear from the Sultan, lest he learn our practice and cut off our heads." "Who shall bring the Sovran to us?" asked the other: "he is in his palace and we are in our own place; and, granting he come, I will divert him by recounting an adventure which befel me." The Kazi answered, "Have no dread of the Sultan; for he may not fare forth a-nights single-handed; nay, what while he issueth forth he must be escorted by his high officials." Now when the next night fell, the Kazi brought the Hashish which he divided into two halves, eating one himself and giving the other to his companion; and both swallowed their portions after supper and then lit the waxen tapers and sat down to take their pleasure.[235] Suddenly the Sultan and his Wazir came in upon them during the height of their enjoyment, and the visitors were habited in dress other than before, and they brought with them a quantity of Bhang-confection and also some conserve of roses: so they handed a portion of the first to the revellers, which these accepted and ate, while they themselves swallowed the conserve, the others supposing it to be Hashish like what they had eaten. Now when they had taken an overdose, they got into a hurly-burly of words and fell to saying things which can neither be intended nor indited, and amongst these they exclaimed, "By Allah, the Sultan is desposed and we will rule in his stead and deal commandment to his reign." The other enquired, "And if the Sultan summon us what wilt thou say to him?" "By Allah, I will tell him a tale which befel myself and crave of him ten Faddahs wherewithal to buy Bhang!" "And hast thou any skill in tale-telling?" "In good sooth I have!" "But how wilt thou despose the Sultan and reign in his stead?" "I will say to him 'Be off!' and he will go." "He will strike thy neck." "Nay, the Sultan is pitiful and will not punish me for my words." So saying the Bhang-eater arose and loosed the inkle of his bag-trowsers, then approaching the Sultan he drew forth his prickle and proceeded to bepiss him:[236] but the King took flight as the other faced him, and fled before him, he pursuing.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Ninety-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Bhang-eater holding up his bag-trowsers ran after the Sultan purposing to bepiss him and caught up the fugitive at the doorway when he fell over the threshold and began a-piddling upon his own clothes. In like manner the Kazi attempted to bepiss the Wazir and ran after him to the entrance, where he also fell upon the Bhang-eater and took to making water over him. So the Bhang-eater and the Kazi lay each bewraying other, and the Sultan and the Wazir stood laughing at then and saying, “By Allah, too much Hashish injureth man’s wits;” and presently they left and went their ways returning to their palaces. But the two drunkards ceased not lying in their own water till day broke; and when the fumes of the drug had left heir brains, they arose and found themselves dripping and befouled with their own filth. Thereupon each said to other, “What be this cross hath betided us?” Presently they arose and washed themselves and their clothes; then sitting down together they said, “None did this deed by us save and except the two fellows who were with us; and who knoweth what they were, or citizens of this city or strangers; for ’twas they brought the intoxicant which we ate and it bred a madness in our brains. Verily ’twas they did the mischief; but, an they come to us a third time, needs must we be instant with them and learn from them an they be foreigners or folk of this city: we will force them to confess, but if they hide them from us we will turn them out.” On the next night they met again and the two sat down and ate a quantity of Hashish after they had supped: and they lit the waxen tapers and each of them drank a cup of coffee.[237] Presently their heads whirled round under the drug and they sat down to talk and enjoy themselves when their drunkenness said to them, “Up with you and dance.” Accordingly they arose and danced, when behold, the Sultan and his Wazir suddenly came in upon them and salam’d to them: so they returned the salutation but continued the saltation. The new comers considered them in this condition and forthwith the King turned to the Minister and said, “What shall we do with them?” Said the other, “Patience until their case come to end in somewhat whereof we can lay hold.” Then they chose seats for themselves and solaced them with the spectacle, and the dancers kept on dancing until they were tired and were compelled to sit down and take their rest. Presently the Bhang-eater looked at the Sultan and exclaimed, “You, whence are you?” and he replied, “We be foreigner folk and never visited this city before that night when we met you; and as we heard you making merry we entered to partake of your merriment.” On this wise the device recoiled upon the Bhang-eater and presently the King asked them, saying, “Fear ye not lest the Sultan hear of you, and ye in this condition which would cause your disgrace at his hands?” The Bhang-eater answered, “The Sultan! What tidings of us can he have? He is in the royal Palace and we in our place of Bhang-eating.” The Sovran rejoined, “Why not go to him! Belike he will gift you and largesse you;” but the Bhang-eater retorted, “We fear his people lest they drive us away.” Whereto quoth the King, “They will not do on such wise and if thou require it we will write thee a note to his address, for we know him of old inasmuch as both of us learned to read in the same school.” “Write thy writ,” quoth the other to the Sultan who after inditing it and sealing it placed it in their hands and presently the two visitors departed. Then the Bhang-eater and the Kazi sat together through the night until daylight did appear when the fumes of the Hashish had fled their brains and the weather waxed fine and clear. So they said, each to other, “Let us go to the Sultan,” and the twain set out together and walked till they reached the square facing the Palace. Here, finding a crowd of folk, they went up to the door and the Bhang-eater drew forth his letter and handed it to one of the Sultan’s suite, who on reading it fell to the ground and presently rising placed it upon his head.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and

that was

The Three Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the officer who took the letter caused the Bhang-eater and his comrade enter the presence, and the Sultan catching sight of them commanded them to be seated in a private stead where none other man was. His bidding was obeyed; and at noon-tide he sent them a tray of food for dinner and also coffee; and the same was done at sundown. But as soon as supper-tide came the Sultan prayed and recited sections of Holy Writ, as was his wont, until two hours had passed when he ordered the twain be summoned; and when they stood in the presence and salam’d to him and blessed him the King returned their salute and directed them to be seated. Accordingly they sat down and quoth the Sultan to the Bhang-eater, “Where be the man who gave you the writ?” Quoth the other, “O King of the Age, there were two men who came to use and said, ‘Why go ye not to the King? Belike he will gift you and largesse you.’ Our reply was, ‘We know him not and we fear lest his folk drive us away.’ So one of them said to us, ‘I will write thee a note to his address for we know him of old, inasmuch as both of us learned to read in the same school.’ Accordingly he indited it and sealed it and gave it to us; and coming hither we found his words true and now we are between his hands.” The Sultan enquired, “Was there any lack of civility to the strangers on your part?” and they replied, “None, save our questioning them and saying, ‘Whence come ye?’ whereto they rejoined, ‘We be strangers.’ Beyond this there was nothing unpleasant; nothing at all.” “Whither went they?” asked the King and the other answered, “I wot not.” The Sultan continued, “Needs must thou bring them to me for ’tis long since I saw them;” and the other remarked, “O King of the Age, if again they come to our place we will seize them and carry them before thee even perforce, but in case they come not, we have no means to hand.” Quoth the King, “An thou know them well, when thou catchest sight of them they cannot escape thee," and quoth the other, "Yea, verily." Then the Sultan pursued, "What did ye with the twain who came before them and ye wanted to bepiss them?" Now when the Bhang-eater heard these words his colour paled and his case changed, his limbs trembled and he suspected that the person which he had insulted was the Sultan; whereupon the King turned towards him and seeing in him signs of discomfiture asked, "What is in thy mind, O Bhang-eater? What hath befallen thee?" The other arose forthright and kissing ground cried, "Pardon, O King of the Age, before whom I have sinned." The Sovran asked, "How didst thou know this?" and he answered, "Because none other was with us and news of us goeth not out of doors; so needs must thou have been one of the twain and he who wrote the writ was thyself; for well we know that the kings read not in schools. Thou and thy friend did come in disguise to make merry at our expense; therefore pardon us, O King of the Age, for mercy is a quality of the noble, and Almighty Allah said, 'Whoso pardoneth and benefitteth his reward is with Allah,' and eke He said, 'And the stiflers of wrath and the pardoners of mankind and Allah loveth the doers of good'."[238] Herewith the Sultan smiled and said, "No harm shall befal thee, O Bhang-eater! Thine excuse is accepted and thy default pardoned, but, O thou clever fellow, hast thou no tale to tell us?" He replied, "O King of the Age, I have a story touching myself and my wife which, were it graven with needle-gravers upon the eye-corners were a warning to whoso would be warned. But I strave against her on my own behalf, withal she overcame me and tyrannised over me by her contrivance." "What is it?" asked the King; so the man began to relate the

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

History of the Bhang-Eater and his Wife.

In the beginning of my career I owned only a single bull and poverty confused my wits.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Ninety-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good-will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Bhang-eater said to the Sultan:?I had no property save a single bull and poverty confused my wits. So I resolved to sell Roger[239] and going to the Bazar stood therein expecting someone to buy it, but none came to me until the last of the day. At that time I drove it forth and dragged it off till we reached half-way to my home, where I came upon a tree and sat down to rest in the cool shade. Now I had somewhat of Bhang with me, also a trifle of bread which I brought out and ate, and after I drank a draught of water from the spring. Presently the Bhang began to wobble in my brains and behold a bird in the tree-top which men call a Magpie[240] fell a-cawing, so I said to her, “Thou, O Mother of Solomon, hast thou a mind to buy the bull?” and she cawed again. I continued, “Whatso price ever thou settest upon the bull, at that will I cede it to thee.” Again a croak and I, “Haply thou hast brought no money?” Another croak and cried I, “Say the word and I will leave the bull with thee till next Friday when thou wilt come and pay me its price.” But she still cawed and I, whenever she opened beak, O King of the Age, fancied that she bespake me and wanted the bull. But all this was of the excess of my Bhang which kept working in my brains and I mistook the croaking for her conversing.

Accordingly I left with her the bull bound to the tree and turned towards my village; and, when I went in to my wife, she asked me anent the bull and I told her of my selling it to the Mother of Solomon. “Who may she be?” asked my rib, and I replied, “She dwelleth in yonder tree;” whereat my spouse rejoined “Allah compensate thee with welfare.” So I awaited patiently the appointed term; then, after swallowing somewhat of Bhang, I repaired to the tree and sat beneath it when, lo and behold! the pie cawed and I cried to her, “Hast thou brought the coin?” A second caw! Then said I, “Come hither and bring me the money.” A third caw! Hereat I waxed wroth and arose and taking up a bittock of brick I threw it at her as she sat perched upon the tree, whereupon she flew off and alit upon an ‘old man’[241] of clay hard by. So it occurred to my mind, “By Allah, the Mother of Solomon biddeth me follow her and recover the value of the bull from yonder ‘old man.’” Presently I went up to it and digging therein suddenly came upon a crock[242] full of gold wherefrom I took ten ashrafis, the value of the bull, and returned it to its place, saying, “Allah ensure thy weal, O Mother of Solomon.” Then I walked back to my village and went in to my wife and said, “By Allah, verily the Mother of Solomon is of the righteous! Lookye, she gave me these ten golden ducats to the price of our Roger.” Said my wife, “And who may be the Mother of Solomon?” and I told her all that had befallen me especially in the matter of the crock of gold buried in the ‘old man.’ But after she heard my words she tarried until sundown; then, going to the land-mark she dug into it and carrying off the crock brought it home privily. But I suspected her of so doing and said to her, “O woman, hast thou taken the good of the Mother of Solomon (and she of the righteous) after we have received from her the price of our Roger out of her own moneys? And hast thou gone and appropriated her property? By Allah, an thou restore it not to its stead even as it was, I will report to the Wali that my wife hath happened upon treasure-trove.” And so saying I went forth from her. Then she arose and got ready somewhat of dough for cooking with flesh-meat and, sending for a fisherman, bade him bring her a few fishes fresh-caught and all alive, and taking these inside the house she drew sweet water and sprinkled them therewith, and lastly she placed the dough and meat outside the house ready for nightfall.

Presently I returned and we supped, I and she; but ’twas my firm resolve to report my wife’s find to the Chief of Police. We slept together till midnight when she awoke me saying, “O man, I have dreamed a dream, and this it is, that the sky hath rained down drink and meat and that the fishes have entered our house.” I replied to her of my folly and the overmuch Bhang which disported in my head, “Let us get up and look.” So we searched the inside of the house and we found the fishes, and the outside where we came upon the doughboy and flesh-meat; so we fell to picking it up, I and she, and broiling it and eating thereof till morning. Then said I, “Do thou go and return the moneys of Solomon’s Mother to their own place.” But she would not and flatly refused.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Three Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Bhang-eater continued:?I said to my wife, “Do thou go and return the moneys of Solomon’s Mother to their own place;” but she would not and flatly refused. Then I repeated[243] my words but without avail, so I flew into a fury and leaving her ceased not trudging till I found the Wali and said to him, “O my lord, my wife Such-an-one hath hit upon a hoard and ’tis now with her.”[244] The Chief of Police asked, “O man, hast thou seen it?” and I answered, “Yes.” So he sent a body of his followers to bring her before him and when she came said to her, “O woman, where is the treasure trove?” Said she, “O my lord, this report is a baseless;” whereupon the Chief of Police bade her be led to jail. They did his bidding and she abode in the prison a whole day, after which the Wali summoned her and repeated his words to her adding, "An thou bring not the hoard I will slay thee and cast thy corpse into the bogshop[245] of the Hammam." The woman (my wife) rejoined, "O my lord, I never found aught;" and when he persisted threatening her with death she cried, "O my lord, wherefore oppress me on this wise and charge such load of sin upon thine own neck? I never came upon treasure at all, at all!" The Chief of Police retorted, "My first word and my last are these:?Except thou bring the treasure trove I will slay thee and cast thee into the jakes." Herewith quoth she, "O my lord, ask my husband where it was I hit upon the hoard and at what time, by day or by night," and the Wali's men cried, "By Allah, these her words are just and right, nor is therein aught of harm." So he sent to summon me and asked me, "O man, when did thy wife hit upon the hoard?" I answered, "O my lord, she found it on the night when the skies rained drink and food and fishes." Now when the Wali heard my words he said to me, "O man, the skies are not wont to shed aught save rainwater; and a man in his right wits speaketh not such speech as this." Said I, "By the life of thy head, O my lord, they did rain all three of them;" but the officers cried, "O my lord, verily this man be Jinn-mad and his wife who telleth plain truth is wronged by him: the fellow deserveth confining in the Máristán."[246] Accordingly the Chief of Police bade the men set the woman free and let her wend her ways and seize me and throw me into the madhouse. They did his bidding and I remained there the first day and the second till the third when my wife said to herself, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! By the Lord, needs must I go and relieve my husband from Bedlam and charge him never again to speak of that treasure trove." So she came to the Maristan and entering said to me, "Ho, Such-an-one, if any ask of thee saying, 'What do the skies rain?'[247] do thou make answer, 'They rain water!' Furthermore if they inquire of thee, 'Do they ever rain drink and food and fishes?' reply thou, 'This is clean impossible, nor can such thing ever take place!' Then haply they will say to thee, 'How many days are in the week?' and do thou say, 'Seven days and this day be such a day!' Lastly have a guard on thyself when speaking." I rejoined, "'Tis well, and now hie thee forth and buy me half a faddah's worth of Bhang, for during these days I have not eaten aught thereof." So she went and bought me somewhat of food and of Hashish.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundredth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Bhang-eater’s wife fared forth and brought back somewhat of food and of Hashish: then returning to the Maristan (he continued) she gave both to me and I ate of them, after which I said to her, “Let us up and be off!” whereto she, “And when we go to the Wali what wilt thou say?” Then the Bhang wrought in the brains and I cried, “O bawd,[248] O my nice young lady, well thou wottest that the skies did rain flesh and drink and fishes! Why then didst thou not tell the truth before the Chief of Police?” Thereupon the Manager of the Madhouse cried to me, “O fellow, this is the babble of madmen!” and I, “By Allah, I ate of them boiled; and doubtless the same kind of rain fell in your house.” The other exclaimed, “There be nor doubt nor hesitation anent the insanity of one who sayeth such say!” Now all this was related by the Bhang-eater to the Sultan who marvelled and asked him, “What could have made thee go to the Manager and recount to him such absurdities?” But the Bhang-eater resumed, saying, “I dwelt in the Maristan twenty days until at last having no Bhang to eat I came to my senses and confessed that the skies shed only rain-water, that the week containeth seven days and that this day be such-and-such; in fact I discoursed like a man in his right mind. So they discharged me and I went my ways.” But when the Kazi heard this tale he cried out to the Sultan, “O King of the Age, my story is still more wondrous than this, which is only a prank played by a wife. My name was originally Abú Kásim al-Tambúri[249] and I was appointed Kazi after a neat thing I did, and if thou, O our lord the Sultan, desire to be told of the adventures which befel me and of the clever trick wherefor they made me a judge, deign give thy commandment and I will commence it." Quoth the Sultan, "Recount to us why and where they entitled thee Kazi," and the judge began to relate

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How Drummer Abu Kasim Became a Kazi.

There was once, O King of the Age, a merchant and a man of Bassorah who went about trading with eunuchs and slave-boys and who bore his goods in bales[250] from Bassorah to Ajam-land there to sell them and to buy him other merchandise for vending in Syria. On this wise he tarried a long while until one year of the years he packed up his property, as was his wont, and fared forth with it to Persia. But at that time there fortuned to be a famine and when he arrived at one of the cities of the Ajam-land, where formerly the traders bought his goods, on this occasion none of them would come near him. In such case he continued a long while till at last a Khwájah appeared before him, a man who owned abundant riches in Persia, but his home was distant three days from the place. The visitor asked saying, "O Bassorite, wilt thou sell me thy stock-in-trade?" whereto the other answered, "And how? Of course I'll sell it!" So the buyer opened the gate of bidding and offered such-and-such; but the Bassorah man cried, "Allah openeth." Then the purchaser added somewhat and the seller rejoined, "Give me yet more?" At last the buyer exclaimed, "I will give nothing more than 'Anaught';"[251] and the seller accepted the offer saying, "May Allah grant us gain!" Thereupon the Persian Khwajah took over all the goods from the vendor and next day the twain met to settle money-matters. Now I, O King of the Age, happened to be abiding in that city. The seller received from the buyer payment in full nor did anything remain; but after, the Bassorah man said to his customer, "Thou still owest me the 'Anaught,' which thou must hand over to me." The other replied jeeringly, "And the 'Anaught' is a naught; to wit, no thing;" but the Bassorite rejoined, "Here with that 'Anaught'!" Upon this a violent ruffle befel between them, the cause was carried before the King and payment was required in the Divan, for the Bassorite still demanded from the purchaser his "Anaught." The Sultan asked, "And what be this 'Anaught'?" and the Bassorah man answered, "I wot not, O King of the Age;" whereat the Sultan marvelled.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and First Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan marvelled at the action of this Bassorite and his saying, “Give me my ‘Anaught!’” Presently the tidings of that cause reached me, O King; so I went to the Divan which was thronged with folk and all present kept saying, “How would it be if this ‘Anaught’ were a fraud or a resiliation of the contract?” Thereupon the Sultan exclaimed, “Whoso shall settle this case, to him verily will I be bountiful.” So I came forward, O King of the Age, thinking of a conceit and kissed ground and said to him, “I will conclude this cause,” and he rejoined, “An thou determine it and dispose of it I will give thee largesse; but if not, I will strike off thy head.” I rejoined, “To hear is to obey.” Then I bade them bring a large basin which could hold a skinful of water and ordered them fill it; after which I called out to the Bassorite, “Draw near,” and he drew near. Then I cried to the claimant, “Close thy fist!” and he did accordingly, and again I commanded him to close it and to keep it tight closed. He obeyed my bidding and I continued “Dip thy neave into the basin,” and he dipped it. Presently I asked, “Is thy hand in the water and thy fist closed?” and he replied, “It is.” Then said I, “Withdraw it,” and he withdrew it, and I cried, “Open thy neave,” and he opened it. Then I asked, “What thing hast thou found therein?” and he answered, “A naught;” whereupon I cried to him, “Take thine ‘Anaught’ and wend thy ways.” Hereupon the Sultan said to the Bassorite, “Hast thou taken thine ‘Anaught,’ O man?” and said he “Yes.” Accordingly the King bade him gang his gait. Then the Sultan gifted me with costly gifts and named me Kazi; and hence, O King of the Age, is the cause of the title in the case of one who erst was Abu Kasim the Drummer. Hereat quoth the Sultan, “Relate to us what rare accident befel thee in thy proper person.” So the judge began to recount

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The Story of the Kazi and his Slipper.

Once upon a time, O King of the Age, I had a slipper which hardly belonged to its kind nor ever was there seen a bigger. Now one day of the days I waxed aweary of it and sware to myself that I would never wear it any more; so in mine anger I flung it away and it fortuned to fall upon the flat roof of a Khwájah's house where the stucco was weakest. Thence it dropped through, striking a shelf that held a number of phials full of the purest rose-water and the boarding yielded breaking all the bottles and spilling their contents. The house-folk heard the breakage ringing and rattling; so they crowded one after other to discover what had done the damage and at last they found my papoosh sprawling amiddlemost the room. Then they made sure that the shelf had not been broken except by the violence of that slipper, and they examined it when, behold, the house-master cried, saying, "This be the papoosh of Abu Kasim the Drummer." Hereupon he took it and carried it to the Governor who summoned me and set me before him; then he made me responsible for the phials and whatso was therein and for the repairing of the terrace-roof and upraising it again. And lastly he handed to me the slipper which was exceedingly long and broad and heavy and, being cruel old it showed upwards of an hundred and thirty patches nor was it unknown to any of the villagers. So I took it and fared forth and, being anangered with the article, I resolved to throw it into some dark hole or out-of-the-way place; ?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-

guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Abu Kasim the Drummer continued to the Sultan; I resolved to throw it into some dark hole or out-of-the-way place; and presently I came to the watercloset of the Hammam and cast it into the conduit saying, "Now shall none ever see it again; nor shall I be troubled with its foul aspect for the rest of my life." Then I returned home and abode there the first day and the second, but about noon on the third a party of the Governor's men came and seized me and bore me before him; and no sooner did he see me than he cried out, "Throw him!" Accordingly they laid me out at fullest length and gave me an hundred cuts with a scourge[252] which I bore stoutly and presently said, "O my Sultan,[253] what be the cause of this fustigation and wherefor do they oppress me?" Said he, "O man, the conduit[254] of the jakes attached to the Mosque was choked by thy slipper and the flow, unable to pass off, brimmed over, whereby sundry houses belonging to the folk were wrecked."[255] I replied, "O my lord, can a slipper estopp the flowing of a water that feedeth a Hammam?" Thereupon the Governor said to me, "Take it away and if any find it in his place and again bring me a complaint thereanent, I will cut off thy head." So they haled me away after tossing my slipper to me, and I repaired to the Efendi[256] of the town and said to him, "O our lord, I have a complaint against this Papoosh which is not my property nor am I its owner: prithee do thou write me a deed to such purport between me and the Slipper and all who pass down this road." The Efendi replied, "O man, how shall I write thee a deed between thee and thy Papoosh, which is a senseless thing? Nay, take it thyself and cut it up and cast it into some place avoided of the folk." Accordingly I seized it and hacked it with a hatchet into four pieces which I threw down in the four corners of the city, saying to myself the while, "By Allah, I shall nevermore in my life hear any further of its adventures;" and walked away barefoot. But I had thrown one bit under a bridge that crossed a certain of the small canals; and the season was the dries, wherefore it collected a heap of sand which rose thereupon, and raised the pile higher until the archway was blocked up by a mound. Now when the Níl[257] flooded and reached that archway the water was dammed up and ceased running so the townsfolk said, "What may be the matter? The

Nile-inundation hath reached the bridge but cannot pass under it. Come let us inspect the archway." They did so and presently discovered the obstacle; to wit, the mound before the arch which obstructed the waterway; whereupon a party kilted their clothes and waded into the channel that they might clear it. But when they came to the mound-base they found my quarter-slipper, and they exclaimed with one cry, "This be the Papoosh of Abu Kasim the Drummer!" But as soon as the tidings reached me, I fared away, flying from that town, and while so doing was met by a comrade, yonder Bhang-eater; so we agreed that we would travel together and he companied me till we came to this city, e'en as thou seest us, O our lord the Sultan." Thereupon the King said to them, "Do ye twain abide with me amongst my servants; but I have a condition with you which is that ye be righteous in your service and that ye be ready to join my séance every night after supper-tide." Then he cautioned them against disobedience and quoth he, "Be ye not deluded by becoming my companions nor say to yourselves, We be the assessors of the King; for that the byword declareth: Whenas the King sitteth beware of his severity, and be not refractory whenever he shall say to thee 'Do.'" They agreed to this condition and each whispered his mate, "Do thou have a care to act righteously!" Then they left the King nor did they see him again till one day of the days when behold, a Khwajah appeared before the Sultan?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that one day of the days, behold a Khwajah appeared before the Sultan and said, "'Tis not lawful in

Allah's sight, O King of the Age, that a Bhang-eater should propose to dishonour me in the person of my daughter and load me with infamy amongst His worshippers saying the while, "I am of the King's suite.'" Now the cause of the merchant's complaint was as follows. One day of the days the Bhang-eater was passing by under the latticed window of the Khwajah's home when by decree of the Decreer, the daughter of the house was looking out at the casement and was solacing herself by observing all who walked the street. Perchance the Bhang-eater's glance fell upon the maiden and that sight of eyes entailed a thousand sighs, so he said to himself, "By Allah, if I meet not this maiden, although it be only once, I shall die of a broken heart nor shall any one know of my death." He then took to passing under the window every day and to gazing upwards and to tarrying there from morning-tide to set of sun; but the more he looked the less he saw of her because Fortune which was fair to him the first time had now turned foul. So he continued in this condition for a while, coming every day to look at the lattice and seeing naught. Presently his case became strait and ill health entered his frame for love to the merchant's daughter; and by reason of its excess he betook himself to his pillow turning and tossing right and left and crying, "O her eyes! O her loveliness! O her stature! O her symmetrical grace!" But as he was repeating these words behold, an old woman came in to him and, seeing his concern and chagrin, accosted him and said, "No harm to thee!" Quoth he, "Ah, my reverend mother, unless thou come to my aid I perish," and quoth she, "What is upon thy mind?" So he disclosed to her all he felt of fondness and affection for the Khwajah's daughter and she rejoined. "Thou wilt never win to thy wish in this matter except through me." Then she left him and repaired to her own place, pondering the wiles of women, till she entered her house and there she donned a woolen robe and hung three rosaries around her neck, after which she hent a palm-staff in hand and set out for the merchant's quarters. She ceased not walking till she reached the place and entered in her garb of a religious mendicant[258] crying out, "Allah, there is no god but the God! extolled be Allah! Allah be with you all!" When the girl, whose name was Sitt al-Husn?the Lady of Beauty?heard these words she met her, hoping for a blessing, and saying, "O my mother, pray for me!” and the old woman responded, “The name of Allah be upon thee! Allah be thy safeguard!”[259] Then she sat down and the damsel came and took seat beside her; so likewise did the girl’s mother and both sought a blessing from her and conversed together till about noon when she arose and made the Wuzú-ablution and span out her prayers, whilst those present exclaimed, “By Allah this be a pious woman!” When her orisons were ended they served up dinner to her; but she said, “I’m fasting;” whereat they increased in love and belief herwards and insisted upon her abiding with them until sunset that she might break her fast within their walls. On such wise she acted but it was all a fraud. Then they persisted in keeping her for the night; so she nighted with them, and when it was morn she arose and prayed and mumbled words, some intelligible and others not to be understanded of any, while the household gazed upon her and, whenever she would move from place to place, supported her with their hands under her armpits. At last, when it was mid-forenoon she fared forth from them albeit their intent was not to let her depart. But early on the next day she came in to them and all met her with greetings and friendly reception, kissing her hands and bussing her feet; so she did as she had done on the first day and in like guise on the third while they showed her increased honour and worship. On the fourth day she came to them, as was her wont, and they prayed her be seated; however she refused and said, “I have a daughter whom I am about to marry and the bridal festivities will be in my house; but I come to you at this hour to let you know my desire that Sitt al-Husn may accompany me and be present at my girl’s wedding-feast and thus she will gain a blessing.” Her mother replied, “We dread lest somewhat befal her,” but the ancient woman rejoined, “Fear not for her as the Hallows[260] are with her!” Thereupon cried the girl, “There is no help but that I accompany her and be present at her daughter’s wedding ceremony and enjoy the spectacle and take my pleasure.” The mother said, “’Tis well;” and the old trot added, “I will go and return within this moment.” So saying, she went off as one aweary to the house of the Bhang-eater and told him what she had done; then she returned to the maiden whom she found drest and decorated and looking her best. So she took the girl and fared forth with her?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the ancient woman took the girl and fared forth with her and led her to the Bhang-eater’s house and brought her in to him who, seeing her in all her beauty and loveliness, arose forthright and his wits fled him and he drew near to her of his excessive love herwards. Therewith the “Lady of Beauty” understood that the old woman was an accursed procuress who had beguiled her in order to bring her and the man together. So of her cleverness and clear intelligence she said to her lover, “O my brave, whoso expecteth a visit of his beloved getteth ready somewhat of meat and somewhat of fruit and somewhat of wine, that their pleasure may be perfected; and, if thou purpose love-liesse we will pass the night in this place.” Quoth the Bhang-eater, “By Allah, O my lady, thou speakest sooth but what shall we do at such hour as this?” and quoth she, “Hie thee to the market-street and bring all whereof I spoke.” Said he, “Hearkening and obedience,” and said she, “I will sit down, I and this my mother in this place, the while thou goest and comest.” He rejoined, “A sensible saying!” and forthright he was right gladsome nor knew what was prepared for him in the hidden future. Now as soon as he went the damsel arose and without making aught of noise locked the door closely upon herself and the old trot: then she wandered about the rooms and presently came upon a butcher’s chopper[261] which she seized. Hereupon tucking up her sleeves above her elbows, in the firmness of her heart she drew near the old crone until she was hard by her right and so clove her skull asunder that she fell weltering in her blood and her ghost fled her flesh. After this the damsel again went about the house and all worth the taking she took, leaving whatso was unworthy, till she had collected a number of fine robes which the man had brought together after he had become a cup-companion of the Sultan; and, lastly, she packed the whole in a sheet[262] and went forth therewith. Now the season was morning but The Veiler veiled her and none met her on the way until she reached her home and went in to her mother whom she found awaiting her and saying, “By Allah, to-day my girl hath tarried long at the bridal festivities of the Ascetic’s daughter.” And behold Sitt al-Husn came in to her carrying a large sheet stuffed with raiment, and as her mother saw her agitated and in disorder she questioned her of her case and of what was packed in the bundle. But the girl, who returned no reply and could not speak one syllable for the emotion caused by the slaughter of the ancient woman, fell to the ground in a fit. Her swoon endured from noon until eventide, her mother sitting at her head the while and sorrowing for her condition. But about set of sun behold, in came her father who found his daughter aswoon; so he questioned his wife who began by recounting to him what they had noted in the old woman of prayer and display of devotion and how she had told them, “I have a daughter whom I am about to marry and the bridal festivities will be in my house.” “And,” pursued the mother, “she invited us to visit her; so at undurntide I sent with her the girl; who at noontide came back bringing somewhat wrapped up and bundled, which be this. But when she entered the house she fell to the floor in a fainting fit and she is even as thou seest; nor do I know what befel her.” Then the father rose up and besprinkled somewhat of water upon her face which revived her and she said, “Where am I?” whereto said he, “Thou art with us.” And when she had recovered and returned to her senses, and her condition was as before the swoon, she told them of the old woman and her ill designs and of her death and lastly how the clothes had been brought by herself from the house of the Bhang-eater. As soon as her sire had heard her words, he set out from his home and sought the Sultan.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that whilst the Sultan was sitting behold, the Khwajah came in and complained to him of the Bhang-eater, whereupon he ordered a company to go fetch the accused and they went off and found him not. So they returned and reported accordingly. Such was the cause of the Khwajah coming to the King and such was the case with them; but as regards the Bhang-eater, when he went off rejoicing to the Bazar in order to buy whatso the merchant’s daughter had asked him, he brought many a thing wherewith he returned to his lodging. However as he returned he beheld the old woman slaughtered and weltering in her blood and he found nothing at all of the choice articles wherewith his house was fulfilled; so he fell to quoting this couplet:[263] ?

“’Twas as a hive of bees that greatly thrived; * But, when the bee-swarm fled, ’twas clean unhived.”

And when he beheld that condition of things he turned from his home in haste and without stay or delay left it about the hour of mid-afternoon and fared forth from the city. There he found a caravan bound to some bourne or other, so he proceeded therewith hardly believing in his own safety and he ceased not accompanying the Cafilah[264] for the space of five days till it made the city the travellers sought, albeit he was fatigued and footsore from the stress of hardships and weariness he had endured. So he entered the place and wandered about until he found a Khan wherein he hired him a cell by way of nighting-stead and every day he would go forth to seek service for wages whereby he might make a livelihood. Now one day of the days a woman met him face to face on the highway and said to him, “Dost thou do service?” and said he, “Indeed I do, O my lady.” She continued, “There is a wall about my place which I desire to level and build another in lieu thereof for that ’tis old and very old.”

He replied to her, "'Tis well," and she took him and repaired with him to her house and showing him the wall in question handed to him a pickaxe and said, "Break it down as much as thou art able be it for two or three days, and heap up the stones in one place and the dried mud in another." He replied, "Hearkening and obedience;" after which she brought to him somewhat of food and of water and he ate and drank and praised Almighty Allah. After this he rose and began breaking down the wall and he ceased not working and piling up the stones and the dried mud until it was sunset time when the woman paid him to his wage ten faddahs and added a something of food which he took and turned towards his own cell. As soon as it was the second day he repaired to the house of the woman who again gave him somewhat to break his fast and he fell to felling the wall even as he had done on the first day and he worked till noon; but when it was midday and all the household was asleep, lo and behold! he found in the middle of the foundation a crock[265] full of gold. So he opened it and considered its contents whereat he was rejoiced and he went forth without leisure or loss of time seeking his own cell and when he reached it he locked himself within for fear lest any look upon him. Then he opened the crock and counted therein one hundred dinars which he pouched in his purse and stowed away in his breast-pocket. Presently he returned, as he was, to break down the rest of the wall and whilst he was trudging along the highway suddenly he sighted a box surrounded by a crowd of whom none knew what might be its contents and its owner was crying out, "For an hundred gold pieces!" Thereupon the Bhang-eater went forwards saying to himself, "Buy thee yonder box for the hundred dinars and thy luck be thy lot, for it there be inside of it aught of wonderful 'tis well, and if otherwise thou shalt stand by thy bad bargain." So he drew near the broker[266] and said to him, "This box for how much?"[267] and the other answered, "For an hundred gold dinars!" But when he questioned him as to its contents the man replied, "I know not; whoso taketh it his luck be his lot." Thereupon he brought out to him the hundred ducats and the broker made over to him the box which he charged upon his shoulders and carried off to his cell. There arrived he bolted himself in and opened the coffer wherein he found a white slave-girl which was a model of beauty and loveliness and stature and perfect grace: but she was like one drunken with wine. So he shook her but she was not aroused when he said to himself, “What may be the story of this handmaiden?” and he was never tired of looking upon her while she was in that condition and he kept saying to himself, “Would Heaven I wot and she be on life or in death; withal I see her breath coming and going.” Now when it was about midnight, the handmaiden revived and looking around and about her, cried, “Where am I?” and said the Bhang-eater, “Thou, O my lady, art in my home;” whereby she understood what had befallen her?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the handmaiden understood what had befallen her at the hands of her enemies. Now the cause thereof was that the Sultan of that city had bought him for concubine one Kút al-Kulúb,[268] or Heart’s-food hight, and she became to him the liefest of all the women he before had, amongst whom his wife, the daughter of his uncle, had been preferred; but all fell into the rank of the common and from the time he bought the new handmaid he was wholly occupied with her love and he never went near the other inmates of his Harem, not even his cousin. So they were filled with exceeding jealousy against Heart’s-food the new comer. Now one day of the days the Sultan went forth to hunt and bird and enjoy the occasion and solace himself in the gardens together with the Lords of his land, and they rode on till they found themselves amiddlemost of the waste pursuing their quarry. But when two days had passed, his wife together with the women which were concubines arose and invited all the neighbourhood whereamong was Kut al-Kulub, and she spread for them a sumptuous banquet and lavished upon the new comers all manner of attentions and the wife began to play with her rival and to disport with her until it was thought that she loved none in the assembly save Heart's-food; and on such wise she continued to cheer her and solace her and gambol with her and make her laugh until the trays were laid and the meats were dispread and all the guests came forward and fell to eating and drinking. Thereupon the King's cousin-wife brought a plate seasoned with Bhang and set it before the concubine who had no sooner eaten it and it had settled in her stomach than she trembled as with sudden palsy and fell to the ground without power of motion. Then the Queen bade place her in a box and having locked her therein sent for one who was Shaykh of the Brokers and committed to him the coffer saying, "Do thou sell it for an hundred gold pieces whilst it is locked and fast locked and suffer not any open it, otherwise we will work for the cutting off of thy hands." He replied, "To hear is to obey;" and took up the box and went with it to the market-street where he said to the brokers, "Cry for sale this coffer at an hundred dinars and if any attempt to open it, open it not to any by any manner of means." So they took their station and made auction of it for an hundred gold pieces, when by the decree of Destiny the Bhang-eater passed down the street exulting in his hundred dinars which he had found in the crock while levelling the wall belonging to the woman. Thereupon he came up and having paid the price required carried off his coffer saying in his mind, "My luck is my livelihood." After this he went to his own cell and opened it and found there the handmaid in condition as though drunken with wine. Such is the history of that concubine Kut al-Kulub and she fell not into the hand of the Bhang-eater save by the wile and guile of the Sultan's cousin-wife. But when she recovered from her fainting fit and gazed around and understood what had befallen her she concealed her secret and said to the man, "Verily this thy cell becometh us not;" and, as she had somewhat of gold pieces with her and a collar of jewels around her neck worth a thousand dinars, she brought out for him some money and sent him forth to hire for them a house in the middle of the quarter beffiting great folk and when this was done she had herself transported thither. Then she would give him every day spending-money to buy whatso she ever required and she would cook the delicatest dishes fit for the eating of the Kings wherewith she fed herself and her owner. This continued for twenty days when suddenly the Sultan returned from his hunting party and as soon as he entered his palace he asked for Kut al-Kulub?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that as soon as the Sultan returned from the chase he asked after Kut al-Kuluh from his exceeding desire to her, and the daughter of his uncle told him the tidings saying, “By Allah, O King of the Age, three days after the time thou faredst forth there came upon her malaise and malady wherein she abode six days and then she deceased to the mercy of Almighty Allah.” He exclaimed, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Verily we are the Almighty’s and unto Him shall we return.” Then befel him the extreme of grief and straitness of breast and he passed that night in exceeding cark and care for Kut al-Kulub. And when it was morning he sent after the Wazir and summoned him between his hands and bade him go forth to the Tigris-bank and there approve some place whereon he might build a palace which should command all the roads. The Minister replied, “Hearkening and obeying;” and hied to do his lord’s bidding taking with him architects[269] and others, and having found a piece of level ground he ordered them to measure an hundred ells of length for the building by a breadth of seventy cubits. Presently he sent for surveyors and master-masons whom he commanded to make ready every requisite for the work, of ashlar and lime and lead; also to dig trenches for the base of the walls. Then they fell to laying the foundations, and the builders and handicraftsmen began to pile the stones and prepare the loads while the Wazir stood by them bidding and forbidding. Now when it was the third day, the Sultan went forth the Palace to look at the masons and artizans who were working at the foundations of his new edifice. And as soon as he had inspected it, it pleased him, so he said to the Wazir, “Walláhi! none would befit this palace save and except Kut al-Kulub, when ’twould have been full of significance;” and so saying he wept with sore weeping at the remembrance of her. Quoth the Wazir to him, “O King of the Age, have patience when calamity afflicteth thee, even as said one of them with much meaning, anent long-suffering:?

‘Be patient under weight of wrath and blow of sore calamities: *
The Nights compressed by Time’s embrace gravidć miras gerunt res.’”[270]

Then quoth the Sultan, “’Tis well, O Wazir, I know that patience is praiseworthy and fretfulness is blameworthy, for indeed quoth the poet:?

When Time shall turn on thee, have patience for ’tis best of plight: * Ease shall pursue unease and naught but suffrance make it light;’

and by Allah, O Wazir, human nature is never free from sad thought and remembrance. Verily that damsel pleased me and I delighted in her; nor can I ever think to find one like her in beauty and loveliness.” Thereupon the Wazir fell to guiding the Sultan with fair words until his breast was broadened and the two began to solace themselves by inspecting the masons. After this the Sultan would go forth every morning for solace to Tigris-bank and tidings reached the ears of Kut al-Kulub that her lord was engaged on building a riverine palace, whereupon she said to the Bhang-eater, “Day by day we expend money upon our condition, and our outgoing is without incoming, so ‘twere but right that each morning thou fare and work with the workmen who are edifying a mansion for the Sultan, inasmuch as the folk declare that he is of temper mild and merciful and haply thou shalt gain from him profit and provision.” “O my lady,” he replied, “by Allah, I have no patience to part with thee or to be far from thee;” and he said so because he loved her and she loved him, for that since the time he had found her locked in the box and had looked upon her he had never required of her her person and this was indeed from his remembrance, for he bore in mind but too well what had befallen him from the Khwajah's daughter. And she on her side used to say, "'Tis a wondrous thing that yon Bhang-eater never asketh me aught nor draweth nigh me seeing that I be a captive of his right hand." So she said to him, "Assuredly thou dost love me?" and said he, "How can it be otherwise when thou art the blood of my life and the light of mine eyes?" "O light of mine eyes," she replied, "take this necklace and set it in thy breast-pocket and go work at the Sultan's palace, and as often as thou shalt think of me, do thou take it out and consider it and smell it and it shall be as if thou wert to see me." Hearing this he obeyed her and went forth till he reached the palace where he found the builders at work and the Sultan and the Wazir sitting in a Kiosk hard by overseeing the masons and the workmen; ?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the Bhang-eater joined the masons he saw the Sultan and Wazir overseeing them; and, as soon as the King sighted him, he opened his breast to him and said, "O man, wilt thou also do work?" and said the other, "Yes." So he bade him labour with the builders and he continued toiling till hard upon noon-tide, at which time he remembered his slave-girl and forthright he bowed his head upon his bosom-pocket and he sniffed thereat. The Wazir saw him so doing and asked him, "What is the meaning of thy sniffing at what is in thy poke?" and he answered him, "No matter." However the Minister espied him a second time occupied in like guise and quoth he to the Sultan, “Look, O King of the Age, at yon labourer who is hiding something in his pocket and smelling thereat.” “Haply,” responded the Sovran, “there is in his pouch something he would look at.” However when the Sultan’s glance happened to fall that way he beheld the Bhang-eater sniffing and smelling at his poke, so he said to the Wazir, “Walláhi! Verily this workman’s case is a strange.” Hereupon both fixed their eyes upon him and they saw him again hiding somewhat in his pouch and smelling at it. The Wazir cried, “Verily this fellow is a-fizzling and he boweth his head toward his breast in order that he may savour his own farts.”[271] The Sultan laughed and said, “By Allah, if he do on this wise ’tis a somewhat curious matter, or perhaps, O Wazir, he have some cause to account for it; at any rate do thou call out to him and ask him.” So the Wazir arose and drawing near to him asked him saying, “Ho, this one![272] every time thou fizzlest thou smellest and sniffest at thy fizzlings;” whereto answered the workman, “Wag not thy tongue with these words seeing thou art in the presence of a King glorious of degree.” Quoth the Minister, “What is the matter with thee in this case that thou art sniffing at thy pocket?” and quoth the labourer, “Verily my beloved is in my pouch.” The Wazir wondered hereat and reported the same to the Sultan who cried, “Return to him and say, ‘Is it possible that thou display to us thy beloved who is in thy breast-pocket?’” So he returned to him and said, “Show us what there is in thy pouch.” Now the origin of this necklace was that the King had bought it for Kut al-Kulub at the price of a thousand dinars and the damsel had given it to the Bhang-eater with the sole object that the Sultan might look upon it and thereby be directed unto her and might learn the reason of her disappearance and her severance from him. Hereupon the man brought out to them the necklace from his breastpocket and the Sultan on seeing it at once recognised it and wondered how it had fallen into the hands of that workman; accordingly he asked who was its owner and the other answered, “It belongeth to the handmaid whom I bought with an hundred dinars.” Quoth the Sultan to him, “Is it possible[273] thou invite us to thy quarters that we may look upon this damsel;” and quoth the other, “Would you look upon my slave-girl and not be ashamed of yourselves? However I will consult her, and if she be satisfied therewith we will invite you." They said to him, "This be a rede that is right and an affair which no blame can excite." When the day had reached its term the masons and workmen were dismissed after they had taken their wage; but as for the Bhang-eater the Sultan gave him two gold pieces and set him free about sunset tide; so he fared to his handmaid and informed her of what had befallen him from the King, adding, "He hath indeed looked upon the necklace and hath asked me to invite him hither as well as the Wazir." Quoth she, "No harm in that; but to-morrow (Inshallah!) do thou bring all we require for a state occasion of meats and drinks, and let me have them here by noon-tide, so they may eat the early meal. But when he shall ask to buy me of thee compose thy mind and say thou, 'No,' when he will reply to thee, 'Give me this damsel in free gift.' Hereat do thou say, 'She is a present from me to thee'; because indeed I am his slave and bought with his money for one thousand and five hundred dinars; and thou hadst never become my lord save through my foes who devised a device against me and who sold me when thou boughtest me. However the hour of thy prosperity hath now come." And when morning morrowed she gave him five gold pieces and said to him, "Bring for me things that be such and such," and said he, "Hearing and obedience." So he went to the market-street where he purchased all the supplies wherewith she had charged him and returned to her forthright. Hereupon she arose and tucking up her sleeves prepared meats that befitted the King and likewise she got ready comfits and the daintiest of dainties and sherbets and she tempered the pastilles and she besprinkled the room with rosewater and looked to the furniture of the place. About midday she sent to the Sultan and the Wazir with notice that she was ready; so the Bhang-eater repaired to the Palace and having gone in to the presence said, "Have the kindness!"[274] The twain arose without more ado and hied with him privily till they reached his house and entered therein.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan and the Wazir entered the place wherein were the Bhang-eater and the damsel, and took their seats. Now the meats were ready and they served up to them the trays and the dishes, when they fell to and were cheered by the sumptuous viands until they had eaten after the measure of their sufficiency. And when their hands were washed, the confections and sherbet and coffee were set before them, so they ate and were satisfied and gladdened and made merry. After this quoth the Sultan to the Bhang-eater, “Where is the damsel?” and quoth the man, “She is here,” whereat he was commanded to bring her. Accordingly he went off and led her in and as soon as the King sighted her he recognised her and ordered her owner to make her over to him and said when he did so, “O man, wilt thou sell to me this damsel?” But the other kissed ground before him and replied, “O King of the Age, she is from me a free gift to thee;” and quoth the Sultan, “She is accepted from thee, O Shaykh, and do thou come and bring her thyself to the Palace about sundown-time.” He replied, “To hear is to obey.” And at the hour named he took the damsel and ceased not faring with her till he brought her to the Serai,[275] where the Eunuchry met her and took her and carried her in to the Sultan. But as soon as she entered she nestled in his bosom and he threw his arms round her neck and kissed her of his excessive desire to her. Then he asked her saying, “This man who purchased thee, hath he any time approached thee?” whereto she answered, “By Allah, O King, from the time he bought me in the box which he opened and found me alive therein until this present never hath he looked upon my face, and as often as I addressed him he would bow his brow earthwards.” Quoth the Sultan, “By Allah, this wight deserveth an aidance for that he paid down for thee an hundred dinars and he hath presented thee in free gift to me.” Now when morrowed the morning the King sent after the Bhang-eater and summoned him between his hands and bestowed upon him one thousand five hundred dinars with a suit of royal raiment, after which he presented to him, by way of honourable robe,[276] a white slave-girl. He also set apart for him an apartment and made him one of his boon companions. So look thou, O hearer,[277] how it happened to this Bhang-eater from the Khwajah's daughter and his love herwards; how he failed to win her and how he gained of blows whatso he gained; and after what prosperity befel him from the part of Kut al-Kulub. And ever afterwards when the Sultan would ride out for disport or for the hunt and chase he would take the man with him. Presently of the perfection of his prosperity this Bhang-eater fully mastered the affairs of the kingdom, both its income and its outgo, and his knowledge embraced all the regions and cities which were under the rule of his lord. Furthermore, whenever he would counsel the King, his advice was found to be in place and he was consulted upon all State affairs, and whenever he heard of any business he understood its inner as well as its outer meaning until the Sultan and the Wazir both sought rede of him, and he would point out to them the right and unright, and that which entaileth trouble and no trouble, when they could fend it off and overthrow it or by word or by deed of hand. Now one day of the many days the King was in a certain of his gardens a-solacing himself with the sights when his heart and stomach became full of pain and he fell ill and his illness grew upon him, nor did he last four days ere he departed to the mercy of Allah Almighty. As he had no issue, either son or daughter, the country remained without a King for three days, when the Lords of the land forgathered and agreed upon a decision, all and some, that they would have no King or Sultan save the Wazir and that the man the Bhang-eater should be made Chief Councillor. So they agreed upon this matter and their words went forth to the Minister who at once took office. After this he gave general satisfaction and lavished alms on the mean and miserable, also on satisfaction and lavished alms on the mean and miserable, also on the widows and orphans, when his fame was bruited abroad and it dispread far and wide till men entitled him the "Just Wazir" and in such case he governed for a while of time.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Tenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Wazir governed for a while of time with all justice of rule so that the caravans spread abroad the name and fame of him throughout every city and all the countries. Presently there befel him an affair between two women which were sister-wives to one man.[278] Now these had conceived by him in the same month and when the time of their pregnancy had passed, the twain were delivered in the same place at the same hour and the midwife was one and the same. One brought forth a babe but it was a daughter which incontinently died and the other a man-child who lived. The women quarrelled and fought about the boy-babe and both of them said, "This is my child;" and there befel between them exceeding contention and excessive hostility. So they carried their cause before the divines and the Olema and the head men of the place, yet did none of them know how to decide between the twain and not a few of the folk said, "Let each woman take the child to her for a month," whilst others declared that they might keep it between them at all times, whilst of the women one said, "'Tis well: this be my boy!" and the other declared, "'Tis well, this be my son!" nor could any point out to which of the women the boy belonged. So the town's people were gathered together and said, "None can determine this dispute except the Just Wazir;" and they agreed upon this, so that the husband of the two women and sundry of his associates arose and took the twain of them and travelled with them to hear the Minister's judgment. Also the Olema and the great men of the place declared "By Allah, we also needs must travel with the party and produce the two women and be present at the Just Wazir's judgment." So they all assembled and followed after the two adversaries, nor did they cease travelling until they entered the city where the Minister abode. There they delayed for rest during one day and on the second they all joined one another and went in to the Wazir and recounted to him the case of the two women. Hearing this he bowed his brow groundwards and presently raising it he cried, “Bring me two eggs and void them of their contents and see that the shells be clean empty.” Then he commanded that each of the women drain somewhat of milk from her nipple into the egg-shell till she had filled it. They did accordingly and set before him the egg-shells brimful when he said, “Bring me a pair of scales.”[279] After this he placed both eggs in the balance-pan and raising it aloft from its rounded stead perceived that one was weighty and the other was light. Quoth he, “The milk of the woman in this egg is the heavier and she is the mother of the boy-babe whereas the other bare the girl-child and we know not an it be alive or dead.” Hereat the true mother of the boy held her peace but the other wailed aloud and said, “’Tis well: still this be my babe!” Thereupon quoth the Wazir, “I am about to take the boy and hew him in halves whereof I will give one to each of you twain.” But the true mother arose and cried out, “No! O my lord, do not on this wise: I will forfeit my claim for Allah’s sake;” while the other one exclaimed, “All this is right good!” Now all the folk of the city who were then standing by heard these words and looked on; but when this order was pronounced and the woman was satisfied and declared, “I will take half the boy,” the Wazir gave orders forthright that they seize her and hang her; so they hanged her and he gave the babe to the right mother. Then said they to him, “O our lord, how was it proved to thee that the boy was the child of this one?” and he said, “It became evident to me from two sides; in the first place because her milk was the heavier, so that I knew that the boy was her boy, and secondly when I commanded, ‘Let us cut the boy in half,’ the real mother consented not to this and the matter was hard upon her because the child was a slice of her liver, and she said to herself, ‘His life is better than his death, even though my sister-wife take him, at any rate I shall be able to look upon him.’ But the second woman designed only to gratify her spite whether the boy died or not and to harm her sister-wife; so when I saw that she was contented to have the babe killed, I knew that it was right to do her die.” Then all who were present of the Lords of the land and the Olema and divines and notables wondered at the judgment and exclaimed, “By Allah, well done,[280] O Wazir of the realm.” Now this history of the Minister’s perspicacity and penetration was spread abroad and all folk went from his presence and everyone who had wives that had borne girls took somewhat of milk from the women and went to each and every of those who had borne boys and took from them milk in the same quantity as the Wazir had taken, and weighted it in the scales, when they found that the mothers of males produced milk that was not equal to, nay it weighed two-fold that of those who bare girls. Hereupon they said, “It is not right that we call this Minister only the Just Wazir;” and all were agreed that he should be titled “The Wazir-wise-in-Allah-Almighty;”[281] and the reason whereof was the judgment which he passed in the cause between the two women. Now after this it befel him to deliver a decision more wondrous than the former.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Eleventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that to the Wazir-wise-in-Almighty-Allah there befel between his hands a strange matter which was as follows. As he was sitting one day of the days there came in to him unexpectedly two men, of whom one led a cow and a little colt whilst the second had with him a mare and a little calf. Now the first who came forward was the owner of the mare and quoth he, “O my lord, I have a claim upon this man.” Quoth the Minister, “What be thy claim?” And the plaintiff continued, “I was going a-morn to the meadow for pasture and with me was my mare followed by her young one, her little colt, when yonder man met me upon the road and the colt began to play and to throw up gravel with its hoofs as is the wont of horse-flesh and draw near to the cow. Hereupon this man came up and seized it and said, ‘This colt is the offspring of my cow,’ and so saying he took it away and he gave me his calf, crying, ‘Take this which be the issue of thy mare.’” So the Wazir turning to the master of the cow asked, “O man, what sayest thou concerning what thy comrade hath spoken?” and the other answered, “O my lord, in very deed this colt is the produce of my cow and I brought it up by hand.” Quoth the Wazir, “Is it right that black cattle should bring forth horses and that horses should bear cows? indeed the intelligence of an intelligent man may not compass this;” and quoth the other, “O my lord, Allah createth whatso He willeth and maketh kine to produce horses and horses to produce kine.” Hereupon the Minister said to him, “O Shaykh, when thou seest a thing before thee and lookest thereon canst thou speak of it in the way of truth?” And the other assented. Then the Wazir continued addressing the two men, “Wend your ways at this time and on the morrow be present here at early morn and let it be at a vacant hour.” Accordingly they forthright went forth, and the next day early the two men came to the divan of the Wazir who set before them a she-mouse he had provided and called for a sack which he filled with earth. And as the men stood between his hands he said, “Wait ye patiently without speaking a word;” so they held their peace and presently he bade them set the sack and the mouse before him and he ordered the men to load the sack upon the mouse. Both cried, “O our lord, ’tis impossible that a mouse can carry a sack full of earth,” when he answered, “How then can a cow bear a colt? and when a mouse shall be able to bear a sack then shall a cow bear a colt.” All this and the Sultan was looking out at the latticed window listening and gazing. Hereupon the Wazir gave an order that the master of the mare take her colt and the master of the cow carry off her calf; after which he bade them go about their business.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Twelfth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan, whose Minister was the Wazir-wise-in-Allah-Almighty, on a certain day summoned his Chief Councillor and when he came said to him, “Verily my breast is straitened and I am beset by unease, so I desire to hear something which may broaden my bosom;” and said the other, “O King of the age, by Allah, I have a friend who is named Mahmúd the ‘Ajami and that man is a choice spirit and he hath all kind of rare tales and strange anecdotes and wondrous histories and marvellous adventures.” Said the Sultan, “There is no help but that thou summon him to us hither and let us hear from him somewhat.” So the Wazir sent after the Persian and when the man stood in the presence said to him, “Verily the Sultan hath summoned thee.” He replied, “Hearing and obeying,” when he was taken and set before the Sovran and as he entered he saluted him with the salams of the Caliphs and blessed him and prayed for him.[282] The King returned his greeting and after seating him said to him, “O Mahamud, at this moment my breast is indeed straitened and I have heard of thee that thou hast a store of rare stories which I would that thou cause me hear[283] and let it be somewhat sweet of speech which shall banish my cark and my care and the straitness of my breast.” Hereto the other replied, “Hearing and obeying;” and began to relate the

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Tale of Mahmud the Persian and the Kurd Sharper.[284]

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The Sultan was delighted with the ‘Ajami’s relation and largessed him two thousand pieces of gold; after which he returned to his palace and took seat upon his Divan when suddenly a poor man appeared before him carrying a load of fruit and greens and greeted him and prayed for him and expressed a blessing which the Sultan returned and bade him fair welcome. After which he asked, “What hast thou with thee, O Shaykh?” and the other answered, “O King of the Age, I have an offering to thee of fresh greens and firstfruits;” and the King rejoined, “It is accepted.” Thereupon the man placed them between his royal hands and stood up, and the King having removed the cover[285] found under it a portion of ordinary cucumbers and sundry curling cucumbers and bundles of rose-mallows[286] which had been placed before him. So he took thereof some little matter and ate it and was much pleased and bade the Eunuchry bear the rest into the Harem. They carried out his commands and the women also were delighted and having eaten somewhat they distributed the remainder to the slave-girls. Then said they, “By Allah, this man, the fruit-owner, deserveth Bakhshísh;”[287] so they sent to him by the Eunuch one hundred gold pieces whereto the Sultan added twain, so the whole of his gain was three hundred dinars. But the Sultan was much pleased with the man and a part of the care which he felt was lightened to him, whereupon asked he, “O Shaykh, knowest thou aught of boon-companionship with the Kings?” to which the other answered, “Yes;” for he was trim of tongue and ready of reply and sweet of speech. Presently the Sultan continued, “O Shaykh, for this present go back to thy village and give to thy wife and family that which Allah hath made thy lot.” Accordingly the man went forth and did as the King bade him; after which he returned in a short time and went into the presence about set of sun when he found his liege lord at supper. The King bade him sit to the trays which he did and he ate after the measure of his sufficiency, and again when the Sultan looked upon him he was pleased with him. And when the hour of night-prayers came all prayed together;[288] then the King invited him to sit down as a cup-companion and commanded him to relate one of his tales.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Seventeenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the man took seat as a boon-companion of the King, and began to relate

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The Tale of the Sultan and His Sons and the Enchanting Bird.[289]

It is told anent a man, one of the Kings of Orient-land, that he had three sons, of whom the eldest one day of the days heard the folk saying, “In such a place there is a bird hight the shrilling Philomelet,[290] which transmews everyone who comes to it into a form of stone. Now when the heir apparent heard this report he went to his father and said, “’Tis my desire to fare forth and to get that marvellous bird;” and said the father, “O my son, thou wouldst work only to waste thy life-blood and to deprive us of thee; for that same bird hath ruined Kings and Sultans, not to speak of Bashas and Sanjáks,[291] men in whose claws[292] thou wouldst be as nothing.” But the son replied, “Needs must I go and if thou forbid my going I will kill myself.” So quoth his father, “There is no Majesty and no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great;” and saith the son, “Affects are affected and steps are sped towards a world that is vile and distributed daily bread.”[293] Then he said to him, “O my child, set out upon thy journey and mayest thou win to thy wish.” Hereupon they prepared for him somewhat of victual and he went forth on his wayfare. But before departing he took off his seal-ring from his finger and gave it to his second brother saying, “O my brother, an this signet press hard upon thy little finger do thou know and make certain that mishap hath happened to me.” So the second Prince took it and put it upon his minim finger, after which the eldest youth farewelled his father and his mother and his brothers and the Lords of the land and departed seeking the city wherein the Bird woned. He ceased not travelling by nights and days, the whole of them, until he reached the place wherein was the bird Philomelet whose habit it was to take station upon his cage between mid-afternoon and sunset, when he would enter it to pass the night. And if any approached him with intent of capturing him, he would sit afar from the same and at set of sun he would take station upon the cage and would cry aloud speaking in a plaintive voice, “Ho thou who sayest to the mean and mesquin, ‘Lodge!’[294] Ho thou who sayest to the sad and severed, ‘Lodge!’ Ho thou who sayest to the woeful and doleful, ‘Lodge!’”

Then if these words were grievous to the man standing before him and he make reply “Lodge!” ere the words could leave his lips the Bird would take a pinch of dust from beside the cage and hovering over the wight’s head would scatter it upon him and turn him into stone. At length arrived the youth who had resolved to seize the Bird and sat afar from him till set of sun: then Philomelet came and stood upon his cage and cried, “Ho thou who sayest to the mean and mesquin, ‘Lodge!’ Ho thou who sayest to the sad and severed, ‘Lodge!’ Ho thou who sayest to the woeful and the doleful, ‘Lodge!’” Now the cry was hard upon the young Prince and his heart was softened and he said, “Lodge!” This was at the time when the sun was disappearing, and as soon as he spake the word the Bird took a somewhat of dust and scattered it upon the head of the youth, who forthright became a stone. At that time his brother was sitting at home in thought concerning the wanderer, when behold, the signet squeezed his finger and he cried, “Verily my brother hath been despoiled of life and done to death!”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Eighteenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the second Prince, when the signet squeezed his little finger, cried out saying, “My brother, by Allah, is ruined and lost; but needs must I also set forth and look for him and find what hath befallen him.” Accordingly he said to his sire, “O my father, ’tis my desire to seek my brother;” and the old King answered, “Why, O my son, shouldst thou become like thy brother, both bereaving us of your company?” But the other rejoined, “There is no help for that nor will I sit at rest till I go after my lost one and espy what hath betided him.” Thereupon his sire gave orders for his journey and got ready what would suffice him of victual, and he departed, but before he went he said to his youngest brother, “Take thou this ring and set it upon thy little finger, and if it press hard thereupon do thou understand and be certified that my life’s blood is shed and that I have perished.” After this he farewelled them and travelled to the place of the Enchanting Bird, and he ceased not wayfaring for whole days and nights and nights and days until he arrived at that stead. Then he found the bird Philomelet and sat afar from him till about sundown when he took station upon his cage and began to cry, “Ho thou who sayest to the mean and mesguin, ‘Lodge!’ Ho thou who sayest to the sad and severed, ‘Lodge!’ Ho thou who sayest to the woeful and doleful, ‘Lodge!’” Now this cry of the Bird was hard upon the young Prince and he had no sooner pronounced the word “Lodge!” than the Philomelet took up somewhat of dust beside his cage and scattered it upon him, when forthright he became a stone lying beside his brother. Now the youngest of the three Princes was sitting at meat with his sire when suddenly the signet shrank till it was like to cut off his finger; so he rose forthright to his feet and said, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great.” Quoth his father, “What is to do with thee, O my son?” and quoth he, “By Allah, my brother is ruined and wasted, so needs must I also fare forth and look after the twain of them.” Exclaimed his sire, “Why, O my son, should you three be cut off?” but the other answered, “Needs must I do this, nor can I remain after them without going to see what hath betided them, and either we three shall return in safety and security or I also shall become one of them.” So the father bade them prepare for his journey and after they had got ready for him a sufficiency of provision he farewelled him and the youth set out. But when he departed from his sire the old man and his wife filleted their brows with the fillets of sorrow[295] and they fell to weeping by night and by day. Meanwhile the youth left not wayfaring till he reached the stead of the Bird and the hour was mid-afternoon, when he found his brothers ensorcelled to stones, and about sunset he sat down at the distance from Philomelet who took station upon his cage and began to cry, “Ho thou who sayest to the mean and mesquin, ‘Lodge!’ Ho thou who sayest to the sad and severed, ‘Lodge!’” together with many words and instances of the same kind. But the Prince hardened his heart nor would speak the word, and albeit the Bird continued his cry none was found to answer him. Now when the sun evanished and he had kept up his appeal in vain he went into the cage, whereupon the youngest of the Princes arose and running up shut the door upon him. Quoth the Bird, “Thou hast done the deed, O son of the Sultan,” and the youth replied, “Relate to me whatso thou hast wrought in magic to these creations of God.” Replied Philomelet, “Beside thee lie two heaps of clay whereof one is white and the other blue: this is used in sorcery and that to loose the spells.”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Twentieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Bird said to the youngest son of the Sultan, “By the side of my cage are two heaps of clay, this blue and that white; and the first is the material for sorcery whilst the second looseth the spell.” Hereupon the youth approached them and finding the mounds took somewhat of the white and scattered it upon the stones and cried, “Be ye returned unto your olden shapes;” and, as he did so, each and every of the stones became men as they had been. Now amongst them were sundry sons of the Sultans, also the children of Kings and Wazirs and Bashas and Lords of the land, and of the number two were the elder brothers of the young Prince: so they salamed to him and all congratulated one another to their safety. After this one came forward to the youth and said to him, “Verily this place is a city, all and some of whose folk are ensorcelled.” So he took a somewhat of clay from the white and entered the streets, where, finding the case as described to him, he fell to sifting the clay upon them and they were transmewed from statutes of stone into the shapes of Adam's sons. Then, at last, the sons of that city rose one and all and began offering to the Prince gifts and rarities until he had of them a mighty matter. But when his brothers saw that he had become master of the bird Philomelet and his cage, and all these presents and choice treasures, they were filled with envy of him[296] and said each to other, "How shall our brother win him all this and we abide with him in servile condition, especially when we hie us homewards and return to our own land? And will not folk say that the salvation of the two elder brothers was by the hand of the youngest? But we cannot endure such disgrace as this!" So envy entered them and in their jealousy they planned and plotted the death of their cadet, who knew not that was in their minds or whatso was hidden from him in the Limbo of Secrets. And when they had wrought their work the youngest Prince arose and bade his pages and eunuchs lade the loads upon the camels and mules and, when they had done his bidding, they all set forth on the homewards march. They travelled for whole days and nights till they drew near their destination and the youngest Prince bade his attendants seeks an open place wherein they might take repose, and they said, "Hearkening and obedience." But when they came upon it they found a well builded of stone, and the brothers said to the cadet, "This be a place befitting the rest by reason of this well being here; for the water thereof is sweet and good for our drink and therefifth we can supply our folk and our beasts." Replied the youth, "This is what we desire." So they set up their tents hard by that well, and when the camp was pitched they let prepare the evening meal, and as soon as it was sunset-tide they spread the trays and supped their sufficiency until presently night came down upon them. Now the youngest Prince had a bezel'd signet-ring which he had taken from the bird Philomelet, and he was so careful thereof that he never slept without it. But his brothers awaited until he was drowned in sleep, when coming softly upon him they pinioned him and carried him off and cast him into the well without anyone knowing aught thereof. Then as soon as morning morrowed the two eldest Princes arose and commanded the attendants to load, but these said to them, "Where be our lord?" and said the others, "He is sleeping in the Takhtrawán." So the camel men arose and loaded the loads and the litter and the two Princes sent forwards to the King their sire a messenger of glad tidings who when he found him informed him of the fair news. Accordingly he and all his Lords took horse and rode forth to meet his sons upon the road that he might salam to them and give them joy of their safe return. Now he chanced in their train to catch sight of the caged bird which is called "the shrilling Philomelet," and he rejoiced thereat and asked them, "How did ye become masters of him?" Then he enquired anent their brother.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Twenty-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night." She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan enquired of the two elder sons concerning their younger brother and they said, "We made ourselves masters of the Bird and we have brought him hither and we know nothing about our cadet." However, the King who loved his youngest with exceeding love put the question, "Have ye not looked after him and have ye not been in his company?" whereto they answered saying, "A certain wayfarer declared to have seen him on some path or other." When the father heard this from them he cried, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great;" and he fell to striking palm upon palm.[297] On this wise it befel these, but as regards the case of their brother, when they cast him into the well he awoke from his sleep and he felt himself falling into the depths, so he cried, "I take refuge with the All-sufficient Words of Allah[298] from the mischief He hath created." And by the blessing of these Holy Names he reached the sole of the well without aught of harm or hurt. Here finding himself pinioned, he strained upon his bonds and loosed them; but the well was deep of bottom and he came upon an arched recess, so he sat in it and exclaimed, “Verily we are Allah’s and to Him we are returning and I who wrought for them such work[299] am rewarded with the contrary thereof; withal the power is unto Allah.” And suddenly he heard the sound of speaking at some little distance beside him, and the voice was saying, “O Black of Head, who hath come amongst us?” and his comrade responded, “By Allah, this youth is the son of the Sultan and his best beloved, and the same hath released his brothers from sorcery and was carrying them to their homes when they played him false and cast him into this well. However, he hath a signet-ring with a bezel which if he rub ‘twill bespeak him with whatso he desireth, and will do what he may wish.” So the Prince said in his mind, “I bid the Servant of this Ring to take me out;” after which he rubbed it and the Jinni appeared and cried, “Yea verily, O son of the Sultan, what is it thou requirest of me?”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Twenty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Ring-bezel said to him, “What dost thou require of me?” and said the Prince, “I demand that thou hoist me out of the well: and this done that thou summon for me an host with Pages and Eunuchs and tents and pavilions and ensigns and banners.” Whereto the other replied, “Present.”[300] Then he brought him forth the well and the youth found hard by it all he needed, so he bade them load their belongings upon the beasts and when this was done he set out seeking the city of his sire. And as he drew so near it that it was within shot of eye, he alighted there upon a broad plain and ordered them to pitch the camp. Accordingly they set up the tents and the sitting pavilions while the Farráshes fell to sprinkling water upon the ground afront the abodes and to setting up the ensigns and colours whilst the band of kettledrums went dub-a-dub and the trumpets blared tantaras. The cooks also began at once to prepare the evening meal. Now when the city-folk saw this pomp and circumstance, they held in their minds that the new comer was some Sultan approaching to take their town; so they gathered together and went in to their own King and informed him thereof. But he, having heard their words, felt his heart melt and his vitals throb and a certain joy penetrate into his heart, so he said, "Praise to the Lord, there hath entered into my heart a certain manner of pleasure, albeit I know not what may be the case and Allah hath said in his Holy Book, 'We have heard good news.'"[301] Hereupon he and the Lords of his land took horse and rode till they reached the front of the pavilions where the King dismounted from his steed. Now the Prince his younger son was dressed in a habit that might have belonged to a hidden Hoard, and when he saw his father he recognised him, so he rose and met him and kissed his hands, but his sire knew him not by reason of the case the youth was in, so he supposed him to be a strange Sultan. Presently, the Prince asked him, "Where be thy youngest son?" and the King hearing this fell down a-fainting, but, soon recovering from his swoon, he said, "Verily my son hath wasted the blood of his life and hath become food for wild beasts." Hereupon the youth laughed aloud and cried, "By Allah, thy son hath not suffered aught from the shifts and changes of the World, and he is still in the bonds of life, safe and sound; nor hath there befallen him anything of harm whatever." "Where is he?" quoth the father: "He standeth between thy hands," quoth the son. So the Sultan looked at him and straightly considering him found that it was his very son who was bespeaking him, and of his delight he threw his arms around his neck and fell with him aswoon to the ground. This lasted for a full-told hour; but when he recovered from his fainting he asked his son what had betided him, so he told all that had befallen, to wit how he had become master of the Enchanting Bird Philomelet and also of the magical clay wherewith he had besprinkled his brethren and others of the city-folk who had been turned to stone, all and some, and how they had returned to the shapes whilome they wore. Moreover he recounted to him the presents and offerings which had been made to him and also how, when they arrived at a certain place, his brothers had pinioned him and cast him into the well. And ere he finished speaking, lo and behold! the two other Princes came in and when they looked upon his condition and noted the state of prosperity he was in, surrounded as he was by all manner of weal, they felt only increase of envy and malice. But as soon as their sire espied them he cried, “Ye have betrayed me in my son and have lied to me and, by Allah, there is no retribution for you on my part save death;” and hereupon the Sultan bade do them die. Then the youngest Prince made intercession for his brethren and said, “O my sire, whoso doeth a deed shall meet its deserts,” and thus he obtained their pardon. So they passed that night one and all in camp and when morning morrowed they loaded and returned to the city and all were in the most pleasurable condition. Now when the King heard this tale from the owner of the fruit it pleased him and he rejoiced therein and said, “By Allah, O Shaykh, indeed that hath gone from us which we had of cark and care; and in good sooth this history deserveth that it be written with water of gold upon the pages of men’s hearts.” Replied the other, “By Allah, O King of the Age, this adventure is marvellous, but I have another more wondrous and pleasurable and delectable than any thou hast yet heard.” Quoth the Sultan, “Needs must thou repeat it to us,” and quoth the fruit-seller, “Inshallah?God willing?I will recite it to thee on the coming night.” Hereupon the Sultan called for a hand-maiden who was a model of beauty and loveliness and stature and perfect grace and from the time of his buying her he never had connection with her nor had he once slept with her, and he gave her in honourable gift to the reciter. Then he set apart for them both an apartment with its furniture and appurtenances and the slave-girl rejoiced greatly thereat. Now when she went in to her new lord she donned her best of dresses so he lay down beside her and sought carnal copulation, but his prickle would not stand erect, as was its wont, although he knew not the cause thereof.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Twenty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the prickle of the Fruiterer would not stand to the handmaid as was the wont thereof, so he cried, “Verily this is a wondrous business.” Then the girl fell to rubbing it up and to toying therewith, her object being to stablish an erection. But the article in question grew not and remained limp, whereupon she said, “O my lord, Allah increase the progress of thy pego!” Thereupon she arose and opened a bag wherefrom she drew out kerchiefs and dried aromatic herbs[302] such as are scattered upon corpses; and she also brought a gugglet of water. Presently she fell to washing the prickle as it were a dead body, and after bathing it she shrouded it with a kerchief: then she cried upon her women and they all bewept the untimely fate of his yard which was still clothed in the kerchief.[303] And when morning morrowed the Sultan sent after the man and summoned him and said to him, “How passed thy night?” So he told him all that had betided him, and concealed from him naught; and when the Sultan heard this account from him he laughed at him on such wise that from excess of merriment he well nigh fell upon his back and cried, “By Allah, if there be such cleverness in that girl, she becometh not any save myself.” Accordingly he sent to fetch her as she stood and left the furniture of the place wholly and entirely to the owner of the fruit. And when this was done the Sultan made of him a boon-companion for that day from morning to evening and whenever he thought of the handmaid’s doings he ordered the man to repeat the tale and he laughed at him and admired the action of the slave-girl with the Limpo. When darkness came on they prayed the night-prayer and they supped and sat down to converse and to tell anecdotes.[304] Thereupon the King said to the Fruiterer, “Relate us somewhat of that thou hast heard anent the

Kings of old;" and said the other, "Hearing and obeying," and forthwith began the

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Story of the King of Al-Yaman and his Three Sons.

It is related that there was a Sultan in the land of Al-Yaman who had three male children, two of them by one mother and a third by another. Now that King used to dislike this second wife and her son, so he sent her from him and made her, together with her child, consort with the handmaids of the kitchen, never asking after them for a while of time. One day the two brothers-german went in to their sire and said to him, "'Tis the desire of us to go forth a-hunting and a-chasing," whereto their father replied, "And have ye force enough for such sport?" They said, "Yea, verily, we have!" when he gave to each of them a horse with its furniture of saddle and bridle, and the twain rode off together. But as soon as the third son (who together with his mother had been banished to the kitchen) heard that the other two had gone forth to hunt, he went to his mother and cried, "I also would fain mount and away to the chase like my brethren." His mother responded, saying, "O my son, indeed I am unable to buy thee a horse or aught of the kind;" so he wept before her and she brought him a silvern article, which he took and fared forth with it to the bazar, and there, having sold it for a gold piece, he repaired to a neighbouring mill and bought him a lame garron. After this he took a bittock of bread; and, backing the beast without saddle or bridle, he followed upon the footsteps of his brothers through the first day and the second, but on the third he took the opposite route. Presently he reached a Wady, when behold, he came across a string[305] of pearls and emeralds which glittered in the sunlight, so he picked it up and set it upon his head and he fared onwards singing for very joy. But when he drew near the town he was met by his two brothers who seized him and beat him and, having taken away his necklace, drove him afar from them. Now he was much stronger and more beautiful than they were, but as he and his mother had been cast off by the King, he durst not offer aught of resistance.[306] Now the two brothers having taken the necklace from him went away joyful, and repairing to their father, showed him the ornament and he rejoiced in them and hending it in his hand marvelled thereat. But the youngest son went to his mother with his heart well nigh broken. Then the Sultan said to his two sons, “Ye have shown no cleverness herein until ye bring me the wearer of this necklace.” They answered, “Hearkening and obedience, and we will set out to find her.”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Twenty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the sons of the Sultan made them ready for the march whereby they might bring back the bird to whom the necklace belonged. So they took them a sufficiency of provision and, farewelling their father, set out for the city wherein they judged the bird might be. Such was their case; but as regards their unhappy brother, when he heard the news of their going he took with him a bittock of bread and having bidden adieu to his mother mounted his lame garron and followed upon the traces of his brethren for three days. Presently he found himself in the midst of the wild and the wold, and he ceased not faring therethrough till he came to a city whose folk were all weeping and wailing and crying and keening. So he accosted an aged man and said to him, “The Peace be upon thee!” and when the other returned his salam and welcomed him he asked saying, “O my uncle, tell me what causeth these groans and this grief?” The other replied, “O my son, verily our city is domineered over by a monstrous Lion who every year cometh about this time and he hath already done on such wise for forty and three years. Now he expecteth every twelvemonth as he appeareth to be provided with a damsel arrayed and adorned in all her finery, and if he chance to come as is his wont and find her not he would assault the city and destroy it. So before the season of his visit they cast lots upon the maidens of the place and whomso these befal, her they decorate and lead forth to a place without the walls that the monster may take her. And this year the sort hath fallen upon the King's daughter."[307] When the youth heard these words he held his peace and, having taken seat by the old man for an hour or so, he arose and went forth to the place where the Lion was wont to appear and he took his station there, when behold, the daughter of the King came to him and right heavy was she of heart. But as she found the youth sitting there, she salam'd to him and made friendship with him and asked, "What brought thee to this stead?" Answered he, "That which brought thee brought me also." Whereto quoth she, "Verily at this hour the Lion shall come to seize me, but as soon as he shall see me he will devour thee before me, and thus both of us shall lose our lives; so rise up and depart and save thyself, otherwise thou wilt become mere wasted matter in the belly of the beast." "By Allah, O my lady," quoth he, "I am thy sacrifice at such a moment as this!" And as they were speaking, suddenly the world was turned topsy-turvy,[308] and dust-clouds and sand-devils[309] flew around and whirlwinds began to play about them, and lo and behold! the monster made his appearance; and as he approached he was lashing his flanks with his tail like the sound of a kettle-drum. Now when the Princess espied him, the tears poured down her cheeks, whereat the youth sprang to his feet in haste, and unsheathing his sword, went forth to meet the foe, who at the sight of him gnashed his tusks at him. But the King's son met him bravely, springing nimbly from right to left, whereat the Lion raged furiously, and with the design to tear him limb from limb, made a rush at the youth, who smote him with all the force of his forearm and planted between his eyes a sway of scymitar so sore that the blade came out flashing between his thighs, and he fell to the ground slain and bleeding amain. When the Princess saw this derring-do of her defender, she rejoiced greatly and fell to wiping with her kerchief the sweat from his brow; and the youth said to her, "Arise and do thou fare to thy family." "O my lord, and O light of mine eyes!" said she, "we twain together will wend together as though we were one flesh;" but he rejoined, "This is on no wise possible." Then he arose from beside her and ceased not faring until he had entered the city, where he rested himself beside a shop. She also sprang up, and faring homewards, went in to her father and mother, showing signs of sore sorrow. When they saw her, their hearts fluttered with fear lest the monster should attack the town and destroy it, whereupon she said to them, “By Allah, the Lion hath been slain and lieth there dead.” They asked her saying, “What was it killed him?” and she answered, “A handsome youth fair of favour,” but they hardly believed her words and both went to visit the place, where they found the monster stone-dead. The folk of the city, one and all, presently heard this fair news, and their joy grew great, when the Sultan said to his daughter, “Thou! knowest thou the man who slew him?” to which she answered, “I know him.” But as all tidings of the youth were cut off, the King let proclaim about the city.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Twenty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night.” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King let proclaim through the city how none should oppose him or delay to obey his bidding; nay, that each and every, great and small, should come forth and pass before the windows of his daughter’s palace. Accordingly the Crier went abroad and cried about the city to that purport, bidding all the lieges muster and defile in front of the Princess’s windows; and they continued so doing for three full-told days, while she sat continually expecting to sight the youth who had slain the lion, but to no purpose. At last never a soul remained who had not passed in the review, so the Sultan asked, “Is there anyone who hath absented himself?” and they answered, “There is none save a stranger youth who dwelleth in such and such a place.” “Bring him hither!” cried the King, “and command him to pass muster,” when the others hastened to fetch him; and as soon as he drew near the window, behold, a kerchief was thrown upon him.[310] Then the Sultan summoned him, and he, when standing in the presence, saluted and made obeisance and blessed the Sovran with the blessings fit for the Caliphs. The Sultan was pleased thereat and said, "Art thou he who slew the Lion?" and said the other, "I did." Hereupon quoth the King, "Ask a favour of me, that I grant it to thee;" and quoth the Youth, "I pray of Allah and then of our lord the Sultan that he marry me to his daughter." But the King continued, "Ask of me somewhat of wealth," and all the Lords of the land exclaimed, "By Allah, he deserveth the Princess who saved her from the Lion and slew the beast." Accordingly the King bade the marriage-knot be tied, and let the bridegroom be led in procession to the bride, who rejoiced in him with extreme joy, and he abated her maidenhead and the two lay that night together. But the Prince arose about the latter hours without awaking his bride, and withdrawing her seal-ring from her finger, passed his own thereupon and wrote in the palm of her hand, "I am 'Aláeddín,[311] son of King Such-and-such, who ruleth in the capital of Al-Hind, and, given thou love me truly, do thou come to me, otherwise stay in thy father's house." Then he went forth without awaking her and fared through wilds and wolds for a term of ten days, travelling by light and by night, till he drew near a certain city which was domineered over by an Elephant. Now this beast would come every year and take from the town a damsel; and on this occasion it was the turn of the Princess, daughter to the King who governed that country. But as the youth entered the streets he was met by groans and moans and crying and keening; so he asked thereanent and was answered that the Elephant was presently approaching to seize the maiden and devour her.[312] He asked, "To what stead cometh he?" and they pointed out to him a place without the city whereto he repaired and took his seat. Suddenly the Princess presented herself before him a-weeping and with tears down her cheeks a-creeping, when he said to her, "O my lady, there is no harm for thee." Said she, "O youth, by Allah! thou wastest thy life to no purpose and seekest thy death without cause, so rise up and save thyself, for the Elephant will be here this very hour." And behold, the beast came up to the heart of the waste and he was raising a dust-cloud and trumpeting with rage[313] and lashing flanks with tail. But when he arrived at the wonted place he was confronted by the youth who, with heart stronger than granite, hastened to fall upon him[314] and fatigued him and dealt blows without cease; and, when the Elephant charged down upon him, he met the monster with a stroke between the eyes dealt with all the force of his forearm, and the blade came flashing out from between his thighs, when the beast fell to the ground slain and weltering in his blood amain. Thereupon, in the stress of her joy, the Princess arose hurriedly and walked towards the youth?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Thirtieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Princess walked hurriedly towards the youth and in the stress of her joy she threw her arms around his neck and kissed him between the eyes and cried, "O my lord, may thy hands never palsied grow nor exult over thee any foe!" Said he to her, "Return to thy people!" and said she, "There is no help but that I and thou fare together." But he replied, "This matter is not the right rede," and he went from her at a double quick pace, saying, "O Allah, may none see me!" until he entered the city and presently seating him beside a tailor's shop fell to conversing with its owner. Presently the man said, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great: by this time the daughter of the King will have been seized by the Elephant and torn to pieces and devoured, and she the mainstay of her mother and her father." And behold loud lullilooing[315] flew about the city and one began exclaiming, "Verily the Elephant which is wont to come hither year by year hath been slaughtered by a man quite young in years, and the Sultan hath sent a Crier to cry amongst the crowds, ‘Let the slayer of the beast come into the presence and crave a boon and marry the maiden.’” So quoth the Youth to the tailor, “What is to do?” and the other informed him of the truth of the report, whereupon he asked, “If I go to the King will he give her to me?” Answered the tailor, “Who art thou that thou shouldest intermarry with the daughter of the King?” and the Prince rejoined, “We will go and bespeak him and lie to him saying, I am he who slew the monster.” But the other retorted, “O Youth, thou art willingly and wilfully going to thy death, for an thou lie to him he will assuredly cut off thy head.” Presently the Prince, who was listening to the Crier, said to his companion, “Up with thee and come with us that thou mayest look upon my execution;” and cried the other, “Why so, O thou true-born son?”[316] whereto the Youth replied, “Needs must I do this!” Hereupon he and the man arose and went till they came to the palace of the Sultan, where they craved leave to enter, but were forbidden by the Chamberlain, when lo and behold! the Princess looked out from the lattice and saw the Prince together with the tailor. So she threw the kerchief upon his head and cried aloud, “By Allah, here he be, and ’tis none but he who slew the Elephant and who saved me from him.” Hereat the tailor fell to wondering at the youth, but when the King saw that his daughter had thrown the kerchief upon him, he presently sent to summon him between his hands and asked him how it happened, and heard from him the truth of the tale. Then said he, “By Allah, verily my daughter was lost, so that this youth well deserveth her.” Thereupon he tied the marriage tie between the twain and the youth after wedding her went to her in procession and did away her pucelage, and lay the night with her. And presently when day was nigh, the young Prince arose and seeing her slumbering wrote in the palm of her hand, “I am Such-and-such, the son of such a King in Such-and-such a capital; and if thou love me truly, come to find me, or otherwise stay in thy father’s house.” Then without awaking her he fared forth to the city of the Enchanting Bird and ceased not cutting athwart the wilds and the wolds throughout the nights and the days till he arrived at the place wherein dwelt the Bird Philomelet whereto the necklace belonged. And she was the property of the Princess the daughter to the Sovran whose seat was in that capital, and it was the greatest of cities and its King was the grandest of the Kings. When he entered the highways he leant against the shop of an Oilman to whom he said, “The Peace be upon you,” and the other returned his salutation and seated him beside himself, and the two fell to conversing. Presently the Prince asked him, “O my lord, what canst thou tell me concerning a certain Bird and her owner?” and the other made answer, “I know nothing but of oil and of honey and of clarified butter, whereof whatever thou requirest I will give to thee.” Quoth the youth, “This is no reply to my question,” and quoth the oilman, “I know not nor regard aught save what is by me in my shop.” So the Prince rising from beside him left him and went forth to continue his search; but whenever he asked concerning the Bird and its owner, the folk changed the subject and returned him no reply save, “We know not.” This lasted until he accosted a man well stricken in years, whose age was nigh to an hundred; and he was sitting alone at one side of the city; so the Youth walked up to him and salam’d; and, after the other returned his greeting and kindly welcomed him and seated him near him, the two fell a-talking together, and the Prince asked him, “O my uncle, what canst thou tell me concerning the Bird whose necklet is of precious stones, and what concerning the owner thereof?” The aged man held his peace for awhile and presently exclaimed, “O my son, why ask me of this? O my child,[317] verily the Kings and sons of the Kings have sought her in marriage but could not avail; indeed and the lives of folks manifold have been wasted upon her. How, then, canst thou hope to win her? Nevertheless, O my son, go and buy thee seven lambs and slaughter them and skin them, after which do thou roast them and cut them in halves; for she hath seven doors at each whereof standeth as warder a rending Lion; and at the eighth which guardeth the maiden and the Bird are posted forty slaves who at all times are there lying. And now I leave thee to thy luck, O my son.” But when the Prince heard these words he asked his aidance of the Shaykh and went forth from him?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was,

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The Four Hundred and Thirty-second Night.

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Prince craved for the prayers of the Shaykh, who blessed him. Then he went forth from him and bought of the lambs what he had been charged to buy, and these he slaughtered and skinned and roasted and he cut each and every into two halves. He waited until night descended with its darkness and ceased the to-ing and fro-ing of folk, when he arose and walked to the place pointed out and there he found the Lion whose shape and size equaled the stature of a full-grown bull. He threw to him half a lamb and the beast allowed him to pass through that door, and it was the same with the other entrances, all seven of them, until he reached the eighth. Here he found the forty slaves who were bestrewn on the ground bedrowned in sleep; so he went in with soft tread and presently he came upon the Bird Philomelet in a cage encrusted with pearls and precious stones and he saw the Princess who owned him lying asleep upon a couch. Hereat he wrote upon the palm of her hand, “I am Such-and-such, son to the King Such-and-such, of such a city; and I have come in upon thee and beheld thee bared whilst thou wast sleeping, and I have also taken away the Bird. However, an thou love me and long for me, do thou come to me in mine own city.” Then he seized the Bird to his prize and fared forth and what he did with the Lions coming that he did when going out. The Veiler[318] veiled him, and he went forth the city and met not a single soul, and he ceased not faring the livelong night till next morning did appear, when he hid in a place seeking repose and he ate somewhat of victual. But as soon as the daylight shone bright, he arose and continued his journey, praying Allah for protection on his wayfare, till it was mid-afternoon: then he found, like an oasis in the middle of the waste, certain pastures of the wild Arabs and as he drew near the owner met him and salam’d to him and greeted him and blessed him. So he lay that night with them till dawn when the Shaykh of the encampment who had heard of the stranger came to him and welcomed him and found him a youth fair of form and favour and saw by his side the Enchanting Bird in its cage. He recognised it and wondered at the young man's derring-do and cried, "Subhana 'llah?praise be to God?who hath committed his secret unto the weakliest of His creation![319] Verily this Bird hath caused on its account to be slain many of the Wazirs and the Kings and the Sultans, yet hath yonder lad mastered it and carried it away. This however is by virtue of his good fortune." Then the old man had compassion on him and gave him a horse that he had by him together with somewhat of provaunt. The Prince took them from him and returning to his march traversed the wilds and the wolds for days and nights, all of them; and he continued in that case when he drew near his father's capital which rose within eye-shot. And as he walked on without heed, behold, his brethren met him and confronted him and fell upon him and, having taken away the Enchanting Bird, reviled him and beat him and shook him off and drove him away. Then they entered the city and sought their sire who received them with fair reception and greeted them and rejoiced in them; after which they presented him with the Bird Philomelet, and said, "Here we bring him to thee and there befel us through his account much toil and trouble." But their brother who had really won the prize went to his mother in sadness of heart?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was,

The Four Hundred and Thirty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the young Prince who had brought the Bird and whom his brothers had beaten and robbed of his prize, went to his mother in sadness of heart and shedding tears. Quoth she, "What is thy case and what hath befallen thee?" So he told her what had betided him and she said, "Sorrow not, O my son; the course of the right shall be made manifest." Then she quieted him and soothed his heart. This is what happened to these persons; but as regards the Princess, the owner of the Bird, when she awoke at dawn of day and opened her eyes, she found her favourite gone and as her glance fell upon the things about her, suddenly she saw something written in the palm of her hand. But as soon as she had read it and comprehended its purport, she cried aloud with a mighty grievous cry which caused the palace-women to flock around,[320] and her father to ask what was to do but none could explain it because no one knew. So the Sultan arose forthright and, going in to his daughter, found her buffeting her face for the sake of her Bird and asked her, "What is to do with thee?" So she informed him of what had befallen her, adding, "Verily he who came into my bower and discovered me bare and looked upon me and wrote upon the palm of my hand, him I am determined to have and none other save that one." Quoth her father, "O my daughter, many sons of the Wazirs and the Kings have sought the bird and have failed; and now do thou suppose that he hath died;" but quoth the Princess, "I desire none save the man who found me in sleep and looked upon me, and he is the son of King So-and-so, reigning in such a capital." Said her father, "Then how standeth the case?" and said she, "Needs must I thank him and seek his city and marry him, for assuredly amongst the sons of the Kings, all of them, none can be fairer or more delightsome than he who hath craftily devised this entrance to me in so guarded a stead as this. How then can anyone be his peer?"[321] Hereupon her father bade muster the forces without the city and he brought out for his daughter rarities and presents and mule-litters, and they pitched the tents and after three days they loaded the loads for travel. Then they fared for whole days and nights until they drew near the city wherein the youth had slain the Elephant and had saved the daughter of the King. So the Sultan set up his encampment with its tents and pavilions hard by the walls, to the end that all might take their rest, but when the King of the City saw this he rode forth to visit the stranger, and after greeting asked him the cause of his coming with such a host. The Sultan apprised him of what had happened to his daughter, how she had lost the Enchanting Bird, also how the youth had come into her bower and had written a writ upon the palm of her hand. But when the King heard from him this account he knew and was certified that it was the same Prince who had also slain the Elephant and who had on such wise saved his daughter's life; so he said to the Sultan, "Verily he who took the Bird belonging to thy Princess hath also married my daughter, for he hath done such-and-such deeds." After which he related to him the slaughter of the Elephant and all that had happened from beginning to end. Now as soon as the Sultan heard these words he cried, "By Allah my daughter is excusable and she hath shown her insight and her contrivance;" and presently he arose and going in to her related what he had heard from the King of the City, and she wondered at the tale of the youth's adventures and the killing of the Elephant. They nighted in that stead and the tidings soon reached the ears of the youth's wife, the Princess who had been saved from the Elephant, and she said to her sire, "I also needs must go to him and forgather with him." Hereupon the King her father bade muster his troops together with the Lords of the land without the city beside the host of the chief Sultan, and on the second day both Sovrans bade the loads be loaded for the march. When their bidding was obeyed the twain set out together and travelled for days and nights until they drew near to the capital of the King where the youth had slain the Lion, and they pitched their tents in its neighbourhood. Presently the Sovran of that capital came out and greeted them and asked them the cause of their coming; so they informed him of their adventures from commencement to conclusion; and he, when certified of the truth of this tale, returned to inform his daughter thereof.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

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The Four Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night.

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the third King informed his daughter of the certainty of the tidings, and she also exclaimed, “Needs must I as well as they set out to seek him and forgather with him.” So her father returned to the Sultan and the King and told them of the adventures of the youth, and how he was the cause of his daughter’s salvation from the Lion which he had slain; and when the twain heard his words they marveled and cried, “By Allah, verily this youth is fortunate in all his doings: would Heaven we knew how be his condition with his father and whether he is loved or he is loathed.” Then the three fell to talking of the Prince’s qualities, and presently the third King arose and gave orders for gathering together the Lords of his land and his army, and he brought out for his daughter mule-litters, and gat ready all she might require of rarities and offerings. Then the three Kings gave orders to load the beasts and fared together, taking with them their three daughters who, whenever they conversed together used to praise the high gifts of the Prince and she who was the mistress of the Bird would say, “Ye twain have forgathered with him;” and the others would answer, “We passed with him no more than a single night;” after which they would relate to her the slaughter of the Lion and the Elephant. So she wondered and cried, “By Allah! verily he is auspicious of fortune. And they ceased not to be in such case for whole days and nights, and nights and days, throughout the length of the journey till they drew near the far-famed[322] city which was the bourne of their wayfare and the object of their wishes. Now this happened about sunset-tide, so the three Kings who had alighted together bade their tents and pavilions be set up, and when their behest was obeyed, each and every of the three commanded that the firemen and the linkmen light up their torches and cressets, and they did so, one and all, until that Wady was illumined as by the sheen of day. But when the city folk saw what was done by the three Kings, their hearts quaked and their flesh quivered, and they cried, "Verily for the mighty hosts of these Kings there needs must be a cause of coming." However the strangers nighted in sight until morn grew light, when the three Sovrans forgathered, and sent a messenger with an invite to the Lord of the city, who on receiving him, exclaimed, "Hearkening and obedience!" Then mounting without stay or delay he rode forth till he reached the strangers' camp, where he alighted and went in and greeted them; and they, on similar guise, arose to him and wished him long life, and seated him and fell to conversing with him for a full-told hour. But he was whelmed in the ocean of thought, and he kept saying to himself, "Would Heaven I knew what be the cause of the Kings coming to this my country." However, the four Sovrans continued to converse until the noon-tide hour, when the trays were dispread for them, and the tables were laid with sumptuous meats in platters and chargers of precious metal, the very basins and ewers being of virgin gold. But when the King of that city beheld this he marveled, and said in his mind, "By Allah, there is not with me aught of rarities like these." As soon as they had ended eating what sufficed them, water was brought to them and they washed their hands, after which they were served with confections and coffee and sherbets. Anon the three Kings said to their guest, "Thou, hast thou any children?" and said he, "Yes, I have two sons." Quoth they, "Summon them before us that we may look upon them;" so he sent and bade them make act of presence. The Princes donned their finest dresses and perfumed themselves; then they took horse and rode until they had reached their father's palace. But the three Princesses stood to look at them, and she who was the owner of the Bird Philomelet asked of the two others, saying, "Is he amongst these twain?" and they answered, "Nay, he is not." She exclaimed, "By Allah, both of them be fine men," and the others cried, "Indeed, our husband is far fairer and finer than they." But when the Kings saw the two brothers they said to their sire, "Verily our need is not with them."?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was,

The Four Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the two Kings said to the lord of the city, “Verily our need is not in this pair of youths,” and the third King added, “By Allah, indeed these two young men be fair of favour,” for that he had not seen the Prince who had taken his daughter’s Bird Philomelet. Presently the two asked the father saying, “Thou, is there by thee no issue other than these two?” and said he, “Yes, I have a son, but I have cast him out and I have placed his mother amongst the handmaids of the kitchen.” “Send to fetch him,” quoth they; so he dispatched a messenger to bring him into the presence. And he came, withal he was without any finery of dress; but as soon as the two damsels saw him they communed concerning him and he inclined to them and went into their pavilion, when they rose to him and threw their arms round his neck and kissed him between his eyes. Hereupon the mistress of the Bird said to the two others, “Be this he?” and said they, “Yes;” so she also arose and kissed his hand. But when he had finished greeting them he at once went forth to the assembled Kings, who stood up in honour to him and welcomed him and greeted him; and when his father saw that case he wondered with great wonderment. Then the youth took seat afar from his brothers and addressed them, saying, “Which of the twain was first to take the necklace?” And they held their peace. He resumed speech and said to them, “Which of you killed the Lion and which of you slew the Elephant and which of you embraved his heart and going into the bower of the august damsel, daughter to this Sultan, carried off her Bird Philomelet?” But they answered him never a syllable and were far from offering a reply. So he resumed, “Wherefore did you fall upon me and beat me and take away the Enchanting Bird, when I was able to slay you both? Yet to everything is its own time and this my father had banished me and banished my mother nor did he give her aught of what became her." Saying these words the youth fell upon his two brethren with his sword and striking a single stroke he slew the twain, after which he would have assaulted his sire, and put him to death. However the three Kings forbade him and presently he whose daughter owned the Bird put an end to this by insisting upon the marriage-tie with him being tied. So he went in unto her that very night and the three damsels became his acknowledged spouses. After this his father gave command that his mother be admitted into the Palace and he honoured her and banished the parents of his two elder sons for he was assured that their cadet had done such derring-do by slaying the Lion and the Elephant and by bringing into the presence Philomelet the Enchanting Bird and he was certified that the deed had been done by none other. So he set apart a palace for the young Prince and his three Princesses and he gave him a commandment and their joys ever increased. And lastly the three Kings ceased not abiding in that place for forty days after which they devised their departure.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was,

The Four Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the three Kings desired, one and all of them, to depart and return to their countries and their capitals; and their son-in-law presented them with gifts and rarities, whereupon they blessed him and went their ways. After this the young Prince, who had become Sovran and Sultan, took seat upon the throne of his realm and by the reign he was obeyed and the servants of Allah for him prayed. Presently on a day of the days he inclined to the hunt and the chase, so he went off with his suite till they found themselves in the middle of the wildest of wolds where the ruler came upon an underground cavern. He proposed to enter therein, when his followers prevented him and behold, a man came to him from the desert showing the signs of wayfare and carrying a somewhat of water and victual and his garments were all threadbare. The King enquired of him saying, “Whence hast thou come and wither art thou going?” and the other replied, “We be three in this antre who have fled our country; and whenever we require aught of meat and drink, one of us fareth forth to fetch what will suffice us of provision for ten days.” “And what is the cause of your flying your native land?” asked the King, and the other answered, “Verily our tale is wondrous and our adventures are joyous and marvellous.” Hereupon quoth the King, “Walláhi, we will not quit this spot till such time as we shall have heard your histories; and let each one of you three recount to us what befell him, so that we hear it from his own mouth.” Hereupon the King commanded sundry of his suite to set forth home and the rest to abide beside him; and he sent a Chamberlain of the Chamberlains that he might go bring from the city somewhat of victual and water and wax candles and all the case required, saying the while to himself, “Verily the hearing of histories is better than hunting and birding, for haply they may solace and gladden the hearts of men.”[323] So the Chamberlain went forth and, after an absence of an hour or so he returned bringing all the King had commanded; upon which he and the suite brought in the Larrikin[324] together with his two companions until they led them to the presence and seated the three together. All this while none of the vagabonds knew that the personage before them was King of the city. So they fell to conversing until the next night came on when the Sovran bade them tell their tales of themselves and what had befallen each and every of them. They replied, “Hearkening and obedience;” and the foremost of them began to recite the

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History of the First Larrikin.

Verily, O King, my tale is a rare and it is e'en as follows:?I had a mother of whose flocks the World had left her but a single kid, and we owned ne'er another. Presently we determined to sell it; and, having so done, we bought it with its price a young calf, which we brought up for a whole year till it grew fat and full-sized. Then my mother said to me, "Take yon calf and go sell it;" so I went forth with it to the Bazar, and I saw that not one was like it, when behold, a body of vagabonds,[325] who numbered some forty, looked at the beast, and it pleased them; so they said one to other, "Let us carry this away and cut its throat and flay it." Then one of them, as all were standing afar off, came near me and said, "O youth, wilt thou sell this kid?" and quoth I, "O my uncle, verily this is a calf and not a kid;" and the other rejoined, "Art thou blind? This is a kid." Cried I, "A calf!" So he asked, "Wilt thou take from me a dollar?"[326] and I answered, "Nay, O my uncle!" Thereupon he went away from me, and another came after him and said, "O youth, wilt thou sell this kid?" and said I, "This is a calf," and quoth he "This is a kid," and reviled me the while I held my peace. Again quoth he, "Wilt thou take for this a dollar?" but I was not satisfied therewith, and they ceased not to wrangle with me, one after other, each coming up and saying, "O youth, wilt thou sell this kid?" At last their Shaykh[327] accosted me and cried, "Wilt thou sell it?" and I rejoined, "There is no Majesty save in Allah! I will sell it on one condition, to wit, that I take from thee its tail." Replied to me[328] the Shaykh of the Vagabonds, "Thou shalt take the tail when we have slaughtered it;" then, paying me a dollar, he led off the beast, and returned to his own folk. Presently they killed it and flayed it, when I took the tail and hastened back to my mother. She said to me, "Hast thou sold the calf?" and said I, "Yes, I have sold it, and have taken a dollar and the calf's tail." "And what wilt thou do for the tail?" asked she; and I answered, "I will do him brown[329] who took it from me saying, This is a kid, and I will serve him a sleight which shall get out of him to its price ten times one hundred."[330] With these words I arose and, taking the tail, I flayed it and studded it with nails and bits of glass, and I asked of my mother a maiden's dress, which she brought me; and presently I covered my face with a Burka'-veil[331] and I adorned me and perfumed myself and I girded my loins underneath my clothes with the tail of that calf. Then went I forth like a virgin girl till I reached the barrack of those blackguards, when I found that they had cooked the whole calf and naught of it remained undressed, and they had prepared to spread the table and were about sitting down to supper. Then I went[332] in to them and said, "The Peace be upon you," and they rose to me in a body of their joy, and returned my greetings and said, "By Allah, our night is a white one." So I entered to them and supped with them, and they all inclined to me, and their mustachios wagged in token that they would disport with me. But when darkness came on they said, "This night is for our Shaykh, but after this each one of us shall take her for his own night."?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Forty-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the vagabonds said, "Each one of us shall take her to him for a night after the Shaykh," and so saying they left me and went their ways. Then the Chief fell to chatting with me and he was in high spirits, when suddenly my glance fell upon a rope hanging from the ceiling of that barrack and I cried, "O Shaykh!" whereto he replied, "Yes, O my lady and light of mine eyes." Said I to him, "What may be this cord thus suspended?" and said he, "This is called 'hanging-gear'; and, when any of ours requireth chastisement from my associates, we hoist him up by this rope and we bash him." Quoth I, "Hang me up and let me see how 'tis done," but quoth he, "Heaven forfend, O my lady! I will hang myself in thy stead and thou shalt look upon me." Hereat he arose and tied himself tight and cried, "Haul up this rope and make it fast in such a place!" I did his bidding and bound it right firmly and left him hanging in the air. Presently he cried, "Let go the cord," and replied I, "O Shaykh, first let me enoy the spectacle." Then I stripped him of all his clothing and drawing forth the calf's tail which was studded with nails and glass splinters, I said to him, "O Shaykh, is this the tail of a kid or of a calf?" "What woman art thou?" asked he, and I answered, "I am the owner of the calf;" and then, tucking up my two sleeves to the elbows, I beat him till I stripped him of his skin and he lost his senses and he had no breath wherewith to speak. Thereupon I arose and fell to searching the hall, where I found sundry valuables amongst which was a box, so I opened it and came upon three hundred gold pieces and a store of reals[333] and silverlings and jadids.[334] I laid hands on the whole of it and bore off somewhat of the most sumptuous dresses; and, having wrapped them all up in a sheet, I carried them away; and about dawn I went in to my mother and cried, "Take thee to the price of the calf, which I have received from the purchaser." But when the day was high and the sun waxed hot the whole troop of the Shaykh collected and said, "Verily our Elder hath slept till the undurn hour;" and one of them declared, "'Tis from enjoying so much pleasure and luxury, he and the girl; and doubtless their night hath been a white[335] night." So they ceased not talking together and each of them had his word until the noon was high, when certain of them said, "Come with us and let us rouse him from sleep:" and, saying thus, all went to the door of the hall and opened it. Hereupon they found their Shaykh hanging up and his body bleeding profusely;[336] so they asked him, "What hath befallen thee?" and he answered in a weak voice, "Verily that girl is no girl at all, but she is the youth who owned the calf." They replied, "By Allah, there is no help but that we seize him and slay him;" whereto the Elder said, "Loose me and lead me to the Hammam that I may wash clean my skin of all this blood." Then they let him down and after mounting him upon a donkey they bore him to the baths. Hereat I went to the slaughter-house and and covered my body with bullocks' blood and stuck to it pledgets of cotton so that I became like one sorely diseased and I repaired to the same Hammam propped upon a staff and required admittance. They refused me saying, “The Shaykh of the Vagabonds is now in the baths nor may anyone go in to him.” Quoth I to them, “I am a man with a malady,” whereto quoth one of them, “This is a poor wight, so let him come within.” Accordingly I entered and found the Chief alone, whereupon I drew forth the tail and asked him, “O Shaykh, is this the tail of a calf or a kid?” “Who art thou?” said he, and I said, “I am the owner of the calf;” after which I fell to beating him with the tail until his breath was clean gone. Then I left him and went forth from the Hammam by another door so as to avoid his followers.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Forty-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth, the owner of the calf, after beating the Shaykh of the Vagabonds with a sore bashing within the Bath went forth by the back door. Whereupon (continued the Larrikin) the followers of the Chief went in and they found him at his last breath and moaning from the excess of blows. Quoth they, “What is the matter with thee?” and quoth he, “That man with a malady who came into the Hammam is none other but the owner of the calf and he hath killed me.” So they took him up and carried him from the place and he said to them, “Do ye bear me outside the city and set up for me a tent and lay me therein, after which do ye gather round about me and never leave me at all.” Hereat they mounted him upon an ass and bore him to the place he described and, pitching a tent, set him therein and all sat around him. Presently the tidings reached me, whereupon I changed my clothes for a disguise and drew near the tent whereabouts I found a Badawi-man feeding his sheep. So I said to him, “O Badawi, take this ducat and draw near yonder tent and call aloud, saying, ‘I am the owner of the calf;’ after which make off with thy life for an they catch thee they will slay thee.” “By Allah,” quoth the Arab, “even if they rode their best mares none of them could come up with me!” So I took charge of the sheep while the Badawi approaching the tent cried in his loudest voice, “By Allah, I am the owner of the calf.” Hearing this the vagabonds sprang to their feet as one body and drew their weapons and rushed after the Badawi; but, when he had run some distance from the tent with all the men behind him, I went in and drawing from below my clothes the tail of the calf said, “O Shaykh, is this the tail of a calf or a kid?” The Elder asked, “Art thou not he who cried out, I am the owner of the calf?” and I answered, “No, I am not,” and came down upon him with the tail and beat him until he could no longer breathe. Then I took the properties belonging to his party and wrapping them in a sheet carried them off and quitting the place I went in to my mother and said to her, “Take them to the worth of the calf.” Now those who had run after the Badawi ceased not pursuing him, yet could none of them come up with him and when they were tired they returned from the chase and stinted not walking until they entered the tent. There they found the Shaykh breathless nor could he move save to make signs; so they sprinkled a little water upon his face; and the life returned to him and he said to them, “Verily the owner of the calf came to me and beat me till he killed me and the wight who cried, ‘I am the owner of the calf’ is an accomplice of his.” Thereupon all waxed furious and the Elder said to them, “Bear me home and give out that your Shakyh is deceased; after which do you bathe my body and carry me to the cemetery and bury me by night and next morning disinter me so that the owner of this calf may hear that I am dead and leave me in peace. Indeed as long as I continue in this condition he will devise for me device after device and some day will come into me and kill me downright.” They did what their Shaykh bade them and began crying and keening and saying, “Verily our Chief is deceased,” so that the report was bruited abroad that the Shaykh of the Vagabonds had died. But I, the owner of the calf, said to myself, “By Allah, an he be dead, they will assuredly make for him some mourning ceremony.” Now when they had washed him and shrouded him and carried him out upon the bier, and were proceeding to the graveyard that they might bury him, and had reached half way to it, lo and behold! I joined the funeral train and suddenly walking under the coffin with a sharp packing-needle[337] in hand,?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable." Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Forty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that I walked under the bier packing-needle in hand, and thrust it into the Shaykh of the Vagabonds, whereat he cried out and sprang up and sat upright upon his shell.[338] Now when the King heard this tale he laughed and was cheered and the Larrikin resumed:?By Allah, when I thrust the needle into him and he sat upright in his coffin all the folk fell to wondering and cried, "Verily the dead hath come to life." Hereupon, O my lord, my fear waxed great and I said to myself, "All adventures are not like one another: haply the crowd[339] will recognise me and slay me." So I went forth the city and came hither. Cried the King, "Of a truth, this tale is marvellous;" when the second Larrikin exclaimed, "By Allah, O my lord, my tale is rarer and stranger than this, for indeed therein I did deeds worthy of the Jinn-mad and amongst the many tricks that came from my hand I died and was buried and I devised a device whereby they drew me from my tomb." Quoth the King, "Wallâhi, if thy tale be more wondrous than that which forewent it I needs must reward thee with somewhat. But now tell us of what betided thee." So the man began to relate the

History of the Second Larrikin.

I was living, O my lord, under the same roof with my father's wife and I had with me some bundles of sesame cobs, but no great quantity, which I stored in a little basket hanging up in the great ceiling-vault of our house. Now one day of the days a party of merchants, numbering five or so, together with their head man, came to our village and began asking for sesame; and they happened to meet me on the road hard by our place, so they put me the same question. I asked them, "Do you want much of it?" and they answered, "We require[340] about an hundred ardabbs."[341] Quoth I, "By me is a large quantity thereof;" and quoth they, "Have the kindness to show us the muster;"[342] whereto I rejoined, "Upon the head and the eye!" Hereat I led them into the room wherein the basket was suspended with a few cobs of sesame (there being none other) and I went up by an outside staircase to the top of the vault, which I pierced, and putting forth my hand, took up a palm-full and therewith returned to them and showed the specimen. They saw that the sesame was clean grain, and said one to other, "This house is naught but full to the vault,[343] for had there been a small quantity there he would have opened the door and shown us the heaps." Hereupon I conversed with them and settled the price and they paid me as earnest money for an hundred ardabbs of sesame six hundred reals. I took the coin and gave it to the wife of my father, saying to her, "Cook for us a supper that shall be toothsome." Then I slaughtered for her five chickens and charged her that, after she should have cooked the supper, she must prepare for us a pot of Baysárah[344] which must be slab and thick. She did as I bade her and I returned to the merchants and invited them to sup with us and night in our house. Now when sunset time came I brought them in for the evening meal and they supped and were cheered, and as soon as the hour for night-prayer had passed I spread for them sleeping-gear and said to them, "O our guests, be careful of yourselves lest the wind come forth from your bellies, for with me dwelleth the wife of my father, who disgusteth fizzles and who dieth if she hear a fart." After this they slept soundly from the stress of their fatigue and were overwhelmed with slumber; but when it was midnight, I took the pot of Baysarah and approached them as they still slumbered and I besmeared[345] their backsides with the Baysarah and returned and slept until dawn of day in my own stead hard beside them. At this time all five were awake, and as each one arose before his companions he sensed a somewhat soft below him and putting forth his hand felt his bum bewrayed[346] with the stuff, and said to his neighbour, “Ho, such an one, I have skited!” and the other said, “I also have conskited myself;” and then all said together, “We have skited.” But when I heard this, O my lord, I arose forthwith and cried out saying, “Haste ye to my help, O ye folk, for these guests have killed my father’s wife.”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale, that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that quoth the second Larrikin to the King:?O my lord, I cried out saying, “The guests have slain the wife of my father.” But when they heard me the merchants arose and ran away, each following other, so I rushed after them, shouting aloud, “Ye have killed my father’s wife,” till such time as they had disappeared from sight. Then said I to myself, “Inshallah! they will never more come back.” But after they had disappeared for a whole year they returned and demanded their coin, to wit, six hundred reals; and I, when the tidings reached me, feigned myself dead and ordered my father’s wife to bury me in the cemetery and I took to my grave a portion of charcoal and a branding-iron. Now when the five merchants came and asked after me the folk said, “He hath deceased and they have graved him in his grave;” whereupon the creditors cried, “By Allah, there is no help but that we go and piss upon his fosse.” Now I had made a crevice in the tomb[347] and I had lighted the charcoal and I had placed the branding-iron ready till it became red hot and, when they came to piddle upon my grave, I took the iron and branded their hinder cheeks with sore branding, and this I did to one and all till the five had suffered in the flesh. Presently they departed to their own country, when my father’s wife came and opened the tomb and drew me forth and we returned together to our home. After a time, however, the news reached these merchants in their towns that I was living and hearty, so they came once more to our village and demanded of the Governor that I be given up to them. So the rulers sent for and summoned me, but when the creditors made a claim upon me for six hundred reals, I said to the Governor, “O my lord, verily these five fellows were slaves to my sire in bygone-times.” Quoth the ruler, “Were ye then in sooth chattels to his sire?” and said they to me, “Thou liest!” Upon this I rejoined, “Bare their bodies; and, if thou find a mark thereupon, they be my father’s serviles, and if thou find no sign then are my words false.” So they examined them and they found upon the rumps of the five, marks of the branding-iron, and the Governor said, “By Allah, in good sooth he hath told the truth and you five are the chattels of his father.” Hereupon began dispute and debate between us, nor could they contrive aught to escape from me until they paid me three hundred reals in addition to what I had before of them. When the Sultan heard these words from the Larrikin he fell to wondering and laughing at what the wight had done and he said, “By Allah, verily thy deed is the deed of a vagabond who is a past-master in fraud.” Then the third Larrikin spoke and said, “By Allah, in good sooth my story is more marvellous and wondrous than the tales of this twain, for that none (methinketh) save I could have done aught of the kind.” The King asked him, “And what may be thy story?” so he began to relate

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The Tale of the Third Larrikin.

O my lord, I was once an owner of herds whereof naught remained to me but a single bull well advanced in years and unhealthy of flesh and of hide; and when I sought to sell him to the butchers none was willing to buy him of me, nor even to accept him as a gift. So I was disgusted with the beast and with the idea of eating him; and, as he could not be used either to grind[348] or to plough, I led him into a great courtyard, where I slaughtered him and stripped off his hide. Then I cut the flesh into bittocks?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Forty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the whilome owner of the bull said to the King:?O my lord, I cut his flesh into bittocks and went forth and cried aloud upon the dogs of the quarter, when they all gathered together nor did one remain behind. Then I caused them to enter the court and having bolted the door gave to each dog a bit of the meat weighing half a pound.[349] So all ate and were filled, after which I shut them up in the house which was large, for a space of three days when, behold, the folk came seeking their tykes and crying, “Whither can the curs have gone?” So I related how I had locked them up within the house and hereupon each man who had a hound came and took it away. Then quoth I, “Thy dog hath eaten a full pound of flesh,” and I took from each owner six faddahs and let him have his beast until I had recovered for the meat of that bull a sum of two thousand faddahs.[350] At last of these dogs there remained to me but one unclaimed and he had only a single eye and no owner. So I took up a staff and beat him and he ran away and I ran after him to catch him until he came upon a house with the door open and rushed within. Now by the decree of the Decreer it so happened that the mistress of the house had a man living with her who was one-eyed and I ran in and said to her, “Bring out the one-eyed that is with thee,” meaning the dog. But when the house mistress heard me say, “Bring out the one-eyed,” she fancied that I spoke of her mate, so knowing naught about the matter of the tyke she came up to me and cried, “Allah upon thee, O my lord, do thou veil what Allah hath veiled and rend not our reputation and deal not disgrace to us;”[351] presently adding, “Take this bangle from me and betray us not.” So I took it and left her and went my ways, after which she returned to the house and her heart was heaving and she found that her man had been in like case ever since he heard me say, “Bring out the one-eyed.” So I went away carrying off the bracelet and fared homeward. But when she looked about the room, lo and behold! she espied the one-eyed dog lying in a corner and, as soon as she caught sight of him, she was certified that I had alluded to the beast. So she buffeted her face and regretted the loss of her bangle and following me she came up and said to me, “O my lord, I have found the one-eyed dog, so do thou return with me and take him;” whereat I had pity upon the woman and restored to her the ornament. However, when this had befallen me, fear possessed my heart lest she denounce me, and I went away from my village and came to this place where the three of us forgathered and have lived ever since. When the King had given ear to this story he was cheered and said, “By Allah, verily the adventures of you three are wondrous, but my desire of you is to know if any of you have heard aught of the histories of bygone Sultans; and, if so, let him relate them to me. First, however, I must take you into the city that you may enjoy your rest.” “O my lord,” quoth they, “who art thou of the citizens?” and quoth he, “I am the King of this country, and the cause of my coming hither was my design to hunt and chase and the finding you here hath diverted me therefrom.” But when they heard his words, they forthwith rose to their feet and did him obeisance saying, “Hearing and obeying,” after which the three repaired with him to the city. Here the King commanded that they set apart for them an apartment and appointed to them rations of meat and drink and invested them with robes of honour; and they remained in company one with other till a certain night of the nights when the Sultan summoned them and they made act of presence between his hands and the season was after the King had prayed the Isha[352] prayers. So he said to them, “I require that each and every of you who knoweth an history of the Kings of yore shall relate it to me,” whereat said one of the four, “I have by me such a tale.” Quoth the King, “Then tell it to us;” when the first Larrikin began to relate the

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Story of a Sultan of Al-Hind and his Son Mohammed.[353]

There was in days of yore a King in the land of Al-Hind, who reigned over wide dominions (and praise be to Him who ruleth the worlds material and spiritual!), but this Sultan had nor daughter nor son. So once upon a time he took thought and said, "Glory to Thee! no god is there save Thyself, O Lord; withal Thou hast not vouchsafed to me a child either boy or girl." On the next day he arose a-morn wholly clad in clothes of crimson hue,[354] ?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Forty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King of Al-Hind arose a-morn wholly clad in clothes of crimson hue, and the Wazir, coming into the Divan, found him in such case. So he salam'd to him and blessed him with the blessing due to Caliphs, and said to him, "O King of the Age, doth aught irk thee that thou art robed in red?" whereto he replied, "O Wazir, I have risen with my heart gript hard." Said the other, "Go into thy treasury of moneys and jewels and turn over thy precious ores, that thy sorrow be dispersed." But said the Sultan, "O Wazir, verily all this world is a transitory, and naught remaineth to any save to seek the face of Allah the Beneficent: withal the like of me may never more escape from cark and care, seeing that I have lived for this length of time and that I have not been blessed with or son or daughter, for verily children are the ornament of the world." Hereupon a wight dark of hue, which was a Takrúri[355] by birth, suddenly appeared before the Sultan and standing between his hands said to him, "O King of the Age, I have by me certain medicinal roots the bequeathal of my forbears and I have heard that thou hast no issue; so an thou eat somewhat thereof haply shall they gladden thy heart." "Where be these simples?" cried the King, whereat the Takruri man drew forth a bag and brought out from it somewhat that resembled a confection and gave it to him with due injunctions. So when it was night-time the Sultan ate somewhat of it and then slept with his wife who, by the Omnipotence of Allah Almighty, conceived of him that very time. Finding her pregnant the King was rejoiced thereat and fell to distributing alms to the Fakirs and the mesquin and the widows and the orphans, and this continued till the days of his Queen's pregnancy were completed. Then she bare a man-child fair of face and form, which event caused the King perfect joy and complete; and on that day when the boy was named Mahommed,[356] Son of the Sultan, he scattered full half his treasury amongst the lieges. Then he bade bring for the babe wet-nurses who suckled him until milktime ended, when they weaned him, after which he grew every day in strength and stature till his age reached his sixth year. Hereupon his father appointed for him a Divine to teach him reading and writing and the Koran and all the sciences, which he mastered when his years numbered twelve. And after this he took to mounting horses and learning to shoot with shafts and to hit the mark, up to the time when he became a knight who surpassed all other knights. Now one day of the days Prince Mohammed rode off a-hunting, as was his wont, when lo and behold! he beheld a fowl with green plumage wheeling around him in circles and rocketing in the air and seeing this he was desirous to bring it down with an arrow. But he found this impossible so he ceased not following the quarry with intent to catch it but again he failed and it flew away from his ken; whereat he was sore vexed and he said to himself, "Needs must I seize this bird," and he kept swerving to the right and the left in order to catch sight of it but he saw it not. This endured until the end of day when he returned to the city and sought his father and his mother, and when they looked upon him they found his case changed and they asked him concerning his condition, so he related to them all about the bird and they said to him, "O our son, O

Mohammed, verily the creations of Allah be curious and how many fowls are like unto this, nay even more wondrous.” Cried he, “Unless I catch her[357] I will wholly give up eating.” Now when morning dawned he mounted according to his custom and again went forth to the chase; and presently he pushed into the middle of the desert when suddenly he saw the bird flying in air and he pushed his horse to speed beneath her and shot at her a shaft with the intent to make her his prey, but again was unable to kill the bird. He persisted in the chase from sunrise until sundown when he was tired and his horse was aweary, so he turned him round purposing a return city-wards, when behold, he was met in the middle of the road by an elderly man who said to him, “O son of the Sultan, in very sooth thou art fatigued and on like wise is thy steed.” The Prince replied, “Yes,” and the Elder asked him, “What is the cause thereof?” Accordingly he told him all anent the bird and the Shaykh replied to him, “O my son, an thou absent thyself and ride for a whole year in pursuit of yonder fowl thou wilt never be able to take her; and, O my child, where is this bird![358] I will now inform thee that in a City of the Islands hight of Camphor there is a garden wide of sides wherein are many of such fowls and far fairer than this, and of them some can sing and others can speak with human speech; but, O my son, thou art unable to reach that city. However, if thou leave this bird and seek another of the same kind, haply I can show thee one and thou wilt not weary thyself any more.” When Mohammed, Son of the Sultan, heard these words from the Elder he cried, “By Allah, ’tis not possible but that I travel to that city.” Hereupon he left the Shaykh and returned to his own home, but his heart was engrossed with the Capital of the Camphor Islands, and when he went in to his sire, his case was troubled. The father asked him thereof and he related to him what the oldster had said. “O my son,” quoth the sire, “cast out this accident from thy heart and weary not thy soul, inasmuch as whoso would seek an object he cannot obtain, shall destroy his own life for the sake thereof and furthermore he shall fail of his gain. Better therefore thou set thy heart at rest[359] and weary thyself no more.” Quoth the Son, “Walláhi, O my sire, verily my heart is hung to yonder fowl and specially to the words of the Elder; nor is it possible to me to sit at home until I shall have reached the city of the Camphor Islands and I shall have gazed upon the gardens wherein such fowls do wone." Quoth his father, "But why, O my child, wouldst thou deprive us of looking upon thee?" And quoth the son, "There is no help but that I travel."?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Fifty-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Mohammed the Son of the Sultan cried, "Needs must I travel, otherwise I will slay myself." "There is no Majesty and there is no Might," quoth the father, "save in Allah the Glorious, the Great; and saith the old saw, 'The chick is unsatisfied till the crow see it and carry it off.'"[360] Thereupon the King gave orders to get ready provisions and other matters required for the Prince's wayfare, and he sent with him an escort of friends and servants, after which the youth took leave of his father and mother and he with his many set forth seeking the Capital of the Camphor Islands. He ceased not travelling for the space of an entire month till he arrived at a place wherein three highways forked, and he saw at the junction a huge rock whereon were written three lines. Now the first read, "This is the road of safe chance," and the second, "This is the way of repentance;" and the third, "This is the path whereon whoso paceth shall return nevermore." When the Prince perused these inscriptions he said to himself, "I will tread the path whereon whoso paceth shall nevermore return." Then he put his trust in Allah, and he travelled over that way for a space of days a score, when suddenly he came upon a city deserted and desolate, nor was there a single created thing therein and it was utterly in ruins. So he alighted beside it and, as a flock of sheep accompanied his suite, he bade slaughter five lambs and commanded the cooks to prepare of them delicate dishes and to roast one of them whole and entire. They did his bidding, and when the meats were cooked he ordered the trays be spread in that site and, as soon as all was done to his satisfaction, he purposed sitting down to food, he and his host, when suddenly an ‘Aun[361] appeared coming from the ruined city. But when Prince Mohammed beheld him he rose to him in honour saying, “Welcome and fair welcome to him who of ‘Auns is the head, and to the brethren friend true-bred,[362] and the Haunter of this stead;” and he satisfied him with the eloquence of his tongue and the elegance of his speech. Now this ‘Aun had hair that overhung either eye and fell upon his shoulders, so the Prince brought out his scissors[363] and trimmed his locks clearing them away from his face, and he pared his nails which were like talons, and finally let bathe his body with warm water. Then he served up to him the barbecue of lamb which he caused to be roasted whole for the use of the Jinni and bade place it upon the tray, so the Haunter ate with the travellers and was cheered by the Prince’s kindness and said to him, “By Allah, O my lord Mohammed, O thou Son of the Sultan, I was predestined to meet thee in this place but now let me know what may be thy need.” Accordingly the youth informed him of the city of the Camphor Islands and of the garden containing the fowls which he fared to seek, and of his design in wayfaring thither to bring some of them away with him. But when the ‘Aun heard from him these words, he said to him, “O thou Son of the Sultan, that site is a far cry for thee, nor canst thou ever arrive thereat unless assisted, seeing that its distance from this place be a march of two hundred years for a diligent traveller. How then canst thou reach it and return from it? However, the old saw saith, O my son, ‘Good for good and the beginner is worthier, and ill for ill and the beginner is unworthier.’[364] Now thou hast done to me a kindly deed and I (Inshallah!) will requite thee with its match and will reward thee with its mate; but let whatso is with thee of companions and slaves and beasts and provisions abide in this site and we will go together, I and thou, and I will win for thee thy wish even as thou hast wrought by me a kindly work.” Hereupon the Prince left all that was with him in that place and the ‘Aun said to him, “O son of the Sultan, come mount upon my shoulders.” The youth did accordingly, after he had filled his ears with cotton, and the ‘Aun rose from earth and towered in air and after the space of an hour he descended again and the rider found himself in the grounds about the capital of the Camphor Islands. So he dismounted from the Jinni’s shoulders and looked about that wady where he espied pleasant spots and he descried trees and blooms and rills and birds that trilled and shrilled with various notes. Then quoth the ‘Aun to him, “Go forth to yonder garden and thence bring thy need;” so he walked thither and, finding the gates wide open, he passed in and fell to solacing himself with looking to the right and the left. Presently he saw bird-cages suspended and in them were fowls of every kind, to each two, so he walked up to them and whenever he noted a bird that pleased him he took it and caged it till he had there six fowls and of all sorts twain. Then he designed to leave the garden when suddenly a keeper met him face to face at the door crying aloud, “A thief! a thief!” Hereat all the other gardeners rushed up and seized him, together with the cage, and carried him before the King, the owner of that garden and lord of that city. They set him in the presence saying, “Verily we found this young man stealing a cage wherein be fowls and in good sooth he must be a thief.” Quoth the Sultan, “Who misled thee, O Youth, to enter my grounds and trespass thereon and take of my birds?” Whereto the Prince returned no reply. So the Sultan resumed, “By Allah, thou hast wilfully wasted thy life, but, O Youngster, an it be thy desire to take my birds and carry them away, do thou go and bring me from the capital of the Isles of the Súdán[365] bunches of grapes which are clusters of diamonds and emeralds, when I will give thee over and above these six fowls six other beside.” So the Prince left him and going to the ‘Aun informed him of what had befallen him, and the other cried, “’Tis easy, O Mohammed;” and mounting him upon his shoulders flew with him for the space of two hours and presently alighted. The youth saw himself in the lands surrounding the capital of the Sudan Islands which he found more beautiful than the fair region he had left; and he designed forthright to approach the garden containing great clusters of diamonds and emeralds, when he was confronted by a Lion in the middle way. Now it was the wont of this beast yearly to visit that city and to pounce upon everything he met of women as well as of men; so seeing the Prince he charged down upon him, designing to rend him limb from limb?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night, and that was

The Four Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale, that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Lion charged down upon Mohammed, Son of the Sultan, designing to rend him in pieces, but he confronted him and unsheathing his scymitar made it glitter in the sunshine[366] and pressed him close and bashed him with brand between his eyes so that the blade came forth gleaming from between his thighs. Now by doom of Destiny the daughter of the Sultan was sitting at the latticed window of her belvedere and was looking at her glass and solacing herself, when her glance fell upon the King’s son as he was smiting the Lion. So she said to herself, “May thy hand never palsied grow nor exult over thee any foe!” But the Prince after slaying the Lion left the body and walked into the garden whose door had been left open and therein he found that all the trees were of precious metal bearing clusters like grapes of diamonds and emeralds. So he went forwards and plucked from those trees six bunches which he placed within a cage, when suddenly he was met by the keeper who cried out, “A thief! a thief!” and when joined by the other gardeners seized him and bore him before the Sultan saying, “O my lord, I have come upon this youth who was red-handed in robbing yonder clusters.” The King would have slain him forth-right, but suddenly there came to him a gathering of the folk who cried, “O King of the Age, a gift of good news!”[367] Quoth he, “Wherefore?” and quoth they, “Verily the Lion which was wont hither to come every year and to pounce upon all that met him of men and of women and of maidens and of children, we have found him in such a place clean slain and split into twain.” Now the Sultan’s daughter was standing by the lattice of the belvedere which was hard by the Divan of her sire and was looking at the youth who stood before the King and was awaiting to see how it would fare with him. But when the folk came in and reported the death of the Lion, the Sultan threw aside the affair of the youth of his joy and delight and fell to asking, “Who was it slew the beast?” and to saying, “Walláhi! By the rights of my forbears in this kingdom,[368] let him who killed the monster come before me and ask of me a boon which it shall be given to him; nay, even if he demand of me a division of all my good he shall receive that same.” But when he had heard of all present that the tidings were true then the city-folk followed one another in a line and went in to the Sultan and one of them said, “I have slain the Lion.” Said the King, “And how hast thou slain him; and in what manner hast thou been able to prevail over and master him?” Then he spake with him softly[369] and proved him and at last so frightened him that the man fell to the ground in his consternation; when they carried him off and the King declared, “This wight lieth!” All this and Mohammed, the Son of the Sultan, was still standing and looking on and when he heard the man’s claim he smiled. Suddenly the King happening to glance at him saw the smile and was astounded and said in his mind, “By Allah, this Youth is a wondrous for he smileth he being in such case as this.” But behold, the King’s daughter sent an eunuch to her father and he delivered the message, when the King arose and went into his Harem and asked her, “What is in thy mind and what is it thou seekest?” She answered, “Is it thy desire to know who slew the Lion that thou mayest largesse him?” and he rejoined, saying, “By virtue of Him who created His servants and computeth their numbers,[370] when I know him and am certified of his truth my first gift to him shall be to wed thee with him and he shall become to me son-in-law were he in the farthest of lands.” Retorted she, “By Allah, O my father, none slew the Lion save the young man who entered the garden and carried off the clusters of gems, the youth whom thou art minded to slay.” When he heard these words from his daughter, the King returned to the Divan and bade summon Mohammed the Son of the Sultan, and when they set him between his hands he said to him, “O Youth, thou hast indemnity from me and say me, art thou he who slew the Lion?" The other answered, "O King, I am indeed young in years; how then shall I prevail over a Lion and slaughter him, when, by Allah, in all my born days I never met even with a hyena much less than a lion? However, O King of the Age, an thou largesse me with these clusters of gems and give them to me in free gift, I will wend my ways, and if not my luck will be with Allah!" Rejoined the King, "O Youth, speak thou sooth and fear not!" Here he fell to soothing him with words and solacing him and gentling him, after which he threatened him with his hand, but Mohammed the Son of the Sultan raised his neave swiftlier than the lightning and smote the King and caused him swoon. Now there was none present in the Divan save Mohammed and the Monarch, who after an hour came to himself and said, "By Allah, thou art he who slew the Lion!" Hereupon he robed him with a robe of honour and, summoning the Kazi, bade tie the marriage-tie with his daughter; but quoth the young man, "O King of the Age, I have a counsel to consult, after which I will return to thee." Quoth the King, "Right rede is this same and a matter not to blame." Accordingly the Prince repaired to the 'Aun in the place where he had left him and related to him all that had betided himself, and of his intended marriage with the King's daughter, whereupon said the Jinni, "Condition with him that if thou take her to wife thou shalt carry her along with thee to thine own country." The youth did his bidding and returned to the King who said, "There is no harm in that," and the marriage-knot was duly knotted. Then the bridegroom was led in procession to his bride with whom he remained a full month of thirty days, after which he craved leave to fare for his own motherland.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Fifty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Mohammed Son of the Sultan craved leave to return to his own motherland, when his father-in-law gave him an hundred clusters of the diamantine and smaragdine grapes, after which he farewelled the King and taking his bride fared without the city. Here he found expecting him the ‘Aun, who, after causing them to fill their ears with cotton, shouldered him, together with his wife, and then flew with them through the firmament for two hours or so and alighted with them near the capital of the Camphor Islands. Presently Mohammed the Son of the Sultan took four clusters of the emeralds and diamonds, and going in to the King laid them before him and drew him back. The Sultan gazed upon them and marvelled and cried, “Walláhi! doubtless this youth be a Magician for that he hath covered a space of three hundred years in three[371] of coming and going, and this is amongst the greatest of marvels.” Presently he resumed, saying, “O Youth, hast thou reached the city of the Sudan?” and the other replied, “I have.” The King continued, “What is its description and its foundation and how are its gardens and its rills?” So he informed him of all things required of him and the Sultan cried, “By Allah, O Youth, thou deservest all thou askest of me.” “I ask for nothing,” said the Prince, “save the birds,” and the King, “O Youth, there is with us in our town a Vulture which cometh every year from behind Mount Káf and pounceth upon the sons of this city and beareth them away and eateth them on the heads of the hills. Now an thou canst master this monster-fowl and slay that same I have a daughter whom I will marry to thee.” Quoth the Prince, “I have need of taking counsel;” and returned to the ‘Aun to inform him thereof when behold, the Vulture made its appearance. But as soon as the Jinni espied it, he flew and made for it, and caught it up; then, smiting it with a single stroke of his hand, he cut it in two and presently he returned and settled down upon the ground. Then, after a while, he went back to Mohammed, the Son of the Sultan, and said to him, “Hie thee to the King and report to him the slaughter of the Vulture.” So he went and entering the presence reported what had taken place, whereupon the Sultan with his lords of the land mounted[372] their horses, and, going to the place, found the monster killed, and cut into two halves. Anon the King returned, and leading Prince Mohammed with him bade knit the marriage-knot with his daughter and caused him to pay her the first visit. He tarried beside her for a full-told month after which he asked leave to travel and to seek the city of his first spouse, carrying with him the second. Hereupon the King his father-in-law presented to him ten cages, each containing four birds of vari-coloured coats and farewelled him. After which he fared forth and left the city, and outside it he found the ‘Aun awaiting him and the Jinni salam’d to the Prince and congratulated him in what he had won of gifts and prizes. Then he arose high in air, bearing Mohammed and his two brides and all that was with them, and he winged his way for an hour or so until he alighted once more at the ruined city. Here he found the Prince’s suite of learned men, together with the bât-beasts and their loads[373] and everything other even as he had left it. So they sat down to take their rest when the ‘Aun said, “O Mohammed, O Son of the Sultan, I have been predestined to thee in this site whither thou wast fated to come; but I have another and a further covenant to keep wherewith I would charge thee.” “What is that?” quoth he, and quoth the ‘Aun, “Verily thou shalt not depart this place until thou shalt have laved me and shrouded me and graved[374] me in the ground;” and so saying he shrieked a loud shriek and his soul fled his flesh. This was grievous to the son of the King and he and his men arose and washed him and shrouded him and having prayed over him buried him in the earth. After this the Prince turned him to travel, so they laded the loads and he and his set forth intending for their families and native land. They journeyed during the space of thirty days till they reached the fork of the highway whereat stood the great rock, and here they found tents and pavilions and a host nor did they know what this mighty many might mean. Now the father, when his son left him, suffered from straitness of breast and was sore perplexed as to his affair and he wot not what to do; so he bade make ready his army and commanded the lords of the land to prepare for the march and all set out seeking his son and determined to find tidings of him. Nor did they cease faring till they reached the place where the road forked into three and on the first rock they saw written the three lines?”This is the road of safe chance;" and "This is the way of repentance;" and "This is the path whereon whoso paceth shall return nevermore." But when the father read it he was posed and perplext as to the matter and he cried, "Would Heaven I knew by which road of these three my son Mohammed may have travelled;" and as he was brooding over this difficulty?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Fifty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that as the Sultan was brooding over this difficulty lo and behold! his son Mohammed appeared before him by the path which showed written, "This is the path whereon whoso passeth shall nevermore return." But when the King saw him, and face confronted face, he arose and met him and salam'd to him giving him joy of his safety; and the Prince told him all that had befallen him from beginning to end?how he had not reached those places save by the All-might of Allah, and how he had succeeded in winning his wish by meeting with the 'Aun. So they nighted in that site and when it was morning they resumed their march, all in gladness and happiness for that the Sultan had recovered his son Mohammed. They ceased not faring a while until they drew near their native city when the bearers of good tidings ran forward announcing the arrival of the Sultan and his son and, hereupon the houses were decorated in honour of the Prince's safe return and crowds came out to meet them till such time as all had entered the city-walls, after which their joys increased and their annoy fell from them. And this is the whole of the tale told by the first Larrikin. Now when the Sultan heard it he marvelled at what had befallen the chief adventurer therein, when the second Larrikin spoke saying “I have by me a tale, a marvel of marvels, and which is a delight to the hearer and a diversion to the reader and to the reciter.” Quoth the Sovran, “What may that be, O Shaykh?” and the man fell to relating the

Tale of the Fisherman and his Son

They tell that whilome there was a Fisherman, a poor man with a wife and family, who every day was wont to take his net and go down to the river a-fishing for his daily bread which is distributed. Then he would sell a portion of his catch and buy victual and the rest he would carry to his wife and children that they might eat. One day of the many days he said to his son who was growing up to a biggish lad, “O my child, come forth with me this morning, haply All-Mighty Allah may send us somewhat of livelihood by thy footsteps;” and the other answered, “’Tis well, O my father.” Hereupon the Fisherman took his son and his net and they twain went off together till they arrived at the river-bank, when quoth the father, “O my boy I will throw the net upon the luck of thee.” Then he went forward to the water and standing thereby took his net and unfokled it so that it spread when entering the stream, and after waiting an hour or so he drew it in and found it heavy of weight; so he cried, “O my son, bear a hand” and the youth came up and lent him aidance in drawing it in. And when they had haled it to shore they opened it and found a fish of large size and glittering with all manner of colours. Quoth the father, “O my son, by Allah, this fish befitteth not any but the Caliph; do thou therefore abide with it till I go and fetch a charger wherein to carry it as an offering for the Prince of True Believers.” The youth took his seat by the fish and when his father was afar off he went up to her and said, “Doubtless thou hast children and the byword saith, Do good and cast it upon the waters.” Then he took up the fish and setting her near the river besprinkled[375] her and said, “Go thou to thy children, this is even better than being eaten by the Caliph.” But having thrown the fish into the stream, his fear of his father grew strong upon him, so he arose and without stay or delay fled his village; and he ceased not flying till he reached the Land of Al-Irák whose capital was under a King wide of dominions (and praise be to the King of all kingdoms!). So he entered the streets and presently he met a baker-man who said to him, “O my son, wilt thou serve?” whereto he replied, “I will serve, O uncle.” The man settled with him for a wage of two silver nusfs a day together with his meat and his drink, and he remained working with him for a while of time. Now one day of the days behold, he saw a lad of the sons of that city carrying about a cock with the intention of vending it, when he was met by a Jew who said to him, “O my child, wilt thou sell this fowl?” and the other said, “I will.” Quoth the Jew, “For ten faddahs?” and quoth the youth, “Allah openeth!” Said the other, “For twenty faddahs?” and the lad, “Allah veileth!”[376] Then the Jew fell to increasing his offer for the cock until he reached a full dinar.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Sixty-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Jew raised his bid for the cock till he reached a gold piece when the lad said, “Here with it.” So the man gave him the dinar and took from him the fowl and slaughtered it forthright. Then he turned to a boy, one of his servants, and said to him, “Take this cock and carry it home and say to thy mistress, ‘Pluck it, but open it not until such time as I shall return.’” And the servant did his bidding. But when the Fisherman’s son who was standing hard by heard these words and saw the bargain, he waited for a while and as soon as the servant had carried off the fowl, he arose and buying two cocks at four faddahs he slaughtered them and repaired with them to the house of the Jew. Then he rapped at the door and when the mistress came out to him he bespoke her saying, “The house master saith to thee, ‘Take these two silvers and send me the bird which was brought to thee by the servant boy.’”[377] Quoth she, "'Tis well," so he gave her the two fowls and took from her the cock which her husband had slaughtered. Then he returned to the bakery, and when he was private he opened the belly of the cock and found therein a signet-ring with a bezel-gem which in the sun showed one colour and in the shade another. So he took it up and hid it in his bosom, after which he gutted the bird and cooked it in the furnace and ate it. Presently the Jew having finished his business, returned home and said to his wife, "Bring me the cock." She brought him the two fowls and he seeing them asked her, "But where be the first cock?" And she answered him, "Thou thyself sentest the boy with these two birds and then orderedst him to bring thee the first cock." The Jew held his peace but was sore distressed at heart, so sore indeed that he came nigh to die and said to himself, "Indeed it hath slipped from my grasp!" Now the Fisherman's son after he had mastered the ring waited until the evening evened when he said, "By Allah, needs must this bezel have some mystery;" so he withdrew into the privacy of the furnace and brought it out from his bosom and fell a-rubbing it. Thereupon the Slave of the Ring appeared and cried, "Here I stand[378] between thy hands." Then the Fisherman's son said to himself, "This indeed is the perfection of good fortune," and returned the gem to his breast-pocket as it was. Now when morning morrowed the owner of the bakery came in and the youth said to him, "O my master, I am longing for my people and my native land and 'tis my desire to fare and look upon them and presently I will return to thee." So the man paid him his wage, after which he left him and walked from the bakery till he came to the Palace of the Sultan where he found near the gate well nigh an hundred heads which had been cut off and there suspended; so he leaned for rest against the booth of a sherbet-seller and asked its owner, "O master, what is the cause of all these heads being hung up?" and the other answered, "O my son, inquire not, anent what hath been done." However when he repeated the question the man replied, "O my son, verily the Sultan hath a daughter, a model of beauty and loveliness, of symmetric stature and perfect grace, in fact likest a branch of the Rattan-palm;[379] and whoso cometh ever to seek her in marriage her father conditioneth with him a condition." Cried the Fisherman's son, "What may be that condition?" and the other replied, “There is a great mound of ashes under the latticed windows of the Sultan’s palace, and whoso wisheth to take his daughter to wife he maketh a covenant with him that he shall carry off that heap. So the other accepted the agreement with only the proviso that he should have forty days’ grace and he consented that, an he fail within that time, his head be cut off.” “And the heap is high?” quoth the Fisherman’s son. “Like a hill,” quoth the other. Now when the youth had thoroughly comprehended what the sherbet-seller had told him, he farewelled him and left him; then, going to a Khan, he hired him a cell and taking seat therein for a time he pondered how he should proceed, for he was indeed fearful yet was his heart hanging to the love of the Sultan’s daughter. Presently he brought out his ring, and rubbed it, when the voice of the Slave cried to him, “Here I stand between thy hands and what mayst thou require of me?” Said the other, “I want a suit of kingly clothes;” whereat without delay a bundle was set before him and when he opened it he found therein princely gear. So he took it and rising without loss of time he went into the Hammam and caused himself to be soaped and gloved and thoroughly washed, after which he donned the dress and his case was changed into other case?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the son of the Fisherman came forth the Bath-house and donned his fine dress, his was changed into other case and he appeared before the folk in semblance of the sons of Kings. Presently he went to the Sultan’s palace and entering therein made his salam and, blushing for modesty, did his obeisance and blessed the Sultan with the blessing due to Caliphs. His greetings were returned and the King welcomed him and after that looked at him, and finding him after princely fashion, asked him, “What is thy need, O Youth, and what requirest thou?” Answered the other, “I seek connection with thy house, and I come desirous of betrothal with the lady concealed and the pearl unrevealed, which is thy daughter.” “Art thou able to perform the condition, O Youth?” asked the King; “For I want neither means nor moneys nor precious stones nor other possession; brief, none other thing save that thou remove yon mound of ashes from beneath the windows of my palace.” Upon this he bade the youth draw near him and when he obeyed threw open the lattice; and, showing him the hillock that stood underneath it, said, “O Youth, I will betroth to thee my daughter an thou be pleased to remove this heap; but if thou prove thee unable so to do I will strike off thy head.” Quoth the Fisherman’s son, “I am satisfied therewith,” presently adding, “A delay![380] grant me the term of forty days.” “I have allowed thy request to thee,” said the King and wrote a document bearing the testimony of those present, when cried the youth, “O King, bid nail up thy windows and let them not be unfastened until the fortieth day shall have gone by.” “These words be fair,” quoth the Sultan, and accordingly he gave the order. Hereat the youth went forth from him whereupon all present in the palace cried, “O the pity of it, that this youngster should be done to die; indeed there were many stronger than he, yet none of them availed to remove the heap.” In this way each and every said his say, but when the Fisherman’s son returned to his cell (and he was thoughtful concerning his life and perplext as to his affair) he cried, “Would Heaven I knew whether the Ring hath power to carry it off.” Then shutting himself up in his cell he brought out the signet from his breast-pocket and rubbed it, and a Voice was heard to cry, “Here I stand (and fair befal thy command) between thy hands. What requirest thou of me, O my lord?” The other replied, “I want thee to remove the ash-heap which standeth under the windows of the royal palace, and I demand that thou lay out in lieu thereof a garden wide of sides in whose middlemost must be a mansion tall and choice-builded of base, for the special domicile of the Sultan’s daughter; furthermore, let all this be done within the space of forty days." "Aye ready," quoth the Jinni, "to do all thou desirest." Hereupon the youth felt his affright assuaged and his heart rightly directed; and after this he would go every day to inspect the heap and would find one quarter of it had disappeared, nor did aught of it remain after the fourth morning for that the ring was graved with the cabalistic signs of the Cohens[381] and they had set upon the work an hundred Marids of the Jann that they might carry out the wishes of any who required aught of them. And when the mound was removed they dispread in its site a garden wide of sides in whose midst they edified a palace choice-builded of base, and all this was done within the space of fifteen days, whilst the Fisherman's son ever repaired thither and inspected the work. But when he had perfected his intent he entered to the Sultan and kissing ground between his hands and having prayed for his glory and permanence, said, "O King of the Age, deign open the lattices of thy Palace!" So he went to them and threw them open when lo and behold, he found in lieu of the mound a mighty fine garden wherein were trees and rills and blooms and birds hymning the praises of their Creator; moreover he saw in that garden a palace, an edifice choice-builded of base which is not to be found with any King or Kaysar. Seeing this he wondered at the circumstance and his wits were wildered and he was perplext as to his affair; after which he sent for the Minister and summoned him and said, "Counsel me, O Wazir, as to what I shall do in the case of this youth and in what way shall I fend him from me." Replied the Councillor, "How shall I advise thee, seeing that thou madest condition with him that should he fail in his undertaking thou wouldst strike off his head? Now there is no contrivance in this matter and there is naught to do save marrying him with the girl." By these words the King was persuaded and caused the knot to be knotted and bade them lead the bridegroom in procession to the bride, after which the youth set her in the garden-palace and cohabited with her in all joy and enjoyment and pleasure and disport. On this wise fared it with them; but as regards the case of the Jew, when he lost the cock he went forth in sore disappointment like unto one Jinn-mad; and neither was his sleep sound and good nor were meat and drink pleasant food, and he ceased not wandering about till the Fates threw him into that garden. Now he had noted in past time that a huge heap of ashes stood under the palace-windows and when he looked he cried, “Verily, the youth hath been here and all this work is the work of the signet-ring, for that none other than the Márids of the Jánn could remove such a hillock.” So saying, the Jew returned to his place, where he brought out a parcel of fine pearls and some few emeralds and specimens of coral and other precious minerals, and set them as for sale in a tray. Then he approached the palace which was builded in the garden and cried out saying, “The pearls! and the emeralds! and the corals! and various kinds of fine jewels!” and he kept up this cry.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Jew fell to hawking about his minerals and crying them for sale beside the garden-palace and the Sultan’s daughter hearing him exclaimed, “O Handmaid, bring me that which is for sale with this Jew.” So the girl went down and said to the man, “What hast thou by thee?” and said the other, “Precious stones.” Quoth she, “Wilt thou sell them for gold?” and quoth he, “No, O my lady, I will sell them for nothing save for rings which must be old.”[382] Accordingly she returned and herewith acquainted her lady who said, “By Allah, my Lord hath in his pencase[383] an old worn-out ring, so do thou go and bring it to me while he sleepeth.” But she knew not what was hidden for her in the Secret Purpose, nor that which was fated to be her Fate. So presently she brought out of the pencase the bezel-ring afore-mentioned and gave it to the handmaid who took it and faring outside the house handed it to the Jew, and he received it with extreme joy and in turn presented to her the tray with all thereon. Then he went forth the city and set out on a voyage to the Seven Islands which are not far from the earth-surrounding Ocean;[384] and when he arrived thither he landed upon a sea-holm and travelled to the middle-most thereof. Anon he took seat, and presently brought out the signet-ring and rubbed it, when the slave appeared and cried, "Here I stand and between thy hands, what is it thou needest of me?" "I require of thee," quoth the Jew, "to transport hither the bower of the Sultan's daughter and to restore the ash-heap to the stead it was in whilome under the lattice of the King's Palace." Now ere night had passed away both Princess and Palace were transported to the middlemost of the island; and when the Jew beheld her his heart flamed high for the excess of her beauty and loveliness. So he entered her bower and fell to conversing with her, but she would return to him no reply and, when he would have approached her, she started away in disgust. Hereupon, seeing no signs of conquest, the Jew said in his mind, "Let her wax accustomed to me and she will be satisfied," and on this wise he continued to solace her heart. Now as regards the son of the Fisherman his sleep had extended deep into the forenoon and when the sun burnt upon his back he arose and found himself lying on the ash-heap below the Palace, so he said to himself, "Up and away, otherwise the Sultan will look out of the window and will behold this mound returned to its place as it was before, and he will order thy neck to be smitten." So he hurried him forth hardly believing in his escape, and he ceased not hastening his pace until he came to a coffee-house, which he entered; and there he took him a lodging and used to lie the night, and to rise amorn. Now one day of the days behold, he met a man who was leading about a dog and a cat and a mouse[385] and crying them for sale at the price of ten faddahs; so the youth said in his mind, "Let me buy these at their cheap price;" and he called aloud to the man and having given him the ten silverlings took away his purchase. After this he would fare every day to the slaughter-house and would buy for them a bit of tripe or liver and feed them therewith, but ever and anon he would sit down and ponder the loss of the Ring and bespeak himself and say, "Would Heaven I wot that which Allah Almighty hath done with my Ring and my Palace and my bride the Sultan's daughter!" Now the dog and the cat and the mouse heard him, and one day of the days as, according to his custom, he took them with him and led them to the slaughter-house and bought a meal of entrails and gave somewhat to each that it might eat thereof, he sat down in sad thought and groaned aloud and sorrow prevailed upon him till he was overcome by sleep. The season was the mid-forenoon[386] and the while he slumbered and was drowned in drowsiness, the Dog said to the Cat and the Mouse, "O brethren mine, in very deed this youth, who hath bought us for ten faddahs, leadeth us every day to this stead and giveth us our rations of food. But he hath lost his Ring and the Palace wherein was his bride, the daughter of the Sultan; so let us up and fare forth and seek therefor and do ye twain mount upon my back so that we can overwander the seas and the island-skirts." They did as he bade them and he walked down with them to the waters and swam with them until they found themselves amiddlemost the main; nor did he cease swimming with them for about a day and a night until the morning morrowed and they saw from afar a somewhat that glittered. So they made for it till they drew near, when they saw that it was the Palace in question, whereat the Dog continued swimming till such time as he came ashore and dismounted the Cat and the Mouse. Then he said to them, "Let us abide here."?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Dog said to the Cat and the Mouse, "I will abide and await you here, and do ye twain fare into the Palace, where the Cat shall take her station upon the crenelles over the lattice window and the Mouse shall enter the mansion and roam about and search through the rooms until she come upon the Ring required." So they did the Dog's bidding and sought the places he had appointed to them and the Mouse crept about but found naught until she approached the bedstead and beheld the Jew asleep and the Princess lying afar off. He had been longsome in requiring of her her person and had even threatened her with slaughter, yet he had no power to approach her nor indeed had he even looked upon the form of her face. Withal the Mouse ceased not faring about until she approached the Jew, whom she discovered sleeping upon his back and drowned in slumber for the excess of his drink that weighed him down. So she drew near and considered him and saw the Ring in his mouth below his tongue whereat she was perplext how to recover it; but presently she went forth to a vessel of oil and dipping her tail therein approached the sleeper and drew it over his nostrils, whereat he sneezed with a sneeze so violent that the Ring sprang from between his jaws and fell upon the side of the bedstead. Then she seized it in huge joy and returning to the Cat said to her, "Verily the prosperity of our lord hath returned to him." After this the twain went back to the Dog whom they found expecting them, so they marched down to the sea and mounted upon his back and he swam with them both, all three being in the highest spirits. But when they reached the middle of the main, quoth the Cat to the Mouse, "Pass the Ring to me that I may carry it awhile;" and the other did so, when she placed it in her chops for an hour of time. Then quoth the Dog to them, "Ye twain have taken to yourselves charge of the Ring, each of you for a little time, and I also would do likewise." They both said to him, "O our brother, haply 'twill fall from thy mouth;" but said he to them, "By Allah, an ye give it not to me for a while I will drown you both in this very place." Accordingly the two did in their fear as the Dog desired and when he had set it in his chops it dropped therefrom into the abyss of the ocean; seeing which all repented thereat and they said, "Wasted is our work we have wrought." But when they came to land they found their lord sleeping from the excess of his cark and his care, and so the trio stood on the shore and were sorrowing with sore sorrow, when behold, there appeared to them a Fish strange of semblance who said to them, "Take ye this Signet-ring and commit it to your lord, the son of the Fisherman, and when giving it to him say, ‘Since thou diddest a good deed and threwest the Fish into the sea thy kindness shall not be for naught; and, if it fail with the Creature, it shall not fail with Allah the Creator.’ Then do ye inform him that the Fish which his father the Fisher would have presented to the King and whereupon he had mercy and returned her to the waters, that Fish am I, and the old saw saith, ‘This for that, and tit for tat is its reward!’” Hereupon the Dog took the Signet-ring and the other two went up with him to their lord and awaking him from sleep returned to him his Ring. But when he saw it he became like one Jinn-mad from the excess of his joy and the three related to him the affair of the Signet; how they had brought it away from the Jew and how it had dropped from the Dog’s mouth into the abyss of the sea and lastly how the Fish who had found it brought it back to them declaring that it was she whom his sire had netted and whom the son had returned to the depths. Cried he, “Alham-dolillah”?Glory be to the Lord?who caused us work this weal and requited us for our kindness;” after which he took the Signet and waited until night had nighted. Then he repaired to the mount which was under the Sultan’s Palace and brought out the Ring and rubbed it, when the Slave appeared and cried to him, “Here I stand (and fair befal thy command!) between thy hands: what is it needest thou and requirest thou of me?” The other replied, “I demand that thou carry off for me this mound.”?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Son of the Fisherman bade the Slave of the Ring remove the mound and return the garden as whilome it was and restore the Palace containing the Jew and the Sultan's daughter. Nor did that hour pass before everything was replaced in its proper stead. Then the Youth went up to the saloon where he found the Jew recovered from his drunkenness and he was threatening the Princess and saying, "Thou! for thee there is no escape from me." But cried she, "O dog, O accurst, joy from my lord is well nigh to me." Hearing these words the Youth fell upon the Jew and dragging him along by his neck, went down with him and bade them light a furious fire, and so they did till it flamed and flared; after which he pinioned his enemy and caused him to be cast therein when his bones were melted upon his flesh. Then returning to the Palace he fell to blaming the Sultan's daughter for the matter of the Ring, and asking her, "Why didst thou on this wise?" She answered, "From Fate there is no flight, and Alhamdolillah?praise to the Lord?who after all that befel us from the Jew hath brought us together once more." Now all that happened from the Jew and the return of the Sultan's daughter and the restoring of the Palace and the death of his deceiver remained unknown to the Sultan, and here is an end to my history. And when the second Larrikin held his peace quoth the King, "Allah quicken thee for this story; by the Almighty 'tis wondrous, and it delighteth the hearer and rejoiceth the teller." Then cried the third Larrikin, "I also have by me an history more marvelous than these two; and, were it written in water of gold upon the pages of men's hearts, it were worthy thereof." Quoth the King, "O Larrikin, if it prove stranger and rarer than these I will surely largesse thee." Whereupon quoth he, "O King of the Age, listen to what I shall relate," and he fell to telling the

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

Tale of the Third Larrikin Concerning Himself.

In my early years I had a cousin, the daughter of my paternal uncle, who loved me and I loved her whilst her father loathed me. So one day she sent to me saying, “Do thou fare forth and demand me in marriage from my sire;” and, as I was poor and her father was a wealthy merchant, she sent me to her dowry fifty gold pieces which I took; and, accompanied by four of my comrades, I went to the house of my father’s brother and there arrived I went within. But when he looked upon me his face showed wrath and my friends said to him, “Verily, thy nephew seeketh in marriage the daughter of his uncle;” and as soon as he heard these words he cried aloud at them and reviled me and drave me from his doors. So I went from him well nigh broken-hearted and I wept till I returned to my mother who cried, “What is to do with thee, O my son!” I related to her all that had befallen me from my uncle and she said to me, “O my child, to a man who loveth thee not thou goest, forsooth, to ask his daughter in marriage!” Whereto I replied, “O mother mine, she sent a message bidding me so do and verily she loveth me.” Quoth my mother, Take patience, O my son!” I heartened my heart, and my parent promised me all welfare and favour from my cousin; moreover she was thinking of me at all times and presently she again sent to me and promised me that she never would love any other. Then behold, a party of folk repaired to her father and asked her to wife of him and prepared to take her away. But when the tidings reached her that her parent purposed marrying her to one of those people, she sent to me saying, “Get thee ready for this midnight and I will come to thee.” When night was at its noon she appeared, carrying a pair of saddle-bags wherein was a somewhat of money and raiment, and she was leading a she-mule belonging to her father whereupon her saddle-bags were packed. “Up with us,” she cried, so I arose with her in that outer darkness and we went forth the town forthright and the Veiler veiled us, nor did we stint faring till morning when we hid ourselves in fear lest we be overtaken. And when the next night fell we made ready and set out again, but we knew not whither we were wending, for the Predestinator existeth and what is decided for us is like

Destiny. At last we came to a wide and open place where the heat smote us, and we sat down under a tree to smell the air. Presently sleep came upon me and I was drowned in slumber from the excess of my toil and travail, when suddenly a dog-faced baboon came up to the daughter of my uncle?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable !" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Seventy-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Larrikin continued his tale saying to the King:?And as I was drowned in slumber a dog-faced baboon came up to the daughter of my uncle and assaulted her and knew her carnally; then, having taken her pucelage he ran away,[387] but I knew nothing thereof from being fast asleep. Now when I awoke I found my cousin was changed of case and her colour had waxed pale and she was in saddest condition; so I asked her and she told me all that had betided her and said to me, "O son of my uncle, from Fate there is no flight, even as saith one of those who knoweth:?

'And when death shall claw with his firm-fixt nail * I saw that spells[388] were of scant avail.'

And one of them also said:?

'When God would execute His will in anything On one endowed with
sight, hearing and reasoning,
He stops his ears and blinds his eyes and draws his will From
him, as one draws out the hairs to paste that cling;
Till, His decrees fulfilled, He gives him back his wit, That
therewithal he may receive admonishing.'"[389]

Then she spake concerning the predestination of the Creator till she could say no more thereof. Presently we departed that stead and we travelled till we came to a town of the towns frequented by merchants, where we hired us a lodging and furnished it with mats and necessaries. Here I asked for a Kazi and they pointed out to me one of them amongst the judges of the place whom I summoned with two of his witnesses; then I made one of them deputy[390] for my cousin and was married to her and went in unto her and I said to myself, "All things depend upon Fate and Lot." After that I tarried with her for a full told year in that same town, a disease befel her and she drew nigh unto death. Hereat quoth she to me, "Allah upon thee, O son of my uncle, when I shall be dead and gone and the Destiny of Allah shall come upon thee and drive thee to marry again, take not to wife any but a virgin-girl or haply do thou wed one who hath known man but once;[391] for by Allah, O my cousin, I will say thee nothing but sooth when I tell thee that the delight of that dog-faced baboon who deflowered me hath remained with me ever since."[392] So saying she expired[393] and her soul fled forth her flesh. I brought to her a woman who washeth the dead and shrouded her and buried her; and after her decease I went forth from the town until Time bore me along and I became a wanderer and my condition was changed and I fell into this case. And no one knew me or aught of my affairs till I came and made friends with yonder two men. Now the King hearing these words marvelled at his adventure and what had betided him from the Shifts of Time and his heart was softened to him and he largessed him and his comrades and sent them about their business. Then quoth one of the bystanders to the King, "O Sultan, I know a tale still rarer than this;" and quoth the King, "Out with it;" whereat the man began to relate

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

THE HISTORY OF ABU NIYYAH AND ABU NIYYATAYN[394]

It is recounted that in Mosel was a king and he was Lord of moneys and means and troops and guards. Now in the beginning of his career his adventures were strange for that he was not of royal rank or race, nor was he of the sons of Kings but prosperity met him because of the honesty of his manners and morals. His name was Abu Niyyah, the single-minded?and he was so poor that he had naught of worldly weal, so quoth he to himself, “Remove thee from this town and haply Allah will widen thy means of livelihood inasmuch as the byword saith, Travel, for indeed much of the joys of life are in travelling.’” So he fixed his mind upon removal from the town; and, having very few articles of his own, he sold them for a single dinar which he took and fared forth from his place of birth seeking another stead. Now when journeying he sighted following him a man who was also on the move and he made acquaintance with him and the two fell to communing together upon the road. Each of the twain wished to know the name of his comrade and Abu Niyyah asked his fellow, saying, “O my brother, what may be thy name?” whereto the other answered, “I am called Abu Niyyatayn?the two-minded.” “And I am Abu Niyyah!” cried the other, and his fellow-traveller questioned him, saying, “Hast thou with thee aught of money?” Whereto he replied, “I have with me a single Ashrafi and no more.” Quoth the other, “But I have ten gold pieces, so do thou have a care of them and the same will be eleven.” Abu Niyyah accepted the charge and they went upon the road together and as often as they entered a town they nighted therein for a single night or two and in the morning they departed therefrom. This continued for a while of time until they made a city which had two gates and Abu Niyyah forewent his fellow through one of the entrances and suddenly heard an asker which was a slave begging and saying, “O ye beneficent, O doers of good deeds, an alms shall bring ten-fold.” And, as the chattel drew near[395] and Abu Niyyah noted his words, his heart was softened and he gave him his single Ashrafi; whereupon his comrade looked upon him and asked, “What hast thou doled to him?” Answered he, “An

Ashrafi;” and quoth the other, “Thou hast but a single gold piece while I have ten;” so he took the joint stock from him and left him and went his way.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Seventy-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the man Abu Niyyatayn took from Abu Niyyah the ten Ashrafis[396] and said to him, “The gold piece belonging to thee thou hast given to the asker;” then, carrying away the other ten he left him and went about his business. Now Abu Niyyah had with him not a single copper neither aught of provaunt so he wandered about the town to find a Cathedral-mosque and seeing one he went into it and made the Wuzu-ablution and prayed that which was incumbent on him of obligatory prayers. Then he seated himself to rest until the hour of the sunset devotions and he said to himself “Ho, Such-an- one! this be a time when no one knoweth thee; so go forth and fare round about the doors and have a heed, haply Allah Almighty our Lord shall give thee somewhat of daily bread thou shalt eat blessing the creator.” Hereupon he went forth the Mosque and wandered through the nearest quarter, when behold, he came upon a lofty gate and a well adorned; so he stood before it and saw a slave lad coming out therefrom and bearing on his head a platter wherein was a pile of broken bread and some bones, and the boy stood there and shook the contents of the platter upon the ground. Abu Niyyah seeing this came forward and fell to picking up the orts of bread and ate them and gnawed the flesh from sundry of the bones until he was satisfied and the slave diverted himself by looking on. After that he cried, “Alhamdolillah? Glory be to God!”[397] and the chattel went upstairs to his master and said, “O my lord, I have seen a marvel!" Quoth the other, "And what may that be?" and quoth the servile, "I found a man standing at our door and he was silent and spoke not a word; but when he saw me throwing away the remnants[398] of our eating-cloth he came up to them and fell to devouring bittocks of the bread and to breaking the bones and sucking them, after which he cried, ÂAlhamdolillah.'" Said the master, "O my good slave, do thou take these ten Ashrafis and give them to the man;" so the lad went down the stair and was half-way when he filched one of the gold-pieces and then having descended he gave the nine. Hereupon Abu Niyyah counted them and finding only nine, said, "There wanted one Ashrafi, for the asker declared, An almsdeed bringeth tenfold, and I gave him a single gold piece." The house-master heard him saying, "There wanteth an Ashrafi," and he bade the slave call aloud to him and Abu Niyyah went upstairs to the sitting room, where he found the owner, a merchant of repute, and salam'd to him. The other returned his greeting and said, "Ho fellow!" and the other said "Yes," when the first resumed, "The slave, what did he give thee?" "He gave me," said Abu Niyyah, "nine Ashrafis;" and the house-master rejoined, "Wherefore didst thou declare, There faileth me one gold piece? Hast thou a legal claim of debt upon us for an Ashrafi, O thou scanty of shame?" He answered, "No, by Allah, O my lord; my intent was not that but there befel me with a man which was a beggar such-and-such matter." Hereupon the merchant understood his meaning and said to him, "Do thou sit thee down here and pass the night with us." So Abu Niyyah seated himself by his side and nighted with the merchant until the morning. Now this was the season for the payment of the poor-rates,[399] and that merchant was wont to take the sum from his property by weight of scales, so he summoned the official weigher who by means of his balance computed the account and took out the poor-rate and gave the whole proceeds to Abu Niyyah. Quoth he, "O my lord, what shall I do with all this good, especially as thou hast favoured me with thy regard?" "No matter for that," quoth the other; so Abu Niyyah went forth from the presence of his patron and hiring himself a shop fell to buying what suited him of all kinds of merchandise such as a portion of coffee-beans and of pepper and of tin;[400] and stuffs of Al-Hind, together with other matters, saying to himself, "Verily this shop is the property of thy hand.” So he sat there selling and buying and he was in the easiest of life and in all comfort rife for a while of time when behold, his quondam companion, Abu Niyyatayn was seen passing along the market-street. His eyes were deep[401] sunken and he was propped upon a staff as he begged and cried, “O good folk, O ye beneficent, give me an alms for the love of Allah!” But when his sometime associate, Abu Niyyah looked upon him, he knew him and said to the slave whom he had bought for his service, “Go thou and bring me yonder man.” Hereat the chattel went and brought him and Abu Niyyah seated him upon the shop-board and sent his servile to buy somewhat of food and he set it before Abu Niyyatayn who ate till he was filled. After this the wanderer asked leave to depart but the other said to him, “Sit thou here, O Shaykh; for thou art my guest during the coming night.” Accordingly he seated himself in the shop till the hour of sundown, when Abu Niyyah took him and led him to his lodging where the slave served up the supper-tray and they ate till they had eaten their sufficiency. Then they washed their hands and abode talking together till at last quoth Abu Niyyah, “O my brother, hast thou not recognised me?” to which the other responded, “No, by Allah, O my brother.” Hereupon said the house-master, “I am thy whilome comrade Abu Niyyah, and we came together, I and thou, from such-and-such a place to this city. But I, O my brother, have never changed mine intent[402] and all thou seest with me of good, the half thereof belongeth to thee.” When it was morning tide he presented him with the moiety of all he possessed of money and means and opened for him a shop in the Bazar by the side of his own and Abu Niyyatayn fell to selling and buying, and he and his friend Abu Niyyah led the most joyous of lives. This endured for a while of time until one day of the days when quoth Abu Niyyatayn to Abu Niyyah, “O my brother, we have exhausted our sitting in this city, so do thou travel with us unto another.” Quoth Abu Niyyah, “Why, O my brother, should we cease abiding here in comfort when we have gained abundance of wealth and moveables and valuables and we seek naught save a restful life?” However Abu Niyyatayn ceased not to repeat his words to him and persist in his purpose and reiterate his demand, till Abu Niyyah was pleased with the idea of travelling?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night and the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Seventy-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Abu Niyyah was pleased with the idea of travelling companied with Abu Niyyatayn: so they got themselves ready and loaded a caravan of camels and mules and went off from that city and travelled for a space of twenty days. At last they came to a camping-ground about sunset-hour and they alighted therein seeking rest and a nighting stead, and next morning when they arose they sought where they could fodder and water their cattle. Now the only place they found was a well and one said to other, “Who will descend therein and draw for us drink?” Cried Abu Niyyah, “I will go down” (but he knew not what was fated to him in the Eternal Purpose), and so saying he let himself down by the rope into the well and filled for them the water-buckets till the caravan had its sufficiency. Now Abu Niyyatayn for the excess of his envy and hatred was scheming in his heart and his secret soul to slay Abu Niyyah, and when all had drunk he cut the cord and loaded his beasts and fared away leaving his companion in the well, for the first day and the second until the coming of night. Suddenly two ‘Ifrits forgathered in that well and sat down to converse with each other, when quoth the first, “What is to do with thee and how is thy case and what mayest thou be?” Quoth his fellow, “By Allah, O my brother, I am satisfied with extreme satisfaction and I never leave the Sultan’s daughter at all at all.” The second Ifrit asked, “And what would forbid thee from her?” and he answered, “I should be driven away by somewhat of wormwood-powder scattered beneath the soles of her feet during the congregational prayers of Friday.” Then quoth the other, “I also, by Allah, am joyful and exulting in the possession of a Hoard of jewels buried without the town near the Azure Column which serveth as bench-mark."[403] "And what," asked the other to his friend, "would expel thee therefrom and expose the jewels to the gaze of man?" whereto he answered, "A white cock in his tenth month[404] slaughtered upon the Azure Column would drive me away from the Hoard and would break the Talisman when the gems would be visible to all." Now as soon as Abu Niyyah had heard the words of the two Ifrits, they arose and departed from the well; and it was the morning hour when, behold, a caravan was passing by that place, so the travellers halted seeking a drink of water. Presently they let down a bucket which was seized by Abu Niyyah and as he was being drawn up they cried out and asked, "What art thou, of Jinn-kind or of man-kind?" and he answered, "I am of the Sons of Adam." Hereupon they drew him up from the pit and questioned him of his case and he said, "I have fallen into it and I am sore ahungered." Accordingly they gave him somewhat to eat and he ate and travelled with them till they entered a certain city and it was on First day.[405] So they passed through the market streets which were crowded and found the people in turmoil and trouble;[406] and as one enquired the cause thereof he was answered, "Verily the Sultan hath a beautiful daughter who is possessed and overridden by an 'Ifrit, and whoso of the physicians would lay[407] the Spirit and is unable or ignorant so to do, the King taketh him and cutteth off his head and hangeth it up before his palace. Indeed of late days a student came hither, a youth who knew nothing of expelling the Evil One, and he accepted the task and the Sultan designeth to smite his neck at this very hour; so the people are flocking with design to divert themselves at the decapitation." Now when Abu Niyyah heard these words he rose without stay or delay and walked in haste till he came into the presence of the Sultan whom he found seated upon his throne and the Linkman standing with his scymitar brandished over the head of the young student and expecting only the royal order to strike his neck. So Abu Niyyah salam'd to him and said, "O King of the Age, release yonder youth from under the sword and send him to thy prison, for if I avail to laying the Spirit and driving him from thy daughter thou shalt have mercy upon yonder wight, and if I fail thou wilt shorten by the head me as well as him." Hereupon the King let unbind the youth and sent him to jail; then he said to Abu Niyyah, “Wouldst thou go at once to my daughter and unspell her from the Jinni?” But the other replied, “No, O King, not until Meeting-day[408] at what time the folk are engaged in congregational prayers.” Now when Abu Niyyah had appointed the Friday, the King set apart for his guest an apartment and rationed him with liberal rations.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundredth and Seventy-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Abu Niyyah having appointed the Sultan for Meeting-day, when he would unsorcel the Princess, waited till the morning dawned. Then he went forth to the Bazar and bought him a somewhat of wormwood[409] for a silvern Nusf and brought it back, and, as soon as the time of congregational prayers came, the Sultan went forth to his devotions and gave orders that Abu Niyyah be admitted to his daughter whilst the folk were busy at their devotions. Abu Niyyah repaired to his patient, and scattered the Absinthium beneath the soles of her feet, when, lo, and behold! she was made whole, and she groaned and cried aloud, “Where am I?” Hereat the mother rejoiced and whoso were in the Palace; and, as the Sultan returned from the Mosque, he found his daughter sitting sane and sound, after they had dressed her and perfumed her and adorned her, and she met him with glee and gladness. So the two embraced and their joy increased, and the father fell to giving alms and scattering moneys amongst the Fakirs and the miserable and the widows and orphans, in gratitude for his daughter’s recovery. Moreover he also released the student youth and largessed him, and bade him gang his gait. After this the King summoned Abu Niyyah into the presence and said to him, “O young man, ask a boon first of Allah and then of me and let it be everything thou wishest and wantest.” Quoth the other, “I require of thee to wife the damsel from whom I drove away the Spirit,” and the King turning to his Minster said, “Counsel me, O Wazir.” Quoth the other, “Put him off until the morrow;” and quoth the Sultan, “O youth, come back to me hither on the morning of the next day.” Hereupon Abu Niyyah was dismissed the presence, and betimes on the day appointed he came to the Sultan and found the Wazir beside him hending in hand a gem whose like was not to be found amongst the Kings. Then he set it before the Sultan and said to him, “Show it to the Youth and say to him, The dowry of the Princess, my daughter, is a jewel like unto this.” But whilst Abu Niyyah was standing between his hands the King showed him the gem and repeated to him the words of the Wazir, thinking to himself that it was a pretext for refusing the youth, and saying in his mind, “He will never be able to produce aught like that which the Wazir hath brought.” Hereupon Abu Niyyah asked, “An so be I bring thee ten equal to this, wilt thou give me the damsel?” and the King answered, “I will.” The youth went from him when this was agreed upon and fared to the Market Street, where he bought him a white cock in its tenth month, such as had been described by the ‘Ifrit, whose plume had not a trace of black or red feathers but was of the purest white. Then he fared without the town and in the direction of the setting sun until he came to the Azure Column, which he found exactly as he had heard it from the Jinni, and going to it, he cut the throat of the cock thereupon, when all of a sudden the earth gaped and therein appeared a chamber full of jewels sized as ostrich eggs. That being the Hoard, he went forth and brought with him ten camels, each bearing two large sacks, and returning to the treasure-room, he filled all of these bags with gems and loaded them upon the beasts. Presently he entered to the Sultan with his string of ten camels and, causing them to kneel in the court-yard of the Divan, cried to him, “Come down, O King of the Age, and take the dowry of thy daughter.” So the Sultan turned towards him and, looking at the ten camels, exclaimed, “By Allah, this Youth is Jinn-mad; yet will I go down to see him.” Accordingly he descended the staircase to the place where the camels had been made kneel, and when the sacks had been unloaded and as the King came amongst them, the bags were opened and were found full of jewels greater and more glorious than the one was with him. Hereupon the Sultan was perplext and his wits were bewildered, and he cried to the Wazir, "Walláhi! I think that all the Kings of the Earth in its length and its breadth have not one single gem the like of these: but say me how shall I act, O Wazir?" The Minister replied, "Give him the girl."?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night, an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Wazir said to the King, "Give him the girl." Hereupon the marriage-tie was tied and the bridegroom was led in to the bride, and either rejoiced mightily in his mate,[410] and was increased their joy and destroyed was all annoy. Now Abu Niyyah was a favourite of Fortune, so the Sultan appointed him the government during three days of every week, and he continued ruling after that fashion for a while of time. But one day of the days, as he was sitting in his pleasaunce, suddenly the man Abu Niyyatayn passed before him leaning on a palm-stick, and crying, "O ye beneficent, O ye folk of good!" When Abu Niyyah beheld him he said to his Chamberlain, "Hither with yonder man;" and as soon as he was brought he bade them lead him to the Hammam and dress him in a new habit. They did his bidding and set the beggar before his whilome comrade who said to him, "Dost thou know me?" "No, O my lord," said the other; and he, "I am thy companion of old whom thou wouldst have left to die in the well; but I, by Allah, never changed my intent, and all that I own in this world I will give unto thee half thereof." And they sat in converse for a while of time, until at last quoth the Double-minded one, “Whence camest thou by all this?” and quoth he, “From the well wherein thou threwest me.” Hereupon from the excess of his envy and malice Abu Niyyatayn said to Abu Niyyah, “I also will go down that well and what to thee was given the same shall be given to me.” Then he left him and went forth from him, and he ceased not faring until he made the place. Presently he descended, and having reached the bottom, there sat until the hour of nightfall, when behold! the two ‘Ifrits came and, taking seat by the well-mouth, salam’d each to other. But they had no force nor contrivance and both were as weaklings; so said one of them, “What is thy case, O my brother, and how is thy health?” and said the other, “Ah me, O my brother, since the hour that I was with thee in this place on such a night, I have been cast out of the Sultan’s daughter, and until this tide I have been unable to approach her or indeed at any other time.” Said his comrade, “I also am like thee, for the Hoard hath gone forth from me, and I have waxed feeble.”[411] Then cried the twain, “By Allah, the origin of our losses is from this well, so let us block it up with stones.” Hereupon the twain arose and brought with them crumbling earth and pebbles,[412] and threw it down the well when it fell upon Abu Niyyatayn, and his bones were crushed upon his flesh.[413] Now his comrade, Abu Niyyah, sat expecting him to return, but he came not, so he cried, “Walláhi! needs must I go and look for him in yonder well and see what he is doing.” So he took horse and fared thither and found the pit filled up; so he knew and was certified that his comrade’s intent had been evil, and had cast him into the hands of death.?And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I should relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Eightieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Abu Niyyah knew and was certified of his comrade Abu Niyyatayn being dead, so he cried aloud, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah the Glorious, the Great. O Allah mine, do thou deliver me from envy, for that it destroyeth the envier and haply jealousy may lead to frowardness against the Lord (glorified be His Glory!);” and so saying he returned to the seat of his kingdom. Now the Sultan’s daughter his spouse had two sisters, both married,[414] and she after the delay of a year or so proved with child, but when her tale of days was told and her delivery was nearhand her father fell sick and his malady grew upon him. So he summoned the Lords of his court and his kingdom one and all, and he said, “In very deed this my son-in-law shall after my decease become my successor;” and he wrote a writ to that purport and devised to him the realm and the reign before his demise; nor was there long delay ere the old King departed to the ruth of Allah and they buried him. Hereupon trouble arose between his two other sons-in-law who had married the Princesses and said they, “We were connected with him ere this man was and we are before him in our claim to the kingdom.” Thereupon said the Wazir, “This rede is other than right, for that the old King before his decease devised his country to this one and also write it in his will and testament: here therefor ye are opposing him, and the result will be trouble and repentance.” And when the Minister spoke on such wise they kept to their houses. Presently the wife of Abu Niyyah bare him a babe, her two sisters being present at her accouchement; and they gave to the midwife an hundred gold pieces and agreed upon what was to be done. So when the babe was born they put in his place a pup and taking the infant away sent it by a slave-girl who exposed it at the gate of the royal garden. Then they said and spread abroad, “Verily, the Sultan’s wife hath been delivered of a doglet,” and when the tidings came to Abu Niyyah’s ears he exclaimed, “Verily this also is a creation of Allah Almighty’s:” so they clothed the pup and tended it with all care. Anon the wife became pregnant a second time and when her days were fulfilled she bare a second babe which was the fairest of its time and the sisters did with it as they had done with the first and taking the infant they exposed him at the door of the garden. Then they brought to the mother another dog-pup in lieu of her babe, saying, “Verily the Queen hath been delivered a second time of a doglet.” Now in this wise it fared with them: but as regards the two infants which were cast away at the garden gate the first was taken up by the Gardener whose wife, by decree of the Decreer, had become a mother on that very same night; so the man carried away the infant he found exposed and brought the foundling home and the woman fell to suckling it. After the third year the Gardener went forth one day of the days and happening upon the second infant in similar case he bore it also back to his wife who began to suckle it and wash it and tend it and nurse it, till the twain grew up and entered into their third and fourth years. The Sultan had in the meantime been keeping the two pups which he deemed to have been brought forth by his wife until the Queen became in the family-way for the third time. Hereupon the Sultan said, “By Allah, ’tis not possible but that I be present at and witness her accouchement;” and the while she was bringing forth he sat beside her. So she was delivered of a girl-child, in whom the father rejoiced with great joy and bade bring for her wet- nurses who suckled her for two years until the milk time was past.[415] This girl grew up till she reached the age of four years and she could distinguish between her mother and her father who, whenever he went to the royal garden would take her with him. But when she beheld the Gardener’s two boys she became familiar with them and would play with them; and, as each day ended, her father would carry her away from the children and lead her home, and this parting was grievous to her and she wept right sore. Hereat the Sultan would take also the boys with her until sleep prevailed over her, after which he would send the twain back to their sire the Gardener. But Abu Niyyah the Sultan would ever wonder at the boys and would exclaim, “Praise be to Allah, how beautiful are these dark-skinned children!” This endured until one day of the days when the King entered into the garden and there found that the two beautiful boys[416] had taken some clay and were working it into the figures of horses and saddles and weapons of war and were opening the ground and making a water-leat;[417] so the Sultan wondered thereat time after time for that he ever found them in similar case. And he marvelled the more because whenever he looked upon them his heart was opened to both and he yearned to the twain and he would give them some gold pieces although he knew not the cause of his affection. Now one day he entered the garden, as was his wont, and he came upon the two boys of whom one was saying, “I am the Sultan!” and the other declaring, “I am the Wazir!” He wondered at their words and forthwith summoned the Gardener and asked him concerning the lads, and lastly quoth he to him, “Say me sooth and fear naught from me.” Quoth the other, “By Allah, O King of the Age, albe falsehood be saving, yet is soothfastness more saving and most saving; and indeed as regards these children the elder was found by me exposed at the gateway of the royal garden on such a night of such a year, and I came upon the second in the very same place; so I carried them to my wife who suckled them and tended them and they say to her, ‘O mother,’ and they say to me, ‘O father.’” Hereupon Abu Niyyah the King returned home and summoning the midwife asked her, saying, “By the virtue of my predecessors in this kingdom, do thou tell me the truth concerning my spouse, whether or no she was delivered of two dog- pups,” and she answered, “No, by Allah, O King of the Age, verily the Queen bare thee two babes like full moons and the cause of their exposure before the garden gate was thy wife’s two sisters who envied her and did with her these deeds whereof she was not aware.”[418] Hereupon cried Abu Niyyah, “Alhamdolillah?Glory be to God who hat brought about this good to me and hath united me with my children, and soothfast is the say, ÂWhoso doeth an action shall be requited of his Lord and the envious wight hath no delight and of his envy he shall win naught save despight.’”[419] Then the King of Mosul, being a man of good intent, did not put to death his wife’s sisters and their husbands, but banished them his realm, and he lived happily with his Queen and children until such time as the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies came to him and he deceased to the mercy of Almighty Allah.

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APPENDIX.

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APPENDIX A.

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INEPTIĆ BODLEIANĆ.

The reader will not understand this allusion (Foreword, p. ix.) without some connaissance de cause. I would apologise for deforming the beautiful serenity and restfulness of The Nights by personal matter of a tone so jarring and so discordant a sound, the chatter and squabble of European correspondence and contention; but the only course assigned to me perforce is that of perfect publicity. The first part of the following papers appeared by the editor's kindness in "The Academy" of November 13, 1886. How strange the contrast of "doings" with "sayings," if we compare the speech reported to have been delivered by Mr. Librarian Nicholson at the opening of the Birmingham Free Public Central Lending and Reference Libraries, on June 1, 1882:?

"As for the Bodleian, I claim your sympathies, not merely because we are trying to do as much for our readers as you are for yours, but because, if the building which you have opened to-day is the newest free public library in the world, the building which I left earlier in the morning is the oldest free public library in the world. (No!) I call it a free public library because any Birmingham artizan who came to us with a trustworthy recommendation might ask to have the rarest gem in our collection placed before him, and need have no fear of asking in vain; and because, if a trusty Birmingham worker wanted the loan of a MS. for three months, it would be lent to the Central Free Library for his use." See Twentieth and Twenty-first Annual Reports of the Free Libraries Committee (Borough of Birmingham), 1883.

And now to my story. The play opens with the following letter:?

No. I.

23, DORSET STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE, Sept. 13, 1886.

"Sir,

"I have the honour to solicit your assistance in the following matter:?

"Our friend Dr. Steingass has kindly consented to collaborate with me in re-translating from the Wortley Montague MS. of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, the tales originally translated in vol. vi. of Dr.

Jonathan Scott's 'Arabian Nights.' Dr. Steingass cannot leave town, and I should find it very inconvenient to live at Oxford during the work, both of us having engagements in London. It would be a boon to us if the Curators of the Bodleian would allow the MS. to be transferred, volume by volume, to the India Office, and remain under the custody of the Chief Librarian?yourself. The whole consists of seven volumes, and we would begin with vols. iii. and iv. I may note that the translated tales (as may be seen by Scott's version) contain nothing indelicate or immoral; in fact the whole MS. is exceptionally pure. Moreover, the MS., as far as I can learn, is never used at Oxford. I am the more anxious about this matter as the November fogs will presently drive me from England, and I want to end the extracts ere winter sets in, which can be done only by the co-operation of Dr. Steingass.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Yours obediently,
(Signed) RICHARD F. BURTON."

"DR. R. ROST,
Chief Librarian, India Office."

As nearly a month had elapsed without my receiving any reply, I directed the following to the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Rev. Dr. Bellamy:?

No. II.

ATHENĆUM CLUB, PALL MALL,
Oct. 13, 1886.

"Sir,

"I have the honour to submit to you the following details:?

"On September 13, 1886, I wrote to Dr. Rost, Chief Librarian, India Office, an official letter requesting him to apply to the Curators of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, for the temporary transfer of an Arabic Manuscript, No. 522 (the Wortley Montague text of the Arabian Nights) to the library of the India Office, there to be kept under special charge of the Chief Librarian. There being seven volumes, I wanted only one or two at a time. I undertook not to keep them long, and, further, I pledged myself not to translate tales that might be deemed offensive to propriety.

“Thus, I did not apply for a personal loan of the MS. which, indeed, I should refuse on account of the responsibility which it would involve. I applied for the safe and temporary transfer of a work, volume by volume, from one public library to another.

“My official letter was forwarded at once by Dr. Rost, but this was the only expeditious step. On Saturday, September 25, the Curators could form no quorum; the same thing took place on Saturday, October 9; and there is a prospect that the same will take place on Saturday, October 23.

“I am acquainted with many of the public libraries of Europe, but I know of none that would throw such obstacles in the way of students.

“The best authorities inform me that until June, 1886, the signatures of two Curators enabled a student to borrow a book or a manuscript; but that since June a meeting of three Curators has been required; and that a lesser number does not form a quorum.

“May I be permitted to suggest that the statute upon the subject of borrowing books and manuscripts urgently calls for revision?

I have the honour to be, sir,

Yours obediently,
(Signed) RICHARD F. BURTON.

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“THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, OXFORD.”

The Curators presently met and the following was the highly unsatisfactory result which speaks little for “Bodleian” kindness or courtesy:?

No. III.

Monday, Nov. 1, 1886.

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“DEAR SIR RICHARD BURTON,

“The Curators considered your application on Saturday, Oct. 30, afternoon, and the majority of them were unwilling to lend the MS[420]

Yours very truly,
(Signed) EDWARD B. NICHOLSON.”

Learning through a private source that my case had been made an unpleasant exception to a long-standing rule of precedent, and furthermore that it had been rendered peculiarly invidious by an act of special favour,[421] I again addressed the Vice-Chancellor, as follows:?

No. IV.

23, DORSET STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE, November 3rd, 1886.

“Sir,

“I have the honour to remind you that, on October 13, I communicated with you officially requesting a temporary transfer of the Wortley Montague manuscript (Arabian Nights) from the Bodleian Library to the personal care of the Librarian, India Office.

“To this letter I received no reply. But on November 1, I was informed by Mr. Librarian Nicholson that the Curators had considered my application on Saturday, October 30, and that the majority of them were unwilling to lend the manuscript.

“The same Curators at the same meeting allowed sundry manuscripts for the use of an Indian subject to be sent to the India Office.

“I cannot but protest against this invidious proceeding, and I would willingly learn what cause underlies it.

“1. It cannot be the importance of the manuscript, which is one of the meanest known to me?written in a schoolmaster character, a most erroneous, uncorrected text, and valuable only for a few new tales.

“2. It cannot be any consideration of public morals, for I undertook (if the loan were granted) not to translate tales which might be considered offensive to strict propriety.

“3. It cannot be its requirement for local use. The manuscript stands on an upper shelf in the manuscript room, and not one man in the whole so-called ‘University’ can read it.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Yours obediently,
RICHARD F. BURTON.”

“THE VlCE-CHANCELLOR, OXFORD.”

In due time came the reply:?

No. V.

ST. JOHN’S COLLEGE, OXFORD,
November 6th, 1886.

“Dear Sir,

“I will remove from your mind the belief that I treated your former letter with discourtesy.

“I may say, that it did not appear to me to contain any question or request which I could answer. You informed me that you had made formal application in September for a loan of MSS., and your letter was to complain of the delay in considering this request. You told me that you had learned from the Librarian the cause of the delay (the want of a quorum), and that he had intimated that there would probably be no meeting formed before October 30th.

“You complained of this, and suggested that the statute regulating the lending of the Bodleian books should be speedily revised.

“As I had no power to make a quorum, nor to engage that your suggestion should be adopted; and as your letter made no demand for any further information, I thought it best to reserve it for the meeting of the 30th, when I communicated it to the Curators.

“I will lay the letter (dated November 3rd), with which you have favoured me, before the next meeting of the Curators.

I beg to remain,

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) J. BELLAMY.”

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“SIR R. F. BURTON.”

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

To resume this part of the subject.

The following dates show that I was kept waiting six weeks before being finally favoured with the curtest of refusals:

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Application made on September 13th, and sent on.

On Saturday, September 25th, Curators could not form quorum, and deferred next meeting till Saturday, October 9th.

Saturday, October 9th. Again no quorum; and yet it might easily have been formed, as three Curators were on or close to the spot.

Saturday, October 23rd. Six Curators met and did nothing.

Saturday, October 30th. Curators met and refused me the loan of MS.

My letter addressed to the Vice-Chancellor was read, and notice was given for Saturday (December 3rd, 1886) of a motion, "That the MS. required by Sir R. F. Burton be lent to him"?and I was not to be informed of the matter unless the move were successful. Of course it failed. One of the Curators (who are the delegates and servants of Convocation) was mortally offended by my letter to "The Academy," and showed the normal smallness of the official mind by opposing me simply because I told the truth concerning the laches of his "learned body."

Meanwhile I had addressed the following note to the Most Honourable the Chancellor of the University.[422]

23, DORSET STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE, November 30th, 1886.

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“MY LORD,

“I deeply regret that the peculiar proceedings of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, necessitate a reference to a higher authority with the view of eliciting some explanation.

“The correspondence which has passed between the Curators of the Bodleian Library and myself will be found in the accompanying printed paper.

“Here it may be noticed that the Committee of the Orientalist Congress, Vienna, is preparing to memorialise H.M.’s Secretary of State, praying that Parliament will empower the British Museum to lend out Oriental MSS. under proper guarantees. The same measure had been proposed at the Leyden Congress of 1883; and thus an extension, rather than a contraction of the loan-system has found favour with European savants.[423]

“I believe, my Lord, that a new statute upon the subject of the Bodleian loans of books and MSS. is confessedly required, and that it awaits only the initiative of the Chancellor of the University, without whose approval it cannot be passed.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) RICHARD F. BURTON.”

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“THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE CHANCELLOR.”

My object being only publicity I was not disappointed by the following reply:?

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HATFIELD HOUSE, HATFIELD, HERTS,
December 1st, 1886.

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“DEAR SIR RICHARD,

“I beg to acknowledge your letter of the 30th of November with enclosure.

“I have, however, no power over the Bodleian Library, and, therefore, I am unable to assist you.

Yours, very truly,
(Signed) SALISBURY.”

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On January 29, 1887, there was another “Bodleian Meeting,” all the Curators save one being present and showing evident symptoms of business. The last application on the list of loans entered on the Agenda paper ran thus:?

V MS. Bodl. Vols. 550-556 to the British Museum (the 7 vols. successively) for the use of Mr. F. F. Arbuthnot’s Agent.

[The MS. lately refused to Sir R. Burton. Mr. Arbuthnot wishes to have it copied.]

It was at once removed by the Regius Professor of Divinity (Dr. Ince) and carried nem. con. that, until the whole question of lending Bodleian books and MSS. then before Council, be definitely settled, no applications be entertained; and thus Professor Van Helton, Bernard Kolbach and Mr. Arbuthnot were doomed, like myself, to be disappointed.

On January 31, 1887, a hebdomadal Council was called to deliberate about a new lending statute for submission to Convocation; and an amendment was printed in the “Oxford University Gazette.” It proposed that the Curators by a vote of two-thirds of their body, and at least six forming a quorum, might lend books or MSS. to students, whether graduates or not; subject, when the loans were of special value, to the consent of Convocation. Presently the matter was discussed in “The Times” (January 25th; April 28th; and May 31st), which simply re-echoed the contention of Mr. Chandler’s vigorous pamphlets.[424] Despite the letters of its correspondent “F. M. M.” (May 6th, 1887), a “host in himself,” who ought to have added the authority of his name to the sensible measures which he propounded, the leading journal took a sentimental view of “Bodley’s incomparable library” and strongly advocated its being relegated to comparative inutility.

On May 31, 1887, an amendment practically forbidding all loans came before the House. In vain Professor Freeman declared that a book is not an idol but a tool which must wear out sooner or later. To no purpose Bodley’s Librarian proved that of 460,000 printed volumes in the collection only 460 had been lent out, and of these only one had been lost. THE AMENDMENT FORBIDDING THE PRACTICE OF LENDING WAS CARRIED BY 106 VOTES TO 60.

Personally I am not dissatisfied with this proceeding. It is retrograde legislation befitting the days when books were chained to the desks. It suffers from a fatal symptom?the weakness of extreme measures. And the inevitable result in the near future will be a strong reaction: Convocation will presently be compelled to adopt some palliation for the evil created by its own folly.

The next move added meanness to inertness. I do not blame Mr. E. B. Nicholson, Bodley's Librarian, because he probably had orders to write the following choice specimen:

30/3/1887.

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“DEAR SIR RICHARD BURTON,

“I have received two vols. of four (read six) ‘Supplemental Nights’ with a subscription form. If a Bodleian MS. is to be copied for any volume, I must stipulate that that volume be supplied to us gratis. Either my leave or that of the Curators is required for the purpose of copying for publication, and I have no doubt that they would make the same stipulation. I feel sure you would in any case not propose to charge us for such a volume, but until I hear from you I am in a difficulty as to how to reply to the subscription form I have received.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) E. B. NICHOLSON,
Librarian.”

The able and energetic papers, two printed and one published by Mr. H. W. Chandler, of Pembroke College, Oxford, clearly prove the following facts:?

1. That on June 20, 1610, a Bodleian Statute peremptorily forbade any books or manuscripts being taken out of the Library.

2. That, despite the peremptory and categorical forbiddance by Bodley, Selden, and others, of lending Bodleian books and MSS., loans of both have for upwards of two centuries formed a precedent.

3. That Bodley’s Statute (June 20th, An. 1610) was formally and officially abrogated by Convocation on May 22nd, 1856; Convocation retaining the right to lend.

4. That a “privileged list” of (113) borrowers presently arose and is spoken of as a normal practice:?sicut mos fuit, says the Statute (Tit. xx. iii. Â§ 11) of 1873; and, lastly,

5. That loans of MSS. and printed books have for years been authorised to approved public libraries.

After these premises I proceed to notice other points bearing upon the subject which, curious to say, are utterly neglected or rather ignored by Mr. Chandler and “The Times.” Sir Thomas Bodley never would have condemned students to study in the Bodleian had he known the peines fortes et dures to which in these days they are thereby doomed. “So picturesque and so peculiar is its construction,” says a writer, “that it ensures the maximum of inefficiency and discomfort.” The whole building is a model of what a library ought not to be. It is at once over solid and ricketty: room for the storage of books is wanted, and its wooden staircases, like touchwood or tinder, give one the shudders to think of fire. True, matches and naked lights are forbidden in the building; but all know how these prohibitions are regarded by the public, and it is dreadful to think of what might result from a lucifer dropped at dark upon the time-rotten planks. The reading public in the XIXth century must content itself with boxes or stalls, like those of an old-fashioned tavern or coffee-house of the humbler sort wherein two readers can hardly find room for sitting back to back. The atmosphere is unpleasant and these mean little cribs, often unduly crowded, are so dark that after the 1st October the reading-room must be closed at 3 p.m. What a contrast are the treasures in the Bodleian with their mean and miserable surroundings and the way in which the public is allowed to enjoy them. The whole establishment calls urgently for reform. Accommodation for the books is wanted; floor and walls will hardly bear the weight which grows every year at an alarming ratio?witness the Novel-room. The model Bodleian would be a building detached and isolated, the better to guard its priceless contents, and containing at least double the area of the present old and obsolete Bibliotheca. An establishment of the kind was proposed in 1857; but unfortunately, the united wisdom of the University preferred new “Examination Schools” for which the old half-ruinous pile would have been sufficiently well fitted. The “Schools,” however, were for the benefit of the examiners; ergň the scandalous sum of Ƚ100,000 (some double the amount) was wasted upon the well-nigh useless Gothic humbug in High Street, and thus no money was left for the prime want of the city. After some experience of public libraries and reading-rooms on the Continent of Europe I feel justified in asserting that the Bodleian in its present condition is a disgrace to Oxford; indeed a dishonour to letters in England.

The Bodleian has a succursale, the Radcliffe, which represents simply a step from bad to worse. The building was intended for an especial purpose, the storage of books, not for a salle de lecture.

Hence the so-called "Camera" is a most odious institution, a Purgatory to readers. It is damp in the wet season from October to May; stuffy during the summer heats and a cave of Eolus in windy weather: few students except the youngest and strongest, can support its changeable and nerve-depressing atmosphere. Consequently the Camera is frequented mainly by the townsfolk, a motley crew who there study their novels and almanacs and shamefully misuse the books.[425] In this building lights, forbidden by the Bodleian, are allowed; it opens at 10 a.m. and closes at 10 p.m.. and the sooner it reverts to its original office of a book-depôt the better.

But the Bodleian-Radcliffe concern is typical of the town; and, if that call for reform, so emphatically does

"Oxford, that scarce deserves the name of land."

From my childhood I had heard endless tirades and much of what is now called "blowing" about this ancient city, and my youth (1840-42) suffered not a little disappointment. The old place, still mostly resembling an overgrown monastery-village, lies in the valley of the Upper Thames, a meadowland drained by two ditches; the bigger or Ise, classically called the Isis, and the lesser the Charwell. This bottom is surrounded by high and healthy uplands, not as the guide-books say "low scarce-swelling hills that softly gird the old town;" and these keep off the winds and make the riverine valley, with its swamped meads and water-meadows, more fenny and feverish even than Cambridge. The heights and woods bring on a mild deluge between October 1st and May 1st; the climate is rainy as that of Shap in Westmoreland (our old home) and, as at Fernando Po and Singapore, the rain it raineth more or less every day during one half of the year. The place was chosen by the ancient Britons for facility of water transport, but men no longer travel by the Thames and they have naturally neglected the older road. Throughout England, indeed a great national work remains to be done. Not a river, not a rivulet, but what requires cleaning out and systematic excavation by élévateurs and other appliances of the Suez Canal. The channels filled up by alluvium and choked by the American weed, are now raised so high that the beds can no longer act as drains: at Oxford for instance the beautiful meadows of Christ Church are little better than swamps and marshes, the fittest homes for Tertiana, Quartana and all the fell sisterhood: a blue fog broods over the pleasant site almost every evening, and a thrust with the umbrella opens up water. This is the more inexcusable as the remedy would be easy and by no means costly: the river-mud, if the ignorant peasants only knew the fact, forms the best of manures; and this, instead of being deposited in spoil-heaps on the banks for the rain to wash back at the first opportunity, should be carried by tram-rails temporarily laid down and be spread over the distant fields, thus almost paying for the dredge works. Of course difficulties will arise: the management of the Thames is under various local "Boards," and each wooden head is able and aye ready to show its independence and ill temper at the sacrifice of public interests to private fads.

Hence the climate of Oxford is detestable. Strong undergraduates cannot withstand its nervous depression and the sleeplessness arising from damp air charged with marsh gases and bacteria. All students take time to become acclimatized here, and some are never acclimatized at all. And no wonder, when the place is drained by a fetid sewer of greenish yellow hue containing per 10,000, 245 parts of sewage. The only tolerable portion of the year is the Long Vacation, when the youths in mortar-boards all vanish from the view, while many of the oldsters congregate in the reformed convents called Colleges.

Climate and the resolute neglect of sanitation are probably the chief causes why Oxford never yet produced a world-famous and epoch-making man, while Cambridge can boast of Newton and Darwin. The harlequin city of domes and spires, cribs and slums shows that curious concurrence of opposites so common in England. The boasted High Street is emblematical of the place, where moral as well as material extremes meet and are fain to dwell side by side. It is a fine thoroughfare branching off into mere lanes, neither these nor that apparently ever cleaned. The huge buildings of scaling, mouldering stone are venerable-looking piles which contrast sadly with the gabled cottages of crepi, hurlin, or wattle and dab; and the brand-new store with its plate-glass windows hustles the old-fashioned lollipop-shop. As regards minor matters there are new market passages but no Public Baths; and on Sundays, the stands are destitute of cabs, although with that queer concession to democracy which essentially belongs to the meaner spirited sort of Conservatism, "‘busses" are allowed to ply after 2 p.m., when the thunder of bells somewhat abates.

Old "Alma Mater," who to me has ever been a "durissima noverca," dubs herself "University;" and not a few of her hopefuls entre faiblesse et folie, still entitle themselves "University men." The title once belonged to Oxford but now appertains to it no more. Compare with it the model universities of Berlin, Paris and Vienna, where the lists of lecturers bear the weightiest names in the land. Oxford is but a congeries of twenty-one colleges and five halls or hostels, each educating its pupils (more or less) with an especial eye to tutors' fees and other benefices, the vested rights of the "Dons." Thus all do their best to prevent the scholars availing themselves of University, as opposed to Collegiate, lectures; and thus they can stultify a list of some sixty-six professors. This boarding-school system is simply a dishonest obstacle to students learning anything which may be of use to them in after-life, such as modern and Oriental languages, chemistry, anthropology and the other -ologies. Here in fact men rarely progress beyond the Trivium and the Quadrivium of the Dark Ages, and tuition is a fine study of the Res scibilis as understood by the Admirable Crichton and other worthies, circa A.D. 1500. The students of Queen Elizabeth's day would here? and here only?find themselves in congenial company. Worse still, Oxford is no longer a "Seat of learning" or a "House of the Muses," nor can learned men be produced under the present system. The place has become a collection of finishing schools, in fact little better than a huge board for the examination of big boys and girls.

Oxford and her education are thoroughly disappointing; but the sorest point therein is that this sham University satisfies the hapless Public, which knows nothing about its fainéance. It is a mere stumbling-block in the way of Progress especially barring the road to one of the main wants of English Education, a great London University which should not be ashamed to stand by Berlin, Paris and Vienna.

Had the good knight and "Pious Founder," Sir Thomas Bodley, who established his library upon the ruins of the University Bibliotheca wrecked by the "Reformation," been able to foresee the condition of Oxford and her libraries?Bodleian and Radcliffean?in this latter section of the XIXth century, he would hardly, I should hope, have condemned English students and Continental scholars to compulsory residence and labour in places so akin to the purgatorial.

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Appendix B.

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THE THREE UNTRANSLATED TALES IN MR. E. J. W. GIBB’S “FORTY VEZIRS.”

THE THIRTY-EIGHTH VEZIR’S STORY.

(Page 353 of Mr. Gibb’s translation.)

There was in the city of Cairo a merchant, and one day he bought a slave-girl, and took her to his house. There was in his house an ape; this the merchant fetched and dragged up to the slave-girl. He said, “Yield thyself over to this, and I will set thee free.” The slave-girl did so of necessity, and she conceived by him. When her time was come she bare a son all of whose members were shaped like those of a man, save that he had a tail like an ape. The merchant and the slave-girl occupied themselves bringing up this son. One day, when the son was five or six months old, the merchant filled a large cauldron with milk, and lighted a great fire under it. When it was boiling, he seized the son and cast him into the cauldron; and the girl began to lament. The merchant said, “Be silent, make no lamentation; go and be free;” and he gave her some sequins. Then he turned, and the cauldron had boiled so that not even any bones were left. The merchant took down the cauldron, and placed seven strainers, one above the other; and he took the scum that had gathered on the liquid in the cauldron and filtered it through the seven strainers, and he took that which was in the last and put it into a bottle. And the slave-girl bare in her heart bitter hatred against the merchant, and she said in herself, “Even as thou hast burned my liver will I burn thee;” and she began to watch her opportunity. (One day) the merchant said to her, “Make ready some food,” and went out. So the girl cooked the food, and she mixed some of that poison in the dish. When the merchant returned she brought the tray and laid it down, and then withdrew into a corner. The merchant took a spoonful of that food, and as soon as he put it into his mouth, he knew it to be the poison, and he cast the spoon that was in his hand at the girl. A piece, of the bigness of a pea, of that poisoned food fell from the spoon on the girl’s hand, and it made the place where it fell black. As for the merchant, he turned all black, and swelled till he became like a blown-out skin, and he died. But the slave-girl medicined herself and became well; and she kept what remained of the poison and sold it to those who asked for it.

THE FORTIETH VEZIR'S STORY.

(Page 366 in Mr. Gibb's translation.)

There was of old time a tailor, and he had a fair wife. One day this woman sent her slave-girl to the carder's to get some cotton teased. The slave-girl went to the carder's shop and gave him cotton for a gown to get teased. The carder while teasing the cotton displayed his yard to the slave-girl. She blushed and passed to his other side. As she thus turned round the carder displayed his yard on that side also. Thus the slave-girl saw it on that side too. And she went and said to her mistress, "Yon carder, to whom I went, has two yards." The lady said to her, "Go and say to yon carder, 'My mistress wishes thee; come at night.'" So the slave-girl went and said this to the carder. As soon as it was night the carder went to that place and waited. The woman went out and met the carder and said, "Come and have to do with me while I am lying by my husband." When it was midnight the carder came and waked the woman. The woman lay conveniently and the carder fell to work. She felt that the yard which entered her was but one, and said, "Ah my soul, carder, at it with both of them." While she was softly speaking her husband awaked and asked, "What means thy saying, 'At it with both of them?'" He stretched out his hand to his wife's kaze and the carder's yard came into it. The carder drew himself back and his yard slipped out of the fellow's hand, and he made shift to get away. The fellow said, "Out on thee, wife, what meant that saying of thine, 'At it with both of them?'" The woman said, "O husband, I saw in my dream that thou wast fallen into the sea and wast swimming with one hand and crying out, 'Help! I am drowning!' I shouted to thee from the shore, 'At it with both of them,' and thou begannest to swim with both thy hands." Then the husband said, "Wife, I too know that I was in the sea, from this that a wet fish came into my hand and then slipped out and escaped; thou speakest truly." And he loved his wife more than before.

THE LADY’S THIRTY-FOURTH STORY.

(From the India Office MS.)

(Page 399 in Mr. Gibb’s translation.)

They tell that there was a Khoja and he had an exceeding fair son, who was so beautiful that he who looked upon him was confounded. This Khoja watched over his son right carefully; he let him not come forth from a certain private chamber, and he left not the ribbon of his trousers unsealed. When the call to prayer was chanted from the minaret, the boy would ask his father saying, “Why do they cry out thus?” and the Khoja would answer, “Someone has been undone and has died, and they are calling out to bury him.” And the boy believed these words. The beauty of this boy was spoken of in Persia; and a Khoja came from Persia to Baghdad with his goods and chattels for the love of this boy. And he struck up a friendship with the boy’s father, and ever gave to him his merchandise at an easy price, and he sought to find out where his son abode. When the Khoja had discovered that the boy was kept safe in that private chamber, he one day said to his father, “I am about to go to a certain place; and I have a chest whereinto I have put whatsoever I possess of valuables; this I shall send to thee, and do thou take it and shut it up in that chamber where thy son is.” And the father answered, “Right gladly.” So the Khoja let build a chest so large that he himself might lie in it, and he put therein wine and all things needful for a carouse. Then he said to his servant, “Go, fetch a porter and take this chest to the house of Khoja Such-an-one, and say, ‘My master has sent this to remain in your charge,’ and leave it and come away. And again on the morrow go and fetch it, saying, ‘My master wishes the chest.’” So the servant went for a porter, and the Khoja hid himself in the chest. Then the boy laded the porter with the chest and took it to the other Khoja’s house, where he left it and went away. When it was night the Khoja came forth from the chest, and he saw a moon-face sleeping in the bed-clothes, and a candle was burning in a candlestick at his head; and when the Khoja beheld this he was confounded and exclaimed, “And blessed be God, the fairest of Creators!”[426] Then the Khoja laid out the wine and so forth; and he went up softly and waked the boy. And the boy arose from his place and addressed himself to speak, saying, “Wherefore hast thou come here?” Straightway the Khoja filled a cup and gave it to him, saying, “Drink this, and then I shall tell thee what manner of man I am.” And he besought the boy and spread out sequins before him. So the boy took the cup and drank what was in it. When the Khoja had given him to drink three or four cups the face of the boy grew tulip-hued, and he became heated with the wine and began to sport with the Khoja. So all that night till morning did the Khoja make merry with the boy; and whatsoever his desire was, he attained thereto. When it was morning, the Khoja again went into the chest; and the servant came and laded the porter with the same and took it back to his house. And on the morrow, when the boy and his father were sitting together, the mu’ezzin chanted the call to prayer, whereupon the boy exclaimed, “Out on thee, father; and the boy who is undone dies, and so this fellow goes up there and bawls out; last night they undid me; how is it that I am not dead?” Then the father smote the boy on the mouth and said, “Speak not such words; they are a shame.” And then he knew why the chest had come.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

FOOTNOTES SUPPLEMENTAL VOLUME IV.

[1] From the Wortley Montague MS. vol. iii. p-96. J. Scott: vol. vi. p-7. Histoire du Sulthan d’Yemen et de ses trois fils; Gauttier vol. vi. p-165.

[2] The worst disease in human life, now recognised as “Annus Domini.”

[3] Arab. “Mál wa Ghawál”: in Badawi parlance “Mál” would = flocks and herds (pecunia, pecus); and amongst the burghers = ready money, coin. Another favourite jingle of similar import is “Mál wa Nawál.”

This is an older form of the Sultan of Al-Yaman and his three sons, taken from M. Zotenberg’s “Chronique de Tabari,” vol. ii. p-61. Aprčs la mort de Nizár, ses fils, en prenant possession des objets que leur pčre avait donnés ŕ chacun, eurent des contestations relativement aux autres biens. Alors ils montčrent sur des chameaux pour se rendre ŕ Nadjrân auprčs du devin, voulant soumettre ŕ son jugement le partage. Sur la route, ils rencontrčrent un terrain couvert d’herbe, dont une partie était broutée, et une partie intacte. Modhar dit: Le chameau qui a brouté cette herbe est borgne de l’il droit. Rabî’a dit: Il est boiteux du pied droit. Iyâd dit: Il a la queue coupée. Anmâr dit: Il s’est échappé des mains de son maître, parce qu’il est farouche. Un peu plus loin, ils rencontrčrent un homme monté sur un chameau; ils lui demandčrent qui il était. Il répondit qu’il était de telle tribu, et qu’il était ŕ la recherche d’un chameau qui s’était échappé. Modhar lui dit: Ce chameau n’est-il pas borgne de l’il droit??Oui, répondit l’homme.?Ne penche-t-il pas du côté droit? demanda Rabî’a.?Oui.?Il n’a pas de queue, dit Iyâd.?C’est vrai, répondit l’homme.?Anmâr ajouta: Il est farouche.?Oui, dit l’homme; oů est-il, ce chameau?? Nous ne l’avons pas vu, dirent les frčres.?Si vous ne l’avez vu, réplique l’homme, comment savez-vous toutes ces particularités? Il insista et dit: C’est certainement vous qui l’avez; rendez-le moi.? Nous ne l’avons pas. Il leur demanda oů ils allaient. Les frčres lui dirent qu’ils se rendaient ŕ Nadjrân, auprčs d’Af’a, le devin, pour

soumettre ŕ son jugement un différend qui s’était élevé entre eux. Cet homme, qui était seul, s’attacha ŕ leurs pas, et suivit les quatre frčres jusqu’ŕ Nadjrân.

Af’a ne les connaissait pas, mais il les re{ç}ut gracieusement et leur demanda le but de leur voyage. Ils lui dirent: Notre pčre est mort, et nous ne pouvons pas nous accorder sur la partage de ses biens; nous sommes venus afin que tu prononces entre nous quatre; nous sommes tombés d’accord de nous soumettre ŕ ton jugement. Alors le propriétaire du chameau dit: Arrange d’abord l’affaire de mon chameau entre eux et moi; j’ai perdu un chameau, ce sont eux qui le tiennent. Af’a lui dit: Comment sais-tu qu’ils l’ont? L’homme répondit: Parce qu’ils m’ont donné son signalement: s’ils ne l’avaient pas vu, comment le sauraient-ils? Modhar dit: J’ai reconnu que ce chameau était borgne de l’œil droit, parce qu’il avait brouté l’herbe d’un côté seulement, et qu’il ne l’avait pas touché du côté oů elle était meilleure. Rabî’a dit: J’ai remarqué que son pied droit avait imprimé sur le sol des traces bien marquées et je n’ai vu celles de l’autre pied; de lŕ j’ai su qu’il penchait du côté droit. Iyâd dit: J’ai vu que ses crottins étaient réunis en tas, comme ceux du bœuf, et non comme sont ordinairement ceux du chameau, qui les écrase (éparpille?) avec sa queue; j’ai reconnu par lŕ qu’il n’avait pas de queue. Anmâr dit: J’ai remarqué que l’herbe n’était pas broutée ŕ un seul et męme endroit, mais qu’il avait pris partout une bouchée: j’ai su que le chameau était d’un caract{č}re farouche et inquiet. Le devin admirait le savoir et l’intelligence des quatre frčres. Cette maničre de juger fait partie de l’art de la divination, et on l’appelle bâb al-tazkîn; c’est une des branches de la science. Ensuite le devin dit au propriétaire de chameau: Ces gens-lŕ n’ont pas ton chameau; va-t’en. Ayant demandé aux quatre frčres qui ils étaient, et ceux-ci lui ayant déclaré qu’ils étaient les fils de Nizâr, fils de Ma’add, fils d’Adnân, le devin dit: excusez-moi de ne vous avoir pas reconnus; j’ai été lié d’amitié avec votre pčre: soyez mes hôtes ce jour et cette nuit, demain j’arrangerai votre affaire. Ils consentirent. Le pčre et les ancętres de ce devin avaient été chefs de Nadjrân.

Le devin leur fit préparer un repas. On leur servit un agneau rôti et une cruche de vin, et ils mangčrent. Lorsque le vin leur monta ŕ la tęte, Modhar dit: Je n’ai jamais bu un vin plus doux que celui-ci;

mais il vient d’une vigne plantée sur un tombeau. Rabî’a dit: Je n’ai jamais mangé de la viande d’agneau plus succulente que celle-ci; mais cette agneau a été nourri du lait d’une chienne. Anmâr dit: {L}e blé qui a servi ŕ faire le pain que nous venons de manger a été semé dans un cimetičre. Iyâd dit: Notre hôte est un excellent homme; mais il n’est pas un fils légitime; ce n’est pas son pčre (légal) qui l’a engendré, mais un autre homme; sa mčre l’a conçut dans l’adultčre.

Le devin recueillit leurs paroles, mais il ne leur en dit rien. Quand la nuit fut venue et qu’ils furent endormis, il appela son intendant et lui demanda de quelle vigne provenait le vin (que l’on avait servi aux hôtes). L’intendant dit: Une vigne a poussée sur le tombeau de ton pčre et elle est devenue grande; j’en ai recueilli le raisin, et ce vin en provient. Ensuite le devin fit venir le berger, et le questionna relativement ŕ l’agneau. Le berger dit: Quand cet agneau vint au monde, il était trčs-joli; mais s{a} mčre mourut, et il n’y avait pas alors de brebis qui e{u}t mis bas. Une chienne avait eu des petits; je mis cet agneau avec la chienne jusqu’ŕ ce qu’il f{u}t grand. Je n’en ai pas trouvé de meilleur pour te l’apporter, lorsque tu m’as fait demander un agneau. Enfin le devin appela le métayer, et l’interrogea sur le blé. Le métayer lui dit: Il y a d’un côté de notre champ un cimetičre. Cette année-ci j’ai ensemencé une partie du cimetičre, et c’est de lŕ que provient le blé que je t’ai apporté. Le devin, fort étonné de ces explications, dit: Maintenant c’est le tour de ma mčre. Il alla trouver sa mčre et lui dit: Si tu ne m’avoues pas la vérité en ce qui me concerne, je te fais mourir. Sa mčre parla ainsi: Ton pčre était le chef de ce peuple et possédait de grandes richesses. Comme je n’avais pas d’enfant de lui, je craignis qu’ŕ sa mort ses biens ne tombassent entre des mains étrangčres et qu’un autre ne prit le pouvoir. Un Arabe, homme de belle figure, fut un jour l’hôte de ton pčre; je m’abandonnai ŕ lui, la nuit; je devins enceinte, et c’est ŕ lui que tu dois ta naissance. J’ai dit ŕ ton pčre que tu avais été engendré par lui.

Le lendemain, le devin interrogea les quatres frčres sur leur paroles, en disant: Je veux que vous me fassiez connaître comment vous avez su les choses que vous avez dites. Modhar, le premier, lui dit: Je su que la vigne était plantée sur un tombeau, parce que, quand nous avions bu le vin, nous devenions tristes et nous avions la figure altérée; ce qui n'est pas l'effet ordinaire du vin. Le deuxičme, dit: J'ai reconnu ce qui concernait l'agneau, parce que nous n'avions mangé de viande plus douce que celle-lŕ, et qu'il n'y a, dans le monde, rien de plus doux que le lait de la chienne. Le troisičme dit: Les Arabes honorent beaucoup leurs hôtes; lorsqu'ils traitent des hôtes, ils restent avec eux et partagent leur repas; mais toi tu nous as fait servir le repas, tu nous as quittés et tu t'{a}s mis ŕ épier nos paroles. J'ai reconnu par lŕ ta condition; j'ai remarqué que tu n'avais pas la gravité des Arabes, et j'ai pensé qu'il y avait quelque illégalité dans ton origine. Le quatričme dit: J'ai reconnu la qualité du blé, parce que le blé semé dans un cimetičre donne au pain un goűt de terre; et j'ai trouvé ce goűt dans ce pain. Le devin leur dit: Vous ętes plus savant que moi; vous n'avez pas besoin de mon jugement. Ils répliqučrent: Quand deux personnes ont un differend, il faut un tiers pour juger, qu'il soit savant ou non. Ce sont les derničres volontés de notre pčre, qui nous a dit de nous en rapporter ŕ ton jugement, si nous n'étions pas d'accord sur l'héritage. Le devin dit: Indiquez-moi exactement ce que votre pčre a donné ŕ chacun de vous et ce qu'il a laissé. Notre pčre, dirent-ils, a laissé de l'or, de l'argent, des chevaux, des moutons, des tapis et des vases de toute espčce et en grand nombre. Ils racontčrent ensuite ce que leur pčre avait donné ŕ chacun d'eux. Le devin dit: Laissez ŕ Modhar tout ce que votre pčre avait en fait d'or et de chameaux; car ces objets sont rouges. Donnez les chevaux, les esclaves et les vętements noirs ŕ Rabî'a; les esclaves blancs, l'argent et les vętements blancs ŕ Iyâd, et les tapis et les moutons ŕ Anmâr. Les quatre frčres acceptčrent cette sentence, et s'en retournčrent.

[4] In the W. M. MS. the sisters are called "Shahrzádeh" (= City-born) and "Dinárzádeh" (= ducat-born) and the royal brothers Shahrbáz (= City-player or City-falcon) and Kahramán (vol. i.) alias Samarbán (ibid.). I shall retain the old spelling.

[5] I have hitherto translated "wa adraka (masc.) Shahrázáda al-Sabáh," as = And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day; but it is more correct as well as more picturesque to render the phrase "was surprised (or overtaken) by the dawn."

[6] Arab. "'Adrán," the root being 'Adr = much and heavy rain.

[7] For "Halwá" see vol. ii. p-212. Scott (vol. vi. 413) explains "Hámiz" as "a species of small grain," probably confounding it with Hummus (or Himmis) = vetches. It is the pop. term for pickles, "sour meat" as opposed to "sweetmeats." The Arabs divide the camel's pasture into "Khullah" which means sweet food called bread and into "Hámiz" termed fruit: the latter is composed mainly of salsolaceć, and as camels feed upon it during the hot season it makes them drink. Hence in Al-Hariri (Preface) "I change the pasture," i.e., I pass from grave to gay, from light to dignified style. (Chenery,).

[8] This is the modern version of the tale which the author of "Zadig" has made familiar to Europe. The hero is brought before the King and Queen of Babylon for stealing a horse and a dog; and, when held by the chief "Destour" (priest) to be a thief, justifies himself. I have given in full the older history from Tabari, the historian (vixit A.D. 839-923). For the tracker ("Paggí") and the art of tracking see Sind Revisited, i. 180-183. I must again express my wonder that the rural police of Europe still disdain the services of trained dogs when these are about to be introduced into the army.

[9] Arab. "Bitá'i"=my own. I have already noticed that this is the Egypt. form and the Nilotes often turn the 'Ayn into an H, e.g. Bitáht for Bitá'at, e.g. Ash Shabakah bitáht as-Sayd, thy net for fishing. (Spitta Bey, Contes Arabes Modernes, .)

[10] Arab. "Mukabbab;" prop. vaulted, arched, domed in Kubbah (or cupola)-shape.

[11] Arab. "Firásah." "Sciences are of three kinds: one the science of Faith, another the science of Physiognomy (Firásah), and another the science of the Body; but unless there be the science of Physiognomy, other science availeth not." So says "The Forty Vizirs:" Lady's vith story and Vizir's xxxist story. For a note on "Firásah" see vol. viii. 326.

[12] Arab. "In lam tazidd Kayní" = lit. unless thou oppose my forming

or composition.

[13] Arab. “Faráfish,” a word which I cannot find in the dictionary, and so translate according to the context. Dr. Steingass remarks that the nearest approach to it would be “Faráfík” (plur. of Furfák)=fine, thin or soft bread.

[14] See, in the “Turkish Tales” by Petis de la Croix (Weber, Tales of the East, vol. iii. 196), the History of the Sophi of Baghdad, where everything returns to (or resembles) its origin. Thus the Wazir who proposed to cut up a criminal and hang him in the shambles was the self-convicted son of a butcher; he who advised boiling him down and giving his flesh to the dogs was the issue of a cook, and the third who proposed to pardon him was nobly born. See Night cccxli.

[15] Arab. “Al-Mafyaat,” lit. = a shady place; a locality whereupon the sun does not rise.

[16] Arab. “Ja’ídiyah,” a favourite word in this MS. “Ja’ad” = a curl, a liberal man: Ja’ad al-yad = miserly, and Abú ja’dah = father of curls, = a wolf. Scott (passim) translates the word “Sharper;” Gore Ouseley “Labourer;” and De Sacy (Chrestomathie ii. 369, who derives it from Ju’d = avoir les cheveux crépus): in Egypt, homme de la populace, canaille. He finds it in the Fabrica Linguć Arab. of Germanus of Silesia () = ignavis, hebes, stupidus, esp. a coward. Ibrahim Salamah of Alexandria makes the term signify in Syria, impudent, thieving, wicked. Spitta Bey translates this word musicien ambulant in his Gloss. to Contes Arabes, . According to Dr. Steingass, who, with the Muhít al-Muhít, reads “Ju’aydíyah,” Ju’ayd is said to be the P. N. of an Egyptian clown, who, with bell-hung cap and tambourine in hand, wandered about the streets singing laudatory doggrel and pestering the folk for money. Many vagabonds who adopted this calling were named after him and the word was generalised in that sense.

[17] MS. vol. iii. p-121. Scott, “Story of the Three Sharpers and the Sultan,” p-17; Gauttier, Histoire des trois filous et d’un Sulthan, vi. 165-176.

[18] Arab. Yasrahú = roaming, especially at early dawn; hence the wolf is called "Sirhán," and Yaklishu (if I read it aright) is from {root} Kulsh, and equivalent to "kicking" (their heels).

[19] Nusf = half a dirham, drachma or franc, see ii. 37; vi. 214, etc.

[20] Bast, a preparation of Bhang (Cannabis Sativa), known in Egypt but not elsewhere: see Lane, M. E., chapt. xv. Here it is made synonymous with "Hashísh" = Bhang in general.

[21] Ghaushah, a Persianism for which "Ghaughá" is a more common form. "Ghaush" is a tree of hard wood whereof musical instruments were made; hence the mod. words "Ghásha" and "Ghawwasha" = he produced a sound, and "Ghaushah" = tumult, quarrel. According to Dr. Steingass, the synon. in the native dicts. are "Khisám," "Laghat," "Jalabah," etc.

[22] Said ironicč, the jeweller being held to be one of the dishonest classes, like the washerman, the water-carrier, the gardener, etc. In England we may find his representative in the "silversmith," who will ask a pound sterling for a bit of metal which cost him perhaps five shillings or even less, and who hates to be bought by weight. The Arab. has "Jauhar-ji," a Turkish form for Jauhari; and here "jauhar" apparently means a pearl, the stone once peculiar to royalty in Persia, but the kind of gem is left undetermined.

[23] Arab. "Sáza, yasízu," not a dictionary word. Perhaps it is a clerical error for "Sasa," he groomed or broke in a horse, hence understood all about horses.

[24] In the orig. "Shorbah," Pers. = a mess of pottage: I have altered it for reasons which will presently appear.

[25] Arab. "Ghabasah," from Ghabas=obscure, dust-coloured.

[26] Arab. "Súsah" = a weevil, a moth, a worm. It does not mean simply a flaw, but a live animal (like our toads in the rock); and in the popular version of the tale the lapidary discovers its presence by

the stone warming in his hand.

[27] Arab. “Mashá’íli” the cresset-bearer who acted hangman: see vol. i. 259, etc.

[28] Arab. “Ta’kíl,” tying up a camel’s foreleg above the knee; the primary meaning of ‘Akl, which has so many secondary significations.

[29] Arab. “Suwán,” lit. = rock, syenite, hard stone, flint; here a marteau de guerre.

[30] Arab. “Hálik” = intensely black, so as to look blue under a certain angle of light.

[31] Arab. “Rikáb” (= stirrup) + “dár” Pers. (= holder).

[32] I have ransacked dictionaries and vocabularies but the word is a mere blank.

[33] Arab. “Jámúsah.” These mules are believed in by the
Arabs. Shaw and other travellers mention the Mauritanian
“Jumart,” the breed between a bull and a mare (or jennyass) or an ass and a cow. Buffon disbelieved in the mongrel, holding it to be a mere bardeau, got by a stallion horse out of an ass.
Voltaire writes “Jumarre” after German fashion and Littré derives it from jument + art (finale péjorative), or the Languedoc “Gimere” which according to Diez suggests “Chimćra.” Even in London not many years ago a mule was exhibited as the issue of a horse and a stag. No Indian ever allows his colt to drink buffalo’s milk, the idea being that a horse so fed will lie down in instead of fording or swimming a stream.

[34] See Sindbad the Seaman, vol. vi. 9.

[35] Arab. “Mubattat” from batt = a duck: in Persia the Batt-i-May is a wine-glass shaped like the duck. Scott (vi. 12) translates “thick and longish.”

[36] Arab. “his Harím”; see vol. i. 165; iv. 126. VOL. XIV.

[37] Again “he” for she. See vol. ii. 179.

[38] Arab. “Gháziyah”: for the plur. “Ghawázi” see vol. i. 214; also Lane (M.E.) index under “Ghazeeyehs.”

[39] The figure prothesis without apodosis. Understand “will slay thee”: see vol. vi. 203.

[40] Because the girl had not been a professional dancer, i.e a public prostitute.

[41] Arab. “Amán” = quarter, mercy: see vol. i. 342.

[42] For the “Mandíl” of mercy see vol. i. 343; for that of dismissal x. 47 and Ibn Khall. iv. 211. In Spitta Bey’s “Contes Arabes” (), I find throwing the kerchief (tarammá al mahramah) used in the old form of choosing a mate. In the Tale of the Sultan of Al-Yaman and his three Sons (Supplem. Nights, vol. iv.) the Princesses drop their kerchiefs upon the head of the Prince who had saved them, by way of pointing him out.

[43] Arab. “Sattár:” see vols. i. 258 and iii. 41.

[44] In the text “Arghá” for “Arkhá” = he “brayed” (like an ostrich, etc.) for “his limbs relaxed.” It reminds one of the German missionary’s fond address to his flock, “My prethren, let us bray!”

[45] Arab. “Azbad,” from {root} Zbd (Zabd) = foaming, frothing, etc., whence “Zubaydah,” etc.

[46] Arab. {root} “Zabh” (Zbh) = the ceremonial killing of animals for food: see vols. v. 391; viii. 44. I may note, as a proof of how modern is the civilisation of Europe that the domestic fowl was unknown to Europe till about the time of Pericles (ob. B.C. 429).

[47] See in “The Forty Vizirs” (Lady’s ivth Tale) how Khizr tells the

King the origin of his Ministers from the several punishments which they propose for the poor man. I have noticed this before in Night cccxxxiii. Boethius, translated by Chaucer, explains the underlying idea, “All thynges seken ayen to hir propre course and all thynges rejoysen in hir returninge agayne to hir nature.”

[48] For the Taylasán hood see vol. iv. 286.

[49] The “Kalansuwah”-cap is noted by Lane (A. N. chapt. iii. 22) as “Kalensuweh.” In M. E. (Supplement i. “The Copts”) he alters the word to Kalás’weh and describes it as a strip of woollen stuff, of a deep blue or black colour, about four inches wide, attached beneath the turban and hanging down the back to the length of about a foot. It is the distinguishing mark of the Coptic regular clergy.

[50] W. M. MS. vol. iii. p-141. Scott, “The Adventures of the abdicated Sultan,” p-19; including the “History of Mahummud, Sultan of Cairo,” p-30.

[51] “Káhirah.” I repeat my belief (Pilgrimage i. 171) that “Káhirah,” whence our “Cairo” through the Italian corruption, means not la victorieuse (Medinat al-Káhirah) as D’Herbelot has it; but City of Káhir or Mars the planet. It was so called because as Richardson informed the world (sub voce) it was founded in A.H. 358 (= A.D. 968) when the warlike planet was in the ascendant by the famous General Jauhar a Dalmatian renegade (not a “Greek slave”) for the first of the Fatimite dynasty Al-Mu’izz li ‘l-dini ‘lláh.

[52] According to Caussin de Perceval (pčre) in his translation of the “Contes Arabes,” there are four wonders in the Moslem world: (1) the Pharos of Alexandria; (2) the Bridge of Sanjia in Northern Syria; (3) The Church of Rohab (Edessa); and (4) the Amawi Mosque of Damascus.

[53] Arab. “Faddah,” lit. = silver, because made of copper alloyed with nobler metal; the smallest Egyptian coin = Nuss (i.e. Nusf, or half a dirham) and the Turk. paráh. It is the fortieth of the piastre and may be assumed at the value of a quarter-farthing.

[54] This word, in Egypt. “Harág,” is the cry with which the Dallál (broker) announces each sum bidden at an auction.

[55] The Portuguese Xerafim: Supplemental Nights, vol. iii. 166.

[56] A Khan or caravanserai: see vol. i. 266 and Pilgrimage i. 60.

[57] Arab. “Hilm” (vision) “au ‘Ilm” (knowledge) a phrase peculiar to this MS.

[58] The careless scribe forgets that the Sultan is speaking and here drops into the third person. This “Enallage of persons” is, however, Koranic and therefore classical: Arab critics aver that in such cases the “Hikáyah” (= literal reproduction of a discourse, etc.) passes into an “Ikhbár” = mere account of the same discourse). See Al Mas’údi iii. 216. I dare not reproduce this figure in English.

[59] Arab. “Auzah,” the Pers. Oták and the Turk. Otah (vulg. “Oda” whence “Odalisque”), a popular word in Egypt and Syria.

[60] Arab. “Al-Afandiyah” showing the late date or reduction of the tale. The Turkish word derives from the Romaic Afentis (?f??t??) the corrupted O.G. a????t?? = an absolute commander, and “authentie.” The word should not be written as usual “Effendi,” but “Efendi,” as Prof. Galland has been careful to do.

[61] Arab. “Al-dakhlah”; repeatedly referred to in The Nights. The adventure is a replica of that in “Abu Mohammed hight Lazybones,” vol. iv., p-174.

[62] Usual in the East, not in England, where some mothers are idiots enough not to tell their daughters what to expect on the wedding night. Hence too often unpleasant surprises, disgust and dislike. The most modern form is that of the chloroform’d bride upon whose pillow the bridegroom found a paper pinned and containing the words, “Mamma says you’re to do what you like.”

[63] Arab. “Akhaztu dam wajhhi-há.”

[64] Arab. “Dilk” more commonly “Khirkah,” the tattered and pieced robe of a religious mendicant.

[65] Arab. “Darbálah.” Scott () must have read “Gharbálah” when he translated “A turban full of holes as a sieve.” In classical Arabic the word is written “Darbalah,” and seems to correspond with the Egyptian “Darábukkah,” a tabor of wood or earthenware figured by Lane (M.E. chapt. xviii.). It is, like the bowl, part of the regular Darwaysh’s begging gear.

[66] Vulg. Maghribi. For this word see the story of Alaeddin, Supplem., vol. iii. 51. According to Heron, “History of Maugraby,” the people of Provence, Languedoc and Gascony use Maugraby as a term of cursing: Maugrebleu being used in other parts of France.

[67] In text “Fanárát”; the Arab. plur. of the Pers. “Fanár” = a light-house, and here equiv. to the Mod. Gr. fa???, a lantern, the Egypt. “Fánús.”

[68] This Sultan of the Jann preceded by sweepers, flag-bearers and tent-pitchers always appears in the form of second-sight called by Egyptians “Darb al Mandal” = striking the magic circle in which the enchanter sits when he conjures up spirits. Lane (M. E. chapt. xii.) first made the “Cairo Magician” famous in Europe, but Herklots and others had described a cognate practice in India many years before him.

[69] Arab, “Jáwúsh” for Cháwush (vulg. Chiaush) Turk. = an army-serjeant, a herald or serjeant-at-arms; an apparitor or officer of the Court of Chancery (not a “Mace-bearer or Messenger,” Scott). See vol. vii. 327.

[70] Arab. from Persian “Bímáristán,” a “sick-house,” hospital, a mad-house: see vol. i. 288.

[71] The text says only that “he was reading:” sub. the Holy Volume.

[72] MS. vol. iii., p-168. Scott, "Story of the First Lunatic," p 44. Gauttier, Histoire du Premier Fou, vol. vi. 187. It is identical with No. ii. of Chavis and Cazotte, translated by C. de Perceval, Le Bimaristan (i.e. the Hospital), ou Histoire du jeune Marchand de Bagdad et de la Dame inconnue (vol. viii. p-180). Heron terms it the "Story of Halechalbe (Ali Chelebi?) and the Unknown Lady," and the narrative is provided with a host of insipid and incorrect details, such as "A gentleman enjoying his pipe." The motif of this tale is common in Arab. folk-lore, and it first appears in the "Tale of Azíz and Azízah," ii. 328. A third variant will occur further on.

[73] Spelt in vol. iii. 143 and elsewhere, "Khwájá" for "Khwájah."

[74] Arab. "Hubban li-raasik," = out of love for thy head, i.e. from affection for thee. Dr. Steingass finds it analogous with the Koranic "Hubban li 'llahi" (ii. 160), where it is joined with "Ashaddu" = stronger, as regards love to or for Allah, more Allah loving. But it can stand adverbially by itself = out of love for Allah, for Allah's sake.

[75] Arab. "Zahr," lit. and generically a blossom; but often used in a specific sense throughout The Nights.

[76] Arab. "Kursi" here = a square wooden seat without back and used for sitting cross-legged. See Suppl. vol. i. 10.

[77] Arab. "Sujjádah" = lit. a praying carpet, which Lane calls "Seggádeh."

[78] Arab. "Wakíl," lit. = agent: here the woman's representative, corresponding roughly with the man who gives away the bride amongst ourselves.

[79] The mention of coffee and sherbet, here and in the next page, makes the tale synchronous with that of Ma'arúf or the xviith. century.

[80] The MS. writes “Zardakát” for “Zardakhán”: see below.

[81] Scott () has “mahazzim (for maházim), al Zerdukkaut (for al-Zardakhán)” and “munnaskif (for manáshif) al fillfillee.” Of the former he notes () “What this composition is I cannot define: it may be translated compound of saffron, yoke of egg or of yellowish drugs.” He evidently confounds it with the Pers. Zard-i-Kháyah = yoke of egg. Of the second he says “compound of peppers, red, white and black.” Lane (The Nights, vol. i.) is somewhat scandalised at such misrepresentation, translating the first “apron-napkins of thick silk,” and the second “drying towels of Líf or palm-fibre,” further suggesting that the text may have dropped a conjunction = drying towels and fibre.

[82] Arab. “Líwán al-barrání,” lit. = the outer bench in the “Maslakh” or apodyterium.

[83] Arab. “Ma’jún,” pop. applied to an electuary of Bhang (Cannabis sativa): it is the “Maagoon” sold by the “Maagungee” of Lane (M.E. chapt. xv.). Here, however, the term may be used in the sense of “confections” generally, the sweetmeats eaten by way of restoratives in the Bath.

[84] He speaks of taking her maidenhead as if it were porter’s work and so defloration was regarded by many ancient peoples. The old Nilotes incised the hymen before congress; the Phnicians, according to Saint Athanasius, made a slave of the husband’s abate it. The American Chibchas and Caribs looked upon virginity as a reproach, proving that the maiden had never inspired love. For these and other examples see , chap. iii. “L’Amour dans l’Humanité,” by P. Mantegazza, a civilised and unprejudiced traveller.

[85] Arab. “Zill,” lit. “shadow me.”

[86] Arab. “Istinshák,” one of the items of the “Wuzú” or lesser ablution: see vol. v. 198.

[87] In Chavis her name is “Zaliza” and she had “conceived an

unhappy passion" for her master, to whom she "declared her sentiments without reserve."

[88] Arab. "Armaghánát," the Arab. plur. of "Armaghán," Pers.=a present.

[89] In the text, "jumlatun min al-mál," which Scott apparently reads "Hamlat al-jamal" and translates () "a camel's load of treasure."

[90] The learned man was to exorcise some possible "evil spirit" or "the eye," a superstition which seems to have begun, like all others, with the ancient Egyptians.

[91] The MS., I have said, always writes "Khwájá" instead of "Khwájah" (plur. "Khwájat"): for this word, the modern Egyptian "Howájah," see vol. vi. 46. Here it corresponds with our "goodman."

[92] Arab. "Yatazáwadú"=increasing.

[93] By which she accepted the offer.

[94] This incident has already occurred in the tale of the Portress (Second Lady of Baghdad, vol. i. 179), but here the consequences are not so tragical. In Chavis the vulgar cock becomes "a golden Censer ornamented with diamonds, to be sold for two thousand sequins" (each=9 shill.).

[95] A royal sign of wrath generally denoting torture and death. See vols. iv. 72; vi. 250.

[96] Arab. "Yá Sallám," addressed to Allah.

[97] Here more is meant than meets the eye. When a Moslem's head was struck off, in the days of the Caliphate, it was placed under his armpit, whereas that of a Jew or a Christian was set between his legs, close to the seat of dishonour.

[98] In Chavis and Cazotte the lady calls to “Morigen, her first eunuch, and says, Cut off his head!” Then she takes a theorbo and “composed the following couplets”?of which the first may suffice:

> Since my swain unfaithful proves,
> Let him go to her he loves, etc., etc.

[99] The device has already occurred in “Ali Baba.”

[100] Arab. “Al-ma’húd min ghayr wa’d.”

[101] In Chavis and Cazotte the king is Harun al-Rashid and the masterful young person proves to be Zeraida, the favourite daughter of Ja’afar Bermaki; whilst the go-between is not the young lady’s mother but Nemana, an old governess. The over- jealous husband in the Second Lady of Baghdad (vol. i. 179) is Al-Amín, son and heir of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid.

[102] Vol. iii. p-179: and Scott’s “Story of the Second Lunatic,” p-51. The name is absurdly given as the youth was anything but a lunatic; but this is Arab symmetromania. The tale is virtually the same as “Women’s Wiles,” in Supplemental Nights, vol. ii. 99-107.

[103] This forward movement on the part of the fair one is held to be very insulting by the modest Moslem. This incident is wanting in “Women’s Wiles.”

[104] Arab. “Labbah,” usually the part of the throat where ornaments are hung or camels are stabbed.

[105] The Chief of the Moslem Church. For the origin of the office and its date (A.D. 1453) see vols. ix. 289, and x. 85.

[106] Arab. “Satíhah” = a she-Satíh: this seer was a headless and neckless body, with face in breast, lacking members and lying prostrate on the ground. His fellow, “Shikk,” was a half-man, and both foretold the divine mission of Mohammed. (Ibn Khall. i. 487.)

[107] Arab. “Wakt al-Zuhŕ;” the division of time between sunrise and midday.

[108] In the text “Sufrah” = the cloth: see vol. i. 178, etc.

[109] Arab. “Ya Tinjír,” lit. = O Kettle.

[110] Arab. “Tari,” lit. = wet, with its concomitant suggestion, soft and pleasant like desert-rain.

[111] Here meaning “Haste, haste!” See vol. i. 46.

[112] The chief man (Aghá) of the Gypsies, the Jink of Egypt whom Turkish soldiers call Ghiovendé, a race of singers and dancers; in fact professional Nautch-girls. See , “Account of the Gypsies of India,” by David MacRitchie (London, K. Paul, 1886), a most useful manual.

[113] Arab. “Kurúsh,” plur of. “Kirsh” (pron. “Girsh”), the Egyptian piastre = one-fifth of a shilling. The word may derive from a {root} Karsh = collecting money; but it is more probably a corruption of Groschen, primarily a great or thick piece of money and secondarily a small silver coin = 3 kreuzers = 1 penny.

[114] The purse (“Kís”) is = 500 piastres (kurúsh) = Ł5; and a thousand purses compose the Treasury (“Khaznah”) = Ł5,000.

[115] MS. vol. iii. p-303. It is Scott’s “Story of the Retired Sage and his Pupil, related to the Sultan by the Second Lunatic,” vi. p-67; and Gauttier’s Histoire du Sage, vi. 199-214. The scene is laid in Cairo.

[116] Meaning that he was an orphan and had, like the well-known widow, “seen better days.”

[117] The phrase, I have noted, is not merely pleonastic: it emphasises the assertion that it was a chance day.

[118] An old Plinian fable long current throughout the East. It is the Pers. Ním-chihreh, and the Arab Shikk and possibly Nasnás = nisf al-Nás (?) See vol. v. 333. Shikk had received from Allah only half the form of a man, and his rival diviner Satíh was a shapeless man of flesh without limbs. They lived in the days of a woman named Tarífah, daughter of Al-Khayr al-Himyarí and wife of Amrú bin ‘Ámir who was famous for having intercourse with the Jann. When about to die she sent for the two, on account of their deformity and the influence exercised upon them by the demons; and, having spat into their mouths, bequeathed to them her Jinni, after which she departed life and was buried at Al-Johfah. Presently they became noted soothsayers; Shikk had issue but Satih none; they lived 300 (some say 600) years, and both died shortly before the birth of the Prophet concerning whom they prophesied. When the Tobba of Al-Yaman dreamed that a dove flew from a holy place and settled in the Tihámah (lowland-seaboard) of Meccah, Satih interpreted it to signify that a Prophet would arise to destroy idols and to teach the best of faiths. The two also predicted (according to Tabari) to Al-Rabí’ah, son of Nasr, a Jewish king of Al-Yaman, that the Habash (Abyssinians) should conquer the country, govern it, and be expelled, and after this a Prophet should arise amongst the Arabs and bring a new religion which all should embrace and which should endure until Doomsday. Compare this with the divining damsel in Acts xvi. 16-18.

[119] Arab. “Kahramánah;” the word has before been explained as a nurse, a duenna, an Amazon guarding the Harem. According to C. de Perceval (pčre) it was also the title given by the Abbasides to the Governess of the Serraglio.

[120] So in the Apocrypha (“Tobias” vi. 8). Tobit is taught by the Archangel Raphael to drive away evil spirits (or devils) by the smoke of a bit of fish’s heart. The practice may date from the earliest days when “Evil Spirits” were created by man. In India, when Europeans deride the existence of Jinns and Rakshasas, and declare that they never saw one, the people receive this information with a smile which means only, “I should think not! you and yours are worse than

any of our devils."

[121] An Inquisitorial costume called in the text "Shámiyát bi al-Nár."

[122] A tribe of the Jinn sometimes made synonymous with "Márid" and at other times contrasted with these rebels, as in the Story of Ma'aruf and J. Scott's "History of the Sultan of Hind" (vol. vi. 195). For another note see The Nights, iv. 88.

[123] Arab. "'Ilm al-Hurúf," not to be confounded with the "'Ilm al-Jumal," or "Hisáb Al-Jumal," a notation by numerical values of the alphabet. See Lumsden's Grammar of the Persian Language, i. 37.

[124] Like our "Cut your mutton," or manger la soupe or die Suppe einzunehmen. For this formula meaning like the Brazilian "cup of water," a grand feast, see vol. vii. 168.

[125] Arab. "Tafazzal," a most useful word employed upon almost all occasions of invitation and mostly equivalent to "Have the kindness," etc. See vol. ii. 103.

[126] The Shaykh for humility sits at the side, not at the "Sadr," or top of the room; but he does not rise before the temporal power. The Sultan is equally courteous and the Shaykh honours him by not keeping silence.

[127] Arab. "Miat Mamlúk kitábí," the latter word meaning "one of the Book, a Jew" (especially), or a Christian.

[128] This MS. prefers the rare form "Al-Jánn" for the singular.

[129] These flags, I have noticed, are an unfailing accompaniment of a Jinn army.

[130] MS. vol. iii. p-210; Scott, "Night Adventure of the Sultan," p-71. Gauttier, Aventure nocturne du Sulthan, vi. 214.

[131] Arab. “Mashrút shadak.” Ashdak is usually applied to a wide-chapped face, like that of Margaret Maultasch or Mickle-mouthed Meg. Here, however, it alludes to an accidental deformity which will presently be described.

[132] Arab. “Amsik lisána-k”: the former word is a standing “chaff” with the Turks, as in their tongue it means cunnus-penis and nothing else. I ever found it advisable when speaking Arabic before Osmanlis, to use some such equivalent as Khuz = take thou.

[133] This is the familiar incident in “Ali Baba”: Supplem. vol iii. 384, etc.

[134] MS. iii. 210-214. Scott’s “Story of the broken-backed Schoolmaster,” vi. p-75, and Gauttier’s “Histoire du Maître d’école éreinté,” vi. 217. The Arabic is “Muaddib al-Atfál” = one who teacheth children. I have before noted that amongst Moslems the Schoolmaster is always a fool. So in Europe of the 16th century probably no less than one-third of the current jests turned upon the Romish clergy and its phenomenal ignorance compared with that of the pagan augur. The Story of the First Schoolmaster is one of the most humorous in this MS.

[135] For the usual ceremony when a Moslem sneezes, see vol. ix. 220.

[136] The “day in the country,” lately become such a favourite with English schools, is an old Eastern custom.

[137] MS. iii. 214-219. Scott’s “Story of the wry-mouthed Schoolmaster,” vi. p-75: Gauttier’s Histoire du Second Estropié, vi. .

[138] In these days the whole would be about 10d.

[139] Pay-day for the boys in Egypt. The Moslem school has often been described but it always attracts the curiosity of strangers. The Moorish or Maroccan variety is a simple affair; “no forms, no desks, few books. A number of boards about the size of foolscap,

whitewashed on either side, whereon the lessons?from the alphabet to sentences of the Koran?are plainly written in large black letters; a pen and ink, a book and a switch or two, complete the paraphernalia. The dominie, squatting on the ground, tailor-fashion, like his pupils, who may number from ten to thirty, repeats the lesson in a sonorous sing-song voice, and is imitated by the urchins, who accompany their voices by a rocking to and fro which sometimes enables them to keep time. A sharp application of the cane is wonderfully effectual in recalling wandering attention; and lazy boys are speedily expelled. On the admission of a pupil, the parents pay some small sum, varying according to their means, and every Wednesday, which is a half-holiday, a payment is made from źd. to 2d. New moons and feasts are made occasions for larger payments, and are also holidays, which last ten days during the two greater festivals. Thursdays are whole holidays, and no work is done on Friday mornings, that day being the Mohammedan ‘Sabbath,’ or at least ‘meeting day,’ as it is called. When the pupils have mastered the first short chapter of the Koran, it is customary for them to be paraded round the town on horseback, with ear-splitting music, and sometimes charitably disposed persons make small presents to the youngster by way of encouragement. After the first, the last is learned, then the last but one, and so on, backwards, as, with the exception of the first, the longest chapters are at the beginning. Though reading and a little writing are taught, at the same time, all the scholars do not arrive at the pitch of perfection necessary to indite a polite letter, so that consequently there is plenty of employment for the numerous scribes or Tálibs who make a profession of writing. These may frequently be seen in small rooms opening on to the street, usually very respectably dressed in a white flowing haik and large turban, and in most cases of venerable appearance, their noses being adorned with huge goggles. Before them are their appliances,?pens made of reeds, ink, paper, and sand in lieu of blotting paper. They usually possess also a knife and scissors, with a case to hold them all. In writing, they place the paper on the knee, or upon a pad of paper in the left hand.” The main merit of the village school in Eastern lands is its noises which teach the boy to concentrate his attention. As Dr. Wilson of Bombay said, the young idea is taught to shout as well as to shoot, and this vivâ voce process is a far better mnemonic than silent reading. Moreover it is fine practice in the art of concentrating attention.

[140] Arab. "Mikshat," whose root would be "Kasht" = skinning (a camel).

[141] Evidently said ironicč as of innocents. In "The Forty Vezirs" we read, "At length they perceived that all this tumult arose from their trusting on this wise the words of children." (Lady's XXth Tale.)

[142] MS. iii. 219-220. For some unaccountable reason it is omitted by Scott (vi. 76), who has written English words in the margin of the W. M. Codex.

[143] In text "Kádúm," for "Kudúm," a Syrian form.

[144] Arab. "Hidyah," which in Egypt means a falcon; see vol. iii. 138.

[145] Arab. "Sifah," = lit. a quality.

[146] Arab. "Istiláh" = specific dialect, idiom. See De Sacy, Chrestomathie, i. 443, where the learned Frenchman shows abundant learning, but does very little for the learner.

[147] In the text "Kattán" = linen, flax.

[148] Arab. "Fí Jífán ka'l-Jawábí!" which, I suppose, means small things (or men) and great.

[149] This form of cleverness is a favourite topic in Arabian folk-lore. The model man was Iyás al-Muzani, al-Kazi (of Bassorah), in the 2nd century A.H., mentioned by Al-Harírí in his 7th Ass. and noted in Arab. Prov. (i. 593) as "more intelligent than Iyás." Ibn Khallikan (i. 233) tells sundry curious tales of him. Hearing a Jew ridicule the Moslem Paradise where the blessed ate and drank ad libitum but passed nothing away, he asked if all his food were voided: the Jew replied that God converted a part of it into nourishment and he

rejoined, “Then why not the whole?” Being once in a courtyard he said that there was an animal under the bricks and a serpent was found: he had noted that only two of the tiles showed signs of dampness and this proved that there was something underneath that breathed. Al-Maydáni relates of him that hearing a dog bark, he declared that the beast was tied to the brink of a well; and he judged so because the bark was followed by an echo. Two men came before him, the complainant claimed money received by the defendant who denied the debt. Iyás asked the plaintiff where he had given it, and was answered, “Under a certain tree.” The judge told him to go there by way of refreshing his memory and in his absence asked the defendant if his adversary could have reached it. “Not yet,” said the rogue, forgetting himself; “’tis a long way off”?which answer convicted him. Seeing three women act upon a sudden alarm, he said, “One of them is pregnant, another is nursing, and the third is a virgin.” He explained his diagnosis as follows: “In time of danger persons lay their hands on what they most prize. Now I saw the pregnant woman in her flight place her hand on her belly, which showed me she was with child; the nurse placed her hand on her bosom, whereby I knew that she was suckling, and the third covered her parts with her hand proving to me that she was a maid.” (Chenery’s Al Hariri, .)

[150] Such an address would be suited only to a King or a ruler.

[151] MS. iii. 231-240; Scott’s “Story of the Sisters and the Sultana their mother,” vi. 82; Gauttier’s Histoire de la Sulthane et de ses trois Filles, vi. 228.

[152] Arab, “Darajatáni”=lit. two astronomical degrees: the word is often used in this MS.

[153] Arab. “Síwan;” plur. “Síwáwín.”

[154] Arab. “‘Alf́ hudúd (or Alf́ hadd) al-Shauk,” repeated in
MS. iii. 239.

[155] Here the writer, forgetting that the youngest sister is speaking,

breaks out into the third person?”their case”?”their mother,” etc.

[156] The idea is that of the French anonyma’s “Mais, Monsieur, vous me suivez comme un lavement.”

[157] The text () speaks of two eunuchs, but only one has been noticed.

[158] Arab. “Manjaník;” there are two forms of this word from the Gr. ????a???, or ???a??, and it survives in our mangonel, a battering engine. The idea in the text is borrowed from the life of Abraham whom Nimrod cast by means of a catapult (which is a bow worked by machinery) into a fire too hot for man to approach.

[159] Showing that he was older; otherwise she would have addressed him, “O my cousin.” A man is “young,” in Arab speech, till forty and some say fifty.

[160] The little precatory formula would keep off the Evil Eye.

[161] Supper comes first because the day begins at sundown.

[162] Calotte or skull-cap; vol. i. 224; viii. 120.

[163] This is a new “fact” in physics and certainly to be counted amongst “things not generally known.” But Easterns have a host of “dodges” to detect physiological differences such as between man and maid, virgin and matron, imperfect castratos and perfect eunuchs and so forth. Very Eastern, mutatis mutandis, is the tale of the thief-catcher, who discovered a fellow in feminine attire by throwing an object for him to catch in his lap and by his closing his legs instead of opening them wide as the petticoated ones would do.

[164] She did not wish to part with her maidenhead at so cheap a price.

[165] Arab. “Subú’” (for “Yaum al-Subú’”) a festival prepared on the seventh day after a birth or a marriage or return from pilgrimage. See Lane (M. E. passim) under “Subooa.”

[166] For this Anglo-Indian term, = a running courier, see vol. vii. 340. It is the gist of the venerable Joe Miller in which the father asks a friend to name his seven-months child. “Call him ‘Cossid’ for verily he hath accomplished a march of nine months in seven months.”

[167] Arab. “Madáfi al-Salámah,” a custom showing the date of the tale to be more modern than any in the ten vols. of The Nights proper.

[168] Master, captain, skipper (not owner): see vols. i. 127; vi. 112.

[169] Zahr al-Bahr = the surface which affords a passage to man.

[170] Arab. “Batiyah,” gen. = a black jack, a leathern flagon.

[171] “Kunáfah” = a vermicelli cake often eaten at breakfast: see vol. x. 1: “Kunafáni” is the baker or confectioner. Scott () converts the latter into a “maker of cotton wallets for travelling.”

[172] In the text (iii. 260) “Mídí,” a clerical error for “Mayyidí,” an abbreviation of “Muayyadí,” the Faddah, Nuss or half-dirham coined under Sultan al-Muayyad, A.H. ixth cent. = A.D. xvth.

[173] Arab. “Rub’” (plur. “Arbá’”) = the fourth of a “Waybah,” the latter being the sixth of an Ardabb (Irdabb) = 5 bushels. See vol. i. 263.

[174] A royal pavilion; according to Shakespear (Hind. Dict. sub voce) it is a corruption of the Pers. “Sayabán.”=canopy.

[175] Arab. “Musajja’” = rhymed prose: for the Saj’a, see vol. i. 116, and Terminal Essay, vol. x. . So Chaucer:?

In rhyme or ellčs in cadence.

[176] Arab. “Huwa inná na’rifu-h” lit. = He, verily we wot him not: the juxtaposition of the two first pronouns is intended to suggest “I am he.”

[177] In Moslem tales decency compels the maiden, however much she

may be in love, to show extreme unwillingness in parting with her maidenhead especially by marriage; and this farce is enacted in real life (see vol. viii. 40). The French tell the indecent truth,

Désir de fille est un feu qui dévore:
Désir de femme est plus fort encore.

[178] The Arab. form (our old "bashaw") of the Turk. "Pasha," which the French and many English write Pacha, thus confusing the vulgar who called Ibrahim Pacha "Abraham Parker." The origin of the word is much debated and the most fanciful derivations have been proposed. Some have taken it from the Sansk. "Paksha" = a wing: Fuerst from Pers. Páigáh = rank, dignity; Von Hammer (History) from Pái-Sháh = foot of the king; many from "Pádisháh" = the Sovran, and Mr. E. T. W. Gibb suspects a connection with the Turk. "Básh" = a head. He writes to me that the oldest forms are "Bashah" and "Báshah"; and takes the following quotation from Colonel Jevád Bey, author of an excellent work on the Janissaries published a few years ago. "As it was the custom of the (ancient) Turks to call the eldest son 'Páshá,' the same style was given to his son Alŕ al-Din (Aladdín) by Osmán Gházi, the founder of the Empire; and he kept this heir at home and beside him, whilst he employed the cadet Orkhan Bey as his commander-in-chief. When Orkhán Gházi ascended the throne he conferred the title of Páshá upon his son Sulayman. Presently reigned Murád (Amurath), who spying signs of disaffection in his first-born Sáwújí Bey about the middle of his reign created Kárá Khalíl (his Kází-Askar or High Chancellor) Wazir with the title Kazyr al-Dín Pasha; thus making him, as it were, an adopted son. After this the word passed into the category of official titles and came to be conferred upon those who received high office." Colonel Jevád Bey then quotes in support of his opinion the "History of Munajjim Pasha" and the "Fatáyah al-Wukú'at" = Victories of Events. I may note that the old title has been sadly prostituted in Egypt as well as in Turkey: in 1851 Páshás could be numbered on a man's fingers; now they are innumerable and of no account.

[179] Arab. "'Alŕ bábi 'lláh" = for the love of the Lord, gratis, etc., a

most popular phrase.

[180] Arab. “Bahár,” often used for hot spices generally.

[181] In the text Shajarat Ríh.

[182] Arab. “Ma’ádin” = minerals, here mentioned for the first time.

[183] For the ear conceiving love before the eye (the basis of half these love-stories), see vol. iii. 9.

[184] According to Dr. Steingass “Mirwad” = the iron axle of a pulley or a wheel for drawing water or lifting loads, hence possibly a bar of metal, an ingot. But he is more inclined to take it in its usual sense of “Kohl-pencil.” Here “Mirwád” is the broader form like “Miftáh” for “Miftah,” much used in Syria.

[185] For the Ashrafi, a gold coin of variable value, see vol. iii. 294. It is still coined; the Calcutta Ashrafi worth Ł1 11s. 8d. is 1/16th (about 5s. to the oz.) better than the English standard, and the Regulations of May, 1793, made it weigh 190.894 grs. Troy.

[186] In text “Anjar” = a flat platter; Pers.

[187] By what physical process the author modestly leaves to the reader’s imagination. Easterns do not often notice this feminine venereal paroxysm which takes the place of seminal emission in the male. I have seen it happen to a girl when hanging by the arms a trifle too long from a gymnastic cross-bar; and I need hardly say that at such moments (if men only knew them) every woman, even the most modest, is an easy conquest. She will repent it when too late, but the flesh has been too strong for her.

[188] A neat and suggestive touch of Eastern manners and morals.

[189] In text “Ghayr Wa’d,” or “Min ghayr Wa’d.” Lit. without previous agreement: much used in this text for suddenly, unexpectedly, without design.

[190] The reader will have remarked the use of the Arabic "'Alaka" = he hung, which with its branches greatly resembles the Lat. pendere.

[191] Arab. "Min al-Malábis," plur. of "Malbas" = anything pleasant or enjoyable; as the plural of "Milbas" = dress, garment, it cannot here apply.

[192] i.e. "The Tigris" (Hid-dekel), with which the Egyptian writer seems to be imperfectly acquainted. See vols. i. 180; viii. 150.

[193] The word, as usual misapplied in the West, is to be traced through the Turk. Kúshk (pron. Kyúshk) to the Pers. "Kushk" = an upper chamber.

[194] Four including the doorkeeper. The Darwayshes were suspected of kidnapping, a practice common in the East, especially with holy men. I have noticed in my Pilgrimage (vols. ii. 273; iii. 327), that both at Meccah and at Al-Medinah the cheeks of babes are decorated with the locally called "Masháli" = three parallel gashes drawn by the barber with the razor down the fleshy portion of each cheek, from the exterior angles of the eyes almost to the corners of the mouth. According to the citizens this "Tashrít" is a modern practice distinctly opposed to the doctrine of Al-Islam; but, like the tattooing of girls, it is intended to save the children from being carried off, for good luck, by kidnapping pilgrims, especially Persians.

[195] The hair being shaven or plucked and showing the darker skin. In the case of the axilla-pile, vellication is the popular process: see vol. ix. 139. Europeans who do not adopt this essential part of cleanliness in hot countries are looked upon as impure by Moslems.

[196] Here a little abbreviation has been found necessary: "of no avail is a twice-told tale."

[197] The nearest approach in Eastern tales to Western hysterics.

[198] A tent-pitcher, body servant, etc. See vol. vii. 4. The word is still

popular in Persia.

[199] The amount of eating and drinking in this tale is phenomenal; but, I repeat, Arabs enjoy reading of “meat and drink” almost as much as Englishmen.

[200] Arab writers always insist upon the symptom of rage which distinguishes the felines from the canines; but they do not believe that the end of the tail has a sting.

[201] The circular leather which acts alternately provision bag and table-cloth. See vols. i. 178; v. 8; viii. 269, and ix. 141.

[202] He refused because he suspected some trick and would not be on terms of bread and salt with the stranger.

[203] The story contains excellent material, but the writer or the copier has “scamped” it in two crucial points, the meeting of the bereaved Sultan and his wife (Night ccclxxvii.) and the finale where we miss the pathetic conclusions of the Mac. and Bresl. Edits. Also a comparison of this hurried dénouement with the artistic tableau of “King Omar bin al-Nu’uman,” where all the actors are mustered upon the stage before the curtain falls, measures the difference between this MS. and the printed texts, showing the superior polish and finish of the latter.

[204] Vol. iii. p-97, where it follows immediately the last story. Scott (Story of the Avaricious Cauzee and his Wife, vi. 112) has translated it after his own fashion, excising half and supplying it out of his own invention; and Gauttier has followed suit in the Histoire du Cadi avare et de sa Femme, vi. 254.

[205] Tarábulus and Atrábulus are Arabisations of Tripolis (hod. Tripoli) the well-known port-town north of Bayrút; founded by the Phnicians, rose to fame under the Seleucidć, and was made splendid by the Romans. See Socin’s “Bćdeker,” .

[206] i.e. the Kazi’s court-house

[207] Arab. “Buksumah” = “hard bread” (Americanicč).

[208] Arab. “Sufrah umm jalájil.” Lit. an eating-cloth with little bells, like those hung to a camel, or metal plates as on the rim of a tambourine.

[209] The Kursi here = the stool upon which the “Síníyah” or tray of tinned copper is placed, the former serving as a table. These stools, some 15 inches high and of wood inlaid with bone, tortoise-shell or mother-of-pearl, are now common in England, where one often sees children using them as seats. The two (Kursi and Síníyah) compose the Sufrah, when the word is used in the sense of our “dinner-table.” Lane (M.E. chapt. v.) gives an illustration of both articles.

[210] Arab. “Jarídah,” a palm-frond stripped of its leaves (Supplemental, vol. i. 264); hence the “Jaríd” used as a javelin; see vol. vi. 263.

[211] An Egyptian or a Syrian housewife will make twenty dishes out of roast lamb, wholly unlike the “good plain cook” of Great or Greater Britain, who leaves the stomach to do all the work of digestion in which she ought to but does not assist.

[212] A plate of “Baysár” or “Faysár,” a dish peculiar to Egypt; beans seasoned with milk and honey and generally eaten with meat. See Mr. Guy Lestrange’s “Al-Mukaddasi,” Description of Syria, ; an author who wrote cir. A.H. 986. Scott (vi. 119) has “A savoury dish called byssarut, which is composed of parched beans and pounded salt meat, mixed up with various seeds, onions and garlic.” Gauttier (vi. 261) carefully avoids giving the Arabic name, which occurs in a subsequent tale (Nights cdxliv.) when a laxative is required.

[213] Arab. “Mulúkhíyah náshiyah,” lit. = flowing; i.e. soft like épinards au jus. Mulúkhíya that favourite vegetable, the malva esculenta is derived from the Gr. l’a???? (also written l’?????) from l’a??ss? = to soften, because somewhat relaxing. In ancient Athens it was the food of the poorer classes and in Egypt it is eaten by all, taking the place of our spinach and sorrel.

[214] Arab. “Kalak” = lit. “agitation,” “disquietude” and here used as syn. with “Kúlanj,” a true colic.

[215] Arab. “Mazarát,” from “Mazr,” = being addled (an egg).

[216] Here is an allusion to the “Massage,” which in these days has assumed throughout Europe all the pretensions of scientific medical treatment. The word has been needlessly derived from the Arab. “Mas’h” = rubbing, kneading; but we have the Gr. synonym l’?ss? and the Lat. Massare. The text describes child-bed customs amongst Moslem women, and the delivery of the Kazi has all the realism of M. Zola’s accouchement in La Joie de Vivre.

[217] Arab. “Fa’álah” = the building craft, builders’ trade.

[218] In text “Kawwárah,” which is not found in the dictionaries. “Kuwárah” = that which is cut off from the side of a thing, etc. My translation is wholly tentative: perhaps Kawwára may be a copyist’s error for “Kazázah” = vulg. a (flask of) glass.

[219] The “Khaznah,” = treasury, is a thousand “Kís” = 500 piastres, or Ł5 at par; and thus represents Ł5,000, a large sum for Tripoli in those days.

[220] The same incident occurs in that pathetic tale with an ill name”How Abu al-Hasan brake Wind,” vol. v. 135.

[221] Arab. “Karkabah,” clerical error (?) for “Karkarah” = driving (as wind the clouds); rumbling of wind in bowels. Dr. Steingass holds that it is formed by addition of a second “K,” from the root “Karb,” one of whose meanings is: “to inflate the stomach.”

[222] For Ummu ‘Amrin = mother of ‘Amru, so written and pronounced “ ‘Amr,” a fancy name, see vol. v. 118, for the Tale of the Schoolmaster, a well-known “Joe Miller.” [Ummu ‘Amrin, like Ummu ‘Ámirin, is a slang term for “hyena.” Hence, if Ass and Umm Amr went off together, it is more than likely that neither came back. St.]

[223] A slang name for Death. “Kash’am” has various sigs. esp. the lion, hence Rabí’at al-Faras (of the horses), one of the four sons of Nizár was surnamed Al-Kash’am from his cur de lion (Al-Mas’udi iii. 238). Another pleasant term for departing life is Abú Yáhyá = Father of John, which also means “The Living” from Hayy?Death being the lord of all: hence “Yamút” lit. = he dies, is an ill-omened name amongst Arabs. Kash’am is also a hyena, and Umm Kash’am is syn. with Umm ‘Ámir (vol. i. 43). It was considered a point of good breeding to use these “Kunyah” for the purpose of varying speech (see al-Hariri Ass. xix.). The phrase in the text = meaning went to hell, as a proverb was first used by Zuhayr, one of the “Suspended Poets.” Umm Kash’am was the P.N. of a runaway camel which, passing by a large fire, shied and flung its riding saddle into the flames. So in Al-Siyúti’s “History of the Caliphs” (), the text has “And Malak Shah went to where her saddle was thrown by Umm Kash’am,” which Major Jarrett renders “departed to hell-fire.”

[224] Scott’s “Story of the Bhang-eater and Cauzee,” vi. 126:
Gauttier, Histoire du Preneur d’Opium et du Cadi, vi. 268.

[225] Arab. “Lawwaha” = lit. pointing out, making clear.

[226] Text “in his belly,” but afterwards in his “Halkah” = throat, throttle, which gives better sense.

[227] In text “Háyishah” from {root} “Haysh” = spoiling, etc.

[228] Arab. “Yauh!” See vols. ii. 321; vi. 235.

[229] Arab. “Yá Jad’án” (pron. “Gád’án”) more gen. “Yá Jad’a” = mon brave!

[230] In text “Yá ‘Arzád”: prob. a clerical slip for “‘Urzát,” plur. of “‘Urzah” = a companion, a (low) fellow, a man evil spoken of.

[231] Easterns love drinking in a bright light: see vol. ii. 59.

[232] Arab. “‘Akl” (= comprehension, understanding) and “Nakl” (=

copying, describing, transcribing), a favourite phrase in this MS.

[233] Arab. “Ummáli”; gen. Ummál, an affirmation; Certes, I believe you!

[234] For the many preparations of this drug, see Herklots, Appendix, pp. lxviii. ciii. It is impossible to say how “Indian hemp,” like opium, datura, ether and chloroform, will affect the nervous system of an untried man. I have read a dozen descriptions of the results, from the highly imaginative Monte Cristo to the prose of prosaic travellers; and do not recognise that they are speaking of the same thing.

[235] This tranquil enjoyment is popularly called “Kayf.” See my Pilgrimage i. 13. In a coarser sense it is applied to all manners of intoxication; and the French traveller Sonnini says, “The Arabs (by which he means the Egyptians) give the name of Kayf to the voluptuous relaxation, the delicious stupor, produced by the smoking of hemp.” I have smoked it and eaten it for months without other effect than a greatly increased appetite and a little drowsiness.

[236] These childish indecencies are often attributed to Bhang-eaters. See “Bákún’s Tale of the Hashísh-eater,” vol. ii. 91. Modest Scott (vi. 129) turns the joke into “tweaking the nose.” Respectable Moslems dislike the subject, but the vulgar relish it as much as the sober Italian enjoys the description of a drinking bout?in novels.

[237] In the text “Finjál,” a vulgarism for “Finján”: so the converse “Isma’ín” for “Ism’aíl” = Ishmael. Mr. J. W. Redhouse (The Academy No. 764) proposes a new date for coffee in Al-Yaman. Colonel Playfair (History of Yemen, Bombay 1859) had carelessly noted that its “first use at Aden was by a judge of the place who had seen it drunk at Zayla’, on the African coast opposite Aden,” and he made the judge die in A.H. 875 = A.D. 1470. This is about the date of the Shaykh al-Sházalí’s tomb at Mocha, and he was the first who brought the plant from about African Harar to the Arabian seaboard. But Mr. Redhouse finds in a Turkish work written only two centuries ago, and printed at Constantinople, in A.D. 1732,

that the "ripe fruit was discovered growing wild in the mountains of Yemen (?) by a company of dervishes banished thither." Finding the berry relieve their hunger and support their vigils the prior, "Shaykh 'Umar advised their stewing it (?) and the use became established. They dried a store of the fruit; and its use spread to other dervish communities, who perhaps (?) sowed the seed wherever it would thrive throughout Africa (N.B. where it is indigenous) and India (N.B. where both use and growth are quite modern). From Africa, two centuries later, its use was reimported to Arabia at Aden (?) by the judge above mentioned, who in a season of scarcity of the dried fruit (?) tried the seed" (N.B. which is the fruit). This is passing strange and utterly unknown to the learned De Sacy (Chrest. Arab. i. 412-481).

[238] Koran iii. 128. D'Herbelot and Sale (Koran, chap. iii. note) relate on this text a noble story of Hasan Ali-son and his erring slave which The Forty Vezirs (Lady's eighth story,) ignorantly attributes to Harun al-Rashid:?Forthwith the Caliph rose in wrath and was about to hew the girl to pieces, when she said, "O Caliph, Almighty Allah saith in His glorious Word (the Koran), 'And the stiflers of Wrath'" (iii. 128). Straightway the Caliph's wrath was calmed. Again said the girl, "'And the pardoners of men.'" (ibid.) Quoth the Caliph, "I have forgiven the crimes of all the criminals who may be in prison." Again said the slave-girl, "'And Allah loveth the beneficent.'" (ibid.) Quoth the Caliph, "God be witness that I have with my own wealth freed thee and as many male and female slaves as I have, and that this day I have for the love of Allah given the half of all my good in alms to the poor." This is no improvement upon the simple and unexaggerated story in Sale. "It is related of Hasan, the son of Ali, that a slave having once thrown a dish on him boiling hot, as he sat at table, and fearing his master's resentment, fell on his knees and repeated these words, Paradise is for those who bridle their anger. Hasan answered, I am not angry. The slave proceeded, And for those who forgive men. I forgive you, said Hasan. The slave, however, finished the verse, For Allah loveth the beneficent. Since it is so, replied Hasan, I give you your liberty and four hundred pieces of silver."

[239] The old name of the parish bull in rural England.

[240] Arab. “Kawík:” see The Nights, vol. vi. 182, where the bird is called “Ak’ak.” Our dicts. do not give the word, but there is a {root} “Kauk” (Káka, yakúku) to cluck, and “Kauk” = an aquatic bird with a long neck. I assume “Kawík” to be an intensive form of the same root. The “Mother of Solomon” is a fanciful “Kunyah,” or bye name given to the bird by the Bhang-eater, suggesting his high opinion of her wisdom.

[241] Arab. “Nátúr,” prop. a watchman: also a land-mark, a bench-mark of tamped clay.

[242] In text “Bartamán” for “Martaban” = a pot, jar, or barrel-shaped vessel: others apply the term to fine porcelain which poison cannot affect. See Col. Yule’s Glossary, s. v. Martabán, where the quotation from Ibn Batutah shows that the term was current in the xivth century. Linschoten (i. 101) writes, “In this town (Martaban of Pegu) many of the great earthen pots are made, which in India are called Martananas, and many of them are carried throughout all India of all sorts both small and great: and some are so great that they will fill two pipes of water.” Pyrard (i. 259) applies the name to “certain handsome jars, of finer shape and larger than I have seen elsewhere” (Transl. by Albert Gray for the Hakluyt Soc. 1887). Mr. Hill adds that at Málé the larger barrel-shaped jars of earthenware are still called “Mátabán,” and Mr. P. Brown (Zillah Dictionary, 1852) finds the word preserved upon the Madras coast = a black jar in which rice is imported from Pegu.

[243] The Arabic here changes person, “he repeated” after Eastern Fashion, and confuses the tale to European readers.

[244] Such treasure trove belonging to the State, i.e. the King.

[245] Arab. “Húrí” for “Húr” = a pool, marsh, or quagmire, in fact corresponding with our vulgar “bogshop.” Dr. Steingass would read “Haurí,” a “mansúb” of “Haur” = pond, quagmire, which, in

connection with a Hammam, may = sink, sewer, etc.

[246] The Bedlam: see vol. i. 288.

[247] Arab. “Tamtar aysh?” (i.e. Ayyu shayyin, see vol. i. 79). I may note that the vulgar abbreviation is of ancient date. Also the Egyptian dialect has borrowed, from its ancestor the Coptic, the practice of putting the interrogatory pronoun or adverb after (not before the verb, e.g. “Rá’ih fayn?” = Wending (art thou) whither? It is regretable that Egyptian scholars do not see the absolute necessity of studying Coptic, and this default is the sole imperfection of the late Dr. Spitta Bey’s admirable Grammar of Egyptian.

[248] Arab. “‘Arsah,” akin to “Mu’arris” (masc.) = a pimp, a pander. See vol. i. 338; and Supp. vol. i. 206; and for its use Pilgrimage i. 276.

[249] i.e. Abú Kásim the Drummer. The word “Tambúr” is probably derived from “Tabl” = a drum, which became by the common change of liquids “Tabur” in O. French and “Tabour” in English. Hence the mod. form “Tambour,” which has been adopted by Turkey, e.g. Tambúrji = a drummer. In Egypt, however, “Tambúr” is applied to a manner of mandoline or guitar, mostly used by Greeks and other foreigners. See Lane, M.E. chap. xviii.

[250] Arab. “Bál” (sing. Bálah) = a bale, from the Span. Bala and Italian Balla, a small parcel made up in the shape of a bale, Lat. Palla.

[251] Arab. “Walásh,” i.e. “Was lá shayya” = “And nihil” (nil, non ens, naught).

[252] Arab. “Kurbáj” = cravache: vol. viii. 17. The best are made of hippopotamus-hide (imported from East Africa), boiled and hammered into a round form and tapering to the point. Plied by a strong arm they cut like a knout.

[253] The text “Yá Sultán-am,” a Persian or Turkish form for the Arab.

"Yá Sultán-i."

[254] In text "Kalb" for "Kulbat" = a cave, a cavern.

[255] The houses were of unbaked brick or cob, which readily melts away in rain and requires annual repairing at the base of the walls where affected by rain and dew. In Sind the damp of the earth with its nitrous humour eats away the foundations and soon crumbles them to dust.

[256] Here meaning the under-Governor or head Clerk.

[257] "Níl" (= the Nile), in vulgar Egyptian parlance the word is = "high Nile," or the Nile in flood.

[258] Arab. "Darwayshah" = a she-Fakír, which in Europe would be represented by that prime pest a begging nun.

[259] Arab. "Allah háfiz-ik" = the popular Persian expression, "Khudá Háfiz!"

[260] Arab. "Sálihin" = the Saints, the Holy Ones.

[261] Arab. "Sharkh" = in dicts. the unpolished blade of a hiltless sword.

[262] In the text "Miláyah," a cotton stuff some 6 feet long, woven in small chequers of white and indigo-blue with an ending of red at either extremity. Men wrap it round the body or throw it over the shoulder like our plaid, whose colours I believe are a survival of the old body-paintings, Pictish and others. The woman's "Miláyah" worn only out of doors may be of silk or cotton: it is made of two pieces which are sewed together lengthwise and these cover head and body like a hooded cloak. Lane figures it in M.E. chapt. i. When a woman is too poor to own a "Miláyah" or a "Habarah" (a similar article) she will use a bed-sheet for out-of-doors work.

[263] The pun here is "Khalíyát" = bee-hive and empty: See vols. vi.

246; ix. 291. It will occur again in Supplementary vol. v. Night DCXLVI.

[264] i.e. Caravan, the common Eastern term. In India it was used for a fleet of merchantmen under convoy: see Col. Yule, Glossary, s. v.

[265] Again “Bartamán” for “Martabán.”

[266] The “Sáhib” = owner, and the “Dallál” = broker, are evidently the same person.

[267] “Alŕ kám” for “kam” (how much?)?peasants’ speech.

[268] She has appeared already twice in The Nights, esp. in The Tale of Ghánim bin ‘Ayyúb (vol. ii. 45) and in Khalifah the Fisherman of Baghdad (vol. viii. 145). I must again warn my readers not to confound “Kút” = food with “Kuwwat” = force, as in Scott’s “Koout al Koolloob” (vi. 146). See Terminal Essay .

[269] In text “Mu’ammarjiyah” (master-masons), a vulgar Egyptianism for “Mu’ammarin.” See “Jáwashiyah,” vols. ii. 49; viii. 330. In the third line below we find “Muhandizín” = geometricians, architects, for “Muhandisín.” [Perhaps a reminiscence of the Persian origin of the word “Handasah” = geometry, which is derived from “Andázah” = measurement, etc. St.]

[270] The text ends this line in Arabic.

[271] Alluding to the curious phenomenon pithily expressed in the Latin proverb, “Suus cuique crepitus benč olet,” I know of no exception to the rule, except amongst travellers in Tibet, where the wild onion, the only procurable green-stuff, produces an odour so rank and fetid that men run away from their own crepitations. The subject is not savoury, yet it has been copiously illustrated: I once dined at a London house whose nameless owner, a noted bibliophile, especially of “facetić,” had placed upon the drawing-room table a dozen books treating of the “Crepitus ventris.” When the guests came up and drew near the table, and opened the volumes, their faces were a study. For

the Arab. "Faswah" = a silent break wind, see vol. ix. 11 and 291. It is opposed to "Zirt" = a loud fart and the vulgar term, see vol. ii. 88.

[272] Arab. "Yá Házá," see vol. i. 290.

[273] In text "Yumkinshayy," written in a single word, a favourite expression, Fellah-like withal, throughout this MS.

[274] In text "Tafazzalú;" see vol. ii. 103.

[275] The word (Saráy) is Pers. but naturalised throughout Egypt and Syria; in places like Damascus where there is no king it is applied to the official head-quarters of the Walí (provincial governor), and contains the prison like the Maroccan "Kasbah." It must not be confounded with "Serraglio" = the Harem, Gynecium or women's rooms, which appears to be a bastard neo-Latin word "Serrare," through the French Serrer. I therefore always write it with the double "canine letter."

[276] I have noted (vol. i. 95) that the "Khil'ah" = robe of honour, consists of many articles, such as a horse, a gold-hilted sword, a fine turban, etc., etc.

[277] This again shows the "Nakkál" or coffee-house tale-teller. See vol. x. 163.

[278] This is the Moslem version of "Solomon's Judgment" (1 Kings iii. 16-20). The Hebrew legend is more detailed but I prefer its rival for sundry reasons. Here the women are not "harlots" but the co-wives of one man and therefore hostile; moreover poetical justice is done to the constructive murderess.

[279] I am not aware that the specific gravity of the milks has ever been determined by modern science; and perhaps the experiment is worthy a trial.

[280] Arab. "Dúna-k." See vol. iv. .

[281] "Al-Wazíru'l-'Arif bi-lláhi Ta'álí," a title intended to mimic those of the Abbaside Caliphs; such as "Mu'tasim bi'llah" (servant of Allah), the first of the long line whose names begin with an epithet (the Truster, the Implorer, etc.), and end with "bi'llah."

[282] [Tarajjama, which is too frequently used in this MS. to be merely considered as a clerical error, I suppose to mean: he pronounced for him the formula: "A'uzzu bi lláhi mina 'l-Shaytáni 'l-Rajimi" = I take refuge with Allah against Satan the Stoned. See Koran xvi. 100. It would be thus equivalent with the usual ta'awwaza.?St.]

[283] The MS. here ends Night cdxii. and begins the next. Up to this point I have followed the numeration but from this forwards as the Nights become unconscionably short compared with the intervening dialogues, I have thrown two and sometimes three into one. The Arabic numbers are, however, preserved for easier reference.

[284] This is a poor and scamped version of "Ali the Persian and the Kurd Sharper," in vol. iv. 149. It is therefore omitted.

[285] The dish-cover, usually made of neatly plaited straw variously coloured, is always used, not only for cleanliness but to prevent the Evil Eye falling upon and infecting the food.

[286] The "Bámiyah," which = the Gumbo, Occra (Okrá) or Bhendi of Brit. India which names the celebrated bazar of Bombay, is the esculent hibiscus, the polygonal pod (some three inches long and thick as a man's finger) full of seeds and mucilage making it an excellent material for soups and stews. It is a favourite dish in Egypt and usually eaten with a squeeze of lime-juice. See Lane, Mod. Egypt. chapt. v., and Herklots (App. p. xlii.) who notices the curry of "Bandakí" or Hibiscus esculentus.

[287] Written "Bakshísh" for "Bakhshísh," after Fellah-fashion.

[288] [In the MS.: Wa'l-Sultánu karaa Wirduh (Wirda-hu) wa jalasa li 'l-Munádamah = And the Sovran recited his appointed portion of the Koran, and then sat down to convivial converse. This reminds of the

various passages of the present Shah of Persia's Diary, in which he mentions the performance of his evening devotions, before setting out for some social gathering, say a supper in the Guildhall, which he neatly explains as a dinner after midnight (Shám ba'd az nisf-i-shab).?St.]

[289] This is Scott's "Story of the Three Princes and Enchanting Bird," vol. vi. 160. On the margin of the W. M. MS. he has written, "Story of the King and his Three Sons and the Enchanting Bird" (vol. i. Night cdxvii.). Gauttier, vi. 292, names it Histoire des Trois Princes et de l'Oiseau Magicien. Galland may have used parts of it in the "Two Sisters who envied their Cadette": see Supp. vol. iii. p-549.

[290] In text "Al-Bulaybul" (the little Nightingale, Philomelet) "Al Sayyáh" (the Shrieker). The latter epithet suggests to me the German novel which begins, "We are in Italy where roses bestink the day and Nightingales howl through the live-long night," &c.

[291] "Sanják," Turk. = flag, banner, and here used (as in vulg. Arab.) for Sanják-dár, the banner-bearer, ensign. In mod. parlance, Sanják = minor province, of which sundry are included in an "Iyálah" = government-general, under the rule of a Wáli (Wiláyah).

[292] In the MS. "Zifr" = nail, claw, talon.

[293] "Al-Rizk maksúm," an old and sage byword pregnant with significance: compare "Al-Khauf (fear) maksúm" = cowardice is equally divided. Vol. iii. 173. [I read: "Yas'ŕ 'l-Kadamu li-'Umrin danŕ au li-Rizkin qusima," taking "Rizk" as an equivalent for "al-Rizku 'l-hasanu" = any good thing which a man obtains without exerting himself in seeking for it, and the passive "qusima" in the sense of Kismah, vulgo "Kismet." Hence I would translate: The foot speeds to a life that is mean, or to a boon that is pre-ordained.?St.]

[294] In the text "Bát" (for Bit), in Fellah-speech "Pass the night here!" The Bird thus makes appeal to the honour and hospitality of his would-be captor, and punishes him if he consent. I have translated after Scott (v. 161). [I cannot persuade myself to take "bát" for an

imperative, which would rather be “bít” for “bit,” as we shall find “kúm” for “kum,” “rúh” for “ruh.” It seems to me that the preterite “bát” means here “the night has passed,” and rendering “man” by the interrogative, I would translate: “O! who will say to the sad, the separated, night is over?” Complaints of the length of night are frequent with the parted in Arab poetry. This accords also better with the following ‘Atús al-Shams, the sneezing of the sun, which to my knowledge, applies only to daybreak, as in Hariri’s 15th Assembly (al-Farzíyah), where “the nose of the morning” sneezes.?St.]

[295] i.e., they bound kerchiefs stained blue or almost black round their brows. In modern days Fellah women stain their veils (face and head), kerchiefs and shirts with indigo; and some colour their forearms to the elbow.

[296] Here again and in the following adventure we have “Khudadad and his Brothers.” Suppl. vol. iii. 209-304.

[297] In sign of despair. See vol. i. 298.

[298] In text “Kalamátu ‘llah” = the Koran: and the quotation is from chapt. cxiii. 5. For the “Two Refuge-takings” (Al-Mu’awizzatáni), see vol. iii. 222.

[299] i.e., caused his brothers to recover life. [I read: Allazí ‘amaltu fí-him natíjah yujázúní bi-Ziddi-há = Those to whom I did a good turn, requite me with the contrary thereof. Allazí, originally the masc. Sing. is in this MS. vulgarly, like its still more vulgar later contraction, “illí,” used for both genders and the three numbers.?St.]

[300] Arab. “Házir!” I have noted that this word, in Egypt and Syria, corresponds with the English waiter’s “Yes sir!”

[301] Koran, Chapter of Joseph, xii. 19.

[302] Arab. “Hanút:” this custom has become almost obsolete: the corpse is now sprinkled with a mixture of water, camphor diluted and the dried and pounded leaves of various trees, especially the “Nabk”

(lote-tree or Zizyphus lotus).?Lane M.E. chapt. xxviii.

[303] These comical measures were taken by “Miss Lucy” in order to charm away the Evil Eye which had fascinated the article in question. Such temporary impotence in a vigorous man, which results from an exceptional action of the brain and the nervous system, was called in old French Nouement des aiguilettes (i.e. point-tying, the points which fastened the haut-de-chausses or hose to the jerkin, and its modern equivalent would be to “button up the flap”). For its cure, the “Déliement des aiguilettes” see Davenport “Aphrodisiacs” , and the French translation of the Shaykh al-Nafzáwi (Jardin Parfumé, chapt. xvii. p-53). The Moslem heal such impotence by the usual simples, but the girl in the text adopts a moral course of treatment which buries the dead parts in order to resurrect them. A friend of mine, a young and vigorous officer, was healed by a similar process. He had carried off a sergeant’s wife, and the husband lurked about the bungalow to shoot him, a copper cap being found under the window: hence a state of nervousness which induced perfect impotence. He applied to the regimental surgeon, happily a practised hand, and was gravely supplied with pills and a draught; his diet was carefully regulated and he was ordered to sleep by the woman but by no means to touch her for ten days. On the fifth he came to his adviser with a sheepish face and told him that he had not wholly followed the course prescribed, as last night he had suddenly?by the blessing of the draught and the pills?recovered and had given palpable evidence of his pristine vigour. The surgeon deprecated such proceeding until the patient should have had full benefit of his drugs?bread pills and cinnamon-water.

[304] Here ends vol. iii. of the W. M. MS. and begins Night cdxxvi.

[305] In the Text “Rísah,” copyist’s error for “Ríshah” = a thread, a line: it afterwards proves to be an ornament for a falcon’s neck. [I cannot bring myself to adopt here the explanation of “Ríshah” as a string instead of its usual meaning of “feather,” “plume.” My reasons are the following: 1. The youth sets it upon his head; that is, I suppose, his cap, or whatever his head-gear may be, which seems a

more appropriate place for a feather than for a necklace. 2. Further on, Night cdxxx., it is said that the Prince left the residence of his second spouse in search (talíb) of the city of the bird. If the word “Ríshah,” which, in the signification of thread, is Persian, had been sufficiently familiar to an Arab to suggest, as a matter of course, a bird’s necklace, and hence the bird itself, we would probably find a trace of this particular meaning, if not in other Arabic books, at least in Persian writers or dictionaries; but here the word “Ríshah,” by some pronounced “Reshah” with the Yá majhúl, never occurs in connection with jewels; it means fringe, filament, fibre. On the other hand, the suggestion of the bird presents itself quite naturally at the sight of the feather. 3. Ib. the youth requests the old man to tell him concerning the “Tayrah allazí Rísh-há (not Rishat-há) min Ma’ádin,” which, I believe, can only be rendered by: the bird whose plumage is of precious stones. The “Ríshah” itself was said to be “min Zumurrud wa Lúlú,” of emeralds and pearls; and the cage will be “min Ma’ádin wa Lúlú,” of precious stones and pearls, in all which cases the use of the preposition “min” points more particularly to the material of which the objects are wrought than the mere Izáfah. The wonderfulness of the bird seems therefore rather to consist in his jewelled plumage than the gift of speech or other enchanting qualities, and I would take it for one of those costly toys, in imitation of trees and animals, in which Eastern princes rejoice, and of which we read so many descriptions, not only in books of fiction, but even in historical works. If it were a live-bird of the other kind, he would probably have put in his word to expose the false brothers of the Prince.?St.]

[306] This is conjectural: the text has a correction which is hardly legible. [I read: “Wa lákin hú ajmalu min-hum bi-jamálin mufritin, lakinnahu matrúdun hú wa ummu-hu” = “and yet he was more beautiful than they with surpassing beauty, but he was an outcast, he and his mother,” as an explanation, by way of parenthesis, for their daring to treat him so shamefully.?St.]

[307] The venerable myth of Andromeda and Perseus (who is Horus in disguise) brought down to Saint George (his latest descendant), the

Dragon (Typhon) and the fair Saba in the "Seven Champions of Christendom." See my friend M. Clermont Ganneau's Horus et Saint-Georges; Mr. J. R. Anderson's "Saint Mark's Rest; the Place of Dragons;" and my "Book of the Sword," chapt. ix.

[308] i.e. there was a great movement and confusion.

[309] [In the text 'Afár, a word frequently joined with "Ghubár," dust, for the sake of emphasis; hence we will find in Night ccccxxix. the verb "yu'affiru," he was raising a dust-cloud.?St.]

[310] Upon the subject of "throwing the kerchief" see vol. vi. 285. Here it is done simply as a previously concerted signal of recognition.

[311] In text "'Alá Yadín;" for which vulgarism see vol. iii. 51.

[312] Elephants are usually, as Cuvier said of the (Christian) "Devil" after a look at his horns and hoofs, vegetarians.

[313] [The MS. has "yughaffiru wa yuzaghdimu." The former stands probably for "yu'affíru," for which see supra , note 2. The writing is, however, so indistinct that possibly "yufaghghiru" is intended, which means he opened his mouth wide. "Yuzaghdimu" is one of those quadriliterals which are formed by blending two triliterals in one verb, in order to intensify the idea. "Zaghada" and "Zaghama" mean both "he roared," more especially applied to a camel, and by joining the "d" of the one with the "m" of the other, we obtain "Zaghdama," he roared fiercely.?St.]

[314] [Sára'a-hu wa láwa'a-hu = he rushed upon him and worried him. The root law' means to enfeeble, render sick, especially applied to love-sickness (Lau'ah). The present 3rd form is rarely used, but here and in a later passage, Night cdxlv., the context bears out the sense of harassing.?St.]

[315] In text "Zaghárit" plur. of Zaghrútah: see vol. ii. .

[316] [Yá walad al-Halál. I would translate: “O! son of a lawful wedlock,” simply meaning that he takes him to be a decent fellow, not a scamp or Walad al-Harám.?St.]

[317] The repetition is a sign of kindness and friendliness; see vol. vi. 370.

[318] This Arabian “Sattár” corresponds passing well with
“Jupiter Servator.”

[319] “Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise.” Matt. Xxi. 16. The idea is not less Moslem than Christian.

[320] [I read “Sarkhah adwat la-há al-Saráyah” = a cry to which the palace-women raised an echo, a cry re-echoed by the palace-women. “Adwá” is the fourth form of “Dawiya,” to hum or buzz, to produce an indistinct noise, and it is vulgarly used in the above sense, like the substantive “Dawi,” an echo. Al-Saráyah is perhaps only an Arabised form of the Persian Saráy, and the sentence might be, to which the palace resounded.?St.]

[321] The Princess is not logical: on the other hand she may plead that she is right.

[322] Arab. “Ma’lúmah,” which may also mean the “made known,” or “aforementioned.”

[323] A sensible remark which shows that the King did not belong to the order called by Mr. Matthew Arnold “Barbarians.”

[324] In text: “Rajul Ja’ídí,” for which see .

[325] Arab. “Fidawiyah,” sing. “Fidáwi” = lit. one who gives his life to a noble cause, a forlorn hope, esp. applied to the Ismai’liyah race, disciples of the “Assassin” Hasan-i-Sabáh. See De Sacy, “Mémoire sur les Assassins Mém. de l’Institut,” etc. iv. 7 et seqq. Hence perhaps a castaway, a “perdido,” one careless of his life. I suspect, however, that is is an Egyptianised form of the Pers. “Fidá’i” = a

robber, a murderer. The Lat. Catalogue prefers “Sicarius” which here cannot be the meaning.

[326] Arab. “Kirsh,” pop. “Girsh.”

[327] I have noticed that there is a Shaykh or head of the Guild, even for thieves, in most Moslem capitals. See vol. vi. 204.

[328] Here is the normal enallage of persons, “luh” = to him for “lí” = to me.

[329] In text “Na’mil ma’allazí, etc….makídah.” I have attempted to preserve the idiom.

[330] [In the MS. “al-’Ashrah Miah,” which, I think, can scarcely be translated by “ten times one hundred.” If Miah were dependent on al-’Ashrah, the latter could not have the article. I propose therefore to render “one hundred for the (i.e. every) ten” = tenfold.?St.]

[331] For this “nosebag,” see vols. ii. 52, and vi. 151, 192.

[332] [Until here the change from the first person into the third, as pointed out in note 2, has been kept up in the MS.?”He reached the barracks,” “he found,” etc. Now suddenly the gender changes as well, and the tale continues: “And lo, the girl went to them and said,” etc. etc. This looseness of style may, in the mouth of an Eastern Ráwí, have an additional dramatic charm for his more eager than critical audience; but it would be intolerable to European readers. Sir Richard has, therefore, very properly substituted the first person all through.?St.]

[333] “Riyál” is from the Span. “Real” = royal (coin): in Egypt it was so named by order of Ali Bey, the Mameluke, in A.H. 1183 (A.D. 1771-72) and it was worth ninety Faddahs = 5 2/5d. The word, however, is still applied to the dollar proper (Maria Theresa), to the Riyál Fransá or five-france piece and to the Span. pillar dollar: the latter is also nicknamed “Abu Madfa’” Father of a Cannon (the columns being mistaken for cannons); also the Abú Tákah (Father of

a Window), whence we obtain the Europeanised “Patacco” (see Lane, Appendix ii.) and “Pataca,” which Littré confounds with the “Patard” and of which he ignores the origin.

[334] See The Nights, vol. x. 12.

[335] i.e. “pleasant,” “enjoyable”; see “White as milk” opposed to “black as mud,” etc., vol. iv. 140. Here it is after a fashion synonymous with the French nuit blanche.

[336] [The MS. seems here to read “wa jasad-hu yuhazdimu,” (thus at least the word, would have to be vocalised if it were a quadriliteral verbal form), and of this I cannot make out any sense. I suspect the final syllable is meant for “Dam,” blood, of which a few lines lower down the plural “Dimá” occurs. Remains to account for the characters immediately preceding it. I think that either the upper dot of the Arabic belongs to the first radical instead of the second, reading “yukhirru,” as the fourth or causative form of “kharra yakhurru,” to flow, to ripple, to purl; or that the two dots beneath are to be divided between the first two characters, reading “bajaza.” The latter, it is true, is no dictionary word, but we have found supra , “muhandiz” for “muhandis,” so here “bajaza” may stand for “bajasa” = gushed forth, used intransitively and transitively. In either case the translation would be “his body was emitting blood freely.”?St.]

[337] The MS. here is hardly intelligible but the sense shows the word to be “Misallah” (plur. “Misáll”) = a large needle for sewing canvas, &c. In Egypt the usual pronunciation is “Musallah,” hence the vulgar name of Cleopatra’s needle “Musallat Far’aun” (of Pharaoh) the two terms contending for which shall be the more absurd. I may note that Commander Gorridge, the distinguished officer of the U.S. Navy who safely and easily carried the “Needle” to New York after the English had made a prodigious mess with their obelisk, showed me upon the freshly uncovered base of the pillar the most distinct intaglio representations of masonic implements, the plumb-line, the square, the compass, and so forth. These, however, I attributed to masonry as the craft, to the guild; he to Freemasonry, which in my

belief was unknown to the Greeks and Romans, and is never mentioned in history before the eight Crusades (A.D. 1096-1270). The practices and procedure were evidently borrowed from the various Vehms and secret societies which then influenced the Moslem world, and our modern lodges have strictly preserved in the "Architect of the Universe," Arian and Moslem Unitarianism as opposed to Athanasian and Christian Tritheism; they admit the Jew and the Mussulman as apprentices, but they refuse the Hindu and the Pagan. It seems now the fashion to run down the mystic craft, to describe it as a "goose-club" and no more; it is, however, sleeping, not dead; the charities of the brethren are still active, and the society still takes an active part in politics throughout the East. As the late Pope Pius IX. (fitly nicknamed "Pio no-no"), a free mason himself, forbade Freemasonry to his church because a secret society is incompatible with oral confession (and priestcraft tolerates only its own mysteries), and made excommunication the penalty, the French lodges have dwindled away and the English have thriven upon their decay, thus enlisting a host of neophytes who, when the struggle shall come on, may lend excellent aid.

[338] The "Janázah" or bier, is often made of planks loosely nailed or pegged together into a stretcher or platform, and it would be easy to thrust a skewer between the joints. I may remind the reader that "Janázah" = a bier with a corpse thereon (vol. ii. 46), whereas the "Sarír" is the same when unburdened, and the "Na'ash" is a box like our coffin, but open at the tip.

[339] [In the Arab. Text "They will recognise me," which I would rather refer to the Vagabonds than to the crowd, as the latter merely cries wonder at the resuscitation, without apparently troubling much about the wonder-worker.?St.]

[340] [Ar. "na'tázu," viii. form of 'áza = it escaped, was missing, lacked, hence the meaning of this form, "we are in want of," "we need."?St.]

[341] For the "Ardabb" (prop. "Irdabb") = five bushels: see vol. i. 263.

[342] [In the MS. "'Ayyinah," probably a mis-reading for "'Ayniyyah" = a sample, pattern.?St.]

[343] In text "Kubbah" = vault, cupola, the dome of unbaked brick upon peasants' houses in parts of Egypt and Syria, where wood for the "Sat'h" or flat roof is scarce. The household granary is in the garret, from which the base of the dome springs, and the "expense-magazines" consist of huge standing coffers of wattle and dab propped against the outside walls of the house.

[344] Gen. "Baysár" or "Faysár," = beans cooked in honey and milk. See retro, Night ccclxxxviii., for its laxative properties.

[345] [In the MS. "barbastu," with the dental instead of the palatal sibilant (Sín instead of Sád). Spelled in the former way the verb "barbasa" means, he sought, looked for, and is therefore out of place here. Spelled in the second manner, it signifies literally, he watered the ground abundantly. Presently we shall find the passive participle "mubarbasah" in the feminine, because referring to the noun "Tíz" = anus, which, like its synonym, "Ist," professes the female gender. ?St.]

[346] [In Ar. "Mubarbasah," for which see the preceding note.?St.]

[347] The Moslem's tomb is an arched vault of plastered brick, large enough for a man to sit up at ease and answer the Questioning Angels; and the earth must not touch the corpse as it is supposed to cause torture. In the graves of the poorer classes a niche (lahad) offsets from the fosse and is rudely roofed with palm-fronds and thatch. The trick played in the text is therefore easy; see Lane's illustration M.E. chapt. xviii. The reader will not forget that all Moslems make water squatting upon their hunkers ina position hardly possible to an untrained European: see vol. i. 259.

[348] The bull being used in the East to turn the mill and the water-wheel; vol. i. 16.

[349] In text "Ratl." See vol. iv. 124.

[350] About 1s. 2d.

[351] The man was therefore in hiding for some crime. [The MS. has "lá tafzah-ní" = Do not rend my reputation, etc. I would, therefore, translate "Sáhib-há" by "her lover," and suggest that the crime in question is simply what the French call "conversation criminelle."? St.]

[352] The "'Ishá"-prayer (called in Egypt "'Eshč") consists of ten "Ruka'át" = bows or inclinations of the body (not "of the head" as Lane has it, M.E. chapt. iii.): of these four are "Sunnah" = traditional or customary (of the Prophet), four are Farz (divinely appointed i.e. by the Koran) and two again Sunnah. The hour is nightfall when the evening has closed in with some minor distinctions, e.g. the Hanafí waits till the whiteness and the red gleam in the west ("Al-Shafak al-ahmar") have wholly disappeared, and the other three orthodox only till the ruddy light has waned. The object of avoiding sundowntide (and sunrise equally) was to distinguish these hours of orisons from those of the Guebres and other faiths which venerate, or are supposed to venerate, the sun.

[353] Scott. "History of the Sultan of Hind," vol. vi. 194-209.

[354] Red robes being a sign of displeasure: see vol. iv. 72;
Scott () wrongly makes them "robes of mourning."

[355] A Moslem negroid from Central and Western North Africa. See vol. ii. 15. They share in popular opinion the reputation of the Maghrabi or Maroccan for magical powers.

[356] This is introduced by the translator; as usual with such unedited tales, the name does not occur till much after the proper place for specifying it.

[357] In text "Iz lam naakhaz-há, wa-illá," &c. A fair specimen of Arab. ellipsis.?If I catch her not ('twill go hard with me), and unless (I catch her) I will, &c.

[358] i.e. “How far is the fowl from thee!”

[359] [In the MS. “turayyih,” a modern form for “turawwih.”?ST.]

[360] [The above translation pre-supposes the reading “Farkhah lá atammat,” and would require, I believe, the conjunction “hattŕ” or “ilŕ an” to express “till.” I read with the MS. “lá tammat,” and would translate: “a chick not yet full grown, when the crow seized it and flew away with it,” as a complaint of the father for the anticipated untimely end of his son.?ST.]

[361] For “‘Aun,” a high degree amongst the “Genies,” see vol. iv. . Readers will be pleased with this description of a Jinni; and not a few will regret that they have not one at command. Yet the history of man’s locomotion compels us to believe that we are progressing towards the time when humanity will become volatile. Pre-historic Adam was condemned to “Shanks his mare,” or to “go on footback,” as the Boers have it, and his earliest step was the chariot; for, curious to say, driving amongst most peoples preceded riding, as the row-boat forewent the sailer. But as men increased and the world became smaller and time shorter the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, after many abortive attempts, converted the chariot into a railway-car and the sailer into a steamer. Aerostatics are still in their infancy and will grow but little until human society shall find some form of flying an absolute necessity when, as is the history of all inventions, the winged woman (and her man) of Peter Wilkins will pass from fiction into fact. But long generations must come and go before “homo sapiens” can expect to perfect a practice which in the present state of mundane society would be fatal to all welfare.

[362] Scott () “Welcome to the sovereign of the Aoon, friendly to his brethren,” (siddík al Akhwán) etc. Elsewhere he speaks of “the Oone.”

[363] So he carried a portable “toilette,” like a certain Crown Prince and Prince Bahman in Suppl. vol. iii. 329.

[364] There is another form of the saw in verse:?

Good is good and he’s best whoso worketh it first; * And ill is for me of provisions the worst.

The provision is = viaticum, provaunt for the way.

[The MS. has “akram” and “azlam” = “the more generous,” “the more iniquitous,” meaning that while good should be requited by good, and evil provokes further evil in retaliation, the beginner in either case deserves the greater praise or blame.?ST.]

[365] I have noted (vols. iii. 75, and viii. 266) that there are two “Soudans” as we write the word, one Eastern upon the Upper Nile Valley and the other Western and drained by the Niger water-shed. The former is here meant. It is or should be a word of shame to English ears after the ungodly murder and massacre of the gallant “Soudanese” negroids who had ever been most friendly to us and whom with scant reason to boast we attacked and destroyed because they aspired to become free from Turkish task-masters and Egyptian tax-gatherers. That such horrors were perpetrated by order of one of the most humane amongst our statesmen proves and decidedly proves one thing, an intense ignorance of geography and ethnology.

[366] [In the MS. “lawá ‘a-hu” for which Sir Richard conjectures the reading “lawwahahu” taking the pronoun to refer to the sword. I believe, however, the word to be a clerical error for our old acquaintance “láwa’a-hu” (see supra) and, referring the pronoun in the three verbs to the Lion, would translate: “and he worried him,” etc.?ST.]

[367] Arab. “Al-bashárah,” see vol. i. 30: Scott has (vi. 204)
“Good tidings to our sovereign.”

[368] [The MS. is here rather indistinct; still, as far as I can make out, it runs: “wa Hakki man aulíní házá ‘l-Mulk” = and by the right of (i.e. my duty towards) Him who made me ruler over this kingdom.?ST.]

[369] [The word in the MS. is difficult to decipher. In a later passage we find corresponding with it the expression “yumázasa-hu fí ‘l-Kalám,”

which is evidently a clerical error for “yumárasa-hu” = he tested or tried him in his speech. Accordingly I would read here: “yakhburu ma’ahu fí ‘l-Kalám,” lit. = he experimented with him, i.e. put him to his test. The idea seems to be, that he first cross-examined him and then tried to intimidate him. With this explanation “yusáhí-hu” and later on “yulhí-hu” would tally, which both have about the same meaning: to divert the attention, to make forget one thing over another, hence to confuse and lead one to contradict himself.?ST.]

[370] Here we find the old superstitious idea that no census or “numbering of the people” should take place save by direct command of the Creator. Compare the pestilence which arose in the latter days of David when Joab by command of the King undertook the work (2 Sam. xxiv. 1-9, etc.).

[371] The text has “Salásín” = thirty, evidently a clerical error.

[372] [In Ar. “yanjaaru,” vii. form of “jaara” (med. Hamzah), in which the idea of “raising,” “lifting up,” seems to prevail, for it is used for raising the voice in prayer to God, and for the growing high of plants.?ST.]

[373] The text, which is wholly unedited, reads, “He found the beasts and their loads (? the camels) and the learned men,” &c. A new form of “bos atque sacerdos” and of place pour les ânes et les savants, as the French soldiers cried in Egypt when the scientists were admitted into the squares of infantry formed against the doughty Mameluke cavalry.

[374] [In the MS. “wáraytaní ilŕ l-turáb” = thou hast given me over to the ground for concealment, iii. form of “warŕ,” which takes the meaning of “hiding,” “keeping secret.”?ST.]

[375] [The MS. has “wa dazz-há,” which is an evident corruption. The translator, placing the diacritical point over the first radical instead of the second, reads “wa zarr-há,” and renders accordingly. But if in the MS. the dot is misplaced, the Tashdid over it would probably also belong to the Dál, resp. Zal, and as it is very feasible that a careless

writer should have dropped one Wáw before another, I am inclined to read "wa wazzar-ha" = "and he left her," "let her go," "set her free." In classical Arabic only the imperative "Zar," and the aorist "yazaru" of the verb "wazara" occur in this sense, while the preterite is replaced by "taraka," or some other synonym. But the language of the common people would not hesitate to use a form scorned by the grammarians, and even to improve upon it by deriving from it one of their favourite intensives.?St.]

[376] Both are civil forms of refusal: for the first see vols. i. 32; vi. 216; and for the second ix. 309.

[377] Everything being fair in love and war and dealing with a "Káfir," i.e. a non-Moslem.

[378] In text "Labbayka" = here am I: see vol. i. 226.

[379] In text "'Úd Khayzarán" = wood of the rattan, which is orig. "Rota," from the Malay "Rotan." Vol. ii. 66, &c.

[380] [In the MS. "al-Zamán." The translation here adopted is plausible enough. Still I think it probable that the careless scribe has omitted the words "yá al-Malik" before it, and meant to write "O king of the age!" as in so many preceding places.- -St.]

[381] Arab. "Al-Kuhná," plur. of "Káhin 't" = diviner, priest (non-Levitical): see "Cohen," ii. 221. [The form is rather curious. The Dictionaries quote "Kuhná" as a Syriac singular, but here it seems to be taken as a plural of the measure "fu'alá" (Kuhaná), like Umará of Amír or Shu'ará of Shá'ir. The usual plurals of Káhin are Kahanah and Kuhhán.?St.]

[382] This is the celebrated incident in "Alaeddin," "New lamps for old:" See Suppl. vol. iii. 160.

[383] In text "Jazdán" = a pencase (Pers.) more pop. called "Kalamdán" = reed-box, vol. iv. 167: Scott () has a "writing-stand." It appears a queer place wherein to keep a ring, but Easterns often store in these

highly ornamented boxes signets and other small matters.

[384] Arab. "Bahr al-Muhít" = Circumambient Ocean; see vol. i. 133.

[385] Arab. "Fár" (plur. "Firán") = mouse rather than rat.

[386] Sleep at this time is considered very unwholesome by Easterns. See under "Kaylúlah" = siesta, vols. i. 51; ii. 178, and viii. 191.

[387] Modern science which, out of the depths of its self-consciousness, has settled so many disputed questions, speaking by the organs of Messieurs Woodman and Tidy ("Medical Jurisprudence") has decided that none of the lower animals can bear issue to man. But the voice of the world is against them and as Voltaire says one cannot be cleverer than everybody. To begin with there is the will: the she-quadruman shows a distinct lust for man by fondling him and displaying her parts as if to entice him. That carnal connection has actually taken place cannot be doubted: my late friend Mirza Ali Akbar, of Bombay, the famous Munshi to Sir Charles Napier during the conquest of Sind, a man perfectly veracious and trustworthy, assured me that in the Gujarát province he had witnessed a case with his own eyes. He had gone out "to the jungle," as the phrase is, with another Moslem who, after keeping him waiting for an unconscionable time, was found carnally united to a she-monkey. My friend, indignant as a good Moslem should be, reproved him for his bestiality and then asked him how it had come to pass: the man answered that the she-monkey came regularly to look at him on certain occasions, that he was in the habit of throwing her something to eat and that her gratitude displayed such sexuality that he was tempted and "fell." That the male monkey shows an equal desire for the woman is known to every frequenter of the "Zoo." I once led a party of English girls to see a collection of mandrils and other anthropoid apes in the Ménagerie of a well-known Russian millionaire, near Florence, when the Priapism displayed, was such that the girls turned back and fled in fright. In the mother-lands of these anthropoids (the Gaboon, Malacca etc.,) the belief is universal and women have the liveliest fear of them. In 1853 when the

Crimean war was brewing a dog-faced baboon in Cairo broke away from his "Kuraydati" (ape-leader), threw a girl in the street and was about to ravish her when a sentinel drew his bayonet and killer the beast. The event was looked upon as an evil omen by the older men, who shook their heads and declared that these were bad times when apes attempted to ravish the daughters of Moslems. But some will say that the grand test, the existence of the mule between man and monkey, though generally believed in, is characteristically absent, absent as the "missing link" which goes so far as to invalidate Darwinism in one and perhaps the most important part of its contention. Of course the offspring of such union would be destroyed, yet t he fact of our never having found a trace of it except in legend and idle story seems to militate against its existence. When, however, man shall become "Homo Sapiens" he will cast off the prejudices of the cradle and the nursery and will ascertain by actual experiment if human being and monkey can breed together. The lowest order of bimana, and the highest order of quadrumana may, under most favourable circumstances, bear issue and the "Mule," who would own half a soul, might prove most serviceable as a hewer of wood and a drawer of water, in fact as an agricultural labourer. All we can say is that such "miscegenation" stands in the category of things not proven and we must object to science declaring them non-existing. A correspondent favours me with the following note upon the subject:?Castanheda (Annals of Portugal) relates that a woman was transporter to an island inhabited by monkeys and took up her abode in a cavern where she was visited by a huge baboon. He brought her apples and fruit and at last had connection with her, the result being two children in two to three years; but when she was being carried off by a ship the parent monkey kissed his progeny. The woman was taken to Lisbon and imprisoned for life by the King. Langius, Virgilius Polydorus and others quote many instances of monstruous births in Rome resulting from the connection of women with dogs and bears, and cows with horses, &c. The following relative conditions are deduced on the authority of MM. Jean Polfya and Mauriceau:?1. If the sexual organism of man or woman be more powerful than that of the monkey, dog, etc., the result will be a monster in the semblance of man. 2. If vice-versâ the appearance will be that of a beast. 3. If both are equal the result will be a distinct sub-species as of the horse with the ass.

[388] Arab. “Tamím” (plur. of Tamímat) = spells, charms, amulets, as those hung to a horse’s neck, the African Greegree and the Heb. Thummim. As was the case with most of these earliest superstitions, the Serpent, the Ark, the Cherubim, the Golden Calf (Apis) and the Levitical Institution, the Children of Israel derived the now mysterious term “Urím” (lights) and “Thummim” (amulets) from Egypt and the Semitic word (Tamímah) still remains to explain the Hebrew. “Thummim,” I may add, is by “general consensus” derived from “Tôm” = completeness and is englished “Perfection,” but we can find a better origin near at hand in spoken Arabic.

[389] These verses have already occurred, see my vol. i. . I have therefore quoted Payne, i. .

[390] Arab. “Wakíl” who, in the case of a grown-up girl, declares her consent to the marriage in the presence of two witnesses and after part payment of the dowry.

[391] Such is the meaning of the Arab. “Thayyib.”

[392] This appears to be the popular belief in Egypt. See vol. iv. 297, which assures us that “no thing poketh and stroketh more strenuously than the Gird” (or hideous Ahyssinian cynocephalus). But it must be based upon popular ignorance: the private parts of the monkey although they erect stiffly, like the priapus of Osiris when swearing upon his Phallus, are not of the girth sufficient to produce that friction which is essential to a woman’s pleasure. I may here allude to the general disappointment in England and America caused by the exhibition of my friend Paul de Chaillu’s Gorillas: he had modestly removed penis and testicles, the latter being somewhat like a bull’s, and his squeamishness caused not a little grumbling and sense of grievance?especially amongst the curious sex.

[393] [In the MS. “fahakat,” lit. she flowed over like a brimful vessel.?ST.]

394 In 1821, Scott () following Gilchrist's method of transliterating eastern tongues wrote "Abou Neeut" and "Neeuteen" (the latter a bad blunder making a masc. plural of a fem. dual). In 1822 Edouard Gauttier (vi. 320) gallicised the names to "Abou- Nyout" and "Abou-Nyoutyn" with the same mistake and one superadded; there is no such Arabic word as "Niyút." Mr. Kirby in 1822, "The New Arabian Nights" () reduced the words to "Abu Neut" and "Abu Neuteen," which is still less intelligible than Scott's; and, lastly, the well-known Turkish scholar Dr. Redhouse converted the tortured names to "Abú Niyyet" and "Abú Niyyeteyn," thus rightly giving a "tashdíd" (reduplication sign) to the Yá (see Appendix to Suppl. v. No iii. and Turk. Dict. sub voce "Niyyat"). The Arab. is "Niyyah" = will, purpose, intent; "Abú Niyyah" (Grammat. "Abú Niyyatin") Father of one Intent = single-minded and "Abú Niyyatayn" = Father of two Intents or double-minded; and Richardson is deficient when he writes only "Niyat" for "Niyyat." I had some hesitation about translating this tale which begins with the "Envier and the Envied" (vol. i. 123) and ends with the "Sisters who envied their Cadette" (Suppl. vol. iii. 492). But the extant versions of it are so imperfect in English and French that I made up my mind to include it in this collection.?[Richardson's "Niyat" is rather another, although rarer form of the same word.?St.]

395 [I read: "wa tukarribu 'I-'abda ilayya," referring the verb to "al-Sadakh" (the alms) and translating: "and it bringeth the servant near to me," the speaker, in Coranic fashion supposed to be Allah.?St.]

396 The text prefers the Egyptian form "Sherífi" pl. "Sherífíyah," which was adopted by the Portuguese.

397 The grace after meat, "Bismillah" being that which precedes it. Abu Niyyah was more grateful than a youth of my acquaintance who absolutely declined asking the Lord to "make him truly thankful" after a dinner of cold mutton.

398 [The root "Kart" is given in the dictionaries merely to introduce the word "karít" = complete, speaking of a year, &c., and "Takrít,"

the name of a town in Mesopotamia, celebrated for its velvets and as the birth-place of Saladin. According to the first mentioned word I would take the signification of “Kart” to be “complement” which here may fitly be rendered by “remainder,” for that which with regard to the full contents of the dinner tray is their complement would of course be their remainder with regard to the viands that have been eaten.?St.]

[399] For the “Zakát” = legal alms, which must not be less than two-and-a-half per cent, see vol. i. 339.

[400] In text “Kazdír,” for which see vols. iv. 274 and vi. 39. Here is may allude to the canisters which make great show in the general store of a petty shopkeeper.

[401] [The MS. reads “murafraf” (passive), from “Rafraf” = a shelf, arch, anything overhanging something else, therefore here applying either to the eye-brows as overhanging the eyes, or to the sockets, as forming a vault or cave for them. Perhaps it should be “murafrif” (active part), used of a bird, who spreads his wings and circles round his prey, ready to pounce upon it; hence with prying, hungry, greedy eyes.?St.]

[402] Arab. “Niyyah” with the normal pun upon the name.

[403] Arab. “‘Ámil Rasad,” lit. acting as an observatory: but the style is broken as usual, and to judge from the third line below the sentence may signify “And I am acting as Talisman (to the Hoard)”.

[404] In the text “Ishári,” which may have many meanings: I take “a shot” at the most likely. In “The Tale of the Envier and the Envied” the counter-spell i{s} a fumigation by means of some white hair plucked from a white spot, the size of a dirham, at the tail-end of a black tom-cat (vol. i. 124). According to the Welsh legend, “the Devil hates cocks”?I suppose since that fowl warned Peter of his fall.

[405] In text “Yaum al-Ahad,” which begins the Moslem week: see vols. iii. 249, and vi. 190.

[406] [In Ar. “Harj wa Laght.” The former is generally joined with “Marj” (Harj wa Marj) to express utter confusion, chaos, anarchy. “Laght” (also pronounced Laghat and written with the palatal “t”) has been mentioned supra as a synonym of “Jalabah” = clamour, tumult, etc.?St.]

[407] [In Ar. “yahjubu,” aor. of “hajaba” = he veiled, put out of sight, excluded, warded off. Amongst other significations the word is technically used of a nearer degree of relationship excluding entirely or partially a more distant one from inheritance.?St.]

[408] Arab. “Yaum al-Jum’ah” = Assembly-day, Friday: see vol. vi. 120.

[409] A regular Badawi remedy. This Artemisia (Arab. Shayh), which the Dicts. translate “wormwood of Pontus,” is the sweetest herb of the Desert, and much relished by the wild men: see my “Pilgrimage,” vol. i. 228. The Finnish Arabist Wallin, who died Professor of Arabic at Helsingfors, speaks of a “Faráshat al- Shayh” = a carpet of wormwood.

[410] “Sáhibi-h,” the masculine; because, as the old grammar tells us, that gender is more worthy than the feminine.

[411] i.e. his strength was in the gold: see vol. i. 340.

[412] Arab. “Haysumah” = smooth stones (water-rounded?).

[413] For “his flesh was crushed upon his bones,” a fair specimen of Arab. “Metonomy-cum-hyperbole.” In the days when Mr. John Bull boasted of his realism versus Gallic idealism, he “got wet to the skin” when M. Jean Crapaud was mouillé jusqu’aux os.

For the Angels supposed to haunt a pure and holy well, and the trick played by Ibn Túmart, see Ibn Khaldun’s Hist. of the Berbers, vol. ii. 575.

[414] Here begins the second tale which is a weak replica of

Galland’s “Two Sisters,” &c.

[415] This is the usual term amongst savages and barbarians, and during that period the father has no connection with the mother. Civilisation has abolished this natural practice which is observed by all the lower animals and has not improved human matters. For an excellent dissertation on the subject see the letter on Polygamy by Mrs. Belinda M. Pratt, in “The City of the Saints,” .

[416] In text “Kuwayyis,” dim. of “Kayyis,” and much used in Egypt as an adj. = “pretty,” “nice,” and as an adv. “well,” “nicely.” See s.v. Spitta Bey’s Glossary to Contes Arabes Modernes. The word is familiar to the travellers in the Nile- valley.

[417] In Arab. a “Kanát;” see vol. iii. 141. The first occupation came from nature; the second from seeing the work of the adopted father.

[418] Abu Niyyah, like most house masters in the East, not to speak of Kings, was the last to be told a truth familiar to everyone but himself and his wife.

[419] The MS. breaks off abruptly at this sentence and evidently lacks finish. Scott (vi., 228) adds, “The young princes were acknowledged and the good Abou Neeut had the satisfaction of seeing them grow up to follow his example.”

In the MS. this tale is followed by a “Story of his own Adventures related by a connection to an Emir of Egypt.” I have omitted it because it is a somewhat fade replica of “The Lovers of the Banú Ozrah” (Vol. vii. 177; Lane iii. 247).

[420] Mr. Chandler remarks (, “On Lending Bodleian Books, &c.”):?”It is said that the Curators can refuse any application if they choose; of course they can, but as a matter of fact no application has ever been refused, and every name added will make it more and more difficult, more and more invidious to refuse anyone.” I have, therefore, the singular honour of being the first chosen for rejection.

[421] Mr. Chandler's motion (see , "Booklending, &c.") was defeated by an amendment prepared by Professor Jowett and the former fought, with mixed success, the report of the Committee of Loans; the document being so hacked as to become useless, and, in this mangled condition, it was referred back to the Committee with a recommendation to consider the best way of carrying out the present statute. The manly and straightforward course of at once proposing a new statute was not adopted, nor was it even formally proposed. Lastly, the applications for loans, which numbered sixteen were submitted to the magnates and were all refused! whilst the application of an Indian subject that MSS. be sent to the India Office for his private use was at once granted. In my case Professors B. Price and Max Müller, who had often voted for loans, and were willing enough to lend anything to anybody, declined to vote.

[422] According to the statutes, "The Chancellor must be acquainted with the Business (of altering laws concerning the Library), and he must approve, and refer it to the Head of Houses, else no Dispensation can be proposed."

[423] The following telegram from the Vienna correspondent of "The Times" (November 16, 1886), is worth quotation:?

"The Committee of the Vienna Congress (of Orientalists) is now preparing a memorial, which will be signed by Archduke Renier, and will be forwarded in a few days to the trustees of the British Museum and to the Secretary of State, praying that a Bill may be introduced into Parliament empowering the British Museum to lend out its Oriental MSS. to foreign savants under proper guarantees. A resolution pledging the members of the Oriental Congress to this course was passed at the Congress of Leyden, in 1883, on the motion of Professor D. H. Müller, of Vienna; but it has not yet been acted upon so thoroughly as will be the case now.

"The British Museum is the only great library in Europe which does not lend out its MSS. to foreigners. The university and court libraries of Vienna, the royal and state libraries of Berlin and Munich, those of Copenhagen and Leyden, and Bibliothčque Nationale in Paris all are very liberal in their loans to well-recommended foreigners. In Paris a diplomatic introduction is required. In Munich the library does not lend directly to the foreign borrower; but sends to the library of the capital whence the borrower may have made his application, and leaves all responsibility to that library. In the other libraries, the discretion is left to the librarian, who generally lends without any formalities beyond ascertaining the bona fides and trustworthiness of the applicant. In Vienna, however, there has occasionally been some little excess of formality, so a petition is about to be presented to the Emperor by the University professors, begging that the privilege of borrowing may be considered as general, and not as depending on the favour of an official.

“As regards Oriental MSS., it is remarked that the guarantees need not be so minute as in the case of old European MSS., which are often unique copies. According to the learned Professor of Sanskrit in this city, Herr George Bühler, there are very few unique Oriental MSS. in existence of Sanskrit?perhaps not a dozen.”

[424] (1.) “On Lending Bodleian Books and Manuscripts” (not published). June 10, 1866; (2) Appendix. Barlow’s Argument. June, 1866; (3) On Book-lending as practised at the Bodleian Library. July 27, 1886; Baxter, Printer, Oxford. The three papers abound in earnestness and energy; but they have the “defects of their qualities,” as the phrase is; and the subject often runs away with the writer. A single instance will suffice. No. i. says, “In a library like the Bodleian, where the practice of lending prevails as it now does, a man may put himself to great inconvenience in order to visit it; he may even travel from Berlin, and when he arrives he may find that all his trouble has been in vain, the very book he wants is out.” This must have been written during the infancy of Sir Rowland Hill, and when telegrams were unknown to mankind; all that the Herr has to do in our times is to ask per wire if the volume be at home or not.

[425] Chandler, “On Lending Bodleian Books,” etc., .

[426] Koran, xxiii. 14.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

SUPPLEMENTAL NIGHTS VOLUME V.

To The Curators of the Bodleian Library, Oxford
Especially Revd. B. Price and Professor Max Muller.

Gentlemen,

I take the liberty of placing your names at the Head of this Volume which owes its rarest and raciest passages to your kindly refusing the temporary transfer of the Wortley Montague MS. from your pleasant library to the care of Dr. Rost, Chief Librarian, India Office. As a sop to "bigotry and virtue," as a concession to the "Scribes and Pharisees," I had undertaken, in case the loan were granted, not to translate tales and passages which might expose you, the Curators, to unfriendly comment. But, possibly anticipating what injury would thereby accrue to the Volume and what sorrow to my subscribers, you were good enough not to sanction the transfer — indeed you refused it to me twice — and for this step my clientele will be (or ought to be) truly thankful to you.

I am, Gentlemen,
Yours obediently,
Richard F. Burton.

Bodleian Library, August 5th, 1888

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

THE TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD.

This volume contains the last of my versions from the Wortley Montague Codex, and this is the place to offer a short account of that much bewritten MS.

In the "Annals of the Bodleian Library," etc., by the Reverend William Dunn Macray, M.A. (London, Oxford and Cambridge, 1868: 8vo.), we find the following official notice: —

"A.D. 1803."

"An Arabic MS. in seven volumes, written in 1764-5, and containing what is rarely met with, a complete collection of the Thousand and one Tales (N.B. an error for "Nights") of the Arabian Nights Entertainments, was bought from Captain Jonathan Scott for Ł50. Mr. Scott published, in 1811, an edition of the Tales in six volumes (N.B. He reprinted the wretched English version of Prof. Galland's admirable French, and his "revisions" and "occasional corrections" are purely imaginative), in which this MS. is described (N.B. after the mos majorum). He obtained it from Dr. (Joseph) White, the Professor of Hebrew and Arabic at Oxford, who had bought it at the sale of the library of Edward Wortley Montague, by whom it had been brought from the East. (N.B. Dr. White at one time intended to translate it literally, and thereby eclipse the Anglo French version.) It is noticed in Ouseley's Oriental Collections (Cadell and Davies), vol. ii. ."

The Jonathan Scott above alluded to appears under various titles as Mr. Scott, Captain Scott and Doctor Scott. He was an officer in the Bengal Army about the end of the last century, and was made Persian Secretary by "Warren Hastings, Esq.," to whom he dedicated his "Tales, Anecdotes and Letters, translated from the Arabic and Persian" (Cadell and Davies, London, 1800), and he englished the "Bahár-i-Dánish" (A.D. 1799) and "Firishtah's History of the Dakkhan (Deccan) and of the reigns of the later Emperors of Hindostan." He became Dr. Scott because made an LL.D. at Oxford as meet for a "Professor (of Oriental languages) at the Royal Military and East India Colleges"; and finally he settled at Netley, in Shropshire, where he died.

It is not the fault of English Orientalists if the MS. in question is not thoroughly well known to the world of letters. In 1797 Sir Gore Ouseley's "Oriental Collections" (vol. ii. p-33) describes it, evidently with the aid of Scott, who is the authority for stating that the tales generally appear like pearls strung at random on the same thread; adding, "if they are truly Oriental it is a matter of little importance to us Europeans whether they are strung on this night or that night."[1] This first and somewhat imperfect catalogue of the contents was followed in 1811 by a second, which concludes the six volume edition of "The

ARABIAN NIGHTS
ENTERTAINMENTS,
Carefully revised and occasionally corrected
from the Arabic.
to which is added
A SELECTION OF NEW TALES,
Now first translated
from the Arabic Originals.
also,
AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES,
Illustrative of the
RELIGION, MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE:
MAHOMMEDANS."

The sixth volume, whose second title is "Tales | selected from the Manuscript copy | of the | 1001 Nights | brought to Europe by Edward Wortley Montague, Esq.," ends with a general Appendix, of which ten pages are devoted to a description of the Codex and a Catalogue of its contents. Scott's sixth volume, like the rest of his version, is now becoming rare, and it is regretable that when Messieurs Nimmo and Bain reprinted, in 1882, the bulk of the work (4 vols. 8vo) they stopped short at volume five.

Lastly we find a third list dating from 1835 in the "Catalogi | Codicum Manuscriptorum Orientalium | Bibliothecć Bodleianć | Pars

Secunda | Arabicos | complectens. | Confecit | Alexander Nicoll, J.C.D. | Nuper Linguć Heb. Professor Regius, necnon Ćdis Christi Canonicus. | Editionem absolvit | et Catalogum urianum² aliquatenus emendavit | G. B. Pusey S.T.B. | Viri desideratissimi Successor. | Oxonii, | E Typographio Academico | MDCCCXXXV." This is introduced under the head, "Codicis Arabici Mahommedani Narrationes Fictć sive Historić Romanenses | in Quarto (pp . 145-150).

I am not aware that any attempt has been made to trace the history of the Wortley Montague MS.; but its internal evidence supplies a modicum of information.

By way of colophon to the seventh and last volume we have, "On this wise end to us the Stories of the Kings and histories of various folk as foregoing in the Thousand Nights and a Night, perfected and completed, on the eighteenth day of Safar the auspicious, which is of the months of (the year A.H.) one thousand one hundred and seventy-eight" (= A.D. 1764-65).

"Copied by the humblest and neediest of the poor, Omar-al-Safatí, to whose sins may Allah be Ruthful!

"An thou find in us fault deign default supply,
And hallow the Faultless and Glorify."

The term "Suftah" is now and has been applied for the last century to the sons of Turkish fathers by Arab mothers, and many of these Mulattos live by the pen. On the fly-leaf of vol. i. is written in a fine and flowing Persian (?) hand, strongly contrasting with the text of the tome, which is unusually careless and bad, "This book | The Thousand Nights and a Night of the Acts and deeds (Sírat) of the Kings | and what befel them from sundry | women that were whorish | and witty | and various | Tales | therein." Below it also is a Persian couplet written in vulgar Iranian characters of the half-Shikastah type:

Chih goyam, o chih poyam? * Na mí-dánam hích o púch. (What shall I say or whither fly? * This stuff and this nonsense know not I.)

Moreover, at the beginning of vol. i. is a list of fifteen tales written in Europeo-Arabic characters, after schoolboy fashion, and probably by Scott. In vol. ii. there is no initial list, but by way of Foreword we read, "This is volume the second of the Thousand Nights and a Night from the xciiid. Night, full and complete." And the Colophon declares, "And this is what hath been finished for us of the fourth (probably a clerical error for "second") tome of the Thousand Nights and a Night to the clxxviith. Night, written on the twentieth day of the month Sha'bán A.H., one thousand one hundred and seventy-seven" (=A.D. 1764). This date shows that the MS. was finished during the year after incept.

The text from which our MS. was copied must have been valuable, and we have reason to regret that so many passages both of poetry and prose are almost hopelessly corrupt. Its tone and tenor are distinctly Nilotic; and, as Mr. E. Wortley Montague lived for some time in Egypt, he may have bought it at the Capital of the Nile-land. The story of the Syrian (v. 468) and that of the Two Lack-tacts (vi. 262), notably exalt Misr and Cairo at the expense of Shám and Damascus; and there are many other instances of preferring Kemi the Black Soil to the so called "Holy Land." The general tone, as well as the special incidents of the book, argues that the stories may have been ancient, but they certainly have been modernised. Coffee is commonly used (passim) although tobacco is still unknown; a youth learns archery and gunnery (Zarb al-Risás, vol. vii. 440); casting of cannon occurs (vol. v. 186), and in one place (vol. vi. 134) we read of "Taban-jatayn," a pair of pistols; the word, which is still popular, being a corruption of the Persian "Tabáncheh" = a slap or blow, even as the French call a derringer coup de poing. The characteristic of this Recueil is its want of finish. The stories are told after perfunctory fashion as though the writer had not taken the trouble to work out the details. There are no names or titles to the tales, so that every translator must give his own; and the endings are equally unsatisfactory, they usually content themselves, after "native" fashion, with "Intihá" = finis; and the connection with the thread of the work must be supplied by the story-teller or the translator. Headlines were not in use for the MSS. of that day, and the catchwords are often irregular, a new word taking the place of the initial in the following page.

The handwriting, save and except in the first volume, has the merit of regularity, and appears the same throughout the succeeding six, except in the rare places (e.g. vi. 92-93), where the lazy copyist did not care to change a worn-out pen, and continued to write with a double nib. On the other hand, it is the character of a village-schoolmaster whose literary culture is at its lowest. Hardly a sheet appears without some blunder which only in rare places is erased or corrected, and a few lacunć are supplied by several hands, Oriental and European, the latter presumably Scott's. Not unfrequently the terminal word of a line is divided, a sign of great incuria or ignorance, as "Sháhr | baz" (i. 4), "Shahr | zád" (v. 309, vi. 106), and "Fawa | jadtu-h" = so I found him (V. 104). Koranic quotations almost always lack vowel points, and are introduced without the usual ceremony. Poetry also, that crux of a skilful scribe, is carelessly treated, and often enough two sets of verse are thrown into one, the first rhyming in úr, and the second in ír (e.g. vol. v. 256). The rhyme-words also are repeated within unlawful limits (passim and vol. v. 308, ll. 6 and 11). Verse is thrust into the body of the page (vii. 112) without signs of citation in red ink or other (iii. 406); and rarely we find it, as it should be, in distichs divided by the normal conventional marks, asterisks and similar separations. Sometimes it appears in a column of hemistichs after the fashion of Europe (iv. 111; iv. 232, etc.): here (v. 226) a quotation is huddled into a single line; there (v. 242) four lines, written as monostichs, are followed by two distichs in as many lines.

As regards the metrical part Dr. Steingass writes to me, "The verses in Al-Hayfá and Yúsuf, where not mere doggerel, are spoiled by the spelling. I was rarely able to make out even the metre and I think you have accomplished a feat by translating them as you have done."

The language of the MS. is generally that of the Felláh and notably so in sundry of the tales, such as, "The Goodwife of Cairo and her four Gallants" (v. 444). Of this a few verbal and phrasal instances will suffice. Adíní = here am I (v. 198); Ahná (passim, for nahnu) nakháf = we fear; 'Alaykí (for 'alayki) = on thee; and generally the long vowel (-kí) for the short (-ki) in the pronoun of the second person feminine; Antah (for ante) = thou (vi. 96) and Antú (for antum) = you (iii. 351); Aráha and even arúha, rúhat and rúha (for ráha) = he went (vii. 74 and iv. 75) and Arúhú (for rúhú) = go ye (iv. 179); Bakarah * * * allazi (for allatí) = a cow (he) who, etc.; (see in this vol.,) and generally a fine and utter contempt for genders, e.g. Hum (for hunna) masc. for fem. (iii. 91; iii. 146; and v. 233); Tá 'áli (for ta'ál) fem. for masc. (vi. 96 et passim); Bíhím (for bi-him) = with them (v. 367); Bi-kám (for bi-kum) = with you (iii. 142) are fair specimens of long broad vowels supplanting the short, a peculiarity known in classical Arab., e.g. Miftáh (for Miftah) = a key. Here, however, it is exaggerated, e.g. Bá'íd (for ba'íd) = far (iv. 167); Kám (for kam) = how many? Kúm (for kum) = you (v. 118); Kúl-há (for kul-ha) = tell it (iv. 58); Mín (for man) = who? (iii. 89); Mirwád (for Mirwad) = a branding iron; Natanáshshad (for natanashshad) = we seek tidings (v. 211); Rájal (pron. Rágil, for Rajul) = a man (iv. 118 and passim); Sáhal (for sahal) = easy, facile (iv. 71); Sír (for sir) = go, be off! (v. 199); Shíl (for shil) = carry away (i. 111); and Záhab (for zahab) = gold (v. 186). This broad Doric or Caledonian articulation is not musical to unaccustomed organs. As in popular parlance the Dál supplants the Zál; e.g. Dahaba (for zahaba) = he went (v. 277 and passim); also T takes the place of Th, as Tult for thulth = one third (iii. 348) and Tamrat (for thamrat) = fruit (v. 260), thus generally ignoring the sibilant Th after the fashion of the modern Egyptians who say Tumm (for thumma) = again; "Kattir (for kaththir) Khayrak" = God increase thy weal, and Lattama (for laththama) = he veiled. Also a general ignoring of the dual, e.g. Házá 'usfurayn (for 'Usfuráni) = these be birds (vi. 121); Nazalú al-Wazirayn (do) = the two Wazirs went down (vii. 123); and lastly Al-Wuzará al-itnayn (for Al-Wazíráni) = the two Wazirs (vii. 121). Again a fine contempt for numbers, as Nanzur ana (for Anzur) = I (we) see (v. 198) and Inní (for inná) narúhu = indeed I (we) go (iii. 190). Also an equally conscientious disregard for cases, as Min mál abú-há (for abí-há) = out of the moneys of her sire (iv. 190); and this is apparently the rule of the writer.

Of Egyptianisms and vulgarisms we have Ant, má ghibtshayy = thou, hast thou not been absent at all? with the shayy (a thing) subjoined to the verb in this and similar other phrases; Baksísh for Bakhshish (iv. 356); Al-Jawáz (for al-zíwáj) = marriage (i. 14); Fakí or Fikí (for fakih) = a divine (vi. 207 and passim); Finjál (for finján)

= a coffee-cup (v. 424, also a Najdí or Central Arabian corruption); Kuwayyis = nice, pretty (iv. 179); Láyálí (for liallá) = lest that (v. 285); Luhúmát (for lukúm) = meats, a mere barbarism (v. 247); Matah (for Matá) =when? (v. 464); Ma'áyah (for ma'í) =with me (vi. 13 et passim); Shuwayy (or shuwayyah) Mayah, a double diminutive (for Muwayy or Muwayh) = a small little water, intensely Nilotic (iv. 44); Mbarih or Embárah (for Al-bárihah) = yesterday (v. 449); Takkat (for Dakkat) = she rapped (iv. 190); Úzbáshá and Uzbáshá (for Yúzbáshí) = a centurion, a captain (v. 430 et passim); Záídjah for Záijah (vi. 329); Zarághít (for Zaghárít) = lullilooing (iv. 12); Zínah (for Ziná) = adultery, and lastly Zúda (for Záda) = increased (iv. 87). Here the reader will cry jam satis; while the student will compare the list with that given in my Terminal Essay (vol. x. 168-9).

The two Appendices require no explanation. No. I. is a Catalogue of the Tales in the Wortley Montague MS., and No. II. contains Notes upon the Storiology of the Supplemental Volumes IV. and V. by the practiced pen of Mr. W. F. Kirby. The sheets during my absence from England have been passed through the press and sundry additions and corrections have been made by Dr. Steingass.

In conclusion I would state that my hope was to see this Volume (No. xv.) terminate my long task; but circumstance is stronger than my will and I must ask leave to bring out one more — The New Arabian Nights.

RICHARD F. BURTON.

ATHENĆUM CLUB, September 1st, 1888.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

THE HISTORY OF THE KING'S SON OF SIND AND THE LADY FATIMAH.[3]

It is related that whilome there was a King of the many Kings of Sind who had a son by other than his wife. Now the youth, whenever he entered the palace, would revile[4] and abuse and curse and use harsh words to his step-mother, his father's Queen, who was beautiful exceedingly; and presently her charms were changed and her face waxed wan and for the excess of what she heard from him she hated life and fell to longing for death. Withal she could not say a word concerning the Prince to his parent. One day of the days, behold an aged woman (which had been her nurse) came in to her and saw her in excessive sorrow and perplext as to her affair for that she knew not what she could do with her step-son. So the ancient dame said to her, "O my lady, no harm shall befal thee; yet is thy case changed into other case and thy colour hath turned to yellow." Hereupon the Queen told her all that had befallen her from her step-son of harsh language and revilement and abuse, and the other rejoined, "O my lady, let not thy breast be straitened, and when the youth shall come to thee and revile thee and abuse thee, do thou say him, 'Pull thy wits somewhat together till such time as thou shalt have brought back the Lady Fatimah, daughter of 'Ámir ibn al-Nu'umán.'" The old woman taught her these words by heart, and anon went forth from her, when the Prince entered by the door and spoke harsh words and abused and reviled her; so his father's wife said to him, "Lower thy tone and pull thy wits somewhat together, for thou be a small matter until thou shalt bring back the daughter of the Sultan, hight Fatimah, the child of 'Amir ibn al-Nu'uman." Now when he heard these words he cried, "By Allah, 'tis not possible but that I go and return with the said Lady Fatimah;" after which he repaired to his sire and said, "'Tis my desire to travel; so do thou prepare for me provision of all manner wherewith I may wend my way to a far land, nor will I return until I win to my wish." Hereupon his father fell to transporting whatso he required of victuals various and manifold, until all was provided, and he got ready for him whatso befitted of bales and camels and pages and slaves and eunuchs and negro chattels. Presently they loaded up and the youth, having farewelled his father and his friends and his familiars, set forth seeking the country of Fatimah bint Amir, and he travelled for the first day and the second day until he found himself in the middle of the wilds and the Wadys, and the mountains and the stony wastes. This lasted for two months till such time as he reached a region wherein were Ghúls and ferals, and to one and all who met him and opposed him he would give something of provaunt and gentle them and persuade them to guide him upon his way. After a time he met a Shaykh well stricken in years; so he salamed to him and the other, after returning his greeting, asked him saying, "What was it brought thee to this land and region wherein are naught but wild beasts and Ghuls?" whereto he answered, "O Shaykh, I came hither for the sake of the Lady Fatimah, daughter of 'Amir ibn al-Nu'uman." Hereat exclaimed the greybeard, "Deceive not thyself, for assuredly thou shalt be lost together with what are with thee of men and moneys, and the maiden in question hath been the cause of destruction to many Kings and Sultans. Her father hath three tasks which he proposeth to every suitor, nor owneth any the power to accomplish a single one, and he conditioneth that if any fail to fulfil them and avail not so to do, he shall be slain. But I, O my son, will inform thee of the three which be these: First the King will bring together an ardabb of sesame grain and an ardabb of clover-seed and an ardabb of lentils; and he will mingle them one with other, and he will say: — Whoso seeketh my daughter to wife, let him set apart each sort, and whoso hath no power thereto I will smite his neck. And as all have failed in the attempt their heads were struck off next morning and were hung up over the Palace gateway. Now the second task is this: the King hath a cistern[5] full of water, and he conditioneth that the suitor shall drink it up to the last drop, under pain of losing his life; and the third is as follows: he owneth a house without doors and windows, and it hath[6] three hundred entrances and a thousand skylights and two thousand closets: so he covenanteth with the suitor that he make for that place whatever befitteth of doors and lattices and cabinets, and the whole in a single night. Now here is sufficient to engross thine intellect, O my son, but take thou no heed and I will do thy task for thee." Quoth the other, "O my uncle, puissance and omnipotence are to Allah!" and quoth the Shaykh, "Go, O my son, and may the Almighty forward the works of thee." So the Prince farewelled him and travelled for the space of two days, when suddenly the ferals and the Ghuls opposed his passage and he gave them somewhat of provaunt which they ate, and after they pointed out to him the right path. Then he entered upon a Wady wherein flights of locusts barred the passage, so he scattered for them somewhat of fine flour which they picked up till they had eaten their sufficiency. Presently he found his way into another valley of iron-bound rocks, and in it there were of the Jánn what could not be numbered or described, and they cut and crossed his way athwart that iron tract. So he came forward and salam'd to them and gave them somewhat of bread and meat and water, and they ate and drank till they were filled, after which they guided him on his journey and set him in the right direction. Then he fared forwards till he came to the middle of the mountain, where he was opposed by none, or mankind or Jinn-kind, and he ceased not marching until he drew near the city of the Sultan whose daughter he sought to wife. Here he set up a tent and sat therein seeking repose for a term of three days; then he arose and walked forwards until he entered the city, where he fell to looking about him leftwards and rightwards till he had reached the palace[7] of the King. He found there over the gateway some hundred heads which were hanging up, and he cried to himself, "Veil me, O thou Veiler! All these skulls were suspended for the sake of the Lady Fatimah, but the bye-word saith, 'Whoso dieth not by the sword dieth of his life-term,' and manifold are the causes whereas death be singlefold." Thereupon he went forwards to the palace gate — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Ninety-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-

guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Prince went forward to the Palace gate and purposed to enter, but they forbade him nor availed he to go in; so he returned to his tents and there spent the night till dawn. Then he again turned to the King's Serai and attempted to make entry, but they stayed him and he was unable to succeed, nor could he attain to the presence of the Sovran. So he devised with one who was standing at the door a device to enter the presence, but again he failed in his object and whenever he craved admission they rejected him and drave him away saying, "O youth, tell us what may be thy need?" Said he, "I have a requirement of the Sultan and my purport is a business I may transact with him and speech containeth both private and public matters; nor is it possible that I mention my want to any save to the Sovran." So a Chamberlain of the chamberlains went in to the presence and reported the affair to the King, who permitted them admit the stranger, and when he stood before the throne he kissed ground and deprecated evil for the ruler and prayed for his glory and permanency, and the Monarch, who marvelled at the terseness of his tongue and the sweetness of his speech, said to him, "O youth, what may be thy requirement?" Quoth the Prince, "Allah prolong the reign of our lord the Sultan! I came to thee seeking connexion with thee through thy daughter the lady concealed and the pearl unrevealed." Quoth the Sultan, "By Allah, verily this youth would doom himself hopelessly to die and, Oh the pity of it for the loquence of his language;" presently adding, "O youth, say me, art thou satisfied with the conditions wherewith I would oblige thee?" and the Prince replied, "O my lord, Omnipotence is to Allah; and, if the Almighty empower me to fulfil thy pact, I shall fulfil it." The King continued, "I have three tasks to impose upon thee," and the Prince rejoined, "I am satisfied with all articles thou shalt appoint." Hereupon the Sovran summoned the writers and witnesses, and they indited the youth's covenant and gave testimony that he was content therewith; and when the Prince had signified his satisfaction and obligation, the King sent for an ardabb of sesame and an ardabb of clover-seed and an ardabb of lentils and let mingle all three kinds one with other till they became a single heap. Then said the King to the Prince, "Do thou separate each sort by itself during the course of the coming night, and if dawn shall arise and every seed is not set apart, I will cut off thy head." Replied the other, "Hearing and obeying." Then the King bade place all the mixed heap in a stead apart, and commanded the suitor retire into solitude; accordingly, he passed alone into that site and looked upon that case and condition, and he sat beside the heap deep in thought, so he set his hand upon his cheek and fell to weeping, and was certified of death. Anon he arose and going forwards attempted of himself to separate the various sorts of grain, but he failed; and had two hundred thousand thousands of men been gathered together for the work they had on nowise availed to it. Hereupon he set his right hand upon his cheek[8] and he fell to weeping and suffered the first third of the dark hours to pass, when he said to himself, "There remaineth naught of thy life save the remnant of this night!" But the while he was conjecturing and taking thought, behold, an army of the locusts to whom he had thrown the flour upon his road came speeding over him like a cloud dispread and said to him with the tongue of the case,[9] "Fear not neither grieve, for we have flocked hither to solace thee and ward from thee the woe wherein thou art: so take thou no further heed." Then they proceeded to separate each kind of grain and set it by itself, and hardly an hour had passed before the whole sample was distributed grain by grain into its proper place while he sat gazing thereon. After this the locusts arose and went their ways, and when morning dawned the Sultan came forth and took seat in the Hall of Commandment and said to those who were present, "Arise ye and bring hither the youth that we may cut off his head." They did his bidding but, when entering in to the Prince, they found all the different grains piled separately, sesame by itself and clover-seed alone and lentils distributed apart, whereat they marvelled and cried, "This thing is indeed a mighty great matter from this youth, nor could it befal any save himself of those who came before him or of those who shall follow after him." Presently they brought him to the Sultan and said, "O King of the Age, all the grains are sorted;" whereat the Sovran wondered and exclaimed, "Bring the whole before me." And when they brought it he looked upon it with amazement and rejoiced thereat, but soon recovered himself and cried, "O youth, there remain to thee two tasks for two nights; and if thou fulfil them, thou shalt win to thy wish, and if thou fail therein, I will smite thy neck." Said the Prince, "O King of the Age, the All-might is to Allah, the One, the Omnipotent!" Now when night drew nigh the King opened to him a cistern and said, "Drink up all that is herein and leave not of it a drop, nor spill aught thereof upon the ground, and if thou drain the whole of it, thou shalt indeed attain to thine aim, but if thou fail to swallow it, I will smite thy neck." The Prince answered, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!" Then he took his seat at the cistern-mouth and fell to thinking and saying in his mind, "Wherefore, O certain person, shouldst thou venture thy life and incur the cruel consequence of this King on account of thy frowardness to thy father's wife? and by Allah, this is naught save Jinn-struck madness on thy part!" So he placed his left hand upon his cheek, and in his right was a stick wherewith he tapped and drew lines in absent fashion upon the ground,[10] and he wept and wailed until the third of the first part of the dark hours had passed, when he said in himself, "There remaineth naught of thine age, ho, Such-an-one, save the remainder of this night." And he ceased not to be drowned in thought when suddenly a host of savage beasts and wild birds came up to him and said with the tongue of the case, "Fear not neither grieve, O youth, for none is faithless to the food save the son of adultery and thou wast the first to work our weal, so we will veil and protect thee, and let there be no sorrowing with thee on account of this matter." Hereupon they gathered together in a body, birds and beasts, and they were like unto a lowering cloud, no term to them was shown and no end was known as they followed in close file one upon other — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the wild beasts and the feral birds met one another beside that cistern and each took his turn thereat and drank without drinking his full[11] until naught of water remained in the reservoir and they fell to licking the sides with their tongues so that anyone seeing it would say that for the last ten years not a drop of liquid had been stored therein. And after this they all went their ways. Now as soon as it was morning-tide the King arose and hied forth the Harem and taking his seat in the Hall of Commandment said to sundry of his pages and Chamberlains, “Go bring us tidings of the cistern.” Accordingly they went thither and inspected it but found no trace of water therein; so they returned straightway to the ruler and reported the matter. Hereupon the Sultan was amazed and his wits were bewildered and he was certified that none had power to win his daughter for wife save that youth. So he cried, “Bring him hither,” and they fared to fetch him and presented him in the presence where he salam’d to the Sovran and deprecated[12] for him and prayed for him. The Sultan greeted him in return and said, “O Youth, there now remaineth with me but a single task which if thou accomplish shall save thee and win for thee my daughter; however if thou fail therein I will smite thy neck.” “Power is to Allah!” exclaimed the Prince whereat the Sultan marvelled and said in his mind, “Glory be to God: the words and works of this youth be wonderful. Whatever I bid him do he beginneth with naming the name of the Lord whereas those who forewent him never suffered me hear aught of the sort. However, the fortunate are Fortune’s favourites and Misfortune never befalleth them.” Now when it was night-tide the Sultan said, “O youth, in very deed this mansion which standeth beside the palace is brand-new and therein are store of wood and timbers of every kind, but it lacketh portals and lattices and the finishing of the cabinets; so I desire that thou make for it doors and windows and closets. I have provided thee with everything thou dost require of carpenter’s gear and turner’s lathes; and either thou shalt work all this during the coming night, or, if thou be wanting in aught and morning shall morrow without all the needful being finished, I will cut off thy head. This is the fine of thy three labours which an thou avail to accomplish thou shalt attain thine aim and if thou fail thereof I will smite thy neck. Such be then my last word." Accordingly the Prince arose and faring from before him entered the unfinished mansion which he found to be a palace greater and grander than that wherein the King abode. He cried, "O Veiler, withdraw not Thy veiling!" and he sat therein by himself (and he drowned in thought) and said, "By Allah, if at this hour I could find somewhat to swallow I would die thereby and rest from this toil and trouble have been my lot;[13] and the morning shall not morrow ere I shall find repose nor shall any one of the town folk solace himself and say, 'The Sultan is about to cut off the head of this youth.' Withal the bye-word hath it, 'Joyance which cometh from Allah is nearer than is the eyebrow to the eye,' and if Almighty (be He extolled and exalted!) have determined aught to my destiny, there is no flight therefrom. Moreover one of the Sages hath said, 'He released me from pillar to post and the Almighty bringeth happiness nearhand.' From this time until dawn of day many a matter may proceed from the Lord wherein haply shall be salvation for me or destruction." Then he fell to pondering his affair and thinking over his frowardness to the wife of his father, after which he said, "The slave meditateth and the Lord determineth, nor doth the meditation of the slave accord with the determination of the Lord." And while thus drowned in care he heard the sound of the Darabukkah-drum[14] and the turmoil of work and the shiftings of voices whilst the house was full of forms dimly seen and a voice cried out to him, "O youth, be hearty of heart and sprightly of spirits: verily we will requite thee the kindness thou wroughtest to us in providing us with thy provision; and we will come to thine aidance this very night, for they who are visiting and assisting thee are of the Jánn from the Valley of Iron." Then they began taking up the timbers and working them and some turned the wood with lathes, and other planed the material with planes, whilst others again fell to painting and dyeing the doors and windows, these green and those red and those yellow; and presently they set them in their several steads; nor did that night go by ere the labour was perfected and there was no royal palace like unto it, either in ordinance or in emplacement. Now as morning morrowed the Sultan went forth to his divan, and when he looked abroad he saw a somewhat of magnificence in the mansion which was not to be found in his palace, so he said in his surprise, “By Allah, the works of this youth be wondrous and had the joiners and carpenters loitered over three years upon this work they never would have fulfilled such task: moreover we ken not by what manner of means this young man hath been able to accomplish the labour.” Thereupon he sent for the Prince to the presence and robed him with a sumptuous robe of honour and assigned to him a mighty matter of money, saying, “Verily thou deservest, O youth, and thou art the only one who meriteth that thou become to my daughter baron and she become to thee femme.” Presently Sultan Amir ibn al-Nu’uman bade tie the marriage-tie and led to her in procession the bridegroom who found her a treasure wherefrom the talisman had been loosed;[15] and the bride rejoiced with even more joyance than he did by cause of her sire, with his three tasks, having made her believe that she would never be wedded and bedded but die a maid, and she had long been in sadness for such reason. Then the married couple abode with the King their father for the space of a month, and all this time the camp of the young Prince remained pitched without the town, and every day he would send to his pages and eunuchs whatso they needed of meat and drink. But when that term ended he craved from the Sultan leave of travel to his own land and his father-in-law answered, “O youth, do whatso thou ever wishest anent returning to thy native realm;” and forthwith fell to fitting out his daughter till all her preparations were completed and she was found ready for wayfare together with her body-women and eunuchs. The Prince having farewelled his father-in-law caused his loads to be loaded and set out seeking his native country and kingdom; and he travelled by day and by night, and he pushed his way through Wadys and over mountains for a while of time until he drew near his own land, and between him and his father’s city remained only some two or three marches. Here suddenly men met him upon the road and as he asked them the tidings they replied that his sire was besieged within his capital of Sind by a neighbour King who had attacked him and determined to dethrone him and make himself Sovereign and Sultan in his stead. Now when he heard this account he pushed forward with forced marches till he reached his father’s city which he found as had been reported; and the old King with all his forces was girded around within his own walls nor could he sally out to offer battle for that the foe was more forceful than himself. Hereupon the Prince pitched his camp and prepared himself for fight and fray; and a many of his men rode with him whilst another many remained on guard at the tents. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Four Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Prince busked him for fight and fray seeking to assault the army of the King who had besieged his sire, and the two hosts fought together a strenuous fight and a stubborn. On this wise fared it with them; but as regards the bride, she took patience till such time as her bridegroom had ridden forth, when she donned her weapons of war and veiled herself with a face-veil and sallying forth in Mameluke's habit presently came up with her mate the Prince whom she found straitened by the multitude of his foes. Now this Princess was mistress of all manner weapons, so she drew her sword from its sheath and she laid on load rightwards and leftwards until the wits of all beholders were wildered and her bridegroom inclined to her and said, "Verily this Mameluke he is not one of our party." But she continued battling till the sun rose high in the firmament-vault when she determined to attack the ensigns and colours which were flying after right royal of fashion, and in the midst thereof was the hostile Sultan. So she smote the ancient who bore the banner and cast him to the ground and then she made for the King and charged down upon him and struck him with the side of the sword a blow so sore that of his affright he fell from his steed. But when his host saw him unhorsed and prostrate upon the plain they sought safety in flight and escape, deeming him to be dead; whereupon she alighted and pinioned his elbows behind his back and tied his forearms to his side, and lashed him on to his charger and bound him in bonds like a captive vile. Then she committed him to her bridegroom who still knew her not and she departed the field seeking her camp until she arrived there and entered her pavilion where she changed her attire and arrayed herself in women's raiment. After this she sat down expecting the Prince who, when she had committed to him the captured King, carried him into the city where he found the gates thrown open. Hereupon his sire sallied forth and greeted him albeit he recognised him not but was saying, "Needs must I find the Knight who came to our assistance." "O my papa," quoth the Prince, "dost thou not know me?" and quoth the other, "O young man, I know thee not;" whereat the other rejoined, "I am thy son Such-an-one." But hardly had the old King heard these words when behold, he fell upon him and threw his arms round his neck and was like to lose his sense and his senses for stress of joyance. After a time he recovered and looking upon the captive King asked him, "What was it drave thee to come hither and seek to seize from me my realm?" and the other answered him with humility and craved his pardon and promised not again to offend, so he released him and bade him gang his gait. After this the young Prince went forth and caused his Harim and his pages and whoso were with him enter the city and when they were seated in the women's apartment the husband and wife fell to talking of their journey and what they had borne therein of toil and travail. At last the Princess said to him, "O my lord, what became of the King who besieged thy sire in his capital and who sought to bereave him of his realm?" and said he, "I myself took him captive and committed him to my father who admitted his excuses and suffered him depart." Quoth she, "And was it thou who capturedst him?" and quoth he, "Yea verily, none made him prisoner save myself." Hereupon said she, "Thee it besitteth not to become after thy sire Sovran and Sultan!" and said he, "Why and wherefore?" "For that a lie defameth and dishonoureth the speaker," cried she, "and thou hast proved thee a liar." "What made it manifest to thee that I lied?" asked the Prince, and the Princess answered, “Thou claimest to have captured the King when it was other than thyself took him prisoner and committed him to thy hands.” He enquired, “And who was he?” and she replied, “I know not, withal I had him in sight.” Hereupon the bridegroom repeated his query till at last she confessed it was she had done that deed of derring-do; and the Prince rejoiced much in her.[16] Then the twain made an entry in triumph and the city was adorned and the general joy was increased. Now his taking to wife the Lady Fatimah daughter of the Sultan Amir bin Al-Nu’uman so reconciled him to his stepmother, the spouse of his father the Sovran of Sind, that both forgot their differences and they lived ever afterwards in harmony and happiness.

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HISTORY OF THE LOVERS OF SYRIA[17]

It is stated that of olden times and by-gone there dwelt in the land of Syria two men which were brothers and whereof one was wealthy and the other was needy. Now the rich man had a love-some daughter and a lovely, whilst the poor man had a son who gave his heart to his cousin as soon as his age had reached his tenth year. But at that time his father the pauper died and he was left an orphan without aught of the goods of this world; the damsel his cousin, however, loved him with exceeding love and ever and anon would send him somewhat of dirhams and this continued till both of them attained their fourteenth years. Then the youth was minded to marry the daughter of his uncle, so he sent a party of friends to her home by way of urging his claim that the father might wed her to him, but the man rejected them and they returned disappointed. However, when it was the second day a body of warm men and wealthy came to ask for the maid in marriage, and they conditioned the needful conditions and stood agreed upon the nuptials. Presently the tidings reached the damsel who took patience till the noon o' night, when she arose and sought the son of her uncle, bringing with her the sum of two thousand dinars which she had taken of her father's good and she knocked softly at the door. Hereupon the youth started from sleep and went forth and found his cousin who was leading a she-mule and an ass, so the twain bestrode either beast and travelled through the remnant of the night until the morning morrowed. Then they alighted to drink and to hide themselves in fear of being seen until the second night fell when they mounted and rode for two successive days, at the end of which they entered a town seated on the shore of the sea. Here they found a ship equipped for voyage, so they repaired to the Ra'is and hired for themselves a sitting place; after which the cousin went forth to sell the ass and the she-mule, and disappeared for a short time. Meanwhile the ship had sailed with the daughter of his uncle and had left the youth upon the strand and ceased not sailing day after day for the space of ten days, and lastly made the port she purposed and there cast anchor.[18] Thus it befel them; but as regards the youth, when he had sold the beasts he returned to the ship and found her not, and when he asked tidings thereof they told him that she had put to sea; and hearing this he was mazed as to his mind and sore amated as to his affair, nor wot he whither he should wend. So he turned him inland sore dismayed. Now when the vessel anchored in that port quoth the damsel to the captain, “O Ra’is,[19] hie thee ashore and bring for us a portion of flesh and fresh bread,” and quoth he, “Hearkening and obedience,” whereupon he betook himself to the town. But as soon as he was far from the vessel she arose and donning male’s dress said to the sailors, “Do ye weigh anchor and set sail,” and she shouted at them with the shouting of seamen. Accordingly they did as she bade them and the wind being fair and the weather favourable, ere an hour had sped they passed beyond sight of land.[20] Presently the captain returned bringing bread and meat but he found ne’er a ship, so he asked tidings of her and they answered, “Verily she is gone.” Hereupon he was perplext and he fell to striking hand upon hand and crying out, “O my good and the good of folk!” and he repented whenas repentance availed him naught. Accordingly, he returned to the town unknowing whither he should wend and walked about like one blind and deaf for the loss of his craft. But as regards the vessel, she ceased not sailing with those within till she cast anchor near a city wherein was a King; and no sooner was she made fast than the damsel arose and donning her most sumptuous dress and decorations fell to scattering money amongst the crew and saying to them, “Hearten your hearts and be not afraid on any wise!” In due time the news of a fresh arrival reached the Ruler, and he ordered his men to bring him tidings concerning that vessel, and when they went for her and boarded her they found that her captain was a damsel of virginal semblance exceeding in beauty and loveliness. So they returned and reported this to the King who despatched messengers bidding her lodge with him for they had heightened their praises of her and the excess of her comeliness, and he said in his mind, “By Allah, an she prove as they describe her, needs must I marry her.” But the damsel sent back saying, “I am a clean maid, nor may I land alone but do thou send to me forty girls, virgins like myself, when I will disembark together with them.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister

Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Five Hundred and Third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the damsel demanded of the king forty clean maids and said, “We will land, I and they together,” whereto he replied, “The right is with her.” Hereupon he ordered all those about him, the Lords of his land and the Commons, that each and every who had in the house a virginal daughter, should bring her to him until the full tale of forty (the daughter of the Wazir being amongst them) was told and he sent them on board the ship where the damsel was about sitting down for supper. But as soon as the maidens came she met them in her finest attire, none of the number being more beauteous than herself, and she salam’d to them and invited them into the cuddy[21] where she bade food be served to them and they ate and were cheered and solaced, after which they sat down to converse till it was the middle of the night. Now when sleep prevailed over the girls they retired to their several berths, and when they were drowned in slumber, the damsel arose softly and arousing the crew bade them leave their moorings and shake out their canvas; nor did daylight dawn to them ere they had covered a far distance. As soon as the maidens awoke they saw themselves on board a ship amid the billows of the main, and as they asked the Captainess she answered, “Fear not for yourselves or for the voyage you are making;”[22] and she gentled them and solaced them until whatso was in their hearts was allayed. However, touching the affair of the King, when morrowed the morn he sent to the ship with an order for the damsel to land with the forty virgins, but they found not the craft and they returned and reported the same to their lord, who cried, “By Allah, this be the discreetest of deed which none other save she could have done.” So he arose without stay or delay and taking with him the Wazir (both being in disguise), he went down to the shore and looked around but he could not find what had become of them. And as regards the vessel carrying the virgins, she ceased not sailing until she made port beside a ruined city wherein none was inhabitant, and here the crew cast anchor and furled their sails when behold, a gang of forty pirate[23] men, ever ready to cut the highway and their friends to betray, boarded them, crying in high glee, "Let us slay all in her and carry off whatso we find." When they appeared before the damsel they would have effected their intent; but she welcomed them and said, "Do ye return ashore: we be forty maids and ye forty men and to each of you shall befal one and I will belong to your Shaykh, for that I am the Captainess." Now when they heard this they rejoiced with excessive joy and they said, "Walláhi, our night shall be a blessed one by virtue of your coming to us;" whereto she asked, "Have you with you aught of sheep?" They answered, "We have," and quoth she, "Do ye slay of them somewhat for supper and fetch the meat that we may cook it for you." So a troop of pirates went off and brought back ten lambs which they slaughtered and flayed and brittled. Then the damsel and those with her tucked up their sleeves ad hung up their chauldrons[24] and cooked the meat after the delicatest fashion, and when it was thoroughly done and prepared, they spread the trays and the pirates came forward one and all, and ate and washed their hands and they were in high spirits each and every, saying, "This night I will take to me a girl." Lastly she brought to them coffee which they drank, but hardly had it settled in their maws when the Forty Thieves fell to the ground, for she had mixed up with it flying Bhang[25] and those who had drunk thereof became like unto dead men. Hereupon the damsel arose without loss of time and taking in her hand a sharp-grided sword fell to cutting off their heads and casting them into the sea until she came to the Shaykh of the Pirates and in his case she was satisfied with shaving his beard and tearing out his eye-teeth and bidding the crew to cast him ashore. They did as she commanded, after which she conveyed the property of all the caitiffs and having distributed the booty amongst the sailors, bade them weigh anchor and shake out their canvas. On this wise they left that ruined city until they had made the middle of the main and they fared for a number of days athwart the billowy deep nor could they hit upon their course amongst the courses of the sea until Destiny cast them beside a city. They made fast to the anchorage-ground, and the damsel arose and donning Mameluke’s dress and arraying the Forty Virgins in the same attire all walked together and paced about the shore and they were like garden blooms. When they entered the streets they found all the folk a-sorrowing, so they asked one of them and he answered, “The Sultan who over-reigneth this city is dead and the reign lacketh rule.” Now in that stead and under the hand of the Wazir, was a Bird which they let loose at certain times, and whenever he skimmed round and perched upon the head of any man to him they would give the Sultanate.[26] By the decree of the Decreer they cast the fowl high in air at the very hour when the damsel was landing and he hovered above her and settled upon her head (she being in slave’s attire), and the city folk and the lords of the land cried out, “Strange! passing strange!” So they flushed the bird from the place where he had alighted and on the next day they freed him again at a time when the damsel had left the ship, and once more he came and settled upon her head. They drove him away, crying, “Oh rare! oh rare!” but as often as they started him from off her head he returned to it and alighted there again. “Marvellous!” cried the Wazir, “but Allah Almighty hath done this[27] and none shall object to what He doeth nor shall any reject what He decreeth.” Accordingly, they gave her the Sultanate together with the signet-ring of governance and the turband of commandment and they seated her upon the throne of the reign. Hereupon she fell to ordering the Forty Virgins who were still habited as Mamelukes and they served the Sultan for a while of time till one day of the days when the Wazir came to the presence and said, “O King of the Age, I have a daughter, a model of beauty and loveliness, and I am desirous of wedding her with the Sovran because one such as thou should not remain in single blessedness.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent, and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and

that was

The Five Hundred and Fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that quoth the Wazir to the Sultan, “I have a daughter, a model of beauty and loveliness and I am desirous of wedding her with the Sultan, because one such as thou should not remain in single blessedness.” “Do whatso thou wishest,” quoth the King, “and Allah prosper thy doing.” Hereupon the Wazir fell to preparing the marriage-portion[28] of his daughter, and of forwarding her affair with the Sultan, until her wedding appointments[29] and other matters were completed. After this he caused the marriage-tie be tied, and he brought her to the supposed Sultan where she lay for the first night, but the damsel having performed the Wuzú ablution did naught but pray through the hours of darkness. When dawned the day the Wazir’s wife which was the mother of the maiden came to look upon her daughter and asked her of her case, and the bride answered, “All the livelong night hath he passed in orisons, nor came he near me even once.” Quoth the mother, “O my daughter, this be the first night, and assuredly he was ashamed, for he is young in years, and he knoweth not what to do; haply also his heart hangeth not upon thee; and he is but a raw lad.[30] However, on the coming night ye shall both enjoy your desire.” But as soon as it was the evening of the next day the Sultan went in to his Harim and made the minor ablution, and abode in prayer through the night until the morrow morrowed, when again the mother came to see how matters stood, and she asked her daughter, who answered, “All the dark hours he hath passed in devotion, and he never approached me.” Now on the third night it happened after like fashion, so the mother said, “O my daughter, whenever thou shalt see thy husband sitting by thy side, do thou throw thyself upon his bosom.” The bride did as she was bidden, and casting herself upon his breast cried, “O King of the Age, haply I please thee not at all;” whereat said the other, “O light of mine eyes, thou art a joy to me for ever; but I am about to confide to thee somewhat and say me canst thou keep a secret?” Quoth she, “Who is there like me for hiding things in my heart?” and quoth the other, “I am a clean maid, and my like is thy like, but the reason for my being in man’s habit is that the son of my uncle, who is my betrothed, hath been lost from me and I have been lost from him, but when Allah shall decree the reunion of our lots he shall marry thee first and he shall not pay the bridegroom’s visit save unto thee, and after that to myself.” The Wazir’s daughter accepted the excuse, and then arising went forth and brought a pigeon whose weazand she split and whose blood she daubed upon the snow-white sheet.[31] And when it was morning and her mother again visited her, the bride showed her this proof of her pucelage, and she rejoiced thereat and her father rejoiced also. After this the Sultan ruled for a while of time, but she was ever deep in thought concerning what device could be devised in order to obtain tidings of her father and her cousin and what had wrought with them the changes of times and tides. So she bade edify a magnificent Hammám and by its side a coffee house,[32] both nearhand to the palace, and forthwith she summoned architects and masons and plasterers and painters, and when all came between her hands she said to them, “Do ye take a long look at my semblance and mark well my features for I desire that you make me a carven image[33] which shall resemble me in all points, and that you fashion it according to my form and figure, and you adorn it aright and render it to represent my very self in all proportions, and then bring it to me.” They obeyed her order and brought her a statue which was herself to a nail, so she looked upon it and was pleased therewith. Then she ordered them set the image over the Hammam-door, so they placed it there, and after she issued a firman and caused it to be cried through the city that whoso should enter that Bath to bathe and drink coffee, should do so free and gratis and for naught. When this was done, the tongues of the folks were loosed with benison, and they fell to praying for the Sultan and the endurance of his glory, and the permanence of his governance till such time as the bruit was spread abroad by the caravans and travellers, and the folk of all regions had heard of the Hammam and the coffee-house. Meanwhile the Sultan had summoned two eunuchs and ordered them and repeatedly enjoined them that whoso might approach the statue and consider it straitly him they should seize and bring before the presence. Accordingly, the slaves fared forth and took their seats before the doors of the Baths. After a while of time the father of the damsel who had become Sultan wandered forth to seek her,[34] and arrived at that city, where he heard that whoso entered the Hammam to bathe and afterwards drank coffee did this without cost; so he said in his mind, "Let me go thither and enjoy myself." Then he repaired to the building and designed to enter, when behold, he looked at the statue over the gateway, and he stood still and considered it with the tears flowing adown his cheeks, and he cried, "Indeed this figure be like her!" But when the eunuchs saw him they seized him and carried him away until they had led him to the Sultan his daughter, who, seeing him, recognised him forthright, and bade set apart for him an apartment and appointed to him rations for the time being. The next that appeared was the son of her uncle, who also had wandered as far as that city seeking his cousin, and he also having heard the folk speaking anent a free entrance to the Baths, said in himself, "Do thou get thee like others to that Hammam and solace thyself." But when he arrived there he also cast a look at that image and stood before it and wept for an hour or so as he devoured it with his eyes when the eunuchry beholding him seized and carried him off to the Sultan, who knew him at first sight. So she bade prepare a place for him and appointed to him rations for the time being. Then also came the Ra'is of the ship, who had reached that city seeking his lost vessel, and when the fame of the free Hammam came to his ears, he said in his mind, "Go thou to the Baths and solace thyself." And when he arrived there and looked upon the statue and fixed his glance upon it he cried out, "Walláhi! 'tis her very self." Hereupon the eunuchry seized him and carried him to the Sultan who seeing him recognised him and placed him in a place apart for a while of time. Anon the King and the Wazir, who were responsible for the Forty Virgins came to that city. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent, and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Five Hundred and Seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King accompanied by the Wazir came to that city seeking the lost Forty Virgins and when the twain had settled there and were stablisht at ease their souls longed for the Baths and they said each to other, "Hie we to the Hammam that we may wash away the dirt which be the result of travel." So they repaired to the place and as they entered the gateway they looked up and fixed their eyes upon the statue; and, as they continued to gaze thereupon, the eunuchs who sighted them seized them and carried them off to the Sultan.[35] When they stood between her hands and they beheld the Forty Mamelukes who were also before her, the Wazir's glance happened to fall upon his daughter who was on similar wise in slave's habit, and he looked at her with the tears flowing adown his cheeks and he said in his mind, "Walláhi! Verily this Mameluke is like my child as like can be." Hereupon the Sultan considered the twain[36] and asked them of their case[37] and they answered, "We be Such-and-such and we are wandering about to seek our daughter and her nine-and-thirty maidens." Hereupon she assigned them also lodgings and rations for the present. Lastly appeared the Pirate which had been Shaykh and comrade of the Forty Thieves also seeking that city, and albeit he was aweary and perplext yet he ceased not to wander that he might come upon the damsel who had slain his associates and who had shaved his beard and had torn out his eye-teeth. He also when he heard of the Hammam without charge and the free coffee-house said in himself, "Hie thee to that place!" and as he was entering the gateway he beheld the image and stood still and fell to speaking fulsome speech and crying aloud and saying, "By Allah, this statue is likest to her in stature and size and, by the Almighty, if I can only lay my hand upon her and seize her I will slaughter her even as one cutteth a mutton's throat. Ah! Ah! an I could but catch hold of her." As he spake these words the eunuchry heard him; so they seized him and dragged him along and carried him before the Sultan who no sooner saw him and knew him than she ordered him to jail. And they imprisoned him for he had not come to that city save for the shortening of his days and the lavishing of his life-blood and he knew not what was predestined to him and in very sooth he deserved all that befel him. Hereupon the damsel bade bring before her, her father and her cousin and the Ra'is and the King and the Wazir and the Pirate (while she still bore herself as one who administered the Sultanate), and when it became night time all began to converse one with other and presently quoth she to them, "O folk, let each and every who hath a tale solace us with telling it." Hereat quoth one and all of them, "We wist not a recital nor can we recount one;" and she rejoined, "I will relate unto you an adventure." They cried, "O King of the Age, pardon us! for how shalt thou rehearse us an history and we sit listening thereto?"[38] and she replied, "Forasmuch as you have no say to say, I will speak in your stead that we may shorten this our night." Then she continued, "There was a merchant man and a wealthy with a brother which was needy, and the richard had a daughter while the pauper had a son. But when the poor man died he left only a boy who sought to marry the girl his cousin: his paternal uncle, however, refused him maugre that she loved him and she was beloved of him. Presently there came a party of substantial merchants who demanded her in wedlock and obtained her and agreed upon the conditions; when her sire was minded to marry her to their man. This was hard upon the damsel and sore grievous to her so she said, 'By Allah, I will mate with none save my uncle's son.' Then she came to him at midnight leading a she-mule and an ass and bringing somewhat of her father's moneys and she knocked at the youth's door and he came out to her and both went forth, he and she, in the outer darkness of that murky night and the Veiler veiled her way." Now when the father and the cousin heard this adventure they threw themselves on her neck,[39] and rejoiced in her until the turn came for her recounting the tale of the merchant-captain and he also approved her and was solaced by her words. Then, as she related the history concerning the King and the Wazir, they said, "By Allah, this indeed is a sweet story and full of light and leading and our lord the Sultan deserveth for this recital whatso he may require.” But when she came to the Pirate he cried, “Wallâhi, O our lord the Sultan, this adventure is a grievous, and Allah upon thee, tell us some other tale;” whereat all the hearers rejoined, “By Allah, in very sooth the recital is a pleasing.” She continued to acquaint them with the adventure of the Bird which invested her with the monarchy and she ended with relating the matter of the Hammam, at all whereof the audience wondered and said, “By Allah, this is a delectable matter and a dainty;” but the Pirate cried aloud, “Such story pleaseth me not in any way for ’tis heavy upon my heart!” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Five Hundred and Ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Pirate cried out, “This tale is heavy upon my heart!” Presently the damsel resumed her speech and said, “Wallâhi! if my mother and my father say sooth this be my sire and that be my cousin and here standeth the King and there the Wazir and yonder are the Ra’is and the Pirate, the comrade of the Forty Thieves whose only will and wish was to dishonour us maidens all.” Then she resumed, addressing the King and his Minister, “These forty Mamelukes whom you see standing between your hands are the virgin girls belonging to you.” After which she presented the twain with sumptuous gifts and they took their maidens and with them went their ways. Next she restored to the Ra’is his ship and freighted it with her good and he set forth in it on his return voyage. But as regards the Pirate she commanded her attendants to kindle for him a furious fire and they lit it till it roared and the sparks flew high in air, after which they pinioned him and cast him into the flames, where his flesh was melted before his bones.[40] But as concerned her cousin she caused the marriage tie to be tied between him and the Wazir’s daughter and he paid her his first visit on that same night and then she ordered her father to knit the wedding knot with the youth on the next night and when this was done forthwith he went in unto her. After this she committed to him the Sultanate and he became a Sovran and Sultan in her stead, and she bade fetch her mother to that city where her cousin governed and where her father-in-law the Wazir was chief Councillor of the realm. On this wise it endured for the length of their lives, and fair to them were the term and the tide and the age of the time, and they led of lives the joyfullest and a livelihood of the perfectest until they were consumed by the world and died out generation of the generation.[41]

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HISTORY OF AL-HAJJAJ BIN YUSUF AND THE YOUNG SAYYID.[42]

It is related (but Allah is All-knowing) that there was in times of yore a man named ‘Abdullah al-Karkhí and he was wont to tell the following tale: — One day I was present in the assembly of Al-Hajjáj the son of Yúsuf the Thakafí[43] what time he was Governor of Kúfah, and the folk around him were seated and for awe of him prostrated and these were the Emirs and Wazirs and the Nabobs and the Chamberlains and the Lords of the Land and the Headmen in command and amongst whom he showed like a rending lion. And behold, there came to him a man young in years and ragged of raiment and of case debased and there was none of blossom upon his cheeks and the World had changed his cuticle and Need had altered his complexion. Presently he salam’d and deprecated and was eloquent in his salutation to the Governor who returned his greeting and looking at him asked, “Who art thou, O young man, and what hast thou to say and what is thine excuse for pushing into the assembly of the Kings even as if, O youth, thou hadst been an invited guest?[44] So say me, who art thou and whose son art thou?” “I am the son of my mother and my father,” answered he, and Al-Hajjaj continued, “In what fashion hast thou come hither?”— “In my clothes.” “Whence hast thou come?”— “From behind me.” “Whither art thou intending?”— “Before me.” “On what hast thou come?”— “On the ground.” “Whence art thou, O young man?”— “I am from the city Misr.” “Art thou from Cairo?”[45] - -”Why asketh thou me, oh Hajjaj?” Whereupon the Lieutenant of Kufah replied, “Verily her ground is gold and her Nile is rare to behold and her women are a toy for the conqueror to enjoy, and her men are nor burghers nor Badawis.” Quoth the youth, “I am not of them,” and quoth Al-Hajjaj, “Then whence art thou, O young man?”— “I am from the city of Syria.” “Then art thou from the stubbornest of places and the feeblest of races.”[46] “Wherefore, O Hajjaj?”— “For that it is a mixed breed I ween, nor Jew nor Nazarene.” “I am not of them.” “Then whence art thou, O young man?”— “I am of Khorásán of ‘Ajamí-land.” “Thou art therefore from a place the fulsomest and of faith the infirmest.”—

"Wherefore, O Hajjaj?" "Because flocks and herds are their chums and they are Ajams of the Ajams from whom liberal deed never comes, and their morals and manners none to praise presumes and their speech is gross and weighty, and stingy are their rich and wealthy." "I am not of them." "Then whence art thou, O young man?" "I am from Mosul." "Then art thou from the foulest and filthiest of a Catamite race, whose youth is a scapegrace and whose old age hath the wits of an ass." "I am not of them." "Then whence art thou, O young man?" "I am from the land of Al-Yaman." "Then art thou from a clime other than delectable." "And why so, O Hajjaj?" "For that their noblest make womanly use of Murd[47] or beardless boys and the meanest of them tan hides and the lowest amongst them train baboons to dance, and others are weavers of Burd or woollen plaids."[48] "I am not of them." "Then whence art thou, O young man?" "I am from Meccah." "Then art thou from a mine of captious carping and ignorance and lack of wits and of sleep over-abundant, whereto Allah commissioned a noble Prophet, and him they belied and they rejected: so he went forth unto a folk which loved him and honoured him and made him a conqueror despite the nose of the Meccan churls." "I am not of them." "Then whence art thou, O young man? for verily thou hast been abundant of prate and my heart longeth to cut off thy pate."[49] Hereupon quoth the youth, "An I knew thou couldst slay me I had not worshipped any god save thyself," and quoth Al-Hajjaj, "Woe to thee and who shall stay me from slaying thee?" "To thyself be the woe with measure enow," cried the youth; "He shall hinder thee from killing me who administereth between a man and his heart,[50] and who falseth not his promise." "'Tis He," rejoined Al-Hajjaj, "who directeth me to thy death;" but the Youth retorted, "Allah forfend that He appoint thee to my slaughter; nay rather art thou commissioned by thy Devil, and I take refuge with the Lord from Satan the stoned." "Whence then art thou, O young man?" "I am from Yathrib."[51] "And what be Yathrib?" "It is Tayyibah." "And what be Tayyibah?" "Al-Madinah, the Luminate, the mine of inspiration and explanation and prohibition and licitation,[52] and I am the seed of the Banú Ghálib[53] and the purest scion of the Imam 'Ali bin Abí Talíb (Allah honour his countenance and accept of him!), and all degree and descent[54] must fail save my descent and degree which shall never be cut off until the Day of Doom." Hereupon Al-Hajjaj raged with exceeding rage and ordered the Youth to execution; whereat rose up against him the Lords of the realm and the headmen of the reign and sued him by way of intercession and stretched out to him their necks, saying, "Here are our heads before his head and our lives before his life. By Allah, ho thou the Emir, there is naught but that thou accept our impetration in the matter of this Youth, for he is on no wise deserving of death." Quoth the Governor, "Weary not yourselves for needs must I slay him; and even were an Angel from Heaven to cry out 'Kill him not,' I would never hearken to his cry." Quoth the youth, "Thou shalt be baffled[55] O Hajjaj! Who art thou that an Angel from Heaven should cry out to thee 'Kill him not,' for thou art of the vilest and meanest of mankind nor hast thou power to find a path to my death." Cried Al-Hajjaj, "By Allah, I will not slay thee except upon a plea I will plead against thee, and convict thee by thy very words." "What is that, O Hajjaj?" asked the Youth, and answered Hajjaj, "I will now question thee, and out of thine own mouth will I convict thee and strike off thy head.[56] Now say me, O young man: - Whereby doth the slave draw near to Allah Almighty?" "By five things, prayer (1), and fasting (2), and alms (3), and pilgrimage (4), and Holy War upon the path of Almighty Allah (5)." "But I draw near to the Lord with the blood of the men who declare that Hasan and Husayn were the sons and successors of the Apostle of Allah.[57] Furthermore, O young man, how can they be born of the Apostle of Almighty Allah when he sayeth, 'Never was Mohammed the father of any man amongst you, but he was the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets.'"[58] "Hear thou, O Hajjaj, my answer with another Koranic verse,[59] 'What the Apostle hath given you, take: and what he hath refused you, refuse.' Now Allah Almighty hath forbidden the taking of life, whose destruction is therefore unlawful." "Thou has spoken sooth, O young man, but inform me of what is incumbent on thee every day and every night?" "The five canonical prayers." "And for every year?" "The fast of the month of Ramazán." "And for the whole of thy life?" "One pilgrimage to the Holy House of Allah." "Sooth thou hast said, O young man; now do inform me" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Five Hundred and Twelfth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Al-Hajjaj said, “Now do thou inform me who is the most excellent of the Arabs and the noblest and of blood the purest?”— “The Khoraysh.” “And wherefore so?” “For that the Prophets from them proceeded.” “And what tribe is the knightliest of the Arabs and the bravest and the firmest in fight?”— “The Banu Háshim.”[60] “And wherefore so?” “For that my grandsire the Imám Alí ibn Abí Tálib is of them.” “And who is the most generous of the Arabs and most steadfast in the guest-rite?”— “The Banu Tayy.” “And wherefore so?” “For that Hátim of Tayy[61] was one thereof.” “And who is the vilest of the Arabs and the meanest and the most miserly, in whom weal is smallest and ill is greatest?” “The Banu Thakíf.”[62] “And wherefore so?” “Because thou, O Hajjaj, art of them.” Thereupon the Lieutenant of Kufah raged with exceeding rage and ordered the slaughter of the youth; but the Grandees of the State rose up and prayed him for mercy, when he accepted their intercession and pardoned the offender. After which he said to him, “O young man, concerning the kid[63] that is in the firmament, tell me be it male or female?” for he was minded on this wise to cut short his words. The young Sayyid replied, “O Hajjaj, draw me aside its tail so I may inform thee thereanent.”[64] “O young man, say me on what pasture best grow the horns of the camel?” “From leaves of stone.” “O lack-wit! do stones bear leaves?” “O swollen of lips and little of wits and wisdom, say me do camels have horns?” “Haply thou art a lover fond, O youth?” “Yes! in love drowned.” “And whom lovest thou?”— “I love my lord, of whom I hope that he will turn my annoy into joy, and who can save me this day from thee, O Hajjaj." "And dost thou know the Lord?" "Yes, I do." "And whereby hast thou known Him?" "By the book of Him which descended upon His Prophet-Apostle." "And knowest thou the Koran by heart?" "Doth the Koran fly from me that I should learn it by rote?" "Hast thou confirmed knowledge thereof?" "Verily Allah sent down a book confirmed."[65] "Hast thou perused and mastered that which is therein?" "I have." "Then, O young man, if thou have read and learned what it containeth, tell me which verset is the sublimest (1) and which verset is the most imperious (2) and which verset is hopefullest (3) and which verset is fearfullest (4) and which verset is believed by the Jew and the Nazarene (5) and in which verset Allah speaketh purely of Himself (6) and in which verset be the Angels mentioned (7) and which verset alludeth to the Prophets (8) and in which verset be mentioned the People of Paradise (9) and which verset speaketh of the Folk of the Fire (10) and which verset containeth tenfold signs (11) and which verset (12) speaketh of Iblís (whom Allah accurse!)." Then quoth the youth, "Listen to my answering, O Hajjaj, with the aid of the Beneficent King. Now the sublimest verset in the Book of Allah Almighty is the Throne verse;[66] and the most imperious is the word of Almighty Allah, 'Verily Allah ordereth justice and well-doing and bestowal of gifts upon kith and kin';[67] and the justest is the word of the Almighty, 'Whoso shall have wrought a mithkál (nay an atom) of good works shall see it again, and whoso shall have wrought a mithkál (nay an atom) of ill shall again see it';[68] and the fullest of fear is that spoken by the Almighty, 'Doth not every man of them desire that he enter into the Paradise hight Al-Na'im?'[69] and the fullest of hope is the word of the Almighty, 'Say Me, O My worshippers who have sinned against your own souls, do not despair of Allah's ruth';[70] and the verset which containeth ten signs is the word of the Lord which saith[71] 'Verily in the Creation of the Heavens and the Earth and in the shifts of Night and Day and in the ships which pass through the sea with what is useful to mankind; and in the rain which Allah sendeth down from Heaven, thereby giving to the earth life after death, and by scattering thereover all the moving creatures, and in the change of the winds, and in the clouds which are made to do service between the Heavens and the Earth are signs for those who understand'; and the verset wherein believe both Jews and Nazarenes is the word of Almighty Allah,[72] 'The Jews say the Nazarenes are on naught, and the Christians say the Jews are on naught, and both speak the sooth for they are on naught.' And the verset wherein Allah Almighty speaketh purely of Himself is that word of Almighty Allah,[73] 'And I created not Jinn-kind and mankind save to the end that they adore Me'; and the verset which was spoken of the Angels is the word of Almighty Allah which saith,[74] 'Laud to Thee! we have no knowledge save what Thou hast given us to know, and verily Thou art the Knowing, the Wise.' And the verset which speaketh of the Prophets is the word of Almighty Allah that saith[75] 'And We have already sent Apostles before thee: of some We have told thee, and of others We have told thee naught: yet no Apostle had the power to come with a sign unless by the leave of Allah. But when Allah's behest cometh, everything shall be decided with truth; and then perish they who entreated it as a vain thing'; and the verset which speaketh of the Folk of the Fire is the word of Almighty Allah which saith[76] 'O our Lord! Bring us forth from her (the Fire), and, if we return (to our sins), we shall indeed be of the evildoers'; and the verset that speaketh of the People of Paradise is the word of Almighty Allah,[77] 'And they shall say: Laud to the Lord who abated to us grief, and verily our Lord is Gracious, Grateful'; and the verset which speaketh of Iblis (whom Allah Almighty accurse!), is the word of Almighty Allah,[78] 'He said: (I swear) therefore by thy glory, that all of them will I surely lead astray.'" Hereupon Al-Hajjaj exclaimed, "Laud to the Lord and thanksgiving Who giveth wisdom unto whoso He please! Never indeed saw I a youth like this youth upon whom the Almighty hath bestowed wits and wisdom and knowledge for all the tenderness of his age. But say me, who art thou, O young man?" Quoth the youth, "I am of the folk of these things,[79] O Hajjaj." Resumed the Lieutenant, "Inform me concerning the son of Adam what injureth him and what profiteth him?" And the youth replied, "I will, O Hajjaj; do thou and these present who are longing for permanency (and none is permanent save Allah Almighty!) be early the fast to break nor be over late supper to make; and wear light body-clothes in summer and gar heavy the headgear in winter, and guard the brain with what it conserveth and the belly with what it preserveth and begin every meal with salt for it driveth away seventy and two kinds of malady: and whoso breaketh his fast each day with seven raisins red of hue" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Five Hundred and Fourteenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth continued to Al-Hajjaj: - "And whoso breaketh his fast daily with seven raisins red of hue shall never find in his body aught that irketh him; moreover, whoso each morning eateth on the spittle[80] three ripe dates all the worms in his belly shall be slain and whoso exceedeth in diet of boucan'd meat[81] and fish shall find his strength weakened and his powers of carnal copulation abated; and beware lest thou eat beef[82] by cause that 'tis a disease forsure whereas the soured milk of cows is a remedy secure and clarified butter is a perfect cure: withal is its hide a succor for use and ure. And do thou take to thee, O Hajjaj, the greater Salve."[83] Cried the Lieutenant, "What may be that?" and said the youth in reply, "A bittock of hard bread eaten[84] upon the spittle, for indeed such food consumeth the phlegm and similar humours which be at the mouth of the maw.[85] And let not blood in the hot bath for it enfeebleth man's force, and gaze not upon the metal pots of the Balnea because such sight breedeth dimness of vision. Also have no connection with woman in the Hammam for its consequence is the palsy; nor do thou lie with her when thou art full or when thou art empty or when thou art drunken with wine or when thou art in wrath nor when lying on thy side, for that it occasioneth swelling of the testicle-veins;[86] or when thou art under a fruit-bearing tree. Avoid carnal knowledge of the old woman[87] for that she taketh from thee and giveth not to thee. Moreover let thy signet ring be made of carnelian[88] because it is a guard against poverty; also a look at the Holy Volume every morning increaseth thy daily bread, and to gaze at flowing water whetteth the sight and to look upon the face of children is an act of adoration. And when thou chancest lose thy way, crave aidance of Allah from Satan the Stoned." Hereupon quoth Al-Hajjaj, "Allah hath been copious to thee, O young man, for thou hast drowned me in the depths of thy lore, but now inform me, Where is the seat of thy dignified behaviour?"— "The two eyes." "And where is the seat of thy well-doing?"— "My tongue." And where is the seat of thy intellect?""My brain." "And where is the seat of thy hearing?"— "The sensorium of mine ears." "And where is the seat of thy smelling?"— "The sensorium of my nose." "And where is the seat of thy taste?"— "My palate." "And where is the seat of thy gladness?"— "My heart." "And where is the seat of thy sorrow?"— "My soul." "And where is the seat of thy wrath?"— "My liver." "And where is the seat of thy laughing?"— "My spleen."[89] "And where is the seat of thy bodily strenght?"— "My two shoulders." "And where is that of thy weakness?"— "My two calves." Hereupon Al-Hajjaj exclaimed, "Laud to the Lord and thanksgiving; for indeed, O young man, I see that thou knowest everything. So tell me somewhat concerning husbandry?"— "The best of corn is the thickest of cob and the grossest of grain and the fullest sized of shock."[90] "And what sayest thou concerning palm-trees?"— "The most excellent is that which the greatest of gathering doth own and whose height is low-grown and within whose meat is the smallest stone." "And what dost thou say anent the vine?"— "The most noble is that which is stout of stem and big of bunch." "And what sayest thou concerning the Heavens?"— "This is the furthest extent of man's sight and the dwelling-place of the Sun and Moon and all the Stars that give light, raised on high without columns pight and overshadowing the numbers that stand beneath its height." "And what dost thou say concerning the Earth?"— "It is wide dispread in length and breadth." "And what dost thou say anent the rain?"- -"The most excellent is that which filleth the pits and pools and which overfloweth into the wadys and the rivers." Hereupon quoth Al-Hajjaj, "O young man inform me what women be the best" — And

Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Five Hundred and Sixteenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Al-Hajjaj said, “O young man, inform me what women be the best and the most enjoyable.”[91] — “One in winning ways excelling and in comeliness exceeding and in speech killing: one whose brow glanceth marvellous bright to whoso filleth his eyes with her sight and to whom she bequeatheth sorrow and blight; one whose breasts are small whilst her hips are large and her cheeks are rosy red and her eyes are deeply black and he lips are full-formed; one who if she look upon the heavens even the rocks will be robed in green, and if she look upon the earth her lips[92] unpierced pearls shall rain; one the dews of whose mouth are the sweetest of waters; one who in beauty hath no peer nor is there any loveliness can with hers compare: the coolth of the eyes to great and small; in fine, one whose praises certain of the poets have sung in these harmonious couplets,[93]

‘A fair one to idolaters if she herself should show, * They’d
leave their idols and her face for only Lord would know.
If in the Eastward she appeared unto a monk, for once * He’d
cease from turning to the West and to the East bend low;
And into the briny sea one day she chanced to spit, * Assuredly
the salt sea’s floods straight fresh and sweet would grow.’”

Hereupon quoth Al-Hajjaj, “Thou hast said well and hast spoken fair, O young man; and now what canst thou declare concerning a maiden of ten years old?” Quoth the youth, “She is a joy to behold.”

"And a damsel of twenty years old?"— "A coolth to eyes manifold." "And a woman thirty of age?"— "One who the hearts of enjoyers can engage." "And in her fortieth year?"— "Fat, fresh and fair doth she appear." "And of the half century?"— "The mother of men and maids in plenty." "And a crone of three score?"— "Men ask of her never more." "And when three score and ten?"— "An old trot and remnant of men." "And one who reacheth four score?"— "Unfit for the world and for the faith forlore." "And one of ninety?"— "Ask not of whoso in Jahím be."[94] "And a woman who to an hundredth hath owned?"— "I take refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned." Then Al-Hajjaj laughed aloud and said, "O young man, I desire of thee even as thou describedst womankind in prose so thou show me their conditions in verse;" and the Sayyid, having answered, "Hearkening and obedience, O Hajjaj," fell to improvising these couplets,[95]

"When a maid owns to ten her new breasts arise * And like diver's
pearl with fair neck she hies:
The damsel of twenty defies compare * 'Tis she whose disport we
desire and prize:
She of thirty hath healing on cheeks of her; * She's a pleasure,
a plant whose sap never dries:
If on her in the forties thou happily hap * She's best of her
sex, hail to him with her lies!
She of fifty (pray Allah be copious to her!) * With wit, craft
and wisdom her children supplies.
The dame of sixty hath lost some force * Whose remnants are easy
to ravenous eyes:
At three score ten few shall seek her house * Age-threadbare made
till afresh she rise:
The fourscore dame hath a bunchy back * From mischievous eld whom
perforce Love flies:
And the crone of ninety hath palsied head * And lies wakeful o'
nights and in watchful guise;
And with ten years added would Heaven she bide * Shrouded in sea
with a shark for guide!"

Hereupon Al-Hajjaj laughed aloud and all who were with him in assembly; and presently he resumed, “O youth, tell me concerning the first man who spake in verse[96] and that was our common sire, Adam (The Peace be upon him!), what time Kábíl[97] slew Hábíl his brother when our forefather improvised these lines,

’Changed I see my country and all thereon; * Earth is now a
blackavice, ugly grown:
The hue and flavour of food is fled * And cheer is fainting from
fair face flown.
An thou, O Abel, be slain this day * Thy death I bemourn with
heart torn and lone.
Weep these eyes and ‘sooth they have right to weep * Their tears
are as rills flowing hills adown.
Kábil slew Hábil — did his brother dead; * Oh my woe for that
lovely face, ochone!’”[98]

Hereat Al-Hajjaj asked, “O young man, what drove our ancestor to poetry?” whereto answered the youth — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Five Hundred and Eighteenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth replied, “He was driven to poetry by Iblis (whom Allah accurse!) when he spake in this verse,

‘Thou bewailest the land and all thereon * And scant was the
breadth of Eden didst own,

Where thou was girded by every good * O' life and in rest ever
wont to wone:
But ne'er ceased my wiles and my guile until * The wind o'erthrew
thee by folly blown.'"[99]

Whereupon quoth Al-Hajjaj, "O young man, inform me concerning the first couplet of verse spoken by the Arab in praise of munificence;" and quoth the youth, "O Hajjaj, the first Arabic distich known to me was spoken by Hátim of Tayy, and 'twas as follows,

'And the guest I greet ere from me he go * Before wife and weans in my weal and woe.'"

Then cried Al-Hajjaj, "Thou hast said well and hast spoken fair, O young man; and thy due is incumbent upon us for that thou hast drowned us in the deeps of thy wisdom." Presently the Lieutenant of Kufah turning towards one of his eunuchs said, "Bring me at this very moment a purse containing ten thousand dirhams[100] upon a charger of red gold and a suit of the rarest of my raiment and a blood mare the noblest steed of my steeds with a saddle of gold and a haubergeon;[101] and a lance of full length and a handmaid the handsomest of my slave-girls." The attendant disappeared for a while, and presently brought all this between the hands of Al-Hajjaj, who said, "O young man, this damsel is the fairest of my chattels, and this be the purse on a charger of gold, and this mare is the purest in blood of my steeds together with her housings, so do thou take whatever thou desirest thereof, either the mare with all upon her or the purse of gold or the concubine," presently saying to himself, "If the young man prefer the purse, 'twill prove he loveth the world and I will slay him, also if he choose the girl, he lusteth after womankind, and I will do him die: but if he take the mare and her furniture, he will show himself the brave of braves, and he meriteth not destruction at my hands." Then the youth came forward and took the mare and her appointments. Now the damsel was standing by the young Sayyid, and she winked at him with her eye as one saying, "Do thou choose me and leave all the rest;" whereupon he began to improvise the following couplets,

"The jingling bridle at Bayard's neck * Is dearer to me than what

sign thou deign:
I fear when I fall into straits and fare * Abroad, no comrade in
thee to gain:
I fear when lain on my couch and long * My sickness, thou prove
thee nor fond nor fain:
I fear me that time groweth scant my good * And my hand be strait
thou shalt work me bane:
A helpmate I want shall do what do I * And bear patient the
pasture of barren plain."[102]

Presently the handmaid answered his verse with the following couplets,

"Forfend me, Allah, from all thou say'st * Though my left with my
right thou shalt hew in twain.
A husband's honour my works shall keep * And I'll wone content
with his smallest gain:
Didst know me well and my nature weet * Thou hadst found me
mate
of the meekest strain.
Nor all of women are like to sight * Nor all of men are of
similar grain.
The charge of a mate to the good belongs; * Let this oath by
Allah belief obtain."

Hearing these words Al-Hajjaj exclaimed, "Woe to thee, O damsel, dost thou answer him in his verse? and do thou O young man, take the whole, and may Allah give thee no blessing therein."[103] Answered by the young Sayyid, "Here with them, O Hajjaj, inasmuch as thou hast given them to me, I will not oppose the order of Allah through thee, but another time there is no union between us twain, me and thee, as there hath been this day." Now the city of Al-Hajjaj had two gates — the door of Destruction and the door of Salvation; and when the youth asked him, "O Hajjaj, shall I go forth from this or from that?" the Lieutenant of Kufah cried, "Issue by this outlet," and showed him the Gate of Safety. Then the youth took all the presents and fared forth by the passage which had been shown to him, and went his ways and was seen no more. Hereupon the Grandees of the kingdom said to Al-Hajjaj, “O our lord, how hast thou given to him these gifts and he hath on nowise thanked thee, nor wished thee well[104] for thy favours, and yet hast thou pointed out to him the Gate of Salvation?” Hereupon he replied, “Verily, the youth asked direction of me, and it becometh the director to be trustworthy and no traitor (Allah’s curse be upon him who betrayeth!), and this youth meriteth naught save mercy by reason of his learning.”[105]

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NIGHT ADVENTURE OF HARUN AL-RASHID AND THE YOUTH MANJAB.[106]

It is told in various relations of the folk (but Allah is All-knowing of His secret purpose and All-powerful and All-beneficent and All-merciful in whatso of bygone years transpired and amid peoples of old took place) that the Caliph Hárún al-Rashíd being straitened of breast one day summoned his Chief of the Eunuchs and said to him, “O Masrur!” Quoth he, “Adsum, O my lord;” and quoth the other, “This day my breast is straitened and I would have thee bring me somewhat to hearten my heart and consume my care.” Replied Masrur, “O my lord, do thou go forth to thy garden and look upon the trees and the blooms and the rills and listen to the warblings of the fowls.” Harun replied, “O Masrur, thou hast mentioned a matter which palleth on my palate[107] nor may my breast be broadened by aught thou hast commended.” Rejoined the Eunuch, “Then do thou enter thy palace and having gathered thy handmaids before thee, let each and every say her say whilst all are robed in the choicest of raiment and ornaments; so shalt thou look upon them and thy spirits shall be cheered.” The Caliph retorted, “O Masrur, we want other than this;” whereupon quoth the slave, “O Prince of True Believers, send after the Wazirs and thy brotherhood of learned men and let them improvise for thee poetry and set before thee stories whereby shall thy care be solaced.” Quoth he, “O Masrur, naught of this shall profit me.” Hereat cried the Eunuch, “Then, O my lord, I see naught for thee save to take thy sabre and smite the neck of thy slave: haply and peradventure this may comfort thee and do away with thy disgust.”[108] When the King Harun al-Rashid heard these words, he laughed aloud and said to him, “O Masrur, go forth to the gate where haply thou shalt find some one of my cup-companions.” Accordingly he went to the porte in haste and there came upon one of the courtiers which was Ali ibn Mansúr Al-Dimishkí and brought him in. The Commander of the Faithful seeing him bade him be seated and said, “O Ibn Mansur, I would have thee tell me a tale somewhat rare and strange; so perchance my breast may be broadened and my doleful dumps from me depart.” Said he, “O Prince of True Believers, dost thou desire that I relate to thee of the things which are past and gone or I recount a matter I espied with my own eyes?” Al-Rashid replied, “An thou have sighted somewhat worthy seeing relate it to us for hearing is not like beholding.” He rejoined, “O Emir al-Muuminín, whilst I tell thee this tale needs must thou lend me ear and mind;” and the Caliph[109] retorted, “Out with thy story, for here am I hearkening to thee with ears and eyes wide awake, so that my soul may understand the whole of this say.” Hereupon Ibn Mansur related to him “The Loves of the Lovers of Bassorah.”[110] Now when Al-Rashid heard the tale of Ibn Mansur there fell from him somewhat of his cark and care but he was not wholly comforted. He spent the night in this case and when it was morning he summoned the Wazir Ja’afar ibn Yahyá the Barmaki, and cried to him, “O Ja’afar!” He replied, “Here am I! Allah lengthen thy life, and make permanent thy prosperity.” The Caliph resumed, “Verily my breast is straitened and it hath passed through my thought that we fare forth, I and thou (and Eunuch Masrur shall make a third), and we will promenade the main streets of Baghdad and solace ourselves with seeing its several places and peradventure I may espy somewhat to hearten my heart and clear off my care and relieve me of what is with me of straitness of breast.” Ja’afar made answer, “O Commander of the Faithful, know that thou art Caliph and Regent and Cousin to the Apostle of Allah and haply some of the sons of the city may speak words that suit thee not and from that matter may result other matter with discomfort to thy heart and annoyance to thy mind, the offender unknowing the while that thou art walking the streets by night. Then thou wilt command his head to be cut off and what was meant for pleasure may end in displeasure and wrath and wrong-doing.” Al-Rashid replied, “I swear by the rights of my forbears and ancestors even if aught mishap to us from the meanest of folk as is wont to happen or he speak words which should not be spoken, that I will neither regard them nor reply thereto, neither will I punish the aggressor, nor shall aught linger in my heart against the addresser; but need must I pass through the Bazar this very night.” Hereupon quoth Ja’afar to the Caliph, “O Viceregent of Allah upon earth, do thou be steadfast of purpose and rely upon Allah!”[111] Then they arose and arousing Masrur doffed what was upon them of outer dress and bag-trousers and habited themselves each one of them in garments differing from those of the city folks. Presently they sallied forth by the private postern and walked from place to place till they came to one of the highways of the capital and after threading its length they arrived at a narrow street whose like was never seen about all the horizons.[112] This they found swept and sprinkled with the sweet northern breeze playing through it and at the head thereof rose a mansion towering from the dust and hanging from the necks of the clouds. Its whole length was of sixty cubits whereas its breadth was of twenty ells; its gate was of ebony inlaid with ivory and plated with plates of yellow brass while athwart the doorway hung a curtain of sendal and over it was a chandelier of gold fed with oil of ‘Irákí violets which brightened all that quarter with its light. The King Harun al-Rashid and the Wazir and the Eunuch stood marvelling at what they saw of these signs and at what they smelt of the scents breathing from the clarity[113] of this palace as though they were the waftings of the perfumed gardens of Paradise and they cast curious glances at the abode so lofty and of base so goodly and of corners so sturdy, whose like was never builded in those days. Presently they noted that its entrance was poikilate with carvings manifold and arabesques of glittering gold and over it was a line writ in letters of lapis lazuli. So Al-Rashid took seat under the candelabrum with Ja’afar standing on his right and Masrur afoot to his left and he exclaimed, “O Wazir, this mansion is naught save in the utmost perfection of beauty and degree; and verily its lord must have expended upon it wealth galore and of gold a store; and, as its exterior is magnificent exceedingly, so would to Heaven I knew what be its interior.” Then the Caliph cast a glance at the upper lintel of the door whereupon he saw inscribed in letters of golden water which glittered in the rays of the chandelier,

“WHOSO SPEAKETH OF WHAT CONCERNETH HIM NOT
SHALL HEAR WHAT PLEASETH HIM NOT.”

Hereupon quoth Al-Rashid, “O Ja’afar, the house-master never wrote yonder lines save for a reason and I desire to discover what may be his object, so let us forgather with him and ask him the cause of this legend being inscribed in this place.” Quoth Ja’afar, “O Prince of True Believers, yonder lines were never written save in fear of the curtain of concealment being withdrawn.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Thirty-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Ja'afar the Barmecide said to the King, "Verily the master of this house never wrote yonder lines save in fear lest the curtain of concealment be withdrawn." Hearing this the Caliph held his peace for a while and fell to pondering this matter then said he, "O Ja'afar, knock at the door and ask for us a gugglet of water;" and when the Wazir did his bidding one of the slaves called out from within the entrance, "Who is it rappeth at our gate?" Hereupon said Masrur to him, "O son of my uncle, open to us the door and give us a gugglet of water for that our lord thirsteth." The chattel went in to his master, the young man, Manjáb hight, who owned the mansion, and said, "O my lord, verily there be at our door three persons who have rapped for us and who ask for a drink of water." The master asked, "What manner of men may they be?" and the slave answered, "One of them sitteth under the chandelier and another of them standeth by his side and the third is a black slave between their hands; and all three show signs of staidness and dignity than which naught can be more." "Go forth to them," exclaimed the master, "and say to them, 'My lord inviteth you to become of his guests.'" So the servile went out and delivered the message, whereat they entered and found five lines of inscription in different parts of the hall with a candelabrum overhanging each and every and the whole five contained the sentence we have before mentioned; furthermore all the lights were hung up over the legend that the writing might be made manifest unto whoso would read it. Accordingly Harun al-Rashid entered and found a mansion of kingly degree[114] and of marvellous ordinance in the utmost that could be of beauty and ornament and five black slaves and as many Eunuchs were standing in the saloon to offer their services. Seeing this the Caliph marvelled with extreme marvel at the house and the house-master who greeted them in friendly guise; after which he to whom the palace belonged sat down upon a divan and bade Al-Rashid sit over against him and signed to Ja'afar and Masrur to take their places in due degree,[115] whilst the negroes and the eunuchs stood expecting their commands for suit and service. Presently was brought to them a huge waxen taper which lighted up the whole of the hall and the young house-master accosted the King and said to him, "Well come and welcome and fair welcome to our guests who to us are the most esteemed of folk and may Allah honour their places!" Hereupon he began to repeat the following couplets,[116]

"If the house knew who visits it, it would indeed rejoice * And
  stoop to kiss the happy place whereon her feet have stood;
And in the voice with which the case, though mute, yet speaks, *
  Exclaim, 'Well come and many a welcome to the generous, and
  the good.'"

Presently Manjab the master of the house bade bring for his guests meats and viands meet for the great, of all kinds and of every colour, so they obeyed his orders, and when they had eaten their sufficiency they were served with confections perfumed with rose-water wondrous fine. Hereupon quoth the youth to Al-Rashid and those with him, "Almighty Allah make it pleasant to you[117] and blame us not and accept our excuses for what Allah hath made easy to us at such time of night, and there is no doubt but that this be a fortunate day when ye made act of presence before us." They thanked him and Al-Rashid's breast was broadened and his heart was heartened and there fell from him all that whilom irked him. Then the youth shifted them from that place to another room which was the women's apartment; and here he seated them upon the highest Divan and bade serve to them a platter containing fruits of all descriptions and ordered his servants to bring roast meats and fried meats and when this was done they set before them the service of wine. Anon appeared four troops of singers with their instruments of music and each was composed of five handmaids, so the whole numbered a score and these when they appeared before the master kissed ground between his hands and sat down each one in her own degree. Then amongst them the cups went about and all sorrow was put to rout and the birds of joyance flapped their wings. This continued for an hour of time whilst the guests sat listening to the performers on the lute and other instruments and after there came forward five damsels other than the first twenty and formed a second and separate set and they showed their art of singing in wondrous mode even as was done by the first troop. Presently on like guise came set after set till the whole twenty had performed and as Al-Rashid heard their strains he shook with pleasure — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when Al-Rashid heard their strains, he shook with pleasure and wonder and joyance and enjoyment until he rent his robes[118] and the house-master beholding this said to him, "O our lord, be the heart of thine enemies thus rended asunder!" Now there was amongst the handmaids a songstress who began to sing and to improvise these couplets,

"My world goes strait when thou art a-gone * And when fled from
  my ken in my heart dost wone[119]
And I love my love with a love as fond * As Jacob him who in pit
  was thrown."

Hereupon Ja'afar was delighted with exceeding delight and rent his raiment even as the Caliph had done, but when the house-master saw this from him he ordered for the twain a suit of clothes that befitted them and bade strip them of the rended garments and clothed them in the new. Presently the young man said, "O my lords, your time is gleesome and Allah make it to you gladsome and broaden your hearts and from you fend everything loathsome and lasting to you be honour and all that is blithesome." Hereupon he ordered another damsel to chaunt that was with her and when Masrur the Eunuch heard it he tare his garment as had been done by Al-Rashid and the Wazir, when the house-master bade bring for him a suit that besitted him and they donned it after doffing the torn clothes. Then the youth ordered a handmaid of the fourth set who sang a tune and spake these couplets,

"Thou hast a lover of looks lune-bright * And lighter than
crescent[120] he shows to sight;
For the sheen of the crescent shall ever wane * But he shall grow
to a perfect light."[121]

Hearing this Manjab the master of the house shrieked out a mighty loud shriek and tare his upper dress and fell aswoon to the ground, and as Al-Rashid looked upon him (and he bestrown in his fainting fit) he beheld upon his sides the stripes of scourging with rods and palm-sticks. At this sight he was surprised and said, "O Ja'afar, verily I marvel at this youth and his generosity and munificence and fine manners, especially when I look upon that which hath befallen him of beating and bastinadoing, and in good sooth this is a wondrous matter." Quoth the other, "O our lord, haply someone hath harmed him in much money and his enemy took flight and the owner of the property administered to him this beating[122] or peradventure someone lied concerning him, and he fell into the hands of the rulers and the Sultan bade bastinado him, or again perchance his tongue tripped and his fate was fulfilled to him." Quoth Al-Rashid, "O Ja'afar, this youth be not in the conditions thou hast mentioned to me," and, replied the other, "Sooth thou hast said, O our lord; by cause that indeed this young man, when we asked him for a gugglet of water invited us into his place and honoured us with all this honour and heartened our hearts and this was of the stress of his generosity and his abundant goodness.” Al-Rashid continued to converse with his Wazir while the young man did not recover from his swoon for a while of time, when another maiden of the maidens spoke out reciting these couplets,

“He adorns the branch of his tribal-tree, * Loves the fawn his
song as his sight she see;
And beauty shines in his every limb * While in every heart he
must stablished be.”

Hereat the young man came to himself and shrieked a mighty loud shriek more violent than the first and put forth his hand to his garment and rent it in rags and fell swooning a second time, when his sides were bared more fully than before until the whole of his back appeared and Al-Rashid was straitened thereby as to his breast and his patience made protest, and he cried, “O Ja’afar, there is no help but that I ask concerning the wheals of this bastinadoing.” And as they talked over the matter of the youth behold, he came to his senses and his slaves brought him a fresh suit and caused him don it, whereupon Al-Rashid came forward and said, “O young man, thou hast honoured us and favoured us and entreated us with such kindness as other than thyself could never do nor can any requite us with the like; withal there remaineth a somewhat in my heart” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will.” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Al-Rashid said to the youth, the master of the house, “Withal there remaineth a somewhat in my heart which if I manifest not to thee will abide there to my displeasure in my thought; and, albeit there is nothing to equal that thou hast done with us, still I desire of thee and of the excellence of thy kindness a fulfilling of thy favour.” Said the youth, “What dost thou wish of me, ho thou the lord?” and said the Caliph, “I would have thee inform me concerning the scars upon thy sides and let me know for what cause they be there.” Now when the young man heard these words he bowed his brow groundwards and wept awhile, then he wiped his face and raised his head and asked, “What hath urged you to this? But the fault is from me and I merit a penalty even greater. O sons of impurity, say me have you not read the lines written over the doors of my house that here you are speaking of what concerneth you not and so right soon shall ye hear what pleaseth you not? However, had ye never entered my house you would not have known of my case and my shame[123] and withal sooth spoke he who said amongst his many sayings,

‘We sowed kindness-seed but they wrought us wrong * Which is caitiff-work and a traitor-deed.’”

Resumed the young man, “O vilest of folk, you asked of me a gugglet of water, and I brought you into my house and honoured and welcomed you and you ate of my victual and my salt, after which I led you into my Harem with the fancy that ye were honest men and behold you are no men. Woe to you, what may ye be?” On this wise he continued to chide and revile them unknowing that the Caliph Harun al-Rashid stood before him, and presently the Prince of True Believers made reply, “We be folk of Bassorah.” “Truth you have spoken,” cried the other, “nothing cometh from Bassorah save the meanest of men and the weakest of wits but now rise up, O ye dung[124] of mankind, O ye foulest of folk, and go forth from us and may Allah curse him who speaketh of whatso concerneth him not.” All this and Ja’afar and Masrur rose to their feet for shame of the youth and of what they had heard from him of ill language and they went from beside him. But Al-Rashid’s temper was ruffled and his jugulars swelled and the Hashimi vein stood out between his eyes and he cried, “Woe to thee, O Ja’afar! go this moment to Such-an-one the Wali and bid him muster his men of whom each one must have in hand an implement of iron, and let him repair to the mansion of this youth and raze it till it return to be level with the ground, nor let the morning dawn and show a trace thereof upon the face of earth.” Quoth Ja’afar to Al-Rashid, “O Prince of True Believers, from the very first we feared for all this, and did we not make condition on the subject? However, O our lord, the good man is not ruined by the good man and this work is not righteous; nay, ’tis wholly unright, and one of the sages hath said, ‘The mild in mind is not known save in the hour of wrath.’ But, O Prince of faithful men and O Caliph of the Lord who the worlds dost vice-reign, thou swarest an oath that although the vilest of men should ill-speak thee yet wouldest thou not requite him with evil, nor return him aught of reply nor keep aught of rancour in thy heart for his unmannerly address. Moreover, O our lord, the youth hath no default at all and the offence is from us, for that he forbade and forefended us and wrote up in many a place the warning words, Whoso speaketh of what concerneth him not, shall hear what pleaseth him not. Therefore he unmeriteth the pain of death. Now what we had better do in this case is as follows: — Send thou for the Wali and bid him bring the youth and when he is present between thy hands, encounter him with kindness that his fear may find rest and his affright be arrested after which he shall inform thee of whatso befel him.” Cried Al-Rashid, “This is the right rede and Allah requite thee with weal, O Ja’afar. ’Tis the like of thee should be Wazir of the Councillors and Counseller of the Kings.” Hereupon Harun al-Rashid returned to his palace in company with Masrur the eunuch, and they entered the aforesaid private door whereby they had gone forth, nor was any aware of them. But when Ja’afar reached his abode he took thought in his mind as to how he should act and how he should send the Wali to the young man and bring him into the presence; and presently he retraced his way afoot and going to the Chief of Police acquainted him with the matter of the youth and carefully described his house and said to him, “Needs must thou bring him to us in the front of morning, but do thou be courteous in thy dealing and show him comradeship and startle him not nor cause him aught of fear.” After this Ja’afar dismissed the Wali and returned to his own quarters. And when the morning morrowed the Chief of Police, having chosen him as escort a single Mameluke, made for the house of the youth, and when he had reached it knocked at the door, upon which the owner came out to him and the Wali knew him by the description wherewith Ja'afar had described him, so he bade him accompany him. Hereat the heart of the young man fluttered. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive." Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth's heart fluttered when the Chief of Police summoned him to go in his company and he was smitten by sore fear; but the Wali said to him, "No harm shall befal thee: obey the summons of the Commander of the Faithful." Now when he heard these words Manjab was terrified with sorer alarm and affright, so by leave of the Wali he entered his house and farewelled his family and familiars after which he fared forth with the Chief of Police saying, "Hearkening and obedience to Allah and to the Prince of True Believers." Then he mounted his beast and the two rode together until they reached the Palace of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid where they craved admission to the presence; and, when leave was granted, the youth went in and standing between the hands of Harun he encouraged his intent and made his tongue eloquent and kissed ground between the royal hands and sat respectfully before him. Then he began with a tongue that was free of fear and showed naught of apprehension and spake the following lines,

"Hail to this place for such be honoured stead * Of God's
viceregent known to all and some:

Palace of Al-Rashid, our lord, which aye * Excelleth Heaven
higher still become:
I haste that may I write what should be writ * And eloquent the
writ albe 'tis dumb."

After which he said, "The peace be upon thee, O Commander of the Faithful, and Allah prolong thy life and gladden unto thee what He hath given." Hereat Al-Rashid raised his head, and returning his greeting signed to the Wazir Ja'afar who, as was his wont, stood by his side, and the Minister taking the youth's hand, led him up to Al-Rashid and seated him beside him. "Draw near me," said Harun al-Rashid, and the young man did accordingly until he was close to the King who thus addressed him, "O young man, what is thy name?" The other replied, "I am Manjab hight wherefrom hath been cut off all cause of delight and who for a year hath suffered parlous plight." "O Manjab," quoth the Caliph, "favour for favour and the beginner is the better, and ill for ill and the first is the worst, and whoso seed of good soweth shall reap it, and whoso planteth evil shall harvest it, and know thou, O Manjab, that yesterday we were thy guests, and that in thee was no default, but we transgressed against thee when thou honouredst us with most high honour, and favouredst us with the highmost favours. I desire, however, that thou relate to me the cause of the blows upon thy body and no harm shall befal thee." The youth replied, "O Prince of True Believers, an thou desire to hear my tale order me a cushion to be placed on my right hand, and deign lend unto me three things, to wit, thine ears and thine eyes and thy heart, for verily my adventure is wondrous and were it graven with needle-gravers on the eye-corners it would be a warning to whoso would be warned and a matter of thought to whoso would think. Learn, O Commander of the Faithful, that my father was a jeweller man, a connoisseur in gems, who owned no son save myself; but when I had increased in age and had grown in stature and Allah had given me comeliness and perfection and beauty and brilliancy and plenty and good fortune, and my sire had brought me up with the best of education, Allah vouchsafed to him a daughter. Now as I had reached the age of twenty years my parent departed to the ruth of Allah Almighty, bequeathing to me a thousand thousand dinars and fiefs and tenements and landed estates, so I let perform for him a sufficiency of mortuary-ceremonies after committing him to mother earth, and caused read twenty perlections of the Koran, and bestowed for him in alms a mighty matter. I abode a-mourning for him a month full told, and when the term was ended my heart turned to diversion and disport and eating and drinking, and I made presents and gave away and doled charities of that my property, and I bought other tenements at the highest price. After this I purchased me singing damsels of the greatest value, and whosoever of my friends and companions was pleased with a musician girl I would hand her over to him without price; nay, I would present her in free gift, and if any saw aught of my belongings which pleased him and said to me, ‘This is nice,’ I would bestow it upon him without money-claim. Furthermore I robed all my familiars in honourable robes, and honoured them with the highest honour, lavishing all that was by me, and whatever my hand possessed, ever quoting these lines,

‘Rise, O comrade of cup, and to joy incline; * I’ve no patience,
O brother, from pressing of wine:
See’st not how night with her hosts be fled * Routed, and morn
doth her troops align?
How with Nadd and ambergris, rarest scents, * Rose laughs and
smiles on us Eglantine?
This, my lord, is joy, this is pure delight. * Not standing at
doors which the books confine.’

But when my mother, O Commander of the Faithful, espied these doings she reproached me, yet would I not be reproved. Then she saw that my wealth would be wasted, so she divided it between me and her, to each one half, a moiety for herself and her daughter, and the rest for myself. And presently she left me, carrying away her good and separated herself from me, abiding afar and leaving me to enjoy my frivolity and intoxication. I ceased not eating and drinking and diversion and disport, and enjoying the all-conquering faces of the beautiful,[125] until the days smote me with their shafts, and all my wealth fell away from me and naught remained to me either above me or below me, and I ceased to be master of aught. Then my condition waxed strait, and as nothing was left to me at home I sold the pots and pans until I lacked even a sleeping-mat, and I used to patch my skirt with my sleeve. And naught profited me, neither friend nor familiar nor lover, nor remained there any one of them to feed me with a loaf of bread; so my case became hard and the folk entreated me evilly, nor was there one of my comrades or compeers who would take thought for me; nay more, when I met any of them on the road or at the receptions they would turn away their faces from me. So at last I took to pulling up the slabs[126] of the house floor and selling them by way of a livelihood, and one day as I did on this wise, lo and behold! there opened in the floor a large vault whereinto I descended." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable;" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night, and that was

The Six Hundred and Fortieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth Manjab continued his tale to Al-Rashid in these words. "So I descended into the vault, O Commander of the Faithful, and I found there three boxes each containing five bags and every bag held five thousand gold pieces. I carried forth the whole of them and set them in an apartment of the apartments and returned the flag of the floor to its place. Then I pondered what my brethren and companions had done with me, after which, O Prince of True Believers, I bought handsome clothes and made my person as it was before; and as soon as those men who were with me of yore and upon whom I had spent my substance in gifts and presents beheld me on such wise they flocked around me again. I accepted of them for a device which I purposed carrying out and took patience with them for a whole month whilst they came to visit me every day. But when it was the thirty-first day I summoned the Kazi and his assessors whom I concealed in a private place and bade write a bond and an acceptance for everything they might hear from my familiars and friends. After this I spread a feast and assembled all my associates; and when we had eaten and drunken and made merry, I drew them on to talk and to each and every whom I had gifted with a present I said, ‘Allah upon thee, O Such-an-one, did I not donate to thee so-and-so without taking any return from thee?’ And they replied, ‘Yes, thou gavest it to me for naught.’ I continued, O Prince of True Believers, to address each and all after this fashion whilst the Kazi and witnesses wrote down against them everything they heard from them and documented every word until not one of my friends remained without confession. Then, O Commander of the Faithful, I rose to my feet without delay and ere anyone could leave the assembly I brought out the Kazi and his assessors and showed them the writ in the name of everyone, specifying whatso he had received from the youth Manjab. After this manner I redeemed all they had taken from me and my hand was again in possession thereof, and I waxed sound of frame and my good case returned to me as it had been. Now one day of the days I took thought in my mind, O Prince of True Believers, that I could open the shop of my sire and I would sit in it as my parent was wont to do, selling and buying in sumptuous Hindi cloths and jewelry and precious metals. Accordingly I repaired to the place, which I found fast locked and the spider had pitched her web-tent about it; so I hired a man to wipe it and sweep it clean of all that was therein. And when the Bazar folk and the merchants and the masters of shops saw me they rejoiced in me and came to congratulate me saying, ‘Praise be to Allah who opened not the store save for the owner thereof in succession to his sire.’ Then I took of merchandise a mighty matter and my shop became one whose like was not to be looked upon throughout the market-street, and amongst the goods I laid in were carnelians of Al-Yaman; after which I seated me upon my shop-board that very day and sold and bought and took and gave, and I ceased not to be after such wise for nine days. Now when it was the tenth day I entered the Hammam and came out after donning a dress which was worth one thousand gold pieces, and my beauty was increased and my colour waxed sheeny-bright and my youth looked as though it had been redoubled, and I was not such but that the women were like to throw themselves upon me. However, when I returned from the Baths and sat in my store for an hour or so behold, I heard a shout that came from the depths of the Bazar and heard one saying, ‘Have patience,’[127] when suddenly I looked up and saw a stare-coloured mule whereon was a saddle of gold dubbed with pearls and gems, and upon it an old woman was riding accompanied by three pages. She ceased not going till she stood at my shop-door where she drew rein and her servants halted with her. Then she salam’d to me and said, ‘How long is’t since thou hast opened this store?’ and said I, ‘This day is the full tenth.’ Quoth she, ‘Allah have ruth upon the owner of this shop, for he was indeed a merchant.’ Quoth I, ‘He was my parent,’ and replied she, ‘Thou art Manjab named and as uniter of thy friends enfamed.’ Said I, ‘Yes!’ whereat she smiled and questioned me, ‘And how is thy sister, and what is the condition of thy mother, and what is the state of thy neighbours?’ ‘They are all well,’ said I, when said she, ‘O my son, O Manjab, thou hast grown up and reached man’s estate.’ Rejoined I, ‘Whoso liveth groweth up;’ and she continued, ‘Say me hast thou a necklace of gems which is pleasing to the sight?’ I responded, ‘With me in the shop are many necklaces but I have better at home and I will bring them for thee betimes to-morrow if it be the will of Almighty Allah.’ When she heard these my words she returned by the way she came and her pages walked by her side; and at the end of the day I went to my mother and informed her of the adventure how it was with the old woman and she said, ‘O my son, O Manjab, verily that ancient dame is a confidential nurse and she conferreth benefits upon the folk amongst whom was thy sire before thee: therefore do thou be urgent in bringing about her business nor do thou forgo thine appointment with her.’ The old woman disappeared for a day; but on the next she returned in her wonted state and when she came to my shop she said, ‘O Manjab, arise and mount thy mule in weal and good health!’ So I left my store and mounted my she-mule.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you in the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night, and that was

The Six Hundred and Forty-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth Manjab said to the Prince of True Believers, "So I mounted my she-mule and I went with the old woman until I came to a mansion built of stone and wide of gates; so we dismounted, I and she, and entered the door, I following after her until we came to the great hall. There I found, O Prince of True Believers, carpets of fine silk and embroidered hangings and mattresses of gold-cloth and vases of the same kind all golden and fine brocades and jars of porcelain and shelves of crystal; in fine I saw things which I may not describe to thee, O Commander of the Faithful. And at the side of the mansion within were four bench-seats of yellow brass, plain and without carving, and the old woman seated me upon the highest mattress and she pointed out to me a porch where stood pourtrayed all manner birds and beasts, and hills and channels were limned. Now as I cast my eye over these paintings suddenly a young lady accosted us speaking with a delicate voice demure and words that the sick and sorry would cure and she was behind a hanging and saying, 'Whoso hath let down this curtain let him receive one hundred stripes.' Then she bade withdraw it and they removed it and behold, I felt as though the lightning were gleaming and glittering and it took away my sight until my head was near striking the ground, for there stood before me a young lady of lance-like stature and a face like the morning bright as though she were a chandelier a-hanging amid the cressets. She was dressed in sumptuous raiment and was even as said of her the poet,

'To us she bent whenas Night hung her veil * And nigh went she my sense to turn from right;
And rang her anklets and her necklace chimed * With dainty music to my tearful plight.

Showed me that her face a four-fold charm, * Water and fire and
pitch and lamping light.'

Then, O Commander of the Faithful, she cried out to the slave girls, 'Woe to you, where is the Nurse,' and when she was fetched between her hands she asked her, 'Hast thou brought the jeweller;' and the other answered, 'Yea, verily, O lady of loveliness, and here he is sitting like the full moon when it easteth.' The young lady cried, 'O old woman, is this he or is it his servant?'[128] Whereto she replied, 'No, 'tis he himself, O lady of loveliness.' Quoth the other, 'By the life of my youth,[129] thou deservest naught for this[130] save whatso thou fanciest not and thou hast raised me from before my food[131] while yet I fancied that he merited rising up to him.' Then she considered me and cried, 'Am I then in this fashion become[132] a bundle of dirty clothes all of poverty, and say me now, hast thou not even washed thy face?' But I, O Prince of True Believers, was still as I came forth from the Hammam and my countenance was shining like unto lightning. Hereat I made myself exceeding small and it mortified me to hear how she had found fault with my face and befouled my dress, scorning me till I became between her hands smaller than the very smallest. Then she fixed her sight upon me and she said to me, 'Thou art Manjab hight, thou dogs' trysting-site or gatherer of friends as saith other wight, but by Allah how far be familiars and friends from thy sight, O thou Manjab hight! Now, however, do thou look upon me, O Jeweller man, the while I eat and when my meal shall end there will be talk.' Hereupon, O Commander of the Faithful, they brought her a crystal platter in a golden basin and therein were the thighs of fowls; so she took seat before me and fell to eating without shyness or difficulty as though in her presence I were other than a son of Adam. And I stood looking at her and whenever she raised her wrist to take up a morsel, the dimple[133] became manifest from without, and upon the skin was a tattoo of green colour and about it jewelled ornaments[134] and armlets of red gold and a pink dye appeared upon the whiteness of her hand: so glory be to Him who created her and she was naught but a seduction to whoso espied her and blessed be Allah the best of Creators. May the Almighty have ruth upon the poet who said concerning the beauty of his lover these couplets,

‘Rise and pass me the wine, O thou son of Mansúr; * And for
stopping it hope not my pardon forsure:
Let it come by the hand of a fair white maid * As though she had
fared from the Heav’n of the Húr:
When we see the figure her wrist adorns * ’Tis a musk grain lying
on limestone pure.’

Then, O Prince of True Believers, she fell to conversing with me hending in hand a broidered kerchief wherewith whenever she had eaten a morsel she wiped her lips and when her sleeve fell from off her wrist she tucked it up even as the poet said of such,

‘She hideth her face from the folk, * With a wrist whereon Ottars
abound;
And to eye of watcher it seems * Gold shaft on Moon’s silvern
round.’

Now when she had eaten, O Commander of the Faithful, I gazed at her face and she cried, ‘O ye women, behold how Manjab looketh upon me and I am eating till my nature cry enough;’ presently adding, ‘O Manjab, what calamity hath befallen thee that thou comest not forward and eatest not of this food?’ So I drew anigh and ate with her, but I was dazed of my wits and sore amazed at her ways.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Forty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating that Manjab continued to the Caliph, “Verily I came forward and ate with her, but I was so dazed of my wits and so sore amazed at her beauty and loveliness that as I took up a mouthful to carry it to my mouth behold, I would carry it to my eyes in consequence of what befel me from seeing that was in this young lady. And presently she fell to laughing at me and inclining towards me in her haughtiness and in beauty’s pride, saying at the same time, ‘By Allah, indeed this man is a maniac and a Bahlúl:[135] where is thy mouth and how far from thine eye?’ So said I, ‘By Allah, O lady of loveliness, I am nor a madman nor a Bahlúl, but whilst looking at thy beauty my wits have fled and I am in condition of unknowing how I ate.’ Then she asked me, ‘Do I please thee, O Manjab?’ and I answered her ‘Yes! Walláhi, O my lady, indeed thou dost.’ Quoth she, ‘What should be the penalty of him who owning me and my white beauties[136] shall then forsake me to take other than myself?’ and quoth I, ‘His award should be a thousand stripes upon his right side and as many upon his left ribs, together with the cutting off of his tongue and his two hands and the plucking out of either eye.’ She cried, ‘Wilt thou marry me upon this condition?’ and I replied, ‘O my lady, dost thou mock and laugh at me?’ Said she, ‘No, by Allah, my word is naught save a true word’; and said I, ‘I am satisfied and I accept this compact; however do thou make haste and delay not.’ But when she looked at me and heard mine intent regarding the marriage she shook with joy and pride and she inclined towards me as she sat before me and my senses were like to take flight. Then she rose up and left me for an hour and came back dressed in sumptuous garments and fairer than before, and perfumes reeked from her sides as she walked between four handmaidens like unto the refulgent moon. But I, when I looked upon her in this condition, cried out with a loud outcry and fell fainting to the ground for what befel me from her beauty and perfection: and she had no design therein, O Commander of the Faithful, save her favour for me. When I came to myself she said, ‘O Manjab, what dost thou say of my beauty and comeliness?’ and I replied, ‘By Allah, O lady of loveliness, there is none in this time can be thy peer.’ Then quoth she, ‘An I please thee thou wilt be content with these conditions?’ whereto quoth I, ‘Content! CONTENT!! CONTENT!!!’ Thereupon she bade summon the Kazi and the assessors who came without stay or delay and she said to the Judge ‘Do thou listen to the condition of this marriage and write from his word of mouth a bond on oath and under penalty for breaking it, to the effect that if he betray me and mate with other or by way of right or of unright, I will smite him a thousand stripes on his right side and as many on his left ribs and I will cut off his tongue and his two hands and I will pluck out his either eye.’ Said the Kazi to me, ‘Shall we bear witness against thee with this condition?’ and when I answered ‘Yes,’ he wrote out, O Commander of the Faithful, his testimony together with the penalty, while I hardly believed in all this. Presently, she brought out a tray, whereupon were a thousand miskals of gold and a thousand dirhams of silver which she scattered among the Kazi and witnesses; so they took them and went their ways having duly tied the marriage-knot and indited the penalty thereto attached. Then they served up food and we ate and drank and I lay with her that night in the pleasantest of nighting and the gladsomest of living and I only desired that morning would never appear for the stress of what befel me of joyance and delight; and, verily, I never saw and never heard and never knew any that was the like of her. So I abode with her, O Prince of True Believers, for seven days which passed away as one watch,[137] and on the eighth she said to me, ‘O thou Manjab named and for friend of friends enfamed, do thou take this purse wherein are a thousand dinars and buy with it merchandise of necklaces and gems and fine clothes wherewith to beautify thy shop and other things that befit thee; for ’tis my will that thou become the greatest of men in the Bazar and that none therein shall boast of more good than thyself. Moreover ’tis my wish, O Manjab, that thou fare to thy store at early dawn and return to me about noon-tide, lest my breast be straitened by thine absence.’ Replied I, ‘Hearkening and obedience,’ but, O Commander of the Faithful, it was mine intent and desire never to fare forth from her, or by night or by day, from the stress of what befel me of enjoyment with my bride. Now she was wont every hour to go don a dress other than that which was upon her, and when I saw her in that condition I could not contain my passion, so I would arise and fulfil my need of her and she would do likewise. Also, as soon as morn appeared I would repair to my shop and open it and take seat therein until midday, at which time my mule would be brought me to ride homewards when she would meet me alone at the threshold whereupon opened the door of her apartment. And I would throw my arms round her neck as soon as she appeared to me till she and I entered the Harem where I had no patience from her but was fain to enjoy my desire. After this she would cry to her women and bid them bring us dinner whereof I ate with her, and in due time she would arise and command her slave-girls to clean the Hammam and perfume it with pastiles of lign-aloes and ambergris adding a sufficiency of rose-water. Then we would enter it, I and she, and doff our dresses when I again lost patience until I had my will of her twice or three times.[138] Anon we would wash and wipe ourselves with apron napkins of thick silk and drying towels of palm-fibre, after which she would cry aloud to the women who, coming to us at her call, would bring sherbets and we would drink, I and she, until mid-afternoon. Then I would mount my she-mule and return to my store and as evening fell I would order the slave to padlock the door and I would return to my house. Now I abode in such case for ten months, but it fortuned one day of the days that, as I was sitting upon my shop-board, suddenly I saw a Badawi woman bestriding a she-dromedary and she was marked with a Burka'[139] of brocade and her eyes danced under her face-veil as though they were the wantoning eyes of a gazelle. When I looked upon her, O Commander of the Faithful, I was perplexed as to my affair." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that quoth Manjab to the Caliph, "O

Prince of True Believers, when I beheld the eyes of the Badawi woman under her Burka' which were like those of a gazelle they tempted my passions herto and I forgot my oath and its penalty and the Kazi and witnesses. Then she approached me and said, 'Allah give thee long life, O Chief of the Arabs;' and said I, 'To thee too, O most seemly of semblance!' Cried she, 'O comely of countenance, say me, hast thou a necklace fine enough for the like of me;' whereto I rejoined, 'Yes.' Then I arose and brought out one to her, but she seeing it said, 'Hast thou naught better than this?' So I displayed to her, O Commander of the Faithful, all the necklaces I had by me in the shop but, none of them pleasing her, I said, 'In all the stores there is naught finer than these.' Then, O Prince of True Believers, she brought out to me from off her neck a carcanet and said, 'I want one such;' and, as I looked upon it, I knew that there was nothing like it in my store, and that all I had by me of collars and jewels and other goods were not worth a single grain of that carcanet. So I said to her, 'O Winsome of Eyes, this is a thing whereto none of this time can avail save it be with the Commander of the Faithful or with his Wazir Ja'afar bin Yahyá the Barmaki.' Quoth she, 'Wilt thou buy it of me?' and quoth I, 'I have no power to its price,' when she exclaimed, 'I require no payment for this necklace, and I want from thee nothing save a kiss upon thy cheek.' Then said I, 'O Lady of loveliness, bussing without treading I trow is like a bowyer sans a bow,' and she replied, 'Whoso kisseth surely treadeth.' Then, O Prince of True Believers, she sprang from off her dromedary and seated herself beside me within my store, so I arose with her and went into the inner room, she following me (albeit I expected not this from her), and when we were safely inside she clasped me to her bosom and encountered me with her breasts never withal withdrawing her veil from her face. Hereat I lost all power over my senses and when I felt her strain me to her bosom I also strained her to mine, and fulfilled of her my desire after the fairest fashion. And when this was done she sprang to her feet even as springeth the lion from his lair, and flying to the door of the shop swiftlier than a bird and leaving the necklace with me, she mounted her dromedary and went her ways. I imagined, O Prince of True Believers, that she would never return to me at all; so my heart rejoiced in the necklace which she had left and I was of that fancy and opinion anent the matter and manner of her going, when suddenly my pages brought me the she-mule, and said to me, ‘O our lord, rise up and fare to the house, for that our lady hath required thee at this very hour and she hath caused dinner to be served and sore we fear lest it wax cold.’ Therefore, O Commander of the Faithful, I found it impossible to bathe[140] by reason of the pages which were standing with the mule at the door of my shop; so I mounted and rode home. I entered my house according to my usual habit when my wife met me and said to me ‘O my dearling, my heart hath been occupied with thee this day, for thou has tarried away from me so long a time and contrary to thy custom is delaying on such a day as this.’ Said I, ‘This morning the Bazar was crowded exceedingly and all the merchants were sitting in their shops, nor was it possible for me to rise from my store whilst the market was so warm.’ Quoth she, ‘O my dearling and coolth of mine eyes, I was at this moment sitting and reading in the Sublime Volume when there befel me a doubt concerning a word in the chapter ‘Yá Sín’[141] and I desire that thou certify it to me that I may learn it by heart from thee.’ Quoth I, ‘O lady of loveliness, I am unable to touch The Book much less may I read the Koran;’ and quoth she, ‘What is the cause of that?’ Replied I, ‘I was sleeping at the side of my shop when I had a polluting dream;’ and she rejoined, ‘An this thy speech be sooth-fast thy bag-trowsers must be fouled, so draw them off that I may see to their washing.’ I retorted, ‘Indeed my trowsers are not bewrayed because I doffed them before lying down to sleep.’ Now when she heard these my words, O Commander of the Faithful, she said to a slave of my slaves whose name was Rayhán, ‘O man, go and open the shop and bring the kerchief that is therein.’[142] Then said I, ‘O lady of lovelings, I presented it in alms-gift to an old woman who was naked of head and her condition pained me and her poverty, so I largessed it to her.’ Rejoined she, ‘Say me, was the old woman she who was mounted on the dromedary, the owner of the valuable necklace which she sold to thee for a kiss when thou saidst to her, ‘O Winsome of Eyes, bussing without treading I trow, is as a bowyer sans bow.’ Now when her words were ended, O Commander of the Faithful, she turned to her women and cried to them, ‘Bring hither this moment Sa’ídíyah, the kitchen-wench,’ and when she came between her hands behold, she was a slave-girl, a negress, and she was the same in species and substance who came to me under the form of a Badawi woman with a face-veil of brocade covering her features. Hereupon my wife drew the Burka’ from before the woman’s face and caused her doff her dress, and when she was stripped she was black as a bit of charcoal. Now as soon as I saw this, O Viceregent of Allah, my wits were bewildered and I considered my affair and I knew not what to do, thinking of the conditions whereto I had consented.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Forty-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Manjab continued, “And I thought of the conditions whereto I had consented and the penalty which had been written for me by the Kazi in the presence of his assessors, so I wandered from my right mind when she looked at me and said, ‘Is this our compact, O Manjab hight, thou dogs’ trysting-site?’ and when I heard her speech, O Commander of the Faithful, I hanged my head ground-wards and could not return a reply, nor even attempt to address her could I. Said she, ‘Woe to thee, did I not say to thee, ‘O Manjab hight, thou who with curs dost unite and no foregatherer with friendly wight?’ Woe to thee, and he lied not who said that in men-kind there be no trust. But how, O Manjab, didst thou prefer this slave-girl before me and make her my equal in dress and semblance? However, O ye women, do ye send and bring the Kazi and the assessors at this moment and instant.’ So they fetched them without stay or delay, and they produced the obligation which had been written, with the penalty duly attested by testimony. Then she said to the witnesses, ‘Read all that for him,’ and they did so and asked me, ‘What hast thou to say about this obligation and the punishment for breaking it?’ Answered I, ‘The document is right and fair, nor have I aught to utter thereanent.’ Hereupon, O Prince of True Believers, she summoned the Governor and his officials, and I confessed before them and bore witness against myself, when they reviled me and abused me, and I told them the tale full and complete. But they would not excuse me and they all cried, ‘Verily, thou deservest splitting or quartering;[143] thou who wouldst abandon this beauty and perfection and brilliancy and stature and symmetry and wouldst throw thyself upon a slave-girl black as char-coal; thou who wouldst leave this semblance which is like the splendours of moonlight and wouldst follow yon fulsome figure which resembleth the murks of night.’ Hereupon, O Prince of True Believers, she said to the Governor, ‘Hearken unto what I tell thee. I bear witness against myself that I have excused him the cutting off his hand and tongue and the plucking out his eyes; but do ye redeem my rights of him by one condition.’ ‘And what may that be?’ asked they; and she answered, ‘A thousand stripes upon his right side, and as many upon his left ribs.’ Hereupon, O Commander of the Faithful, they seized me and smote me upon my right flank until I was estranged from the world,[144] and after they took a handful of salt, which they rubbed upon the wounds.[145] Then they applied a thousand stripes to my left ribs, and threw over me a ragged robe wherewith to veil my shame. But my flanks had been torn open by such a bastinado, nor did I recover for a space of three days, when I found myself lying cast-out upon a dunghill. Seeing this my condition, I pulled myself together, and arising walked to the mansion wherein I was wont to wone; but I found the door locked with three padlocks and it was empty and void, nor was voice or sound to be heard therein at all, and ’twas, as said one of the poets in this couplet,

‘The chambers were like a beehive well stocked; * When the bees quitted them they became empty.’[146]

So I lingered there an hour of time, when a woman suddenly came out from one of the neighbouring houses and asked me, ‘What dost thou want, O asker; and what seekest thou?’ I answered, ‘We are in quest of the owners of this mansion;’ and said she, ‘Here they were in crowds and then they abandoned it, and may Allah have mercy upon him who spake these two couplets,

‘They fared and with faring fled rest from me * And my parted
heart no repose can see:
Have ruth on a wight with a heart weighed by woes * Seest not how
their door is without a key?’

Then indeed I repented, O Commander of the Faithful, over that I had done and regretted what had befallen me and what had proceeded from me of ill-deeds, and quoth I to the woman who had addressed me, ‘Allah upon thee, O my mistress, say me hast thou of their traces any tidings?’ “ — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent, and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Forty-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night.” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Manjab, speaking to the woman, said, “O my lady, say me, dost thou know of their traces any tidings, and hast thou come upon any manifest news?” Said she, “This thing was to befal thee of old, O thou poor fellow, even as quoth the poet in the following couplets,

‘My tears flow fast, my heart knows no rest * And melts my soul
and cares aye molest:
Would Heaven mine eyeballs their form beheld * And flies my life,
and ah! who shall arrest?
’Tis wondrous the while shows my form to sight, * Fire burns my
vitals with flamey crest!

Indeed for parting I've wept, and yet * No friend I find to mine
aid addrest:
Ho thou the Moon in a moment gone * From sight, wilt thou rise to
a glance so blest?
An thou be 'stranged of estrangement who * Of men shall save me?
Would God I wist!
Fate hath won the race in departing me * And who with Fate can
avail contest?'"

"Then, O Commander of the Faithful, my longings grew and I poured fast tears in torrents and I was like to choke with my sobs, so I arose to walk about the city highways and I clung from wall to wall for what befel me of despight and affright at the disappearance of them,[147] and as I wandered about I repeated these verses,

'To man I'm humbled when my friends lost I * And missed the way
of right where hardships lie:
Sorrow and sickness long have been my lot * To bear, when need
was strong to justify:
Say me, shall any with their presence cheer — * Pity my soul?
Then bless my friend who's nigh!
I kiss your footprints for the love of you, * I greet your envoy
e'en albeit he lie.'

After this, O Prince of True Believers, I remained immersed in cark and care and anxious thought, and as ever I wandered about behold, a man met me and said, ''Tis now three days since they marched away and none wotteth where they have alighted.'[148] So I returned once more to the mansion-door and I sat beside it to take my rest when my glance was raised and fell upon the lintel and I saw attached to it a folded paper which I hent in hand and found written therein these lines,

'Scant shall avail with judgment just the tear * When at
love-humbled heart man dareth jeer:
I was thy dearling, fain with thee to dwell * But thou
transgressedst nor return canst speer:

And if by every means thou find me not, * From thee I fled and
other hold I dear:
I come in dreams to see if sore thy heart; * Let it take patience
in its woe sincere:
Thou dost beweep our union fled, but I * Wist that such weeping
brings no profit clear:
Ho, stander at my door, once honoured guest, * Haply my tidings
thou some day shalt hear.'

Thereupon, O Commander of the Faithful, I returned to my mother and sister and told them the tale of what had betided me, first and last, and the twain wept over me and my parent said, 'I thought not, O my son, that such case as this would come down upon thee; withal every calamity save Death is no calamity at all; so be thou of long-suffering, O my child, for the compensation of patience is upon Allah; and indeed this that hath happened to thee hath happened unto many the likes of thee, and know thou that Fate is effectual and Sort is sealed. Hast thou not heard the words of the poet who spoke these couplets,[149]

'The world aye whirleth with its sweet and sour * And Time aye
trippeth with its joy and stowre:
Say him to whom life-change is wilful strange * Right wilful is
the world and risks aye low'r:
See'st now how Ocean overwhelms his marge * And stores the
pearl-drop in his deepest bow'r:
On Earth how many are of leafy trees, * But none we harvest save
what fruit and flow'r:
See'st not the storm-winds blowing fierce and wild * Deign level
nothing save the trees that tow'r?
In Heaven are stars and planets numberless * But none save Sun
and Moon eclipse endure.
Thou judgest well the days when Time runs fair * Nor fearest
trouble from Fate's evil hour:
Thou wast deceived what time the Nights were fain, * But in the
bliss o' nights 'ware days of bane.'

Now when I heard these words of my mother, O Prince of True Believers, and what she addressed to me of wise sayings and poetry, I took patience and rendered account to Allah;" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Forty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Manjab said, "O Commander of the Faithful, I had patience and rendered my account to Allah Almighty. Then my mother fell to nursing me, with medicines and unguents and what not else of remedies wherefrom cometh health until I was healed, yet there remained to me the scars even as thou sawest. But I inscribed not those lines upon my house which thou didst espy, O Commander of the Faithful, save that the news thereof might reach thee, and that naught be concealed from thee of my tidings and my past fate, and present condition. And this is the whole that hath befallen me."[150] Now when the Caliph Harun al-Rashid heard these words he smote hand upon hand and cried, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah the Glorious, the Great." Then he cried upon the Minister Ja'afar the Barmecide, and said to him, "O Wazir, unless thou bring me information of this affair and root out this matter and make manifest to me the condition of this youth, verily I will smite thy neck." The Minister answered, "Hearing and obeying: however, do thou, O Commander of the Faithful, give me three days' delay," and the Caliph rejoined, "I have granted this to thee." Hereupon Ja'afar went forth like unto one blind and deaf, unseeing nor hearing aught, and he was perplext and distraught as to his affair and continued saying, "Would Heaven we had not forgathered with this youth, nor ever had seen the sight of him.” And he ceased not faring till he arrived at his own house, where he changed his dress and fell to threading the thoroughfares of Baghdad, which in the time of Harun al-Rashid was a mighty great city, and in every street he entered he sought intelligence and questioned the folk concerning every affair which had happened in town from dawn to dark, but he hit upon no trace nor information manifest touching this matter. On the second day it was the same, and nothing became known to him between morning and evening; but on the third day as he fared forth he repeated these words,

“With the King be familiar and ‘ware his wrath * Nor be wilful when cometh his order ‘Do.’”

And he crossed and recrossed the city until it was noon-tide without aught of novelty appearing to him, so he returned to his mansion where he had a confidential nurse whom he apprised of the tidings, and concealing naught from her said, “Verily the term allowed to me by the King is until set of sun, at which time unless I bring him the information required he will cut off my head.” Thereupon the Kahramánah went forth and circled through the city until it was mid-afternoon, but she brought back no fresh tidings; whereat Ja’afar cried, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might, save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great!” Now the Wazir had a sister who lived single in his home with her women and eunuchs, and he said to himself, “I will go to my sister Budur and solace myself by conversing awhile with her and farewell her: haply Fate is not afar.” This sister was yet unwedded for none dared come forward and propose marriage to her, albeit in the city of Baghdad not one was her peer in beauty, even amongst the women of the Caliph. Accordingly he turned towards her apartment and entered therein, when she met him upon the threshold of the gate, and as she saw him changed of condition she cried, “No harm to thee, O my brother, verily thou art altered in case;” and he replied, “Indeed I have fallen into evil plight and into a matter of affright, whereupon naught can deliver me save the power of Allah of All-might, and unless the affair be made evident to me by the morning the Caliph will cut off my head.” Then he related to her the affair from beginning to end, and she, when she heard the words of her brother, waxed wan of colour, and was altered in case and said, “O brother mine, give me immunity and a binding bond when I will explain to thee the matter of this youth." Hereat calmed was his affright, and his heart was satisfied quite, and he gave her promise of safety and a binding bond and contract not to harm her; whereupon said she to him, "O my brother, womankind was created for mankind, and mankind was created for womankind, and albe falsehood is an excuse, yet soothfastness is more saving and safe-guiding. The whole of this business is mine and I am she who married him and made with him that condition which he accepted for himself, being contented with the covenant and its penalty." Now when Ja'afar heard these words spoken to him by his sister concerning the case of Manjab, he outwardly made merry but he inwardly mourned, for that he had forbidden her to wed, and she had worked this craft and had given herself away to wife. Hereupon he arose without stay or delay and fared forth until he went in to the Caliph Harun al-Rashid whom he blessed and greeted, and the King, having returned his salam, asked him, "Hast thou brought to me the required tidings, O Ja'afar?" The Wazir answered, "Yes, O my lord, the news hath become manifest and 'tis certified to me that this is a private matter; and had not the Creator favoured me by forgathering with the young lady in her substance and accidence and had I not met her at a term not appointed, I should have been done to die." Quoth the Caliph, "And who is she that I may requite her for her deeds and for what she hath practiced upon Manjab, who verily deserveth not that which hath betided him, although he may have been somewhat in fault." Then Ja'afar came forward and craved pardon from the Caliph in token of honour for his sister's sake, and quoth his lord, "O Ja'afar, thou hast declared that she it is with whom thou hast forgathered." Quoth Ja'afar, "O Prince of True Believers, the same is my sister Budur." But when the Caliph heard these words, he asked, "O Ja'afar, and why did thy sister do such deed?" and the Wazir answered, "Whatso is fated shall take place nor shall any defer the predestined nor forbid it when decreed, nor hasten it when forbidden. This thing which hath happened was of no profit to anyone and whatever thou shalt ordain that shall be done." Thereat Manjab after saluting the Caliph, accompanied Ja'afar to the house of his sister, and when they went in the Wazir made peace between the two, and the Caliph largessed the youth with most sumptuous presents. Now the Caliph every year at times appointed was accustomed to go by night in disguise to the house of Manjab accompanied by Ja'afar for the sake of hearing music, and one night of the nights he said to the youth, "Alhamdolillah — Glory be to God — O Manjab, that I have caused reunion between thee and Budur, thy beloved; but I desire that thou tell me some tale which shall be rare and shall broaden my breast." The youth replied, "Hearing and obeying," — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night, and that was

The Six Hundred and Fifty-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King and Caliph, Harun al-Rashid, bade the youth Manjab tell him some tale of the Kings of old and he replied, "Hearkening and obedience, O Prince of True Believers;" and thereupon he fell recounting the

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Story of the Darwaysh and the Barber's Boy and the Greedy Sultan.

It is related (but Allah is All-knowing of hidden things and All-wise!) that in the days of a King called Dahmár[151] there was a barber who had in his booth a boy for apprentice and one day of the days there came in a Darwaysh man who took seat and turning to the lad saw that he was a model of beauty and loveliness and stature and symmetric grace. So he asked him for a mirror and when it was brought he took it and considered his face therein and combed his beard, after which he put hand in pouch and pulling out an Ashrafi of gold set it upon the looking-glass which he gave back to the boy.[152] Hereupon the barber turned towards the beggar and wondered in himself and said, "Praise be to Allah, albeit this man be a Fakir yet he placeth a golden piece upon the mirror, and surely this is a marvellous matter." Hereupon the Darwaysh went his ways, and on the following day he suddenly made his appearance and entering the booth called for a looking-glass from the barber's prentice and when it was handed to him combed his beard after he had looked at his features therein; then, bringing forth an Ashrafi, he set it upon the mirror and gave it back to the boy; and the barber marvelled yet the more to see the Fakir rising up and wending his ways.[153] The beggar ceased not coming every day and gazing at himself in the glass and laying down his ducat, whereat the barber said to himself, "By Allah, indeed this Darwaysh must have some object of his own and haply he is in love with the lad my prentice and I fear from the beggar lest he seduce the boy and take him away from me." Hereat he cried, "O boy, when the Darwaysh shall come to thee draw thou not anear him; and when he demandeth the looking-glass give it not to him; for I myself will do so." On the third day behold, the Fakir appeared according to his custom and asked for the mirror from the boy who wittingly disregarded him, whereupon he turned towards him and waxed wroth[154] and was like to slay him. The apprentice was terrified at his rage and gave him the looking-glass whilst he was still an-angered; but when the man had reviewed himself therein and had combed his beard and had finished his need, he brought out ten dinars of gold and setting them upon the mirror handed them to the lad. Seeing this the barber wondered anew with extreme wonderment, saying to himself, “By Allah, this Darwaysh cometh daily and layeth down an Ashrafi, but this day he hath given ten gold pieces; withal there accrueth not to me from my shop even half a piastre of daily wage. However, O Boy, when the man shall come hither, as is his wont, do thou spread for him a prayer-rug in the inner room of the shop, lest the people seeing his constant visits should have ill suspicions of us.” “Yes!” said the lad. So when it was the next day the Fakir came and went into the ben whither he was shown by the boy, and he followed him till they were in the innermost of the booth. Now the heart of this Religious hung to the love of the barber’s boy for that he had of beauty and perfection and he continued frequenting the shop every day whilst the lad ceased not spreading the rug and receiving upon the mirror ten Ashrafis. Hereat the barber and his apprentice rejoiced till one day of the days when the Darwaysh came to the shaving-shop, as was his wont, where he met none but only the boy nor was there any other in sight. So he asked concerning his employer and the other answered, “O uncle, my master hath gone forth to solace himself with seeing the casting of the cannon; for this day the Sultan and the Wazir and the Lords of the land will all be present thereat.” Said he, “O my son, go thou with us and we will also enjoy the spectacle and return before the rest of the folk, ere thy master can be back, and we will enjoy ourselves and make merry and look at the sport before I set out upon my journey, for ’tis my intention this day to go forth about noontide.” Quoth the lad, “’Tis well O uncle;” and arising he locked the shop-door and walked with the Darwaysh till they reached the spot where the cannon were being cast. There they found the Sultan and the Wazirs and the Chamberlains and the Lords of the land and the Grandees of the realm all standing in a body until presently the workmen took the crucibles[155] from off the fire. Now the first who went up to them was the Sultan and he found them full of molten brass: so he put his hand into his pocket and drew it forth full of gold which he cast into the melting pots. Then the Grand Wazir walked forward and did as the King had done and all the Notables who were present threw cash into the crucibles, bar-silver and piastres and dollars. Thereat the Darwaysh stepped out of the crowd and brought from his cowl a reed used as an étui[156] wherefrom he drew a spoon-like ear-picker and cast into one of the crucibles a something of powder like grain.[157] This he did to each one of the melting pots; after which he disappeared from the eyes of the folk and taking the boy with him returned to the booth and opened it and said to him, "O my child, when the Sultan shall send after thee and shall question thee concerning me, do thou tell him that I am in such a town where shouldst thou come to seek me thou shalt find me sitting beside the gate." Then he farewelled the boy, the barber's apprentice, and set forth seeking that city. Such was the case with these twain; but as regards the matter of the King, he ceased not standing there until they had brought the crucibles to the cannon-moulds and when the folks designed to pour out their contents they found all therein pure gold. Then quoth the Sultan to the Wazir and the Notables of his realm, "Who was it threw aught into the crucibles and what stranger man happened to be here?" Quoth they, "We beheld a Darwaysh man who took some powder and fell to casting thereof a somewhat into the crucibles." Hereupon enquiries were made of the bystanders and they gave information how that same Darwaysh was inclined to the barber's apprentice who lived in such a quarter. Hereupon the Sultan ordered one of his Chamberlains to bring the boy, — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Fifty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan sent one of his Chamberlains to the boy, the apprentice of the barber, whom they sought for and brought into the presence and placed between the royal hands; and he on entering kissed ground and deprecated and prayed for his liege lord with prayers fit for the Caliphs. The Sovran returned his salam and questioned him concerning the Darwaysh who had been with him and he replied, “O King of the Realm, he charged me saying that he was faring for and would be found in such a city.” Hereupon the Sultan commanded the lad go forth and bring him, and was answered, “Hearkening and obedience;” so he appointed for him an especial ship and gifted him with various presents and the boy set sail and voyaged for a short while till he reached the port-town in question. Here he landed and made for the city-gate and as he entered it behold, he came face to face with the Darwaysh who was sitting upon a raised bench, and when he beheld him he salam’d to him and told him what had taken place. The Fakir at once arose, and without resisting the lad, went down to the ship and they shook out the sails and the two voyaged together until they reached the city of the Sultan. Here the twain went in to him and kissed ground between his hands and salam’d to him and their greeting was answered. Now as to the lad, the King largessed him largely and raised his degree to Governor and despatched him to one of his provinces therein to rule;[158] but as for the Darwaysh, he remained beside King Dahmar the first day and the second until the seventh; after which quoth the Sovran, “’Tis my desire that thou teach me the art and mystery of making gold;” whereto the other replied, “Hearing and obeying, O our lord the Sultan.” Presently the Darwaysh arose; and, bringing a brazier,[159] ranged thereupon the implements of his industry and lighted a fire thereunder; then, fetching a portion of lead and a modicum of tin and a quant. suff. of copper, the whole weighing about a quintal, he fanned the flame that was beneath the crucible until the metal was fluid as water. And while the Sultan was sitting and looking on and considering the operation, the Fakir brought out something from a casket and taking a pinch of it on the ear-picker besprinkled therewith the lead and copper and the tin which presently became virgin gold. He repeated this feat once or twice before the King who after that fell to working as the Religious had wrought and turned out in his presence the purest gold. So the Sultan rejoiced and was wont to sit before the Darwaysh whatever time his heart chose[160] and there and then he gathered together ignoble metals and besprinkled them with the powder[161] which had been given to him by the Fakir and all came out of the noblest gold. Now one night of the nights, as the Sultan was sitting in his Harem and would have worked as he had wrought in the presence of the Darwaysh, nothing went right with him; whereat he was exceedingly sorrowful and said, “I have neither magnified nor minished aught, so how is this case?”[162] As soon as it was morning he forgathered with the Fakir and worked in his presence and produced virgin gold; so in his surprise he said, “Walláhi, ’tis indeed most marvellous that whatso I work alone cometh not right and when I have wrought in presence of the Darwaysh it succeedeth and turneth to gold.” After this the Sultan never transmuted metals save in the presence of the Fakir, until one day of the days when his breast was narrowed and he sought recreation in the gardens. Accordingly he rode forth, he and the Lords of the land, taking also the Darwaysh with him and he went to the riverside, the Monarch preceding and the Mendicant following together with the suite. And as the King rode along with a heavy hand upon the reins he grasped them strongly and his fist closed upon them; but suddenly he relaxed his grip when his seal-ring flew from his little finger and fell into the water, where it sank to the bottom. Seeing this the Sultan drew bridle and halted and said, “We will on no wise remove from this place till such time as my seal-ring shall be restored to me.” So the suite dismounted, one and all, and designed plunging into the stream, when behold, the Fakir finding the King standing alone and in woeful plight by cause of his signet asked him saying, “What is to do with thee, O King of the Age, that I find thee here halted?” He replied, “Verily my signet-ring of Kingship[163] hath dropped from me into the river somewhere about this place.” Quoth the Darwaysh, “Be not grieved, O our lord;” after which he brought out from his breast pocket a pencase, and having drawn from it a bit of bees’ wax, he fashioned it into the form of a man and cast it into the water. Then he stood gazing thereat when, lo and behold! the Figure came forth the river with the seal-ring hanging to its neck and sprang upon the saddle-bow in front of the Sultan. The King would have taken his signet when the Form jumped off and approached the Darwaysh who hent the ring in hand and rubbed it and the Figure at once became wax as it had been. Hereupon the Darwaysh restored it to his pencase and said to the Sovran, “Now do thou ride on!” All this and the Lords of the land sat gazing upon the Darwaysh and what he had done; after which the whole party fared forwards till they reached the gardens, where they dismounted and took seat and fell to conversing together. They enjoyed themselves that day and when evening fell they remounted and sought their homes, and the Darwaysh returned to the apartment which had been set apart for him. But presently the Grandees of the realm forgathered with the Sultan and said to him, “O King of the Age, yon Darwaysh requireth of thee exceeding caution seeing that he, whenso he ever will, availeth to slay everyone in the Palace, and after doing thee die can raise himself to rule in thy stead.” “How so?” quoth the King, and quoth they, “In that ‘twere easy for him to make Figures of wax and cause them prevail over thee and over us, so that they may kill us and he may succeed thee as Sultan; nor would this be aught of inconvenience to him.” Now when the King heard these words he was afeared and cried, “By Allah, sooth ye speak, and this is the right rede and one which may not be blamed indeed!” presently adding, “And how shall we manage with this Darwaysh?” Said they, “Do thou send for him and summon him and slay him forthright; and better ‘twere that thou kill him ere he kill thee;[164] and if he say thee ‘I will go and return,’ suffer him not depart.” The Sultan acted after their counsel and sending to fetch the Fakir — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan sent after the Darwaysh and bade him be brought into the presence and set between his hands, when he said to him, “O Darwaysh, do thou know ’tis mine aim and intention to slay thee: say me then, hast thou any charge thou wouldst send to thy family?” Quoth the Religious, “Wherefore shouldst thou kill me, O our lord, and what of ill deeds hath proceeded from me that thou shouldst destroy me therefor, and do thou make me aware of my sin, and then if I merit death kill me or decree to me banishment.” Quoth the King, “There is no help but that I slay thee,”[165] and the Darwaysh fell to gentling him but it availed him naught; so as soon as he was certified that the Sultan would not release him or dismiss him, he arose and drew a wide ring upon the ground in noose shape and measuring some fifteen ells, within which he described a lesser circle. Then he stood up before the Sovran and said, “O King of the Age, verily this greater circle is the dominion belonging to thee, whilst the lesser round is mine own realm.” So saying he moved from his place and stepped forwards and passing into the smaller ring quoth he, “An thy reign, O King of the Age, be not ample for me I will inhabit my own;” and forthright upon entering the lesser circle he vanished from the view of those present. Cried the Sultan to the Lords of the land, “Seize him”; but they availed not to find him, and after going forth in search they returned and reported that they could light upon no one. Then said the Sovran, “He was beside me in this place and passed into the smaller ring; so do ye seek for him again;” and accordingly they went forth once more but could not see a trace of him. Hereupon the Sultan repented and cried, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah the Glorious, the Great: verily we have exceeded in the matter of this Darwaysh and we have hearkened to the words of hypocrites who caused us to fall into trouble by obeying them in all they said to me against him. However, whatso they did to me that will I do unto them.” And as soon as it was morning-tide and the Lords of the land forgathered in the Divan, the Sultan commanded to slay those who had counselled him to kill the Darwaysh, and some of them were done to death and others of them were banished the country.[166] Now when the Caliph Harun al-Rashid heard this narrative from Manjab, he wondered with extreme wonderment and said to him, “By Allah, O Manjab, thou deservest to be a cup-companion of the Kings:” so he created him from that moment his

Equerry in honour to the Grand Wazir Ja'afar the Barmaki, whereof he had become brother-in-law. Now after some time Al-Rashid asked from Manjab a tale concerning the wiles of womankind, and when the youth hung his head groundwards and blushed before him, Harun said to him, “O Manjab, verily the place of the Kings in privacy is also the place for laying aside gravity.” Said Manjab, “O Prince of True Believers, to-morrow night (Inshallah!) I will tell thee a tale in brief concerning the freaks of the gender feminine, and what things they do with their mates.” Accordingly when night came on, the Caliph sent for and summoned Manjab to the presence, and when he came there he kissed ground and said, “An it be thy will, O Commander of the Faithful, that I relate thee aught concerning the wiles of wives, let it be in a private place lest haply one of the slave girls hear me and any of them report my tale to the Queen.” Quoth Rashid, “This is the right rede which may not be blamed indeed!” So he went with him to a private place concealed from the folk, and took seat, he and the youth, and none beside, when Manjab related to him the following

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Tale of the Simpleton Husband.[167]

It is related that there was a Badawi man who had a wife and he dwelt under a tent of hair[168] in the desert where, as is the fashion of Arabs, he used to shift from site to site for the purpose of pasturing his camels. Now the woman was of exceeding beauty and comeliness and perfection, and she had a friend (also a Badawi man) who at all times would come to her and have his wicked will of her, after which he would wend his ways. But one day of the days her lover visited her and said, “Wallahi, ’tis not possible but that what time we sleep together, I and thou, we make merry with thy husband looking on.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Fifty-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the man which was the friend of the Badawi’s wife said to her, “Walláhi, ’tis not possible but that when we make merry, I and thou, thy husband shall look upon us.” Quoth she, “Why should we suffer at such time of our enjoyment either my husband or any wight to be present?” and quoth he, “This must needs be, and unless thou consent I will take to me a mistress other than thyself.” Then said she, “How shall we enjoy ourselves with my husband looking on? This is a matter which may not be managed.” Hereupon the woman sat down and took thought of her affair and how she should do for an hour or so, and presently she arose and dug her amiddlemost the tent a hole[169] which would contain a man, wherein she concealed her lover. Now, hard by the tent was a tall sycamore tree,[170] and as the noodle her husband was returning from the wild the woman said to him, “Ho thou, Such-an-one! climb up this tree and bring me therefrom a somewhat of figs that we may eat them.” Said he, “’Tis well;” and arising he swarmed up the tree-trunk, when she signed to her lover who came out and mounted and fell to riding upon her. But her mate considered her and cried aloud, “What is this, O whore: doth a man cavalcade thee before me and the while I am looking at thee?” Then he came down from the tree in haste, but he saw no one, for as soon as the lover had finished his business the good-wife thrust him into the hole amiddlemost the tent and covered him with a mat. When the husband went inside to the booth and met his wife he found no stranger with her so said she to him, “O man, thou hast sinned against me, saying, ‘Verily, some one is riding thee’; and thou hast slandered me by falsely charging me with folly.” Quoth he, “By Allah I saw thee with my own eyes;” but quoth she, “Do thou sit here the while I have a look.” Hereupon she arose and swarmed up the trunk and sat upon one of the branches, and as she peered at her spouse she shrieked aloud crying, “O man, do thou have some regard for thine honour. Why do on this wise and lie down and allow a man to ride thee, and at this moment he worketh his will on thee.” Said her husband, “Beside me there is neither man nor boy.” And said she, “Here I am[171] looking at thee from the top of this tree.” Quoth he, “O woman, this place must be haunted,[172] so let us remove hence;” and quoth she, “Why change our place? rather let us remain therein.” Hereupon the Caliph said to Manjab, “By Allah, verily, this woman was an adulteress;” and the youth replied, “Amongst womankind indeed are many more whorish than this. But of that anon; and now do thou hear from me and learn of me this marvellous tale anent

NOTE CONCERNING THE “TIRREA BEDE,” NIGHT 655.

Scott refers to a tale in the “Bahar-Danush” (Bahár-i-Dánish); or, “Garden of Knowledge,” translated by himself, story viii. lesson 4; chapter xii. vol. iii. p-68. Cadell & Co., Strand, London, 1799. Five women come from a town to draw water at a well; and, finding there a young Brahmin, become his teachers and undertake to instruct him in the “Tirrea” or fifth “Veda” — there being only four of these Hindu Scriptures. Each lesson consists of an adventure showing how to cornute a husband, and the fourth runs as follows. I leave them in Scott’s language: —

The fourth lady through dread of the arrow of whose cunning the warrior of the fifth heaven[173] trembled in the sky, like the reed, having bestowed her attention on the pilgrim bramin (Brahman), despatched him to an orchard; and having gone home, said to her husband, “I have heard that in the orchard of a certain husbandman there is a date tree, the fruit of which is of remarkably fine flavour; but what is yet stranger, whoever ascends it, sees many wonderful objects. If to-day, going to visit this orchard, we gather dates from this tree, and also see the wonders of it, it will not be unproductive of amusement.” In short, she so worked upon her husband with flattering speeches and caresses, that nolens volens he went to the orchard, and at the instigation of his wife, ascended the tree. At this instant she beckoned to the bramin, who was previously seated, expectantly, in a corner of the garden.

The husband, from the top of the tree, beholding what was not fit to be seen, exclaimed in extreme rage, “Ah! thou shameless Russian-born[174] wretch, what abominable action is this?” The wife making not the least answer, the flames of anger seized the mind of the man, and he began to descend from the tree; when the bramin with activity and speed having hurried over the fourth section of the Tirrea Bede,[175] went his way.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

VERSE. The road to repose is that of activity and quickness.

The wife during her husband’s descent from the tree having arranged her plan, said, “Surely, man, frenzy must have deprived thy brain of the fumes of sense, that having foolishly set up such a cry, and not reflecting upon thine own disgrace (for here, excepting thyself, what male is present?), thou wouldst fix upon me the charge of infidelity?” The husband, when he saw no person near, was astonished, and said to himself, “Certainly, this vision must have been miraculous.”

The completely artful wife, from the hesitation of her husband, guessed the cause, and impudently began to abuse him. Then instantly tying her vest round her waist she ascended the tree. When she had reached the topmost branch, she suddenly cried out, “O thou shameless man, what abominable action is this! If thy evil star hath led thee from the path of virtue, surely thou mightest have in secret ventured upon it. Doubtless to pull down the curtain of modesty from thy eyes, and with such impudence to commit such a wicked deed, is the very extreme of debauchery.”

The husband replied, “Woman, do not ridiculously cry out, but be silent; for such is the property of this tree, that whoever ascends it, sees man or woman below in such situations.” The cunning wife now came down, and said to her husband, “What a charming garden and amusing spot is this! where one can gather fruit, and at the same time behold the wonders of the world.” The husband replied, “Destruction seize the wonders which falsely accuse man of abomination!” In short the devilish wife, notwithstanding the impudence of such an action, escaped safely to her house, and the next day, according to custom, attending at the well, introduced the bramin to the ladies, and informed them of her worthy contrivance.[176]

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE LOVES OF AL-HAYFA AND YUSUF.[177]

I had a familiar in the Northern region who was called ‘Abd al-Jawád and he was one of the greatest of merchants there and made of money; also he loved voyage and travel, and at whatever time I visited him and we forgathered, I and he, we exchanged citations of poetry. Now one day my heart yearned to visit him, so I repaired to his place and found him there; and as we came together we both sat down in friendly converse, I and he; and he said to me “O my brother, do thou hear what happened and was accomplished for me in these times. I travelled to the land of Al-Yaman and therein met a familiar who, when we sat down to talk, I and he, said, ‘O my brother, verily there befel me and betided me in the land of Al-Hind a case that was strange and an adventure that was admirable and it ran as follows. There was erewhile a King of the kings of India and one of her greatest, who was abundant in money and troops and guards and he was called Al-Mihrján.[178] This same was a lord of high degree and a majestic and he had lived for a long while of his age without having issue male or female. Wherefor he was full of cark and care wanting one who after him would preserve his memory, so he said in his mind one night of the nights, ‘Whenas I die cut off shall be my name, and effaced shall be my fame nor shall anyone remember me.’ So saying he raised both hands to Heaven and humbled himself before Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) to vouchsafe him a child who should outlive him with the view that man might not lose the memory of him. Now one night as he was sleeping a-bed dreaming and drowned in slumber behold, he heard a Voice (without seeing any form) which said to him, ‘O Mihrjan the Sage, and O King of the Age, arouse thee this moment and go to thy wife and lie with her and know her carnally, for she shall indeed conceive of thee at this very hour and bear thee a child which, an it be a boy shall become thine aider in all thine affairs but will, an it prove a girl, cause thy ruin and thy destruction and the uprooting of thy traces.’ When Al-Mihrjan heard from the Speaker these words and such sayings, he left his couch without stay or delay in great joy and gladness and he went to his wife and slept with her and swived her and as soon as he arose from off her she said, ‘O King of the Age, verily I feel that I have become pregnant; and (Inshallah — if Almighty Allah please!) this shall prove the case.’[179] When Al-Mihrjan heard the words of his wife he was glad and rejoiced at good news and he caused that night be documented in the archives of his kingdom. Then, when it was morning he took seat upon the throne of his kingship and summoned the Astrologers and the Scribes of characts and Students of the skies and told them what had been accomplished to him in his night and what words he had heard from the Voice; whereupon the Sages one and all struck tables of sand and considered the ascendant. But each and every of them concealed his thought and hid all he had seen nor would any return a reply or aught of address would supply; and said they, ‘O King of the Age, verily appearances in dreams hit the mark at times and at times fly wide; for when a man is of a melancholic humour he seeth in his sleep things which be terrible and horrible and he waxeth startled thereat: haply this vision thou hast beheld may be of the imbroglios of dreams so do thou commit the reins to Him who all overreigns and the best Worker is He of all that wisheth and willeth He.’ Now when Al-Mihrjan heard these words of the Sages and the Star-gazers he gifted and largessed them and he freed the captives in prison mewed and he clothed the widows and the poor and nude. But his heart remained in sore doubt concerning what he had heard from the Voice and he was thoughtful over that matter and bewildered and he knew not what to do; and on such wise sped those days. Now, however, returneth the tale to the Queen his Consort who, when her months had gone by, proved truly to be pregnant and her condition showed itself, so she sent to inform her husband thereof. He was gladdened and rejoiced in the good news and when the months of gestation were completed the labour-pains set in and she was delivered of a girl-child (praise be to Him who had created and had perfected what He had produced in this creation!), which was winsome of face and lovesome of form and fair fashioned of limbs, with cheeks rosaceous and eyne gracious and eyebrows continuous and perfect in symmetrical proportion. Now after the midwives delivered her from the womb and cut her navel-string and kohl’d her eyes, they sent for King Al-Mihrjan and informed him that his Queen had borne a maid- babe, but when the

Eunuchs gave this message, his breast was narrowed and he was bewildered in his wits, and rising without stay or delay he went to his wife. Here they brought to him the new-born when he uncovered her face and, noting her piquancy and elegancy and beauty and brilliancy and size and symmetry, his vitals fluttered and he was seized with yearning sorrow for her fate; and he named her Al-Hayfá[180] for her seemlihead. Then he gifted the midwife'" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that King Al-Mihrjan largessed a robe of honour to the midwife and gifted her with a thousand gold pieces and went forth from beside his daughter. Then they committed her to wetnurses and drynurses and governesses who reared her with the fairest rearing, and after she had reached the age of four they brought to her divines who lessoned her in the art of writing and of making selections[181] and presently she approved herself sharp of wits, clever, loquent of tongue, eloquent of speech, sweet spoken of phrase; and every day she increased in beauty and loveliness and stature and perfect grace. And when she reached the age of fourteen she was well read in science and she had perused the annals of the past and she had mastered astrology and geomancy and she wrote with caligraphic pen all the seven handwritings and she was mistress of metres and modes of poetry and still she grew in grace of speech. Now as her age reached her fourteenth year her sire the Sultan chose for her a palace and settled her therein and placed about her slave-girls, high-bosomed virgins numbering an hundred, and each and every famous for beauty and loveliness; and presently she selected of them a score who were all maidenhoods, illustrious for comeliness and seemliness. These she taught in verse and poetry and in the strangenesses of history and in striking instruments of mirth and merriment until they surpassed all the folk of their day; and she assiduously enjoined upon them the drinking of wine pure and new and boon-companionship with choice histories and strange tales and the rare events of the time. Such was the case with Al-Hayfa; but as regards her father, King Al-Mihrjan, as one night he was lying abed pondering what he had heard from the Voice, suddenly there addressed him a sound without a form and said, "O King of the Age," whereat he was fully aroused by sore terror and his vitals fluttered and his wits were bewildered and he was perplexed as to his affair. So he took refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned and repeated somewhat of the Koran and fenced himself about with certain of the holy names of Allah the Munificent; then he would have returned to his couch but was unable, even to place cheek on pillow. Presently sounded the Voice a second time, saying, "O King of the Age, O Mihrjan, verily shalt thou die by reason of her;" and forthwith improvised the following couplets,

"Ho thou! Hear, O Mihrjan, what to thee shall be said * Learn the drift of my words in these lines convey'd:
Thy daughter, Al-Hayfa (the girded round * With good, and with highest of grade array'd)
Shall bring with right hand to thee ruin-bowl * And reave thee of realm with the sharp-biting blade."[182]

Now when Al-Mihrjan had heard what the Voice had spoken of verse and had produced for him of prose, he was wholly aroused from his sleep and became like one drunken with wine who knew not what he did and his vitals fluttered and increased his cark and care and anxious thought. So he removed from that site into another stead and was stirred up and went awandering about. Then he set his head upon the pillow but was unable to close his eyelids and the Voice drew nearer and cried upon him in frightful accents and said, "O Mihrjan, dost thou not hearken to my words and understand my verse; to wit, that thy daughter Al-Hayfa shall bequeath to thee shame and thou shalt perish by cause of her?" Then the Unseen One recited these couplets,[183]

"I see thee, O Mihrjan, careless-vain * who from hearing the
words of the wise dost abstain:
I see Al-Hayfa, by potent lord * Upraised in her charms and
speech sweet of strain,
Who shall home thee in grave sans a doubt and she * Shall seize
thy king-ship and reave thy reign."

But when Al-Mihrjan had heard the words of the Voice and what it had urged upon him of poetry and of prose-addresses, he arose from his rest in haste and anxiety until Allah caused the morn to morrow and break in its sheen and it shone, whereupon the King summoned the Mathematicians and the Interpreters of dreams and the Commentators on the Koran; and, when they came between his hands, he related to them his vision, fully and formally, and they practised their several arts, making all apparent to them; but they concealed the truth and would not reveal it, saying to him, "Indeed the consequence of thy vision is auspicious." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night, and that was

The Six Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Astrologers said to King Al-Mihrjan, "Verily the consequence of thy vision is auspicious;" and on the second night Iblis the Accursed appeared to him under the bodily form of a handsome man and said, "Ho thou the King, I am he who terrified thee yesternight in thy dream, for the reason that thou hast ruined the Monastery of the Archers[184] wherein I lay homed. However an thou wilt edify it again I will favour thee with my counsel, ho thou the King!” Al-Mihrjan replied, “Upon me be its rebuilding an thou wilt honour me with thy advice, ho thou the Voice!” Hereupon Iblis fell to lying with him and saying, “Verily I am thine aider in building thee a palace by the river Al-Kawá’ib,[185] O thou will of me and desire of me!” (Now the folk heard these words spoken aloud.) Then Al-Mihrjan arose from his sleep joyful and cheerful and when morning came he summoned the Mathematicians and Architects and Masons and bade them rebuild the Monastery of the Archers; so they obeyed his bidding until they had completed it in the handsomest fashion and with the best of workmanship. After that the King ordered they construct for his daughter Al-Hayfa a palace unsurpassed by any edifice and perfectly builded and decorated, hard by the river Al-Kawa’ib; moreover that it should be situate in a wady, a hill-girt plain through which meandered the stream. So they obeyed his bidding and laid its foundations and marked with large stones the lines thereof which measured a parasang of length by a parasang of breadth. Then they showed their design to the King, who gathering together his army returned with them to the city. Presently the Architects and Master-masons fell to building it square of corners and towering in air over the height of an hundred ells and an ell; and amiddlemost thereof stood a quadrangular hall with four-fold saloons, one fronting other, whilst in each was set apart a cabinet for private converse. At the head of every saloon a latticed window projected over the garden whereof the description shall follow in its place; and they paved the ground with vari-coloured marbles and alabastrine slabs which were dubbed with bezel stones and onyx[186] of Al-Yaman. The ceilings were inlaid with choice gems and lapis lazuli and precious metals: the walls were coated with white stucco painted over with ceruse[187] and the frieze was covered with silver and gold and ultramarine and costly minerals. Then they set up for the latticed windows colonnettes of gold and silver and noble ores, and the doors of the sitting chamber were made of chaunders-wood alternating with ebony which they studded with jewels and arabesque’d with gold and silver. Also they placed in each sitting-room a pillar of Comorin lign-aloes and the best of sandal-wood encrusted with gems; and over the speak-room they threw cupolas supported upon arches and connecting columns and lighted in the upper part by skylights of chrystal and carnelian and onyx. And at the head of each saloon was a couch of juniper-wood whose four legs were of elephants' ivories studded with rubies and over each was let down a hanging[188] of golden weft and a network of gems, whilst higher than the whole was a latticed casement adorned with pearls which were threaded upon golden wire and curtains bearing scented satchels of ambergris. The furniture of the divans was of raw silk stuffed with ostrich- down and the cushions were purfled with gold. The floors of all the saloons were spread with carpets and rugs embroidered with sendal, and in the heart of the Great Hall amiddlemost the four saloons rose a marble jet-d'eau, square of shape, whose corners were cunningly wrought and whose floor and marge were set with gems of every hue. They also placed upon the edges of that fountain figures fashioned of gold and silver representing all manner birds and beasts, each modelled according to his several tint and peculiar form; their bellies too were hollow and from the fountain was conducted a conduit which led the water into their insides and caused it gush from their mouths so that they jetted one at other like two hosts about to do battle. After this the same water returned to the middle of the fountain and thence flowed into the gardens, of which a description will follow in its place.[189] Also the walls of the Great Hall were variegated with wondrous pictures in gold and lapis lazuli and precious materials of every kind, and over the doors of the sitting-places they hung candelabra of chrystal with chains of gold wherein were set jewels and jacinths and the costliest stones; after which they inscribed upon the entrance of the speak-rooms couplets to the following purport,

"Clear and clean is our seance from slanderous foe; * And from
envious rival whose aim is blame:
None hither may come save the cup-boy, and eke * Cup-comrades who
never our fame defame."

Upon the chandeliers themselves were inscribed these lines,

“I am raised in reverence high o’er head * For they see that my
gift is the boon of light:
I’m a pleasure to eyesight, so up with you all, * O Seers, and
joy ye the joys of my sight.”

And upon the Palace-door was inscribed the following quatrain,

“This Mansion’s adorned * As delight to mans eye;
O’er its door writ is ‘Welcome,’ * So safely draw nigh.”

And when they had finished this inscription over the doorway, they went forth from the entrance which stood at the head of the Great Hall and proceeded to a square of large space abounding in trees and enjoyable for rills; and they surrounded it with a fencing-wall built of rough stone which they stuccoed over and figured with various paintings. Then they planted this garden with all manner fruit-bearing trees and fragrant herbs and flowers and firstlings of every kind and hue and they trained the branches after a wonderful fashion, leading under their shade leats and runnels of cool water; and the boughs were cunningly dispread so as to veil the ground which was planted with grains of divers sorts and greens and all of vegetation that serveth for the food of man. Also they provided it with a watering wheel whose well was revetted with alabaster[190] — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Architects set up in that palace-garden a water-wheel whose well was revetted with alabaster and whose wood-work and wheel were of chaunders-wood, whilst its pitchers were of fine porcelain and its cordage[191] was of raw silk. And when they were free of this work they edified amongst the scented shrubs and blossoms a towering dome based upon four-square walls of variegated marbles and alabasters studded with carbuncles[192] and its ceiling was supported upon columns of the finest stone with joinery of lign-aloes and sandal, and they dubbed its cupola with jewels and precious stones and arabesque'd[193] it with gold and silver. Then they made therein four saloons more, each fronting other, and at the head of one and all was a latticed window impending over the bloomy shrubs and fragrant herbs; the colonnettes of those casements were silvern whilst the shutters were of sandal-wood plated and studded with precious metals; and over the lintels thereof was an ornamental frieze of gold inscribed with lines of verse which shall be described in its due place. And they inlaid that frieze with rubies and jacinths until it made the cupola resemble the domes of Paradise. Moreover they trained the flowering shrubs and the perfumed herbs to overrun with their tendrils the casements in the drum of the dome, and when they had completed the work and had embellished it with all adornments they pierced for it an entrance and ranged around it three ramparts which, built up with large stones, were in breadth seven cubits. Then they edified for the Palace an impregnable gateway of Chinese steel whereunto led flights of alabastrine steps which were continued to the highmost parts, and lastly they derived the river Al-Kawa'ib till it surrounded the edifice on every side and encircled it as signet-ring girdeth finger or wristlet wrist. Now when the Architects and Master-masons had made an end of building the Palace and its domes and had finished laying out and planting the parterres, they went in to King Al-Mihrjan and kissing ground between his hands informed him thereof; and he, receiving this report, at once took his daughter, Al-Hayfa, and mounting horse, he and the Lords of his land rode forth till they reached the river Al-Kawa'ib which ran at three days' distance from his capital. When he arrived there and looked upon the Palace and its elevation in fortalice-form he was pleased therewith and so were all of his suite and retinue; whereupon he went up to it and beholding the ordinance and the ornamentation and the cupolas and the gardens and the edification and embellishment of the whole, he sent for the Architects and Master-masons and the artificers whom he thanked for their work, and he bestowed upon them robes of honour and gifted and largessed them and assigned to them rations and pay and allowances. So they kissed ground before him and went their ways. Then King Al-Mihrjan and his host withdrew within the Palace, and he bade serve up the trays of viands and sumptuous food for a banquet, after which he and his abode three days in eating and drinking and diversion and disport; and he gave robes of honour to his Wazirs and Emirs and the Grandees of his kingdom, and in fine issued orders for their departure. When they went forth from him, he commanded to summon Al-Hayfa and her women with all their belongings; and she, having made act of presence and having ascended to the Palace and considered it with its beauty and artifice and ornamentation, was pleased and rejoiced therein. The father abode with her three days, and then farewelling her returned to his capital; and she on his departure bade her slave-girls distribute the couches about the saloons placing in each one a seat of ebony plated with glittering gold, whose legs were of elephant's ivory, and over one and all they reared canopies of silk and brocade adorned with jewels and precious metals and bespread them with mattresses and cushions and pillows, and over the floor of the palaces they laid down carpets whereupon was orfrayed this couplet,

"O Friend hereon seated be blythe and gay * Unless hereto bound
and debarred of way."[194]

Then they set upon them settees for seats whereupon were inscribed these couplets,

"O Seat, be thy beauty increased evermore; * Fair fall thee with
happiness choice and meet;
An I fail in life through my slip and sin, * To-morrow in Heav'n
I'll give thee seat."

Then[195] the attendants decorated the whole Palace until it became like unto one of the Mansions of Heaven, and when the women had done her bidding, Al-Hayfa was much pleased, so she took one of the slave-girls by the hand and walked with the rest of them around the Palace considering its artifice and its embellishment, especially the paintings which covered the walls; and they rejoiced thereat, marvelling at the cunning decorations and they were grateful to the Architects who had builded and presented all these representations. And when Al-Hayfa reached the terrace- roof of the Palace she descended by its long flight of steps which led to the river-side, and bidding the door be thrown open she gazed upon the water which encircled it like ring around finger or armlet round arm, and admired its breadth and its swiftness of streaming; and she magnified the work and admired the gateway of steel for its strength and power of defence and sued for pardon of Almighty Allah.[196] — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Seventieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will." It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Al-Hayfa sued pardon of Allah the Great and took refuge with the Almighty from Satan the Stoned, after which said she, "There is no diverter to whatso is doomed by the Lord nor availeth aught of solicitude against that commanded by the Omnipotent, the All- puissant; and His power is upon me with His destiny and needs must it come to pass." Then she called for a pen-case of gold and she wrote for placing over the gateway of the Palace the following couplets,[197]

"Behold here's a mansion like 'Home of Delight' * Whose sight
 heals the sick and abates all blight:
Here are roe-like maidens with breasts high raised * And with

charms of the straightest stature bedight:
Their eyes prey on the lion, the Desert's lord. * And sicken the
prostrate love- felled plight:
Whomso their glances shall thrust and pierce * Naught e'er
availeth mediciner's might:
Here Al-Hayfa scion of noble sire * E'en craven and sinner doth
fain invite;
And here for the drunken wight there abide * Five pardons[198]
and bittocks of bread to bite.
My desire is the maiden who joys in verse, * All such I welcome
with me to alight,
And drain red wine in the garth a-morn * where beasts and birds
all in pairs unite;
Where rose and lily and eglantine * And myrtle with scent
morning-breeze delight,
Orange bloom, gillyflower and chamomile * With Jasmine and
palm-bud, a joyful site.
Whoso drinketh not may no luck be his * Nor may folk declare him
of reason right!
Wine and song are ever the will of me * But my morning wine lacks
a comrade-wight
O who brightenest the Five[199] do thou rise and fetch * By
night for my use olden wine and bright:
O thou reading this writ, prithee comprehend: * Cross the stream
I swear thee by God's All-might!
This is House of Honour may none gainsay :* Cup-comrade shall be
who shall self invite;
For within these gates only women wone, * So of men-folk here
thou hast naught to affright."

When Al-Hayfa had finished her writing and what she had improvised of verse and couplets, she bade close the entrance of the Palace and went up, she and her women, to the higher apartments; and the while she was drowned in thought and fell to saying, "Would Heaven I knew an this mighty guard and ward will defend Al-Mihrjan and would I wot if this fortalice will fend off Fate and what fain must be." Then she enjoined her women to high diet and the drinking of wine and listening to intimate converse and the hearing of songs and musical instruments and gladness and gaiety for a while of time; and she felt herself safe from the shifts of chance and change. Such was her case but now we will recount (Inshallah!) what further befel her.[200] In the land of Sind was a King hight Sahl[201] and he was of the Monarchs of might, endowed with puissance and prepotency and exalted degree, abounding in troops and guards and overruling all that fair region. Now Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) had vouchsafed him a son than whom was none in his age fairer of semblance: beautiful exceedingly was he, with a face brighter far than the full moon; and he was of tongue eloquent and of pluck puissant, valorous, formidable. Also he was mighty fond of wine mere and rare and of drinks in the morning air and of converse with the fair and he delighted in mirth and merriment and he was assiduous in his carousing which he would never forego during the watches of the night or the wards of the day. Now for the abundance of his comeliness and the brilliancy of his countenance, whenever he walked abroad in the capital he would swathe his face with the Lithám,[202] lest wax madly enamoured of him the woman-kind and all creation, wherefore he was named the Veiled Yúsuf of Beauty. It chanced one night as he sat carousing with his boon companions that the wine prevailed over him and he became sprightly and frolicsome; so he went forth from the door of his cabinet in a state of drink, understanding naught and knowing nothing of that he did. He wandered about the rooms belonging to his father and there he saw a damsel of the paternal concubines standing at the door of her bower and his wine so mastered him that he went up to her and clasped her to his bosom and threw her backwards upon the floor. She cried aloud to the royal Eunuchs who stood there looking on at him, not one of them, however, dared arrest him or even draw near him to free the girl, so he had his will of her and abated her maidenhead after which he rose up from off her and left her all bleeding[203] from his assault. Now this slave-girl had been gifted to his sire and Yusuf left her to recover her condition when he would have visited her again, but as soon as he had returned to his apartment (and he not knowing what he had done) the Eunuchs took the damsel (she bleeding as before) and carried her to King Sahl who seeing her in such case exclaimed, “What man hath done this to her?” Said they, “’Tis thy son Yusuf;” and he, when he heard the words of his slaves, felt that this matter was hard upon him and sent to fetch the Prince. They hastened to bring him, but amongst the Mamelukes was one lovingly inclined to the youth who told him the whole tale and how his father had bade the body-guards summon him to the presence. And when Yusuf had heard the words of the Mameluke he arose in haste and baldrick’d his blade and hending his spear in hand he went down to the stables and saddled him a steed of the noblest blood and likeliest strain; then he mounted and, taking with him a score of Mamelukes his pages, he sallied forth with them through the city gate and rode on unknowing what was concealed from him in the Secret Purpose — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Seventy-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Prince Yusuf, son of King Sahl, went forth the city all unknowing whither he should wend and to what part he should turn, and he ceased not faring with his merry men for ten full-told days, cutting across the wold and wild and the valley and the stone-clad hill, and he was perplext as to his affair. But whilst he was still journeying he came upon the river Al-Kawa’ib and he drew in sight of the castle of Al-Hayfa, which stood amiddlemost that mighty stream with its height and bulk and defensive strength. Hereupon quoth Yusuf to himself, “By Allah, none founded this puissant fortalice in such power and prepotency and forcefulness save for a mighty matter and a cause of much consequence. Would Heaven I wot to whom this belongeth and who dwelleth therein!” Then he applied his mind and had recourse to the knowledge of his companions the Mamelukes and he commanded all his white slaves alight upon the marge of the river for the purpose of rest, and when they had reposed he asked them, “Who amongst you will go down to this stream and will over-swim it and will visit the lord of the Castle and bring us news of it and tidings of its ownership and discover for us the man to whom it belongeth?” But as no one would return him a reply he repeated his words without any answer and he, when he saw that, arose forthright and doffed what he had upon him of dress, all save his shirt only. Then he took his bow and quiver and placing his clothes with his weapon and arrow-case upon his head he went down to the river and swam it until he came forth it on the further side. Here he walked up to the gateway and found an impregnable entrance all of steel which none might avail to open, but when he saw the verses thereon inscribed and understood their significance he gave himself joy and was certified of entering. Then he took from his quiver a pen-case and paper whereupon he inscribed these couplets,

“At your door, O Fountains of weal, I stand * A stranger from
home and a-morning bann’d.
Your grace shall haply forfend my foe * And the hateful band of
unfriends disband:
I have none resort save your gates, the which * With verse like
carcanet see I spann’d:
Ibn Sahl hath ‘spied with you safe repair, * So for lonesome
stranger approach command!”

And when Yusuf had ended his writing, he folded the paper and made it fast to a shaft; then he took his bow and arming it drew the string and aimed the arrow at the upper terrace, where it dropped within the parapet. Now, by the decree of The Decreer Al-Hayfa was walking there with her women when the shaft fell between her feet and the paper became manifest, so she caught sight of it and took it up and opened it, and having read it understood its significance. Hereat she rejoiced and congratulated herself and her cheeks flushed rosy-red, and presently she went hastily in the direction of the entrance, whilst her women still looked down from the terrace upon the doorway and saw Yusuf a-foot before it. They cried out to their lady, “Verily there standeth below a youth lovely in his youthfulness, with his face gladdening as the crescent moon of Sha’abán.”[204] But when Al-Hayfa heard the words of the women she was glad and gave herself joy and sensed an oppression of pleasure, whilst her vitals palpitated and she perspired in her petticoat-trowsers.[205] Then she went down to the gateway which she bade be thrown open, and seeing Prince Yusuf she smiled in his face and welcomed him and greeted him. He returned her salam with sweetness of phrase and softness of words, when said she to him, “Well come and welcome and good cheer to thee, O thou who dost visit us and takest refuge in our demesne[206] and in our presence, for that here thou hast immunity and impunity and civility;” presently adding, “Enter into this guarded stead and feel thou no fear from any foe, for thou hast wrought thy wish and hast attained thine aim and hast won thy will, O fair of face and O perfect of form, O thou whose countenance excelleth the new moon: here thou hast preserved thy life and art saved from foeman’s strife.” Thereupon she mounted the staircase and he behind her, while the slave-girls surrounded the twain, and she conversed with him and cheered him with fair words and welcomed him once more till they had entered the Castle saloon, when she took his hand and seated him at the head of the hall. But as Yusuf looked upon the fortalice and the beauty of its building and the excellence of its ordinance and the high degree of its decorations which made it like unto the Palaces of Paradise, and as he beheld that furniture and those couches, with what was over them of hangings, and the gems and jewels and precious metals which abounded there, he magnified the matter in his mind and said to himself, “This place belongeth to none save to a mighty monarch!” Then Al-Hayfa bade her women bring a bundle of clothing, and when they had set it between her hands, she opened it and drew forth a suit of Daylakian[207] garments and a caftan of Coptick stuff (fine linen of Misraim purfled with gold), and bestowed them upon him, and she bound around his head an or-fringed Shash[208] with either end gem-adorned. And when he donned the dress his countenance became brilliant and its light shone afar, and his cheeks waxed red as rose, and she seeing this felt her wits bewildered and was like to faint. However, she soon recovered herself and said, “This is no mortal: verily he is naught but of the Húrs of Heaven.” Then she bade her women bring food — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Al-Hayfa bade her women bring the food trays, and when they obeyed her bidding and placed them between the hands of Yusuf, he considered them and saw that one was made of Yamání onyx and another of red carnelian and a third of rock chrystal, and they bore platters of gold and silver and porcelain and jasper. Upon them were ranged dishes furnished with the daintiest food which perplexed the wits, and sweetmeats and sumptuous meats, such as gazelle’s haunch and venison and fatted mutton and flesh of birds, all the big and the small, such as pigeon and rock-pigeon, and greens marinated and viands roasted and fried of every kind and colour and cheeses and sugared dishes. Then she seated Yusuf beside her and served him with all manner cates and confections and conjured him to fall-to and morselled him until he had eaten his sufficiency; after which they twain sat together in laughter and enjoyment each conjoined to other and both cast in the mould of beauty and loveliness and brilliancy and stature and symmetric grace as though in the likeness of a rattan-palm. All this and Al-Hayfa rejoiced in Yusuf, but ever and anon she took thought anent her sire King Al-Mihrjan and his works and she kept saying in her mind, “Would Heaven I wot will he wed me to this youth so charming of inner grace; and, if my father be not satisfied therewith, I will marry my lover in despite of him.” And the while Yusuf quoth to himself “Would Heaven I wot how my sire will act in the business of the concubine whose pucelage I did away, and would Heaven I knew if he have ridden forth in search of me, or he have lost sight of me and never asked of me.” On this wise either of the twain spoke to themselves, and neither of them believed in safety, all unknowing what was predestined to them by Him who saith to a thing, “Be” and it becometh. So Al-Hayfa and Yusuf sat drowned in the depths of thought, withal their joyance and enjoyment made them clean forget that writ for them by Fate; and the Prince gazing upon the greater tray saw graven upon its edge these couplets,

“For the gathering of friends and familiars design’d * Between
hands of Kings and Wazirs I’m shrin’d:
Upon me is whatever taste loves and joys * Of flesh and viands
all kinds combin’d:
From me fill thee full of these cates and praise * Thy Lord, the
Maker of all mankind.”

Then the attendants placed bread upon the trays, and the Prince found writ in moulded letters upon the loaves the couplets that follow,

“And a loaf new-born from the flour of wheat, * White and piping
hot from the oven-heat:
Quoth to me my chider, Be wise and say * Soothe my heart and
blame not, O friend I greet.”

Presently the handmaidens piled upon the trays platters of silver and porcelain (whereof mention hath been made) containing all that lip and tongue gratify of the meat of muttons in fry and Katá-grouse and pigeon-poults and quails and things that fly of every kind and dye which hungry men can long to espy, and Yusuf saw inscribed upon the china dishes the following couplets,

“Platters of china fair * That all men’s eyne ensnare,
None seeth in this our town * China of mould so rare.”

Then he looked upon the silver plate and found it graven with these lines,

“Plate worked in silver of the brightest white * In height of
beauty, O thou joy to sight,
When fully finisht and when perfect made * Becometh chargers
peerless in delight.”

And portrayed upon the porcelain were all that grow and fly of geese and poultry. Anon a handmaid brought in hand a knife wherewith to carve the meats, and Yusuf looking at the blade saw upon it letters gold-inlaid and forming these verses,

“I am blade of finest grain * Wherefrom comes naught of bane:
Fro’ my friends all harm I ward * And thy foes by me be slain!”

Hereupon the handmaids ended the ordinance of the table and set everything in its own stead; after which the Princess took seat beside the Prince and said to him, “O my lord, hearten our heart and deign grace to us and honour us by eating with us: this indeed be a day of joy for my union with thee and for thy lighting this my lodging with the splendour of thy semblance so bright and thy beauty so rare and for thine alighting at my home and thine opportune kindness and thine inner graciousness,[209] O thou unique one of the Age and the Time, and O thou who hast no peer in our day and our tide.” Now when Yusuf heard the words of Al-Hayfa he said to her, “Wallahi, O thou who the moons adornest and who the sun and the daylight shamest, O lady of brow flower-bright and of stature elegant-slight, O thou who passest in beauty and comeliness all mortal beings, O thou with smile like water sweet and mouth-dews like purest spring and of speech the softest, I wot thou art the lady of goodness and excellence and generosity and liberality.” Then she again fell to morselling the Prince until they both had a sufficiency of food, whereupon she bade them fetch water for washing their hands after meat. And they brought to Yusuf a basin of glittering gold, when he rejoiced with exceeding exultation the while he was sunk in meditation, and at times he gazed upon Al-Hayfa and his wits were bewildered and his senses seduced him to something he would do with her for the abundance that was in her of beauty and loveliness. But his reason forbade to him his passion, and quoth he in his mind, "To everything its own time," — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will." It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Yusuf said, "To everything its own time, and soothly sayeth the old saw, Whoso hurrieth upon a matter ere opportunity consent shall at last repent. Now when they brought the basin before him and therein stood an ewer of chrystal garnished with gold, he looked at it and saw graven thereupon the following couplets,

"I'm a Basin gold beautifies * For the hands of the great and the
 wise:
Abased[210] for the cleansing of palms, * Washing hands with
 the water of eyes."

Thereat he considered the ewer and saw inscribed upon it these lines,

"O rare the Ewer's form whereon must dote * Our hearts and pupils
 of our eyes fain gloat:
Seems ferly fair to all admiring orbs * You seemly body wi' the
 slender throat."

And when he had finished washing his hands and had dried them with the napkins he pointed at them and spoke these couplets,

"Groweth my love a-heart and how to hide * When o'er the plains

of cheek tear-torrents glide?
I veil what love these sobs and moans betray * With narrowed
heart I spread my patience wide.
O Farer to the fountain,[211] flow these eyes * Nor seek from
other source to be supplied:
Who loveth, veil of Love his force shall reave, * For tears shall
tell his secrets unespied:
I for the love of you ain bye-word grown, * My lords, and driven
to the Desert-side;
While you in heart of me are homed, your home; * And the
heart-dweller kens what there may bide."

When Prince Yusuf had finished his improvisation and the poetry which he produced, Princess Al-Hayfa bussed him upon the brow, and he seeing this waxed dazed of his wits and right judgment fled him and he fell fainting to the floor for a while of time. And when he came to himself he pondered how she had entreated him and his Passion would have persuaded him to do with her somewhat but Reason forbad and with her force he overcame himself. After his improvising Al-Hayfa again saluted him on the front and cried, "Indeed thou hast done well in thy words, O thou with Crescent's brow!" Presently she came for the table of wine and filling a cup drank it off; then she crowned another goblet and passed it to Yusuf who took it and kissed it while she improvised some couplets as follows,

"Thy seduction of lips ne'er can I forbear * Nor deny
love-confession for charms so rare:
O thou aim of my eyes, how my longing stay? * O thou tall of form
and long wavy hair?
Thy rose-hued cheek showeth writ new-writ[212] * Dimming wine
my cups in their rondure bear."

And presently she added,[213]

"I hid his phantom, by the Lord, but showed * My looks the blush
his scented cheek had sent:

How veil the joy his love bestows, when I * To blood-red[214]
tears on cheek give open vent,
When his uplighted cheek my heart enfires * As though a-morn in
flame my heart were pent?
By Allah, ne'er my love for you I'll change * Though change my
body and to change consent.

And when Al-Hayfa had finished her improvisation and her poetry, Yusuf drained the goblet and after kissing it returned it to her; but he was as one a-swoon. Then she took it from him and he recovered and presently declaimed for her the following couplets,

"A maiden in your tribe avails my heart with love to fire[215]

* And how can I a-hidden bear the love my eyes declare?
The branches of the sand-hill tree remember and recall * What
time she softly bent and showed a grace beyond compare;
And taught me how those eyne o'erguard the roses of her cheek *
And knew to ward them from the hand to cull her charms would
dare."

As soon as Yusuf had finished his improvisation and what of poetry he had produced, Al-Hayfa took seat by his side and fell to conversing with him in sweetest words with softest smiles, the while saying, "Fair welcome to thee, O wonder of beauty and lovesome in eloquence and O charming in riant semblance and lord of high degree and clear nobility: thou hast indeed illumined our place with the light of thy flower-like forehead and to our hearts joyance hast thou given and our cares afar hast thou driven and eke our breasts hast made broad; and this is a day of festival to laud, so do thou solace our souls and drain of our wine with us for thou art the bourne and end and aim of our intent." Then Al-Hayfa took a cup of chrystal, and crowning it with clear-strained wine which had been sealed with musk and saffron, she passed it to Prince Yusuf. He accepted it from her albeit his hand trembled from what befel him of her beauty and the sweetness of her poetry and her perfection; after which he began to improvise these couplets,

“O thou who drainest thy morning wine * With friends in a bower
sweet blooms enshrineÂ
Place unlike all seen by sight of man * In the lands and gardens
of best design — ,
Take gladly the liquor that quivers in cup * And elevates man,
this clean Maid of the Vine:
This goblet bright that goes round the room * Nor Chosroës held
neither Nu’uman’s line.
Drink amid sweet flowers and myrtle’s scent * Orange-bloom and
Lily and Eglantine,
And Rose and Apple whose cheek is dight * In days that glow with
a fiery shine;
‘Mid the music of strings and musician’s gear * Where harp and
pipe with the lute combine; —
An I fail to find her right soon shall I * Of parting perish
foredeemed to die!”

Then Al-Hayfa responded to him in the same rhyme and measure and spake to him as follows,

“O thou who dealest in written line * Whose nature hiding shall
e’er decline;
And subdued by wine in its mainest might * Like lover drunken by
strains divine,[216]
Do thou gaze on our garden of goodly gifts * And all manner
blooms that in wreaths entwine;
See the birdies warble on every bough * Make melodious music the
finest fine.
And each Pippet pipes[217] and each Curlew cries * And
Blackbird and Turtle with voice of pine;
Ring-dove and Culver, and eke Hazár, * And Katá calling on Quail
vicine;
So fill with the mere and the cups make bright * With bestest
liquor, that boon benign; —
This site and sources and scents I espy * With Rizwan’s garden
compare defy.”

And when Al-Hayfa had ended her improvisation and what she had spoken to him of poetry, and Yusuf had given ear to the last couplet, he was dazed and amazed and he shrieked aloud and waxed distraught for her and for the women that were beside and about her, and after the cry he fell fainting to the ground. But in an hour[218] he came to, when the evening evened and the wax candles and the chandeliers were lighted, his desire grew and his patience flew and he would have risen to his feet and wandered in his craze but he found no force in his knees. So he feared for himself and he remained sitting as before. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Seventy-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when Yusuf remained sitting as before, Al-Hayfa asked him saying, "How art thou hight, O dearling of my heart and fruit of my vitals?" Hereupon he told her his name and the name of his sire, and related to her the whole of what had befallen him, first and last, with the affair of the concubine and his faring forth from his own city and how he had sighted her Palace and had swum the stream and shot the shaft that carried the paper, after which he recited to her these couplets,

"I left my home for a fair young maid * Whose love my night with
its light array'd;
Yet wot I not what her name may be * Thus ignorance mating with
union forbade.
But when of her gifts I was certified * Her gracious form the
feat easy made;

The King of Awe sent my steps to her * And to union with beauty
vouchsafed me aid:
Indeed disgrace ever works me shame * Tho’ long my longing to
meet I’m afraid.”

When Al-Hayfa heard his name her great love to him waxed greater. Then she took the lute upon her lap and caressed it with her finger-tips when it sighed and sobbed and groaned and moaned[219] and she fell to singing these verses,

“A thousand welcomes hail thy coming fain, * O Yusuf, dearling
son of Sahl’s strain:
We read thy letter and we understood * Thy kingly birth from sand
that told it plain:[220]
I’m thine, by Allah, I the loveliest maid * Of folk and thou to
be my husband deign:
Bruit of his fair soft cheek my love hath won * And branch and
root his beauty grows amain:
He from the Northern Realms to us draws nigh * For King Mihrjan
bequeathing ban and bane;
And I behold him first my Castle seek * As mate impelled by
inspiration fain.
The land upstirs he and the reign he rules * From East to West,
the King my father slain;
But first he flies us for no fault of ours * Upon us wasting
senseless words and vain:
E’en so Creation’s Lord hath deigned decree, * Unique in
Heaven — glorified be He!”[221]

Now when Yusuf heard the words of Al-Hayfa he rejoiced with exceeding joy and she was gladdened in like manner, after which he gifted her with all that was upon him of gear and in similar guise she doffed what dress was upon her and presented it to him.[222] Then she bade the slave-girls bring her an especial suit and they fetched her a second bundle and she clothed Yusuf with what was therein of sumptuous clothes. After this the Prince abode with Al-Hayfa as an inmate of her palace for a term of ten days in all the happiness of life, eating and drinking and enjoying conjugal intercourse.[223] Presently Almighty Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) decreed that, when all tidings of Yusuf son of Sahl were lost, his sire sent in search of him Yahyŕ,[224] his cousin and the son of his maternal aunt, amongst a troop of twenty knights to track his trail and be taught his tidings until Allah (be He glorified and magnified!) guided him to the pages who had been left upon the river-bank. Here they had tarried for ten days whilst the sunshine burnt them and hunger was exterminating them; and when they were asked concerning their lord, they gave notice that he had swum the stream and had gone up to yonder Castle and had entered therein. "And we know not (they ended) whether he be alive or dead." So the lord Yahya said to them, "Is there amongst you any will cross the current and bring us news of him?" But not one of them would consent and they remained in silence and confusion. So he asked them a second time and a third time yet none would rise up before him and hearten him to attempt the dangers of the stream, whereupon he drew forth his ink-case of brass and a sheet of paper and he fell to writing the following verses,

"This day I have witnessed a singular case * Of Yusuf scion to
    Sahl's dear race:
Since he fared at undurn his sire was grieved * And the Palace
    remained but an empty place:
I liken the youth to full moon 'mid stars * Disappeadng and
    darkening Earth's bright face.
'Tis my only fear that his heart is harmed, * Brent by Love-fires
    lacking of mercy and grace:
By Allah, albeit man's soul thou rule * Among stranger folk thou
    art but an ace!"

Presently he took a reed and grasping it thrust thereinto the twisted and folded paper, after which he stopped the hole with wax; then, lashing it to the surface of the shaft, he set it upon the bow-handle and drew the string and shot the bolt in the direction of the Castle, whither it flew and fell at the foot of the staircase beside the main entrance. It so fortuned at that time a slave-girl came forth to fill her pitcher with water and she found the arrow and picked it up and carried it to her lady who was sitting in the speak-room at converse with Yusuf. Hereupon the Prince hent the reed in hand and broke it and drew forth the paper which he opened and read and comprehended. Hereupon he wept with exceeding great weeping until he fell to the floor a-faint and the Princess took the note from his grasp and perused it, and it was hard upon her, so she bade them beat the slave-girl who brought the writ with an hundred blows and they bastinadoed her till she lost her senses. But when Yusuf recovered, he thought of his pages and his people and his homestead and his family and he cried to Al-Hayfa, “Wallahi, I have sinned with a great sin when I left my suite in the desert; and Satan garred me forget them and the wine made me mindless of them and banished from my thought my folk and my home. And now ’tis my desire to fare and look upon my pages and to forgather with Yahya my cousin, the son of the King’s sister and greet them and dismiss them to their homesteads, after which I will return to thee forthright.” Quoth she, “By Allah, I may not patient myself away from thee a single hour otherwise shall my spirit depart my body, and I conjure thee by the Almighty that thou bid me return to them a reply!” Quoth Prince Yusuf, “What news wilt thou give them? An thou say that I never came to thee none will believe; for indeed my pages saw me passing into thy Palace” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Eightieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Prince Yusuf said to the Princess Al-Hayfa, “Indeed my pages saw me passing into the Palace and have given him[225] tidings to that effect.” And she responded to him with fairest response and tenderness of terms and gem-like verse. Then she took her ink-case and paper and a brazen pen and would have written but he forbade her, saying by way of deprecation "This be not the right rede! An thou return a reply my slaves will take it and will bear it to my native country and will inform the folk of all our adventure: 'tis better far that I fare to them myself and greet them and going with them to my own country satisfy my sire, after which I will return to thee in hottest haste. And do not thou on this wise, for we fear lest our affair be made public and this our case be reported to thy royal father, and it prove hard to him by reason that all such talk in the case of the Kings is to them mighty grievous. Moreover, when he shall be acquainted with the truth he will either transport thee to his presence or he shall place over this Palace guards who may forbid thee from me and forbid me from thee, and this shall be a cause of our separation each from other." But Al-Hayfa shrieked aloud when she heard these words and wept and wailing said, "O my lord, prithee take me with thee, me and my handmaids and all that be in this my Palace." Said he, "I will not delay from thee save for the space of my wayfare an I live and Allah Almighty preserve me." Hereat she wept with loud weeping and groaned, and love-longing surged up in her and she fell to repeating the following couplets,

"Rain, O mine eyeballs, gouts of blood beshed * From clouds of
    eyelids e'en as grass turns red.
O mighty bane that beatest on my bones * And oh heart-core, that
    melts with fire long-fed!
My soul's own dearling speedeth on his march * Who can be patient
    when his true love sped?
Deal kindly with my heart, have ruth, return * Soon to my Castle
    nor be long misled."

And when Al-Hayfa had ended her verse, Yusuf wept with sore weeping and cried, "By Allah, I had intended to return to thee after I had fared to them and had settled the matter in hand. But suffer me dismiss those who have come for me and seek reunion with thee, Inshallah — an it be the will of Allah Almighty." Then he farewelled her and doffed what he had of dress, and when Al-Hayfa asked him, “Wherefore take off these clothes?” he answered,[226] “I will not inform anyone of our news, and indeed this dress mostly befitteth womenkind.” Then he went forth from her with a grief-bound heart and she wept and cried, “Help! Help!”[227] and all her women shrieked and shed tears over parting with him. But as soon as Yusuf passed out of the palace-door he took off the gown which was upon him and turband’d it around his head together with his bow and quiver, and he stinted not to stem the stream until he had reached the further bank where he found and greeted the lord Yahya and his Mamelukes. They all kissed his hand, and his cousin enquired of him, “What is the cause of thy disappearing from these thy men for a space of ten days?” He replied, “By Allah, O son of my aunt, when I went up to yonder Palace, I found there a Youth of the sons of the kings, who welcomed and greeted me as a guest and honoured me with the highmost honour and favoured me with the fullest favour. But when I would have taken leave of him, the air smote me[228] and fell upon my loins and laid me up so that I feared to swim the stream and the unease that was upon me increased, and such is the reason of my delaying away from you.” Then he took horse together with Yahya and the pages, and they all sought their homes and cut across the wilds and the wastes and the vales and the stony hills until they drew near to their destination and their city rose clear before eyes of them. As soon as they reached it the tidings were told to King Sahl[229] who made ready for faring forth, he and the lords of his land, to meet and greet his son and heir Yusuf; and meanwhile he bade decorate the capital with the choicest decorations and ornaments and adornments. The lieges gave one another joy of their Prince’s safe return, and clothed their city in gala-guise, and the father having met the son alighted from his steed and embraced him and kissed him between the eyes, and personally conducting him up to the Palace did him due honour and largessed him; and so great and lasting was their joy that the day of arrival became high holiday. As soon as night fell, Prince Yusuf repaired to his own Palace where he was met by his mother and his women who were as full moons a-rising; and the spouses numbered three, besides forty concubines. However he turned away from them and he lay alone that night moaning even as moaneth the dove for the loss of her mate; and he regarded not one of those wives and lemans, and he passed the dark hours in brooding over the loss of his beloved, and in weeping and in the reciting of poetry — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Eighty-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Yusuf passed the night weeping and improvising verse, but he let not fall a word of explanation fearing lest he divulge his secret; and his spouses supposed that he was wroth with his sire and knew not what there was in his vitals of exceeding desire to Al-Hayfa. But when brake the day he was roused and gazing upon the rise of awaking Dawn he pondered the happy mornings which had passed; so he wept and complained and moaned like the culver and he fell to reciting these couplets,

“No joy but you in house and home I know * Save bitter heart and
tears that ever flow;
Nor with mine eyes I view aught save yourselves * Whenas in lowe
of love-desire I glow:
My heart enjoys but gust and greed for you, * Mine eyelids own no
joy save wake and woe:
O blaming me for them, avaunt, by God * Nor leave me fancy-free,
worst gift of foe!”

And when Yusuf had finished his poetry he fell into a fainting fit and he quivered as quivereth the fowl with cut throat,[230] and he came not to himself save when the sun had arisen arraying the lowlands with its rays. Then he waxed wood and sat with eyes at the ground, a-gazing and not accosting anyone nor answering aught, and lastly he took to his pillow. These tidings presently reached the King his father, who accompanied by the Lords of his land came to him and after greeting him said, “O my son, whom I would ransom with my life, what contagion hath come upon thee of disease, and whereof dost thou complain?” Quoth he, “O my father, the air hath struck me and hath cut my joints,”[231] and quoth his father, “O my son, Almighty Allah vouchsafe ease thee of this thy disease.” Then the King mounted and went forth from him, and sent a leach which was a Jew[232] of wits penetrating and sagacious. The man went in to him, and sitting beside him felt his joints and asked him of his case; but he held his peace nor would return aught of reply. So the Israelite knew that he was a lover and in the depths of love bedrowned; accordingly he left him and told the King that the Prince had no complaint save that he was a hot amourist and distraught of vitals. Hereupon his mother came to Yusuf and said, “O my son, fear Almighty Allah for thy soul, and have some regard for thy wives and concubines and yield not to thy passions which will mislead thee from the path of Allah.” But he deigned not answer her. In this condition he remained until three days sped, taking no taste of meat or drink, nor finding pleasure in any stead, nor aught of rest a-bed. Presently he bade summon a Mameluke of the Mamelukes Hilál hight, and asked him, “O Hilal, say me wilt thou be my companion in travel?” whereto the other answered, “Yea, verily, O my lord, to hear is to obey thee in all thou devisest and desirest.” Hereupon the Prince bade him saddle a steed of the purest blood, whose name was “The-Bull-aye-ready-and-for-Battle-day- steady,”[233] a beast which was a bye-word amongst the folk. The Prince waited until the first third of the night had gone by when he mounted the courser and placed Hilal his Mameluke upon the crupper, and they cut once more the wilds and the wastes until they sighted hard-by the river Al-Kawa’ib and the Castle of Al-Hayfa rising from its waters. Hereupon Yusuf fell to the ground in a swoon, and he when he recovered said to Hilal, “Do thou ungirth the horse’s saddle and hide it within the cave amid the rocks;” and the Mameluke did as he was bidden and returned to him. Herewith Prince Yusuf turband’d himself with his clothes and those of his man and backing the horse bade Hilal hang on by its tail, then the beast breasted the stream and ceased not swimming with them until it reached the farther side. There Yusuf dismounted and knocked at the door when a confidential handmaid established in the good graces of her mistress,[234] came down and threw it open, after which she embraced him and kissed his hands and his breast and his brow between the eyes. Then she ran up and informed thereof her lady who with wits bedazed for excess of joy hurried down to him and threw her arms round his neck, and he threw his arms round hers, and she clasped him to her bosom, and he clasped her to his, and he kissed her and she kissed him, and they exchanged accolades, after which they both of them fell fainting to the floor until the women who stood by thought that they had been reaped by Death, and that their latest hour had been doomed. But when they recovered from their swoon they complained and wept, each lamenting to other the pains of parting, and lastly she asked him concerning Hilal, and he answered, “This is a Mameluke of the number of my Mamelukes.” So she marvelled how two men had come upon one horse,[235] and quoth she to him, “O Yusuf, thou hast indeed tortured me with thine absence;” and quoth he to her, “By Allah (and beside Him God there is none!) my hand never touched or woman or aught of feminine kind or of she-Jinn or Jinn kind, but in me desire for thee ever surged up, and wake and in vitals a fiery ache.” Then the Princess bade her handmaids wend with Hilal in a body to the garden, and when they obeyed her bidding she arose and walked forth with Yusuf. And Shahrazad was surprised by dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Eighty-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting, and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Al-Hayfa walked forth with

Yusuf and led him to the saloon of session where they passed their day in privacy, he and she, and right joyous was the joy of them twain. After this the Prince abode with her thirty full-told days in merriment prime and pleasure and wine. But when that time had elapsed, she said to him, “O light of my eyes, do thou arise and go up with me to the highmost post of the Palace that we may look upon this flow of stream and command a view of these mounts and mountains and these wilds and valleys wherein wander the gazelles.” Thereupon the twain fared together and solaced themselves with the spectacle of the antelopes browsing on the desert growth, when quoth Al-Hayfa, “Ah, O my lord, would I had for captive one of these herding roes to keep beside me in the Palace,” and quoth he, “By the rights of thine eyes, and the night of their pupils, I indeed will fill the place with them.” Hereupon he went forth from her in haste, albeit she hung on to him and forbade him from that, and she invoked upon herself a mighty strong invocation, yet would he not be stayed, but taking his horse and saddling it he left his Mameluke Hilal in the Castle and swam the stream upon his steed, and rode through the wold in quest of the gazelles. He ceased not chasing them till he had taken three,[236] which he tied fast and slung upon his courser and rode back until he had reached the river-bank, and Al-Hayfa sat looking at him as he pounced upon and snatched up the roes from his courser’s back like a lion and she wondered with extreme wonderment. But when he had made sure of his place on the water-side and purposed returning to the palace, lo and behold! he saw a batel[237] manned by sundry men coming towards him down-stream from the direction of his capital. Now Al-Hayfa, who was in her bower, expected the craft to be sent, bearing rarities and presents, by her sire King Al-Mihrjan; and Yusuf, when he looked upon its approach, was certified that it came from her father. So he delayed going down to the river till he had seen what action might be taken by the batel, but when the Princess sighted it she made sure of its coming from her sire, so she bade bring paper for note and a pen of brass wrought wherewith she wrote in verse and lastly indited to Yusuf these couplets,

“O my need, thou hast left me a-field to fare * When come is a
craft which our men doth bear:

I deem she be sent by Al-Mihrján * And it bringeth of provaunt a
goodly share:
So loiter a little, then back to us * And obey my bidding, O
Beauty rare."[238]

Then she made fast the paper to a shaft and setting it upon a bow-handle drew the string aiming high in air, and the arrow fell between the feet of the Prince, who seeing it took it up and read the writ and comprehended its meaning and full significance. So he hung back and he turned to wandering amongst the mountains, but anon he said in himself, "There is no help but that I discover this matter." Then he dismounted from his steed and stabled it in a cave hard-by, and having loosed the antelopes he propped himself against a rock and fell to gazing upon the batel, which ceased not floating down until it made fast at the Palace gate. Hereupon there issued from it a youth, singular of comeliness, whom Al-Hayfa greeted and embraced, and forthright led within her Palace. Presently came forth from the batel the four pages that were therein, and amongst them was a man hight Mohammed ibn Ibráhím, one of the King's cup-companions, whereas the youth she had embraced was her cousin, named Sahlúb, the son of her maternal aunt. But when Yusuf looked upon this lover-like reception, his wits were wildered and the sparks started from his eyes, and he deprecated and waxed care-full and indeed he was like one Jinn-mad, and he cried, "Walláhi, I will stay away from them this night and see whatso they do." Now Al-Hayfa had left her trusty handmaid at the Palace gate, saying to her, "Tarry here alone: haply Yusuf shall return during the dark hours, when do thou open to him the door." Then she returned to her guests and bade serve the table of wine and seated Sahlub and Ibn Ibrahim, and took seat between them after she had hidden the Mameluke Hilal in a closet and she had disposed of the pages about the Palace-sides. Then they fell to drinking wine. Such was the case with these; but as regards Yusuf, he took patience until the dark hours drew near, when he swam the stream and he came forth it to the Palace-door, at which he knocked a light knock. Hereupon the porter-handmaiden opened to him and he accosted her and questioned her concerning her lady, and was told that she was sitting with her cousin and the prime favourite and cup-companion of her sire. So quoth he to the girl, “Say me, canst thou place me in some commanding place that I may look upon them?” and she did accordingly, choosing a site whence he might spy them without being espied. He gazed at them as one distraught, while Al-Hayfa engaged them in converse and improvised verse to them; and this was so distressful to him that at last he asked the slave-girl, “Say me, hast thou by thee ink-case and paper?” And — Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Eighty-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale, that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Prince Yusuf took from the handmaid the pen-case and paper, and waxing void of sense through jealousy, fell to writing the following couplets,

“Indeed I deemed you of memory true * And our hearts as one that had once been two;
But I found to my sorrow you kept no pact: * This much and you fain of unfaith I view.
Ill eye ne’er looketh on aught but love * Save when the lover is hater too.
You now to another than us incline * And leave us and homeward path pursue;
And if such doings you dare gainsay, * I can summon witness convicting you;
To the Lion, wild dogs from the fount shall drive * And shall drink themselves, is none honour due.
That I’m not of those who a portion take * In love, O Moslems, I know ye knew.”

This done, he folded the paper and gave it to the slave-girl crying, “Say me, dost thou know where be Hilal?” and as she replied “Yes,” he told her to fetch him. So she went and brought him, and when he came his lord dismissed the girl on some pretext; then he opened the Castle-door and turband’d himself with his gear and that of his Mameluke, and the twain went down to the river and swam the stream until they reached the other side. When they stood on terra firma, the Prince found his horse and saddled and mounted him, taking Hilal upon the crupper, and rode forth to his own country. Such was the case with Yusuf; but as regards Al-Hayfa, when she awoke a-morn, she asked of her lover and her handmaid handed to her the letter; so she took it and read it and mastered its meaning and significance, after which she wept with excessive weeping until she fainted and the blood issued from her eyes. Presently she came to herself and dismissed Sahlub and his companions; then she said to Ibn Ibrahim, “Rise thou and depart our presence; haply some wight may come to us and swim the stream and pass into the Palace.” But Ibn Ibrahim remained behind while Sahlub departed with those about him; and when they had left the company, Al-Hayfa asked, “O Ibn Ibrahim, say me, canst thou keep my secret and my being fascinate[239] by love?” and he answered, “Yea, verily, O my lady, how should I not conceal it for thee, when thou art my mistress and princess and the daughter of my master, even though I keep it inside mine eyes?” So she continued, “O Ibn Ibrahim, there came to me a youth named the Veiled Yusuf of Beauty, son of King Sahl, Sovran of Sind; and I waxed enamoured of him and he waxed enamoured of me, and he abode with me two score of days. One day of the days, quoth I to him, ‘Come up with me to the Palace-roof that we may gaze upon the view,’ when we saw from its height a herd of gazelles, and I cried, ‘Ah that I had one of these!’ Hereat said he, ‘By Allah, and by the life of thine eyes and by the blackness of their pupils, I will in very deed fill thy Palace therewith;’ and with such words he went forth and saddled his steed and swam the river to the further side, where he rode down three roes within sight of me. Then I looked city-ward up stream and saw a batel cleaving the waters, whereby I knew that my father had sent me somewhat therein; so I wrote to the Prince and shot the paper bound to a shaft and bade him hide away from your faces until ye should have departed. So he concealed himself within a cave where he tethered his horse, then he sought tidings of me, and seeing my cousin Sahlub, he was seized by jealousy. So he lingered till yesternight, when he again swam the stream and came to the Palace where I had posted Rádih, the handmaid, bidding her take seat beside the door lest haply he should enter; and presently she opened to him and he sought a place commanding a sight of us, and he saw me sitting with you twain, and both of you were carousing over your wine. Now this was sore to him; so he wrote to me yonder note, and taking his Mameluke with him, fared forth to his own folk; and my desire is that you hie to him."[240] — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Eighty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that quoth Al-Hayfa to Ibn Ibrahim, "I devise that thou hie to Yusuf with this letter;" whereto quoth he, "Hearkening is obedience: I will, however, take this thy writ and wend with it first to my own folk, after which I will mount my horse and fare to find him." So she largessed him with an hundred gold pieces and entrusted to him the paper which contained the following purport in these couplets,

"What state of heart be this no ruth can hoard? * And harm a
  wretch to whom none aid accord,
But sobs and singulfs, clouds that rain with tears * And seas aye
  flowing and with gore outpour'd;
And flames that rage in vitals sickness-burnt * The while in
  heart-core I enfold them stor'd.

Yet will I hearten heart with thee, O aim! * O Ravisher, O
Moslems' bane ador'd:
Ne'er did I look for parting but 'twas doomed * By God Almighty
of all the lords the Lord."

Then Mohammed Ibn Ibrahim took the paper and Al-Hayfa said to him, "Ho thou! Inform none that thou wast sitting beside me on that night." Then he went forth until he drew near his folk and there he mounted a she-dromedary and pushed her pace until he arrived at the capital of Sind. He asked for the son of the King; and when they had directed him thereto he entered and found the Prince in privacy; so he kissed hands and gave him the writ which he took and opened and read. But when he had comprehended its object and purport, he turned and re-turned it with stern regards until he had well nigh torn it to tatters. Then he threw it to Ibn Ibrahim who said to him, "O lord of the Time and the Tide, 'tis not on this wise that the sons of the Kings cast away an address without returning aught of reply." Quoth he, "There is no response from me," and quoth Ibn Ibrahim, "O King of the Age, pity that thou mayest be pitied!"[241] Hereupon the Prince called for pen-case and paper of note and pen of brass wrought[242] and wrote in reply to her poetry the following couplets,

"Al-Hayfá with verses a-tip of tongue * Comes suing mercy for
love so strong:
She hath no mercy fro' me, but still * She pleadeth a plea that
our love was long:
She falsed, turned face, doubted, recked her naught * And her
hard false heart wrought me traitor's wrong:
Were my heart now changčd her love to woo * She with quick
despisal my heart had stung:
Were my eyne to eye her, she'd pluck them out * With tip of
fingers before the throng:
Soft and tranquil life for her term she seeks * While with
hardness and harshness our souls are wrung.

Then Yusuf folded the paper and handed it to Ibn Ibrahim and ordered him a robe of honour and an hundred dinars. So he took them and rode forth until he drew near the Palace of Al-Hayfa, when he tethered his dromedary and hid her in a cave whose mouth he walled with stones. Then he went down to the river and swam it till he reached the other side; and entering into the presence of Al-Hayfa he drew forth the paper and committed it to her. But she, after perusing it, wept with sore weeping and groaned until she swooned away for excess of tears and for the stress of what had befallen her. Such was the effect of what she had read in the letter, and she knew not what might be the issue of all this affair and she was perplext as one drunken without wine. But when she recovered she called for pen-case and paper, and she wrote these improvised couplets,

"O Lord of folk, in our age alone * And O Raper of hearts from
the bonny and boon:
I have sent to thee 'plaining of Love's hard works * And my
plaint had softened the hardest stone:
Thou art silent all of my need in love * And with shafts of
contempt left me prone and strown."

And after she had ended writing she folded her note and gave it to Ibn Ibrahim who took it, and cried to his slaves, "Saddle my she-dromedary,", after which he mounted and fared until he had made the city of Sind. Then he repaired to Yusuf and after greetings handed the letter to him, but the Prince after perusing it[243] threw it in his face, and presently rose and would have left him. But Ibn Ibrahim followed him and heard him say to his pages, "Send him back without beating him," and they did accordingly, after forbidding him the place. So he again bestrode his she-camel and ceased not pushing on till he arrived at the Palace of Al-Hayfa where he presented himself in her presence.[244] But when he handed to her the writ she found it was that very same she had sent to the Prince, so she wept and sorrow was sore upon her and presently she cried, "O Ibn Ibrahim! what's to do?" He replied, "When I delivered thy writ to him, he brake its seal and read it and threw it in my face: then he rose in wrath from beside me, and as I followed he bade his slaves and pages drive me away, adding, 'I have for her nor answer nor address'; and this was all he did." When the Princess heard his words, she felt the matter to be grievous, and she wept unknowing how she should act, and fainted for awhile, and when she recovered she said, "O Ibn Ibrahim, what is this affair and on what wise shall I behave? Do thou advise me in my case; and haply joy shall come to me from thy hand, for that thou be a Counsellor of the Kings and their boon-companion." "O my lady," he replied, "do thou not cut off thy tidings from him and haply shall Almighty Allah change his heart from case to case and peradventure insistance overcometh hindrance."[245] Quoth she, "Had he sent me a reply I had been rightly directed as to what I should write, but now I wot not what to indite, and if this condition long endure I shall die." "Address him again," answered he, "and I will fare back once more and fain would I ransom thee with my life, nor will I return without a reply." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Eighty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Ibn Ibrahim said to Al-Hayfa, "Do thou write to him and there is no help but that I return to thee with a reply, albe life depart from me." Then she asked for pen-case and paper and thereon indited the following couplets,

"Ah would thou knew what I of parting dree * When all my hiddens
show for man to see;
Passion and longing, pine and lowe o' love * Descend surchargĕd
on the head of me:
God help the days that sped as branches lopt * I spent in Garden
of Eternity.[246]
And I of you make much and of your love * By rights of you, while

dearest dear be ye:[247]
May Allah save you, parted though we be, * While bide I parted
all unwillingly:
Then, O my lord, an come thou not right soon * The tomb shall
home me for the love of thee."

And when she had written her reply, she largessed Ibn Ibrahim with an hundred dinars, after which he returned[248] to the capital of Sind, where he found Yusuf issuing forth to hunt; so he handed to him the letter, and the Prince returning citywards set apart for him a fair apartment and spent the livelong night asking anent Al-Hayfa. And when it was morning he called for pen-case and paper whereupon he wrote these improvised couplets,

"You dealt to us a slender dole our love mote satisfy, * Yet nor
my gratitude therefor nor laud of me shalt gain:
I'm none of those console their hearts by couplets or by verse *
For breach of inner faith by one who liefly breaks the
chain:
When so it fortunes she I love a partner gives to me * I wone in
single bliss and let my lover love again:
Take, then, what youth your soul desires; with him forgather, for

* I aim not at your inner gifts nor woo your charms I deign:
You set for me a mighty check of parting and ill-will * In public
fashion and a-morn you dealt me bale and bane:
Such deed is yours and ne'er shall it, by Allah satisfy * A boy,
a slave of Allah's slaves who still to slave is fain."

Then Prince Yusuf robed Ibn Ibrahim in a robe of green; and giving him an hundred gold pieces, entrusted him with the letter which he carried to Al-Hayfa and handed it to her. She brake the seal and read it and considered its contents, whereupon she wept with sore weeping which ended in her shrieking aloud; and after she abode perplext as to her affair and for a time she found no sweetness in meat and drink, nor was sleep pleasant to her for the stress of her love-longing to Yusuf. Also her nature tempted her to cast herself headlong from the terrace of the Palace; but Ibn Ibrahim forbade her saying, “Do thou write to him replies, time after time; haply shall his heart be turned and he will return unto thee.” So she again called for writing materials and indited these couplets, which came from the very core of her heart,

“Thou art homed in a heart nothing else shall invade; * Save thy
  love and thyself naught shall stay in such stead;
O thou, whose brilliancy lights his brow, * Shaped like
  sandhill-tree with his locks for shade,
Forbid Heaven my like to aught else incline * Save you whose
  beauties none like display’d:
Art thou no amongst mortals a starless moon * O beauty the dazzle
  of day hath array’d?”

These she committed[249] to Ibn Ibrahim who rode again on his route and forgathered with Prince Yusuf and gave him the letter, whose contents were grievous to him; so he took writing materials and returned a reply in the following verses,

“Cease then to carry missives others write, * O Son of Ibrahim,
  shun silly plight:
I’m healed of longing for your land and I * Those days forget and
  daysters lost to sight:
Let then Al-Hayfá learn from me I love * Distance from her and
  furthest earthly site.
No good in loving when a rival shows * E’en tho’ ‘twere victual
  shared by other wight;
These modes and fashions never mind arride * Save him unknowing
  of his requisite.”

Then he entrusted the writ to Ibn Ibrahim, after giving him an hundred dinars, and he fared forth and ceased not faring till he had reached the palace of the Princess. Presently he went in and handed to her the writ, and as soon as she had read it, the contents seemed to her sore and she wept until her vitals were torn with sobs. After this she raised her hand[250] heavenwards and invoked Allah and humbled herself before him and said, “My God, O my Lord, do Thou soften the heart of Yusuf ibn Sahl and turn him mewards and afflict him with love of me even as thou hast afflicted me with his love; for Thou to whatso Thou wishest canst avail, O bestest of Rulers and O forcefullest of Aiders.” Anon she fell to writing and indited these verses,

“Love rules my bosom and a-morn doth moan * The Voice, ah Love, who shows strength weakness grown!
His lashes’ rapier-blade hath rent my heart; * That keen curved brand my me hath overthrown:
That freshest cheek-rose fills me with desire: * Fair fall who plucketh yonder bloom new-blown!
Since love befel me for that youth did I * Begin for charms of him my pride to own:
O thou my hope, I swear by Him did share * Love and decreed thou shouldst in longing wone,
In so exceeding grief why sight I thee * Jacob made Joseph by the loss of me?”

She then handed the letter to Ibn Ibrahim, after giving him an hundred dinars; and he returned forthright to the city of Sind and, repairing to Yusuf, gave him the writ which he took and read. Hereupon the Prince waxed sore sorrowful and said to himself, “By Allah, indeed Al-Hayfa cleaveth to love.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Ninety-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Prince Yusuf said, "By Allah, had Al-Hayfa any save myself she had not sent me these letters; but the outgoings of the heart conciliate lovers and correspond each with other." Then he took writing materials and after thinking awhile he improvised these couplets,

O thou of stature fair with waist full slight[251] *
  Surpassing sandhill-branch and reedlet light;
I deal in words and gems of speech that melt, * By none 'mid all
  of mortal kind indite;
From my tribe's lord, a lion rending foes * Moon of Perfections
  and 'The Yusuf' hight:
Homed in thy home I joyed my joys with maids *
  High-breasted,[252] virgins weakening forceful sprite;
Your songs and touch of lute 'mid trembling wine * Consoled all
  sorrows, made all hearts delight,
Till you to other deignčd union grant * And I your nature learnt
  and learnt aright,
Whereat my vitals failed, sore bane befel, * Pine,
  disappointment, and injurious blight.
No virtue dwelleth in the fairest forms * But forms the fairest
  are by goodness dight.
How many a maiden deckt with crescent brow * Hath nature dealing
  injury and despite?
Man hath no merit save in kindly mind * And loquent tongue with
  light of wits unite."[253]

And when Yusuf had ended his poetry he presented an hundred dinars to Ibn Ibrahim, who took the letter and fell to cutting through the wilds and the wolds, after which he went in to the presence of Al-Hayfa and gave her the missive. She wept and wailed and cried, "O Ibn Ibrahim, this letter is indeed softer than all forewent it; and as thou hast brought it to me, O Ibn Ibrahim, I will largesse thee with two honourable robes of golden brocade and a thousand dinars." So saying, she called for pen-case and paper whereupon she indited these couplets,

“O my lord, these words do my vitals destroy, * O thou gem of the
earth and full moon a-sky!
How long this recourse to denial and hate * With heart whose
hardness no rocks outvie?
Thou hast left my spirit in parting-pangs * And in fires of
farness that flame on high:
How long shall I ‘plain of its inner pains? * Haps thy grace
shall grant me reunion-joy:
Then pity, my vitals and whatso homed * Thy form within me before
I die.”

She then handed the paper to Ibn Ibrahim who again set out and sought the Prince and kissed his hand and gave him the letter; whereupon said he, “O Ibn Ibrahim, come not thou again bringing me aught of missive — ever or any more after this one.” Quoth Ibn Ibrahim, “Wherefore, O my lord, shall I not do on such wise?” and quoth Yusuf “Suffer her to learn the fates of men-kind.” Said the other, “I conjure thee, by Allah Almighty, ho thou the King, inasmuch as thou art of the seed of mighty monarchs, disappoint her not of her question; and Allah upon thee, unless thou show pity to her heart it haply will melt away with melancholy and love and madness for thy sake; and all of this is for the truth of her affection.” Hereupon Yusuf smiled and taking up his pen wrote these couplets,

“Stay thy tears; for hindrance and parting hie, * And the endless
of Empire aye glorify:
From my core of heart fly all cark and care * After parting that
seemed all Time defy.
A Lion am I for the love of him * Whom the slanderer’s part ne’er
can satisfy:
My mind and soul be this day with you * But my heart and thought
are at enmity:
Thought and mind delight in Love’s cruelty * While heart and soul
for re-union cry:
And if mind and thought e’er can overcome * Soul and heart,
Re-union thou ne’er shalt ‘spy.”

And when Yusuf had finished his writing, he gifted Ibrahim with an hundred dinars and sent him again to Al-Hayfa with the letter, and she on receiving it shed tears and said, "O Ibn Ibrahim, seeing that his soul and heart be with us, Allah Almighty availeth to turn his thoughts and his fancy and the mind of him." Hereupon she took writing materials and wrote,

"Calm, O my lord, thy vitals' painful plight, * O thou whose
semblance lighteth sooty night:
O gladding heart, O sweet of union, Oh * Whose charms the tribe
in festal hours delight:
O high in honour passing height of Kings, * O thou with purest
blood 'mid Kings bedight,
Fear'st not the Throne[254] of God (O hope of me!) * When
harming heart whereon all pains alight?
Then deign thou grant me union, for such wise * Shall rest my
heartstrings and dark care wax bright:
From none, except that Lion O' men Ali[255] * Comes pardon
proving to man- kind his might."

Then she passed her missive to Ibn Ibrahim giving him an hundred gold pieces and he pushed his pace till he reached the city of Sind, where he went in to Yusuf and kissed his hands and feet. The Prince taking the letter smiled and laughed and said, "O Ibn Ibrahim, when Allah (be He extolled and exalted!) shall decree my faring I will fare to them[256] within a short while; but do thou return and let know that I intend forgathering with them." Quoth the other, "Ah! O my lord, do thou indite her a reply, otherwise she will have no trust in me; so the Prince fell to penning these lines,

"My vitals restless bide for very jealousy * The while my heart
must ever show unfriendly gree:
Yet I obeyed my heart and tore it out for him * Albe man ever
holds his heart in amity;
And I have heard my lover drives me forth from him * But Allah
grant my prayer of benedicite.
In anxious care I came and sought your side this day * Naught

shall the youth exalt save generosity."

Then Prince Yusuf passed the letter to Ibn Ibrahim who, after receiving his hundred dinars, repaired to Al-Hayfa and greeted her[257] informing her the while that her lover was about to make act of presence. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Ninety-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Ibn Ibrahim said to Al-Hayfa, "Verily Yusuf purposeth to visit thee after a little while." But when the Princess heard his words she would not believe him albeit her heart palpitated with pleasure; whereupon Ibn Ibrahim improvised to her as follows,

"O thou world-seducer and full moon bright, * Stay thy speech and
with boon of good news requite.
Love pledged me his word he would see thee and said, * Hie thee
home and order the house aright.
I awoke this morning in cark and care, * In tears distraught and
in dire despite;
For the wrongs and farness thou doom'st me dree * Have forced my
forces to fright-full flight."

And when Ibn Ibrahim had ended his verse, Al-Hayfa joyed with increased and exceeding joy, and in her delight she answered him according to the rhyme and rhythm of his verse,

“O who spreadest clouds,[258] Son of Ibrahim hight; * By the
Lord who ruleth in ‘Arsh his height,
By Mohammed the bestest of men and by * Th’ adorers of yore and
the Tá-Há’s[259] might,
By Zemzem, Safá and wall Hatím[260] * And Ka’abah and glories
of Ka’abah’s site,
An this speech be sooth and my dearling come * One thousand, two
thou- sand dinars are thy right;
And I’ll give thee a courser, O Ibrahim’s son, * Selle, stirrups
and bridle with gold bedight;
Six turbands and robes that shall honour show * With that courser
the colour of blackest night.
So hold me not like the most of mankind, * Who joy the fair ones
to twit and flyte.”

And when Al-Hayfa had finished her verses, Ibn Ibrahim brought out to her the letter of the Prince, and as soon as she read it her heart was comforted and she waxed glad with exceeding gladness and she bade them present him with largesse of value great and a thousand dinars upon a china plate. After this she took him by the hand and led him into a closet and said, “O Ibn Ibrahim, all that be in this cabinet is a free gift to thee when thou shalt have brought to me that lover of mine.” Such was the case with them; but as regards Prince Yusuf, when Ibn Ibrahim left him, he felt love-lowe aflaming in his heart, and he summoned his Mameluke Hilal and said to him, “Go saddle for us the steed known by the name of The Bull-aye-ready-and-for-Battle-day-steady.” Hereupon the slave arose and ensellled the courser and Yusuf mounted; and, taking his Mameluke on the crupper, pushed his pace (and he madly in love with Al-Hayfa), and he ceased not faring till he reached her Palace. He then swam the stream with his Mameluke hanging on, as before, to the tail, and knocked at the door which was opened by a damsel hight Nuzhat al-Zaman[261] and she on recognising him kissed his hands and hurrying to her lady informed her of his coming. Al-Hayfa hearing of the arrival fell fainting to the ground and when she recovered she found Yusuf standing beside her head; so she arose and embraced him for a long while, after which she improvised and said,

"O thou Pilgrim of Love, after parting far * From us driven by
malice of jealous foe!
My life for the friend in affection comes; * Naught dearer to me
than such boon can show;
Full many a writ have I written thee * Nor union nor grace of
return I know.
In this world I see him with single heart * O my wish! and Allah
ne'er part us two."

And when she had ended her verses she bade the slave-girls convey Ibn Ibrahim and Hilal to the gardens, after which she led Yusuf to the saloon of session and the twain passed the night together he and she, in joyance and enjoyment, for that night was indeed a night of delight. But when Allah bade the morn to morrow, Al-Hayfa arose and cried, "How short it is for a night: Ah that it had been longer for us! but 'tis for me to say even as said Imr al-Kays[262] in sundry of his verses upon a similar theme,

"On me Night waxeth long nor would I shorten Night; * Yet hasteth
Morn when I for longer Nights would sue:
It brings me union till 'My lover's mine' I cry * Yet when with
him unite disunion comes to view.

Now when it was the second day, Al-Hayfa took seat in the assembly of converse. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Ninety-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night." She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Al-Hayfa repaired to the saloon of séance, she and Yusuf, and summoned Ibn Ibrahim and bade the handmaids bring everything that was in the closet. They obeyed her bidding and fetched her all the contents, amongst which were ten robes of honour and three coffers of silk and fine linen and a packet of musk and a parcel of rubies and pearls and jacinths and corals and similar objects of high price. And she conferred the whole of this upon Mohammed ibn Ibrahim, the while improvising these verses,

“We are noblest of lords amongst men of might; * What we give and
largesse bring the most delight:
And when we strive with our hearts and souls * We strive in
public nor rue our plight.
With me the pact no regret shall breed * Save in head of
suspecting envying wight.
I am none who riseth sans bounteous deed; * I am none who giveth
with felon sprite.”

And when Al-Hayfa had ended her poetry, Prince Yusuf largessed[263] Ibn Ibrahim and said to him, “Thou shalt have on my part one thousand dinars and twenty robes of brocade and an hundred she-camels and eighty horses (whereof the meanest is worth five hundred gold pieces and each is saddled with a golden selle), and lastly forty handmaids.” After which he began to improvise these couplets,

“Good signeth man to sight and all men see * Sahl’s son is lord
of liberality:
Time and the world and mortals one and all * Witness my goodness
and for aye agree:
Who comes for purpose him I gratify * With boons, though ‘twere
with eyen-light of me:
I back my neighbour whenas harmĕd by * Dolour of debt and
foeman’s tyranny:
Whoso hath moneys lacking liberal mind * Though he snatch
Fortune
‘mid the vile is he.”

And when Yusuf had finished his verse, Ibn Ibrahim arose and bussed his hands and feet and cried, “Allah dole to thee all thou desirest.” The other replied, “When thou shalt return to our city, do thou go to my quarters and therefrom take thee whatso I have promised.” Then the Prince and Princess waxed assiduous in the eating of meat and the drinking of wine; and this continued for many successive months[264] until Ibn Ibrahim craved leave to visit his folk; and, when he received permission, he took with him that was light in weight and weighty of worth. And as he set forth, Al-Hayfa said to him, “When thou shalt return to thy people in safety, do thou salute for me my sire and name to him a certain stallion which same he shall largesse to thee and likewise its saddle and bridle.” Hereupon he farewelled them and went forth and stemmed the stream and withdrawing his she-dromedary from the cave harnessed her and mounted her and set forth upon his desert way, and as soon as he reached the capital of Sind he went to his folk who greeted him kindly. Now when King Al-Mihrjan heard of Mohammed ibn Ibrahim’s coming he sent to summon him and as soon as he appeared between his hands he asked concerning his absence. “O King of the Time and the Tide,” quoth he, “I have been in Yathrib[265] city;” and indeed he was one of the cup-companions of Al-Hayfa’s father and by the decree of Destiny he had been ever in high favour with the King. So the twain sat down to drink wine and as Fortune willed it Ibn Ibrahim bore about him a letter containing poetry, part of the correspondence between the Prince and Princess, wherein were written the names of all three. Now when he was at the height of his joy he wagged his head and shook off his turband and the paper fell therefrom into Al-Mihrjan’s lap.[266] The King took it and read it and understood its contents but he kept the case secret for a while; presently, however, he dismissed his Courtiers and Equerries who were around him and forthright bade smite Mohammed ibn Ibrahim with stripes until his sides were torn. Then quoth he, “Acquaint me concerning this youth who correspondeth with my daughter, making thee the goer between them twain, otherwise I will cut off thy head.” Quoth Ibn Ibrahim, “Ho thou the King; verily this be only poetry which I found in one of the histories of old.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Ninety-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that Ibn Ibrahim said to Al-Mihrjan, “Verily I found this poetry in a tale of the olden time.” So the King issued orders to smite his neck, when intercession was made for him by a Courtier hight Tá’il al-Wasf,[267] whereupon the King commanded him to jail, whither he was taken forthright. But as Ibn Ibrahim was being locked up, he said to the gaoler, “Say me, canst thou bring for me a pen-case and paper and pen?” and the other assented, fetching for him whatso he wanted. So he wrote to Prince Yusuf the following couplets,

“O Yúsuf, master mine, for safety fly; * In sorest danger
Ibrahim’s son doth lie:
When from thy side for house and home he sped * Forthright bade
Al-Mihrjan to bring him nigh,
And ‘mid th’ Assembly highest stead assigned * A seat in public
with a sleight full sly.
A writ thou wrotest bore he on his head * Which fell and picked
it up the King to ‘spy:
’Tis thus discovered he thy state and raged * With wrath and fain
all guidance would defy.
Then bade he Ibrahim’s son on face be thrown * And painful
beating to the bare apply;
With stripes he welted and he tare his sides * Till force waxed
feeble, strength debility.
So rise and haste thee to thine own and fetch * Thy power, and
instant for the tribe-lands hie;

Meanwhile I'll busy to seduce his men * Who hear me, O thou
princely born and high;
For of the painful stress he made me bear * The fire of bane I've
sworn him even I."

Now when Ibn Ibrahim had finished his verse, he said to the gaoler, "Do thou summon for me the son of my brother hight Manná'[268] and thou shalt have from me one hundred gold pieces." The man did his bidding, and when the youth came the uncle gave him the letter and bespake him as follows: "O son of my brother, take thou this paper and fare with it to the Castle of Al-Hayfa and swim the stream, and go up to the building and enter therein and commit this missive unto a youth whom thou shalt see sitting beside the Princess. Then do thou greet him with the salam from me, and inform him of all that I am in and what I have seen and what thou hast witnessed, and for this service I will give thee an hundred gold pieces." The nephew took the uncle's letter and set forth from the first of the night until he drew nigh the Castle. Such was the case with Ibn Ibrahim and his sending his nephew Manna' on a mission to the Princess; but as regards King Al-Mihrjan, when the morning morrowed and showed its sheen and shone and the sun arose with rays a-lowland strown, he sent to summon Ibn Ibrahim; and, when they set him between his hands, he adjured him saying, "O thou! by the rights of the God unique in his rule for Unity; by Him who set up the skies without prop and stay and dispread the Earths firmly upon the watery way, unless thou inform me and apprise me rightly and truly I will order thy head to be struck off this very moment." So the cup-companion related to the King the whole affair of Princess Al-Hayfa and Prince Yusuf, and all that had passed between the twain; whereupon Al-Mihrjan asked, "And this Yusuf from what land may he be?" "He is son to the Sovran of Sind, King Sahl," quoth the other, and quoth Al- Mihrjan, "And is he still in the Palace, or hath he gone to his own country?" "He was therein," replied Ibn Ibrahim, "but I know not whether he be yet there, or he be gone thence." Hereupon Al-Mihrjan commanded his host at once to mount, and all took horse and rode forth making for the Castle of Al-Hayfa. Now, between Manna' and King Al-Mihrjan was a march of only a single night, when the youth went up to the Palace of the Princess, where he knocked at the door and they opened and admitted him to the presence of Prince Yusuf. There he handed to him the letter, which the Prince opened and read; then he suddenly rose up crying upon Hilal, whom when he was fetched he bade forthwith bring out his steed. Hereat cried Al-Hayfa, "I ask thee by Allah, O my lord, what may be the news?" and he answered her, "Verily when Ibn Ibrahim fared from us to his folk he was summoned on his arrival by thy sire, and he went to him and informed him of all that hath befallen us, first and last." So saying he put the letter into her hands, and she having read it exclaimed, "O my lord, do thou take me with thee lest haply he slay me." Answered the Prince, "O end and aim of mine every wish, we have naught with us save this one steed who availeth not to carry three; therefore will thy father overtake us upon the road and will put us to death one and all. Now the rede that is right be this, that thou conceal thyself somewhere in the Palace and charge the slave-girls when thy sire shall come hither, to tell him that I have carried thee off to mine own country, and for the rest be thou assured that I will tarry away from thee but a few days." So saying Yusuf took his horse with him and Hilal his page a-crupper and swam the river and made for his own land pushing his pace, and presently he drew within sight of the capital. Such was the case of Prince Yusuf, son to King Sahl; but as regards the matter of King Al-Mihrjan and his host, he ceased not marching them till such time as he came within sight of the Castle of his daughter Al-Hayfa; and this was soon after the departure of Yusuf. And when he had led hither his host, which was like unto a dashing sea, he dismounted upon the river-bank that all might free themselves of their fatigue, after which he summoned Sahlub and bade him swim the stream and walk up to the Castle and knock at the door. The youth did as he was bidden, and the handmaids opened to him and greeted him as he asked for Al-Hayfa — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Six Hundred and Ninety-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when Sahlub went up to the Palace, he asked of Al-Hayfa, and the slave-girls told him that a youth had come thither and had taken her away and had carried her off to his own country. So he returned to Al-Mihrjan and informed him thereof, when the King took horse with all his host and pursued Yusuf with uttermost haste and hurry until there was between the twain less than a day’s march. But as the Prince drew near his capital on the tenth day he went in to his sire and told him whatso had befallen him from incept to conclusion, nor did he hide from him aught; whereupon King Sahl mustered his many (all who received from him royal solde and allowances), and bade them take horse with his son Yusuf. The troops did accordingly and the Prince rode a-van, and after a little while the two armies met. Now Ibn Ibrahim had made a compact with five of the nobles who were the chiefest men of King Al-Mihrjan’s reign and had promised them five hundred thousand dinars. So when the two hosts were about to engage, an Emir of the Emirs came forth (and he was one of those whom Ibn Ibrahim had appointed to watch over Yusuf) and said to the Prince, “O Son of the King, verily Ibn Ibrahim hath promised five of the nobles as many hundred thousand dinars of gold the which we may take and receive from thee.” Replied he, “The like sum shall be thine from me with all thou canst ask of us.” Presently the Emir returned from him to Al-Mihrjan and said to him, “Verily I have asked this youth that he make vain and void the battle between us twain, but he assented not and sware an oath that he would never return from affray until the enemies should meet and fight it out, and that he had with him a mighty host and a conquering whose van was not known from its rear.[269] Now ’tis my rede that thou strive to take him prisoner[270] and then do whatso he may please, especially he being son to thee, King of the mighty Kings and with him a thousand thousand knights all mailed cap-ŕ-pie and clothed in steel not one of whom hath any fear of fight." King Al-Mihrjan waxed wroth at the Emir's speech and cried, "What words be these? Shall the Kings of the Age remain saying of me that a man hath debauched the daughter of Al-Mihrjan and hath carried her away perforce despite the nose of her father? Never shall such thing be spoken of me; no, never! But do thou know, ho thou the Emir, that an ye have no taste for fray nor avail for fight and ye have no training save for bibbing of wine and ease at home, I have sworn and swear by Him who lighted the lucident fires of the Sun and the Moon, none shall sally forth to do single combat with this youth save I myself." But when so saying he knew not that was hidden from him in the World of Secrets. Presently he rushed into the field of fight with reins floating upon his courser's neck and he renowned it, showing himself between the foremost files, and he played with the edge of glaive and spit of spear until men's wits were bewildered and he improvised the while and cried out the following couplets,

"Ibn Sahl, ho scion of tree abhorr'd! * Rise, meet me in mellay
and prove thee lord:
My daughter hast snatched, O thou foul of deed, * And approachest
me fearing the Lion of the horde.
Hadst come in honour and fairly sued * I had made her thine own
with the best accord;
But this rape hath o'erwhelmed in dishonour foul * Her sire, and
all bounds thou hast overscor'd."

Now when King Al-Mihrjan finished his verse, Yusuf rushed out to him, and cried at him with a terrible cry and a terrifying, and garred his own steed bound upon the battle-plain, where he played with brand and lance until he cast into oblivion every knight, reciting in the meantime the following verses,

"I am son to Al-Sahl, O of forbears vile! * Come forth and fight
me sans guile or wile;
Thou hast hurt my heart; O of deed misdone, * So thou com'st to
contend with this rank and file."[271]

King Al-Mihrjan re-echoed his war-cry, but hardly had he ended when Yusuf drawing near him answered it with a shout which enquaked his heart and ravished his reason with sore terror, and repeated in reply these couplets,

“I am not to be titled of forbears vile * O whose ape-like face
    doth the tribe defile!
Nay, I’m rending lion amid mankind, * A hero in wilds where the
    murks beguile.
Al-Hayfá befitteth me, only me; * Ho thou whom men for an
    ape[272] revile.”

When Yusuf had ended these words, Al-Mihrjan rushed forth and charged down upon him, and the two drawing nigh each of the foemen set on the other with a mighty onset and a prodigious. They fought in duello and lanced out with lance and smote with sword, and dashed together as they were two ships or two mountains clashing; and they approached and retired, and the dust- cloud arose over them and they disappeared from men’s sight. But hardly had an hour passed by when Yusuf made a final attack upon his enemy and narrowed his course and barred his way and pressed him hard; and, hanging upon his flank, smote him with the scymitar upon the nape of the neck[273] and caused his head to fall between his feet, when he slipt from his steed upon the ground, and he lay stone dead and in his gore drowned. Now as soon as the folk looked upon Yusuf and what he had dealt to their King and how he had made his head fly his body and had done him dead, they turned to take flight. Thereupon Yusuf recognised Sahlub the cousin of Al-Hayfa, he who had been the cause of their separation and had roused her wrath against him; so he drew near to him and smote him with the bright shining blade on the right flank, and it came forth gleaming between his left ribs; so he fell to the ground drenched with blood, and he was left prostrate in the dust. And when Yusuf had slain King Al- Mihrjan and Sahlub, his nephew, the Grandees of the realm came around him and greeted him with the salam. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundredth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the Grandees of King Al-Mihrjan's reign saw their Sovran slain, they flocked to Prince Yusuf and greeted him, marvelling at his beauty and valour and excellence: then they all agreed to salute him as their Sultan and they raised him to the rank of King and sole ruler over them. Presently they led him with them, and fared seeking the city of Al-Mihrjan until they reached it, when they adorned the streets on the occasion of his coming. And King Yusuf having entered his capital took seat on the throne of his kingship and bade and forbade and deposed and appointed; and lastly freed Mohammed ibn Ibrahim from gaol, and established him his Wazir. Hereupon the new Minister displayed to him the four wives and the hundred concubines of King Al-Mihrjan, also his negro slaves, male and female, whom he found to number two hundred and four hundred. Moreover, he showed his riches and rarities and treasuries wherein were found an hundred boxes full of silk and fine linen, and parcels of pearls and rubies and jacinths and jewels and precious minerals and other wealth in abundance. So he distributed the whole amongst his nobles, and largessed them with excessive largesses; and his partisans of his subjects and his guards flocked to him with presents and offerings; and all the city-folk gave him joy and rejoiced in him. Then he commissioned Ibn Ibrahim to Al-Hayfa, daughter of King Al-Mihrjan, saying, "Do thou bring her hither to me, her and her handmaids and all that be in her palace." Accordingly he went forth to Al-Hayfa's Castle, and ceased not wending till he came to its entrance where he discovered that King Yusuf had appointed a craft for the river transport. And when he arrived there and found the vessel afloat he went in to Al-Hayfa and he greeted her. Then he related to her what had betided her sire from Yusuf and how the Prince had slain him after the fashion of what befel; so she cried, “There is no Majesty and no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great; and this was writ in the Book of Life!” Then she asked Ibn Ibrahim touching her mother, and he answered that she was sound and safe in her own home which she had never left nor did any one go in to her; and, (added he) “she expecteth thy coming to her.” Then he bade carry down her impediments and her bondmaids and all the good that was in her Castle until nothing remained, and embarked them upon the craft; and presently, mounting her in a litter of sandal-wood plated with ruddy gold, he set her women in Howdahs;[274] and, taking horse himself, he rode until they drew near the city. And when they arrived there he went up to King Yusuf whom he informed of their coming and was told, “Suffer them to be till night shall set in.” Hereupon he took patience, and when came the appointed term Al-Hayfa went up to the Palace. Now as Allah caused the morn to morrow and to light the world with its shine and sheen, King Yusuf sent to summon the Kazi and witnesses and bade them write his writ of marriage with Al-Hayfa and was wedded to her by Book and traditional Usage.[275] After this Al-Hayfa sent to fetch her mother and bore her to her home and their joy and enjoyment were great and lasting. Now by the decree of the Decreer anon it befel that the Caliph Al-Maamun waxed strait of breast one night of the nights: so he summoned a certain of his courtiers whose name was Ibrahim the Cup-companion;[276] but, as they found him not, he bade bring a man hight Al-Khadí’a, and when he came between his hands quoth he to him, “’Tis a while since I have seen thee here.” Quoth the other, “O Commander of the Faithful, I have been wayfaring about the land of Syria.” Continued the Prince of True Believers, “Do thou this very night broaden the Caliph’s heart with a delectable tale;” and the other rejoined, “O Viceregent of Allah upon Earth, know thou an adventure befel me with a youth named the Veiled Yusuf of Beauty, son to King Sahl, the friendly ruler of Al-Sind, and with Al-Hayfa the daughter of King Al-Mihrjan, and ’tis a tale whose like hath never been heard; no, never.” Hereupon he related to Al-Maamun the history of the two, first and last, adding, “Furthermore, O Commander of the Faithful, I have learnt that Al-

Hayfa owneth ten handmaidens whose peers are not to be found in thy Palace, and they are mistresses of all manner instruments of mirth and merriment and other matters; and amongst things said of them by their lady when they marvelled at her good fortune, ‘Verily this day I have acquired half a score of slave- girls the like of which Al-Maamun hath never collected.’” But when the Prince of True Believers heard this he gave ear to the tale anent them during the livelong night till Allah caused the morn to morrow. Then he sent for Ibrahim the Cup-companion, and to him coming into the presence the Viceregent of Allah exclaimed “Mount without stay and delay taking with thee one thousand Mamelukes and make thy way to this youth who is King of Al-Sind[277] and named ‘The Veiled Yusuf of Beauty,’ and bring me his ten handmaidens. After which do thou ask concerning his case and anent his subjects, whether he be just or unjust to the lieges, and if he be righteous I will robe him in honourable robes and if otherwise do thou bring him to my presence.” Hereupon Ibrahim took leave of the Caliph and went forth at that very time and tide intending for Al-Sind, and he ceased not wending till he arrived there and found Yusuf setting out for the chase. But when the youth saw the host approaching him — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night, and that was

The Seven Hundred and Second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that, when Yusuf beheld Ibrahim the Cup-companion, and those in his company, he returned to the city and took them with him; yet he knew not Ibrahim nor did Ibrahim know him. But on entering the capital he was met by his guards and his soldiers who blessed him and prayed for him length of days and permanence of rule wherefor the courtier knew him to be a just King. Yusuf led them to and lodged them in the House of Hospitality; after which returning to his own Palace he sent for Ibrahim and assembled for him a session and received him with the highmost honour that could be, and rose to him and greeted him and embraced him and accompanied him to the sitting-saloon where the twain took their places. Then Yusuf bade summon the ten handmaidens with as many instruments of music; and, sitting down begirt by them, he ordered wine be brought. So they set before him flagons and beakers of chrystal and jewelled cups; and presently pointing to the first of the slave-girls whose name is not recorded, bade her recite somewhat of her pleasantest poetry. So she hent the lute in hand and set it upon her lap and swept it with a light touch and caressed it with her finger-tips and smote it after eleven modes; then she returned to the first[278] and recited these couplets,

"My heart for parting ever burns with lowe; * My lids fiery with
 tear-floods ever flow:
Ho thou in lover's loving ferly fair, * Cut is the road for those
 Love gars to glow.
How many a youth has felt his vitals torn * By slender forms and
 glances forceful prow?
Alas for lover slain by might of Love; * Nor friend avails nor
 brother true, I trow!"

When the first handmaiden had finished, Yusuf rejoiced (as did Ibrahim the Cup-companion) with excessive joy and the King bade robe her in a sumptuous robe. Hereupon she drained her cup and passed it to her compeer whose name was Takná, and this second handmaiden taking beaker in hand placed it afore her and hending the lute smote on it with many a mode; then, returning to the first[279] while the wits of all were bewildered, she improvised the following verses,

"Look on the lute that 'minds of Mangonel; * Whose strings are
 ropes that make each shot to tell:
And note the pipes that sound with shriek and cry, * The pipes

that cast a fearful joyful spell;
Espy the flagons ranged in serried rank * And crops becrowned
with wine that longs to well.”

But when Takna had finished her poetry Yusuf and Ibrahim were gladdened and the King bade largesse her with a sumptuous robe and a thousand dinars and she tossed off her cup and passed it to her successor the third handmaiden Mubdi’[280] hight. She accepted it and setting it before her took the lute and smote it after manifold fashions and presently she spake these couplets,

“Love with his painful pine doth rack this frame of me; * Melts
heart and maims my vitals cruel agony;
And rail my tears like cloud that rains the largest drops; * And
fails my hand to find what seek I fain to see:
Thee I conjure, O Yúsuf, by Him made thee King * O Sahl-son, Oh
our dearest prop, our dignity,
This man methinks hath come to part us lovers twain * For in his
eyes I see the flame of jealousy.”

And when Mubdi’ had sung her song, Ibrahim the Cup-companion and King Yusuf smiled and rejoiced and anon there befel them what there befel and the two slipt down aswoon; — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that King Yusuf and Ibrahim the Cup-companion hearing the song sung by Mubdi’, the third handmaiden, both fell to the floor aswoon; and when they revived after an hour or so, Ibrahim largessed to her one thousand dinars and a robe purfled with glistening gold. Then she drained her cup and crowning it again passed it to her compeer whose name was Nasím[281] and who took it and set it in front of her. Then hending in hand the lute she played upon it with manifold modes and lastly spake these couplets,

“O Blamer, blaming me for draining lonely wine, * Stint carping,
    I this day to Holy War incline:
Oh fair reflection she within her wine-cup shows * Her sight
    makes spirit dullest earthly flesh refine:
How mention her? By Allah ’tis forbid in writ * To note the
    meaner charms in Eden-garth divine.”

When the fourth handmaiden had ended her verse, Ibrahim gifted her with one thousand dinars and presented a sumptuous robe to her owner, then she drank off her cup and passed it to her compeer hight Al-Badr[282] and she sang the following lines,

“One robbed of heart amid song and wine * And Love that smiteth
    with babe of eyne:
His voice to the lute shall make vitals pain * And the wine shall
    heal all his pangs and pine:
Hast e’er seen the vile drawing near such draught * Or miser
    close-fisted thereto incline?
The wine is set free in the two-handed jar[283] * Like sun of
    summer in Aries’ sign.”

When she had finished Ibrahim bade reward her like the rest with gold and gear and she passed her cup to her compeer whose name was Radáh.[284] The sixth handmaiden drained it and performed in four-and-twenty modes after which she sang these couplets,

“O thou wine-comrade languor cease to show; * Hand me the morning
    draught and ne’er foreslow;

And prize fair poesy and sweet musick hear * And shun the ‘say’
and naught of ‘said’ beknow:
The wine of day-dawn drunk with joyous throng * From house of
Reason garreth Grief to go:
The man of Kays aye loved his wine right well * And from his lips
made honey’d verse to flow;
And in like guise[285] came Isa singing sweet * For such was
custom of the long-ago.”

When Radah ended her verse and her improvising of mysterious significance, and secret, King Yusuf and Ibrahim the Cup-companion tore their robes from their bodies until naught remained upon them save only the bag-breeches about their waists. Then the twain shrieked aloud and at one moment and they fell fainting to the floor, unheeding the world and their own selves from the excess of that was in their heads of wine and hearing of poetry spoken by the slave-girl. They remained in such condition for a while of time, after which they recovered though still amazed, a-drunken. Then they donned other dresses and sat down to listen as before, when Radah drained her goblet and filled and passed it to her compeer whose name was Na’ím;[286] and she taking her lute, improvised the following verses,

“My poesy-gem showeth clear of shine, * When appears that pearl
with cheek coralline:
’Tis marvel the cloud cannot quench the blaze * That fire in the
heart and this water of eyne!
Then alas for Love who hath made me woe! * Pine that rends and
racks limbs and vitals o’ mine:
O thou Well of Poetry well forth thy gems * O’er our drink when
our cups overbrim with wine:
And sing in her presence, for Envy hath fled * And flies jealous
spite and all joys combine.
Oh the charms of wine which enthral the mind, * Clear and
clearing sprites by its sprite refined!”

When the seventh handmaiden had ended her verses, King Yusuf and Ibrahim rejoiced with exceeding joy and each of them bade gift her with a thousand gold pieces and quoth the courtier, “By Allah Almighty, none of the Emirs or of the Wazirs or of the Kings or of the Caliphs hath attained excellence like unto this handmaid.” Hereupon Na’im passed her goblet to her compeer and she, whose name was Surúr,[287] tossed it off and taking in hand her lute, sang these couplets,

“How is’t with heart of me all cares waylay * As drowned in
surging tears of Deluge-day?
I weep for Time endured not to us twain * As though Time’s honour
did not oft betray.
O my lord Yúsuf, O my ending hope, * By Him who made thee lone
on
Beauty’s way,
I dread lest glorious days us twain depart * And youth’s bright
world be dimmed to old and grey;
O Lord! be Parting’s palm for us undyed[288] * Ere death, nor
carry this my lord away.”

When the eighth handmaiden had ended her song, the twain marvelled at her eloquence and were like to rend that was upon them of raiment — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and goodwill!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that King Yusuf and Ibrahim the Cup-companion were like to rend that was upon them of raiment and they joyed with extreme joy after hearing what Surur had sung to them. Hereupon she passed her cup to her fellow, hight Zahrat al-Hayy,[289] who took it and recited as follows,

“O cup-boy, I crave thee cup-comrade to be * And hearten my heart of its malady;
Nor pass me the bowls for I sorely dread * when drunken all dolours of Love- lowe to dree,
To be vilely reviled in the sittings of men, * To be frowardly treated where zephyrs play free.
God-blest is the Lute for her melodies * Which pain me with painfullest penalty,
With the jewels of speech whose transcendent charms * Like fires of Jahím[290] burn the vitals of me.
By Allah, show ruth, be compassionate, * For Allah deals pardon compassionately.

Yusuf and Ibrahim, hearing her words, were gladdened with excessive gladness and cried to the ninth handmaid, “May the lord be copious to thee like the fruitful years!” Then the Cup- companion bade gift her with one thousand gold pieces as like- wise did her lord. Hereupon she passed her cup to the tenth handmaiden known as Muhjat al-Kulúb[291] who fell to improvising these couplets,

“O Blamer, who canst not my case explain; * Cease, for who blame friends shall of blame complain;
And whoso unknoweth the workings of Love * Mankind shall reckon him mean and vain:
Alas for Love, O ye tribe-landers, I * Am weaned that wont nipples of union to drain.
I have learnt the whole of Love’s governance * Since my baby days amid cradles lain.
Forbear by Allah to ask of my state * How shall morn one banned with debtor bane?
O thou jewel of speech, O thou Yúsuf, laud * To the Lord who robed thee with charms amain!
Deign the God of ‘Arsh make thy days endure * In wealth and honour sans pause or wane;

E’en as Ishak’s son[292] every gift conjoined * Amid men,
making rulers to serve him fain.”

When Muhjat al-Kulub ended her song, Yusuf gifted her with a splendid robe and a thousand gold pieces as eke did Ibrahim, and presently the courtier said to the handmaiden, “Who is Ibrahim that thou shouldst sing of him in song?” She replied, “Walláhi, O my lord, he is son of Ishak, amongst the pleasant ones sans peer and a cup-companion to the Caliphs dear and the pearl concealed and the boon friend of our lord the Commander of the Faithful Al-Maamún and his familiar who to him joy and enjoyment maketh known. Ah! happy the man who can look upon him and forgather with him and company with him before his death; and verily by Allah he is the Master of the Age and the one Wonder of the World. Moreover, by the Almighty, O my lord, wert thou to see this lute fall into his hands, thou wouldst hear it converse in every language with the tongues of birds and beasts and of the sons of Adam: and well nigh would the place dance ere he had improvised a word. And he the horizons can make to joy and lovers with overlove can destroy, nor shall any after his decease such excellence of speech employ.” All this, and Muhjat al-Kulub knew not who was sitting beside them as she went on to praise Ibrahim. Hereupon he took the lute from her hand and smote it till thou hadst deemed that within the instrument lurked babes of the Jinns[293] which were crying and wailing while spake the strings, and in fine King Yusuf imagined that the palace had upflown with them between heaven and earth. And the handmaidens sang to his tunes in sore astonishment; when Ibrahim designed to talk but King Yusuf cut him short and fell to saying poetry in these couplets,

“By the rights of our lord who shows ruth in extreme, * And Giver
and Guide and boon Prophet we deem,
And by Ka’abah resplendent and all its site * And by Zemzem, Safa
and the wall Hatim,
Lo! thou’rt hight Ibrahim, and suppose I say * Thee sooth, my
wits thou must surely esteem:
And thy face shows signalled with clearest eyne * Deliv’rance

followed by Yá and Mím."[294]

Now Ibrahim kept his secret and did not manifest himself to any, but presently he also improvised and spake in these words preserving the measure and rhyme,

"By him who chose Musŕ, the Speaker,[295] by Him * who
made[296] Háshimite orphan select and supreme!
Ibrahim am I not, but I deem this one * The Caliph who sits by
Baghdadian stream;
Of his grace the heir of all eloquent arts * And no partner hath
he in all gifts that beseem."

And when Ibrahim had finished his verses, Yusuf said to him, "By the virtue of Almighty Allah, an I guess aright and my shot[297] go not amiss, thou art Ibrahim the musician;" but the courtier retained his incognito and replied, "O my lord, Ibrahim is my familiar friend and I am a man of Al-Basrah who hath stolen from him sundry of his modes and airs for the lute and other instruments and I have the practice of improvisation." Now when Ibrahim was speaking behold, there came one of the Caliph's pages and he walked up to the head of the assembly bearing with him a letter, which he handed to his lord. But Yusuf put forth his hand and took it, and after reading the superscription he learnt that his companion was Ibrahim without doubt or mistake, so he said to him, "By Allah, O my lord, verily thou hast slighted me, for that thou hast not informed me of thyself." Quoth the other, "By Allah, I feared from thee lest I give thee excess of trouble;" and quoth Yusuf, "Do thou take to thee all these handmaids whom the Commander of the Faithful hath bid thee receive." Ibrahim replied, "Nay, I will not accept from thee the handmaidens but rather will I fend from thee the Prince of True Believers;" however, King Yusuf rejoined, "I have gifted them to the Viceregent of Allah: an thou take them not I will send them by other than thyself." Presently King Yusuf set apart for the Caliph great store of gifts, and when the handmaidens heard of that they wept with sore weeping. Ibrahim, hearing their wailing, found it hard to bear, and he also shed tears for the sobbing and crying of them; and presently he exclaimed, “Allah upon thee, O Yusuf, leave these ten handmaidens by thee and I will be thy ward with the Prince of True Believers.” But Yusuf answered, “Now by the might of Him who stablished the mountains stable, unless thou bear them away with thee I will despatch them escorted by another.” Hereupon Ibrahim took them and farewelled King Yusuf and fared forth and hastened his faring till the party arrived at Baghdad, the House of Peace, where he went up into the Palace of the Commander of the Faithful — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when Ibrahim reached Baghdad and went up to the Palace of the Commander of the Faithful and stood in the presence he was asked, “What hast thou brought for us from thy journey, O Ibrahim?” whereto he answered, “O our lord, I have come to thee with all thou willest and wishest that of rede be right and of word apposite.” Quoth he, “And what may that be?” and quoth the other, “The ten handmaids:” and so saying he set them before the Caliph, whereupon they kissed ground and did him suit and service and deprecated for him and greeted him with blessings, and each and every of them addressed him in tongue most eloquent and with theme most prevalent. The Prince of True Believers hugely admired them, marvelling at their deftness of address and their sweetness of speech which he had never witnessed in any other; and he was delighted with their beauty and loveliness and their stature and symmetrical grace, and he wondered with extreme wonderment how their lord had consented they should be brought before him.

Then cried he, “O Ibrahim, what hath been thy case with the owner of these damsels, and did he commit them to thee despite himself in anger and care or with resignation of mind and broadening of bosom and joy and satisfaction?” “O my lord,” said Ibrahim, “verily he made them over to me in none except the best of dispositions, and Allah give him length of life for a youth! How benign was his countenance and how beautiful, and how perfect and how liberal were his hands and prompt to act, and how excellent were his wits and how goodly and gracious was his society and how yielding was his nature and how great was his dignity and how just were his dealings with his lieges! By Allah, O Commander of the Faithful, when I went to him from thee I found him outside his city intending for the hunt and chase and about to enjoy himself in pleasurable case, but seeing our coming he met me and salam’d to me and greeted me and rejoiced in me with extreme joy. All this, and he knew me not nor did I on my part know him; but he took me with him and returned to town, and as we entered he was met by the Lords of the land and the lieges who prayed for him; so I knew that man to be their King and Captain of commandment, also that he was equitable to his subjects. Then he made me alight in his House of Hospitality, and went up into his Palace, after which he sent to call me and I obeyed his summons, when he set apart for me an apartment under his own roof and taking me by the hand led me thereto, where I found everything the best that could be. Anon he despatched for us wine and wax candles and perfumes and fruits fresh and dry and whatnot of that which becometh such assembly; and, when this was done, he bade summon the ten handmaidens, and they also took their seats in the session, and they smote their instruments and they sang verse wherein each one excelled her companion. But one of them insisted in her song upon the name of me, saying, ‘None availeth to compose such lines save Ibrahim the Cup-companion, the son of Ishak.’ Now I had denied myself to their lord and acquainted him not with my name; but when the damsel had finished her verse, I largessed to her a thousand gold pieces and asked her, ‘Who may be this Ibrahim whereat thou hast hinted in thy song?’ Said she, ‘He is the boon-companion of the Caliph and he is unique among the pleasant’; then she fell to praising me with praise galore than which naught could be more, unknowing me the while, until I took the lute from her hand and smote it with a touch unlike their play. Hereby their lord discovered me and said in his verse, ‘Thou art Ibrahim without doubt or mistake’; but still I denied myself, replying, ‘I am a man from Al-Basrah and a familiar of Ibrahim the Master-Musician’: And on this wise I answered him, when behold, there came up to us a page bearing a rescript from thee. So King Yusuf took it from his hand and read the address when he made certain that I was Ibrahim, the Cup-companion, and having learnt my name he blamed me saying, ‘O Ibrahim, thou hast denied thyself to me.’ ‘O my lord,’ I replied, ’Twas that I feared for thee excess of trouble’; after which quoth he, ‘Verily these ten damsels are a free gift from me to the Commander of the Faithful.’ Hearing these words I refused to receive them and promised on my return to the Caliph that I would defend their lord from all detraction, but he cried, ‘O Ibrahim, unless thou take them I will forward them with other than thyself.’ And lastly, O Prince of True Believers, he presented to me fifty slave-girls and as many Mamelukes and an hundred and fifty negro-serviles and twenty steeds of purest blood, with their housings and furniture, and four hundred she-camels and twenty pods of musk.”[298] Then having told his tale, the Cup-companion fell to commending Yusuf, and the Caliph inclined ear to him admiring at this man and his generosity and his openness of hand and the eloquence of his tongue and the excellence of his manners, until Al-Maamun desired to forgather with him and work him weal and gift him with liberal gifts. Presently the Caliph bade summon the ten handmaidens and the hour was past supper-tide, at which time Ibrahim the Cup-companion was seated beside him without other being present. And as soon as the girls came before him the Caliph bade them take their seats, and when they obeyed his order the wine cups went merrily round, and the ten were directed to let him hear somewhat of their chaunting and playing. So they fell to smiting their instruments of mirth and merriment and singing their songs, one after other, and each as she ended her poetry touched the Caliph with delight until it came to the last of them, who was hight Muhjat al-Kulúb; — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the last poetical piece recited by the ten damsels to the Commander of the Faithful was by Muhjat al-Kulub; and he upon hearing it rose at once to his feet and shrieked and fell aswoon for an hour of time. And when he recovered he cried, "By Allah, O Muhjat al-Kulub and Oh of eyne the coolth, do thou repeat to me what thou hast said." Hereupon she touched her instrument with another touch accompanying the repetition of her poetry in a style wholly unlike the first, and she repeated her song in the mode and form Nahawand.[299] But when the Caliph heard her, his wits were wildered, and he rent that was upon him of raiment, and he fell fainting to the floor until Ibrahim the Cup-companion and the ten handmaidens deemed him dead. But as he revived after an hour of time he said to the handmaiden, "O Muhjat al-Kulub, ask and it shall be granted to thee." "I pray," quoth she, "first of Allah and then of the Commander of the Faithful that he restore us, all the ten, unto our lord;" and he granted her request after he had gifted them all and largessed them.[300] He also wrote to their owner, King Yusuf, a royal Rescript appointing him Sultan over all the kingdoms that were in and about the land of Al-Sind; and moreover that whenas the Caliph might be absent from his good city of Baghdad, Yusuf should take his place in bidding and forbidding and ordering and governing. This ended, he despatched the ten slave-girls with a body of his Chamberlains after giving them wealth galore and of presents and rarities great store; and they fared forth from him and ceased not faring till they reached the city of Al-Sind. Now when the ten handmaidens drew nigh thereto they sent to inform King Yusuf of their coming, and he commissioned his Wazir Mohammed bin

Ibrahim to meet and receive them, and he caused them enter the Palace, wondering the while that his ten bondswomen had not found favour with the Prince of True Believers. So he summoned them to his presence and asked them thereanent, and they answered by relating all that had befallen them; and presently Muhjat al-Kulub presented to him the Royal Rescript, and when he read it he increased in joy and delight.[301] Now[302] when supper was over the Prince of True Believers said to Ibn Ahyam, “Needs must thou relate unto us a story which shall solace us; and said the other, “O Commander of the Faithful, I have heard a tale touching one of the Kings.” “What is that?” asked the Caliph, whereupon Ibn Ahyam fell to relating the adventures of

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE THREE PRINCES OF CHINA.[303]

Whilome there was a King in the land of Al-Sín and he had three male children to whose mother befel a mysterious malady. So they summoned for her Sages and leaches of whom none could understand her ailment and she abode for a while of time strown upon her couch. At last came a learned physician to whom they described her disorder and he declared, "Indeed this sickness cannot be healed save and except by the Water of Life, a treasure that can be trove only in the land Al-'Irák." When her sons heard these words they said to their sire, "There is no help but that we make our best endeavour and fare thither and thence bring for our mother the water in question." Hereupon the King gat ready for them a sufficiency of provaunt for the way and they farewelled him and set forth intending for Barbarian-land.[304] The three Princes ceased not travelling together for seven days, at the end of which time one said to other, "Let us separate and let each make search in a different stead, so haply shall we hit upon our need." So speaking they parted after dividing their viaticum and, bidding adieu to one another, each went his own way. Now the eldest Prince ceased not wending over the wastes and none directed him to a town save after a while when his victual was exhausted and he had naught remaining to eat. At that time he drew near to one of the cities where he was met at the entrance by a Jewish man who asked him saying, "Wilt thou serve, O Moslem?" Quoth the youth to himself, "I will take service and haply Allah shall discover to me my need." Then said he aloud, "I will engage myself to thee;" and said the Jew, "Every day thou shalt serve me in yonder Synagogue, whose floor thou shalt sweep and clean its mattings and rugs and thou shalt scour the candlesticks." "'Tis well," replied the Prince, after which he fell to serving in the Jew's house, until one day of the days when his employer said to him, "O Youth, I will bargain with thee a bargain." "And what may that be?" asked the young Prince, and the man answered, "I will condition with thee for thy daily food a scone and a half but the broken loaf thou shalt not devour nor shalt thou break the whole bread; yet do thou eat thy sufficiency and whoso doth contrary to our agreement we will flay[305] his face. So, an it be thy desire to serve, thou art welcome." Now of his inexperience the Prince said to him, "We will serve thee;" whereupon his employer rationed him with a scone and a half and went forth leaving him in the Synagogue. When it was noon the youth waxed anhungered so he ate the loaf and a half; and about mid-afternoon the Jew came to him and finding that he had devoured the bread asked him thereanent and the other answered, "I was hungry and I ate up all." Cried the Jew, "I made compact with thee from the beginning that thou shouldst eat neither the whole nor the broken," and so saying he fared forth from him and presently brought a party of Jews, who in that town numbered some fifty head, and they seized the youth and slew him and bundling up the body in a mat[306] set it in a corner of the synagogue. Such was his case; but as regards the Cadet Prince, he ceased not wayfaring and wending from town to town until Fate at last threw him into the same place where his brother had been slain and perchance as he entered it he found the same Jew standing at the Synagogue-door. The man asked him, "Wilt thou serve, O Moslem?" and as the youth answered "Yea verily," he led the new comer to his quarters. After this the Jew had patience for the first day and the second day — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Eleventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King's son tarried with the Jewish man the first day and the second day, after which his employer did with him even as he had done by his brother before him; to wit, he slew him and wrapping him in a mat placed his corpse beside that of the eldest Prince. On this wise it happed to these twain; but as regards the youngest of the three, he ceased not travelling from town to town and enduring excessive fatigue and hunger and nakedness until by decree of Destiny and by determination of the Predestinator he was thrown into the hands of the same Jew whom he found standing at the Synagogue-door. Here the man accosted him, saying, “Wilt thou serve, O Moslem?” and the Youth agreeing he imposed upon him the same pact which he had made with his two brothers, and the Prince said “’Tis well, O Master.” Then quoth the Jew, “Do thou sweep the Synagogue and cleanse it and shake out the mats and rugs;” and quoth the other, “Good!” But when the Prince left him and went into the building, his glance fell upon the two bundles of matting wherein were wrapped the corpses of his brothers, so he drew near to them and, raising a corner of the covering, found the bodies stinking and rotten. Hereat he arose and fared forth the Synagogue and opening a pit in the ground took up his brothers (and he sorrowing over them and weeping) and buried them. Then he returned to the building and, rolling up the mats, heaped them together and so with the rugs, after which he built a fire under them until the whole were burnt and after he took down the candlesticks one and all and brake them to bits. Now when it was mid-afternoon behold, the Jew came to the Synagogue and found a bonfire and all the furniture thereof lying in ashes and when he saw this he buffeted his face and cried, “Wherefore, O Moslem, hast thou done on such wise?” Replied the youth, “Thou hast defrauded me, O Master,” and rejoined the Jew, “I have not cheated thee of aught. However, O Moslem, hie thee home and bid thy mistress slaughter a meat-offering and cook it and do thou bring it hither forthright.” “’Tis well, O my Master,” said the Prince. Now the Jew had two boy children in whom he delighted and the youth going to his house knocked at the door which was opened to him by the Jewess and she asked, “What needest thou?” Quoth the Prince to the Jew’s wife, “O my mistress, my master hath sent me to thee saying, ‘Do thou slaughter the two lambs that are with thee and fifty chickens and an hundred pair[307] of pigeons,’ for all the masters are with him in the Synagogue and ’tis his desire to circumcise the boys.”[308] The Jew’s wife replied to him, “And who shall slaughter me all this?” when he rejoined, “I will.” So she brought out to him the lambs and the chickens and the pigeons and he cut the throats of all. The Jewess hereupon arose and cried upon her neighbours to aid her in the cooking until the meats were well done and all were dished up. Then the youth hending the ten porcelain plates in hand went with them to a house in the Ghetto[309] and rapped at the door and said, “My Master hath sent all these to you.” Meanwhile the Jew was in the Synagogue unknowing of such doings; and as the Prince was setting down the last of the plates which he carried with him, behold! the Jew came to that house because he had noticed his servant’s absence, so he repaired thither to see concerning the business of the meat offering wherewith he had charged him. He found his home in a state of pother and up-take and down-set and he asked the folk, “What is the matter?” They related the whole to him and said, “Thou sentest to demand such-and-such,” and when he heard this case he beat his face with his brogue[310] — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Twelfth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale, that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night.” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that, when the Jew came to his home and looked around, he found it in the condition which the youth had contrived, so he beat his face with his brogue and cried, “O the ruin of my house!” Suddenly the prince entered and his employer asked him, “Wherefore doest thou on such wise, O Moslem?” Answered the youth, “Verily thou hast defrauded me,” and rejoined the other, “No; I have not cheated thee on any wise.” Then said the Jew in his mind:— “Needs must I set a snare for this youth and slay him;” so he went in to his wife and said, “Spread for us our beds upon the terrace-roof; and we will take thereto the young

Moslem, our servant, and cause him lie upon the edge, and when he is drowned in slumber we will push him between us and roll him along the floor till he fall down from the terrace and break to bits his neck." Now by fiat of Fate the youth was standing and overhearing[311] their words. As soon as it was night-time the woman arose and spread the beds upon the roof according as her husband had charged her do; but about mid-afternoon the Prince bought him half a pound of filberts and placed them with all care and circumspection in his breast-pocket. Presently the Jew said to him, "O Moslem, we design to sleep in the open air, for the weather is now summery;" and said he, "'Tis well, O my Master." Hereupon the Jew and the Jewess and the children and the Prince their servant went up to the roof and the first who lay him down was the house-master, placing his wife and children beside him. Then said he to the youth, "Do thou sleep here upon the side,"[312] when the Prince brought the filberts out of his breast-pocket and cracked them with his teeth, and as often as they repeated to him, "Arise, O Moslem, and take thy place on the couch," he answered them, "Whenas I shall have eaten these filberts." He ceased not watching them till all had lain down and were fast asleep, when he took his place on the bed between the mother and the two boys. Presently the Jew awoke, and thinking that the youth was sleeping on the edge, he pushed his wife, and his wife pushed the servant, and the servant pushed the children towards the terrace-marge, and both the little ones fell over and their brain-pans[313] were broken and they died. The Jew hearing the noise of the fall fancied that none had tumbled save his servant the young Moslem; so he rose in joy and awoke his wife saying, "Indeed the youth hath rolled off the terrace-roof and hath been killed." Hereat the woman sat up, and not finding her boys beside her, whilst the Prince still lay there she wailed and shrieked and buffeted her cheeks, and cried to her husband, "Verily none hath fallen save the children." Hereat he jumped up and attempted to cast the youth from the roof; but he, swiftlier than the lightning, sprang to his feet and shouted at the Jew and filled him with fear, after which he stabbed him with a knife which was handy, and the other fell down killed and drowned in the blood he had spilled. Now the Jew's wife was a model of beauty and of loveliness and stature and perfect grace, and when the

King's son turned upon her and designed to slay her, she fell at his feet, and kissing them, placed herself under his protection. Hereupon the youth left her alive, saying to himself, "This be a woman and indeed she must not be mishandled;"[314] and the Jewess asked him, "O my lord, what is the cause of thy doing on this wise? At first thou camest to me and toldest me the untruth, such-and-such falsehoods, and secondly, thou wroughtest for the slaughter of my husband and children." Answered he, "In truth thy man slew my two brothers wrongously and causelessly!" Now when the Jewess heard of this deed she enquired of him, "And art thou their very brother?" and he replied, "In good sooth they were my brethren;" after which he related to her the reason of their faring from their father to seek the Water of Life for their mother's use. Hereat she cried, "By Allah, O my lord, the wrong was with my mate and not with thee; but the Decreed chevisance doth need, nor is there flight from it indeed; so do thou abide content. However, as regards the Water in question, it is here ready beside me, and if thou wilt carry me along with thee to thy country I will give thee that same, which otherwise I will withhold from thee; and haply my wending with thee may bring thee to fair end." Quoth the Prince in his mind, "Take her with thee and peradventure she shall guide thee to somewhat of good:" and thereupon promised to bear her away. So she arose and led him into a closet where she showed him all the hoards of the Jew, ready moneys and jewellery and furniture and raiment; and everything that was with her of riches and resources she committed to the young Prince, amongst these being the Water of Life. So they bore away the whole of that treasure and he also carried off the Jewess, who was beautiful exceedingly, none being her peer in that day. Then they crossed the wilds and the wastes, intending for the land of Al-Sín, and they persevered for a while of time. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Fourteenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the young Prince ceased not wayfaring until the twain drew near to the capital of China[315] where, by the fiat of Fate and the sealed decree of Destiny, on entering the walls he found that his father had fared to the mercy of Allah Almighty, and that the city, being Kingless, had become like unto a flock of sheep lacking shepherd. Moreover he was certified that the Lords of his father’s land and the Grandees of the realm and all the lieges were in the uttermost confusion. He went up to the palace and forgathered with his mother, and seeing that she had not been healed of her sickness, he brought her out the Water of Life and gave her to drink some little thereof whereby health returned to her and she rose from her couch and took seat and salam’d to him and asked concerning his brethren. However he concealed his secret thereanent fearing lest it induce in her weakly state a fresh attack and discovered to her naught but said, “Verily, we parted at such a place in order to seek the Water of Life.” Then she looked upon his companion the Jewess (and she cast in the mould of loveliness) and she questioned him concerning the woman and he recounted to her the whole affair, first and last, still concealing for the reason aforesaid, the fate of his brothers. Now on the second day the bruit went abroad throughout the city that the King’s son had returned; so the Wazirs and Emirs and the Lords of the land and all who had their share in governance forgathered with him and they set him as King and Sultan in the stead of his sire. He took seat on the throne of his Kingship and bade and forbade and raised and deposed and so tarried for a while of time, until one day of the days when he determined to enjoy the hunt and chase and divert himself in pleasurable case.[316] So he and his host rode forth the city when his glance fell upon a Badawi girl who was standing with the Shaykh her father considering his retinue; and the age of the maiden might have mastered thirteen years. But as soon as the King looked upon the girl love of her upon his heart alighted, and he was thereby engrossed, for she was perfect in beauty and comeliness. Hereupon he returned to his palace and sending for her father asked her of him in marriage; the Shaykh, however, answered saying, "O our lord the Sultan, I will not give up my daughter save to one who hath a handicraft of his own,[317] for verily trade is a defence against poverty and folk say, 'Handicraft an it enrich not still it veileth.'"[318] Hereupon the King took thought in himself and said to the Shaykh, "O Man, I am Sovran and Sultan and with me is abundant good;" but the other replied, "O King of the Age, in King-craft there is no trust." However, of his exceeding love to the girl the Sultan presently summoned the Shaykh of the Mat-makers and learnt from him the craft of plaiting and he wove these articles of various colours both plain and striped.[319] After this he sent for the father of the damsel and recounted to him what he had done and the Shaykh said to him "O King of the Age, my daughter is in poor case and you are King and haply from some matter may befal a serious matter; moreover the lieges may say, 'Our King hath wived with a Badawi girl.'" "O Shaykh," replied the King, "all men are the sons of Adam and Eve." Hereupon the Badawi granted to him his daughter and got ready her requisites in the shortest possible time and when the marriage-tie was tied the King went in unto her and found her like unto a pearl.[320] So he rejoiced in her and felt his heart at rest and after tarrying with her a full-told year, one chance day of the days he determined to go forth in disguise and to wander about town and solace himself with its spectacles alone and unattended. So he went into the vestiary where the garments were kept and doffing his dress donned a garb which converted him into a Darwaysh. After this he fared forth in early morning to stroll around the streets and enjoy the sights of the highways and markets, yet he knew not what was hidden from him in the World of the Future. Now when it was noon-tide he entered a street which set off from the Bazar and yet was no thoroughfare,[321] and this he followed up until he reached the head and end, where stood a cook[322] making Kabábs. So he said to himself, "Enter yon shop and dine therein." He did so and was met by sundry shopmen who seeing him in Darwaysh's garb welcomed him and greeted him and led him within, when he said to them, "I want a dinner." "Upon the head and the eyes be it," they replied, and conducting him into a room within the shop showed him another till he came to the place intended, when they said to him, “Enter herein, O my lord.” So he pushed open the door and finding in the closet a matting and a prayer-rug[323] spread thereupon he said to himself, “By Allah, this is indeed a secret spot, well concealed from the eyes of folk.” Then he went up to the prayer-rug and would have sat down upon it after pulling off his papooshes, but hardly had he settled himself in his seat when he fell through the floor for a depth of ten fathoms. And while falling he cried out, “Save me, O God the Saviour;” for now he knew that the people of that place only pretended to make Kababs and they had digged a pit within their premises. Also he was certified that each and every who came in asking for dinner were led to that place where they found the prayer-rug bespread and supposed that it was set therein for the use of the diners. But when the Sultan fell from his seat into the souterrain, he was followed by the thieves who designed to murther him and to carry off his clothes, even as they had done to many others. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Sixteenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the King fell into the pit (and he disguised in Darwaysh-garb) the thieves sought to slay him and carry off his clothes, when quoth he to them, “Wherefore kill me when my garments are not worth a thousand groats[324] and I own not a single one? However, I have at hand a handicraft whereat I am ready to work sitting in this pit and do you take and sell my produce for a thousand faddahs; and every day I will labour for you, finishing one and requiring naught save my meat and drink and perpetual privacy in your quarters.” “At what craft art thou crafty?” asked they, and he answered, “At mat-weaving: so do ye bring me a piastre[325] worth of rushes[326] and the same of yarn.” Accordingly they fared forth and fetched him his need and presently he made a mat and said to them, “Take ye this and sell it not for less than a thousand faddahs.” They hied out and carried the work to the Bazar where, as soon as the folk caught sight thereof, they crowded about the seller, each man offering more until the price had risen to a thousand and two hundred silvern nusfs. Hereupon said the thieves to themselves, “By Allah, this Darwaysh can profit us with much profit and enrich us without other trade;” so every morning for ten days they brought him rushes and yarn and he wove for them a mat which they vended for a like sum. On this wise it happened to him; but as regards the Wazirs and Emirs and lords of the land, they went up to the Council-chamber[327] for the first day and the second and the third until the week was ended and they awaited the coming of their King, but he came not, neither found they any tidings nor hit they upon any manifest traces and none knew whither he had wended. So they were sore exercised and confusion befel with much tittle-tattle of folk; each one said his own say nor were they guided by any to what they should do. Furthermore, as often as they asked of the Harem they were answered, “We have no tidings of him;” so they were perplext and at last they agreed, their King being clean lost, to set up a Sultan as his successor. However the Wazirs said, “Tarry ye until Allah shall open unto us a door whereby we shall be rightly directed to him.” Now the King had required from the people of the pit rushes of various colours, red and green, and when they fetched them he fell to weaving a mat like those of the striped sort, whereon he figured by marks and signs the name of the quarter wherein he was gaoled[328] and discovered to his men the way thereto and the site itself; after which he said to the thieves, “Verily this mat misfitteth every save those in the Royal Palace and its price is seven thousand faddahs. Do you take it and hie with it to the Sultan who shall buy it of you and pay you the price.” They obeyed his bidding and wending to the palace of the Grand Wazir found him sitting with the Lords of the land and with the Nobles of the realm talking over the matter of the King when behold, those who brought the mat entered into his presence. Quoth the Minister, “What be that which is with you?” and quoth they, “A mat!” whereupon he bade them unroll it and they did so before him; and he, being sagacious, experienced in all affairs, looked thereat and fell to examining the bundle and turning it about, and considering it until suddenly he espied signs thereupon figured. He at once understood what they meant and he was rightly directed to the place where the King was confined; so he arose without delay and after ordering them to seize those who had brought the mat took with him a party and went forth, he and they, after mastering the marks which were upon the weft. He ceased not wending (and the people of the pit with him under arrest) until such time as he arrived at the place. Here they went in and opened the souterrain and brought out the King who was still in Darwaysh garb. Presently the Wazir sent for the Linkman and when he appeared they seized all who were in that place and struck off their heads; but as for the women they put them into large sacks[329] of camel’s hair and drowned them in the river: furthermore, they spoiled all that was on that site and the Sultan gave orders to raze the house until it became level with the ground. When all this had been done they questioned the Sultan concerning the cause of that event and he informed them of what had befallen him from incept to conclusion and lastly he cried, “Walláhi! the cause of my escape from this danger was naught save the handicraft which I learnt; to wit, the making of mats, and the Almighty requite with welfare him who taught me because he was the means of my release; and, but for my learning this trade, ye had never known the way to discover me, seeing that Allah maketh for every effect a cause.” And having on such wise ended this tale Ibn Ahyam[330] fell to relating to the King the history of

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THE RIGHTEOUS WAZIR WRONGFULLY GAOLED.[331]

It is related that there was a King among the manifold Kings of Al-Hind, and he had a Wazir which was a right good counsellor to the realm and pitiful to the lieges and the Fakirs and merciful to the miserable and just in all his dealings. Despite this the Grandees of the kingdom hated him and envied him, and at all times and seasons when he went forth the presence or returned to his house, one of the Emirs would come forward and say to the King, "O our lord, verily the Wazir doth of doings thus and thus," — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Twenty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Lords of the land, whenever the Wazir was absent traduced him and maligned him in the presence of the Sultan, saying, "The Minister doth such and such doings," and this continued for a while of time. Now one day of the days, as the Sultan was sitting in his palace behold, a running messenger came to him bearing letters from sundry of the provinces which were in his reign imploring help against their foemen's violence. "What may be done in this case?" asked the Sultan, and his Nobles answered saying, "Send to them the Wazir," but they spake not this speech save in their resolve to ruin him and their determination to destroy him. Hereupon the King sent for him and summoned him and commanded him to journey to the places in question; but those of whom the complaints had been made threw dangers and difficulties in his way. Said the Wazir, “Hearing and obeying;” and after preparing himself for wayfare he set forth on his way. Now the Lords had despatched letters to the province whither he intended, apprising the folk of his coming, and saying to them, “Empower him not with anything, and if you avail to work him aught of wrong, so do.” When the Wazir marched upon those places he was met by the people with welcomes and deputations to receive him and offer him presents and rarities and sumptuous gifts, and all who were therein honoured him with highmost honour. Presently he sent for their adversaries, and having brought them before him made peace between the two parties, and their gladness increased and their sadness ceased, and he tarried with them for a month full-told; after which he set out on his homeward march. The Lords, however, had reported all this to the King and they were right sore and sorrowful, for that their desire had been the destruction of the Minister. And one day of the days as the Wazir was sitting at home, behold, a party of Chamberlains appeared before him and summoned him to the presence, saying, “Arise, the King requireth thee.” He rose without stay or delay, and taking horse made for the presence, and ceased not riding until he had reached the palace and had gone in to the King, who forthright bade throw him into gaol. (Now it happened that the prison had seven doors.)[332] Cried the Wazir, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great; and verily we be Allah’s and unto Him are we returning! Would I wot why and wherefore the King hath confined me and for what cause; but Omnipotence is Allah’s.” As soon as the Minister was quartered in his new quarters the Sovran sent to interdict his eating any food of flesh-kind, allowing only bread and cheese and olives and oil, and so left him in durance vile. Hereupon all the folk applied them to addressing the King with petitions and to interceding for the captive; but this was not possible; nay, the Sultan’s wrath waxed hotter nor did it soon cool, for the Wazir abode in gaol during the longsome length of seven years. At last one day of the days that Sultan went forth disguised in Darwaysh-garb and toured about town unattended, and ceased not walking until he reached and passed before the palace of the Wazir, where he found a gathering of much folk, some sweeping and others sprinkling water, and others spreading[333] , whilst the Harem and household were in high glee and gladness. He stood there amongst the spectators and presently asked what was doing, and they informed him, saying, "The Wazir returneth from abroad this night and folk have been informed by messenger that the Sultan hath deigned restore him to favour and expressed himself satisfied, so presently we shall see him once more at home." "Praise be to Allah!" quoth the King in his mind; "by the Almighty, this occurrence hath no cause, and how went the bruit abroad that the King hath again accepted him? And now there is no help but that I forgather with the Wazir and see what there may be to do and how this occurred." The Sultan increased in disquietude therefor, so he went and bought a somewhat of bread and repairing to the gaol (he being still in Fakir's garb) accosted the gaoler and said to him, "Allah upon thee, O my lord, open to me the bridewell that I may enter and distribute this provaunt among the prisoners, for that I have obliged myself to such course by oath, and the cause is that when suffering from a sickness which brought me nigh to death's door I vowed a vow and sware a strong swear that, an Almighty Allah deign heal me, I would buy somewhat of bread and dole it out to the inmates of the gaol[334] . So here am I come for such purpose." Upon this the man opened to him the door and he went in and divided all the bread amongst the captives yet he saw not the Wazir; so he said to the gaoler, "Hath any one remained that I may dole to him his share?" "O Darwaysh," said the other, "whereof askest thou?" and said the Fakir, "O my lord, I have sworn an oath and Allah upon thee, if there be among the captives any save these I have seen, do thou tell me thereof." Quoth the man, "There remaineth none save the Wazir who is in another place, but indeed he is not in want;" and quoth the Fakir, "O my lord, my desire is to free myself from the obligation of mine oath." Accordingly the gaoler led him in to the Wazir and when the Darwaysh drew nigh the visitor shrieked and fell fainting to the floor, and the warder seeing him prostrate left him to himself and went his ways. Hereupon the Minister came to him and sprinkling somewhat of water upon his face said to him, "O Darwaysh, there is no harm to thee!" So the Fakir arose and said, "O my lord, my heart hath been upon thee for a while of time;" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say.

Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Thirty-First Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that quoth the Fakir to the Wazir, “By Allah, O my lord, my heart hath indeed been with thee for this space of seven years; and often as I went to thy mansion, they told me that the Sultan is wroth with the Wazir; withal I still awaited for thee until this very day, when I repaired to thy quarters according to my custom and I found in thy house much folk, this sweeping and that sprinkling and that spreading, and all were in joyous case. So I asked of the by-standers and they informed me that the Sovran hath become satisfied with thee and that on the ensuing night thou wilt hie thee home for that this thy saying is soothfast.”[335] “O Darwaysh,” replied the other, “ ’Tis true that I sent to my household and informed them thereof, for that I have received welcome news from an event befel me; so I bade apprise those at home that the Sultan is satisfied with me; and to me, O Darwaysh, hath betided a matter wondrous and an occurrence marvellous; were it written with needle-gravers upon the eye-corners it had been a warning to whoso would be warned.” The Fakir asked, “And what may be that?” and the other answered, “By Allah, O Darwaysh, the while I was in the service of His Highness the King, I was a true counsellor to him and pitiful to the lieges and I never deceived him nor did I betray him at any time at all; and often as he sent me to a place wherein were mutual strife and trouble and wrong and tyranny, I smoothed matters and pacified the folk and righted wrongs amongst them by the power of Almighty Allah. But one day of the days, my mind was set upon riding out to the waste lands about the town and the gardens thereof, by way of solacing my self; so I embarked in a little cad’que[336] upon the river and when we were amid stream I had a longing for coffee[337] ; so I said to the boatman, ‘Abide in this place and throw out the anchor while we drink coffee.’ Hereat all my suite arose and busied themselves in preparing it until ’twas ready and I had a finján[338] worth a treasury[339] of money which they filled and passed to me. I took it as I was sitting upon the gunwale of the boat whence it dropped into the stream; and I was sorely sorrowful therefor, because that cup was a souvenir. Seeing this, all in the boat arose and sent for a diver who asked, saying, ‘In what place hath the finjan fallen that I may seek it? and do ye inform me of its whereabouts.’ So we sought for a pebble in the caďque but we found none, and as I wore upon my finger a signet ring which was worth two treasuries of money I drew it off and cast it into the water crying, ‘The cup fell from me in this place.’ But when the ducker saw me throw my ring he said to me, ‘Wherefore, O my lord, hast thou parted with thy seal?’ and said I to him, ‘The deed is done.’ Then he went down and plunged into the deep for a while and behold he came up grasping the cup, in the middle of which we saw the signet ring. Now when this mighty great matter befel me, I said to myself, ‘Ho certain person, there remaineth upon this good luck no better luck; and haply there will befal thee somewhat contrary to this.’[340] However those with me rejoiced at the finding of my two losses, not did any fear therefrom my change of state and downfall, but they wondered and said, ‘By Allah, this is a rare matter!’ Then we went forward in the caďque until we had reached the place intended, where we tarried the whole of that day and presently returned home. But hardly was I settled and had I taken seat in my home quarters when behold, a party of Chamberlains of the King’s suite came in to me and said, ‘The Sultan requireth thee!’ Accordingly, I arose and mounted horse and rode on till I had come to the palace and entered the presence; and I designed to offer suit and service to the King as was my wont, when suddenly he cried, ‘Carry him away.’ So they bore me off and confined me in this place, after which the Sultan sent and interdicted me from eating a tittle of flesh food, and here I am after the space of seven years, O Darwaysh, still in the same condition. Now on the morning of this day my stomach craved for meat, so I said to the gaoler, ‘O Such-and-such, ’tis now seven years since I tasted flesh, so take this ashrafi and bring us an ounce of meat.' He accepted the money saying, ' 'Tis well,' and went forth from me and brought me my need." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Thirty-Third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale, that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting, and of deeds fair seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Wazir continued to the Fakir, "Then, O Darwaysh, we divided the meat (I and the gaoler) with our fingers, and we washed it and set it upon the hearth, building a fire beneath it until it was cooked, when we took it off, and after waiting awhile dished it up and were about to eat it. But it happened to be noon-tide, and the hour of incumbent orisons, so we said, 'Let us pray our prayers;' and we arose and made the Wuzú-ablution, and went through the mid-day devotions. After this we set the plate before us; and I, removing its cover, put forth my hand to take up a bit of meat, but as I took it, behold, a mouse passed over that same morsel with its tail and paws[341] . I cried, 'There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah the Glorious, the Great! I have divided this meat with my own hand and have cooked it myself, so how could this matter have occurred? How ever, Allah the Omniscient haply knoweth that the stumbling stone hath been removed from my path,' and this I said, for when I saw that mouse do on such wise I felt that glad news and good tidings were coming from the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth. So I sent to my home and informed them that the Sultan was satisfied with me, for things when at their worst mend, and in joyance end; and I opine, O Darwaysh, that all my troubles have now ceased." Said to him the Fakir, "Alhamdolillah — Glory be to God — O my lord, who hath sent thee forerunners of welfare." Then he arose from beside the

Wazir, and went forth and ceased not wending until he came to his palace where he doffed his disguise and donned the garments of the Kings, and taking seat upon the throne of his Kingship summoned the Wazir from his gaol in all joy, and set him between his hands and gifted him with sumptuous gifts. And all displeasure in the Sultan's heart being removed from the Wazir he committed to him once more the management of all his affairs[342] . But when Ibn Ahyam (continued Shahrazad) had ended his history of the Righteous Wazir he presently began to tell the tale of

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THE CAIRENE YOUTH, THE BARBER, AND THE CAPTAIN.

It is related that in Misr there was a Youth, a Shalabí,[343] sans peer for semblance and excellence, and he had to friend a lovely woman whose husband was a Yúzbáshí[344] or captain. Now whenever that young man or his playmate would fain conjoin, each with other, union proved almost impossible and yet his heart was always hanging to her love and she was in similar state and even more enamoured for that he was passing fair of form and feature. One day of the days the Captain returned home and said to his wife, “I am invited to such a place this afternoon, therefore an thou require aught ask it of me ere I go.” Cried they,[345] “We want nothing save thy safety;” yet were they delighted therewith, and the youth’s friend said, “Alhamdolillah — Glory to God — this day we will send to a certain person and bring him hither and we will make merry he and I.” As soon as the husband fared forth his home in order to visit the gardens according to his invitation, the wife said to a small boy which was an eunuch beside her, “Ho boy, hie thee to Such-an-one (the Shalabi) and seek him till thou forgather with him and say to him, ‘My lady salameth to thee and saith, Come to her house at this moment.’ “ So the little slave went from his mistress and ceased not wending to seek the Shalabi (her friend) till he found him in a barber’s booth where at that time it was his design to have his head shaved and he had ordered the shaver so to do. The man said to him, “O, my lord, may this our day be blessed!” whereupon he brought out from his budget a clean towel, and going up to the Shalabi dispread it all about his breast. Then he took his turband and hung it to a peg[346] and placing a basin before him washed his pate, and was about to poll it when behold, the boy-slave passed within softly pacing, and inclining to him whispered in his ear confidentially between them twain so that none might overhear them, “My lady So-and-so sendeth thee many salams and biddeth me let thee know that to-day the coast is clear, the Captain being invited out to a certain place. Do thou come to her at once and if thou delay but a little thou mayst not avail to possess her nor may she possess thee, and if thou be really minded to forgather with her come with all speed.” Hearing these words of the boy the lover’s wits were wildered and he could not keep patience; no, not for a minute; and he cried to the Barber, “Dry my head this instant and I will return to thee, for I am in haste to finish a requirement.” With these words he put his hand into his breast pouch and pulling out an ashrafi gave it to the Barber, who said in himself, “An he have given me a gold-piece for wetting his poll, how will it be when I shall have polled him? Doubtless he will then gift me with half a score of dinars!” Hereupon the youth went forth from the Barber who followed him saying, “Allah upon thee, O my lord, when thou shalt have ended thy business, return to me that I may shave thy scalp and ‘twere better that thou come to the shop.” “Right well,” said the youth, “we will presently return to thee,” and he continued walking until he drew near the place of his playmate when suddenly the Barber caught him up a second time — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the youth approached the house of his friends, suddenly the Barber caught him up hard by thereto and placing himself in front said, “Allah upon thee, O my lord, do not forget me, but be sure of return to the shop that I may poll thee.” Quoth the youth to him in his folly, “ ’Tis well, O Man, I will certainly come back to thee and will not forget thy shop.” So the lover left him and ganged his gait and presently went up to the home of his friend, whilst the Barber stayed expecting him and remained standing at the door; and of the denseness of the tonsorial wits would not budge from that place and would await the youth that he might shave him. Such was the case with them; but as regards the Yuzbashi, when he went forth from his house bent upon seeking his friend who had invited him, he found that a serious matter of business[347] would hinder his giving the entertainment, so the host said to the Captain, “Allah upon thee, O my lord, pardon me for I have this day a matter which will prevent my going forth to the garden and Inshallah — God willing — on the morrow we will there meet and enjoy ourselves, we and thou, free and with hearts at rest; for a man who hath work in hand may not take his pleasure and his thoughts will remain ever preoccupied.” Hereupon quoth the Captain, “Sooth thou hast said, O Such-and-such, and herein there is naught to excuse of harm or hindrance, and the day’s engagement between us if it be not to-morrow will come after to-morrow.” So he farewelled his host and left him and returned homewards. Now that Yuzbashi was a man of honour and sagacity and pluck and spunk and by nature a brave. He ceased not wending until he had reached his home where he found the Barber standing at the house door and the fellow came up to him and said, “Allah upon thee, O my lord, when thou goest within do thou send me down a handsome youth who went upstairs into this dwelling.” The Yuzbashi turned upon him with a face fiery as ruddy sparks and cried to him, “What, O Man, dost thou say that one hath gone up to my house, O pimp, O pander? [348] What manner of man can enter therein and I absent?” Quoth the Barber, “By Allah, O my lord, one did go up whilst I stood awaiting him the while he passed out of my sight; so when thou art abovestairs do thou send him down to me, saying, ‘Thine own Barber awaiteth thee at the entrance below.’ “ Now when the Yuzbashi heard these words, he waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and going up into his house with haste and hurry knocked at the inner door which defended the Harem. The inmates heard him and knew that it was he, and the Youth fell to piddling in his bag-trowsers; but the woman took him and hid him in the shaft of the cistern[349] and going forth opened the door to her husband. Cried the Yuzbashi, “Of a truth, hath any right or reason to say that here in this house is a man?”[350] and she replied, “Oh, the shame of me! How ever, O my lord, can there be here a man?”[351] So the Yuzbashi went about seeking and searching but he came not upon any; then he went down to the Barber wight and cried, “O Man, I have found none upstairs save the womenkind;” but the Barber replied, “By Allah, O my lord, he went up before my eyes and I am still awaiting him.” Then the Captain hurried away a second time and rummaged about, high and low, and left no place whereinto he did not pry and spy, yet he came upon no one. He was perplext at his affair and again going down to the Barber said to him, “O Man, we have found none.” Still the fellow said to him doggedly, “Withal a man did go within, whilst I who am his familiar here stand expecting him, and thou sayest forsooth he is not there, albeit he be abovestairs and after he went in he never came out until this tide.” Hereupon the Captain returned to his Harem a third time and a fourth time unto the seventh time; but he found no one; so he was dazed and amazed and the going in and faring out were longsome to him. All this and the youth concealed in the cistern shaft lay listening to their dialogue and he said, “Allah ruin this rascal Barber!” but he was sore afraid and he quaked with fright lest the Yuzbashi slay him and also slay his wife. Now after the eighth time the Captain came down to the Barber and said to him, “An thou saw him enter, up along with me and seek for him.” The man did accordingly, but when the two had examined every site, they came upon no one; so the Barber was stupefied and said to himself, “Whoso went up before me and I looking upon him, whither can he have wended?” Then he fell to pondering and presently said, “By Allah, verily this is a wondrous matter that we have not discovered him;” but the Yuzbashi cried fiercely, “By the life of my head and by Him who created all creatures and numbered the numberings thereof, an I find not this fellow needs must I do thee die.” The Barber of his exceeding terror fell to rummaging all the places but it fortuned that he did not look into the shaft of the cistern; however at last he said, “There remaineth for us only the cistern-shaft ;” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent, and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night, Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Barber wight, after he and the Captain had finished their search without finding anyone, said, “There remaineth to us only the cistern- shaft;” so he went and peered therein, but he could not use his sight overwell. Hereat the Yuzbashi came up behind him and cuffed him with a mighty cuff upon the neck and laid him prostrate and insensible at the mouth of the shaft. Now when the woman heard the Barber saying, “Let us explore the door which openeth upon the cistern-shaft,” she feared from the Yuzbashi, so coming up to him she said, “O my lord, how is it that thou art a Captain and that thy worth and thy length and thy breadth are on such wise; withal thou obeyest the word of a fellow Jinn-mad[352] and sayest that there is a man in thine own house. This is indeed a reproach to thee.” So the Yuzbashi of his stupidity believed her, and approaching the Barber on the edge of the cistern-shaft cuffed him with a cuff whose excess of violence dazed him and he fell upon the floor retaining naught of his senses. When the woman saw this she cried to her husband, “Pinion his elbows at this moment and suffer me take my due of him by a sound drubbing, and then let him go.” “This is the right rede,”quoth he and after all was done she cried to her husband, “Come with us above that we enjoy our pleasure, and Alhamdolillah that thou didst not go to the place of invitation for I should have been desolate by thine absence this day.” So they ascended and sat together, each beside other, and they sported and were gladdened and rejoiced; and after that the Captain lay down and was presently drowned in slumber. Seeing this the wife arose and repaired to the cistern- shaft wherefrom she released her beloved and finding all his clothes in a filthy state from the excess of what had befallen him of affright penetrating into his heart by reason of the Yuzbashi, she doffed his dress and bringing a bundle of clean clothing garbed him therein; after which his fear was calmed and his heart comforted and he was set on the right way. Then she led him to a private stead, wherein they twain, he and she, took their joyance and had their pleasure and made merry for the space of three hours, till such time as each had had fullest will of other. After this he went forth from her and the Veiler veiled him. On such wise were the wife's doings; but as regards what befel the Barber-man, he ceased not to remain strown on the ground and dazed by the stress of the blow and he abode there pinioned for a while. About mid-afternoon the Yuzbashi's wife went to her husband and awaking him from sleep made for him coffee which he drank and felt cheered; and he knew nothing anent that his spouse had done with her beloved during the while he slumbered like unto a he goat. So she said to him, "Rise up and go we to the man and do thou drub him with the soundest drubbing and turn him out." Quoth he, "Yes indeed, by Allah, verily he deserveth this, the pimp! the pander! the procurer!" Accordingly he went to him and finding him lying upon the ground raised him and said to him, "Up with thee and let us seek the man whereof thou spakest." Hereupon the Barber arose and went down into the cistern-shaft where he found none and therewith the Captain laid the fellow upon his back; and, baring his arms to his elbows, seized a Nabbút[353] and beat him till he made water in his bag-trowsers; after which he let him go. So the Barber arose and he in doleful dumps, and went off from the house and ceased not wending until he reached his shop about sunset, hardly believing in his own safety. But (resumed Shahrazad) as regards the history of the woman who was a fornicatress and an adultress, I have to relate to thee the following story of

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THE GOODWIFE OF CAIRO AND HER FOUR GALLANTS.[354]

It is said that in Misr lived a woman, a model of beauty and loveliness and stature and perfect grace, who had a difficulty with a man which was a Kazi and after this fashion it befel. She was the wife of an Emir[355] and she was wont to visit the Baths once a month; and when the appointed term for her going forth had come, she adorned herself and perfumed herself and beautified herself and hastened, tripping and stumbling,[356] to the Hammám. Now her path passed by the Kazi's court-house where she saw many a man[357] and she stopped to enjoy the spectacle, upon which the judge himself glanced at her with a glance of eyes that bequeathed to him a thousand sighs and he asked her saying, "O woman, hast thou any want?" "No indeed," answered she, "I have none." Then he inclined to her and drawing near her said, "O lady mine and O light of these eyne, is union possible between us twain?" She replied, "'Tis possible," and he enquired of her when it could be, and she made an appointment with him saying, "Do thou come to me after supper-time," — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable! Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night." She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Goodwife said to the Kazi, "Do thou come to me after supper-time," and went her ways and entered the Hammam, where she washed herself and cleaned herself; then, coming out thence, she determined to go home. But she was met on her road by a Gentleman[358] who was Sháhbandar of the

Trader-guild, and he seeing her set his affections upon her; so he accosted her, saying, “Is’t possible that we ever be merry together?” Hereat she appointed him to come when supper was done, after which she left him and ganged her gait. As she neared her home she was met by a Butcher whose heart inclined to her, so he addressed her saying, “Is union possible?” and she appointed him to visit her an hour after supper had been eaten. Then she went home and mounting the stairs took seat in the upper saloon open to the air, where she doffed her head-veil[359] and all that was upon her head. Now in the neighbourhood of her house was a Trader and he had mounted to the terrace-roof for a reason; so when the woman bared her hair and taking up a comb began to dry and prepare it for dressing, his eyes fell upon her whilst so engaged, and his heart was engrossed with her love. Presently he sent to her an old woman; and she returned him a reply and appointed him to visit her house during the night after supper-tide. On this wise she had promised herself to four men.[360] Now the Kazi had got ready for her a Kohl-style and the Gentleman had prepared for her a fine suit of clothes and the Butcher had led for her a full-sized ram and the Trader had set apart for her two pieces of silk. As soon as it was supper-time, behold, the Kazi repaired to her in privacy bringing his gift and knocked at the door which he found unbolted and she cried to him, “Come in.” Accordingly he entered to her and presented to her that which was with him, but hardly had he settled himself comfortably in his seat when the Gentleman arrived and also rapped. Quoth the Kazi to the Goodwife, “Who may this be?” and quoth she, ‘Fear thou nothing, but arise and doff thy dress;” so he stripped himself altogether and she garbed him in a gaberdine and bonnet[361] and hid him in a closet and went to open the door. Hereupon appeared the Consul and she let him in and accepted what he had brought and seated him beside her. But hardly had he settled down when, behold, there came a knock at the door and he cried, “Who may that be?” Said she, “Fear nothing but up and doff thy dress;” so he arose and stripped himself and she disguised him in a gaberdine and bonnet and hid him in another closet all alone. Then she hastened to the door and suddenly the Flesher-man appeared and she let him in and led him within and having accepted his present seated him; but hardly was he at his ease when the door was again knocked, whereat he was overcome and affrighted: however, she said to him, “Fear nothing, but arise and doff thy dress in order that I may hide thee.” So he threw off his clothes and she invested him in a gaberdine and a bonnet and thrust him into a third cabinet. After this she went and opened the door when there came to her the Trader who was her neighbour, so she let him in and took what was with him, and seated him; and he was proceeding to sit down in comfort when behold, some one knocked at the door and he said, “Who may that be?” Hereupon she cried, “O my honour! O my calamity! This is my husband who but yesterday[362] killed off four men; however do thou rise up and doff thy dress.” He did as she bade him, upon which she garbed him in a gaberdine and a bonnet and laid him in a fourth closet. So these four one and all found themselves in as many cabinets[363] sorely sorrowful and fearful; but she went forth and suddenly her mate the Emir came in and took seat upon a chair that was in the house. Hereat all four sensed that she had opened to her husband and had admitted him; and they said in their minds, “Yesterday he killed four men and now he will kill me.” And each and every considered his own affair and determined in his mind what should happen to him from the husband. Such was the case with these four; but as regards the house-master, when he took seat upon the chair, he fell to chatting with his wife and asking her saying, “What hast thou seen this day during thy walk to the Hammam?” Said she, “O my lord, I have witnessed four adventures and on every one hangeth a wondrous tale!” Now when the four heard the Goodwife speaking these words each of them said to himself, “Indeed I am a dead man and ’tis the intention of this woman to peach upon me.” Presently her husband asked her, “What be these four histories?” and answered she, “I saw four men each and every of whom was an antic fellow, a droll, a buffoon; furthermore, O my lord, one and all of them were garbed in gaberdine and bonnet.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Forty-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director,the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the woman said to her husband, “Moreover each of the four was habited in gaberdine and bonnet.” But when the amourists heard these words every one of them said to himself, “Here be a judgment this strumpet of a woman hath wrought upon us, the whore! the witch!” and her husband understanding what she told him asked, “Wherefore didst thou not bring them hither that the sight might solace us?” “O my lord,” answered she, “had I brought them what hadst thou said to them? indeed I fear me thou wouldst have slain them!” And he, “No indeed; I would not have killed them, for they are but buffoon-folk, and we should have enjoyed their harlequinades and would have made them dance to us a wee and all and some tell us tales to gladden our minds; after which we would have suffered them depart and go about their own business.” The wife enquired, “And given that they knew neither dancing nor story-telling what hadst thou done with them?” and replied he, “Had the case been as thou sayest and they ignorant of all this, verily we would have killed them and cast them into the chapel of ease.” The four men hearing such threatening words muttered to themselves, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great;” but the Kazi said in his mind, “How remain Judge of this city when I shall have been found garbed in gaberdine and bonnet and dancing and tale-telling? and indeed this is the greater death. Allah bring to ruin this adulteress of a woman!” Then the Flesher took thought as follows, “How shall I continue to be Chief of the Butchers when I prance about with a bonnet on my pate? this is indeed a painful penalty!” Then quoth the Gentleman, the Consul, “How shall it be with me when I am seen dancing and donning a bonnet? indeed death by the sword were lighter than this!” Then muttered the Trader which was the woman’s neighbour, “’Tis easier to kill myself with my own hand than to endure all such ill.” Anon the woman said to her husband, “Inshallah — God willing —

on the morrow we will bring them hither to thy house that we may solace ourselves therewith;" but said he, "Walláhi, hadst thou brought them this night 'twere better, for that to-morrow evening I have business in the house of the Chief Emir." Quoth she to him, "Now grant me immunity and give me permission and I will arise and bring them to thee at this moment, but each must come to thee alone and by himself." Quoth he, "O Woman, leave I do give thee and immunity I do grant thee;" whereupon she rose without stay or delay and went to the closet wherein was the Judge. Then she opened it and entered, and taking him by the hand dragged him forward and came out with him and set him before her spouse garbed as he was in gaberdine and bonnet. The house-master scrutinised him and was certified of his being the Kazi and said to him, "Blessed be to thee, O our lord, this bonnet and this gaberdine which become thee passing well." But the Judge, as he stood before the presence of the woman's husband, bowed his front downwards and was clothed as with a garment in the sweat of shame and was sore abashed, when the Emir said to him, "O our lord the Kazi, do thou dance for us a wee the baboon dance and rejoice us; after which performance do thou tell us a tale that our breasts may thereby be broadened." But when the man said this to him, the Judge feared for his life because he had heard and well remembered the words of the householder and he fell to clapping his palms and prancing to right and left. Hereupon the Emir laughed consumedly, he and his wife, and they signed and signalled each to other deriding the judicial dance, and the Kazi ceased not skipping until he fell to the floor for his fatigue. Hereupon the man said to him, "Basta! Now tell us thy tale that we may rejoice thereat; then do thou rise up and go about thy business." "Hearkening and obedience," said the Judge and forthright he began to relate the adventure of

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The Tailor and the Lady and the Captain.[364]

It is related that a Tailor was sitting in his shop facing a tall house tenanted by a Yúzbáshi, and this man had a wife who was unique for beauty and loveliness. Now one day of the days as she looked out at the latticed window the Snip espied her and was distraught by her comeliness and seemlihead. So he became engrossed by love of her and remained all day a-gazing at the casement disturbed and perturbed, and as often as she approached the window and peered out therefrom, he would stare at her and say to her, "O my lady and O core of my heart, good morning to thee; and do thou have mercy upon one sore affected by his affection to thee; one whose eyes sleep not by night for thy fair sake." "This pimp be Jinn-mad!" quoth the Captain's wife, "and as often as I look out at the window he dareth bespeak me: haply the folk shall say, 'Indeed she must needs be his mistress.'" But the Tailor persevered in this proceeding for a while of days until the lady was offended thereby and said in her mind, "Walláhi, there is no help but that I devise for him a device which shall make unlawful to him this his staring and casting sheep's eyes at my casement; nay more, I will work for ousting him from his shop." So one day of the days when the Yuzbashi went from home, his wife arose and adorned and beautified herself, and donning the bestest of what dresses and decorations she had, despatched one of her slave-girls to the Tailor instructing her to say to him, "My lady salameth to thee and biddeth thee come and drink coffee with her." The handmaiden went to his shop and delivered the message; and he, when hearing these words,[365] waxed bewildered of wits and rose up quivering in his clothes; — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Forty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be

other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the Tailor heard the girl's words, he quivered in his clothes; but indeed he recked not aught of the wiles of womankind. So after padlocking his shop he went with her to the house and walked upstairs, where he was met by the lady with a face like the rondure of the moon and she greeted him right merrily, and taking him by the hand led him to a well-mattressed Divan and bade her slave-girl serve him with coffee, and as he drank it she sat facing him. Presently the twain fell to conversing, she and he; and she soothed him with sweet speech, whilst he went clean out of his mind for the excess of her beauty and loveliness. This lasted until near midday, when she bade serve the dinner-trays, and took seat in front of him, and he began picking up morsels[366] designed for his lips and teeth, but in lieu thereof thrust them into his eye. She laughed at him, but hardly had he swallowed the second mouthful and the third when behold, the door was knocked, whereupon she looked out from the casement and cried, "Oh my honour! this is my husband." Hereat the man's hands and knees began to quake, and he said to her, "Whither shall I wend?" Said she, "Go into this closet," and forthright she thrust him into a cabinet and shot the bolt upon him and taking the key she tare out one of its teeth[367] and put it in her pocket. After this she went down and opened the door to her husband who walked upstairs; and finding the dinner trays bespread, asked her, "What is this?" She answered, "I and my lover have been dining together." "And what may be thy lover?" "Here he is."[368] "Where may he be?" to which she replied, "He is inside this closet." Now as soon as the Tailor heard her say this say, he piddled in his bag-breeches and befouled himself and he was in a filthy state with skite and piss.[369] Hereupon the Captain asked, "And where's the key?" and she answered, "Here it is with me."[370] "Bring it out," said he, so she pulled it from her pocket and handed it to him. The Captain took the key from his spouse and applying it to the wooden bolt of the cabinet rattled it to and fro[371] but it would not open; so the wife came up to him and cried, "Allah upon thee, O my lord, what wilt thou do with my playmate?” Said he, “I will slay him!” and said she, “No, ’tis my opinion that thou hadst better pinion him and bind him as if crucified to the pillar in the court floor and then smite him with thy sword upon the neck and cut off his head; for I, during my born days, never saw a criminal put to death and now ’tis my desire to sight one done to die.” “Sooth is thy speech,” quoth he: so he took the key and fitting it into the wooden bolt would have drawn it back, but it could not move because a tooth had been drawn therefrom and the while he was rattling at the bolt his wife said to him, “O my lord,’tis my desire that thou lop off his hands and his feet until he shall become marked by his maims;[372] and after do thou smite his neck.” “A sensible speech,” cried the husband and during the whole time her mate was striving to pull the bolt she kept saying to him, “Do this and do that with the fellow,” and he ceased not saying to her, “’Tis well.” All this and the Tailor sat hearkening to their words and melting in his skin; but at last the wife burst out laughing until she fell upon her back and her husband asked her, “Whereat this merriment?” Answered she, “I make mock of thee for that thou art wanting in wits and wisdom.” Quoth he, “Wherefore?” and quoth she, “O my lord, had I a lover and had he been with me should I have told aught of him to thee? Nay; I said in my mind, ‘Do such and such with the Captain and let’s see whether he will believe or disbelieve.’ Now when I spake thou didst credit me and it became apparent to me that thou art wanting in wits.” Cried he to her, “Allah disappoint thee! Dost thou make jibe and jape of me? I also said in my thoughts, ‘How can a man be with her and she speak of him in the face of me?’” So he arose and took seat with her, the twain close together, at the dinner-tray and she fell to morselling him and he to morselling her, and they laughed and ate until they had their sufficiency and were filled; then they washed their hands and drank coffee. After this they were cheered and they toyed together and played the two-backed beast until their pleasure was fulfilled and this was about mid-afternoon — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the

Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night, and that was

The Seven Hundred and Forty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale, that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Yuzbashi fell to toying with his wife, and thrusting and foining at her cleft,[373] her solution of continuity, and she wriggled to and fro to him, and bucked up and down, after which he tumbled her and both were in gloria.[374] This lasted until near mid-afternoon when he arose and went forth to the Hammam. But as soon as he left the house she opened the cabinet and brought out the Tailor, saying, “Hast thou seen what awaiteth thee, O pander, O impure? Now by Allah, an thou continue staring at the windows or durst bespeak me with one single word it shall be the death of thee. This time I have set thee free, but a second time I will work to the wasting of thy heart’s blood.” Cried he, “I will do so no more; no, never!” Thereupon said she to her slave-girl, “O handmaid, open to him the door;” and she did so, and he fared forth (and he foully bewrayed as to his nether garments) until he had returned to his shop. Now when the Emir heard the tale of the Kazi, he rejoiced thereat and said to him, “Up and gang thy gait!” so the judge went off garbed in his gaberdine and bonnet. Then said the house-master to his wife, “This be one of the four, where’s Number Two?” Hereat she arose and opened the closet in which was the Gentleman and led him out by the hand till he stood before her husband, who looked hard at him and was certified of him and recognised him as the Sháhbandar; so he said to him, “O Khawájah, when didst thou make thee a droll?”[375] but the other returned to him neither answer nor address and only bowed his brow groundwards. Quoth the house-master to him, “Dance for us a wee and when thou shalt have danced do thou tell us a tale.” So he fell perforce to clapping his hands and skipping about until he fell down of fatigue when he said, “O my lord, there is with me a rare story, and an exceeding strange if thou of thy grace accord attention to my words.” “Tell on and I will listen to thee," quoth the other, whereupon said the Gentleman, "'Tis concerning the wiles of womankind," and fell to relating the adventures of

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The Syrian and the Three Women of Cairo.[376]

There was a man, a Shámí, who came to the God-guarded city of Misr al-Káhirah — Misr of Mars — and with him was a store of money and merchandize and sumptuous clothing. He hired for himself a room in a caravanserai, and having no slave, he was wont to go forth every day and roam about the city-thoroughfares and cater for himself. Now this continued for a while of time till one day of the days, as he was wandering and diverting his mind by looking to the right and to the left, he was met on the way by three women who were leaning and swaying one towards other as they walked on laughing aloud; and each and every of the three surpassed her fellow in beauty and loveliness. When he looked at them his mustachios curled[377] at the sight and he accosted them and addressed the trio, saying, "May it be that ye will drink coffee in my lodging?" "Indeed we will," said they, "and we will make mirth with thee and exceeding merriment, passing even the will of thee." Quoth he, "When shall it be?" and quoth they, "To-night we will come to thy place." He continued, "I am living in a room of Such-and-such a Wakálah."[378] and they rejoined, "Do thou make ready for us supper and we will visit thee after the hour of night-prayers." He cried, "These words are well; " so they left him and went their ways; and he, on the return way home, bought flesh and greens and wine and perfumes; then, having reached his room, he cooked five kinds of meats without including rice and conserves, and made ready whatso for the table was suitable. Now when it was supper-time behold, the women came in to him, all three wearing capotes[379] over their dresses, and when they had entered they threw these cloaks off their shoulders and took their seats as they were moons. Hereupon the Syrian arose and set before them the food-trays and they ate their sufficiency, after which he served to them the table of wine, whereat they filled and passed to him and he accepted and swilled until his head whirled round, and as often as he looked at any one of them and considered her in her mould of beauty and loveliness he was perplext and his wits were wildered. They ceased not to be after such fashion until the noon o' night. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Forty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Syrian and the three ladies ceased not to persevere in the drinking of wine until the noon o’ night, at which time he would not distinguish between masculine and feminine from the excess of his wine-bibbing, so he said to one of the three, “Allah upon thee, O my lady, what may be the name of thee?” She replied, “I am hight ‘Hast-thou-seen-aught-like-me?’” Whereat he exclaimed, “No, Walláhi!” Then he up-propped himself on his elbow and rising from the ground said to the second, “Thou, O my lady, and life-blood of my heart, what is thy name?” She answered, “I am hight ‘Never-sawest-thou-my-like,’” and he replied, “Inshallah — what Allah willeth — O my lady Never-sawest-thou-my-like.” Then said he to the third, “And thou, O dearling of my heart, what may be the name of thee?” And said she, “I am hight ‘Look-at-me-and-thou-shalt-know-me.’” When he heard these words he cried out with a loud outcry and fell to the ground saying, “No, by Allah, O my lady Look-at-me-and-thou-shalt-know-me.”[380] But when the three women regarded him his reason was upset and they forced upon him more wine-bibbing whilst he cried to them, “Fill for me, ho my lady Never-sawest-thou-my-like, and thou too, my lady Hast-thou-seen-aught-like-me, and eke thou, O my lady Look-at-me-and-thou-shalt-know-me.” And they drove him to drink still more until he fell to the ground without a vein swelling[381] for he had become drunken and dead drunk. When they saw him in this condition they doffed his turband and crowned him with a cap, and fringes projecting from the peak,[382] which they had brought with them; then they arose and finding in his room a box full of raiment and ready money, they rifled all that was therein. Presently they donned their dresses and, waiting until the door of the Wakalah was opened after the call to the morning-prayer, they went their ways and the Veiler vouchsafed them protection[383] and they left the Syrian man in his room strown as a tried toper and unknowing what the women had done with him of their wile and guile. Now when it was the undurn-hour he awoke from his crapula and opening his eyes, cried, "Ho my lady Never-sawest-thou-my-like! and ho my lady Hast-thou-seen-aught-like-me! and ho my lady Look-at-me-and-thou-shalt-know-me!" But none returned to him any reply. Then he pulled himself together and glanced carefully around but his sight fell not upon anyone beside him, so he arose and went to the box wherein he found never a single thing. This restored him to his right senses and he recovered from his drink and cried, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great: this be a judgment they have wrought for me." Then he went forth still wearing the tall fringed cap and knowing nothing of himself and, when he had issued from his caravanserai, he cried to everyone he met in the streets, "I am seeking Hast-thou-seen-aught-like-me?" and the men would reply, "No, I never sighted the like of thee;" and to a second he would say, "I am looking for one Never-sawest-thou-aught-like-me;" and the other would answer, "Indeed, I never beheld thy fellow;" then he would ask a third, "Hast thou seen one Look-at-me-and-thou-shalt-know-me?" and the questioned would answer, "Indeed, I have looked at thee but I know thee not at all." And he ceased not wandering about, bonnet on head, and everyone who met him by the way returned to him the like replies until he came upon a party of folk who were in front of a barber's booth.[384] There he cried upon them also, "Ah! Hast-thou-seen-aught-like-me! and Ah! Never-sawest-thou-my-like! and Ah! Look-upon-me-and-thou-shalt-know-me!" Hereat, understanding that he was touched in brain and this was a judgment that had been wrought upon him, they seized him and forced him into the barber's shop and bringing a mirror set it in his hands. When he looked therein he found a fool's cap upon his head, so forthwith he tore it off and took thought and said to those present, "Who of you can guide me to those three women?" They said to him, "O Syrian, march off with thyself to thy own land for that the folk of

Egypt can play with the egg and the stone."[385] So he arose without stay and delay; then, taking what provaunt was sufficient for the way and what little of fine raiment had been left to him, he quitted Cairo intending for his own country. Now the Emir hearing this tale of the Shahbandar wondered thereof with extreme wonderment and said to the Gentleman, "An thou have finished do thou fare forth and go about thy business." Accordingly he went from him still garbed in gaberdine and bonnet on head when the house-master asked his wife, "Who of them here remaineth with thee?" And she answered, "Have patience and I will bring thee the third." So she arose and opening another closet summoned the Flesher and taking him by the hand, whilst he was ashamed and abashed, led him till he stood before her spouse and the poor fellow availed not to raise his eyes from the ground. Presently the husband considered him and knew him and was certified that he was Such-and-such the Chief Butcher and head of the craft, so he said to him, "Ho thou the clever one, do thou dance for us a wee and after that tell us a tale." Accordingly he stood up and clapped hands and fell to dancing and prancing till such time as he dropped down for fatigue; after which he said, "O my lord, I have by me a tale anent the craft and cunning of women." Asked the other, "And what may it be?" and the Butcher began to relate the tale of

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The Lady with Two Coyntes.

It is told of a woman which was a fornicatress and adulteress and a companion of catastrophes and calamities that she was married to a Káim-makám[386] who had none of the will of mankind to womankind, at all, at all. Now the wife was possessed of beauty and loveliness and she misliked him for that he had no desire to carnal copulation, and there was in the house a Syce-man who was dying for his love of her. But her husband would never quit his quarters, and albeit her longing was that the horse-keeper might possess her person and that she and he might lie together, this was impossible to her. She abode perplext for some sleight wherewith she might serve her mate, and presently she devised a device and said to him, "O my lord, verily my mother is dead and 'tis my wish to hie me and be present at her burial and receive visits of condolence for her; and, if she have left aught by way of heritage, to take it and then fare back to thee." "Thou mayest go," said he, and said she, "I dread to fare abroad alone and unattended; nor am I able to walk, my parent's house being afar. Do thou cry out to the Syce that he fetch me hither an ass and accompany me to the house of my mother, wherein I shall lie some three nights after the fashion of folk." Hereupon he called to the horse-keeper and when he came before him, ordered the man to bring an ass,[387] and mount his mistress and hie with her; and the fellow, hearing these words, was hugely delighted. So he did as he was bidden, but instead of going to the house they twain, he and she, repaired to a garden carrying with them a flask of wine and disappeared for the whole day and made merry and took their pleasure[388] until set of sun. Then the man brought up the ass and mounting her thereon went to his own home, where the twain passed the entire night sleeping in mutual embrace on each other's bosoms, and took their joyance and enjoyment until it was morning tide. Hereupon he arose and did with her as before, leading her to the garden, and the two, Syce and dame, ceased not to be after this fashion for three days solacing themselves and making merry and tasting of love-liesse. On the fourth day he said to her, "Do thou return with us to the house of the Kaim-makam," and said she, "No;

not till we shall have spent together three days more enjoying ourselves, I and thou, and making merry till such time as I have had my full will of thee and thou thy full will of me; and leave we yon preposterous pimp to lie stretched out, as do the dogs,[389] enfolding his head between his two legs." So the twain ceased not amusing themselves and taking their joyance and enjoyment until they had ended the six days, and on the seventh they wended their way home. They found the Kaim-makam sitting beside a slave which was an old negress; and quoth he, "You have disappeared for a long while!" and quoth she, "Yes, until we had ended with the visits of condolence for that my mother was known to foyson of the folk. But, O my lord, my parent (Allah have ruth upon her!) hath left and bequeathed to me a somewhat exceeding nice." "What may that be?" asked he, and answered she, "I will not tell thee aught thereof at this time, nor indeed until we remain, I and thou, in privacy of night, when I will describe it unto thee." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Fifty-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the woman said to her husband, "My mother hath left and bequeathed to me somewhat, but I will not tell thee thereof till the coming night when we twain shall be alone." "'Tis well," said he; after which he continued to address himself, "Would Heaven I knew what hath been left by the mother of our Harím!"[390] Now when darkness came on and he and she had taken seats together, he asked her, "What may be the legacy thy mother left?" and she answered, "O my lord, my mother hath bequeathed to me her Coynte being loath that it be given to other save myself and therefore I have brought it along with me." Quoth he of his stupidity (for he was like unto a cosset),[391] "Ho thou, solace me with the sight of thy mother's Coynte." Hereupon she arose; and, doffing all she had on her of dress until she was mother-naked, said to him, "O my lord, I have stuck on my mother's Coynte hard by and in continuation of mine own cleft and so the twain of them have remained each adjoining other between my hips." He continued, "Let me see it;" so she stood up before him and pointing to her parts, said, "This which faceth thee is my coynte whereof thou art owner;" after which she raised her backside and bowing her head groundwards showed the nether end of her slit between the two swelling cheeks of her sit-upon, her seat of honour, crying, "Look thou! this be the Coynte of my mother; but, O my lord, 'tis my wish that we wed it unto some good man and pleasant who is faithful and true and not likely treason to do, for that the Coynte of my mother must abide by me and whoso shall intermarry therewith I also must bow down to him whilst he shall have his will thereof." Quoth the Kaim-makam, "O sensible say! but we must seek and find for ourselves a man who shall be agreeable and trustworthy," presently adding, "O woman, we will not give the Coynte of thy mother in marriage to some stranger lest he trouble thee and trouble me also; so let us bestow this boon upon our own Syce." Replied the wife of her craft and cursedness, "Haply, O my lord, the horsekeeper will befit us not;", yet the while she had set her heart upon him. Rejoined the Kaim-makam her husband, "If so it be that he have shown thee want of respect we will surely relieve him of his lot." But after so speaking he said a second time, "'Tis better that we give the Coynte of thy mother to the Syce;" and she retorted, "Well and good! but do thou oblige him that he keep strait watch upon himself." Hereat the man summoned his servant before him and said to him, "Hear me, O Syce; verily the mother of my wife to her hath bequeathed her Coynte, and 'tis our intent to bestow it upon thee in lawful wedlock; yet beware lest thou draw near that which is our own property." The horsekeeper answered, "No, O my lord, I never will." Now after they arrived at that agreement concerning the matter in question, whenever the wife waxed hot with heat of lust she would send for the Syce and take him and repair with him, he and she, to a place of privacy within the Harem, whilst her mate remained sitting thoroughly satisfied, and they would enjoy themselves to the uttermost, after which the twain would come forth together. And the Kaim-makam never ceased saying on such occasions, “Beware, O Syce, lest thou poach upon that which is my property;” and at such times the wife would exclaim, “By Allah, O my lord, he is a true man and a trusty.” So they continued for a while[392] in the enjoyment of their luxury and this was equally pleasurable to the husband and wife and the lover. Now when the Emir heard this tale from the Butcher, he began laughing until he fell upon his back and anon he said to him, “Wend thy ways about thine own work;” so the Flesher went forth from him not knowing what he should do in his garb of gaberdine and bonnet. Hereupon the woman arose and going to the fourth closet threw it open and summoned and led the Trader man by the hand and set him before her husband who looked hard at him in his droll’s dress and recognised him and was certified of him that he was his neighbour. So he said, “Ho Such-an-one! Thou art our neighbour and never did we suspect that thou wouldst strive to seduce our Harím;[393] nay rather did we expect thee to keep watch and ward over us and fend off from us all evil.[394] Now by Allah, those whom we have dismissed wrought us no foul wrong even as thou wroughtest us in this affair; for thou at all events art our neighbour. Thou deservest in this matter that I slay thee out of hand, but Default cometh not save from the Defaulter; therefore I will do thee no harm at all as did I with thy fellows even save that needs must thou tell us a tale whereby to rejoice us.”[395] Quoth he, “Hearing and obeying,” and herewith fell to relating the story of

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The Whorish Wife who Vaunted her Virtue.

It is related that once upon a time there was a man which was an astronomer[396] and he had a wife who was singular in beauty and loveliness. Now she was ever and aye boasting and saying to him, “O man, there is not amongst womankind my peer in nobility[397] and chastity;” and as often as she repeated this saying to him he would give credit to her words and cry, “Walláhi, no man hath a wife like unto the lady my wife for high caste and continence!” Now he was ever singing her praises in every assembly; but one day of the days as he was sitting in a séance of the great, who all were saying their says anent womankind and feminine deeds and misdeeds, the man rose up and exclaimed, “Amongst women there is none like my wife, for that she is pure of blood and behaviour;” hereat one of those present said to him, “Thou liest, O certain person!” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Fifty-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that while the man was singing the praises of his spouse one of those present rose and said to him, “Walláhi, thou liest, O certain person!” “Wherein do I lie?” quoth he, and quoth the other, “I will teach thee and show thee manifestly whether thy wife be a lady or a whore. Do thou rise up from amongst us and hie thee home and go thou in to her and say, ‘O woman, I am intent upon travelling to a certain place and being absent for a matter of four days and after will return; so do thou arise, O woman, and bring me some bread and a mould of cheese by way of viaticum.’

Then go thou forth from beside her and disappear for a while; and presently returning home hide thee in a private place without uttering a word.” Cried those present, “By Allah, indeed these words may not be blamed.” Accordingly, the man went forth from them and fared till he entered his house where he said, “O woman, bring me something of provision for a journey: my design is to travel and to be absent for a space of four days or haply six.” Cried the wife, “O my lord, thou art about to desolate me nor can I on any wise bear parting from thee; and if thou needs must journey do thou take me with thee.” Now when the man heard these the words of his wife he said to himself, “By Allah, there cannot be the fellow of my spouse amongst the sum of womankind,” presently adding to her, “I shall be away from four to six days but do thou keep watch and ward upon thyself and open not my door to anyone at all.” Quoth she, “O Man, how canst thou quit me?[398] and indeed I cannot suffer such separation.” Quoth he, “I shall not long be separated from thee;” and so saying he fared forth from her and disappeared for the space of an hour, after which he returned home softly walking and hid himself in a place where none could see him. Now after the space of two hours behold, a Costermonger[399] came into the house and she met him and salam’d to him and said, “What hast thou brought for me?” “Two lengths of sugar-cane,” said he, and said she, “Set them down in a corner of the room.” Then he asked her, “Whither is thy husband gone?” and she answered, “On a journey: may Allah never bring him back nor write his name among the saved and our Lord deliver me from him as soon as possible!” After this she embraced him and he embraced her and she kissed him and he kissed her and enjoyed her favours till such time as he had his will of her; after which he went his ways. When an hour had passed a Poulterer[400] came to the house, whereupon she arose and salam’d to him and said, “What hast thou brought me?” He answered, “A pair of pigeon-poults;” so she cried, “Place them under yon vessel.”[401] Then the man went up to the woman and he embraced her and she embraced him and he tumbled[402] her and she tumbled him; after which he had his will of her and presently he went off about his own business. When two hours or so had gone by there came to her another man which was a Gardener;[403] so she arose and met him with a meeting still fairer than the first two and asked him, “What hast thou brought with thee?” “A somewhat of pomegranates,” answered he; so she took them from him and led him to a secret place where she left him and changed her dress and adorned herself and perfumed herself and Kohl’d[404] her eyes. After that she returned to the pomegranate-man and fell a-toying with him and he toyed with her and she hugged him and he hugged her and at last he rogered and had his wicked will of her and went his ways. Hereupon the woman doffed her sumptuous dress and garbed herself in her everyday garment. All this and the husband was looking on through the chinks of the door behind which he was lurking and listening to whatso befel, and when all was ended he went forth softly and waited awhile and anon returned home. Hereupon the wife arose and her glance falling upon her husband she noted him and accosted him and salam’d to him and said, “Hast thou not been absent at all?” Said he, “O Woman, there befel me a tale on the way which may not be written on any wise, save with foul water upon disks of dung,[405] and indeed I have endured sore toil and travail, and had not Allah (be He praised and exalted!) saved me therefrom, I had never returned.” Quoth his wife, “What hath befallen thee?” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent, and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Fifty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale, that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the wife asked the husband saying, “What hath befallen thee on thy way?” And he answered, “O Woman, when I went forth the town and took the road, behold, a basilisk issued from his den and coming to the highway stretched himself therealong, so I was unable to step a single footstep; and indeed, O Woman, his length was that of yon sugar cane, brought by the Costermonger and which thou placedst in the corner. Also he had hair upon his head like the feathers of the pigeon-poults presented to thee by the Poulterer-man, and which thou hast set under the vessel; and lastly, O Woman, his head was like the pomegranates which thou tookest from the Market Gardener[406] and carriedst within the house." Whenas the wife heard these words, she lost command of herself and her right senses went wrong and she became purblind and deaf, neither seeing nor hearing, because she was certified that her spouse had sighted and eye-witnessed what she had wrought of waywardness and frowardness. Then the man continued to her, "O Whore! O Fornicatress! O Adulteress! How durst thou say to me, 'There is not amongst womankind my better in nobility and purity?' and this day I have beheld with my own eyes what thy chastity may be. So do thou take thy belongings and go forth from me and be off with thyself to thine own folk." And so saying he divorced her with the triple divorce and thrust her forth the house. Now when the Emir heard the aforetold tale from his neighbour, he rejoiced therein; this being a notable wile of the guiles of womankind which they are wont to work with men for "Verily great is their craft."[407] And presently he dismissed the fourth lover, his neighbour, even as he had freed the other three, and never again did such trouble befal him and his wife, or from Kazi or from any other.[408] And to the same purport (quoth Shahrazad), to wit, the slights and snares of the sex, they also tell the tale of

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CÂLEBS THE DROLL AND HIS WIFE AND HER FOUR LOVERS.

There lived at the Court of a certain King a man wherewith he was wont to jest and this droll was unmated. So one day of the days the Sultan said to him, “O Man, thou art a bachelor, so suffer us to marry thee,” and said the buffoon, “No, O King of the Age; allow me to remain in single blessedness, for in womankind there is no rest and they work many a wile, and indeed I fear lest haply we fall upon one who shall be of the fornicatresses, the adulteresses.” Quoth the King, “There is no help but that thou wed;” and quoth the Droll, “’Tis well, O King of the Age.” Hereupon the Sultan sent to summon the Wazir and bade him betroth the man to a woman of righteous conduct and come of decent folk. Now the Minister had with him an old nurse, and he commanded her to find a match for the Sultan’s Jester; whereupon she rose and went out from him and engaged for the man a beautiful woman. And presently the marriage-tie was tied between these twain and he went in unto the bride and she tarried with him a while of time even half a year or may be seven months. Now one day of the days the King’s Jester went forth his house ere the dawn-prayer had been called on some business for the Sultan, intending to return before rise of sun. Such was the case with him; but as regards his wife, she had known when yet unmarried four men who to her were the liefest of her companions and who, during the earlier days of her wedding, had not been able to possess her. However, on the morning when her husband fared forth from her before the call to dawn-prayers, each and every of these four favoured lovers made up their minds to visit their playmate. Now one of them was a Pieman[409] and the second was an Herbalist[410] , the third was a Flesher and the fourth was the Shaykh of the Pipers[411] . When the Droll went forth from his wife behold, the Pieman came and rapped at the door, whereat she opened to him and said, “Thou hast come betimes,” and said he, “I have minced the meat and I desired to work it up when I found that the hour was too early and that no one was in the market. So I said to myself, ‘Up with thee and go to Such-and-such a woman.’” “’Tis well,” quoth she; but when they desired to make merry together, of a sudden the door was knocked; so quoth he to her, “Who is this?” and quoth she to him, “I know not, but do thou hie and hide thee in yonder closet.” He did her bidding, whereupon she went forth and threw open the door when behold, it was the Herbalist and she said to him, “This is a time betimes.” Said he, “By Allah, I was nighting in the garden and I have brought these sweet-scented herbs, and as the hour was over-early I said to myself, ‘Go thou to Such-and-such a woman and make merry, thou and she, for a wee.’” So she let him in; but hardly had he settled himself in his seat when suddenly the door was again rapped and he asked her, “Who is this?” and she answered, “I know not, but do thou hie and hide thee in yonder closet.” So he went in and found the Pieman there seated and said to him, “What thing mayest thou be?”[412] and said the other, “I and thou are each like other.” Meanwhile the woman had gone forth and opened the door when behold, she was met by the Flesher whom she led within and then said to him, “This is a time betimes.” Quoth he, “By Allah, I arose from sleep and slaughtered a ram[413] and prepared the flesh for selling when I found that the hour was over-early and said I to myself, ‘Take thee a piece of mutton-flesh and go thou in to a certain person and enjoy yourselves, thou and she, until the Bazar shall have opened.’” But hardly had he taken seat when came a fourth knock at the door, and as he heard this he was wonderstruck; so she said to him, “Fear not, but hie thee and hide thee within yonder closet.” Accordingly he went in and found the Pieman and the Herbalist there sitting and he salam’d to the twain who returned his salute; then he asked them, “What hath brought you hither?” and they answered, “That which brought us brought also thee.” He took seat with them while the woman went and threw open the door and behold, she was met by her friend the Shaykh of the Pipers belonging to the Sultan, so she brought him in and said to him, “Indeed thy time is betimes.” Said he, “Walláhi, I went forth my home intending to fare and prepare the band[414] in the Royal Palace when I found the hour was over-early, so said I to myself, ‘Hie thee to a certain person and make ye merry, thou and she, until the sun shall rise and thou art bound to wend palacewards.’” “’Tis well,” quoth she and seated him and designed to take seat beside him when behold, came a rap at the door and he cried, “Who is that?” and she replied, “Allah only is Omniscient, but haply ’tis my husband.” So he was startled and afeard, and when she whispered to him, “Up and enter yon closet,” he did her bidding and found a-facing him therein the Pieman and the Herbalist and the Flesher to whom he said, “Peace be upon you,” and when they returned his greeting he asked them, “Ye, who brought you?” They answered him saying, “That which brought us also brought thee.” After this he sat beside them and the four remained seated in the closet and huddled together, whilst each addressed himself saying, “What now wilt thou do?” Meanwhile the woman suddenly went forth and opened the door when behold, it was her mate the Droll who walked in and took seat; whereupon she asked him, “And thou, why hast thou come at such an hour? ’tis not often thy wont to return early from the King’s presence. Haply thou art unwell, for thy custom is not to appear until near supper-tide and now thou hast forestalled our meeting-time and hast returned a-morn. I suspect that he hath bespoken thee concerning some matter of urgent matters that thou comest home at this hour; but haply thou wilt finish off such business and hie thee back to the Sultan.” Quoth he, “By Allah, O Woman, when I fared forth hence and went to the King I found that he had many and important affairs to settle, so he said, ‘Hie thee to thy home and abide therein, nor return to me till after the third day.’” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent, and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Fifty-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale, that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the King’s Jester went in to his wife she said, “Thou, wherefore hast thou come so early?” and said he, “By Allah, the Sultan hath much and important business and said to me, ‘Hie thee home, and tarry there and return not to me save after the third day.’” Now when the four men who were closeted together heard these words they were perplext as to their affair, and said one to other, “What shall we do? Indeed we are unable to sit out three days in this stead.” Hereupon the Pieman said to them, “Nay, rather let us play a prank whereby we may escape,” and said they, “What may be the device thou wouldest devise?” Quoth he, “Whatso I do that do ye look upon and then act in like guise,” and so speaking he arose and taking his minced meat fell to sticking it upon his skin until he was like a leper covered with sores.[415] Then he went forth the closet to the husband of the mistress, and cried, “The Peace be upon you!” The man returned his salute and asked him, “What art thou?” to which he made answer, “I am the Prophet Job the Ulcered, where is the way out of this?” “Here,” cried the Jester, upon which Job passed out of the door and went about his business and on such wise made his escape. Next the Herbalist stood up and opening his basket brought out fragrant herbs and fell to scattering them over his sconce and about it and over his ears,[416] till such time as all his face was hidden in greens, after which he also went out and accosting the house-master said, “The Peace be upon you!” And when the man returned the salam he asked him, “Hath Job the Ulcered passed by thee on this path?” “Indeed he hath,” said the other; “but what mayst thou be?” “I am Al-Khizr, the Green Prophet” (upon whom be The Peace),[417] and so saying he brushed by the Droll and passed through the door. Now when the second lover had gone forth and escaped, the Flesher arose and donning the ram’s skin set its horns upon his head and began crawling out of the closet upon all fours, hands and knees, until he stood before the husband of his beloved, and said to him, “The Peace be upon you!” “And upon you be The Peace,” returned the other, “What mayst thou be?” “I am Iskandar, Lord of the Two Horns,” cried the other; “say me, have there passed by thee Job the Ulcered and Al-Khizr the Green Prophet (upon whom be The Peace)?” Quoth the house-master, “They went by this place and forewent thee.” So the third lover passed through the doorway and escaped, and presently the Shaykh of the Pipers rose to his feet and applying the mouthpiece of his pipe to his lips went up to his mistress’s mate and said, “The Peace be upon you!” and on the man returning his salam, asked him, “Hath it so happened that Job the Ulcered and Al-Khizr the Green Prophet and Iskandar Lord of the Two Horns passed this way?” “They have,” answered the other, “What art thou?” Cried he, “I am Isráfíl,[418] and ’tis my design forthright to blow the Last Trump.” Hereupon the Droll straightway arose and laid hands upon him crying, “Yállah, Yállah,[419] O my brother, blow not at all until we shall have gone, I and thou, to the Sultan.” So saying he took him by the hand and fared forth with him and ceased not faring until he had carried him into the presence, when the King asked, “Wherefore hast thou arrested this man?” Answered he, “O King of the Age, this is our Lord Israfil and ’twas his intent to blow the Last Trump, so I forbade him therefrom until such time as I had brought him for thee to look upon, lest haply he might so have done without thy knowledge, and said I to myself, ‘By Allah, better set him before the Sultan ere he sound his Trumpet.’ Furthermore I do pray for thy welfare, O King of the Age, inasmuch as thou hast married me to this dame because I had fear of her lest she company with strange men. But I found her a saintly woman who admitted none of mankind save that to-day when I went forth from thee at morning-tide I turned me homewards and going into my house caught with her three Prophets and one Archangel and this is he who intended to blow the Last Trump.” Hereupon quoth the Sultan to him, “O Man, art thou Jinn-mad? How canst thou have found with thy spouse any of the Prophets as thou sayest?” And quoth he, “By Allah, O King of the Age, whatso hath befallen me that I have reported to thee nor have I hidden from thee aught.” The King asked, “Which was he of the Prophets thou foundest beside thy wife?” and he answered, “The Prophet Job (on whom be The Peace) and after him came forth to me from a closet the Prophet Al-Khizr (on whom be the Peace!), and after him Iskandar Lord of the Two Horns (on whom be the Peace!) and lastly this the fourth is the Archangel Israfil.” The Sultan marvelled at his words, and exclaimed, “Laud to the Lord! Verily this man whom thou entitlest Israfil is naught but the Shaykh of my Pipers.” “I wist naught, O King of the Age,” said the other, “but I have related to thee what hath occurred and what I beheld and eyewitnessed.” Hereupon the Sultan understood that the wife had friends who forgathered with her, and who had served her husband with such sleight, so he said to the musician, "O man, unless thou tell me truly what happened I will cut off thy head." Thereupon the Shaykh of the Pipers arose, and kissing ground before the Sultan, said to him, "O King of the Age, give me promise of immunity and I will relate to thee all that befel." Quoth the King, "'Tis upon condition that thou tell no lies;" and quoth the other, "O King of the Age, verily, I will shun leasing."[420] So the King gave him a pledge of safety, and the Shaykh described everything that had been done and kept nothing back, and when the King heard the story and the trick which had been wrought by the woman's friends he marvelled thereat and cried, "Allah kill all womankind,[421] the fornicatresses, the adulteresses, the traitresses!" After which he despatched a posse of the Chamberlains to bring into his presence the four persons. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Sixtieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King despatched a posse of his Chamberlains to bring into his presence the four persons who were lovers to the Droll's wife, and he found the first to be a Pieman who had claimed the rank of our lord Job (on whom be The Peace!), and the second to be a Market-Gardener who sold savoury herbs and all manner fragrant growths, and he had made himself out to be Al-Khizr (on whom be The Peace!), and the third to be a Butcher who had passed himself off as Iskandar, Lord of the Two Horns (on whom be The Peace!); whilst the fourth, whom the Jester had brought, and who declared that he was the Archangel Israfil, and was about to blow the Last Trump, proved to be the Shaykh of the Pipers. Now when the four were before the King he gave orders to castrate them all save the Shaykh[422] this being the award of him who lewdly frequenteth the women of the royal household. Hereupon they gelded them, and each one who was made a eunuch died without stay and delay; and the Droll divorced his wife and sent her about her business.

I have also by me (said Shahrazad) another tale concerning the wiles of womankind, and it is that of

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THE GATE-KEEPER OF CAIRO AND THE CUNNING SHE-THIEF.[423]

It is related that in Misr of Káhir there was a man who had reached the age of fourscore and ten years, and he was a chief-watchman of the ward in the service of the Wáli; a brave man withal, and one not wont to be startled or afeard. Now one night as he was going around about the city with the Chief of Police, and he was returning to the guard-house[424] before break o' day that he might perform the Wuzú-ablution, and at the call to dawn-prayers he might rise and repeat them, it so fortuned that when he was about to stand up to his orisons, according to the custom of him, suddenly a purse fell before him upon the ground. As soon as he had done with his devotions he arose and gazed around to see who had thrown him that bag of money, but he could find nobody; so he took it up and opened it, when an hundred dinars met his sight. Hereat he wondered; but on the following day when he had washed and was praying, behold, a second purse was cast at his feet; so he waited until he had finished his orisons and then stood up and looked around to see who had thrown it. Thereupon, as he failed to find any, he took it up and opened it and again beheld an hundred dinars, a matter which filled him with wonder. This continued till the third day at morning-tide, when he had washed as was his wont and stood up to his prayers, and lo and behold! another purse was dropped at his feet. Herewith he cut short his devotions, and turning him round saw beside him a girl whose years had reached fifteen; so he seized her and said, "Who art thou, and what is the reason of thy throwing at my feet every day a purse of an hundred gold pieces, and this is the third time; argal the sum amounteth to three hundred. What may be this case?" Said she, "O my lord, my name is Fátimah, and my wish and will is a matter which thou canst bring to an end for me by means of thy tongue!" Quoth he, "What is't thou wantest of me?" and quoth she, "'Tis my intent that on the morrow I sham drunkenness with wine and cast myself before the mansion of the Kazi of the Army.[425] Thou shalt find me there strown upon the ground and dressed in all the best of my clothes and finest ornaments. So when thou shalt come to that quarter and espy me lying there in drink do thou bid the Linkman move the links to and fro; then come forward, O Mukaddam,[426] and investigate the case and examine me, and say the Wali, 'This girl is in liquor.' The Chief of Police shall reply to thee, 'Take her and carry her to the watch-house and keep her there till day-break.'" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night, and that was

The Seven Hundred and Sixty-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that quoth the girl to the Mukaddam, "And when thou shalt have found me drunken with wine, the Wali shall bid thee, 'Take her to the watch-house and there keep her till daybreak.' Hereto do thou object, 'No! this were not suitable: I will cry upon someone of the quarter and will awake the Kazi of the Army, for that she belongeth to his ward.' Then assemble all thy folk and say to them, 'Verily this girl is in liquor and not mistress of herself at such time; needs must she be of a great family and daughter to grandees; therefore 'twere not proper that we take her with us to the watch-house; nor let any hold her in his charge save the Kazi of the Army till morning and until such time as she shall have recovered her senses and can fare to her own folk.'" Hereupon quoth the Mukaddam to her, "Easy enough!" and quoth she, "An thou act on this wise and my success be from thy hand, I will give thee five hundred dinars besides the three hundred." "This matter is not far to us,"[427] said he; so she left him and went away. Now when it was the season after night-prayers, the Chief of Police came forth his quarters and, repairing to the watch-house and taking the Mukaddam and his men, would have threaded the highways of Cairo as was his wont, but the head Gate-Keeper forewent him and took the direction of the quarter wherein dwelt the Kazi of the Army; the Wali unknowing the while what was in the man’s thought. They ceased not faring until they entered that part of the town wherein stood the Judge’s house, and when they approached it, lo and behold! the Mukaddam found a something strown upon the ground. So said he to the Linkman who carried the light, “O my son, do thou shake the torch,” and when he moved the link to and fro it illumined the whole quarter. Then the Gate-Keeper came forward; and, looking at what was lying there, found it to be a damsel in liquor dressed out with sumptuous dress and adorned with all her ornaments: so he said to the Wali, “O my Chief,[428] this girl is drunken with wine and hath fallen on the ground;” and said the Chief of Police, “Take her up and carry her to the watch-house until morning.” Hereupon quoth the Mukaddam, “No! this were not fitting; nor is it possible for the like of this girl. She is in the ward of the Kazi al-’Askar, to whose household haply she belongeth or to some great man in the quarter, and we fear lest befal her of evil matters some matter and we shall come to be transgressors.” Hereupon, after applying some remedy to the damsel, they made her sit up and presently they called aloud upon the people of the quarter and awoke the Judge and when all the folk came out in a body the Wali said to them, “Look ye upon this girl; peradventure you may know whose daughter she is.” They came forward and examined her and found her garbed in sumptuous garments and trickt out with the whole of her ornaments, whereupon the Chief of Police and the Mukaddam of the Watchmen said to them, “Indeed ’tis not possible for us to remove yon maiden from this place; so do you take her to your homes until morning-tide when she shall recover and be able to care for herself and then fare to her own folk.” Hereat they made agreement that none should lodge her in his house save the Kazi of the Army; so a party of the servants raised her and led her to his mansion and set her in a chamber hard by the open saloon; after which each and every of them fared forth to sleep in his own place. On this wise it befel the Wali and the Mukaddam and the Kazi and the folk of the ward; but as regards the affair of the damsel whom they found stretched on the ground as one drunken, she on entering the Kazi’s abode pulled herself together and recovered herself, for that she had wrought all this wily work for the special purpose of being led into the house there to carry out her wish and will. Presently the Judge lay down and was drowned in slumber and knew not what Allah had destined to him from the plans and projects of the girl who, rising up at midnight, opened the door of her chamber leading into the saloon where the Kazi al-'Askar kept all his hoards and coin[429] and dresses and belongings. Now she had appointed her people to meet her at that house, so they came and carried off the whole of what was in the saloon nor did they leave aught therein, at all, at all, save only the matting. And when dawned the morn, the Kazi of the Army arose and repaired to the saloon, as was his wont, for the purpose of dressing, but he found therein nothing except the matting. So he buffeted his face with his palms and wailed aloud whereat a party of his servants came to him and asked, "What is the matter with thee, O our lord the Kazi?" then, on going into the saloon they remarked that it had been gutted of everything. So they went from him and threw open the door of the chamber wherein they had placed the damsel but they found her nowhere. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Sixty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Kazi's folk went and threw open the door of the chamber wherein the damsel had slept; and, when they found nothing therein, they were certified it was she who had carried away the goods. After such fashion it happened to these; but as regards the action of the Judge, he took horse and wended his way to the Sultan, and he ceased not wending till he had entered the presence and salam'd and blessed the Sovran who returned his salute. Then cried he, "O King of the Age, there hath befallen me that which is so-and-so, and I have a claim on the Chief of Police and the Mukaddam of the watch, for that indeed they were the men who bade me admit the girl into my home, and this guest of mine hath left me nor muchel nor little.” Hereupon the King bade summon the men with their many, and when they came before him, he bade strike off the heads of the two head men; but they said to him, “O King of the Age, grant us three days’ respite and, if aught discover itself to us and we rid ourselves of the responsibility, we shall be saved; but an we avail not thereto, the sword of the Sultan is long.” “Go forth,” cried the King; “I have granted you a three days’ delay; if you bring the offender ’tis well, and if not, your heads shall be in lieu thereof and eke so your families and your properties.” Hearing this they sued for dismissal, and the Wali went forth to search in this way and wander in one direction and the Mukaddam in another. They roamed about Cairo for two full-told days, but naught happened to them until the third about the call to noontide-prayers, when the Mukaddam entered a narrow street on the side of the city to the west, and behold, a door opened and a speaker spake saying, “O Mukaddam, who is behind the door?” So he turned towards the sound and said, “’Tis well,” and the other cried, “Come thou and draw near to me.” He did so and approached the entrance when suddenly he saw the damsel who had shammed drunkenness[430] and whom they had introduced into the Kazi al-’Askar’s house. Now when he accosted her and recognised her, he seized her and she asked him, “Wherefore dost thou arrest me and what is thine intent to do with me?” “We will carry thee to the Sultan,” answered he, “and I and the Wali shall be set free. During the last three days I have done nothing but wander about in search of thee who hast wrought for us such work and after hast fled from us.” Quoth the girl, “O clever one, had I designed the ruin of you I had never made myself manifest to thee, nor couldst thou have met me or forgathered with me: however, I will now work at freeing you from the hands of the Sultan, that both thou and the Wali may escape and that you twain may take from the Judge of the Army whatever of good you want and will.” Quoth he, “How shall we do?” and quoth she, “I have by me a white slave-girl the very likeness of myself and at this time I have dressed her in my dresses and decorations and have cut her throat, and by my cleverness and force of heart I have caused her to be carried to a ruin hard by the Kazi's house and have had her buried therein and have set over her a slab. So do thou fare hence and taking the Wali seek the Sultan and say him, 'We have wandered about Misr, the whole thereof, but we have found naught of our want, and now nothing remaineth to us save the house of the Kazi al-'Askar; so we desire to search therein and, if we find that damsel murthered, we will gather together the folk of the quarter who saw us before that they may look upon her; and be the Judge also standing by that we may ask the people, 'What say ye concerning this maiden?' when haply they may reply, 'This is the girl which was drunken with wine.' And as soon as they shall bear witness that it is the same, you twain shall stay behind to converse with the Judge as ye desire and take from him whatever you wish and will; and he shall sue you for grace and for aidance. Then will he go up to the King and report to him saying, 'I have found my debtor and I have recovered from him all my good;' whereupon you shall be set free and eke I shall be freed. And finally do ye come hither to me and we will divide all the plunder I have taken from the Kazi's house." Now when the damsel had made the old Watchman understand these words, he left her, and going to the Wali, informed him of the whole affair and reported all that the girl had communicated to him of treachery and plottings, whereupon the Chief of Police took horse, and accompanied by the Mukaddam, rode to the Palace, — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Sixty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Wali rode to the Palace, he and the chief Watchman, seeking the Sultan, and they ceased not riding until they entered the presence and saluted the Sovran, praying for the endurance of his glory and the continuance of his life-tide. He returned their salute and asked concerning the affair of his Judge and they answered him, “O King of the Age, verily we have wandered about Misr and the entirety thereof, without finding any and now there remaineth for our search naught save the quarters occupied by the Kazi al-’Askar. So we design to examine it that if aught be found therein we may be set free, and if not that thou work upon us thine own intent.” Hereupon the Sultan sent to summon the Judge; and, when he made act of presence, commanded him suffer the Wali and the Mukaddam to search his quarters and he replied, “Hearing and obeying.” The whole forty then fared from the Palace and reaching the Judge’s mansion rummaged it until they came upon the ruined stead described by the damsel; so thither they went and seeing a slab newly laid, pulled it up and found beneath it a white girl full-dressed and ornamented.[431] The Watchman fared forth and summoned all the ward-folk who considered narrowly the corpse of the murthered damsel, and they all cried with a single voice, “Indeed this be the girl which was drunken with wine and which was carried into the Kazi’s quarters.” And they bore official testimony to such effect what while the Judge, who was standing in that stead looking and listening, said to himself, “How can such case have occurred to us without cause?” And when this business was finished, the Wali turned to the Kazi and said “O Shaykh of Islam,[432] we left this damsel in thy charge and to thine honour until morning-tide, deeming that haply she might be the daughter of a grandee house and yet hast thou cut her throat and hidden her within thy premises.” But the Judge could return to him no reply nor attempt any address, for he feared lest the King should hear thereof; so he inclined to the Master of Police and got ready for him an hundred purses and twenty for the Mukaddam that they might keep silence and not report such matter of scandal to the Sultan. Accordingly they accepted that amount of money from him and the Kazi went forth from him and took horse and informed the Sultan that he had found his debtor and had recovered his due; but he spoke not these words save for fear of the Chief of Police and the Head of the Watchmen lest they inform the King that they had found the murthered damsel within his demesne. Then the Mukaddam repaired to the house where the She-thief had bespoken him and standing at the door knocked thereat when those inside asked, “Who mayest thou be?” and he answered, “I am seeking Fatimah!” “Who is Fatimah?” cried they, “we have here nor Fatimah nor Halímah.”[433] Thereupon quoth the Mukaddam, “Indeed this Fornicatress, this Adulteress hath wrought upon us and hath escaped us; but, seeing that we also have won free by virtue of the wile she pointed out to us, we will leave her to time and doubtless during the length of days we twain shall forgather again.” On this wise endeth the story (quoth Shahrazad); but I will now relate a very different adventure and ’tis the

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TALE OF MOHSIN AND MUSA.[434]

It fortuned once upon a time that two men went forth from the same place, one foregoing the other, and they forgathered by the way. Now each had a bag full of flour and a flask[435] containing somewhat of water; and when they made acquaintance on the road the first of them said to his companion, “O my brother, what may be thy name?” and said the Second, “I am hight Mohsin, the Beneficent,[436] and thou what art thou called?” Quoth the other, “Músŕ the Malignant.”[437] So the two fared on in converse and whenever mealtime came round, each would bring out a portion of meal and knead it and make of it a scone,[438] and light a fire and bake it thereon: after which they would satisfy their hunger. But Mohsin knew not that had been doomed for him by his companion Musa the Misdoer, so the twain would fare together and feed together. On the following day quoth Musa to Mohsin, “O my brother, I have with me a bag of flour and a flask of water and thou hast the same, and whenever eating-time cometh round each one bringeth out somewhat of his vivers. Now this is not right; ‘twere the better way that we first eat that is with thee and when ’tis ended we use my provaunt.” “’Tis well, O my brother,” quoth Mohsin. They agreed upon this condition and whenever moved by appetite they ate of Mohsin’s viaticum until his bag of flour and his flask of water were clean emptied. But when the meal-hour came, Musa arose and made for him a single scone and no more, and baked it and ate it by himself, while Mohsin sat by looking on. This befel time after time for the first day and the second day until Mohsin waxed anhungered and famine wrung his vitals, so quoth he to Musa, “O my brother, give me somewhat of thy food that I may nourish myself therewith, for indeed I am empty exceedingly.” But Musa made reply, “By Allah, I will not give it to thee; no, not a single mouthful.” Rejoined Mohsin, “O my brother, we two made covenant that we should become brethren, and first eat of my provaunt and then of thine; now, however, thou art not pleased to grant me or bite or sup. This is not the act of an honest man.” He answered, “Be brief! an thou be hungry I will give thee half of my scone on condition that I pluck out thine eye.” “How so, O my brother?” rejoined Mohsin, "Wilt thou blind me of one eye for the sake of half a scone? better leave me to die with my sight as it is." Said Musa, "At thy pleasure!"[439] But on the third day Mohsin was like to sink for extreme hunger, and he cried, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great. Do thou, O Musa, give the half-scone and pluck out one of mine eyes." Musa did as he was bidden, and thrusting forth his finger gouged[440] out the right eye, whereby Mohsin remained purblind, withal was he not filled by the half-scone. Now on the fourth day Mohsin waxed yet more ravenous and famine was right sore upon him, and he cried, "There is no Majesty! by Allah, O Musa, my brother, I am a-famished, so pity me and the Lord shall pity thee." Replied the other, "I will give thee nothing until I shall have gouged out thine other eye." Quoth Mohsin, "Verily we are Allah's and unto him we shall return! but, by the Almighty, famishing is bitter; so do thou with me, O Musa, what the Omniscient hath predestined as to the plucking out of my two eyes." Accordingly the man gave him the half scone and plucked out his other eye; and on such wise made him stone blind. Hereupon Musa left his companion darkly tramping[441] about the roads. Now in the neighbourhood of that place was a well full of water;[442] so when Mohsin drew near knowing nothing thereof, Musa came up and pushed him thereinto; and while falling into the pit Mohsin said to himself, "O Lord, thou hast doomed me to blinding and at last Thou hast condemned me to drowning." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Sixty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when Musa had thrust Mohsin into the well with intent to drown him, the blinded man cried, "O Lord thou hast doomed me to blinding, and at last Thou hast condemned me to drowning." Then he struck out with hands and feet till he felt the walls of the well wherein he found two niches; so he set toes into one of them and there stood awaiting the salvation of Allah which was nearhand; and his heart was satisfied and he drank of the water. When the first night fell behold, two of the Jinns came to the pit and sat down in converse each with other, when quoth the first to the second, "Walláhi! O certain person, there is now to be found nor sage nor leach, and all of them are preposterous pretenders and balkers of man's intent." Quoth the other, "What may be these words?" and the former resumed, "By Allah, I have possessed the daughter of the Sultan and she is the dearling of my heart whom I love with dearest love; yet can none avail to unsorcel her of me." Quoth his companion, "And what would expel thee?" And quoth he, "Naught will oust me save a black cock or a sable chicken; and whenas one shall bring such and cut his throat under her feet of a Saturday,[443] I shall not have power to approach the city wherein she dwelleth." "By Allah, O my brother," said the other, "thou hast spoken sooth: there is in this land nor wizard nor mediciner who knoweth aught, and all of them are liars and contradictors who lay claim to science without aught of intelligence; indeed there is not one of them who knoweth of this tree (which adjoineth our well) that whoso shall take the leaves thereof and plaster them upon his eyes, even though he be born blind he will be gifted with sight and wax sound after two or three days by the kind permission of Allah Almighty. Yet are the folk all heedless of such virtue in the tree." Now Mohsin remained listening to these words and pondering them as he stood supported by the side-wall of the well, and when it was the last third of the night, the Jinns which were conversing at the mouth took leave each of other. And as soon as the day brake and the time waxed bright behold there came a Kafilah which passed by the pit seeking drink for themselves and water for their cattle. Presently they let down a bucket by a cord and when Mohsin felt the rope he caught hold thereof, whereat the caravan people cried, "We take refuge with Allah from Satan the Stoned," and said one to other, "Verily in this well is a Satan!" Mohsin heard their words and answered them and said, “Yá’llah[444] Ho you, draw me out hence, for verily I am of mankind and not of Jinn-kind and being blind I fell yesterday into this hole.” Cried they, “Catch tight hold of the cord,” and when he did so they drew him out and finding him weak from famine they gave him a somewhat of food and he ate and drank. The caravan-folk on like guise drank from the well and watered their beasts; after which they would have led Mohsin away with them but he said, “O my brethren (whose weal Allah increase[445] and whose grace may He reward!), I have a single want wherewith I fain ye would favour me!” Asked they, “And what may that be?” and he answered, “That ye direct me to the tree which adjoineth this well and lead me close thereto and God shall gar your good to grow!” Hereupon one hent him by the hand and after doing as he desired and setting him beside the tree returned to his own folk and the caravan loaded and left the place. Presently Mohsin swarmed up the trunk; and, taking seat upon a branch of its branches, fell to cropping the leaves and patching them upon either eye as he had heard the Jinni prescribe; and hardly had two days gone by when he felt healed of his hurt and opened his eyelids and saw what was around him. Then, after taking somewhat of its foliage, he came down from the tree and went on his wayfare until he entered a city and found him a lodging. When this was done he fell to threading the streets and ways crying aloud the while, “I am the Leach, the Healer![446] I am the Mediciner who can cure the blind!” whereat all the one-eyed and the sightless would summon him with outcries and he would apply to them somewhat of his leaves; and after two or three days (he superintending the while) they would open their eyes and see. On this wise went by a term of time until at last the King of that city heard rumour of a new leach; so he sent to him and summoned him and said to him, “Art thou a clever Medicine-man even as they have informed me concerning thee? I have a daughter ridden[447] by a Jinni of the Jann and we desire of thee that thou unsorcel her.” “And if I avail not to free her?” asked Mohsin, and the King answered, “Then will I kill thee even as I have slain a many before thee who have looked upon the face of the Princess.” “And if I prove able to deliver her and fend her from further offence?” “I will give thee what thou askest of coin and hoards.” “No, O King of the Age; this condition I will not accept: if I free her I must take her to wife, for an I fail therein thou wilt slay me; and unless thou agree with me after I shall have saved her that thou e'en wed her to me" — [448] "'Tis well, O Shaykh; and for releasing her I give thee a delay of three months for visiting and healing her." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Sixty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King covenanted with the Mediciner that the unsorcelling of the Princess should be within three months; after which he set apart an apartment for him with all the furniture and appurtenances thereof and appointed to him rations of meat and drink. So Mohsin abode with him the appointed time and he in the extreme of comfort and enjoyment; but when the three months were ended the Sultan sent for him and summoned him between his hands and said, "O Shaykh, the term is gone by." Hereupon Shaykh Mohsin went forth and bought him a black cock and when Sabbath[449] came round the Sultan presented him to his daughter whom he found in sore and sorrowful state, unknowing aught concerning herself or how the mishap had occurred to her. Now when he went in and looked upon her in such case, he drew near to her and fell to reciting Koranic versets which avert evil (the Sultan sitting beside them the while); and at the last he slaughtered the cock between her feet. Hereat the Princess recovered her senses and rose up and sat down[450] forthright and called for meat and drink which were brought to her; then she ate and drank and besought for herself the guidance of God and said, "Alhamdolillah" — laud to the Lord — and presently she kissed the hand of her sire and of Shaykh

Mohsin. Quoth the King, “O my daughter, art thou indeed well?” and quoth she, “At this present I feel naught of pain in my person nor do I sense anything of what hath been with me; and all this is by blessing of yonder Shaykh thou hast brought to me. But say me, O my father, what hast thou made over to him of money as a reward for unsorcelling me?” “O my daughter,” replied he, “I have offered him all he shall ask.” But when the Princess recovered from her malady and returned to self, she changed from mode to mode and she became as one cast in the mould of beauty and loveliness and Shaykh Mohsin looking upon her was dazed and amazed in his wits by cause of her exceeding comeliness and seemlihead. Presently the Princess addressed, “O Shaykh Mohsin, what thing dost thou ask of the King’s Majesty?” for indeed her heart was fulfilled of the love to him which had mastered her. Now the Wazir had a son and it was his aim that his heir should marry the King’s daughter, but this his wish was in vain; for when she was certified that her salvation was at the hand of Shaykh Mohsin, she said to her sire, “Do thou, O my father, largesse what is dearest to thee upon my healer.”[451] Her design in these words was that the Sultan might bestow her to wife upon her deliverer, and she added, “Indeed our joyance hath been at his hands and he is deserving of munificence full and abundant.” But again the object of her speech was that her parent might espouse her to the Shaykh for the love to Mohsin which had mastered her heart. Quoth her father, “O my daughter we will give him a sumptuous robe of honour and ten purses;” but quoth she, “No, O my sire, this be not gift sufficient for the like of such service.” Now she was the sole prop of her parents who had no child save herself, so the King replied, “O my daughter, I will give him whatso thou shalt say.” Thereupon she asked him, “How many of the folk came in to me and uncovered my shame[452] and were slain therefor?” and he answered, “Some fifty.” Then cried she, “Had not Shaykh Mohsin been able to exorcise me what hadst thou done with him?” “Indeed I had slain him.” “Then Alhamdolillah — Glory be to God — for that my deliverance was at his hand: so do thou bestow upon him thy best,” and so she spake for that she was ashamed to say her sire, “Wed me to him.” The King not understanding the hint she had hinted said to her, “All thou wishest I will largesse to him;” and she, “I have spoken to thee but thou hast not comprehended my words! All who have looked upon my shame and proved unable to deliver me thou wast wont to slay and this man hath been my salvation after seeing me unveiled: how then wilt thou gift him with money and means or condition with him when thou art unable to carry out thy compact?" Hereupon the King became ware of what was in his daughter's mind and forthwith sending to summon the Kazi and witnesses he bade bind the marriage-bond between her and Shaykh Mohsin and in due time let them lead him to her in procession and suffer him go in unto her. So he cohabited with the Princess a while of time, after which the life-term of the Sultan drew near, and he fell sick of a sickness whereof he died. And when they had committed his remains to earth the Lords of the land and the Grandees of command forgathered and agreed in council that none should overrule them save the Shaykh Mohsin. So they invested him with the signet-ring of Sovranty and seated him upon the throne of Kingship and he became Sovereign and Sultan. Moreover Allah Almighty enlightened his heart in governance with justice and equity; and all the subjects with the Notables of the realm and the Rulers of high rank blessed him and prayed for him. Now one day of the days Sultan Mohsin felt desirous of solacing himself in the gardens; so he rode forth, he and his suite, when he suddenly sighted his whilome comrade, the same who had plucked out one eye for half a scone and had gouged out the other eye for the other half. He bade them bring the man to the presence and when they set him between his hands he asked him saying, "O Shaykh, what may be thy name?" and he answered, "I am hight Shaykh Mohammed." So he carried him with his suite to the gardens where they abode until day ended, after which the Sultan rode back and entering his palace, bade bring Shaykh Mohammed whom he despatched to the House of Hospitality.[453] On the third day he bade summon his guest after supper-tide and taking him by the hand led him into a cabinet and said, "O Shaykh Mohammed, do thou tell us a tale." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Seventy-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, o my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the King entered the closet leading Mohammed by the hand he said to him, "Do thou, O Shaykh, tell us a tale." "By Allah, O our lord," quoth the other, "I know naught of stories." Whereupon the Sultan rejoined, "If so it be, I will relate to thee, O Shaykh Mohammed, an adventure of my own and 'tis as follows: — Once upon a time a man went forth his town and he made companionship with another upon the way, and each one of them bore with him a bag of meal and a flask of water." On this wise the Sultan continued recounting to him the real history of Mohsin and Musa the Malignant, till at the end of the tale he said, "And Musa, after gouging out both eyes of Mohsin for the sake of a single scone, thrust him into a well designing to drown him therein, but Allah Almighty preserved his life and brought him forth the pit and our Lord favoured him and restored to him his two eyes and empowered him over the kingdom and thus did he become Sovran and Sultan. Now the prosperity of that Shaykh Mohsin was from the well whereinto Musa had thrust him." Presently he added, "An this tale be soothfast, then am I Mohsin and thou art Musa the Malignant. I am able at this moment to slay thee but I will spare thee and moreover counsel thee as follows: — Do thou go to the well and haply Almighty Allah shall thereby grant to thee some good, for that the root of my fair fortune was from that same pit." Now when the first third of the night had sped, Musa arose and repaired to the pit and descended therein when behold, the same two Jinnis had forgathered beside the wellmouth at that same hour and were seated together conversing each with other. Quoth the first, "What is thy case this day?" and quoth the second, "By Allah, O my brother, my condition is ill-conditioned ever since a certain night when we met in this place and talked together. And so it hath continued until the present time, for that I have been unable to approach the city wherein dwelleth the Sultan's daughter: and someone that was in the well must have overheard us whilst we knew naught of him and he must have acted according to our words and slaughtered the black cock; after which I have been unable to near her abode." Quoth the other, "By Allah, O my brother, thou hast spoken sooth; but our ill-constraint is from this well." Hereupon the Jinni put forth his hand about the pit[454] and finding Musa the Misdoer snatched him up and seizing him between his palms tore his body into four pieces and cast away the quarters in some desert stead. And this (said Shahrazad) is the award of whoso betrayeth his fellow man. And they also relate the adventure of

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MOHAMMED THE SHALABI AND HIS MISTRESS AND HIS WIFE.[455]

It is told among the many things which happened in Cairo the God-guarded that therein dwelt a man who was an Emir and who had a son Mohammed Shalabi[456] hight, a youth in his day unique for beauty and loveliness, nor in his time was there his peer for comeliness and seemlihead amongst women or amongst men. Now when he had attained the age of ten and was approaching puberty, his sire betrothed him and wedded him to a fair wife who loved him with fondest love even after marriage. There was also in Misr a Kazi al-'Askar, a Judge of the Army, who had a daughter singular for form and favour and bloom and brilliancy, and stature and symmetric grace and she was known as Sitt al-Husn — the Lady of Loveliness. Now one chance day of the days she went forth together with her mother and the handmaidens to the Baths and when they reached the half way behold, they were confronted by the young Shalabi whose glance fell upon the girl and her glance lit upon the youth, wherefrom love and affection for him settled in her heart and it was with him after the same fashion. Presently she began to send him messages and letters and he to do on like guise, yet could neither win possession of other nor indeed could the twain meet privately in one place. This endured for the space of three years therefore were their hearts melted in fire of mutual love-longing, until on a certain day when desire in the girl surged high for her lover and likewise did his yearning for his beloved; withal neither availed to win union. Hereupon befel them sore travail and trouble and the young lady sent an old woman to her dearling praying him to meet her in such a site; and when the go-between had informed him thereof, he arose to obey her without stay or delay, unknowing what was hidden from him in the Secret Purpose. He fared till he came to the place in question when it was the hour of sunset and here the Shalabi forgathered with the Kazi's daughter who had kept tryst with him accompanied by her handmaidens; and anon the twain, he and she, repaired to a retired spot. Now by the decree of the Decreer which is written upon the foreheads and the brows of mankind, one of the folk belonging to the

Chief of Police was loitering about the place when the couple entered that secret stead; and as soon as they had settled themselves comfortably, each began complaining to other of the pangs of separation. After this the handmaidens brought to them food, meat and wine, and they ate and drank and toyed and were cheered and made merry from set of sun till the noon o' night and they conversed together as boon companions until either was fulfilled of other and the pains of parting had vanished from their hearts. Such was the case with the lover and the beloved; but as regards the Wali's man who was looking upon them and listening, he well knew the place wherein the couple had retired and having noted it and certified himself thereof, he went to the Chief of Police and made his report saying, "In such a site of such a ward are a man and a maid whereupon show the signs of affluence, and doubtless an thou seize them thou shalt easily get from each and either some fifteen purses." The Wali hearing these words forthwith led out his party and marched with them to the spot appointed; and he ceased not wending for half the night until they all came to the trysting place. Then he pushed forward axe[457] in hand and smote the door and broke it down; and forthright he rushed into the room without being expected by the youth or the young lady whom he found sitting together in the very height of enjoyment. But when they saw him suddenly appear they were consterned and confounded and confused as to their affair, so he arrested them and led them off and carried them to his house, where he placed them in prison.[458] Forthwith the bruit concerning the youth went abroad and reached his family; to wit, how Mohammed Shalabi had been seized by the Chief of Police, together with the girl his beloved. Now after imprisoning them the Wali said, "This pair shall remain with me for a day or two days and until I catch them in their robbery;"[459] but quoth one of the party, "Indeed thou knowest not and thou hast not learnt that this damsel is the daughter of the Kazi of the Army who throughout the past year wrought for the slaying of thee by the Sultan." And hardly had the Wali heard these words than his heart was filled with joy and he exclaimed, "By Allah, needs must I have his wench disgraced and proclaimed by bell[460] about the thoroughfares of Cairo and him dishonoured in the presence of the Sultan and degraded from his degree." Now when it was morning-tide a rumour flew about town that the Judge's daughter had been seized by the Wali and the watch together with the young Shalabi in a certain place and presently the report reached her father who cried, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! O Saving God, save me! Oh vile disgrace and foul dishonour before Sultan and subjects who shall say the Kazi's daughter hath been seduced and abused. However may the Veiler enveil me!" On his part the Wali went up to the Palace and sought the Sovran to acquaint him therewith; but, finding that he had business, he sat him down to await its ending when he purposed informing him concerning the daughter of his enemy the Chief Kazi. On such wise it befel him; but as regards the wife of the youth who was lover to the girl, as soon as the rumour reached her that the Shalabi had been arrested by the Wali and the watch, she arose to her feet without stay and delay and doffing whatso of woman's dress was upon her — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Seventy-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that as soon as the Shalabi's wife was informed touching her husband how the Wali had seized him in company with the Kazi's daughter, she arose forthright and doffing whatso of woman's dress was upon her and donning man's disguise provided herself with somewhat of provaunt[461] and went forth intending for the gaol in the Wali's house. She asked for the road as she went and a man of the people directed her to the office until she reached the place carrying her victuals; then she enquired for the gaoler. So they made him meet her and quoth she, "Open to me the prison wherein they have gaoled the Shalabi and the maiden," and she promised him by signs a gold piece; hereupon he admitted her and she passed into the room where lay her spouse and the girl and set meat before him. But he knew her not and cried, "Indeed I will nor eat nor drink, and do thou fare from me and leave me in this my plight." Quoth she, "Nay, thou must eat and gladness shall befal thee." Accordingly he came forward and ate a small matter and she after sitting with him for an hour or so, arose and doffed her man's dress. Then she stripped the Kazi's daughter of all the clothes she was wearing and garbed her in the masculine garb wherewith she had entered to the twain. The young lady did as she was bidden and showed likest to the Shalabi's wife who lastly served her with what remained of the meat and said to her, "Up with thee and hie thee home." So the Kazi's daughter fared forth under the disguise of a dainty youth such an one as he who anon had entered the gaol; and as soon as she had wended her way the wife took seat beside her husband. When he saw her habited in the habit of the Kazi's daughter he recognised her and knew her for his spouse; so he asked of her, "What hath brought thee hither?" and she answered, "I have come with this contrivance for the purpose of saving thee and of saving the honour of the girl thou lovest." But as soon as the Kazi's daughter had departed in her disguise the gaoler was deaf to entreaty and closed the prison doors upon the pair and the Shalabi and his spouse sat down together and his heart was satisfied and his secret was safe-directed,[462] and fell from him all the sorrow which had settled upon his heart. Such was the case with these two; but as regards the Chief of Police, when he went up to the Sultan and saw that he was busied he took patience until the work was ended, after which he came forward and kissed ground before him and salam'd to him and blessed him. The King returned his salute and then said, "What is to do?" and said he, "O King of the Age, I found during the past night the Lady Sitt al-Husn, daughter to the Kazi al-'Askar, companying with her lover a certain Mohammed Shalabi son of the Emir Such-and-such; so I seized the couple and confined them by me and now I myself come to report the case in thy presence." When the Sultan heard these words, he was wroth with exceeding wrath and his eyes flashed red and his outer jugulars[463] swelled and he foamed at the mouth and roaring cried, “How can it be that the daughter of the Kazi al-Islam companieth with a lover and alloweth herself to be debauched? By Allah, needs must I slay her and slay her father and slay the youth her lover.” Thus befel it with the Sultan and the Wali; but as regards the matter of the girl Sitt al-Husn, when she went forth the prison in the dress of a Shalabi, a dainty youth, she ceased not wending till she reached her paternal home. Here she repaired to a place which was private and having doffed her man’s dress garbed her in maidenly garments, then retiring secretly to her own room lay her down and her heart was heartened and trouble and turmoil and travail of mind fell from her. Now at that time her mother was lamenting like a funeral mourner and buffeting her face and her breast and kept crying out, “Oh the shame of us! Oh the dishonour of us! When they shall have informed the Sultan of this, he shall surely slay her sire.” And the Kazi waxed distraught and full of thought and he also said in his mind, “How shall I remain Kazi al-Islam when the folk of Cairo say, ‘Verily the daughter of our Lord High Chancellor hath been debauched?’” With these words he kept visiting his wife’s apartment and sitting with her for awhile, then faring forth and coming in from place to place[464] and he wandered about like one bewildered of wits. When behold, a handmaid of the handmaidens entered the room wherein lay the Kazi’s daughter and finding her strown upon her bed looked upon her and recognised her. So she left her and running in her haste hied her to the mistress and cried, “O my lady, indeed Sitt al-Husn of whom you are talking is lying down in such a room of the Harem.” Thereupon the mother arose and went and came upon her daughter, so she rejoiced in her and returning to the Kazi in his apartment acquainted him therewith. He also repaired to his daughter’s bower and finding her therein quoth he, “Where hast thou been?” Quoth she, “O my father, my head began to ache after sunset-time, so I lay me down in this place.” Hereupon without stay or delay the Kazi took horse, he and his Officials, and repaired to the Sultan — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Seventy-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Kazi of the Army repaired to the Sultan, he and the whole of his officials, and he ceased not wending until he entered the presence, where he salam’d and said, “O King of the Age, is it lawful and allowed of Allah Almighty that thy Wali charge us with calumnious charge and false?” As the Chief of Police was standing hard by, the Sultan asked him, “How can the Wali have mispoken thee and thy daughter when she is still imprisoned by him and in his house?” whereto the Chief of Police added, “’Tis true! his daughter is surely with us in durance vile, she along with her lover, for indeed I found the pair in such a place.” Said the Kazi, “O King of the Age, I will abide here beside thee and do thou let the Wali go down and bring before thee that which is with him in gaol, and the case shall be made manifest, because hearing with the ear is not like eyeing with the eye.” The Sultan replied, “This rede is right,” whereupon the Chief of Police returned to his house and ordered the gaoler to open the gaol and bring thereout the maiden Sitt al-Husn and her lover the youth Mohammed Shalabi. The man did his bidding and leading forth of prison the couple committed them to the Chief of Police who took them and fared with them to the Sovran, rejoicing the while with all joy. The citizens of Cairo heard of all this, so they flocked in crowds to solace them with the spectacle; and when the Wali reached the presence, the maiden and the young man being with him, he set them before the Sultan. Presently the King asked the youth saying, “Who mayest thou be, O young man, and who is thy father?” and answered he, “I am son of such an Emir;” when the King who believed that she was the daughter of the Chief Kazi continued, “And this maiden that is with thee, who may she be and whose daughter?” The youth replied, “This is my wife, O King of the Age,” and the King rejoined, “How can she be thy wife?” So the youth retorted, “Indeed she is; and Such-an-one and So-and-so and Such-another together with a host of thy favoured courtiers wot right well that she is my spouse and that she is the daughter of So-and-so.” Hereupon they accosted her and bespoke her and she bespake them, so they recognised her and were certified that she was lawful wife to the Shalabi. Then asked the King, “How is it that the Wali arrested thee and her?” and the youth answered, “O King of the Age, I went out with this my wife intending to enjoy ourselves and, finding a place that was cheerful and pleasant we tarried there until midnight when the Wali broke in upon us and seized us, scandalously declaring that I was companying with the Kazi’s daughter. Then he carried us off and gaoled us in his house and now (Alhamdolillah!) here we are between thy hands. So do thou whatso thou will and command according to Holy Law and whoever shall deserve chastisement deal it to him, for thou art the lord of our necks and the master of our good.” Now when the youth spake these words the King bade put to death the Chief of Police and harry his house and enslave his women and he commanded the Crier before the execution to cry about the thoroughfares of Cairo in front of the Wali that he was being led to die and declare, “This is the award of him who dishonoureth the noble and chargeth the folk with lying charges and false!” After that they slew the Chief of Police and thus carried out the King’s commandment. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Seventy-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that after the Wali had been put to death the Sultan bestowed his good upon Mohammed Shalabi and having gifted him with munificent gifts sent him home with his spouse in all honour. And when the youth returned to his quarters he fell to kissing his wife's hands and feet, for that he had been saved at her hands by the stratagem she had wrought for him and she had preserved the honour of the Kazi's daughter and had enabled her father to prevail over his enemy the Wali.[465] "And now I will relate to thee" (quoth Shahrazad) "another tale touching the wiles of women;" and thereupon she fell to recounting the story of

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THE FELLAH AND HIS WICKED WIFE.[466]

There was of olden time in the land of Egypt a Fellah, or tiller of the ground, who had a fair woman to wife and she had another man to friend. The husband used to sow every year some fifty faddán[467] of seeding-wheat wherein there was not one barley-grain, and grind it in the mill and pass this meal to his spouse who would sift it and bolt it. Then would she take the softest and best of the flour to make thereof either scones or cakes[468] or something more toothsome which she would give to her friend and feed him therewith, whereas the refuse of the flour[469] she would make into loaves for her husband so this bread would be ruddy-brown of hue.[470] Now every day about dawn-time the Fellah was wont fare to his field either to ear or to delve and tarry there working till noon at which time the wife would send him the bread of bran and refuse flour, whilst to those beside him who wrought as he did, would be brought from their homes white bread and clean. So they said, "Ho certain person! thy wheat is from fine sowing-seed, nor is there in it a barley-corn, how then be your bread like unto barley?" Quoth he, "I know not." He remained in such case for a while of time whilst his wife fed her playmate with all the good food and served to her husband the vilest of diet, until one chance day of the days the Fellah took his plough and went off at early dawn to work and wrought till midday when his wife sent him his dinner of dirty bread. Hereupon he and his neighhours, who were earing in the same field, took seat and each one set before him white bread and seeing the Fellah's scones brown as barley-meal they marvelled thereat. They had with them a scald-head boy who was sitting with them at the noon-meal, so they said to the peasant, "Take thee to servant this youngster and he shall manifest thee the case wherein thou art from the doings of thy dame." He obeyed their bidding — And Shahrazad was suprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night, and that was

The Seven Hundred and Seventy-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Fellah obeyed their bidding and took with him the scald-head youngster for house-service and on the second day the lad fell to grinding at the mill and carried the meal to his mistress and sat beside her and anon she rose and sifted and bolted the flour; still he stayed by her stealthily watching her while she kneaded it and balled it and breaded it. After this he carried off the early meal for his master and faring to the field set it before him and when the Fellah looked upon it he cried, “O Boy, by Allah this bread is white and ’tis clean unlike the foregone.” Quoth he, “O my master, I have ground it with my own hands and I sat beside my mistress the while she got it ready, kneading it and baking it, wherefor she availed not to do aught else with it.” Now when the servant-lad had left the hut her lover came in asking, “Hast thou made bread for me?” and she answered, “Indeed the boy with the scald-head ceased not sitting beside me, nor was I able to bake aught for thee.” But when the lad had gone forth to the field with his master’s dinner he set it before him and returned in hot haste and hurry to the house, where he found the friend of his mistress conversing with her; so he hid himself behind the door and fell to overhearing them and to noting whatso they said. Amongst other things quoth she, “Take this quartern of good wheat and clean grain and grind it in this mill and I will make thee a platter of bread from handrubbed flour[471] which I will send to thee on the morrow.” Asked he, “How shalt thou know the field?” and she answered, “Carry with thee a basket of bran and drop the contents as thou walkest along the highway; then leave it hard by the land belonging to thee and I will follow the traces and find thee a-field; and so do thou remain at rest.” All this and the scald-head boy was standing behind the door hearkening to their words until he had understood them all. On the next day the lad took a basket of bran which he scattered on the way to his master’s land and then sat with him whilst the wife, after baking the platter full of scones, carried it upon her head and fared forth intending for her lover in the field. She marked the traces of the bran which the scald-head had dropped and she ceased not following them until she came to her husband's field. Hereupon the lad arose and taking the platter from her said, "By Allah, O my master, verily my mistress loveth thee and favoureth thee, for that she hath brought a bannock made from handrubbed grain;" and so saying he set it before him. Presently she looked out of the corner of her eye and saw her lover ploughing at a little distance from them; so she said to her husband, "Allah upon thee, O certain person, call aloud to so-and-so our neighbour that he may come and eat the noon-meal with thee." The man said, "'Tis well;" and presently added, "O Boy, go forth and shout to such-an-one." Now the lad had brought with him a parcel of green dates, so he arose and scattered them at intervals upon the highway; and when he came to his mistress's lover he cried aloud, "Do thou come dine with my master." But the man refused so to do wherefore the scald-head returned and said, "He will not;" and hereupon the wife bade her husband go himself and fetch him. The Fellah trudged along the highway and finding thereon the scattered dates bowed himself downwards to gather them when the lover said to himself, "This one is picking up stones wherewith to beat me;'"[472] and as he saw the man often stoop he fled and left the place, and the more the other cried to him, "Come hither, O certain person," the faster sped he in his running. — And Shahrazad was suprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Seventy-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting, and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the more that man cried to the lover "Come," the faster did he run away; so the Fellah returned and said, "He misliketh to come and he hath fled." Hereupon he took seat together with the scald-head and the neighbours to dine off the scones of hand-rubbed grain, and the wife served to them whatso she had made for her lover's eating and she would not touch aught thereof but left it for her spouse and for his servant and for the neighbours. On the following day the Fellah went forth betimes to plough whilst the boy, delaying purposely at home, hid himself behind the door when behold, the lover entered to her, and she said, " 'Tis my desire that we forge a story whereby to slay my husband and Master Scald-head the servant." Quoth he, "How wilt thou slay them?" and quoth she, "I will buy for them poison and make it up in cooked food, so they may devour it together and perish together; after which we will abide, I and thou, making merry, nor shall the dead disturb us any more." He rejoined, "Do what thou willest," and all this whilst the boy stood listening to them behind the door. But as soon as the lover went forth the house, the lad arose and retired; then, donning Jews' garb he shouldered a pair of saddle-bags and went about crying, "Ho! Aloes good for use. Ho! Pepper[473] good for use. Ho! Kohl good for use. Ho! Tutty good for use!" Now when the woman saw him she came forth the house and hailed him, "Ho thou the Jew!" and said he to her, "Yes, O my lady." Then said she, "Hast thou with thee aught of poison?" and said he, "How, O my lady? Have I not with me poison of the hour?[474] and whoever shall eat thereof in a mess of sweet milk[475] and rice and clarified butter shall die within that time." "Do thou take this dinar," continued she, "and give me somewhat of it;" but he rejoined, "I do not trade for moneys, and I will sell it only for ornaments of precious metal." Hereupon she pulled off one of her anklets and handed it to him and he, who had provided himself with half a loaf of Egyptian sugar,[476] gave her the moiety thereof, saying, "Use it with sweet milk and rice and clarified butter." She took it in high glee, and arising milked the she-buffalo, after which she boiled the loaf-sugar in the milk and then threw it into a sufficiency of the rice and the clarified butter, fancying the while that she was cooking a mortal meal,[477] and lastly she ladled out the mess into a large platter. Now when it was sunset-time her husband returned from the field and was met about half-way by the boy who told him all that he had overheard and how he had sold her the sugar for one of her anklets, saying, “This be poison.” Then he charged him that, as soon as both of them should have swallowed the mess of milk and rice and clarified butter, they fall down and feign dead. So master and servant agreed upon this plan. And when the Fellah entered the hut she served to them the platter which contained their supper, and they ate the whole thereof, she sitting by intent upon their action and expecting their death. But they served her with a sleight; for suddenly the Fellah changed countenance and made as though he waxed ill and faint, and fell upon the ground like one in the last agony, and shortly after the boy rolled upon the floor on similar wise. Whenas she considered them she exclaimed, “May Allah have no mercy upon you; the wretches are dead!” Hereupon she went out and called aloud to her lover, and as he was coming cried, “Hie thee hither and enjoy the sight of these dead ones;” so he hastened up to them, and seeing them stretched upon the door said, “They’re dead.” Presently quoth she, “We two, I and thou, will now make merry;” and so saying she withdrew with him into another hut, intending at once to sleep together. Hereupon the husband arose and went in to them and smote the lover with a quarter-staff upon the neck and broke in his back bone,[478] after which he turned to the wicked woman his wife and struck her and split open her head, and left the twain stone dead. And as soon as it was midnight he wrapped them in a single sheet and carried them forth outside the village, and after choosing a place,[479] dug a hole and thrust them therein. And ever after that same Fellah had rest from his wife, and he bound himself by a strong oath not to interwed with womankind-never no more.[480] And now (quoth Shahrazad) I will recount to you another tale touching the wiles of women; and thereupon she fell to relating the adventure of

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THE WOMAN WHO HUMOURED HER LOVER AT HER HUSBAND'S EXPENSE.[481]

There was a man in Cairo and he had a wife who ever boasted of her gentle blood and her obedience and her docility and her fear of the Lord. Now she happened to have in the house a pair of fatted ganders[482] and she also had a lover whom she kept in the background. Presently the man came to visit her and seeing beside her the plump birds felt his appetite sharpened by them, so he said to her, "O Such-an-one, needs must thou let cook these two geese with the best of stuffing so that we may make merry over them, for that my mind is bent upon eating goose-flesh." Quoth she, "'Tis right easy; and by thy life, O So-and-so, I will slaughter them and stuff them and thou shalt take them and carry them home with thee and eat them, nor shall this pimp my husband taste of them or even smell them." "How wilt thou do?" asked he, and she answered, "I will serve him a sleight shall enter into his brains and then give them to thee, for none is dear to me as thyself, O thou light of mine eyes; whereas this pander my mate shall not touch a bittock thereof." Upon this agreement the lover went from her and when her husband returned at sunset-tide she said to him, "Ho Man, how canst thou ever call thyself a man when thou never invitest anybody to thy house and no day of the days thou sayest me, 'I have a guest coming to us,' even as another would do; and folk surely will talk of thee and declare thou art a miser and unknowing the ways of generosity." "O Woman," said he, "this were for me an easy business and to-morrow morning (Inshallah!) I will buy for thee flesh and rice and thou shalt let cook for us or dinner or supper, whereto I will invite one of my intimates." Quoth she to him, "Nay, O Man; rather do thou buy for me a pound of mince-meat; then slaughter the two geese and I will stuff them and fry them, for that nothing is more savoury to set before guests." Said he, "Upon my head and mine eye be it!" and as soon as it was dawn he slaughtered the geese and went forth and bought a Rotolo of meat which he minced and took all was required of rice and hot spices and what not else. These he carried home to his wife and said to her, "Do thou finish off thy cooking before midday when I will bring my guests," and presently he fared forth from her. Then she arose and cleaned out the geese and stuffed them with minced meat and a portion of rice and almonds and raisins;[483] and fried them until they were well cooked; after which she sent for her lover and as soon as he came she and he made merry together, and she gave him the geese which he took up and left her. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Eighty-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night." She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the woman gave to her lover the geese which she had fried and he took the twain and fared away with them. Now when it was noon suddenly her husband came home accompanied by a friend and knocked at the door; so she arose and opened to him and admitted them. Then she asked, "And hast thou brought only one man?[484] hie thee forth and fetch at least two or better still three." "'Tis well," said he and went off to do her bidding. Then the woman accosted the guest who came first and cried, "Oh the pity of it! By Allah thou art lost and the Lá Haul of Allah[485] is upon thee and doubtless thou hast no children." Now when the man heard these words he exclaimed, "Why, O Woman?" for indeed fear and affright had sunk deep into his heart. She rejoined, "Verily my husband hath not brought thee hither save with the intention of cutting off thy precious stones the honours of thy yard[486] and of gelding thee to a Castrato; and heigho and alas for thee whether thou die or whether thou live, and Oh the pity of it for thee!" Now when the man heard this speech, he arose in haste and hurry and rushed out by the door, when behold, the husband came bringing with him two of his familiars. So the wife met him at the entrance and said to him, "O Man, O miserablest of men, O thou disappointed, O thou dissatisfied,[487] thou hast brought to me a fellow which was a thief, a ne'er-do-well like unto thyself." "How so?" asked he, and she answered, "The man stole the two geese and stole away." Thereupon the husband went out and catching sight of the guest running off shouted to him, "Come back! Come back! even although thou bring only one with thee and take the other." Cried the man in reply, "An thou catch me do thou take thee the two." But the house-master meant the two geese whilst the man who was running away thought only of himself, saying in his mind, "This one speaketh of my ballocks, meaning that he will take only one of my stones[488] and leave me the other." So he ceased not running and the other followed after him, but being unable to catch him he returned to his guests and served them with somewhat of bread and so forth, whilst the woman kept blaming him and knagging about the matter of the geese which she said had been carried off, but which had been given by her to her lover. The husband enjoined her to silence; however she would not hold her peace[489] and on this wise he was balked of the meal to feed his wife's friend. And now (quoth Shahrazad) I will relate to you somewhat of the wiles of an honest woman, and thereupon she fell to recounting the adventure of

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THE KAZI SCHOOLED BY HIS WIFE.

It is related of a man which was a Kazi that he had a wife of the virtuous and the righteous and of the charitable and the pitiful to the orphan and the pauper; and the same was beautiful exceedingly. Her husband held and was certified anent womankind that all and every were like unto his spouse; so that when any male masculant came into his court[490] complaining about his rib he would deliver his decision that the man was a wrongdoer and that the woman was wronged. On such wise he did because he saw that his wife was the pink of perfection and he opined that the whole of her sex resembled her, and he knew naught of the wickedness and debauchery of the genus and their sorcery and their contrariety and the cunning contrivance wherewith they work upon men's wits. He abode all careless of such matters, in consequence of the virtues of his spouse, until one chance day of the days when suddenly a man came to him with a grievance about his better half and showed how he had been evil entreated by her and how her misconduct was manifest and public. But when the man laid his case before the Kazi and enlarged upon his charge, the Judge determined that he was in tort and that his wife was in the right; so the complainant went forth the court as one deaf and blind who could neither hear nor see. Moreover he was perplexed as to his affair, unknowing what he should do in the matter of his helpmate and wherefore the Kazi had determined contrary to justice that he had ill-used his spouse. Now as to the Kazi's wife none could forgather with her;[491] so the plaintiff was distraught and confounded when he was met unexpectedly on the way by one who asked him, "What may be thy case, O certain person, and how hath it befallen thee with the Kazi in the matter of thy rib?" "He hath given sentence," quoth the man, "that I am the wrong-doer and that she is the wronged, and I know not how I shall act." Whereupon quoth the other, "Return and take thy station hard by the entrance to the Judge's Harem and place thyself under the protection of its inmates." The man did as his friend advised him and knocked, when a handmaiden came out and he said to her, "O Damsel, 'tis my desire that thou send me hither thy lady, so I may bespeak her with a single word." She went in and informed her mistress[492] who rose and humoured him, and standing veiled behind the door asked, "What is to do with thee, O man?" "O my lady," said he, "I place myself under thy ward and thine honour, so thou enable me to get justice of my wife and overcome her and prevail over her, for in very deed she hath wronged me and disgraced me. I came to complain of her ill-conduct before His Honour our lord the Kazi, yet he hath determined that I am the wrong-doer and have injured her while she is the wronged. I know not what I shall do with him, and sundry of the folk have informed me that thou art of the beneficent; so I require that thou charge for me the Judge to deliver according to Holy Law his decree between me and my mate." Quoth she, "Go thou and take thy rest, nor do thou return to him until he shall have sent after thee, and fear not aught from him at all." "Allah increase thy weal, O my lady," quoth he, and he left her and went about his business pondering his case and saying to himself in mind, "Oh would Heaven I wot whether the Kazi's wife will protect me and deliver me from this fornicatress, this adulteress, who hath outraged me and carried away my good and driven me forth from her." Now when it was night-tide and the Judge was at leisure from his commandments, he went into his Harem, and it was his wife's custom whenever he returned home to meet him at the middle doorway. But as on that occasion she failed so to do, he walked into the apartment wherein she woned and found her at prayers; then he recalled to mind the contention of the man who had come to him with a grievance against his spouse — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Eighty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the Kazi went in to his wife whom he found praying, he recalled to mind the matter of the man who had come to him with a contention against his spouse and he said in his thought, “Verily nor hurting nor harming ever cometh from womankind and indeed this liar complaineth of his wife falsely;” for it was still in his mind that all of the contrary sex are as virtuous as his lady. But when she had done with her devotions, she rose up to him and served him and set before him, she and her handmaidens, the tray of food and she sat down at meat with him as was her wont. Now amongst the dishes was a charger containing two chickens, so said she to her husband, “By Allah, O my lord, do thou buy for us to-morrow a couple of geese that I may let stuff them, for my heart is set upon eating of their meat.” Said he, “O my lady, to-morrow (Inshallah! an it be the will of the Almighty) I will send to the Bazar and let buy for thee two geese of the biggest and the fattest and the Eunuchs shall slaughter them and thou shalt use them as thou will.” Accordingly, at dawn-tide the Judge sent to buy two plump birds and bade the Eunuchs cut their throats and the handmaidens gutted them and stuffed them and cooked them with rice over and above the usual food. Thereupon the Kazi’s wife arose and proceeded to work her contrivance. She had bought two sparrows which the hunter had trapped; and she bade kill and dress them and place them upon the rice instead of the geese and awaited the eventide when her husband would return to supper. Then they spread the tables whereupon was placed a covered platter under which he supposed stood the geese, so he took it off and behold, he found the two sparrows. Hereat he was perplext and said to his wife, “Allaho Akbar-God is most Great-where be the geese?” and said she to him, “Whatso thou broughtest here it be[493] before thee upon the dish.” “These be two sparrows,” quoth he, and quoth she, “I wot not.” So the Judge arose displeased[494] with his wife and going to her home fetched her father and as she saw him coming, she stood up and whipping off the two small birds placed the big ones in their stead; and he uncovered the plate and found the geese. So he said to his son-in-law, “Thou declarest that these be sparrows but indeed they are geese;” for he also was deceived and went forth in displeasure with the Judge, after which the Kazi followed in his footstep and soothed him and invited him to meat but he would not return with him. Hereupon the husband padlocked the door but, before he had entered, the wife had substituted the birdies for the big birds and when her mate sat down to meat and would fain have eaten he uncovered the platter and beheld the two sparrows. Seeing this he was like to go out of his mind and he cried aloud, “Walláhi! indeed this be a portentous calamity,” and he went forth, trotting in his haste, until he met his father-in-law upon the way. Then he cried upon him and said, “Come and look at the two geese which were in the platter.” “Wherefore?” asked the other and answered he, “Because I found them changed to two sparrows.” Hereupon the father returned with him to the house and walked up to the table whence the lady, during her husband’s absence, had removed the birdies and replaced the birds in lieu of them. So the father took off the cover and finding before him the pair of geese said to his son-in-law, “Be these two geese? consider them well whether they be sparrows or not.” “Two geese,” said the other and said the sire, “Then why dost thou come to me a second and a several time and bring me hither and complain of my daughter?” Hereupon he left him and went forth an-angered and the Judge came up with him at the doorway and soothed him and conjured him to return. Meanwhile the lady arose and whipping off the geese set the two birdies in lieu thereof and covered them up; and as soon as the Kazi returned and sat down to meat he removed the cover from the platter and found the two sparrows. Hereat he shrieked aloud and arose and went forth the door and cried, “Ho Moslems, come ye to my help!”[495] Now when the people of the quarter heard the outcry, they gathered together about the house, when the lady seized the occasion to carry off the two birdies and to set in lieu of them the two geese. Asked they, “What is to do with thee, O our lord the Kazi, and what hath befallen thee?” and he answered, “I bought two geese for our supper and now I find them turned into two sparrows;” and so saying he led the Notables of the quarter into his house and showed them the dish. They uncovered it and found therein two geese, so they exclaimed, “These be two geese which thou callest sparrows;” and so saying they left him and went their ways. He followed them making excuses and was absent for a while, when his wife took the birds and set the birdies in place of them and when the Kazi returned and proceeded to sit down at meat he uncovered the platter and behold, thereon stood the two sparrows. So he smote hand upon hand crying, “These be two sparrows without doubt or hesitation;” whereat his wife arose and called out with a loud voice, “O ye Moslems, help ye a Moslemah.”[496] So the folk ran to her aidance and asked her saying, “What is to do, O our lady?” and she answered, “Verily my calamity is grievous and there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great. My husband the Kazi hath gone Jinn-mad and do you of our grace and benevolence lay hold of him and carry him to the Máristán.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Eighty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Judge’s wife cried upon the folk of the quarter, “Do ye of your grace and benevolence to us seize the Kazi and carry him to the Maristan that they may confine him therein until he return to his reason and regain his right mind.” Hereupon they laid hands upon him and bore him to the Bedlam and imprisoned him therein amongst the maniacs, and it was certified to all the folk that their Kazi had been suddenly struck by insanity and that they had confined him in the madhouse. Now all this was of the cunning contrivance of his wife, that she might make manifest to him concerning womankind how none of mankind can prevail over them. But after the lapse of three days which the Judge passed in the Bedlam, his wife went in to him bringing a somewhat of food and set meat before him and asked him saying, “What was it thou foundest on the platter?” Answered he, “Two sparrows,” and continued she, “Recover thy senses and thy right mind and see here am I who have made thee out mad for thy confusion between two geese and two sparrows. Now whenever any man cometh to thee complaining of his wife (and thou unknowing aught of the couple and of their circumstances), thou determinest that the male is the evil-doer and withal thou wottest not that women are often the worst of wrongers and that men are sorely wronged by them. And in the matter now in hand, the whole of the folk declare that the Kazi is a wrong-doer to his wife, and no one knoweth that thou art really the wronged and I the wronger. Indeed sooth did he say who said, ‘Alas for those who be gaoled wrongfully!’ So do thou never decide aught thou knowest not. However, thou hast approved to thyself that I am true and loyal to thee and thou makest all the folk like one to other, but this is a sore injury to some. In the present case do thou send for the man who is wronged and let bring him to thy presence and bid his wife be also present and do him justice of her.” After this she removed her husband from the Máristán and went her ways, and the Kazi did with the man as his lady had charged him do and whenever a plaintiff came before him with a grievance against his wife he would decide that the man was the wronged and the woman was the wronger, and he ceased not doing after this fashion for a while of time. And now (quoth Shahrazad) I will relate to you another history of womankind and this is the tale of

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THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTER AND THE PRINCE OF AL-IRAK.[497]

Whilome there was, men say, a Khwajah, a merchant man who was lord of money and means and estates and endowments and appanages, withal he had no seed, or son or daughter, and therefore he sued Almighty Allah that he might be blessed with even a girl-child to inherit his good and keep it together. Suddenly he heard a Voice bespeak him in dreamery saying, "Ho Such-an-one, Predestination overcometh Prudence and resignation to the trials sent by Allah is foremost and fairest." Hearing this he arose without stay or delay and casually[498] slept with his wife who, by decree of the Decreer and by allowance of Allah Almighty, conceived that very night. When she became pregnant and the signs of gestation showed in her, the merchant rejoiced and distributed and doled and did alms-deed; and, as soon as her tale of days was fulfilled, there befel her what befalleth womankind of labour-pangs, and parturition came with its madding pains and the dolours of delivery, after which she brought forth a girl-babe moulded in mould of beauty and loveliness and showing promise of brilliance and stature and symmetric grace. Now on the night after the birth and when it was the middle thereof, the Merchant was sitting at converse beside his wife and suddenly he again heard the Voice announcing to him that his daughter was fated to become a mother in illicit guise by the son of a King who reigned in the region Al-Irak. He turned him towards the sound but could see no man at such time, and presently he reflected that between his city and the capital of the King's son in Al-Irak was a distance of six months and a moiety. Now the night wherein the Merchant's wife became a mother was the same when the King's wife of Al-Irak bare a boy-heir, and the Merchant, albe he wist naught thereof, was seized with trembling and terror at the words of the Voice and said in himself, "How shall my daughter forgather with the King's son in question when between us and him is a travel of six months and a half? What can be such case? But haply this Voice is of a Satan!" As soon as it was morning-tide the father summoned astrologers and men who compute horoscopes and scribes who cast lots,[499] and when they presented themselves he informed them that a daughter had been added to his household and his aim was to see what the prognostic[500] might be. Hereupon all and every wrought at his art and mystery, and it was shown that the Merchant's daughter would become a mother by the son of a King and this would be in the way of unright: but so far from informing him of this or suffering him to learn concerning of her circumstance they said, "The future none wotteth it save Allah Almighty and our craft at times proveth soothfast and at times falsifieth us." However the Khwajah's heart was on no wise satisfied and he ceased not to suffer patiently nor did rest repose him nor were meat and sleep to him sweet for the space of two years, during which his daughter was suckled and in due time was weaned. The father never ceased pondering how he should act towards his child and at sundry times he would say, "Let us slay her and rest from her," and at other times he would exclaim, "Let us remove her to a stead where none shall approach her or of man-kind or of Jinn-kind." Withal did none point out a path to pursue nor did any guide him to any course of the courses he might adopt. Now one day of the days he fared forth his house unknowing whither he should wend and he stinted not wending until he found himself without the town, — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Eighty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Khwajah stinted not wending until he found himself without the town, where he was expectedly met by a wight in Darwaysh-garb to whom he salam'd and by whom he was saluted. Presently the holy man turned to the merchant and seeing him changed of colour and conduct asked him, "What is with thee to do, and what ill hast thou to rue that thy case and complexion are so changed to view?" "O Fakir," answered the other, "verily a matter of marvel hath betided me and I know not how to act therein." Quoth the ghostly man, "And what may that be?" whereupon the Merchant related to him all his affair first and last, and how he had heard a Voice saying to him, "In very deed thy daughter shall conceive after unlawful fashion by the King's son of Al-Irak." The Darwaysh was surprised on hearing these words from him and said in his thought, "There is no averting of adversity foredoomed and Allah will do whatso he will;" presently adding, "O Khwajah, in yonder direction riseth a mountain Jabal al-Saháb[501] hight, which is impenetrable or to mankind or to Jinn-kind; but given thou avail to reach it thou wilt find therein and about the middle combe thereof a vast cavern two miles in breadth by an hundred long. Here, an thou have in thee force and thou attain thereto and lodge thy daughter, haply shall Allah Almighty conserve and preserve the maid from what evils thou heardest the Voice declare to thee for her destiny: however, thou shalt on no wise reach those highlands until thou shalt have expended thereon a matter of much money. Moreover at the head and front of that cave[502] is an inner crevice which, extending to the mountain-top, admitteth daylight into its depths and displayeth a small pavilion by whose side be five-fold pleasaunce-gardens with flowers and fruits and rills and trees besprent and birds hymning Allah, the One, the Omnipotent. Now an thou avail to convey thy daughter to that place, she shall dwell there secure, safe-guarded." As soon as the Khwajah heard those words from the Fakir, there faded from his heart whatso there was of thought and forethought and cark and care and he took the hand of the Religious whom he led to his home and honoured him and robed him, for that he had indicated such place of protection. When the maiden reached the age of five and had waxed killing in beauty, her father brought her a learned Divine with whom she began reading and who taught her the Koran and writing and the art of caligraphy;[503] and when she had seen the first decade, she fell to studying astrology and astronomy and the aspect of the Heavens. Such was her case; but as regards that of her sire the Merchant, from the hour he forgathered with the Darwaysh he ceased not to hold him in his heart and presently he proposed to take him and travel with him to the mountain aforementioned. So they set out together and when they reached it they found it a site right strong as though fortified, and entering the antre they fell to considering it right and left till they reached its head where they came upon the little pavilion. After all this quoth the Fakir, “Indeed such stead shall safeguard thy daughter from the shifts of the Nights and the Days;” withal was he unknowing that the Decreed be determined and must perforce be done, albeit Doom be depending from the skirts of the clouds.[504] And the Religious ceased not showing the site until he caused his companion enter the parterres, which he found as they had been described to him with flowers and fruits and streams and trees besprent and birds hymning the One, the Omnipotent. As soon as they had finished solacing themselves with the sights, they fared back to their town where, during their absence-term, the damsel’s mother had made ready for them viaticum and presents, and by the time the twain returned they found ready to hand everything of travel-gear and all the wants of wayfare. So they equipped themselves and set forth, taking with them the maiden together with five white slave-girls and ten negresses and as many sturdy black chattels who loaded the packs upon the mules’ and the camels’ backs. Then they fell to cutting across the wilds and wolds, each and everyone intent upon ministering to the maiden, and they ceased not faring until they drew near the mountain, and they took station by the cavern-door. Here they unloaded the bales and burthens and transported them to the pavilion within the cave, after which the Merchant’s daughter went in and as she walked forwards fell to gazing, rightwards and leftwards, until such time as she had reached the pavilion. Presently she found it poikilate of corners and columns, and she was assured that the distance of that mountain from her father’s town measured the march of a full-told month. And whenas she had taken seat and had settled in that pavilion, her father considered the unapproachable nature of the place and waxed contented of heart and his mind became right of rede, because he was certified of his daughter that she was safe from the tricks of Time and every trickster.[505] So he tarried beside her for a decade of days, after which he farewelled her and wended him home, leaving the damsel in the mountain-cave. Thus fared it with these; but as regards the case of the Prince of Al-Irak, his father who owned no issue, or man-child or girl-child, lay sleeping one night of the nights when, lo and behold! he heard the words, "All things befal by Fate and Fortune." Hereat he arose from slumber being sore startled and cried, "Laud to the Lord whom I have heard say[506] that all things depend upon Doom and Destiny." On the next night he slept with his spouse who by leave of Almighty Allah forthright conceived. When her pregnancy became manifest the Sovran rejoiced and he scattered and largessed and doled alms-deeds to the widows and paupers and the mean and miserable; and he sued the Creator on high saying, "O Lord vouchsafe to me a man-boy which may succeed me in the reign, and deign Thou make him a child of life."[507] But when the Queen's time had sped she was seized by labour-pangs and delivery-pains, after which she bare a babe — Glory be to God who created him and confirmed what He had wrought in the creation of that child who was like unto a slice of the moon! They committed him to the wet-nurses who fell to suckling him and tending him and fondling him till the milk-term was completed, and when his age had reached the sixth year, his father brought for him a Divine perfect in knowledge of all the sciences, spiritual and temporal, and the craft of penmanship and what not. Accordingly, the boy began to read and study under his learner until he had excelled him in every line of lore, and he became a writer deft, doughty in all the arts and sciences: withal his sire knew not that was doomed to him of dule and dolours. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Ninetieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-

guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Prince became a penman doughty in all knowledge, withal he wist not that was written for him of dule and dolours. This lasted until his tenth year, and the old King rejoiced in him and caused him to back steeds until he had mastered all of horsemanship, and he waxed accomplished in hunting and birding and he had attained the bourne of omnis res scibilis. Every morning he would superintend the governance of his sire in the office of Commandments and direct him to affairs wherein lay rede that was right until, one day of the days, his parent said to him "O my son, do thou rule for a day and I will govern on the next." "O my father," said he, "I am young of years nor is it meet that I meddle with public matters or sit in thy Divan." Now when he reached the age of fourteen and had entered upon man's estate and had waxed perfect in the words of ordinance and had become complete and sanspareil in beauty and loveliness, the King resolved upon marrying him, but he consented not, nor did his heart incline to womankind for the being in the All-Knowledge of Almighty Allah all that was foredoomed to him from Time beginningless. Presently on a chance day his nature longed for the hunt and chase, and he asked leave of his sire who consented not, fearing for his safety; but he said in himself, "An I go not I will slay myself;"[508] and so he privily apprized of his intent a party of his dependents who, all and every, prepared to ride forth with him into the Desert. Now the King had in his stables a stallion, known as Abú Hamámah,[509] which was kept alone in a smaller stall, and he was chained by four chains to a like number of posts[510] and was served by two grooms who never could draw nigh to him or let him loose; nor could any, save only his lord, approach him with bridle or saddle or aught of horse-gear. But when the Prince had designed to fare forth a-hunting and a-birding, he went in to his father's steed Abu Hamamah by hest of Allah Almighty's might over him and for what was hidden to him in the Future, and found him chained and tethered; and, as the horse pleased him and affected his fancy, he approached him and gentled him with caressing hands. The stallion also at that time under decree of Destiny was influenced by the Lord and directed towards the Prince for the sake of that which was hidden from him in the World of Secrets. So he continued to gentle the animal and to caress him and to make much of him, and he was ever the more pleased with him, and said to himself, “Verily my riding forth to the hunt and chase shall not be save upon this stallion;” and he ceased not pacing and pressing around him, soothing him the while, until the steed showed subjection and neither started nor lashed-out nor indeed moved a limb, but stood like a man obedient and dependent. And when the youth’s glance wandered around he saw beside the stallion a closet, and as he neared it and opened it he found therein all manner harness and equipments, such as a saddle complete with its girths and shovel-stirrups and bit and bridle,[511] whilst on every side was gear of warfare enfolded in the furniture, such as scymitar and dagger;[512] and a pair of pistols. So he wondered at this circumstance of the horse how that none could draw near him or place upon him that harness, and he likewise marvelled at the subjection of the steed to himself. Hereupon he carried the furniture from the closet and going forth with it walked up to the Father of a Pigeon, which was somewhat fearful of him and affrighted, and he uplifted the saddle and threw it upon his back, and girthed him tight and bridled him with the bit, when the horse became adorned as a bride who is displayed upon her throne. Now the King’s son at times enquired of himself saying, “An I loose this horse from his chains he will start away from me;” and at other times quoth he, “At this hour the stallion will not think of bolting from me,” and on this wise he abode between belief and unbelief in his affair. And he stinted not asking of himself until his suite was a-weary of waiting and of looking at him, so they sent to him praying that he would hurry, and he said in his thought, “I place my trust in Allah, for the Forewritten hath no flight therefrom.” Anon he loosed the stallion’s chains after harnessing and girthing him straitly; then, throwing his right leg over his back[513] mounted thereupon with a spring and settled himself in selle and came forth. And all who looked at that steed were unable to stand upon the road until the Prince had ridden forwards and had overtaken the rest of his suite without the town, whence they sought the hunting-grounds. But when they were amiddlemost the waste lands and beyond sight of the city, the courser glanced right and left and tossed his crest and neighed and snorted and ran away; then shaking his head and buck-jumping under the son of the Sultan bolted[514] with him until he became like a bird whereof is seen no trace nor will trick avail to track.[515] When his folk beheld him they were impotent to govern their horses until their lord had vanisht from their view, nor had anyone the muscle or the manhood to keep up pursuit. So waxing perplext and wildered in their wits they sought counsel one of other saying, “Let each and every of us ride by a separate road until such a day when haply we shall meet him.” Hereupon the whole party dispersed and all took their own directions seeking the Prince; and they stinted not search, anon putting out to speed and anon retracing their steps[516] and then returning by the same road. This endured for five days when not a soul came upon their liege lord, so they waxed distraught nor could they find right guidance to aught they should do. However when the trysting-day came, all gathered together and said, “Fare we to the Sultan and acquaint we him with this and let him devise a device for the matter of his son; because this youth is his father’s prop and stay, nor owneth he any other than this one.” Hereupon they set out citywards and ceased not riding until they drew near the capital where they found a marquee pitched without the walls, and having considered it they knew it to be the King’s own. So they drew near it and there found the Chamberlains and Nabobs and officers of high commandment standing round about it, and when they asked saying, “What is the cause for setting up yonder tent in such place?” they were answered, “Verily, whenas his son fared from him designing to hunt and bird, on the next day his heart was straitened for the Youth and he wist not what had befallen him. On the first night when the Prince fared forth from him and disappeared, all went well, but on the second his breast was straitened and in his vitals he sensed a change and ’twas at the hour when the stallion began buck-jumping with his child and running away. Anon he lost all patience and unable to endure session within his Palace so he commanded pitch his pavilion without the walls and here we have been sitting for a space of six days, awaiting the escort to return.” As the party drew near the marquee the bruit of them went abroad until it came to the King’s ears. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Ninety-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King feeling his breast a-straitened bade pitch his pavilion without the walls and tarried therein for a space of six days and on the seventh appeared his son's suite which had been left behind when the horse ran away with the Prince, nor did any know what direction the beast had taken. As soon as the bruit went abroad and came to the ears of the bereaved father, he cried out with a single outcry and fell to the ground aswoon, and the fainting fit lasted for two days. But when he came to himself and asked after his son, the suite reported all that had befallen the youth from the stallion and at that moment the King recalled to mind the Voice which had spoken saying, "All things befal by Fate and Fortune;" and had declared, "Resignation to the trials sent by Allah is first and best till such time as Destiny shall win to her end." "If" (he mused) "my lot be forgathering with him anywheres then needs must it be; and, if otherwise, we will be patient under the All-might of Allah Most Highest." Such was the case with these; but as concerns the young Prince,[517] when the stallion started off with him and bolted and became like a bird flying between the firmament and terra firma, he suffered nor fatigue nor emotion, nay, he sat contented upon the beast's back, for that had he hent in hand a cup full of coffee naught thereof would have been spilt. And the stallion ceased not galloping at speed with him through the livelong day until night came on when, seeing a lake, he halted by the side of it. The Prince thereupon dismounted and withdrawing the bridle offered him water which he drank; then he foddered him with forage which he ate, for our Lord had subjected to him that steed till it became between his hands like one familiar from the first and, as the youth had somewhat of provaunt in his budget he drew forth of it and took food. But the Prince knew not whither the horse was minded to bear him and the Fiat of Fate drove him to the matter foredoomed to him from Eternity. So after that time as often as he mounted and let loose the bridle thongs,[518] the horse paced unguided on those wilds and wastes and hills and dales and stony leas, and whenever they drew near a city or a town the son of the Sultan dismounted from his steed; and, leaving him where he was, went into the streets in order to bring provaunt and forage, after which he could return to his beast and feed him in the same place. And he ceased not wayfaring until he drew near a city where he designed to dismount as was his wont and lay in somewhat of vivers and fodder, so he alighted and leaving his horse outside the houses he went in to satisfy his need. Now by the decree of the Decreer the King of that Capital had left it on an excursion to hunt and bird, and he chanced return at that moment and as he drew near the walls behold, he found the steed standing alone and harnessed with trappings fit for the Kings. The Sultan was astounded when he looked upon this and being on horseback himself he designed to draw near and catch the animal, and when he came close he put forth his hand. But the steed was scared with the scaring of a camel, and the King bade his followers form ring around him and seize him; so they gat about him and designed to catch him and lead him away, when suddenly the steed screamed a scream which resounded throughout the city and when the horses heard the cry of that stallion they turned with their riders in headlong flight and dispersed one from other. And amongst them was the Sultan, who, when his courser ran away with him, strove hard to pull him up and control him, but he lost all power and whilst the rest of the horses were trembling under their riders he swooned and fell to the ground. Presently the followers came to his aid and found him in fainting condition, so they propped him up and sprinkled somewhat of water upon him, when he recovered and asked them, “Where is the horse?” Answered they, “He is still standing in the same place;” and quoth he, “Walláhi, needs must this affair have a cause, and do ye lie awaiting him and see whither he will wend, for this beast God wots must be of the Jinns.” On this wise it befel them; but as regards the horse’s owner, the son of the Sultan, when he entered the city seeking to buy somewhat of victual and fodder, he heard the scream of the steed and recognised it, but of the city-folk all who had hearkened to that outcry felt their hearts fluttering with extreme affright; so each one rose and padlocked his shop and hardly believed that he could reach his house in safety and this continued until the capital (even within its bazars) became empty like a waste, a ruin. Hereupon quoth the youth, “By Allah, needs must some matter of the matters have befallen the horse,” and so saying he went forth the city and walked on till he neared the site where he had left the steed when, behold, he came suddenly upon a party of people in the middlemost whereof appeared one sitting and trembling in all his limbs, and he saw the attendants standing about him and each one holding in hand a horse. So he drew near him and asked him what was to do and they acquainted him with the affair of the stallion and his scream and the cause of the man being seated; and this was none other than the Sultan who had been seized with affright and had fainted at the outcry of the Father of a Pigeon. Hereupon he fell to conversing with them and they knew not that he was the owner of the steed until such time as he asked them, “And doth not any of you avail to draw near him?” Answered they, “O Youth, indeed there is none who can approach him.” Quoth he, “This is a matter which is easy to us and therein is no hindrance;” and so saying he left them and turned towards the courser who no sooner saw him than he shook his head at him; and he approached the beast and fell to stroking his coat and kissing him upon the brow. After this he strewed somewhat of fodder before him and offered him water and the stallion ate and drank until he was satisfied. All this and the suite of the Sultan was looking on at the Prince and presently informed their lord, saying, “O King of the Age, a Youth hath come to us and asked us for information touching this steed and when we told him what had happened he approached him and gentled him and bussed him on the brow; and after that he strewed before him somewhat of forage which he ate and gave him water to drink and still he standeth hard by him.” When the Sultan heard these words he marvelled and cried, “By Allah, indeed this is a wondrous matter, but do ye fare to him and bring him to me, him and his horse; and, if he make aught delay with you, seize and pinion him and drag him before me debased and degraded and in other than plight pleasurable!" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred nd Ninety-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King sent to his suite bidding them bring the owner of that stallion adding, "If he make aught delay with you drag him before me debased and degraded, and in other than pleasurable plight." Accordingly, they went to him and accosting him said, "O youth, thou owest hearing and obeying to His Highness the King; and, if thou come not to him with good gree we will bear thee maugre thyself." But the Prince, hearing these their words, set his left foot in stirrup and throwing his right leg over the saddle mounted till he was firm of seat upon his stallion's back and had power over his monture. Then he asked saying, "Who amongst you shall come near me or carry me to yonder Sultan of yours?" Whenas they saw this from him they kept away from his arm-reach, but inasmuch as they could not return to their King and report saying, "We availed not to bring him," they exclaimed, "Allah upon thee, O Youth, that thou draw nigh with us to the Sovran and bespeak him from the back of thy steed: so shall we be clear and bear nor rebuke nor reproach." Hearing this much the Prince understood what was in their thoughts and that their design was to win free of the King and the avoidance of blame; accordingly he said to them; "Fare ye before me and I will follow you."[519] But when they returned with the youth behind them to within a short distance of the King where either of the twain could hear the other's words, the Prince asked, "O King of the Age, what dost thou require of me and what is it thou wantest?" "Do thou dismount," answered the Sultan, "and draw near me when I will tell thee and question thee of a certain matter;” but quoth the youth, “I will not alight from the back of my steed and let whoso hath a claim upon me demand satisfaction,[520] for here be the Maydán — the field of fight.” So saying he wheeled his steed and would have made for the open country, when the Sultan cried aloud to his followers, “Seize him and bring him hither.” So they took horse all of them, a matter of one hundred and fifty riders, and followed him at full speed (he still riding) and overtook him and formed a ring around him, and he seeing this shortened the bridle-reins and gored flanks with stirrup-irons when the beast sprang from under him like the wafting of the wind. Then he cried out to them, “Another day, O ye dogs;” and no sooner had they heard his outcry than they turned from him flying and to safety hieing. When the Sultan beheld his followers, some hundred and fifty riders, returning to the presence in headlong flight and taking station before him, he enquired the cause of their running, and they replied that none could approach that horseman, adding, “Verily he cried a warcry which caused each and every of us to turn and flee, for that we deemed him one of the Jánn.” “Woe to you!” exclaimed the King: “an hundred and fifty riders and not avail to prevail over a single horseman!” presently adding, “By Allah, his say was sooth who said,

‘And how many an one in the tribe they count * When to one a thousand shall ne’er amount?’

Verily this youth could not be confronted by a thousand, nor indeed could a whole tribe oppose him, and by Allah, I have been deficient in knightly devoir for not doing him honour; however, it was not to be save on such wise.” But the youth ceased not faring through days and nights for the whole of four months, unknowing the while when he should reach a place wherein to take repose. And as soon as this long wayfare ended, suddenly a mountain towering high to the heights of heaven arose before him; so he set his face thither, and after a further term of three days[521] (and he ever wayfaring) he reached it and beheld upon its flanks fair leasows with grasses and rills and trees and fruits besprent, and birds hymning Allah the One, the Omnipotent. Anon he alighted therein for that his heart had somewhat to say anent that mountain, and he also marvelled thereat by cause that during his wayfare he had never seen aught like it at all, nor anything resembling that herbage and those streams. And after dismounting he unbridled his steed and suffered him browse and pasture upon the greenery and drink of the water, while he on like wise fell to eating of the fruits which hung from the trees and taking his ease and repose. But the more he shifted from place to place the fairer he found it than the first, so he was delighted with the site, and as he looked upon it he improvised these couplets,

"O who fearest the world do thou feel right safe; * Trust all to
Him did mankind create:
Fate aye, O my lord, shall come to pass * While safe thou art
from th' undoomed by Fate."

The Sultan's son ceased not straying from stead to stead for a term of ten days, during which he wandered round about the Mountain and solaced himself by gazing upon the trees and waters,[522] and he was gladdened by the warbling of the birds till at length the Doom of Destiny and the Fiat of Fate cast him over against the door of the cave which contained the Khwajah's daughter with her handmaids and her negro slaves. He looked at the entrance and marvelled and was perplexed at — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Ninety-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the King's son took place before the Cavern-door he marvelled at its strength intended to protect those within, but he knew not if it had any inmate or an it were void of inhabitants, seeing that the mountain was far distant and divided from towns and cities nor could any avail to reach it. So he said in his mind, “Sit thee down here over against the entrance amid these grasses and trees and fruits, for an thou quit this site thou shalt find none like it in charms and eke it shall console thee for parting from thy people. Moreover, haply shall someone of this place pass by me and from him I may ask tidings concerning this region and peradventure Almighty Allah shall guide me back to my own country and I shall forgather with my father and my folk and my friends. Indeed possibly there may be someone within this place who when he issueth forth shall become my familiar.” So he ceased not sitting at the door of the cave for a term of twenty days eating of the fruits of the trees and drinking of the water of the rain pools as likewise did his steed; but when it was the twenty and first day, behold, the door of the antre was thrown open and there came forth it two black slave-girls and a negro chattel, followed by five white handmaidens, all seeking diversion and disport among those meadows which lay on the mountain-flank and beyond. But as they paced along their eyes fell on the son of the Sultan who was still sitting there with his steed before him and they found him cast in the mould of beauty and loveliness, for he had now rested in that place from his wayfare and the perfection of charms was manifest upon him. When the slave-girls looked at him they were overwhelmed by the marvels of his comeliness and shapeliness and they returned in haste and hurry to their mistress and said to her, “O our lady, verily at the cavern-door is a Youth, never saw we a fairer than he or a seemlier of semblance, and in very deed he resembleth thee in grace and elegance of face and form, and before him standeth a steed even as a bride.” Now when the Merchant’s daughter heard these words from her handmaidens, she arose and in haste and hurry made for the cave-door and her heart was filled with gladness and she ceased not walking till she reached it. Then she looked upon the Prince and came forward and embraced him[523] and gave him the salam and she continued to gaze upon and consider his beauty and comeliness, until love to him settled in her heart and likewise the Prince’s love to her increased. Hereupon she hent him by the hand and led him into the cavern where he fell to looking rightwards and leftwards about the sides thereof and wondering at what he saw therein of pleasaunces and trees and streams and birds, until at last they reached the pavilion. But before entering thither the Prince had led his horse and loosed him in the leasows which lay in the cavern; and, when at last the twain ended at the palace and went within, the attendants brought meat for him; so he ate his sufficiency and they washed his hands and then the couple fell to conversing together whilst all were delighted with the son of the King. And they continued in such case until night drew nigh when each of the handmaidens went to her chamber and lay her down and on like wise did the black slaves until there remained none save the Prince and the Merchant's daughter. Then began she to excite him and incite him and disport with him until his heart inclined towards her by reason of her toyings and her allurements, so he drew near to her and clasped her to his breast and at last he threw her upon her back and did away her maidenhead. Now by hest of Allah Almighty's All-might she conceived of him that very night and they ceased not to be in sport and laughter until the Creator brought on the dawn which showed its sheen and shone and the sun arose over lowland and lawn. Then did the twain, she and he, sit communing together, when the girl began to improvise these couplets,

"Loving maid in obedience doth come * Trailing skirt with her
pride all astir;
And she's meet for no man save for him * And he's meet for no
maid save for her."[524]

After this the Khwajah's daughter tarried with the King's son for a term of six months; but, from the night when he had abated her pucelage, he never approached her at all, and she also on like wise felt no lust of the flesh for him in any way nor did she solicit him to love-liesse.[525] But when it was the seventh month, the youth remembered his family and native land and he sought leave of her to travel but she said to him, "Why dost thou not tarry beside us?" Said he, "If in our life there be due length needs must we forgather." Then asked she, "O my lord, who mayest thou be?" so he declared to her his pedigree and degree and the name of his native country and she also informed him of her rank and lineage and her patrial stead.

Presently he farewelled her and mounting his horse fared forth from her in early morning, — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive.” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Seven Hundred and Ninety-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale, that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King’s son farewelled the Merchant’s daughter and fared forth from her in early morning, seeking his folk and his natal land, and he drove amiddlemost the wilds and the wolds. On this wise it was with him; but as regards the merchant, the father of the damsel, he and the Darwaysh after consigning her to the cavern returned to his town and there spent six months in business as was his wont; but on the seventh he called to mind his child and was desolated by her absence because he had none other. So quoth he to her mother, “I have an intent to visit the girl and look upon her and see what may be her condition, for my heart is in sore doubt on her account and I cannot but fancy that some unforeseen casualty hath brought calamity or that some wayfarer may have visited her; and my thoughts are occupied with her, so ’tis my will to fare forth and see her.” “Such act were advisable,” quoth the wife; and so saying she fell to making him somewhat of provaunt amounting to some ten camel-loads.[526] Presently he led forth with him a few of his negro slaves and set out to see his daughter on the Jabal al-Saháb. So he dove into the depths of the desert and cut across the dales and the hills and conjoined the journeyings of night with day for a space of three months, and about sunset-tide on the first of the fourth behold, a rider appeared to him coming from the breast of the waste, nor had he with him anyone. When the stranger drew near, the Khwajah saluted him and his salam was returned by the horseman who happened to be the Prince returning from the

Merchant's daughter. Quoth the Khwajah, "O Youth, dismount with us in this place and let us twain, I and thou, night together and solace ourselves with converse;[527] then, when it shall be morning, each of us shall depart seeking his own stead." Quoth the Prince, "No harm in that," and so saying he sprang from the back of his steed and unbridled him and suffered him to browse upon the grasses and greenery together with the Khwajah's cattle. Hereat the two sat down together in talk while the slaves slaughtered a lamb and flayed it, then, having lighted a fire, they set the meat thereupon in a chauldron and when it was cooked they fished it out with a flesh-hook and scored it[528] and placed it in a mighty platter which they served up to their lord and the King's son. Both ate of it after the measure of their sufficiency and the remnants were borne off by the slaves for their suppers. And when the time for night-prayers came, the two having made the Wuzú ablution performed the orisons obligatory upon them, and anon sat down for evening converse, overtalking the tidings of the world and its affairs, until quoth the Merchant to the Prince, "O Youth, whence comest thou and whither art thou wending?" Quoth the other, "Walláhi, O Khwajah, I have a wondrous tale, nay a marvel of marvels which, were it graved with needle-gravers upon the eye-corners were a warning to whoso would be warned. And this it is, I am the King's son of Al-Irak and my sire's prop and stay in the House of the World, and he reared me with the fairest of rearing; but when I had grown to man's estate and had learnt the mysteries of venerie I longed one chance day of the days to ride forth hunting and birding. So I went for a horse (as was my wont) to the stables, where I found yon stallion which is with me chained to four posts; whereupon of my ignorance, unknowing that none could approach him save myself nor any avail to mount him, I went up to him and girthed him, and he neither started nor moved at my gentling of him, for this was existing in the purpose of Almighty Allah. Then I mounted him and sought my suite without informing my sire and rode forth the city with all my many, when suddenly the horse snorted with his nostrils and neighed through his throttle and buckjumped in air and bolted for the wilderness swift as bird in firmament-plain, nor wist I whither he was intending.[529] He ceased not running away with me the whole day till eventide when we reached a lake in a grassy mead." (Now when the Khwajah heard the words of the Prince his heart was heartened and presently the other pursued), "So I took seat and ate somewhat of my vivers, my horse also feeding upon his fodder, and we nighted in that spot and next morning I set out and stinted not riding for a march of four months. But on the first of the fifth I neared a towering mountain whose length and whose breadth had no bounds, and on its flanks I found leasows manifold with trees and fruits and streams besprent and birds hymning the One, the Omnipotent. So I was gladdened by the sight and dismounted and unbridled my steed whom I allowed to browse the while I ate of the fruits, and presently I fell to roaming about from site to site. And when some time had passed I came to the mouth of a cavern whence after a short delay on my part fared forth slave-girls under the escort of a negro chattel. When they beheld me they rejoiced in me, then going in they disappeared for an hour and anon returned bringing a young lady as she was the moon of the fourteenth night, who salam'd to me, and invited me to become her guest and led me into the cave — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night, an the Sovran suffer me to survive." Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and First Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Prince continued to the Merchant saying, "The slave-girls invited me and led me into the cave until I reached a Pavilion that was there. I tarried beside them for a matter of some six months when I felt desolate for my folk and my native land, so I craved leave to depart from them and farewelled them and went forth, they sending me away with highmost honour. But when bidding them goodbye, I covenanted with them saying, 'an there be in life any length needs must we forgather'; and with these words I left them, and now 'tis some time since I journeyed thence when thou mettest me in this place." Now the Merchant hearing his tale knew from the beginning what had occurred there, and was certified of the saying of the Voice, and judging from the tenor of the information said in his mind, "There is no doubt or hesitation but that this be the youth to whom was appointed my daughter, that of him she should conceive in the way of unright and the Written[530] is now fulfilled." So quoth the Merchant, "O Youth, where is thy town?" and he informed him thereof. Now the Prince knew not that he had come upon the damsel's father by the road, whereas the Khwajah wotted right well that this man had had to do with his daughter. As soon as it was morning the twain farewelled each other and either of them went his own way; but the Khwajah fell into cark and care such as cannot be conceived, and he fasted from food nor was meat to him sweet nor was sleep. However, he ceased not travelling till he arrived at the Jabal al-Sahab, when he approached the door of the cave and rapped thereat. The handmaidens opened to him and as soon as they saw his face they recognised him, and returning to their lady informed her thereof: so she arose to seek him, and presently met him and salam'd to him and kissed his hands and walked by his side until she reached the Pavilion, where the twain, he and she, went up, and she seated him and stood before him in his suit and service. Hereat her father looked at her and considered her and found her colour changed and her belly grown big, and asked her, "What is to do with thee and what is't hath altered thy complexion, for to-day I see thee heavy of body, and no doubt some man has mixed[531] with thee?" Now when she heard the words of her father she understood and was certified that he had compassed full knowledge concerning what had befallen her, so she returned him nor answer nor address, and she was overwhelmed with shame and confusion, and waxed changed and was well nigh falling upon the floor. Presently she sat down in abashment before her sire by reason of the bigness of her belly, but he bowed in obedience before the power of Almighty Allah; and they two ceased not conversing until fall of night, when each and every of the handmaids had sought her own chamber that she might sleep therein. As soon as the Khwajah remained alone with his daughter and without other being present he said to her, “O my child, verily this matter was foredoomed to thee from the Lord of the Heavens, and there is no Averter of whatso is fated; but do thou relate to me what befel between thee and the youth who owneth the steed, and who is the King’s son of Al-Irak.” Hereupon the girl was consterned and she could return no reply, and presently when she recovered she said to her sire, “How shall I relate to one who is already informed of all, first and last, and thou declarest that the foredoomed must come to pass, nor can I say thereanent a single word?” And presently she resumed, “O my father, verily the Youth promised me that an his life have length he would certainly forgather with me, and I desire of thee that when thou shalt return to thy country thou take me and carry me in thy company to him, and reunite me with him and let me meet his sire and ask him to keep his word, for I require none else nor shall anyone ever unveil me in privacy. And in fine do thou marry me to him. Now whatso hath betided me thou hast heard it from the Voice, and thou hast wearied thy soul in transporting me to this place, fearing for me the shifts of the days, and thou hast contraried the power of Allah, nor hath this profited thee aught, because the Destinies which be writ upon mankind from infinity and eternity must needs be carried out. All this was determined by Allah, for that prosperity and adversity and benefaction and interdiction all be from the Almighty. Do thou whatso I have said and that which is inscribed upon my forehead shall be the quickening of me (Inshallah — an so please God!), since patience and longsuffering are better than restless thought.” When her father heard from her such words, he agreed with her in all she had spoken to him, and as soon as it was morning he fell to preparing for wayfare, he and his daughter and his handmaidens and his negro-slaves; and on the third day they loaded their loads and set forth on return to their country and city. Then they conjoined the travel of night and day and pushed forward on their journey without stay or delay for a term of five months, until they reached their home and settled them down therein. Such was their case; but as regards the King’s son of Al-’Irak, after he had met the girl’s father on the road and had parted from him, without recognising him withal, he strave for return to his own land and behold, he wandered from the way and was confronted by a sea dashing with clashing billows. So he was perplext as to his affair and his judgment left him and his right wits, and he knew not what he should do or whither he should wend, or what direction he should take or what Allah had decreed for him — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the Prince came upon that sea he was perplext and wist not what to do, so he leapt from the back of the Father of the Pigeon and set his steed standing beside him that he might lean against his quarter[532] when, of the excess of his night watching, he fell asleep and was drowned in slumber. Then, by doom of Destiny the beast shook his head and snorted and set off at full speed making for the wild and the wold and was presently amiddlemost the waste. Now when some two-told hours of time had passed, the Prince shook off his drowsihead and opened his eyes, but of his steed could see nor sign nor aught of visible trace. So he smote hand upon hand and cried, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great," after which he took seat by the side of the sea and sued comfort of Almighty Allah. On the next day a ship suddenly sailed in and made fast to the shore, after which a posse of Jews landed from her and as soon as they saw him they fell upon him and seized him and pinioned him; then, carrying him perforce aboard, loaded his legs with irons. So quoth he to himself, "Whenas Fate is so minded our eyes are blinded; however, patience is fairest and of Allah must we ask aidance." Hereupon the Jews again disembarked and filled their kegs with the water of an adjoining rain-pool, after which they trooped aboard and making sail voyaged over the billows of the ocean before them. This lasted for a month, after which time they cast anchor beside a harbour-town, and presently swarmed out to sell and to buy, and there they delayed for a term of two months until they had finished their business and they had purchased them what sufficed of provaunt. All this while the Prince lay bound in the black hole deep down in the ship's hold, nor did anyone go near him save a Jew, a man of a certain age.[533] And whenever he entered that dismal place he heard the youth reciting from the Koran and he would stand to hearken until his heart was softened to the speaker and he would favour him in the matter of meat and drink. When they cast anchor beside the second place, the King's son asked the man, "What may be this port-city and what is her name and the name of her ruler? Would Heaven I wot an her lord be a King or a Governor under a royal hand?" "Wherefore askest thou?" quoth the Jew, and quoth the other, "For nothing: my only want is the city's name[534] and I would learn whether it belong to Moslems or Jews or Nazarenes." "This be peopled by Moslem folk," replied the Jew, "natheless can none carry tidings of thee to her inhabitants. However, O Moslem, I feel a fondness for thee and 'tis my intent when we reach the city of Andalús[535] to give tidings of thee, but it must be on condition that thou accept of me to thy company whenas Allah Almighty shall have delivered thee." Said the Prince, "And what hindereth thee from Al-Islam at this hour?" and said the other, "I am forbidden by fear of the ship's Captain."[536] Replied the Prince, "Become a Moslem in secret and wash and pray in privacy beside me here." So he became of the True Believers at the hand of the King's son, who presently asked him, "Say me, be there in this vessel any Moslems save myself?" "There are some twenty here," answered he, "and 'tis the design of the Captain to offer them up on arrival at his own country and he shall devote them as victims in the Greater Synagogue." Rejoined the other, "Thou art now a Moslem even as I am a Moslem, and it besitteth thou apprise me of all and whatsoever befalleth in the ship, but first art thou able to gar me forgather with the other True Believers?" And the man answered in the affirmative. Now after the ship had sailed with them for ten days, the whilome Jew contrived to bring him and the Moslem prisoners together and they were found to number twenty, each and every in irons. But when it was the Sabbath about undurn hour, all the Jews including the Captain fell to winebibbing and therein exceeded until the whole of them waxed drunken; whereat the Prince and his convert arose, and going to the armoury[537] and opening it found therein all manner war-gear, even habergeons. So the Youth returned to the captives and unbinding their bonds, led them to the cabin of weapons and said to them, "Do each and every of you who shall find aught befitting take it and let such as avail to wear coat of mail seize one of them and don it." On this wise he heartened their hearts and cried to them, "Unless ye do the deeds of men you will be slaughtered with the slaughtering of sheep, for at this moment 'tis their design on reaching their own land to offer you up as corbans in their Greater Synagogue. So be you on your guard and, if ye fall in this affair,[538] 'tis fairer for you than to die with split weasands." So each of them snatched up whatso of war-gear suited him and one equipped other and they heartened their hearts and all waxed eager for the fray. Then sallied they forth, one and twenty in number, at a single word, with the Takbír and the Tahlíl,[539] whilst the Jews who formed the ship's crew were some one hundred and five. But these were all drunken with wine and giddy of head, nor did they recover until the weapons began to play upon their necks and their backs, whereat they shook off their crapulence and learned that the Moslems had gotten about them with their war-gear. So they cried out to one another and became ware and the liquor-fumes left their brains. Then they rushed for the armoury but found that most of the weapons were with the Moslems, whom the Prince was urging to derring-do of cut and thrust. Thus were they departed into two portions and hardly had passed an hour, an hour which would grey the hair of a little child, in fight and fray and onset and retreat — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Prince urged on his party and fortified their hearts to fight, nor had an hour passed in battle and slaughter (and he smiting rightwards and leftwards) when behold, he was encountered by the Captain who sprang at him with his scymitar and designed to cut him down. But he forestalled him with sway of sabre and smote him a swashing stroke and an all-sufficient which share through his joints and tare through his limbs; and when the ship’s crew saw their Chief fall dead they gave in their submission[540] and throwing down their weapons would have saved their lives. The Prince, however, went forward to them and fell to pinioning them, one after other, until he had bound them all, after which he counted them and found them to number about forty head while the slain were three score and five. These he threw into the sea,[541] but the captives he placed in prison after chaining them with iron chains and they padlocked the doors upon them; and the Moslems worked the ship’s sails while the man who had newly islamised directed them upon their course until they moored at a holm hard by the mainland. Here they landed and found the place abounding in blooms and trees and streams, and the Prince left the ship to reconnoitre the continent when suddenly a dust cloud drew nigh and a sand-pillar soared awhile in air high; then it uncovered some fifty horsemen, and they were pursuing in the hottest of haste,[542] a stallion which was saddled and bridled and which they intended to secure. Now for ten days they had galloped after him but none availed to catch him. When the King’s son looked upon that case he uttered a loud cry and the courser, hearing the sound of his master’s voice, made for him and fell to rubbing his cheeks upon his back and shoulders[543] until they came up with him as he was standing beside his lord. Hereat all the riders dismounted with intent to seize him, but the Prince opposed them saying. “This is my horse and he was lost from me in such a place upon the margin of the main.” Replied they, “’Tis well, but this is our booty nor will we ever leave him to thee, for that during the last ten days we have galloped after him until we are melted, and our horses are melted as well as ourselves. Moreover, our King awaiteth us and if we return without the steed our heads will be cut off." Quoth the Prince, "Nor ye nor that Sovran of yours can have any command over him, albeit you may have pursued him at speed for ten days or fifteen days or twenty days; nor shall you make him a quarry or for yourselves or for the King of you. By Allah, one Sultan was unable to take even a hair from him and, by the Almighty! were you to pursue him for a full-told year not one of you could come up with him or make him your own." Hereupon talk increased between them and one drew weapon upon other and there befel between them contest and enmity and rage of bad blood and each clapt hand to sword and drew it from sheath. When the King's son saw this from them, he sprang upon the steed's back swiftlier than the blinding leven; and, having settled himself firmly in selle, he put forth his hand and seized a sword which hung by the saddle bow. As soon as the folk saw that he had mounted the horse, they charged upon him with their scymitars and would have cut him down, but he made his steed curvet and withdrew from them saying, "An you design battle I am not fain of fight, and do ye all go about your business and covet not the horse lest your greed deceive you and you ask more than enough and thereby fall into harm. This much we know and if you require aught else let the strongest and doughtiest of you do his best." Then they charged upon him a second time and a third time and he warded them off and cried, "Allah draw the line between me and you,[544] O folk, and do ye gang your gait for you be fifty riders and I be alone and singlehanded and how shall one contend in fight with half an hundred?" Cried they, "Naught shall save thee from us except thou dismount from the steed and suffer us to take him and return home with him;" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the fifty horsemen said to the King’s son, “There is no help but that we take from thee the horse,” and said he, “I have given you good advice, and well I wot and am certified that were you two hundred riders ye could never prevail over me whilst I am mounted on my courser’s back and indeed I have no fear of fight; but let any of you who hath claim to knightlihood come forwards and take him and mount him.” So saying he alighted forthright and left his horse and went to some distance from him, when one of the fifty riders pushed forwards and designed to seize the steed by the reins and bestride him, when suddenly the stallion raged like fire at him and attacked him and smote him with his forehand and drove the entrails out of his belly and the man at once fell to the ground slain. As his party saw this they bared their brands and assaulted the horse designing to cut him in pieces when behold, a dust-cloud high in lift upflew and walled the view; and all extended their glances in that direction for an hour of time until it opened and showed some two hundred knights headed by a King mighty of degree and majesty and over his head were flags a-flying. The fifty horsemen, seeing him advance with his troops, drew off and stood still to look and see whom he might be, and when the horse sighted these banners he sniffed with nostrils opened wide to the air, and made for them at full speed, as if gladdened by the sight, and approached them and returned to them a second time in like guise and at the third time he drew up hard beside them and nearing the King fell to rubbing his cheeks upon the stirrups whilst the ruler put forth his hand and gentled the steed by smoothing his head and forehead. As soon as the fifty riders saw this, they marvelled thereat, but the King’s son who had kept his ground was astounded and said to himself, “The horse fled me and when this host drew nigh he sought me again.”[545] Presently the Prince fixed his glance upon the latest comers and behold, the King was his father, so he sprang to him and when the sire saw him he knew his son and footed it and the twain embraced and fell fainting to the ground for awhile. When they recovered the suite of the Sultan came forward and salam'd to the Prince who presently asked his sire, "What may be the cause of thy coming to this plain?" and the ruler informed him by way of answer that after his child's departure slumber to him brought no rest nor was there in food aught of zest and with him longing overflowed for the sake of his son, so that after a while of time he and the grandees of his realm had marched forth, and he ended by saying, "O my son, our leaving home was for the sake of thee, but do thou tell me what befel thee after mounting the Father of a Pigeon, and what was the cause of thy coming to this spot." Accordingly the Prince told all that had betided him, first and last, of his durance vile amongst the Jews and how he had devised the killing of the Captain and the capture of the craft; and how the steed, after being lost in the waste,[546] had returned to him in this place; also of the fifty riders who encountered him on landing and would fain have seized him but failed and of the death of the horseman who was slain by the horse. Hereat they pitched the pavilions upon that spot and set up a throne for the King who after taking seat thereon placed his son by his side and bade summon the fifty riders who were brought into the presence — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting, and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that when the Sultan took seat upon the throne and set his son by his side he summoned the fifty riders, who were brought into the presence and placed between his hands. Then he questioned them of their case and their country and the cause of their coming to that stead and they notified to him their native land and their Sovran and the reason of their wandering; to wit, their headlong pursuit of the stallion which had lasted for a term of ten days. Now when the Sultan understood their words and knew and was certified concerning their King and their country, he robed them with honourable robes[547] and said to them, “Walláhi! had I known that the stallion would have submitted to you and would have obeyed you I should have delivered him up to you, but I feared for any that durst approach him, barring his master. Now, however, do ye depart and salam to your Sovran and say him, ‘By Allah, if the stallion thou sawest wandering the waste befitted the use of thee I had sent him in free gift.’” With this fair message the men farewelled him and fared from him and they ceased not faring until they returned to their liege lord and reported to him all that had betided them; that is, how the owner of the stallion had appeared and proved to be a King who (they added) “hath sent his salam to thee saying it was his desire to despatch the horse but none availed to manage him save himself and his son.” And when the Ruler heard these words, he returned thanks to the Sovran for the grace of his goodness, and returned forthright to his own land. Meanwhile the Sultan who was owner of the stallion presented the captured ship to those who had captured her, and taking his son turned towards his capital, and they marched without stay or delay until they reached it. Hereupon the Chamberlains and the Nabobs and the high Officers and the townsfolk came forth to meet and greet their Ruler and rejoiced in his safety and that of his son, and they adorned the city for three days and all were in high mirth and merriment until what time the Sultan had settled down at home. Such was his case; but as regards the Khwajah and his daughter, when they had let load their loads they quitted the cavern and set forth, making for their country and patrial stead, and they ceased not forcing their marches for a term of ten days. But on the eleventh they encountered fiery heat beginning from mid-forenoon; and, as the place was grassy ground and overgrown with greenery, they alighted from their beasts and bade pitch two pavilions, one for the daughter and the other for her father and his folk, that it might shade them and shelter them from the excessive sultriness. Now when it was mid-afternoon behold, the damsel was seized with the birth-pains and the pangs of child-bearing, but Allah Almighty made delivery right easy to her and presently she became the mother of a man-child — Glory be to God who fashioned him and perfected what He had fashioned in the creation of that babe![548] So his mother cut his navel-string and, rolling it up in one of her shifts, kept careful guard over it.[549] And presently her father entered to look upon her, and finding that she had been delivered was grieved with exceeding grief and the world was straitened before his face, and unknowing what to do he said to himself, "Had we reached our homes and that babe appeared with the damsel, our honour had been smirched and men had blamed us saying, 'The Khwajah's daughter hath brought forth in sin.' So we cannot confront the world, and if we bear with us this infant they will ask where is its father?" He remained perplext and distraught, seeing no way of action, and now he would say, "Let us slay the child," and anon, "Let us hide it;" and the while he was in that place his nature bespake him with such promptings. But when morning came he had determined upon abandoning the new-born and not carrying it further, so quoth he to his daughter, "Hearken unto whatso I shall say thee." Quoth she, "'Tis well!" and he continued, "If we travel with this infant the tidings of us will spread through the city and men will say, 'The Khwajah's daughter hath been debauched and hath borne a babe in bastardy'; and our right way (according to me) is that we leave it in this tent under charge of the Lord and whoso shall come up to the little one shall take it with the tent; moreover I will place under its head two hundred dinars and any whose lot it is shall carry off the whole." When the damsel heard these words she found the matter grievous, but she could return no reply. "What sayest thou?" asked he, and she answered, "Whatso is right that do thou." Hereupon he took a purse[550] of two hundred gold pieces which he set under the child's head and left it in the tent. Then he loaded his loads and fared forth, he and his daughter and his pages, and they ceased not pushing their marches until they reached their own land and native country and entered their home, where they were met by sundry of their familiars coming forth to greet them. They settled down in their quarters when the damsel forgathered with her mother who threw her arms round her neck for exceeding affection to her and asked her of her news; so she informed her concerning the matter of the cavern and what was therein and how great was its distance, but she told her naught of what had befallen her nor of her pregnancy by the Prince nor of the babe she had abandoned. The mother still supposed that she was a clean maid, yet she noted the change in her state and complexion. Then the damsel sought privacy in one of the chambers and wept until her gall-bladder was like to burst and said to herself, "Would Heaven I knew whether Allah will re-unite me with the child and its father the Prince!" and in this condition she remained for a while of time. On such wise it befel the Merchant and his daughter; but as regards the son of the Sultan, when he had settled down in the city of his sire he remembered the Khwajah's daughter, and quoth he to his father, "O my papa, my desire is to hunting and birding and diversion." Quoth the King, the better that Destiny might be fulfilled, "'Tis well, O my son, but take with thee a suite." "I desire no more than five men in all," said the other, and gat himself ready for travel and, having farewelled his father, set forth from the city — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Tenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Prince went forth from his father with a train of five attendants and made for the wilderness, and he conjoined the journeys of night and day; withal he knew not whither he was going, and he chanced travel over the same wilds and wolds and dales and stony leas. But as regards the Merchant and his daughter, he went in to her one day of the days and found her weeping and wailing, so he said to her, "What causeth thee to shed tears, O my child?" and said she, "How shall I not weep? indeed I must wail over my lot, and over the promise wherewith Allah promised me." Hereupon he exclaimed, "O my daughter, be silent and Inshallah — God willing — I will equip me for travel and will fare to the son of the King; and look to it, for haply Allah Almighty our Lord may direct me to a somewhat shall conduct me to the Prince's city." So saying he bade his handmaidens and eunuchs make ready forthright a viaticum sufficing for a full-told year himself and his following of pages and eunuchs, and they did his bidding. After a few days they prepared all he had required and he purposed to set out; then, he loaded his loads and, farewelling his wife and daughter, went forth seeking the city of the King's son. He ceased not travelling for a space of three months, when he found a meadow wide of sides on the margin of a sweet-water lake, so he said to his slaves, "Alight we here in this very place that we may take our rest." Accordingly, they dismounted and pitched a tent and furnisht it for him, and he passed that night by the water-side, and all enjoyed their repose. But as soon as morn 'gan show and shone with sheeny glow, and the sun arose o'er the lands lying low, the Khwajah designed to order a march for his slaves when suddenly espying a dust-cloud towering in rear of them, they waited to see what it might be, and after some two hours of the day it cleared off and disclosed beneath it six riders and with them a bât-beast carrying a load of provisions. These drew near the meadow where the Khwajah sat looking at them, and fear hereat entered into his heart, and trembling fell upon his limbs[551] until he was assured that they were but six men. So his mind was calmed. But when the party drew near him he fixed his glance and made certain that the men were headed by the King's son whom he had met on his first journey, and he marvelled indeed at the youth making for the same place, and he strove to guess the cause of his coming with only five followers and no more. Then he arose and accosted him and salam'd and sat down in converse with him, being assured the while that it was the same who had had doings with his daughter, and that the child which she had borne in the tent and which they abandoned was the son of this Prince, while the youth knew not that the Khwajah was father to the damsel with whom he had tarried in the cavern. So they fell to communing together for a while until the Prince asked the Trader, "What is the cause of thy coming hither?" and answered the other, "I have come seeking thee and thy country, for I have a want which thou must fulfil me;" presently adding, "And thou, whither art thou intending?" Quoth the King's son, "I am making for the cavern wherein the handmaidens showed me much honour, for indeed I gave my word that I would return to them after I had revisited my country and had met my folk and my friends; and here I am coming back to keep what plight and promise were between us." Hereupon the Merchant arose, and taking the Prince, retired with him to a place of privacy where none could wot of them twain save Allah Almighty. "Would Heaven I knew what may be in the thoughts of this Khwájah!" said the Prince in his mind; but when both had seated themselves at ease, the Merchant addressed the King's son in these words, "O my son, all things are foredoomed in the World of Secrets, and from fated lot is no flight. Now the end and aim whereto thou designest in the cavern, verily they[552] left it for their own land." When the King's son heard these words informing him that his beloved had quitted her abode, he cried out with a loud outcry for stress of what had betided him, and fell a-swoon by cause that love of the damsel had mastered his heart and his vitals hung to her. After a while he recovered and asked the Khwajah, "Say me, be these words of thine soothfast or false?" "Soothfast indeed," answered the father, "but, O my child, be of good cheer and eyes clear, for that thy wish is won" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Twelfth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that quoth the Khwajah to the King's son after he had revived, "O my child, be of good cheer and eyes clear for that thy want is won and for thee the way hath been short done and if thy heart be firm-fixed upon thy beloved the heart of her is still firmer than thine and I am a messenger from her who seek thee that I may unite you twain Inshallah — an Allah please." Asked the Prince, "And who mayest thou be to her, O my lord?" and answered the other, "I am her father and she is my daughter and hers is a marvel-tale, I swear by the All-might of Him who made the Heavens and the Earth." Then he fell to recounting anent the Voice which came to him on the night of her being conceived in her mother's womb and all that had since befallen her, keeping concealed[553] only the matter of the babe which she had borne in the tent. But when the Prince knew that the wayfarer was her sire who was travelling to seek him, he rejoiced in the glad tidings of forgathering with the damsel and on the morning of the second day all marched off together and made for the Merchant's city. And they stinted not wayfaring and forcing their marches until they drew near it, and as soon as they entered it, the Merchant, before going to his home, led the Prince with him and sought the Kazi by whose aid the marriage-tie, after due settlement of the dowry, might be tied between him and the damsel. This done, he conducted him to a place of concealment and presently went in to his daughter and her mother who saluted him and asked him the news. Hereupon he gave them to know that he had brought the King's son and had made ready to knot the knot of wedlock between him and her. As soon as the damsel heard these tidings she fainted for excess of her happiness, and when she revived her mother arose and prepared her person and adorned her and made her don her most sumptuous of dresses. And when night fell they led the bridegroom in procession to her and the couple embraced and each threw arms round the neck of other for exceeding desire and their embraces lasted till dawn-tide.[554] After that the times waxed clear to them and the days were serene until one chance night of the nights when the Prince was sitting beside his bride and conversing with her concerning various matters when suddenly she fell to weeping and wailing. He was consterned thereat and cried, "What causeth thee cry, O dearling of my heart and light of mine eyes?" and she, "How shall I not cry when they have parted me from my boy, the life-blood of my liver!" "And thou, hast thou a babe?"

asked he and she answered, “Yes indeed, my child and thy child, whom I conceived by thee while we abode in the cavern. But when my father[555] took me therefrom and was leading me home we encountered about midway a burning heat, so we halted and pitched two tents for myself and my sire; then, as I sat within mine the labour-pangs came upon me and I bare a babe as the moon. But my parent feared to carry it with us lest our honour be smirched by tittle-tattle, so we left the little one in the tent with two hundred gold pieces under its head, that whoso might come upon it and take it and tend it might therewith be repaid.” In fine, she told her spouse the whole tale concerning her infant and declared that she had no longer patience to be parted from it. Her bridegroom consoled her and promised her with the fairest promises that he would certainly set out and travel and make search for the lost one amongst the lands, even though his absence might endure through a whole year in the wilderness. And lastly he said to her, “We will ask news and seek tidings of him from all the wayfarers who wend by that same valley, and certify ourselves of the information, nor will we return to thee save with assured knowledge; for this child is the fruit of my loins and I will never neglect him; no, never. Needs must I set forth and fare to those parts and search for my son.” Such was their case; but as regards the babe which had been abandoned (as we have noticed), he lay alone for the first day and yet another when a caravan appeared passing along that same road; and, as soon as they sighted the pavilion yet they saw none within, they drew near to it and behold, they found a babe lying prostrate with his fingers in his mouth and sucking thereat[556] and he was even as a slice of the moon. So they approached him and took him up and found under his head the purse, whereupon they carried him, not forgetting the gold, and showed him to the Shaykh of the Cafilah[557] who cried, “Walláhi, our way is a blessed for that we have discovered this child; and, inasmuch as I have no offspring, I will take him and tend him and adopt him to son.” Now this caravan was from the land of Al-Yaman and they had halted on that spot for a night’s rest, so when it was morning they loaded and left it and fared forwards and they ceased not wayfaring until they reached their homes safe and sound. After returning all the Cafilah folk dispersed, each to his own stead, but the

Shaykh, who was employed by government under the King of Al-Yaman, repaired to his own house accompanied by the child which he had carefully tended and salam'd to his wife. As soon as she saw the babe she marvelled at his fashion and, sending for a wet-nurse, committed him for suckling to her and set apart for her a place; and the woman fell to tending him and cleaning him, and the house prospered for the master and dame had charge of it[558] during the days of suckling. And when the boy was weaned they fed him fairly[559] and took sedulous charge of him, so he became accustomed to bespeak the man with, "O my papa," and the woman with, "O my mamma," believing the twain to be truly his parents. This endured for some seven years when they brought him a Divine to teach him at home, fearing lest he should fare forth the house; nor would they at any time send him to school. So the tutor[560] took him in hand and taught him polite letters and he became a reader and a writer and well versed in all knowledge before he reached his tenth year. Then his adopted father appointed for him a horse that he might learn cavalarice and the shooting of shafts and firing of bullets at the butt,[561] and then brought for him a complete rider that he might teach him all his art and when he came to the age of fourteen he became a doughty knight and a prow. Now one chance day of the days the youth purposed going to the wild that he might hunt, — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Fourteenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth proposed going forth to the wild that he might hunt, but his guardians feared for him so that he availed not to fare forth. Grievous to him was it that he could not obtain his liberty to set out a-chasing, and there befel him much concern[562] and a burning thirst; so he lay him down sore sick and troubled. Hereupon his father and mother went in to him and, finding that he had taken to his pillow, they mourned over him, and fearing lest he be afflicted by some disease they asked him, "What is to do with thee and what calamity hath befallen thee?" Answered he, "There is no help but that I go forth a-hunting in the wilderness." Quoth they, "O our son, we fear for thee," and quoth he, "Fear not, for that all things be foredoomed from Eternity and, if aught be written for me, 'twill come to pass even although I were beside you; and the bye-word saith, 'Profiteth not Prudence against Predestination.'" Hereat they gave him permission, and upon the second day he rode forth to the chase, but the wold and the wilds swallowed him up, and when he would have returned he knew not the road, so he said to himself, "Folk declare that affects are affected and footsteps are sped to a life that is vile and divided daily bread.[563] If aught be written to me fain must I fulfil it." And whenever he hunted down a gazelle, he cut its throat and broiled the meat over a fire and nourished himself for a while of days and nights; but he was lost in those wastes until he drew in sight of a city. This he entered, but he had no money for food or for foraging his horse, so he sold it willy nilly and, hiring a room in a Wakálah, lived by expending its price till the money was spent. Then he cried, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! The wise man doth even as the fool, but All-might is to Allah." So he went forth to solace himself in the highways of the city, looking rightwards and leftwards, until he came to the gateway of the King's Palace, and when he glanced around he saw written over it, "Dive not into the depths unless thou greed for thyself and thy wants."[564] So he said in his mind, "What is the meaning of these words I see here inscribed?" Presently he repaired for aid to a man in a shop and salam'd to him, and when his salutation was returned enquired of him, "O my lord, what is the meaning of this writ which is written over the Sultan's gateway?" The other replied, "O my son, whereof dost thou ask? Verily the Sultan and all the Lords of his land are in sore cark and care for the affair of his daughter, the Princess." The youth rejoined, "What is the matter with her and what hath befallen her?” and the man retorted, “O my son, verily the Sultan hath a daughter so fair that she seemeth cast in the very mould of beauty and none in her day can excel her, but whoso is betrothed to her and marrieth her and goeth in unto her the dawn never cometh without his becoming a heap of poison, and no one wotteth the business what it may be.” Hearing these words the youth said to himself, “By Allah, the death of me were better than this the life of me, but I have no dower to offer her.” Then he asked the man, “O my uncle, whoso lacketh money and wisheth to marry her, how shall he act?” “O my son,” answered the other, “verily the Sultan demandeth nothing; nay, he expendeth of his own wealth upon her.” The youth arose from beside the man at that moment and, going in to the King, found him seated on his throne; so he salam’d to him and prayed for him and deprecated and kissed ground before him, and when the King returned his salutation and welcomed him he cried, “O King of the Age, ’tis my intent and design to be connected with thee through the lady safe-guarded, thy daughter.” “By Allah, O Youth,” said the Sultan, “I consent not for thine own sake that thou wed her by cause that thou wilt be going wilfully to thy death;” and hereupon he related to him all that befel each and every who had married her and had gone in unto her. Quoth the youth, “O King of the Age, indeed I rely upon the Lord, and if I die I shall fare to Allah and His ruth and, if I live, ’tis well, for that all things are from the Almighty.” Quoth the Sultan, “O Youth, counsel appertaineth to Allah, for thou art her equal in beauty;” and the other rejoined, “All things are by Fate and man’s lot.” Hereupon the King summoned the Kazi and bade tie the marriage-tie between the youth and his daughter; then he went in to his Harem and apprised thereof her mother that she might prepare the girl’s person for the coming night. But the youth departed from the Sultan’s presence perplext of heart and distraught, unknowing what to do; and, as he walked about, suddenly he met a man in years, clean of raiment and with signs of probity evident; so he accosted him and said, “O my lord, ask a blessing for me.” Said the Shaykh, “O my son, may our Lord suffice thee against all would work thee woe and may He ever forefend thee from thy foe.”[565] And the youth was gladdened by the good omen of the Shaykh’s words. But when the Sultan had sought his Harem he said, “By Allah, he who hath wedded the damsel is a beautiful youth: oh the pity of it that he should die! Indeed I dissuaded him, saying so-and-so shall befal thee, but I could not deter him. Now by the rights of Him who raised the firmament without basement, an our Lord deign preserve this Youth and he see the morn in safety, I will assuredly gift him and share with him all my good, for that I have no male issue to succeed me in the sovranty; and this one, if Allah Almighty vouchsafe prolong his days, shall become my heir apparent and inherit after me. Indeed I deem him to be a son of the Kings who disguiseth himself, or some Youth of high degree who is troubled about worldly goods and who sayeth in himself, ‘I will take this damsel to wife that I may not die of want, for verily I am ruined.’ I diverted him from wedding her, but it could not be, and the more I deterred him with words manifold only the more grew his desire and he cried, ‘I am content’; thus speaking after the fashion of one who longeth to perish. However, let him meet his lot — either death-doom or deliverance from evil.” Now when it was eventide the Sultan sent to summon his son-in-law and, seating him beside the throne, fell to talking with him and asking after his case; but he concealed his condition and said, “Thy servant is such whereof ’tis spoken, ‘I fell from Heaven and was received by Earth.’ Ask me not, O King of the Age, or of the root or of the branch, for one of the wise and ware hath said: —

‘To tell my root and my name refrain; * The root of the youth is
what good he gain:[566]
A wight without father full oft shall win * And melting shall
purify drossy strain.’

And folk are equal but in different degrees.”[567] Now when the Sultan heard these words, he wondered at his eloquence and sweetness of speech; withal he marvelled that his son-in-law would not explain to him from what land or from what folk he came. And the two ceased not their converse until after the hour of night prayers, when the Lords of the land had been dismissed; whereupon the Sultan bade an eunuch take the youth and introduce him to the Princess. So he arose from him and went with the slave, the King exclaiming the while, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might, save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great: verily yonder young man wendeth wilfully to his death." Now when the bridegroom reached the apartment of the Sultan's daughter and entered to her — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Seventeenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the youth, when entering to the Sultan's daughter, exclaimed "Bismillah — in the name of Allah — I place my trust upon Allah, and I have committed mine affair unto Allah!" Then he went forwards and found his bride seated upon her bedstead, and she was as a Hoard newly loosed from its Talisman; while she on her part rose and met him, and looked upon him and considered him until she was certified of his being cast in beauty's mould, nor had she ever seen any like unto him. So she wept till the tears trickled adown her cheeks and she said to herself, "Oh the pity of it! Never shall my joy be fulfilled with this beautiful youth, than whom mine eyes never fell upon one fairer." Quoth he, "What causeth thee cry, O my lady?" and quoth she, "I cry for the loss of my joys with thee seeing that thou art to perish this very night; and I sue of the Almighty and supplicate Him that my life may be thy ransom, for by Allah 'tis a pity!" When he heard these words he presently looked around and suddenly he sighted a magical Sword[568] hanging by the belt against the wall: so he arose and hent it and threw it across his shoulders; then, returning he took seat upon the couch beside the Sultan's daughter, withal his heart and his tongue never neglected to recite the Names of Allah or to sue aidance from the Prince of the Hallows[569] who alone can reconcile with the Almighty fiat the fates and affairs of God's servants. This lasted for an hour until the first third of the night, when suddenly were heard the bellowings as of wind and rumblings of thunder, and the bride, perceiving all the portents which had occurred to others, increased in weeping and wailing. Then lo and behold! a wall amiddlemost the chamber clave asunder, and there issued forth the cleft a Basilisk[570] resembling a log of palm-tree, and he was blowing like the storm-blast and his eyes were as cressets and he came on wriggling and waving. But when the youth saw the monster he sprang up forthright with stout heart that knew naught of startling or affright, and cried out, “Protect me, O Chief and Lode-star of the Hallows, for I have thrown myself upon thine honour and am under thy safe-guard.” So saying and setting hand on brand he advanced and confronted the portent swiftlier than an eye-glance, raising his elbow till the blackness of the armpit appeared; and he cried out with a loud outcry whereto the whole city re-echoed, and which was audible even to the Sultan. Then he smote the monster upon his neck[571] and caused head to fly from body for a measure of some two spans. Hereupon the Basilisk fell dead, but the youth was seized by a fainting-fit for the mighty stress of his stroke, and the bride arose for the excess of her joy and threw herself upon him and swooned away for a full-told hour. When the couple recovered, the Princess fell to kissing his hands and feet and wiping with her kerchief the sweat from his brow and saying to him, “O my lord, and light of mine eyes, may none thy hand ever foreslow nor exult over thee any foe,” till he had recovered his right senses and had regained his strength. Anon he arose, and taking the Basilisk set it upon a large tray;[572] then, letting bring a skinful of water he cleaned away the blood. After this the youth and the King’s daughter sat down and gave each other joy of their safety and straightway disappeared from them all traces of distress. Presently the Bridegroom looked at his Bride and found her like a pearl, so he caused her to laugh and disported with her and excited her and she did on like wise and at last he threw her upon her back and did away her maidenhead, whenas their gladness grew and their pleasures were perfected and their joyance was enhanced by the monster’s death. They ceased not, the twain of them, toying and enjoying themselves until it was well nigh dawn and sleep overcame them and they slumbered. But the Sultan during that night could relish nor lying down nor sitting up, and as soon as he heard the shout he cried, “The Youth is indeed dead and this world hath fled! There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great.” About morning-tide he prepared for him a shroud and mortuary perfumes, and all things required, and despatched a party to dig a tomb for him who had been slain by the side of his daughter, and he let make an iron bier, after which he sent for the washers of the dead and summoned them to his presence and lastly he awaited for his wife to seek her daughter and bring him the tidings — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Nineteenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale, that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Sultan sat until morning-tide expecting his wife to bring him tidings of the youth that he might take him and bury him. But the Queen-mother repaired to her daughter’s apartment where she found the door locked and bolted upon the couple; so she knocked for them whilst her eyes were tear-stained and she was wailing over the loss of her daughter’s love-liesse. Hereat the Princess awoke and she arose and opened the door when behold, she found her mother weeping so she asked her, “What caused thee shed tears, O Mother mine, whilst my enjoyment hath been the completest?” Asked she, “And what hath joyed you?” So the daughter led her to the middlemost of the apartment where she found the Basilisk (which was like the section of a palm-trunk) lying dead upon a huge tray and she saw her son-in-law sleeping upon the bedstead[573] and he was like a fragment of the moon on the fourteenth night. The mother bowed head towards him and kissed him upon the brow saying, “Verily and indeed thou deservest safety!” Then she went forth from him lullilooing aloud and bade all the handmaids raise the cry of joy[574] and the Palace was turned topsy-turvy with gladness and delight. When the Sultan heard this he arose and asked "What may be the news? Are we in grief or in gladness;" and so saying he went forth when suddenly he was met by his wife in the highest delight who took him and led him to the apartment of her daughter. There he also espied the Basilisk stretched dead upon the tray and the youth his son-in-law lying asleep upon the bedstead, whereat from the stress of his joyance he fell to the floor in a fainting-fit which lasted an hour or so. But when he revived he cried, "Is this wake or rather is't sleep?" after which he arose and bade the musicians of his band beat the kettledrums and blow the shawms and the trumps and he commanded adorn the city; and the citizens did all his bidding. The decorations remained during seven days in honour of the safety of the Sultan's son-in-law, and increased were their joys and fell from them all annoys, and the Sultan took to distributing and giving alms and largessing and making presents to the Fakirs and the miserable and he robed his nobles with honourable robes and fed the captives and the prisoners one and all;[575] and the naked he clothed, and those anhungered he feasted in honour of his daughter. Then said the Sultan, "By Allah, this youth deserveth naught save that I make him my partner and share with him my good, for he hath banished from us our dule and our dolours and eke on account of himself and his own sake." After this he made over to him half of his realm and his riches and the Sultan would rule one day and his son-in-law the other and their joys endured for the space of a full-told year. Then the Sovran was seized of a sickness, so he bequeathed to his son-in-law all he had and everything he owned; and but a little time elapsed before his malady increased day by day until he fared to the ruth of Almighty Allah and the youth sat in his stead as Sovran and Sultan. Such was his case; but as regards the matter of his sire, the King's son of Al-'Irak, when he promised his wife that he would certainly go forth and travel and search for their son, he ceased not wending through the regions for a length of nights and days until Destiny threw him into such-and-such a city; and from the excess of what he had suffered of toil and travail he tarried therein a time. Now the Shaykh of the Caravans (who had found the babe in the tent and had taken him and had tended and adopted him, and from whom the youth when grown to man's estate had disappeared on the hunting excursion and returned not to his parents) also set out a-seeking him and fell diligently to searching for tidings of him and roaming from place to place. Presently he was cast by doom of Destiny into the same city; and, as he found none to company with, he was suddenly met on one of the highways by the youth's true father and the twain made acquaintance and became intimate until they nighted and morning'd in the same stead; withal neither knew what was his companion. But one night of the nights the two sat down in talk and the true sire asked the adoptive father, "O my brother, tell us the cause of thy going forth from thy country and of thy coming hither?" Answered his comrade, "By Allah, O my brother, my tale is a wondrous and mine adventure is a marvellous." Quoth he, "And how?" and quoth the other, "I was Shaykh of the Cafilahs on various trading journeys, and during one of them I passed by a way of the ways where I found a pavilion pitched at a forking of the roads. So I made for it and dismounted my party in that place and I glanced at the tent but we found none therein, whereupon I went forwards and entered it and saw a babe new-born strown upon his back and sucking his fingers.[576] So I raised him between my hands and came upon a purse of two hundred dinars set under his head; and I took the gold and carried it off together with the child." But when his comrade, the true father, heard this tale from him he said to himself, "This matter must have been after such fashion," and he was certified that the foundling was his son, for that he had heard the history told by the mother of the babe with the same details essential and accidental. So he firmly believed[577] in these words and rejoiced thereat, when his comrade continued, "And after that, O my brother, I bore off that babe and having no offspring I gave him to my wife who rejoiced therein and brought him a wet-nurse to suckle him for the usual term. When he had reached his sixth year I hired a Divine to read with him and teach him writing and the art of penmanship;[578] and, as soon as he saw ten years, I bought him a horse of the purest blood, whereon he learnt cavalarice and the shooting of shafts and the firing of bullets until he attained his fifteenth year. Presently one day of the days he asked to go a-hunting in the wilderness, but we his parents (for he still held me to be his father and my wife his mother) forbade him in fear of accidents; whereupon he waxed sore sorrowful and we allowed him leave to fare forth." — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Twenty-first Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the adoptive father pursued to his comrade, "So we permitted him to hie a-hunting, and he farewelled us and went forth from us and left us, whereat we fell to beweeping him; and inasmuch as until this present he hath not returned to us, I have set out to seek him and here am I in this place searching for traces of him. Peradventure may Allah Almighty deign unite me with him and gar me forgather with him; for, Walláhi! from the hour he went from us sleep hath done us no good nor have we found relish in food." And when the speech was ended, quoth his comrade, "O my brother, whenas he is not the son of thy loins and he could prove himself perverse to thee, what must be the condition in his regard of the father who begat him and the mother who enwombed him?" He replied, "Theirs must be cark and care and misery beyond even mine;" and the other rejoined, "By Allah, O my brother, verily the relation thou hast related anent this child proveth that he is, by God, my child and of mine own seed, for in sooth his mother gave birth to him in that stead where she left him being unable to carry him with her; but now she beweepeth the loss of him through the nights and the days." "O my brother," quoth the adoptive father, "we twain, I and thou, will indeed make public search and open inquiry for him through the lands, and Allah Almighty shall guide us himwards." When morning came the pair went forth together intending to journey from that city, but by doom of the Decreer the Sultan on that very day set out to visit the gardens; and, when the travellers heard tidings thereof, one said to the other, “Let us stay and solace ourselves with a sight of the royal suite and after we will wend our ways.” Said his comrade, “’Tis well.” So they took their station to await the issuing forth of the Sultan, who suddenly rode out amid his suite as the two stood leaning beside the road and looking at the Sultan, when behold, his glance fell upon the two men. He at once recognised the father who had reared him, and when he gazed at the other standing beside him his heart was opened to the love of him albeit he weeted naught of their tie of blood nor believed that any was his sire save the Shaykh who had adopted him. Accordingly, after considering them he bade carry them both to the House of Hospitality, so they led them thither and did his bidding. Hereupon the twain said to themselves, “Wherefore hath the Sultan made us his guests? Nor he knoweth us nor we know him and needs must this have a cause.” But after leaving them the King rode to the gardens where he tarried the whole day, and when it was sunset he returned to his Palace, and at suppertide commanded the men be brought before him. They salam’d to him and blessed him and he returned their salutations, and bade them take seat at the trays whereat none other was present. They obeyed his order much wondering thereat the while and musing in their minds, “What condition is this?” They ate till they were satisfied, after which the food-trays were removed and they washed their hands and drank coffee and sherbets; then, by command of the King, they sat down to converse when the Sultan addressed them instead of the others, whereat they marvelled self-communing and saying, “What can be the cause?” But as soon as all the attendants had been dismissed to their quarters and no one remained save the Sultan and his guests (three in all and no more), and it was the first third of the night, the King asked them, “Which of you availeth to tell a tale which shall be a joyance to our hearts?” The first to answer him was the true father, who said, “Walláhi, O King of the Age, there befel me an adventure which is one of the wonders of the world, and ’tis this. I am son to a King of the Kings of the earth who was wealthy of money and means, and who had the goods of life beyond measure. He feared for my safety because he had none other save myself, and one day of the days, when I craved leave to go a-hunting in the wilderness, he refused me in his anxiety for my safety." (Hereat, quoth the Sultan in himself, "By Allah, the story of this man is like my history!") "So quoth I, 'O King, unless I fare forth to sport, verily I will slay myself,' and quoth my sire, 'O my son, do thou go ride to the chase, but leave us not long for the hearts of us two, I and thy mother, will be engrossed by thee.' Said I, 'Hearing and obeying,' and I went down to the stable to take a steed; and finding a smaller stall wherein was a horse chained to four posts and, on guard beside him two slaves who could never draw near him, I approached him and fell to smoothing his coat. He remained silent and still whilst I took his furniture and set it upon his back, and girthed his saddle right tight and bridled him and loosed him from the four posts, and during all this he never started not shied at me by reason of the Fate and Fortune writ upon my forehead from the Secret World. Then I got him ready and mounted him and went forth" — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day, and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Twenty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the man who was bespeaking the Sultan pursued to him, "Then I mounted him and rode him over the gravelly ground without the city when behold, he snorted and snarked and shook his crest and started at speed and galloped with me and bolted, swiftly as though he were a bird in the firmament of heaven." On this wise he fell to recounting all that had befallen in the cave between him and the Merchant's daughter and what had betided him by decree of Allah; how he had left her for his own land and how had her sire come and carried her away; also in what manner she had been delivered of a son by him on the road and had left her babe-child in the tent hoping that someone might find him and take him and tend him; and, lastly, how he had married the child's mother and what was the cause of his going forth and his coming to that place that he might seek his son. Hereupon the Sultan turned to his adoptive father whom hitherto he had believed to be his real parent saying, "And thou, the other, dost thou know any tale like that told to us by thy comrade?" So the Shaykh recounted to him the whole history as hath before been set forth from incept to conclusion, nor hid from him aught thereof. Then the Sultan declared himself to his true sire, saying, "Thou art my father and there befel such things and such," after which said his adoptive parent, "Wallâhi, O my son, verily none is thy father save this one from whose loins thou art sprung, for I only found thee in the pavilion and took thee and tended thee in my home. But this is thy very parent in very deed." Hereat all the three fell upon one another's necks and kissed one another and the Sultan cried, "Praise to Him who hath united us after disunion!" and the others related to him anent his maternal grandfather how he was a Merchant, and concerning his paternal grandsire how he was a Monarch. Anon each of the two was ordered to revisit his own country and convey his consort and his children; and the twain disappeared for the space of a year and a month and at length returned to the young King. Hereupon he set apart for them palaces and settled them therein and they tarried with him until such time as there came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies.

Story of the Youth Who Would Futter His Father's Wives.[579]

It is related that there was a man who had a grown-up son, but the youth was a ne'er-do-well,[580] and whatever wife his sire wedded, the son would devise him a device to lie with her and have his wicked will of her, and he so managed the matter that his father was forced to divorce her. Now the man once married a bride beautiful exceedingly and, charging her beware of his son, jealously guarded her from him. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night, and that was

The Eight Hundred and Thirty-second Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be not sleeping, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the father applied himself to safe-guarding his wife and gave her a charge warning her with threats against his son and saying, “Whenas I wed ever a woman, yonder youth by his cunning manageth to have his wicked will of her.” Quoth she, “O Man, what be these words thou speakest? This thy son is a dog, nor hath he power to do with me aught, and I am a lady amongst women.” Quoth he, “Indeed I but charge thee to have a care of thyself.[581] Haply I may hie me forth to wayfare and he will lay some deep plot for thee and work with thee as he wrought with others.” She replied, “O Man, hold thyself secure therefrom for an he bespeak me with a single word I will slipper him with my papoosh;”[582] and he rejoined, “May safety be thine!” He cohabited with her for a month till one day of the days when he was compelled to travel; so he went in to his wife and cautioned her and was earnest with her saying, “Have a guard of thyself from my son the debauchee for ’tis a froward fellow, a thief, a miserable, lest he come over thee with some wile and have his will of thee.” Said she, “What words are these? Thy son is a dog nor hath he any power over me in aught whereof thou talkest, and if he bespeak me with one injurious word, I will slipper him soundly with my foot- gear.”[583] He rejoined, “If thou happen to need aught[584] never even mention it to him;” and she, “Hearkening and obedience.” So he farewelled her and fared forth wholly intent upon his wayfare. Now when he was far enough from the town the youth came to the grass-widow but would not address a single word to her, albeit fire was lighted in his heart by reason of her being so beautiful. Accordingly he contrived a wile. It happened to be summer-tide so he went[585] to the house and repaired to the terrace-roof, and there he raised his clothes from his sitting-place and exposed his backside stark naked to the cooling breeze; then he leant forwards propped on either elbow and, spreading his hands upon the ground, perked up[586] his bottom. His stepmother looked at him and marvelling much said in her mind, "Would Heaven I knew of this froward youth what may be his object!"[587] However he never looked at her nor ever turned towards her but he abode quiet in the posture he had chosen. She stared hard at him and at last could no longer refrain from asking him, "Wherefore dost thou on this wise?" He answered, "And why not? I am doing that shall benefit me in the future, but what that is I will never tell thee; no, never." She repeated her question again and again, and at last he replied, "I do thus when 'tis summer-tide and a something of caloric entereth my belly through my backside and when 'tis winter the same cometh forth and warmeth my body; and in the cool season I do the same and the frigoric cometh forth in the dog-days and keepeth me in heats like these, fresh and comfortable."[588] She asked, "An I do what thou doest, shall it be the same to me?" And he answered, "Aye." Herewith she came forward beside him and raised her raiment from her behind till the half of her below the waist was stark naked; — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Thirty-third Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the grass- widow came forward beside her stepson and raised her raiment from her behind until the half of her below the waist was stark naked; and she did even as her husband's son had done, and perked up her buttocks, leaning heavily upon her knees and elbows. Now when she acted on this wise the youth addressed her saying, "Thou canst not do it aright." "How so?" "Because the wind passing in through the postern passeth out through thy portal, thy solution of continuity." "Then how shall I do?" "Stopper thy slit wherethrough the air passeth." "How shall I stopper it?" "An thou stopper it not thy toil will be in vain." "Dost thou know how to stopper it?" "Indeed I do!" "Then rise up and stopper it." Hearing these words he arose, because indeed he greeded for her, and came up behind her as she rested upon her elbows and knees and hending in hand his prickle nailed it into her coynte and did manly devoir. And after having his will of her he said, "Thou hast now done thy best for me and thy belly is filled full of the warm breeze." On this wise he continued every day, enjoying the wife of his father for some time during his wayfare, till the traveller returned home, and on his entering the house the bride rose and greeted him and said, "Thou hast been absent overlong!"[589] The man sat with her awhile and presently asked of her case for that he was fearful of his son; so she answered, "I am hale and hearty!" "Did my son ask thee of aught?" "Nay, he asked me not, nor did he ever address me: withal, O Man, he hath admirable and excellent expedients and indeed he is deeply versed in natural philosophy." "What expedients and what natural philosophy?" "He tucketh up his dress and exposeth his backside to the breeze which now passeth into his belly and benefiteth him throughout the cold season, and in winter he doeth exactly what he did in summer with effect as beneficial. And I also have done as he did." Now when the husband heard these her words he knew that the youth had practised upon her and had enjoyed his desire of her; so he asked her, "And what was it thou diddest?" She answered, "I did even as he did. However the breeze would not at first enter into my belly for whatever passed through the back postern passed out of the front portal, and the youth said to me, 'Stopper up thy solution of continuity.' I asked him, 'Dost thou know how to stopper it?' and he answered, 'Indeed I do!' Then he arose and blocked it with his prickle; and every day I continued to do likewise and he to stopper up the peccant part with the wherewithal he hath." All this was said to the husband who listened with his head bowed groundwards; but presently he raised it and cried, “There is no Majesty and there is no might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great;” and suddenly as they were speaking on that subject the youth came in to them — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Thirty-fourth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be not sleeping, finish for us thy tale, that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting, and of deeds fair-seeming and worth celebrating, that the youth came in to his father and found his stepmother relating to him all they had done whilst he was away and the man said to him, “Wherefore, O youth, hast thou acted on such wise?” Said the son, “What harm have I done? I only dammed the waterway that the warm air might abide in her belly and comfort her in the cold season.” So the father knew that his son had played this trick in order to have his will of her. Hereat he flew into a fury[590] and forthright divorced her, giving her the contingent dowry; and she went her ways. Then the man said in his mind, “I shall never get the better of this boy until I marry two wives and ever keep them with each other, so that he may not cozen the twain.” Now after a couple of weeks he espoused a fair woman fairer than his former and during the next month he wived with a second and cohabited with the two brides. Then quoth the youth in his mind, “My papa hath wedded two perfect beauties and here am I abiding in single blessedness. By Allah, there is no help but that I play a prank upon both of them!” Then he fell to seeking a contrivance but he could not hit upon aught for that whenever he entered the house he found his two step-mothers sitting together and thus he could not avail to address either. But his father never fared forth from home or returned to it without warning his wives and saying, “Have a care of yourselves against that son of mine. He is a whoremonger and he hath made my life distraught, for whenever I take to myself a wife he serveth some sleight upon her; then he laugheth at her and so manageth that I must divorce her.” At such times the two wives would cry, “Walláhi, an he come near us and ask us of amorous mercy we will slap him with our slippers.” Still the man would insist, saying, “Be ye on your guard against him,” and they would reply, “We are ever on our guard.” Now one day the women said to him, “O man, our wheat is finished,” and said he, “Be ye watchful while I fare to the Bazar in our market- town which lieth hard by and fetch you the corn.” So he left them and made for the town, — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Thirty-fifth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worth celebrating, that when the father had gone forth and was making for the market-town, his son happened to meet him, and the two wives went up to the terrace wishing to see if their husband be gone or not. Now by the decree of the Decreer the man had in some carelessness forgotten his papooshes so he turned to the youth who was following him and said, “O my son, go back and bring me my shoes.” The women still stood looking, and the youth returned in mighty haste and hurry till he stood under the terrace, when he looked up and said, “My father hath just now charged me with a charge saying, ‘Do thou go sleep with my wives, the twain of them, and have each one of them once.’ They replied, “What, O dog, O accursed, thy father bespake thee on this wise? By Allah, indeed thou liest, O hog, O ill- omened wight.” “Wallahi,” he rejoined, “I lie not!” So he walked back till he was near his father when he shouted his loudest so as to be heard by both parties, “O my papa, O my papa, one of them or the two of them? One of them or the two of them?" The father shouted in reply, "The two, the two! Allah disappoint thee: did I say one of them or the two of them?" So the youth returned to his father's wives and cried, "Ye have heard what my papa said. I asked him within your hearing, 'One of them or the two of them?' and ye heard him say, 'Both, both.'" Now the man was speaking of his slippers, to wit, the pair; but the women understood that his saying, "the two of them" referred to his wives. So one turned to her sister spouse and said, "So it is,[591] our ears heard it and the youth hath in no wise lied: let him lie with me once and once with thee even as his father bade him." Both were satisfied herewith; but meanwhile the son stole quietly into the house and found his father's papooshes: then he caught him up on the road and gave them to him and the man went his ways. Presently the youth returned to the house and taking one of his father's wives lay with her and enjoyed her and she also had her joy of him; and when he had done all he wanted with her he fared forth from her to the second wife in her chamber and stretched himself beside her and toyed with her and futtered her. She saw in the son a something she had not seen in the sire, so she joyed in him and he joyed in her. Now when he had won his will of the twain and had left the house the women foregathered and began talking and saying, "By Allah, this youth hath given us both much amorous pleasure, far more than his father ever did; but when our husband shall return let us keep our secret even though he spake the words we heard: haply he may not brook too much of this thing." So as soon as the man came back with the wheat he asked the women saying, "What befel you?" and they answered, "O Man, art thou not ashamed to say to thy son, 'Go sleep with both thy father's wives?' 'Tis lucky that thou hast escaped." Quoth he, "Never said I aught of this"; and quoth they, "But we heard thee cry, 'The two of them.'" He rejoined, "Allah disappoint you: I forgot my papooshes and said to him, 'Go fetch them.' He cried out 'One of them or the two of them?' and I replied, 'The two of them,' meaning my shoes, not you." "And we," said they, "when he spake to us such words slippered him and turned him out and now he never cometh near us." "Right well have ye done," he rejoined, "'tis a fulsome fellow." This was their case; but as regards the youth, he fell to watching and dogging his father's path, and whenever the man left the house and went afar from it he would go in to the women who rejoiced in his coming. Then he would lie with one, and when he had won his will of her he would go to the sister-wife and tumble her. This lasted for some time, until the women said each to other, "What need when he cometh to us for each to receive him separately in her room? Let us both be in one chamber and when he visiteth us let us all three, we two and he, have mutual joyance and let him pass from one to the other." And they agreed to this condition, unknowing the decree of Allah which was preparing to punish the twain for their abandoned wantonness. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Thirty-sixth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be not sleeping, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the two women agreed to partnership in iniquity with the youth their stepson. Now on the next day the man went forth and left his house for some pressing occasion and his son followed him till he saw him far distant: then the youth repaired to the two wives and found them both in one chamber. So he asked them, "Why doth not each of you go to her own apartment?" and they answered, "What use is there in that? Let us all be together and take our joy, we and thou." So he lay between them and began to toy with them and tumble them; and roll over them and mount upon the bubbies of one and thence change seat to the other's breasts and while so doing all were plunged in the sea of enjoyment.[592] But they knew not what lurked for them in the hidden World of the Future. Presently, lo and behold! the father returned and entered the house when none of them expected him or was ware of him; and he heard their play even before he went into the chamber. Here he leant against a side-wall and privily viewed their proceedings and the lewd state they were in; and he allowed time to drag on and espied them at his ease, seeing his son mount the breasts of one woman and then shift seat to the bubbies of his other wife. After noting all this he fared quietly forth the house and sought the Wali complaining of the case; so the Chief of Police took horse and repaired with him to his home where, when the two went in, they found the three at the foulest play. The Wali arrested them one and all and carried them with elbows pinioned to his office. Here he made the youth over to the Linkman who struck his neck, and as for the two women he bade the executioner delay till nightfall and then take them and strangle them and hide their corpses underground. And lastly he commanded the public Crier go about all the city and cry:— "This be the award of high treason." And men also relate (continued Shahrazad) the

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

STORY OF THE TWO LACK-TACTS OF CAIRO AND DAMASCUS.[593]

Whilome in Cairo-city there was a man famed as a Lack-tact and another in Damascus was celebrated for the like quality. Each had heard of his compeer and longed to forgather with him and sundry folk said to the Syrian, "Verily the Lack-tact of Egypt is sharper than thou and a cleverer physiognomist and more intelligent, and more penetrating, and much better company; also he excelleth thee in debate proving the superiority of his lack of tact." Whereto the Damascene would reply, "No, by Allah, I am more tasteful in my lack of tact than yon Cairene;" but his people ceased not to bespeak him on this wise until his heart was filled full of their words; so one day of the days he cried, "By Allah, there is no help for it but I fare for Cairo and forgather with her Lack-tact." Hereupon he journeyed from Damascus and ceased not wayfaring till he reached Cairo. The time was about set of sun and the first who met him on the road was a woman; so he asked her concerning certain of the highways of the city and she answered, "What a Lack-tact thou must be to put such a question at such an hour! Whoso entereth a strange place in the morning enquireth about its highways, but whoso entereth at eventide asketh about its caravanserai[594] wherein he may night." "Sooth thou sayest," rejoined he, "but my lack of tact hath weakened my wits." He then sought news of the Khans and they showed him one whereto he repaired and passed the night; and in the morning — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Thirty-seventh Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-

guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Lack-tact of Damascus passed the night in the Wakálah and in the morning he went forth and wandered about the highways of Cairo questing her Lack-tact; and, when they informed him of his rival's whereabouts, he forgathered with him and was received with an honorable reception and was welcomed and kindly entreated and comfortably seated that the twain might talk over the news of the world. Presently quoth the Lack-tact of Damascus to the Lack-tact of Cairo, "I would that we two test each other's quality by playing a prank in turn; and whoso shall be preferred by the testimony of the general, he shall lord it over his rival." The Cairene asked, "Which of us shall begin?" and the Damascene answered, "I," whereto the other rejoined, "Do whatso thou willest." So the Syrian went forth and hired him an ass which he drove out of the city to a neighbouring clump of Ausaj-bushes[595] and other thorns whereof he cut down a donkey-load, and setting the net-full upon the beast's back returned to the city. He then made for the Báb al-Nasr,[596] but he could not enter for the crowding of the folk frequenting it and the Cairene was gladdened by his doings: so the man stinted not standing there with his ass and load of thorns till morn was near, when he lost his temper and urged his beast close up to the gate. By so doing all the garments of the wayfarers which were caught by the Ausaj-thorns were torn to rags and tatters, and some of the people beat him and others buffetted him and others shoved him about saying, "What a superior Lack-tact thou art! Allah ruin thy natal realm! Thou hast torn folk's dress to rags and tatters with that load of thorns." Still he drave his donkey onwards albeit the people cried to him, "O man, withdraw thee, the passengers are all jammed at the gate;" but he would not retire and those present dealt him more blows and abuse. Hereat he only cried, "Let me pass through!" and pushed on whereby he obtained a severer beating. This lasted till mid-afternoon, for he could on nowise enter by reason of the crush at the Báb al-Nasr; but about sundown the crowd thinned and so he drove on his ass and passed the gate. Then quoth to him the Cairene, "What is this thou hast done? This is mere horseplay[597] and not lack of tact." Now on the morning of the next day the Lack-tact of Cairo was required to play his prank even as the

Damascene had done; so he rose up and girded his loins and tucked up his sleeves and took up a tray — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Thirty-eighth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be not sleeping, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Egyptian rose up and girded his loins and tucked up his sleeves, and taking him a tray said to the Syrian, “Up and after me and see what I shall do.” Then he went out tray on head, and foregoing the Damascene to a flower-garden he gathered a bundle of blooms and sweet-scented herbs, pinks and roses and basil and pennyroyal[598] and marjoram and other such, until the tray was filled, after which he turned to town. About noontide he repaired to one of the Cathedral-mosques and entered the lavatory,[599] around which were some fifteen privies:[600] so he stood amiddlemost the floor considering the folk as they entered the jakes to do their jobs in private lest the bazar-people come upon them during their easement. And all were sore pressed wanting to pass urine or to skite; so whenever a man entered the place in a hurry he would draw the door to. Then the Lack-tact of Cairo would pull the door open, and go in to him carrying a posy of perfumed herbs, and would say, “Thy favour![601] O my brother,” and the man would shout out saying, “Allah ruin thy natal realm, are we at skite or at feast?” whereat all standing there would laugh at him. Suddenly one rushed into the lavatory sore pressed and hanging an arse[602] and crying aloud in his grievous distress, “O Allah, O His Prophet, aid me!” for that he feared to let fly in his bag-trousers. Then the Lack-tact would accost him holding in hand his posy of perfumed herbs, and softly saying, “Bismillah-take it, and give me thy favour;” and the man would roar at the top of his voice, "Allah disappoint thee! what a Lack-tact thou art: I am sore pressed; get thee out." And the further that man would fare away from him the closer he would follow him saying, "Thy favour! Take it! Smell it!" Now at that time all the cabinets of easement were full of people, nor did one remain vacant, and the distressed man stood there expecting someone to issue that he might enter; but in his condition the delay was over-long — And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Cairene Lack-tact kept bespeaking that sorely distressed man and following him as he fled, crying out to him and saying, "Away from me, am I not this moment about to skite or am I at a feast?" till at last the excess of weight in his arse-gut caused him to let fly in his bag-trousers and bewray all his behind. And during this time none came out of the jakes, so the unhappy sat in his unease and all the folk seeing him conskite himself fell to laughing at him as he sat there, and the Lack-tact of Cairo continued offering him the posy, saying, "Thy favour!" and the other continned shouting his loudest, "Am I at skite or at a feast?" Thereupon the Lack-tact of Damascus turned to his rival and cried, "The Fátihah[603] is in thy books, O Chief Joker of Cairo. By Allah (and the Almighty grant thee length of life!) thou hast excelled me in everything, and they truly say that none can surpass or overcome the Cairene and men have agreed to declare that the Syrian winneth his wish and gaineth only blame, while the Egyptian winneth not his wish and gaineth thanks and praise." And amongst other things it happened[604] that a Cairene went to borrow a donkey from another man, a Damascene, wishing to ride it to a wedding, and when he met his friend he saluted him and said, “Ho Such-an-one, lend me thine ass for such a purpose.” Now when the owner of the animal heard these words he smote hand upon hand and cried, “O worshipper of Allah,[605] a little while ere thou camest to me, a man urgently asked it of me and took it on loan: haddest thou been somewhat earlier I would have lent it to thee. Verily I am put to shame by thee as thou goest from me without thy need.” The Egyptian said in his mind, “By Allah, this one speaketh sooth, and had the donkey been in his house assuredly he would have lent it to me.” But the owner of the animal said to himself, “Certainly Such-an-one begged it of me, but the rest is a lie, for the beast is shut up in the stable.” However the Syrian who owned the beast went to his gossip, the man who had begged a loan of it, and entering the house salam’d to him and said, “Give me the donkey, O Such-an-one;” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was

The Eight Hundred and Fortieth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the Syrian went to his gossip saying, “Give me the ass;” and when the other heard this he showed his teeth[606] and cried, “Allah disappoint the donkey and the owner of the donkey and whoso rideth the donkey,” and flying into an exceeding fury at last said, “Go, O my lord, and take it from the stable, and may Allah never bring back nor thee nor the beast.” So the Syrian went from him saying in himself, “Allah disappoint this fellow, why did he not give me the ass at first and then he had not had occasion to abuse and curse himself and to revile me also.” But they say and say truly, “The Syrian winneth his wish, but gaineth only blame while the Egyptian winneth not his wish and gaineth thanks and praise!"

Tale of Himself Told by the King[607]

I have a tale, O my lord the Kazi, which bewildereth the wits and it is on this wise. By birth and origin I was the son of a Khwájah, but my father owned much worldly wealth in money and effect and vaiselle and rarities and so forth, besides of landed estates and of fiefs and mortmains a store galore. And every year when the ships of Al-Hind would arrive bringing Indian goods and coffee from Al-Yaman the folk bought thereof one-fourth of the whole and he three-fourths paying in ready cash and hard money.[608] So his word was heard and his works were preferred amongst the Traders and the Grandees and the Rulers. Also he had controul[609] in counselling the Kings and he was held in awe and obeyed by the merchants, one and all, who consulted him in each and every of their affairs. This endured until one year of the years when suddenly he fell sick and his sickness grew upon him and gained mastery over his frame, so he sent for me, saying, "Bring me my son." Accordingly I went and entered to him and found him changed of condition and nearing his last gasp. But he turned to me and said, "O my son, I charge thee with a charge which do thou not transgress nor contrary me in whatso I shall declare to thee." "What may that be?" asked I, and he answered, "O my son, do thou never make oath in Allah's name, or falsely or truly, even although they fill the world for thee with wealth; but safeguard thy soul in this matter and gainsay it not, nor give ear to aught other." But when it was midnight the Divine Mystery[610] left him and he died to the mercy of Allah Almighty; so I buried him, expending much money upon his funeral and graved him in a handsome tomb. He had left to me wealth in abundance such as the pens could not compute, but when a month or so had sped after his decease suddenly came to me a party of folk, each and every claming by way of debt from me and my sire the sum of some five thousand dinars. "Where be your written bond given by my father?" asked I; but they answered, "There be no instrument and if thou believe us not make oath by Allah." Replied I saying, "Never will I swear at all," and paid them whatso they demanded; after which all who feared not the Lord would come to me and say, "We have such-

and-such owing to us by thy parent;" and I would pay them off until there remained to me of ready moneys a matter neither great nor small. Hereupon I fell to selling off my landed estates — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Nine Hundred and Twelfth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the King thus continued his relation to the Kazi: — I began selling off my landed estates and fiefs and letting out my settlements of bequeathal[611] until naught of all that remained by me; so I fell to vending the house-gear and goods and carpets and pots and pans until I owned nothing whatever, and my case waxed straitened and the affair was grievous to me. Then I quoth to myself, "Allah's earth for Allah's folk!" and, albeit I had a wife and two male children, I left them and went forth under cover of the night a wanderer about the world and unknowing where I should bring myself to anchor. But suddenly O my lord the Kazi, I was confronted by a man whose aspect bred awe, showing signs of saintliness and garbed wholly in spotless white; so I accosted him and kissed his hand, and he on seeing me said, "O my son, there is no harm to thee!" presently adding,

"Do thou be heedless of thy cark and care * And unto Fate commit
thy whole affair;
The Lord shall widen what to thee is strait; * The Lord shall all
for breadth of space prepare:
The Lord shall gladly end thy grievous toils; * The Lord shall
work His will, so jar forbear."

After these words he took my hand and walked with me athwart those wilds and wolds till such time as we made a city and entered its gates. Here, however, we found no signs of creature-kind nor any mark of Son of Adam, and when I sighted this my condition changed and fear and affright entered my heart. But presently the man turned to me and said, “Dread not nor be startled, for that this city shall (Inshallah!) be thy portion, and herein thou shalt become Sovran and Sultan.” Quoth I to myself, “Walláhi, verily this man be Jinn-mad lacking wit and understanding! How shall become King and Kaysar in such place which is all ruins?” Then he turned to me yet another time, saying, “Trust in Allah and gainsay Him not; for verily shall come to thee joy out of that wherein thou wast of straitness and annoy.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!” Quoth she, “And where is this compared with that I would relate an the Sovran suffer me to survive?” Now when it was the next night and that was,

The Nine Hundred and Thirteenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, “Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that quoth the man to the youth[612] , “Trust in Allah, for verily joy shall assuredly come to thee from the Almighty.” “What joy?” quoth the Khwajah’s son, “and indeed this city is a ruinous heap nor is there indweller or habitant or any to attest God’s Unity.” But the man ceased not going about the highways of the deserted town with his companion till such time as he reached the Palace of the Sultanate, and the twain entering therein found it with its vases and its tapestry like a bride tricked out[613] . But the Spider had tented therein, so both the wights fell to shaking and sweeping for three days’ space till they had cleaned away all the webbing and dust of years; after which the elder man took the younger and entered a closet. Herein he came upon a trap-door which the two uplifted, when behold, they found a staircase leading below;

so they descended and walked till they ended at a place with four open halls, one and all fulfilled with gold, and amiddlemost thereof rose a jetting fount twenty ells long by fifteen broad, and the whole basin was heaped up with glittering gems and precious ores. When the merchant's son saw this sight, he was wildered on his wits and perplext in his thoughts, but the man said to him, "O my son, all this hath become thine own good." After this the two replaced the trap-door as it was and quitted that place; then the man took him and led him to another stead concealed from the ken of man wherein he found arms and armour and costly raiment; and the two stinted not wandering about the palace until they reached the royal Throne-room. Now when the Khwajah's son looked upon it he waxed distraught and fell a-fainting to the floor for awhile[614] and presently when he revived he asked his companion, "O my lord, what be this?" Answered he, "This be the throne of the Sultanate wherewith the Almighty hath gifted thee;" and quoth the other, "By Allah, O my lord, I believe that there is not in me or strength or long-suffering to take seat upon yonder throne." All this the King (who erst was a merchant's son) recounted to the Judge and presently resumed:[615] — Then the man, O my lord, said to me, "O my son, to all who shall come hither and seek thee be sure thou distribute gifts and do alms-deeds; so the folk, hearing of thy largesse, shall flock to thee and gather about thee and as often as one shall visit thee, exceed in honour and presents from the treasure-store thou hast sighted and whose site thou weetest." And so speaking, O our lord the Kazi, he vanished from my view and I wist not an he had upflown to the firmament or had dived into the depths of the earth, but one thing I knew; to wit, that I was alone. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Nine Hundred and Fourteenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!” She replied, “With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the merchant’s son resumed to the Kazi: — Then the man vanisht from my view and I wist no more thereof. So I seated me (and I was all alone) in that city for the first day and the second, but on the third behold, I saw a crowd making for me from the city-suburbs and they were seeking a site wherefrom they had somewhat to require. So I met them and welcomed them and seated them, and soon I arose and cooking for them food ate in their company and we nighted together; and when it was morning I presented each and every of them with an hundred dinars. These they accepted and fared forth from me and on reaching their homes they recounted the adventure to other folk who also flocked to me and received presents like those who preceded them. Anon appeared to me a multitude with their children and wives who said, “Billáhi,[616] O my lord, accept of us that we may settle beside thee and be under thy protecting glance;” whereupon I ordered houses be given to them. Moreover there was amongst them a comely youth who showed signs of prosperity and him I made my assessor; so we two, I and he, would converse together. The crowd thickened, little by little, until the whilome ruined city became fulfilled of habitants, when I commanded sundry of them that they go forth and lay out gardens and orchards and plant tree-growths; and a full-told year had not elapsed ere the city returned to its older estate and waxed great as erst it was and I became therein Sovran and Sultan. Such was the case of this King;[617] but as regards the matter of his wife and his two sons, whenas he fared forth from them he left them naught to eat and presently their case was straitened and the twain set out, each in his own direction, and overwandered the world and endured the buffets of life until their semblance was changed for stress of toil and travail and transit from region to region for a while of time. At last, by decree of the Decreer, the elder was thrown by Eternal Fate into the very town wherein was his sire and said to himself, “I will fare to the King of this city and take from him somewhat.” — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, “How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the King suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Nine Hundred and Fifteenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the young man went in to the Sultan and kissed the ground before him and the King regarding him felt his heart yearn himwards and said, "What wantest thou, O youth?" "My design is service with thee," said the other; and the King rejoined, "Then welcome to thee!" So he abode in his employ for a term of four months until he became like unto a Mameluke[618] and his first case was changed: the Sultan also drew him near and fell to consulting him in sundry matters the which proved propitious, so quoth the King, "By Allah, this young man meriteth naught less than to become my Wazir," and accordingly made him his Minister of the Right. In his new degree he became as another liege lord[619] and his word was heard, so the land was opened up by his hand and year by year he derived from it corvées and taxes, nor did he cease to be Chief Councillor under the right hand of the King. Meanwhile his brother who was the younger stinted not faring from land to land until he was met by a party of wayfarers that said to him, "O youth, verily the Sultan who ruleth in such a capital is a liberal lord, loving the poor and paupers; so do thou seek him and haply shall he show himself bounteous to thee." Quoth he, "I know not the city," and quoth they, "We will lead thee thereto for we purpose to go by his town." So they took him and he accompanied them until they reached the city when he farewelled them and entered the gates. After solacing himself with the sights he passed that night in the Wakálah and as soon as it was morning he fared forth to serve for somewhat wherewith he might nourish himself,[620] and it was his lot and the doom of the

Decreer that the Sultan, who had ridden forth to seek his pleasure in the gardens, met him on the highway. The King's glance fell upon the youth and he was certified of his being a stranger and a wanderer for that his clothes were old and worn, so he thrust his hand into pouch and passed to him a few gold pieces which the other accepted right thankfully and blessed the giver and enlarged his benediction with eloquent tongue and the sweetest speech. The Sultan hearing this bade them bring to him the stranger, and whenas they did his bidding he questioned him of his case and was informed that he was a foreigner who had no friends in that stead; whereupon the Sovran took him in and clothed him and entreated him with kindness and liberality[621] . And after a time the Wazir of the Right became kindly hearted unto him and took him into his household where he fell to teaching him until the youth waxed experienced in expression and right ready of the reply and acquired full knowledge of kingcraft. Presently quoth the Minister to the Sultan, "o King of the Age, indeed this youth befitteth naught save councillorship, so do thou make him Wazir of the Left." The

King said, "With love," and followed his advice; nor was it long before his heart inclined to the hearts of his two Ministers and the time waxed clear to him and the coming of these two youths brought him serenity for a length of days and they also were in the most joyous of life. But as regards their mother; when her sons went forth from her, she abode alone — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased to say her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet is thy story, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Nine Hundred and Sixteenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!” It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the woman who abode alone having been abandoned by her husband and her children, cried, “I am here sitting sans my mate and sans my sons; whatso shall I ever do?” and anon the case became grievous to her and she set out to bewander the regions saying, “Haply shall Allah reunite me with my children and my husband!” And she stinted not passing from place to place and shifting from site to site until she reached a town upon the margin of the main and found a vessel in cargo and about to sail.[622] Now by the decree of the Decreer the ship-captain having heard tell of the Sultan’s generosity and open handedness had made ready for him a present and was about to voyage therewith to his capital. Learning this the woman said to him, “Allah upon thee, O Captain, take me with thee;” and he did accordingly, setting sail with a fair wind. He sped over the billows of that sea for a space of forty days and throughout this time he kept all the precepts and commandments of religion, as regards the woman,[623] supplying her with meat and drink; nay more, he was wont to address her, “O my mother.” And no sooner had they made the city than he landed and disembarked the present and loading it upon porters’ backs took his way therewith to the Sovran and continues faring until he entered the presence. The Sultan accepted the gift and largessed him in return, and at even-tide the skipper craved leave of return to his ship fearing lest any harm befal vessel or passengers. So he said, “O King of the Age, on board with me is a woman, but she is of goodly folk and godly and I am apprehensive concerning her.” “Do thou night here with us,” quoth the Sovran, “and I will dispatch my two Wazirs to keep guard over her until dawn shall break.” Quoth the Captain, “Hearing and obeying,” and he sat with the Sultan, who at night-fall commissioned his two Ministers and placed the vessel under their charge and said, “Look ye well to your lives, for an aught be lost from the ship I will cut off your heads,” So they went down to her and took their seats the one on poop and the other on prow until near midnight when both were seized by drowsiness; and said each to other, “Sleep is upon us, let us sit together[624] and talk.”

Hereupon he who was afore returned to him who was abaft the ship[625] and they sat side by side in converse, while the woman in the cabin sat listening to them. — And Shahrazad was surprised by the dawn of day and fell silent and ceased saying her permitted say. Then quoth her sister Dunyazad, "How sweet and tasteful is thy tale, O sister mine, and how enjoyable and delectable!" Quoth she, "And where is this compared with that I would relate to you on the coming night an the Sovran suffer me to survive?" Now when it was the next night and that was

The Nine Hundred and Seventeenth Night,

Dunyazad said to her, "Allah upon thee, O my sister, an thou be other than sleepy, finish for us thy tale that we may cut short the watching of this our latter night!" She replied, "With love and good will!" It hath reached me, O auspicious King, the director, the right-guiding, lord of the rede which is benefiting and of deeds fair-seeming and worthy celebrating, that the two sons forgathered in converse while the mother was listening and anon quoth the elder to the younger, "Allah upon thee, O Wazir of the Left, do thou relate to me whatso befel and betided thee in thy time and what was the true cause of thy coming to this city; nor conceal from me aught." "By Allah, O Wazir of the Right," quoth the other, "my tale is wondrous and mine adventure marvellous and were it paged upon paper the folk would talk thereanent race after race."[626] "And what may that be?" asked he, and the other answered, "'Tis this. My sire was son to a mighty merchant who had of moneys and goods and estates and such like what pens may not compute and which intelligence may not comprehend. Now this my grandsire was a man whose word was law and every day he held a Divan wherein the traders craved his counsel about taking and giving and selling and buying; and this endured until what while a sickness attacked him and he sensed his end drawing near. So he summoned his son and charged him and insisted thereon as his last will and testament that he never and by no means make oath in the name of Allah or truly or falsely." Now the younger brother had not ended his adventure before the elder Wazir threw himself upon him and flinging his arms around his neck cried, "Walláhi, thou art my brother by father and mother!" and when the woman heard these words of the twain her wits wandered for joy, but she kept the matter hidden until morning. The two Wazirs rejoiced in having found each of them a long-lost brother and slumber fled their eyes till dawned the day when the woman sent for the Captain and as soon as he appeared said to him, "Thou broughtest two men to protect me but they caused me only trouble and travail." The man hearing these words repaired forthright and reported them to the Sovran who waxed madly wroth and bade summon his two Ministers and when they stood between his hands asked them, "What was't ye did in the ship?" They answered, "By Allah, O King, there befel us naught but every weal;" and each said, "I recognised this my brother for indeed he is the son of the same parents," whereat the Sovran wondered and quoth he, "Laud to the Lord, indeed these two Wazirs must have a strange story." So he made them repeat whatso they had said in the ship and they related to him their adventure from the beginning to end. Hereupon the King cried, "By Allah, ye be certainly my sons," when lo and behold! the woman came forwards and repeated to him all that the Wazirs had related whereby it was certified that she was the King's lost wife and their lost mother.[627] Hereupon they conducted her to the Harem and all sat down to banquet and they led ever after the most joyous of lives. All this the King related to the Judge and finally said, "O our lord the Kazi, such-and-such and so-and-so befel until Allah deigned re-unite me with my children and my wife."

End of Volume XV.

Appendix I.

CATALOGUE OF WORTLEY MONTAGUE MANUSCRIPT CONTENTS.

I here proceed to offer a list of the tales in the Wortley Montague MS. (Nos. 550-556), beginning with

VOL. I.,

which contains 472 pages=92 Nights. It is rudely written, with great carelessness and frequent corrections, and there is a noted improvement in the subsequent vols. which Scott would attribute to another transcriber. This, however, I doubt: in vol. i. the scribe does not seem to have settled down to his work. The MS. begins abruptly and without caligraphic decoration; nor is there any red ink in vol. i. except for the terminal three words. The topothesia is in the land of Sásán, in the Isles of Al-Hind and Al-Sind; the elder King being called "Báz" and "Shár-báz" and the younger "Kahramán" (, ll. 5-6), and in the same page (l. 10) "Saharbán, King of Samarkand"; while the Wazir's daughters are "Shahrzádah" and "Dunyázádah" (). The Introduction is like that of the Mac. Edit. (my text); but the dialogue between the Wazir and his Daughter is shortened, and the "Tale of the Merchant and his Wife," including "The Bull and the Ass," is omitted. Of novelties we find few. When speaking of the Queen and Mas'úd the Negro (called Sa'id in my text,) the author remarks: —

Take no black to lover; pure musk tho' he be * Carrion-taint shall pierce to the nose of thee.

And in the "Tale of the Trader and the Jinni " (MS. 1, 9: see my transl. 1, 25) the 'Ifrit complains that the Merchant had thrown the date-stones without exclaiming "Dastúr!" — by thy leave.

The following is a list of the Tales in vol. i.: —

	PAGE
Introductory Chapter	1-9
Tale of the Trader and the Jinni, Night i.-ii.	9
The First Shaykh's Story, Night ii.	14
The Second Shaykh's Story, Night ii.	23
The Third Shaykh's Story, Night iv..	34

Scott, following "Oriental Collections," ii. 34, supposes that the latter was omitted by M. Galland "on account of its indecency, it being a very free detail of the amours of an unfaithful wife." The true cause was that it did not exist in Galland's Copy of The Nights (Zotenberg, Histoire d' 'Ala al-Din,). Scott adds, "In this copy the Genie restores the Antelope, the Dogs and the Mule to their pristine forms, which is not mentioned by Galland, on their swearing to lead virtuous lives."

PAGE
Conclusion of the Trader and the Jinni, Night v. 43
The Fisherman and the Jinni, including the Tales of the Sage Dúbán and the ensorcelled Prince
and omitting the Stories (1) of King Sindibád and his Falcon (2) the Husband and the Parrot and (3) the Prince and the Ogress.. 44
The Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdad, Night v. 100
The First Kalandar’s Tale, Night xxxix.. 144
The Second Kalandar’s Tale, Night xlviii.. 152

(The beginning of this Tale is wanting in the MS. which omits : also The Envier and the Envied, admitted into the list of Hikáyát, is here absent.)

The Third Kalandar’s Tale, Night lv. 173
The Eldest Lady’s Tale. Night lxvi.. 231
Tale of the Portress. Conclusion of the Story of the Porter and Three Ladies of Baghdad,
Night lxii. (a clerical mistake for lxx.?). 260

(In Galland follow the Voyages of Sindbad the Seaman which are not found in this copy.)

The Tailor and the Hunchback, Night lxviii. (for lxxiv.?). . .295
The Nazarene Broker’s Story, Night lxviii. (for lxxiv.?) . . .308
The Youth whose hand was cut off, Night (?)[628] 312

(In is a hiatus not accounting for the loss of hand.)

The Barber’s Tale of his First Brother 314
The Barber’s Tale of his Second Brother. 317
The Barber’s Tale of his Third Brother 323
The Barber’s Tale of his Fourth Brother. 327
The Barber’s Tale of his Fifth Brother 331
The Barber’s Tale of his Sixth Brother 343
The end of the Tale of the Hunchback, the Barber and others, Night lxviii.(?) 350

(Here Ends My Vol. I.)

Núr al-Dín Alí and the Damsel Anis al-Jalís, Night lxviii. . .355
Sayf al-Mulúk and Badí’a al-Jamal, Night xci.[629] 401
Tale of the Youth of Mosul whose hand was cut off, Night xcii466-472

(The Tale of the Jewish Doctor in my vol. i. 288-300.)

Vol. i. ends with a page of scrawls, the work of some by-gone owner.

VOL. II.

Contains 316 pages, and includes end of Night xcii. to Night clxvi. The MS. is somewhat better written; the headings are in red ink and the verses are duly divided. The whole volume is taken up by the Tale of Kamar al-Zamán (1st), with the episodes of Al-Amjad and Al-As’ad, but lacking that of Ni’amah and Naomi. In Galland Kamar al-Zaman begins with Night ccxi.: in my translation with vol. iii. 212 and concludes in vol. iv. 29. This 2nd vol. (called in colophon the 4th Juz) ends with the date 20th Sha’abán, A.H. 1177.

VOL. III.

Contains 456 pages, extending from Night cccvi. (instead of Night clxvii.) to cdxxv. and thus leaving an initial hiatus of 140 Nights (cxvi.-cccvi. C. de Perceval, vol. viii.). Thus the third of the original eight volumes is lost. On this subject Dr. White wrote to Scott, “One or two bundles of Arabic manuscript, of the same size and handwriting as the second volume of the Arabian Tales, were purchased at the sale by an agent for Mr. Beckford of Fonthill, and I have no doubt whatever but that the part deficient in your copy is to be found in his possession.” If such be the case, and everything seems to prove it, this volume was not No. iii. but No. iv. The MS. begins abruptly with the continuation of the tale. There is no list of contents, and at the end are two unimportant “copies of verses” addressed to the reader, five couplets rhyming inÂímu (e.g. ta’dimu) and two in — af (e.g. Salaf).

The following is a list of the contents: —

PAGE
Part of the Tale of Hasan of Bassorah, Nights cccvi.-cccxxix 1-81
Story of the Sultan of Al-Yaman[630] and his Sons, told to Al-Rashíd by Hasan of Bassorah,
Nights cccxxix.-cccxxxiv. 81
Story of the Three Sharpers,[631] Nights cccxxxiv.-cccxlii. 96
The Sultan who fared forth in the habit of a Darwaysh, Night cccxlii. 121
History of Mohammed, Sultan of Cairo, Night cccxliii.-cccxlviii124
Story of the First Lunatic,[632] Night cccxlviii.-ccclv . .141
Story of the Second Lunatic, Night ccclv.-ccclvii. 168
Story of the Sage and his Scholar, Night ccclvii.-ccclxii. . .179
Night-Adventure of Sultan Mohammed of Cairo with three foolish Schoolmasters,
Night ccclxii 204
Tale of the Mother and her Three Daughters, Night ccclxii. . .206
Story of the broke-back Schoolmaster, Night ccclxiii 211
Story of the Split-mouthed Schoolmaster, Night ccclxiii. . . .214
Story of the limping Schoolmaster, Night ccclxiv.-ccclxv . . 219
Story of the three Sisters and their Mother the Sultánah, Night ccclxvi.-ccclxxxvi 231
History of the Kází who bare a babe, Night ccclxxxvi.-cccxcii.322
Tale of the Kází and the Bhang-eater, Night cccxciii.-cdiii. .344
History of the Bhang-eater and his wife, Night cccxciii.-cdiii348
How Drummer Abú Kásim became a Kází, Night cdiii.-cdxii. . . .372
Story of the Kazi and his Slipper (including the Tale of the Bhang-eater who became the Just
Wazir and who decided two difficult cases), Night cdxii.-cdxiii. 424
Tale of Mahmúd the Persian and the Kurd Sharper, Night cdxiii.-cdxvi 428
Tale of the Sultan and the poor man who brought to him fruit, including the
Fruit-seller's[633] Tale, Night cdxvi.-cdxxv. 432
Story of the King of Al-Yaman and his Three Sons and the

Enchanting Bird, which ends this
volume, Night cdxvii-cdxxvi. 437

VOL. IV.

PAGE

Contains 456 pages, and ranges between Nights cdxxvi. and dxcvi.

Continuation of the Story of the King of Al-Yaman[634] and his Three Sons and the
Enchanting Bird, Night cdxxvi.-cdxxxix 1-34

SCOTT prefers "The Sultan of the East," etc.
History of the First Larrikin, Night cdxxxix-cdxliv. 34
SCOTT: "The first Sharper in the Cave," .

History of the Second Larrikin, Night cdxliii.-cdxlv 46
History of the Third Larrikin, Night cdxlv.-cdxlvi 53
Story of a Sultan of Hind and his Son Mohammed, Night cdxlvi.-cdlviii. 58

SCOTT: "The Sultan of Hind."
Tale of a Fisherman and his Son, Night cdlix.-cdlxix 83
Tale of the Third Larrikin concerning himself, Night cdlxix.-cdlxxii. 107
SCOTT: "The Unfortunate Lovers."

History of Abú Niyyah and Abú Niyyatayn, Night cdlxxii.-cdlxxxiii 113

SCOTT: "Abou Neeut, the well-intentioned Sultan of Moussul, and Ab ou Neeutteen, the double-minded."

The Courtier's Story, or Tale of the Nadim to the Emir of Cairo, Night cdlxxxiii.-cdxci .140

SCOTT: "Story related to an Ameer of Egypt by a Courtier,"
.

Another relation of the Courtier, Night cdxci. 157

(Here Iblis took the place of a musician.)

The Shaykh with Beard shorn by the Shaytan, Night cdxcii . . .162

History of the King's Son of Sind and the Lady Fatimah, Night cdxci.-di. 165

SCOTT: "The Sultan of Sind and Fatimah, daughter of Ummir[635] ('Ámir) Ibn Naománn (Nu'uman)."

History of the Lovers of Syria, Night di.-dx 189

SCOTT: "The Lovers of Syria."

History of Al-Hajjaj bin Yusuf and the Young Sayyid, Night dx-dxx 213

SCOTT: "The Young Sayd and Hijauje."

Uns al-Wujúd and the Wazir's Daughter Rose-in-hood, Night dxxi.-dxli 240

SCOTT: "Ins al-Wujood and Wird al-Ikmaum, daughter of Ibrahim, Vizier of Sultan Shamikh."

Story of the Sultan's Son and Daughter of the Wazir, Night dxli.-dxlv 293

Tale of Sultan Káyyish, Night dxlv.-dlvii. 312

(A romance of chivalry and impossible contests of ten knights against 15,000 men.)

The Young Lady transformed into a Gazelle by her Step-mother, Night dlviii.-dlxiii 345

The History of Mázin, Night dlxviii-dxcv. (omitted, because it is the same as "Hasan of Bassorah and the King's Daughter of the Jinn," vol. viii. 7); to the end of vol. iv 456

VOL. V.

PAGE

Contains 465 pages from the beginning of Night dxcvi. to dccxlvi.

Continuation and end of the History of Mazin, Night dxcvi-dcxxiv1-94
Night adventure of Harun al-Rashid, Night dcxxxxv.-dcl 95

SCOTT: "Adventure of Haroon al-Rusheed, vol. vi. 343 (including Story related to Haroon al-Rusheed) by Ibn Munsoor of Damascus, of his adventures at Bussorah; the Story related to Haroon al-Rusheed by Munjaub (Manjab) and Haroon's conduct on hearing the story of Munjaub."

Tale of the Barber and his Son (told by Manjab), Night dlxi.-dcli 180

SCOTT: "Story of the Sultan, the Dervishe and the Barber's Son."

The Badawi Woman and her Lover, Night dclv.-dclvi. 196
Story of the Wife and her two Gallants, Night dclvi.-dclx. . .199
Tale of Princess Al-Hayfá and Prince Yusuf, Night dclx.-dccx .210

SCOTT: "Story of Aleefah, daughter of Mherejaun, Sultan of Hind, and Eusuff, Prince of Sind, related to Haroun al-Rusheed by the celebrated reciter of Tales, Ibn Malook Aleed Iowaudee," .

Adventures of the Three Princes of China, Night dccx.-dccxvii.362
SCOTT: "Adventures of the Three Princes, sons of the Sultan of China."
History of the first Brave, Night dccxvii.-dccxxii 385

SCOTT: "The Military Braggadocio;" OUSELEY, "the Gallant Officer" and the Lat. list "Miles Gloriosus."

History of another Brave, Night dccxxii.-dccxxiii. . . . . . .395 The Merry Adventures of a Simpleton,[636] Night dccxxiii.-dccxxvi. 400
SCOTT: "The Idiot and his Asses."

The Goodwife of Cairo and the three Rakehells, Night dccxxvi.-dccxxviii . . . . .409 Story of the righteous Wazir wrongfully gaoled, Night dccxxviii.-dccxxxviii. . . . . .416 Tale of the Barber, the Captain and the Cairene Youth, Night dccxxxiii.-dcxxxvii. 430

(In the Lat. list we find “Tonsor et Juvenis Cahirensis.”)

Story of the Goodwife of Cairo and her Gallants, Night dccxxxviii.-dccxliii 444

SCOTT: “The virtuous Woman of Cairo and her Suitors,” p. 380.

The Kazi’s Tale of the Tailor, the Lady and the Captain,[637] Night dccxlii.-dccxlvi .455

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SCOTT: “The Deformed Jester.”

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The Merchant’s Daughter and the Prince of Al-Irák, Night dccclxv.-dcccxxiv. 118

SCOTT: “Story of the Merchant, his Daughter, and the Prince of Eerauk,” . In the text we find ‘Irák for Al-Irák.

The Story of Ahmad and Ali who cuckolded their Masters, Night dcccxxiv.-dcccxxix 225

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The Fellah and his fair Wife, Night dcccxxix.-dcccxxx. 241

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SCOTT: “The two wits of Cairo and Sind.”

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This MS. terminates The Nights with the last tale and has no especial conclusion relating the marriage of the two brother Kings with the two sisters.

Appendix II.

I. — NOTES ON THE STORIES CONTAINED IN VOLUME XIV.[640]

By W. F. Kirby.

Story of the Sultan of Al-yaman and His Three Sons.

P. 9. — The hippopotamus has also been observed, at the

Zoological Gardens, to scatter his dung in the manner described.

P. 13. — It is evident from the importance which the author attaches to good birth and heredity, that he would hardly approve of the Socialistic custom, so prevalent in the East, of raising men of low birth to important offices of State.

The Story of the Three Sharpers (p-35).

P. 19. — In quoting the titles of this and other tales of the Wortley Montague MS., in which the word Ja'ídí frequently occurs, Scott often wrote "labourer" or "artisan" instead of "sharper." The term "sharper" is hardly applicable here, for the fellows appear really to have possessed the knowledge to which they laid claim. The "sharpers" in this story differ much from such impostors as the Illiterate Schoolmaster (No. 93, vol. v. p-121), who escapes from his dilemma by his ready wit, or from European pretenders of the type of Grimm's Dr. Knowall, who escapes from his difficulties by mere accident; or again from our old friend Ma'aruf (No. 169), whose impudent pretensions and impostures are aided by astounding good luck.

P. 23. — This test was similar to that given to Ma'aruf (vol. x. p,17), but there is nothing in the latter passage to show whether Ma'aruf had any real knowledge of gems, or not. In the present story, the incident of the worm recalls the well-known incident of Solomon ordering worms to pierce gems for Bilkees, the Queen of Sheba.

P. 23. — English schoolboys sometimes play the "trussing game." Two boys have their wrists and ankles tied together, and their arms are passed over their knees, and a stick thrust over the arms and under the knees, and they are then placed opposite each other on the ground, and endeavour to turn each other over with their toes.

P. 25 note. — Can the word Kashmar be a corruption of Kashmiri?

History of Mohammed, Sultan of Cairo (p-49).

P. 37. — A few years ago, a travelling menagerie exhibited a pair of dog-faced baboons in Dublin as "two monstrous gorillas!"

P. 40. — Ma'aruf's jewel has been already referred to. The present incident more resembles the demand made by the king and the wazir from Aladdin and his mother, though that was far more extravagant.

P, 43. — A more terrible form of these wedding disillusions, is when the bridegroom is entrapped into marriage by an evil magician, and wakes in the morning to find the phantom of a murdered body in the place of his phantom bride, and to be immediately charged with the crime. Compare the story of Naerdan and Guzulbec (Caylus' Oriental Tales; Weber, ii. p-637) and that of Monia Emin (Gibb's Story of Jewad, p, 75). Compare my Appendix, Nights, x. p, 508, 509.

P, 45. — There is a Western story (one of the latest versions of which may be found in Moore's Juvenile Poems under the title of "The Ring") in which a bridegroom on his wedding-day places the ring by accident on the finger of a statue of Venus; the finger closes on it, and Venus afterwards interposes continually between him and his bride, claiming him as her husband on the strength of the ring. The unfortunate husband applies to a magician, who sends him by night to a meeting of cross-roads, where a procession similar to that described in the text passes by. He presents the magician's letters to the King (the devil in the medićval versions of the story) who requires Venus to surrender the ring, and with it her claim to the husband.

One of the most curious stories of these royal processions is perhaps the Lithuanian (or rather Samoghitian) story of

The King of the Rats.[641]

Once upon a time a rich farmer lived in a village near Korzian, who was in the habit of going into the wood late in the evening. One evening he went back again into the wood very late, when he distinctly heard the name Zurkielis shouted. He followed the voice, but could not discover from whence the sound proceeded.

On the next evening the farmer went into the wood, and did not wait long before he heard the cry repeated, but this time much louder and more distinctly. On the third evening the farmer went again to the wood; but this time on Valpurgis-night — the Witch's Sabbath. Suddenly he saw a light appear in the distance; then more lights shone out, and the light grew stronger and stronger; and presently the farmer saw a strange procession advancing, and passing by him. In front of the procession ran a great number of mice of all sorts, each of whom carried a jewel in his mouth which shone brighter than the sun. After these came a golden chariot, drawn by a lion, a bear, and two wolves. The chariot shone like fire, and, instead of nails, it was studded with dazzling jewels. In the chariot sat the King of the Rats and his consort, both clad in golden raiment. The King of the Rats wore a golden crown on his head, and his consort marshalled the procession. After the chariot followed a vast procession of rats, each of whom carried a torch, and the sparks which flew from the torches fell to the earth as jewels. Some of the rats were shouting "Zurkielis" incessantly; and whenever a rat uttered this cry, a piece of gold fell from his mouth. The procession was followed by a great number of fantastic forms, which collected the gold from the ground, and put it into large sacks. When the farmer saw this he also gathered together as much of the gold and jewels as he could reach. Presently a cock crew, and everything vanished. The farmer returned to his house, but the gold and jewels gave him a very tangible proof that the adventure had not been a dream.

A year passed by, and on the next Valpurgis-night the farmer went back to the wood, and everything happened as on the year before. The farmer became immensely rich from the gold and jewels which he collected; and on the third anniversary of the Valpurgis-night he did not go to the wood, but remained quietly at home. He was quite rich enough, and he was afraid that some harm might happen to him in the wood. But on the following morning a rat appeared, and addressed him as follows: "You took the gold and jewels, but this year you did not think it needful to pay our king and his consort the honour due to them by appearing before them during the procession in the wood; and henceforward it will go ill with you."

Having thus spoken, the rat disappeared; but shortly afterwards such a host of rats took up their abode in the farmer's house that it was impossible for him to defend himself against them. The rats gnawed everything in the house, and whatever was brought into it. In time the farmer was reduced to beggary, and died in wretchedness.

Story of the Second Lunatic (p-74).

This is a variant of “Woman’s Craft” (No. 184 of our Table), or “Woman’s Wiles,” (Supp. Nights, ii. p-148). Mr. L. C. Smithers tells me that an English version of this story, based upon Langlčs’ translation (Cf. Nights, x. App., , sub “Sindbad the Sailor”), appeared in the Literary Souvenir for 1831, under the title of “Woman’s Wit.”

P-76. — Concerning the Shikk and the Nesnás, Lane writes (1001 Nights, i., Introd. note 21): “The Shikk is another demoniacal creature, having the form of half a human being (like a man divided longitudinally); and it is believed that the Nesnás is the offspring of a Shikk and of a human being. The Shikk appears to travellers; and it was a demon of this kind who killed, and was killed by, ‘Alkamah, the son of Safwán, the son of Umeiyeh, of whom it is well known that he was killed by a Jinnee. So says El-Kazweenee.

“The Nesnás (above-mentioned) is described as resembling half a human being, having half a head, half a body, one arm, and one leg, with which it hops with much agility; as being found in the woods of El-Yemen, and being endowed with speech; ‘but God,’ it is added, ‘is all-knowing.’ (El-Kazweenee in the khatimeh of his work.) It is said that it is found in Hadramót as well as El-Yemen; and that one was brought alive to El-Mutawekkil; it resembled a man in form, excepting that it had but half a face, which was in its breast, and a tail like that of a sheep. The people of Hadramót, it is added, eat it; and its flesh is sweet. It is only generated in their country. A man who went there asserted that he saw a captured Nesnás, which cried out for mercy, conjuring him by God and by himself. (Mi-rát ez-Zemán.) A race of people whose head is in the breast is described as inhabiting an island called Jábeh (supposed to be Java) in the Sea of El-Hind or India; and a kind of Nesnás is also described as inhabiting the Island of Ráďj, in the Sea of Es-Seen, or China, and having wings like those of the bat. (Ibn El-Wardee.)” Compare also an incident in the story of Janshah (Nights v. , and note) and the description of the giant Haluka in Forbes’ translation of the Persian Romance of Hatim Tai (): “In the course of an hour the giant was so near as to be distinctly seen in shape like an immense dome. He had neither hands nor feet, but a tremendous mouth, situated in the midst of his body. He advanced with an evolving motion, and from his jaws issued volumes of flame and clouds of smoke." When his reflection was shown him in a mirror, he burst with rage.

I may add that a long-tailed species of African monkey
(Cercopithecus
Pyrrhonotus) is now known to naturalists as the Nisnas.

Story of the Broken-backed Schoolmaster (p-97).

I once heard a tale of two Irishmen, one of whom lowered the other over a cliff, probably in search of the nests of sea-fowl. Presently the man at the top called out, "Hold hard while I spit on my hands," so he loosed the rope for that purpose, and his companion incontinently disappeared with it.

Story of the Split-mouthed Schoolmaster (p-101).

In Scott's "Story of the Wry-mouthed Schoolmaster" (Arabian Nights, vi. p-75) the schoolmaster crams a boiling egg into his mouth, which the boy smashes.

Night Adventure of Sultan Mohammed of Cairo (p-109).

P. 103. — Scott (vi.) makes the proclamation read, "Whoever presumes after the first watch of the night to have a lamp lighted in his house, shall have his head struck off, his goods confiscated, his house razed to the ground, and his women dishonoured." A proclamation in such terms under the circumstances (though not meant seriously) would be incredible, even in the East.

Story of the Kazi Who Bare a Babe (p-185).

In the Esthonian Kalevipoeg we read of two giants who lay down to sleep on opposite sides of the table after eating a big supper of thick peas-soup. An unfortunate man was hidden under the table, and the consequence was that he was blown backwards and forwards between them all night.

History of the Bhang-Eater and His Wife (p-209).

Selling a bull or a cow in the manner described is a familiar incident in folk-lore; and in Rivičre's "Contes Populaires Kabyles" we find a variant of the present story under the title of "L'Idiot et le

Coucou." In another form, the cow or other article is exchanged for some worthless, or apparently worthless, commodity, as in Jack and the Bean-stalk; Hans im Glück; or as in the case of Moses in the Vicar of Wakefield. The incident of the fool finding a treasure occurs in Cazotte's story of Xailoun.[642]

How Drummer Abu Kasim Became a Kazi (p-212).

I have heard an anecdote of a man who was sued for the value of a bond which he had given payable one day after the day of judgment. The judge ruled, "This is the day of judgment, and I order that the bill must be paid to-morrow!"

Story of the Kazi and His Slipper (p-215).

This story is well known in Europe, though not as forming part of The Nights. Mr. W. A. Clouston informs me that it first appeared in Cardonne's "Mélanges de littérature orientale" (Paris, 1770). Cf. Nights x. App. p and 512.

History of the Third Larrikin (p-297).

Such mistakes must be very frequent. I remember once seeing a maid stoop down with a jug in her hand, when she knocked her head against the table. Some one sitting by, thinking it was the jug, observed, "Never mind, there's nothing in it."

Another time I was driving out in the country with a large party, and our host got out to walk across to another point. Presently he was missed, and they inquired, "Where is he?" There was a dog lying in the carriage, and one of the party looked round, and not seeing the dog, responded, "Why, where is the dog?"

Tale of the Fisherman and His Son (p-329).

The present story, though not very important in itself, is interesting as combining some of the features of three distinct classes of folk-tales. One of these is the anti-Jewish series, of which Grimm's story of the Jew in the Bramble-Bush is one of the most typical examples. According to these tales, any villany is justifiable, if perpetrated on a Jew. We find traces of this feeling even in Shakspeare, and to this day Shylock (notwithstanding the grievous wrongs which he had suffered at the hands of Christians) rarely gets much sympathy from modern readers, who quite overlook all the extenuating circumstances in his case.[643] Nor do we always find the Jew famous for 'cuteness in folk-tales. This phase of his reputation is comparatively modern, and in the time of Horace, “Credat Judćus” was a Roman proverb, which means, freely translated, “Nobody would be fool enough to believe it except a Jew.”

The present story combines the features of the anti-Jewish tales, the Alaeddin series, and the Grateful Beasts series. (Compare Mr. W. A. Clouston’s remarks on Aladdin, Supp. Nights, App. iii., p-581; and also his “Tales and Popular Fictions.”)

In vol. 53 of the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1884, p-39) I find a Nicobar story which relates how Tiomberombi received a magic mirror from a snake whose enemy he had killed. Its slaves obeyed all his orders if he only put the key into the keyhole, but he was not allowed to open the mirror, as he was too weak to face the spirits openly. He dwelt on an island, but when a hostile fleet came against him, the gunners could not hit it, as the island became invisible. The hostile chief sent an old woman to worm the secret out of Tiomberombi’s wife; the mirror was stolen, and Tiomberombi and his wife were carried off. On reaching land, Tiomberombi was thrown into prison, but he persuaded the rats to fetch him the mirror.[644] He destroyed his enemies, went home, and re-established himself on his island, warning his wife and mother not to repeat what had happened, lest the island should sink. They told the story while he was eating; the island sank into the sea, and they were all drowned.

The History of Abu Niyyah and Abu Niyyatayn (p-352).

This story combines features which we find separately in Nos. 3b (ba); 162 and 198. The first story, the Envier and the Envied, is very common in folk-lore, and has been sometimes used in modern fairy-tales. The reader will remember the Tailor and the Shoemaker in Hans Christian Andersen’s “Eventyr.” Frequently, as in the latter story, the good man, instead of being thrown into a well, is blinded by the villain, and abandoned in a forest, where he afterwards recovers his sight. One of the most curious forms of this story is the Samoghitian

Truth and Injustice.[645]

Truth and Injustice lived in the same country, and one day they happened to meet, and agreed to be friends. But as Injustice brought many people into trouble, Truth declared that she would have no more to do with her, upon which Injustice grew angry, and put out the eyes of Truth. Truth wandered about for a long time at random, and at last she came to a walnut-tree, and climbed up it to rest awhile in safety from wild beasts. During the night a wolf and a mouse came to the foot of the tree, and held the following conversation. The wolf began, "I am very comfortable in the land where I am now living, for there are so many blind people there that I can steal almost any animal I like without anybody seeing me. If the blind men knew that they had only to rub their eyes with the moss which grows on the stones here in order to recover their sight, I should soon get on badly with them."

The mouse responded, "I live in a district where the people have no water, and are obliged to fetch it from a great distance. When they are away from home I can enjoy as much of their provisions as I like; indeed, I can heap together as large a store as I please without being disturbed. If the people knew that they had only to cut down a great oak tree, and a great lime tree which grow near their houses, in order to find water, I should soon be badly off."

As soon as the wolf and the mouse were gone, Truth came down from her tree, and groped about until she found a moss-covered stone, when she rubbed her eyes with the moss. She recovered her sight immediately, and then went her way till she came to the country where most of the people were blind. Truth demanded that the blind people should pay her a fixed sum of money, when she would tell them of a remedy by which they could recover their sight. The blind men gave her the money, and Truth supplied them with the remedy which had cured herself.

After this, Truth proceeded further till she came to the district where the people had no water. She told them that if they would give her a carriage and horses, she would tell them where to find water. The people were glad to agree to her proposal.

When Truth had received the carriage and horses, she showed the people the oak and the lime tree, which they felled by her directions, when water immediately flowed from under the roots in great abundance.

As Truth drove away she met Injustice, who had fallen into poverty, and was wandering from one country to another in rags.

Truth knew her immediately, and asked her to take a seat in her carriage. Injustice then recognised her, and asked her how she had received the light of her eyes, and how she had come by such a fine carriage. Truth told her everything, including what she had heard from the wolf and the mouse. Injustice then persuaded her to put out her eyes, for she wanted to be rich, and to have a fine carriage too; and then Truth told her to descend. Truth herself drove away, and seldom shows herself to men.

Injustice wandered about the country till she found the walnut tree, up which she climbed. When evening came, the wolf and the fox met under the tree again to talk. Both were now in trouble, for the wolf could not steal an animal without being seen and pursued by the people, and the mouse could no longer eat meat or collect stores without being disturbed, for the people were no longer obliged to leave their home for a long time to fetch water. Both the wolf and the mouse suspected that some one had overheard their late conversation, so they looked up in search of the listener, and discovered Injustice in the tree. The animals supposed that it was she who had betrayed them, and said in anger, “May our curse be upon you that you may remain for ever blind, for you have deprived us of our means of living.”

After thus speaking, the animals ran away, but Injustice has ever since remained blind, and does harm to everybody who chances to come in her way.

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II. — NOTES ON THE STORIES CONTAINED IN VOLUME XV.

By W. F. KIRBY.

History of the King's Son of Sind and the Lady Fatimah (p-18).

P. 3. — This mixture of seeds, &c., is a very common incident in folk-tales.

P. 7. — Compare the well-known incident in John xviii. 1-11, which passage, by the way, is considered to be an interpolation taken from the lost Gospel of the Hebrews.

History of the Lovers of Syria (p-36).

P. 18. — Divination by the flight or song of birds is so universal that it is ridiculous of Kreutzwald (the compiler of the Kalevipoeg) to quote the fact of the son of Kalev applying to birds and beasts for advice as being intended by the composers as a hint that he was deficient in intelligence.

In Bulwer Lytton's story of the Fallen Star (Pilgrims of the Rhine, ch. xix.) he makes the imposter Morven determine the succession to the chieftainship by means of a trained hawk.

P. 26, note 2. — Scott may possibly refer to the tradition that the souls of the dead are stored up in the trumpet of Israfil, when he speaks of the "receiving angel."

History of Al-Hajjaj Bin Yusuf and the Young Sayyid (p-60).

P. 43, note 1. — I doubt if the story-teller intended to represent Al-Hajjaj as ignorant. The story rather implies that he was merely catechising the youth, in order to entangle him in his talk.

P. 46. — Compare the story of the Sandal-wood Merchant and the Sharpers (Nights, vi.) in which the Merchant is required to drink up the sea [or rather, perhaps, river], and requires his adversary to hold the mouth of the sea for him with his hand.

P. 52, note 3. — It is well known that children should not be allowed to sleep with aged persons, as the latter absorb their vitality.

Night Adventure of Harun Al-Rashid and the Youth Manjab (p-105).

P. 102. — In the Danish ballads we frequently find heroes appealing to their mothers or nurses in cases of difficulty. Compare "Habor and Signild," and "Knight Stig's Wedding," in Prior's Danish Ballads, i. and ii. .

Story of the Darwaysh and the Barber's Boy and the Greedy Sultan (p-114).

This story belongs to the large category known to students of folk-lore as the
Sage and his Pupil; and of this again there are three main groups:

1. Those in which (as in the present instance) the two remain on friendly terms.
2. Those in which the sage is outwitted and destroyed by his pupil (e.g., Cazotte's story of the Maugraby; or Spitta Bey's tales, No. 1).
3. Those in which the pupil attempts to outwit or to destroy the sage, and is himself outwitted or destroyed (e.g., The Lady's Fifth Story, in Gibb's Forty Vezirs, p-80; and his App. B. note v.,).

The Loves of Al-Hayfa and Yusuf (p-210).

P. 149, note 1. — I believe that a sudden attack of this kind is always speedily fatal.

The Goodwife of Cairo and Her Four Gallants (p-294).

P. 255, note. — It may be worth while to note that Swedenborg asserts that it is unlawful in Heaven for any person to look at the back of the head of another, as by so doing he interrupts the divine influx. The foundation of this idea is perhaps the desire to avoid mesmeric action upon the cerebellum.

Tale of Mohsin and Muss (p-241).

The notes on the story of Abu Niyyat and Abu Niyyateen (supra, p) will apply still better to the present story.

The Merchant's Daughter, and the Prince of Al-irak (pp. 264-317).

P-312. — The case of Tobias and Sara (Tobit, chaps. iii.-viii.) was very similar: but in this instance the demon Asmodeus was driven away by fumigating with the liver and heart of a fish.

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FOOTNOTES SUPPLEMENTAL VOLUME V.

[1] In the same volume (ii. 161) we also find an “Introductory Chapter of the Arabian Tales,” translated from an original manuscript by Jonathan Scott, Esq.; neither MS nor translation having any merit. In p, 35 (ibid.) are noticed the “Contents of a Fragment of the Arabian Nights procured in India by James Anderson, Esq., a copy of which” (made by his friend Scott) “is now in the possession of Jonathan Scott, Esq.” (See Scott, vol. vi. .) For a short but sufficient notice of this fragment cf. the Appendix (vol. x.) to my Thousand Nights and a Night, the able and conscientious work of Mr. W. F. Kirby. “The Labourer and the Flying Chain” (No. x.) and “The King’s Son who escaped death by the ingenuity of his Father’s seven Viziers” (No. xi.) have been translated or rather abridged by Scott in his “Tales, Anecdotes and Letters” before alluded to, a vol. of p containing scraps from the Persian “Tohfat al-Majális” and “Hazliyát’ Abbíd Zahkání” (Facetić of ‘Abbíd the Jester), with letters from Aurangzeb and other such padding much affected by the home public in the Early XIXth Century.

[2] So called from Herr Uri, a Hungarian scholar who first catalogued “The Contents.”

[3] W. M. MS. iv. 165189: Scott (vi. 238245), “Story of the Prince of Sind, and Fatima, daughter of Amir Bin Naomaun”: Gauttier (vi. 342348) Histoire du Prince de Sind et de Fatime. Sind is so called from Sindhu, the Indus (in Pers. Sindáb), is the general name of the riverine valley: in early days it was a great station of the so-called Aryan race, as they were migrating eastwards into India Proper, and it contains many Holy Places dating from the era of the Puránás. The Moslems soon made acquaintance with it, and the country was conquered and annexed by Mohammed bin Kásim, sent to attack it by the famous or infamous Hajjáj bin Yúsuf the Thakafite, lieutenant of Al-’Irák under the Ommiade Abd al-Malik bin Marwán. For details, see my “Sind Re-visited”: vol. i. chapt. viii.

[4] [In MS. "shakhat," a modern word which occurs in Spitta Bey's "Contes Arabes Modernes," spelt with the palatal instead of the dental, and is translated there by "injurier." — ST.]

[5] In the text "Sahríj"; hence the "Chafariz" (fountain) of Portugal, which I derived (Highlands of the Brazil, i. 46) from "Sakáríj." It is a "Moghrabin" word = fonte, a fountain, preserved in the Brazil and derided in the mother country, where a New World village is described as

— Chafariz,
Joam Antam e a Matriz:

which may be roughly rendered

— Parish church,
Pump on the Green and Johnny Birch.

[6] [Here I suppose the scribe dropped a word, as "yahtáj," or the like, and the sentence should read: it requires, etc. — ST.]

[7] In text "Sárayah," for "Saráyah," Serai, Government House: vol. ix. 52.

[8] A manner of metonymy, meaning that he rested his cheek upon his right hand.

[9] For the sig. of this phrase = words suggested by the circumstances, see vol. i. 121.

[10] Mr. Charles M. Doughty ("Arabia Deserta," i. 223) speaks of the Badawin who "sit beating the time away, and for pastime limning with their driving-sticks (the Bákúr) in the idle land."

[11] In text "Lam yanúb al-Wáhidu min-hum nisf haffán." [I cannot explain this sentence satisfactory to myself, but by inserting "illá" after "min-hum." Further I would read "nassaf" = libavit, delibavit, degustavit (Dozy, Suppl. s. v.) and "Hifán," pl. of "Hafna" = handful,

mouthful, small quantity, translating accordingly: “and none took his turn without sipping a few laps.” — ST.]

[12] “Tarajjama”: Suppl. vol. iv. 188. I shall always translate it by “he deprecated” scil. evil to the person addressed.

[13] [The text, as I read it, has: “In wahadtu (read wajadtu) fí házih al-Sá’áh shayyan naakul-hu wa namút bi-hi nartáh min házá al-Taab wa’l-mashakkah la-akultu-hu” = if I could find at this hour a something (i.e. in the way of poison) which I might eat and die thereby and rest from this toil and trouble, I would certainly eat it, etc. — ST.]

[14] See vol. i. 311 for this “tom-tom” as Anglo-Indians call it.

[15] i.e. Whereinto the happy man was able to go, which he could not whilst the spell was upon the hoard.

[16] Here ends this tale, a most lame and impotent conclusion, in the W. M. MS. iv. 189. Scott () copied by Gauttier (vi. 348) has, “His father received him with rapture, and the prince having made an apology to the sultana (!) for his former rude behaviour, she received his excuses, and having no child of her own readily adopted him as her son; so that the royal family lived henceforth in the utmost harmony, till the death of the sultan and sultana, when the prince succeeded to the empire.”

[17] W. M. MS. iv. 189. Scott (vi. 246-258) “Story of the Lovers of Syria; or, the Heroine:” Gauttier (iv. 348-354) Histoire des Amans de Syrie.

[18] Scott (vi. 246) comments upon the text:— “The master of the ship having weighed anchor, hoisted sail and departed: the lady in vain entreating him to wait the return of her beloved, or send her on shore, for he was captivated with her beauty. Finding herself thus ensnared, as she was a woman of strong mind . . . she assumed a satisfied air; and as the only way to preserve her honour, received the addresses of the treacherous master with pretended complacency, and consented

to receive him as a husband at the first port at which the ship might touch.”

[19] The captain, the skipper, not the owner: see vols. i. 127; vi. 12; the fem. (which we shall presently find) is “Ra’isah.”

[20] Scott () has:— “At length the vessel anchored near a city, to which the captain went to make preparations for his marriage; but the lady, while he was on shore, addressed the ship’s crew, setting forth with such force his treacherous conduct to herself, and offering such rewards if they would convey her to her lover at the port they had left, that the honest sailors were moved in her favour, agreed to obey her as their mistress, and hoisting sail, left the master to shift for himself.”

[21] In text “Kamrah,” = the chief cabin, from the Gr. ?aľ??a = vault; Pers. Kamar; Lat. “Camera” or “Camara”; Germ. “Kammer.” It is still the popular term in Egypt for the “cuddy,” which is derived from Pers. “Kadah” = a room.

[22] Scott makes the doughty damsel (), “relate to them her own adventures, and assure them that when she should have rejoined her lover, they should, if they chose it, be honourably restored to their homes; but in the mean time she hoped they would contentedly share her fortunes.”

[23] In text “Fidáwi,” see “Fidá’i” and “Fidawíyah,” suppl. vol. iv. 281.

[24] [In the text “Al-Kázánát,” pl. of “Kázán,” which occurs in Spitta Bey’s tales under the form “Kazán” on account of the accent. It is the Turkish “Kazghán,” vulgarly pronounced “Kazan,” and takes in Persian generally the form “Kazkán.” In Night 652 it will be met again in the sense of crucibles. — ST.]

[25] In text “Banj al-tayyár,” i.e. volatile: as we should say, that which flies fastest to the brain.

[26] This marvellous bird, the “Ter-il-bas” (Tayr Táús?), is a particular

kind of peacock which is introduced with a monstrous amount of nonsense about "Dagon and his son Bil-il-Sanan" and made to determine elections by alighting upon the head of one of the candidates in Chavis and Cazotte, "History of Yamalladdin (Jamál al-Din), Prince of Great Katay" (Khátá = Cathay = China). See Heron, iv. 159.

[27] Lit. "hath given it to him."

[28] Arab. "Jiház," the Egypt. "Gaház," which is the Scotch "tocher," and must not be confounded with the "Mahr" = dowry, settled by the husband upon the wife. Usually it consists of sundry articles of dress and ornament, furniture (matting and bedding carpets, divans, cushions and kitchen utensils), to which the Badawi add "Girbahs" (water-skins), querns, and pestles with mortars. These are usually carried by camels from the bride's house to the bridegroom's: they are the wife's property, and if divorced she takes them away with her and the husband has no control over the married woman's capital, interest or gains. For other details see Lane M.E. chapt. vi. and Herklots chapt. xiv. sec. 7.

[29] [Arab. "Shuwár" = trousseau, whence the verb "shawwara bintahu" = he gave a marriage outfit to his daughter. See Dozy Suppl. s. v. and Arnold's Chrestom. 157, 1. — ST.]

[30] Arab. "Ghashím," see vol. ii. 330. It is a favourite word in Egypt extending to Badawi-land, and especially in Cairo, where it is looked upon as slighting if not insulting.

[31] The whole of the scene is a replica of the marriage between Kamar al-Zamán and that notable blackguard the Lady Budúr (vol. iii. 211), where also we find the pigeon slaughtered (). I have mentioned that the blood of this bird is supposed throughout the East, where the use of the microscope is unknown, and the corpuscles are never studied, most to resemble the results of a bursten hymen, and that it is the most used to deceive the expert eyes of midwives and old matrons. See note to vol. iii. .

[32] Scott () makes his heroine "erect a most magnificent caravanserai, furnished with baths hot and cold, and every convenience for the weary traveller." Compare this device with the public and royal banquet () contrived by the slave-girl sultaness, the charming Zumurrud or Smaragdine in the tale of Ali Shár, vol. iv. 187.

[33] In text "Shakhs," see vol. iii. 26; viii. 159.

[34] This assemblage of the dramatis personć at the end of the scene, highly artistic and equally improbably, reminds us of the ending of King Omar bin al-Nu'uman (vol. iii. 112).

[35] The King and the Minister could not have recognised the portrait as neither had seen the original.

[36] In text "Ishtalaka" = he surmised, discovered (a secret).

[37] In the Arab. "she knew them," but the careless storyteller forgets the first part of his own story.

[38] Story-telling being servile work.

[39] [In the MS. "istanatú lá-ha." The translation in the text presupposes the reading "istanattú" as the 10th form of "natt" = he jumped, he leaped. I am inclined to take it for the 8th form of "sanat," which according to Dozy stands in its 2nd form "sannat" for "sannat," a transposition of the classical "nassat" = he listened to. The same word with the same meaning of "listening attentively," recurs in the next line in the singular, applying to the captain and the following pronoun "la-há" refers in both passages to "Hikáyah," tale, not to the lady-sultan who reveals herself only later, when she has concluded her narrative. — ST.]

[40] Here the converse is probably meant, as we have before seen.

[41] Scott ends () "Years of unusual happiness passed over the heads of the fortunate adventurers of this history, until death, the destroyer of all things, conducted them to a grave which must one day be the

resting-place for ages of us all, till the receiving (?) angel shall sound his trumpet."

[42] Scott (vi. 259-267), "Story of Hyjuaje, the tyrannical Governor of Coufeh, and the Young Syed." For the difference between the "Sayyid" (descendant of Hasan) and the "Sharíf," derived from Husayn, see vol. v. 259. Being of the Holy House the youth can truly deny that he belongs to any place or race, as will be seen in the sequel.

[43] This masterful administrator of the Caliphate under the early Ommiades is noticed in vols. iv. 3, vii. 97. The succession to the Prophet began — as mostly happens in the proceedings of elective governments, republics, and so forth — with the choice of a nobody, "Abubakr the Veridical," a Meccan merchant, whose chief claim was the glamour of the Apostolate. A more notable personage, and seen under the same artificial light, was "Omar the Justiciary," also a trader of Meccah, who was murdered for an act of injustice. In Osman nepotism and corruption so prevailed, while distance began to dim the Apostolic glories, that the blood-thirsty turbulence of the Arab was aroused and caused the death of the third Caliph by what we should call in modern phrase "lynching." Ali succeeded, if indeed we can say he succeeded at all, to an already divided empire. He was the only one of the four who could be described as a man of genius, and therefore he had a host of enemies: he was a poet, a sage, a moralist and even a grammarian; brave as a lion, strong as a bull, a successful and experienced captain, yet a complete failure as a King. A mere child in mundane matters, he ever acted in a worldly sense as he should have avoided acting, and hence, after a short and disastrous reign, he also was killed. His two sons, Hasan and Husayn, inherited all the defects and few of the merits of their sire: Hasan was a pauvre diable, whose chief characteristic was addiction to marriage, and by poetical justice one of his wives murdered him. Husayn was of stronger mould, but he fought against the impossible; for his rival was Mu'áwiyah, the Cavour of the Age, the longest-headed man in Arabia, and against Yezíd, who, like Italy of the present day, flourished and prospered by the artificial game which the far-seeing

politician, his father, had bequeathed to his house — the Ommiade. The fourth of this dynasty, ‘Abd al-Malik bin Marwán, “the Father of Flies,” and his successor, Al-Walid, were happy in being served thoroughly and unscrupulously by Al-Hajjáj, the ablest of Lieutenants, whose specialty it was to take in hand a revolted province, such as Al-Hijáz, Al-Irák, or Khorásán, and to slaughter it into submission; besides deaths in battle he is computed to have slain 120,000 men. He was an unflinching preacher of the Divine Right of Kings and would observe that the Lord says, “Obey Allah an ye can” (conditional), but as regards royal government “Hearing and obeying” (absolute); ergo, all opposition was to be cut down and uprooted. However, despite his most brilliant qualities, his learning, his high and knightly sense of honour, his insight and his foresight (e.g. in building Wásit), he won an immortality of infamy: he was hated by his contemporaries, he is the subject of silly tale and offensive legend (e.g., that he was born without anus, which required opening with instruments, and he was suckled by Satan’s orders on blood), and he is still execrated as the tyrant, per excellentiam, and the oppressor of the Holy Family — the children and grand-children of the Apostle.

The traditional hatred of Al-Hajjaj was envenomed by the accession of the Abbasides and this dynasty, the better to distinguish itself from the Ommiades, affected love for the Holy Family, especially Ali and his descendants, and a fanatical hatred against their oppressors. The following table from Ibn Khaldún (Introduct. xxii.) shows that the Caliphs were cousins, which may account for their venomous family feud.

[First Version]

‘Abd Manaf
|
|
| |
Hashim Abd Shams
| |

Abd al-Muttalib Umayyah
| |
| |
| | | | |
Al-Abbas Abdullah Abu Talib Harb Abu ‘l-Aus
| | | | |
Abdullah Mohammed | Abu Sufyan Al-Hakim
| | | | |
Ali Fatimah married Ali Mu’awiyah Marwan
| | (1st Ommiade)
| | |
Mohammed Al-Hasan Al-Husayn
|
Al-Saffáh
(1st Abbaside)

[Second Version]

‘Abd Manaf, father of Hashim and Abd Shams
Hashim, father of Abd al-Muttalib
Abd al-Muttalib, father of Al-Abbas, Abdullah, and Abu Talib
Al-Abbas, father of Abdullah
Abdullah, father of Ali
Ali, father of Mohammed
Mohammed, father of Al-Saffáh (1st Abbaside)
Abdullah, father of Mohammed
Mohammed, father of Fatimah, who married Ali
(son of Abu Talib)
Fatimah, mother of Al-Hasan and Al-Husayn
Abu Talib, father of Ali
Abd Shams, father of Umayyah
Umayyah, father of Harb and Abu ‘l-Aus
Harb, father of Abu Sufyan
Abu Sufyan, father of Mu’awiyah (1st Ommiade)
Abu ‘l-Aus, father of Al-Hakim
Al-Hakim, father of Marwan

[44] [The word here translated "invited guest" reads in the MS. "Mad'úr." In this form it is no dictionary word, but under the root "D'r" I find in the Muhít: "wa 'l-'ámatu takúlu fulánun da'irun ya'ní ghalízun jáfin" = the common people say such a one is "da'ir," i.e., rude, churlish. "Mad'úr" may be a synonym and rendered accordingly: as though thou wert a boor or clown. — ST]

[45] A neat specimen of the figure anachronism. Al-Hajjaj died in A.H. 95 (= A.D. 714), and Cairo was built in A.H. 358 (= A.D. 968).

[46] Perfectly true even in the present day. The city was famed for intelligence and sanguinary fanaticism; and no stranger in disguise could pass through it without detection. This ended with the massacre of 1840, which brought a new era into the Moslem East. The men are, as a rule, fine-looking, but they seem to be all show: we had a corps of them in the old Básh-Buzuks, who, after a month or two in camp, seemed to have passed suddenly from youth into old age.

[47] In text, "Yasta'amilúna al-Mrd," which may have a number of meanings, e.g. "work frowardness" (Maradd), or "work the fruit of the tree Arák" (Marad = wild capparis) and so forth. I have chosen the word mainly because "Murd" rhymes to "Burd." The people of Al-Yaman are still deep in the Sotadic Zone and practice; this they owe partly to a long colonization of the "'Ajam," or Persians. See my Terminal Essay, § "Pederasty," .

[48] "Burd," plur. of "Burdah" = mantle or woollen plaid of striped stuff: vol. vii. 95. They are still woven in Arabia, but they are mostly white.

[49] So in Tabari (vol. III. 127) Al Hajjáj sees a man of haughty mien (Abd al-Rahmán bin Abdullah), and exclaims, "Regarde comme il est orgueilleux: par Dieu, j'aurais envie de lui couper la tęte!"

[50] [The phrase is Koranic (viii. 24): "Wa 'lamú anna 'lláha yahúlu bayna 'l-mari wa kalbi-hi," which Rodwell translates: Know that God cometh in between man and his own heart. — ST]

[51] “Yathrib,” the classical name ?at??ppa, one of the multifarious titles of what is called in full “Madínat al-Nabi,” City of the Prophet, and vulgarly, Al-Madinah, the City. “Tayyibah,” the good, sweet, or lawful: “Al-Munawwarah” = the enlightened, i.e. by the light of The Faith and the column of (odylic) flame supposed to be based upon the Prophet’s tomb. For more, see my Pilgrimage, ii. 162. I may note how ridiculously the story-teller displays ignorance in Al-Hajjaj, who knew the Moslem’s Holy Land by heart.

[52] In text “Taawíl,” = the commentary or explanation of Moslem Holy Writ: “Tanzíl” = coming down, revelation of the Koran: “Tahrím” = rendering any action “harám” or unlawful, and “Tahlíl” = the converse, making word or deed canonically legal. Those are well-known theological terms.

[53] The Banú Ghálib, whose eponymous forefather was Ghálib, son of Fihr, the well-known ancestor of Mohammed.

[54] In text “Hasab wa Nasab.” It is told of Al-Mu’izz bi Díni’llah, first Fatimite Caliph raised to the throne of Egypt, that he came forward to the elective assembly and drew his sword half way out of the scabbard and exclaimed “Házá Nasabí” (this is my genealogy); and then cast handfuls of gold amongst the crowd, crying, “Házá Hasabí” (such is my title to reign). This is as good as the traditional saying of Napoleon the Great at his first assuming the iron crown— “God gave her to me; woe for whoso toucheth her” (the crown).

[55] [In MS. “takhsa-u,” a curious word of venerable yet green old age, used in the active form with both transitive and intransitive meaning: to drive away (a dog, etc.), and to be driven away. In the Koran (xxiii. 110) we find the imper. “ikhsaú” = be ye driven away, and in two other places (ii. 61, vii. 166), the nomen agentis “khási” = “scouted” occurs, as applied to the apes into which the Sabbath-breaking Jews were transformed. In the popular language of the present day it has become equivalent with “khába,” to be disappointed, and may here be translated: thou wilt fail ignominiously. — ST]

[56] Scott introduces (), “the tyrant, struck with his magnanimity, became calm, and commanding the executioner to release the youth, said, For the present I forbear, and will not kill thee unless thy answers to my further questions shall deserve it. They then entered on the following dialogue: Hyjuawje hoping to entrap him in discourse.”

[57] See the dialogue on this subject between Al-Hajjaj and Yáhyá ibn Yamar in Ibn Khallikan, iv. 60.

[58] Surah xxxiii. (The Confederates), v. 40, which ends, “And Allah knoweth all things.”

[59] Surah lix. (The Emigration), v. 40: the full quotation would be, “The spoil, taken from the townsfolk and assigned by Allah to His Apostle, belongeth to Allah and to the Apostle and to his kindred and to the orphan and to the poor and to the wayfarer, that naught thereof may circulate among such only of you as be rich. What the Apostle hath given you, take. What he hath refused you, refuse. And fear ye Allah, for Allah is sure in punishing.”

[60] The House of Háshim, great-grandfather to the Prophet.

[61] Ibn Khallikan (vol. i. 354) warns us that “Al-Taî” means belonging to the Taî which is a famous tribe. This relative adjective is of irregular formation; analogy would require it to be Táîî; but the formation of relative adjectives admits some variations; thus from dahr (time) is derived duhrí (temporal) and from sahl (a plain), suhlí (plain, level). The author might also have told us that there is always a reason for such irregularities; thus “Dahrí” (from Dahr) would mean a Mundanist, one who believes in this world and not the next or another.

[62] The “Banú Thakíf” was a noble tribe sprung from Iyád (Ibn Khallikan i. 358-363); but the ignorant and fanatic scribe uses every means, fair and foul, to defame Al-Hajjaj. It was a great race and a well known, living about Táif in the Highlands East of Meccah, where they exist to the present day. Mr. Doughty (loc. cit. ii. 174)

mentions a kindred of the Juhaynah Badawin called El-Thegif (Thakíf) of whom the Medinites say, “Allah ya’alan Thegíf Kuddám takuf” (God damn the Thegíf ere thou stand still). They are called “Yahud” (Jews), probably meaning pre-Islamitic Arabs, and are despised accordingly.

[63] In Arab. “Jady” = the Zodiacal sign Capricorn.

[64] We find a similar facetia in Mullah Jámí (Garden viii.). When a sheep leapt out of the stream, her tail happened to be raised, and a woolcarder said laughing:— “I have seen thy parts genital.” She turned her head and replied, “O miserable, for many a year I have seen thee mother-naked yet never laughed I.” This alludes to the practice of such artisans who on account of the heat in their workshops and the fibre adhering to their clothes work in naturalibus. See , the Beharistán (Abode of Spring). Printed by the Kamashastra Society for Private Subscribers only. Benares, 1887.

[65] This passage is not Koranic, and, according to Prof. Houdas, the word “Muhkaman” is never found in the Holy Volume. [The passage is not a literal quotation, but it evidently alludes to Koran iii. 5: “Huwa’llazí anzalá ‘alayka ‘l-kitába minhu áyâtun muhkamátun” = He it is who sent down to thee the book, some of whose signs (or versets) are confirmed. The singular “muhkamatun” is applied (xlvii.) to “Súratun,” a chapter, and in both places the meaning of “confirmed” is “not abrogated by later revelations.” Hence the sequel of my first quotation these portions are called “the mother (i.e. groundwork) of the book,” and the learned Sayyid is not far from the mark after all. — ST]

[66] Surah ii. (The Cow) v. 56, the verse beginning, “Allah! there be no God but He; … His Throne overreacheth the Heavens and the Hearth,” etc.

[67] Surah lxxiii. (The Bee) v. 92, ending with, “And he forbiddeth frowardness and wrong-doing and oppression; and He warneth you

that haply may ye be warned."

[68] Surah (Meccah) xcix. vv. 7 and 8: in text "Mithkála Zarratin," which Mr. Rodwell () englishes "an atom's weight of good," and adds in a foot-note, "Lit. a single ant." Prof. Houdas would render it, Quiconque aura fait la valeur d'un mitskal de millet en fait de bien; but I hardly think that "Zarrah" can mean "Durrah" = millet. ["Mithkál" in this context is explained by the commentators by "Wazn" = weight, this being the original meaning of the word which is a nomen instrumenti of the form "Mif'ál," denoting "that by which the gravity of bodies is ascertained." Later on it became the well-known technical term for a particular weight. "Zarrah," according to some glossarists, is the noun of unity of "Zarr," the young ones of the ant, an antlet, which is said to weigh the twelfth part of a "Kitmír" = pedicle of the date-fruit, or the hundredth part of a grain of barley, or to have no weight at all. Hence "Mukhkh al-Zarr," the brains of the antlet, means a thing that does not exist or is impossible to be found. According to others, "Zarrah" is a particle of al-Habá, i.e. of the motes that are seen dancing in the sunlight, called "Sonnenstäubchen" in German, and "atomo solare" in Italian. Koran xxi. 48 and xxxi. 15 we find the expression "Mithkála Habbatin min Khardalin" = of the weight of a mustard-seed, used in a similar sense with the present quotation. — ST]

[69] Surah lxx. 38, Mr. Rodwell () translates, "Is it that every man of them would fain enter the Garden of Delights?"

[70] Surah xxxix. 54: they sinned by becoming apostates from Al-Islam. The verset ends, "Verily all sins doth Allah forgive: aye, Gracious, and Merciful is He."

[71] Surah ii. 159; the quotation in the MS. is cut short.

[72] Surah ii. 107; the end of the verse is, "Yet both are readers of the Book. So with like words say they (the pagan Arabs) who have no knowledge."

[73] Surah li. (The Scattering), v. 56.

[74] Surah ii. v. 30.

[75] Surah xl. (The Believer), v. 78. In the text it is fragmentary. I do not see why Mr. Rodwell founds upon this verset a charge against the Prophet of ignorance concerning Jewish history: Mohammed seems to have followed the Talmud and tradition rather than the Holy Writ of the Hebrews.

[76] Surah (The Believers) lxiv. 108.

[77] Surah xxxv. (The Creator or the Angels), v. 31: The sentence concludes in v. 32, “Who of His bounty hath placed us in a Mansion that shall abide for ever, therein no evil shall reach us, and therein no weariness shall touch us.”

[78] Surah (“Sad”) lix. 54; Iblis, like Satan in the Book of Job, is engaged in dialogue with the Almighty. I may here note that Scott () has partially translated these Koranic quotations, but he has given only one reference.

[79] In text “Aná min ahli zálika,” of which the vulgar equivalent would be “Kizí” (for “Kazálika,” “Kazá”) = so (it is)!

[80] i.e. On an empty stomach, to “open the spittle” is = to break the fast. Sir Wm. Gull in his evidence before a committee of the House of Commons deposed that after severe labor he found a bunch of dried raisins as efficacious a “pick-me-up” as a glass of stimulants. The value of dried grapes to the Alpinist is well known.

[81] Arab. “Al-Kadíd” = jerked (charqui = chaire cuite) meat-flesh smoked, or (mostly) sun-dried.

[82] I have noticed (i. 345) one of the blunders in our last unfortunate occupation of Egypt where our soldiers died uselessly of dysenteric disease because they were rationed with heating beef instead of digestible mutton.

[83] Arab. “Al-Marham al-akbar.”

[84] [In the text: “Al-Kisrat al-yábisah ‘alŕ ‘l-Rík fa-innahá tukhlik jamí’a má ‘alŕ fum al-mádah min al-balgham,” of which I cannot make anything but: a slice of dry bread (kisrah = piece of bread) on the spittle (i.e. to break the fast), for it absorbs (lit. uses up, fourth form of “khalik” = to be worn out) all that there may be of phlegm on the mouth of the stomach. Can it be that the dish “Khushk-nán” (Pers. = dry-bread) is meant, of which the village clown in one of Spitta Bey’s tales, when he was treated to it by Harun al-Rashid thought it must be the “Hammám,” because he had heard his grandmother say, that the Hammám (bath) is the most delightful thing in the world?ST]

[85] The stomach has two mouths, sophagic above (which is here alluded to) and pyloric below.

[86] Arab. “‘Irk al-Unsá” = chordć testiculorum, in Engl. simply the cord.

[87] The “‘Ajúz” is a woman who ceases to have her monthly period: the idea is engrained in the Eastern mind and I cannot but believe in it seeing the old-young faces of men who have “married their grandmothers” for money or folly, and what not.

[88] Arab. “Al-’Akík,” vol. iii. 179: it is a tradition of the Prophet that the best of bezels for a signet-ring is the carnelian, and such are still the theory and practice of the Moslem East.

[89] Arab. “Tuhál;” in text “Tayhal.” Mr. Doughty (Arabia Deserta, i. 547) writes the word “Tahal” and translates it “ague-cake,” i.e. the throbbing enlarged spleen, left after fevers, especially those of Al-Hijáz and Khaybar. [The form “Tayhál” with a plural “Tawáhil” for the usual “Tihál” = spleen is quoted by Dozy from the valuable Vocabulary published by Schiaparelli, 1871, after an old MS. of the end of the xiii. century. It has the same relation to the verb “tayhal” = he suffered from the spleen, which “Tihál” bears to the verb “tuhil,” used passively in the same sense. The name of the disease is “Tuhál.” — ST]

[90] In text “Kasalah” = a shock of corn, assemblage of sheaves. It may be a clerical error for “Kasabah” = stalk, haulm, straw.

[91] Of course the conversation drifts into matters sexual and intersexual: in a similar story, “Tawaddud,” the learned slave girl, “hangs down her head for shame and confusion” (vol. v. 225); but the young Sayyid speaks out bravely as becomes a male masculant.

[92] [In the text: “Allatí lau nazarat ilŕ ‘l-samá la-a’shab (fourth form of ‘ashab with the affirmative “la”) al-Safá (pl. of Safát), wa lau nazarat ilŕ ‘l-arz la amtar taghru-há (read thaghru-há) Lúluan lam yuskab wa ríku-há min al-Zulál a’zab (for a’zab min al-Zulál),” which I would translate: Who if she look upon the heavens, the very rocks cover themselves with verdure, and an she look upon the earth, her lips rain unpierced pearls (words of virgin eloquence) and the dews of whose mouth are sweeter than the purest water. — ST.]

[93] These lines have often occurred before: see index (vol. x. 443) “Wa lau anunahá li ‘l-Mushrikín,” etc. I have therefore borrowed from Mr. Payne, vol. viii. 78, whose version is admirable.

[94] For the Jahím-hell, see vol. viii. 111.

[95] For the Seven Ages of womankind (on the Irish model) see vol. ix. 175. Some form of these verses is known throughout the Moslem East to prince and peasant. They usually begin: —

From the tenth to the twentieth year * To the gaze a charm doth appear;

and end with: —

From sixty to three score ten * On all befal Allah’s malison.

[96] [Here I suppose the word “kál” has been dropped after “bi ‘l-shi’r,” and it should be: He (the youth) replied, that was our common sire, Adam, etc. — ST.]

[97] “Hábíl” and “Kábíl” are the Arab. equivalent of Abel and Cain. Neither are named in the Koran (Surah v. “The Table,” vv. 30-35), which borrows dialogue between the brothers derived from the Targum (Jeirus. on Gen. iv. 8) and makes the raven show the mode of burial to Cain, not to Adam, as related by the Jews. Rodwell’s Koran, .

[98] Sit venia verbo: I have the less hesitation in making Adam anticipate the widow Malone from a profound conviction that some Hibernian antiquary, like Vallancey who found the Irish tongue in the Punic language of Plautus, shall distinctly prove that our first forefather spoke Keltic.

[99] In text “Ríh,” wind, gust (of temper), pride, rage. Amongst the Badawín it is the name given to rheumatism (gout being unknown), and all obscure aching diseases by no means confined to flatulence or distension. [The MS. has: “ilŕ an káta-ka ‘l-’amal al-rabíh,” which gives no sense whatever. Sir Richard reads: “kátala-ka ‘l-’amal al-ríh,” and thus arrives at the above translation. I would simply drop a dot on the first letter of “káta-ka,” reading “fáta-ka,” when the meaning of the line as it stands, would be: until the work that is profitable passed away from thee, i.e., until thou ceasedst to do good. The word “rabíh” is not found in Dictionaries, but it is evidently an intensive of “rábih” (tijárah rábihah = a profitable traffic) and its root occurs in the Koran, ii. 15: “Fa-má rabihat Tijáratuhum” = but their traffic has not been gainful. — ST.]

[100] Arab. “Badrah”: see vol. iv. 281. [According to Kámús, “Badrah” is a purse of one thousand or ten thousand dirhams, or of seven thousand dínárs. As lower down it is called “Badrat Zahab,” a purse of gold, I would take it here in the third sense. — ST.]

[101] In text “Zardiyá,” for “Zaradiyyah” = a small mail-coat, a light helmet.

[102] Arab. “‘Ind ‘uzzáti ‘s-siníni” = lit. the thorny shrubs of ground bare of pasture.

[103] This is another form of “inverted speech,” meaning the clean contrary; see vols. ii. 265; vi. 262; and viii. 179.

[104] In text “Lam yakthir Khayrak”; this phrase (pronounced “Kattir Khayrak”) is the Egyptian (and Moslem) equivalent for our “thank you.” Vols. iv. 6; v. 171. Scott () makes Al-Hajjaj end with, “Cursed is he who doth not requite a sincere adviser, declareth our sacred Koran.”

[105] In the W.M. MS. this tale is followed by the “History of Uns al-Wujúd and the Wazir’s daughter Rose-in-hood,” for which see vol. v. 32 et seq. Then comes the long romance “Mázin of Khorásán,” which is a replica of “Hasan of Bassorah and the King’s daughter of the Jinn” (vol. viii. 7). I have noted (vol. x. 78) that this story shows us the process of transition from the Persian original to the Arabic copy. “Mázin” is also the P.N. of an Arab tribe: De Sacy, Chrest. i. 406.

[106] MS. vol. v. p-94: Scott, vol. vi. 343: Gauttier, vi. 376. The story is a replica of the Mock Caliph (vol. iv. 130) and the Tale of the First Lunatic (Suppl. vol. iv.); but I have retained it on account of the peculiar freshness and naďveté of treatment which distinguishes it, also as a specimen of how extensively editors and scriveners can vary the same subject.

[107] In text “Natar” (watching) for “Nataf” (indigestion, disgust).

[108] Here again we have the formula “Kála ‘l-Ráwí” = the reciter saith, showing the purpose of the MS. See Terminal Essay, .

[109] It were well to remind the reader that “Khalífah” (never written “Khalíf”) is = a viceregent or vicar, i.e. of the Prophet of Allah, not of Allah himself, a sense which was especially deprecated by the Caliph Abubakr as “vicar” supposes l’absence du chef; or Dieu est présent partout et ŕ tout instant. Ibn Khal. ii. 496.

[110] This tale, founded on popular belief in tribadism, has already been told in vol. vii. 130: in the W.M. MS. it occupies 23 pages (p- 118).

Scott (vi. 343) has “Mesroor retired and brought in Ali Ibn Munsoor Damuskkee, who related to the Caliph a foolish narrative (!) of two lovers of Bussorah, each of whom was coy when the other wished to be kind.” The respectable Britisher evidently cared not to “read between the lines.”

[111] In pop. parlance “Let us be off.”

[112] Arab. “Al-Áfák” plur. of Ufk, “elegant” (as the grammarians say) for the world, the universe.

[113] [In MS. “Rankah” or “Ranakah,” probably for “Raunakah,” which usually means “troubled,”; speaking of water, but which, according to Schiaparelli’s Vocabulista, has also the meaning of “Raunak” = amenitas. As however “Ranakah” taken as fem. of “Ranak” shares with Raunakah the signification of “troubled,” it may perhaps also be a parallel form to the latter in the second sense. — ST.]

[114] The text has “Martabat Saltanah” (for Sultániyah) which may mean a royal Divan. The “Martabah” is a mattress varying in size and thickness, stuffed with cotton and covered with cloths of various colours and the latter mostly original and admirable of figuration but now supplanted by the wretched printed calicoes of civilisation. It is placed upon the ground and garnished with cushions which are usually of length equally the width of the mattress and of a height measuring about half of that breadth. When the “Martabah” is placed upon its “Mastabah” (bench of masonry or timber) or upon its “Sarír” (a framework of “jaríd” or midribs of the palm), it becomes the Díwan = divan.

[115] In text “Bi-izá-humá;” lit. vis-ŕ-vis to the twain.

[116] These have occurred vol. i. 176: I quote Mr. Payne (i. 156).

[117] In text “Hanná-kumú ‘llah:” see “Hanian,” vol. ii. 5.

[118] This is usually a sign of grief, a symbolic act which dates from the days of the Heb. patriarchs (Gen. xxxvii. 29-34); but here it is the

mark of strong excitement. The hand is placed within the collar and a strong pull tears the light stuff all down the breast. Economical men do this in a way which makes darning easy.

[119] [The MS. is very indistinct in this place, but by supplying "'an" after "ghibta" and reading "'ayní" for "'anní," I have no doubt the words are: Wa in ghibta 'an 'ayni fa-má ghibta 'an kalbi = and if thou art absent from my eyes, yet thou are not absent from my heart. The metre is Tawíl and the line has occurred elsewhere in The Nights. — ST.]

[120] I have already noted that "Hilál" is the crescent (waxing or waning) for the first and last two or three nights: during the rest of the lunar month the lesser light is called "Kamar."

[121] The sense is that of Coleridge. —

> To be beloved is all I need;
> And whom I love I love indeed.

[122] There is something wrong in the text. I cannot help again drawing the reader's attention to the skilful portraiture of the model Moslem Minister, the unfortunate Ja'afar. He is never described in the third person; but the simple dialogue always sets him off as a wise, conciliatory, benevolent, loveable and man-loving character, whose constant object is to temper the harshness and headstrong errors of a despotic master as the Caliph is represented to be by way of showing his kingliness. See vol. i., 102. [The MS. is certainly wrong here, but perhaps it can be righted a little. It has: "Kad yakún Z R H ahad fí Mál jazíl wa harab al-Maz'ún," etc., where Sir Richard reads "zarra-hu" = he harmed, and Mazghún = the hated one, i.e. enemy. I have a strong suspicion that in the original from which our scribe copied, the two words were "zamin" and "al-Mazmún." Zamin in the Arabic character would be {Arabic characters} The loop for the "m," if made small, is easily overlooked; the curve of the "n," if badly traced, can as easily be mistaken for "r" and a big dot inside the "n" might appear like a blotted "h". Mazmún would become "Maz'ún"

by simply turning the “m” loop upwards instead of downwards, an error the converse of which is so frequently committed in printed texts. Curiously enough the same error occurs of the MS., where we shall find “na’ ‘al” with two ‘Ayns instead of “na’mal” with ‘Ayn and Mim. If this conjecture is correct the sense would be: Haply he may have stood security for someone for much money, and the person for whom security was given, took to flight, etc. For “zamin” with the acc. see Ibn Jubair ed. by Wright, 77, 2. I may say on this occasion, that my impression of the Montague MS. is, that it is a blundering copy of a valuable though perhaps indistinctly written original. — ST.]

[123] In text “‘Aurat” = nakedness: see vol. vi. 30.

[124] In Arab. “‘Urrah”: see Fatimah the Dung in vol. x. 1.

[125] [In the MS. “bi-Wujúh al Fániját al-Miláh.” The translator conjectures “al-fátihát,” which he refers to “Wujúh.” I read it “al-Ghániját,” in apposition with al-Miláh, and render: the faces of the coquettish, the fair. See index under “Ghunj.” — ST.]

[126] In text “Ballát,” the name still given to the limestone slabs cut in the Torah quarries South of Cairo. The word is classical, we find in Ibn Khaldún (vol. i. , Fr. Trans.) a chief surnommé el-Balt (le pavé), ŕ cause de sa fermeté et de sa force de caractčre.

[127] In text “Usburú” = be ye patient, the cry addressed to passengers by the Grandee’s body-guard.

[128] The “young person” here begins a tissue of impertinences which are supposed to show her high degree and her condescension in mating with the jeweller. This is still “pretty Fanny’s way” amongst Moslems.

[129] A “swear” peculiarly feminine, and never to be used by men.

[130] In text “‘Alŕ-Aklí:” the whole passage is doubtful.

[I would read, and translate the passage as follows: “Má tastahlí ‘alŕ hazá illá shay lá tazann-hu allazí (for “allatí,” see Suppl. iv. 253) kayyamtíní (2nd fem. sing.) min ‘alŕ aklí wa aná zanantu innahu man yújab la-hu al-kiyám; thumma iltifatat illayya wa kálat hakazá sirtu aná la-ghazárat al-thiyáb al-wasikhat min al-fakr fa-hal má ghasalta wajhak?” = Thou deservest not for this but a thing thou doest not fancy, thou who madest me rise from before my food, while I thought he was one to whom rising up is due. Then she turned towards me, saying, “Am I then in this manner (i.e. like thyself) a bundle of clothes all dirty from poverty, and hast thou therefore (“fa” indicating the effect of a cause) not washed thy face?” Or to put it in more intelligible English: “Am I then like thyself a heap of rags that thou shouldst come to me with unwashed face?” — ST.]

[131] Of the respect due to food Lane (M. E. chapt. xiii.) tells the following tale: “Two servants were sitting at the door of their master’s house, eating their dinner, when they observed a Mameluke Bey with several of his officers, riding along the streets towards them. One of these servants rose, from respect to the Grandee, who regarding him with indignation, exclaimed, Which is the more worthy of respect, the bread which is before thee or myself? Without awaiting a reply, he made, it is said, a well-understood signal with his hand; and the unintending offender was beheaded on the spot.” I may add that the hero of the story is said to have been the celebrated “Daftardar” whose facetious cruelties have still a wide fame in the Nile Valley.

[132] I would read (for “Sirtu ana” = I have become) “Sirt’ anta” = thou hast become.

[133] In text “Mukh;” lit. = brain, marrow.

[134] [In Ar. “Wa zand mujauhar fí-hi Asáwir min al-Zahab al-ahmar,” which may mean: and a fore-arm (became manifest), ornamented with jewels, on which were bracelets of red gold. — ST.]

[135] For this famous type of madman see Suppl. Vol. vi. 155.

[136] [Ar. “Ghurrát,” which may be bright looks, charms, in general, or according to Bocthor, fore-locks. The more usual plural of “Ghurrah” is “Ghurar.” — ST.]

[137] In the text “Darajah” = an instant; also a degree (of the Zodiac). We still find this division of time in China and Japan, where they divide the twenty-four hours into twelve periods, each of which is marked by a quasi-Zodiacal sign: e.g. —

Midnight until 2 a.m. is represented by the Rat. 2 a.m. until 4 a.m. is represented by the Ox. 4 a.m. until 6 a.m. is represented by the Tiger. 6 a.m. until 8 a.m. is represented by the Hare. 8 a.m. until 10 a.m. is represented by the Dragon. 10 a.m. until noon is represented by the Serpent. Noon until 2 p.m. is represented by the Horse. 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. is represented by the Ram. 4 p.m. until 6 p.m. is represented by the Ape. 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. is represented by the Cock. 8 p.m. until 10 p.m. is represented by the Hog. 10 p.m. until midnight is represented by the Fox.

See Edit. ii. of C. B. Mitford’s Tales of Old Japan, a most important contribution to Eastern folklore.

[“Darajah” is, however, also used for any short space of time; according to Lane it is = 4 minutes (i.e. the 24 hours or 1,440 minutes of the astronomical day divided into 360 degrees of 4 minutes each), and Bocthor gives it as an equivalent for our instant or moment. — ST.]

[138] The young fool vaunts his intersexual powers, apparently unknowing that nothing can be more fatal to love than fulfilling the desires of a woman who, once accustomed to this high diet, revolts against any reduction of it. He appears to have been a polisson by his own tale told to the Caliph and this alone would secure the contempt of a high-bred and high-spirited girl.

[139] The “nosebag”; vol. ii. 52, etc. The Badawíyah (Badawí woman) generally prefers a red colour, in opposition to the white and black of civilisation; and she of the Arabian Desert generally disdains to use

anything of the kind.

[140] This ablution of the whole body he was bound to perform after having had carnal knowledge of a woman, and before washing he was in a state of ceremonial impurity. For “Ghusl,” or complete ablution, see vol. v. 80.

[141] “The Heart of the Koran,” chap. xxxvi. see vol. iv. 50.

[142] The Mandíl apparently had been left in the shop by the black slave-girl. Women usually carry such articles with them when “on the loose,” and in default of water and washing they are used to wipe away the results of car. cop.

[143] In Arab. “Shakk.” The criminal was hung up by the heels, and the executioner, armed with a huge chopper, began to hew him down from the fork till he reached the neck, when, by a dextrous turn of the blade, he left the head attached to one half of the body. This punishment was long used in Persia and abolished, they say, by Fath Ali Shah, on the occasion when an offender so treated abused the royal mother and women relatives until the knife had reached his vitals. “Kata’ al-’Arba’,” or cutting off the four members, equivalent to our “quartering,” was also a popular penalty.

[144] In text “Ghibtu ‘an al-Dunyá,” a popular phrase, meaning simply I fainted.

[145] This was done to staunch the blood: see the salt-wench in vol. i. 341.

[146] This couplet has repeatedly occurred: in the preceding volume, Night cdv. (Suppl. iv. 222); and in The Nights (proper), vol. vi. 246. Here I have quoted Lane (A.N. iii. 220), who has not offered a word of comment or of explanation concerning a somewhat difficult couplet.

[147] The plur. masc. for the sing. fem.: see vol. vii. 140.

[148] He speaks after the recognised conventional fashion, as if reporting the camp-shift of a Badawí tribe.

[149] See vol. i. 25 for the parallel of these lines.

[150] The text inserts here, “Saith the Reciter of this adventure and right joyous history strange as rare,” etc.

[151] Scott, in the “Story of the Sultan, the Dirveshe, and the Barber’s son” (vi. 348), calls the King “Rammaud.” The tale is magical and Rosicrucian, laid somewhat upon the lines of “The Physician Dúbán”; i.45.

[152] This is the custom among Eastern Moslems: the barber, after his operations are over, presents his hand-mirror for the patient to see whether all be satisfactory, saying at the same time “Na’íman” = may it be pleasurable to thee! The customer answers “Allah bring thee pleasure,” places the fee upon the looking-glass and returns it to the shaver. For “Na’íman” see vol. ii. 5.

[153] The least that honest Figaro expected to witness was an attempt upon the boy’s chastity.

[154] In text “Tazaghzagha,” gen. = he spoke hesitatingly, he scoffed. [I read the words in the text: “Tazaghghara fíhi.” The Kámús gives “Zaghara-hu” = he seized it by force, he took hold of him with violence, and this present fifth form, although not given in the Dictionaries, has doubtlessly the same meaning. Popularly we may render it: he pitched into him. — ST]

[155] In the text “Kazánát” (plur. of “Kázán”), afterwards written “Kázát” (a clerical error?). They are opposed to the “Kawálib” = moulds. [See note to . — ST.]

[156] “Akhraja min Kuláhi-hi (Kulah?) búsah.”

[157] “Akhaza min-há ‘ala ma’ lakati ‘l-Hilál shay misl al-Jinnah.” [I have no doubt that “Kuláh” is meant for “Kuláh,” a Dervish’s cap.

"Búsah" puzzles me. I am inclined to take it for a reed used as a case or sheath, as we shall see of the MS. Prince Yúsuf uses a "Kasabah" or reed to enclose a letter in it. "Mi'lakat (popular corruption for 'Mil'akat') al-Hilál" may be the spoon or hollow part of an ear-picker, Hilál being given by Bocthor as equivalent for "cure-oreille." Lastly for "al-Jinnah" I would read "al-Habbah" = grain. The article before the word may indicate that a particular grain is meant perhaps "al-Habbat al-halwah" = anise seed, or that it stands for "al-Hubbah," according to Lempričre (A Tour to Marocco, London 1791,) a powder employed by the ladies of Marocco to produce embonpoint. — ST.]

[158] So even in our day Mustafá bin Ism'aíl who succeeded "General Khayru 'l-Dín" as Prime Minister to "His Highness Mohammed al-Sádik, Bey of Tunis," began life as apprentice to a barber, became the varlet of an officer, rose to high dignity and received decorations from most of the European powers.

[159] In text "Wiják," a stove, a portable hearth.

[160] In the text: ["Wa sára kulla-má tastarí nafsuhu yak'ad kuddáma 'l-Darwísh," which I would translate: and each time his heart chose (8th form of "Sarw") he used to sit before the Darwaysh, etc. — ST.]

[161] In text "Darín" for "Zarín" = what is powdered, collyrium.

[162] The King failed because his "Niyat" or intention was not pure; that is, he worked for wealth, and not, as the Darwaysh had done, for the good of his brother man.

[163] For the importance attached to this sign of sovereignty see in my Pilgrimage (ii. 218-19) the trouble caused by the loss of the Prophet's seal-ring (Khátim) at Al-Madinah.

[164] The text is somewhat doubtful— "Min kuddám-ak." [Perhaps it means only "from before thee," i.e. in thy presence, without letting him out of sight and thereby giving him a chance of escape. — ST.]

[165] This especially is on the lines of “The Physician Dúbán”; vol. i. 45.

[166] In text “Wa min-hum man fáha,” evidently an error of the scribe for “Man nafáhu.” Scott (vi. 351), after the fashion of the “Improver-school,” ends the tale, which is somewhat tail-less, after this fashion, “At the same instant, the Sultan and his courtiers found themselves assaulted by invisible agents, who, tearing off their robes, whipped them with scourges till the blood flowed in streams from their lacerated backs. At length the punishment ceased, but the mortification of the Sultan did not end here, for all the gold which the Dirveshe had transmuted returned to its original metals. Thus, by his unjust credulity, was a weak Prince punished for his ungrateful folly. The barber and his son also were not to be found, so that the sultan could gain no intelligence of the Dirveshe, and he and his courtiers became the laughing-stock of the populace for years after their merited chastisement.” Is nothing to be left for the reader’s imagination?

[167] See under the same name the story in my Suppl. vol. i. 162; where the genealogy and biography of the story is given. I have translated the W.M. version because it adds a few items of interest. A marginal note of Scott’s (in the W.M. MS. v. 196) says that the “Tale is similar to Lesson iv. in the Tirrea Bede.” See note at the end of this History.

[168] For the Badawí tent, see vol. vii. 109.

[169] In text “Birkah” = a fountain-basin, lake, pond, reservoir. The Bresl. Edit. has “Sardáb” = a souterrain.

[170] Arab. “Jummayz”: see vol. iii. 302. In the Bresl. Edit. it is a “tall tree,” and in the European versions always a “pear-tree,” which is not found in Badawi-land.

[171] “Adí” in Egyptian (not Arabic) is = that man, the (man) here; “Adíní” (in the text) is = Here am I, me voici. Spitta Bey (loc. cit. iv. 20, etc.)

[172] Arab. “Ma’múrah.” In the Bresl. Edit. “the place is full of Jinns and Marids.” I have said that this supernatural agency, ever at hand and ever credible to Easterns, makes this the most satisfactory version of the world-wide tale.

[173] The planet Mars.

[174] The Asiatics have a very contemptible opinion of the Russians, especially of the females, whom they believe to be void of common modesty. Our early European voyagers have expressed the same idea. — Scott.

[175] i.e. having enjoyed the woman. — R.F.B.

[176] The reader will doubtless recollect the resemblance which the plot of this lesson bears to Pope’s January and May, and to one of Fontaine’s Tales. Eenaiut Olla acknowledges his having borrowed it from the Brahmins, from whom it may have travelled through some voyage to Europe many centuries past, or probably having been translated in Arabic or Persian, been brought by some crusader, as were many Asiatic romances, which have served as the groundwork of many of our old stories and poems. — Scott.

[177] In Scott (vi. 352) “Adventures of Aleefa and Eusuff.” This long and somewhat longsome history is by another pen, which is distinguished from the ordinary text by constant attempts at fine writing, patches of Saj’a or prose-rhyme and profuse poetry, mostly doggerel. I recommend it to the student as typically Arabian with its preponderance of verse over prose, its threadbare patches made to look meaner by the purpureus pannus; its immoderate repetition and its utter disregard of order and sequence. For the rest it is unedited and it strikes me as a sketch of adventure calculated to charm the Fellah-audience of a coffee-house, whose delight would be brightened by the normal accompaniment of a tambourine or a Rabábah, the one-stringed viol.

[178] This P. N. has occurred in vol. vi. 8, where I have warned readers that it must not be confounded with the title

“Maháráj” = Great Rajah. Scott (vi. 352) writes “Mherejaun,” and Gauttier (vi. 380) “Myr-djyhan” (Mír Jahán = Lord Life).

[179] I need not inform the civilised reader that this “feeling conception” is unknown except in tales.

[180] i.e. “The Slim-waisted.” Scott (vi. 352) persistently corrupts the name to “Aleefa,” and Gauttier (vi. 380) follows suit with “Alifa.”

[181] In text “Al-Istikhráj,” i.e. making “elegant extracts.”

[182] These lines are the merest doggerel of a strolling Ráwí, like all the pičces d’occasion in this MS.

[183] Which are still worse: two couplets rhyme in ání, and one in álí, which is not lawful.

[184] In text “Dayr Nashshábah,” a fancy name.

[185] So in text: the name is unknown to me; its lit. meaning would be, “of high-breasted Virgins.”

[186] In text “Al-Jay’a” which is a well-omened stone like the ‘Akík = carnelian. The Arabs still retain our medićval superstitions concerning precious stones, and of these fancies I will quote a few. The ruby appeases thirst, strengthens cardiac action and averts plague and “thunderbolts.” The diamond heals diseases, and is a specific against epilepsy or the “possession” by evil spirits: this is also the specialty of the emerald, which, moreover, cures ophthalmia and the stings of scorpions and bites of venomous reptiles, blinding them if placed before their eyes. The turquoise is peculiarly auspicious, abating fascination, strengthening the sight, and, if worn in a ring, increasing the milk of nursing mothers: hence the blue beads hung as necklaces to cattle. The topaz (being yellow) is a prophylactic against jaundice and bilious diseases. The bloodstone when shown to men in rage causes their wrath to depart: it arrests hemorrhage, heals toothache, preserves from bad luck, and is a pledge of long life and happiness. The “cat’s-eye” nullifies Al-Ayn =

malign influence by the look, and worn in battle makes the wearer invisible to his foe. This is but a “fist-full out of a donkey-load,” as the Persians say: the subject is a favourite with Eastern writers.

[187] Or white lead: in the text it is “Sapídaj,” corresponding with the “Isfidaj” of vol. vi. 126.

[188] In the text “Bashkhánah”; corr. of the Pers.
“Peshkhánah” = state-tents sent forward on the march.

[189] This phrase, twice repeated, is the regular formula of the Ráwí or professional reciter; he most unjustifiably, however, neglects the “Inshallah.”

[190] The revetment of the old wells in Arabia is mostly of dry masonry.

[191] [Ar. “Tawáníís,” with a long final to rhyme with
“Kawádís,” instead of the usual “Tawánis,” pl. of “Taunas,” which Dozy (Suppl. s.v.) identifies with the Greek t???? in the sense of cable. — ST.]

[192] In Arab. “Hajárata ‘l-Bahramán.”

[193] In text “Zamakú-há.”

[194] I can see little pertinence in this couplet: but that is not a sine quâ non amongst Arabs. Perhaps, however, the Princess understands that she is in a gorgeous prison and relieves her heart by a cunning hint.

[195] I again omit “Saith the Reciter of this marvellous relation,” a formula which occurs with unpleasant reiteration.

[196] i.e. she cried “Astaghfiru ‘llah” (which strangers usually pronounce “Astaffira ‘llah”); a pious exclamation, humbling oneself before the Creator, and used in a score of different senses, which are not to be found in the dictionaries.

[197] In vol. viii. 183, there are two couplets of which the first is here repeated.

[198] [Here the translator seems to read “Khams Ghaffár,” = five pardoners,where however, grammar requires a plural after “khams.” I take “khams” to be a clerical error for “Khamr” = wine, and read the next word “‘ukár,” which is another name for wine, but is also used adjectively together with the former, as in the Breslau Edition iv. 6 “al-Khamr al-’ukár” = choice wine. — ST.]

[199] I understand this as the cupbearer who delights the five senses.

[200] In the original we have, “Saith the Sayer of this delectable narrative, the strange and seld-seen (and presently we will return to the relation full and complete with its sense suitable and its style admirable), anent what befel and betided of Destinies predestinate and the will of the Lord preordinate which He decreed and determined to His creatures.” I have omitted it for uniformity’s sake.

[201] Meaning “The easy-tempered.” Scott (vi. 354) writes “Sohul.”

[202] In text “Litám” = the mouth-band for man: ii. 31, etc. The “Mutalathsimín” in North Africa are the races, like the Tawárik, whose males wear this face-swathe of cloth.

[203] “Drowned in her blood,” says the text which to us appears hyperbole run mad. So when King Omar (vol. ii. 123) violently rapes the unfortunate Princess Abrízah “the blood runs down the calves of her legs.” This is not ignorance, but that systematic exaggeration which is held necessary to impressionise an Oriental audience.

[204] For this allusion see vol. v. 191.

[205] This physical sign of delight in beauty is not recognised in the literature of Europe, and The Nights usually attributes it to old women.

[206] In text “Himŕ” = the private and guarded lands of a Badawi tribe; viii. 102.

[207] In text “Daylakí.”

[208] A small compact white turband and distinctive sign of the True Believers: see vol. viii. 8.

[209] [The words in the text seem to be: “wa Talattuf Alfázak wa Ma’áník al-hisán” = and for the pleasingness of thy sayings and meanings so fine and fair. — ST.]

[210] [The Arabic seems here to contain a pun, the consonantic outline of “Tasht” = “basin” being the same as of “tashshat” = she was raining, sprinkling. — ST.]

[211] In Arab. “Yá Wárid”: see vol. iii. 56.

[212] The growing beard and whisker being compared with black letters on a white ground.

[213] In the text these seven couplets form one quotation, although the first three rhyme in — úru and the second four in — íru.

[214] This “diapedesis” of bloodstained tears is frequently mentioned in The Nights; and the “Bloody Sweat” is well-known by name. The disease is rare and few have seen it whilst it has a certain quasi-supernatural sound from the “Agony and bloody sweat” in the Garden of Gethsemane. But the exudation of blood from the skin was described by Theophrastus and Aristotle and lastly by Lucan in these lines: —

— Sic omnia membra
Emisere simul rutilum pro sanguine virus.
Sanguis erant lachrymć, etc.

Of Charles IX. of France Mezaray declares “Le sang lui rejaillait par les pores et tous les conduits de son corps,” but the superstitious

Protestant holds this to be a “judgment.” The same historian also mentions the phenomenon in a governor condemned to die; and Lombard in the case of a general after losing a battle and a nun seized by banditti — blood oozed from every pore. See Dr. Millingen’s “Curiosities of Medical Experience,” , London, Bentley, 1839.

[215] [I read this line: “Fí Hayyi-kum Taflatun|háma ‘l-Fawádu bi-há (Basít)” and translate: In your clan there is a maiden of whom my heart is enamoured. In the beginning of the next line the metre requires “tazakkarat,” which therefore refers to “Aghsun,” not to the speaker: “the branches remember (and by imitating her movements show that they remember) the time when she bent aside, and her bending, graceful beyond compare, taught me that her eyes kept watch over the rose of her cheek and knew how to protect it from him who might wish to cull it.” This little gem of a Mawwál makes me regret that so many of the snatches of poetry in this MS. are almost hopelessly corrupted. — ST.]

[216] In the text “Simá’a,” lit. hearing, applied idiomatically to the ecstasy of Darwayshes when listening to esoteric poetry.

[217] The birds mentioned in the text are the “Kumrí” (turtle-dove), the “Shabaytar” [also called “Samaytar” and “Abu al-’Ayzar” = the father of the brisk one, a long-necked water bird of the heron kind. — ST.], the Shuhrúr (in MS. Suhrúr) = a blackbird [the Christians in Syria call St. Paul “Shuhrúr al-Kanísah,” the blackbird of the Church, on account of his eloquence. — ST.], the “Karawán,” crane or curlew (Charadrius ćdicnemus) vol. vi. 1; the “Hazár;” nightingale or bird of a thousand songs, vol. v. 48; the “Hamám,” ruffed pigeon, culver, vol. v. 49; the “Katá,” or sandgrouse, vols. i. 131, iv. 111, etc.; and the “Sammán” or quail, Suppl. vol. vi. 66.

[218] The “Sá’ah,” I may here remark, is the German Stunde, our old “Stound,” somewhat indefinite but meaning to the good Moslem the spaces between prayer times. The classical terms, Al-Zuhŕ (undurn-hour, or before noon) and Maghrib = set of sun, become in Badawi

speech Al-Ghaylah = siesta-time and Ghaybat al-Shams. (Doughty, index.)

[219] For the beautiful song of the lute, referred to here, see vol. viii. 281.

[220] Alluding to the "Takht Raml," table of sand, geomantic table?

[221] As before noted, her love enables her to deal in a somewhat of prophetic strain.

[222] This scene may sound absurd; but it is admirable for its materialism. How often do youthful lovers find an all-sufficient pastime in dressing themselves up and playing the game of mutual admiration. It is well nigh worthy of that "silliest and best of love-stories" — Henrietta Temple.

[223] The text bluntly says "Wa Nikáh," which can mean nothing else.

[224] Scott calls him "Yiah": vi. 354.

[225] Arab. "Akhbarú-hu," alluding to the lord Yahyŕ.

[226] Here I presume a "Kála" (quoth he) is omitted; for the next sentence seems appropriate to Yusuf.

[227] In Arab. "Tastaghís" = lit. crying out "Wa Ghausáh" — Ho, to my aid!

[228] The "Zug" or draught which gave him rheumatism — not a romantic complaint for a young lover. See vol. ii. 9. But his power of sudden invention is somewhat enviable, and lying is to him, in Hindustani phrase, "easy as drinking water."

[229] Who evidently ignored or had forgotten the little matter of the concubine, so that incident was introduced by the story-teller for mere wantonness.

[230] In text "Mazbúh" = slaughtered for food.

[231] i.e. “I suffer from an acute attack of rheumatism” — a complaint common in even the hottest climates.

[232] Needless to say that amongst Moslems, as amongst Christians, the Israelite medicine-man has always been a favourite, despite an injunction in the “Díním” (Religious Considerations) of the famous Andalusian Yúsuf Caro. This most fanatical work, much studied at Tiberias and Safet (where a printing-press was established in the xvith century) decides that a Jewish doctor called to attend a Goi (Gentile) too poor to pay him is bound to poison his patient — if he safely can.

[233] Lit. “The-Bull-(Taur for Thaur or Saur)numbered-and-for-battle-day-lengthened.” In p.30 this charger is called, “The-bull-that-spurneth-danger-on-battle-day.” See vol. vi. 270 for a similar compound name, The-Ghul-who-eateth-man-we-pray-Allah-for-safety.

[234] In text “Al-Járiyah rádih,” the latter word being repeated in p.282, where it is Rádih a P.N. [Here also I would take it for a P.N., for if it were adjective to “al-Járiyah” it should have the article. — ST.]

[235] The “Radíf,” or back-rider, is common in Arabia, esp. on dromedaries when going to the Razzia: usually the crupper-man loads the matchlock and his comrade fires it.

[236] The text has “thirty,” evidently a clerical error.

[237] Arab. “Sakhtúr” for “Shakhtúr,” vol. vii. 362.

[238] Doggerel fit only for the coffee-house.

[239] In text “Ta’ayyun” = influence, especially by the “‘Ayn,” or (Evil) Eye.

[240] I have somewhat abridged the confession of the Princess, who carefully repeats every word known to the reader. This iteration is no objection in the case of a coffee-house audience to whom the tale is

told bit by bit, but it is evidently unsuited for reading.

[241] In text “Irham turham:” this is one of the few passive verbs still used in popular parlance.

[242] This formula will be in future suppressed.

[243] I spare my readers the full formula:— “Yúsuf took it and brake the seal (fazza-hu) and read it and comprehended its contents and purport and significance: and, after perusing it,” etc. These forms, decies repetitć, may go down with an Eastern audience, but would be intolerable in a Western volume. The absence of padding, however, reduces the story almost to a patchwork of doggerel rhymes, for neither I nor any man can “make a silk purse from a suille ear.”

[244] Here again in full we have:— “He mounted the she-camel and fared and ceased not faring until he drew near to the Palace of Al-Hayfá, where he dismounted and concealed his dromedary within the same cave. Then he swam the stream until he had reached the Castle and here he landed and appeared before Al-Hayfá,” etc.

[245] “’Tis dogged as does it” was the equivalent expression of our British Aristotle; the late Charles Darwin.

[246] Arab. “Jannat al-Khuld” = the Eternal Garden: vol. ix. 214.

[247] [I read: Wa inní la-ar’ákum wa ar’ŕ widáda-kum, wa-hakki-kumú antum a’azzu ‘l-Warŕ ‘andí = And I make much of you and of your love; by your rights (upon me, formula of swearing), you are to me the dearest of mankind. — ST.]

[248] In text: “He swam the stream and bestrode his she-camel.”

[249] In text “Then she folded the letter and after sealing it,” etc.

[250] Not “her hands” after Christian fashion.

[251] In text, “Ahyaf,” alluding to Al-Hayfá.

[252] Arab. "Al-Kawá'ib," also P. N. of the river.

[253] This is moralising with a witness, and all it means is "handsome is that handsome does."

[254] In text "'Arsh" = the Ninth Heaven; vol. v.167.

[255] The Shi'ah doctrine is here somewhat exaggerated.

[256] "Them" for "her," as has often occurred.

[257] In the original "entrusted to her the missive:" whereas the letter is delivered afterwards.

[258] The cloud (which contains rain) is always typical of liberality and generous dealing.

[259] The Koranic chapt. No. xx., revealed at Meccah and recounting the (apocryphal) history of Moses.

[260] The "broken" (wall) to the North of the Ka'abah:
Pilgrimage iii. 165.

[261] i.e. "Delight of the Age:" see vol. ii. 81.

[262] In the text written "Imriyyu 'l-Kays": for this pre-Islamitic poet see Term. Essay, . "The Man of Al-Kays" or worshipper of the Priapus-idol was a marking figure in Arabian History. The word occurs, with those of Aera, Dusares (Theos Ares), Martabu, Allat and Manát in the Nabathćan (Arabian) epigraphs brought by Mr. Doughty from Arabia Deserta (vol. i. p-184).

[263] In text "Zakka," which means primarily a bird feeding her young.

[264] In the text "months and years," the latter seeming de trop.

[265] Or "Yathrib" = Al-Madinah; vol. iv. 114.

[266] Scott (vi. 358 et seqq.) who makes Ali bin Ibrahim, "a faithful

eunuch," renders the passage, "by some accident the eunuch's turban unfortunately falling off, the precious stones (N.B. the lovers' gift) which, with a summary of the adventures (!) of Eusuff and Aleefa, and his own embassy to Sind, were wrapped in the folds, tumbled upon the floor."

[267] i.e. "Drawer-out of Descriptions."

[268] i.e. a Refuser, a Forbidder.

[269] i.e. both could not be seen at the same time.

[270] [The MS. has T Kh D H, which the translator reads "takhuz-hu." I suspect that either the second or eighth form of "ahad" is meant, in the sense that thou comest to an agreement (Ittihád) with him. — ST.]

[271] In the MS. v. 327, we find four hemistichs which evidently belong to Al-Mihrján; these are: —

Hadst come to court her in fairer guise * I had given Al-Hayfá in bestest style;
But in mode like this hast thou wrought me wrong * And made Envy gibe me with jeering smile."

Also I have been compelled to change the next sentence, which in the original is, "And hardly had King Al-Mihrján ended his words," etc.

[272] In this doggerel, "Kurúd" (apes) occurs as a rhyme twice in three couplets.

[273] "Upon the poll of his head" ('alŕ hámati-hi) says the Arabian author, and instantly stultifies the words.

[274] Arab. "Haudaj" = a camel-litter: the word, often corrupted to Hadáj, is now applied to a rude pack-saddle, a wooden frame of mimosa-timber set upon a "witr" or pad of old tent-cloth, stuffed

with grass and girt with a single cord. Vol. viii. 235, Burckhardt gives “Maksar,” and Doughty (i. 437) “Muksir” as the modern Badawi term for the crates or litters in which are carried the Shaykhly housewives.

[275] In text “Sunnah” = the practice, etc., of the Prophet: vol. v. 36, 167.

[276] This, as the sequel shows, is the far-famed Musician,
Ibrahim of Mosul: vol. vii. 113.

[277] In the text King of Al-Sín = China, and in of MS. Yusuf is made “King of China and Sind,” which would be much like “King of Germany and Brentford.”

[278] This is the full formula repeated in the case of all the ten blessed damsels. I have spared the patience of my readers.

[279] This formula of the cup and lute is decies repetita, justifying abbreviation.

[280] i.e. The Beginner, the Originator.

[281] The Zephyr, or rather the cool north breeze of upper
Arabia, vol. viii. 62.

[282] The “Full Moon”; plur. Budúr: vols. iii., 228, iv., 249.

[283] “Dann” = amphora, Gr. ?l’f??e?? short for ?l’f?f??e?? = having two handles.

[284] “The large-hipped,” a form of Rádih.

[285] In text “Minba’ada-hu” making Jesus of later date than
Imr al-Kays.

[286] i.e. “The Delight”: also a P.N. of one of the Heavens: vols. iii. 19; iv. 143.

[287] i.e. Joy, Contentment.

[288] In text "Lá khuzibat Ayday al-Firák," meaning, "may separation never ornament herself in sign of gladness at the prospect of our parting." For the Khazíb-dye see vol. iii. 105.

[289] i.e. "Bloom of the Tribe." "Zahrat" = a blossom especially yellow and commonly applied to orange-flower. In line 10 of the same page the careless scribe calls the girl "Jauharat (Gem) of the Tribe."

[290] For this Hell, see vol. viii. 111.

[291] "Core" or "Life-blood of Hearts."

[292] Presently explained.

[293] In text "Afrákh al-Jinn," lit. = Chicks of the Jinns, a mere vulgarism: see "Farkh 'Akrab," vol. iv. 46.

[294] "Ibráa" = deliverance from captivity, etc. Yá = í, and Mím = m, composing the word "Ibrahím." The guttural is concealed in the Hamzah of Ibráa, a good illustration of Dr. Steingass's valuable remarks in Terminal Essay, p, 236.

[295] "Kalím" = one who speaks with another, a familiar. Moses' title is Kalímu'llah on account of the Oral Law and certain conversations at Mount Sinai.

[296] In text "Istífá" = choice, selection: hence Mustafŕ = the Chosen Prophet, Mohammed; vols i. 7; ii. 40.

[297] In text "Jazr" = cutting, strengthening, flow (of tide).

[298] In the text "Náfishah" = Pers. "Náfah," derived, I presume, from the {root} "Náf" = belly or testicle, the part which in the musk-deer was supposed to store up the perfume.

[299] For 'Nahávand," the celebrated site in Al-Irak where the Persians sustained their final defeat at the hands of the Arabs A.H. 21. It is

also one of the many musical measures, like the Ispaháni, the Rásti, the Rayháni, the Búsalik, the Navá, etc., borrowed from the conquered ‘Ajamí.

[300] This second half of the story is laid upon the lines of “The Man of Al-Yaman and his six Slave-girls”: vol. iv. 245.

[301] This history again belongs to the class termed “Abtar = tailless. In the text we find for all termination, “After this he (Yúsuf) invited Mohammed ibn Ibrahim to lie that night in the palace.” Scott (vi. 364) ends after his own fashion:— “They (the ten girls) recited extempore verses before the caliph, but the subject of each was so expressive of their wish to return to their beloved sovereign, and delivered in so affecting a manner, that Mamoon, though delighted with their wit and beauty, sacrificed his own pleasure to their feelings, and sent them back to Eusuff by the officer who carried the edict, confirming him in his dominions, where the prince of Sind and the fair Aleefa continued long, amid a numerous progeny, to live the protectors of their happy subjects.”

[302] This tale is headless as the last is tailless. We must suppose that soon after Mohammed ibn Ibrahim had quitted the Caliph, taking away the ten charmers, Al-Maamun felt his “breast straitened” and called for a story upon one of his Ráwís named Ibn Ahyam. This name is repeated in the text and cannot be a clerical error for Ibn Ibrahim.

[303] Scott (vi. 366) “Adventures of the Three Princes, sons of the Sultan of China.”

[304] In the text “‘Ajam,” for which see vol. i. 2, 120. Al-Irak, I may observe, was the head-quarters of the extensive and dangerous Khárijite heresy; and like Syria has ever a bad name amongst orthodox Moslems.

[305] In the Arab. “Salkh,” meaning also a peculiar form of circumcision, for which see Pilgrimage iii. 80-81. The Jew’s condition was of course a trick, presenting an impossibility and

intended as a mere pretext for murdering an enemy to his faith. Throughout the Eastern world this idea prevails, and both Sir Moses Montefiore and M. Cremieux were utterly at fault and certainly knew it when they declared that Europe was teaching it to Asia. Every Israelite community is bound in self-defence, when the murder of a Christian child or adult is charged upon any of its members, to court the most searching enquiry and to abate the scandal with all its might.

[306] The text has "Fí Kíb," which Scott (vol. vi. 367) renders "a mat." [According to the Muhít "Kíb" is a small thick mat used to produce shade, pl. "Kiyáb" and "Akyáb." The same authority says the word is of Persian origin, but this seems an error, unless it be related to "Keb" with the Yá majhúl, which in the Appendix to the Burháni Káti' is given as synonymous with "Pech," twist, fold. Under "Bardí" = papyrus the Muhít mentions that this is the material from which the mats known by the name of "Akyáb" are made. — ST.]

[307] The text has here "Wasayah," probably a clerical error for "wa Miah" (spelt "Máyah"), and a hundred pair of pigeons. — ST.]

[308] Showing utter ignorance of the Jewish rite which must always be performed by the Mohel, an official of the Synagogue duly appointed by the Sheliach = legatus; and within eight days after birth. The rite consists of three operations. Milah = the cut; Priah = tearing the foreskin and Mezzízah = applying styptics to the wound. The latter process has become a matter of controversy and the Israelite community of Paris, headed by the Chief Rabbi, M. Zadoc Kahin, has lately assembled to discuss the question. For the difference between Jewish and Moslem circumcision see vol. v. 209.

[309] The Jewish quarter (Hárah), which the Israelites themselves call "Hazer," = a court-yard, an inclosure. In Mayer's valuable "Conversations-Lexicon" the Italian word is derived from the Talmudic "Ghet" = divorce, separation (as parting the Hebrews from the rest of the population) and the Rev. S. R. Melli, Chief Rabbi of Trieste, has kindly informed me that the word is Chaldaic.

[310] [Ar. “Sarmújah,” from Persian “Sar-múzah,” a kind of hose or gaiter worn over a boot. — ST.]

[311] [Arab. “Yastanít,” aor. to the preter. “istanat,” which has been explained, . — ST.]

[312] The bed would be made of a carpet or thin mattress strewn upon the stucco flooring of the terrace-roof. But the ignorant scribe overlooks the fact that by Mosaic law every Jewish house must have a parapet for the “Sakf” (flat roof), a precaution neglected by Al-Islam.

[313] Good old classical English. In the “Breeches Bible” (A.D. 1586) we read, “But a certaine woman cast a piece of millstone upon Abimelech’s head and broke his brain-panne” (Judges ix. 33).

[314] [The words “‘Irz,” protection, in the preceding sentence, “Hurmah” and “Shatáráh” explain each other mutually. The formula “fí ‘irzak” (vulg. “arzak”), I place myself under thy protection, implies an appeal to one’s honour (“‘Irz”). Therefore the youth says: “Inna házih Hurmah lam ‘alay-há Shatárah,” i.e. “Truly this one is a woman” (in the emphatic sense of a sacred or forbidden object; “this woman” would be “házih al-Hurmah”), “I must not act vilely or rashly towards her,” both vileness and rashness belonging to the many significations of “Shatárah,” which is most usually “cleverness.” — ST.]

[315] In the text “Sind,” still confounding this tale with the preceding.

[316] In text “Intihába ‘l furas,” lit. = the snatching of opportunities, a jingle with “Kanas.”

[317] [Compare with this episode the viith of Spitta Bey’s
Tales: Histoire du Prince qui apprit un métier. — ST.]

[318] i.e. enables a man to conceal the pressure of impecuniosity.

[319] In text “Al-Sádah wa al-Khatáyát.”

[320] Subaudi, “that hath not been pierced.” “The first night,” which is often so portentous a matter in England and upon the Continent (not of North America), is rarely treated as important by Orientals. A long theoretical familiarity with the worship of Venus

Leaves not much mystery for the nuptial night.

Such lore has been carefully cultivated by the “young person” with the able assistance of the ancient dames of the household, of her juvenile companions and co-evals and especially of the slave-girls. Moreover not a few Moslems, even Egyptians, the most lecherous and salacious of men, in all ranks of life from prince to peasant take a pride in respecting the maiden for a few nights after the wedding-feast extending, perhaps to a whole week and sometimes more. A brutal haste is looked upon as “low”; and, as sensible men, they provoke by fondling and toying Nature to speak ere proceeding to the final and critical act. In England it is very different. I have heard of brides over thirty years old who had not the slightest suspicion concerning what complaisance was expected of them: out of mauvaise honte, the besetting sin of the respectable classes, neither mother nor father would venture to enlighten the elderly innocents. For a delicate girl to find a man introducing himself into her bedroom and her bed, the shock must be severe and the contact of hirsute breast and hairy limbs with a satiny skin is a strangeness which must often breed loathing and disgust. Too frequently also, instead of showing the utmost regard for virginal modesty and innocence (alias ignorance), the bridegroom will not put a check upon his passions and precipitates matters with the rage of the bull, ruentis in venerem. Even after he hears “the cry” which, as the Arabs say, “must be cried,” he has no mercy: the newly made woman lies quivering with mental agitation and physical pain, which not a few describe as resembling the tearing out of a back-tooth, and yet he insists upon repeating the operation, never supposing in his stupidity, that time must pass before the patient can have any sensation of pleasure and before the glories and delights of the sensual orgasm bathe her soul in bliss. Hence complaints, dissatisfaction, disgust, mainly caused by the man’s fault, and hence not unfrequently a permanent distaste for the act of carnal congress. All women are by no means equally capable of such enjoyment, and not a few have become mothers of many children without ever being or becoming thoroughly reconciled to it. Especially in the case of highly nervous temperaments — and these seem to be increasing in the United States and notably in New England — the fear of nine months’ pains and penalties makes the sex averse to the “deed of kind.” The first child is perhaps welcomed, the second is an unpleasant prospect and there is a firm resolve not to conceive a third. But such conjugal chastity is incompatible, except in the case of “married saints,” with a bon ménage. The husband, scandalised and offended by the rejection and refusal of the wife, will seek a substitute more complaisant; and the spouse also may “by the decree of Destiny” happen to meet the right man, the man for whom and for whom only every woman will sweep the floor. And then adieu to prudence and virtue, honour and fair fame. For, I repeat, it is the universal custom of civilised and Christian Europeans to plant their womankind upon a pedestal exposed as butts to every possible temptation: and, if they fall, as must often be expected, to assail them with obloquy and contempt for succumbing to trials imposed upon them by the stronger and less sensitive sex. Far more sensible and practical, by the side of these high idealists, shows the Moslem who guards his jewel with jealous care and who, if his “honour,” despite every precaution, insist upon disgracing him, draws the sabre and cuts her down with the general approbation and applause of society.

[321] [Arab. “‘Alŕ ghayri tarík,” which I would translate “out of the way,” like the Persian “bí-Ráh.” — ST.]

[322] In text “Kababjí” (for Kabábji) seller of Kabábs, mutton or kid grilled in small squares and skewered: see vol. vi. 225.

[323] In text “Sujjádah;” vol. vi. 193.

[324] In text “Faddah” all through.

[325] In text “Kirsh” (= piastre) a word before explained. See Lane (M.E.) Appendix B.

[326] In Arab. “Samár;” from the Pers. “Sumar” = a reed, a rush.

[327] In Arab. “Díwán:” vols. vii. 340; ix. 108.

[328] Scott has (vol. vi. 373), “The desired articles were furnished, and the Sultan setting to work, in a few days finished a mat, in which he ingeniously contrived to plait in flowery characters, known only to himself and his vizier, the account of his situation.”

[329] In Arab. “Ghirárah” (plur. “Gharáír”) = a sack. In Ibn Khall. (iv. p, 104) it is a large sack for grain and the especial name of a tax on corn.

[330] In the text “Mohammed ibn Ibrahim,” another confusion with the last tale. This story is followed in the MS. by (1) “The History of the First Brave,” (2) “The History of the Second Brave,” and “The Tale of the Noodle and his Asses,” which I have omitted because too feeble for insertion.

[331] Scott (vi.375) “Story of the Good Vizier unjustly imprisoned.” Gauttier (vi. 394) Histoire du bon Vizier injustement emprisonné.

[332] This detail has no significance, though perhaps its object may be to affect the circumstantial, a favourite manuvre with the Ráwí. [It may mean that the prisoner had to pass through seven gates before reaching it, to indicate its formidable strength and the hopelessness of all escape, except perhaps by a seven-warded, or as the Arabs would say, a seven-pinned key of gold. In the modern tale mentioned on the kidnapped Prince and his Wazir are made to pass “through one door after the other until seven doors were passed,” to emphasise the utter seclusion of their hiding place. — ST.]

[333] i.e. the mats and mattresses, rugs and carpets, pillows and cushions which compose the chairs, tables and beds of a well-to-do Eastern lodging.

[334] The pretext was natural. Pious Moslems often make such vows and sometimes oblige themselves to feed the street dogs with good

bread.

[335] In text “Min hakk házá ‘l-Kalám sahíh.”

[336] In text “Káík” and “Káík-jí,” the well-known caďque of the Bosphorus, a term which bears a curious family resemblance to the “Kayak” of the Eskimos.

[337] Here coffee is mentioned without tobacco, whereas in more modern days the two are intimately connected. And the reason is purely hygienic. Smoking increases the pulsations without strengthening them, and depresses the heart-action with a calming and soothing effect. Coffee, like alcohol, affects the circulation in the reverse way by exciting it through the nervous system; and not a few authorities advise habitual smokers to end the day and prepare for rest with a glass of spirits and water. It is to be desired that the ignorants who write about “that filthy tobacco” would take the trouble to observe its effects on a large scale, and not base the strongest and extremest opinions, as is the wont of the Anglo-Saxon Halb-bildung, upon the narrowest and shakiest of bases. In Egypt, India and other parts of the Eastern world they will find nicotiana used by men, women and children, of all ranks and ages; and the study of these millions would greatly modify the results of observing a few hundreds at home. But, as in the case of opium-eating, populus vult decipi, the philanthrope does not want to know the truth, indeed he shrinks from it and loathes it. All he cares for is his own especial “fad.”

[338] Arab. “Fínjál” systematically repeated for “Finján” pronounced in Egypt “Fingán” see vol. viii. 200. [The plural “Fanájíl,” pronounced “Fanágíl,” occurs in Spitta Bey’s Contes Arabes Modernes, , and in his Grammar, , the same author states that the forms “Fingán” and “Fingál” are used promiscuously. — ST.]

[339] For the “Khaznah” (Khazínah) or 10,000 kís each = Ł5, see vols. ii. 84; iii. 278.

[340] A euphuism meaning some disaster. The text contains a favourite

incident in folklore; the first instance, I believe, being that of Polycrates of Samos according to Herodotus (lib. iii. 41-42). The theory is supported after a fashion by experience amongst all versed in that melancholy wisdom the “knowledge of the world.” As Syr Cauline the knight philosophically says: —

Everye white will have its blacke,
And everye sweete its sowre: etc.

[341] Thus making the food impure and unfit for a religious Moslem to eat. Scott (vi. 378) has “when a huge rat running from his hole leaped into the dish which was placed upon the floor.” He is probably thinking of the East Indian “bandycoot.”

[342] In text this tale concludes, “It is ended and this (next) is the History of the Barber.”

[343] A dandy, a macaroni, from the Turk. Chelebi, see vol. i. 22. Here the word is thoroughly Arabised. In old Turk. it means, a Prince of the blood; in mod. times a gentleman, Greek or European.

[344] In the text “Úzbáshá” or “Uzbáshá,” a vile Egyptianism for Yúzbáshi = head of a hundred (men), centurion, captain.

[345] Scil. the household, the Harem, etc. As usual, the masc. is used for the fem.

[346] [Ar. “Al-Rashákah,” a word is not found in the common lexicons. In Dozy and “Engelmann’s Glossary of Spanish and Portuguese words derived from the Arabic,” it is said to be a fork with three prongs, here probably a hat-stand in the shape of such a fork. — ST.]

[347] In text “Shá’il” copyist’s error for “Shághil,” act. part. of “Shughl” = business, affairs. [Here it stands probably for the fuller “Shughl shághil,” an urgent business. — ST.]

[348] In text “Yá ‘Ars, yá Mu’arras”: vol. i. 338.

[349] In Syria most houses have a rain cistern or tank into which the terrace-roof drains and which looks from above like a well with a cover. The water must have been low when the lover hid himself in the reservoir.

[350] [In the MS. “Min Hakk la-hu Asl an ‘and-ná huná Rájil,” a thoroughly popular phrase. “Min Hakk” and “min Hakkan,” where in the adverbial meaning of Hakkan its grammatical form as an accusative is so far forgotten that it allows itself to be governed by the preposition “min,” is rendered by Bocthor “tout de bon,” “sérieusement.” “Asl” = root has here the meaning of foundation in fact. The literal translation of the passage would therefore be: “Forsooth, is there any truth in it that a man is here in our house?” “Min Hakk” has occurred page 235, where the text, quoted in the note, may perhaps be translated: “Of a truth, is this saying soothfast?” — ST.]

[351] [The MS. has: “Yá Gháratí a-Zay má huná Rájil;” “Yá Gháratí” will recur presently, , along with “yá Musíbatí” = Oh my calamity! I take it therefore to be an exclamation of distress from “Ghárat” = invasion, with its incidents of devastation, rapine and ruin. It would be the natural outcry of the women left helpless in an unprotected camp when invaded by a hostile tribe. In “a-Zay má” the latter particle is not the negative, but the pronoun, giving to “a-Zay” = “in what manner,” “how ?” the more emphatical sense of “how ever?” In the same sense we find it again, infra, Night 754, “a-Zay má tafútní” = how canst thou quit me? I would therefore render: “Woe me I am undone, how ever should there be a man here?” or something to that purpose. — ST.]

[352] In Persian he would be called “Parí-stricken,” — smitten by the Fairies.

[353] A quarter-staff (vols. i, 234; viii. 186) opp. to the “Dabbús,” or club-stick of the Badawin, the Caffres’ “Knob- kerry,” which is also called by the Arabs “Kaná,” pron. “Ganá.”

[354] Scott's "Story of the Lady of Cairo and her four Gallants" (vol. vi. 380): Gauttier, Histoire d' une Dame du Caire et de ses Galans (vi. 400). This tale has travelled over the Eastern world. See in my vol. vi. 172 "The Lady and her Five Suitors," and the "Story of the Merchant's Wife and her Suitors" in Scott's "Tales, Anecdotes, and Letters" (Cadell, London, 1800), which is in fact a garbled version of the former, introduced into the répertoire of "The Seven Wazírs." I translate the W. M. version of the tale because it is the most primitive known to me; and I shall point out the portions where it lacks finish.

[355] This title does not appear till (vol. v.) of the
MS., and it re-appears in vol. vi. 8.

[356] i.e. in her haste: the text has "Kharrat." The Persians who rhetorically exaggerate everything say "rising and sinking like the dust of the road." [I doubt whether "Kharrat" could have the meaning given to it in the translation. The word in the MS. has no Tashdíd and I think the careless scribe meant it for "Kharajat," she went out. — ST.]

[357] I read "Nás malmúmín = assembled men, a crowd of people." — ST.]

[358] "Rajul Khwájá:" see vol. vi. 46, etc. For "Sháhbandar" = king of the port, a harbour-master, whose post I have compared with our "Consul," see vol. iv. 29. It is often, however, applied to Government officials who superintend trade and levy duties at inland marts.

[359] Arab. "Khimár," a veil or rather a covering for the back of the head. This was the especial whorishness with which Shahrazad taxes the Goodwife: she had been too prodigal of her charms, for the occiput and the "back hair" should not be displayed even to the moon.

[360] These four become five in the more finished tale — the
King, the Wazir, the Kazi, the Wali or Chief of Police and the
Carpenter. Moreover each one is dressed in different costume,

gowns yellow, blue, red and patched with headgear equally absurd.

[361] In text “Turtúr” = the Badawi’s bonnet: vol. ii. 143. Mr. Doughty (i. 160) found at Al-Khuraybah the figure of an ancient Arab wearing a close tunic to the knee and bearing on poll a coif. At Al-’Ula he was shown an ancient image of a man’s head cut in sandstone: upon the crown was a low pointed bonnet. “Long caps” are also noticed in i. 562; and we are told that they were “worn in outlandish guise in Arabia.”

[362] In text “Embárah” (pron. ‘Mbárah); pop. for Al-bárihah = the last part of the preceding day or night, yesterday. The vulgar Egyptian uses it as if it were a corruption of the Pers. “in bár” = this time. The Arab Badawin pronounce it El-beyrih (with their exaggerated “Imálah”) and use it not only for “yesterday,” but also for the past afternoon.

[363] This device is far inferior in comic effect to the carpenter’s press or cabinet of five compartments, and it lacks the ludicrous catastrophe in which all the lovers make water upon one another’s heads.

[364] Scott (vi. 386) “The Cauzee’s story:” Gauttier (vi. 406) does not translate it.

[365] In the text the message is delivered verbatim: this iteration is well fitted for oral work, with its changes of tone and play of face, and varied “gag”; but it is most annoying for the more critical reader.

[366] Arab. “Lukmah” = a balled mouthful: vols. i. 261, vii. 367.

[367] The “Miftáh” (prop. “Miftah”) or key used throughout the Moslem East is a bit of wood, 714 inches long, and provided with 410 small iron pins which correspond with an equal number of holes in the “Dabbah” or wooden bolt. If one of these teeth be withdrawn the lock will not open. Lane (M.E. Introduction) has a sketch of the “Miftah” and “Dabbah.”

[368] In text “Ayoh” which is here, I hold, a corruption of “Í (or Ayy) hú” = “yes indeed he.” [I take “aywah” (as I would read the word) to be a different spelling for “aywa” = yes indeed, which according to Spitta Bey, Gr. is a contraction of “Ay (Í) wa’lláhi,” yes by Allah. “What? thy lover?” asks the husband, and she emphatically affirms the fact, to frighten the concealed tailor — ST.]

[369] In the Arab. “Al-Ashkhákh,” plur. of “Shakhkh” and literally “the stales” meaning either dejection. [I read: “bi ‘l-Shakhákh,” the usual modern word for urine. “‘Alayya Shakhákh” is: I want to make water. See Dozy Suppl. s.v. — ST.]

[370] In text “Ahú ma’í” — pure Fellah speech.

[371] In the Arab. “laklaka-há” — an onomatopoeia.

[372] In text “Ilŕ an yasír Karmu-hu.” The root Karm originally means cutting a slip of skin from the camel’s nose by way of mark, in lieu of the normal branding.

[373] In text “Yazghaz-há fí shikkati-ha,” the verb being probably a clerical error for “Yazaghzagh,” from {root} “Zaghzagha,” = he opened a skin bag.

[374] This is the far-famed balcony-scene in “Fanny” (of Ernest Feydeau translated into English and printed by Vizetelly and Co.) that phenomenal specimen of morbid and unmasculine French (or rather Parisian) sentiment, which contrasts so powerfully with the healthy and manly tone of The Nights. Here also the story conveys a moral lesson and, contrary to custom, the husband has the best of the affair. To prove that my judgment is not too severe, let me quote the following passages from a well-known and popular French novelist, translated by an English littérateur and published by a respectable London firm.

In “A Ladies’ Man:” by Guy de Maupassant, we read: —

Page 62. — And the conversation, descending from elevated theories concerning love, strayed into the flowery garden of polished blackguardism. It was the moment of clever, double meanings; veils raised by words, as petticoats are lifted by the wind; tricks of language, cleverly disguised audacities; sentences which reveal nude images in covered phrases, which cause the vision of all that may not be said to flit rapidly before the eyes of the mind, and allow well-bred people the enjoyment of a kind of subtle and mysterious love, a species of impure mental contact, due to the simultaneous evocations of secret, shameful and longed-for pleasures.

Page 166. — George and Madeleine amused themselves with watching all these couples, the woman in summer toilette and the man darkly outlined beside her. It was a huge flood of lovers flowing towards the Bois, beneath the starry and heated sky. No sound was heard save the dull rumble of wheels. They kept passing by, two by two in each vehicle, leaning back on the seat, clasped one against the other, lost in dreams of desire, quivering with the anticipation of coming caresses. The warm shadow seemed full of kisses. A sense of spreading lust rendered the air heavier and more suffocating. All the couples, intoxicated with the same idea, the same ardour, shed a fever about them.

Page 187 — As soon as she was alone with George, she clasped him in her arms, exclaiming: “Oh! my darling Pretty-boy, I love you more and more every day.”

The cab conveying them rocked like a ship.

“It is not so nice as our own room,” said she.

He answered; “Oh, no.” But he was thinking of Madame Waller.

Page 198. — He kissed her neck, her eyes, her lips with eagerness, without her being able to avoid his furious caresses, and whilst repulsing him, whilst shrinking from his mouth, she, despite herself, returned his kisses. All at once she ceased to struggle, and, vanquished, resigned, allowed him to undress her. One by one he neatly and rapidly stripped off the different articles of clothing with the light fingers of a lady’s maid. She had snatched her bodice from his hands to hide her face in it, and remained standing amidst the garments fallen at her feet. He seized her in his arms and bore her towards the couch. Then she murmured in his ear in a broken voice, “I swear to you, I swear to you, that I have never had a lover.”

And he thought, “That is all the same to me.”

[375] In text “Ant’ amilta maskhará (for maskharah) matah (for matŕ),” idiomatical Fellah-tongue.

[376] Scott (Appendix vol. vi. 460) simply called this tale “The Syrian.” In M. Clouston’s “Book of Noodles” (p94) we find a man who is searching for three greater simpletons than his wife, calling himself “Saw ye ever my like?” It is quoted from Campbell’s “Popular Tales of the West Highlands” (ii. 385387), but it lacks the canopic wit of the Arabo-Egyptian. I may note anent the anecdote of the Gabies (), who proposed, in order to make the tall bride on horseback enter the low village-gate, either to cut off her head or the legs of her steed, that precisely the same tale is told by the biting wits of Damascus concerning the boobies of Halbún. “Halbáún,” as these villagers call their ancient hamlet, is justly supposed to be the Helbon whose wine is mentioned by Ezekiel in the traffic of Damascus, although others less reasonably identify it with Halab = Aleppo.

[377] In text “La’bat Shawáribu-hu” = lit. his mustachios played.

[378] For the “Wakálah,” or caravanserai, see vol. i. 266.

[379] In text “Kabút,” plur. Kabábít:

Oh! who is more brave than a dark Suliote,
In his snowy camise and his shaggy capote?
“Childe Harold,” Canto II.

And here I cannot but notice the pitiful contrast (on the centenary of the poet’s nativity, Jan. 22nd, ‘88) between the land of his birth and that of his death. The gallant Greeks honoured his memory with wreaths and panegyrics and laudatory articles, declaring that they will never forget the anniversaries of his nativity and his decease. The British Pharisee and Philistine, true to his miserable creed, ignored all the “real Lord Byron” — his generosity, his devotion to his friends, his boundless charity, and his enthusiasm for humanity. They exhaled their venom by carping at Byron’s poetry (which was and is to Europe a greater boon than Shakspeare’s), by condemning his morality (in its dirty sexual sense) and in prophesying for him speedy oblivion. Have these men no shame in presence of the noble panegyric dedicated by the Prince of German poets, Goethe, to his brother bard whom he welcomed as a prophet? Can they not blush before Heine (the great German of the future), before Flaubert, Alfred de Musset, Lamartine, Leopardi and a host of Italian, Spanish and Portuguese notables? Whilst England will not forgive Byron for having separated from his unsympathetic wife, the Literary society of Moscow celebrated his centenary with all honour; and Prof. Nicholas Storojenko delivered a speech which has found an echo

> further west
> Than his sires’ “Islands of the Blest.”

He rightly remarked that Byron’s deadly sin in the eyes of the Georgian-English people was his Cosmopolitanism. He was the poetical representative of the Sturm und Drang period of the xixth century. He reflected, in his life and works, the wrath of noble minds at the collapse of the cause of freedom and the reactionary tendency of the century. Even in the distant regions of Monte Video Byron’s hundredth birthday was not forgotten, and Don Luis Desteffanio’s lecture was welcomed by literary society.

[380] He cried out thinking of the mystical meaning of such name. So ????? sea?t??, would mean in Sufí language — Learn from thyself what is thy Lord; — corresponding after a manner with the Christian “looking up through Nature to Nature’s God.”

[381] The phrase prob. means so drunk that his circulation had apparently stopped.

[382] This is the article usually worn by the professional buffoon. The cap of the “Sutarí” or jester of the Arnaut (Albanian) regiments — who is one of their professional braves — is usually a felt cone garnished with foxes’ brushes.

[383] In Arab. “Sabbal alayhim (for Alayhinna, the usual masc. pro fem.) Al-Sattár” = lit. the Veiler let down a curtain upon them.

[384] The barber being a surgeon and ever ready to bleed a madman.

[385] i.e. Can play off equally well the soft-brained and the hard-headed.

[386] i.e. a deputy (governor, etc.); in old days the governor of Constantinople; in these times a lieutenant-colonel, etc.

[387] Which, as has been said, is the cab of Modern Egypt, like the gondola and the caďque. The heroine of the tale is a Nilotic version of “Aurora Floyd.”

[388] In text “Rafaka” and infrŕ () “Zafaka.”

[389] [In text “Misla ‘l-Kalám,” which I venture to suggest is another clerical blunder for: “misla ‘l-Kiláb” = as the dogs do. — ST.]

[390] i.e. My wife. In addition to notes in vols. i. 165, and iv. 9, 126, I would observe that “Harím” (women) is the broken plur. of “Hurmah;” from Haram, the honour of the house, forbidden to all save her spouse. But it is also an infinitive (whose plur. is Harîmát = the women of a family); and in places it is still used for the women’s apartment, the gynćceum. The latter by way of distinction I have mostly denoted by the good old English corruption “Harem.”

[391] In text “Misla ‘l-khárúf” (for Kharúf) a common phrase for an “innocent,” a half idiot; so our poets sing of “silly (harmless, Germ. Selig) sheep.”

[392] In text this ends the tale.

[393] In text “Wa lá huwa ‘ashamná min-ka talkash ‘alŕ Harimi-ná.” “‘Ashama,” lit. = he greeded for; and “Lakasha” = he conversed with. [There is no need to change the “talkas” of the text into “talkash.” “Lakasa” is one of the words called “Zidd,” i.e. with opposite meanings: it can signify “to incline passionately towards,” or “to loath with abhorrence.” As the noun “Laks” means “itch” the sentence might perhaps be translated: “that thou hadst an itching after our Harím.” What would lead me to prefer the reading of the MS. is that the verb is construed with the preposition “‘alŕ” = upon, towards, for, while “lakash,” to converse, is followed by “ma’” = with. — ST.]

[394] Such was the bounden duty of a good neighbour.

[395] He does not insist upon his dancing because he looks upon the offence as serious, but he makes him tell his tale — for the sake of the reader.

[396] “Sáhib al-Hayát:” this may also = a physiognomist, which, however, is probably not meant here.

[397] In text “Harárah” = heat, but here derived from “Hurr” = freeborn, noble.

[398] In text “Azay má tafút-ní?”

[399] In the Arab. “Rajul Khuzarí” = a green-meat man. [The reading “Khuzarí” belongs to Lane, M.E. ii. 16, and to Bocthor. In Schiaparelli’s Vocabulista and the Muhít the form “Khuzrí” is also given with the same meaning. — ST.]

[400] [In text “Faráriijí,” as if the pl. of “Farrúj” = chicken were “Farárij” instead of “Faráríj.” In modern Egyptian these nouns of relation from irregular plurals to designate tradespeople not only drop the vowel of the penultimate but furthermore, shorten that of the preceding syllable, so that “Faráriijí” becomes “Fararjí.” Thus “Sanádikí,” a maker of boxes, becomes “Sanadkí,” and “Dakhákhiní, a seller of tobacco brands,” “Dakhakhní.” See Spitta Bey’s

Grammar, . — ST.]

[401] In the Arab. “Al-Májúr,” for “Maajúr” = a vessel, an utensil.

[402] In text “shaklaba” here = “shakala” = he weighed out (money, whence the Heb. Shekel), he had to do with a woman.

[403] [The trade of the man is not mentioned here, of the 5th vol. of the MS., probably through negligence of the copyist, but it only occurs as far lower down as . — ST.]

[404] A certain reviewer proposes “stained her eyes with Kohl,” showing that he had never seen the Kohl-powder used by Asiatics.

[405] [“Bi-Má al-fasíkh ‘alŕ Akrás al-Jullah.” “Má al-Fasíkh” = water of salt-fish, I would translate by “dirty brine” and “Akrás al-Jullah” by “dung-cakes,” meaning the tale should be written with a filthy fluid for ink upon a filthy solid for paper, more expressive than elegant. — ST.]

[406] “Al-Janínáti”; or, as the Egyptians would pronounce the word, “Al-Ganínátí”. [Other Egyptian names for gardener are “Janáiní,” pronounced “Ganáiní,” “Bustánjí” pronounced “Bustangi,” with a Turkish termination to a Persian noun, and “Bakhshawángí,” for Baghchawánjí,” where the same termination is pleonastically added to a Persian word, which in Persian and Turkish already means “gardener.” — ST.]

[407] A Koranic quotation from “Joseph,” chap. xii. 28: Sale has “for verily your cunning is great,” said by Potiphar to his wife.

[408] I have inserted this sentence, the tale being absolutely without termination. So in the Medićval Lat. translations the MSS. often omit “explicit capitulum (primum). Sequitur capitulum secundum,” this explicit being a sine qua non.

[409] In text “Fatáirí” = a maker of “Fatírah” = pancake, or rather a

kind of pastry rolled very thin, folded over like a napkin, saturated with butter and eaten with sugar or honey poured over it.

[410] In Arab. “Nayízáti,” afterwards “Nuwayzátí,” and lastly “Rayhání” () = a man who vends sweet and savoury herbs. We have neither the craft nor the article, so I have rendered him by “Herbalist.”

[411] In text a “Mihtár” = a prince, a sweeper, a scavenger; the Pers. “Mihtar,” still used in Hindostani. [In Quatremčre’s Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks “Mihtar” occurs also in the sense of superintendent, of head-equerry, and of chief of a military band. See Dozy Supp. s. v. — ST.]

[412] “Ant’ aysh” for “man,” decidedly not complimentary, “What (thing) art thou?”

[413] Arab. “Kabsh.” Amongst the wilder tribes of the East ram’s mutton is preferred because it gives the teeth more to do: on the same principle an old cock is the choicest guest-gift in the way of poultry.

[414] “Naubah,” lit. = a period, keeping guard; and here a band of pipes and kettledrums playing before the doors of a great man at certain periods.

[415] In text “Al-Mubtali.”

[416] Arab. “Hawwálín”; the passage is apparently corrupt. [“Hawálín” is clerical error for either “hawálí” = all around, or “Hawálí” = surroundings, surrounding parts, and “Audán” is pl. of the popular “Widn” or “Wudn” for the literary “Uzn,” ear. — ST.]

[417] The exclamation would be uttered by the scribe or by Shahrazad. I need hardly remind the reader that “Khizr” is the Green Prophet and here the Prophet of greens.

[418] For “Isráfíl” = Raphael, the Archangel who will blow the last trump, see vol. ii. 287.

[419] Gen. meaning “Look sharp,” here syn. with “Allah! Allah!” = I conjure thee by God. Vol. i. 346.

[420] A Persian would say, “I am a Iráni but Walláhi indeed I am not lying.”

[421] [This sentence of wholesale extermination passed upon womankind, reminds me of the Persian lines which I find quoted in ‘Abdu ‘l-Jalíl’s History of the Barmecides:

> Agar nek búdí Zan u Ráy-i-Zan
> Zan-rá Ma-zan Nám búdí, na Zan,

and which I would render Anglicč:

> If good there were in Woman and her way
> Her name would signify “Slay not,” not “Slay.”

“Zan” as noun = woman; as imp. of “zadan” = strike, kill, whose negative is “mazan.” — ST.]

[422] In the text the Shaykh, to whom “Amán” was promised, is also gelded, probably by the neglect of the scribe.

[423] This tale is a variant of “The First Constable’s History:” Suppl. Nights, vol. ii. 3-11.

[424] In text “Al-Bawwábah” = a place where door-keepers meet, a police-station; in modern tongue “Karakol,” for “Karaghol-khánah” = guard-house.

[425] In text “Kází al-’Askar” = the great legal authority of a country: vol. vi. 131.

[426] Anglo-Indice “Mucuddum” = overseer, etc., vol. iv. 42.

[427] i.e. is not beyond our reach.

[428] In text “Yá Sultán-am” with the Persian or Turkish suffixed

possessional pronoun.

[429] In text “mál,” for which see vol. vi. 267. Amongst the Badawin it is also applied to hidden treasure.

[430] I carefully avoid the obnoxious term “intoxication” which properly means “poisoning,” and should be left to those amiable enthusiasts the “Teetotallers.”

[431] A sign of foul play; the body not having been shrouded and formally buried.

[432] For the title, the office and the date see vol. ix. 289.

[433] The names are = Martha and Mary.

[434] MS. vi. 57-77, not translated by Scott, who entitles it (vi. 461) “Mhassun, the Liberal, and Mouseh, the treacherous Friend.” It is a variant of “The Envier and the Envied:” vol. i. 123.

[435] The Arab. “Jarrah”: vol. viii. 177.

[436] i.e. One who does good, a benefactor.

[437] In the text “Músŕ wa Múzi,” the latter word = vexatious, troublesome. [I notice that in the MS. the name is distinctly and I believe purposely spelt with Hamzah above the Wáw and Kasrah beneath the Sín, reading “Muusí.” It is, therefore, a travesty of the name Músŕ, and the exact counterpart of “Muhsin”, being the active participle of “asáa”, 4th form of “sáa,” = he did evil, he injured, and nearly equivalent with the following “Muuzí.” The two names may perhaps be rendered: Muhsin, the Beneficent, and Muusí, the Malignant, the Malefactor. — ST.]

[438] In text “Fatír” for “Fatírah” = a pancake, before described.

[439] In text “Bi-khátiri-k” = Thy will be done; the whole dialogue is in pure Fellah speech.

[440] Supposed to be American, but, despite Bartlett, really old English from Lancashire, the land which has supplied many of the so-called “American” neologisms. A gouge is a hollow chisel, a scoop; and to gouge is to poke out the eye: this is done by thrusting the fingers into the side-hair thus acting as a base and by prising out the ball with the thumbnail which is purposely grown long.

[441] [In the text: “Fa tarak-hu Muusí am’ŕ dáir yaltash fí ‘l-Tarík.” Latash has the meaning of beating, tapping; I therefore think the passage means: “hereupon Muusí left him, blind as he was, tramping and groping his way” (feeling it with his hands or stick). — ST.]

[442] In text “Biiru milyánah Moyah.” As a rule the Fellah of Egypt says “Mayyeh,” the Cairene “Mayya,” and the foreigner “Moyah”: the old Syrian is “Mayá,” the mod. “Moy,” and the classical dim. of “Má” is “Muwayh,” also written “Muwayy” and “Muwayhah.”

[443] “Sabt” = Sabbath, Saturday: vol. ii. 305, and passim.

[444] i.e. “By Allah,” meaning “Be quick!”

[445] For this well-nigh the sole equivalent amongst the Moslems of our “thank you,” see Vol. iv. 6. and v. 171.

[446] In Arab. “Ana ‘l-Tabíb, al-Mudáwi.” In pop. parlance, the former is the scientific practitioner and the latter represents the man of the people who deals in simples, etc.

[447] In text “Rákiba-há,” the technical term for demoniac insiliation or possession: the idea survives in our “succubi” and “incubi.” I look upon these visions often as the effects of pollutio nocturna. A modest woman for instance dreams of being possessed by some man other than her husband; she loves the latter and is faithful to him, and consequently she must explain the phenomena superstitiously and recur to diabolical agency. Of course it is the same with men, only they are at less trouble to excuse themselves.

[448] The construction here, MS. , is very confused. [The speech of Muhsin seems to be elliptical. In Ar. it runs: “Li-anní izá, lam nukhullis-ha (or nukhlis-há, 2nd or 4th form) taktulní, wa aná iz lam tattafik ma’í anní izá khallastu-há tu’tí-há alayya” — which I believe to mean: “for if I do not deliver her, thou wilt kill me; so I (say) unless thou stipulate with me that when I have delivered her thou wilt give her to me in marriage—” supply: “well then I wash my hand of the whole business.” The Shaykh acts on the tit for tat principle in a style worthy of the “honest broker” himself. — ST.]

[449] In text “Yaum Sabt” again.

[450] As has been said (vol. ii. 112) this is a sign of agitation. The tale has extended to remote Guernsey. A sorcier named Hilier Mouton discovers by his art that the King’s daughter who had long and beautiful tresses was dying because she had swallowed a hair which had twined round her praecordia. The cure was to cut a small square of bacon from just over the heart, and tie it to a silken thread which the Princess must swallow, when the hair would stick to it and come away with a jerk. See () “Folk-lore of Guernsey and Sark,” by Louise Lane-Clarke, printed by E. Le Lievre, Guernsey, 1880; and I have to thank for it a kind correspondent, Mr. A. Buchanan Brown, of La Coűture, , who informs us why the Guernsey lily is scentless, emblem of the maiden who sent it from fairy-land.

[451] The text says only, “O my father, gift Shaykh Mohsin.”

[452] Her especial “shame” would be her head and face: vol. vi. 30, 118.

[453] In northern Africa the “Dár al-Ziyáfah” was a kind of caravanserai in which travellers were lodged at government expense. Ibn Khaldún (Fr. Transl. i. 407).

454 In most of these tales the well is filled in over the intruding “villain” of the piece. Ibn Khaldun (ii. 575) relates a “veritable history” of angels choking up a well; and in Mr. Doughty (ii. 190) a Pasha-governor of Jiddah does the same to a

Jinni-possessed pit.

[455] This tale is of a kind not unfrequent amongst Moslems, exalting the character of the wife, whilst the mistress is a mere shadow.

[456] Here written “Jalabí” (whence Scott’s “Julbee,”) and afterwards (, etc.) “Shalabí”: it has already been noticed in vol. i. 22 and elsewhere.

[457] In text “Baltah” for Turk. “Báltah” = an axe, a hatchet. Hence “Baltah-ji” a pioneer, one of the old divisions of the Osmanli troops which survives as a family name amongst the Levantines and semi-European Perotes of Constantinople.

[458] Here the public gaol is in the Head Policeman’s house. So in modern times it is part of the Wali or Governor’s palace and is included in the Maroccan “Kasbah” or fortalice.

[459] In text “Naakhaz bi-lissati-him;” “Luss” is after a fashion ??st??; but the Greek word included piracy which was honourable, whenas the Arab. term is mostly applied to larcenists and similar blackguards. [I would read the word in the text “Balsata-hum,” until I have received their “ransom.” — ST.]

[460] In the text “Tajrís” which I have rendered by a circumlocution. [For the exact meaning of “Tajrís,” see Dozy, Suppl. s.v. “jarras,” where an interesting passage from Mas’údí is quoted. — ST.]

[461] In Moslem lands prisoners are still expected to feed themselves, as was the case in England a century ago and is still to be seen not only in Al-Islam, Egypt and Syria, but even in Madeira and at Goa.

[462] In text “Hudá Sirru-hu,” i.e. his secret sin was guided (by Allah) to the safety of concealment. [A simpler explanation of this passage would perhaps be: “wa hadá Sirru-hu,” = and his mind was at rest. — ST.]

[463] Arab. “Audáj” (plur. of “Wadaj”) a word which applies

indiscriminately to the carotid arteries and jugular veins. The latter, especially the external pair, carry blood from the face and are subject abnormally to the will: the late lamented Mr. Charley Peace, who murdered and "burgled" once too often, could darken his complexion and even change it by arresting jugular circulation. The much-read Mr. F. Marion Crawford (Saracinesca, chapt. xii.) makes his hero pass a foil through his adversary's throat, "without touching the jugular artery (which does not exist) or the spine." But what about larynx and pharynx? It is to be regretted that realistic writers do not cultivate a little more personal experience. No Englishman says "in guard" for "on guard." "Colpo del Tancredi" is not = "Tancred's lunge" but "the thrust of the (master) Tancredi:" it is quite permissible and to say that it loses half its dangers against a left-handed man is to state what cannot be the fact as long as the heart is more easily reached from the left than from the right flank.

[464] Lit. "Then faring forth and sitting in his own place." I have modified the too succinct text which simply means that he was anxious and agitated.

[465] After this in the text we have only, "End of the Adventure of the Kazi's Daughter. It is related among the many wiles of women that there was a Fellah-man," etc. I have supplied the missing link.

[466] On the margin of the W. M. MS. (vi. 92) J. Scott has written: "This story bears a faint resemblance to one in the Bahardanush." He alludes to the tale I have already quoted. I would draw attention to "The Fellah and his Wicked Wife," as it is a characteristic Fellah-story showing what takes place too often in the villages of Modern Egypt which the superficial traveller looks upon as the homes of peace and quiet. The text is somewhat difficult for technicalities and two of the pages are written with a badly nibbed reed-pen which draws the lines double.

[467] The "Faddán" (here miswritten "Faddád") = a plough, a yoke of oxen, a "carucate," which two oxen can work in a single season. It is also the common land-measure of Egypt and Syria reduced from acre

1.1 to less than one acre. It is divided into twenty-four Kiráts (carats) and consists or consisted of 333 Kasabah (rods), each of these being 22-24 Kabzahs (fists with the thumb erect about = 6″ inches). In old Algiers the Faddán was called “Zuijah” (= a pair, i.e. of oxen) according to Ibn Khaldun i. 404.

[468] In text “Masbúbah.”

[469] Arab. “Dashísh,” which the Dicts. make = wheat-broth to be sipped. [“Dashísh” is a popular corruption of the classical “Jashísh” = coarsely ground wheat (sometimes beans), also called “Sawík,” and “Dashíshah” is the broth made of it. — ST.]

[470] In text “Ahmar” = red, ruddy-brown, dark brown.

[471] In text “Kas’at (= a wooden platter, bowl) afrúkah.” [The “Mafrúkah,” an improvement upon the Fatírah, is a favourite dish with the Badawí, of which Dozy quotes lengthy descriptions from Vansleb and Thévenot. The latter is particularly graphical, and after enumerating all the ingredients says finally: “ils en font une grosse pâte dont ils prennent de gros morceaux. — ST.]

[472] The Fellah will use in fighting anything in preference to his fists and a stone tied up in a kerchief or a rag makes no mean weapon for head-breaking.

[473] The cries of an itinerant pedlar hawking about woman’s wares. See Lane (M. E.) chapt. xiv. “Flfl’a” (a scribal error?) may be “Filfil” = pepper or palm-fibre. “Tutty,” in low-Lat. “Tutia,” probably from the Pers. “Tutiyah,” is protoxide of zinc, found native in Iranian lands, and much used as an eye-wash.

[474] In text “Samm Sá’ah.”

[475] “Laban halíb,” a trivial form = “sweet milk;” “Laban” being the popular word for milk artificially soured. See vols. vi. 201; vii. 360.

[476] In text “Nisf ra’as Sukkar Misri.” “Sukkar” (from Pers.

“Shakkar,” whence the Lat. Saccharum) is the generic term, and Egypt preserved the fashion of making loaf-sugar (Raas Sukkar) from ancient times. “Misri” here = local name, but in India it is applied exclusively to sugar-candy, which with Gúr (Molasses) was the only form used throughout the country some 40 years ago. Strict Moslems avoid Europe-made white sugar because they are told that it is refined with bullock’s blood, and is therefore unlawful to Jews and the True Believers.

[477] Lit. “that the sugar was poison.”

[478] In text “Kata’a Judúr-há” (for “hu”). [I refer the pronoun in “Judúr-há” to “Rakabah,” taking the “roots of the neck” to mean the spine. — ST.]

[479] In text “Fahata” for “Fahasa” (?) or perhaps a clerical error for “Fataha” = he opened (the ground). [“Fahata,” probably a vulgarisation of “fahatha” (fahasa) = to investigate, is given by Bocthor with the meaning of digging, excavating. Nevertheless I almost incline to the reading “fataha,” which, however, I would pronounce with Tashdíd over the second radical, and translate: “he recited a ‘Fátihah’ for them,” the usual prayer over the dead before interment. The dative “la-hum,” generally employed with verbs of prayer, seems to favour this interpretation. It is true I never met with the word in this meaning, but it would be quite in keeping with the spirit of the language, and in close analogy with such expressions as “kabbara,” he said “Allabu akbar,” “Hallala,” he pronounced the formula of unity, and a host of others. Here it would, in my opinion, wind up the tale with a neat touch of peasant’s single-mindedness and loyal adherence to the injunctions of religion even under provoking circumstances. — ST.]

[480] In the MS. we have only “Ending. And it is also told,” etc. I again supply the connection.

[481] Scott does not translate this tale, but he has written on the margin (MS. vi. 101), “A story which bears a strong resemblance to that I

have read (when a boy) of the Parson's maid giving the roasted goose to her Lover and frightening away the guests, lest he should geld them."

[482] In text "Zakarayn Wizz (ganders) simán"; but afterwards "Wizzatayn" = geese.

[483] These dried fruits to which pistachios are often added, form the favourite "filling" of lamb and other meats prepared in "puláo" (pilaff).

[484] "Anta jáib(un) bas rájul (an) wáhid (an)" — veritable and characteristic peasant's jargon.

[485] i.e., it is a time when men should cry for thy case. "Lá Haula" = there is no Majesty, etc. An ejaculation of displeasure, disappointments, despair.

[486] In text "Maháshima-k" = good works, merits; in a secondary sense beard and mustachios. The word yard (etymologically a rod) is medical English, and the young student is often surprised to see, when a patient is told to show his yard, a mere inchlet of shrunken skin. ["Maháshim," according to Bocthor, is a plural without singular, meaning: les parties de la génération. Pedro de Alcala gives "Hashshúm," pl. "Hasháshim," for the female parts, and both words are derived from the verb "hasham, yahshím," he put to shame. — ST.]

[487] Characteristic words of abuse, "O thou whose fate is always to fail, O thou whose lot is ever subject to the accidents of Fortune!"

[488] Arab. "Bayzah" = an egg, a testicle. See "Bayza'áni," vol. ii. 55.

[489] Here the text ends with the tag, "Concluded is the story of the Woman with her Husband and her Lover. It is related of a man which was a Kazi," etc. I have supplied what the writer should have given.

[490] The "Mahkamah" (Place of Judgment), or Kazi's Court, at Cairo

is mostly occupied with matrimonial disputes, and is fatally famous for extreme laxness in the matter of bribery and corruption. During these days it is even worse than when Lane described it. M.E. chapt. iv.

[491] The first idea of an Eastern would be to appeal from the Kazi to the Kazi's wife, bribing her if he failed to corrupt the husband; and he would be wise in his generation as the process is seldom known to fail.

[492] In Arab. "Sitta-há": the Mauritanians prefer "Sídah," and the Arabian Arabs Kabírah" = the first lady, Madame Mčre.

[493] In text "Ahú 'inda-k," — pure Fellah speech.

[494] In text here and below "Maghbún" usually = deceived, cajoled.

[495] He began to fear sorcery, Satan, etc. "Muslimína" is here the reg. Arab. plur. of "Muslim" = a True Believer. "Musulmán" (our "Mussalman" too often made plur. by "Mussalmen") is corrupted Arab. used in Persia, Turkey and India by the best writers as Sa'adi; the plur. is "Musulmánán" and the Hind. fem. is Musalmání. Francois Pyrard, before alluded to, writes (i. 261) "Mouselliman, that is, the faithful."

[496] In the text "help ye the Moslems."

[497] Again the old, old story of the "Acrisian maid," and a prose variant of "Yusuf and Al-Hayfa" for which see vol. v. . I must note the difference of treatment and may observe that the style is rough and the incidents are unfinished, but it has the stuff of an excellent tale.

[498] In text "Min ghayr Wa'ad" = without appointment, sans préméditation, a phrase before noticed.

[499] In text, "Al-Mukawwamína wa Arbábu 'l-Aklam," the latter usually meaning "Scribes skilled in the arts of caligraphy."

[500] In text "Zarb al-Fál" = casting lots for presage, see v. 136.

[501] "The Mount of Clouds."

[502] In the margin is written "Kbb," possibly "Kubb" for "Kubbah" = a vault, a cupola. [I take "Kubba" for the passive of the verb "Kabba" = he cut, and read "Fajwatun" for "Fajwatan" = "and in that cave there is a spot in whose innermost part from the inside a crevice is cut which," etc. — ST.]

[503] "Zarb al-Aklám," before explained: in a few pages we shall come upon "San'at al-Aklám.

[504] A pun upon the name of the Mountain.

[505] In text "Wa kulli Tárik" = Night-traveller, magician, morning-star.

[506] i.e. In Holy Writ — the Koran and the Ahádís.

[507] "Walad al-Hayáh" for "Hayát" i.e. let him be long-lived.

[508] This and other incidents appear only at the latter end of the tale, MS. .

[509] i.e. "Father of a Pigeon," i.e. surpassing in swiftness the carrier-pigeon.

[510] "Bi-sab'a Sikak" = lit. "with seven nails;" in the MS. vol. vi. , l. 2, and , l. 4, we have "four Sikak," and the word seems to mean posts or uprights whereto the chains were attached. ["Sakk," pl. "Sikák" and "Sukúk," is nail, and "Sikkah," pl. "Sikak," has amongst many other meanings that of "an iron post or stake" (Bocthor: piquet de fer). — ST.]

[511] In text "Al-Lijám w' al-Bílám" = the latter being a "Tábi'" or dependent word used only for jingle. [The Muhít explains "Bilám" by "Kimám at-Thaur" = muzzle of a bull, and Bocthor gives as

equivalent for it the French “cavecon” (English “cavesson” nose-band for breaking horses in). Here, I suppose, it means the headstall of the bridle. — ST.]

[512] In Arab. “Al-Sayfu w’ al-Kalanj.”

[513] In text “Itowwaha,” which is repeated in , l. 2.
[“Ittawwah” seems to be the modern Egyptian 5th form of “Tauh.” In classical Arabic it would be “tatawwah,” but in the dialect of to-day the prefix becomes “it,” whose final dental here assimilates with the initial palatal of the root; the word is correctly spelt with two Tashdids. The meaning is: he threw himself (with his right foot foremost) upon the horse’s back. Instances of this formation, which has now become all but general in Egyptian, are not infrequent in old Arabic, witness chapters lxxiii. and lxxiv. of the Koran, which begin with “ayyuhá ‘l Muddassiru” and “ayyuhŕ ‘l-Muzzammilu” respectively. — ST.]

[514] In text “Ramaha bi-h.”

[515] The vowel points in the MS. show this to be a quotation.

[516] In text “Yarjú,” I presume an error for “yarja’u.” [I believe “yarju” is an error for yajrú,” and the various paces to which they put their horses are meant: sometimes they galloped (ramahú), sometimes they trotted (Pedro de Alcala gives “trotar” for “jará yajrí”), sometimes they ambled (yasírú). — ST.]

[517] In text “Saith the Sayer of this say so wondrous and this delectable matter seld-seen and marvellous,” — which I omit as usual.

[518] In text “Sar’a ‘l-Lijám.”

[519] The invariable practice of an agent de police in England and France, according to the detective tales of MM. Gaboriau and Du Boisgobey. In Africa the guide often attempts to follow instead of leading the party, and this proceeding should always awake

suspicion.

[520] In text another prothesis without apodosis: see vol. vi. 203, etc.

[521] In text “Fa ghába thaláthat ayyamin” = and he (or it the mountain?) disappeared for three days. [“Ghába” = departed, may have here the meaning of “passed away” and three days had gone, and he ever travelling, before (ilŕ an) he reached it. — ST.]

[522] A feeling well-known to the traveller: I have often been laughed at for gazing fondly upon the scanty brown-green growth about Suez after a few months’ sojourn in the wolds of Western Arabia. It is admirably expressed in that book of books Eothen (chapt. xvii.):—“The next day I entered upon Egypt, and floated along (for the delight was as the delight of bathing) through green wavy fields of rice, and pastures fresh and plentiful, and dived into the cold verdure of grasses and gardens, and quenched my hot eyes in shade, as though in deep, rushing waters.”

[523] The writer does not mean to charge the girl with immodesty (after the style “Come to my arms, my slight acquaintance!”) but to show how powerfully Fate and Fortune wrought upon her. Hence also she so readily allowed the King’s son to possess her person.

[524] [I read “al-Muhibbattu,” fem. of “Muhibb,” lover (in Tasawwuf particularly = lover of God), and take the “lam taku taslah” in the second verse for the 3rd person fem., translating: The loving maiden has come in obedience to the lover’s call, proudly trailing her skirts (“tajarru min al-Tíhi Azyála-há”), and she is meet, etc. — ST.]

[525] Again the work of Fate which intended to make the lovers man and wife and probably remembered the homely old English proverb, “None misses a slice from a cut loaf.”

[526] A little matter of about a ton at the smallest computation of 200 lbs. to each beast.

[527] In text “Natawású sawíyah” [Clerical error for “natawánasú

(nataánasú, the rarely used 6th form of anisa) shuwayyah" = let us divert ourselves a little. — ST.]

[528] In text "salaku-hu wa nashalú-hu." The {root} "salk" = scoring the skin and the {root} "nashl" = drawing meat from the cooking-pot with its fingers or a flesh-hook or anything but a ladle which would be "Gharf."

[529] This account has been slightly abridged seeing that it is a twice-told tale.

[530] "Written" either on the Preserved Tablet (vol. ii. 68) or on the sutures of the skull (iii. 123).

[531] In Arab. "Khálat-kí insánun," meaning also to lie with: compare the Gr. ľ????ľ?, Lat. misceo. [The same word occurs presently in another tropical sense: "Khálata-há al-Khajal wa 'l-Hayá" = shame and abashment mixed with her, i.e. suffused or overwhelmed her. — ST.]

[532] In text "Istanade 'alŕ Shakkati-h." ["Istanáda 'alŕ" is in the Vocabulista in Arabico rendered by "recumbere" and "Shikkah" is a rug, while I can find no authority for "Shakkah" as "quarter." The passage may therefore mean he lay down on his rug. If he had been leaning against the standing horse, it would on bolting have thrown him on the ground and awaked him rudely. — ST.]

[533] "Rajul ikhtiyár," a polite term for an old man: See i. 55. In the speech of the Badawin it means a man of substance and hospitality.

[534] In Arab. "Wa lásh: Murádí bas Ism al-Madinah." I seem to hear some Fellah speaking to me from the door of his clay hut.

[535] "Madínat al-Andalús" = usually Seville.

[536] In text "Kabdán," the usual form being "Kaptan," from the Ital. Capitano (iv. 85): here, however, we have the Turk. form as in "Kapúdán-pashá" = Lord High Admiral of ancient Osmanli-land.

[537] Arab. "Khaznat al-Síláh." When Easterns, especially Maroccan Moslems and Turkish Pilgrims, embark as passengers, their weapons are taken from them, ticketed and placed in a safe cabin.

[538] Arab. "Waka'h" = an affair (of fight).

[539] i.e. crying the war-cry, "Alláho Akbar" = God is most Great (vol. ii. 89, etc.) and "Lá iláha illa 'llah," the refrain of Unity: vol. ii. 236.

[540] In text "A'atú Al-Wírah." ["Wírah" is gerund of the Turkish "wírmek" or "wermek," to give, to give up, and the phrase in the text corresponds to the Turkish "wírah wírmek" = to capitulate.
— ST.]

[541] The "buccaneers," quite as humane, made their useless prisoners "walk a plank." The slave-ships, when chased and hard-driven, simply tossed the poor devil niggers overboard; and the latter must often have died, damning the tender mercies of the philanthrope which had doomed them to untimely deaths instead of a comfortable middle passage from Blackland to Whiteland.

[542] [In the text "Kárishín" = chasing, being in hot pursuit of; see Dozy, Suppl. s. v. "karash." — ST.]

[543] See in Mr. Doughty's valuable "Arabia Deserta" (i. 309) how the Badawi's mare puts down her soft nose to be kissed by the sitters about the coffee-hearth.

[544] In text, "Hadda 'lláho bayní wa baynakum."

[545] The last clause is omitted in the text which is evidently defective: MS. vol. vi. , line 7.

[546] In text "Tauhán al-Husán."

[547] In Abyssinia the "Khil'at" = robe of honour (see vol. i. 195) is an extensive affair composed of a dress of lion's pelt with silver-gilt buttons, a pair of silken breeches, a cap and waist-shawl of the same

material, a sword, a shield and two spears; a horse with furniture of silk and silver and a mule similarly equipped. These gifts accompany the insignia of the "Order of Solomon," which are various medals bearing an imperial crown, said to represent the Hierosolymitan Temple of the Wise King, and the reverses show the Amharic legend "Yohanne Negus zei Etiopia" — John, Emperor of Ethiopia. The orders are distinguished as (1) the Grand Cross, a star of 100 grammes in massive gold, hammer-wrought, and studded with gems, given only to royalties; (2) the Knighthood, similar, but of 50 grammes, and without jewels, intended for distinguished foreigners; (3) the Officer's Star, silver-gilt, of 50 grammes; and (4) the Companion's, of pure silver, and the same weight. All are worn round the neck save the last, which hangs upon the chest. This practice of gilding the medals prevails also in Europe, for instance in Austria, where those made of gun-metal are often gilt by the recipients contrary to all official etiquette.

[548] Meaning only that the babe was perfectly beautiful.

[549] In order that the cord might not be subject to the evil eye or fall into the hand of a foe who would use it magically to injure the babe. The navel-string has few superstitions in England. The lower classes mostly place over the wound a bit of cloth wherein a hole has been burned, supposing that the carbon will heal the cut, and make it fast to the babe by a "binder" or swathe round the body, as a preventative to "pot-belly." But throughout the East there are more observances. In India, on the birth of the babe, the midwife demands something shining, as a rupee or piece of silver, and having touched the navel-string therewith she divides it and appropriates the glittering substance, under the pretence that the absence of the illuminating power of some such sparkling object would prevent her seeing to operate. The knife with which the umbilical cord has been cut is not used for common purposes but is left beside the puerpera until the "Chilla" (fortieth day), when "Kajjal" (lamp-black), used by way of Kohl, is collected on it and applied to the child's eyelids. Whenever the babe is bathed or taken out of the house the knife must be carried along with it; and when they are brought in again the instrument is

deposited in its former place near the mother. Lastly, on the “Chilla”-day they must slaughter with the same blade a cock or a sheep (Herklots, chapt. i. sec. 3). Equally quaint is the treatment of the navel-string in Egypt; but Lane (M.E.) is too modest to give details.

[550] In text “Sarsarah,” a clerical error for “Akhaza(?) surratan.” See MS. vol. vi. , line 9. [I read “sarra Surrah (Surratan)” = he tied up a purse. — ST.]

[551] In the text “on account of the dust-cloud” which, we were just told, had cleared away [The translator seems to have overlooked the “kána” before “kad dákhala-hu al-Ra’b,” which gives to the verb the force of a pluperfect: “and fear had entered into him at the sight of the dust-cloud.” — ST.]

[552] i.e. his daughter, of whom he afterwards speaks in the plur.

[553] These concealments are inevitable in ancient tale and modern novel, and it need hardly be said that upon the nice conduct of them depends all the interest of the work. How careful the second-rate author is to spoil his plot by giving a needless “pregustation” of his purpose, I need hardly say.

[554] The mysteries of the marriage-night are touched with a light hand because the bride had already lost her virginity.

[555] In text “Abúyah,” a Fellah vulgarism for Abí which latter form occurs a few lines lower down.

[556] In text “Wa-Sawábi ‘hu (Asábi ‘a-hu?) fí hanaki-h:” this is explained in MS. : “Bi-yarza’u fí Asábí hi.” [Dozy, Suppl. i. 815, gives “Sawábi’” as an irregular pl. of “Asba’” quoting from Bresl. ed. iii. 381, 9. I would rather say it is a regularly formed broken plural of a singular “Sábi’” = the pointing one, i.e. index, now commonly called “Sabbábah” the reviler, where the same idea of pointing at with contempt seems to prevail, and “Sháhid” = the witnessing, because it is raised in giving testimony. In the plural it would be naturally generalised to “finger,” and in point of fact, the

sing. “Sábi’” is used nowadays in this sense in Egypt along with the other popular form of “Subá’.”{ — ST.}]

[557] I write “Cafilah” and not “Cafila” with the unjustifiable suppression of the final “h” which is always made sensible in the pure pronunciation of the Badawi. The malpractice has found favour chiefly through the advocacy of Dr. Redhouse, an eminent Turkish scholar whose judgments must be received with great caution; and I would quote on this subject the admirable remarks of my late lamented friend Dr. G. P. Badger in “The Academy” of July 2, 1887. “Another noticeable default in the same category is that, like Sale, Mr. Wherry frequently omits the terminal ‘h’ in his transliteration of Arabic. Thus he writes Sura, Amína, Fátima, Madína, Taháma; yet, inconsistently enough, he gives the ‘h’ in Allah, Khadijah, Kaabah, Makkah, and many other words. This point deserves special notice, owing to Dr. Redhouse’s letter, published in ‘The Academy’ of November 22 last, in which he denounces (as ‘a very common European error’) the addition of the ‘h’ or ‘final aspirate,’ in the English transliteration of many Arabic words. Hence, as I read the eminent Orientalist’s criticism, when that aspirate is not sounded in pronunciation he omits it, writing “Fatima,” not Fatimah, lest, as I presume, the unwary reader may aspirate the ‘h.’ But in our Bibles we find such names as Sarah, Hannah, Judah, Beulah, Moriah, Jehovah, in the enunciation of which no one thinks of sounding the last letter as an aspirate. I quite agree with Dr. Redhouse that in the construct case the final h assumes the sound of t, as in Fatimatu bint-Muhammed; yet that does not strike me as a valid reason for eliding the final h, which among other uses, is indicative of the feminine gender, as in Fâtimah, Khadîjah, Amînah, etc.; also of the nomina vicis, of many abstract nouns, nouns of multitude and of quality, as well as of adjectives of intensiveness, all which important indications would be lost by dropping the final h. And further unless the vowel a, left after the elision of that letter, be furnished with some etymological mark of distinction, there would be great risk of its being confounded with the â, formative of the singular of many verbal nouns, such as binâ, safâ, jalâ; with the masculine plurals ending in the same letters, such as hukamâ, ághniyâ, kúfarâ; and with

the feminine plurals of many adjectives, such as kúbra, súghra, húsna, etc. Dr. Redhouse says that ‘many eminent Arabists avoid such errors’ — a remark which rather surprises me, since Pocock, Lane and Palmer, and Fresnel and Perron among French Orientalists, as also Burton, all retain the final aspirate h, the latter taking special care to distinguish, by some adequate, diacritical sign, those substantive and adjective forms with which words ending in the final aspirate h might otherwise be confounded.”

[558] In the text, “Wa sába’l-dár wa Zaujatu-hu mutawassíyín bi-há.” [I cannot explain to myself the plural “Mutawassín” unless by supposing that the preceding “Sáb al-Dár” is another blunder of the scribe for “Sáhibu ‘l-Dár” when the meaning would be: “and the master of the house and his wife took charge of her (the nurse) during the days of suckling.” — ST.]

[559] In text “Sárú yaráshú-hu wa yatawassu.”

[560] [In the text “Fikí” the popular form of the present day “Fikíh,” properly “learned in the law” (LL.D. as we would say), but now the usual term for “school-master.” — ST.]

[561] Both of which are practised by Easterns from horseback, the animal going at fullest speed. With the English saddle and its narrow stirrup-irons we can hardly prove ourselves even moderately good shots after Parthian fashion.

[562] In text “Ihtimám wa Ghullah”: I suspect that the former should be written with the major h, meaning fever.

[563] See Suppl. vol. iv. .

[564] i.e. tempt not Providence unless compelled so to do by necessity.

[565] The youth was taking a “Fál” or omen: see vol. v. 136.

[566] In text “Hasal,” for which I would read “Khasal.”

[567] A wiser Sprichwort than those of France and America. It compares advantageously with the second par. of the Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1776) by the Representatives of the U.S., which declares, “these truths to be self-evident: — that all men are created equal,” etc. It is regretable that so trenchant a state-paper should begin with so gross and palpable a fallacy. Men are not born equal, nor do they become equal before their death-days even in condition, except by artificial levelling; and in republics and limited monarchies, where all are politically equal, the greatest social inequalities ever prevail. Still falser is the shibboleth-crow of the French cock, “Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité,” which has borrowed its plumage from the American Bird o’ Freedom. And Douglas Jerrold neatly expressed the truth when he said,— “We all row in the same boat but not with the same sculls.”

[568] Sayf Kunúzí = a talismanic scymitar: see “Kanz,” ix. 320.

[569] In Arab. “Al-Kutb al-Ghauth” = lit. the pole-star of invocation for help; or simply “Al-Ghauth” is the highest degree of sanctity in the mystic fraternity of Tasawwuf. See v. 384; and Lane (A. N.) i. 232. Students who would understand these titles will consult vol. iii. chapt. 12 of The Dabistán by Shaw and Troyer, Paris and London, 1843. By the learned studies of Dr. Pertsch the authorship of this work of the religious eclecticism of Akbar’s reign, has been taken from the wrongful claimant and definitively assigned to the legitimate owner, Mobed Shah. (See Z. d. M. G. xvi. 224.) It is regretable that the index of the translation is worthless as its contents are valuable.

[570] Arab. “Su’ubán” = cockatrice, etc., vols. i. 172; vii. 322. Ibn Khaldun (vol. iii. 350) tells us that it was the title of a famous and fatal necklace of rubies.

[571] In Ar. “Anakati-h.” [This is a very plausible conjecture of the translator for the word written in the text: “‘Anfakati-h” = the hair between the lower lips and the chin, and then used for the chin itself. — ST.]

[572] In the text "Tisht" (a basin for the ewer), which I have translated tray: these articles are often six feet in diameter.

[573] A neat touch of realism: the youth is worn out by the genial labours of the night which have made the bride only the merrier and the livelier. It is usually the reverse with the first post-nuptial breakfast: the man eats heartily and the woman can hardly touch solid food. Is this not a fact according to your experience, Mesdames?

[574] In text "Tazarghít" a scribal error for "Zaghrítah." In Mr. Doughty (ii. 621) "Zalághít" for "Zaghárit" and the former is erroneously called a "Syrian word." The traveller renders it by "Lullul-lullul-lullul-lá." [Immediately before, however, the correct form "hiya tazaghritu," she was lulli-looing, had been used. The word occurs in numerous forms, differentiated by the interchange of the dental and palatal "t" and of the liquid letters "r" and "l." Dozy gives: "Zaghrata," "Zaghlata" and "Zalghata" for the verb, and "Zaghrítah," "Zaghrútah" (both with pl. "Zaghárít"), "Zalghútah," "Zalghatah" (both with pl. "Zalághít"), and even a plural "Zaghálít" for the noun. — ST.]

[575] In these cases usually an exception is made of brigands, assassins and criminals condemned for felony. See Ibn Khaldun, iv. 189.

[576] [In text: "biyarza' fí Asábí-hi" (see supra).
This is, as far as I remember, the only instance where in the MS. the aorist is preceded by the preposition "bi," a construction now so common in the popular dialects. Strange as it may appear at first sight, it has a deep foundation in the grammatical sentiment, if I may say so, of the Arabic language, which always ascribed a more or less nominal character to the aorist. Hence its inflection by Raf' (u), Nasb (a) and Jazm (absence of final vowel), corresponding to the nominative, accusative and oblique case of the noun. Moreover in the old language itself already another preposition ("li") was joined to the aorist. The less surprising, therefore, can it be to find that the use of a preposition in connection with it has so largely increased in the

modern idiom, where it serves to mark this semi-nominal character of the aorist, which otherwise would be lost in consequence of the loss of the vowel terminations. This interesting subject deserves a fuller development, but I must reserve it for another opportunity — inshá ‘lláh! — ST.]

[577] [Again “yastanit” = he listened attentively; comp. note . — ST.]

[578] In text “Zarb al-Aklám.”

[579] Vol. iii. 247-261. This violation of the Harem is very common in Egypt.

[580] Arab. “Fadáwi,” here again = a blackguard, see Suppl. vol. iv. 281.

[581] The Irishman says, Sleep with both feet in one stocking.

[582] Arab. or rather Egypt. “Bábúj,” from “Bábúg,” from the Pers. “Pay-púsh” = foot-clothing, vulg. “Pápúsh.” To beat with shoe, slipper, or pipe-stick is most insulting; the idea, I believe, being that these articles are not made, like the rod and the whip, for corporal chastisement, and are therefore used by way of slight. We find the phrase “he slippered the merchant” in old diaries, e.g. Sir William Ridges, 1683, Hakluyts, mdccclxxvii.

[583] Arab. “Sarmújah” = sandals, slippers, shoes, esp. those worn by slaves.

[584] Suggesting carnal need.

[585] The young man being grown up did not live in his father’s house.

[586] Arab. “Tartara.” The lexicons give only the sigs. “chattering” and so forth. Prob. it is an emphatic reduplication of “Tarra” = sprouting, pushing forward.

[587] The youth plays upon the bride’s curiosity, a favourite topic in

Arab. and all Eastern folk-lore.

[588] There is a confusion in the text easily rectified by the sequel. The facetia suggests the tale of the Schildburgers, who on a fine summer’s day carried the darkness out of the house in their caps and emptied it into the sunshine which they bore to the dark room.

[589] A kindly phrase popularly addressed to the returning traveller whether long absent or not.

[590] In the text “Hamákah.”

[591] Arab. “Adi” which has occurred before.

[592] This “little orgie,” as moderns would call it, strongly suggests the Egyptian origin of the tale.

[593] MS. vol. vi. 262-271. Arab. “ ‘Adím al-Zauk” which the old Latin dictionaries translate “destitutus experientić” and “expers desiderii,” and it is = to our deficient in taste, manners, etc. The term is explained in vol. ix. 266 (Correct my General Index “ix. 206”). Here it evidently denotes what we call “practical joking,” a dangerous form of fun, as much affected by Egyptians as by the Hibernians.

[594] In text “Wakálah” = an inn: vol. i. 266.

[595] “ ‘Ausaj,” for which the dictionaries give only a thorny plant, a bramble.

[596] The grand old Eastern or Desert-gate of Cairo: see vol. vi. 234.

[597] Arab. “Thakálah,” lit. = heaviness, dullness, stupidity.

[598] This is a mere shot: the original has “Baítharán.”

[599] Arab. “Mayzah” = the large hall with a central fountain for ablution attached to every great Mosque.

[600] In the text “Shashmah,” from Pers. “Chashmah” a fountain;

applied in Egypt to the small privies with slab and hole; vol. i. 221.

[601] [In Ar. “Unsak,” an expression principally used when drinking to one’s health, in which sense it occurs, for instance, in the Bresl. ed. of The Nights, i. 395, 7.-ST.]

[602] Arab. “Mutáti bi zahri-h”: our ancestors’ expression was not polite, but expressive and picturesque.

[603] The normal pun: “Fátihah,” fem. of “fátih” = an opener, a conqueror, is the first Koranic chapter, for which see iv. 36.

[604] This appears to be a kind of padding introduced to fill up the Night. The loan of an ass is usually granted gratis in Fellah villages and Badawi camps. See Matth. xxi. 2, 3; Mark xi. 2-6, and Luke xix. 30-34.

[605] i.e. O Moslem, opposed to Enemy of Allah = a non-Moslem. In text Yá ‘Ibád, plur. for sing.

[606] Arab. “Kashshara” = grinned a ghastly smile; it also means laughing so as to show the teeth.

[607] This tale follows “The Kazi of Baghdad, his treacherous Brother and his Virtuous Wife,” which is nothing but a replica of “The Jewish Kazi and his Pious Wife” (vol. v. 256). Scott has translated it, after his fashion, in vol. vi. -408, and follows it up with “The sultan’s Story of Himself,” which ends his volume as it shall be the conclusion of mine.

[608] In text, “Wa yaakhazu ‘l thalátha arbá’ min máli-hi wa salbi hálí-hi.”

[609] In text, “La-hu Diráah (for “Diráyah” = prudence) fí tadbírí ‘l-Mulúk.”

[610] In text, “Al-Sirru ‘l-iláhi,” i.e. the soul, which is “divinć particula aurć.”

[611] In text, “Nuwájiru ‘l-wukúfat.” [I read “nuwájiru (for nuájiru”) ‘l-wukúfát,” taking the first word to be a verb corresponding to the preceding, “nabí’u,” and the second a clerical error for “al-Maukúfát.” In this case the meaning would be: “and letting for hire such parts of my property as were inalienable.” — ST.]

[612] Here the text has the normal enallage of persons, the third for the first, “the youth” for “I.” I leave it unaltered by way of specimen.

[613] In text “‘Arús muhallíyah.”

[614] He fainted thinking of the responsibilities of whoso should sit thereupon.

[615] Here is a third enallage, the King returning to the first person, the oratio directa.

[616] i.e. “by Allah;” for “Bi” (the particle proper of swearing) see viii. 310.

[617] Here again is a fourth enallage; the scribe continuing the narrative.

[618] i.e. well fed, sturdy and bonny.

[619] “Sára lá-hu Shanán.” [The work in the text, which is exceedingly badly written, looks to me as if it were meant for “Thániyan” = and he (the youth) became second to him (the Sultan), i.e. his alter ego. — ST.]

[620] In text “Yatama’ash min-hu.” [A denominative of the 5th form from “Ma’ásh,” livelihood. It usually has the meaning of “earning one’s living,” but occurs in Makkari’s Life of Ibn al-Khatíb also in the sense of “feeding or glutting upon,” although applied there not to victuals but to books. — ST.]

[621] In text “Sára yuráshí-h.” [“Yuráshí” and “yuráshú,” which had occurred , are the 6th form of “rashá, yarshú” = he bestowed a gift

(principally for the sake of bribery, hence “Rashwah” or “Rishwah” = a bribe), he treated kindly. — ST.]

[622] “Markab Mausúkah,” from {root} “Wask” = conceiving, being pregnant, etc.

[623] “Mutawassi * * * al-Wisáyat al-Támmah.” [“Mutawassi” has been met with before (see) and “Wisáyah” is the corresponding noun = he charged himself with (took upon himself) her complete charge, i.e. maintenance. — ST.]

[624] [In Ar. “khallí-ná nak’ud,” a thoroughly modern expression. It reads like a passage from Spitta Bey’s Contes Arabes Modernes, where such phrases as: “khallí-ná niktib al-Kitáb,” let us write the marriage contract, “ma-tkhallihsh (for “má takhallí-hu shay”) yishúfak,” let him not see thee, and the like are very frequent. — ST.]

[625] “Fi Kashshi ‘l-Markab;” According to custom in the East all the ship’s crew had run on shore about their own business as soon as she cast anchor. This has happened to me on board an Egyptian man-of-war where, on arriving at Suez, I found myself the sum total of the crew.

[626] In text, “Jílan ba’da Jíl:” the latter word = revolutions, change of days, tribe, people.

[627] The dénouement is a replica of “The Tale of the King who lost kingdom and wife and wealth and Allah restored them to him” (Suppl. Nights, vol. i. 319). That a Sultan should send his Ministers to keep watch over a ship’s cargo sounds passably ridiculous to a European reader, but a coffee-house audience in the East would find it perfectly natural. Also, that three men, the Sultan and his sons, should live together for years without knowing anything of one another’s lives seems to us an absurdity: in the case of an Oriental such detail would never strike him even as impossible or even improbable.

[628] Between Nights lxviii. and xci. () the Nights are not numbered.

[629] Here the numeration begins again.

[630] In Ouseley he becomes a “King of Greece.”

[631] The Arab. is “Ja’idi”: Scott has “Artizans or Sharpers”: Ouseley, “labourers.”

[632] Ouseley has “Story of the first foolish Man.”

[633] In the Latin Catalogue he is called Agricola, and by Scott the Husbandman.

[634] In Ouseley he now becomes a King of Greece.

[635] In Ouseley, “Bint-Ameen.”

[636] In Arab. “Rujub al-Mutarmakh,” in the Lat. list “insipicus.”

[637] In Ouseley “The Tailor, a story told by the Cauzee.”

[638] In Scott “The Deformed Jester,” reading “Al-Ahdab” for “Al-Maskharat al-Azib.”

[639] In text “Al-Jalabí,” whence Ouseley and Scott’s “Mahummud Julbee.”

[640] Further notes illustrative of this and the succeeding volumes will be found in the Bibliography in Supp. Nights vol vi. I frequently refer to tales by their numbers in the Table (Nights, vol. x., p-530).

[641] Veckenstedt, Mythen, Sagen und Legenden der Zamaiten, ii. p,162.

[642] Compare, too, Mr. Clouston’s “Book of Noodles,” chap. v., “The Silly Son.”

[643] Cf. “An Apology for the Character and Conduct of

Shylock," in a volume of Essays published by a Society of Gentlemen in Exeter (1796), p-573.

[644] This incident shews that the story belongs to the Grateful Beasts' class, though it is not said that Tiomberombi had conferred any benefit on the rats; it is only implied that he understood their language.

[645] Veckenstedt, Mythen, Sagen und Legenden der Zamaiten, i. p-166.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

SUPPLEMENTAL NIGHTS VOLUME VI.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

The Translator’s Foreword.

This volume has been entitled “THE NEW ARABIAN 1 NIGHTS,” a name now hackneyed because applied to its contents as far back as 1819 in Henry Weber’s “Tales of the East” (Edinburgh, Ballantyne).

The original MS. was brought to France by Al-Káhin Diyánisiás Sháwísh, a Syrian priest of the Congregation of St. Basil, whose name has been Frenchified to Dom Dennis (or Denys) Chavis. He was a student at the European College of Al-Kadís Ithanásiús (St. Athanasius) in Rúmiyah the Grand (Constantinople) and was summoned by the Minister of State, Baron de Breteuil, to Paris, where he presently became “Teacher of the Arabic Tongue at the College of the Sultán, King of Fransá in Bárís (Paris) the Great.” He undertook (probably to supply the loss of Galland’s ivth MS. volume) a continuation of The Nights (proper), and wrote with his own hand the last two leaves of the third tome, which ends with three instead of four couplets: thus he completed Kamar al-Zamán (Night cclxxxi.- cccxxix.) and the following tales: —

The History of the Sleeper and the Waker (Nights cccxxx.-ccclxxix.).
The History of Warlock and the Cook (ccclxxx.-cd.).
The History of the Prisoner in the Bímáristán or Madhouse (cd.-cdxxvii.).
The History of Ghánim the Thrall o’ Love (cdxxviii.-cdlxxiv.).
The History of Zayn al-Asnám and the King of the Jánn (cdlxxv.-cdxci.).
The History of Alaeddin (cdxcii.-dlxix.), and
The History of Ten Wazirs (dlxx.).

The copy breaks off at folio 320, r in the middle of Night dcxxxi., and the date (given at the end of Night cdxxvii., folio 139) is Shubát (February), A.D. 1787. This is the MS. numbered Supplément Arabe, No. 1716.

In Paris, Dom Chavis forgathered with M. Cazotte, a littérateur of the category “light,” an ingénieux écrivain, distinguished for “gaiety, delicacy, wit and Attic elegance," and favorably known for (inter alia) his poem "Olivier," his "Diable Amoureux," "The Lord Impromptu," and a travesty of The Nights called "The Thousand and One Fopperies." The two agreed to collaborate, the Syrian translating the Arabic into French, and the Parisian metamorphosing the manner and matter to "the style and taste of the day"; that is to say, working up an exaggerated imitation, a caricature, of Galland. The work appeared, according to Mr. A. G. Ellis, of the British Museum, who kindly sent me these notes, in Le Cabinet | des Fées, | ou | Collection choisie | des Contes des Fées, | et autres contes merveilleux, | ornés de figures. | Tome trente-huitiéme — (quarante-unième). | A Genève, | chez Bárde, Manget et Compagnie, | Imprimeurs-Libraires. | Et se trouve à Paris | Rue et Hôtel Serpente. | 1788-89, 8 [1] . The half-title is Les Veilliées Persanes, and on the second title- page is Les Veilliées | du | Sultan Schahriar, avec | la Sultane Scheherazade; | Histoires incroyables, amusantes, et morales, | traduites de l'Arabe par M. Cazotte et | D. Chavis. Faisant suite aux mille et une Nuits. | Ornées de I2 belles gravures. | Tome premier (— quatrième) | à Genève, | chez Barde, Manget et Comp' | 1793. This 8vo[2] bears the abridged title, La Suite des mille et une Nuits, Contes Arabes, traduits par Dom Chavis et M. Cazotte. The work was printed with illustrations at Geneva and in Paris, MDCCLXXXVIII., and formed the last four volumes (xxxviii.- xli.) of the great Recueil, the Cabinet des Fées, published at Geneva from A.D. 1788 to 1793.

The following is a complete list of the histories, as it appears in the English translation, lengthily entitled, "Arabian Tales; | or, | a Continuation | of the | Arabian Nights Entertainments. | Consisting of | Stories | Related by the | Sultana of the Indies | to divert her Husband from the Performance of a rash vow; | Exhibiting | A most interesting view of the Religion, Laws, | Manners, Customs, Arts, and Literature | of the | Nations of the East, | And | Affording a rich Fund of the most pleasing Amusement, | which fictitious writings can supply. | In Four Volumes | newly translated from the original Arabic into French | By Dom Chavis | a native Arab and M. Cazotte, Member | of the Academy of Dijon. | And translated from the French into English |

By Robert Heron. | Edinburgh: | Printed for Bell and Bradfute, J. Dickson, E. Balfour, | and P. Hill, Edinburgh, | and G. G. J. and J. Robinson, London | MDCCXCIl."

1. The Robber-Caliph; or, adventures of Haroun-Alraschid, with the Princess of Persia and the fair Zutulbe.[3] 2. The Power of Destiny, or, Story of the Journey of Giafar to Damascus comprehending the Adventures of Chebib (Habíb) and his family. 3. The Story of Halechalbé (Ali Chelebí) and the Unknown Lady; or, the Bimaristan. 4. The Idiot; or, Story of Xailoun.[4] 5. The Adventures of Simustafa (="Sí" for Sídí "Mustafa") and the Princess Ilsatilsone (Lizzat al-Lusún = Delight of Tongues?). 6. Adventures of Alibengiad, Sultan of Herat, and of the False Birds of Paradise. 7. History of Sankarib and his two Viziers. 8. History of the Family of the Schebandad (Shah-bander = Consul) of Surat. 9. The Lover of the Stars: or, Abil Hasan's Story. 10. History of Captain Tranchemont and his Brave Companions: Debil Hasen's Story. 11. The Dream of Valid Hasan. 12-23. Story of Bohetzad and his Ten Viziers (with eleven subsidiary tales).[5] 24. Story of Habib and Dorathal-Goase (=Durrat al-Ghawwás the Pearl of the Diver); or, the Arabian Knight. 25. Story of Illabousatrous (?) of Schal-Goase, and of Camarilzaman. 26. Story of the Lady of the Beautiful Tresses. 27. The History of Habib and Dorathal-Goase; or, the Arabian Knight continued. 28. History of Maugraby (Al Magnrabi=the Moor); or, the Magician. 29. History of Halaiaddin ('Alá al-Din, Alaeddin, Aladdin), Prince of Persia. 30. History of Yemaladdin (Jamál al-Dín), Prince of Great Katay. 31. History of Baha-Ildur, Prince of Cinigae. 32. History of Badrildinn (Badr al-Dín), Prince of Tartary. 33. History of the Amours of Maugraby with Auhata al-Kawakik (= Ukht al-Kawákib, Sister of the Planets), daughter of the King of Egypt. 34. History of the Birth of Maugraby.

Of these thirty four only five (MS. iv., vi., vii., xxvii. and xxxii.) have not been found in the original Arabic.

Public opinion was highly favourable to the "Suite" when first issued. Orientalism was at that time new to Europe, and the general was startled by its novelties, e.g. by "Women wearing drawers and trousers like their husbands, and men arrayed in loose robes like their wives, yet at the same time cherishing, as so many goats, each a venerable length of beard." (Heron's Preface.) They found its "phænomena so remote from the customs and manners of Europe, that, when exhibited as entering into the ordinary system of human affairs, they could not fail to confer a considerable share of amusive novelty on the characters and events with which they were connected." (Ditto, Preface.) Jonathan Scott roundly pronounced the continuation a forgery. Dr. Patrick Russell (History of Aleppo, vol. i. 385) had no good opinion of it, and Caussin de Perceval (père, vol. viii., -46) declared the version éloignée du goût Orientale; yet he re-translated the tales from the original Arabic (Continués, Paris, 1806), and in this he was followed by Gauttier, while Southey borrowed the idea of his beautiful romance, "Thalaba the Destroyer," now in Lethe from the "History of Maughraby." Mr. A. G. Ellis considers these tales as good as the old "Arabian Nights," and my friend Mr. W. F. Kirby (Appendix to The Nights, vol. x.), quite agrees with him that Chavis and Cazotte's Continuation is well worthy of republication in its entirety. It remained for the Edinburgh Review, in one of those ignorant and scurrilous articles with which it periodically outrages truth and good taste (No. 535, July, 1886), to state, "Cazotte published his Suite des Mille et une Nuits, a barefaced forgery, in 1785." A barefaced forgery! when the original of twenty eight tales out of thirty four are perfectly well known, and when sundry of these appear in MSS. of "The Thousand Nights and a Night."

The following is a list of the Tales (widely differing from those of Chavis and Cazotte) which appeared in the version of Caussin de Perceval.

VOLUME VIII.

Les | Mille et une Nuits | Contes Arabes, | Traduits en Francais
| Par M. Galland, | Membre de l'Académie des Inscriptions et |
Belles-Lettres, Professeur de Langue Arabe | au Collége Royal, |
Continués | Par M. Caussin de Perceval, | Professeur de Langue
Arabe au Collége Impérial. | Tome huitiéme. | à Paris, | chez Le
Normant, Imp.-Libraire, | Rue des Prêtres Saint-Germain-l
Auxerrois. | 1806.

1. Nouvelles aventures du calife Haroun Alraschid; ou histoire de la petite fille de Chosroès Anouschirvan. Gauttier, Histoire du Khalyfe de Baghdad: vol. vii. II7.) 2. Le Bimaristan, ou histoire du jeune Marchand de Bagdad et de la dame inconnue. 3. Le médécin et le jeune traiteur de Bagdad 4. Histoire du Sage Hicar. (Gauttier, Histoire du Sage Heycar, vii. 313.) 5. Histoire du roi Azadbakht, ou des dix Visirs. 6. Histoire du marchand devenu malheureux. 7. Histoire du imprudent et de ses deux enfants. 8. Histoire du d’ Abousaber, ou de l’homme patient. 9. Histoire du du prince Behezad. 10. Histoire du roi Dadbin, ou de la vertueuse Aroua. 11. Histoire du Bakhtzeman. 12. Histoire du Khadidan. 13. Histoire du Beherkerd. 14. Histoire du Ilanschah et d’Abouteman. 15. Histoire du Ibrahim et de son fils. 16. Histoire du Soleïman-schah. 17. Histoire du de l’esclave sauve du supplice.

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VOLUME IX.

18. Attaf ou l’homme généreux. (Gauttier, Histoire de l’habitant de Damas, vii. 234.) 19. Histoire du Prince Habib et de Dorrat Algoase. 20. Histoire du roi Sapor, souverain des îles Bellour; de Camar Alzemann, fille du genie Alatrous, et Dorrat Algoase. (Gauttier, vii. 64.) 21. Histoire de Naama et de Naam. 22. Histoire du d’Alaeddin. 23. Histoire du d’Abou Mohammed Alkeslan. 24. Histoire du d’Aly Mohammed le joaillier, ou du faux calife.

I need hardly offer any observations upon these tales, as they have been discussed in the preceding pages.

By an error of the late M. Reinaud (for which see Histoire d’ ‘Alâ al-Din by M. H. Zotenberg, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, MDCCCLXXXVIII.) the MS. Supplément Arabe, No. I7I6, in the writing of Dom Chavis has been confounded with No. 1723, which is not written by the Syrian priest but which contains the originals of the Cazotte Continuation as noted by M. C. de Perceval (Les Mille et une Nuits, etc., vol. viii. Préf. p. I7, et seqq.) It is labelled Histoires tirées la plupart des Mille et une Nuits | Supplément Arabe | Volume de 742 pages. The thick quarto measures centimètres 20 ½ long by I6 wide; the binding is apparently Italian and the paper is European, but the filegrane or water-mark, which is of three varieties, a coronet, a lozenge-shaped bunch of circles and a nondescript, may be Venetian or French. It contains 765 pages, paginated after European fashion, but the last eleven leaves are left blank reducing the number written to 742; and the terminal note, containing the date, is on the last leaf. Each page numbers IS lines and each leaf has its catchword (mot de rappel). It is not ordered by “karrás” or quires; but is written upon 48 sets of 4 double leaves. The text is in a fair Syrian hand, but not so flowing as that of No. 1716, by Sháwísh himself, which the well-known Arabist, Baron de Slane, described as Bonne écriture orientale de la fin du XVIII Siècle. The colophon conceals or omits the name of the scribe, but records the dates of incept Kánún IId. (the Syrian winter month January) A.D. 1772; and of conclusion Naysán (April) of the same year. It has head-lines disposed recto and verve, e.g.,

Haykár —— —— —— —— —— Al-Hakím,

and parentheses in the text after European fashion with an imperfect list at the beginning. A complete index is furnished at the end. The following are the order and pagination of the fourteen stories: —

1. The King of Persia and his Ten Wazirs . . . . . .p to 62 2. Say of the Sage Haykár. . . . . .140 3. History of King Sabúr and the Three Wise Men. . . . . . .183 4. The Daughter of Kisrà the King (Al Bundukâni) . . . . . .217 5. The Caliph and the Three Kalandars. . . . . .266 6. Julnár the Sea born . . . . .396 7. The Duenna, the Linguist-dame and the King's Son. . . . .476 8. The Tale of the Warlock and the young Cook of Baghdad . .505 9. The Man in the Bímáristan or Madhouse . . . . .538 10. The Tale of Attáf the Syrian. . . . . .588 11. The History of Sultan Habíb and Durrat al-Ghawwás . . . .628 12. The Caliph and the Fisherman. . . . . .686 13. The Cock and the Fox. . . . . .718 14. The Fowl-let and the Fowler . . . . 725 to 739 (finis)

Upon these tales I would be permitted to offer a few observetions. No. i. begins with a Christian formula:— "In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost" (Rúhu'l-Kudus); and it is not translated, because it is a mere replica of the Ten Wazirs (Suppl. vol. i. 55-151). The second, containing "The Sage Haykár," which is famous in folk-lore throughout the East, begins with the orthodox Moslem "Bismillah," etc. "King Sapor" is prefaced by a Christian form which to the Trinitarian formula adds, "Allah being One"; this, again, is not translated, because it repeats the "Ebony Horse" (vol. v. 1). No iv., which opens with the Bismillah, is found in the Sabbágh MS. of The Nights (see Suppl. vol. iii.) as the Histoire de Haroun al-Raschid et de la descendante de Chosroès. Albondoqani (Nights lxx.-lxxvii.). No. v., which also has the Moslem invocation, is followed by the "Caliph and the Three Kalandars," where, after the fashion of this our MS., the episodes (vol. i., 104-130) are taken bodily from "The Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdad" (i. 82), and are converted into a separate History. No. vi. has no title to be translated, being a replica of the long sea-tale in vol. vii., 264. Nos. vii., viii., ix., x. and xi. lack initiatory invocation betraying Christian or Moslem provenance. No. viii. is the History of Sí Mustafá and of

Shaykh Shaháb al- Dín in the Turkish Tales: it also occurs in the Sabbágh MS. (Nights ccclxxxvi.-cdviii.). The Bímáristán (No. ix.), alias Ali Chalabi (Halechalbé), has already appeared in my Suppl. vol. iv. 35. No. xii., "The Caliph and the Fisherman," makes Harun al-Rashid the hero of the tale in "The Fisherman and the Jinni" (vol. i. 38); it calls the ensorcelled King of the Black Islands Mahmúd, and his witch of a wife Sitt al-Mulúk, and it also introduces into the Court of the Great Caliph Hasan Shumán and Ahmad al-Danaf, the prominent personages in "The Rogueries of Dalílah" (vol. vii. 144) and its sister tale (vii. 172). The two last Histories, which are ingenious enough, also lack initial formulæ.

Dr. Russell (the historian of Aleppo) brought back with him a miscellaneous collection comprising —

Al-Bundukani, or the Robber Caliph;
The Power of Destiny (Attaf the Syrian);
Ali Chelebi, or the Bimaristan;
King Sankharib and the Sage Haykar;
Bohetzad (Azádbakht) and the Ten Wazirs; and, lastly,
Habib, or the Arabian Knight.

The Encyclopedia Britannica (ixth edit. of MDCCCLXXVI.), which omits the name of Professor Galland, one of the marking Orientalists in his own day, has not ignored Jacques Cazotte, remarkable for chequered life and noble death. Born in 1720, at Dijon, where his father was Chancellor for the Province of Burgundy, he studied with the Jesuits at home; and, having passed through the finishing process in Paris, he was introduced to public life by the Administration de la Marine. He showed early taste for poetry as well as prose, and composed songs, tales, and an opera— "The Thousand and One Fopperies." His physique is described as a tall figure, with regular features, expressive blue eyes, and fine hair, which he wore long. At twenty seven he became a commissary in the office and was presently sent as Comptroller to the Windward Islands, including the French Colony Martinique, which then as now was famous for successful woman- kind. At these head-quarters he became intimate with Père Lavalette, Superior of the S. J. Mission, and he passed some years of a pleasant and not unintellectual career. Returning to Paris on leave of absence he fell in with a country-woman and an old family friend, Madame La Poissonnier, who had been appointed head nurse to the Duke of Burgundy; and, as the child in her charge required lulling to sleep, Cazotte composed the favourite romances (ballads), Tout au beau milieu des Ardennes, and Commere Il faut chauffer le lit. These scherzi, however, brought him more note than profit, and soon afterwards he returned to Martinique.

During his second term of service Cazotte wrote his heroic comic-poem, the Roman d'Olivier, in twelve cantos, afterwards printed in Paris (2 vols. 8vo, 1765); and it was held a novel and singular composition. When the English first attacked (in 1759) Saint Pierre of Martinique, afterwards captured by Rodney in 1762, the sprightly littérateur showed abundant courage and conduct, but over-exertion injured his health, and he was again driven from his post by sickness. He learned, on landing in France, that his brother, whilome Vicar-General to M. de Choiseul, Bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, had died and left him a fair estate, Pierry, near Epernay; he therefore resigned his appointment and retired with the title "Commissary General to the Marine." But presently he lost 50,000 écus — the whole fruit of his economies — by the speculations of Père Lavalette, to whose hands he had entrusted his estates, negroes, and effects at Martinique. These had been sold and the cheques had been forwarded to the owner: the S. J., however, refused to honour them. Hence the scandal of a law-suit in which Cazotte showed much delicacy and regard for the feelings of his former tutors.

Meanwhile Cazotte had married Elizabeth Roignon, daughter to the Chief Justice of Martinique; he returned to the Parisian world with some éclat and he became an universal favourite on account of his happy wit and humour, his bonhomie, his perfect frankness, and his hearty amiability. The vogue of "Olivier" induced him to follow it up with Le Diable Amoureux, a continuation or rather parody of Voltaire's Guerre civile de Genève: this work was so skilfully carried out that it completely deceived the world; and it was followed by sundry minor pieces which were greedily read. Unlike the esprits forts of his age, he became after a gay youth- tide an ardent Christian; he made the Gospel his rule of life; and he sturdily defended his religious opinions; he had also the moral courage to enter the lists with M. de Voltaire, then the idol-in-chief of the classes and the masses.

In later life Cazotte met Dom Chavis, who was translating into a curious jargon (Arabo-Franco-Italian) certain Oriental tales; and, although he was nearing the Psalmist's age-term of man, he agreed to "collaborate." The Frenchman used to take the pen at midnight when returning from "social pleasures," and work till 4-5 a.m. As he had prodigious facility and spontaneity he finished his part of the task in two winters. Some of the tales in the suite, especially that of "Maugraby," are attributed wholly to his invention; and, as a rule, his aim and object were to diffuse his spiritual ideas and to write treatises on moral perfection under the form of novelle.

Cazotte, after a well-spent and honourable life, had reason to expect with calmness "the evening and ending of a fine day." But this was not to be; the Great Revolution had burst like a hurricane over the land, and he was doomed to die a hero's death. His character was too candid, and his disposition too honest, for times which suggested concealment. He had become one of the Illuminati, and La Harpe ascribed to him the celebrated prophecy which described the minutest events of the Great Revolution. A Royalist pur sang, he freely expressed his sentiments to his old friend Ponteau, then Secretary of the Civil List. His letters came to light shortly after the terrible day, August IO, 1792: he was summarily arrested at Pierry and brought to Paris, where he was thrown into prison. On Sept. 3, when violence again waxed rampant, he was attacked by the patriot-assassins, and was saved only by the devotion of his daughter Elizabeth, who threw herself upon the old man crying, "You shall not reach my father's heart before piercing mine." The courage of the noble pair commanded the admiration of the ruffians, and they were carried home in triumph.

For a few weeks the family remained unmolested, but in those days "Providence" slept and Fortune did not favour the brave. The Municipality presently decreed a second arrest, and the venerable littérateur, aged seventy two, was sent before the revolutionary tribunal appointed to deal with the pretended offences of August 10. He was subjected to an interrogatory of thirty-six hours, during which his serenity and presence of mind never abandoned him and impressed even his accusers. But he was condemned to die for the all-sufficient reason:— “It is not enough to be a good son, a good husband, a good father, one must also prove oneself a good citizen.” He spent his last hours wit’. his confessor, wrote to his wife and children, praying his family not to beweep him, not to forget him, and never to offend against their God; and this missive, with a lock of his hair for his beloved daughter, he finally entrusted to the ghostly father. Upon the scaffold he turned to the crowd and cried, “I die as I have lived, truthful and faithful to my God and my King.” His venerable head, crowned with the white honours of age, fell on Sept. 25, 1792.

Cazotte printed many works, some of great length, as the Œuvres Morales, which filled 7 vols. 8vo in the complete edition of 1817; and the biographers give a long list of publications, besides those above-mentioned, romantic, ethical, and spiritual, in verse and in prose. But he wrote mainly for his own pleasure, he never sought fame, and consequently his reputation never equalled his merit. His name, however, still smells sweet, passing sweet, amid the corruption and the frantic fury of his day, and the memory of the witty, genial, and virtuous littérateur still blossoms in the dust.

During my visit to Paris in early 1887, M. Hermann Zotenberg was kind enough to show me the MS., No. 1723, containing the original tales of the “New Arabian Nights.” As my health did not allow me sufficient length of stay to complete my translation, Professor Houdas kindly consented to copy the excerpts required, and to explain the words and phrases which a deficiency of dictionaries and vocabularies at an outlandish port-town rendered unintelligible to me.

In translating a MS., which has never been collated or corrected and which abounds in errors of omission and commission, I have been guided by one consideration only, which is, that my first and chiefest duty to the reader is to make my book readable at the same time that it lays before him the whole matter which the text offered or ought to have offered. Hence I have not hesitated when necessary to change the order of the sentences, to delete tautological words and phrases, to suppress descriptions which are needlessly reiterated, and in places to supply the connecting links without which the chain of narrative is weakened or broken. These are liberties which must be allowed, unless the translator's object be to produce a mutilated version of a mutilation.

Here also I must express my cordial gratitude to Mr. Alexander J. Cotheal, Consul-General for Nicaragua, in New York. This distinguished Arabist not only sent to me across the seas his MS. containing, inter alia, "The Tale of Attaf," he also under took to translate it for my collection upon my distinct assurance that its many novelties of treatment deserved an especial version. Mr. W. F. Kirby has again conferred upon my readers an important service by his storiological notes. Lastly, Dr. Steingass has lent me, as before, his valuable aid in concluding as he did in commencing this series, and on putting the colophon to

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The Say of Haykar the Sage.[6]

In the name of Allah, the Compassionating, the Compassionate, the Eternal One, the Termless, the Timeless, and of Him aidance we await. And here we begin (with the assistance of Allah Almighty and his fair furtherance) to invite the Story of Haykar the Sage, the Philosopher, the Wazir of Sankharib[7] the Sovran, and of the son of the wise man's sister Nadan[8] the Fool.

They relate that during the days of Sankháríb the King, lord of Asúr[9] and Naynawah,[10] there was a Sage, Haykár hight, Grand Wazir of that Sovran and his chief secretary, and he was a grandee of abundant opulence and ampliest livelihood: ware was he and wise, a philosopher, and endowed with lore and rede and experience. Now he had interwedded with threescore wives, for each and every of which he had builded in his palace her own bower; natheless he had not a boy to tend, and was he sore of sorrow therefor. So one day he gathered together the experts, astrologers and wizards, and related to them his case and complained of the condition caused by his barrenness. They made answer to him, "Get thee within and do sacrifice to the Godheads and enquire of them and implore their favour when haply shall they vouchsafe unto thee boon of babe." He did whatso they bade and set corbans and victims before the images and craved their assistance, humbling himself with prayer and petition; withal they vouchsafed to him never a word of reply. So he fared forth in distress and disappointment and went his ways all disheartened. Then he returned in his humiliation to Almighty Allah[11] and confided his secret unto Him and called for succour in the burning of his heart, and cried with a loud voice saying, "O God of Heaven and Earth, O Creator of all creatures, I beg Thee to vouchsafe unto me a son wherewith I may console my old age and who may become my heir, after being present at my death and closing my eyes and burying my body." Hereat came a Voice from Heaven which said, "Inasmuch as at first thou trustedst in graven images and offeredst to them victims, so shalt thou remain childless, lacking sons and daughters. However, get thee up and take to thee Nádán, thy sister's child; and, after taking this nephew to son, do thou inform him with thy learning and thy good breeding and thy sagesse, and demise to him that he inherit of thee after thy decease." Hereupon the Sage adopted his nephew Nadan, who was then young in years and a suckling, that he might teach him and train him; so he entrusted him to eight wet-nurses and dry-nurses for feeding and rearing, and they brought him up on diet the choicest with delicatest nurture and clothed him with sendal and escarlate[12] and dresses dyed with Alkermes,[13] and his sitting was upon shag-piled rugs of silk. But when Nadan grew great and walked and shot up even as the lofty Cedar[14] of Lebanon, his uncle taught him deportment and writing and reading[15] and philosophy and the omne scibile. Now after a few days Sankharib the King looked upon Haykar and saw how that he had waxed an old old man, so quoth he to him, "Ho thou excellent companion,[16] the generous, the ingenious, the judicious, the sagacious, the Sage, my Secretary and my Minister and the Concealer of my secrets and the Councillor of my kingdom, seeing how so it be that thou art aged and well shotten in years and nigh unto thy death and decease, so tell me[17] who shall stand in my service after thy demise?" Made answer Haykar, "O my lord the King, may thy head live for ever and aye! that same shall be this Nadan, son to my sister, whom I have taken to myself as mine own child and have reared him and have taught him my learning and my experience, all thereof." "Bring him to the presence," quoth the King, "and set him between my hands, that I look upon him; and, if I find him fitting, I will stablish him in thy stead. Then do thou wend thy ways and off-go from office that thou take thy rest and tend thine old age, living the lave of thy life in the fairest of honour." Hereupon Haykar hied him home and carried his nephew Nadan before the King, who considered him and was pleased with the highmost of pleasure and, rejoicing in him, presently asked the uncle, "Be this thine adopted son, O Haykar? I pray Allah preserve him; and, even as thou servedst my sire Sarhádún[18] before me, even so shall this thy son do me suite and service and fulfil my affairs and my needs and my works, to the end that I may honour him and advance him for the sake of thee." Thereat Haykar prostrated himself before the presence and said, "May thy head live, O my lord, for evermore! I desire of thee to extend the wings of thy spirit over him for that he is my son, and do thou be clement to his errings, so that he may serve thee as besitteth." The King forthwith made oath that he would stablish the youth amongst the highmost of his friends and the most worshipful of his familiars and that he should abide with him in all respect and reverence. So Haykar kissed the royal hands and blessed his lord; then, taking with him Nadan his nephew, he seated him in privacy and fell to teaching him by night as well as by day, that he might fill him with wisdom and learning rather than with meat and drink; and he would address him in these terms.[19] "O dear my son,[20] if a word come to thine ears, suffer it to die within thy heart nor ever disclose it unto other, lest haply it become a live coal[21] to burn up thy tongue and breed pain in thy body and clothe thee in shame and gar thee despised of God and man. O dear my son, an thou hear a report reveal it not, and if thou behold a thing relate it not. O dear my son, make easy thine address unto thine hearers, and be not hasty in return of reply. O dear my son, desire not formal beauty which fadeth and vadeth while fair report endureth unto infinity. O dear my son, be not deceived by a woman immodest of speech lest her snares waylay thee[22] and in her springes thou become a prey and thou die by ignominious death. O dear my son, hanker not after a woman adulterated by art, such as clothes and cosmetics, who is of nature bold and immodest, and beware lest thou obey her and give her aught that is not thine and entrust to her even that which is in thy hand, for she will robe thee in sin and Allah shall become wroth with thee. O dear my son, be not like unto the almond-tree[23] which leafeth earlier than every growth and withal is ever of the latest to fruit; but strive to resemble the mulberry-tree which beareth food the first of all growths and is the last of any to put forth her foliage.[24] O dear my son, bow thy head before thine inferior and soften thine utterance and be courteous and tread in the paths of piety, and shun impudence and louden not thy voice whenas thou speakest or laughest; for, were a house to be builded by volume of sound, the ass would edify many a mansion every day.[25] O dear my son, the transport of stones with a man of wisdom is better than the drinking of wine with one blamed for folly. O dear my son, rather pour out thy wine upon the tombs of the pious than drain it with those who give offence by their insolence. O dear my son, cleave to the sage that is Allah- fearing and strive to resemble him, and approach not the fool lest thou become like unto him and learn his foolish ways. O dear my son, whenas thou affectest a friend or a familiar, make trial of him and then company with him, and without such test nor praise him nor divulge thy thoughts unto one who is other than wise. O dear my son, as long as thy boot is upon thy leg and foot, walk therewith over the thorns and tread a way for thy sons and thy sons' sons; and build thee a boat ere the sea break into billows and breakers and drown thee before thou find an ark of safety. O dear my son, when the richard eateth a snake, folks shall say that 'tis of his subtilty; but when a pauper feedeth upon it, the world shall declare 'tis of his poverty. O dear my son, be content with thy grade and thy good, nor covet aught of thy fellow. O dear my son, be not neighbourly with the ignorant nor do thou break with him bread, and joy not in the annoy of those about thee and when thy foe shall maltreat thee meet him with beneficence. O dear my son, fear the man who feareth not Allah and hold him in hate. O dear my son, the fool shall fall when he trippeth; but the wise man when he stumbleth shall not tumble and if he come to the ground he shall rise up quickly, and when he sickeneth he shall readily heal himself, whereas to the malady of the ignorant and the stupid there is no remedy. O dear my son, when a man lesser than thyself shall accost thee, prevent him in standing respectfully before him, and if he suffice thee not the Lord shall suffice thee in his stead. O dear my son, spare not blows to thy child,[26] for the beating of the boy is like manuring to the garden and binding to the purse-mouth and tethering to the cattle and locking to the door. O dear my son, withhold thy child from wickedness, and discipline him ere he wax great and become contumacious to thee, thus belittling thee amongst thine equals and lowering thy head upon the highways and in the assemblies, and thou be described as an aider in his wrongous works. O dear my son, let no word escape thy lips without consulting thy heart; nor stand up between two adversaries, for out of converse with the wicked cometh enmity, and from enmity is bred battle, and from battle ariseth slaughter, when thy testimony shall be required; nay, do thou fly therefrom and be at rest. O dear my son, stand not up against one stronger than thyself; but possess thy soul in patience and and long-suffering and forbearance and pacing the paths of piety, for than this naught is more excellent. O dear my son, exult not over the death of thy enemy by cause that after a little while thou shalt become his neighbour. O dear my son, turn thou a deaf ear to whoso jeereth thee, and honour him and forego him with the salam-salutation. O dear my son, whenas the water shall stand still in stream and the bird shall fly sky-high and the black raven shall whiten and myrrh shall wax honey-sweet, then will the ignorant and the fool comprehend and converse. O dear my son, an thou would be wise restrain thy tongue from leasing and thy hand from thieving and thine eyes from evil glancing; and then, and then only, shalt thou be called a sage. O dear my son, suffer the wise man strike thee with his staff rather than the fool anoint thee with his sweetest unguent.[27] O dear my son, be thou humble in thy years of youth, that thou may be honoured in thine old age. O dear my son, stand not up against a man in office and puissance nor against a river in its violence, and haste not in matters of marriage; for, an this bring weal, folk will not appraise thee and if ill they will abuse thee and curse thee. O dear my son, company with one who hath his hand fulfilled and well-furnisht and associate not with any whose hand is fist-like and famisht. O dear my son, there be four things without stability: a king and no army,[28] a Wazir in difficulty for lack of rede; amongst the folks villainy and over the lieges tyranny. Four things also may not be hidden; to wit, the sage and the fool, the richard and the pauper."[29] Now when Haykar had made an end of these injunctions and instances addrest to Nadan his nephew, he fondly deemed in mind that the youth would bear in memory all his charges, and he wist not that the clean contrary thereof to him would become manifest. After this the older Minister sat in peace at home and committed to the younger all his moneys and his negro slaves and his concubines; his horses and camels, his flocks and herds, and all other such whereof he was seized. Also bidding and forbiddal were left in the youth's hand and he was promoted and preferred by the monarch like his maternal uncle and even more, whilst the ex-Wazir took his rest in retirement, nor was it his habit to visit the King save once after a while, when he would fare forth to salute him with the salam and forthwith return home. But when Nadan made sure of all commandment being in his own hand, he jeered in public at his uncle and raised his nose at him and fell to blaming him whenever he made act of presence and would say, “Verily Haykar is in age and dotage and no more he wotteth one thing from other thing.” Furthermore he fell to beating the negro slaves and the handmaidens, and to vending the steeds and dromedaries and applied him wilfully to waste all that appertained to his uncle who, when he saw this lack of ruth for the chattels and the household, incontinently drove him ignominiously from his place. Moreover he sent to apprize the King thereof; to wit, that he would assuredly[30] resume all his belongings and provision; and his liege, summoning Nadan, said to him, “So long as Haykar, shall be in life, let none lord it over his household or meddle with his fortune.” On this wise the youth’s hand was stayed from his uncle and from all his good and he ceased to go in to him and come out from him, and even to accost him with the salam. Presently Haykar repented of the pains and the trouble he had taken with Nadan and he became perplext exceedingly. Now the youth had a younger brother, Naudan[31] hight, so Haykar adopted him in lieu of the other and tendered him and honoured him with highmost honour and committed to him all his possessions and created him comptroller of his household and of his affairs. But when the elder brother beheld what had betided him, he was seized with envy and jealousy and he fell to complaining before all who questioned him, deriding his benefactor; and he would say, “Verily my maternal uncle hath driven me from his doors and hath preferred my brother before me; but, an Almighty Allah empower me, I will indeed cast him into doom of death.” Hereat he fell to brooding over the ruin of his relative, and after a long while he went, one day of the days, and wrote a letter to Akhyash Abná Sháh,[32] physician to the King of Persia and Ajam or Barbaria-land, and the following were its contents. “All salams that befit and greetings that are meet from part of Sankharib, King of Assyria and Niniveh, and from his Wazir and Secretary Haykar unto thee, O glorious monarch, and salutations be betwixt me and thee. And forthright, when this missive shall have reached thee, do thou arise in haste and come to meet me and let our trysting-place be the Buk’at Nisrín, the Lowland of the Eglantine[33] of Assyria and Niniveh, that I may commit to thee the kingdom sans fight or fray.” Furthermore he wrote a second letter in Haykar’s name to Pharaoh,[34] lord of Misraim,[35] with this purport:[36] — “Greetings between me and thee, O mighty potentate; and do thou straightway, on receipt of this epistle, arise and march upon the Buk’at Nisrin to the end that I make over to thee the kingdom without battle or slaughter.” Now Nadan’s handwriting was the likest to that of his mother’s brother. Then he folded the two missives and sealed them with Haykar’s signet and cast them into the royal palace, after which he went and indited a letter in the King’s name to his uncle, saying.— “All salutations to my Wazir and Secretary and Concealer of my secret, Haykar; and do thou forthright on receipt of this present levy thy host and all that be under thee with arms and armour complete, and march them to meet me on fifth-day[37] at the Buk’at Nisrin. Moreover, when thou see me approach thee make thy many prepare for mimic onset as they were my adversaries and offer me sham fight; for that messengers from Pharaoh, King of Egypt, have been sent to espy the strength of our armies. Accordingly, let them stand in fear of us, for that they be our foes and our haters.” Presently, sealing this epistle, he sent it to Haykar by one of the royal pages and himself carrying the other letters he had addressed to the Persian and the Egyptian, he laid them before the King and read them aloud and showed their seals. But when Sankharib heard their contents he marvelled with mighty great marvel and raged with exceeding rage and cried out, saying, “What is it I have done unto Haykar that he should write such a writ to mine adversaries? Is this my reward for all the benefits I have lavished upon Haykar?” The other replied, “Be not grieved, O King, and sorrow not, nor be thou an-angered: rather let us fare on the morrow to the Buk’at Nisrin and look into the matter, whether it be fact or falsehood.” So when Thursday came, Nadan arose, and taking the King and his Wazirs and army-officers marched them over the wastes to the Lowland of the Eglantine, and arrived there Sankharib, the Sovran, looked upon Haykar and saw his host aligned in battle against himself. And when the ex-Minister beheld his King approaching, he bade his host stir for battle and prepare to smite the opposing ranks; to wit, those of his liege lord, even as he had been commanded by royal rescript, nor did he ken what manner of pit had been digged for him by Nadan. But seeing this sight the monarch was agitated and consterned and raged with mighty great wrath. Then quoth Nadan, “Seest thou, O King, what this sorry fellow hath done? But chafe not, neither be thou sorrowful, but rather do thou retire to thy palace, whither I will presently bring to thee Haykar pinioned and bearing chains; and I will readily and without trouble fend off from thee thy foe.” So when Sankharib hied him home in sore anger with that which his ancient Minister had done, Nadan went to his uncle and said, “Indeed the King hath rejoiced with exceeding joy, and thanketh thee for acting as he bade thee, and now he hath despatched me to order that thy men be bidden to wend their ways, and that thou present thyself before him pinioned and fettered to the end that thou be seen in such plight of the envoys sent by Pharaoh concerning whom and whose master our Monarch standeth in fear.” “To hear is to obey!” replied Haykar, and forthwith let pinion his arms and fetter his legs; then, taking with him Nadan, his nephew, he repaired to the presence, where he found the King perusing the other forged letter also sealed with the ministerial signet. When he entered the throne-room he prostrated himself, falling to the ground upon his face, and the Sovran said to him, “O Haykar, my Viceregent and Secretary and Concealer of my secret and Councillor of my kingdom, say me, what have I wrought thee of wrong that thou shouldst requite me with such hideous deed?” So saying he showed him the two papers written in the handwriting and sealed with the seal of the accused who, when he looked upon them, trembled in every limb, and his tongue was knotted for a while, nor could he find power to speak a word, and he was reft of all his reason and of his knowledge. Wherefor he bowed his brow groundwards and held his peace. But when the King beheld this his condition, he bade them slay him by smiting his neck without the city, and Nadan cried aloud, “O Haykar, O blackavice, what could have profited thee such trick and treason that thou do a deed like this by thy King?”[38] Now the name of the Sworder was Abú Sumayk the Pauper,[39] and the monarch bade him strike the neck of Haykar in front of the Minister’s house-door and place his head at a distance of an hundred ells from his body.[40] Hearing this Haykar fell prone before the King and cried, “Live thou, O my lord the King, for ever and aye! An thou desire my death be it as thou wilt and well I wot that I am not in default and that the evil-doer exacteth according to his ill- nature.[41] Yet I hope from my lord the King and from his benevolence that he suffer the Sworder make over my corpse to my menials for burial, and so shall thy slave be thy sacrifice.” Hereat the Monarch commanded the Headsman do as he was desired, and the man, accompanied by the royal pages, took Haykar, whom they had stripped of his outer raiment, and led him away to execution. But when he was certified of coming death, he sent tidings thereof to his wife, Shaghaftíní[42] hight, adding, “Do thou forthright come forth to meet me escorted by a thousand maiden girls, whom thou shalt habit in escarlate and sendal, that they may keen over me ere I perish; moreover dispread for the Headsman and his varlets a table of food and bring an abundance of good wine that they may drink and make merry.”[43] Haykar’s wife presently obeyed his orders for she also was ware and wise, sharp-witted, experienced and a compendium of accomplishments and knowledge. Now when the guards[44] and the Sworder and his varlets came to Haykar’s door, they found the tables laid out with wine and sumptuous viands; so they fell to eating and drinking till they had their sufficiency and returned thanks to the housemaster.[45] Thereupon Haykar led the Headsman aside into privacy and said to him, “O Abu Sumayk,[46] what while Sarhadun the King, sire of Sankharib the King, determined to slay thee, I took thee and hid thee in a place unknown to any until the Sovran sent for thee. Moreover I cooled his temper every day till he was pleased to summon thee, and when at last I set thee in his presence he rejoiced in thee. Therefore do thou likewise at this moment bear in mind the benefits I wrought thee, and well I wot that the King will repent him for my sake and will be wroth with exceeding wrath for my slaughter, seeing that I be guiltless; so when thou shalt bring me alive before him thy degree shall become of the highest. For know thou that Nadan my nephew hath betrayed me and devised for me this ill device; and I repeat that doubtless my lord will presently rue my ruin. Learn, too, that beneath the threshold of my mansion lieth a souterrain whereof no man is ware: so do thou conceal me therein with the connivance of my spouse Shaghaftini. Also I have in my prison a slave which meriteth doom of death:[47] so bring him forth and robe him in my robes; then bid the varlets (they being drunken with wine) do him die, nor shall they know whom they have slain. And lastly command them to remove his head an hundred cubits from his body and commit the corpse unto my chattels that they inter it. So shalt thou store up with me this rich treasure of goodly deeds." Hereupon the Sworder did as he was bidden by his ancient benefactor, and he and his men repairing to the presence said, "Live thy head, O King, for ever and aye!"[48] And after this Shaghaftini, the wife of Haykar, brought meat and drink to her husband down in the Matamor,[49] and every Friday she would provide him with a sufficiency for the following week without the weeting of anyone. Presently the report was spread and published and bruited abroad throughout Assyria and Niniveh how Haykar the Sage had been done to die and slain by his Sovran; and the lieges of all those regions, one and all, keened[50] for him aloud and shed tears and said, "Alas for thee, O Haykar, and alack for the loss of thy lore and thy knowledge! Woe be to us for thee and for thy experience! Where now remaineth to find thy like? where now shall one intelligent, understanding and righteous of rede resemble thee and stand in thy stead?" Presently the King fell to regretting the fate of Haykar whereof repentance availed him naught: so he summoned Nadan and said to him, "Fare forth and take with thee all thy friends to keen and make ceremonious wailings for thy maternal uncle Haykar and mourn, according to custom, in honour of him and his memory." But Nadan, the fool, the ignorant, the hard of heart, going forth the presence to show sorrow at his uncle's house, would neither mourn nor weep nor keen; nay, in lieu thereof he gathered together lewd fellows and fornicators who fell to feasting and carousing. After this he took to himself the concubines and slaves belonging to his uncle, whom he would scourge and bastinado with painful beating; nor had he any shame before the wife of his adopted father who had entreated him as her son; but solicited her sinfully to lie with him. On the other hand Haykar, who lay perdu in his Silo, ever praised Allah the Compassionate,[51] and returned thanks unto Him for saving his life and was constant in gratitude and instant in prayer and in humbling himself before God. At times after due intervals the Sworder would call upon him to do him honour due and procure him pleasure, after which he would pray for his release and forthright gang his gait. Now when the bruit spread abroad over all the lands how that Haykar the Wise had been done to die, the rulers everywhere rejoiced, exulting in the distress of King Sankharib who sorely regretted the loss of his Sage. Presently, awaiting the fittest season, the Monarch of Misraim arose and wrote a writ to the Sovran of Assyria and Niniveh of the following tenor:— “After salams that befit and salutations that be meet and congratulations and veneration complete wherewith I fain distinguish my beloved brother Sankharib the King, I would have thee know that I am about to build a bower in the air between firmament and terra firma; and I desire thee on thy part to send me a man which is wise, a tried and an experienced, that he may help me to edify the same: also that he make answer to all the problems and profound questions I shall propose, otherwise thou shalt deposit with me the taxes in kind[52] of Assyria and Niniveh and their money-tributes for three years.” Then he made an end of his writ and, sealing it with his signet-ring, sent it to its destination. But when the missive reached Sankharib, he took it and read it, he and his Wazirs and the Lords of his land; and all stood perplext thereat and sore confounded; whilst the King waxed furious with excessive fury, and he was distraught as to what he should do and how he should act. Anon, however, he gathered together all the Shaykhs and Elders and the Olema and doctors of law and the physicists and philosophers and the charmers[53] and the astrologers and all such persons which were in his realm, and he let read the epistle of Pharaoh in their presence. Then he asked them, saying, “Who amongst you shall repair to the court of Pharaoh, lord of Misraim, and reply to his interrogations?” But they cried, “O our lord the King, do thou know there be no one who can loose the knot of these difficulties save only thy Wazir Haykar; and now that none shall offer an answer save Nadan, the son of his sister, whom he hath informed with all his subtilty and his science. Therefore, do thou summon him and haply he shall unravel for thee a tangled skein so hard to untwist.” Sankharib did as they advised, and when Nadan appeared in the presence said to him, “Look thou upon this writ and comprehend its contents.” But when the youth read it he said to the Sovran, “O my lord the King, leave alone this folk for they point to impossibilities: what man can base a bower upon air between heaven and earth?” As soon as King Sankharib heard these words of Nadan, he cried out with a mighty outcry and a violent; then, stepping down from his throne, he sat upon ashes[54] and fell to beweeping and bewailing the loss of Haykar and crying, “Alas, for me and woe worth the day for thee, O Caretaker of my capital and Councillor of my kingdom! Where shall I find one like unto thee, O Haykar? Harrow now for me, O Haykar, Oh Saviour of my secret and Manifester of my moot-points, where now shall I fare to find thee? Woe is me for sake of thee whom I slew and destroyed at the word of a silly boy! To him indeed who could bring Haykar before me or who could give me the glad tidings of Haykar being on life, I would give the half of my good; nay, the moiety of my realm. But whence can this come? Ah me, O Haykar; happy was he who looked upon thee in life that he might take his sufficiency of thy semblance and fortify himself[55] therefrom. Oh my sorrow for thee to all time! Oh my regret and remorse for thee and for slaying thee in haste and for not delaying thy death till I had considered the consequence of such misdeed.” And the King persisted in weeping and wailing night and day on such wise. But when the Sworder[56] beheld the passion of his lord and his yearning and his calling upon Haykar, he came to the presence and prostrated himself and said, “O my lord, bid thy varlets strike off my head!” Quoth the Monarch, “Woe to thee, what be thy sin?” and quoth the Headsman, “O my lord, what slave ever contrarieth the command of his master let the same be slain, and I verily have broken thy behest.” The King continued, “Fie upon thee,[57] O Abu Sumayk, wherein hast thou gainsaid me?” and the other rejoined, “O my lord, thou badest me slay the Sage Haykar; but well I wotted that right soon indeed thou wouldst regret the death of him, and the more so for that he was a wronged man; accordingly I fared forth from thee and hid him in a place unbeknown to any and I slew one of his slaves in his stead. And at this moment Haykar is alive and well; and if thou bid me, I will bring him before thee when, if thou be so minded, do thou put me to death, otherwise grant me immunity.” Cried the King, “Fie upon thee, O Abu Sumayk, how durst thou at such time make mock of me, I being thy lord?” but the Sworder replied, “By thy life and the life of thy head, O my lord, I swear that Haykar is alive and in good case!” Now when the Monarch heard these words from the Sworder and was certified by him of the matter, he flew for very gladness and he was like to fall a-swoon for the violence of his joy. So he bade forthright Haykar be brought to him and exclaimed to the Sworder, “O thou righteous slave an this thy say be soothfast, I am resolved to enrich thee and raise thy degree amongst all my companions;” and so saying and rejoicing mightily he commanded the Sworder set Haykar in the presence. The man fared to the Minister’s house forthright, and opening the souterrain went downstairs to the tenant whom he found sitting and praising Allah and rendering to Him thanksgivings; so he cried out and said, “O Haykar, the blessedest of bliss hath come to thee, and do thou go forth and gladden thy heart!” Haykar replied, “And what is to do?” whereat the man told him the whole tale, first and last, of what had befallen his lord at the hands of Pharaoh; then, taking him, led him to the presence. But when Sankharib considered him, he found him as one clean wasted by want; his hair had grown long like the pelts of wild beasts and his nails were as vulture’s claws and his members were meagre for the length of time spent by him in duresse and darkness, and the dust had settled upon him and changed his colour which had faded and waxed of ashen hue. So his lord mourned for his plight and, rising up in honour, kissed him and embraced him and wept over him saying, “Alhamdolillah — laud to the Lord — who hath restored thee to me on life after death!” Then he fell to soothing his sorrows and consoled him, praying pardon of him the while; and after bestowing robes of honour upon the Sworder and giving him due guerdon and lavishing upon him abundant good, he busied himself about the recovery of Haykar, who said, “O my lord the King, may thy head live for ever and aye! All this wrong which befel me is the work of the adulterines, and I reared me a palm-tree against which I might prop me, but it bent and brought me to the ground: now, however, O my lord and master, that thou hast deigned summon me before thee, may all passion pass away and dolour depart from thee!” “Blessed and exalted be Allah,” rejoined Sankharib, “who hath had ruth upon thee, and who, seeing and knowing thee to be a wronged man, hath saved thee and preserved thee from slaughter.[58] Now, however, do thou repair to the Hammam and let shave thy head and pare thy nails and change thy clothes; after which sit at home in ease for forty days’ space that thy health be restored and thy condition be righted and the hue of health return to thy face; and then (but not till then) do thou appear before me." Hereupon the King invested him with sumptuous robes, and Haykar, having offered thanks to his liege lord, fared homewards in joyaunce and gladness frequently ejaculating, "Subhána 'llahu ta'áláGod Almighty be glorified!" and right happy were his household and his friends and all who had learned that he was still on life. Then did he as the King had bidden him and enoyed his rest for two-score days, after which he donned his finest dress and took horse, followed and preceded by his slaves, all happy and exulting, and rode to Court, while Nadan the nephew, seeing what had befallen, was seized with sore fear and affright and became perplexed and unknowing what to do. Now, when Haykar went in and salamed to the King, his lord seated him by his side and said, "O my beloved Haykar, look upon this writ which was sent to me by the King of Misraim after hearing of thy execution; and in very deed they, to wit he and his, have conquered and chastised and routed most of the folk of our realm, compelling them to fly for refuge Egyptwards in fear of the tax-tribute which they have demanded of us." So the Minister took the missive and, after reading and comprehending the sum of its contents, quoth he to the King, "Be not wroth, O my lord: I will repair in person to Egypt and will return a full and sufficient reply to Pharaoh, and I will explain to him his propositions and will bring thee from him all the tax-tribute he demandeth of thee: moreover, I will restore all the lieges he hath caused fly this country and I will humiliate every foe of thee by aidance of Almighty Allah and by the blessings of thy Majesty." Now when the Sovran heard this answer, he rejoiced and his heart was gladdened; whereupon he gifted Haykar with a generous hand and once more gave immense wealth to the Sworder. Presently the Minister said, "Grant me a delay of forty days that I ponder this matter and devise a sufficient device." As soon as Sankharib granted him the required permission he returned homewards and, summoning his huntsmen, bade them catch for him two vigorous young vultures;[59] and, when these were brought, he sent for those who twist ropes and commanded them make two cords of cotton each measuring two thousand ells. He also bade bring him carpenters and ordered them to build for him two coffers of large size, and as soon as his bidding was done he chose out two little lads, one hight Binúhál and the other Tabshálím.[60] Then every day he would let slaughter a pair of lambs and therewith feed the children and the vultures, and he mounted those upon the back of these, binding them tight, and also making fast the cords to the legs of the fowls. He would then allow the birds to rise little by little, prolonging the flight every day to the extent of ten cubits, the better to teach and to train them; and they learnt their task so well that in a short time they would rise to the full length of the tethers till they soared in the fields of air with the boys on their backs, after which he would let hale them down. And when he saw them perfect in this process, he taught the lads to utter loud shouts what while they reached the full length of the cords and to cry out, "Send us stones and mud[61] and slaked lime that we may build a bower for King Pharaoh, inasmuch as we now stand here all the day idle!" And Haykar ceased not to accustom them and to instruct them until they became dexterous in such doings as they could be. Then he quitted them and presenting himself before King Sankharib said, "O my lord, the work is completed even as thou couldst desire; but do thou arise and come with me that I may show thee the marvel." Thereupon the King and his courtiers accompanied Haykar to a wide open space outside the city whither he sent for the vultures and the lads; and after binding the cords he loosed them to soar as high as the lanyards allowed in the firmament-plain, when they fell to outcrying as he had taught them. And lastly he haled them in and restored them to their steads. Hereat the King wondered, as did all his suite, with extreme wonderment, and kissing his Minister between his eyes, robed him in an honourable robe and said to him, "Go forth in safety, O my beloved, and boast of my realm, to the land of Egypt[62] and answer the propositions of Pharaoh and master him by the power of Almighty Allah;" and with these words farewelled him. Accordingly Haykar took his troops and guards, together with the lads and the vultures, and he fared forth intending for Egypt where on arrival he at once made for the royal Palace. And when the folk of the capital understood that Sankharib the King had commissioned a man of his notables to bespeak their Sovran the Pharaoh, they entered and apprized their liege lord who sent a party of his familiars summoning him to the presence. Presently Haykar the Sage entered unto

Pharaoh; and after prostration as befitteth before royalty said, "O my lord, Sankharib the King greeteth thee with many salutations and salams; and hath sent me singlehanded sans other of his slaves, to the end that I answer thy question and fulfil whatso thou requirest and I am commanded to supply everything thou needest; especially inasmuch as thou hast sent to the Monarch my master for the loan of a man who can build thee a bower between firmament and terra firma; and I, by the good aidance of Allah Almighty and of thine august magnanimity, will edify that same for thee even as thou desirest and requirest. But this shall be upon the condition stablished concerning the tax-tribute of Misraim for three years, seeing that the consent of the Kings be their fullest securities. An thou vanquish me and my hand fall short and I fail to answer thee, then shall my liege lord send thee the tax-tribute whereof thou speakest; but if I bring thee all thou needest, then shalt thou forward to my lord the tax-tribute thou hast mentioned and of him demanded." Pharaoh, hearing these words, marvelled and was perplexed at the eloquence of his tongue and the sweetness of his speech and presently exclaimed, "O man, what may be thy name?" The other replied, "Thy slave is hight Abíkám;[63] and I am an emmet of the emmets under Sankharib the King." Asked Pharaoh, "Had not thy lord one more dignified of degree than thou, that he sent unto me an ant to answer me and converse with me?" and Haykar answered, "I humbly hope of the Almighty that I may satisfy all which is in thy heart, O my lord; for that Allah is with the weakling the more to astounding the strangling." Hereat Pharaoh gave orders to set apart for Abikam his guest an apartment, also for the guards and all that were with him and provide them with rations and fodder of meat and drink, and whatso was appropriate to their reception as properest might be. And after the usual three days of guest-rite[64] the King of Egypt donned his robes of brightest escarlate; and, having taken seat upon his throne, each and every Grandee and Wazir (who were habited in the same hue) standing with crossed arms and feet joined,[65] he sent a summons to produce before him Haykar, now Abikam hight. Accordingly he entered and prostrated in the King's presence and stood up to receive the royal behest, when Pharaoh after a long delay asked him, "O Abikam, whom do I resemble and what may these my Lords and

Ministers represent?” Hereto the envoy answered saying, “O my lord, thou favourest Bel the idol[66] and thy chief-cains favour the servitors thereof!” Then quoth the King, “Now do thou depart and I desire thee on the morrow come again.” Accordingly Abikam, which was Haykar, retired as he was ordered, and on the next day he presented himself before Pharaoh and after prostrating stood between his hands. The King was habited in a red coat of various tincts and his mighty men were garbed in white, and presently he enquired saying, “O Abikam, whom do I resemble and what may these my Lords and Ministers represent?” He replied, “O my lord, thou art like unto the sun and thy nobles are like the rays thereof!” Then quoth the King, “Do thou retire to thy quarters and tomorrow come hither again.” So the other fared forth and Pharaoh commanded and charged his head men to don pure white, himself doing the same; and, having taken seat upon his throne, he bade Abikam be brought into the presence and when he appeared asked him, “Whom do I resemble, and what may these my Grandees represent?” He replied, “O my lord, thou favourest the moon and thy servitors and guards favour the stars and planets and constellations.” Then quoth the King, “Go thou until the morrow when do thou come hither again;” after which he commanded his Magnates to don dresses of divers colours and different tincts whilst he wore a robe of ruddy velvet. Anon he seated him upon his throne and summoned Abikam, who entered the presence and prostrated and stood up before him. The King for a fourth time asked him, “O Abikam, whom do I resemble and what may these my guards represent?” and he answered, “O my lord, thou art like the auspicious month Naysán,[67] and thy guards and grandees are like the white chamomile[68] and his bloom.” Hearing these words Pharaoh rejoiced with extreme joy and said, “O Abikam, thou hast compared me first with Bel the idol, secondly with the sun and thirdly with the moon and lastly with the auspicious month Naysan, and my lords with the chamomile and his flower. But say me now unto what likenest thou Sankharib thy lord, and what favour his Grandees?” Haykar made answer, “Heaven forfend I mention my liege lord the while thou sittest on thy throne; but rise to thy feet, and I will inform thee what my Master representeth and what his court most resembleth.” Pharaoh, struck with astonishment at such heat of tongue and valiancy of speech, arose from his seat and stood facing Haykar and presently said, “Now tell me that I may learn what thy lord resembleth and what his Grandees represent.” The other made reply, “My lord resembleth the God of Heaven, and his lords represent the Lightning and Thunder. An it be his will the winds do blow and the rains do fall; and, when he deign order, the leven playeth and the thunder roareth and at his behest the sun would refuse light and the moon and stars stand still in their several courses. But he may also command the storm-wind to arise and downpours to deluge when Naysan would be as one who beateth the bough[69] and who scattereth abroad the blooms of the chamomile.” Pharaoh hearing these words wondered with extreme wonderment, then raging with excessive rage he cried, “O man, tell me the real truth and let me know who thou art in very sooth.” “I am Haykar,” quoth the other, “Chief Secretary and especial to Sankharib the King; also his Wazir and Councillor of his kingdom and Keeper of his secret.” “Thou statest fact, O Sage,” quoth Pharaoh, “and this thy say is veridical: yet have we heard that Haykar is dead indeed, withal here art thou alive and alert.” The Minister replied, “Yea, verily that was the case, but Alhamdolillah — Glory to God, who knoweth all hidden things, my master had in very deed doomed me die believing the reports of certain traitors, but my Lord preserved me and well done to him who relieth upon the Almighty!” Then quoth Pharaoh, “Go forth and on the morrow do thou return hither and say me somewhat no man hath ever heard, nor I nor my Grandees nor any of the folk in my kingdom and my capital.” Accordingly Haykar hied him home and penned a paper wherein he said as follows: “From Sankharib, King of Assyria and Naynawah, to Pharaoh King of Misraim: — Peace be upon thee, O my brother! As well thou wottest, brother needeth brother and the Kings require the aidance of other Kings and my hope from thee is that thou wilt lend[70] me the loan of nine hundred-weight[71] of gold which I require to expend on the pay and allowances due to certain of my soldiery wherewith to provide for them the necessaries of life.” After this he folded the writ and despatched it by a messenger on the next day to Pharaoh, who perused it and was perplext and exclaimed, “Verily and indeed never till now have I heard a saying like unto this at all, nor hath anyone ever spoken[72] to me after such fashion!" Haykar replied, "'Tis fact, and 'tis well an thou own thee debtor of such sum to my lord the King." Pharaoh accepted this resolving of his proposition and said, "O Haykar, 'tis the like of thee who suiteth the service of the Kings, and blessed be Allah who perfected thee in wisdom and adorned thee with philosophy[73] and knowledge. And now remaineth to us only one need of thee; to wit, that thou build us a bower between firmament and terra firma." Haykar replied, "Hearkening and obeying! I will edify it for thee e'en as thou wishest and thou choosest; but do thou get ready for me gypsum lime and ashlar- stone and brick-clay and handicraftsmen, while I also bring architects and master masons and they shall erect for thee whatso thou requirest." So King Pharaoh gat ready all this and fared forth with his folk to a spacious plain without the city whither Haykar and his pages had carried the boys and the vultures; and with the Sovran went all the great men of his kingdom and his host in full tale that they might look upon the wonder which the Envoy of Assyria was about to work. But when they reached the place appointed, Haykar brought out of their boxes the vultures and making fast the lads to their backs bound the cords to the legs of the birds and let them loose, when they soared firmament- wards till they were poised between heaven and earth. Hereat the lads fell to crying aloud, "Send up to us the stones and the mud and the slaked lime that we may build a bower for King Pharaoh, forasmuch as here we stand the whole day idle." At this were agitated all present, and they marvelled and became perplext; and not less wondered the King and the Grandees his lieges, while Haykar and his pages fell to buffeting the handicraftsmen and to shouting at the royal guards, saying, "Provide the workmen with that they want, nor hinder them from their work!" Whereupon cried Pharaoh, "O Haykar, art thou Jinn-mad? Who is ever able to convey aught of these matters to so far a height?" But he replied to the King, "O my lord, how shall we build a bower in the lift on other wise? And were the King my master here he would have edified two such edifices in a single day." Hearing this quoth Pharaoh to him, "Hie thee, O Haykar, to thy quarters, and for the present take thy rest, seeing that we have been admonished anent the building of the bower; but come thou to me on the morrow." Accordingly, Haykar fared to his lodging, and betimes on the next day presented himself before Pharaoh, who said to him, “O Haykar, what of the stallion of thy lord which, when he neigheth in Assyria and Nineveh, his voice is heard by our mares in this place so that they miscarry?”[74] Hereat Haykar left the King and faring to his place took a tabby-cat and tying her up fell to flogging her with a sore flogging until all the Egyptians heard her outcries and reported the matter to the Sovran. So Pharaoh sent to fetch him and asked, “O Haykar, for what cause didst thou scourge this cat and beat her with such beating, she being none other but a dumb beast?”[75] He replied, “O my lord the King, she hath done by me a wrongous deed and she hath amply merited this whipping and these stripes.” The King asked, “And what may be this deed she did?” whereto Haykar made answer, “Verily my master Sankharib the King had given me a beautiful cock who had a mighty fine voice and a strong, and he knew the hours of darkness and announced them. But as he was in my mansion this mischief- making tabby fared there and fell upon him last night and tare off his head; and for this cause when she returned to me I took to punishing her with such blows and stripes.” Pharaoh rejoined, “O Haykar, indeed I see thou art old and doting! Between Misraim and Nineveh lie eight hundred and sixty parasangs; so how could this cat have covered them in one night and have torn off thy chanticleer’s head and have returned by morning to Egypt?” He replied, “O my lord, seeing that between Egypt and Assyria is such interval how then can the neighing of my lord the King’s stallion reach unto Nile-land and be heard by your mares so that here they miscarry?” When Pharaoh had pondered these words, he knew that the envoy had returned him a full and sufficient reply, so quoth he, “O Haykar, ’tis my desire that thou make for me two ropes of sand;” and quoth the other, “Do thou prescribe that they bring me a cord from thy stores that I twist one like it.” So when they had done as he bade, Haykar fared forth arear of the palace and dug two round borings equal to the thickness of the cord; then he collected sand from the river-bed and placed it therein, so that when the sun arose and entered into the cylinder, the sand appeared in the sunlight like unto ropes.[76] Thereupon quoth he to Pharaoh, “Command thy slaves take up these ropes and I will twist thee as many of them as thou willest.” Quoth Pharaoh, “O Haykar, we have before our eyes a millstone which is broken; and I require of thee that thou sew up the rent.” Accordingly the Envoy looked about him and, seeing there another stone, said to Pharaoh, “O my lord, here am I a stranger man nor have I with me aught of darning-gear; but I would have thee bid thy confidants amongst the cobblers to provide me out of this other stone with shoemaker’s awls and needles and scissors wherewith I may sew up for thee the breach in yon millstone.” Hereat Pharaoh the King fell a-laughing, he and his Grandees, and cried, “Blessed be Allah, who hath vouchsafed to thee all this penetration and knowledge;” then, seeing that the Envoy had answered all his questions and had resolved his propositions he forthright confessed that he was conquered and he bade them collect the tax-tribute of three years and present it to him together with the loan concerning which Haykar had written and he robed him with robes of honour, him and his guards and his pages; and supplied him with viaticum, victual and moneys for the road, and said to him, “Fare thee in safety, O honour of thy lord and boast of thy liege: who like unto thee shall be found as a Councillor for the Kings and the Sultans? And do thou present my salam to thy master Sankharib the Sovran saying, ‘Excuse us for that which we forwarded to thee, as the Kings are satisfied with a scanting of such acknowledgment.’”[77] Haykar accepted from him all this; then, kissing ground before him, said, “I desire of thee, O my lord, an order that not a man of Assyria and Nineveh remain with thee in the land of Egypt but fare forth it with me homewards.” Hereupon Pharaoh sent a herald to make proclamation of all whereof Haykar had spoken to him, after which the envoy farewelled the King and set out on his march intending for the realm of Assyria and Nineveh and bearing with him of treasures and moneys a mighty matter. When the tidings of his approach came to the ears of Sankharib, the King rode forth to meet his Minister, rejoicing in him with joy exceeding and received him lovingly and kissed him, and cried, “Well come and welcome and fair welcome to my sire and the glory of my realm and the vaunt of my kingdom: do thou require of me whatso thou wantest and choosest, even didst thou covet one-half of my good and of my government.” The Minister replied, “Live, O King, for ever; and if thou would gift me bestow thy boons upon Abu Sumayk, the Sworder, whose wise delay, furthered by the will of Allah Almighty, quickened me with a second life." "In thine honour, O my beloved," quoth the King, "I will do him honour;" and presently he fell to questioning his envoy concerning what had befallen him from Pharaoh and how the Lord of the Misraim had presented him with the tax-tribute and moneys and gifts and honourable robes; and lastly, he asked anent the instances and secrets which ended the mission. So Haykar related all that had betided, whereat Sankharib rejoiced with mighty great joy; and, when the converse was concluded, the King said to him, "O Haykar, take unto thee everything thou wishest and wantest of all this, for 'tis in the grasp of thy hand." Haykar answered, "Live, O King, for ever and aye; naught do I require save thy safety and the permanency of thy rule: what shall I do with moneys and such like? But an thou deign largesse me with aught, make over to me in free gift Nadan, my sister's son, that I requite him for that he wrought with me: and I would that thou grant me his blood and make it lawfully my very own." Sankharib replied, "Take him, for I have given to thee that same." So Haykar led his nephew to his home[78] and bound his hands in bonds and fettered his feet with heavy chains; then he beat him with a severe bastinado and a torturing upon his soles and calves, his back, his belly and his armpits; after which bashing he cast him into a black hole adjoining the jakes. He also made Binuhal guardian over him and bade him be supplied day by day with a scone of bread and a little water; and whenever the uncle went in to or came forth from the nephew he would revile Nadan and of his wisdom would say to him, "O dear my son, I wrought with thee all manner of good and kindly works and thou didst return me therefor evil and treason and death. O dear my son, 'tis said in saws, 'Whoso heareth not through his ears, through the nape of his neck shall he hear.'"[79] Hereat quoth Nadan, "O my uncle, what reason hast thou to be wroth with me?" and quoth Haykar, "For that I raised thee to worship and honour and made thee great after rearing thee with the best of rearing and I educated thee so thou mightest become mine heir in lore and contrivance and in worldly good. But thou soughtest my ruin and destruction and thou desiredst for me doom of death; however, the Lord, knowing me to be a wronged man, delivered me from thy mischief, for God hearteneth the broken heart and abaseth the envious and the vain-glorious. O dear my son,[80] thou hast been as the scorpion who when she striketh her sting[81] upon brass would pierce it. O dear my son, thou hast resembled the Sajálmah-bird[82] when netted in net who, when she cannot save herself alive, she prayeth the partridges to cast themselves into perdition with her. O dear my son, thou hast been as the cur who, when suffering cold entereth the potter's house to warm himself at the kiln, and when warmed barketh at the folk on such wise that they must beat him and cast him out, lest after barking he bite them. O dear my son, thou hast done even as the hog who entered the Hammam in company with the great; but after coming out he saw a stinking fosse a-flowing[83] and went and therein wallowed. O dear my son, thou hast become like the old and rank he-goat who when he goeth in leadeth his friends and familiars to the slaughter-house and cannot by any means come off safe or with his own life or with their lives. O dear my son, a hand which worketh not neither plougheth, and withal is greedy and over-nimble shall be cut off from its armpit. O dear my son, thou hast imitated the tree whom men hew down, head and branch, when she said, 'Had not that in your hands been of me,[84] indeed ye would not have availed to my felling.' O dear my son, thou hast acted as did the she-cat to whom they said, 'Renounce robbing that we make thee collars of gold and feed thee with sugar and almond cake!' But she replied, 'As for me, my craft is that of my father and my mother, nor can I ever forget it.' O dear my son, thou art as a dragon mounted upon a bramble-bush, and the two a-middlemost a stream, which when the wolf saw he cried, 'A mischief on a mischief and let one more mischievous counsel the twain of them.' O dear my son, with delicate food I fed thee and thou didst not fodder me with the driest of bread; and of sugar and the finest wines I gave thee to drink, while thou grudgedst to me a sup of cold water. O dear my son, I taught thee and tendered thee with the tenderest of tending and garred thee grow like the lofty cedar of Lebanon, but thou didst incriminate me and confine me in fetters by thine evil courses.[85] O dear my son, I nourished a hope that thou wouldst build me a strong tower wherein I might find refuge from mine adversary and foil my foes; but thou hast been to me as a burier, a grave-digger, who would thrust me into the bowels of the earth: however, my Lord had mercy upon me. O dear my son, I willed thee well and thou rewardedst me with ill-will and foul deed; wherefore, tis now my intent to pluck out thine eyes and hack away thy tongue and strike off thy head with the sword-edge and then make thee meat for the wolves; and so exact retaliation from thine abominable actions.” Hereupon Nadan made answer and said to Haykar his uncle, “Do with me whatso thy goodness would do and then condone thou to me all my crimes, for who is there can offend like me and can condone like thee? And now I pray thee take me into thy service and suffer me to slave in thy house and groom thy horses, even to sweeping away their dung, and herd thy hogs; for verily I am the evil-doer and thou art the beneficent; I am the sinner and thou art the pardoner.” “O dear my son,” rejoined Haykar, “Thou favourest the tree which, albe planted by the side of many waters, was barren of dates and her owner purposed to hew her down, when she said, ‘Remove me unto another stead where if I fruit not then fell me.’ But he rejoined, ‘Being upon the water-edge thou gavest ne’er a date, so how shalt thou bear fruit being in other site?’ O dear my son, better the senility of the eagle than the juvenility of the raven. O dear my son, they said to the wolf, ‘Avoid the sheep lest haply the dust they raise in flight may do thee a damage;’ but Lupus made answer, ‘Verily their dust is a powder good for the eyes.’ O dear my son, they brought the wolf to school that he might learn to read; but, when quoth they to him, ‘Say A, B, C, D,’[86] quoth he, ‘Lamb, Sheep, Kid, Goat,[87] even as within my belly.’ O dear my son, they set the ass’s head beside a tray of meats, but he slipped down and fell to rolling upon his back, for his nature (like that of others) may never be changed. O dear my son, his say is stablished who said, ‘When thou hast begotten a child assume him to be thy son, and when thou hast reared a son assume him to be a slave.’[88] O dear my son, whoso doeth good, good shall be his lot; and whoso worketh evil, evil shall befal him; for that the Lord compensateth mankind according to conduct. O dear my son, wherewith shall I bespeak thee beyond this my speech? and verily Allah knoweth concealed things and wotteth all secret and hidden works and ways and He shall requite thee and order and ordain between me and thee and shall recompense thee with that thou deservest.” Now when Nadan heard these words from his uncle Haykar, his body began to swell and become like a blown-up bag and his members waxed puffy, his legs and calves and his sides were distended, then his belly split asunder and burst till his bowels gushed forth and his end (which was destruction) came upon him; so he perished and fared to Jahannam-fire and the dwelling-place dire. Even so it is said in books:— “Whoever diggeth for his brother a pit shall himself fall into it and whoso setteth up a snare for his neighbour shall be snared therein.” And this much know we anent the Say of Haykar the Sage, and magnification be to Allah for ever and ever Amen.

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THE HISTORY OF AL-BUNDUKANI OR, THE CALIPH HARUN AL-RASHID AND THE DAUGHTER OF KING KISRA.

In the name of Allah the Compassionating, the Compassionate, we here indite, by the aidance of the Almighty and His furtherance, the History of the Caliph Harun Al-Rashid and of the Daughter of Kisra the King.[90]

It is related (but Allah is all-knowing of His secrets and all-kenning in whatso hath passed and preceded and preterlapsed of the annals of folk),[91] that the Caliph (by whom I mean Harun al-Rashid) was sitting on the throne of his kingdom one chance day of the days which happened to be the fête of 'Arafát.[92] And as he chanced to glance at Ja'afar the Barmaki, he said to him, "O Wazir, I desire to disguise myself and go down from my palace into the streets and wander about the highways of Baghdad that I may give alms to the mesquin and miserable and solace myself with a sight of the folk: so do thou hie with me nor let any know of our faring forth." "With love and good will," quoth Ja'afar. So his lord arose and passed from the audience-room into the inner palace where the two donned disguise and made small their sleeves and breasts[93] and issued forth to circle about the thorough-fares of Baghdad and her market-streets, distributing charity to the poor and the paupers, until the last of the day. And whilst so doing, the Commander of the Faithful chanced to espy a woman seated at the head of a highway who had extended the hand of beggary, showing at the same time her wrist and crying, "Give me somewhat for the sake of Allah Almighty!" Hereat he considered her nicely and saw that her palm and her wrist were like whitest crystal and yet more brilliant in brightness. So he wondered thereat, and presently pulling a dinar from his breast-pocket he handed it to Ja'afar and said, "Bestow it upon yonder woman." The Minister took the ducat and leaving his lord went up to her and placed it in her palm; and, when she closed her fingers thereupon, she felt that the coin was bigger than a copper or a silverling, so she looked thereat and saw that it was of gold. Hereupon she called after

Ja’afar who had passed onwards, saying, “Ho, thou fair youth!” and when he came back to her she continued, “The dinar wherewith thou hast gifted me, is it for Allah’s sake or for other service?” Said he, “’Tis not from me, nay ’twas given by yonder Youth who sent it through me.” “Ask him,” she rejoined, “and tell me what may be his purport.” Ja’afar hied him back to the Caliph and reported her words, whereat his lord commanded him, “Go back and say thou to her ’tis for Almighty Allah’s sake.” The Minister did his master’s bidding when she replied “His reward be upon the Almighty.” Then the Wazir returned and reported the woman’s prayer to the Commander of the Faithful, who cried, “Hie thee to her and enquire an she be married or virginal; and, if she be unwedded, do thou ask her an she be willing to wive with me.”[94] So Ja’afar fared to her and questioned her, whereat she answered, “A spinster.” Quoth he, “The Youth who sent the dinar to thee desireth to mate with thee;” and quoth she, “An he can pay me my dower and my money down,[95] I will become his bride.” Hereat Ja’afar said in his thought, “whence can the Prince of True Believers find her dower and her money down? Doubtless we shall have to ask a loan for him;”[96] and presently he enquired of her what might be the amount of both. Replied she, “As for the pin-money, this shall be the annual revenue of Ispahán, and the income of Khorásán-city shall form the settlement.” So Ja’afar wagged his head and going back to the Commander of the Faithful repeated her terms; wherewith Harun was satisfied and bespake him, “Hie thee to her and say, ‘He hath accepted this and thou hast professed thyself contented.’” Hearing his words she rejoined, “What be his worth, yonder man, and how may he attain unto such sum?” and he retorted, “Of a truth he is the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid.” When this reply reached her ears she veiled her hands and feet crying, “To Allah be laud and gratitude;” adding to Ja’afar, “An he be the Prince of True Believers, I am satisfied therewith.” Accordingly the Wazir returned to the Caliph and reported her consent, whereafter the twain repaired homewards and the Caliph despatched to her a duenna and a train of handmaidens who went and bore her to the Hammam within the palace and bathed her. Then they brought her out and robed her in sumptuous raiment, such as becometh the women of the Kings, and ornaments and jewellery and what not: after which they led her to a fine apartment which was set apart and private for her wherein also were meat and drink and furniture, arras[97] and curtains and all necessaries of such sort. In fine they fared to the Caliph and apprized him of what they had done and he presently gave command to summon the four Kazis who wrote her marriage-lines. When it was night he paid her the first visit and taking seat opposite her he asked, "Daughter of whom mayst thou be amongst the folk that thou demandedst of me this dower?" "Allah advance in honour the Commander of the Faithful," answered she; "verily thy hand-maid is of the seed of Kisrà Anushirwán; but the shifts of time and tide brought me down and low down." Replied he, "They relate that thine ancestor, the Chosroë, wronged his lieges with mighty sore wronging;"[98] and she rejoined, "Wherefor and because of such tyranny over the folk hath his seed come to beg their bread at the highway-heads." Quoth he, "They also make mention of him that in after-times he did justice to such degree that he decided causes between birds and beasts;" and quoth she, "Wherefor hath Allah exalted his posterity from the highway-head and hath made them Harím to the Prince of True Believers." Hearing this the Caliph was wroth with mighty great wrath[99] and sware that he would not go in unto her for full told year, and arising forthright went forth from her. But when the twelvemonth had passed and the fête-day of Arafat came round again, the Commander of the Faithful donned disguise and taking with him Ja'afar and Masrúr the Eunuch, strolled out to wander about the streets of Baghdad and her highways. And as they walked along, the Caliph looked about him and beheld a booth wherein a man was turning out Katífah-cakes[100] and he was pleased to admire his dexterity to such degree that, returning to the Palace, he sent him one of his Eunuchs with the message, "The Prince of True Believers requireth of thee an hundred pancakes, and let each one of them, when filled and folded, fit into the hollow of a man's hand." So the Castrato went and gave the order as we have related and paid the price and, when the pastrycook had made his requirement, he carried it away to the presence. Then the Caliph took seat and bade bring sugar and pistachios and all other such needs wherewith he fell to stuffing the pancakes with his own hands and placing in each and every a golden dinar. When this was done he despatched the same

Eunuch to Kisra's daughter with the message, "This night the Commander of the Faithful proposeth to visit thee, the year of his oath having expired, and he sendeth to thee saying, 'What is it thy heart coveteth that he may forward it to thee?'" The Castrato set forth upon this errand and received for all reply, "Say him my heart desireth naught, for that all I require is with me nor is there aught of deficiency." Accordingly, he returned and repeated her words to the Caliph who bade him fare forth again to her and say the same to her a second time, whenas she, "Let him send me a thousand dinars and a duenna in whom he confideth, so that I may disguise myself and go down with her and distribute gold to the mean and the mesquin." Presently back came the slave bearing this reply, whereat the Caliph ordered the moneys be sent to her and the woman required; and the twain, Princess and duenna, went forth and threaded the lanes of Baghdad and her great thoroughfares whilst the young lady distributed her charity to the Fakirs and the paupers. But when all the gold with her had been expended and naught of it remained, they turned homewards making for the Palace; and, the day being sultry, drowthiness befel the young lady. So she said to her companion, "O mother mine, I am athirst and want a draught of water to drink;" and said the other, "We will call aloud to the Water-carrier[101] who shall give thee thy need." Replied the Princess, "Drinking from the Waterman's jar will not be pleasant to my heart; nor will I touch it, for 'tis like the whore[102] whereinto some man goeth every hour: let the draught of water be from a private house and suffer that it be given by way of kindness." Hereupon the old woman looked in front of her and saw a grand gateway with a door of sandal-wood over which a lamp hung by a silken cord[103] and a curtain was drawn across it and it had two benches of marble, the whole under the charge of a goodly concierge. Then quoth she, "From this house I will ask a drink for thee." So the two women went forward and stood before the door and the duenna advancing rapped a light rap with the ring, when behold, the entrance was opened and came forth a young man in youthful favour fair and robed in raiments pure and rare and said, "'Tis well!" Hereat the governante addressed him, "O my son, indeed this my daughter is athirst and I crave of thy kindness that thou give her a draught of water, seeing that she will not drink from the Watercarrier." He replied, "With love and goodwill;" and going within brought out what was required and handed the cup to the old woman. She took it and passed it on to her mistress and the young lady turning her face to the wall raised her veil and drank her sufficiency without showing a single feature.[104] After this she returned the cup to the old woman who took it and handed it back to the young man saying, "Allah requite thee with all of weal, O my son!" whereto he replied, "Health to you and healing!"[105] And the two went their way and returned to the Palace and entered therein. On such wise fared it with these twain but as regards the Caliph, when he had finished filling the pancakes, he ranged them in a large charger of porcelain; then, summoning the Eunuch he said to him, "Take up this and carry it to the daughter of Kisra and say her, 'Here be the sweetmeats of peace,' and let her know that I will night with her this night." The Castrato did his lord's bidding; and carrying the charger to the Princess's apartment handed it to the duenna and delivered the message, whereupon she blessed and prayed for the Commander of the Faithful and the slave departed. Now he was angry and disappointed for that he could not eat one pancake of them all because they had become big by stuffing and he feared that if he touched any thereof its place would show void. Presently it so befel that the young lady said to the old woman, her governante, "Do thou take up this charger and carry it to the youth who gave us the draught of water with the intent that he may not claim an obligation or have aught to desire of us." Accordingly, the ancient dame took the charger and walked off with it. But on her way she longed for a Katifah and put forth her hand to one and took it up when she saw that it left in the line of pancakes a gap big as a man's palm. Hereat she feared to touch it and replaced it saying, "'Twill be known that I carried off one of them." Then after returning the pancake to its place she passed on with the charger to the door of that young man whom she suddenly sighted as he sat at the gateway. She saluted him with the salam which he returned, and then said she, "O my son, the young lady who drank the water hath sent thee all these cates in acknowledgment for the draught thou gavest her to drain." Said he, "Set it down on the door-bench;" and when she did his bidding, he expressed his thanks to her and she ganged her gait. Now as the youth still sat there, the Watchman of the Ward suddenly stood before him blessing him and saying, “O my lord, this be Arafat-day and to-night will be the Eve of the ‘I’d, or Greater Festival; so I hope from the beneficence of my master the Chamberlain and Emir Alaeddin (whom Allah Almighty keep and preserve!) that he will deign order me a largesse befitting the Fête wherewith I may buy sweetmeats for my wife and children.” The other replied, “Take this charger and wend thy ways therewith;” so the Watchman kissed his hand and carrying it off went home and showed it to his wife. But she cried, “O thou miserable,[106] whence gottest thou this charger: hast thou wilfully stolen it or suddenly snatched it?”[107] Replied her mate, “This be the property of the Emir Alaeddin, the Chamberlain (whom Allah preserve!), and he gave it to me as an alms-gift; so come hither all of you that we eat, for the pancakes look toothsome.” Rejoined his wife, “Art thou Jinn-mad? Up with thee and sell the charger and cates, for the worth must be some thirty to forty dirhams which we will lay out for the benefit of the little ones.” He retorted, “O woman, suffer us eat of this food wherewith the Almighty would feed us;” but she fell to wailing and crying out, “We will not taste thereof while the children lack caps and slippers.”[108] and she prevailed over him with her opinion, for indeed women are mostly the prevailers. So taking up the charger he fared with it to the market-place and gave it for sale to a broker, and the man began crying, “Who will buy this charger with whatso is thereon?” Hereat up came the Shaykh of the Bazar who bid forty dirhams therefor, and a second merchant raised its price to eighty, when a third hent it in hand and turning it about espied graven upon the edge, “Made by commandment of Harun al-Rashid, Commander of the Faithful.” Hereat the trader’s wits fled him and he cried to the broker, “Hast thou a will to work for my hanging in this matter of the charger?” Quoth the other, “What may be the meaning of these words?” and quoth the merchant, “This charger is the property of the Prince of True Believers.” The broker, dying of dread, took the charger and repaired therewith to the Palace of the Caliphate where he craved leave to enter; and, when this was accorded, he went in and kissed ground before the presence and blessed the Commander of the Faithful and lastly showed to him the charger. But when the Caliph looked at it and considered it carefully, he recognised it with its contents and he waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and said in himself, “When I make aught for the eating of my household, shall it be sent out and hawked about for sale?” adding to the broker, “Who gave thee this charger?” “O my lord, ’twas the Watchman of one of the wards,” replied he; and Harun rejoined, “Bring him to me hither.” So they fared forth and fetched him bound in cords and saying in his mind, “The whore would not suffer us eat of that was in the charger and enjoy its sweetness, so this happened which hath happened to us; we have eaten naught and have fallen into misfortune.” But when they set him between the hands of the Caliph the latter asked him, “Where haddest thou yon charger? say me sooth or I will smite thy neck!” The Watchman answered, “Allah prolong the life of our liege lord! verily as regards this charger it was given to me by the Lord Alaeddin, the junior Chamberlain.” Hereat the Prince of True Believers redoubled in rage and cried, “Bring me that Emir with his turband in tatters, and drag him along on his face and plunder his home.” Accordingly the magnates fared forth with their pages; and, reaching the house, knocked at the door, when the owner came out and, seeing the officials, asked, “What is to do?” “’Tis against thee,” replied some of the Grandees, whereto the Chamberlain rejoined, “Hearkening and obeying Allah and then the Commander of the Faithful!” After this they bore him to the Palace of the Caliphate and an Emir of them put forth his hand to the Chamberlain’s coat and tare it and rent his turband adown his neck saying, “O Alaeddin,[109] this is the behest of the Prince of True Believers who hath enjoined that we do with thee on such wise and we despoil thy house: yet there is bread and salt between us albe we must do as we are bidden, for obedience to royal behest is of the ways of good breeding.” Then they carried him into the presence of the Caliph and he, after he was made to stand between the Sovran’s hands, kissed ground and blessed Harun and said, “Allah give aidance to our liege lord and have him in His holy keeping: what may be the offence of thine humble slave that he hath merited such treatment as this?” Harun raised his head and asked, “Say me, knowest thou yon fellow?” and the other looked and seeing the guardian of the gates corded and pinioned made answer, “Yes indeed, I know him and he is the Watchman of our ward.” The

Caliph resumed, “Whence came to thee this charger?” and the Chamberlain replied, “Let the Commander of the Faithful (to whom Almighty Allah vouchsafe furtherance!) learn that I was sitting at home when there rapped a rap at the door; and I, going forth to open, beheld an ancient dame who said to me, ‘O my son, this my daughter is athirst and I beg thee of thy bounty to give her a draught of water for she will not take drink from the public Sakká.’ So I brought them out their requirement and they satisfied themselves and went their ways. After an hour or so I came forth and took seat by my house-door when behold, up came the old woman bearing in hand yon charger and said, ‘O my son, the person to whom thou suppliedest drink hath sent this to thee in requital for that thou gavest her of water inasmuch as she is unwilling to be under an obligation.’ Quoth I, ‘Set it down’; when she placed it upon the edge of the Mastabah-bench and left me. Thereupon suddenly came up this Watchman and craved from me the Sweetmeat of the Festival, whereto I answered, ‘Do thou take this charger and its contents’ (whereof by the bye I had not tasted aught); and he did so and departed. This is all I know and — The Peace.” Now when the Commander of the Faithful heard this from the Chamberlain, his heart was gladdened and he enquired, “O Alaeddin, what time the young lady drank the draught of water didst thou see her face or not?” and the Chamberlain replied in haste, “O Prince of True Believers, indeed I did see it.” Hereat Harun was wroth with exceeding wrath and bade summon the daughter of Kisra and when she came bade the twain be beheaded saying, “Thou farest forth to do alms-deeds, and thou durst display thy features to this fellow when thou drankest water at his hand!” Hereat she turned her towards Alaeddin and replied, “Thou see my face! Nay, this is but a lie that may work my death.” He rejoined, “The Reed-pen wrote what ’twas bidden write![110] I designed to say, ‘Verily I beheld naught of her,’ and my tongue ran as it did the sooner to end our appointed life-term.” Then having set the twain upon the rug of blood the Sworder bound their hands and tearing off a strip from their skirts bandaged their eyes, whereafter he walked around them and said, “By leave of the Commander of the Faithful;” and Harun cried, “Smite!” Then the Headsman paced around them a second time saying, “By leave of the Commander of the Faithful,” and Harun again cried, "Smite!" But when the executioner did in like manner for the third and last time[111] quoth he to Alaeddin, "Hast thou haply in heart aught of regret or requirement that I may fulfil it to thee? Ask of me anything save release, ere the Commander of the Faithful say the word and forthright thy head fall before thy feet?" "I desire," quoth the Chamberlain, "that thou unbind this bandage from mine eyes so may I look one latest look at the world and at my friends, after which do thou work thy will." The Sworder granted this and Alaeddin glanced first to the right where he saw none to aidance dight, and then to the left where he found all favour reft; and the spectators each and every hung their heads groundwards for awe of the Caliph, nor did any take upon himself to utter a kindly word. Whereupon the Chamberlain cried out his loudest saying, "A counsel, O Commander of the Faithful!" and Harun regarding him asked, "What is it thou counsellest?" "A respite of three days' space," rejoined the condemned, "when thou shalt see a marvel, indeed a miracle of miracles;" and the Caliph retorted, "After the third day, an I see not as thou sayest, I will assuredly smite thy neck;" and bade them bear him back to gaol. But when the appointed term ended the Caliph sprang up and in his impatience to see what would befal him donned a dress distinctive of his new calling,[112] and thrusting his feet into coarse shoon and high of heel[113] and binding about his brows a honey-coloured turband[114] he hent in hand a pellet-bow[115] and slung its case over his shoulders: he also took gold in pouch and thus equipped he left the palace. Then, as he roamed about the lanes of Baghdad and her highways, giving alms and saying in his mind, "Haply may I sight the wonder which the Chamberlain Alaeddin announced to me," it befel about mid- forenoon (and he still walking) that behold, a man came forth from the Kaysaríyah[116] or chief mart of the merchants crying aloud, "This be a marvel, nay a miracle of miracles." So the Caliph questioned him saying "What be this wonder thou hast seen?" and he answered, "Within yon Kaysariyah is a woman who reciteth the Koran even as it was brought down,[117] and albeit she have not ceased declaiming from the hour of the dawn- prayer until this time, yet hath none given her a single dirham: no, nor even one mite;[118] and what strangeness can be stranger than this I tell thee?" The Caliph, hearing his words, entered the mart wherein he descried an ancient dame sitting and reciting the Koran and she had well nigh reached the end thereof. He was charmed with the beauty of her lecture and stood there until she had finished it and had blessed the by-standers, but when he glanced round he saw nobody give her aught. So he thrust his hand into his pouch saying in his mind, "Whatso[119] of coin remaineth in purse shall go to this woman." And he designed to gift her with the gold when suddenly the old dame sprang from her seat and going to a merchant's shop took seat beside the man and said to him, "O my son, dost thou accept of a fair young lady?" Said he, "Yea, verily," and she continued, "Up with thee and come that I show thee a thing whose like thou hast never seen." Now when the Caliph heard her words he said to himself, "Look at yon foul old crone who playeth bawd when I held her to be a devotee, a holy woman. Indeed I will not give her aught until I see what work is wrought by these twain." The trader then followed the old woman to her home wherein both, youth and crone, entered and the Caliph who pursued them also went in privily and took his station at a stead whence he could see without being seen.[120] Then lo and behold! the old trot called to her daughter who came forth from the bower wherein she was, and the Caliph looking at this young lady owned that he had never sighted amongst his women aught fairer than this, a model of beauty and loveliness and brilliancy and perfect face and stature of symmetric grace. Her eyes were black and their sleepy lids and lashes were kohl'd with Babylonian witchery, and her eyebrows were as bows ready to shoot the shafts of her killing glances, and her nose was like unto the scymitar's edge, and her mouth for magical might resembled the signet-ring of Sulayman (upon whom be The Peace!), and her lips were carnelians twain, and her teeth union pearls and her mouth-dews sweeter than honey and more cooling than the limpid fount; with breasts strutting from her bosom in pomegranate-like rondure and waist delicate and hips of heavy weight, and stomach soft to the touch as sendal with plait upon plait, and she was one that excited the sprite and exalted man's sight even as said a certain poet in song of her like,

"Breeze-wavèd branch, full moon O' murk or sun of undurn sheeny

bright, * Which is she hight who all the three hath might to place in pauper plight, ah!
Where on the bending branch alight with grace of stature like to hers * Tho' be the branch by Zephyr deckt and in its ornaments bedight, ah!
And how can fellowèd be her brow with fullest moon that lights the darks * When sun must borrow morning light from that fair forehead dazzling bright, ah!
Were set in scales the fairest fair and balanced with a long compare * heir boasts, thou haddest over-weight for beauty and their charms were light, ah!"

Now when he considered her straitly, she captured the whole of his heart. But the young lady had not upon her clothes enough for concealment, and here and there her body showed bare; so when she came forth and espied the young man standing by the old woman she withdrew into her bower and said to her mother, "Allah requite[121] thee for that thou hast done. How can it be allowed thee by the Almighty to set me in this state before a stranger?" "Hold thy peace," said her parent; "man is allowed to look, and if he have any art or part in the object looked at 'tis well; but thereafter if he look without its being his lot, then 'twere unlawful. This youth hath gazed upon thee, and if he prove to have a portion in thee let him take it, otherwise he may wend his ways, nor is there a flaw in aught of legal observance." Hereat the Caliph's heart was cheered, for he knew that the ancient dame meant to marry the maid. Anon quoth the old mother to the merchant, "Hast thou seen her?" and quoth he, "Yes." "Did she please thee?" asked the crone, and he answered, "Yea verily," adding, "How much may be her actual marriage-settlement and her contingent dower?" She replied, "The first shall consist of four thousand dinars and the second shall be the same.'" "This be overmuch," rejoined the youth, "and more than all my good; to wit, four thousand gold pieces, the gift of which will send me forth to beg; but do thou take of me a thousand dinars, and upon me be the arraying of the house and the maiden's raiment for another thousand; so will I do business and trade with the remainder." But the crone sware to him by Allah the Almighty,[122] that an the four thousand failed of a single gold piece he should never see of the damsel a single hair. He replied, “I have no power thereto and — good day to both of you;” and he made for the door, but the Caliph forewent him to the street and standing in a corner suffered him to pass and gang his gait. After this Harun went back to the old woman, and entering salam’d to her and she, returning his salutation, asked him, “What dost thou want and what may be thy wish?” He answered, “The young trader who went forth hence sent me to say that he hath no intent to wed,” and she rejoined, “On this mind the man hied away from us.” Then quoth the Caliph, “I will marry the maid, and by me is all thou canst desire of gold and what not.” She retorted, “O Robber,[123] all I see upon thee is not worth two hundred dirhams: whence then canst thou procure four thousand dinars?” Quoth he, “Hast thou grapes to sell, or wishest thou only to breed a quarrel between me and the vineyard-keeper?”[124] and quoth she, “Doubtless I have and hold the grapes.” “Then, I possess all thou canst desire, said he, and said she, “Then, we will wed thee when thou shalt have weighed out the gold.” The Caliph cried, “I accept;” and anon entering the lodging he took seat at the head of the chamber and in its place of honour, and said to the house-mistress, “Go thou to Kází Such-an-one and tell him that Al-Bundukáni requireth him.” “O Robber,” said she, “will the Kazi be content to come at thy bidding?” The Commander of the Faithful laughed at these words and said, “Do thou go without danger and bid him bring his ink-case and pens and paper.” So she went off saying to herself, “Verily, an the Judge accompany me, this my son-in-law must be a Captain of Robbers.”[125] But when at last she arrived at the Kazi’s mansion she saw him sitting in the middle of the room and surrounded by doctors of divinity and a host of learned wights: so she feared to enter, and fell to looking in through the doorway and she dreaded to fare farther and stepped backwards; withal she kept saying, “How shall I go home without speaking a word to the Kazi?” and the thought would hearten her heart, so she would return to the entrance and thrust in her head and then withdraw it. On such wise she had done many a time when the Kazi, catching sight of her, bade one of his messengers bring her within; so the man went to her and said, “Bespeak the Kazi!” So she went in full of affright and salam’d to the Judge who, returning her salutation, asked her, “What is thy want, O woman?” She answered, “There is a young man in my house who desireth that thou come to him;” whereat he rejoined, “And who may be this youth that I in person should hie to him; and what may be his name?” She replied, “He pretendeth to the name of Al-Bundukani — the Arbalestrier” (which was a by-name of the Caliph kept concealed from the folk but well known to all officials). Hereat the Kazi sprang to his feet without stay or delay and said to her, “O my lady, do thou forego me,” whilst all present asked him, “O our lord, whither away?” and he, answering them, “A need hath suddenly occurred,” went forth. Then quoth the crone in her mind, “Hapless the Kazi who is a pleasant person, haply this son-in-law of mine hath given him to drink of clotted gore[126] by night in some place or other and the poor man hath yet a fear of him; otherwise what is the worth of this Robber that the Judge should hie to his house?” When they reached the door, the Kazi bade the ancient dame precede him;[127] so she went in and called to him and he on entering saw the Caliph seated at the head of the chamber. He would have kissed ground but Harun signed to him silence with a wink; so he made his salam and sat him down saying, “’Tis well,[128] O my lord, what may be thy want?” The Prince of True Believers replied, “I desire thou marry me to the daughter of this ancient dame, so do thou write out the writ.” Hereupon the Judge asked the assent of the old woman and of her daughter; and, when they both granted it, he enquired, “What may be the amount of the dower?” The mother replied, “Four thousand dinars of gold and the like sum in ready coin.” “Dost thou accept?” quoth the Kazi to the Caliph, and quoth he, “Yes.” Accordingly, the Judge wrote out the writ upon the skirt of his Farajiyah-robe for in his agitation he had forgotten to bring paper, and he set down the name of the Sovran and his father and his grandfather without question for that he knew them well; after which he enquired of the old woman her daughter’s name[129] and that of her sire and grandsire. She wailed and cried, “Why and wherefore?[130] Oh miserable that we are! Had her father been living how would this Robber have availed to stand at our door, much less to marry her? but ’twas Death that did with us this deed.” “Allah bless the wronged,”[131] quoth the Kazi and busied himself with writing out the writ; but whatever question he put to the crone, she wailed in reply and buffeted her cheeks, whilst the Judge wagged his head and his heart was like to burst and the Caliph laughed long and loud. And when the writ was written and finished, the writer cut off from the skirt of his gown according to the measure of the writing and gave it to Harun; then he rose up to fare forth but he was ashamed to wear a robe in rags, so he stripped it off and said to the old woman, "O my mother, present this to anyone deserving it." And so saying he left the house. Hereupon quoth the old woman to the Caliph, "Dost thou not pay unto the Kazi his fee for coming to thee in person and writing the writ upon his robe which he was obliged to throw away?" "Let him go," said the Caliph, "I will not give him aught." Cried she, "And why? Oh, how greedy are these robbers! the man came to us in hopes of gain and we have stripped him instead of robing him." Harun laughed again, then he arose and said to her, "I now hie me home to fetch thee the gold and the stuffs wherewith to clothe my bride," and the crone cried out, "Robber, whence shalt thou find cloth and coin? unhappy some one whom thou designest to seize and deprive of his daily bread and reduce to poverty and penury!" The Commander of the Faithful held his peace and went forth intending for his Palace, where he donned the royal robes and taking seat upon his throne bade summon marble-cutters and carpenters and plasterers and house- painters. Then, as they came to the presence and kissed ground and blessed him and prayed for the permanence of his empire, he had them thrown and bade administer to them a bastinado of two hundred sticks a head.[132] And when they prayed for mercy and said to him, "O our lord, the Commander of the Faithful, what be our crime?" he said to the artizans, "The hall such-and-such in the Darb-al-Záji,[133] do ye wot it well?" They replied, "Yes," and he resumed, "I desire that ye fare thither forthright and ye repair the walls with marble-slabs and should mid- afternoon come on and ye leave unfinished a place as big as a man's palm, I will hack off your hands and place them in lieu thereof." "O Prince of True Believers," asked they, "how shall we do seeing that we have no marble?"[134] He answered, "Take it from the government stores[135] and collect each and every stone-cutter in Baghdad. But do you all bear in mind that, if the household enquire who sent you, ye must reply, 'Thy son-in-law;' and should they demand, 'What is his craft,' say, ‘We ken not;’ and when they require to know his name declare it to be Al- Bundukani. And whoso of you shall speak aught beyond this him will I crucify.” So the master-mason went forth and gathered together the stone-cutters and took marble and ashlar from the stores and set the material on the backs of beasts with all other needs and he repaired to the hall,[136] and entered with his company. Hereat the old woman asked “What is’t ye want?” “We would slab the floors and walls of this dwelling with marble!” “And who was it sent you?” “Thy son-in-law!” “And what may be his business?” “We know not.” “Then what is his name?” “A1- Bundukani,” they replied. So she said to herself, “He is naught but a Robber and Captain of thieves.” Then the masons divided and marked out the ground, and each found that each and every had to pave and slab a surface of a cubit or less. Such was their case; but as concerneth the Caliph, he turned him to the chief Carpenter, and looking at him keenly said, “Go thou likewise and assemble all thy fellows in the capital: then do thou repair to the dwelling of Such-an-one and make the doors and so forth, in fact everything needed of carpentry and joinery, taking thee all the requisites from the public warehouses; nor let the afternoon come on ere thou shalt have finished, and if all be not done I will strike thy neck.” He also charged them even as he had charged the marble-cutters never to divulge his dignity or even his name other than Al-Bundukani. So the chief Carpenter went and, gathering his craftsmen, took planks and nails and all his needs, after which they repaired to the lodging and entered, and setting up their scaffoldings[137] fell to work while the head man marked off a task for each hand. But the crone was consterned and cried to the men, “And why? Who hath sent you?” “Thy son-in- law!” “And what may be his trade?” “We know not.” “Then what may be his name?” “Al-Bundukani.” So they pushed on their work, each urging his fellow, whilst the old woman well-nigh waxed Jinn- mad,[138] and said to herself, “This my son-in-law, the Robber, is naught save a viceroy of the Jánn; and all this is of their fear, so that none dareth or deemeth it safe to disclose the craft or even the name of him, so much do they hold him in awe.” Lastly, the Caliph bade the plasterers and house-painters call a meeting of their brother-craftsmen and go to the government stores and thence take all their requirements of quicklime and hemp[139] and so forth; and lastly, charging them as he had charged the others who forewent them, he said, “As soon as the Izán of mid-afternoon prayer shall be cried, if any one of you shall have left in the lodging work unwrought, be it only the size of a man’s palm, I will hack off his hand and set it upon the unfinished stead.” Accordingly, they kissed ground and fared forth carrying with them all their requirements; and, repairing to the tenement, entered therein and slaked their lime and set up their ladders, and four or five artificers fell to working at every wall whilst the house-painters followed them. But when the ancient dame beheld this, her wits were wildered and she was utterly bedazed: so said she to her daughter, “This son- in-law of mine is none save one whose word is heard, and folk abide in awe of him; otherwise who could work all this work in a single day whenas none other than himself could have wrought the same within a twelve-month? But pity ’tis he be a Robber.” Anon she went to the plasterers and said, “Who was it sent you?” “Thy son-in-law!” “And what may be his trade?” “We know not.” “Then what is his name?” “Al-Bundukani.” After this she passed on to the house-painters and asked the same question and receiving the same reply, quoth she to one of them, “I demand of thee, by God the Great, O my son, why thou wilt not disclose to me concerning my son-in-law his name and his craft?” Thereupon quoth the wight addressed, “No man hath power to speak out, otherwise his life is lost;” and she repeated to herself, “Indeed he is none but a mighty Robber, for that the Moslems one and all dread him and his mischief.”[140] Now when mid-afternoon came, the artizans had done the whole of their work; so they donned their outer dresses and went forth intending for the Commander of the Faithful, Harun the Orthodox. And when they entered all kissed ground and said, “Under the good auspices of our lord the Prince of True Believers we have wroughten the work of the house.” So he bestowed robes of honour upon them and gave them gifts that contented them, after which they fared forth about their business. Then the Caliph summoned Hammáls or porters and set in their crates articles of furniture such as carpets and counterpanes and sofa-cushions and hangings of arras and prayer-rugs, besides gear of brass and all such necessaries for the household; and to this he added two baskets containing body-raiment and kimcob or gold cloth and stuffs inworked and studded with gems; also jewellery and precious stones, pearls and what not: nor did he forget a coffer containing the eight thousand pieces of gold.[141] Then he sent them upon their errand, saying, “Take up all this and bear it to such a house in the Darb al-Zaji and make it over to the ancient dame who owneth the hall; and when she asketh, ‘Who was it sent you?’ do ye answer, ‘Thy son-in-law;’ and should she enquire, ‘What is his craft?’ respond, ‘We know it not;’ and should she demand the name, declare, ‘Al-Bundukani.’ Accordingly the porters fared forth, and reaching the tenement rapped at the door, when the old woman came out and cried, “Who knocketh here?” and they replied “Open and take what we have brought of cloth and clothes and so forth.” But when she looked upon the loads she wailed and cried, “Indeed ye have wandered from the way: whence could all this prosperity have befallen us? return with it to the owner thereof.” They asked her, “Is not this hall that which was builded this day?” And when she answered, “Yes,” quoth they, “Then ’twas hither thy son-in-law sent us.” With these words they went in and set down whatso was with them, but the old woman wailed and cried aloud, “’Tis not for us: ye have wandered from your way.” “It is for you, indeed,” they rejoined, “and thy son- in-law saith, ‘Adorn your dwelling and don the stuffs and dress therewith whomso you choose:’ as for him, he hath much business yet will he come to you what time the folk sleep.” “Yes, indeed,” quoth she to herself, “Robbers never do come save by night.” And when the Hammals went their ways the old woman fared forth to her neighbours and summoned them to assist her in ranging the furniture and vaiselle;[142] so they gathered together and entered; and, when they beheld what had befallen, their eyes were dazed and dazzled by seeing the restoration of the hall and by the stuffs and vases therein. So they asked her, “Whence camest thou by all this, and who set for thee this dwelling in such condition and at what time? Yesterday ’twas a ruin and showed neither marble nor whitewash nor stencilling. Can it not be that we are sleeping and haply that we see a dream-house?” She replied, “No vision is this, but evidence of eye-sight: and what work ye behold was wrought by my son-in-law during this one day and to-day also he sent me these stuffs and other matters whereon ye look.” “And who may be thy son-in-law?" asked they, "and when didst thou wed thy daughter while we wotted naught thereof?" Answered she, "To-day all this happened;" and they rejoined, "And what may be the bridegroom's calling? haply he is a mighty merchant or an Emir." "Nor merchant nor Emir," quoth she, "but a Robber and the Head and Captain of Bandits!" Hereat the women were startled and cried, "Allah upon thee, do thou charge him anent us that he plunder not aught from our houses, seeing that we have a claim of neighbourhood and gossipry upon you." "Never fear," she replied, "he is not wont to take aught of neighbours albeit he be a Viceregent of the Jann." So their hearts were heartened, and they fell to ordering the furniture and decorations; and, when they had ended the ordinance of the house, they applied themselves to dressing the bride; and they brought her a tirewoman and robed her in the finest robes and raiment and prepared her and adorned her with the choicest ornaments. And while they did thus behold, up came other porters carrying crates of meat, such as pigeon-poults and poultry, Katás,[143] and quails,[144] lambs and butcher's meat, clarified butter and other cooking material, with all manner of edibles and delicacies such as sugar and Halwá-confections and the like thereof. The Hammals then said to the household, "'Take ye this which your son-in-law hath sent to you saying, 'Do ye eat and feed your neighbours and whomso ye please.'" Quoth the old woman, "I ask you, for Allah's sake, to let me know what may be my son-in-law's craft and his name;" and quoth they, "His name is Al-Bundukani, but what his business may be we know not;" and so saying they went their ways. Hereupon exclaimed certain of the women who were present, "By the Apostle, he is naught but a robber;" while others who had claims upon the old housemistress cried, "Be whatever may be, before the man who can do after this fashion all the folk in Baghdad are helpless." Presently they served the provision and all ate their sufficiency; then they removed the trays and set on others loaded with the confections which they also enjoyed; and at last after dividing the orts amongst the neighbours they reserved some of the best of meats and sweetmeats for the bridegroom's supper. In due time a report was bruited about the quarter that the old woman had wedded her daughter with a robber who had enriched them with what booty he had brought them. And these tidings spread from folk to folk till they reached the young merchant of whom mention hath been made, the same who had sought the maiden to wife and who had not wedded her because refused by her mother. Also he was told that the damsel had been married to a robber who had rebuilt the hall with marble, and the plasterers and painters and carpenters and joiners had wrought therein works which astounded the beholders; moreover that the bridegroom had sent them of stuffs and jewellery a matter beyond count or compute. Hearing this report he found the matter grievous on him and the fire of envy flamed in his heart and he said to himself, "Naught remaineth to me except that I wend me to the Wálí[145] and tempt him with promises and thereby work the ruin of this robber and take the damsel to myself." With these words he rose up sans stay or delay and, going to the Chief of Police related to him all that occurred and promised him a muchel of money, saying, "Whatso thou wantest can be gotten from this robber inasmuch as he owneth good galore." The Wali rejoiced and replied, "Be patient until after supper-tide when the thief shall have returned home and we will go and catch him and thou shalt carry away the young lady." So the trader blessed him and took himself off and waited at home until it was supper-time and the streets were void of folk. Presently Názúk[146] the Wali mounted horse with four hundred headsmen and smiters of the sword, link-boys and low fellows,[147] bearing cressets and paper-lanthorns under four head constables and rode to the house of the old woman. Now all the gossips had departed to their abodes and were dispersed, nor did one of them remain behind; but the household had lighted wax candles and was expecting the bridegroom with bolted doors when behold, the Chief of Police came up and finding all shut bade his men knock with an easy rap. This was heard by those within the hall and the ancient dame sprang up and went to the entrance, whence she espied gleams of light athwart the door-chinks and when she looked out of the window she saw the Wali and his merry men crowding the street till the way was cut. Now the Chief had a lieutenant Shamámah[148] hight, which was a meeting-place of ill manners and morals; for naught was dearer to him save the straitening of a Moslem, nor was there upon his body a single hair which affected or aided the veiling of Allah.[149] Brief he was, even as the poet said,

“Whoreson and child of thousand pagans twain; * Son of the Road
to lasting sin and bane;
The Lord of Ruth ne’er grew him e’en a hair * Was not with this
or that of contact fain!”[150]

Now this man, who was standing beside the Chief of Police, seized the opportunity of saying, “O Emir, what booteth our standing idle in this stead? Better ‘twere that we break down the door and rush in upon them and snatch what we want and loot all the stuffs in the house.” Hereat came forward another lieutenant who was called Hasan[151] — the Handsome — for that his face was fair and his works were fairer and he was a meeting-place of fairest deeds; and the same was wont to stand at the Wali’s door as a symbol of ruth to mankind. So he came forward and said, “O Emir, this were not the rede which is right and yonder man’s words lack good counsel, seeing that none hath complained against this folk and we know not an the accused be a thief or not: furthermore we fear consequences for that haply this merchant speaketh with an object, they having forbidden his marrying the girl: do not therefore cast thyself into that shall harm thee, but rather let us enquire anent the matter openly and publicly; and should it prove to be as reported, then the Emir’s opinion shall prevail.” All this took place while the old woman heard from behind the door whatso they said. Hereat she dried up with dread and affright and going within acquainted her daughter with what had occurred and ended with, “The Wali still is standing at the door.” The young lady was sore terrified and said to her mother, “Do thou bar[152] the entrance till Allah haply deign bring us comfort.” So the old woman fared forth and bolted and barred it yet more straitly; and when they knocked a second time she acknowledged the rap by “Who is at the door?” and the lieutenant Shamamah replied to her and said, “O ill-omened old woman, O accomplice of robbers, knowest thou not that he who rappeth is the Master of Police and his young men? So open to us forthright.” Quoth she, “We be Haríms and ne’er a man with us, therefore we will not open to any;” and quoth he, “Open, or we will break it down.” The old woman made no reply but returning to her daughter within said to her, "Now look at this Robber and how from the first of this night we have been humbled for his sake: yet had he fallen into this trap his life had been taken, and would Heaven he may not come now and be made prisoner by them. Ah me! Were thy father on life the Wali never had availed to take station at our house-door or the door of any other." "Such be our lot," replied the girl, and she went to the casement that she might espy what was doing. This is how it fared with them; but as concerneth the Caliph, when the folk had finished crowding the streets he disguised himself and hending in hand his pellet-bow and slinging his sword over his shoulder he went forth intending for his bride. But when reaching the head of the street he saw lanthorns and stir of crowd:[153] so he approached to look and he espied the Wali and his men with the merchant standing by the Chief's side together with the lieutenants, all save one shouting, "Break down the door and rush in and seize the old woman: then let us question her with torture until she confess where be her Robber of a son-in-law." But Hasan the fourth officer dissuaded them saying, "O good folk, do ye fear Almighty Allah and be not over hasty, saving that hurry is of old Harry. These be all women without a man in the house; so startle them not; and peradventure the son-in-law ye seek may be no thief and so we fall into an affair wherefrom we may not escape without trouble the most troublous." Thereupon Shamamah came up and cried out, "O Hasan, it ill becometh thee to stand at the Wali's door: better 'twere for thee to sit on the witness-bench; for none should be gate-keepers to a head policeman save they who have abandoned good deeds and who devour ordure[154] and who ape the evil practices of the populace." All this and the Caliph overheard the fellow's words and said to himself, "'Tis well! I will indeed gladden thee, O Accurst." Then he turned and espied a street which was no thoroughfare, and one of its houses at the upper end adjoined the tenement wherein was his bride; so he went up to it and behold, its gateway showed a curtain drawn across and a lamp hung up and an Eunuch sitting upon the door-bench. Now this was the mansion of a certain noble who was lord over a thousand of his peers and his name was the Emir Yúnas:[155] he was an angry man and a violent; and on the day when he had not bastinado'd some wight he would not break his fast and loathed his meat for the stress of his ill-stomach. But when the Eunuch saw the Caliph he cried out at him and sprang up to strike him exclaiming, “Woe to thee! art thou Jinn-mad? whither going?” But the Commander of the Faithful shouted at him saying, “Ho! thou ill-omened slave!” and the chattel in his awe of the Caliphate fancied that the roar was of a lion about to rend him and he ran off and entered the presence of his owner quivering with terror. “Woe to thee!” said his master; “what hath befallen thee?” and he, “O my lord, the while I was sitting at the gate suddenly a man passed up the street and entered the house-door; and, when I would have beaten him, he cried at me with a terrible voice saying, ‘Ho, thou ill-omened slave!’ So I fled from him in affright and came hither to thee.” Now when the Emir Yunas heard his words, he raged with such excessive rage that his soul was like to leave his body and he cried out saying, “Since the man addressed thee as ‘ill-omened slave,’ and thou art my chattel, I therefore am servile and of evil-omen. But indeed I will show him his solace!” He then sprang to his feet and hent in hand a file- wrought mace[156] studded with fourteen spikes, wherewith had he smitten a hill he had shivered it; and then he went forth into the street muttering, “I, ill-omened!”[157] But the Caliph seeing him recognised him straitway and cried, “Yunas!” whereat the Emir knew him by his voice, and casting the mace from his hand kissed ground and said, “’Tis well, O Commander of the Faithful!” Harun replied, “Woe to thee, dog! whilst thou art the Chief of the Emirs shall this Wali, of men the meanest, come upon thy neighbours and oppress them and terrify them (these being women and without a man in the house), and yet thou holdest thy peace and sittest in ease at home nor goest out to him and ejectest him by the foulest of ejections?” Presently the other replied, “O Prince of True Believers, but for the dread of thee lest thou say, ‘This be the warder of the watch, why hast thou exceeded with him?’ I would have made for him a night of the fulsomest, for him and for those with him. But an the Caliph command I will forthright break them all to bits nor leave amongst them a sound man; for what’s the worth of this Wali and all his varlets?” “First admit us to thy mansion,” quoth the Commander of the Faithful; so they passed in and the housemaster would have seated his visitor for the guest-rite but he refused all offers and only said, “Come up with us to the terrace-roof.” Accordingly they ascended and found that between it and the dwelling of the bride was but a narrow lane; whereupon quoth the Caliph, “O Yunas, I would find a place whence I can look down upon these women.” “There is no other way,” quoth the other, “save herefrom; and, if thou desire, I will fetch thee a ladder[158] and plant it in such wise that thou canst pass across.” “Do so,” rejoined the other, and the Emir bringing a ladder disposed it after bridge fashion that the Caliph crossed over the lane to the house on the other side. Then quoth he, “Go sit thee in thy stead, and when I want thee I will call.” Yunas did as he was bidden and remained on the watch for his lord’s summons. But the Prince of True Believers walked over the terrace-roof with the lightest tread and not audible, lest his footsteps frighten the inmates, till he came to the parapet[159] and looking adown therefrom upon the hall he saw a site like the Garden of Paradise which had been newly pranked and painted, whilst the lighted wax-candles and candelabra showed the young lady, the bride, sitting upon her bedstead adorned with gems and jewellery. She was like a Sun shedding sheen in sky serene, or a full moon at the fullest seen, with brow flower- bright and eyes black and white and beauty-spots fresh as greenth to the sight; brief she was as one of whom the poet saith,

“She’s a wonder! her like none in universe see, * For beauty and
    graces and softest blee:
That fairest of blossoms she blooms on earth * Than gardens the
    sheeniest sheenier she:
And soft is the rose of her cheek to the touch * ‘Twixt apple’s
    and Eglantine’s lenity,
And the forelock-falls on the brow of her * Death-doom to the
    World and the Faith decree;
And she shames the branchlet of Basil when * She paces the Garden
    so fair and free.
An water doubted her soft sweet gait * She had glided with water
    o’er greenery:
When she walketh the world like the Húr al-Ayn[160] * By the
    tongue of looks to her friends say we: —

‘O Seeker, an soughtest the heart of me * Heart of other thou
never hadst sought for thee:
O lover, an filled thee my love thou ne’er * ‘Mid lovers hadst
dealt me such tyranny.
Praise Him who made her an idol for man * And glory to Him who
to
her quoth ‘BE’!’”

The Caliph was astonishment-struck at what he sighted of her beauty and loveliness whilst her mother stood before her saying, “O my child, how shall be our case with these tyrants,[161] especially we being women and sans other recourse save Allah Almighty? Would Heaven I wot whence came to us this Robber who, had thy sire been on life, would have been far from able to stand at the door. But this is the doom of Destiny upon us by God’s will.” Replied the young lady, “O mother mine, and how long wilt thou put me to shame for this young man and call him ‘Robber,’ this whom the Almighty hath made my portion; and haply had he been a good man and no thief he had been given to some other?[162] However he is my lot, and lauds to the Lord and gratitude for that He hath bestowed and made my portion.” When the ancient dame heard these words she pursued, “I hope to Heaven, O my daughter, that thy portion may not come hither this night, otherwise sore I fear they will seize him and do him a harm and well-away for his lost youthtide!” All this took place between mother and daughter whilst the Caliph stood upon the terrace-roof listening to their say, and presently he picked up a pebble the size of a vetchling[163] and, setting it between his thumb and forefinger, jerked it at the wax candle which burned before the young lady and extinguished the light. “Who put out yon taper?” cried the old woman, “and left the others afire?” and so saying she rose and lighted it again. But Harun took aim at that same and jerking another pebble once more extinguished it and made her exclaim, “Ah me! what can have put out this also?” and when the quenching and quickening were repeated for the third time she cried with a loud voice saying, “Assuredly the air must have waxed very draughty and gusty; so whenever I light a candle the breeze bloweth it out.” Hereat laughed the young lady and putting forth her hand to the taper would have lit it a third time when behold, her finger was struck by a pebble and her wits fled her head. But as the mother turned towards the terrace-wall the first glance showed to her sight her son-in-law there sitting, so she cried to her daughter "O my child, behold thy bridegroom whence he cometh unto thee, but robbers arrive not save by the roof, and had he not been a housebreaker he would have entered by the door. However Alhamdolillah that he hath chosen the way of our terrace, otherwise they had captured him;" presently adding, "Woe to thee, O miserable, fly hence or the watch at the door shall seize thee and we women shall not avail to release thee after thou fallest into their hands; nor will any have ruth upon thee; nay, they will cut off at least one of thine extremities. So save thyself and vanish so as not to lapse into the grip of the patrol." But hearing these her words he laughed and said to her, "Do thou open to me the terrace-wicket that I come down to you and see how to act with these dogs and dog- sons." She replied, "Woe to thee, O miserable, deemest thou these be like unto that poor Kazi who snipped his gown in fear of thee: he who now standeth at the door is Nazuk Wali and hast thou authority over him also?" He repeated, "Open to me that I may come down, otherwise I will break in the door;" so she unbolted the terrace-wicket and he descended the stairs and entered the hall where he took seat beside his bride and said, "I am an- hungered; what have ye by way of food?" The ancient dame cried, "And what food shall go down grateful to thy stomach and pleasant when the police are at the door?" and he replied, "Bring me what ye have and fear not." So she arose and served up to him whatso remained of meat and sweetmeat and he fell to morselling[164] them with mouthfuls and soothing them with soft words till they had their sufficiency of victual, after which she, the mother-in- law, removed the tray. Meanwhile the Chief of Police and his varlets stood shouting at the door and saying, "Open to us, otherwise we will break in." Presently quoth the Caliph to the old trot, "Take this seal-ring and go thou forth to them and place it in the Wali's hands. An he ask thee, 'Who is the owner of this signet?' answer thou, 'Here is he with me;' and if he enquire of thee, 'What doth he wish and what may he want?' do thou reply, 'He requireth a ladder of four rungs and its gear, not forgetting a bundle of rods;[165] also do thou, O man, enter with four of thy lieutenants and see what else he demandeth.'" When the ancient dame heard this from him she exclaimed, "And doth the Wali also dread thee or fear this seal- ring? My only fear is that they may now seize me and throw me and beat me with a bastinado so painful that it will be the death of me, and they hearken not to a word of mine, nor suffer thee to avail me aught." Rejoined the Caliph, "Be not alarmed, he shall not be able to gainsay my word;" and she, "An the Wali fear thee and give ear to thee, then will I gird my loins and suffer thee to teach me something of thy craft even were it that of robbing slaves' shoon." "Go forth without affright," said he laughing at her words, whereupon she took the seal-ring and went as far as behind the door and no farther, muttering to herself, "I will not open it wholly but only a little so as to give them the signet; then if they hearken to what saith this Robber 'tis well, otherwise I will keep the bolt fastened as it was." Presently she went forward and addressed the watch saying, "What is it ye want?" and Shamamah cried in reply, "O ill-omened old baggage, O rider of the jar,[166] O consorter of thieves, we want the robber who is in thy house that we may take him and strike off his hand and his foot; and thou shalt see what we will do with thee after that." She shrank from his words, but presently she heartened her heart and said to him, "Amongst you is there any who can read a whit?" "Yes," said the Wali, and she rejoined, "Take thou this seal-ring and see what be graven thereupon and what may be its owner's name." "Almighty Allah curse him," cried the lieutenant Shamamah, presently adding to the Wali, "O Emir, as soon as the old crone shall come forth I will throw her and flog her with a sore flogging; then let us enter the door and slay her and harry the house and seize the robber; after which I will inspect the signet and find out its owner and who sendeth it; then, if this be one of whom we stand in shame we will say, 'Indeed we read not its graving before the command was somewhat rashly carried out.' On this wise none may avail to molest us or thee." Hereupon he drew near the door and cried to her, "Show me that thou hast, and perhaps the sending it may save thee." So she opened one leaf of the door sufficient to thrust out her hand and gave him the ring which he took and passed to the Chief of Police. But when the Wali had considered and read the name engraved (which was that of the Commander of the Faithful, Harun the Orthodox), his colour waxed wan and his limbs quaked with fear. "What is to do with thee?" asked Shamamah, and the other answered, "Take and look!" The man hent the ring in hand and coming forward to the light read what was on it and understood that it was the signet of the Vicar of Allah. So a colick[167] attacked his entrails and he would have spoken but he could stammer only "Bí, Bí, Bí"[168] whereupon quoth the Master of Police, "The rods of Allah are descending upon us, O accurst, O son of a sire accurst: all this is of thy dirty dealing and thy greed of gain: but do thou address thy creditor[169] and save thyself alive." Hereat quoth Shamamah "O my lady, what dost thou require?" and quoth she to herself, "Indeed I am rejoiced for that they dread my son-in-law;" and presently she spoke aloud to him and said, "The lord of the seal-ring demandeth of thee a ladder of four rungs, a bundle of rods and cords and a bag containing the required gear,[170] also that the Wali and his four lieutenants go within to him" He replied, "O my lady chief of this household, and where is he the owner of the signet?" "Here is he seated in the hall," she replied and the Wali rejoined, "What was it he said to thee?" She then repeated the command about the Wali and the men and the bag, whereat he asked again concerning the whereabouts of the signet-owner and declared the gear to be ready, while all of them bepiddled their bag- trousers with fear.[171] Then the Wali and his four lieutenants, amongst whom was Shamamah the Accurst, entered the house, and the Caliph commanded lieutenant Hasan (knowing him for a kindly man of goodly ways and loath to injure his neighbour as proved by his opposing the harshness of Shamamah), saying, "Hie thee, O Hasan, and summon forthright Yunas the Emir of a thousand!" So this lord came in all haste[172] and was bidden to bastinado the Wali and Shamamah which he did with such good will that the nails fell from their toes; after which they were carried off and thrown into gaol. Then the Caliph largessed lieutenant Hasan; and, appointing him on the spot Chief of Police, dismissed the watch to their barracks. And when the street was cleared the old woman returning to the Harem said to her son-in-law, laughing the while, "There be none in this world to fellow thee as the Prince of Robbers! The Wali dreadeth thee and the Kazi dreadeth thee and all dread thee, whilst I gird my loins in thy service and become a she-robber amongst the women even as thou art a Robber amongst men, and indeed so saith the old saw, ‘The slave is fashioned of his lord’s clay and the son after the features of his sire.’ Had this Wali, at his first coming, let break down the door and had his men rushed in upon us and thou not present, what would have been our case with them? But now to Allah be laud and gratitude!” The Caliph hearing these words laughed, and taking seat beside his bride, who rejoiced in him, asked his mother-in-law, “Say me, didst ever see a Robber who bore him on this wise with the Wali and his men?” and answered she, “Never, by the life of thee, but may Allah Almighty reprehend the Caliph for that he did by us and punish him for wronging us, otherwise who was it forwarded thee to us, O Robber?” Quoth the Commander of the Faithful in his mind, “How have I wronged this ill-omened old woman that she curseth me?” and presently he asked her, “And wherein hath the Caliph done thee an injury?” She replied, “And what hath the Caliph left us of livelihood and so forth when he marauded our mansion and seized all our seisins? Even this hall was part of the plunder and they laid it waste after taking from it all they could of marble and joinery and what-not; and they left us paupers, as thou sawest, without aught wherewith to veil us and naught to eat. So had it not been that Almighty Allah favoured us with thyself, O Robber, we had been of the destroyed by famine and so forth.” “And wherefore did the Caliph plunder you?” asked he, “and what was the cause of his so doing?” She answered,[173] “My son was a Chamberlain of the Commander of the Faithful, and one day as he was sitting in this our home two women asked him for a draught of water which he gave to them. Presently the elder brought him a porcelain charger full of pancakes with the tidings that it had been sent as a return gift from the young lady her companion who had drunk from his hand; and he replied, ‘Set it down and wend thy ways,’ which she did. Presently as my son sat outside his door, the Watchman came up to offer blessings on the occasion of the Greater Festival and he gave him the charger and the man fared forth; but ere an hour had sped, folk came who marauded our mansion, and seizing my son, carried him before the Caliph, who demanded of him how the charger had come to his hands. He told him what I have told thee, and the Commander of the

Faithful asked him, 'Say me sawest thou aught of the charms of the young lady?' Now my son had on his lips to say No, but his tongue foreran him and he stammered out, 'Yes, I espied her face,' without really having seen her at all, for that when drinking she had turned to the wall. The Caliph hearing this hapless reply summoned the lady and bade smite both their necks, but in honour of the Festival-eve he had them carried off to prison. Such be then the reason of the wrong by the Caliph wrought, and except for this injustice and his seizure of my son, O Robber, it had been long ere thou hadst wedded my daughter." When the Prince of True Believers heard the words of her, he said in his mind, "Verily I have oppressed these unhappiest" and he presently asked her, "What wilt thou say if I cause the Caliph to free thy son from gaol and robe him and return his fiefs to him and promote him in the Chamberlain's office and return him to thee this very night?" Hereat the old woman laughed and made answer, "Hold thy peace! This one is no Chief of Police that he fear thee and thou work on him whatso thou willest: this one is the Prince of True Believers Harun al-Rashid, whose behest is heard both in Orient and in Occident, the lord of hosts and armies, one at whose gate the lowest menial is higher in degree than the Wali. Be not therefore beguiled by whatso thou hast done, nor count the Caliph as one of these lest thou cast thyself into doom of destruction, and there be an end of thy affair, while we unfortunates abide without a man in the house, and my son fail of being righted by him who wronged him." But when the Commander of the Faithful heard these words, his eyes brimmed with tears for ruth of her; then, rising without stay or delay, he would have fared forth when the old woman and the young lady hung about his neck crying, "We adjure thee, by Almighty Allah, that thou draw back from this business, for that we fear greatly on thy account." But he replied, "There is no help therefor," and he made oath that perforce he must go. Then he fared for the Palace of his kingship, and seating himself upon the throne bade summon the Emirs and Wazirs and Chamberlains, who flocked into the presence and kissed ground and prayed for him saying, "'Tis well, Inshallah! and what may be the reason for calling us together at this time o' night?" Said he, "I have been pondering the affair of Alaeddin the Emir, the Chamberlain, how I seized him wrongfully and jailed him, yet amongst you all was not a single one to intercede for him or to cheer him with your companionship." They bussed ground and replied, "Verily we were awe-struck by the majesty of the Prince of True Believers; but now at this hour we implore of the Commander of the Faithful his mercy upon his slave and chattel;" and so saying, they bared their heads and kissing the floor did humble obeisance. He replied, "I have accepted[174] your intercession on his account, and I have vouchsafed to him pardon; so hie ye to him and robe him with a sumptuous robe and bring him to me." They did the bidding of their lord and led the youth to the presence where he kissed ground and prayed for the permanence of the Caliph's rule; and the Sovran accepting this clothed him in a coat whereon plates of gold were hammered[175] and binding round his head a turband of fine gauze with richly embroidered ends made him Chief Lord of the Right[176] and said to him, "Hie thee now to thy home!" Accordingly he blessed the Prince and went forth accompanied by all the Emirs who rode their blood-steeds, and the Knights fared with him and escorted him in procession, with kettledrums and clarions, till they reached his mansion. Here his mother and his sister heard the hubbub of the multitude and the crash of the kettledrums and were asking, "What is to do?" when the bearers of glad tidings forewent the folk and knocked at the door saying, "We require of you the sweetmeats of good news, for the Caliph hath shown grace to Alaeddin the Chamberlain and hath increased his fiefs besides making him Chief Lord of the Right." Hearing this they rejoiced with joy exceeding and gave to the messengers what satisfied them, and while they were thus, behold, Alaeddin the son of the house arrived and entered therein. His mother and sister sprang up and saluted him throwing their arms round his neck and weeping for stress of gladness. Presently he sat down and fell to recounting to them what had befallen him; but chancing to look around he saw that the house had changed condition and had been renovated; so he said "O my mother, the time of my absence hath been short and when was this lodging made new?" She replied, "O my son, what day thou wast seized, they plundered our abode even to tearing up the slabs and the doors, nor did they leave us aught worth a single dirham: indeed we passed three days without breaking our fast upon aught of victual." Hearing this from her quoth he, “But whence cometh all this to you, these stuffs and vessels, and who was it rebuilded this house in a space so short? Or haply is all this I see in the land of dreams?” But quoth she, “Nay, ’tis no vision but an absolute reality and ’twas all done by my son-in-law in a single day.” “And who may be my new brother-in-law?” he enquired, “and when didst thou give away my sister, and who married her without my leave?”[177] “Hold thy peace, O my son,” rejoined she, “but for him we had died of want and hunger!” “And what may be his calling?” the Emir asked, and she answered, “A Robber!” But when her son heard this he was like to choke with anger and he cried, “What degree hath this robber that he become my brother-in-law? Now by the tomb of my forbears I will assuredly smite his neck.” “Cast away from thee such wild talk,” cried she, “for the mischief of another is greater than thy mischief, withal naught thereof availed him[178] with a man who wrought all thou seest in half a day.” Then she related to her son what had befallen the Kazi and the Wali from the man and how he had bastinado’d the police, showing him as he spoke the blood which had poured from their bodies upon the floor for excess of flogging; and she continued, “Presently I complained to him of my case, how the Commander of the Faithful had seized thee and imprisoned thee when he said to me, ‘At this very moment I fare to the Caliph and cause him to free thy son and suffer him to return home; also to robe him and to increase his fiefs;’ whereupon he went from us and after an hour, lo and behold! thou appearedst; so but for him we had never seen thee any more.” When her son heard these words, his wits were bewildered and he was confounded at his case, so he asked her, “What may this man be styled and what may be his name?” She answered, “We are ignorant an he have any name or not, for however much we enquired of the marble-cutters and master artificers and handi-craftsmen, they told us only that his bye- name[179] is Al-Bundukani without letting us know any other. Moreover on like wise when he sent me to fetch the Kazi he bade me tell him that Al-Bundukani had summoned him.” Now when the Emir Alaeddin heard her name Al-Bundukani he knew that it was the Commander of the Faithful, nor could he prevent himself springing to his feet and kissing ground seven times; but as his mother beheld this she laughed and cried, “O thou brawler,[180] 'tis as if he had met thee in the street and had given thee to drink a draught of clotted blood, one beyond the common![181] What of thy brave words when anon thou saidst, 'I will smite his neck'?" "And dost thou know," quoth he, "who may be the person thou so callest?" and quoth she, "Who may he be?" "The Commander of the Faithful, the Caliph Harun al-Rashid in person," cried her son, "and what other could have done with the Kazi and the Wali and the rest what he did?" When she heard these words, she dried up with dread and cried, "O my son, set me in a place of safety,[182] for he will suffer me no longer to cumber the face of earth by reason of my often speaking at him; nor did I ever cease to address him as 'Robber.'" Now whilst they were speaking behold, came up the Commander of the Faithful, whereat Alaeddin arose and kissed ground and blessed him, but the ancient dame took to flight and hid her in a closet. The Caliph seated himself, then he looked around and, not seeing his mother-in-law, said to the Chamberlain, "And where may be thy parent?" "She dreadeth," replied Alaeddin, 'and standeth in awe of the Caliph's majesty;" but Harun rejoined, "There is no harm for her." Then he bade her be summoned whereat she appeared and kissed ground and prayed for the permanency of his kingship, and he said to her, "Erewhiles thou girdest thy waist to aid me in stealing slaves' shoon and now thou fliest from thy teacher?" She blushed for shame and exclaimed, "Pardon, O Commander of the Faithful," and Harun al-Rashid[183] replied, "May Allah pardon the Past." Presently he sent for the Princess, the daughter of the Chosroë and, summoning the Kazi, forthright divorced her and gave her in marriage to Alaeddin, his Chamberlain. Hereupon were spread bride-feasts which gathered together all the Lords of the Empire and the Grandees of Baghdad, and tables and trays of food were laid out during three successive days for the mesquin and the miserable. The visit of entrance was paid by the two bridegrooms on a single night when both went in unto their wives and took their joy of them, and made perfect their lives with the liveliest enjoyment. And ever after they passed the fairest of days till such time as came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies and all passed away and died.

So praise be to the Ever-Living who dieth not!

Such is the tale which came down to us
in completion and perfection,
and glory be to God, the
Lord of the three Worlds.
AMEN.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

M.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

THE LINGUIST-DAME, THE DUENNA AND THE KING’S SON.

We here begin,[184] with the aidance of Allah Almighty, and invite the History of the Tarjumánah[185] and the Kahramanah[186] and the young man, the King’s son, and whatso happed between them of controversy and of contention and interrogation on various matters.

It is related (but Allah is All-knowing anent what passed and preceded us of the histories belonging to bygone peoples) that there reigned in a city of Roum[187] a King of high degree and exalted dignity, a lord of power and puissance. But this Sovran was issueless, so he ceased not to implore Allah Almighty that boon of babe might be vouchsafed to him, and presently the Lord had pity upon him and deigned grant him a man-child. He bade tend the young Prince with tenderest tending, and caused him to be taught every branch of knowledge, and the divine precepts of wisdom and morals and manners; nor did there remain aught of profitable learning wherein the Youth was not instructed; and upon this education the King expended a mint of money. Now after the Youth grew up Time rounded upon the Sovran his sire and his case was laid bare and he was perplext as to himself and he wotted not whatso he should ever do. Presently his son took heart to direct him aright, and asked, “O my father, say me, wilt thou give ear to that wherewith I would bespeak thee?” “Speak out,” quoth the King, “that is with thee of fair rede;” and quoth the youth, “Rise, O my sire, that we depart this city ere any be ware of our wending; so shall we find rest and issue from the straits of indigence now closing around us. In this place there is no return of livelihood to us and poverty hath emaciated us and we are set in the sorriest of conditions than which naught can be sorrier.” “O my child,” quoth his sire in reply, “admirable is this advice wherewith thou hast advised us, O my son, pious and dutiful; and be the affair now upon Allah and upon thee.” Hereupon the Youth gat all ready and arising one night took his father and mother without any being cognisant; and the three, entrusting themselves to the care of Allah Almighty, wandered forth from home. And they ceased not wandering over the wilds and the wolds till at last they saw upon their way a large city and a mighty fine; so they entered it and made for a place whereat they alighted. Presently the young Prince arose and went forth to stroll about the streets and take his solace; and whilst he walked about he asked concerning the city and who was its Sovran. They gave him tidings thereof saying, “This be the capital of a Sultan, equitable and high in honour amongst the Kings.” Hereupon returning to his father and mother, quoth he to them, “I desire to sell you as slaves to this Sultan,[188] and what say ye?” Quoth they, “We have committed our case to Almighty Allah and then to thee, O our son; so do whatso thou wishest and judgest good.” Hereat the Prince, repairing to the Palace, craved leave to enter to the King and, having obtained such permission, made his obeisance in the presence. Now when the Sultan looked upon him he saw that his visitor was of the sons of the great, so he asked him, “What be thy need, Ho thou the Youth?” and the other made answer, “O my lord, thy slave is a merchant man and with me is a male captive, handy of handicraft, God-fearing and pious, and a pattern of honesty and honour in perfect degree: I have also a bondswoman goodly in graciousness and of civility complete in all thou canst command of bondswomen; these I desire to vend, O my lord, to thy Highness, and if thou wouldst buy them of thy servant they are between thy hands and at thy disposal, and we all three are thy chattels.” When the King heard these pleasant words spoken by the Youth, he said to him, “And where are they? Bring them hither that I behold them; and, if they be such as thou informest me, I will bid them be bought of thee!” Hereupon the Prince fared forth and informed his parents of this offer and said to them, “Rise up with me that I vend you and take from this Sultan your price wherewith I will pass into foreign parts and win me wealth enough to redeem and free you on my return hither. And the rest we will expend upon our case.” “O our son,” said they, “do with us whatso thou wishest.” Anon,[189] the parents arose and prepared to accompany him and the Youth took them and led them into the presence of that Sultan where they made their obeisance, and the King at first sight of them marvelled with extreme marvel and said to them, “Are ye twain slaves to this young man?” Said they, “Yes, O our lord;” whereupon he turned to the Youth and asked him, “What be the price thou requirest for these two?” “O my lord," replied he, "give me to the price of this man slave, a mare saddled and bridled and perfect in weapons and furniture;[190] and, as for this bondswoman, I desire thou make over to me as her value, a suit of clothes, the choicest and completest." Accordingly the Sultan bade pay him all his requirement, over and above which he largessed him with an hundred dinars; and the Youth, after obtaining his demand and receiving such tokens of the royal liberality, kissed the King's hands and farewelled his father and mother. Then he applied himself to travel, seeking prosperity from Allah and all unknowing whither he should wend. And whilst he was faring upon his wayfare he was met by a horseman of the horsemen,[191] and they both exchanged salutations and welcomings, when the stranger was highly pleased at the politeness of the King's son and the elegance of his expressions. Presently, pulling from his pocket a sealed letter wrapt in a kerchief he passed it over to the Youth, saying, "In very sooth, O my brother, affection for thee hath befallen my heart by reason of the goodliness of thy manners and elegance of thine address and the sweetness of thy language; and now I desire to work thy weal by means of this missive." "And what of welfare may that be?" asked the Prince, whereto the horseman answered, "Take with thee this letter and forthwith upon arriving at the Court of the King whither thou art wending, hand to him this same; so shalt thou obtain from him gain abundant and mighty great good and thou shalt abide with him in degree of highmost honour. This paper (gifted to me by my teacher) hath already brought me ample livelihood and prodigious profit, and I have bestowed it upon thee by reason of thine elegance and good breeding and thy courteousness in showing me respect." Hereat the Youth, the son of the King, answered him, "Allah requite thee with weal and grant thou gain thy wish;" and so saying accepted the letter of that horseman with honest heart and honourable intent, meditating in his mind, "Inshallah ta'ála — an it be the will of God the Greatest I shall have good fortune to my lot by the blessing of this epistle; then will I fare and set free my father and my mother." So the Prince resumed his route and he exulted in himself especially at having secured the writ, by means whereof he was promised abundant weal. Presently, it chanced that he became drowthy with excessive drowth that waxed right sore upon him and he saw upon his path no water to drink; and by the tortures of thirst he was like to lose his life. So he turned round and looked at the mare he bestrode and found her covered with a foam of sweat wholly unlike her wonted way. Hereat dismounting he brought out the wrapper wherein the letter was enrolled and loosing it he mopped up therewith his animal's sweat and squeezing it into a cup he had by him drank it off and found to his joy that he was somewhat comforted. Then, of his extreme satisfaction with the letter, he said to himself, "Would Heaven I knew that which is within, and how the profit which the horseman promised should accrue to me therefrom. So let me open it and see its contents that my heart may be satisfied and my soul be joyed." Then he did as he devised and perused its purport and he mastered its meaning and the secret committed to it, which he found as follows, "O my lord, do thou straightway on the arrival of him who beareth these presents slay him, nor leave him one moment on life; because this Youth came to me and I entreated him with honour the highmost that could be of all honouring, as a return for which this traitor of the salt, this reprobate betrayed me in a daughter that was by me. I feared to do him dead lest I come to shame amongst the folk and endure disgrace, I and my tribe, wherefore I have forwarded him to thy Highness that thou mayest torture him with torments of varied art and end his affair and slaughter him, thus saving us from the shame which befel us at the hands of this reprobate traitor."[192] Now when the young Prince read this writ and comprehended its contents, he suspected that it was not written concerning him and he took thought in himself, saying, "Would Heaven I knew what I can have done by this horseman who thus seeketh diligently to destroy my life, for that this one had with him no daughter, he being alone and wending his way without any other save himself; and I made acquaintance with him nor passed there between us a word which was unworthy or unmeet. Now this affair must needs have one of two faces; to wit, the first, that such mishap really did happen to him from some youth who favoureth me and when he saw the likeness he gave me the letter; or, on the second count, this must be a trial and a test sent to me from Almighty Allah, and praise be to God the Great who inspired me to open this missive. At any rate I thank the Most Highest and laud Him for His warding off the distress and calamity descending upon me and wherefrom He delivered me." Then the young Prince ceased not wending over the wildest of wolds until he came to a mighty grand city which he entered; and, hiring himself a lodging in a Khan,[193] dismounted thereat; then, having tethered his mare and fed her with a sufficiency of fodder, he fared forth to walk about the thoroughfares. Suddenly he was met by an ancient dame who considered him and noted him for a handsome youth and an elegant, tall of stature and with the signs of prosperity showing manifest between his eyes. Hereat he accosted her and questioned her of the city folk and their circumstances, whereto the old woman made reply with the following purport, "Here in our city reigneth a King of exalted dignity and he hath a daughter fair of favour, indeed the loveliest of the folk of her time. Now she hath taken upon herself never to intermarry with any of mankind unless it be one who can overcome her with instances and arguments and can return a sufficient reply to all her questions; and this is upon condition that, should he come off vanquisher, he shall become her mate, but if vanquished she will cut off his head, and on such wise hath she done with ninety-and-nine men of the noblest blood, as sons of the Kings and sundry others. Furthermore, she hath a towering castle founded upon the heights that overfrown the whole of this city whence she can descry all who pass under its walls." As soon as the young Prince heard these words from the love of the King's daughter and he passed that night as it were to him the longsomest of nights, nor would he believe that the next morn had morrowed. But when dawned the day and anon showed its sheen and shone, he arose without let or stay and after saddling his mare mounted her and turned towards the palace belonging to the King's daughter; and presently reaching it, took his station at the gateway. Hereat all those present considered him and asked him saying, "What be the cause of thy standing hereabouts?" whereto he answered, "I desire speech with the Princess." But when they heard these words, all fell to addressing him with kindly words and courteous and dissuading him from his desire and saying, "Ho thou beautiful youngling! fear[194] Allah and pity thyself and have ruth upon thy youth; nor dare seek converse with this Princess, for that she hath slain fourscore and nineteen men of the nobles and sons of the kings and for thee sore we fear that thou shalt complete the century." The Prince, however, would not hear a word from them nor heed their rede; neither would he be warned by the talk of others than they; nay he persisted in standing at the Palace gateway. And presently he asked admission to go in to the King's daughter; but this was refused by the Princess, who contented herself with sending forth to him her Tarjumánah, her Linguist-dame, to bespeak him and say, "Ho thou fair youth! art thou ready and longing to affront dangers and difficulties?" He replied, "I am." "Then," quoth she, "hie thee to the King the father of this Princess and show thyself and acquaint him with thine affair and thine aim, after which do thou bear witness against thyself in presence of the Kazi that an thou conquer his daughter in her propositions and she fail of replying to a query of thine thou shalt become her mate; whereas if she vanquish thee she shall lawfully cut off thy head,[195] even as she hath decapitated so many before thy time. And when this is done come thou back to us." The Prince forthright fared for the monarch and did as he was bidden; then he returned to the Linguist-dame and reported all his proceedings before the King and eke the Kazi. After this he was led in to the presence of the Princess and with him was the afore-mentioned Tarjumánah who brought him a cushion of silk for the greater comfort of his sitting; and the two fell to questioning and resolving queries and problems in full sight of a large attendance. Began the Tarjumánah, interpreting the words of her lady who was present, "Ho thou the Youth! my mistress saith to thee, Do thou inform me concerning an ambulant moving sepulchre whose inmate is alive." He answered and said, "The moving sepulchre is the whale that swallowed Jonas (upon whom be the choicest of Salams![196]), and the Prophet was quick in the whale's belly." She pursued, "Tell me concerning two combatants who fight each other but not with hands or feet, and who withal never say a say or speak a speech." He answered saying, "The bull and the buffalo who encounter each other by ramming with horns." She continued, "Point out to me a tract of earth which saw not the sun save for a single time and since that never." He answered saying, "This be the sole of the Red Sea when Moses the Prophet (upon whom be The Peace!) smote it with his rod and clove it asunder so that the Children of Israel crossed over it on dry ground, which was never seen but only once."[197] She resumed, "Relate to me anent that which drank water during its life-time and ate meat after its death?" He answered saying, "This be the Rod[198] of Moses the Prophet (upon whom be The Peace!) which, when a living branch[199] struck water from its living root and died only when severed from the parent tree. Now Almighty Allah cast it upon the land of Egypt by the hand of Moses, what time this Prophet drowned Pharaoh and his host[200] and therewith clove the Red Sea, after which that Rod became a dragon and swallowed up the wands of all the Magicians of Misraim." Asked she, "Give me tidings of a thing which is not of mankind nor of the Jánn-kind, neither of the beasts nor of the birds?" He answered saying, "This whereof thou speakest is that mentioned by Solomon, to with the Louse,[201] , and secondly the Ant." She enquired, "Tell me to what end Almighty Allah created the creation and for what aim of wisdom did He quicken this creation and for what object did He cause death to be followed by resurrection and resurrection by the rendering men's accounts?" He answered saying, "God created all creatures that they might witness His handicraft, and he did them die that they might behold his absolute dominion and He requickened them to the end that they learn His All-Might, and He decreed their rendering account that they might consider His wisdom and His justice." She questioned him saying, "Tell me concerning three, of whom my first was not born of father and mother and yet died; and my second was begotten of sire and born of woman yet died not, and my third was born of father and mother yet died not by human death?" He answered saying, "The first were Adam and Eve,[202] the second was Elias[203] the Prophet and the third was Lot's wife who died not the death of the general, for that she was turned into a pillar of salt." Quoth she, "Relate to me concerning one who in this world had two names?" and he answered saying, "This be Jacob, sire of the Twelve Tribes, to whom Allah vouchsafed the title of Israel, which is Man with El or God."[204] She said, "Inform me concerning the Nákús, or the Gong,[205] who was the inventor thereof and at what time was it first struck in this world?" He answered saying, "The Gong was invented by Noah, who first smote upon it in the Ark." And after this she stinted not to question him nor he to ree her riddles until evening fell, when quoth the King's daughter to the

Linguist-dame, “Say thou to the young man that he may now depart, and let him come to me betimes next morning when, if I conquer him, I will give him drink of the cup his fellows drained; and, should he vanquish me, I will become his wife.” Then the Tarjumánah delivered her message word for word, and the Youth went forth from the Princess with fire aflame in his heart and spent the longest of nights hardly believing that the morn would morrow. But when day broke and the dawn came with its sheen and shone upon all mankind, he arose from his sleep and fared with the first light to the palace where the King’s daughter bade the Linguist-dame introduce him, and when he came in ordered him to be seated. As soon as he had taken seat she gave her commands to the Tarjumánah, who said, “My lady directeth thee to inform her what may be the tree bearing a dozen boughs, each clothed with thirty leaves and these of two colours, one half white and the other moiety black?” He answered saying, “Now that tree is the year, and its twelve branches are the dozen months, while the thirty leaves upon each of these are the thirty white days and the thirty black nights.” Hereat quoth she, “Tell me, what tree was it bore many a bough and manifold leaves which presently became flesh and blood?” He answered saying, “This was the Rod of Moses the Prophet (upon whom be The Peace!) which was at first a tree but which after cutting became a serpent with flesh and blood.” Continued she, “Inform me what became of Moses’ Rod and Noah’s Ark, and where now be they?” He answered saying, “They are at this tide sunken in the Lake of Tabariyyah,[206] and both, at the end of time, will be brought out by a man hight Al-Násirí.[207] She pursued, “Acquaint me with spun yarn, whence did it originate and who was it first practised spinning the same?” He answered, saying, “Almighty Allah from the beginning of mankind ordered the Archangel Gabriel to visit Eve and say to her, ‘Spin for thyself and for Adam waistcloths wherewith ye may veil your persons.’”[208] She enquired, “Tell me concerning the Asáfír,[209] and why they were so called, and who first named them with such name?” He answered saying, “There was in the days of the Moses the Prophet (upon whom be The Peace!) a fowl called Fír, and in the time of Solomon the King (upon whom be The Peace!) all the birds paid him obedience, even as did all the beasts, and albeit each and every created thing was subject to the Prophet, withal this Fír would not show submission: so the Wise King sent a body of birds to bring him into the presence, but he refused to present himself. Presently they returned to the Prophet who asked them, “Where be Fír?” and they answered, “O our lord, ‘Asá Fír,’[210] whence that name hath clung to the fowls.” She resumed, “Inform me of the two Stationaries and the two Moveables and the two Conjoineds and the two Disjoineds by jealousy and the twain which be eternal Foes.” He answered saying, “Now the two Stationaries be Heaven and Earth and the two Moveables are the Sun and the Moon; the two Conjoineds are Night and Day and the two Disjoineds by jealousy are the Soul and the Body and the two Hostiles are Death and Life.”[211] On this wise the Linguist-dame ceased not to question him and he to reply solving all her problems until eve closed in. Then she bade him go forth that night and on the next day come again to her. Accordingly, the young Prince returned to his Khan and no sooner had he made sure that the morn had morrowed than he resolved to see if that day would bring him aught better than had come to him before. So arising betimes he made for the palace of the King’s daughter and was received and introduced by the Tarjumánah who seated him as was her wont and presently she began, saying, “My lady biddeth thee inform her of a thing which an a man do that same ’tis unlawful; and if a man do not that same ’tis also unlawful.” He answered, saying, “I will: this be the prayer[212] of a drunken man which is in either case illegal.” Quoth she, “Tell me how far is the interval between Heaven and Earth?” and he answered saying, “That bridged over by the prayer of Moses the Prophet[213] (upon him be The Peace!) whom Allah Almighty saved and preserved.” She said, “And how far is it betwixt East and West?” whereto he answered saying, “The space of a day and the course of the Sun wending from Orient unto Occident.” Then she asked, “Let me know what was the habit[214] of Adam in Paradise?” and he answered saying, “Adam’s habit in Eden was his flowing hair.”[215] She continued, “Tell me of Abraham the Friend (upon whom be The Peace!) how was it that Allah chose him out and called him ‘Friend?’”[216] He answered saying, “Verily the Lord determined to tempt and to test him albeit he kenned right clearly that the Prophet was free of will yet fully capable of enduring the trial;

natheless, He resolved to do on this wise that he might stablish before men the truth of His servant's trust in the Almighty and the fairness of his faith and the purity of his purpose. So the Lord bade him offer to Him his son Is'hák[217] as a Corban or Sacrifice; and of the truth of his trust he took his child and would have slain him as a victim. But when he drew his knife with the purpose of slaughtering the youth he was thus addressed by the Most Highest Creator, 'Now indeed well I wot that thou gatherest[218] me and keepest my covenant: so take thou yonder rain and slay it as a victim in the stead of Is'hák.' And after this he entitled him 'Friend.'" She pursued, "Inform me touching the sons of Israel how many were they at the time of the going forth from Egypt?" He answered, saying, "When they marched out of Misraim-land they numbered six hundred thousand fighting[219] men besides women and children." She continued, "Do thou point out to me, some place on earth which is higher than the Heavens;" and he answered saying, "This is Jerusalem[220] the Exalted and she standeth far above the Firmament." Then the Youth turning to the Linguist-dame, said, "O my lady, long and longsome hath been the exposition of that which is between us, and were thy lady to ask me for all time questions such as these and the like of them, I by the All-might of Allah shall return a full and sufficient answer to one and all. But, in lieu of so doing, I desire of thy mistress the Princess to ask of her one question and only one: and, if she satisfy me of the significance I claim therefor, let her give me to drain the cup of my foregoers whom she overcame and slew; and if she fail in the attempt she shall own herself conquered and become my wife — and The Peace!"[221] Now this was said in the presence of a mighty host there present, the great of them as well as the small thereof; so the Tarjumánah answered willy-nilly, "Say, O Youth, whatso is the will of thee and speak out that which is in the mind of thee." He rejoined, "Tell thy lady that she deign enlighten me concerning a man who was in this condition. He was born and brought up in the highest of prosperity but Time turned upon him and Poverty mishandled him;[222] so he mounted his father and clothed him with his mother[223] and he fared forth to seek comfort and happiness at the hand of Allah Almighty. Anon Death met him on the way and Doom bore him upon his head and his courser saved him from destruction whenas he drank water which came neither from the sky nor from the ground. Now see thou who may be that man and do thou give me answer concerning him."[224] But when the Princess heard this question, she was confused with exceeding confusion touching the reply to be replied in presence of a posse of the people, and she was posed and puzzled and perplext to escape the difficulty and naught availed her save addressing the Tarjumánah and saying, "Do thou bid this Youth wend his ways and remove himself until the morrow." The Linguist-dame did as she was bidden, adding, "And on the morrow (Inshallah!) there shall be naught save weal;" and the Prince went forth leaving the folk aghast at the question he had urged upon the King's daughter. But as soon as he left her the young lady commanded the Tarjumánah to let slaughter somewhat of the most toothsome poultry and to prepare them for food as her mistress might direct her; together with dainty meats and delicate sweetmeats and the finest fruits fresh and dried and all manner of other eatables and drinkables, and lastly to take a skin-bottle filled with good old wine. Then she changed her usual garb and donned the most sumptuous dress of all her gear; and, taking her Duenna and favourite handmaiden with a few of her women for comitive, she repaired to the quarters of the Youth, the King's son; and the time of her visit was the night-tide. Presently, reaching the Khan she said to her guardian, "Go thou in to him alone whilst I hide me somewhere behind the door and do thou sit between his hands;" after which she taught the old woman all she desired her do of dissimulation and artifice. The slave obeyed her mistress and going in accosted the young man with the salam; and, seating herself before him, said, "Ho thou the Youth! Verily there is here a lovely damsel, delightsome and perfect of qualities, whose peer is not in her age, and well nigh able is she to make the sun fare backwards[225] and to illumine the universe in lieu thereof. Now when thou wast wont to visit us in the apartment of the Princess, this maiden looked upon thee and found thee a fair youth; so her heart loved thee with excessive love and desired thee with exceeding desire and to such degree that she insisted upon accompanying me and she hath now taken station at thy door longing to enter. So do thou grant her permission that she come in and appear in thy presence and then retire to some privacy where she may stand in thy service, a slave to thy will."[226] The Prince replied, "Whoso seeketh us let enter with weal and welfare, and well come and welcome and fair welcome to each and every of such guests." Hereat the Princess went in as did all those who were with her, and presently after taking seat they brought out and set before the Youth their whole store of edibles and potables and the party fell to eating and drinking and converse, exchanging happy sayings blended with wit and disport and laughter, while the Princess made it her especial task to toy with her host deeming that he knew her not to be the King's daughter. He also stinted not to take his pleasure with her; and on this wise they feasted and caroused and enjoyed themselves and were cheered and the converse between them was delightful. The Duenna, however, kept plying the Prince with wine, mere and pure, until she had made him drunken and his carousal had so mastered him that he required her person of her; however she refused herself and questioned him of the enigma wherewith he had overcome her mistress; whilst he, for stress of drunkenness, was incapacitated by stammering to explain her aught thereof. Hereupon the Princess, having doffed her upper dress, propped herself sideways upon a divan cushion and stretched herself at full length and the Youth for the warmth of his delight in her and his desire to her anon recovering his speech explained to her the reply of his riddle. The King's daughter then joyed with mighty great joy as though she had won the world universal;[227] and, springing to her feet incontinently, of her extreme gladness she would not delay to finish her disport with her wooer; but ere the morning morrowed she departed and entered her palace. Now in so doing she clean forgot her outer robes and the wine-service and what remained of meat and drink. The Youth had been overcome with sleep and after slumbering he awoke at dawn when he looked round and saw none of the company about him; withal he recognised the princely garments which were of the most sumptuous and costly, robes of brocade and sendal and suchlike, together with jewels and adornments: and scattered about lay sundry articles of the wine-service and fragments of the food they had brought with them. And from these signs of things forgotten he learnt that the King's daughter had visited him in person and he was certified that she had beguiled him with her wiles until she had wrung from him the reply of his question. So as soon as it was morning-tide he arose and went, as was his wont, to the Princess's palace where he was met by the Tarjumánah who said to him, "O Youth, is it thy pleasure that my lady expound to thee her explanation of the enigma yesterday proposed by thee?" "I will tell the very truth," answered he; "and relate to thee what befel me since I saw you last, and 'twas this. When I left you there came to me a lovely bird, delightsome and perfect of charms, and I indeed entertained her with uttermost honour and worship; we ate and we drank together, but at night she shook her feathers and flew away from me. And if she deny this I will produce her plumage before her father and all present." Now when the Sovran, the sire of the Princess, heard these words concerning his daughter, to wit, that the youth had conquered her in her contention and that she had fared to his quarters to the end that she might wring from him an explanation of the riddle which she was unable to ree or reply thereto, he would do naught else save to summon the Cohen[228] and the Lords of his land and the Grandees of his realm and the Notables of his kith and kin. And when the Priest and all made act of presence, he told them the whole tale first and last; namely, the conditions to the Youth conditioned, that if overcome by his daughter and unable to answer her questions he should be let drain the cup of destruction like his fellows, and if he overcame her he should claim her to wife. Furthermore he declared that the Youth had answered, with full and sufficient answer, all he had been asked without doubt or hesitation; while at last he had proposed to her an enigma which she had been powerless to solve; and in this matter he had vanquished her twice (he having answered her and she having failed to answer him). "For which reason," concluded the King, "'tis only right that he marry her; even as was the condition between them twain; and it becometh our first duty to adjudge their contention and decide their case according to covenant and he being doubtless the conqueror to bid write his writ of marriage with her. But what say ye?" They replied, "This is the rightest of redes; moreover the Youth, a fair and a pleasant, becometh her well and she likewise besitteth him; and their lot is a wondrous." So they bade write the marriage writ and the Cohen, arising forthright, pronounced the union auspicious and began blessing and praying for the pair and all present. In due time the Prince went in to her and consummated the marriage according to the custom stablished by Allah and His Holy Law; and thereafter he related to his bride all that had betided him, from beginning to end, especially how he had sold his parents to one of the Kings. Now when she heard these words, she had ruth upon his case and soothed his spirit saying to him, “Be of good cheer and keep thine eyes clear and cool of tear.” Then, after a little while the Princess bestowed upon her bridegroom a mint of money that he might fare forth and free his father and his mother. Accordingly the Prince, accepting her largesse, sought the King to whom he had pledged his parents (and they were still with him in all weal and welfare) and going in to him made his salam and kissed ground and told him the whole tale of the past and the conditions of death or marriage he had made with the King’s daughter and of his wedding her after overcoming her in contention. So the monarch honoured him with honour galore than which naught could be more; and, when the Prince paid him over the moneys, he asked, “What be these dirhams?” “The price of my parents thou paidest to me,” answered the other. But the King exclaimed, “I gave thee not to the value of thy father and mother moneys of such amount as this sum. I only largessed thee with a mare and a suit of clothes which was not defraying a debt but presenting thee with a present and thereby honouring thee with due honour. Then Alhamdolillah-laud be to the Lord, who preserved thee and enabled thee to win thy wish, and now arise and take thy parents and return in safety to thy bride.” The Prince hereupon thanked him and praised Allah for the royal guerdon and favours and the fair treatment wherewith he had been entreated; after which he craved leave to receive his parents in charge and wend his ways. And when permission was granted to him, he wished all good wishes to the King and taking his father and his mother in weal and welfare he went his ways with them, in joy and gladness and gratitude for all blessings and benefits by Allah upon him bestowed, till he had returned to his bride. Here he found that his father-in-law had deceased during his absence, so he took seat in lieu of him upon the throne of the kingdom; and he and his consort, during all the days of their life in this world, ceased not eating and drinking in health and well-being and eating and drinking in joy and happiness and bidding and forbidding until they quitted this mundane scene to the safeguard of the Lord God. And here endeth and is perfected the history of the Youth, the King's son, and the sale of his parents and his falling into the springes of the Princess who insisted upon proposing problems to all her wooers with the condition that if they did not reply she would do them drain the cup of destruction and on this wise had slain a many of men; and, in fine, how she was worsted by and she fell to the lot of this youth whom Allah gifted with understanding to ree all her riddles and who had confounded her with his question whereto she availed not to reply; when his father-in-law died, succeeded to the kingdom which he ruled so well.[229]

NOTE TO P. 82. {footnote [219]]

The Músà (Moses) of the Moslems is borrowed from Jewish sources, the Pentateuch and especially the Talmud, with a trifle of Gnosticism which, hinted at in the Koran (chapt. xviii.), is developed by later writers, making him the "external" man, while Khizr, the Green prophet, is the internal. But they utterly ignore Manetho whose account of the Jewish legislator (Josephus against Apion, i. cc. 26, 27) shows the other or Egyptian part. Moses, by name Osarsiph=Osiris-Sapi, Osiris of the underworld, which some translate rich (Osii) in food (Siph, Seph, or Zef) was nicknamed Mosheh from the Heb. Mashah=to draw out, because drawn from the water[230] (or rather from the Koptic Mo=water ushe=saved). He became a priest an An or On (Heliopolis), after studying the learning of the Egyptians. Presently he was chosen chief by the "lepers and other unclean persons" who had been permitted by King Amenophis to occupy the city Avaris lately left desolate by the "Shepherd Kings." Osarsiph ordained the polity and laws of his followers, forbidding them to worship the Egyptian gods and enjoining them to slay and sacrifice the sacred animals. They were joined by the "unclean of the Egyptians" and by their kinsmen of the Shepherds, and treated the inhabitants with a barbarity more execrable than that of the latter, setting fire to cities and villages, casting the Egyptian priests and prophets out of their country, and compelling Amenophis to fall back upon Ethiopia. After some years of disorder Sethos (also called Ramesses from his father Rampses) son of Amenophis came down with the King from Ethiopia leading great united forces, and, "encountering the Shepherds and the unclean people, they defeated them and slew multitudes of them, and pursued the remainder to the borders of Syria." Josephus relates this account of Manetho, which is apparently truthful, with great indignation. For the prevalence of leprosy we have the authority of the Hebrews themselves, and Pliny (xxvi. 2), speaking of Rubor Ægyptus, evidently white leprosy ending in the black, assures us that it was "natural to the Ægyptians," adding a very improbable detail, namely that the kings cured it by balneæ (baths) of human blood.[231]

Schiller (in "Die Sendung Moses") argues that the mission of the Jewish lawgiver, as adopted son (the real son?) of Pharoah's daughter, became "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," by receiving the priestly education of the royal princes, and that he had advanced from grade to grade in the religious mysteries, even to the highest, in which the great truth of the One Supreme, the omniscient, omnipotent God was imparted, as the sublime acme of all human knowledge, thus attributing to Moses before his flight into Midian, an almost modern conception of an essentially anthropomorphous Deity.

Further, that his conscious mission when he returned to Egypt was not merely the deliverance of his people from the Egyptian yoke, but the revelation to them of this great conception, and so the elevation of that host of slaves to the position of a nation, to whose every member the highest mystery of religion should be known and whose institutions should be based upon it. It is remarkable that Schiller should have accepted the fables of Manetho as history, that he should not have suspected the fact that the Egyptian priest wrote from motives of personal spite and jealousy, and with the object of poisoning the mind of Ptolemy against the learned Jews with whom he stood on terms of personal friendship. Thus he not only accepts the story that the Hebrews were expelled from Egypt because of the almost universal spread of leprosy among them, but explains at length why that loathsome and horrible disease should have so prevailed. Still Schiller's essay, written with his own charming eloquence, is a magnificent eulogy of the founder of the Hebrew nation.

Goethe ("Israel in der Wüste"), on the other hand, with curious ingenuity, turns every thing to the prejudice of the "headstrong man" Moses, save that he does grant him a vivid sentiment of justice. He makes him both by nature and education a grand, strong man, but brutal (roh) withal. His killing the Egyptian is a secret murder; "his dauntless fist gains him the favour of a Midianitish priest-prince . . . . under the pretence of a general festival, gold and silver dishes are swindled (by the Jews under Moses's instigation) from their neighbours, and at the moment when the Egyptians believe the Israelites to be occupied in harmless feastings, a reversed Sicilian vesper is executed; the stranger murders the native, the guest the host; and, with a horrible cunning, only the first-born are destroyed to the end that, in a land where the first-born enjoyed such superior rights, the selfishness of the younger sons might come into play, and instant punishment be avoided by hasty flight. The artifice succeeds, the assassins are thrust out instead of being chastised." (Quoted from p-100 "The Hebrews and the Red Sea," by Alexander W. Thayer; Andover, Warren F. Draper, 1883.) With respect to the census of the Exodus, my friend Mr. Thayer, who has long and conscientiously studied the subject, kindly supplied me with the following notes and permitted their publication.

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

Trieste, October 11, 1887.

My Dear Sir Richard,

The points in the views presented by me in our conversation upon the Hebrews and their Exodus, of which you requested a written exposition, are, condensed, these:

Assuming that the Hebrew records, as we have them, are in the main true, i.e. historic, a careful search must reveal some one topic concerning which all the passages relating to it agree at least substantially. Such a topic is the genealogies, precisely that which Philippsohn the great Jewish Rabbi, Dr. Robinson, of the Palestine researches, and all the Jewish and Christian commentators — I know no exception — with one accord, reject! Look at these two columns, A. being the passages containing the genealogies, B. the passages on which the rejection of them is based:

A. 1. Genesis xxiv. 32 to xxv. 25 (Births of Jacob's sons). 2. xxxv. 23-26 (Recapitulation of the above). 3. xlvi. 8-27 (List of Jacob and his sons, when they came into Egypt). 4. Ex. vi. 14-27 (Lineage of Aaron and Moses). 5. Numb. xxxvi. 1-2 (Lineage of Zelophehad). 6. Josh. vii. 17-18 (Lineage of Achan). 7. Ruth iv. 18-22 (ditto of David). 8. 1 Chron. ii. 9-15 (ditto). 9. Mat. i. 2-6 (ditto). 10. Luke iii. 32-37 (ditto). 11. Ezra vii. 1-5 (ditto of Ezra).

The lists of Princes, heads of tribes, the spies, the commission to divide conquered Palestine, contain names that can be traced back, and all coincide with the above.

B. 1. Gen. xv. 13. 2. Ex. xii. 40, 41. 3. Acts vii. 6.

These three give the 400 and the 430 years of the supposed bondage of the Bene
Jacob, but are offset by Gen. xv. 16 (four generations) and Gal. iii. 17 (Paul's understanding of the 430 years).

4. The story of Joseph, beginning Gen. xxxvii. 2, gives us the dates in his life; viz., 17 when sold, 30 when he becomes Prime Minister, 40 when his father joins him.

5. 1 Chron. vi. 1-15 (Lineage of Ezra's brother Jehozadak,

abounding in repetitions and worthless).

1. As between the two, the column A. is in my opinion more trustworthy than B.

2. By all the genealogies of the Davidian line we have Judah No. 1, Solomon No. 12. By Ezra's genealogy of his own family we have Levi No. 1, and Azariah (Solomon's High Priest) No. 12. They agree perfectly.

3. If there were 400 years of Hebrew (Bene Jacob) slavery between the death of Joseph and the Exodus, there were 400 - 80 = 320, between Joseph's death and the birth of Moses. If this was so there is no truth in the accounts of Moses and Aaron being the great-grandchildren of Levi (Levi, Kohath, Amram, Aaron and Moses). In fact, if Dr. Robinson be correct in saying that at least six generations are wanting in the genealogies of David (to fill the 400 years) the same must be lacking in all the early genealogies. Reductio ad absurdum!

4. Jacob, a young man, we will say of 40, is sent to Laban for a wife. He remains in Padan Aram twenty years (Gen. xxxi. 38), where all his sons except Benjamin were born, that is, before he was 60. At 130 he joined Joseph in Egypt (Gen. xlvii. 9). Joseph, therefore, born in Padan Aram was now, instead of 40, over 70 years old! That this is so, is certain. In Judah's exquisite pleadings (Gen. xliv. 18-34) he speaks of Benjamin as "the child of Jacob's old age," "a little one," and seven times he calls him "the lad." Benjamin is some years younger than Joseph, but when the migration into Egypt takes place-a few weeks after Judah's speech-Benjamin comes as father of ten sons (Gen. xlvi. 21), but here Bene Benjamin is used in its broad sense of "descendants," for in 1 Chron. vii. 6-12 we find that the "Bene" were sons, grandsons and great-grandsons. To hold that Joseph at 40 had a younger brother who was a great-grandfather, is, of course, utterly absurd.

5. According to Gen. xv. 18, the Exodus was to take place in the fourth generation born in Egypt, as I understand it.

Born in Egypt: —

Levi (father of) Kohath Judah (father of) Pharez
Hezron

1. Amram 1. Ram 2. Aaron 2. Amminadab 3. Eleazar 3. Nahshon 4. Phinees 4. Salma

A conspicuous character in Numbers (xiii. 6, 30; xiv. 24, etc.) is Caleb. In the first chapter of Judges Caleb still appears, and Othniel, the son of his younger brother Kenaz, is the first of the so-called Judges (Jud. iii. 9). This also disposes of the 400 years and confirms the view that the Exodus took place in the fourth generation born in Egypt. Other similar proofs may be omitted — these are amply sufficient.

6. What, then, was the origin of the notion of the 400 years of Hebrew slavery?

If the Egyptian inscriptions and papyri prove anything, it is this: that from the subjugation of Palestine by one of the Thormes down to the great invasion of the hordes from Asia Minor in the reign of Ramses III., that country had never ceased to be a Pharaonic province; that during these four or five centuries every attempt to throw off the yoke had been crushed and its Semitic peoples deported to Egypt as slaves; that multitudes of them joined in the Exodus under Moses, and became incorporated with the Hebrews under the constitution and code adopted at Horeb (=Sinai? or Jebel Araif?). These people became "Seed of Abraham," "Children of Israel," by adoption, to which I have no doubt Paul refers in the "adoption" of Romans viii. 15-23; ix. 4; Gal. iv. 5; Eph. i. 5. In the lapse of ages this distinction between Bene Israel and Bene Jacob was forgotten, and therefore the very uncritical Masorites in their edition of the Old Testament "confounded the confusion" in this matter. With the disappearance of the 400 years and of the supposed two or three centuries covered by the book of Judges, the genealogies stand as facts. The mistake in the case of the Judges is in supposing them to have been consecutive, when, in fact, as the subjugations by neighbouring peoples were local and extended only over one or two tribes, half a dozen of them may have been contemporaneous.

7. Aaron and Moses were by their father Amram, great-grandchildren of Levi- -by their mother his grandchildren (Ex. vi. 20). Joseph lived to see his own great-grandchildren. Moses must have been born before Joseph's death.

8. There is one point determined in which the Hebrew and the

Egyptian chronologies coincide. It is the invasion of Judea by Shishak of Egypt in the fifth year of Rehoboam, son of Solomon (1 Kings xiv. 25). Supposing the Egyptian chronology from the time of Minephtah II. to be in the main correct, as given by Brugsch and others, the thirteen generations, Judah — Rehoboam, allowing three to a century, take us back to just that Minephtah. In his reign, according to Brugsch, Pharaoh sent breadstuffs to the Chittim in "the time of famine." The Hebrew records and traditions connect Joseph's prime ministry with a famine. By the genealogies it could have been only this in the time of Minephtah.

9. The Bene Jacob were but temporary sojourners in Goshen and always intended to return to Canaan. They were independent and had the right to do so. See what Joseph says in Gen. i. 24-25. But before this design was executed came the great irruption of the depopulated all Palestine, in the time of Ramses III. Here was the opportunity for the Bene Jacob to enlarge their plans and to devise the conquest and possession of Palestine. According to Josephus, supported by Stephen (Acts vii. 22), Moses was a man "mighty in works"-a man of military fame. The only reasonable way of understanding the beginning of the Exodus story, is to suppose that, in the weakened condition of Ramses III., the Hebrew princes began to intrigue with the enslaved Semites-the Ruthenu of the Egyptian inscriptions — and this being discovered by the Pharaoh, Moses was compelled to fly. Meantime the intrigues were continued and when the time for action came, under one of Ramses' weak successors, Moses was recalled and took command.

10. This prepares us for the second query, which you proposed, that is as to the numbers who joined in the Exodus.

The Masoretic text, from which the English version of the Hebrew records is made, gives the result of the census at Sinai (=Horeb) as being 603,550 men, "twenty years old and upwards, that were able to go forth to war in Israel"-the tribe of Levi not included. On this basis it has been generally stated, that the number of the Bene Israel at the Exodus was three millions. Of late I find that two millions is the accepted number. The absurdity of even this aggregate is manifest. How could such a vast multitude be subsisted? How kept in order? How compelled to observe sanitary regulations? Moreover, in the then enfeebled state of Egypt, why should 603,550 armed men not have marched out without ceremony? Why ask permission to go to celebrate a sacrifice to their God?

But there is another series of objections to these two millions, which I have never seen stated or even hinted, to which I pray your attention.

The area of Palestine differs little from that of the three American States, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut, the most densely peopled of the Union, containing by the last census a population of somewhat less than two and a half millions.

By the second Hebrew census (Numb. xxvi.) taken just before the death of Moses, the army was 601,730; from which the inference has always been drawn, that at least 2,000,000, in the aggregate, Levites 23,000 males still excepted, entered and possessed the conquered territories.

Take now one of the late maps of Palestine and mark upon it the boundaries of the tribes as given in the book of Joshua. This second census gives the number of each tribal army to be inserted in each tribal territory. Reuben, 43,750; Judah, 76,500; Benjamin, 45,600, etc., etc. By Josh. xii. the land was then divided between some 40 petty kings and peoples, 31 of whom are named as having been subjected. If, now, Joshua's army numbered over 600,000, why was not the conquest made complete? Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut are divided into 27 counties. Suppose, now, that these counties were each a separate and independent little kingdom dependent upon itself for defence, what resistance could be made to an army of 600,000 men, all of them grown up during forty years of life in a camp, and in the full vigour of manhood? And yet Joshua was unable to complete his conquest! Again, the first subjugation of a part of the newly-conquered territory as noted in the book of Judges, was Judah and Simeon by a king of Edom.[232] If Judah could put an army into the field of 76,500, and Simeon 22,500, their subjugation by a king of Edom is incredible, and the story absurd. Next comes King Eglon of Moab and subjugates the tribes of Reuben and Gad, east of the Dead Sea and the Jordan. And yet Reuben has an army of over 43,000, and Gad 45,000. And so on.

With an army of 60,000 only, and an aggregate of half a million of people led out of Egypt, all the history becomes instantly rational and trustworthy.

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There remains one more bubble to be exploded.

Look at these figures, in which a quadruple increase — at least 25 per centum too great — is granted.[233]

1st Generation, the Patriarchs, in number. . . . . 12 2nd Generation, Kohath, Pharez, etc. . . . .48 3rd Generation, Amram, Hezron, etc.. . . . . .192 4th Generation, Aaron and Moses. . . . . .768 Aggregate . . . . .1,020 Minus 25 per cent. for deaths, children, etc.. . . . . .255 Actual number of Bene Jacob. 765

But Jacob and his sons brought with them herdsmen, shepherds, servants, etc.

Bunsen puts the number of all, masters and men, at less than 2,000.

Let the proportion in this case be one able-bodied man in four persons, and the increase triple.

1st Generation, the Patriarchs, in number. . . . . .500 2nd Generation, Kohath, Pharez, etc. . . . . .1,500 3rd Generation, Amram, Hezron, etc.. . . . . .4,500 4th Generation, Aaron and Moses. . . . . 13,500 20,000 Minus 25 per centum as above . . . . .5,000 15,000 Add the real Bene Jacob. 765

Aggregate. 15,765

Were these people, while Joseph is still alive, the subjects of slavery as described in Ex. i.? Did they build Pithom and Ramses, store-cities?

The number is sufficient to lead in the great enterprise and to control the mixed multitude which was at Sinai, adopted as "Bene Israel," "Seed of Abraham," and divided among and incorporated with the tribes; but not sufficient to warrant the supposition that with so small a force the Hebrew leaders could for a moment have entertained the project of conquering Palestine.

A word more on the statement in Ex. i. 11: "And they built for Pharaoh store-cities, Pithom and Ramses." All Egyptologists agree that these cities were built by Ramses II., or certainly not later than his reign. If the Hebrew genealogies are authentic, this was long before the coming of Jacob and his sons into Egypt.

(Signed) A.W. Thayer

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THE TALE OF THE WARLOCK AND THE YOUNG COOK OF BAGHDAD.

Here we begin with the aidance of Allah Almighty, the Tale of the Warlock and the Young Cook of Baghdad.[234]

It is related (and Allah is All knowing!) of a certain man which was a Warlock, that Destiny crave him from town to town until at last he entered Baghdad city and dismounted at a Khán of the Khans where he spent the night of arrival. Then, rising betimes next morning, he walked about the highways and wandered around the lanes and he stinted not passing from market street to market street, solacing himself with a sight of many places, till he reached the Long Bazar, whence he could descry the whole site of the city. Now he narrowly considered the land, and, lo and behold! it was a capital sans peer amongst the cities, where-through coursed the Dajlah River blended with the River Furát[235] and over the united stream were thrown seven bridges of boats; all these were bound one to other for the folk to pass over on their several pursuits, especially for the pleasure seekers who fared forth to the palm orchards and the vergiers abounding in fruits while the birds were hymning Allah, the Sole, the All-conquering. Now one day as this Warlock was amusing himself amongst the markets he passed by the shop of a Cook before whom were set for sale dressed meats of all kinds and colours;[236] and, looking at the youth, he saw that he was rising fourteen and beautiful as the moon on the fourteenth night; and he was elegant and habited in a habit as it had just come from the tailor's hand for its purity and excellent fit, and one had said that he (the artisan) had laboured hard thereat, for the sheen of it shimmered like unto silver.[237] Then the Warlock considering the face of this Cook saw his colour wan as the hue of metal leaves[238] and he was lean of limb;[239] so he took station facing him and said to him, "The Peace be upon thee, O my brother," and said the other in reply, "And upon thee be The Peace and the Truth of Allah and His blessings: so well come to thee and welcome and fair welcome. Honour me, O my lord, by suffering me to serve thee with the noonday meal." Hereat the

Wizard entered the shop and the Kitchener took up two or three platters white as the whitest silver; and, turning over into each one a different kind of meat set them between the hands of the stranger who said to him, “Seat thee, O my son.” And when his bidding was obeyed he added, “I see thee ailing and thy complexion is yellow exceedingly: what be this hath affected thee and what is thy disorder and what limb of thy limbs paineth thee and is it long since thou art in such case?” Now when the Cook heard this say he drew a sigh of regret from the depths of his heart and the soles of his feet and quoth he weeping, “Allah upon thee, O my lord, remind me not of that hath betided me!” But quoth the other, “Tell me what may be thy disease and whereof cost thou complain; nor conceal from me thy pain; for that I am a physician and by aidance of Allah an experienced; and I have a medicine for thy malady.” Hereat the youth fell to moaning and groaning and presently replied, “In very sooth, O my lord, I have nor pain nor complaint, save that I am a lover.” The Warlock asked, “Art thou indeed a lover?” whereto the Cook make answer, “And not only a lover but a lover parted from his beloved.” “On whom hangeth thy heart, say me?” continued the Mediciner and the youth replied, “Leave me for the nonce till such time as I am quit of my business, and return to me about mid-afternoon, that I may inform thee of mine affair and acquaint thee with the case I am in.” The Warlock rejoined, “Arise now to thy work lest it be miswrought by loitering;” and so saying he ate whatso of meats had been served up to him and fared forth to thread the Bazars of Baghdad and solace himself by seeing the city. But when it was the hour of Al ‘Asr — the mid afternoon prayer — he went back to the Cook and found that by this time he had wrought all his work, and as soon as the youth sighted him he rejoiced in him and his spirits were cheered and he said in his mind, “Haply joy shall come to me from the healing hand of this Mediciner;” so he shut his shop and taking with him his customer tried him to his own home. Now this young Kitchener was of amplest means which he had inherited from either parent; so as soon as they entered his quarters he served up food and the two ate and drank and were gladdened and comforted. After this quoth the guest to his host, “Now relate to me the manner of thy story and what is the cause of thy disorder?” “O my lord,” quoth the youth, “I must inform thee that the Caliph Al-Mu'tazid bi'llah,[240] the Commander of the Faithful, hath a daughter fair of favour, and gracious of gesture; beautiful delightsome and dainty of waist and flank, a maiden in whom all the signs and signals of loveliness are present, and the tout ensemble is independent of description: seer never saw her like and relator never related of aught that eveneth her in stature and seemlihead and graceful bearing of head. Now albeit a store of suitors galore, the grandees and the Kings, asked her from the Caliph, her sire refused to part with her, nor gave her neither would he give her to any one thereof. And every Friday when fare the folk to the Mosques that they pray the prayers of meeting-day, all the merchants and men who buy and sell and the very artisans and what not, leave their shops and warehouses[241] and taverns[242] unbolted and wide open and flock to congregational devotions. And at such time this rare maiden cometh down from her palace and solaceth herself with beholding the Bazars and anon she entereth the Hammam and batheth therein and straightway goeth forth and fareth homewards. But one Friday said I to myself, 'I will not go to the Mosque, for I would fain look upon her with a single look;' and when prayer- time came and the folk flocked to the fane for divine service, I hid myself within my shop Presently that august damsel appeared with a comitive of forty handmaidens all as full moons newly risen and each fairer than her fellows, while she amiddlemost rained light upon them as she were the irradiating sun; and the bondswomen would have kept her from sight by thronging around her and they carried her skirts by means of bent rods[243] golden and silvern. I looked at her but one look when straightway my heart fell in love to her burning as a live coal and from mine eyes tears railed and until now I am still in that same yearning, and what yearning!" And so saying the youth cried out with an outcry whereby his soul was like to leave his body. "Is this case still thy case?" asked the Warlock, and the youth answered, "Yes, O my lord;" when the other enquired, "An I bring thee and her together what wilt thou give me?" and the young Cook replied, "My money and my life which shall be between thy hands!" Hereupon quoth the Mediciner, "Up with thee and bring me a phial of metal and seven needles and a piece of fresh Lign-aloes;[244] also a bit of cooked meat,[245] and somewhat of sealing-clay and the shoulder-blade of a sheep together with felt and sendal of seven kinds.” The youth fared forth and did his bidding, when the Sage took the shoulder-blades and wrote upon them Koranic versets and adjurations which would please the Lord of the Heavens and, wrapping them in felt, swathed them with silken stuff of sevenfold sorts. Then, taking the phial he thrust the seven needles into the green Lign-aloes and set it in the cooked meat which he made fast with the sealing clay. Lastly he conjured over these objects with a Conjuration[246] which was, “I have knocked, I have knocked at the hall doors of Earth to summon the Jánn, and the Jánn have knocked for the Jánn against the Shaytán.” Hereat appeared to me the son of Al bin Imrán[247] with a snake and baldrick’d with a basilisk and cried, “Who be this trader and son of a slave-girl who hath knocked at the ground for us this evening?” “Then do thou, O youth, reply, ‘I am a lover and of age youthful and my love is to a young lady; and unto your gramarye I have had recourse, O folk of manliness and generosity and masterful deeds: so work ye with me and confirm mine affair and aid me in this matter. See ye not how Such an one, daughter of Such an one, oppression and wrong to me hath done, nor is she with me in affection as she was anon?’ They shall answer thee, ‘Let it be, as is said, in the tail;’[248] then do thou set the objects upon a fire exceeding fierce and recite then over them, ‘This be the business; and were Such-an- one, daughter of Such-an-one, within the well of Káshán[249] or in the city Ispahan or in the towns of men who with cloaks buttoned tight and ever ready good fame to blight,[250] let her come forth and seek union with the beloved.’ Whereto she will reply ‘Thou art the lord and I am the bondswoman.’ “ Now the youth abode marvelling at such marvel-forms and the Warlock having repeated to him these words three times, turned to him and said “Arise to thy feet and perfume and fumigate thy person and don thy choicest dress and dispread thy bed, for at this very hour thou shalt see thy mistress by thy side.” And so saying the Sage cast out of hand the shoulder-blades and set the phial upon the fire. Thereupon the youth arose without stay or delay and bringing a bundle of raiment the rarest, he spread it and habited himself, doing whatso the Wizard had bidden him; withal could he not believe that his mistress would appear. However ere a scanty space of time had elapsed, lo and behold! the young lady bearing her bedding[251] and still sleeping passed through the house door and she was bright and beautiful as the easting sun. But when the youth the Cook sighted her, he was perplex" and his wits took flight with his sense and he cried aloud saying, "This be naught save a wondrous matter!" "And the same," quoth the Sage, "is that requiredst thou." Quoth the Cook, "And thou, O my lord art of the Hallows of Allah," and kissed his hand and thanked him for his kindly deed. "Up with thee and take thy pleasure," cried the Warlock; so the lover crept under the coverlet into the bed and he threw his arms round the fair one and kissed her between the eyes; after which he bussed her on the mouth. She sensed a sensation in herself and straightway awaking opened her eyes and beheld a youth embracing her, so she asked him, "Ho thou, who art thou?" Answered he, "One by thine eyes a captive ta'en and of thy love the slain and of none save thyself the fain." Hereat she looked at him with a look which her heart for love longing struck and again asked him, "O my beloved; say me then, who art thou, a being of mankind or of Jánn-kind?" whereto he answered, "I am human and of the most honourable." She resumed, "Then who was it brought me hither to thee?" and he responded, "The Angels and the Spirits, the Jinns and the Jann." "Then I swear thee, O my dearling," quoth she, "that thou bid them bear me hither to thine arms every night," and quoth he, "Hearkening and obeying, O my lady, and for me also this be the bourne of all wishes." Then, each having kissed other, they slept in mutual embrace until dawn. But when the morning morrowed and showed its sheen and shone, behold, the Warlock appeared and, calling the youth who came to him with a smiling face, said to him, "How was it with thy soul this night?"[252] and both lovers cried, "We were in the Garden of Paradise together with the Hur and Ghilman:[253] Allah requite thee for us with all weal." Then they passed into the Hammam and when they had bathed, the youth said, "O my lord, what shall we do with the young lady and how shall she hie to her household and what shall be the case of me without her?" "Feel no grief," said the other, "and quit all care of anything: e'en as she came so shall she go; nor shall any of Almighty Allah's creatures know aught of her." Hereat the Sage dismissed her by the means which conveyed her, nor did she cease to bear her bedding with her every night and to visit the youth with all joyance and delight. Now after a few weeks had gone by, this young lady happening to be upon the terrace roof of her palace in company with her mother, turned her back to the sun, and when the heat struck her between the shoulders her belly swelled; so her parent asked her, “O my daughter, what hast thou that thou justest out after this wise?” “I wot naught thereof,” answered she; so the mother put forth her hand to the belly of her child and found her pregnant; whereupon she screamed and buffeted her face and asked, “Whence did this befal thee?” The women- attendants all heard her cries and running up to her enquired, “What hath caused thee, O our lady, such case as this?” whereto she replied, “I would bespeak the Caliph.” So the women sought him and said, “O our lord, thou art wanted by our lady;” and he did their bidding and went to his wife, but at first sight he noted the condition of his daughter and asked her, “What is to do with thee and what hath brought on thee such calamity?” Hereupon the Princess told him how it was with her and he exclaimed as he heard it, “O my daughter, I am the Caliph and Commander of the Faithful, and thou hast been sought to wife of me by the Kings of the earth one and all, but thou didst not accept them as connections and now thou doest such deed as this! I swear the most binding oaths and I vow by the tombs of my sires and my grandsires, an thou say me sooth thou shalt be saved; but unless thou tell me truth concerning whatso befel thee and from whom came this affair and the quality of the man’s intention thee- wards, I will slaughter thee and under earth I will sepulchre thee.” Now when the Princess heard from her father’s mouth these words and had pondered this swear he had sworn she replied, “O my sire, albeit lying may save yet is truth-telling the more saving side. Verily, O my father, ’tis some time before this day that my bed beareth me up every night and carrieth me to a house of the houses wherein dwelleth a youth, a model of beauty and loveliness, who causeth every seer to languish; and he beddeth with me and sleepeth by my side until dawn, when my couch uplifteth me and returneth with me to the Palace: nor wot I the manner of my going and the mode of my coming is alike unknown to me.” The Caliph hearing these her words marvelled at this her tale with exceeding marvel and fell into the uttermost of wonderment, but bethinking him of his Wazir, a man of penetrative wit, sagacious, astute, argute exceedingly, he summoned him to the presence and acquainted him as soon as he came with this affair and what had befallen his daughter; to wit, how she was borne away in her bed without knowing whither or aught else. Quoth the Minister after taking thought for a full told hour, "O Caliph of the Time and the Age, I have a device by whose virtue I do opine we shall arrive at the stead whither wendeth the Princess;" and quoth the Caliph "What may be this device of thine?" "Bid bring me a bag;" rejoined the Wazir, "which I will let fill with millet;"[254] so they brought him one and he after stuffing the same with grain set it upon the girl's bed and close to her where lay her head, leaving the mouth open to the intent that when during the coming night her couch might be carried away, the millet in going and returning might be shed upon the path. "Allah bless thee, Ho thou the Wazir!" cried the Caliph: "this device of thine is passing good and fair fall it for a sleight than which naught can be slyer and good luck to it for a proof than which naught can be better proven." Now as soon as it was even-tide, the couch was carried off as had happened every night and the grain was strown broad cast upon the path, like a stream, from the gateway of the Palace to the door of the young Cook's lodging, wherein the Princess righted as was her wont until dawn of day. And when morn appeared the Sage came and carried off with him the youth to the Hammam where he found privacy and said to him, "O my son, an thou ask me aught touching thy mistress's kith and kin, I bid thee know that they have indeed discovered her condition and against thee they have devised a device." Exclaimed the youth, "Verily we are Allah's and unto Him are we returning! What may be thy rede in this affair? An they slay me I shall be a martyr on Allah's path;[255] but do thou wend thy ways and save thyself and may the Almighty requite thee with all of welfare; thee, through whom mine every wish I have won, and the whole of my designs I have fulfilled; after which let them do with me as they desire." The Warlock replied, "O my son, grieve not neither fear, for naught shall befal thee of harm, and I purpose to show thee marvels and miracles wroughten upon them." When the youth heard these words his spirits were cheered, and joying with joy exceeding he replied, "Almighty Allah reward thee for me with fullest welfare!"

Then the twain went forth the Hammam and tried them home. But as soon as morning morrowed, the Wazir repaired to the Caliph; and, both going to the Princess together, found her in her bower and the bag upon her bed clean empty of millet, at sight of which the Minister exclaimed, “Now indeed we have caught our debtor. Up with us and to horse, O Caliph of the Age, and sum and substance of the Time and the Tide, and follow we the millet and track its trail.” The Com mender of the Faithful forthright gave orders to mount, and the twain, escorted by their host, rode forth on the traces of the grain till they drew near the house, when the youth heard the jingle and jangle[256] of horses’ tramp and the wrangle and cangle of men’s outcries. Upon this said the Cook to the Warlock, “Here they draw near to seize me, O my lord, what is there now for me to do?” and said the other, “Rise and fill me an ewer with water then mount therewith to the terrace-roof and pour the contents round and about the house, after which come down to me.” The youth did his bidding, and meanwhile the Caliph and the Wazir and the soldiery had approached the house when, lo and behold! the site had become an island amiddlemost a main dashing with clashing billows.[257] But when the Commander of the Faithful sighted this sea, he was perplexed with mighty great perplexity and enquired of the Wazir, “At what time did such great water appear in this place?” The Minister replied, “I never knew that here was any stream, albe well I wot that the Tigris river floweth amiddlemost the capital; but this is a magical current.” So saying he bade the soldiery urge their horses into the water sans fear, and every one crave as he had directed until all who entered lost their lives and a many of men were drowned. Hereupon cried the Prince of True Believers, “O Wazir, we are about to destroy our host and to fare with them!” and cried the other, “How shall we act, O Caliph of the Age? Haply our first, nay our best way, is to ask help of those within the house and grant to them indemnity while they exchange words with us and we see anon what will come of their affair.” “Do as beseemeth thee,” answered the Prince of True Believers; whereupon the Minister commanded his men to cry aloud upon the household and they sued for help during a length of time. But the Sage, hearing their shouts, said to the youth, “Arise and go up to the terrace and say to the Caliph of the Age, ‘Thou art in safety;

turn away thy steps hence and presently we will meet thy Highness in health and weal; otherwise[258] thy daughter shall be lost and thine army shall be destroyed, and thou, O Commander of the Faithful, wilt depart and return as one outdriven. Do thou wend thy ways: this be not the mode of meeting us and in such manner there is no management.' " The Cook did as he was bidden, and when the twain heard his words, quoth the Wazir to the Caliph, "Verily these be naught save Magicians, otherwise they must be of the fulsomest of the Jann, for indeed never heard we nor saw we aught of this." Hereupon the Prince of True Believers turned his back upon the place and he sorrowful and strait of breast and disheartened of heart; so he went down to his Palace and sat there for a full-told hour when behold, the Warlock and the Cook appeared before him. But as soon as they stood in the presence the Caliph cried out, "O Linkman, bring me the head of yonder youth from between his shoulders!" Hereupon the Executioner came forward and tearing a strip off the youth's robe-skirt bandaged his eyes; then he walked thrice round about him brandishing his blade over the victim's head and lastly cried, "O Caliph of the Age, shall I make away with this youth?" Answered the Caliph, "Yes, after thou shalt have stricken off his head." Hearing this the Sworder raised his hand and smote, when suddenly his grip was turned backwards upon a familiar of his who stood beside him, and it lighted upon his neck with such force that his head hew off and fell at the Caliph's feet. The King and the Wazir, were perplexed at this affair, and the former cried out, "What be this? Art gone blind, O Bhang eater, that thy stroke hath missed the mark and thou hast not known thy familiar from this youth who kneeleth before thee? Smite him without delay!" Hereupon the Linkman again raised his hand to obey his lord, but the blow fell upon the neck of his varlet and the head flew off and rolled at the feet of the Caliph and his Chief Councillor. At this second mishap the wits of all present were bewildered and the King cried, "What business is this, O Wazir, whereto the other made answer, "O Caliph of the Time and rare gift of the Age and the Tide, what canst thou do, O my lord, with such as these? And whoso availeth to take away o' nights thy daughter upon her bed and dispread a sea around his house, the same also hath power to tear thy kingdom from thy grasp; nay more, to practice upon thy life. Now ’tis my rede that thou rise and kiss the hand of this Sage and sue his protection,[259] lest he work upon us worse than this. Believe me, ‘twere better for thee, O my lord, to do as I bid thee and thus ‘twill be well for us rather than to rise up as adversaries of this man.” Hearing such words from his Minister, the King bade them raise the youth from the strip of blood-rug and remove the bandage from before his eyes, after which he rose to his feet, and, kissing the Warlock’s hand, said to him, “In very sooth we knew thee not nor were we ware of the measure of thine excellence. But, O teacher of the Time and sum and substance of revolving Tide, why hast thou wrought to me on this wise in the matter of my daughter and destroyed my servants and soldiers?” “O Viceregent of Allah upon His Earth,” replied the Sage, “I am a stranger, and having eaten bread and salt with this youth, I formed friendship and familiarity with him: then, seeing his case which was sad and his state which was marvellous as it had afflicted him with sickness, I took compassion upon him; moreover I designed to show you all what I am and what Almighty Allah hath taught me of occult knowledge. Hitherto there hath been naught save weal, and now I desire of thy favour that thou marry thy daughter to this youth, my familiar, for that she suiteth none other save himself.” Quoth the Caliph, “This proceeding I look upon as the fittest and it besitteth us that we obey thy bidding.” Presently he robed the youth with a sumptuous robe worth the kingdom of a King, and commanded him to sit beside the presence and seated the Sage upon a chair of ebony-wood. Now whilst they were in converse the Warlock turned round and beheld arear of the Caliph a hanging of sendal whereupon stood figured lions twain: so he signed with his hand to these forms which were mighty huge of limb and awesome to look upon, when each put forth his paw upon his fellow and both roared with roars like unto the bellow of ear-rending thunder. Hereat all present were perplex in the extreme and were in admiration at that matter and especially the Prince of True Believers who cried, “O Wazir what seest thou in this business?” The Wazir replied, “O Caliph of the Age, verily Allah Almighty to thee hath sent this Sage that He[260] might show thee such marvels as these.” Then the Warlock signalled with his hand to the lions which shrank till they became as cats which carried on the combat; and both Caliph and Wazir wondered thereat with excessive wonderment. Anon quoth the King to the Minister, "Bid the Sage display to us more of his marvels;" and accordingly the Wazir obeyed his lord's be hest, and the Warlock replied, "To hear is to obey." He then said, "Bring hither to me a chauldron full of water;" and when it was brought he asked the Courtiers, "Which of you would divert himself?" "I," quoth the Wazir; when quoth the Sage, "Do thou rise to thy feet and doff thy robes and gird thee with a zone:" whereto said the other, "Bring me a waistcloth;" and when it was brought he did therewith as he was bidden. Hereat said the Warlock, "Seat thee in the centre of the chauldron;" so he plunged into the water, but when he would have seated him amiddlemost thereof as ordered he saw only that he had entered a sea dashing with surges clashing wherein whoso goeth is lost to view, and whence whoso cometh is born anew; and he fell to swimming from side to side intending to issue forth, while the waves suffered him not to make the shore. And while he was in this case behold, a billow of the billows vomited[261] him up from the sea to the strand and he stood on dry land, when he surveyed his person and suddenly saw that he had become a woman with the breasts of a woman and the solution of continuity like a woman, and long black hair flowing down to his heels even as a woman's. Then said he to himself, "O ill- omened diversion! What have I done with such unlucky disport that I have looked upon this marvel and wonder of wonderments, only to become a woman.[262] Verily we are Allah's, and unto Him shall we return;" adding as he took thought of the matter and of what had befallen him, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great." Presently a Fisherman approached him and sighting a fair girl said, "This be none other than a blessed day which Allah hath opened to us with a beautiful maiden for quarry; and she is doubtless of the Daughters of the Deep, whom Allah Almighty hath sent to us that I may espouse her to my son." Hearing these words said the transformed to himself, "Now after being a Wazir I have become a woman and this be for that as tit for tat,[263] and the wight furthermore desireth to see me married, and as for the Caliph and the kingdom and the countries, who shall now be able to offer them counsel?" But the Fisherman who for his joyance had no stomach to ply his pursuit, as was his custom, forthwith arose and taking with him the Daughter of the Deep led her to his house, and on entering the door cried aloud to his wife, “This day hath been a lucky for my fishing craft: during all these years it never befel me to happen upon a Mermaid save on this best-omened of all the days,ö adding, “Where is thy son, to whom Allah hath sent this Daughter of the Daughters of the Main; and hath made her his portion and vouchsafed her to his service? for ’tis my design to marry them.” Replied the woman, “He hath taken the beasts and hath fared forth to pasture it and plough therewith; but right soon will he return.[264] And whilst they were thus conversing the youth came forward, and the Wazir on sighting him groaned and cried, Well-away for me! this very night I shall become a bride for this blamed lad[265] to sleep withal. And if I say to them, ‘What intent have ye? Ye are in meanness and misery[266] while I am Wazir to the Caliph;’ they will never believe me for that I have become a woman, and all thereto appertaining now belongeth to me. Alack and alas for that I did with mine own self; indeed what business had I with such diversion?” Hereupon the fisherman called out, “O my son, up with thee and straightway take this Mermaid and marry her and abate her pucelage and be blessed with her and enjoy thy joy with her during all the days of thy life-tide: doubtless, O my child, thou art in all boon fortune, seeing that what good befel thee never betided any before thee nor will become the lot of one after thee.” So the youth arose and for his delight hardly believing in his conquest, married her and lay with her and did away her maidenhead and on that very night she conceived by him. After nine months she bare him issue and the couple ceased not to be after this fashion till she had become a mother of seven. But the Wazir, of his stress and excess of the trouble and the travail he endured, said to himself, “How long shall last this toil and torment wherewith I am liver-smitten and that too by mine own consent? So e’en will I arise and hie me to this sea and hurl me thereinto and whatso shall become of me let it be: haply I may find rest from these torments into which I have fallen.” And forthright he arose and sought the shore and did as he had devised, when a wave enveloped him and cast him deep into the depths and he was like to choke, when suddenly his head protruded from the chauldron and he was seated as before he had ducked it. Hereupon he saw the Caliph sitting in state with the Sage by his side and all the Lords of the land and the Notables of the commons awaiting the end of his adventure. So he gazed at them and showed a smiling face[267] and laughed aloud when the Prince of True Believers asked him saying, "What hast thou seen, O Wazir?" So he repeated to the Sovran all he had sighted and everything that had come down upon his head, presently adding, "O Caliph of the Age and the sum and sub stance of the Time and the Tide, what be these marvels wrought by this Sage? Verily I have beheld the garths of Paradise[268] with maidens of the Húr and the youths of Heaven, and wonderments galore unlooked upon by mankind at all, at all. But, an thou be pleased, O Commander of the Faithful, to espy these rare spectacles and marvellous conditions with thine own eyes, deign go down into the water; so shalt thou divert thyself with peregrine matters and adventures seld-seen." The Sultan, delighted at this rede, arose and doffed his dress; then, girding his loins with a zone, he entered the chauldron whereat the Sage cried out to him, "O my lord, sit thee down and duck thy head." But when this was done the Caliph found himself in a bottomless sea and wide dispread and never at rest by any manner of means, so he fell to swimming therein, when a huge breaker threw him high ashore and he walked up the beach mother-naked save for his zone. So he said in his mind, "Let me see what hath been wrought with me by the Sage and the Wazir who have thus practiced upon me and have cast me in this place; and haply they have married my daughter to the youth, and they have stolen my kingdom, the Sage becoming Sultan in my stead. And now let me ask myself, 'What had I to do with such damned diversion as this?'" But as he brooded over these thoughts and the like of them behold, a bevy of maidens came forwards to fill their pitchers from a fountain and a pool of sweet water lying beside the sea; and sighting him they exclaimed, "Thou, who art thou? say sooth be thou of man-kind or rather haply of Jinn-kind?" He replied, "I am a mortal and of the noblest-born; withal I am a stranger in the land and I wot not whither I should wend." "Of what country art thou?" asked they, and he answered, "I am from Baghdad." "Up with thee," quoth one of the damsels, "to yonder knoll, then down to the flat on the further side, and thou shalt sight a city whose name is

‘Omán,[269] whereinto do thou enter.” The Caliph did her bidding, and no sooner had the people seen him stripped than they said one to other, “This man is a merchant who hath been shipwrecked;” so they gave him by way of almsgift a Tobe[270] all tattered and torn wherewith he veiled his shame. And after so doing he fell to wandering about the city for pastime, and while walking about he passed into a Bazar and there sighted a cook, before whom he stood open mouthed (for indeed famine had thinned him), and he bethought him of what to do, and he knew not how to act. However the cook at first sight was certified of his being a foreigner, and haply a shipwrecked mariner so he asked him, “O my brother, why cost thou not come in and sit thee down, for thou art a stranger and without means; so in the way of Allah I would engage thy services and will pay thee daily two dirhams to provide thee with meat and drink.” Answered the Caliph, “Hearing and obeying,” after which he abode with the cook and served him and stinted not to serve him for a long time, saying in himself the while, “This for that is tit for tat! and after the Caliphate and commandment and happiness and honour, this day art thou left to lick the platters. What had I to do with such diversion as this? Withal ’tis fairer than the spectacle that anyone even my Wazir ever saw and the more excellent, for that I after being the Caliph of the Age, and the choice gift of the Time and Tide have now become the hireling of a cook. Would to Heaven I wot the sin which brought me hereto?”[271] Now as he abode with the cook it befel him that one day he threaded the Jewellers’ Bazar; for about that city was a sea-site whereinto the duckers and divers went down and whence they brought up pearls and corals and precious stones; and as he stood in the market-place, quoth he to himself, “Let me here become a broker in this market street and find rest from my groaning in labour and my licking of platters.” As soon as morning morrowed he did on such wise, when suddenly a merchant approached him, hending in hand a costly gem whose light burned like a lamp or rather like a ray of sunshine, and ’twas worth the tribute of Egypt and Syria. Hereat the Caliph marvelled with exceeding marvel, and quoth he to the trader, “Say me, wilt thou sell this jewel?” and quoth the other, “Yes.” So the Sultan taking it from him went about with it amongst the merchants, who seeing and considering it, wondered greatly at its beauty. Accordingly they bid for it fifty thousand diners, but the royal broker ceased not to bear it about and the buyers to increase their biddings till they offered an hundred thousand gold pieces. Thereupon the Caliph returned with it to the owner and accosted him saying, “Wilt thou sell it for the sum named?” and when the merchant consented, he continued, “I now go to receive its price, wherewith I will come back to thee.” Then the broker went up to the buyer and said, “Bring hither its value and set it in my hand;” but the man asked him, “Where be its owner?” and the Caliph answered, “Its owner hath commissioned me to receive its price, after which he will come and recover the same from me.” However the bidder retorted, “This be not fitting nor is it according to Holy Law: do thou bring me its owner; then come and let him pouch the price, for ’tis he hath sold it to me and thou art only our agent.” Hereupon the Caliph went forth to seek the proprietor and wandered about a long while without finding him; after which he again accosted the purchaser, and said to him, “I am the rightful proprietor: place the price in my hand.” The buyer arose to pay his debt, but before so doing he considered the jewel and saw that it was a bit of dark Sandarach;[272] whereat he was sore perplex” and cried out to the Caliph, “O Satan, cost thou palm off false wares, the market-place of the merchants being under the orders of the Sultan?” But when the traders heard these words, they flocked around the pretended broker and having seized him they pinioned his elbows and dragged him before the Sovran of that city who, when they set the prisoner before him, asked, “What be the offence of this man?” “O our honoured lord,” answered they, “this wight palmeth off false wares and swindleth the traders in the royal Bazar.” So the King commanded them to hang him, whereat they charged his neck with chains and bared his head, and bade the cryer cry, “This be his award and the least of awards who forgeth counterfeits and who tricketh the merchant folk in the market-place of the Sultan.” Hereat quoth the Caliph to himself, “I was not content with platter licking, which now appeareth to me a mighty pleasant calling but e’en I must become a broker and die sus. per coll. This be for that tit for tat; how ever, scant blame to the Time which hath charged me with this work.” Now when they brought him to the hanging place and threw the loop around his neck and fell to hoisting him up, as he rose from the ground his eyes were opened and he found himself emerging from the chauldron, whilst the Wazir and the Sage and the youth were sitting and considering him. And the Minister catching sight of his lord sprang to his feet and kissed ground before him, and laughed aloud, and the Commander of the Faithful asked him, “Why this laughter?” Answered he, “O thou, the Prince of True Believers and God- guarded Sovran, my laughter and my gladness are for myself, seeing that I have recovered my identity after becoming a woman and being wedded to a ploughman, who eared the ground, and after bearing to him seven babes.” Cried the Caliph, “Woe to thee, O dog, O son of a dog, thou west married and rejoicedst in children, whereas I this very moment from the hanging-place have come down.” Then he informed the Wazir of all that had befallen him and the Minister did on like guise, whereat all those present laughed consumedly and marvelled at the words of the Warlock, and his proficiency in occult knowledge. Then the Kazi and witnesses were summoned with their writing gear and were bidden draw up the marriage-contract of the young Cook and the Caliph’s daughter. After this the Sage sojourned with the Commander of the Faithful in highmost degree and most honourable dignity, and they abode eating and drinking and living the most delectable of lives and the most enjoyable with all manner of joy and jollity, till came to them the Destroyer of delights and the Divider of man’s days and they departed life one and all.

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THE PLEASANT HISTORY OF THE COCK AND THE FOX.

Here we begin to indite the pleasant History which beset between the Cock and the Fox.[273]

It is said that there abode in such a village a man which was a Shaykh of long standing, one gifted with fair rede and right understanding. Now he had on his farm a plenty of poultry, male and female, and these he was wont to breed and to eat of their eggs and their chickens. But amongst his cocks was a Chanticleer, well advanced of age and wily of wit, who had long fought with Fortune and who had become wise and ware in worldly matters and in the turns and shifts of Time. It fortuned one day that this Cock went forth to wander about the farm-lands pecking and picking up as he went such grains of wheat and barley and holcus[274] and sesame and millet as chanced fall in his way; but, being careless of himself, he had left the village afar off without thinking of what he did, and ere he took counsel with himself he found him amiddlemost the wilderness. So he turned him rightwards and leftwards but espied nor friend nor familiar, whereat he stood perplext as to his affair and his breast was straitened and still he knew not what to do. Now while thus bewildered in his wits touching his next step, behold, his glance fell upon a Fox[275] who was approaching him from afar, whereat he feared and trembled and was agitated with mighty great agitation. At once he turned him about and presently espied a high wall arising from the waste, whereto was no place of ascending for his foe; so he spread his wings and flew up and perched upon the coping where he took his station. Presently the Fox came forward to the foot of the wall, and, finding no means of climbing it and getting at the fowl, he raised his head and said, “The Peace be upon thee, Ho thou the soothfast brother and suitable friend!” But as the Cock would not turn towards him nor return aught of reply to his salutation, the Fox resumed, “What is to do with thee, O dear my brother, that my greeting thou acknowledgest not and to my words inclinest thee not?” Still the Cock requited not his courtesy and declined to reply, whereat the Fox resumed, “Wottest thou not, O my brother, the glad tidings wherewith I came theewards, with what suitable intelligence and counsel veridical and information at once sincere and self-evident? and, didst know what it is hath come to mine ears, verily thou hadst embraced me and kissed me on the mouth.” But the Cock feigned absence of mind and ignored him and answered him naught, but stood with rounded eyes and fixed upon the far when the Fox resumed, “O my brother, the King of the Beasts which be the Lion and the King of the Birds which be the Eagle have alighted from a journey upon the meads where grass is a-growing and by the marge where waters are a-flowing and blossoms are a- blowing and browsing gazelles are a-to-ing and a-fro-ing; and the twain have gathered together all manner of ferals, lions and hyenas, leopards and lynxes, wild cattle and antelopes and jackals and even hares, brief, all the wild beasts of the world; and they have also collected every kind of bird, eagle and vulture, crow and raven,[276] wild pigeon and turtledove, poultry and fowls and Katás and quails[277] and other small deer, and these two liege lords have bidden the herald proclaim, throughout the tracts of the upland wold and the wild lowland, safety and security and confraternity and peace with honour and sympathy and familiar friendship and affection and love amongst wild beasts and cattle and birds; also that enmity be done away with and wrongs be forbidden nor might one transgress against other; nay, if any chance to injure his fellow this offence might be for his scourging a reason, and for his death by tearing to pieces a justification. The order hath also come forth that all do feed and browse in one place whichever they please, never venturing to break the peace but dwelling in all amity and affection and intimacy one with other. Moreover they have commissioned me, very me, to overroam the wastes and gladden with good tidings the peoples of the wilds and proclaim that one and all without exception must assemble together, and also that whoso delayeth or refuseth obedience shall not escape punishment[278] nor let each and every fail to make act of presence and to kiss hands. And of thee, O my brother, I especially require that thou descend from thy high stead in safety and security and satisfaction, and that henceforward thy heart be not startled nor thy limbs shake for fear.” All this description was described by the Fox to the Cock who paid no heed to him as though he had never heard the news; and he remained silent without return of reply or without so much as turning to regard him; nay, he only kept his head raised and gazed afar. Hereat quoth to him the Fox (for indeed his heart burned with desire to know how he could seize and devour him), "O brother mine, why and wherefore dost thou not acknowledge me by an answer or address to me a word or even turn thy face towards me who am a Commissioner sent by Leo, Sovran of the beasts, and Aquila, Sultan of the birds? Sore I fear lest thou refuse to accompany me and thus come upon thee censure exceeding and odium excessive seeing that all are assembled in the presence and are browsing upon the verdant mead." Then he added (as Chanticleer regarded him not), "O my brother, I bespeak thee and thou unheedest me and my speech and, if thou refuse to fare with me, at least let me know what may be thy reply." Hereupon the Cock inclined towards him and said, "Sooth hast thou spoken, O my brother, and well I wot thou be an Envoy and a Commissioner from our King, and the special Messenger of him: but my condition is changed by that which hath befallen me." "And what calamity, O my brother hath betided thee?" "Dost thou espy what I am at present espying?" "And what is it thou espiest?" "Verily, I see a dust cloud lowering and the Saker-falcons in circles towering;" and quoth the Fox (whose heart throbbed with fear), "Look straitly, O my brother, lest there happen to us a mishap." So Chanticleer gazed as one distraught for a full told hour, after which he turned to the Fox and said, "O my brother, I behold and can distinguish a bird flying and a dust-trail hieing." "Consider them narrowly, O my brother," cried the Fox (whose side-muscles quivered) "lest this be sign of greyhound;" and the other replied, "The Truth is known to Allah alone, yet I seem now to see a something lengthy of leg, lean of flank, loose of ears, fine of forehand and full of quarter, and at this moment it draweth near and is well nigh upon us — O fine!"[279] Now when the Fox heard these words he cried to the Cock, "O my brother, I must farewell thee!" and so saying he arose and committed his legs to the wind and he had recourse to the Father of Safety.[280] Seeing this, the Cock also cried, "Why thus take to flight when thou hast no spoiler thy heart to affright?" Replied the Fox, "I have a fear of the Greyhound, O my brother, for that he is not of my friends or of my familiars;" and the

Cock rejoined, “Didst thou not tell me thou camest as Commissioner of the Kings to these wastes proclaiming a peace and safety amongst all the beasts and the birds?” “O my brother Chanticleer,” retorted the other, “this feral, Greyhound hight, was not present at the time when pacifcation was proclaimed, nor was his name announced in the Congress of the beasts; and I for my part have no love lost with him, nor between me and him is there aught of security.” So saying the Fox turned forthright to fly, routed with the foulest of routing, and the Cock escaped the foe by his sleight and sagacity with perfect safety and security. Now after the Fox had turned tail and fled from him Chanticleer came down from the wall and regained his farm, lauding Allah Almighty who had conveyed him unharmed to his own place. And here he related unto his fellows what had befallen him with the Fox and how he had devised that cunning device and thereby freed himself from a strait wherein, but for it, the foe had torn him limb by limb.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

FINIS.

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HISTORY OF WHAT BEFEL THE FOWL-LET WITH THE FOWLER

Here we begin to invite the History of what befel the Fowl-let from the Fowler.[281]

They relate (but Allah is All-knowing) that there abode in Baghdad-city a huntsman-wight in venerie trained aright. Now one day he went forth to the chase taking with him nets and springes and other gear he needed and fared to a garden-site with trees bedight and branches interlaced tight wherein all the fowls did unite; and arriving at a tangled copse he planted his trap in the ground and he looked around for a hiding-place and took seat therein concealed. Suddenly a Birdie approaching the trap-side began scraping the earth and, wandering round about it, fell to saying in himself, "What may this be? Would Heaven I wot, for it seemeth naught save a marvellous creation of Allah!" Presently he considered the decoy which was half buried in the ground and salam'd to it from afar to the far and the Trap returned his salutation, adding thereto, "And the ruth of Allah and His blessings;" and presently pursued, "Welcome and fair welcome to the brother dear and the friend sincere and the companionable fere and the kindly compeer, why stand from me so far when I desire thou become my neighbour near and I become of thine intimates the faithful and of thy comrades the truthful? So draw thee nigh to me and be of thy safety trustful and prove thee not of me fearful." Quoth the Fowl-let, "I beseech thee by Allah, say me who art thou so I may not of thee feel affright and what be thy bye-name and thy name and to which of the tribes dost trace thy tree?" And quoth the Trap, "My name is Hold-fast[282] and my patronymic is Bindfast and my tribe is hight the Sons of Fallfast." Replied the Birdie, "Sooth thou sayest; for such name is truly thy name and such bye-name is without question thy bye-name nor is there any doubt of thy tribe being the noblest of the tribes." The Trap answered him saying, "Alhamdolillah — laud to the Lord — that me thou hast recognised and that I be of thy truest friends thou hast acknowledged, for where shalt thou find a familiar like unto me, a lover soothful and truthful and my fellow in mind? And indeed I a devotee of religious bent and from vain gossip and acquaintances and even kith and kin abstinent; nor have I any retreat save upon the heads of hills and in the bellies of dales which be long and deep; and from mundane tidings I am the true Holdfast and in worldly joys the real Bindfast." The Fowl replied, "Sooth hast spoken, O my lord; and all hail to thee; how pious and religious and of morals and manners gracious art thou? Would to Heaven I were a single hair upon thy body." Rejoined the Trap, "Thou in this world art my brother and in the next world my father;" and the other retorted, "O my brother, fain would I question thee concerning matters concealed within thy thoughts;" whereto the Trap, "Enquire of whatso thou requires", that I make manifest to thee what in heart thou desirest; for I will truly declare to thee mine every aim and disclose to thee soothly all my case and my thoughts concealed, nor shall remain unrevealed of mine intent aught." So the Birdie began, "O my brother, why and wherefore see I thee on this wise abiding in the dust and dwelling afar from relations and companeers and thou hast parted from thy family and peers and hast departed from the fondness of thy dears?" "Hast thou not learned, O my brother," answered the Trap, "that retirement is permanent heal and farness from folk doth blessings deal and separation from the world is bodily weal; and on this matter hath one of the poets said, and said right well,

'Fly folk, in public ne'er appearing, * And men shall name thee
    man God-fearing;[283]
Nor say I've brother, mate and friend: * Try men with mind still
    persevering:
Yea, few are they as thou couldst wish: * Scorpions they prove
    when most endearing.'[284]

And one of the Sages hath said, 'Solitude and not ill associate.' Also quoth they to Al-Bahlúl,[285] 'Why this tarrying of thine amid the homes of the dead and why this sojourning in a barren stead and wherefore this farness from kinsmen and mate and lack of neighbourly love for brother and intimate?' But quoth he, 'Woe to you! my folk did I dwell amongst them would some day unlove me and the while I abide far from them will never reprove me; not indeed would they remember my affection nor would they desire my predilection; and so satisfied with my solitude am I that an I saw my family I should start away as in fear of them, and were my parent quickened anew and longed for my society verily I would take flight from them.' " Replied the Fowl-let, "In good sooth, O my brother, truth thou hast pronounced in all by thee announced and the best of rede did from thee proceed; but tell me, prithee, anent that cord about thy middle wound and despite thine expending efforts that abound why thou art neither a-standing nor a-sitting on ground?" To him replied the Trap, "O my brother, learn that I spend every night of every month in prayer, during which exercise whenever sleep would seize me I tighten this cord about my waist and drive slumber from my eyes and become therefrom the more wide-awake for my orisons. Know thou also that Allah (be He glorified and magnified!) affectioneth his servants when devout are they, and stand in worship alway, ever dight to pray and praise Him by night and by day; and who turn on their sides loving the Lord to obey in desire and dismay and doling their good away. And quoth Allah (be He glorified and magnified!), 'And for scanty while of the night they take not gentle rest and at rising morn His pardon they obtest and their Lord granteth unto them their request.' [286] And wottest thou not, O my brother, what said the poet?

'These busy are with worldly gear * Those of their moneys proud
appear:
But some be rich by God's approof — * Praise Him o' nights with
love sincere:
Their Guardian's eye regards them aye * Praying, confessing sins
to clear:
They wot nor worship aught but Him * And hail His name with love
and fear.'"

Therewith quoth the Fowl-let, "Sooth hast thou said, O my brother, in each word by thee sped and right eloquently was announced all by thee pronounced; however (I am thy protected!), do thou tell me why I see thee one half buried in earth and the other half above ground?" And quoth the Trap, "For the reason that I thereby resemble the dead and in life I am shunning the pernicious lusts of the flesh; and Almighty Allah (be He glorified and magnified!) said in His August Volume, ‘From earth have We created you and unto her We will return you and from her will We draw you forth a second time.’ “[287] Replied the Birdie, “The truth thou hast told in whatso thou dost unfold, but why do I see thee so bent of back?” and rejoined the Trap, “Learn, O my brother, that the cause for this bowing of my back is my frequent standing in prayer by day and my upstanding by night in the service of the King, the Clement, the One, the Prepotent, the Glorious, the Omnipotent; and verily upon this matter right well the poet hath spoken,

‘None save the pious Youth gains boon of Paradise * (To whom the Lord doth pardon crime and sin and vice),
Whose back by constant prayer through murk o’ night is bent * And longs to merit Heaven in sore and painful guise.
Hail to the slave who ever would his lord obey * And who by death is saved when he obedient dies.’”

The Fowl-let continued, “O my brother, of truth the token is that whereof thou hast spoken and I have understood thee and am certified of thy sooth. But yet, I see upon thee a robe[288] of hair!” and the Trap rejoined, “O my brother, knowest thou not of hair and wool that they be the wear of the pious and the religious, whereof one of the poets hath spoken in these words,

‘Folk who in fear of long accompt[289] for naught of worldly care * Hail to them! haply garb of wool they’ll change for silken wear:
In life for provaunt shall suffice them salt and barley bread * Who seek th’ Almighty Lord and bow the head in sedulous pray’r.’”

The Birdie resumed, “In very deed thy speech the sooth doth teach; but say me what be this staff[290] thou hendest in hand?” Replied the Trap, “O my brother, know that I have become an olden man well shotten in years and my strength is minished, wherefor I have taken me a staff that I may prop me thereon and that it aid my endeavour when a-fasting.” The Fowl-let pursued, “Thy speech is true, O my brother, and thou speakest as due, yet would I ask thee of a matter nor refuse me information thereanent: tell me why and wherefore this plenty of grain scattered all about thee?” The Trap answered, “Indeed the merchants and men of wealth bring to me this victual that I may bestow it in charity upon the Fakir and the famisht;” and the Birdie rejoined, “O my brother, I also am an hungered; so dost thou enjoin me to eat thereof?” “Thou art my companion,” cried the Trap, “so upon me such injunction is a bounden duty,” presently adding, “Be so kind, O my brother, and haste thee hither and eat.” Hereat the Fowl-let flew down from off his tree and approaching little by little (with a heart beating for fear of the Trap) picked up a few grains which lay beside it until he came to the corn set in the loop of the springe. Hereupon he pecked at it with one peck nor had he gained aught of good therefrom ere the Trap came down heavily upon him and entangled his neck and held him fast. Hereupon he was seized with a fit of sore affright and he cried out, “Zík! zík!” and “Mík! mík! [291] Verily I have fallen into wreak and am betrayed by friendly freke and oh, the excess of my trouble and tweak, Zík, Zík! O Thou who keenest my case, do Thou enable me escape to seek, and save me from these straits unique and be Thou ruthful to me the meek!” Thereupon quoth to him the Trap, “Thou criest out Zik! Zik! and hast fallen into straits unique and hast strayed from the way didst seek, O Miscreant and Zindík,[292] and naught shall avail thee at this present or brother or friend veridigue or familiar freke. Now understand and thy pleasure seek! I have deceived thee with a deceit and thou lentest ear and lustedst.” Replied the Bird, “I am one whom desire hath cast down and ignorance hath seduced and inordinate greed, one for whose neck the collar of destruction is fitted and I have fallen along with those who lowest fall!” Hereupon the Fowler came up with his knife to slaughter the Fowl-let and began saying, “How many a birdie have we taken in all ease for desire of its meat that we may dress their heads with rice or in Harísah [293] or fried in pan and eat thereof pleasurably myself or feed therewith great men and grandees. Also ’tis on us incumbent to feed privily upon half the bodies and the other half shall be for our guests whilst I will take the wings to set before my family and kinsmen as the most excellent of gifts."[294] Hearing these words the Bird fell to speaking and saying,

"O Birder, my mother's in misery * And blind with weeping my loss is she.
I suffice not thy guest nor can serve for gift: * Have ruth and compassion and set me free!
With my parents I'll bless thee and then will I * Fly a-morn and at e'en-tide return to thee."

Presently resumed he, "Seest thou not how my meat be mean and my maw be lean; nor verily can I stand thee in stead of cate nor thy hunger satiate: so fear Allah and set me at liberty then shall the Almighty requite thee with an abundant requital." But the Fowler, far from heeding his words, made him over to his son saying, "O my child, take this bird and faring homewards slaughter him and of him cook for us a cumin ragout and a lemonstew, a mess flavoured with verjuice and a second of mushrooms and a third with pomegranate seeds and a fourth of clotted curd[295] cooked with Summák,[296] and a fine fry and eke conserves of pears[297] and quinces and apples and apricots hight the rose-water and vermicelli[298] and Sikbáj;[299] and meat dressed with the six leaves and a porridge[300] and a rice-milk, and an 'Ajíjíyah[301] and fried flesh in strips and Kabábs and meat-olives and dishes the like of these. Also do thou make of his guts strings for bows and of his gullet a conduit for the terrace-roof and of his skin a tray-cloth and of his plumage cushions and pillows." Now when the Fowl-let heard these words (and he was still in the Fowler's hand), he laughed a laugh of sorrow and cried, "Woe to thee, O Birder, whither be wended thy wits and thine understanding? Art Jinn-mad or wine-drunken? Art age-foolish or asleep? Art heavy-minded or remiss in thought? Indeed had I been that long-necked bird the 'Anká, daughter of Life, or were I the she- camel of Sálih to be, or the ram of Isaac the sacrificed, or the loquent calf of Al-Sámiri [302] or even a buffalo fattened daintily all this by thee mentioned had never come from me." Hereat he fell to improvising and saying,

"The Ruthful forbiddeth the eating of me * And His Grace doth

grace me with clemency:
A Camel am I whom they overload * And the Birder is daft when my flesh seeth he:
Prom Solomon's breed, O my God, I have hope: * If he kill me the Ruthful his drowning[303] decree.'?

Then quoth the Fowl to the Fowler, "An thou design to slaughter me in thy greed even as thou hast described, verily I shall avail thee naught, but an thou work my weal and set me free I will show thee somewhat shall profit thee and further the fortunes of thy sons' sons and thy latest descendants." "What is that direction thou wouldst deal to me?" asked the Fowler, and answered the Fowl-let, "I will teach a trio of words all wise and will discover to thee in this earth a Hoard wherewith thou and thy seed and posterity shall ever be satisfied and shall ever pray for the lengthening of my years. Moreover I will point out to thee a pair of Falcons ashen-grey, big of body and burly of bulk who are to me true friends and whom thou didst leave in the gardens untrapped." Asked the Birder, "And what be the three words which so savour of wisdom?" and answered the other "O Fowler, the three words of wisdom are: — Bemourn not what is the past nor at the future rejoice too fast nor believe aught save that whereon thy glance is cast. But as regards the Hoard and the two Falcons, when thou shalt have released me I will point them out to thee and right soon to thee shall be shown the sooth of whatso I have said to thee." Hereat the Birder's heart became well affected toward the Birdie for his joy anent the Treasure and the Falcons; and the device of the captive deceived the Capturer and cut short his wits so that he at once released the prey. Forthright the Fowl-let flew forth the Fowler's palm in huge delight at having saved his life from death; then, after preening his plume and spreading his pinions and his wings, he laughed until he was like to fall earthwards in a fainting fit Anon he began to gaze right and left, long breaths a drawing and increase of gladness ever a showing; whereupon quoth the Birder, "O Father of Flight, O thou The Wind hight! what saidst thou to me anent pointing out the two Falcons ashen-grey and who were the comrades thou leftest in the gardens?" Quoth the Birdie in reply, "slack and alas! never saw I thy like for an ass nor aught than thyself meaner of capacity nor mightier of imbecility; for indeed thou carries” in thy head lightness and in thy wits slackness. O Scant of Sense, when sawest thou ever a sparrow company with a Falcon, much less with two Falcons? So short is thine understanding that I have escaped thy hand by devising the simplest device which my nous and knowledge suggested.” Hereat he began to improvis and repeat:

“When Fortune easy was, from duty[304] didst forbear * Nor
from that malady[305] hast safety or repair:
Then blame thyself nor cast on other wight[306] the fault *
And lacking all excuse to death of misery fare!”

Then resumed the Fowl-let, “Woe to thee, O mean and mesquin thou wottedst not that which thou hast lost in me, for indeed baulked is thy bent and foiled is thy fortune and near to thee is poverty and nigh to thee is obscurity. Hadst thou when taking me cut my throat and cloven my crop thou hadst found therein a jewel the weight of an ounce which I picked up and swallowed from the treasury of Kisrà Anúshírwán the King.” But when the Birder heard the Birdie’s words he scattered dust upon his head and buffeted his face and plucked out his beard and rent his raiment, and at last slipped down a swooning to the ground. And presently recovering his senses he looked towards his late captive and cried, “O Father of Flight, O thou The Wind hight say me is there any return for thee me-wards, where thou shalt with me abide, and thee within the apple of mine eye will I hide, and after all this toil and turmoil I will perfume and fumigate thee with ambergris and with Comorin lign-aloes, and I will bring thee sugar for food and nuts of the pine[307] and with me thou shalt tarry in highmost degree?” Replied the Birdie, “O miserable, past is that which passed; I mean, suffice me not thy fraud and thy flattering falsehood. And laud to the Lord, O thou meanest of men, how soon hast thou forgotten the three charges wherewith I charged thee! And how short are thy wits seeing that the whole of me weigheth not ten drachms[308] and how then can I bear in crop a jewel weighing an ounce? How far from thee is subtilty and how speedily hast thou forgotten mine injunctions wherewith I enjoined thee saying, ‘Believe not aught save that whereon thine eye is cast nor regret and bemourn the past nor at what cometh rejoice too fast.' These words of wisdom are clean gone from thy memory, and hadst thou been nimble of wits thou hadst slaughtered me forthright: however, Alhamdolillah — Glory to God, who caused me not to savour the whittle's sharp edge, and I thank my Lord for my escape and for the loosing of my prosperity from the trap of trouble." Now when the Birder heard these words of the Birdie he repented and regretted his folly, and he cried, "O my sorrow for what failed me of the slaughter of this volatile," and as he sank on the ground he sang,[309]

"O brave was the boon which I held in my right * Yet O Maker of
man, 'twas in self despight.
Had my lot and my luck been of opulence, * This emptiness never
had proved my plight."

Hereupon the Fowl let farewelled the Fowler and took flight until he reached his home and household, where he seated him and recited all that had befallen him with the Birder, to wit, how the man had captured him, and how he had escaped by sleight, and he fell to improvising,

"I charged you, O brood of my nestlings, and said, * Ware yon
Wady, nor seek to draw near a stead
Where sitteth a man who with trap and with stakes * Entrapped me,
drew knife and would do me dead.
And he longed to destroy me, O children, but I * Was saved by the
Lord and to you was sped."

And here endeth the History of the Fowl let and the Fowler entire and complete.

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The Tale of Attaf.

Here we begin to write and invite the Tale of a man of Syria, Attaf hight.[310]

They relate (but Allah is All-knowing of His unknown and All-cognisant of what forewent in the annals of folk and the wonders of yore, and of times long gone before!) that in the city of Sham[311] there dwelt of old a man Attáf hight, who rivalled Hátim of Tayy[312] in his generosity and his guest-love and in his self-control as to manners and morals. Now he lived in the years when the Caliph Harun al-Rashid was reigning in Baghdad-city, and it happened on a day of the days that this Commander of the Faithful awoke morne and melancholic, and right straitened was his breast. So he arose, and taking Ja'afar the Barmecide and Mastur the Eunuch passed with them into the place where his treasures were stored. Presently quoth he to the Wazir, "O Ja'araf, open to me this door that I may solace me with the sight, and my breast may be broadened and haply be gladdened by such spectacle." The Minister did the bidding of his lord, who, finding a room full of books, put forth his hand, and taking up one of the volumes, opened and read. Thenhe fell to weeping thrice, and thrice to laughing aloud,[313] whereat the Wazir considered him and cried, "O King of the Age, how is it I espy thee reading and weeping and laughing at one and the same moment when none so act save madmen and maniacs?"[314] And having spoken on this wise he held his peace; but the Prince of True Believers turned himwards and cried, "O dog of the sons of Bermak, I see thee going beyond thy degree and quitting the company of sensible men, and thou speakest vainly making me a madman in saying, 'None laugh and cry at one and the same time save maniacs?'" With these words the Caliph restored the volume to its place in the Treasury and bade lock the door, after which the three returned to the Divan. Here the Commander of the Faithful regarded Ja'afar and exclaimed, "Go thou forth from before me and address me not again nor seat thee upon the Wazirial seat until thou answer thine own question and thou return me a reply concerning that which is writ and aligned in yonder book I was reading, to the end thou learn why I wept and wherefore I laught at one and the same hour." And he cried at him in anger saying, "Off and away with thee, nor face me again save with the answer, else will I slay thee with the foulest of slaughter." Accordingly Ja'afar fared forth and hardly could he see with his eyes, and he kept saying to himself, "Indeed I have fallen with a sore fall; foul befal it for a fall; how fulsome it is!" Then he fared homewards where he encountered face to face his father Yahyá the Bermaki, who was issuing from the mansion and he recounted to him the tale, whereat his parent said, "Go at once, abide not here, but turn thee Damascus-wards until shall terminate this decline of fortune and this disjunciton of favour, and at the ending thereof thou shalt see wonders therein."[315] Ja'afar replied, "Not until I shall have laid a charge upon my Harím;"[316] but Yahya cried, "Enter not these doors, hie thee at once to Al-Shám, for even so 'tis determined by Destiny." Accordingly the Wazir gave ear to his sire, and taking a bag containing one thousand dinars and slinging on his sword farewelled him; then, mounting a she-mule, alone and unattended by slave or page, he rode off and he ceased not riding for ten days full-told until he arrived at the Marj[317] or mead of Damascus. Now it so fortuned that on that same day Attaf,[318] a fair youth and a well-known of the "Smile of the Prophet," and one of the noblest and most generous of her sons, had pitched tents and had spread a banquet outside the city, where chancing to sight Ja'afar mounted on his beast, he knew him to be a wayfarer passing by, and said to his slaves, "Call to me yonder man!" They did his bidding and the stranger rode up to the party of friends, and dismounting from his mule saluted them with the salam which they all returned. Then they sat for a while[319] after which Attaf arose and led Ja'afar to his house companied by all the company which was there and they paced into a spacious open hall and seated themselves in converse for an hour full-told. Anon the slaves brought them to a table spread with the evening meal and bearing more than ten several manners of meat. So they ate and were cheered, and after the guests had washed hands, the eunuchs and attendants brought in candles of honey-coloured wax that shed a brilliant light, and presently the musicians came in band and performed a right royal partition while the servants served up conserves for dessert. So they ate, and when they had eaten their sufficiency they drank coffee;[320] and finally, at their ease and in their own good time, all the guests arose and made obeisance and fared homewards. Then Attaf and Ja'afar sat at table for an hour or so, during which the host offered his guest an hundred greetings, saying, "All kinds of blessings have descended from Heaven upon our heads. Tell me, how was it thou honouredst us, and what was the cause of thy coming and of thy favouring us with thy footsteps?"[321] So Ja'afar disclosed to him his name and office[322] and told him the reasons of his ride to Damascus from the beginning to the end full and detailed, whereto Attaf rejoined, "Tarry with me an thou please a decade of years; and grieve not at all, for thy Worship is owner of this place." After this the eunuchs came in and spread for Ja'afar bedding delicately wrought at the head of the hall and its honour-stead, and disposed other sleeping-gear alongside thereof, which seeing the Wazir said to himself, "Haply my host is a bachelor, that they would spread his bed to my side; however, I will venture the question." Accordingly he addressed his host saying, "O Attaf, art thou single or married?"[323] "I am married, O my lord," quoth the other, whereat Ja'afar resumed, "Wherefore dost thou not go within and lie with thy Harím?" "O my lord," replied Attaf, "the Harím is not about to take flight, and it would be naught but disgraceful to me were I to leave a visitor like thyself, a man by all revered, to sleep alone while I fare to-night with my Harím and rise betimes to enter the Hammam.[324] In me such action would I deem be want of courtesy and failure in honouring a magnifico like thine Honour. In very sooth, O my lord, so long as thy presence deign favour this house I will not sleep within my Harem until I farewell thy Worship and thou depart in peace and safety to thine own place." "This be a marvellous matter," quoth Ja'afar to himself, "and peradventure be so doeth the more to make much of me." So they lay together that night and when morning morrowed they arose and fared to the Baths whither Attaf had sent for the use of his guest a suit of magnificent clothes, and caused Ja'afar don it before leaving the Hammam. Then finding the horses at the door, they mounted and repaired to the Lady's Tomb,[325] and spent a day worthy to be numbered in men's lives. Nor did they cease visiting place after place by day and sleeping in the same stead by night, in the way we have described, for the space of four months, after which time the soul of the Wazir Ja'afar waxed sad and sorry, and one chance day of the days, he sat him down and wept. Seeing him in tears Attaf asked him, saying, "Allah fend from thee all affliction, O my lord! why dost thou weep and wherefore art thou grieved? An thou be heavy of heart why not relate to me what hath oppressed thee?" Answered Ja'afar, "O my brother, I find my breast sore straitened and I would fain stroll about the streets of Damascus and solace me from seeing the Cathedral-mosque of the Ommiades."[326] "And who, O my lord," responded the other, "would hinder thee therefrom? Do thou deign wander whither thou wilt and take thy solace, so may thy spirits be gladdened and thy breast be broadened. Herein is none to let or stay thee at all, at all." Hearing these words Ja'afar arose to fare forth, when quoth his host, "O my lord, shall they saddle thee a hackney?" but the other replied, "O my friend, I would not be mounted for that the man on horseback may not divert himself by seeing the folk; nay the folk enjoy themselves by looking upon him." Quoth Attaf, "At least delay thee a while that I may supply thee with spending money to bestow upon the folk; and then fare forth and walk about to thy content and solace thyself with seeing whatso thou wilt; so mayest thou be satisfied and no more be sorrowed." Accordingly, Ja'afar took from Attaf a purse of three hundred dinars and left the house gladly as one who issueth from durance vile, and he turned into the city and began a-wandering about the streets of Damascus and enjoying the spectacle; and at last he entered the Jámi' al-Amawi where he prayed the usual prayers. After this he resumed his strolling about pleasant places until he came to a narrow street and found a bench formed of stone[327] set in the ground. Hereon he took seat to rest a while, and he looked about, when behold, fronting him were latticed windows wherein stood cases planted with sweet-smelling herbs.[328] And hardly had he looked before those casements were opened and suddenly appeared thereat a young lady,[329] a model of comeliness and loveliness and fair figure and symmetrical grace, whose charms would amate all who upon her gaze, and she began watering her plants. Ja'afar cast upon her a single glance and was sore hurt by her beauty and brilliancy; but she, after looking upon the lattices and watering the herbs to the extent they required turned her round and gazed adown the street where she caught a sight of Ja'afar sitting and earnestly eyeing her. So she barred the windows and disappeared. But the Minister lingered on the bench hoping and expecting that haply the casement would open a second time and allow him another look at her; and as often as he would have risen up his nature said to him, "Sit thee down." And he stinted not so doing till evening came on, when he arose and returned to the house of Attaf, whom he found standing at the gateway to await him, and presently his host exclaimed, "'Tis well, O my lord! during all this delay indeed my thoughts have gone with thee for that I have long been expecting thy return." "'Tis such a while since I walked abroad," answered Ja'afar, "that I had needs look about me and console my soul, wherefor I lingered and loitered." Then they entered the house and sat down, when the eunuchs served up on trays the evening meal, and the Minister drew near to eat thereof but was wholly unable, so he cast from his hand the spoon and arose. Hereat quoth his host, "Why, O my lord, canst thou not eat?" "Because this day's noon-meal hath been heavy to me and hindereth my supping; but 'tis no matter!" quoth the other. And when the hour for sleep came Ja'afar retired to rest; but in his excitement by the beauty of that young lady he could not close eye, for her charms had mastered the greater part of his sense and had snared his senses as much as might be; nor could he do aught save groan and cry, "Ah miserable me! who shall enjoy thy presence, O full Moon of the Age and who shall look upon that comeliness and loveliness?" And he ceased not being feverish and to twist and turn upon his couch until late morning, and he was as one lost with love; but as soon as it was the undurn-hour Attaf came in to him and said, "How is thy health? My thoughts have been settled on thee: and I see that thy slumber hath lasted until between dawn and midday: indeed I deem that thou hast lain awake o' night and hast not slept until so near the midforenoon." "O my brother, I have no Kayf,"[330] replied Ja'afar. So the host forthwith sent a white slave to summon a physician, and the man did his bidding, and after a short delay brought one who was the preventer[331] of his day. And when ushered into Ja'afar's room he addressed the sick man, "There is no harm to thee and boon of health befal thee;[332] say me what aileth thee?” “All is excitement[333] with me,” answered the other, whereat the Leach putting forth his fingers felt the wrist of his patient, when he found the pulsations pulsing strong and the intermissions intermitting regularly.[334] Nothing this he was ashamed to declare before his face, “Thou art in love!” so he kept silence and presently said to Attaf, “I will write thee a recipe containing all that is required by the case.” “Write!” said the host, and the Physician sat down to indite his prescription, when behold, a white slave came in and said to his lord, “Thy Harim requireth thee.” So the host arose and retired to learn what was requireth of him in the women’s apartments, and when his wife saw him she asked, “O my lord, what is thy pleasure that we cook for dinner and supper?” “Whatsoever may be wanted,” he rejoined and went his ways, for since Ja’afar had been guested in his house Attaf had not once entered the inner rooms according as he had before declared to the Minister. Now the Physician during the host’s visit to the Harem had written out the prescription and had placed it under the pillow of the patient, and as he was leaving the house he came suddenly upon the housemaster on return to the men’s apartment, and Attaf asked him, “Hast thou written thy perscription?” “Yes,” answered the Leach, “I have written it and set it under his head.” Thereupon the host pulled out a piastre[335] and therewith fee’d the physician; after which he went up to Ja’afar’s couch and drew the paper from under his pillow and read it and saw therein written,[336] “O Attaf, verily thy guest is a lover, so do thou look for her he loveth and for his state purvey and make not overmuch delay.” So the host addressed his guest, saying, “Thou art now become one of us: why then hide from me thy case and conceal from me thy condition? This Doctor, than whom is none keener or cleverer in Damascus, hath learned all that befel thee.” Hereupon he produced the paper and showed it to Ja’afar, who took it and read it with a smile; then he cried, “This Physician is a master leach and his saying is soothfast. Know that on the day when I went forth from thee and sauntered about the streets and lanes, there befel me a matter which I never had thought to have betided me; no, never; and I know not what shall become of me for that, O my brother, Attaf, my case is one involving life-loss.” And he told him all that had happened to himself; how when seated upon the bench a lattice had been unclosed afront of him and he had seen a young lady, the loveliest of her time, who had thrown it open and had come forward to water her window-garden; adding, "Now my heart was upstirred by love to her, and she had suddenly withdrawn after looking down the street and closed the casement as soon as she had seen a stranger gazing upon her. Again and again I was minded to rise and retire, but desire for her kept me seated in the hope that haply she would again throw open the lattice and allow me the favour of another glimpse, so could I see her a second time. However, inasmuch as she did not show till evening came on I arose and repaired hither, but of my exceeding agitation for the ardour of love to her I was powerless to touch meat or drink, and my sleep was broken by the excess of desire for her which had homed in my heart. And now, O my brother Attaf, I have made known to thee whatso betided me." When the host heard these words, he was certified that the house whereof Ja'afar spoke was his house and the lattice his own lattice and the lovely and lovesome young lady his wife the daughter of his paternal uncle, so he said in his thought, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great. Verily we were Allah's and unto Him shall we return!" But presently he rgained himself in the nobility of his nature, and he continued, "O Ja'afar, thine intent is pure for that the dame thou sawest yesterday was divorced by her husband; and I will straightway fare to her father and bespeak him to the end that none may lay hand upon her; and then will I return and let thee ken all concerning her." So saying he arose and went at once to his cousin-wife[337] who greeted him and kissing his hand said to him, "Is thy guest a-going?" Said he, "By no means; the cause of my coming to thee is not his going, the reason thereof is my design of sending thee to the home of thy people, for that thy father anon met me in the market-street and declared to me that thy mother is dying of a colick, and said to me, 'Go send her daughter without delay so that she may see her parent alive and meet her once more.'" Accordingly the young wife arose; and, hardly knowing how she moved for tears at such tidings, she took her slave-girls with her and repairing to her home rapped at the door, and her mother who opened to her cried on seeing her, "May this thy coming (Inshallah!) be well, O my daughter, but how is it thou comest thus unexpected?"

“Inshallah!” said the wife, “thou art at rest from the colick?” and the mother rejoined, “Who told thee I was colicky? but pass thou within.” So she entered the court and her father, Abdullah Chelebi hight,[338] hearing her footstep from an inner room, asked, “What is there to do?” “Thou mettest anon,” replied his daughter, “Attaf thy son-in-law in the Bazar and didst tell him that my mother was sore afflicted with a colick.” Hearing this he exclaimed, “This day I went not once to the market-street nor have I seen a soul!” Now they had not ceased conversing ere the door was rapped; and as the slave girls opened it, they saw porters laden with the young lady’s gear and garments and they led the men into the court where the father asked them, “Who sent these stuffs?” “Attaf,” they replied, and setting down their loads within went their way. Then the father turned to his daughter and said to her, “What deed hast done that my son-in-law bade take up thy gear and have it sent after thee?” And the mother said to him, “Hold thy peace and speak not such speech lest the honour of the house be blamed and shamed.” And as they were talking, behold, up came Attaf companied by a party of friends when his father-in-law asked him, “Wherefore hast thou done on this wise?” “To-day,” answered he, “there came from me a wrongous oath: on account of my inclination to thy daughter my heart is dark as night whereas her good name is whiter than my turband and ever bright.[339] Furthermore an occasion befell and this oath fell from my mouth and I bade her be the owner of herself.[340] And now will I beweep the past and straightway set her free.” So saying he wrote a writ of repudiation and returning to Ja’afar said, “From early dawn I have wearied myself[341] for thy sake and have so acted that no man can lay hand upon her. And at last thou mayst now enjoy life and go to the gardens and the Hammams and take thy pleasure until the days of her widowhood[342] be gone by.” Replied Ja’afar, “Allah quicken thee for what thou wroughtest of kindness to me,” and Attaf rejoined, “Find for thyself something thou requirest, O my brother.”[343] Then he fell to taking him every day amongst the crowd of pleasure-seekers and solacing him with a show of joyous spectacles[344] till the term of divorce had sped, when he said to the Wazir, “O Ja’afar, I would counsel thee with an especial counsel.” “And what may it be, O my brother?” quoth the other; and quoth he, “Know, O my lord, that many of the folk have found the likeness between thy Honour and Ja’afar the Barmecide, wherefore must I fain act on this wise. I will bring thee a troop of ten Mamelukes and four servants on horseback, with whom do thou fare privily and by night forth the city and presently transmit to me tidings from outside the walls that thou the Grand Wazir, Ja’afar the Barmecide, art recalled to court and bound thither from Egypt upon business ordered by the Sultan. Hereat the Governor of Damascus, ‘Abd al-Malik bin Marván[345] and the Grandees of Syria will flock forth to meet and greet thee with fêtes and feasts, after which do thou send for the young lady’s sire and of him ask her to wife. Then I will summon the Kazi and witnesses and will write out without stay or delay the marriage-writ with a dower of a thousand dinars the while thou makest ready for wayfare, and if thou journey to Homs or to Hamah do thou alight at whatso place ever pleaseth thee. Also I will provide thee of spending-money as much as thy soul can desire and supply to thee raiment and gear, horses and bat-animals, tents and pavilions of the cheap and of the dear, all thou canst require. So what sayest thou concerning this counsel?” “Fair fall it for the best of rede which hath no peer,” replied Ja’afar. Hereupon Attaf arose and gathering his men about his guest sent him forth the city when the Minister wrote a write and dispatched it by twenty horsemen with a trader to inform the Governor of Syria that Ja’afar the Barmecide was passing that way and was about to visit Damascus on the especial service of the Sultan. So the Kapújí[346] entered Damascus and read out the Wazirial letter[347] announcing Ja’afar’s return from Egypt. Hereat the Governor arose and after sending a present of provisions[348] without the walls bade pitch the tents, and the Grandees of Syria rode forth to meet the Minister, and the Headmen of the Province set out to greet him, and he entered with all honour and consideration. It was indeed a day fit to be numbered among the days of a man’s life, a day of general joyance for those present, and they read the Farmán and they offered the food and the forage to the Chamberlain and thus it became known to one and all of the folk that a writ of pardon had come to Ja’afar’s hands and on this wise the bruit went abroad, far and near, and the Grandees brought him all manner of presents. After this Ja’afar sent to summon the young lady’s father and as soon as he appeared in his presence, said to him, “Thy daughter hath been divorced?” and said the other, “Yes; she is at home with me.” Quoth the Minister, “I would fain take her to wife;” and quoth the father, “Here am I ready to send her as thy handmaid.” The Governor of Sham added, “I will assume charge of the dowry,” and the damsel’s father rejoined, “It hath already come to hand.”[349] Hereat they summoned the Kazi and wrote out the writ of Ja’afar’s marriage; and, having ended the ceremony, they distributed meat and drink to the poor in honour of the wedding, and Abd al-Malik bin Marwan said to Ja’afar, “Deign, O my lord, come hither with me and become my guest, and I will set apart for thee a place wherein thou canst consummate thy marriage.” But the other replied, “Nay, I may not do so; I am sent on public affairs by the Commander of the Faithful and I purpose setting off with my bride and marching without further delay.” The Grandees of Syria spent that night until morning without any being able to snatch a moment of sleep, and as soon as dawned the day Ja’afar sent to summon his father-in-law and said, “On the morrow I design setting forth, and I desire that my bride be ready for the road;” whereto replied the other, “Upon my head be it and my eyes!” Then Abdullah Chelebi fared homewards and said to his daughter, “O my child, Attaf hath divorced thee from bed and from board, whereas Sultan Ja’afar the Bermaki hath taken thee to wife, and on Allah is the repairing of our broken fortunes and the fortifying of our hearts.” And she held her peace for displeasure by cause that she loved Attaf on account of the blood-tie and his exceeding great generosity. But on the next day Ja’afar sent a message to her sire informing him that the march would begin about mid-afternoon and that he wished him to make all ready, so the father did accordingly; and when Attaf heard thereof he sent supplies and spending-money.[350] At the time appointed the Minister took horse escorted by the Governor and the Grandees, and they brought out the mule-litter[351] wherein was the bride, and the procession rode onwards until they had reached the Dome of the Birds,[352] whereat the Minister bade them return home and they obeyed him and farewelled him. But on the ride back they all met Attaf coming from the city, and he reined in his horse and saluted the Governor and exchanged salams with his companions, who said to him, “Now at the very time we are going in thou comest out." Attaf made answer, "I wotted not that he would set forth this day, but as soon as I was certified that he had mounted I sent to summon his escort and came forth a-following him."[353] To this the Governor replied, "Go catch them up at the Dome of the Birds, where they are now halting." Attaf followed this counsel and reaching the place alighted from his mare, and approaching Ja'afar embraced him and cried, "Laud to the Lord, O brother mine, who returneth thee to thy home with fortunes repaired and heart fortified;" and said the Minister, "O Attaf, Allah place it in my power to requite thee; but cease thou not to write me and apprise me of thy tidings; and for the nonce I order thee to return hence and not to lie the night save in thine own house." And his host did his bidding whilst the cousin-wife hearing his voice thrust her head out of the litter and looked upon him with flowing tears, understanding the length to which his generosity had carried him. So fared it with Attaf and his affair; but now give ear to what befell him from Abd al-Malik bin Marwan. As they hied them home one who hated the generous man asked the Governor, "Wottest thou the wherefore he went forth to farewell his quondam guest at so late a time as this?" "Why so?" answered the other; and the detractor continued, "Ja'afar hath tarried four months as a guest in his household, and disguised so that none save the host knew him, and now Attaf fared not forth for his sake but because of the woman." "What woman?" enquired the Governor, and the other replied, "His whilom wife, whom he divorced for the sake of this stranger, and married her to him; so this day he followeth to enjoin him once more concerning the Government of Syria which perchance is promised to him. And 'tis better that thou breakfast upon him ere he sup upon thee." The other enquired, "And whose daughter is she, is not her sire Abdullah Chelebi?"[354] Whereto the man answered, "Yes, O my lord, and I repeat that she was put away to the intent that Ja'afar might espouse her." When the Governor heard these words, he was wroth with wrath galore than which naught could be more, and he hid his anger from Attaf for a while of time until he had devised a device to compass his destruction. At last, one day of the days, he bade cast the corpse of a murthered man into his enemy's garden and after the body was found by spies he had sent to discover the slayer, he summoned Attaf and asked him, "Who murthered yon man within thy grounds?" Replied the other, "'Twas I slew him." "And why didst slay him?" cried the Governor, "and what harm hath he wrought thee?" But the generous one replied, "O my lord, I have confessed to the slaughter of this man in order that I and only I may be mulcted in his blood-wite lest the neighbours say, 'By reason of Attaf's garden we have been condemned to pay his fine.'" Quoth Abd al-Malik, "Why should I want to take mulcts from the folk? Nay; I would command according to the Holy Law and even as Allah hath ordered, 'A life for a life.'" He then turned for testimony to those present and asked them, "What said this man?" and they answered, "He said, 'I slew him.'" "Is the accused in his right mind or Jinn-mad?"[355] pursued the Governor; and they said, "In his senses." Then quoth the Governor to the Mufti, "O Efendi, deliver me thine official decision according to that thou heardest from the accused's mouth;" and the Judge pronounced and indited his sentence upon the criminal according to his confession. Hereupon the Governor gave order for his slaves to plunder the house and bastinado the owner; then he called for the headsman, but the Notables interfered and cried, "Give him a delay, for thou hast no right to slay him without further evidence; and better send him to gaol." Now all Damascus was agitated and excited by this affair, which came upon the folk so suddenly and unforeseen. And Attaf's friends[356] and familiars came down upon the Governor and went about spreading abroad that the generous man had not spoken such words save in fear lest his neighbours be molested and be mulcted for a murther which they never committed, and that he was wholly innocent of such crime. So Abd al-Malik bin Marwan summoned them and said, "An ye plead that the accused is Jinn-mad this were folly, for he is the prince of intelligent men: I was resolved to let him life until the morrow; but I have been thwarted and this very night I will send and have him strangled." Hereupon he returned to prison and ordered the gaoler to do him die before day might break. But the man waxed wroth with exceeding wrath to hear the doom devised for Attaf and having visited him in prison said to him, "Verily the Governor is determined to slay thee for he was not satisfied with the intercession made for thee by the folk or even with taking the legal blood-wite." Hereat Attaf wept and cried, "Allah (be He magnified and glorified!) hath assigned unto every death a cause. I desired but to do good amongst the garden folk and prevent their being fined; and now this benevolence hath become the reason of my ruin." Then, after much 'say and said,' the gaoler spoke as follows, "Why talk after such fashion? I am resolved to set thee free and to ransom thee with my life; and at this very moment I will strike off thy chains and deliver thee from him. But do thou arise and tear my face and pluck out my beard and rend my raiment; then, after thrusting a gag[357] into my mouth wend thy ways and save thy life and leave me to bear all blame."[358] Quoth Attaf, "Allah requite thee for me with every weal!" Accordingly the gaoler did as he had undertaken and his prisoner went forth unhurt and at once followed the road to Baghdad. So far concerning him; but now hear thou what befell the Governor of Syria, Abd al-Malik bin Marwan. He took patience till midnight, when he arose and fared accompanied by the headsman to the gaol that he might witness the strangling of Attaf; but lo and behold! he found the prison door wide open and the keeper in sore sorrow with his raiment all rent to rags and his beard plucked out and his face scratched and the blood trickling from his four sides and his case was the miserablest of cases. So they removed the gag from his mouth and the Governor asked him, "Who did with thee on this wise?" and the man answered, "O my lord, yesternight, about the middle thereof, a gang of vagabonds and ne'er-do-wells as they were 'Ifrits of our lord Sulayman (upon whom be The Peace!), not one of whom I recognized, came upon me and ere I was ware of them they broke down the prison door and killed me;[359] and when I would have cried aloud and shouted for aid they placed yonder gag in my mouth, then they wounded me and shredded my dress and left me in the state thou seest. Moreover they took Attaf after breaking his chains and said to him, 'Go and lay thy complaint before the Sultan.'" Now those who accompanied the Governor said, "This be a gaoler and the son of a gaoler, nor during all his days hath anyone charged him with letting a prisoner out of hand." Quoth Abd al-Malik to the wounded man, "Hie thee to thy house and stay there;" whereat he straightway arose and went his ways. After this the Governor took horse, he and his escort; and all rode off to search for Attaf during a term of four days and some of them dug and dug deep down while the others returned after a bootless errand, and reported that they had failed to find him. Such was the case with the Governor of Syria; and now give ear to the adventure of Attaf. He left not wayfaring until but a single stage remained between him and Baghdad when robbers came upon him and stripped him of all his clothes, so that he was compelled to enter the capital in foulest condition, naked even as his mother bare him. And after some charitable wight had thrown an old robe about him and bound his head with a clout (and his unshorn hair fell over his eyes)[360] he fell to asking for the mansion of the Wazir Ja'afar and the folk guided him thereto. But when he would have entered the attendants suffered him not; so he stood at the gate till an old man joined him. Attaf enquired of him saying, "Hast thou with thee, O Shaykh, an ink-case and pens and paper?" and the other replied, "I have; but what is thy need thereof? tell me, so may I write for thee." "I will write myself," rejoined Attaf; and when the old man handed to him the gear, he took seat and indeed an address to Ja'afar informing him of all that passed from first to last, and especially of his own foul plight.[361] Presently he returned the ink-case and reed pens to the Shaykh; and, going up to the gate, asked those standing about the doors, "Will ye not admit for me this missive and place it in the hand of his Highness, Ja'afar the Bermaki, the Wazir?" "Give it here," said they, and one of them took it with the intent of handing it to the Minister when suddenly the cannon roared;[362] the palace was in a hubbub and each and everyone cried, "What is to do?" Hereat many voices replied, "The Sultan, who hath been favoured with a man-child, who had charged himself with the letter, threw it in that confusion from his hand and Attaf was led to gaol as a vagrant. Anon Ja'afar took horse and, after letting read the Sultan's rescript about the city-decorations, gave command that all the prisoners be released, Attaf amongst the number. As he issued forth the gaol he beheld all the streets adorned with flags and tapestry, and when evening approached eating-cloths and trays of food were set and all fell-in, while sundry said to Attaf who was in pauper plight, "Come and eat thou;" for it was a popular feast.[363] And affairs went on after this same fashion and the bands made music and cannon was fired until ended the week of decoration during which the folk ceased not to-ing and fro-ing. As evening evened Attaf entered a cathedral-mosque and prayed the night-prayers when he was accosted by the eunchs who cried, “Arise and gang this gait, that we may close the mosque-door, O Attaf,” for his name had become known. He replied, “O man, the Apostle of Allah saith, ‘Whoso striveth for good is as the doer thereof and the doer is of the people of Paradise:’ so suffer me to sleep here in some corner;” but quoth the other, “Up with thee and be off: yesterday they stole me a bit of matting and to-night I will bolt the door nor allow any to sleep here. And indeed the Apostle of Allah (whom the Almighty save and assain!) hath forbidden sleep o’ nights in the mosques.” Attaf had no competence to persuade the Castrato by placing himself under his protection, albeit he prayed him sore saying, “I am a stranger in the city nor have I knowledge of any, so do thou permit me here to pass this one night and no more.” But as he was again refused he went forth into the thoroughfares where the street dogs barked at him, and thence he trudged on to the market where the watchmen and warders cried out at him, till at last he entered a ruinous house where he stumbled when walking and fell over something which proved to be a youth lately murthered, and in tripping he fell upon his face and his garments were bewrayed and crimsoned with blood. And as he stood in doubt as to what must be done the Wali and the watch, who were going round the town by night, met him face to face; and as soon as they saw him all rushed at him in a body and seizing him bore him to the gaol. Here we leave speaking of him; and now return we to Ja’afar and what befel him. After he had set out from Damascus and sent back Attaf from the Dome of the Birds he said in his mind, “Thou art about to consummate marriage with a damsel and to travel until thou shalt reach Baghdad, so meanwhile up and take thee an ewer of water and make the Wuzú and pray.” However, as he purposed that evening to go in unto the wife of Attaf, controversy forewent compliments[364] and the tent-pitchers, who were sent on to the next station to set up the pavilion of the bride and the other tents. Ja’afar took patience until every eye however wakeful waxed sleep-full, at which time he rose up and went in to Attaf’s wife who, the moment she saw him enter, covered her face with her hands as from a stranger. “The Peace be upon thee!” said he and said she, “With thee also be The Peace and the ruth of Allah and His blessings.” Then he continued, “O daughter of my father’s brother[365] why hast thou placed thy hand upon thy face? in the lawful there be naught of shameful.” “True, O my lord,” she replied, “but Modesty is a part of Religion. If to one the like of thee it be a light matter that the man who guested thee and served thee with his coin and his case be treated on this wise and thou have the heart to take his mate from him, then am I but a slave between thy hands.” “Art thou the divorced wife of Attaf?” asked Ja’afar, and she answered, “I am.” Quoth he, “And why did thy husband on such wise?” and quoth she, “The while I stood watering plants at the window, thy Highness deigned look upon me and thou toldest thy love to Attaf, who forthright put me away and made me wife to thy Worship. And this is wherefore I conceal from thee my face.” Ja’afar cried, “Thou art now unlawful to him and licit to me; but presently thou shalt become illicit to me and legitimate to thy husband; so from this time forth thou art dearer and more honorable to me than my eyes and my mother and my sister. But for the moment thy return to Damascus is not possible for fear of foolish tongues lest they prattle and say, ‘Attaf went forth to farewell Ja’afar, and his wife lay the night with the former, and thus have the back-bones had a single lappet.’[366] However I will bear thee to Baghdad where I will stablish thee in a spacious and well furnished lodging with ten slave girls and eunuchs to serve thee; and, as long as thou abide with me, I will give thee[367] every day five golden ducats and every month a suit of sumptuous clothes. Moreover everything in thy lodging shall be thine; and whatever gifts and offerings be made to thee they shall be thy property, for the folk will fancy thee to be my bride and will entertain thee and escort thee to the Hammams and present thee with sumptuous dresses. After this fashion thou shalt pass thy days in joyance and thou shalt abide with me in highmost honour and esteem and worship till what time we see that can be done. So from this moment forth[368] throw away all fear and hereafter be happy in heart and high in spirits, for that now thou standest me in stead of mother and sister and here naught shall befall thee save weal. And now my first desire to thee which burned in my soul hath been quenched and exchanged for brotherly love yet stronger than what forewent it.” So Attaf’s wife rejoiced with exceeding joy; and, as they pursued their journey, Ja'afar ceased not to clothe her in the finest of clothes, so that men might honour her as the Wazir's Consort; and ever to entreat her with yet increasing deference. This endured until they entered Baghdad-city where the attendants bore her Takhtrawan into the Minister's Harem and an apartment was set apart for her even as he had promised, and she was provided with a monthly allowance of a thousand dianrs and all the comforts and conveniences and pleasures whereof he had bespoken her; nor did he ever allow his olden flame for her to flare up again, and he never went near her, but sent messengers to promise her a speedy reunion with her mate. Such was the case of Ja'afar and Attaf's wife; and now give ear to what befell and betided the Minister during his first reception by his liege lord who had sorely regretted his departure and was desolated by the loss of him. As soon as he presented himself before the Caliph, who rejoiced with exceeding joy and returned his salute and his deprecation of evil,[369] the Commander of the Faithful asked him, "Where was the bourne of this thy wayfare?" and he answered, "Damascus." "And where didst alight?" "In the house of one Attaf hight," rejoined Ja'afar, who recounted all that his host had done with him from the beginning to the end. The Prince of True Believers took patience, until he had told his story and then cried to his Treasurer saying, "Hie thee hence and open the Treasury and bring me forth a certain book." And when this was done he continued, "Hand that volume to Ja'afar." Now when the Minister took it and read it he found written therein all that had occurred between Attaf and himself and he left not reading till he came to the time when the twain, host and guest, had parted and each had farewel'ed other and Attaf had fared homewards. Hereupon the Caliph cried to him, "Close the book at what place it completeth the recital of thy bidding adieu to Attaf and of his returning to his own place, so shalt thou understand how it was I said to thee, 'Near me not until thou bring that which is contained in this volume.'" Then the Commander of the Faithful restored the book to the Treasurer saying, "Take this and set it in the bibliotheca;" then, turning to Ja'afar he observed, "Verily Almighty Allah (be He glorified and magnified!) hath deigned show thee whatso I read therein until I fell a-weeping and a-laughing at one and the same time. So now do thou retire and hie thee home." Ja'afar did his bidding and reassumed the office of Wazir after fairer fashion than he was before. And now return we to the purport of our story as regardeth the designs of Attaf and what befel him when they took him out of gaol. They at once led him to the Kazi who began by questioning him, saying, "Woe to thee, didst thou murther this Háshimi?"[370] Replied he, "Yes, I did!" "And why killedst thou him?" "I found him in yonder ruin, and I struck him advisedly and slew him!" "Art thou in thy right senses?" "Yea, verily." "What may be thy name?" "I am hight Attaf." Now when the Judge heard this confession, which was thrice repeated, he wrote a writ to the Mufti and acquainted him with the contention; and the divine after delivering his decision produced a book and therein indited the procès-verbal. Then he sent notice thereof to Ja'afar the Wair for official order to carry out the sentence and the Minister took the document and affixing his seal and signature thereto gave the order for the execution. So they bore Attaf away and led him to the gallows-foot whither he was followed by a world of folk in number as the dust; and, as they set him under the tree Ja'afar the Wazir, who was riding by with his suite at the time, suddenly espied a crowd going forth the city. Thereupon he summoned the Sobáshí[371] who came up to him and kissed his knee. "What is the object of this gathering of folk who be manifold as the dust and what do they want?" quoth the Wazir; and quoth the officer, "We are wending to hang[372] a Syrian who hath murthered a youth of Sharif family." "And who may be this Syrian?" asked the Wazir, and the other answered, "One hight Attaf." But when Ja'afar heard the word Attaf he cried out with a mighty loud outcry and said, "Hither with him." So after loosing the noose from his neck they set him before the Wazir who regarding him at once recognized his whilome host albeit he was in the meanest of conditions, so he sprang up and threw himself upon him and he in turn threw himself upon his sometime quest.[373] "What condition be this?" quoth Ja'afar as soon as he could speak, and quoth Attaf, "This cometh of my acquaintance with thee which hath brought me to such pass." Hereupon the twain swooned clean away and fell down fainting on the floor, and when they came to themselves and could rise to their feet Ja'afar the Wazir sent his friend Attaf to the Hammam with a sumptuous suit of clothes which he donned as he came out. Then the attendants led him to the Wazirial mansion where both took seat and drank wine and ate the early meal[374] and after their coffee they sat together in converse. And when they had rested and were cheered, Ja'afar said, "Do thou acquaint me with all that betided thee from the time we took leave each of other until this day and date." So Attaf fell to telling him how he had been entreated by Abdal-Malik bin Marwan, Governor of Syria; how he had been thrown into prison and how his enemy came thither by night with intent to strangle him; also how the gaoler devised a device to save him from slaughter and how he had fled nor ceased flight till he drew near Baghdad when robbers had stripped him; how he had lost an opportunity of seeing the Wazir because the city had been decorated; and, lastly, what had happened to him through being driven from the Cathedral-mosque; brief, he recounted all from commencement to conclusion. Hereupon the Minister loaded him with benefits and presently gave orders to renew the marriage-ceremony between man and wife; and she seeing her husband led in to pay her the first visit lost her senses, and her wits flew from her head and she cried aloud, "Would Heaven I wot if this be on wake or the imbroglio of dreams!" So she started like one frightened and a moment after she threw herself upon her husband and cried, "Say me, do I view thee in vision or really in the flesh?" whereto he replied, "In the world of sense and no sweven is this." Then he took seat beside her and related to her all that had befallen him of hardships and horrors till he was taken from under the Hairibee; and she on her part recounted how she had dwelt under Ja'afar's roof, eating well and drinking well and dressing well and in honour and worship the highmost that might be. And the joy of this couple on reunion was perfect. But as for Ja'afar when the morning morrowed, he arose and fared for the Palace; then, entering the presence, he narrated to the Caliph all that had befallen Attaf, art and part; and the Commander of the Faithful rejoined, "Indeed this adventure is the most wondrous that can be, and the most marvelous that ever came to pass." Presently he called to the Treasurer and bade him bring the book a second time from the Treasury, and when it was brought the Prince of True Believers took it, and handing it to Ja'afar, said to him, "Open and read." So he perused the whole tale of Attaf with himself the while his liege lord again wept and laughed at the same moment and said, “In very deed, all things strange and rare are written and laid up amongst the treasuries of the Kings; and therefor I cried at thee in my wrath and forbade thee my presence until thou couldst answer the question, What is there is this volume? and thou couldst comprehend the cause of my tears and my smiles. Then thou wentest from before me and wast driven by doom of Destiny until befel thee with Attaf that which did befal; and in fine thou returnedst with the reply I required.” Then the Caliph enrobed Ja’afar with a sumptuous honour-robe and said to the attendants, “Bring hither to me Attaf.” So they went out and brought him before the Prince of True Believers; and the Syrian standing between his hands blessed the Sovran and prayed for his honour and glory in permanence of prosperity and felicity. Hereat quoth the Caliph, “O Attaf ask what thou wishest!” and quoth the generous man, “O King of the Age, I pray only thy pardon for Abd al-Malik bin Marwan.” “For that he harmed htee?” asked Harun al-Rashid, and Attaf answered, “O my lord, the transgression came not from him, but from Him who caused him work my wrong; and I have freely pardoned him. Also do thou, O my lord, write a Farmán with thine own hand certifying that I have sold to the gaoler, and have received from the price thereof, all my slaves and estates in fullest tale and most complete. Moreover deign thou appoint him inspector over the Governor of Syria[375] and forward to him a signet-ring by way of sign that no petition which doth not bear that seal shall be accepted or even shall be heard and lastly transmit all this with a Chamberlain unto Damascus.” Now all the citizens of Syria were expecting some ill-turn from the part of Attaf, and with this grievous thought they were engrossed, when suddenly tidings from Baghdad were bruited abroad; to wit, that a Kapuji was coming on Attaf’s business. Hereat the folk feared with exceeding great affright and fell to saying, “Gone is the head of Abd al-Malik bin Marwan, and gone all who could say aught in his defence.” And when the arrival of the Chamberlain was announced all fared forth to meet and greet him, and he entered on a day of flocking and crowding,[376] which might be truly numbered amongst the days and lives of men. And presently he produced the writ of indemnity, and pardon may not be procured save by one duly empowered to pardon. Then he sent for the gaoler and committed to him the goods and chattels of Attaf, together with the signet and the appointment of supervisor over the Governor of Syria with an especial Farman that no order be valid unless sealed with the superior's seal. Nor was Abd al-Malik bin Marwan less rejoiced that the adventure had ended so well for him when he saw the Kapuji returning Baghdad-wards that he might report all concerning his mission. But as for Attaf, his friend Ja'afar bestowed upon him seigniories and presented him with property and moneys exceeding tenfold what he had whilome owned and made him more prosperous than he had ever been aforetime.

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NOTE ON THE TALE OF ATTAF.

Mr. Alexander J. Cotheal, of New York, a correspondent who already on sundry occasions has rendered me able aid and advice, was kind enough to send me his copy of the Tale of Attaf (the "C. MS." of the foregoing pages). It is a small 4to of p, size 5 3/4 by 8 inches, with many of the leaves injured and repaired; and written in a variety of handwritings, here a mere scribble, there regular and legible as printed Arabic. A fly-leaf inserted into the Arabic binding contains in cursive hand the title, "A Book embracing many Tales of the Tales of the Kings and named 'Stories from the Thousand Nights and a Night'." And a note at the end supplies the date: "And the finish thereof was on Fifth Day (Thursday), 9th from the beginning of the auspicious month Rabí'a 2nd, in the year 1096 of the Hijrah of the Apostle, upon whom be the choicest of blessings and the fullest of greetings; and Allah prospereth what he pleaseth,[377] and praise be to God the One." Thus (A.H. 1096 = A.D. 1685) the volume is upwards of 200 years old. It was bought by Mr. Cotheal many years ago with other matters among the effects of a deceased American missionary who had brought it from Syria.

The "Tale of Attaf" occupies p-50, and the end is abrupt. The treatment of the "Novel" contrasts curiously with that of the Chavis MS. which forms my text, and whose directness and simplicity give it a European and even classical character. It is an excellent study of the liberties allowed to themselves by Eastern editors and scribes. In the Cotheal MS. the tone is distinctly literary, abounding in verse (sometimes repeated from other portions of The Nights), and in Saj'a or Cadence which the copyist sometimes denotes by marks in red ink. The wife of Attaf is a much sterner and more important personage than in my text: she throws water upon her admirer as he gazes upon her from the street, and when compelled to marry him by her father, she "gives him a bit of her mind" as forcibly and stingingly as if she were of "Anglo-Saxon" blood; e.g. "An thou have in thee aught of manliness and generosity thou wilt divorce me even as he did." Sundry episodes like that of the brutal Eunuch at Ja'afar's door, and the Vagabond in the Mosque, are also introduced;

but upon this point I need say no more, as Mr. Cotheal shall now speak for himself.

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The Tale of Attaf.

Story of Attaf the generous, and what happened to him with the Wazir Ja'afar who fell in love with a young lady not knowing her to be the cousin-wife of Attaf who, in his generosity divorced her and married her to him. The Naïb of Damascus being jealous of Attaf's intimacy with Ja'afar imprisons him for treason and pillages his property. Escape of Attaf from prison and his flight to Baghdad where he arrives in a beggarly condition, and being accused of assassination is condemned to death, but being released he goes to Ja'afar who recognises him and is rewarded by him and the Caliph. His wife is restored to him and after a while they are sent home to Damascus of which he is appointed Wali in place of the Naïb who is condemned to death, but is afterwards exiled.

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate, to whom we cry for help.

They say God is omniscient, knowing the past and the future, and we learn from the histories of the peoples that there was in ancient times and bygone seasons (and God knows best!) a Caliph of the Caliphs or the orthodox and he was Harun er-Rashid who one night became very restless and from the drowsiness that came upon him he sat down upon the bed and dressed himself in sleeping-clothes; then it was that he called to his service Mesrúr the sword-bearer of grace who came immediately into his presence and said to him, O Mesrur, the night is very oppressive and I wish thee to dispel my uneasiness. Then Mesrur said to him, O Commander of the Faithful, arise now and go to the terrace-roof of the palace and look upon the canopy of heaven and upon the twinkling stars and the brightness of the moon, while listening to the music of the rippling streams and the creaking norias as they are spoken of by the poet who said: —

A Noria that discharges by the spouts of her tears resembles the
actions of a
distracted lover:
She is the lover of her branches (sweeps or levers) by the magic in
her heart

until she laughs:
She complains and the tears run from her eyes, she rises in the
morning to
find herself weeping and complaining.

Then he said, O Commander of the Faithful, the streams also are thus mentioned by one of them: —

My favorite is a damsel dispensing drink, and my recreation is a
running
stream;
A damsel whose eyes are a garden of Paradise, and a garden whose
springs make
a running brook.

Then again said Harun er-Rashid, O Mesrur, such is not my wish, and Mesrur replied, O Commander of the Faithful, in thy palace are three hundred and sixty damsels, they are thy concubines and thy slaves, and they are as if they were rising moons and beautiful gazelles, and in elegant robes they are dressed like the flowers. Walk around in the midst of the palaces and from thy hiding-place see each of them enter by herself in her own apartment admiring her beauty and her magnificent dresses, all showing their joy and mirth since they will not know of thee; then listen to their singing and their playing and their joyous company in their apartments and perhaps you'll attach yourself to one of them who'll play with thee, keep thee awake and be thy cup-companion, dispelling what may remain of thy restlessness. But he replied, O Mesrur, bring to me my cousin Ja'afar the Barmeky immediately. So he answered, Hearing is obedience. Then Mesrur went out to the house of Ja'afar and said to him, Come to the Commander of the Faithful, and he answered, To hear is to obey. Then Ja'afar dressed himself and went with Mesrur to the Caliph and kissing the ground before him he said, May it be good! O Commander of the Faithful. It is not other than good, he answered, but I am wearied this night with a great weariness and I sent for you to divert me so that my unrest may be dissipated. Then Ja'afar said, Let's get up, O Commander of the Faithful, and we'll go out into the garden of the palace and listen to the warbling of the birds and smell of the odours of the flowers, and the cool zephyr with its gentle breath will pass over us, dispelling our uneasiness and gladdening the heart. The Rawi says that Ja'afar was very familiar with the Caliph by reason of the endearment between them. Then the Caliph arose and with Ja'afar and Mesrur went to the garden. The Caliph began to be thoughtful and asked about the trees and the qualities of the flowers and the fruits and the nature of their colours, and as the Caliph took pleasure in that, he walked around for an hour and then passed over to the palaces and houses, going from place to place, from quarter to quarter, and from market to market; and, whilst they were going on, they stopped before a bookshop and the Caliph opened a book-case and began to turn over the books one by one, and taking one in his hand opened it, began to read in it, and then suddenly laughed until he fell upon his back. He read in it again and wept until his beard was wet with the falling tears, and wrapping up the book he put it in his sleeve when Ja'afar said, O Commander of the Faithful and Lord of the two worlds, what was it that made thee laugh and then weep at the same time? When the Caliph heard that he was angered and cried out at him in the midst of his rage, O dog of a Barmeky, what an impertinence on thy part about what concerns thee not, why meddle with what thou hast not lost. You've taken upon yourself to be annoying and conceited, you have passed beyond your place and it only remained for you to brave the Caliph. By my fathers and grandfathers, if thou dost not bring me someone who can tell me about the contents of this book from the first page to the last, I'll strike thy neck and show thee what it is that has made me laugh and cry. When Ja'afar heard these words and saw his passion he said, O Commander of the Faithful, I have committed a fault: a sin is for the like of me and forgiveness for the like of your Highness; to which the Caliph answered, I have made oath, thou must bring that person to explain the book or I'll strike thy neck this very hour. Then Ja'afar said, O Commander of the Faithful, God created the heavens and the two worlds in six days and if it had pleased Him He could have created them in a single hour, but He did so for an instruction to his worshippers that one should not fault with another but be patient; then, O Lord, be thou patient with thy servant if it be for three days only; and the Caliph replied to him, If thou bringest not to me him whom I have mentioned I will slay thee with the most horrible of deaths. At this Ja'afar said, I depart on thy mission; thereupon Ja'afar went home with a sorrowful heart to his father Yahya and his brother El-Fadl to take leave of them and weep. Then they said to him, What is thy trouble? so he told them of what had occurred between him and the Caliph and of the condition laid upon him of execution if not complied with in three days, for doubtless the Caliph seeks my death; he who strikes against a point, 'twill pierce his hand, and he that struggles with a lion will be killed; but as to myself I can no longer remain with him for that would be the greatest of dangers for me and for thee, O my father, and for thee, O my brother. I now set out to travel and I wish to go far away from his eye. The preservation of life is not esteemed and is of little value: distance is the best preservative for our necks-as is said by the poet: —

Save your life if menaced by evil (danger), and leave the house to complain of
the builder:
You'll find a land upon a land, but not another life for your own life.

When he had finished, his father and his brother said to him, Do not do so, for probably the Caliph will be merciful to you. And Ja'afar answered, Only good will come of my travel. Then he went to his treasure-room and took out a purse containing 1,000 dinars, mounted his horse, put on his sword, bade adieu to his father and brother and set forth in his time and hour; then, not taking with him any servants, either slave or boy, he hastened on his journey, travelling day and night for twenty days until he reached the city of Aleppo without stopping, passing by Hamah and Homs until he reached Teniyát al-Igáb and arrived at Damascus where he entered the city and saw the Minaret of the Bride from bottom to top covered with gilded tiles; and it surrounded with meadows, irrigated gardens with all kinds of flowers, fields of myrtle with mountains of violets and other beauties of the gardens. He dwelt upon these charms while listening to the singing of the birds in the trees; and he saw a city whose like has never been created in any other country of the world.

Turning then to the right hand and to the left he espied a man standing near him and said to him, O my brother, what's the name of this city? and he answered, O my lord, this city in ancient times was called Jullag the same that is mentioned by the poet who says: —

I am called Jullag and my heart I attach, in me flow the waters, in
and out;
The Garden of Eden upon the earth, birth-place of the fairies:
I will never forget thy beauties, O Damascus, for none but thee will I
ever
long: —
Blessed be the wonders that glitter on thy roofs (expanse).

She was also called Sham (grain of beauty) because she is the Sham of Cities and the Sham of God on earth. Ja'afar was pleased at the explanation of the name, and dismounted with the intention of taking a stroll through the streets, by the great houses and the domes (mosks). Whilst thus engaged in examining the various places and their beauties, he perceived a tent of silk brocade called Dibáj, containing carpets, furniture, cushions, silk curtains, chairs and beds. A young man was sitting upon a mattress, and he was like a rising moon, like the shining orb in its fourteenth night. He was in an undress, upon his head a kerchief and on his body a rose-coloured gaberdine; and as he sat before him were a company and drinks worthy of Kings. Ja'afar stopped and began to contemplate the scene, and was pleased with what he saw of the youth; then looking further he espied a damsel like unto the sun in serene firmament who took her lute and played on it while singing: —

Evil to whoever have their heart in possession of their lovers, for in obtaining it they will kill it: They have abandoned it when they have seen it amorous: when they see it amorous they abandon it. Nursling, they pluck it out from the very entrails: O bird, repeat "Nursling they have plucked thee out!" They have killed it unjustly: the loved plays the coquette with the humble lover. The seeker of the effects of love, love am I, brother of love, and sigh Behold the man stricken by love, though his heart change not they bury it (him?).

The Rawi said that Ja'afar was pleased and he rejoiced at hearing the song and all his organs were moved at the voice of the damsel and he said, Wallahy, it is fine. Then she began again to sing, reciting the following verses: —

With these sentiments thou art in love, it is not wonderful that I should love
thee:
I stretch out my hand to thee asking for mercy and pity for my humility — mayst
thou be charitable;
My life has passed away soliciting thy consent, but I have not found it in my
confidence to be charitable,
And I have become a slave in consequence of her possession of love my heart is
imprisoned and my tears flow.

When the poem was finished Ja'afar gave himself up more and more to the pleasure of hearing and looking at the damsel. The youth, who was reclining, sat up and calling some of his boys said to them, Don't you see that young man standing there in front of us? They answered, Yes, and he said, He must be a stranger for I see on him the signs of travel; bring him to me and take care not to offend him. They answered, With joy and gladness, and went towards Ja'afar, who, while contemplating the damsel, perceived the boy that came and who said to him, In the name of God, O my lord, please have the generosity to come in to our master. Ja'afar came with the boy to the door of the tent, dismounted from his horse and entered at hte moment when the youth was rising upon his feet, and he stretched out his two hands and saluted him as if he had always known him, and after he had chanted the prayer to the envoy (of Allah) he sang: —

O my visitor be welcome, thou enlivenest us and bringest us our union:
By thy face I live when it appears and I die if it disappears.

Then he said to Ja'afar, Please be seated, my dear sir; thanks be to God for your happy arrival; and he continued his chant after another prayer to the envoy (of God): —

If we had known of thy arrival we would have covered (thy) heart with the black
of our eyes,
And we would have spread the street with out cheeks that thy coming might have
been between our eyelids.

After that he arose, kissed the breast of Ja'afar, magnified his power and said to him, O my Master, this day is a happy one and were it not a fast-day I would have fasted for thee to render thanks to God. Then came up the servants to whom he said, Bring us what is ready. They spread the table of viands and the youth said, O my lord, the Sages say, If you are invited content yourself with what's before you, but if you are not invited, stay not and visit not again; if we had known that you would arrive to-day we would have sacrified the flesh of our bodies and our children. Ja'afar said, I put out my hand and I ate until I was satisfied, while he was presenting me with his hand the delicate morsels and taking pleasure in entertaining me. When we had finished they brought the ewer and basin, we washed our hands and we passed into the drinking room where he told the damsel to sing. She took up her lute, tuned it, and holding it against her breast she began: —

A visitor of whom the sight is venerated by all, sweeter than either spirit or
hope:
He spreads the darkness of his hair over the morning dawn and the dawn of shame
appeared not;
And when my lot would kill me I asked his protection, his arrival revived a soul
that death reclaimed:
I've become the slave of the Prince of the Lovers and the dominion

of love was
    of my making.

The Rawi says that Ja'afar was moved with exceeding joy, as was also the youth, but he did not fail to be fearful on account of his affair with the Caliph, so that it showed itself in his countenance, and this anxiety was apparent to the youth who knew that he was anxious, frightened, dreaming and uncertain. Ja'afar perceived that the youth was ashamed to question him on his position and the cause of his condition, but the youth said to him, O my lord, listen to what the Sages have said: —

Worry not thyself for things that are to come, drive away your cares by the
    intoxicating bowl:
See you not that hands have painted beautiful flowers on the robes of drink?
Spoils of the vine-branch, lilies and narcissus, and the violet and the striped
    flower of N'uman:
If troubles overtake you, lull them to sleep with liquors and flowers and
    favourites.

Then said he to Ja'afar, Contract not thy breast, and to the damsel, Sing; and she sang, and Ja'afar who was delighted with her songs, said Let us not cease our enjoyment, now in conversation, now in song until the day closes and night comes with darkness.

The youth ordered the servants to bring up the horses and they presented to his guest a mare fit for Kings. We mounted (said Ja'afar), and, entering Damascus, I proceeded to look at the bazars and the streets until we came to a large square in the middle of which were two mastabas or stone benches before a high doorway brilliantly illuminated with divers lights, and before a portière was suspended a lamp by a golden chain. There were lofty domes surrounded by beautiful statues, and containing various kinds of birds and abundance of flowing water, and in their midst was a hall with windows of silver. He opened it and found it looking upon a garden like that of Paradise animated by the songs of the birds and the perfumes of the flowers and the ripple of the brooks. The house, wherein were fountains and birds warbling their songs understood in every language, was carpeted with silken rugs and furnished with cushions of Dibaj-brocade. It contained also in great number costly articles of every kind, it was perfumed with the odours of flowers and fruits and it contained every other imaginable thing, plates and dishes of silver and gold, drinking vessels, and a censer for ambergris, powder of aloes and every sort of dried fruits. Brief, it was a house like that described by the poet: —

Society became perfectly brilliant in its beauty and shone in the eclat of its magnificience.

Ja'afar said, When I sat down the youth came to me and asked, From what country art thou? I replied, From Basora, soldier by profession, commandant over a company of men and I used to pay a quit-rent to the Caliph. I became afraid of him for my life and I came away fleeing with downcast face for dread of him, and I never ceased wandering about the country and in the deserts until Destiny has brought me to thee. The youth said, A blessed arrival, and what may be thy name? I replied, My name is like thine own. On hearing my words he smiled, and said, laughing, O my lord, Abu 'l-Hasan, carry no trouble in your heart nor contraction of your breast; then he ordered a service and they set for us a table with all kinds of delicacies and we ate until satisfied. After this they took away the table and brought again the ewer and basin and we washed our hands and then went to the drinking room where there was a pleasaunce filled with fruits and flowers in perfection. Then he spoke to the damsel for music and she sang, enchanting both Ja'afar and the youth with delight at her performances, and the place itself was agitated, and Ja'afar in the excess of his joy took off his robes and tore them. Then the youth said to him, Wallahy, may the tearing be the effect of the pleasure and not of sorrow and waywardness, and may God disperse far from you the bitterness of your enemies. Then he went to a chest (continued Ja'afar) and took out from it a complete dress, worth a hundred dinars and putting it upon me said to the damsel, Change the tune of thy lute. She did so, and sang the following verses: —

My jealous regard is attached to him and if he regard another I am impatient: I terminate my demand and my song, crying, Thy friendship will last until death in my heart.

The Rawi said: When she had finished her poetry Ja'afar threw off the last dress and cried out, and the youth said, May God ameliorate your life and make its beginning the end. Then he went to the chest and took out a dress better than the first and put it upon Ja'afar and the damsel was silent for an hour during the conversation. The youth said, Listen, O my lord Abu 'l-Hasan, to what people of merit have said of this valley formerly called the Valley of Rabwat in which we now are and spoken of in the poem, saying: —

O bounty of our Night in the valley of Rabwat where the gentle zephyr brings in
her perfumes:
It is a valley whose beauty is like that of the necklace: trees and flowers
encompass it.
Its fields are carpeted with every variety of flowers and the birds fly around
above them;
When the trees saw us seated beneath them they dropped upon us their fruits.
We continued to exchange upon the borders of its gardens the flowing bowls of
conversation and of poesy,
The valley was bountiful and her zephyrs brought to us what the flowers had sent
to us.

So when the youth had finished his recitation he turned to the damsel and told her to sing: —

I consume (with desire) when I hear from him a discourse whose sweetness is a
melting speech:

My heart palpitates when he sees it, it is not wonderful that the drunken one
should dance:
It has on this earth become my portion, but on this earth I have no chance to
obtain it.
O Lord! tell me the fault that I've committed, perhaps I may be able to correct
it.
I find in thee a heart harder than that of others and the hearts consume my
being.

Now when she had finished, Ja'afar in his joy threw off the third dress. The youth arose, kissed him on the head, and then took out for him another suit and put it upon him, for he was the most generous man of his time. Then he enteretained Ja'afar with the news of the day and of the subjects and anecdotes of the great pieces of poetry and said to him, O my lord, load not thyself with cares. The Rawi says that they continued living in the same way for forty days and on the forty-first Ja'afar said to the young man, Know, O my lord, that I have left my country neither for eating nor for drinking, but to divert myself and to see the world; but if God vouchsafe my return to my country to talk to my people, my neighbours and frieds, and they ask me where I have been and what I have seen, I will tell them of your generosity and of the great benefactions that you have heaped upon me in your country of Damascus. I will say that I have sighted this and that, and thus I will entertain them with what I have espied in Damascus and of its order. The young man replied, Thou sayest true: and Ja'afar said, I desire to go out and visit the city, its bazars and its streets, to which the young man answered, With love and good will, to-morrow morning if it please Allah. That night Ja'afar slept there and when God brought the day, he rose, went in to the young man, wished him good morning and said to him, O my lord, thy promise! to which he replied, With love and good will; and, ordering a white dress for him, he handed him a purse of three hundred dinars saying, Bestow this in charity and return quick after thou hast made thy visit, and lastly said to his servants, Bring to your lord a horse to ride. But Ja’afar answered, I do not wish to have one, for a rider cannot observe the people but the people observe him. The young man, who was named Attaf, said, O my lord, be it as thou wishest and desirest; be not away long on my account for thine absence gives me pain. Then he gave to Ja’afar a grain of red musk saying, Take this and keep it in thy hand and if thou go into any place where there is a bad odour thou wilt take a smell of the musk. Ja’afar the Barmeky (Allah be merciful to him!) said, After that I left him and set out to walk in the streets and quarters of Damascus and went on until I came to the Most of the ‘Omeyyades where I saw a fountain casting the water from its upper part and falling like serpents in their flight. I sat down under the pulpit; and as it was a Friday I heard the preacher and made my Friday prayer and remained until I made the afternoon prayer when I went to distribute the money I had, after which I recited these verses: —

I see the beauties united in the mosk of Jullag, and around her the meaning of
beauty is explained;
If people converse in the mosks tell them their entrance door is open.

Then I left the mosk and began to promenade the quarters and the streets until I came before a splendid house, broad in its richness and strong in its build, having a border of gold astonishing the mind by the beauty of the work, showing curtains of silk embroidered with gold and in front of the door were two carpeted steps. I sat down upon one of them and began to think of myself and of the events that had happened to me and of my ignorance of what had taken place after my departure. In the midst of my sadness at the contemplation of my troubles (and the wind blowing upon me) I fell asleep and I awaked not until a sprinkling of water came down upon me. On opening my eyes I saw a young woman behind the curtain dressed in a morning gown and a Sa’údí fillet upon her forehead. Her look and eyelids were full of art and her eyebrows were like the fronts of the wings of light. The Rawi says she resembled a full moon. When my eyes fell upon her (continued Ja’afar) and looked at her, that look brought with it a thousand sighs and I arose and my disposition was changed. The young woman cried at me and I said, I am your servant, O my lady, and here at thy command, but said she, No labbayka and no favour for thee! Is this house thine? Said I, No my lady, and she replied, O dog of the streets, this house is not thine, why art thou sitting here? When Ja'afar heard this he was greatly mortified, but he took courage and dissimulated, answering, O my lady, I am resting here only to recite some verses which I have composed for thee, then she asked, And what hast thou said about me? He continued: —

She appeared in a whitish robe with eyelids and glances of wonder,
I said she came out without greeting, with her I'm content to my heart's
 content.
Blessed be He that clothed thy cheeks with roses, He can create what He wills
 without hindrance.
Thy dress like thy lot is as my hand, white, and they are white upon white upon
 my white.

When he had finished these verses he said, I have composed others on thine expression, and recited the following: —

Dost thou see through her veil that face appearing how it shines, like the moon
 in the horizon?
Its splendour enlightens the shade of her temples and the sun enters into
 obscurity by system;
Her forehead eclipses the rose and the apple, and her look and expression
 enchant the people;
It is she that if mortal should see her he'd become victim of love, of the fires
 of desire.

On hearing this recitation the young lady said to Ja’afar, Miserable fellow, what is this discourse which does not belong to the like of thee? Get up and begone with the malediction of Allah and the protection of Satan. Ja’afar arose, seized with a mighty rage in addition to his love; and in this love for her he departed and returned to the house of his friend Attaf and saluted him with a prepossessed heart. As soon as Attaf saw him he cast himself on his breast and kissed him between the eyes, saying to him, O my lord, thou hast made me feel desolate to-day by thine absence. Then Attaf, looking in the face of Ja’afar and reading in it many words, continued to him, O my lord, I find thy countenance changed and thy mind broken. Ja’afar answered, O my lord, since I left thee up to the present time I have been suffering with a headache and a nervous attack for I was sleeping upon my ear. The people in the mosk recited the afternoon prayer without my knowing it, and now I have a mind to get an hour’s sleep, probably I shall find repose for the body, and what I suffer will pass off. Accordingly, Attaf went into the house and ordered cushions to be brought out and a bed to be made for him. Ja’afar then stretched himself upon it depressed and out of spirits, and covering himself up began to think of the young lady and of the offensive words she gave him so contrary to usage. Also he thoguht of her beauty and the elegance of her stature and perfect proportions and of what Allah (to whom be praise!) had granted her of magnificence. He forgot all that happened to him in other days and also his affair with the Caliph and his people and his friends and his society. Such was the burden of his thoughts until he was taken with monomania and his body wasted. Hereupon Attaf sent for doctors, they surrounded him constantly, they employed all their talents for him, but they could find no remedy. So he remained during a certain time without anyone being able to discover what was the matter with him. The breast of Attaf became straitened, he renounced all diversions and pleasures, and Ja’afar getting worse and worse, his trouble augmented. One day a new doctor arrived, a man of experience in the art of gallantry, whose name was Dabdihkán. When he came to Ja’afar and looked at his face and felt his pulse and found everything in its place, no suffering, no pain, he comprehended that he was in love, so he took a paper and wrote a prescription and placed it beneath Ja'afar's head. He then said, Thy remedy is under thy head, I've prescribed a purge, if thou take it thou wilt get well, for he was ashamed to tell Attaf his love-sick condition. Presently, the Doctor went away to other patients and Attaf arose and when about entering to see Ja'afar he heard him recite the following verses:—

A doctor came to me one day and took my hand and pulse, when I said to him Let
  go my hand, the fire's in my heart.
He said, Drink syrup of the rose and mix it well with water of the tongue but
  tell it not to anyone:
I said, The syrup of the rose is quite well known to me; it is the water of the
  cheek that breaks my very heart;
But can it be that I can get the water of the tongue that I may cool the burning
  fire that within me dwells?
The doctor said, Thou art in love, I said Yes to him, and said he to me, Its
  remedy is to have the body here.

Then when Attaf went in to him after the end of the recitation he sat down at the head of the bed and asked him about his condition and what had been perscribed for him by the Hakím. Ja'afar said, O my lord, he wrote for me a paper which is under the pillow. Attaf put out his hand, took the paper and read it and found upon it written:—"In the name of God the Curer — To be taken, with the aid and blessing of God, 3 miskals of pure presence of the beloved unmixed with morsels of absence and fear of being watched: plus, 3 miskals of a good meeting cleared of any grain of abandonment and rupture: plus, 2 okes of pure friendship and discretion deprived of the wood of separation. Then take some extract of the incense of the kiss, the teeth and the waist, 2 miskals of each; also take 100 kisses of pomegranate rubbed and rounded, of which 50 small ones are to be sugared, 30 pigeon-fashion and 20 after the fashion of little birds.

Take of Aleppine twist and sigh of Al-Iráq 2 miskals each; also 2 okes of tongue-sucking, mouth and lip kissing, all to be pounded and mixed. Then put upon a furnace 3 drams of Egyptian grain with the addition of the beautiful fold of plumpness, boil it in love-water and syrup of desire over a fire of wood of pleasure in the retreat of the ardour. Decant the whole upon a royal díbáqy divan and add to it 2 okes of saliva syrup and drink it fasting during 3 days. Next take for dinner the melon of desire mixed with embrace-almond and juice of the lemon of concord, and lastly 3 rolls of thigh-work and enter the bath for the benefit of your health. And — The Peace!" When Attaf had finished reading of this paper he burst into a laugh at the prescription and, turning to Ja'afar, he asked him with whom he was in love and of whom he was enamoured. Ja'afar gave no answer, he spoke not neither did he commence any discourse, when Attaf said, O my brother, thou are not my friend, but thou art in my house esteemed as is the soul in the body. Between me and thee there has been for the last four months friendship, company, companionship and conversation. Why then conceal thy situation? For me, I have fear and sorrow on thine account. Thou art a stranger, thou art not of this capital. I am a son of this city, I can dispel what thou hast (of trouble) and that of which thou sufferest. By my life, which belongs to you, by the bread and salt between us, reveal to me thy secret. And Attaf did not cease to speak thus until Ja'afar yielded and said to him, It shall no longer be concealed, and I will not blame those who are in love and are impatient. Then he told his story from beginning to end, what was said to him by the young lady and what she did with him and lastly he described the quarter and the place. Now when Attaf heard the words of Ja'afar he reflected on the description of the house and of the young lady and concluded that the house was his house and the young lady was his cousin-wife, and said to himself, There is no power nor strength but in Allah the High, the Great. We are from God and to Him we return. Then he came to his mind again and to the generosity of his soul and said to himself, O Attaf! God hath favored me and hath made me worthy of doing good and hath sent to me I know not whence this stranger who hath become bound in friendship with me during all this time and he hath acquired over me the ties of friendship. His heart hath become attached to the young woman and his love for her hath reached in him an imminent point. Since that time he is almost on the verge of annihilation, in so pitiable a condition and behold, he hopeth from me a good issue from his trouble. He hath made known to me his situation after having concealed it for so long a time: if I do not befriend him in his misfortune I should resemble him who would build upon water and thus would aid him to annihilate his existence. By the magnanimity of my God, I will further him with my property and with my soul. I will divorce my cousin and will marry her to him and I will not change my character, my generosity nor my resolution. The Rawi says, that young woman was his wife and his cousin, also a second wife as he was previously married to another, and she occupied the house, his own house containing all that he possessed of property and so forth, servants, odalisques and slaves. There was also his other house which was for his guests, for drinking and eating and to receive his friends and his company. Of this, however, he said nothing to his cousin-wife when he came to see her at certain times. When he heard that Ja'afar was in love with her he could not keep from saying to him, Be quiet, I take upon myself to dispel thy chagrin, and soon I shall have news of her, and if she is the daughter of the Naïb of Damascus I will take the proper steps for thee even though I should lose all my property; and if she is a slave-girl I will buy her for thee even were her price such as to take all I possess. Thus he calmed the anguish of Ja'afar the best way he could; then he went out from his own house and entered that of his cousin-wife without making any change in his habits or saying a single word save to his servants, Go to my uncle's and bring him to me. The boy then went for the uncle and brought him to Attaf, and when the uncle entered the nephew arose to receive him, embraced him and made him be seated, and, after he had been seated awhile, Attaf came to him and said, O my uncle! there is naught but good! Know that when God wills good to his servitor he shows to him the way and my heart inclines to Meccah, to the house of God, to visit the tomb of Mohammed (for whom be the most noble of prayers and the most complete of salutations!). I have decided to visit those places this year and I cannot leave behind me either attachments or debts or obligations; nothing in fact that can disturb the mind, for no one can know who will be the friend of the morrow. Here, then, is the writ of divorce of thy daughter and of my other wife. Now when his uncle heard that, he was troubled and exaggerating to himself the matter, he said, O son of my brother, what is it that impels thee to this? If thou depart and leave her and be absent as long as thou willest she is yet thy wife and thy dependent which is sufficient. But Attaf said, O my uncle, what hath been done is done. As soon as the young wife heard that, the abomination of desolation overcame her, she became as one in mourning and was upon the point of killing herself, because she loved her husband by reason of his relationship and his education. But this was done by Attaf only to please Ja’afar, and for that he was incited by his duty to do good to his fellow beings. Then Attaf left the house and said to himself, If I delay this matter it will be bruited abroad, and will come to the ears of my friend who will be afflicted and will be ashamed to marry, and what I have done will come to naught. The divorce of Attaf’s second spouse was only out of regard to his cousin-wife, and that there might not be an impediment to the success of his project. Then Attaf proceeded to his guesthouse and went in to Ja’afar, who when he saw him, asked where he had been. Attaf replied, Make yourself easy, O my brother, I am now occupied with your affair, I have sought out the young lady and I know her. She is divorced from her husband and her ‘iddah is not yet expired, so expand your breast and gladden your soul, for when her obligatory term of waiting shall be accomplished I will marry her to you. And Attaf ceased not to diver him by eating and drinking, amusements and shows, song and songstress until he knew that the ‘iddah of his cousin had ended; then he went to Ja’afar and said to him, Know, O my lord, that the father of the young woman thou sawest is one of my friends, and if I betroth her that would not be proper on my part and he will say: My friend hath not done well in betrothing my daughter to a man who is a stranger and whom I know not. He will take her and carry her to his own country and we shall be separated. Now I have an idea that has occurred to me, and ’tis to send out for you a tent with ten mamelukes and four servants upon horses and mules, baggage, stuffs, chests of dresses, and horses and gilded vehicles. Everything I have mentioned will be placed outside the city that no one shall know of thee, and I will say that thou art Ja’afar the Barmeky the Caliph’s Wazir. I will go to the Kady and the Wali and the Naïb and I will inform them of thee (as Ja’afar); so will they come out to meet and salute thee. Then thou wilt salute them and tell them that thou hast come on business of the Caliph. Thou must also say thou hast heard that Damascus is a very fine city and a hospitable, and add, I will go in to visit it and if it prove favourable to me I will remain and marry to establish between myself and its inhabitants relationship and friendship, and I would like you to seek for me a man of high position and noble origin who hath a beautiful cousin that I may marry. Attaf then said to Ja’afar, O my lord, we know one who hath a daughter of noble origin, that man is such-and-such an one, ask her of him for betrothal and say to him, Here is her dowry, which is all that thou hast in the chests. Then produce a purse of a thousand dinars and distribute them among those present, and display the characteristic of the Barmekys, and take out a piece of silken stuff and order them to draw up the marriage contract immediately. If they sign it, declare to them that thou wilt not enter the city because thou art pressed and thy bride will come to thee. Should thou do thus, thou wilt accomplish what thou desirest, God willing, then leave instantly and order that the tents be struck, the camels loaded, and set out for thine own country in peace. Know that all I shall do for you is little for the rights of friendship and devotedness. Ja’afar sprang up to kiss the hand of Attaf, but was prevented, then he thanked him and praised him and passed the night with him. The next morning at break of day he arose, made his ablutions, and having recited his morning prayer, accompanied his host to the outside of the city. Attaf ordered a great tent to be pitched and that everything necessary should be carried to it; of horses, camels, mules, slaves, mamelukes, chests containing all kinds of articles for distribution, and boxes holding purses of gold and silver. He dressed his guest in a robe worthy of a Wazir, and set up for him a throne and sent some slaves to the Naïb of Damascus to announce the arrival of Ja’afar on business of the Caliph. As soon as the Naïb of Damascus was informed of that, he went out accompanied by the notables of the city and of his government and met the Wazir Ja’afar, and kissing the ground between his hands, said to him, O my lord, why didst thou not inform me sooner in order that we might be prepared for thine arrival. Ja’afar said, That was not necessary, may God augment thy wealth, I have not come but with the intention to visit this city; I desire to stay in it for some time and I would also marry in it. I have learned that the Amír ‘Amr has a daughter of noble descent, I wish thou wouldst cause her to be brought before thee and that thou betroth her to me. The Naïb of Damascus said, Hearing is obeying. Her husband hath divorced her and desireth to go to al-Hejaz on the pilgrimage, and after her ‘iddah hath expired and there remaineth not any impediment the betrothal can take place. At the proper time the Naïb of Damascus caused to be present the father of the lady and spoke to him of what the Wazir Ja’afar had said and that he should betroth his daughter, so that there was nothing more for the father to say than, I hear and I obey. The Rawi says that Ja’afar ordered to be brought the dress of honour and the gold from the purses to be thrown out for distribution and commanded the presence of the Kady and witnesses; and, when they arrived, he bade them write the marriage contract. Then he brought forward and presented the ten chests and the ten purses of gold, the dowry of the bride, and all those present, high and low, and rich and poor gave him their best wishes and congratulations. After the father of the lady had taken the dowry he ordered the Kady to draw up the contract and presented to him a piece of satin; he also called for sugar-water to drink and set before them the table of viands, and they ate and washed their hands. Afterwards they served sweet dishes and fruits; and when that was finished and the contract passed, the Naïb of Damascus said to the Wazir, O my lord, I will prepare a house for thy residence and for the reception of thy wife. Ja’afar said, That cannot be; I am here on a commission of the Commander of the Faithful, and I wish to take my wife with me to Baghdad and only there can I have the bridal ceremonies. The father of the lady said, Enter unto thy bride and depart when thou wilt. Ja’afar replied, I cannot do that, but I wish thee to make up the trousseau of thy daughter and have it ready so as to depart this very day. We only wait, said the father of the bride, for the Naïb of Damascus to retire, to do what the Wazir commands. He answered, With love and good will; and the lady’s father set about getting together the trousseau and making her ready. He took her out and got her trousseau, mounted her upon a Hodaj, and when she arrived at Ja'afar's camp her people made their adieus and departed. When Ja'afar had ridden to some distance from Damascus and had arrived at Tiniat el 'Iqáb he looked behind him and perceived in the distance in the direction of Damascus a horseman galloping towards him; so he stopped his attendants and when the rider had come near them Ja'afar looked at him and behold it was Attaf. He had come out after him and cried, Hasten not, O my brother. And when he came up he embraced him and said, O my lord, I have found no rest without thee, O my brother Abu 'l-Hasan, it would have been better for me never to have seen thee nor known thee, for now I cannot support thine absence. Ja'afar thanked him and said to him, I have not been able to act against what thou hast prescribed for me and provided, but we pray God to bring near our reunion and never more separate us. He is Almighty to do what He willeth. After that Ja'afar dismounted and spread a silken carpet and they sat down together, and Attaf laid a tablecloth with duck, chicken, sweets and other delicacies, of which they ate and he brought out dry fruits and wine. They drank for an hour of the day when they remounted their horses and Attaf accompanied Ja'afar a way on the journey, when Ja'afar said to him, Every departer must return, and he pressed him to his breast and kissed him and said to him, O my brother Abu 'l-Hasan, do not interrupt the sending of thy letters; but make known to me about thyself, and thy condition as if I were present with thee. Then they bade each other adieu and each went on his way. When the young wife noticed that the camels had stopped on their march as well as their people, she put out her head from the Hodaj and saw her cousin dismounting with Ja'afar and they eating and drinking together and then in company to the end of the road where they bade adieu exchanging a recitation of poetry. So she said, The one, Wallahy, is my cousin Attaf and the other the man whom I saw seated under the window, and upon whom I sprinkled the water. Doubtless he is the friend of my cousin. He hath been seized with love for me, and complaining to my cousin, hath given him a description of me and of my house; and the devotedness of his character and the greatness of his soul must have impelled him to divorce me and to take steps to marry me to that man. The Rawi says that Attaf in bidding good-bye to Ja'afar left him joyful in the possession of the young lady for whom he was on the point of ruin by his love, and in having made the friendship of Attaf whom he intended to reward in gratitude for what he had done by him. So glad was he to have the young wife that everything that had taken place with Er-Rashid had passed out of his mind. In the meanwhile she was crying and lamenting over what had happened to her, her separation from her cousin and from her parents and her country, and bemoaning what she did and what she had been; and her scalding tears flowed while she recited these verses: —

I weep for these places and these beauties; blame not the lover if some day he's
 insane:
For the places the dear ones inhabit. O praise be to God! how sweet is their
 dwelling!
God protect the past days while with you, my dear friends, and in the same house
 may happiness join us!

On finishing this recitation she wept and lamented and recited again: —

I'm astonished at living without you at the troubles that come upon us:
I wish for you, dear absent ones, my wounded heart is still with you.

Then, still crying and lamenting, she went on: —

O you to whom I gave my soul, return; from you I wish'd to pluck it, but could
 not succeed:
Then pity the rest of a life that I've sacrificed for thee, before the hour of
 death my last look I will take:
If all of thee be lost astonished I'll not be; my astonishment would be that his

lot will be to another.

Presently the Wazir Ja'afar coming up to the Hodaj said to the young wife, O mistress of the Hodaj, thou hast killed us. When she heard this address she called to him with dejection and humility, We ought not to talk to thee for I am the cousin-wife of thy friend and companion Attaf, prince of generosity and devotion. If there be in thee any feeling of the self-denial of a man thou wilt do for him that which, in his devotion, he hath done for thee. When Ja'afar heard these words he became troubled and taking in the magnitude of the situation he said to the young lady, O thou! thou art then his cousin-wife? and said she, Yes! it is I whom thou sawest on such a day when this and that took place and thy heart attached itself to me. Thou hast told him all that. He divorced me, and while waiting for the expiration of my 'iddah diverted thee that such and such was the cause of all my trouble. Now I have explained to thee my situation: do thou the action of a man. When Ja'afar heard these words he uttered a loud cry and said, We are from God and to Him we return. O thou! thou art now to me an interdiction and hast become a sacred deposit until thy return to where it may please thee. Then said Ja'afar to a servant, Take good care of thy mistress. After which they set foward and travelled on day and night. Now Er-Rashid, after the departure of Ja'afar, became uneasy and sorrowful at his absence. He lost patience and was tormented with a great desire to see him again, while he regretted the conditions he had imposed as impossible to be complied with and obliging him to the extremity of tramping about the country like a vagabond, and forcing him to abandon his native land. He had sent envoys after him to search for him in every place, but he had never received any news of him, and was cast into great embarrassment by reason of his absence. He was always waiting to hear of him, and when Ja'afar had approached Baghdad and he, Er-Rashid, had received the good tidings of his coming, he went forth to meet him, and as soon as they came together they embraced each other, and the Caliph became content and joyful. They entered together into the palace and the Prince of True Believers seating Ja'afar at his side, said to him, Relate to me thy story where thou hast been during thine absence and what thou hast come upon. So Ja'afar told him then all that had happened from the time he left him until the moment of finding himself between his hands. Er-Rashid was greatly astonished and said, Wallahy, thou hast made me sorrowful for thine absence, and hast inspired me with great desire to see thy friend. My opinion is that thou divorce this young lady and put her on the road homeward accompanied by someone in whom thou hast confidence. If thy friend have an enemy he shall be our enemy, and if he have a friend he also shall be ours; after which we will make him come to us, and we shall see him and have the pleasure of hearing him and pass the time with him in joy. Such a man must not be neglected, we shall learn, by his generosity, bounty and useful things. Ja'afar answered, To hear is obedience. Then Ja'afar apportioned to the young lady a spacious house and servants and a handsome enclosure; and he treated with generosity those who had come with her as suite and followers. He also sent to her sets of furniture, mattresses and every thing else she might need, while he never intruded upon her and never saw her. He sent her his salutation and reassuring words that she should be returned to her cousin; and he made her a monthly allowance of a tousand dinars, besides the cost of her living. So far as to Ja'afar; but as to Attaf, when he had bidden adieu to Ja'afar and had returned to his country, those who were jealous of him took steps to ruin him with the Naïb of Damascus, to whom they said, O our lord, what is it that hath made thee neglect Attaf? Dost thou not know that the Wazir was his friend and that he went out after him to bid him adieu after our people had returned, and accompanied him as far as Katifa, when Ja'afar said to him, Hast thou need of anything O Attaf? he said Yes. Of what? asked the Wazir, and he answered, That thou send me an imperial rescript removing the Naïb of Damascus. Now this was promised to him, and the most prudent thing is that thou invite him to breakfast before he takes you to supper; success is in the opportunity and the assaulted profiteth by the assaulter. The Naïb of Damascus replied, Thou has spoken well, bring him to me immediately. The Naïb of Damascus replied, Thou hast spoken well, bring him to me immediately. The Rawi says that Attaf was in his own house, ignorant that anyone owed him grudge, when suddenly in the night he was surrounded and seized by the people of the Naïb of Damascus armed with swords and clubs. They beat him until he was covered with blood, and they dragged him along until they set him in presence of the Pasha of Damascus who ordered the pillage of his house and of his slaves and his servants and all his property and they took everything, his family and his domestics and his goods. Attaf asked, What is my crime? and he answered, O scoundrel, thou art an ignorant fellow of the rabble, dost dispute with the Naïbat of Damascus? Then the Swordman was ordered to strike his neck, and the man came forward and, cutting off a piece of his robe, with it blindfolded his eyes, and was about to strike his neck when one of the Emírs arose and said, Be not hasty, O my lord, but wait, for haste is the whisper of Satan, and the proverb saith: Man gaineth his ends by patience, and error accompanieth the hasty man. Then he continued, Do not press the matter of this man; perhaps he who hath spoken of him lieth and there is nobody without jealousy; so have patience, for thou mayest have to regret the taking of his life unjustly. Do not rest easy upon what may come to thee on the part of the Wazir Ja'afar, and if he learn what thou hast done by this man be not sure of thy life on his part. He will admit of no excuse for he was his friend and companion. When the Naïb of Damascus heard that he awoke from his slumber and conformed to the words of the Emir. He ordered that Attaf should be put in prison, enchained and with a padlock upon his neck, and bade them, after severely tightening the bonds, illtreat him. They dragged him out, listening neither to his prayers nor his supplications; and he cried every night, doing penance to God and praying to Him for deliverance from his affliction and his misfortune. In that condition he remained for three months. But one night as he woke up he humiliated himself before God and walked about his prison, where he saw no one; then, looking before him, he espied an opening leading from the prison to the outside of the city. He tried himself against his chain and succeeded in opening it; then, taking it from his neck, he went out from the gaol running at full speed. He concealed himself in a place, and darkness protected him until the opening of the city gate, when he went out with the people and hastening his march he arrived at Aleppo and entered the great mosk. There he saw a crod of strangers on the point of departure and Attaf asked them whither they were going, and they answered, To Baghdad.

Whereupon he cried, And I with you. They said, Upon the earth is our weight, but upon Allah is our nourishment. Then they went on their march until they arrived at Koufa after a travel of twenty days, and then continued journeying till they came to Baghdad. Here Attaf saw a city of strong buildings, and very rich in elegant palaces reaching to the clouds, a city containing the learned and the ignorant, and the poor and the rich, and the virtuous and the evil doer. He entered the city in a miserable dress, rags upon his shoulders, and upon his head a dirty, conical cap, and his hair had become long and hanging over his eyes and his entire condition was most wretched. He entered one of the mosks. For two days he had not eaten. He sat down, when a vagabond entered the mosk and seating himself in front of Attaf threw off from his shoulder a bag from which he took out bread and a chicken, and bread again and sweets and an orange, and olive and date-cake and cucumbers. Attaf looked at the man and at his eating, which was as the table of ‘Isa son of Miriam (upon whom be peace!). For four months he had not had a sufficient meal and he said to himself, I would like to have a mouthful of this good cheer and a piece of this bread, and then cried for very hunger. The fellow looked at him and said, Bravo! why dost thou squint and do what strangers do? By the protection of God, if you weep tears enough to fill the Jaxartes and the Bactrus and the Dajlah and the Euphrates and the river of Basrah and the stream of Antioch and the Orontees and the Nile of Egypt and the Salt Sea and the ebb and the flow of the Ocean, I will not let thee taste a morsel. But, said the buffoon, if thou wish to eat of chicken and white bread and lamb and sweets and mutton patties, go thou to the house of Ja’afar son of Yahya the Barmeky, who hath received hospitality from a Damascus man named Attaf. He bestoweth charity in honour of him in this manner, and he neither getteth up nor sitteth down without speaking of him. Now when Attaf heard these words from the buffoon he looked up to heaven and said, O Thou whose attributes are inscrutable, bestow thy benefits upon thy servant Attaf. Then he recited this couplet: —

Confide thy affairs to thy Creator; set aside thy pains and dismiss thy thoughts.

Then Attaf went to a paper-seller and got from him a piece of paper and borrowed an inkstand and wrote as follows: — From thy brother Attaf whom God knoweth. Let him who hath possessed the world not flatter himself, he will some day be cast down and will lose it in his bitter fate. If thou see me thou wilt not recognise me for my poverty and my misery; and, because of the change in situation and the reverses of the times, my soul and body are reduced by hunger, by the long journey I have made, until at last I have come to thee. And peace be with thee. Then he folded the paper and returning the pencase to its owner asked for the house of Ja'afar, and when it was shown to him he went there and stood at a distance before it. The doorkeepers saw him standing, neither commencing nor repeating a word, and nobody spoke to him, but as he was thus standing embarassed, an eunuch dressed in a striped robe and golden belt passed by him. Attaf remained, motionless before him, then went up to him, kissed his hands and said to him, O my lord, the Apostle of Allah (upon whom be peace and salutation) hath said, The medium of a good deed is like him who did it, and he who did it belongeth to the dwellers in heaven. The man said to him, What is thy need? and said he, I desire of thy goodness to send in this paper to thy lord and say to him, Thy brother Attaf is standing at the door. When the servant heard his words he got into a great and excessive rage so that his eyes swelled in his head and he asked, O cursed one, thou art then the brother of the Wazir Ja'afar! and as he had in his hand a rod with a golden end, he struck Attaf with it in the face and his blood flowed and he fell full length to the ground in his weakness from weeping and from receiving the blow. The Rawi says that God hath placed the instinct of good in the heart of some domestics, even as he hath placed that of evil in the heart of others. Another of the domestics was raised up against his companion by good will to Attaf and reproved him for striking the stranger and was answered, Didst thou not hear, O brother, that he pretended to be the brother of the Wazir Ja'afar? and the second one said, O man of evil, son of evil, slave of evil, O cursed one, O hog! is Ja'afar one of the prophets? is he not a dog of the earth like ourselves? Men are all brethren, of one father and one mother, of Adam and of Eve; and the poet hath said: —

Men by comparison all are brethren, their father is Adam their mother is Eve;

but certain people are preferable to others. Then he came up to Attaf and made him be seated and wiped off the blood from his face and washed him and shook off the dust that was upon him and said, O my brother, what is thy need? and said he, My need is the sending of this paper to Ja'afar. The servant took the paper from his hand and going in to Ja'afar the Barmeky found there the officers of the Governor and the Barmekys standing at his service on his right and on his left; and Ja'afar the Wazir who held in his hand a cup of wine was reciting poetry and playing and saying, O you all here assembled, the absent from the eye is not like the present in the heart; he is my brother and my friend and my benefactor, Attaf of Damascus, who was continuous in his generosity and his bounty and his benfactions to me; who for me divorced his cousin-wife and gave her to me. He made me presents of horses and slaves and damsels and stuffs in quantities that I might furnish her dower; and, if he had not acted thus, I should certainly have been ruined. He was my benefactor without knowing who I was, and generous to me without any idea of profiting by it. The Rawi says that when the good servant heard these words from his lord he rejoiced and coming forward he kneeled down before him and presented the paper. When Ja'afar read it he was in a state of intoxication and not being able to discern what he was doing he fell on his face to the floor while holding the paper and the glass in his hand, and he was wounded in the forehead so his blood ran and he fainted and the paper fell from his grasp. When the servant saw that he hastened to depart fearing the consequence; and the Wazir Ja'afar's friends seated their lord and staunched the blood. They exclaimed, There is no power and strength but in God the High, the Mighty. Such is the character of servants; they trouble the life of kings in their pleasures and annoy them in their humours: Wallahy, the writer of this paper merits nothing less than to be handed over to the Wali who shall give him five hundred lashes and put him in prison. Thereupon the Wazir's doorkeeper went out and asked for the owner of the paper, when Attaf answered, 'Tis I, O my lord. Then they seized him and sent him to the Wali and ordered him to give one hundred blows of the stick to the prisoner and to write upon his chain "for life." Thus they did with Attaf and carried him to the prison where he remained for two months when a child was born to Harun er-Rashid, who then ordered that alms should be distributed, and good done to all, and bade liberate all that were in prison and among those that were set free was Attaf. When he found himself out of gaol, beaten and famished and naked, he looked up to heaven and exclaimed, Thanks be to thee, O Lord, in every situation, and crying said, It must be for some fault committed by me in the past, for God had taken me into favour and I have said repaid Him in disobedience; but I pray to Him for pardon for having gone too far in my debauchery. Then he recited these verses: —

O God! the worshipper doth what he should not do; he is poor, depending on Thee: In the pleasures of life he forgetteth himself, in his ignorance, pardon Thou his faults.

Then he cried again and said to himself, What shall I do? If I set out for my country I may not reach it; if I arrive there, there will be no safety for my life on teh part of the Naïb, and if I remain here nobody knoweth me among the beggars and I cannot be for them of any use nor for myself as an aid or an intermediate. As for me, I had hope in that man, that he would raise me from my poverty. The affair hath turned out contrary to my expectations, and the poet was right when he said: —

O friend, I've run o'er the world west and east; all that I met with was pain
and fatigue:
I've frequented the men of the age, but never have found e'en a friend grateful
not even to me.

Once more he cried and exclaimed, God give me the grace of patience. After that he got up and walked away, and entered one of the mosks and staid there until afternoon. His hunger increased and he said, By Thy magnanimity and Thy majesty I shall ask nothing of anyone but of Thee. He remained in the mosk until it became dark when he went out for something, saying to himself, I have heard a call from the Prophet (on whom be the blessing and peace of Allah!) which said, God forbiddeth sleep in the Sanctuary and forbiddeth it to His worshippers. Then he arose, and went out from the mosk to some distance when he entered a ruined building after walking an hour, and here he stumbled in the darkness and fell upon his face. He saw something before him that he had struck with his foot and felt it move, and this was a lad that had been slain and a knife was in his side. Attaf rose up from off the body, his clothes stained with blood; he stood motionless and embarrassed, and while in that situation the Wali and his policemen stood at the door of the ruin and Attaf said to them, Come in and search. They entered with their torches and found the body of the murdered lad and the knife in him and the miserable Attaf standing at the head with his clothes stained with blood. When a man with a scarf saw him he arrested him and said to him, O Wretch, ’tis thou killedst him. Attaf said, Yes. Then said the Wali, Pinion him and take him to prison until we make our report to the Wazir Ja’afar. If he orders his death we will execute him. They did as ordered, and the next day the man with the scarf wrote to the Wazir, We went into a ruin and found there a man who had killed a lad and we interrogated him and he confessed that it was he who had done the deed, what are thine orders? The Wazir commanded them to put him to death; so they took Attaf from the prison to the place of execution and cut off a piece of his garment and with it bandaged his eyes. The Sworder said, O my lord, shall I strike his neck? and the Wali said, Strike! He brandished the sword which whistled and glittered in the air and was about to strike, when a cry from behind, Stop thy hand! was heard, and it was the voice of the Wazir Ja’afar who was out on a promenade. The Wali went to him and kissed the earth before him and the Wazir said to him, What is this great gathering here? He answered, ’Tis the execution of a young man of Damascus whom we found yesterday in a ruin; he had killed a lad of noble blood and we found the knife with him and his clothes spotted with blood. When I said to him, Is it thou that killedst him? he replied Yes three times. To-day I sent to thee my written report and thine Excellency ordered his death, saying, Let the sentence of God be executed, and now I have brought him out that his neck may be struck. Ja’afar said, Oh, hath a man of Damascus come into our country to find himself in a bad condition? Wallahy, that shall never be! Then he ordered that he should be brought to him. The Wazir did not recognise him, for Attaf’s air of ease and comfort had disappeared; so Ja'afar said to him, From what country art thou, O young man, and he answered, I am a man from Damascus. From the city or from the villages? Wallahy, O my lord, from Damascus city where I was born. Ja'afar asked, Didst thou happen to known there a man named Attaf? I know when thou wast his friend and he lodged thee in such-and-such a house and thou wentest out to such-and-such a garden; and I know when thou didst marry his cousin-wife, I know when he bade adieu to thee at Katifa where thou drankest with him. Ja'afar said, Yes, all that is true, but what became of him after he left me? He said, O my Lord, there happened to him this and that and he related to him everything from the time he quitted him up to the moment of his standing before him and then recited these verses: —

This age, must it make me its victim, and thou at the same time art living:
    wolves are seeking to devour me while thou the lion art here.
Every thirsty one that cometh his thirst is quenched by thee: can it be that I
    thirst while thou art still our refuge?

When he had finished the verses he said, O my lord, I am Attaf, and then recalled all that had taken place between them from first to last. While he was thus speaking a great cry was heard, and it came from a Sheikh who was saying, This is not humanity. They looked at the speaker, who was an old man with trimmed beard dyed with henna, and upon him was a blue kerchief. When Ja'afar saw him he asked him what was the matter, and he exclaimed, Take away the young man from under the sword, for there is no fault in him: he hath killed no one nor doth he know anything of the dead youth. Nobody but myself is the killer. The Wazir said, Then 'tis thou that killed him? and he answered. Yes. — Why didst thou kill him? hast thou not the fear of God in killing a Hashimy child? The old man said, He was my servant, serving me in the house and working with me at my trade. Every day he took from me some quarter-pieces of money and went to work for another man called Shumooshag, and to work with Nagísh, and with Gasís, and with Ghúbar, and with Gushír, and every day working with someone. They were jealous of my having him. ‘Odis the sweeper and Abu Butrán the stoker, and everyone wanted to have him. In vain I corrected him, but he would not abide corrected and ceased not to do thus until I killed him in the ruin, and I have delivered myself from the torment he gave me. That is my story. I kept silent until I saw thee when I made myself known at the time thou savest the head of this young man from the sword. Here I am standing before you: strike my neck and take life for life. Pray do no harm to this young man, for he hath committed no fault. The Wazir said, Neither to thee nor to him. Then he ordered to be brought the parents of the dead lad and reconciled them with the old man, whom he pardoned. He mounted Attaf upon a horse and took him to his house; then he entered the palace of the Caliph and kissed the earth before him and said, Behold Attaf, he who was my host at Damascus, and of whom I have related his treatment of me and his kindness and generosity, and how he preferred me to himself. Er-Rashid said, Bring him in to me immediately. He presented him to the Caliph in the miserable state in which he had found him; and when he entered, he made his salutations in the best manner and with the most eloquent language. Er-Rashid answered and said to him, What is this state in which I find you? and Attaf wept and made his complaint in these verses: —

Troubles, poverty and distant sojourn far away from the dear ones, and a
    crushing desire to see them:
The soul is in them, they became like their fellows, thus the enigma remains in
    the world;
While the generous is stricken with misfortune and grief, where’s the miser that
    finds not good fortune therein?

When Attaf had finished he conversed with the Caliph about his history and all his life from beginning to end; and Er-Rashid cried and suffered at what had happened to him after the loss of his riches, nor did he cease to weep with Ja’afar until the close of Attaf’s story. The Sheikh who had killed the lad and had been liberated by Ja’afar came in and Er-Rashid laughed at seeing him. Then he caused Attaf to be seated and made him repeat his story. And when Attaf had finished speaking the Caliph looked at Ja'afar and said, The proverb goeth: —

Good for good, to the giver the merit remains; evil for evil, the doer's most cruel.

Afterwards the Caliph said to Ja'afar, Tell me what thou didst for thy brother Attaf before he came to thee, and he answered, O Commander of the Faithful, he came upon me suddenly, and I now prepare for him three millions of gold, and the like of it in horses, and in slaves, and in boys, and in dresses; and the Caliph said, From me the same. Here endeth the last leaf of the writ, but the Wari says that two days afterwards Ja'afar restored to his friend Attaf his beloved cousin-wife, saying to him, I have divorced her and now I deliver over to thee intact the precious deposit that thou didst place in my hands. Already hath the order from the Caliph been despatched to Damascus enjoining the arrest of the Naïb, to place him in irons and imprison him until further notice. Attaf passed several months in Baghdad enjoying the pleasures of the city in company with his friend Ja'afar and Er-Rashid. He would have liked to have stayed there all his life, but numerous letters from his relations and his friends praying him to return to Damascus, he thought it his duty to do so, and asked leave of the Caliph, who granted it, not without regrets and fears for his future condition. Er-Rashid appointed him Wali of Damascus and gave him the imperial rescript; and a great escort of horses, mules and dromedaries, with abundant magnificent presents accompanied him as far as Damascus, where he was received with great pomp. All the city was illuminated as a mark of joy for the return of Attaf, so loved and respected by all classes of the people, and above all by the poor who had wept incessantly for him in his absence. As to the Naïb, a second decree of the Caliph ordered his being put to death for his oppression of the people, but by the generous intercession of Attaf Er-Rashid contented himself with commuting the sentence to banishment. Attaf governed his people many years with justice and prosperity, protector of his happy subjects and in the enjoyment of the delights and pleasures of life, until the Angel of Death overtook him and summoned him to

Paradise.

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HISTORY OF PRINCE HABIB

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AND WHAT BEFEL HIM WITH THE

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LADY DURRAT AL-GHAWWAS.

Here we begin to indite the history of Sultan Habib and of what befel him with Durrat al-Ghawwas.[378]

It is related (but Allah is All-knowing of His unknown and All-cognisant of what took place and forewent in the annals of folk!) that there was, in days of yore and in times and tides long gone before, a tribe of the tribes of the Arabs hight Banú Hilál[379] whose head men were the Emir Hilál and the Emir Salámah.[380] Now this Emir Salamah had well nigh told out his tale of days without having been blessed with boon of child; withal he was a ruler valiant, masterful, a fender of his foes and a noble knight of portly presence. He numbered by the thousand horsemen the notablest of cavaliers and he came to overrule three-score-and-six tribes of the Arabs. One chance night of the nights as he lay sleeping in the sweetness of slumber, a Voice addressed him saying, "Rise forthright and know thy wife, whereby she shall conceive under command of Allah Almighty." Being thus disturbed of his rest the Emir sprang up and compressed his spouse Kamar al-Ashráf;[381] she became pregnant by that embrace and when her days came to an end she bare a boy as the full moon of the fulness-night who by his father's hest was named Habíb.[382] And as time went on his sire rejoiced in him with joy exceeding and reared him with fairest rearing and bade them teach him Koran-reading together with the glorious names of Almighty Allah and instruct him in writing and in all the arts and sciences. After this he bestowed robes of honour and gifts of money and raiment upon the teachers who had made the Sultan[383] Habib, when he reached the age of seventeen, the most intelligent and penetrating and knowing amongst the sons of his time. And indeed men used to admire at the largeness of his understanding and were wont to say in themselves, "There is no help but that this youth shall rise to dignity (and what dignity!) whereof men of highmost intellect shall make loud mention." For he could write the seven caligraphs[384] and he could recite traditions and he could improvise poetry; and, on one occasion when his father bade him versify impromptu, that he might see what might come thereof, he intoned,

“O my sire, I am lord of all lere man knows or knew — * Have
enformed my vitals with lore and with legend true;
Nor cease I repeat what knowledge this memory guards * And my writ
as ruby and pearl doth appear to view.”

So the Emir Salamah his sire marvelled at the elegance of his son’s diction; and the Notables of the clan, after hearing his poetry and his prose, stood astounded at their excellence; and presently the father clasped his child to his breast and forthright summoned his governor, to whom there and then he did honour of the highmost. Moreover he largessed him with four camels carrying loads of gold and silver and he set him over one of his subject tribes of the Arabs; then said he to him, “Indeed thou hast done well, O Shaykh; so take this good and fare therewith to such a tribe and rule it with justice and equity until the day of thy death.” Replied the governor, “O King of the Age, I may on no wise accept thy boons, for that I am not of mankind but of Jinn-kind; nor have I need of money or requirement of rule. Know thou, O my lord, that erst I sat as Kázi amongst the Jinns and I was enthroned amid the Kings of the Jánn, whenas one night of the nights a Voice[385] addressed me in my sleep saying, ‘Rise and hie thee to the Sultan Habib son of the Emir Salamah ruler of the tribes of the Arabs subject to the Banu Hilal and become his tutor and teach him all things teachable; and, if thou gainsay going, I will tear thy soul from thy body.’ Now when I saw this marvel-vision in my sleep, I straightway arose and repairing to thy son did as I was bidden.”[386] But as the Emir Salamah heard the words of this Shaykh he bowed him down and kissing his feet cried, “Alhamdolillah — laud to the Lord, who hath vouchsafed thee to us of His bounty; and indeed thy coming to us was of good omen, O Judge of the Jann.” “Where is thy son?” quoth the governor, and quoth the father, “Ready, aye ready;” then he summoned his child and when the Shaykh looked upon his pupil he wept with sore weeping and cried, “Parting from thee, O Habib, is heavy upon us,” presently adding, “Ah! were ye to wot all that shall soon befal this youth after my departure and when afar from me!”[387] Those present in the assembly at once asked saying,

“And what shall, O Shaykh, to us fall forthright?” * Quoth he,
“Sore marvels shall meet your sight:
No heart have I to describe it you.” * Then approached Habib the
same tutor-wight;
And clasping the youth to the breast of him, * Kissed his cheek a-
shrieking the shrillest shright.[388]

Whereupon all about them were perturbed and were amated and amazed at the action of the Shaykh when, vanishing from their view, he could nowhere be seen. Then the Emir Salamah addressed the lieges saying, “Ho ye Arabs, who wotteth what presently shall betide my son? would Heaven I had one to advise him!” Hereupon said his Elders and Councillors, “We know of none.” But the Sultan Habib brooded over the disappearance of his governor and bespake his sire weeping bitter tears the while, “O my father, where be he who brought me up and enformed me with all manner knowledge?” and the Emir replied, “O my son, one day of the days he farewelled us and crying out with a loud cry evanished from our view and we have seen him no more.” Thereupon the youth improvised and said,

“Indeed I am scourged by those ills whereof I felt affray, ah! * By
parting and thoughts which oft compellèd my soul to say, ‘Ah!’
Oh saddest regret in vitals of me that ne’er ceaseth, nor * Shall
minished be his love that still on my heart doth prey, ah!
Where hath hied the generous soul my mind with lere adorned? *
And
alas! what hath happened, O sire, to me, and well-away, ah!”

Hereat the Emir Salamah shed tears (as on like wise did all present) and quoth he to his son, “O Habib, we have been troubled by his action,” and quoth the youth, “How shall I endure severance from one who fostered me and brought me to honour and renown and who raised my degree so high?” Then began he to improvise saying,

“Indeed this pine in my heart grows high, * And in eyeballs wake
doth my sleep outvie:
You marched, O my lords, and from me hied far * And you left a

lover shall aye outcry:
I wot not where on this earth you be * And how long this patience when none is nigh:
Ye fared and my eyeballs your absence weep, * And my frame is meagre, my heart is dry.”

Now whilst the Emir Salamah was sitting in his seat of dignity and the Sultan Habib was improvising poetry and shedding tears in presence of his sire, they heard a Voice which announced itself and its sound was audible whilst its personality was invisible. Thereupon the youth shed tears and cried, “O father mine, I need one who shall teach me horsemanship and the accidents of edge and point and onset and offset and spearing and spurring in the Maydán; for my heart loveth knightly derring-do to plan, such as riding in van and encountering the horseman and the valiant man.” And the while they were in such converse behold, there appeared before them a personage rounded of head, long of length and dread, with turband wide dispread, and his breadth of breast was armoured with doubled coat of mail whose manifold rings were close-enmeshed after the model of Dáúd[389] the Prophet (upon whom be The Peace!). Moreover he hent in hand a mace erst a block cut out of the live hard rock, whose shock would arrest forty braves of the doughtiest; and he was baldrick’d with an Indian blade that quivered in the grasp, and he bestrode, with a Samhari[390] lance at rest, a bay destrier of black points whose peer was not amongst the steeds of the Arabs. Then he took his station standing as a vassal between the Emir Salamah’s hands and he addressed a general salam and he greeted all that stood a-foot or were seated. His salute they repealed and presently the pages hastened forwards and aided him alight from his charger’s back; and after waiting for a full-told hour that he might take somewhat of repose, the stranger-knight and doughty wight advanced and said, “Ho thou the Emir, I came hither to fulfil the want whereof thou expressedst a wish; and, if such prove thy pleasure, I will teach thy son fray and fight and prowess in the plain of sword-stroke and lance-lunge. But ere so doing I would fain test thy skill in cavalarice; so do thou, O Emir, be first to appear as champion and single combatant in the field when I will show thee what horsemanship is.”

“Hearkening and obeying,” replied the Emir, “and if thou desire the duello with us we will not baulk thee thereof.” Hereat his Shaykhs and Chieftains sprang up and cried to him, “O Emir, Allah upon thee, do not meet in fight this cavalier for that thou wottest not an he be of mankind or of Jinn-kind; so be thou not deceived by his sleights and snares.” “Suffer me this day,” quoth the Emir, “to see the cavalarice of this cavalier, and, if over me he prevail, know him to be a knight with whom none may avail.” Speaking thus the Emir arose and hied him to his tent where he bade the slaves bring forth the best of his habergeons; and, when all these were set before him, he took from them a Davidian suit of manifold rings and close-meshed, which he donned, and he baldrick’d himself with a scymitar of Hindi steel, hadst thou smitten therewith a cliff it had cleft it in twain or hadst thou stricken a hill it had been laid level as a plain; and he hent in hand a Rudaynían lance[391] of Khatt Hajar, whose length was thirty ells and upon whose head sat a point like unto a basilisk’s tongue; and lastly he bade his slaves bring him his courser which in the race was the fleetest-footed of all horses. Then the two combatants took the plain accompanied by the tribesmen nor did one of them all, or great or small, remain in camp for desire to witness the fight of these champions who were both as ravening lions. But first the stranger-knight addressed his adversary and speaking with free and eloquent tongue quoth he, “I will encounter thee, O Emir Salamah, with the encountering of the valiant; so have thou a heed of me for I am he hath overthrown the Champions some and all.” At these words each engaged his foeman and the twain forwards pressed for a long time, and the Raven of cut-and-thrust croaked over the field of fight and they exchanged strokes with the Hindi scymitar and they thrust and foined with the Khatti spear and more than one blade and limber lance was shivered and splintered, all the tribesmen looking on the while at both. And they ceased not to attack and retire and to draw near and draw off and to heave and fence until their forearms ailed and their endeavour failed. Already there appeared in the Emir Salamah somewhat of weakness and weariness; natheless when he looked upon his adversary’s skill in the tourney and encounter of braves he saw how to meet all the foeman’s sword-strokes with his targe: however at last fatigue and loss of strength prevailed over him and he knew that he had no longer the force to fight; so he stinted his endeavour and withdrew from brunt of battle. Hereat the stranger-knight alighted and falling at the Emir's feet kissed them and cried, "O Sovran of the Age, I came not hither to war with thee but rather with the design of teaching thy son, the Sultan Habib, the complete art of arms and make him the prow cavalier of his day." Replied Salamah, "In very sooth, O horseman of the age, thou hast spoken right fairly in thy speech; nor did I design with thee to fight nor devised I the duello or from steed to alight;[392] nay, my sole object was my son to incite that he might learn battle and combat aright, and the charge of the heroic Himyarite[393] to meet with might." Then the twain dismounted and each kissed his adversary; after which they returned to the tribal camp and the Emir bade decorate it and all the habitations of the Arab clans with choicest decoration, and they slaughtered the victims and spread the banquets and throughout that day the tribesmen ate and drank and fed the travellers and every wayfarer and the mean and mesquin and all the miserables. Now as soon as the Sultan Habib was informed concerning that cavalier how he had foiled his father in the field of fight, he repaired to him and said, "Peace be with him who came longing for us and designing our society! Who art thou, Ho thou the valorous knight and foiler of foemen in fight?" Said the other, "Learn thou, O Habib, that Allah hath sent me theewards." "And, say me, what may be thy name?" "I am hight Al-'Abbús,[394] the Knight of the Grim Face." "I see thee only smiling of countenance whilst thy name clean contradicteth thy nature;" quoth the youth. Presently the Emir Salamah committed his son to the new governor saying, "I would thou make me this youth the Brave of his epoch;" whereto the knight replied, "To hear is to obey, first Allah then thyself and to do suit and service of thy son Habib." And when this was determined youth and governor went forth to the Maydan every day and after a while of delay Habib became the best man of his age in fight and fray. Seeing this his teacher addressed him as follows. "Learn, O Sultan Habib, that there is no help but thou witness perils and affrights and adventures, wherefor is weak the description of describers and thou shalt say in thyself, 'Would heaven I had never sighted such and I were of these same free.' And thou shalt fall into every hardship and horror until thou be united with the beautiful Durrat al-Ghawwás, Queen-regnant over the Isles of the Sea. Meanwhile to affront all the perils of the path thou shalt fare forth from thy folk and bid adieu to thy tribe and patrial stead; and, after enduring that which amateth man's wit, thou shalt win union with the daughter of Queen Kamar al-Zamán."[395] But when Habib heard these words concerning the "Pearl of the Diver" his wits were wildered and his senses were agitated and he cried to Al-Abbús, "I conjure thee by Allah say me, is this damsel of mankind or of Jinn-kind." Quoth the other, "Of Jinn-kind, and she hath two Wazirs, one of either race, who overrule all her rulers, and a thousand islands of the Isles of the Sea are subject to her command, while a host of Sayyids and Sharífs[396] and Grandees hath flocked to woo her, bringing wealthy gifts and noble presents, yet hath not any of them won his wish of her but all returned baffled and baulked of their will." Now the Sultan Habib hearing this from him cried in excess of perturbation and stress of confusion, "Up with us and hie we home where we may take seat and talk over such troublous matter and debate anent its past and its future." "Hearkening and obedience," rejoined the other; so the twain retired into privacy in order to converse at ease concerning the Princess, and Al-Abbus began to relate in these words —

Richard Francis Burton's translation: detailed table of contents

The History of Durrat al-Ghawwas.

Whilome there was a Sovran amongst the Kings of the Sea, hight Sábúr, who reigned over the Crystalline Isles,[397] and he was a mighty ruler and a generous, and a masterful potentate and a glorious. He loved women and he was at trouble to seek out the fairest damsels; yet many of his years had gone by nor yet had he been blessed with boon of boy. So one day of the days he took thought and said in himself, "To this length of years I have attained and am well nigh at life's end and still am I childless: what then will be my case?" Presently, as he sat upon his throne of kingship, he saw enter to him an Ifrit fair of face and form, the which was none other than King 'Atrús[398] of the Jánn, who cried, "The Peace be upon thee, Ho thou the King! and know that I have come to thee from my liege lord who affecteth thee. In my sleep it befel that I heard a Voice crying to me, 'During all the King's days never hath he been vouchsafed a child, boy or girl; so now let him accept my command and he shall win to his wish. Let him distribute justice and largesse and further the rights of the wronged and bid men to good and forbid them from evil and lend not aid to tyranny or to innovation in the realm and persecute not the unfortunate, and release from gaol all the prisoners he retaineth.' At these words of the Voice I awoke astartled by my vision and I hastened to thee without delay and I come with design to inform thee, O King of the Age, that I have a daughter, hight Kamar al- Zaman, who hath none like her in her time, and no peer in this tide, and her I design giving thee to bride. The Kings of the Jann have ofttimes asked her in marriage of me but I would have none of them save a ruler of men like thyself and Alhamdolillah — glory be to God, who caused thy Highness occur to my thought, for that thy fame in the world is goodly fair and thy works make for righteousness. And haply by the blessing of these thou shalt beget upon my daughter a man child, a pious heir and a virtuous." Replied the King, "Ho thou who comest to us and desirest our weal, I accept thine offer with love and good will." Then Sabur, the King of the Crystalline Isles, bade summon the Kazi and witnesses, and quoth the Ifrit, "I agree to what thou sayest, and whatso thou proposest that will I not oppose." So they determined upon the dowry and bound him by the bond of marriage with the daughter of Al-'Atrus, King of the Jinns, who at once sent one of his Flying Jann to bring the bride. She arrived forthright when they dressed and adorned her with all manner ornaments, and she came forth surpassing all the maidens of her era. And when King Sabur went in unto her he found her a clean maid: so he lay that night with her and Almighty Allah so willed that she conceived of him. When her days and months of pregnancy were sped, she was delivered of a girl-babe as the moon, whom they committed to wet-nurses and dry-nurses, and when she had reached her tenth year, they set over her duennas who taught her Koran-reading and writing and learning and belles-lettres; brief, they brought her up after the fairest of fashions. Such was the lot[399] of Durrat al-Ghawwas, the child of Kamar al-Zaman, daughter to King 'Atrus by her husband King Sabur. But as regards the Sultan Habib and his governor Al-Abbus, the twain ceased not wandering from place to place in search of the promised damsel until one day of the days when the youth entered his father's garden and strolled the walks adown amid the borders[400] and blossoms of basil and of rose full blown and solaced himself with the works of the Compassionate One and enjoyed the scents and savours of the flowers there bestrown; and, while thus employed, behold, he suddenly espied the maiden, Durrat al-Ghawwas hight, entering therein as she were the moon; and naught could be lovelier than she of all earth supplies, gracious as a Huriyah of the Virgins of Paradise, to whose praise no praiser could avail on any wise. But when the Sultan Habib cast upon her his eyes he could no longer master himself and his wits were bewildered from the excitement of his thoughts; so he regarded her with a long fixed look and said in himself, "I fear whenas she see me that she will vanish from my sight." Accordingly, he retired and clomb the branches of a tree in a stead where he could not be seen and whence he could see her at his ease. But as regards the Princess, she ceased not to roam about the Emir Salamah's garden until there approached her two score of snow-white birds each accompanied by a handmaid of moon-like beauty. Presently they settled upon the ground and stood between her hands saying, "Peace be upon thee, O our Queen and Sovran Lady." She replied, "No welcome to you and no greeting; say me, what delayed you until this hour when ye know that I am longing to meet the Sultan Habib, the dear one, son of Salamah, and I long to visit him for that he is the dearling of my heart. Wherefor I bade you accompany me and ye obeyed not, and haply ye have made mock of me and of my commandment." "We never gainsay thy behest," replied they, "or in word or in deed;" and they fell to seeking her beloved. Hearing this the Sultan Habib's heart was solaced and his mind was comforted and his thoughts were rightly directed and his soul was reposed; and when he was certified of her speech, he was minded to appear before her; but suddenly fear of her prevailed over him and he said to his thoughts, "Haply she will order one of the Jinns to do me die; so 'twere better to have patience and see what Allah shall purpose for me of His Almighty will." But the Princess and her attendants ceased not wandering about the garden from site to site and side to side till they reached the place wherein the Sultan Habib lay in lurking; when Durrat al-Ghawwas there stood still and said in herself, "Now I came not from my capital save on his account, and I would see and be seen by him even as the Voice informed me of him, O ye handmaidens; and peradventure hath the same informed him of me." Then the Princess and her suite, drawing still nearer to his place of concealment, found a lakelet in the Arab's garden brimful of water amiddlemost whereof stood a brazen lion, through whose mouth the water entered to issue from his tail. Hereat the Princess marvelled and said to her bondswomen, "This be none other than a marvellous lake, together with the lion therein; and when, by the goodwill of Almighty Allah, I shall have returned home, I will let make a lakelet after this fashion, and in it set a lion of brass." Thereupon she ordered them to doff their dress and go down to the piece of water and swim about; but they replied, "O our lady, to hear is to obey thy commandment, but we will not strip nor swim save with thee." Then she also did off her dress and all stripped themselves and entered the lakelet in a body, whereupon the Sultan Habib looked through the leaves to solace himself with the fair spectacle and he ejaculated, "Blessed be the Lord the best of Creators!" And when the handmaids waxed aweary of swimming, the Princess commanded them to come forth the water, and said, "Whenas Heaven willeth that the desire of my heart be fulfilled in this garden, what deem ye I should do with my lover?" and quoth they, "'Twould only add to our pleasure and gladness." Quoth she, "Verily my heart assureth me that he is here and hidden amongst the trees of yon tangled brake;" and she made signs with her hand whither Habib lay in lurking-place; and he, espying this, rejoiced with joy galore than which naught could be more, and exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great; what meaneth this lady? Indeed, I fear to stay in this stead lest she come hither and draw me forth and put me to shame; and 'twere better that of mine own accord I come out of my concealment and accost her and suffer her to do all she designeth and desireth." So he descended from the topmost of the tree wherein he had taken refuge and presented himself before the Princess Durrat Al-Ghawwas, who drew near and cried to him, "O Habib, O welcome to Habib! and is it thus that we have travailed with love of thee and longing for thee, and where hast thou been all this time, O my dearling, and O coolth of my eyes and O slice of my liver?" Replied he, "I was in the head of yonder huge tree to which thou pointedst with thy finger." And as they looked each at other she drew nearer to him and fell to improvising,

"Thou hast doomed me, O branchlet of Bán, to despair * Who in worship and honour was wont to fare, —
Who lived in rule and folk slaved for me * And hosts girded me round every hest to bear!"

And anon quoth the Sultan Habib, "Alhamdolillah — laud be to the Lord, who deigned show me thy face and thy form! Can it be thou kennest not what it was that harmed me and sickened me for thy sake, O Durrat al-Ghawwas?" Quoth she, "And what was it hurt thee and ailed thee?" "It was the love of thee and longing for thee!" "And who was the first to tell thee and make thee ware of me?" He replied saying, "One day it so befel, as I was amongst my family and my tribe, a Jinni Al-Abbus hight became my governor and taught me the accidents of thrust and cut and cavalarice; and ere he left he commended thy beauty and loveliness and foretold to me all that would pass between thee and me. So I was engrossed with affection for thee ere my eyes had sight of thee, and thenceforwards I lost all the pleasures of sleep, nor were meat and eating sweet to me, nor were drink and wine, draughts a delight to me: so Alhamdolillah — praise be to Allah, who deigned conjoin me in such union with my heart's desire!" Hereat the twain exchanged an embrace so long that a swoon came upon them and both fell to the ground in a fainting fit, but after a time the handmaidens raised them up and besprinkled their faces with rose-water which at once revived them. All this happened, withal the Emir Salamah wotted naught of what had befallen his son the Sultan Habib nor did his mother weet that had betided her child; and the husband presently went in to his spouse and said, "Indeed this boy hath worn us out: we see that o' nights he sleepeth not in his own place and this day he fared forth with the dawn and suffered us not to see a sight of him." Quoth the wife, "Since the day he went to Al-Abbus, thy boy fell into cark and care;" and quoth the husband, "Verily our son walked about the garden and Allah knoweth that therefrom is no issue anywhither. So there shalt thou find him and ask him of himself." And they talked over this matter in sore anger and agitation. Meanwhile as the Sultan Habib sat in the garden with the handmaids waiting upon him and upon the Princess Durrat al-Ghawwas, there suddenly swooped upon them a huge bird which presently changed form to a Shaykh seemly of aspect and semblance who approached and kissing their feet humbled himself before the lover and his beloved. The youth marvelled at such action of the Shaykh, and signalled to the Princess as to ask, "Who may be this old man?" and she answered in the same way, "This is the Wazir who caused me forgather with thee;" presently adding to the Shaykh, "What may be thy need?" "I came hither for the sake of thee," he replied, "and unless thou fare forthright to thy country and kingdom the rule of the Jánn will pass from thy hand; for that the Lords of the land and Grandees of the realm seek thy loss and not a few of the nobles have asked me saying, O Wazir, where is our Queen? I answered, She is within her palace and to-day she is busied with some business. But such pretext cannot long avail, and thou, unless thou return with me to the region of thy reign there shall betray thee some one of the Marids and the hosts will revolt against thee and thy rule will go to ruin and thou wilt be degraded from command and sultanate." "What then is thy say and what thy bidding?" enquired she, and he replied, "Thou hast none other way save departure from this place and return to thy realm." Now when these words reached the ear of Durrat al-Ghawwas, her breast was straitened and she waxed sorrowful with exceeding sorrow for severance from her lover whom she addressed in these words, "What sayest thou anent that thou hast heard? In very sooth I desire not parting from thee and the ruin of my reign as little do I design; so come with me, O dearling of my heart, and I will make thee liege lord over the Isles of the Sea and sole master thereof." Hereat the Sultan Habib said in his soul, "I cannot endure parting from my own people; but as for thee thy love shall never depart from thee:" then he spake aloud, "An thou deign hear me, do thou abandon that which thou purposest and bid thy Wazir rule over the Isles and thy patrial stead; so shall we twain, I and thou, live in privacy for all time and enjoy the most joyous of lives." "That may never be," was her only reply; after which she cried to the Wazir saying, "Carry me off that I fare to my own land." Then after farewelling her lover, she mounted the Emir-Wazir's back[401] and bade him bear her away, whereat he took flight and the forty handmaidens flew with him, towering high in air. Presently, the Sultan Habib shed bitter tears; his mother hearing him weeping sore as he sat in the garden went to her husband and said, "Knowest thou not what calamity hath befallen thy son that I hear him there groaning and moaning"" Now when the parents entered the garden, they found him spent with grief and the tears trickled adown his cheeks like never-ceasing rain-showers;[402] so they summoned the pages who brought cucurbits of rosewater wherewith they besprinkled his face. But as soon as he recovered his senses and opened his eyes, he fell to weeping with excessive weeping and his father and mother likewise shed tears for the burning of their hearts and asked him, "O Habib, what calamity hath come down to thee and who of his mischief hath overthrown thee? Inform us of the truth of thy case." So he related all that had betided between him and Durrat-al-Ghawwas, and his mother wept over him while his father cried, "O Habib, do thou leave this say and this thy desire cast away that the joys of meat and drink and sleep thou may enjoy alway." But he made answer, "O my sire, I will not slumber upon this matter until I shall sleep the sleep of death." "Arise thou, O my child," rejoined the Emir, "and let us return homewards,"[403] but the son retorted, "Verily I will not depart from this place wherein I was parted from the dearling of my heart." So the sire again urged him saying, "These words do thou spare nor persist in this affair because therefrom for thee I fear;" and he fell to cheering him and comforting his spirits. After a while the Sultan Habib arose and fared homewards beside his sire who kept saying to him, "Patience, O my child, the while I assist thee in thy search for this young lady and I send those who shall bring her to thee." "O my father," rejoined the son, "I can no longer endure parting from her; nay, 'tis my desire that thou load me sundry camels with gold and silver and plunder and moneys that I may go forth to seek her: and if I win to my wish and Allah vouchsafe me length of life I will return unto you; but an the term of my days be at hand then the behest be to Allah, the One, the Omnipotent. Let not your breasts be straitened therefor and do ye hold and believe that if I abide with you and see not the beloved of my soul I shall perish of my pain while you be standing by to look upon my death. So suffer me to wayfare and attain mine aim; for from the day when my mother bare me 'twas written to my lot that I journey over wild and wold and that I see and voyage over the seas seven-fold." Hereupon he fell to improvising these verses,

"My heart is straitened with grief amain * And my friends and familiars have wrought me pain;
And whene'er you're absent I pine, and fires * In my heart beweep what it bears of bane:
O ye, who fare for the tribe's domain, * Cry aloud my greetings to friends so fain!"

Now when the Emir Salamah heard these his son's verses, he bade pack for him four camel loads of the rarest stuffs, and he largessed to him a she-dromedary laden with thrones of red gold; then he said to him, "Lo, O my son, I have given thee more than thou askedst." "O my father," replied Habib, "where are my steed and my sword and my spear?" Hereat the pages brought forward a mail-coat Davidian[404] and a blade Maghrabian and a lance Khattian and

Samharian, and set them between his hands; and the Sultan Habib donning the habergeon and drawing his sabre and sitting lance in rest backed his steed, which was of the noblest blood known to all the Arabs. Then quoth he, "O my father, is it thy desire to send with me a troop of twenty knights that they may escort me to the land of Al-Yaman and may anon bring me back to thee?" "My design," quoth the sire, "is to despatch those with thee who shall befriend thee upon the road;" and, when Habib prayed him do as he pleased, the Emir appointed to him ten knights, valorous wights, who dreaded naught of death however sudden and awesome. Presently, the youth farewelled his father and mother, his family and his tribe, and joining his escort, mounted his destrier when Salamah, his sire, said to his company, "Be ye to my son obedient in all he shall command you;" and said they, "Hearing and obeying." Then Habib and his many turned away from home and addressed them to the road when he began to improvise the following lines,

My longing grows less and far goes my cark * After flamed my heart
with the love-fire stark;
As I ride to search for my soul's desire * And I ask of those
faring to Al-Irák."

On this wise it befel the Sultan Habib and his farewelling his father and mother; but now lend ear to what came of the knights who escorted him. After many days of toil and travail they waxed discontented and disheartened; and presently taking counsel one with other, they said, "Come, let us slay this lad and carry off the loads of stuffs and coin he hath with him; and when we reach our homes and be questioned concerning him, let us say that he died of the excess of his desire to Princess Durrat al-Ghawwas." So they followed this rede, while their lord wotted naught of the ambush laid for him by his followers. And having ridden through the day when the night of offence[405] was dispread, the escort said, "Dismount we in this garden[406] that here we may take our rest during the dark hours, and when morning shall morrow we will resume our road." The Sultan Habib had no mind to oppose them, so all alighted and in that garden took seat and whatso of victual was with them produced; after which they ate and drank their sufficiency and lay down to sleep all of them save their lord, who could not close eye for excess of love-longing. “O Habib, why and wherefore sleepest thou not?” they asked, and he answered, “O comrades mine, how shall slumber come to one yearning for his dearling, and verily I will lie awake nor enjoy aught repose until such time as I espy the lifeblood of my heart, Durrat al-Ghawwas.” Thereupon they held their peace; and presently they held council one with other saying, “Who amongst us can supply a dose of Bhang that we may cast him asleep and his slaughter may be easy to us?” “I have two Miskáls weight[407] of that same,” quoth one of them, and the others took it from him and presently, when occasion served, they put it into a cup of water and presented it to Habib. He hent that cup in hand and drank off the drugged liquid at a single draught; and presently the Bhang wrought in his vitals and its fumes mounted to his head, mastering his senses and causing his brain to whirl round, whereupon he sank into the depths of unconsciousness. Then quoth his escort, “As soon as his slumber is soundest and his sleep heaviest we will arise and slay him and bury him on the spot where he now sleepeth: then will we return to his father and mother, and tell them that of love-stress to his beloved and of excessive longing and pining for her he died.” And upon this deed of treachery all agreed. So when dawned the day and showed its sheen and shone clear and serene the knights awoke and seeing their lord drowned[408] in sleep they arose and sat in council, and quoth one of them, “Let us cut his throat from ear to ear;”[409] and quoth another, “Nay, better we dig us a pit the stature of a man and we will cast him amiddlemost thereof and heap upon him earth so that he will die, nor shall any know aught about him.” Hearing this said one of the retinue, whose name was Rabí’a,[410] “But fear you naught from Almighty Allah and regard ye not the favours wherewith his father fulfilled you, and remember ye not the bread which ye ate in his household and from his family? Indeed twas but a little while since his sire chose you out to escort him that his son might take solace with you instead of himself, and he entrusted unto you his heart’s core, and now ye are pleased to do him die and thereby destroy the life of his parents. Furthermore, say me doth your judgment decide that such ill-work can possibly abide hidden from his father? Now I swear by the loyalty[411] of the Arabs there will not remain for us a wight or any who bloweth the fire alight, however mean and slight, who will receive us after such deed. So do ye at least befriend and protect your households and your clans and your wives and your children whom ye left in the tribal domain. But now you design utterly to destroy us, one and all, and after death affix to our memories the ill-name of traitors, and cause our women be enslaved and our children enthralled, nor leave one of us aught to be longed for." Quoth they jeeringly, "Bring what thou hast of righteous rede:" so quoth he, "Have you fixed your intent upon slaying him and robbing his good?" and they answered, "We have." However, he objected again and cried, "Come ye and hear from me what it is I advise you, albeit I will take no part[412] in this matter;" presently adding, "Established is your resolve in this affair, and ye wot better than I what you are about to do. But my mind is certified of this much; do ye not transgress in the matter of his blood and suffer only his crime be upon you;[413] moreover, if ye desire to lay hands upon his camels and his moneys and his provisions, then do ye carry them off and leave him where he lieth; then if he live, 'twere well, and if he die 'twill be even better and far better." "Thy rede is right and righteous," they replied. Accordingly they seized his steed and his habergeon and his sword and his gear of battle and combat, and they carried off all he had of money and means, and placing him naked upon the bare ground they drove away his camels. Presently asked one of other, "Whenas we shall reach the tribe what shall we say to his father and his mother?" "Whatso Rabi'a shall counsel us," quoth they, and quoth Rabi'a, "Tell them, 'We left not travelling with your son; and, as we fared along, we lost sight of him and we saw him nowhere until we came upon him a-swoon and lying on the road senseless: then we called to him by name but he returned no reply, and when we shook him with our hands behold, he had become a dried-up wand. Then seeing him dead we buried him and brought back to you his good and his belongings.'" "And if they ask you," objected one, "'In what place did ye bury him and in what land, and is the spot far or near,' what shall ye make answer; also if they say to you, 'Why did ye not bear his corpse with you,' what then shall be your reply?" Rabi'a to this rejoined "Do you say to them, 'Our strength was weakened and we waxed feeble from burn of heart and want of water, nor could we bring his remains with us.’ And if they ask you, ‘Could ye not bear him a-back; nay, might ye not have carried him upon one of the camels?’ do ye declare that ye could not for two reasons, the first being that the body was swollen and stinking from the fiery air, and the second our fear for his father, lest seeing him rotten he could not endure the sight and his sorrow be increased for that he was an only child and his sire hath none other.” All the men joined in accepting this counsel of Rabi’a, and each and every exclaimed, “This indeed is the rede that is most right.” Then they ceased not wayfaring until they reached the neighbourhood of the tribe, when they sprang from their steeds and openly donned black, and they entered the camp showing the sorest sorrow. Presently they repaired to the father’s tent, grieving and weeping and shrieking as they went; and when the Emir Salamah saw them in this case, crowding together with keening and crying for the departed, he asked them, “Where is he, my son?” and they answered, “Indeed he is dead.” Right hard upon Salamah was this lie, and his grief grew the greater, so he scattered dust upon his head and plucked out his beard and rent his raiment and shrieked aloud saying, “Woe for my son, ah! Woe for Habib, ah! Woe for the slice of my liver, ah! Woe for my grief, ah! Woe for the core[414] of my heart, ah!” Thereupon his mother came forth, and seeing her husband in this case, with dust on his head and his beard plucked out and his robe-collar[415] rent, and sighting her son’s steed she shrieked, “Woe is me and well-away for my child, ah!” and fainted swooning for a full-told hour. Anon when recovered she said to the knights who had formed the escort, “Woe to you, O men of evil, where have ye buried my boy?” They replied, “In a far-off land whose name we wot not, and ’tis wholly waste and tenanted by wild beasts,” whereat she was afflicted exceedingly. Then the Emir Salamah and his wife and household and all the tribesmen donned garbs black-hued and ashes whereupon to sit they strewed, and ungrateful to them was the taste of food and drink, meat and wine; nor ceased they to beweep their loss, nor could they comprehend what had befallen their son and what of ill-lot had descended upon him from Heaven. Such then was the case of them; but as regards the Sultan Habib, he continued sleeping until the

Bhang ceased to work in his brain, when Allah sent a fresh, cool wind which entered his nostrils and caused him sneeze, whereby he cast out the drug and sensed the sun-heat and came to himself. Hereupon he opened his eyes and sighted a wild and waste land, and he looked in vain for his companions the knights, and his steed and his sword and his spear and his coat of mail, and he found himself mother- naked, athirst, anhungered. Then he cried out in that Desert of desolation which lay far and wide before his eyes, and the case waxed heavy upon him, and he wept and groaned and complained of his case to Allah Almighty, saying, "O my God and my Lord and my Master, trace my lot an thou hast traced it upon the Guarded Tablet, for who shall right me save Thyself, O Lord of Might that is All-might and of Grandeur All-puissant and All-excellent!" Then he began improvising these verses,

"Faileth me, O my God, the patience with the pride o' me; * Life-
tie is broke and drawing nigh I see Death-tide o' me:
To whom shall injured man complain of injury and wrong * Save to
the Lord (of Lords the Best!) who stands by side o'me."

Now whilst the Sultan Habib was ranging with his eye-corners to the right and to the left, behold, he beheld a blackness rising high in air, and quoth he to himself, "Doubtless this dark object must be a mighty city or a vast encampment, and I will hie me thither before I be overheated by the sun-glow and I lose the power of walking and I die of distress and none shall know my fate." Then he heartened his heart for the improvising of such poetry as came to his mind, and he repeated these verses,

"Travel, for on the way all goodly things shalt find; * And wake
from sleep and dreams if still to sleep inclined!
Or victory win and rise and raise thee highmost high * And gain, O
giddy pate, the food for which thy soul hath pined;
Or into sorrow thou shalt fall with breast full strait * And ne'er
enjoy the Fame that wooes the gen'rous mind,
Nor is there any shall avail to hinder Fate * Except the Lord of
Worlds who the Two Beings[416] designed."

And when he had finished his verse, the Sultan Habib walked in the direction of that blackness nor left walking until he drew near the ridge; but after he could fare no farther and that walking distressed him (he never having been broken to travel afoot and barefoot withal), and his forces waxed feeble and his joints relaxed and his strong will grew weak and his resolution passed away. But whilst he was perplexed concerning what he should do, suddenly there alighted between his hands a snow-white fowl huge as the dome of a Hammám, with shanks like the trunk of a palm-tree. The Sultan Habib marvelled at the sight of this Rukh, and saying to himself, "Blessed be Allah the Creator!" he advanced slowly towards it and all unknown to the fowl seized its legs. Presently the bird put forth its wings (he still hanging on) and flew upwards to the confines of the sky, when behold, a Voice was heard saying, "O Habib! O Habib! hold to the bird with straitest hold, else 'twill cast thee down to earth and thou shalt be dashed to pieces limb from limb!" Hearing these words he tightened his grasp and the fowl ceased not flying until it came to that blackness which was the outline of Káf the mighty mountain, and having set the youth down on the summit it left him and still flew onwards. Presently a Voice sounded in the sensorium of the Sultan Habib saying, "Take seat, O Habib; past is that which conveyed thee hither on thy way to Durrat al-Ghawwas;" and he, when the words met his ear, aroused himself and arose and, descending the mountain slope to the skirting plain, saw therein a cave. Hereat quoth he to himself, "If I enter this antre, haply shall I lose myself, and perish of hunger and thirst!" He then took thought and reflected, "Now death must come sooner or later, wherefore will I adventure myself in this cave." And as he passed thereinto he heard one crying with a high voice and a sound so mighty that its volume resounded in his ears. But right soon the crier appeared in the shape of Al-Abbus, the Governor who had taught him battle and combat; and, after greeting him with great joy, the lover recounted his love-adventure to his whilome tutor. The Jinni bore in his left a scymitar, the work of the Jann and in his right a cup of water which he handed to his pupil. The draught caused him to swoon for an hour or so, and when he came-to Al-Abbus made him sit up and bathed him and robed him in the rarest of raiment and brought him a somewhat of victual and the twain ate and drank together. Then quoth Habib to Al-Abbus, “Knowest thou not that which befel me with Durrat al-Ghawwas of wondrous matters?” and quoth the other, “And what may that have been?” whereupon the youth rejoined, “O my brother, Allah be satisfied with thee for that He willed thou appear to me and direct me and guide me aright to the dearling of my heart and the cooling of mine eyes.” “Leave thou such foolish talk,” replied Al-Abbus, “for where art thou and where is Durrat al-Ghawwas? Indeed between thee and her are horrors and perils and long tracts of land and seas wondrous, and adventures marvellous, which would amaze and amate the rending lions, and spectacles which would turn grey the sucking child or any one of man’s scions.” Hearing these words Habib clasped his governor to his breast and kissed him between the eyes, and the Jinni said, “O my beloved, had I the might to unite thee with her I would do on such wise, but first ’tis my desire to make thee forgather with thy family in a moment shorter than an eye-twinkling.” “Had I longed for my own people,” rejoined Habib, “I should never have left them, nor should I have endangered my days nor wouldst thou have seen me in this stead; but as it is I will never return from my wayfaring till such time as my hope shall have been fulfilled, even although my appointed life-term should be brought to end, for I have no further need of existence.” To these words the Jinni made answer, “Learn thou, O Habib, that the cavern wherein thou art containeth the hoards of our Lord Solomon, David’s son (upon the twain be The Peace!), and he placed them under my charge and he forbade me abandon them until such time as he shall permit me, and furthermore that I let and hinder both mankind and Jinn-kind from entering the Hoard; and know thou, O Habib, that in this cavern is a treasure-house and in the Treasury forty closets offsetting to the right and to the left. Now wouldst thou gaze upon this wealth of pearls and rubies and precious stones, do thou ere passing through the first door dig under its threshold, where thou shalt find buried the keys of all the magazines. Then take the first of them in hand and unlock its door, after which thou shalt be able to open all the others and look upon the store of jewels therein. And when thou shalt design to depart the Treasury thou shalt find a curtain hung up in front of thee and fastened around it eighty hooks of red gold;[417] and do thou beware how thou raise the hanging without quilting them all with cotton.” So saying he gave him a bundle of tree-wool he had by him, and pursued, “O Habib, when thou shalt have raised the curtain thou wilt discover a door with two leaves also of red gold, whereupon couplets are inscribed, and as regards the first distich an thou master the meaning of the names and the talismans, thou shalt be saved from all terrors and horrors, and if thou fail to comprehend them thou shalt perish in that Hoard. But after opening the door close it not with noise nor glance behind thee, and take all heed, as I fear for thee those charged with the care of the place[418] and its tapestry. And when thou shalt stand behind the hanging thou shalt behold a sea clashing with billows dashing, and ’tis one of the Seven Mains which shall show thee, O Habib, marvels whereat thou shalt wonder, and whereof relaters shall relate the strangest relations. Then do thou take thy stand upon the sea-shore whence thou shalt descry a ship under way and do thou cry aloud to the crew who shall come to thee and bear thee aboard. After this I wot not what shall befal thee in this ocean, and such is the end of my say and the last of my speech, O Habib, and — The Peace!” Hereat the youth joyed with joy galore than which naught could be more and taking the hand Of Al-Abbus he kissed it and said, “O my brother, thou hast given kindly token in what thou hast spoken, and Allah requite thee for me with all weal, and mayest thou be fended from every injurious ill!” Quoth Al-Abbus, “O Habib, take this scymitar and baldrick thyself therewith, indeed twill enforce thee and hearten thy heart, and don this dress which shall defend thee from thy foes.” The youth did as he was bidden; then he farewelled the Jinni and set forth on his way, and he ceased not pacing forward until he reached the end of the cavern and here he came upon the door whereof his governor had informed him. So he went to its threshold and dug thereunder and drew forth a black bag creased and stained by the lapse of years. This he unclosed and it yielded him a key which he applied to the lock and it forthwith opened and admitted him into the Treasury where, for exceeding murk and darkness, he could not see what he hent in hand. Then quoth he to himself, “What is to do? Haply Al-Abbus hath compassed my destruction!” And the while he sat on this wise sunken in thought, behold, he beheld a light gleaming from afar, and as he advanced its sheen guided him to the curtain whereof he had been told by the Jinni. But as he looked he saw above it a tablet of emerald dubbed with pearls and precious stones, while under it lay the hoard which lighted up the place like the rising sun. So he hastened him thither and found inscribed upon the tablet the following two couplets,

"At him I wonder who from woe is free, * And who no joy
displays[419] when safe is he:
And I admire how Time deludes man when * He views the past; but ah,
Time's tyranny."

So the Sultan Habib read over these verses more than once, and wept till he swooned away; then recovering himself he said in his mind, "To me death were pleasanter than life without my love!" and turning to the closets which lay right and left he opened them all and gazed upon the hillocks of gold and silver and upon the heaps and bales of rubies and unions and precious stones and strings of pearls, wondering at all he espied, and quoth he to himself "Were but a single magazine of these treasures revealed, wealthy were all the peoples who on earth do dwell." Then he walked up to the curtain whereupon Jinns and Ifrits appeared from every site and side, and voices and shrieks so loudened in his ears that his wits well-nigh flew from his head. So he took patience for a full-told hour when behold, a smoke which spired in air thickened and brooded low, and the sound ceased and the Jinns departed. Hereat, calling to mind the charge of Al-Abbus, he took out the cotton he had by him and after quilting the golden hooks he withdrew the curtain and sighted the portal which the Jinni had described to him. So he fitted in the key and opened it, after which, oblivious of the warning, he slammed-to the door noisily in his fear and forgetfulness, but he did not venture to look behind him. At this the Jinns flocked to him from every side and site crying, "O thou foulest of mankind, wherefore dost thou provoke us and disturb us from our stead? and, but for thy wearing the gear of the Jann, we had slain thee forthright." But Habib answered not and, arming himself with patience and piety, he tarried awhile until the hubbub was stilled, nor did the Jann cry at him any more: and, when the storm was followed by calm, he paced forward to the shore and looked upon the ocean crashing with billows dashing. He marvelled at the waves and said to himself, “Verily none may know the secrets of the sea and the mysteries of the main save only Allah!” Presently, he beheld a ship passing along shore, so he took seat on the strand until Night let down her pall of sables upon him; and he was an-hungered with exceeding hunger and athirst with excessive thirst. But when morrowed the morn and day showed her sheen and shone serene, he awoke in his sore distress and behold, he saw two Mermaidens of the daughters of the deep (and both were as moons) issue forth hard by him. And ere long quoth one of the twain, “Say me, wottest thou the mortal who sitteth yonder?” “I know him not,” quoth the other, whereat her companion resumed, “This be the Sultan Habib who cometh in search of Durrat al-Ghawwas, our Queen and liege lady.” Hearing these words the youth considered them straitly and marvelling at their beauty and loveliness he presently rejoiced and increased in pleasure and delight. Then said one to other, “Indeed the Sultan Habib is in this matter somewhat scant and short of wits; how can he love Durrat al-Ghawwas when between him and her is a distance only to be covered by the sea-voyage of a full year over most dangerous depths? And, after all this woe hath befallen him, why doth he not hie him home and why not save himself from these horrors which promise to endure through all his days and to cast his life at last into the pit of destruction?” Asked the other, “Would heaven I knew whether he will ever attain to her or not!” and her companion answered, “Yes, he will attain to her, but after a time and a long time and much sadness of soul.” But when Habib heard this promise of success given by the Maidens of the Main his sorrow was solaced and he lost all that troubled him of hunger and thirst. Now while he pondered these matters there suddenly issued from out the ocean a third Mermaid, which asked her fellows, “Of what are you prattling?” and they answered, “Indeed the Sultan Habib sitteth here upon the sea-shore during this the fourth successive night.” Quoth she, “I have a cousin the daughter of my paternal uncle and when she came to visit me last night I enquired of her if any ship had passed by her and she replied, ‘Yea verily, one did sail driven towards us by a violent gale, and its sole object was to seek you.'" And the others rejoined, "Allah send thee tidings of welfare!" The youth hearing these words was gladdened and joyed with exceeding joy; and presently the three Mermaidens called to one another and dove into the depths leaving the listener standing upon the strand. After a short time he heard the cries of the crew from the craft announced and he shouted to them and they, noting his summons, ran alongside the shore and took him up and bore him aboard: and, when he complained of hunger and thirst, they gave him meat and drink and questioned him saying, "Thou! who art thou? Say us, art of the trader-folk?" "I am the merchant Such-and-such," quoth he, "and my ship foundered albe 'twas a mighty great vessel; but one chance day of the days as we were sailing along there burst upon us a furious gale which shivered our timbers and my companions all perished while I floated upon a plank of the ship's planks and was carried ashore by the send of the sea. Indeed I have been floating for three days and this be my fourth night." Hearing this adventure from him the traders cried, "Grieve no more in heart but be thou of good cheer and of eyes cool and clear: the sea voyage is ever exposed to such chances and so is the gain thereby we obtain; and if Allah deign preserve us and keep for us the livelihood He vouchsafed to us we will bestow upon thee a portion thereof." After this they ceased not sailing until a tempest assailed them and blew their vessel to starboard and larboard and she lost her course and went astray at sea. Hereat the pilot cried aloud, saying, "Ho ye company aboard, take your leave one of other for we be driven into unknown depths of ocean, nor may we keep our course, because the wind bloweth full in our faces." Hereupon the voyagers fell to beweeping the loss of their lives and their goods, and the Sultan Habib shed tears which trickled adown his cheeks and exclaimed, "Would Heaven I had died before seeing such torment: indeed this is naught save a matter of marvel." But when the merchants saw the youth thus saddened and troubled of soul, and weeping withal, they said to him, "O Monarch of the Merchants, let not thy breast be straitened or thy heart be disheartened: hapty Allah shall vouchsafe joy to us and to thee: moreover, can vain regret and sorrow of soul and shedding of tears avail aught? Do thou rather ask of the

Almighty that He deign relieve us and further our voyage." But as the vessel ran through the middle of the main, she suddenly ceased her course and came to a stop without tacking to the right or the left, and the pilot cried out, "O folk, is there any of you who conneth this ocean?" But they made answer, "We know thereof naught, neither in all our voyage did we see aught resembling it." The pilot continued, "O folk, this main is hight 'The Azure';[420] nor did any trader at any time therein enter but he found destruction; for that it is the home of Jinns and the house of Ifrits, and he who now withholdeth our vessel from its course is known as Al-Ghashamsham,[421] and our lord Solomon son of David (upon the twain be The Peace!) deputed him to snatch up and carry off from every craft passing, through these forbidden depths whatever human beings, and especially merchants, he might find a-voyaging, and to eat them alive." "Woe to thee!" cried Habib. "Wherefore bid us take counsel together when thou tellest us that here dwelleth a Demon over whom we have no power to prevail, and thou terrifiest us with the thoughts of being devoured by him? However, feel ye no affright; I will fend off from you the mischief of this Ifrit." They replied, "We fear for thy life, O Monarch of the Merchants," and he rejoined, "To you there is no danger." Thereupon he donned a closely woven mail-coat and armed himself with the magical scymitar and spear; then, taking the skins of animals freshly slain,[422] he made a hood and vizor thereof and wrapped strips of the same around his arms and legs that no harm from the sea might enter his frame. After this he bade his shipmates bind him with cords under his armpits and let him down amiddlemost the main. And as soon as he touched bottom he was confronted by the Ifrit, who rushed forward to make a mouthful of him, when the Sultan Habib raised his forearm and with the scymitar smote him a stroke which fell upon his neck and hewed him into two halves. So he died in the depths; and the youth, seeing the foeman slain, jerked the cord and his mates drew him up and took him in, after which the ship sprang forward like a shaft outshot from the belly[423] of the bow. Seeing this all the traders wondered with excessive wonderment and hastened up to the youth, kissing his feet and crying, "O Monarch of the Merchants, how didst thou prevail against him and do him die?" "When I dropped into the depths," replied he, “in order to slay him, I asked against him the aidance of Allah, who vouchsafed His assistance, and on such wise I slaughtered him.” Hearing these good tidings and being certified of their enemy’s death the traders offered to him their good and gains whereof he refused to accept aught, even a single mustard seed. Now, amongst the number was a Shaykh well shotten in years and sagacious in all affairs needing direction; and this oldster drew near the youth, and making lowly obeisance said to him, “By the right of Who sent thee uswards and sent us theewards, what art thou and what may be thy name and the cause of thy falling upon this ocean?” The Sultan Habib began by refusing to disclose aught of his errand, but when the Shaykh persisted in questioning he ended by disclosing all that had betided him first and last, and as they sailed on suddenly the Pilot cried out to them, “Rejoice ye with great joy and make ye merry and be ye gladdened with good news, O ye folk, for that ye are saved from the dangers of these terrible depths and ye are drawing near the city of Sábúr, the King who overruleth the Isles Crystalline; and his capital (which be populous and prosperous) ranketh first among the cities of Al-Hind, and his reign is foremost of the Isles of the Sea.” Then the ship inclined thither, and drawing nearer little by little entered the harbour[424] and cast anchor therein, when the canoes[425] appeared and the porters came on board and bore away the luggage of the voyagers and the crew, who were freed from all sorrow and anxiety. Such was their case; but as regards Durrat al-Ghawwas, when she parted from her lover, the Sultan Habib, severance weighed sore and stark upon her, and she found no pleasure in meat and drink and slumber and sleep. And presently whilst in this condition and sitting upon her throne of estate, an Ifrit appeared to her and coming forwards between her hands said, “The Peace of Allah upon thee, O Queen of the Age and Empress of the Time and the Tide!” whereto she made reply, “And upon thee be The Peace and the ruth of Allah and His blessings. What seekest thou O Ifrit?” Quoth he, “There lately hath come to us a shipful of merchants and I have heard talk of the Sultan Habib being amongst them.” As these words reached her ear she largessed the Ifrit and said to him, “An thou speak sooth I will bestow upon thee whatso thou wishest.” Then, having certified herself of the news, she bade decorate the city with the finest of decorations and let beat the kettledrums of glad tidings and bespread the way leading to the Palace with a carpeting of sendal,[426] and they obeyed her behest. Anon she summoned her pages and commanded them to bring her lover before her; so they repaired to him and ordered him to accompany them. Accordingly, he followed them and they ceased not faring until they had escorted him to the Palace, when the Queen bade all her pages gang their gait and none remained therein save the two lovers; to wit, the Sultan Habib and Durrat al-Ghawwas. And after the goodly reunion she sent for the Kazi and his assessors and bade them write out her marriage-writ[427] with Habib. He did as he was bidden and the witnesses bore testimony thereto and to the dowry being duly paid; and the tie was formally tied and the wedding banquets were dispread. Then the bride donned her choicest of dresses and the marriage procession was formed and the union was consummated and both joyed with joy exceeding. Now this state of things endured for a long while until the Sultan Habib fell to longing after his parents and his family and his native country; and at length, on a day of the days, when a banquet was served up to him by his bride, he refused to taste thereof, and she, noting and understanding his condition, said to him, “Be of good cheer, this very night thou shalt find thee amongst thine own folk.” Accordingly she summoned her Wazir of the Jann, and when he came she made proclamation amongst the nobles and commons of the capital saying, “This my Wazir shall be my Viceregent over you and whoso shall gainsay him that man I will slay.” They replied with “Hearkening to and obeying Allah and thyself and the Minister.” Then turning to her newly-established deputy she said, “I desire that thou guide me to the garden wherein was the Sultan Habib;” and he replied, “Upon my head be it and on my eyes!” So an Ifrit was summoned, and Habib mounting him pick-a-back together with the Princess Durrat al-Ghawwas bade him repair to the garden appointed, and the Jinni took flight, and in less than the twinkling of an eye bore the couple to their destination. Such was the reunion of the Sultan Habib with Durrat al-Ghawwas and his joyous conjunction;[428] but as regards the Emir Salamah and his wife, as they were sitting and recalling to memory their only child and wondering in converse at what fate might have betided him, lo and behold! the

Sultan Habib stood before them and by his side was Durrat al-Ghawwas his bride, and as they looked upon him and her, weeping prevailed over them for excess of their joyance and delight and both his parents threw themselves upon him and fell fainting to the ground. As soon as they recovered the youth told them all that had betided him, first and last, whereupon one congratulated other and the kettledrums of glad tidings were sounded, and a world of folk from all the Badawi tribes and the burghers gathered about them and offered hearty compliments on the reunion of each with other. Then the encampment was decorated in whole and in part, and festivities were appointed for a term of seven days full-told, in token of joy and gladness; and banquets were arrayed and trays were dispread, and all sat down to them in the pleasantest of life eating and drinking; and the hungry were filled, and the mean and the miserable and the mendicants were feasted until the end of the seventh day. After this they applied them to the punishment of the ten Knights whom the Emir Salamah had despatched to escort his son; and the Sultan Habib gave order that retribution be required from them, and restitution of all the coin and the good and the horses and the camels entrusted to them by his sire. When these had been recovered he commanded that there be set up for them as many stakes in the garden wherein he sat with his bride, and there in their presence he let impale[429] each upon his own pale. And thenceforward the united household ceased not living the most joyous of lives and the most delectable until the old Emir Salamah paid the debt of nature, and they mourned him with excessive mourning for seven days. When these were ended his son, the Sultan Habib, became ruler in his stead and received the homage of all the tribes and clans who came before him and prayed for his victory and his length of life; and the necks of his subjects, even the most stubborn, were bowed in abasement before him. On this wise he reigned over the Crystalline Isles of Sabur, his sire-in-law, with justice and equity, and his Queen, Durrat al-Ghawwas, bare to him children in numbers who in due time followed in their father's steps. And here is terminated the tale of Sultan Habib and Durrat al-Ghawwas with all perfection and completion and good omen.

Note On The History of Habib

The older translators of this "New Arabian Night" have made wild work with this Novel at least as the original is given by my text and the edition of Gauttier (vii, 60-90): in their desire to gallicise it they have invested it with a toilette purely European and in the worst possible style. Amongst the insipid details are the division of the Crystalline Islands into the White, Yellow, Green and Blue; with the Genies Abarikaff, the monstrous Racachik, Ilbaccaras and Mokilras; and the terrible journey of Habib to Mount Kaf with his absurd reflections: even the "Roc" cannot come to his aid without "a damask cushion suspended between its feet by silken cords" for the greater comfort of the "Arabian Knight." The Treasury of Solomon, "who fixed the principles of knowledge by 366 hieroglyphics (sic) each of which required a day's application from even the ablest understanding, before its mysterious sense could be understood," is spun out as if the episode were copy intended for the daily press. In my text the "Maidens of the Main" are introduced to say a few words and speed the action. In the French version Ilzaide the elder becomes a "leading lady," whose rôle is that of the naïve ingénue, famous for "smartness" and "vivacty": "one cannot refrain from smiling at the lively sallies of her good nature and simplicity of heart." I find this young person the model of a pert, pretty, prattling little French soubrette who, moreover, makes open love to "the master." Habib calls the "good old lady," his governess "Esek! Esek!" which in Turk. means donkey, ass. I need hardly enlarge upon these ineptitudes; those who wish to pursue the subject have only to compare the two versions.

At the end of the Frenchified tale we find a note entitled: — Observations by the French Editor, on the "History of Habib and Dorathil-goase, or the Arabian Knight," and these are founded not upon the Oriental text but upon the Occidental perversion. It is described "from a moral plane rather as a poem than a simple tale," and it must be regarded as "a Romance of Chivalry which unites the two chief characteristics of works of that sort, — amusement and instruction." Habib's education is compared with that of Telemachus, and his being inured to fatigue is according to the advice of Rousseau in his "Emilius" and the practice of Robinson Crusoe. Lastly "Grandison is a here already formed: Habib is one who needs to be instructed." I cannot but suspect when reading all this Western travesty of an Eastern work that M. Cazotte, a typical littérateur, had prepared for caricaturing the unfortunate Habib by carefully writing up Fénélon, Rousseau, and Richardson; and had grafted his own ideas of morale upon the wild stem of the Arabian novel.

Appendix.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

NOTES ON THE STORIES CONTAINED IN VOLUME XVI.

By W. F. Kirby.

The Say of Haykar the Sage (Pp.1-30).

Haykar's precepts may be compared advantageously with those of other nations of the East and West (at a corresponding stage of civilisation) which, as a rule, follow very similar lines. Many of them find their parallels not only in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, as we might reasonably expect, but even in the Havamál of the Elder Edda, respecting which Thorpe remarks in his translation (i. note): "Odin is the 'High One.' The poem is a collection of rules and maxims, and stories of himself, some of them not very consistent with our ideas of a supreme deity." The style of the Icelandic poem, and the manners of the period when it was composed, are of course as wide apart from those of Haykar as is Iceland from Syria, but human nature remains the same.

P-24. — Two classes of subterfuges similar to those employed by Haykar are common in folk-tales. In one, the hero vanquishes, and generally destroys, his adversary (usually a giant) by imposing on his credulity, like Jack when he hid himself in a corner of the room, and left a faggot in his bed for the giant to belabour, and afterwards killed the giant by pretending to rip himself up, and defying the other to do the same. In other cases, the hero foils his opponents by subterfuges which are admitted to be just, but which are not intended actually to deceive, as in the devices by which the blind Shaykh instructs the merchant to baffle the sharpers, in one of the Sindibad stories (vol. vi., p-212, No. 135x., of our Table). In the present story Pharaoh was baffled by the superior cunning of Haykar but it is not made quite clear whether he actually believed in his power to build a castle in the air or not. However the story probably belongs to the second class.

P. 25. — Twisting ropes out of sand was a device by which Michael Scot baffled a devil for whom he had to find constant employment. (Cf. Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel," and notes.)

The History of Al-Bundukani (P-68).

I believe the “Robber-Caliph” is sometimes played as a burlesque, for which it is well adapted. The parallel suggested between the Caliph and a robber may remind the reader of the interview between Alexander the Great and the Robber, in “Evenings at Home.” One cannot help sympathising with the disappointed young Merchant who acted as an informer, and feeling glad that he got off with a whole skin.

P. 34. — In some versions of this story Harun’s abstention from his bride for a year is attributed to a previous vow.

P. 46 and note 4. — This passage, relative to the character of the Caliph, may be compared with his forgetfulness respecting Nur Al-Din Ali and Anis Al-Jalis. (Vol. ii. p, 42, and note.)

The Linguist-dame, the Duenna, and the King’s Son (P-87).

This story, though much shorter, is very closely paralleled by that of Prince Calaf and the Princess of China, in the Thousand and One Days (cf. vol. x., App, p, 500) Prince Calaf (the son of the King of the Nogais Tartars) and his parents are driven from their kingdom by the Sultan of Carizme (Khwárizm), and take refuge with the Khan of Berlas, where the old King and Queen remain, while Calaf proceeds to China, where he engages in an intellectual contest with Princess Tourandocte (Turandot, i.e. Turándokht or Turan’s daughter). When Turandot is on the point of defeat, she sends her confidante, a captive princess, to Calaf, to worm out his secret (his own name). The confidante, who is herself in love with Calaf, horrifies him with the invention that Turandot intends to have him secretly assassinated; but although he drops his name in his consternation, he refuses to fly with his visitor. In the morning Turandot declares Calaf’s name to him but comforts him by saying that she has nevertheless determined to accept him as her husband, instead of cutting off his head; and the slave princess commits suicide. Messengers are then sent for Calaf’s parents, who arrive in company with the friendly Khan who had granted them an asylum; and Calaf marches against the Sultan of Carizme, who is defeated and slain, when his subjects readily submit to the conqueror.

P. 77. — According to Jewish tradition, the Rod of Moses became transformed into so terrible a dragon that the Egyptians took to flight, and 60,000 of them were slain in the press. — (Sale’s Koran, cha, note.)

P. 77, note 4. — It was long denied that ants store up grain, because our English ants do not; but it is now well known that many foreign species, some of which inhabit countries bordering on the Mediterranean (including Palestine), store up large quantities of grass seeds in their nests; and one ant found in North America is said to actually cultivate a particular kind of grass.

P. 81, note 6. — Those interested in the question of the succession of the Patriarchs may refer to Joseph Jacobs’ article on “Junior-right in Genesis,”[430] in which the writer argues that it was the original custom among the Hebrews, as among other nations, for the youngest son to succeed to his father’s estates, after the elder ones had already established themselves elsewhere. Much may be urged in favour of this writer’s conclusions, and it will be remembered that our own Monarchy was not recognised as hereditary until the time of the Conquest, the most able or the strongest relative of the late King usually succeeding to the Crown, and minors being always set aside, unless powerful politicians intended to use them as mere tools. In the Esthonian Kalevipoeg the system comes out still more strongly. Three sons are living at home at the time of the death of Kalev, but the youngest is designated by him as his successor, and is afterwards indicated by lot as the peculiar favourite of the gods.

P. 84, note 4. — Although it has nothing to do with the present story, yet I may point out the great importance of the bridle in all the folk-tales which deal with the transformation of human beings into domestic animals. It is clearly implied (though not actually expressed) in the story of Julnar the Sea Born (No. 153) that the power of Abdallah and Badr Basim over Queen Lab, while she bore the form of a mule, depended entirely on their keeping possession of the bridle (cf. Nights, vol. vii., , and note). There are many stories of magicians who transform themselves into horses, &c., for their friends to sell; but the bridle must on no account be given with the horse. Should this be neglected (purposely or otherwise) the magician is unable to reassume his human form at will. Cf. also Spitta-Bey’s story No. 1 (infrà).

The Tale of the Warlock and the Young Cook of Baghdad (P-112).

This story appears in Chavis and Cazotte's version, and in the various translations made from the French, in a very highly elaborated form, under the title of "The Adventures of Simoustapha, and the Princess Ilsetilsone." The Caliph and his Wazir are identified with Harun Al-Rashid and Ja'afar, but they suffer no transformations at the hands of the Magician after whose death Prince Simoustapha is protected by Setelpedour Ginatille, whose name is interpreted as meaning the Star of the Seven Seas, though the first name appears rather to be a corruption of Sitt El Bubúr. She is the queen of Ginnistan, and the daughter of Kokopilesobe (Satan), whose contests with Mahomet and Michael (the former of whom continues the conflict by "becoming man") are described on the approved Miltonic lines. Her chief councillors are Bahlisboull (Beelzebub) and Asmonchar (Asmodeus), but ultimately she falls in love with Simoustapha, and adjures her sovereignty, after which he carries her off, and marries her, upon which the mother of Ilsetilsone, "the sensible Zobeide, formed now a much truer and more favourable judgment of her daughter's happiness, since she had shared the heart of Simoustapha with Setelpedour, and at last agreed that the union of one man with two women might be productive of great happiness to all the three, provided that one of the wives happened to be a fairy." (Weber, ii. .) A most encouraging sentiment for would-be polygamists, truly, especially in Europe, where fairies appear to fly before the advance of civilisation as surely as the wild beasts of the forest!

P. 99. — These apparitions resemble those which usually precede the visions which appear in the well-known pool of ink. But the sweeper is not mentioned in the present story, nor do I remember reading of his appearing in cases of crystal seeing, though Dante Gabriel Rossetti introduces him into his fine poem, "Rose Mary," as preparing the way for the visions seen in the beryl:

> "'I see a man with a besom grey
> That sweeps the flying dust away.'

‘Ay, that comes first in the mystic sphere;
But now that the way is swept and clear
Heed well what next you look on there.’”

P. 104, note 1. — Apropos of the importance of “three days,” I may refer to the “three days and three nights” which Christ is commonly said to have passed in the tomb, and I believe that some mystics assert that three days is the usual period required by a man to recover consciousness after death.

P, 107. — These worked lions recall the exhibition of power made by Abu Mohammed hight Lazybones (No. 37; Nights, iv.,). Their Oriental prototypes are probably the lions and eagles with which the Jinn ornamented the throne of Solomon. In the West, we meet with Southey’s amusing legend of the Pious Painter:

“‘Help, help, Blessed Mary,’ he cried in alarm,
As the scaffold sunk under his feet;
From the canvass the Virgin extended her arm;
She caught the good Painter; she saved him from harm;
There were hundreds who saw in the street.”

The enchanted palaces of the Firm Island, with their prodigies of the Hart and the Dogs, &c., may also be mentioned (Amadis of Gaul, book II., cha, &c.).

P, 108. — Stories of changed sex are not uncommon in Eastern and classical mythology and folk-lore; usually, as in this instance, the change of a man into a woman, although it is the converse (apparent, of course) which we meet with occasionally in modern medical books.

In the Nights, &c., we have the story of the Enchanted Spring (No. 135j) in the great Sindibad cyclus (Nights, vi., p-150), and Lane (Modern Egyptians, chap. xxv.) relates a story which he heard in Cairo more resembling that of the transformed Wazir. In classical legend we have the stories of Tiresias, Cæneus, and Iphis. Turning to India, we meet with the prototype of Cæneus in Amba, who was reincarnated as Sikhandin, in order to avenge herself on Bhishma, and subsequently exchanged her sex with a Yaksha, and became a great warrior (Mahabharata Udyoga-Parva, 5942-7057). Some of the versions of the Enchanted Spring represent the Prince as recovering his sex by an exchange with a demon, thus showing a transition from the story of Sikhandin to later replicas. There is also a story of changed sex in the Hindi Baital Pachisí; and no doubt many others might be quoted.

History of What Befel the Fowl-let with the Fowler (P-128).

One of the most curious stories relative to the escape of a captured prey is to be found in the 5th Canto of the Finnish Kalevala. Väinäimöinen, the old minstrel, is fishing in the lake where his love, Aino, has drowned herself, because she would not marry an old man. He hooks a salmon of very peculiar appearance, and while he is speculating about cutting it up and cooking it, it leaps from the boat into the water, and then reproaches him with his folly, telling him that it is Aino (now transformed into a water-nymph) who threw herself in his way to be his life-companion, but that owing to his folly in proposing to eat her, he has now lost her for ever. Hereupon she disappears, and all his efforts to rediscover her are fruitless.

The Tale of Attaf (P-170).

P. 138, note 6. — I may add that an episode is inserted in the Europeanised version of this story, relative to the loves of the son of Chebib and the Princess of Herak, which is evidently copied from the first nocturnal meeting of Kamaralzaman and Budur (No. 21, Nights, iii., p-242), and is drawn on exactly similar lines (Weber, i. p-510).

History of Prince Habib, and What Befel Him with the Lady Durrat Al-Ghawwas (P-201).

P. 197, note 1. — Epithets of colour, as applied to seas, frequently have a purely mythological application in Eastern tales. Thus, in the story of Zaher and Ali (cf. my “New Arabian Nights,”) we read, “You are now upon an island of the Black Sea, which encompasses all other seas, and flows within Mount Kaf. According to the reports of travellers, it is a ten years’ voyage before you arrive at the Blue Sea, and it takes full ten years to traverse this again to reach the Green Sea, after which there is another ten years’ voyage before you can reach the Greek Sea, which extends to inhabited countries and islands."

Kenealy says (in a note to his poem on "Night") that the Atlantic Ocean is called the Sea of Darkness, on account of the great irruption of water which occasioned its formation; but this is one of his positive statements relative to facts not generally known to the world, for which he considered it unnecessary to quote his authority.

P. 200. — According to one account of impalement which I have seen, the stake is driven through the flesh of the back beneath the skin.

Reading the account of the Crucifixion between the lines, I have come to the conclusion that the sudden death of Christ was due to his drinking from the sponge which had just been offered to him. The liquid, however, is said to have been vinegar, and not water; but this might have had the same effect, or water may have been substituted, perhaps with the connivance of Pilate. In the latter case vinegar may only have been mentioned as a blind, to deceive the fanatical Jews. The fragmentary accounts of the Crucifixion which have come down to us admit of many possible interpretations of details.

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Sons, Tale of the Merchant and his, i.
Speedy relief of Allah, Of the, i.

Split-mouthed Schoolmaster, Story of the, iv.
Sulayman Shah and his Niece, Story of King, i.
Sultanah, Story of three Sisters and their Mother the, iv.
Sultan and his Three Sons and the Enchanting Bird, Tale of the, iv.
Sultan and the Poor Man who brought to him Fruit, Tale of the, iv.
Sultan Mohammed of Cairo with the Three Foolish Schoolmasters, The Night Adventure of, iv.
Sultan of Al-Hind and his Son Mohammed, Story of the, iv.
Sultan of Al-Yaman and his Three Sons, Story of, iv.
Sultan who fared forth in the habit of a Darwaysh, The, iv.
Syria, History of the Lovers of, v.
Syrian and the Three Women of Cairo, The, v.
Tailor and the Lady and the Captain, The, v.
Tale of Himself told by the King, v.
Tenth Constable's History, ii.
Ten Wazirs; or, the History of King Azadbakht and his Son, The, i.
Thief's Tale, The, ii.
Third Constable's History, ii.
Third Larrikin concerning himself, Tale of, iv.
Third Larrikin, History of the, iv.
Thirteenth Constable's History, ii.
Three Foolish Schoolmasters, The Night Adventure of Sultan Mohammed of Cairo with the, iv.
Three men and our Lord Isa, Tale of the, i.
Three Princes of China, The, v.
Three Sharpers, Story of the, iv.
Three Sisters and their Mother the Sultanah, Story of the, iv.
Three Sons, Tale of the Sage and his, i.
Three Women of Cairo, The Syrian and the, v.
Three Young Men, Al-Hajjaj and the, i.
Tither, Tale of the Unjust King and the, i.
Tohfat al-Kulub and the Caliph Harun Al-Rashid, Tale of the Damsel, ii.
Trooper, Tale of the Fuller and his wife and the, i.

Trust in Allah, Of, i.
Tutor, Tale of the Man of Khorassan, his Son and his, i.
Twelfth Constable's History, ii.
Two Kings and the Wazir's daughters, Tale of the, ii.
Two Lack-Tacts of Cairo and Damascus, Story of the, v.
Two Sharpers who each cozened his Compeer, Tale of the, i.
Two Sisters who envied their Cadette, Tale of the, iii.
Ugly man and his beautiful Wife, Tale of the, i.
Unjust King and the Tither, Tale of the, i.
Uselessness of Endeavour against the Persistent Ill Fortune, Of the, i.
Virtue, The whorish wife who vaunted her, v.
Waker, The Sleeper and the, i.
Warlock and the Young Cook of Baghdad, Tale of the, vi.
Wazir Al Rahwan, King Shah Bakht and his, i.
Wazir, Tale of the King of Hind and his, i.
Wazir, (The Righteous) wrongfully gaoled, v.
Wazir's Daughters, Tale of the Two Kings and the, ii.
Wazirs; or the History of King Azadbakht and his Son, The Ten, i.
Wazirs, Story of King Dadbin and his, i.
Weaver who became a Leach by order of his wife, Tale of the, i.
Whorish wife who vaunted her virtue, The, v.
Wicked wife, The Fellah and his, v.
Wife, Firuz and his, i.
Wife, History of the Bhang Eater and his, iv.
Wife, Story of the Crone and the Draper's, i.
Wife, Tale of the King and his Chamberlain's, i.
Wife, Tale of the Ugly man and his beautiful, i.
Wife, Tale of the Weaver who became a Leach by order of his, i.
Wife, The Kazi schooled by his, v.
Wives, Story of the Youth who would futter his father's, v.
Woman of the Barmecides, Harun Al-Rashid and the, i.
Woman, Tale of the Robber and the, i.
Woman who humoured her lover at her husband's expense, The, v.
Women's Wiles, ii.
Wonderful Lamp, Alaeddin; or the, iii.
Young Cook of Baghdad, Tale of the Warlock and the, vi.

Young Sayyid, History of Al-Hajjaj bin Yusuf and the, v.
Youth Manjab, Night Adventure of Harun Al-Rashid and the, v.
Youth who would futter his father's wives, Story of the, v.
Yusuf, The Loves of Al-Hayfa and, v.
Zayn al-Asnam, Tale of, iii.
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Variants and Analogues of Some of the Tales in the Supplemental Nights.

By W. A. Clouston.

Aladdin; or the Wonderful Lamp, iii.
Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves, iii.
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King who kenned the Quintessence of things, The, ii.
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Prince who fell in love with the Picture, The, ii.

Sidi Nu'man, History of, iii.
Simpleton Husband, The, ii.
Singer and the Druggist; The, ii.
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Two Sisters who envied their Cadette, The, iii.
Weaver who became a leach by order of his wife, The, ii.
Women's Wiles, ii.
Zayn al-Asnarn, The tale of, iii.

Additional Notes.
By W. A. Clouston.

Aladdin, or the Wonderful Lamp, iii.
Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves, iii.
Firuz and his Wife, ii.
Fuller, his wife and the Trooper, The, ii.
Prince Ahmad, The Tale of, iii.
Singer and the Druggist, The, ii.
Zayn al-Asnam, The Tale of, iii.

By W. F. Kirby.

Additional Notes to some of Tales in vol. iv.; v.
Additional Notes to some of Tales in vol. v.; v.
Additional Notes to some of Tales in vol. vi.; vi.
Additional Bibliographical Notes to the Tales in the Supplemental Nights, vi.

Additional Notes on the Bibliography of the Thousand and One Nights. (Cf. Nights, X., App. Ii., P. 414.)

By W. F. Kirby.

Herewith I add notes on any works of importance which I had not seen when my

"Contributions" were published, or which have appeared since.

Zotenberg's Work on Aladdin and on Various Manuscripts of the Nights.

One of the most important works which has appeared lately in connection with the Thousand and One Nights, is the following:

Histoire d' 'Alâ Al-Dîn ou la Lampe Merveilleuse. Texte Arabe publié avec une notice sur quelques manuscrits des Mille et une Nuits par H. Zotenberg, roy. 8vo. Paris, Imprimérie Nationale, 1888

The publication of this work puts an end to the numerous conjectures of scholars as to the source of Galland's unidentified tales; and the notes on various MSS. of the Nights are also very valuable. It therefore appears desirable to give a tolerably full sketch of the contents of the book.[431]

M. Zotenberg begins with general remarks, and passes on to discuss Galland's edition. [Section I.] — Although Galland frequently speaks of Oriental tales[432] , in his journal, kept at Constantinople in 1672 and 1673, yet as he informs us, in his Dedication to the Marquise d'O., he only succeeded in obtaining from Syria a portion of the MS. of the Nights themselves with considerable difficulty after his return to France.

There is some doubt as to the date of appearance of the first 6 vols. of Galland's "Mille et une Nuit." According to Caussin de Perceval, vols. 1 and 2 were published together in 1704, and vols. 3 and 4 in the course of the same year. Nevertheless, in the copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale, vols. 1 and 4 are dated 1704, and vols. 2, 5 and 6 are dated 1705; vol. 3 is missing, just as we have only odd volumes of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th English editions in the British Museum, the 1st being still quite unknown.

M. Zotenberg proceeds to give an account of Galland's MS. (cf. Nights, x. App.,), and illustrates it by a specimen page in facsimile. Judging from the character of the writing, &c., he considers it to have been transcribed about the second half of the 14th century (Sir R. F. Burton suggests about A.D. 1384). It is curious that there is a MS. of the 15th century in the Library of the Vatican, which appears to be almost a counterpart of Galland's, and likewise contains only the first

282 Nights. Galland’s MS. wants a leaf extending from part of Night 102 to the beginning of Night 104, and containing an account of the Hunchback and his buffooneries; this hiatus is filled up in the Vatican MS.

Habìcht’s version is noted as more approaching Galland’s MS. than do the texts founded on the Egyptian texts; but in thus speaking, Zotenberg does not notice the assertion that Habìcht’s MS., though obtained at Tunis, came originally from Egypt. He considers the ordinary Egyptian texts to be generally abridged and condensed.

Although it is clear that Galland made great use of this MS. for his translation, yet M. Zotenberg points out numerous discrepancies, especially those at the commencement of the work, which led Caussin de Perceval to regard Galland’s work as a mere paraphrase of the original. M. Zotenberg, however (), writes, “Evidemment, Galland, pour la traduction du commencement du rècit, à suivi un texte plus developpé que celui du MS. 1508, texte dont la rédaction égyptienne ne presente qu’un maladroit abrégé.” He quotes other instances which seem to show that Galland had more than one text at his disposal.

[Section II.] — At the beginning of the 17th century, only two MSS. of the Nights existed m the libraries of Paris, one in Arabic, and the other in Turkish. The Arabic MS. contains 870 Nights, and is arbitrarily divided into 29 sections. M. Zotenberg considers that it was to this MS. that Galland referred, when he said that the complete work was in 36 parts The tales follow the order of our Table as far as No. 7 (Nos. 2ab, 2ac and 3ba are wanting), the remainder are irregular, and run as follows: 153, 154, 154a, 20; story of Khailedján ibn Háman, the Persian; Story of the Two Old Men, and of Báz al-Aschbáb Abou Lahab; 9, apparently including as episodes 9a, 9aa, 21, 8, 9b, 170, 181r to 181bb 137, 154 (commencement repeated), 181u to 181bb (repeated), 135a, Adventures of a traveller who entered a pond (étang) and underwent metamorphoses:[433] anecdotes and apothegms; a portion of the Kalila and Dimna ?

The Turkish MS. (in 11 vols.) is made up of several imperfect copies, which have been improperly put together. The bulk is formed by vols. 2-10 which are written in three different hands, and some of which bear date 1046 A.H. The contents of these nine vols. are as follows: Introduction and 1-3 (wanting 2ab), Story of ‘Abdallah of Basra, 5; Story of ‘Attáf ibn Ismá’il al-Schoqláni of Damascus and the schaikh Abou-’l-Baraka al-Nawwám, 6; Story told by the Christian Merchant (relating to Qamar al-Zamán during the reign of Sultan Mahmoud, and different from the story known under this title); Story of Ahmad al- Saghir (the tattle) and Schams al-Qosour; Story of the Young Man of Baghdad and the Bathman (Baigneur, attendant in a Hammam), 7; 153; 21; Story of Khaledjan ibn Maháni; Story of Nour al-Din ‘All and of Dounya (or Dinar) of Damascus, 133, Story of Prince Qamar-Khan and of the schaikh ‘Ate, of the Sultan Mahmoud-Khán, of Bahrám-Scháh, of ‘Abdallah ibn Hilal, of Harout and Marout, &c.; Story of Qowwat al-Qoloub; 9, including as episodes 9a; 8; Story of Moubaref who slept in the bath; (? = 96); and 170; Fables.

The other volumes (1 and 11 of the MS.) both contain the beginning of the MS. Vol. I was written towards the end of the 17th century, and extends about as far as Night 55, concluding with No. 7, which follows No. 3. Vol. 11., which once belonged to Galland, includes only a portion of the Introduction. The text of these two fragments is similar, but differs considerably from that of vol. 2 of the MS.; and specimens of the commencement of vols. 1 and 2 are given to show this. Yet it is singular that Galland does not seem to have used these Turkish volumes; and the second MS. which he actually used, like the 4th vol. of the copy preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, appears to be missing.

M. Zotenberg then remarks on the missing vol. 4 of Galland, and quotes extracts from Galland’s Diary, strewing that Nos. 191, 192 and 192a, which were surreptitiously introduced into his work without his knowledge, and greatly to his annoyance, were translated by Petis de la Croix, and were probably intended to be included in the Thousand and One Days, which was published in 1710.

[Section III.] — This is one of the most important in the book, in which extracts from Galland’s Diary of 1709 are quoted, shewing that he was then in constant communication with a Christian Maronite of Aleppo, named Hanna (Jean), who was brought to Paris by the traveller Paul Lucas, and who related stories to Galland, of which the latter took copious notes, and most of which he worked up into the later volumes of his “Mille et une Nuit” (sic). Among these were 193, 194a, 194b, 59, 197, 198, 174, 195, 194c, 196. The following tales he did not use: An Arab story of two cousins, Camar eddin and Bedr el Bodour; the Golden City (another version of the story of the Three Princes, in No. 198, combined with the story of the woman who slew pretenders who were unable to solve a riddle); The Three Princes, the Genius Morhagian, and his Daughters; and the story of the seller of ptisanne (or diet-drinks) and his son Hassan.

Further extracts from Galland’s Diary are added, extending from the time of Hanna’s departure from Paris between June and October, 1709, and the completion of the 12th volume of the Mille et une Nuit in 1712. These relate to the gradual progress of the work; and to business in connection with it; and Hanna’s name is occasionally mentioned.

Hanna supplied Galland with a written version of No. 193, and probably of 194 a-c; (i.e. most of the tales in vol. 9 and 10); but the tales in vols. 11 and 12 were apparently edited by Galland from his notes and recollections of Hanna’s narrations. These are Nos. 195, 196, 59, 197 and 198. M. Zotenberg concludes that Hanna possessed a MS. containing all these tales, part of which he copied for Galland, and that this copy, like several other important volumes which Galland is known or believed to have possessed, was lost. M. Zotenberg thinks that we may expect to meet with most of Hanna’s tales either in other copies of the Nights, or in some other collection of the same kind. The latter supposition appears to me to be by far the most probable.

[Section IV.] — M. Zotenberg proceeds to give an account of one or two very important MSS. of the Nights in the Bibliothèque Nationale. One of these is a MS. which belonged to the elder Caussin, and was carefully copied by Michael Sabbagh from a MS. of Baghdad. Prof. Fleischer, who examined it, states (Journal Asiatique, 1827, t. II.,) that it follows the text of Habicht, but in a more developed form. M. Zotenberg copies a note at the end, finishing up with the word “Kabíkaj” thrice repeated. This, he explains, “est le nom du génie préposé au régne des insectes. Les scribes, parfois, l’invoquent pour preserver leurs manuscrits de l’atteinte de vers.”

This MS. was copied in Parts on European paper at the beginning of the century, though Caussin de Perceval was not acquainted with it in 1806, but only with a MS. of the Egyptian redaction. This MS. agrees with Galland's only as far as the 69th Night. It differs from it in two other points; it contains No. 1c, and the end of No. 3 coincides with the end of Night 69. The contents of Nights 70-1001 are as follows: 246, 4, 5, 6, 20, 7, 153, 21, 170, 247, The Unhappy Lover confined in the Madhouse (probably = 204c), 8, 191, 193,174, 9, 9b (not 9a, or 9aa) and as episodes, 155, 32, and the story of the two brothers 'Amír and Ghadir, and their children Djamil and Bathina.

Another MS., used by Chavis and Cazotte, and Caussin de Perceval, was written in the year 1772. It has hitherto been overlooked, because it was erroneously stated in the late M. Reinaud's Catalogue to be a MS. containing part of the 1001 Nights, extending from Night 282 to Night 631, and copied by Chavis. It is not from Chavis' hand, and does not form part of the ordinary version of the Nights, but contains the following tales: 174, 248, Story of King Sapor, 246, 3a, 36, 3c, 153, Story of the Intendant, the Interpreter, and the Young Man; 247, 204c, 240, 250, Story of the Caliph and the Fisherman (probably = 156), the Cat and the Fox, and the Little Bird and the Fowler.

Another MS., really written by Chavis, commences exactly where Vol. 3 of Galland's MS leaves off, i. e. in the middle of No. 21, and extends from Night 281 to Night 631. M. Zotenberg supposes it to have been written to supply the place of the last volume of Galland's set. It contains the following tales in addition to the conclusion of No. 21: 170, 247, 204c, 8, 191, 193 and 174. M. Zotenberg suggests that the first part of this MS may have been copied from Galland's last volume, which may have existed at the time in private hands.

The two last MSS. contain nearly the same tales, though with numerous variations.

M. Zotenberg discusses the hypothesis of Chavis' MS. being a translation from the French, and definitely rejects it.

[Section V.] — Here M. Zotenberg discusses the MSS. of the Nights in general, and divides them into three categories. 1. MSS. proceeding from Muslim parts of Asia. These, except the MSS. of Michael Sabbagh and that of Chavis, contain only the first part of the work. They are all more or less incomplete, and stop short in the middle of the text. They are not quite uniform, especially in their readings, but generally contain the same tales arranged in the same order. II. Recent MSS. of Egyptian origin, characterised by a special style, and a more condensed narrative; by the nature and arrangement of the tales, by a great number of anecdotes and fables; and by the early part of the work containing the great romance of chivalry of King Omar Bin Al-Nu'uman. III. MSS. mostly of Egyptian origin, differing as much among themselves in the arrangement of the tales as do those of the other groups.

The following MSS. are mentioned as belonging to the first group: —

I. Galland's MS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Nos. 1506-1508.
II. MS. in the Vatican, No. 782.
III. Dr. Russell's MS. from Aleppo.
IV. MS. in the Bibl. Nat. (Suppl. 1715, I and II.).
V. MS. in the Library of Christ Church College, Oxford (No. ccvii.).
VI. MS. in the Library of the India Office, London (No. 2699).
VII. Sir W. Jones' MS., used by Richardson.
VIII. Rich's MS. in the Library of the British Museum (Addit. 7404).
IX. MS. in Bibl. Nat. (Suppl. 2522 and 2523) X. MS. in Bibl. Nat. (Suppl. 1716).

The following MSS. are enumerated as belonging to the second group: —

I. Salt's MS. (printed in Calcutta in 4 vols.).
II-IV. Three complete MSS. in Bibliothèque Nationale (Suppl. Arabe, Nos. 1717,1718, 1719).
V. Incomplete MS. of Vol. II. in Bibl. Nat. (Suppl. Arabe, Nos 2198 to 2200).
VI. Incomplete MS. of Vol. 4 (Suppl. Arabe, Nos. 2519 to 2521).
VII. Odd vol. containing Nights 656 to 1001 (Suppl. Arabe, No.

1721, III.).
XII. MS. containing Nights 284 to 327 (Suppl. Arabe, No. 1720).
XIII. MS. in British Museum (Oriental MSS., Nos. 1593 to 1598).
XIV. Ditto (Oriental MSS., Nos. 2916 to 2919).
XV. Burckhardt's MS. in the University Library at Cambridge (B. MSS. 106 to
109).
XVI. MS. in the Vatican (Nos. 778 to 781).
XVII. MS. in the Ducal Library at Gotha.
XVIII. Odd vol. in ditto.
XIX. MS. in the Royal Library at Munich.
XX. Ditto, incomplete (De Sacy's).
XXI. Fragment in the Library of the Royal and Imperial Library at Vienna (No.
CL.).
XXII. MS. in the Imperial Public Library at St. Petersburg (Von
Hammer's).
XXIII.MS. in the Library of the Institute for the Study of Oriental languages
at St. Petersburg (Italinski's).
XXIV. Mr. Clarke's MS. (cf. Nights, x., App. p- 448).
XXV. Caussin de Perceval's MS.
XXVI. Sir W. Ouseley's MSS.

The above list does not include copies or fragments in various libraries of which M. Zotenberg has no sufficient information, nor miscellaneous collection in which tales from the Nights are mixed with others.

Portions of Habicht's MS. appear to belong to the Egyptian recension, and others to have come from further East.

There is a MS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Suppl. Arabe, No. 1721, IV.) from Egypt, containing the first 210 Nights, which somewhat resembles Habicht's MS. both in style and in the arrangement of the tales. The Third Shaykh's Story (No. 1 c.) is entirely different from those in the ordinary MSS., nor is it the same as that in the Turkish version of the Nights, which is again quite different from either. In this MS. (No. 1721, IV.) No. 6 is followed by Nos. 7, 174, and 133.

Then follow notices of Anderson's MS., used by Scott, but which cannot now be traced the Calcutta edition of the first 200 Nights; and of the Wortley Montague MS. These form M. Zotenberg's third group of MSS.

M. Zotenberg does not enter into the question of the original form, date and constituents of the primitive work, but concludes that the complete work as we now have it only assumed its present form at a comparatively recent period. But it must not be forgotten that the details, description, manners, and style of the tales composing this vast collection, are undergoing daily alteration both from narrators and copyists.

Then follows an Appendix, in which M. Zotenberg has copied two tales from Galland's journals, which he took down as related by the Maronite Hanna. One of these is new to me, it is the story of the Three Princes, and the Genius Morhagian and his Daughters (added at the end of this section); and the other is the well-known story of the Envious Sisters.

The remainder of M. Zotenberg's volume contains the Arabic text of the story of 'Ala Al-Din, or the Wonderful Lamp, with numerous critical notes, most of which refer to Galland's version. A few pages of Chavis' text are added for comparison.

The story itself, M. Zotenberg remarks, is modern, giving a faithful picture of Egyptian manners under the reign of the last Mamlouk Sultans. Some expressions which occur in the French Arabic Dictionary of Ellions Bocthor and of A. Caussin de Perceval, are apparently derived from the story of 'Ala Al-Din.

Story of the Three Princes and the Genius Morhagian and His Daughters.

[Reprinted by M. Zotenberg (p-61) from Galland's Journal, MS. francais, No. 15277, p-131. The passages in brackets are added by the present translator (chiefly where Galland has inserted "etc.") to fill up the sense.]

When the Sultan of Samarcand had reached a great age, he called the three princes, his sons, and after observing that he was much pleased to see how much they loved and revered him, he gave them leave to ask for whatever they most desired. They had only to speak, and he was ready to grant them whatever they asked, let it be what it might, on the sole condition that he should satisfy the eldest first, and the two younger ones afterwards, each in his turn. The eldest prince, whose name was Rostam, begged the Sultan to build him a cabinet of bricks of gold and silver alternately, and roofed with all kinds of precious stones.

The Sultan issued his orders that very day, but before the roof of the cabinet was finished, indeed before any furniture had been put into it, Prince Rostam asked his father's leave to sleep there. The Sultan tried to dissuade him, saying that [the roof] ought to be finished first, but the prince was so impatient that he ordered his bed to be removed there, and he lay down. He was reading the Koran about midnight, when suddenly the floor opened and he beheld a most hideous genius named Morhagian rise from the ground, who cried out, "You are a prince, but even if you were the Sultan himself, I would not refrain from taking vengeance for your rashness in entering this house which has been built just above the palace of my eldest daughter." At the same time he paced around the cabinet, and struck its walls, when the whole cabinet was reduced to dust so fine that the wind carried it away, and left not a trace of it. The prince drew his sword, and pursued the genius, who took to flight until he came to a well, into which he plunged [and vanished]. When the prince appeared before his father the Sultan next morning, he was overwhelmed with confusion [not only at what had happened, but on account of his disobedience to his father, who reproached him severely for having disregarded his advice].

The second prince, whose name was Gaiath Eddin (Ghayáth al-Din), then requested the Sultan to build him a cabinet constructed entirely of the bones of fishes. The Sultan ordered it to be built, at great expense. Prince Gaiath Eddin had no more patience to wait till it was quite finished than his brother Rostam. He lay down in the cabinet notwithstanding the Sultan's warnings, but took care to keep his sword by his side The genius Morhagian appeared to him also at midnight, paid him the same compliment, and told him that the cabinet was built over the palace of his second daughter. He reduced it to dust, and Prince Gaiath Eddin pursued him, sword in hand, to the well, where he escaped; and next day the prince appeared before his father, the Sultan [as crestfallen as his brother].

The third prince, who was named Badialzaman (Badíu'l-Zamán = Rarity of the Age) obtained leave from the Sultan to build a cabinet entirely of rock crystal. He went to sleep there before it was entirely finished, but without saying anything to the Sultan, as he was resolved to see whether Morhagian would treat him in the same way. Morhagian arrived at midnight, and declared that the cabinet was built over the palace of his third daughter. He destroyed the cabinet' and when the prince seized his sword, Morhagian took to flight. The prince wounded him three times before he reached the well, but he nevertheless succeeded in escaping.

Prince Badialzaman did not present himself to the Sultan, but went to the two princes, his brothers, and urged them to pursue the genius in the well itself. The three went together, and the eldest was let down into the well by a rope, but after descending a certain distance, he cried out, and asked to be drawn up a rain. He excused his failure by saying that he felt a burning heat [and was almost suffocated]. The same thing happened to Prince Gaiath Eddin, who likewise cried out till he was drawn up. Prince Badialzaman then had himself let down but commanded his brothers not to draw him up again, even if he should cry out. They let him down, and he cried out, but he continued to descend till he reached the bottom of the well, when he untied himself from the rope, and called out to his brothers that the air was very foul. At the bottom of the well he found an open door and he advanced for some distance between two walls, at the end of which he found a golden door, which he opened, and beheld a magnificent palace. He entered and passed through the kitchen and the storerooms, which were filled with all kinds of provisions, and then inspected the rooms, when he entered one magnificently furnished with sofas and divans. He was curious to find out who lived there, so he hid himself. Soon afterwards he beheld a flight of doves alight at the edge of a basin of water in the middle of the court The doves plunged into the water, and emerged from it as women, each of whom immediately set about her appointed work. One went to the store room, another to the kitchen a third began to sweep [and so on]. They prepared a feast [as if for expected guests]. Some time afterwards, Badialza man beheld another flight of ten doves of different colours who surrounded an eleventh, which was quite white, and these also perched on the edge of the basin. The ten doves plunged into the basin and came forth as women, more beautiful than the first and more magnificently robed. They took the white dove and plunged her into a smaller basin, which was [filled with] rose [water] and she became a woman of extraordinary beauty. She was the eldest daughter of the genius, and her name was Fattane. (Fattánah = The Temptress.)

Two of her attendants then took Fattane under the armpits, and led her to her apartment, followed by the others. She took her seat on a small raised sofa, and her women separated, some to the right and some to the left, and set about their work. Prince Badialzaman had dropped his handkerchief. One of the waiting women saw it and picked it up, and when she looked round, she saw the prince. She was alarmed, and warned Fattane, who sent some of her women to see who the stranger was. The prince came forward, and presented himself before Fattane, who beheld a young prince, and gave him a most gracious reception. She made him sit next to her, and inquired what brought him there? He told his story from the beginning to the end, and asked where he could find the genius, on whom he wished to take vengeance. Fattane smiled, and told him to think no more about it, but only to enjoy himself in the good company in which he found himself. They spread the table, and she made him sit next to her, and her women played on all kinds of musical instruments before they retired to rest.

Fattane persuaded the prince to stay with her from day to day: but on the fortieth day he declared that he could wait no longer, and that it was absolutely necessary for him to find out where Morhagian dwelt. The princess acknowledged that he was her father, and told him that his strength was so great [that nobody could overcome him]. She added that she could not inform him where to find him, but that her second sister would tell him. She sent one of her women to guide him to her sister's palace through a door of communication, and to introduce him. He was well received by the fairy, for whom he had a letter, and he found her younger and more beautiful than Fattane. He begged her to inform him where he could find the genius, but she changed the subject of conversation, entertained him magnificently, and kept him with her for forty days. On the fortieth day she permitted him to depart, gave him a letter, and sent him to her youngest sister, who was a still more beautiful fairy. He was received and welcomed with joy. She promised to show him Morhagian's dwelling, and she also entertained him for forty days. On the fortieth day she tried to dissuade him from his enterprise, but he insisted. She told him that Morhagian would grasp his head in one hand, and his feet in the other, and would tear him asunder in the middle. But this did not move him, and she then told him that he would find Morhagian in a dwelling, long, high and wide in proportion to his bulk. The prince sought him out, and the moment he caught sight of him, he rushed at him, sword in hand. Morhagian stretched out his hand, seized his head in one hand and his feet in the other, rent him in two with very little effort, and threw him out of a window which overlooked a garden.

Two women sent by the youngest princess each took a piece of the body of the prince, and brought it to their mistress, who put them together, reunited them, and restored life to the prince by applying water [of life ?] to the wounds. She then asked the prince where he came from, and it seemed to him that he had just awakened from sleep; and she then recalled everything to his recollection. But this did not weaken his firm resolve to kill the genius. The fairy begged him to eat, but he refused; and she then urged that Morhagian was her father, and that he could only be killed by his own sword, which the prince could not obtain.[434] "You may say what you please," answered the prince; "but there is no help for it, and he must die by my hand [to atone for the wrongs which my brothers and I have suffered from him]."

Then the princess made him swear solemnly to take her as his bride, and taught him how he might succeed in killing the genius. "You cannot hope to kill him while he wakes," said she, "but when he sleeps it is not quite impossible. If he sleeps, you will hear him snore, but he will sleep with his eyes open, which is a sign that he has fallen into a very profound slumber. As he fills the whole room, step upon him and seize his sword which hangs above his head, and then strike him on the neck. The blow will not kill him, but as he wakes, he will tell you to strike him a second time. But beware of doing this [for if you strike him again, the wound will heal of itself, and he will spring up and kill you, and me after you]."

Then Badialzaman returned to Morhagian's room, and found him snoring so loud that everything around him shook. The prince entered, though not without trembling, and walked over him till he was able to seize the sword when he struck him a violent blow on the neck. Morhagian awoke, cursing his daughter, and cried out to the prince, whom he recognised, "Make an end of me." The prince answered that what he had done was enough, and he left him, and Morhagian died.

The prince carried off Morhagian's sword, which he thought would be useful to him in other encounters; and as he went, he passed a magnificent stable in which he saw a splendid horse. He returned to the fairy and related to her what he had done, and added that he would like to carry off the horse, but he feared it would be very difficult. "Not so difficult as you think," said she. "Go and cut off some hair from his tail, and take care of it, and whenever you are in need, burn one or two of the hairs, and he will be with you immediately [and will bring you whatever you require]."

After this the three fairies assembled together, and the prince promised that the two princes, his brothers, should marry the other two sisters. Each fairy reduced her palace to the size of a small ball, which she gave to the prince

The prince then took the three fairies to the bottom of the well. His father, the Sultan, had long believed that he was dead, and had put on mourning for him. His two brothers often came to the well, and they happened to be there just at the time. Badialzaman attracted their attention by his shouts, told them what had happened, and added that he had brought the three fairies with him. He asked for a rope and fastened the eldest fairy to it, calling out, "Pull away, Prince Rostam, I send you your good fortune." The rope was let down again, and he fastened the second fairy to it, calling out "Brother Gaiath Eddin, pull up your good fortune too."

The third fairy, who was to marry Badialzaman, begged him to allow himself to be drawn up before her [as she was distrustful of his brothers], but he would not listen to her. As soon as the two princes had drawn her up so high that they could see her, they began to dispute who should have her. Then the fairy cried out to Badialzaman, “Prince, did I not warn you of this ?”

The princes were obliged to agree that the Sultan should settle their dispute. When the third fairy had been drawn out of the well, the three fairies endeavoured to persuade the two princes to draw up their youngest brother, but they refused, and compelled them to follow them. While they carried off the youngest princess, the other two asked leave to say adieu to Prince Badialzaman They cried out from the top of the well, “Prince have patience till Friday, when you will see six bulls pass by — three red ones and three black ones. Mount upon one of the red ones and he will bring you up to the earth, but take good care not to mount upon a black one, for he would carry you down to the Seventh Earth.”[435]

The princes carried off the three fairies, and on Friday, three days afterwards, the six bulls appeared. Badialzaman was about to mount upon a red one, when a black one prevented him, and compelled him to mount his back, when he plunged through the earth till he stopped at a large town in another world. He entered the town, and took up his abode with an old woman, to whom he gave a piece of gold to provide him with something to eat, for he was almost famished. When he had eaten enough, he asked for something to drink. “You cannot be a native of this country,” said the old woman [“or you would not ask for drink”]. She then brought him a sponge, saying that she had no other water. She then informed him that the town was supplied with water from a very copious spring, the flow of which was interrupted by a monster. They were obliged to offer up a girl to be devoured by it on every Friday. To-day the princess, the Sultan’s daughter, was to be given up to him, and while the monster emerged from his lair to devour her, enough water would flow for everyone to supply himself until the following Friday.

Badialzaman then requested the old woman to show him the way to the place where the princess was already exposed; but she was so much afraid that he had much trouble in persuading her to come out of her house to show him what direction to take. He went out of the town, and went on till he saw the princess, who made a sign to him from a distance to approach no nearer; and the nearer he came, the more anxiety she displayed. As soon as he was within hearing, he shouted to her not to be afraid; and he sat down beside her, and fell asleep, after having begged her to wake him as soon as the monster appeared. Presently a tear from the princess fell upon his face, and he woke up, and saw the monster, which he slew with the sword of Morhagian, and the water flowed in abundance The princess thanked her deliverer, and begged him to take her back to the Sultan her father, who would give proofs of his gratitude; but he excused himself. She then marked his shoulder with the blood of the monster without his noticing it. The princess then returned to the town, and was led back to the palace, where she related to the Sultan [all that had happened]. Then the Sultan commanded that all the men in the town should pass before himself and the princess under pain of death. Badialzaman tried to conceal himself in a khan, but he was compelled to come with the others. The princess recognised him, and threw an apple at him to point him out. He was seized, and brought before the Sultan, who demanded what he could do to serve him. The prince hesitated, but at length he requested the Sultan to show him the way to return to the world from whence he came. The Sultan was furious, and would have ordered him to be burned as a heretic [but the princess interceded for his life]. The Sultan then treated him as a madman, and drove him ignominiously from the town, and he wandered away without knowing where he was going. At length he arrived at a mountain of rock, where he saw a great serpent rising from his lair to prey on young Rokhs. He slew the serpent with the sword of Morhagian, and the father and mother of the Rokhs arrived at the moment, and asked him to demand whatever he desired in return. He hesitated awhile, but at length he asked them to show him the way to the upper world. The male Rokh then told him to prepare ten quarters of mutton, to mount on his back, and to give him some of the meat whenever he should turn his head either to one side or to the other on the journey.

The prince mounted on the back of the Rokh, the Rokh stamped with his foot, and the earth opened before them wherever he turned. They reached the bottom of the well when the Rokh turned his head, but there was no more meat left, so the prince cut off the calf of his leg and gave it to him. When the Rokh arrived at the top of the well, the prince leaped to the ground, when the Rokh perceived [that he was lame, when he inquired the reason, and the prince explained what had happened]. The Rokh then disgorged the calf of the leg, and returned it to its place, when it grew fast, and the prince was cured immediately.

As the prince left the well, he met a peasant, and changed clothes with him, but he kept the sword, the three balls, and the horse-hair. He went into the town, where he took lodgings with a tailor, and kept himself in retirement. The prince gradually rose in the tailor's esteem by letting him perceive that he knew how to sew [and all the arts of an accomplished tailor]. Presently, preparations were made for the wedding of Prince Rostam, and the tailor with whom Badialzaman lodged was ordered to prepare the fairy's robes. Badialzaman, who slept in the shop, took clothes from one of the balls similar to those which were already far advanced, and put them in the place of the others. The tailor was astonished [at their fine workmanship] and wished to take the prince with him to receive a present, but he refused, alleging as an excuse that he had so lately come to the town. When the fairies saw the clothes, they thought it a good omen.

The wedding day arrived, and they threw the jarīd[436] [and practised other martial exercises]. It was a grand festival, and all the shops were closed. The tailor wished to take the prince to see the spectacle, but he put him off with an excuse. However, he went to a retired part of the town, where he struck fire with a gun,[437] and burned a little of the horse hair. The horse appeared, and he told him to bring him a complete outfit all in red, and that he should likewise appear with trappings, jewels, &c., and a reed (jarīd) of the same colour. The prince then mounted the horse, and proceeded to the race-course, where his appearance excited general admiration. At the close of the sports, he cut off the head of Prince Rostam, and the horsemen pursued him, but were unable to overtake him, and soon lost sight of him. He returned to the shop dressed as usual before the arrival of the tailor, who related to him what had happened, of which he pretended to be entirely ignorant. There was a great mourning at the court; but three months afterwards, fresh robes were ordered for the wedding of the second prince. The fairies were confirmed in their suspicions when they saw the fresh clothes [which Badialzaman sent them].

On the wedding day they again assembled to throw the jaríd. Prince Badialzaman now presented himself on the white horse, robed in white, and with pearls and jewels to match, and again he attracted general admiration. He pushed himself into the midst of a guard of eight hundred horsemen, and slew Gaiath Eddin. They rushed upon him, and he allowed himself to be carried before the Sultan, who recognised him [and pronounced his decision]. "A brother who has been abandoned to die by his brothers has a right to kill them."

After this, Prince Badialzaman espoused the youngest princess, and the two others were given in marriage to two princes who were related to the Sultan.

Cazotte's Continuation, and the Composite Editions of the Arabian Nights (P-422).

P. 422. — There is a small Dutch work, the title of which is as follows:

Oostersche Vertellingen, uit de Duizend-en-cen-Nacht: Naar de Hoogduitsche
Bewerking van M. Claudius,[438] voor de Nederlandsche Jeugduiitgegeven door
J. J. A. Gouverneur. Te Groningen, bij B. Wolters, n.d. 8vo., p, colt front. (illustrating No. 170).

A composite juvenile edition, including Introduction (very short), and Nos. 251g, 36a 163 (complete form), 6ef, 4, 5, 1, 52, 170, 6ee, 223, 207c, 6, 194c, 206a, 204h, 2a, 174a and Introduction (a).

Derived from at least four different sources.

Translations of the Printed Texts (P-439).

Under this heading I have to record Sir Richard and Lady Burton's own works.

Lady Burton's Edition of her husband's Arabian Nights, translated literally from the Arabic, prepared for household reading by Justin Huntly McCarthy, M.P., London, Waterlow and Sons, Roy.

8vo. 6 vols.

In preparing this edition for the press, as much as possible has been retained, both of the translation and notes; and it has not been found necessary to omit altogether more than a very few of the least important tales. The contents of the 6 volumes are as follows: —

Vol. I. (1886), Front’s piece (Portrait of Lady Burton), Preface, Translator’s
Foreword Introduction 1-9 (pp. xxiii. 476).

Vol. II. (1886), Front’s piece (Portrait of Sir Richard F. Burton), 9 (continued), 9a-29 (pp. ii. 526).

Vol. III. (1887), 29 (continued)-133e (pp. viii. 511).

Vol. IV. (1887), 133e (continued)-154a (pp. iv. 514).

Vol. V. (1887), 154a (continued)-163 (pp. iv. 516).

Vol. VI. (1886) [? 1888], 163 (continued)-169 (pp. ii. 486).

Also includes Terminal Essay, Index to Tales and Proper Names, Contributions to Bibliography, as far as it relates to Galland’s MS. and Translations; Comparative Table of Tales; Opinions of the Press; and Letters from Scholars.

Supplemental Nights to the Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night, with notes anthropological and explanatory, by Richard F. Burton. Benares, printed by the Kamashastra Society for private subscribers only. Roy. 8vo.

The contents of the 6 volumes are as follows:

Vol. I. (1886) Translator’s Foreword, 170-181bb.

Vol. II. (1886) 182-189. Appendix: Variants and analogues of some of the tales in vols. i. and ii., by Mr. W. A. Clouston.

These two volumes contain the tales peculiar to the Breslau Text, and cover the same ground as Mr. Payne’s 3 vols. of “Tales from the Arabic.”

Vol. III. (1887) Foreword, 191-198. Appendix: Variants and Analogues of the
Tales in the Supplemental Nights, vol. iii., by Mr. W. A. Clouston.

This volume, the bulkiest of the whole series, contains such of

Galland's tales as are not to be found in the ordinary texts of the Nights.

Vol. IV. (1887) The Translator's Foreword, 203-209; App. A. Ineptiæ
Bodleianae; App. B., The three untranslated tales in Mr. E. J. W. Gibb's
"Forty Vezirs."

Vol. V. (1888) 210-241a, Translator's Foreword; App. i. Catalogue of Wortley Montague Manuscript, Contents, App. ii. Notes on the Stories contained in vols. iv. and v. of Supplemental Nights, by Mr. W. F. Kirby.

These two volumes contain tales translated from the Wortley Montague MS., used by Jonathan Scott, and now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. The following tales, not in our table, are added: —

Vol. IV. Story of the Limping Schoolmaster (between 204i and 204j).

How Drummer Abu Kasim became a Kazi, and Story of the Kazi and his Slipper.
(These two tales come between 206a and 206b.)

Adventure of the Fruit-seller and the Concubine (between 207c and 207d).

Tale of the third Larrikin concerning himself (between 208 and 209).

On the other hand, a few tales in the MS. are omitted as repetitions, or as too unimportant to be worth translating: —

Vol. VI. (1888) Translator's Foreword: 248; 246; The Linguist-Dame, the
Duenna, and the King's Son; 247; The Pleasant History of the Cock and the Fox;
History of what befel the Fowl-let with the Fowler; 249; 250.

App. i. Index to the Tales and Proper Names; ii. Alphabetical Table of the Notes (Anthropological, &c.); iii. Notes on the Stories contained in vol. vi. of Supplementary Nights, by W. F. Kirby; iv. Additional Notes on the Bibliography of the Thousand and One Nights, by W. F. Kirby; v. The Biography of the Book and the Reviewers Reviewed, Opinions of the Press.

This volume contains the originals of Chavis and Cazotte's Tales, omitting the four doubtful ones (cf. Nights, x. App., p, 419).

Collections of Selected Tales (P. 439).

"We have also 'Aladdin or the Wonderful Lamp,' 'Sindbad the Sailor, or the Old
Man of the Sea' and 'Ali Baba, or the Forty Thieves,' revised by M. E.
Braddon, author of 'Lady Audley's Secret,' etc. Illustrated by Gustav Doré and
other artists. London: J. & R. Maxwell.

"Miss Braddon has contented herself with 'Englishing' the vulgar version, whose Gallicisms are so offensive to the national ear." (Sir R. F. Burton, in litt.)

Imitations and Miscellaneous Works Having More or less
Connection with the Nights (P-453). B. English
(P-453).

13. History of Rhedi, the Hermit of Mount Ararat, an Oriental Tale. By — Mackenzie, 16mo., Dublin, 1781.

I have not seen this little book.

14. Miscellanies, consisting of classical extracts, and Oriental Epilogues. By William Beloe, F.S.A. Translator of Herodotus, &c. London, 1795.

Includes some genuine Oriental tales, such as a version of that of Básim the
Smith.

15. The Orientalist, or Letters of a Rabbi, with Notes by James Noble, Oriental Master in the Scottish Nasal and Military Academy. Edinburgh, 1831.

Noticed by Mr. W. A. Clouston, Suppl. Nights, iii., .

16. The Adventures of the Caliph Haroun Al-raschid. Recounted by the Author of “Mary Powell” [Miss Manning]. 8vo., London, 1855; Arthur Hall, Virtue & Co.

17. The 1001 Days, a Companion to the Arabian Nights, with introduction by Miss J.] Pardoe. 8vo., London 1857, woodcuts.

A miscellaneous collection partly derived from “Les Mille et un Jours” (cf. Nights x., p, 500). I have also seen a similar miscellaneous collection in French under the latter title. The tales in the English work are as follows:

I. Hassan Abdallah, or the Enchanted Keys Story of Hassan.
    Hassan Abdallah the Basket Maker.
    Hassan Abdallah the Dervise Abounader

II. Soliman Bey and the Story Tellers
    The First Story Teller.
    The Second Story Teller.
    The Third Story Teller.

III. Prince Khalaf and the Princess of China
    Story of Prince Al-Abbas.
    Story of Liri-in.

IV. The Wise Dey.
V. The Tunisian Sage.
VI. The Nose for Gold.
VII. The Treasures of Basra.
History of Aboulcassem.
VIII. The Old Camel.
IX. The Story of Medjeddin (Grimm’s “Haschem,” cf. Nights, x.,).

X. King Bedreddin Lolo and his Vizier.
    Story of the Old Slippers.
    Story of Atalmulk, surnamed the Sorrowful Vizier, and the Princess

Zelica.

Story of Malek and the Princess Schirine

18. The Modern Arabian Nights. By Arthur A'Beckett and Linley Sambourne. London: Bradbury, Agnew & Co., 1877, sm. 4to., with comic coloured frontispieces and woodcuts.

Four clever satires (social and political) as follows:

1. Alley Baber and Son, a Mock Exchange Story. 2. Ned Redding and the Beautiful Persian. 3. The Ride of Captain Alf Rashit to Ke-Vere-Street. 4. Mr. O'Laddin and the Wonderful Lamp.

19. Tales of the Caliph. By Al Arawiyah, 8vo., London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1887.

Belongs to Class 5 (Imitations). Consists of fictitious adventures supposed to have happened to Harun Al-Rashid, chiefly during his nocturnal rambles.

Separate Editions of Single or Composite Tales (P 441).

P. 440. — No. 184 was published under the title of "Woman's Wit" in the "Literary Souvenir" for 1831, pp.217-237.derived from Langles' version (Mr. L.C. Smithers in litt.).

Translation of Cognate Oriental Romances Illustrative of the Nights (P-443).

P. 441, No. 1. Les Mille et un Jours.

Mr. L. C. Smithers (in litt.) notes English editions published in 1781 and 1809, the latter under the title of "The Persian and Turkish Tales."

P. 443, No. 5. Recueil de Contes Populaires de la Kabylie du Djurdjura recueillis et traduits par J. Riviere. 12mo. Paris: Leroux. 1882.

This collection is intended to illustrate the habits and ideas of the people. The tales are very short, and probably very much abridged, but many of them illustrate the Nights. I may note the following tales as specially interesting from their connection with the Nights, or with important tales in other collections, Oriental or otherwise.

Thadhillala. A brief abstract of No. 151.

Les deux Frères. A variant of Herodotus' Story of Rhampsinitus.

L'homme de bien et le méchant. A variant of No. 262; or Schiller's Fridolin.

Le Corbeau et l'Enfant. Here a child is stolen and a crow left in its place.

H'ab Sliman. Here an ugly girl with foul gifts is substituted for her opposite.

Le roi et son fils. Here we find the counterpart of Schaibar (from No. 197), who, however, is a cannibal and devours everybody.

Les Enfants et la Chauve-sourie. Resembles No. 198.

Le Joueur de Flute. Resembles Grimm's story of the Jew in the Bramble-Bush.

Jésus-Christ et la femme infidels (=261 b.; cf. Nights, x.,).

Le Roitelet. This is the fable of the Ox and the Frog.

L'idiot et le coucou (=No. 206a).

Moh'amed teen Soltan. This is one of the class of stories known to folk-lorists as the Punchkin series. The life of a Ghúl is hidden in an egg, the egg in a pigeon, the pigeon in a camel, and the camel in the sea.

Les deux Frères. A Cinderella story. The slayer of a hydra is discovered by trying on a shoe.

Les trots Frères. Here a Ghúl is killed by a single blow from a magic dagger, which must not be repeated. (Cf. Nights, vii., .) In this story, too, the protection of a Ghúlah is secured by tasting her milk, a point which we find in Spitta Bey's "Comes Arabes Modernes," but not in the Nights.

9. Turkish Evening Entertainments. "The Wonders of Remarkable Incidents and the Rarities of Anecdotes," by Ahmed ibn Hemdem the Kethhoda called "Sobailee." Translated from the Turkish by John F. Brown. 8vo., New York, 1850.

Contains a great number of tales and anecdotes, divided into 37 chapters, many of which bear such headings as "Illustrative of intelligence and piety," "On justice and fostering care," "Anecdotes about the Abbaside Caliphs," &c.

"A translation of the Turkish story-book, 'Aja'ib al-ma'ásir wa ghará 'ib ennawádir,' written for Muád the Fourth Ottoman Sultan who reigned between 1623-40. A volume of interesting anecdotes from the Arabic and Persian" (Mr. L. C. Smithers, in litt.).

10. Contes Arabes Modernes, recueillis et traduits par Guillaume Spitta-Bey. 8vo., Leyden and Paris, 1883.

This book contains 12 orally collected tales of such great importance from a folk-lore point of view that I have given full abstracts of all. They are designed to illustrate the spoken Egyptian dialect, and are printed in Roman character, with translation and glossary. The hero of nearly all the tales is called "Mohammed l'Avisé," which Mr. Sydney Hartland renders "Prudent," and Mr. W. A. Clouston "Discreet." The original gives "Essâtir Mehammed." (Al-Shátir Mohammed, i.e., M. the Clever.) The frequent occurrence of the number 39 (forty less one) may also be noted. Ghúls often play the part which we should expect Jinn to fill. The bear, which occurs in two stories, is not an Egyptian animal. Having called attention to these general features we may leave the tales to speak for themselves.

I. Histoire de Mohammed l'Avise.

Contains the essential features of Cazotte's story of the Maugraby (cf. Nights, x., p 418) with interesting additions. The "Mogrébin" confers three sons on a king and queen and claims Mohammed, the eldest and the cleverest. He gives him a book to read during his absence of 30 days, but on the 29th day he finds a girl hanging by her hair in the garden and she teaches him to read it, but not to tell the magician. The latter cuts off his arm threatening to cut off his head if he cannot read the book within another 30 days. As soon as he is gone, Mohammed reads on his arm again with the book, and escapes with the girl when they separate and return to their respective homes. Mohammed then changes himself into a sheep for his mother to sell, but warns her not to sell the cord round his neck. Next day he changes himself into a camel, forbidding his mother to sell the bridle but she is persuaded to do so, and he falls into the hands of the magician. But he contrives to escape in the form of a crow and the magician pursues him for two days and nights in the form of a hawk, when he descends into the garden of the king whose daughter he had rescued from the magician, and changes himself into a pomegranate on a tree. The magician asks for and receives the pomegranate, when it bursts, and the seed containing the life of Mohammed rolls under the king's throne. The magician changes himself into a cock, and picks up the seeds, but while he is searching for the last, it changes into a dagger, and cuts him in two. The princess acknowledges Mohammed as her deliverer and they are married.

II. Histoire de l'Ours de Cuisine.

This begins as a swan-maiden story.[439] A king steals the feather-dress of a bathing maiden, who will only marry him on condition that she shall tear out the eyes of his forty women (39 white slaves and a princess). The king answers, "C'est bien, il n'y a pas d'inconvénient." The forty blind women are shut up in a room under the kitchen, where they give birth to children whom they cut up and divide; but the princess saves her shares and thus preserves her son, whom she calls "Mohammed l'Avisé," and teaches to read. He steals food from the kitchen, calling himself "Ours de Cuisine," the queen hears of him, pretends to be ill, and demands that he shall be sent to fetch the heart of the Bull of the Black Valley. He finds a Ghúleh sitting with her breasts thrown back on her shoulders so he tastes her milk unperceived, and she at once adopts him as her son. She gives him a ball and a dagger, warning him that if he strikes the bull more than once, he will sink into the earth with him. The ball rolls before him, and when it stops, the bull rises from the ground. Mohammed kills him, refusing to repeat the blow, returns the ball and dagger to the Ghúleh, and returns home. A few days afterwards, the queen sends Mohammed to fetch the heart of the Bull of the Red Valley, and when he informs the Ghúleh, she says "Does she wish to kill her second brother too?" "Are these her brothers ?" asked Mohammed. She answered, "Yes, indeed, they are the sons of the Sultan of the Jánn." He kills the Bull as before. A fortnight afterwards, the queen hides a loaf of dry bread under her mattress. When its cracking gives rise to the idea that she is very ill, and she complains of great pain in the sides. She demands a pomegranate from the White Valley, where the pomegranates grow to the weight of half a cantar.[440] The Ghuleh tells him she cannot help him, but he must wait for her son

Adberrahym. When he arrives he remarks, “Hum! mother, there’s a smell of man about you, bring him here to me to eat for breakfast.” But his mother introduces Mohammed to him as his foster brother, and he becomes friendly at once, but says that the pomegranate is the queen’s sister. He tells Mohammed to get an ardebb of small round loaves in a basket, along with a piece of meat, and a piece of liver. The Ghúl then gives him a rod, saying, “Throw it down, and walk after it. It will knock at the garden gate, which will open, and when you enter you will find great dogs, but throw the bread right and left, without looking back. Beyond a second gate you will find Ghúls; throw bread to them right and left, and after passing them, look up, and you will find a tree in a fountain surrounded with roses and jasmine. You will see a pomegranate upon it. Gather it, and it will thunder, but fear nothing, and go on your way directly, and do not look behind you after passing the gate.” The queen waits another fortnight, and then demands the flying castle from Mount Kaf, intending that her father, who dwelt there, should burn him. The Ghúleh directed Mohammed to dye himself black, and to provide himself with some mastic (ladin) and lupines. With these, he makes friends with a black slave, who takes him into the castle, and shows him a bottle containing the life of the queen, another containing the eyes of the forty women; a magic sword which spares nothing, and the ring which moves the castle. Mohammed then sees a beetle,[441] which the slave begs him not to kill, as it is his life. He watches it till it enters a hole, and as soon as the slave is asleep, he kills it, and the slave dies. Then he lays hands on the talismans, rushes into the room where the inhabitants of the castle are condoling with the king and queen on the loss of their three children, and draws the sword, saying “Strike right and left, and spare neither great nor small.” Having slain all in the castle, Mohammed removes it to his father’s palace, when his father orders the cannons to be fired. Then Mohammed tells his father his history, compels the queen to restore the eyes of the forty women, when they become prettier than before, and then gives her the flask containing her life. But she drops it in her fright, and her life ends, and the king places Mohammed on the throne.

III. — Histoire de la Dame des Arabes Jasmin.

A king sends his wazir to obtain a talisman of good luck, which is written for him by Jasmine, the daughter of an Arab Sheikh. The king marries her, although she demands to be weighed against gold, but drives her away for kissing a fisherman in return for a bottle which he has drawn out of the river for her. She goes two days' journey to a town, where she takes up her abode with a merchant, and then discovers that whenever she turns the stopper of the bottle, food, drink, and finally ten white dancing girls emerge from it. The girls dance, each throws her ten purses of money, and then they retire into the bottle. She builds herself a grand palace, where her husband seeks her, and seeing the new palace, orders that no lights shall be lit in the town that night. She lights up her palace, which convinces the king that he has a dangerous rival. Then the wazir and the king visit her; the king asks for the bottle, and she demands more than a kiss, then reveals herself, puts the king to shame, and they are reconciled.

IV. — Histoire du Pécheur et de son Fils.

A king falls in love with the wife of a fisherman, and the wazir advises the former to require the fisherman on pain of death to furnish a large hall with a carpet in a single piece. The fisherman's wife sends him to the well of Shoubrah where he exclaims, "O such-and-such-a-one, thy sister so-and-so salutes thee, and asks thee to send her the spindle which she forgot when she was with thee yesterday, for we want to furnish a room with it." The fisherman drives a nail into the floor at one end of the room, fixes the thread on the spindle to it, and draws out a wonderful carpet. Then the wazir demands a little boy eight days old, who shall tell a story of which the beginning shall be a lie and the end a lie. The fisherman is sent to the well with the message, "O such-and-such-a-one, thy sister so-and-so greets thee, and requests thee to give her the child which she brought into the world yesterday." But the child only cries until three gnats are applied to him, one on each side and one on the back. Then the boy speaks, saying, "Peace be on thee, O king!" and afterwards tells his lying story: "When I was in the flower of my youth, I walked out of the town one day into the fields when it was very hot, I met a melon-seller, I bought a melon for a mahboub, took it, cut out a piece, and looked inside, when I saw a town with a grand hall, when I raised my feet and stepped into the melon. Then I walked about to look at the people of the town inside the melon. I walked on till I came out of the town into the country. There I saw a date-tree bearing dates a yard long. I wished for some, and climbed the date-tree to gather a date and eat it. There I found peasants sowing and reaping on the date-tree, and the threshing wheels were turning to thresh the wheat. I walked on a little, and met a man who was beating eggs to make a poultry yard. I looked on, and saw the chickens hatch; the cocks went to one side and the hens to the other. I stayed near them till they grew up, when I married them to each other, and went on. Presently I met a donkey carrying sesame-cakes, so I cut off a piece and ate it. When I had eaten it, I looked up, and found myself outside the melon, and the melon became whole as it was at first.” Then the child rebukes and threatens the king and the wazir and the fisherman’s wife sends her husband to take the child back to the well.

The fisherman had a son named Mohammed l’Avisé (Al-Shatír), who was as handsome as his mother; but the king had a son whose complexion was like that of a Fellah. The boys went to school together, and the prince used to say, “Good day, fisherman’s son,” and Mohammed used to reply, “Good day, O son of the king, looking like a shoe-string.” The prince complained to his father, who ordered the schoolmaster to kill Mohammed and he bastinadoed him severely. The boy went to his father, and turned fisherman. On the first day he caught a mullet (Fr. rouget), and was about to fry it, when it cried out that it was one of the princesses of the river, and he threw it back. Then the wazir advised the king to send Mohammed to fetch the daughter of the king of the Green Country, seven years journey distant. By the advice of the fish, Mohammed asked the king for a golden galley; and on reaching the Green Country, invited the inhabitants to inspect his galley. At last the princess came down, and he carried her off. When she found she was entrapped she threw her ring into the sea, which the fish caught. When the king proposed to the princess, she first demanded her ring, which Mohammed immediately presented to the king. Then she said it was the custom of her country on the occasion of a marriage to dig a trench from the palace to the river, which was filled with wood, and set on fire. The bridegroom was required to walk through the trench to the river. The wazir proposed that Mohammed should walk through the trench first;

and by the fish's advice, he stopped his ears, cried out, "In the name of God, the Compassioning, the Merciful," threw himself into the trench, and returned from the river handsomer than before. So the wazir said to the king, "Send for your son to go with us, that he may become as handsome as Mohammed." So the three threw themselves into the fire, and were burned to ashes, and Mohammed married the princess.

V. — Histoire de Dalâl.

Dalal was a little girl, the daughter of a king, who found a louse on her head, and put it into a jar of oil, where it remained till Dalal was twenty years old, when it burst the jar, and emerged in the form of a horned buffalo. The king ordered the hide to be hung at the gate of the palace, and proclaimed that anyone who could discover what the skin was should marry his daughter, but whoever tried and failed should lose his head. Thirty-nine suitors thus perished, when a Ghul passed by in the form of a man, who knew the secret. He took Dalal home with him and brought her a man's head, but as she would not eat it, he brought her a sheep. He then visited her under the forms of her mother and her two aunts, and told her that her husband was a Ghul; but she refused to believe it until the third visit. Then he was angry; but she begged him to let her go to the bath before she was eaten. He consented, took her to a bath, and sat at the door; but she rubbed herself with mud, changed clothes with an old lupine-seller, and escaped for a time. She reached a palace which she would not enter until she was invited by the Prince himself, who then proposed to marry her, but on the wedding day, her husband, having tracked her out, contrived that another Ghúl in the form of a man should present him to the king in the form of a sheep, pretending that he had been reared in a harem, and would bleat so loud that nobody could sleep, unless he was tethered in the women's apartments. At night the Ghúl carried off Dalal from beside the prince to the adjoining room, but she begged to be allowed to retire for a few moments, when she called upon Saint Zaynab for help, who sent one of her sisters (?) a Jinniyah. She clove the wall, and asked Dalal to promise to give her her first child. She then gave her a piece of wood to throw into the mouth of the Ghúl when he opened his mouth to eat her.[442] He fell on the ground senseless, and Dalal woke up the prince who slew him. But when Dalal brought forth a daughter whom she gave to the Jinniyah, her mother-in law declared that Dalal herself was a Ghuleh, and she was banished to the kitchen, where she peeled onions for ten years. At the end of this time the Jinniyah again clove the wall, and brought back the young princess, who was introduced to her father, who took Dalal again into favour. Meantime the sultan of the Jinn sent for the Jinniyah, for his son was ill, and could only be cured by a cup of water from the Sea of Emeralds, and this could only be obtained by a daughter of mankind. So the Jinniyah borrowed Dalal's daughter again, and took her to the sultan, who gave her a cup, and mounted her on a Jinni, warning her not to wet her fingers. But a wave touched the hand of the princess, which turned as green as clover. Every morning the Sea of Emerald is weighed by an officer to discover whether any has been stolen; and as soon as he discovered the deficiency, he took a platter of glass rings and bracelets, and went from palace to palace calling out, "Glass bracelets and rings, O young ladies." When he came to Dalal's palace, the young princess was looking out of the window, and insisted on going herself to try them on. She hesitated to show her right hand; and the spy knew that she was guilty, so he seized her hand, and sunk into the ground with her. He delivered her over to the servants of the King of the Sea of Emerald, who would have beaten her, but the Jinn surrounded her, and prevented them. Then the King of the Sea of Emerald ordered her to be taken, bound into the bath, saying that he would follow in the form of a serpent, and devour her. But she recognised him by his green eyes, when he became a man, ordered her to be restored to her father, and afterwards married her. He gave forty camel loads of emeralds and jacinths as her dowry, and always visited her by night in the form of a winged serpent, entering and leaving by the window.

VI. — Histoire de la fille vertueuse.

A merchant and his wife set out to the Hejaz with their son, leaving their daughter to keep house, and commending her to the protection of the Kazi. The Kazi fell in love with the girl, but as she would not admit him, he employed an old woman to entice her to the bath, but the girl threw soap in his eyes, pushed him down and broke his head, and escaped to her own house, carrying off his clothes.

When the Kazi was well enough to get about again he found that she had had the door of her house walled up until the return of her friends, so he wrote a slanderous letter to her father, who sent her brother to kill her, and bring him a bottle of her blood. But her brother, although he thought the walling up of the door was a mere presence, could not find it in his heart to kill her, but abandoned her in the desert, and filled the bottle with gazelle blood. When the young girl awoke, she wandered to a spring, and climbed into a tree where a prince who was passing saw her, carried her home, and married her. She had two sons and a daughter, but one of their playmates refused to play with them because they had no maternal uncle. The king then ordered the wazir to escort the princess and her three children to her father's village for a month; but on the road, the wazir made love to her, and she allowed him to kill children in succession to save her honour. At last, he became so pressing that she pretended to consent, but asked to quit the tent for a moment, with a cord attached to her hand to prevent her escape. But she untied the cord, fastened it to a tree, and fled. As they could not find the princess, the wazir advised the soldiers to tell the king that a Ghúleh had devoured the children, and fled into the desert. The princess changed clothes with a shepherd boy, went to a town, and took a situation in a café. When the wazir returned to the king, and delivered his report, the king proposed that they should disguise themselves and set out in search of the princess and her children; and the wazir could not refuse. Meantime, the brother of the princess had admitted to her father that he had not slain her, and they also set out in search of her, taking the Kazi with them. They all met at the café, where she recognised them, and offered to tell them a story. She related her own, and was restored to her friends. They seized the Kazi and the wazir, and sent for the old woman, when they burned them all three, and scattered their ashes in the air.

VII. — Histoire du prince qui apprit un métier.

A prince named Mohammed l'Avisé went to seek a wife, and fell in love with the daughter of a leek-grower. She would not accept him unless he learned a trade, so he learned the trade of a silk weaver, who taught him in five minutes, and he worked a handkerchief with the palace of his father embroidered upon it. Two years afterwards, the prince and the wazir took a walk, when they found a Maghrabi seated at the gate of the town, who invited them to take coffee. But he was a prisoner (or rather a murderer) who imprisoned them behind seven doors; and after three days he cooked the wazir, and was going to cook the prince, but he persuaded him to take his handkerchief to market where it was recognised, and the prince released from his peril. Two years later the king died, and the prince succeeded to the throne. The latter had a son and daughter, but he died when the boy was six and the girl eight, warning the boy not to marry until the girl was married, lest his wife should ill-use her. After two years the sister said, "Brother, if I show you the treasures of your father and mother, what will you do?" He answered, "I will buy a slipper for you and a slipper for me, and we will play with them among the stones." "No," said she, "you are still too little," and waited a year before she asked him again. This time he answered, "I will buy a tambourine for you, and a flute for myself and we will play in the street." She waited two more years, and this time he answered, "We will use them to repair the water-wheels and my father's palaces, and we will sow and reap." "Now you are big," said she, and gave him the treasures, which he used to erect buildings in his father's country. Soon afterwards, an old woman persuaded the youth to marry her daughter; but she herself went into the mountains, collected eggs of the bird Oumbar, which make virgins pregnant if they eat them, and gave them to the sister. The old woman reported the result to the king, who visited his sister to satisfy himself of the truth of the matter, and then left her, but sent her food by a slave. When the sister's time came, four angels descended from heaven, and took her daughter, bringing the child to her mother to be nursed. The mother died of grief, and the angels washed and shrouded her and wept over her; and when the king heard it, he opened the door, and the angels flew away to heaven with the child. The king ordered a tomb to be built in the palace for his sister, and was so much grieved at her death that he went on pilgrimage. When he had been gone some time, and the time of his return approached, the old woman opened the sister's tomb, intending to throw her body to the dogs to devour, and to put the carcase of a sheep in its place. The angels put the child in the tomb, and she reproached and threatened the old woman; who, however, seized upon her and dyed her black, pretending that she was a little black slave whom she had bought. When the king returned, he pitied her, and called her to sit by him, but she asked for a candle and candlestick to hold in her hand before all the company. Then she told her mother's story, saying to the candle at every word, "Gutter for kings; this is my uncle, the chief of kings." Then the candle threw mahboubs on her uncle's knees. When the story was ended the king ordered proclamation to be made, "Let whosoever loves the Prophet and the Elect, bring wood and fire." The people obeyed, and the old woman and her daughter were burned.

VIII. — Histoire du Prince Amoureux.

A woman prayed to God to give her a daughter, even if she should die of the smell of flax. When the girl was ten years old, the king's son passed through the street, saw her at the window, and fell in love with her. An old woman discovered that he loved Sittoukan, the daughter of a merchant, and promised to obtain her. She contrived to set her to spin flax, when a splinter ran under her nail, and she fainted. The old woman persuaded her father and mother to build a palace in the midst of the river, and to lay her there on a bed. Thither she took the prince, who turned the body about, saw the splinter, drew it out, and the girl awoke. He remained with her forty days, when he went down to the door, where he found the wazir waiting, and they entered the garden. There they found roses and jasmines, and the prince said, "The jasmines are as white as Sittoukan, and the roses are like her cheeks; if you did not approve, I would still remain with her, were it only for three days." He went up again for three days, and when he next visited the wazir, they saw a carob-tree, and the prince said, "Remember, wazir, the carob-tree is like the eyebrows of Sittoukan, and if you would not let me, I would still remain with her, were it only for three days." Three days later, they saw a fountain, when the prince observed that it was like the form of Sittoukan, and he returned. But this time, she was curious to know why he always went and returned, and he found her watching behind the door, so he spat on her saying, "If you did not love men, you would not hide behind doors"; and he left her. She wandered into the garden in her grief, where she found the ring of empire, which she rubbed, and the ring said, "At your orders, what do you ask for ?"

She asked for increased beauty, and a palace beside that of the prince. The prince fell in love with her, and sent his mother to propose for her hand. The mother took two pieces of royal brocade as a present, which the young lady ordered a slave in her hearing to cut up for dusters. Then the mother brought her an emerald collar worth four thousand diners, when she ordered it to be threshed, and thrown to the pigeons. The old lady acknowledged herself beaten, and asked Sittoukan if she wished to marry or not. The latter demanded that the prince should be wrapped in seven shrouds, and carried to the palace which she indicated, as if he were dead. Then she went and took off the shrouds one after another, and when she came to the seventh, she spat on him, saying, “If you did not love women, you would not be wrapped in seven shrouds.” Then he said, “Is it you?” and he bit his finger till he bit it off, and they remained together.

IX. — Histoire du musician ambulant et de son fils.

This travelling musician was so poor that when his wife was confined, he went out to beg for their immediate necessities, and found a hen lying on the ground with an egg under her. He met a Jew to whom he sold the egg for twenty mahboubs. The hen laid an egg every day, which the Jew bought for twenty mahboubs, and the musician became rich and opened a merchant’s shop. When his son was grown, he built a school for him at his own expense, where poor children were taught to read. Then the musician set out on pilgrimage, charging his wife not to let the Jew trick her out of the hen. A fortnight afterwards, the Jew called, and persuaded the woman to sell him the hen for a casket of silver. He ordered her to cook it, but told her that if anybody else ate a piece, he would rip him up. The musician’s son came in, while the fowl was cooking, and as his mother would not give him any, he seized the gizzard, and ate it, when one of the slaves warned him to fly before the arrival of the Jew. The Jew pursued the boy, and would have killed him, but the latter took him up with one hand, and dashed him to pieces on the ground. The musician’s son continued his journey, and arrived at a town where thirty-nine heads of suitors who had failed to conquer the princess in wrestling, were suspended at the gate of the palace. On the first day the youth wrestled with the princess for two hours without either being able to overcome the other; but during the night the king ordered the doctors to drug the successful suitor, and to steal the talisman. Next morning when the youth awoke, he perceived his weakness, and fled. Presently he met three men quarrelling over a flying carpet, a food-producing cup, and a money mill. He threw a stone for them to run after and transported himself to Mount Kaf, where he made trial of the other talismans. Then he returned to the palace, called to the princess to come down to wrestle with him, and as soon as she stepped on the carpet, carried her away to Mount Kaf, when she promised to restore the gizzard, and to marry him. She deserted him, and he found two date-trees, one bearing red and the other yellow dates. On eating a yellow date, a horn grew from his head[443] and twisted round the two date-trees. A red date removed it. He filled his pockets, and travelled night and day for two months.[444] He cried dates out of season, and the princess bought sixteen yellow ones, and ate them all; and eight [sixteen ?] horns grew from her head, four to each wall. They could not be sawn off, and the king offered his daughter to whoever could remove them. When the musician's son married the princess, and became wazir, he said to his bride, "Where is my carpet, &c." She replied, "Is it you?" "Yes," said he, "Is my trick or yours the best?" She admitted that she was beaten, and they lived together in harmony.

X. — Histoire du rossignol chanteur.

Three brothers built a palace for their mother and sister after their father's death. The sister loved someone of whom the brothers disapproved. An old woman advised the sister to send her brothers for the singing nightingale. The two eldest would not wait till the bird was asleep, but while they were trying to shut his cage, he dusted sand over them with his claws, and sunk them to the seventh earth. The beads and the ring gave warning of their deaths at home; but the third, who left a rose with his mother, to fade if he died captured the bird, and received sand from under the cage. When he scattered it on the ground, more than a thousand men rose up, some negroes and some Turks. The brothers were not among them, so the youngest was told to scatter white sand, when 500 more people emerged, including the brothers. Afterwards the eldest brother was sitting in his ship when a Maghrebi told him to clean his turban; which his mother interpreted to mean that his sister had misconducted herself, and he should kill her. He refused, and fled with her to the desert. Hearing voices, he entered a cave where thirty nine robbers were dividing rations; and he contrived to appropriate a share, and then to return it when missed; but as he was detected, he gave himself out as a fellow-robber, engaged himself to them, and watching his opportunity, slew them. Afterwards he brought his sister two young lions. She found a wounded negro in the cave, whom she nursed, and after having had two children by him, plotted against her brother. She pretended to be ill, and sent him to find the grapes of Paradise. He met a Ghúleh who gave him a ball which directed him to Paradise, and he returned safely. Then his sister sent him for the Water of Life when the two young lions followed him, and he could not drive them back. After travelling for a year the brother reached the Sea of the Water of Life, and while resting under a tree heard two pigeons telling each other that the king's daughter was ill, and every doctor who failed to restore her was put to death, and she could only be cured by the Water of Life. "Mohammed l'Avisé" filled two bottles and a jar with the water, cured the princess with the water in the jar, married her, and after forty days, gave her one bottle, and set out to visit his family. At the sister's instigation, the negro slew Mohammed, cut him to pieces, and put the remains into a sack, which they loaded on the ass. Then the lions drove the ass to the wife of Mohammed, who restored his life with the water which he had left with her. Mohammed then shut up the lions, dressed himself as a negro, and went to visit his sister, taking with him some rings and mastic (ladin). His sister recognised his eyes, and while she and the negro were disputing, Mohammed slew the negro and the three [sic] children, and buried his sister alive. He then returned to his wife, announced that his relations were dead, and asked for a hundred camels; and it took them a week to convey away the treasures of the robbers.

XI . — Histoire d' Arab-Zandyq.

This story is translated by Mr. W. A. Clouston, Suppl. Nights, iii., , and need not be repeated here.

XII. — Histoire du prince et de son cheval.

A prince and foal were born at the same time, and some time afterwards the mother and the mare died. The king married again, and the new queen had an intrigue with a Jew. They plotted to poison the prince, but his horse wept and warned him. Then the queen pretended to be ill, and asked for the heart of the horse, but the prince fled to another kingdom, and bought clothes from a poor man, packing his own on his horse. Then he parted from the horse, who gave him a hair and a flint, telling him to light the hair when ever he needed him. The prince then went to a town, and engaged himself as under gardener to the king. He was set to drive the ox which turned the water-wheel, but one day he called his horse, put on his own clothes, and galloped about the garden, where the youngest princess saw "Mohammed l'Avisé" from the window, and fell in love with him. He then returned to the water-wheel, and when the head-gardener returned and found the garden in disorder, he wanted to beat him; but the princess interfered and ordered the prince to receive a fowl and a cake of bread every day. The princess then persuaded her mother and sisters that it was time to be married, so the king ordered everybody to pass under the window of the seven princesses, each of whom threw down a handkerchief on the man of her choice. But the youngest would look at no one till at last they fetched the gardener's boy, when the king was angry, and confined them in a room. The king fell ill with vexation, and the doctors ordered him to drink bear's milk in the hide of a virgin bear. The king's six sons-in-law were ordered to seek it, and Mohammed too set forth mounted on a lame mare, while the people jeered him. Presently he summoned his own horse, and ordered him to pitch a camp of which the beginning and the end could not be seen, and which should contain nothing but bears. When the six sons-in-law passed, they dismounted, and asked the attendants for what they required, but they referred them to their king. The latter offered them what they asked, but branded a ring and a circle on the back of each of the sons-in-law. However, he gave them only the milk and hide of old she-bears, while he himself took the milk of a virgin[445] bear that had just cubbed for the first time, slaughtered it, put the milk into the skin, and then remounted his lame mare, saying to the horse, "God reward you." He returned to town, and gave the milk to his wife who took it to her mother. Then the six sons-in-law brought the milk to the doctors, but when they looked at it, they said, "This is the milk of an old she-bear and is good for nothing.” Then they gave the king the other milk, and cured him, but he was much annoyed to hear who had brought it. Soon afterwards a war broke out, and the king pitched his camp outside the town in face of the enemy. Mohammed set out again on his lame mare, the people shouting after him, “Go back, sir, for the soldiers have been defeated.” Then he summoned his horse, put on his own clothes, and said to the horse, “Let your hair shoot forth fire.” Then he came before the king, saying, “I declare for you and your six sons-in-law.” He rushed into battle, smiting with his sword, while his horse shot forth fire. They slew a third of the enemy, and then disappeared, while the king lamented. “Ah, if my six sons-in-law had only done this!” After his exertions Mohammed was tired, and went home to sleep. Next day the same thing happened, but the king put his own ring on his finger. On the third day he slew the remaining third of his enemies, but his arm was wounded, and the king bound it up with his own handkerchief before he departed.

The king gathered together the horses and the spoil, and returned to town, much vexed that his sons-in-law had done nothing. Then the youngest princess asked her mother to send for her father to look at the ring and the handkerchief, when he fell down and kissed the feet of Mohammed, who rose up giddy from sleep, but when he was asked his history, he answered, “I am a prince like yourself, and your six sons-in-law are mamelouks of my father. I beat them, and they took to flight, and through fear of my father, I set out in search of them. I came here and found that they were your sons-in-law, but I imposed silence on them. But as regards your daughter, she saw me in the garden, and recognised my real rank; here is your daughter, O king; she is still a virgin.” Then the wedding was celebrated with great pomp, and Mohammed remained with his father-in-law for some time, until he desired to return to his own country. On his arrival he found that his father had died, so he ascended the throne, and ordered his mother-in-law and the Jew to be burned.

Carlo de Landberg, Básim le Forgeron et Haron Er-Rachid, 8vo., Leyden, 1888.

Text and translation of a modern Arabic story of an unfortunate smith and hashish-eater whom Harun encounters on one of his usual nocturnal rambles. Harun plays a succession of practical jokes on him, driving him out of his employment every day, and supping with him every night. At last he bastinadoes him, and throws him into prison, where a jinniyah takes pity on him, and confers unlimited power on him, which he enjoys for a week, and then dies, to the great grief of Harun.

Additional Note to Suppl. Vol. V. (P-320).

Compare Boccaccio's story of the Devil in Hell (Day iii. No. 11).

The Biography of the Book
and
Its Reviewers Reviewed.

[" It has occurred to me that perhaps it would be a good plan to put a set of notes . . . to the 'Origin,' which now has none, exclusively devoted to the errors of my reviewers. It has occurred to me that where a reviewer has erred a common reader might err. Secondly, it will show the reader that we must not trust implicitly to reviewers." — DARWIN'S LIFE. ii. 349.]

TO RICHARD FRANCIS BURTON.

The Thousand Nights and a Night.

Athwart the welkin slant the snows and pile
On sill and balcony, their feathery feet
Trip o'er the landscape, and pursuing sleet
Earth's brow beglooming, robs the skies of smile:
Lies in her mourning-shroud our Northern Isle
And bitter winds in battle o'er her meet.
Her world is death-like, when behold! we greet
Light-gleams from morning-land in welcome while.

A light of golden mine and orient pearl —
Vistas of fairy-land, where Beauty reigns
And Valiance revels; cloudless moon, fierce sun,
The wold, the palm-tree; cities; hosts; a whirl
Of life in tents and palaces and fanes:
The light that streams from THOUSAND NIGHTS AND

ONE.

Isabel Burton,
Tangier, Marocco: Feb. 19, 1886.

The Biography of the Book
and
Its Reviewers Reviewed.

Preliminary.

I here propose to produce what may be called the "biography" of a book whereof, methinks, the writer has some reason to be proud, a work which, after occupying him for the third of a century, well nigh half the life of average man and the normal endurance of a generation, can show for result these sixteen volumes. A labour of such parts and magnitude deserves, in my humble opinion, some notice of the main features distinguishing its career, especially of its presentation to Court (Public Opinion) and its reception by the high officials of the Palace, the critics, reviewers and criticasters.

And there is yet another consideration. To ignore the charges and criminations brought forward by certain literary Sir Oracles would be wilfully suffering judgment to go by default. However unpopular and despised may be, as a rule, the criticism of critique, and however veridical the famous apothegm "A controversy in the Press with the Press is the controversy of a fly with a spider," I hold it the author's bounder duty, in presence of the Great Public, to put forth his reply, if he have any satisfactory and interesting rejoinder, and by such ordeal to purge himself and prove his innocence unless he would incur wittingly impeachment for contumacy and contempt of court.

It is not only an instinct of human nature expressed by nemo me impurè lacessit which impels to answering in presence of the passers by the enemy at the gate; it is also a debt which his honour and a respectful regard for the good opinion of his fellows compel the author to repay. The man who is feeble enough silently to suffer detraction and calumny at the hands of some sciolist or Halb-bildung sheltering his miserable individuality under the shadow (may it never be less!) of " King We," simply sins against himself as the Arabs say and offends good manners by holding out a premium to wanton aggression and injurious doing. The reading world has a right to hear the alteram partem before it shall deliver that judgment and shall pronounce that sentence wherefrom lies no appeal. To ignore and not to visit with représailles unworthy and calumnious censure, may become that ideal and transcendental man who forgives (for a personal and egoistical reason) those who trespass against him. But the sublime doctrine which commands us to love our enemies and affect those who despitefully entreat us is in perilous proximity to the ridiculous; at any rate it is a vain and futile rule of life which the general never thinks of obeying. It contrasts poorly with the common sense of the pagan — Fiat Justitia, ruat clum; and the heathenish and old- Adamical sentiment of the clansman anent Roderick Dhu —

> “Who rights his wrong where it was given
> If it were in the court of Heaven,”

L. of the Lake, v. 6.

— commends itself far more to what divines are pleased to call “fallen human nature” that is the natural man.

And here before crossing the threshold, I would seize the opportunity of expressing my cordial gratitude and hearty thanks to the Press in general, which has received my Eastern studies and contributions to Oriental knowledge in the friendliest and most sympathetic spirit, appreciating my labours far beyond the modicum of the offerer’s expectation and lending potent and generous aid to place them before the English world in the fairest and most favourable point of view. To number a small proportion of “black sheep” is no shame for a flock amounting to myriads: such exceptional varieties must be bred for the use and delectation of those who prefer to right wrong and darkness to light. It is with these only that my remarks and retorts will deal and consequently I have assigned to them the post of honour. The various extracts from notices, favourable appreciative and complimentary, appear as the “Opinions of the Press” at the end of this volume, and again I take the opportunity of professing myself truly thankful for the good word of the Fourth Estate, and for its wisely detecting the soul of good in things evil.

The romantic and exceptional circumstances under which my large labour was projected and determined have been sufficiently described in the Foreword (vol. i. pp. vii- x). I may here add that during a longsome obligatory halt of some two months at East African Zayla' and throughout a difficult and dangerous march across the murderous Somali country upon Harar-Gay, then the Tinbukhtú of Eastern Africa, The Nights rendered me the best of service. The wildlings listened with the rapt attention of little lads and lasses to the marvellous recitals of the charming Queen and the monotonous interpellations of her lay-image sister and looked forward to the evening lecture as the crown and guerdon of the toilsome day. And assuredly never was there a more suitable setting, a more admirable mise-en-scène for The Nights than the landscape of Somali-land, a prospect so adapted to their subject-matter that it lent credibility even to details the least credible. Barren and grisly for the most part, without any of the charms gladdening and beautifying the normal prospects of earth, grassy hill and wooded dale, park-like plain and placid lake, and the snaking of silvery stream, it displays ever and anon beauties made all its own by borrowing from the heavens, in an atmosphere of passing transparency, reflections of magical splendours and of weird shadows proper to tropical skies. No rose-hue pinker than the virginal blush and dewy flush of dawn in contrast with the shivering reek of flaming noon-tide, when all brightness of colour seems burnt out of the world by the white heat of sun-glow. No brilliancy more gorgeous or more ravishing than the play of light and shade, the rainbow shiftings and the fiery pinks and purples and embers and carmines of the sunset scenery — the gorgeous death-bed of the Day. No tint more tender, more restful, than the uniform grey, pale and pearly, invading by slowest progress that ocean of crimson that girds the orb of the Sun-King, diminishing it to a lakelet of fire and finally quenching it in iridescent haze. No gloom more ghostly than the murky hangings drooping like curtains from the violet heavens during those traveller's trials the unmoored nights, when the world seems peopled by weird phantoms and phantasms of man and monster moving and at rest. No verdure more exquisite than earth's glazing of greenery, the blend of ethereal azure and yellow; no gold more sheeny than the foregrounds of sand shimmering in the slant of the sun; no blue more profound and transparent than the middle distances; no neutral tints more subtle, pure, delicate and sight-soothing than the French grey which robes the clear-cut horizon; no variety of landscape more pronounced than the alternations of glowing sunlight and snowy moonlight and twinkling starlight, all streaming through diaphanous air. No contrast more admirable than the alternation of iron upland whereupon hardly a blade of grass may grow and the Wady with its double avenue of leek-green tamarisks, hedging now a furious rain-torrent then a ribbon of purest sand, or the purple-gray shadow rising majestic in the Orient to face the mysterious Zodiacal Light, a white pyramid whose base is Amenti — region of resting Osiris — and whose apex pierces the zenith. And not rarely this "after-glow" is followed by a blush of "celestial rosy-red" mantling the whole circle of the horizon where the hue is deepest and paling into the upper azure where the stars shine their brightest. How often in Somali land I repeated to myself

— Contente-vous, mes yeux,
Jamais vous ne verrez chose plus belle;

and the picture still haunts me.

* * * * * *

And now, turning away from these and similar pleasures of memory, and passing over the once told tale (Foreword, vol. i. pp. viii., ix.) of how, when and where work was begun, together with the disappointment caused by the death of my friend and collaborator, Steinhaeuser concerning the copying process which commenced in 1879 and anent the precedence willingly accorded to the "Villon Edition," I proceed directly to what may be termed

The Engineering of the Work.

During the autumn of '82, after my return from the Gold Coast (with less than no share of the noble metal which my companion Cameron and I went forth to find and found a failure), my task began in all possible earnest with ordering the old scraps of translation and collating a vast heterogeneous collection of notes. I was fortunate enough to discover at unlettered Trieste, an excellent copyist able and willing to decypher a crabbed hand and deft at reproducing facetious and drolatic words without thoroughly comprehending their significance. At first my exertions were but fitful and the scene was mostly a sick bed to which I was bound between October ‘83 and June ‘84. Marienbad, however, and Styrian Sauerbrunn (bed Rohitsch) set me right and on return to Trieste (Sept. 4, ‘84), we applied ourselves to the task of advertising, the first two volumes being almost ready for print.

And here we were confronted by a serious question, What number of copies would suffice my public? A distinguished Professor who had published some 160,000 texts with prices ranging from 6d. to 50 guineas, wrote to me in all kindness advising an issue of 150 to 250: an eminent printer-publisher would have ventured upon some 500: others rose to 750 with a warning-note anent “wreckage,” great risk and ruinous expenditure, while only one friend — and he not in business — urged an edition of 2,000 to 3,000 with encouraging words as to its probable reception. After long forethought I chose 1,000 as a just middle.

We then drew up a long list, names of friends, acquaintances and strangers likely to patronise the novelty, and caused the following three papers to be lithographed and printed at Trieste.

No. I.

Captain Burton, having neither agent nor publisher for his forthcoming ARABIAN NIGHTS, requests that all subscribers will kindly send their names and addresses to him personally (Captain Burton, Trieste, Austria), when they will be entered into a book kept for the purpose.

There will be 10 volumes at a guinea a piece, each to be paid for on delivery. Subscribers may count on the first three volumes being printed in March next. Captain Burton pledges himself to furnish copies to all subscribers who address themselves to him; and he also undertakes not to issue, nor to allow the issue of a cheaper Edition. One thousand copies will be printed, the whole Manuscript will be ready before going to press in February, and the ten volumes will be issued within Eighteen Months.

This was presently followed by

No. II.

The Student of Arabic who reads "THE NIGHTS" with this version, will not only be competent to join in any conversation, to peruse the popular books and newspapers, and to write letters to his friends, he will also find in the notes a repertoire of those Arabian Manners and Customs, Beliefs and Practices, which are not discussed in popular works.

The 10 volumes will be handsomely bound in black and gold.

No subscriptions will be until the work is done, and then at Coutts' Bank,
Strand London.

Subscribers who apply directly are preferred.

The author will pay carriage of volumes all over the United Kingdom. A London address is requested.

And, lastly, after some delay, came the subjoined cutting from the Daily
Tribune, New York.

No. III.

"It has already been announced that the first instalment of Captain Burton's new translation of the Arabian Nights may be expected this autumn. I am indebted to a friend of his for some details which have not yet, I think, been made public. There is still room for a translation of the Arabian Nights. All or nearly all the popular editions of which there are hundreds, are but renderings, more or less imperfect, from Professor Galland's French version, which is itself an abridgment from the original, and turns a most valuable ethnographical work into a mere collection of fairy tales. Moreover, these English translations abound in Gallicisms, and their style offers but a painful contrast to the French of the seventeenth century. Some years since a Mr. Torrens undertook a complete translation from the original, but his work did not go beyond a single volume, or fifty tales out of the 1,001. Then came Mr. Lane in 1839, whose success was but moderate In his three large and (in the 1839 edition) beautifully illustrated volumes, he has given not more than half the tales. He used the Cairo Arabic edition, which is itself an abridgment, and took all kinds of liberties with the text, translating verse into prose, and excising everything that was not 'strictly proper.'

"Lastly, there is Mr. John Payne's excellent translation, which has occupied him during seven years and is just brought to a conclusion. Mr. Payne bound himself to print not more than 500 copies, and his nine volumes, not published but printed, nominally for the Villon Society, are unprocurable except at a price which to the general public is prohibitive.

"Captain Burton began his work on this extraordinary monument of Oriental literature in 1852, at Aden, with some help from his friend Dr. Steinhaeuser, of the Bombay Army. He has gone on with it as opportunity offered, and as other literary and official labours and his many journeys in savage lands permitted. The text and the subject offer many difficulties, and it is to these difficulties that he has devoted especial attention. His object is to reproduce the book in a form as entirely Arabian as possible, preserving the strict division of the nights, and keeping (a more questionable matter) to the long unbroken sentences in which the composer indulged, imitating also the rhythmic prose which is a characteristic of the Arabic. The effect in English remains to be seen, but of the value of Captain Burton's method as an experiment in literature there can be no doubt, or of its great interest to everybody who cares for Oriental habits of thought and language. He will not shirk any of the passages which do not suit the taste of the day, but these, Captain Burton thinks, will not commonly be found more objectionable than some which are in Shakespeare and in Shakespeare's contemporaries. At the same time it will be understood that the book is intended for men only and for the study; — not for women or children, nor for the drawing-room table or dentist's waiting-room. It will be printed by subscription and not published.

"Few are the Oriental scholars in England who could do justice to this picture of the mediaeval Arab. Captain Burton is perhaps the only one who joins to the necessary linguistic knowledge that varied practical experience of Eastern life which alone in many cases can supply the true meaning of a troublesome passage or an accurate comment upon it. His aim is to make the book in its English dress not only absolutely literal in text but Oriental in tone and colour. He knows the tales almost by heart, and used to keep the Bedouin tribes in roars of laughter in camp during the long summer nights by reciting them. Sheiks to whom a preternatural solemnity of demeanour is usual were to be seen rolling on the ground in paroxysms of uncontrollable mirth. It was also Burckhardt's custom to read the stories aloud, but the Arabs would snatch the book from his hand because his pronunciation was so bad. Captain Burton is said to have an Arab accent not easily distinguishable from the native. When he contents himself with the English tongue here in England, he is one of the most picturesque talkers to be met with. I can remember a certain dinner-party, now many years ago, where the great traveller kept us all listening till long past day-break; narrating, as he did, the most singular adventures with the most vivid fidelity to facts. That, however, is a digression. I have only to add that Captain Burton has the names of many subscribers and will doubtless be glad to receive others which may, I suppose, be sent to him at Trieste. His present hope is to be ready to go to press next February and to bring out the whole of the volumes in 1885."

(Signed) G. W. S.

Concerning this "American" communication and its author I shall have more to say in a future page.

Some 24,000 to 30,000 circulars were posted at an expense of 126 pounds and they produced about 800 favourable replies which, after my return to England (May '85), rose to 1,500 and to 2,000 as my unprofessional friend, and he only, had anticipated. Meanwhile occurred an incident characteristic of such appeals by the inexperienced to the public. A case containing 1,100 circulars had been sent to my agent for mailing in London, and my secretary had unfortunately gummed their envelopes. Hereupon I should have been subjected by the Post Office to the pains and penalties of the law, perhaps to a fine of £200 pounds. But when the affair was reported, with due explanations, to the late lamented Postmaster-General

Henry Fawcett — a man in a million, and an official in ten millions — he had the justice and generosity to look upon the offence as the result of pure ignorance, and I received a caution “not to do it again.”

Needless to say that I lost no time about advertising my mistake in the dailies, giving the name of my agent and in offering to refund the money. Some of the sealed and unpaid envelopes had, however, been forwarded prematurely and the consequence was a comical display of wrath in quarters where it was hardly to be expected. By way of stemming the unpleasant tide of abuse I forwarded the following communiqué; to The Academy.

“TUPPENCE AS A TOUCHSTONE.”

Trieste, Nov. 2, 85.

“Can you kindly find space for a few lines on a purely personal matter which is causing me abundant trouble? A box of circulars giving details concerning my forthcoming version of the Arabian Nights was sent to London with directions to stamp and post the contents. The envelopes having been inadvertently gummed down, the case was stopped by the Custom-house, and was transmitted to the Post Office where it was found to contain circulars not letters, and of these sundry were forwarded without prepayment. The pleasant result was that one out-spoken gentleman writes upon the circular, which he returns, — When you send your trash again, put postage-stamps on. A second is peremptorily polite, Please forward four stamps to the Adjutant of the — th Regiment. The ‘Chaplain of the Forces at —— ,’ at once ironical and severe, ventures to suggest to Captain Burton that it is advisable, if he thinks his book worth selling, to put the postage on future advertisements. A fourth who, I regret to say, signs himself Lieutenant Colonel, gives me advice about pre-payment written in an orderly’s hand upon a torn envelope (gratuitously insulting!); encloses the 2d. stamp and sends the missive under official cover ‘On Her Majesty’s Service.’ The idea of a French or an Austrian Colonel lowering himself so infinitely low! Have these men lost all sense of honour, all respect for themselves (and others) because they can no longer be called to account for their insolence more majorum? I never imagined ‘Tuppence’ to be so cunning a touchstone for detecting and determining the difference between gold and dross; nor can I deeply regret that circumstance and no default of mine has placed in hand Ithuriel's spear in the shape of the said 'Tuppence'."

I am, Sir, etc.

RICHARD F. BURTON.

The process of filling-up my list presented a fine and varied study of character; and an extensive experience of subscribers, as well as of non-subscribers, presently enabled me to distribute the genus into the following eight species. The friendly subscriber who takes ten copies (more or less) forwarding their value. The gentleman subscriber who pays down his confidingly. The cautious-canny subscriber who ventures £5. 5s., or half the price. The impudent and snobbish subscriber who will address his victim as follows: —

Sir,

Send me the first volume of your Arabian Nights and if I like it I will perhaps take more.

Yours obediently,

X.Y.Z.

And Cynophron will probably receive for all reply: —

Sir,

Send me ten guineas and take one or ten volumes as you please.

Yours obediently, etc.

No. vi. is the fussy and troublesome subscriber who gives more bother than he is worth, and who takes a VICIOUS pride in not paying till pushed to the last point. The professional subscriber fights hard for the most favourable terms, and holds it his vested right to "part" by dribblers. And lastly comes the dishonest subscriber who does not pay at all. I must however, in justice own that species No. viii. is rare: of one thousand the proportion was only about a score.

In mid-June, '85, I returned to London and began at once to prepare for issuing the book. Having found the publisher peculiarly unsatisfactory — with one single and remarkable exception my venerable friend, Mr. Van Voorst, whilome of Paternoster Row — I determined, like Professor Arber, to do without him, although well aware how risky was the proceeding, which would, in the case of a work for general reading, have arrayed against me the majority of the trade and of their "hands," the critics. Then I sought hard, but sought in vain, for the agency of a literary friend or friends, men of name and note, like those who assisted in the Villon version: all feared the responsibility and the expected storm of abuse which, however, failed to burst.

Under these circumstances "The Printing Times," a professional periodical produced by Messieurs Wymans, was pleased (August 25, '85) to be unpleasantly intrusive on the subject of my plan. "We always heard associated with the publication of this important work, the name of Mr. —— , which is now conspicuous by its absence, nor is, apparently the name of any other leading publishing house to be identified with its production" (The Printer's Devil is, I presume, responsible for the English!) The writer then warns me in all (un-)friendliness that if the printers forget to add their imprint, they would become liable to a legal penalty; that the work is unsafe for literal translation and, lastly that although printed by private subscription, "It is likely enough to be pronounced an injury to public morals to the danger of the author and his printers." The unhappy article concludes, "We await the issue of the first volume since much will depend upon the spirit(!) in which the translation has been undertaken; certainly the original text is not suitable for general circulation (connu!) unless edited with the utmost care and discretion."

To this production so manifestly inspired by our old friend £s. d., I replied in The Aademy (August 7, '85), the gist of the few lines being as follows: —

In answer to many inquiries from friends and others, will you allow me to repeat through your columns, that my translation of the "Arabian Nights" will be strictly limited to 1,000 copies, each sent to picked subscribers, and to renew the promise which I before made, that no cheaper edition shall be printed? Correspondents have complained that I have not stated the price; but I have mentioned over and over again that there are ten volumes, at one guinea each —

my object in making it so expensive being to keep it from the general public. I am also troubled with inquiries as to who is my publisher I am my own publisher, inaugurating (Inshallah!) a golden age for authors. Jesting apart the book has no publisher. It is printed by myself for the benefit of Orientalists and Anthropologists, and nothing could be more repugnant to me than the idea of a book of the kind being published or being put into the hands of any publisher.

The first volume dated "Benares: MDCCCLXXXV: Printed by the Kamashastra Society for Private Subscribers only," did not appear till September 12, '85: it had been promised for March and had been delayed by another unavoidable detention at Trieste. But my subscribers had no further cause of complaint; ten tomes in sixteen months ought to satisfy even the most exigent.

No. i. volume was accompanied by a circular earnestly requesting that the book might not be exposed for sale in public places or permitted to fall into the hands of any save curious students of Moslem manners. Yet the birth of the first-born was accompanied (I am fain to confess) with no small trouble and qualms to the parent and to all who assisted at the parturition. Would the "little stranger" robed in black and gold, the colours of the Abbaside Caliphs, with its brick-red night-cap after the fashion of ecclesiastical bandings, be kindly welcomed or would it be regarded as an abortion, a monster? The reader will readily understand how welcome to an author in such perplexity came the following article from the Standard (September 12), usually attributed to the popular and trenchant pen of Mr. Alfred Austin. I must be permitted to quote it entire, because it expresses so fully and so admirably all and everything I could desire a reviewer to write. And the same paper has never ceased to give me the kindest encouragement: its latest notice was courteous and appreciative as its earliest.

The first volume of Captain Burton's long-expected edition of the "Arabian Nights" was issued yesterday to those who are in a position to avail themselves of the wealth of learning contained in this monumental labour of the famous Eastern traveller. The book is printed for subscribers only, and is sold at a price which is not likely to be paid by any save the scholars and students for whose instruction it is intended. But though the Benares "Kamashastra

Society" are careful to let the world know that the "Thousand Nights and a Night" is not "published" in the technical sense of the term, the pages which will be read by a thousand purchasers may be fittingly regarded as the property of the world at large. In any case, the day when the experience of a life was embodied into this fresh translation of the "Alf Laylah wa Laylah" marks a distinct stage in the history of Oriental research. The world has had numerous versions of these stories. For at least a century and a half they have delighted old and young, until Shahrazade and Dunyazade, the Fisherman and the Jinn, and the tales told by the Tailor, the Kalendar, the Nazarene broker, and the Hunchback. . . to say nothing of Aladdin, Ali Baba, Sinbad the Sailor, and Camaralzaman and Badoura — seem like the most familiar of friends. Yet many of those who know the ordinary epitome prepared for the nursery and the drawing-room have little idea of the nature of the original. Galland's abridgment was a mere shadow of the Arabic. Even the editions of Lane and Habicht and Torrens and Von Hammer represented but imperfectly the great corpus of Eastern folk-lore which Captain Burton has undertaken to render into English, without regard to the susceptibilities of those who, not having bought the book, are, therefore, in no way concerned in what is the affair of him and his subscribers. The best part of two centuries have passed away since Antoine Galland first turned some of the tales into French, and got stigmatised as a forger for his pains. Never was there such a sensation as when he printed his translations. For weeks he had been pestered by troops of roysterers rousing him out of bed, and refusing to go until the shivering Professor recited one of the Arab stories to the crowd under his window. Nor has the interest in them in any way abated. Thousands of copies pass every year into circulation, and any one who has ever stood in the circle around the professional storyteller of the East must have noticed how often he draws on this deathless collection. The camel-driver listens to them as eagerly as did his predecessors ages ago. The Badawi laughs in spite of himself, though next moment he ejaculates a startling "Astaghfaru'llah" for listening to the light mention of the sex whose name is never heard amongst the Nobility of the Desert. Or if the traveller is a scholar and a gentleman, he will pull out his book for amusement of the company squatted round the camp fire, as did Captain Burton many a time and oft in the course of his Eastern wanderings.

To Captain Burton the preparation of these volumes must have been a labour of love. He began them in conjunction with his friend Steinhaeuser, soon after his return from the Mecca pilgrimage, more than thirty years ago, and he has been doing something to them ever since. In the swampy jungles of West Africa a tale or two has been turned into English, or a poem has been versified during the tedium of official life in the dank climate of Brazil. From Sind to Trieste the manuscript has formed part and parcel of his baggage and though, in the interval, the learned author has added many a volume to the shelf-full which he has written, the "Thousand Nights and a Night" have never been forgotten. And now when he nears the end of his labours it seems as if we had never before known what the beauteous Shahrazad told the King who believed not in the constancy of women. Captain Burton seems the one sober man among drunkards. We have all the old company though they appear in dresses so entirely new that one scans the lines again and again before the likeness is quite recognised. However, Tajal-Mulook will no doubt be as knightly as ever when his turn comes, for the Barber is garrulous, after the old fashion, and the three Shaykhs relate their experiences with the Jinns, the gazelles, and mules as vividly as they have done any time these thousand years or more. King Yoonan and the Sage Dooban are here, and so are King Sindibad and his falcon, the young Prince of the Black Islands, the envious Weezer and the Ghoolah, and the stories of the Porter and the Ladies of Baghdad lose nothing of their charm in the new, and, we may add, extremely unsophisticated version. For Captain Burton's work is not virginibus puerisque, and, while disclaiming for his version anything like intentional indecorum, he warns the readers that they will be guilty of a breach of good faith should they permit a work prepared only for students to fall into the hands of boys and girls. From the first to almost the penultimate edition of these stories the drawing-room alone has been consulted. Even Mr. Payne, though his otherwise faithful version was printed for the Villon Society, had the fear of Mrs. Grundy before his eyes. Moreover, no previous editor — not even Lane himself — had a tithe of Captain Burton's acquaintance with the manners and customs of the Moslem East. Hence not unfrequently, they made ludicrous blunders and in no instance did they supply anything like the explanatory notes which have added so greatly to the value of this issue of “Alf Laylah wa Laylah.” Some of these are startling in their realism, and often the traveller who believed that he knew something of the East, winces at the plainness with which the Wazir’s daughter tells her tales to Shahryar, King of the Banu Sasan. The language is, however, more frequently coarse than loose, and smacks more of the childish plainness with which high and low talk in the family circles from Tangier to Malayia, than of prurience or suggestiveness. The Oriental cannot understand that it is improper to refer in straightforward terms to anything which Allah has created or of which the Koran treats. But in his conversation, as in his folk-lore, there is no subtle corruption or covert licentiousness — none of the vicious suggestion and false sentiment that pervade so many of the productions of the modern romantic school.

It is, indeed, questionable whether there is much in these inimitable romances half so objectionable as many of the chapters in Rabelais and Boccaccio. Nor do the most archaic of the passages which Captain Burton declines to “veil in the decent obscurity of a learned language” leave much room for the admirers of Shakespeare, or Greene, or Nash, or Wycherley, or Swift, or Sterne to cry shame. Their coarseness was a reflection of the times. The indelicacy was not offensive to those who heard it. On the other hand, apart from the language, the general tone of “The Nights” is exceptionally high and pure. The devotional fervour, as Captain Burton justly claims, often rises to the boiling-point of fanaticism and the pathos is sweet and deep, genuine and tender, simple and true. Its life — strong, splendid, and multitudinous — is everywhere flavoured with that unaffected pessimism and constitutional melancholy which strike deepest root under the brightest skies. The Kazi administers poetical justice with exemplary impartiality, and so healthy is the morale that at times we descry through the voluptuous and libertine picture “vistas of a transcendental morality — the morality of Socrates in Plato.” In no other work of the same nature is Eastern life so vividly portrayed. We see the Arab Knight, his prowess and his passion for adventure, his love and his revenge, the craft of his wives, and the hypocrisy of his priests, as plainly as if we had lived among them. Gilded palaces, charming women, lovely gardens, caves full of jewels, and exquisite repasts, captivate the senses and give variety to the panorama which is passing before our eyes. Yet we repeat that, though there is much in the excellent version now begun which is very plain speaking, there is nothing intentionally demoralising. Evidently, however the translator is prepared to hear this charge brought against his labour of love. Indeed, there is a tinge of melancholy pervading the preface in which the Editor refers to his "unsuccessful professional life," and to the knowledge of which his country has cared so little to avail itself. * * * * * Even in the recent Egyptian troubles — which are referred to somewhat bitterly — his wisdom was not utilised, though, after the death of Major Morice, there was not an English official in the camps before Suakin capable of speaking Arabic. On this scandal, and on the ignorance of Oriental customs which was everywhere displayed, Captain Burton is deservedly severe. The issue of the ten volumes now in the press, accompanied by notes so full of learning as those with which they are illuminated, will surely give the nation an opportunity for wiping away the reproach of that neglect which Captain Burton seems to feel more keenly than he cares to express.

This was a sop to the friend and a sore blow dealt to the enemy. Moreover it was speedily followed up by another as swashing and trenchant in the Morning Advertiser (September 15, '85), of which long extracts are presently quoted. The journal was ever friendly to me during the long reign of Mr. James Grant, and became especially so when the editorial chair was so worthily filled by my old familiar of Oxford days, the late Alfred Bate Richards, a man who made the "Organ of the Licensed Victuallers" a power in the state and was warmly thanked for his good services by that model conservative, Lord Beaconsfield.

A phrase in the Standard, the "most archaic of the passages," acted upon

The "Pall Mall Gazette"

like a red rag upon a rageous bull. I should rather say that it excited the so-called “Sexual I Journal” by suggesting another opportunity for its unclean sensationalism: perhaps also the staff hoped to provide company and a fellow-sufferer for their editor, who was then in durance vile, his of fences being “inciting to an indecent assault” and an act of criminal immorality. I should not have felt called upon to remind my readers of a scandal half forgotten in England, while still held in lively remembrance by the jealous European world, had not the persistent fabrications, calumnies, and slanders of the Pall Mall, which continue to this day, compelled me to move in self-defence, and to explain the mean under lying motives.

Some three years and a half ago (June 3, ‘85), the paper startled the world of London by a prodigy of false, foul, and fulsome details in the shape of articles entitled “The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon.” The object of the editor, Mr. William T. Stead, a quondam teacher in the London schools and a respectable Methodist strengthened by non- Conformist support, in starting this ignoble surprise on the public was much debated. His partisans asserted that he had been honestly deceived by some designing knave as if such child-like credulity were any excuse for a veteran journalist! His foes opined that under the cloak of a virtue, which Cato never knew, he sought to quicken his subscription list ever dwindling under the effects of his exaggerated Russophilism and Anglophobia.

But whatever may have been the motive, the effect was deplorable. The articles, at once collected into a pamphlet (price two pence), as the “Report of the Pall Mall Gazette’s Secret Commission,” and headed by a laudatory quotation from one of the late Lord Shaftesbury’s indiscreetly philanthropic speeches, were spread broadcast about every street and lane in London. The brochure of sixteen pages divided into three chapters delighted the malignant with such sensational section-headings as — How Girls are Bought and Ruined — Why the Cries of the Victims are not Heard — Procuresses in the West End — How Annie was Procured — You Want a Maid, do You? — The Ruin of Children — A London Minotaur(?) — The Ruin of the Young Life — The Demon Child and — A Close Time for Girls, the latter being intended to support the recommendation of the Lords’ Committee and the promise of a Home Secretary that the age of consent be raised from thirteen to sixteen. And all this catchpenny stuff (price 2d.) ended characteristically with "Philanthropic and Religious Associations can be supplied with copies of this reprint on special terms." Such artless benevolence and disinterested beneficence must, of course, be made to pay.

Read by every class and age in the capital, the counties and the colonies, this false and filthy scandal could not but infect the very children with the contagion of vice. The little gutter-girls and street-lasses of East London looked at men passing-by as if assured that their pucelages were or would become vendible at £3 to £5. But, the first startling over men began to treat the writer as he deserved. The abomination was "boycotted" by the Press, expelled from clubs, and driven in disgrace from the "family breakfast table," an unpleasant predicament for a newspaper which lives, not by its news, but by its advertise meets. The editor had the impudence to bemoan a "conspiracy of silence," which can only mean that he wanted his foul sheets to be bought and discussed when the public thought fit to bury them in oblivion. And yet he must have known that his "Modern Babylon" is not worse in such matters than half-a-dozen minor Babylons scattered over Europe, Asia, and America; and that it is far from being, except by the law of proportion the "greatest market of human flesh in the world." But by carefully and curiously misrepresenting the sporadic as the systematic, and by declaring that the "practice of procuration has been reduced to a science" (instead of being, we will suppose, one of the fine arts), it is easy to make out a case of the grossest calumny and most barefaced scandal against any great capital.

The revelations of the Pall Mall were presently pooh-pooh'd at home; but abroad their effect was otherwise. Foreigners have not yet learned thoroughly to appreciate our national practice of washing (and suffering others to wash) the foulest linen in fullest public. Mr. Stead's unworthy clap-trap representing London as the head-quarters of kidnapping, hocussing, and child-prostitution, the author invoking the while with true Pharisaic righteousness, unclean and blatant, pure intentions and holy zeal for good works was welcomed with a shout of delight by our unfriends the French, who hold virtue in England to be mostly Tartuffery, and by our cousins-german and rivals the Germans, who dearly love to use us and roundly abuse us. In fact, the national name of England was wilfully and wrongfully defiled and bewrayed by a "moral and religious" Englishman throughout the length and breadth of Europe.

Hard upon these "revelations" came the Eliza Armstrong case whereby the editor of the "Sexual Gazette" stultified thoroughly and effectually his own assertions; and proved most satisfactorily, to the injury of his own person, that the easiest thing in the world is notably difficult and passing dangerous. An accomplice, unable to procure a "maiden" for immoral purposes after boasting her ability as a procuress, proceeded to kidnap one for the especial benefit of righteous Mr. Stead. Consequently, he found himself in the dock together with five other accused, male and female; and the verdict, condemning the archplotter to three months and the assistants to lesser terms of imprisonment for abduction and indecent assault, was hailed with universal applause. The delinquent had the fanatical and unscrupulous support, with purse and influence, of the National Vigilance Association, a troop of busybodies captained by licensed blackmailers who of late years have made England their unhappy hunting-ground.[446] Despite, however, the "Stead Defence Fund" liberally supplied by Methody; despite the criminal's Pecksniffan tone, his self-glorification of the part he had taken, his effronté boast of pure and lofty motives and his passionate enthusiasm for sexual morality, the trial emphasised the fact that no individual may break the law of the land in order that good may come therefrom. It also proved most convincingly the utter baselessness of the sweeping indictment against the morality of England and especially of London — a charge which "undoubtedly had an enormous influence for harm at home and cruelly prejudiced the country abroad." In the words of Mr. Vaughan of the Bow Street Police Court (September 7, '85) the Pall Mall's "Sensational articles had certainly given unlimited pain and sorrow to many good people at home and had greatly lowered the English nation in the estimation of foreigners." In a sequel to the Eliza Armstrong case Mr. Justice Manisty, when summing up, severely condemned the "shocking exhibition that took place in the London streets by the publication of statements containing horrible details, and he trusted that those who were responsible for the administration of the law would take care that such outrage should not be permitted again.” So pure and pious Mr. Stead found time for reflection during the secluded three-months life of a “first-class misdemeanant” in “happy Holywell,” and did not bring out his intended articles denouncing London as the head- quarters of a certain sin named from Sodom.

About mid-September, when Mr. Stead still lay in durance vile, a sub-editor Mr. Morley (Jun.) applied to me for an interview which I did not refuse. It was by no means satisfactory except to provide his paper with “copy.” I found him labouring hard to place me “in the same box” with his martyred principal and to represent my volume (“a book of archaic delights”) as a greater outrage on public decency than the two-penny pamphlet. This, as said the London Figaro (September 19, ‘85), is a “monstrous and absurd comparison.” It became evident to me, during the first visit, that I was to play the part of Mr. Pickwick between two rival races of editors, the pornologists and the anti- pornologists, and, having no stomach for such sport, I declined the rôle. In reply to a question about critics my remark to the interviewer was, “I have taken much interest in what the classics call Skiomachia and I shall allow Anonymus and Anonyma to howl unanswered. I shall also treat with scornful silence the miserables who, when shown a magnificent prospect, a landscape adorned with the highest charms of Nature and Art, can only see in a field corner here and there a little heap of muck. ‘You must have been looking for it, Madam!’ said, or is said to have said, sturdy old Doctor Samuel Johnson.”

Moreover Mr. Morley’s style of reporting “interviews” was somewhat too advanced and American — that is, too personal, too sensation-mongering and too nauseously familiar — to suit my taste, and I would have none other of them. Hereupon being unable to make more copy out of the case the Pall Mall Gazette let loose at me a German Jew pennyliner, who signs himself Sigma. This pauvre diable delivered himself of two articles, “Pantagruelism or Pornography?” (September 14, ‘85) and “The Ethics of the Dirt” (September 19, ‘85), wherein with matchless front of brass he talks of the “unsullied British breakfast-table,” so pleasantly provided with pepper by his immaculate editor. And since that time the Pall Mall Gazette has never ceased to practice at my expense its old trade, falsehood and calumny, and the right of private judgment, sentence and execution. In hopes that his splenetic and vindictive fiction might bear fruit, at one time the Pall Mall Gazette has “heard that the work was to be withdrawn from circulation” (when it never circulated). Then, “it was resolved by the authorities to request Captain Burton not to issue the third volume and to prosecute him if he takes no notice of the invitation;” and, finally, “Government has at last determined to put down Captain Burton with a strong hand.” All about as true as the political articles which the Pall Mall Gazette indites with such heroic contempt for truth, candour and honesty. One cannot but apply to the “Gutter Gazette” the words of the Rev. Edward Irving:— “I mean by the British Inquisition that court whose ministers and agents carry on their operations in secret; who drag every man’s most private affairs before the sight of thousands and seek to mangle and destroy his life, trying him without a witness, condemning him without a hearing, nor suffering him to speak for himself, intermeddling in things of which they have no knowledge and cannot on any principle have a jurisdiction * * * I mean the ignorant, unprincipled, unhallowed spirit of criticism, which in this Protestant country is producing as foul effects against truth, and by as dishonest means as ever did the Inquisition of Rome” (“Preliminary Discourse to Ben Ezra,” etc.).

Of course men were not wanting to answer the malevolent insipidities of the Pall Mall Gazette, and to note the difference between newspaper articles duly pamphleted and distributed to the disgust of all decency, and the translation of an Arabian limited in issue and intended only for the few select. Nor could they fail to observe that black balling The Nights and admitting the “revelations” was a desperate straining at the proverbial gnat and swallowing the camel. My readers will hardly thank me for dwelling upon this point yet I cannot refrain from quoting certain of the protests: —

Sir,

To the Editor of the “PALL MALL GAZETTE.”

Your correspondent "Sigma" has forgotten the considerable number of "students" who will buy Captain Burton's translation as the only literal one, needing it to help them in what has become necessary to many — a masterly knowledge of Egyptian Arabic. The so-called "Arabian Nights" are about the only written half-way house between the literary Arabic and the colloquial Arabic, both of which they need, and need introductions too. I venture to say that its largest use will be as a grown-up school-book and that it is not coarser than the classics in which we soak all our boys' minds at school.

ANGLO EGYPTIAN
September 14th, 1885.

And the Freethinker's answer (Oct. 25, '85) to these repeated and malicious assaults is as follows: —

Here is a fine illustration of Mr. Stead's Pecksniffian peculiarities. Captain Burton, a gentleman and a scholar whose boots Mr. Stead is not fit to black, is again hauled over the coals for the hundredth time about his new translation of the Arabian Nights, which is so "pornographic" that the price of the first volume has actually risen from a pound to twenty-five shillings. Further down, in the very same column, the P.M.G. gloats proudly over the fact that thirty-five shillings have been given for a single copy of its own twopennyworth of smut.

The last characteristic touch which I shall take the trouble to notice is the following gem of September 16, '87: —

I was talking to an American novelist the other day, and he assured me that the Custom-house authorities on "the other side" seized all copies of Sir Richard Burton's "Nights" that came into their hands, and retained them as indecent publications. Burned them, I hope he meant, and so, I fear, will all holders of this notorious publication, for prices will advance, and Sir Richard will chuckle to think that indecency is a much better protection than international copyright.

Truly the pen is a two-edged tool, often turned by the fool against his own soul. So an honest author "chuckles" when his subscribers have lost their copies because this will enhance the value of his book! I ask, Can anything be better proven than the vileness of a man who is ever suspecting and looking for vileness in his fellow-men? Again, the assertion that the Custom-house authorities in the United States had seized my copies is a Pall-Mallian fiction pure and simple, and the "Sexual Gazette" must have known this fact right well. In consequence of a complaint lodged by the local Society for the Suppression of Vice, the officials of the Custom-house, New York, began by impounding the first volumes of the Villon Version; but presently, as a literary friend informs me (February 10, '88), "the new translations of The Nights have been fully permitted entry at the Custom-house and are delivered on the payment of 25% duty." To my copies admittance was never refused.

Mr. Stead left his prison-doors noisily declaring that the rest of his life should be "devoted to Christian chivalry" — whatever that majestic dictum may mean. As regards his subsequent journalistic career I can observe only that it has been unfortunate as inconsequent. He took up the defence, abusing the Home Secretary after foulest fashion of the card-blooded murderer Lipski, with the result that his protégé was hanged after plenary confession and the Editor had not the manliness to apologise. He espoused the cause of free speech in Ireland with the result that most of the orators were doomed to the infirmaries connected with the local gaols. True to his principle made penal by the older and wiser law of libel, that is of applying individual and irresponsible judgment to, and passing final and unappealable sentence upon, the conduct of private individuals and of public men, he raged and inveighed with all the fury of outraged (and interested) virtue against Colonel Hughes-Hallett with the consequence of seating that M.P. more firmly than before. He took up the question of free public meeting in England with the result that a number of deludeds (including Mr. Cunninghame Graham, M.P.) found their way to prison, which the "Christian chevalier" had apparently contracted to supply with inmates. But there is more to say concerning the vaunted morality of this immoral paper. — Eheu! quantum mutatus from the old decent days when, under Mr. Frederic Greenwood, it was indeed "written by gentlemen for gentlemen" (and ladies).

A journal which, like the Pall Mall Gazette, affects preferably and persistently sexual subjects and themes rubric, works more active and permanent damage to public morals than books and papers which are frankly gross and indecent. The latter, so far as the world of letters knows them, are read either for their wit and underlying wisdom (e.g. Rabelais and Swift), for their historical significance (Petronius Arbiter) or for their anthropological interest as the Alf Laylah. But the public print which deals, however primly and decently, piously and unctuously, with sexual and inter-sexual relations, usually held to be of the Alekta or taboo'd subjects, is the real perverter of conduct, the polluter of mental purity, the corrupter-general of society. Amongst savages and barbarians the comparatively unrestrained intercourse between men and women relieves the brain through the body; the mind and memory have scant reason, physical or mental, to dwell fondly upon visions amatory and venereal, to live in a "rustle of (imaginary) copulation." On the other hand the utterly artificial life of civilization, which debauches even the monkeys in "the Zoo," and which expands the period proper for the reproductory process from the vernal season into the whole twelvemonth, leaves to the many, whose lot is celibacy, no bodily want save one and that in a host of cases either unattainable or procurable only by difficulty and danger. Hence the prodigious amount of mental excitement and material impurity which is found wherever civilization extends, in maid, matron, and widow, save and except those solely who allay it by some counteragent — religion, pride, or physical frigidity. How many a woman in "Society," when stricken by insanity or puerperal fever, breaks out into language that would shame the slums and which makes the hearers marvel where she could have learned such vocabulary. How many an old maid held to be cold as virgin snow, how many a matron upon whose fairest fame not a breath of scandal has blown, how many a widow who proudly claims the title univira, must relieve their pent-up feelings by what may be called mental prostitution. So I would term the dear delights of sexual converse and that sub-erotic literature, the phthisical "French novel," whose sole merit is "suggestiveness," taking the place of Oriental morosa voluptas and of the unnatural practices — Tribadism and so forth, still rare, we believe, in England. How many hypocrites of either sex, who would turn away disgusted from the outspoken Tom Jones or the Sentimental Voyager, revel in and dwell fondly upon the sly romance or "study" of character whose profligacy is masked and therefore the more perilous. And a paper like the (modern) Pall Mall Gazette which deliberately pimps and panders to this latent sense and state of aphrodisiac excitement, is as much the more infamous than the loose book as hypocrisy is more hateful than vice and prevarication is more ignoble than a lie. And when such vile system is professionally practiced under the disguise and in the holy names of Religion and Morality, the effect is loathsome as that spectacle sometimes seen in the East of a wrinkled old eunuch garbed in woman's nautchdress ogling with painted eyes and waving and wriggling like a young Bayadére.

There is much virtue in a nickname: at all events it shows the direction whither the aura popularis sets. The organ of Christian Chivalry is now universally known to Society as "The Gutter Gazette;" to the public as "The Purity-Severity Paper," and the "Organ of the Social Pruriency Society," and to its colleagues of the Press as "The Dirt Squirt." In the United States fulsomely to slander a man is "to Pall Mall Gazette him:" "Just like your Pall Mall Gazette," said an American to me when describing a disreputable print "over the water." And Mr. Stead, now self-constituted coryphæus of the Reptile Press in Great Britain, has apparently still to learn that lying and slandering are neither Christian nor chivalrous.

The diminutive Echo of those days (October 13 and 14, '85) followed suit of the Pall Mall Gazette and caught lightly the sounds as they fell from the non-melliferous lips of the charmer who failed to charm wisely. The precious article begins by informing me that I am "always eager after the sensational," and that on this occasion I "cater for the prurient curiosity of the wealthy few," such being his synonym for "readiness to learn." And it ends with the following comical colophon:— "Captain Burton may possibly imitate himself(?) and challenge us(!) to mortal combat for this expression of opinion. If so, the writer of these lines will imitate himself(?) and take no notice of such an epistle." The poor scribe suggests the proverbial "Miss Baxter, who refused a man before he axed her."

And what weapon could I use, composing-stick or dung-fork, upon an anonymous correspondent of the hawkers' and newsboys' "Hecker," the favourite ha'porth of East London? So I left him to the tender mercies of Gaiety (October 14, '84): —

The Echo is just a bit wild,
Its "par." is indeed a hard hitter:
In fact, it has not drawn it mild
'Tis a matter of "Burton and bitter."

I rejoice to subjoin that the Echo has now (1888) made a name for decent and sensible writing, having abandoned the "blatant" department to the Star (see, for the nonsense about a non-existent Alderman Waterlow, its issue of September 6, '88).

In the opinions of the Press will be found a selection from half a century of laudatory notices to which the few curious touching such matters will turn, while those who misjudged my work are duly acknowledged in this paper. Amongst friends I would specify without invidious distinction, The Bat (September 29, '85), who on this occasion and sundry others sturdily defended me, showing himself a bird of "light and leading." To the St. James's Gazette (September 12, '85), the Whitehall Review (September 17), the Home News (September 18), and the Nottingham Journal (September 19), I am also indebted for most appreciative and intelligent notices. My cordial thanks are likewise due to the Editor and especially to "Our London Correspondent" of the Lincoln Gazette (October 10 and October 17, '85, not to notice sundry minor articles): the articles will be reprinted almost entire because they have expressed my meaning as though it came from my own mouth. I have quoted Mr. J. Addington Symonds in extenso: if England now possesses a writer who can deliver an authoritative judgment on literary style it is this littérateur. Of the journals which profess letters The Academy has ever been my friend and I have still the honour of corresponding with it: we are called "faddists" probably from our "fad" of signing our articles and thus enabling the criticised to criticise the critic.

I now turn to another of my unfriends, amongst whom is and long has been

The “Saturday Review,”

This ancient dodderer, who has seen better days, deigned favour me with six notices (January 2 and March 27, ‘86; April 30, June 4, August 14, ‘87, and July 21, ‘88), of which No. i., dealing with my first and second volumes, is written after the facile American fashion, making the book review itself; that is, supply to the writer all the knowledge and familiarity with the subject which he parades before an incurious and easily gullible public. This especial form of dishonesty has but lately succeeded to and ousted the classical English critique of Jeffrey, Macaulay, and the late Mr. Abraham Hayward, which was mostly a handy peg for the contents of the critic’s noddle or note book. The Saturnine article opens characteristically.

Abroad we English have the character of being the most prudish of nations; we are celebrated as having Bowdlerized for our babes and sucklings even the immortal William Shakespeare; but we shall infallibly lose this our character should the Kamashastra Society flourish. Captain Burton has long been known as a bold explorer; his pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, disguised in the dress and taking on him the manners and customs of a True Believer, was a marvel of audacity; but perhaps he may be held now to have surpassed himself, for he has been bold enough to lay before his countrymen a literal and unexcised translation of The Arabian Nights.

The writer is kind enough to pat me upon the back for “picturesque and fluent English” and to confess that I have successfully imitated the rhyming cadence of the original. But The Saturday would not be The Saturday without carping criticism, wrong-headedness and the culte of the common-place, together with absolute and unworthy cruelty to weaker vessels. The reviewer denounces as “too conceited to be passed over without comment” the good old English “whenas” (for when, vol. ii. 130), the common ballad-terms “a plump of spearmen” (ii. 190) and a “red cent” (i. 321), the only literal rendering of “Fals ahmar” which serves to show the ancient and noble pedigree of a slang term supposed to be modern and American. Moreover this Satan even condemns fiercely the sin of supplying him with “useful knowledge.” The important note (ii. 45) upon the normal English mispronunciation of the J in Jerusalem, Jesus, Jehovah, a corruption whose origin and history are unknown to so many, and which was, doubtless, a surprise to this Son of King “We,” is damned as “uninteresting to the reader of the Arabian Nights.” En revanche, three mistakes of mine (““ for ““ in vol. ii., index; “King Zahr Shah” for “King Suleyman Shah,” ii. 285, and the careless confusion of the Caliphs Al-Muntasir and Al-Mustansir, ii. 817, note i.) were corrected and I have duly acknowledged the correction. No. i. article ends with Saturnine geniality and utterly ignoring a bye-word touching dwellers in glass houses: —

Finally, we mark with regret that Captain Burton should find no more courteous terms to apply to the useful work of a painstaking clergyman than those where in his note he alludes to “Missionary Porter’s miserable Handbook.”

As Mr. Missionary Porter has never ceased to malign me, even in his last Edition of Murray’s “miserable Handbook,” a cento of Hibernian blunders and hashed Bible, I have every reason to lui rendre la pareille.

The second article (March 27, ‘86), treating of vol. iii., opens with one of those plagiaristic common-places, so dear to the soul of The Saturday, in its staid and stale old age as in its sprightly youth. “There is particularly one commodity which all men, therein nobly disregarding their differences of creed and country, are of a mind that it is better to give than to receive. That commodity is good advice. We note further that the liberality with which this is everywhere offered is only to be equalled (he means ‘to be equalled only’) by the niggard reception at most times accorded to the munificent donation; in fact the very goodness of advice given apparently militates against its due appreciation in (by?) the recipient.” The critic then proceeds to fit his ipse dixit upon my case. The sense of the sentiment is the reverse of new: we find in The Spectator (No. dxii.), “There is nothing we receive with so much reluctance as good advice,” etc., but Mr. Spectator writes good English and his plagiarist does not. Nor is the dictum true. We authors who have studied a subject for years, are, I am convinced, ready enough to learn, but we justly object to sink our opinions and our judgment in those of a counsellor who has only “crammed” for his article. Moreover, we must be sure that he can fairly lay claim to the three requisites of an adviser — capacity to advise rightly, honesty to advise truly, and courtesy to advise decently. Now the Saturday Review has neither this, that, nor the other qualification. Indeed his words read like subtle and lurking irony by the light of those phenomenal and portentous vagaries which ever and anon illuminate his opaque pages. What correctness can we expect from a journal whose tomahawk-man, when scalping the corpse of Matthew Arnold, deliberately applies the term “sonnet” to some thirty lines in heroic couplets? His confusion of Dr. Jenner, Vaccinator, with Sir William Jenner, the President of the R. C. of Physicians, is one which passes all comprehension. And what shall we say of this title to pose as an Aristarchus (November 4th, ‘82)? “Then Jonathan Scott, LL.D. Oxon, assures the world that he intended to re-translate the Tales given by Galland(!) but he found Galland so adequate on the whole (!!) that he gave up the idea and now reprints Galland with etchings by M. Lalauze, giving a French view of Arab life. Why Jonathan Scott, LL.D., should have thought to better Galland while Mr. Lane’s version is in existence, and has just been reprinted, it is impossible to say.” In these wondrous words Jonathan Scott’s editio princeps with engravings from pictures by Smirke and printed by Longmans in 1811 is confounded with the imperfect reprint by Messieurs Nimmo and Bain, in 1883; the illustrations being borrowed from M. Adolphe Lalauze, a French artist (nat. 1838), a master of eaux fortes, who had studied in Northern Africa and who maroccanized the mise-en-scène of “The Nights” with a marvellous contrast of white and negro nudities. And such is the Solomon who fantastically complains that I have disdained to be enlightened by his “modest suggestions.” Au reste the article is not bad simply because it borrows — again Americanicè — all its matter from my book. At the tail-end, however comes the normal sting: I am guilty of not explaining “Wuzú” (lesser ablution), “Ghusl” (greater ablution), and “Zakát” (legal alms which constitute a poor-rate), proving that the writer never read vol. iii. He confidently suggests replacing “Cafilah,” “by the better known word Caravan,” as if it were my speciality (as it is his) to hunt-out commonplaces: he grumbles about “interrogation-points a l’Espagnole upside down”(?) which still satisfies me as an excellent substitute to distinguish the common Q(uestion) from A(nswer) and he seriously congratulates me upon my discovering a typographical error on the fly- leaf. No. iii. (August 14, ‘86, handling vols. vi., vii. and viii.) is free from the opening pretensions and absurdities of No. ii. and it is made tolerably safe by the familiar action of scissors and paste. But — desinit in piscem — it ends fishily; and we find, after saturnine fashion, in cauda venenum. It scolds me for telling the English public what it even now ignores, the properest way of cooking meat (à propos of kabábs) and it “trembles to receive vols. ix. and x. for truly (from a literary point of view, of course, we mean) there seems nothing of which the translator might not be capable” — capable de tout, as said Voltaire of Habbakuk and another agnostic Frenchman of the Prophet Zerubbabel. This was indeed high praise considering the Saturday’s sympathy with and affection for the dead level, for the average man; but as an augury of ill it was a brutum fulmen. No. iv. (August 30, ‘87) was, strange to say, in tone almost civil and ended with a touch simulating approval: —

“The labours of a quarter of a century,” writes the translator in L’Envoi, “are now brought to a close, and certainly no one could have been found better suited by education and taste to the task of translating the ‘Nights’ than is the accomplished author of the ‘Pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina.’ His summing up of the contents and character of ‘The Thousand and One Nights’ in the Terminal Essay is a masterpiece of careful analysis and we cannot do better than conclude our notice with a paragraph that resumes with wonderful effect the boundless imagination and variety of the picture that is conjured up before our eyes: —

“Viewed as a tout ensemble in full and complete form, they are a drama of Eastern life and a Dance of Death made sublime by faith and the highest emotions, by the certainty of expiation and the fulness of atoning equity, where virtue is victorious, vice is vanquished and the ways of Allah are justified to man. They are a panorama which remains kenspeckle upon the mental retina. They form a phantasmagoria in which archangels and angels, devils and goblins, men of air, of fire, of water, naturally mingle with men of earth, where flying horses and talking fishes are utterly realistic, where King and Prince must meet fishermen and pauper, lamia and cannibal, where citizen jostles Badawi, eunuch meets knight; the Kazi hob-nobs with the thief.... The work is a kaleidoscope where everything falls into picture, gorgeous palaces and pavilions; grisly underground caves and deadly words, gardens fairer than those of the Hesperid; seas dashing with clashing billows upon enchanted mountains, valleys of the Shadow of Death, air-voyages and promenades in the abysses of the ocean, the duello, the battle, and the siege, the wooing of maidens and the marriage rite. All the splendour and squalor, the beauty and baseness the glamour and grotesqueness, the magic and the mournfulness, the bravery and the baseness, of Oriental life are here."

And now, after the Saturday Review has condescended severely and sententiously to bepreach me, I must be permitted a trifling return in kind. As is declared by the French an objectionable people which prefers la gloire to "duty," and even places "honour" before "honesty," the calling of the Fourth Estate is un sacerdoce, an Apostolate: it is a high and holy mission whose ends are the diffusion of Truth and Knowledge and the suppression of Ignorance and Falsehood. "Sacrilege," with this profession, means the breaking of its two great commandments and all sins of commission and omission suggested and prompted by vain love of fame, by sordid self-esteem or by ignoble rancour. What then shall we say of a paper which, professedly established to "counteract the immorality of The Times," adds to normal journalistic follies, offences and mistakes an utter absence of literary honour, systematic misrepresentation, malignity and absolute ruffianism? Let those who hold such language exaggerated glance at my pièce justicative, the Saturday's article (June 28, '88) upon Mr. Hitchman's "Biography of Sir Richard Burton." No denizen of Grub Street in the coarse old day of British mob-savagery could have produced a more damning specimen of wilful falsehood, undignified scurrility and brutal malevolence, in order to gratify a well-known pique, private and personal. The "Saturday Reviler" — there is, I repeat, much virtue in a soubriquet — has grown only somewhat feebler, not kindlier, not more sympathetic since the clever author of "In Her Majesty's Keeping" styled this Magister Morum "the benignant and judicious foster-parent of literature"; and since Darwin wrote of it (ii. 260) "One cannot expect fairness in a reviewer;" nor has it even taken to heart what my friend Swinburne declared (anent its issue of December 15, '83) "clumsy and shallow snobbery can do no harm." Like other things waxing obsolete it has served, I hasten to confess, a special purpose in the world of letters. It has lived through a generation of thirty years in the glorification of the mediocrities and in pandering to the impish taint of poor human nature, the ungenerous passions of those who abhor the novel, the original, the surprising, the startling, and who are only too glad to witness and to assist in the Procrustes' process of trimming and lengthening out thoughts and ideas and diction that rise or strive to rise above the normal and vulgar plane. This virtual descendant of the ancestral Satirist, after long serving as a spawning-ground to envy, hatred and malice, now enters upon the decline of an unworthy old age. Since the death of its proprietor, Mr. Beresford-Hope, it has been steadily going down hill as is proved by its circulation, once 15,000, and now something nearer 5,000 than 10,000. It has become a poor shadow of its former self — preserving the passive ill- will but lacking the power of active malevolence — when journalists were often compelled to decline correspondence upon its misjudgments and to close to complainants their columns which otherwise would have been engrossed by just and reasonable protestations. The "young lions" of its prime (too often behanged with a calf-skin on their recreant limbs) are down among the dead and the jackal-pack which has now taken up the howling could no longer have caused Thackeray to fear or can excite the righteous disgust of that votary of "fair-play" — Mr. John Bright.

And now, before addressing myself to another Reviewer, I would be allowed a few words upon two purely personal subjects; the style chosen for my translation and my knowledge of the Arabian language and literature.

I need hardly waste time to point out what all men discern more or less distinctly, how important are diction and expression in all works of fancy and fiction and how both branches, poetic and prosaic, delight in beauty adorned and allow in such matters the extreme of liberty. A long study of Galland and Torrens, Lane and Payne, convinced me that none of these translators, albeit each could claim his special merit, has succeeded in preserving the local colouring of the original. The Frenchman had gallicised and popularised the general tone and tenor to such extent that even the vulgar English versions have ever failed to throw off the French flavour. Torrens attempted literalism laudably and courageously enough; but his execution was of the roughest, the nude verbatim; nor did his familiarity with Arabic, or rather with Egyptian, suffice him for the task. Lane, of whom I have already spoken, and of whom I shall presently be driven by his imprudent relatives and interested friends to say more, affected the latinised English of the period flat and dull, turgid and vapid as that of Sale's Koran; and his style proved the most insufficient and inadequate attire in which an Oriental romance of the Middle Ages could be arrayed. Payne was perfectly satisfactory to all cultivated tastes but he designedly converted a romantic into a classical work: none ignores its high merits regarded merely as strong and vital English, but it lacks one thing needful — the multiform variety of The Nights. The original Arabic text which in the first thirteen tales (Terminal Essay,) must date from before the xiiith century at the latest (since Galland's MS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale has been assigned to the early xivth) is highly composite: it does not disdain local terms, bye-words and allusions (some obsolete now and forgotten), and it borrows indiscriminately from Persian (e.g. Sháhbandar), from Turkish (as Khátún) and from Sanscrit (for instance Brahman). As its equivalent, in vocabulary I could devise only a somewhat archaical English whose old-fashioned and sub-antique flavour would contrast with our modern and everyday speech, admitting at times even Latin and French terms, such as res scibilis and citrouille. The mixture startled the critics and carpers to whom its object had not been explained; but my conviction still remains that it represents, with much truth to nature, the motley suit of the Arabo-Egyptian. And it certainly serves one purpose, too often neglected by writers and unnoticed by reviewers. The fluent and transparent styles of Buckle and Darwin (the modern Aristotle who has transformed the face of Biological Science) are instruments admirably fitted for their purpose: crystal-clear, they never divert even a bittock of the reader's brain from the all-important sense underlying the sound-symbols. But in works of imagination mar. wants a treatment totally different, a style which, by all or any means, little mattering what they be, can avoid the imminent deadly risk of languor and monotony and which adds to fluency the allurement of variety, of surprise and even of disappointment, when a musical discord is demanded.

Again, my estimate of a translator's office has never been of the low level generally assigned to it even in the days when Englishmen were in the habit of englishing every important or interesting work published on the continent of Europe. We cannot expect at this period of our literature overmuch from a man who, as Messieurs Vizetelly assure their clientèle, must produce a version for a poor £20. But at his best the traducteur, while perfectly reproducing the matter and the manner of his original, works upon two lines. His prime and primary object is an honest and faithful copy, adding naught to the sense nor abating aught of its peculiar cachet whilst he labours his best to please and edify his readers. He has, however, or should have, another aim wherein is displayed the acme of hermeneutic art. Every language can profitably lend something to and borrow somewhat from its neighbours, near or far, an epithet, a metaphor, a turn of phrase, a naive idiom and the translator of original mind will not neglect the frequent opportunities of enriching his mother tongue with alien and novel ornaments, which will justly be accounted barbarisms until formally adopted and naturalised. Such are the "peoples" of Kossuth and the useful "lengthy," an American revival of a good old English term. Nor will my modern versionist relegate to a foot-note, as is the malpractice of his banal brotherhood the interesting and often startling phases of his foreign author's phraseology and dull the text with its commonplace English equivalent — thus doing the clean reverse of what he should do. It is needless to quote instances concerning this phase of "Bathos:" they abound in every occidental translation of every Oriental work, especially the French, such as Baron de Slane's honest and conscientious "Ibn Khaldún." It was this grand ideal of a translator's duty that made Eustache Deschamps, a contemporary poet, write of his English brother bard. —

"Grand Translateur, Noble Geoffroy Chaucier."

Here,

“The firste finder of our faire language”

is styled a “Socrates in philosophy, a Seneca in morals, an Angel in conduct and a great Translator,” which apparent anti-climax has scandalised not a little inditers of “Lives” and “Memoirs.” The title is given simply because Chaucer translated (using the best and highest sense of the term) into his English tongue and its linguistic peculiarities, the thoughts and ideas of his foreign models — the very letter and spirit of Petrarch and Boccacao.

That my attempts to reproduce the form and features of the original and thee my manner of writing is well adapted to the matter appears from the consensus of the “Notices” presently to be quoted. Mr. J. Addington Symonds pronounces the version to be executed with “peculiar literary vigour.” Mr. Swinburne is complimentary, and even the Saturday deigns to declare “Captain Burton is certainly felicitous in the manner in which he has englished the picturesque lines of the original.” But le style est de l’homme; and this is a matter upon which any and every educated man who writes honestly will form and express and retain his own opinion: there are not a few who loathe “Pickwick,” and who cannot relish Vanity Fair. So the Edinburgh Review No. 335 (p, 181), concerning which more anon, pronounces my work to be “a jumble of the vulgarest slang of all nations;” also “an unreadable compound of archæology and ‘slang,’ abounding in Americanisms, and full of an affected reaching after obsolete or foreign words and phrases;” and finally shows the assurance to assert “Captain Burton has produced a version which is neither Arabic nor English, but which has at least the merit of being beautifully unreadable” ().

It has been circulated widely enough by the Lane-Poole clique — poules mouillees they are called by an Arabist friend — that I do not know Arabic. Let me at once plead guilty to the charge, adding by way of circonstance atténuante that I know none who does know or who can thoroughly know a tongue of which we may say as did honest Izaak Walton of other two crafts, “angling be so like the mathematics that it can never be fully learned.” Most of us can master one section of a language concerning which those who use it vernacularly declare “Only Allah wotteth its entirety”, but we lack as yet the means to study it as a whole. Older by long ages than Babel’s fabulous Tower, and covering a continuous area from Eastern Arabia to the Maghrab al-Aksa (western Mauritania), from Chaldaea in the North to southern Zanzibar, it numbers of potential vocabulary 1,200,000 words all of which may be, if they are not, used, and while they specify the finest shades of meaning, not a few of them, technically termed “Zidd,” bear significations diametrically opposite, e.g., “Maulá” = lord, slave; and “‘Ajúz” with 88 different meanings. Its literature, poetic, semi-poetic and prosaic, falls into three greater sections: — Ancient (The Suspendeds, the Kitáb al-Aghání and the Koran), Mediæval (Al-Mutanabbi, Al-Asm’ài, Abú Nowás and the poets of the Harunic cycle) and Moderns, of whom not the least important (e.g. Yúsuf al-Yazají) are those of our own day. Throughout its vast domain there are local differences of terminology which render every dialect a study; and of these many are intimately connected with older families, as the Egyptian with Coptic and the Moorish with Berber. The purest speakers are still the Badawin who are often not understood by the citizen-folk (e.g. of Cairo, Damascus and Baghdad) at whose gates they tent; and a few classes like the Banú Fahim of Al-Hijáz still converse sub-classically, ever and anon using the terminal vowels and the nunnation elsewhere obsolete. These wildlings, whose evening camp-fires are still their schools for eloquence and whose improvisations are still their unwritten laws, divide speech into three degrees, Al-’Áli the lofty addressed to the great, Al-Wasat used for daily converse and Al-Dún the lowly or broken “loghat” (jargon) belonging to most tribes save their own. In Egypt the purest speakers are those of the Sa’íd — the upper Nile-region — differing greatly from the two main dialects of the Delta; in Syria, where the older Aramean is still current amongst sundry of the villagers outlying Damascus, the best Arabists are the Druzes, a heterogeneous of Arabs and Curds who cultivate language with uncommon care. Of the dialectic families which subtend the Mediterranean’s southern sea-board, the Maroccan and the Algerine are barbarised by Berber, by Spanish and by Italian words and are roughened by the inordinate use of the Sukún (quiescence or conjoining of consonants), while the Tunisian approaches nearer to the Syrian and the Maltese was originally Punic. The jargon of Meccah is confessedly of all the worst. But the wide field has been scratched not worked out, and the greater part of it, especially the Mesopotamian and the Himyaritic of Mahrahland, still remains fallow and the reverse of sterile.

Materials for the study of Arabic in general and of its dialects in particular are still deficient, and the dictionaries mostly content themselves with pouring old stuff from flask to flask, instead of collecting fresh and unknown material. Such are recueils of prayers and proverbs, folk-songs and stories, riddles and satires, not forgetting those polyglot vocabularies so common in many parts of the Eastern world, notably in Sind and Afghánistán; and the departmental glossaries such as the many dealing with "Tasawwuf" — the Moslem form of Gnosticism. The excellent lexicon of the late Professor Dozy, Supplément aux Dictionnaires Arabes, par R. Dozy, Leyde: E. J. Brill, 1881, was a step in advance, but we still lack additions like Baron Adolph Von Kremer's Beitrage zur Arabischen Lexicographie (In commission bei Carl Gerold's Sohn, Wien, 1884). The French, as might be expected, began early, e.g. M. Ruphy's Dictionnaire abrege francais-arabe, Paris, Imprimerie de la Republique, 1810; they have done good work in Algiers and are now carrying it on in Tunis. Of these we have Marcel, Vocabulaire, etc. (Paris, 1837), Bled de Braine (Paris, 1846), who to his Cours Synthetique adds a study of Maroccan and Egyptian, Professor Cherbonneau (Paris, 1854), Précis Historique, and Dialogues, etc. (Alger, 1858); M. Gasselin (Paris, 1866), Dictionnaire francais-arabe, M. Brassier (Algiers, 1871), Dictionnaire pratique, also containing Algerine and Tunisian terms; General Parmentier (Vocabulaire arabe-francais des Principaux Termes de Geographie, etc.: Paris, rue Antoine-Dubois, 1882); and, to mention no others, the Grammaire Arabe Vulgaire (Paris, 1824) of M. Caussin de Perceval (fils) has extended far and wide. Berggren (Upsal, 1844) published his Guide Francais-Arabe des Voyageurs en Syrie et en Egypte. Rowland de Bussy printed (Algiers, 1877) his Dialogues Francais-Arabes in the Algerian dialect. Fr. José de Lerchundi, a respected Missioner to Tangier, has imitated and even improved upon this in his Rudimentos del Arabe Vulgar (Madrid, Rivadeneyra, 1872); and his studies of the Maghrabi dialect are most valuable. Dr. A. Socin produced his Arabische Sprichwörter, etc. (Tubingen, 1878), and the late Wilhelm Spitta-Bey, whose early death was so deeply lamented left a grammar of Egyptian which would have been a model had the author brought to his task more knowledge of Coptic in his Grammatik des Arabischen vulgär Dialektes von Ægypten, (Leipsig, 1870). Dr. Landberg published with Brill of Leyden and Maisonneuve of Paris, 1883, a volume of Syrian Proverbs and promises some five others — No. 2, Damascus and the Haurán; No. 3, Kasrawán and the Nusayriyah; No. 4, Homs, Hamah and Halab (Aleppo), and No. 5, the Badawin of Syria. It is evident that the process might be prolonged ad infinitum by a writer of whom I shall have something to say presently. M. Clément Huart (Jour. Asiat., Jan. '83) has printed notes on the dialect of Damascus: Dr. C. Snouck Hurgronje published a collection of 77 proverbs and idioms with lengthy notes in his Mehkanische Sprichwörter, etc. (Haag, Martinus Nijhoff, 1886), after being expelled from Meccah by the Turkish authorities who had discovered him only through a Parisian journal Le Temps (see his Het Mekkanshe Feest, Leyden, 1880). For the lower Najd and upper Hijaz we have the glossary of Arabic words ably edited by Prof. M. J. de Goeje in Mr. Charles M. Doughty's valuable and fantastic "Arabia Deserta" (ii. 542-690: see The Academy, July 28th, '88). Thus the local vocabularies are growing, but it will be long before the ground is covered.

Again the East, and notably the Moslem East since the Massacre of Damascus in 1860, although still moving slowly, shows a distinct advance. The once secluded and self- contained communities are now shaken by the repeated and continuous shocks of progress around them; and new wants and strange objects compel them nilly-willy to provide vernacular equivalents for the nomenclature of modern arts and sciences. Thus the Orientalist, who would produce a contemporary lexicon of Persian, must not only read up all the diaries and journals of Teheran and the vocabularies of Yezd and Herat, he must go further a-field. He should make himself familiar with the speech of the Iliyát or wandering pastoral tribes and master a host of cognate tongues whose chiefs are Armenian (Old and New), Caucasian, a modern Babel, Kurdish, Lúri (Bakhtiyári), Balochki and Pukhtú or Afghan, besides the direct descendants of the Zend, the Pehlevi, Dari and so forth. Even in the most barbarous jargons he will find terms which throw light upon the literary Iranian of the lexicons: for instance “Mádiyán” = a mare presupposes the existence of “Narayán” = a stallion, and the latter is preserved by the rude patois of the Baloch mountaineers. This process of general collection would in our day best be effected after the fashion of Professor James A. H. Murray’s “New English Dictionary on Historical Principles.” It would be compiled by a committee of readers resident in different parts of Persia, communicating with the Royal Asiatic Society (whose moribund remains they might perhaps quicken) and acting in co-operation with Russia, whom unfriends have converted from a friend to an angry and jealous rival and who is ever so forward in the linguistic field.

But if the model Persian dictionary have its difficulties, far harder will be the task with Arabic, which covers incomparably more ground. Here we must begin with Spain and Portugal, Sardinia and the Balearics, Southern Italy and Sicily; and thence pass over to Northern Africa and the two “Soudans,” the Eastern extending far South of the Equator and the Western nearly to the Line. In Asia, besides the vast Arabian Peninsula, numbering one million of square miles, we find a host of linguistic outliers, such as Upper Hindostan, the Concan, Malacca, Java and even remote Yun-nan, where al-Islam is the dominant religion, and where Arabic is the language of Holy Writ.

My initiation into the mysteries of Arabic began at Oxford under my tutor Dr. W. A. Greenhill, who published a “Treatise on Small-pox and Measles,” translated from Rhazes — Abú Bakr al-Rází (London, 1847), and where the famous Arabist, Don Pascual de Gayangos, kindly taught me to write Arabic leftwards. During eight years of service in Western India and in Moslem Sind, while studying Persian and a variety of vernaculars it was necessary to keep up and extend a practical acquaintance with the language which supplies all the religious and most of the metaphysical phraseology; and during my last year at Sindian Karáchí (1849), I imported a Shaykh from Maskat. Then work began in downright earnest. Besides Erpenius’ (D’Erp) “Grammatica Arabica,” Richardson, De Sacy and Forbes, I read at least a dozen Perso-Arabic works (mostly of pamphlet form) on “Serf Wa Nahw” — Accidence and Syntax —

and learned by heart one-fourth of the Koran. A succession of journeys and long visits at various times to Egypt, a Pilgrimage to the Moslem Holy Land and an exploration of the Arabic-speaking Somáli-shores and Harar-Gay in the Galla country of Southern Abyssinia, added largely to my practice. At Aden, where I passed the official examination, Captain (now Sir. R. Lambert) Playfair and the late Rev. G. Percy Badger, to whom my papers were submitted, were pleased to report favourably of my proficiency. During some years of service and discovery in Western Africa and the Brazil my studies were necessarily confined to the "Thousand Nights and a Night"; and when a language is not wanted for use my habit is to forget as much of it as possible, thus clearing the brain for assimilating fresh matter. At the Consulate of Damascus, however, in West Arabian Midian and in Maroccan Tangier the loss was readily recovered. In fact, of this and sundry other subjects it may be said without immodesty that I have forgotten as much as many Arabists have learned. But I repeat my confession that I do not know Arabic and I have still to meet the man who does know Arabic.

Orientalists, however, are like poets and musicians, a rageous race. A passing allusion to a Swedish student styled by others (Mekkanische Sprichwörter, etc., p.1) "Dr. Landberg," and by himself "Doctor Count Carlo Landberg" procured me the surprise of the following communication. I quote it in full because it is the only uncourteous attempt at correspondence upon the subject of The Nights which has hitherto been forced upon me.

In his introduction (p. xx.) to the Syrian Proverbes et Dictons Doctor Count Landberg was pleased to criticise, with less than his usual knowledge, my study entitled "Proverbia Communia Syriaca" (Unexplored Syria, i. 264-269). These 187 "dictes" were taken mainly from a MS. collection by one Hanná Misk, ex-dragoman of the British Consulate (Damascus), a little recueil for private use such as would be made by a Syro Christian bourgeois. Hereupon the critic absurdly asserted that the translator a voulu s'occuper de la langue classique au lieu de se faire * * * l'interprète fidèle de celle du peuple. My reply was (The Nights, vol. viii. 148) that, as I was treating of proverbs familiar to the better educated order of citizens, his critique was not to the point; and this brought down upon me the following letter under the ægis of a portentous coronet and initials blazing with or, yules and azure.

Paris, le 24 Févr., 1888.

Monsieur,

J'ai l'honneur de vous adresser 2 fascicules de mes Critica Arabica. Dans le vol. viii. de votre traduction de 1001 Nuits vous avez une note qui me regard (sic). Vous y cites que je ne suds pas "Arabist." Ce n'est pas votre jugement qui m'impressionne, car vous n'êtes nullement à même de me juger. Votre article contient, comme tout ce que vous avez écrit dans le domaine de la langue arabe, des bévues. C'est vous qui n'êtes pas arabisant: cela est bien connu et reconnu, et nous ne nous donnons pas même la peine de relever toutes les innombrables erreurs don't vos publications fourmillent. Quant à "Sahífah" vous êtes encore en erreur. Mon étymologie est acceptée par tout le monde et je vous renvoie à Fleischer, Kleinre Schriften, , Leipzig, 1885, où vous trouverez [‘instruction nécessaire. Le dilettantism qui se trahit dans tout ce que vous écrivez vous fait faire de telles erreurs. Nous autres arabisants et professo (?) nous ne vous avons jamais et nous ne vous pouvons jamais considérer comme arabisant. Voila ma réponse à votre note.

Agréez, Monsieur,

l'expression de mes sentiments distingués,

Comte Lasdberg,

Dr.-ès-lettres.

After these preliminaries I proceed to notice the article (No. 335, of July ‘86) in

The "Edinburgh Review"

and to explain its private history with the motives which begat it.

"This is the Augustan age of English criticism," say the reviewers, who are fond of remarking that the period is one of literary appreciation rather than of original production that is, contemporary reviewers, critics and monograph-writers are more important than "makers" in verse or in prose. In fact it is their aurea ætas. I reply "Virgin ore, no!" on the whole mixed metal, some noble, much ignoble; a little gold, more silver and an abundance of brass, lead and dross. There is the criticism of Sainte Beuve, of the late Matthew Arnold and of Swinburne, there is also the criticism of the Saturday Reviler and of the Edinburgh criticaster. The golden is truth and honour incarnate: it possesses outsight and insight: it either teaches and inspires or it comforts and consoles, save when a strict sense of duty compels it to severity: briefly, it is keen and guiding and creative. Let the young beginner learn by rote what one master says of another:— "He was never provoked into coarseness: his thrusts were made with the rapier according to the received rules of fence, he firmly upheld the honour of his calling, and in the exercise of it was uniformly fearless, independent and incorrupt." The Brazen is partial, one-sided, tricksy, misleading, immoral; serving personal and interested purposes and contemptuously forgetful of every obligation which an honest and honourable pen owes to the public and to itself. Such critiques bring no profit to the reviewed. He feels that he has been written up or written down by a literary hireling who has possibly been paid to praise or abuse him secondarily, and primarily to exalt or debase his publisher or his printer.

My own literary career has supplied me with many a curious study. Writing upon subjects, say The Lake Regions of Central Africa which were then a type of the Unknown I could readily trace in the journalistic notices all the tricks and dodges of the trade. The rare honest would confess that they could say nothing upon the subject, they came to me therefore for information and professed themselves duly thankful. The many dishonest had recourse to a variety of devices. The hard worker would read-up voyages and travels treating of the neighboring countries, Abyssinia, the Cape and the African Coasts Eastern and Western; thus he would write in a kind of reflected light without acknowledging his obligation to my volumes. Another would review my book after the easy American fashion of hashing up the author's production, taking all its facts from me with out disclosing that one fact to the reader and then proceed to "butter" or "slash." The worst, "fulfyld with malace of froward entente," would choose for theme not the work but the worker, upon the good old principle "Abuse the plaintiff's attorney." These arts fully account for the downfall of criticism in our day and the deafness of the public to such literary verdicts. But a few years ago a favourable review in a first-rate paper was “fifty pounds in the author’s pocket”: now it is not worth as many pence unless signed by some well-known scribbling statesman or bustling reverend who caters for the public taste. The decline and fall is well expressed in the old lines: —

“Non est sanctior quod laudaris:
Non est vilior si vituperaris.”

“No one, now-a-days, cares for reviews,” wrote Darwin as far back as 1849; and it is easy to see the whys and the wherefores. I have already touched upon the duty of reviewing the reviewer when the latter’s work calls for the process, despite the pretensions of modern criticism that it must not be criticised. Although to buffet an anonym is to beat the air, still the very effort does good. A well-known and popular novelist of the present day was a favourite butt for certain journalists who, with the normal half-knowledge of men —

“That read too little, and that write too much” —

persistently fell foul of the points in which the author was almost always right and the reviewer was wrong. “An eagle hawketh not at flies;” the object of ill-natured satire despised —

“The creatures of the stall and stye,”

and persisted in contemptuous reticence, giving consent by silence to what was easily refuted, and suffering a fond and foolish sentence to misguide the public which it pretends to direct. “Take each man’s censure but reserve thy judgment,” is a wise saying when silently practiced; it leads, however, to suffering in public esteem. The case in question was wholly changed when, at my suggestion, the writer was persuaded to catch a few of the culprits and to administer the dressing and redressing they so richly deserved.

And now to my tale.

Mr. Henry Reeve, Editor of the Edinburgh Review, wrote to me shortly before my first volume was issued to subscribers (September,’85) asking for advance sheets, as his magazine proposed to produce a general notice of The Arabian Nights Entertainments. But I suspected the man whose indiscretion and recklessness had been so unpleasantly paraded in the shape of the Greville (Mr. Worldly Wiseman's) Memoirs, and I had not forgotten the untruthful and malignant articles of perfervid brutality which during the hot youth and calm middle age of the Edinburgh had disgraced the profession of letters. My answer, which was temporising and diplomatic, induced only a second and a more urgent application. Bearing in mind that professional etiquette hardly justifies publicly reviewing a book intended only for private reading and vividly remembering the evil of the periodical, I replied that the sheets should be forwarded but on one condition, namely, that the reviewer would not dwell too lovingly and longingly upon the "archaics," which had so excited the Tartuffean temperament of the chaste Pall Mall Gazette. Mr. Henry Reeves replied (surlily) that he was not in the habit of dictating to his staff and I rejoined by refusing to grant his request. So he waited until five, that is one half of my volumes had been distributed to subscribers, and revenged himself by placing them for review in the hands of the "Lane-Poole" clique which, as the sequel proved could be noisy and combative as setting hens disturbed when their nest-egg was threatened by an intruding hand.

For the clique had appropriated all right and claim to a monopoly of The Arabian Nights Entertainments which they held in hand as a rotten borough. The “Uncle and Master,” Mr. Edward William Lane, eponymous hero of the house, had retranslated certain choice specimens of the Recueil and the “nephews of their uncle” resolved to make a private gold-mine thereof. The book came out in monthly parts at half-a-crown (1839-41) and when offered for sale in 3 vols. royal 8 vo, the edition of 5,000 hung fire at first until the high price (3 pounds 3s.) was reduced to 27 shillings for the trade. The sale then went off briskly and amply repaid the author and the publishers — Charles Knight and Co. And although here and there some “old Tory” grumbled that new-fangled words (as Wezeer, Kádee and Jinnee) had taken the places of his childhood’s pets, the Vizier, the Cadi, and the Genie, none complained of the workmanship for the all-sufficient reason that naught better was then known or could be wanted. Its succes de salon was greatly indebted to the “many hundred engravings on wood, from original designs by William Harvey”, with a host of quaint and curious Arabesques, Cufic inscriptions, vignettes, head pieces and culs- de-lampes. These, with the exception of sundry minor accessories, [447] were excellent and showed for the first time the realistic East and not the absurdities drawn from the depths of artistical ignorance and self-consciousness — those of Smirke, Deveria, Chasselot and Co., not to speak of the horrors of the De Sacy edition, whose plates have apparently been used by Prof. Weil and by the Italian versions. And so the three bulky and handsome volumes found a ready way into many a drawing room during the Forties, when the public was uncritical enough to hail the appearance of these scattered chapters and to hold that at last they had the real thing, pure and unadulterated. No less than three reprints of the “Standard Edition,” 1859 (the last being in ‘83), succeeded one another and the issue was finally stopped, not by the author’s death (ætat 75; London, August 10, 1876: net. Hereford, September 17, 1801), nor by the plates, which are now the property of Messieurs Chatto and Windus, becoming too worn for use, but simply by deficient demand. And the clique, represented by the late Edward Lane-Poole in 1879, who edited the last edition (1883) with a Preface by Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole, during a long run of forty-three years never paid the public the compliment of correcting the multitudinous errors and short comings of the translation. Even the lengthy and longsome notes, into which The Nights have too often been merged, were left untrimmed. Valuable in themselves and full of information, while wholly misplaced in a recueil of folk-lore, where they stand like pegs behung with the contents of the translator's adversaria, the monographs on details of Arab life have also been exploited and reprinted under the "fatuous" title, "Arabian (for Egyptian) Society in the Middle Ages: Studies on The Thousand and One Nights." They were edited by Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole (Chatto and Windus) in 1883.

At length the three volumes fell out of date, and the work was formally pronounced unreadable. Goëthe followed from afar by Emerson, had foreseen the "inevitable increase of Oriental influence upon the Occident," and the eagerness with which the men of the West would apply themselves to the languages and literature of the East. Such garbled and mutilated, unsexed and unsoured versions and perversions like Lane's were felt to be survivals of the unfittest. Mr. John Payne (for whom see my Foreword, vol. i. pp. xi.-xii.) resolved to give the world the first honest and complete version of the Thousand Nights and a Night. He put forth samples of his work in the New Quarterly Magazine (January- April, 1879), whereupon he was incontinently assaulted by Mr. Reginald Stuart Poole, the then front of the monopolists, who after drawing up a list of fifteen errata (which were not errata) in two Nights, declared that "they must be multiplied five hundred-fold to give the sum we may expect." (The Academy, April 26, 1879; November 29, 1881; and December 7, 1881.) The critic had the courage, or rather impudence, to fall foul of Mr. Payne's mode and mannerism, which had long become deservedly famous, and concludes:— "The question of English style may for the present be dropped, as, if a translator cannot translate, it little matters in what form his results appear. But it may lie questioned whether an Arab edifice should be decorated with old English wall-papers."

Evidently I had scant reason to expect mercy from the clique: I wanted none and I received none.

My reply to the arch-impostor, who
Spreads the light wings of saffron and of blue,

will perforce be somewhat detailed: it is necessary to answer paragraph by paragraph, and the greater part of the thirty-three pages refers more or less directly to myself. To begin with the beginning, it caused me and many others some surprise to see the "Thousand Nights and a Night" expelled the initial list of thirteen items, as if it were held unfit for mention. Cet article est principalement une diatribe contre l'ouorage de Sir Richard Burton et dans le libre cet ouvrage n'est même pas mentionné', writes my French friend. This proceeding was a fair specimen of "that impartiality which every reviewer is supposed to possess." But the ignoble "little dodge" presently suggested itself. The preliminary excursus (p.168) concerning the "Mille et Une Nuits (read Nuit) an audacious fraud, though not the less the best story book in the world," affords us a useful measure of the writer's competence in the matter of audacity and ill-judgment. The honest and single-minded Galland is here (let us believe through that pure ignorance which haply may hope for "fool's pardon") grossly and unjustly vilified; and, by way of making bad worse, we are assured () that the Frenchman "brought the Arabic manuscript from Syria" — an infact which is surprising to the most superficial student. "Galland was a born story teller, in the good and the bad sense" (), is a silly sneer of the true Lane-Poolean type. The critic then compares most unadvisedly () a passage in Galland (De Sacy edit. vol. i. 414) with the same in Mr. Payne's (i. 260) by way of proving the "extraordinary liberties which the worthy Frenchman permitted himself to take with the Arabic": had he troubled himself to collate my version (i. 290-291), which is made fuller by the Breslau Edit. (ii. 190), he would have found that the Frenchman, as was his wont, abridged rather than amplified;[448] although, when the original permitted exact translation, he could be literal enough. And what doubt, may I enquire, can we have concerning "The Sleeper Awakened" (Lane, ii. 351-376), or, as I call it, "The Sleeper and the waker" (Suppl. vol.i.1-29), when it occurs in a host of MSS., not to mention the collection of tales which Prof. Habicht converted into the Arabian Nights by breaking the text into a thousand and one sections (Bresl. Edit. iv. 134-189, Nights cclxxii. ccxci.). The reckless assertions that “the whole” of the last fourteen (Gallandian) tales have nothing whatever to do with “The Nights” (); and that of the histories of Zayn al-Asnám and Aladdin, “it is abundantly certain that they belong to no manuscript of the Thousand and One Nights” (), have been notably stultified by M. Hermann Zotenberg’s purchase of two volumes containing both these bones of long and vain contention. See Foreword to my Suppl. vol. iii. pp. viii.-xi., and Mr. W. F. Kirby’s interesting notice of M. Zotenberg’s epoch-making booklet (vol. vi.).

“The first English edition was published (pace Lowndes) within eight years of Galland’s” () states a mere error. The second part of Galland (6 vols. 12 mo) was not issued till 1717, or two years after the translator’s death. Of the English editio princeps the critic tells nothing, nor indeed has anyone as yet been able to tell us aught. Of the dishonouring assertion (again let us hope made in simple ignorance) concerning “Cazotte’s barefaced forgery” (), thus slandering the memory of Jacques Cazotte, one of the most upright and virtuous of men who ever graced the ranks of literature, I have disposed in the Foreword to my Supplemental vol. vi. “This edition (Scott’s) was tastefully reprinted by Messrs. Nimmo and Bain in four volumes in 1883” (). But why is the reader not warned that the eaux fortes are by Lalauze (see suprà,), 19 in number, and taken from the 21 illustrations in MM. Jouaust’s edit. of Galland with preface by J. Janin? Why also did the critic not inform us that Scott’s sixth volume, the only original part of the work, was wilfully omitted? This paragraph ends with mentioning the labours of Baron von Hammer-Purgstall, concerning whom we are afterwards told () for the first time that he “was brilliant and laborious.” Hard-working, yes! brilliant, by no means!

We now come to the glorification of the “Uncle and Master,” concerning whom I can only say that Lane’s bitterest enemy (if the amiable Orientalist ever had any unfriend) could not have done him more discredit than this foolish friend. “His classical(!) translation was at once recognised as an altogether new departure” (), and “it was written in such a manner that the Oriental tone of The Nights should be reflected in the English” (ibid.). “It aims at reproducing in some degree the literary flavour of the original” (p 173). “The style of Lane's translation is an old-fashioned somewhat Biblical language" () and "it is precisely this antiquated ring" (of the imperfect and mutilated "Boulak edition," unwisely preferred by the translator) "that Lane has succeeded in preserving" "The measured and finished language Lane chose for his version is eminently fitted to represent the rhythmical tongue of the Arab" (Memoir, p. xxvii.). "The translation itself is distinguished by its singular accuracy and by the marvellous way in which the Oriental tone and colour are retained " (ibid.). The writer has taken scant trouble to read me when he asserts that the Bulak edit was my text, and I may refer him, for his own advantage, to my Foreword (vol. i. p. xvii.), which he has wilfully ignored by stating unfact. I hasten to plead guilty before the charge of "really misunderstanding the design of Lane's style" (). Much must be pardoned to the panegyrist, the encomiast; but the idea of mentioning in the same sentence with Biblical English, the noblest and most perfect specimen of our prose, the stiff and bald, the vapid and turgid manner of the Orientalist who "commences" and "concludes" — never begins and ends, who never uses a short word if he can find a long word, who systematically rejects terse and idiomatic Anglo-Saxon when a Latinism is to be employed and whose pompous stilted periods are the very triumph of the "Deadly-lively"! By arts precisely similar the learned George Sale made the Koran, that pure and unstudied inspiration of Arabian eloquence, dull as a law document, and left the field clear for the Rev. Mr. Rodwell. I attempted to excuse the style-laches of Lane by noticing the lack of study in English linguistic which distinguished the latter part of the xviiith and the first half of the xixth centuries, when men disdaining the grammar of their own tongue, learned it from Latin and Greek; when not a few styled Shakespeare "silly-billy," and when Lamb the essayist, wrote, "I can read, and I say it seriously, the homely old version of the Psalms for an hour or two together sometimes, without sense of weariness." But the reviewer will have none of my palliative process, he is surprised at my "posing as a judge of prose style," being "acquainted with my quaint perversions of the English language" () and, when combating my sweeping assertion that "our prose" (especially the prose of schoolmasters and professors, of savans and Orientalists) "was perhaps the worst in Europe," he triumphantly quotes half a dozen great exceptions whose eminence goes far to prove the rule.

As regards Lane’s unjustifiable excisions the candid writer tells us everything but the truth. As I have before noted (vol. ix. 304), the main reason was simply that the publisher, who was by no means a business man, found the work outgrowing his limits and insisted upon its coming to an untimely and, alas! a tailless end. This is perhaps the principal cause for ignoring the longer histories, like King Omar bin al-Nu’umán (occupying 371 pages in my vols. ii. and iii.); Abú Hasan and his slave-girl Tawaddud (p, vol. v. 189-245), the Queen of the Serpents with the episodes of Bulukiyá and of Jánshah (pp.98, vol. v. 298-396); The Rogueries of Dalilah the Crafty and the Adventures of Mercury Ali (p, vol. vii. 144-209). The Tale of Harun al-Rashid and Abu Hasan of Oman (p, vol. ix. 188-207) is certainly not omitted by dictations of delicacy, nor is it true of the parts omitted in general that “none could be purified without being destroyed.” As my French friend remarks, “Few parts are so plain-spoken as the introduction, le cadre de l’ouvrage, yet M. Lane was not deterred by such situation.” And lastly we have, amongst the uncalledfor excisions, King Jali’ad of Hind, etc. (p, vol. ix. 32-134). The sum represents a grand total of 701 pages, while not a few of the notes are filled with unimportant fabliaux and apologues.

But the critic has been grandly deceptive, either designedly or of ignorance prepense in his arithmetic. “There are over four hundred of these (anecdotes, fables, and stories) in the complete text, and Lane has not translated more than two hundred” (). * * * “Adding the omitted anecdotes to the omitted tales, it appears that Lane left out about a third of the whore ‘Nights,’ and of that third at least three-fourths was incompatible with a popular edition. When Mr. Payne and Captain Burton boast of presenting the public ‘with three times as much matter as any other version,’ they perhaps mean a third as much again” (). * * * “Captain Burton records his opinion that Lane has ‘omitted half and by far the more characteristic half of the Arabian Nights,’ but Captain Burton has a talent for exaggeration, and for ‘characteristic’ we should reed ‘unclear.’ It is natural that he should make the most of such omissions, since they form the raison d’être of his own translation; but he has widely overshot the mark, and the public may rest assured that the tales omitted from the standard version (proh pudor!) are of very slight importance in comparison with the tales included in it” ().

What a mass of false statement!

Let us now exchange fiction for fact. Lane’s three volumes contain a total, deducting 15 for index, of p (viz. 618 + 643 + 734); while each (full) page of text averages 38 lines and of notes (in smaller type) 48. The text with a number of illustrations represents a total of p (viz. 441 + 449 + 595). Mr. Payne’s nine volumes contain a sum of p, mostly without breaks, to the 1485 of the “Standard edition.” In my version the sum of pages, each numbering 41 lines, is 3156, or 1163 more than Lane’s total and 2671 more than his text.

Again, in Lane’s text the tales number 62 (viz. 35 + 14 + 13), and as has been stated, all the longest have been omitted, save only Sindbad the Seaman. The anecdotes in the notes amount to 44 1/2 (viz. 3 1/2 + 35 + 6): these are for the most pert the merest outlines and include the 3 1/2 of volume i. viz. the Tale of Ibrahim al-Mausilí (p-24), the Tale of Caliph Mu’áwiyah (i. p-22), the Tale of Mukhárik the Musician (i. p- 26), and the half tale of Umm ‘Amr (i.). They are quoted bodily from the “Halbat al- Kumayt” and from the “Kitáb al-Unwán fí Makáid al-Niswán,” showing that at the early stage of his labours the translator, who published in parts, had not read the book on which he was working; or, at least, had not learned that all the three and a half had been borrowed from The Nights. Thus the grand total is represented by 106 1/2 tales, and the reader will note the difference between 106 1/2 and the diligent and accurate reviewer’s “not much more than two hundred.” In my version the primary tales amount to 171; the secondaries, &c., to 96 and the total to 267, while Mr. Payne has 266.[449] And these the critic swells to “over four hundred!” Thus I have more than double the number of pages in Lane’s text (allowing the difference between his 38 lines to an oft-broken page and my 41) and nearly two and a half tales to his one, and therefore I do not mean “a third as much again.”

Thus, too, we can deal with the dishonest assertions concerning Lane’s translation “not being absolutely complete” () and that "nobody desired to see the objectionable passages which constituted the bulk of Lane's omissions restored to their place in the text" ().

The critic now passes to The Uncle's competence for the task, which he grossly exaggerates. Mr. Lane had no "intimate acquaintance with Mahommedan life" (). His "Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians" should have been entitled "Modern Cairenes;" he had seen nothing of Nile-land save what was shown to him by a trip to Philæ in his first visit (1825-28) and another to Thebes during his second, he was profoundly ignorant of Egypt as a whole, and even in Cairo he knew nothing of woman-life and child-life — two thirds of humanity. I doubt if he could have understood the simplest expression in baby language; not to mention the many idioms peculiar to the Harem nursery. The characteristic of his work is geniality combined with a true affection for his subject, but no scholar can ignore its painful superficiality. His studies of legal theology gave him much weight with the Olema, although, at the time when he translated The Nights, his knowledge of Arabic was small. Hence the number of lapses which disfigures his pages. These would have been excusable in an Orientalist working out of Egypt, but Lane had a Shaykh ever at his elbow and he was always able to command the assistance of the University Mosque, Al-Azhar. I need not enter upon the invidious task of cataloguing these errors, especially as the most glaring have been cursorily noticed in my volumes. Mr. Lane after leaving Egypt became one of the best Arabic scholars of his day, but his fortune did not equal his deserts. The Lexicon is a fine work although sadly deficient in the critical sense, but after the labour of thirty-four years (it began printing in 1863) it reached only the 19th letter Ghayn (). Then invidious Fate threw it into the hands of Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole. With characteristic audacity he disdained to seek the services of some German Professor, an order of men which, rarely dining out and caring little for "Society," can devote itself entirely to letters, perhaps he hearkened to the silly charge against the Teuton of minuteness and futility of research as opposed to "good old English breadth and suggestiveness of treatment." And the consequence has been a "continuation" which serves as a standard whereby to measure the excellence of the original work and the woful falling- off and deficiencies of the sequel — the latter retaining of the former naught save the covers.[450]

Of Mr. Lane's Notes I have ever spoken highly: they are excellent and marvellously misplaced — non erat his locus. The text of a story-book is too frail to bear so ponderous a burden of classical Arabian lore, and the annotations injure the symmetry of the book as a work of art. They begin with excessive prolixity: in the Introduction these studies fill 27 closely printed pages to 14 of a text broken by cuts and vignettes. In chaps. i. the proportion is p, notes: 15 text, and in chaps. ii. it is p: 35. Then they become under the publisher's protest, beautifully less; and in vol. iii. chaps. 30 (the last) they are p: 57. Long disquisitions, "On the initial Moslem formula," "On the Wickedness of Women," "On Fate and Destiny," "On Arabian Cosmogony," "On Slaves," "On Magic," "On the Two Grand Festivals," all these being appended to the Introduction and the first chapter, are mere hors d'oeuvres: such "copy" should have been reserved for another edition of "The Modern Egyptians." The substitution of chapters for Nights was perverse and ill-judged as it could be, but it appears venial compared with condensing the tales in a commentary, thus converting the Arabian Nights into Arabian Notes. However, "Arabian Society in the Middle Ages," a legacy left by the "Uncle and Master", and like the tame and inadequate "Selections from the Koran," utilised by the grand-nephew, has been of service to the Edinburgh. Also, as it appears three several and distinct times in one article (p, 174, and 183), we cannot but surmise that a main object of the critique was to advertise the volume. Men are crafty in these days when practicing the "puff indirect."

But the just complaint against Lane's work is its sin of omission. The partial Reviewer declares (p 75) that the Arabist "retranslated The Nights in a practical spirit, omitting what was objectionable, together with a few tales(!) that were, on the whole, uninteresting or tautological, and enriching the work with a multitude of valuable notes. We had now a scholarly version of the greater part of The Nights imbued with the spirit of the East and rich in illustrative comment; and for forty years no one thought of anything more, although Galland still kept his hold on the nursery." Despite this spurious apology, the critic is compelled cautiously to confess (), “We are not sure that some of these omissions were not mistaken;” and he instances “Abdallah the Son of Fazil” and “Abu’l-Hasan of Khorasan” (he means, I suppose, Abu Hasan al-Ziyádi and the Khorasani Man, iv. 285), whilst he suggests, “a careful abridgment of the tale of Omar the Son of No’man” (ii. 7,, etc.). Let me add that wittiest and most rollicking of Rabelaisian skits, “All the Persian and the Kurd Sharper” (iv. 149), struck-out in the very wantonness of “respectability;” and the classical series, an Arabian “Pilpay,” entitled “King Jali’ád of Hind and his Wazir Shimas” (iv. 32). Nor must I omit to notice the failure most injurious to the work which destroyed in it half the “spirit of the East.” Mr. Lane had no gift of verse or rhyme: he must have known that the ten thousand lines of the original Nights formed a striking and necessary contrast with the narrative part, acting as aria to recitativo. Yet he rendered them only in the baldest and most prosaic of English without even the balanced style of the French translations. He can be excused only for one consideration — bad prose is not so bad as bad verse.

The ill-judged over-appreciation and glorification of Mr. Lane is followed () by the depreciation and bedevilment of Mr. John Payne, who first taught the world what The Nights really is. We are told that the author (like myself) “unfortunately did not know Arabic;” and we are not told that he is a sound Persian scholar: however, “he undoubtedly managed to pick up enough of the language(!) to understand The Arabian Nights with the assistance of the earlier translations of (by?) Torrens and Lane,” the former having printed only one volume out of some fifteen. This critic thinks proper now to ignore the “old English wall-papers,” of Mr. R. S. Poole, indeed he concedes to the translator of Villon, a “genius for language,” a “singular robust and masculine prose, which for the present purpose he intentionally weighted with archaisms and obsolete words but without greatly injuring its force or brilliancy” (). With plausible candour he also owns that the version “is a fine piece of English, it is also, save where the exigencies of rhyme compelled a degree of looseness, remarkably literal” (). Thus the author is damned with faint praise by one who utterly fails to appreciate the portentous difference between linguistic genius and linguistic mediocrity, and the Reviewer proceeds, “a careful collation” (we have already heard what his “careful” means) “of the different versions with their originals leads us to the conclusion that Mr. Payne’s version is little less faithful than Lane’s in those parts which are common to both, and is practically as close a rendering as is desirable” (). Tell the truth, man, and shame the Devil! I assert and am ready to support that the “Villon version” is incomparably superior to Lane’s not only in its simple, pure and forcible English, but also in its literal and absolute correctness, being almost wholly free from the blunders and inaccuracies which everywhere disfigure Torrens, and which are rarely absent from Lane. I also repeat that wherever the style and the subject are the most difficult to treat, Mr. Payne comes forth most successfully from the contest, thus giving the best proof of his genius and capacity for painstaking. Of the metrical part, which makes the Villon version as superior to Lane’s as virgin gold to German silver, the critique offers only three inadequate specimens specially chosen and accompanied with a growl that “the verse is nothing remarkable” () and that the author is sometimes “led into extreme liberties with the original” (ibid.). Not a word of praise for mastering the prodigious difficulties of the monorhyme!

But — and there is a remarkable power in this particle — Mr. Payne’s work is “restricted to the few wealthy collectors of proscribed books and what booksellers’ catalogues describe as facetiæ’” (); for “when an Arabic word is unknown to the literary language” (what utter imbecility!), “and belongs only to the low vocabulary of the gutter” (which the most “elegant” writers most freely employ), “Mr. Payne laboriously searches out a corresponding term in English ‘Billingsgate,’ and prides himself upon an accurate reproduction of the tone of the original” (). This is a remarkable twisting of the truth. Mr. Payne persisted, despite my frequent protests, in rendering the “nursery words” and the “terms too plainly expressing natural situations” by old English such as “kaze” and “swive,” equally ignored by the “gutter” and by “Billingsgate”: he also omitted an offensive line whenever it did not occur in all the texts and could honestly be left untranslated. But the unfact is stated for a purpose: here the Reviewer mounts the high horse and poses as the Magister Morum per excellentiam. The Battle of the Books has often been fought, the crude text versus the bowdlerised and the expurgated; and our critic can contribute to the great fray only the merest platitudes. “There is an old and trusty saying that ‘evil communications corrupt good manners,’ end it is a well-known fact that the discussion(?) and reading of depraved literature leads (sic) infallibly to the depravation of the reader’s mind” (). [451] I should say that the childish indecencies and the unnatural vice of the original cannot deprave any mind save that which is perfectly prepared to be depraved; the former would provoke only curiosity and amusement to see bearded men such mere babes, and the latter would breed infinitely more disgust than desire. The man must be prurient and lecherous as a dog-faced baboon in rut to have aught of passion excited by either. And most inept is the conclusion, “So long as Mr. Payne’s translation remains defiled by words, sentences, and whole paragraphs descriptive of coarse and often horribly depraved sensuality, it can never stand beside Lane’s, which still remains the standard version of the Arabian Nights” (). Altro! No one knows better than the clique that Lane, after an artificially prolonged life of some half-century, has at last been weighed in the balance and been found wanting; that he is dying that second death which awaits the unsatisfactory worker and that his Arabian Nights are consigned by the present generation to the limbo of things obsolete and forgotten.

But if Mr. Payne is damned with poor praise and mock modesty, my version is condemned without redemption — beyond all hope of salvation: there is not a word in favour of a work which has been received by the reviewers with a chorus of kindly commendation. “The critical battery opens with a round-shot.” “Another complete translation is now appearing in a surreptitious way” (). How “surreptitious” I ask of this scribe, who ekes not the lack of reason by a superfluity of railing, when I sent out some 24,000 — 30,000 advertisements and published my project in the literary papers? “The amiability of the two translators (Payne and Burton) was testified by their each dedicating a volume to the other. So far as the authors are concerned nothing could be more harmonious and delightful; but the public naturally ask, What do we want with two forbidden versions?” And I again inquire, What can be done by me to satisfy this atrabilious and ill-conditioned Aristarchus? Had I not mentioned Mr. Payne, my silence would have been construed into envy, hatred and malice: if I am proud to acknowledge my friend's noble work the proceeding engenders a spiteful sneer. As regards the "want," public demand is easily proved. It is universally known (except to the Reviewer who will not know) that Mr. Payne, who printed only 500 copies, was compelled to refuse as many hundreds of would be subscribers; and, when my design was made public by the Press, these and others at once applied to me. "To issue a thousand still more objectionable copies by another and not a better hand" (notice the quip cursive!) may "seem preposterous" (), but only to a writer so "preposterous" as this.

"A careful (again!) examination of Captain Burton's translation shows that he has not, as he pretends(!), corrected it to agree with the Calcutta text, but has made a hotch-potch of various texts, choosing one or another — Cairo, Breslau, Macnaghten or first Calcutta — according as it presented most of the 'characteristic' detail (note the dig in the side vicious), in which Captain Burton's version is peculiarly strong" (). So in return for the severe labour of collating the four printed texts and of supplying the palpable omissions, which by turns disfigure each and every of the quartette, thus producing a complete copy of the Recueil, I gain nothing but blame. My French friend writes to me: Lorsqu'il s'agit d'établir un texte d'après différents manuscrits, il est certain qu'il faut prendre pour base une-seule redaction. Mais il n'est pas de même d'une traduction. Il est conforme aux règles de la saine critique littéraire, de suivre tous les textes. Lane, I repeat, contented himself with the imperfect Bulak text while Payne and I preferred the Macnaghten Edition which, says the Reviewer, with a futile falsehood all his own, is "really only a revised form of the Cairo text" [452] (ibid.). He concludes, making me his rival in ignorance, that I am unacquainted with the history of the MS. from which the four- volume Calcutta Edition was printed (ibid.). I should indeed be thankful to him if he could inform me of its ultimate fate: it has been traced by me to the Messieurs Allen and I have vainly consulted Mr. Johnston who carries on the business under the name of that now defunct house. The MS. has clean disappeared.

"On the other hand he (Captain Burton) sometimes omits passages which he considers(!) tautological and thereby deprives his version of the merit of completeness (e.g. vol. v.). It is needless to remark that this uncertainty about the text destroys the scholarly value of the translation" (). The scribe characteristically forgets to add that I have invariably noted these excised passages which are always the merest repetitions, damnable iterations of a twice-, and sometimes a thrice-told tale, and that I so act upon the great principle — in translating a work of imagination and "inducing" an Oriental tale, the writer's first duty to his readers is making his pages readable.

"Captain Burton's version is sometimes rather loose" (p.180), says the critic who quotes five specimens out of five volumes and who might have quoted five hundred. This is another favourite "dodge" with the rogue-reviewer, who delights to cite words and phrases and texts detached from their contexts. A translator is often compelled, by way of avoiding recurrences which no English public could endure, to render a word, whose literal and satisfactory meaning he has already given, by a synonym or a homonym in no way so sufficient or so satisfactory. He charges me with rendering "Siyar, which means 'doings,' by 'works and words'"; little knowing that the veteran Orientalist, M. Joseph Derenbourgh (, Johannes de Capua, Directorium, etc.), renders "Akhlák-í wa Síratí" (sing. of Siyar) by caractère et conducte, the latter consisting of deeds and speech. He objects to "Kabir" (lit.=old) being turned into very old; yet this would be its true sense were the Ráwí or story-teller to lay stress and emphasis upon the word, as here I suppose him to have done. But what does the Edinburgh know of the Ráwí? Again I render "Mal'únah" (not the mangled Mal'ouna) lit. = accurst, as "damned whore," which I am justified in doing when the version is of the category Call-a-spade-a-spade.

"Captain Burton's Arabian Nights, however, has another defect besides this textual inaccuracy" (); and this leads to a whole page of abusive rhetoric anent my vocabulary: the Reviewer has collected some thirty specimens — he might have collected three hundred from the five volumes — and he concludes that the list places Captain Burton's version "quite out of the category of English books" () and "extremely annoying to any reader with a feeling for style." Much he must know of modern literary taste which encourages the translator of an ancient work such as Mr. Gibb's

Aucassin and Nicolette (I quote but one in a dozen) to borrow the charm of antiquity by imitating the nervous and expressive language of the pre-Elizabethans and Shakespeareans. Let him compare any single page of Mr. Payne with Messieurs Torrens and Lane and he will find that the difference saute aux yeux. But a purist who objects so forcibly to archaism and archaicism should avoid such terms as "whilom Persian Secretary" (); as anthophobia, which he is compelled to explain by "dread of selecting only what is best" (), as anthophobist (); as "fatuous ejaculations" (), as a "raconteur" (), and as "intermedium" () terms which are certainly not understood by the general. And here we have a list of six in thirty-three pages: — evidently this Reviewer did not expect to be reviewed.

"Here is a specimen of his (Captain Burton's) verse, in which, by the way, there is seen another example of the careless manner in which the proofs have been corrected" (). Generous and just to a work printed from abroad and when absence prevented the author's revision: false as unfair to boot! And what does the critic himself but show two several misprints in his 33 pages; "Mr. Payne, vol. ix. " (, for vol. i. 260), and "Jamshah" (, for Jánsháh). These faults may not excuse my default: however, I can summon to my defence the Saturday Review, that past-master in the art and mystery of carping criticism, which, noticing my first two volumes (Jan. 2, 1886), declares them "laudably free from misprints."

"Captain Burton's delight in straining the language beyond its capabilities(?) finds a wide field when he comes to those passages in the original which are written in rhyming prose" (). "Captain Burton of course could not neglect such an opportunity for display of linguistic flexibility on the model of 'Peter Parley picked a peck of pickled peppers'" (, where the Saj'a or prose rhyme is most ignorantly confounded with our peculiarly English alliteration). But this is wilfully to misstate the matter. Let me repeat my conviction (Terminal Essay, 144-145) that The Nights, in its present condition, was intended as a text or handbook for the Ráwí or professional story-teller, who would declaim the recitative in quasi-conversational tones, would intone the Saj'a and would chant the metrical portions to the twanging of the Rabábah or one-stringed viol. The Reviewer declares that the original has many such passages; but why does he not tell the reader that almost the whole Koran, and indeed all classical Arab prose, is composed in such “jingle”? “Doubtfully pleasing in the Arabic,” it may “sound the reverse of melodious in our own tongue” (); yet no one finds fault with it in the older English authors (Terminal Essay,), and all praised the free use of it in Eastwick’s “Gulistán.” Torrens, Lane and Payne deliberately rejected it, each for his own and several reason; Torrens because he never dreamt of the application, Lane, because his scanty knowledge of English stood in his way; and Payne because he aimed at a severely classical style, which could only lose grace, vigour and harmony by such exotic decoration. In these matters every writer has an undoubted right to carry out his own view, remembering the while that it is impossible to please all tastes. I imitated the Saj’a, because I held it to be an essential part of the work and of my fifty reviewers none save the Edinburgh considered the reproduction of the original manner aught save a success. I care only to satisfy those whose judgment is satisfactory: “the abuse and contempt of ignorant writers hurts me very little,” as Darwin says (iii. 88), and we all hold with Don Quixote that, es mejor ser loado de los pocos sabios, que burlado de los muchos necios.

“This amusement (of reproducing the Saj’a) may be carried to any length (how?), and we do not see why Captain Burton neglects the metre of the poetry, or divides his translation into sentences by stops, or permits any break in the continuity of the narrative, since none such exists in the Arabic” (). My reply is that I neglect the original metres first and chiefly because I do not care to “caper in fetters,” as said Drummond of Hawthornden; and, secondly, because many of them are unfamiliar and consequently unpleasant to English ears. The exceptions are mostly two, the Rajaz (Anapaests and Iambs, Terminal Essay, x. 253), and the Tawíl or long measure (ibid. p, 255), which Mr. Lyall (Translations of Ancient Arab. Poetry, p. xix.) compares with “Abt Vogler,”

And there! ye have heard and seen: consider and bow the head.

This metre greatly outnumbers all others in The Nights; but its lilting measure by no means suits every theme, and in English it is apt to wax monotonous.

“The following example of a literal rendering which Mr. Payne adduces (vol. ix. 381: camp. my vol. v. 66) in order to show the difficulty of turning the phraseology of the original into good English, should have served Captain Burton as a model, and we are surprised he has not adopted so charmingly cumbrous a style" (). I shall quote the whole passage in question and shall show that by the most unimportant changes, omissions and transpositions, without losing a word, the whole becomes excellent English, and falls far behind the Reviewer's style in the contention for "cumbrousness":—

"When morrowed the morning he bedabbled his feet with the water they twain had expressed from the herb and, going-down to the sea, went thereupon, walking days and nights, he wondering the while at the horrors of the ocean and the marvels and rarities thereof. And he ceased not faring over the face of the waters till he arrived at an island as indeed it were Paradise. So Bulukiya went up thereto and fell to wondering thereanent and at the beauties thereof; and he found it a great island whose dust was saffron and its gravel were carnelian and precious stones: its edges were gelsomine and the growth was the goodliest of the trees and the brightest of the scented herbs and the sweetest of them. Its rivulets were a-flowing; its brushwood was of the Comorin aloe and the Sumatran lign- aloes; its reeds were sugar-canes and round about it bloomed rose and narcissus and amaranth and gilliflower and chamomile and lily and violet, all therein being of several kinds and different tints. The birds warbled upon those trees and the whole island was fair of attributes and spacious of sides and abundant of good things, comprising in fine all of beauty and loveliness," etc. (Payne, vol. ix.).

The Reviewer cites in his list, but evidently has not read, the "Tales from the Arabic," etc., printed as a sequel to The Nights, or he would have known that Mr. Payne, for the second part of his work, deliberately adopted a style literal as that above-quoted because it was the liveliest copy of the original.

We now come to the crucial matter of my version, the annotative concerning which this "decent gentleman," as we suppose this critic would entitle himself (), finds a fair channel of discharge for vituperative rhetoric. But before entering upon this subject I must be allowed to repeat a twice-told tale and once more to give the raison d’être of my long labour. When a friend asked me point-blank why I was bringing out my translation so soon after another and a most scholarly version, my reply was as follows:— “Sundry students of Orientalism assure me that they are anxious to have the work in its crudest and most realistic form. I have received letters saying, Let us know (you who can) what the Arab of The Nights was: if good and high-minded let us see him: if witty and humorous let us hear him: if coarse and uncultivated, rude, childish and indecent, still let us have him to the very letter. We want for once the genuine man. We would have a mediæval Arab telling the tales and traditions with the lays and legends of his own land in his own way, and showing the world what he has remained and how he has survived to this day, while we Westerns have progressed in culture and refinement. Above all things give us the naive and plain-spoken language of the original — such a contrast with the English of our times — and show us, by the side of these enfantillages, the accumulated wit and wisdom, life-knowledge and experience of an old-world race. We want also the technique of the Recueil, its division into nights, its monorhyme, in fact everything that gives it cachet and character.” Now I could satisfy the longing, which is legitimate enough, only by annotation, by a running commentary, as it were, enabling the student to read between the lines and to understand hints and innuendoes that would otherwise have passed by wholly unheeded. I determined that subscribers should find in my book what does not occur in any other, making it a repertory of Eastern knowledge in its esoteric phase, by no means intended for the many-headed but solely for the few who are not too wise to learn or so ignorant as to ignore their own ignorance. I regretted to display the gross and bestial vices of the original, in the rare places where obscenity becomes rampant, but not the less I held it my duty to translate the text word for word, instead of garbling it and mangling it by perversion and castration. My rendering (I promised) would be something novel, wholly different from all other versions, and it would leave very little for any future interpreter.[453]

And I resolved that, in case of the spiteful philanthropy and the rabid pornophobic suggestion of certain ornaments of the Home-Press being acted upon, to appear in Court with my version of The

Nights in one hand and bearing in the other the Bible (especially the Old Testament, a free translation from an ancient Oriental work) and Shakespeare, with Petronius Arbiter and Rabelais by way of support and reserve. The two former are printed by millions; they find their way into the hands of children, and they are the twin columns which support the scanty edifice of our universal home-reading. The Arbiter is sotadical as Abú Nowás and the Curé of Meudon is surpassing in what appears uncleanness to the eye of outsight not of insight. Yet both have been translated textually and literally by eminent Englishmen and gentlemen, and have been printed and published as an "extra series" by Mr. Bohn's most respectable firm and solo by Messieurs Bell and Daldy. And if The Nights are to be bowdlerised for students, why not, I again ask, mutilate Plato and Juvenal, the Romances of the Middle Ages, Boccaccio and Petrarch and the Elizabethan dramatists one and all? What hypocrisy to blaterate about The Nights in presence of such triumphs of the Natural! How absurd to swallow such camels and to strain at my midge!

But I had another object while making the notes a Repertory of Eastern knowledge in its esoteric form (Foreword, p. xvii.). Having failed to free the Anthropological Society from the fetters of mauvaise honte and the mock-modesty which compels travellers and ethnological students to keep silence concerning one side of human nature (and that side the most interesting to mankind), I proposed to supply the want in these pages. The England of our day would fain bring up both sexes and keep all ages in profound ignorance of sexual and intersexual relations; and the consequences of that imbecility are peculiarly cruel and afflicting. How often do we hear women in Society lamenting that they have absolutely no knowledge of their own physiology; and at what heavy price must this fruit of the knowledge-tree be bought by the young first entering life. Shall we ever understand that ignorance is not innocence? What an absurdum is a veteran officer who has spent a quarter-century in the East without learning that all Moslem women are circumcised, and without a notion of how female circumcision is effected; without an idea of the difference between the Jewish and the Moslem rite as regards males; without an inkling of the Armenian process whereby the cutting is concealed, and without the slightest theoretical knowledge concerning the mental and spiritual effect of the operation. Where then is the shame of teaching what it is shameful not to have learnt? But the ultra-delicacy, the squeamishness of an age which is by no means purer or more virtuous than its ruder predecessors, has ended in trenching upon the ridiculous. Let us see what the modern English woman and her Anglo-American sister have become under the working of a mock-modesty which too often acts cloak to real dévergondage; and how Respectability unmakes what Nature made. She has feet but no "toes"; ankles but no "calves"; knees but no "thighs"; a stomach but no "belly" nor "bowels"; a heart but no "bladder" nor "groin"; a liver end no "kidneys"; hips and no "haunches"; a bust and no "backside" nor "buttocks": in fact, she is a monstrum, a figure fit only to frighten the crows.

But the Edinburgh knows nothing of these things, and the "decent gentleman," like the lady who doth protest overmuch, persistently fixes his eye upon a single side of the shield." Probably no European has ever gathered such an appalling collection of degrading customs and statistics of vice as is contained in Captain Burton's translation of the 'Arabian Nights' (). He finds in the case of Mr. Payne, like myself, "no adequate justification for flooding the world (!) with an ocean of filth" (ibid.) showing that he also can be (as said the past-master of catch-words, the primus verborum artifex) "an interested rhetorician inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity." But audi alteram partem — my view of the question. I have no apology to make for the details offered to the students of Moslem usages and customs, who will find in them much to learn and more to suggest the necessity of learning. On no wise ashamed am I of lecturing upon these esoteric matters, the most important to humanity, at a time when their absence from the novel of modern society veils with a double gloom the night-side of human nature. Nay, I take pride to myself for so doing in the face of silly prejudice and miserable hypocrisy, and I venture to hold myself in the light of a public benefactor. In fact, I consider my labours as a legacy bequeathed to my countrymen at a most critical time when England the puissantest of Moslem powers is called upon, without adequate knowledge of the Moslem's inner life, to administer Egypt as well as to rule India.

And while Pharisee and Philister may be or may pretend to be "shocked" and "horrified" by my pages, the sound common sense of a public, which is slowly but surely emancipating itself from the prudish and prurient reticences and the immodest and immoral modesties of the early xixth century, will in good time do me, I am convinced, full and ample justice.

In the Reviewer sneers at me for writing "Roum" in lieu of Rum or Rúm; but what would the latter have suggested to the home-reader save a reference to the Jamaican drink? He also corrects me (vol. v. 248) in the matter of the late Mr. Emanuel Deutsch (), who excised "our Saviour" from the article on the Talmud reprinted amongst his literary remains. The Reviewer, or inspirer of the Review, let me own, knew more of Mr. Deutsch than I, a simple acquaintance, could know; but perhaps he does not know all, and if he did he probably would not publish his knowledge. The truth is that Mr. Deutsch was, during his younger years, a liberal, nay, a latitudinarian in religion, differing little from the so-styled "Christian Unitarian." But when failing health drove him to Egypt and his hour drew nigh he became (and all honour to him!) the scrupulous and even fanatical Hebrew of the Hebrews; he consorted mainly with the followers and divines of his own faith, and it is said that he ordered himself when dying to be taken out of bed and placed upon the bare floor. The "Saviour" of the article was perhaps written in his earlier phase of religious thought, and it was excised as the end drew in sight.

"Captain Burton's experience in the East seems to have obliterated any (all?) sentiments of chivalry, for he is never weary of recording disparaging estimates of women, and apparently delights in discovering evidence of 'feminine devilry'" (). This argumentum ad feminam is sharpish practice, much after the manner of the Christian "Fathers of the Church" who, themselves vehemently doubting the existence of souls non- masculine, falsely and foolishly ascribed the theory and its consequences to Mohammed and the Moslems. And here the Persian proverb holds good "Harf-i-kufr kufr níst" — to speak of blasphemy is not blasphemous. Curious readers will consult the article "Woman" in my Terminal Essay (x. 167), which alone refutes this silly scandal. I never pretended to understand woman, and, as Balzac says, no wonder man fails when

He who created her was by no means successful. But in The Nights we meet principally Egyptian maids, matrons and widows, of whose "devilry" I cannot speak too highly, and in this matter even the pudibund Lane is as free-spoken as myself. Like the natives of warm, damp and malarious lowlands and river-valleys adjacent to rugged and healthy uplands, such as Mazanderán, Sind, Malabar and California, the passions and the sexual powers of the females greatly exceed those of their males, and hence a notable development of the crude form of polyandry popularly termed whoredom. Nor have the women of the Nile valley improved under our rule. The last time I visited Cairo a Fellah wench, big, burly and boisterous, threatened one morning, in a fine new French avenue off the Ezbekiyah Gardens, to expose her person unless bought off with a piastre. And generally the condition of womenkind throughout the Nile-valley reminded me of that frantic outbreak of debauchery which characterised Afghanistán during its ill-judged occupation by Lord Auckland, and Sind after the conquest by Sir Charles Napier.

"Captain Burton actually depends upon the respectable and antiquated D'Herbelot for his information" (). This silly skit at the two great French Orientalists, D'Herbelot and Galland, is indeed worthy of a clique which, puff and struggle however much it will, can never do a tithe of the good work found in the Bibliothéque Orientale. The book was issued in an unfinished state; in many points it has been superseded, during its life of a century and a half, by modern studies, but it is still a mine of facts, and a revised edition would be a boon to students. Again, I have consulted Prof. Palmer's work, and the publications of the Palæographical Society (); but I nowhere find the proofs that the Naskhi character (vol. i. 128) so long preceded the Cufic which, amongst vulgar Moslems, is looked upon like black letter in Europe. But Semitic epigraphy is only now entering upon its second stage of study, the first being mere tentative ignorance: about 80 years ago the illustrious De Sacy proved, in a learned memoir, the non-existence of letters in Arabia before the days of Mohammed. But Palmer[454] , Halevy, Robertson Smith, Doughty and Euting have changed all that, and Herr Eduard Glaser of Prague is now bringing back from Sana'á some 390 Sabaean epigraphs — a mass of new-old literature.

And now, having passed in review, and having been much scandalised by the "extravagant claims of the complete translations over the Standard Version" — a term which properly applies only to the Editio princeps, 3 vols. 8vo — the Edinburgh delivers a parting and insolent sting. "The different versions, however, have each its proper destination — Galland for the nursery, Lane for the library, Payne for the study, and Burton for the sewers" (). I need hardly attempt to precise the ultimate and well merited office of his article: the gall in that ink may enable it hygienically to excel for certain purposes the best of "curl-papers." Then our critic passes to the history of the work concerning which nothing need be said: it is bodily borrowed from Lane's Preface (pp. ix. xv.), and his Terminal Review (iii. 735-47) with a few unimportant and uninteresting details taken from Al-Makrízí, and probably from the studies of the late Rogers Bey (p-92). Here the cult of the Uncle and Master emerges most extravagantly. "It was Lane who first brought out the importance of the 'Arabian Nights' as constituting a picture of Moslem life and manners" (); thus wholly ignoring the claims of Galland, to whom and whom alone the honour is due. But almost every statement concerning the French Professor involves more or less of lapse. "It was in 1704 that Antoine Galland, sometime of the French embassy at Constantinople, but then professor at the Collége de France, presented the world with the contents of an Arab Manuscript which he had brought from Syria and which bore the title of 'The Thousand Nights and One Night'" (), thus ignoring the famous Il a fallu le faire venir de Syrie. At that time (1704) Galland was still at Caen in the employ of "L'intendant Fouquet"; and he brought with him no MS., as he himself expressly assures us in Preface to his first volume. Here are two telling mistakes in one page, and in the next () we find "As a professed translation Galland's 'Mille et une Nuits' (N.B. the Frenchman always wrote Mille et une Nuit)[455] is an audacious fraud. "It requires something more than" audacity "to offer such misstatement even in the pages of the Edinburgh, and can anything be falser than to declare "the whole of the last fourteen tales have nothing whatever to do with the 'Nights'"?

These bévues, which give us the fairest measure for the

Reviewer’s competence to review, are followed () by a series of obsolete assertions. “The highest authority on this point (the date) is the late Mr. Lane, who states his unqualified conviction that the tales represent the social life of mediaerval Egypt, and he selects a period approaching the close of the fifteenth century as the probable date of collection, though some of the tales are, he believes, rather later” (). Mr. Lane’s studies upon the subject were painfully perfunctory. He distinctly states (Preface, p. xii.) that “the work was commenced and completed by one man,” or at least that “one man completed what another commenced.” With a marvellous want of critical acumen he could not distinguish the vast difference of style and diction, treatment and sentiments, which at once strikes every intelligent reader, and which proves incontestably that many hands took part in the Great Saga-book. He speaks of “Galland’s very imperfect MS.,” but he never took the trouble to inspect the three volumes in question which are still in the Bibliothèque Nationale. And when he opines that “it (the work) was most probably not commenced earlier than the fifteenth century of our era” (Pref. p. xiii.) M. Hermann Zotenberg, judging from the style of writing, would attribute the MS. to the beginning[456] of the xivth century. The French Savant has printed a specimen page in his Histoire d’Alâ al-Dîn (; see my Suppl. vol. iii., Foreword p. ix.); and now, at the request of sundry experts, he is preparing for publication other proofs which confirm his opinion. We must correct Lane’s fifteenth century to thirteenth century — a difference of only 200 years.[457]

After this unhappy excursus the Reviewer proceeds to offer a most unintelligent estimate of the Great Recueil. “Enchantment” may be “a constant motive,” but it is wholly secondary and subservient: “the true and universal theme is love;” “‘all are but the ministers of love’ absolutely subordinate to the great theme” (). This is the usual half-truth and whole unfact. Love and war, or rather war and love, form the bases of all romantic fiction even as they are the motor power of the myriad forms and fashions of dancing. This may not appear from Lane’s mangled and mutilated version which carefully omits all the tales of chivalry and conquest as the History of Gharíb and his brother ‘Ajíb (vol. vi. 257) and that of Omar ibn Al-Nu’umán, “which is, as a whole so very unreadable” () though by no means more so than our European romances. But the reverse is the case with the original composition. Again, "These romantic lovers who will go through fire to meet each other, are not in themselves interesting characters: it may be questioned whether they have any character at all" (). "The story and not the delineation of character is the essence of the 'Arabian Nights'" (). I can only marvel at the utter want of comprehension and appreciation with which this critic read what he wrote about: one hemisphere of his brain must have been otherwise occupied and his mental cecity makes him a phenomenon even amongst reviewers. He thus ignores all the lofty morale of the work, its marvellous pathos and humour, its tender sentiment and fine touches of portraiture, the personal individuality and the nice discrimination between the manifold heroes and heroines which combine to make it a book for all time.

The critic ends his article with doing what critics should carefully avoid to do. After shrewdly displaying his powers of invective and depreciation he has submitted to his readers a sample of his own workmanship. He persists in writing "Zobeyda," "Khalifa," "Aziza" () and "Kahramana" () without the terminal aspirate which, in Arabic if not in Turkish, is a sine quâ non (see my Suppl. vol. v. 302). He preserves the pretentious blunder "The Khalif" (), a word which does not exist in Arabic. He translates (), although I have taught him to do better, "Hádimu 'I-Lizzáti wa Mufarriku 'l-Jama'át," by "Terminator of Delights and Separator of Companies" instead of Destroyer of delights and Severer of societies. And lastly he pads the end of his article (p-199) with five dreary extracts from Lane (i. 372-73) who can be dull even when translating the Immortal Barber.

The first quotation is so far changed that the peppering of commas (three to the initial line of the original) disappears to the reader's gain, Lane's textual date (Ap) is also exchanged for that of the notes (A.H. 653); and the "æra of Alexander," A.M. 7320, an absurdity which has its value in proving the worthlessness of such chronology, is clean omitted, because Lane used the worthless Bull Edit. The latinisms due to Lane show here in force— "Looked for a considerable time" (Maliyyan = for a long while); "there is an announcement that presenteth itself to me" (a matter which hath come to my knowledge) and "thou hast dissipated[458] my mind"

(Azhakta rúhí = thou scatterest my wits, in the Calc. Edit. Saghgharta rúhí = thou belittles" my mind). But even Lane never wrote "I only required thee to shave my head" — the adverb thus qualifying, as the ignoramus loves to do, the wrong verb — for "I required thee only to shave my head." In the second échantillon we have "a piece of gold" as equivalent of a quarter-diner and "for God's sake" which certainly does not preserve local colour. In No. 3 we find "'May God,' said I," etc.; "There is no deity but God! Mohammed is God's apostle!" Here Allah ought invariably to be used, e.g. "Mohammed is the Apostle of Allah," unless the English name of the Deity be absolutely required as in "There is no god but the God." The Moslem's "Wa'lláhi" must not be rendered "By God," a verbal translation and an absolute nonequivalent; the terms Jehovah, Allah and God and the use of them involving manifold fine distinctions. If it be true that God made man, man in his turn made and mismade God who thus becomes a Son of Man and a mere racial type. I need not trouble my reader with further notices of these extracts whose sole use is to show the phenomenal dullness of Lane's latinised style: I prefer even Torrens ().

"We have spoken severely with regard to the last" (my version), says the Reviewer (p.185), and verily I thank him therefor. Laudari ab illaudato has never been my ambition. A writer so learned and so disinterested could hurt my feelings and mortify my pride only by approving me and praising me. Nor have I any desire to be exalted in the pages of the Edinburgh, so famous for its incartades of old. As Dryden says, "He has done me all the honour that any man can receive from him, which is to be railed at by him." I am content to share the vituperation of this veteran — incapable in company with the poetaster George Gordon who suffered for "this Lord's station;" with that "burnish fly in the pride of May," Macaulay, and with the great trio, Darwin, Huxley and Hooker, who also have been the butts of his bitter and malignant abuse (April '63 and April '73). And lastly I have no stomach for sweet words from the present Editor of the Edinburgh Mr. Henry Reeve, a cross and cross-grained old man whose surly temper is equalled only by his ignoble jealousy of another's success. Let them bedevil the thin-skinned with their godless ribaldry; for myself peu m'importe — my shoulders are broad enough to bear all their envy, hatred and malice.

During the three years which have elapsed since I first began printing my book
I have not had often to complain of mere gratuitous impertinence, and a single
exception deserves some notice. The following lines which I addressed to The
Academy (August 11, '88) will suffice to lay my case before my readers: —

The Bestial Element in Man.

"One hesitates to dissent from so great an authority as Sir Richard Burton on all that relates to the bestial element in man." So writes (p. xii., Introduction to the Fables of Pilpay), with uncalled-for impertinence, Mr. Joseph Jacobs, who goes out of his way to be offensive, and who confesses to having derived all his knowledge of my views not from "the notorious Terminal Essay of the Nights," but from the excellent article by Mr. Thomas Davidson on "Beast-fables," in Chambers's Cyclopædia, Edinburgh, 1888. This lofty standpoint of morality was probably occupied for a reason by a writer who dedicates "To my dear wife" a volume rich in anecdotes grivoises, and not poor in language the contrary of conventional. However, I suffer from this Maccabee in good society together with Prof. Max Müller (pp. xxvi. and xxxiii.), Mr. Clouston (pp. xxxiii. and xxxv.), Byron (p. xlvi.), Theodor Benfey (p. xlvii.), Mr. W. G. Rutherford (p. xlviii.), and Bishop Lightfoot (p. xlix.). All this eminent half-dozen is glanced at, with distinct and several sneers, in a little volume which, rendered useless by lack of notes and index, must advertise itself by the réclame of abuse.

As regards the reminiscence of Homo Darwinienesis by Homo Sapiens, doubtless it would ex hypothesi be common to mankind. Yet to me Africa is the old home of the Beast-fable, because Egypt was the inventor of the alphabet, the cradle of letters, the preacher of animism and metempsychosis, and, generally, the source of all human civilisation.

Richard F. Burton

And now I must proceed a trifle further a-field and meet

The Critic in Anglo-America.

The Boston Daily Advertiser (Jan. 26,'86) contains the following choice morceau which went the round of the Transatlantic Press: —

G. W. S. writes from London to the New York Tribune in regard to Captain Burton's notorious translation of the "Arabian Nights." Of Captain Burton's translation of "The Arabian Nights," two volumes have now appeared. Before anything had been seen of them, I gave some account of this scheme, and of the material on which he had worked, with a statement of the reasons which made all existing versions unsatisfactory to the student, and incomplete. Captain Burton saw fit to reprint these desultory paragraphs as a kind of circular or advertisement on his forthcoming book. He did not think it necessary to ask leave to do this, nor did I know to what use my letter had been put till it was too late to object. In any ordinary case it would have been of no consequence, but Captain Burton's version is of such a character that I wish to state the facts, and to say that when I wrote my letter I had never seen a line of his translation, and had no idea that what I said of his plans would be used for the purpose it has been, or for any purpose except to be printed in your columns. As it is, I am made to seem to give some sort of approval to a book which I think offensive, and not only offensive, but grossly and needlessly offensive. If anybody has been induced to subscribe for it by what I wrote I regret it, and both to him and to myself I think this explanation due.

Mr. Smalley is the London correspondent of the New York Tribune, which represents Jupiter Tonans in the Western World. He may be unable to write with independent tone — few Anglo-Americans can afford to confront the crass and compound ignorance of a "free and independent majority" — but even he is not called upon solemnly to state an untruth. Before using Mr. Smalley's article as a circular, my representative made a point of applying to him for permission, as he indeed was bound to do by the simplest rules of courtesy. Mr. Smalley replied at once, willingly granting the favour, as I can prove by the note still in my possession; and presently, frightened by the puny yelping of a few critical curs at home, he has the effrontery to deny the fact.

In my last volumes I have been materially aided by two Anglo-American friends, MM Thayer and Cotheal, and I have often had cause to thank the Tribune and the Herald of New York for generously appreciating my labours. But no gratitude from me is due to the small fry of the Transatlantic Press which has welcomed me with spiteful little pars mostly borrowed from unfriends in England and mainly touching upon style and dollars. In the Mail Express of New York (September 7, '85) I read, "Captain Richard Burton, traveller and translator, intends to make all the money that there may be in his translation of the 'Arabian Nights.' * * * If he only fills his list, and collects his money, he will be in easy circumstances for the remainder of his days." In a subsequent issue (October 24) readers are told that I have been requested not to publish the rest of the series under pain of legal prosecution. In the same paper (October 31, '85; see also November 7, '85) I find: —

The authorities have discovered where Capt. Burton's "Thousand and One Nights" is being printed, despite the author's efforts to keep the place a secret, but are undecided whether to suppress it or to permit the publication of the coming volumes. Burton's own footnotes are so voluminous that they exceed the letterpress of the text proper, and make up the bulk of the work.[459] The foulness of the second volume of his translation places it at a much higher premium in the market than the first.

The Tribune of Chicago (October 26,'85) honours me by declaring "It has been resolved to request Captain Burton not to publish the rest of his translation of the 'Thousand and One Nights,' which is really foul and slipshod as to style." The New York Times (October 17 and November 9, '85) merely echoes the spite of its English confrere: —

Capt. Burton's translation of the "Arabian Nights" bears the imprint "Benares." Of course the work never saw Benares. America, France, Belgium and Germany have all been suggested as the place of printing, and now the Pall Mall Gazette affirms that the work was done "north of the Tweed." There is, without doubt, on British soil, it says, "a press which year after year produces scores of obscene publications."

And the same is the case with the St. Louis Post Dispatch (November 11, ‘85) the Mail Express of New York (November 23,’85); the Weekly Post of Boston (November 27 ‘85), which again revives a false report, and with the Boston Herald (December 16,’85). The Chicago Daily News (January 30, ‘86) contains a malicious sneer at the Kamashastra Society. The American Register (Paris, July 25, ‘86) informs its clientèle, “If, as is generally supposed, Captain Burton’s book is printed abroad, the probability is that every copy will on arrival be confiscated as ‘indecent’ by the Custom-house.” And to curtail a long list of similar fadaises I will quote the Bookmart (of Pittsburg, Pa., U.S.A., October, ‘86): “Sir Richard Burton’s ‘Nights’ are terribly in want of the fig-leaf, if anything less than a cabbage leaf will do, before they can be fit (fitted?) for family reading. It is not possible (Is it not possible?) that by the time a household selection has been sifted out of the great work, everything which makes the originality and the value — such as it is — of Richard’s series of volumes will have disappeared, and nothing will remain but his diverting lunacies of style.” The Bookmart, I am informed, is edited by one Halkett Lord, an unnaturalised Englishman who finds it pays best to abuse everything and everyone English. And lastly, the Springfield Republican (April 5, ‘88) assures me that I have published “fully as much as the (his?) world wants of the ‘Nights’.”

In the case of “The Nights,” I am exposed to that peculiar Protestant form of hypocrisy, so different from the Tartuffean original of Catholicism, and still as mighty a motor force, throughout the length and breadth of the North-American continent, as within the narrow limits of England. There also as here it goes hand-in-hand with “Respectability” to blind judgment and good sense.

A great surgeon of our day said (or is said to have said) in addressing his students:— “Never forget, gentlemen, that you have to deal with an ignorant public.” The dictum may fairly be extended from medical knowledge to general information amongst the many headed of England; and the Publisher, when rejecting a too recondite book, will repeat parrot-fashion, The English public is not a learned body. Equally valid is the statement in the case of the Anglo-American community which is still half-educated and very far from being erudite. The vast country has produced a few men of great and original genius, such as Emerson and Theodore Parker, Edgar Allan Poe and Walt Whitman; but the sum total is as yet too small to leaven the mighty mass which learns its rudiments at school and college and which finishes its education with the newspaper and the lecture. When Emerson died it was said that the intellectual glory of a continent had departed; but Edgar A. Poe, the peculiar poetic glory of the States, the first Transatlantic who dared be himself and who disdained to borrow from Schiller and Byron, the outlander poet who, as Edgar Allan Poe, is now the prime favourite in France, appears to be still under ban because he separated like Byron from his spouse, and he led a manner of so-called "Bohemian" life. Indeed the wide diffusion of letters in the States, that favourite theme for boasting and bragging over the unenlightened and analphabetic Old World, has tended only to exaggerate the defective and disagreeable side of a national character lacking geniality and bristling with prickly individuality. This disposition of mind, whose favourable and laudable presentations are love of liberty and self-reliance, began with the beginnings of American history. The "Fathers," Pilgrim and Puritan, who left their country for their country's good and their own, fled from lay tyranny and clerkly oppression only to oppress and tyrannise over others in new and distant homes. Hardly had a century and a half elapsed before the sturdy colonists, who did not claim freedom but determined to keep it, formally revolted and fought their way to absolute independence — not, by the by, a feat whereof to be overproud when a whole country rose unanimously against a handful of troops. The movement, however, reacted powerfully upon the politics of Europe, which stood agape for change, and undoubtedly precipitated the great French Revolution. As soon as the States became an empire, their democratic and republican institutions at once attracted hosts of emigrants from the Old World, thus peopling the land with a selection of species: the active and the adventurous, the malcontent and the malefactor, readily expatriate themselves, while the pauvre diable remains at home. The potato-famine in Ireland (1848) gave an overwhelming impetus to the exode of a race which had never known a racial baptism; and, lastly, the Germans flying from the conscription, the blood tax of the Fatherland, carried with them over the ocean a transcendentalism which has engendered the wildest theories of socialism and communism. And the emigration process still continues. Whole regions, like the rugged Bocche di Cattaro in Dalmatia and pauper Iceland, are becoming depopulated to me the wonder is that a poor man ever consents to live out of America or a rich man to live.

The result of such selection has been two-fold. The first appears in a splendid self- esteem, a complacency, a confidence which passes all bounds of the golden mean. “I am engrossed in calmly contemplating the grandeur of my native country and her miraculous growth,” writes to me an old literary friend. The feeling normally breaks out in the grossest laudation of everything American. The ultra-provincial twang which we still hear amongst the servant-classes of Lancashire and Yorkshire, and which is so notable in the nouveau riche, modified by traditional nasalisation and, as in Australia, by climatic influences, is American and, therefore, the purest of English utterances. The obsolete vocabulary often obsolete in England without just reason — contrasting with a modern disfigured etymology which strips vocables of their genealogy and history, is American and ergo admirably progressive. The spurious facetiousness which deals mainly in mere jargon words ill-spelt and worse pronounced; in bizarre contrast of ideas, and in ultra-Rabelaisian exaggeration, is American wit and humour — therefore unsurpassable. The Newspaper Press, that great reflector of nationalities, that prime expression of popular taste, too often of an écurant vulgarity, personal beyond all bounds of common decency, sensational as a transpontine drama, is American; America is the greatest nation upon earth’s face, ergo the daily sheet is setting-up the standard of English speech and forming the language of the Future, good and too good for all the world. This low standard of the Press is the more regretable as its exalted duty is at present to solve the highest problems social and industrial, such as co-operation in labour, the development of fisheries, direct taxation versus indirect and a host of enigmas which the young world, uncumbered by the burdens of the Old World, alone shall unravel.

The second result is still more prejudicial and perilous. This is the glorification of mediocrity, of the average man and woman whose low standard must be a norm to statesman and publicist. Such cult of the common and the ignoble is the more prejudicial because it "wars against all distinction and against the sense of elevation to be gained by respecting and admiring superiority." Its characteristic predominance in a race which, true to its Anglo-Saxon origin, bases and builds the strongest opinions upon the weakest foundations, hinders the higher Avatars of genius and interferes with the "chief duty of a nation which is to produce great men." It accounts for the ever-incroaching reign of women in literature — meaning as a rule cheap work and second-rate. And the main lack is not so much the "thrill of awe," which Göethe pronounces to be the best thing humanity possesses, but that discipline of respect, that sense of loyalty, not in its confined meaning of attachment to royalty, but in a far higher and nobler signification, the recognising and welcoming elevation and distinction whatever be the guise they may assume. "The soul lives by admiration and hope and love."

And here we see the shady side of the educational process, the diffusion of elementary and superficial knowledge, of the veneer and polish which mask, until chipped-off, the raw and unpolished material lying hidden beneath them. A little learning is a dangerous thing because it knows all and consequently it stands in the way of learning more or much. Hence, it is sorely impatient of novelty, of improvement, of originality. It is intolerant of contradiction, irritable, thin-skinned, and impatient of criticism, of a word spoken against it. It is chargeable with the Law of Copyright, which is not only legalised plunder of the foreigner, but is unfair, unjust and ungenerous to native talent for the exclusive benefit of the short-sighted many-headed. I am far from charging the United States with the abomination called "International Copyright;" the English publisher is as sturdy an enemy to "protection" as the Transatlantic statesman; but we expect better things from a new people which enjoys the heritage of European civilisation without the sufferings accompanying the winning of it. This mediocrity has the furious, unpardoning hatred of l'amour propre offensé. Even a word in favour of my old friends the Mormons is an unpardonable offence: the dwarfish and dwarfing demon "Respectability" has made their barbarous treatment a burning shame to a so-called “free” country: they are subjected to slights and wrongs only for practicing polygamy, an institution never condemned by Christ or the early Christians. The calm and dispassionate judgments of Sir Lepel Griffith and the late Matthew Arnold, who ventured to state, in guarded language, that the boasted civilisation of the United States was not quite perfect, resulted in the former being called a snob and the latter a liar. English stolidity would only have smiled at the criticism even had it been couched in the language of persiflage. And when M. Max O’Rell traverses the statements of the two Englishmen and exaggerates American civilisation, we must bear in mind first that la vulgarité ne se traduit pas, and secondly, that the foes of our foemen are our friends. Woe be to the man who refuses to fall down and do worship before that brazen-faced idol (Eidolon Novi Mundi), Public Opinion in the States; unless, indeed, his name be Brown and he hail from Briggsville.

Some years ago I proposed to write a paper upon the reflex action of Anglo-America upon England using as a base the last edition of Mrs. Trollope, who was compelled to confess that almost every pecularity which she had abused in her first issue had become naturalised at home. Yankee cuteness has already displaced in a marvellous way old English rectitude and plain-dealing; gambling on the Stock Exchange, cornering, booms and trusts have invaded the trading-classes from merchant-princes to shopkeepers, and threaten, at their actual rate of progress, not to leave us an honest man. But now the student’s attention will be called to the great and ever-growing influence of the New World upon the Old, and notably upon Europe. Some 50,000 Americans annually visit the continent, they are rapidly becoming the most important item of the floating population, and in a few years they will number 500,000. Meanwhile they are revolutionising all the old institutions; they are abolishing the classical cicerone whose occupation is gone amongst a herd which wants only to see streets and people: they greatly increase the cost of traveling; they pay dollars in lieu of francs, and they are satisfied with inferior treatment at superior prices: — hence the American hotel abroad is carefully shunned by Englishmen and natives. At home the “well-to-do class” began by regarding their kinsmen d’outre mer with contemptuous dislike; then they looked upon them as a country squire would regard a junior branch which has emigrated and has thriven by emigration; and now they are welcomed in Society because they amuse and startle and stir up the duller depths. But however warm may be private friendship between Englishmen and Anglo-Americans there is no public sympathy nor is any to be expected from the present generation. “New England does not understand Old England and never will,” the reverse being equally the fact. “The Millennium must come,” says Darwin (ii. 387), “before nations love each other:” I add that first Homo alalus seu Pithecanthropus must become Homo Sapiens and cast off his moral slough — egoism and ignorance. Mr. Cleveland, in order to efface the foul stigma of being the “English President,” found it necessary to adopt the strongest measures in the matter of “Fisheries;” and the “Irish vote” must quadrennially be bought at the grave risk of national complications. Despite the much-bewritten “brotherhood of the two great English-speaking races of the world,” the old leaven of cousinly ill-feeling, the jealousy which embitters the Pole against his Russian congener, is still rampant. Uncle Sam actively dislikes John Bull and dispraises England. An Anglo-American who has lived years amongst us and in private intimacy must, when he returns home, speak disparagingly of the old country unless he can afford the expensive luxury of telling unpopular truths and of affronting Demos, the hydra-headed.

But there are even now signs of better things in the Great Republic. Mr. James R. Lowell, an authority (if there be any) upon the subject of Democracy, after displaying its fine points and favourable aspects in his addresses to English audiences, has at length had the uncommon courage to discuss family affairs, and to teach Boston and New York what “weaknesses and perils there may be in the practical working of a system never before set in motion under such favourable circumstances, nor on so grand a scale.” He is emboldened to say firmly and aloud, despite the storming of false and hollow self-praise, that American civilisation, so strong on the material side, is sadly wanting on the other, and still lacks much to make it morally acceptable or satisfactory. And we have some truths concerning that Fool’s Paradise, the glorification of the “average man.” Every citizen of the world must wish full success to the “Independents” (in politics) who sit at the feet of so wise and patriotic a teacher.

And here I feel myself bound to offer some explanation concerning

The Household Edition of the Arabian Nights.

lest any subscriber charge me, after contracting not to issue or to allow the issue of a cheaper form, with the sharp practice which may be styled

To keep the word of promise to our ear
And break it to our hope.

Hardly had my third volume of “The Nights” (proper) been issued to my patrons when a benevolent subscriber, whose name I am bound to conceal, apprised me that he had personal and precise information concerning a project to pirate the production. England and Anglo-America, be it observed, are the only self-styled civilised countries in the world where an author’s brain-work is not held to be his private property: his book is simply no book unless published and entered, after a cost of seven presentation copies, at “Stationers’ Hall” — its only ægis. France, Italy and Austria treat such volumes as private MSS.: here any dishonest house may reproduce them in replica without the slightest regard to the writer’s rightful rights. In my case this act of robbery was proposed by a German publisher domiciled in London, supported by a Frenchman equally industrious, who practises in Paris, and of whose sharp doings in money-matters not a few Englishmen have had ample reason bitterly to complain. This par nobile agreed to print in partnership an issue of handier form and easier price than my edition, and their plan if carried out would have seriously damaged the property of my subscribers: the series which cost them 10 pounds 10s. would have fallen probably to one-half value. The two pirates met by agreement in Paris where the design was duly discussed and determined; but, fortunately for me, an unexpected obstacle barred the way. The London solicitor, professionally consulted by the dishonest firm, gave his opinion that such a work publicly issued would be a boon to the Society for the

Suppression of Vice, and would not escape the unsavoury attentions of old Father Antic — the Law.

But, although these two men were deterred by probable consequences, a bolder spirit might make light of them. I had never intended to go beyond my original project, that is of printing one thousand copies and no more, nor did I believe that any cunning of disguise could make "The Nights" presentable in conventionally decent society. It was, however, represented to me by many whose opinions I valued that thus and thus only the author and his subscribers could be protected from impudent fraud, and finally an unwilling consent was the result.

Mr. Justin Huntley McCarthy, a name well known in the annals of contemporary literature, undertook the task of converting the grand old barbarian into a family man to be received by the "best circles." His proofs, after due expurgation, were passed on to my wife, who I may say has never read the original, and she struck out all that appeared to her over-free, under the promise that no mother should hesitate in allowing the book to her daughters. It would, perhaps, surprise certain "modest gentlemen" and blatantly virtuous reviewers that the amount of raw material excised from the text and the notes chiefly addressed to anthropologists and Orientalists, amounts to only 215 pages out of a grand total numbering 3156.

Between 1886 and 1888 appeared the revision in six pretty volumes, bearing emblematic colours, virgin-white adorned with the golden lilies of St. Joseph and the "chaste crescent of the young moon." The price also was reduced to the lowest (£3 3s.) under the idea that the work would be welcome if not to families at any rate to libraries and reading-rooms, for whose benefit the older translations are still being reproduced. But the flattering tale of Hope again proved to be a snare and a delusion; I had once more dispensed with the services of Mr. Middleman, the publisher, and he naturally refused to aid and abet the dangerous innovation. The hint went abroad that the book belonged to the category which has borrowed a name from the ingenious Mr. Bowdler, and vainly half a century of reviewers spoke bravely in its praise. The public would have none of it: even innocent girlhood tossed aside the chaste volumes in utter contempt, and would not condescend to aught save the thing, the whole thing, and nothing but the thing, unexpurgated and uncastrated. The result was an unexpected and unpleasant study of modern taste in highly respectable England. And the fact remains that of an edition which began with a thousand copies only 457 were sold in the course of two years. Next time I shall see my way more clearly to suit the peculiar tastes and prepossessions of the reading world at home.

Before dismissing the subject of the Household Edition, I would offer a few words of explanation on the part of the Editress. While touching-up and trimming the somewhat hurried work of our friend, Mr. McCarthy, she was compelled to accompany me abroad, and to nurse me through a dangerous illness, which left but little time for the heavy claims of business. Unable to superintend, with the care required, the issue of her six volumes she entrusted the task to two agents in whose good will and experience she had and still has the fullest confidence; but the results were sundry letters of appeal and indignation from subscribers touching matters wholly unknown and unintelligible to her. If any mistakes have been made in matters of detail she begs to express her sincerest regret, and to assure those aggrieved that nothing was further from her intention than to show discourtesy where she felt cordial gratitude was due.

* * * * * Nothing now remains for me but the pleasant task of naming the many friends and assistants to whom this sixteenth and last volume has been inscribed. The late Reverend G. Percy Badger strongly objected to the literal translation of “The Nights” (The Academy, December 8, ‘81); not the less, however, he assisted me in its philology with all readiness. Dr. F. Grenfell Baker lent me ready and valuable aid in the mechanical part of my hard labour. Mr. James F. Blumhardt, a practical Orientalist and reacher of the Prakrit dialects at Cambridge, englished for me the eight Gallandian tales (Foreword, Supp. vol. iii.) from the various Hindostan versions. To Mr. William H. Chandler, of Pembroke College, Oxford, I have expressed (Supp. vol. iii.) the obligations due to a kind and generous friend: his experiments with photography will serve to reconcile the churlishness and retrograde legislation of the great Oxford Library with the manners and customs of more civilised peoples. Mr. W. A.

Clouston, whose degree is high in “Storiology,” supplied my second and third Supplemental volumes with valuable analogues and variants. Mr. Alexander J. Cotheal, Consul-General for Nicaragua at New York, sent a valuable MS. to me across the water, and was persuaded to translate, for my sixth Supplemental volume, a novel version of the “Tale of Attáf.” Mr. A. G. Ellis, of the British Museum, amongst other favours, kindly revised the Foreword of my sixth volume. Mr. E. J. W. Gibb, an Orientalist of the modern and realistic school, who is not deterred by literal translation, permitted me to print his version of the Turkish Zayn al-Asnám (Supp. vol. iii.) and translations of three tales which he judged inexpedient to publish (Supp. vol. iv.). M. O. Houdas, Professeur d’ Arabe Vulgaire à l’école des langues Orientales vicantes, Paris, copied for me the Arabic text of Zayn al-Asnám and the whole MS. used by MM. Chavis and Cazotte: he also obligingly assisted me in overcoming the various difficulties of a crabbed and imperfect text. My friend Mr. W. F. Kirby appended to volume x. of “The Nights” (proper) his most valuable contributions to the bibliology of the work with its various imitations and a table showing the contents of the principal editions and translations of “The Nights”: he also enriched my Supplemental volumes v. and vi. with his excellent annotations. Mr. Kingsbury (and Notcutt) photographed for my use 400 and odd pages of the Wortley-Montague MS., and proved how easy it was to produce a perfect fac-simile of the whole. Mr. George Lewis gave me the soundest advice touching legal matters and Mr. Philip M. Justice was induced to take an active interest in the “Household Edition.” The eminent Orientalist, Dr. Pertsch, Librarian of the Grand-Ducal Collection, Saxe-Gotha, in lively contrast to my countrymen of the Bodleian, offered to send me the two volumes of a valuable MS. containing the most detailed texts of Judar and his brethren (vol. vi. 213) and of Zahir and his son Ali. Dr. Reinhold Rost, Librarian of the Indian Office, took much trouble about the W. M. MS. but all in vain. Mr. Alexander W. Thayer, of Trieste, who has studied for years the subject of the so-called Jewish “Exodus,” obliged me with a valuable note detailing his original views. His Excellency Yacoub Artin Pasha, Minister of Public Instruction, Cairo, a friend of many years standing, procured for me the decorations in the Cufic, Naskhí and other characters, which add to much of novelty and ornament to the outer semblance of my sixteen volumes. Mr. Hermann Zotenberg, Keeper of Oriental MS. at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, lent me his own transcription of the "Alaeddin," and generously supplied me with exact bibliographical notes and measurements of sundry tomes in that admirable collection.

I am also deeply indebted to Mrs. Victoria L. Maylor, of Trieste, who, during the past three years (1885-1888) had the energy and perseverance to copy for me sixteen bulky volumes written in a "running-hand," concerning which the less said the better. And lastly, I must acknowledge peculiar obligations to my Shaykh, Dr. Steingass, Ph.D. This well-known Arabist not only assisted me in passing the whole work through the press he also added a valuable treatise on Arabic Prosody (x. 233-258) with indexes of various kinds, and finally he supervised the MSS. of the Supplemental volumes and enriched the last three, which were translated under peculiar difficulties in analphabetic lands, with the results of his wide reading and lexicographical experience.

And now, Alhamdolillah, the play is ended, and while the curtain drops, I take the final liberty of addressing my kindly and appreciative audience in the following words, borrowed from a Persian brother of the pen: —

Now hear my hope from men of liberal mind,
Faults, that indulgence crave, shall seek and find;
For whose blames and of despite decries,
Is wight right witless, clean reverse of wise.

To which let me add the following gentle reminder from Ibn Khaldún: —

All that we can we do, and who ne'er swerves
From best endeavour much of praise deserves.

Farewell!

Richard F. Burton

United Service Club, September 30, 1888.

Opinions of the Press.
Morning Advertiser, September 15th, 1885.

As the holiday season draws to a close the publishers' announcements of "new books" fill column after column of the organs chosen from these special communiqué's. But there is one work which is not entered in these lists, though for years scholars, and many people who are not scholars, have been looking for it with an eagerness which has left far behind the ordinary curiosity which is bestowed on the greatest of contributions to current literasure. And to-day the chosen few who are in possession of the volume in question are examining it with an interest proportionate to the long toil which has been bestowed on its preparation. We refer to Captain Burton's translation of The Arabian Nights Entertainments, now entitled The Book of The Thousand Nights and a Night, of which the first tome has just been issued. * * * * Captain Burton scorns any namby pambyism. In the Arabic a spade is usually called a spade, and in the latest English translation it is never designated an agricultural implement. Moreover the endless footnotes which the editor appends speak with much freedom of many things usually avoided as themes for conversation in polite society, though they throw a flood of light on hundreds of features of Oriental life on which, since travellers have been compelled to write for "refined" audiences the student has failed to be informed. * * * * *

Yet, admitting that The Nights are often coarse and indelicate, and sometimes even gross it is a mistake to suppose that they are demoralising in the same way that a French novel of the Zola type is, or might be. Indeed, what we would call its impropriety is only a reflection of the naïve freedom with which talk is to this day carried on in the family circles of the East. They see no harm in what we should regard as indecency. So that when Captain Burton prefaces his unbowdlerised version with the Arab proverb, "To the pure in heart all things are pure," he presents perhaps the best defence he could against the attack which it is quite possible may be made on him for devoting many years of his life to what he terms “a labour of love.” * * * Captain Burton, thirty-three years ago, went in the disguise of an Indian pilgrim to Mecca and Al-Medinah, and no one capable of giving the world the result of his experience has so minute, so exhaustive a knowledge of Arab and Oriental life generally. Hence the work now begun — only a limited number of students can ever see — is simply priceless to any one who concerns himself with such subjects, and may be regarded as marking an era in the annals of Oriental translation.

St. James’ Gazette, September 12th, 1885.

One of the most important translations to which a great English scholar has ever devoted himself is now in the press. For three decades Captain Burton has been more or less engaged on his translation of the Arabian Nights, the latest of the many versions of that extraordinary story which has been made into English, the only one at all worthy of a great original.

Whitehall Review, September 17th, 1885.

The publication of the first volume of Captain Burton’s translation of the Alif Laïla enriches the world of Oriental investigation with a monument of labour and scholarship and of research. * * * * * In the name of the whole world of Oriental scholarship, we offer our heartfelt thanks and congratulations to Captain Burton upon the appearance of this first volume; and we look forward with the keenest interest for its successors.

Home News, September 18th, 1885.

Captain Burton has begun to issue the volumes of his subscription translation of the Arabian Nights, and its fortunate possessors will now be able to realize the full flavour of Oriental feeling. They will now have the great storehouse of Eastern folk-lore opened to them, and Captain Burton’s minute acquaintance with Eastern life makes his comments invaluable. In this respect, as well as in the freeness of the translation, the version will be distinguished from its many predecessors. Captain Burton’s preface, it may be observed, bears traces of soreness at official neglect. Indeed it seems curious that his services could not have been utilised in the Soudan, when the want of competent Arabic scholars was so severely felt.

Nottingham Journal, September 19th, 1885.

But to scholars and men who have sufficient love of the soul of these sweet stories to discern the form in its true proportions, the new edition will be welcome. From an Oriental point of view the work is masterly to a degree. The quatrains and couplets, reading like verses from Elizabethan mantels, and forming a perfect rosary of Eastern lore, the constant succession of brilliant pictures, and the pleasure of meeting again our dear old friend Shahrázád, all these combine to give a unique charm and interest to this "perfect expositor of the mediæval Moslem mind."

The Bat, September 29th, 1885.

Captain Burton, in his way, renders a gigantic service to all students of literature who are not profound Orientalists, and to many who are, by giving them a literal, honest, and accurate translation of the Arabian Nights. * * * Some idiotic persons here and there, and certain journals which have earned an infamous notoriety by doing their best to deprave public morals, have raised a foolish clamour against Captain Burton and his translation. Journalists, who had no objection to pandering to the worst tastes of humanity at a penny a copy, are suddenly inspired by much righteous indignation at a privately printed work which costs a guinea a volume, and in which the manners, the customs, and the language of the East are boldly represented as they were and as they are. Such critics Captain Burton, and the readers of Captain Burton's translation, can afford to despise and to ignore. The Arabian Nights Entertainment has been the playbook of generations, the delight of the nursery and the school-room for nearly two hundred years. Now it is high time that scholars and students should be allowed to know what the Arabian Nights Entertainment really is. Lovers of Arabic have long since known something of the truth concerning the Alif Laila. It needs no Burton, it needed no Payne to tell the masters of Oriental languages that The Thousand Nights and a Night was a very different thing from what either Galland or Lane had made it out to be. Mr. Payne in his way, rendered no slight service, Captain Burton, in his way, renders a gigantic service to all students of literature who are not profound Orientalists, and to many who are, by giving them a literal, honest, and accurate translation of the "Arabian Nights."

The Academy, October 3rd, 1885.

As Capt. Richard F. Burton's translation of The Thousand and One Nights is likely for several reasons to awaken a literary controversy, the following letter from Mr. John Addington Symonds in the Academy of October 3 will be read with interest. The subject upon which it touches is an important one, and one which must be regarded from a scholarly as well as a moral point of view. Mr. Symonds writes like the scholar that he is; we shall soon see how the moralists write, and if they say anything to the point we shall copy it:—

Am Hof, Davos Platz, Switzerland, September 27th, 1885.

"There is an outcry in some quarters against Capt. Burton's translation of the Arabian Nights. Only one volume of the work has reached me, and I have not as yet read the whole of it. Of the translator's notes I will not speak, the present sample being clearly insufficient to judge by, but I wish to record a protest against the hypocrisy which condemns his text. When we invite our youth to read an unexpurgated Bible (in Hebrew and Greek, or in the authorised version), an unexpurgated Aristophanes, an unexpurgated Juvenal, an unexpurgated Boccaccio, an unexpurgated Rabelais, an unexpurgated collection of Elizabethan dramatists, including Shakespeare, and an unexpurgated Plato (in Greek or in Prof. Jowett's English version), it is surely inconsistent to exclude the unexpurgated Arabian Nights, whether in the original or in any English version, from the studies of a nation who rule India and administer Egypt.

"The qualities of Capt. Burton's translation are similar to those of his previous literary works, and the defects of those qualities are also similar. Commanding a vast and miscellaneous vocabulary, he takes such pleasure in the use of it that sometimes he transgresses the unwritten laws of artistic harmony. From the point of view of language, I hold that he is too eager to seize the mot propre of his author, and to render that by any equivalent which comes to hand from field or fallow, waste or warren, hill or hedgerow, in our vernacular. Therefore, as I think, we find some coarse passages of the Arabian Nights rendered with unnecessary crudity and some poetic passages marred by archaisms and provincialisms. But I am at a loss to perceive how Burton’s method of translation should be less applicable to the Arabian Nights than to the Lusiad. So far as I can judge, it is better suited to the naïveté combined with stylistic subtlety of the former than to the smooth humanistic elegancies of the latter.

“This, however, is a minor point. The real question is whether a word for word version of the Arabian Nights, executed with peculiar literary vigor, exact scholarship, and rare insight into Oriental modes of thought and feeling, can under any shadow of presence be classed with ‘the garbage of the brothels.’ In the lack of lucidity, which is supposed to distinguish English folk, our middle-class censores morum strain at the gnat of a privately circulated translation of an Arabic classic, while they daily swallow the camel of higher education based upon minute study of Greek and Latin literature. When English versions of Theocritus and Ovid, of Plato’s Phaedrus and the Ecclesiazusae, now within the reach of every school-boy, have been suppressed, then and not till then can a ‘plain and literal’ rendering of the Arabian Nights be denied with any colour of consistency to adult readers. I am far from saying that there are not valid reasons for thus dealing with Hellenic and Graeco-Roman and Oriental literature in its totality. But let folk reckon what Anglo Saxon Puritanism logically involves. If they desire an Anglo-Saxon Index Librorum Prohibitorum, let them equitably and consistently apply their principles of inquisitorial scrutiny to every branch of human culture.

“John Addington Symonds.”

The Lincoln Gazette, Saturday, October 10th, 1885.

Thousand Nights and a Night.

First Notice

Everything comes to him who waits — even the long-promised, eagerly-expected “Plain and Literal Translation of the Arabian

Nights," by Richard F. Burton. It is a whole quarter of a century since this translation of one of the most famous books of the world was contemplated, and we are told it is the natural outcome of the well-known Pilgrimage to Medinah and Mecca. Of Captain Burton's fitness for the task who can doubt. It was during that celebrated journey to the tomb of the Prophet that he proved himself to be an Arab — indeed, he says, in a previous state of existence he was a Bedouin. Did he not for months at a stretch lead the life of a Son of the Faithful, eat, drink, sleep dress, speak, pray like his brother devotees, the sharpest eyes failing to pierce his disguise. He knows the ways of Eastern men — and women — as he does the society of London or Trieste. How completely at home he is with his adopted brethren he showed at Cairo when, to the amazement of some English friends who were looking on at the noisy devotions of some "howling" Dervishes, he suddenly joined the shouting, gesticulating circle and behaved as if to the manner born. He has qualified as a "Howler," he holds a diploma as a master Dervish (see vol. iii. of his "Pilgrimage"), and he can initiate disciples. Clearly to use a phrase of Arabian story, it was decreed by Allah from the beginning, and fate and fortune have arranged, that Captain Burton should be the one of all others to confer upon his countrymen the boon of the genuine unsophisticated Thousand Nights and a Night. In the whole of our literature no book is more widely known. It is spread broadcast like the Bible, Bunyan and Shakespeare; yet although it is in every house, and every soul in the kingdom knows something about it, yet nobody knows it as it really exists. We have only had what translators have chosen to give — selected, diluted and abridged transcripts. And of late some so-called "original" books have been published containing minor tales purloined bodily from the Nights. There have been many versions, beginning with the beautiful Augustan French example of Professor Galland, but all have failed, or rather no one has attempted, to reproduce the great Oriental masterpiece. Judged by the number of editions — a most fallacious test of merit — Lane's three volumes, on the whole, have found greatest favour with the British public. He was too timid to give to the world the full benefit of his studies, and he kept a drawing-room audience in view. He was careful to adapt his picture to the English standard of propriety, and his suppressions and omissions are on a wholesale scale. Lord Byron said of English novelists that they give a full length of courtship and but a bust of marriage. Mr. Lane thought it expedient to draw a tight veil, to tell only half the truth — in short he stops at the bust. Moreover he destroyed all the mécanique of his original, and cruelly altered the form. He did away with the charming and dramatic framework of the tales, turned the Arabian Nights into the Arabian Chapters, and too often into the Arabian Notes. The first sole and complete translation was furnished recently by Mr. John Payne, whose "Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night" is dedicated to Captain Burton. Mr. Payne printed 500 copies for private circulation, a mere drop in the ocean. His edition was instantly absorbed, clutched with avidity, and is unprocurable — unless, as has happened several times, a stray copy finds its way into the market, and is snatched up at a fancy price. It so happened that Mr. Payne and Captain Burton applied themselves to the same task quite unconscious of each other's labour. They were running on the same rails, like Adams and Leverrier, the joint discoverers of Neptune, or like Darwin and Wallace, who simultaneously evolved the theory of Natural Selection. Hearing of a competitor, Captain Burton, who was travelling to the Gold Coast, freely offered his fellow worker precedence. Mr. Payne's production served to whet curiosity, and the young scholars of the day applied themselves to Arabic in order to equip their minds, and to be in a more blissful state of preparation for the triumphant edition to follow. Captain Burton's first volume in sombre black and dazzling gold — the livery of the Abbasides — made its appearance three weeks ago, and divided attention with the newly-discovered Star. It is the first volume of ten, the set issued solely to subscribers. And already, as in the case of Mr. Payne's edition, there has been a scramble to secure it, and it is no longer to be had for love or money. The fact is, it fills a void, the world has been waiting for this chef d'æuvre, and all lovers of the Arabian Nights wonder how they have got on without it. We must break off from remarks to give some idea of the originality of the style, of the incomparable way in which the very essence and life of the East is breathed into simple, straightforward Anglo-Saxon English. In certain of Captain Burton's books he borrows words from all languages, there are not enough for his use, and he is driven to coin them. But in the character of Arabian story-teller he is simplicity itself, and whilst avoiding words of length, he introduces just enough of antique phrase as gives a bygone and poetic flavour. The most exacting and the most fastidious will be satisfied at the felicitous handling of immortal themes. A delightful characteristic is the division of the text into Nights. Lane and Payne, for peculiar reasons of their own, have both omitted to mark the breaks in the recital. But now for the first time the thread on which all is strung is clearly kept in view, and justice is done to the long drawn-out episode of the young wife who saves her own neck and averts a wholesale massacre of maidens by her round of stories within stories.

The reader most familiar with the ordinary versions at once is in a new atmosphere. The novelty is startling as it is delightful. We are face to face with the veritable East, where Cairo, Damascus, and Baghdad are known to us as London or Lincoln. The whole life of the people is represented, nothing is passed over or omitted. The picture is complete, and contains everything as the "white contains the black of the eye," a phrase which, by- the-bye, in Arabic is all contained in one word. We have before alluded to the strength and beauty of the style. The felicities of expression are innumerable. What could be better than the terms to express grief and joy, "his breast broadened," "his breast straitened," or the words used of a person in abject terror, "I died in my skin," or the cruelty of the scourger who persevered "till her forearm failed," or the expression of despair "The light before his face became night," or the grand account of the desert storm "when behold a dust cloud up-flew and grew until it walled the horizon from view." Another speciality of Captain Burton's edition is the Notes. He is celebrated for sowing the bottom of his pages with curiously illuminating remarks, and he has here carried out his custom in a way to astonish. He tells us that those who peruse his notes in addition to those of Lane would be complete proficients in the knowledge of Oriental practices and customs. Lane begins with Islam from Creation to the present day, and has deservedly won for his Notes the honour of a separate reprint. Captain Burton's object in his annotations is to treat of subjects which are completely concealed from the multitude. They are utterly and entirely esoteric, and deal with matters of which books usually are kept clear. Indeed he has been assured by an Indian officer who had been 40 years in the East, that he was entirely ignorant of the matters revealed in these Notes. Without these marvellous elucidations the Arabian Nights would remain only half understood, but by their aid we may know as much of the Moslems as the Moslems know of themselves.

The Lincoln Gazette, Saturday, October 17th, 1885.
Second Notice.

In bringing out his Arabian Nights Captain Burton has made a bold attempt to dispense with the middleman the publisher. He has gone straight to the printer, he himself undertaking the business of distribution. It is time somebody should be energetic. With curious submission authors go on bearing their grievances, and sow that others may reap. Whole editions of travels are issued, and the person most concerned, the author, gets a pittance of £5. And only the other day Walt Whitman, most illustrious of American poets, and in the opinion of capable judges the most illustrious man of letters across the Atlantic, publicly that the profits on his writings for a whole year amounted to a few dollars. Captain Burton has broken through the bondage, and the result promises to be highly satisfactory. But he has been threatened with pains and penalties, one trade journal, the Printing Times and Lithographer, under the immediate direction of an eminent bookseller, known for his vast purchases of rare publications, announced that The Arabian Nights would be suppressed unless its tone and morals were unexceptionable! In short, publishers are exasperated, and, like the Peers, they do not see the force of being abolished. The authors, however, who sigh to be independent, must not take it for granted that the experiment is easy, or likely to be often successful. In this particular instance it is a case of the Man and the Book. There is only one Arabian Nights in the world, and only one Captain Burton.

The Thousand Nights and a Night offers a complete picture of Eastern peoples. But the English reader must be prepared to find that the manners of Arabs and Moslems differ from his own. Eastern people look at things from a more natural and primitive point of view, and they say what they think with all the unrestraint of children. At times their plain speaking is formidable, but they are not conscious of impropriety, and their coarseness is not intentional. It is their nature to be downright, and to be communicative on subjects about which the Saxon is shy or silent, and it must be remembered that the separation of the sexes adds considerably to this freedom of expression. Their language is material in quality, every root is objective; as an instance, for the word soul they have no more spiritual equivalent than breath. Even the conversation between parents and children is of incredible frankness, and the Wazir of Egypt talks to his daughter "the Lady of Beauty," in a fashion astonishing to the West. But the Arabs are a great mixture. They are keenly alive to beauty, and every youth and every damsel is described in glowing, rapturous terms. We have heard in our own country, so far north as chilly Scotland, of a whole audience standing up in a theatre to applaud the entrance and acknowledge the charms of a beautiful woman. In the East they are far more readily subjugated, and the event is of everyday occurrence, and not a wonder. "When the people of Damascus saw Ajib's beauty and brilliancy and perfect grace and symmetry (for he was a marvel of comeliness and winning loveliness, softer than the cool breeze of the North, sweeter than limpid waters to man in drouth, and pleasanter than the health for which sick man sueth), a mighty many followed him, whilst others ran on before and sat down on the road until he should come up, that they might gaze on him." The Arabs are highly imaginative, and their world is peopled with supernatural beings, whilst Ovid is surpassed in the number and ingenuity of their metamorphoses. Their nerves are highly strung, they are emotional to the hysteric degree, and they do everything in the superlative fashion. They love at first sight, and one glimpse of a face is enough to set them in flames; they cease to sleep or to eat until they are admitted to the adored presence, they weep till they faint, they rend their garments, pluck their beards, buffet their faces, and after paroxysms of passion they recover sufficiently to recite verses— "and he beat his face and head and recited these couplets"— "then she recited, weeping bitterly the while"— "When the young man heard these words he wept with sore weeping, till his bosom was drenched with tears and began reciting.” All this effervescence, so different to our rigid repression, all this exuberance of feeling is the gift of a hot climate. And, besides this easy stirring of their passions, they always live in supreme consciousness that every impulse, every act is decreed, that they drift without will of their own, and are the helpless creatures of destiny. Half their talk consists of invocations to Allah, the All-ruling, All-gracious Allah! This fatalistic element is a leading feature in the Nights. All that happens is accepted with submission, and with the conviction that nothing can be averted. The Wazir’s eye is knocked out, “as fate and fortune decreed,” the one pomegranate seed escapes destruction, and the Princess dies in consequence; the beautiful lad secreted in a cave under the earth to keep him from harm, because it is foretold by the astrologers that he will die on a certain day, meets with his death at the appointed hour despite all precautions. This is one of the myriad instances, says Captain Burton, showing “that the decrees of Anagké, Fate, Destiny, Weird are inevitable.” And yet, in the face of overwhelming evidence that Moslems in all things bow to the stroke of destiny, it is singular to note that a Turkish scholar like Mr. Redhouse, translator of the “Mesnevi,” fails to realise this most characteristic trait of Mahometan belief, and confuses it with the Christian idea of Providence and Premonition. The folk in Arabian tales, as might be expected, meet calamity in the shape of death with fortitude. The end of life is not a terror acutely feared as with us. They die easily, and when the time comes they give up the ghost without repining, although the mourning by survivors is often loud and vehement, and sometimes desperately prolonged. This facility in dying is partly due to their fatalistic philosophy, and partly it is the effect of climate. It is in rugged climes that death is appalling, and comes as the King of Terrors, but the hotter the country the easier it is to enter the Door of Darkness. All these things which make the difference between Orientals and ourselves must be taken into account by readers of Arabian story, and the coarseness, as Captain Burton shows, is but the shade of a picture which otherwise would be all light;” the general tone of the Nights “is exceptionally high and pure, and the devotional fervour often rises to boiling point.” We have shown how

Captain Burton has rendered the prose of the Nights, how vigorous, yet simple, is the language, how pleasant is his use of antique phrase, serving as it often does to soften the crudity of Oriental expression. In translating the poetry, which finally will amount to nearly 10,000 lines, he has again started on a path of his own. He has closely preserved the Arab form, although, as he says, an absolutely exact copy of Arabic metres is an impossibility.

A striking novelty in Captain Burton's translation is the frequent occurrence of passages in cadenced prose, called in Arabic "Saj'a," or the cooing of a dove. These melodious fragments have a charming effect on the ear. They come as dulcet-surprises, and mostly occur in highly-wrought situations, or they are used to convey a vivid sense of something exquisite in art or nature. We give one or two instances of these little eddies of song set like gems in the prose. Their introduction seems due to whim or caprice, but really is due to profound study of the situation, as if the tale-teller felt suddenly compelled to break into the rhythmic strain. The prose ripples and rises to dancing measure when the King of the Age, wandering in a lonely palace, comes upon the half-petrified youth, "the Ensorcelled Prince."

"Now when the Sultan heard the mournful voice he sprang to his feet, and following the sound found a curtain let down over the chamber door. He raised it and saw behind it a young man sitting upon a couch about a cubic above the ground: he fair to the sight, a well- shaped wight, with eloquence dight, his forehead was flower-white, his cheek rosy bright, and a mole on his cheek breadth like an ambergris mite."

It is broken again to bring into fuller notice the perfections of one of the three merry ladies of Baghdad, sitting under a silken canopy, the curtains "looped up with pearls as big as filberts and bigger." We are told to note how eastern are the metaphors, how confused the flattery.

"Thereupon sat a lady bright of blee, with brow-beaming brilliancy, and her eyebrows were arched as for archery; her breath breathed ambergris and perfumery, and her lips were sugar to taste and carnelian to see. Her stature was straight as the letter I (the letter Alif a straight perpendicular stroke), and her face shamed the noon sun’s radiancy; and she was even as a galaxy or a dome with golden marquetry, or a bride displayed on choicest finery, or a noble maid of Araby.”

And prose is not thought adequate to do justice to the natural beauty of a garden “like one of the pleasaunces of Paradise.”

“It was a garden with trees of freshest green and ripe fruits of yellow sheen; and its birds were singing clear and keen, and rills ran wimpling through the fair terrene.”

It is a marvel that these cadences have never been reproduced before. They have been faintly attempted by Eastwick, in his “Gulistan,” whilst Mr. Payne simply passed them over, rejected them as of no account. They fall in with Captain Burton’s plan of omitting nothing; of giving the Nights intact in the precise form in which they are enjoyed by the Oriental. Beside the verses so characteristic of exaggerated Arabic sentiment, and the rhymed cadences, let like precious stones into the gold of the prose, the proverbs embodying the proverbial wit and wisdom are all rhymed as in the original Arabic. What Arabists think of this translation we may learn from a professed Arabist writing to this effect:— “I am free to confess, after many years study of Arabic, a comparison of your translation with the text has taught me more than many months of dry study,” whilst Englishmen who for years have lived in the East are making the discovery that, after all, they have known little or nothing, and their education is only beginning with this version of the Arabian Nights. It is only knowledge that knows how to observe; and it is satisfactory to observe that Captain Burton’s amazing insight into Eastern peculiarities has been put to its best use in giving a true idea of the People of the Sun and a veritable version of their Book of Books. The labour expended on this edition has been enormous. The work could only have been completed by the most excessive and pertinatious application. All the same we are told it has been “a labour of love,” a task that has brought its own exceeding great reward.

Richard Francis Burton’s translation: detailed table of contents

FOOTNOTES SUPPLEMENTAL VOLUME VI.

[1] Tome xii. is dated 1789, the other three, 1788, to include them in the "Cabinet."

[2] The titles of all the vols. are dated alike, 1793, the actual date of printing.

[3] This name is not in the Arabic text, and I have vainly puzzled my brains about its derivation or meaning.

[4] This P.N. is, I presume, a corruption of "Shawalán"=one falling short. The wife "Oitba" is evidently "Otbá" or "Utbá."

[5] See my Supplemental volume i. p-116, "The Ten
Wazirs; or, the History of King Azádbakht and his Son."

[6] MS. p-182. Gauttier, vol. ii., p-353, Histoire du sage Heycar translated by M. Agoub: Weber, "History of Sinkarib and his two Viziers" (vol. ii. 53): the "Vizier" is therein called Hicar.

[7] This form of the P.N. is preferred by Prof. R. Hoerning in his "Prisma des Sanherib," etc. Leipsic, 1878. The etymology is "Sin akhi-irib"=Sini (Lunus, or the Moon-God) increaseth brethren. The canon of Ptolemy fixes his accession at B.C. 702, the first year of Elibus or Belibus. For his victories over Babylonia, Palestine, Judea, and Egypt see any "Dictionary of the Bible," and Byron for the marvellous and puerile legend —

The Assyrian came down as a wolf on the fold,

which made him lose in one night 185,000 men, smitten by the "Angel of the Lord" (2 Kings xix. 35). Seated upon his throne before Lachish he is represented by a bas-relief as a truly noble and kingly figure.

[8] I presume that the author hereby means a "fool," Pers. nádán. But

in Assyrian story Nadan was=Nathan, King of the people of Pukudu, the Pekod of Jeremiah (i. 21) and other prophets.

[9] In text always "Atúr," the scriptural "Asshur"=Assyria, biblically derived from Asshur, son of Shem (Gen. x. 22), who was worshipped as the proto-deity. The capital was Niniveh. Weber has "Nineveh and Thor," showing the spelling of his MS. According to the Arabs, "Ashur" had four sons; Iran (father of the Furs=Persians, the Kurd, or Ghozzi, the Daylams, and the Khazar), Nabít, Jarmúk, and Basíl. Ibn Khaldun (iii. 413), in his "Universal History," opposes this opinion of Ibn Sa'id.

[10] i.e. "Fish-town" or "town of Nin" =Ninus, the founder. In mod. days "Naynawah" was the name of a port on the east bank of the Tigris; and moderns have unearthed the old city at Koyunjik, Nabi Yunas, and the Tall (mound of) Nimrud.

[11] The surroundings suggest Jehovah, the tribal deity of the Jews. The old version says, "Hicar was a native of the country of Haram (Harrán), and had brought from thence the knowledge of the true God; impelled, however, by an irresistible decree," etc.

[12] i.e. a woollen cloth dyed red. Hence Pyrard (i. 244) has "red scarlet," and (vol. ii.) "violet scarlet"; Froissart (xvth centy.) has "white scarlet," and Marot (xvith) has "green scarlet." The word seems to be French of xiith century, but is uncertain: Littré proposes Galaticus, but admits the want of an intermediate form. Piers Plowman and Chaucer use "cillatún, which suggests Pers. "Sakalat, or "Saklatún", whence Mr. Skeat would derive "scarlet." This note is from the voyage of F. Pyrard, etc. London. Hakluyts, M.dccc.lxxxvii.; and the editor quotes Colonel Yule's M. Polo (ii. chapt. 58) and his "Discursive Glossary s. v. Suclát."

[13] i.e."Al-Kirm," Arab. and Pers. =a worm, as in Kirmán (see Supplem. vol. i. 40); the coccus ilicis, vulg. called cochineal.

[14] Arab. "Arz", from the Heb. Arz or Razah (raz=to vibrate), the root {Greek} (cedrus conifera), the Assyrian "Erimu of Lebanon," of

which mention is so often made. The old controversy as to whether "Razah"=cedar or fir, might easily have been settled if the disputants had known that the modern Syrians still preserve the word for the clump called "The Cedars" on the seaward slope of the Libanus.

[15] We should say "reading and writing," but the greater difficulty of deciphering the skeleton eastern characters places reading in the more honourable place. They say of a very learned man, "He readeth it off (readily) as one drinketh water."

[16] Arab. "Al-Sáhib al-jayyid." ["Jayyid" is, by the measure "Fay'il," derived from the root, "Jaud," to excel, like "Kayyis," from "Kaus" (see Suppl. vol. iv., p.277), "Mayyit" from "Maut," "Sayyid" from "Saud." The form was originally "Jaywid;" then the Wáw became assimilated to the preceding Já, on account of the following Kasrah, and this assimilation or "Idghám" is indicated by Tashdíd. As from "Kayyis" the diminutive "Kuwayyis" is formed, so "Jayyid" forms the Tasghír, "Juwayyid," which, amongst the Druzes, has the specific meaning of "deeply versed in religious matters." — ST.]

[17] "Kúl," vulg. for "Kul"; a form constant in this MS.

[18] Gauttier "Sarkhadom," the great usurper Sargon, a contemporary of Merodach Baladan of Babylon and of Sabaco 1st of Ethiopia, B.C. 721-702: one of the greatest Assyrian Kings, whose place has been determined to be between Shalmaneser and his son, the celebrated Sennacherib, who succeeded him. The name also resembles the biblical Ezarhaddon (Asaridanus), who, however, was the son of Sennacherib, and occupied the throne of Babylon in B.C. 680.

[19] Gauttier, p-319, has greatly amplified and modified these words of wisdom.

[20] In text "Yá Bunayya" =lit. "O my little son," a term of special fondness.

[21] Arab. "Jamrah," a word of doubtful origin, but applied to a tribe strong enough to be self-dependent. The "Jamarát of the Arabs" were

three, Banú Numayr, Banú Háris (who afterwards confederated with Mashíj) and Banú Dabbah (who joined the Rikáb), and at last Nomayr remained alone. Hence they said of it:

"Nomayr the jamrah (also "a live coal") of Arabs are; * And ne'er cease they to burn in fiery war."

See Chenery's Al-Hariri, p-428.

[22] In the Arab. "Ta'arkalak," which M. Houdas renders "qu'elle ne te retienne dans ses filets."

[23] A lieu commun in the East. It is the Heb. "Sháked" and the fruit is the "Loz" (Arab. Lauz)=Amygdalus communis, which the Jews looked upon as the harbinger of spring and which, at certain feasts, they still carry to the synagogue, as representing the palm branches of the Temple.

[24] The mulberry-tree in Italy will bear leaves till the end of October and the foliage is bright as any spring verdure.

[25] Gauttier omits this: pas poli, I suppose.

[26] The barbarous sentiment is Biblical-inspired, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son" (Prov. xiii. 24), and "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying" (Prov. xix. 18). Compare the Arab equivalent, "The green stick is of the trees of Paradise" (Pilgrimage i. 151). But the neater form of the saw was left to uninspired writers; witness "Spare the rod and spoil the child," which appears in Ray's proverbs, and is immortalised by Hudibras:—

> Love is a boy by poets styled,
> Then spare the rod and spoil the child. (ii. 1, 843.)

It is to the eternal credit of John Locke, the philosopher, that in an age of general brutality he had the moral courage to declare, "Beating is the worst and therefore the last means to be used in the correction of children."

[27] Arab. "Dahn" (oil, ointment) which may also mean "soft sawder."

[28] Aucun roi ne peut gouverner sans armée et on ne peut avoir une armée sans argent. For a treatise on this subject see the "Chronique de Tabari," ii. 340.

[29] M. Agoub, in Gauttier (vi. 321) remarks of these prosings, "Ces maximes qui ne seraient pas indignes, pour la plupart, des beaux temps de la philosophie grecque, appartiennent toutes au texte arabe; je n'ai fait que les disposer dans un ordre plus méthodique. J'ai dû aussi supprimer quelques unes, soit parce qu'elles n'offraient que des préceptes d'une morale banale, soit que traduites en frangais, elles eussent pû paraître bizarres à des lecteurs européens. Ce que je dis ici, s'applique également à celles qui terminent le conte et qui pourraient fournir le sujet de plusieurs fables." One would say that the translator is the author's natural enemy.

[30] Arab. "Ammál," now vulgarly written with initial Hamzah, a favourite expression in Egypt and meaning "Verily," "I believe you, my boy," and so forth. But "'Ammál" with the Ayn may also mean "he intended," or "he was about to."

[31] In Gauttier the name is Ebnazadan, but the Arab. text has "Naudán," which I take to be the Persian "New of knowledge" as opp. to Nádán, the "unknowing."

[32] In Chavis (Weber ii. 58) and Gauttier () Akis, roi de Perse. The second name may be "Shah of the Ebna" or Persian incolæ of Al-Yaman; aristocratie Persane naturalisée Arabe (Al-Mas'udi, iv. 188, etc.).

[33] i.e. the Lowland of the Eglantine or Narcissus; Nisrín is also in dictionaries an island where amber abounds. There is a shade of difference between Buk'ah and Bak'ah. The former which is the corrector form=a patch of ground, a plain (hence the Buká'a= Coelesyria), while Bak'ah=a hollow where water collects. In Chavis

we find "the plain of Harrim" and in Gauttier la plaine de Baschrin; and the appointment was "for the first of the month Niram" (Naysán).

[34] "Pharaoh," which Hebrew Holy Writ left so vague and unsatisfactory, has become with the Arabs "Fir'aun", the dynastic name of Egyptian kings, as Kisrà (Chosroës) of the Persians, Tobba of the Himyarites, Kaysar (Cæsar) of the Romans, Jalut (Goliath) of the Phoenicians, Faghfur of the Chinese, Khákán of the Tartars, Adfonsh (Alfonso) of the Spanish, and Aguetíd of the Berbers. Ibn Khaldún iv. 572.

[35] "Mizr" in Assyrian="Musur," in Heb. "Misraim" (the dual Misrs, whose duality permeated all their polity), and in Arab. "Misr," the O. Egypt. "Há káhi Ptáh" (the Land of the great God, Ptah), and the Coptic "Tá-mera"=the Land of the Nile flood, ignoring, I may add, all tradition of a Noachian or general deluge.

[36] The simplicity of old Assyrian correspondence is here well preserved, as we may see by comparing those letters with the cuneiform inscriptions, etc., by S. Abden Smith (Pfeiffer, Leipsic, 1887). One of them begins thus, "The will of the King to Sintabni-Uzur. Salutation from me to thee. May it be well with thee. Regarding Sinsarra-utzur whom thou hast sent to me, how is thy report?" etc. We find such expressions as "May the great Gods, lovers of thy reign, preserve thee an hundred years;" also "Peace to the King, my lord," etc.

[37] Arab. "Yaum al-Khamís." For the week-days see vol. vi. 190, and for a longer notice, Al-Mas'udi, iii. 422-23.

[38] In the text "Kál" (al-Ráwí), "the Reciter saith" — which formula I omit here and elsewhere.

[39] i.e. "The Father of the little Fish," in Gauttier (vii. 329) "Abou Soméika."

[40] By way of insult; as I have before noticed.

[41] He had now learned that Nadan had ruined him.

[42] The wife (in ; “Ashghaftíní”) is called “Thou hast enamoured me” from the root “Shaghaf”=violent love, joy, grief. Chavis has Zefagnie: Gauttier suppresses the name, which is not pretty. In the old version she is made aunt (father’s sister) to Sankharib.

[43] The old version attributes all this device to “Zefagnie;” thus injuring the unity and the interest of the tale.

[44] Arab. “Jund” plur. “Junúd,” a term mostly applied to regular troops under the Government, as opposed to soldiers who took service with the Amirs or great barons — a state of things still enduring in non-British India.

[45] Who thus makes a “Ma’adabah”=wake or funeral feast before his death. See vol. viii. 231.

[46] i.e. “Father of the Fishlet”, in the old version “Yapousmek” (Yá Abú Sumayk).

[47] In Chavis he becomes “an old slave, a magician, stained with the greatest crimes, who has the air and figure of Hicar.”

[48] A formula which announces the death of his supposed enemy.

[49] Arab. “ Matmúrah”=Sardábah (i. 340), a silo for storing grain, an underground cell (ii. 39).

[50] See text “Náhú” from “Nauh”=ceremonious keening for the dead. The general term for the wail is “Walwalah” or “Wilwál” (an onomatopoy) and for the public wailing-woman “Naddábah.”

[51] Here we find the Doric form “Rahúm” for “Rahím,” or it may simply be the intensive and emphatic form, as “Nazúr”=one who looks intently for “Názir,” a looker.

[52] In the old version “a tenth part of the revenues.” The “Kasím” of

the text is an unusual word which M. Houdas would render revenues en nature, as opposed to Khiráj, revenues en argent. I translate it by “tax tribute.”

[53] In text “‘Azzámín, “i.e. men who recite “‘Azm,” mostly Koranic versets which avert evil.

[54] This may either be figurative or literal — upon the ashes where the fire had been; even as the father of Sayf al-Mulúk sat upon the floor of his audience-hall (vol. vii. 314).

[55] In text “Ya’tadir” — from ‘Adr=heavy rain, boldness. But in this MS. the dots are often omitted and the word may be Ya’tazir=find excuse.

[56] In the old version the wife is made to disclose the secret of her husband being alive — again a change for the worse.

[57] Here “Wayha-v.” and before “Wayla-k”: see vols. v. 258; vii. 127 and iii. 82.

[58] The King, after the fashion of Eastern despots, never blames his own culpable folly and hastiness: this was decreed to him and to his victim by Destiny.

[59] The older version reads “Roc” and informs us that “it is a prodigious bird, found in the deserts of Africa: it will bear two hundred pounds weight; and many are of opinion that the idea of this bird is visionary.” In Weber ii. 63, this is the device of “Zafagnie,” who accompanies her husband to Egypt.

[60] This name appears to be a corruption. The sound, however, bears a suspicious resemblance to “Dabshalim” (a name most proper for such a Prince, to wit, meaning in their tongue a mighty King), who appears in chapt. i. of the “Fables of Pilpay” (Bidpai=Bidyapati=Lord of Lore?). “Dabshalímat”=the Dabshalíms, was the dynastic title of the Kings of Somanáth (Somnauth) in Western India.

[61] Arab. “Tín”=clay, mud, which would be used with the Tob (adobe, sun-dried brick) forming the walls of Egypt and Assyria. M.G. Maspero, in his excellent booklet “L’Archéologie Egyptienne” (. Paris, Quantin, 1887), illustrates this ancient industry which endures with all its gear to the present day. The average measured 22 X 11 X 14 cm.; the larger was 38 X 18 X 14 cm., with intermediate sizes. These formed the cores of temple walls, and, being revetted with granite, syenite, alabaster and other stones, made a grand show; but when the outer coat was removed they were presently weathered to the external semblance of mud-piles. Such was mostly the condition of the ruins of grand Bubastis (“Pi-Pasht”) hod. Zagázig, where excavations are still being pushed on.

[62] The old version has “Masser, Grand Cairo (in the days of the Pharaohs!); so called from having been built by Misraim, the son of Cham.”

[63] In Chavís, “Abicam, a Chaldæan astrologer;” in Gauttier “Abimacam.”

[64] In Al-Harírí () we read, “Hospitality is three days;” and a Hadís of the Prophet confirms the liberal practice of The Ignorance:— “The entertainment of a guest is three days, and the viaticum (“Jáizah”) is a day and a night, and whatso exceedeth is an alms-gift.” On the first day is shown largesse and courtesy; on the second and third the stranger is treated after the usual custom of the household, and then he is provided with rations for a day and a night. See Lane: A. Nights, i. 486; also The Nights, vol. i. 3.

[65] i.e. Not standing astraddle, or in other such indecorous attitude.

[66] Chavis, “Bilelsanam, the oracle of Bel, the chief God of the Assyrian: “Gauttier, Une idole Bíl. Bel (or Ba’al or Belus, the Phoenician and Canaanite head-god) may here represent Hobal the biggest idol in the Meccan Pantheon, which used to be borne on raids and expeditions to give plunder a religious significance. Tabari iii. 17. Evidently the author holds it to be an idol.

[67] The Syro-solar month=April; much celebrated by poets and fictionists: rain falling at such time into shells becomes pearls and upon serpents poison.

[68] The text has "Baybúnah," prop. Bábúnaj in Arab., and in Pers. "Bábúk," or "Bábúnak"=the white camomile-flower. See vol. iii. 58.

[69] "Khabata"="He (the camel) pawed the ground." The prim. sig. is to beat, secondly, it is applied to a purblind camel which beats or strikes the ground and so stumbles, or to him who bashes a tree for its leaves; and lastly to him who gets alms by begging. See Chenery's Al-Hariri, .

[70] Arab. "Karz"=moneys lent in interest and without fixed term of payment, as opp. to "Dayn."

[71] In text "Kintár"=a quintal, 98 to 99 lbs. avoir.: in round numbers a cwt. a hundred weight: see vol. ii. 233. The old version explains it by "A golden coin, equivalent to three hundred livres French (?)." About the value of the Kintár of gold, doctors differ. Some value it at 40 ounces, others make it a leathern bag containing 1,080 to 1,100 dinars, and others 100 rotls (lbs.) of precious metal; while Al-Makrizi relates that Mohammed the Apostle declared, "The Kintár of gold is twelve hundred ounces." Baron de Slane (Ibn Khaldun i. 210) computes 100 Kintárs=1 million of francs.

[72] In the text "wa lá ahad tafawwaha fina."

[73] Arab. "Falsafah"=philosophy: see vols. v. 234 and vii. 145.

[74] In the text "Fa-yatrahúna," masc. for fem.

[75] The writer probably remembered that the cat was a sacred animal amongst the Egyptians: see Herod., ii. 66, and Diod. Sic., who tells us (vol. i.) of a Roman put to death under Ptolemy Auletes for accidentally killing one of these holy beasts. The artists of Bubastis, whose ruins are now for the first time being scientifically explored, modelled the animal in bronze with an admirable art akin to nature.

[76] M. Houdas explains this miswritten passage, Quand le soleil fut levé et qu'il pénétra par ces ouvertures (lis. abkhásh, trou de flûte), il répandit le sable dans ces cylindres formés par la lumière du soleil. It is not very intelligible. I understand that the Sage went behind the Palace and drove through a mound or heap of earth a narrow hole bearing east-west, which he partially filled up with sand; and so when the sun rose the beams fell upon it and made it resemble a newly made cord of white flax. M. Agoub (in Gauttier vol. vi. 344) shirks, as he is wont to do, the whole difficulty. [The idea seems to me to be, and I believe this is also the meaning of M. Houdas, that Haykar produced streaks of light in an otherwise dark room by boring holes in the back wall, and scattered the sand over them, so that, while passing through the rays of the sun, it assumed the appearance of ropes. Hence he says mockingly to Pharaoh, "Have these ropes taken up, and each time you please I will twist thee the like of them" — reading "Aftilu," lst p. aor. instead of "Iftil", 2nd imper. — ST.)

[77] Gauttier (vi. 347), Ces présens ne sont pas dignes de lui; mais peu de chose contents les rois.

[78] Haykar is a Sage who follows the religion of nature, "Love thy friends and hate thy foes." Gauttier (vii. 349) embroiders all this with Christian and French sentiment — L'intention secrète de Heycar était de sauver la vie à l'ingrat qui avait conspiré contre la sienne. Il voulait pour toute vengeance, le mettre désormais dans l'impossibilité de nuire et l'abandonner ensuite à ses remords, persuadé que le remords n'est pas le moindre châtiment du coupable. True nonsense this when talking of a character born bad: its only remorse is not to have done worse than bad.

[79] Striking the nape being the Moslem equivalent for "boxing ears."

[80] With this formula compare Chaucer, "The Manciple's Tale."

[81] In the text "Znnákt-ha," which is unintelligible, although the sense be clear.

[82] A bird unknown to the dictionaries, apparently a species of hawk.

[83] In the text “Júrah Syán” for “Júrah Sayyál.”

[84] The tree having furnished the axe-helve.

[85] M. Houdas translates Tu as médit de moi et tu m’as accablé de tes méchancetés.

[86] In text “Alif, bá, tá, sá,” the latter written with a Sin instead of a Thá, showing the vulgar use which extends from Alexandria to Meccah.

[87] So in French, deriding the difference between written and spoken English, Ecrivez Salmonassar, prononcez crocodile.

[88] Because he owes thee more than a debt of life.

[89] i.e. “Tammat”=She (the tale) is finished.

[90] MSS. pp.217-265. See the “Arabian Tales,” translated by Robert Heron (Edinburgh M.DCC.XCII.), where it is “The Robber-Caliph; or Adventures of Haroun Alraschid, with the Princess of Persia, and the fair Zutulbé,” vol. i. p-69. Gauttier, Histoire du Khalyfe de Baghdad, vol. vii. pp.117-150.

[91] In text “Ahádís,” esp. referred to the sayings of Mohammed, and these are divided into two great sections, the “Ahádís al-Nabawí,” or the actual words pronounced by the Apostle; and the “Ahádís al-Kudus,” or the sentences attributed to the Archangel Gabriel.

[92] Heron has “the Festival of Haraphat,” adding a power of nonsense. This is the day of the sermon, when the pilgrims sleep at Muzdalifah (Pilgrimage iii. 265). Kusayy, an ancestor of the Apostle, was the first to prepare a public supper at this oratory, and the custom was kept up by Harun al-Rashid, Zubaydah and Sha’ab, mother of the Caliph al-Muktadir (Tabari ii. 368). Alms are obligatory on the two

great ‘I’ds or festivals, al-Fitr which ends the Ramazán fast and al-Kurbán during the annual Pilgrimage. The dole must consist of at least a “Sa’” = 7 lbs. in grain, dates, &c.

[93] i.e. habited themselves in the garments of little people: so to “enlarge the turband” is to assume the rank of an ‘Álim or learned man. “Jayb,” the breast of a coat is afterwards used in the sense of a pocket.

[94] Either the Caliph was persuaded that the white wrist was a “promise of better things above and below,” or he proposed marriage as a mere freak, intelligible enough when divorce costs only two words.

[95] In text “Nakdí” = the actual as opposed to the contingent dowry: sec vols. vii. 126; ix. 32.

[96] This is said in irony.

[97] In text “Basházkhín” plur. of “Bashkhánah:” see Suppl. vols. ii. 119; iii. 87.

[98] In Heron he becomes “Kassera-Abocheroan.” Anushirwan (in full Anúshínrawán = sweet of soul) is popularly supposed to have begun his rule badly after the fashion of Eastern despots, and presently to have become the justest of monarchs. Nothing of this, however, is found in Tabari (ii. 159).

[99] He was indignant because twitted with having married a beggar-maid like good King Cophetua. In Heron he is “moved by so sensible a reply.”

[100] Plur. “Katáif,” a kind of pancake made of flour and sugar (or honey) and oil or butter.

[101] Arab. “Sakká” = a water-carrier, generally a bad lot. Of the “Sakká Sharbah,” who supplies water to passengers in the streets, there is an illustration in Lane; M. E. chapt. xiv.

[102] In the text "Kahbah" an ugly word = our whore (i.e. hired woman): it is frightfully common in every-day speech. See vol. ii. 70.

[103] Arab. "Sibák" usually = a leash (for falconry, etc.).

[104] I have emphasised this detail which subsequently becomes a leading incident.

[105] Usual formulæ when a respectable person is seen drinking: the same politeness was also in use throughout the civilised parts of mediæval Europe. See the word "Hanian" (vol. ii. 5), which at Meccah and elsewhere is pronounced also "Haniyyan."

[106] In text "Yá Ta'ís," a favorite expression in this MS. Page 612 (MS.) has "Tá'ish," a clerical error, and in page 97 we have "Yá Ta'ásat-ná" = O our misery!

[107] As might a "picker-up of unconsidered trifles."

[108] In text "Akbá' wa Zarábíl." I had supposed the first to be the Pers. Kabá = a short coat or tunic, with the Arab. 'Ayn (the second is the common corruption for "Zarábín" = slaves' shoes, slippers: see vol. x. 1), but M. Hondas translates Ni calottes ni calecons, and for the former word here and in MS. p.227 he reads "'Arakiyah" = skull-cap: see vol. i. 215. ["Akbá'" is the pi. of "Kub'," which latter occurs infra, p.227 of the Ar. MS., and means, in popular language, any part of a garment covering the head, as the hood of a Burnus or the top-piece of a Kalansuwah; also a skull-cap, usually called "'Araqíyah." — ST.]

[109] Heron dubs him "Hazeb (Hájib) Yamaleddin." In text "'Alái al-Dín;" and in not a few places it is familiarly abbreviated to "'Ali" (, etc.). For the various forms of writing the name see Suppl. vol. iii. 30. The author might have told us the young Chamberlain's name Arabicè earlier in the tale; but it is the Ráwi's practice to begin with the vague and to end in specification. I have not, however, followed his example here or elsewhere.

[110] i.e. Destiny so willed it. For the Pen and the Preserved Tablet see vol. v. 322.

[111] This was the custom not only with Harun as Mr. Heron thinks, but at the Courts of the Caliphs generally.

[112] In text "Ghiyár," Arab. = any piece of dress or uniform which distinguishes a class, as the soldiery: in Pers. = a strip of yellow cloth worn by the Jews subject to the Shah.

[113] Arab. "Zarbúl tákí," the latter meaning "high-heeled." Perhaps it may signify also "fenestrated, or open-worked like a window." So "poules" or windows cut in the upper leathers of his shoes. Chaucer, The Miller's Tale.

[114] "Mayzar," in Pers. = a turband: in Arab. "Miizar" = a girdle; a waistcloth.

[115] Arab. "Kaus al-Bundúk" (or Banduk) a pellet-bow, the Italian arcobugio, the English arquebuse; for which see vol. i. 10. Usually the "Kís" is the Giberne or pellet-bag; but here it is the bow-cover. Gauttier notes (vii. 131): — Bondouk signifie en Arabe harquebuse, Albondoukani signifie l'arquebusier; c'était comme on le voit, le mot d'ordre dit Khalyfe. He supposes, then, that firelocks were known in the days of Harun al-Rashid (A.D. 786-809). Al-Bundukáni = the cross-bow man, or rather the man of the pellet-bow was, according to the Ráwí, the name by which the Caliph was known in this disguise. Al-Zahir Baybars al- Bundukdárí, the fourth Baharite Soldan (A.D. 1260-77), was so entitled because he had been a slave to a Bundukdár, an officer who may be called the Grand Master of Artillery. In Chavis and Cazotte the Caliph arms himself with a spear, takes a bow and arrow (instead of the pellet-bow that named him), disguises his complexion, dyes beard and eyebrows, dons a large coarse turband, a buff waistcoat with a broad leathern belt, a short robe of common stuff and half-boots of strong coarse leather, and thus "assumes the garb of an Arab from the desert." (!)

[116] See vol. i. 266.

[117] i.e. by the Archangel Gabriel.

[118] Arab. “Habbah” = a grain (of barley, etc.), an obolus, a mite: it is also used for a gold bead in the shape of a cube forming part of the Egyptian woman’s headdress (Lane M.E., Appendix A). As a weight it is the 48th of a dirham, the third of a kírát (carat) or 127/128 of an English grain, avoir.

[119] In text “Mahmá” = as often as = kullu-má. This is the eleventh question of the twelve in Al-Hariri, Ass. xxiv., and the sixth of Ass. xxxvi. The former runs, “What is the noun (kullu- má) which gives no sense except by the addition thereto of two words, or the shortening thereof to two letters (i.e. má); and in the first case there is adhesion and in the second compulsion?” (Chenery, p-253).

[120] In Chavis and Cazotte he looks through the key-hole which an Eastern key does not permit, the holes being in the bolt. See Index, Suppl. vol. v.

[121] In text “Kábal-ki,” which I suspect to be a clerical error for “Kátal-ki” = Allah strike thee dead. See vol. iv. 264, 265. [One of the meanings of “Mukábalah,” the third form of “kabila,” is “requital,” “retaliation.” The words in the text could therefore be translated: “may God requite thee.” — ST.]

[122] In Chavis and Cazotte she swears “by the name of God which is written on our Great Prophet’s forehead.”

[123] Arab. “Yá Luss”; for this word = the Gr. {Greek}; see
Suppl. vol. v. index.

[124] “Al-Nátúr,” the keeper, esp. of a vineyard, a word naturalized in Persian. The Caliph asks, Is this a bon> fide affair and hast thou the power to settle the matter definitely? M. Houdas translates as Les raisins sont-ils à toi, ou bien es-tu seulement la gardienne de la vigne? [The verb záraba, 3rd form, followed by the accusative, means “to join one in partnership.” The sense of the passage seems therefore to be: Dost thou own grapes thyself, or art thou (“tuzáribí,”

2 fem. sing.) in partnership with the vineyard-keeper. The word may be chosen because it admits of another interpretation, the double entendre of which might be kept up in English by using the expression “sleeping” partnership. Perhaps, however, “tuzáribí” means here simply: “Dost thou play the part of.” — ST.]

[125] The innuendo is intelligible and I may draw attention to the humorous skill with which the mother-in-law’s character is drawn.

[126] In text “Aská-hu ‘alakah” = gave him a good sound drubbing (‘alakah), as a robber would apply to a Judge had he the power.

[127] Lest he happen to meet an unveiled woman on the stairs; the usual precaution is to cry “Dastúr!” by your leave (Persian).

[128] Arab. “Khayr” — a word of good omen.

[129] In Chavis and Cazotte the mother gives her daughter’s name as Zutulbé (?) and her own Lelamain (?).

[130] In text “Waliyah” or “Waliyáh” = and why?

[131] The “Wronged” (Al-Mazlúm) refers to the Caliph who was being abused and to his coming career as a son-in-law. Gauttier, who translates the tale very perfunctorily, has Dieu protège les malheureux et les orphelins (vii. 133).

[132] This again is intended to show the masterful nature of the Caliph, and would be as much admired by the average coffee- house audience as it would stir the bile of the free and independent Briton.

[133] The “Street of the Copperas-maker”: the name, as usual, does not appear till further on in the tale.

[134] In text “Rukhám” = marble or alabaster, here used for building material: so “Murakhkhim” = a marble-cutter, means simply a stone-mason. I may here note the rediscovery of the porphyry quarries in Middle Egypt, and the gypsum a little inland of Ras Gharíb to the

West of the Suez Gulf. Both were much used by the old Egyptians, and we may now fairly expect to rediscover the lost sites, about Tunis and elsewhere in Northern Africa, whence Rosso antico and other fine stones were quarried.

[135] Arab. “Al-Hásil” also meaning the taxes, the revenue.

[136] In text “Ká’ah” = a saloon: see vols. i. 85; i. 292; and vii. 167.

[137] In the sing. “Sikálah.”

[138] The Jinn here was Curiosity, said to be a familiar of the sex feminine, but certainly not less intimate with “the opposite.”

[139] In text “Kinnab” which M. Houdas translates étoupe que l’on fixe an bout d’un roseau pour blanchir les murs.

[140] Impossible here not to see a sly hit at the Caliph and the Caliphate.

[141] The writer has omitted this incident which occurs in
Chavis and Cazotte.

[142] In the text, “Samd” = carpets and pots and pans.

[143] The Katá grouse (Tetrao alchata seu arenarius of Linn.) has often been noticed by me in Pilg. I. 226 (where my indexer called it “sand goose”) and in The Nights (vols. i. 131; iv. 111). De Sacy (Chrestom. Arab. iii p, 507-509) offers a good literary account of it: of course he cannot speak from personal experience. He begins with the Ajáib al-Makhlúkát by Al- Kazwini (ob. A.H. 674 = A.D. 1274) who tells us that the bird builds in the desert a very small nest (whence the Hadís, “Whoso shall build to Allah a mosque, be it only the bigness of a Katá’s nest, the Lord shall edify for him a palace in Paradise”); that it abandons its eggs which are sometimes buried in sand, and presently returns to them (hence the saying, “A better guide than the Katá”); that it watches at night (?) and that it frequents highways to reconnoitre travellers (? ?), an interpretation confirmed by the

Persian translator. Its short and graceful steps gave rise to the saying, “She hath the gait of a Katá,” and makes De Sacy confound the bird with the Pers. Káhú or Kabk-i-dari (partridge of the valley), which is simply the francolin, the Ital. francolino, a perdrix. The latter in Arab. Is “Durráj” (Al- Mas’udi, vii. 347): see an affecting story connected with it in the Suppl. Nights (ii. 4O-43). In the xxiiid Ass. of Al-Hariri the sagacity of the Katá is alluded to, “I crossed rocky places, to which the Katá would not find its way.” See also Ass. viii. But Mr. Chenery repeats a mistake when he says () that the bird is “never found save where there is good pasturage and water:” it haunts the wildest parts of Sind and Arabia, although it seldom strays further than 60 miles from water which it must drink every evening. I have never shot the Katá since he saved my party from a death by thirst on a return-ride from Harar (First Footsteps in E. Africa,). The bird is very swift, with a skurrying flight like a frightened Pigeon; and it comes to water regularly about dusk when it is easily “potted.”

[144] In text “Samman” for “Sammán”: Dozy gives the form “Summun” (Hondas). The literary name is “Salwà.”

[145] For Wali (at one time a Civil Governor and in other ages a Master of Police) see vol. i. 259.

[146] Prob. a corruption of the Pers. “Názuk,” adj. delicate, nice.

[147] In text “Jaftáwát,” which is, I presume, the Arab. plur. of the Turk. “Chifút” a Jew, a mean fellow. M. Hondas refers to Dozy s.v. “Jaftáh.” [The Turkish word referred to by Dozy is “Chifte” from the Persian “Juft” = a pair, any two things coupled together. “Mashá’ilíyah jaftáwát wa fánúsín” in the text would therefore be “(cresset-) bearers of double torches and lanterns,” where the plural fánúsín is remarkable as a vulgarism, instead of the Dictionary form “Fawánís.” — ST.]

[148] So in Chavis and Cazotte: Gauttier and Heron prefer (vol. i. 38) “Chamama.” They add, “That dæmon incarnate gave out himself that Satan was his father and the devil Camos (?) his brother.” The Arab

word is connected with shamma = he smelt, and suggests the policeman smoking plots.

[149] i.e. concealing the secret sins of the people. This sketch of the cad policeman will find many an original in the London force, if the small householder speak the truth.

[150] Qui n'ait un point de contact aver l'une de ces catégories — (Houdas).

[151] In the old translations "The Hazen" (Kházin = treasurer?) which wholly abolishes the double entendre.

[152] In text "Darbisí al-báb" from the Persian, "Dar bastan" = to tie up, to shut.

[153] In text "Ghaush" for "Ghaushah" = noise, row.

[154] "Akkál bula'hu" i.e. commit all manner of abominations.
"To eat skite" is to talk or act foolishly.

[155] In the old translations "Ilamir Youmis."

[156] In text "Dabbús bazdaghání," which I have translated as if from the Pers. "Bazdagh" = a file. But it may be a clerical error for "Bardawáni," the well-known city in Hindostan whose iron was famous.

[157] "Nahs" means something more than ill-omened, something nasty, foul, uncanny: see vol. i. 301.

[158] In Chavis, Heron and Co. there are two ladders to scale the garden wall and descend upon the house-terrace which apparently they do not understand to be the roof.

[159] Arab. "Al-Káfi'ah" = garde-fou, rebord d'une terrasse —
(Houdas).

[160] Our vulgar "Houri": see vols. i. 90; iii. 233. There are many

meanings of Hawar; one defines it as intense darkness of the black of the eye and corresponding whiteness; another that it is all which appears of the eye (as in the gazelle) meaning that the blackness is so large as to exclude the whiteness; whilst a third defines “Haurá” as a woman beautiful in the “Mahájir” (parts below and around the eyes which show when the face is veiled), and a fourth as one whose whiteness of eye appears in contrast with the black of the Kohl-Powder. See Chenery’s Al-Hariri, p-55.

[161] Arab. “Zalamah” = tyrants, oppressors (police and employés): see vols. i. 273, and vi. 214.

[162] In text “Kunná nu’tíhu li-ahad” = we should have given him to someone; which makes very poor sense. [The whole passage runs: “Házá allazí kasam alláh bi-hi fa-lau kána rajul jayyid ghayr luss kunná nu’tí-hu li-ahad,” which I would translate: This is he concerning whom Allah decreed (that he should be my portion, swearing:) “and if he were a good man and no thief we would have bestowed him on someone.” In “kasama” the three ideas of decreeing, giving as a share, and binding one’s self by oath are blended together. If it should appear out of place to introduce Divinity itself as speaking in this context, we must not forget that the person spoken of is no less illustrious individual than Harun al-Rashíd, and that a decidedly satirical and humorous vein runs through the whole tale. Moreover, I doubt that “li-ahad” could be used as equivalent for “li-ghayrí,” “to some other than myself,” while it frequently occurs in the emphatic sense of “one who is somebody, a person of consequence.” The damsel and her mother, on the other hand, allude repeatedly to the state of utter helplessness in which they find themselves in default of their natural protector, and which has reduced them from an exalted station to the condition of nobodies. I speak, of course, here as elsewhere, “under correction.” — ST.]

[163] In text “Hmsh.” The Dicts. give Himmas and Himmis, forms never heard, and Forsk. (Flora Ægypt.-Arab. p. lxxi.) “Homos,” also unknown. The vulg. pron. is, “Hummus” or as Lane (M.E. chapt. v.)

has it “Hommus” (chick-peas). The word applies to the pea, while “Malán” is the plant in pod. It is the cicer arietinum concerning which a classical tale is told. “Cicero (pron. Kikero) was a poor scholar in the University of Athens, wherewith his enemies in Rome used to reproach him, and as he passed through the streets would call out ‘O Cicer, Cicer, O,’ a word still used in Cambridge, and answers to a Servitor in Oxford.” Quaint this approximation between “Cicer” the vetch and “Sizar” which comes from “size” = rations, the Oxford “battel.”

[164] Arab. “Yulakkimu,” from “Lukmah” = a mouthful: see vols. i. 266; vii. 367.

[165] Arab. “Jarazat Kuzbán” (plur. or “Kazíb,” see vol. ii. 66) = long and slender sticks.

[166] i.e. a witch; see vol. viii. 131.

[167] So in the phrase “Otbah hath the colic,” first said concerning Otbah b. Rabí’a by Abú Jahl when the former advised not marching upon Badr to attack Mohammed. Tabari, vol. ii. 491.

[168] Compare the French “Brr!”

[169] i.e. to whom thou owest a debt of apology or excuse,
“Gharím” = debtor or creditor.

[170] Arab. “Juráb al-’uddah,” i.e. the manacles, fetters, etc.

[171] The following three sentences are taken from the margin of (MS.)
, and evidently belong to this place.

[172] In text “Bghb” evidently for “Baght” or preferably
“Baghtatan.”

[173] This is a twice-told tale whose telling I have lightened a little without omitting any important detail. Gauttier reduces the ending of the history to less than five pages.

[174] The normal idiom for “I accept.”

[175] In text Khila’t dakk al-Matrakah,” which I have rendered literally: it seems to signify an especial kind of brocade.

[176] The Court of Baghdad was, like the Urdú (Horde or Court) of the “Grand Mogul,” organised after the ordinance of an army in the field, with its centre, the Sovran, and two wings right and left, each with its own Wazir for Commander, and its vanguard and rearguard.

[177] Being the only son he had a voice in the disposal of his sister. The mother was the Kabírah = head of the household, in Marocco Al-Sídah = Madame mère; but she could not interfere single-handed in affairs concerning the family. See Pilgrimage, vol. iii. 198. Throughout Al-Islam in default of a father the eldest brother gives away the sisters, and if there be no brother this is done by the nearest male relation on the “sword” side. The mother has no authority in such matters nor indeed has anyone on the “spindle” side.

[178] Alluding to the Wali and his men.

[179] Arab. “Kunyah” (the pop. mispronunciation of “Kinyah”) is not used here with strict correctness. It is a fore-name or bye-name generally taken from the favourite son, Abú (father of) being prefixed. When names are written in full it begins the string, e.g., Abu Mohammed (fore-name), Kásim (true name), ibn Ali (father’s name), ibn Mohammed (grandfather’s), ibn Osman (great-grandfather), Al-Hariri (= the Silkman from the craft of the family), Al-Basri (of Bassorah). There is also the “Lakab” (sobriquet), e.g. Al-Bundukání or Badí’u’l-Zamán (Rarity of the Age), which may be placed either before or after the “Kunyah” when the latter is used alone. Chenery (Al-Hariri, p.315) confines the “Kunyah” to fore-names beginning with Abú; but it also applies to those formed with Umm (mother), Ibn (son), Bint (daughter), Akh (brother) and Ukht (sister). See vol. iv. 287. It is considered friendly and graceful to address a Moslem by this bye-name. -Gaudent prænomine molles Auriculæ.

[180] In text “Yá Kawákí,” which M. Houdas translates “O piailleur,” remarking that here it would be = poule mouillée.

[181] “‘Alakah khárijah” = an extraordinary drubbing.

[182] In text “Ij’alní fí kll,” the latter word being probably, as M. Houdas suggests, a clerical error for “Kal-a” or “Kiláa” = safety, protection.

[183] I am surprised that so learned and practical an Arabist as the Baron de Slane in his Fr. translation of Ibn Khaldún should render le surnom d’Er-Rechid (le prudent), for “The Rightly Directed,” the Orthodox (vol. ii. 237), when (ibid.) he properly translates “Al-Khulafá al-rashidín” by Les Califes qui marchent dans la voie droite.

[184] MSS. p-504. This tale is laid down on the same lines as “Abú al-Husn and his Slave-girl Tawaddud,” vol. vi. 189. It is carefully avoided by Scott, C. de Perceval, Gauttier, etc.

[185] Lit. an interpreter woman; the word is the fem. of Tarjumán, a dragoman whom Mr. Curtis calls a Drag o’ men; see vol. i. 100. It has changed wonderfully on its way from its “Semitic” home to Europe which has naturalised it as Drogman, Truchman and Dolmetsch.

[186] For this word of many senses, see vols. i. 231; ix. 221. M. Caussin de Perceval (viii. 16), quoting d’Herbelot (s.v.), notes that the Abbasides thus entitled the chief guardian of the Harem.

[187] See vols. iv. 100; viii. 268. In his Introduction () to the Assemblies of Al-Hariri Chenery says, “This prosperity had now passed away, for God had brought the people of Rum (so the Arabs call the Byzantines, whom Abú Zayd here confounds with the Franks) on the land,” etc. The confusion is not Abu Zayd’s: “Rumí” in Marocco and other archaic parts of the Moslem world is still synonymous with our “European.”

[188] This obedience to children is common in Eastern folk-lore: see

Suppl. vol. i. 143, in which the royal father orders his son to sell him. The underlying idea is that the parents find their offspring too clever for them; not, as in the "New World," that Youth is entitled to take precedence and command of Age.

[189] In text "Fa min tumma" for "thumma" — then, alors.

[190] Such as the headstall and hobbles the cords and chains for binding captives, and the mace and sword hanging to the saddle-bow.

[191] i.e. not a well-known or distinguished horseman, but a chance rider.

[192] These "letters of Mutalammis," as Arabs term our Litteræ Bellerophonteæ, or "Uriah's letters," are a lieu commun in the East and the Prince was in luck when he opened and read the epistle here given by mistake to the wrong man. Mutalammis, a poet of The Ignorance, had this sobriquet (the "frequent asker," or, as we should say, the Solicitor-General), his name being Jarír bin 'Abd al-Masíh. He was uncle to Tarafah of the Mu'-allakah or prize poem, a type of the witty dissolute bard of the jovial period before Al-Islam arose to cloud and dull man's life. One day as he was playing with other children Mutalammis was reciting a panegyric upon his favourite camel, which ran: —

I mount a he-camel, dark-red and firm-fleshed; or a she-camel of Himyar, fleet of foot and driving the pebbles with her crushing hooves.

"See the he-camel turned to a she," cried the boy, and the phrase became proverbial to express inelegant transition (Arab. Prov. ii. 246). The uncle bade his nephew put out his tongue and seeing it dark-coloured said, "That black tongue will be thy ruin!" Tarafah, who was presently entitled Ibn al-'Ishrin (the son of twenty years), grew up a model reprobate who cared nothing save for three things, "to drink the dark-red wine foaming as the water mixeth with it, to urge into the fight a broad-backed steed, and to while away the dull day with a young beauty." His apology for wilful waste is highly poetic: —

I see that the grave of the careful, the hoarder, differeth not from the grave of the debauched, the spendthrift: A hillock of earth covers this and that, with a few flat stones laid together thereon.

See the whole piece in Chenery's Al-Hariri (), from which this note is borrowed. At last uncle and nephew fled from ruin to the Court of 'Amrú bin Munzír III., King of Hira, who in the tale of Al-Mutalammis and his wife Umaymah (The Nights, vol. v. 74) is called Al-Nu'umán bin Munzir but is better known as 'Amrú bin Hind (his mother). The King, who was a derocious personage nicknamed Al-Muharrik or the Burner, because he had thrown into the fire ninety-nine men and one woman of the Tamím tribe in accordance with a vow of vengeance he had taken to slaughter a full century, made the two strangers boon-companions to his boorish brother Kábús. Tarafah, offended because kept at the tent-door whilst the master drank wine within, bitterly lampooned him together with 'Abd Amrú a friend of the King; and when this was reported his death was determined upon. Amrú, the King, seeing the anxiety of the two poets to quit his Court, offered them letters of introduction to Abú Kárib, Governor of Al-Hajar (Bahrayn) under the Persian King and they were accepted. The uncle caused his letter to be read by a youth, and finding that it was an order for his execution destroyed it and fled to Syria; but the nephew was buried alive. Amrú, the King, was afterwards slain by the poet-warrior, Amrú bin Kulthum, also of the "Mu'allakát," for an insult offered to his mother by Hind: hence the proverb, "Quicker to slay than 'Amrú bin Kulsum" (A.P. ii. 233).

[193] See vols. i. 192; iii. 14; these correspond with the "Stathmoi," Stationes, Mansiones or Castra of Herodotus, Terps. ca, and Xenophon. An. i. 2, 10.

[194] In text "Ittiká" viiith of waká: the form "Takwà" is generally used = fearing God, whereby one guards oneself from sin in this life and from retribution in the world to come.

[195] This series of puzzling questions and clever replies is still as favourite a mental exercise in the East as it was in middle-aged Europe. The riddle or conundrum began, as far as we know, with the Sphinx, through whose mouth the Greeks spoke: nothing less likely than that the grave and mysterious Scribes of Egypt should ascribe aught so puerile to the awful emblem of royal majesty — Abu Haul, the Father of Affright. Josephus relates how Solomon propounded enigmas to Hiram of Tyre which none but Abdimus, son of the captive Abdæmon, could answer. The Tale of Tawaddud offers fair specimens of such exercises, which were not disdained by the most learned of Arabian writers. See Al-Hariri's Ass. xxiv, which proposes twelve enigmas involving abstruse and technical points of Arabic, such as: "What be the word, which as ye will is a particle beloved, or the name of that which compriseth the slender-waisted milch camel!" Na'am = "Yes" or "cattle," the latter word containing the Harf, or slender camel. Chenery, .

[196] For the sundry meanings and significance of "Salám," here=Heaven's blessing, see vols. ii. 24, vi. 232.

[197] This is the nursery version of the Exodus, old as Josephus and St. Jerome, and completely changed by the light of modern learning. The Children of Israel quitted their homes about Memphis (as if a large horde of half-nomadic shepherds would be suffered in the richest and most crowded home of Egypt). They marched by the Wady Músà that debouches upon the Gulf of Suez a short way below the port now temporarily ruined by its own folly and the ill-will of M. de Lesseps; and they made the "Sea of Sedge" (Suez Gulf) through the valley bounded by what is still called Jabal 'Atákah, the Mountain of Deliverance, and its parallel range, Abu Durayj (of small steps). Here the waters were opened and the host passed over to the "Wells of Moses," erstwhile a popular picnic place on the Arabian side; but according to one local legend (for which see my Pilgrimage, i. 294-97) they crossed the sea north of Túr, the spot being still called "Birkat Far'aun"=Pharoah's Pool. Such also is the modern legend amongst the Arabs, who learned their lesson from the Christians (not the Jews) in the days when the Copts and the Greeks

(ivth century) invented “Mount Sinai.” And the reader will do well to remember that the native annalists of Ancient Egypt, which conscientiously relate all her defeats and subjugations by the Ethiopians, Persians, etc., utterly ignore the very name of Hebrew, Sons of Israel, etc.

I cannot conceal my astonishment at finding a specialist journal like the “Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund” (Oct., 1887) admitting such a paper as that entitled “The Exode,” by R. F. Hutchinson, M.D. For this writer the labours of the last half-century are non-existing. Job is still the “oldest book” in the world. The Rev. Charles Forster’s absurdity, “Israel in the wilderness,” gives valuable assistance. Goshen is Mr. Chester’s Tell Fakús (not, however, far wrong in this) instead of the long depression by the Copts still called “Gesem” or “Gesemeh,” the frontier-land through which the middle course of the Suez Canal runs. “Succoth,” tabernacles, is confounded with the Arab. “Sakf” = a roof. Letopolis, the “key of the Exode,” and identified with the site where Babylon (Old Cairo) was afterwards built, is placed on the right instead of the left bank of the Nile. “Bahr Kulzum” is the “Sea of the Swallowing-up,” in lieu of The Closing. El-Tíh, “the wandering,” is identified with Wady Musa to the west of the Suez Gulf. And so forth. What could the able Editor have been doing?

Students of this still disputed question will consult “The Shrine of Saft el-Henneh and the Land of Goschen,” by Edouard Naville, fifth Memoir of the Egypt Exploration Fund. Published by order of the Committee. London, Trübner, 1837.

[198] Eastern fable runs wild upon this subject, and indeed a larger volume could be written upon the birth, life and death of Moses’ and Aaron’s rods. There is a host of legends concerning the place where the former was cut and whence it descended to the Prophet whose shepherd’s staff was the glorification of his pastoral life (the rod being its symbol) and of his future career as a ruler (and flogger) of men. In Exodus (viii. 3-10), when a miracle was required of the brothers, Aaron’s rod became a “serpent” (A.V.) or, as some prefer, a

"crocodile," an animal worshipped by certain of the Egyptians; and when the King's magicians followed suit it swallowed up all others. Its next exploit was to turn the Nile and other waters of Egypt into blood (Exod. vii. 17). The third wonder was worked by Moses' staff, the dividing of the Red Sea (read the Sea of Sedge or papyrus, which could never have grown in the brine of the Suez Gulf) according to the command, "Lift thou up thy rod and stretch out thine hand over the sea," etc. (Exod. xiv. 15). The fourth adventure was when the rod, wherewith Moses smote the river, struck two blows on the rock in Horeb and caused water to come out of it (Numb. xxi. 8). Lastly the rod (this time again Aaron's) "budded and brought forth buds and bloomed blossoms and yielded almonds" (Numb. xvii. 7); thus becoming a testimony against the rebels: hence it was set in the Holiest of the Tabernacles (Heb. ix. 14) as a lasting memorial. I have described (Pilgrim. i. 301) the mark of Moses' rod at the little Hammam behind the old Phoenician colony of Tur, in the miscalled "Sinaitic" Peninsula: it is large enough to act mainmast for a ship. The end of the rod or rods is unknown: it died when its work was done, and like many other things, holy and unholy, which would be priceless, e.g., the true Cross or Pilate's sword, it remains only as a memory around which a host of grotesque superstitions have grouped themselves.

[199] In this word "Hayy" the Arab. and Heb. have the advantage of our English: it means either serpent or living, alive.

[200] It is nowhere said in Hebrew Holy Writ that "Pharaoh," whoever he may have been, was drowned in the "Red Sea."

[201] Arab. "Kaml." The Koranic legend of the Ant has, I repeat, been charmingly commented upon by Edwin Arnold in "Solomon and the Ant" (p.i., Pearls of the Faith). It seems to be a Talmudic exaggeration of the implied praise in Prov. vi. 6 and xxx. 25, "The ants are a people nto strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer" which, by the by, proves that the Wise King could be caught tripping in his natural history, and that they did not know everything down in Judee.

[202] Isá, according to the Moslems, was so far like Adam (Koran iii. 52) that he was not begotten in the normal way: in fact his was a miraculous conception. See vol. v. 238.

[203] For Elias, Elijah, or Khizr, a marvellous legendary figure, see vols. iv. 175; v. 334. The worship of Helios (Apollo) is not extinct in mod. Greece where it survives under the name of Elias. So Dionysus has become St. Dionysius; Bacchus the Drunken, St. George; and Artemis, St. Artemides the healer of childhood.

[204] Gesenius interprets it "Soldier of God"; the bye-name given to Jacob presently became the national name of the Twelve Tribes collectively; then it narrowed to the tribe of Judah; afterwards it became = laymen as opposed to Levites, etc., and in these days it is a polite synonym for Jew. When you want anything from any of the (self-) Chosen People you speak of him as an Israelite; when he wants anything of you, you call him a Jew, or a damned Jew, as the case may be.

[205] I am not aware that there is any general history of the bell, beginning with the rattle, the gong and other primitive forms of the article; but the subject seems worthy of a monograph. In Hebrew Writ the bell first appears in Exod. xxviii. 33 as a fringe to the Ephod of the High Priest that its tinkling might save him from intruding unwarned into the bodily presence of the tribal God, Jehovah.

[206] Gennesaret (Chinnereth, Cinneroth), where, according to some Moslems, the Solomon was buried.

[207] I cannot explain this legend.

[208] So the old English rhyme, produced for quite another purpose by Sir John Bull in "Wat Tyler's Rebellion" (Hume, Hist. of Eng., vol. i. chapt. 17): —

> "When Adam dolve and Eve span,
> Who was then the gentleman?"

A variant occurs in a MS. of the xvth century, Brit. Museum: —

> “Now bethink the gentleman,
> How Adam dalf and Eve span.”

And the German form is: —

> “So Adam reutte (reute) and Eva span
> Wwer was da ein Eddelman (Edelman)?”

[209] Plur. of “‘Usfúr” = a bird, a sparrow. The etymology is characteristically Oriental and Mediaeval, reminding us of Dan Chaucer’s meaning of Cecilia “Heaven’s lily” (Súsan) or “Way for the blind” (Cæcus) or “Thoughts of Holiness” and lia=lasting industry; or, “Heaven and Leos” (people), so that she might be named the people’s heaven (The SEcond Nonne’s Tale).

[210] i.e. “Fír is rebellious.”

[211] Both of which, I may note, are not things but states, modes or conditions of things. See. vol. ix. 78.

[212] “Salát” = the formal ceremonious prayer. I have noticed (vol. iv. 60) the sundry technical meanings of the term Salát, from Allah=Mercy; from Angel-kind=intercession and pardon, and from mankind=a blessing.

[213] Possibly “A prayer of Moses, the man of God,” the title of the highly apocryphal Psalm xc.

[214] Arab. “Libás” = clothes in general.

[215] In text “Zafar” = victory. It may also be “Zifr”=alluding to the horny matter which, according to Moslem tradition, covered the bodies of “our first parents” and of which after the “original sin” nothing remained but the nails of their fingers and toes. It was only when this disappeared that they became conscious of their nudity. So says M. Houdas; but I prefer to consider the word as Zafar=plaited

hair.

[216] According to Al-Mas’udi (i. 86, quoting Koran xxi. 52), Abraham had already received of Allah spiritual direction or divine grace (“Rushdu ‘llah” or “Al-Hudà”) which made him sinless. In this opinoin of the Imamship, says my friend Prof. A. Sprenger, the historian is more fatalistic than most Sunnis.

[217] Modern Moslems are all agreed in making Ishmael and not Issac the hero of this history: see my Pilgrimage (vol. iii. 306). But it was not always so. Al-Mas’udi (vol. ii. 146) quotes the lines of a Persian poet in A.H. 290 (=A.D. 902) which expressly say “Is’háku kána’l-Zabíh” = Isaac was the victim, and the historian refers to this in sundry places. Yet the general idea is that Ishmael succeeded his father (as eldest son) and was succeeded by Isaac; and hence the bitter family feud between the Eastern Jews and the ARab Gentiles.

[218] In text “Tajui”=lit. thou pluckest (the fruit of good deeds). M. Houdas translates Tu recueilles, mot à mot tu citeilles.

[219] See note at the end of this tale.

[220] Amongst the Jews the Temple of Jerusalem was a facsimile of the original built by Jehovah in the lowest heaven or that of the Moon. For the same idea (doubtless a derivation from the Talmud) amongst the Moslems concerning the heavenly Ka’abah called Bayt al-Ma’mur (the Populated House) see my Pilgrimage iii. 186, et seq.

[221] i.e. there is an end of the matter.

[222] In text “Massa-hu’l Fakr”=poverty touched him.

[223] He had sold his father for a horse, etc., and his mother for a fine dress.

[224] This enigma is in the style of Samson’s (Judges xiv. 12) of which we complain that the unfortuante Philistines did not possess the sole clue which could lead to the solution; and here anyone with a

modicum of common sense would have answered, “Thou art the man!” The riddles with which the Queen of Sheba visited Solomon must have been simply hard questions somewhat like those in the text; and the relator wisely refuses to record them.

[225] We should say “To eclipse the sun.”

[226] A very intelligible offer.

[227] Arab. “Bi Asri-hi,” lit. “rope and all;” metaphorically used=altogether, entirely: the idea is borrowed from the giving or selling of a beast with its thong, halter, chain, etc.

[228] In the text, “Káhin,” a Cohen, a Jewish Priest, a soothsayer: see Al-Kahánah, vol. i. 28. In Heb. Kahana=he ministered (priests’ offices or other business) and Cohen=a priest either of the true God or of false gods.

[229] This ending with its résumé of contents is somewhat hors ligne, yet despite its vain repetition I think it advisable to translate it.

[230] “And she called his name Moses, and she said because from the water I drew him” (Exod. ii. 10).

[231] The Pharoah of the Exodus is popularly supposed by Moslems to have treated his leprosy with baths of babes’ blood, the babes being of the Banú Isráíl. The word “Pharoah” is not without its etymological difficulties.

[232] Graetz (Geschichte i. note 7) proves that “Aram,” in the Hebrew text (Judges iii. 8), should be “Edom.”

[233] I give a quadruple increase, at least 25 per centum more than the genealogies warrant.

[234] MS. p-537. This story is found in the “Turkish Tales” by Petis de la Croix who translated one fourth of the “Forty Wazirs” by an author self-termed “Shaykh Zádeh.” It is called the “History of Chec

Chahabeddin" (Shaykh Shiháb al-Dín), and it has a religious significance proving that the Apostle did really and personally make the "Mi'raj" (ascent to Heaven) and returned whilst his couch was still warm and his upset gugglet had not run dry. The tale is probably borrowed from Saint Paul, who (2 Cor. xii. 4) was "caught up into Paradise," which in those days was a kind of region that roofed the earth. The Shaykh in question began by showing the Voltairean Sultan of Egypt certain specious miracles, such as a phantom army (in our tale two lions), Cairo reduced to ashes, the Nile in flood and a Garden of Irem, where before lay a desert. He then called for a tub, stripped the King to a zone girding his loins and made him dip his head into the water. Then came the adventures as in the following tale. When after a moment's space these ended, the infuriated Sultan gave orders to behead the Shaykh, who also plunged his head into the tub; but the Wizard divined the ill-intent by "Mukáshafah" (thought-reading); and by "Al-Ghayb 'an al-Absár" (invisibility) levanted to Damascus. The reader will do well to compare the older account with the "First Vizir's Story" () in Mr. Gibb's "History of the Forty Vizirs," etc. As this scholar remarks, the Mi'ráj, with all its wealth of wild fable, is simply alluded to in a detached verses of the Koran (xvii. 1) which runs: [I declare] "The glory of Him who transported His servant by night from the Sacred Temple (of Meccah) to the Remote Temple (of Jerusalem), whose precincts we have blessed, that we might show him of our signs." After this comes an allusion to Moses (v. 2); Mr. Gibb observes () that this lengthening out of the seconds was a favourite with "Dervishes," as he has shown in "The Story of Jewád ," and suggests that the effect might have been produced by some drug like Hashish. I object to Mr. Gibb's use of the word "Hour)" (ibid.) without warning the reader that it is an irregular formation, masculine withal for "Huríyah," and that the Pers. "Húri," from which the Turks borrowed their blunder, properly means "One Húr."

[235] For the Dajlah (Tigris) and Furát (Euphrates) see vols. viii. 150- ix. 17. The topothesia is worse than Shakespearean. In Weber's Edit. of the "New Arabian Nights" (Adventures of Simoustapha, etc.), the rivers are called "Ilfara" and "Aggiala."

[236] In text “Alwán,” for which see vol. vii. 135.

[237] [The word which is here translated with: “and one had said that he had laboured hard thereat (walawá’yh?) seems scarcely to bear out this meaning. I would read it “wa’l-Aw’iyah” (plur. of wi’á), rendering accordingly: “and the vessels (in which the aforesaid meats were set out) shimmered like unto silver for their cleanliness.” — ST.]

[238] In text “Al-Wahwah.”

[239] In text, “Mutasa’lik” for “Moutasa’lik” = like a “sa’lúk.”

[240] For this “high-spirited Prince and noble-minded lord” see vol. ix. 229.

[241] In text “Bisáta-hum” = their carpets.

[242] In text “Hawánít,” plur. of “Hanút” = the shop or vault of a vintner, pop. derived from the Persian Kháneh. In Jer. xxvii. 16, where the A. V. has “When Jeremiah was entered into the dungeon and into the cabins,” read “underground vaults,” cells or cellars where wine was sold. “Hanút” also means either the vintner or the vintner’s shop. The derivation because it ruins man’s property and wounds his honour is the jeu d’esprit of a moralising grammarian. Chenery’s Al-Hariri, .

[243] In the Arab. “Jawákín,” plur. of Arab. Jaukán for Pers. Chaugán, a crooked stick a club, a bat used for the Persian form of golf played on horseback — Polo.

[244] [The text reads “Liyah,” and lower down twice with the article “Al-Liyah” (double Lam). I therefore suspect that “Liyyah,” equivalent with “Luwwah,” is intended which both mean Aloes-wood as used for fumigation (yutabakhkharu bi-hi). For the next ingredient I would read “Kit’ah humrah,” a small quantity of red brickdust, a commodity to which, I do not know with what foundation, wonderful medicinal powers are or were ascribed. This

interpretation seems to me the more preferable, as it presently appears that the last-named articles had to go into the phial, the mention of which would otherwise be to no purpose and which I take to have been finally sealed up with the sealing clay. The whole description is exceedingly loose, and evidently sorely corrupted, so I think every attempt at elucidation may be acceptable. — ST.]

[245] "Wa Kíta'h hamrah," which M. Houdas renders un morceau de viande cuite.

[246] This is a specimen of the Islamised Mantra called in Sanskrit Stambhana and intended to procure illicit intercourse. Herklots has printed a variety of formulæ which are popular throughout southern India: even in the Maldive Islands we find such "Fandita" (i.e. Panditya, the learned Science) and Mr. Bell (Journ., Ceylon Br. R. A. S. vii. 109) gives the following specimen, "Write the name of the beloved; pluck a bud of the screw-pine (here a palette de mouton), sharpen a new knife, on one side of the bud write the Surat al-Badr (chapter of Power, No. xxi., thus using the word of Allah for Satan's purpose); on the other side write Vajahata; make an image out of the bud; indite particulars of the horoscope copy from beginning to end the Surat al-Rahmán (the Compassionating, No. xlviii.);, tie the image in five places with coir left-hand-twisted (i.e. widdershins or 'against the sun'); cut the throat of a blood-sucker (lizard); smear its blood on the image; place it in a loft, dry it for three days, then take it and enter the sea. If you go in knee deep the woman will send you a message; if you go in to the waist she will visit you." (The Voyage of Francois Pyrard, etc., .) I hold all these charms to be mere instruments for concentrating and intensifying the brain action called Will, which is and which presently will be recognised as the chief motor-power. See Suppl. vol. iii.

[247] Probably the name of some Prince of the Jinns.

[248] In text "Kamá zukira fí Dayli-h" = arrange-toi de facon à l'atteindre (Houdas).

[249] Proverbial for its depth: Káshán is the name of sundry cities; here one in the Jibál or Irák ‘Ajami — Persian Mesopotamia.

[250] Doubtless meaning Christians.

[251] The Sage had summoned her by the preceding spell which the Princess obeyed involuntarily.

[252] i.e., last night, see vol. iii. 249.

[253] In text “Wuldán” = “Ghilmán”: the boys of Paradise; for whom and their feminine counterparts the Húr (Al-Ayn) see vols. i. 90, 211; iii. 233.

[254] Arab. “Dukhn” = Holcus dochna, a well-known grain, a congener of the Zurrah or Durrah = Holcus Sativus, Forsk. cxxiii. The incident is not new. In “Des blaue Licht,” a Mecklenburg tale given by Grimm, the King’s daughter who is borne through the air to the soldier’s room is told by her father to fill her pocket with peas and make a hole therein; but the sole result was that the pigeons had a rare feast. See Suppl. vol. iii. 375.

[255] i.e., a martyr of love. See vols. iii. 211; i-iv. 205.

[256] In the text “Ka’ka’”; hence the higher parts of Meccah, inhabited by the Jurham tribe, was called “Jabal Ka’ka’án,” from their clashing arms (Pilgrimage iii. 191).

[257] This was the work of the form of magic popularly known as Símiyá = fascination, for which see vol. i. 305, 332. It is supposed to pass away after a period of three days, and mesmerists will find no difficulty in recognising a common effect upon “Odylic sensitives.”

[258] Here supply the MS. with “illá.”

[259] In text “tatadakhkhal’alay-h:” see “Dakhíl-ak,” vol. i. 61.

[260] Or “he”: the verb may also refer to the Sage.

[261] Arab. “Kazafa” = threw up, etc.

[262] This, in the case of the Wazir, was a transformation for the worse: see vol. vii. 294, for the different kinds of metamorphosis.

[263] i.e. my high fortune ending in the lowest.

[264] In text “Bakar” = black cattle, whether bull, ox or cow.
For ploughing with bulls.

[265] In text “Mukrif” = lit. born of a slave father and free mother.

[266] In text “Antum fí kháshin wa básh,” an error for “khásh-másh” = a miserable condition.

[267] In text “yatbashsh” for “yanbashsha.” [Or it may stand for yabtashsh, with transpositions of the “t” of the eighth form, as usual in Egypt. See Spitta-Bey’s Grammar, . — ST.]

[268] “Janánan,” which, says M. Houdas, is the vulgar form of “Jannatan” = the garden (of Paradise). The Wazir thus played a trick upon his hearers. [The word in the text may read “Jinánan,” accusative of “Jinán,” which is the broken plural of “Jannah,” along with the regular plural “Jannát,” and, like the latter, used for the gardens of Paradise. — ST.]

[269] For this name of the capital of Eastern Arabia see vols. i. 33, vii. 24.

[270] “To be” is the Anglo-Oriental form of “Thaub” = in
Arabia a loose robe like a nightgown. See ii. 206.

[271] The good old Mosaic theory of retribution confined to this life, and the belief that Fate is the fruit of man’s action.

[272] Arab. “Sandarúsah” = red juniper gum (Thuja articulata of Barbary), red arsenic realgar, from the Pers. Sandar = amber.

[273] MSS. p-724. This fable, whose moral is that the biter is often bit,

seems unknown to Æsop and the compilation which bore his name during the so-called Dark Ages. It first occurs in the old French metrical Roman de Renart entitled, Si comme Renart prist Chanticler le Coq (ea. Meon, tom. i. 49). It is then found in the collection of fables by Marie, a French poetess whose Lais are still extant; and she declares to have rendered it de l'Anglois en Roman; the original being an Anglo- Saxon version of Æsop by a King whose name is variously written Li reis Alured (Alfred ?), or Aunert (Albert ?), or Henris, or Mires. Although Alfred left no version of Æsop there is in MS. a Latin Æsop containing the same story of an English version by Rex Angliae Affrus. Marie's fable is printed in extenso in the Chaucer of Dr. Morris (i. 247); London, Bell and Sons, 1880; and sundry lines remind us of the Arabic, e.g.: —

Li gupil volt parler en haut,
Et li cocs de sa buche saut,
Sur un haut fust s'est muntez.

And it ends with the excellent moral: —

Ceo funt li fol tut le plusur,
Parolent quant deivent taiser,
Teisent quant il deivent parler.

Lastly the Gentil Cok hight Chanticlere and the Fox, Dan Russel, a more accidented tale, appears in "The Nonne Preestes Tale," by the Grand Traducteur.

[274] "Durà" in MS. () for "Zurà," the classical term, or for "Zurrah," pop. pronounced "Durrah"=the Holcus Sativus before noticed, an African as well as Asiatic growth, now being supplanted by maize and rice.

[275] "Sa'alab" or "Tha'lab": vol. iii. 132.

[276] In text "Kikán," plur. of "Kíik" =des corneilles
(Houdas).

[277] “Samman” or “Summán,” classically “Salwà.”

[278] In text “Al-Kawání”=the spears, plur. of “Kanát.” [“Al- Kawání” as plural of a singular “Kanát”=spear would be, I think, without analogy amongst the plural formations, and its translation by “punishment” appears somewhat strained. I propose to read “al-Ghawání” and to translate “and whoever lags behind of the singing birds will not be safe” (“lá yaslimu,” it will not go well with him). In the mouth of the fox this implies a delicate compliment for the cock, who might feel flattered to be numbered amongst the same tribe with the nightingale and the thrush. — ST.]

[279] In text “yá zayn” =Oh, the beautiful beast!

[280] In text “Abú Sahíh”=(flight to) a sure and safe place.

[281] MS. p-739.

[282] Arab. “Zábit,” from “Zabt”=keeping in subjection, holding tight, tying. Hence “Zabtiyah” = a constable and “Zábit” = a Prefect of Police. See vol. i. 259. The rhyming words are “Rábit” and “Hábit.”

[283] In text “Ráhib” = monk or lion.

[284] The lines are wholly corrupt.

[285] The “Bahalul” of D’Herbelot. This worthy was a half-witted Sage (like the Iourodivi of Russia and the Irish Omadhaun), who occupies his own place in contemporary histories flourished under Harun al-Rashid and still is famous in Persian Story. When the Caliph married him perforce and all the ceremonies were duly performed and he was bedded with the bride, he applied his ear to her privities and forthwith ran away with the utmost speed and alarm. They brought him back and questioned him concerning his conduct when he made answer, “ If you had only heard what it said to me you would have done likewise.” In the text his conduct is selfish and ignoble as that of Honorius

“Who strove to merit heaven by making earth a hell.”

And he shows himself heartless and unhuman as the wretched St. Alexius of the Gesta Romanorum (Tale xv.), a warning of the intense selfishness solemnly and logically inculcated by Christianity. See vol. v. 150.

[286] Koran, ch. li. v. 17.

[287] Koran xx. 57: it is the famous “Tá-Há” whose first 14-16 verses are said to have converted the hard-headed Omar. In the text the citation is garbled and imperfect.

[288] In text “Mas’h.”

[289] “Hisában tawíl” = a long punishment.

[290] The rod of Moses (see p-77) is the great prototype in Al-Islam of the staff or walking stick, hence it became a common symbol of dignity and it also served to administer ready chastisement, e.g. in the hands of austere Caliph Omar.

[291] An onomatopy like “Coüic, Coüic.” For “Maksah,” read “Fa-sáha” = and cried out.

[292] “Zindík” = Atheist, Agnostic: see vols. v. 230; viii. 27.

[293] “Harísah” = meat-pudding. In Al-Hariri (Ass. xix.) where he enumerates the several kinds of dishes with their metonomies it is called the “Mother of Strengthening” (or Restoration) because it contains wheat— “the Strengthener” (as opposed to barley and holcus). So the “Mother of Hospitality” is the Sikbáj, the Persian Sikbá, so entitled because it is the principal dish set before guests and was held to be royal food. (Chenery p, 457.) For the latter see infra.

[294] This passage in the MS. () is apparently corrupt.
I have done my best to make sense of it.

[295] In text “ Kamburisiyah.”

[296] In the Dicts. a plant with acid flavour, dried, pounded and peppered over meat.

[297] In text “Najas” = a pear.

[298] “Tutmajíyah” for “Tutmáj.”

[299] “Sikbáj,” a marinated stew like “Zirbájah” (vol. iii. 278): Khusrau Parwez, according to the historians, was the first for whom it was cooked and none ate of it without his permission. See retro.

[300] Kishk=ground wheat, oatmeal or barley-flour eaten with soured sheep’s milk and often with meat.

[301] So in text: I suspect for “‘Ajínniyah” = a dish of dough.

[302] The Golden Calf is alluded to in many Koranic passages, e.g. Súrah ii. (the Cow) 48; vii. (Al-Aaráf) 146; S. Iiv. (Woman) 152; but especially in S. xx. (Tá Há) 90, where Sámiri is expressly mentioned. Most Christian commentators translate this by “Samaritan” and unjustly note it as “ a grievous ignorance of history on the part of Mohammed.” But the word is mysterious and not explained. R. Jehuda (followed by Geiger) says upon the text (Exod. xxxii. 24), “The calf came forth lowing and the Israelites beheld it”; also that “Samael entered into it and lowed in order to mislead Israel” (Pirke R. Eliezer, 45). Many Moslems identify Samiri with Micha (Judges xvii.), who is said to have assisted in making the calf (Raschi, Sanhedr. cii. 2; Hottinger, Hist. Orient.). Selden (de Diis Syr. Syn. 1. cap.4) supposes that Samiri is Aaron himself, the Shomeer or keeper of Israel during the absence of Moses. Mr. Rodwell (Koran, 2nd Edit.) who cleaves to the “ Samaritan” theory, writes, “ It is probable (?) that the name and its application, in the present instance, is to be traced to the old national feud between the Jews and the Samaritans” — of which Mohammed, living amongst the Jews, would be at least as well informed as any modern European. He quotes De Sacy (Chrest. i. 189) who states that Abu Rayhan Mohammed Birúni

represents the Samaritans as being nicknamed (not Al-limsahsit as Mr. Rodwell has it, but) “Lá Mesas” or “Lá Mesásiyah” = the people who say “no touch” (i.e. touch me not, from Súrah xx. 97), and Juynboll, Chron. Sam. (Leid. 1848). Josephus (Ant. xii. ca) also mentions a colony of Samaritans settled in Egypt by Ptolemy Lagus, some of whose descendants inhabited Cairo as late as temp. Scaliger (De Emend. Temp. vii. 622). Sale notices a similar survival on one of the islands of the Red Sea. In these days the Samaritans or, as their enemies call them the Cuthim (“men from Cutha,” Cushites), in physical semblance typical Jews, are found only at Náblús where the colony has been reduced by intermarriage of cousins and the consequent greater number of male births to about 120 souls. They are, like the Shi’ah Moslems, careful to guard against ceremonial pollution: hence the epithet “Noli me tangere.”

[303] Alluding to the “Sayyád,” lit. = a fisherman.

[304] In text “Al-Zahr.”

[305] “Ajdár.”

[306] In text “Al-Maláya.”

[307] In text “Sinaubar,” which may also mean pistachio-tree.

[308] i.e. 475 to 478 Eng. grains avoir., less than the
Ukiyyah or Wukiyyah=ounce = 571.5 to 576 grains. Vol. ix. 216.

[309] Not more absurd than an operatic hero singing while he dies.

[310] MS. p-627. In Gauttier’s edit. vii. (234-256), it appears as Histoire de l’Habitant de Damas. His advertisement in the beginning of vol. vii. tells us that it has been printed in previous edits., but greatly improved in his; however that may be, the performance is below contempt. In Heron it becomes The POWER OF DESTINY, or Story of the Journey of Giafar to Damascus, comprehending the adventures of Chebib and his Family (Vol. i. P-175).

[311] Damascus-city (for which see the tale of Núr al-Din Ali and his Son, The Nights, vol. i. 239-240) derives its name from Dimishk who was son of Bátir, i. Málik, i. Arphaxed, i. Shám, i. Nuh (Noah); or son of Nimrod, son of Canaan. Shám = Syria (and its capital) the land on the left, as opposed to Al-Yaman the land on the right of one looking East, is noticed in vol. i. 55. In Mr. Cotheal's MS. Damascus is entitled "Shám" because it is the "Shámat" cheek-mole (beauty-spot) of Allah upon earth. "Jalak" the older name of the "Smile of the Prophet," is also noted: see vol. ii. 109.

[312] Hátim of the Tayy-tribe, proverbial for liberality.
See vols. iv. 95, and vii. 350.

[313] In Mr. Cotheal's MS. the Caliph first laughs until he falls backwards, and then after reading further, weeps until his beard in bathed.

[314] Heron inserts into his text, "It proved to be a Giaffer, famous throughout all Arabia," and informs us (?) in a foot-note that it is "Ascribed to a prince of the Barmecide race, an ancestor of the Gran Vizier Giafar." The word "Jafr" is supposed to mean a skin (camel's or dog's), prepared as parchment for writing; and Al-Jafr, the book here in question, is described as a cabalistic prognostication of all that will ever happen to the Moslems. The authorship is attributed to Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet. There are many legendary tales concerning its contents; however, all are mere inventions as the book is supposed to be kept in the Prophet's family, nor will it be fully explained until the Mahdi or Forerunner of Doomsday shall interpret its difficulties. The vulgar Moslems of India are apt to confuse Al-Jafr with Ja'afar bin Tayyár, the Jinni who is often quoted in talismans (see Herklots, p-257). D'Herbelot gives the sum of what is generally known about the "Jafr" (wa Jámi'a) under the articles "Ali" and "Gefru Giame."

[315] The father (whom Heron calls "Hichia Barmaki") spoke not at random, but guessed that the Caliph had been reading the book Al-Jafr.

[316] Heron calls Ja'afar's wife "Fatmé" from the French.

[317] This is the open grassy space on the left bank of the Baradah River, first sighted by travellers coming from Bayrút. See vol. i. 234, where it is called Al-Hasá = the Plain of Pebbles.

[318] Heron names him Chebib (Habíb) also "Xakem Tai-Chebib" = Hátim Tayy Habíb.

[319] The scene is described at full length in the Cotheal MS. with much poetry sung by a fair slave-girl and others.

[320] Again showing the date of the tale to be modern. See my Terminal Essay, .

[321] This might serve even in these days to ask a worshipful guest why he came, and what was his business — it is the address of a well-bred man to a stranger of whose rank and station he is ignorant. The vulgar would simply say, "Who art thou, and what is thy native country?"

[322] In Heron the host learns everything by the book Al-Jafr.

[323] In text "Muzawwa" which the Egyptian pronounces "Mugawwaz."

[324] Which would be necessary after car. cop. with his women.

[325] In text "Kabr al-Sitt," wherein the Sitt Zaynab, aunt to Mohammed, is supposed to lie buried. Here the cultivation begins about half a mile's ride from the Báb-al-Shághúr or S. Western gate of the city. It is mentioned by Baedeker (), and ignored by Murray, whose editor, Mr. Missionary Porter, prefers to administer the usual dainty dish of "hashed Bible."

[326] Arab. "Jámi' al-Amawí": for this Mosque, one of the

Wonders of the Moslem World, consult any Guide Book to Damascus.
See Suppl. vol. iv. Night cccxlii. In Heron it becomes the "Giamah Illamoue," one of the three most famous mosques in the world.

[327] M. houdas trasnlates "Tarz," "Márkaz" or "Mirkáz" by Un pierrre en forme de dame, instrument qui sert à enfoncer les pavés (= our "beetle"); c'est-à-dire en form de borne.

[328] For this "window-gardening," an ancient practice in the East, see vol. i. 301.

[329] Heron calls her "Negemet-il-Souper" = Najmat al-Sabáh = Constellation of Morn. In the Cotheal MS. she uses very harsh language to the stranger, "O Bull (i.e. O stupid), this be not thy house nor yet the house of thy sire," etc.; "go forth to the curse of God and get thee to Hell," etc.

[330] For "Kayf" = joy, the pleasure of living, see my Pligrimage i. 12-13.

[331] In text, "'Ayyik," or "'Ayyuk" = a hinderer (of disease) from 'Ayk or 'Auk, whence also 'Ayyúk = Capella, a bright star proverbial for its altitude, as in the Turk, saw "to give praise to the 'Ayyúk" = skies.

[332] Auspicious formulæ. The Cotheal MS. calls the physician "Dubdihkán."

[333] In text "Kullu Shayyin lí mu'as'as"; the latter from "'As'as" = to complicate a matter.

[334] A sign that he diagnosed a moral not a bodily disorder. We often find in The Nights, the doctor or the old woman distinguishing a love-fit by the pulse or similar obscure symptoms, as in the case of Seleucus, Stratonice and her step-son Antiochus — which seems to be the arch-type of these anecdotes.

[335] Arab. “Kirsh,” before explained; in Harun’s day = 3 francs.

[336] In the Cotheal MS. the recipe occupies a whole page of ludicrous items, e.g. Let him take three Miskals of pure “Union-with-the-lover,” etc.

[337] In the Cotheal MS. Attaf seeks his paternal uncle and father-in-law with the information that he is going to the Pilgrimage and Visitation.

[338] Called in the old translation or rather adaptation “Scheffander-Hassan” or simply “Scheffander” = Shahbandar Hasan, for which see vol. iv. 29. In the Cotheal MS. () he becomes the “Emir Omar, and the Báshá of Damascus” ().

[339] The passage is exceedingly misspelt. “Ammá min Maylí Binti-ka sháshí Aná Aswadu (for Sháshi M. Houdas reads “Jáshí” = my heart) Wa Taná (read “Thaná,” reputation) Binti-ka abyazu min Sháshí.”

[340] One of the formulæ of divorce.

[341] In text “Muábalár min Shaani-ka.” M. Houdas reads the first word “Muzábal” = zublán, wearied, flaccid, weak.

[342] For “Al-’iddah,” in the case of a divorcée three lunar months, for a widow four months and ten days and for a pregnant woman, the interval until her delivery, see vols. iii. 292; vi. 256; and x. 43: also Lane (M.E.) chap. iii.

[343] In text “Alfi (4th form of ‘Lafw’) Hájatan,” the reading is that of M. Houdas; and the meaning would be “what dost thou want (in the way of amusement)? I am at thy disposal.”

[344] Heron has here interpolated an adventure with a Bazar-cook and another with a Confectioner: both discover Ja’afar also by a copy of the “Giaffer” (Al-Jafr). These again are followed by an episode with a fisherman who draws in a miraculous draught by pronouncing the

letters “Gim. Bi. Ouaow” (wáw = J. B. W.), i.e. Ja’afar, Barmecide, Wazir; and discovers the Minister by a geomantic table. Then three Darvishes meet and discourse anent the virtues of “Chebib” (i.e. Attaf); and lastly come two blind men, the elder named Benphises, whose wife having studied occultism and the Dom-Daniel of Tunis, discovers Ja’afar. All this is to marshal the series of marvels and wonders upon wonders predicted to Ja’afar by his father when commanding him to visit Damascus; and I have neither space nor inclination to notice their enormous absurdities.

[345] This Governor must not be confounded with the virtuous and parsimonious Caliph of the same name the tenth of the series (reign A.D. 692-705) who before ruling studied theology at Al-Medinah and won the sobriquet of “Mosque-pigeon.” After his accession he closed the Koran saying, “Here you and I part,” and busied himself wholly with mundane matters. The Cotheal MS. mentions only the “Nabob” (Náib = lieutenant) of Syria.

[346] “Kapú” (written and pronounced Kapi in Turk.) is a door, a house or a government office and Kapújí = a porter; Kapújí-báshí = head porter; also a chamberlain in Arab. “Hájíb”; and Kapú Katkhúdási (pron. Kapi-Kyáyasí) = the agent which every Governor is obliged to keep at Constantinople.

[347] In text “Al-buyúrdi,” clerical error for “Buyúruldi” (pron. Buyúruldu) = the written order of a Governor.

[348] “Al-Yamaklak” = vivers, provaunt; from the T. “Yamak” = food, a meal.

[349] Meaning that he waived his right to it.

[350] In text “Zawádah” (gen. “Azwád” or “Azwi’dah”) = provisions, viaticum.

[351] In text “Takhtrawún”; see vols. ii. 180; v. 175. In the Cotheal MS. it is a “Haudaj” = camel-litter (vol. viii. 235).

[352] "Kubbat al-'Asáfír," now represented by the "Khan al-Asáfír," on the road from Damascus to Palmyra, about four hours' ride from and to the N. East of the Báb Túmá or N. Eastern gate. The name is found in Baedeker (). IN the C. MS. it becomes the "Thaníyyat al-'Ukáb" = the Vulture's Pass.

[353] Meaning that Attaf had not the heart to see his cousin-wife leave her home.

[354] Written in Turkish fashion with the Jím (j) and three dots instead of one. This Persian letter is still preserved in the Arabic alphabets of Marocco, Algiers, etc.

[355] In Arab. "Jinn" = spirit or energy of a man, which here corresponds with the Heb. "Aub"; so in the Hamasah the poet says, "My Jinn have not fled; my life is not blunted; my birds never drooped for fear," where, say commentators, the Arabs compare an energetic man with a Jinní or Shaytán. So the Prophet declared of Omar, "I never saw such an 'Abkarí amongst men," 'Abkar, in Yamámah, like Yabrín and Wabár near Al-Yaman, being a desolate region, the home of wicked races destroyed by Allah and now haunted by gruesome hosts of non-human nature. Chenery, p-9.

[356] In the C. MS. it is an Emir of the Emirs.

[357] Arab. "Tábah."

[358] This excellent episode is omitted in the C. MS. where
Attaf simply breaks gaol and reaching Aleppo joins a caravan to
Baghdad.

[359] In text "Katalú-ní": see vols. v. 5; vi. 171.

[360] In the C. MS. he enters a mosque and finds a Ja'ídí (vagabond) who opens his bag and draws out a loaf, a roast food, lemons, olives, cucumbers and date-cake, which suggest to Attaf, who had not eaten such things for a month, "the table of Isá bin Maryam." For the rest see Mr. Cotheal's version.

[361] The C. MS. gives the short note in full.

[362] In text "al-Towáb," Arab. plur. of the Persian and Turk. "Top." We hardly expected to find ordinance in the age of Harun al-Rashid, although according to Milton they date before the days of Adam.

[363] M. Houdas would read for "Alhy Tys" in the text "Tuhá Tays" a general feast; "Tuhá" = cooked meat and "Tays" = myriads of.

[364] M. Houdas translates les injures devancèrent les compliments, an idiom = he did not succeed in his design.

[365] "Cousin" being more polite than "wife": see vols. vi. 145; ix. 225.

[366] Les vertèbres ont fait bourrelet, says M. Houdas who adds that "Shakbán" is the end of a cloth, gown, or cloak, which is thrown over the shoulders and serves, like the "Jayb" in front, to carry small parcels, herbs, etc.

[367] In the local Min jargon, the language of Fellahs, "Addíki" = I will give thee.

[368] In text "Min al-'Án wa sá'idan;" lit. = from this moment upwards.

[369] "Tarajjum" taking refuge from Satan the Stone (Rajím). See vol. iv. 242.

[370] i.e. a descenant of Al-Háshim, great-grandfather of the Prophet. See ix. 24.

[371] In text "Shobási," for "Sobáshí" which M. Houdas translates prévôt du Palais.

[372] In the C. MS. Attaf's head was to be cut off.

[373] In the C. MS. the anagnorisis is much more detailed. Ja'afar asks Attaf if he knew a Damascus-man Attaf hight and so forth; and lastly an old man comes forward and confesses to have slain the Sharíf or

Háshimi.

[374] The drink before the meal, as is still the custom in Syria and Egypt. See vol. vii. 132.

[375] Gauttier (vii. 256), illustrating the sudden rise of low-caste and uneducated men to high degree, quotes a contemporary celebrity, the famous Mirza Mohammed Husayn Khan who, originally a Bakkál or greengrocer, was made premier of Fath Ali Shah's brilliant court, the last bright flash of Iranian splendour and autocracy. But Irán is a land upon which Nature has inscribed "Resurgam"; and despite her present abnormal position between two vast overshadowing empires — British India and Russia in Asia — she has still a part to play in history. And I may again note that Al-Islam is based upon the fundamental idea of a Republic which is, all (free) men are equal, and the lowest may aspire to the highest dignity.

[376] In text "'Aramramí."

[377] "Wa'lláha 'l-Muwaffiku 'l-Mu'in" = God prospereth and directeth, a formula often prefixed or suffixed to a book.

[378] MS. p-685. Gauttier, vii. 64-90; Histoire du Prince Habib et de la Princesse Dorrat-el-Gawas. The English translation dubs it "Story of Habib and Dorathil-goase, or the Arabian Knight" (vol. iii. 219-89); and thus degrades the high sounding name to a fair echo of Dorothy Goose. The name = Pearl of the Diver: it is also the P.N. of a treatise on desinental syntax by the grammarian-poet Al-Hariri (Chenery,).

[379] The "Banú Hilál," a famous tribe which formed part of a confederation against the Prophet on his expedition to Honayn. See Tabari, vol. iii. chapt. 32, and Doughty, Arabia Deserta (Index, B. Helal). In the text we have the vulgarism "Baní" for "Banú".

[380] Gauttier (vii. 64) clean omits the former Emir because he has nothing to do with the tale. In Heron it is the same, and the second chief is named "Emir-Ben-Hilac-Salamis"; or for shortness tout

bonnement "Salamis"; and his wife becoming Amírala which, if it mean anything, is = Colonel, or Captain R. N.

[381] ie. Moon of the Nobles.

[382] = the Beloved, le bien-aimé.

[383] As has been seen Gauttier reduces the title to "Prince." Amongst Arabs, however, it is not only a name proper but may denote any dignity from a Shaykh to a Sultan rightly so termed.

[384] For the seven handwritings see vol. iv. 196. The old English version says, "He learned the art of writing with pens cut in seven different ways." To give an idea of the style it renders the quatrain:—"Father," said the youth, "you must apply to my master, to give you the information you desire. As for me, I must long be all eye and all ear. I must learn to use my hand, before I begin to exercise my tongue, and to write my letters as pure as pearls from the water." And this is translation!

[385] I need hardly note that "Voices from the other world" are a lieu commun of so-called Spiritualism. See also vol. i. 142 and Suppl. Vol. iii.

[386] This tale and most of those in the MS. affect the Kála l-Ráwí (= quoth the reciter) showing the true use of them. See Terminal Essay, vol. x. 144.

[387] The missing apodosis would be, "You would understand the cause of my weeping."

[388] In the text there are only five lines. I have borrowed the sixth from the prose.

[389] "Dáúd" = David: see vols. ii. 286; vi. 113.

[390] For "Samharí" see vol. iv. 258.

[391] From “Rudaynah,” either a woman or a place: see vols. ii. 1; vii. 265; and for “Khatt Hajar” vol. ii. 1.

[392] This is the idiomatic meaning of the Arab word “Nizál” = dismounting to fight on foot.

[393] In the text “Akyál,” plur. of “Kayl” = Kings of the Himyarite peoples. See vol. vii. 60; here it is = the hero, the heroes.

[394] An intensive word, “on the weight,” as the Arabs say of ‘Abbás (stern-faced) and meaning “Very stern-faced, austere, grim.” In the older translations it becomes “Il Haboul” — utterly meaningless.

[395] The Arab. “Moon of the Time” becomes in the olden versions “Camaulzaman,” which means, if anything, “Complete Time,” and she is the daughter of a Jinn-King “Illabousatrous (Al-’Atrús?).” He married her to a potent monarch named “Shah-Goase” (Shah Ghawwás=King Diver), in this version “Sábúr” (Shahpur), and by him Kamar Al-Zaman became the mother of Durrat al-Ghawwas.

[396] In text “Sádát wa Ashráf:” for the technical meaning of “Sayyid” and “Sharif” see vols. iv. 170; v. 259.

[397] Gauttier, vii. 71. Les Isles Bellour. see vol. iii. 194.

[398] Heron’s “Illabousatrous”(?).

[399] In text “Zayjah,” from Pers. “Záycheh” = lit. a horoscope, a table for calculating nativities and so forth. In page 682 of the MS. the word is used = marriage-lines.

[400] In text “Snsál,” for “Salsál “ = lit. chain.

[401] In Sindbad the Seaman I have shown that riding men as asses is a facetious exaggeration of an African practice, the Minister being generally the beast of burden for the King. It was the same in the Maldive Islands. “As soon as the lord desires to land, one of the rhief Catibes (Arab. Khatíb = a preacher, not Kátib = a writer) comes

forward to offer his shoulder (a function much esteemed) and the other gets upon his shoulders; and so, with a leg on each side, he rides him horse fashion to land, and is there set down.” See , “The Voyage of François Pyrard,” etc. The volume is unusually well edited by Mr. Albert Gray, formerly of the Ceylon Civil Service, for the Hakluyt Society, MDCCCLXXXVII: it is, however, regretable that he and Mr. Bell, his collaborateur, did not trace out the Maldive words to their “Aryan” origin showing their relationship to vulgar Hindostani as Mas to Machhí (fish) from the Sanskrit Matsya.

[402] In text “Ghayth al-Hátíl = incessant rain of small drops and widely dispread. In Arab. the names for clouds, rain and all such matters important to a pastoral race are well nigh innumerable. Poetry has seized upon the material terms and has converted them into a host of metaphors; for “the genius of the Arabic language, like that of the Hebrew, is to form new ideas by giving a metaphorical signification to material objects (e.g. ‘Azud, lit. the upper arm; met. a helper).” Chenery, .

[403] In the text “To the palace:” the scribe, apparently forgetting that he is describing Badawi life, lapses at times into “decorating the capital” and “adorning the mansion,” as if treating of the normal city-life. I have not followed his example.

[404] Heron translates “A massy cuirass of Haoudi.”

[405] In text, “Inbasata ‘l-Layl al-Asá,” which M. Houdas renders et s’étendit la nuit (mère) de la tristesse.

[406] “Rauzah” in Algiers is a royal park; also a prairie, as
“Rauz al-Sanájirah,” plain of the Sinjars: Ibn Khaldun, ii. 448.

[407] The “Miskál” (for which see vols. i. 126; ix. 262) is the weight of a dinar = 1½ dirham = 71-72 grains avoir. A dose of 142 grains would kill a camel. In 1848, when we were marching up the Indus Valley under Sir Charles Napier to attack Náo Mall of Multan, the Sind Camel Corps was expected to march at the rate of some 50 miles a day, and this was done by making the animals more than half

drunk with Bhang or Indian hemp.

[408] In text, “Yakhat,” probably clerical error for “Yakhbut,” lit. = he was panting in a state of unconsciousness: see Dozy, Suppl. s. v.

[409] In text “Al-Dán, which is I presume a clerical error for “Al-Uzn” = ear. [“Dán,” with the dual “Dánayn,” and “Wudn,” with the plural “Audán,” are popular forms for the literary “Uzn.”--ST.]

[410] This name has occurred in MS. , but it is a mere nonentity until — the normal incuriousness. Heron dubs him “Rabir.”

[411] In the text “Zimmat” = obligation, protection, clientship.

[412] “Sahha ‘alakah” (=a something) “fí hazá ‘l-Amri.” The first word appears de trop being enclosed in brackets in the MS.

[413] “Wa yabkí alaykum Mabálu-h.” [For “Mabál” I would read “Wabál,” in the sense of crime or punishment, and translate: “lest the guilt of it rest upon you.” — ST.)

[414] In the text “Suwaydá” literally “a small and blackish woman”; and “Suwaydá al-Kalb” (the black one of the heart) = original sin, as we should say. [The diminutive of “Sayyid” would be “Suwayyid,” as “Kuwayyis” from “Kayyis,” and “Juwayyid” from “Jayyid” (comp. supra). “Suwayd” and “Suwaydá” are diminutives of “Aswad,” black, and its fem. “Saudá” respectively, meaning blackish. The former occurs in “Umm al-Suwayd” = anus. “Suwaydá al-Kalb” = the blackish drop of clotted blood in the heart, is synonymous with “Habbat al-Kalb” = the grain in the heart, and corresponds to our core of the heart. Metaphorically both are used for “original sin.” — ST.]

[415] “Yákah Thiyábish;” the former word being Turkish (M. Houdas).

[416] Arab. “Kaunayn” = the two entities, this world and the other

world, the past and the future, etc. Here it is opposed to “‘A’lamína,” here Awálim = the (three) worlds, for which see vol. ii. 236.

[417] In text “Changul,” again written with a three-dotted Chím.

[418] In text “Al-Mazrab” which M. Houdas translates cet endroit.

[419] In text “Yabahh” = saying “Bah, Bah!”

[420] In text “Bahr al-Azrak” = the Blue Sea, commonly applied to the Mediterranean: the origin of the epithet is readily understood by one who has seen the Atlantic or the Black Sea.

[421] i.e. “The Stubborn,” “The Obstinate.”

[422] In text “Al-Jawádit,” where M. Houdas would read “Al-Hawádith” which he renders by animaux fraîchement tués.

[423] In the text “Kabad” = the liver, the sky-vault, the handle or grasp of a bow.

[424] In the text “Míná” = a port both in old Egyptian and mod. Persian: see “Mitrahinna,” vol. ii. 257.

[425] “Al-Nakáír,” plur. of “Nakír” = a dinghy, a dug-out.

[426] For this “Pá-andáz,” as the Persians call it, see vol. iii. 141.

[427] In text “Kataba Zayjata-há,” the word has before been noticed.

[428] Again “Hizà bi-Zayjati-há” = le bonheur de ses aventures.

[429] This impalement (“Salb,” which elsewhere means crucifying, vol. iii. 25) may be a barbarous punishment but it is highly effective, which after all is its principal object. Old Mohammed Ali of Egypt never could have subjugated and disciplined the ferocious Badawi of Al-Asir, the Ophir region South of Al-Hijáz, without the free use of the stake. The banditti dared to die but they could not endure the idea

of their bodies being torn to pieces and devoured by birds and beasts. The stake commonly called “Kházúk”, is a stout pole pointed at one end, and the criminal being thrown upon his belly is held firm whilst the end is passed up his fundament. His legs and body are then lashed to it and it is raised by degrees and planted in a hole already dug, an agonising part of the process. If the operation be performed by an expert who avoids injuring any mortal part, the wretch may live for three days suffering the pangs of thirst; but a drink of water causes hemorrhage and instant death. This was the case with the young Moslem student who murdered the excellent Marshal Kleber in the garden attached to Shepherd’s Hotel, Cairo, wherein, by the by, he suffered for his patriotic crime. Death as in crucifixion is brought on by cramps and nervous exhaustion, for which see Canon Farrar (Life of Christ, ii. 392 et seqq.).

[430] Archaeological Review, July, 1888, p-342.

[431] The proper names are overrun with accents and diaeretical points, of which I have here retained but few.

[432] Particularly mentioning Syntipas, the Forty Vizirs, a Turkish romance relating to Alexander, in 120 volumes; and Mohammed al-’Aufi.

[433] Probably similar to those described in the story of the Warlock and the Cook (anteà, p-112)

[434] The last clause is very short and obscure in the French “qu’il n’a pas son satire,” but what follows shows the real meaning to be that given above. (W. F. K.)

[435] This I take to be the meaning of the words, “une autre monde sous la terre par sept fois.” (W.F.K.)

[436] Galland writes “on fait un jeu de Giret (tournoi), etc.” (W. F. K.)

[437] Perhaps an error of Galland’s. (W. F. K.)

[438] I do not know the German edition referred to.

[439] This great class of tales is quite as widely extended in the north of Europe and Asia, as in the south. We meet with them in Siberia, and they are particularly common in Lapland I believe, too, that the Indian story of the Red Swan (referred to by Longfellow, Hiawatha xii.) is only a Swan Maiden legend in a rather modified form. As usual, we find a bizarre form of the Swan Maiden story among the Samoghitians of Lithuania. The Zemyne is a one eyed venomous snake, with black blood which cures all diseases and neutralises all magic. It is an enchanted maiden; and sometimes the skin has been stolen, and she has reamed a man. But if she recovers her skin, she resumes her snake-form, and bites and kills her husband and children. Many other strange things are related of the Zemyne (Veckenstedt, Mythen, Sagen, und Legenden der Zamaiten, ii., p-152).]

[440] About twenty pounds.

[441] Spitta Bey (note) suggests that this is a reminiscence of the ancient Egyptian idea of the Scarabæus which typifies life.

[442] Southey, in his story of the Young Dragon, relates how Satan, disapproving of the rapid conversion of the inhabitants of Antioch to Christianity, laid an egg, and hatched out a dragon, which he sent to destroy the inhabitants. But a Pagan whose Christian daughter was devoted to the dragon by lot, stole the thumb from a relic (the hand of John the Baptist), as he pretended to kiss it, and cast it into the mouth of the dragon, and blew him up.

[443] This is a variant of the Nose-Tree; I do not remember another in genuine Oriental literature (cf. Nights, x., app.,).]

[444] How small the world becomes in this story!

[445] It is evident that a young she-bear is all that is meant.

[446]These Vigilants and Purifiers, with that hypocritical severity which

ever makes the worst sinner in private the most rigorous judge in public, lately had the imprudent impudence to summons a publisher who had reprinted the Decameron with the “objectionable passages” in French. Mr. Alderman Faudell Phillips had the good sense contemptuously to dismiss the summons. Englishmen are no longer what they were if they continue to tolerate this Ignoble espionnage of Vicious and prurient virtuous “Associations.” If they mean real work why do they commence by condemning scholar-like works, instead of cleansing the many foul cesspools of active vice which are a public disgrace to London.

[447] It may serve the home-artist and the home-reader to point out a few of the most erroneous The harp (i. 143) is the Irish and not the Eastern, yet the latter has been shown In i. 228; and the “Kánún “ (ii. 77) is a reproduction from Lane’s Modern Egyptians. The various Jinnís are fanciful, not traditional, as they should be (see inter alia Doughty’s Arabia Deserta, ii. 3, etc.). In i. 81 and ii. 622 appears a specimen bogie with shaven chin and “droopers” by way of beard and mustachios: mostly they have bestial or simiad countenances with rabbits’ ears, goats’ horns and so forth (i. 166, 169; ii. 97, 100), instead of faces more or less human and eyes disposed perpendicularly. The spreading yew-tree (i. 209) is utterly misplaced. In many the action is excessive, after the fashion of the Illustrateds (i. 281, 356, 410 and 565; ii. 366, 374). The scymitar and the knife, held in the left hand or slung by the left flank, are wholly out of order (i. 407 ii.281,374; iii.460) and in iii. 355, the blade is wider than the wielder’s waist. In i. 374 the astrolabe is also held in the left hand. The features are classical as those of Arsinoë, certainly not Egyptian, in i. 15; i. 479 and passim. The beggar-women must not wander with faces bare and lacking “nose-bags” as in i. 512. The Shah (i. 523) wears modern overalls strapped down over dress-bottines: Moreover he holds a straight-bladed European court-sword, which is correct in i. 527. The spears (i. 531) are European not Asiatic, much less Arabian, whose beams are often 12-15 feet long. Azíz (i. 537) has no right to tricot drawers and shoes tightened over the instep like the chaussure of European moutards: his foot (i. 540) is wholly out of drawing, like his hand, and the toes are European distortions. The

lady writing (i. 581) lacks all local colour; she should sit at squat, support the paper in the hollow of her left instead of using a portfolio, and with her right ply the reed or "pen of brass." In vol. ii. 57 the lion is an absurdum, big as a cow or a camel, and the same caricature of the King of Beasts occurs elsewhere (i. 531; ii. 557 and iii. 250). The Wazir (ii. 105) wears the striped caftan of a Cairene scribe or shopkeeper. The two birds (ii. 140) which are intended for hawks (see ii. 130) have the compact tails and the rounded-off wings of pigeons. I should pity Amjad and As'ad if packed into a "bullock trunk" like that borne by the mule in ii. 156. The Jew's daughter (ii. 185) and the Wali of Bulak (ii. 504) carry European candlesticks much improved in ii. 624. The Persian leach (ii. 195) is habited most unlike an 'Ajami, while the costume is correct in ii. 275. The Badawi mounts (ii. 263) an impossible Arab with mane and tail like the barb's in pictures. The street-dogs (ii. 265), a notable race, become European curs of low degree. The massage of the galleys (ii. 305) would suit a modern racing-yacht. Utterly out of place are the women's costumes such as the Badawi maidens (ii. 335), Rose-in Hood (ii. 565), and the girl of the Banú Odhrah (iii.250), while the Lady Zubaydah (ii. 369) is coiffee with a European coronet. The sea-going ship (ii. 615) is a Dahabiyah fit only for the Nile. The banana-trees (ii. 621) tower at least 80 feet tall and the palms and cocoa-nut trees (ii. 334; iii. 60) are indicated only by their foliage, not by their characteristic boles. The box (ii. 624) is European and modern: in the Eastern "Sakhkhárah" the lid fits into the top, thus saving it from the "baggage-smasher." In iii. 76, the elephant, single-handed, uproots a tree rivalling a century-old English oak. The camel-saddle (iii. 247) is neither Eastern nor possible for the rider, but it presently improves (iii. 424 and elsewhere). The emerging of the Merfolk (iii. 262) is a "tableau," a transformation-scene of the transpontine pantomime, and equally theatrical is the attitude of wicked Queen Láb (iii. 298), while the Jinni, snatching away Daulat Khatun (iii.341), seems to be waltzing with her in horizontal position. A sun-parasol, not a huge Oriental umbrella, is held over the King's head (iii. 377). The tail-piece, the characteristic Sphinx (iii. 383), is as badly drawn as it well can be, a vile caricature. Khalífah the Fisherman wears an English night-gown (iii. 558) with the side-locks of a Polish Jew (iii. 564).

The dancing- girl (iii. 660) is equally reprehensible in form, costume and attitude, and lastly, the Fellah ploughing (iii. 700) should wear a felt skull-cap instead of a turband, be stripped to the waist and retain nothing but a rag around the middle.

I have carefully noted these lapses and incongruities: not the less, however, I thoroughly appreciate the general excellence of the workmanship, and especially the imaginative scenery and the architectural designs of Mr. W. Harvey. He has shown the world how a work of the kind should be illustrated, and those who would surpass him have only to avoid the minor details here noticed.

[448] See in M. Zotenberg's "Ala al-Din" the text generally; also .

[449] Mr. Payne, in his Essay, vol. ix., 281, computes less than two hundred tales in all omitting the numerous incidentals; and he notices that the number corresponds with the sum of the "Night-stories" attributed to the Hazár Afsán by the learned author of the "Fihrist" (see Terminal Essay, vol. x. p). In (ibid.) he assumes the total at 264.

[450] This parlous personage thought proper to fall foul of me (wholly unprovoked) in the Athenaeum of August 25, '88. I give his production in full: —

Lord Stratford De Redcliffe.

August 18, 1888.

In the notice of Sir R. Burton's "Life" in to-day's Athenæum it is mentioned that his biographer says that Capt. Burton proposed to march with his Bashi-bazuks to the relief of Kars, but was frustrated by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, who, according to Sir Richard, "gained a prodigious reputation in Europe, chiefly by living out of it."

This is a strange inversion of facts. The proposal to relieve Kars by way of Redoutkalé and Kutais originated, not with Capt. Burton, but with the Turkish Seraskier, who recommended for this purpose the employment of Vivian’s Turkish Contingent and part of Beatson’s Horse (“his Bashi-bazuks”), in which Capt. Burton held a staff appointment. In the last days of June, 1855, General Mansfield, Lord Stratford’s military adviser, was in constant communication on this subject with the Turkish Ministers, and the details of the expedition were completely arranged to the satisfaction of military opinion, both British and Turkish, at Constantinople. Lord Stratford officially recommended the plan to his Government, and in his private letters to the Foreign Secretary strongly urged it upon him and expressed a sanguine hope of its success. But on July 14th, Lord Clarendon telegraphed: “The plan for reinforcing the army at Kars contained in your despatches of 30th June and 1st inst. is disapproved.” Lord Panmure really “frustrated” the Turkish plan; Lord Stratford never “frustrated” any attempt to succour the Army of Asia, but, contrariwise, did all in his power to forward the object.

As to the amiable reference to the Great Elchi’s reputation, no one knows better than Sir R. Burton by what queer methods reputations may be annexed, but it is strange that anyone with the reputation of a traveller should consider Constantinople to be “out of Europe.”

S. Lane-Poole.

The following was my reply: —

Lord Stratford De Redcliffe and Mr. S. Lane-Poole.

London, Aug. 26, 1888.

Will you kindly spare me space for a few lines touching matters personal?

I am again the victim (Athenæum, August 25) of that everlasting réclame. Mr. S. Lane-Poole has contracted to “do” a life of Lord Stratford, and, ergo, he condemns me in magistral tone and a style of uncalled-for impertinence, to act as his “advt.” In relating how, by order of the late General Beatson, then commanding Bash-buzuk (Bashi-bazuk is the advertiser’s own property), I volunteered to relieve Cars, how I laid the project before the "Great Eltchee," how it was received with the roughest language and how my first plan was thoroughly "frustrated." I have told a true tale, and no more. "A strange perversion of facts," cries the sapient criticaster, with that normal amenity which has won for him such honour and troops of unfriends: when his name was proposed as secretary to the R. A. S., all prophesied the speediest dissolution of that infirm body.

I am aware that Constantinople is not geographically "out of Europe." But when Mr. S. Lane-Poole shall have travelled a trifle more he may learn that ethnologically it is. In fact, most of South-Eastern Europe holds itself more or less non-European, and when a Montenegrin marries a Frenchwoman or a German, his family will tell you that he has wedded a "European."

"No one knows better than Sir R. Burton by what queer methods reputation may be annexed." Heavens, what English! And what may the man mean? But perhaps he alludes in his own silly, saltless, sneering way to my Thousand Nights and a Night, which has shown what the "Uncle and Master's" work should have been. Some two generations of poules mouillées have reprinted and republished Lane's "Arabian Notes" without having the simple honesty to correct a single bévue, or to abate one blunder; while they looked upon the Arabian Nights as their own especial rotten borough. But more of this in my tractate, "The Reviewer Reviewed," about to be printed as an appendix to my Supplemental Volume, No. vi.

Richard F. Burton.

And here is the rejoinder (Athenæum, September 8): —

Lord Stratford and Sir R. Burton.

September 4, 1888.

Sir R. Burton, like a prominent Irish politician, apparently prefers to select his own venue, and, in order to answer my letter in the Athenæum of August 25, permits himself in the Academy of

September 1 an exuberance of language which can injure no one but himself. Disregarding personalities, I observe that he advances no single fact in support of the statements which I contradicted, but merely reiterates them. It is a question between documents and Sir R. Burton's word.

S. Lane-Poole.

It is not a question between documents and my word, but rather of the use or abuse of documents by the "biographer." My volunteering for the relief of Kars was known to the whole camp at the Dardanelles, and my visit to the Embassy at Constantinople is also a matter of "documents." And when Mr. S. Lane-Poole shall have produced his I will produce mine.

[451] It appears to me that our measures, remedial and punitive, against "pornographic publications" result mainly in creating "vested interests" (that English abomination) and thus in fostering the work. The French printer, who now must give name and address, stamps upon the cover Avis aux Libraires under Edition privee and adds Ce volume ne doit pas etre mis en vente ou expose dans les lieux publics (Loi du 29 Juillet, 1881). He also prints upon the back the number of copies for sale We treat "pornology" as we handle prostitution, unwisely ignore it, well knowing the while that it is a natural and universal demand of civilised humanity; and whereas continental peoples regulate it and limit its abuses we pass it by, Pharisee-like, with nez en-l'air. Our laws upon the subject are made only to be broken, and the authorities are unwilling to persecute, because by so doing they advertise what they condemn. Thus they offer a premium to the greedy and unscrupulous publisher and immensely enhance the value of productions ("Fanny Hill" by Richard Cleland for instance) which, if allowed free publication, would fetch pence instead of pounds. With due diffidence, I suggest that the police be directed to remove from booksellers' windows and to confiscate all indecent pictures, prints and photographs; I would forbid them under penalty of heavy fines to expose immoral books for sale, and I would leave "cheap and nasty" literature to the good taste of the publisher and the

public. Thus we should also abate the scandal of providing the secretaries and officers of the various anti-vice societies with libraries of pornological works which, supposed to be escheated or burned, find their way into the virtuous hands of those who are supposed to destroy them.

[452] "Quand aux manuscrits de la rédaction égyptienne, l'omission de cet épisode parait devoir être attribuée à la tendance qui les caractérise géneralement, d'abréger et de condenser la narrative " (loc. cit. : see also).

[453] Here I would by no means assert that the subject matter of The Nights is exhausted: much has been left for future labourers. It would be easy indeed to add another five volumes to my sixteen as every complete manuscript contains more or less of novelty. Dr. Pertsch, the learned librarian of Saxe-Gotha, informs me that no less than two volumes are taken up by a variant of Judar the Egyptian (in my vol. vi. 213) and by the History of Zahir and Ali. For the Turkish version in the Bibliothèque Nationale see M. Zotenberg (p-23). The Rich MS. in the British Museum abounds in novelties, of which a specimen was given in my Prospectus to the Supplemental Volumes.

In the French Scholar's "Alâ al-Dîn" () we find the MSS. of The Nights divided into three groups. No. i. or the Asian (a total of ten specified) are mostly incomplete and usually end before the half of the text. The second is the Egyptian of modern date, characterised by an especial style and condensed narration and by the nature and ordinance of the tales, by the number of fables and historiettes, and generally by the long chivalrous Romance of Omar bin al-Nu'umán. The third group, also Egyptian, differs only in the distribution of the stories.]

[454] My late friend, who brought home 3,000 copies of inscriptions from the so-called Sinai which I would term in ancient days the Peninsula of Paran. and in our times the Peninsula of Tor.

[455] See M. Zotenberg, p, 26.

[456] M. Zotenberg () wrote la seconde moitie du xive. Siècle, but he informed me that he has found reason to antedate the text.

[457] I regret the necessity of exposing such incompetence and errors which at the time when Lane wrote were venial enough; his foolish friend, however, by unskilful and exaggerated pretensions and encomiums, compels me to lay the case before the reader.

[458] This past tense, suggesting that an act is complete, has a present sense in Arabic and must be translated accordingly.

[459] Quite untrue: the critic as usual never read and probably never saw the subject of his criticism. In this case I may invert one of my mottoes and write, “To the foul all things”

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BROUGHT TO EUROPE BY EDWARD WORTLEY MONTAGUE, ESQ.
Diruit, ćdificat, mutat quadrata rotundis.
The trail of the slow-worm is over them all.
TRIESTE, April 10th, 1888.
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M.
THE LINGUIST-DAME, THE DUENNA AND THE KING’S SON.
Trieste, October 11, 1887.
There remains one more bubble to be exploded.
THE TALE OF THE WARLOCK AND THE YOUNG COOK OF BAGHDAD.
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ANDREW LANG 1885 TRANSLATION

Andrew Lang (1844-1912) was a Scots poet, novelist, literary critic and contributor to the field of anthropology, who is now best remembered as a collector of folk and fairy tales. He was educated at St. Andrews University and at Balliol College, Oxford, where he took a first class in the final classical schools in 1868, becoming a fellow and subsequently honorary fellow of Merton College. He soon made a reputation as one of the most able and versatile writers of the day as a journalist, poet, critic and historian. His condensed translation of *One Thousand and One Nights* was published under the title *The Arabian Nights Entertainments* in 1898.

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The Story of Sidi-Nouman
The Story of Ali Colia, Merchant of Bagdad

The Enchanted Horse
The Story of Two Sisters Who Were Jealous of Their Younger Sister

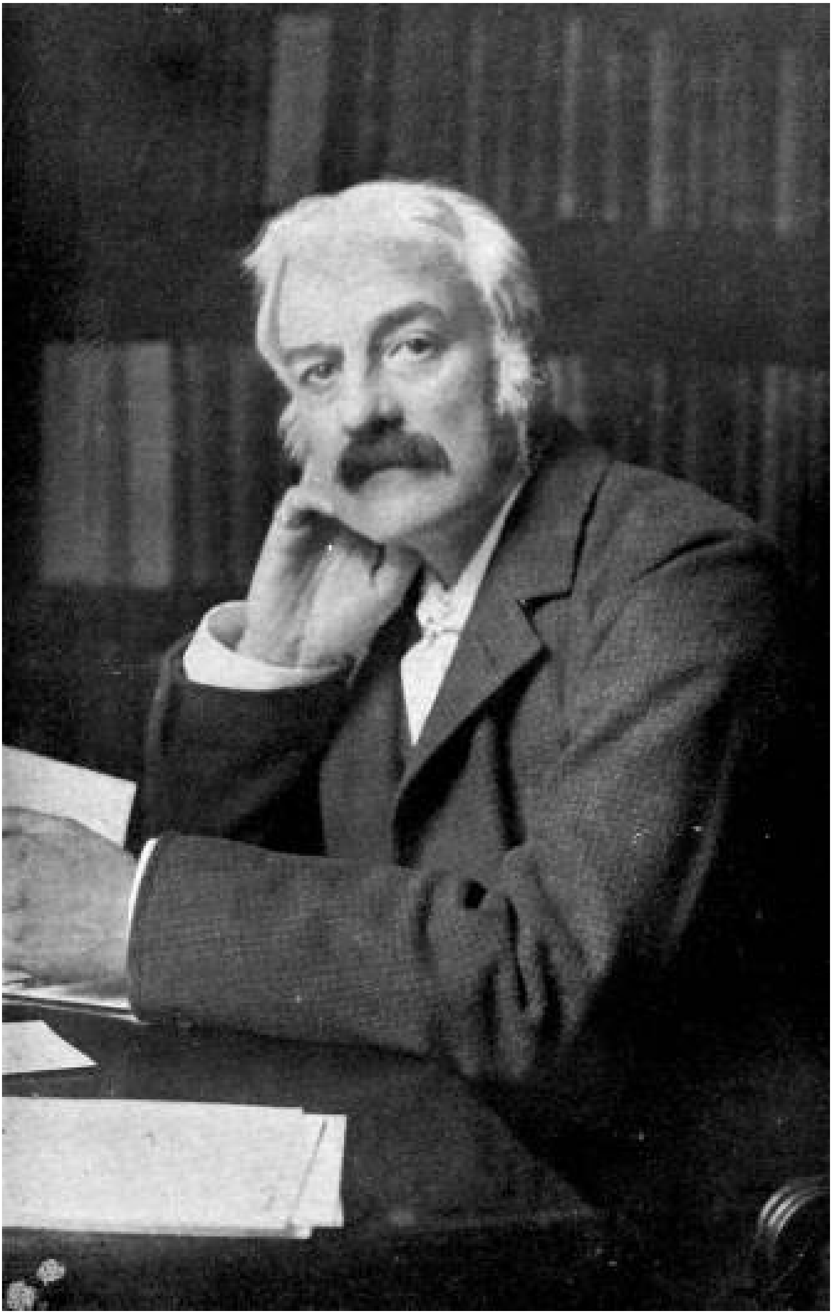

Andrew Lang, c. 1910

Preface

The stories in the Fairy Books have generally been such as old women in country places tell to their grandchildren. Nobody knows how old they are, or who told them first. The children of Ham, Shem and Japhet may have listened to them in the Ark, on wet days. Hector's little boy may have heard them in Troy Town, for it is certain that Homer knew them, and that some of them were written down in Egypt about the time of Moses.

People in different countries tell them differently, but they are always the same stories, really, whether among little Zulus, at the Cape, or little Eskimo, near the North Pole. The changes are only in matters of manners and customs; such as wearing clothes or not, meeting lions who talk in the warm countries, or talking bears in the cold countries. There are plenty of kings and queens in the fairy tales, just because long ago there were plenty of kings in the country. A gentleman who would be a squire now was a kind of king in Scotland in very old times, and the same in other places. These old stories, never forgotten, were taken down in writing in different ages, but mostly in this century, in all sorts of languages. These ancient stories are the contents of the Fairy books.

Now "The Arabian Nights," some of which, but not nearly all, are given in this volume, are only fairy tales of the East. The people of Asia, Arabia, and Persia told them in their own way, not for children, but for grown-up people. There were no novels then, nor any printed books, of course; but there were people whose profession it was to amuse men and women by telling tales. They dressed the fairy stories up, and made the characters good Mahommedans, living in Bagdad or India. The events were often supposed to happen in the reign of the great Caliph, or ruler of the Faithful, Haroun al Raschid, who lived in Bagdad in 786-808 A.D. The vizir who accompanies the Caliph was also a real person of the great family of the Barmecides. He was put to death by the Caliph in a very cruel way, nobody ever knew why. The stories must have been told in their present shape a good long while after the Caliph died, when nobody knew very exactly what had really happened. At last some storyteller thought of writing down the tales, and fixing them into a kind of framework, as if they had all been narrated to a cruel Sultan by his wife. Probably the tales were written down about the time when Edward I. was fighting Robert Bruce. But changes were made in them at different times, and a great deal that is very dull and stupid was put in, and plenty of verses. Neither the verses nor the dull pieces are given in this book.

People in France and England knew almost nothing about "The Arabian Nights" till the reigns of Queen Anne and George I., when they were translated into French by Monsieur Galland. Grown-up people were then very fond of fairy tales, and they thought these Arab stories the best that they had ever read. They were delighted with Ghouls (who lived among the tombs) and Geni, who seemed to be a kind of ogres, and with Princesses who work magic spells, and with Peris, who are Arab fairies. Sindbad had adventures which perhaps came out of the Odyssey of Homer; in fact, all the East had contributed its wonders, and sent them to Europe in one parcel. Young men once made a noise at Monsieur Galland's windows in the dead of night, and asked him to tell them one of his marvellous tales. Nobody talked of anything but dervishes and vizirs, rocs and peris. The stories were translated from French into all languages, and only Bishop Atterbury complained that the tales were not likely to be true, and had no moral. The bishop was presently banished for being on the side of Prince Charlie's father, and had leisure to repent of being so solemn.

In this book "The Arabian Nights" are translated from the French version of Monsieur Galland, who dropped out the poetry and a great deal of what the Arabian authors thought funny, though it seems wearisome to us. In this book the stories are shortened here and there, and omissions are made of pieces only suitable for Arabs and old gentlemen. The translations are by the writers of the tales in the Fairy Books, and the pictures are by Mr. Ford.

I can remember reading "The Arabian Nights" when I was six years old, in dirty yellow old volumes of small type with no pictures, and I hope children who read them with Mr. Ford's pictures will be as happy as I was then in the company of Aladdin and Sindbad the Sailor.

The Arabian Nights

In the chronicles of the ancient dynasty of the Sassanidae, who reigned for about four hundred years, from Persia to the borders of China, beyond the great river Ganges itself, we read the praises of one of the kings of this race, who was said to be the best monarch of his time. His subjects loved him, and his neighbors feared him, and when he died he left his kingdom in a more prosperous and powerful condition than any king had done before him.

The two sons who survived him loved each other tenderly, and it was a real grief to the elder, Schahriar, that the laws of the empire forbade him to share his dominions with his brother Schahzeman. Indeed, after ten years, during which this state of things had not ceased to trouble him, Schahriar cut off the country of Great Tartary from the Persian Empire and made his brother king.

Now the Sultan Schahriar had a wife whom he loved more than all the world, and his greatest happiness was to surround her with splendour, and to give her the finest dresses and the most beautiful jewels. It was therefore with the deepest shame and sorrow that he accidentally discovered, after several years, that she had deceived him completely, and her whole conduct turned out to have been so bad, that he felt himself obliged to carry out the law of the land, and order the grand-vizir to put her to death. The blow was so heavy that his mind almost gave way, and he declared that he was quite sure that at bottom all women were as wicked as the sultana, if you could only find them out, and that the fewer the world contained the better. So every evening he married a fresh wife and had her strangled the following morning before the grand-vizir, whose duty it was to provide these unhappy brides for the Sultan. The poor man fulfilled his task with reluctance, but there was no escape, and every day saw a girl married and a wife dead.

This behaviour caused the greatest horror in the town, where nothing was heard but cries and lamentations. In one house was a father weeping for the loss of his daughter, in another perhaps a mother trembling for the fate of her child; and instead of the blessings that had formerly been heaped on the Sultan's head, the air was now full of curses.

The grand-vizir himself was the father of two daughters, of whom the elder was called Scheherazade, and the younger Dinarzade. Dinarzade had no particular gifts to distinguish her from other girls, but her sister was clever and courageous in the highest degree. Her father had given her the best masters in philosophy, medicine, history and the fine arts, and besides all this, her beauty excelled that of any girl in the kingdom of Persia.

One day, when the grand-vizir was talking to his eldest daughter, who was his delight and pride, Scheherazade said to him, “Father, I have a favour to ask of you. Will you grant it to me?”

“I can refuse you nothing,” replied he, “that is just and reasonable.”

“Then listen,” said Scheherazade. “I am determined to stop this barbarous practice of the Sultan’s, and to deliver the girls and mothers from the awful fate that hangs over them.”

“It would be an excellent thing to do,” returned the grand-vizir, “but how do you propose to accomplish it?”

“My father,” answered Scheherazade, “it is you who have to provide the Sultan daily with a fresh wife, and I implore you, by all the affection you bear me, to allow the honour to fall upon me.”

“Have you lost your senses?” cried the grand-vizir, starting back in horror. “What has put such a thing into your head? You ought to know by this time what it means to be the sultan’s bride!”

“Yes, my father, I know it well,” replied she, “and I am not afraid to think of it. If I fail, my death will be a glorious one, and if I succeed I shall have done a great service to my country.”

“It is of no use,” said the grand-vizir, “I shall never consent. If the Sultan was to order me to plunge a dagger in your heart, I should have to obey. What a task for a father! Ah, if you do not fear death, fear at any rate the anguish you would cause me.”

“Once again, my father,” said Scheherazade, “will you grant me what I ask?”

“What, are you still so obstinate?” exclaimed the grand-vizir. “Why are you so resolved upon your own ruin?”

But the maiden absolutely refused to attend to her father’s words, and at length, in despair, the grand-vizir was obliged to give way, and went sadly to the palace to tell the Sultan that the following evening he would bring him Scheherazade.

The Sultan received this news with the greatest astonishment.

“How have you made up your mind,” he asked, “to sacrifice your own daughter to me?”

“Sire,” answered the grand-vizir, “it is her own wish. Even the sad fate that awaits her could not hold her back.”

“Let there be no mistake, vizir,” said the Sultan. “Remember you will have to take her life yourself. If you refuse, I swear that your head shall pay forfeit.”

“Sire,” returned the vizir. “Whatever the cost, I will obey you. Though a father, I am also your subject.” So the Sultan told the grand-vizir he might bring his daughter as soon as he liked.

The vizir took back this news to Scheherazade, who received it as if it had been the most pleasant thing in the world. She thanked her father warmly for yielding to her wishes, and, seeing him still bowed down with grief, told him that she hoped he would never repent having allowed her to marry the Sultan. Then she went to prepare herself for the marriage, and begged that her sister Dinarzade should be sent for to speak to her.

When they were alone, Scheherazade addressed her thus:

“My dear sister; I want your help in a very important affair. My father is going to take me to the palace to celebrate my marriage with the Sultan. When his Highness receives me, I shall beg him, as a last favour, to let you sleep in our chamber, so that I may have your company during the last night I am alive. If, as I hope, he grants me my wish, be sure that you wake me an hour before the dawn, and speak to me in these words: ‘My sister, if you are not asleep, I beg you, before the sun rises, to tell me one of your charming stories.’ Then I shall begin, and I hope by this means to deliver the people from the terror that reigns over them.” Dinarzade replied that she would do with pleasure what her sister wished.

When the usual hour arrived the grand-vizir conducted Scheherazade to the palace, and left her alone with the Sultan, who bade her raise her veil and was amazed at her beauty. But seeing her eyes full of tears, he asked what was the matter. “Sire,” replied Scheherazade, “I have a sister who loves me as tenderly as I love her.

Grant me the favour of allowing her to sleep this night in the same room, as it is the last we shall be together." Schahriar consented to Scheherazade's petition and Dinarzade was sent for.

An hour before daybreak Dinarzade awoke, and exclaimed, as she had promised, "My dear sister, if you are not asleep, tell me I pray you, before the sun rises, one of your charming stories. It is the last time that I shall have the pleasure of hearing you."

Scheherazade did not answer her sister, but turned to the Sultan. "Will your highness permit me to do as my sister asks?" said she.

"Willingly," he answered. So Scheherazade began.

The Story of the Merchant and the Genius

Sire, there was once upon a time a merchant who possessed great wealth, in land and merchandise, as well as in ready money. He was obliged from time to time to take journeys to arrange his affairs. One day, having to go a long way from home, he mounted his horse, taking with him a small wallet in which he had put a few biscuits and dates, because he had to pass through the desert where no food was to be got. He arrived without any mishap, and, having finished his business, set out on his return. On the fourth day of his journey, the heat of the sun being very great, he turned out of his road to rest under some trees. He found at the foot of a large walnut-tree a fountain of clear and running water. He dismounted, fastened his horse to a branch of the tree, and sat by the fountain, after having taken from his wallet some of his dates and biscuits. When he had finished this frugal meal he washed his face and hands in the fountain.

When he was thus employed he saw an enormous genius, white with rage, coming towards him, with a scimitar in his hand.

“Arise,” he cried in a terrible voice, “and let me kill you as you have killed my son!”

As he uttered these words he gave a frightful yell. The merchant, quite as much terrified at the hideous face of the monster as at his words, answered him tremblingly, “Alas, good sir, what can I have done to you to deserve death?”

“I shall kill you,” repeated the genius, “as you have killed my son.”

“But,” said the merchant, “how can I have killed your son? I do not know him, and I have never even seen him.”

“When you arrived here did you not sit down on the ground?” asked the genius, “and did you not take some dates from your wallet, and whilst eating them did not you throw the stones about?”

“Yes,” said the merchant, “I certainly did so.”

“Then,” said the genius, “I tell you you have killed my son, for whilst you were throwing about the stones, my son passed by, and one of them struck him in the eye and killed him. So I shall kill you.”

"Ah, sir, forgive me!" cried the merchant.

"I will have no mercy on you," answered the genius.

"But I killed your son quite unintentionally, so I implore you to spare my life."

"No," said the genius, "I shall kill you as you killed my son," and so saying, he seized the merchant by the arm, threw him on the ground, and lifted his sabre to cut off his head.

The merchant, protesting his innocence, bewailed his wife and children, and tried pitifully to avert his fate. The genius, with his raised scimitar, waited till he had finished, but was not in the least touched.

Scheherazade, at this point, seeing that it was day, and knowing that the Sultan always rose very early to attend the council, stopped speaking.

"Indeed, sister," said Dinarzade, "this is a wonderful story."

"The rest is still more wonderful," replied Scheherazade, "and you would say so, if the sultan would allow me to live another day, and would give me leave to tell it to you the next night."

Schahriar, who had been listening to Scheherazade with pleasure, said to himself, "I will wait till to-morrow; I can always have her killed when I have heard the end of her story."

All this time the grand-vizir was in a terrible state of anxiety. But he was much delighted when he saw the Sultan enter the council-chamber without giving the terrible command that he was expecting.

The next morning, before the day broke, Dinarzade said to her sister, "Dear sister, if you are awake I pray you to go on with your story."

The Sultan did not wait for Scheherazade to ask his leave. "Finish," said he, "the story of the genius and the merchant. I am curious to hear the end."

So Scheherazade went on with the story. This happened every morning. The Sultana told a story, and the Sultan let her live to finish it.

When the merchant saw that the genius was determined to cut off his head, he said: "One word more, I entreat you. Grant me a little delay; just a short time to go home and bid my wife and children farewell, and to make my will. When I have done this I will come back here, and you shall kill me."

"But," said the genius, "if I grant you the delay you ask, I am afraid that you will not come back."

"I give you my word of honour," answered the merchant, "that I will come back without fail."

"How long do you require?" asked the genius.

"I ask you for a year's grace," replied the merchant. "I promise you that to-morrow twelvemonth, I shall be waiting under these trees to give myself up to you."

On this the genius left him near the fountain and disappeared.

The merchant, having recovered from his fright, mounted his horse and went on his road.

When he arrived home his wife and children received him with the greatest joy. But instead of embracing them he began to weep so bitterly that they soon guessed that something terrible was the matter.

"Tell us, I pray you," said his wife, "what has happened."

"Alas!" answered her husband, "I have only a year to live."

Then he told them what had passed between him and the genius, and how he had given his word to return at the end of a year to be killed. When they heard this sad news they were in despair, and wept much.

The next day the merchant began to settle his affairs, and first of all to pay his debts. He gave presents to his friends, and large alms to the poor. He set his slaves at liberty, and provided for his wife and children. The year soon passed away, and he was obliged to depart. When he tried to say good-bye he was quite overcome with grief, and with difficulty tore himself away. At length he reached the place where he had first seen the genius, on the very day that he had appointed. He dismounted, and sat down at the edge of the fountain, where he awaited the genius in terrible suspense.

Whilst he was thus waiting an old man leading a hind came towards him. They greeted one another, and then the old man said to him, "May I ask, brother, what brought you to this desert place, where there are so many evil genii about? To see these beautiful trees one would imagine it was inhabited, but it is a dangerous place to stop long in."

The merchant told the old man why he was obliged to come there.

He listened in astonishment.

“This is a most marvellous affair. I should like to be a witness of your interview with the genius.” So saying he sat down by the merchant.

While they were talking another old man came up, followed by two black dogs. He greeted them, and asked what they were doing in this place. The old man who was leading the hind told him the adventure of the merchant and the genius. The second old man had not sooner heard the story than he, too, decided to stay there to see what would happen. He sat down by the others, and was talking, when a third old man arrived. He asked why the merchant who was with them looked so sad. They told him the story, and he also resolved to see what would pass between the genius and the merchant, so waited with the rest.

They soon saw in the distance a thick smoke, like a cloud of dust. This smoke came nearer and nearer, and then, all at once, it vanished, and they saw the genius, who, without speaking to them, approached the merchant, sword in hand, and, taking him by the arm, said, “Get up and let me kill you as you killed my son.”

The merchant and the three old men began to weep and groan.

Then the old man leading the hind threw himself at the monster’s feet and said, “O Prince of the Genii, I beg of you to stay your fury and to listen to me. I am going to tell you my story and that of the hind I have with me, and if you find it more marvellous than that of the merchant whom you are about to kill, I hope that you will do away with a third part of his punishment?”

The genius considered some time, and then he said, “Very well, I agree to this.”

The Story of the First Old Man and of the Hind

I am now going to begin my story (said the old man), so please attend.

This hind that you see with me is my wife. We have no children of our own, therefore I adopted the son of a favorite slave, and determined to make him my heir.

My wife, however, took a great dislike to both mother and child, which she concealed from me till too late. When my adopted son was about ten years old I was obliged to go on a journey. Before I went I entrusted to my wife's keeping both the mother and child, and begged her to take care of them during my absence, which lasted a whole year. During this time she studied magic in order to carry out her wicked scheme. When she had learnt enough she took my son into a distant place and changed him into a calf. Then she gave him to my steward, and told him to look after a calf she had bought. She also changed the slave into a cow, which she sent to my steward.

When I returned I inquired after my slave and the child. "Your slave is dead," she said, "and as for your son, I have not seen him for two months, and I do not know where he is."

I was grieved to hear of my slave's death, but as my son had only disappeared, I thought I should soon find him. Eight months, however, passed, and still no tidings of him; then the feast of Bairam came.

To celebrate it I ordered my steward to bring me a very fat cow to sacrifice. He did so. The cow that he brought was my unfortunate slave. I bound her, but just as I was about to kill her she began to low most piteously, and I saw that her eyes were streaming with tears. It seemed to me most extraordinary, and, feeling a movement of pity, I ordered the steward to lead her away and bring another. My wife, who was present, scoffed at my compassion, which made her malice of no avail. "What are you doing?" she cried. "Kill this cow. It is the best we have to sacrifice."

To please her, I tried again, but again the animal's lows and tears disarmed me.

"Take her away," I said to the steward, "and kill her; I cannot."

The steward killed her, but on skinning her found that she was nothing but bones, although she appeared so fat. I was vexed.

“Keep her for yourself,” I said to the steward, “and if you have a fat calf, bring that in her stead.”

In a short time he brought a very fat calf, which, although I did not know it, was my son. It tried hard to break its cord and come to me. It threw itself at my feet, with its head on the ground, as if it wished to excite my pity, and to beg me not to take away its life.

I was even more surprised and touched at this action than I had been at the tears of the cow.

“Go,” I said to the steward, “take back this calf, take great care of it, and bring me another in its place instantly.”

As soon as my wife heard me speak this she at once cried out, “What are you doing, husband? Do not sacrifice any calf but this.”

“Wife,” I answered, “I will not sacrifice this calf,” and in spite of all her remonstrances, I remained firm.

I had another calf killed; this one was led away. The next day the steward asked to speak to me in private.

“I have come,” he said, “to tell you some news which I think you will like to hear. I have a daughter who knows magic. Yesterday, when I was leading back the calf which you refused to sacrifice, I noticed that she smiled, and then directly afterwards began to cry. I asked her why she did so.”

“Father,” she answered, “this calf is the son of our master. I smile with joy at seeing him still alive, and I weep to think of his mother, who was sacrificed yesterday as a cow. These changes have been wrought by our master’s wife, who hated the mother and son.”

“At these words, of Genius,” continued the old man, “I leave you to imagine my astonishment. I went immediately with the steward to speak with his daughter myself. First of all I went to the stable to see my son, and he replied in his dumb way to all my caresses. When the steward’s daughter came I asked her if she could change my son back to his proper shape.”

“Yes, I can,” she replied, “on two conditions. One is that you will give him to me for a husband, and the other is that you will let me punish the woman who changed him into a calf.”

“To the first condition,” I answered, “I agree with all my heart, and I will give you an ample dowry. To the second I also agree, I only beg you to spare her life."

"That I will do," she replied; "I will treat her as she treated your son."

Then she took a vessel of water and pronounced over it some words I did not understand; then, on throwing the water over him, he became immediately a young man once more.

"My son, my dear son," I exclaimed, kissing him in a transport of joy. "This kind maiden has rescued you from a terrible enchantment, and I am sure that out of gratitude you will marry her."

He consented joyfully, but before they were married, the young girl changed my wife into a hind, and it is she whom you see before you. I wished her to have this form rather than a stranger one, so that we could see her in the family without repugnance.

Since then my son has become a widower and has gone travelling. I am now going in search of him, and not wishing to confide my wife to the care of other people, I am taking her with me. Is this not a most marvellous tale?

"It is indeed," said the genius, "and because of it I grant to you the third part of the punishment of this merchant."

When the first old man had finished his story, the second, who was leading the two black dogs, said to the genius, "I am going to tell you what happened to me, and I am sure that you will find my story even more astonishing than the one to which you have just been listening. But when I have related it, will you grant me also the third part of the merchant's punishment?"

"Yes," replied the genius, "provided that your story surpasses that of the hind."

With this agreement the second old man began in this way.

The Story of the Second Old Man, and of the Two Black Dogs

Great prince of the genii, you must know that we are three brothers — these two black dogs and myself. Our father died, leaving us each a thousand sequins. With this sum we all three took up the same profession, and became merchants. A short time after we had opened our shops, my eldest brother, one of these two dogs, resolved to travel in foreign countries for the sake of merchandise. With this intention he sold all he had and bought merchandise suitable to the voyages he was about to make. He set out, and was away a whole year. At the end of this time a beggar came to my shop. “Good-day,” I said. “Good-day,” he answered; “is it possible that you do not recognise me?” Then I looked at him closely and saw he was my brother. I made him come into my house, and asked him how he had fared in his enterprise.

“Do not question me,” he replied, “see me, you see all I have. It would but renew my trouble to tell of all the misfortunes that have befallen me in a year, and have brought me to this state.”

I shut up my shop, paid him every attention, taking him to the bath, giving him my most beautiful robes. I examined my accounts, and found that I had doubled my capital — that is, that I now possessed two thousand sequins. I gave my brother half, saying: “Now, brother, you can forget your losses.” He accepted them with joy, and we lived together as we had before.

Some time afterwards my second brother wished also to sell his business and travel. My eldest brother and I did all we could to dissuade him, but it was of no use. He joined a caravan and set out. He came back at the end of a year in the same state as his elder brother. I took care of him, and as I had a thousand sequins to spare I gave them to him, and he re-opened his shop.

One day, my two brothers came to me to propose that we should make a journey and trade. At first I refused to go. “You travelled,” I said, “and what did you gain?” But they came to me repeatedly, and after having held out for five years I at last gave way. But when they had made their preparation, and they began to buy the merchandise we needed, they found they had spent every piece of the thousand sequins I had given them. I did not reproach them. I divided my six thousand sequins with them, giving a thousand to each and keeping one for myself, and the other three I buried in a corner of my house. We bought merchandise, loaded a vessel with it, and set forth with a favorable wind.

After two months' sailing we arrived at a seaport, where we disembarked and did a great trade. Then we bought the merchandise of the country, and were just going to sail once more, when I was stopped on the shore by a beautiful though poorly dressed woman. She came up to me, kissed my hand, and implored me to marry her, and take her on board. At first I refused, but she begged so hard and promised to be such a good wife to me, that at last I consented. I got her some beautiful dresses, and after having married her, we embarked and set sail. During the voyage, I discovered so many good qualities in my wife that I began to love her more and more. But my brothers began to be jealous of my prosperity, and set to work to plot against my life. One night when we were sleeping they threw my wife and myself into the sea. My wife, however, was a fairy, and so she did not let me drown, but transported me to an island. When the day dawned, she said to me,

"When I saw you on the sea-shore I took a great fancy to you, and wished to try your good nature, so I presented myself in the disguise you saw. Now I have rewarded you by saving your life. But I am very angry with your brothers, and I shall not rest till I have taken their lives."

I thanked the fairy for all that she had done for me, but I begged her not to kill my brothers.

I appeased her wrath, and in a moment she transported me from the island where we were to the roof of my house, and she disappeared a moment afterwards. I went down, and opened the doors, and dug up the three thousand sequins which I had buried. I went to the place where my shop was, opened it, and received from my fellow-merchants congratulations on my return. When I went home, I saw two black dogs who came to meet me with sorrowful faces. I was much astonished, but the fairy who reappeared said to me, "Do not be surprised to see these dogs; they are your two brothers. I have condemned them to remain for ten years in these shapes." Then having told me where I could hear news of her, she vanished.

The ten years are nearly passed, and I am on the road to find her. As in passing I met this merchant and the old man with the hind, I stayed with them.

This is my history, O prince of genii! Do you not think it is a most marvellous one?

"Yes, indeed," replied the genius, "and I will give up to you the third of the merchant's punishment."

Then the third old man made the genius the same request as the other two had done, and the genius promised him the last third of the merchant's punishment if his story surpassed both the others.

So he told his story to the genius, but I cannot tell you what it was, as I do not know.

But I do know that it was even more marvellous than either of the others, so that the genius was astonished, and said to the third old man, "I will give up to you the third part of the merchant's punishment. He ought to thank all three of you for having interested yourselves in his favour. But for you, he would be here no longer."

So saying, he disappeared, to the great joy of the company. The merchant did not fail to thank his friends, and then each went on his way. The merchant returned to his wife and children, and passed the rest of his days happily with them.

"But, sire," added Scheherazade, "however beautiful are the stories I have just told you, they cannot compare with the story of the Fisherman."

The Story of the Fisherman

Sire, there was once upon a time a fisherman so old and so poor that he could scarcely manage to support his wife and three children. He went every day to fish very early, and each day he made a rule not to throw his nets more than four times. He started out one morning by moonlight and came to the sea-shore. He undressed and threw his nets, and as he was drawing them towards the bank he felt a great weight. He though he had caught a large fish, and he felt very pleased. But a moment afterwards, seeing that instead of a fish he only had in his nets the carcase of an ass, he was much disappointed.

Vexed with having such a bad haul, when he had mended his nets, which the carcase of the ass had broken in several places, he threw them a second time. In drawing them in he again felt a great weight, so that he thought they were full of fish. But he only found a large basket full of rubbish. He was much annoyed.

"O Fortune," he cried, "do not trifle thus with me, a poor fisherman, who can hardly support his family!"

So saying, he threw away the rubbish, and after having washed his nets clean of the dirt, he threw them for the third time. But he only drew in stones, shells, and mud. He was almost in despair.

Then he threw his nets for the fourth time. When he thought he had a fish he drew them in with a great deal of trouble. There was no fish however, but he found a yellow pot, which by its weight seemed full of something, and he noticed that it was fastened and sealed with lead, with the impression of a seal. He was delighted. "I will sell it to the founder," he said; "with the money I shall get for it I shall buy a measure of wheat."

He examined the jar on all sides; he shook it to see if it would rattle. But he heard nothing, and so, judging from the impression of the seal and the lid, he thought there must be something precious inside. To find out, he took his knife, and with a little trouble he opened it. He turned it upside down, but nothing came out, which surprised him very much. He set it in front of him, and whilst he was looking at it attentively, such a thick smoke came out that he had to step back a pace or two. This smoke rose up to the clouds, and stretching over the sea and the shore, formed a thick mist, which caused the fisherman much astonishment. When all the smoke was out of the jar it gathered itself together, and became a thick mass in which appeared a genius, twice as large as the largest giant. When he saw such a terrible-looking monster, the fisherman would like to have run away, but he trembled so with fright that he could not move a step.

"Great king of the genii," cried the monster, "I will never again disobey you!"

At these words the fisherman took courage.

"What is this you are saying, great genius? Tell me your history and how you came to be shut up in that vase."

At this, the genius looked at the fisherman haughtily. "Speak to me more civilly," he said, "before I kill you."

"Alas! why should you kill me?" cried the fisherman. "I have just freed you; have you already forgotten that?"

"No," answered the genius; "but that will not prevent me from killing you; and I am only going to grant you one favour, and that is to choose the manner of your death."

"But what have I done to you?" asked the fisherman.

"I cannot treat you in any other way," said the genius, "and if you would know why, listen to my story.

"I rebelled against the king of the genii. To punish me, he shut me up in this vase of copper, and he put on the leaden cover his seal, which is enchantment enough to prevent my coming out. Then he had the vase thrown into the sea. During the first period of my captivity I vowed that if anyone should free me before a hundred years were passed, I would make him rich even after his death. But that century passed, and no one freed me. In the second century I vowed that I would give all the treasures in the world to my deliverer; but he never came.

"In the third, I promised to make him a king, to be always near him, and to grant him three wishes every day; but that century passed away as the other two had done, and I remained in the same plight. At last I grew angry at being captive for so long, and I vowed that if anyone would release me I would kill him at once, and would only allow him to choose in what manner he should die. So you see, as you have freed me to-day, choose in what way you will die."

The fisherman was very unhappy. "What an unlucky man I am to have freed you! I implore you to spare my life."

"I have told you," said the genius, "that it is impossible. Choose quickly; you are wasting time."

The fisherman began to devise a plot.

"Since I must die," he said, "before I choose the manner of my death, I conjure you on your honour to tell me if you really were in that vase?"

"Yes, I was," answered the genius.

"I really cannot believe it," said the fisherman. "That vase could not contain one of your feet even, and how could your whole body go in? I cannot believe it unless I see you do the thing."

Then the genius began to change himself into smoke, which, as before, spread over the sea and the shore, and which, then collecting itself together, began to go back into the vase slowly and evenly till there was nothing left outside. Then a voice came from the vase which said to the fisherman, "Well, unbelieving fisherman, here I am in the vase; do you believe me now?"

The fisherman instead of answering took the lid of lead and shut it down quickly on the vase.

"Now, O genius," he cried, "ask pardon of me, and choose by what death you will die! But no, it will be better if I throw you into the sea whence I drew you out, and I will build a house on the shore to warn fishermen who come to cast their nets here, against fishing up such a wicked genius as you are, who vows to kill the man who frees you."

At these words the genius did all he could to get out, but he could not, because of the enchantment of the lid.

Then he tried to get out by cunning.

"If you will take off the cover," he said, "I will repay you."

"No," answered the fisherman, "if I trust myself to you I am afraid you will treat me as a certain Greek king treated the physician Douban. Listen, and I will tell you."

The Story of the Greek King and the Physician Douban

In the country of Zouman, in Persia, there lived a Greek king. This king was a leper, and all his doctors had been unable to cure him, when a very clever physician came to his court.

He was very learned in all languages, and knew a great deal about herbs and medicines.

As soon as he was told of the king's illness he put on his best robe and presented himself before the king. "Sire," said he, "I know that no physician has been able to cure your majesty, but if you will follow my instructions, I will promise to cure you without any medicines or outward application."

The king listened to this proposal.

"If you are clever enough to do this," he said, "I promise to make you and your descendants rich for ever."

The physician went to his house and made a polo club, the handle of which he hollowed out, and put in it the drug he wished to use. Then he made a ball, and with these things he went the next day to the king.

He told him that he wished him to play at polo. Accordingly the king mounted his horse and went into the place where he played. There the physician approached him with the bat he had made, saying, "Take this, sire, and strike the ball till you feel your hand and whole body in a glow. When the remedy that is in the handle of the club is warmed by your hand it will penetrate throughout your body. The you must return to your palace, bathe, and go to sleep, and when you awake to-morrow morning you will be cured."

The king took the club and urged his horse after the ball which he had thrown. He struck it, and then it was hit back by the courtiers who were playing with him. When he felt very hot he stopped playing, and went back to the palace, went into the bath, and did all that the physician had said. The next day when he arose he found, to his great joy and astonishment, that he was completely cured. When he entered his audience-chamber all his courtiers, who were eager to see if the wonderful cure had been effected, were overwhelmed with joy.

The physician Douban entered the hall and bowed low to the ground. The king, seeing him, called him, made him sit by his side, and showed him every mark of honour.

That evening he gave him a long and rich robe of state, and presented him with two thousand sequins. The following day he continued to load him with favours.

Now the king had a grand-vizir who was avaricious, and envious, and a very bad man. He grew extremely jealous of the physician, and determined to bring about his ruin.

In order to do this he asked to speak in private with the king, saying that he had a most important communication to make.

"What is it?" asked the king.

"Sire," answered the grand-vizir, "it is most dangerous for a monarch to confide in a man whose faithfulness is not proved, You do not know that this physician is not a traitor come here to assassinate you."

"I am sure," said the king, "that this man is the most faithful and virtuous of men. If he wished to take my life, why did he cure me? Cease to speak against him. I see what it is, you are jealous of him; but do not think that I can be turned against him. I remember well what a vizir said to King Sindbad, his master, to prevent him from putting the prince, his son, to death."

What the Greek king said excited the vizir's curiosity, and he said to him, "Sire, I beg your majesty to have the condescension to tell me what the vizir said to King Sindbad."

"This vizir," he replied, "told King Sindbad that one ought not believe everything that a mother-in-law says, and told him this story."

The Story of the Husband and the Parrot

A good man had a beautiful wife, whom he loved passionately, and never left if possible. One day, when he was obliged by important business to go away from her, he went to a place where all kinds of birds are sold and bought a parrot. This parrot not only spoke well, but it had the gift of telling all that had been done before it. He brought it home in a cage, and asked his wife to put it in her room, and take great care of it while he was away. Then he departed. On his return he asked the parrot what had happened during his absence, and the parrot told him some things which made him scold his wife.

She thought that one of her slaves must have been telling tales of her, but they told her it was the parrot, and she resolved to revenge herself on him.

When her husband next went away for one day, she told on slave to turn under the bird's cage a hand-mill; another to throw water down from above the cage, and a third to take a mirror and turn it in front of its eyes, from left to right by the light of a candle. The slaves did this for part of the night, and did it very well.

The next day when the husband came back he asked the parrot what he had seen. The bird replied, "My good master, the lightning, thunder and rain disturbed me so much all night long, that I cannot tell you what I have suffered."

The husband, who knew that it had neither rained nor thundered in the night, was convinced that the parrot was not speaking the truth, so he took him out of the cage and threw him so roughly on the ground that he killed him. Nevertheless he was sorry afterwards, for he found that the parrot had spoken the truth.

"When the Greek king," said the fisherman to the genius, "had finished the story of the parrot, he added to the vizir, "And so, vizir, I shall not listen to you, and I shall take care of the physician, in case I repent as the husband did when he had killed the parrot." But the vizir was determined. "Sire," he replied, "the death of the parrot was nothing. But when it is a question of the life of a king it is better to sacrifice the innocent than save the guilty. It is no uncertain thing, however. The physician, Douban, wishes to assassinate you. My zeal prompts me to disclose this to your Majesty. If I am wrong, I deserve to be punished as a vizir was once punished." "What had the vizir done," said the Greek king, "to merit the punishment?" "I will tell your Majesty, if you will do me the honour to listen," answered the vizir."

The Story of the Vizir Who Was Punished

There was once upon a time a king who had a son who was very fond of hunting. He often allowed him to indulge in this pastime, but he had ordered his grand-vizir always to go with him, and never to lose sight of him. One day the huntsman roused a stag, and the prince, thinking that the vizir was behind, gave chase, and rode so hard that he found himself alone. He stopped, and having lost sight of it, he turned to rejoin the vizir, who had not been careful enough to follow him. But he lost his way. Whilst he was trying to find it, he saw on the side of the road a beautiful lady who was crying bitterly. He drew his horse's rein, and asked her who she was and what she was doing in this place, and if she needed help. "I am the daughter of an Indian king," she answered, "and whilst riding in the country I fell asleep and tumbled off. My horse has run away, and I do not know what has become of him."

The young prince had pity on her, and offered to take her behind him, which he did. As they passed by a ruined building the lady dismounted and went in. The prince also dismounted and followed her. To his great surprise, he heard her saying to some one inside, "Rejoice my children; I am bringing you a nice fat youth." And other voices replied, "Where is he, mamma, that we may eat him at once, as we are very hungry?"

The prince at once saw the danger he was in. He now knew that the lady who said she was the daughter of an Indian king was an ogress, who lived in desolate places, and who by a thousand wiles surprised and devoured passers-by. He was terrified, and threw himself on his horse. The pretended princess appeared at this moment, and seeing that she had lost her prey, she said to him, "Do not be afraid. What do you want?"

"I am lost," he answered, "and I am looking for the road."

"Keep straight on," said the ogress, "and you will find it."

The prince could hardly believe his ears, and rode off as hard as he could. He found his way, and arrived safe and sound at his father's house, where he told him of the danger he had run because of the grand-vizir's carelessness. The king was very angry, and had him strangled immediately.

“Sire,” went on the vizir to the Greek king, “to return to the physician, Douban. If you do not take care, you will repent of having trusted him. Who knows what this remedy, with which he has cured you, may not in time have a bad effect on you?”

The Greek king was naturally very weak, and did not perceive the wicked intention of his vizir, nor was he firm enough to keep to his first resolution.

“Well, vizir,” he said, “you are right. Perhaps he did come to take my life. He might do it by the mere smell of one of his drugs. I must see what can be done.”

“The best means, sire, to put your life in security, is to send for him at once, and to cut off his head directly he comes,” said the vizir.

“I really think,” replied the king, “that will be the best way.”

He then ordered one of his ministers to fetch the physician, who came at once.

“I have had you sent for,” said the king, “in order to free myself from you by taking your life.”

The physician was beyond measure astonished when he heard he was to die.

“What crimes have I committed, your majesty?”

“I have learnt,” replied the king, “that you are a spy, and intend to kill me. But I will be first, and kill you. Strike,” he added to an executioner who was by, “and rid me of this assassin.”

At this cruel order the physician threw himself on his knees. “Spare my life,” he cried, “and yours will be spared.”

The fisherman stopped here to say to the genius: “You see what passed between the Greek king and the physician has just passed between us two. The Greek king,” he went on, “had no mercy on him, and the executioner bound his eyes.”

All those present begged for his life, but in vain.

The physician on his knees, and bound, said to the king: “At least let me put my affairs in order, and leave my books to persons who will make good use of them. There is one which I should like to present to your majesty. It is very precious, and ought to be kept carefully in your treasury. It contains many curious things the chief being that when you cut off my head, if your majesty will turn to the sixth leaf, and read the third line of the left-hand page, my head will answer all the questions you like to ask it."

The king, eager to see such a wonderful thing, put off his execution to the next day, and sent him under a strong guard to his house. There the physician put his affairs in order, and the next day there was a great crowd assembled in the hall to see his death, and the doings after it. The physician went up to the foot of the throne with a large book in his hand. He carried a basin, on which he spread the covering of the book, and presenting it to the king, said: "Sire, take this book, and when my head is cut off, let it be placed in the basin on the covering of this book; as soon as it is there, the blood will cease to flow. Then open the book, and my head will answer your questions. But, sire, I implore your mercy, for I am innocent."

"Your prayers are useless, and if it were only to hear your head speak when you are dead, you should die."

So saying, he took the book from the physician's hands, and ordered the executioner to do his duty.

The head was so cleverly cut off that it fell into the basin, and directly the blood ceased to flow. Then, to the great astonishment of the king, the eyes opened, and the head said, "Your majesty, open the book." The king did so, and finding that the first leaf stuck against the second, he put his finger in his mouth, to turn it more easily. He did the same thing till he reached the sixth page, and not seeing any writing on it, "Physician," he said, "there is no writing."

"Turn over a few more pages," answered the head. The king went on turning, still putting his finger in his mouth, till the poison in which each page was dipped took effect. His sight failed him, and he fell at the foot of his throne.

When the physician's head saw that the poison had taken effect, and that the king had only a few more minutes to live, "Tyrant," it cried, "see how cruelty and injustice are punished."

Scarcely had it uttered these words than the king died, and the head lost also the little life that had remained in it.

That is the end of the story of the Greek king, and now let us return to the fisherman and the genius.

"If the Greek king," said the fisherman, "had spared the physician, he would not have thus died. The same thing applies to you. Now I am going to throw you into the sea."

"My friend," said the genius, "do not do such a cruel thing. Do not treat me as Imma treated Ateca."

"What did Imma do to Ateca?" asked the fisherman.

"Do you think I can tell you while I am shut up in here?" replied the genius. "Let me out, and I will make you rich."

The hope of being no longer poor made the fisherman give way.

"If you will give me your promise to do this, I will open the lid. I do not think you will dare to break your word."

The genius promised, and the fisherman lifted the lid. He came out at once in smoke, and then, having resumed his proper form, the first thing he did was to kick the vase into the sea. This frightened the fisherman, but the genius laughed and said, "Do not be afraid; I only did it to frighten you, and to show you that I intend to keep my word; take your nets and follow me."

He began to walk in front of the fisherman, who followed him with some misgivings. They passed in front of the town, and went up a mountain and then down into a great plain, where there was a large lake lying between four hills.

When they reached the lake the genius said to the fisherman, "Throw your nets and catch fish."

The fisherman did as he was told, hoping for a good catch, as he saw plenty of fish. What was his astonishment at seeing that there were four quite different kinds, some white, some red, some blue, and some yellow. He caught four, one of each colour. As he had never seen any like them he admired them very much, and he was very pleased to think how much money he would get for them.

"Take these fish and carry them to the Sultan, who will give you more money for them than you have ever had in your life. You can come every day to fish in this lake, but be careful not to throw your nets more than once every day, otherwise some harm will happen to you. If you follow my advice carefully you will find it good."

Saying these words, he struck his foot against the ground, which opened, and when he had disappeared, it closed immediately.

The fisherman resolved to obey the genius exactly, so he did not cast his nets a second time, but walked into the town to sell his fish at the palace.

When the Sultan saw the fish he was much astonished. He looked at them one after the other, and when he had admired them long enough, “Take these fish,” he said to his first vizir, “and given them to the clever cook the Emperor of the Greeks sent me. I think they must be as good as they are beautiful.”

The vizir took them himself to the cook, saying, “Here are four fish that have been brought to the Sultan. He wants you to cook them.”

Then he went back to the Sultan, who told him to give the fisherman four hundred gold pieces. The fisherman, who had never before possessed such a large sum of money at once, could hardly believe his good fortune. He at once relieved the needs of his family, and made good use of it.

But now we must return to the kitchen, which we shall find in great confusion. The cook, when she had cleaned the fish, put them in a pan with some oil to fry them. When she thought them cooked enough on one side she turned them on the other. But scarcely had she done so when the walls of the kitchen opened, and there came out a young and beautiful damsel. She was dressed in an Egyptian dress of flowered satin, and she wore earrings, and a necklace of white pearls, and bracelets of gold set with rubies, and she held a wand of myrtle in her hand.

She went up to the pan, to the great astonishment of the cook, who stood motionless at the sight of her. She struck one of the fish with her rod, “Fish, fish,” said she, “are you doing your duty?” The fish answered nothing, and then she repeated her question, whereupon they all raised their heads together and answered very distinctly, “Yes, yes. If you reckon, we reckon. If you pay your debts, we pay ours. If you fly, we conquer, and we are content.”

When they had spoken the girl upset the pan, and entered the opening in the wall, which at once closed, and appeared the same as before.

When the cook had recovered from her fright she lifted up the fish which had fallen into the ashes, but she found them as black as cinders, and not fit to serve up to the Sultan. She began to cry.

“Alas! what shall I say to the Sultan? He will be so angry with me, and I know he will not believe me!”

Whilst she was crying the grand-vizir came in and asked if the fish were ready. She told him all that had happened, and he was much surprised. He sent at once for the fisherman, and when he came said to him, “Fisherman, bring me four more fish like you have brought already, for an accident has happened to them so that they cannot be served up to the Sultan.”

The fisherman did not say what the genius had told him, but he excused himself from bringing them that day on account of the length of the way, and he promised to bring them next day.

In the night he went to the lake, cast his nets, and on drawing them in found four fish, which were like the others, each of a different colour.

He went back at once and carried them to the grand-vizir as he had promised.

He then took them to the kitchen and shut himself up with the cook, who began to cook them as she had done the four others on the previous day. When she was about to turn them on the other side, the wall opened, the damsel appeared, addressed the same words to the fish, received the same answer, and then overturned the pan and disappeared.

The grand-vizir was filled with astonishment. “I shall tell the Sultan all that has happened,” said he. And he did so.

The Sultan was very much astounded, and wished to see this marvel for himself. So he sent for the fisherman, and asked him to procure four more fish. The fisherman asked for three days, which were granted, and he then cast his nets in the lake, and again caught four different coloured fish. The sultan was delighted to see he had got them, and gave him again four hundred gold pieces.

As soon as the Sultan had the fish he had them carried to his room with all that was needed to cook them.

Then he shut himself up with the grand-vizir, who began to prepare them and cook them. When they were done on one side he turned them over on the other. Then the wall of the room opened, but instead of the maiden a black slave came out. He was enormously tall, and carried a large green stick with which he touched the fish, saying in a terrible voice, “Fish, fish, are you doing your duty?” To these words the fish lifting up their heads replied, “Yes, yes. If you reckon, we reckon. If you pay your debts, we pay ours. If you fly, we conquer, and are content."

The black slave overturned the pan in the middle of the room, and the fish were turned to cinders. Then he stepped proudly back into the wall, which closed round him.

"After having seen this," said the Sultan, "I cannot rest. These fish signify some mystery I must clear up."

He sent for the fisherman. "Fisherman," he said, "the fish you have brought us have caused me some anxiety. Where did you get them from?"

"Sire," he answered, "I got them from a lake which lies in the middle of four hills beyond yonder mountains."

"Do you know this lake?" asked the Sultan of the grand-vizir.

"No; though I have hunted many times round that mountain, I have never heard of it," said the vizir.

As the fisherman said it was only three hours' journey away, the sultan ordered his whole court to mount and ride thither, and the fisherman led them.

They climbed the mountain, and then, on the other side, saw the lake as the fisherman had described. The water was so clear that they could see the four kinds of fish swimming about in it. They looked at them for some time, and then the Sultan ordered them to make a camp by the edge of the water.

When night came the Sultan called his vizir, and said to him, "I have resolved to clear up this mystery. I am going out alone, and do you stay here in my tent, and when my ministers come to-morrow, say I am not well, and cannot see them. Do this each day till I return."

The grand-vizir tried to persuade the Sultan not to go, but in vain. The Sultan took off his state robe and put on his sword, and when he saw all was quiet in the camp he set forth alone.

He climbed one of the hills, and then crossed the great plain, till, just as the sun rose, he beheld far in front of him a large building. When he came near to it he saw it was a splendid palace of beautiful black polished marble, covered with steel as smooth as a mirror.

He went to the gate, which stood half open, and went in, as nobody came when he knocked. He passed through a magnificent courtyard and still saw no one, though he called aloud several times.

He entered large halls where the carpets were of silk, the lounges and sofas covered with tapestry from Mecca, and the hangings of the most beautiful Indian stuffs of gold and silver. Then he found himself in a splendid room, with a fountain supported by golden lions. The water out of the lions' mouths turned into diamonds and pearls, and the leaping water almost touched a most beautifully-painted dome. The palace was surrounded on three sides by magnificent gardens, little lakes, and woods. Birds sang in the trees, which were netted over to keep them always there.

Still the Sultan saw no one, till he heard a plaintive cry, and a voice which said, "Oh that I could die, for I am too unhappy to wish to live any longer!"

The Sultan looked round to discover who it was who thus bemoaned his fate, and at last saw a handsome young man, richly clothed, who was sitting on a throne raised slightly from the ground. His face was very sad.

The sultan approached him and bowed to him. The young man bent his head very low, but did not rise.

"Sire," he said to the Sultan, "I cannot rise and do you the reverence that I am sure should be paid to your rank."

"Sir," answered the Sultan, "I am sure you have a good reason for not doing so, and having heard your cry of distress, I am come to offer you my help. Whose is this palace, and why is it thus empty?"

Instead of answering the young man lifted up his robe, and showed the Sultan that, from the waist downwards, he was a block of black marble.

The Sultan was horrified, and begged the young man to tell him his story.

"Willingly I will tell you my sad history," said the young man.

The Story of the Young King of the Black Isles

You must know, sire, that my father was Mahmoud, the king of this country, the Black Isles, so called from the four little mountains which were once islands, while the capital was the place where now the great lake lies. My story will tell you how these changes came about.

My father died when he was sixty-six, and I succeeded him. I married my cousin, whom I loved tenderly, and I thought she loved me too.

But one afternoon, when I was half asleep, and was being fanned by two of her maids, I heard one say to the other, “What a pity it is that our mistress no longer loves our master! I believe she would like to kill him if she could, for she is an enchantress.”

I soon found by watching that they were right, and when I mortally wounded a favourite slave of hers for a great crime, she begged that she might build a palace in the garden, where she wept and bewailed him for two years.

At last I begged her to cease grieving for him, for although he could not speak or move, by her enchantments she just kept him alive. She turned upon me in a rage, and said over me some magic words, and I instantly became as you see me now, half man and half marble.

Then this wicked enchantress changed the capital, which was a very populous and flourishing city, into the lake and desert plain you saw. The fish of four colours which are in it are the different races who lived in the town; the four hills are the four islands which give the name to my kingdom. All this the enchantress told me to add to my troubles. And this is not all. Every day she comes and beats me with a whip of buffalo hide.

When the young king had finished his sad story he burst once more into tears, and the Sultan was much moved.

“Tell me,” he cried, “where is this wicked woman, and where is the miserable object of her affection, whom she just manages to keep alive?”

“Where she lives I do not know,” answered the unhappy prince, "but she goes every day at sunrise to see if the slave can yet speak to her, after she has beaten me."

"Unfortunate king," said the Sultan, "I will do what I can to avenge you."

So he consulted with the young king over the best way to bring this about, and they agreed their plan should be put in effect the next day. The Sultan then rested, and the young king gave himself up to happy hopes of release. The next day the Sultan arose, and then went to the palace in the garden where the black slave was. He drew his sword and destroyed the little life that remained in him, and then threw the body down a well. He then lay down on the couch where the slave had been, and waited for the enchantress.

She went first to the young king, whom she beat with a hundred blows.

Then she came to the room where she thought her wounded slave was, but where the Sultan really lay.

She came near his couch and said, "Are you better to-day, my dear slave? Speak but one word to me."

"How can I be better," answered the Sultan, imitating the language of the Ethiopians, "when I can never sleep for the cries and groans of your husband?"

"What joy to hear you speak!" answered the queen. "Do you wish him to regain his proper shape?"

"Yes," said the Sultan; "hasten to set him at liberty, so that I may no longer hear his cries."

The queen at once went out and took a cup of water, and said over it some words that made it boil as if it were on the fire. Then she threw it over the prince, who at once regained his own form. He was filled with joy, but the enchantress said, "Hasten away from this place and never come back, lest I kill you."

So he hid himself to see the end of the Sultan's plan.

The enchantress went back to the Palace of Tears and said, "Now I have done what you wished."

"What you have done," said the Sultan, "is not enough to cure me. Every day at midnight all the people whom you have changed into fish lift their heads out of the lake and cry for vengeance. Go quickly, and give them their proper shape."

The enchantress hurried away and said some words over the lake.

The fish then became men, women, and children, and the houses and shops were once more filled. The Sultan's suite, who had encamped by the lake, were not a little astonished to see themselves in the middle of a large and beautiful town.

As soon as she had disenchanted it the queen went back to the palace.

"Are you quite well now?" she said.

"Come near," said the Sultan. "Nearer still."

She obeyed. Then he sprang up, and with one blow of his sword he cut her in two.

Then he went and found the prince.

"Rejoice," he said, "your cruel enemy is dead."

The prince thanked him again and again.

"And now," said the Sultan. "I will go back to my capital, which I am glad to find is so near yours."

"So near mine!" said the King of the Black Isles.

"Do you know it is a whole year's journey from here? You came here in a few hours because it was enchanted. But I will accompany you on your journey."

"It will give me much pleasure if you will escort me," said the Sultan, "and as I have no children, I will make you my heir."

The Sultan and the prince set out together, the Sultan laden with rich presents from the King of the Black Isles.

The day after he reached his capital the Sultan assembled his court and told them all that had befallen him, and told them how he intended to adopt the young king as his heir.

Then he gave each man presents in proportion to his rank.

As for the fisherman, as he was the first cause of the deliverance of the young prince, the Sultan gave him much money, and made him and his family happy for the rest of their days.

The Story of the Three Calenders, Sons of Kings, and of Five Ladies of Bagdad

In the reign of the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid, there lived at Bagdad a porter who, in spite of his humble calling, was an intelligent and sensible man. One morning he was sitting in his usual place with his basket before him, waiting to be hired, when a tall young lady, covered with a long muslin veil, came up to him and said, “Pick up your basket and follow me.” The porter, who was greatly pleased by her appearance and voice, jumped up at once, poised his basket on his head, and accompanied the lady, saying to himself as he went, “Oh, happy day! Oh, lucky meeting!”

The lady soon stopped before a closed door, at which she knocked. It was opened by an old man with a long white beard, to whom the lady held out money without speaking. The old man, who seemed to understand what she wanted, vanished into the house, and returned bringing a large jar of wine, which the porter placed in his basket. Then the lady signed to him to follow, and they went their way.

The next place she stopped at was a fruit and flower shop, and here she bought a large quantity of apples, apricots, peaches, and other things, with lilies, jasmine, and all sorts of sweet-smelling plants. From this shop she went to a butcher’s, a grocer’s, and a poulterer’s, till at last the porter exclaimed in despair, “My good lady, if you had only told me you were going to buy enough provisions to stock a town, I would have brought a horse, or rather a camel.” The lady laughed, and told him she had not finished yet, but after choosing various kinds of scents and spices from a druggist’s store, she halted before a magnificent palace, at the door of which she knocked gently. The porteress who opened it was of such beauty that the eyes of the man were quite dazzled, and he was the more astonished as he saw clearly that she was no slave. The lady who had led him hither stood watching him with amusement, till the porteress exclaimed, “Why don’t you come in, my sister? This poor man is so heavily weighed down that he is ready to drop.”

When they were both inside the door was fastened, and they all three entered a large court, surrounded by an open-work gallery. At one end of the court was a platform, and on the platform stood an amber throne supported by four ebony columns, garnished with pearls and diamonds. In the middle of the court stood a marble basin filled with water from the mouth of a golden lion.

The porter looked about him, noticing and admiring everything; but his attention was specially attracted by a third lady sitting on the throne, who was even more beautiful than the other two. By the respect shown to her by the others, he judged that she must be the eldest, and in this he was right. This lady's name was Zobeida, the porteress was Sadie, and the housekeeper was Amina. At a word from Zobeida, Sadie and Amina took the basket from the porter, who was glad enough to be relieved from its weight; and when it was emptied, paid him handsomely for its use. But instead of taking up his basket and going away, the man still lingered, till Zobeida inquired what he was waiting for, and if he expected more money. "Oh, madam," returned he, "you have already given me too much, and I fear I may have been guilty of rudeness in not taking my departure at once. But, if you will pardon my saying so, I was lost in astonishment at seeing such beautiful ladies by themselves. A company of women without men is, however, as dull as a company of men without women." And after telling some stories to prove his point, he ended by entreating them to let him stay and make a fourth at their dinner.

The ladies were rather amused at the man's assurances and after some discussion it was agreed that he should be allowed to stay, as his society might prove entertaining. "But listen, friend," said Zobeida, "if we grant your request, it is only on condition that you behave with the utmost politeness, and that you keep the secret of our way of living, which chance has revealed to you." Then they all sat down to table, which had been covered by Amina with the dishes she had bought.

After the first few mouthfuls Amina poured some wine into a golden cup. She first drank herself, according to the Arab custom, and then filled it for her sisters. When it came to the porter's turn he kissed Amina's hand, and sang a song, which he composed at the moment in praise of the wine. The three ladies were pleased with the song, and then sang themselves, so that the repast was a merry one, and lasted much longer than usual.

At length, seeing that the sun was about to set, Sadia said to the porter, "Rise and go; it is now time for us to separate."

"Oh, madam," replied he, "how can you desire me to quit you in the state in which I am? Between the wine I have drunk, and the pleasure of seeing you, I should never find the way to my house. Let me remain here till morning, and when I have recovered my senses I will go when you like."

"Let him stay," said Amina, who had before proved herself his friend. "It is only just, as he has given us so much amusement."

"If you wish it, my sister," replied Zobeida; "but if he does, I must make a new condition. Porter," she continued, turning to him, "if you remain, you must promise to ask no questions about anything you may see. If you do, you may perhaps hear what you don't like."

This being settled, Amina brought in supper, and lit up the hall with a number of sweet smelling tapers. They then sat down again at the table, and began with fresh appetites to eat, drink, sing, and recite verses. In fact, they were all enjoying themselves mightily when they heard a knock at the outer door, which Sadie rose to open. She soon returned saying that three Calenders, all blind in the right eye, and all with their heads, faces, and eyebrows clean shaved, begged for admittance, as they were newly arrived in Bagdad, and night had already fallen. "They seem to have pleasant manners," she added, "but you have no idea how funny they look. I am sure we should find their company diverting."

Zobeida and Amina made some difficulty about admitting the new comers, and Sadie knew the reason of their hesitation. But she urged the matter so strongly that Zobeida was at last forced to consent. "Bring them in, then," said she, "but make them understand that they are not to make remarks about what does not concern them, and be sure to make them read the inscription over the door." For on the door was written in letters of gold, "Whoso meddles in affairs that are no business of his, will hear truths that will not please him."

The three Calenders bowed low on entering, and thanked the ladies for their kindness and hospitality. The ladies replied with words of welcome, and they were all about to seat themselves when the eyes of the Calenders fell on the porter, whose dress was not so very unlike their own, though he still wore all the hair that nature had given him. “This,” said one of them, “is apparently one of our Arab brothers, who has rebelled against our ruler.”

The porter, although half asleep from the wine he had drunk, heard the words, and without moving cried angrily to the Calender, “Sit down and mind your own business. Did you not read the inscription over the door? Everybody is not obliged to live in the same way.”

“Do not be so angry, my good man,” replied the Calender; “we should be very sorry to displease you;” so the quarrel was smoothed over, and supper began in good earnest. When the Calenders had satisfied their hunger, they offered to play to their hostesses, if there were any instruments in the house. The ladies were delighted at the idea, and Sadie went to see what she could find, returning in a few moments laden with two different kinds of flutes and a tambourine. Each Calender took the one he preferred, and began to play a well-known air, while the ladies sang the words of the song. These words were the gayest and liveliest possible, and every now and then the singers had to stop to indulge the laughter which almost choked them. In the midst of all their noise, a knock was heard at the door.

Now early that evening the Caliph secretly left the palace, accompanied by his grand-vizir, Giafar, and Mesrour, chief of the eunuchs, all three wearing the dresses of merchants. Passing down the street, the Caliph had been attracted by the music of instruments and the sound of laughter, and had ordered his vizir to go and knock at the door of the house, as he wished to enter. The vizir replied that the ladies who lived there seemed to be entertaining their friends, and he thought his master would do well not to intrude on them; but the Caliph had taken it into his head to see for himself, and insisted on being obeyed.

The knock was answered by Sadie, with a taper in her hand, and the vizir, who was surprised at her beauty, bowed low before her, and said respectfully, “Madam, we are three merchants who have lately arrived from Moussoul, and, owing to a misadventure which befel us this very night, only reached our inn to find that the doors were closed to us till to-morrow morning. Not knowing what to do, we wandered in the streets till we happened to pass your house, when, seeing lights and hearing the sound of voices, we resolved to ask you to give us shelter till the dawn. If you will grant us this favour, we will, with your permission, do all in our power to help you spend the time pleasantly."

Sadie answered the merchant that she must first consult her sisters; and after having talked over the matter with them, she returned to tell him that he and his two friends would be welcome to join their company. They entered and bowed politely to the ladies and their guests. Then Zobeida, as the mistress, came forward and said gravely, "You are welcome here, but I hope you will allow me to beg one thing of you — have as many eyes as you like, but no tongues; and ask no questions about anything you see, however strange it may appear to you."

"Madam," returned the vizir, "you shall be obeyed. We have quite enough to please and interest us without troubling ourselves about that with which we have no concern." Then they all sat down, and drank to the health of the new comers.

While the vizir, Giafar, was talking to the ladies the Caliph was occupied in wondering who they could be, and why the three Calenders had each lost his right eye. He was burning to inquire the reason of it all, but was silenced by Zobeida's request, so he tried to rouse himself and to take his part in the conversation, which was very lively, the subject of discussion being the many different sorts of pleasures that there were in the world. After some time the Calenders got up and performed some curious dances, which delighted the rest of the company.

When they had finished Zobeida rose from her seat, and, taking Amina by the hand, she said to her, "My sister, our friends will excuse us if we seem to forget their presence and fulfil our nightly task." Amina understood her sister's meaning, and collecting the dishes, glasses, and musical instruments, she carried them away, while Sadie swept the hall and put everything in order. Having done this she begged the Calenders to sit on a sofa on one side of the room, and the Caliph and his friends to place themselves opposite. As to the porter, she requested him to come and help her and her sister.

Shortly after Amina entered carrying a seat, which she put down in the middle of the empty space. She next went over to the door of a closet and signed to the porter to follow her. He did so, and soon reappeared leading two black dogs by a chain, which he brought into the centre of the hall. Zobeida then got up from her seat between the Calenders and the Caliph and walked slowly across to where the porter stood with the dogs. “We must do our duty,” she said with a deep sigh, pushing back her sleeves, and, taking a whip from Sadie, she said to the man, “Take one of those dogs to my sister Amina and give me the other.”

The porter did as he was bid, but as he led the dog to Zobeida it uttered piercing howls, and gazed up at her with looks of entreaty. But Zobeida took no notice, and whipped the dog till she was out of breath. She then took the chain from the porter, and, raising the dog on its hind legs, they looked into each other’s eyes sorrowfully till tears began to fall from both. Then Zobeida took her handkerchief and wiped the dog’s eyes tenderly, after which she kissed it, then, putting the chain into the porter’s hand she said, “Take it back to the closet and bring me the other.”

The same ceremony was gone through with the second dog, and all the while the whole company looked on with astonishment. The Caliph in particular could hardly contain himself, and made signs to the vizir to ask what it all meant. But the vizir pretended not to see, and turned his head away.

Zobeida remained for some time in the middle of the room, till at last Sadie went up to her and begged her to sit down, as she also had her part to play. At these words Amina fetched a lute from a case of yellow satin and gave it to Sadie, who sang several songs to its accompaniment. When she was tired she said to Amina, “My sister, I can do no more; come, I pray you, and take my place.”

Amina struck a few chords and then broke into a song, which she sang with so much ardour that she was quite overcome, and sank gasping on a pile of cushions, tearing open her dress as she did so to give herself some air. To the amazement of all present, her neck, instead of being as smooth and white as her face, was a mass of scars.

The Calenders and the Caliph looked at each other, and whispered together, unheard by Zobeida and Sadie, who were tending their fainting sister.

“What does it all mean?’ asked the Caliph.

“We know no more than you,” said the Calender to whom he had spoken.

“What! You do not belong to the house?”

“My lord,” answered all the Calenders together, “we came here for the first time an hour before you.”

They then turned to the porter to see if he could explain the mystery, but the porter was no wiser than they were themselves. At length the Caliph could contain his curiosity no longer, and declared that he would compel the ladies to tell them the meaning of their strange conduct. The vizir, foreseeing what would happen, implored him to remember the condition their hostesses had imposed, and added in a whisper that if his Highness would only wait till morning he could as Caliph summon the ladies to appear before him. But the Caliph, who was not accustomed to be contradicted, rejected this advice, and it was resolved after a little more talking that the question should be put by the porter. Suddenly Zobeida turned round, and seeing their excitement she said, “What is the matter — what are you all discussing so earnestly?”

“Madam,” answered the porter, “these gentlemen entreat you to explain to them why you should first whip the dogs and then cry over them, and also how it happens that the fainting lady is covered with scars. They have requested me, Madam, to be their mouthpiece.”

“Is it true, gentlemen,” asked Zobeida, drawing herself up, “that you have charged this man to put me that question?”

“It is,” they all replied, except Giafar, who was silent.

“Is this,” continued Zobeida, growing more angry every moment, “is this the return you make for the hospitality I have shown you? Have you forgotten the one condition on which you were allowed to enter the house? Come quickly,” she added, clapping her hands three times, and the words were hardly uttered when seven black slaves, each armed with a sabre, burst in and stood over the seven men, throwing them on the ground, and preparing themselves, on a sign from their mistress, to cut off their heads.

The seven culprits all thought their last hour had come, and the

Caliph repented bitterly that he had not taken the vizir's advice. But they made up their minds to die bravely, all except the porter, who loudly inquired of Zobeida why he was to suffer for other people's faults, and declared that these misfortunes would never have happened if it had not been for the Calenders, who always brought ill-luck. He ended by imploring Zobeida not to confound the innocent with the guilty and to spare his life.

In spite of her anger, there was something so comic in the groans of the porter that Zobeida could not refrain from laughing. But putting him aside she addressed the others a second time, saying, "Answer me; who are you? Unless you tell me truly you have not another moment to live. I can hardly think you are men of any position, whatever country you belong to. If you were, you would have had more consideration for us."

The Caliph, who was naturally very impatient, suffered far more than either of the others at feeling that his life was at the mercy of a justly offended lady, but when he heard her question he began to breathe more freely, for he was convinced that she had only to learn his name and rank for all danger to be over. So he whispered hastily to the vizir, who was next to him, to reveal their secret. But the vizir, wiser than his master, wished to conceal from the public the affront they had received, and merely answered, "After all, we have only got what we deserved."

Meanwhile Zobeida had turned to the three Calenders and inquired if, as they were all blind, they were brothers.

"No, madam," replied one, "we are no blood relations at all, only brothers by our mode of life."

"And you," she asked, addressing another, "were you born blind of one eye?"

"No, madam," returned he, "I became blind through a most surprising adventure, such as probably has never happened to anybody. After that I shaved my head and eyebrows and put on the dress in which you see me now."

Zobeida put the same question to the other two Calenders, and received the same answer.

"But," added the third, "it may interest you, madam, to know that we are not men of low birth, but are all three sons of kings, and of kings, too, whom the world holds in high esteem."

At these words Zobeida's anger cooled down, and she turned to her slaves and said, "You can give them a little more liberty, but do not leave the hall. Those that will tell us their histories and their reasons for coming here shall be allowed to leave unhurt; those who refuse—" And she paused, but in a moment the porter, who understood that he had only to relate his story to set himself free from this terrible danger, immediately broke in,

"Madam, you know already how I came here, and what I have to say will soon be told. Your sister found me this morning in the place where I always stand waiting to be hired. She bade me follow her to various shops, and when my basket was quite full we returned to this house, when you had the goodness to permit me to remain, for which I shall be eternally grateful. That is my story."

He looked anxiously to Zobeida, who nodded her head and said, "You can go; and take care we never meet again."

"Oh, madam," cried the porter, "let me stay yet a little while. It is not just that the others should have heard my story and that I should not hear theirs," and without waiting for permission he seated himself on the end of the sofa occupied by the ladies, whilst the rest crouched on the carpet, and the slaves stood against the wall.

Then one of the Calenders, addressing himself to Zobeida as the principal lady, began his story.

The Story of the First Calender, Son of a King

In order, madam, to explain how I came to lose my right eye, and to wear the dress of a Calender, you must first know that I am the son of a king. My father's only brother reigned over the neighbouring country, and had two children, a daughter and a son, who were of the same age as myself.

As I grew up, and was allowed more liberty, I went every year to pay a visit to my uncle's court, and usually stayed there about two months. In this way my cousin and I became very intimate, and were much attached to each other. The very last time I saw him he seemed more delighted to see me than ever, and gave a great feast in my honour. When we had finished eating, he said to me, "My cousin, you would never guess what I have been doing since your last visit to us! Directly after your departure I set a number of men to work on a building after my own design. It is now completed, and ready to be lived in. I should like to show it to you, but you must first swear two things: to be faithful to me, and to keep my secret."

Of course I did not dream of refusing him anything he asked, and gave the promise without the least hesitation. He then bade me wait an instant, and vanished, returning in a few moments with a richly dressed lady of great beauty, but as he did not tell me her name, I thought it was better not to inquire. We all three sat down to table and amused ourselves with talking of all sorts of indifferent things, and with drinking each other's health. Suddenly the prince said to me, "Cousin, we have no time to lose; be so kind as to conduct this lady to a certain spot, where you will find a dome-like tomb, newly built. You cannot mistake it. Go in, both of you, and wait till I come. I shall not be long."

As I had promised I prepared to do as I was told, and giving my hand to the lady, I escorted her, by the light of the moon, to the place of which the prince had spoken. We had barely reached it when he joined us himself, carrying a small vessel of water, a pickaxe, and a little bag containing plaster.

With the pickaxe he at once began to destroy the empty sepulchre in the middle of the tomb. One by one he took the stones and piled them up in a corner. When he had knocked down the whole sepulchre he proceeded to dig at the earth, and beneath where the sepulchre had been I saw a trap-door. He raised the door and I caught sight of the top of a spiral staircase; then he said, turning to the lady, "Madam, this is the way that will lead you down to the spot which I told you of."

The lady did not answer, but silently descended the staircase, the prince following her. At the top, however, he looked at me. "My cousin," he exclaimed, "I do not know how to thank you for your kindness. Farewell."

"What do you mean?" I cried. "I don't understand."

"No matter," he replied, "go back by the path that you came."

He would say no more, and, greatly puzzled, I returned to my room in the palace and went to bed. When I woke, and considered my adventure, I thought that I must have been dreaming, and sent a servant to ask if the prince was dressed and could see me. But on hearing that he had not slept at home I was much alarmed, and hastened to the cemetery, where, unluckily, the tombs were all so alike that I could not discover which was the one I was in search of, though I spent four days in looking for it.

You must know that all this time the king, my uncle, was absent on a hunting expedition, and as no one knew when he would be back, I at last decided to return home, leaving the ministers to make my excuses. I longed to tell them what had become of the prince, about whose fate they felt the most dreadful anxiety, but the oath I had sworn kept me silent.

On my arrival at my father's capital, I was astonished to find a large detachment of guards drawn up before the gate of the palace; they surrounded me directly I entered. I asked the officers in command the reason of this strange behaviour, and was horrified to learn that the army had mutinied and put to death the king, my father, and had placed the grand-vizir on the throne. Further, that by his orders I was placed under arrest.

Now this rebel vizir had hated me from my boy-hood, because once, when shooting at a bird with a bow, I had shot out his eye by accident. Of course I not only sent a servant at once to offer him my regrets and apologies, but I made them in person. It was all of no use.

He cherished an undying hatred towards me, and lost no occasion of showing it. Having once got me in his power I felt he could show no mercy, and I was right. Mad with triumph and fury he came to me in my prison and tore out my right eye. That is how I lost it.

My persecutor, however, did not stop here. He shut me up in a large case and ordered his executioner to carry me into a desert place, to cut off my head, and then to abandon my body to the birds of prey. The case, with me inside it, was accordingly placed on a horse, and the executioner, accompanied by another man, rode into the country until they found a spot suitable for the purpose. But their hearts were not so hard as they seemed, and my tears and prayers made them waver.

"Forsake the kingdom instantly," said the executioner at last, "and take care never to come back, for you will not only lose your head, but make us lose ours." I thanked him gratefully, and tried to console myself for the loss of my eye by thinking of the other misfortunes I had escaped.

After all I had gone through, and my fear of being recognised by some enemy, I could only travel very slowly and cautiously, generally resting in some out-of-the-way place by day, and walking as far as I was able by night, but at length I arrived in the kingdom of my uncle, of whose protection I was sure.

I found him in great trouble about the disappearance of his son, who had, he said, vanished without leaving a trace; but his own grief did not prevent him sharing mine. We mingled our tears, for the loss of one was the loss of the other, and then I made up my mind that it was my duty to break the solemn oath I had sworn to the prince. I therefore lost no time in telling my uncle everything I knew, and I observed that even before I had ended his sorrow appeared to be lightened a little.

"My dear nephew," he said, "your story gives me some hope. I was aware that my son was building a tomb, and I think I can find the spot. But as he wished to keep the matter secret, let us go alone and seek the place ourselves."

He then bade me disguise myself, and we both slipped out of a garden door which opened on to the cemetery. It did not take long for us to arrive at the scene of the prince's disappearance, or to discover the tomb I had sought so vainly before. We entered it, and found the trap-door which led to the staircase, but we had great difficulty in raising it, because the prince had fastened it down underneath with the plaster he had brought with him.

My uncle went first, and I followed him. When we reached the bottom of the stairs we stepped into a sort of ante-room, filled with such a dense smoke that it was hardly possible to see anything. However, we passed through the smoke into a large chamber, which at first seemed quite empty. The room was brilliantly lighted, and in another moment we perceived a sort of platform at one end, on which were the bodies of the prince and a lady, both half-burned, as if they had been dragged out of a fire before it had quite consumed them.

This horrible sight turned me faint, but, to my surprise, my uncle did not show so much surprise as anger.

"I knew," he said, "that my son was tenderly attached to this lady, whom it was impossible he should ever marry. I tried to turn his thoughts, and presented to him the most beautiful princesses, but he cared for none of them, and, as you see, they have now been united by a horrible death in an underground tomb." But, as he spoke, his anger melted into tears, and again I wept with him.

When he recovered himself he drew me to him. "My dear nephew," he said, embracing me, "you have come to me to take his place, and I will do my best to forget that I ever had a son who could act in so wicked a manner." Then he turned and went up the stairs.

We reached the palace without anyone having noticed our absence, when, shortly after, a clashing of drums, and cymbals, and the blare of trumpets burst upon our astonished ears. At the same time a thick cloud of dust on the horizon told of the approach of a great army. My heart sank when I perceived that the commander was the vizir who had dethroned my father, and was come to seize the kingdom of my uncle.

The capital was utterly unprepared to stand a siege, and seeing that resistance was useless, at once opened its gates. My uncle fought hard for his life, but was soon overpowered, and when he fell I managed to escape through a secret passage, and took refuge with an officer whom I knew I could trust.

Persecuted by ill-fortune, and stricken with grief, there seemed to be only one means of safety left to me. I shaved my beard and my eyebrows, and put on the dress of a calender, in which it was easy for me to travel without being known. I avoided the towns till I reached the kingdom of the famous and powerful Caliph, Haroun-al-Raschid, when I had no further reason to fear my enemies. It was my intention to come to Bagdad and to throw myself at the feet of his Highness, who would, I felt certain, be touched by my sad story, and would grant me, besides, his help and protection.

After a journey which lasted some months I arrived at length at the gates of this city. It was sunset, and I paused for a little to look about me, and to decide which way to turn my steps. I was still debating on this subject when I was joined by this other calender, who stopped to greet me. “You, like me, appear to be a stranger,” I said. He replied that I was right, and before he could say more the third calender came up. He, also, was newly arrived in Bagdad, and being brothers in misfortune, we resolved to cast in our lots together, and to share whatever fate might have in store.

By this time it had grown late, and we did not know where to spend the night. But our lucky star having guided us to this door, we took the liberty of knocking and of asking for shelter, which was given to us at once with the best grace in the world.

This, madam, is my story.

“I am satisfied,” replied Zobeida; “you can go when you like.”

The calender, however, begged leave to stay and to hear the histories of his two friends and of the three other persons of the company, which he was allowed to do.

The Story of the Second Calender, Son of a King

“Madam,” said the young man, addressing Zobeida, “if you wish to know how I lost my right eye, I shall have to tell you the story of my whole life.”

I was scarcely more than a baby, when the king my father, finding me unusually quick and clever for my age, turned his thoughts to my education. I was taught first to read and write, and then to learn the Koran, which is the basis of our holy religion, and the better to understand it, I read with my tutors the ablest commentators on its teaching, and committed to memory all the traditions respecting the Prophet, which have been gathered from the mouth of those who were his friends. I also learnt history, and was instructed in poetry, versification, geography, chronology, and in all the outdoor exercises in which every prince should excel. But what I liked best of all was writing Arabic characters, and in this I soon surpassed my masters, and gained a reputation in this branch of knowledge that reached as far as India itself.

Now the Sultan of the Indies, curious to see a young prince with such strange tastes, sent an ambassador to my father, laden with rich presents, and a warm invitation to visit his court. My father, who was deeply anxious to secure the friendship of so powerful a monarch, and held besides that a little travel would greatly improve my manners and open my mind, accepted gladly, and in a short time I had set out for India with the ambassador, attended only by a small suite on account of the length of the journey, and the badness of the roads. However, as was my duty, I took with me ten camels, laden with rich presents for the Sultan.

We had been travelling for about a month, when one day we saw a cloud of dust moving swiftly towards us; and as soon as it came near, we found that the dust concealed a band of fifty robbers. Our men barely numbered half, and as we were also hampered by the camels, there was no use in fighting, so we tried to overawe them by informing them who we were, and whither we were going. The robbers, however, only laughed, and declared that was none of their business, and, without more words, attacked us brutally. I defended myself to the last, wounded though I was, but at length, seeing that resistance was hopeless, and that the ambassador and all our followers were made prisoners, I put spurs to my horse and rode away as fast as I could, till the poor beast fell dead from a wound in his side. I managed to jump off without any injury, and looked about to see if I was pursued. But for the moment I was safe, for, as I imagined, the robbers were all engaged in quarrelling over their booty.

I found myself in a country that was quite new to me, and dared not return to the main road lest I should again fall into the hands of the robbers. Luckily my wound was only a slight one, and after binding it up as well as I could, I walked on for the rest of the day, till I reached a cave at the foot of a mountain, where I passed the night in peace, making my supper off some fruits I had gathered on the way.

I wandered about for a whole month without knowing where I was going, till at length I found myself on the outskirts of a beautiful city, watered by winding streams, which enjoyed an eternal spring. My delight at the prospect of mixing once more with human beings was somewhat damped at the thought of the miserable object I must seem. My face and hands had been burned nearly black; my clothes were all in rags, and my shoes were in such a state that I had been forced to abandon them altogether.

I entered the town, and stopped at a tailor’s shop to inquire where I was. The man saw I was better than my condition, and begged me to sit down, and in return I told him my whole story. The tailor listened with attention, but his reply, instead of giving me consolation, only increased my trouble.

“Beware,” he said, “of telling any one what you have told me, for the prince who governs the kingdom is your father’s greatest enemy, and he will be rejoiced to find you in his power.”

I thanked the tailor for his counsel, and said I would do whatever he advised; then, being very hungry, I gladly ate of the food he put before me, and accepted his offer of a lodging in his house.

In a few days I had quite recovered from the hardships I had undergone, and then the tailor, knowing that it was the custom for the princes of our religion to learn a trade or profession so as to provide for themselves in times of ill-fortune, inquired if there was anything I could do for my living. I replied that I had been educated as a grammarian and a poet, but that my great gift was writing.

"All that is of no use here," said the tailor. "Take my advice, put on a short coat, and as you seem hardy and strong, go into the woods and cut firewood, which you will sell in the streets. By this means you will earn your living, and be able to wait till better times come. The hatchet and the cord shall be my present."

This counsel was very distasteful to me, but I thought I could not do otherwise than adopt it. So the next morning I set out with a company of poor wood-cutters, to whom the tailor had introduced me. Even on the first day I cut enough wood to sell for a tolerable sum, and very soon I became more expert, and had made enough money to repay the tailor all he had lent me.

I had been a wood-cutter for more than a year, when one day I wandered further into the forest than I had ever done before, and reached a delicious green glade, where I began to cut wood. I was hacking at the root of a tree, when I beheld an iron ring fastened to a trapdoor of the same metal. I soon cleared away the earth, and pulling up the door, found a staircase, which I hastily made up my mind to go down, carrying my hatchet with me by way of protection. When I reached the bottom I discovered that I was in a huge palace, as brilliantly lighted as any palace above ground that I had ever seen, with a long gallery supported by pillars of jasper, ornamented with capitals of gold. Down this gallery a lady came to meet me, of such beauty that I forgot everything else, and thought only of her.

To save her all the trouble possible, I hastened towards her, and bowed low.

"Who are you? Who are you?" she said. "A man or a genius?"

"A man, madam," I replied; "I have nothing to do with genii."

"By what accident do you come here?" she asked again with a sigh. "I have been in this place now for five and twenty years, and you are the first man who has visited me."

Emboldened by her beauty and gentleness, I ventured to reply, "Before, madam, I answer your question, allow me to say how grateful I am for this meeting, which is not only a consolation to me in my own heavy sorrow, but may perhaps enable me to render your lot happier," and then I told her who I was, and how I had come there.

"Alas, prince," she said, with a deeper sigh than before, "you have guessed rightly in supposing me an unwilling prisoner in this gorgeous place. I am the daughter of the king of the Ebony Isle, of whose fame you surely must have heard. At my father's desire I was married to a prince who was my own cousin; but on my very wedding day, I was snatched up by a genius, and brought here in a faint. For a long while I did nothing but weep, and would not suffer the genius to come near me; but time teaches us submission, and I have now got accustomed to his presence, and if clothes and jewels could content me, I have them in plenty. Every tenth day, for five and twenty years, I have received a visit from him, but in case I should need his help at any other time, I have only to touch a talisman that stands at the entrance of my chamber. It wants still five days to his next visit, and I hope that during that time you will do me the honour to be my guest."

I was too much dazzled by her beauty to dream of refusing her offer, and accordingly the princess had me conducted to the bath, and a rich dress befitting my rank was provided for me. Then a feast of the most delicate dishes was served in a room hung with embroidered Indian fabrics.

Next day, when we were at dinner, I could maintain my patience no longer, and implored the princess to break her bonds, and return with me to the world which was lighted by the sun.

"What you ask is impossible," she answered; "but stay here with me instead, and we can be happy, and all you will have to do is to betake yourself to the forest every tenth day, when I am expecting my master the genius. He is very jealous, as you know, and will not suffer a man to come near me."

"Princess," I replied, "I see it is only fear of the genius that makes you act like this. For myself, I dread him so little that I mean to break his talisman in pieces! Awful though you think him, he shall feel the weight of my arm, and I herewith take a solemn vow to stamp out the whole race."

The princess, who realized the consequences of such audacity, entreated me not to touch the talisman. "If you do, it will be the ruin of both of us," said she; "I know genii much better than you." But the wine I had drunk had confused my brain; I gave one kick to the talisman, and it fell into a thousand pieces.

Hardly had my foot touched the talisman when the air became as dark as night, a fearful noise was heard, and the palace shook to its very foundations. In an instant I was sobered, and understood what I had done. "Princess!" I cried, "what is happening?"

"Alas!" she exclaimed, forgetting all her own terrors in anxiety for me, "fly, or you are lost."

I followed her advice and dashed up the staircase, leaving my hatchet behind me. But I was too late. The palace opened and the genius appeared, who, turning angrily to the princess, asked indignantly,

"What is the matter, that you have sent for me like this?"

"A pain in my heart," she replied hastily, "obliged me to seek the aid of this little bottle. Feeling faint, I slipped and fell against the talisman, which broke. That is really all."

"You are an impudent liar!" cried the genius. "How did this hatchet and those shoes get here?"

"I never saw them before," she answered, "and you came in such a hurry that you may have picked them up on the road without knowing it." To this the genius only replied by insults and blows. I could hear the shrieks and groans of the princess, and having by this time taken off my rich garments and put on those in which I had arrived the previous day, I lifted the trap, found myself once more in the forest, and returned to my friend the tailor, with a light load of wood and a heart full of shame and sorrow.

The tailor, who had been uneasy at my long absence, was, delighted to see me; but I kept silence about my adventure, and as soon as possible retired to my room to lament in secret over my folly. While I was thus indulging my grief my host entered, and said, "There is an old man downstairs who has brought your hatchet and slippers, which he picked up on the road, and now restores to you, as he found out from one of your comrades where you lived. You had better come down and speak to him yourself." At this speech I changed colour, and my legs trembled under me. The tailor noticed my confusion, and was just going to inquire the reason when the door of the room opened, and the old man appeared, carrying with him my hatchet and shoes.

"I am a genius," he said, "the son of the daughter of Eblis, prince of the genii. Is not this hatchet yours, and these shoes?" Without waiting for an answer — which, indeed, I could hardly have given him, so great was my fright — he seized hold of me, and darted up into the air with the quickness of lightning, and then, with equal swiftness, dropped down towards the earth. When he touched the ground, he rapped it with his foot; it opened, and we found ourselves in the enchanted palace, in the presence of the beautiful princess of the Ebony Isle. But how different she looked from what she was when I had last seen her, for she was lying stretched on the ground covered with blood, and weeping bitterly.

"Traitress!" cried the genius, "is not this man your lover?"

She lifted up her eyes slowly, and looked sadly at me. "I never saw him before," she answered slowly. "I do not know who he is."

"What!" exclaimed the genius, "you owe all your sufferings to him, and yet you dare to say he is a stranger to you!"

"But if he really is a stranger to me," she replied, "why should I tell a lie and cause his death?"

"Very well," said the genius, drawing his sword, "take this, and cut off his head."

"Alas," answered the princess, "I am too weak even to hold the sabre. And supposing that I had the strength, why should I put an innocent man to death?"

"You condemn yourself by your refusal," said the genius; then turning to me, he added, "and you, do you not know her?"

"How should I?" I replied, resolved to imitate the princess in her fidelity. "How should I, when I never saw her before?"

"Cut her head off," then, "if she is a stranger to you, and I shall believe you are speaking the truth, and will set you at liberty."

"Certainly," I answered, taking the sabre in my hands, and making a sign to the princess to fear nothing, as it was my own life that I was about to sacrifice, and not hers. But the look of gratitude she gave me shook my courage, and I flung the sabre to the earth.

"I should not deserve to live," I said to the genius, "if I were such a coward as to slay a lady who is not only unknown to me, but who is at this moment half dead herself. Do with me as you will — I am in your power — but I refuse to obey your cruel command."

"I see," said the genius, "that you have both made up your minds to brave me, but I will give you a sample of what you may expect." So saying, with one sweep of his sabre he cut off a hand of the princess, who was just able to lift the other to wave me an eternal farewell. Then I lost consciousness for several minutes.

When I came to myself I implored the genius to keep me no longer in this state of suspense, but to lose no time in putting an end to my sufferings. The genius, however, paid no attention to my prayers, but said sternly, "That is the way in which a genius treats the woman who has betrayed him. If I chose, I could kill you also; but I will be merciful, and content myself with changing you into a dog, an ass, a lion, or a bird — whichever you prefer."

I caught eagerly at these words, as giving me a faint hope of softening his wrath. "O genius!" I cried, "as you wish to spare my life, be generous, and spare it altogether. Grant my prayer, and pardon my crime, as the best man in the whole world forgave his neighbour who was eaten up with envy of him." Contrary to my hopes, the genius seemed interested in my words, and said he would like to hear the story of the two neighbours; and as I think, madam, it may please you, I will tell it to you also.

The Story of the Envious Man and of Him Who Was Envied

In a town of moderate size, two men lived in neighbouring houses; but they had not been there very long before one man took such a hatred of the other, and envied him so bitterly, that the poor man determined to find another home, hoping that when they no longer met every day his enemy would forget all about him. So he sold his house and the little furniture it contained, and moved into the capital of the country, which was luckily at no great distance. About half a mile from this city he bought a nice little place, with a large garden and a fair-sized court, in the centre of which stood an old well.

In order to live a quieter life, the good man put on the robe of a dervish, and divided his house into a quantity of small cells, where he soon established a number of other dervishes. The fame of his virtue gradually spread abroad, and many people, including several of the highest quality, came to visit him and ask his prayers.

Of course it was not long before his reputation reached the ears of the man who envied him, and this wicked wretch resolved never to rest till he had in some way worked ill to the dervish whom he hated. So he left his house and his business to look after themselves, and betook himself to the new dervish monastery, where he was welcomed by the founder with all the warmth imaginable. The excuse he gave for his appearance was that he had come to consult the chief of the dervishes on a private matter of great importance. “What I have to say must not be overheard,” he whispered; “command, I beg of you, that your dervishes retire into their cells, as night is approaching, and meet me in the court.”

The dervish did as he was asked without delay, and directly they were alone together the envious man began to tell a long story, edging, as they walked to and fro, always nearer to the well, and when they were quite close, he seized the dervish and dropped him in. He then ran off triumphantly, without having been seen by anyone, and congratulating himself that the object of his hatred was dead, and would trouble him no more.

But in this he was mistaken! The old well had long been inhabited (unknown to mere human beings) by a set of fairies and genii, who caught the dervish as he fell, so that he received no hurt. The dervish himself could see nothing, but he took for granted that something strange had happened, or he must certainly have been dashed against the side of the well and been killed. He lay quite still, and in a moment he heard a voice saying, "Can you guess whom this man is that we have saved from death?"

"No," replied several other voices.

And the first speaker answered, "I will tell you. This man, from pure goodness of heart, forsook the town where he lived and came to dwell here, in the hope of curing one of his neighbours of the envy he felt towards him. But his character soon won him the esteem of all, and the envious man's hatred grew, till he came here with the deliberate intention of causing his death. And this he would have done, without our help, the very day before the Sultan has arranged to visit this holy dervish, and to entreat his prayers for the princess, his daughter."

"But what is the matter with the princess that she needs the dervish's prayers?" asked another voice.

"She has fallen into the power of the genius Maimoum, the son of Dimdim," replied the first voice. "But it would be quite simple for this holy chief of the dervishes to cure her if he only knew! In his convent there is a black cat which has a tiny white tip to its tail. Now to cure the princess the dervish must pull out seven of these white hairs, burn three, and with their smoke perfume the head of the princess. This will deliver her so completely that Maimoum, the son of Dimdim, will never dare to approach her again."

The fairies and genii ceased talking, but the dervish did not forget a word of all they had said; and when morning came he perceived a place in the side of the well which was broken, and where he could easily climb out.

The dervishes, who could not imagine what had become of him, were enchanted at his reappearance. He told them of the attempt on his life made by his guest of the previous day, and then retired into his cell. He was soon joined here by the black cat of which the voice had spoken, who came as usual to say good-morning to his master. He took him on his knee and seized the opportunity to pull seven white hairs out of his tail, and put them on one side till they were needed.

The sun had not long risen before the Sultan, who was anxious to leave nothing undone that might deliver the princess, arrived with a large suite at the gate of the monastery, and was received by the dervishes with profound respect. The Sultan lost no time in declaring the object of his visit, and leading the chief of the dervishes aside, he said to him, “Noble scheik, you have guessed perhaps what I have come to ask you?”

“Yes, sire,” answered the dervish; “if I am not mistaken, it is the illness of the princess which has procured me this honour.”

“You are right,” returned the Sultan, “and you will give me fresh life if you can by your prayers deliver my daughter from the strange malady that has taken possession of her.”

“Let your highness command her to come here, and I will see what I can do.”

The Sultan, full of hope, sent orders at once that the princess was to set out as soon as possible, accompanied by her usual staff of attendants. When she arrived, she was so thickly veiled that the dervish could not see her face, but he desired a brazier to be held over her head, and laid the seven hairs on the burning coals. The instant they were consumed, terrific cries were heard, but no one could tell from whom they proceeded. Only the dervish guessed that they were uttered by Maimoum the son of Dimdim, who felt the princess escaping him.

All this time she had seemed unconscious of what she was doing, but now she raised her hand to her veil and uncovered her face. “Where am I?” she said in a bewildered manner; “and how did I get here?”

The Sultan was so delighted to hear these words that he not only embraced his daughter, but kissed the hand of the dervish. Then, turning to his attendants who stood round, he said to them, “What reward shall I give to the man who has restored me my daughter?”

They all replied with one accord that he deserved the hand of the princess.

“That is my own opinion,” said he, “and from this moment I declare him to be my son-in-law.”

Shortly after these events, the grand-vizir died, and his post was given to the dervish. But he did not hold it for long, for the Sultan fell a victim to an attack of illness, and as he had no sons, the soldiers and priests declared the dervish heir to the throne, to the great joy of all the people.

One day, when the dervish, who had now become Sultan, was making a royal progress with his court, he perceived the envious man standing in the crowd. He made a sign to one of his vizirs, and whispered in his ear, “Fetch me that man who is standing out there, but take great care not to frighten him.” The vizir obeyed, and when the envious man was brought before the Sultan, the monarch said to him, “My friend, I am delighted to see you again.” Then turning to an officer, he added, “Give him a thousand pieces of gold out of my treasury, and twenty waggon-loads of merchandise out of my private stores, and let an escort of soldiers accompany him home.” He then took leave of the envious man, and went on his way.

Now when I had ended my story, I proceeded to show the genius how to apply it to himself. “O genius,” I said, “you see that this Sultan was not content with merely forgiving the envious man for the attempt on his life; he heaped rewards and riches upon him.”

But the genius had made up his mind, and could not be softened. “Do not imagine that you are going to escape so easily,” he said. “All I can do is to give you bare life; you will have to learn what happens to people who interfere with me.”

As he spoke he seized me violently by the arm; the roof of the palace opened to make way for us, and we mounted up so high into the air that the earth looked like a little cloud. Then, as before, he came down with the swiftness of lightning, and we touched the ground on a mountain top.

Then he stooped and gathered a handful of earth, and murmured some words over it, after which he threw the earth in my face, saying as he did so, “Quit the form of a man, and assume that of a monkey.” This done, he vanished, and I was in the likeness of an ape, and in a country I had never seen before.

However there was no use in stopping where I was, so I came down the mountain and found myself in a flat plain which was bounded by the sea. I travelled towards it, and was pleased to see a vessel moored about half a mile from shore. There were no waves, so I broke off the branch of a tree, and dragging it down to the water's edge, sat across it, while, using two sticks for oars, I rowed myself towards the ship.

The deck was full of people, who watched my progress with interest, but when I seized a rope and swung myself on board, I found that I had only escaped death at the hands of the genius to perish by those of the sailors, lest I should bring ill-luck to the vessel and the merchants. "Throw him into the sea!" cried one. "Knock him on the head with a hammer," exclaimed another. "Let me shoot him with an arrow," said a third; and certainly somebody would have had his way if I had not flung myself at the captain's feet and grasped tight hold of his dress. He appeared touched by my action and patted my head, and declared that he would take me under his protection, and that no one should do me any harm.

At the end of about fifty days we cast anchor before a large town, and the ship was immediately surrounded by a multitude of small boats filled with people, who had come either to meet their friends or from simple curiosity. Among others, one boat contained several officials, who asked to see the merchants on board, and informed them that they had been sent by the Sultan in token of welcome, and to beg them each to write a few lines on a roll of paper. "In order to explain this strange request," continued the officers, "it is necessary that you should know that the grand-vizir, lately dead, was celebrated for his beautiful handwriting, and the Sultan is anxious to find a similar talent in his successor. Hitherto the search has been a failure, but his Highness has not yet given up hope."

One after another the merchants set down a few lines upon the roll, and when they had all finished, I came forward, and snatched the paper from the man who held it. At first they all thought I was going to throw it into the sea, but they were quieted when they saw I held it with great care, and great was their surprise when I made signs that I too wished to write something.

"Let him do it if he wants to," said the captain. "If he only makes a mess of the paper, you may be sure I will punish him for it. But if, as I hope, he really can write, for he is the cleverest monkey I ever saw, I will adopt him as my son. The one I lost had not nearly so much sense!"

No more was said, and I took the pen and wrote the six sorts of writing in use among the Arabs, and each sort contained an original verse or couplet, in praise of the Sultan. And not only did my handwriting completely eclipse that of the merchants, but it is hardly too much to say that none so beautiful had ever before been seen in that country. When I had ended the officials took the roll and returned to the Sultan.

As soon as the monarch saw my writing he did not so much as look at the samples of the merchants, but desired his officials to take the finest and most richly caparisoned horse in his stables, together with the most magnificent dress they could procure, and to put it on the person who had written those lines, and bring him to court.

The officials began to laugh when they heard the Sultan's command, but as soon as they could speak they said, "Deign, your highness, to excuse our mirth, but those lines were not written by a man but by a monkey."

"A monkey!" exclaimed the Sultan.

"Yes, sire," answered the officials. "They were written by a monkey in our presence."

"Then bring me the monkey," he replied, "as fast as you can."

The Sultan's officials returned to the ship and showed the royal order to the captain.

"He is the master," said the good man, and desired that I should be sent for.

Then they put on me the gorgeous robe and rowed me to land, where I was placed on the horse and led to the palace. Here the Sultan was awaiting me in great state surrounded by his court.

All the way along the streets I had been the object of curiosity to a vast crowd, which had filled every doorway and every window, and it was amidst their shouts and cheers that I was ushered into the presence of the Sultan.

I approached the throne on which he was seated and made him three low bows, then prostrated myself at his feet to the surprise of everyone, who could not understand how it was possible that a monkey should be able to distinguish a Sultan from other people, and to pay him the respect due to his rank. However, excepting the usual speech, I omitted none of the common forms attending a royal audience.

When it was over the Sultan dismissed all the court, keeping with him only the chief of the eunuchs and a little slave. He then passed into another room and ordered food to be brought, making signs to me to sit at table with him and eat. I rose from my seat, kissed the ground, and took my place at the table, eating, as you may suppose, with care and in moderation.

Before the dishes were removed I made signs that writing materials, which stood in one corner of the room, should be laid in front of me. I then took a peach and wrote on it some verses in praise of the Sultan, who was speechless with astonishment; but when I did the same thing on a glass from which I had drunk he murmured to himself, “Why, a man who could do as much would be cleverer than any other man, and this is only a monkey!”

Supper being over chessmen were brought, and the Sultan signed to me to know if I would play with him. I kissed the ground and laid my hand on my head to show that I was ready to show myself worthy of the honour. He beat me the first game, but I won the second and third, and seeing that this did not quite please I dashed off a verse by way of consolation.

The Sultan was so enchanted with all the talents of which I had given proof that he wished me to exhibit some of them to other people. So turning to the chief of the eunuchs he said, “Go and beg my daughter, Queen of Beauty, to come here. I will show her something she has never seen before.”

The chief of the eunuchs bowed and left the room, ushering in a few moments later the princess, Queen of Beauty. Her face was uncovered, but the moment she set foot in the room she threw her veil over her head. “Sire,” she said to her father, “what can you be thinking of to summon me like this into the presence of a man?”

“I do not understand you,” replied the Sultan. “There is nobody here but the eunuch, who is your own servant, the little slave, and myself, yet you cover yourself with your veil and reproach me for having sent for you, as if I had committed a crime.”

“Sire,” answered the princess, “I am right and you are wrong. This monkey is really no monkey at all, but a young prince who has been turned into a monkey by the wicked spells of a genius, son of the daughter of Eblis."

As will be imagined, these words took the Sultan by surprise, and he looked at me to see how I should take the statement of the princess. As I was unable to speak, I placed my hand on my head to show that it was true.

"But how do you know this, my daughter?" asked he.

"Sire," replied Queen of Beauty, "the old lady who took care of me in my childhood was an accomplished magician, and she taught me seventy rules of her art, by means of which I could, in the twinkling of an eye, transplant your capital into the middle of the ocean. Her art likewise teaches me to recognise at first sight all persons who are enchanted, and tells me by whom the spell was wrought."

"My daughter," said the Sultan, "I really had no idea you were so clever."

"Sire," replied the princess, "there are many out-of-the-way things it is as well to know, but one should never boast of them."

"Well," asked the Sultan, "can you tell me what must be done to disenchant the young prince?"

"Certainly; and I can do it."

"Then restore him to his former shape," cried the Sultan. "You could give me no greater pleasure, for I wish to make him my grand-vizir, and to give him to you for your husband."

"As your Highness pleases," replied the princess.

Queen of Beauty rose and went to her chamber, from which she fetched a knife with some Hebrew words engraven on the blade. She then desired the Sultan, the chief of the eunuchs, the little slave, and myself to descend into a secret court of the palace, and placed us beneath a gallery which ran all round, she herself standing in the centre of the court. Here she traced a large circle and in it wrote several words in Arab characters.

When the circle and the writing were finished she stood in the middle of it and repeated some verses from the Koran. Slowly the air grew dark, and we felt as if the earth was about to crumble away, and our fright was by no means diminished at seeing the genius, son of the daughter of Eblis, suddenly appear under the form of a colossal lion.

“Dog,” cried the princess when she first caught sight of him, “you think to strike terror into me by daring to present yourself before me in this hideous shape.”

“And you,” retorted the lion, “have not feared to break our treaty that engaged solemnly we should never interfere with each other.”

“Accursed genius!” exclaimed the princess, “it is you by whom that treaty was first broken.”

“I will teach you how to give me so much trouble,” said the lion, and opening his huge mouth he advanced to swallow her. But the princess expected something of the sort and was on her guard. She bounded on one side, and seizing one of the hairs of his mane repeated two or three words over it. In an instant it became a sword, and with a sharp blow she cut the lion’s body into two pieces. These pieces vanished no one knew where, and only the lion’s head remained, which was at once changed into a scorpion. Quick as thought the princess assumed the form of a serpent and gave battle to the scorpion, who, finding he was getting the worst of it, turned himself into an eagle and took flight. But in a moment the serpent had become an eagle more powerful still, who soared up in the air and after him, and then we lost sight of them both.

We all remained where we were quaking with anxiety, when the ground opened in front of us and a black and white cat leapt out, its hair standing on end, and miauing frightfully. At its heels was a wolf, who had almost seized it, when the cat changed itself into a worm, and, piercing the skin of a pomegranate which had tumbled from a tree, hid itself in the fruit. The pomegranate swelled till it grew as large as a pumpkin, and raised itself on to the roof of the gallery, from which it fell into the court and was broken into bits. While this was taking place the wolf, who had transformed himself into a cock, began to swallow the seed of the pomegranate as fast as he could. When all were gone he flew towards us, flapping his wings as if to ask if we saw any more, when suddenly his eye fell on one which lay on the bank of the little canal that flowed through the court; he hastened towards it, but before he could touch it the seed rolled into the canal and became a fish. The cock flung himself in after the fish and took the shape of a pike, and for two hours they chased each other up and down under the water, uttering horrible cries, but we could see nothing. At length they rose from the water in their proper forms, but darting such flames of fire from their mouths that we dreaded lest the palace should catch fire. Soon, however, we had much greater cause for alarm, as the genius, having shaken off the princess, flew towards us. Our fate would have been sealed if the princess, seeing our danger, had not attracted the attention of the genius to herself. As it was, the Sultan's beard was singed and his face scorched, the chief of the eunuchs was burned to a cinder, while a spark deprived me of the sight of one eye. Both I and the Sultan had given up all hope of a rescue, when there was a shout of "Victory, victory!" from the princess, and the genius lay at her feet a great heap of ashes.

Exhausted though she was, the princess at once ordered the little slave, who alone was uninjured, to bring her a cup of water, which she took in her hand. First repeating some magic words over it, she dashed it into my face saying, "If you are only a monkey by enchantment, resume the form of the man you were before." In an instant I stood before her the same man I had formerly been, though having lost the sight of one eye.

I was about to fall on my knees and thank the princess but she did not give me time. Turning to the Sultan, her father, she said, "Sire, I have gained the battle, but it has cost me dear. The fire has penetrated to my heart, and I have only a few moments to live. This would not have happened if I had only noticed the last pomegranate seed and eaten it like the rest. It was the last struggle of the genius, and up to that time I was quite safe. But having let this chance slip I was forced to resort to fire, and in spite of all his experience I showed the genius that I knew more than he did. He is dead and in ashes, but my own death is approaching fast." "My daughter," cried the Sultan, "how sad is my condition! I am only surprised I am alive at all! The eunuch is consumed by the flames, and the prince whom you have delivered has lost the sight of one eye." He could say no more, for sobs choked his voice, and we all wept together.

Suddenly the princess shrieked, "I burn, I burn!" and death came to free her from her torments.

I have no words, madam, to tell you of my feelings at this terrible sight. I would rather have remained a monkey all my life than let my benefactress perish in this shocking manner. As for the Sultan, he was quite inconsolable, and his subjects, who had dearly loved the princess, shared his grief. For seven days the whole nation mourned, and then the ashes of the princess were buried with great pomp, and a superb tomb was raised over her.

As soon as the Sultan recovered from the severe illness which had seized him after the death of the princess he sent for me and plainly, though politely, informed me that my presence would always remind him of his loss, and he begged that I would instantly quit his kingdom, and on pain of death never return to it. I was, of course, bound to obey, and not knowing what was to become of me I shaved my beard and eyebrows and put on the dress of a calender. After wandering aimlessly through several countries, I resolved to come to Bagdad and request an audience of the Commander of the Faithful.

And that, madam, is my story.

The other Calender then told his story.

The Story of the Third Calender, Son of a King

My story, said the Third Calender, is quite different from those of my two friends. It was fate that deprived them of the sight of their right eyes, but mine was lost by my own folly.

My name is Agib, and I am the son of a king called Cassib, who reigned over a large kingdom, which had for its capital one of the finest seaport towns in the world.

When I succeeded to my father's throne my first care was to visit the provinces on the mainland, and then to sail to the numerous islands which lay off the shore, in order to gain the hearts of my subjects. These voyages gave me such a taste for sailing that I soon determined to explore more distant seas, and commanded a fleet of large ships to be got ready without delay. When they were properly fitted out I embarked on my expedition.

For forty days wind and weather were all in our favour, but the next night a terrific storm arose, which blew us hither and thither for ten days, till the pilot confessed that he had quite lost his bearings. Accordingly a sailor was sent up to the masthead to try to catch a sight of land, and reported that nothing was to be seen but the sea and sky, except a huge mass of blackness that lay astern.

On hearing this the pilot grew white, and, beating his breast, he cried, "Oh, sir, we are lost, lost!" till the ship's crew trembled at they knew not what. When he had recovered himself a little, and was able to explain the cause of his terror, he replied, in answer to my question, that we had drifted far out of our course, and that the following day about noon we should come near that mass of darkness, which, said he, is nothing but the famous Black Mountain. This mountain is composed of adamant, which attracts to itself all the iron and nails in your ship; and as we are helplessly drawn nearer, the force of attraction will become so great that the iron and nails will fall out of the ships and cling to the mountain, and the ships will sink to the bottom with all that are in them. This it is that causes the side of the mountain towards the sea to appear of such a dense blackness.

As may be supposed — continued the pilot — the mountain sides are very rugged, but on the summit stands a brass dome supported on pillars, and bearing on top the figure of a brass horse, with a rider on his back. This rider wears a breastplate of lead, on which strange signs and figures are engraved, and it is said that as long as this statue remains on the dome, vessels will never cease to perish at the foot of the mountain.

So saying, the pilot began to weep afresh, and the crew, fearing their last hour had come, made their wills, each one in favour of his fellow.

At noon next day, as the pilot had foretold, we were so near to the Black Mountain that we saw all the nails and iron fly out of the ships and dash themselves against the mountain with a horrible noise. A moment after the vessels fell asunder and sank, the crews with them. I alone managed to grasp a floating plank, and was driven ashore by the wind, without even a scratch. What was my joy on finding myself at the bottom of some steps which led straight up the mountain, for there was not another inch to the right or the left where a man could set his foot. And, indeed, even the steps themselves were so narrow and so steep that, if the lightest breeze had arisen, I should certainly have been blown into the sea.

When I reached the top I found the brass dome and the statue exactly as the pilot had described, but was too wearied with all I had gone through to do more than glance at them, and, flinging myself under the dome, was asleep in an instant. In my dreams an old man appeared to me and said, “Hearken, Agib! As soon as thou art awake dig up the ground underfoot, and thou shalt find a bow of brass and three arrows of lead. Shoot the arrows at the statue, and the rider shall tumble into the sea, but the horse will fall down by thy side, and thou shalt bury him in the place from which thou tookest the bow and arrows. This being done the sea will rise and cover the mountain, and on it thou wilt perceive the figure of a metal man seated in a boat, having an oar in each hand. Step on board and let him conduct thee; but if thou wouldest behold thy kingdom again, see that thou takest not the name of Allah into thy mouth.”

Having uttered these words the vision left me, and I woke, much comforted. I sprang up and drew the bow and arrows out of the ground, and with the third shot the horseman fell with a great crash into the sea, which instantly began to rise, so rapidly, that I had hardly time to bury the horse before the boat approached me. I stepped silently in and sat down, and the metal man pushed off, and rowed without stopping for nine days, after which land appeared on the horizon. I was so overcome with joy at this sight that I forgot all the old man had told me, and cried out, “Allah be praised! Allah be praised!”

The words were scarcely out of my mouth when the boat and man sank from beneath me, and left me floating on the surface. All that day and the next night I swam and floated alternately, making as well as I could for the land which was nearest to me. At last my strength began to fail, and I gave myself up for lost, when the wind suddenly rose, and a huge wave cast me on a flat shore. Then, placing myself in safety, I hastily spread my clothes out to dry in the sun, and flung myself on the warm ground to rest.

Next morning I dressed myself and began to look about me. There seemed to be no one but myself on the island, which was covered with fruit trees and watered with streams, but seemed a long distance from the mainland which I hoped to reach. Before, however, I had time to feel cast down, I saw a ship making directly for the island, and not knowing whether it would contain friends or foes, I hid myself in the thick branches of a tree.

The sailors ran the ship into a creek, where ten slaves landed, carrying spades and pickaxes. In the middle of the island they stopped, and after digging some time, lifted up what seemed to be a trapdoor. They then returned to the vessel two or three times for furniture and provisions, and finally were accompanied by an old man, leading a handsome boy of fourteen or fifteen years of age. They all disappeared down the trapdoor, and after remaining below for a few minutes came up again, but without the boy, and let down the trapdoor, covering it with earth as before. This done, they entered the ship and set sail.

As soon as they were out of sight, I came down from my tree, and went to the place where the boy had been buried. I dug up the earth till I reached a large stone with a ring in the centre. This, when removed, disclosed a flight of stone steps which led to a large room richly furnished and lighted by tapers. On a pile of cushions, covered with tapestry, sat the boy. He looked up, startled and frightened at the sight of a stranger in such a place, and to soothe his fears, I at once spoke: “Be not alarmed, sir, whoever you may be. I am a king, and the son of a king, and will do you no hurt. On the contrary, perhaps I have been sent here to deliver you out of this tomb, where you have been buried alive.”

Hearing my words, the young man recovered himself, and when I had ended, he said, “The reasons, Prince, that have caused me to be buried in this place are so strange that they cannot but surprise you. My father is a rich merchant, owning much land and many ships, and has great dealings in precious stones, but he never ceased mourning that he had no child to inherit his wealth.

“At length one day he dreamed that the following year a son would be born to him, and when this actually happened, he consulted all the wise men in the kingdom as to the future of the infant. One and all they said the same thing. I was to live happily till I was fifteen, when a terrible danger awaited me, which I should hardly escape. If, however, I should succeed in doing so, I should live to a great old age. And, they added, when the statue of the brass horse on the top of the mountain of adamant is thrown into the sea by Agib, the son of Cassib, then beware, for fifty days later your son shall fall by his hand!

“This prophecy struck the heart of my father with such woe, that he never got over it, but that did not prevent him from attending carefully to my education till I attained, a short time ago, my fifteenth birthday. It was only yesterday that the news reached him that ten days previously the statue of brass had been thrown into the sea, and he at once set about hiding me in this underground chamber, which was built for the purpose, promising to fetch me out when the forty days have passed. For myself, I have no fears, as Prince Agib is not likely to come here to look for me.”

I listened to his story with an inward laugh as to the absurdity of my ever wishing to cause the death of this harmless boy, whom I hastened to assure of my friendship and even of my protection; begging him, in return, to convey me in his father’s ship to my own country. I need hardly say that I took special care not to inform him that I was the Agib whom he dreaded.

The day passed in conversation on various subjects, and I found him a youth of ready wit and of some learning. I took on myself the duties of a servant, held the basin and water for him when he washed, prepared the dinner and set it on the table. He soon grew to love me, and for thirty-nine days we spent as pleasant an existence as could be expected underground.

The morning of the fortieth dawned, and the young man when he woke gave thanks in an outburst of joy that the danger was passed. “My father may be here at any moment,” said he, “so make me, I pray you, a bath of hot water, that I may bathe, and change my clothes, and be ready to receive him.”

So I fetched the water as he asked, and washed and rubbed him, after which he lay down again and slept a little. When he opened his eyes for the second time, he begged me to bring him a melon and some sugar, that he might eat and refresh himself.

I soon chose a fine melon out of those which remained, but could find no knife to cut it with. “Look in the cornice over my head,” said he, “and I think you will see one.” It was so high above me, that I had some difficulty in reaching it, and catching my foot in the covering of the bed, I slipped, and fell right upon the young man, the knife going straight into his heart.

At this awful sight I shrieked aloud in my grief and pain. I threw myself on the ground and rent my clothes and tore my hair with sorrow. Then, fearing to be punished as his murderer by the unhappy father, I raised the great stone which blocked the staircase, and quitting the underground chamber, made everything fast as before.

Scarcely had I finished when, looking out to sea, I saw the vessel heading for the island, and, feeling that it would be useless for me to protest my innocence, I again concealed myself among the branches of a tree that grew near by.

The old man and his slaves pushed off in a boat directly the ship touched land, and walked quickly towards the entrance to the underground chamber; but when they were near enough to see that the earth had been disturbed, they paused and changed colour. In silence they all went down and called to the youth by name; then for a moment I heard no more. Suddenly a fearful scream rent the air, and the next instant the slaves came up the steps, carrying with them the body of the old man, who had fainted from sorrow! Laying him down at the foot of the tree in which I had taken shelter, they did their best to recover him, but it took a long while. When at last he revived, they left him to dig a grave, and then laying the young man's body in it, they threw in the earth.

This ended, the slaves brought up all the furniture that remained below, and put it on the vessel, and breaking some boughs to weave a litter, they laid the old man on it, and carried him to the ship, which spread its sails and stood out to sea.

So once more I was quite alone, and for a whole month I walked daily over the island, seeking for some chance of escape. At length one day it struck me that my prison had grown much larger, and that the mainland seemed to be nearer. My heart beat at this thought, which was almost too good to be true. I watched a little longer: there was no doubt about it, and soon there was only a tiny stream for me to cross.

Even when I was safe on the other side I had a long distance to go on the mud and sand before I reached dry ground, and very tired I was, when far in front of me I caught sight of a castle of red copper, which, at first sight, I took to be a fire. I made all the haste I could, and after some miles of hard walking stood before it, and gazed at it in astonishment, for it seemed to me the most wonderful building I had ever beheld. While I was still staring at it, there came towards me a tall old man, accompanied by ten young men, all handsome, and all blind of the right eye.

Now in its way, the spectacle of ten men walking together, all blind of the right eye, is as uncommon as that of a copper castle, and I was turning over in my mind what could be the meaning of this strange fact, when they greeted me warmly, and inquired what had brought me there. I replied that my story was somewhat long, but that if they would take the trouble to sit down, I should be happy to tell it them. When I had finished, the young men begged that I would go with them to the castle, and I joyfully accepted their offer. We passed through what seemed to me an endless number of rooms, and came at length into a large hall, furnished with ten small blue sofas for the ten young men, which served as beds as well as chairs, and with another sofa in the middle for the old man. As none of the sofas could hold more than one person, they bade me place myself on the carpet, and to ask no questions about anything I should see.

After a little while the old man rose and brought in supper, which I ate heartily, for I was very hungry. Then one of the young men begged me to repeat my story, which had struck them all with astonishment, and when I had ended, the old man was bidden to "do his duty," as it was late, and they wished to go to bed. At these words he rose, and went to a closet, from which he brought out ten basins, all covered with blue stuff. He set one before each of the young men, together with a lighted taper.

When the covers were taken off the basins, I saw they were filled with ashes, coal-dust, and lamp-black. The young men mixed these all together, and smeared the whole over their heads and faces. They then wept and beat their breasts, crying, "This is the fruit of idleness, and of our wicked lives."

This ceremony lasted nearly the whole night, and when it stopped they washed themselves carefully, and put on fresh clothes, and lay down to sleep.

All this while I had refrained from questions, though my curiosity almost seemed to burn a hole in me, but the following day, when we went out to walk, I said to them, "Gentlemen, I must disobey your wishes, for I can keep silence no more. You do not appear to lack wit, yet you do such actions as none but madmen could be capable of. Whatever befalls me I cannot forbear asking, `Why you daub your faces with black, and how it is you are all blind of one eye?'" But they only answered that such questions were none of my business, and that I should do well to hold my peace.

During that day we spoke of other things, but when night came, and the same ceremony was repeated, I implored them most earnestly to let me know the meaning of it all.

"It is for your own sake," replied one of the young men, "that we have not granted your request, and to preserve you from our unfortunate fate. If, however, you wish to share our destiny we will delay no longer."

I answered that whatever might be the consequence I wished to have my curiosity satisfied, and that I would take the result on my own head. He then assured me that, even when I had lost my eye, I should be unable to remain with them, as their number was complete, and could not be added to. But to this I replied that, though I should be grieved to part company with such honest gentlemen, I would not be turned from my resolution on that account.

On hearing my determination my ten hosts then took a sheep and killed it, and handed me a knife, which they said I should by-and-by find useful. “We must sew you into this sheep-skin,” said they, “and then leave you. A fowl of monstrous size, called a roc, will appear in the air, taking you to be a sheep. He will snatch you up and carry you into the sky, but be not alarmed, for he will bring you safely down and lay you on the top of a mountain. When you are on the ground cut the skin with the knife and throw it off. As soon as the roc sees you he will fly away from fear, but you must walk on till you come to a castle covered with plates of gold, studded with jewels. Enter boldly at the gate, which always stands open, but do not ask us to tell you what we saw or what befel us there, for that you will learn for yourself. This only we may say, that it cost us each our right eye, and has imposed upon us our nightly penance.”

After the young gentlemen had been at the trouble of sewing the sheep-skin on me they left me, and retired to the hall. In a few minutes the roc appeared, and bore me off to the top of the mountain in his huge claws as lightly as if I had been a feather, for this great white bird is so strong that he has been known to carry even an elephant to his nest in the hills.

The moment my feet touched the ground I took out my knife and cut the threads that bound me, and the sight of me in my proper clothes so alarmed the roc that he spread his wings and flew away. Then I set out to seek the castle.

I found it after wandering about for half a day, and never could I have imagined anything so glorious. The gate led into a square court, into which opened a hundred doors, ninety-nine of them being of rare woods and one of gold. Through each of these doors I caught glimpses of splendid gardens or of rich storehouses.

Entering one of the doors which was standing open I found myself in a vast hall where forty young ladies, magnificently dressed, and of perfect beauty, were reclining. As soon as they saw me they rose and uttered words of welcome, and even forced me to take possession of a seat that was higher than their own, though my proper place was at their feet. Not content with this, one brought me splendid garments, while another filled a basin with scented water and poured it over my hands, and the rest busied themselves with preparing refreshments. After I had eaten and drunk of the most delicate food and rarest wines, the ladies crowded round me and begged me to tell them all my adventures.

By the time I had finished night had fallen, and the ladies lighted up the castle with such a prodigious quantity of tapers that even day could hardly have been brighter. We then sat down to a supper of dried fruits and sweetmeats, after which some sang and others danced. I was so well amused that I did not notice how the time was passing, but at length one of the ladies approached and informed me it was midnight, and that, as I must be tired, she would conduct me to the room that had been prepared for me. Then, bidding me good-night, I was left to sleep.

I spent the next thirty-nine days in much the same way as the first, but at the close of that time the ladies appeared (as was their custom) in my room one morning to inquire how I had slept, and instead of looking cheerful and smiling they were in floods of tears. “Prince,” said they, “we must leave you, and never was it so hard to part from any of our friends. Most likely we shall never see you again, but if you have sufficient self-command perhaps we may yet look forward to a meeting.”

“Ladies,” I replied, “what is the meaning of these strange words — I pray you to tell me?”

“Know then,” answered one of them, “that we are all princesses — each a king’s daughter. We live in this castle together, in the way that you have seen, but at the end of every year secret duties call us away for the space of forty days. The time has now come; but before we depart, we will leave you our keys, so that you may not lack entertainment during our absence. But one thing we would ask of you. The Golden Door, alone, forbear to open, as you value your own peace, and the happiness of your life. That door once unlocked, we must bid you farewell for ever.”

Weeping, I assured them of my prudence, and after embracing me tenderly, they went their ways.

Every day I opened two or three fresh doors, each of which contained behind it so many curious things that I had no chance of feeling dull, much as I regretted the absence of the ladies. Sometimes it was an orchard, whose fruit far exceeded in bigness any that grew in my father's garden. Sometimes it was a court planted with roses, jessamine, dafeodils, hyacinths and anemones, and a thousand other flowers of which I did not know the names. Or again, it would be an aviary, fitted with all kinds of singing birds, or a treasury heaped up with precious stones; but whatever I might see, all was perfect of its own sort.

Thirty-nine days passed away more rapidly than I could have conceived possible, and the following morning the princesses were to return to the castle. But alas! I had explored every corner, save only the room that was shut in by the Golden Door, and I had no longer anything to amuse myself with. I stood before the forbidden place for some time, gazing at its beauty; then a happy inspiration struck me, that because I unlocked the door it was not necessary that I should enter the chamber. It would be enough for me to stand outside and view whatever hidden wonders might be therein.

Thus arguing against my own conscience, I turned the key, when a smell rushed out that, pleasant though it was, overcame me completely, and I fell fainting across the threshold. Instead of being warned by this accident, directly I came to myself I went for a few moments into the air to shake of the effects of the perfume, and then entered boldly. I found myself in a large, vaulted room, lighted by tapers, scented with aloes and ambergris, standing in golden candlesticks, whilst gold and silver lamps hung from the ceiling.

Though objects of rare workmanship lay heaped around me, I paid them scant attention, so much was I struck by a great black horse which stood in one corner, the handsomest and best-shaped animal I had ever seen. His saddle and bridle were of massive gold, curiously wrought; one side of his trough was filled with clean barley and sesame, and the other with rose water. I led the animal into the open air, and then jumped on his back, shaking the reins as I did so, but as he never stirred, I touched him lightly with a switch I had picked up in his stable. No sooner did he feel the stroke, than he spread his wings (which I had not perceived before), and flew up with me straight into the sky. When he had reached a prodigious height, he next darted back to earth, and alighted on the terrace belonging to a castle, shaking me violently out of the saddle as he did so, and giving me such a blow with his tail, that he knocked out my right eye.

Half-stunned as I was with all that had happened to me, I rose to my feet, thinking as I did so of what had befallen the ten young men, and watching the horse which was soaring into the clouds. I left the terrace and wandered on till I came to a hall, which I knew to have been the one from which the roc had taken me, by the ten blue sofas against the wall.

The ten young men were not present when I first entered, but came in soon after, accompanied by the old man. They greeted me kindly, and bewailed my misfortune, though, indeed, they had expected nothing less. "All that has happened to you," they said, "we also have undergone, and we should be enjoying the same happiness still, had we not opened the Golden Door while the princesses were absent. You have been no wiser than we, and have suffered the same punishment. We would gladly receive you among us, to perform such penance as we do, but we have already told you that this is impossible. Depart, therefore, from hence and go to the Court of Bagdad, where you shall meet with him that can decide your destiny." They told me the way I was to travel, and I left them.

On the road I caused my beard and eyebrows to be shaved, and put on a Calender's habit. I have had a long journey, but arrived this evening in the city, where I met my brother Calenders at the gate, being strangers like myself. We wondered much at one another, to see we were all blind of the same eye, but we had no leisure to discourse at length of our common calamities. We had only so much time as to come hither to implore those favours which you have been generously pleased to grant us.

He finished, and it was Zobeida's turn to speak: "Go wherever you please," she said, addressing all three. "I pardon you all, but you must depart immediately out of this house."

The Seven Voyages of Sindbad the Sailor

In the times of the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid there lived in Bagdad a poor porter named Hindbad, who on a very hot day was sent to carry a heavy load from one end of the city to the other. Before he had accomplished half the distance he was so tired that, finding himself in a quiet street where the pavement was sprinkled with rose water, and a cool breeze was blowing, he set his burden upon the ground, and sat down to rest in the shade of a grand house. Very soon he decided that he could not have chosen a pleasanter place; a delicious perfume of aloes wood and pastilles came from the open windows and mingled with the scent of the rose water which steamed up from the hot pavement. Within the palace he heard some music, as of many instruments cunningly played, and the melodious warble of nightingales and other birds, and by this, and the appetising smell of many dainty dishes of which he presently became aware, he judged that feasting and merry making were going on. He wondered who lived in this magnificent house which he had never seen before, the street in which it stood being one which he seldom had occasion to pass. To satisfy his curiosity he went up to some splendidly dressed servants who stood at the door, and asked one of them the name of the master of the mansion.

"What," replied he, "do you live in Bagdad, and not know that here lives the noble Sindbad the Sailor, that famous traveller who sailed over every sea upon which the sun shines?"

The porter, who had often heard people speak of the immense wealth of Sindbad, could not help feeling envious of one whose lot seemed to be as happy as his own was miserable. Casting his eyes up to the sky he exclaimed aloud,

"Consider, Mighty Creator of all things, the differences between Sindbad's life and mine. Every day I suffer a thousand hardships and misfortunes, and have hard work to get even enough bad barley bread to keep myself and my family alive, while the lucky Sindbad spends money right and left and lives upon the fat of the land! What has he done that you should give him this pleasant life — what have I done to deserve so hard a fate?"

So saying he stamped upon the ground like one beside himself with misery and despair. Just at this moment a servant came out of the palace, and taking him by the arm said, “Come with me, the noble Sindbad, my master, wishes to speak to you.”

Hindbad was not a little surprised at this summons, and feared that his unguarded words might have drawn upon him the displeasure of Sindbad, so he tried to excuse himself upon the pretext that he could not leave the burden which had been entrusted to him in the street. However the lackey promised him that it should be taken care of, and urged him to obey the call so pressingly that at last the porter was obliged to yield.

He followed the servant into a vast room, where a great company was seated round a table covered with all sorts of delicacies. In the place of honour sat a tall, grave man whose long white beard gave him a venerable air. Behind his chair stood a crowd of attendants eager to minister to his wants. This was the famous Sindbad himself. The porter, more than ever alarmed at the sight of so much magnificence, tremblingly saluted the noble company. Sindbad, making a sign to him to approach, caused him to be seated at his right hand, and himself heaped choice morsels upon his plate, and poured out for him a draught of excellent wine, and presently, when the banquet drew to a close, spoke to him familiarly, asking his name and occupation.

“My lord,” replied the porter, “I am called Hindbad.”

“I am glad to see you here,” continued Sindbad. “And I will answer for the rest of the company that they are equally pleased, but I wish you to tell me what it was that you said just now in the street.” For Sindbad, passing by the open window before the feast began, had heard his complaint and therefore had sent for him.

At this question Hindbad was covered with confusion, and hanging down his head, replied, “My lord, I confess that, overcome by weariness and ill-humour, I uttered indiscreet words, which I pray you to pardon me.”

“Oh!” replied Sindbad, “do not imagine that I am so unjust as to blame you. On the contrary, I understand your situation and can pity you. Only you appear to be mistaken about me, and I wish to set you right. You doubtless imagine that I have acquired all the wealth and luxury that you see me enjoy without difficulty or danger, but this is far indeed from being the case. I have only reached this happy state after having for years suffered every possible kind of toil and danger.

"Yes, my noble friends," he continued, addressing the company, "I assure you that my adventures have been strange enough to deter even the most avaricious men from seeking wealth by traversing the seas. Since you have, perhaps, heard but confused accounts of my seven voyages, and the dangers and wonders that I have met with by sea and land, I will now give you a full and true account of them, which I think you will be well pleased to hear."

As Sindbad was relating his adventures chiefly on account of the porter, he ordered, before beginning his tale, that the burden which had been left in the street should be carried by some of his own servants to the place for which Hindbad had set out at first, while he remained to listen to the story.

First Voyage

I had inherited considerable wealth from my parents, and being young and foolish I at first squandered it recklessly upon every kind of pleasure, but presently, finding that riches speedily take to themselves wings if managed as badly as I was managing mine, and remembering also that to be old and poor is misery indeed, I began to bethink me of how I could make the best of what still remained to me. I sold all my household goods by public auction, and joined a company of merchants who traded by sea, embarking with them at Balsora in a ship which we had fitted out between us.

We set sail and took our course towards the East Indies by the Persian Gulf, having the coast of Persia upon our left hand and upon our right the shores of Arabia Felix. I was at first much troubled by the uneasy motion of the vessel, but speedily recovered my health, and since that hour have been no more plagued by sea-sickness.

From time to time we landed at various islands, where we sold or exchanged our merchandise, and one day, when the wind dropped suddenly, we found ourselves becalmed close to a small island like a green meadow, which only rose slightly above the surface of the water. Our sails were furled, and the captain gave permission to all who wished to land for a while and amuse themselves. I was among the number, but when after strolling about for some time we lighted a fire and sat down to enjoy the repast which we had brought with us, we were startled by a sudden and violent trembling of the island, while at the same moment those left upon the ship set up an outcry bidding us come on board for our lives, since what we had taken for an island was nothing but the back of a sleeping whale. Those who were nearest to the boat threw themselves into it, others sprang into the sea, but before I could save myself the whale plunged suddenly into the depths of the ocean, leaving me clinging to a piece of the wood which we had brought to make our fire. Meanwhile a breeze had sprung up, and in the confusion that ensued on board our vessel in hoisting the sails and taking up those who were in the boat and clinging to its sides, no one missed me and I was left at the mercy of the waves. All that day I floated up and down, now beaten this way, now that, and when night fell I despaired for my life; but, weary and spent as I was, I clung to my frail support, and great was my joy when the morning light showed me that I had drifted against an island.

The cliffs were high and steep, but luckily for me some tree-roots protruded in places, and by their aid I climbed up at last, and stretched myself upon the turf at the top, where I lay, more dead than alive, till the sun was high in the heavens. By that time I was very hungry, but after some searching I came upon some eatable herbs, and a spring of clear water, and much refreshed I set out to explore the island. Presently I reached a great plain where a grazing horse was tethered, and as I stood looking at it I heard voices talking apparently underground, and in a moment a man appeared who asked me how I came upon the island. I told him my adventures, and heard in return that he was one of the grooms of Mihrage, the king of the island, and that each year they came to feed their master's horses in this plain. He took me to a cave where his companions were assembled, and when I had eaten of the food they set before me, they bade me think myself fortunate to have come upon them when I did, since they were going back to their master on the morrow, and without their aid I could certainly never have found my way to the inhabited part of the island.

Early the next morning we accordingly set out, and when we reached the capital I was graciously received by the king, to whom I related my adventures, upon which he ordered that I should be well cared for and provided with such things as I needed. Being a merchant I sought out men of my own profession, and particularly those who came from foreign countries, as I hoped in this way to hear news from Bagdad, and find out some means of returning thither, for the capital was situated upon the sea-shore, and visited by vessels from all parts of the world. In the meantime I heard many curious things, and answered many questions concerning my own country, for I talked willingly with all who came to me. Also to while away the time of waiting I explored a little island named Cassel, which belonged to King Mihrage, and which was supposed to be inhabited by a spirit named Deggial. Indeed, the sailors assured me that often at night the playing of timbals could be heard upon it.

However, I saw nothing strange upon my voyage, saving some fish that were full two hundred cubits long, but were fortunately more in dread of us than even we were of them, and fled from us if we did but strike upon a board to frighten them. Other fishes there were only a cubit long which had heads like owls.

One day after my return, as I went down to the quay, I saw a ship which had just cast anchor, and was discharging her cargo, while the merchants to whom it belonged were busily directing the removal of it to their warehouses. Drawing nearer I presently noticed that my own name was marked upon some of the packages, and after having carefully examined them, I felt sure that they were indeed those which I had put on board our ship at Balsora. I then recognised the captain of the vessel, but as I was certain that he believed me to be dead, I went up to him and asked who owned the packages that I was looking at.

“There was on board my ship,” he replied, “a merchant of Bagdad named Sindbad. One day he and several of my other passengers landed upon what we supposed to be an island, but which was really an enormous whale floating asleep upon the waves. No sooner did it feel upon its back the heat of the fire which had been kindled, than it plunged into the depths of the sea. Several of the people who were upon it perished in the waters, and among others this unlucky Sindbad. This merchandise is his, but I have resolved to dispose of it for the benefit of his family if I should ever chance to meet with them.”

“Captain,” said I, “I am that Sindbad whom you believe to be dead, and these are my possessions!”

When the captain heard these words he cried out in amazement, “Lackaday! and what is the world coming to? In these days there is not an honest man to be met with. Did I not with my own eyes see Sindbad drown, and now you have the audacity to tell me that you are he! I should have taken you to be a just man, and yet for the sake of obtaining that which does not belong to you, you are ready to invent this horrible falsehood.”

“Have patience, and do me the favour to hear my story,” said I.

“Speak then,” replied the captain, “I’m all attention.”

So I told him of my escape and of my fortunate meeting with the king's grooms, and how kindly I had been received at the palace. Very soon I began to see that I had made some impression upon him, and after the arrival of some of the other merchants, who showed great joy at once more seeing me alive, he declared that he also recognised me.

Throwing himself upon my neck he exclaimed, "Heaven be praised that you have escaped from so great a danger. As to your goods, I pray you take them, and dispose of them as you please." I thanked him, and praised his honesty, begging him to accept several bales of merchandise in token of my gratitude, but he would take nothing. Of the choicest of my goods I prepared a present for King Mihrage, who was at first amazed, having known that I had lost my all. However, when I had explained to him how my bales had been miraculously restored to me, he graciously accepted my gifts, and in return gave me many valuable things. I then took leave of him, and exchanging my merchandise for sandal and aloes wood, camphor, nutmegs, cloves, pepper, and ginger, I embarked upon the same vessel and traded so successfully upon our homeward voyage that I arrived in Balsora with about one hundred thousand sequins. My family received me with as much joy as I felt upon seeing them once more. I bought land and slaves, and built a great house in which I resolved to live happily, and in the enjoyment of all the pleasures of life to forget my past sufferings.

Here Sindbad paused, and commanded the musicians to play again, while the feasting continued until evening. When the time came for the porter to depart, Sindbad gave him a purse containing one hundred sequins, saying, "Take this, Hindbad, and go home, but to-morrow come again and you shall hear more of my adventures."

The porter retired quite overcome by so much generosity, and you may imagine that he was well received at home, where his wife and children thanked their lucky stars that he had found such a benefactor.

The next day Hindbad, dressed in his best, returned to the voyager's house, and was received with open arms. As soon as all the guests had arrived the banquet began as before, and when they had feasted long and merrily, Sindbad addressed them thus:

"My friends, I beg that you will give me your attention while I relate the adventures of my second voyage, which you will find even more astonishing than the first.”

Second Voyage

I had resolved, as you know, on my return from my first voyage, to spend the rest of my days quietly in Bagdad, but very soon I grew tired of such an idle life and longed once more to find myself upon the sea.

I procured, therefore, such goods as were suitable for the places I intended to visit, and embarked for the second time in a good ship with other merchants whom I knew to be honourable men. We went from island to island, often making excellent bargains, until one day we landed at a spot which, though covered with fruit trees and abounding in springs of excellent water, appeared to possess neither houses nor people. While my companions wandered here and there gathering flowers and fruit I sat down in a shady place, and, having heartily enjoyed the provisions and the wine I had brought with me, I fell asleep, lulled by the murmur of a clear brook which flowed close by.

How long I slept I know not, but when I opened my eyes and started to my feet I perceived with horror that I was alone and that the ship was gone. I rushed to and fro like one distracted, uttering cries of despair, and when from the shore I saw the vessel under full sail just disappearing upon the horizon, I wished bitterly enough that I had been content to stay at home in safety. But since wishes could do me no good, I presently took courage and looked about me for a means of escape. When I had climbed a tall tree I first of all directed my anxious glances towards the sea; but, finding nothing hopeful there, I turned landward, and my curiosity was excited by a huge dazzling white object, so far off that I could not make out what it might be.

Descending from the tree I hastily collected what remained of my provisions and set off as fast as I could go towards it. As I drew near it seemed to me to be a white ball of immense size and height, and when I could touch it, I found it marvellously smooth and soft. As it was impossible to climb it — for it presented no foot-hold — I walked round about it seeking some opening, but there was none. I counted, however, that it was at least fifty paces round. By this time the sun was near setting, but quite suddenly it fell dark, something like a huge black cloud came swiftly over me, and I saw with amazement that it was a bird of extraordinary size which was hovering near. Then I remembered that I had often heard the sailors speak of a wonderful bird called a roc, and it occurred to me that the white object which had so puzzled me must be its egg.

Sure enough the bird settled slowly down upon it, covering it with its wings to keep it warm, and I cowered close beside the egg in such a position that one of the bird's feet, which was as large as the trunk of a tree, was just in front of me. Taking off my turban I bound myself securely to it with the linen in the hope that the roc, when it took flight next morning, would bear me away with it from the desolate island. And this was precisely what did happen. As soon as the dawn appeared the bird rose into the air carrying me up and up till I could no longer see the earth, and then suddenly it descended so swiftly that I almost lost consciousness. When I became aware that the roc had settled and that I was once again upon solid ground, I hastily unbound my turban from its foot and freed myself, and that not a moment too soon; for the bird, pouncing upon a huge snake, killed it with a few blows from its powerful beak, and seizing it up rose into the air once more and soon disappeared from my view. When I had looked about me I began to doubt if I had gained anything by quitting the desolate island.

The valley in which I found myself was deep and narrow, and surrounded by mountains which towered into the clouds, and were so steep and rocky that there was no way of climbing up their sides. As I wandered about, seeking anxiously for some means of escaping from this trap, I observed that the ground was strewed with diamonds, some of them of an astonishing size. This sight gave me great pleasure, but my delight was speedily damped when I saw also numbers of horrible snakes so long and so large that the smallest of them could have swallowed an elephant with ease. Fortunately for me they seemed to hide in caverns of the rocks by day, and only came out by night, probably because of their enemy the roc.

All day long I wandered up and down the valley, and when it grew dusk I crept into a little cave, and having blocked up the entrance to it with a stone, I ate part of my little store of food and lay down to sleep, but all through the night the serpents crawled to and fro, hissing horribly, so that I could scarcely close my eyes for terror. I was thankful when the morning light appeared, and when I judged by the silence that the serpents had retreated to their dens I came tremblingly out of my cave and wandered up and down the valley once more, kicking the diamonds contemptuously out of my path, for I felt that they were indeed vain things to a man in my situation. At last, overcome with weariness, I sat down upon a rock, but I had hardly closed my eyes when I was startled by something which fell to the ground with a thud close beside me.

It was a huge piece of fresh meat, and as I stared at it several more pieces rolled over the cliffs in different places. I had always thought that the stories the sailors told of the famous valley of diamonds, and of the cunning way which some merchants had devised for getting at the precious stones, were mere travellers' tales invented to give pleasure to the hearers, but now I perceived that they were surely true. These merchants came to the valley at the time when the eagles, which keep their eyries in the rocks, had hatched their young. The merchants then threw great lumps of meat into the valley. These, falling with so much force upon the diamonds, were sure to take up some of the precious stones with them, when the eagles pounced upon the meat and carried it off to their nests to feed their hungry broods. Then the merchants, scaring away the parent birds with shouts and outcries, would secure their treasures. Until this moment I had looked upon the valley as my grave, for I had seen no possibility of getting out of it alive, but now I took courage and began to devise a means of escape. I began by picking up all the largest diamonds I could find and storing them carefully in the leathern wallet which had held my provisions; this I tied securely to my belt. I then chose the piece of meat which seemed most suited to my purpose, and with the aid of my turban bound it firmly to my back; this done I laid down upon my face and awaited the coming of the eagles. I soon heard the flapping of their mighty wings above me, and had the satisfaction of feeling one of them seize upon my piece of meat, and me with it, and rise slowly towards his nest, into which he presently dropped me. Luckily for me the merchants were on the watch, and setting up their usual outcries they rushed to the nest scaring away the eagle. Their amazement was great when they discovered me, and also their disappointment, and with one accord they fell to abusing me for having robbed them of their usual profit. Addressing myself to the one who seemed most aggrieved, I said: “I am sure, if you knew all that I have suffered, you would show more kindness towards me, and as for diamonds, I have enough here of the very best for you and me and all your company.” So saying I showed them to him. The others all crowded round me, wondering at my adventures and admiring the device by which I had escaped from the valley, and when they had led me to their camp and examined my diamonds, they assured me that in all the years that they had carried on their trade they had seen no stones to be compared with them for size and beauty.

I found that each merchant chose a particular nest, and took his chance of what he might find in it. So I begged the one who owned the nest to which I had been carried to take as much as he would of my treasure, but he contented himself with one stone, and that by no means the largest, assuring me that with such a gem his fortune was made, and he need toil no more. I stayed with the merchants several days, and then as they were journeying homewards I gladly accompanied them. Our way lay across high mountains infested with frightful serpents, but we had the good luck to escape them and came at last to the seashore. Thence we sailed to the isle of Rohat where the camphor trees grow to such a size that a hundred men could shelter under one of them with ease. The sap flows from an incision made high up in the tree into a vessel hung there to receive it, and soon hardens into the substance called camphor, but the tree itself withers up and dies when it has been so treated.

In this same island we saw the rhinoceros, an animal which is smaller than the elephant and larger than the buffalo. It has one horn about a cubit long which is solid, but has a furrow from the base to the tip. Upon it is traced in white lines the figure of a man. The rhinoceros fights with the elephant, and transfixing him with his horn carries him off upon his head, but becoming blinded with the blood of his enemy, he falls helpless to the ground, and then comes the roc, and clutches them both up in his talons and takes them to feed his young. This doubtless astonishes you, but if you do not believe my tale go to Rohat and see for yourself. For fear of wearying you I pass over in silence many other wonderful things which we saw in this island. Before we left I exchanged one of my diamonds for much goodly merchandise by which I profited greatly on our homeward way. At last we reached Balsora, whence I hastened to Bagdad, where my first action was to bestow large sums of money upon the poor, after which I settled down to enjoy tranquilly the riches I had gained with so much toil and pain.

Having thus related the adventures of his second voyage, Sindbad again bestowed a hundred sequins upon Hindbad, inviting him to come again on the following day and hear how he fared upon his third voyage. The other guests also departed to their homes, but all returned at the same hour next day, including the porter, whose former life of hard work and poverty had already begun to seem to him like a bad dream. Again after the feast was over did Sindbad claim the attention of his guests and began the account of his third voyage.

Third Voyage

After a very short time the pleasant easy life I led made me quite forget the perils of my two voyages. Moreover, as I was still in the prime of life, it pleased me better to be up and doing. So once more providing myself with the rarest and choicest merchandise of Bagdad, I conveyed it to Balsora, and set sail with other merchants of my acquaintance for distant lands. We had touched at many ports and made much profit, when one day upon the open sea we were caught by a terrible wind which blew us completely out of our reckoning, and lasting for several days finally drove us into harbour on a strange island.

"I would rather have come to anchor anywhere than here," quoth our captain. "This island and all adjoining it are inhabited by hairy savages, who are certain to attack us, and whatever these dwarfs may do we dare not resist, since they swarm like locusts, and if one of them is killed the rest will fall upon us, and speedily make an end of us."

These words caused great consternation among all the ship's company, and only too soon we were to find out that the captain spoke truly. There appeared a vast multitude of hideous savages, not more than two feet high and covered with reddish fur. Throwing themselves into the waves they surrounded our vessel. Chattering meanwhile in a language we could not understand, and clutching at ropes and gangways, they swarmed up the ship's side with such speed and agility that they almost seemed to fly.

You may imagine the rage and terror that seized us as we watched them, neither daring to hinder them nor able to speak a word to deter them from their purpose, whatever it might be. Of this we were not left long in doubt. Hoisting the sails, and cutting the cable of the anchor, they sailed our vessel to an island which lay a little further off, where they drove us ashore; then taking possession of her, they made off to the place from which they had come, leaving us helpless upon a shore avoided with horror by all mariners for a reason which you will soon learn.

Turning away from the sea we wandered miserably inland, finding as we went various herbs and fruits which we ate, feeling that we might as well live as long as possible though we had no hope of escape. Presently we saw in the far distance what seemed to us to be a splendid palace, towards which we turned our weary steps, but when we reached it we saw that it was a castle, lofty, and strongly built. Pushing back the heavy ebony doors we entered the courtyard, but upon the threshold of the great hall beyond it we paused, frozen with horror, at the sight which greeted us. On one side lay a huge pile of bones — human bones, and on the other numberless spits for roasting! Overcome with despair we sank trembling to the ground, and lay there without speech or motion. The sun was setting when a loud noise aroused us, the door of the hall was violently burst open and a horrible giant entered. He was as tall as a palm tree, and perfectly black, and had one eye, which flamed like a burning coal in the middle of his forehead. His teeth were long and sharp and grinned horribly, while his lower lip hung down upon his chest, and he had ears like elephant's ears, which covered his shoulders, and nails like the claws of some fierce bird.

At this terrible sight our senses left us and we lay like dead men. When at last we came to ourselves the giant sat examining us attentively with his fearful eye. Presently when he had looked at us enough he came towards us, and stretching out his hand took me by the back of the neck, turning me this way and that, but feeling that I was mere skin and bone he set me down again and went on to the next, whom he treated in the same fashion; at last he came to the captain, and finding him the fattest of us all, he took him up in one hand and stuck him upon a spit and proceeded to kindle a huge fire at which he presently roasted him. After the giant had supped he lay down to sleep, snoring like the loudest thunder, while we lay shivering with horror the whole night through, and when day broke he awoke and went out, leaving us in the castle.

When we believed him to be really gone we started up bemoaning our horrible fate, until the hall echoed with our despairing cries. Though we were many and our enemy was alone it did not occur to us to kill him, and indeed we should have found that a hard task, even if we had thought of it, and no plan could we devise to deliver ourselves. So at last, submitting to our sad fate, we spent the day in wandering up and down the island eating such fruits as we could find, and when night came we returned to the castle, having sought in vain for any other place of shelter. At sunset the giant returned, supped upon one of our unhappy comrades, slept and snored till dawn, and then left us as before. Our condition seemed to us so frightful that several of my companions thought it would be better to leap from the cliffs and perish in the waves at once, rather than await so miserable an end; but I had a plan of escape which I now unfolded to them, and which they at once agreed to attempt.

"Listen, my brothers," I added. "You know that plenty of driftwood lies along the shore. Let us make several rafts, and carry them to a suitable place. If our plot succeeds, we can wait patiently for the chance of some passing ship which would rescue us from this fatal island. If it fails, we must quickly take to our rafts; frail as they are, we have more chance of saving our lives with them than we have if we remain here."

All agreed with me, and we spent the day in building rafts, each capable of carrying three persons. At nightfall we returned to the castle, and very soon in came the giant, and one more of our number was sacrificed. But the time of our vengeance was at hand! As soon as he had finished his horrible repast he lay down to sleep as before, and when we heard him begin to snore I, and nine of the boldest of my comrades, rose softly, and took each a spit, which we made red-hot in the fire, and then at a given signal we plunged it with one accord into the giant's eye, completely blinding him. Uttering a terrible cry, he sprang to his feet clutching in all directions to try to seize one of us, but we had all fled different ways as soon as the deed was done, and thrown ourselves flat upon the ground in corners where he was not likely to touch us with his feet.

After a vain search he fumbled about till he found the door, and fled out of it howling frightfully. As for us, when he was gone we made haste to leave the fatal castle, and, stationing ourselves beside our rafts, we waited to see what would happen. Our idea was that if, when the sun rose, we saw nothing of the giant, and no longer heard his howls, which still came faintly through the darkness, growing more and more distant, we should conclude that he was dead, and that we might safely stay upon the island and need not risk our lives upon the frail rafts. But alas! morning light showed us our enemy approaching us, supported on either hand by two giants nearly as large and fearful as himself, while a crowd of others followed close upon their heels. Hesitating no longer we clambered upon our rafts and rowed with all our might out to sea. The giants, seeing their prey escaping them, seized up huge pieces of rock, and wading into the water hurled them after us with such good aim that all the rafts except the one I was upon were swamped, and their luckless crews drowned, without our being able to do anything to help them. Indeed I and my two companions had all we could do to keep our own raft beyond the reach of the giants, but by dint of hard rowing we at last gained the open sea. Here we were at the mercy of the winds and waves, which tossed us to and fro all that day and night, but the next morning we found ourselves near an island, upon which we gladly landed.

There we found delicious fruits, and having satisfied our hunger we presently lay down to rest upon the shore. Suddenly we were aroused by a loud rustling noise, and starting up, saw that it was caused by an immense snake which was gliding towards us over the sand. So swiftly it came that it had seized one of my comrades before he had time to fly, and in spite of his cries and struggles speedily crushed the life out of him in its mighty coils and proceeded to swallow him. By this time my other companion and I were running for our lives to some place where we might hope to be safe from this new horror, and seeing a tall tree we climbed up into it, having first provided ourselves with a store of fruit off the surrounding bushes. When night came I fell asleep, but only to be awakened once more by the terrible snake, which after hissing horribly round the tree at last reared itself up against it, and finding my sleeping comrade who was perched just below me, it swallowed him also, and crawled away leaving me half dead with terror.

When the sun rose I crept down from the tree with hardly a hope of escaping the dreadful fate which had over-taken my comrades; but life is sweet, and I determined to do all I could to save myself. All day long I toiled with frantic haste and collected quantities of dry brushwood, reeds and thorns, which I bound with faggots, and making a circle of them under my tree I piled them firmly one upon another until I had a kind of tent in which I crouched like a mouse in a hole when she sees the cat coming. You may imagine what a fearful night I passed, for the snake returned eager to devour me, and glided round and round my frail shelter seeking an entrance. Every moment I feared that it would succeed in pushing aside some of the faggots, but happily for me they held together, and when it grew light my enemy retired, baffled and hungry, to his den. As for me I was more dead than alive! Shaking with fright and half suffocated by the poisonous breath of the monster, I came out of my tent and crawled down to the sea, feeling that it would be better to plunge from the cliffs and end my life at once than pass such another night of horror. But to my joy and relief I saw a ship sailing by, and by shouting wildly and waving my turban I managed to attract the attention of her crew.

A boat was sent to rescue me, and very soon I found myself on board surrounded by a wondering crowd of sailors and merchants eager to know by what chance I found myself in that desolate island. After I had told my story they regaled me with the choicest food the ship afforded, and the captain, seeing that I was in rags, generously bestowed upon me one of his own coats. After sailing about for some time and touching at many ports we came at last to the island of Salahat, where sandal wood grows in great abundance. Here we anchored, and as I stood watching the merchants disembarking their goods and preparing to sell or exchange them, the captain came up to me and said,

"I have here, brother, some merchandise belonging to a passenger of mine who is dead. Will you do me the favour to trade with it, and when I meet with his heirs I shall be able to give them the money, though it will be only just that you shall have a portion for your trouble."

I consented gladly, for I did not like standing by idle. Whereupon he pointed the bales out to me, and sent for the person whose duty it was to keep a list of the goods that were upon the ship. When this man came he asked in what name the merchandise was to be registered.

"In the name of Sindbad the Sailor," replied the captain.

At this I was greatly surprised, but looking carefully at him I recognised him to be the captain of the ship upon which I had made my second voyage, though he had altered much since that time. As for him, believing me to be dead it was no wonder that he had not recognised me.

"So, captain," said I, "the merchant who owned those bales was called Sindbad?"

"Yes," he replied. "He was so named. He belonged to Bagdad, and joined my ship at Balsora, but by mischance he was left behind upon a desert island where we had landed to fill up our water-casks, and it was not until four hours later that he was missed. By that time the wind had freshened, and it was impossible to put back for him."

"You suppose him to have perished then?" said I.

"Alas! yes," he answered.

"Why, captain!" I cried, "look well at me. I am that Sindbad who fell asleep upon the island and awoke to find himself abandoned!"

The captain stared at me in amazement, but was presently convinced that I was indeed speaking the truth, and rejoiced greatly at my escape.

"I am glad to have that piece of carelessness off my conscience at any rate," said he. "Now take your goods, and the profit I have made for you upon them, and may you prosper in future."

I took them gratefully, and as we went from one island to another I laid in stores of cloves, cinnamon, and other spices. In one place I saw a tortoise which was twenty cubits long and as many broad, also a fish that was like a cow and had skin so thick that it was used to make shields. Another I saw that was like a camel in shape and colour. So by degrees we came back to Balsora, and I returned to Bagdad with so much money that I could not myself count it, besides treasures without end. I gave largely to the poor, and bought much land to add to what I already possessed, and thus ended my third voyage.

When Sindbad had finished his story he gave another hundred sequins to Hindbad, who then departed with the other guests, but next day when they had all reassembled, and the banquet was ended, their host continued his adventures.

Fourth Voyage

Rich and happy as I was after my third voyage, I could not make up my mind to stay at home altogether. My love of trading, and the pleasure I took in anything that was new and strange, made me set my affairs in order, and begin my journey through some of the Persian provinces, having first sent off stores of goods to await my coming in the different places I intended to visit. I took ship at a distant seaport, and for some time all went well, but at last, being caught in a violent hurricane, our vessel became a total wreck in spite of all our worthy captain could do to save her, and many of our company perished in the waves. I, with a few others, had the good fortune to be washed ashore clinging to pieces of the wreck, for the storm had driven us near an island, and scrambling up beyond the reach of the waves we threw ourselves down quite exhausted, to wait for morning.

At daylight we wandered inland, and soon saw some huts, to which we directed our steps. As we drew near their black inhabitants swarmed out in great numbers and surrounded us, and we were led to their houses, and as it were divided among our captors. I with five others was taken into a hut, where we were made to sit upon the ground, and certain herbs were given to us, which the blacks made signs to us to eat. Observing that they themselves did not touch them, I was careful only to pretend to taste my portion; but my companions, being very hungry, rashly ate up all that was set before them, and very soon I had the horror of seeing them become perfectly mad. Though they chattered incessantly I could not understand a word they said, nor did they heed when I spoke to them. The savages now produced large bowls full of rice prepared with cocoanut oil, of which my crazy comrades ate eagerly, but I only tasted a few grains, understanding clearly that the object of our captors was to fatten us speedily for their own eating, and this was exactly what happened. My unlucky companions having lost their reason, felt neither anxiety nor fear, and ate greedily all that was offered them. So they were soon fat and there was an end of them, but I grew leaner day by day, for I ate but little, and even that little did me no good by reason of my fear of what lay before me. However, as I was so far from being a tempting morsel, I was allowed to wander about freely, and one day, when all the blacks had gone off upon some expedition leaving only an old man to guard me, I managed to escape from him and plunged into the forest, running faster the more he cried to me to come back, until I had completely distanced him.

For seven days I hurried on, resting only when the darkness stopped me, and living chiefly upon cocoanuts, which afforded me both meat and drink, and on the eighth day I reached the seashore and saw a party of white men gathering pepper, which grew abundantly all about. Reassured by the nature of their occupation, I advanced towards them and they greeted me in Arabic, asking who I was and whence I came. My delight was great on hearing this familiar speech, and I willingly satisfied their curiosity, telling them how I had been shipwrecked, and captured by the blacks. “But these savages devour men!” said they. “How did you escape?” I repeated to them what I have just told you, at which they were mightily astonished. I stayed with them until they had collected as much pepper as they wished, and then they took me back to their own country and presented me to their king, by whom I was hospitably received. To him also I had to relate my adventures, which surprised him much, and when I had finished he ordered that I should be supplied with food and raiment and treated with consideration.

The island on which I found myself was full of people, and abounded in all sorts of desirable things, and a great deal of traffic went on in the capital, where I soon began to feel at home and contented. Moreover, the king treated me with special favour, and in consequence of this everyone, whether at the court or in the town, sought to make life pleasant to me. One thing I remarked which I thought very strange; this was that, from the greatest to the least, all men rode their horses without bridle or stirrups. I one day presumed to ask his majesty why he did not use them, to which he replied, “You speak to me of things of which I have never before heard!” This gave me an idea. I found a clever workman, and made him cut out under my direction the foundation of a saddle, which I wadded and covered with choice leather, adorning it with rich gold embroidery. I then got a lock-smith to make me a bit and a pair of spurs after a pattern that I drew for him, and when all these things were completed I presented them to the king and showed him how to use them. When I had saddled one of his horses he mounted it and rode about quite delighted with the novelty, and to show his gratitude he rewarded me with large gifts. After this I had to make saddles for all the principal officers of the king's household, and as they all gave me rich presents I soon became very wealthy and quite an important person in the city.

One day the king sent for me and said, "Sindbad, I am going to ask a favour of you. Both I and my subjects esteem you, and wish you to end your days amongst us. Therefore I desire that you will marry a rich and beautiful lady whom I will find for you, and think no more of your own country."

As the king's will was law I accepted the charming bride he presented to me, and lived happily with her. Nevertheless I had every intention of escaping at the first opportunity, and going back to Bagdad. Things were thus going prosperously with me when it happened that the wife of one of my neighbours, with whom I had struck up quite a friendship, fell ill, and presently died. I went to his house to offer my consolations, and found him in the depths of woe.

"Heaven preserve you," said I, "and send you a long life!"

"Alas!" he replied, "what is the good of saying that when I have but an hour left to live!"

"Come, come!" said I, "surely it is not so bad as all that. I trust that you may be spared to me for many years."

"I hope," answered he, "that your life may be long, but as for me, all is finished. I have set my house in order, and to-day I shall be buried with my wife. This has been the law upon our island from the earliest ages — the living husband goes to the grave with his dead wife, the living wife with her dead husband. So did our fathers, and so must we do. The law changes not, and all must submit to it!"

As he spoke the friends and relations of the unhappy pair began to assemble. The body, decked in rich robes and sparkling with jewels, was laid upon an open bier, and the procession started, taking its way to a high mountain at some distance from the city, the wretched husband, clothed from head to foot in a black mantle, following mournfully.

When the place of interment was reached the corpse was lowered, just as it was, into a deep pit. Then the husband, bidding farewell to all his friends, stretched himself upon another bier, upon which were laid seven little loaves of bread and a pitcher of water, and he also was let down-down-down to the depths of the horrible cavern, and then a stone was laid over the opening, and the melancholy company wended its way back to the city.

You may imagine that I was no unmoved spectator of these proceedings; to all the others it was a thing to which they had been accustomed from their youth up; but I was so horrified that I could not help telling the king how it struck me.

“Sire,” I said, “I am more astonished than I can express to you at the strange custom which exists in your dominions of burying the living with the dead. In all my travels I have never before met with so cruel and horrible a law.”

“What would you have, Sindbad?” he replied. “It is the law for everybody. I myself should be buried with the Queen if she were the first to die.”

“But, your Majesty,” said I, “dare I ask if this law applies to foreigners also?”

“Why, yes,” replied the king smiling, in what I could but consider a very heartless manner, “they are no exception to the rule if they have married in the country.”

When I heard this I went home much cast down, and from that time forward my mind was never easy. If only my wife’s little finger ached I fancied she was going to die, and sure enough before very long she fell really ill and in a few days breathed her last. My dismay was great, for it seemed to me that to be buried alive was even a worse fate than to be devoured by cannibals, nevertheless there was no escape. The body of my wife, arrayed in her richest robes and decked with all her jewels, was laid upon the bier. I followed it, and after me came a great procession, headed by the king and all his nobles, and in this order we reached the fatal mountain, which was one of a lofty chain bordering the sea.

Here I made one more frantic effort to excite the pity of the king and those who stood by, hoping to save myself even at this last moment, but it was of no avail. No one spoke to me, they even appeared to hasten over their dreadful task, and I speedily found myself descending into the gloomy pit, with my seven loaves and pitcher of water beside me. Almost before I reached the bottom the stone was rolled into its place above my head, and I was left to my fate. A feeble ray of light shone into the cavern through some chink, and when I had the courage to look about me I could see that I was in a vast vault, bestrewn with bones and bodies of the dead. I even fancied that I heard the expiring sighs of those who, like myself, had come into this dismal place alive. All in vain did I shriek aloud with rage and despair, reproaching myself for the love of gain and adventure which had brought me to such a pass, but at length, growing calmer, I took up my bread and water, and wrapping my face in my mantle I groped my way towards the end of the cavern, where the air was fresher.

Here I lived in darkness and misery until my provisions were exhausted, but just as I was nearly dead from starvation the rock was rolled away overhead and I saw that a bier was being lowered into the cavern, and that the corpse upon it was a man. In a moment my mind was made up, the woman who followed had nothing to expect but a lingering death; I should be doing her a service if I shortened her misery. Therefore when she descended, already insensible from terror, I was ready armed with a huge bone, one blow from which left her dead, and I secured the bread and water which gave me a hope of life. Several times did I have recourse to this desperate expedient, and I know not how long I had been a prisoner when one day I fancied that I heard something near me, which breathed loudly. Turning to the place from which the sound came I dimly saw a shadowy form which fled at my movement, squeezing itself through a cranny in the wall. I pursued it as fast as I could, and found myself in a narrow crack among the rocks, along which I was just able to force my way. I followed it for what seemed to me many miles, and at last saw before me a glimmer of light which grew clearer every moment until I emerged upon the sea shore with a joy which I cannot describe. When I was sure that I was not dreaming, I realised that it was doubtless some little animal which had found its way into the cavern from the sea, and when disturbed had fled, showing me a means of escape which I could never have discovered for myself. I hastily surveyed my surroundings, and saw that I was safe from all pursuit from the town.

The mountains sloped sheer down to the sea, and there was no road across them. Being assured of this I returned to the cavern, and amassed a rich treasure of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and jewels of all kinds which strewed the ground. These I made up into bales, and stored them into a safe place upon the beach, and then waited hopefully for the passing of a ship. I had looked out for two days, however, before a single sail appeared, so it was with much delight that I at last saw a vessel not very far from the shore, and by waving my arms and uttering loud cries succeeded in attracting the attention of her crew. A boat was sent off to me, and in answer to the questions of the sailors as to how I came to be in such a plight, I replied that I had been shipwrecked two days before, but had managed to scramble ashore with the bales which I pointed out to them. Luckily for me they believed my story, and without even looking at the place where they found me, took up my bundles, and rowed me back to the ship. Once on board, I soon saw that the captain was too much occupied with the difficulties of navigation to pay much heed to me, though he generously made me welcome, and would not even accept the jewels with which I offered to pay my passage. Our voyage was prosperous, and after visiting many lands, and collecting in each place great store of goodly merchandise, I found myself at last in Bagdad once more with unheard of riches of every description. Again I gave large sums of money to the poor, and enriched all the mosques in the city, after which I gave myself up to my friends and relations, with whom I passed my time in feasting and merriment.

Here Sindbad paused, and all his hearers declared that the adventures of his fourth voyage had pleased them better than anything they had heard before. They then took their leave, followed by Hindbad, who had once more received a hundred sequins, and with the rest had been bidden to return next day for the story of the fifth voyage.

When the time came all were in their places, and when they had eaten and drunk of all that was set before them Sindbad began his tale.

Fifth Voyage

Not even all that I had gone through could make me contented with a quiet life. I soon wearied of its pleasures, and longed for change and adventure. Therefore I set out once more, but this time in a ship of my own, which I built and fitted out at the nearest seaport. I wished to be able to call at whatever port I chose, taking my own time; but as I did not intend carrying enough goods for a full cargo, I invited several merchants of different nations to join me. We set sail with the first favourable wind, and after a long voyage upon the open seas we landed upon an unknown island which proved to be uninhabited. We determined, however, to explore it, but had not gone far when we found a roc's egg, as large as the one I had seen before and evidently very nearly hatched, for the beak of the young bird had already pierced the shell. In spite of all I could say to deter them, the merchants who were with me fell upon it with their hatchets, breaking the shell, and killing the young roc. Then lighting a fire upon the ground they hacked morsels from the bird, and proceeded to roast them while I stood by aghast.

Scarcely had they finished their ill-omened repast, when the air above us was darkened by two mighty shadows. The captain of my ship, knowing by experience what this meant, cried out to us that the parent birds were coming, and urged us to get on board with all speed. This we did, and the sails were hoisted, but before we had made any way the rocs reached their despoiled nest and hovered about it, uttering frightful cries when they discovered the mangled remains of their young one. For a moment we lost sight of them, and were flattering ourselves that we had escaped, when they reappeared and soared into the air directly over our vessel, and we saw that each held in its claws an immense rock ready to crush us. There was a moment of breathless suspense, then one bird loosed its hold and the huge block of stone hurtled through the air, but thanks to the presence of mind of the helmsman, who turned our ship violently in another direction, it fell into the sea close beside us, cleaving it asunder till we could nearly see the bottom. We had hardly time to draw a breath of relief before the other rock fell with a mighty crash right in the midst of our luckless vessel, smashing it into a thousand fragments, and crushing, or hurling into the sea, passengers and crew. I myself went down with the rest, but had the good fortune to rise unhurt, and by holding on to a piece of driftwood with one hand and swimming with the other I kept myself afloat and was presently washed up by the tide on to an island. Its shores were steep and rocky, but I scrambled up safely and threw myself down to rest upon the green turf.

When I had somewhat recovered I began to examine the spot in which I found myself, and truly it seemed to me that I had reached a garden of delights. There were trees everywhere, and they were laden with flowers and fruit, while a crystal stream wandered in and out under their shadow. When night came I slept sweetly in a cosy nook, though the remembrance that I was alone in a strange land made me sometimes start up and look around me in alarm, and then I wished heartily that I had stayed at home at ease. However, the morning sunlight restored my courage, and I once more wandered among the trees, but always with some anxiety as to what I might see next. I had penetrated some distance into the island when I saw an old man bent and feeble sitting upon the river bank, and at first I took him to be some ship-wrecked mariner like myself. Going up to him I greeted him in a friendly way, but he only nodded his head at me in reply. I then asked what he did there, and he made signs to me that he wished to get across the river to gather some fruit, and seemed to beg me to carry him on my back. Pitying his age and feebleness, I took him up, and wading across the stream I bent down that he might more easily reach the bank, and bade him get down. But instead of allowing himself to be set upon his feet (even now it makes me laugh to think of it!), this creature who had seemed to me so decrepit leaped nimbly upon my shoulders, and hooking his legs round my neck gripped me so tightly that I was well-nigh choked, and so overcome with terror that I fell insensible to the ground. When I recovered my enemy was still in his place, though he had released his hold enough to allow me breathing space, and seeing me revive he prodded me adroitly first with one foot and then with the other, until I was forced to get up and stagger about with him under the trees while he gathered and ate the choicest fruits. This went on all day, and even at night, when I threw myself down half dead with weariness, the terrible old man held on tight to my neck, nor did he fail to greet the first glimmer of morning light by drumming upon me with his heels, until I perforce awoke and resumed my dreary march with rage and bitterness in my heart.

It happened one day that I passed a tree under which lay several dry gourds, and catching one up I amused myself with scooping out its contents and pressing into it the juice of several bunches of grapes which hung from every bush. When it was full I left it propped in the fork of a tree, and a few days later, carrying the hateful old man that way, I snatched at my gourd as I passed it and had the satisfaction of a draught of excellent wine so good and refreshing that I even forgot my detestable burden, and began to sing and caper.

The old monster was not slow to perceive the effect which my draught had produced and that I carried him more lightly than usual, so he stretched out his skinny hand and seizing the gourd first tasted its contents cautiously, then drained them to the very last drop. The wine was strong and the gourd capacious, so he also began to sing after a fashion, and soon I had the delight of feeling the iron grip of his goblin legs unclasp, and with one vigorous effort I threw him to the ground, from which he never moved again. I was so rejoiced to have at last got rid of this uncanny old man that I ran leaping and bounding down to the sea shore, where, by the greatest good luck, I met with some mariners who had anchored off the island to enjoy the delicious fruits, and to renew their supply of water.

They heard the story of my escape with amazement, saying, “You fell into the hands of the Old Man of the Sea, and it is a mercy that he did not strangle you as he has everyone else upon whose shoulders he has managed to perch himself. This island is well known as the scene of his evil deeds, and no merchant or sailor who lands upon it cares to stray far away from his comrades.” After we had talked for a while they took me back with them on board their ship, where the captain received me kindly, and we soon set sail, and after several days reached a large and prosperous-looking town where all the houses were built of stone. Here we anchored, and one of the merchants, who had been very friendly to me on the way, took me ashore with him and showed me a lodging set apart for strange merchants. He then provided me with a large sack, and pointed out to me a party of others equipped in like manner.

“Go with them,” said he, “and do as they do, but beware of losing sight of them, for if you strayed your life would be in danger.”

With that he supplied me with provisions, and bade me farewell, and I set out with my new companions. I soon learnt that the object of our expedition was to fill our sacks with cocoanuts, but when at length I saw the trees and noted their immense height and the slippery smoothness of their slender trunks, I did not at all understand how we were to do it. The crowns of the cocoa-palms were all alive with monkeys, big and little, which skipped from one to the other with surprising agility, seeming to be curious about us and disturbed at our appearance, and I was at first surprised when my companions after collecting stones began to throw them at the lively creatures, which seemed to me quite harmless. But very soon I saw the reason of it and joined them heartily, for the monkeys, annoyed and wishing to pay us back in our own coin, began to tear the nuts from the trees and cast them at us with angry and spiteful gestures, so that after very little labour our sacks were filled with the fruit which we could not otherwise have obtained.

As soon as we had as many as we could carry we went back to the town, where my friend bought my share and advised me to continue the same occupation until I had earned money enough to carry me to my own country. This I did, and before long had amassed a considerable sum. Just then I heard that there was a trading ship ready to sail, and taking leave of my friend I went on board, carrying with me a goodly store of cocoanuts; and we sailed first to the islands where pepper grows, then to Comari where the best aloes wood is found, and where men drink no wine by an unalterable law. Here I exchanged my nuts for pepper and good aloes wood, and went a-fishing for pearls with some of the other merchants, and my divers were so lucky that very soon I had an immense number, and those very large and perfect. With all these treasures I came joyfully back to Bagdad, where I disposed of them for large sums of money, of which I did not fail as before to give the tenth part to the poor, and after that I rested from my labours and comforted myself with all the pleasures that my riches could give me.

Having thus ended his story, Sindbad ordered that one hundred sequins should be given to Hindbad, and the guests then withdrew; but after the next day's feast he began the account of his sixth voyage as follows.

Sixth Voyage

It must be a marvel to you how, after having five times met with shipwreck and unheard of perils, I could again tempt fortune and risk fresh trouble. I am even surprised myself when I look back, but evidently it was my fate to rove, and after a year of repose I prepared to make a sixth voyage, regardless of the entreaties of my friends and relations, who did all they could to keep me at home. Instead of going by the Persian Gulf, I travelled a considerable way overland, and finally embarked from a distant Indian port with a captain who meant to make a long voyage. And truly he did so, for we fell in with stormy weather which drove us completely out of our course, so that for many days neither captain nor pilot knew where we were, nor where we were going. When they did at last discover our position we had small ground for rejoicing, for the captain, casting his turban upon the deck and tearing his beard, declared that we were in the most dangerous spot upon the whole wide sea, and had been caught by a current which was at that minute sweeping us to destruction. It was too true! In spite of all the sailors could do we were driven with frightful rapidity towards the foot of a mountain, which rose sheer out of the sea, and our vessel was dashed to pieces upon the rocks at its base, not, however, until we had managed to scramble on shore, carrying with us the most precious of our possessions. When we had done this the captain said to us:

"Now we are here we may as well begin to dig our graves at once, since from this fatal spot no shipwrecked mariner has ever returned."

This speech discouraged us much, and we began to lament over our sad fate.

The mountain formed the seaward boundary of a large island, and the narrow strip of rocky shore upon which we stood was strewn with the wreckage of a thousand gallant ships, while the bones of the luckless mariners shone white in the sunshine, and we shuddered to think how soon our own would be added to the heap. All around, too, lay vast quantities of the costliest merchandise, and treasures were heaped in every cranny of the rocks, but all these things only added to the desolation of the scene. It struck me as a very strange thing that a river of clear fresh water, which gushed out from the mountain not far from where we stood, instead of flowing into the sea as rivers generally do, turned off sharply, and flowed out of sight under a natural archway of rock, and when I went to examine it more closely I found that inside the cave the walls were thick with diamonds, and rubies, and masses of crystal, and the floor was strewn with ambergris. Here, then, upon this desolate shore we abandoned ourselves to our fate, for there was no possibility of scaling the mountain, and if a ship had appeared it could only have shared our doom. The first thing our captain did was to divide equally amongst us all the food we possessed, and then the length of each man's life depended on the time he could make his portion last. I myself could live upon very little.

Nevertheless, by the time I had buried the last of my companions my stock of provisions was so small that I hardly thought I should live long enough to dig my own grave, which I set about doing, while I regretted bitterly the roving disposition which was always bringing me into such straits, and thought longingly of all the comfort and luxury that I had left. But luckily for me the fancy took me to stand once more beside the river where it plunged out of sight in the depths of the cavern, and as I did so an idea struck me. This river which hid itself underground doubtless emerged again at some distant spot. Why should I not build a raft and trust myself to its swiftly flowing waters? If I perished before I could reach the light of day once more I should be no worse off than I was now, for death stared me in the face, while there was always the possibility that, as I was born under a lucky star, I might find myself safe and sound in some desirable land. I decided at any rate to risk it, and speedily built myself a stout raft of drift-wood with strong cords, of which enough and to spare lay strewn upon the beach. I then made up many packages of rubies, emeralds, rock crystal, ambergris, and precious stuffs, and bound them upon my raft, being careful to preserve the balance, and then I seated myself upon it, having two small oars that I had fashioned laid ready to my hand, and loosed the cord which held it to the bank. Once out in the current my raft flew swiftly under the gloomy archway, and I found myself in total darkness, carried smoothly forward by the rapid river. On I went as it seemed to me for many nights and days. Once the channel became so small that I had a narrow escape of being crushed against the rocky roof, and after that I took the precaution of lying flat upon my precious bales. Though I only ate what was absolutely necessary to keep myself alive, the inevitable moment came when, after swallowing my last morsel of food, I began to wonder if I must after all die of hunger. Then, worn out with anxiety and fatigue, I fell into a deep sleep, and when I again opened my eyes I was once more in the light of day; a beautiful country lay before me, and my raft, which was tied to the river bank, was surrounded by friendly looking black men. I rose and saluted them, and they spoke to me in return, but I could not understand a word of their language. Feeling perfectly bewildered by my sudden return to life and light, I murmured to myself in Arabic, "Close thine eyes, and while thou sleepest Heaven will change thy fortune from evil to good."

One of the natives, who understood this tongue, then came forward saying:

"My brother, be not surprised to see us; this is our land, and as we came to get water from the river we noticed your raft floating down it, and one of us swam out and brought you to the shore. We have waited for your awakening; tell us now whence you come and where you were going by that dangerous way?"

I replied that nothing would please me better than to tell them, but that I was starving, and would fain eat something first. I was soon supplied with all I needed, and having satisfied my hunger I told them faithfully all that had befallen me. They were lost in wonder at my tale when it was interpreted to them, and said that adventures so surprising must be related to their king only by the man to whom they had happened. So, procuring a horse, they mounted me upon it, and we set out, followed by several strong men carrying my raft just as it was upon their shoulders. In this order we marched into the city of Serendib, where the natives presented me to their king, whom I saluted in the Indian fashion, prostrating myself at his feet and kissing the ground; but the monarch bade me rise and sit beside him, asking first what was my name.

"I am Sindbad," I replied, "whom men call `the Sailor,' for I have voyaged much upon many seas."

“And how come you here?” asked the king.

I told my story, concealing nothing, and his surprise and delight were so great that he ordered my adventures to be written in letters of gold and laid up in the archives of his kingdom.

Presently my raft was brought in and the bales opened in his presence, and the king declared that in all his treasury there were no such rubies and emeralds as those which lay in great heaps before him. Seeing that he looked at them with interest, I ventured to say that I myself and all that I had were at his disposal, but he answered me smiling:

“Nay, Sindbad. Heaven forbid that I should covet your riches; I will rather add to them, for I desire that you shall not leave my kingdom without some tokens of my good will.” He then commanded his officers to provide me with a suitable lodging at his expense, and sent slaves to wait upon me and carry my raft and my bales to my new dwelling place. You may imagine that I praised his generosity and gave him grateful thanks, nor did I fail to present myself daily in his audience chamber, and for the rest of my time I amused myself in seeing all that was most worthy of attention in the city. The island of Serendib being situated on the equinoctial line, the days and nights there are of equal length. The chief city is placed at the end of a beautiful valley, formed by the highest mountain in the world, which is in the middle of the island. I had the curiosity to ascend to its very summit, for this was the place to which Adam was banished out of Paradise. Here are found rubies and many precious things, and rare plants grow abundantly, with cedar trees and cocoa palms. On the seashore and at the mouths of the rivers the divers seek for pearls, and in some valleys diamonds are plentiful. After many days I petitioned the king that I might return to my own country, to which he graciously consented. Moreover, he loaded me with rich gifts, and when I went to take leave of him he entrusted me with a royal present and a letter to the Commander of the Faithful, our sovereign lord, saying, “I pray you give these to the Caliph Haroun al Raschid, and assure him of my friendship.”

I accepted the charge respectfully, and soon embarked upon the vessel which the king himself had chosen for me. The king’s letter was written in blue characters upon a rare and precious skin of yellowish colour, and these were the words of it: “The King of the Indies, before whom walk a thousand elephants, who lives in a palace, of which the roof blazes with a hundred thousand rubies, and whose treasure house contains twenty thousand diamond crowns, to the Caliph Haroun al Raschid sends greeting. Though the offering we present to you is unworthy of your notice, we pray you to accept it as a mark of the esteem and friendship which we cherish for you, and of which we gladly send you this token, and we ask of you a like regard if you deem us worthy of it. Adieu, brother.”

The present consisted of a vase carved from a single ruby, six inches high and as thick as my finger; this was filled with the choicest pearls, large, and of perfect shape and lustre; secondly, a huge snake skin, with scales as large as a sequin, which would preserve from sickness those who slept upon it. Then quantities of aloes wood, camphor, and pistachio-nuts; and lastly, a beautiful slave girl, whose robes glittered with precious stones.

After a long and prosperous voyage we landed at Balsora, and I made haste to reach Bagdad, and taking the king’s letter I presented myself at the palace gate, followed by the beautiful slave, and various members of my own family, bearing the treasure.

As soon as I had declared my errand I was conducted into the presence of the Caliph, to whom, after I had made my obeisance, I gave the letter and the king’s gift, and when he had examined them he demanded of me whether the Prince of Serendib was really as rich and powerful as he claimed to be.

“Commander of the Faithful,” I replied, again bowing humbly before him, “I can assure your Majesty that he has in no way exaggerated his wealth and grandeur. Nothing can equal the magnificence of his palace. When he goes abroad his throne is prepared upon the back of an elephant, and on either side of him ride his ministers, his favourites, and courtiers. On his elephant’s neck sits an officer, his golden lance in his hand, and behind him stands another bearing a pillar of gold, at the top of which is an emerald as long as my hand. A thousand men in cloth of gold, mounted upon richly caparisoned elephants, go before him, and as the procession moves onward the officer who guides his elephant cries aloud, `Behold the mighty monarch, the powerful and valiant Sultan of the

Indies, whose palace is covered with a hundred thousand rubies, who possesses twenty thousand diamond crowns. Behold a monarch greater than Solomon and Mihrage in all their glory!'"

"Then the one who stands behind the throne answers: 'This king, so great and powerful, must die, must die, must die!'"

"And the first takes up the chant again, `All praise to Him who lives for evermore.'"

"Further, my lord, in Serendib no judge is needed, for to the king himself his people come for justice."

The Caliph was well satisfied with my report.

"From the king's letter," said he, "I judged that he was a wise man. It seems that he is worthy of his people, and his people of him."

So saying he dismissed me with rich presents, and I returned in peace to my own house.

When Sindbad had done speaking his guests withdrew, Hindbad having first received a hundred sequins, but all returned next day to hear the story of the seventh voyage, Sindbad thus began.

Seventh and Last Voyage

After my sixth voyage I was quite determined that I would go to sea no more. I was now of an age to appreciate a quiet life, and I had run risks enough. I only wished to end my days in peace. One day, however, when I was entertaining a number of my friends, I was told that an officer of the Caliph wished to speak to me, and when he was admitted he bade me follow him into the presence of Haroun al Raschid, which I accordingly did. After I had saluted him, the Caliph said:

"I have sent for you, Sindbad, because I need your services. I have chosen you to bear a letter and a gift to the King of Serendib in return for his message of friendship."

The Caliph's commandment fell upon me like a thunderbolt.

"Commander of the Faithful," I answered, "I am ready to do all that your Majesty commands, but I humbly pray you to remember that I am utterly disheartened by the unheard of sufferings I have undergone. Indeed, I have made a vow never again to leave Bagdad."

With this I gave him a long account of some of my strangest adventures, to which he listened patiently.

"I admit," said he, "that you have indeed had some extraordinary experiences, but I do not see why they should hinder you from doing as I wish. You have only to go straight to Serendib and give my message, then you are free to come back and do as you will. But go you must; my honour and dignity demand it."

Seeing that there was no help for it, I declared myself willing to obey; and the Caliph, delighted at having got his own way, gave me a thousand sequins for the expenses of the voyage. I was soon ready to start, and taking the letter and the present I embarked at Balsora, and sailed quickly and safely to Serendib. Here, when I had disclosed my errand, I was well received, and brought into the presence of the king, who greeted me with joy.

"Welcome, Sindbad," he cried. "I have thought of you often, and rejoice to see you once more."

After thanking him for the honour that he did me, I displayed the Caliph's gifts. First a bed with complete hangings all cloth of gold, which cost a thousand sequins, and another like to it of crimson stuff. Fifty robes of rich embroidery, a hundred of the finest white linen from Cairo, Suez, Cufa, and Alexandria. Then more beds of different fashion, and an agate vase carved with the figure of a man aiming an arrow at a lion, and finally a costly table, which had once belonged to King Solomon. The King of Serendib received with satisfaction the assurance of the Caliph's friendliness toward him, and now my task being accomplished I was anxious to depart, but it was some time before the king would think of letting me go. At last, however, he dismissed me with many presents, and I lost no time in going on board a ship, which sailed at once, and for four days all went well. On the fifth day we had the misfortune to fall in with pirates, who seized our vessel, killing all who resisted, and making prisoners of those who were prudent enough to submit at once, of whom I was one. When they had despoiled us of all we possessed, they forced us to put on vile raiment, and sailing to a distant island there sold us for slaves. I fell into the hands of a rich merchant, who took me home with him, and clothed and fed me well, and after some days sent for me and questioned me as to what I could do.

I answered that I was a rich merchant who had been captured by pirates, and therefore I knew no trade.

"Tell me," said he, "can you shoot with a bow?"

I replied that this had been one of the pastimes of my youth, and that doubtless with practice my skill would come back to me.

Upon this he provided me with a bow and arrows, and mounting me with him upon his own elephant took the way to a vast forest which lay far from the town. When we had reached the wildest part of it we stopped, and my master said to me: "This forest swarms with elephants. Hide yourself in this great tree, and shoot at all that pass you. When you have succeeded in killing one come and tell me."

So saying he gave me a supply of food, and returned to the town, and I perched myself high up in the tree and kept watch. That night I saw nothing, but just after sunrise the next morning a large herd of elephants came crashing and trampling by. I lost no time in letting fly several arrows, and at last one of the great animals fell to the ground dead, and the others retreated, leaving me free to come down from my hiding place and run back to tell my master of my success, for which I was praised and regaled with good things. Then we went back to the forest together and dug a mighty trench in which we buried the elephant I had killed, in order that when it became a skeleton my master might return and secure its tusks.

For two months I hunted thus, and no day passed without my securing, an elephant. Of course I did not always station myself in the same tree, but sometimes in one place, sometimes in another. One morning as I watched the coming of the elephants I was surprised to see that, instead of passing the tree I was in, as they usually did, they paused, and completely surrounded it, trumpeting horribly, and shaking the very ground with their heavy tread, and when I saw that their eyes were fixed upon me I was terrified, and my arrows dropped from my trembling hand. I had indeed good reason for my terror when, an instant later, the largest of the animals wound his trunk round the stem of my tree, and with one mighty effort tore it up by the roots, bringing me to the ground entangled in its branches. I thought now that my last hour was surely come; but the huge creature, picking me up gently enough, set me upon its back, where I clung more dead than alive, and followed by the whole herd turned and crashed off into the dense forest. It seemed to me a long time before I was once more set upon my feet by the elephant, and I stood as if in a dream watching the herd, which turned and trampled off in another direction, and were soon hidden in the dense underwood. Then, recovering myself, I looked about me, and found that I was standing upon the side of a great hill, strewn as far as I could see on either hand with bones and tusks of elephants. “This then must be the elephants’ burying place,” I said to myself, “and they must have brought me here that I might cease to persecute them, seeing that I want nothing but their tusks, and here lie more than I could carry away in a lifetime.”

Whereupon I turned and made for the city as fast as I could go, not seeing a single elephant by the way, which convinced me that they had retired deeper into the forest to leave the way open to the Ivory Hill, and I did not know how sufficiently to admire their sagacity. After a day and a night I reached my master’s house, and was received by him with joyful surprise.

“Ah! poor Sindbad,” he cried, “I was wondering what could have become of you. When I went to the forest I found the tree newly uprooted, and the arrows lying beside it, and I feared I should never see you again. Pray tell me how you escaped death."

I soon satisfied his curiosity, and the next day we went together to the Ivory Hill, and he was overjoyed to find that I had told him nothing but the truth. When we had loaded our elephant with as many tusks as it could carry and were on our way back to the city, he said:

"My brother — since I can no longer treat as a slave one who has enriched me thus — take your liberty and may Heaven prosper you. I will no longer conceal from you that these wild elephants have killed numbers of our slaves every year. No matter what good advice we gave them, they were caught sooner or later. You alone have escaped the wiles of these animals, therefore you must be under the special protection of Heaven. Now through you the whole town will be enriched without further loss of life, therefore you shall not only receive your liberty, but I will also bestow a fortune upon you."

To which I replied, "Master, I thank you, and wish you all prosperity. For myself I only ask liberty to return to my own country."

"It is well," he answered, "the monsoon will soon bring the ivory ships hither, then I will send you on your way with somewhat to pay your passage."

So I stayed with him till the time of the monsoon, and every day we added to our store of ivory till all his ware-houses were overflowing with it. By this time the other merchants knew the secret, but there was enough and to spare for all. When the ships at last arrived my master himself chose the one in which I was to sail, and put on board for me a great store of choice provisions, also ivory in abundance, and all the costliest curiosities of the country, for which I could not thank him enough, and so we parted. I left the ship at the first port we came to, not feeling at ease upon the sea after all that had happened to me by reason of it, and having disposed of my ivory for much gold, and bought many rare and costly presents, I loaded my pack animals, and joined a caravan of merchants. Our journey was long and tedious, but I bore it patiently, reflecting that at least I had not to fear tempests, nor pirates, nor serpents, nor any of the other perils from which I had suffered before, and at length we reached Bagdad. My first care was to present myself before the Caliph, and give him an account of my embassy. He assured me that my long absence had disquieted him much, but he had nevertheless hoped for the best. As to my adventure among the elephants he heard it with amazement, declaring that he could not have believed it had not my truthfulness been well known to him.

By his orders this story and the others I had told him were written by his scribes in letters of gold, and laid up among his treasures. I took my leave of him, well satisfied with the honours and rewards he bestowed upon me; and since that time I have rested from my labours, and given myself up wholly to my family and my friends.

Thus Sindbad ended the story of his seventh and last voyage, and turning to Hindbad he added:

"Well, my friend, and what do you think now? Have you ever heard of anyone who has suffered more, or had more narrow escapes than I have? Is it not just that I should now enjoy a life of ease and tranquillity?"

Hindbad drew near, and kissing his hand respectfully, replied, "Sir, you have indeed known fearful perils; my troubles have been nothing compared to yours. Moreover, the generous use you make of your wealth proves that you deserve it. May you live long and happily in the enjoyment in it."

Sindbad then gave him a hundred sequins, and hence-forward counted him among his friends; also he caused him to give up his profession as a porter, and to eat daily at his table that he might all his life remember Sindbad the Sailor.

The Little Hunchback

In the kingdom of Kashgar, which is, as everybody knows, situated on the frontiers of Great Tartary, there lived long ago a tailor and his wife who loved each other very much. One day, when the tailor was hard at work, a little hunchback came and sat at the entrance of the shop, and began to sing and play his tambourine. The tailor was amused with the antics of the fellow, and thought he would take him home to divert his wife. The hunchback having agreed to his proposal, the tailor closed his shop and they set off together.

When they reached the house they found the table ready laid for supper, and in a very few minutes all three were sitting before a beautiful fish which the tailor's wife had cooked with her own hands. But unluckily, the hunchback happened to swallow a large bone, and, in spite of all the tailor and his wife could do to help him, died of suffocation in an instant. Besides being very sorry for the poor man, the tailor and his wife were very much frightened on their own account, for if the police came to hear of it the worthy couple ran the risk of being thrown into prison for wilful murder. In order to prevent this dreadful calamity they both set about inventing some plan which would throw suspicion on some one else, and at last they made up their minds that they could do no better than select a Jewish doctor who lived close by as the author of the crime. So the tailor picked up the hunchback by his head while his wife took his feet and carried him to the doctor's house. Then they knocked at the door, which opened straight on to a steep staircase. A servant soon appeared, feeling her way down the dark staircase and inquired what they wanted.

"Tell your master," said the tailor, "that we have brought a very sick man for him to cure; and," he added, holding out some money, "give him this in advance, so that he may not feel he is wasting his time." The servant remounted the stairs to give the message to the doctor, and the moment she was out of sight the tailor and his wife carried the body swiftly after her, propped it up at the top of the staircase, and ran home as fast as their legs could carry them.

Now the doctor was so delighted at the news of a patient (for he was young, and had not many of them), that he was transported with joy.

"Get a light," he called to the servant, "and follow me as fast as you can!" and rushing out of his room he ran towards the staircase. There he nearly fell over the body of the hunchback, and without knowing what it was gave it such a kick that it rolled right to the bottom, and very nearly dragged the doctor after it. "A light! a light!" he cried again, and when it was brought and he saw what he had done he was almost beside himself with terror.

"Holy Moses!" he exclaimed, "why did I not wait for the light? I have killed the sick man whom they brought me; and if the sacred Ass of Esdras does not come to my aid I am lost! It will not be long before I am led to jail as a murderer."

Agitated though he was, and with reason, the doctor did not forget to shut the house door, lest some passers-by might chance to see what had happened. He then took up the corpse and carried it into his wife's room, nearly driving her crazy with fright.

"It is all over with us!" she wailed, "if we cannot find some means of getting the body out of the house. Once let the sun rise and we can hide it no longer! How were you driven to commit such a terrible crime?"

"Never mind that," returned the doctor, "the thing is to find a way out of it."

For a long while the doctor and his wife continued to turn over in their minds a way of escape, but could not find any that seemed good enough. At last the doctor gave it up altogether and resigned himself to bear the penalty of his misfortune.

But his wife, who had twice his brains, suddenly exclaimed, "I have thought of something! Let us carry the body on the roof of the house and lower it down the chimney of our neighbour the Mussulman." Now this Mussulman was employed by the Sultan, and furnished his table with oil and butter. Part of his house was occupied by a great storeroom, where rats and mice held high revel.

The doctor jumped at his wife's plan, and they took up the hunchback, and passing cords under his armpits they let him down into the purveyor's bed-room so gently that he really seemed to be leaning against the wall. When they felt he was touching the ground they drew up the cords and left him.

Scarcely had they got back to their own house when the purveyor entered his room. He had spent the evening at a wedding feast, and had a lantern in his hand. In the dim light it cast he was astonished to see a man standing in his chimney, but being naturally courageous he seized a stick and made straight for the supposed thief. “Ah!” he cried, “so it is you, and not the rats and mice, who steal my butter. I’ll take care that you don’t want to come back!”

So saying he struck him several hard blows. The corpse fell on the floor, but the man only redoubled his blows, till at length it occurred to him it was odd that the thief should lie so still and make no resistance. Then, finding he was quite dead, a cold fear took possession of him. “Wretch that I am,” said he, “I have murdered a man. Ah, my revenge has gone too far. Without the help of Allah I am undone! Cursed be the goods which have led me to my ruin.” And already he felt the rope round his neck.

But when he had got over the first shock he began to think of some way out of the difficulty, and seizing the hunchback in his arms he carried him out into the street, and leaning him against the wall of a shop he stole back to his own house, without once looking behind him.

A few minutes before the sun rose, a rich Christian merchant, who supplied the palace with all sorts of necessaries, left his house, after a night of feasting, to go to the bath. Though he was very drunk, he was yet sober enough to know that the dawn was at hand, and that all good Mussulmen would shortly be going to prayer. So he hastened his steps lest he should meet some one on his way to the mosque, who, seeing his condition, would send him to prison as a drunkard. In his haste he jostled against the hunchback, who fell heavily upon him, and the merchant, thinking he was being attacked by a thief, knocked him down with one blow of his fist. He then called loudly for help, beating the fallen man all the while.

The chief policeman of the quarter came running up, and found a Christian ill-treating a Mussulman. “What are you doing?” he asked indignantly.

“He tried to rob me,” replied the merchant, “and very nearly choked me.”

"Well, you have had your revenge," said the man, catching hold of his arm. "Come, be off with you!"

As he spoke he held out his hand to the hunchback to help him up, but the hunchback never moved. "Oho!" he went on, looking closer, "so this is the way a Christian has the impudence to treat a Mussulman!" and seizing the merchant in a firm grasp he took him to the inspector of police, who threw him into prison till the judge should be out of bed and ready to attend to his case. All this brought the merchant to his senses, but the more he thought of it the less he could understand how the hunchback could have died merely from the blows he had received.

The merchant was still pondering on this subject when he was summoned before the chief of police and questioned about his crime, which he could not deny. As the hunchback was one of the Sultan's private jesters, the chief of police resolved to defer sentence of death until he had consulted his master. He went to the palace to demand an audience, and told his story to the Sultan, who only answered,

"There is no pardon for a Christian who kills a Mussulman. Do your duty."

So the chief of police ordered a gallows to be erected, and sent criers to proclaim in every street in the city that a Christian was to be hanged that day for having killed a Mussulman.

When all was ready the merchant was brought from prison and led to the foot of the gallows. The executioner knotted the cord firmly round the unfortunate man's neck and was just about to swing him into the air, when the Sultan's purveyor dashed through the crowd, and cried, panting, to the hangman,

"Stop, stop, don't be in such a hurry. It was not he who did the murder, it was I."

The chief of police, who was present to see that everything was in order, put several questions to the purveyor, who told him the whole story of the death of the hunchback, and how he had carried the body to the place where it had been found by the Christian merchant.

"You are going," he said to the chief of police, "to kill an innocent man, for it is impossible that he should have murdered a creature who was dead already. It is bad enough for me to have slain a Mussulman without having it on my conscience that a Christian who is guiltless should suffer through my fault."

Now the purveyor's speech had been made in a loud voice, and was heard by all the crowd, and even if he had wished it, the chief of police could not have escaped setting the merchant free.

"Loose the cords from the Christian's neck," he commanded, turning to the executioner, "and hang this man in his place, seeing that by his own confession he is the murderer."

The hangman did as he was bid, and was tying the cord firmly, when he was stopped by the voice of the Jewish doctor beseeching him to pause, for he had something very important to say. When he had fought his way through the crowd and reached the chief of police,

"Worshipful sir," he began, "this Mussulman whom you desire to hang is unworthy of death; I alone am guilty. Last night a man and a woman who were strangers to me knocked at my door, bringing with them a patient for me to cure. The servant opened it, but having no light was hardly able to make out their faces, though she readily agreed to wake me and to hand me the fee for my services. While she was telling me her story they seem to have carried the sick man to the top of the staircase and then left him there. I jumped up in a hurry without waiting for a lantern, and in the darkness I fell against something, which tumbled headlong down the stairs and never stopped till it reached the bottom. When I examined the body I found it was quite dead, and the corpse was that of a hunchback Mussulman. Terrified at what we had done, my wife and I took the body on the roof and let it down the chimney of our neighbour the purveyor, whom you were just about to hang. The purveyor, finding him in his room, naturally thought he was a thief, and struck him such a blow that the man fell down and lay motionless on the floor. Stooping to examine him, and finding him stone dead, the purveyor supposed that the man had died from the blow he had received; but of course this was a mistake, as you will see from my account, and I only am the murderer; and although I am innocent of any wish to commit a crime, I must suffer for it all the same, or else have the blood of two Musselmans on my conscience. Therefore send away this man, I pray you, and let me take his place, as it is I who am guilty."

On hearing the declaration of the Jewish doctor, the chief of police commanded that he should be led to the gallows, and the Sultan’s purveyor go free. The cord was placed round the Jew’s neck, and his feet had already ceased to touch the ground when the voice of the tailor was heard beseeching the executioner to pause one moment and to listen to what he had to say.

“Oh, my lord,” he cried, turning to the chief of police, “how nearly have you caused the death of three innocent people! But if you will only have the patience to listen to my tale, you shall know who is the real culprit. If some one has to suffer, it must be me! Yesterday, at dusk, I was working in my shop with a light heart when the little hunchback, who was more than half drunk, came and sat in the doorway. He sang me several songs, and then I invited him to finish the evening at my house. He accepted my invitation, and we went away together. At supper I helped him to a slice of fish, but in eating it a bone stuck in his throat, and in spite of all we could do he died in a few minutes. We felt deeply sorry for his death, but fearing lest we should be held responsible, we carried the corpse to the house of the Jewish doctor. I knocked, and desired the servant to beg her master to come down as fast as possible and see a sick man whom we had brought for him to cure; and in order to hasten his movements I placed a piece of money in her hand as the doctor’s fee. Directly she had disappeared I dragged the body to the top of the stairs, and then hurried away with my wife back to our house. In descending the stairs the doctor accidentally knocked over the corpse, and finding him dead believed that he himself was the murderer. But now you know the truth set him free, and let me die in his stead.”

The chief of police and the crowd of spectators were lost in astonishment at the strange events to which the death of the hunchback had given rise.

“Loosen the Jewish doctor,” said he to the hangman, “and string up the tailor instead, since he has made confession of his crime. Really, one cannot deny that this is a very singular story, and it deserves to be written in letters of gold.”

The executioner speedily untied the knots which confined the doctor, and was passing the cord round the neck of the tailor, when the Sultan of Kashgar, who had missed his jester, happened to make inquiry of his officers as to what had become of him.

“Sire,” replied they, “the hunchback having drunk more than was good for him, escaped from the palace and was seen wandering about the town, where this morning he was found dead. A man was arrested for having caused his death, and held in custody till a gallows was erected. At the moment that he was about to suffer punishment, first one man arrived, and then another, each accusing themselves of the murder, and this went on for a long time, and at the present instant the chief of police is engaged in questioning a man who declares that he alone is the true assassin.”

The Sultan of Kashgar no sooner heard these words than he ordered an usher to go to the chief of police and to bring all the persons concerned in the hunchback’s death, together with the corpse, that he wished to see once again. The usher hastened on his errand, but was only just in time, for the tailor was positively swinging in the air, when his voice fell upon the silence of the crowd, commanding the hangman to cut down the body. The hangman, recognising the usher as one of the king’s servants, cut down the tailor, and the usher, seeing the man was safe, sought the chief of police and gave him the Sultan’s message. Accordingly, the chief of police at once set out for the palace, taking with him the tailor, the doctor, the purveyor, and the merchant, who bore the dead hunchback on their shoulders.

When the procession reached the palace the chief of police prostrated himself at the feet of the Sultan, and related all that he knew of the matter. The Sultan was so much struck by the circumstances that he ordered his private historian to write down an exact account of what had passed, so that in the years to come the miraculous escape of the four men who had thought themselves murderers might never be forgotten.

The Sultan asked everybody concerned in the hunchback’s affair to tell him their stories. Among others was a prating barber, whose tale of one of his brothers follows.

The Story of the Barber's Fifth Brother

As long as our father lived Alnaschar was very idle. Instead of working for his bread he was not ashamed to ask for it every evening, and to support himself next day on what he had received the night before. When our father died, worn out by age, he only left seven hundred silver drachmas to be divided amongst us, which made one hundred for each son. Alnaschar, who had never possessed so much money in his life, was quite puzzled to know what to do with it. After reflecting upon the matter for some time he decided to lay it out on glasses, bottles, and things of that sort, which he would buy from a wholesale merchant. Having bought his stock he next proceeded to look out for a small shop in a good position, where he sat down at the open door, his wares being piled up in an uncovered basket in front of him, waiting for a customer among the passers-by.

In this attitude he remained seated, his eyes fixed on the basket, but his thoughts far away. Unknown to himself he began to talk out loud, and a tailor, whose shop was next door to his, heard quite plainly what he was saying.

"This basket," said Alnaschar to himself, "has cost me a hundred drachmas — all that I possess in the world. Now in selling the contents piece by piece I shall turn two hundred, and these hundreds I shall again lay out in glass, which will produce four hundred. By this means I shall in course of time make four thousand drachmas, which will easily double themselves. When I have got ten thousand I will give up the glass trade and become a jeweller, and devote all my time to trading in pearls, diamonds, and other precious stones. At last, having all the wealth that heart can desire, I will buy a beautiful country house, with horses and slaves, and then I will lead a merry life and entertain my friends. At my feasts I will send for musicians and dancers from the neighbouring town to amuse my guests. In spite of my riches I shall not, however, give up trade till I have amassed a capital of a hundred thousand drachmas, when, having become a man of much consideration, I shall request the hand of the grand-vizir's daughter, taking care to inform the worthy father that I have heard favourable reports of her beauty and wit, and that I will pay down on our wedding day 3 thousand gold pieces. Should the vizir refuse my proposal, which after all is hardly to be expected, I will seize him by the beard and drag him to my house."

When I shall have married his daughter I will give her ten of the best eunuchs that can be found for her service. Then I shall put on my most gorgeous robes, and mounted on a horse with a saddle of fine gold, and its trappings blazing with diamonds, followed by a train of slaves, I shall present myself at the house of the grand-vizir, the people casting down their eyes and bowing low as I pass along. At the foot of the grand-vizir's staircase I shall dismount, and while my servants stand in a row to right and left I shall ascend the stairs, at the head of which the grand-vizir will be waiting to receive me. He will then embrace me as his son-in-law, and giving me his seat will place himself below me. This being done (as I have every reason to expect), two of my servants will enter, each bearing a purse containing a thousand pieces of gold. One of these I shall present to him saying, "Here are the thousand gold pieces that I offered for your daughter's hand, and here," I shall continue, holding out the second purse, "are another thousand to show you that I am a man who is better than his word." After hearing of such generosity the world will talk of nothing else.

I shall return home with the same pomp as I set out, and my wife will send an officer to compliment me on my visit to her father, and I shall confer on the officer the honour of a rich dress and a handsome gift. Should she send one to me I shall refuse it and dismiss the bearer. I shall never allow my wife to leave her rooms on any pretext whatever without my permission, and my visits to her will be marked by all the ceremony calculated to inspire respect. No establishment will be better ordered than mine, and I shall take care always to be dressed in a manner suitable to my position. In the evening, when we retire to our apartments, I shall sit in the place of honour, where I shall assume a grand demeanour and speak little, gazing straight before me, and when my wife, lovely as the full moon, stands humbly in front of my chair I shall pretend not to see her. Then her women will say to me, "Respected lord and master, your wife and slave is before you waiting to be noticed. She is mortified that you never deign to look her way; she is tired of standing so long. Beg her, we pray you, to be seated.” Of course I shall give no signs of even hearing this speech, which will vex them mightily. They will throw themselves at my feet with lamentations, and at length I will raise my head and throw a careless glance at her, then I shall go back to my former attitude. The women will think that I am displeased at my wife’s dress and will lead her away to put on a finer one, and I on my side shall replace the one I am wearing with another yet more splendid. They will then return to the charge, but this time it will take much longer before they persuade me even to look at my wife. It is as well to begin on my wedding-day as I mean to go on for the rest of our lives.

The next day she will complain to her mother of the way she has been treated, which will fill my heart with joy. Her mother will come to seek me, and, kissing my hands with respect, will say, “My lord” (for she could not dare to risk my anger by using the familiar title of “son-in-law”), “My lord, do not, I implore you, refuse to look upon my daughter or to approach her. She only lives to please you, and loves you with all her soul.” But I shall pay no more heed to my mother-in-law’s words than I did to those of the women. Again she will beseech me to listen to her entreaties, throwing herself this time at my feet, but all to no purpose. Then, putting a glass of wine into my wife’s hand, she will say to her, “There, present that to him yourself, he cannot have the cruelty to reject anything offered by so beautiful a hand,” and my wife will take it and offer it to me tremblingly with tears in her eyes, but I shall look in the other direction. This will cause her to weep still more, and she will hold out the glass crying, “Adorable husband, never shall I cease my prayers till you have done me the favour to drink.” Sick of her importunities, these words will goad me to fury. I shall dart an angry look at her and give her a sharp blow on the cheek, at the same time giving her a kick so violent that she will stagger across the room and fall on to the sofa.

“My brother,” pursued the barber, “was so much absorbed in his dreams that he actually did give a kick with his foot, which unluckily hit the basket of glass. It fell into the street and was instantly broken into a thousand pieces.”

His neighbour the tailor, who had been listening to his visions, broke into a loud fit of laughter as he saw this sight.

"Wretched man!" he cried, "you ought to die of shame at behaving so to a young wife who has done nothing to you. You must be a brute for her tears and prayers not to touch your heart. If I were the grand-vizir I would order you a hundred blows from a bullock whip, and would have you led round the town accompanied by a herald who should proclaim your crimes."

The accident, so fatal to all his profits, had restored my brother to his senses, and seeing that the mischief had been caused by his own insufferable pride, he rent his clothes and tore his hair, and lamented himself so loudly that the passers-by stopped to listen. It was a Friday, so these were more numerous than usual. Some pitied Alnaschar, others only laughed at him, but the vanity which had gone to his head had disappeared with his basket of glass, and he was loudly bewailing his folly when a lady, evidently a person of consideration, rode by on a mule. She stopped and inquired what was the matter, and why the man wept. They told her that he was a poor man who had laid out all his money on this basket of glass, which was now broken. On hearing the cause of these loud wails the lady turned to her attendant and said to him, "Give him whatever you have got with you." The man obeyed, and placed in my brother's hands a purse containing five hundred pieces of gold. Alnaschar almost died of joy on receiving it. He blessed the lady a thousand times, and, shutting up his shop where he had no longer anything to do, he returned home.

He was still absorbed in contemplating his good fortune, when a knock came to his door, and on opening it he found an old woman standing outside.

"My son," she said, "I have a favour to ask of you. It is the hour of prayer and I have not yet washed myself. Let me, I beg you, enter your house, and give me water."

My brother, although the old woman was a stranger to him, did not hesitate to do as she wished. He gave her a vessel of water and then went back to his place and his thoughts, and with his mind busy over his last adventure, he put his gold into a long and narrow purse, which he could easily carry in his belt. During this time the old woman was busy over her prayers, and when she had finished she came and prostrated herself twice before my brother, and then rising called down endless blessings on his head. Observing her shabby clothes, my brother thought that her gratitude was in reality a hint that he should give her some money to buy some new ones, so he held out two pieces of gold. The old woman started back in surprise as if she had received an insult. “Good heavens!” she exclaimed, “what is the meaning of this? Is it possible that you take me, my lord, for one of those miserable creatures who force their way into houses to beg for alms? Take back your money. I am thankful to say I do not need it, for I belong to a beautiful lady who is very rich and gives me everything I want.”

My brother was not clever enough to detect that the old woman had merely refused the two pieces of money he had offered her in order to get more, but he inquired if she could procure him the pleasure of seeing this lady.

“Willingly,” she replied; “and she will be charmed to marry you, and to make you the master of all her wealth. So pick up your money and follow me.”

Delighted at the thought that he had found so easily both a fortune and a beautiful wife, my brother asked no more questions, but concealing his purse, with the money the lady had given him, in the folds of his dress, he set out joyfully with his guide.

They walked for some distance till the old woman stopped at a large house, where she knocked. The door was opened by a young Greek slave, and the old woman led my brother across a well-paved court into a well-furnished hall. Here she left him to inform her mistress of his presence, and as the day was hot he flung himself on a pile of cushions and took off his heavy turban. In a few minutes there entered a lady, and my brother perceived at the first glance that she was even more beautiful and more richly dressed than he had expected. He rose from his seat, but the lady signed to him to sit down again and placed herself beside him. After the usual compliments had passed between them she said, “We are not comfortable here, let us go into another room,” and passing into a smaller chamber, apparently communicating with no other, she continued to talk to him for some time. Then rising hastily she left him, saying, “Stay where you are, I will come back in a moment.”

He waited as he was told, but instead of the lady there entered a huge black slave with a sword in his hand. Approaching my brother with an angry countenance he exclaimed, “What business have you here?” His voice and manner were so terrific that Alnaschar had not strength to reply, and allowed his gold to be taken from him, and even sabre cuts to be inflicted on him without making any resistance. As soon as he was let go, he sank on the ground powerless to move, though he still had possession of his senses. Thinking he was dead, the black ordered the Greek slave to bring him some salt, and between them they rubbed it into his wounds, thus giving him acute agony, though he had the presence of mind to give no sign of life. They then left him, and their place was taken by the old woman, who dragged him to a trapdoor and threw him down into a vault filled with the bodies of murdered men.

At first the violence of his fall caused him to lose consciousness, but luckily the salt which had been rubbed into his wounds had by its smarting preserved his life, and little by little he regained his strength. At the end of two days he lifted the trapdoor during the night and hid himself in the courtyard till daybreak, when he saw the old woman leave the house in search of more prey. Luckily she did not observe him, and when she was out of sight he stole from this nest of assassins and took refuge in my house.

I dressed his wounds and tended him carefully, and when a month had passed he was as well as ever. His one thought was how to be revenged on that wicked old hag, and for this purpose he had a purse made large enough to contain five hundred gold pieces, but filled it instead with bits of glass. This he tied round him with his sash, and, disguising himself as an old woman, he took a sabre, which he hid under his dress.

One morning as he was hobbling through the streets he met his old enemy prowling to see if she could find anyone to decoy. He went up to her and, imitating the voice of a woman, he said, “Do you happen to have a pair of scales you could lend me? I have just come from Persia and have brought with me five hundred gold pieces, and I am anxious to see if they are the proper weight.”

“Good woman,” replied the old hag, “you could not have asked anyone better. My son is a money-changer, and if you will follow me he will weigh them for you himself. Only we must be quick or he will have gone to his shop." So saying she led the way to the same house as before, and the door was opened by the same Greek slave.

Again my brother was left in the hall, and the pretended son appeared under the form of the black slave. "Miserable crone," he said to my brother, "get up and come with me," and turned to lead the way to the place of murder. Alnaschar rose too, and drawing the sabre from under his dress dealt the black such a blow on his neck that his head was severed from his body. My brother picked up the head with one hand, and seizing the body with the other dragged it to the vault, when he threw it in and sent the head after it. The Greek slave, supposing that all had passed as usual, shortly arrived with the basin of salt, but when she beheld Alnaschar with the sabre in his hand she let the basin fall and turned to fly. My brother, however, was too quick for her, and in another instant her head was rolling from her shoulders. The noise brought the old woman running to see what was the matter, and he seized her before she had time to escape. "Wretch!" he cried, "do you know me?"

"Who are you, my lord?" she replied trembling all over. "I have never seen you before."

"I am he whose house you entered to offer your hypocritical prayers. Don't you remember now?"

She flung herself on her knees to implore mercy, but he cut her in four pieces.

There remained only the lady, who was quite ignorant of all that was taking place around her. He sought her through the house, and when at last he found her, she nearly fainted with terror at the sight of him. She begged hard for life, which he was generous enough to give her, but he bade her to tell him how she had got into partnership with the abominable creatures he had just put to death.

"I was once," replied she, "the wife of an honest merchant, and that old woman, whose wickedness I did not know, used occasionally to visit me. 'Madam,' she said to me one day, 'we have a grand wedding at our house to-day. If you would do us the honour to be present, I am sure you would enjoy yourself.' I allowed myself to be persuaded, put on my richest dress, and took a purse with a hundred pieces of gold. Once inside the doors I was kept by force by that dreadful black, and it is now three years that I have been here, to my great grief."

"That horrible black must have amassed great wealth," remarked my brother.

"Such wealth," returned she, "that if you succeed in carrying it all away it will make you rich for ever. Come and let us see how much there is."

She led Alnaschar into a chamber filled with coffers packed with gold, which he gazed at with an admiration he was powerless to conceal. "Go," she said, "and bring men to carry them away."

My brother did not wait to be told twice, and hurried out into the streets, where he soon collected ten men. They all came back to the house, but what was his surprise to find the door open, and the room with the chests of gold quite empty. The lady had been cleverer than himself, and had made the best use of her time. However, he tried to console himself by removing all the beautiful furniture, which more than made up for the five hundred gold pieces he had lost.

Unluckily, on leaving the house, he forgot to lock the door, and the neighbours, finding the place empty, informed the police, who next morning arrested Alnaschar as a thief. My brother tried to bribe them to let him off, but far from listening to him they tied his hands, and forced him to walk between them to the presence of the judge. When they had explained to the official the cause of complaint, he asked Alnaschar where he had obtained all the furniture that he had taken to his house the day before.

"Sir," replied Alnaschar, "I am ready to tell you the whole story, but give, I pray you, your word, that I shall run no risk of punishment."

"That I promise," said the judge. So my brother began at the beginning and related all his adventures, and how he had avenged himself on those who had betrayed him. As to the furniture, he entreated the judge at least to allow him to keep part to make up for the five hundred pieces of gold which had been stolen from him.

The judge, however, would say nothing about this, and lost no time in sending men to fetch away all that Alnaschar had taken from the house. When everything had been moved and placed under his roof he ordered my brother to leave the town and never more to enter it on peril of his life, fearing that if he returned he might seek justice from the Caliph. Alnaschar obeyed, and was on his way to a neighbouring city when he fell in with a band of robbers, who stripped him of his clothes and left him naked by the roadside. Hearing of his plight, I hurried after him to console him for his misfortunes, and to dress him in my best robe. I then brought him back disguised, under cover of night, to my house, where I have since given him all the care I bestow on my other brothers.

The Story of the Barber’s Sixth Brother

There now remains for me to relate to you the story of my sixth brother, whose name was Schacabac. Like the rest of us, he inherited a hundred silver drachmas from our father, which he thought was a large fortune, but through ill-luck, he soon lost it all, and was driven to beg. As he had a smooth tongue and good manners, he really did very well in his new profession, and he devoted himself specially to making friends with the servants in big houses, so as to gain access to their masters.

One day he was passing a splendid mansion, with a crowd of servants lounging in the courtyard. He thought that from the appearance of the house it might yield him a rich harvest, so he entered and inquired to whom it belonged.

“My good man, where do you come from?” replied the servant. “Can’t you see for yourself that it can belong to nobody but a Barmecide?” for the Barmecides were famed for their liberality and generosity. My brother, hearing this, asked the porters, of whom there were several, if they would give him alms. They did not refuse, but told him politely to go in, and speak to the master himself.

My brother thanked them for their courtesy and entered the building, which was so large that it took him some time to reach the apartments of the Barmecide. At last, in a room richly decorated with paintings, he saw an old man with a long white beard, sitting on a sofa, who received him with such kindness that my brother was emboldened to make his petition.

“My lord,” he said, “you behold in me a poor man who only lives by the help of persons as rich and as generous as you.”

Before he could proceed further, he was stopped by the astonishment shown by the Barmecide. “Is it possible,” he cried, “that while I am in Bagdad, a man like you should be starving? That is a state of things that must at once be put an end to! Never shall it be said that I have abandoned you, and I am sure that you, on your part, will never abandon me.”

“My lord,” answered my brother, “I swear that I have not broken my fast this whole day.”

"What, you are dying of hunger?" exclaimed the Barmecide. "Here, slave; bring water, that we may wash our hands before meat!" No slave appeared, but my brother remarked that the Barmecide did not fail to rub his hands as if the water had been poured over them.

Then he said to my brother, "Why don't you wash your hands too?" and Schacabac, supposing that it was a joke on the part of the Barmecide (though he could see none himself), drew near, and imitated his motion.

When the Barmecide had done rubbing his hands, he raised his voice, and cried, "Set food before us at once, we are very hungry." No food was brought, but the Barmecide pretended to help himself from a dish, and carry a morsel to his mouth, saying as he did so, "Eat, my friend, eat, I entreat. Help yourself as freely as if you were at home! For a starving man, you seem to have a very small appetite."

"Excuse me, my lord," replied Schacabac, imitating his gestures as before, "I really am not losing time, and I do full justice to the repast."

"How do you like this bread?" asked the Barmecide. "I find it particularly good myself."

"Oh, my lord," answered my brother, who beheld neither meat nor bread, "never have I tasted anything so delicious."

"Eat as much as you want," said the Barmecide. "I bought the woman who makes it for five hundred pieces of gold, so that I might never be without it."

After ordering a variety of dishes (which never came) to be placed on the table, and discussing the merits of each one, the Barmecide declared that having dined so well, they would now proceed to take their wine. To this my brother at first objected, declaring that it was forbidden; but on the Barmecide insisting that it was out of the question that he should drink by himself, he consented to take a little. The Barmecide, however, pretended to fill their glasses so often, that my brother feigned that the wine had gone into his head, and struck the Barmecide such a blow on the head, that he fell to the ground. Indeed, he raised his hand to strike him a second time, when the Barmecide cried out that he was mad, upon which my brother controlled himself, and apologised and protested that it was all the fault of the wine he had drunk. At this the Barmecide, instead of being angry, began to laugh, and embraced him heartily. “I have long been seeking,” he exclaimed, “a man of your description, and henceforth my house shall be yours. You have had the good grace to fall in with my humour, and to pretend to eat and to drink when nothing was there. Now you shall be rewarded by a really good supper.”

Then he clapped his hands, and all the dishes were brought that they had tasted in imagination before and during the repast, slaves sang and played on various instruments. All the while Schacabac was treated by the Barmecide as a familiar friend, and dressed in a garment out of his own wardrobe.

Twenty years passed by, and my brother was still living with the Barmecide, looking after his house, and managing his affairs. At the end of that time his generous benefactor died without heirs, so all his possessions went to the prince. They even despoiled my brother of those that rightly belonged to him, and he, now as poor as he had ever been in his life, decided to cast in his lot with a caravan of pilgrims who were on their way to Mecca. Unluckily, the caravan was attacked and pillaged by the Bedouins, and the pilgrims were taken prisoners. My brother became the slave of a man who beat him daily, hoping to drive him to offer a ransom, although, as Schacabac pointed out, it was quite useless trouble, as his relations were as poor as himself. At length the Bedouin grew tired of tormenting, and sent him on a camel to the top of a high barren mountain, where he left him to take his chance. A passing caravan, on its way to Bagdad, told me where he was to be found, and I hurried to his rescue, and brought him in a deplorable condition back to the town.

“This,” — continued the barber,— “is the tale I related to the Caliph, who, when I had finished, burst into fits of laughter.

“Well were you called `the Silent,’” said he; “no name was ever better deserved. But for reasons of my own, which it is not necessary to mention, I desire you to leave the town, and never to come back.”

“I had of course no choice but to obey, and travelled about for several years until I heard of the death of the Caliph, when I hastily returned to Bagdad, only to find that all my brothers were dead. It was at this time that I rendered to the young cripple the important service of which you have heard, and for which, as you know, he showed such profound ingratitude, that he preferred rather to leave Bagdad than to run the risk of seeing me. I sought him long from place to place, but it was only to-day, when I expected it least, that I came across him, as much irritated with me as ever" — So saying the tailor went on to relate the story of the lame man and the barber, which has already been told.

"When the barber," he continued, "had finished his tale, we came to the conclusion that the young man had been right, when he had accused him of being a great chatter-box. However, we wished to keep him with us, and share our feast, and we remained at table till the hour of afternoon prayer. Then the company broke up, and I went back to work in my shop.

"It was during this interval that the little hunchback, half drunk already, presented himself before me, singing and playing on his drum. I took him home, to amuse my wife, and she invited him to supper. While eating some fish, a bone got into his throat, and in spite of all we could do, he died shortly. It was all so sudden that we lost our heads, and in order to divert suspicion from ourselves, we carried the body to the house of a Jewish physician. He placed it in the chamber of the purveyor, and the purveyor propped it up in the street, where it was thought to have been killed by the merchant.

"This, Sire, is the story which I was obliged to tell to satisfy your highness. It is now for you to say if we deserve mercy or punishment; life or death?"

The Sultan of Kashgar listened with an air of pleasure which filled the tailor and his friends with hope. "I must confess," he exclaimed, "that I am much more interested in the stories of the barber and his brothers, and of the lame man, than in that of my own jester. But before I allow you all four to return to your own homes, and have the corpse of the hunchback properly buried, I should like to see this barber who has earned your pardon. And as he is in this town, let an usher go with you at once in search of him."

The usher and the tailor soon returned, bringing with them an old man who must have been at least ninety years of age. "O Silent One," said the Sultan, "I am told that you know many strange stories. Will you tell some of them to me?"

"Never mind my stories for the present," replied the barber, "but will your Highness graciously be pleased to explain why this Jew, this Christian, and this Mussulman, as well as this dead body, are all here?"

"What business is that of yours?" asked the Sultan with a smile; but seeing that the barber had some reasons for his question, he commanded that the tale of the hunchback should be told him.

"It is certainly most surprising," cried he, when he had heard it all, "but I should like to examine the body." He then knelt down, and took the head on his knees, looking at it attentively. Suddenly he burst into such loud laughter that he fell right backwards, and when he had recovered himself enough to speak, he turned to the Sultan. "The man is no more dead than I am," he said; "watch me." As he spoke he drew a small case of medicines from his pocket and rubbed the neck of the hunchback with some ointment made of balsam. Next he opened the dead man's mouth, and by the help of a pair of pincers drew the bone from his throat. At this the hunchback sneezed, stretched himself and opened his eyes.

The Sultan and all those who saw this operation did not know which to admire most, the constitution of the hunchback who had apparently been dead for a whole night and most of one day, or the skill of the barber, whom everyone now began to look upon as a great man. His Highness desired that the history of the hunchback should be written down, and placed in the archives beside that of the barber, so that they might be associated in people's minds to the end of time. And he did not stop there; for in order to wipe out the memory of what they had undergone, he commanded that the tailor, the doctor, the purveyor and the merchant, should each be clothed in his presence with a robe from his own wardrobe before they returned home. As for the barber, he bestowed on him a large pension, and kept him near his own person.

The Adventures of Prince Camaralzaman and the Princess Badoura

Some twenty days' sail from the coast of Persia lies the isle of the children of Khaledan. The island is divided into several provinces, in each of which are large flourishing towns, and the whole forms an important kingdom. It was governed in former days by a king named Schahzaman, who, with good right, considered himself one of the most peaceful, prosperous, and fortunate monarchs on the earth. In fact, he had but one grievance, which was that none of his four wives had given him an heir.

This distressed him so greatly that one day he confided his grief to the grand-vizir, who, being a wise counsellor, said: "Such matters are indeed beyond human aid. Allah alone can grant your desire, and I should advise you, sire, to send large gifts to those holy men who spend their lives in prayer, and to beg for their intercessions. Who knows whether their petitions may not be answered!"

The king took his vizir's advice, and the result of so many prayers for an heir to the throne was that a son was born to him the following year.

Schahzaman sent noble gifts as thank offerings to all the mosques and religious houses, and great rejoicings were celebrated in honour of the birth of the little prince, who was so beautiful that he was named Camaralzaman, or "Moon of the Century."

Prince Camaralzaman was brought up with extreme care by an excellent governor and all the cleverest teachers, and he did such credit to them that when he was grown up, a more charming and accomplished young man was not to be found. Whilst he was still a youth the king, his father, who loved him dearly, had some thoughts of abdicating in his favour. As usual he talked over his plans with his grand-vizir, who, though he did not approve the idea, would not state all his objections.

"Sire," he replied, "the prince is still very young for the cares of state. Your Majesty fears his growing idle and careless, and doubtless you are right. But how would it be if he were first to marry? This would attach him to his home, and your Majesty might give him a share in your counsels, so that he might gradually learn how to wear a crown, which you can give up to him whenever you find him capable of wearing it."

The vizir's advice once more struck the king as being good, and he sent for his son, who lost no time in obeying the summons, and standing respectfully with downcast eyes before the king asked for his commands.

"I have sent for you," said the king, "to say that I wish you to marry. What do you think about it?"

The prince was so much overcome by these words that he remained silent for some time. At length he said: "Sire, I beg you to pardon me if I am unable to reply as you might wish. I certainly did not expect such a proposal as I am still so young, and I confess that the idea of marrying is very distasteful to me. Possibly I may not always be in this mind, but I certainly feel that it will require some time to induce me to take the step which your Majesty desires."

This answer greatly distressed the king, who was sincerely grieved by his objection to marriage. However he would not have recourse to extreme measures, so he said: "I do not wish to force you; I will give you time to reflect, but remember that such a step is necessary, for a prince such as you who will some day be called to rule over a great kingdom."

From this time Prince Camaralzaman was admitted to the royal council, and the king showed him every mark of favour.

At the end of a year the king took his son aside, and said: "Well, my son, have you changed your mind on the subject of marriage, or do you still refuse to obey my wish?"

The prince was less surprised but no less firm than on the former occasion, and begged his father not to press the subject, adding that it was quite useless to urge him any longer.

This answer much distressed the king, who again confided his trouble to his vizir.

"I have followed your advice," he said; "but Camaralzaman declines to marry, and is more obstinate than ever."

"Sire," replied the vizir, "much is gained by patience, and your Majesty might regret any violence. Why not wait another year and then inform the Prince in the midst of the assembled council that the good of the state demands his marriage? He cannot possibly refuse again before so distinguished an assemblage, and in our immediate presence."

The Sultan ardently desired to see his son married at once, but he yielded to the vizir's arguments and decided to wait. He then visited the prince's mother, and after telling her of his disappointment and of the further respite he had given his son, he added: "I know that Camaralzaman confides more in you than he does in me. Pray speak very seriously to him on this subject, and make him realize that he will most seriously displease me if he remains obstinate, and that he will certainly regret the measures I shall be obliged to take to enforce my will."

So the first time the Sultana Fatima saw her son she told him she had heard of his refusal to marry, adding how distressed she felt that he should have vexed his father so much. She asked what reasons he could have for his objections to obey.

"Madam," replied the prince, "I make no doubt that there are as many good, virtuous, sweet, and amiable women as there are others very much the reverse. Would that all were like you! But what revolts me is the idea of marrying a woman without knowing anything at all about her. My father will ask the hand of the daughter of some neighbouring sovereign, who will give his consent to our union. Be she fair or frightful, clever or stupid, good or bad, I must marry her, and am left no choice in the matter. How am I to know that she will not be proud, passionate, contemptuous, and recklessly extravagant, or that her disposition will in any way suit mine?"

"But, my son," urged Fatima, "you surely do not wish to be the last of a race which has reigned so long and so gloriously over this kingdom?"

"Madam," said the prince, "I have no wish to survive the king, my father, but should I do so I will try to reign in such a manner as may be considered worthy of my predecessors."

These and similar conversations proved to the Sultan how useless it was to argue with his son, and the year elapsed without bringing any change in the prince's ideas.

At length a day came when the Sultan summoned him before the council, and there informed him that not only his own wishes but the good of the empire demanded his marriage, and desired him to give his answer before the assembled ministers.

At this Camaralzaman grew so angry and spoke with so much heat that the king, naturally irritated at being opposed by his son in full council, ordered the prince to be arrested and locked up in an old tower, where he had nothing but a very little furniture, a few books, and a single slave to wait on him.

Camaralzaman, pleased to be free to enjoy his books, showed himself very indifferent to his sentence.

When night came he washed himself, performed his devotions, and, having read some pages of the Koran, lay down on a couch, without putting out the light near him, and was soon asleep.

Now there was a deep well in the tower in which Prince Camaralzaman was imprisoned, and this well was a favourite resort of the fairy Maimoune, daughter of Damriat, chief of a legion of genii. Towards midnight Maimoune floated lightly up from the well, intending, according to her usual habit, to roam about the upper world as curiosity or accident might prompt.

The light in the prince's room surprised her, and without disturbing the slave, who slept across the threshold, she entered the room, and approaching the bed was still more astonished to find it occupied.

The prince lay with his face half hidden by the coverlet. Maimoune lifted it a little and beheld the most beautiful youth she had ever seen.

"What a marvel of beauty he must be when his eyes are open!" she thought. "What can he have done to deserve to be treated like this?"

She could not weary gazing at Camaralzaman, but at length, having softly kissed his brow and each cheek, she replaced the coverlet and resumed her flight through the air.

As she entered the middle region she heard the sound of great wings coming towards her, and shortly met one of the race of bad genii. This genie, whose name was Danhasch, recognised Maimoune with terror, for he knew the supremacy which her goodness gave her over him. He would gladly have avoided her altogether, but they were so near that he must either be prepared to fight or yield to her, so he at once addressed her in a conciliatory tone:

"Good Maimoune, swear to me by Allah to do me no harm, and on my side I will promise not to injure you."

"Accursed genie!" replied Maimoune, "what harm can you do me? But I will grant your power and give the promise you ask. And now tell me what you have seen and done to-night."

"Fair lady," said Danhasch, "you meet me at the right moment to hear something really interesting. I must tell you that I come from the furthest end of China, which is one of the largest and most powerful kingdoms in the world. The present king has one only daughter, who is so perfectly lovely that neither you, nor I, nor any other creature could find adequate terms in which to describe her marvellous charms. You must therefore picture to yourself the most perfect features, joined to a brilliant and delicate complexion, and an enchanting expression, and even then imagination will fall short of the reality.

"The king, her father, has carefully shielded this treasure from the vulgar gaze, and has taken every precaution to keep her from the sight of everyone except the happy mortal he may choose to be her husband. But in order to give her variety in her confinement he has built her seven palaces such as have never been seen before. The first palace is entirely composed of rock crystal, the second of bronze, the third of fine steel, the fourth of another and more precious species of bronze, the fifth of touchstone, the sixth of silver, and the seventh of solid gold. They are all most sumptuously furnished, whilst the gardens surrounding them are laid out with exquisite taste. In fact, neither trouble nor cost has been spared to make this retreat agreeable to the princess. The report of her wonderful beauty has spread far and wide, and many powerful kings have sent embassies to ask her hand in marriage. The king has always received these embassies graciously, but says that he will never oblige the princess to marry against her will, and as she regularly declines each fresh proposal, the envoys have had to leave as disappointed in the result of their missions as they were gratified by their magnificent receptions."

"Sire," said the princess to her father, "you wish me to marry, and I know you desire to please me, for which I am very grateful. But, indeed, I have no inclination to change my state, for where could I find so happy a life amidst so many beautiful and delightful surroundings? I feel that I could never be as happy with any husband as I am here, and I beg you not to press one on me."

"At last an embassy came from a king so rich and powerful that the King of China felt constrained to urge this suit on his daughter. He told her how important such an alliance would be, and pressed her to consent. In fact, he pressed her so persistingly that the princess at length lost her temper and quite forgot the respect due to her father. "Sire," cried she angrily, "do not speak further of this or any other marriage or I will plunge this dagger in my breast and so escape from all these importunities."

"The king of China was extremely indignant with his daughter and replied: "You have lost your senses and you must be treated accordingly." So he had her shut in one set of rooms in one of her palaces, and only allowed her ten old women, of whom her nurse was the head, to wait on her and keep her company. He next sent letters to all the kings who had sued for the princess's hand, begging they would think of her no longer, as she was quite insane, and he desired his various envoys to make it known that anyone who could cure her should have her to wife.

"Fair Maimoune," continued Danhasch, "this is the present state of affairs. I never pass a day without going to gaze on this incomparable beauty, and I am sure that if you would only accompany me you would think the sight well worth the trouble, and own that you never saw such loveliness before."

The fairy only answered with a peal of laughter, and when at length she had control of her voice she cried, "Oh, come, you are making game of me! I thought you had something really interesting to tell me instead of raving about some unknown damsel. What would you say if you could see the prince I have just been looking at and whose beauty is really transcendent? That is something worth talking about, you would certainly quite lose your head."

"Charming Maimoune," asked Danhasch, "may I inquire who and what is the prince of whom you speak?"

"Know," replied Maimoune, "that he is in much the same case as your princess. The king, his father, wanted to force him to marry, and on the prince's refusal to obey he has been imprisoned in an old tower where I have just seen him."

"I don't like to contradict a lady," said Danhasch, "but you must really permit me to doubt any mortal being as beautiful as my princess."

"Hold your tongue," cried Maimoune. "I repeat that is impossible."

"Well, I don't wish to seem obstinate," replied Danhasch, "the best plan to test the truth of what I say will be for you to let me take you to see the princess for yourself."

"There is no need for that," retorted Maimoune; "we can satisfy ourselves in another way. Bring your princess here and lay her down beside my prince. We can then compare them at leisure, and decide which is in the right."

Danhasch readily consented, and after having the tower where the prince was confined pointed out to him, and making a wager with Maimoune as to the result of the comparison, he flew off to China to fetch the princess.

In an incredibly short time Danhasch returned, bearing the sleeping princess. Maimoune led him to the prince's room, and the rival beauty was placed beside him.

When the prince and princess lay thus side by side, an animated dispute as to their respective charms arose between the fairy and the genius. Danhasch began by saying:

"Now you see that my princess is more beautiful than your prince. Can you doubt any longer?"

"Doubt! Of course I do!" exclaimed Maimoune. "Why, you must be blind not to see how much my prince excels your princess. I do not deny that your princess is very handsome, but only look and you must own that I am in the right."

"There is no need for me to look longer," said Danhasch, "my first impression will remain the same; but of course, charming Maimoune, I am ready to yield to you if you insist on it."

"By no means," replied Maimoune. "I have no idea of being under any obligation to an accursed genius like you. I refer the matter to an umpire, and shall expect you to submit to his verdict."

Danhasch readily agreed, and on Maimoune striking the floor with her foot it opened, and a hideous, hump-backed, lame, squinting genius, with six horns on his head, hands like claws, emerged. As soon as he beheld Maimoune he threw himself at her feet and asked her commands.

"Rise, Caschcasch," said she. "I summoned you to judge between me and Danhasch. Glance at that couch, and say without any partiality whether you think the youth or the maiden lying there the more beautiful."

Caschcasch looked at the prince and princess with every token of surprise and admiration. At length, having gazed long without being able to come to a decision, he said

"Madam, I must confess that I should deceive you were I to declare one to be handsomer than the other. There seems to me only one way in which to decide the matter, and that is to wake one after the other and judge which of them expresses the greater admiration for the other."

This advice pleased Maimoune and Danhasch, and the fairy at once transformed herself into the shape of a gnat and settling on Camaralzaman's throat stung him so sharply that he awoke. As he did so his eyes fell on the Princess of China. Surprised at finding a lady so near him, he raised himself on one arm to look at her. The youth and beauty of the princess at once awoke a feeling to which his heart had as yet been a stranger, and he could not restrain his delight.

"What loveliness! What charms! Oh, my heart, my soul!" he exclaimed, as he kissed her forehead, her eyes and mouth in a way which would certainly have roused her had not the genie's enchantments kept her asleep.

"How, fair lady!" he cried, "you do not wake at the signs of Camaralzaman's love? Be you who you may, he is not unworthy of you."

It then suddenly occurred to him, that perhaps this was the bride his father had destined for him, and that the King had probably had her placed in this room in order to see how far Camaralzaman's aversion to marriage would withstand her charms.

"At all events," he thought, "I will take this ring as a remembrance of her."

So saying he drew off a fine ring which the princess wore on her finger, and replaced it by one of his own. After which he lay down again and was soon fast asleep.

Then Danhasch, in his turn, took the form of a gnat and bit the princess on her lip.

She started up, and was not a little amazed at seeing a young man beside her. From surprise she soon passed to admiration, and then to delight on perceiving how handsome and fascinating he was.

“Why,” cried she, “was it you my father wished me to marry? How unlucky that I did not know sooner! I should not have made him so angry. But wake up! wake up! for I know I shall love you with all my heart.”

So saying she shook Camaralzaman so violently that nothing but the spells of Maimoune could have prevented his waking.

“Oh!” cried the princess. “Why are you so drowsy?” So saying she took his hand and noticed her own ring on his finger, which made her wonder still more. But as he still remained in a profound slumber she pressed a kiss on his cheek and soon fell fast asleep too.

Then Maimoune turning to the genie said: “Well, are you satisfied that my prince surpasses your princess? Another time pray believe me when I assert anything.”

Then turning to Caschcasch: “My thanks to you, and now do you and Danhasch bear the princess back to her own home.”

The two genii hastened to obey, and Maimoune returned to her well.

On waking next morning the first thing Prince Camaralzaman did was to look round for the lovely lady he had seen at night, and the next to question the slave who waited on him about her. But the slave persisted so strongly that he knew nothing of any lady, and still less of how she got into the tower, that the prince lost all patience, and after giving him a good beating tied a rope round him and ducked him in the well till the unfortunate man cried out that he would tell everything. Then the prince drew him up all dripping wet, but the slave begged leave to change his clothes first, and as soon as the prince consented hurried off just as he was to the palace. Here he found the king talking to the grand-vizir of all the anxiety his son had caused him. The slave was admitted at once and cried:

“Alas, Sire! I bring sad news to your Majesty. There can be no doubt that the prince has completely lost his senses. He declares that he saw a lady sleeping on his couch last night, and the state you see me in proves how violent contradiction makes him." He then gave a minute account of all the prince had said and done.

The king, much moved, begged the vizir to examine into this new misfortune, and the latter at once went to the tower, where he found the prince quietly reading a book. After the first exchange of greetings the vizir said:

"I feel really very angry with your slave for alarming his Majesty by the news he brought him."

"What news?" asked the prince.

"Ah!" replied the vizir, "something absurd, I feel sure, seeing how I find you."

"Most likely," said the prince; "but now that you are here I am glad of the opportunity to ask you where is the lady who slept in this room last night?"

The grand-vizir felt beside himself at this question.

"Prince!" he exclaimed, "how would it be possible for any man, much less a woman, to enter this room at night without walking over your slave on the threshold? Pray consider the matter, and you will realise that you have been deeply impressed by some dream."

But the prince angrily insisted on knowing who and where the lady was, and was not to be persuaded by all the vizir's protestations to the contrary that the plot had not been one of his making. At last, losing patience, he seized the vizir by the beard and loaded him with blows.

"Stop, Prince," cried the unhappy vizir, "stay and hear what I have to say."

The prince, whose arm was getting tired, paused.

"I confess, Prince," said the vizir, "that there is some foundation for what you say. But you know well that a minister has to carry out his master's orders. Allow me to go and to take to the king any message you may choose to send."

"Very well," said the prince; "then go and tell him that I consent to marry the lady whom he sent or brought here last night. Be quick and bring me back his answer."

The vizir bowed to the ground and hastened to leave the room and tower.

“Well,” asked the king as soon as he appeared, “and how did you find my son?”

“Alas, sire,” was the reply, “the slave’s report is only too true!”

He then gave an exact account of his interview with Camaralzaman and of the prince’s fury when told that it was not possible for any lady to have entered his room, and of the treatment he himself had received. The king, much distressed, determined to clear up the matter himself, and, ordering the vizir to follow him, set out to visit his son.

The prince received his father with profound respect, and the king, making him sit beside him, asked him several questions, to which Camaralzaman replied with much good sense. At last the king said: “My son, pray tell me about the lady who, it is said, was in your room last night.”

“Sire,” replied the prince, “pray do not increase my distress in this matter, but rather make me happy by giving her to me in marriage. However much I may have objected to matrimony formerly, the sight of this lovely girl has overcome all my prejudices, and I will gratefully receive her from your hands.”

The king was almost speechless on hearing his son, but after a time assured him most solemnly that he knew nothing whatever about the lady in question, and had not connived at her appearance. He then desired the prince to relate the whole story to him.

Camaralzaman did so at great length, showed the ring, and implored his father to help to find the bride he so ardently desired.

“After all you tell me,” remarked the king, “I can no longer doubt your word; but how and whence the lady came, or why she should have stayed so short a time I cannot imagine. The whole affair is indeed mysterious. Come, my dear son, let us wait together for happier days.”

So saying the king took Camaralzaman by the hand and led him back to the palace, where the prince took to his bed and gave himself up to despair, and the king shutting himself up with his son entirely neglected the affairs of state.

The prime minister, who was the only person admitted, felt it his duty at last to tell the king how much the court and all the people complained of his seclusion, and how bad it was for the nation. He urged the sultan to remove with the prince to a lovely little island close by, whence he could easily attend public audiences, and where the charming scenery and fine air would do the invalid so much good as to enable him to bear his father's occasional absence.

The king approved the plan, and as soon as the castle on the island could be prepared for their reception he and the prince arrived there, Schahzaman never leaving his son except for the prescribed public audiences twice a week.

Whilst all this was happening in the capital of Schahzaman the two genii had carefully borne the Princess of China back to her own palace and replaced her in bed. On waking next morning she first turned from one side to another and then, finding herself alone, called loudly for her women.

"Tell me," she cried, "where is the young man I love so dearly, and who slept near me last night?"

"Princess," exclaimed the nurse, "we cannot tell what you allude to without more explanation."

"Why," continued the princess, "the most charming and beautiful young man lay sleeping beside me last night. I did my utmost to wake him, but in vain."

"Your Royal Highness wishes to make game of us," said the nurse. "Is it your pleasure to rise?"

"I am quite in earnest," persisted the princess, "and I want to know where he is."

"But, Princess," expostulated the nurse, "we left you quite alone last night, and we have seen no one enter your room since then."

At this the princess lost all patience, and taking the nurse by her hair she boxed her ears soundly, crying out: "You shall tell me, you old witch, or I'll kill you."

The nurse had no little trouble in escaping, and hurried off to the queen, to whom she related the whole story with tears in her eyes.

"You see, madam," she concluded, "that the princess must be out of her mind. If only you will come and see her, you will be able to judge for yourself."

The queen hurried to her daughter's apartments, and after tenderly embracing her, asked her why she had treated her nurse so badly.

"Madam," said the princess, "I perceive that your Majesty wishes to make game of me, but I can assure you that I will never marry anyone except the charming young man whom I saw last night. You must know where he is, so pray send for him."

The queen was much surprised by these words, but when she declared that she knew nothing whatever of the matter the princess lost all respect, and answered that if she were not allowed to marry as she wished she should kill herself, and it was in vain that the queen tried to pacify her and bring her to reason.

The king himself came to hear the rights of the matter, but the princess only persisted in her story, and as a proof showed the ring on her finger. The king hardly knew what to make of it all, but ended by thinking that his daughter was more crazy than ever, and without further argument he had her placed in still closer confinement, with only her nurse to wait on her and a powerful guard to keep the door.

Then he assembled his council, and having told them the sad state of things, added: "If any of you can succeed in curing the princess, I will give her to him in marriage, and he shall be my heir."

An elderly emir present, fired with the desire to possess a young and lovely wife and to rule over a great kingdom, offered to try the magic arts with which he was acquainted.

"You are welcome to try," said the king, "but I make one condition, which is, that should you fail you will lose your life."

The emir accepted the condition, and the king led him to the princess, who, veiling her face, remarked, "I am surprised, sire, that you should bring an unknown man into my presence."

"You need not be shocked," said the king; "this is one of my emirs who asks your hand in marriage."

"Sire," replied the princess, "this is not the one you gave me before and whose ring I wear. Permit me to say that I can accept no other."

The emir, who had expected to hear the princess talk nonsense, finding how calm and reasonable she was, assured the king that he could not venture to undertake a cure, but placed his head at his Majesty's disposal, on which the justly irritated monarch promptly had it cut off.

This was the first of many suitors for the princess whose inability to cure her cost them their lives.

Now it happened that after things had been going on in this way for some time the nurse's son Marzavan returned from his travels. He had been in many countries and learnt many things, including astrology. Needless to say that one of the first things his mother told him was the sad condition of the princess, his foster-sister. Marzavan asked if she could not manage to let him see the princess without the king's knowledge.

After some consideration his mother consented, and even persuaded the eunuch on guard to make no objection to Marzavan's entering the royal apartment.

The princess was delighted to see her foster-brother again, and after some conversation she confided to him all her history and the cause of her imprisonment.

Marzavan listened with downcast eyes and the utmost attention. When she had finished speaking he said,

"If what you tell me, Princess, is indeed the case, I do not despair of finding comfort for you. Take patience yet a little longer. I will set out at once to explore other countries, and when you hear of my return be sure that he for whom you sigh is not far off." So saying, he took his leave and started next morning on his travels.

Marzavan journeyed from city to city and from one island and province to another, and wherever he went he heard people talk of the strange story of the Princess Badoura, as the Princess of China was named.

After four months he reached a large populous seaport town named Torf, and here he heard no more of the Princess Badoura but a great deal of Prince Camaralzaman, who was reported ill, and whose story sounded very similar to that of the Princess Badoura.

Marzavan was rejoiced, and set out at once for Prince Camaralzaman's residence. The ship on which he embarked had a prosperous voyage till she got within sight of the capital of King Schahzaman, but when just about to enter the harbour she suddenly struck on a rock, and foundered within sight of the palace where the prince was living with his father and the grand-vizir.

Marzavan, who swam well, threw himself into the sea and managed to land close to the palace, where he was kindly received, and after having a change of clothing given him was brought before the grand-vizir. The vizir was at once attracted by the young man's superior air and intelligent conversation, and perceiving that he had gained much experience in the course of his travels, he said, "Ah, how I wish you had learnt some secret which might enable you to cure a malady which has plunged this court into affliction for some time past!"

Marzavan replied that if he knew what the illness was he might possibly be able to suggest a remedy, on which the vizir related to him the whole history of Prince Camaralzaman.

On hearing this Marzavan rejoiced inwardly, for he felt sure that he had at last discovered the object of the Princess Badoura's infatuation. However, he said nothing, but begged to be allowed to see the prince.

On entering the royal apartment the first thing which struck him was the prince himself, who lay stretched out on his bed with his eyes closed. The king sat near him, but, without paying any regard to his presence, Marzavan exclaimed, "Heavens! what a striking likeness!" And, indeed, there was a good deal of resemblance between the features of Camaralzaman and those of the Princess of China.

These words caused the prince to open his eyes with languid curiosity, and Marzavan seized this moment to pay him his compliments, contriving at the same time to express the condition of the Princess of China in terms unintelligible, indeed, to the Sultan and his vizir, but which left the prince in no doubt that his visitor could give him some welcome information.

The prince begged his father to allow him the favour of a private interview with Marzavan, and the king was only too pleased to find his son taking an interest in anyone or anything. As soon as they were left alone Marzavan told the prince the story of the Princess Badoura and her sufferings, adding, "I am convinced that you alone can cure her; but before starting on so long a journey you must be well and strong, so do your best to recover as quickly as may be."

These words produced a great effect on the prince, who was so much cheered by the hopes held out that he declared he felt able to get up and be dressed. The king was overjoyed at the result of

Marzavan's interview, and ordered public rejoicings in honour of the prince's recovery.

Before long the prince was quite restored to his original state of health, and as soon as he felt himself really strong he took Marzavan aside and said:

"Now is the time to perform your promise. I am so impatient to see my beloved princess once more that I am sure I shall fall ill again if we do not start soon. The one obstacle is my father's tender care of me, for, as you may have noticed, he cannot bear me out of his sight."

"Prince," replied Marzavan, "I have already thought over the matter, and this is what seems to me the best plan. You have not been out of doors since my arrival. Ask the king's permission to go with me for two or three days' hunting, and when he has given leave order two good horses to be held ready for each of us. Leave all the rest to me."

Next day the prince seized a favourable opportunity for making his request, and the king gladly granted it on condition that only one night should be spent out for fear of too great fatigue after such a long illness.

Next morning Prince Camaralzaman and Marzavan were off betimes, attended by two grooms leading the two extra horses. They hunted a little by the way, but took care to get as far from the towns as possible. At night-fall they reached an inn, where they supped and slept till midnight. Then Marzavan awoke and roused the prince without disturbing anyone else. He begged the prince to give him the coat he had been wearing and to put on another which they had brought with them. They mounted their second horses, and Marzavan led one of the grooms' horses by the bridle.

By daybreak our travellers found themselves where four cross roads met in the middle of the forest. Here Marzavan begged the prince to wait for him, and leading the groom's horse into a dense part of the wood he cut its throat, dipped the prince's coat in its blood, and having rejoined the prince threw the coat on the ground where the roads parted.

In answer to Camaralzaman's inquiries as to the reason for this, Marzavan replied that the only chance they had of continuing their journey was to divert attention by creating the idea of the prince's death. "Your father will doubtless be plunged in the deepest grief," he went on, "but his joy at your return will be all the greater."

The prince and his companion now continued their journey by land and sea, and as they had brought plenty of money to defray their expenses they met with no needless delays. At length they reached the capital of China, where they spent three days in a suitable lodging to recover from their fatigues.

During this time Marzavan had an astrologer's dress prepared for the prince. They then went to the baths, after which the prince put on the astrologer's robe and was conducted within sight of the king's palace by Marzavan, who left him there and went to consult his mother, the princess's nurse.

Meantime the prince, according to Marzavan's instructions, advanced close to the palace gates and there proclaimed aloud:

"I am an astrologer and I come to restore health to the Princess Badoura, daughter of the high and mighty King of China, on the conditions laid down by His Majesty of marrying her should I succeed, or of losing my life if I fail."

It was some little time since anyone had presented himself to run the terrible risk involved in attempting to cure the princess, and a crowd soon gathered round the prince. On perceiving his youth, good looks, and distinguished bearing, everyone felt pity for him.

"What are you thinking of, sir," exclaimed some; "why expose yourself to certain death? Are not the heads you see exposed on the town wall sufficient warning? For mercy's sake give up this mad idea and retire whilst you can."

But the prince remained firm, and only repeated his cry with greater assurance, to the horror of the crowd.

"He is resolved to die!" they cried; "may heaven have pity on him!"

Camaralzaman now called out for the third time, and at last the grand-vizir himself came out and fetched him in.

The prime minister led the prince to the king, who was much struck by the noble air of this new adventurer, and felt such pity for the fate so evidently in store for him, that he tried to persuade the young man to renounce his project.

But Camaralzaman politely yet firmly persisted in his intentions, and at length the king desired the eunuch who had the guard of the princess's apartments to conduct the astrologer to her presence.

The eunuch led the way through long passages, and Camaralzaman followed rapidly, in haste to reach the object of his desires. At last they came to a large hall which was the ante-room to the princess's chamber, and here Camaralzaman said to the eunuch:

"Now you shall choose. Shall I cure the princess in her own presence, or shall I do it from here without seeing her?"

The eunuch, who had expressed many contemptuous doubts as they came along of the newcomer's powers, was much surprised and said:

"If you really can cure, it is immaterial when you do it. Your fame will be equally great."

"Very well," replied the prince: "then, impatient though I am to see the princess, I will effect the cure where I stand, the better to convince you of my power." He accordingly drew out his writing case and wrote as follows— "Adorable princess! The enamoured Camaralzaman has never forgotten the moment when, contemplating your sleeping beauty, he gave you his heart. As he was at that time deprived of the happiness of conversing with you, he ventured to give you his ring as a token of his love, and to take yours in exchange, which he now encloses in this letter. Should you deign to return it to him he will be the happiest of mortals, if not he will cheerfully resign himself to death, seeing he does so for love of you. He awaits your reply in your ante-room."

Having finished this note the prince carefully enclosed the ring in it without letting the eunuch see it, and gave him the letter, saying:

"Take this to your mistress, my friend, and if on reading it and seeing its contents she is not instantly cured, you may call me an impudent impostor."

The eunuch at once passed into the princess's room, and handing her the letter said:

"Madam, a new astrologer has arrived, who declares that you will be cured as soon as you have read this letter and seen what it contains."

The princess took the note and opened it with languid indifference. But no sooner did she see her ring than, barely glancing at the writing, she rose hastily and with one bound reached the doorway and pushed back the hangings. Here she and the prince recognised each other, and in a moment they were locked in each other's arms, where they tenderly embraced, wondering how they came to meet at last after so long a separation. The nurse, who had hastened after her charge, drew them back to the inner room, where the princess restored her ring to Camaralzaman.

"Take it back," she said, "I could not keep it without returning yours to you, and I am resolved to wear that as long as I live."

Meantime the eunuch had hastened back to the king. "Sire," he cried, "all the former doctors and astrologers were mere quacks. This man has cured the princess without even seeing her." He then told all to the king, who, overjoyed, hastened to his daughter's apartments, where, after embracing her, he placed her hand in that of the prince, saying:

"Happy stranger, I keep my promise, and give you my daughter to wife, be you who you may. But, if I am not much mistaken, your condition is above what you appear to be."

The prince thanked the king in the warmest and most respectful terms, and added: "As regards my person, your Majesty has rightly guessed that I am not an astrologer. It is but a disguise which I assumed in order to merit your illustrious alliance. I am myself a prince, my name is Camaralzaman, and my father is Schahzaman, King of the Isles of the Children of Khaledan." He then told his whole history, including the extraordinary manner of his first seeing and loving the Princess Badoura.

When he had finished the king exclaimed: "So remarkable a story must not be lost to posterity. It shall be inscribed in the archives of my kingdom and published everywhere abroad."

The wedding took place next day amidst great pomp and rejoicings. Marzavan was not forgotten, but was given a lucrative post at court, with a promise of further advancement.

The prince and princess were now entirely happy, and months slipped by unconsciously in the enjoyment of each other's society.

One night, however, Prince Camaralzaman dreamt that he saw his father lying at the point of death, and saying: "Alas! my son whom I loved so tenderly, has deserted me and is now causing my death."

The prince woke with such a groan as to startle the princess, who asked what was the matter.

"Ah!" cried the prince, "at this very moment my father is perhaps no more!" and he told his dream.

The princess said but little at the time, but next morning she went to the king, and kissing his hand said:

"I have a favour to ask of your Majesty, and I beg you to believe that it is in no way prompted by my husband. It is that you will allow us both to visit my father-in-law King Schahzaman."

Sorry though the king felt at the idea of parting with his daughter, he felt her request to be so reasonable that he could not refuse it, and made but one condition, which was that she should only spend one year at the court of King Schahzaman, suggesting that in future the young couple should visit their respective parents alternately.

The princess brought this good news to her husband, who thanked her tenderly for this fresh proof of her affection.

All preparations for the journey were now pressed forwards, and when all was ready the king accompanied the travellers for some days, after which he took an affectionate leave of his daughter, and charging the prince to take every care of her, returned to his capital.

The prince and princess journeyed on, and at the end of a month reached a huge meadow interspersed with clumps of big trees which cast a most pleasant shade. As the heat was great, Camaralzaman thought it well to encamp in this cool spot. Accordingly the tents were pitched, and the princess entering hers whilst the prince was giving his further orders, removed her girdle, which she placed beside her, and desiring her women to leave her, lay down and was soon asleep.

When the camp was all in order the prince entered the tent and, seeing the princess asleep, he sat down near her without speaking. His eyes fell on the girdle which, he took up, and whilst inspecting the precious stones set in it he noticed a little pouch sewn to the girdle and fastened by a loop. He touched it and felt something hard within. Curious as to what this might be, he opened the pouch and found a cornelian engraved with various figures and strange characters.

“This cornelian must be something very precious,” thought he, “or my wife would not wear it on her person with so much care.”

In truth it was a talisman which the Queen of China had given her daughter, telling her it would ensure her happiness as long as she carried it about her.

The better to examine the stone the prince stepped to the open doorway of the tent. As he stood there holding it in the open palm of his hand, a bird suddenly swooped down, picked the stone up in its beak and flew away with it.

Imagine the prince’s dismay at losing a thing by which his wife evidently set such store!

The bird having secured its prey flew off some yards and alighted on the ground, holding the talisman it its beak. Prince Camaralzaman advanced, hoping the bird would drop it, but as soon as he approached the thief fluttered on a little further still. He continued his pursuit till the bird suddenly swallowed the stone and took a longer flight than before. The prince then hoped to kill it with a stone, but the more hotly he pursued the further flew the bird.

In this fashion he was led on by hill and dale through the entire day, and when night came the tiresome creature roosted on the top of a very high tree where it could rest in safety.

The prince in despair at all his useless trouble began to think whether he had better return to the camp. “But,” thought he, “how shall I find my way back? Must I go up hill or down? I should certainly lose my way in the dark, even if my strength held out.” Overwhelmed by hunger, thirst, fatigue and sleep, he ended by spending the night at the foot of the tree.

Next morning Camaralzaman woke up before the bird left its perch, and no sooner did it take flight than he followed it again with as little success as the previous day, only stopping to eat some herbs and fruit he found by the way. In this fashion he spent ten days, following the bird all day and spending the night at the foot of a tree, whilst it roosted on the topmost bough. On the eleventh day the bird and the prince reached a large town, and as soon as they were close to its walls the bird took a sudden and higher flight and was shortly completely out of sight, whilst Camaralzaman felt in despair at having to give up all hopes of ever recovering the talisman of the

Princess Badoura.

Much cast down, he entered the town, which was built near the sea and had a fine harbour. He walked about the streets for a long time, not knowing where to go, but at length as he walked near the seashore he found a garden door open and walked in.

The gardener, a good old man, who was at work, happened to look up, and, seeing a stranger, whom he recognised by his dress as a Mussulman, he told him to come in at once and to shut the door.

Camaralzaman did as he was bid, and inquired why this precaution was taken.

“Because,” said the gardener, “I see that you are a stranger and a Mussulman, and this town is almost entirely inhabited by idolaters, who hate and persecute all of our faith. It seems almost a miracle that has led you to this house, and I am indeed glad that you have found a place of safety.”

Camaralzaman warmly thanked the kind old man for offering him shelter, and was about to say more, but the gardener interrupted him with:

“Leave compliments alone. You are weary and must be hungry. Come in, eat, and rest.” So saying he led the prince into his cottage, and after satisfying his hunger begged to learn the cause of his arrival.

Camaralzaman told him all without disguise, and ended by inquiring the shortest way to his father’s capital. “For,” added he, “if I tried to rejoin the princess, how should I find her after eleven days’ separation. Perhaps, indeed, she may be no longer alive!” At this terrible thought he burst into tears.

The gardener informed Camaralzaman that they were quite a year’s land journey to any Mahomedan country, but that there was a much shorter route by sea to the Ebony Island, from whence the Isles of the Children of Khaledan could be easily reached, and that a ship sailed once a year for the Ebony Island by which he might get so far as his very home.

“If only you had arrived a few days sooner,” he said, “you might have embarked at once. As it is you must now wait till next year, but if you care to stay with me I offer you my house, such as it is, with all my heart.”

Prince Camaralzaman thought himself lucky to find some place of refuge, and gladly accepted the gardener's offer. He spent his days working in the garden, and his nights thinking of and sighing for his beloved wife.

Let us now see what had become during this time of the Princess Badoura.

On first waking she was much surprised not to find the prince near her. She called her women and asked if they knew where he was, and whilst they were telling her that they had seen him enter the tent, but had not noticed his leaving it, she took up her belt and perceived that the little pouch was open and the talisman gone.

She at once concluded that her husband had taken it and would shortly bring it back. She waited for him till evening rather impatiently, and wondering what could have kept him from her so long. When night came without him she felt in despair and abused the talisman and its maker roundly. In spite of her grief and anxiety however, she did not lose her presence of mind, but decided on a courageous, though very unusual step.

Only the princess and her women knew of Camaralzaman's disappearance, for the rest of the party were sleeping or resting in their tents. Fearing some treason should the truth be known, she ordered her women not to say a word which would give rise to any suspicion, and proceeded to change her dress for one of her husband's, to whom, as has been already said, she bore a strong likeness.

In this disguise she looked so like the prince that when she gave orders next morning to break up the camp and continue the journey no one suspected the change. She made one of her women enter her litter, whilst she herself mounted on horseback and the march began.

After a protracted journey by land and sea the princess, still under the name and disguise of Prince Camaralzaman, arrived at the capital of the Ebony Island whose king was named Armanos.

No sooner did the king hear that the ship which was just in port had on board the son of his old friend and ally than he hurried to meet the supposed prince, and had him and his retinue brought to the palace, where they were lodged and entertained sumptuously.

After three days, finding that his guest, to whom he had taken a great fancy, talked of continuing his journey, King Armanos said to him:

"Prince, I am now an old man, and unfortunately I have no son to whom to leave my kingdom. It has pleased Heaven to give me only one daughter, who possesses such great beauty and charm that I could only give her to a prince as highly born and as accomplished as yourself. Instead, therefore, of returning to your own country, take my daughter and my crown and stay with us. I shall feel that I have a worthy successor, and shall cheerfully retire from the fatigues of government."

The king's offer was naturally rather embarrassing to the Princess Badoura. She felt that it was equally impossible to confess that she had deceived him, or to refuse the marriage on which he had set his heart; a refusal which might turn all his kindness to hatred and persecution.

All things considered, she decided to accept, and after a few moments silence said with a blush, which the king attributed to modesty:

"Sire, I feel so great an obligation for the good opinion your Majesty has expressed for my person and of the honour you do me, that, though I am quite unworthy of it, I dare not refuse. But, sire, I can only accept such an alliance if you give me your promise to assist me with your counsels."

The marriage being thus arranged, the ceremony was fixed for the following day, and the princess employed the intervening time in informing the officers of her suite of what had happened, assuring them that the Princess Badoura had given her full consent to the marriage. She also told her women, and bade them keep her secret well.

King Armanos, delighted with the success of his plans, lost no time in assembling his court and council, to whom he presented his successor, and placing his future son-in-law on the throne made everyone do homage and take oaths of allegiance to the new king.

At night the whole town was filled with rejoicings, and with much pomp the Princess Haiatelnefous (this was the name of the king's daughter) was conducted to the palace of the Princess Badoura.

Now Badoura had thought much of the difficulties of her first interview with King Armanos' daughter, and she felt the only thing to do was at once to take her into her confidence.

Accordingly, as soon as they were alone she took Haiatelnefous by the hand and said:

"Princess, I have a secret to tell you, and must throw myself on your mercy. I am not Prince Camaralzaman, but a princess like yourself and his wife, and I beg you to listen to my story, then I am sure you will forgive my imposture, in consideration of my sufferings."

She then related her whole history, and at its close Haiatelnefous embraced her warmly, and assured her of her entire sympathy and affection.

The two princesses now planned out their future action, and agreed to combine to keep up the deception and to let Badoura continue to play a man's part until such time as there might be news of the real Camaralzaman.

Whilst these things were passing in the Ebony Island Prince Camaralzaman continued to find shelter in the gardeners cottage in the town of the idolaters.

Early one morning the gardener said to the prince:

"To-day is a public holiday, and the people of the town not only do not work themselves but forbid others to do so. You had better therefore take a good rest whilst I go to see some friends, and as the time is near for the arrival of the ship of which I told you I will make inquiries about it, and try to bespeak a passage for you." He then put on his best clothes and went out, leaving the prince, who strolled into the garden and was soon lost in thoughts of his dear wife and their sad separation.

As he walked up and down he was suddenly disturbed in his reverie by the noise two large birds were making in a tree.

Camaralzaman stood still and looked up, and saw that the birds were fighting so savagely with beaks and claws that before long one fell dead to the ground, whilst the conqueror spread his wings and flew away. Almost immediately two other larger birds, who had been watching the duel, flew up and alighted, one at the head and the other at the feet of the dead bird. They stood there some time sadly shaking their heads, and then dug up a grave with their claws in which they buried him.

As soon as they had filled in the grave the two flew off, and ere long returned, bringing with them the murderer, whom they held, one by a wing and the other by a leg, with their beaks, screaming and struggling with rage and terror. But they held tight, and having brought him to his victim's grave, they proceeded to kill him, after which they tore open his body, scattered the inside and once more flew away.

The prince, who had watched the whole scene with much interest, now drew near the spot where it happened, and glancing at the dead bird he noticed something red lying near which had evidently fallen out of its inside. He picked it up, and what was his surprise when he recognised the Princess Badoura's talisman which had been the cause of many misfortunes. It would be impossible to describe his joy; he kissed the talisman repeatedly, wrapped it up, and carefully tied it round his arm. For the first time since his separation from the princess he had a good night, and next morning he was up at day-break and went cheerfully to ask what work he should do.

The gardener told him to cut down an old fruit tree which had quite died away, and Camaralzaman took an axe and fell to vigorously. As he was hacking at one of the roots the axe struck on something hard. On pushing away the earth he discovered a large slab of bronze, under which was disclosed a staircase with ten steps. He went down them and found himself in a roomy kind of cave in which stood fifty large bronze jars, each with a cover on it. The prince uncovered one after another, and found them all filled with gold dust. Delighted with his discovery he left the cave, replaced the slab, and having finished cutting down the tree waited for the gardener's return.

The gardener had heard the night before that the ship about which he was inquiring would start ere long, but the exact date not being yet known he had been told to return next day for further information. He had gone therefore to inquire, and came back with good news beaming in his face.

"My son," said he, "rejoice and hold yourself ready to start in three days' time. The ship is to set sail, and I have arranged all about your passage with the captain.

“You could not bring me better news,” replied Camaralzaman, “and in return I have something pleasant to tell you. Follow me and see the good fortune which has befallen you.”

He then led the gardener to the cave, and having shown him the treasure stored up there, said how happy it made him that Heaven should in this way reward his kind host’s many virtues and compensate him for the privations of many years.

“What do you mean?” asked the gardener. “Do you imagine that I should appropriate this treasure? It is yours, and I have no right whatever to it. For the last eighty years I have dug up the ground here without discovering anything. It is clear that these riches are intended for you, and they are much more needed by a prince like yourself than by an old man like me, who am near my end and require nothing. This treasure comes just at the right time, when you are about to return to your own country, where you will make good use of it.”

But the prince would not hear of this suggestion, and finally after much discussion they agreed to divide the gold. When this was done the gardener said:

“My son, the great thing now is to arrange how you can best carry off this treasure as secretly as possible for fear of losing it. There are no olives in the Ebony Island, and those imported from here fetch a high price. As you know, I have a good stock of the olives which grew in this garden. Now you must take fifty jars, fill each half full of gold dust and fill them up with the olives. We will then have them taken on board ship when you embark.”

The prince took this advice, and spent the rest of the day filling the fifty jars, and fearing lest the precious talisman might slip from his arm and be lost again, he took the precaution of putting it in one of the jars, on which he made a mark so as to be able to recognise it. When night came the jars were all ready, and the prince and his host went to bed.

Whether in consequence of his great age, or of the fatigues and excitement of the previous day, I do not know, but the gardener passed a very bad night. He was worse next day, and by the morning of the third day was dangerously ill. At daybreak the ship’s captain and some of his sailors knocked at the garden door and asked for the passenger who was to embark.

“I am he,” said Camaralzaman, who had opened the door. “The gardener who took my passage is ill and cannot see you, but please come in and take these jars of olives and my bag, and I will follow as soon as I have taken leave of him.”

The sailors did as he asked, and the captain before leaving charged Camaralzaman to lose no time, as the wind was fair, and he wished to set sail at once.

As soon as they were gone the prince returned to the cottage to bid farewell to his old friend, and to thank him once more for all his kindness. But the old man was at his last gasp, and had barely murmured his confession of faith when he expired.

Camaralzaman was obliged to stay and pay him the last offices, so having dug a grave in the garden he wrapped the kind old man up and buried him. He then locked the door, gave up the key to the owner of the garden, and hurried to the quay only to hear that the ship had sailed long ago, after waiting three hours for him.

It may well be believed that the prince felt in despair at this fresh misfortune, which obliged him to spend another year in a strange and distasteful country. Moreover, he had once more lost the Princess Badoura’s talisman, which he feared he might never see again. There was nothing left for him but to hire the garden as the old man had done, and to live on in the cottage. As he could not well cultivate the garden by himself, he engaged a lad to help him, and to secure the rest of the treasure he put the remaining gold dust into fifty more jars, filling them up with olives so as to have them ready for transport.

Whilst the prince was settling down to this second year of toil and privation, the ship made a rapid voyage and arrived safely at the Ebony Island.

As the palace of the new king, or rather of the Princess Badoura, overlooked the harbour, she saw the ship entering it and asked what vessel it was coming in so gaily decked with flags, and was told that it was a ship from the Island of the Idolaters which yearly brought rich merchandise.

The princess, ever on the look out for any chance of news of her beloved husband, went down to the harbour attended by some officers of the court, and arrived just as the captain was landing. She sent for him and asked many questions as to his country, voyage, what passengers he had, and what his vessel was laden with. The captain answered all her questions, and said that his passengers consisted entirely of traders who brought rich stuffs from various countries, fine muslins, precious stones, musk, amber, spices, drugs, olives, and many other things.

As soon as he mentioned olives, the princess, who was very partial to them, exclaimed:

"I will take all you have on board. Have them unloaded and we will make our bargain at once, and tell the other merchants to let me see all their best wares before showing them to other people."

"Sire," replied the captain, "I have on board fifty very large pots of olives. They belong to a merchant who was left behind, as in spite of waiting for him he delayed so long that I was obliged to set sail without him."

"Never mind," said the princess, "unload them all the same, and we will arrange the price."

The captain accordingly sent his boat off to the ship and it soon returned laden with the fifty pots of olives. The princess asked what they might be worth.

"Sire," replied the captain, "the merchant is very poor. Your Majesty will not overpay him if you give him a thousand pieces of silver."

"In order to satisfy him and as he is so poor," said the princess, "I will order a thousand pieces of gold to be given you, which you will be sure to remit to him."

So saying she gave orders for the payment and returned to the palace, having the jars carried before her. When evening came the Princess Badoura retired to the inner part of the palace, and going to the apartments of the Princess Haiatelnefous she had the fifty jars of olives brought to her. She opened one to let her friend taste the olives and to taste them herself, but great was her surprise when, on pouring some into a dish, she found them all powdered with gold dust. "What an adventure! how extraordinary!" she cried. Then she had the other jars opened, and was more and more surprised to find the olives in each jar mixed with gold dust.

But when at length her talisman was discovered in one of the jars her emotion was so great that she fainted away. The Princess Haiatelnefous and her women hastened to restore her, and as soon as she recovered consciousness she covered the precious talisman with kisses.

Then, dismissing the attendants, she said to her friend:

"You will have guessed, my dear, that it was the sight of this talisman which has moved me so deeply. This was the cause of my separation from my dear husband, and now, I am convinced, it will be the means of our reunion."

As soon as it was light next day the Princess Badoura sent for the captain, and made further inquiries about the merchant who owned the olive jars she had bought.

In reply the captain told her all he knew of the place where the young man lived, and how, after engaging his passage, he came to be left behind.

"If that is the case," said the princess, "you must set sail at once and go back for him. He is a debtor of mine and must be brought here at once, or I will confiscate all your merchandise. I shall now give orders to have all the warehouses where your cargo is placed under the royal seal, and they will only be opened when you have brought me the man I ask for. Go at once and obey my orders."

The captain had no choice but to do as he was bid, so hastily provisioning his ship he started that same evening on his return voyage.

When, after a rapid passage, he gained sight of the Island of Idolaters, he judged it better not to enter the harbour, but casting anchor at some distance he embarked at night in a small boat with six active sailors and landed near Camaralzaman's cottage.

The prince was not asleep, and as he lay awake moaning over all the sad events which had separated him from his wife, he thought he heard a knock at the garden door. He went to open it, and was immediately seized by the captain and sailors, who without a word of explanation forcibly bore him off to the boat, which took them back to the ship without loss of time. No sooner were they on board than they weighed anchor and set sail.

Camaralzaman, who had kept silence till then, now asked the captain (whom he had recognised) the reason for this abduction.

“Are you not a debtor of the King of the Ebony Island?” asked the captain.

“I? Why, I never even heard of him before, and never set foot in his kingdom!” was the answer.

“Well, you must know better than I,” said the captain. “You will soon see him now, and meantime be content where you are and have patience.”

The return voyage was as prosperous as the former one, and though it was night when the ship entered the harbour, the captain lost no time in landing with his passenger, whom he conducted to the palace, where he begged an audience with the king.

Directly the Princess Badoura saw the prince she recognised him in spite of his shabby clothes. She longed to throw herself on his neck, but restrained herself, feeling it was better for them both that she should play her part a little longer. She therefore desired one of her officers to take care of him and to treat him well. Next she ordered another officer to remove the seals from the warehouse, whilst she presented the captain with a costly diamond, and told him to keep the thousand pieces of gold paid for the olives, as she would arrange matters with the merchant himself.

She then returned to her private apartments, where she told the Princess Haiatelnefous all that had happened, as well as her plans for the future, and begged her assistance, which her friend readily promised.

Next morning she ordered the prince to be taken to the bath and clothed in a manner suitable to an emir or governor of a province. He was then introduced to the council, where his good looks and grand air drew the attention of all on him.

Princess Badoura, delighted to see him looking himself once more, turned to the other emirs, saying:

“My lords, I introduce to you a new colleague, Camaralzaman, whom I have known on my travels and who, I can assure you, you will find well deserves your regard and admiration.”

Camaralzaman was much surprised at hearing the king — whom he never suspected of being a woman in disguise — asserting their acquaintance, for he felt sure he had never seen her before. However he received all the praises bestowed on him with becoming modesty, and prostrating himself, said:

"Sire, I cannot find words in which to thank your Majesty for the great honour conferred on me. I can but assure you that I will do all in my power to prove myself worthy of it."

On leaving the council the prince was conducted to a splendid house which had been prepared for him, where he found a full establishment and well-filled stables at his orders. On entering his study his steward presented him with a coffer filled with gold pieces for his current expenses. He felt more and more puzzled by such good fortune, and little guessed that the Princess of China was the cause of it.

After a few days the Princess Badoura promoted Camaralzaman to the post of grand treasurer, an office which he filled with so much integrity and benevolence as to win universal esteem.

He would now have thought himself the happiest of men had it not been for that separation which he never ceased to bewail. He had no clue to the mystery of his present position, for the princess, out of compliment to the old king, had taken his name, and was generally known as King Armanos the younger, few people remembering that on her first arrival she went by another name.

At length the princess felt that the time had come to put an end to her own and the prince's suspense, and having arranged all her plans with the Princess Haiatelnefous, she informed Camaralzaman that she wished his advice on some important business, and, to avoid being disturbed, desired him to come to the palace that evening.

The prince was punctual, and was received in the private apartment, when, having ordered her attendants to withdraw, the princess took from a small box the talisman, and, handing it to Camaralzaman, said: "Not long ago an astrologer gave me this talisman. As you are universally well informed, you can perhaps tell me what is its use."

Camaralzaman took the talisman and, holding it to the light, cried with surprise, "Sire, you ask me the use of this talisman. Alas! hitherto it has been only a source of misfortune to me, being the cause of my separation from the one I love best on earth. The story is so sad and strange that I am sure your Majesty will be touched by it if you will permit me to tell it you."

"I will hear it some other time," replied the princess. "Meanwhile I fancy it is not quite unknown to me. Wait here for me. I will return shortly."

So saying she retired to another room, where she hastily changed her masculine attire for that of a woman, and, after putting on the girdle she wore the day they parted, returned to Camaralzaman.

The prince recognised her at once, and, embracing her with the utmost tenderness, cried, "Ah, how can I thank the king for this delightful surprise?"

"Do not expect ever to see the king again," said the princess, as she wiped the tears of joy from her eyes, "in me you see the king. Let us sit down, and I will tell you all about it."

She then gave a full account of all her adventures since their parting, and dwelt much on the charms and noble disposition of the Princess Haiatelnefous, to whose friendly assistance she owed so much. When she had done she asked to hear the prince's story, and in this manner they spent most of the night.

Next morning the princess resumed her woman's clothes, and as soon as she was ready she desired the chief eunuch to beg King Armanos to come to her apartments.

When the king arrived great was his surprise at finding a strange lady in company of the grand treasurer who had no actual right to enter the private apartment. Seating himself he asked for the king.

"Sire," said the princess, "yesterday I was the king, to-day I am only the Princess of China and wife to the real Prince Camaralzaman, son of King Schahzaman, and I trust that when your Majesty shall have heard our story you will not condemn the innocent deception I have been obliged to practise."

The king consented to listen, and did so with marked surprise.

At the close of her narrative the princess said, "Sire, as our religion allows a man to have more than one wife, I would beg your Majesty to give your daughter, the Princess Haiatelnefous, in marriage to Prince Camaralzaman. I gladly yield to her the precedence and title of Queen in recognition of the debt of gratitude which I owe her."

King Armanos heard the princess with surprise and admiration, then, turning to Camaralzaman, he said, "My son, as your wife, the

Princess Badoura (whom I have hitherto looked on as my son-in-law), consents to share your hand and affections with my daughter, I have only to ask if this marriage is agreeable to you, and if you will consent to accept the crown which the Princess Badoura deserves to wear all her life, but which she prefers to resign for love of you."

"Sire," replied Camaralzaman, "I can refuse your Majesty nothing."

Accordingly Camaralzaman was duly proclaimed king, and as duly married with all pomp to the Princess Haiatelnefous, with whose beauty, talents, and affections he had every reason to be pleased.

The two queens lived in true sisterly harmony together, and after a time each presented King Camaralzaman with a son, whose births were celebrated throughout the kingdom with the utmost rejoicing.

Noureddin and the Fair Persian

Balsora was the capital of a kingdom long tributary to the caliph. During the time of the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid the king of Balsora, who was his cousin, was called Zinebi. Not thinking one vizir enough for the administration of his estates he had two, named Khacan and Saouy.

Khacan was kind, generous, and liberal, and took pleasure in obliging, as far as in him lay, those who had business with him. Throughout the entire kingdom there was no one who did not esteem and praise him as he deserved.

Saouy was quite a different character, and repelled everyone with whom he came in contact; he was always gloomy, and, in spite of his great riches, so miserly that he denied himself even the necessaries of life. What made him particularly detested was the great aversion he had to Khacan, of whom he never ceased to speak evil to the king.

One day, while the king amused himself talking with his two vizirs and other members of the council, the conversation turned on female slaves. While some declared that it sufficed for a slave to be beautiful, others, and Khacan was among the number, maintained that beauty alone was not enough, but that it must be accompanied by wit, wisdom, modesty, and, if possible, knowledge.

The king not only declared himself to be of this opinion, but charged Khacan to procure him a slave who should fulfil all these conditions. Saouy, who had been of the opposite side, and was jealous of the honour done to Khacan, said, "Sire, it will be very difficult to find a slave as accomplished as your Majesty desires, and, if she is to be found, she will be cheap if she cost less than 10,000 gold pieces."

"Saouy," answered the king, "you seem to find that a very great sum. For you it may be so, but not for me."

And forthwith he ordered his grand treasurer, who was present, to send 10,000 gold pieces to Khacan for the purchase of the slave.

As soon, then, as Khacan returned home he sent for the dealers in female slaves, and charged them directly they had found such a one as he described to inform him. They promised to do their utmost, and no day passed that they did not bring a slave for his inspection but none was found without some defect.

At length, early one morning, while Khacan was on his way to the king's palace, a dealer, throwing himself in his way, announced eagerly that a Persian merchant, arrived late the previous evening, had a slave to sell whose wit and wisdom were equal to her incomparable beauty.

Khacan, overjoyed at this news, gave orders that the slave should be brought for his inspection on his return from the palace. The dealer appearing at the appointed hour, Khacan found the slave beautiful beyond his expectations, and immediately gave her the name of "The Fair Persian."

Being a man of great wisdom and learning, he perceived in the short conversation he had with her that he would seek in vain another slave to surpass her in any of the qualities required by the king, and therefore asked the dealer what price the merchant put upon her.

"Sir," was the answer, "for less than 10,000 gold pieces he will not let her go; he declares that, what with masters for her instruction, and for bodily exercises, not to speak of clothing and nourishment, he has already spent that sum upon her. She is in every way fit to be the slave of a king; she plays every musical instrument, she sings, she dances, she makes verses, in fact there is no accomplishment in which she does not excel."

Khacan, who was better able to judge of her merits than the dealer, wishing to bring the matter to a conclusion, sent for the merchant, and said to him, "It is not for myself that I wish to buy your slave, but for the king. Her price, however, is too high."

"Sir," replied the merchant, "I should esteem it an honour to present her to his Majesty, did it become a merchant to do such a thing. I ask no more than the sum it has cost me to make her such as she is."

Khacan, not wishing to bargain, immediately had the sum counted out, and given to the merchant, who before withdrawing said:

"Sir, as she is destined for the king, I would have you observe that she is extremely tired with the long journey, and before presenting her to his Majesty you would do well to keep her a fortnight in your own house, and to see that a little care is bestowed upon her. The sun has tanned her complexion, but when she has been two or three times to the bath, and is fittingly dressed, you will see how much her beauty will be increased."

Khacan thanked the merchant for his advice, and determined to follow it. He gave the beautiful Persian an apartment near to that of his wife, whom he charged to treat her as befitting a lady destined for the king, and to order for her the most magnificent garments.

Before bidding adieu to the fair Persian, he said to her: "No happiness can be greater than what I have procured for you; judge for yourself, you now belong to the king. I have, however, to warn you of one thing. I have a son, who, though not wanting in sense, is young, foolish, and headstrong, and I charge you to keep him at a distance."

The Persian thanked him for his advice, and promised to profit by it.

Noureddin — for so the vizir's son was named — went freely in and out of his mother's apartments. He was young, well-made and agreeable, and had the gift of charming all with whom he came in contact. As soon as he saw the beautiful Persian, though aware that she was destined for the king, he let himself be carried away by her charms, and determined at once to use every means in his power to retain her for himself. The Persian was equally captivated by Noureddin, and said to herself: "The vizir does me too great honour in buying me for the king. I should esteem myself very happy if he would give me to his son."

Noureddin availed himself of every opportunity to gaze upon her beauty, to talk and laugh with her, and never would have left her side if his mother had not forced him.

Some time having elapsed, on account of the long journey, since the beautiful Persian had been to the bath, five or six days after her purchase the vizir's wife gave orders that the bath should be heated for her, and that her own female slaves should attend her there, and after-wards should array her in a magnificent dress that had been prepared for her.

Her toilet completed, the beautiful Persian came to present herself to the vizir's wife, who hardly recognised her, so greatly was her beauty increased. Kissing her hand, the beautiful slave said:

"Madam, I do not know how you find me in this dress that you have had prepared for me; your women assure me that it suits me so well that they hardly knew me. If it is the truth they tell me, and not flattery, it is to you I owe the transformation."

"My daughter," answered the vizir's wife, "they do not flatter you. I myself hardly recognised you. The improvement is not due to the dress alone, but largely to the beautifying effects of the bath. I am so struck by its results, that I would try it on myself."

Acting forthwith on this decision she ordered two little slaves during her absence to watch over the beautiful Persian, and not to allow Noureddin to enter should he come.

She had no sooner gone than he arrived, and not finding his mother in her apartment, would have sought her in that of the Persian. The two little slaves barred the entrance, saying that his mother had given orders that he was not to be admitted. Taking each by an arm, he put them out of the anteroom, and shut the door. Then they rushed to the bath, informing their mistress with shrieks and tears that Noureddin had driven them away by force and gone in.

This news caused great consternation to the lady, who, dressing herself as quickly as possible, hastened to the apartment of the fair Persian, to find that Noureddin had already gone out. Much astonished to see the vizir's wife enter in tears, the Persian asked what misfortune had happened.

"What!" exclaimed the lady, "you ask me that, knowing that my son Noureddin has been alone with you?"

"But, madam," inquired the Persian, "what harm is there in that?"

"How! Has my husband not told you that you are destined for the king?"

"Certainly, but Noureddin has just been to tell me that his father has changed his mind and has bestowed me upon him. I believed him, and so great is my affection for Noureddin that I would willingly pass my life with him."

"Would to heaven," exclaimed the wife of the vizir, "that what you say were true; but Noureddin has deceived you, and his father will sacrifice him in vengeance for the wrong he has done."

So saying, she wept bitterly, and all her slaves wept with her.

Khacan, entering shortly after this, was much astonished to find his wife and her slaves in tears, and the beautiful Persian greatly perturbed. He inquired the cause, but for some time no answer was forthcoming. When his wife was at length sufficiently calm to inform him of what had happened, his rage and mortification knew no bounds. Wringing his hands and rending his beard, he exclaimed:

"Wretched son! thou destroyest not only thyself but thy father. The king will shed not only thy blood but mine." His wife tried to console him, saying: "Do not torment thyself. With the sale of my jewels I will obtain 10,000 gold pieces, and with this sum you will buy another slave."

"Do not suppose," replied her husband, "that it is the loss of the money that affects me. My honour is at stake, and that is more precious to me than all my wealth. You know that Saouy is my mortal enemy. He will relate all this to the king, and you will see the consequences that will ensue."

"My lord," said his wife, "I am quite aware of Saouy's baseness, and that he is capable of playing you this malicious trick. But how can he or any one else know what takes place in this house? Even if you are suspected and the king accuses you, you have only to say that, after examining the slave, you did not find her worthy of his Majesty. Reassure yourself, and send to the dealers, saying that you are not satisfied, and wish them to find you another slave."

This advice appearing reasonable, Khacan decided to follow it, but his wrath against his son did not abate. Noureddin dared not appear all that day, and fearing to take refuge with his usual associates in case his father should seek him there, he spent the day in a secluded garden where he was not known. He did not return home till after his father had gone to bed, and went out early next morning before the vizir awoke, and these precautions he kept up during an entire month.

His mother, though knowing very well that he returned to the house every evening, dare not ask her husband to pardon him. At length she took courage and said:

"My lord, I know that a son could not act more basely towards his father than Noureddin has done towards you, but after all will you now pardon him? Do you not consider the harm you may be doing yourself, and fear that malicious people, seeking the cause of your estrangement, may guess the real one?"

"Madam," replied the vizir, "what you say is very just, but I cannot pardon Noureddin before I have mortified him as he deserves."

"He will be sufficiently punished," answered the lady, "if you do as I suggest. In the evening, when he returns home, lie in wait for him and pretend that you will slay him. I will come to his aid, and while pointing out that you only yield his life at my supplications, you can force him to take the beautiful Persian on any conditions you please." Khacan agreed to follow this plan, and everything took place as arranged. On Noureddin's return Khacan pretended to be about to slay him, but yielding to his wife's intercession, said to his son:

"You owe your life to your mother. I pardon you on her intercession, and on the conditions that you take the beautiful Persian for your wife, and not your slave, that you never sell her, nor put her away."

Noureddin, not hoping for so great indulgence, thanked his father, and vowed to do as he desired. Khacan was at great pains frequently to speak to the king of the difficulties attending the commission he had given him, but some whispers of what had actually taken place did reach Saouy's ears.

More than a year after these events the minister took a chill, leaving the bath while still heated to go out on important business. This resulted in inflammation of the lungs, which rapidly increased. The vizir, feeling that his end was at hand, sent for Noureddin, and charged him with his dying breath never to part with the beautiful Persian.

Shortly afterwards he expired, leaving universal regret throughout the kingdom; rich and poor alike followed him to the grave. Noureddin showed every mark of the deepest grief at his father's death, and for long refused to see any one. At length a day came when, one of his friends being admitted, urged him strongly to be consoled, and to resume his former place in society. This advice Noureddin was not slow to follow, and soon he formed little society of ten young men all about his own age, with whom he spent all his time in continual feasting and merry-making.

Sometimes the fair Persian consented to appear at these festivities, but she disapproved of this lavish expenditure, and did not scruple to warn Noureddin of the probable consequences. He, however, only laughed at her advice, saying, that his father had always kept him in too great constraint, and that now he rejoiced at his new-found liberty.

What added to the confusion in his affairs was that he refused to look into his accounts with his steward, sending him away every time he appeared with his book.

"See only that I live well," he said, "and do not disturb me about anything else."

Not only did Noureddin's friends constantly partake of his hospitality, but in every way they took advantage of his generosity; everything of his that they admired, whether land, houses, baths, or any other source of his revenue, he immediately bestowed on them. In vain the Persian protested against the wrong he did himself; he continued to scatter with the same lavish hand.

Throughout one entire year Noureddin did nothing but amuse himself, and dissipate the wealth his father had taken such pains to acquire. The year had barely elapsed, when one day, as they sat at table, there came a knock at the door. The slaves having been sent away, Noureddin went to open it himself. One of his friends had risen at the same time, but Noureddin was before him, and finding the intruder to be the steward, he went out and closed the door. The friend, curious to hear what passed between them, hid himself behind the hangings, and heard the following words:

"My lord," said the steward, "I beg a thousand pardons for interrupting you, but what I have long foreseen has taken place. Nothing remains of the sums you gave me for your expenses, and all other sources of income are also at end, having been transferred by you to others. If you wish me to remain in your service, furnish me with the necessary funds, else I must withdraw."

So great was Noureddin's consternation that he had not a word to say in reply.

The friend, who had been listening behind the curtain, immediately hastened to communicate the news to the rest of the company.

"If this is so," they said, "we must cease to come here."

Noureddin re-entering at that moment, they plainly saw, in spite of his efforts to dissemble, that what they had heard was the truth. One by one they rose, and each with a different excuse left the room, till presently he found himself alone, though little suspecting the resolution his friends had taken. Then, seeing the beautiful Persian, he confided to her the statement of the steward, with many expressions of regret for his own carelessness.

"Had I but followed your advice, beautiful Persian," he said, "all this would not have happened, but at least I have this consolation, that I have spent my fortune in the company of friends who will not desert me in an hour of need. To-morrow I will go to them, and amongst them they will lend me a sum sufficient to start in some business."

Accordingly next morning early Noureddin went to seek his ten friends, who all lived in the same street. Knocking at the door of the first and chief, the slave who opened it left him to wait in a hall while he announced his visit to his master. "Noureddin!" he heard him exclaim quite audibly. "Tell him, every time he calls, that I am not at home." The same thing happened at the second door, and also at the third, and so on with all the ten. Noureddin, much mortified, recognised too late that he had confided in false friends, who abandoned him in his hour of need. Overwhelmed with grief, he sought consolation from the beautiful Persian.

"Alas, my lord," she said, "at last you are convinced of the truth of what I foretold. There is now no other resource left but to sell your slaves and your furniture."

First then he sold the slaves, and subsisted for a time on the proceeds, after that the furniture was sold, and as much of it was valuable it sufficed for some time. Finally this resource also came to an end, and again he sought counsel from the beautiful Persian.

"My lord," she said, "I know that the late vizir, your father, bought me for 10,000 gold pieces, and though I have diminished in value since, I should still fetch a large sum. Do not therefore hesitate to sell me, and with the money you obtain go and establish yourself in business in some distant town."

"Charming Persian," answered Noureddin, "how could I be guilty of such baseness? I would die rather than part from you whom I love better than my life."

"My lord," she replied, "I am well aware of your love for me, which is only equalled by mine for you, but a cruel necessity obliges us to seek the only remedy."

Noureddin, convinced at length of the truth of her words, yielded, and reluctantly led her to the slave market, where, showing her to a dealer named Hagi Hassan, he inquired her value.

Taking them into a room apart, Hagi Hassan exclaimed as soon as she had unveiled, "My lord, is not this the slave your father bought for 10,000 pieces?"

On learning that it was so, he promised to obtain the highest possible price for her. Leaving the beautiful Persian shut up in the room alone, he went out to seek the slave merchants, announcing to them that he had found the pearl among slaves, and asking them to come and put a value upon her. As soon as they saw her they agreed that less than 4,000 gold pieces could not be asked. Hagi Hassan, then closing the door upon her, began to offer her for sale — calling out: "Who will bid 4,000 gold pieces for the Persian slave?"

Before any of the merchants had bid, Saouy happened to pass that way, and judging that it must be a slave of extraordinary beauty, rode up to Hagi Hassan and desired to see her. Now it was not the custom to show a slave to a private bidder, but as no one dared to disobey the vizir his request was granted.

As soon as Saouy saw the Persian he was so struck by her beauty, that he immediately wished to possess her, and not knowing that she belonged to Noureddin, he desired Hagi Hassan to send for the owner and to conclude the bargain at once.

Hagi Hassan then sought Noureddin, and told him that his slave was going far below her value, and that if Saouy bought her he was capable of not paying the money. "What you must do," he said, "is to pretend that you had no real intention of selling your slave, and only swore you would in a fit of anger against her. When I present her to Saouy as if with your consent you must step in, and with blows begin to lead her away."

Noureddin did as Hagi Hassan advised, to the great wrath of Saouy, who riding straight at him endeavoured to take the beautiful Persian from him by force. Noureddin letting her go, seized Saouy's horse by the bridle, and, encouraged by the applause of the bystanders, dragged him to the ground, beat him severely, and left him in the gutter streaming with blood. Then, taking the beautiful Persian, he returned home amidst the acclamations of the people, who detested Saouy so much that they would neither interfere in his behalf nor allow his slaves to protect him.

Covered from head to foot with mire and streaming with blood he rose, and leaning on two of his slaves went straight to the palace, where he demanded an audience of the king, to whom he related what had taken place in these words:

“May it please your Majesty, I had gone to the slave market to buy myself a cook. While there I heard a slave being offered for 4,000 pieces. Asking to see her, I found she was of incomparable beauty, and was being sold by Noureddin, the son of your late vizir, to whom your Majesty will remember giving a sum of 10,000 gold pieces for the purchase of a slave. This is the identical slave, whom instead of bringing to your Majesty he gave to his own son. Since the death of his father this Noureddin has run through his entire fortune, has sold all his possessions, and is now reduced to selling the slave. Calling him to me, I said: “Noureddin, I will give you 10,000 gold pieces for your slave, whom I will present to the king. I will interest him at the same time in your behalf, and this will be worth much more to you than what extra money you might obtain from the merchants.” “Bad old man,” he exclaimed, “rather than sell my slave to you I would give her to a Jew.” “But, Noureddin,” I remonstrated, “you do not consider that in speaking thus you wrong the king, to whom your father owed everything.” This remonstrance only irritated him the more. Throwing himself on me like a madman, he tore me from my horse, beat me to his heart’s content, and left me in the state your Majesty sees.”

So saying Saouy turned aside his head and wept bitterly.

The king’s wrath was kindled against Noureddin. He ordered the captain of the guard to take with him forty men, to pillage Noureddin’s house, to rase it to the ground, and to bring Noureddin and the slave to him. A doorkeeper, named Sangiar, who had been a slave of Khacan’s, hearing this order given, slipped out of the king’s apartment, and hastened to warn Noureddin to take flight instantly with the beautiful Persian. Then, presenting him with forty gold pieces, he disappeared before Noureddin had time to thank him.

As soon, then, as the fair Persian had put on her veil they fled together, and had the good fortune to get out of the town without being observed. At the mouth of the Euphrates they found a ship just about to start for Bagdad. They embarked, and immediately the anchor was raised and they set sail.

When the captain of the guard reached Noureddin's house he caused his soldiers to burst open the door and to enter by force, but no trace was to be found of Noureddin and his slave, nor could the neighbours give any information about them. When the king heard that they had escaped, he issued a proclamation that a reward of 1,000 gold pieces would be given to whoever would bring him Noureddin and the slave, but that, on the contrary, whoever hid them would be severely punished. Meanwhile Noureddin and the fair Persian had safely reached Bagdad. When the vessel had come to an anchor they paid five gold pieces for their passage and went ashore. Never having been in Bagdad before, they did not know where to seek a lodging. Wandering along the banks of the Tigris, they skirted a garden enclosed by a high wall. The gate was shut, but in front of it was an open vestibule with a sofa on either side. "Here," said Noureddin, "let us pass the night," and reclining on the sofas they soon fell asleep.

Now this garden belonged to the Caliph. In the middle of it was a vast pavilion, whose superb saloon had eighty windows, each window having a lustre, lit solely when the Caliph spent the evening there. Only the door-keeper lived there, an old soldier named Scheih Ibrahim, who had strict orders to be very careful whom he admitted, and never to allow any one to sit on the sofas by the door. It happened that evening that he had gone out on an errand. When he came back and saw two persons asleep on the sofas he was about to drive them out with blows, but drawing nearer he perceived that they were a handsome young man and beautiful young woman, and decided to awake them by gentler means. Noureddin, on being awoke, told the old man that they were strangers, and merely wished to pass the night there. "Come with me," said Scheih Ibrahim, "I will lodge you better, and will show you a magnificent garden belonging to me.” So saying the doorkeeper led the way into the Caliph’s garden, the beauties of which filled them with wonder and amazement. Noureddin took out two gold pieces, and giving them to Scheih Ibrahim said,

“I beg you to get us something to eat that we may make merry together.” Being very avaricious, Scheih Ibrahim determined to spend only the tenth part of the money and to keep the rest to himself. While he was gone Noureddin and the Persian wandered through the gardens and went up the white marble staircase of the pavilion as far as the locked door of the saloon. On the return of Scheih Ibrahim they begged him to open it, and to allow them to enter and admire the magnificence within. Consenting, he brought not only the key, but a light, and immediately unlocked the door. Noureddin and the Persian entering, were dazzled with the magnificence they beheld. The paintings and furniture were of astonishing beauty, and between each window was a silver arm holding a candle.

Scheih Ibrahim spread the table in front of a sofa, and all three ate together. When they had finished eating Noureddin asked the old man to bring them a bottle of wine.

“Heaven forbid,” said Scheih Ibrahim, “that I should come in contact with wine! I who have four times made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and have renounced wine for ever.”

“You would, however, do us a great service in procuring us some,” said Noureddin. “You need not touch it yourself. Take the ass which is tied to the gate, lead it to the nearest wine-shop, and ask some passer-by to order two jars of wine; have them put in the ass’s panniers, and drive him before you. Here are two pieces of gold for the expenses.”

At sight of the gold, Scheih Ibrahim set off at once to execute the commission. On his return, Noureddin said: “We have still need of cups to drink from, and of fruit, if you can procure us some.” Scheih Ibrahim disappeared again, and soon returned with a table spread with cups of gold and silver, and every sort of beautiful fruit. Then he withdrew, in spite of repeated invitations to remain.

Noureddin and the beautiful Persian, finding the wine excellent, drank of it freely, and while drinking they sang. Both had fine voices, and Scheih Ibrahim listened to them with great pleasure — first from a distance, then he drew nearer, and finally put his head in at the door. Noureddin, seeing him, called to him to come in and keep them company. At first the old man declined, but was persuaded to enter the room, to sit down on the edge of the sofa nearest the door, and at last to draw closer and to seat himself by the beautiful Persian, who urged him so persistently to drink her health that at length he yielded, and took the cup she offered.

Now the old man only made a pretence of renouncing wine; he frequented wine-shops like other people, and had taken none of the precautions Noureddin had proposed. Having once yielded, he was easily persuaded to take a second cup, and a third, and so on till he no longer knew what he was doing. Till near midnight they continued drinking, laughing, and singing together.

About that time the Persian, perceiving that the room was lit by only one miserable tallow candle, asked Scheih Ibrahim to light some of the beautiful candles in the silver arms.

"Light them yourself," answered the old man; "you are younger than I, but let five or six be enough."

She did not stop, however, till she had lit all the eighty, but Scheih Ibrahim was not conscious of this, and when, soon after that, Noureddin proposed to have some of the lustres lit, he answered:

"You are more capable of lighting them than I, but not more than three."

Noureddin, far from contenting himself with three, lit all, and opened all the eighty windows.

The Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid, chancing at that moment to open a window in the saloon of his palace looking on the garden, was surprised to see the pavilion brilliantly illuminated. Calling the grand-vizir, Giafar, he said to him:

"Negligent vizir, look at the pavilion, and tell me why it is lit up when I am not there."

When the vizir saw that it was as the Caliph said, he trembled with fear, and immediately invented an excuse.

"Commander of the Faithful," he said, "I must tell you that four or five days ago Scheih Ibrahim told me that he wished to have an assembly of the ministers of his mosque, and asked permission to hold it in the pavilion. I granted his request, but forgot since to mention it to your Majesty."

"Giafar," replied the Caliph, "you have committed three faults — first, in giving the permission; second, in not mentioning it to me; and third, in not investigating the matter more closely. For punishment I condemn you to spend the rest of the night with me in company of these worthy people. While I dress myself as a citizen, go and disguise yourself, and then come with me."

When they reached the garden gate they found it open, to the great indignation of the Caliph. The door of the pavilion being also open, he went softly upstairs, and looked in at the half-closed door of the saloon. Great was his surprise to see Scheih Ibrahim, whose sobriety he had never doubted, drinking and singing with a young man and a beautiful lady. The Caliph, before giving way to his anger, determined to watch and see who the people were and what they did.

Presently Scheih Ibrahim asked the beautiful Persian if anything were wanting to complete her enjoyment of the evening.

"If only," she said, "I had an instrument upon which I might play."

Scheih Ibrahim immediately took a lute from a cup-board and gave it to the Persian, who began to play on it, singing the while with such skill and taste that the Caliph was enchanted. When she ceased he went softly downstairs and said to the vizir:

"Never have I heard a finer voice, nor the lute better played. I am determined to go in and make her play to me."

"Commander of the Faithful," said the vizir, "if Scheih Ibrahim recognises you he will die of fright."

"I should be sorry for that," answered the Caliph, "and I am going to take steps to prevent it. Wait here till I return."

Now the Caliph had caused a bend in the river to form a lake in his garden. There the finest fish in the Tigris were to be found, but fishing was strictly forbidden. It happened that night, however, that a fisherman had taken advantage of the gate being open to go in and cast his nets. He was just about to draw them when he saw the Caliph approaching. Recognising him at once in spite of his disguise, he threw himself at his feet imploring forgiveness.

"Fear nothing," said the Caliph, "only rise up and draw thy nets."

The fisherman did as he was told, and produced five or six fine fish, of which the Caliph took the two largest. Then he desired the fisherman to change clothes with him, and in a few minutes the Caliph was transformed into a fisherman, even to the shoes and the turban. Taking the two fish in his hand, he returned to the vizir, who, not recognising him, would have sent him about his business. Leaving the vizir at the foot of the stairs, the Caliph went up and knocked at the door of the saloon. Noureddin opened it, and the Caliph, standing on the threshold, said:

"Scheih Ibrahim, I am the fisher Kerim. Seeing that you are feasting with your friends, I bring you these fish."

Noureddin and the Persian said that when the fishes were properly cooked and dressed they would gladly eat of them. The Caliph then returned to the vizir, and they set to work in Scheih Ibrahim's house to cook the fish, of which they made so tempting a dish that Noureddin and the fair Persian ate of it with great relish. When they had finished Noureddin took thirty gold pieces (all that remained of what Sangiar had given him) and presented them to the Caliph, who, thanking him, asked as a further favour if the lady would play him one piece on the lute. The Persian gladly consented, and sang and played so as to delight the Caliph.

Noureddin, in the habit of giving to others whatever they admired, said, "Fisherman, as she pleases you so much, take her; she is yours."

The fair Persian, astounded that he should wish to part from her, took her lute, and with tears in her eyes sang her reproaches to its music.

The Caliph (still in the character of fisherman) said to him, "Sir, I perceive that this fair lady is your slave. Oblige me, I beg you, by relating your history."

Noureddin willingly granted this request, and recounted everything from the purchase of the slave down to the present moment.

"And where do you go now?" asked the Caliph.

"Wherever the hand of Allah leads me," said Noureddin.

"Then, if you will listen to me," said the Caliph, "you will immediately return to Balsora. I will give you a letter to the king, which will ensure you a good reception from him."

"It is an unheard-of thing," said Noureddin, "that a fisherman should be in correspondence with a king."

"Let not that astonish you," answered the Caliph; "we studied together, and have always remained the best of friends, though fortune, while making him a king, left me a humble fisherman."

The Caliph then took a sheet of paper, and wrote the following letter, at the top of which he put in very small characters this formula to show that he must be implicitly obeyed:— "In the name of the Most Merciful God.

"Letter of the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid to the King of Balsora.

"Haroun-al-Raschid, son of Mahdi, sends this letter to Mohammed Zinebi, his cousin. As soon as Noureddin, son of the Vizir Khacan, bearer of this letter, has given it to thee, and thou hast read it, take off thy royal mantle, put it on his shoulders, and seat him in thy place without fail. Farewell."

The Caliph then gave this letter to Noureddin, who immediately set off, with only what little money he possessed when Sangiar came to his assistance. The beautiful Persian, inconsolable at his departure, sank on a sofa bathed in tears.

When Noureddin had left the room, Scheih Ibrahim, who had hitherto kept silence, said: "Kerim, for two miserable fish thou hast received a purse and a slave. I tell thee I will take the slave, and as to the purse, if it contains silver thou mayst keep one piece, if gold then I will take all and give thee what copper pieces I have in my purse."

Now here it must be related that when the Caliph went upstairs with the plate of fish he ordered the vizir to hasten to the palace and bring back four slaves bearing a change of raiment, who should wait outside the pavilion till the Caliph should clap his hands.

Still personating the fisherman, the Caliph answered: "Scheih Ibrahim, whatever is in the purse I will share equally with you, but as to the slave I will keep her for myself. If you do not agree to these conditions you shall have nothing."

The old man, furious at this insolence as he considered it, took a cup and threw it at the Caliph, who easily avoided a missile from the hand of a drunken man. It hit against the wall, and broke into a thousand pieces. Scheih Ibrahim, still more enraged, then went out to fetch a stick. The Caliph at that moment clapped his hands, and the vizir and the four slaves entering took off the fisherman's dress and put on him that which they had brought.

When Scheih Ibrahim returned, a thick stick in his hand, the Caliph was seated on his throne, and nothing remained of the fisherman but his clothes in the middle of the room. Throwing himself on the ground at the Caliph's feet, he said: "Commander of the Faithful, your miserable slave has offended you, and craves forgiveness."

The Caliph came down from his throne, and said: "Rise, I forgive thee." Then turning to the Persian he said: "Fair lady, now you know who I am; learn also that I have sent Noureddin to Balsora to be king, and as soon as all necessary preparations are made I will send you there to be queen. Meanwhile I will give you an apartment in my palace, where you will be treated with all honour."

At this the beautiful Persian took courage, and the Caliph was as good as his word, recommending her to the care of his wife Zobeida.

Noureddin made all haste on his journey to Balsora, and on his arrival there went straight to the palace of the king, of whom he demanded an audience. It was immediately granted, and holding the letter high above his head he forced his way through the crowd. While the king read the letter he changed colour. He would instantly have executed the Caliph's order, but first he showed the letter to Saouy, whose interests were equally at stake with his own. Pretending that he wished to read it a second time, Saouy turned aside as if to seek a better light; unperceived by anyone he tore off the formula from the top of the letter, put it to his mouth, and swallowed it. Then, turning to the king, he said:

"Your majesty has no need to obey this letter. The writing is indeed that of the Caliph, but the formula is absent. Besides, he has not sent an express with the patent, without which the letter is useless. Leave all to me, and I will take the consequences."

The king not only listened to the persuasions of Saouy, but gave Noureddin into his hands. Such a severe bastinado was first administered to him, that he was left more dead than alive; then Saouy threw him into the darkest and deepest dungeon, and fed him only on bread and water. After ten days Saouy determined to put an end to Noureddin's life, but dared not without the king's authority.

To gain this end, he loaded several of his own slaves with rich gifts, and presented himself at their head to the king, saying that they were from the new king on his coronation.

“What!” said the king; “is that wretch still alive? Go and behead him at once. I authorise you.”

“Sire,” said Saouy, “I thank your Majesty for the justice you do me. I would further beg, as Noureddin publicly affronted me, that the execution might be in front of the palace, and that it might be proclaimed throughout the city, so that no one may be ignorant of it.”

The king granted these requests, and the announcement caused universal grief, for the memory of Noureddin’s father was still fresh in the hearts of his people. Saouy, accompanied by twenty of his own slaves, went to the prison to fetch Noureddin, whom he mounted on a wretched horse without a saddle. Arrived at the palace, Saouy went in to the king, leaving Noureddin in the square, hemmed in not only by Saouy’s slaves but by the royal guard, who had great difficulty in preventing the people from rushing in and rescuing Noureddin. So great was the indignation against Saouy that if anyone had set the example he would have been stoned on his way through the streets. Saouy, who witnessed the agitation of the people from the windows of the king’s privy chambers, called to the executioner to strike at once. The king, however, ordered him to delay; not only was he jealous of Saouy’s interference, but he had another reason. A troop of horsemen was seen at that moment riding at full gallop towards the square. Saouy suspected who they might be, and urged the king to give the signal for the execution without delay, but this the king refused to do till he knew who the horsemen were.

Now, they were the vizir Giafar and his suite arriving at full speed from Bagdad. For several days after Noureddin’s departure with the letter the Caliph had forgotten to send the express with the patent, without which the letter was useless. Hearing a beautiful voice one day in the women’s part of the palace uttering lamentations, he was informed that it was the voice of the fair Persian, and suddenly calling to mind the patent, he sent for Giafar, and ordered him to make for Balsora with the utmost speed — if Noureddin were dead, to hang Saouy; if he were still alive, to bring him at once to Bagdad along with the king and Saouy.

Giafar rode at full speed through the square, and alighted at the steps of the palace, where the king came to greet him. The vizir's first question was whether Noureddin were still alive. The king replied that he was, and he was immediately led forth, though bound hand and foot. By the vizir's orders his bonds were immediately undone, and Saouy was tied with the same cords. Next day Giafar returned to Bagdad, bearing with him the king, Saouy, and Noureddin.

When the Caliph heard what treatment Noureddin had received, he authorised him to behead Saouy with his own hands, but he declined to shed the blood of his enemy, who was forthwith handed over to the executioner. The Caliph also desired Noureddin to reign over Balsora, but this, too, he declined, saying that after what had passed there he preferred never to return, but to enter the service of the Caliph. He became one of his most intimate courtiers, and lived long in great happiness with the fair Persian. As to the king, the Caliph contented himself with sending him back to Balsora, with the recommendation to be more careful in future in the choice of his vizir.

Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp

There once lived a poor tailor, who had a son called Aladdin, a careless, idle boy who would do nothing but play all day long in the streets with little idle boys like himself. This so grieved the father that he died; yet, in spite of his mother's tears and prayers, Aladdin did not mend his ways. One day, when he was playing in the streets as usual, a stranger asked him his age, and if he were not the son of Mustapha the tailor.

"I am, sir," replied Aladdin; "but he died a long while ago."

On this the stranger, who was a famous African magician, fell on his neck and kissed him, saying: "I am your uncle, and knew you from your likeness to my brother. Go to your mother and tell her I am coming."

Aladdin ran home, and told his mother of his newly found uncle.

"Indeed, child," she said, "your father had a brother, but I always thought he was dead."

However, she prepared supper, and bade Aladdin seek his uncle, who came laden with wine and fruit. He presently fell down and kissed the place where Mustapha used to sit, bidding Aladdin's mother not to be surprised at not having seen him before, as he had been forty years out of the country. He then turned to Aladdin, and asked him his trade, at which the boy hung his head, while his mother burst into tears. On learning that Aladdin was idle and would learn no trade, he offered to take a shop for him and stock it with merchandise. Next day he bought Aladdin a fine suit of clothes, and took him all over the city, showing him the sights, and brought him home at nightfall to his mother, who was overjoyed to see her son so fine.

Next day the magician led Aladdin into some beautiful gardens a long way outside the city gates. They sat down by a fountain, and the magician pulled a cake from his girdle, which he divided between them. They then journeyed onwards till they almost reached the mountains. Aladdin was so tired that he begged to go back, but the magician beguiled him with pleasant stories, and led him on in spite of himself.

At last they came to two mountains divided by a narrow valley.

“We will go no farther,” said the false uncle. “I will show you something wonderful; only do you gather up sticks while I kindle a fire.”

When it was lit the magician threw on it a powder he had about him, at the same time saying some magical words. The earth trembled a little and opened in front of them, disclosing a square flat stone with a brass ring in the middle to raise it by. Aladdin tried to run away, but the magician caught him and gave him a blow that knocked him down.

“What have I done, uncle?” he said piteously; whereupon the magician said more kindly: “Fear nothing, but obey me. Beneath this stone lies a treasure which is to be yours, and no one else may touch it, so you must do exactly as I tell you.”

At the word treasure, Aladdin forgot his fears, and grasped the ring as he was told, saying the names of his father and grandfather. The stone came up quite easily and some steps appeared.

“Go down,” said the magician; “at the foot of those steps you will find an open door leading into three large halls. Tuck up your gown and go through them without touching anything, or you will die instantly. These halls lead into a garden of fine fruit trees. Walk on till you come to a niche in a terrace where stands a lighted lamp. Pour out the oil it contains and bring it to me.”

He drew a ring from his finger and gave it to Aladdin, bidding him prosper.

Aladdin found everything as the magician had said, gathered some fruit off the trees, and, having got the lamp, arrived at the mouth of the cave. The magician cried out in a great hurry:

“Make haste and give me the lamp.” This Aladdin refused to do until he was out of the cave. The magician flew into a terrible passion, and throwing some more powder on the fire, he said something, and the stone rolled back into its place.

The magician left Persia for ever, which plainly showed that he was no uncle of Aladdin’s, but a cunning magician who had read in his magic books of a wonderful lamp, which would make him the most powerful man in the world. Though he alone knew where to find it, he could only receive it from the hand of another. He had picked out the foolish Aladdin for this purpose, intending to get the lamp and kill him afterwards.

For two days Aladdin remained in the dark, crying and lamenting. At last he clasped his hands in prayer, and in so doing rubbed the ring, which the magician had forgotten to take from him. Immediately an enormous and frightful genie rose out of the earth, saying:

"What wouldst thou with me? I am the Slave of the Ring, and will obey thee in all things."

Aladdin fearlessly replied: "Deliver me from this place!" whereupon the earth opened, and he found himself outside. As soon as his eyes could bear the light he went home, but fainted on the threshold. When he came to himself he told his mother what had passed, and showed her the lamp and the fruits he had gathered in the garden, which were in reality precious stones. He then asked for some food.

"Alas! child," she said, "I have nothing in the house, but I have spun a little cotton and will go and sell it."

Aladdin bade her keep her cotton, for he would sell the lamp instead. As it was very dirty she began to rub it, that it might fetch a higher price. Instantly a hideous genie appeared, and asked what she would have. She fainted away, but Aladdin, snatching the lamp, said boldly:

"Fetch me something to eat!"

The genie returned with a silver bowl, twelve silver plates containing rich meats, two silver cups, and two bottles of wine. Aladdin's mother, when she came to herself, said:

"Whence comes this splendid feast?"

"Ask not, but eat," replied Aladdin.

So they sat at breakfast till it was dinner-time, and Aladdin told his mother about the lamp. She begged him to sell it, and have nothing to do with devils.

"No," said Aladdin, "since chance has made us aware of its virtues, we will use it and the ring likewise, which I shall always wear on my finger." When they had eaten all the genie had brought, Aladdin sold one of the silver plates, and so on till none were left. He then had recourse to the genie, who gave him another set of plates, and thus they lived for many years.

One day Aladdin heard an order from the Sultan proclaimed that everyone was to stay at home and close his shutters while the princess, his daughter, went to and from the bath. Aladdin was seized by a desire to see her face, which was very difficult, as she always went veiled. He hid himself behind the door of the bath, and peeped through a chink. The princess lifted her veil as she went in, and looked so beautiful that Aladdin fell in love with her at first sight. He went home so changed that his mother was frightened. He told her he loved the princess so deeply that he could not live without her, and meant to ask her in marriage of her father. His mother, on hearing this, burst out laughing, but Aladdin at last prevailed upon her to go before the Sultan and carry his request. She fetched a napkin and laid in it the magic fruits from the enchanted garden, which sparkled and shone like the most beautiful jewels. She took these with her to please the Sultan, and set out, trusting in the lamp. The grand-vizir and the lords of council had just gone in as she entered the hall and placed herself in front of the Sultan. He, however, took no notice of her. She went every day for a week, and stood in the same place.

When the council broke up on the sixth day the Sultan said to his vizir: “I see a certain woman in the audience-chamber every day carrying something in a napkin. Call her next time, that I may find out what she wants.”

Next day, at a sign from the vizir, she went up to the foot of the throne, and remained kneeling till the Sultan said to her: “Rise, good woman, and tell me what you want.”

She hesitated, so the Sultan sent away all but the vizir, and bade her speak freely, promising to forgive her beforehand for anything she might say. She then told him of her son’s violent love for the princess.

“I prayed him to forget her,” she said, “but in vain; he threatened to do some desperate deed if I refused to go and ask your Majesty for the hand of the princess. Now I pray you to forgive not me alone, but my son Aladdin.”

The Sultan asked her kindly what she had in the napkin, whereupon she unfolded the jewels and presented them.

He was thunderstruck, and turning to the vizir said: “What sayest thou? Ought I not to bestow the princess on one who values her at such a price?”

The vizir, who wanted her for his own son, begged the Sultan to withhold her for three months, in the course of which he hoped his son would contrive to make him a richer present. The Sultan granted this, and told Aladdin’s mother that, though he consented to the marriage, she must not appear before him again for three months.

Aladdin waited patiently for nearly three months, but after two had elapsed his mother, going into the city to buy oil, found everyone rejoicing, and asked what was going on.

“Do you not know,” was the answer, “that the son of the grand-vizir is to marry the Sultan’s daughter to-night?”

Breathless, she ran and told Aladdin, who was overwhelmed at first, but presently bethought him of the lamp. He rubbed it, and the genie appeared, saying: “What is thy will?”

Aladdin replied: “The Sultan, as thou knowest, has broken his promise to me, and the vizir’s son is to have the princess. My command is that to-night you bring hither the bride and bridegroom.”

“Master, I obey,” said the genie.

Aladdin then went to his chamber, where, sure enough at midnight the genie transported the bed containing the vizir’s son and the princess.

“Take this new-married man,” he said, “and put him outside in the cold, and return at daybreak.”

Whereupon the genie took the vizir’s son out of bed, leaving Aladdin with the princess.

“Fear nothing,” Aladdin said to her; “you are my wife, promised to me by your unjust father, and no harm shall come to you.”

The princess was too frightened to speak, and passed the most miserable night of her life, while Aladdin lay down beside her and slept soundly. At the appointed hour the genie fetched in the shivering bridegroom, laid him in his place, and transported the bed back to the palace.

Presently the Sultan came to wish his daughter good-morning. The unhappy vizir’s son jumped up and hid himself, while the princess would not say a word, and was very sorrowful.

The Sultan sent her mother to her, who said: “How comes it, child, that you will not speak to your father? What has happened?"

The princess sighed deeply, and at last told her mother how, during the night, the bed had been carried into some strange house, and what had passed there. Her mother did not believe her in the least, but bade her rise and consider it an idle dream.

The following night exactly the same thing happened, and next morning, on the princess's refusing to speak, the Sultan threatened to cut off her head. She then confessed all, bidding him ask the vizir's son if it were not so. The Sultan told the vizir to ask his son, who owned the truth, adding that, dearly as he loved the princess, he had rather die than go through another such fearful night, and wished to be separated from her. His wish was granted, and there was an end of feasting and rejoicing.

When the three months were over, Aladdin sent his mother to remind the Sultan of his promise. She stood in the same place as before, and the Sultan, who had forgotten Aladdin, at once remembered him, and sent for her. On seeing her poverty the Sultan felt less inclined than ever to keep his word, and asked the vizir's advice, who counselled him to set so high a value on the princess that no man living could come up to it.

The Sultan then turned to Aladdin's mother, saying: "Good woman, a Sultan must remember his promises, and I will remember mine, but your son must first send me forty basins of gold brimful of jewels, carried by forty black slaves, led by as many white ones, splendidly dressed. Tell him that I await his answer." The mother of Aladdin bowed low and went home, thinking all was lost.

She gave Aladdin the message, adding: "He may wait long enough for your answer!"

"Not so long, mother, as you think," her son replied "I would do a great deal more than that for the princess."

He summoned the genie, and in a few moments the eighty slaves arrived, and filled up the small house and garden.

Aladdin made them set out to the palace, two and two, followed by his mother. They were so richly dressed, with such splendid jewels in their girdles, that everyone crowded to see them and the basins of gold they carried on their heads.

They entered the palace, and, after kneeling before the Sultan, stood in a half-circle round the throne with their arms crossed, while Aladdin's mother presented them to the Sultan.

He hesitated no longer, but said: "Good woman, return and tell your son that I wait for him with open arms."

She lost no time in telling Aladdin, bidding him make haste. But Aladdin first called the genie.

"I want a scented bath," he said, "a richly embroidered habit, a horse surpassing the Sultan's, and twenty slaves to attend me. Besides this, six slaves, beautifully dressed, to wait on my mother; and lastly, ten thousand pieces of gold in ten purses."

No sooner said than done. Aladdin mounted his horse and passed through the streets, the slaves strewing gold as they went. Those who had played with him in his childhood knew him not, he had grown so handsome.

When the Sultan saw him he came down from his throne, embraced him, and led him into a hall where a feast was spread, intending to marry him to the princess that very day.

But Aladdin refused, saying, "I must build a palace fit for her," and took his leave.

Once home he said to the genie: "Build me a palace of the finest marble, set with jasper, agate, and other precious stones. In the middle you shall build me a large hall with a dome, its four walls of massy gold and silver, each side having six windows, whose lattices, all except one, which is to be left unfinished, must be set with diamonds and rubies. There must be stables and horses and grooms and slaves; go and see about it!"

The palace was finished by next day, and the genie carried him there and showed him all his orders faithfully carried out, even to the laying of a velvet carpet from Aladdin's palace to the Sultan's. Aladdin's mother then dressed herself carefully, and walked to the palace with her slaves, while he followed her on horseback. The Sultan sent musicians with trumpets and cymbals to meet them, so that the air resounded with music and cheers. She was taken to the princess, who saluted her and treated her with great honour. At night the princess said good-bye to her father, and set out on the carpet for Aladdin's palace, with his mother at her side, and followed by the hundred slaves. She was charmed at the sight of Aladdin, who ran to receive her.

"Princess," he said, "blame your beauty for my boldness if I have displeased you."

She told him that, having seen him, she willingly obeyed her father in this matter. After the wedding had taken place Aladdin led her into the hall, where a feast was spread, and she supped with him, after which they danced till midnight.

Next day Aladdin invited the Sultan to see the palace. On entering the hall with the four-and-twenty windows, with their rubies, diamonds, and emeralds, he cried:

"It is a world's wonder! There is only one thing that surprises me. Was it by accident that one window was left unfinished?"

"No, sir, by design," returned Aladdin. "I wished your Majesty to have the glory of finishing this palace."

The Sultan was pleased, and sent for the best jewelers in the city. He showed them the unfinished window, and bade them fit it up like the others.

"Sir," replied their spokesman, "we cannot find jewels enough."

The Sultan had his own fetched, which they soon used, but to no purpose, for in a month's time the work was not half done. Aladdin, knowing that their task was vain, bade them undo their work and carry the jewels back, and the genie finished the window at his command. The Sultan was surprised to receive his jewels again and visited Aladdin, who showed him the window finished. The Sultan embraced him, the envious vizir meanwhile hinting that it was the work of enchantment.

Aladdin had won the hearts of the people by his gentle bearing. He was made captain of the Sultan's armies, and won several battles for him, but remained modest and courteous as before, and lived thus in peace and content for several years.

But far away in Africa the magician remembered Aladdin, and by his magic arts discovered that Aladdin, instead of perishing miserably in the cave, had escaped, and had married a princess, with whom he was living in great honour and wealth. He knew that the poor tailor's son could only have accomplished this by means of the lamp, and travelled night and day till he reached the capital of China, bent on Aladdin's ruin. As he passed through the town he heard people talking everywhere about a marvellous palace.

"Forgive my ignorance," he asked, "what is this palace you speak of?"

"Have you not heard of Prince Aladdin's palace," was the reply, "the greatest wonder of the world? I will direct you if you have a mind to see it."

The magician thanked him who spoke, and having seen the palace knew that it had been raised by the genie of the lamp, and became half mad with rage. He determined to get hold of the lamp, and again plunge Aladdin into the deepest poverty.

Unluckily, Aladdin had gone a-hunting for eight days, which gave the magician plenty of time. He bought a dozen copper lamps, put them into a basket, and went to the palace, crying: "New lamps for old!" followed by a jeering crowd.

The princess, sitting in the hall of four-and-twenty windows, sent a slave to find out what the noise was about, who came back laughing, so that the princess scolded her.

"Madam," replied the slave, "who can help laughing to see an old fool offering to exchange fine new lamps for old ones?"

Another slave, hearing this, said: "There is an old one on the cornice there which he can have."

Now this was the magic lamp, which Aladdin had left there, as he could not take it out hunting with him. The princess, not knowing its value, laughingly bade the slave take it and make the exchange.

She went and said to the magician: "Give me a new lamp for this."

He snatched it and bade the slave take her choice, amid the jeers of the crowd. Little he cared, but left off crying his lamps, and went out of the city gates to a lonely place, where he remained till nightfall, when he pulled out the lamp and rubbed it. The genie appeared, and at the magician's command carried him, together with the palace and the princess in it, to a lonely place in Africa.

Next morning the Sultan looked out of the window towards Aladdin's palace and rubbed his eyes, for it was gone. He sent for the vizir, and asked what had become of the palace. The vizir looked out too, and was lost in astonishment. He again put it down to enchantment, and this time the Sultan believed him, and sent thirty men on horseback to fetch Aladdin in chains. They met him riding home, bound him, and forced him to go with them on foot. The people, however, who loved him, followed, armed, to see that he came to no harm. He was carried before the Sultan, who ordered the executioner to cut off his head. The executioner made Aladdin kneel down, bandaged his eyes, and raised his scimitar to strike.

At that instant the vizir, who saw that the crowd had forced their way into the courtyard and were scaling the walls to rescue Aladdin, called to the executioner to stay his hand. The people, indeed, looked so threatening that the Sultan gave way and ordered Aladdin to be unbound, and pardoned him in the sight of the crowd.

Aladdin now begged to know what he had done.

"False wretch!" said the Sultan, "come hither," and showed him from the window the place where his palace had stood.

Aladdin was so amazed that he could not say a word.

"Where is my palace and my daughter?" demanded the Sultan. "For the first I am not so deeply concerned, but my daughter I must have, and you must find her or lose your head."

Aladdin begged for forty days in which to find her, promising if he failed to return and suffer death at the Sultan's pleasure. His prayer was granted, and he went forth sadly from the Sultan's presence. For three days he wandered about like a madman, asking everyone what had become of his palace, but they only laughed and pitied him. He came to the banks of a river, and knelt down to say his prayers before throwing himself in. In so doing he rubbed the magic ring he still wore.

The genie he had seen in the cave appeared, and asked his will.

"Save my life, genie," said Aladdin, "and bring my palace back."

"That is not in my power," said the genie; "I am only the slave of the ring; you must ask the slave of the lamp."

"Even so," said Aladdin "but thou canst take me to the palace, and set me down under my dear wife's window." He at once found himself in Africa, under the window of the princess, and fell asleep out of sheer weariness.

He was awakened by the singing of the birds, and his heart was lighter. He saw plainly that all his misfortunes were owing to the loss of the lamp, and vainly wondered who had robbed him of it.

That morning the princess rose earlier than she had done since she had been carried into Africa by the magician, whose company she was forced to endure once a day. She, however, treated him so harshly that he dared not live there altogether. As she was dressing, one of her women looked out and saw Aladdin. The princess ran and opened the window, and at the noise she made Aladdin looked up. She called to him to come to her, and great was the joy of these lovers at seeing each other again.

After he had kissed her Aladdin said: "I beg of you, Princess, in God's name, before we speak of anything else, for your own sake and mine, tell me what has become of an old lamp I left on the cornice in the hall of four-and-twenty windows, when I went a-hunting."

"Alas!" she said "I am the innocent cause of our sorrows," and told him of the exchange of the lamp.

"Now I know," cried Aladdin, "that we have to thank the African magician for this! Where is the lamp?"

"He carries it about with him," said the princess, "I know, for he pulled it out of his breast to show me. He wishes me to break my faith with you and marry him, saying that you were beheaded by my father's command. He is forever speaking ill of you, but I only reply by my tears. If I persist, I doubt not that he will use violence."

Aladdin comforted her, and left her for a while. He changed clothes with the first person he met in the town, and having bought a certain powder returned to the princess, who let him in by a little side door.

"Put on your most beautiful dress," he said to her, "and receive the magician with smiles, leading him to believe that you have forgotten me. Invite him to sup with you, and say you wish to taste the wine of his country. He will go for some, and while he is gone I will tell you what to do."

She listened carefully to Aladdin, and when he left her arrayed herself gaily for the first time since she left China. She put on a girdle and head-dress of diamonds, and seeing in a glass that she looked more beautiful than ever, received the magician, saying to his great amazement: "I have made up my mind that Aladdin is dead, and that all my tears will not bring him back to me, so I am resolved to mourn no more, and have therefore invited you to sup with me; but I am tired of the wines of China, and would fain taste those of Africa."

The magician flew to his cellar, and the princess put the powder Aladdin had given her in her cup. When he returned she asked him to drink her health in the wine of Africa, handing him her cup in exchange for his as a sign she was reconciled to him.

Before drinking the magician made her a speech in praise of her beauty, but the princess cut him short saying:

"Let me drink first, and you shall say what you will afterwards." She set her cup to her lips and kept it there, while the magician drained his to the dregs and fell back lifeless.

The princess then opened the door to Aladdin, and flung her arms round his neck, but Aladdin put her away, bidding her to leave him, as he had more to do. He then went to the dead magician, took the lamp out of his vest, and bade the genie carry the palace and all in it back to China. This was done, and the princess in her chamber only felt two little shocks, and little thought she was at home again.

The Sultan, who was sitting in his closet, mourning for his lost daughter, happened to look up, and rubbed his eyes, for there stood the palace as before! He hastened thither, and Aladdin received him in the hall of the four-and-twenty windows, with the princess at his side. Aladdin told him what had happened, and showed him the dead body of the magician, that he might believe. A ten days' feast was proclaimed, and it seemed as if Aladdin might now live the rest of his life in peace; but it was not to be.

The African magician had a younger brother, who was, if possible, more wicked and more cunning than himself. He travelled to China to avenge his brother's death, and went to visit a pious woman called Fatima, thinking she might be of use to him. He entered her cell and clapped a dagger to her breast, telling her to rise and do his bidding on pain of death. He changed clothes with her, coloured his face like hers, put on her veil and murdered her, that she might tell no tales. Then he went towards the palace of Aladdin, and all the people thinking he was the holy woman, gathered round him, kissing his hands and begging his blessing. When he got to the palace there was such a noise going on round him that the princess bade her slave look out of the window and ask what was the matter. The slave said it was the holy woman, curing people by her touch of their ailments, whereupon the princess, who had long desired to see Fatima, sent for her. On coming to the princess the magician offered up a prayer for her health and prosperity. When he had done the princess made him sit by her, and begged him to stay with her always. The false Fatima, who wished for nothing better, consented, but kept his veil down for fear of discovery. The princess showed him the hall, and asked him what he thought of it.

"It is truly beautiful," said the false Fatima. "In my mind it wants but one thing."

"And what is that?" said the princess.

"If only a roc's egg," replied he, "were hung up from the middle of this dome, it would be the wonder of the world."

After this the princess could think of nothing but a roc's egg, and when Aladdin returned from hunting he found her in a very ill humour. He begged to know what was amiss, and she told him that all her pleasure in the hall was spoilt for the want of a roc's egg hanging from the dome.

"It that is all," replied Aladdin, "you shall soon be happy."

He left her and rubbed the lamp, and when the genie appeared commanded him to bring a roc's egg. The genie gave such a loud and terrible shriek that the hall shook.

"Wretch!" he cried, "is it not enough that I have done everything for you, but you must command me to bring my master and hang him up in the midst of this dome? You and your wife and your palace deserve to be burnt to ashes; but this request does not come from you, but from the brother of the African magician whom you destroyed. He is now in your palace disguised as the holy woman — whom he murdered. He it was who put that wish into your wife's head. Take care of yourself, for he means to kill you." So saying the genie disappeared.

Aladdin went back to the princess, saying his head ached, and requesting that the holy Fatima should be fetched to lay her hands on it. But when the magician came near, Aladdin, seizing his dagger, pierced him to the heart.

"What have you done?" cried the princess. "You have killed the holy woman!"

"Not so," replied Aladdin, "but a wicked magician," and told her of how she had been deceived.

After this Aladdin and his wife lived in peace. He succeeded the Sultan when he died, and reigned for many years, leaving behind him a long line of kings.

The Adventures of Haroun-al-Raschid, Caliph of Bagdad

The Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid sat in his palace, wondering if there was anything left in the world that could possibly give him a few hours' amusement, when Giafar the grand-vizir, his old and tried friend, suddenly appeared before him. Bowing low, he waited, as was his duty, till his master spoke, but Haroun-al-Raschid merely turned his head and looked at him, and sank back into his former weary posture.

Now Giafar had something of importance to say to the Caliph, and had no intention of being put off by mere silence, so with another low bow in front of the throne, he began to speak.

"Commander of the Faithful," said he, "I have taken on myself to remind your Highness that you have undertaken secretly to observe for yourself the manner in which justice is done and order is kept throughout the city. This is the day you have set apart to devote to this object, and perhaps in fulfilling this duty you may find some distraction from the melancholy to which, as I see to my sorrow, you are a prey."

"You are right," returned the Caliph, "I had forgotten all about it. Go and change your coat, and I will change mine."

A few moments later they both re-entered the hall, disguised as foreign merchants, and passed through a secret door, out into the open country. Here they turned towards the Euphrates, and crossing the river in a small boat, walked through that part of the town which lay along the further bank, without seeing anything to call for their interference. Much pleased with the peace and good order of the city, the Caliph and his vizir made their way to a bridge, which led straight back to the palace, and had already crossed it, when they were stopped by an old and blind man, who begged for alms.

The Caliph gave him a piece of money, and was passing on, but the blind man seized his hand, and held him fast.

"Charitable person," he said, "whoever you may be grant me yet another prayer. Strike me, I beg of you, one blow. I have deserved it richly, and even a more severe penalty."

The Caliph, much surprised at this request, replied gently: “My good man, that which you ask is impossible. Of what use would my alms be if I treated you so ill?” And as he spoke he tried to loosen the grasp of the blind beggar.

“My lord,” answered the man, “pardon my boldness and my persistence. Take back your money, or give me the blow which I crave. I have sworn a solemn oath that I will receive nothing without receiving chastisement, and if you knew all, you would feel that the punishment is not a tenth part of what I deserve.”

Moved by these words, and perhaps still more by the fact that he had other business to attend to, the Caliph yielded, and struck him lightly on the shoulder. Then he continued his road, followed by the blessing of the blind man. When they were out of earshot, he said to the vizir, “There must be something very odd to make that man act so — I should like to find out what is the reason. Go back to him; tell him who I am, and order him to come without fail to the palace to-morrow, after the hour of evening prayer.”

So the grand-vizir went back to the bridge; gave the blind beggar first a piece of money and then a blow, delivered the Caliph’s message, and rejoined his master.

They passed on towards the palace, but walking through a square, they came upon a crowd watching a young and well-dressed man who was urging a horse at full speed round the open space, using at the same time his spurs and whip so unmercifully that the animal was all covered with foam and blood. The Caliph, astonished at this proceeding, inquired of a passer-by what it all meant, but no one could tell him anything, except that every day at the same hour the same thing took place.

Still wondering, he passed on, and for the moment had to content himself with telling the vizir to command the horseman also to appear before him at the same time as the blind man.

The next day, after evening prayer, the Caliph entered the hall, and was followed by the vizir bringing with him the two men of whom we have spoken, and a third, with whom we have nothing to do. They all bowed themselves low before the throne and then the Caliph bade them rise, and ask the blind man his name.

“Baba-Abdalla, your Highness,” said he.

“Baba-Abdalla,” returned the Caliph, “your way of asking alms yesterday seemed to me so strange, that I almost commanded you then and there to cease from causing such a public scandal. But I have sent for you to inquire what was your motive in making such a curious vow. When I know the reason I shall be able to judge whether you can be permitted to continue to practise it, for I cannot help thinking that it sets a very bad example to others. Tell me therefore the whole truth, and conceal nothing.”

These words troubled the heart of Baba-Abdalla, who prostrated himself at the feet of the Caliph. Then rising, he answered: “Commander of the Faithful, I crave your pardon humbly, for my persistence in beseeching your Highness to do an action which appears on the face of it to be without any meaning. No doubt, in the eyes of men, it has none; but I look on it as a slight expiation for a fearful sin of which I have been guilty, and if your Highness will deign to listen to my tale, you will see that no punishment could atone for the crime.”

The Story of the Blind Baba-Abdalla

I was born, Commander of the Faithful, in Bagdad, and was left an orphan while I was yet a very young man, for my parents died within a few days of each other. I had inherited from them a small fortune, which I worked hard night and day to increase, till at last I found myself the owner of eighty camels. These I hired out to travelling merchants, whom I frequently accompanied on their various journeys, and always returned with large profits.

One day I was coming back from Balsora, whither I had taken a supply of goods, intended for India, and halted at noon in a lonely place, which promised rich pasture for my camels. I was resting in the shade under a tree, when a dervish, going on foot towards Balsora, sat down by my side, and I inquired whence he had come and to what place he was going. We soon made friends, and after we had asked each other the usual questions, we produced the food we had with us, and satisfied our hunger.

While we were eating, the dervish happened to mention that in a spot only a little way off from where we were sitting, there was hidden a treasure so great that if my eighty camels were loaded till they could carry no more, the hiding place would seem as full as if it had never been touched.

At this news I became almost beside myself with joy and greed, and I flung my arms round the neck of the dervish, exclaiming: “Good dervish, I see plainly that the riches of this world are nothing to you, therefore of what use is the knowledge of this treasure to you? Alone and on foot, you could carry away a mere handful. But tell me where it is, and I will load my eighty camels with it, and give you one of them as a token of my gratitude.”

Certainly my offer does not sound very magnificent, but it was great to me, for at his words a wave of covetousness had swept over my heart, and I almost felt as if the seventy-nine camels that were left were nothing in comparison.

The dervish saw quite well what was passing in my mind, but he did not show what he thought of my proposal.

“My brother,” he answered quietly, “you know as well as I do, that you are behaving unjustly. It was open to me to keep my secret, and to reserve the treasure for myself. But the fact that I have told you of its existence shows that I had confidence in you, and that I hoped to earn your gratitude for ever, by making your fortune as well as mine. But before I reveal to you the secret of the treasure, you must swear that, after we have loaded the camels with as much as they can carry, you will give half to me, and let us go our own ways. I think you will see that this is fair, for if you present me with forty camels, I on my side will give you the means of buying a thousand more."

I could not of course deny that what the dervish said was perfectly reasonable, but, in spite of that, the thought that the dervish would be as rich as I was unbearable to me. Still there was no use in discussing the matter, and I had to accept his conditions or bewail to the end of my life the loss of immense wealth. So I collected my camels and we set out together under the guidance of the dervish. After walking some time, we reached what looked like a valley, but with such a narrow entrance that my camels could only pass one by one. The little valley, or open space, was shut up by two mountains, whose sides were formed of straight cliffs, which no human being could climb.

When we were exactly between these mountains the dervish stopped.

"Make your camels lie down in this open space," he said, "so that we can easily load them; then we will go to the treasure."

I did what I was bid, and rejoined the dervish, whom I found trying to kindle a fire out of some dry wood. As soon as it was alight, he threw on it a handful of perfumes, and pronounced a few words that I did not understand, and immediately a thick column of smoke rose high into the air. He separated the smoke into two columns, and then I saw a rock, which stood like a pillar between the two mountains, slowly open, and a splendid palace appear within.

But, Commander of the Faithful, the love of gold had taken such possession of my heart, that I could not even stop to examine the riches, but fell upon the first pile of gold within my reach and began to heap it into a sack that I had brought with me.

The dervish likewise set to work, but I soon noticed that he confined himself to collecting precious stones, and I felt I should be wise to follow his example. At length the camels were loaded with as much as they could carry, and nothing remained but to seal up the treasure, and go our ways.

Before, however, this was done, the dervish went up to a great golden vase, beautifully chased, and took from it a small wooden box, which he hid in the bosom of his dress, merely saying that it contained a special kind of ointment. Then he once more kindled the fire, threw on the perfume, and murmured the unknown spell, and the rock closed, and stood whole as before.

The next thing was to divide the camels, and to charge them with the treasure, after which we each took command of our own and marched out of the valley, till we reached the place in the high road where the routes diverge, and then we parted, the dervish going towards Balsora, and I to Bagdad. We embraced each other tenderly, and I poured out my gratitude for the honour he had done me, in singling me out for this great wealth, and having said a hearty farewell we turned our backs, and hastened after our camels.

I had hardly come up with mine when the demon of envy filled my soul. “What does a dervish want with riches like that?” I said to myself. “He alone has the secret of the treasure, and can always get as much as he wants,” and I halted my camels by the roadside, and ran back after him.

I was a quick runner, and it did not take me very long to come up with him. “My brother,” I exclaimed, as soon as I could speak, “almost at the moment of our leave-taking, a reflection occurred to me, which is perhaps new to you. You are a dervish by profession, and live a very quiet life, only caring to do good, and careless of the things of this world. You do not realise the burden that you lay upon yourself, when you gather into your hands such great wealth, besides the fact that no one, who is not accustomed to camels from his birth, can ever manage the stubborn beasts. If you are wise, you will not encumber yourself with more than thirty, and you will find those trouble enough.”

“You are right,” replied the dervish, who understood me quite well, but did not wish to fight the matter. “I confess I had not thought about it. Choose any ten you like, and drive them before you.”

I selected ten of the best camels, and we proceeded along the road, to rejoin those I had left behind. I had got what I wanted, but I had found the dervish so easy to deal with, that I rather regretted I had not asked for ten more. I looked back. He had only gone a few paces, and I called after him.

"My brother," I said, "I am unwilling to part from you without pointing out what I think you scarcely grasp, that large experience of camel-driving is necessary to anybody who intends to keep together a troop of thirty. In your own interest, I feel sure you would be much happier if you entrusted ten more of them to me, for with my practice it is all one to me if I take two or a hundred."

As before, the dervish made no difficulties, and I drove off my ten camels in triumph, only leaving him with twenty for his share. I had now sixty, and anyone might have imagined that I should be content.

But, Commander of the Faithful, there is a proverb that says, "the more one has, the more one wants." So it was with me. I could not rest as long as one solitary camel remained to the dervish; and returning to him I redoubled my prayers and embraces, and promises of eternal gratitude, till the last twenty were in my hands.

"Make a good use of them, my brother," said the holy man. "Remember riches sometimes have wings if we keep them for ourselves, and the poor are at our gates expressly that we may help them."

My eyes were so blinded by gold, that I paid no heed to his wise counsel, and only looked about for something else to grasp. Suddenly I remembered the little box of ointment that the dervish had hidden, and which most likely contained a treasure more precious than all the rest. Giving him one last embrace, I observed accidentally, "What are you going to do with that little box of ointment? It seems hardly worth taking with you; you might as well let me have it. And really, a dervish who has given up the world has no need of ointment!"

Oh, if he had only refused my request! But then, supposing he had, I should have got possession of it by force, so great was the madness that had laid hold upon me. However, far from refusing it, the dervish at once held it out, saying gracefully, "Take it, my friend, and if there is anything else I can do to make you happy you must let me know."

Directly the box was in my hands I wrenched off the cover. “As you are so kind,” I said, “tell me, I pray you, what are the virtues of this ointment?”

“They are most curious and interesting,” replied the dervish. “If you apply a little of it to your left eye you will behold in an instant all the treasures hidden in the bowels of the earth. But beware lest you touch your right eye with it, or your sight will be destroyed for ever.”

His words excited my curiosity to the highest pitch. “Make trial on me, I implore you,” I cried, holding out the box to the dervish. “You will know how to do it better than I! I am burning with impatience to test its charms.”

The dervish took the box I had extended to him, and, bidding me shut my left eye, touched it gently with the ointment. When I opened it again I saw spread out, as it were before me, treasures of every kind and without number. But as all this time I had been obliged to keep my right eye closed, which was very fatiguing, I begged the dervish to apply the ointment to that eye also.

“If you insist upon it I will do it,” answered the dervish, “but you must remember what I told you just now — that if it touches your right eye you will become blind on the spot.”

Unluckily, in spite of my having proved the truth of the dervish’s words in so many instances, I was firmly convinced that he was now keeping concealed from me some hidden and precious virtue of the ointment. So I turned a deaf ear to all he said.

“My brother,” I replied smiling, “I see you are joking. It is not natural that the same ointment should have two such exactly opposite effects.”

“It is true all the same,” answered the dervish, “and it would be well for you if you believed my word.”

But I would not believe, and, dazzled by the greed of avarice, I thought that if one eye could show me riches, the other might teach me how to get possession of them. And I continued to press the dervish to anoint my right eye, but this he resolutely declined to do.

“After having conferred such benefits on you,” said he, “I am loth indeed to work you such evil. Think what it is to be blind, and do not force me to do what you will repent as long as you live.”

It was of no use. “My brother,” I said firmly, “pray say no more, but do what I ask. You have most generously responded to my wishes up to this time, do not spoil my recollection of you for a thing of such little consequence. Let what will happen I take it on my own head, and will never reproach you.”

“Since you are determined upon it,” he answered with a sigh, “there is no use talking,” and taking the ointment he laid some on my right eye, which was tight shut. When I tried to open it heavy clouds of darkness floated before me. I was as blind as you see me now!

“Miserable dervish!” I shrieked, “so it is true after all! Into what a bottomless pit has my lust after gold plunged me. Ah, now that my eyes are closed they are really opened. I know that all my sufferings are caused by myself alone! But, good brother, you, who are so kind and charitable, and know the secrets of such vast learning, have you nothing that will give me back my sight?”

“Unhappy man,” replied the dervish, “it is not my fault that this has befallen you, but it is a just chastisement. The blindness of your heart has wrought the blindness of your body. Yes, I have secrets; that you have seen in the short time that we have known each other. But I have none that will give you back your sight. You have proved yourself unworthy of the riches that were given you. Now they have passed into my hands, whence they will flow into the hands of others less greedy and ungrateful than you.”

The dervish said no more and left me, speechless with shame and confusion, and so wretched that I stood rooted to the spot, while he collected the eighty camels and proceeded on his way to Balsora. It was in vain that I entreated him not to leave me, but at least to take me within reach of the first passing caravan. He was deaf to my prayers and cries, and I should soon have been dead of hunger and misery if some merchants had not come along the track the following day and kindly brought me back to Bagdad.

From a rich man I had in one moment become a beggar; and up to this time I have lived solely on the alms that have been bestowed on me. But, in order to expiate the sin of avarice, which was my undoing, I oblige each passer-by to give me a blow.

This, Commander of the Faithful, is my story.

When the blind man had ended the Caliph addressed him: “Baba-

Abdalla, truly your sin is great, but you have suffered enough. Henceforth repent in private, for I will see that enough money is given you day by day for all your wants."

At these words Baba-Abdalla flung himself at the Caliph's feet, and prayed that honour and happiness might be his portion for ever.

The Story of Sidi-Nouman

The Caliph, Haroun-al-Raschid, was much pleased with the tale of the blind man and the dervish, and when it was finished he turned to the young man who had ill-treated his horse, and inquired his name also. The young man replied that he was called Sidi-Nouman.

"Sidi-Nouman," observed the Caliph, "I have seen horses broken all my life long, and have even broken them myself, but I have never seen any horse broken in such a barbarous manner as by you yesterday. Every one who looked on was indignant, and blamed you loudly. As for myself, I was so angry that I was very nearly disclosing who I was, and putting a stop to it at once. Still, you have not the air of a cruel man, and I would gladly believe that you did not act in this way without some reason. As I am told that it was not the first time, and indeed that every day you are to be seen flogging and spurring your horse, I wish to come to the bottom of the matter. But tell me the whole truth, and conceal nothing."

Sidi-Nouman changed colour as he heard these words, and his manner grew confused; but he saw plainly that there was no help for it. So he prostrated himself before the throne of the Caliph and tried to obey, but the words stuck in his throat, and he remained silent.

The Caliph, accustomed though he was to instant obedience, guessed something of what was passing in the young man's mind, and sought to put him at his ease. "Sidi-Nouman," he said, "do not think of me as the Caliph, but merely as a friend who would like to hear your story. If there is anything in it that you are afraid may offend me, take courage, for I pardon you beforehand. Speak then openly and without fear, as to one who knows and loves you."

Reassured by the kindness of the Caliph, Sidi-Nouman at length began his tale.

"Commander of the Faithful," said he, "dazzled though I am by the lustre of your Highness' presence, I will do my best to satisfy your wishes. I am by no means perfect, but I am not naturally cruel, neither do I take pleasure in breaking the law. I admit that the treatment of my horse is calculated to give your Highness a bad opinion of me, and to set an evil example to others; yet I have not chastised it without reason, and I have hopes that I shall be judged more worthy of pity than punishment."

Commander of the Faithful, I will not trouble to describe my birth; it is not of sufficient distinction to deserve your Highness' attention. My ancestors were careful people, and I inherited enough money to enable me to live comfortably, though without show.

Having therefore a modest fortune, the only thing wanting to my happiness was a wife who could return my affection, but this blessing I was not destined to get; for on the very day after my marriage, my bride began to try my patience in every way that was most hard to bear.

Now, seeing that the customs of our land oblige us to marry without ever beholding the person with whom we are to pass our lives, a man has of course no right to complain as long as his wife is not absolutely repulsive, or is not positively deformed. And whatever defects her body may have, pleasant ways and good behaviour will go far to remedy them.

The first time I saw my wife unveiled, when she had been brought to my house with the usual ceremonies, I was enchanted to find that I had not been deceived in regard to the account that had been given me of her beauty. I began my married life in high spirits, and the best hopes of happiness.

The following day a grand dinner was served to us but as my wife did not appear, I ordered a servant to call her. Still she did not come, and I waited impatiently for some time. At last she entered the room, and she took our places at the table, and plates of rice were set before us.

I ate mine, as was natural, with a spoon, but great was my surprise to notice that my wife, instead of doing the same, drew from her pocket a little case, from which she selected a long pin, and by the help of this pin conveyed her rice grain by grain to her mouth.

"Amina," I exclaimed in astonishment, "is that the way you eat rice at home? And did you do it because your appetite was so small, or did you wish to count the grains so that you might never eat more than a certain number? If it was from economy, and you are anxious to teach me not to be wasteful, you have no cause for alarm. We shall never ruin ourselves in that way! Our fortune is large enough for all our needs, therefore, dear Amina, do not seek to check yourself, but eat as much as you desire, as I do!"

In reply to my affectionate words, I expected a cheerful answer; yet Amina said nothing at all, but continued to pick her rice as before, only at longer and longer intervals. And, instead of trying the other dishes, all she did was to put every now and then a crumb, of bread into her mouth, that would not have made a meal for a sparrow.

I felt provoked by her obstinacy, but to excuse her to myself as far as I could, I suggested that perhaps she had never been used to eat in the company of men, and that her family might have taught her that she ought to behave prudently and discreetly in the presence of her husband. Likewise that she might either have dined already or intend to do so in her own apartments. So I took no further notice, and when I had finished left the room, secretly much vexed at her strange conduct.

The same thing occurred at supper, and all through the next day, whenever we ate together. It was quite clear that no woman could live upon two or three bread-crumbs and a few grains of rice, and I determined to find out how and when she got food. I pretended not to pay attention to anything she did, in the hope that little by little she would get accustomed to me, and become more friendly; but I soon saw that my expectations were quite vain.

One night I was lying with my eyes closed, and to, all appearance sound asleep, when Amina arose softly, and dressed herself without making the slightest sound. I could not imagine what she was going to do, and as my curiosity was great I made up my mind to follow her. When she was fully dressed, she stole quietly from the room.

The instant she had let the curtain fall behind her, I flung a garment on my shoulders and a pair of slippers on my feet. Looking from a lattice which opened into the court, I saw her in the act of passing through the street door, which she carefully left open.

It was bright moonlight, so I easily managed to keep her in sight, till she entered a cemetery not far from the house. There I hid myself under the shadow of the wall, and crouched down cautiously; and hardly was I concealed, when I saw my wife approaching in company with a ghoul — one of those demons which, as your

Highness is aware, wander about the country making their lairs in deserted buildings and springing out upon unwary travellers whose flesh they eat. If no live being goes their way, they then betake themselves to the cemeteries, and feed upon the dead bodies.

I was nearly struck dumb with horror on seeing my wife with this hideous female ghoul. They passed by me without noticing me, began to dig up a corpse which had been buried that day, and then sat down on the edge of the grave, to enjoy their frightful repast, talking quietly and cheerfully all the while, though I was too far off to hear what they said. When they had finished, they threw back the body into the grave, and heaped back the earth upon it. I made no effort to disturb them, and returned quickly to the house, when I took care to leave the door open, as I had previously found it. Then I got back into bed, and pretended to sleep soundly.

A short time after Amina entered as quietly as she had gone out. She undressed and stole into bed, congratulating herself apparently on the cleverness with which she had managed her expedition.

As may be guessed, after such a scene it was long before I could close my eyes, and at the first sound which called the faithful to prayer, I put on my clothes and went to the mosque. But even prayer did not restore peace to my troubled spirit, and I could not face my wife until I had made up my mind what future course I should pursue in regard to her. I therefore spent the morning roaming about from one garden to another, turning over various plans for compelling my wife to give up her horrible ways; I thought of using violence to make her submit, but felt reluctant to be unkind to her. Besides, I had an instinct that gentle means had the best chance of success; so, a little soothed, I turned towards home, which I reached about the hour of dinner.

As soon as I appeared, Amina ordered dinner to be served, and we sat down together. As usual, she persisted in only picking a few grains of rice, and I resolved to speak to her at once of what lay so heavily on my heart.

“Amina,” I said, as quietly as possible, “you must have guessed the surprise I felt, when the day after our marriage you declined to eat anything but a few morsels of rice, and altogether behaved in such a manner that most husbands would have been deeply wounded.

However I had patience with you, and only tried to tempt your appetite by the choicest dishes I could invent, but all to no purpose. Still, Amina, it seems to me that there be some among them as sweet to the taste as the flesh of a corpse?"

I had no sooner uttered these words than Amina, who instantly understood that I had followed her to the grave-yard, was seized with a passion beyond any that I have ever witnessed. Her face became purple, her eyes looked as if they would start from her head, and she positively foamed with rage.

I watched her with terror, wondering what would happen next, but little thinking what would be the end of her fury. She seized a vessel of water that stood at hand, and plunging her hand in it, murmured some words I failed to catch. Then, sprinkling it on my face, she cried madly:

"Wretch, receive the reward of your prying, and become a dog."

The words were not out of her mouth when, without feeling conscious that any change was passing over me, I suddenly knew that I had ceased to be a man. In the greatness of the shock and surprise — for I had no idea that Amina was a magician — I never dreamed of running away, and stood rooted to the spot, while Amina grasped a stick and began to beat me. Indeed her blows were so heavy, that I only wonder they did not kill me at once. However they succeeded in rousing me from my stupor, and I dashed into the court-yard, followed closely by Amina, who made frantic dives at me, which I was not quick enough to dodge. At last she got tired of pursuing me, or else a new trick entered into her head, which would give me speedy and painful death; she opened the gate leading into the street, intending to crush me as I passed through. Dog though I was, I saw through her design, and stung into presence of mind by the greatness of the danger, I timed my movements so well that I contrived to rush through, and only the tip of my tail received a squeeze as she banged the gate.

I was safe, but my tail hurt me horribly, and I yelped and howled so loud all along the streets, that the other dogs came and attacked me, which made matters no better. In order to avoid them, I took refuge in a cookshop, where tongues and sheep's heads were sold.

At first the owner showed me great kindness, and drove away the other dogs that were still at my heels, while I crept into the darkest corner. But though I was safe for the moment, I was not destined to remain long under his protection, for he was one of those who hold all dogs to be unclean, and that all the washing in the world will hardly purify you from their contact. So after my enemies had gone to seek other prey, he tried to lure me from my corner in order to force me into the street. But I refused to come out of my hole, and spent the night in sleep, which I sorely needed, after the pain inflicted on me by Amina.

I have no wish to weary your Highness by dwelling on the sad thoughts which accompanied my change of shape, but it may interest you to hear that the next morning my host went out early to do his marketing, and returned laden with the sheep's heads, and tongues and trotters that formed his stock in trade for the day. The smell of meat attracted various hungry dogs in the neighbourhood, and they gathered round the door begging for some bits. I stole out of my corner, and stood with them.

In spite of his objection to dogs, as unclean animals, my protector was a kind-hearted man, and knowing I had eaten nothing since yesterday, he threw me bigger and better bits than those which fell to the share of the other dogs. When I had finished, I tried to go back into the shop, but this he would not allow, and stood so firmly at the entrance with a stout stick, that I was forced to give it up, and seek some other home.

A few paces further on was a baker's shop, which seemed to have a gay and merry man for a master. At that moment he was having his breakfast, and though I gave no signs of hunger, he at once threw me a piece of bread. Before gobbling it up, as most dogs are in the habit of doing, I bowed my head and wagged my tail, in token of thanks, and he understood, and smiled pleasantly. I really did not want the bread at all, but felt it would be ungracious to refuse, so I ate it slowly, in order that he might see that I only did it out of politeness. He understood this also, and seemed quite willing to let me stay in his shop, so I sat down, with my face to the door, to show that I only asked his protection. This he gave me, and indeed encouraged me to come into the house itself, giving me a corner where I might sleep, without being in anybody's way.

The kindness heaped on me by this excellent man was far greater than I could ever have expected. He was always affectionate in his manner of treating me, and I shared his breakfast, dinner and supper, while, on my side, I gave him all the gratitude and attachment to which he had a right.

I sat with my eyes fixed on him, and he never left the house without having me at his heels; and if it ever happened that when he was preparing to go out I was asleep, and did not notice, he would call "Rufus, Rufus," for that was the name he gave me.

Some weeks passed in this way, when one day a woman came in to buy bread. In paying for it, she laid down several pieces of money, one of which was bad. The baker perceived this, and declined to take it, demanding another in its place. The woman, for her part, refused to take it back, declaring it was perfectly good, but the baker would have nothing to do with it. "It is really such a bad imitation," he exclaimed at last, "that even my dog would not be taken in. Here Rufus! Rufus!" and hearing his voice, I jumped on to the counter. The baker threw down the money before me, and said, "Find out if there is a bad coin." I looked at each in turn, and then laid my paw on the false one, glancing at the same time at my master, so as to point it out.

The baker, who had of course been only in joke, was exceedingly surprised at my cleverness, and the woman, who was at last convinced that the man spoke the truth, produced another piece of money in its place. When she had gone, my master was so pleased that he told all the neighbours what I had done, and made a great deal more of it than there really was.

The neighbours, very naturally, declined to believe his story, and tried me several times with all the bad money they could collect together, but I never failed to stand the test triumphantly.

Soon, the shop was filled from morning till night, with people who on the pretence of buying bread came to see if I was as clever as I was reported to be. The baker drove a roaring trade, and admitted that I was worth my weight in gold to him.

Of course there were plenty who envied him his large custom, and many was the pitfall set for me, so that he never dared to let me out of his sight. One day a woman, who had not been in the shop before, came to ask for bread, like the rest. As usual, I was lying on the counter, and she threw down six coins before me, one of which was false. I detected it at once, and put my paw on it, looking as I did so at the woman. “Yes,” she said, nodding her head. “You are quite right, that is the one.” She stood gazing at me attentively for some time, then paid for the bread, and left the shop, making a sign for me to follow her secretly.

Now my thoughts were always running on some means of shaking off the spell laid on me, and noticing the way in which this woman had looked at me, the idea entered my head that perhaps she might have guessed what had happened, and in this I was not deceived. However I let her go on a little way, and merely stood at the door watching her. She turned, and seeing that I was quite still, she again beckoned to me.

The baker all this while was busy with his oven, and had forgotten all about me, so I stole out softly, and ran after the woman.

When we came to her house, which was some distance off, she opened the door and then said to me, “Come in, come in; you will never be sorry that you followed me.” When I had entered she fastened the door, and took me into a large room, where a beautiful girl was working at a piece of embroidery. “My daughter,” exclaimed my guide, “I have brought you the famous dog belonging to the baker which can tell good money from bad. You know that when I first heard of him, I told you I was sure he must be really a man, changed into a dog by magic. To-day I went to the baker’s, to prove for myself the truth of the story, and persuaded the dog to follow me here. Now what do you say?”

“You are right, mother,” replied the girl, and rising she dipped her hand into a vessel of water. Then sprinkling it over me she said, “If you were born dog, remain dog; but if you were born man, by virtue of this water resume your proper form.” In one moment the spell was broken. The dog’s shape vanished as if it had never been, and it was a man who stood before her.

Overcome with gratitude at my deliverance, I flung myself at her feet, and kissed the hem of her garment. “How can I thank you for your goodness towards a stranger, and for what you have done? Henceforth I am your slave. Deal with me as you will!”

Then, in order to explain how I came to be changed into a dog, I told her my whole story, and finished with rendering the mother the thanks due to her for the happiness she had brought me.

"Sidi-Nouman," returned the daughter, "say no more about the obligation you are under to us. The knowledge that we have been of service to you is ample payment. Let us speak of Amina, your wife, with whom I was acquainted before her marriage. I was aware that she was a magician, and she knew too that I had studied the same art, under the same mistress. We met often going to the same baths, but we did not like each other, and never sought to become friends. As to what concerns you, it is not enough to have broken your spell, she must be punished for her wickedness. Remain for a moment with my mother, I beg," she added hastily, "I will return shortly."

Left alone with the mother, I again expressed the gratitude I felt, to her as well as to her daughter.

"My daughter," she answered, "is, as you see, as accomplished a magician as Amina herself, but you would be astonished at the amount of good she does by her knowledge. That is why I have never interfered, otherwise I should have put a stop to it long ago." As she spoke, her daughter entered with a small bottle in her hand.

"Sidi-Nouman," she said, "the books I have just consulted tell me that Amina is not home at present, but she should return at any moment. I have likewise found out by their means, that she pretends before the servants great uneasiness as to your absence. She has circulated a story that, while at dinner with her, you remembered some important business that had to be done at once, and left the house without shutting the door. By this means a dog had strayed in, which she was forced to get rid of by a stick. Go home then without delay, and await Amina's return in your room. When she comes in, go down to meet her, and in her surprise, she will try to run away. Then have this bottle ready, and dash the water it contains over her, saying boldly, "Receive the reward of your crimes." That is all I have to tell you."

Everything happened exactly as the young magician had foretold. I had not been in my house many minutes before Amina returned, and as she approached I stepped in front of her, with the water in my hand. She gave one loud cry, and turned to the door, but she was too late. I had already dashed the water in her face and spoken the magic words. Amina disappeared, and in her place stood the horse you saw me beating yesterday.

This, Commander of the Faithful, is my story, and may I venture to hope that, now you have heard the reason of my conduct, your Highness will not think this wicked woman too harshly treated?

“Sidi-Nouman,” replied the Caliph, “your story is indeed a strange one, and there is no excuse to be offered for your wife. But, without condemning your treatment of her, I wish you to reflect how much she must suffer from being changed into an animal, and I hope you will let that punishment be enough. I do not order you to insist upon the young magician finding the means to restore your wife to her human shape, because I know that when once women such as she begin to work evil they never leave off, and I should only bring down on your head a vengeance far worse than the one you have undergone already.”

The Story of Ali Colia, Merchant of Bagdad

In the reign of Haroun-al-Raschid, there lived in Bagdad a merchant named Ali Cogia, who, having neither wife nor child, contented himself with the modest profits produced by his trade. He had spent some years quite happily in the house his father had left him, when three nights running he dreamed that an old man had appeared to him, and reproached him for having neglected the duty of a good Mussulman, in delaying so long his pilgrimage to Mecca.

Ali Cogia was much troubled by this dream, as he was unwilling to give up his shop, and lose all his customers. He had shut his eyes for some time to the necessity of performing this pilgrimage, and tried to atone to his conscience by an extra number of good works, but the dream seemed to him a direct warning, and he resolved to put the journey off no longer.

The first thing he did was to sell his furniture and the wares he had in his shop, only reserving to himself such goods as he might trade with on the road. The shop itself he sold also, and easily found a tenant for his private house. The only matter he could not settle satisfactorily was the safe custody of a thousand pieces of gold which he wished to leave behind him.

After some thought, Ali Cogia hit upon a plan which seemed a safe one. He took a large vase, and placing the money in the bottom of it, filled up the rest with olives. After corking the vase tightly down, he carried it to one of his friends, a merchant like himself, and said to him:

"My brother, you have probably heard that I am staffing with a caravan in a few days for Mecca. I have come to ask whether you would do me the favour to keep this vase of olives for me till I come back?"

The merchant replied readily, "Look, this is the key of my shop: take it, and put the vase wherever you like. I promise that you shall find it in the same place on your return."

A few days later, Ali Cogia mounted the camel that he had laden with merchandise, joined the caravan, and arrived in due time at Mecca. Like the other pilgrims he visited the sacred Mosque, and after all his religious duties were performed, he set out his goods to the best advantage, hoping to gain some customers among the passers-by.

Very soon two merchants stopped before the pile, and when they had turned it over, one said to the other:

"If this man was wise he would take these things to Cairo, where he would get a much better price than he is likely to do here."

Ali Cogia heard the words, and lost no time in following the advice. He packed up his wares, and instead of returning to Bagdad, joined a caravan that was going to Cairo. The results of the journey gladdened his heart. He sold off everything almost directly, and bought a stock of Egyptian curiosities, which he intended selling at Damascus; but as the caravan with which he would have to travel would not be starting for another six weeks, he took advantage of the delay to visit the Pyramids, and some of the cities along the banks of the Nile.

Now the attractions of Damascus so fascinated the worthy Ali, that he could hardly tear himself away, but at length he remembered that he had a home in Bagdad, meaning to return by way of Aleppo, and after he had crossed the Euphrates, to follow the course of the Tigris.

But when he reached Mossoul, Ali had made such friends with some Persian merchants, that they persuaded him to accompany them to their native land, and even as far as India, and so it came to pass that seven years had slipped by since he had left Bagdad, and during all that time the friend with whom he had left the vase of olives had never once thought of him or of it. In fact, it was only a month before Ali Cogia's actual return that the affair came into his head at all, owing to his wife's remarking one day, that it was a long time since she had eaten any olives, and would like some.

"That reminds me," said the husband, "that before Ali Cogia went to Mecca seven years ago, he left a vase of olives in my care. But really by this time he must be dead, and there is no reason we should not eat the olives if we like. Give me a light, and I will fetch them and see how they taste."

"My husband," answered the wife, "beware, I pray, of your doing anything so base! Supposing seven years have passed without news of Ali Cogia, he need not be dead for all that, and may come back any day. How shameful it would be to have to confess that you had betrayed your trust and broken the seal of the vase! Pay no attention to my idle words, I really have no desire for olives now. And probably after all this while they are no longer good. I have a presentiment that Ali Cogia will return, and what will he think of you? Give it up, I entreat."

The merchant, however, refused to listen to her advice, sensible though it was. He took a light and a dish and went into his shop.

"If you will be so obstinate," said his wife, "I cannot help it; but do not blame me if it turns out ill."

When the merchant opened the vase he found the topmost olives were rotten, and in order to see if the under ones were in better condition he shook some out into the dish. As they fell out a few of the gold pieces fell out too.

The sight of the money roused all the merchant's greed. He looked into the vase, and saw that all the bottom was filled with gold. He then replaced the olives and returned to his wife.

"My wife," he said, as he entered the room, "you were quite right; the olives are rotten, and I have recorked the vase so well that Ali Cogia will never know it has been touched."

"You would have done better to believe me," replied the wife. "I trust that no harm will come of it."

These words made no more impression on the merchant than the others had done; and he spent the whole night in wondering how he could manage to keep the gold if Ali Cogia should come back and claim his vase. Very early next morning he went out and bought fresh new olives; he then threw away the old ones, took out the gold and hid it, and filled up the vase with the olives he had bought. This done he recorked the vase and put it in the same place where it had been left by Ali Cogia.

A month later Ali Cogia re-entered Bagdad, and as his house was still let he went to an inn; and the following day set out to see his friend the merchant, who received him with open arms and many expressions of surprise. After a few moments given to inquiries Ali Cogia begged the merchant to hand him over the vase that he had taken care of for so long.

"Oh certainly," said he, "I am only glad I could be of use to you in the matter. Here is the key of my shop; you will find the vase in the place where you put it."

Ali Cogia fetched his vase and carried it to his room at the inn, where he opened it. He thrust down his hand but could feel no money, but still was persuaded it must be there. So he got some plates and vessels from his travelling kit and emptied out the olives. To no purpose. The gold was not there. The poor man was dumb with horror, then, lifting up his hands, he exclaimed, "Can my old friend really have committed such a crime?"

In great haste he went back to the house of the merchant. "My friend," he cried, "you will be astonished to see me again, but I can find nowhere in this vase a thousand pieces of gold that I placed in the bottom under the olives. Perhaps you may have taken a loan of them for your business purposes; if that is so you are most welcome. I will only ask you to give me a receipt, and you can pay the money at your leisure."

The merchant, who had expected something of the sort, had his reply all ready. "Ali Cogia," he said, "when you brought me the vase of olives did I ever touch it?"

"I gave you the key of my shop and you put it yourself where you liked, and did you not find it in exactly the same spot and in the same state? If you placed any gold in it, it must be there still. I know nothing about that; you only told me there were olives. You can believe me or not, but I have not laid a finger on the vase."

Ali Cogia still tried every means to persuade the merchant to admit the truth. "I love peace," he said, "and shall deeply regret having to resort to harsh measures. Once more, think of your reputation. I shall be in despair if you oblige me to call in the aid of the law."

"Ali Cogia," answered the merchant, "you allow that it was a vase of olives you placed in my charge. You fetched it and removed it yourself, and now you tell me it contained a thousand pieces of gold, and that I must restore them to you! Did you ever say anything about them before? Why, I did not even know that the vase had olives in it! You never showed them to me. I wonder you have not demanded pearls or diamonds. Retire, I pray you, lest a crowd should gather in front of my shop."

By this time not only the casual passers-by, but also the neighbouring merchants, were standing round, listening to the dispute, and trying every now and then to smooth matters between them. But at the merchant's last words Ali Cogia resolved to lay the cause of the quarrel before them, and told them the whole story. They heard him to the end, and inquired of the merchant what he had to say.

The accused man admitted that he had kept Ali Cogia's vase in his shop; but he denied having touched it, and swore that as to what it contained he only knew what Ali Cogia had told him, and called them all to witness the insult that had been put upon him.

"You have brought it on yourself," said Ali Cogia, taking him by the arm, "and as you appeal to the law, the law you shall have! Let us see if you will dare to repeat your story before the Cadi."

Now as a good Mussulman the merchant was forbidden to refuse this choice of a judge, so he accepted the test, and said to Ali Cogia, "Very well; I should like nothing better. We shall soon see which of us is in the right."

So the two men presented themselves before the Cadi, and Ali Cogia again repeated his tale. The Cadi asked what witnesses he had. Ali Cogia replied that he had not taken this precaution, as he had considered the man his friend, and up to that time had always found him honest.

The merchant, on his side, stuck to his story, and offered to swear solemnly that not only had he never stolen the thousand gold pieces, but that he did not even know they were there. The Cadi allowed him to take the oath, and pronounced him innocent.

Ali Cogia, furious at having to suffer such a loss, protested against the verdict, declaring that he would appeal to the Caliph, Haroun-al-Raschid, himself. But the Cadi paid no attention to his threats, and was quite satisfied that he had done what was right.

Judgment being given the merchant returned home triumphant, and Ali Cogia went back to his inn to draw up a petition to the Caliph. The next morning he placed himself on the road along which the Caliph must pass after mid-day prayer, and stretched out his petition to the officer who walked before the Caliph, whose duty it was to collect such things, and on entering the palace to hand them to his master. There Haroun-al-Raschid studied them carefully.

Knowing this custom, Ali Cogia followed the Caliph into the public hall of the palace, and waited the result. After some time the officer appeared, and told him that the Caliph had read his petition, and had appointed an hour the next morning to give him audience. He then inquired the merchant's address, so that he might be summoned to attend also.

That very evening, the Caliph, with his grand-vizir Giafar, and Mesrour, chief of the eunuchs, all three disguised, as was their habit, went out to take a stroll through the town.

Going down one street, the Caliph's attention was attracted by a noise, and looking through a door which opened into a court he perceived ten or twelve children playing in the moonlight. He hid himself in a dark corner, and watched them.

"Let us play at being the Cadi," said the brightest and quickest of them all; "I will be the Cadi. Bring before me Ali Cogia, and the merchant who robbed him of the thousand pieces of gold."

The boy's words recalled to the Caliph the petition he had read that morning, and he waited with interest to see what the children would do.

The proposal was hailed with joy by the other children, who had heard a great deal of talk about the matter, and they quickly settled the part each one was to play. The Cadi took his seat gravely, and an officer introduced first Ali Cogia, the plaintiff, and then the merchant who was the defendant.

Ali Cogia made a low bow, and pleaded his cause point by point; concluding by imploring the Cadi not to inflict on him such a heavy loss.

The Cadi having heard his case, turned to the merchant, and inquired why he had not repaid Ali Cogia the sum in question.

The false merchant repeated the reasons that the real merchant had given to the Cadi of Bagdad, and also offered to swear that he had told the truth.

"Stop a moment!" said the little Cadi, "before we come to oaths, I should like to examine the vase with the olives. Ali Cogia," he added, "have you got the vase with you?" and finding he had not, the

Cadi continued, “Go and get it, and bring it to me.”

So Ali Cogia disappeared for an instant, and then pretended to lay a vase at the feet of the Cadi, declaring it was his vase, which he had given to the accused for safe custody; and in order to be quite correct, the Cadi asked the merchant if he recognised it as the same vase. By his silence the merchant admitted the fact, and the Cadi then commanded to have the vase opened. Ali Cogia made a movement as if he was taking off the lid, and the little Cadi on his part made a pretence of peering into a vase.

“What beautiful olives!” he said, “I should like to taste one,” and pretending to put one in his mouth, he added, “they are really excellent!

“But,” he went on, “it seems to me odd that olives seven years old should be as good as that! Send for some dealers in olives, and let us hear what they say!”

Two children were presented to him as olive merchants, and the Cadi addressed them. “Tell me,” he said, “how long can olives be kept so as to be pleasant eating?”

“My lord,” replied the merchants, “however much care is taken to preserve them, they never last beyond the third year. They lose both taste and colour, and are only fit to be thrown away.”

“If that is so,” answered the little Cadi, “examine this vase, and tell me how long the olives have been in it.”

The olive merchants pretended to examine the olives and taste them; then reported to the Cadi that they were fresh and good.

“You are mistaken,” said he, “Ali Cogia declares he put them in that vase seven years ago.”

“My lord,” returned the olive merchants, “we can assure you that the olives are those of the present year. And if you consult all the merchants in Bagdad you will not find one to give a contrary opinion.”

The accused merchant opened his mouth as if to protest, but the Cadi gave him no time. “Be silent,” he said, “you are a thief. Take him away and hang him.” So the game ended, the children clapping their hands in applause, and leading the criminal away to be hanged.

Haroun-al-Raschid was lost in astonishment at the wisdom of the child, who had given so wise a verdict on the case which he himself was to hear on the morrow. “Is there any other verdict possible?” he asked the grand-vizir, who was as much impressed as himself. “I can imagine no better judgment.”

“If the circumstances are really such as we have heard,” replied the grand-vizir, “it seems to me your Highness could only follow the example of this boy, in the method of reasoning, and also in your conclusions.”

“Then take careful note of this house,” said the Caliph, “and bring me the boy to-morrow, so that the affair may be tried by him in my presence. Summon also the Cadi, to learn his duty from the mouth of a child. Bid Ali Cogia bring his vase of olives, and see that two dealers in olives are present.” So saying the Caliph returned to the palace.

The next morning early, the grand-vizir went back to the house where they had seen the children playing, and asked for the mistress and her children. Three boys appeared, and the grand-vizir inquired which had represented the Cadi in their game of the previous evening. The eldest and tallest, changing colour, confessed that it was he, and to his mother’s great alarm, the grand-vizir said that he had strict orders to bring him into the presence of the Caliph.

“Does he want to take my son from me?” cried the poor woman; but the grand-vizir hastened to calm her, by assuring her that she should have the boy again in an hour, and she would be quite satisfied when she knew the reason of the summons. So she dressed the boy in his best clothes, and the two left the house.

When the grand-vizir presented the child to the Caliph, he was a little awed and confused, and the Caliph proceeded to explain why he had sent for him. “Approach, my son,” he said kindly. “I think it was you who judged the case of Ali Cogia and the merchant last night? I overheard you by chance, and was very pleased with the way you conducted it. To-day you will see the real Ali Cogia and the real merchant. Seat yourself at once next to me.”

The Caliph being seated on his throne with the boy next him, the parties to the suit were ushered in. One by one they prostrated themselves, and touched the carpet at the foot of the throne with their foreheads. When they rose up, the Caliph said: “Now speak. This child will give you justice, and if more should be wanted I will see to it myself."

Ali Cogia and the merchant pleaded one after the other, but when the merchant offered to swear the same oath that he had taken before the Cadi, he was stopped by the child, who said that before this was done he must first see the vase of olives.

At these words, Ali Cogia presented the vase to the Caliph, and uncovered it. The Caliph took one of the olives, tasted it, and ordered the expert merchants to do the same. They pronounced the olives good, and fresh that year. The boy informed them that Ali Cogia declared it was seven years since he had placed them in the vase; to which they returned the same answer as the children had done.

The accused merchant saw by this time that his condemnation was certain, and tried to allege something in his defence. The boy had too much sense to order him to be hanged, and looked at the Caliph, saying, "Commander of the Faithful, this is not a game now; it is for your Highness to condemn him to death and not for me."

Then the Caliph, convinced that the man was a thief, bade them take him away and hang him, which was done, but not before he had confessed his guilt and the place in which he had hidden Ali Cogia's money. The Caliph ordered the Cadi to learn how to deal out justice from the mouth of a child, and sent the boy home, with a purse containing a hundred pieces of gold as a mark of his favour.

The Enchanted Horse

It was the Feast of the New Year, the oldest and most splendid of all the feasts in the Kingdom of Persia, and the day had been spent by the king in the city of Schiraz, taking part in the magnificent spectacles prepared by his subjects to do honour to the festival. The sun was setting, and the monarch was about to give his court the signal to retire, when suddenly an Indian appeared before his throne, leading a horse richly harnessed, and looking in every respect exactly like a real one.

"Sire," said he, prostrating himself as he spoke, "although I make my appearance so late before your Highness, I can confidently assure you that none of the wonders you have seen during the day can be compared to this horse, if you will deign to cast your eyes upon him."

"I see nothing in it," replied the king, "except a clever imitation of a real one; and any skilled workman might do as much."

"Sire," returned the Indian, "it is not of his outward form that I would speak, but of the use that I can make of him. I have only to mount him, and to wish myself in some special place, and no matter how distant it may be, in a very few moments I shall find myself there. It is this, Sire, that makes the horse so marvellous, and if your Highness will allow me, you can prove it for yourself."

The King of Persia, who was interested in every thing out of the common, and had never before come across a horse with such qualities, bade the Indian mount the animal, and show what he could do. In an instant the man had vaulted on his back, and inquired where the monarch wished to send him.

"Do you see that mountain?" asked the king, pointing to a huge mass that towered into the sky about three leagues from Schiraz; "go and bring me the leaf of a palm that grows at the foot."

The words were hardly out of the king's mouth when the Indian turned a screw placed in the horse's neck, close to the saddle, and the animal bounded like lightning up into the air, and was soon beyond the sight even of the sharpest eyes. In a quarter of an hour the Indian was seen returning, bearing in his hand the palm, and, guiding his horse to the foot of the throne, he dismounted, and laid the leaf before the king.

Now the monarch had no sooner proved the astonishing speed of which the horse was capable than he longed to possess it himself, and indeed, so sure was he that the Indian would be quite ready to sell it, that he looked upon it as his own already.

"I never guessed from his mere outside how valuable an animal he was," he remarked to the Indian, "and I am grateful to you for having shown me my error," said he. "If you will sell it, name your own price."

"Sire," replied the Indian, "I never doubted that a sovereign so wise and accomplished as your Highness would do justice to my horse, when he once knew its power; and I even went so far as to think it probable that you might wish to possess it. Greatly as I prize it, I will yield it up to your Highness on one condition. The horse was not constructed by me, but it was given me by the inventor, in exchange for my only daughter, who made me take a solemn oath that I would never part with it, except for some object of equal value."

"Name anything you like," cried the monarch, interrupting him. "My kingdom is large, and filled with fair cities. You have only to choose which you would prefer, to become its ruler to the end of your life."

"Sire," answered the Indian, to whom the proposal did not seem nearly so generous as it appeared to the king, "I am most grateful to your Highness for your princely offer, and beseech you not to be offended with me if I say that I can only deliver up my horse in exchange for the hand of the princess your daughter."

A shout of laughter burst from the courtiers as they heard these words, and Prince Firouz Schah, the heir apparent, was filled with anger at the Indian's presumption. The king, however, thought that it would not cost him much to part from the princess in order to gain such a delightful toy, and while he was hesitating as to his answer the prince broke in.

"Sire," he said, "it is not possible that you can doubt for an instant what reply you should give to such an insolent bargain. Consider what you owe to yourself, and to the blood of your ancestors."

"My son," replied the king, "you speak nobly, but you do not realise either the value of the horse, or the fact that if I reject the proposal of the Indian, he will only make the same to some other monarch, and I should be filled with despair at the thought that anyone but myself should own this Seventh Wonder of the World. Of course I do not say that I shall accept his conditions, and perhaps he may be brought to reason, but meanwhile I should like you to examine the horse, and, with the owner's permission, to make trial of its powers."

The Indian, who had overheard the king's speech, thought that he saw in it signs of yielding to his proposal, so he joyfully agreed to the monarch's wishes, and came forward to help the prince to mount the horse, and show him how to guide it: but, before he had finished, the young man turned the screw, and was soon out of sight.

They waited some time, expecting that every moment he might be seen returning in the distance, but at length the Indian grew frightened, and prostrating himself before the throne, he said to the king, "Sire, your Highness must have noticed that the prince, in his impatience, did not allow me to tell him what it was necessary to do in order to return to the place from which he started. I implore you not to punish me for what was not my fault, and not to visit on me any misfortune that may occur."

"But why," cried the king in a burst of fear and anger, "why did you not call him back when you saw him disappearing?"

"Sire," replied the Indian, "the rapidity of his movements took me so by surprise that he was out of hearing before I recovered my speech. But we must hope that he will perceive and turn a second screw, which will have the effect of bringing the horse back to earth."

"But supposing he does!" answered the king, "what is to hinder the horse from descending straight into the sea, or dashing him to pieces on the rocks?"

"Have no fears, your Highness," said the Indian; "the horse has the gift of passing over seas, and of carrying his rider wherever he wishes to go."

"Well, your head shall answer for it," returned the monarch, "and if in three months he is not safe back with me, or at any rate does not send me news of his safety, your life shall pay the penalty.” So saying, he ordered his guards to seize the Indian and throw him into prison.

Meanwhile, Prince Firouz Schah had gone gaily up into the air, and for the space of an hour continued to ascend higher and higher, till the very mountains were not distinguishable from the plains. Then he began to think it was time to come down, and took for granted that, in order to do this, it was only needful to turn the screw the reverse way; but, to his surprise and horror, he found that, turn as he might, he did not make the smallest impression. He then remembered that he had never waited to ask how he was to get back to earth again, and understood the danger in which he stood. Luckily, he did not lose his head, and set about examining the horse’s neck with great care, till at last, to his intense joy, he discovered a tiny little peg, much smaller than the other, close to the right ear. This he turned, and found him-self dropping to the earth, though more slowly than he had left it.

It was now dark, and as the prince could see nothing, he was obliged, not without some feeling of disquiet, to allow the horse to direct his own course, and midnight was already passed before Prince Firouz Schah again touched the ground, faint and weary from his long ride, and from the fact that he had eaten nothing since early morning.

The first thing he did on dismounting was to try to find out where he was, and, as far as he could discover in the thick darkness, he found himself on the terraced roof of a huge palace, with a balustrade of marble running round. In one corner of the terrace stood a small door, opening on to a staircase which led down into the palace.

Some people might have hesitated before exploring further, but not so the prince. “I am doing no harm,” he said, “and whoever the owner may be, he will not touch me when he sees I am unarmed,” and in dread of making a false step, he went cautiously down the staircase. On a landing, he noticed an open door, beyond which was a faintly lighted hall.

Before entering, the prince paused and listened, but he heard nothing except the sound of men snoring. By the light of a lantern suspended from the roof, he perceived a row of black guards sleeping, each with a naked sword lying by him, and he understood that the hall must form the ante-room to the chamber of some queen or princess.

Standing quite still, Prince Firouz Schah looked about him, till his eyes grew accustomed to the gloom, and he noticed a bright light shining through a curtain in one corner. He then made his way softly towards it, and, drawing aside its folds, passed into a magnificent chamber full of sleeping women, all lying on low couches, except one, who was on a sofa; and this one, he knew, must be the princess.

Gently stealing up to the side of her bed he looked at her, and saw that she was more beautiful than any woman he had ever beheld. But, fascinated though he was, he was well aware of the danger of his position, as one cry of surprise would awake the guards, and cause his certain death.

So sinking quietly on his knees, he took hold of the sleeve of the princess and drew her arm lightly towards him. The princess opened her eyes, and seeing before her a handsome well-dressed man, she remained speechless with astonishment.

This favourable moment was seized by the prince, who bowing low while he knelt, thus addressed her:

"You behold, madame, a prince in distress, son to the King of Persia, who, owing to an adventure so strange that you will scarcely believe it, finds himself here, a suppliant for your protection. But yesterday, I was in my father's court, engaged in the celebration of our most solemn festival; to-day, I am in an unknown land, in danger of my life."

Now the princess whose mercy Prince Firouz Schah implored was the eldest daughter of the King of Bengal, who was enjoying rest and change in the palace her father had built her, at a little distance from the capital. She listened kindly to what he had to say, and then answered:

"Prince, be not uneasy; hospitality and humanity are practised as widely in Bengal as they are in Persia. The protection you ask will be given you by all. You have my word for it." And as the prince was about to thank her for her goodness, she added quickly, "However great may be my curiosity to learn by what means you have travelled here so speedily, I know that you must be faint for want of food, so I shall give orders to my women to take you to one of my chambers, where you will be provided with supper, and left to repose."

By this time the princess's attendants were all awake, and listening to the conversation. At a sign from their mistress they rose, dressed themselves hastily, and snatching up some of the tapers which lighted the room, conducted the prince to a large and lofty room, where two of the number prepared his bed, and the rest went down to the kitchen, from which they soon returned with all sorts of dishes. Then, showing him cupboards filled with dresses and linen, they quitted the room.

During their absence the Princess of Bengal, who had been greatly struck by the beauty of the prince, tried in vain to go to sleep again. It was of no use: she felt broad awake, and when her women entered the room, she inquired eagerly if the prince had all he wanted, and what they thought of him.

"Madame," they replied, "it is of course impossible for us to tell what impression this young man has made on you. For ourselves, we think you would be fortunate if the king your father should allow you to marry anyone so amiable. Certainly there is no one in the Court of Bengal who can be compared with him."

These flattering observations were by no means displeasing to the princess, but as she did not wish to betray her own feelings she merely said, "You are all a set of chatterboxes; go back to bed, and let me sleep."

When she dressed the following morning, her maids noticed that, contrary to her usual habit, the princess was very particular about her toilette, and insisted on her hair being dressed two or three times over. "For," she said to herself, "if my appearance was not displeasing to the prince when he saw me in the condition I was, how much more will he be struck with me when he beholds me with all my charms."

Then she placed in her hair the largest and most brilliant diamonds she could find, with a necklace, bracelets and girdle, all of precious stones. And over her shoulders her ladies put a robe of the richest stuff in all the Indies, that no one was allowed to wear except members of the royal family. When she was fully dressed according to her wishes, she sent to know if the Prince of Persia was awake and ready to receive her, as she desired to present herself before him.

When the princess's messenger entered his room, Prince Firouz Schah was in the act of leaving it, to inquire if he might be allowed to pay his homage to her mistress: but on hearing the princess's wishes, he at once gave way. "Her will is my law," he said, "I am only here to obey her orders."

In a few moments the princess herself appeared, and after the usual compliments had passed between them, the princess sat down on a sofa, and began to explain to the prince her reasons for not giving him an audience in her own apartments. "Had I done so," she said, "we might have been interrupted at any hour by the chief of the eunuchs, who has the right to enter whenever it pleases him, whereas this is forbidden ground. I am all impatience to learn the wonderful accident which has procured the pleasure of your arrival, and that is why I have come to you here, where no one can intrude upon us. Begin then, I entreat you, without delay."

So the prince began at the beginning, and told all the story of the festival of Nedrouz held yearly in Persia, and of the splendid spectacles celebrated in its honour. But when he came to the enchanted horse, the princess declared that she could never have imagined anything half so surprising. "Well then," continued the prince, "you can easily understand how the King my father, who has a passion for all curious things, was seized with a violent desire to possess this horse, and asked the Indian what sum he would take for it.

"The man's answer was absolutely absurd, as you will agree, when I tell you that it was nothing less than the hand of the princess my sister; but though all the bystanders laughed and mocked, and I was beside myself with rage, I saw to my despair that my father could not make up his mind to treat the insolent proposal as it deserved. I tried to argue with him, but in vain. He only begged me to examine the horse with a view (as I quite understood) of making me more sensible of its value."

"To please my father, I mounted the horse, and, without waiting for any instructions from the Indian, turned the peg as I had seen him do. In an instant I was soaring upwards, much quicker than an arrow could fly, and I felt as if I must be getting so near the sky that I should soon hit my head against it! I could see nothing beneath me, and for some time was so confused that I did not even know in what direction I was travelling. At last, when it was growing dark, I found another screw, and on turning it, the horse began slowly to sink towards the earth. I was forced to trust to chance, and to see what fate had in store, and it was already past midnight when I found myself on the roof of this palace. I crept down the little staircase, and made directly for a light which I perceived through an open door — I peeped cautiously in, and saw, as you will guess, the eunuchs lying asleep on the floor. I knew the risks I ran, but my need was so great that I paid no attention to them, and stole safely past your guards, to the curtain which concealed your doorway.

"The rest, Princess, you know; and it only remains for me to thank you for the kindness you have shown me, and to assure you of my gratitude. By the law of nations, I am already your slave, and I have only my heart, that is my own, to offer you. But what am I saying? My own? Alas, madame, it was yours from the first moment I beheld you!"

The air with which he said these words could have left no doubt on the mind of the princess as to the effect of her charms, and the blush which mounted to her face only increased her beauty.

"Prince," returned she as soon as her confusion permitted her to speak, "you have given me the greatest pleasure, and I have followed you closely in all your adventures, and though you are positively sitting before me, I even trembled at your danger in the upper regions of the air! Let me say what a debt I owe to the chance that has led you to my house; you could have entered none which would have given you a warmer welcome. As to your being a slave, of course that is merely a joke, and my reception must itself have assured you that you are as free here as at your father's court. As to your heart," continued she in tones of encouragement, "I am quite sure that must have been disposed of long ago, to some princess who is well worthy of it, and I could not think of being the cause of your unfaithfulness to her."

Prince Firouz Schah was about to protest that there was no lady with any prior claims, but he was stopped by the entrance of one of the princess's attendants, who announced that dinner was served, and, after all, neither was sorry for the interruption.

Dinner was laid in a magnificent apartment, and the table was covered with delicious fruits; while during the repast richly dressed girls sang softly and sweetly to stringed instruments. After the prince and princess had finished, they passed into a small room hung with blue and gold, looking out into a garden stocked with flowers and arbutus trees, quite different from any that were to be found in Persia.

"Princess," observed the young man, "till now I had always believed that Persia could boast finer palaces and more lovely gardens than any kingdom upon earth. But my eyes have been opened, and I begin to perceive that, wherever there is a great king he will surround himself with buildings worthy of him."

"Prince," replied the Princess of Bengal, "I have no idea what a Persian palace is like, so I am unable to make comparisons. I do not wish to depreciate my own palace, but I can assure you that it is very poor beside that of the King my father, as you will agree when you have been there to greet him, as I hope you will shortly do."

Now the princess hoped that, by bringing about a meeting between the prince and her father, the King would be so struck with the young man's distinguished air and fine manners, that he would offer him his daughter to wife. But the reply of the Prince of Persia to her suggestion was not quite what she wished.

"Madame," he said, "by taking advantage of your proposal to visit the palace of the King of Bengal, I should satisfy not merely my curiosity, but also the sentiments of respect with which I regard him. But, Princess, I am persuaded that you will feel with me, that I cannot possibly present myself before so great a sovereign without the attendants suitable to my rank. He would think me an adventurer."

"If that is all," she answered, "you can get as many attendants here as you please. There are plenty of Persian merchants, and as for money, my treasury is always open to you. Take what you please."

Prince Firouz Schah guessed what prompted so much kindness on the part of the princess, and was much touched by it. Still his passion, which increased every moment, did not make him forget his duty. So he replied without hesitation:

"I do not know, Princess, how to express my gratitude for your obliging offer, which I would accept at once if it were not for the recollection of all the uneasiness the King my father must be suffering on my account. I should be unworthy indeed of all the love he showers upon me, if I did not return to him at the first possible moment. For, while I am enjoying the society of the most amiable of all princesses, he is, I am quite convinced, plunged in the deepest grief, having lost all hope of seeing me again. I am sure you will understand my position, and will feel that to remain away one instant longer than is necessary would not only be ungrateful on my part, but perhaps even a crime, for how do I know if my absence may not break his heart?

"But," continued the prince, "having obeyed the voice of my conscience, I shall count the moments when, with your gracious permission, I may present myself before the King of Bengal, not as a wanderer, but as a prince, to implore the favour of your hand. My father has always informed me that in my marriage I shall be left quite free, but I am persuaded that I have only to describe your generosity, for my wishes to become his own."

The Princess of Bengal was too reasonable not to accept the explanation offered by Prince Firouz Schah, but she was much disturbed at his intention of departing at once, for she feared that, no sooner had he left her, than the impression she had made on him would fade away. So she made one more effort to keep him, and after assuring him that she entirely approved of his anxiety to see his father, begged him to give her a day or two more of his company.

In common politeness the prince could hardly refuse this request, and the princess set about inventing every kind of amusement for him, and succeeded so well that two months slipped by almost unnoticed, in balls, spectacles and in hunting, of which, when unattended by danger, the princess was passionately fond. But at last, one day, he declared seriously that he could neglect his duty no longer, and entreated her to put no further obstacles in his way, promising at the same time to return, as soon as he could, with all the magnificence due both to her and to himself.

"Princess," he added, "it may be that in your heart you class me with those false lovers whose devotion cannot stand the test of absence. If you do, you wrong me; and were it not for fear of offending you, I would beseech you to come with me, for my life can only be happy when passed with you. As for your reception at the Persian Court, it will be as warm as your merits deserve; and as for what concerns the King of Bengal, he must be much more indifferent to your welfare than you have led me to believe if he does not give his consent to our marriage."

The princess could not find words in which to reply to the arguments of the Prince of Persia, but her silence and her downcast eyes spoke for her, and declared that she had no objection to accompanying him on his travels.

The only difficulty that occurred to her was that Prince Firouz Schah did not know how to manage the horse, and she dreaded lest they might find themselves in the same plight as before. But the prince soothed her fears so successfully, that she soon had no other thought than to arrange for their flight so secretly, that no one in the palace should suspect it.

This was done, and early the following morning, when the whole palace was wrapped in sleep, she stole up on to the roof, where the prince was already awaiting her, with his horse's head towards Persia. He mounted first and helped the princess up behind; then, when she was firmly seated, with her hands holding tightly to his belt, he touched the screw, and the horse began to leave the earth quickly behind him.

He travelled with his accustomed speed, and Prince Firouz Schah guided him so well that in two hours and a half from the time of starting, he saw the capital of Persia lying beneath him. He determined to alight neither in the great square from which he had started, nor in the Sultan's palace, but in a country house at a little distance from the town. Here he showed the princess a beautiful suite of rooms, and begged her to rest, while he informed his father of their arrival, and prepared a public reception worthy of her rank. Then he ordered a horse to be saddled, and set out.

All the way through the streets he was welcomed with shouts of joy by the people, who had long lost all hope of seeing him again. On reaching the palace, he found the Sultan surrounded by his ministers, all clad in the deepest mourning, and his father almost went out of his mind with surprise and delight at the mere sound of his son's voice. When he had calmed down a little, he begged the prince to relate his adventures.

The prince at once seized the opening thus given him, and told the whole story of his treatment by the Princess of Bengal, not even concealing the fact that she had fallen in love with him. “And, Sire,” ended the prince, “having given my royal word that you would not refuse your consent to our marriage, I persuaded her to return with me on the Indian’s horse. I have left her in one of your Highness’s country houses, where she is waiting anxiously to be assured that I have not promised in vain.”

As he said this the prince was about to throw himself at the feet of the Sultan, but his father prevented him, and embracing him again, said eagerly:

“My son, not only do I gladly consent to your marriage with the Princess of Bengal, but I will hasten to pay my respects to her, and to thank her in my own person for the benefits she has conferred on you. I will then bring her back with me, and make all arrangements for the wedding to be celebrated to-day.”

So the Sultan gave orders that the habits of mourning worn by the people should be thrown off and that there should be a concert of drums, trumpets and cymbals. Also that the Indian should be taken from prison, and brought before him.

His commands were obeyed, and the Indian was led into his presence, surrounded by guards. “I have kept you locked up,” said the Sultan, “so that in case my son was lost, your life should pay the penalty. He has now returned; so take your horse, and begone for ever.”

The Indian hastily quitted the presence of the Sultan, and when he was outside, he inquired of the man who had taken him out of prison where the prince had really been all this time, and what he had been doing. They told him the whole story, and how the Princess of Bengal was even then awaiting in the country palace the consent of the Sultan, which at once put into the Indian’s head a plan of revenge for the treatment he had experienced. Going straight to the country house, he informed the doorkeeper who was left in charge that he had been sent by the Sultan and by the Prince of Persia to fetch the princess on the enchanted horse, and to bring her to the palace.

The doorkeeper knew the Indian by sight, and was of course aware that nearly three months before he had been thrown into prison by the Sultan; and seeing him at liberty, the man took for granted that he was speaking the truth, and made no difficulty about leading him before the Princess of Bengal; while on her side, hearing that he had come from the prince, the lady gladly consented to do what he wished.

The Indian, delighted with the success of his scheme, mounted the horse, assisted the princess to mount behind him, and turned the peg at the very moment that the prince was leaving the palace in Schiraz for the country house, followed closely by the Sultan and all the court. Knowing this, the Indian deliberately steered the horse right above the city, in order that his revenge for his unjust imprisonment might be all the quicker and sweeter.

When the Sultan of Persia saw the horse and its riders, he stopped short with astonishment and horror, and broke out into oaths and curses, which the Indian heard quite unmoved, knowing that he was perfectly safe from pursuit. But mortified and furious as the Sultan was, his feelings were nothing to those of Prince Firouz Schah, when he saw the object of his passionate devotion being borne rapidly away. And while he was struck speechless with grief and remorse at not having guarded her better, she vanished swiftly out of his sight. What was he to do? Should he follow his father into the palace, and there give reins to his despair? Both his love and his courage alike forbade it; and he continued his way to the palace.

The sight of the prince showed the doorkeeper of what folly he had been guilty, and flinging himself at his master's feet, implored his pardon. "Rise," said the prince, "I am the cause of this misfortune, and not you. Go and find me the dress of a dervish, but beware of saying it is for me."

At a short distance from the country house, a convent of dervishes was situated, and the superior, or scheih, was the doorkeeper's friend. So by means of a false story made up on the spur of the moment, it was easy enough to get hold of a dervish's dress, which the prince at once put on, instead of his own. Disguised like this and concealing about him a box of pearls and diamonds he had intended as a present to the princess, he left the house at nightfall, uncertain where he should go, but firmly resolved not to return without her.

Meanwhile the Indian had turned the horse in such a direction that, before many hours had passed, it had entered a wood close to the capital of the kingdom of Cashmere. Feeling very hungry, and supposing that the princess also might be in want of food, he brought his steed down to the earth, and left the princess in a shady place, on the banks of a clear stream.

At first, when the princess had found herself alone, the idea had occurred to her of trying to escape and hide herself. But as she had eaten scarcely anything since she had left Bengal, she felt she was too weak to venture far, and was obliged to abandon her design. On the return of the Indian with meats of various kinds, she began to eat voraciously, and soon had regained sufficient courage to reply with spirit to his insolent remarks. Goaded by his threats she sprang to her feet, calling loudly for help, and luckily her cries were heard by a troop of horsemen, who rode up to inquire what was the matter.

Now the leader of these horsemen was the Sultan of Cashmere, returning from the chase, and he instantly turned to the Indian to inquire who he was, and whom he had with him. The Indian rudely answered that it was his wife, and there was no occasion for anyone else to interfere between them.

The princess, who, of course, was ignorant of the rank of her deliverer, denied altogether the Indian's story. "My lord," she cried, "whoever you may be, put no faith in this impostor. He is an abominable magician, who has this day torn me from the Prince of Persia, my destined husband, and has brought me here on this enchanted horse." She would have continued, but her tears choked her, and the Sultan of Cashmere, convinced by her beauty and her distinguished air of the truth of her tale, ordered his followers to cut off the Indian's head, which was done immediately.

But rescued though she was from one peril, it seemed as if she had only fallen into another. The Sultan commanded a horse to be given her, and conducted her to his own palace, where he led her to a beautiful apartment, and selected female slaves to wait on her, and eunuchs to be her guard. Then, without allowing her time to thank him for all he had done, he bade her repose, saying she should tell him her adventures on the following day.

The princess fell asleep, flattering herself that she had only to relate her story for the Sultan to be touched by compassion, and to restore her to the prince without delay. But a few hours were to undeceive her.

When the King of Cashmere had quitted her presence the evening before, he had resolved that the sun should not set again without the princess becoming his wife, and at daybreak proclamation of his intention was made throughout the town, by the sound of drums, trumpets, cymbals, and other instruments calculated to fill the heart with joy. The Princess of Bengal was early awakened by the noise, but she did not for one moment imagine that it had anything to do with her, till the Sultan, arriving as soon as she was dressed to inquire after her health, informed her that the trumpet blasts she heard were part of the solemn marriage ceremonies, for which he begged her to prepare. This unexpected announcement caused the princess such terror that she sank down in a dead faint.

The slaves that were in waiting ran to her aid, and the Sultan himself did his best to bring her back to consciousness, but for a long while it was all to no purpose. At length her senses began slowly to come back to her, and then, rather than break faith with the Prince of Persia by consenting to such a marriage, she determined to feign madness. So she began by saying all sorts of absurdities, and using all kinds of strange gestures, while the Sultan stood watching her with sorrow and surprise. But as this sudden seizure showed no sign of abating, he left her to her women, ordering them to take the greatest care of her. Still, as the day went on, the malady seemed to become worse, and by night it was almost violent.

Days passed in this manner, till at last the Sultan of Cashmere decided to summon all the doctors of his court to consult together over her sad state. Their answer was that madness is of so many different kinds that it was impossible to give an opinion on the case without seeing the princess, so the Sultan gave orders that they were to be introduced into her chamber, one by one, every man according to his rank.

This decision had been foreseen by the princess, who knew quite well that if once she allowed the physicians to feel her pulse, the most ignorant of them would discover that she was in perfectly good health, and that her madness was feigned, so as each man approached, she broke out into such violent paroxysms, that not one dared to lay a finger on her. A few, who pretended to be cleverer than the rest, declared that they could diagnose sick people only from sight, ordered her certain potions, which she made no difficulty about taking, as she was persuaded they were all harmless.

When the Sultan of Cashmere saw that the court doctors could do nothing towards curing the princess, he called in those of the city, who fared no better. Then he had recourse to the most celebrated physicians in the other large towns, but finding that the task was beyond their science, he finally sent messengers into the other neighbouring states, with a memorandum containing full particulars of the princess's madness, offering at the same time to pay the expenses of any physician who would come and see for himself, and a handsome reward to the one who should cure her. In answer to this proclamation many foreign professors flocked into Cashmere, but they naturally were not more successful than the rest had been, as the cure depended neither on them nor their skill, but only on the princess herself.

It was during this time that Prince Firouz Schah, wandering sadly and hopelessly from place to place, arrived in a large city of India, where he heard a great deal of talk about the Princess of Bengal who had gone out of her senses, on the very day that she was to have been married to the Sultan of Cashmere. This was quite enough to induce him to take the road to Cashmere, and to inquire at the first inn at which he lodged in the capital the full particulars of the story. When he knew that he had at last found the princess whom he had so long lost, he set about devising a plan for her rescue.

The first thing he did was to procure a doctor's robe, so that his dress, added to the long beard he had allowed to grow on his travels, might unmistakably proclaim his profession. He then lost no time in going to the palace, where he obtained an audience of the chief usher, and while apologising for his boldness in presuming to think that he could cure the princess, where so many others had failed, declared that he had the secret of certain remedies, which had hitherto never failed of their effect.

The chief usher assured him that he was heartily welcome, and that the Sultan would receive him with pleasure; and in case of success, he would gain a magnificent reward.

When the Prince of Persia, in the disguise of a physician, was brought before him, the Sultan wasted no time in talking, beyond remarking that the mere sight of a doctor threw the princess into transports of rage. He then led the prince up to a room under the roof, which had an opening through which he might observe the princess, without himself being seen.

The prince looked, and beheld the princess reclining on a sofa with tears in her eyes, singing softly to herself a song bewailing her sad destiny, which had deprived her, perhaps for ever, of a being she so tenderly loved. The young man's heart beat fast as he listened, for he needed no further proof that her madness was feigned, and that it was love of him which had caused her to resort to this species of trick. He softly left his hiding-place, and returned to the Sultan, to whom he reported that he was sure from certain signs that the princess's malady was not incurable, but that he must see her and speak with her alone.

The Sultan made no difficulty in consenting to this, and commanded that he should be ushered in to the princess's apartment. The moment she caught sight of his physician's robe, she sprang from her seat in a fury, and heaped insults upon him. The prince took no notice of her behaviour, and approaching quite close, so that his words might be heard by her alone, he said in a low whisper, "Look at me, princess, and you will see that I am no doctor, but the Prince of Persia, who has come to set you free."

At the sound of his voice, the Princess of Bengal suddenly grew calm, and an expression of joy overspread her face, such as only comes when what we wish for most and expect the least suddenly happens to us. For some time she was too enchanted to speak, and Prince Firouz Schah took advantage of her silence to explain to her all that had occurred, his despair at watching her disappear before his very eyes, the oath he had sworn to follow her over the world, and his rapture at finally discovering her in the palace at Cashmere. When he had finished, he begged in his turn that the princess would tell him how she had come there, so that he might the better devise some means of rescuing her from the tyranny of the Sultan.

It needed but a few words from the princess to make him acquainted with the whole situation, and how she had been forced to play the part of a mad woman in order to escape from a marriage with the Sultan, who had not had sufficient politeness even to ask her consent. If necessary, she added, she had resolved to die sooner than permit herself to be forced into such a union, and break faith with a prince whom she loved.

The prince then inquired if she knew what had become of the enchanted horse since the Indian's death, but the princess could only reply that she had heard nothing about it. Still she did not suppose that the horse could have been forgotten by the Sultan, after all she had told him of its value.

To this the prince agreed, and they consulted together over a plan by which she might be able to make her escape and return with him into Persia. And as the first step, she was to dress herself with care, and receive the Sultan with civility when he visited her next morning.

The Sultan was transported with delight on learning the result of the interview, and his opinion of the doctor's skill was raised still higher when, on the following day, the princess behaved towards him in such a way as to persuade him that her complete cure would not be long delayed. However he contented himself with assuring her how happy he was to see her health so much improved, and exhorted her to make every use of so clever a physician, and to repose entire confidence in him. Then he retired, without awaiting any reply from the princess.

The Prince of Persia left the room at the same time, and asked if he might be allowed humbly to inquire by what means the Princess of Bengal had reached Cashmere, which was so far distant from her father's kingdom, and how she came to be there alone. The Sultan thought the question very natural, and told him the same story that the Princess of Bengal had done, adding that he had ordered the enchanted horse to be taken to his treasury as a curiosity, though he was quite ignorant how it could be used.

"Sire," replied the physician, "your Highness's tale has supplied me with the clue I needed to complete the recovery of the princess. During her voyage hither on an enchanted horse, a portion of its enchantment has by some means been communicated to her person, and it can only be dissipated by certain perfumes of which I possess the secret. If your Highness will deign to consent, and to give the court and the people one of the most astonishing spectacles they have ever witnessed, command the horse to be brought into the big square outside the palace, and leave the rest to me. I promise that in a very few moments, in presence of all the assembled multitude, you shall see the princess as healthy both in mind and body as ever she was in her life. And in order to make the spectacle as impressive as possible, I would suggest that she should be richly dressed and covered with the noblest jewels of the crown."

The Sultan readily agreed to all that the prince proposed, and the following morning he desired that the enchanted horse should be taken from the treasury, and brought into the great square of the palace. Soon the rumour began to spread through the town, that something extraordinary was about to happen, and such a crowd began to collect that the guards had to be called out to keep order, and to make a way for the enchanted horse.

When all was ready, the Sultan appeared, and took his place on a platform, surrounded by the chief nobles and officers of his court. When they were seated, the Princess of Bengal was seen leaving the palace, accompanied by the ladies who had been assigned to her by the Sultan. She slowly approached the enchanted horse, and with the help of her ladies, she mounted on its back. Directly she was in the saddle, with her feet in the stirrups and the bridle in her hand, the physician placed around the horse some large braziers full of burning coals, into each of which he threw a perfume composed of all sorts of delicious scents. Then he crossed his hands over his breast, and with lowered eyes walked three times round the horse, muttering the while certain words. Soon there arose from the burning braziers a thick smoke which almost concealed both the horse and princess, and this was the moment for which he had been waiting. Springing lightly up behind the lady, he leaned forward and turned the peg, and as the horse darted up into the air, he cried aloud so that his words were heard by all present, "Sultan of Cashmere, when you wish to marry princesses who have sought your protection, learn first to gain their consent."

It was in this way that the Prince of Persia rescued the Princess of Bengal, and returned with her to Persia, where they descended this time before the palace of the King himself. The marriage was only delayed just long enough to make the ceremony as brilliant as possible, and, as soon as the rejoicings were over, an ambassador was sent to the King of Bengal, to inform him of what had passed, and to ask his approbation of the alliance between the two countries, which he heartily gave.

The Story of Two Sisters Who Were Jealous of Their Younger Sister

Once upon a time there reigned over Persia a Sultan named Kosrouschah, who from his boyhood had been fond of putting on a disguise and seeking adventures in all parts of the city, accompanied by one of his officers, disguised like himself. And no sooner was his father buried and the ceremonies over that marked his accession to the throne, than the young man hastened to throw off his robes of state, and calling to his vizir to make ready likewise, stole out in the simple dress of a private citizen into the less known streets of the capital.

Passing down a lonely street, the Sultan heard women's voices in loud discussion; and peeping through a crack in the door, he saw three sisters, sitting on a sofa in a large hall, talking in a very lively and earnest manner. Judging from the few words that reached his ear, they were each explaining what sort of men they wished to marry.

"I ask nothing better," cried the eldest, "than to have the Sultan's baker for a husband. Think of being able to eat as much as one wanted, of that delicious bread that is baked for his Highness alone! Let us see if your wish is as good as mine."

"I," replied the second sister, "should be quite content with the Sultan's head cook. What delicate stews I should feast upon! And, as I am persuaded that the Sultan's bread is used all through the palace, I should have that into the bargain. You see, my dear sister, my taste is as good as yours."

It was now the turn of the youngest sister, who was by far the most beautiful of the three, and had, besides, more sense than the other two. "As for me," she said, "I should take a higher flight; and if we are to wish for husbands, nothing less than the Sultan himself will do for me."

The Sultan was so much amused by the conversation he had overheard, that he made up his mind to gratify their wishes, and turning to the grand-vizir, he bade him note the house, and on the following morning to bring the ladies into his presence.

The grand-vizir fulfilled his commission, and hardly giving them time to change their dresses, desired the three sisters to follow him to the palace. Here they were presented one by one, and when they had bowed before the Sultan, the sovereign abruptly put the question to them:

"Tell me, do you remember what you wished for last night, when you were making merry? Fear nothing, but answer me the truth."

These words, which were so unexpected, threw the sisters into great confusion, their eyes fell, and the blushes of the youngest did not fail to make an impression on the heart of the Sultan. All three remained silent, and he hastened to continue: "Do not be afraid, I have not the slightest intention of giving you pain, and let me tell you at once, that I know the wishes formed by each one. You," he said, turning to the youngest, "who desired to have me for an husband, shall be satisfied this very day. And you," he added, addressing himself to the other two, "shall be married at the same moment to my baker and to my chief cook."

When the Sultan had finished speaking the three sisters flung themselves at his feet, and the youngest faltered out, "Oh, sire, since you know my foolish words, believe, I pray you, that they were only said in joke. I am unworthy of the honour you propose to do me, and I can only ask pardon for my boldness."

The other sisters also tried to excuse themselves, but the Sultan would hear nothing.

"No, no," he said, "my mind is made up. Your wishes shall be accomplished."

So the three weddings were celebrated that same day, but with a great difference. That of the youngest was marked by all the magnificence that was customary at the marriage of the Shah of Persia, while the festivities attending the nuptials of the Sultan's baker and his chief cook were only such as were suitable to their conditions.

This, though quite natural, was highly displeasing to the elder sisters, who fell into a passion of jealousy, which in the end caused a great deal of trouble and pain to several people. And the first time that they had the opportunity of speaking to each other, which was not till several days later at a public bath, they did not attempt to disguise their feelings.

"Can you possibly understand what the Sultan saw in that little cat," said one to the other, "for him to be so fascinated by her?"

"He must be quite blind," returned the wife of the chief cook. "As for her looking a little younger than we do, what does that matter? You would have made a far better Sultana than she."

"Oh, I say nothing of myself," replied the elder, "and if the Sultan had chosen you it would have been all very well; but it really grieves me that he should have selected a wretched little creature like that. However, I will be revenged on her somehow, and I beg you will give me your help in the matter, and to tell me anything that you can think of that is likely to mortify her."

In order to carry out their wicked scheme the two sisters met constantly to talk over their ideas, though all the while they pretended to be as friendly as ever towards the Sultana, who, on her part, invariably treated them with kindness. For a long time no plan occurred to the two plotters that seemed in the least likely to meet with success, but at length the expected birth of an heir gave them the chance for which they had been hoping.

They obtained permission of the Sultan to take up their abode in the palace for some weeks, and never left their sister night or day. When at last a little boy, beautiful as the sun, was born, they laid him in his cradle and carried it down to a canal which passed through the grounds of the palace. Then, leaving it to its fate, they informed the Sultan that instead of the son he had so fondly desired the Sultana had given birth to a puppy. At this dreadful news the Sultan was so overcome with rage and grief that it was with great difficulty that the grand-vizir managed to save the Sultana from his wrath.

Meanwhile the cradle continued to float peacefully along the canal till, on the outskirts of the royal gardens, it was suddenly perceived by the intendant, one of the highest and most respected officials in the kingdom.

"Go," he said to a gardener who was working near, "and get that cradle out for me."

The gardener did as he was bid, and soon placed the cradle in the hands of the intendant.

The official was much astonished to see that the cradle, which he had supposed to be empty, contained a baby, which, young though it was, already gave promise of great beauty. Having no children himself, although he had been married some years, it at once occurred to him that here was a child which he could take and bring up as his own. And, bidding the man pick up the cradle and follow him, he turned towards home.

"My wife," he exclaimed as he entered the room, "heaven has denied us any children, but here is one that has been sent in their place. Send for a nurse, and I will do what is needful publicly to recognise it as my son."

The wife accepted the baby with joy, and though the intendant saw quite well that it must have come from the royal palace, he did not think it was his business to inquire further into the mystery.

The following year another prince was born and sent adrift, but happily for the baby, the intendant of the gardens again was walking by the canal, and carried it home as before.

The Sultan, naturally enough, was still more furious the second time than the first, but when the same curious accident was repeated in the third year he could control himself no longer, and, to the great joy of the jealous sisters, commanded that the Sultana should be executed. But the poor lady was so much beloved at Court that not even the dread of sharing her fate could prevent the grand-vizir and the courtiers from throwing themselves at the Sultan's feet and imploring him not to inflict so cruel a punishment for what, after all, was not her fault.

"Let her live," entreated the grand-vizir, "and banish her from your presence for the rest of her days. That in itself will be punishment enough."

His first passion spent, the Sultan had regained his self-command. "Let her live then," he said, "since you have it so much at heart. But if I grant her life it shall only be on one condition, which shall make her daily pray for death. Let a box be built for her at the door of the principal mosque, and let the window of the box be always open. There she shall sit, in the coarsest clothes, and every Mussulman who enters the mosque shall spit in her face in passing. Anyone that refuses to obey shall be exposed to the same punishment himself. You, vizir, will see that my orders are carried out."

The grand-vizir saw that it was useless to say more, and, full of triumph, the sisters watched the building of the box, and then listened to the jeers of the people at the helpless Sultana sitting inside. But the poor lady bore herself with so much dignity and meekness that it was not long before she had won the sympathy of those that were best among the crowd.

But it is now time to return to the fate of the third baby, this time a princess. Like its brothers, it was found by the intendant of the gardens, and adopted by him and his wife, and all three were brought up with the greatest care and tenderness.

As the children grew older their beauty and air of distinction became more and more marked, and their manners had all the grace and ease that is proper to people of high birth. The princes had been named by their foster-father Bahman and Perviz, after two of the ancient kings of Persia, while the princess was called Parizade, or the child of the genii.

The intendant was careful to bring them up as befitted their real rank, and soon appointed a tutor to teach the young princes how to read and write. And the princess, determined not to be left behind, showed herself so anxious to learn with her brothers, that the intendant consented to her joining in their lessons, and it was not long before she knew as much as they did.

From that time all their studies were done in common. They had the best masters for the fine arts, geography, poetry, history and science, and even for sciences which are learned by few, and every branch seemed so easy to them, that their teachers were astonished at the progress they made. The princess had a passion for music, and could sing and play upon all sorts of instruments she could also ride and drive as well as her brothers, shoot with a bow and arrow, and throw a javelin with the same skill as they, and sometimes even better.

In order to set off these accomplishments, the intendant resolved that his foster children should not be pent up any longer in the narrow borders of the palace gardens, where he had always lived, so he bought a splendid country house a few miles from the capital, surrounded by an immense park. This park he filled with wild beasts of various sorts, so that the princes and princess might hunt as much as they pleased.

When everything was ready, the intendant threw himself at the Sultan's feet, and after referring to his age and his long services, begged his Highness's permission to resign his post. This was granted by the Sultan in a few gracious words, and he then inquired what reward he could give to his faithful servant. But the intendant declared that he wished for nothing except the continuance of his Highness's favour, and prostrating himself once more, he retired from the Sultan's presence.

Five or six months passed away in the pleasures of the country, when death attacked the intendant so suddenly that he had no time to reveal the secret of their birth to his adopted children, and as his wife had long been dead also, it seemed as if the princes and the princess would never know that they had been born to a higher station than the one they filled. Their sorrow for their father was very deep, and they lived quietly on in their new home, without feeling any desire to leave it for court gaieties or intrigues.

One day the princes as usual went out to hunt, but their sister remained alone in her apartments. While they were gone an old Mussulman devotee appeared at the door, and asked leave to enter, as it was the hour of prayer. The princess sent orders at once that the old woman was to be taken to the private oratory in the grounds, and when she had finished her prayers was to be shown the house and gardens, and then to be brought before her.

Although the old woman was very pious, she was not at all indifferent to the magnificence of all around her, which she seemed to understand as well as to admire, and when she had seen it all she was led by the servants before the princess, who was seated in a room which surpassed in splendour all the rest.

"My good woman," said the princess pointing to a sofa, "come and sit beside me. I am delighted at the opportunity of speaking for a few moments with so holy a person." The old woman made some objections to so much honour being done her, but the princess refused to listen, and insisted that her guest should take the best seat, and as she thought she must be tired ordered refreshments.

While the old woman was eating, the princess put several questions to her as to her mode of life, and the pious exercises she practiced, and then inquired what she thought of the house now that she had seen it.

"Madam," replied the pilgrim, "one must be hard indeed to please to find any fault. It is beautiful, comfortable and well ordered, and it is impossible to imagine anything more lovely than the garden. But since you ask me, I must confess that it lacks three things to make it absolutely perfect."

"And what can they be?" cried the princess. "Only tell me, and I will lose no time in getting them."

"The three things, madam," replied the old woman, "are, first, the Talking Bird, whose voice draws all other singing birds to it, to join in chorus. And second, the Singing Tree, where every leaf is a song that is never silent. And lastly the Golden Water, of which it is only needful to pour a single drop into a basin for it to shoot up into a fountain, which will never be exhausted, nor will the basin ever overflow."

"Oh, how can I thank you," cried the princess, "for telling me of such treasures! But add, I pray you, to your goodness by further informing me where I can find them."

"Madam," replied the pilgrim, "I should ill repay the hospitality you have shown me if I refused to answer your question. The three things of which I have spoken are all to be found in one place, on the borders of this kingdom, towards India. Your messenger has only to follow the road that passes by your house, for twenty days, and at the end of that time, he is to ask the first person he meets for the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Golden Water." She then rose, and bidding farewell to the princess, went her way.

The old woman had taken her departure so abruptly that the Princess Parizade did not perceive till she was really gone that the directions were hardly clear enough to enable the search to be successful. And she was still thinking of the subject, and how delightful it would be to possess such rarities, when the princes, her brothers, returned from the chase.

"What is the matter, my sister?" asked Prince Bahman; "why are you so grave? Are you ill? Or has anything happened?"

Princess Parizade did not answer directly, but at length she raised her eyes, and replied that there was nothing wrong.

"But there must be something," persisted Prince Bahman, "for you to have changed so much during the short time we have been absent. Hide nothing from us, I beseech you, unless you wish us to believe that the confidence we have always had in one another is now to cease."

"When I said that it was nothing," said the princess, moved by his words, "I meant that it was nothing that affected you, although I admit that it is certainly of some importance to me. Like myself, you have always thought this house that our father built for us was perfect in every respect, but only to-day I have learned that three things are still lacking to complete it. These are the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Golden Water." After explaining the peculiar qualities of each, the princess continued: "It was a Mussulman devotee who told me all this, and where they might all be found. Perhaps you will think that the house is beautiful enough as it is, and that we can do quite well without them; but in this I cannot agree with you, and I shall never be content until I have got them. So counsel me, I pray, whom to send on the undertaking."

"My dear sister," replied Prince Bahman, "that you should care about the matter is quite enough, even if we took no interest in it ourselves. But we both feel with you, and I claim, as the elder, the right to make the first attempt, if you will tell me where I am to go, and what steps I am to take."

Prince Perviz at first objected that, being the head of the family, his brother ought not to be allowed to expose himself to danger; but Prince Bahman would hear nothing, and retired to make the needful preparations for his journey.

The next morning Prince Bahman got up very early, and after bidding farewell to his brother and sister, mounted his horse. But just as he was about to touch it with his whip, he was stopped by a cry from the princess.

"Oh, perhaps after all you may never come back; one never can tell what accidents may happen. Give it up, I implore you, for I would a thousand times rather lose the Talking Bird, and the Singing Tree and the Golden Water, than that you should run into danger."

"My dear sister," answered the prince, "accidents only happen to unlucky people, and I hope that I am not one of them. But as everything is uncertain, I promise you to be very careful. Take this knife," he continued, handing her one that hung sheathed from his belt, "and every now and then draw it out and look at it. As long as it keeps bright and clean as it is to-day, you will know that I am living; but if the blade is spotted with blood, it will be a sign that I am dead, and you shall weep for me."

So saying, Prince Bahman bade them farewell once more, and started on the high road, well mounted and fully armed. For twenty days he rode straight on, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, till he found himself drawing near the frontiers of Persia. Seated under a tree by the wayside he noticed a hideous old man, with a long white moustache, and beard that almost fell to his feet. His nails had grown to an enormous length, and on his head he wore a huge hat, which served him for an umbrella.

Prince Bahman, who, remembering the directions of the old woman, had been since sunrise on the look-out for some one, recognised the old man at once to be a dervish. He dismounted from his horse, and bowed low before the holy man, saying by way of greeting, "My father, may your days be long in the land, and may all your wishes be fulfilled!"

The dervish did his best to reply, but his moustache was so thick that his words were hardly intelligible, and the prince, perceiving what was the matter, took a pair of scissors from his saddle pockets, and requested permission to cut off some of the moustache, as he had a question of great importance to ask the dervish. The dervish made a sign that he might do as he liked, and when a few inches of his hair and beard had been pruned all round the prince assured the holy man that he would hardly believe how much younger he looked. The dervish smiled at his compliments, and thanked him for what he had done.

"Let me," he said, "show you my gratitude for making me more comfortable by telling me what I can do for you."

"Gentle dervish," replied Prince Bahman, "I come from far, and I seek the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Golden Water. I know that they are to be found somewhere in these parts, but I am ignorant of the exact spot. Tell me, I pray you, if you can, so that I may not have travelled on a useless quest." While he was speaking, the prince observed a change in the countenance of the dervish, who waited for some time before he made reply.

"My lord," he said at last, "I do know the road for which you ask, but your kindness and the friendship I have conceived for you make me loth to point it out."

"But why not?" inquired the prince. "What danger can there be?"

"The very greatest danger," answered the dervish. "Other men, as brave as you, have ridden down this road, and have put me that question. I did my best to turn them also from their purpose, but it was of no use. Not one of them would listen to my words, and not one of them came back. Be warned in time, and seek to go no further."

"I am grateful to you for your interest in me," said Prince Bahman, "and for the advice you have given, though I cannot follow it. But what dangers can there be in the adventure which courage and a good sword cannot meet?"

"And suppose," answered the dervish, "that your enemies are invisible, how then?"

"Nothing will make me give it up," replied the prince, "and for the last time I ask you to tell me where I am to go."

When the dervish saw that the prince's mind was made up, he drew a ball from a bag that lay near him, and held it out. "If it must be so," he said, with a sigh, "take this, and when you have mounted your horse throw the ball in front of you. It will roll on till it reaches the foot of a mountain, and when it stops you will stop also. You will then throw the bridle on your horse's neck without any fear of his straying, and will dismount. On each side you will see vast heaps of big black stones, and will hear a multitude of insulting voices, but pay no heed to them, and, above all, beware of ever turning your head. If you do, you will instantly become a black stone like the rest. For those stones are in reality men like yourself, who have been on the same quest, and have failed, as I fear that you may fail also. If you manage to avoid this pitfall, and to reach the top of the mountain, you will find there the Talking Bird in a splendid cage, and you can ask of him where you are to seek the Singing Tree and the Golden Water. That is all I have to say. You know what you have to do, and what to avoid, but if you are wise you will think of it no more, but return whence you have come."

The prince smilingly shook his head, and thanking the dervish once more, he sprang on his horse and threw the ball before him.

The ball rolled along the road so fast that Prince Bahman had much difficulty in keeping up with it, and it never relaxed its speed till the foot of the mountain was reached. Then it came to a sudden halt, and the prince at once got down and flung the bridle on his horse's neck. He paused for a moment and looked round him at the masses of black stones with which the sides of the mountain were covered, and then began resolutely to ascend. He had hardly gone four steps when he heard the sound of voices around him, although not another creature was in sight.

"Who is this imbecile?" cried some, "stop him at once." "Kill him," shrieked others, "Help! robbers! murderers! help! help!" "Oh, let him alone," sneered another, and this was the most trying of all, "he is such a beautiful young man; I am sure the bird and the cage must have been kept for him."

At first the prince took no heed to all this clamour, but continued to press forward on his way. Unfortunately this conduct, instead of silencing the voices, only seemed to irritate them the more, and they arose with redoubled fury, in front as well as behind. After some time he grew bewildered, his knees began to tremble, and finding himself in the act of falling, he forgot altogether the advice of the dervish. He turned to fly down the mountain, and in one moment became a black stone.

As may be imagined, Prince Perviz and his sister were all this time in the greatest anxiety, and consulted the magic knife, not once but many times a day. Hitherto the blade had remained bright and spotless, but on the fatal hour on which Prince Bahman and his horse were changed into black stones, large drops of blood appeared on the surface. "Ah! my beloved brother," cried the princess in horror, throwing the knife from her, "I shall never see you again, and it is I who have killed you. Fool that I was to listen to the voice of that temptress, who probably was not speaking the truth. What are the Talking Bird and the Singing Tree to me in comparison with you, passionately though I long for them!"

Prince Perviz's grief at his brother's loss was not less than that of Princess Parizade, but he did not waste his time on useless lamentations.

“My sister,” he said, “why should you think the old woman was deceiving you about these treasures, and what would have been her object in doing so! No, no, our brother must have met his death by some accident, or want of precaution, and to-morrow I will start on the same quest.”

Terrified at the thought that she might lose her only remaining brother, the princess entreated him to give up his project, but he remained firm. Before setting out, however, he gave her a chaplet of a hundred pearls, and said, “When I am absent, tell this over daily for me. But if you should find that the beads stick, so that they will not slip one after the other, you will know that my brother’s fate has befallen me. Still, we must hope for better luck.”

Then he departed, and on the twentieth day of his journey fell in with the dervish on the same spot as Prince Bahman had met him, and began to question him as to the place where the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree and the Golden Water were to be found. As in the case of his brother, the dervish tried to make him give up his project, and even told him that only a few weeks since a young man, bearing a strong resemblance to himself, had passed that way, but had never come back again.

“That, holy dervish,” replied Prince Perviz, “was my elder brother, who is now dead, though how he died I cannot say.”

“He is changed into a black stone,” answered the dervish, “like all the rest who have gone on the same errand, and you will become one likewise if you are not more careful in following my directions.” Then he charged the prince, as he valued his life, to take no heed of the clamour of voices that would pursue him up the mountain, and handing him a ball from the bag, which still seemed to be half full, he sent him on his way.

When Prince Perviz reached the foot of the mountain he jumped from his horse, and paused for a moment to recall the instructions the dervish had given him. Then he strode boldly on, but had scarcely gone five or six paces when he was startled by a man’s voice that seemed close to his ear, exclaiming: “Stop, rash fellow, and let me punish your audacity.” This outrage entirely put the dervish’s advice out of the prince’s head. He drew his sword, and turned to avenge himself, but almost before he had realised that there was nobody there, he and his horse were two black stones.

Not a morning had passed since Prince Perviz had ridden away without Princess Parizade telling her beads, and at night she even hung them round her neck, so that if she woke she could assure herself at once of her brother's safety. She was in the very act of moving them through her fingers at the moment that the prince fell a victim to his impatience, and her heart sank when the first pearl remained fixed in its place. However she had long made up her mind what she would do in such a case, and the following morning the princess, disguised as a man, set out for the mountain.

As she had been accustomed to riding from her childhood, she managed to travel as many miles daily as her brothers had done, and it was, as before, on the twentieth day that she arrived at the place where the dervish was sitting. "Good dervish," she said politely, "will you allow me to rest by you for a few moments, and perhaps you will be so kind as to tell me if you have ever heard of a Talking Bird, a Singing Tree, and some Golden Water that are to be found somewhere near this?"

"Madam," replied the dervish, "for in spite of your manly dress your voice betrays you, I shall be proud to serve you in any way I can. But may I ask the purpose of your question?"

"Good dervish," answered the princess, "I have heard such glowing descriptions of these three things, that I cannot rest till I possess them."

"Madam," said the dervish, "they are far more beautiful than any description, but you seem ignorant of all the difficulties that stand in your way, or you would hardly have undertaken such an adventure. Give it up, I pray you, and return home, and do not ask me to help you to a cruel death."

"Holy father," answered the princess, "I come from far, and I should be in despair if I turned back without having attained my object. You have spoken of difficulties; tell me, I entreat you, what they are, so that I may know if I can overcome them, or see if they are beyond my strength."

So the dervish repeated his tale, and dwelt more firmly than before on the clamour of the voices, the horrors of the black stones, which were once living men, and the difficulties of climbing the mountain; and pointed out that the chief means of success was never to look behind till you had the cage in your grasp.

"As far as I can see," said the princess, "the first thing is not to mind the tumult of the voices that follow you till you reach the cage, and then never to look behind. As to this, I think I have enough self-control to look straight before me; but as it is quite possible that I might be frightened by the voices, as even the boldest men have been, I will stop up my ears with cotton, so that, let them make as much noise as they like, I shall hear nothing."

"Madam," cried the dervish, "out of all the number who have asked me the way to the mountain, you are the first who has ever suggested such a means of escaping the danger! It is possible that you may succeed, but all the same, the risk is great."

"Good dervish," answered the princess, "I feel in my heart that I shall succeed, and it only remains for me to ask you the way I am to go."

Then the dervish said that it was useless to say more, and he gave her the ball, which she flung before her.

The first thing the princess did on arriving at the mountain was to stop her ears with cotton, and then, making up her mind which was the best way to go, she began her ascent. In spite of the cotton, some echoes of the voices reached her ears, but not so as to trouble her. Indeed, though they grew louder and more insulting the higher she climbed, the princess only laughed, and said to herself that she certainly would not let a few rough words stand between her and the goal. At last she perceived in the distance the cage and the bird, whose voice joined itself in tones of thunder to those of the rest: "Return, return! never dare to come near me."

At the sight of the bird, the princess hastened her steps, and without vexing herself at the noise which by this time had grown deafening, she walked straight up to the cage, and seizing it, she said: "Now, my bird, I have got you, and I shall take good care that you do not escape." As she spoke she took the cotton from her ears, for it was needed no longer.

"Brave lady," answered the bird, "do not blame me for having joined my voice to those who did their best to preserve my freedom.

Although confined in a cage, I was content with my lot, but if I must become a slave, I could not wish for a nobler mistress than one who has shown so much constancy, and from this moment I swear to serve you faithfully. Some day you will put me to the proof, for I know who you are better than you do yourself. Meanwhile, tell me what I can do, and I will obey you."

"Bird," replied the princess, who was filled with a joy that seemed strange to herself when she thought that the bird had cost her the lives of both her brothers, "bird, let me first thank you for your good will, and then let me ask you where the Golden Water is to be found."

The bird described the place, which was not far distant, and the princess filled a small silver flask that she had brought with her for the purpose. She then returned to the cage, and said: "Bird, there is still something else, where shall I find the Singing Tree?"

"Behind you, in that wood," replied the bird, and the princess wandered through the wood, till a sound of the sweetest voices told her she had found what she sought. But the tree was tall and strong, and it was hopeless to think of uprooting it.

"You need not do that," said the bird, when she had returned to ask counsel. "Break off a twig, and plant it in your garden, and it will take root, and grow into a magnificent tree."

When the Princess Parizade held in her hands the three wonders promised her by the old woman, she said to the bird: "All that is not enough. It was owing to you that my brothers became black stones. I cannot tell them from the mass of others, but you must know, and point them out to me, I beg you, for I wish to carry them away."

For some reason that the princess could not guess these words seemed to displease the bird, and he did not answer. The princess waited a moment, and then continued in severe tones, "Have you forgotten that you yourself said that you are my slave to do my bidding, and also that your life is in my power?"

"No, I have not forgotten," replied the bird, "but what you ask is very difficult. However, I will do my best. If you look round," he went on, "you will see a pitcher standing near. Take it, and, as you go down the mountain, scatter a little of the water it contains over every black stone and you will soon find your two brothers."

Princess Parizade took the pitcher, and, carrying with her besides the cage the twig and the flask, returned down the mountain side. At every black stone she stopped and sprinkled it with water, and as the water touched it the stone instantly became a man. When she suddenly saw her brothers before her her delight was mixed with astonishment.

"Why, what are you doing here?" she cried.

"We have been asleep," they said.

"Yes," returned the princess, "but without me your sleep would probably have lasted till the day of judgment. Have you forgotten that you came here in search of the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Golden Water, and the black stones that were heaped up along the road? Look round and see if there is one left. These gentlemen, and yourselves, and all your horses were changed into these stones, and I have delivered you by sprinkling you with the water from this pitcher. As I could not return home without you, even though I had gained the prizes on which I had set my heart, I forced the Talking Bird to tell me how to break the spell."

On hearing these words Prince Bahman and Prince Perviz understood all they owed their sister, and the knights who stood by declared themselves her slaves and ready to carry out her wishes. But the princess, while thanking them for their politeness, explained that she wished for no company but that of her brothers, and that the rest were free to go where they would.

So saying the princess mounted her horse, and, declining to allow even Prince Bahman to carry the cage with the Talking Bird, she entrusted him with the branch of the Singing Tree, while Prince Perviz took care of the flask containing the Golden Water.

Then they rode away, followed by the knights and gentlemen, who begged to be permitted to escort them.

It had been the intention of the party to stop and tell their adventures to the dervish, but they found to their sorrow that he was dead, whether from old age, or whether from the feeling that his task was done, they never knew.

As they continued their road their numbers grew daily smaller, for the knights turned off one by one to their own homes, and only the brothers and sister finally drew up at the gate of the palace.

The princess carried the cage straight into the garden, and, as soon as the bird began to sing, nightingales, larks, thrushes, finches, and all sorts of other birds mingled their voices in chorus. The branch she planted in a corner near the house, and in a few days it had grown into a great tree. As for the Golden Water it was poured into a great marble basin specially prepared for it, and it swelled and bubbled and then shot up into the air in a fountain twenty feet high.

The fame of these wonders soon spread abroad, and people came from far and near to see and admire.

After a few days Prince Bahman and Prince Perviz fell back into their ordinary way of life, and passed most of their time hunting. One day it happened that the Sultan of Persia was also hunting in the same direction, and, not wishing to interfere with his sport, the young men, on hearing the noise of the hunt approaching, prepared to retire, but, as luck would have it, they turned into the very path down which the Sultan was coming. They threw themselves from their horses and prostrated themselves to the earth, but the Sultan was curious to see their faces, and commanded them to rise.

The princes stood up respectfully, but quite at their ease, and the Sultan looked at them for a few moments without speaking, then he asked who they were and where they lived.

“Sire,” replied Prince Bahman, “we are sons of your Highness’s late intendant of the gardens, and we live in a house that he built a short time before his death, waiting till an occasion should offer itself to serve your Highness.”

“You seem fond of hunting,” answered the Sultan.

“Sire,” replied Prince Bahman, “it is our usual exercise, and one that should be neglected by no man who expects to comply with the ancient customs of the kingdom and bear arms.”

The Sultan was delighted with this remark, and said at once, “In that case I shall take great pleasure in watching you. Come, choose what sort of beasts you would like to hunt.”

The princes jumped on their horses and followed the Sultan at a little distance. They had not gone very far before they saw a number of wild animals appear at once, and Prince Bahman started to give chase to a lion and Prince Perviz to a bear. Both used their javelins with such skill that, directly they arrived within striking range, the lion and the bear fell, pierced through and through. Then Prince Perviz pursued a lion and Prince Bahman a bear, and in a very few minutes they, too, lay dead. As they were making ready for a third assault the Sultan interfered, and, sending one of his officials to summon them, he said smiling, “If I let you go on, there will soon be no beasts left to hunt. Besides, your courage and manners have so won my heart that I will not have you expose yourselves to further danger. I am convinced that some day or other I shall find you useful as well as agreeable.”

He then gave them a warm invitation to stay with him altogether, but with many thanks for the honour done them, they begged to be excused, and to be suffered to remain at home.

The Sultan who was not accustomed to see his offers rejected inquired their reasons, and Prince Bahman explained that they did not wish to leave their sister, and were accustomed to do nothing without consulting all three together.

“Ask her advice, then,” replied the Sultan, “and to-morrow come and hunt with me, and give me your answer.”

The two princes returned home, but their adventure made so little impression on them that they quite forgot to speak to their sister on the subject. The next morning when they went to hunt they met the Sultan in the same place, and he inquired what advice their sister had given. The young men looked at each other and blushed. At last Prince Bahman said, “Sire, we must throw ourselves on your Highness’s mercy. Neither my brother nor myself remembered anything about it.”

“Then be sure you do not forget to-day,” answered the Sultan, “and bring me back your reply to-morrow.”

When, however, the same thing happened a second time, they feared that the Sultan might be angry with them for their carelessness. But he took it in good part, and, drawing three little golden balls from his purse, he held them out to Prince Bahman, saying, “Put these in your bosom and you will not forget a third time, for when you remove your girdle to-night the noise they will make in falling will remind you of my wishes.”

It all happened as the Sultan had foreseen, and the two brothers appeared in their sister’s apartments just as she was in the act of stepping into bed, and told their tale.

The Princess Parizade was much disturbed at the news, and did not conceal her feelings. “Your meeting with the Sultan is very honourable to you,” she said, “and will, I dare say, be of service to you, but it places me in a very awkward position. It is on my account, I know, that you have resisted the Sultan’s wishes, and I am very grateful to you for it. But kings do not like to have their offers refused, and in time he would bear a grudge against you, which would render me very unhappy. Consult the Talking Bird, who is wise and far-seeing, and let me hear what he says.”

So the bird was sent for and the case laid before him.

“The princes must on no account refuse the Sultan’s proposal,” said he, “and they must even invite him to come and see your house.”

“But, bird,” objected the princess, “you know how dearly we love each other; will not all this spoil our friendship?”

“Not at all,” replied the bird, “it will make it all the closer.”

“Then the Sultan will have to see me,” said the princess.

The bird answered that it was necessary that he should see her, and everything would turn out for the best.

The following morning, when the Sultan inquired if they had spoken to their sister and what advice she had given them, Prince Bahman replied that they were ready to agree to his Highness’s wishes, and that their sister had reproved them for their hesitation about the matter. The Sultan received their excuses with great kindness, and told them that he was sure they would be equally faithful to him, and kept them by his side for the rest of the day, to the vexation of the grand-vizir and the rest of the court.

When the procession entered in this order the gates of the capital, the eyes of the people who crowded the streets were fixed on the two young men, strangers to every one.

“Oh, if only the Sultan had had sons like that!” they murmured, “they look so distinguished and are about the same age that his sons would have been!”

The Sultan commanded that splendid apartments should be prepared for the two brothers, and even insisted that they should sit at table with him. During dinner he led the conversation to various scientific subjects, and also to history, of which he was especially fond, but whatever topic they might be discussing he found that the views of the young men were always worth listening to. "If they were my own sons," he said to himself, "they could not be better educated!" and aloud he complimented them on their learning and taste for knowledge.

At the end of the evening the princes once more prostrated themselves before the throne and asked leave to return home; and then, encouraged by the gracious words of farewell uttered by the Sultan, Prince Bahman said: "Sire, may we dare to take the liberty of asking whether you would do us and our sister the honour of resting for a few minutes at our house the first time the hunt passes that way?"

"With the utmost pleasure," replied the Sultan; "and as I am all impatience to see the sister of such accomplished young men you may expect me the day after to-morrow."

The princess was of course most anxious to entertain the Sultan in a fitting way, but as she had no experience in court customs she ran to the Talking Bird, and begged he would advise her as to what dishes should be served.

"My dear mistress," replied the bird, "your cooks are very good and you can safely leave all to them, except that you must be careful to have a dish of cucumbers, stuffed with pearl sauce, served with the first course."

"Cucumbers stuffed with pearls!" exclaimed the princess. "Why, bird, who ever heard of such a dish? The Sultan will expect a dinner he can eat, and not one he can only admire! Besides, if I were to use all the pearls I possess, they would not be half enough."

"Mistress," replied the bird, "do what I tell you and nothing but good will come of it. And as to the pearls, if you go at dawn to-morrow and dig at the foot of the first tree in the park, on the right hand, you will find as many as you want."

The princess had faith in the bird, who generally proved to be right, and taking the gardener with her early next morning followed out his directions carefully. After digging for some time they came upon a golden box fastened with little clasps.

These were easily undone, and the box was found to be full of pearls, not very large ones, but well-shaped and of a good colour. So leaving the gardener to fill up the hole he had made under the tree, the princess took up the box and returned to the house.

The two princes had seen her go out, and had wondered what could have made her rise so early. Full of curiosity they got up and dressed, and met their sister as she was returning with the box under her arm.

"What have you been doing?" they asked, "and did the gardener come to tell you he had found a treasure?"

"On the contrary," replied the princess, "it is I who have found one," and opening the box she showed her astonished brothers the pearls inside. Then, on the way back to the palace, she told them of her consultation with the bird, and the advice it had given her. All three tried to guess the meaning of the singular counsel, but they were forced at last to admit the explanation was beyond them, and they must be content blindly to obey.

The first thing the princess did on entering the palace was to send for the head cook and to order the repast for the Sultan When she had finished she suddenly added, "Besides the dishes I have mentioned there is one that you must prepare expressly for the Sultan, and that no one must touch but yourself. It consists of a stuffed cucumber, and the stuffing is to be made of these pearls."

The head cook, who had never in all his experience heard of such a dish, stepped back in amazement.

"You think I am mad," answered the princess, who perceived what was in his mind. "But I know quite well what I am doing. Go, and do your best, and take the pearls with you."

The next morning the princes started for the forest, and were soon joined by the Sultan. The hunt began and continued till mid-day, when the heat became so great that they were obliged to leave off. Then, as arranged, they turned their horses' heads towards the palace, and while Prince Bahman remained by the side of the Sultan, Prince Perviz rode on to warn his sister of their approach.

The moment his Highness entered the courtyard, the princess flung herself at his feet, but he bent and raised her, and gazed at her for some time, struck with her grace and beauty, and also with the indefinable air of courts that seemed to hang round this country girl.

"They are all worthy one of the other," he said to himself, "and I am not surprised that they think so much of her opinions. I must know more of them."

By this time the princess had recovered from the first embarrassment of meeting, and proceeded to make her speech of welcome.

"This is only a simple country house, sire," she said, "suitable to people like ourselves, who live a quiet life. It cannot compare with the great city mansions, much less, of course, with the smallest of the Sultan's palaces."

"I cannot quite agree with you," he replied; "even the little that I have seen I admire greatly, and I will reserve my judgment until you have shown me the whole."

The princess then led the way from room to room, and the Sultan examined everything carefully. "Do you call this a simple country house?" he said at last. "Why, if every country house was like this, the towns would soon be deserted. I am no longer astonished that you do not wish to leave it. Let us go into the gardens, which I am sure are no less beautiful than the rooms."

A small door opened straight into the garden, and the first object that met the Sultan's eyes was the Golden Water.

"What lovely coloured water!" he exclaimed; "where is the spring, and how do you make the fountain rise so high? I do not believe there is anything like it in the world." He went forward to examine it, and when he had satisfied his curiosity, the princess conducted him towards the Singing Tree.

As they drew near, the Sultan was startled by the sound of strange voices, but could see nothing. "Where have you hidden your musicians?" he asked the princess; "are they up in the air, or under the earth? Surely the owners of such charming voices ought not to conceal themselves!"

"Sire," answered the princess, "the voices all come from the tree which is straight in front of us; and if you will deign to advance a few steps, you will see that they become clearer."

The Sultan did as he was told, and was so wrapt in delight at what he heard that he stood some time in silence.

"Tell me, madam, I pray you," he said at last, "how this marvellous tree came into your garden? It must have been brought from a great distance, or else, fond as I am of all curiosities, I could not have missed hearing of it! What is its name?"

"The only name it has, sire," replied she, "is the Singing Tree, and it is not a native of this country. Its history is mixed up with those of the Golden Water and the Talking Bird, which you have not yet seen. If your Highness wishes I will tell you the whole story, when you have recovered from your fatigue."

"Indeed, madam," returned he, "you show me so many wonders that it is impossible to feel any fatigue. Let us go once more and look at the Golden Water; and I am dying to see the Talking Bird."

The Sultan could hardly tear himself away from the Golden Water, which puzzled him more and more. "You say," he observed to the princess, "that this water does not come from any spring, neither is brought by pipes. All I understand is, that neither it nor the Singing Tree is a native of this country."

"It is as you say, sire," answered the princess, "and if you examine the basin, you will see that it is all in one piece, and therefore the water could not have been brought through it. What is more astonishing is, that I only emptied a small flaskful into the basin, and it increased to the quantity you now see."

"Well, I will look at it no more to-day," said the Sultan. "Take me to the Talking Bird."

On approaching the house, the Sultan noticed a vast quantity of birds, whose voices filled the air, and he inquired why they were so much more numerous here than in any other part of the garden.

"Sire," answered the princess, "do you see that cage hanging in one of the windows of the saloon? that is the Talking Bird, whose voice you can hear above them all, even above that of the nightingale. And the birds crowd to this spot, to add their songs to his."

The Sultan stepped through the window, but the bird took no notice, continuing his song as before.

"My slave," said the princess, "this is the Sultan; make him a pretty speech."

The bird stopped singing at once, and all the other birds stopped too.

"The Sultan is welcome," he said. "I wish him long life and all prosperity."

"I thank you, good bird," answered the Sultan, seating himself before the repast, which was spread at a table near the window, "and I am enchanted to see in you the Sultan and King of the Birds."

The Sultan, noticing that his favourite dish of cucumber was placed before him, proceeded to help himself to it, and was amazed to and that the stuffing was of pearls. "A novelty, indeed!" cried he, "but I do not understand the reason of it; one cannot eat pearls!"

"Sire," replied the bird, before either the princes or the princess could speak, "surely your Highness cannot be so surprised at beholding a cucumber stuffed with pearls, when you believed without any difficulty that the Sultana had presented you, instead of children, with a dog, a cat, and a log of wood."

"I believed it," answered the Sultan, "because the women attending on her told me so."

"The women, sire," said the bird, "were the sisters of the Sultana, who were devoured with jealousy at the honour you had done her, and in order to revenge themselves invented this story. Have them examined, and they will confess their crime. These are your children, who were saved from death by the intendant of your gardens, and brought up by him as if they were his own."

Like a flash the truth came to the mind of the Sultan. "Bird," he cried, "my heart tells me that what you say is true. My children," he added, "let me embrace you, and embrace each other, not only as brothers and sister, but as having in you the blood royal of Persia which could flow in no nobler veins."

When the first moments of emotion were over, the Sultan hastened to finish his repast, and then turning to his children he exclaimed: "To-day you have made acquaintance with your father. To-morrow I will bring you the Sultana your mother. Be ready to receive her."

The Sultan then mounted his horse and rode quickly back to the capital. Without an instant's delay he sent for the grand-vizir, and ordered him to seize and question the Sultana's sisters that very day. This was done. They were confronted with each other and proved guilty, and were executed in less than an hour.

But the Sultan did not wait to hear that his orders had been carried out before going on foot, followed by his whole court to the door of the great mosque, and drawing the Sultana with his own hand out of the narrow prison where she had spent so many years, “Madam,” he cried, embracing her with tears in his eyes, “I have come to ask your pardon for the injustice I have done you, and to repair it as far as I may. I have already begun by punishing the authors of this abominable crime, and I hope you will forgive me when I introduce you to our children, who are the most charming and accomplished creatures in the whole world. Come with me, and take back your position and all the honour that is due to you.”

This speech was delivered in the presence of a vast multitude of people, who had gathered from all parts on the first hint of what was happening, and the news was passed from mouth to mouth in a few seconds.

Early next day the Sultan and Sultana, dressed in robes of state and followed by all the court, set out for the country house of their children. Here the Sultan presented them to the Sultana one by one, and for some time there was nothing but embraces and tears and tender words. Then they ate of the magnificent dinner which had been prepared for them, and after they were all refreshed they went into the garden, where the Sultan pointed out to his wife the Golden Water and the Singing Tree. As to the Talking Bird, she had already made acquaintance with him.

In the evening they rode together back to the capital, the princes on each side of their father, and the princess with her mother. Long before they reached the gates the way was lined with people, and the air filled with shouts of welcome, with which were mingled the songs of the Talking Bird, sitting in its cage on the lap of the princess, and of the birds who followed it.

And in this manner they came back to their father’s palace.

JULIA PARDOE 1857 ADAPTATION

THE THOUSAND AND ONE DAYS; A COMPANION TO THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

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INTRODUCTION.

The Compiler of the graceful little volume which I have the pleasure of introducing to the public, has conferred an undeniable benefit upon the youth of England by presenting to them a collection of Oriental Tales, which, rich in the elements of interest and entertainment, are nevertheless entirely free from the licentiousness which renders so many of the fictions of the East, beautiful and brilliant as they are, most objectionable for young and ardent minds. There is indeed no lack of the wonderful in the pages before us, any more than in the Arabian and Persian Tales already so well known: but it will be seen that the supernatural agency in the narratives is used as a means to work out totally different results. There is, in truth, scarcely one of these Tales which does not inculcate a valuable moral lesson; as may be seen by reference to "The Powder of Longevity," "The Old Camel," and "The Story of the Dervise Abounadar" among several, others.

The present collection of Eastern Stories has been principally derived from the works of different Oriental Scholars on the Continent, and little doubt can be entertained of the genuineness of their origin; while they have been carefully selected, and do honour to the good taste of their Compiler. An acknowledgment is also due to him for his adherence to the good old orthography to which we have all been accustomed from our childhood, in the case of such titles as "Caliph," "Vizier," "Houri," "Genii," &c.; as, however critically correct and learned the spelling of Mr. Lane may be in his magnificent version of the "Thousand and One Nights," and however appropriate to a work of so much research and value to Oriental students, it would have been alike fatiguing and out of character to have embarrassed a volume, simply intended for the amusement of youthful readers, by a number of hard and unfamiliar words, difficult of pronunciation to all save the initiated; and for the pleasure of the young requiring translation fully as much as the narrative itself.

In one of the Tales there will be at once detected a portion of the favourite old story of Aladdin's Lamp, in the subterranean gem-garden discovered by the handsome youth; while in another, mention is made of the already-familiar legend of the hidden city of Ad, so popular among the ancient Arabs; but these repetitions will cease to create any surprise when it is remembered that the professional story-tellers of the East are a wandering race, who travel from city to city, exhibiting their talent during seasons of festivity, in the palaces of the wealthy and the public coffee-houses. Those admitted to the women's apartments are universally aged crones, whose volubility is something marvellous; and they are always welcome guests to the indolent beauties, who listen to them for hours together without a symptom of weariness, as they pour forth their narratives in a monotonous voice strangely displeasing to European ears. The men, while reciting their tales, indulge in violent gesticulations and contortions of the body, which appear to produce great delight in their audience. Since they generally travel two or three in company; and, save in rare cases of improvisation, their stock of narrative is common to all, it is their ambition so individually to embellish, heighten, and amplify their subject-matter, as to outshine their competitors; and it is consequently to this cause that the numerous variations of the same Tale which have reached Europe must be attributed.

Most of our readers will also recognize in the Story of the Princess Schirine the groundwork of one of Hans Andersen's beautiful Danish Tales, "The Flying Trunk."

Taken altogether, there can be no doubt that the "Thousand and One Days" merit the warm welcome which I trust awaits them.

J. P.

London, Feb. 1857.

THE STORY OF HASSAN ABDALLAH; OR, THE ENCHANTED KEYS.

Theilon, caliph of Egypt, died, after having bequeathed his power to his son, Mohammed, who, like a wise and good prince, proceeded to root out abuses, and finally caused peace and justice to flourish throughout his dominions. Instead of oppressing his people by new taxes, he employed the treasures, which his father had amassed by violence, in supporting learned men, rewarding the brave, and assisting the unfortunate. Every thing succeeded under his happy sway; the risings of the Nile were regular and abundant; every year the soil produced rich harvests; and commerce, honoured and protected, caused the gold of foreign nations to flow abundantly into the ports of Egypt.

Mohammed determined, one day, to take the census of the officers of his army, and of all the persons in public situations whose salaries were paid out of the treasury. The vizirs, to the number of forty, first made their appearance and knelt in succession before the sovereign. They were, for the most part, men venerable from their age, and some of them had long beards of snowy whiteness. They all wore on their heads tiaras of gold, enriched with precious stones, and carried in their hands long staves as badges of their power. One enumerated the battles in which he had been engaged, and the honourable wounds he had received; another recounted the long and laborious studies he had pursued, in order to render himself master of the various sciences, and to qualify himself to serve the state by his wisdom and knowledge.

After the vizirs, came the governors of provinces, the generals, and the great officers of the army; and next to them the civil magistrates, and all who were entrusted with the preservation of the peace and the awarding of justice. Behind these walked the public executioner, who, although stout and well-fed, like a man who had nothing to do, went along as if depressed with grief, and instead of carrying his sword naked on his shoulder, he kept it in its scabbard. When he came into the presence of the prince, he threw himself at his feet, and exclaimed, “O mighty prince, the day of justice and of munificence is at last about to dawn on me! Since the death of the terrible Theilon, under whose reign my life was happy and my condition prosperous, I have seen my occupation and its emoluments diminish daily. If Egypt continue thus to live in peace and plenty, I shall run great danger of perishing with hunger, and my family will be brought to misery and ruin."

Mohammed listened in silence to the complaints of the headsman, and acknowledged that there was some foundation for them, for his salary was small, and the chief part of his profits arose from what he obtained from criminals, either by way of gift, or as a rightful fee. In times of trouble, quarrelling, and violence, he had lived, in fact, in a state of ease and affluence, while now, under the present prosperous reign, he had nothing better than the prospect of beggary before him.

"Is it then true," exclaimed the caliph, "that the happiness of all is a dream? that what is joy to one, may be the cause of grief to another? O executioner, fear not as to your fate! May it, indeed, please God that, under my reign, your sword, — which is almost as often an instrument of vengeance as of justice, — may remain useless and covered with rust. But, in order to enable you to provide for the wants of yourself and your family, without the unhappy necessity of exercising your fatal office, you shall receive every year the sum of two hundred dinars."

In this way all the officers and servants of the palace passed before the notice of the prince; he interrogated each on the nature of his occupation and his past services, on his means of existence, and on the salary which he received. When he found that any one held a situation of a painful and difficult nature, for which he was inadequately remunerated, the caliph diminished his duties and increased his pay; and, on the other hand, when he found the contrary to be the case, he lessened the salary and increased the duties of the office. After having, in this way, performed many acts of wisdom and justice, the caliph observed, among the officers of the civil service, a sheik, whose wrinkled countenance and stooping figure indicated his great age. The caliph called him up, in order to inquire what was his employment in the palace, and the sum which it yielded him.

"Prince," the old man replied, "my only employment is to take care of a chest that was committed to my charge by your father, the late caliph, and for attending to which he allowed me ten pieces of gold a month."

"It seems to me," replied Mohammed, "that the reward is great for so slight a service. Pray what are the contents of this chest?"

"I received it," replied the sheik, "in charge forty years ago, and I solemnly swear to you that I know not what it contains."

The caliph commanded the chest to be brought to him, which was of pure gold, and most richly adorned. The old man opened it. It contained a manuscript written in brilliant characters on the skin of a gazelle, painted purple and sprinkled with a red dust. Neither the prince, however, nor his ministers, nor the ulemas who were present, could decipher the writing. By the caliph's order, the wise men of Egypt were summoned, as well as others from Syria, Persia, and India, but to no purpose; not one was able to interpret the mysterious characters. The book remained open for a long time, exposed to the gaze of all, and a great reward was offered to any one who could bring forward a person of sufficient learning to read it.

Some time after this, a savant who had left Egypt in the reign of Theilon, and had now returned after a long absence, chanced to hear of the mysterious book, and said that he knew what it was, and could explain its history. The caliph immediately admitted him to an audience, and the old man addressed him as follows:

"O sovereign ruler, may the Almighty prolong your days! Only one man can read this book, its rightful master, the sheik Hassan Abdallah, son of El-Achaar. This man had travelled through many lands, and penetrated into the mysterious city of Aram, built on columns, from which he brought this book, which no one but himself could read. He made use of it in his experiments in alchemy, and by its aid he could transmute the most worthless metals into gold. The caliph Theilon, your father, having learned this, commanded the sage to be brought before him, with a view of compelling him to reveal the secret of his knowledge. Hassan Abdallah refused to do so, for fear of putting into the hands of the unjust an instrument of such terrible power; and the prince, in a rage, laid hold of the chest, and ordered the sage to be thrown into prison, where he still remains, unless he has died since that time, which is forty years ago."

On hearing this, Mohammed immediately despatched his officers to visit the prisons, and, on their return, learned with pleasure that Hassan was still alive. The caliph ordered him to be brought forth and arrayed in a dress of honour; and, on his appearing in the audience chamber, the prince made him sit down beside him, and begged him to forgive the unjust treatment which his father had caused him to undergo. He then told him how he had accidentally discovered that he was still alive; and at last, placing the mysterious book before him, said,

"Old man, if this book could make me the owner of all the treasures of the world, I would not consent to possess it, since it only belongs to me by injustice and violence."

On hearing these words, Hassan burst into tears.

"O God," he exclaimed, "all wisdom proceeds from Thee! Thou causest to arise from the same soil the poisonous and the wholesome plant. Every where good is placed by the side of evil. This prince, the support of the feeble, the defender of the oppressed, who has conferred on me the happiness of spending my remaining years in the light of day, is the son of the tyrant who plunged Egypt in mourning, and who kept me for forty years in a loathsome dungeon. Prince," added the old man, addressing Mohammed, "what I refused to the wrath of your father, I willingly grant to your virtues: this book contains the precepts of the true science, and I bless Heaven that I have lived long enough to teach it to you. I have often risked my life to become the master of this wonderful book, which was the only article of value that I brought from Aram, that city into which no man can enter who is not assisted by Heaven."

The caliph embraced the old man, and, calling him his father, begged him to relate what he had seen in the city of Aram.

"Prince," replied Hassan, "it is a long story, as long, nearly, as my whole life."

He then proceeded as follows.

THE STORY OF HASSAN ABDALLAH.

I am the only son of one of the richest inhabitants of Egypt. My father, who was a man of extensive knowledge, employed my youth in the study of science; and at twenty years of age I was already honourably mentioned among the ulemas, when my father bestowed a young maiden on me as my wife, with eyes brilliant as the stars, and with a form elegant and light as that of the gazelle. My nuptials were magnificent, and my days flowed on in peace and happiness. I lived thus for ten years, when at last this beautiful dream vanished. It pleased Heaven to afflict me with every kind of misfortune: the plague deprived me of my father; war destroyed my dear brothers; my house fell a prey to the flames; my richly-laden ships were buried beneath the waves. Reduced to misery and want, my only resource was in the mercy of God and the compassion of the faithful whom I met while I frequented the mosques. My sufferings, from my own wretched state of poverty, and that of my wife and children, were cruel indeed. One day when I had not received any charitable donations, my wife, weeping, took some of my clothes, and gave them to me in order to sell them at the bazaar. On the way thither I met an Arab of the desert, mounted on a red camel. He greeted me, and said,

"Peace be with you, my brother! Can you tell me where the sheik Hassan Abdallah, the son of El-Achaar, resides in the city?"

Being ashamed of my poverty, and thinking I was not known, I replied,

"There is no man at Cairo of that name."

"God is great!" exclaimed the Arab; "are you not Hassan Abdallah, and can you send away your guest by concealing your name?"

Greatly confused, I then begged him to forgive me, and laid hold of his hands to kiss them, which he would not permit me to do, and I then accompanied him to my house. On the way there I was tormented by the reflection that I had nothing to set before him; and when I reached home I informed my wife of the meeting I had just had.

“The stranger is sent by God,” said she; “and even the children’s bread shall be his. Go, sell the clothes which I gave you; buy some food for our guest with the money, and if any thing should remain over, we will partake of it ourselves.”

In going out it was necessary that I should pass through the apartment where the Arab was. As I concealed the clothes, he said to me, “My brother, what have you got there hid under your cloak?”

I replied that it was my wife’s dress, which I was carrying to the tailor.

“Show it to me,” he said. I showed it to him, blushing.

“O merciful God,” he exclaimed, “you are going to sell it in order to get money to enable you to be hospitable towards me! Stop, Hassan! here are ten pieces of gold; spend them in buying what is needful for our own wants and for those of your family.”

I obeyed, and plenty and happiness seemed to revisit my abode. Every day the Arab gave me the same sum, which, according to his orders, I spent in the same way; and this continued for fifteen days. On the sixteenth day my guest, after chatting on indifferent matters, said to me, “Hassan, would you like to sell yourself to me?”

“My lord,” I replied, “I am already yours by gratitude.”

“No,” he replied, “that is not what I mean; I wish to make you my property, and you shall fix the price yourself.”

Thinking he was joking, I replied, “The price of a freeman is one thousand dinars if he is killed at a single blow; but if many wounds are inflicted upon him, or if he should be cut in many pieces, the price is then one thousand five hundred dinars.”

“Very well,” answered my guest, “I will pay you this last-mentioned sum if you will consent to the bargain.”

When I saw that he was speaking seriously, I asked for time in order to consult my family.

“Do so,” he replied, and then went out to look after some affairs in the city.

When I related the strange proposal of my guest, my mother said, “What can this man want to do with you?” The children all clung to me, and wept. My wife, who was a wise and prudent woman, remarked,

“This detestable stranger wants, perhaps, to get back what he has spent here. You have nothing but this wretched house, sell it, and give him the money, but don't sell yourself."

I passed the rest of the day and the following night in reflection, and was in a state of great uncertainty. With the sum offered by the stranger I could at least secure bread for my family. But why wish to purchase me? What could he intend to do? Before next morning, however, I had come to a decision. I went to the Arab and said, "I am yours." Untying his sash, he took out one thousand five hundred gold pieces, and giving them to me, said, "Fear not, my brother, I have no designs against either your life or your liberty; I only wish to secure a faithful companion during a long journey which I am about to undertake."

Overwhelmed with joy, I ran with the money to my wife and mother; but they, without listening to my explanations, began weeping and crying as if they were lamenting for the dead.

"It is the price of flesh and blood," they exclaimed; "neither we nor our children will eat bread procured at such a cost!"

By dint of argument, however, I succeeded at length in subduing their grief; and having embraced them, together with my children, I set out to meet my new master.

By order of the Arab I purchased a camel renowned for its speed, at the price of a hundred drachms; I filled our sacks with food sufficient for a long period; and then, mounting our camels, we proceeded on our journey.

We soon reached the desert. Here no traces of travellers were to be seen, for the wind effaced them continually from the surface of the moving sand. The Arab was guided in his course by indications known only to himself. We travelled thus together for five days under a burning sun; each day seemed longer to me than a night of suffering or of fear. My master, who was of a lively disposition, kept up my courage by tales which I remember even now with pleasure after forty years of anguish; and you will forgive an old man for not being able to resist the pleasure of relating some of them to you. The following story, he said, had been recounted to him by the basket-maker himself, a poor man whom he had found in prison, and whom he had charitably found means to release.

THE STORY OF THE BASKET-MAKER.

I was born of poor and honest parents; and my father, who was a basket-maker by trade, taught me to plait all kinds of baskets. So long as I had only myself to care for, I lived tolerably well on the produce of my labour; but when I reached twenty years of age, and took a wife, who in a few years presented me with several children, my gains proved insufficient to maintain my family. A basket-maker earns but little; one day he gets a drachm, the next he may get two, or perhaps only half a drachm. In this state of things I and my children had often to endure the pangs of hunger.

One day it happened that I had just finished a large basket; it was well and strongly made, and I hoped to obtain at least three drachms for it. I took it to the bazaar and through all the streets, but no purchaser appeared. Night came on and I went home. When my wife and children saw me return without any food, they began to cry and to ask for bread, but as I had none to give them, I could only weep with them: the night was long and sorrowful. At daybreak my wife awoke me, saying, “Go, and sell the basket at any price you can get for it, were it only half a drachm.” I set out, and perambulated the streets and squares, but night came on again without my finding a purchaser. My wife burst out into a great rage. “What!” she said, “do you still bring back this basket? Do you wish to see us die with hunger?”

I assured her that I had tried every means, but in vain, to sell the basket. She then took some articles of her own, and told me to go and sell them, and procure some bread for the children. I did as she said, and my famished family partook of a miserable repast, which my depressed state of mind prevented me from sharing with them. I slept little that night; and as soon as it was day I performed my devotions, and prayed to God to come to my assistance. I then went out again with my unsaleable basket, with which I made many weary and fruitless rounds through the whole city. At noon, overwhelmed with fatigue and famished with hunger, I sat down at the door of a mosque, where the voice of the muezzim was calling the faithful to prayer. I entered to implore of God’s goodness that I might be able, by his assistance, to sell the basket. Prayer being ended, the faithful left the mosque, and I found myself alone with a venerable Persian, named Saadi, who seemed lost in contemplation. Rising to go away, he passed near me, and noticing how pale I was, he said, “Friend, you are too much addicted to wine, and your health suffers from it.”

“My lord,” I replied, “do not believe it; I have never tasted wine; my weakness and paleness arise from my not having had any food for the last two days.”

I then related to him my life, my occupation, and my wretched state. Whilst listening to me the stranger shed tears; and when I had finished speaking, he said, “God be praised, my brother! for I can put an end to your troubles: take this,” putting a purse of gold into my hands; “run to the market, and buy meat, bread, and fruits for the refreshment of yourself and family. What I have given you will last you for a year to come; and in exchange, I only ask you to meet me here, at the same day and hour, every year.” So saying, he departed.

I could scarcely think but that I had been dreaming; the purse, however, proved that I was indeed awake. I opened it, and found in it a hundred pieces of gold! Overjoyed, I ran to the bazaar, and, in pursuance of the orders of the benevolent donor, I purchased enough, not only to satisfy the calls of hunger, but also food of such a nourishing nature, as had never entered my house before. The whole I put into my basket, and hastened to return home. Having reached the door, I listened, being curious to know what was going on. My children were uttering lamentations, and their mother was endeavouring to quiet them by repeating, for the hundredth time, her advice, to be quiet, and not to weep, for that their father would be sure to return with something to eat. I then entered the room, exclaiming, that God had heard them, and had sent them a plentiful supply for a long time to come. But when I showed them the purse and its contents, my wife shouted out, “What! have you then killed and robbed some one? Are we to become the object of the inquiries and suspicions of the police?”

I then related my fortunate meeting with the old man, and while embracing me with tears of joy, and a conscience at ease, my family partook, with me, of a plentiful repast, at the same time invoking blessings on our unknown benefactor.

For a whole year I lived happily in this manner. The day fixed upon by the stranger having arrived, I went to the mosque, after having attired myself in a becoming manner. The Persian came and seated himself beside me. When prayers were ended, and all the worshippers had departed, he turned towards me and said, with a smiling look,

"O my brother! how has the time passed with you since our last interview?"

"Thanks to your generosity, my lord," I replied, "my life has been spent in a tranquil and happy manner."

The stranger then questioned me as to my courage, address, and love of travelling; and to all his questions I replied in a satisfactory manner, and, in my turn, asked him if I could be of any service to him.

"Noureddin," he replied, "I intend setting out on a journey, and I wish you to accompany me as my servant. I shall employ you in a respectable and becoming manner; and if you show yourself obedient and devoted to my interests, you will have no reason to repent it. The journey will last two months; look, here are thirty dinars; buy provisions, that your family may want for nothing during your absence. In eight days you must bid adieu to your wife and children, and come to meet me here, bringing a supply of rice and dates, and arming yourself with a yatagan, to defend yourself in case of our being attacked."

I then went to my wife, and told her what the stranger required of me. "He is our benefactor," she replied; "it is your duty to obey him." I spent the eight days in laying in a store of food for my family and for the journey, and on the appointed day, after embracing my wife and children, I went to the mosque, where I found the Persian. The muezzim having proclaimed the hour of prayer, we joined in it; and afterwards I followed him to a desert place, where were two fine horses well harnessed and yoked, which we unloosed and mounted, and then set out on our journey.

After having traversed deserts and mountains during a whole month, we arrived at a fertile plain, watered by a fine river, whose peaceful and limpid waters winding about a thick forest, formed it into peninsula: a pavilion, with a golden cupola, seemed to rise out of this mass of verdure, and shone in the sun's rays as if it had been on fire.

The Persian now said to me, "Noureddin, enter this forest, and give me an account of what you see." I obeyed, but I had scarcely walked an hour, when I saw two huge lions with manes erect. Seized with alarm, I drew back, and running away reached my master out of breath, who only laughed at my fears, and assured me that I was needlessly afraid of the monsters. He wanted me to return, but I refused, and he was obliged to come back along with me. Having approached the lions, the Persian charmed them by some magical words, on which they became as submissive as lambs, remained motionless, and permitted us to pass. We journeyed on for many hours in the recesses of the forest, meeting, to my great dread, with what appeared to be troops of horsemen, sword in hand, and giants, armed with clubs, ready to strike us. All these fantastic beings disappeared at the sight of my master, and we reached at last the pavilion which crowned the forest.

My master then said to me, "Go, Noureddin, to this pavilion; remove the belt of iron chains which fastens the gates, while I go and pray to the great Solomon to be propitious to our enterprise." I did as he commanded me; but when I let the chains fall, a frightful noise was heard, which made the earth shake under my feet. More dead than alive, I returned to the Persian, who, having finished his prayer, entered the pavilion. At the end of an hour he came out, bringing a book with him written in the sacred language. He began to read it; and when he had finished, with his countenance radiant with delight he exclaimed, "O thrice fortunate Saadi! thou possessest at last this holy book, — the sum of wisdom, the mirror of the good and the terror of the wicked! May the perusal of this garden of roses lead the children of Adam back to that original innocence from which they have so fatally departed! Hearken to these maxims and sentences, worthy to be the guides of mankind from the shepherd to the king: —

'He who learns the rules of wisdom without conforming his life to them, is like the man who tills his field but never sows any seed therein.

'Virtue does not consist in acquiring the riches of this world, but in attaching all hearts by benefits and good offices.

‘If you are insensible to the sufferings of the unfortunate, you do not deserve the name of a man.

‘It is better to be loaded with chains for having told the truth, than to be freed from them by means of a lie.

‘A wicked person that accuses you of licentiousness should be made to blush, in his turn, by your virtues and your innocence.

‘Man should remember that he is born of the earth, and that his pride will one day come to an end in it.

‘Crystal is found every where; but nothing is more rare than the diamond, and hence the difference in their value.

‘Instruction only bears fruit in so far as it is assisted by your own endeavours.

‘The discipline of the master is of greater benefit to the child than the indulgence of the father.

‘So long as the tree is young it is easy to fashion it as you please; but when it has been permitted to grow, nothing but fire can straighten it.

‘Woe to the man of might, who devours the substance of the people! At last some dire calamity will, of a surety, overtake him.

‘The most awful spectacle at the day of judgment will be, says the prophet, to see pious slaves in paradise, and hard and merciless masters in hell.

‘Do you ask whether the ant beneath your feet has a right to complain? Yes; just as much right as you would have if crushed to atoms by an elephant.

‘Encouragement towards the wicked is a wrong done to the good; and the severest attack on virtue is to be indulgent to crime.

‘The perpetrator of an unjust action dies, but his memory is held in everlasting abhorrence. The just man dies, and his good actions bear fruit unto eternity.

‘Be assured that thou wilt be rewarded if thine actions are good, whether thou wearest the dress of the dervise or the crown of the king.

‘Would a king have nothing to fear from his enemies, let him live in peace with his subjects.

‘O my brother! the world forsakes us all. Fix thy heart on the

Creator of the universe, and all will be well with thee.

‘What signifies it, whether we die in a stable or on a throne?

‘At your morning and evening prayer be able to say, Almighty God, be pleased to remember Thy servant, who has never forgotten Thee!’

“My ambition is satisfied,” resumed the Persian, “by the possession of this book; but a fortune of that description would be no fortune to you, Noureddin. You stand in need of a material treasure; and this sacred volume tells me where we ought to look for it. Quick! Mount your steed, and let us proceed so long as Solomon favours us.” Leaping into our saddles, therefore, we set off at full gallop, and entering the desert, journeyed thus for two days and a night.

On the evening of the second day we arrived at a city situated on a high mountain, and surrounded with white walls which shone like silver. We passed the night under the trees of an adjoining wood; and next day, having offered up our prayers, looked about for some way of entering the city, the gates of which were shut, and within which there reigned a perfect stillness. My master went round the walls, and in his examination of them he discovered a stone slab, in which was fastened an iron ring. We endeavoured to move the slab, but could not. The Persian then ordered me to take the horses and to fasten them to the ring with our sashes; and by this means we succeeded in removing the stone, which discovered the entrance to a subterraneous passage. My master said to me, “Noureddin, follow me; by this passage we shall get into the city.” On leaving the subterraneous passage we heard a noise like that which might be produced by the loud puffing of the bellows of a forge, and we supposed for a moment that the city was inhabited. This strange noise was nothing else than the hissing of two winged serpents, which advanced towards us at a frightful pace. With the sacred book in his hand the Persian advanced to meet them, and with one touch of this talisman laid them prostrate on the ground.

This obstacle being overcome, we traversed the whole city, admiring its squares, houses, mosques, and palaces. But what had become of the inhabitants? By what scourge had they been cut off, or what reason had induced them to quit so beautiful a city? How long ago was it inhabited? My mind was lost in conjectures about what seemed so far beyond my comprehension, and my master made no reply to the questions which I addressed to him. At length we stopped at the open railing of some gardens surrounding an enormous palace, which surpassed all that the imagination could conceive. Bushy thickets; orchards covered with flowers and fruits; enamelled meads, watered by murmuring streams; parterres planted with the rarest and most variegated flowers, every where met the eye. The Persian sat down under the shadow of a tree, opened the book, and commenced reading, and when he had finished ordered me to enter the palace. I reached it by a staircase that could only have been constructed by the hands of genii; it was formed of the most rare and costly marble, as were also the statues which were placed at the sides. After having walked through many spacious and magnificent apartments richly adorned, I entered a subterranean hall, still larger and more splendid. A hundred crystal lustres, brilliant with gold and precious stones, and lit up with thousands of wax-lights, shed a refulgence more dazzling than the day. Its walls were covered with paintings, in which the spirit of evil strove in vain for the mastery over the spirit of good, and a long series of the statues of justly-renowned dead princes were ranged all around. Vacant pedestals, waiting to receive monarchs still living, whose names were inscribed on them, were also to be seen. In the centre of this subterranean apartment, a throne of gold arose, incrusted with pearls and rubies. On this throne an old man was reposing, with a countenance pale as death, but whose open eyes shone with a supernatural brilliancy. I saluted him respectfully, but he made no gesture. I spoke to him, and he made no reply. Seized with astonishment and fear, I returned to my master and told him what I had seen.

"God be praised!" he said, "we are now near the end of our enterprise. Return, Noureddin, to the old man; go up to him fearlessly, and bring to me the chest on which his head rests."

I obeyed, and on my return to the subterranean hall I drew near to the throne, to which three silver steps led up. When I placed my foot on the first step the old man stood up; in spite of my surprise I ascended the second step, when, seizing a bow, he placed a keen-pointed arrow in it, and aimed it at me. Without any consideration of my benefactor's orders, I jumped backwards and took to flight anew.

When the Arab saw me, he said, “Is this what you promised me? cowardly man, come with me, and you will find inestimable riches!” I then conducted him to the place where the old man was to be found. When my master was near the throne, he ascended the first step, and the old man arose; at the second step he took his bow and arrow; and at the third he shot it at my master, who received it on the sacred book, from which it rebounded as from a steel cuirass, and fell broken on the ground. The old man fell back motionless on the throne, and his eyes ceased to shine. My master then laid hold of the mysterious chest of which he had spoken to me, and took from it the magic key which opened subterranean recesses where heaps of pearls, diamonds, and rubies were deposited. The Persian allowed me to take as much as I pleased. I filled my trousers and the folds of my robe and turban with the finest pearls, the largest diamonds, and many other kinds of precious stones. As Saadi the Wise passed by all these treasures without looking at them, I said to him, “O my lord, why do you leave here all this wealth, and take away with you, as the reward of so many fatigues, an article of so little value? The book of wisdom is now useless; what man is there who does not think himself wise?”

“My son,” replied the old man, “I am near the end of my career, and my life has been spent in the search after true wisdom. If I have done nothing to improve mankind, God, when I appear before Him, will reckon with me not only for the evil I shall have done, but also for the good I may have neglected to do. As for you, who have a wife and children, I approve of your wishing to provide for their future condition.”

We left the enchanted city and its treasures, which I greatly regretted not being able to carry away. When we reached the open country, I looked back to gaze upon the palace and city, but they had disappeared, at which I expressed my astonishment to my master, who replied, “Noureddin, do not seek to fathom the mysteries of knowledge, but be contented to rejoice with me at the success of our journey.” We then directed our faces towards Bagdad, and at the end of a short time arrived there, without meeting with any thing else worth relating. My family were rejoiced at my return and at the good fortune I had so unexpectedly met with. The old man abode with us for some time, which he employed in reading the Gulistan and in giving me useful counsels as to my future conduct.

“Noureddin,” he said, “you are the possessor of great wealth; know how to make a good use of it; always remember the wretched condition in which I found you in the mosque; beware of bad company and pretended friends and flatterers; avoid covetousness, and be charitable toward the poor; remember the uncertainty of riches, and how Providence often punishes those who give way to ingratitude and pride.” Besides his good advice, he would often relate to me instructive histories by way of example, and I shall not tire you too much if I repeat one of them to you.

THE STORY OF THE DERVISE ABOUNADAR.

A dervise, venerable from his age, fell ill at the house of a woman who was a widow, and who lived in a state of great poverty in the outskirts of Balsora. He was so affected by the care and zeal with which she had nursed him, that at the time of his departure he said to her, “I have noticed that your means are sufficient for yourself alone, and are not adequate for the additional support of your only son, the young Mujahid; but if you will entrust him to my care, I will do my utmost to repay through him the obligations which I am under to your care.”

The good woman received the proposal with pleasure, and the dervise took his departure with the young man, stating, at the same time, that they were to be absent two years on a journey. While travelling in various countries the widow’s son lived in opulence with his protector, who gave him excellent instructions, attended to him in a dangerous illness which he had, and, in short, treated him in every respect as if he had been his only son. Mujahid often said how grateful he was for such kindness, and the old man’s constant reply was, “My son, gratitude is shown by actions, not words; at the proper time and place we shall see how you estimate my conduct towards you.”

One day, in their journeyings, they reached a place out of the beaten road, and the dervise said to Abdallah, “We are now at the end of our travels; I am about to cause the earth to open and allow you to enter a place where you will find one of the greatest treasures in the bosom of the globe; have you courage sufficient to descend into this subterranean recess?” Mujahid declared that he might be depended upon for his obedience and zeal. The dervise then lighted a small fire, into which he threw some perfumes, and when he had pronounced some prayers the earth opened, and the dervise said to the young man, “You can now enter; remember that it is in your power to render me a great service, and that the present occasion is perhaps the only one when you can prove to me that you are not ungrateful. Do not allow yourself to be dazzled by all the wealth which you will find, but think only of getting possession of an iron chandelier with twelve branches which you will see near a door; lose no time in bringing it to me.” The youth promised to attend to all that was required of him, and plunged into the subterraneous recess full of confidence in himself. Forgetting, however, what had been so expressly enjoined upon him, while he was busy filling his pockets with the gold and diamonds spread around in prodigious quantities, the entrance by which he had descended was closed. He had, however, the presence of mind to lay hold of the iron chandelier which the dervise had urged him to bring away; and although he was now, by the closing of the entrance, placed in circumstances which were enough to appal a stouter heart, he did not abandon himself to despair. While trying to discover some way of escape from a place which was likely otherwise to be his grave, he saw but too plainly that the opening had been closed upon him on account of his not having strictly followed the dervise’s orders; and reflecting on the kindness and care with which he had been treated, he bitterly reproached himself for his ingratitude. At length, after a busy search and much anxiety, he was fortunate enough to discover a narrow passage that led out of this dark cavern. The opening was covered over with briers and thorns, through which he managed to struggle, and thus recovered the light of day. He looked around him every where for the dervise in order to deliver the chandelier to him, but in vain; he was not to be seen.

Unable to recognize any of the places where he had been, he walked at random, and was very much astonished to find himself, after a short time, at his mother’s door, from which he had thought himself at a great distance. In reply to her inquiries respecting the dervise, he frankly told her all that had happened, and the danger he had encountered in order to gratify the fancy of the dervise; and then he showed her the riches with which he was loaded. His mother concluded, on seeing all this wealth, that the dervise only wanted to try his courage and obedience, and that he ought to take advantage of his good luck, adding, that such was no doubt the intention of the holy man.

While they gazed on these treasures with avidity, and framed a thousand dazzling projects for spending them, the whole vanished suddenly from their eyes. Mujahid then reproached himself again for his ingratitude and disobedience; and looking at the iron chandelier which alone remained of all his treasure, said, “What has happened is just. I have lost what I had no wish to render back; and the chandelier, which I desired to give to the dervise, remains with me, — a proof that it belongs to him, and that the rest was improperly obtained.” So saying, he placed the chandelier in the middle of his mother’s small house.

When night came on, Mujahid thought he would put a light in the chandelier, by way of turning it to some use. No sooner had he done this, than a dervise immediately appeared, who, after turning round, vanished, and threw a small coin behind him. Mujahid, whose thoughts were occupied all next day with what he had seen the evening before, wished to see what would be the event if he placed a light in each of the twelve branches. He did so, and twelve dervises immediately appeared, who, after wheeling round, also became invisible, each of them at the same time throwing down a small coin. Every day Mujahid repeated the same ceremony with the same success; but he could only make it occur once in twenty-four hours. The moderate sum with which the dervises supplied him daily was sufficient for the subsistence of himself and his mother, and for a long time this was all that he desired. By and by, however, his imagination began to feast itself with the idea of the riches of the cavern, the sight of those which he had once thought to be safe in his possession, and the schemes which he had formed as to the use to be made of his wealth; all these things had left so deep an impression on his mind, that he found it impossible to rest. He resolved, therefore, if possible, to find out the dervise, and to take him the chandelier, in the hope of obtaining the treasure by bringing to the holy man an article for which he had shown so strong a desire.

Fortunately Mujahid recollected the dervise’s name, and the name of the city, Magnebi, where he dwelt. He set out on his journey as soon as possible, bidding farewell to his mother, and taking the chandelier with him, which supplied him every evening, after being lit, with the means of supporting himself, without having occasion to resort for assistance to the compassion of the faithful. When he reached Magnebi, his first inquiry was after the house where Abounadar lodged. He was so well known, that the first person he met could tell him his residence. On arriving at the house, or rather palace, he found fifty porters keeping watch at the door, each of them bearing a wand with a golden apple for its handle. The courts of the palace were crowded with slaves and domestics; indeed, no prince's residence ever displayed greater splendour. Mujahid, struck with astonishment and admiration, was reluctant to proceed further. "Either," said he to himself, "I have described the person whom I wanted imperfectly, or those to whom I spoke must have wished to make a mock of me, observing that I was a stranger. This is not the residence of a dervise, but of a king."

Mujahid was in this state of embarrassment when a man came up to him and said, "You are welcome, Mujahid; my master, Abounadar, has been long expecting you;" and so saying, he conducted him into a magnificent garden, where the dervise was seated. Mujahid, struck with the riches which he saw every where around him, would have thrown himself at his feet, but Abounadar would not permit him, and interrupted him when he was about to make a merit of bringing back the chandelier which he presented to him, by saying, "You are an ungrateful wretch. Do you think to impose upon me? I know all your thoughts; and if you had known the worth of this chandelier, you would never have brought it to me. I shall now make you acquainted with its true use." In each of the branches of the chandelier he now placed a light; and when the dervises had turned round, Abounadar gave each of them a blow with a stick, and immediately they were converted into twelve heaps of sequins, diamonds, and other precious stones. "Look," he said, "at the use to be made of this wonderful chandelier. My only reason, however, for wishing to place it in my cabinet, was on account of its being a talisman composed by a sage whom I revered; and I shall be always happy to show it to persons who visit me. To prove to you," he continued, "that curiosity is the only reason which induced me to procure the lamp, take the keys of my cellars, open them, and judge for yourself of the extent of my opulence, and say if I should not be the most insatiably avaricious of all men, not to be contented with what I have." Mujahid took the keys, and made a survey of twelve magazines so filled with every description of precious stones, that he was unable to tell which of them most deserved his admiration.

Regret at having restored the chandelier, and at not having discovered its uses, now wrung his heart intensely. Abounadar seemed not to perceive this, but on the contrary loaded Mujahid with caresses, kept him for some days in his palace, and desired his servants to treat him as they would himself. On the evening before the day fixed for his departure, Abounadar said to him, "Mujahid, my son, I think, from what has occurred, that you are now cured of the frightful sin of ingratitude; however, I owe you something for having undertaken so long a journey for the purpose of bringing to me an article which I wished to possess. You may now depart; I will detain you no longer. To-morrow you will find at the gate of my palace one of my horses to carry you home. I will make you a present of it, together with a slave who will bring you two camels loaded with gold and precious stones, which you can select for yourself from among my treasures."

During the night Mujahid was restless and uneasy, and unable to think of any thing except the chandelier and its wonderful qualities. For a long time he said to himself, "It was in my power; Abounadar would never have obtained it but for me. What risks did I not encounter in the subterranean cave in order to secure it! Why is it that he is now the fortunate owner of this treasure of treasures? Is it not owing to my fidelity, or rather folly, in bringing it to him, that he now profits by the trouble and danger I underwent in the long journey I had to make? And what does he give me in return? only two miserable camels loaded with gold and precious stones, when in a moment the chandelier could supply me with ten times as much! It is Abounadar who is ungrateful, and not I who am so. What injury shall I do him by taking the chandelier? Not any; for he is rich, and wants nothing more."

These ideas determined him, at last, to do all in his power to get possession of the chandelier; and it was not difficult to do so. He knew where to find it, and having taken it, he placed it at the bottom of one of his sacks which he had filled with the treasure given to him, and put the sack, along with the others, on the back of one of the camels. His only desire now was to get away, and after having hurriedly bid farewell to the generous Abounadar, he took his departure, with his slave and camels.

When now at some considerable distance from Balsora, he sold his slave, not wishing to retain him as a witness of his former poverty, or of the source of his wealth. He purchased another, and went straight to his mother's house, whom he scarcely noticed, so absorbed was he with his treasures. His first care was to place the camels' luggage in a secure place; and, in his impatience to feast his eyes with solid riches, he placed lights in the chandelier without delay. The twelve dervises made their appearance, and he bestowed on each of them a blow with all his might, being afraid of not complying sufficiently with the laws of the talisman; but he had not noticed that Abounadar, when striking them, held his stick in his left hand. Mujahid naturally held his in his right hand, and the dervises, instead of being changed into heaps of treasure, drew from beneath their robes formidable bludgeons, with which they all belaboured him so long and so severely, that they left him nearly dead, after which they disappeared, carrying with them the camels and all their burdens, the horse, the slave, and the chandelier.

Thus, for not being contented with a large fortune honestly acquired, Mujahid fell into a state of misery from which he never recovered — a suitable punishment for his ingratitude and avarice.

The old man at last took his leave of us, and returned to Schiraz, his native place, bearing with him the blessings of all my family.

After Saadi's departure, I unhappily neglected to follow his good advice. I purchased a new and splendid residence, where I lived in great splendour and luxury. Instead of being grateful to Heaven for its bounty, I became proud and insolent. I entertained and feasted all the gay companions I could meet with, while I refused to give alms, and drove the needy from my door; in short, I spent my money rapidly, and made the worst possible use of what I had so mysteriously acquired. My treasure soon began to run low; still I lived in the same profuse extravagance, until at last all was spent, and I found that, for some time, I had been living upon credit. The truth could no longer be concealed, and, being unable to meet the demands upon me, I had to sell off the whole of my property. A small sum would have sufficed to release me, so that I might again return to my trade, and, for this purpose, I appealed for assistance to my former friends and companions. Not one of these, however, would come forward in my behalf. The produce of the sale of my house and effects was insufficient to pay my debts, and I was consequently thrown into prison, where I have remained for three years, my family, in the mean time, living upon the casual alms of the faithful. The aid you have rendered me will suffice to set me free, and I am now resolved to labour with diligence, in order to repair, as far as possible, my past folly.

CONTINUATION OF THE STORY OF HASSAN ABDALLAH.

In this manner our journey was beguiled, and on the sixth day, in the morning, we entered on an immense plain, whose glittering soil seemed composed of silver dust. In the middle of the plain arose a lofty pillar of granite, surmounted by a statue of copper, representing a young man, whose right hand was stretched out open, and to each of whose fingers was suspended a key; the first was of iron, the second of lead, the third of bronze, the fourth of copper, and the fifth of gold.

This statue was the workmanship of an enchanter, and each key was a talisman; whoever was led by accident or his own free will into this desert, and became possessed of these keys, inherited the destiny attached to them. The first was the key of calamities, the second of physical sufferings, the third of death, the fourth of glory, and the last of knowledge and wealth.

I was ignorant of all these matters; but my master had become acquainted with them from a learned Indian, who had also informed him that the keys could only be obtained by shooting them down with arrows. The Arab planted his foot near to the column, and then fixing an arrow in his bow, which was of a foreign make, he shot it towards the statue, but, whether from want of skill or intentionally, the arrow did not reach halfway. He then said to me, “Hassan, you have now an opportunity of discharging your debt to me, and of purchasing your liberty. You are both strong and skilful; take this bow and arrows, and bring me down those keys.” I took the bow, and perceived that it was of Persian workmanship, and made by a skilful hand. In my youth, I had accustomed myself to this exercise, and had acquired great reputation in it. Desirous of displaying my attainments, I bent the bow with all my strength, and with the first arrow I brought down the first key. Overjoyed, I took it up, and presented it to my master. “Keep it,” he said; “it is the reward of your skill.” With a second arrow, I brought down the leaden one. The Arab would not touch it, and I took it, and put it in my belt, along with the other. With two other arrows, I brought down two more keys — the copper key and the golden key. My companion took them up, uttering exclamations of delight.

"O Hassan," he said, "God be praised! blessed be he who trained your arm and practised your eye to such accuracy. I am proceeding happily towards the accomplishment of my object."

I was about to aim at the last key — that of death, and had raised my bow for that purpose, but he forbade me, and struck my arm to prevent my shooting. In doing this, he caused the arrow to fall and pierce my foot, producing a painful wound. Having dressed it as well as he could, he assisted me to mount my camel, and we thereupon continued our journey. After three days and nights of laborious travelling, we arrived in the neighbourhood of a small wood, where we stopped to spend the night. I set about looking for water, and some refreshing fruits, and particularly some with whose good qualities I was acquainted, but I could find nothing eatable. At last I discovered in the crevice of a rock a small spring, which invited me, by its clear and limpid waters, to refresh myself; but stooping down to drink, I heard the voice of my companion shouting to me not to taste the water, for that it was poisoned. "What matters it," I said, "whether I die of thirst or of poison?"

"This water," he said, "comes from the infernal regions, and passes through the mass of sulphur, bitumen, and metals that feed the fires in the centre of the earth; and if you drink, you will in all probability fall a victim to your imprudence."

Although bitter, the water was so clear and fresh, that without heeding what he said, I drank some of it, and feeling refreshed for the time, I agreed to proceed on our journey, but I had scarcely gone on a hundred paces, when I was attacked by the most racking pains, and with many exclamations and cries to Heaven for help, I endeavoured to moderate the speed of my camel, who was following his companion at a brisk pace. My tortures became so great, that I called aloud to the Arab, and begged him to stop; he consented, when I dismounted and walked for some time, which partly relieved me. The Arab chid me for my disobedience to his commands, and taking out a small phial from his pocket, gave me a few drops of a cordial, which in a short time completely cured me.

Towards evening we came near a high mountain, where we stopped to take a little rest. The Arab said, "God be praised, to-day will not be a fast day with us! by experience I have learned to collect a healthy and refreshing nourishment from a quarter where you would only find poison." He then went to a bush with leaves of a very thick and prickly nature, and having cut off some of them with his sabre, and stript them, of their skins, he extracted from them a yellow and sugary substance, similar in taste to figs, and I partook of the food until I was quite satisfied and refreshed. I was beginning to forget my sufferings, and hoped to pass the night in peaceful slumber, but when the moon arose my master said to me, "I expect you to perform a signal service for me; you have to ascend this mountain, and when at the summit, you must wait for sunrise; then, standing up and turning towards the East, you must offer up your devotions and descend; but take care, and do not allow yourself to be overtaken by sleep, for the emanations which arise from the ground in this place are extremely noxious, and you may suffer severely from them."

Although overwhelmed with fatigue and pain, I obeyed the Arab's orders, remembering that he had given bread to my children; and that, perhaps, should I refuse, he would abandon me in this savage wilderness. I ascended the mountain and reached the summit about midnight. The soil was bare and stony; not a shrub, not a blade of grass was to be found upon it. The extreme cold, together with fatigue, threw me into such a state of torpor that I could not resist lying down on the earth and falling asleep. I awoke at the rising of the sun to fulfil my instructions. I stood up with difficulty; my aching limbs refused to support my body; my head hung down as if made of lead, and I was unable to lift up my paralyzed arms. Making a painful effort, and holding myself up towards the East, I invoked the name of God. I then endeavoured to descend the mountain, but it was so steep, and my weakness was so great, that at the first step my limbs tottered under me, and I fell, and rolled down the mountain with frightful rapidity; stones and thorns were the only obstacles to my descent, and they tore my dress and my skin, causing me to bleed at every pore. At length I reached the bottom of the hill, near to where my master was stretched on the ground, tracing lines on it with such attention, that he did not observe in what a state I was. "God be thanked and praised," he said, without noticing me; "we were born under a happy planet; every thing succeeds with us! Thanks to you, Hassan, I have just discovered what I wanted, by measuring the shadow projected by your head from the summit of the mountain. Assist me to dig where I have stuck my lance." He raised his head, and seeing me extended on the earth, motionless, came up to me, and exclaimed, "What! in disobedience to my orders you have slept on the mountain, and imbibed its unwholesome vapours into your blood! Do not despair, however, I will cure you;" and he took from his pocket a lancet, with which, before I could offer any resistance, he made small incisions in different parts of my body, from which I bled profusely. He then dressed my wounds and bruises carefully, and I felt a little better. Seeing that I was too weak to assist him, he began to dig in the earth himself at the place which he had marked. He soon exposed to view a tomb of white marble, which he opened; it contained some human bones, and a book written in letters of gold on the skin of the gazelle.

My master began reading it with attention: at length his pale brow became lit up with pleasure, and his eyes sparkled with delight.

"Hassan Abdallah," he said to me, "this book teaches me the way to the mysterious city; we shall soon enter into Aram, built on columns, where no mortal has ever as yet penetrated; it is there that we shall find the principle of earthly riches, the germ of the metallic mines which God has placed in the centre of the earth."

"My lord," I replied, "I share with you in your joy; but this treasure is of little or no advantage to me; I would rather, I assure you, be poor and in good health at Cairo, than rich and in wretchedness here."

"Ungrateful man!" he exclaimed; "I am labouring for your advantage as well as for my own, intending to share with you the fruit of our journey, as I have done until now."

"True," I said, "but, alas! all the ill fortunes and calamities fall to me." However, after some further assurances on the part of the Arab, I became pacified, and the same day, after having laid in a stock of fruits, we reascended our camels, and continued our journey towards the East.

We journeyed thus for three days and nights. The fourth day in the morning we perceived in the horizon the appearance of a large mirror, which reflected the sunbeams. On drawing near we saw that it was a river of quicksilver; it was crossed by a bridge of crystal, without balustrades, but so narrow and slippery that no man in his senses would think of attempting to pass it. My master told me to unsaddle the camels, to let them feed at liberty, and to prepare woollen slippers with thick and soft soles for both of us; and having ordered me to walk behind him without looking to the right hand or to the left, he crossed the bridge with a firm step, and I followed him trembling.

After we had crossed the river and proceeded for some hours, we found ourselves at the entrance of a gloomy valley. It was surrounded on all sides with black rocks, hard as iron, and here and there on the ground were spread human bones, bleached by time. Through the dark foliage of the shrubs which grew there might be seen the undulating and scaly forms of serpents gliding along. I retreated hastily from this den of horror, but could not discover the spot at which I had entered, the rocks seeming every where to rise up like the walls of a great cavern.

I began to weep, and said to my companion, “You have led me on to death by the path of suffering and misery; I shall never see my wife and children again. Why have you torn me away from my poor but peaceful home?”

“Hassan,” he said to me, “be a man! Have patience; we shall soon get out of this horrible place. Wait a few moments, and I will show you how we may escape.” So saying, he sat down on the ground, and, opening the mysterious book, began turning over the pages and reading in it as calmly as if he had been sitting in his own house. After a short time he called to me, and said, “My friend, call up your courage, your task is easy; you are a skilful marksman; take this bow and arrows; examine the valley until you meet with a huge serpent with a black head, kill him and bring his head and heart to me.”

“Alas!” I said, weeping, “is this indeed a thing so easy for me? Why will you not do it yourself? We are too fortunate not to be molested by these monsters; why should we go in search of them?” Upon this he started up with a fierce aspect, and, drawing his sword, swore that he would kill me that instant if I did not obey him.

“Do you see all these bones?” he said. “They are the bones of men who disobeyed me, and who died in consequence by my hand.” Trembling, I took the bow and arrows, and went among the rocks where the serpents were to be found. Selecting one which appeared to me to answer the description given me, I took aim at its head, and, invoking the assistance of Heaven, discharged my arrow. The serpent, mortally wounded, sprung up, and twisting and contorting itself in a frightful manner, fell dead on the ground. When I was certain that he was dead, I took my knife, cut off his head, and took out his heart. With these bloody trophies I returned to my master, who received me with a smiling countenance. “Forgive me,” he said, “for employing threats towards you; in reality I was anxious to save you from a miserable fate. The men to whom these bones belonged died here of hunger by their own fault; they proved deficient in courage, and I was compelled, in spite of myself, to abandon them to their fate.”

“Now,” he continued, “come and assist me to make a fire.”

I collected dry leaves and small branches of trees, of which he made a small heap; then turning an enchanted diamond towards the sun, which was then in its meridian, a ray of light issued from the precious stone which set the materials in a blaze. He next drew from under his robe a small iron vase and three phials; the first, of ruby, contained the elements of winds; the second, of emerald, contained a ray of moonlight; and the third, which was of gold, contained the blood of a ph[oe]nix. All these substances he placed in the vase, and added the heart and brain of the serpent. He then opened the book and put the vase on the fire, pronouncing at the same time some words which to me were unintelligible. When he had finished, he uncovered his shoulders, as the pilgrims do at their departure, and dipping a portion of his garment in the mixture, handed it to me, desiring me to rub his back and shoulders with it. As I did so I observed the skin swell out and wings spring forth, which, visibly increasing in size, soon reached the ground. The Arab spread them and began to rise in the air. Fear of remaining in this doleful place lent me courage, and laying hold with all my might of the end of his girdle, I was borne up along with him, and in a few moments we bade farewell to the black rocks of this fatal valley. Presently, as we pursued this aërial tour, we found ourselves soaring above an immense plain, surrounded by a precipice of crystal, tinged with azure and purple. The earth seemed formed of golden dust, and the pebbles upon it looked like precious stones. Before us were the lofty walls of a city crowded with magnificent palaces and delicious gardens. Lost in admiration of this glorious scene, the Arab forgot to keep his wings moving, and we descended rapidly towards the ground, which I of course reached first, he falling upon me. I then perceived his wings gradually diminish, and by degrees wholly disappear. When I noticed this to him, he replied, that, unfortunately, science was limited in its powers; it enabled him to construct wings of great power, but could not avail for their preservation beyond a certain time. “To become the possessor,” said he, “of the ingredients which you saw me employ in forming these wings, I have spent thirty years of my life, the lives of many men, and money sufficient for a king’s ransom. The wings helped me but for a few moments, long enough, however, for my purpose; they have borne me to glory and fortune. Rejoice, Hassan Abdallah; behold Aram, the city built on columns, the mysterious city!”

We then approached the walls; they were built of alternate layers of bricks of gold and silver. The battlements were of marble, cut and sculptured by the hands of genii. There were eight gates in the walls, — the number of the gates of paradise; the first was of silver, the second of gold, the third of agate, the fourth of coral, the fifth of pearl, the sixth of topaz, the seventh of emerald, and the eighth of ruby.

The Arab informed me that this city had been built by the famous enchanter Tchedad, the son of Aad, who had exhausted upon it all the treasures of earth, sea, and sky. He wanted in his pride to rival the glory of the Almighty by this piece of workmanship; but God, to punish him, struck him and his family with lightning at the very instant he and they were solemnly taking possession of the palace. An impenetrable veil hangs over the city ever since, and no one has been able to discover it.

We went forward, invoking the name of God; the streets were lined with palaces adorned with columns of marble, agate, and all kinds of costly materials; streams of odoriferous waters embalmed and refreshed the atmosphere; trees of a wondrous form furnished a delicious shelter from the rays of the sun, and in their branches birds of song produced concerts of ravishing sweetness. The very air that one breathed seemed to fascinate the mind, and to lift it up to heaven.

The Arab, taking me by the hand, conducted me towards the palace of Tchedad; its construction, in point of art and splendour of adornment, was unspeakably magnificent. Terraces, formed of coloured crystal, were supported on a thousand columns of gold. In the midst of the palace was an enchanted garden, where the earth, breathing of musk, bore fruits and flowers of marvellous richness and beauty. Three rivers surrounded the garden, flowing with wine, rose-water, and honey. In the centre of the garden there was a pavilion, whose dome, formed of a single emerald, overshadowed a throne of gold covered with pearls and rubies. On the throne there was a small chest of gold; the Arab opened it, and found in it a red powder. "Throw away this dust," I said, "and fill the casket with precious stones."

"Poor fool that you are," he replied; "this dust is the source of all the riches of the world; it is red sulphur. A small portion of it is sufficient to change into gold the basest metals. With it I can build palaces, found cities, purchase the life of men and the admiration of beautiful women. I can even, if I please, cause myself to become prince and king; but I cannot by it prolong my life a single day, or efface an hour from my by-past existence. God alone is great! God alone is eternal!"

Whilst he thus spoke, I employed myself in collecting precious stones and pearls, filling with them my girdle, pockets, and turban.

"Unhappy man!" he cried, "what are you doing? You will bring down upon us the vengeance of Heaven. We are only permitted to touch this casket; and if we should attempt to carry out of the valley a leaf from one of these trees, or a stone from off the ground, instantaneous death would be our lot."

I immediately emptied my pockets, much to my regret, and followed my master, not however without often turning my head aside to look at the incalculable riches spread around me. Fearing that I should fall a prey to the seductions of wealth, my master took me by the hand and led me out of the city. We quitted it by the path by which we came, but more slowly than we approached. When we arrived at the crystal precipice it opened before us, and we passed through it; when we had done so, we looked about in vain for the wonderful plain and the city, — they could no longer be seen. We found ourselves on the brink of the river of quicksilver, and crossed the bridge. Our camels were feeding on the flowery herbage, and I ran to mine with delight, as to an old friend. After refastening our girths, we mounted and set out on the road to Egypt. We were three months in reaching Cairo. During all this time I suffered many privations; my health was destroyed, and I endured every kind of evil. From some fatality, the cause of which was unknown to me at the time, I alone was exposed to all the accidents of the journey, while my companion continued in health and comfort, passing safely through every danger. I discovered afterwards that all my misfortunes arose from my having in my possession the enchanted keys. This was one day towards the close of our journey, when the Arab confessed to me that he was aware of this fatal quality of theirs, and that it was in order to free himself from it that he purchased me. When I wanted to throw away the accursed keys, he withheld me. "Patience and resignation," said he, "and these virtues only, can exhaust their evil influence, and for your own sake I would advise you to keep them to the end. All will turn out eventually for your good."

A few days after receiving this communication we arrived at Cairo, and I immediately ran to my home, the door of which was open and broken, and the interior occupied by crowds of famished and prowling dogs, who had taken up their abode there. A neighbour, who heard me calling out in an agony of despair, opened her door, and said to me, "Hassan Abdallah, is that you? Well may you be astounded! Know that some time after your departure, — that is, about five months ago, — some thieves, knowing that you were absent, and that there was no male slave left to take care of your house, broke into your house during the night, insulted the women, and went off with all the property that you had left. Your mother died a few days after, in consequence. Your wife, in her destitution, resolved to go to Alexandria, to her brother. The caravan which she accompanied was attacked by the Arabs of the desert, who, being enraged at the resistance they met with, put all to the sword without mercy."

On hearing these sad tidings, I shed many tears, and returning to the Arab, accused him with being the cause of all my misfortunes. "God is the author and end of all things," he said to me, and then, taking me by the hand, led me along with him. It appeared that on the same day he had hired a magnificent palace, to this he now compelled me to repair and reside with him; and for my consolation, he told me that he would share with me the treasures of science, and teach me to read in the book of alchemy.

Here we resided a long time: whenever his costly fancies caused him to be in want of money, he used to have several hundred-weight of lead conveyed secretly to him, and when it was melted he threw some small portions of red sulphur into it, and in a moment the vile metal was changed into the purest gold. In the midst of all this luxury, I continued ill and unhappy; my feeble body was unable to support the weight, or to endure the contact of the rich clothes and the precious stuffs with which I was covered. The most delicate food was served up to me in vain, and the most delicious wines; I only felt disgusted and disinclined towards them all. I had superb apartments, beds formed of sweet smelling and costly woods, and divans of purple; but sleep, in spite of all, was a stranger to my eyes.

I called on death, but he refused to come to me. The Arab, on the other hand, passed his time in pleasure and feasting.

The palace gardens extended to the banks of the Nile; they were planted with the rarest trees, brought at a great expense from India, Persia, China, and the isles. Machines, constructed with great skill, raised the water of the Nile, and caused it to fall in fresh and brilliant jets into marble reservoirs,

"'Mid orange groves and myrtle bowers, that breathed a gale of fragrance round,"

mingled with the perfume of jasmines and roses; there were silken pavilions, embroidered with gold, and supported on pillars of gold and silver; brilliant lamps, enclosed in globes of crystal, shed over all a light soft and effulgent as that of the moon.

There, on each returning night, the Arab received his companions, and treated them with the utmost magnificence. His liberality made every one who approached him his friend, and they styled him the Great, the Magnificent.

He would sometimes come to see me at the pavilion, where my illness compelled me to remain, a solitary prisoner. On one such occasion, he paid me his visit after a night of pleasure, early in the morning. He was heated with wine, his face red, and his eyes shining with a strange lustre. He sat down beside me, and taking hold of my hand, began singing, and when he had concluded, shut his eyes, leaned his head on his breast, and appeared to fall asleep. Alarmed at length at his unnatural stillness, I leaned over to him; his breathing had ceased, he had expired.

Perceiving that all help was useless, I began to rummage his pockets, his girdle, and his turban, in the hope of finding the keys of happiness and of wisdom, but could not discover them. I thereupon, in spite of my bad state of health, and without losing a moment, laid hold of the casket containing the book of alchemy and the red sulphur; and considering that I might lawfully regard myself as the legitimate proprietor, I carried it secretly to my former house, which I had previously caused to be rebuilt and provided with new furniture.

Returning to the palace just as I had left it, I began to cry aloud, and to ask for help; the slaves and servants ran immediately to know what was the matter, and I then sent them to bring the best physician, even the caliph's, if he could be found. When the medical men came they declared that the stranger had died by the will of God. I then gave orders for the funeral.

His body, attired in the richest vestments, was placed, exposed to view, in a coffin of aloe-wood, lined with gold. A cloth of a marvellously fine tissue, which had been manufactured for a Persian prince, served for a coverlet. Fifty servants, all dressed in mourning attire, bore, in turns, the coffin on their shoulders; and every good mussulman who passed by, hastened to lend his assistance, if it were only by a helping hand.

A considerable number of women, hired for the purpose, followed the bier, uttering plaintive cries.

The keepers of the mosque sung sacred verses, and the crowd repeated, "God is God! There is no God but God! He alone is eternal." In this order, accompanied by numerous friends whom the Arab had made by his generosity, we proceeded to the cemetery, southward of the city, and near to the gate of Bab-el-Masr (the gate of victory). I gave a purse of gold to a skilful architect, with orders to raise a tomb to the memory of my master.

Returning to the palace, it fell to my lot, of course, to preside at the funeral repast. This painful duty was scarcely over, when I saw some officers from the caliph arrive, who were commanded by his order to take possession of the wealth contained in the palace, and which belonged to him, as a stranger's heir. I was driven away, and left the palace, taking with me, in appearance, nothing but the dress which I wore, but, in reality, the owner of an inestimable treasure.

Betaking myself to my house, I resolved to live there an unknown and peaceful life, passing the time in the study of the sciences, and only using the red sulphur to impart benefit to others in secret.

A curious and jealous neighbour having ascended the terrace of my house one evening, and seen me at work, effecting the transmutation of the lead into gold, told my secret to his wife, who repeated it at the bath, and next morning all Cairo was acquainted with it.

The report reached the ears of the caliph, Theilon, who sent for me, and told me that he knew I possessed the great secret of knowledge, and that if I would share it with him, he would overwhelm me with honours, and associate me with him in rank. I refused to the impious man the distinguished favour which God had denied to him. Transported with rage, he caused me to be loaded with chains, and thrown into a gloomy dungeon; and being baffled in his attempts to penetrate my secret, he placed the casket and the book under the care of a person on whose fidelity he could depend, hoping to force the secret from me by the sufferings which he made me endure. In this state I have lived for forty years. By my persecutor's orders, I have been made to undergo all kinds of privations and tortures, and only knew of his death by my being relieved from punishment.

This morning, when kneeling on the ground at my devotions, I put my hand on a strange and hard substance. Looking at it, I perceived that it was the fatal keys which I had years ago buried under the floor of my dungeon. They were so worn by rust and damp, that they crumbled into powder in my hand, and I then thought that God intended to have pity upon me, and that my afflictions were about to end, either by death or the alleviation of my sufferings. A few moments after, your officers came and set me at liberty.

"Now, O king!" continued the old man, "I have lived long enough, since I have been permitted to approach the greatest and most upright of monarchs."

Mohammed, overjoyed at performing an act of justice, thanked Heaven for having sent him such a treasure, and being desirous to prove its reality, he caused one thousand hundred-weight of lead to be melted in immense caldrons; and having mixed some of the red powder in the fiery mass, and pronounced over it the magical words dictated to him by the old man, the base metal was instantly changed into pure gold.

The caliph, in order to propitiate the favour of Heaven, resolved to employ this treasure in the building of a mosque which should transcend by its magnificence every other in the world. He collected architects from all the neighbouring countries, laid before them the plan of a vast edifice, unfettered by the difficulties or expense of its execution.

The architects traced out an immense quadrangle, the sides of which faced the four cardinal points of the heavens. At each corner a tower of prodigious height was placed, of admirable proportions; the top of the structure was surrounded with a gallery and crowned with a dome of gilt copper. On each side of the edifice one thousand pillars were raised, supporting arches of an elegant curve and solid construction, and on the arches terraces were laid out with balustrades of gold of exquisite workmanship. In the centre of the edifice an immense pavilion was erected, whose construction was of so light and elegant a nature, that one would have thought it reached from earth to heaven. The vault was inlaid with azure-coloured enamel and studded with golden stars. Marbles of the rarest kinds formed the pavement, and the walls consisted of a mosaic formed of jasper, porphyry, agate, mother-of-pearl, sapphires, rubies, and other precious stones. The pillars and arches were covered with arabesques and verses from the Koran, carved in relief, and painted. No wood was employed in the building of this wonderful edifice, which was therefore fire-proof. Mohammed spent seven years in erecting this celebrated mosque, and expended on it a sum of two millions of dinars.

Although so old, Hassan Abdallah recovered his health and strength, and lived to be a hundred years of age, honoured with the esteem and the friendship of the caliph.

The mosque built by the caliph Mohammed is still to be seen at Cairo, and is the largest and the finest of all the mosques of that great city.

One day, very shortly after the completion of the mosque, the caliph and Hassan Abdallah were absent for three days on a journey. Mohammed communicated to no one but his first vizir his intention; but on his return he assembled his whole court, and informed them that the object of the expedition had been to bury the casket, with the book and the powder, where it was impossible they could ever be discovered. “I have done,” added Mohammed, “what I could to consecrate this wonderful treasure, but I would not trust even myself any longer with so dangerous a temptation.”

II.

SOLIMAN BEY AND THE THREE STORY-TELLERS.

Soliman Bey, passing one day along a street in Cairo, saw three common-looking men seated at the door of a coffee-house and sipping their cup of mocha. From their dull and meaningless looks he conjectured that they were under the influence of haschich. After looking at them attentively, the bey saluted them, and was pursuing his way, when he suddenly found himself obliged to stop, as a long train of camels, heavily laden, blocked up the street and prevented him from passing on. The bey, having nothing better to do, amused himself by scrutinizing attentively the eaters of haschich, who were old men. A warm discussion seemed to be going on among them; they raised their arms, vied with each other who should cry the loudest, and made the strangest possible grimaces; but owing to the distance at which he stood, he was unable to hear what they said. On his return home, being curious to know the subject of their dispute, he sent his officer to beg these three originals to wait upon him.

An intoxicating drug, like opium.

When they arrived, he said to them, “What were you disputing about, my friends, when I passed you?”

“May Allah prolong your days!” replied one of them; “we were disputing about which of us it was to whom the salutation belonged that your highness addressed to us, for each of us took that honour to himself.”

The bey burst out laughing. “I greeted,” he said, after a moment’s reflection, “him among you who did the greatest number of foolish things while intoxicated by the haschich.”

“It was I, my lord,” they all at once exclaimed.

“Stop,” replied the bey; “let each of you tell me one of the tricks played him by the haschich, and the honour of my greeting shall be his who shall have committed the greatest act of folly; and do you begin,” added the bey, pointing to one of the men.

THE FIRST STORY-TELLER.

“Be it known to you, my lord,” said the first story-teller, “that a short time ago I had in my purse a thousand piastres, which were enough for my expenses, and I was contented with my lot. One day, however, I had been taking a walk, and on my return I sat down to rest and chewed a bit of haschich, took my coffee, and lit my pipe; in two or three hours my head began to buzz. I went out again and walked about the streets. In front of a coffee-house I noticed some men collected round an *improvisatore*, who was singing and accompanying himself on the timbrel. I sat down in the circle and asked for coffee. I lighted my pipe and commenced listening. The improvisatore depicted a young girl. Oh, how beautiful she was! it was impossible not to love her. Compared with her Iyleika was but as a star in the presence of the sun, and Ablia but as the dirt of the street. I was so captivated by his description of the beautiful girl, that when he ceased I gave him all the money I had about me.

Personages who figure in Arabian legends.

“Next day, at the same hour, while the haschich was boiling in my brain, I ran to the coffee-house, where the improvisatore was commencing the continuation of his yesterday’s story. He now told how paladins and padishahs disputed for the possession of my adorable Haridée, and how she disdained their love and refused their offers. I became more distracted this time than before, and the improvisatore got from me twice as much as he did the day before. I gave him all that I had, even to the last farthing.

“Next day I never left my little seat at the *café*. The improvisatore struck his tambourine this time with more vehemence while singing the charms of the beautiful Haridée. He then began to relate how Haridée was in love with a certain worthless fellow. At this it was impossible to tell what I felt; the hydra of jealousy devoured my heart and poured a maddening poison through my veins. I became as one deprived of all sense and feeling. But stop; the parents have separated the lovers and plunged them in an ocean of tears. I again breathed more freely, and emptied my pockets to fill the purse of the improvisatore.

“Thus were passed many days in succession. The flame of love and the stings of jealousy tormented me without ceasing. The haschich did its part unremittingly, and threw me at one moment into fire, and at another into ice and snow, hurling me from the height of bliss into the depths of misery. My fortunes fell with me, and I soon became totally destitute. But my thoughts were otherwise taken up than with eating or drinking; my love for Haridée had become the only source to me of life and action. In this way, with empty stomach and purse, I went one day to the *café* after having paid a few paras for a little haschich. I listened — the voice of the improvisatore trembled; in truth he wept, and grief was depicted on his features.

“‘What has happened?’ I asked, drawing near to him.

“‘Poor Haridée!’ he replied.

“‘What is the matter? What has taken place?’ I exclaimed.

“‘She is dead!’ he muttered.

“I wept, I tore my clothes, and fled I scarce knew where. When the first transports of my despair had subsided, I saw pass before my eyes, still under the influence of the haschich, the funeral of Haridée. The mournful cry of ‘There is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet,’ echoed in my ears, amidst the outcries and the lamentations of the women. I ran like a madman from street to street, while the crowd followed on my path with the coffin of Haridée, and the frightful groans and cries burst forth louder and louder on my ears. At length, worn out, and sore all over, I fell down in a state of complete unconsciousness, and when I came to myself, I perceived that I was at the threshold of my own home. I arose, and endeavoured to recal past events, which as they woke up in my memory caused me to feel the utmost surprise. My purse was empty, my heart broken, and the blood was flowing down my face, for in my fall I had cut open my head. After remaining a whole day in the house, I took a small piece of haschich and went to a coffee-house near at hand, where my friend the landlord poured me out a cup of mocha, and gave me a pipe. It was there that I met my two friends, and received from you, my gracious lord, a look, and a nod.”

“This story is not a bad one,” replied Soliman Bey, “but do not too hastily take to yourself the honour of my greeting; let me hear first what the others have to say.”

THE SECOND STORY-TELLER.

"Know, my lord," replied the second, "that I was formerly a rich and respected merchant, with a beautiful wife and fine children. My life was like a morning of spring-time — clear, peaceful, and balmy. But haschich has ruined the structure of my happiness, and destroyed it from the roof to the foundations. One day when I had imbibed a little of this fatal poison, I was reclining, after the labours of the day, on my sofa, sipping from time to time a mouthful of coffee, and inhaling a whiff of perfumed *latakia*. My wife was occupied at my side in embroidery, and my children were at play in the room, which they made ring again with their shrill voices. At length, my brain becoming overpowered by the vapours of the haschich, the thickening fancies began to chase each other in quick succession, and my imagination at length became morbidly excited. The cries of my children seemed insupportable to me. I ordered them several times to be quiet, but the brats, wild with their games and noise, paid no attention to me. At last I lost patience, laid hold of my stick, and rapped angrily on the floor, ordering them sternly to be quiet. In the midst of this fit of anger, I stopped short, all of a sudden. The floor of my apartment emitted a hollow sound, as if there were a vault beneath it. The haschich suggested to me that there might be hidden treasure down below. 'Oh, oh,' I said to myself, 'I must not be in a hurry. If I should discover the treasure in my wife's presence, she will foolishly run and trumpet it about to all our neighbours. What good would that do? Let me consider, then, what I shall do to get her away.' Intoxicated as I was, there was no need to deliberate long. I darted from my seat, exclaiming, 'Woman! thou art separated from me by a triple divorce!'

This is the legal form of pronouncing a divorce among the Mahometans.

"My wife became pale as death. She threw aside her embroidery, and rose up.

"'What is the matter, my dear husband? What has happened? Of what have I been guilty?'

"'Don't say a word! And hasten this moment to leave the house, with your children.’

“‘But pray inform me, my lord and master, when and how I have given you any cause of complaint? We have now lived together twelve years in perfect peace and harmony, and never been but on the most affectionate terms; tell me.’

“‘No more explanations,’ I replied; ‘here are a thousand *grouches*. Go to your room, and take of the furniture as much as you require, and return to your father’s house.’

A small coin, in circulation in Turkey, about the value of eighteenpence of our money. It is probably from the same root as the German *groschen*.

“Sadly and sorrowfully she thereupon proceeded to collect her wearing apparel, uttering mournful cries and lamentations, and taking her children with her, left the house.

“‘Now!’ I exclaimed, with satisfaction, ‘now, I am quite alone.’

“‘Silence, Abou-Kalif,’ whispered the haschich to me; ‘don’t be in such haste. Suppose you find this treasure, who knows but that at the first meeting of haschich-eaters, you will disclose your discovery to all the world. Put yourself to the proof beforehand, by some effectual means, and thus find out if your tongue have sufficient self-command to keep still, and not say one word too much.’

“Faithful to the voice of my inward monitor, I arose, and taking from my chest the sum of five hundred grouches, went to pay a visit to the vali.

The public executioner.

“‘Here,’ said I to him, ‘take this money, and give me on the soles of my feet five hundred blows with a leathern thong, and, while laying them on, ask me if I have seen, found, or discovered any thing?’

“The man was extremely surprised at my request, and refused to comply with it; but the people about him said that my body was my own, and that I was at liberty to dispose of it as I thought proper. ‘Take his money,’ they said to him, ‘and give him a hearty flogging.’

“The vali, shrugging his shoulders, gave the signal; I was laid on the ground, my feet were tied together, and the lash whistled and sung on my bare feet. At each blow, the question I had suggested was asked, and I replied in the negative. This system of question and answer went on till the last blow. Fairly exhausted with the pain, I fell down the moment I attempted to stand up. I therefore crawled along on my knees, and reached my ass, on whose back I managed, somehow or other, to raise myself, and thus reached my home.

“A few days’ rest having restored me in some measure, I resolved to prosecute my search for the hidden treasure. But the haschich, to which I had not forgotten on that day to pay my usual respects, stopped me in my intention. ‘O Abou-Kalif,’ it muttered in my ear, ‘you have not yet put yourself sufficiently to the proof. Are you now in a fit state to resist all attempts to make you disclose your secret? Submit to another trial, my good fellow!’ This suggestion was all-powerful, and I submitted forthwith. I drew from my strong-box one thousand grouches, and went to the aga of the Janissaries. ‘Take this money,’ I said to him, ‘and give me in exchange for it a thousand stripes with a thong on the bare back; asking me between the blows, Have you seen any thing? have you found any thing? have you discovered any thing?’ The aga did not keep me waiting long for a reply, — and having pocketed the money, bestowed upon me most faithfully the full complement of the lashes desired.

“At the conclusion of the whipping my soul seemed hovering on my lips, as if about to leave my mutilated body, which was quite prostrated by the infliction. I was obliged to be carried to my ass, and it was many days before I could set my feet to the ground. When I had recovered a little, I recollected all the details of the strange adventure which had brought upon me the acute anguish that I felt in every part of my body; and the more I reflected on the matter, the more vividly I saw the fatal consequences that would follow from too much confidence in the suggestions inspired by the haschich. I cursed the hateful ideas produced by the vapours of this drug, and promised myself that I would amend my ways, and repair, as far as possible, my injustice to my wife. But at the very moment when this praiseworthy resolution arose in my brain and diffused its odours there, like a fresh-opening flower, my hand, from the strength of habit, sought for the tin box that lay under my pillow, and drew from it a white particle, which I placed in my mouth, as if to mock all the weak efforts of my will. In fact, while my mind was occupied in planning a final rupture with the perfidious hempen-seed, my enemy stole in on me like a midnight robber by night, imposed his yoke, and overthrew completely all my good intentions. Unwittingly I found myself again in the power of the enemy. ‘Well, Abou-Kalif,’ he said, ‘arise. The precautions you have taken are sufficiently severe; it is time to set to work, and not allow the favourable moment to escape, otherwise you may repent it.’ In this manner spake the delusive poison working within me, and I was wholly in its power, incapable of resistance. I rose from my bed with a frightful pain in my back and sides, dragged myself along towards the mysterious flag-stone, and with my heart beating violently, and my brain cloudy and obscured, I set to work to raise the stone, which speedily yielded to my efforts. In a state of the highest excitement, I sat down on the edge of the cavern with my legs hanging down into it, and my hands leaning on its sides; I scarcely dared to look downwards. The haschich, however, pushed me forwards, and seemed to press on my shoulders. My hands at last yielded, and I fell down. O my sovereign and master, do not ask where I found myself; enough that I felt myself stifled. The noisome matter into which I had fallen up to the chin, being disturbed and agitated, had emitted exhalations which fairly suffocated me. I strove to cry out, but in vain. I fainted, and lost all consciousness.

“Meanwhile, whilst I, pursued by the fatal influence of the haschich, had fallen over the edge of the precipice, where I was now struggling, my disconsolate wife had begged her father to allow her to make inquiry respecting me. ‘I know,’ she said, weeping, ‘that a sudden attack of madness has seized him, and that the real cause of his sending me away, as well as of all the evil that has just befallen us, is the haschich. Let no curse fall upon him. No doubt my husband will change his conduct with regard to me, as I cannot reproach myself with any thing; I will therefore go and see what has happened to him.’ ‘Well, my child, you may go,’ replied her father; ‘I shall not seek to hinder you.’ She went, and knocked at the door, but no one replied. She then inquired of the neighbours if Abou-Kalif was at home; they said they had not seen him leave the house for the last week. On being told this, she had the door burst open, and, followed by a crowd of neighbours of both sexes, searched for me for a long time in vain. At last, however, I was discovered, half dead and stifled. They pulled me out, cleansed and sweetened me, and attired me in a fresh suit of clothes; after which I left the house to breathe the fresh air and recover myself. It was not long, however, before the haschich regained its old dominion over me, and led me to the coffee-house, where you saw me, and condescended to honour me with your greeting."

"Not quite so soon," exclaimed the bey, holding his sides with laughter; "your story is also a very good one, but before I award to you the honour of my salutation, I must hear what your other companion has got to say."

THE THIRD STORY-TELLER.

"Sovereign and master," commenced the third eater of haschich, "no longer ago than a week I was so happy and satisfied with my lot, that in truth I would not have exchanged it even for your own. I had a house filled with every comfort, plenty of money, and a wife who was a miracle of beauty. One day this charming better half of myself, after having passed all the day in the bath, returned from it looking so clean, fresh, and rosy, that my head, where the haschich which I had been taking for the last hour and a half was breeding disorder, became on fire and was lost. My eyes grew intoxicated with my wife, as if I had then beheld her beauty for the first time, and my heart bounded like the holy waves of the Nile during a storm.

"'Dear cousin,' I cried, for she was my cousin as well as my wife, 'how captivating you are to-day! I am over head and ears in love with you again!'

"At this instant the haschich suggested to me to divorce her immediately in order to contract a new marriage and taste again the bliss of a first union. No sooner said than done; I pronounced the prescribed phrase, and the next day I celebrated a new marriage with her. When the festivities were over, I conducted my relations and guests to the door, which, from absence of mind, I had forgotten to shut.

The Mahometans may immediately take back the woman whom they had divorced, but a fresh marriage ceremony must take place.

"'Dear cousin,' said my wife to me when we were alone, 'go and shut the street door.'

"'It would be strange indeed if I did,' I replied. 'Am I just made a bridegroom, clothed in silk, wearing a shawl and a dagger set with diamonds, and am I to go and shut the door? Why, my dear, you are crazy; go and shut it yourself!'

"'Oh indeed!' she exclaimed; 'am I, young, robed in a satin dress, with lace and precious stones, am I to go and shut the court-yard door? No, indeed, it is you who have become crazy, and not I. Come, let us make a bargain,' she continued; 'and let the first who speaks get up and bar the door.'

"'Agreed,' I replied, and straightway I became mute, and she too was silent, while we both sat down, dressed as we were in our nuptial attire, looking at each other, and seated on opposite sofas. We remained thus for one — two — hours. During this time thieves happening to pass by, and seeing the door open, entered and laid hold of whatever came to their hand. We heard footsteps in the house, but opened not our mouths; the robbers came even into our room, and saw us seated, motionless and indifferent to all that took place. They continued therefore their pillage, collecting together every thing valuable, and even dragging away the carpets from beneath us; they then laid hands on our own persons, which they despoiled of every article worth taking, while we, in the fear of losing our wager, said not a word.

"Having thus cleared the house, the thieves departed quietly, but we remained on our seats, saying not a syllable. Towards morning a police officer came round on his tour of inspection, and, seeing our door opened, walked in. Having searched all the rooms and found no one, he entered the apartment where we were seated, and inquired the meaning of what he saw. Neither my wife nor I would condescend to reply. The officer became angry, and ordered our heads to be cut off. The executioner's sword was just about to perform its office, when my wife cried out, 'Sir, he is my husband, spare him!'

"'Oh, oh!' I exclaimed, overjoyed and clapping my hands, 'you have lost the wager; go, shut the door.'

"I then explained the whole affair to the police officer, who shrugged his shoulders and went away, leaving us in a truly dismal plight. Immediately after I went to a coffee-house, where you deigned to honour me with a salutation."

At the conclusion of this story the bey, who was ready to die with laughter, exclaimed, "This time it is you who are in the right; you are truly entitled to my respects."

III.

THE STORY OF PRINCE KHALAF AND THE PRINCESS OF CHINA.

Prince Khalaf was the son of an aged khan of the Nagäi-Tartars. The history of his time makes honourable mention of his name. It relates that he surpassed all the princes of the age in beauty, in wisdom, and in valour; that he was as learned as the greatest doctors of his age; that he could fathom the deepest mysteries of the commentaries on the Koran; and that he knew by heart the sayings of the prophet: it speaks of him, in short, as the hero of Asia and the wonder of the East.

This prince was the soul of the councils of his father Timurtasch. When he gave advice, the most accomplished statesmen approved it, and could not sufficiently admire his prudence and wisdom. If, moreover, it were necessary to take up arms, he was immediately seen at the head of the troops of the state, seeking out the enemy, engaging them and vanquishing them. He had already won several victories, and the Nagäis had rendered themselves so formidable by their repeated successes, that the neighbouring nations did not venture to quarrel with them.

Such was the prosperous state of affairs in the khan's dominions, when an ambassador from the sultan of Carisma arrived at the court of Timurtasch, and demanded in the name of his master that the Nagäis should henceforth pay him a yearly tribute; he added that in default he would come in person, with an overwhelming force, and compel them to submit, at the same time depriving their sovereign of his crown as a punishment for his refusal. On hearing this arrogant message, the khan immediately assembled his council in order to decide whether to pay the tribute rather than risk a war with so powerful an enemy, or whether to treat his menaces with contempt and prepare to repel the invaders. Khalaf, with the majority of the council, were of the latter opinion, and the ambassador being dismissed with a refusal, took his departure for Carisma.

The khan lost no time in sending deputies to the neighbouring nations, in order to represent to them that it was to their interest to unite with him against the sultan of Carisma, whose ambition now exceeded all bounds, and who would undoubtedly exact the same tribute from them if he should succeed in conquering the Nagäis. The deputies succeeded in these negotiations; the neighbouring nations and tribes, and amongst them the Circassians, engaged to join in the proposed confederation, and to furnish among them a quota of fifty thousand men. On this promise, the khan proceeded to raise fresh troops, in addition to the army which he already had on foot.

While the Nagäis were making these preparations, the sultan of Carisma assembled an army of two hundred thousand men, and crossed the Jaxartes at Cogende. He marched through the countries of Ilac and Saganac, where he found abundance of provisions; and had advanced as far as Jund, before the army of the khan, commanded by prince Khalaf, was able to take the field, in consequence of the Circassians and the other auxiliary troops not having been able sooner to join him. As soon as these succours arrived, Khalaf marched direct towards Jund, but he had scarcely passed Jenge Kemt, when his scouts informed him that the enemy was close at hand, and was advancing to attack him. The young prince immediately ordered his troops to halt, and proceeded to arrange them in order of battle.

The two armies were nearly equal in numbers, and the men who composed them equally courageous. The battle which ensued was bloody and obstinate. The sultan did all that a warrior skilled in the conduct of armies could do; and the prince Khalaf, on his side, more than could be expected from so young a general. At one time the Nagäi-Tartars had the advantage, at another they were obliged to yield to the Carismians; at last both parties, alternately victors and vanquished, were obliged by the approach of night to sound a retreat. The combat was to have recommenced in the morning; but, in the mean time, the leader of the Circassians went secretly to the sultan, and offered to abandon the cause of the Nagäis, provided the sultan would pledge himself, on oath, never to exact tribute from the Circassians upon any pretence whatever. The sultan having consented, the treaty was confirmed, and the Circassian leader, instead of occupying his place next day in the army of the khan, detached his troops from the Nagäis, and took the road back to his own country.

This treachery was a terrible blow to prince Khalaf, who, seeing himself now much weakened in numbers, would have withdrawn for the time from the conflict; but there was no possibility of retreat. The Carismians advanced furiously to the charge, and taking advantage of the ground which allowed them to extend their lines, they surrounded the Nagäis on all sides. The latter, notwithstanding that they had been deserted by their best auxiliaries, did not lose their courage. Animated by the example of their prince, they closed their ranks, and for a long time firmly sustained the terrible onset of their enemies. At last, however, resistance became hopeless, and Khalaf, seeing all hope at an end, thought of nothing but his escape, which he fortunately succeeded in effecting. The moment the sultan was apprised of his flight, he sent six thousand horsemen to endeavour to capture him, but he eluded their pursuit, by taking roads that were unknown to them; and after a few days' hard riding through unfrequented and unknown tracts, arrived at his father's court, where he spread sorrow and consternation, by the disastrous tidings he brought.

If this piece of news deeply afflicted Timurtasch, the intelligence he next received drove him to despair. An officer who had escaped from the battle, brought word that the sultan of Carisma had put to the sword nearly all the Nagäis, and that he was advancing with all possible speed, fully resolved to put the whole family of the khan to death, and to absorb the nation into his own kingdom. The khan then repented of having refused to pay the tribute, but he fully recognized the force of the Arab proverb, "When the city is in ruins, what is the use of repentance?" As time pressed, and it was necessary to fly, for fear of falling into the hands of the sultan, the khan, the princess Elmaze (diamond), his wife, and Khalaf, made a selection of all their most precious treasures, and departed from the capital, Astracan, accompanied by several officers of the palace, who refused to abandon them in their need, as well as by such of the troops as had cut their way through the ranks of their enemies with the young prince.

They directed their march towards Bulgaria; their object being to beg an asylum at the court of some sovereign prince. They had now been several days on their journey, and had gained the Caucasus, when a swarm of some four thousand suddenly poured down upon them from that range. Although Khalaf had scarcely a hundred men with him, he steadily received the furious attack of the robbers, of whom numbers fell; his troops, however, were by degrees overpowered and slaughtered, and he himself remained in the power of the bandits, some of whom fell upon the spoil, whilst others butchered the followers of the khan. They only spared the lives of that prince, his wife, and his son, leaving them, however, almost naked in the midst of the mountains.

It is impossible to describe the grief of Timurtasch when he saw himself reduced to this extremity. He envied the fate of those whom he had seen slain before his eyes, and giving way to despair, sought to destroy himself. The princess burst into tears, and made the air resound with her lamentations and groans. Khalaf alone had strength to support the weight of their misfortunes; he was possessed of an indomitable courage. The bitter lamentations which the khan and his wife uttered were his greatest trouble. “Oh, my father! Oh, my mother!” said he, “do not succumb to your misfortunes. Remember that it is God who wills that you should be thus wretched. Let us submit ourselves without a murmur to his absolute decrees. Are we the first princes whom the rod of justice has struck? How many rulers before us have been driven from their kingdoms, and after wandering about for years in foreign lands, sharing the lot of the most abject of mortals, have been in the end restored to their thrones! If God has the power to pluck off crowns, has He not also the power to restore them? Let us hope that He will commiserate our misery, and that He will in time change into prosperity the deplorable condition in which we now are.”

With such arguments he endeavoured to console his father and mother, and to some extent succeeded; they experienced a secret consolation, and at last allowed themselves to take comfort. “So be it, my son,” said the khan, “let us bow to Providence; and since these evils which encompass us are written in the book of fate, let us endure them without repining.” At these words the royal party made up their minds to be firm under their misfortunes, and proceeded to continue their journey on foot, the robbers having taken their horses. They wandered on for a long time, living upon the fruits they found in the valleys; but at length they entered upon a desert, where the earth yielded nothing upon which they could subsist, and now their courage deserted them. The khan, far advanced in years, began to feel his strength fail him; and the princess, worn out with the fatigue of the journey she had made, could scarcely hold out any longer. In this predicament, Khalaf, although wofully tired himself, had no resource but to carry them by turns on his shoulders. At last all three, overwhelmed by hunger, thirst, and weariness, arrived at a spot abounding with frightful precipices. It was a hill, very steep, and intersected with deep chasms, forming what appeared to be dangerous passes. Through these, however, seemed to be the only way by which to enter upon the vast plain which stretched out beyond; for both sides of the hill were so encumbered with brambles and thorns, that it was impossible to force a way through. When the princess perceived the chasms, she uttered a piercing cry, and the khan at length lost his patience. He rushed furiously forward. "I can bear this no longer," said he to his son; "I yield to my hard destiny; I succumb to so much suffering. I will throw myself headlong into one of these deep gulfs, which, doubtless, Heaven has reserved for my tomb. I will escape the tyranny of wickedness. I prefer death to such a miserable existence."

The khan, yielding himself up to the frenzy which had taken possession of him, was on the point of throwing himself down one of the precipices, when prince Khalaf seized him in his arms and held him back. "Oh, my father!" said he, "what are you doing? Why give way to this transport of fury? Is it thus that you show the submission you owe to the decrees of Heaven? Calm yourself. Instead of displaying a rebellious impatience of its will, let us endeavour to deserve by our constancy its compassion and favour. I confess that we are in a deplorable state, and that we can scarcely take a step without danger amidst these abysses; but there may be another road by which we can enter the plain: let me go and see if I can find one. In the mean time, my lord, calm the violence of your transports, and remain near the princess; I will return immediately."

"Go, then, my son," replied the khan, "we will await you here; do not fear that I will any longer give way to despair."

The young prince traversed the whole hill without being able to discover any path. He was oppressed with the deepest grief; he threw himself on the ground, sighed, and implored the help of Heaven. He rose up, and again searched for some track that would conduct them to the plain. At length he found one. He followed it, returning thanks to Heaven for the discovery, and advanced to the foot of a tree which stood at the entrance of the plain, and which covered with its shade a fountain of pure transparent water. He also perceived other trees laden with fruit of an extraordinary size. Delighted with this discovery, he ran to inform his father and mother, who received the news with the greater joy, since they now began to hope that Heaven had begun to compassionate their misery.

Khalaf conducted them to the fountain, where all three bathed their faces and their hands and quenched the burning thirst which consumed them. They then ate of the fruits which the young prince gathered for them, and which, in their state of exhaustion from want of food, appeared to them delicious. “My lord,” said Khalaf to his father, “you see the injustice of your complaints. You imagined that Heaven had forsaken us; I implored its succour, and it has succoured us. It is not deaf to the voice of the unfortunate who put their whole trust in its mercy.”

They remained near the fountain two or three days to repose and recruit their wasted strength. After that they collected as much of the fruit as they could carry, and advanced into the plain, hoping to find their way to some inhabited place. They were not deceived in their expectations; they soon perceived before them a town which appeared large and splendidly built. They made their way to it, and having arrived at the gates, resolved to remain there and wait for night, not wishing to enter the town during the day, covered with dust and perspiration, and with what little clothing the robbers had left them, travel-worn and rent with brambles. They selected a tree which cast a delicious shade, and stretched themselves upon the grass at its foot. They had reposed there some time, when an old man came out of the town and directed his steps to the same place, to enjoy the cool shade. He sat down near them after making them a profound obeisance. They in turn saluted him, and then inquired what was the name of the town. “It is called Jaic,” replied the old man. “The king, Ileuge-Khan, makes it his residence. It is the capital of the country, and derives its name from the river which flows through it. You must be strangers since you ask me that question." "Yes," replied the khan, "we come from a country very far from here. We were born in the kingdom of Chrisnia, and we dwell upon the banks of the Caspian Sea; we are merchants. We were travelling with a number of other merchants in Captchak; a large band of robbers attacked our caravan and pillaged us; they spared our lives, but have left us in the situation in which you see us. We have traversed mount Caucasus, and found our way here without knowing where we were directing our steps."

The old man, who had a compassionate heart for the distress of his neighbour, expressed his sympathy for their misfortunes, and, to assure them of his sincerity, offered them shelter in his house. He made the offer with such cordiality, that, even if they had not needed it, they would have felt some difficulty in refusing.

As soon as night set in he conducted them to his home. It was a small house, very plainly furnished; but every thing was neat, and wore the appearance rather of simplicity than of poverty. As the old man entered he gave some orders in an undertone to one of his slaves, who returned in a short time followed by two boys, one of whom carried a large bundle of men's and women's clothes ready made, the other was laden with all sorts of veils, turbans, and girdles. Prince Khalaf and his father each took a caftan of cloth and a brocaded dress with a turban of Indian muslin, and the princess a complete suit. After this their host gave the boys the price of the clothes, sent them away, and ordered supper. Two slaves brought the table and placed upon it a tray covered with dishes of china, sandal, and aloe-wood, and several cups of coral perfumed with ambergris. They then served up a repast, delicate, yet without profusion. The old man endeavoured to raise the spirits of his guests; but perceiving that his endeavours were vain, "I see clearly," said he, "that the remembrance of your misfortunes is ever present to your minds. You must learn how to console yourselves for the loss of the goods of which the robbers have plundered you. Travellers and merchants often experience similar mishaps. I was myself once robbed on the road from Moussul to Bagdad. I nearly lost my life on that occasion, and I was reduced to the miserable condition in which I found you. If you please I will relate my history; the recital of my misfortunes may encourage you to support yours.” Saying this, the good old man ordered his slaves to retire, and spoke as follows.

THE STORY OF PRINCE AL ABBAS.

I am the son of the king of Moussul, the great Ben-Ortoc. As soon as I had reached my twentieth year, my father permitted me to make a journey to Bagdad; and, to support the rank of a king's son in that great city, he ordered a splendid suite to attend me. He opened his treasures and took out for me four camel-loads of gold; he appointed officers of his own household to wait upon me, and a hundred soldiers of his guard to form my escort.

I took my departure from Moussul with this numerous retinue in order to travel to Bagdad. Nothing happened the first few days; but one night, whilst we were quietly reposing in a meadow where we had encamped, we were suddenly attacked so furiously by an overwhelming body of Bedouin Arabs, that the greater part of my people were massacred almost before I was aware of the danger. After the first confusion I put myself at the head of such of the guards and officers of my father's household as had escaped the first onslaught, and charged the Bedouins. Such was the vigour of our attack, that more than three hundred fell under our blows. As the day dawned, the robbers, who were still sufficiently numerous to surround us on all sides, seeing our insignificant numbers, and ashamed and irritated by the obstinate resistance of such a handful of men, redoubled their efforts. It was in vain that we fought with the fury of desperation; they overpowered us; and at length we were forced to yield to numbers.

They seized our arms and stripped off our clothes, and then, instead of reserving us for slaves, or letting us depart, as people already sufficiently wretched, in the state to which we were reduced, they resolved to revenge the deaths of their comrades; and were cowards and barbarians enough to slaughter the whole of their defenceless prisoners. All my people perished; and the same fate was on the point of being inflicted on me, when making myself known to the robbers, "Stay, rash men," I exclaimed, "respect the blood of kings. I am prince Al Abbas, only son of Ben-Ortoc, king of Moussul, and heir to his throne." "I am glad to learn who thou art," replied the chief of the Bedouins. "We have hated thy father mortally these many years; he has hanged several of our comrades who fell into his hands; thou shalt be treated after the same manner."

Thereupon they bound me; and the villains, after first sharing among them all my baggage, carried me along with them to the foot of a mountain between two forests, where a great number of small grey tents were pitched. Here was their well-concealed camping ground. They placed me under the chief's tent, which was both loftier and larger than the rest. Here I was kept a whole day, after which they led me forth and bound me to a tree, where, awaiting the lingering death that was to put an end to my existence, I had to endure the mortification of finding myself surrounded by the whole gang, insulted with bitter taunts, and every feeling miserably outraged.

I had been tied to the tree for some considerable time, and the last moments of my life appeared fast approaching, when a scout came galloping in to inform the chief of the Bedouins that a splendid chance offered itself seven leagues from thence; that a large caravan was to encamp the next evening in a certain spot, which he named. The chief instantly ordered his companions to prepare for the expedition; this was accomplished in a very short time. They all mounted their horses, and left me in their camp, not doubting but at their return they would find me a corpse. But Heaven, which renders useless all the resolves of men which do not agree with its eternal decrees, would not suffer me to perish so young. The wife of the robber chief had, it seems, taken pity on me; she managed to creep stealthily, during the night, to the tree where I was bound, and said to me, "Young man, I am touched by thy misfortune, and I would willingly release thee from the dangers that surround thee; but, if I were to unbind thee, dost thou think that thou hast strength enough left to escape." I replied, "The same good God who has inspired thee with these charitable feelings will give me strength to walk." The woman loosed my cords, gave me an old caftan of her husband's, and showing me the road, "Take that direction," said she, "and thou wilt speedily arrive at an inhabited place." I thanked my kind benefactress, and walked all that night without deviating from the road she had pointed out.

The next day, I perceived a man on foot, who was driving before him a horse, laden with two large packages. I joined him, and, after telling him that I was an unfortunate stranger, who did not know the country, and had missed my way, I inquired of him where he was going. "I am going," replied he, "to sell my merchandise at Bagdad, and I hope to arrive there in two days." I accompanied this man, and only left him when I entered that great city; he went about his business, and I retired to a mosque, where I remained two days and two nights. I had no desire to go forth into the streets; I was afraid of meeting persons from Moussul, who might recognize me. So great was my shame at finding myself in this plight, that far from thinking of making my condition known, I wished to conceal it, even from myself. Hunger at length overcame my shame, or rather I was obliged to yield to that necessity which brooks no refusal. I resolved to beg my bread, until some better prospect presented itself. I stood before the lower window of a large house, and solicited alms with a loud voice. An old female slave appeared almost immediately, with a loaf in her hand, which she held out to me. As I advanced to take it, the wind by chance raised the curtain of the window, and allowed me to catch a glimpse of the interior of the chamber; there I saw a young lady of surpassing beauty; her loveliness burst upon my vision like a flash of lightning. I was completely dazzled. I received the bread without thinking what I was about, and stood motionless before the old slave, instead of thanking her, as I ought to have done.

I was so surprised, so confused, and so violently enamoured, that doubtless she took me for a madman; she disappeared, leaving me in the street, gazing intently, though fruitlessly, at the window, for the wind did not again raise the curtain. I passed the whole day awaiting a second favourable breeze. Not until I perceived night coming on, could I make up my mind to think of retiring; but before quitting the house, I asked an old man, who was passing, if he knew to whom it belonged. "It is," replied he, "the house of Mouaffac, the son of Adbane; he is a man of rank, and, moreover, a rich man and a man of honour. It is not long since he was the governor of the city, but he quarrelled with the cadi, who found means of ruining him in the estimation of the caliph, and thereby caused him to lose his appointment."

With my thoughts fully taken up by this adventure, I slowly wandered out of the city, and entering the great cemetery determined to pass the night there. I ate my bread without appetite, although my long fast ought to have given me a good one, and then lay down near a tomb, with my head resting on a pile of bricks. It was with difficulty that I composed myself to sleep: the daughter of Mouaffac had made too deep an impression upon me; the remembrance of her loveliness excited my imagination too vividly, and the little food I had eaten was not enough to cause the usual tendency to a refreshing sleep. At length, however, I dozed off, in spite of the ideas that filled my imagination; but my sleep was not destined to be of long duration; a loud noise within the tomb soon awoke me.

Alarmed at the disturbance, the cause of which I did not stay to ascertain, I started up, with the intention of flying from the cemetery, when two men, who were standing at the entrance of the tomb, perceiving me, stopped me, and demanded who I was, and what I was doing there. “I am,” I replied, “an unfortunate stranger, whom misfortune has reduced to live upon the bounty of the charitable, and I came here to pass the night, as I have no place to go to in the town.” “Since thou art a beggar,” said one of them, “thank Heaven that thou hast met with us; we will furnish thee with an excellent supper.” So saying, they dragged me into the tomb, where four of their comrades were eating large radishes and dates, and washing them down with copious draughts of raki.

They made me sit near them, at a long stone that served as a table, and I was obliged to eat and drink, for politeness’ sake. I suspected them to be what they really were, that is to say, thieves, and they soon confirmed my suspicions by their discourse. They began to speak of a considerable theft they had just committed, and thought that it would afford me infinite pleasure to become one of their gang; they made me the offer, which threw me into great perplexity. You may imagine that I had no desire to associate myself with such fellows, but I was fearful of irritating them by a refusal. I was embarrassed, and at a loss for a reply, when a sudden event freed me from my trouble. The lieutenant of the cadi, followed by twenty or thirty *asas* (archers) well armed, entered the tomb, seized the robbers and me, and took us all off to prison, where we passed the remainder of the night. The following day, the cadi came and interrogated the prisoners. The thieves confessed their crime, as they saw there was no use in denying it; for myself, I related to the judge how I had met with them, and, as they corroborated my statement, I was put on one side. The cadi wished to speak to me in private, before he set me free. Accordingly, he presently came over to me, and asked what took me into the cemetery where I was caught, and how I spent my time in Bagdad. In fact, he asked me a thousand questions, all of which I answered with great candour, only concealing the royalty of my birth. I recounted to him all that had happened to me, and I even told him of my having stopped before the window of Mouaffac’s house to beg, and of my having seen, by chance, a young lady who had charmed me.

At the name of Mouaffac I noticed the eyes of the cadi sparkle, with a curious expression. He remained a few moments immersed in thought; then, assuming a joyous countenance, he said, “Young man, it depends only on thyself to possess the lady thou sawest yesterday. It was doubtless Mouaffac’s daughter; for I have been informed that he has a daughter of exquisite beauty. Though thou wert the most abject of beings, I would find means for thee to possess the object of thine ardent wishes. Thou hast but to leave it to me, and I will make thy fortune.”

I thanked him, without being able to penetrate his designs, and then by his orders followed the aga of his black eunuchs, who released me from the prison, and took me to the bath.

Whilst I was there, the judge sent two of his *tchaous* (guards) to Mouaffac’s house, with a message that the cadi wished to speak to him upon business of the greatest importance. Mouaffac accompanied the guards back. As soon as the cadi saw him coming he went forward to meet him, saluted him, and kissed him several times. Mouaffac was in amazement at this reception.

“Ho! ho!” said he to himself, “how is this, that the cadi, my greatest enemy, is become so civil to me to-day? There is something at the bottom of all this.”

“Friend Mouaffac,” said the judge, “Heaven will not suffer us to be enemies any longer. It has furnished us with an opportunity of extinguishing that hatred which has separated our families for so many years. The prince of Bozrah arrived here last night. He left

Bozrah without taking leave of his father the king. He has heard of your daughter; and from the description of her beauty which he has received, he has become so enamoured of her, that he is resolved to ask her in marriage. He wishes me to arrange the marriage, — a task which is the more agreeable to me, as it will be the means of reconciling us."

"I am astounded," replied Mouaffac, "that the prince of Bozrah should have condescended to confer upon me the honour of marrying my daughter; and that you of all men should be the chosen means of communicating this happiness to me, as you have always shown yourself so anxious to injure me."

"Let us not speak of the past, friend Mouaffac," returned the cadi; "pray let all recollection of what we have done to annoy each other be obliterated in our happiness at the splendid connexion which is to unite your daughter with the prince of Bozrah; let us pass the remainder of our days in good fellowship."

Mouaffac was naturally as good and confiding as the cadi was crafty and bad: he allowed himself to be deceived by the false expressions of friendship that his enemy displayed. He stifled his hatred in a moment, and received without distrust the perfidious caresses of the cadi. They were in the act of embracing each other, and pledging an inviolable friendship, when I entered the room, conducted by the aga. This officer, on my coming out of the bath, had clothed me with a beautiful dress, which he had ready, and a turban of Indian muslin, with a gold fringe that hung down to my ear, and altogether my appearance was such as fully to bear out the statements of the cadi.

"Great prince," said the cadi as soon as he perceived me, "blessed be your feet, and your arrival in Bagdad, since it has pleased you to take up your abode with me. What tongue can express to you the gratitude I feel for so great an honour? Here is Mouaffac, whom I have informed of the object of your visit to this city. He consents to give you in marriage his daughter, who is as beautiful as a star."

Mouaffac then made me a profound obeisance, saying, "O son of the mighty, I am overwhelmed with the honour you are willing to confer upon my daughter; she would esteem herself sufficiently honoured in being made a slave to one of the princesses of your harem."

Judge of the astonishment that this discourse caused me. I knew not what to answer. I saluted Mouaffac without speaking; but the cadi, perceiving my embarrassment, and fearing lest I should make some reply which would destroy his plot, instantly took up the conversation.

"I venture to submit," said he, "that the sooner the marriage contract is made in presence of the proper witnesses the better." So saying, he ordered his aga to go for the witnesses, and in the mean time drew up the contract himself.

When the aga arrived with the witnesses, the contract was read before them. I signed it, then Mouaffac, and then the cadi, who attached his signature the last. The judge then dismissed the witnesses, and turning to Mouaffac said, "You know that with great people these affairs are not managed as with persons of humble rank. Besides, in this case you readily perceive that silence and despatch are necessary. Conduct this prince, then, to your house, for he is now your son-in-law; give speedy orders for the consummation of the marriage, and take care that every thing is arranged as becomes his exalted rank."

I left the cadi's house with Mouaffac. We found two mules richly caparisoned awaiting us at the door; the judge insisted upon our mounting them with great ceremony. Mouaffac conducted me to his house; and when we were in the court-yard dismounted first, and with a respectful air presented himself to hold my stirrup, — a ceremony to which of course I was obliged to submit. He then took me by the hand and conducted me to his daughter, with whom he left me alone, after informing her of what had passed at the cadi's.

Zemroude, persuaded that her father had espoused her to a prince of Bozrah, received me as a husband who would one day place her upon the throne, — and I, the happiest of men, passed the day at her feet, striving by tender and conciliating manners to inspire her with love for me. I soon perceived that my pains were not bestowed in vain, and that my youth and ardent affection produced a favourable impression upon her. With what rapture did this discovery fill me! I redoubled my efforts, and I had the gratification of remarking that each moment I made advances in her esteem.

In the mean time Mouaffac had prepared a splendid repast to celebrate his daughter’s nuptials, at which several members of his family were present. The bride appeared there more brilliant and more beautiful than the houris. The sentiments with which I had already inspired her, seemed to add new lustre to her beauty.

The next morning I heard a knock at my chamber-door; I got up and opened it. There stood the black aga of the cadi carrying a large bundle of clothes. I thought that perhaps the cadi had sent robes of honour to my wife and myself, but I was deceived.

“Sir adventurer,” said the negro in a bantering tone, “the cadi sends his salutations, and begs you to return the dress he lent you yesterday to play the part of the prince of Bozrah in. I have brought you back your own old garment, and the rest of the tatters, which are more suited to your station than the other.”

I was astounded at the application; my eyes were opened, and I saw through the whole malicious scheme of the cadi. However, making a virtue of necessity, I gravely restored to the aga the robe and turban of his master, and retook my own old caftan, which was a mass of rags. Zemroude had heard part of the conversation; and seeing me covered with rags, “O heavens!” she exclaimed, “what is the meaning of this change, and what has that man been saying to you?”

“My princess,” I replied, “the cadi is a great rascal, but he is the dupe of his own malice. He thinks he has given you a beggar for a husband, a man born in the lowest grade, but you are, indeed, the wife of a prince, and my rank is in no way inferior to that of the husband, whose hand you fancy you have received. I am to the full the equal of the prince of Bozrah, for I am the only son of the king of Moussul, and am heir to the kingdom of the great Ben-Ortoc; my name is Al Abbas.” I then related my history to her, without suppressing the least circumstance. When I had finished the recital,

“My prince,” said she, “even were you not the son of a great king, I should love you none the less; and, believe me, that if I am overjoyed to learn the circumstance of your exalted birth, it is but out of regard to my father, who is more dazzled by the honours of the world than I; my only ambition is to possess a husband who will love me alone, and not grieve me by giving me rivals.”

I did not fail to protest that I would love her, and her alone, all my life, with which assurance she appeared delighted. She then summoned one of her women, and ordered her to proceed with all speed and secrecy to a merchant's, and buy a dress, ready made, of the richest materials that could be procured. The slave who was charged with this commission acquitted herself in the most satisfactory manner. She returned speedily, bringing a magnificent dress and robe, and a turban of Indian muslin as handsome, even handsomer, than what I had worn the previous day, so that I found myself even more gorgeously dressed than on the occasion of my first interview with my father-in-law. "Well, my lord," said Zemroude, "do you think the cadi has much reason to be satisfied with his work? He thought to heap reproaches on my family, and he has bestowed upon it an imperishable honour. He thinks that we are now overwhelmed with shame. What will be his grief when he knows that he has conferred such a benefit upon his enemy? But before he is made aware of your birth, we must invent some means of punishing him for his wicked designs against us. I will take that task upon me. There is in this city a dyer, who has a daughter most frightfully ugly. I will not tell you further," she continued, checking herself. "I will not deprive you of the pleasure of the surprise. I shall only let you know that I have conceived a project which will drive the cadi nearly mad, and make him the laughingstock of the court and the city."

She then dressed herself in plain clothes, and covering her face with a thick veil, asked my permission to go out, which I granted her. She went alone, repaired to the cadi's house, and placed herself in one corner of the hall, where the judge gave audience.

He no sooner cast his eyes upon her, than he was struck with her majestic figure; he sent an officer to ask who she was, and what she desired. She answered that she was the daughter of an artisan in the town, and that she wished to speak to the cadi on important private business. The officer having borne her answer to the cadi, the judge made a sign to Zemroude to approach, and enter his private apartment, which was on one side of the court; she complied, making a low obeisance. When she entered the cadi's private apartment, she took her seat upon the sofa, and raised her veil. The cadi had followed her, and as he seated himself near her, was astonished at her beauty.

"Well! my dear child," said he, patronizingly, "of what service can I be to you?"

"My lord," she replied, "you, who have the power to make the laws obeyed, who dispense justice to rich and poor alike, listen, I pray you, to my complaint, and pity the unfortunate situation in which I am placed."

"Explain yourself," replied the judge, already moved, "and I swear by my head and my eyes that I will do every thing that is possible, ay, and impossible, to serve you."

"Know then, my lord," replied Zemroude, "that, notwithstanding the attractions which Heaven has bestowed upon me, I live in solitude and obscurity in a house, forbidden not only to men, but even to women, so that even the conversation of my own sex is denied me. Not that advantageous proposals were at one time wanting for my hand; I should have been married long ago, if my father had not had the cruelty to refuse me to all who have asked me in marriage. To one he says, I am as withered as a dead tree; to another, that I am bloated with unnatural fat; to this one, that I am lame, and have lost the use of my hands; to that one, that I have lost my senses, that I have a cancer on my back, that I am dropsical; in fact, he wishes to make me out a creature not worthy the society of human beings, and has so decried me, that he has at length succeeded in making me the reproach of the human race; nobody inquires about me now, and I am condemned to perpetual celibacy."

When she ceased speaking she pretended to weep, and played her part so well that the judge allowed himself to be deceived.

"What can be the reason, my angel," said he, "that your father prevents your marrying? What can his motive be?"

"I know not, my lord," replied Zemroude; "I cannot conceive what his intentions can be; but I confess my patience is exhausted. I can no longer live in this state. I have found means to leave home, and I have escaped to throw myself into your arms, and to implore your help; take pity on me, I implore you, and interpose your authority, that justice may be done to me, otherwise I will not answer for my life."

"No, no," replied he, "you shall not die, neither shall you waste your youth in tears and sighs. It only remains with yourself to quit the darkness in which your perfections are buried, and to become this very day the wife of the cadi of Bagdad. Yes, lovely creature, more fair than the houris, I am ready to marry you, if you will consent."

"My lord," replied the lady, "even were not your station one of the most dignified and honourable in the city, I could have no objection to give you my hand, for you appear to be one of the most amiable of men; but I fear that you will not be able to obtain the consent of my father, notwithstanding the honour of the alliance."

"Don't trouble yourself upon that point," replied the judge, "I will pledge myself as to the issue; only tell me in what street your father lives, what his name is, and what his profession."

"His name is Ousta Omar," replied Zemroude; "he is a dyer, he lives upon the eastern quay of the Tigris, and in front of his door is a palm-tree laden with dates."

"That is enough," said the cadi; "you can return home now; you shall soon hear from me, depend upon my word."

The lady, after bestowing a gracious smile upon him, covered her face again with her veil, left the private chamber, and returned to me.

"We shall be revenged," she said, laughing gaily; "our enemy, who thought to make us the sport of the people, will himself become so."

The judge had scarcely lost sight of Zemroude, ere he sent an officer to Ousta Omar, who was at home. "You are to come to the cadi," said the man, "he desires to speak with you, and he commanded me to bring you before him." The dyer grew pale at these words, he thought that some one had lodged a complaint against him before the judge, and that it was on that account the officer had come to fetch him. He rose, however, and followed in silence, but in great uneasiness.

As soon as he appeared before the cadi, the judge ordered him into the same chamber where he had had the interview with Zemroude, and made him sit upon the same sofa. The artisan was so astonished at the honour paid him, that he changed colour several times.

"Master Omar," said the cadi, "I am glad to see you; I have heard you spoken very well of this long time past. I am informed that you are a man of good character, that you regularly say your prayers five times a day, and that you never fail to attend the great mosque on Friday; besides, I know that you never eat pork, and never drink wine nor date-spirits; in fact, that whilst you are at work one of your apprentices reads the Koran."

"That is true," replied the dyer; "I know above four thousand *hadits* (sayings of Mahomet), and I am making preparations for a pilgrimage to Mecca."

"I assure you," replied the cadi, "that all this gives me the greatest pleasure, for I passionately love all good mussulmen. I am also informed that you keep concealed at home a daughter of an age to marry; is that true?"

"Great judge," answered Ousta Omar, "whose palace serves as a haven and refuge for the unfortunate who are tossed about by the storms of the world, they have told you true. I have a daughter who is old enough, in all conscience, to be married, for she is more than thirty years old; but the poor creature is not fit to be presented to a man, much less to so great a man as the cadi of Bagdad; she is ugly, or rather frightful, lame, covered with blotches, an idiot; in a word, she is a monster whom I cannot take too much pains to hide from the world."

"Indeed," said the cadi, "that is what I expected, master Omar. I was certain that you would thus praise your daughter; but know, my friend, that this blotchy, idiotic, lame, frightful person, in short, this monster, with all her defects, is loved to distraction by a man who desires her for his wife, and that man is myself."

At this speech the dyer seemed to doubt whether he were awake; he pinched himself, rubbed his eyes, and then looking the cadi full in the face, said,

"If my lord, the cadi, wishes to be merry, he is master; he may make a jest of my child as much as he pleases."

"No, no," replied the cadi, "I am not joking, I am in love with your daughter, and I ask her in marriage."

The artisan at these words burst into a fit of laughter. "By the prophet," cried he, "somebody wants to give you something to take care of. I give you fair warning, my lord, that my daughter has lost the use of her hands, is lame, dropsical."

"I know all about that," replied the judge, "I recognize her by her portrait. I have a peculiar liking for that sort of girls, they are my taste."

"I tell you," insisted the dyer, "she is not a fit match for you. Her name is Cayfacattaddhari (the monster of the age), and I must confess that her name is well chosen."

"Come, come!" replied the cadi, in an impatient and imperious tone, "this is enough, I am sick of all these objections. Master Omar, I ask you to give me this Cayfacattaddhari just as she is, so not another word."

The dyer, seeing him determined to espouse his daughter, and more than ever persuaded that some person had made him fall in love with her upon false representations for fun, said to himself, "I must ask him a heavy *scherbeha* (dowry): the amount may disgust him, and he will think no more of her."

"My lord," said he, "I am prepared to obey you; but I will not part with Cayfacattaddhari unless you give me a dowry of a thousand golden sequins beforehand."

"That is rather a large sum," said the cadi, "still I will pay it you." He immediately ordered a large bagful of sequins to be brought, a thousand were counted out, which the dyer took after weighing them, and the judge then ordered the marriage contract to be drawn out. When, moreover, it was ready for signature, the artisan protested that he would not sign it except in the presence of a hundred lawyers at least.

"You are very distrustful," said the cadi; "but never mind, I will satisfy your wishes, for I don't intend to let your daughter slip through my fingers." He thereupon sent immediately for all the neighbouring doctors, alfayins, mollahs, persons connected with the mosques and courts of law, of whom far more crowded in than the dyer required.

When all the witnesses had arrived at the cadi's, Ousta Omar spoke thus,

"My lord cadi, I give you my daughter in marriage, since you absolutely require me to do so; but I declare before all these gentlemen that it is on condition, that if you are not satisfied with her when you see her, and you wish afterwards to repudiate her, you will give her a thousand gold sequins, such as I have received from you."

"Well! so be it," replied the cadi, "I promise it before all this assembly. Art thou content?" The dyer replied in the affirmative, and departed, saying that he would send the bride.

He had scarcely left the house before the enamoured judge gave orders to have an apartment furnished in the most splendid manner to receive his new bride. Velvet carpets were laid down, new draperies hung up, and sofas of silver brocade placed round the walls, whilst several braziers perfumed the chamber with delicious scents. All was at length in readiness, and the cadi impatiently awaited the arrival of Cayfacattaddhari. The fair bride, however, not making her appearance so speedily as his eagerness expected, he called his faithful aga, and said, "The lovely object of my affections ought to be here by this time, I think. What can detain her so long at her father's? How slow the moments appear which retard my happiness!" At length his impatience could brook no longer delay, and he was on the point of sending the aga to Ousta Omar's, when a porter arrived carrying a deal case covered with green taffeta.

"What hast thou got there, my friend," inquired the judge.

"My lord," replied the porter, placing the box on the ground, "it is your bride; you have only to take off the covering and you will see what she is like."

The cadi removed the cloth and saw a girl three feet and a half high: she had a lank visage covered with blotches, eyes sunk deep in their sockets and as red as fire, not the least vestige of a nose, but above her mouth two horrid wide nostrils like those of a crocodile. He could not look at this object without horror; he hastily replaced the cover, and, turning to the porter, cried,

"What am I to do with this miserable creature?"

"My lord," replied the porter, "it is the daughter of master Omar, the dyer, who told me you had married her from choice."

"Merciful heavens!" exclaimed the cadi, "is it possible to marry such a monster as that?"

At that moment the dyer, who had foreseen the surprise of the judge, arrived.

"Wretch," said the cadi, "what dost thou take me for? Thou certainly hast an amazing amount of impudence to dare to play me such a trick as this. Dost thou dare thus to treat me who have it in my power to revenge myself on my enemies; me who, when I please, can put the like of thee in fetters? Dread my wrath, wretch! Instead of the hideous monster which thou hast sent me, give me instantly thy other daughter, whose beauty is unparalleled, or thou shalt experience what an angry cadi can do!"

"My lord," replied Omar, "spare your threats, I beg, and don't be angry with me. I swear by the Creator of the light that I have no other daughter but this. I told you a thousand times that she would not suit you; you would not believe — whose fault is it?"

The cadi at these words felt his soul sink within him, and said to the dyer,

"Master Omar, a damsel of the most exquisite loveliness came here this morning and told me that you were her father, and that you represented her to the world as a perfect monster, indeed so much so, that no one would ask her in marriage."

"My lord," returned the dyer, "that girl must have been playing you a trick; you must have some enemy."

The cadi bent his head on his bosom, and remained some time in deep thought.

"It is a misfortune that was destined to befal me; let us say no more about it; have your daughter taken back home; keep the thousand sequins you have got, but don't ask for any more, if you wish us to be friends."

Although the judge had sworn before witnesses that he would give a thousand sequins more if Omar's daughter did not please him, the artisan did not dare to endeavour to compel him to keep his word, for he knew him to be a most vindictive man, and one who would easily find an opportunity of revenging himself upon any one he disliked, and was, of course, afraid to offend him. He thought it better to be content with what he had received.

"My lord," said he, "I will obey you, and relieve you of my daughter, but you must, if you please, divorce her first."

"Oh! true," said the cadi; "I have not the least objection; be assured that shall soon be done."

Accordingly, he instantly sent for his naib, and the divorce was made out in due form, after which master Omar took leave of the judge, and ordered the porter to bear the wretched Cayfacattaddhari back home.

This adventure was speedily noised all over the city. Every body laughed at it, and warmly applauded the trick which had been played upon the cadi, who could not escape the ridicule in which the whole city indulged at his expense. We carried our revenge still further. By Mouaffac's advice, I presented myself before the prince of the faithful, to whom I told my name and related my story. I did not suppress, as you may imagine, the circumstances which put the malice of the cadi in so strong a light. The caliph, after listening to me with the greatest attention, received me very graciously. "Prince," said he, "why did you not come at once to me? Doubtless you were ashamed of your condition, but you might, without a blush, have presented yourself before my face, even in your wretched state. Does it depend upon men themselves to be happy or unhappy? Is it not Allah that spins the thread of our destiny? Ought you to have feared an ungracious reception? No! You know that I love and esteem king Ben-Ortoc, your father; my court was a safe asylum for you."

The caliph embraced me, and conferred on me a *gulute* (robe of honour) and a beautiful diamond which he wore on his finger. He regaled me with excellent sherbet, and when I returned to my father-in-law's house, I found six large bales of Persian brocade, gold and silver, two pieces of damask, and a beautiful Persian horse richly caparisoned. In addition, he reinstated Mouaffac in the government of Bagdad; and as to the cadi, by way of punishment for his malicious attempt to deceive Zemroude and her father, he deposed him, and condemned him to perpetual imprisonment, and, to crown his misery, ordered him as a companion in his confinement the daughter of Ousta Omar.

A few days after my marriage, I sent a courier to Moussul, to inform my father of all that had happened to me since my departure from his court, and to assure him that I would return shortly, with the lady whom I had married. I waited most impatiently for the return of the courier; but, alas! he brought me back news which deeply afflicted me. He informed me that Ben-Ortoc having heard that four thousand Bedouin Arabs had attacked me, and that my escort had been cut to pieces, persuaded that I no longer lived, took my supposed death so much to heart that he died; that prince Amadeddin Zingui, my cousin-german, occupied the throne; that he reigned with equity; and that, nevertheless, although he was generally beloved, the people no sooner learned that I was still alive, than they gave themselves up to the greatest joy. Prince Amadeddin himself, in a letter which the courier placed in my hands, assured me of his fidelity, and expressed his impatience for my return, in order that he might restore the crown to me, and become the first subject in my dominions.

This news decided me to hasten my return to Moussul. I took my leave of the prince of the faithful, who ordered a detachment of three thousand cavalry of his own guard to escort me to my kingdom, and, after embracing Mouaffac and his wife, I departed from Bagdad with my beloved Zemroude, who would almost have died of grief at the separation from her parents, if her love for me had not somewhat moderated the violence of her sorrow. About halfway between Bagdad and Moussul, the vanguard of my escort discovered a body of troops marching towards us. Concluding at once that it was a body of Bedouin Arabs, I immediately drew up my men, and was fully prepared for the attack, when my scouts brought me word, that those whom we had taken for robbers and enemies were, in fact, troops from Moussul, who had set out to meet me, with Amadeddin at their head.

This prince, on his part, having learned who we were, left his little army to meet me, accompanied by the principal nobles of Moussul. When he reached the spot where I was awaiting him, he addressed me in the same tone in which his letter had been couched, submissively and respectfully, whilst all the nobles who accompanied him assured me of their zeal and fidelity. I thought it my duty to show my entire confidence in them, by dismissing the soldiers of the caliph's guard. I had no reason to repent of this step; far from being capable of forming any treacherous design, prince Amadeddin did all in his power to give me proofs of his attachment.

When we came to Moussul, our safe and auspicious arrival was celebrated by gifts to the mosques, abundant alms to the poor, fêtes, and an illumination of the palace gardens with lamps of a thousand different colours. The people in general testified the delight they felt at my return by acclamations, and for a space of three days gave themselves up entirely to great rejoicings. The booths of the itinerant merchants, and the bazaars, were hung within and without with draperies, and at night they were lit up by lamps, which formed the letters of a verse of the Koran, so that every shop having its particular verse, this holy book was to be read entire in the city; and it appeared as though the angel Gabriel had brought it a second time in letters of light to our great prophet.

In addition to this pious illumination, before each shop were placed large dishes, plates of pillau, of all sorts of colours, in the form of pyramids, and huge bowls of sherbet and pomegranate juice, for the passers-by to eat and drink at pleasure. In all the cross streets were to be seen dancers, displaying their graceful evolutions to the sounds of drums, lutes, and tambourines.

The different trades formed a procession, consisting of cars decorated with tinsel and many-coloured flags, and with the tools used in their trades; and after traversing the principal streets, defiled to the music of pipes, cymbals, and trumpets, before my balcony, where Zemroude was sitting by my side, and after saluting us, shouted at the top of their voices, “Blessing and health to thee, Apostle of God, God give the king victory.”

It was not enough for me to share these honours with the daughter of Mouaffac, my study was to find out every thing that would afford her any pleasure. I caused her apartments to be adorned with every thing most rare and pleasing to the sight. Her suite was composed of twenty-five young Circassian ladies, slaves in my father’s harem; some sang and played the lute exquisitely, others excelled on the harp, and the rest danced with the greatest grace and lightness. I also gave her a black aga, with twelve eunuchs, who all possessed some talent which might contribute to her amusement.

I reigned over faithful and devoted subjects; every day I loved Zemroude more and more, and she as ardently reciprocated my attachment.

My days passed thus in perfect happiness, till one day a young dervise appeared at my court. He introduced himself to the principal nobles, and gained their friendship by his pleasing and agreeable manners, as well as by his wit and his happy and brilliant repartees. He accompanied them to the chase, he entered into all their gaieties, and was a constant guest at their parties of pleasure. Every day some of my courtiers spoke to me of him as a man of charming manners, so that at last they excited in me a desire to see and converse with the agreeable stranger. Far from finding his portrait overdrawn, he appeared to me even more accomplished than they had represented him. His conversation charmed me, and I was disabused of an error into which many persons of quality fall, namely, that men of wit and high sentiment are only to be met with at court. I experienced so much pleasure in the company of the dervise, and he seemed so well suited to manage affairs of the greatest importance, that I wished to appoint him my minister, but he thanked me, and told me he had made a vow never to accept any employment, that he preferred a free and independent life, that he despised honours and riches, and was content with what God, who cares for the lowest animals, should provide for him; in a word, he was content with his condition.

I admired a man so much raised above worldly considerations, and conceived the greatest esteem for him; I received him with pleasure each time he presented himself at court; if he was among the crowd of courtiers my eyes sought him out, and to him I most frequently addressed myself; I insensibly became so attached to him, that I made him my exclusive favourite.

One day during a hunt, I had strayed from the main body of my followers, and the dervise was alone with me. He began by relating his travels, for although young he had travelled extensively. He spoke of several curious things he had seen in India, and, amongst others, of an old Bramin whom he knew. “This great man,” said he, “knew an infinity of secrets, each more extraordinary than the former. Nature had no mystery but what he could fathom. He died in my arms,” said the dervise, “but as he loved me, before he expired he said, ‘My son, I wish to teach you a secret by which you may remember me, but it is on condition that you reveal it to no one.’ I promised to keep it inviolate, and on the faith of my promise he taught me the secret.”

“Indeed!” said I, “what is the nature of the secret? Is it the secret of making gold?”

“No, sire,” replied he, “it is a greater and much more precious secret than that. It is the power of reanimating a dead body. Not that I can restore the same soul to the body it has left, Heaven alone can perform that miracle; but I can cause my soul to enter into a body deprived of life, and I will prove it to your highness whenever you shall please.”

“Most willingly!” said I, “now, if you please.”

At that moment there passed by us most opportunely a doe; I let fly an arrow, which struck her, and she fell dead. “Now let me see,” said I, “if you can reanimate this creature.”

“Sire,” replied the dervise, “your curiosity shall soon be gratified; watch well what I am about to do.”

He had scarcely uttered these words, when I beheld with amazement his body fall suddenly without animation, and at the same moment I saw the doe rise with great nimbleness. I will leave you to judge of my surprise. Although there was no room left to doubt what I beheld, I could hardly believe the evidence of my senses. The creature, however, came to me, fondled me, and after making several bounds, fell dead again, and immediately the body of the dervise, which lay stretched at my feet, became reanimated.

I was delighted at so wonderful a secret, and entreated the dervise to impart it to me.

“Sire,” said he, “I deeply regret that I cannot comply with your desire; for I promised the dying Bramin not to disclose it to any one, and I am a slave to my word.”

The more the dervise excused himself from satisfying my wishes, the more did I feel my curiosity excited.

“In the name of Allah,” said I, “do not refuse to comply with my entreaties. I promise thee never to divulge the secret, and I swear by Him who created us both never to employ it to a bad purpose.”

The dervise considered a moment, then turning to me said,

“I cannot resist the wishes of a king whom I love more than my life; I will yield to your desire. It is true,” added he, “that I only gave a simple promise to the Bramin. I did not bind myself by an inviolable oath. I will impart my secret to your highness. It consists only in remembering two words; it is sufficient to repeat them mentally to be able to reanimate a dead body."

He then taught me the two magic words. I no sooner knew them, than I burned to test their power. I pronounced them, with the intention to make my soul pass into the body of the doe, and in a moment I found myself metamorphosed into the animal. But the delight I experienced at the success of the trial was soon converted into consternation; for no sooner had my spirit entered into the body of the doe, than the dervise caused his to pass into mine, and then suddenly drawing my bow, the traitor was on the point of shooting me with one of my own arrows, when, perceiving his intention, I took to flight, and by my speed just escaped the fatal shaft. Nevertheless, he let fly the arrow at me with so true an aim, that it just grazed my shoulder.

I now beheld myself reduced to live with the beasts of the forests and mountains. Happier for me would it have been if I had resembled them more perfectly, and if in losing my human form, I had at the same time lost my power of reason. I should not then have been the prey to a thousand miserable reflections.

Whilst I was deploring my misery in the forests, the dervise was occupying the throne of Moussul; and fearing that, as I possessed the secret as well as himself, I might find means to introduce myself into the palace, and take my revenge upon him, on the very day he usurped my place he ordered all the deer in the kingdom to be destroyed, wishing, as he said, to exterminate the whole species, which he mortally hated. Nay, so eager was he for my destruction, that the moment he returned from the hunting expedition, he again set out at the head of a large body of followers, intent upon the indiscriminate slaughter of all the deer they might meet.

The people of Moussul, animated by the hope of gain, spread themselves all over the country with their bows and arrows; they scoured the forests, over-ran the mountains, and shot every stag and deer they met with. Happily, by this time I had nothing to fear from them; for, having seen a dead nightingale lying at the foot of a tree, I reanimated it, and under my new shape flew towards the palace of my enemy, and concealed myself among the thick foliage of a tree in the garden. This tree was not far from the apartments of the queen. There, thinking upon my misfortune, I poured forth in tender strains the melancholy that consumed me. It was one morning, as the sun rose, and already several birds, delighted to see its returning beams, expressed their joy by their minstrelsy. For my part, taken up with my griefs, I paid no attention to the brightness of the newborn day; but with my eyes sadly turned towards Zemroude's apartment, I poured forth so plaintive a song, that I attracted the attention of the princess, who came to the window. I continued my mournful notes in her presence, and I tried all the means in my power to render them more and more touching, as though I could make her comprehend the subject of my grief. But, alas! although she took pleasure in listening to me, I had the mortification to see, that instead of being moved by my piteous accents, she only laughed with one of her slaves, who had come to the window to listen to me.

I did not leave the garden that day, nor for several following, and I took care to sing every morning at the same spot. Zemroude did not fail to come to the window; and at length, by the blessing of Providence, took a fancy to have me. One morning she said to her female attendants, "I wish that nightingale to be caught; let birdcatchers be sent for. I love that bird; I doat upon it; let them try every means to catch it, and bring it to me." The queen's orders were obeyed; expert birdcatchers were found, who laid traps for me, and, as I had no desire to escape, because I saw that their only object in depriving me of my liberty was to make me a slave to my princess, I allowed myself to be taken. The moment I was brought to her she took me in her hand, with every symptom of delight. "My darling," said she, caressing me, "my charming bul-bul, I will be thy rose; I already feel the greatest tenderness for thee." At these words she kissed me. I raised my beak softly to her lips. "Ah! the little rogue," cried she laughing, "he appears to know what I say." At last, after fondling me, she placed me in a gold filigree cage, which an eunuch had been sent into the city to buy for me.

Every day as soon as she woke I began my song; and whenever she came to my cage to caress me or feed me, far from appearing wild, I spread out my wings, and stretched my beak towards her, to express my joy. She was surprised to see me so tame in so short a time. Sometimes she would take me out of the cage, and allow me to fly about her chamber. I always went to her to receive her caresses, and to lavish mine upon her; and if any of her slaves wished to take hold of me, I pecked at them with all my might. By these little insinuating ways I endeared myself so much to Zemroude, that she often said if by any mishap I were to die, she should be inconsolable, so strong was her attachment to me.

Zemroude also had a little dog in her chamber, of which she was very fond. One day, when the dog and I were alone, it died. Its death suggested to me the idea of making a third experiment of the secret. “I will pass into the body of the dog,” thought I, “for I wish to see what effect the death of her nightingale will produce upon the princess.” I cannot tell what suggested the fancy, for I did not foresee what this new metamorphosis would lead to; but the thought appeared to me a suggestion of Heaven, and I followed it at all risks.

When Zemroude returned to the room, her first care was to come to my cage. As soon as she perceived that the nightingale was dead, she uttered a shriek that brought all her slaves about her. “What ails you, madam?” said they in terrified accents. “Has any misfortune happened to you?”

“I am in despair,” replied the princess, weeping bitterly; “my nightingale is dead. My dear bird, my little husband, why art thou taken from, me so soon? I shall no more hear your sweet notes! I shall never see you again! What have I done to deserve such punishment from Heaven?”

All the efforts of her women to console her were in vain. The dervise had just returned from his murderous expedition, and one of them ran to acquaint him with the state in which they had found the queen. He quickly came and told her that the death of a bird ought not to cause her so much grief; that the loss was not irreparable; that if she was so fond of nightingales, and wanted another, it was easy to get one. But all his reasoning was to no purpose, he could make no impression upon her.

“Cease your endeavours,” she exclaimed, “to combat my grief, you will never overcome it. I know it is a great weakness to mourn so for a bird, I am as fully persuaded of it as you can be, still I cannot bear up against the force of the blow that has overwhelmed me. I loved the little creature; he appeared sensible of the caresses I bestowed on him, and he returned them in a way that delighted me. If my women approached him, he exhibited ferocity, or rather disdain; whereas he always came eagerly on to my hand when I held it out to him. It appeared as though he felt affection for me, he looked at me in so tender and languishing a manner, that it almost seemed as though he was mortified that he had not the power of speech to express his feelings towards me. I could read it in his eyes. Ah! I shall never think of him without despair." As she finished speaking her tears gushed out afresh, and she seemed as if nothing could ever console her.

I drew a favourable omen from the violence of her grief. I had laid myself down in a corner of the room, where I heard all that was said and observed all that passed without their noticing me. I had a presentiment that the dervise, in order to console the queen, would avail himself of the secret, and I was not disappointed.

Finding the queen inaccessible to reason, and being deeply enamoured of her, he was moved by her tears, and instead of persevering in fruitless arguments, he ordered the queen's slaves to quit the room and leave him alone with her. "Madam," said he, thinking that no one overheard him, "since the death of your nightingale causes you so much sorrow, he must be brought to life. Do not grieve, you shall see him alive again; I pledge myself to restore him to you; to-morrow morning, when you wake, you shall hear him sing again, and you shall have the satisfaction of caressing him."

"I understand you, my lord," said Zemroude; "you look upon me as crazed, and think that you must humour my sorrow; you would persuade me that I shall see my nightingale alive to-morrow; to-morrow you will postpone your miracle till the following day, and so on from one day to another; by this means you reckon on making me gradually forget my bird; or, perhaps," pursued she, "you intend to get another put in his place to deceive me."

"No, my queen," replied the dervise, "no; it is that very bird which you see stretched out in his cage without life; this very nightingale, the enviable object of such poignant grief; it is that very bird himself that shall sing. I will give him new life, and you can again lavish your caresses upon him. He will better appreciate that delight, and you shall behold him still more anxious to please you, for it will be I myself who will be the object of your endearments; every morning I will myself be his fresh life in order to divert you. I can perform this miracle," continued he; "it is a secret I possess; if you have any doubts upon it, or if you are impatient to behold your favourite reanimated, I will cause him to revive now immediately."

As the princess did not reply, he imagined from her silence that she was not fully persuaded he could accomplish what he professed; he seated himself on the sofa, and by virtue of the two cabalistic words left his body, or rather mine, and entered into that of the nightingale. The bird began to sing in its cage to the great amazement of Zemroude. But his song was not destined to continue long; for no sooner did he begin to warble than I quitted the body of the dog and hastened to retake my own. At the same time running to the cage, I dragged the bird out and wrung his neck. "What have you done, my lord?" cried the princess. "Why have you treated my nightingale thus? If you did not wish him to live, why did you restore him to life?"

"I thank Heaven!" cried I, without paying any regard to what she said, so much were my thoughts taken up with the feeling of vengeance which possessed me at the treacherous conduct of the dervise, "I am satisfied. I have at length avenged myself on the villain whose execrable treason deserved a still greater punishment."

If Zemroude was surprised to see her nightingale restored to life, she was not the less so to hear me utter these words with such fierce emotion.

"My lord," said she, "whence this violent transport which agitates you, and what do those words mean which you have just spoken?"

I related to her all that had happened to me, and she could not doubt that I was truly Al Abbas, because she had heard that the body of the dervise had been found in the forest, and she was also of course well acquainted with the order which he had given for destroying all the deer.

But my poor princess could not recover the shock her sensitive love had sustained. A few days after she fell ill, and died in my arms, literally frightened to death by the imminence of the danger from which she had just been so happily rescued.

After I had bewailed her, and erected a splendid tomb to her memory, I summoned the prince Amadeddin.

"My cousin," said I, "I have no children, I resign the crown of Moussul in your favour. I give the kingdom up into your hands. I renounce the regal dignity, and wish to pass the rest of my days in repose and privacy." Amadeddin, who really loved me, spared no arguments to deter me from taking the step I proposed, but I assured him that nothing could shake my resolution.

"Prince," said I, "my determination is fixed, I resign my rank to you. Fill the throne of Al Abbas, and may you be more happy than he. Reign over a people who know your merit, and have already experienced the blessings of your rule. Disgusted with pomp, I shall retire to distant climes, and live in privacy; there freed from the cares of state, I shall mourn over the memory of Zemroude, and recall the happy days we passed together."

I left Amadeddin upon the throne of Moussul, and, accompanied only by a few slaves, and carrying an ample supply of riches and jewels, took the road to Bagdad, where I arrived safely. I immediately repaired to Mouaffac's house. His wife and he were not a little surprised to see me, and they were deeply affected when I informed them of the death of their daughter, whom they had tenderly loved. The recital unlocked the fountains of my own grief, and I mingled my tears with theirs. I did not stay long in Bagdad, I joined a caravan of pilgrims going to Mecca, and after paying my devotions, found, by chance, another company of pilgrims from Tartary, whom I accompanied to their native country. We arrived in this city; I found the place agreeable, and took up my abode here, where I have resided for nearly forty years. I am thought to be a stranger who was formerly concerned in trade, and whose time is now passed in study and contemplation. I lead a retired life, and rarely see strangers. Zemroude is ever present to my thoughts, and my only consolation consists in dwelling fondly upon her memory and her virtues.

CONTINUATION OF THE STORY OF PRINCE KHALAF AND THE PRINCESS OF CHINA.

Al Abbas, having finished the recital of his adventures, thus addressed his guests:

"Such is my history. You perceive by my misfortunes and your own, that human life is but as a reed, ever liable to be bent to the earth by the bleak blasts of misfortune. I will, however, confess to you that I have led a happy and quiet life ever since I have been in Jaic; and that I by no means repent having abdicated the throne of Moussul; for in the obscurity in which I now live, I have discovered peaceful and tranquil joys which I never experienced before."

Timurtasch, Elmaze, and Khalaf bestowed a thousand flattering encomiums upon the son of Ben-Ortoc; the khan admired the resolution which had caused him to deprive himself of his kingdom, in order to live in privacy in a country of strangers, where the station which he had filled in the world was unknown. Elmaze praised the fidelity he displayed towards Zemroude, and the grief he experienced at her death. And Khalaf remarked, "My lord, it were to be wished that all men could display the same constancy in adversity which you have done, under your misfortunes."

They continued their conversation till it was time to retire. Al Abbas then summoned his slaves, who brought wax-lights in candlesticks made of aloe-wood, and conducted the khan, the princess, and her son to a suite of apartments, where the same simplicity reigned that characterized the rest of the house. Elmaze and Timurtasch retired to sleep in a chamber appropriated to themselves, and Khalaf to another. The following morning their host entered the chamber of his guests as soon as they were up, and said,

"You are not the only unfortunate persons in the world; I have just been informed that an ambassador from the sultan of Carisma arrived in the city last evening; that his master has sent him to Ileuge-Khan, to beg of him not only to refuse an asylum to the khan of the Nagäis, his enemy, but if the khan should endeavour to pass through his dominions, to arrest him. Indeed, it is reported," pursued Al Abbas, "that the unfortunate khan, for fear of falling into the hands of the sultan of Carisma, has left his capital and fled with his family." At this news, Timurtasch and Khalaf changed colour, and the princess fainted.

The swoon of Elmaze, as well as the evident trouble of the father and son, instantly caused Al Abbas to suspect that his guests were not merchants.

"I see," said he, as soon as the princess had recovered her senses, "that you take a deep interest in the misfortunes of the khan of the Nagäis; indeed, if I may be permitted to tell you what I think, I believe you are yourselves the objects of the sultan of Carisma's hatred."

"Yes, my lord," replied Timurtasch, "we are, indeed, the victims for whose immolation he is thirsty. I am the khan of the Nagäis, you behold my wife and my son; we should, indeed, be ungrateful, if we did not discover our position to you, after your generous reception, and the confidence you have reposed in us. I am encouraged even to hope, that by your counsels you will aid us to escape from the danger which threatens us."

"Your situation is most critical," replied the aged king of Moussul; "I know Ileuge-Khan well, and, as he fears the sultan of Carisma, I cannot doubt that, to please him, he will search for you every where. You will not be safe, either in my house or in any other in this city; the only resource left you, is to leave the country of Jaic as speedily as possible, cross the river Irtisch, and gain, with the utmost diligence, the frontiers of the tribe of the Berlas."

This advice pleased Timurtasch, his wife, and son. Al Abbas had three horses instantly got ready, together with provisions for the journey, and giving them a purse filled with gold; "Start immediately," said he, "you have no time to lose, by to-morrow, no doubt, Ileuge-Khan will cause search to be made for you every where."

They returned their heartfelt thanks to the aged monarch, and then quitted Jaic, crossed the Irtisch, and joining company with a camel-driver, who was travelling that way, arrived after several days' journey in the territories of the tribe of Berlas. They took up their quarters with the first horde they met, sold their horses, and lived quietly enough as long as their money lasted; but, as soon as it came to an end, the misery of the khan recommenced. “Why am I still in the world?” he began to exclaim. “Would it not have been better to have awaited my blood-thirsty foe in my own kingdom, and have died defending my capital, than to drag on a life which is only one continued scene of misery? It is in vain that we endure our misfortunes with patience; for, in spite of our submission to its decrees, Heaven will never restore us to happiness, but leaves us still the sport of misery.”

“My lord,” replied Khalaf, “do not despair of our miseries coming to an end. Heaven, which decrees these events, is preparing for us, I doubt not, some relief which we cannot foresee. Let us proceed at once,” added he, “to the principal horde of this tribe. I have a presentiment, that our fortunes will now assume a more favourable aspect.”

They all three proceeded accordingly to the horde with whom the khan of Berlas resided. They entered a large tent which served as a refuge for poor strangers. Here they laid themselves down, worn out with their journey, and at a loss at last to know how to obtain even the necessaries of life. Khalaf, however, quietly slipt out of the tent, leaving his father and mother there, and went through the horde, asking charity of the passers-by. By the evening he had collected a small sum of money, with which he bought some provisions, and carried them to his parents. When they learned that their son had actually solicited charity, they could not refrain from tears. Khalaf himself was moved by their grief, but cheerfully remarked, nevertheless, “I confess that nothing we have yet endured has appeared to me more mortifying than to be reduced to solicit alms; still, as at present I cannot procure you subsistence by any other means, is it not my duty to do it, in spite of the mortification it costs me? But,” he added, as though struck with a sudden thought, “there is still another resource — sell me for a slave, and the money you will receive will last you a long time.”

“What do you say, my son?” cried Timurtasch, when he heard these words. “Can you propose to us that we should live at the expense of your liberty? Ah! rather let us endure for ever our present misery. But if it should come to this, that one of us must be sold, let it be myself; I do not refuse to bear the yoke of servitude for you both.”

“My lord,” said Khalaf, “another thought strikes me; to-morrow morning I will take my station among the porters; some one may chance to employ me, and we may thus earn a living by my labour.” They agreed to this, and the following day the prince stationed himself among the porters of the horde, and waited till some one should employ him; but unfortunately no one wanted him, so that half the day passed and he had not had a single job. This grieved him deeply. “If I am not more successful than this,” thought he, “how am I to support my father and mother?”

He grew tired of waiting among the porters on the chance of some person wanting his services. He went out of the encampment and strolled into the country, in order to turn over in his mind undisturbedly the best means of earning a livelihood. He sat down under a tree, where, after praying Heaven to have pity on his perplexity, he fell asleep. When he woke he saw near him a falcon of singular beauty: its head was adorned with a tuft of gaudy feathers, and from its neck hung a chain of gold filigree-work set with diamonds, topazes, and rubies. Khalaf, who understood falconry, held out his fist, and the bird alighted on it. The prince of the Nagäis was delighted at the circumstance. “Let us see,” said he, “what this will lead to. This bird, from all appearance, belongs to the sovereign of the tribe.” Nor was he wrong. It was the favourite falcon of Almguer, khan of Berlas, who had lost it the previous day. His principal huntsmen were engaged at that moment in searching every where for it with the greatest diligence and uneasiness, for their master had threatened them with the severest punishments if they returned without his bird, which he loved passionately.

Prince Khalaf returned to the encampment with the falcon. As soon as the people of the horde saw it, they began to cry out, “Ha! here is the khan’s falcon recovered. Blessings on the youth who will make our prince rejoice by restoring him his bird.” And so it turned out, for when Khalaf arrived at the royal tent, and appeared with the falcon, the khan, transported with joy, ran to his bird and kissed it a thousand times. Then addressing the prince of the Nagäis, he asked him where he found it. Khalaf related how he had recovered the falcon. The khan then said to him, “Thou appearest to be a stranger amongst us; where wast thou born, and what is thy profession?"

"My lord," replied Khalaf, prostrating himself at the khan's feet, "I am the son of a merchant of Bulgaria, who was possessed of great wealth. I was travelling with my father and mother in the country of Jaic, when we were attacked by robbers, who stripped us of every thing but our lives, and we have found our way to this encampment actually reduced to beg our bread."

"Young man," replied the khan, "I am glad that it is thou who hast found my falcon; for I swore to grant to whomsoever should bring me my bird, whatever two things he might ask; so thou hast but to speak. Tell me what thou desirest me to grant thee, and doubt not that thou shalt obtain it." "Since I have permission to ask two things," returned Khalaf, "I request in the first place that my father and mother, who are in the strangers' tent, may have a tent to themselves in the quarter where your highness resides, and that they may be supported during the rest of their days at your highness's expense, and waited on by officers of your highness's household; secondly, I desire to have one of the best horses in your highness's stables and a purse full of gold, to enable me to make a journey which I have in contemplation." "Thy wishes shall be gratified," said Almguer; "thou shalt bring thy father and mother to me, and from this day forth I will begin to entertain them as thou desirest; and to-morrow, dressed in rich attire, and mounted on the best horse in my stables, thou shalt be at liberty to go wherever it shall please thee. Thy modesty, the filial love which is imprinted upon thy features, thy youth, thy noble air, please me; be my guest, come and join my festivities, and thou shalt listen to an Arabian story-teller, whose knowledge and imaginative powers instruct and amuse my tribes."

The khan and the son of Timurtasch presently seated themselves at a table loaded with viands, confectionary, fruit, and flowers; gazelle venison, red-legged partridges, pheasants, and black cock were displayed as trophies of the skill of the hunter king. The Arab stationed near the khan awaited his orders. "Moustapha," said the khan at length, turning to the Arab, "I have been extolling thy knowledge and wit to my guest; surpass thyself, and let him see that I have not exaggerated. He shall give thee a subject; treat it in such a manner as to deserve his praise."

“I am curious,” said the prince, “to hear of China; I ask thee to instruct me concerning the government of that important kingdom, and to give me an insight into the manners and customs of its people.”

The Arab reflected a moment, and then, prefacing his recital with a few general remarks, proceeded to depict in glowing colours this celestial empire, whose civilization dates back to the remotest ages of the world. He described its extent as equal to one-half of the habitable globe; its population as so numerous that it might be counted by hundreds of millions; he spoke of cities, each of which alone brought a revenue to their crown, which surpassed that of entire kingdoms; of those gigantic works, the canals, whose extent equalled the course of the largest rivers, which traversed the vast empire. And he foretold that a time would come when Tartar warriors should scale that very wall which the terror of their arms had caused to be built, and should again reconquer the whole of that wealthy tract. He then began his story as follows.

THE STORY OF LIN-IN.

A CHINESE TALE.

At Wou-si, a town dependent upon the city of Tchang-tcheou, in the province of Kiang-nan, there resided a family in the middle sphere of life. Three brothers composed the family; the name of the eldest was Lin-in (the jasper); the second Lin-pao (the precious); the youngest Lin-tchin (the pearl); this last was not yet old enough to marry; the other two had taken wives to themselves. The wife of the first was named Wang; the wife of the second Yang; and both possessed every grace which can constitute the charm of woman.

Lin-pao's engrossing passions were gambling and wine; he evinced no inclination to good. His wife was of a similar disposition, and depraved in her conduct; she was very different from her sister-in-law Wang, who was a pattern of modesty and propriety. So although these two women lived together on neighbourly terms, there was but little real sympathy between them.

Wang had a son named Hi-eul, that is to say, "the son of rejoicing." He was a child of six years old. One day having stopped in the street with some other children, to look at a great procession in the neighbourhood, he was lost in the crowd, and in the evening did not return to the house.

This loss caused the deepest sorrow to his parents. They had handbills posted up, and there was not a street in which they did not make inquiries, but all to no purpose; they could gain no intelligence respecting their darling child. Lin-in was inconsolable; and giving way to the grief that overwhelmed him, he sought to fly from his home, where every thing brought back the remembrance of his dear Hi-eul. He borrowed a sum of money from one of his friends to enable him to carry on a small trade in the neighbourhood of the city and the adjacent villages, hoping that in one of these short excursions he might be able to recover the treasure he had lost.

As his whole thoughts were taken up with his child, he took little pleasure in the circumstance that his trade flourished. He nevertheless continued to pursue it during five years, without making long journeys from home, whither he returned every year to spend the autumn. At length, being utterly unsuccessful in discovering the least trace of his son after so many years, and concluding that he was lost to him for ever, and finding moreover that his wife Wang bore him no more children, as he had now amassed a good sum of money, he determined to divert his thoughts from painful recollections by trading in another province.

He joined the company of a rich merchant travelling the road he had fixed upon; and the merchant, having observed his aptitude for business, made him a very advantageous offer. The desire of becoming wealthy now took possession of him, and diverted his thoughts from their accustomed channel.

Within a very short time after their arrival in the province of Chan-si every thing had succeeded to their utmost wishes. They found a quick sale for their merchandise, and the profits arising from it was considerable. The payments, however, were delayed for two years in consequence of a drought and famine which afflicted the country, as well as by a tedious illness by which Lin-in was attacked. They were detained altogether three years in the province; after which, having recovered his money and his health, he took his departure to return to his own country.

He halted one day during his journey near a place named Tchin-lieou to recruit his strength, and strolling round the neighbourhood accidentally came upon a girdle of blue cloth, in the form of a long, narrow bag, such as is worn round the body, under the dress, and in which money is usually kept; as he took it up, he found the weight considerable. He retired to a quiet spot, opened the girdle, and found it contained about two hundred täels.

At sight of this treasure he fell into the following train of reflection: “My good fortune has placed this sum in my hands; I might keep it and employ it for my own use without fearing any unpleasant consequences. Still the person who has dropt it, the moment he discovers his loss, will be in great distress, and will return in haste to look for it. Do they not say that our forefathers dared scarcely touch money found in this way; and if they picked it up, only did so with a view of restoring it to its owner? This appears to me a very praiseworthy custom, and I will imitate it, the more so as I am growing old and have no heir. Of what benefit would money got by such means be to me?”

Whilst thus reasoning, he had wandered to some distance from the spot where he had found the money; he now, however, retraced his steps to the place, and waited there the whole day, to be ready in case the owner should return. Nobody came, however, and the next day he continued his journey.

After five days' travelling, he arrived in the evening at Nan-sou-tcheou, and took up his quarters at an inn where several other merchants were staying. The conversation having turned upon the advantages of commerce, one of the company said, "Five days ago, on leaving Tchin-lieou, I lost two hundred täels, which I had in an inside girdle. I had taken it off, and placed it near me whilst I lay down to sleep, when a mandarin and his cortége chanced to pass by. I hastened to get out of the way for fear of insult, and in my hurry forgot to take up my money. It was only at night, as I was undressing to go to bed, that I discovered my loss. I felt sure that as the place where I lost my money was by the side of a well-frequented road, it would be useless to delay my journey for several days in order to look for what I should never find."

Every one condoled with him on his loss. Lin-in asked him his name and place of abode. "Your servant," replied the merchant, "is named Tchin, and lives at Yang-tcheou, where he has a shop and a large warehouse. May I be so bold in return to inquire to whom I have the honour of speaking?" Lin-in told him his name, and said that he was an inhabitant of the town of Wou-si. "My shortest road there," added he, "lies through Yang-tcheou; and, if agreeable to you, I shall have much pleasure in your company so far."

Tchin acknowledged this politeness in a becoming manner. "Most willingly," said he; "we will continue our journey together, and I esteem myself very fortunate in meeting with such an agreeable companion." The journey was not long, and they soon arrived at Yang-tcheou.

After the usual civilities, Tchin invited his fellow-traveller to his house, and on their arrival there immediately ordered refreshments to be brought. Whilst they were discussing their meal, Lin-in managed to turn the conversation on the subject of the lost money.

"What," he asked, "was the colour of the girdle which contained your money, and of what material was it made?"

"It was of blue cloth," replied Tchin; "and what would enable me to identify it is, that at one end the letter Tchin, which is my name, is embroidered upon it in white silk."

This description left no doubt as to the owner. Lin-in, therefore, rejoined in a cheerful tone, "If I have asked you all these questions, it was merely because passing through Tchin-lieou, I found a belt such as you describe." At the same time producing it, he added, "Look if this is yours." "The very same," said Tchin. Whereupon Lin-in politely restored it to its owner.

Tchin, overwhelmed with gratitude, pressed him to accept the half of the sum which it contained; but his entreaties were in vain, Lin-in would receive nothing. "What obligations am I not under to you?" resumed Tchin; "where else should I find such honesty and generosity?" He then ordered a splendid repast to be brought, over which they pledged each other with great demonstrations of friendship.

Tchin thought to himself, "Where should I find a man of such probity as Lin-in? Men of his character are very scarce in these days. What! shall I receive from him such an act of kindness, and not be able to repay him? I have a daughter twelve years old; I must form an alliance with such an honest man. But has he got a son? On this point I am entirely ignorant."

"My dear friend," said he, "how old is your son?"

This question brought tears into the eyes of Lin-in. "Alas!" replied he, "I had but one, who was most dear to me. It is now eight years ago since my child, having run out of the house to see a procession pass by, disappeared; and from that day to this I have never been able to learn any thing of him; and, to crown my misfortune, my wife has not borne me any more children."

Upon hearing this, Tchin appeared to think for a moment, then, continuing the conversation, said, "My brother and benefactor, of what age was the child when you lost him?" "About six years old," replied Lin-in. "What was his name?" "We called him Hi-eul," returned Lin-in. "He had escaped all the dangers of the small-pox which had left no traces upon his countenance; his complexion was clear and florid."

This description gave the greatest pleasure to Tchin, and he could not prevent his satisfaction from displaying itself in his looks and manner. He immediately called one of his servants, to whom he whispered a few words. The servant, having made a gesture of obedience, retired into the interior of the house.

Lin-in, struck by the questions, and the joy which lit up the countenance of his host, was forming all sorts of conjectures, when he saw a youth of about fourteen years of age enter the room. He was dressed in a long gown, with a plain though neat jacket. His graceful form, his air and carriage, his face with its regular features, and his quick and piercing eyes, and finely arched black eyebrows, at once engaged the admiration and riveted the attention of Lin-in.

As soon as the youth saw the stranger seated at table, he turned towards him, made a low bow, and uttered some respectful words; then approaching Tchin, and standing modestly before him, he said in a sweet and pleasing tone, “My father, you have called Hi-eul; what are you pleased to command?” “I will tell you presently,” replied Tchin, “in the mean time stand beside me.”

The name of Hi-eul, by which the youth called himself, excited fresh suspicions in the breast of Lin-in. A secret sympathy suddenly forced itself upon him; and by one of those wonderful instincts of nature which are so unerring, recalled to his recollection the image of his lost child, his form, his face, his air, and manners; he beheld them all in the youth before him. There was but one circumstance that made him doubt the truth of his conjectures, and that was his addressing Tchin by the name of ‘father.’ He felt it would be rude to ask Tchin if the youth really were his son; perhaps he might truly be so, for it was not impossible that there might be two children bearing the same name, and in many respects resembling each other.

Lin-in, absorbed in these reflections, paid little attention to the good cheer placed before him. Tchin could read on the countenance of Lin-in the perplexing thoughts that filled his mind. An indescribable charm seemed to attract him irresistibly towards the youth. He kept his eyes constantly fixed upon him, he could not turn them away. Hi-eul, on his part, despite his bashfulness and the timidity natural to his age, could not help gazing intently upon Lin-in; it seemed as though nature was revealing his father to him.

At length Lin-in, no longer master of his feelings, suddenly broke the silence, and asked Tchin if the youth really was his son.

"I am not," replied Tchin, "really his father, although I look upon him as my own child. Eight years ago, a man passing through this city, leading this child in his hand, addressed me by chance, and begged me to assist him in his great need. 'My wife,' said he, 'is dead, and has left me with this child. The impoverished state of my affairs has compelled me to leave my native place, and go to Hoaingan to my relations, from whom I hope to receive a sum of money, to enable me to set up in business again. I have not wherewith to continue my journey to that town, will you be so charitable as to lend me three täels? I will faithfully restore them on my return, and I will leave as a pledge all that I hold most dear in the world, my only son; I shall no sooner reach Hoaingan, than I will return and redeem my dear child.'

"I felt gratified by this mark of confidence, and I gave him the sum he asked. As he left me he burst into tears, and gave every evidence of the grief he felt in leaving his child. I was, however, surprised that the child did not exhibit the least emotion at the separation; as, however, time wore on, and the pretended father did not return, suspicions began to rise, which I was anxious to set at rest. I called the child, and by various questions I put to him, learned that he was born in Wou-si, that having one day run out to see a procession pass by, he had strayed too far from home, and lost his way, and that he had been trepanned and carried off by a stranger. He also told me the name of his father and mother; indeed, it is that of your own family. I thus discovered that the fellow, so far from being the father of the poor child, was the identical rascal who had carried him off. Not only was my compassion excited, but the boy's pleasing manners had entirely won my heart; I treated him from that time as one of my own children, and I sent him to college with my own son, to study with him. I have often entertained the plan of going to Wou-si, to inquire after his family. But business of some kind always prevented me from undertaking the journey, of which, however, I had never fully relinquished the idea; when, happily, a few moments ago, you chanced in the course of conversation to mention your son, my suspicions were aroused, and upon the extraordinary coincidence of your tale, and the circumstances of which I was acquainted, I sent for your child to see if you would recognize him."

At these words Hi-eul wept for joy, and his tears caused those of Lin-in to flow copiously. "A peculiar mark," said he, "will prove his identity; a little above the left knee you will find a small black spot, which has been there from his birth." Hi-eul pulled up the leg of his trouser, and showed the spot in question. Lin-in, on seeing it, threw himself upon the neck of the child, covered him with kisses, and folded him in his arms. "My child," cried he, "my dear child, what happiness for your father to find you after so many years' absence."

It is not difficult to conceive to what transports of joy the father and son delivered themselves up, during these first moments of pleasure. After a thousand tender embraces, Lin-in at length tore himself from the arms of his son, and made a profound obeisance to Tchin. "What gratitude do I not owe you," said he, "for having received my son into your house, and brought up this dear portion of myself with so much care. But for you we should never have been united."

"My kind benefactor," replied Tchin, rising, "it was the act of disinterested generosity you practised towards me, in restoring the two hundred täels, which moved the compassion of Heaven. It is Heaven that conducted you to my house, where you have found him whom you sought in vain for so many years. Now that I know that good youth is your son, I regret that I have not treated him with greater consideration."

"Kneel, my son," said Lin-in, "and thank your generous benefactor."

Tchin was about to return these salutations, when Lin-in himself prevented him, overcome with this excess of respect. This interchange of civilities being over they resumed their seats, and Tchin placed little Hi-eul on a seat by his father's side.

Then Tchin resuming the conversation, said, "My brother (for henceforth that is the title by which I shall address you), I have a daughter twelve years of age, and it is my intention to give her in marriage to your son, in order that the union may cement our friendship more closely." This proposition was made in so sincere and ardent a manner, that Lin-in did not feel it right to make the usual excuses that good breeding prescribed. He therefore waived all ceremony, and gave his consent at once.

As it was growing late, they separated for the night. Hi-eul slept in the same chamber with his father. You may imagine all the tender and affectionate conversation that passed between them during the night. The next day Lin-in prepared to take leave of his host, but he could not resist his pressing invitation to remain. Tchin had prepared a second day's festivity, in which he spared no expense to regale the future father-in-law of his daughter, and his new son-in-law, and thereby to console himself for their departure. They drank and sang, and gave themselves up fully to the hilarity of the occasion.

When the repast was ended, Tchin drew out a packet of twenty täels, and looking towards Lin-in, said, "During the time my dear son-in-law has been with me, it is possible he may have suffered many things against my wish, and unknown to me; here is a little present I wish to make him, until I can give him more substantial proofs of my affection. I will not hear of a refusal."

"What!" replied Lin-in, "at a time when I am contracting an alliance so honourable to me, and when I ought, according to custom, to make marriage presents for my son, presents which I am prevented from doing at this moment, only because I am travelling, do you load me with gifts? I cannot accept them; the thought covers me with confusion."

"Well!" replied Tchin, "I am not dreaming of offering *you* such a trifle. It is for my son-in-law, not the father-in-law of my daughter, that I intend this present. Indeed, if you persist in the refusal, I shall consider it as a sign that the alliance is not agreeable to you."

Lin-in saw that he must yield, and that resistance would be useless. He humbly accepted the present, and making his son rise from table, ordered him to make a profound reverence to Tchin. "What I have given you," said Tchin, raising him up, "is but a trifle, and deserves no thanks." Hi-eul then went into the house to pay his respects to his mother-in-law. The whole day passed in feasting and diversions; it was only at night that they separated.

When Lin-in retired to his chamber, he gave himself up entirely to the reflections to which these events gave rise. "It must be confessed," cried he, "that by restoring the two hundred täels, I have done an action pleasing to Heaven, and now I am rewarded by the happiness of finding my child, and contracting so honourable an alliance. This is, indeed, joy upon joy; it is like putting gold flowers upon a beautiful piece of silk. How can I be sufficiently grateful for so many favours? Here are the twenty täels that my friend Tchin has given me; can I do better than employ them towards the maintenance of some virtuous bonzes? It will be sowing them in a soil of blessings."

The next day, after breakfast, the father and son got ready their luggage, and took leave of their host; they proceeded to the quay, hired a boat, and commenced their journey. They had scarcely gone half a league, ere they came in sight of a scene of terrible excitement; the river was full of struggling people, whose cries rent the air. A bark, full of passengers, had just sunk, and the cries of the unfortunate creatures for help were heart-rending! The people on the shore called loudly to several small boats which were near to come to the rescue. But the hard-hearted and selfish boatmen demanded that a good sum should be guaranteed them, before they would bestir themselves. At this critical moment Lin-in's boat came up. The moment he perceived what was going on, he said to himself: "It is a much more meritorious action to save the life of a man, than to adorn the temples and support bonzes. Let us consecrate the twenty täels to this good work; let us succour these poor drowning souls." He instantly proclaimed that he would give the twenty täels amongst those who would take the drowning men into their boats.

At this offer all the boatmen crowded towards the scene of the disaster, and the river was, in a moment, covered with their boats; at the same time, some of the spectators on shore, who knew how to swim, threw themselves into the water, and, in a few moments, all were saved, without exception. Lin-in then distributed amongst the boatmen the promised reward.

The poor creatures, snatched from a watery grave, came in a body to return thanks to their preserver. One amongst them, having looked attentively at Lin-in, suddenly cried out, "What! is that you, my eldest brother? By what good luck do I find you here?"

Lin-in, turning towards him, recognized his youngest brother, Lin-tchin. Then, transported with joy, he exclaimed, clasping his hands, "O wonderful circumstance! Heaven has led me hither to save my brother's life." He instantly reached out his hand to him, and made him come into his boat, helped him off with his wet clothes, and gave him others.

As soon as Lin-tchin had sufficiently recovered, he paid the respects due to an elder brother which good breeding demands from a younger, and Lin-in, having acknowledged his politeness, called Hi-eul, who was in the cabin, to come and salute his uncle; he then recounted all his adventures, which threw Lin-tchin into a state of amazement, from which he was a long time in recovering. "But tell me," said Lin-in, at length, "your motive in coming to this country."

"It is not possible," replied Lin-tchin, "to tell you in a few words the reason of my travels. In the course of the three years which have elapsed since your departure from home, the melancholy news of your death from illness reached us. My second brother made every inquiry, and assured himself that the report was true. It was a thunderbolt for my sister-in-law; she was inconsolable, and put on the deepest mourning. For my part, I could not give credit to the report. After a few days had elapsed, my second brother tried all in his power to induce my sister-in-law to contract a fresh marriage. She, however, steadily rejected the proposal; at length she prevailed upon me to make a journey to Chan-si, to ascertain upon the spot what had become of you; and, when I least expected it, at the point of perishing in the water, the very person I was in search of, my well-beloved brother, has saved my life. Is not this unexpected good fortune, a blessing from Heaven? But believe me, my brother, there is no time to be lost; make all possible haste to return home, and to put an end to my sister-in-law's grief. The least delay may cause an irreparable misfortune."

Lin-in, overwhelmed at this news, sent for the captain of the boat, and, although it was late, ordered him to set sail, and continue the voyage during the night.

Whilst all these events were happening to Lin-in, Wang, his wife, was a prey to the most poignant grief. A thousand circumstances led her to suspect that her husband was not dead; but Lin-pao, who by that reported death became the head of the family, so positively assured her that it was true, that, at last, she had allowed herself to be persuaded into that belief, and had assumed the widow's weeds.

Lin-pao possessed a bad heart, and was capable of the most unworthy acts. “I have no doubt,” said he, “of my elder brother’s death. My sister-in-law is young and handsome; she has, besides, no one to support her; I must force her to marry again, and I shall make money by this means.”

He thereupon communicated his plan to Yang, his wife, and ordered her to employ some clever matchmaker. But Wang resolutely rejected the proposal; she vowed that she would remain a widow, and honour the memory of her husband by her widowhood. Her brother-in-law, Lin-tchin, supported her in her resolution. Thus all the artifices which Lin-pao and his wife employed were useless; and, as every time they urged her on the subject it occurred to her that they had no positive proof of his death, “I am determined,” said she, at length, “to know the truth; these reports are often false; it is only on the very spot that certain information can be obtained. True, the distance is nearly a hundred leagues. Still, I know that Lin-tchin is a good-hearted man; he will travel to the province of Chan-si to relieve my anxiety, and learn positively if I am so unfortunate as to have lost my husband; and, if I have, he will, at least, bring me his precious remains.”

Lin-tchin was asked to undertake the journey, and, without a moment’s hesitation, departed. His absence, however, only rendered Lin-pao more eager in the pursuit of his project. To crown the whole, he had gambled very deeply, and, having been a heavy loser, was at his wit’s end to know where to obtain money. In this state of embarrassment, he met with a merchant of Kiang-si, who had just lost his wife, and was looking for another. Lin-pao seized upon the opportunity, and proposed his sister-in-law to him. The merchant accepted the offer, taking care, however, to make secret inquiries whether the lady who was proposed to him was young and good-looking. As soon as he was satisfied on these points, he lost no time, and paid down thirty täels to clinch the bargain.

Lin-pao, having taken the money, said to the merchant, “I ought to warn you, that my sister-in-law is proud and haughty. She will raise many objections to leaving the house, and you will have a great deal of trouble to force her to do it. Now this will be your best plan for managing it. This evening, as soon as it gets dark, have a palanquin and good strong bearers in readiness; come with as little noise as possible, and present yourself at the door of the house. The young woman who will come to the door, attired in the head-dress of mourners, is my sister-in-law; don't say a word to her, and don't listen to what she may say, but seize her at once, thrust her into your palanquin, carry her to your boat, and set sail at once." This plan met with the approbation of the merchant, and its execution appeared easy enough of accomplishment.

In the mean time, Lin-pao returned home, and, in order to prevent his sister-in-law from suspecting any thing of the project he had planned, he assumed an air of the most perfect indifference, but as soon as she left the room, he communicated his plans to his wife, and, alluding to his sister-in-law, in a contemptuous manner, said, "That two-legged piece of goods must leave this house to-night. However, not to be a witness of her tears and sighs, I shall go out beforehand, and, as it gets dark, a merchant of Kiang-si will come, and take her away in a palanquin to his boat."

He would have continued the conversation, when he heard the footsteps of some person outside the window, and went hurriedly away. In his haste he forgot to mention the circumstance of the mourning dress. It was doubtless an interposition of Providence that this circumstance was omitted. The lady Wang easily perceived that the noise she made outside the window had caused Lin-pao to break off the conversation suddenly. The tone of his voice plainly showed that he had something more to say; but she had heard enough; for having remarked by his manner that he had some secret to tell his wife when he entered the house, she had pretended to go away, but listening at the window had heard these words distinctly, "They will take her away and put her into a palanquin."

These words strongly fortified her suspicions. Her resolution was taken at once. She entered the room, and approaching Yang, gave utterance to her anxiety. "My sister-in-law," said she, "you behold an unfortunate widow, who is bound to you by the strongest ties of a friendship which has been always sincere. By this long-standing friendship I conjure you to tell me candidly whether my brother-in-law still persists in his design of forcing me into a marriage that would cover me with disgrace."

At these words Yang at first appeared confused, and changed colour; then, assuming a more confident expression, “What are you thinking of?” she asked, “and what fancies have you got into your head? If there were any intention of making you marry again, do you think there would be any difficulty? What is the good of throwing oneself into the water before the ship is really going to pieces?”

The moment the lady Wang heard this allusion to the ship, she understood more clearly the meaning of the secret conference of her brother-in-law with his wife. She now suspected the worst, and gave vent to her lamentations and sighs; and yielding to the current of her grief, she shut herself up in her room, where she wept, groaned, and bewailed her hard lot. “Unfortunate wretch that I am,” cried she, “I do not know what has become of my husband. Lin-tchin, my brother-in-law and friend, upon whom alone I can rely, is gone on a journey. My father, mother, and relations live far from hence. If this business is hurried on, how shall I be able to inform them of it? I can hope for no assistance from our neighbours. Lin-pao has made himself the terror of the whole district, and every body knows him to be capable of the greatest villany. Miserable creature that I am! how can I escape his snares? If I do not fall into them to-day, it may be to-morrow, or at any rate in a very short time.”

She fell to the ground half dead; her fall, and the violence of her grief, made a great noise. The lady Yang, hearing the disturbance, hastened to her room, and finding the door firmly fastened, concluded that it was a plan of her distracted sister-in-law to evade the scheme of the night; she therefore seized a bar which stood by and broke the door open. As she entered the room, the night being very dark, she caught her feet in the clothes of the lady Wang, and fell tumbling over her. In her fall she lost her head-dress, which flew to some distance, and the fright and fall brought on a faint, in which she remained for some time. When she recovered she got up, went for a light, and returned to the room, where she found the lady Wang stretched on the floor, without motion and almost without breath.

At the moment she was going to procure other assistance, she heard a gentle knock at the door. She knew it must be the merchant of Kiang-si come to fetch the wife he had bought. She quickly ran to receive him and bring him into the room, that he might himself be witness of what had occurred; but remembering that she had no head-dress, and that she was unfit to present herself in that state, she hastily caught up the one she found at her feet, which was the lady Wang's head-dress of mourning, and ran to the door.

It was indeed the merchant of Kiang-si, who had come to fetch away his promised bride. He had a bridal palanquin, ornamented with silk flags, festoons, flowers, and several gay lanterns; it was surrounded by servants bearing lighted torches, and by a troop of flute and hautboy-players. The whole cortége was stationed in the street in perfect silence. The merchant, having knocked gently and finding the door open, entered the house with some of those who bore torches to light him.

Upon the lady Yang's appearance, the merchant, who spied at a glance the mourning head-dress, which was the mark by which he was to distinguish his bride, flew upon her like a hungry kite upon a sparrow. His followers rushed in, carried off the lady, and shut her into the palanquin, which was all ready to receive her. It was in vain she endeavoured to make herself heard, crying out, "You are mistaken; it is not me you want." The music struck up as she was forced into the palanquin, and drowned her voice, whilst the bearers flew rather than walked, and bore her to the boat.

Whilst all this was taking place, the lady Wang had gradually revived and come to her senses. The great hubbub she heard at the door of the house renewed her fears, and occasioned her the most painful anxiety; but as she found that the noise of music, and the tumult of voices, which had arisen so suddenly died gradually away in the distance, she regained her courage, and after a few minutes summoned up strength to go and inquire what was the matter.

After calling her sister-in-law two or three times without effect, the truth began to dawn on her; and after considering the matter carefully, she could only come to the conclusion that the merchant had made a mistake, and had carried off the wrong lady. But now a fresh cause of uneasiness arose; she dreaded the consequences when Lin-pao should return and be informed of the mistake. She shut herself up in her room, and after picking up the head-pins, the earrings, and the head-dress, which were lying on the floor, threw herself, quite worn out with fatigue and anxiety, on her couch, and endeavoured to get a little sleep, but she was not able to close her eyes all night.

At daybreak she rose and bathed her face, and proceeded to complete her toilet. As, however, she was searching about for her mourning head-dress, some one began making a great noise at the room-door, knocking loudly and crying out, “Open the door instantly!” It was, in fact, Lin-pao himself. She recognized the voice at once. She made up her mind at once what to do; she let him go on knocking without answering him. He swore, stormed and bawled, till he was hoarse. At length the lady Wang went to the door, and standing behind it without opening it, asked, “Who is knocking there, and making such a disturbance?” Lin-pao, who recognized the voice of his sister-in-law, began to shout still louder: but seeing that his storming had no effect, he had recourse to an expedient which proved successful. “Sister-in-law,” said he, “I have brought you good news! Lin-tchin, my youngest brother, has come back, and our eldest brother is in excellent health; open the door at once!”

Overjoyed at this intelligence, the lady Wang ran to complete her toilet, and in her haste put on the black head-dress that her sister-in-law had left behind, and eagerly opened the door; but, alas! in vain did she look for her friend Lin-tchin; no one was there but Lin-pao. He entered her room hurriedly and looked round, but not seeing his wife, and perceiving a black head-dress on the head of his sister-in-law, his suspicions began to be excited in a strange manner.

The Chinese mourning colour is white.

“Well! where is your sister-in-law?” he asked roughly.

“You ought to know better than I,” replied the lady Wang, “since you had the whole management of this admirable plot.”

“But tell me,” returned Lin-pao, “why don’t you still wear a white head-dress? have you left off mourning?” The lady Wang forthwith proceeded to relate to him all that had happened during his absence.

Just at this moment he caught sight through the window of four or five persons hurrying towards his house. To his utter astonishment he perceived that they were his eldest brother Lin-in, his youngest brother Lin-tchin, his nephew Hi-eul, and two servants carrying their luggage. Lin-pao, thunderstruck at this sight, and not having impudence enough to face them, ran off by the back-door, and disappeared like a flash of lightning.

The lady Wang was transported with joy at her husband's return. But who shall describe her ecstasies of joy when her son was presented to her? She could scarcely recognize him, so tall and handsome had he grown. "Oh!" cried she, "by what good fortune did you recover our dear child, whom I thought we had lost for ever?"

Lin-in gave her in detail an account of his adventures; and the lady Wang related at length all the indignities she had endured at the hands of Lin-pao, and the extremities to which she had been reduced by his scandalous treatment.

Lin-in lavished on his wife encomiums which indeed her fidelity deserved; after which, reflecting on the whole chain of events by which the present meeting had been brought about, he seemed deeply moved, and remarked, "If a blind passion for wealth had caused me to keep the two hundred täels I found by accident, how should I have ever met with our dear child? If avarice had prevented me from employing the twenty täels in saving those drowning people, my dear brother would have perished in the waves, and I should never have seen him; if by an unlooked-for chance I had not met my kind-hearted brother, how should I have discovered the trouble and confusion that reigned in this house in time to prevent its disastrous consequences? But for all this, my beloved wife, we should never have seen each other again. I recognize the special interposition of Providence in bringing about all these things. As to my other brother, that unnatural brother, who has unconsciously sold his own wife, he has drawn upon himself his own terrible punishment. Heaven rewards men according to their deserts; let them not think to escape its judgments.

"Let us learn from this how profitable in the end, as well as good, it is to practise virtue; it is that alone which bestows lasting prosperity upon a house."

In due course of time Hi-eul brought home his bride, the daughter of Tchin. The marriage was celebrated with great rejoicings, and proved a happy one. They had several children, and lived to see a crowd of grandchildren, several of whom became men of learning, and acquired important positions in the state.

CONTINUATION OF THE STORY OF PRINCE KHALAF AND THE PRINCESS OF CHINA.

The prince applauded the narrative of the story-teller; and, dinner being over, he prostrated himself a second time before the khan, and, after thanking him for his goodness, returned to the tent, where Elmaze and Timurtasch were anxiously expecting him. “I bring you good news,” said he to them; “our fortune has changed already.” He then related to them all that had passed. This fortunate event caused them the greatest pleasure; they regarded it as an infallible sign that the hardness of their destiny was beginning to soften. They willingly followed Khalaf, who conducted them to the royal tent and presented them to the khan. This prince received them with courtesy, and renewed to them the promise he had given to their son; and he did not fail to keep his word. He appointed them a private tent, caused them to be waited on by the slaves and officers of his household, and ordered them to be treated with the same respect as himself.

The next day Khalaf was arrayed in a rich dress; he received from the hand of Almguer himself a sabre with a diamond hilt and a purse full of gold sequins; they then brought him a beautiful Turcoman horse. He mounted before all the court; and to show that he understood the management of a horse, he made him go through all his paces and evolutions in a manner that charmed the prince and all his courtiers.

After having thanked the khan for all his benefits, he took his leave. He then sought Elmaze and Timurtasch; and after some time spent in desultory conversation, proceeded to unfold to them a scheme which for some days past had been agitating his mind. “I have a great desire,” said he, “to see the great kingdom of China; give me permission to gratify that wish. I have a presentiment that I shall signalize myself by some splendid action, and that I shall gain the friendship of the monarch who holds that vast empire under his sway. Suffer me to leave you in this asylum, where you are in perfect safety, and where you can want for nothing. I am following an impulse which inspires me, or rather, I am yielding myself to the guidance of Heaven.”

"Go, my son," replied Timurtasch; "yield to the noble impulse which animates you; hasten to the fortune that awaits you. Accelerate by your valour the arrival of that tardy prosperity which must one day succeed our misfortunes, or by a glorious death deserve an illustrious place in the history of unfortunate princes."

The young prince of the Nagäis, after having embraced his father and mother, mounted upon his beautiful charger, took a respectful leave of the khan, received from the hand of the princess Elmaze, who came out of her tent for the purpose, the parting cup, and set out on his journey. Historians do not mention that he encountered any thing worthy notice on his route; they only say that, having arrived at the great city Canbalac, otherwise Pekin, he dismounted at a house near the gate, where a worthy woman, a widow, lived. Khalaf reined up his horse here, and on the widow presenting herself at the door, he saluted her and said,

"My good mother, would you kindly receive a stranger? If you could give me a lodging in your house, I can venture to say that you will have no cause to regret it." The widow scrutinized him; and judging from his good looks, as well as from his dress, that he was no mean guest, she made him a low bow, and replied, "Young stranger of noble bearing, my house is at your service, and all that it contains."

"Have you also a place where I can put my horse?"

"Yes," said she, "I have," and called a young slave, who took the horse by the bridle, and led him into a small stable behind the house. Khalaf, who felt very hungry, then asked her if she would kindly send and buy something for him in the market. The widow replied, that she had a maiden who lived with her, and who would execute his orders. The prince then drew from his purse a sequin of gold and placed it in the girl's hand, who went off to the market.

In the mean time, the widow had enough to do to answer the inquiries of Khalaf. He asked her a thousand questions; what were the customs of the inhabitants of the city? how many families Pekin was said to contain? and, at length, the conversation fell upon the king of China.

"Tell me, I pray you," said Khalaf, "what is the character this prince bears. Is he generous, and do you think that he would pay any regard to a young stranger, who might offer to serve him against his enemies? In a word, is he a man to whose interests I could worthily attach myself?"

"Doubtless," replied the widow; "he is an excellent prince, who loves his subjects as much as he is beloved by them, and I am surprised that you have never heard of our good king, Altoun-Khan, for the fame of his justice and liberality is spread far and wide."

"From the favourable picture you draw of him," replied the prince of the Nagäis, "I should imagine that he ought to be the happiest and most prosperous monarch in the world."

"He is not so, however," replied the widow; "indeed, he may be said to be the most wretched. In the first place, he has no prince to succeed him on his throne; a male heir is denied him, notwithstanding all the prayers of himself and his subjects, and all the good deeds he performs to that end. But I must tell you, the grief of having no son is not his greatest trouble; what principally disturbs the peace of his life is the princess Tourandocte, his only daughter."

"How is it," replied Khalaf, "that she is such a source of grief to him?"

"I will tell you," replied the widow; "and, indeed, I can speak upon the subject from the very best authority; for my daughter has often told me the story and she has the honour of being among the attendants on the princess."

"The princess Tourandocte," continued the hostess of the prince of the Nagäis, "is in her nineteenth year; she is so beautiful, that the artists to whom she has sat for her portrait, although the most expert in the East, have all confessed that they were ashamed of their efforts; and that the most able painter in the world, and the best skilled in delineating the charms of a beautiful face, could not express those of the princess of China; nevertheless, the different portraits which have been taken of her, although infinitely inferior to the original, have produced the most disastrous consequences.

"She combines, with her ravishing beauty, a mind so cultivated, that she not only understands all that is usual for persons in her station to know, but is mistress of sciences suited only for the other sex. She can trace the various characters of several languages, she is acquainted with arithmetic, geography, philosophy, mathematics, law, and, above all, theology, she knows the laws and moral philosophy of our great legislator, Berginghuzin; in fact, is as learned as all the wise men put together. But her good qualities are effaced by a hardness of heart without parallel, and all her accomplishments are tarnished by detestable cruelty.

"It is now two years ago since the king of Thibet sent to ask her in marriage for his son, who had fallen in love with her from a portrait he had seen. Altoun-Khan, delighted with the prospect of this alliance, proposed it to Tourandocte. The haughty princess, to whom all men appeared despicable, so vain had her beauty rendered her, rejected the proposal with disdain. The king flew into a violent rage with her, and declared that he would be obeyed; but instead of submitting dutifully to the wishes of her father, she burst into bitter lamentations, because he showed a disposition to force her to comply; she grieved immoderately, as though it were intended to inflict a great injury upon her; in fact, she took it so much to heart that she fell seriously ill. The physicians, who soon discovered the secret of her complaint, told the king that all their remedies were useless, and that the princess would certainly lose her life, if he persisted in his resolution to make her espouse the prince of Thibet.

"The king then, who loves his daughter to distraction, alarmed at the danger she was in, went to see her, and assured her that he would send back the ambassador with a refusal. 'That is not enough, my lord,' replied the princess; 'I am resolved to die, except you grant what I ask you. If you wish me to live, you must bind yourself by an inviolable oath never to try to influence my wishes in this matter, and to publish a decree declaring that of all the princes who may seek my hand, none shall be allowed to espouse me who shall not previously have replied, without hesitation, to the questions which I shall put to him before all the learned men in this city; that if his answers prove satisfactory, I will consent to his becoming my husband, but if the reverse, that he shall lose his head in the court-yard of your palace.'

"'By this edict,' added she, 'of which all the foreign princes who may arrive at Pekin shall be informed, you will extinguish all desire of asking me in marriage; and that is exactly what I wish, for I hate men, and do not wish to be married.'

"'But, my child,' said the king, 'if by chance some one should present himself, and reply to your questions?' —

"'Ha! I do not fear that,' she said quickly, interrupting him; 'I can put questions which would puzzle the most learned doctors; I am willing to run that risk.'

"Altoun-Khan pondered over what the princess demanded of him. 'I see clearly,' thought he, 'that my daughter does not wish to marry, and the effect of this edict will be to frighten away all lovers. I run no risk, therefore, in yielding to her fancies, no evil can come of it. What prince would be mad enough to face such danger?'

"At length the king, persuaded that this edict would not be followed by any bad results, and that the recovery of his daughter entirely depended upon it, caused it to be published, and swore upon the laws of Berginghuzin to see that it was observed to the letter. Tourandocte, reassured by this oath, which she knew her father dare not violate, regained her strength, and was soon restored to perfect health.

"In spite of the decree, the fame of her beauty attracted several young princes to Pekin. It was in vain that they were informed of the nature of the edict; and as every body, but particularly a young prince, entertains a good opinion of himself, they had the hardihood to present themselves to reply to the questions of the princess; and not being able to fathom her deep meaning, they perished miserably one after another.

"The king, to do him justice, appears deeply afflicted with their sad fate. He repents of having made the oath which binds him; and however tenderly he may love his daughter, he would now almost rather he had let her die than have saved her life at such a price. He does all in his power to prevent these evils. When a lover whom the decree cannot restrain comes to demand the hand of the princess, he strives to deter him from his purpose; and he never consents, but with the deepest regret, to his exposing himself to the chance of losing his life. But it generally happens that he is unable to dissuade these rash young men. They are infatuated with Tourandocte, and the hope of possessing her blinds them to the difficulty of obtaining her.

"But if the king shows so much grief at the ruin of the unfortunate princes, it is not the case with his barbarous daughter. She takes a pride in these spectacles of blood with which her beauty periodically furnishes the Chinese. So great is her vanity, that she considers the most accomplished prince not only unworthy of her, but most insolent in daring to raise his thoughts towards her, and she looks upon his death as a just chastisement for his temerity.

“But what is still more deplorable, Heaven is perpetually permitting princes to come and sacrifice themselves to this inhuman princess. Only the other day, a prince, who flattered himself that he had knowledge enough to reply to her questions, lost his life; and this very night another is to die, who, unfortunately, came to the court of China with the same hopes.”

Khalaf was deeply attentive to the widow’s story.

“I cannot understand,” said he, after she had ceased speaking, “how any princes can be found sufficiently devoid of judgment to come and ask the hand of the princess of China. What man would not be terrified at the condition without which he cannot hope to obtain her? Besides, despite what the artists may say who have painted her portrait; although they may affirm that their productions are but an imperfect image of her beauty, my firm belief is that they have added charms, and that their portraits exaggerate her beauty, since they have produced such powerful effects; indeed, I cannot think that Tourandocte is so beautiful as you say.”

“Sir,” replied the widow, “she is more lovely by far than I have described her to you; and you may believe me, for I have seen her several times when I have gone to the harem to visit my daughter. Draw upon your fancy as you please, collect in your imagination all that can possibly be brought together in order to constitute a perfect beauty, and be assured that even then you would not have pictured to yourself an object which could approach the perfections of the princess.”

The prince of the Nagäis could not credit the story of the widow, so overdrawn did he consider it; he felt, nevertheless, a secret pleasure for which he could not account. “But, my mother,” said he, “are the questions which the king’s daughter proposes so difficult of solution that it is impossible to reply to them to the satisfaction of the lawyers who are judges? For my part, I cannot help thinking that the princes who were not able to penetrate the meaning of her questions, must have been persons of very little ingenuity, if not absolutely ignorant.”

“No, no!” replied the widow. “There is no enigma more obscure than the questions of the princess, and it is almost impossible to reply to them.”

Whilst they were conversing thus of Tourandocte and her lovers, the girl arrived from the market loaded with provisions. Khalaf sat down to a table which the widow had prepared, and ate like a man famishing with hunger. Whilst thus engaged the night drew on, and they heard shortly in the town the gong of justice. The prince asked what the noise meant. “It is to give notice to the people,” replied the widow, “that some person is going to be executed; and the unfortunate victim about to be immolated is the prince of whom I told you, and who is to be executed to-night for not being able to answer the princess’s questions. It is customary to punish the guilty during the day, but this is an exceptional case. The king, who in his heart abhors the punishment which he causes to be inflicted upon the lovers of his daughter, will not suffer the sun to be witness of such a cruel action.”

The son of Timurtasch had a wish to see this execution, the cause of which appeared so singular to him. He went out of the house, and meeting a crowd of Chinese in the street animated by the same curiosity, he mixed with them, and went to the court-yard of the palace, where the tragic scene was to be enacted. He beheld in the middle of the yard a *schebt-cheraghe*, in other words a very high wooden tower, the outside of which, from the top to the bottom, was covered with branches of cypress, amongst which a prodigious quantity of lamps, tastefully arranged, spread a brilliant light around, and illuminated the whole court-yard. Fifteen cubits from the tower a scaffold was raised, covered with white satin, and around the scaffold were arranged several pavilions of taffetas of the same colour open towards the scaffold. Behind these two thousand soldiers of the guard of Altoun-Khan were stationed, with drawn swords and axes in their hands, forming a double rank, which served as a barrier against the people. Khalaf was looking with deep attention at all that presented itself to his view, when suddenly the mournful ceremony commenced. It was ushered in by a confused noise of drums and bells, which proceeded from the town, and could be heard at a great distance. At the same moment twenty mandarins and as many judges, all dressed in long robes of white woollen cloth, emerged from the palace, advanced towards the scaffold, and after walking three times around it, took their places under the pavilions.

Next came the victim, crowned with flowers interwoven with cypress leaves, and with a blue fillet round his head, — not a red one, such as criminals condemned by justice wear. He was a young prince, who had scarcely reached his eighteenth year; he was accompanied by a mandarin leading him by the hand, and followed by the executioner. The three ascended the scaffold; instantly the noise of the drums and bells ceased. The mandarin then addressed the prince in a tone so loud that he was heard by nearly the whole concourse of people. “Prince,” said he, “is it not true that you were apprised of the terms of the king’s edict before you presented yourself to ask the princess in marriage? Is it not also true that the king himself used all his endeavours to dissuade you from your rash resolution?” The prince, having replied in the affirmative, “Acknowledge, then,” continued the mandarin, “that it is by your own fault that you lose your life to-day, and that the king and princess are not guilty of your death.”

“I pardon them,” returned the prince; “I impute my death to myself alone, and I pray Heaven not to require of them my blood which is about to be shed.”

He had scarcely finished these words, when the executioner swept off his head with one stroke of the sword. The air instantly resounded with the noise of the drums and the bells. Then twelve mandarins took up the body, laid it in a coffin of ivory and ebony, and placed it upon a litter, which six of them bore away upon their shoulders into the gardens of Serail. Here they deposited it under a dome of white marble, which the king had ordered to be erected purposely to be the resting-place of all those unfortunate princes who should share the same fate. He often retired there to weep upon the tombs of those who were buried within it, and tried, by honouring their ashes with his tears, in some measure to atone for the barbarity of his child. As soon as the mandarins had carried away the body of the prince who had just suffered, the people and all the councillors retired to their homes, blaming the king for having had the imprudence to sanction such barbarity by an oath that he could not break. Khalaf remained in the court-yard of the palace in a state of bewilderment; he noticed a man near him weeping bitterly; he guessed that it was some person who was deeply interested in the execution that had just taken place, and wishing to know more about it, addressed him in these words:

"I am deeply moved," said he, "by the lively grief you exhibit, and I sympathize in your troubles, for I cannot doubt that you were intimately acquainted with the prince who has just suffered."

"Ah! sir," replied the mourner, with a fresh outburst of grief, "I ought indeed to know him, for I was his tutor. O unhappy king of Samarcand!" added he, "what will be thy grief when thou shalt be told of the extraordinary death of thy son? and who shall dare to carry thee the news?"

Khalaf asked by what means the prince of Samarcand had become enamoured of the princess of China. "I will tell you," replied the tutor: "and you will doubtless be astonished at the recital I am about to make. The prince of Samarcand," pursued he, "lived happily at his father's court. The court looked upon him as a prince who would one day be their sovereign, and they studied to please him as much as the king himself. He usually passed the day in hunting and playing at ball, and at night he assembled secretly in his apartments the distinguished youth of the court, with whom he drank all sorts of liquors. He sometimes amused himself by seeing the beautiful slaves dance, or by listening to music and singing. In a word, his life was passed in a constant round of pleasure.

"One day a famous painter arrived at Samarcand with several portraits of princesses which he had painted in the different courts through which he had passed. He showed them to my prince, who, looking at the first he presented, said, 'These are very beautiful pictures; I am certain that the originals are under a deep obligation to you.'

"'My lord,' replied the artist, 'I confess that in these portraits I have somewhat flattered the sitters; but I crave permission to tell you that I have one far more beautiful than these, which does not approach the original.' Saying this, he drew from the case which contained his portraits that of the princess of China.

"Scarcely had my master looked at it, when not conceiving that nature was capable of producing so perfect a beauty, he exclaimed that there was not in the world a woman of such exquisite loveliness, and that the portrait of the princess of China was more flattering than the others. The artist protested that it was not, and assured him that no pencil could convey an idea of the grace and beauty which shone in the countenance of the princess Tourandocte. Upon this assurance my master bought the portrait, which made so deep an impression on him, that, leaving the court of his father, he quitted Samarcand, accompanied by me alone, and without informing any one of his intentions, took the road for China, and came to this city. He volunteered to serve Altoun-Khan against his enemies, and asked the hand of his daughter the princess. We were apprized of the severe edict connected with the proposal, but alas! my prince, instead of being dismayed by the severity of the conditions, conceived the liveliest joy. 'I will go,' said he, 'and present myself to answer the questions of Tourandocte; I am not deficient in talent or ready wit, and I shall obtain the hand of the princess.'

"It is needless to tell you the rest, sir," continued the tutor, sobbing; "you may judge by the mournful spectacle you have beheld that the unfortunate prince of Samarcand was unable to answer, as he hoped, the fatal questions of this barbarous beauty, whose delight is to shed blood, and who has already been the means of sacrificing the lives of several kings' sons. A few moments before his death he gave me the portrait of this cruel princess. 'I entrust,' said he, 'this portrait to thee; guard carefully the precious deposit. Thou hast but to show it to my father when thou informest him of my sad fate, and I doubt not that when he beholds so beautiful a face, he will pardon my temerity.' But," added the old man, "let any one else who pleases carry the sad news to the king his father; for my part, borne down by the weight of my affliction, I will go far from hence and Samarcand, and mourn for my beloved charge. This is what you wished to know; and here is the dangerous portrait," pursued he, taking it from beneath his cloak and throwing it on the ground in a paroxysm of rage; "behold the cause of the sad fate of my prince. O execrable portrait! why had my master not my eyes when he took thee into his hands? O inhuman princess! may all the princes of the earth entertain for thee the same sentiments as those with which thou hast inspired me! Instead of being the object of their love, thou wouldest then be their aversion.” Saying this, the tutor of the prince of Samarcand retired full of rage, regarding the palace with a furious eye and without speaking another word to the son of Timurtasch. The latter quickly picked up the portrait of Tourandocte, and turned to retrace his steps to the house of the widow; but he missed his way in the darkness, and wandered heedlessly out of the city. He impatiently awaited the daylight to enable him to contemplate the beauty of the princess of China. As soon as the approach of dawn furnished him with sufficient light to satisfy his curiosity, he opened the case which contained the portrait.

Still he hesitated before he looked at it. “What am I about to do?” cried he; “ought I to disclose to my eyes so dangerous an object? Think, Khalaf, think of the direful effects it has caused; hast thou already forgotten what the tutor of the prince of Samarcand has just narrated to thee? Look not on this portrait; resist the impulse which urges thee, it is nothing more than a feeling of idle curiosity. Whilst thou retainest thy reason thou canst prevent thy destruction. But what do I say? prevent,” added he, checking himself; “with what false reasoning does my timid prudence inspire me. If I am to love the princess, is not my love already written in indelible characters in the book of fate. Besides, I think that it is possible to look upon the most beautiful portrait with impunity; one must be weak, indeed, to be influenced by the sight of a vain array of colours. Never fear; let us scan these surpassing and murderous features without emotion. I will even find defects, and taste the pleasure of criticizing the charms of this too beautiful princess; and I could wish, in order to mortify her vanity, that she might learn that I have looked upon her portrait without emotion.”

The son of Timurtasch had fully made up his mind to look upon the portrait of Tourandocte with an indifferent eye. He now casts his eyes on it, he regards it attentively, examines it, admires the contour of the countenance, the regularity of the features, the vivacity of the eyes, — the mouth, the nose, all appear perfect; he is surprised at so rare a combination of perfect features, and although still on his guard, he allows himself to be charmed. An inconceivable uneasiness takes possession of him in spite of himself; he can no longer understand his feelings. “What fire,” said he, “has suddenly kindled itself in my bosom! What tumult has this portrait produced in my thoughts! Merciful Heaven, is it the lot of all those who look upon this portrait to become enamoured of this inhuman princess? Alas! I feel but too surely that she has made the same impression upon me, as she did upon the unhappy prince of Samarcand; I yield to the charms that wounded him, and far from being terrified by his melancholy fate, I could almost envy his very misfortune. What a change, gracious Heaven! I could not conceive a short time ago, how one could be mad enough to despise the severity of the edict, and now I see nothing that frightens me, all the danger has vanished.

“No! incomparable princess,” pursued he, devouring the portrait with an enamoured gaze, “no obstacle can stop me, I love you spite of your barbarity; and since it is permitted to me to aspire to your possession, from this day I will strive to win you; if I perish in the bold attempt, I shall only feel in dying the grief of not being able to possess you.”

Khalaf, having formed the resolve of demanding the hand of the princess, returned to the widow’s house, a journey which cost him no little trouble, for he had rambled to some considerable distance during the night. “Ah! my son,” exclaimed his hostess, as soon as she beheld him, “I am so glad to see you, I was very uneasy about you, I feared some accident had befallen you; why did you not return earlier?”

“My good mother,” replied he, “I am sorry to have caused you any uneasiness, I missed my way in the darkness.” He then related to her how he had met the tutor of the prince whom they had put to death, and did not fail to repeat to her all that he had told him. Then showing her the portrait of Tourandocte; “Tell me,” said he, “if this portrait is only an imperfect likeness of the princess of China; for my part, I cannot conceive that it is not equal to the original.”

“By the soul of the prophet Jacmouny,” cried the widow, after she had examined the portrait, “the princess is a thousand times more beautiful, and infinitely more charming than she is here represented. I wish you could see her, you would be of my opinion, that all the artists in the world who should undertake to paint her as she really is, could never succeed. I will not even make an exception in favour of the famous Many."

"You delight me above measure," replied the prince of the Nagäis, "by assuring me that the beauty of Tourandocte surpasses all the efforts of the artist's power. How flattering the assurance! It strengthens me in my determination, and incites me to attempt at once the brilliant adventure. Oh that I were before the princess! I burn with impatience to try whether I shall be more fortunate than the prince of Samarcand."

"What do you say, my son?" eagerly asked the widow, "what enterprise are you so rashly planning? And do you seriously think of carrying it into effect?"

"Yes, my good mother," returned Khalaf, "I intend this very day to present myself to answer the questions of the princess. I came to China only with the intention of offering my services to the great king, Altoun-Khan, but it is better to be his son-in-law than an officer in his army."

At these words the widow burst into tears. "Ah! sir, in the name of Heaven do not persist in so rash a resolution; you will certainly perish if you are bold enough to aspire to the hand of the princess; instead of allowing her beauty to charm you, let it be the object of your detestation, since it has been the cause of so many frightful tragedies; picture to yourself what the grief of your parents will be when they hear of your death; let the thoughts of the mortal grief into which you will plunge them deter you."

"For pity's sake, my mother," interrupted the son of Timurtasch, "cease to present to my mind such affecting images. I cannot be ignorant, that if it be my destiny to die this day, my sad end will be a source of bitter and inexhaustible grief to my beloved parents; nay, I can conceive their misery being so excessive as to endanger their own lives, for well do I know their extreme affection for me; notwithstanding all this, however, notwithstanding the gratitude with which their love ought to inspire, and indeed does inspire me, I must yield to the passion that consumes me. But, what! Is it not in hopes of making them more happy that I am about to expose my life? Yes, doubtless, their interest is bound up with the desire that urges me on, and I feel sure that if my father were here, far from opposing my design, he would rather excite me to its speedy execution. My resolution is taken; waste no more time in trying to dissuade me; nothing shall shake my determination."

When the widow found that her young guest would not heed her advice, her grief increased. "So it must be, then, sir," continued she; "you will not be restrained from rushing headlong on your destruction. Why was it ordained that you should come to lodge in my house? why did I speak of Tourandocte? You became enamoured of her from the description I gave of her; wretched woman that I am, it is I who have caused your ruin; why must I reproach myself with your death?"

"No, my good mother," said the prince of the Nagäis, interrupting her a second time, "you are not the cause of my misfortune; do not blame yourself because I love the princess; I am to love her, and do but fulfil my destiny. Besides, how do you know that I shall not be able to reply to her questions? I am not without understanding, and I have studied much; and Heaven may have reserved for me the honour of delivering the king of China from the grief with which his frightful oath overwhelms him. But," added he, drawing out the purse which the khan of Berlas had given him, and which still contained a considerable quantity of gold pieces, "as my success is after all uncertain, and I may chance to die, I make you a present of this purse to console you for my death. You may sell my horse and keep the money, for it will be of no more use to me, whether the daughter of Altoun-Khan become the reward of my boldness, or my death be the mournful forfeit of my audacity."

The widow took the purse from Khalaf, saying, "O my son, you are much mistaken if you imagine that these pieces of gold will console me for your loss. I will employ them in good works, I will distribute a portion among the poor in the hospitals, who bear their afflictions with patience, and whose prayers are consequently acceptable to Heaven; the remainder I will give to the ministers of our religion, that they all may pray together that Heaven may inspire you, and not suffer you to perish. All the favour I ask you is, not to go to-day and present yourself to answer the questions of Tourandocte; wait till to-morrow, the time is not long; grant me that interval to enlist the hearts of the pious in your behalf, and propitiate our Prophet in your favour, after that you can do as you think best. I pray you to grant me that favour; I am bold to say that you owe it to one who has conceived so great a friendship for you, that she would be inconsolable if you were to die."

Indeed Khalaf's appearance had made a favourable impression upon her, for, besides being one of the handsomest princes in the world, his manners were so easy and pleasing that it was impossible to see him without loving him. He was moved by the grief and affection the good lady exhibited. "Well, my mother," said he, "I will do as you desire me; and I will not go to-day to ask the hand of the princess; but, to speak my sentiments frankly, I don't believe that even your prophet Jacmouny will be able to make me forego my determination."

The following morning, the prince appeared more determined than ever to demand Tourandocte. "Adieu, my good mother," said he, to the widow. "I am sorry that you have given yourself so much trouble on my account; you might have spared it, for I assured you yesterday that I should be of the same mind." With these words, he left the widow, who, giving herself up to the deepest sorrow, covered her face with her veil, and sat with her head on her knees, overwhelmed with indescribable grief.

The young prince of the Nagäis, perfumed with rare scents and more beautiful than the moon, repaired to the palace. He found at the gate five elephants, and, on each side, a line of two thousand soldiers, with helmets on their heads, armed with shields, and covered with plate armour. One of the principal officers in command of the troops, judging from Khalaf's air that he was a stranger, stopped him, and demanded his business at the palace.

"I am a foreign prince," replied the son of Timurtasch. "I am come to present myself to the king, and pray him to grant me permission to reply to the questions of the princess his daughter."

The officer, at these words, regarding him with astonishment, said to him, "Prince, do you know that you come to seek death? You would have done more wisely to have remained in your own country, than form the design which brings you hither; retrace your steps, and do not flatter yourself with the deceitful hope that you will obtain the hand of the cruel Tourandocte. Although you may have studied until you have become more learned in science than all the mandarins, you will never be able to fathom the meaning of her ambiguous questions."

"Accept my heartfelt thanks," replied Khalaf; "but, believe me, I am not come thus far to retreat."

"Go on to your certain death, then," returned the officer, in a tone of chagrin, "since it is impossible to restrain you." At the same moment, he allowed him to enter the palace, and then, turning towards some other officers who had been listening to their conversation, he said, "How handsome and well-grown this young prince is. It is a pity he should die so early."

Khalaf traversed several saloons, and, at length, found himself in the hall where the king was accustomed to give audience to his people. In it was placed the steel throne of Cathay, made in the form of a dragon, three cubits high; four lofty columns, of the same material, supported above it a vast canopy of yellow satin, ornamented with precious stones. Altoun-Khan, dressed in a caftan of gold brocade upon a crimson ground, was seated on his throne, with an air of gravity which was in admirable keeping with his long moustache and ample beard. The monarch, after listening to some of his subjects, cast his eyes by chance to where the prince of the Nagäis stood amongst the crowd; he saw, at once, by his noble bearing and splendid dress, that he was not a man of common birth; he pointed out Khalaf to one of his mandarins, and gave an order, in an undertone, to learn his rank, and the reason of his visit to his court.

The mandarin approached the son of Timurtasch, and told him that the king desired to know who he was, and whether he wished to make any request of the king. "You may tell the king, your master," replied the prince, "that I am the only son of a king, and that I am come to endeavour to merit the honour of becoming his son-in-law."

Altoun-Khan no sooner learned the reply of the prince of the Nagäis, than he changed colour; his august countenance became pale as death, he broke up the audience, and dismissed all the people; he then descended from his throne, and, approaching Khalaf, "Rash young man," said he, "are you aware of the severity of my edict, and of the miserable fate of those who have hitherto persisted in their desire to obtain the hand of the princess my daughter?"

"Yes, my lord," replied the son of Timurtasch, "I know all the danger I incur; my eyes have witnessed the just and severe punishment your majesty inflicted upon the prince of Samarcand; but the deplorable end of the audacious youths who have flattered themselves with the sweet, though vain, hope of possessing the princess Tourandocte, only stimulates the desire I have of deserving her."

"What madness!" rejoined the king; "scarcely has one prince lost his life, than another presents himself to share the same fate; it appears as though they took a pleasure in sacrificing themselves. What blindness! Reconsider the step you are taking, and be less prodigal of your blood; you inspire me with more pity than any who have hitherto come to seek their destruction; I feel a growing inclination towards you, and wish to do all in my power to hinder you from perishing. Return to your father's kingdom, and do not inflict upon him the pain of learning from strangers' lips the sad intelligence that he will never more behold his only son."

"My lord," replied Khalaf, "I am overjoyed to hear, from your majesty's own lips, that I have the honour of pleasing you; I draw a happy presage from it. It may be that Heaven, touched by the misfortunes caused by the beauty of the princess, will use me as a means of putting an end to them, and securing you, at the same time, tranquillity for the remainder of your life, which the necessity of authorizing these cruel deeds disturbs. Can you be sure that I shall not be able to answer the questions that may be put to me? What certainty have you that I shall perish? If others have been unable to fathom the depths of the obscure propositions of Tourandocte, is it to be concluded that I cannot penetrate their meaning? No, my lord, their example shall never make me renounce the brilliant honour of having you for a father-in-law."

"Ah! unhappy prince," replied the king, melting into tears, "you wish to die; all the princes who have presented themselves before you, to answer the fatal questions put by my daughter, used the same language; they all hoped that they could penetrate her meaning, and not one was able to do so. Alas! you will be the dupe of your own confidence. Once more, my son, let me dissuade you. I love you, and wish to save you; do not frustrate my good intentions by your obstinacy; whatever confidence you may feel, distrust it. You deceive yourself, if you imagine that you will be able to answer upon the spot what the princess may propose to you; you will, it is true, have seven minutes to answer in; that is the rule. But if in that time you do not give a satisfactory reply, and one that shall be approved of by all the doctors and wise men who are appointed the judges, that moment you will be declared worthy of death, and on the following night will be conducted to execution. So, prince, retire; pass the rest of the day in considering what is your duty in reference to the step you propose to take; consult wise persons, reflect well, and to-morrow let me know your determination." When the king had finished speaking, he dismissed Khalaf, who immediately quitted the palace, much mortified that he was obliged to wait till the next day, for he was no way daunted by what the king had said. He returned to his hostess without exhibiting the least concern about the danger to which he had determined to expose himself. As soon as he presented himself to the widow, and had related all that had passed at the palace, she began to remonstrate with him afresh, and bring every argument she could think of into play to dissuade him from his enterprise; but her efforts were crowned with no better success, and she had the mortification of seeing that they only inflamed her young guest more, and strengthened him in his resolution. The next day the prince returned to the palace, and was announced to the king, who received him in his cabinet, not wishing any one to be present at their interview.

"Well, prince," began Altoun-Khan, "am I to rejoice or grieve at your presence here to-day? What is your determination?"

"My lord," replied Khalaf, "I am in the same mind as yesterday. Before I had the honour of presenting myself then before your majesty, I had thoroughly reflected upon the matter; and I am still prepared to suffer the same punishment as my rivals, if Heaven has not otherwise ordained." At these words the king smote his breast, rent his clothes, and plucked the hairs from his beard.

"Wretched man that I am!" cried he, "that I should have conceived such friendship for him. The death of the others has not caused me half the pain which his will occasion me. Ah! my son," continued he, embracing the prince of the Nagäis with a tenderness that caused him deep emotion, “yield to my grief, if my arguments are not able to shake thee. I feel that the blow which takes thy life will strike my heart with deadly force. Renounce, I conjure thee, the hope of possessing my cruel daughter; thou wilt find in the world plenty of other princesses whom thou mayst gain with more ease and as much honour. Why persevere in the pursuit of an inhuman creature whom thou wilt never be able to obtain? Remain, if thou wilt, in my court; thou shalt hold the first rank after me; thou shalt have beautiful slaves; pleasures shall follow thee wherever thou goest; in a word, I will look on thee as my own son. Desist from thy pursuit of Tourandocte. Oh! let me at least have the joy of rescuing one victim from the sanguinary princess.”

The son of Timurtasch was deeply moved by the friendship which the king of China exhibited towards him; but he replied, “My lord, let me for pity’s sake expose myself to the danger from which you seek to deter me; the greater it is, the more do I feel myself tempted to encounter it. I must avow that even the cruelty of the princess stimulates my love. I feel an inward pleasure in the thought that I am the happy mortal who is to triumph over this proud beauty. For Heaven’s sake, your majesty,” pursued he, “cease to oppose a design which my glory, my repose, my life even render it necessary for me to prosecute; for, truly, I cannot live unless I obtain Tourandocte.”

Altoun-Khan, perceiving that Khalaf was not to be moved, was overwhelmed with affliction. “Ah! rash youth,” said he, “thy death-warrant is sealed, since thou art still determined to persist in demanding my daughter. Heaven is witness that I have done all in my power to inspire thee with rational thoughts. Thou rejectest my counsel, and lovest rather to perish than follow it; let us say no more; thou wilt receive the reward of thy mad constancy. I consent to thy undertaking to answer the questions of Tourandocte, but I must first pay thee the honour which I am accustomed to bestow upon princes who seek my alliance.”

At these words he called the chief of his first band of eunuchs; he ordered him to conduct Khalaf into the princes’ palace, and to assign him two hundred eunuchs to wait upon him.

The prince of the Nagäis had scarcely entered the palace to which the eunuch conducted him, before the principal mandarins came to salute him, which they did in the following manner: they placed themselves on their knees before him, bowed their heads to the ground, saying one after the other, “Prince, the perpetual servant of your illustrious race comes to make his obeisance to you.” They then all made him presents and retired.

The king, who felt the greatest friendship for the son of Timurtasch, and pitied him, sent for the most learned professor of the royal college, and said to him, “There is a new prince, who has come to my court to demand the hand of my daughter. I have spared no pains to induce him to renounce his intention, but without success. I wish thee to exert thine eloquence in endeavouring to make him listen to reason. It is for this I have sent for thee.” The professor obeyed. He went to Khalaf and entered into a long conversation with him; after which he returned to Altoun-Khan, and said, “My lord, it is impossible to dissuade this young prince; he will absolutely deserve the princess or die. When I saw the futility of attempting to conquer his resolution, I had the curiosity to try and ascertain whether his obstinacy did not proceed from some other cause than his love. I interrogated him upon several different subjects, and I found him so well informed that I was surprised at his learning. He is a Moslem, and appears to me perfectly instructed in all that concerns his religion; in fact, to confess the truth to your majesty, I believe if any prince is capable of replying to the questions of the princess it is he.”

“O wise man,” cried the king, “I am overjoyed at thy report. Heaven grant that he may become my son-in-law. From the moment he appeared before me I felt an affection for him; may he be more fortunate than the others who came to this city only to seek a grave.”

After prayers and sacrifices, the Chinese monarch sent his calao to the prince of the Nagäis with notice that he was to hold himself in readiness to reply to the princess’s questions on the next day, and to tell him that the proper officers would come at the right time to conduct him to the divan; and that the persons who were to compose the assembly had already received orders to attend.

Notwithstanding his inflexible determination to persevere in this adventure, Khalaf did not pass a quiet night; if at one time he dared to trust to his genius, and promise himself success, at another, losing confidence, he represented to himself the shame he should endure if his replies did not please the divan; at another time he thought of Elmaze and Timurtasch. “Alas!” said he, “if I die, what will become of my father and mother?”

Day surprised him occupied with these conflicting thoughts. Presently he heard the ringing of bells and beating of drums. He concluded that this was to call to the council all those who were ordered to attend. Then raising his thoughts to Mahomet, “O great prophet,” said he, “you behold my difficulties and know my doubts. Inspire me, and reveal to me whether I must go to the divan, or must confess to the king that the danger terrifies me!” He had scarcely pronounced these words, before he felt all his fears vanish and his confidence return. He rose and dressed himself in a caftan, and mantle of red silk worked with gold flowers, which Altoun-Khan had sent him, with stockings and slippers of blue silk.

When he had finished dressing, six mandarins, booted and dressed in very wide robes of crimson, entered his apartment, and after having saluted him in the same manner as on the previous day, informed him that they came from the king to lead him to the divan. He immediately rose and accompanied them; they traversed a court between a double file of soldiers, and when they arrived in the first council-chamber found more than a thousand singers and players upon instruments, who performing in concert produced a wonderful noise. From thence they advanced into the hall, where the council was sitting, and which communicated with the interior palace.

All the persons who were to assist at this assembly were already seated under canopies of different colours arranged round the hall. The mandarins of the highest rank were on one side, the calao with the professors of the college on the other, and several doctors, renowned for their erudition, occupied other seats. In the middle were placed two thrones of gold raised upon triangular pedestals.

As soon as the prince of the Nagäis appeared, the noble and learned assembly saluted him with gestures of great respect, but without speaking a word; for every body, being in expectation of the king’s arrival, preserved the strictest silence.

The sun was upon the point of rising. As soon as the first rays of that brilliant luminary were perceived, two eunuchs drew aside the curtains which hung before the door of the inner palace, and immediately the king appeared, accompanied by the princess Tourandocte, who wore a long robe of silk and gold tissue, whilst her face was concealed by a veil of the same material. When the king and princess had taken their seats upon their thrones, which they ascended by five steps of silver, two young girls of perfect beauty approached and stationed themselves, one on the side of the king and the other near the princess. They were slaves of the harem of Altoun-Khan; their faces and necks were exposed; they wore large pearls in their ears; and they stood each with pen and paper, ready to transcribe what the king or the princess might desire. All this time the whole assembly, who had risen upon the entrance of Altoun-Khan, stood up with great gravity and their eyes half closed. Khalaf alone looked about him, or rather looked only at the princess, whose majestic demeanour filled him with admiration.

When the powerful monarch of China had ordered the mandarins and doctors to be seated, one of the six nobles who had conducted Khalaf, and who stood with him at fifteen cubits' distance from the two thrones, kneeled down and read a petition, which contained the demand of the stranger prince for the hand of the princess Tourandocte. He then rose and told Khalaf to make three salutations to the king. The prince of the Nagäis acquitted himself with so much grace, that Altoun-Khan could not refrain from smiling and expressing the pleasure he experienced in seeing him.

The calao then rose from his place and read with a loud voice the fatal edict, which condemned to death all the rash lovers who should fail to reply satisfactorily to the questions of Tourandocte. Then addressing Khalaf, "Prince," said he, "you have just heard the conditions upon which alone the princess's hand is to be obtained. If the sense of danger makes any impression upon you, there is still time to retire."

"No, no!" said the prince; "the prize to be carried off is too precious to be lost by cowardice."

The king, seeing Khalaf ready to reply to the questions of Tourandocte, turned towards the princess and said, "My daughter, it is for you to speak; propose to this young prince the questions which you have prepared; and may all the spirits to whom sacrifices were offered yesterday grant that he may penetrate the meaning of your words."

Tourandocte thereupon said, "I take the prophet Jacmouny to witness, that I behold with sorrow the death of so many princes; but why do they persist in desiring to wed me? why will they not leave me to live in peace without making attempts on my liberty? Know then, rash young man," added she, addressing Khalaf, "that you cannot reproach me if you suffer a cruel death; you have the examples of your rivals before your eyes; you alone are the cause of your own destruction; I do not oblige you to come and ask my hand."

"Lovely princess," replied the prince of the Nagäis, "I am fully alive to all that has been said upon this subject; propound, if you please, your questions, and I will endeavour to unravel their meaning."

"Well then," said Tourandocte, "tell me what creature is that which belongs to every land, is a friend to the whole world, and will not brook an equal?"

"Madam," replied Khalaf, "it is the sun."

"He is right," exclaimed all the doctors, "it is the sun."

"What is that mother," resumed the princess, "who, after having brought her children into the world, devours them when they are grown up?"

"It is the sea," replied the prince of the Nagäis; "because the rivers, which draw their sources from the sea, discharge themselves into it again."

Tourandocte, seeing that the prince gave correct replies to her questions, was so vexed that she resolved to spare no effort to destroy him. Exerting all her ingenuity, she next asked, "What tree is that whose leaves are white on one side and black on the other?" She was not satisfied with proposing the riddle alone; the malignant princess, in order to dazzle and confuse him, raised her veil at the same moment, and allowed the assembly to see all the beauty of her countenance, the haughty charms of which were only enhanced by the violence of her emotions. Her head was adorned with natural flowers arranged with infinite art, and her eyes shone more brilliantly than the stars. She was as lovely as the sun in all his splendour, when he emerges from a thick cloud. The son of Timurtasch, at the sight of this incomparable princess, remained mute and motionless; so much so, that all the divan, who were deeply interested in him, were seized with terror; the king himself grew pale, and thought that the prince was lost for ever.

But Khalaf, recovering from the surprise that the beauty of Tourandocte had caused him, quickly reassured the assembly by resuming, “Charming princess, I pray you pardon me if I remained for some moments speechless; I could not behold so much loveliness without being disturbed. Have the goodness to repeat the question, for I no longer remember it; your charms have made me forget every thing.”

“I asked you,” said Tourandocte, “what tree is that whose leaves are white on one side and black on the other?”

“That tree,” replied Khalaf, “is the year, which is composed of days and nights.”

This reply was again applauded in the divan. The mandarins and the doctors said that it was correct, and bestowed a thousand praises on the young prince. Altoun-Khan said to Tourandocte, “Come, my daughter, confess thyself vanquished, and consent to espouse thy conqueror; the others were not able to reply to even one of thy questions, and this one, thou seest, has answered them all.”

“He has *not* gained the victory,” angrily retorted the princess, replacing her veil to conceal her confusion and the tears she was not able to repress; “I have others to propose to him. But I will defer them till to-morrow.”

“No,” replied the king, “I will certainly not permit you to propose questions without end: all that I can allow you is to ask him one more, and that immediately.”

The princess objected, saying that she had only prepared those which had just been answered, and entreated the king, her father, for permission to interrogate the prince on the following day.

“I will certainly not grant it,” cried the monarch of China, in a rage; “you are only endeavouring to perplex this young prince, while I am eagerly grasping at the prospect of escaping from the frightful oath I had the imprudence to make. Ah! cruel one, you breathe nothing but blood, and the death of your lovers is a pleasant sight to you. The queen, your mother, touched by the first misfortunes your cruelty caused, died of grief at having brought into the world so barbarous a child; and I, you know well, am plunged into a state of profound melancholy, which nothing can dissipate, whilst I behold the fatal results of the love I entertained for you; but, thanks to the sun, and the moon, and the spirits who preside in the heavens, and by whom my sacrifices have been regarded with a propitious eye, no more of those horrible executions which have rendered my name execrable shall be committed in my palace. Since this prince has answered your questions satisfactorily, I ask all this assembly if it is not right that you should become his wife?"

The mandarins and the doctors expressed their assent in murmurs, and the calao took upon himself to speak. "My lord," said he, addressing the king, "your majesty is no longer bound by the oath you made, to execute your severe edict; it is for the princess to fulfil her engagement. She promised her hand to him who should answer her questions correctly; a prince has answered them, to the satisfaction of the whole divan; she must keep her promise, or we cannot doubt that the spirits who preside over the punishment of perjurers will quickly take vengeance upon her."

Tourandocte kept silence during the delivery of this speech; she sat with her head on her knees, and appeared buried in deep affliction. Khalaf, perceiving this, prostrated himself before Altoun-Khan, and said, "Great king, whose justice and goodness have raised the vast empire of China to such prosperity, I beg of your majesty to grant me a favour. I see that the princess is in despair at my having been so fortunate as to reply to her questions; doubtless she would rather it had so happened that I should have deserved death. Since she exhibits so strong an aversion to me, that, in spite of her promise, she refuses to become my wife, I will renounce my right to her, on condition that she, on her part, replies correctly to a question which I shall propose."

The whole assembly was surprised at this speech. "Is this young prince mad," they whispered one to another, "to risk the loss of that for which he perilled his life? Does he imagine he can propose a question that will be too difficult for Tourandocte to solve? He must have lost his senses." Altoun-Khan was also amazed at the request which Khalaf had the temerity to make. "Prince," said he, "have you reflected upon the words which have just escaped your lips?"

"Yes, my lord," replied the prince of the Nagäis, "and I implore you to grant me this favour."

"I grant it," returned the king; "but, whatever be the result, I declare that I am no longer bound by the oath I made, and that, henceforth, I will not cause another prince to be put to death."

"Divine Tourandocte," resumed the son of Timurtasch, addressing the princess, "you have heard what I said. Although the decision of this learned assembly has awarded to me the prize of your hand, although you are mine, I will give you back your liberty, I will yield up possession of you, I will despoil myself of a treasure precious to me above all things, provided you reply at once to a question I shall ask; but, on your part, swear that if you cannot, you will consent willingly to complete my happiness and crown my love."

"Yes, prince," replied Tourandocte, "I accept the conditions, and I take this assembly as witnesses of my oath."

All the divan awaited, in breathless suspense, the question that Khalaf was to propose to the princess, and there was not one who did not blame the young prince for exposing himself to the risk of losing the daughter of Altoun-Khan; they were all amazed at his temerity. "Lovely princess," said Khalaf, "what is the name of that prince who, after suffering a thousand hardships, and being reduced even to beg his bread, finds himself, at this moment, overwhelmed with glory and joy?"

"It is impossible," said Tourandocte, "for me to reply to that question on the spot, but I promise that to-morrow I will tell you the name of that prince."

"Madam," cried Khalaf, "I asked no time for consideration, and it is not right to grant you any; still, I will grant you your wish; I hope, after that, you will look more favourably on me, and not oppose any further difficulty to your becoming my bride."

"She must make up her mind to that," said Altoun-Khan, "if she cannot reply to the question proposed. Let her not think by falling ill, or pretending to do so, that she will thereby escape. Even if my rash oath should not bind me to grant him her hand, and she were not his according to the tenor of the edict, I would rather let her die, than send this young prince away. Where would it be possible for her to meet with one more perfectly worthy of her?” With these words, he rose and dismissed the assembly. He re-entered the inner palace with the princess, who retired to her own apartments.

As soon as the king had left the divan, all the mandarins and doctors complimented Khalaf upon his wit and understanding. “I admire,” said one, “your ready and easy conception.” “No!” said another, “there is not a bachelor licentiate, or doctor even, of greater penetration than you. Not one of all the princes who has presented themselves hitherto, in the least degree approached your merit, and we feel the most heartfelt joy at your success.” The prince of the Nagäis had no light task to perform in thanking all those who pressed round him to congratulate him. At length, the six mandarins who had conducted him to the council-chamber, led him back to the same palace whence they had brought him, whilst the others, together with the learned doctors retired, not without anxiety about the answer which the daughter of Altoun-Khan would return to the question.

The princess Tourandocte regained her palace, followed by the two young slaves who enjoyed her confidence. No sooner had she entered into her apartment, than she tore off her veil, and throwing herself upon a couch, gave free vent to the grief and rage which agitated her; shame and sorrow were depicted on her countenance; her eyes already bedimmed with tears, overflowed afresh; she tore off the flowers that adorned her head, and allowed her hair to fall about her in confusion. Her two favourite slaves attempted to console her, but she only said bitterly, “Leave me, both of you, cease your useless attentions. I will listen to nothing but my despair; leave me alone to pour forth my tears and lamentations. Ah! how great will be my confusion to-morrow, when I shall be forced to acknowledge before the whole council, and the wisest doctors of China, that I cannot solve the question. Is that, they will say, the transcendent princess who prides herself upon knowing every thing, and to whom the solution of the most difficult enigma presented no difficulty?”

“Alas!” continued she, “they all take an interest in this young prince. I noticed them grow pale with anxiety when he appeared embarrassed. I saw their faces beaming with joy when he penetrated the meaning of my questions. I shall have the bitter mortification of seeing them again rejoice at my confusion, when I shall have to confess myself conquered. How great will be their delight when I make the degrading avowal, and what agony must I endure in making it."

"My princess," said one of her slaves, "instead of afflicting yourself beforehand, instead of picturing to yourself the shame you fear to suffer to-morrow, would it not be better to think of some means of preventing it? Is the question the prince has proposed so difficult, that you cannot answer it? with the genius and penetration you possess, can you not accomplish it?"

"No," said Tourandocte, "it is impossible. He asks me to name the prince who, after suffering a thousand hardships, and being reduced to beg his bread, is, at this moment, overwhelmed with joy and glory? I feel assured that he is himself that prince, but not knowing him, I cannot tell his name."

"Still, madam," rejoined the same slave, "you have promised to name that prince to-morrow; when you made that promise, you hoped, doubtless, to be able to fulfil it."

"I had no hope," replied the princess, "and I only demanded time to die of grief, rather than be obliged to acknowledge my shame, and marry the prince."

"The resolution is a violent one," said the other favourite slave. "I know well that no man is worthy of you, but you must allow that this prince possesses singular merits; his beauty, his noble bearing, and his ready wit ought to plead in his favour."

"I grant it all," interrupted the princess. "If there is any prince in the world who is worthy of my regards, it is he. Indeed, I will not deny it, that I grieved for him, before I put my questions to him; I sighed when I beheld him, and — what has never happened till to-day — I almost hoped he would reply to my questions correctly. It is true that, at the same moment, I blushed at my weakness, but my pride got the better of me, and the apt answers he made excited my abhorrence towards him; all the commendations which the doctors bestowed on him so deeply mortified me, that I then felt, and still feel, the most bitter hatred against him. O unhappy Tourandocte, lay thee down and die of vexation and grief, at having found a man, and he a youth, who has been able to load thee with disgrace, and compel thee to become his wife."

At these words she redoubled her tears, and in the transport of her rage spared neither her hair nor her clothes. She raised her hands more than once towards her cheeks to tear them, and punish them as the prime authors of the disgrace she had endured; but her slaves, who were watching her frenzy, prevented her. They tried, however, in vain to console her; they could not calm the fury of her agitation. Whilst she was in this fearful state of excitement, the prince of the Nagäis, charmed with the result, and overwhelmed with joy, delivered himself up to the hope of bearing off his bride the next day.

The king, having returned from the council-chamber, sent for Khalaf to talk over in private the events which had taken place at the divan. The prince of the Nagäis hastened to obey the orders of the monarch, who, after embracing him with great tenderness, said, "Ah! my son, release me from the anxiety I am suffering. I fear lest my daughter should be able to answer the question you have proposed. Why have you risked the danger of losing the object of your love?"

"Let not your majesty be under the least apprehension," replied Khalaf; "it is impossible that the princess can tell me who the prince is whose name I have asked, for I am that prince, and no one in your court knows me."

"This gives me fresh hope," cried the king in a transport of joy; "I confess I was most anxious about you. Tourandocte is very shrewd; the subtlety of her wit made me tremble for you; but, thank Heaven, you dispel my doubts. However great her facility of penetrating the sense of enigmas, she cannot guess your name. I can no longer accuse you of temerity; and I see what appeared to me a lack of prudence, is an ingenious device you have formed to remove every pretext for my daughter's refusal."

Altoun-Khan, after laughing with Khalaf at the question proposed to the princess, prepared to enjoy the diversion of the chase. He dressed himself in a light and close-fitting caftan, and enclosed his beard in a bag of black satin. He ordered the mandarins to hold themselves in readiness to accompany him, and commanded a hunting-dress to be given to the prince of the Nagäis. They partook of a slight repast, and then quitted the palace. The mandarins, in open palanquins of ivory inlaid with gold, headed the procession, each carried by six men; two men armed with whips of cord marched before each palanquin, and two others followed with tablets of silver, upon which were written in large characters all the mandarin's titles. The king and Khalaf, in an open litter of red sandalwood, carried by twenty military officers, on whose dresses were embroidered in silver the monarch's monogram and badges, — the latter consisting of several figures of animals, — appeared next. After the mandarins, two generals of Altoun-Khan's army marched on either side of the litter, carrying large fans or umbrellas to ward off the heat, and three thousand eunuchs on foot completed the cortége.

When they arrived at the place where the hunters awaited the king with the falcons, the sport began by flying hawks at quails; this diversion lasted till sunset, when the king and the prince, and the persons of their suites, returned to the palace in the same order in which they had left. They found in the court several pavilions of silk of different colours, a great number of small tables, beautifully polished and covered with all sorts of viands ready cut up. As soon as the king had taken his seat, Khalaf and the mandarins sat down, each at a little separate table, near which stood another, which served as a buffet. They all began by drinking several bumpers of rice wine before touching the viands; they then proceeded to eat without drinking any more. The banquet ended, the king, Altoun-Khan, led the prince of the Nagäis into a large hall, brilliantly illuminated, and fitted up with seats arranged for seeing some spectacle, and they were followed by all the mandarins. The king appointed each his place, and made Khalaf sit near him, upon a large ebony throne, inlaid with gold tracery.

As soon as the company had taken their places, singers and musicians entered, who commenced an agreeable concert. Altoun-Khan was delighted with it. Infatuated with the Chinese music, he asked the son of Timurtasch, from time to time, what he thought of it, and the young prince, out of politeness, gave it the highest rank of all the music in the world. The concert finished, the singers and musicians retired, to make room for an artificial elephant, which having advanced by secret springs into the middle of the hall, vomited forth six vaulters, who began by making some perilous leaps. They were attired in very thin dresses; they had on only drawers of Indian cloth, caps of brocade, and light shoes. After they had exhibited their agility and suppleness by a thousand extraordinary performances, they re-entered the elephant, which went away as it came. Next, there appeared players, who performed, impromptu, a piece, the subject of which the king chose. When all these diversions were finished, and the night was far advanced, Altoun-Khan and Khalaf rose, to retire to their apartments, and the mandarins followed their example.

The young prince of the Nagäis, conducted by eunuchs bearing wax candles in gold candelabra, was preparing to taste the sweets of repose as well as his impatience to return to the divan would permit him, when on entering his chamber, he found a young lady, dressed in a robe of red brocade with silver flowers, and adorned with rubies and emeralds; she wore a head-dress of rose-coloured silk, ornamented with pearls and bound by a very light silver border, which only covered the top of her head, and allowed her beautiful hair to escape, which hung down in ringlets, adorned with a few artificial flowers; as to her figure and face it was impossible to see any more beautiful and perfect except that of the princess of China.

The son of Timurtasch was much surprised at meeting a lady alone, and so beautiful, at midnight in his room. He could not have looked upon her with indifference, had he not seen Tourandocte; but as the lover of that princess he had no eyes for any other.

As soon as the lady perceived Khalaf, she rose from the sofa where she was seated, and upon which she had laid her veil, and after making a low inclination of her head, “Prince,” said she, “I doubt not that you are surprised to find a woman here; for you cannot be ignorant that it is rigorously forbidden for men and women who inhabit the harem, to have any communication together; but the importance of the matter that I have to communicate to you, has made me disregard all danger. I have had dexterity and good fortune enough to overcome all the obstacles which opposed my design. I have gained the eunuchs who wait upon you. It now only remains for me to tell you what brought me here.”

Khalaf felt interested; he could not doubt but that the lady who had taken so perilous a step, had something to communicate worthy his attention; he begged her to resume her seat on the sofa; they both sat down; and the lady then continued in these terms:

"My lord, I believe I ought to begin by informing you that I am the daughter of a khan, one of the tributaries of Altoun-Khan. Some years ago, my father was bold enough to refuse to pay the usual tribute, and, relying too much upon his experience in the art of war, as well as upon the valour of his troops, prepared to defend himself in case he were attacked. What he expected happened. The king of China irritated by his audacity, sent the most experienced of his generals with a powerful army against him. My father, though considerably weaker in numbers, went out to meet him. After a sanguinary battle, which was fought on the banks of a river, the Chinese general remained victorious. My father, pierced with a thousand wounds, died during the battle, but before his death, he ordered all his wives and children to be thrown into the river, to preserve them from slavery. Those who were charged with the generous, though inhuman order, executed it; they threw me, together with my mother, sisters, and two brothers, whose tender age had kept them with us, into the river. The Chinese general arrived at the spot at the very moment when they had cast us in, and when we were about to finish our miserable existence. This mournful and horrible sight excited his compassion; he promised a reward to any of the soldiers who should save any of the vanquished khan's family. Several Chinese horsemen, in spite of the rapidity of the stream, dashed in, and urged their horses wherever they saw our dying bodies floating. They recovered a few, but their assistance was only of use to me. I still breathed when they brought me to shore. The general took great pains for my recovery, as though the glory acquired by my captivity would bestow a fresh lustre on his victory; he brought me to this city, and presented me to the king, after giving an account of his mission. Altoun-Khan placed me with his daughter the princess, who is two or three years younger than I am.

"Although still a child, I could not help reflecting that I had become a slave, and that I ought to have sentiments conformable to my situation. I therefore studied the disposition of Tourandocte, and strove to please her, and I succeeded so well by my compliance with her wishes and my attentions, that I gained her friendship. From that time I have shared her confidence with a young person of illustrious birth, whom the misfortunes of her family have reduced to slavery.

“Pardon, my lord,” she continued, “this narrative which does not bear any relation to the subject that has brought me here. I thought it but right to apprize you that I am of noble blood, that you might place more reliance in me; for the important communication I have to make is such, that an ordinary slave might induce you to give but little credence to what she had to say; and I know not, that even I, though the daughter of a khan, shall be able to influence you: would a prince enamoured of Tourandocte give credit to what I am about to say of her?”

“Princess,” replied the son of Timurtasch, interrupting her, “keep me no longer in suspense, tell me, I pray you, at once what you have to say concerning the princess of China.”

“My lord,” replied the lady, “Tourandocte, the barbarous Tourandocte has formed a plot to assassinate you!”

At these words Khalaf, falling back on the sofa, lay for a moment in a state of horror and amazement.

The slave-princess, who had foreseen the astonishment of the young prince, said,

“I am not surprised that you should thus receive this frightful announcement, and I was right when I doubted that you would believe it.”

“Merciful Heaven,” cried Khalaf, when he recovered from his stupefaction, “did I hear aright? Is it possible that the princess of China could be guilty of such an atrocious attempt? How could she conceive so base a project?”

“Prince,” replied the lady, “I will explain to you how she came to take this horrible resolution. When she left the divan this morning, where I had been stationed behind her throne, I saw that she was mortally enraged at what had taken place; she returned into her apartments writhing under the most bitter feelings of mortification and fury; she pondered over the question you asked her for a long time, and not being able to find a suitable answer, she abandoned herself to despair. While she was in the bath, I spared no means, in which I was seconded by the other favourite slave, to calm the violence of her transports; we tried all in our power to inspire her with sentiments favourable to you; we extolled your person and your talents; we represented to her, that she ought to determine to bestow her hand upon you; we pointed out the unseemliness of such immoderate grief; but she imposed silence upon us, with a torrent of injurious words. The most agreeable and handsome make no more impression upon her than the ugliest and most deformed. ‘They are all,’ said she, ‘objects of my contempt, and for whom I shall always entertain the deepest aversion. As regards him who has presented himself last, I entertain a greater hatred towards him than towards the others, and if I cannot rid myself of him by any other means I will have him assassinated.’

“I opposed this detestable design,” continued the slave-princess, “and laid before her the terrible consequences of such a deed. I represented to her the injury she would inflict upon herself, the despair she would occasion the king, and the just horror that future ages would entertain for her memory.

“The other favourite slave supported with all her eloquence the arguments I adduced, but all our persuasions were of no avail; we could not turn her from her purpose. She has entrusted her faithful eunuchs with orders to take your life to-morrow morning as you leave your palace to repair to the divan.”

“O inhuman princess, perfidious Tourandocte,” cried the prince of the Nagäis, “is it thus you prepare to crown the affection of the unhappy son of Timurtasch? Has Khalaf indeed appeared so hateful to you, that you would rather rid yourself of him by a crime that will dishonour you, than unite your destiny with his? Great Heaven! how chequered with strange events is my life! At one moment I seem to enjoy happiness that the greatest might envy, at another I am plunged into a whirlpool of misery.”

“My lord,” said the slave-princess, “if Heaven ordains that you should suffer misfortunes, it does not will that you should sink beneath their weight, since it warns you of the dangers that threaten you. Yes, prince, it is Heaven that has doubtless inspired me with the thought of saving you, for I come not only to point out the snare laid for your life, I come also to furnish you with means to escape. By the assistance of some eunuchs who are devoted to me, I have gained over the soldiers of the guard, who will facilitate your flight from the serail. As they will not fail to make a searching investigation, when they know of your departure, and discover that I am the author of it, I am resolved to fly with you, and escape from this court, where I have more than one cause for discontent; my state of bondage makes me hate it, and you make it still more odious to me.

"Let us waste no time; come, and let to-morrow's sun, when he begins his course, find us far, far from Pekin.

"In a certain spot in the town," continued she, "horses await us; let us fly, and reach if possible the territory of the tribe of Berlas."

Khalaf replied, "Beautiful princess, I render you a thousand thanks for your wish to save me from the danger with which I am encompassed. Oh! that I could, to prove my gratitude, deliver you from your slavery, and conduct you in safety to the horde of the khan of Berlas your relation. With what pleasure would I place you in his hands! I should thereby repay some of the obligations I lie under to him. But I ask you, princess, ought I thus to steal away from Altoun-Khan? What would he think of me? He would believe that I came to his court for the sole purpose of carrying you off, and at the very time when I should be flying, only that I might save his daughter from perpetrating a fearful crime, he would be accusing me of violating the laws of hospitality. Ah! must I confess it, cruel though the princess of China be, I could never find in my foolish heart to hate her? Whatever misfortune may be in store for me, I cannot consent to so ignominious a flight. I acknowledge that charms like yours would amply repay your liberator, and that my days with you might pass in the greatest bliss, but I am not born to be happy, my destiny is to love Tourandocte; despite the aversion she feels towards me, I should wear out my days in endless sorrow, were they spent away from her."

"Well then, ingrate, remain," cried the lady passionately, interrupting him, "and let the spot in which thy happiness is concentrated be sprinkled with thy blood." Saying these words, she replaced her veil, and quitted the apartment.

The young prince, after the lady had retired, remained upon the sofa in a state of bewilderment. "Must I believe," said he, "what I have just heard? Can she carry her cruelty thus far? Alas! I dare not doubt it, for the slave-princess's expressions of horror at Tourandocte's plot were so natural — the risks she ran in coming herself to warn me of it so great, and the feelings she displayed so unquestionable, — that all are pledges of the truthfulness of her words. Ah! cruel daughter of the best of kings, is it thus that you abuse the gifts with which Heaven has endowed you? O Heaven! how couldst thou confer on this barbarous princess so much beauty, or why adorn so inhuman a soul with so many charms?"

Instead of seeking a few hours' sleep, he passed the night, distracted with the most painful reflections. At length day appeared, the ringing of the bells and beating of drums was again heard, and shortly after six mandarins arrived to conduct him to the council-chamber, as on the preceding day. He traversed the court where the soldiers were arranged in two files: he expected to meet his death at this spot, and that it was here the persons who had been appointed to assassinate him were posted, in order to despatch him as he passed. Far from thinking of defending himself or putting himself upon his guard, he walked on like a man prepared to die; he even appeared to chide the delay of his assassins. He passed through the court, however, without any attack being made upon him, and reached the first hall of the divan. "Ah! doubtless it is here," thought he, "that the sanguinary order of the princess is to be put in execution." He looked around him on all sides, and thought he saw in every one he surveyed a murderer. He nevertheless advanced and entered the hall where the council was sitting, without receiving the deadly stroke which he thought awaited him.

All the doctors and mandarins were already seated under their canopies, and Altoun-Khan was momentarily expected. "What can be the design of the princess?" thought he. "Can she wish to be an eye-witness of my death, and does she desire to have me assassinated before the eyes of her father? Can the king be an accomplice in the deed? What am I to think? Can he have changed his mind, and issued the order for my death?"

Whilst his thoughts were occupied with these doubts, the door of the inner palace opened, and the king, accompanied by Tourandocte, entered the hall. They took their seats upon their thrones, and the prince of the Nagäis stood before them, at the same distance as on the day before.

When the calao saw the king seated, he rose, and demanded of the young prince whether he remembered having promised to renounce the hand of the princess if she answered the question which he had proposed. Khalaf replied that he did, and again declared that in that event, he would renounce all claim to the honour of being the king's son-in-law. The calao then addressed Tourandocte, and said, "And you, great princess, you are aware of the oath that binds you, and of the penalty to which you are subjected if you do not this day declare the name of the prince, which you are required to give."

The king, persuaded that she could not reply to the question of Khalaf, said to her, "My daughter, you have had ample time to consider the question which was proposed to you; but if you had a whole year to think of it, I believe that in spite of your sagacity you would be obliged, at the end of it, to acknowledge that it is something which even you could not reveal. So, as you cannot guess, yield with good grace to the love of this young prince, and satisfy the wish I feel that he should be your husband. He is worthy of being so, and of reigning with you, after my death, over the people of this mighty empire."

"My lord," replied Tourandocte, "why do you think that I shall not be able to reply to the question of this prince? It is not so difficult as you imagine. I suffered the shame of a defeat yesterday, but to-day I look forward to the honour of a victory. I will confound this rash young man who has entertained so mean an opinion of my talents. Let him put the question, and I will answer it."

"Madam," thereupon said the prince of the Nagäis, "I ask, what is the name of that prince who, after suffering a thousand hardships, and being reduced to beg his bread, finds himself at this moment covered with glory, and overwhelmed with joy?"

"This prince," replied Tourandocte, "is named Khalaf, and he is the son of Timurtasch."

When Khalaf heard his name he changed colour, a dark mist seemed to cover his eyes, and he fell senseless to the ground. The king and all the mandarins, judging from this that Tourandocte had answered correctly, and had given the prince's real name, grew pale, and sat in great consternation.

After Khalaf had recovered from his swoon, through the attentions of the mandarins and the king himself, who had quitted his throne to come to his assistance, he thus addressed Tourandocte:

"Beautiful princess, you are mistaken if you think you have given a fitting answer to my question; the son of Timurtasch is not covered with glory, and overwhelmed with joy; he is rather covered with shame, and overwhelmed with grief."

"I agree with you," replied the princess, "that at this moment you are not overwhelmed with glory and joy, but you were so when you proposed this question; so, prince, instead of having recourse to vain quibbles, confess honestly that you have lost your right to Tourandocte. I therefore can, if I choose, refuse you my hand, and abandon you to the regret of having lost your prize; nevertheless, I will acknowledge to you, and declare here publicly, that I entertain different feelings towards you to what I did. The friendship my father has conceived for you, and your own merit, have determined me to take you for my husband."

At these words all etiquette was for a moment forgotten; the council-chamber resounded with shouts of joy. The mandarins and doctors applauded the words of Tourandocte. The king approached her, and kissing her, said, "My child, you could not have formed a decision more agreeable to me; by this act you will efface the bad impression you have made upon the minds of my people, and you confer upon your father a joy to which he has long been a stranger, and which hitherto he had hoped for in vain. Yes, that aversion you entertained for marriage, that aversion so contrary to nature, robbed me of the sweet hope of seeing princes of my own blood spring from you. Happily, that aversion has ceased, and what crowns my wishes is, that you have extinguished it in favour of a young hero who is dear to me. But tell us," added he, "how you have been able to guess the name of a prince who was unknown to you."

"My lord," replied Tourandocte, "it was not by enchantment that I learned it; it was by perfectly natural means. One of my slaves sought the prince Khalaf, and had subtlety enough to rob him of his secret, and I hope he will forgive me for taking advantage of this treachery, since I have made no worse use of it."

"Ah! charming Tourandocte," hereupon cried the prince of the Nagäis, "is it possible that you entertain such favourable sentiments towards me? From what a frightful abyss do you draw me, to raise me to the height of bliss! Alas, how unjust was I! whilst you were preparing such a glorious fate for me I thought you guilty of the blackest of all treachery. Deceived by a horrible fable which darkened my reason, I repaid your good intentions with injurious doubts. Oh! what impatience do I feel to expiate my unjust suspicions at your feet.”

Altoun-Khan ordered the preparations for the marriage of Khalaf and Tourandocte to be set on foot, and whilst they were engaged about them he sent ambassadors to the tribe of Berlas, to inform the khan of the Nagäis of all that had taken place in China, and to beg him to come with the princess his wife.

The preparations being concluded, the marriage was celebrated with all the pomp and magnificence which belonged to the high birth of the happy pair. Khalaf was raised to the rank of the highest subject, and the king himself made a public declaration that, to mark his sense of the esteem and consideration he entertained for his son-in-law, he should allow him to dispense with the customary obeisances to his bride. During a whole month nothing was seen at the court but feasting and pageants, and in the city nothing but gaiety and rejoicings.

The possession of Tourandocte did not diminish the love Khalaf entertained for her, and the princess, who had hitherto regarded men with so much contempt, could not but love so perfect a prince. Some time after their marriage the ambassadors whom Altoun-Khan had sent to the country of Berlas returned, bringing with them not only the father and mother of the king’s son-in-law, but also prince Almguer, who, to pay honour to Elmaze and Timurtasch, insisted on accompanying them, with the most distinguished of his nobles, and conducting them to Pekin.

The young prince of the Nagäis, apprized of their arrival, immediately rode out to meet them. He found them nearly at the gate of the palace. The joy he felt on seeing his father and mother, and their transports on seeing him, can be scarcely conceived, much less described. They all three embraced each other over and over again, and the tears they shed drew forth corresponding signs of emotion from the Chinese and Tartars who were present.

After these tender embraces, Khalaf saluted the khan of Berlas; he expressed to him how deeply he felt his kindness, and more especially his condescension in himself accompanying his parents to the court of China; the prince Almguer replied that, being ignorant of the rank of Timurtasch and Elmaze, he had not shown towards them the respect that was due to them, and thus to atone for any neglect they might have experienced, he thought it his duty to pay them this mark of honour; the khan of the Nagäis and his wife the princess, however, paid a high tribute to the attentive kindness of the khan of Berlas; they then all entered the palace of the king, to be presented to Altoun-Khan. They found this monarch awaiting them in the first hall. He embraced them all, one after the other, and received them very graciously; he then conducted them into his cabinet, where, after expressing the pleasure he felt at seeing Timurtasch, and his sympathy in his misfortunes, he assured him that he would employ all his power to avenge him on the sultan of Carisma. This was no empty offer, for that very day he despatched orders to the governors of the provinces to march with all speed with the soldiers who were in the towns within their jurisdiction, and to take the route to lake Baljouta, which was chosen for the rendezvous of the formidable army he proposed to assemble there.

For his part, the khan of Berlas, who had foreseen this war, and who wished to assist in the re-establishment of Timurtasch in his dominions, had, previous to his departure from his tribe, ordered the general of his army to be in readiness to take the field at the first summons. He now commanded him also to repair to lake Baljouta with all possible speed.

During the time the officers and soldiers who were to compose the army of Altoun-Khan, and who were dispersed throughout the kingdom, were marching to assemble at the spot indicated, this king spared no pains to express his high consideration for his new guests; he appointed a separate palace to each, with a great number of eunuchs, and a guard of two thousand men. Every day some new fête was contrived for their entertainment, and the king’s whole attention seemed turned towards affording them pleasure. Khalaf, although he had now every day a thousand matters to occupy his attention, did not forget his kind hostess; he remembered with gratitude the solicitude she expressed for him; he sent for her to the palace, and begged Tourandocte to receive her amongst her attendants.

The hope that Timurtasch and Elmaze entertained of reascending the throne of the Nagäi-Tartars, by the assistance of the king of China, insensibly made them forget their past troubles; and when Tourandocte gave birth to a beautiful prince, they were quite overwhelmed with joy. The birth of this child, who was named the prince of China, was celebrated in all the cities of this vast empire by public rejoicings.

Whilst these festivities were taking place, news was brought by couriers, sent by the officers who had orders to collect the army, that all the troops of the kingdom, and those of the khan of Berlas, had assembled at lake Baljouta. Immediately Timurtasch, Khalaf, and Almguer set out for the camp, where they found every thing in readiness, and seven hundred thousand men ready to march; they immediately took the read to Kotan, from whence they marched to Raschar, and at length entered the dominions of the sultan of Carisma.

This prince, informed of their numbers, and of the invasion of his territories, by couriers whom the governors of the frontier towns had despatched, far from being alarmed at the number of his enemies, courageously prepared to meet them. Instead even of intrenching himself, he had the boldness to take the field himself, at the head of four hundred thousand men, whom he had hastily collected. The armies met near Cogendi, where they drew up in battle array. On the side of the Chinese, Timurtasch commanded the right wing, prince Almguer the left, and Khalaf the centre. On the other side, the sultan confided the command of his right wing to the ablest of his generals, opposed the prince of Carisma to the prince of the Nagäis, and reserved the left to himself, where the elite of his cavalry were stationed. The khan of Berlas began the attack with the soldiers of his tribe, who, fighting like men who knew the eyes of their master were on them, soon turned the right wing of their enemies; the officer who commanded it, however, succeeded in reforming it almost immediately. Meanwhile the right wing, commanded by Timurtasch, was not so fortunate; the sultan broke them at the first onset, and the Chinese in disorder were on the point of taking flight, in spite of every effort of the khan of the Nagäis, when Khalaf, informed of what had taken place, confided the care of the centre to an experienced Chinese general, and rushed to the assistance of his father at the head of reinforcements. In a short time things assumed a different aspect. The left wing of the Carismians was driven back, and in turn routed; the whole of the ranks fell into disorder and were easily broken — the entire wing was put to flight. The sultan determined to conquer or die, and made incredible efforts to rally his soldiers; but Timurtasch and Khalaf gave them no time, and surrounded them on all sides, whilst prince Almguer having defeated the right wing, victory declared in favour of the Chinese.

There remained but one chance of safety for the sultan of Carisma, and that was to cut his way through the ranks of his enemies, and to take refuge with some foreign prince; but he preferred not surviving his defeat to exhibiting amongst the nations his brow despoiled of the diadem; so rushing blindly into the thickest of the carnage, he fell bravely, fighting to the last, and pierced with a thousand mortal wounds, on a heap of slain. The prince of Carisma, his son, shared the same fate; two hundred thousand of their troops were killed or made prisoners, the rest seeking safety in flight. The Chinese also lost a great number of men; but if the battle had been a bloody one, it was decisive. Timurtasch, after thanking Heaven for this signal success, despatched an officer to Pekin to give an account of the battle to the king of China; he then advanced into Zagatay, and seized upon the city of Carisma.

He made a proclamation in this capital that he would not touch the property, or interfere with the liberty of the Carismians; that Heaven having made him master of the throne of his enemy, he intended to take possession of it, and that henceforth, Zagatay, and the other countries which had been under the sway of the sultan, should acknowledge for their sovereign his son Khalaf.

The Carismians, tired of the harsh rule of their late master, and persuaded that that of Khalaf would be milder, submitted readily, and proclaimed as sultan this young prince, with whose merits they were acquainted. Whilst the new sultan took all necessary measures to strengthen his position, Timurtasch departed with a body of Chinese troops with all possible speed to his own dominions. The Nagäi-Tartars received him like faithful subjects, and were overjoyed to see their legitimate sovereign; but he was not content with regaining his throne; he declared war against the Circassians, in order to punish them for their treachery to prince Khalaf at Jund. Instead of trying to appease him by submission, these warlike people speedily collected an army to oppose him. He attacked them, and cut them nearly all to pieces; after which he caused himself to be proclaimed king of Circassia, and then returned to Zagatay, where he found Elmaze and Tourandocte, whom Altoun-Khan had sent to Carisma in great state.

Such was the end of the misfortunes of prince Khalaf, who gained by his virtues the love and esteem of the Carismians. He reigned long and peacefully over them, and never abated in his love for Tourandocte; he had a second son by her, who became afterwards the sultan of Carisma. As for the prince of China, Altoun-Khan brought him up, and chose him for his successor. Timurtasch and the princess Elmaze passed the rest of their days at Astrachan, and the khan of Berlas, after having received from them and their children all the tokens of gratitude which his generosity merited, retired to his tribe with the remainder of his troops.

IV.

THE WISE DEY.

Chaaban, Dey of Algiers, being dead, the Turkish janissaries bethought themselves of electing a new dey; and their intention was to place in this high station an inert, weak, and indolent man, who would allow them to be their own masters, to act as they pleased either with or without justice, and who would never inflict any punishment upon them. Passing through the streets of Algiers, they beheld Hadgi-Achmet, a man of ripe age, seated peaceably at the door of his dwelling, and carefully mending his old slippers, without taking any part either in the outcries, the conversation, or the gossiping going on all around him. Hadgi-Achmet seemed to them to be just the sort of apathetic man they were in search of, a man who would never interfere with any one, would allow them to do exactly as they pleased, and who, in short, would be but the shadow of a dey. They therefore laid hold of Hadgi-Achmet, tore him from his work, led him to the divan, and elected him dey in spite of himself.

Hadgi-Achmet, thus forced to assume the reins of government, wisely examined into the duties of his new position, and set himself to fulfil them with as much assiduity and zeal as he had employed in the humbler task of mending his old slippers. He watched over the interests of the country, and over those of justice, and punished severely all misdeeds which came under his observation; having a stern, strange habit of knitting his shaggy eyebrows and flashing his brilliant eyes whenever any thing mean or wicked came under his notice. All this was very displeasing to the Turkish janissaries, and to several members of the divan. Four of these latter formed a species of plot with the design of bringing Hadgi-Achmet into contempt in the eyes of the public. Now as it was the pleasure of the dey to administer justice himself, and to enquire into the smallest matter that concerned the interests of the people, they thought to render him ridiculous, by begging him one day to judge four distinct matters, unworthy, in their opinion, to occupy the attention of a great ruler.

"Hadgi-Achmet," said one of the members of the divan to the dey, "my lord, here is a culprit who can only be judged by thee, O sun of justice! He is a Tunisian merchant, who has established himself a short time since at Bab-a-Zoun street, not far from the mosque. At first he carried on his trade with tolerable honesty; but by degrees it has been shown that he is nothing better than a rogue, and has cheated a great number of his customers in the weight, the quality, and the value of his goods. Thou knowest well the law which condemns such offenders to lose an ear. This man was seized, carried before the cadi, and his rogueries being but too apparent, condemned by the cadi to lose his left ear, the right being reserved in the event of fresh misdemeanors. But when the man's turban was removed, it was discovered that his left ear was already gone. The cadi, being informed of the fact, ordered the right ear to be cut off. To execute this order, they had to pull the hand of the culprit away from his right ear, and when this had been done, it was discovered that the Tunisian's right ear was missing as well as the left. The cadi therefore sent to inform me, and I, knowing the pleasure thou takest in resolving grave and important questions, have come to submit this one to thy consummate prudence, to thy glorious justice."

Hadgi-Achmet, having heard these words, knit his brows, his eyes flashed fire upon him who had just spoken, and upon all those who were present at this audience; then, turning towards the man without ears, he said,

"Since thou hast always been a rogue, and that nothing could reform thee, I condemn thee all thy life long to wear neither turban nor any head-dress whatsoever to conceal the mutilation of thy ears. Purchasers, on beholding this mutilation, will shun thee if they are wise, for no one is ignorant that a merchant without ears is nothing else than a rogue."

The earless Tunisian went sadly away. Being compelled to exhibit to every one and at all times the mutilation he had undergone, was a far worse punishment than the loss of five hundred ears, if he had had them.

This judgment pronounced, a second member of the divan addressed the dey,

"Hadgi-Achmet, our lord and master, here are two men who are quarrelling upon a question which thou only canst decide by thy profound wisdom. One of these men is the father of a beautiful and promising boy. He had this son and two others. One day, about ten years ago, Ibrahim, his neighbour, who was childless, said to him, ‘Chamyl, give me thy youngest son, I will adopt him; he shall live in my house, inherit my wealth, and be happy. If thou desirest it, I will give thee in exchange for thy son my country-house at Boudjaréah; thou knowest that the north breeze is wafted there in the hottest days of summer.’

“Chamyl consented to give his son, and took the house at Boudjaréah in exchange. Ormed, the son of Chamyl, went to live with Ibrahim, who soon loved him very tenderly, whilst Ormed, if only out of gratitude, soon became much attached to him.

“Chamyl has now lost both his other sons, and having become rich, desires to take back Ormed, saying, ‘This child is henceforth the sole hope of my race, the joy of my heart, and I wish him to become my heir.’

“As for Ibrahim, he has lost nearly the half of his fortune, but he has not lost the attachment which he bears to his adopted son. On the contrary, his affection continues daily to strengthen for this child, who is endowed with the finest qualities of mind, and with a grateful and affectionate heart.

“With whom dost thou decree that Ormed shall remain? with his adopted or with his real father?”

Hadgi-Achmet, addressing himself to Chamyl, said, “In what does thy fortune consist?”

Chamyl enumerated his possessions: a house, a ship, several country houses, and merchandise.

“Can these things be removed?” asked Hadgi-Achmet.

“Some of them can,” replied Chamyl.

“And the others,” replied Hadgi-Achmet; “couldst not thou, if necessary, dispose of them, and buy others with the price?”

“I could,” replied Chamyl.

“And the affection which thou hadst for thy sons who are dead, couldst thou transfer it, and bestow it upon other children.”

“Ah! that would be impossible,” replied Chamyl, sorrowfully.

“Then affection cannot be transferred or exchanged,” said Hadgi-Achmet; “and as it forms part of the heart of man, it is of far higher consequence than material things, is it not?”

“Yes, my lord,” answered Chamyl.

"So that," continued the dey, "we may say to a man, Sell, or give away, thy possessions; but we cannot, without absurdity, say to any one, Cease to love him whom thou lovest. For which reason, Chamyl, I condemn thee to leave with Ibrahim the child whom he loves, and whom thou voluntarily gavest him when thou hadst affection for thy two sons who are no more. As to thy possessions, thou canst bear them whithersoever thou wilt, for riches are not the heart."

"But I love my son," cried Chamyl, "and I will have him, and him only, for my heir."

"Ah! thou lovest thy son," rejoined Hadgi-Achmet. "It may be so, but thou gavest no proofs of it so long as thy two other children were alive. Moreover, thou hast taken a house in exchange for thy son; it is exactly the same as if thou hadst sold thy child."

"I was poor," murmured Chamyl.

"A lame excuse," said the dey, "for there are many more poor men than rich men, yet we do not see poor men giving up their children for any gain whatsoever."

"No, no! I have not sold my son," cried Chamyl, "and my son is mine."

"No, thy son is no longer thine," said the dey, "for thou art not a father after my heart, and for ten years thy son has been cared for by the man to whom thou gavest him in exchange for a house. Ibrahim has not deserved that the child whom he so tenderly loves should be taken from him, and I order him to be left with him. But since thou wilt have none other than thy son for thine heir, I decree moreover that all thy property shall revert to him after thy death, which is nothing but justice."

Ibrahim then interposed. "My lord," said he to the dey, "Ormed and I have no need of the fortune of Chamyl. What Allah has left to us is sufficient for our wants. Permit Chamyl then to preserve the right of choosing for himself an heir among orphans or poor children, of whom he will now probably adopt one."

"No," replied the dey, "the man who has been able to calmly select one from among his own children and barter him for a house, can never attach himself to the orphan or the unfortunate. I see no reason to alter the judgment I have pronounced. Ormed will have for his inheritance the love of his adopted father and the wealth of his real one."

Chamyl withdrew, greatly incensed at this judgment, which seemed to him unjust, but which appeared highly equitable to the inhabitants of Aldgezaire.

A third member of the divan then addressed Hadgi-Achmet:

"All thy words bear the impress of the wisdom which illuminates thee. It suffices to hear thee, in order to know and venerate thee. If we do not abuse thy patience and thy goodness, it is because both are inexhaustible. Behold," added he, "a woman veiled, according to the law. She accuses her husband of leaving her to perish with hunger, whilst her husband here maintains that the woman tells an infamous untruth, and that he supplies her with ample means for becoming fat and strong; he adds, that the famished locusts from the desert eat not more voraciously than doth this woman, all the while remaining lean and feeble, as thou seest. The woman persists in asserting that her husband scarcely gives her sufficient to languish on like a dying tree, and she claims thy pity and thy justice."

Hadgi-Achmet, having heard these words, knit his brows, his eyes flashed fire upon him who had just spoken, and upon those present at this audience. Then he said, "Mahmoud, dost thou declare that thou affordest sufficient nourishment to thy wife?"

"Yes, my lord," replied Mahmoud.

"And thou, woman," said the dey, "dost thou still maintain that thy husband leaves thee in want of nourishment?"

"Yes, my lord," replied the poor starving woman in a faint voice, and extending her transparent hands and long thin arms, in a supplicating manner towards her master and her judge.

"Art thou poor?" demanded Hadgi-Achmet of Mahmoud.

"No, my lord," replied Mahmoud, "I could support several wives if I wished, but it pleases me to have only this one in my house."

"Ah! thou couldst support several wives," replied the dey; "and why then dost thou not give to this one all she desires, even supposing she devoured as voraciously as the famished locusts of the desert?"

"I never refuse her any thing," said Mahmoud.

The poor veiled woman sighed.

"Well," added Hadgi-Achmet, "since thou art both rich and generous, I will put thee in the position to repel an accusation so disgraceful to thee as that of leaving the woman whom thou hast espoused to perish of hunger. To which end I order that thy wife shall dwell in my palace in the apartments of my women and receive from thee a pension which will enable her to purchase whatever food she may desire. If at the end of a year of peace and plenty she should still possess that feeble voice and that excessive thinness which inspire my compassion, I shall regard her as inflicted with an incurable malady, and will leave her to go and die beneath thy roof; but if, on the contrary, she regains strength and voice, thou shalt be hung, not only for having violated the law which commands the husband to minister to the support of his wife, but still more for having lied before thy lord and thy judge, who knows and ever will know how to punish those who offend him."

Having spoken thus, Hadgi-Achmet cast terrible looks upon all the men present at this audience. Mahmoud withdrew only too sure of being hung next year, and every one preserved a gloomy silence which lasted for several minutes.

Hadgi-Achmet meanwhile resumed: "If there remains any other cause for me to judge, let it be declared."

Then with less self-possession and confidence than his colleagues had displayed, a fourth member of the divan presented himself. "Here, my lord," said he, "is a strange affair which occupies us, and which thou alone canst judge.

"These two men here present are twin-brothers. They have always loved each other, and have never been separated. Their father is just dead. After having deplored his loss, they said to each other: 'The roof of our father's dwelling has sheltered us to this day, let it shelter us still; and let us amicably share all that is left us by our father, arms, vestments, or jewels.'

"But all at once an object presented itself which could not be divided, and for the loss of which nothing else would compensate. The article in question is a holy amulet, which it is said bestows wisdom on him who wears it upon his breast beneath his tunic. Now the two brothers equally desire wisdom, and both would fain possess the precious talisman left them by their father."

Hadgi-Achmet having heard these words, knit his brows, again his eyes flashed fire, as he said to one of the twins:

"Mozza, canst thou not yield to thy brother, who so earnestly desires it, the amulet left you both by your father?"

"No, my lord," replied Mozza, "I could easily reconcile myself to my brother's being richer than myself, but not to his being wiser!"

Hadgi-Achmet turned to the other brother:

"Farzan, canst thou not yield to thy brother the amulet he wishes to possess?"

"No, my lord," replied Farzan, "for wisdom not alone bestows upon its possessor the things of the earth, but those also which belong to heaven, and I desire those above all."

Hadgi-Achmet then ordered Mozza to place upon his breast beneath his tunic the cherished amulet, which being done, he said to the young man:

"I am charmed to find that thou preferrest wisdom to fortune, for wisdom is above all. But dost thou not see that it is wise to be at peace with thy brother, and that to obtain this peace there is no sacrifice too great? To yield to thy brother is the beginning and the end of wisdom; he who yields is ever the best and the wisest. On this ground thou wilt now, I am persuaded, yield cheerfully this amulet to thy brother."

"I repeat, my lord," answered Mozza, "that I will yield every thing to my brother, slaves, diamonds, house — my entire fortune; but I will never willingly give up this sacred amulet: it is the only heritage I covet."

"Ah!" said Hadgi-Achmet, "thou hast not changed thy mind then! well, give me thy father's amulet."

Mozza reluctantly handed the precious talisman to the dey.

"Farzan," said the dey, "place this amulet upon thy breast, and beneath thy tunic."

Farzan obeyed. He had no sooner placed the amulet upon his breast than he felt so lively a joy that he would have embraced his brother had he dared, and his eyes glistened with pleasure.

"Ah!" said Hadgi-Achmet, addressing himself to Farzan, "I perceive that this amulet has great power over thee. Thy heart is opened to wisdom, and thou wilt renounce foolish quarrels, wilt thou not, and yield to thy brother the talisman which he so much desires, and of which he has perhaps greater need than thou?"

"I!" cried Farzan, "rather would I die than part with my father's amulet! I feel myself capable of plunging my dagger into the bosom of any one rash enough to attempt to tear it from me, whoever he might be."

"In truth," rejoined Hadgi-Achmet, "I see that this amulet is far from bestowing all the wisdom of which you young men deem it capable. On the contrary it only seems to me fit to sow dissensions between you, since notwithstanding you have both worn it upon your breast, you have nevertheless preserved your animosity and unjust pretensions in the dispute in question. For which reason I ordain that this precious talisman, of whose real power we are doubtless ignorant, shall remain in my palace and be restored in ten years' time to whichever of you two shall have given by his conduct the most incontestable proofs of piety and virtue."

Having heard this sentence, the two brothers sorrowfully withdrew. But they had no sooner crossed the threshold of the palace, than they were reconciled to each other, avowing that the dey had acted with justice, and thenceforth they lived happy and united as before.

In the mean time, Hadgi-Achmet, having delivered these four judgments, knit his brows once more, and turning to the members of the divan, addressed them as follows:

"Joyfully have I just occupied myself with the smallest things which concern the welfare and repose of my subjects, and I should not regret my time had it been employed in affairs still more trifling. Every thing appears of importance to me which in any way relates to the wellbeing of one of those over whom Allah has made me sovereign. I nothing doubt that you applaud my conduct, and that you would gladly imitate my zeal in the service of the people. Your praises prove it; but I know well that men such as you prefer proving their zeal by actions, rather than by words. I am about therefore to entrust you with a task of great importance to me, since it is for the most interesting class of my subjects, namely, the most unfortunate. I am about to distribute before the Ramadan, four sacks of rice among poor old men and widows. An unskilful hand has contrived in filling these sacks with the rice, to spill amongst it a quantity of *oats*. Now as I do not wish these poor people to think themselves treated with contempt by receiving rice mixed with oats, I wish that pious hands should carefully sift the rice and extract from it these grains. It is on you I rely for the performance of this duty, which awaits you in one of the halls of my palace. I cannot at this moment be an eye-witness of your zeal in obeying me, and serving the people; but before your task is finished, I will be with you."

Having spoken these words, the dey caused the members of the divan to be respectfully conducted by his guards to a large hall, where they found four sacks of rice and several baskets.

The members of the divan feeling persuaded that this was an affair which more nearly concerned their heads than the sacks of rice, set themselves silently to this unexpected work, whilst the guards remained stationary at the entrance of the hall in which the labour was being carried on.

The flight of a musquito might have been heard in this hall where the members of the divan were busily engaged sifting the rice for the poor, all the while vowing to be revenged upon Hadgi-Achmet, if they ever had the power.

Towards the evening the members of the divan were joined by Hadgi-Achmet, who perceiving that one of them had made less progress in his task than his three colleagues, said,

"I would not accuse thee of want of zeal: man knows not always what he wishes, nor knows what he can do; I will therefore aid thee in thy task," and he began gravely to assist the four members of the divan in sifting the rice of the poor.

The tasks being accomplished, the four sacks of rice were carefully closed. Hadgi-Achmet thanked his enemies, and caused them to be conducted with the greatest respect to the gates of his palace.

These men left to themselves, regarded each other with consternation and shame; they then said, "We would fain have laughed at Hadgi-Achmet, and it is he who has mocked us. Let us henceforth abstain from criticizing his scrupulous exactitude in rendering justice, but let us think only of avenging ourselves."

But they sought the opportunity in vain. Hadgi-Achmet, who had commenced his career by so carefully mending his old slippers, held the reins of power with a strong hand, and whilst other deys in those times almost always met a violent death by steel or poison, he died peacefully in his palace, after having lived many long years.

V.

THE TUNISIAN SAGE; OR, THE POWDER OF LONGEVITY.

Selim-ben-Foubi had been twenty years engaged in commerce when he inherited a fortune which greatly surpassed his wants and even his desires.

As he had lost all his children, his great wealth caused him but little joy, and he felt it even embarrassing to possess so much gold and so many precious things, of which he should never be able to make any use.

"I am now fifty," said he, "and were I to live to a hundred, I should not spend half of what I possess. I can only take one meal at a time, dress in a single suit, and sleep in but one bed. Hence if I can but rest in peace in a substantial and commodious house, eat as much as I desire, and invite a friend to partake of my repast, that is all I need wish for. I have therefore resolved to give away the half of my fortune during my lifetime, that I may enjoy the pleasure of beholding happiness of my own creating."

Having formed this generous project, Selim nevertheless wished before putting it into execution to take counsel with two of his friends.

Quitting therefore his country-house at Boudjaréah, he repaired to Aldgezaire, where in the garden of the grand mosque dwelt usually a sage mufti, a grave and reverend man. Seating himself by his side beneath the shade of some flowering pomegranate trees, he thus accosted him:

"Mehemet, I have come to visit thee in order to open my whole heart to thee and take counsel of thy wisdom. I am suddenly become very rich, as thou knowest, and I have no son to inherit my wealth; is it not too great for a single solitary man? speak, answer me."

"That which Allah gives should never be despised," replied the sage.

"I do not disdain my riches," replied Selim, "but I am thinking of sharing them with others, and of keeping only what is necessary to my existence for the remainder of my days."

"Thou knowest not what the number of thy days will be."

"I will suppose that I may enjoy the longest of lives, a hundred years for example, thinkest thou I shall live yet longer?"

"Allah alone knows."

"Let us say five hundred," continued Selim, "surely that covers all chances; well then, during this long course of years, would it not be more agreeable to me to know that my riches are useful, than to feel that they were hidden in some coffer, where they might become an object of envy to the poor, or tempt the cupidity of the ill-doer?"

"May be so," said the mufti.

"My thought is a good one then?"

"It may be; but will it be good in practice? I cannot say. Nothing is more common than to think wisely; nothing more rare than to put wise thoughts into practice."

"Advise me," said Selim, "and I shall then be sure of fulfilling the law, and of doing good. How ought I to distribute the half of my large fortune?"

The mufti reflected profoundly, and then replied:

"I advise thee first to take at least one year to reflect upon thy project. Time is the sun that ripens the thoughts of men. We never repent of having reflected before acting; we often regret not having done so. Reflect then, and afterwards come and consult with me."

Selim quitted the mosque, and repaired to Bab-a-Zoun street, to the house of his other friend, a Moorish merchant, who laboured hard to support himself by his calling. He began thus:

"We have been friends and have known each other these ten years, for which reason I come to put to thee this question: 'In what way, thinkest thou, a man who is both rich and beneficent should employ his fortune, in order to be useful?'"

The Moorish merchant replied: "Thou makest a very singular demand of me. I cannot believe that a man can find any difficulty in giving, if he really possess the desire. He may found a mosque, succour the aged, support the widow and the orphan, enrich his friends, if he have any, and the rich are seldom without friends."

"But thou," rejoined Selim, "if thou hadst aught to give away, what wouldst thou do?"

"I? I cannot fancy myself having any thing to give away, seeing that I can scarcely pay the rent of my poor shop, and fill that shop with a few sacks of rice and a little coffee. If I had money, it is very certain that I should begin by buying a house and goods. It is of no use to say to a poor man like me, ‘To whom wouldst thou give thy money?’ But I repeat to thee there is no lack of good actions to be done. Happy he who has only to choose.”

“Thou art right,” said Selim to his friend; and quitting him, he returned to his country-house at Boudjaréah. One of his neighbours, Achmet the Arab, accosted him upon the road thither; and Selim, having stopped to converse with his friend, said to him: “Thou art of a ripe age, and art not wanting in experience of the things of this life. Tell me then if thou considerest that it would be well for a man who is rich and childless to give away, while still living, the half of his fortune, reserving the other half, upon which to subsist honourably the remainder of his days.”

Achmet replied, “I cannot say whether it is better in the sight of Allah to give away or to retain the goods with which he has endowed thee. As for myself, I have nothing to give, for I have a very small fortune, and a great many children; but if I were rich and without heirs, I would bury my gold in some corner of my garden, sooner than bestow it to gratify men who are either wicked or ungrateful, and such they almost all are. This gold would sooner or later be discovered by some one whom Allah desired to enrich, and thus I should not be responsible for the use that was made of it.”

“Thy idea is not, perhaps, a bad one,” said Selim, “and I will certainly reflect upon it.”

While Selim and his neighbour were talking together, a Tunisian of miserable aspect approached the spot. This was no other than Hussein Muley, a physician of Tunis. He was already advanced in years, and passed for a man rich in science, but poor in money. Selim requested this man to rest himself in his house, and his invitation being accepted, he saluted his neighbour Achmet, and conducted his guest into one of the fresh and salubrious halls of his smiling abode. Hussein Muley, fatigued by two hours’ walk under a broiling sun, threw himself upon a divan, whilst fruits and coffee were abundantly served to him. When he had somewhat reposed and refreshed himself, Selim said to him in a friendly manner, “I am happy to receive thee at my house, because thou art a wise man, and of good renown in thy profession. Thou hast travelled, read, and seen life; thou must of necessity be able to judge wisely of the things which relate to this life. I should therefore be very glad to have thy opinion upon a project which I have formed. I have become very rich by inheritance; and having no children, I think of disposing, while yet living, of a great portion of my wealth. In what way dost thou consider it would be most desirable to employ this wealth?"

Hussein Muley regarded Selim with surprise.

"Thou wouldst give away a great portion of what thou hast," said he. "This is, indeed, a marvellous thing. I have, as thou sayest, travelled, read, and seen life, but never yet have I heard of any man giving away, during his lifetime, the greater part of his fortune."

"Does that prove that it would be wrong to do so?" demanded Selim.

"I know not," replied the Tunisian, falling into a fit of profound meditation, and looking all the while at the tips of his old slippers, instead of contemplating from afar the ever-changing sea and azure sky.

"On what dost thou muse?" at length demanded Selim.

"I was thinking — I was thinking that if the duration of man's life were longer, it would be better both for those who study science, and for those who are the fortunate possessors of great wealth; it would be equally good for the poor, since they might one day hope to enjoy the fruit of their toils, if they took pains to become rich."

"What profits it to meditate so deeply upon a thing which all the reflections of man cannot change?"

"I do not regard the prolongation of human existence as impossible. Hitherto physicians have most frequently been instrumental in abridging it. My aim is to repair the wrongs they have involuntarily committed. I would have succeeding ages regard my memory with gratitude."

"What sayest thou?" cried Selim. "Thou wouldst change the order of things, the whole course of nature?"

"Nothing can convince me that we follow the course of nature by dying at sixty or eighty years of age, when men formerly lived hundreds of years. On the contrary, I am certain that we were created to live longer, much longer, and I consecrate all my days, my nights, and my studies to the pursuit of a discovery which is destined to prolong the existence of mankind, and renew the state of things as they were when men married at a hundred years of age, and lived to see their sons' sons grow up and marry in their turn. Why, have I often asked myself, should our lives be shorter than those of an oak of the forests, of a serpent, or even of a vulture?"

"If we lived as long as an oak," replied Selim, "the cedars and the palm trees would still live longer than we."

"Thou dost but jest, but thy jesting is ill-timed; nothing is more serious than the thought which occupies me. Thou thyself, confess now, wouldst thou not be enchanted to see suns succeed suns, and to contemplate for ages to come the wonders of the heavens and the fecundity of the earth?"

Selim reflected a little, and replied, "Man does not love death, it is true; nevertheless life is not so desirable as thou wouldst fain have us believe."

"Then thou desirest not to prolong thy days upon the earth? For myself, I confess that I desire it greatly; so that besides my days and my nights, I consecrate all that I glean from learned researches to the accomplishment of this great end. I am already upon the track. But unfortunately gold is wanting — this gold which thou despisest, or knowest not how to employ — this gold would in my hands contribute to the happiness of future generations. With gold — with gold you can purchase books of precious value, measure the stars, dig the bowels of the earth, rend metals from her bosom, decompose substances, in short, penetrate into every mystery. Yes, gold which heretofore has been unable to bestow a day, nay an hour upon its possessor, gold in my hands would accomplish a wondrous discovery. I should certainly not keep the secret for myself alone, and I should share it first of all with the man whose wealth had helped me to the means of obtaining it."

"But shouldst thou discover the means of prolonging my life for many centuries, I should not then be rich enough to give away half of my fortune."

"What!" cried the physician of Tunis, "is not life preferable to all the riches in the world? and if at this moment it were said to thee, 'thou shalt die, or give up the whole of thy possessions,' wouldst thou not readily yield them to avoid the thrust of a yataghan, or the discharge of a gun in thy breast?"

"Thou puzzlest me, but I think that in such a case I should give up my property to preserve my life."

"Thou seest then that life is dear, even to the poor. Why not therefore endeavour to prolong thine own? Even if my profound science did not succeed, thou wouldst still be rich enough to enjoy an existence of the shorter duration."

Listening thus to the learned physician, Selim fell by degrees into a profound reverie, and the Tunisian, instead of continuing his discourse, gave himself up to meditation also; so that both these two men became absorbed in their own dreams in presence of each other, but without communicating their ideas, and Allah alone knows of what they were thinking.

After long and silent reflection, Selim said to Hussein Muley, "Before seeing thee I had intended to bestow while yet alive one-half of my fortune in making others happy. It will, I think, be no change of purpose, if I aid thee in pursuing those learned researches which tend to prolong the life of man. For which reason, Hussein Muley, I propose at once to present thee with the gold of which thou hast need. Come with me."

The Tunisian, appearing more astonished than rejoiced at these words, gravely arose, followed Selim into another apartment in the house, and received from him a little casket filled with pieces of gold.

"Employ this wisely," said Selim, "and communicate to me the result of thy labour."

"I will not fail to do so," replied Hussein Muley. And clasping the precious casket to his breast, he exclaimed, "Here then is the means of satisfying my thirst for knowledge, of surmounting all obstacles, of snatching from the past the secret which shall add hundreds of years to the existence of man, and prolong his days to the space of those of his fathers. Selim," added he, "thou dost a meritorious action in giving me this. I need not thank thee, because I am going to work for thee as for myself; nevertheless I do thank thee, and with my whole heart."

Having said these words the learned physician withdrew gravely, and with an air of deep abstraction.

Selim was not less preoccupied. Left to himself, he meditated long and profoundly on long and short lives, and on the prodigies accomplished by science, and he ended by asking himself whether he should confide to the sage mufti, whom he was soon about to see again, what he had done for Hussein Muley, and his hope of beholding the existence of the human species prolonged to an almost indefinite period. His final resolution was to admit no one to his confidence in the matter, but to await in silence the marvellous discovery of his new friend Hussein Muley, the physician of Tunis.

Several months passed by without the reappearance of the latter, but when at length he returned to Boudjaréah he was yellower, leaner, and more attenuated even than a man who had crossed on foot the mighty desert of Sahara. His limbs, in fact, could scarcely support his trembling frame.

“Well,” said Selim, “what has befallen thee? art thou sick, or dost thou return to me perishing of hunger?”

“No, but I have travelled night and day beneath the pale light of the stars, and the burning rays of the sun, and have often forgotten to take necessary sustenance, so deeply was I absorbed in my studies.”

“Well, and the result?”

“Alas! I have not yet succeeded as I could desire. Thus far have I attained only, that I have secured the power of prolonging our days fifty years.”

Having uttered these words, Hussein Muley sorrowfully clasped his withered hands upon his breast, and then added:

“I know that such a discovery would afford intense joy to any other but myself, but it is far from satisfying me. To live fifty years longer than usual, what is that?”

“It is something, nevertheless,” replied Selim, “and wilt thou tell me what is necessary to be done, in order to add fifty years to one’s existence?”

“Will I tell thee?” cried the Tunisian; “I am come expressly for that purpose, and to give thee this powder. It must be taken every morning fasting, for one year, three months, a week, and a day, without fail.”

“I must write down these directions,” said Selim.

He wrote them down at once, and then asked, “Dost thou not think thou shouldst rest satisfied with thy discovery, and begin to live well, and sleep well, in order to enjoy the remaining years of thy life?”

“I have no desire to repose yet from my labours. Of what account are fifty years added to sixty or eighty, soon to be over for me? No, no, I would live two centuries at the least, to enjoy the fruits of my toil, and make the fortunes of my children, and my children’s children. For thou dost not imagine we shall at first give to every one for nothing this magnificent secret, which has cost us so much. It is this secret which will procure us the means of living in splendour to the end of our days. Thou canst, for heavy sums of money, dispose of the powder which I shall have composed to whomsoever thou pleasest, while I on my part equally will part with it for gold; and when at length we die, surfeited with life, we will leave our secret to the multitude that survives us.”

“This arrangement seems to me just, and well conceived. Nevertheless, I desire not to sell the powder, but may I bestow it, and at once, upon one or two men whom I esteem highly?”

“No, let us not yet draw attention to our happy fortune; let us wait until my discovery shall be completely perfected.”

“Agreed; but I lament to see thee yellow, thin, and attenuated, as thou art.”

“Oh! that is nothing,” said the Tunisian, striking his forehead with his hands; “do not let my haggard appearance disturb thee. I would rather have nothing but skin upon my bones, and keep my secret to myself. I shall soon regain my flesh and my complexion. No, my health causes me no uneasiness. I merely suffer from anxiety, which arises from not having money sufficient for the prosecution of my studies.”

“Dost thou require much?” demanded Selim.

“Ah! yes, much,” replied Hussein with a sigh; “and if I fail in procuring it, instead of living fifty years longer than the usual course of things, I will either starve myself to death, or drown myself in the well of my house.”

“Beware of acting thus,” said Selim. “I can still give thee something; make use of that, and afterwards follow my advice, and sell to some rich man thy powder, in order to meet the expenses of thy lengthened researches.”

Hussein Muley appeared to meditate profoundly with his forehead buried in his hands, and seemed not to listen to Selim, but it is not improbable that he heard him very well.

“Thou dost not listen to me,” continued Selim. “Hussein! Hussein! I will give thee another little casket of gold; but after this casket I have nothing more to give thee. There will only remain just sufficient for me, during the time that I hope to live, thanks to thy powder. If thou discoverest another still more marvellous, thou wilt give it me, at least for my own use, wilt thou not?”

Hussein Muley seemed suddenly to come to himself, and exclaimed:

“Oh! I have at length found that of which I was in search! Yes, one herb alone is now wanting; I will go in quest of it, were it at the other end of the earth, and I will resolve the great problem which has occupied me for more than thirty years. Selim! Selim! entrust to my keeping what thou canst still consecrate to the happiness of mankind, and rest assured that thou wilt merit the admiration and the gratitude of ages to come.”

“I desire neither the one nor the other,” replied Selim; “I only wish to do a little good, that is all. Shall I succeed in my purpose? I will confess to thee, Hussein Muley, that I have more than once regretted devoting my fortune to a discovery which may prove more fatal than useful to the world; for the world is already peopled enough, and what would it be, if men lived for several centuries? Would they not kill each other for want of room?”

“Do they not already kill each other by sea and by land?” said Hussein Muley with a strange smile. “Come,” continued he, “do not disquiet thyself about what will some day happen upon the earth; profit by what fate offers thee, and prolong thy days in peace.”

Having thus spoken, he took the second casket proffered him by Selim, put it under his arm, and said in a grave tone:

“I am about to undertake a journey into Asia. There, near the Indies, is a high mountain, Mount Himalaya — dost thou not know it?”

“No,” answered Selim.

“Well, nor I either; but I go to cull from its summit, covered with perpetual snows, a plant, which will complete the discoveries I have already made.”

“I thought that no plant was ever to be found on those mountain tops covered with perpetual snow and frost?”

“There grows none, but that of which I have immediate need; I am going in quest of it, and will show it thee on my return.”

“It is well,” said Selim, and they separated.

Hussein Muley retreated with rapid strides.

Selim carefully placed in a small box the powder which he was to take fasting, during one year, three months, a week, and a day, and he began from the very next day to administer to himself this drug, which happily he did not find to be very nauseous to the taste.

Meanwhile the Tunisian set out from Aldgezaire with his wife, his children, and several chests, containing no doubt his books, and the papers necessary for his studies; but Selim never saw him more. He awaited his return, three, five, ten years, and, as he judged that ten years should suffice to go to Asia, and scale the highest mountain there, he began to think that the yellow, thin, and learned Tunisian was either dead, or else had taken advantage of his credulity and ignorance.

Whilst these thoughts occupied his mind, an epidemic broke out in Aldgezaire; Selim was attacked by it.

He therefore begged the wise mufti, who was still alive, to come and visit him; and then with that burst of confidence which seizes men in the hour of danger, he opened his heart to him, and related how he had given two caskets full of gold to Hussein Muley, in the hope of prolonging the existence of mankind for many centuries.

The wise mufti stroked his venerable beard and exclaimed:

“Selim, Selim, thou hast been played upon by a swindler, to whom thou hast imprudently confided thy generous thoughts. This proves the truth of what I one day said to thee, ‘With the best intentions we may commit the most foolish actions.’”

“Ah!” said Selim sorrowfully, “my misfortune has been in not spontaneously following the first impulse of my heart, for I had really the wish to do good, but in taking counsel of one and another I have followed the worst I received.”

“Yes,” replied the mufti, “thou mightest perhaps have acted wisely in following thy first idea; at the same time, if thou hadst, in accordance with my advice, reflected longer upon thy projects of benevolence, it is certain that thou wouldst not have given thy gold to a cheat who has done nothing but laugh at thy credulity.”

Selim willingly consented to acknowledge his fault. He confessed that it is useless to take the opinion of the wise and learned, if we do not mean to profit by it; then he prostrated himself devoutly before Allah, recovered his health by degrees, and caused a large sum of money to be distributed among the poor of the mosques, for he relied no longer on the hundreds of years of existence which were to come to him from Mount Himalaya, any more than on the powder of longevity.

VI.

THE NOSE FOR GOLD.

Mohammed and Yousouf, young Moors, born in Aldgezaire, had loved each other from infancy, and increasing years only served to strengthen the bonds of their attachment. Besides the happiness they enjoyed in their mutual affection, their friendship tended also to elevate their characters, and make them remarkable, for every body knows that constant friendships are never the lot of vulgar minds. These two young men, therefore, raised themselves above the level of the vulgar herd by the fidelity of their affection; they were cited as models in their native city; people smiled with pleasure on seeing them pass, always together, ever in good humour; and although they were far from being rich, yet their fate was envied by every one.

Mohammed and Yousouf generally dressed alike, and they had recourse to the same trade to gain their living. Their only trouble, — there must always be some in this world, — arose from the shops in which they were engaged during the day being separated from each other; evening, it is true, reunited them in the same dwelling, but that was not enough for them. When they married even, they contrived that it should be to each other's relatives. One family established itself on the first floor of the house, the other immediately above, and the two friends continued to love as heretofore, and to rejoice in their common felicity.

Over and over again, during their long conversations, they would repeat with the reiteration usual to those to whom a subject is dear, some such sentiments as these:

"The restless periods of youth, marriage, and commercial affairs have tried our friendship without altering it; it is henceforth secure from all changes; old age will only serve to render us dearer to each other, and we shall leave to our families the record and example of an affection which a future day will doubtless see renewed in our sons."

"It is probable," they would often say, "that Allah, touched by our friendship upon earth, will reunite us eternally in the paradise of true believers, beneath fresh shades, and by the side of bubbling fountains, surrounded by flowers of sweet perfume."

At this prospect of an eternal union, an eternal happiness, both would smile in anticipation, and such expressions as these they were never weary of repeating to each other.

These two friends were about thirty years of age, when a lucky chance gave them the opportunity of accomplishing the dearest wish of their hearts, that of occupying together two small shops adjoining each other.

An old Israelite, without family and without children, had inhabited them for twenty years. In one he slept and ate, not having any other house; in the other he displayed his merchandise; essences, amber, pastilles, necklaces and bracelets for the rich Moors, small looking-glasses, and beads of coral for the slaves; all of which he sold at the dearest possible price, as if he had a dozen children to support, and as many of his co-religionists.

Mohammed and Yousouf established themselves with lively satisfaction in these shops, the possession of which they had so long coveted, without at the same time desiring the death of the old Jew. They were incapable of a wicked action; but the Jew being dead, as they could not restore him to life, they saw no harm in lawfully taking possession of his domicile. This event seemed to complete their happiness.

But who can say or know what is really a good or an evil? who can foresee the consequences of things?

Mohammed one day, while knocking a nail into the partition wall between his shop and that of Yousouf, discovered that this wall was hollow, and that it contained some pieces of metal. His first impulse was to call, “Yousouf! Yousouf! there is gold or silver in our wall;” but the next moment he thought, “I will first assure myself of what this part of the wall contains, and if I really make a fortunate discovery, I shall give Yousouf such an agreeable surprise by calling him to partake of it.”

Accordingly he waited until Yousouf should be out of the way for an hour or two to give him the opportunity of exploring further into his wall, but it so happened that Yousouf was never absent at all for several days following.

Mohammed then said to his friend:

“I fancy that something has been stolen from my shop during the night. I shall sleep there to-night, in order to surprise the thief, if he should reappear."

"I shall not leave thee alone here all night," replied Yousouf, "but shall sleep also in my shop by the side of thee."

Mohammed in vain strove to oppose the resolution of his friend; he could not revisit his shop alone in the evening, and for several days following, Yousouf seeing that he appeared pensive and uneasy, quitted him less than ever, and said to him with the solicitude of true friendship:

"Thou seemest sad! Thy wife and thy sons, are they ill? Regrettest thou what has been taken from thy shop? Compensate thyself for thy loss by selecting whatever thou wilt from that which I possess."

Mohammed thanked Yousouf, and replied with a smile:

"Rest satisfied, I have no grief." He dared not add, "I have no secret," for he had one.

In order however to put an end to the feeling of intense anxiety that filled his mind, he came to his shop one night unknown to Yousouf, and hastily detaching from the partition wall first one stone, then two or three more, he discovered a hundred Spanish doubloons, and eight four-dollar pieces. This was a perfect treasure to Mohammed, who had never in his life possessed more than the half of a small house, and the few goods exposed for sale in his shop.

"We are rich," said he. "Yousouf and I can now purchase a country house by the sea-side, as we have so often wished. Our wives and our children will disport themselves in our sight. My son Ali, that beautiful child whom I so tenderly love, will be delighted to run among the trees and climb up into their topmost branches. Ah! how rejoiced I am, if only for his sake."

Thus thinking, Mohammed took his gold and his silver, replaced, as well as he was able, the stones in his wall, and returned to his home, his mind occupied with delightful visions, and already beholding himself in imagination enjoying the pleasures of a delightful habitation by the sea-shore, with his beautiful Ali, that dear child whom he so tenderly loved. During two days he put off from hour to hour the disclosure which he had to make to Yousouf; and during those two days he revolved all sorts of ideas in his mind.

"If I made the fortune of my son, instead of that of my friend," said he at length to himself, “should I be guilty? Is not a son nearer and dearer than all the friends in the world? Yes; but then the gold and silver which I have discovered belong by rights as much to Yousouf as to myself, for the wall whence I have taken them belongs as much to his shop as to mine.”

Unable to resolve either to share his treasure with his friend or to keep it for himself alone, he took the resolution of carefully concealing it in the chamber in which he slept, and of waiting until the agitation caused in his mind by so important an event should have somewhat subsided, to which end he hastened to secure his newly acquired possession.

“Reflection is no crime,” said he. Consequently he gave himself time to reflect, instead of following the first impulse of his heart and remaining faithful to that devotion of friendship which had hitherto constituted his pride and glory, and which still bore the promise of so rich a harvest in the future.

He passed all his time then, extended during the heat of the day upon a mat by the side of his merchandise, and with closed eyes feigning to sleep, while in reality he was thinking of nothing but his treasure, and of what he ought to do with it.

Yousouf meanwhile, impressed with the idea that his friend was sleeping, took every care to guard his slumbers from interruption, thinking as he gently fanned his fevered brow of nothing but Mohammed, and what he could possibly invent to divert him and render him happy.

One day as Yousouf and Mohammed were reposing after their labours, an old hump-backed Jew with a sallow complexion and an enormous nose accosted Yousouf, saying:

“Was it not here that Nathan Cohen, the son of David, lived about two years since?”

“Speak low,” replied Yousouf to the Jew. “My friend is asleep, and I would not that his slumbers should be disturbed.”

The Jew seated himself on the edge of Yousouf’s little counter, and repeated his inquiry, at the same time lowering the harsh and hollow tones of his voice.

“Yes, it was here that Nathan Cohen, the son of David, dwelt,” replied the young Moor.

"Ah!" said the old Jew, working his large and flexible nostrils, "I was sure of it — that is why I scent gold hidden here."

"Indeed!" said Yousouf, regarding somewhat incredulously the extraordinary nose of his interlocutor. "Thou dost well to talk of smelling gold or silver either. Thy olfactory nerves are of the strongest no doubt, nevertheless I fear me they are at fault in this dwelling, where gold and silver but seldom make their appearance."

"They are not often to be seen here," replied the Jew; "I know that full well; they are not heard here either, for the earth conceals them both from sight and sound. But remove them from the envious ground that covers them, and they will dazzle thine eyes and charm thine ears."

"Indeed!" said Yousouf, laughing. "Thou art the bearer of good news. How much dost thou demand for thy reward?"

"I would have thee share with me all that I shall cause to be discovered in thy house by means of the marvellous sense of smelling with which I am endowed, and at which thou now jestest."

"Share with thee!" exclaimed Yousouf. "Oh no, indeed! If I were fortunate enough to discover a treasure, it is with my friend Mohammed that I should hasten to share it."

"But thou wilt have nothing to share with him if I do not disclose to thee the spot where thy treasure lies concealed."

"Perhaps so. But if I put any confidence in thy nose, what prevents me from turning my whole shop topsy-turvy, digging up the floor, and pulling down the walls and the shelves?"

The Jew slowly regarded the ground, the walls, and the shelves, as they were severally named by Yousouf; then he said in an ironical manner:

"Thou wouldst not do much harm if thou wert to demolish all around thee; but to save thyself so much trouble and labour, thou hadst far better give me at least one-third of what I shall discover in thy dwelling. The other two-thirds can be for thyself and thy friend, if thou art fool enough not to wish to keep all for thyself."

"Ah, it may suit such a man as thou to call him who prefers friendship to money a fool! But in spite of all thy arguments I shall never change, and I shall love Mohammed better than all the money in the world."

"As you please. It remains to be seen if Mohammed would do the same for you."

"I have not the slightest doubt of it," replied Yousouf.

The Jew uttered a suppressed laugh.

"And I have every doubt of it," said he. "I doubt even *thy* future disinterestedness, notwithstanding the warmth of thy discourse. Yousouf! Yousouf! thou hast not yet beheld the dazzling brilliancy of gold! It is the lustre of this metal which charms the eyes and wins the heart of man. Once let him see gold before him, and know that he has the power to possess himself of it, and adieu to every other thought. Gold! why it is the thing to be most desired in the world. Possessed of gold, what can we not enjoy? a fine house, smiling pasturage, blooming gardens, rich stuffs, divans, perfumes, all, in short, that renders life desirable!"

"That is very true," replied Yousouf. "We can procure many things with gold; but still gold cannot purchase youth, gaiety, friendship, or even a good appetite or sound sleep. Leave me then in peace with thy discoveries, and if thou art so skilled in the art of scenting gold, learn also to scan the disposition of him to whom thou addressest thyself."

"Then thou wilt not consent to give me the third of what I know to be here, hidden though it may be?"

"Decidedly not," replied Yousouf. "I have no faith in thy ridiculous pretensions; moreover, I do not know thee, and have never seen thee either in the public walks, the streets, or elsewhere."

"I have just returned from a long journey," replied the old man; "my name is Ephraim. When I quitted this city, thou wert but sixteen years of age; my friend Nathan Cohen, son of David, was then very old: he has been dead, they say, these two years."

"And so thou comest to exercise thy sense of smelling in thy accustomed haunt," said Yousouf gaily; "and seest thou not then that there is some power in friendship, since it is the memory of a friend that brings thee hither?"

"Ah! it is not the memory of the past, but hope for the future," replied the old Jew. "So long as our friends are alive they may be useful, though that is a thing that very rarely happens; but when they are dead, what is the use of thinking any more of them?"

Yousouf, wearied out with so much discussion, said at length to Ephraim:

"Come, come, enough of this! Leave this place; thy voice will, I am sure, awaken my friend, and prevent him from sleeping, as he delights to do during the heat of the day."

"Do not let us awaken him," replied the Jew, "but let us remove the ground there beneath thy feet. I will hope that a feeling of gratitude may induce thee to bestow upon me a portion of what I shall discover for thee."

So saying, the Jew drew a long iron pickaxe from beneath his dirty brown tunic, and began to break up the ground around the feet of Yousouf. The latter regarded the old man — his prodigious nose inflated by the hope of gain — with a smile of derision. But in a short space of time their eyes were dazzled by a sight of the precious metal. The Jew had, indeed, succeeded in disinterring a veritable treasure.

"Let us now count this gold and silver," said he.

They took it, and counted it, and found that Yousouf had suddenly become the possessor of five hundred Spanish doubloons, and sixty four-dollar pieces. He could scarcely believe his eyes.

"Well," said the Jew, "what sayest thou? have I lied to thee, or deceived myself? Come, let us see now what thou art going to give me in reward for my pains."

"I will awaken Mohammed," said Yousouf, "and he and I will certainly give thee something as a recompense."

"Yousouf!" said the Jew, arresting the young Moor by the arm, "reflect a moment before awakening thy friend. Would it not be better to keep this treasure for thyself and for thy sons? Hast thou not children, and are not children much dearer than a friend?"

"If I have children," replied Yousouf, "Mohammed has them also. We loved each other before they were born, and we know how to be good fathers without being faithless friends."

At this moment Mohammed, who had not awaked, for the very sufficient reason that he had not been asleep, started as if he had been stung by a thousand mosquitoes at once, and rose with a sudden bound. The concluding words of Yousouf had awakened a feeling of remorse within his breast.

“Yousouf! Yousouf!” said he to his friend, “I have heard all. Yes, every thing, and thy sincere friendship, tried by time and tried by gold, is now the sole treasure I desire.”

“I know for how long a time thou hast thought thus,” replied Yousouf. “But since Allah has chosen to make us rich, let us not disdain the blessing which he sends. He it was who first inspired us with the wish for these two little shops, and who has bestowed them upon us. It is he who has conducted hither this Jew who has been the instrument of our discovering this treasure. Let us offer our thanks to Allah, and let us give to Ephraim that which is meet and right.”

“Be that as thou only wilt,” said Mohammed with a preoccupied air. “Thou art just and righteous, and thy thoughts are pure in the sight of Allah.”

Yousouf paid no great heed to this friendly eulogium, but continued gaily:

“Since thou permittest me to be the sole arbiter in the affair, this is my decision.”

Then, turning towards Ephraim: “Thou shalt be more or less recompensed,” said he, “according to the candour with which thou repliest to my question. Come, then, answer me truly, hast thou really, thanks to the singular form of thy nose, so fine a sense of smell as to be able to trace any metal whatever, either under ground or elsewhere?”

“Yes,” said the Jew, “I possess this rare faculty, thanks to my nose; and to give thee a farther proof of it, I declare that I can again scent in this spot in the wall a sum of gold and silver, the exact amount of which I cannot enumerate.”

Mohammed turned pale at these words. “In this wall?” said he.

“Yes. Suffer me to make a little hole with this gimlet here, and you will see if I speak falsely.”

“Dig where thou wilt,” replied Yousouf; “we have no right to prevent thee after the discovery thou hast just made here.”

The Jew instantly set to work at the wall, but it was now his turn to be astonished, for the wall, hollow it is true, was guiltless of gold or silver either.

Yousouf burst out laughing at the disconcerted and stupified look of the old Jew.

"Never mind," said he, "thy nose has deceived thee for once; but thou must not let that discourage thee. Still, hadst thou frankly told me that as a friend of old Nathan Cohen thou knewest where he had hidden his treasure, in return for thy confidence I should have given thee a quarter of what thou hast found; but since thou hast persisted in assuring me that thy nose is gifted with supernatural powers, I shall give thee much less. Besides, with such a nose as thine no one can doubt but thy fortune is made."

"Ah!" cried the Jew, clasping his withered and wrinkled hands, "Yousouf! Yousouf! since thou art good and just, as Mohammed says, take pity on my poverty; it impelled me to deal falsely with thee; I confess it now; and spite of its singular form, my nose has nothing but what is common to other noses. Accord then to my tardy sincerity that which thou wouldst at first have given me."

Yousouf consulted Mohammed again, who replied thus:

"Thou art just and pious; act according to thy own desire."

Yousouf then counted out to the old Jew the fourth part of what he had just found, thus rendering him happy for the remainder of his days.

Then, finding himself alone with his friend, he began to divide into two equal parts the gold and silver which remained.

"Give me none! give me none, Yousouf!" exclaimed Mohammed, "I am no longer deserving of thy friendship."

"Thou!" said Yousouf, "art thou mad? what sayst thou?"

"I speak the melancholy truth," cried Mohammed; "I have not a noble heart like thine. Some time since I discovered in the wall the gold and silver which the Jew thought to find there; but instead of saying as thou hast done, 'I will share it with my friend,' I put off from day to day the fulfilment of this sacred duty. Ah, Yousouf, I am unworthy of thy friendship, and am very unhappy!"

Yousouf remained silent for a few moments, but soon his brow grew clear, and a pleasing smile diffused itself over his features and illuminated his fine dark eyes.

"What man," said he, "is entirely master over his own thoughts? Thou didst hesitate, sayst thou, before confiding to me the discovery thou hadst made. That may be, but thou wouldst not have failed to do so at last. Thou wouldst never have been able to behold thyself rich, knowing me to be poor, and to sit at a feast whilst I lived upon black bread. Thou didst not thoroughly understand the wants and feelings of thy heart: that is all. Thou didst not at once perceive wherein lies true happiness, for which reason thou hast caused thyself much uneasiness. It is over now; our friendship has been tried by gold; nothing remains for us but to enjoy the good fortune that has befallen us. Let us seek to do so like wise men, and never let us forget to set apart for the poor a portion of that which Allah has bestowed upon us."

The two friends agreed therefore to give a hundred doubloons to the poor of the great mosque. Then with the rest of their treasure they purchased a beautiful country house not far from the sea, on the coast of Punta Pescada. There they lived happily for many long years, always admired and esteemed for their mutual affection, and for the goodness of their hearts; for, strange to say, their sudden and unexpected change of fortune never served to render them callous to the poor, nor indifferent to the wants and troubles of their fellow-creatures.

VII.

THE STORY OF THE TREASURES OF BASRA.

All historians agree that the caliph Haroun-al-Raschid would have been the most perfect prince of his time, as he was also the most powerful, if he had not so often given way both to anger and to an insupportable vanity. He was always saying that no prince in the world was so generous as himself. Giafar, his chief vizir, being at last quite disgusted with his boasting, took the liberty to say to him one day, “Oh, my sovereign lord, monarch of the world, pardon your slave if he dares to represent to you that you ought not thus to praise yourself. Leave that to your subjects and the crowds of strangers who frequent your court. Content yourself with the knowledge that the former thank heaven for being born in your dominions, and that the latter congratulate themselves on having quitted their country to come and live under your laws.” Haroun was very angry at these words; he looked sternly at his vizir, and asked him if he knew any one who could be compared to himself in generosity.

“Yes, my lord,” answered Giafar, “there is in the town of Basra a young man named Aboulcassem, who, though a private individual, lives in more magnificence than kings, and without excepting even your majesty, no prince is more generous than this man.”

The caliph reddened at these words, his eyes flashed with anger. “Do you know,” he said, “that a subject who has the audacity to lie to his master merits death?”

“I have said nothing but the truth,” replied the vizir. “During my last visit to Basra I saw this Aboulcassem; I stayed at his house; my eyes, though accustomed to your treasures, were surprised at his riches, and I was charmed with the generosity of his manners.”

At these words the impetuous Haroun could no longer contain his anger. “You are most insolent,” he cried, “to place a private individual on an equality with myself! Your imprudence shall not remain unpunished.”

So saying, he made a sign for the captain of his guards to approach, and commanded him to arrest the vizir Giafar. He then went to the apartment of the princess Zobeide his wife, who grew pale with fear on seeing his irritated countenance.

"What is the matter, my lord?" said she; "what causes you to be thus agitated?"

Haroun told her all that had passed, and complained of his vizir in terms that soon made Zobeide comprehend how enraged he was with the minister. This wise princess advised him to suspend his resentment, and send some one to Basra to ascertain the truth of Giafar's assertion; if it was false, she argued, the vizir should be punished; on the contrary, if it proved true, which she could not believe, it was not just to treat him as a criminal. This discourse calmed the fury of the caliph.

"I approve of this counsel, madam," said he, "and will acknowledge that I owe this justice to such a minister as Giafar. I will do still more; as any other person I charged with this office might, from an aversion to my vizir, give me a false statement, I will myself go to Basra and judge of the truth of this report. I will make acquaintance with this young man, whose generosity is thus extolled; if Giafar has told me true, I will load him with benefits instead of punishing him for his frankness; but I swear he shall forfeit his life if I find he has told me a falsehood."

As soon as Haroun had formed this resolution he thought of nothing but how to execute it. One night he secretly left the palace, mounted his horse, and left the city, not wishing any one to follow him, though Zobeide entreated him not to go alone. Arriving at Basra, he dismounted at the first caravansary he found on entering the city, the landlord of which seemed a good old man.

"Father," said Haroun, "is it true that there is in this city a young man called Aboulcassem, who surpasses even kings in magnificence and generosity?"

"Yes, my lord," answered the landlord; "and if I had a hundred mouths, and in each mouth a hundred tongues, I could not relate to you all his generous actions." As the caliph had now need of some repose, he retired to rest after partaking of a slight refreshment. He was up very early in the morning, and walked about until sunrise. Then he approached a tailor's shop and asked for the dwelling of Aboulcassem. "From what country do you come?" said the tailor; "most certainly you have never been at Basra before, or you would have heard where the lord Aboulcassem lives; why, his house is better known than the palace of the king."

The caliph answered, "I am a stranger; I know no one in this city, and I shall be obliged if you will conduct me to this lord's house."

Upon that the tailor ordered one of his boys to show the caliph the way to the residence of Aboulcassem. It was a large house built of stone, with a doorway of marble and jasper. The prince entered the court, where there was a crowd of servants and liberated slaves who were amusing themselves in different ways while they awaited the orders of their master. He approached one of them and said, "Friend, I wish you would take the trouble to go to the lord Aboulcassem and tell him a stranger wishes to see him." The domestic judged from the appearance of Haroun that he was no common man. He ran to apprise his master, who coming into the court took the stranger by the hand and conducted him to a very beautiful saloon. The caliph then told the young man, that having heard him mentioned in terms of praise, he had become desirous of seeing him, and had travelled to Basra for that purpose. Aboulcassem modestly replied to this compliment, and seating his guest on a sofa, asked of what country and profession he was, and where he lodged at Basra.

"I am a merchant of Bagdad," replied the caliph, "and I have taken a lodging at the first caravansary I found on my arrival."

After they had conversed for a short time there entered twelve pages bearing vases of agate and rock crystal, enriched with precious stones, and full of the most exquisite beverages. They were followed by twelve very beautiful female slaves, some carrying china bowls filled with fruit and flowers, and others golden caskets containing conserves of an exquisite flavour. The pages presented their beverages to the caliph; the prince tasted them, and though accustomed to the most delicious that could be obtained in the East, he acknowledged that he had never tasted better. As it was now near the hour for dinner, Aboulcassem conducted his guest to another room, where they found a table covered with the choicest delicacies served on dishes of massive gold. The repast finished, the young man took the caliph by the hand and led him to a third room more richly furnished than the two others. Here the slaves brought a prodigious quantity of gold vases, enriched with rubies, filled with all sorts of rare wines, and china plates containing dried sweetmeats. While the host and his guest were partaking of these delicious wines there entered singers and musicians, who commenced a concert, with which Haroun was enchanted. “I have,” he said to himself, “the most admirable voices in *my* palace, but I must confess they cannot bear comparison with these. I do not understand how a private individual can live in such magnificence.”

Amongst the voices there was one in particular the extraordinary sweetness of which attracted the attention of the prince, and whilst he was absorbed in listening to it Aboulcassem left the room and returned a moment after holding in one hand a wand, and in the other a little tree whose stem was of silver, the branches and leaves emeralds, and the fruit rubies. On the top of this tree was a golden peacock beautifully executed, the body of which was filled with amber, essence of aloes, and other perfumes. He placed this tree at the caliph’s feet; then striking the head of the peacock with his wand, the bird extended its wings and tail, and moved itself quickly to the right and left, whilst at each movement of its body the most odoriferous perfumes filled the apartment. The caliph was so astonished and delighted that he could not take his eyes off the tree and the peacock, and he was just going to express his admiration when Aboulcassem suddenly took them away. Haroun was offended at this, and said to himself, “What does all this mean? It appears to me this young man does not merit so much praise. He takes away the tree and the peacock when he sees me occupied in looking at them more than he likes. Is he afraid I want him to make me a present? I fear Giafar is mistaken in calling him a generous man.” He was thus thinking when Aboulcassem returned accompanied by a little page as beautiful as the sun. This lovely child was dressed in gold brocade covered with pearls and diamonds. He held in his hand a cup made of one single ruby, and filled with wine of a purple colour. He approached the caliph, and prostrating himself to the ground, presented the cup. The prince extended his hand to receive it, but, wonderful to relate, he perceived on giving back the cup to the page, that though he had emptied the cup, it was still quite full. He put it again to his lips and emptied it to the very last drop. He then placed it again in the hands of the page, and at the same moment saw it filling without any one approaching it. The surprise of Haroun was extreme at this wonderful circumstance, which made him forget the tree and the peacock. He asked how it was accomplished. “My lord,” said Aboulcassem, “it is the work of an ancient sage who was acquainted with most of the secrets of nature;” and then, taking the page by the hand, he precipitately left the apartment. The caliph was indignant at this behaviour. “I see how it is,” said he, “this young man has lost his senses. He brings me all these curiosities of his own accord, he presents them to my view, and when he perceives my admiration, he instantly removes his treasures. I never experienced treatment so ridiculous or uncourteous. Ah, Giafar! I thought you a better judge of men.”

In this manner they continued amusing themselves till sunset. Then Haroun said to the young man, “Oh, generous Aboulcassem, I am confused with the reception you have given me; permit me now to retire and leave you to repose.” The young lord of Basra not wishing to inconvenience his guest, politely saluted him, and conducted him to the door of the house, apologizing for not having received him in a more magnificent style. “I quite acknowledge,” said the caliph on returning to his caravansary, “that for magnificence Aboulcassem surpasses kings, but for generosity, there my vizir was wrong in placing him in comparison with myself; for what present has he made me during my visit? I was lavish in my praises of the tree, the cup, and the page, and I should have thought my admiration would have induced him to offer me, at least, one of these things. No, this man is ostentatious; he feels a pleasure in displaying his riches to the eyes of strangers. And why? Only to satisfy his pride and vanity. In reality he is a miser, and I ought not to pardon Giafar for thus deceiving me.” Whilst making these disagreeable reflections on his minister, he arrived at the caravansary. But what was his astonishment on finding there silken carpets, magnificent tents, a great number of servants, slaves, horses, mules, camels, and besides all these, the tree and the peacock, and the page with his cup? The domestics prostrated themselves before him, and presented a roll of silk paper, on which were written these words, “Dear and amiable guest, I have not, perhaps, shown you the respect which is your due; I pray you to forget any appearance of neglect in my manner of receiving you, and do not distress me by refusing the little presents I have sent you. As to the tree, the peacock, the page, and the cup, since they please you, they are yours already, for any thing that delights my guests ceases to be mine from that instant.” When the caliph had finished reading this letter, he was astounded at the liberality of Aboulcassem, and remembered how wrongly he had judged the young man. “A thousand blessings,” cried he, “on my vizir Giafar! He has caused me to be undeceived. Ah, Haroun, never again boast of being the most magnificent and generous of men! one of your subjects surpasses you. But how is a private individual able to make such presents? I ought to have asked where he amassed such riches; I was wrong not to have questioned him on this point: I must not return to Bagdad without investigating this affair. Besides, it concerns me to know why there is a man in my dominions who leads a more princely life than myself. I must see him again, and try to discover by what means he has acquired such an immense fortune.”

Impatient to satisfy his curiosity, he left his new servants in the caravansary, and returned immediately to the young man’s residence. When he found himself in his presence he said, “Oh, too amiable Aboulcassem, the presents you have made me are so valuable, that I fear I cannot accept them without abusing your generosity. Permit me to send them back before I return to Bagdad, and publish to the world your magnificence and generous hospitality.” “My lord,” answered the young man with a mortified air, “you certainly must have had reason to complain of the unhappy Aboulcassem; I fear some of his actions have displeased you, since you reject his presents; you would not have done me this injury, if you were satisfied with me.”

“No,” replied the prince, “heaven is my witness that I am enchanted with your politeness; but your presents are too costly; they surpass those of kings, and if I dared tell you what I think, you would be less prodigal with your riches, and remember that they may soon be exhausted.”

Aboulcassem smiled at these words and said to the caliph, “My lord, I am very glad to learn that it is not to punish me for having committed any fault against yourself that you wished to refuse my presents; and now to oblige you to accept them, I will tell you that every day I can make the same and even more magnificent ones without inconveniencing myself. I see," added he, "that this astonishes you, but you will cease to be surprised when I have told you all the adventures which have happened to me. It is necessary that I should thus confide in you."

Upon this he conducted Haroun to a room a thousand times richer and more ornamented than any of the others. The most exquisite essences perfumed this apartment, in which was a throne of gold placed on the richest carpets. Haroun could not believe he was in the house of a subject; he imagined he must be in the abode of a prince infinitely more powerful than himself. The young man made him mount the throne, and placing himself by his side, commenced the history of his life.

HISTORY OF ABOULCASSEM.

I am the son of a jeweller of Cairo, named Abdelaziz. He possessed such immense riches, that fearing to draw upon himself the envy or avarice of the sultan of Egypt, he quitted his native country and established himself at Basra, where he married the only daughter of the richest merchant in that city. I am the only child of that marriage, so that inheriting the estates of both my parents I became possessed on their death of a very splendid fortune. But I was young, I liked extravagance, and having wherewith to exercise my liberal propensities, or rather my prodigality, I lived with so much profusion, that in less than three years my fortune was dissipated. Then, like all who repent of their foolish conduct, I made the most promising resolutions for the future.

After the life I had led at Basra, I thought it better to leave that place, for it seemed to me my misery would be more supportable among strangers. Accordingly I sold my house, and left the city before daybreak. When it was light I perceived a caravan of merchants who had encamped on a spot of ground near me. I joined them, and as they were on their road to Bagdad, where I also wished to go, I departed with them; I arrived there without accident, but soon found myself in a very miserable situation. I was without money, and of all my large fortune there remained but one gold sequin. In order to do something for a living I changed my sequin into aspres, and purchased some preserved apples, sweetmeats, balms, and roses. With these I went every day to the house of a merchant where many persons of rank and others were accustomed to assemble and converse together. I presented to them in a basket what I had to sell. Each took what he liked, and never failed to remunerate me, so that by this little commerce I contrived to live very comfortably. One day as I was as usual selling flowers at the merchant's house, there was seated in a corner of the room an old man, of whom I took no notice, and on perceiving that I did not address him, he called me and said, "My friend, how comes it that you do not offer your merchandise to me as well as the others? Do you take me for a dishonest man, or imagine that my purse is empty?"

“My lord,” answered I, “I pray you pardon me. All that I have is at your service, I ask nothing for it.” At the same time I offered him my basket; he took some perfume, and told me to sit down by him. I did so, and he asked me a number of questions, who I was, and what was my name.

“Excuse me satisfying your curiosity,” said I, sighing; “I cannot do so without reopening wounds which time is beginning to heal.”

These words, or the tone in which I uttered them, prevented the old man from questioning me further. He changed the discourse, and after a long conversation, on rising to depart he took out his purse and gave me ten gold sequins. I was greatly surprised at this liberality. The wealthiest lords to whom I had been accustomed to present my basket had never given me even one sequin, and I could not tell what to make of this man.

On the morrow, when I returned to the merchants, I again found my old friend; and for many days he continued to attract my attention. At length, one day, as I was addressing him after he had taken a little balm from my basket, he made me again sit by him, and pressed me so earnestly to relate my history, that I could not refuse him. I informed him of all that had happened to me; after this confidence he said:

“Young man, I knew your father. I am a merchant of Basra; I have no child, and have conceived a friendship for you; I will adopt you as my son, therefore console yourself for your past misfortunes. You have found a father richer by far than Abdelaziz, and who will have as much affection for you.” I thanked the venerable old man for the honour he did me, and followed him as he left the house. He made me throw away my basket of flowers, and conducted me to a large mansion that he had hired. There I was lodged in a spacious apartment with slaves to wait on me, and by his order they brought me rich clothes. One would have thought my father Abdelaziz again lived, and it seemed as if I had never known sorrow. When the merchant had finished the business that detained him at Bagdad, — namely, when he had sold the merchandise he brought with him, — we both took the road to Basra. My friends, who never thought to see me again, were not a little surprised to hear I had been adopted by a man who passed for the richest merchant in the city. I did my best to please the old man. He was charmed with my behaviour. "Aboulcassem," he often said to me, "I am enchanted that I met you at Bagdad. You appear worthy of all I have done for you." I was touched with the kindness he evinced for me, and far from abusing it, endeavoured to do all I could to please my kind benefactor. Instead of seeking companions of my own age, I always kept in his company, scarcely ever leaving him. At last this good old man fell sick, and the physicians despaired of his life. When he was at the last extremity he made all but myself leave him, and then said, "Now is the time, my son, to reveal to you a most important secret. If I had only this house with all its riches to bequeath, I should leave you but a moderate fortune; but all that I have amassed during the course of my life, though considerable for a merchant, is nothing in comparison to the treasure that is concealed here, and which I am now about to reveal to you. I shall not tell you how long ago, by whom, or in what manner it was found, for I am ignorant of that myself; all I know is, that my grandfather, when dying, told the secret to my father, who also made me acquainted with it a few days before his death. But," continued he, "I have one advice to give you, and take care you do not slight it. You are naturally generous. When you are at liberty to follow your own inclinations, you will no doubt be lavish of your riches. You will receive with magnificence any strangers who may come to your house. You will load them with presents, and will do good to all who implore your assistance. This conduct, which I much approve of if you can keep it within bounds, will at last be the cause of your ruin. The splendour of your establishment will excite the envy of the king of Basra, and the avarice of his ministers. They will suspect you of having some hidden treasure. They will spare no means to discover it, and will imprison you. To prevent this misfortune, you have only to follow my example. I have always, as well as my grandfather and father, carried on my business and enjoyed this treasure without ostentation; we have never indulged in any extravagance calculated to surprise the world."

I faithfully promised the merchant I would imitate his prudence. He told me where I should find the treasure, and assured me that whatever idea I might have formed of its splendour, I should find the reality far exceed my expectations. At last, when the generous old man died, I, as his sole heir, performed for him the last offices, and, taking possession of his property, of which this house is a part, proceeded at once to see this treasure. I confess to you, my lord, that I was thunderstruck. I found it to be, if not inexhaustible, at least so vast that I could never expend it, even if heaven were to permit me to live beyond the age of man. My resolution therefore was at once formed, and instead of keeping the promise I made to the old merchant, I spend my riches freely. It is my boast that there is no one in Basra who has not benefited by my generosity. My house is open to all who desire my aid, and they leave it perfectly contented. Do you call it *possessing* a treasure if it must not be touched? And can I make a better use of it than by endeavouring to relieve the unhappy, to receive strangers with liberality, and to lead a life of generosity and charity? Every one thought I should be ruined a second time.

"If Aboulcassem," said they, "had all the treasures of the commander of the faithful, he would spend them."

But they were much astonished, when, instead of seeing my affairs in disorder, they, on the contrary, appeared every day to become more flourishing. No one could imagine how my fortune increased, while I was thus squandering it. As the old man predicted, a feeling of envy was excited against me. A rumour prevailed that I had found a treasure. This was sufficient to attract the attention of a number of persons greedy of gain. The lieutenant of police at Basra came to see me.

"I am," said he, "the daroga, and am come to demand where the treasure is which enables you to live in such magnificence."

I trembled at these words, and remained silent. He guessed from my confused air that his suspicions were not without foundation; but instead of compelling me to discover my treasure, "My lord Aboulcassem," continued he, "I exercise my office as a man of sense. Make me some present worthy of my discretion in this affair, and I will retire."

"How much do you ask?" said I.

"I will content myself with ten gold sequins a day."

"That is not enough — I will give you a hundred. You have only to come here every day or every month, and my treasurer will count them out to you."

The lieutenant of police was transported with joy at hearing these words. "My lord," said he, "I wish that you could find a thousand treasures. Enjoy your fortune in peace; I shall never dispute your possession of it." Then taking a large sum of money in advance he went his way.

A short time after the vizir Aboulfatah-Waschi sent for me, and, taking me into his cabinet, said:

"Young man, I hear you have discovered a treasure. You know the fifth part belongs to God; you must give it to the king. Pay the fifth, and you shall remain the quiet possessor of the other four parts."

I answered him thus: "My lord, I acknowledge that I *have* found a treasure, but I swear to you at the same time that I will confess nothing, though I should be torn in pieces. But I promise to give you every day a thousand gold sequins, provided you leave me in peace."

Aboulfatah was as tractable as the lieutenant of police. He sent his confidential servant, and my treasurer gave him thirty thousand sequins for the first month. This vizir, fearing no doubt that the king of Basra would hear of what had passed, thought it better to inform him himself of the circumstance. The prince listened very attentively, and thinking the affair required investigating, sent to summon me. He received me with a smiling countenance, saying:

"Approach, young man, and answer me what I shall ask you. Why do you not show me your treasure? Do you think me so unjust, that I shall take it from you?"

"Sire," replied I, "may the life of your majesty be prolonged for ages; but if you commanded my flesh to be torn with burning pincers I would not discover my treasure; I consent every day to pay to your majesty two thousand gold sequins. If you refuse to accept them, and think proper that I should die, you have only to order it; but I am ready to suffer all imaginable torments, sooner than satisfy your curiosity."

The king looked at his vizir as I said this, and demanded his opinion.

"Sire," said the minister, "the sum he offers you is considerable — it is of itself a real treasure. Send the young man back, only let him be careful to keep his word with your majesty."

The king followed this advice; he loaded me with caresses, and from that time, according to my agreement, I pay every year to the prince, the vizir, and the lieutenant of police, more than one million sixty thousand gold sequins. This, my lord, is all I have to tell you. You will now no longer be surprised at the presents I have made you, nor at what you have seen in my house.

CONCLUSION OF THE STORY OF THE TREASURES OF BASRA.

When Aboulcassem had finished the recital of his adventures, the caliph, animated with a violent desire to see the treasure, said to him, “Is it possible that there is in the world a treasure that your generosity can never exhaust? No! I cannot believe it, and if it was not exacting too much from you, my lord, I would ask to see what you possess, and I swear never to reveal what you may confide to me.” The son of Abdelaziz appeared grieved at this speech of the caliph’s. “I am sorry, my lord,” he said, “that you have conceived this curiosity; I cannot satisfy it but upon very disagreeable conditions.”

“Never mind,” said the prince, “whatever the conditions, I submit without repugnance.”

“It is necessary,” said Aboulcassem, “that I blindfold your eyes, and conduct you unarmed and bareheaded, with my drawn scimitar in my hand, ready to cut you to pieces at any moment, if you violate the laws of hospitality. I know very well I am acting imprudently, and ought not to yield to your wishes; but I rely on your promised secrecy, and besides that, I cannot bear to send away a guest dissatisfied.”

“In pity then satisfy my curiosity,” said the caliph.

“That cannot be just yet,” replied the young man, “but remain here this night, and when my domestics are gone to rest I will come and conduct you from your apartment.”

He then called his people, and by the light of a number of wax tapers, carried by slaves in gold flambeaux, he led the prince to a magnificent chamber, and then retired to his own. The slaves disrobed the caliph, and left him to repose, after placing at the head and foot of his bed their lighted tapers, whose perfumed wax emitted an agreeable odour. Instead of taking any rest, Haroun-al-Raschid impatiently awaited the appearance of Aboulcassem, who did not fail to come for him towards the middle of the night. “My lord,” he said, “all my servants are asleep. A profound silence reigns in my house. I will now show you my treasure upon the conditions I named to you.”

“Let us go then,” said the caliph. “I am ready to follow you, and I again swear that you will not repent thus satisfying my curiosity.”

The son of Abdelaziz aided the prince to dress; then putting a bandage over his eyes, he said, “I am sorry, my lord, to be obliged to treat you thus; your appearance and your manners seem worthy of confidence, but—”

“I approve of these precautions,” interrupted the caliph, “and I do not take them in ill part.”

Aboulcassem then made him descend by a winding staircase into a garden of vast extent, and after many turnings they entered the place where the treasure was concealed. It was a deep and spacious cavern closed at the entrance by a stone. Passing through this they entered a long alley, very dark and steep, at the end of which was a large saloon, brilliantly lighted by carbuncles. When they arrived at this room the young man unbound the caliph’s eyes, and the latter gazed with astonishment on the scene before him. A basin of white marble, fifty feet in circumference and thirty feet deep, stood in the middle of the apartment. It was full of large pieces of gold, and ranged round it were twelve columns of the same metal, supporting as many statues composed of precious stones of admirable workmanship. Aboulcassem conducted the prince to the edge of the basin and said to him, “This basin is thirty feet deep. Look at that mass of gold pieces. They are scarcely diminished the depth of two fingers. Do you think I shall soon spend all this?”

Haroun, after attentively looking at the basin, replied: “Here are, I confess, immense riches, but you still may exhaust them.”

“Well,” said the young man, “when this basin is empty I shall have recourse to what I am now going to show you.”

He then proceeded to another room, more brilliant still, where on a number of red brocaded sofas were immense quantities of pearls and diamonds. Here was also another marble basin, not so large or so deep as that filled with gold pieces, but to make up for this, full of rubies, topazes, emeralds, and all sorts of precious stones. Never was surprise equal to that of the caliph’s. He could scarcely believe he was awake, this new basin seemed like enchantment. His gaze was still fixed on it, when Aboulcassem made him observe two persons seated on a throne of gold, who he said were the first masters of the treasure. They were a prince and princess, having on their heads crowns of diamonds. They appeared as if still alive, and were in a reclining posture, their heads leaning against each other. At their feet was a table of ebony, on which were written these words in letters of gold: "I have amassed all these riches during the course of a long life. I have taken and pillaged towns and castles, have conquered kingdoms and overthrown my enemies. I have been the most powerful monarch in the world, but all my power has yielded to that of death. Whoever sees me in this state ought to reflect upon it. Let him remember that once I was living, and that he also must die. He need not fear diminishing this treasure: it will never be exhausted. Let him endeavour so to use it as to make friends both for this world and the next. Let him lead a life of generosity and charity, for in the end he must also die. His riches cannot save him from the fate common to all men."

"I will no longer disapprove of your conduct," said Haroun to the young man on reading these words; "you are right in living as you now do, and I condemn the advice given you by the old merchant. But I should like to know the name of this prince. What king could have possessed such riches? I am sorry this inscription does not inform us."

The young man next took the caliph to see another room in which also there were many rarities of even greater value than what he had seen, amongst others several trees like the one he had given the prince. Haroun would willingly have passed the remainder of the night admiring all that was contained in this wonderful cavern, but the son of Abdelaziz, fearing to be observed by his servants, wished to return before daybreak in the same manner as they came, namely, the caliph blindfolded and bareheaded, and Aboulcassem with his scimitar in his hand, ready to cut off the prince's head if he made the least resistance. In this order they traversed the garden, and ascended by the winding stairs to the room where the caliph had slept. Finding the tapers still burning, they conversed together till sunrise; the caliph then, with many thanks for the reception he had received, returned to the caravansary, from whence he took the road to Bagdad, with all the domestics and presents he had accepted from Aboulcassem.

Two days after the prince's departure, the vizir Aboulfatah, hearing of the magnificent gifts that Aboulcassem made to strangers when they came to see him, and above all astonished at the regularity of his payments to the king, the lieutenant, and himself, resolved to spare no means to discover the treasure from which he drew such inexhaustible supplies. This minister was one of those wicked men to whom the greatest crimes are nothing, when they wish to gain their own ends. He had a daughter eighteen years of age, and of surpassing beauty. She was named Balkis, and possessed every good quality of heart and mind. Prince Aly, nephew of the king of Basra, passionately loved her; he had already demanded her of her father, and they were soon to be married. Aboulfatah summoned Balkis one day to his presence and said: "My daughter, I have great need of your assistance. I wish you to array yourself in your richest robes, and go this evening to the house of the young Aboulcassem. You must do every thing to charm him, and oblige him to discover the treasure he has found."

Balkis trembled at this speech; her countenance expressed the horror she felt at this command. "My lord," said she, "what is it you propose to your daughter? Do you know the peril to which you may expose her? Consider the stain on your honour, and the outrage against the prince Aly."

"I have considered all this," answered the vizir, "but nothing will turn me from my resolution, and I order you to prepare to obey me."

The young Balkis burst into tears at these words. "For heaven's sake, my father," said the weeping girl, "stifle this feeling of avarice, seek not to despoil this man of what is his own. Leave him to enjoy his riches in peace."

"Be silent, insolent girl!" said the vizir angrily, "it does not become you to blame my actions. Answer me not. I desire you to repair to the house of Aboulcassem, and I swear that if you return without having seen his treasure, I will kill you."

Balkis, hearing this dreadful alternative, retired to her apartment overwhelmed with grief; she called her women, and made them attire her in the richest apparel and most costly ornaments, though in reality she needed nothing to enhance her natural beauty. No young girl was less desirous to please than Balkis. All she feared was appearing too beautiful in the eyes of the son of Abdelaziz, and not sufficiently so to prince Aly.

At length, when night arrived and Aboulfatah judged it time for his daughter to go, he secretly conducted her to the door of the young man's house, where he left her, after again declaring he would kill her if she returned unsuccessful. She timidly knocked and desired to speak to the son of Abdelaziz. A slave led her to a room where his master was reposing on a sofa, musing on the vicissitudes of his past life. As soon as Balkis appeared Aboulcassem rose to receive his visitor; he gravely saluted her, and, taking her hand with a respectful air, seated her on a sofa, at the same time inquiring why she honoured him by this visit. She answered, that hearing of his agreeable manners, she had resolved to spend an evening in his company.

"Beautiful lady," said he, "I must thank my lucky star for procuring me this delightful interview; I cannot express my happiness."

After some conversation supper was announced. They seated themselves at a table covered with choice delicacies. A great number of officers and pages were in attendance, but Aboulcassem dismissed them that the lady might not be exposed to their curious looks. He waited on her himself, presenting her with the best of every thing, and offering her wine in a gold cup enriched with diamonds and rubies. But all these polite attentions served but to increase the lady's uneasiness; and at length, frightened at the dangers which menaced her, she suddenly changed countenance and became pale as death, whilst her eyes filled with tears.

"What is it, madam?" said the young man much surprised; "why this sudden grief? Have I said or done any thing to cause your tears to flow? Speak, I implore you; inform me of the cause of your sorrow."

"Oh, Mahomet!" exclaimed Balkis, "I can dissimulate no longer; the part I am acting is insupportable. I have deceived you, Aboulcassem; I am a lady of rank. My father, who knows you have a hidden treasure, wishes me to discover where you have concealed it. He has ordered me to come here and spare no means to induce you to show it me. I refused to do so, but he has sworn to kill me if I return without being able to satisfy his curiosity. What an unhappy fate is mine! If I was not beloved by a prince who will soon marry me, this cruel vow of my father's would not appear so terrible."

When the daughter of Aboulfatah had thus spoken, Aboulcassem said to her, "Madam, I am very glad you have informed me of this. You will not repent your noble frankness; you shall see my treasure, and be treated with all the respect you may desire. Do not weep, therefore, or any longer afflict yourself."

"Ah, my lord," exclaimed Balkis at this speech, "it is not without reason that you pass for the most generous of men. I am charmed with your noble conduct, and shall not be satisfied until I have found means to testify my gratitude."

After this conversation Aboulcassem conducted the lady to the same chamber that the caliph had occupied, where they remained until all was quiet in the dwelling. Then blindfolding the eyes of Balkis he said, "Pardon me, madam, for being obliged to act thus, but it is only on this condition that I can show you my treasure."

"Do what you please, my lord," answered Balkis; "I have so much confidence in your generosity that I will follow wherever you desire; I have no fear but that of not sufficiently repaying your kindness."

Aboulcassem then took her by the hand, and causing her to descend to the garden by the winding stairs, he entered the cavern and removed the bandage from her eyes. If the caliph had been surprised to see such heaps of gold and precious stones, Balkis was still more so. Every thing she saw astonished her. But the objects that most attracted her attention were the ancient owners of the treasure. As the queen had on a necklace composed of pearls as large as pigeons' eggs, Balkis could not avoid expressing her admiration. Aboulcassem detached it from the neck of the princess, and placed it round that of the young lady, saying her father would judge from this that she had seen the treasure; he then, after much persuasion, made her take a large quantity of precious stones which he himself chose for her.

The young man then, fearing the day would dawn whilst she was looking at the wonders of the cavern, again placed the bandage over her eyes, and conducted her to a saloon where they conversed together until sunrise. Balkis then took leave, repeatedly assuring the son of Abdelaziz that she would never forget his generous conduct.

She hastened to her father's and informed him of all that had passed. The vizir had been impatiently awaiting his daughter's return. Fearing she might not be sufficiently able to charm Aboulcassem, he remained in a state of inconceivable agitation. But when he saw her enter with the necklace and precious stones that Aboulcassem had given her, he was transported with joy.

"Well, my daughter," he said, "have you seen the treasure?"

"Yes, my lord," answered Balkis, "and to give you a just idea of its magnitude, I tell you that if all the kings of the world were to unite their riches, they could not be compared to those of Aboulcassem. But still, however vast this young man's treasures, I am less charmed with them than with his politeness and generosity." And she then related to her father the whole of her adventure.

In the mean time Haroun-al-Raschid was advancing towards Bagdad. As soon as he arrived at his palace he set his chief vizir at liberty, and restored him to his confidence. He then proceeded to relate to him the events of his journey, and ended by asking, "Giafar, what shall I do? You know the gratitude of monarchs ought to surpass the pleasures they have received. If I should send the magnificent Aboulcassem the choicest and most precious treasure I possess, it will be but a slight gift, far inferior to the presents he has made me. How then can I surpass him in generosity?"

"My lord," replied the vizir, "since your majesty condescends to consult me, I should write this day to the king of Basra and order him to commit the government of the state to the young Aboulcassem. We can soon despatch the courier, and in a few days I will depart myself to Basra and present the patents to the new king."

The caliph approved of this advice. "You are right," he said to his minister, "it will be the only means of acquitting myself towards Aboulcassem, and of taking vengeance on the king of Basra and his unworthy vizir, who have concealed from me the considerable sums they have extorted from this young man. It is but just to punish them for their violence against him; they are unworthy of the situations they occupy."

He immediately wrote to the king of Basra and despatched the courier. He then went to the apartment of the princess Zobeide to inform her of the success of his journey, and presented her with the little page, the tree, and the peacock. He also gave her a beautiful female slave. Zobeide found this slave so charming that she smilingly told the caliph she accepted this gift with more pleasure than all his other presents. The prince kept only the cup for himself; the vizir Giafar had all the rest; and this good minister, as he had before resolved, made preparations for his departure from Bagdad.

The courier of the caliph no sooner arrived in the town of Basra than he hastened to present his despatch to the king, who was greatly concerned on reading it. The prince showed it to his vizir. “Aboulfatah,” said he, “see the fatal order that I have received from the commander of the faithful. Can I refuse to obey it?”

“Yes, my lord,” answered the minister; “do not afflict yourself. Aboulcassem must be removed from hence. Without taking his life I will make every one believe he is dead. I can keep him so well concealed that he shall never be seen again; and by this means you will always remain on the throne and possess the riches of this young man; for when we are masters of his person we can increase his sufferings until he is obliged to reveal where his treasure is concealed.”

“Do what you like,” replied the king; “but what answer shall we send the caliph?”

“Leave that to me. The commander of the faithful will be deceived as well as others. Let me execute the design I meditate, and the rest need cause you no uneasiness.”

Aboulfatah then, accompanied by some courtiers who were ignorant of his intention, went to pay a visit to Aboulcassem. He received them according to their rank, regaled them magnificently, seated the vizir in the place of honour, and loaded him with presents without having the least suspicion of his perfidy. Whilst they were at table and partaking of the most delicious wines, the treacherous Aboulfatah skilfully threw unperceived into the cup of the son of Abdelaziz a powder which would render him insensible, and cause his body to remain in a state of lethargy resembling that of a corpse long deprived of life. The young man had no sooner taken the cup from his lips than he fainted away. His servants hastened to support him, but soon perceiving he had all the appearance of a dead man, they placed him on a sofa and uttered the most lamentable cries. The guests, struck with sudden terror, were silent from astonishment. As for Aboulfatah, it is impossible to say how well he dissimulated. He not only feigned the most immoderate grief, but tore his clothes and excited the rest of the company to follow his example. He ordered a coffin to be made of ivory and ebony, and while they were preparing it, he collected all the effects of Aboulcassem and placed them in the king's palace. The account of the young man's death soon spread abroad. All persons, men and women, put on mourning, and came to the door of the house, their heads and feet bare; old and young men, women and girls, were bathed in tears, filling the air with their cries and lamentations. Some said they had lost in him an only son, others a brother or a husband tenderly beloved. Rich and poor were equally afflicted at his death; the rich mourned a friend who had always welcomed them, and the poor a benefactor whose charity had never been equalled. His death caused a general consternation.

Meanwhile the unhappy Aboulcassem was enclosed in the coffin, and a procession having been formed, the people, by order of Aboulfatah, carried him out of the town to a large cemetery containing a number of tombs, and amongst others a magnificent one where reposed the vizir's father and many others of his family. They placed the coffin in this tomb, and the perfidious Aboulfatah, leaning his head on his knees, beat his breast, and gave way apparently to the most violent grief. Those present pitied and prayed heaven to console him. As night approached the people returned to the town, but the vizir remained with two of his slaves in the tomb, the door of which he shut and double locked. They lit a fire, warmed some water in a silver basin, and taking Aboulcassem from the coffin, bathed him with the warm water. The young man by degrees regained his senses. He cast his eyes on Aboulfatah, whom he at once recognized. "Ah, my lord," said he, "where are we, and to what state am I reduced?"

"Wretch!" answered the minister, "know that it is I who have caused your misfortune. I brought you here to have you in my power, and to make you suffer a thousand torments if you will not discover to me your treasure. I will rack your body with tortures — will invent each day new sufferings to render life insupportable: in a word, I will never cease to persecute you until you deliver me those hidden treasures which enable you to live with even more magnificence than kings."

"You can do what you please," replied Aboulcassem; "I will never reveal my treasure."

He had scarcely uttered these words, when the cruel Aboulfatah, making his slaves seize the unfortunate son of Abdelaziz, drew from his robe a whip made of twisted lion's skin, with which he struck so long and with such violence that the young man fainted. When the vizir saw him in this state, he commanded the slaves to replace him in the coffin, and leaving him in the tomb, which he firmly secured, returned to his palace.

On the morrow he went to inform the king of what he had done. "Sire," said he, "I tried yesterday, but in vain, to overcome the firmness of Aboulcassem; however, I have now prepared torments for him which I think he cannot resist."

The prince, who was quite as barbarous as his minister, said, "Vizir, I am perfectly satisfied with all you have done. Ere long, I hope, we shall know where this treasure is concealed. But we must send back the courier without delay. What shall I write to the caliph?"

"Tell him, my lord, that Aboulcassem, hearing he was to occupy your place, was so enchanted, and made such great rejoicings, that he died suddenly at a feast."

The king approved of this advice, and writing immediately to Haroun-al-Raschid, despatched the courier. The vizir, flattering himself that he should at length be able to force Aboulcassem to reveal his treasure, left the town, resolving to extract the secret or leave him to perish. But on arriving at the tomb, he was surprised to find the door open. He entered trembling, and not seeing the son of Abdelaziz in the coffin, he nearly lost his senses. Returning instantly to the palace, he related to the king what had occurred. The monarch, seized with a mortal terror, exclaimed, "Oh, Waschi! what will become of us? Since this young man has escaped, we are lost. He will not fail to hasten to Bagdad, and acquaint the caliph with all that has taken place."

Aboulfatah, on his part, in despair that the victim of his avarice was no longer in his power, said to the king his master, "What would

I now give to have taken his life yesterday! He would not then have caused us such uneasiness. But we will not quite despair yet; if he has taken flight, as no doubt he has, he cannot be very far from here. Let me take some soldiers of your guard, and search in all the environs of the town; I hope still to find him."

The king instantly consented to so important a step. He assembled all his soldiers, and dividing them into two bodies, gave the command of one to his vizir, and placing himself at the head of the other, prepared with his troops to search in all parts of his kingdom.

Whilst they were seeking Aboulcassem in the villages, woods, and mountains, the vizir Giafar, who was already on the road to Basra, met the courier returning, who said to him, "My lord, it is useless for you to proceed further, if Aboulcassem is the sole cause of your journey, for this young man is dead; his funeral took place some days past; my eyes were witnesses of the mournful ceremony."

Giafar, who had looked forward with pleasure to see the new king, and present his patents, was much afflicted at his death. He shed tears on hearing the sad news, and, thinking it was useless to continue his journey, retraced his steps. As soon as he arrived at Bagdad, he went with the courier to the palace. The sadness of his countenance informed the king he had some misfortune to announce.

"Ah, Giafar!" exclaimed the prince, "you have soon returned. What are you come to tell me?'

"Commander of the faithful," answered the vizir, "you do not, I am sure, expect to hear the bad news I am going to tell. Aboulcassem is no more; since your departure from Basra the young man has lost his life."

Haroun-al-Raschid had no sooner heard these words than he threw himself from his throne. He remained some moments extended on the ground without giving any signs of life. At length his eyes sought the courier, who had returned from Basra, and he asked for the despatch. The prince read it with much attention. He shut himself in his cabinet with Giafar, and showed him the letter from the king of Basra. After re-reading it many times, the caliph said,

"This does not appear to me natural; I begin to suspect that the king of Basra and his vizir, instead of executing my orders, have put Aboulcassem to death."

"My lord," said Giafar, "the same suspicion occurred to me, and I advise that they should both be secured."

"That is what I determine from this moment," said Haroun; "take ten thousand horsemen of my guard, march to Basra, seize the two guilty wretches, and bring them here. I will revenge the death of this most generous of men."

"We will now return to the son of Abdelaziz, and relate why the vizir Aboulfatah did not find him in the tomb. The young man, after long remaining insensible, was beginning to recover, when he felt himself laid hold of by powerful arms, taken from the coffin, and gently laid on the earth. He thought it was the vizir and his slaves come again on their cruel errand.

"Executioners!" he cried, "put me to death at once; if you have any pity spare me these useless torments, for again I declare that nothing you can do will ever tempt me to reveal my secret."

"Fear not, young man," answered one of the persons who had lifted him from the coffin; "instead of ill-treating you, we are come to your assistance."

At these words Aboulcassem opened his eyes, and, looking at his liberators, recognized the young lady to whom he had shown his treasure.

"Ah, madam!" he said, "is it to you I owe my life?"

"Yes, my lord," answered Balkis; "to myself and prince Aly, my betrothed, whom you see with me. Informed of your noble behaviour, he wished to share with me the pleasure of delivering you from death."

"It is quite true," said prince Aly; "I would expose my life a thousand times, rather than leave so generous a man to perish."

The son of Abdelaziz, having entirely recovered his senses by the help of some cordials they had given him, expressed to the lady and the prince his grateful thanks for the service they had rendered him, and asked how they had been informed he still lived.

"My lord," said Balkis, "I am the daughter of the vizir Aboulfatah. I was not deceived by the false report of your death. I suspected my father in this affair, and, bribing one of his slaves, was informed of all concerning you. This slave is one of the two who were with him in the tomb, and as he had charge of the key he confided it to me for a few hours. I no sooner made this affair known to prince Aly than he hastened to join me with some of his confidential domestics. We lost not a moment in coming hither, and, thanks be to heaven, we did not arrive too late."

"Oh, Mahomet!" said Aboulcassem, "is it possible so unworthy and cruel a father possesses such a daughter?"

"Let us depart, my lord," said prince Aly; "the time is precious. I doubt not but that to-morrow the vizir, finding you have escaped, will seek you in all directions. I am going to conduct you to my house, where you will be in perfect safety, for no one will suspect me of giving you an asylum."

They then covered Aboulcassem with a slave's robe, and all left the tomb. Balkis proceeded to her father's, and returned the key to the slave, whilst prince Aly took the son of Abdelaziz to his own palace, and kept him so well concealed, that it was impossible his enemies could discover him. Aboulcassem remained some time in prince Aly's house, who treated him most kindly, until the king and his vizir, despairing of finding him, gave up their search. The prince then gave him a very beautiful horse, loaded him with sequins and precious stones, and said to him:

"You can now safely depart; the roads are open, and your enemies know not what is become of you. Hasten to seek a place where you will be secure from harm."

The young man thanked this generous prince for his hospitality, and assured him he should ever gratefully remember it. Prince Aly embraced him, and prayed heaven to protect and watch over him on his journey. Aboulcassem then took the road to Bagdad, and arrived there in safety a few days afterwards. The first thing he did on entering the city was to hasten to the place where the merchants usually assembled. The hope of seeing there some one he had known at Basra, and of relating his misfortunes, was his only consolation. He was vexed at being unable to find this place, and traversing the town, sought in vain for the face of a friend amongst the multitudes he met. Feeling fatigued, he stopped before the caliph's palace to rest a little: the page whom he had given to his former guest was then at a window, and the child looking by chance that way, instantly recognized him. He ran to the caliph's apartment.

"My lord," he exclaimed, "I have just seen my old master from Basra!"

Haroun put no faith in this report. "You are mistaken," he said; "Aboulcassem no longer lives. Deceived by some fancied resemblance, you have taken another for him."

"No, no, commander of the faithful; I assure you it is he: I am certain I am not mistaken."

Though the caliph did not believe this assertion, still he wished to fathom the mystery, and sent one of his officers with the page to see the man the boy declared was the son of Abdelaziz. They found him in the same place, for, imagining he had recognized his little page, he waited till the child reappeared at the window. When the boy was convinced he was not deceived, he threw himself at the feet of Aboulcassem, who raised him, and asked if he had the honour of belonging to the caliph.

"Yes, my lord," said the child; "it was to the commander of the faithful himself — he it was whom you entertained at Basra — it was to him that you gave me. Come with me, my lord; the caliph will be delighted to see you."

The surprise of the young man at this speech was extreme. He allowed himself to be conducted into the palace by the page and the officer, and was soon ushered into the apartment of Haroun. The prince was seated on a sofa. He was extremely affected at the sight of Aboulcassem. He hastened towards the young man, and held him long embraced without uttering a word, so much was he transported with joy. When he recovered a little from his emotion he said to the son of Abdelaziz:

"Young man, open your eyes, and recognize your happy guest. It was I whom you received so hospitably, and to whom you gave presents that kings could not equal."

At these words Aboulcassem, who was not less moved than the caliph, and who from respect had drawn his cloak over his head, and had not yet dared to look up, now uncovered his face, and said:

"Oh, my sovereign master! oh, king of the world, was it you who honoured your slave's house?" And he threw himself at the feet of Haroun, and kissed the floor before him.

"How is it," said the prince, raising him, and placing him on a sofa, "that you are still alive? Tell me all that has happened to you."

Aboulcassem then related the cruelties of Aboulfatah, and how he had been preserved from the fury of that vizir. Haroun listened attentively, and then said:

"Aboulcassem, I am the cause of your misfortunes. On my return to Bagdad, wishing to repay my debt to you, I sent a courier to the king of Basra, desiring him to resign his crown to you. Instead of executing my orders, he resolved to take your life. Aboulfatah, by putting you to the most frightful tortures, hoped to induce you to reveal your treasures; that was the sole reason he delayed your death. But you would have been revenged. Giafar, with a large body of my troops, is gone to Basra. I have given him orders to seize your two persecutors, and to bring them here. In the mean time you shall remain in my palace, and be attended by my officers with as much respect as myself."

After this speech he took the young man by the hand, and made him descend to a garden, filled with the choicest flowers. There he saw basins of marble, porphyry, and jasper, which served for reservoirs to multitudes of beautiful fish. In the midst of the garden, supported upon twelve lofty pillars of black marble, was a dome, the roof of sandal wood and aloes. The spaces between the columns were closed by a double trellis-work of gold, which formed an aviary containing thousands of canaries of different colours, nightingales, linnets, and other harmonious birds, who mingling their notes formed the most charming concert. The baths of Haroun-al-Raschid were under this dome. The prince and his guest took a bath, after which the attendants rubbed them with the finest towels, which had never before been used. They then clothed Aboulcassem in rich apparel. The caliph conducted him to a chamber where refreshments awaited them, such as roasted fowls and lamb, white soups, pomegranates from Amlas and Ziri, pears from Exhali, grapes from Melah and Sevise, and apples from Ispahan. After they had partaken of these delicacies, and drunk some delicious wine, the caliph conducted Aboulcassem to Zobeide's apartment. This princess was seated on a throne of gold, surrounded by her slaves, who were ranged standing on each side of her; some had tambourines, others flutes and harps. At that moment their instruments were mute, all being attentively engaged in listening to a young girl whose charming voice rang through the saloon like the warblings of a nightingale. As soon as Zobeide perceived the caliph and the son of Abdelaziz, she descended from her throne to receive them.

"Madam," said Haroun, "allow me to present to you my host of Basra."

The young man prostrated himself before the princess. At this moment the vizir Giafar was heard returning with the troops, and bringing with him Aboulfatah securely bound. As for the king of Basra, he was left behind dying of grief and fright at not finding Aboulcassem. Giafar had no sooner rendered an account of his mission, than the caliph ordered a scaffold to be erected before the palace, to which the wicked Aboulfatah was conducted. The people knowing the cruelty of this vizir, instead of being touched with his misfortune, testified the utmost impatience to witness his execution. The executioner was already prepared, sabre in hand, to strike off the guilty man's head, when the son of Abdelaziz prostrating himself before the caliph, exclaimed, "Oh, commander of the faithful, yield to my prayers the life of Aboulfatah! Let him live to witness my happiness, to behold all the favours you are conferring upon me, and he will be sufficiently punished."

"Oh, too generous Aboulcassem," replied the caliph, "you, indeed, deserve a crown! Happy the people of Basra to have you for their king."

"My lord, I have one more favour to ask. Give to the prince Aly the throne you destined for myself. Let him reign, together with the lady who had the generosity to avert from me the fury of her father; these two lovers are worthy this honour. As to myself, cherished and protected by the commander of the faithful, I have no need of a crown; I shall be superior to kings."

The caliph assented to this proposal, and to recompense prince Aly for the service he had rendered the son of Abdelaziz, sent him the patents, and made him king of Basra; but finding Aboulfatah too guilty to accord him liberty as well as life, he ordered the vizir to be shut up in a dark tower for the remainder of his days. When the people of Bagdad were informed that it was Aboulcassem himself who had begged the life of his persecutor, they showered a thousand praises on the generous young man, who soon after departed for Basra, escorted by a troop of the caliph's guards, and a great number of his officers.

VIII.

THE OLD CAMEL.

Eggadi-ben-Yousouf, a merchant at Miliana, was a mere lover of gain; he never gave away any thing in alms; his heart was dry as the earth in the hottest days of summer, and never open to pity for the unfortunate. To amass, to amass for ever was the sole desire of Eggadi. But in what did his riches consist? None could say, for he concealed them with the utmost care.

One day one of his camels having died, he bought to replace it the only camel of Ali-Bénala, a poor dealer in mats. This camel was the sole heritage of which Ali came into possession at the death of his father. He sold it for much less than its value; — Eggadi, who was an adept at bargaining, depreciating it in every possible way, especially on account of its extreme age.

On his next journey Eggadi added this camel to his little caravan. As he was passing a solitary place, he was surprised to see the camel betake itself with hasty steps to a spot at some distance behind some rocks, and on its arrival there kneel down and groan, as camels usually do when they expect to be unloaded. A negro, having run after the animal, brought it back to its place in the caravan.

Eggadi soon took a second journey on the same road, and on this occasion too the camel sold him by Ali-Bénala again quitted the rank, and was again observed to kneel down and groan at the same place. This time Eggadi followed it, and saw with surprise that the spot at which it stopped was one where no merchant of any country had been ever known to unload his merchandise. He reflected deeply on this circumstance, and in the end resolved to revisit the spot alone with the camel, who, faithful perhaps to some recollection, might, he thought, be the means of disclosing to him some mysterious act, or perhaps the place where a treasure lay concealed.

Eggadi returned, in short, soon after, to this solitary spot. He had brought with him a spade, and proceeded to dig with care around the camel, who had invariably knelt in the same place. He had scarcely laboured ten minutes ere he discovered traces of another spade; this redoubled his zeal, and soon after, to his intense satisfaction, he came upon some bags of money, then a coffer firmly shut, but which contained, he could not doubt, objects of costly value. He first took the bags, which were filled with good and true Spanish doubloons; with these he loaded his camel, who thus had gained nothing but a double burden for his pains; then, having re-covered with stones and sand the precious coffer, which he resolved upon examining another time, he returned with his mind greatly preoccupied, asking himself whether it must not have been the old father of Ali-Bénala to whom all the wealth he had just discovered formerly belonged.

This question, which he could not help addressing to his conscience over and over again, prevented him from fully enjoying the possession of his treasure. Although he dearly loved money, yet Eggadi to obtain possession of it had never yet plundered the widow and the orphan. The first step in the road to evil is not accomplished without difficulty and without remorse; Eggadi painfully experienced the truth of this. "And yet," said he to himself, "I made a fair bargain with poor Ali for this very camel which has been the means of my finding a treasure."

Before going to take possession of the coffer left underground behind the rocks, Eggadi, impelled by his conscience, approached the miserable shop where Ali carried on the sale of his mats, and said to him:

"How comes it, Ali, that your father, rich as it is said he was, left you no fortune, only an old camel and a house in ruins?"

"Ah!" replied Ali, "my father was good to the poor. Not only did he call every poor man his brother, but assisted him to the utmost of his power. At times, however, I have suspected that my father may have had riches concealed in some spot, and that he intended to bestow them upon me before he died. And I will tell you what led me to suppose so.

"A few moments before his death he sent for me, and said: 'I have a great secret to confide to thee. Come close to me that my voice may reach thy ear alone: but before our conversation, my son, let us pray to Allah to grant us on this solemn day that which is best for us.'

"We prayed, and in ten minutes my father was no more. Allah, no doubt, judged that that which was best for me was poverty. Allah be praised."

Ali bowed his head profoundly, laying his hand upon his breast.

Eggadi, much disturbed at the virtuous resignation of Ali-Bénala, rejoined:

“But thinkest thou, that if good fortune befel thee, thou wouldst know how to make good use of it?”

“Allah alone knows,” said Ali. “Should he ever see fit to make me rich, he will know how to fit me for the change. For myself, I cannot succeed in improving the poverty of my estate. I work incessantly, but nothing succeeds with me. My oxen, if I have any, drown themselves in crossing a torrent; my goods either do not sell or are damaged. I am destined to possess upon this earth nothing but this miserable hut, which has been my only home for ten years, But what matters it, provided I fulfil the law of the prophet? I shall see Abraham, in heaven. If at times my poverty renders me uneasy, it is only for the sake of my poor children, who live miserably in a house as open to the wind and the rain as though it were without a roof.”

“Well,” said Eggadi, “it is certainly not just that such an honest man as thou should be in such a wretched state of poverty.”

“How! not just!” replied Ali. “Are there not, then, many honest men who are no richer than myself?”

“That may be,” said Eggadi. “Nevertheless, since thy father was rich, it seems to be but just that thou shouldst be so too, and I come to propose to thee to enter into partnership with me. I have two good houses outside the town; one shall be for thy family, the other for mine. We will live as brothers, and unite our children as in the time of the patriarchs.”

Ali remained greatly astonished at such a proposition, coming especially from Eggadi-ben-Yousouf, who had never had any friendship for him, and who so far from evincing any generosity towards him, had bargained with him for his poor camel like the veriest Jew in the world.

He therefore remained silent, neither accepting nor refusing the offer, but looking with an abstracted air upon the mats in his miserable dwelling.

“Well,” said Eggadi, ashamed at the bottom of his heart at making this show of generosity to one whom he was secretly despoiling, “well, thou dost not reply to me?”

“Grant me time to imitate the example of my father by invoking

Allah before taking a resolution," said Ali. "Allah alone can know whether it will be best for me to keep at once my poverty and the freedom of all my actions, or to accept opulence and with it the necessity of being always of thy opinion; for bringing into our partnership nothing but my two stout arms, I should be an ingrate if I did not yield in every thing to thy wishes."

Eggadi involuntarily cast down his eyes before this poor man who spoke with so much wisdom.

"Well," said he again, "reflect till to-morrow, and come to me in the morning under the palm trees in front of my house; I will there await thee."

Then these two men separated. Ali, praying in the mosque, thought he heard his father pronounce these words. "Never associate thyself save with him who has no more than thyself, and who already knows the right way. The good are spoilt by associating with the rogue and the miser, whilst neither rogue nor miser is reformed by association with one better than himself."

The next morning Ali repaired to the palm trees which grew before the house of Eggadi, where the latter awaited him uneasy and fatigued after a sleepless night. After the usual Mussulman salutation, Ali-Bénala said to the rich Eggadi:

"How comes it that thou appearest sad, thou who possessest fine houses, coffers of gold, and merchandise, whilst I, I who have nothing, rise with a joyous heart, and smoke my pipe all day with pleasure, seated on the threshold of my poor shop?"

"The weight of business overwhelms me," replied Eggadi; "I have great need of some one to share it."

"Then why not diminish thy transactions, and live in peace?" inquired Ali.

"No, no, it is impossible to set limits to one's purchases and sales. A fortunate speculation balances an unlucky one. You must accept all if you would grow rich. But come, hast thou decided? Wilt thou enter into partnership with me?"

"I have reflected and prayed," said Ali. "I am very grateful for thy offers, and Allah will doubtless recompense thee; but prudence forbids me to accept them. I will never enter into partnership but with one who is as poor as myself."

“Indeed!” exclaimed Eggadi-ben-Yousouf, “be no longer then surprised at thy poverty, since thou refusest the opportunity of enriching thyself. The traveller who does not stop beneath the first trees he meets runs the risk of not finding another upon his road, and of performing the whole journey without enjoying their refreshing shade. Such a man would have no right to complain of the dust of the roads, or the heat of the sun.”

“I do not complain,” replied Ali, “I come, on the contrary, to tell thee that I live and sleep in peace.”

“It is well, it is well,” said Eggadi, who had not closed his eyes till the morning, “it is well, remain as thou art. Instead of gold pieces, be content to receive rain-drops through thy roof, eat bread when thou hast any, and go fasting oftener; it concerns me no more.”

“I should be a fool,” added he internally, “to trouble myself any longer about the poverty of this man.” And he remembered his fine house, where gilded cakes, a delicious repast, and rich and rare fruits awaited him.

He ate his meal in company with his sons; then he washed his beard and hands, rose from the table, and called his wife, his daughters, his mother, and his grandmother, and said to them, “Women, eat in your turn; this is for you.”

The women respectfully kissed his hands, and proceeded to make their meal, whilst he went and sat down out of doors, and smoked with his sons, to whom he spoke as follows whilst a negro waited upon him with coffee:

“I am about to take another journey. During my absence see to such and such things, and do not forget any of my orders, if you would not run the risk of becoming poor, poor—” he was going to say, “as Ali, the seller of mats,” but this name excited too keenly his remorse; he could not venture to pronounce it.

So that in spite of the good repast of which he had just partaken, Eggadi felt ill at ease, for the thought was ever recurring to him, “Ali is poor, his father was rich, and it is I who have unjustly taken possession of his father’s wealth.” Meanwhile Eggadi had this very moderate relief, he might still enjoy the benefit of a doubt as to whether the father of Ali was really the possessor of the discovered treasures. However, the coffer left behind the rocks would doubtless throw a light upon this matter. Eggadi proceeded at once in search of this coffer; he opened it, and his eyes, dazzled though they were by the precious objects that met their gaze, were constrained to perceive at the same time a sheet of parchment, upon which the following words were very distinctly inscribed:

"All the treasures buried in this spot have been lawfully acquired, or received in heritage by me, Mustapha Selim. I bequeath them to my only son, Ali-Bénala, who has ever been a faithful servant of Allah, and respectful towards me. May he, and his children, and his children's children inherit and enjoy these possessions, to which I add my benediction."

As soon as Eggadi had read these words a profound sadness took possession of him, for he could no longer doubt that these hidden riches were the inheritance of Ali-Bénala. If therefore he appropriated them, he was a despoiler of the poor and the orphan. It would have been so delightful to have been able to keep up the illusion, and to say to himself: "This wealth was without an owner; Allah has been pleased to bestow it on me!" But if Eggadi had never as yet committed any very culpable actions, he had never done any good ones, and did not merit the protection of heaven. He dared not doubt that by keeping unlawful possession of the property of Ali he should incur the wrath of heaven; at the same time he could not bring himself to renounce it. He took the coffer, carried it home, meditating by turns on the uses to which he might turn his great fortune, and on what might be done by way of compromising his conscience for poor Ali, his children, and his children's children.

Arrived at his own house, he placed his treasures in a large chest, which he kept thenceforth in the chamber where he passed his nights. By day, too, this coffer often served him for a seat; whilst scarce a day passed without his opening it, to assure himself that nothing had disappeared. He kept it carefully fastened with the aid of several locks and a master key, of which he never gave up the possession.

Eggadi contemplated a thousand times these treasures acquired with so little trouble; if we can call that gained with little trouble which is purchased at the price of our peace of mind. And each time after having contemplated them, he would repeat to himself the words of Ali, "Allah will no doubt recompense thee." "Ah! if he recompenses me as I deserve," he could not help reflecting, "he will send me great disasters indeed."

Pursued by the dread of a heavy chastisement, Eggadi became so miserable in the midst of his fine family and his treasures, that he formed the project of quitting his country, where the sight of Ali, his humble house and miserable shop, haunted him incessantly. So he adjusted his affairs, collected his merchandise, and then communicated his intention to his children and his servants.

But whilst, spurred on by a secret terror, he was hastening the preparations for his departure, Allah, on whose will depend all things on earth and in heaven, visited him with a severe fever, accompanied with delirium, during which he spoke incessantly of the old camel of Ali, of concealed treasures, and the vengeance of Heaven.

Salmanazar, an old Jew doctor, had charge of Eggadi; he heard the incoherent ravings of his patient, and immediately divined them to be the result of preceding mental anguish. Thanks to the skill acquired by medical science, and still more to the intuition engendered by the desire of self-enrichment, the old Jew was not slow in comprehending that there was a secret relating to a treasure unjustly acquired, and he saw no reason, moreover, why he should not be a partaker in the booty.

He found means therefore to remove all the attendants, and constituting himself sole guardian of the sick man, seated himself by his bedside and patiently awaited the auspicious moment which should deliver into his merciless keeping a soul harassed by the stings of remorse.

This moment at length arrived; Eggadi ceased to be delirious, and as though awakening from a painful dream, drew a long breath, and cast looks of inquiry around him.

Salmanazar, who had been watching for this opportunity, then exclaimed: "Eggadi! Eggadi! you Mussulmans cry, 'God is great,' but you do not believe it, for if you did, how could you dare enrich yourselves at the expense of the poor man and his children? Thou art rich, Eggadi, and Ali is poor."

"What sayst thou?" cried the sick man, distending his eyes with terror as dismal recollections thronged upon him.

"I say that thou hast a treasure which should not belong to thee, and that this is why thou hast the fever, and why moreover thou wilt die, unless I save thy life by my profound science. Restitution must be made; nay, if indeed thou wert to do good with this treasure to poor Jews like me, God would perhaps pardon thee, but thou takest care to give us nothing. If I cure thee what will be my profit? a few miserable doubloons, which I shall have all the same if thou diest; for thy sons will give them me, and if they refused to pay me, I should summon them before the cadi. Thus, whether thou livest or whether thou diest is much the same to me. Nevertheless, if I had a mind I could easily cure thee, and cause thee still to live, that thy days might be long upon the earth. But what profit would this be to me?"

"Cure me, cure me," cried the sick man, "and I will give thee far more than my sons would give thee, far more than the cadi would grant thee did my children refuse thee payment. I will give thee twenty doubloons; nay, fifty. That would be a fine thing for thee."

"It would be a much better thing for thyself," chuckled Salmanazar. "Of what use will thy doubloons be to thee when thou art dead? I demand five hundred doubloons for curing thee, and I will have them at once, for in an hour's time I shall demand a thousand, and if you then delay deciding there will be no longer any time to choose."

"A thousand doubloons!" exclaimed the patient; "I will not even give thee five hundred. If I did, — Allah would not pardon me the more, even supposing I really am guilty of what thou suggested."

"Well, then, thou wilt die," rejoined Salmanazar, settling himself again in his chair.

The chamber of the sick man was gloomy. A small lamp cast a fitful light upon one corner, while the rest seemed inhabited by nothing but dim shadows. An odour of fever and its remedies pervaded the atmosphere; out of doors, — for it was night, — the dismal cry of the jackals seeking food resounded, whilst the deep baying of the neighbouring dogs was heard without intermission. The weather was windy and tempestuous. All this but served to increase the deep depression which filled the soul of Eggadi. He threw a wistful look around his shadow-haunted room; it fell upon the old Jew who was watching him askance, his large dark eyes dimmed by ophthalmia, and he asked himself whether the old man with his prominent nose, yellow visage, long, lean and withered arms, habited in a scanty and dirty garment, were not some evil genius come thither to curse him for his crime, and drag him to the bottomless pit of perdition.

Nevertheless, Eggadi contrived to raise himself up in a sitting posture on his bed. He collected all his strength, drew a long breath, sighed feebly, and said:

"Well, I have decided, Salmanazar; give me the remedy which will make my days long upon the earth."

"Give me first the five hundred doubloons," said Salmanazar.

"I have them not here," replied the sick man.

"Tell me where they are, I will go and get them."

"That is impossible," said Eggadi; "but summon Bankala, my black slave, he will bring me the key of my coffer, and the coffer itself which contains my treasures."

"Well and good," replied Salmanazar; and he summoned Bankala.

Eggadi gave some orders to the slave in a language unknown to Salmanazar, and he disappeared. He returned shortly with two other slaves, whom he placed like two sentinels by the side of his master's bed.

"Send away those men," said Salmanazar to the sick man. The latter replied, "They are needed to go and bring the coffer as soon as Bankala shall have given us the key; he and I alone know where it is hidden."

"It is well," said the Jew; and he held his peace, looking alternately at the sick man and the two slaves.

"What wilt thou do to effect my cure?" began Eggadi to inquire of the Jew in a doleful tone.

"Thou shalt see — thou shalt see," replied the latter. And they both awaited the return of the slave with an equal anxiety, which they in vain strove to conceal.

Bankala made them wait a long time, but when at length he did return, Ali, the poor seller of mats, followed upon his footsteps. "Arise quickly," had been the summons of the slave to him; "Eggadi my master summons thee in the name of Allah, and desires to see thee before he dies." Ali had hastened to obey. At sight of him the

Jew trembled. Eggadi, on the contrary, felt himself happy and reassured.

"Come hither, Ali," said he; "come and behold a man guilty but repentant. The example of thy virtues did not suffice to bring me back to the path of duty: it was necessary that I should be struck by misfortune. Thanks to Heaven misfortune has befallen me. Ali! Ali! it was I who bought of thee the old camel which was left thee by thy father. That camel no doubt aided him in concealing the great wealth he would fain have bestowed upon thee ere he died. I discovered this wealth, and I conceived the iniquitous design of keeping it, instead of restoring it to thee in accordance with the demands of justice. I was on the point of quitting my country to avoid the further sight of thy poverty, the unceasing reproach to my crime, when Allah visited me with a terrible malady, and a still more terrible physician. This physician, whom thou there beholdest, having discovered my secret, instead of urging me to the restitution of my ill-acquired fortune, dreamt only of sharing it with me, and threatened me with death if I refused the division of the plunder.

"His horrible conduct, his avarice and cruelty combined, have inspired me with horror, and have shown me to what lengths an inordinate love of gold may lead. I have mourned for my fault, and have taken a sudden resolution to repair it. By deceiving this skilful man, I have been enabled to send for thee, and before him I declare that I render thee up joyfully all the treasures which are enclosed in the chest upon which Salmanazar is seated."

Salmanazar started up on hearing these words. How! he had been actually sitting upon the treasure and had not divined it.

Eggadi continued:

"Consider, Ali, what will be most suitable to bestow upon this Jew. He demanded of me five hundred doubloons down, or a thousand in an hour's time, if I desired to live. I think that five hundred blows with a stick should be his recompense; at the same time I am unworthy to judge any man in this world. Thou who art just, act towards him as thou thinkest best, but deign, above all things, to grant me thy forgiveness."

Ali was of course greatly surprised at all he had just heard. He took a moment to collect his thoughts and then said:

“Eggadi-ben-Yousouf, I pardon thee willingly; and to prove it, I say to thee as thou once saidst to me:

“Let us enter into partnership, let us live as brothers, and unite our children as in the time of the patriarchs. As for Salmanazar, let his only punishment be to behold the riches he would have forced thee to share with him, and after having seen them, let him return home without money and without blows.”

The wish of the wise Ali was put into execution. The coffer, the key of which Eggadi had about him, was opened; and the Jew, though still trembling with the fear of receiving the blows, could not help eagerly regarding the gold and precious stones which were revealed to his cupidity. Then he departed, filled with grief at having missed his aim, and at not having been himself the fortunate purchaser of the old camel of Ali. This event was engraven on his memory, and caused him to regard with looks of eager anxiety all the old camels whom he chanced to meet. He often stopped before them, and seemed to endeavour to trace in their movements some mysterious sign which might lead to the discovery of hidden treasures.

Eggadi, having his conscience at ease, regained his health without the aid of any other physician. He became the adopted brother of Ali, who insisted on sharing with him his newly-acquired fortune; and these two men, their children, and their children’s children, continued to live together wealthy and united.

IX.

THE STORY OF MEDJEDDIN.

Many hundred years ago there lived in the famous city of Bagdad a retired merchant named El Kattab. The earlier part of his life had been assiduously devoted to commercial pursuits, in the prosecution of which he had made many a long journey, and crossed many a sea. In the course of his wanderings he had not only amassed the wealth he sought, but, what was better, had stored his mind and memory with the treasures of wisdom and general information. The property he had acquired was far from immense, yet it was amply sufficient to enable him to live in a style of substantial comfort and respectability, and to devote himself to the darling object of his declining years, the education and training of his only son.

El Kattab's beard was grey, yet he had not very long passed the prime of life, and still retained most of the vigour and elasticity of his earlier years. He was wise enough to be content with the quiet enjoyments of a moderate affluence, and had no desire to wear out the rest of his life in the feverish labour of constant acquirement, for the mere sake of amassing a splendid fortune; therein differing from too many of his friends, who seemed to forget in their headlong pursuit of enormous riches, that by the time these might be acquired, life would be nigh spent, and at any rate all its charms gone, unless some higher and nobler object had been substituted for that of mere wealth-getting.

The city of Mossul had been El Kattab's home in his earlier days; but he quitted it, and took up his abode in Bagdad, partly in order to be near his friend Salek, with whom he had been on the most intimate terms from his youth; partly, too, for the sake of his son's education, as he expected that a residence in the latter city would produce good and lasting impressions on the mind of the young man; for the great city of Bagdad was at this time under the rule of the far-famed caliph Haroun al Raschid, and was the resort of strangers from all parts of the globe; and here artists and sages of all countries mingled with each other. Nor had El Kattab conceived a vain expectation. His son, whose name was Medjeddin, was a young man gifted with good natural abilities, and endowed with a pure and noble heart. He used every opportunity to extend his knowledge and improve his disposition; nor was he deficient in bodily exercises and warlike accomplishments: so that through good discipline he became powerful in body and strong in mind. He was not only, therefore, as was natural enough, the joy and pride of his father, but was loved and esteemed by all who knew him, and was often pointed out by the elders, to others of his own age, as an example worthy of imitation. As the father saw his greatest treasure in the person of his son, so the latter, with all the fervour of a well-directed mind, clung affectionately to his father.

Some years passed over them in this mutual love, rendered still more delightful by the companionship of their friend Salek, and their happiness was full and uninterrupted. It chanced one day that El Kattab and Salek were taking their accustomed walk in the gardens adjoining the city in front of the gate. The heat of the summer's day had been diminished by a gentle rain, and the two strolled on, in happy conversation, and extended their walk beyond its usual length. They passed the last garden, and wandered on over some green meadow-land, behind a little wood, at the entrance of which stood high palms, whose shadows invited to repose, while a fresh spring gushed from a neighbouring rock, and meandered among the verdant herbage and variegated flowers.

The two friends lay down in the shade, and conversed on the perils to which even the most virtuous men are subject, particularly enlarging on the danger of an over-confidence in the rectitude of our own intentions, and on the comparative ease with which a sudden impulse will sometimes hurry even the best of men, who possesses an overweening reliance on his own firmness of purpose, into a false or even fatal step in life.

"I have known men," observed Salek, "who, although among the best and noblest I have ever met in the course of my life, have been led unawares, by too great self-confidence, into an action which they might easily have avoided by moderate caution, but which has proved the beginning of a long chain of evils, ending at last in their complete ruin."

El Kattab, on the contrary, maintained that a heart accustomed from early youth to virtue, would not be easily led to commit a serious fault; and even if this should happen, that it would readily find its way back from a slight error to the right road. They continued to talk on these subjects, each endeavouring to confirm his assertions by examples, whilst Medjeddin, stretched beside them, listened with attention to their conversation. Suddenly he sprang to his feet, and ran quickly up the woody hill, at the foot of which they were reposing. His father and Salek looked after him surprised, as they could not comprehend what had occasioned his sudden disappearance. They then saw that a little bird, as white as snow, was flying before him, which he was trying to catch. He was soon lost to their view among the bushes; they called to him to come back; but in vain. They waited for a quarter of an hour, and still Medjeddin did not return. Growing uneasy about him, they advanced in the direction in which he had disappeared, but could discover nothing. At last the sun set; then Salek said, “Let us return home: your son is a strong, active young man; he will easily find his way back to the city. Perhaps he has gone home some other way, and will be there before us.”

After much opposition, the father was persuaded to return without his son; but he was still full of anxiety which no arguments could overcome. When they arrived at the city, his friend accompanied him to his house. They entered hastily, and inquired for Medjeddin: but he had not returned. Salek’s cheering suggestions were of no more avail; El Kattab would no longer listen to him, but threw himself weeping on his couch. Salek rebuked him for this weakness, and represented to him that it might easily have happened that the young man had lost his way in the pursuit of the bird, and could not recover the track all at once.

“He has no doubt found a shelter where he will remain till morning,” continued he; “he will return here early to-morrow, and will laugh heartily at your fears.”

When Salek was gone, El Kattab gave free scope to his feelings. He wept aloud, tore his beard, and dashed himself upon the ground, like a madman. The slaves stood around in motionless astonishment, surprised to see their master exhibiting such passionate emotion; others sought to console him, but fruitlessly; at length they all began to cry and bewail with him for his dear son, who was beloved by them all. After a sleepless night, the afflicted father rose not at all quieted. He wished early in the morning to send messengers in all directions; but Salek, who had come to inquire if the lost one had returned home, explained to him how foolish this step would be.

"Consider," said he, "that your Medjeddin has most probably found a night's lodging, and slept better than you. Supposing him, therefore, to be at any probable distance, even if he had set out on his way at daybreak, he could hardly be here now: if you send these messengers after him, he may perhaps come home by a shorter path, while they will be searching for him in vain; wait at least till midday."

El Kattab yielded; he appointed the messengers to be ready at noon, and in the meanwhile walked through the gardens and in the country around the city, where they had been on the preceding day. His friend accompanied him, although he pointed out that Medjeddin might, in the interval, have reached home while they were walking, and that El Kattab was thus perhaps giving himself more trouble than was necessary.

"I have yielded to you in the rest," replied El Kattab; "let me at least in this instance have my own will, and walk here."

They went together to the fountain in the rock near the palms; they climbed the neighbouring heights; they called the name of the lost one in all directions; but no sound was heard in reply. At noon they went home, and asked all they met if they had seen a young man, whom they accurately described. Nobody could give them any information about him. El Kattab now sent out his messengers in all directions; promising a rich reward to the one who should lead his lost son back to his arms. The messengers returned on the tenth day, and reported that all their researches had been without success. At this the parent's grief knew no bounds. His friend Salek remained almost constantly with him, comforting him; and all his friends held a consultation on the possible means of gaining tidings of Medjeddin. They agreed that he could not have been killed, for then his corpse would have been found: that he had no cause to conceal himself: that he could not have been attacked by enemies, as he had none: might he, they suggested, in the pursuit of the bird, have been led to the brink of the river, and have thrown himself in, and been carried away by the stream? scarcely had this idea presented itself, ere two messengers were despatched to each side of the river to search, from its junction with the Euphrates above Balsora to the spot where it flows into the Arabian Sea, and ascertain if the corpse of Medjeddin had been washed ashore. But these messengers also returned to the anxious parent, without having found what they sought. The parent and his friend now gave up Medjeddin for lost; El Kattab's spirit was broken; grief for his lost son shortened his life; he soon became old: all joy fled from his mind; and his sorrow was only a little alleviated when his faithful friend Salek sat by him in the evening, talking with him of his son, relating the virtues by which he had been distinguished, and telling him how it had been his darling wish that this excellent young man should marry his daughter Maryam.

A few days afterwards the caliph Haroun al Raschid went, as he was accustomed, in disguise, with his grand vizier Giafar, and Mesrur his chamberlain, through the streets of Bagdad, to see with his own eyes and to hear with his own ears how justice and order were maintained by his servants, and whether his people were happy and prosperous. He had, as usual, chosen the last hour of the evening for this walk, because he thought that at this time he could look deeper into the joys and pleasures of his subjects, as they had then ended their daily toils, and were seeking comfort and repose in the bosoms of their families. In the course of his progress he came to a street remarkable for its peculiar quiet. As he approached a house, before the door of which two men were standing whispering, Haroun al Raschid addressed them with these words: "Why do you whisper, as if you were concerting a crime? is not this street lonely enough, that you cannot hold your discourse aloud? Can you tell me why this street is so quiet, as though every inhabitant were dead?"

"I can easily tell you, my lord," answered one of the whisperers; "here, in the next house, lives the unfortunate El Kattab; and, as usual at this hour, his friend Salek is sitting with him to console him. Now all the inhabitants of this street respect this man, and wish not to remind him, by any outburst of joy, that happier men than himself live in his neighbourhood."

Before the caliph could answer him, the man turned away, and entered the house, and the other followed him.

"Have you ever heard of this unfortunate El Kattab before?" asked Haroun al Raschid of his grand vizier; and as he answered in the negative, the caliph proceeded, "Let us make an inspection of the house where this El Kattab dwells; perhaps we may discover the cause of his sorrow."

They drew near, and saw the light from the inner court shining through a crevice. The caliph applied his eye to the aperture, and after he had watched for some time, beckoned his followers to him, and said, "Two grey-headed men are sitting in this court by the light of a lamp, and one seems to be comforting the other; but this latter continues to weep all the more bitterly, the more his companion endeavours to console him: both appear to be of the same rank. I am desirous of knowing what sorrow oppresses the unfortunate El Kattab: order him to appear at my palace early to-morrow morning; perhaps it may be in my power to lighten his calamity."

The next day the grand vizier executed his commission. El Kattab was alarmed when he heard that his presence was required at the palace. He was led into the great hall where the divan usually assembled; but there the attendants left him quite alone. He reviewed the whole of his past life, to see if he had sinned in any way, so as to bring on him the displeasure of the caliph; for he knew that Haroun al Raschid often, in a mysterious manner, discovered the faults of his subjects, and punished them accordingly. But he could not call to mind any deed of which he felt ashamed, nor any that deserved punishment. Whilst he was thus meditating, a curtain was drawn back, and the caliph entered, followed by his vizier and his chamberlain. El Kattab rose from the ground, and bowed his head down to the carpet on which the caliph stood.

"El Kattab," said the caliph, "a heavy weight of grief seems to oppress you; and by the anxiety which your neighbours manifest to show respect for your sorrow, I must consider you as a man of worth: I wish then to know the cause of your despondency; have you any objection to inform me of it before these two witnesses, or would you rather confide to me alone the reason of your tears?"

"Ruler of the faithful," answered El Kattab, "sorrow is great and deep in my soul; but still the cause of it is unworthy to distract for a moment the attention of the caliph from the cares of his kingdom."

The caliph replied, "That which fills the heart of the meanest of my subjects with such grief that it consumes his life, is not unworthy of my care. If I am careful for my whole kingdom, this care none the less extends to each individual; and, if I am careful for one, this one is a member of the whole, and thus my care is not lost. But speak, what is the cause of your affliction?"

El Kattab then recounted the mysterious disappearance of his son; how he had sought for him every where, and how all his messengers had returned home without the least trace of him. "I must therefore weep for him as one that is dead," — thus he ended his relation; "and in tears perhaps my sorrow might expend itself, if at the same time a spark of hope did not live in my heart, that possibly he is still alive: but ah! where? This spark of hope keeps the wound in the father's heart always open."

"You have, indeed, real cause for grief," answered the caliph, "and I comprehend that the uncertainty of your son's fate must be as terrible to bear, as would be the mournful certainty of his death. You did wrong in not applying to me before; my power extends not only over believers, but also into foreign lands: other kings and rulers I have as my servants, whose eyes see for me, whose ears hear for me, and whose hands perform what is necessary in order to do my pleasure. That which was not possible to yourself, your friends, and your servants to accomplish, may perhaps prove easy for me. Now go home, and believe that you shall obtain news of your son, if he live on the earth, in any land where my power can reach."

With these words he dismissed him, after he had first inquired the marks by which his lost son might be recognised.

When El Kattab was sitting again with his friend Salek in the evening, he related to him the gracious and comforting words of the caliph. Salek perceived that hope was revived in his friend's heart, and that he confidently trusted to find his son. He thought it his duty, therefore, to damp somewhat this hope, and said, "Beloved friend, I have once heard a speech, which sunk deeply in my memory: it is, 'Trust not in princes; they are but men.' In truth, the mightiest on earth are subject to destiny. If the caliph have influence in distant lands, it must still be within a comparatively confined and narrow limit; whilst what is in the farthest regions of the earth, as well as what is but a span distant, are all equally under the control of all-governing fate, even from the meanest slave to the ruler of the faithful."

Haroun al Raschid meanwhile resolved to do all he could to fulfil the hope he had raised in El Kattab's heart. He gave a commission to all his servants in the kingdom, high and low, and to his ambassadors in the neighbouring kingdoms, and even sent into distant lands, with the princes of which he was on terms of friendship, at the same time despatching messengers with the charge to search for Medjeddin with all diligence, giving them a description by which they might recognise him if they found him. But week after week, and month after month passed away; even a whole year elapsed, without any intelligence being received either of the life or death of the lost one. So that all hope of finding him deserted the father for ever.

Medjeddin, meantime, had not perished — none of the accidents suggested by his father's advisers had befallen him; he still lived, but in such complete concealment that it was impossible for any one to discover him. He had followed the snow-white bird till evening, without clearly knowing why: he was induced to think he could catch the curious creature, particularly as it flew at such a moderate height from the ground, and at the same time so slowly. The tardiness of its flight made him conjecture that it must have hurt one of its wings; several times he succeeded in getting quite close to it, but just as he stretched out his hand to seize it, the bird again raised its wings, and flew a little in advance. Medjeddin now felt himself tired, and would have given up the pursuit, but the bird also seemed fatigued; he approached it, but again the bird flew a little farther off. In this chase he climbed a hill, and soon after found himself in a narrow meadow-valley, down which he ran; twilight came, but the snow-white colour of the bird still lighted him on. At last the pursued bird perched in a thicket; he hastened to it, but when he closed his hand to seize his prisoner, it flew away, leaving only one of its tail-feathers tightly grasped in his hand: still he saw it through the twilight flying before him, and still he hastened after it. The bird seemed now to quicken its pace; but as he had so nearly caught it once, he continued the pursuit with more eagerness; he ran through the high grass, with his strained sight fixed on this glimmering white object, he saw nothing else. Thus he came unexpectedly on a small but deep pool of water, which lay across his path; he jumped in, swam across, and tried to climb the other side, but it was so steep that he fell in with some of the crumbling earth: the water closed over his head, and he lost all consciousness. When he came to himself, he found himself lying on the turf, and a tall, grey-headed man of strange appearance by him, clothed in a long black robe reaching to his ancles, and fastened by a glittering girdle of a fiery colour. Instead of a turban, he wore a high pointed cap on his head, with a tassel of the same hue as the girdle.

"Has your life returned to you?" he asked: "you deserved to be suffocated in the mud. Come, we must go farther before daylight quite leaves us."

With these words the stranger raised him from the ground, passed his left arm round his body, and flew with him through the air with the speed of an arrow. Medjeddin again soon lost recollection, and did not know how long he remained in this condition. He awoke at last as from a deep sleep; and looking around, the first thing he observed was a cage of gold wire, hanging from the ceiling by a long golden chain, and within was the snow-white bird he had so long followed. He found himself alone with this bird in a hall, the roof of which was supported on pillars of white marble, and the walls were built of smooth pale-green stones. The openings which served as windows were protected by lattices so skilfully contrived with winding tracery, that even the white bird could have found no space to pass through, even if it had escaped from the cage. Beside one wall stood a crystal urn; and from this fell a stream of clear water, which passing over the curved brim of the urn, was received in a white basin beneath, from which it disappeared unseen. Whilst he was observing this, and wondering what had happened to him, and how he came there, suddenly the old man in the black robe entered from behind a curtain. He carried a small golden box in his hand, and approached him with these words: "You have now caught the white bird, and have it safe in a cage; in this box is food for it, and there is water; take diligent care of it, and mind that it does not escape."

As he said this he disappeared. Medjeddin now arose and walked round the hall: he looked through the windows, and ascertained that he must be in a foreign land, as the forms of the mountains and trees were quite different from any he had before seen. The hall seemed to be high in the air, as if it were the upper story of a lofty tower. No other edifice was to be seen, and from the windows he could not distinguish what shrubs and plants bloomed beneath. He drew the curtain aside, and discovered a doorway; but there was a thick metal door which he could not open. He was now very much embarrassed, for he began to feel hungry, and could find nothing that would serve him for food. He examined the walls to see if he could discover any concealed outlet; he tried to open the lattices, that he might put his head out, and see if there were any body beneath, to whom he might cry out. There was no door; he could not open the lattices; and as far as he could strain his sight in every direction, he could see nobody: he threw himself in despair on the pillow, wrung his hands, and wept, and cried: "I am then imprisoned — imprisoned in a dungeon where splendour and riches are lavished around! Of what avail is it that these walls are built of precious stones? that this lattice is of fine gold, that this cage is of gold, and hangs on a golden chain? I am as much a prisoner behind golden lattices as I should be behind a grating of iron." Then he rose and shouted through the lattices, in hopes that his voice might be heard, and aid brought; but nobody appeared, and no one answered him. When he again threw himself weeping on his couch, after these useless efforts, he observed that the white bird fluttered restlessly in its prison, and pecked at the golden dish for its food, without finding any.

"Poor brother in misfortune," said Medjeddin, "you shall not suffer want; I will take care of you; come, I will bring you what you want."

He took the pans from the cage, filling one with water from the urn, and the other with grain from the gold box which the old man had given him. Scarcely had he hung the last on the cage, when, on turning round, he saw a table behind him covered with costly viands. He was astonished, and could not understand how this had happened; still it was not long before he attacked the meats with the zest of a young man who had fasted nearly all day. Although these viands were altogether different from those he had been accustomed to taste in his father's house, they all appeared excellent. He ate till he was fully satisfied, and then took from the table a golden cup, and quenched his thirst with pure water from the urn. After this he threw himself on a couch and fell asleep. When he awoke he felt strong and well. He arose and began to make another tour of the hall, and he then observed that the table with the meats had disappeared. This was a disappointment, as he had thought to make a good supper of the remainder. He did not allow this, however, to trouble him much, as he now felt pretty sure that he was not to die of hunger. He next proceeded to scrutinise his prison more closely: he examined all anew, pillars, walls, and floor; but could no where find a crevice or a fissure: all was fast and whole. His view from the windows did not allow him to make any further discovery; he only saw that he was very far above the earth, and in a spacious valley; mountains were to be seen in the distance, with curiously-pointed summits. As soon as he had completed this examination, and found there was nothing to occupy him, he turned his attention to the white bird in the cage. Here was still life; and if the cage was narrow, yet the prisoner could hop about on the different perches. Soon it remained still and gazed at him with its bright eyes, which seemed as if sense and speech lay in them, the interpretation only was wanting.

Night put an end to these reflections. Next morning he observed that the bird again wanted food. He filled its seed-pan with grain from his golden box, and gave it fresh water from the urn. Scarcely had he done this, when the table covered with meats again stood in the same place as the day before. This day passed like the former, and the following in the same manner; Medjeddin wept and mourned, took care of the little bird, fed it, and was every time rewarded in the same manner with the table covered with dishes as soon as he had filled the bird's seed-pan. He could not perceive who brought the table, nor how it disappeared. It always came whilst he stood beside the cage with his back turned, and without any noise. On the ninth day the old man suddenly appeared to him, and said, “To-day is a day of rest for you; you have performed your duty during the preceding days in giving the bird its food, you may now amuse yourself in the garden till evening.” He led him through a door into a narrow passage, at the end of which they descended twenty steps; he then opened a small metal trap-door, and then

Medjeddin descended twenty steps more: they next came to a similar door, and descended twenty more steps to a third, and so on, till, after passing the ninth door, they found themselves in the open air.

"Remain here till you are called," said the old man, who went back into the building through the same doors, which he shut after him. Medjeddin was very curious to examine more closely the building in which he had been imprisoned: he therefore went round it, and narrowly observed it. It was a tower of nine stories, each about fifteen feet in height. The tower was nine-sided, with a window in the third side of each story, so arranged that no window was directly over another, and that consequently only three altogether appeared in each side of the tower from bottom to top. This distribution of regularity and order reigned throughout the whole building. The walls were made of large pieces of gold, quite as smooth as glass; and these were so skilfully put together that, even when closely looked at, the joints could not be discovered. The lattices of the windows were all of gold, like those in the upper hall, and the lower doors through which he had passed were of a yellow metal, inclining to green. All these considerations were not calculated to lessen his conviction that no man could possibly find him out in such a prison. Suddenly a new hope awoke in him: "I am no longer shut up in the tower," said he to himself; "here I am in the open air, in a garden: I can clamber and jump like a monkey; I may possibly find some outlet from this garden, by which I can escape." He immediately turned from the tower, and hastened through the gardens, seeking freedom; but he soon discovered that this hope was vain. He found the gardens surrounded on all sides by a lofty wall, constructed of the same materials, and quite as glassy, as the tower. After making the whole circuit of the garden, he at length found a gate, consisting of a grating of strong iron bars, polished to the highest degree of smoothness, and so close together, that he could scarcely pass his arm through. He tried to climb it by holding by the upper bars with his hands; but his feet slipped on the smooth iron, and he hurt his knee so much, that he lost his hold and fell backwards on the earth. He next examined the grating closely to see if there were no means of escape; but all was in vain: every where the bars were high, thick, and like polished glass. Sorrowfully he wandered round the garden; the sun's rays darting down scorched up the grass, and he sought some shade where he might screen himself from their influence. He lay down on a mossy bank, and meditated anew on his fate. Besides his own grief at his imprisonment, the thought of his father's sorrow at his loss pained him. The exhaustion consequent on tears and loud lamentations, joined with the noontide heat, at last caused him to fall into a deep sleep. When he awoke, the table covered with meats was again before him; he ate, and wandered again mournfully through the garden, meditating whether he could not make a ladder from the trees around him, to aid him in his escape over the grating. But there was something wanting for this work; he had not even a dagger or a knife. As he thus thought, the old man appeared, and said, "Evening is drawing on; follow me in." He led him again to the upper room of the tower, and locked the metal door upon him.

There was no change observable in his prison, only the bird seemed harassed and mournful; it sat quiet and still on the lowest perch, its plumage was rough, and its eyes dull. "Poor creature," said Medjeddin, "what is the matter? are you ill?" It seemed as if the bird was affected by these sympathising questions, but it soon sank again into its former dejection. He mused long upon this. The next day and the following ones passed like the former; but on the ninth the old man again appeared, led him into the garden, and at night conducted him back into the hall. He took care of the bird; and as soon as he had given it food and water, he always found the table covered with meats behind him. In the intervals he stood at the lattice of one of the three windows looking on the plain below, earnestly hoping to catch sight of some person to free him from his captivity. In such monotonous employment many months passed away: every ninth day the old man appeared, and gave him leave to walk in the garden; but he did not derive much amusement from his strolls in this narrow enclosure. In the mean time he asked the old man many times the reason of his imprisonment, and how long it was to last. No answer was vouchsafed but these words: "Every man has his own fate; this is thine."

One day the old man appeared and led him into the garden as usual; but he had not been there more than a quarter of an hour, when he returned, called him in, and then quickly retired with marks of disquietude. Medjeddin also remarked that the white bird, which he had learnt to love more every day, sat at the bottom of its cage, more mournful than it usually was after the old man's visit. He drew near, and observed a little door in the cage which he had never before seen. He examined it closely, and found a fine bolt which passed into a ring of gold wire. These were made so skilfully, and worked into the ornamental parts of the cage so cunningly, that nobody could have discovered them if his attention had not been drawn to them by design or accident. Medjeddin pushed back the bolt and opened the door; the bird started up as if some sudden joy had seized it, hopped out, and as soon as it touched the floor was transformed, and in its stead a young maiden stood before Medjeddin, clothed in a white silk robe; beautiful dark locks streamed over her neck and shoulders, and a thin fragrant veil fell over them, confined by a fillet set with precious stones; her finely-formed countenance was as white as ivory, relieved by the softest shade of the rose. Surprised and astonished, Medjeddin started back and said, "By the beard of the prophet, I conjure you to tell me whether you are of human race, or whether you belong to the genii?"

"I am a helpless maiden," said she, "and implore you to deliver me from the hands of this cruel magician; I will reward you handsomely for it: know, I am the only daughter of Omar, king of Zanguebar; and this wicked enchanter has cunningly carried me off from my father's palace, and shut me up in this cage. He has one son, as ugly as night, whom he wishes me to take for my husband. Every ninth day he comes, brings his son with him, and praises his excellent qualities. This he has done regularly for many months past, tormenting me at every visit for my consent to this odious union; and he now threatens me with cruel tortures if I give it not by the next new moon. On that day he will have kept me a year in imprisonment, and longer than a year he says he will not continue to entreat: then will the time of my punishment begin; I conjure you therefore to help me." At these words she burst into a flood of tears.

"Noble maiden," answered Medjeddin, "how willingly would I free you! but, alas, I am as helpless as yourself, and cannot even free myself. But tell me how is it? you say the enchanter brings his hateful son with him — why, then, have I never seen him?"

"He always sends you away when he comes," answered the princess.

"But even then," pursued Medjeddin, "the son could not conceal himself from me on the stairs, or in the narrow passage."

"Quite true," she answered, "but he carries him in his pocket."

"What," exclaimed Medjeddin in astonishment, "in his pocket! — how can that be?"

The princess informed him that the young man became on the occasion of each visit a white bird, like herself: that the enchanter put him into the cage with her, and that she felt such a dislike to him that she always fluttered about the cage to avoid getting near him; but that he, with the pertinacious obstinacy of a brutal affection, would follow her and settle confidingly near her. "You must," she continued, "have remarked how tired and mournful I always was on the ninth day when you returned."

Medjeddin, astonished at this explanation, assured her of his willingness to free her, but bewailed his helplessness. The princess, however, would not give up hopes of their success. "It seems to me," said she, "a good omen that the enchanter has to-day received a message which caused him to leave so early, and in such haste that he did not securely close the cage, and that you returned so early to-day from the garden; this day is my birthday, the only day I can be delivered from the magician's power; on any other day I should still have remained a dumb bird, even if you had freed me from my cage; only on this day has my touching the floor had power to restore me to my natural form; the enchantment lies in the cage."

Medjeddin instantly seized the cage, exclaiming, "If it be so, we will break the enchantment." He threw the cage to the ground, stamped on it with his feet till it was quite flat, and its shape no longer distinguishable, then he rolled it together, and threw it into a corner of the hall.

At this moment a frightful noise like thunder resounded through the air. The whole building shook as with a furious tempest, the doors flew open with a crash, the curtains were drawn aside, and the magician stood before them with a countenance full of anger. "Ah," cried he, "weak worms, what have you presumed to do? how did you learn to break my charm in this manner? who bid you destroy the cage?"

Medjeddin was so terrified he could answer nothing. The enchanter then turned to the maiden and cried, "And you, you thought this miserable worm could defend you against my power: I will show you how useless it is to oppose me."

He felt in the pocket of his black robe, and pulled out thence a small box; this he opened, and a white bird flew out and perched on the table. He then took a smaller box from his girdle and opened it, — it was filled with grains of millet; from these he took one, and laid it before the bird, who had scarcely eaten it before such a distorted man stood in its place, that both Medjeddin and the princess screamed aloud. His head was large and thick, his eyes red and dark, his nose small and quite flat, his lips thick and blueish red, his chin broad and projecting, and on his head grew a few stiff white hairs; a hump grew out in front, and a similar one behind; his shoulders were quite drawn up, and his head so jammed between them that his ears could not be seen. The upper part of his body was so unwieldy, and his legs so weak and thin that it was wonderful how they supported him; he tottered about incessantly, balancing himself first on one leg, then on the other.

"Come forward, my son," said the enchanter to this deformed creature; "behold, there is your bride; she does not wish to wait till the new moon which I fixed upon for your betrothal: to-day she has effected her own change by the help of this friend. Go, my son, give your bride a kiss, and then thank this young man."

The deformed creature approached the princess with a horrible fiendish laugh; she averted her face with disgust, and stretched out her arms to motion him away. But by this time Medjeddin's courage had returned: resolving to venture all, he stepped before the princess and gave the deformity such a blow that he reeled and fell backwards. His head struck in the fall on the corner of the pedestal of one of the marble pillars with such violence, that his skull was broken: a stream of blood flowed from the wound, and the monster gave a hollow groan. Medjeddin thought of nothing but the father's rage and revenge, and gave up his life for lost. But the enchanter stood quite confounded as he observed his son's mortal wound, and appeared stupified with horror and amazement. Presently he threw himself down beside him, examined the injury, and wrung his hands, forgetting his revenge in his sorrow. Medjeddin quickly seized the hand of the princess, and led her through the door and down the stairs: all the doors were open, and they found their way without any obstacle into the garden. Soon they stood before the grating of the iron gate, which was closed.

"Of what use is our flight?" said Medjeddin despondingly; "we are still as much as ever in the power of the enchanter; and even if we were on the other side of the gate, and concealed in the deepest cavern, he would discover us by his knowledge, and wreak his vengeance on us."

"I am of a different opinion," said the princess; "I know many of the things on which the superior power of this magician depends, and I believe that if we could only get out of this place, we should be safe."

They went on a little further, and came to a spot where a number of trees had been uprooted by the hurricane; one of these lay overturned with its summit resting on the top of the wall, and its boughs and branches hanging far over the other side. At this sight the young man rejoiced; he climbed quickly on to the trunk, pulling the princess after him, and guiding her with great care and tenderness into the top of the tree. They then clambered over the wall in spite of a formidable row of spikes, and let themselves down on the other side by the overhanging branches of the tree. These did not quite reach to the ground, but near enough for them to leap down; they let go accordingly, and fell gently to the earth; then jumping up, they proceeded as rapidly as the strength of the princess and the difficulties of the way would allow them, through thickets, underwood, and plains studded with prickly plants, towards the distant mountains.

After the two fugitives had continued their flight for several hours without looking back on the scene of their imprisonment, the princess felt her strength exhausted, and that she could go no further; she begged her companion, therefore, to stop and rest for a short time. Medjeddin sought a place free from bushes, and clad with moss and long grass; they seated themselves there, and Medjeddin entreated the princess to relate her history. She was too much exhausted at first, but after a short pause recovered her strength and commenced thus:

"My early history is very simple. I am called Jasmin, the only daughter of the sultan of Zanguebar. My mother was brought over the wide-stretching sea, from beyond Arabia and Mount Caucasus, and was sold to him as a slave. Soon attracted by her beauty and manners, he raised her to the dignity of wife. My earliest youth was spent in happy sports under my mother's eyes, who died, however, before I had passed the age of childhood, as the change from the mild climate of her land to the heat of my father's shortened her days. My father loved me as his greatest treasure, and confided me to a careful nurse. Every evening I passed several hours with him, as soon as he was released from the cares of government, and one whole day in each week he devoted to conversation with me. On that day we always went together in a light bark to a neighbouring promontory, where he had a beautiful palace and gardens. The air there was cooler and more refreshing, the trees and shrubs were clothed with fresher green than in the shut-up garden in the capital, and we passed the whole day in the open air. In the mean time I had outgrown childhood, and was beloved by a prince, the son of a neighbouring king, to whom I was betrothed, and who was to succeed my father in his kingdom. This prince, whose name was Mundiana Mesoud, often accompanied us in these visits to the castle on the promontory.

"It happened one day, as we were sitting on a terrace by the sea, that a foreign ship anchored just below us. A stranger caused himself to be landed in a little boat, and asked us permission to appear before us, as he had many costly wares to offer for sale. I was desirous to see his wares, and begged my father to admit him. The man laid many costly trinkets of gold and precious stones before us; and my father bought some which pleased me the most. I remarked that the merchant watched me closely, but he did this with such evident pleasure that my vanity ascribed it to his admiration of my charms, and found no harm in it. Whilst he showed his goods, he let fall some words which intimated that he had left his most precious articles behind in the ship; he had there, he said, many curious birds, particularly a snow-white bird which was the most beautiful of all creatures of this kind. He managed thus to excite my curiosity so much that I begged my father to allow me to go with the stranger to his ship to see these rarities. My father was weak enough to comply with this unreasonable wish. A suitable train ought to have accompanied me, but the stranger prevented this; he said his boat had only room in it for three people, and that he should not like to show his wares if many strangers came into his ship. ‘They are only things fit for the royal princess,’ he said; ‘there is no fear that I should expose her to danger. I can never forget that a powerful king has entrusted his only daughter to my care. However, the prince may accompany you as a watchful protector.’ We accompanied the merchant to the ship; there we found an immense number of extraordinary things and unknown animals. In the place where in other ships the rowers sat, were great apes; on high on the mast sat an eagle; in the cabins were many large and small cages of smooth ebony with thick gold bars, behind which moved a confused multitude of animals.

“My desire was now directed to the snow-white bird, about which I made inquiry. He showed it me high up in a sort of box; and as I could not see it distinctly, he took it out and placed it in my hand. ‘The most wonderful circumstance,’ said he, ‘connected with this bird is, that, being a native of a far distant country, when removed to this it can only remain a few days alive, but I have found the corn of life of which I give it some grains each week, and it is then refreshed for nine days.’ We asked for the corn of life, of which we had never heard; and he opened a little box and took out three grains. He gave me one to give the bird, the other I was to try, and the third prince Mesoud. When I offered the grain to the bird, it refused it; and when I pressed my hand closer, drew back, lost its balance and fell down with outspread wings. I hastened to it, picked it up perhaps somewhat roughly, and as it tried to escape, I held some of its tail-feathers fast, so that it lay fluttering in my hand. I was very much frightened, and the merchant seemed so also. He soon laughed, however, with a sort of malicious joy, and said that I should swallow the corn, because it would prevent the flight of the frightened prisoner; he said the same to the prince; and we swallowed the grains at the same moment. I felt a wonderful transformation pass over me, and found that I was changed into a snow-white bird; and when I looked towards the prince, in his stead I saw a black bird. Upon this the stranger, who was no other than the enchanter, seized me, and shut me up in the golden cage which you have trodden to pieces. The apes began to ply the oars, and the ship moved with unusual swiftness over the sea. I still saw my father and the attendants on the terrace, and could distinguish their gestures of wonder as they saw the ship depart; I believed even that I heard their voices calling us back. But what could I do in my cage? The black bird flew to the promontory; and from that moment I have neither heard nor seen any thing of prince Mesoud.

"When my home was far in the distance, and even the summit of the mountains which overhung it could no longer be distinguished, the enchanter rose with my cage high in the air, leaving his ship behind, and bore me into the hall of the tower. How he brought the other white bird, I do not know; I only know that he took it out of his pocket and put it into the cage. 'Now you have a companion,' said he. As I took him for a real bird, I considered myself, though unfortunate, superior to him, and drew myself back into a corner. But the bird came nearer and followed me round the cage. At last I lost patience, and pecked his eyes. When the enchanter saw this, he took out a little box and took from it a grain which he laid before the bird, who picked it up immediately. It was then changed into a man, the same ugly wretch you saw in the tower. He desired me, as I have already told you, to take that deformity for my husband; and promised me that, on my consent, I should be immediately restored to my proper form, and assured me that otherwise I should always remain as a bird, except on my birthday. It was also part of my enchantment to be obliged to allure you here. I have now no other wish than to return to my father in Zanguebar, because I know he is living in great affliction."

This relation vividly reminded Medjeddin of his own father; he knew, from the great love he had always shown him, that he must have pined for his loss, and his mournful countenance and bowed-down form presented themselves before his mind. "Princess," said he, "your desire cannot be greater than mine. Still, I swear to you, that I will not return to my father till I have safely conducted you to your native land, or have seen you safe into the hands of those who will bring you to your father; if I do not, may Heaven not grant my father life to receive this joy!”

They journeyed on with renewed vigour. But evening was drawing near, and it was necessary to find a resting-place for the night; fortune was favourable; they soon found a nook overhung by a large and lofty bush. Medjeddin broke away the boughs, so as to form a hedge which fenced round a small spot in which he concealed the princess, leaving only a narrow entrance, before which he lay down to watch. Night passed without danger. However anxiously Medjeddin strove against sleep in order to watch over his companion, it at last weighed down his eyelids; and they both awoke with the first rays of the sun. They wandered the whole day, resting occasionally; at every step the journey became more hazardous; the thickets became thicker and higher; they were often obliged to creep between the boughs, and their clothes hung in rags. On the fourth day they reached the foot of the mountains. There they found cultivated land and human habitations. Medjeddin inquired where they were, and asked the way to the sea. The people told them the name of the country, which was unknown to Medjeddin and to the princess Jasmin, and added, that on the other side of the high mountains lay a large flat land, bordering on the sea. They received this information with great joy, and, tired and footsore as they were, addressed themselves, without loss of time, to the task of crossing the mountains, and at last, after a wearisome journey, during which they had seen the sun rise and set seven times, they arrived at the flat country and the sea-coast of which they had been told. A ship lay ready at anchor; and when they inquired its destination, the steersman answered, “We are going to Zanguebar, to fetch a cargo of cinnamon.” To Medjeddin’s question where they came from, and the name of the land where they were, he received for answer, “that the ship belonged to a merchant of Balsora, and that it had been cast on these unknown shores by a violent storm.”

When the princess perceived that the ship was going towards her native land, she was very much rejoiced. She took one of the precious stones out of the fillet on her forehead, and gave it for the passage money of herself and her companion. The following morning they weighed anchor, and, after a prosperous voyage, reached the very same place where the enchanter's ship had formerly lain at anchor, when he carried off the princess.

They were landed in a small boat, and Jasmin led her deliverer through the beautiful leafy walks of the imperial gardens. In this way they came to a terrace, from which they could see the ship. Instead of pressing hastily forwards, they concealed themselves behind a bush, for on the terrace sat a venerable and noble-looking man, with the profoundest melancholy stamped on his features; he was looking seawards, and the vessel had just caught his eye; a flood of tears ran down his face, "Ah!" cried he, "it was just so on the day that my sorrows began! There lay the ship of the robber; there landed the boat which carried away my beloved daughter and her betrothed. It was even at the same hour of the day. I have sent messengers into all the neighbouring lands; I have caused the opposite sea-coasts to be searched; but all has been in vain. I must die, and never see my child again."

He pronounced these words aloud, and covered his face, as he bowed himself forward on his hands.

The princess Jasmin was rushing towards him, but Medjeddin held her back, and said, "Let me first prepare him for your arrival, for otherwise joy may kill him." And he came forward, and bowed himself before the sorrowing old man.

The king then said, "Who are you? Are you a beggar, and do you need any gift? It shall be given you; go to my palace."

Medjeddin stood up and answered, "From my appearance, you might well take me for a beggar, O great king Omar. But know that under these ragged clothes is concealed a magician, who is able to change your tears into smiles, your sobs into transports of joy."

"Can any man on earth do this?" asked Omar.

"I have only to speak three words," answered the other, "and it will happen. Are you strong enough to support the highest joy that your heart can feel or conceive?"

At these questions, a ray of hope kindled in the soul of the mourning father. "What is it? Who are you who can promise this?" asked he; and, on Medjeddin repeating his question, he answered, "I think so," regarding him, at the same time, with eager looks.

"Approach, princess Jasmin," cried the youth; and she sprang forward into her father's open arms.

Medjeddin's promise was indeed fulfilled; the aged monarch's tears were changed into smiles of joy. Their embrace continued long. At last Omar raised himself, beckoned Medjeddin to approach, and said, "You are indeed a magician such as I have never seen before. By your words you have changed the mournful course of my life into the brightest sunshine. I will not now ask you who you are, and what I have to thank you for, nor inquire what chance brought you to my daughter; I shall only give myself up to joy at her return."

They went back to the capital in the king's barge, and soon the joyful news of the unexpected reappearance of the princess spread every where. Crowds assembled at the palace to ascertain if the news were true, and the princess at length went out of the principal gate of the palace, and showed herself at the head of the flight of steps which led up to it. Then arose a shout of joy from ten thousand voices, and loud wishes for her health and happiness.

The next day, after the king had heard from his daughter the history of her imprisonment, and of the devotion with which Medjeddin had watched over her and when Medjeddin had in turn narrated his history Omar became very thoughtful, and caused his council to assemble, to deliberate how they should reward him. "If he were not so young," said some of them "he might be made grand vizier, the next in dignity to the king, or be appointed governor of a province. But his youth prevents his being placed over the people next to the king."

After longer consultation, the eldest of the councillors rose, and said, "Omar, my king and lord, the youth has certainly performed a great service to you and the princess Jasmin; it seems to me, therefore, that his reward ought to come from you. It is fitting that the king, having received from him a great benefit in his family, should reward him from his family. Were I in such a case, I would constitute him Mundiana, and give him for a wife the daughter whom he has restored."

The whole assembly were of the same opinion, and the king gave them to understand that this was also his wish. "I am old," said he, "and can easily perceive that the cares of this land will soon need other hands to support them. I shall be much pleased to see my daughter with so good a husband. The prince Mundiana Mesoud, whom I had before chosen, has disappeared; and this youth, although of lower birth, is of noble soul, and will soon, under my guidance, acquire the necessary experience to enable him to promote justice and order in my kingdom."

He did not delay, but immediately caused Medjeddin to be called. A costly band of gold and silver was fastened round his forehead, and the king then said, "I herewith appoint you Mundiana;" and the assembled councillors immediately added their congratulations.

Medjeddin expressed his gratitude in becoming terms, but inquired, smiling, what was the precise nature of the dignity conferred on him.

The eldest councillor stepped forward and said, "This name points out the highest post of honour which the king can bestow. You are found worthy of this honour, and no other lives who bears the title, because the Mundiana Prince Mesoud has disappeared."

An elephant covered with costly trappings was now brought in by its keeper, and upon it was a richly ornamented seat. On this the new officer was placed, and led through the streets. Heralds went before him, and cried aloud, "Listen to what Omar makes known to all people. This youth has restored to him his dearest jewel, which he had lost. In gratitude, the king has nominated him Mundiana, and has appointed his daughter Jasmin for his wife. To-morrow the betrothal will be celebrated; and every body is invited to the court of the palace to partake of the general joy."

Medjeddin hardly knew how all this had come about. He had received clothes and rich arms as a present from the king, and the king so highly favoured him, that he was not only to be husband of the princess Jasmin, but was to succeed Omar on the throne, and to reign over that beautiful and rich land. In his happiness he forgot his early life, his father's sorrow, and even his playfellow Maryam and his father's faithful friend Salek, and thought no more of his home or his father-land. The next day his betrothal with the princess was celebrated with great pomp.

The princess had willingly yielded to her father's wish, without manifesting any particular joy, although, she felt a very sincere friendship for her intended husband, and treated him with great respect and attention, as she did not forget in her prosperity how much she had owed to him in the time of misfortune. The first days and weeks after the ceremony of betrothal were devoted to recreation and amusement, after which he was formally introduced by the king to the council, and instructed in the business of the state. The king and councillors had soon reason to wonder at the acuteness of his judgment in difficult cases, and above all, at his quick perception of right and order. Throughout the country, the justice and wisdom of the king's future son-in-law were praised, and it was hoped that fortune would permit him to rule over the land. A whole year had now elapsed, and the day was fast approaching when he was to marry the princess and ascend the throne. One day, as usual, he sought his betrothed, the princess Jasmin, in her apartments. He happened to enter very rapidly after his announcement by the attendant, and saw the princess hastily wiping her eyes; and as he drew nearer, he perceived the traces of her tears. Sympathising with her, he asked the cause of her grief; she tried to avoid answering him, but as he continued to urge her, she at last said, "I dare tell you why these tears flow, because you are good and compassionate, and will not consider it a crime that I have a feeling and constant heart. You know that I was formerly beloved by prince Mesoud, the son of the neighbouring king; I related to you that this prince was changed into a black bird by the enchanter, and flew from the ship to the promontory of the island where our country seat was situated. Now I must tell you that I grieve so much the more about this prince's fate, as from my own change I can compassionate his mournful condition. I could not repress the desire to ascertain his fate, and I have obtained certain news of his present condition, by the secret knowledge of a certain wise man. I have learned that he still lives in his new form, and that he has flown away, from fear of the machinations of the demon hunter, called among us Dolda Waldas, and is now in far distant regions; and that it is ordained by fate that he shall never regain his human form if I give my hand to another husband. Sorrow at his mournful destiny has drawn these tears from my eyes, the traces of which you observed."

This narrative made a deep impression on Medjeddin; he discovered that Jasmin had acceded to her father's wish only from gratitude and filial obedience, whilst her affections were still fixed on the absent prince. He saw that he could purchase the good fortune of being the husband of the noble princess, and son-in-law of the great king Omar, and after him king of Zanguebar, only by the misfortunes of prince Mesoud. He asked himself if this were right, and was obliged to confess that justice and honour were opposed to it. He saw that the intoxication of good fortune had hitherto blinded him. Then the remembrance of his father came before him, and his imagination pictured him pining away at the uncertainty of his son's fate. He bitterly reproached himself for his long forgetfulness, and for not having sent an embassy to announce his safe arrival in Zanguebar. Scarcely had these thoughts and feelings arisen in his breast, than he made up his mind: he went to the king, told him all, and begged him to let him go and fulfil a son's duty to a father whom he had too long neglected. Omar sighed deeply at these disclosures of his expected son-in-law; he proposed to send a ship to bring his father, so that he might spend the rest of his life in sharing his son's good fortune and companionship. Upon this Medjeddin declared to him, with determination, that he could never be his son-in-law or successor to the throne. "I cannot purchase such good fortune at another's expense," said he; "it was otherwise before I knew the decision of fate; but now that I know that the prince Mesoud must, through my happiness, always remain in his present condition, if I thus take away the possibility of his ever returning to his human form, I should be in the highest degree culpable, if I did not voluntarily give up my good fortune."

All the persuasions and arguments of Omar were useless. The councillors also, and the grand vizier and the governors of the provinces, begged him to continue in the land, and to take still more share in the government. He remained firm in his resolution; he promised the princess, who was astonished at his honourable spirit, that, as soon as he had seen and comforted his father, he would seek information about prince Mesoud from all the sages and magicians of his native land, and that he would try all means to restore him to his former condition. As he was determined to set out, the king gave him costly presents, including many precious stones from his treasury, and provided him with a ship, and all necessaries for the voyage.

The heavens seemed to favour the resolution of the returning son: the finest weather and most favourable winds seconded his journey, and the ship anchored in the harbour without accident. He took some servants, bought some camels, which he loaded with the king's presents, and so went through Balsora along the river to Bagdad. One beautiful evening he came near the city, and recognised the very place where he had lain at the feet of his father and Salek, and listened to their conversation; their last discourse there returned to his memory. "Well," said he to himself, "my own experience has indeed proved how true it is that it is easy for a man to be seduced from virtue into one false step, if he be not watchful, but relies on his own power: I thought that my heart was sure to be always right, and neglected the practice of weighing carefully each action beforehand. In this manner have I so much forgotten my love for my father, and had nearly committed a great wrong, having been about to sacrifice to my vanity, in the intoxication of good fortune, the happiness of the princess and her betrothed. And you, my father, were also right when you maintained that a heart accustomed to virtue from early years would only for a short time wander from the right road. I have myself experienced the truth of these words, and I therefore thank you with tears that you brought me up to what was good." As he spoke, he espied a small solitary hut where the palm-trees used to stand. A venerable man, much marked by sorrow, appeared at the door; he stood still before the threshold, and regarded the youth with astonishment; the young man gazed earnestly at him. Then suddenly recognising the features of the old man, he threw himself on his knees before him, seized his hand, and covered it with kisses.

"My father," cried he, "is it so indeed? have you become so much altered in the course of so few years? that is my fault. Father, forgive your offending son, who forgot you in the height of prosperity."

El Kattab extended his other hand to him, blessed him, and said: "Rise up, my son, rise; he who feels repentance is forgiven." He rose and threw himself into his father's arms.

When he looked up again, he saw a man approaching, accompanied by a maiden, whose features he recognised. It was Salek and his daughter Maryam, Medjeddin's playfellow. After welcoming him, they sat down, and Medjeddin related to them all that had happened to him since the memorable evening. He related, truly and candidly, how he had forgotten his father, and nearly fallen into greater crimes, because he had been blinded by fortune, by greatness, and by honours. As they were sitting and conversing, they observed three birds coming up from a distance, and who seemed to be chasing one another. They soon perceived that one of them was a black bird flying in great fright from a large hawk. It was obvious that the hawk would soon have seized his prey, had he not been pursued in turn by a larger bird, to avoid which, he was often compelled to dart from side to side: at last they came to close conflict. The pursued black bird fell into Medjeddin's lap; the hawk, struck by his pursuer, fell to the ground at their feet, and was, by the strong hooked bill and sharp claws of his adversary, soon killed and torn to pieces. Scarcely had this taken place, when the conqueror changed into a venerable-looking sage. He turned to Medjeddin, who was quite astonished, and said: "Dip quickly your forefinger in the blood of this slain bird, and anoint with it the beak of the black one."

Medjeddin obeyed immediately; and scarcely had he touched the black bird's beak with the blood, ere it was transformed, and a handsome youth in kingly dress stood before them.

"Guess who this is," said the genius.

"The prince Mesoud?" asked Medjeddin.

The genius answered, "It is he!" And as he stood looking at the young prince with astonishment, added, "You do not perceive how and why all this has happened. I could explain to you all these mysteries; but to what purpose? It is not necessary for weak men to know the threads by which their fates are linked together: suffice it to know that it was necessary for you to perform all this, that you might be tried: you are found worthy, and Heaven rewards you with Maryam, the early companion of your youth, now to be your wife."

Then Medjeddin turned towards Maryam, and looked inquiringly at Salek, her father. This latter said, "With joy I listen to the will of fate; the highest wish of my heart will now be fulfilled."

"Know," continued the genius, "that the slain bird was the enchanter who transformed the princess Jasmin and the prince Mesoud. They were also to pass through trials; thus it was decreed by fate. Because the enchanter only fulfilled the will of fate from selfish motives, and carried his revenge beyond it, and contrary to it, the king of the genii commanded me to slay him."

With these words he disappeared from their sight. They returned now in happy union to the city; and El Kattab, who had built his hut at the edge of the wood to be always near the place of his sorrow, dwelt again in his house with his children. The prince proceeded to Zanguebar in the same ship that had brought Medjeddin. He was received there with great joy, and was soon married to his early love. But Medjeddin's name lived long in their memory, and in that of all the inhabitants of that island.

When the caliph Haroun al Raschid heard of Medjeddin's return, he had him called before him, and made him relate his history. The caliph was so pleased with him that he took him into his palace, and gave him an important post in his court. His history he caused to be inscribed in the records of his kingdom. And when Giafar, his aged vizier, expressed a wish to end his life in quietness, the caliph raised Medjeddin to the grand viziership; and he continued long in this office, to the pleasure of his friends and the happiness of the people, by whom he was greatly beloved.

VIII.

THE STORY OF KING BEDREDDIN-LOLO AND HIS VIZIR ATALMULC.

The city of Damascus is one of the most populous and flourishing cities of the East, and to this capital of a rich kingdom travellers and caravans arrive from all the countries of the world. Its sovereigns bear the title of “Prince of the Believers,” and their person is sacred.

Bedreddin-Lolo, king of Damascus, had for his grand vizir a man celebrated in history for his goodness. This minister, whose real name was Aswad, but whose great virtues had acquired for him the surname of Atalmulc, was in every way worthy of the high name he had so obtained; uniting to an indefatigable zeal for the king’s service a vigilance that nothing could deceive, a penetrating and capacious mind, and a disinterestedness that was universally admired. But he was surnamed the “sorrowful” vizir, because he appeared to be always plunged in a profound melancholy. Whatever he did at court was performed in a grave and serious manner, and he never smiled at the wittiest remark that was made in his presence.

A gift to the kingdom.

One day the king entertained this vizir and Sedif-Elmuloak, his favourite, and related to them, laughing immoderately all the while, the following misfortunes that happened to a rich old miser.

THE OLD PAIR OF SLIPPERS.

There was at Bagdad a merchant very notorious for his avarice, and his name was Abou-Cassem-Tambouri. Although he was enormously rich, his clothes were constantly in rags and tatters, and his turban, made of coarse stuff, was so dirty that its colour could no longer be distinguished. Of all his garments, however, his slippers were the most remarkable; the soles were kept together by large, clumsy nails, and the upper leathers were pieced in every direction. The famous ship Argo was not made up of a greater number of separate fragments. During the ten years of their existence as slippers, the cleverest cobblers of Bagdad had exerted their utmost skill to tag together their remains, and had only succeeded by adding piece on piece, by which means they had become so heavy, that they had passed into a proverb; and when any one wished to describe something weighty, the slippers of Cassem were always the object of comparison.

One day, when this merchant was taking a walk in the great bazaar of the city, a proposal was made to him to buy a considerable quantity of glass; he agreed to the offer, because it was an advantageous one; and having heard a few days afterwards, that a perfumer who had fallen into difficulties had nothing left but some rose-water, which he would of course be obliged to sell as speedily as possible, Cassem took advantage of the poor man’s misfortune, and purchased it at less than half its value. This successful stroke of business had put him into good humour, and instead of giving a great feast, according to the custom of Eastern merchants, when they have made an excellent bargain, he thought it better to take a bath, a luxury which he had not enjoyed for a long time.

Whilst he was taking off his clothes, one of his friends, or at least one who pretended to be a friend — for it is a rare thing for a miser to have one — remarked to him that his slippers made him the laughing-stock of the whole city, and that he certainly ought to purchase a new pair.

“I have long thought of doing so,” replied Cassem; “but my old ones are not so very bad, and will last me for some time even yet.”

While talking, he stripped off his clothes, and entered the bath.

At this juncture the cadi of Bagdad came also to take one. Cassem, having finished his bath before the judge, went into the first apartment, where he found his clothes, but not his slippers, which had disappeared, and in their place was a new pair, which our miser was convinced were a present from the man who had made him such a friendly remonstrance about them. With that he made no more ado, but put the new pair on his own feet, thus sparing himself the pain of buying new ones, and left the bath overjoyed with his prize.

When the cadi had finished his bath, his slaves looked about in vain, for their master's slippers, and finding only a wretched pair, which were immediately recognized as Cassem's, the police ran after the supposed sharper, and brought him back with the stolen goods upon his feet. The cadi, after having exchanged the slippers, sent Cassem to prison; and, as he was well known to be rich as well as avaricious, he was not allowed to come out of prison until he had paid a handsome fine.

On returning home the afflicted Cassem threw his slippers, in a rage, into the Tigris, which flowed beneath his windows. A few days after, some fishermen, drawing up a net heavier than usual, found in it Cassem's slippers. The nails, with which they had been patched, had broken the meshes of the net. The fishermen, out of spite to Cassem and his slippers, threw them into his room by the open window, and in their passage they struck the bottles containing the rose-water, and knocking them down, the bottles were broken and the water totally lost.

The grief and wrath of Cassem on seeing this may easily be conceived. He cursed his slippers, and tearing out the hair from his beard, vowed that they should cause him no more mischief; and so saying, he took a spade, and digging a hole in his garden, buried them there.

One of his neighbours, however, who had borne him a grudge for a long time, perceived him turning up the earth, and ran and told the governor that Cassem had dug up a treasure in his garden. This was enough to excite the cupidity of the officer, and he sent forthwith for Cassem. In vain our miser declared that he had not found money, that he was only employed in burying his slippers. The governor had calculated on his bribe, and the afflicted Cassem could only regain his liberty by paying down a second large sum.

Our friend, in an extremity of despair, consigned his slippers to Shitan, and went and threw them into an aqueduct at some distance from the city, thinking that this time he should hear no more of them. But as though the evil spirit he had invoked was determined to play him a trick, the slippers somehow found their way just to the very pipe of the aqueduct, by this means preventing the flowing of the water. The persons who had the care of the aqueduct having gone to ascertain the cause of the stoppage, and to remove it, carried Cassem's slippers to the governor of the city, declaring them to be the cause of all the injury. Their unfortunate owner was thrown again into prison, and condemned to pay a larger fine than before. The governor who had punished the offence, and who pretended to be indebted to no one for any thing, returned Cassem's precious slippers to him again most faithfully; and Cassem, in order to free himself from all the evils which they had brought upon him, resolved to burn them. As they were saturated with water, he first of all put them out to dry in the sun on the terrace of his house. But Cassem's evil genius had not yet quite done with his tricks, and the last which he played him was the worst of all.

The Devil.

A neighbour's dog prowling along the terrace on the housetops spied out the slippers, and, darting at them, carried off one of them. As, however, the dog was playing with it, and tossing it about, he contrived to let it fall off the terrace on to the head of a woman who happened to be passing below. The fright and the violence of the blow together, made the poor woman quite ill; and her husband having carried his complaint before the cadi, Cassem was condemned to pay a fine proportionate to the misfortune of which he had been the cause. Going home, he took up his slippers, and returned to the cadi with them in his hands.

“My lord,” he exclaimed with a vehemence which excited the judge's laughter, “my lord, look at the fatal cause of all my troubles! These abominable slippers have at length reduced me to poverty; be pleased now to issue a decree, in order that the misfortunes which they will, no doubt, still continue to occasion, may not be imputed to me."

The cadi could not refuse to comply with this request, and Cassem learned, at great expense, the danger there is in not changing one's slippers often enough.

The vizir listened to this story with such a serious countenance that Bedreddin was astonished.

"Atalmulc," he said, "you are of a strange disposition; you seem always sad and melancholy. During ten years that you have been in my service I have never seen the slightest sign of pleasure on your countenance."

"May it please your majesty," replied the vizir, "you need not be surprised at it; all have their secret sorrows; there is no man on earth who is exempt from them."

"Your remark is surely untrue," replied the king. "Do you mean to say that all men have some secret anxiety preying on their minds, because you appear in that state? Do you really believe this to be the truth?"

"Yes, your majesty," replied Atalmulc; "such is the condition of all the children of Adam; our bosoms are incapable of enjoying perfect ease. Judge of others by yourself. Is your majesty quite contented?"

"Oh, as to me," exclaimed Bedreddin, "that is impossible! I have enemies to deal with — the weight of an empire on my hands — a thousand cares to distract my thoughts, and disturb the repose of my life; but I am convinced that there are in the world a vast number of persons whose days run on in unruffled enjoyment."

The vizir Atalmulc, however, pertinaciously adhered to what he had stated, so that the king, seeing him so strongly attached to his opinion, said to him:

"If no one is exempt from vexation, all the world, at any rate, is not like you, wholly overcome by affliction. You have made me, however, very curious to know what it is that has rendered you so pensive and sorrowful; tell me therefore the reason of your melancholy."

"I shall comply with your majesty's wish," replied the vizir, "and reveal the cause of my secret cares to you, by relating the history of my life.”

THE HISTORY OF ATALMULC, SURNAMED “THE SORROWFUL VIZIR,” AND THE PRINCESS ZELICA.

I am the only son of a rich jeweller of Bagdad. My father, whose name was Cogia Abdallah, spared no expense in my education; having from my earliest infancy hired masters, who taught me the various sciences, philosophy, law, theology, and more particularly the different languages of Asia, in order that they might be useful to me in my travels, if I should ever make any in that part of the world.

Shortly after this my father died, and when the funeral ceremony, which was magnificent, was over, I took possession of all his immense property. Instead of giving myself up to the pursuit of pleasure, I resolved to devote myself to my father’s profession. Being well versed in the knowledge of precious stones, I had reason to believe that I should succeed in business, and accordingly I went into partnership with two merchant jewellers of Bagdad, friends of my father, who were about to undertake a trading expedition to Ormus. At Basra we hired a vessel, and embarked on our enterprise from the bay which bears the name of that city.

Our companions on board were agreeable; the ship wafted by favourable winds glided swiftly through the waves. We passed the time in festive mirth, and our voyage promised to end as pleasantly as we could desire, when my two associates gave me a startling proof that they were not the honourable characters I had supposed. We were just at the end of our voyage, and being in good spirits on that account, we held a sort of farewell feast, and did ample justice to some exquisite wines which we had laid in at Basra. For my part, being in the highest spirits, I made copious libations, and, on retiring to rest, lay down on a sofa, without taking off my clothes. In the middle of the night, while I was buried in profound slumber, my partners took me up in their arms, and threw me over-board through the cabin window. Death would seem inevitable under the circumstances, and in truth it is still impossible for me to imagine how I was fortunate enough to survive such a catastrophe. The sea was running high at the time, but the waves, as if Heaven had commanded them to spare me, instead of overwhelming me, bore me to the foot of a mountain, and cast me violently on shore. As soon as I recovered the shock, I found myself safe and sound on the beach, where I passed the remainder of the night in thanking God for my deliverance, at which I could not sufficiently wonder.

At break of day I clambered up with great difficulty to the top of the mountain, which was very steep, and met there with some peasants of the neighbourhood, who were occupied in collecting crystal, which they afterwards sold at Ormus. I related to them the danger in which my life had been placed, and my escape seemed miraculous to them, as well as to myself. These worthy people took pity on me, gave me part of their provisions, which consisted of honey and rice, and as soon as they had finished gathering their crystal, acted as my guides to the great city of Ormus. I put up at a caravansary, where the first object that met my eyes was one of my associates.

His surprise was great at seeing a man whom he no doubt believed to be safely housed in some marine monster's stomach, and he ran off instantly to find his companion, in order to acquaint him with my arrival, and to plan how they should receive me. They soon settled as to their course of proceeding, and, returning to the place where I was, they took no notice of me, and studiously conducted themselves as though they had never seen me before.

"O traitors!" I exclaimed, "Heaven frustrated your murderous intentions, and in spite of your cruelty I am still alive; give me back instantly all my precious stones; I will no longer associate with such vile wretches."

On hearing these words, which ought to have overwhelmed them with shame and remorse, they had the impudence to reply:

"O thief and rogue! who are you, and where do you come from? What precious stones do you speak of that we have belonging to you?"

So saying, they set on me, and gave me several blows with a stick. I threatened to complain to the cadi, but they anticipated me by going to that judge themselves. Bowing down before him, after having previously taken care to present him with some valuable brilliants, which no doubt belonged to me, they said to him:

"O lamp of justice! light which dispels the darkness of deceit! We have recourse to you. We are poor strangers, come from the ends of the earth to trade here; is it right that a thief should insult us, and will you permit that he should deprive us by an imposture of what we have acquired at the risk of our lives, and after running a thousand dangers?"

"Who is the man of whom you make this complaint?" asked the cadi.

"My lord," they replied, "we do not know him, we never saw him before this morning."

At this moment I presented myself before the judge, to make my own complaint, but as soon as they saw me they exclaimed:

"Here is the man — here is the wretch, the arrant thief! He is even impudent enough to venture into your palace, and show himself before you, the very sight of whom ought to frighten the guilty. Great judge, condescend to protect us."

I now approached the cadi, in order to address him, but having no presents to make to him, I found it impossible to get him to listen to my story. The calm and unmoved aspect with which I spoke to him, proceeding from the testimony of a good conscience, was thought by the cadi's prejudiced mind to arise from impudence, and he ordered his archers to convey me instantly to prison, an order which they lost no time in executing. So that while I, an innocent man, was loaded with chains, my partners departed, not only unpunished but in triumph, and well persuaded that a new miracle would require to be wrought to deliver me from the hands of the cadi.

And, indeed, my escape from my present difficulty might not have been of so fortunate a nature as that from drowning, had not an incident occurred which showed the goodness of Heaven still visibly displayed on my behalf. The peasants who had brought me to Ormus, having heard by chance that I had been put in prison, moved with compassion, went to the cadi, and told him in what way they had fallen in with me, together with all the details which they had heard from myself on the mountain.

This recital began to open the eyes of the judge, and caused him to regret that he had not listened to me. He forthwith resolved to investigate the matter; and first of all sent to the caravansary to inquire for the two merchants, but they had hastily decamped, and returned on board the ship, which had put to sea; for in spite of the bias of the cadi in their favour they had taken the alarm. Their rapid flight effectually convinced the judge that I had been committed to prison unjustly, and he gave orders to set me at liberty. Such was the termination of the partnership I had entered into with the two honest jewellers.

As one saved from drowning, and the hands of justice, (or rather injustice,) I might well have considered myself eminently bound to return thanks to the Almighty. My situation, however, was such as to render me rather indifferent as to what might happen to me; for I was without money, without friends, without credit, and reduced either to subsist on charity, or to perish of hunger. I quitted Ormus, without knowing what would become of me, and walked in the direction of the prairie of Lar, which is between the mountains and the Persian Gulf. On arriving there, I met a caravan of merchants from Hindostan, who were setting out for Schiras, and, joining myself to them, I gained a subsistence by rendering myself useful on trifling occasions. On our arrival at Schiras, where the shah Tahmaspe held his court, I stopped for some time in that city.

One day, when returning from the great mosque to the caravansary where I lodged, I saw an officer of the king of Persia, richly dressed and very handsome; looking at me attentively, he came up to me and said, “Young man, from what country do you come; for I see you are a stranger, and evidently not in a very prosperous condition?” I replied, that I came from Bagdad, and that his conjecture was but too well founded. I then related my history more at length, to which he listened attentively, and with much feeling for my misfortunes. He next asked me how old I was; and when I told him that I was nineteen years of age, he desired me to follow him, and walking before me proceeded to the king’s palace, which I entered along with him. Conducting me into a very elegant apartment, he asked me, “What is your name?” I replied, “Aswad;” he then asked many other questions, and being satisfied with my replies, said at last:

“Aswad, your misfortunes have affected me greatly, and I wish to assist you as a father: I am the capi-aga of the king of Persia; there is now a place vacant for a new page, and I have appointed you to it. You are young and handsome, and I cannot make a better choice, for there is not one among the present pages who surpasses you in good looks."

Captain of the door of the king's chamber.

I thanked the capi-aga for his kindness, and he forthwith took me under his command, and caused me to be equipped in the dress of a page. I was made acquainted with my duties, which I soon learned to discharge in such a manner as to gain the esteem of the zuluflis, and to confer honour on my protector.

The officer in command of the pages.

There was a rule that no page of the twelve chambers should, under pain of death, remain in the gardens of the seraglio after a certain hour, when the women were accustomed occasionally to walk there. The same rule extended to all the officers of the palace and the soldiers of the guard. Being in the gardens one evening quite alone, and musing on my misfortunes, I became so lost in thought that I did not perceive that the proper time for men to leave the gardens was already past: knowing that no time was to be lost, I quickened my pace in order to enter the palace, when just as I was turning the corner of one of the walks, a lady appeared before me. She was of a majestic stature, and in spite of the darkness I could see that she was both young and beautiful. "You are in a great hurry," she remarked; "what can it be that obliges you to walk so fast?"

"I have very good reasons for doing so," I replied, "and if you belong to the palace, as doubtless you do, you cannot be ignorant of them. You know that men are forbidden to appear in the gardens after a certain hour, and that whoever breaks this rule suffers death."

"You have been rather slow in remembering the rule," replied the lady, "for the hour is long past; however, on another account you may thank your stars you have loitered, for if you had not, you would not have met with me."

"How unfortunate for me that I should have mistaken the time," I exclaimed, thinking only that I had placed my life in danger.

"Don't reproach yourself," said the lady; "if you do, I shall feel offended. You ought to look on your misfortune to be rather a source of congratulation. It is very true that the danger in which you are placed presents ideas disagreeable enough, but it is not quite so certain that you will be beheaded, for the king is a good prince, who may be induced to forgive you. Who are you?”

“I am one of the pages,” I replied.

“Indeed!” she exclaimed, “you make very wise observations for a page; the grand vizir could not make better. Well, don’t distress yourself about what may happen to-morrow, the events of which are hidden from you, and are only known to Heaven, which has perhaps even now prepared a means of escape for you. Leave then the future to take care of itself, and think only of the present. If you knew who I am, and the great honour conferred upon you by this adventure, instead of poisoning the precious moments by bitter reflections, you would esteem yourself the most fortunate of mortals.”

By such animating language the lady at length dispelled my fears: the idea of the punishment which threatened me vanished from my mind as I abandoned myself to the flattering ideas which she held out to me, and I proceeded somewhat over ardently to ingratiate myself with my companion. The next moment, however, as if at a signal from her, I found myself surrounded by ten or a dozen women who had concealed themselves close by, in order to listen to our conversation. It was easy now to see that the woman who had played me this trick was laughing at me. I supposed she was one of the female slaves of the princess of Persia who was desirous of having a little amusement at my expense. All the other women ran quickly to her assistance, and, bursting into laughter, began to surround me, and to joke with me. One remarked that I was of a lively character, and well fitted for an amusing companion. “If I should ever walk all alone at night,” said another, “I hope I shall meet with somebody quite as clever as this page.” Their pleasantries put me quite out of countenance, while every now and then they laughed outrageously, and I felt as ashamed as if they had rallied me for being too bashful. They even made themselves merry at my having permitted the hour for leaving the gardens to escape me, and said that it would be a pity if I were to die on that account; and that I well deserved to live since I was so devoted to the service of the ladies. The first one then, whom I had heard addressed as Cale-Cairi, said to another, “It is for you, my princess, to determine respecting his lot: is it your wish that he should be abandoned to his fate, or shall we lend him our assistance?"

"He must be saved from the danger he is in," replied the princess: "I give my consent for him to live; and, indeed, to the end that he may remember this adventure of his for a long time to come, we must make it still more agreeable to him; let him come to my apartments."

When I entered the chamber of Zelica Begum — for such was her name, and she was the princess of Persia — she inquired my name, and how long I had been a page. When I had satisfied her curiosity on these points she said:

"Well, Aswad, make yourself at home, and forget that you are in an apartment which is forbidden to be entered by any man: forget that I am Zelica: speak to us as if you were with a party of young ladies, the daughters of plain citizens of Schiras: look attentively at all these young women, and tell me frankly which one among us all you like best."

Although Zelica's slaves were perfectly beautiful, and the princess herself might be considered to have a just claim to the preference, my heart decided at once in favour of the charming Cale-Cairi; but concealing sentiments which would seem to cast Zelica into the shade, I said to her that she ought not to place herself in the same rank with the others, or contend with her slaves for the possession of my heart, for that her beauty was such that wherever she was seen, all eyes must be directed to her, and her alone. While speaking thus, however, I could not resist looking at Cale-Cairi in a way which would make her think that my language had been dictated by courtesy alone, and not by the real feelings of my breast. Zelica noticing this, said, "Aswad, you flatter me too much: you must be more candid: I am certain that you have not spoken your real sentiments, and you must really answer me truly in reply to my question: open your inmost soul to us: we all beg you to do this, and you cannot confer a greater pleasure both on myself and all my slaves." Yielding at last to their urgent requests, I threw off my timidity, and addressing myself to Zelica, I said:

"I will then endeavour to comply with your highness's wishes: it would be difficult to decide which of the exquisitely beautiful assemblage before me is the most beautiful, but I will avow to you that the amiable Cale-Cairi is the lady for whom the inclinations of my heart plead the most strongly."

Zelica, instead of being offended by my boldness, replied: "I am well pleased, Aswad, that you have given the preference to Cale-Cairi; she is my favourite, and that is sufficient to prove that your taste is not bad. You do not know the full worth of the fair lady whom you have chosen: we unite in owning that she excels us all."

The princess and her slaves now began to banter Cale-Cairi on the triumph which her charms had achieved — and she received all their witticisms in very good part. Zelica then ordered a lute to be brought, and placing it in Cale's hands, said to her, "Show your lover what you can do with it," and she played upon it in a style which enchanted me, accompanying it at the same time with her voice in a song which indicated that when a lover has made choice of a suitable object, he ought to love that dear one for ever. An old slave at length came to inform us that daylight was approaching, and that there was no time to be lost, if it were intended that I should quit the apartments in safety. Zelica then told me to follow the slave, who led me through many galleries, and by many windings and turnings, until we reached a little gate of which she had the key; and on the door being opened, I went out, and as it was now daylight, I saw that I was no longer in the palace. A few hours after I rejoined my companions.

Eight days after this, an eunuch came to the door of the king's apartments, and said that he wished to speak with me. I went to him and inquired what he wanted.

"Is not your name Aswad?" he asked.

I replied that it was. He then put a note into my hands, and went away. The letter stated that if I felt inclined to pay a visit to the gardens of the seraglio next night, and would be at the same place as before, I should there see a lady who was very sensibly touched with the preference I had given to her over all the princess's women. Although I suspected that Cale-Cairi had taken a fancy to me, I had no idea of receiving such a letter as this from her. Intoxicated with my good luck, I asked leave from the oda-baschi to pay a visit to a dervise — who was a countryman of my own, and who had just arrived from Mecca. Leave being granted me, I ran, or rather flew, to the gardens of the seraglio, as soon as night was come. If, on the first occasion time fled too swiftly and surprised me into stopping after the hour for leaving the gardens, it seemed now too slow in bringing me the promised pleasure, and I thought the hour of retreat would never come. It did come, however, and I could see, shortly afterwards, approaching the place where I was concealed, a lady whom I recognized by her stature and air to be Cale-Cairi. Transported with delight, I drew near, and throwing myself at her feet, I remained for some time prostrate on the ground without speaking a word, so completely had I lost all self-possession.

"Rise, Aswad," she said, "I am enraptured at having inspired you with such feelings towards me, for I will confess to you that for my part I have not been able to resist a friendly regard for you. Your youth, good looks, and lively and brilliant wit, but more than all, perhaps, your preferring me to other ladies of great beauty, have endeared you to me. My conduct proves this sufficiently; but, alas! my dear Aswad," she added, sighing, "I scarcely know whether I ought to be proud of the conquest I have made, or rather to regard it as an event which will embitter the whole course of my life."

"But, madam," I replied, "why give way to such gloomy presentiments at the very time when your presence brings me such delight?"

"It is not," she replied, "a foolish fear that now, at such a moment as this, causes me annoyance and disturbs the pleasure of our meeting; my fears are only too well founded, and you are ignorant of the cause of my grief. The princess Zelica loves you, and when she has freed herself, as she will do soon, from the splendid bondage in which she is held, she will inform you of your happiness. When she confesses to you that you are dear to her, how will you receive such a glorious avowal? Will your love for me hold out against the honour of having the affections of the first princess in the world?"

"Yes, charming Cale-Cairi," I said, interrupting her; "I would prefer you even to Zelica. Were it to please Heaven that you should have even a still more formidable rival, you would see that nothing could shake the constancy of a heart that is devoted to you."

"Unhappy Aswad!" exclaimed the lady, "whither does your love carry you? What a fatal assurance you are giving me of your fidelity! You forget that I am a slave of the princess of Persia. If you were to repay her kindness by ingratitude you would draw down her anger upon us both, and we should perish. Better it were that I should yield you up to so powerful a rival; it would be the only means of saving ourselves."

"No, no," I replied hastily; "there is another means which I should rather choose in my despair, and that would be to banish myself from the court altogether. After my retreat you would be safe from the vengeance of Zelica, and you would regain your peace of mind: by degrees you would forget the unfortunate Aswad, who would retire into the deserts to seek for rest in his misfortunes."

I spoke with such deep feeling and truth that the lady was herself overcome with my grief, and said:

"Cease, Aswad, to yield to a needless affliction. You are mistaken; your merits are such that it would be wrong to keep you longer in the dark. I am Zelica herself, and not her slave. That night when you came to my apartment I personated Cale-Cairi, and you supposed my attendant to be myself."

Zelica then called one of her women, who ran to her from amidst some cypress trees where she was concealed, and I perceived that she was the slave whom I supposed to be the princess of Persia.

"Aswad," said the princess to me, "you now see the true Cale-Cairi; I give her back her name and take my own: I have no wish to disguise myself any longer. Although your love is greater than your ambition, I am certain that it will be a source of new pleasure to you to know that the lady who loves you is a princess."

We passed nearly the whole night in walking about and conversing, and daylight would no doubt have found us in the gardens, had not Cale-Cairi, who was with us, taken care to inform us that it was time to withdraw. It was needful then that we should separate, but before I parted from Zelica the princess said to me:

"Adieu, Aswad! do not forget me. We shall see each other again, and I will soon let you know how dear you are to me." I threw myself at her feet to thank her for so flattering a promise, after which Cale-Cairi took me out by the same winding passages as before, and I then left the seraglio.

Beloved by the august princess whom I idolized, and forming an enchanting image of what she had promised me, I abandoned myself to the most pleasing fancies that the mind could depict, when an unlooked-for event deprived me all on a sudden of my proud hopes. I had heard a report that the princess Zelica was ill, and two days afterwards the rumour of her death was circulated in the palace. I was unwilling to give credit to this fatal intelligence, and refused to do so until I saw preparations going for the funeral ceremony. I did not see the whole of it, because excessive grief threw me into a succession of dangerous fainting fits which lasted for a long time. One of the officers of the palace gave directions for me to be carried into the pages' room, where great care was taken of me; my limbs were rubbed with a balm of exceeding virtue, and in spite of my overwhelming misery, such was the progress I made, that in two days my strength was restored. A stay in Schiras, however, having become insupportable, I secretly left the court of Persia three days after the interment of my beloved princess. Overwhelmed with grief, I walked all night without knowing whither I was going or where I ought to go. Next morning, having stopped to rest myself, a young man approached who was dressed in a very extraordinary manner. Coming up to me he saluted me and presented me with a green branch which he held in his hand, and after having civilly made me accept it, he began to recite some Persian verses to induce me to bestow my charity upon him. As I had no money I could not give him any. Thinking that I was ignorant of the Persian language he recited some Arabic verses, but seeing that he had no better success this way than the other, and that I did not do what he wanted, he said to me, "Brother, I cannot persuade myself that you are deficient in charity, but rather in the means wherewith to exercise it."

"You are right," I said, "I have not a farthing in the world, and I know not even where to shelter my head."

"Unfortunate man," he exclaimed, "what a sad plight you are in; I really pity you, and wish, moreover, to assist you."

I was not a little astonished to be thus addressed by a man who had been asking alms of me a moment before, and I supposed that the assistance he offered was merely that of his prayers, when he went on to say:

“I am one of those merry fellows they call fakirs; and I can tell you, that though we subsist entirely on charity, we fare none the less sumptuously for that, as we have discovered the secret of exciting the compassion of well-meaning people by an appearance of mortification and penance which we well know how to impart to ourselves. It is true there are a few fakirs fools enough to be really what they seem, and who lead a life of such austerity as sometimes to go ten whole days without the least nourishment. But we are a little less rigorous than these ascetics; we make no pretensions to the reality of their virtues, only to the appearance of them. Will you become one of our fraternity? I am now on my way to meet two of them at Bost; if you have a fancy to make the fourth, you have but to follow me.”

“I am afraid,” I replied, “that not being accustomed to your religious exercises I shall acquit myself but clumsily.”

“Pray don’t trouble yourself,” he broke in, “on that head; I repeat to you that we are not fakirs of the austere order; in short, we have really nothing of the fakir about us but the dress.”

Although I guessed from what the fakir had told me, that he and his companions were in reality three libertines in disguise, I nevertheless did not hesitate to join them; for besides being reckless from sheer misery, I had not learned among the pages of the court many lessons of scrupulousness on the score of morality. As soon as I had signified to the fakir my consent, he set out with me at once for Bost, feeding me on the road with abundance of dates, rice, and other good things, which people presented to him in the towns and villages through which we passed; for the moment his little bell and his peculiar cry became heard, the good Mussulmans came running to him with provisions from all quarters.

In this way we arrived at the large town of Bost; we made our way to a small house in the suburbs, where the two other fakirs resided. They received us with open arms, and appeared delighted with my resolution of joining them. They soon initiated me into their mysteries; that is to say, they showed me how to perform their antics. As soon as I was well instructed in the art of imposing on the populace, they sent me into the town to present respectable citizens with flowers or branches, and to recite verses to them. I always returned home with some pieces of silver, which enabled us to live merrily enough.

I passed nearly two years with the fakirs, and should have lived there much longer had not the one who had induced me to join them, and whom I liked the best, proposed to me to travel.

“Aswad,” said he one day, “I am sick of this town; I begin to long to roam a little. I have heard wonderful accounts of the city of Candahar; if you will accompany me we will put the truth of these reports to the test.”

I consented at once, for I had a curiosity to see some new country, or rather, I was impelled by that superior power which guides our destinies.

Accordingly we both quitted Bost, and passing through many cities of Segestan without stopping, we reached the noble city of Candahar, surrounded with its strong fortifications. We betook ourselves to a caravansary, where our dresses, the most commendable thing about us by the way, procured us a kind and hearty reception. We found the inhabitants of the city in a great bustle, as they were going to celebrate the feast of Giulous on the following day. We learned that at court they were no less busy, as every one was anxious to show his attachment for the king Firouzshah, who had earned by his justice the love of all good men, and still more by his rigour the fear of the wicked.

The fakirs going where they please without hindrance, we proceeded next day to court to witness the festival, which however had few charms for the eyes of a man who had seen the Giulous of the king of Persia.

Whilst we were attentively watching what passed, I felt myself pulled by the sleeve, and turning round, perceived close to me the very eunuch who, in the shah’s palace, had been the bearer of Cale-Cairi’s, or rather Zelica’s letter.

“My lord,” he whispered, “I recognized you at once in spite of your strange dress; but indeed, though I flatter myself I am never mistaken, I am not quite sure whether on the present occasion I ought not to doubt the evidence of my own eyes. Is it possible that it is you I have met here?”

“And pray,” I asked in reply, “what are you doing at Candahar, and why have you left the court of Persia? Can the death of the princess Zelica have driven you away as it did me?"

"That," replied he, "is exactly what I cannot tell you at this moment, but I will amply satisfy your curiosity if you will meet me here to-morrow alone at the same hour. I have a few things to tell you which will astonish you, and which — let me add — concern you not a little."

I promised to return alone to the same spot the following day, and took care to keep my word. The eunuch was there, and coming up to me, proposed that we should leave the palace and seek some place better adapted for conversation. We accordingly went out into the city, and after traversing several streets, stopped at last at the door of a good-sized house, of which he had the key. We entered, and I observed suites of apartments magnificently furnished, delicious carpets and luxurious sofas, whilst through the windows I perceived a garden beautifully laid out, with a delightful piece of water in the middle, bordered with variegated marble.

"My lord Aswad," said the eunuch, "I trust the house pleases you."

"I am delighted with it," I replied.

"I am glad to hear you say so," he returned, "for I yesterday took it, just as you see it, for *you*. You will next want slaves to wait on you. I will go and purchase some whilst you take a bath."

So saying, he conducted me to a chamber, where I found baths all ready.

"In Heaven's name," I exclaimed, "tell me for what purpose you have brought me here, and what the news is you have promised to tell me."

"At the proper time and place," he rejoined, "you shall learn all; for the present be content to know that your lot is materially changed since I met you, and that I have my orders for every thing I am doing."

As he spoke, he assisted me to undress — a process which did not take long — I entered the bath and the eunuch left me, enjoining patience.

All this mystery furnished ample food for conjecture, but I wearied myself fruitlessly in endeavouring to fathom it. Schapour left me a long time in the bath, and my patience was beginning to be exhausted, when he returned, followed by four slaves, two of whom carried towels and garments, and the others all sorts of provisions.

"I beg your pardon, my lord," said he, "I am extremely sorry I have kept you waiting so long."

At the same time the slaves placed their bundles on the sofas and proceeded to wait on me: they rubbed me with towels of the finest texture, and then dressed me in rich garments, with a magnificent robe and turban.

"What on earth is all this to end in?" said I to myself; "and by whose orders can it be that this eunuch treats me in such a manner?"

My impatience to be enlightened became so lively that I could not conceal it. Schapour soon perceived it, and said:

"It is with the deepest regret that I see you so restless and uneasy, but I cannot yet relieve you. Even supposing I had not been expressly forbidden to say a word, or even supposing that I betrayed my trust, and told you every thing I am now concealing from you, I should not succeed in tranquillizing you in the least; anxieties still more harassing would take the place of those which now worry you — you must wait till night, and you shall then learn all you desire to know."

Though I would not but augur well from what the eunuch said, yet it was impossible to help being for the rest of the day in a state of cruel suspense. I really believe that the expectation of evil causes less real suffering than that of some great pleasure. The night however came at last, and the slaves proceeded to light up the whole house, and particularly the principal apartment, with wax candles. In this apartment I took my seat with Schapour, who, to assuage my impatience, kept saying to me, "They will be here in a moment — have but a little more patience." At last we heard knocking at the door, the eunuch went himself to open it, and returned with a lady whom, the moment she raised her veil, I recognized as Cale-Cairi. My surprise was extreme, for I believed her to be at Schiras.

"My lord Aswad," said she, "however astonished you may be to see me, you will be much more so when you hear the story I have to tell you."

At these words Schapour and the slaves quitted the apartment, leaving me alone with Cale-Cairi; we both sat down on the same sofa, and she commenced her narration as follows:

"You recollect well, my lord, that night on which Zelica made herself known to you, nor can you yet have forgotten the promise she made you on leaving. The following day I asked her whether she had come to any resolution what course to pursue in the matter; I represented to her the absurdity of a princess of her rank dreaming of exposing herself to disgrace and death for the sake of a mere page; in short, I used every effort to overcome her passion; and you may well pardon me for doing so, as all my reasoning served but to strengthen her attachment. When I saw I was utterly unable to prevail with her, 'Madam,' I said at length, 'I cannot contemplate without shuddering the danger into which you are rushing, but since no consideration seems powerful enough to detach you from your lover, we must endeavour to contrive some plan for you to meet without endangering either your life or his. I have thought of one which would doubtless be gratifying to your affection, but it seems to me so daring that I hardly like to propose it.'

"'Let me hear it at once, Cale-Cairi,' said the princess; 'whatever it may be, pray do not keep it from me.'

"'If you put it in practice,' replied I, 'you must make up your mind to quit the court and live as though you had been born to the humblest lot in life. You must renounce all the honours of your rank. Do you love Aswad sufficiently to make so great a sacrifice?'

"'*Do* I love him?' returned she, drawing a deep sigh. 'Ah! the very humblest lot with him would please me far more than all the pomp and luxury with which I am now surrounded. Only point out to me what I can do in order to enjoy his society without constraint and without impropriety, and I am ready to do it without a moment's hesitation.'

"'Well, madam,' I replied, 'since I perceive it is useless to endeavour to overcome your attachment, I will do all in my power to favour it. I am acquainted with the properties of a herb of singular power. One leaf of it placed in your ear will in an hour bring on so lethargic a sleep that you will appear quite dead; they will then perform the funeral rites, and carry you to your tomb, from which at nightfall I can easily release you—'"

Here I interrupted Cale-Cairi, "Great Heavens!" I exclaimed, "is it possible that the princess Zelica did not die after all — what then has become of her?—”

“My lord,” said Cale-Cairi, “she is still alive. But pray listen patiently to my story, and you will learn all that you desire to know. My mistress,” she continued, “threw herself into my arms with joy, so clever did my plan appear to her; presently, however, she began to perceive many difficulties connected with the rites and observances usual at funerals. I removed all her doubts, and thus we set about the execution of our plan.

“Zelica complained of a terrible pain in her head, and went to bed. The next morning I spread a report that she was dangerously ill; the royal physician was sent for; it was no difficult matter to deceive him. He sent some remedies which of course were never taken. From day to day the princess’s illness increased; and as soon as, in my judgment, her last moments ought to approach, I placed in her ear a leaf of the herb I have mentioned. I immediately after ran to the shah, and told him the princess had but a few moments to live, and desired anxiously to speak to him. He came to her at once, and, observing that, as the herb began its work, her face changed rapidly, he was deeply moved, and began to weep.

“‘My lord,’ said his daughter, in faint accents, ‘I implore you, by the love you have always borne me, to order my last wishes to be carried out to the letter. My wish is, that when I am dead, no one but Cale-Cairi shall be permitted to wash my body, and that none of my other slaves shall share that honour with her. I also beg that none but she shall watch my tomb the first night, that no tears but hers shall fall on it, and that her prayers alone shall ascend to the prophet, to avert from me the assaults of evil spirits.’

“Shah Tahmaspe promised his daughter that I alone should perform for her these last sad duties.

“‘But this is not all, my lord,’ continued she; ‘I also implore you to give Cale-Cairi her liberty the moment I am no more, and to give her, with her freedom, presents worthy of yourself and of the affection she has always evinced towards me.’

“‘My child,’ replied the shah, ‘make yourself perfectly easy on all the matters you have commended to my notice; should it be my misfortune to lose you, I swear that your favourite slave, loaded with presents, shall be at liberty to go whither she pleases.’

“He had hardly done speaking when the herb completed its work. Zelica lost all consciousness, and her father, supposing her to be dead, retired to his own apartments in deep grief. He gave orders that I alone should wash and embalm the body, which I pretended to do, and then wrapping it in a white cloth, laid it in the coffin. The princess was then carried in great pomp to the tomb, where by the shah’s express orders I was left alone for the first night. I made a careful survey all round, to assure myself that no one was on the watch, and, not having discovered any one, I roused my mistress at once from her sleep in the coffin, made her put on a dress and veil I had concealed under my own, and we both repaired to a spot where Schapour was in waiting. The faithful eunuch conducted the princess to a small house which he had taken, and I returned to the tomb to pass the remainder of the night. I made up a bundle to represent the corpse, covered it with the same cloth in which I had previously wrapped Zelica, and placed it in the coffin. The next morning the princess’s other slaves came to take my place, which I took care not to leave without previously indulging in all the expressions of inconsolable grief usual on such occasions. A faithful account of this exhibition of woe was duly carried to the king’s ear, who was induced by it to make me presents far beyond what he had determined on. He ordered me ten thousand sequins out of his treasury, and granted me permission, the moment I asked it, to quit the court and carry with me the eunuch Schapour. I immediately proceeded to join my mistress, and congratulate her on the complete success of our stratagem. Next day we sent the eunuch to the royal apartments with a note asking you to come and see me. But one of your attendants told him you were ill, and could see no one. Three days after we sent him again; he brought back word that you had left the palace, and that no one knew what had become of you. We caused search to be made for you all through the city; Schapour left nothing undone in order to discover you; and when at last we gave up the search in despair and left Schiras, we took the road to the Indus, because we thought it just possible that you might have turned your steps in that direction; — and, stopping at every town on our route, we set on foot the most careful inquiries, which nevertheless proved entirely useless.

“One day, on our road from one city to another, though we were travelling with a caravan, a vast horde of robbers surrounded us, and, in spite of a vigorous defence, swept down the merchants and plundered their goods. Of us, of course, they soon made themselves masters, robbed us of our money and jewels, carried us to Candahar, and sold us to a slave merchant of their acquaintance. This merchant had no sooner secured Zelica, than he resolved to show her to the king of Candahar. Firouzshah was charmed the moment he saw her, and asked her whence she came. She told him Ormus was her native place, and answered the prince’s other inquiries in a similar manner. In the end he purchased us, and placed us in the palace of his wives, where the handsomest apartments were assigned to us. Passionately though she is loved by the king of Candahar, she cannot, nevertheless, forget you; and, though he sighs at her feet, he has never succeeded in obtaining the slightest proof of any return of attachment. No one ever saw any thing like the joy she exhibited yesterday when Schapour informed her he had met with you. She was quite beside herself all the rest of the day. She ordered Schapour instantly to engage a furnished house for you, to conduct you there to-day, and to suffer you to want for nothing. I am now here by her orders to inform you of the several things I have communicated, and to prepare you to see her in the course of to-morrow night. We shall leave the palace unobserved, and let ourselves in here by a small door in the garden wall, of which we have had a key made for us.” As she uttered these last words the favourite slave of the princess of Persia rose and quitted the apartment, in order to return to her mistress, and Schapour accompanied her.

I could do nothing all that night but think of Zelica, my love for whom seemed to return with tenfold ardour. Sleep never approached my eyelids, and the following day seemed a century. At last, as I almost began to think I should fall a victim to the agonies of suspense, I heard a knocking at the door; my slaves ran to open it, and the next moment I saw my princess entering the room. How shall I describe the feelings which her presence excited in me! and for her part what was her delight to see me once more! I threw myself at her feet and for some time could do nothing but embrace them without uttering a syllable. At length she forced me to rise, and seating me next her on the sofa, “Aswad,” said she, “I render thanks to Heaven for reuniting us; let us now hope that the goodness of Providence will not stop here, but will remove the new obstacle which hinders our union. In expectation of the arrival of that happy hour we will live here in contentment; and if circumstances prevent our meeting unconstrainedly, we can at least enjoy the consolation of hearing daily news of each other, as well as of occasional secret interviews.” In such conversation we passed the greater part of the night. Next day, in spite of the happy thoughts which now filled my mind, I did not forget the fakir in whose company I had come to Candahar; and picturing to myself his uneasiness at not knowing where I was, I determined to go and find him out. I met him by accident in the street and we embraced each other.

“My friend,” said I, “I was on my way to your caravansary to inform you of what has happened to me, and to set your mind at ease. No doubt I have occasioned you some uneasiness.”

“That is true enough,” replied he; “I was in no small trouble about you. But what a change! What clothes are these you appear in? You seem to have been in luck. Whilst I was worrying myself about what had become of you, you were passing your time, as it seems to me, pleasantly enough.”

“I confess it, my dear friend,” replied I; “and I can assure you, moreover, that I am a thousand times happier than it is possible for you to conceive. I want you not only to be witness of my good fortune, but to profit by it as well. Quit your caravansary and come and live with me.”

So saying, I led him to my house and showed him all over it. He admired the rooms and the furniture amazingly, and every now and then would exclaim, “O Heaven! what has Aswad done more than other men to deserve such an accumulation of good fortune?”

“What, now, fakir,” asked I, “do you view my happy condition with chagrin? It seems to me that my good fortune is positively annoying to you.”

“On the contrary,” returned he, “it affords me the liveliest satisfaction; so far from envying my friends’ happiness, I am never so happy as when I see them flourishing.”

As he concluded this speech he embraced me ardently, the better to persuade me of the sincerity of his words. I believed him sincere, and acting towards him myself in the most perfect good faith, betrayed myself without the least mistrust into the hands of the most envious, the most cowardly, and the most treacherous of men.

In this way we continued to live for some time. Schapour or Cale-Cairi brought me daily intelligence of my beloved princess, and an occasional stolen interview elevated me to the seventh heaven of happiness. The fakir expressed the liveliest interest in the progress of my attachment, and I confided to him, as to my bosom friend, every particular of my life.

One day, as I was reposing on a sofa and dreaming of Zelica, I was aroused by a great noise in my house. I rose in order to ascertain the cause, and to my great dismay, found that it was occasioned by a body of Firouzshah's own guards.

"Follow me," said the officer in command; "our orders are to conduct you to the palace."

"What crime have I committed?" asked I; "of what am I accused?"

"We have not been informed," replied the officer; "our orders are merely to carry you before the king; we know nothing about the cause: but I may tell you for your comfort, that if you are innocent you have nothing whatever to fear, for you have to do with a prince of the strictest justice, who never lightly condemns any one who is brought before him. He requires the most convincing proofs before he will pass an adverse sentence; but it is true at the same time that he punishes the guilty with the utmost rigour, so that, if you are guilty, I pity you."

There was no help for it; I was obliged to follow the officer. On my way to the palace I said to myself, "Firouzshah has no doubt discovered my correspondence with Zelica; but how can he have learned it?" As we crossed the court-yard of the palace I observed that four gibbets had been erected there. I made a shrewd guess at their destination, and apprehended that this kind of death was the least part of the punishment I had to expect from the wrath of Firouzshah. I raised my eyes to heaven and prayed that at least the princess of Persia might be saved from this. We entered the palace;

the officer who had charge of me conducted me into the king’s apartment. That prince was there, attended only by his grand vizir and the fakir. The moment I perceived my treacherous friend I saw that I had been betrayed.

“It is you, then,” said Firouzshah to me, “who has secret interviews with my favourite. Wretch! you must be bold indeed to dare to trifle with me! Speak, and reply exactly and truly to my questions: — When you came to Candahar, were you not told that I was a severe punisher of criminals?”

I replied that I was informed of it.

“Well,” he continued, “since you knew that, why have you committed the greatest of all crimes?”

“Sire,” I answered, “may your majesty’s days last for ever. You know that love gives courage to the dove: a man possessed by a violent passion fears nothing: I am ready to be a victim to your just wrath; and as to any tortures that may be reserved for me I shall not complain of your severity, provided you grant a pardon to your favourite. Alas! she was living peacefully in your palace before I came here, and would soon have been contented with rendering a great king happy, while gradually forgetting an unfortunate lover whom she never thought to see again. Knowing that I was in this city, her former attachment returned. It was I that separated her from your affection, and your punishment should fall on me alone.”

While I was thus speaking, Zelica, who had been sent for by the king’s order, entered the apartment, followed by Schapour and Cale-Cairi, and hearing the last words I uttered, ran forward and threw herself at the feet of Firouzshah.

“Great prince!” she exclaimed, “forgive this young man: it is on your guilty slave, who has betrayed you, that your vengeance ought to fall.”

“Traitors that you both are!” exclaimed the king “expect no favour either of you: die! both of you. This ungrateful woman only implores my kindness in behalf of the rash man who has offended me; while his sensibilities are only alive to the loss of her whom he loves; both of them thus parading in my very sight their amorous madness; what insolence! Vizir!” he cried, turning to his minister, “let them be led away to execution. Hang them up on gibbets, and after their death, let their carcasses be thrown to the dogs and the vultures."

The officers were leading us away, when I resolved on one more desperate effort to save the princess.

"Stop, sire!" I shouted at the top of my voice, "take care what you do, and do not treat with ignominy the daughter of a king! Let your jealousy even in its fury have respect to the august blood from which she has sprung!"

At these words Firouzshah appeared thunderstruck, and then addressing Zelica, he inquired, "Who then is the prince who is your father?"

The princess looked at me with a proud countenance, and said:

"Alas! Aswad, where was your discretion? how is it that you have told what I wished to conceal, if it were possible, even from myself? I should have had the consolation in death of knowing that my rank was a secret, but in disclosing it, you have overwhelmed me with shame. Learn then who I am," she continued, addressing herself to Firouzshah; "the slave whom you have condemned to an infamous death is the daughter of shah Tahmaspe!" She then related her whole story, without omitting the slightest circumstance.

When she had concluded her recital, which increased the king's astonishment, she said to him, "Now I have revealed a secret which it was my intention to bury in my own breast, and which nothing but the indiscretion of my lover could have wrung from me. After this confession, which I make with extreme humiliation, I beg that you will instantly give orders for my immediate execution. This is the only favour I now ask of your majesty."

"Madam," replied the king, "I revoke the order for your death: I have too great a love for justice not to honour your faithfulness: what you have told me makes me look upon you in a different light; I have no complaint to make against you, and I set you at liberty. Live for Aswad, and may the happy Aswad live for you! Schapour also and your friend have life and liberty granted to them. Go, most faithful lovers, and may you pass the rest of your days in the enjoyment of each other's society, and may nothing interrupt the course of your happiness. As for you, traitor," he continued, turning to the fakir, "you shall be punished for your treason, for your base and envious heart, which could not endure to see the happiness of your friend, and led you to deliver him up yourself to my vengeance. Miserable wretch! You shall yourself be the victim of my jealousy!"

While this villain was being led to the gallows, Zelica and I threw ourselves at the feet of the king of Candahar, and bathed them with tears of gratitude and joy. We assured him that we should ever retain a grateful sense of his generous goodness. And at length we left his palace, accompanied by Schapour and Cale-Cairi, with the intention of taking up our lodging at a caravansary. We were just about to enter, when an officer sent by the king accosted us. "I come," he said, "from my master, Firouzshah, to offer you a lodging: the grand vizir will lend you a house of his, situated at the gates of the city, where you will be very commodiously lodged. I will be your conductor thither, if you will allow me, and will take the trouble to follow me." We accompanied him, and soon arrived at a house of imposing appearance, and elegant architecture: the interior corresponded to the outside appearance. Every thing was magnificent, and in good taste. There were more than twenty slaves, who told us that their master had desired them to supply us with every thing that we wanted, and to treat us as they would himself all the time that we remained in the house.

Here my marriage with the princess was duly celebrated, though with the strictest privacy. Two days after we received a visit from the grand vizir, who brought an immense quantity of presents from the king. There were bales of silk and cloth of India, with twenty purses, each containing a thousand sequins of gold. As we did not feel ourselves quite at our ease in a house which was not our own, and as the king's bounty enabled us to go elsewhere, we joined ourselves to a great caravan of merchants, who were proceeding to Bagdad, where we arrived without encountering any disaster.

We took up our lodgings at my own house, where we remained for a few days after our arrival, for the purpose of recovering ourselves from the fatigue of our long journey. I then went into the city and visited my friends, who were astonished to see me, as they had been told by my associates on their return, that I was dead. As soon as I knew that they were at Bagdad, I hastened to the grand vizir, threw myself at his feet, and related their perfidious conduct towards me. He gave orders for their immediate arrest, and commanded them to be interrogated in my presence. “Is it not true,” I asked them, “that I awoke when you took me up in your arms, that I asked what you intended doing with me, and that without replying you threw me out through the porthole of the ship into the sea?”

They replied that I must have been dreaming, and that I must certainly have thrown myself into the sea when asleep.

“Why then,” said the vizir, “did you pretend not to know him at Ormus?”

They replied that they had not seen me at Ormus.

“Traitors!” he replied, eyeing them with a threatening aspect, “what will you say, when I show you a certificate from the cadi of Ormus, proving the contrary?”

At these words, which the vizir only made use of to put them to the proof, my associates turned pale and became confused. The vizir noticed their altered looks, and bade them confess their crime, that they might not be compelled to do so, by being put to the torture.

They then confessed every thing and were conveyed to prison, until the caliph should be informed of the matter, and give his orders respecting the kind of death which they were to undergo. In the mean time, however, they contrived to make their escape, either by bribing their guards, or deceiving their vigilance, and concealed themselves so carefully in Bagdad, that all search after them proved ineffectual. Their property, however, was confiscated to the caliph, excepting a small part which was bestowed upon me, by way of some compensation for the robbery.

After this all my ambition consisted in living a quiet life with the princess, with whom I was perfectly united in love and affection. My constant prayer to Heaven was, that such a state of felicity might be continued to us; but alas! how vain are the wishes and hopes of man, who is never destined to enjoy unruffled repose for a long time, but whose existence is continually disturbed by contending cares and sorrows! Returning home one evening from partaking of an entertainment with some friends, I knocked at the door of my house, but could get no one to admit me, although I knocked loudly and repeatedly. I was surprised at this, and began to form the gloomiest conjectures. I redoubled my knocks at the door, but no slave came to admit me. What can have happened? I thought; can this be some new misfortune that has befallen me? Such were my surmises. At the noise I made several neighbours came out of their houses, and being as astonished as myself at none of the domestics appearing, we broke open the door, and on entering found my slaves lying on the floor, with their throats cut, and weltering in their blood. We passed from them to Zelica's apartment, and here another frightful spectacle presented itself, for we found both Schapour and Cale-Cairi stretched lifeless on the ground, bathed in their blood. I called on Zelica, but received no reply. I searched every room and corner in the house, but without finding her. Such a blow was too much for me, and I sank back in a swoon in the arms of my neighbours. Happy would it have been for me had the angel of death at that moment borne me away; but no! it was the will of Heaven that I should live to see the full horror of my fate.

When my neighbours by their attentions had succeeded in recalling me to life, I asked how it was possible that so terrible a slaughter could have taken place in my house, and not the slightest sound of it have been heard by them. They replied that they were as astonished as I was at the circumstance. I then ran to the cadi, who despatched his nayb into all the surrounding country with all his asas, but their inquiries were fruitless, and every one formed his own conjecture respecting this horrible tragedy. As for myself, I believed, as well as many others, that my former partners were the perpetrators of the crime. My grief was so intense that I fell ill, and continued in a languishing state at Bagdad for a long time. When I recovered I sold my house, and went to reside at Mossoul, carrying with me the wreck of my fortune. I adopted this course because I had a relation there of whom I was extremely fond, and who belonged to the household of the grand vizir of the king of Mossoul. My relation received me very cordially, and in a short time I became known to the minister, who, thinking that he saw in me good business talents, gave me some employment. I endeavoured to discharge effectively the duties entrusted to me, and I had the good fortune to succeed. His satisfaction with me daily increased, and I became insensibly initiated into the most secret state affairs, the weight of which I even assisted him to bear. In a few years this minister died, and the king, who was perhaps too partial to me, appointed me to his place, which I filled for two years, to the satisfaction of the king, and the contentment of the people. To mark, also, how much he was pleased with my conduct as minister, he first gave me the name of Atalmulc. And now envy soon began to be excited against me. Some of the chief nobles became my secret enemies, and plotted my ruin. The better to secure their ends, they instilled suspicions respecting me into the mind of the prince of Mossoul, who, being influenced by their unfavourable insinuations, asked the king, his father, to deprive me of power. The king at first refused, but yielded at last to the urgent requests of his son. I thereupon left Mossoul, and came to Damascus, where I had soon the honour of being presented to your majesty.

Lieutenant.

Archers.

I have now related to you, sire, the history of my life, and the cause of the deep grief in which I seem to be buried. The abduction of Zelica is ever present to my mind, and renders me insensible to every kind of pleasure. If I could learn that she was no more in life, I might, perhaps, lose the recollection of her, as I did before; but the uncertainty of her fate brings her ever back to my memory, and constantly feeds my grief.

CONTINUATION OF THE STORY OF KING BEDREDDIN-LOLO AND HIS VIZIR.

When the vizir Atalmulc had concluded the recital of his adventures, the king said to him:

"I am no longer surprised at your melancholy, for you have, indeed, good reason for it; but every one has not, like you, lost a princess, and you are wrong in thinking that there is not one man in the world who is perfectly satisfied with his condition."

For the purpose of proving to his grand vizir that there are men in this state, the king of Damascus said, one day, to his favourite Seyf-Elmulouk, "Go into the city, walk before the shop of the artisans, and bring me here immediately the man who seems the gayest of the gay." The favourite obeyed, and returned to Bedreddin in a few hours. "Well," said the monarch, "have you done what I commanded you?"

"Yes, sire," replied the favourite, "I passed in front of several shops, and saw all descriptions of workmen who sung while at their various occupations, and seemed quite contented with their lot. I noticed one among them, a young weaver, named Malek, who laughed with his neighbours till I thought he would have split his sides, and I stopped to have some chat with him. 'Friend,' I said, 'you appear to be very merry.' 'Yes,' he replied, 'it is my way: I don't encourage melancholy.' I asked his neighbours if it was true that he was of such a happy turn of mind, and they all assured me that he did nothing but laugh from morning till night. I then told him to follow me, and I have brought him to the palace. He is now at hand: does your majesty wish him to be introduced to your presence?"

"By all means," replied the king, "bring him here, for I wish to speak with him."

Seyf-Elmulouk immediately left the king's cabinet and returned in an instant, followed by a good-looking young man, whom the favourite presented to the king. The weaver threw himself down at the monarch's feet, who said to him, "Rise, Malek, and tell me truly if you are as happy as you seem to be: I am told you do nothing but laugh and sing the live-long day while at your work: you are thought to be the happiest man in my dominions, and there is reason to believe that such is really the case. Tell me whether or not this is a correct judgment, and if you are contented with your condition. This is a matter that I am concerned to know; and I desire that you will speak without disguise."

"Great king," replied the weaver, standing up, "may your majesty's days last to the end of the world, and be interwoven with a thousand delights, unmixed with the slightest misfortune. Excuse your slave from satisfying your curiosity. If it is forbidden to lie to kings, it must also be owned that there are truths that we dare not reveal. I can only say that a false idea is entertained respecting me: in spite of my laughter and songs, I am perhaps the most unfortunate of men. Be contented with this avowal, sire, and do not compel me to relate my misfortunes to you."

"I am resolved to have them," replied the king. "Why should you be afraid to tell them? Are they not creditable to you?"

"Of this your majesty must judge," replied the weaver. "I had resolved to keep them to myself, but since it is necessary I will proceed with my story."

The weaver then began as follows: —

THE STORY OF MALEK AND THE PRINCESS SCHIRINE.

I am the only son of a merchant of Surat, who left me at his death considerable wealth, most of which I squandered away in a very short time. I was nearly at the end of my property, when one day a stranger, who was going to the island of Serendib, happened to be dining with me. The conversation turned on voyages and travels: some who were present praised the advantages and the pleasure attending them, and others expatiated on their dangers. Among the guests there were a few persons who had travelled extensively, and who gave us detailed accounts of their experience in this adventurous kind of life. Between their accounts of the strange and curious scenes which they had witnessed and of the dangers which they had encountered, my mind was kept in suspense, as I conceived a strong desire to travel, and yet felt afraid of the accompanying risks. After listening to all that was related, I remarked:

"It is impossible to hear your striking account of the pleasure experienced by you in travelling over the world without feeling a strong wish to travel also; but the dangers to which a traveller is exposed deprive me of all inclination for visiting foreign countries. If it were possible," I added, smiling, "to go from one end of the earth to the other, without meeting with any bad accident by the way, I would leave Surat to-day."

These words excited universal laughter, but the stranger before alluded to remarked:

"O Malek! if you have a desire to travel, and if nothing prevents you but the fear of encountering robbers and other dangers, I will teach you whenever you have a mind, a method of travelling at your pleasure, and without peril, from one kingdom to another."

I thought he was joking, but after dinner he took me aside, and told me that he would pay me a visit the following morning and show me something extraordinary. He was true to his word, for the next day he came to see me, and said, "I mean to keep my promise, but some days must elapse before you can see the effect, for what I have to show you is a piece of workmanship which cannot be constructed in a day. Send therefore for a carpenter; let one of your slaves go for him, and let them both return with planks and other materials according to this list.” I immediately complied with his request. When the slave and the carpenter returned, the stranger directed the latter to construct a box in the form of a bird, six feet in length and four in breadth, the upper part open, so as to admit a man to sit in it. The artisan immediately set to work, and the stranger on his part was not idle, for he made or brought from his lodging several parts of the machine, such as wings, wheels, and springs. For several days the carpenter and he worked together, and afterwards the former was dismissed, while the stranger spent one day in putting together the machinery and finishing the work.

At length on the sixth day the box was finished, and covered with a Persian carpet. I observed that in this box there were several apertures, as well to admit air as to serve for look-outs. At the stranger’s desire I then ordered some of my slaves to carry it into the country, whither I followed with the stranger. When we arrived at the spot he said to me, “Send away your slaves and let no one be here but ourselves. I do not wish to have other persons present beside yourself to see what I am about to do.”

I ordered my slaves to return home, while I remained alone with the stranger. I was very anxious to know what he intended to do with this machine, and eagerly watched his movements. He removed the carpet, and stepped inside. In a moment the box began to ascend above the earth and soared into the sky with incredible swiftness, carrying him rapidly to a great distance in the clouds; before I had recovered from my astonishment he was down again on the ground. I cannot express to you my amazement at witnessing this miracle of art.

“You behold,” said the stranger to me, as he stepped out of the machine, “a very quiet carriage, and you must admit that in travelling in it there is no fear of being robbed on the journey. This is the method I spoke of, and I now make you a present of the machine to be employed by you if ever you should take a fancy to visit foreign countries. Do not suppose that there is any magic or black art in what you have seen: it is neither by cabalistic words nor by virtue of a talisman that the box rises above the earth: its motion is produced merely by an ingenious adaptation of machinery. I am perfectly conversant with the mechanical arts, and know how to construct other machines quite as surprising as this one."

I thanked the stranger for such a rare gift, and as a mark of my gratitude presented him with a purse of sequins. I then requested him to instruct me how to set the machine in motion. "It is very easily done," he said, and requested me to step into the box along with him: he then touched a spring and we immediately mounted up into the air; when there, he next showed me how to steer the machine. "By turning this screw," he said, "you will go to the right, and that other screw will take you to the left; by touching this spring you will ascend, and the same operation applied to another spring will cause you to descend." I wanted to make the experiment myself: I turned the screws and touched the springs, and the machine, obedient to my hand, went whither I pleased; I quickened its movements, or slackened them, just as I wished. After having taken several turns in the air, we directed our flight towards my house and alighted in the garden.

We reached home before my slaves, who were astonished beyond measure when they found we had returned. I shut up the box in my room, where I watched it more carefully than any heap of gold; and the stranger departed as well satisfied with me as I was with him. I continued to amuse myself in the society of my friends until I had eaten and drunk all my fortune — was compelled to borrow money, and eventually got over head and ears in debt. As soon as it was known in Surat that I was a ruined man, I lost all credit; no one would trust me, and my creditors being impatient to get their money, sent me summonses to pay them. Finding myself almost penniless, and consequently exposed to all kinds of insults and mortifications, I had recourse to my machine, and dragging it out one night from my room into the open air, I stepped into it, taking with me some provisions and the little money I had left. I touched the spring which caused the machine to ascend; and then moving one of the screws, I turned my back upon Surat and my creditors, without any fear of their sending the officers after me. I put on as much propelling power as possible all night, and it seemed to me that my flight was swifter than the winds. At daybreak I looked out of one of the apertures in the carpet to see whereabouts I was. I could see nothing but mountains, precipices, a barren country, and a frightful desert. Wherever I looked I could discover no signs of human habitations. During all that day and the following night I continued my aërial tour, and next day I found myself above a very thick wood, near which was a fine city situated in an extensive plain. I stopped here in order to take a view of the city, as well as of a magnificent palace which I saw at some distance from it at the extremity of the plain. I was extremely anxious to know where I was, and began to ponder in what way I could satisfy my curiosity, when I observed a peasant at work in a field. I descended in the wood, left my box there, and going up to the labourer, asked the name of the city. "Young man," he replied, "it is easy to see that you are a stranger, since you do not know that this is the renowned city of Gazna, where the just and valiant king Bahaman resides."

"And who lives," I asked, "in the palace at the end of the plain?"

"The king of Gazna," he replied, "has built it in order to keep his daughter, the princess Schirine, shut up there; for the princess's horoscope declares that she is threatened with being deceived by a man. Bahaman, for the purpose of evading this predicted danger, has erected this palace, which is built of marble, and surrounded by a deep ditch. The gate is formed of Indian steel, and while the king himself keeps the key, a numerous body of troops keep watch round it day and night to prevent any man from gaining entrance. The king goes once a week to see his daughter, and then returns to Gazna. Schirine's only companions in the palace are a governess and a few female slaves."

I thanked the peasant for his information, and directed my steps towards the city. When I was near to it, I heard the noise of an approaching multitude, and soon espied a vast crowd of horsemen magnificently attired, and mounted on very fine horses richly caparisoned. I perceived in the midst of this splendid cavalcade a tall individual, with a crown of gold on his head, and whose dress was covered with diamonds. I concluded that this person was the king of Gazna, going to visit the princess his daughter; and, in fact, I learned in the city that my conjecture was correct.

After having made the circuit of the city, and somewhat satisfied my curiosity, I bethought me of my machine; and although I had left it in a spot which seemed to promise security, I became uneasy on its account. I left Gazna and had no peace of mind until I reached the place where I had left the box, which I found quite safe. I then became tranquil, and partook with a good appetite of the food which I had brought with me, and as night was coming on, I resolved to pass it in the wood. I had reason to hope that a profound sleep would soon overpower me, for latterly my debts, as well as the general complication of my affairs, had naturally caused me much uneasiness and many sleepless nights: but my wishes were in vain, I could not sleep; for what the peasant had told me respecting the princess Schirine was constantly present to my mind. The more I thought of her and her peculiar situation, the more did I become possessed with the desire of effecting an interview; at length my inclinations became ungovernable, and I resolved to convey myself to the roof of the princess's palace and endeavour to obtain an entrance into her chamber. "Perhaps," thought I, "I may have the happiness to please her, perhaps to dispel the *ennui* she must suffer under: perhaps even I may be the mortal whose fortunate audacity was foretold by the astrologers." I was young and consequently thoughtless, and I was not deficient in courage, or such a scheme would not have occurred to me. However, having formed the rash resolution, I instantly proceeded to execute it. I raised myself up in the air and steered my machine in the direction of the palace: the night was as dark as I could wish. I passed without being seen over the heads of the soldiers, who were dispersed around the palace fosse, keeping watch, and descended on the roof near a spot where I saw a light; quitting my box I then slipped in at a window which had been left open to admit the cool night breeze. The room was furnished with the utmost magnificence; and I saw, reposing in slumber on a sofa, a young lady who, from the splendour and luxury with which she was surrounded, I could not doubt was the princess Schirine herself. I gazed for some time on her and found her to be of such dazzling beauty as exceeded the highest idea I had formed of her. I drew nearer in order to gaze upon her more intently: I could not, without an overwhelming emotion of rapture, contemplate such charms. I was quite overcome; and hardly knowing what I was about, knelt down beside her to kiss one of her beautiful hands. She awoke at that instant, and seeing a man near her, though in an attitude of respect which need have excited no alarm, uttered a cry which soon brought her governess, who slept in an adjoining room.

"Help, Mahpeiker!" exclaimed the princess: "here is a man! how was it possible for him to get into my room? You must surely have admitted him, and are an accomplice in his crime."

"I his accomplice!" exclaimed the governess: "the bare idea is an insult to me! I am as astonished as you can be, to see here this rash young man. Besides, if I had even been inclined to favour him in his bold attempt, how was it possible for me to deceive the vigilance of the guards who keep watch around the palace? You know also that there are twenty gates of burnished steel to be opened before any person can get in here; the seal royal is on every lock, and the king, your father, keeps the keys. I cannot imagine how this young man has been able to overcome all these obstacles."

All this time I remained kneeling, overwhelmed with confusion: the governess's long speech, however, gave me time to collect my thoughts, and it occurred to me that I would endeavour to persuade them that I was a being of a superior order.

"Beautiful princess," I said to Schirine, rising from my knee and making her a profound obeisance, "do not be surprised at seeing me here. I am not a lover who lavishes gold, and resorts to nefarious tricks to accomplish his wishes; far be from me any unworthy intention: I have not a wish at which your virtuous mind need be ashamed. Know then that I am the king of the genii: for a long time I have been aware of your singular position, and could not without pitying you see you condemned to pass your best days in a prison. I am come here to throw myself at your feet, and to ask you in marriage from Bahaman: as my bride it will be in my power to shield you from the danger alluded to by the prediction which has terrified your father. Deign, therefore, beautiful princess, to look kindly on my suit, and then let both your father and yourself be at rest respecting your future fate, which cannot fail to be both glorious and happy; for as soon as the news of your marriage is spread abroad in the world, all the kings of the earth will stand in awe of the father-in-law of so powerful a monarch, and every princess will envy your fate.”

Schirine and her governess looked at each other during this speech as if desirous of consulting together whether they should give credit to it. I confess I had reason to believe that they would give no heed to such a fable, but women are fond of the wonderful, and both Mahpeiker and her mistress believed me.

After passing the greater part of the night in delightful conversation with the princess of Gazna and her governess, I left her apartment before daybreak, promising to return next day. I lost no time in getting into my machine, and ascended to a great height that I might not be seen by the soldiers. I alighted in the wood, left the box there, and went into the city, where I purchased a stock of provisions for eight days, magnificent robes, a turban of Indian woof surrounded with a golden circlet, darting forth rays of light, and a rich girdle. At the same time I did not forget the costliest perfumes and essences. I spent all my money in these purchases without troubling my head about the future; for I thought that after such a pleasant adventure as had befallen me, I should never more want for any thing. I remained all day in the wood employed in dressing and perfuming myself with the utmost care and attention. When night came on, I entered the machine and set off for the roof of Schirine’s palace, where I introduced myself into her apartment as before, and spent another delightful evening in conversation with the princess and her attendant. I left the palace when night was waning, for fear lest my imposture should be discovered. I returned next day, and always conducted myself so cleverly that the princess and Mahpeiker had not the least idea that I was an impostor. True it is that the princess by degrees had acquired such a fondness for me that, on this account, she gave a more ready belief to what I said; for love is blind and, when such feelings exist in favour of a person, his sincerity is never doubted. I, too, had become deeply enamoured of the beautiful princess, and more than once regretted the imposture I was practising on her; but what was I to do? To discover it was certain destruction, and I could not summon up courage to undeceive her.

After some days had elapsed, the king of Gazna, attended by some of his officers, paid his weekly visit to his daughter’s palace, and finding the gates securely fastened, and his seal on the locks, said to the vizirs who accompanied him:

“Every thing goes on as well as possible: so long as the palace gates continue in this state I have little fear of the evil with which my daughter is threatened.”

He went up to her apartment alone and unannounced, and at seeing him she could not help betraying some emotion, which he noticed and required to know the reason of. His curiosity added to her perplexity; and, finding herself at last compelled to satisfy him, she related all that had taken place. Your majesty may conceive the astonishment of king Bahaman when he learned that, without his knowledge, a proposal of marriage had been made by the king of the genii. But he was not so easily duped as his daughter. Suspecting the truth, he exclaimed:

“Alas! my child, how credulous you are! O Heaven! I see that it is hopeless to endeavour to avoid the misfortunes destined for us; the horoscope of Schirine is fulfilled; some villain has deceived her!”

So saying, he left the princess’s room in a state of great agitation, and went over all the palace, from the top to the bottom, searching every where, and strictly examining all the attendants, but I need hardly say without success, for he found no trace of any stranger, nor the slightest circumstance to lead to the supposition that bribery had been resorted to, which increased his astonishment. “By what means,” he said, “can any person, however ingenious and daring, enter this fortress? To me it is inconceivable.”

He resolved to get at the truth of the matter somehow, but being desirous of setting to work prudently, and of speaking himself alone, in the first instance, and without witnesses, to the pretended genius, he sent back his vizirs and courtiers to Gazna. “Withdraw,” he said to them, “and I will remain alone at the palace this night with my daughter; and do you return here to-morrow.”

They all obeyed the king’s orders: they returned to the city, and Bahaman set about questioning the princess afresh until night drew on. He asked her if I had eaten with her. She replied that I had not, for that she had in vain offered me refreshments, and that she had not seen me either eat or drink any thing since I came to her. “Tell me the whole occurrence again,” he said, “and conceal nothing.” Schirine related to him her story all over again, and the king, who was attentive to her recital, weighed every circumstance of it carefully.

Night had now set in; Bahaman seated himself on a sofa, and ordered tapers to be lit and to be placed before him on the marble table. He then drew his sabre, to be employed, if necessary, in wiping out with my blood the insult he conceived to have been offered to his honour. He sat thus, expecting me every moment; and the idea of seeing me appear instantaneously probably agitated him not a little.

That night it happened that the atmosphere was highly charged with electric matter. A brilliant flash of lightning darted across the sky before him and made him start. Approaching the window at which Schirine had told him I should enter, and observing the heavens to be on fire with vivid flashes, his imagination was excited, although nothing was taking place but what was quite natural: he thought he saw in the clouds fanciful forms, among which was prominently conspicuous that of a venerable old man, such as the prophet is represented to us. As he gazed he forgot to reflect that these meteors arose merely from exhalations of an inflammable nature that exploded in the air, and came to regard them as brilliant lights announcing to the world the descent of the king of the genii. In such a state of mind the king was disposed to receive me as really bearing the character to which I pretended, and therefore when I appeared at the window, instead of exhibiting the fury he had contemplated, he was overcome with respect and fear; he dropped his sabre, and, falling at my feet, kissed them, and said, “O great king! what am I, and what have I done to deserve the honour of being your father-in-law?”

From these words I could guess what had passed between the king and the princess, and discovered that the worthy monarch was almost as easily imposed upon as his daughter. We sat down together on the sofa and conversed. I now formally renewed to him my suit for the hand of the princess. He believed all I told him, and feeling delighted at the prospect of being allied to me, again prostrated himself at my feet in sign of gratitude for my kindness. I raised him up, embraced him, and assured him of my protection, for which he could not find language sufficiently strong to thank me. It was arranged that the marriage should take place the following day. I stopped with

Schirine and her father for a few hours, but however pleased I might be with our interview, I did not forget how time was flying; I was apprehensive of daylight surprising us, and of my box being seen on the roof of the palace. I therefore made haste to leave in good time and to reseat myself in the machine.

The following day, on the return of the vizirs and great officers of state, a magnificent banquet was prepared at the palace, and immediately on my arrival in the evening the marriage was celebrated with great pomp and rejoicing.

A month had nearly passed during which I continued to be looked on and treated as the king of the genii, and I was leading a most agreeable life, when there arrived in the city of Gazna an ambassador from a neighbouring monarch to demand Schirine in marriage. On being admitted to an audience, and detailing the object of his embassy, Bahaman said to him:

“I am sorry that I am unable to give my daughter in marriage to the king, your master, for I have already bestowed her hand on the king of the genii.”

From such a reply the ambassador supposed that king Bahaman had lost his senses; he therefore took leave and returned to his master, who also at first thought Bahaman was mad, but on reconsidering the answer began to look on the refusal as a studied insult; he therefore raised troops, and forming a large army, entered the kingdom of Gazna in a hostile manner. This king, whose name was Cacem, was more powerful than Bahaman, who also was so slow in preparing to oppose his enemy that he could not prevent him from making great progress. Cacem defeated some troops which opposed him, and advancing rapidly towards the city of Gazna, found the army of Bahaman intrenched in the plain before the castle of the princess Schirine. The design of the irritated lover was to attack Bahaman in his intrenchments; but as his troops had need of rest, and he had only arrived that evening in the plain after a long forced march, he delayed his attack until the following morning.

The king of Gazna, having been informed of the numbers and valour of Cacem’s soldiers, began to tremble for the result. He assembled his privy council and asked for their advice, when one of its members spoke in the following terms:

“I am astonished that the king should appear to be at all uneasy on this occasion. What alarm can all the princes of the world, to say nothing of Cacem, occasion to the father-in-law of the king of the genii? Your majesty need only address yourself to him, and beg his assistance, and he will soon confound your enemies. It is his duty to do this, indeed, since it is on his account that Cacem has come to disturb the quiet of your majesty’s subjects.”

This speech did not fail to inspire king Bahaman with confidence.

“You are right,” he said to the courtier; “I shall at once go and beg of him to repulse my proud enemy, and I venture to hope that he will not reject my supplication.”

So saying, he went to visit his daughter, and said to her:

“Schirine, to-morrow at daybreak it is Cacem’s intention to attack us, and I am afraid he will carry our intrenchments. I wish to entreat of the king of the genii that he would undertake our defence. Let us unite our prayers that he would be favourable to us.”

“My lord and father,” replied the princess, “there will be no great difficulty in engaging the king on our side; he will soon disperse the enemy’s troops, and all the kings of the world will learn, at Cacem’s expense, to respect you.”

“But,” resumed king Bahaman, “night is coming on, and still the king of the genii does not appear; can he have forsaken us?”

“No, no, my father,” replied Schirine; “do not fear that he will fail us in time of need. He sees the army which is now besieging us, and is perhaps at this moment preparing to carry disorder and terror into all its ranks.”

And this, in fact, was what I was desirous of doing. I had watched during the day Cacem’s troops; I had observed their arrangement, and taken particular notice of the head-quarters of the king. I collected a quantity of stones and pebbles, both large and small, with which I filled my box, and at midnight I mounted aloft. Advancing towards the tents of Cacem, I easily discovered that in which the king was reposing. It was very lofty, richly adorned with gilding, and in the form of a dome, supported on twelve columns of painted wood, fixed deep in the ground; the spaces between the columns were intertwined with branches of different kinds of trees, and towards the summit there were two windows, one at the east, and another at the south side.

All the soldiers around the tent were asleep; and this circumstance permitted me to descend near one of the windows without being perceived. Through it I saw the king lying on a sofa, with his head supported on a satin cushion. Rising a little in my box, I hurled a large stone at Cacem; I struck him on the forehead, and wounded him dangerously; he uttered a cry, which soon awoke his guards and officers, who, running up to him, found him covered with blood, and almost insensible. Immediately loud cries were heard, and the alarm was communicated to the whole quarter, every one asking what had happened. A report was soon circulated that the king was wounded, and it was not known by whom the blow had been struck. Whilst the culprit was being searched for, I ascended high up among the clouds, and discharged from an immense height a shower of stones on the royal tent and all near it. The stones cut through the silk of the tent, and severely wounded the attendants; many of the soldiers who surrounded it, too, were very badly hit, and began to cry out that stones were being rained down on them from heaven. The news soon spread, and to confirm it I scattered my stony artillery in all directions. Terror took possession of the army; both officers and soldiers thinking that the Prophet was enraged with Cacem, and that his anger was too evidently declared by this miraculous interference. In short, Bahaman's enemies took to flight in a panic, and with such precipitation, that they abandoned their tents and baggage to their foes, crying out, "We are lost; Heaven is destroying us!"

When day dawned the king of Gazna was not a little surprised to find, that, instead of advancing to the attack, the enemy was in full retreat. Seeing this, however, he pursued the fugitives with his best troops, who made prodigious carnage, and took prisoner Cacem himself, whose wound prevented his making a sufficiently speedy flight.

"Why," asked Bahaman, when his enemy was brought before him, "why have you advanced into my dominions against all right and reason? What provocation have I given you for making war against me?"

"Bahaman," replied the vanquished monarch, "I thought you had refused me your daughter out of contempt for me, and I thirsted to be revenged upon you. I believed the story of the king of the genii being your son-in-law to be a mere pretext. I have now, however, good reason to be sure of its truth, for it is he who has wounded me and dispersed my army."

When the pursuit was ended Bahaman returned to Gazna with Cacem, who, however, died of his wound the same day. The spoil was divided, and it was so considerable, that even the common soldiers returned home laden with booty; and prayers were offered up in all the mosques thanking Heaven for having confounded the enemies of the state.

When night arrived, the king repaired to the princess's palace.

"My daughter," he said, "I have come to thank the king of the genii for a success I owe entirely to him. The courier whom I despatched to you has informed you of all that he has done for us, and I am so profoundly grateful for it, that I am dying with impatience to embrace his knees."

This satisfaction was soon granted him. I entered Schirine's room by the usual window, and there, as I indeed expected, I found him.

"O great king!" he exclaimed, "language is wanting to express to you what I feel on this occasion. Read yourself in my countenance the full measure of my gratitude."

I raised up Bahaman, and kissed his forehead.

"Prince," I said to him, "could you possibly think that I would refuse to help you in the embarrassing situation in which you were placed on my account? I have punished the proud Cacem who intended to make himself master of your kingdom, and to carry off Schirine, to place her among the slaves of his seraglio. No longer fear that any potentate on the earth will dare to make war against you; but if any one should be so bold, be assured that I will rain a fiery shower upon his troops, which will reduce them to ashes."

After having again assured the king of Gazna that I would take his kingdom under my protection, I related how the enemy's army had been terrified at seeing stones showered down upon their camp. Bahaman, for his part, repeated to me what Cacem had told him, and then took his departure, leaving Schirine and myself to ourselves. The princess was as sensible as her father of the important service I had rendered to the country, and manifested the greatest gratitude, caressing me a thousand times over.

Two days after the interment of Cacem, on whom, although a foe, a magnificent funeral was bestowed, the king of Gazna commanded that rejoicings should take place in the city for the defeat of the enemy's troops. I thought that a festival prepared in my honour ought to be signalized by some wonderful prodigy; and for this purpose I purchased in Gazna some combustible materials. With these I manufactured fireworks, which I let off at as great a height as possible, while the people in the streets were celebrating their victory with great rejoicings. My pyrotechnic display was very successful; and as soon as daylight appeared I left my machine, and went into the town to have the pleasure of hearing what people said about me. I was not deceived in my expectations. A thousand extravagant accounts were current among those who had been spectators of my display. Some said that the king of the genii had illuminated the whole heavens expressly to show his satisfaction with the festival; and others asserted that they had even seen him in the sky, surrounded by a blaze of meteors.

All these speeches amused me exceedingly. But alas! while I was indulging in these pleasurable sensations, my box — my dear machine — the instrument by which I had worked all my wonders — was burning to ashes in the wood. A spark, which I had not perceived, had set fire to it in my absence, and consumed it, and in this state I found it on my return. A father who enters his house, and finds his only son pierced with a thousand mortal wounds, and lying bathed in his blood, could not suffer more than I did on this occasion. I tore my hair and garments, while the wood resounded with my cries and lamentations; I even wonder that I did not lay violent hands upon myself in the paroxysm of my despair. However, by degrees I became calmed, and reflecting that there was no help for my disaster, I at the same time perceived that some resolution must be formed immediately. Only one course seemed open to me, and that was to seek my fortunes elsewhere.

Leaving, therefore, Bahaman and Schirine, doubtless in the deepest distress about me, I left the city of Gazna, and falling in with a caravan of Egyptian merchants, returning to their own country, I joined myself to them, and travelled to Grand Cairo, where I became a weaver in order to gain a subsistence. I lived there for some years and afterwards came to Damascus, where I have followed the same occupation. In appearance I am very well satisfied with my condition, but in reality I am not at all happy, I cannot forget my former fortunate condition, Schirine is ever present to my thoughts, and although I would wish to banish her from my recollection, and in truth make every effort to do so, yet the attempt, as painful as useless, merely causes me constant uneasiness.

I have now, may it please your majesty, performed what you required of me. I know very well that you do not approve the deceit I practised towards the king of Gazna and the princess Schirine, for I have perceived oftener than once, that my story was repugnant to your feelings and that your piety shuddered at my sacrilegious audacity. But be pleased to remember that you demanded a true account from me, and condescend to forgive the confession I have made of my adventures, in consideration of the necessity I was under of obeying you.

CONCLUSION.

The king of Damascus made a suitable reply, and dismissed the weaver, whose story afforded a new argument in favour of the grand vizir's opinion that there is no man who is perfectly happy: however, the king would not desist.

"Atalmulc," he said, "with the exception of yourself, there is no man approaches me but with a smiling countenance; it cannot be that not one of all these is perfectly happy; I shall ask my generals, courtiers, and all the officers of my household. Go, vizir, and summon them all into my presence in succession."

He had the patience to speak to them all individually, and they all made the same reply; namely, that they were not exempt from grief. One complained of his wife, another of his children; the poor accused their poverty as the cause of all their misfortunes, and the rich either did not enjoy good health, or laboured under some other source of affliction.

Bedreddin having questioned so many persons, not one of whom was contented with his lot, came at last to be of the same mind with Atalmulc, and was obliged to admit to his favourite vizir that perfect felicity is not to be looked for in the present life; that every lot and every station has its cares, its anxieties, and its misfortunes; and that we approach the condition of complete happiness only as we conscientiously discharge those duties which our position daily and hourly requires of us.

THE END

The Guide

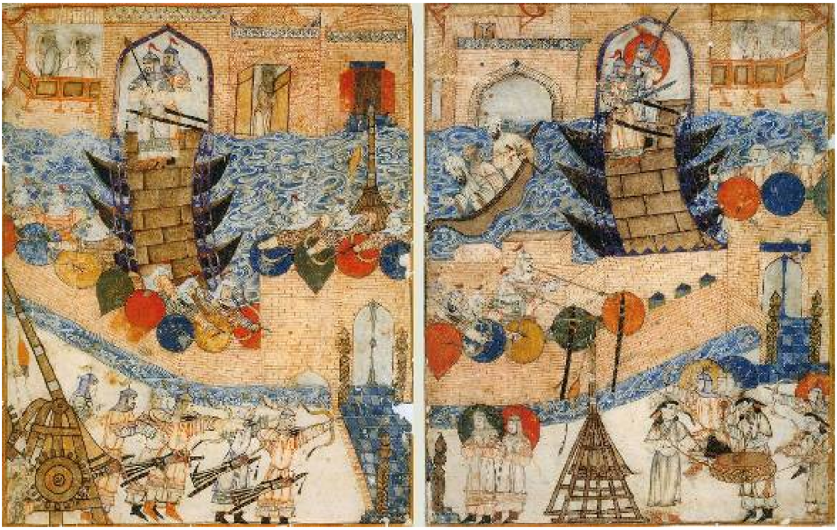

Medieval depiction of Baghdad, the setting of many of the tales in 'One Thousand and One Nights'

Baghdad today

ARABIAN SOCIETY IN THE MIDDLE AGES
by Edward William Lane

STUDIES FROM THE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS

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TO THE MEMORY OF

E. H. PALMER,

THE TRUE SUCCESSOR OF

EDWARD WILLIAM LANE,

IN HIS INSIGHT INTO EASTERN CHARACTER AND THOUGHT

AND HIS GENIUS FOR THE ARABIC LANGUAGE,

THIS BOOK IS SORROWFULLY

DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

When Mr. Lane translated the "Thousand and One Nights," he was not content with producing a mere rendering of the Arabic text: he saw that the manners and ideas there described required a commentary if they were to become intelligible to an unlearned reader. At the end of each chapter of his translation, therefore, he appended a series of explanatory notes, which often reached the proportions of elaborate essays on the main characteristics of Mohammadan life.

These notes have long been recognized by Orientalists as the most complete picture in existence of Arabian society — or rather of those Arab, Persian, or Greek, but still Mohammadan, conditions of life and boundaries of the mental horizon which are generally distinguished by the name of Arabian. Their position and arrangement, however, scattered as they were through three large volumes, and inserted in the order required not by their subjects but by the tales they illustrated, rendered them difficult to consult, and cumbrous, if not impossible, to read consecutively. It has often been suggested that a reprint of the principal notes, in a convenient form and in natural sequence, would be a welcome addition to the scholar's as well as to the general library. The publication of a new impression of the "Thousand and One Nights" presented an opportunity for discussing the project; and the result is the present volume.

My task, as editor, has been a simple one. I have rejected only those notes which have no value apart from the main work — glossarial notes, for instance, giving the English of the proper names occurring in the Arabian Nights; disquisitions on the probable date of the composition of the tales; and others inseparably connected with the stories themselves. The rest I have arranged in a series of chapters, interweaving the shorter notes in the longer, and giving as far as possible an air of unity to each division. Beyond such verbal alterations as were required by the separation of the notes from the text to which they referred, occasional changes in punctuation, and a slight alteration in the spelling of Oriental names in accordance with my great-uncle's latest method, I have not interfered with the form of the notes as they appeared in the edition of 1859. Such insignificant changes as I have made, I think I may state with confidence, would have been approved by the author. Beyond a few notes distinguished by square brackets, a new and very minute index (in which all Arabic words are explained), and a list of the authorities quoted, I have added nothing of my own.

It may be objected to the title of the book that a considerable part of the notes is composed of recollections of Mr. Lane's personal experiences in Cairo in the early part of the present century. The subject-matter, however, is really mediæval. The notes have all the same purpose: to explain the conditions of life and society as they were at the time when the "Thousand and One Nights" assumed their present collected form. Upon various grounds Mr. Lane placed this redaction or composition at about the end of the fifteenth century. Accordingly, a large proportion of these notes consist of extracts from the more famous Arabic historians and other authors of the later Middle Ages, such as Ibn El-Jowzee (who died in A.D. 1256), El-Ḳazweenee (1283), Ibn-el-Wardee (1348), Ibn-Khaldoon (1406), El-Maḳreezee (1441), Es-Suyooṭee (1505), who all knew Arabian society in precisely the state described in the "Thousand and One Nights." Most of these authorities were unpublished when the notes were written, and Mr. Lane's quotations are from manuscripts in his own possession. Some are still inedited; and though many have been printed at the Booláḳ Press and elsewhere, it is surprising how little they have been used by European authors.

To the records of these mediæval writers, Mr. Lane added the results of his personal experience; and in doing so he was guilty of no anachronism: for the Arabian Society in which a Saladin, a Beybars, a Barḳooḳ, and a Ḳait-Bey moved, and of which the native historians have preserved so full and graphic a record, survived almost unchanged to the time of Moḥammad ´Alee, when Mr. Lane spent many years of intimate acquaintance among the people of Cairo. The life that he saw was the same as that described by El-Maḳreezee and Es-Suyooṭee; and the purely Muslim society in which Mr. Lane preferred to move was in spirit, in custom, and in all essentials the same society that once hailed a Hároon er-Rasheed, a

Jaạfar el-Barmekee, and an Aboo-Nuwás, among its members. The continuity of Arabian social tradition was practically unbroken from almost the beginning of the Khalifate to the present century, at least in such a metropolis of Islám as Cairo, or as Damascus or Baghdad. European influence has been busy in demolishing it. Cairo has long been trying to become a bastard Paris instead of the picturesque city of El-Mo´izz and Ṣaláḥ-ed-Deen, and to forget its traditions of the palmy days of Islám and its memorials of the chivalrous heroes of crusading times. It would be impossible now to gather the minute details of a purely Mohammadan society which Mr. Lane found ready to his eye and hand; and it is therefore the more fortunate that the record of Arabian Society, as it was during the Khalifate and under the rule of the Memlooks in the Middle Ages, and as it continued to be in Egypt to the days of Moḥammad ´Alee, was faithfully preserved in the "Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians," and in the notes to the "Thousand and One Nights," which are here for the first time presented in a separate and consecutive form.

STANLEY LANE-POOLE.

December, 1882.

CHAPTER I.

RELIGION.

The confession of the Muslim’s faith is briefly made in these words, — “There is no deity but God: Moḥammad is God’s Apostle,” — which imply a belief and observance of everything that Moḥammad taught to be the word or will of God. In the opinion of those who are commonly called orthodox, and termed Sunnees, the Mohammadan code is founded upon the Ḳur-án, the Traditions of the Prophet, the concordance of his principal early disciples, and the decisions which have been framed from analogy or comparison. The Sunnees consist of four sects, Ḥanafees, Sháfiˊees, Málikees, and Hambelees, so called after the names of their respective founders. The other sects, who are called Shiyaˊees (an appellation particularly given to the Persian sect, but also used to designate generally all who are not Sunnees), are regarded nearly in the same light as those who do not profess El-Islám (the Mohammadan faith); that is, as destined to eternal punishment.

I. The Mohammadan faith embraces the following points: —

1. Belief in God, who is without beginning or end, the sole Creator and Lord of the universe, having absolute power, and knowledge, and glory, and perfection.

2. Belief in his Angels, who are impeccable beings, created of light; and Genii (Jinn), who are peccable, created of smokeless fire. The Devils, whose chief is Iblees, or Satan, are evil Genii.▯

3. Belief in his Prophets and Apostles;▯ the most distinguished of whom are Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Moḥammad. Jesus is held to be more excellent than any of those who preceded him, to have been born of a virgin, and to be the Messiah and the word of God and a Spirit proceeding from him, but not partaking of his essence and not to be called the Son of God. Moḥammad is held to be more excellent than all, the last and greatest of prophets and apostles, the most excellent of the creatures of God.

4. Belief in his Scriptures, which are his uncreated word, revealed to his prophets. Of these there now exist, but held to be greatly

corrupted, the Pentateuch of Moses, the Psalms of David, and the Gospels of Jesus Christ; and, in an uncorrupted and incorruptible state, the Ḳur-án, which is held to have abrogated, and to surpass in excellence, all preceding revelations.

5. Belief in the general Resurrection and Judgment, and in future rewards and punishments, chiefly of a corporeal nature: the punishments will be eternal to all but wicked Mohammadans; and none but Mohammadans will enter into a state of happiness.

6. Belief in God’s Predestination of all events, both good and evil.

The belief in fate and destiny (el-ḳaḍà wa-l-ḳadar)▯ exercises a most powerful influence upon the actions and character of the Muslims. Many hold that fate is in some respects absolute and unchangeable, in others admitting of alteration; and almost all of them *act* in many of the affairs of life as if this were their belief. In the former case, it is called “el-ḳaḍà el-moḥkam;” in the latter, “el-ḳaḍà el-mubram” (which term, without the explanation here given, might be regarded as exactly synonymous with the former). Hence the Prophet, it is said, prayed to be preserved from the latter, as knowing that it might be changed; and in allusion to this changeable fate, we are told, God says, “God will cancel what He pleaseth, and confirm;”▯ while, on the contrary, the fate which is termed “moḥkam” is appointed “destiny” decreed by God.▯

Many doctors have argued that destiny respects only the *final state* of a certain portion of men (believers and unbelievers), and that in general man is endowed with free will, which he should exercise according to the laws of God and his own conscience and judgment, praying to God for a blessing on his endeavours, or imploring the intercession of the Prophet or of any of the saints in his favour, and propitiating them by offering alms or sacrifices in their names, relying upon God for the result, which he may then, and then only, attribute to fate or destiny. They hold, therefore, that it is criminal to attempt resistance to the will when its dictates are conformable with the laws of God and our natural consciences and prudence, and so passively to await the fulfilment of God’s decrees. — The doctrine of the Ḳur-án and the traditions respecting the decrees of God, or fate and destiny, appears, however, to be that they are altogether absolute and unchangeable, written in the beginning of the creation on the

“Preserved Tablet” in heaven; that God hath predestined every event and action, evil as well as good, — at the same time commanding and approving good, and forbidding and hating evil; and that the “cancelling” mentioned in the preceding paragraph relates (as the context seems to show) to the abrogation of former scriptures or revelations, not of fate. But still it must be held that He hath not predestined the *will*; though He sometimes inclines it to good, and the Devil sometimes inclines it to evil. It is asked, then, If we have the power to will, but not the power to perform otherwise than as God hath predetermined, how can we be regarded as responsible beings? The answer to this is that our actions are judged good or evil according to our intentions, if we have faith: good actions or intentions, it should be added, only increase, and do not cause, our happiness if we are believers; and evil actions or intentions only increase our misery if we are unbelievers or irreligious: for the Muslim holds that he is to be admitted into heaven only by the mercy of God, on account of his faith, and to be rewarded in proportion to his good works.

The Prophet’s assertions on the subject of God’s decrees are considered of the highest importance as explanatory of the Ḳur-án.— “Whatever is in the universe,” said he, “is by the order of God.”— “God hath pre-ordained five things on his servants; the duration of life, their actions, their dwelling-places, their travels, and their portions.”— “There is not one among you whose sitting-place is not written by God, whether in the fire or in paradise.” — Some of the companions of the Prophet, on hearing the last-quoted saying, asked him, “O Prophet, since God hath appointed our places, may we confide in this, and abandon our religious and moral duties?” He answered, “No: because the happy will do good works, and those who are of the miserable will do bad works.”

The following of his sayings further illustrate this subject:— “When God hath ordered a creature to die in any particular place, He causeth his wants to direct him to that place.” — A companion asked, “O Prophet of God, inform me respecting charms, and the medicines which I swallow, and shields which I make use of for protection, whether they prevent any of the orders of God.” Moḥammad answered, “These also are by the order of God.” “There is a medicine for every pain: then, when the medicine reaches the pain it is cured by the order of God."▯ — When a Muslim, therefore, feels an inclination to make use of medicine for the cure of a disease, he should do so, in the hope of its being predestined that he shall be so cured.

On the predestination of diseases, I find the following curious quotation and remark in a manuscript work▯ by Es-Suyooṭee, who wrote in the fifteenth century, in my possession:— "El-Ḥaleemee says, 'Communicable or contagious diseases are six: small-pox, measles, itch or scab, foul breath or putridity, melancholy, and pestilential maladies; and diseases engendered are also six: leprosy, hectic, epilepsy, gout, elephantiasis, and phthisis.' But this does not contradict the saying of the Prophet, 'There is no transition of diseases by contagion or infection, nor any omen that brings evil:' for the transition here meant is one occasioned by the disease itself; whereas the effect is of God, who causes pestilence to spread when there is intercourse with the diseased." — A Bedawee asked the Prophet, "What is the condition of camels which stay in the deserts? verily you might say they are deer, in health and in cleanness of skin; then they mix with mangy camels, and they become mangy also." Moḥammad said, "What made the first camel mangy?"▯

Notwithstanding, however, the arguments which have been here adduced, and many others that might be added, declaring or implying the unchangeable nature of all God's decrees, I have found it to be the opinion of my own Muslim friends that God may be induced by supplication to change certain of his decrees, at least those regarding degrees of happiness or misery in this world and the next; and that such is the general opinion appears from a form of prayer which is repeated in the mosques on the eve of the middle (or fifteenth day) of the month of Shaạbán, when it is believed that such portions of God's decrees as constitute the destinies of all living creatures for the ensuing year are confirmed and fixed. In this prayer it is said, "O God, if Thou *hast recorded* me in thy abode, upon 'the Original of the Book' [the Preserved Tablet], miserable or unfortunate or scanted in my sustenance, *cancel*, O God, of thy goodness, my misery and misfortune and scanty allowance of sustenance, and confirm me in thy abode, upon the Original of the Book, as happy and provided for and directed to good,”▯ etc.

The Arabs in general constantly have recourse both to charms and medicines, not only for the cure but also for the prevention of diseases. They have, indeed, a strange passion for medicine, which shows that they do not consider fate as altogether unconditional. Nothing can exceed the earnestness with which they often press a European traveller for a dose; and the more violent the remedy, the better are they pleased. The following case will serve as an example: — Three donkey-drivers, conveying the luggage of two British travellers from Booláḳ to Cairo, opened a bottle which they observed in a basket, and finding it to contain (as they had suspected) brandy, emptied it down their throats: but he who had the last draught, on turning up the bottle, got the tail of a scorpion into his mouth; and, looking through the bottle to his great horror saw that it contained a number of these reptiles, with tarantulas, vipers, and beetles. Thinking that they had poisoned themselves, but not liking to rely upon fate, they persuaded a man to come to me for medicine. He introduced the subject by saying, “O Efendee, do an act of kindness: there are three men poisoned; in your mercy give them medicine, and save their lives:” and then he related the whole affair, without concealing the theft. I answered that they did not deserve medicine; but he urged that by giving it I should obtain an immense reward. “Yes,” said I; “‘he who saveth a soul alive shall be as if he had saved the lives of all mankind.’”▯ I said this to try the feeling of the applicant, who, expressing admiration of my knowledge, urged me to be quick, lest the men should die; thus showing himself to be no unconditional fatalist. I gave him three strong doses of tartar emetic; and he soon came back to thank me, saying that the medicine was most admirable, for the men had hardly swallowed it when they almost vomited their hearts and livers and everything else in their bodies.

From a distrust in fate some Muslims even shut themselves up during the prevalence of plague; but this practice is generally condemned. A Syrian friend of mine who did so nearly had his door broken open by his neighbours. Another of my friends, one of the most distinguished of the ´Ulamà, confessed to me his conviction of the lawfulness of quarantine and argued well in favour of it; but said that he dared not openly avow such an opinion. “The Apostle of God,” said he, “God favour and preserve him! hath commanded that we should not enter a city where there is pestilence, nor go out from it. Why did he say, ‘Enter it not’? — because, by so doing, we should expose ourselves to the disease. Why did he say, ‘Go not out from it?’ — because, by so doing, we should carry the disease to others. The Prophet was tenderly considerate of our welfare: but the present Muslims in general are like bulls [brute beasts]; and they hold the meaning of this command to be, Go not into a city where there is pestilence, because this would be rashness; and go not out from it, because this would be distrusting God’s power to save you from it.”

Many of the vulgar and ignorant among modern Muslims, believe that the unchangeable destinies of every man are written upon his head, in what are termed the sutures of the skull.

II. The principal Ritual and Moral Laws are on the following subjects, of which the first four are the most important.

1. Prayer (eṣ-ṣaláh) including preparatory purifications. There are partial or total washings to be performed on particular occasions which need not be described. The ablution which is more especially preparatory to prayer (and which is called wuḍoo) consists in washing the hands, mouth, nostrils, face, arms (as high as the elbow, the right first), each three times; and then the upper part of the head, the beard, ears, neck, and feet, each once. This is done with running water, or from a very large tank, or from a lake, or the sea.

Prayers are required to be performed five times in the course of every day; between daybreak and sunrise, between noon and the ´aṣr, (which latter period is about mid-time between noon and nightfall), between the ´aṣr and sunset, between sunset and the ´eshè (or the period when the darkness of night commences), and at, or after, the ´eshè. The commencement of each of these periods is announced by a chant (called adán), repeated by a crier (muëddin) from the mádineh, or minaret, of each mosque; and it is more meritorious to commence the prayer then than at a later time. On each of these occasions, the Muslim has to perform certain prayers held to be ordained by God, and others ordained by the Prophet; each kind consisting of two, three, or four “rek´ahs;” which term signifies the repetition of a set form of words, chiefly from the Ḳur-án, and ejaculations of “God is most Great!” etc., accompanied by particular postures; part of the words being repeated in an erect posture; part, sitting; and part, in other postures: an inclination of the head and body, followed by two prostrations, distinguishing each rek´ah. These prayers may in some cases be abridged, and in others entirely omitted. Other prayers must be performed on particular occasions.

On Friday, the Mohammadan Sabbath, there are congregational prayers, which are similar to those of others days, with additional prayers and exhortations by a minister, who is called Imám, or Khaṭeeb. The Selám (or Salutation) of Friday — a form of blessing on the Prophet and his family and companions, — is chanted by the muëddins from the mádinehs of the congregational mosques half-an-hour before noon. The worshippers begin to assemble in the mosque as soon as they hear it, and arranging themselves in rows parallel to, and facing, that side in which is the niche that marks the direction of Mekkeh, each performs by himself the prayers of two rek´ahs, which are supererogatory, and then sits in his place while a reader recites part or the whole of the 18th chapter of the Ḳur-án. At the call of noon, they all stand up, and each again performs separately the prayers of two rek´ahs ordained by the Prophet. A minister standing at the foot of the pulpit-stairs then proposes to bless the Prophet: and accordingly a second Selám is chanted by one or more other ministers stationed on an elevated platform. After this, the former minister, and the latter after him, repeat the call of noon (which the muëddins have before chanted from the mádinehs); and the former enjoins silence. The Khaṭeeb has already seated himself on the top step or platform of the pulpit. He now rises and recites a khuṭbeh of praise to God and exhortation to the congregation; and, if in a country or town acquired by arms from unbelievers, he holds a wooden sword, resting its point on the ground. Each of the congregation next offers up some private supplication; after which, the Khaṭeeb recites a second khuṭbeh, which is always the same or nearly so, in part resembling the first, but chiefly a prayer for the Prophet and his family, and for the general welfare of the Muslims. This finished, the Khaṭeeb descends from the pulpit, and, stationed before the niche, after a form of words differing slightly from the call to prayer has been chanted by the ministers on the elevated platform before mentioned, recites the divinely-ordained prayers of Friday (two rek´ahs) while the people do the same silently, keeping time with him exactly in the various postures. Thus are completed the Friday-prayers; but some of the congregation remain, and perform the ordinary divinely-ordained prayers of noon.

Other occasions for special prayer are the two grand annual festivals; the nights of Ramaḍán, the month of abstinence; the occasion of an eclipse of the sun or moon; for rain; previously to the commencement of battle; in pilgrimage; and at funerals.

2. Alms-giving. An alms, called “zekáh,” is required by law to be given annually, to the poor, of camels, oxen (bulls and cows) and buffaloes, sheep and goats, horses and mules and asses, and gold and silver (whether in money or in vessels, ornaments, etc.), provided the property be of a certain amount, as five camels, thirty oxen, forty sheep, five horses, two hundred dirhems, or twenty deenárs. The proportion is generally one-fortieth, which is to be paid in kind or in money or other equivalent.

3. Fasting (eṣ-Ṣiyám). The Muslim must abstain from eating and drinking, and from every indulgence of the senses, every day during the month of Ramaḍán, from the first appearance of daybreak until sunset, unless physically incapacitated. — On the first day of the following month, a festival, called the Minor Festival, is observed with public prayer and with general rejoicing, which continues three days.

4. Pilgrimage (el-Ḥájj). It is incumbent on the Muslim, if able, to perform at least once in his life the pilgrimage to Mekkeh and Mount ´Arafát. The principal ceremonies of the pilgrimage are completed on the 9th of the month of Dhu-l-Ḥijjeh: on the following day, which is the first of the Great Festival, on the return from ´Arafát to Mekkeh, the pilgrims who are able to do so perform a sacrifice, and every other Muslim who can is required to do the same: part of the meat of the victim he should eat, and the rest he should give to the poor. This festival is otherwise observed in a similar manner to the minor one, above mentioned; and lasts three or four days.

The less important ritual and moral laws may here be briefly mentioned. — One of these is circumcision, which is not absolutely obligatory. — The distinctions of clean and unclean meats are nearly the same in the Mohammadan as in the Mosaic code. Camel's flesh is an exception; being lawful to the Muslim. Swine's flesh, and blood, are especially condemned; and a particular mode of slaughtering animals for food is enjoined, accompanied by the repetition of the name of God. — Wine and all inebriating liquors are strictly forbidden. — So too is gaming. — Music is condemned; but most Muslims take great delight in hearing it. — Images and pictures representing living creatures are contrary to law. — Charity, probity in all transactions, veracity (excepting in a few cases),▯ and modesty, are virtues indispensable. — Cleanliness in person, and decent attire, are particularly required. Clothes of silk and ornaments of gold or silver are forbidden to men, but allowed to women: this precept, however, is often disregarded. — Utensils of gold and silver are also condemned: yet they are used by many Muslims. — The manners of Muslims in society are subject to particular rules with respect to salutations, etc.

Of the Civil Laws, the following notices will suffice. — A man may have four wives at the same time, and according to common opinion as many concubine slaves as he pleases. — He may divorce a wife twice, and each time take her back again; but if he divorce her a third time, or by a triple sentence, he cannot make her his wife again unless by her own consent and by a new contract, and after another man has consummated a marriage with her and divorced her. — The children by a wife and those by a concubine slave inherit equally, if the latter be acknowledged by the father. Sons inherit equally: and so do daughters; but the share of a daughter is half that of a son. One-eighth is the share of the wife or wives of the deceased if he have left issue, and one-fourth if he have left no issue. A husband inherits one-fourth of his wife's property if she have left issue, and one-half if she have left no issue. The debts and legacies of the deceased must first be paid. A man may leave one-third [but no more] of his property in any way he pleases. — When a concubine slave has borne a child to her master, she becomes entitled to freedom on his death. — There are particular laws relating to commerce. Usury and monopoly are especially condemned.

Of the Criminal Laws, a few may be briefly mentioned. Murder is punishable by death, or by a fine to be paid to the family of the deceased, if they prefer it. — Theft, if the property stolen amount to a quarter of a deenár, is to be punished by cutting off the right hand, except under certain circumstances. — Adultery, if attested by four eye-witnesses, is punishable by death (stoning): fornication, by a hundred stripes, and banishment for a year. — Drunkenness is punished with eighty stripes. — Apostasy, persevered in, by death.

The Ḳur-án ordains that murder shall be punished with death; or, rather, that the free shall die for the free, the slave for the slave, and the woman for the woman;[] or that the perpetrator of the crime shall pay, to the heirs of the person whom he has killed, if they will allow it, a fine, which is to be divided according to the laws of inheritance already explained. It also ordains that unintentional homicide shall be expiated by freeing a believer from slavery, and paying a fine to the family of the person killed, unless they remit it. But these laws are amplified and explained by the same book and by the Imáms. A fine is not to be accepted for murder unless the crime has been attended by some palliating circumstance. This fine, the price of blood, is a hundred camels; or a thousand deenárs (about £500) from him who possesses gold; or, from him who possesses silver, twelve thousand dirhems (about £300). This is for killing a free man; for a woman, half that sum; for a slave, his or her value, but this must fall short of the price of blood for the free. A person unable to free a believer must fast two months as in Ramaḍán. The accomplices of a murderer are liable to the punishment of death. By the Sunneh (or Traditions of the Prophet) also, a man is obnoxious to capital punishment for the murder of a woman; and by the Ḥanafee law, for the murder of another man's slave. But he is exempted from this punishment who kills his own child or other descendant, or his own slave, or his son's slave, or a slave of whom he is part-owner; so also are his accomplices: and according to Esh-Sháfi´ee, a Muslim, though a slave, is not to be put to death for killing an infidel, though the latter be free. A man who kills another in self-defence, or to defend his property from a robber, is exempt from all punishment. The price of blood is a debt incumbent on the family, tribe, or association, of which the homicide is a member. It is also incumbent on the inhabitants of an enclosed quarter, or the proprietor or proprietors of a field, in which the body of a person killed by an unknown hand is found; unless the person has been found killed in his own house.

Retaliation for intentional wounds and mutilations is allowed by the Mohammadan law, like as for murder, “an eye for an eye,” etc.; but a fine may be accepted instead, which the law allows also for unintentional injuries. The fine for a member that is single (as the nose) is the whole price of blood, as for homicide; for a member of which there are two, and not more (as a hand), half the price of blood; for one of which there are ten (a finger or toe), a tenth of the price of blood: but the fine of a man for maiming or wounding a woman is half of that for the same injury to a man; and that of a free person for injuring a slave varies according to the value of the slave. The fine for depriving a man of any of his five senses, or dangerously wounding him, or grievously disfiguring him for life, is the whole price of blood.

The Mohammadan law ordains that a person who is adult and of sound mind, if he steals an article of the value of a quarter of a deenár (or piece of gold) from a place to which he has not ordinary or free access, shall lose his right hand; but this punishment is not to be inflicted for stealing a free child, or anything which, in the eye of the law, is of no pecuniary value, as wine, or a musical instrument; and there are some other cases in which the thief is not to be so punished. For the second offence, the left foot is to be cut off; and for the third and subsequent offences, according to the Ḥanafee code, the culprit is to be punished by a long imprisonment; or, by the Sháfi´ee law, for the third offence, he is to lose his left hand; for the fourth, his right foot; and for further offences, he is to be flogged or beaten. The punishment is the same for a woman as for a man. This law induced a freethinking Muslim to ask, “If the hand is worth five hundred deenárs [this being the fine for depriving a man of that member], why should it be cut off for a quarter of a deenár?” He was answered, “An honest hand is of great value; but not so is the hand that hath stolen.” Amputation for theft, however, is now seldom practised: beating, or some other punishment, is usually inflicted in its stead for the first, second, and third offence; and frequently, death for the fourth.

The Muslims observe two grand ´Eeds or Festivals in every year. The first of these immediately follows Ramaḍán, the month of abstinence, and lasts three days: it is called the Minor Festival. The other, which is called the Great Festival, commences on the tenth of Dhu-l-Ḥijjeh, the day when the pilgrims, halting in the Valley of Minè, on their return from Mount ´Arafát to Mekkeh, perform their sacrifice: the observance of this festival also continues three days, or four.

Early in the first morning, on each of these festivals, the Muslim is required to perform a lustration of his whole person, as on the mornings of Friday; and on the first morning of the Minor Festival he should break his fast with a few dates or some other light food, but on the Great Festival he abstains from food until he has acquitted himself of the religious duties now to be mentioned. Soon after sunrise on the first day of each festival, the men, dressed in new or in their best clothes, repair to the mosque or to a particular place appointed for the performance of the prayers of the ´Eed. On going thither, they should repeat frequently "God is most Great!" — on the Minor Festival inaudibly, on the other aloud. The congregation having assembled repeat the prayers of two rek´ahs; after which the Khaṭeeb recites a khuṭbeh, *i.e.* an exhortation and a prayer. On each of these festivals, in the mosque or place of prayer and in the street and at each other's houses, friends congratulate and embrace one another, generally paying visits for this purpose; and the great receive visits from their dependants. The young on these occasions kiss the right hand of the aged, and servants or dependants do the same to their masters or superiors, unless the latter be of high rank, in which case they kiss the end of the hanging sleeves or the skirt of the outer garment. Most of the shops are closed, excepting those at which eatables and sweet drinks are sold; but the streets are filled with people in their holiday-clothes.

On the Minor Festival, which, as it terminates an arduous fast, is celebrated with more rejoicing than the other,▯ servants and other dependants receive presents of new articles of clothing from their masters or patrons; and the servant receives presents of small sums of money from his master's friends, whom, if they do not visit his master, he goes to congratulate; as well as from any former master, to whom he often takes a plate-full of kaḥks. These are sweet cakes or biscuits of an annular form, composed of flour and butter, with a little ´ajameeyeh (a thick paste consisting of butter, honey, a little flour, and some spices) inside. They are also often sent as presents on this occasion by other people. Another custom required of the faithful on this festival is the giving of alms.

On the Great Festival, after the prayers of the congregation, every one who can afford it performs, with his own hand or by that of a deputy, a sacrifice of a ram, he-goat, cow or buffalo, or she-camel; part of the meat of which he eats, and part he gives to the poor, or to his friends or dependants. The ram or goat should be at least one year old; the cow or buffalo, two years; and the camel, five years; and none should have any considerable mutilation or infirmity. A cow or buffalo, or a camel, is a sufficient sacrifice for seven persons. The clothes which were put on new at the former festival are generally worn on this occasion; and the presents which are given to servants and others are usually somewhat less.

On each of the two festivals it is also customary, especially with the women, to visit the tombs of relations. The party generally take with them a palm-branch, and place it, broken in several pieces, or merely its leaves, upon the tomb or monument; or some, instead of this, place sweet basil or other flowers. They also usually provide themselves with sweet cakes, bread, dates, or some other kind of food, to distribute to the poor. But their first duty on arriving at the tomb is to recite the Fátiḥah (the opening chapter of the Ḳur-án), or to employ a person to recite previously a longer chapter, generally the thirty-sixth (Soorat Yá-Seen), or even the whole of the book: sometimes the visitors recite the Fátiḥah, and, after having hired a person to perform a longer recitation, go away before he commences. The women often stay all the days of the festivals in the cemeteries, either in tents or in houses of their own erected there for their reception on these and other occasions. The tent of each party surrounds the tomb which is the object of their visit. In the outskirts of the cemeteries, swings and whirligigs are set up, and story-tellers, jugglers, and dancers amuse the populace.

CHAPTER II.

DEMONOLOGY.

The Muslims, in general, believe in three different species of created intelligent beings: Angels, who are created of light; Genii, who are created of fire; and Men, created of earth. The first species are called Meláïkeh (sing. Melek); the second, Jinn (sing. Jinnee); the third, Ins (sing. Insee). Some hold that the Devils (Sheyṭáns) are of a species distinct from Angels and Jinn; but the more prevailing opinion, and that which rests on the highest authority, is, that they are rebellious Jinn.

"It is believed," says El-Ḳazweenee, "that the Angels are of a simple substance, endowed with life and speech and reason, and that the difference between them and the Jinn and Sheyṭáns is a difference of species. Know," he adds, "that the Angels are sanctified from carnal desire and the disturbance of anger: they disobey not God in what He hath commanded them, but do what they are commanded. Their food is the celebrating of his glory; their drink, the proclaiming of his holiness; their conversation, the commemoration of God, whose name be exalted; their pleasure, his worship; they are created in different forms, and with different powers." Some are described as having the forms of brutes. Four of them are Archangels; Jebraeel or Jibreel (Gabriel), the angel of revelations; Meekaeel or Meekál (Michael), the patron of the Israelites; ´Azraeel, the angel of death; and Isráfeel, the angel of the trumpet, which he is to sound twice, or as some say thrice, at the end of the world — one blast will kill all living creatures (himself included), another, forty years after, (he being raised again for this purpose, with Jebraeel and Meekaeel), will raise the dead. These Archangels are also called Apostolic Angels. They are inferior in dignity to human prophets and apostles, though superior to the rest of the human race: the angelic nature is held to be inferior to the human nature, because all the Angels were commanded to prostrate themselves before Adam. Every believer is attended by two guardian and recording angels, one of whom writes his good actions, the other, his evil actions: or, according to some, the number of these angels is five, or sixty, or a hundred and sixty. There are also two Angels, called Munkir (vulg. Nákir) and Nekeer, who examine all the dead and torture the wicked in their graves.

The species of Jinn is said to have been created some thousands of years before Adam. According to a tradition from the Prophet, this species consists of five orders or classes; namely, Jánn (who are the least powerful of all), Jinn, Sheyṭáns (or Devils), ´Efreets, and Márids. The last, it is added, are the most powerful; and the Jánn are transformed Jinn, like as certain apes and swine were transformed men.▯ — It must, however, be remarked here that the terms Jinn and Jánn are generally used indiscriminately as names of the whole species (including the other orders above mentioned), whether good or bad; and that the former term is the more common; also, that Sheyṭán is commonly used to signify any evil Jinnee. An ´Efreet is a powerful evil Jinnee: a Márid, an evil Jinnee of the most powerful class. The Jinn (but, generally speaking, evil ones) are called by the Persians Deevs; the most powerful evil Jinn, Nárahs (which signifies "males," though they are said to be males and females); the good Jinn, Perees, though this term is commonly applied to females.

In a tradition from the Prophet, it is said, "The Jánn were created of a smokeless fire."▯ El-Jánn is sometimes used as a name of Iblees, as in the following verse of the Ḳur-án:— "And the Jánn [the father of the Jinn; *i.e.* Iblees] we had created before [*i.e.* before the creation of Adam] of the fire of the samoom [*i.e.* of fire without smoke]."▯ Jánn also signifies "a serpent," as in other passages of the Ḳur-án;▯ and is used in the same book as synonymous with Jinn.▯ In the last sense it is generally believed to be used in the tradition quoted in the commencement of this paragraph. There are several apparently contradictory traditions from the Prophet which are reconciled by what has been above stated: in one, it is said that Iblees was the father of all the Jánn and Sheyṭáns,▯ Jánn being here synonymous with Jinn; in another, that Jánn was the father of all the Jinn,▯ Jánn being here used as a name of Iblees.

"It is held," says El-Ḳazweenee, a writer of the thirteenth century, "that the Jinn are aërial animals, with transparent bodies, which can assume various forms. People differ in opinion respecting these beings: some consider the Jinn and Sheyṭáns as unruly men, but these persons are of the Moạtezileh [a sect of Muslim freethinkers]; and some hold that God, whose name be exalted, created the Angels of the light of fire, and the Jinn of its flame [but this is at variance with the general opinion], and the Sheyṭáns of its smoke [which is also at variance with the common opinion], and that [all] these kinds of beings are [usually] invisible▯ to men, but that they assume what forms they please, and when their form becomes condensed they are visible.” — This last remark illustrates several descriptions of Jinnees in the “Thousand and One Nights,” where the form of the monster is at first undefined, or like an enormous pillar, and then gradually assumes a human shape and less gigantic size. It is said that God created the Jánn (or Jinn) two thousand years before Adam (or, according to some writers, much earlier), and that there are believers and infidels, and every sect, among them, as among men.▯ Some say that a prophet, named Yoosuf, was sent to the Jinn; others, that they had only preachers or admonishers; others, again, that seventy apostles were sent, before Moḥammad, to Jinn and men conjointly.▯ It is commonly believed that the preadamite Jinn were governed by forty (or, according to some, seventy-two) kings, to each of whom the Arab writers give the name of Suleymán (Solomon); and that they derive their appellation from the last of these, who was called Jánn Ibn Jánn, and who, some say, built the Pyramids of Egypt. The following account of the preadamite Jinn is given by El-Ḳazweenee.— “It is related in histories that a race of Jinn in ancient times, before the creation of Adam, inhabited the earth and covered it, the land and the sea, and the plains and the mountains; and the favours of God were multiplied upon them, and they had government and prophecy and religion and law. But they transgressed and offended, and opposed their prophets, and made wickedness to abound in the earth; whereupon God, whose name be exalted, sent against them an army of Angels, who took possession of the earth, and drove away the Jinn to the regions of the islands, and made many of them prisoners; and of those who were made prisoners was ´Azázeel [afterwards called Iblees, from his *despair*]; and a slaughter was made among them. At that time, ´Azázeel was young: he grew up among the Angels [and probably for that reason was called one of them], and became learned in their knowledge, and assumed the government of them; and his days were prolonged until he became their chief; and thus it continued for a long time, until the affair between him and Adam happened, as God, whose name be exalted, hath said, ‘When we said unto the Angels, Worship ye Adam, and [all] worshipped except Iblees, [who] was [one] of the Jinn.’”

“Iblees,” we are told by another author, “was sent as a governor upon the earth, and judged among the Jinn a thousand years, after which he ascended into heaven, and remained employed in worship until the creation of Adam.” The name of Iblees was originally, according to some, ´Azázeel (as before mentioned); and according to others, El-Ḥárith: his patronymic is Aboo-Murrah, or Abu-l-Ghimr. It is disputed whether he was of the Angels or of the Jinn. There are three opinions on this point. — 1. That he was of the Angels, from a tradition from Ibn-´Abbás. — 2. That he was of the Sheyṭáns (or evil Jinn); as it is said in the Ḳur-án, “except Iblees, [who] was [one] of the Jinn:” this was the opinion of El-Ḥasan El-Baṣree, and is that commonly held. — 3. That he was neither of the Angels nor of the Jinn; but created alone, of fire. Ibn-´Abbás founds his opinion on the same text from which El-Ḥasan El-Baṣree derives his: “When we said unto the Angels, Worship ye Adam, and [all] worshipped except Iblees, [who] was [one] of the Jinn” (before quoted): which he explains by saying, that the most noble and honourable among the Angels are called “the Jinn,” because they are *veiled* from the eyes of the other Angels on account of their superiority; and that Iblees was one of these Jinn. He adds that he had the government of the lowest heaven and of the earth, and was called the Ṭáoos (literally, Peacock) of the Angels; and that there was not a spot in the lowest heaven but he had prostrated himself upon it: but when the Jinn rebelled upon the earth, God sent a troop of Angels who drove them to the islands and mountains; and Iblees being elated with pride, and refusing to prostrate himself before Adam, God transformed him into a Sheyṭán. But this reasoning is opposed by other verses, in which Iblees is represented as saying, “Thou hast created *me* of *fire*, and hast created *him* [Adam] of earth.” It is therefore argued, “If he were created originally of fire, how was he created of light? for the Angels were [all] created of light.” The former verse may be explained by the tradition that Iblees, having been taken captive, was exalted among the Angels; or perhaps there is an ellipsis after the word “Angels;” for it might be inferred that the command given to the Angels was also (and *à fortiori*) to be obeyed by the Jinn.

According to a tradition, Iblees and all the Sheyṭáns are distinguished from the other Jinn by a longer existence. “The Sheyṭáns,” it is added, “are the children of Iblees, and die not but with him, whereas the [other] Jinn die before him;” though they may live many centuries. But this is not altogether accordant with the popular belief: Iblees and many other evil Jinn are to survive mankind, but they are to die before the general resurrection, as also even the Angels, the last of whom will be the Angel of Death, ´Azraeel. Yet not *all* the evil Jinn are to live thus long: many of them are killed by shooting stars, hurled at them from heaven; wherefore, the Arabs, when they see a shooting star (shiháb), often exclaim, “May God transfix the enemy of the faith!” Many also are killed by other Jinn, and some even by men. The fire of which the Jinnee is created circulates in his veins, in place of blood: therefore, when he receives a mortal wound, this fire, issuing from his veins, generally consumes him to ashes.

The Jinn, it has been already shown, are peccable. They eat and drink, and propagate their species, sometimes in conjunction with human beings; in which latter case, the offspring partakes of the nature of both parents. In all these respects they differ from the Angels. Among the evil Jinn are distinguished the five sons of their chief, Iblees; namely, Teer, who brings about calamities, losses and injuries; El-Aạwar, who encourages debauchery; Sóṭ, who suggests lies; Dásim, who causes hatred between man and wife; and Zelemboor, who presides over places of traffic.

The most common forms and habitations or places of resort of the Jinn must now be described.

The following traditions from the Prophet are the most to the purpose that I have seen. — The Jinn are of various shapes; having the forms of serpents, scorpions, lions, wolves, jackals, etc. The Jinn are of three kinds: one on the land, one in the sea, and one in the air. The Jinn consist of forty troops; each troop consisting of six hundred thousand. — The Jinn are of three kinds: one have wings and fly; another are snakes and dogs; and the third move about from place to place like men.[] Domestic snakes are asserted to be Jinn on the same authority.[a]

The Prophet ordered his followers to kill serpents and scorpions if they intruded at prayers; but on other occasions he seems to have required first to admonish them to depart, and then, if they remained, to kill them. The Doctors, however, differ in opinion whether *all* kinds of snakes or serpents should be admonished first, or whether *any* should; for the Prophet, say they, took a covenant of the Jinn [probably after the above-mentioned command], that they should not enter the houses of the faithful: therefore, it is argued, if they enter, they break their covenant, and it becomes lawful to kill them without previous warning. Yet it is related that ´Aïsheh, the Prophet's wife, having killed a serpent in her chamber, was alarmed by a dream, and fearing that it might have been a Muslim Jinnee, as it did not enter her chamber when she was undressed, gave in alms, as an expiation, twelve thousand dirhems (about £300), the price of the blood of a Muslim.[]

The Jinn were said to appear to mankind most commonly in the shapes of serpents, dogs, cats, or human beings. In the last case, they are sometimes of the stature of men, and sometimes of a size enormously gigantic. If good, they are generally resplendently handsome: if evil, horribly hideous. They become invisible at pleasure, by a rapid extension or rarefaction of the particles which compose them, or suddenly disappear in the earth or air or through a solid wall. Many Muslims in the present day profess to have seen and held intercourse with them: — witness the following anecdote, which was related to me by a Persian with whom I was acquainted in Cairo, named Abu-l-Ḳásim, a native of Jeelán, then superintendent of Moḥammad ´Alee's Printing-office at Booláḳ.

One of this person's countrymen, whom he asserted to be a man of indubitable veracity, was sitting on the roof of a house which he had hired, overlooking the Ganges, and was passing the closing hour of the day, according to his usual custom, in smoking his Persian pipe and feasting his eyes by gazing at the beautiful forms of Indian maidens bathing in the river, when he beheld among them one so lovely that his heart was overpowered with desire to have her for his wife. At nightfall she came to him, and told him that she had observed his emotion and would consent to become his wife; but on the condition that he should never admit another female to take or share her place, and that she should only be with him in the night time. They took the marriage-vow to each other, with none for their witness but God; and great was his happiness, till, one evening, he saw again, among a group of girls in the river, another who excited in him still more powerful emotions. To his surprise, this very form stood before him at the approach of night. He withstood the temptation, mindful of his marriage-vow; she used every allurement, but he was resolute. His fair visitor then told him that she was his wife; that she was a jinneeyeh; and that she would always thenceforward visit him in the form of any females whom he might chance to desire.

The Zóba´ah, which is a whirlwind that raises the sand or dust in the form of a pillar of prodigious height, often seen sweeping across the deserts and fields, is believed to be caused by the flight of an evil Jinnee. To defend themselves from a Jinnee thus “riding in the whirlwind,” the Arabs often exclaim, “Iron! Iron!” (Ḥadeed! Ḥadeed!), or, “Iron! thou unlucky!” (Ḥadeed! yá mashoom!) as the Jinn are supposed to have a great dread of that metal: or they exclaim, “God is most great!” (Alláhu akbar!).▯ A similar superstition prevails with respect to the water-spout at sea, as may be seen in the adventures of King Shahriyár in the introduction to the “Thousand and One Nights.”

It is believed that the chief abode of the Jinn is in the Mountains of Ḳáf, which are supposed to encompass the whole of our earth. But they are also believed to pervade the solid body of our earth, and the firmament; and to choose as their principal places of resort or of occasional abode, baths, wells, ovens, ruined houses, market-places, the junctures of roads, the sea, and rivers. The Arabs, therefore, when they pour water on the ground, or enter a bath, or let down a bucket into a well, and on various other occasions, say “Permission!” or “Permission, ye blessed!” (Destoor! or Destoor yá mubárakeen! ▯)The evil spirits (or evil Jinn), it is said, had liberty to enter any of the seven heavens till the birth of Jesus, when they were excluded from three of them: on the birth of Moḥammad they were forbidden the other four.[] They continue, however, to ascend to the confines of the lowest heaven, and there listening to the conversation of the Angels respecting things decreed by God, obtain knowledge of futurity, which they sometimes impart to men, who, by means of talismans, or certain invocations, make them to serve the purposes of magical performances. What the Prophet said of Iblees, in the following tradition, applies also to the evil Jinn over whom he presides: — His chief abode [among men] is the bath; his chief places of resort are the markets, and the junctures of roads; his food is whatever is killed without the name of God being pronounced over it; his drink, whatever is intoxicating; his muëddin, the mizmár (a musical pipe, *i.e.* any musical instrument); his Ḳur-án, poetry; his written character, the marks made in geomancy;[] his speech, falsehood; his snares, women.[]

That particular Jinn presided over particular places was an opinion of the early Arabs. It is said in the Ḳur-án, "And there were certain men who sought refuge with certain of the Jinn."[] In the Commentary of the Jeláleyn, I find the following remark on these words:— "When they halted on their journey in a place of fear, each man said, 'I seek refuge with the lord of this place, from the mischief of his foolish ones!'" In illustration of this, I may insert the following tradition, translated from El-Ḳazweenee:— "It is related by a certain narrator of traditions, that he descended into a valley with his sheep, and a wolf carried off a ewe from among them; and he arose, and raised his voice, and cried, 'O inhabitant of the valley!' whereupon he heard a voice saying, 'O wolf, restore to him his sheep!' and the wolf came with the ewe, and left her and departed." The same opinion is held by the modern Arabs, though probably they do not use such an invocation. A similar superstition, a relic of ancient Egyptian credulity, still prevails among the people of Cairo. It is believed that each quarter of this city has its peculiar guardian-genius, or Agathodaemon, which has the form of a serpent.[]

It has already been mentioned that some of the Jinn are Muslims, and others infidels. The good Jinn acquit themselves of the imperative duties of religion, namely, prayers, alms-giving, fasting during the month of Ramaḍán, and pilgrimage to Mekkeh and Mount ´Arafát; but in the performance of these duties they are generally invisible to human beings.▯

It has been stated, that, by means of talismans, or certain invocations, men are said to obtain the services of Jinn; and the manner in which the latter are enabled to assist magicians, by imparting to them the knowledge of future events, has been explained above. No man ever obtained such absolute power over the Jinn as Suleymán Ibn Dáood (Solomon, the son of David). This he did by virtue of a most wonderful talisman, which is said to have come down to him from heaven. It was a seal-ring, upon which was engraved “the most great name” of God, and was partly composed of brass and partly of iron. With the brass he stamped his written commands to the good Jinn; with the iron (for the reason before mentioned,), those to the evil Jinn or Devils. Over both orders he had unlimited power; as well as over the birds and the winds,▯ and, as is generally said, over the wild beasts. His Wezeer, Áṣaf the son of Barkhiyà, is also said to have been acquainted with “the most great name,” by uttering which, the greatest miracles may be performed, — even that of raising the dead. By virtue of this name engraved on his ring, Suleymán compelled the Jinn to assist in building the Temple of Jerusalem, and in various other works. Many of the evil Jinn he converted to the true faith, and many others of this class, who remained obstinate in infidelity, he confined in prisons. He is said to have been monarch of the whole earth. Hence, perhaps, the name of Suleymán is given to the universal monarchs of the preadamite Jinn; unless the story of his own universal dominion originated from confounding him with those kings.

The injuries related to have been inflicted upon human beings by evil Jinn are of various kinds. Jinn are said to have often carried off beautiful women, whom they have forcibly kept as their wives or concubines. Malicious or disturbed Jinn are asserted often to station themselves on the roofs or at the windows of houses, and to throw down bricks and stones on persons passing by. When they take possession of an uninhabited house, they seldom fail to persecute terribly any person who goes to reside in it. They are also very apt to pilfer provisions, etc. Many learned and devout persons, to secure their property from such depredations, repeat the words “In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful!” on locking the doors of their houses, rooms, or closets, and on covering the bread-basket, or anything containing food. During the month of Ramaḍán, the evil Jinn are believed to be confined in prison; and therefore, on the last night of that month, with the same view, women sometimes repeat the words above mentioned, and sprinkle salt upon the floors of the apartments of their houses.

To complete this sketch of Arabian demonology, an account must be added of several creatures generally believed to be of inferior orders of the Jinn.

One of these is the Ghool, which is commonly regarded as a kind of Sheyṭán or evil Jinnee, that eats men; and is also described by some as a Jinnee or an enchanter who assumes various forms. The Ghools are said to appear in the forms of human beings, and of various animals, and in many monstrous shapes; to haunt burial-grounds and other sequestered spots; to feed upon dead human bodies; and to kill and devour any human creature who has the misfortune to fall in their way: whence the term "Ghool" is applied to any cannibal. An opinion quoted by a celebrated author respecting the Ghool is that it is a demoniacal animal, which passes a solitary existence in the deserts, resembling both man and brute; that it appears to a person travelling alone in the night and in solitary places, and being supposed by him to be itself a traveller, lures him out of his way.

Another opinion stated by him is this: that when the Sheyṭáns attempt to hear words by stealth [from the confines of the lowest heaven] they are struck by shooting-stars; and some are burnt; some, falling into a sea, or rather a large river (baḥr), are converted into crocodiles; and some, falling upon the land, become Ghools. The same author adds the following tradition:— "The Ghool is any Jinnee that is opposed to travels, assuming various forms and appearances;" and affirms that several of the Companions of the Prophet saw Ghools in their travels, and that ʹOmar, among them, saw a Ghool while on a journey to Syria, before El-Islám, and struck it with his sword. It appears that "Ghool" is, properly speaking, a name only given to a *female* demon of the kind above described: the male is called "Ḳuṭrub." It is said that these beings, and the Ghaddár or Gharrár, and other similar creatures which will presently be mentioned, are the offspring of Iblees and of a wife whom God created for him of the fire of the samoom (which here signifies, as in an instance before mentioned, “a smokeless fire”); and that they sprang from an egg.▯ The female Ghool, it is added, appears to men in the deserts, in various forms, converses with them, and sometimes yields herself to them.

The Seạláh, or Saạláh, is another demoniacal creature, described by most authors as of the Jinn. It is said that it is mostly found in forests; and that when it captures a man, it makes him dance, and plays with him as the cat plays with the mouse. A man of Iṣfahán asserted that many beings of this kind abounded in his country; that sometimes the wolf would hunt one of them by night, and devour it, and that, when it had seized it, the Seạláh would cry out, “Come to my help, for the wolf devoureth me!” or it would cry, “Who will liberate me? I have a hundred deenárs, and he shall receive them!” but the people knowing that it was the cry of the Seạláh, no one would liberate it; and so the wolf would eat it.▯ — An island in the sea of Eṣ-Ṣeen (China) is called “the Island of the Seạláh,” by Arab geographers, from its being said to be inhabited by the demons so named: they are described as creatures of hideous forms, supposed to be Sheyṭans, the offspring of human beings and Jinn, who eat men.▯

The Ghaddár, or Gharrár,▯ is another creature of a similar nature, described as being found in the borders of El-Yemen, and sometimes in Tihámeh, and in the upper parts of Egypt. It is said that it entices a man to it, and either tortures him in a manner not to be described, or merely terrifies him, and leaves him.▯

The Delhán is also a demoniacal being, inhabiting the islands of the seas, having the form of a man, and riding on an ostrich. It eats the flesh of men whom the sea casts on the shore from wrecks. Some say that a Delhán once attacked a ship in the sea, and desired to take the crew; but they contended with it; whereupon it uttered a cry which caused them to fall upon their faces, and it took them.▯

The Shiḳḳ is another demoniacal creature, having the form of half a human being (like a man divided longitudinally); and it is believed that the Nesnás is the offspring of a Shiḳḳ and of a human being. The former appears to travellers; and it was a demon of this kind who killed, and was killed by, ´Alḳamah, the son of Ṣafwán, the son of

Umeiyeh; of whom it is well known that he was killed by a Jinnee. So says El-Ḳazweenee.

The Nesnás (above mentioned) is described as resembling half a human being; having half a head, half a body, one arm, and one leg, with which it hops with much agility; as being found in the woods of El-Yemen, and being endowed with speech: “but God,” it is added, “is all-knowing.”▯ It is said that it is found in Ḥaḍramót as well as El-Yemen; and that one was brought alive to El-Mutawekkil: it resembled a man in form, excepting that it had but half a face, which was in its breast, and a tail like that of a sheep. The people of Ḥaḍramót, it is added, eat it; and its flesh is sweet. It is only generated in their country. A man who went there asserted that he saw a captured Nesnás, which cried out for mercy, conjuring him by God and by himself.▯ A race of people whose head is in the breast, is described as inhabiting an island called Jábeh (supposed to be Java), in the Sea of El-Hind (India).▯ A kind of Nesnás is also described as inhabiting the Island of Ráïj, in the Sea of Eṣ-Ṣeen (China), and having wings like those of the bat.▯

The Hátif is a being that is heard, but not seen; and is often mentioned by Arab writers. It is generally the communicator of some intelligence in the way of advice, or direction, or warning.

Here terminating this chapter, I must beg the reader to remark that the superstitious fancies which it describes are prevalent among all classes of the Arabs, and the Muslims in general, learned as well as vulgar.

CHAPTER III.

SAINTS.

The Arabs entertain remarkable opinions with respect to the offices and supernatural powers of their saints, which form an important part of the mysteries of the Darweeshes (Dervishes), and are but imperfectly known to the generality of Muslims.

Muslim Saints and devotees are known by the common appellation of Welees, or particular favourites of God. The more eminent among them compose a mysterious hierarchical body, whose government respects the whole human race, infidels as well as believers, but whose power is often exercised in such a manner that the subjects influenced by it know not from what person or persons its effects proceed. The general governor or coryphaeus of these holy beings is commonly called the Ḳuṭb, which literally signifies a "pole," or an "axis," and is metaphorically used to signify a "chief," either in a civil or political, or in a spiritual sense. The Ḳuṭb of the saints is distinguished by other appellations: he is called Ḳuṭb el-Ghós, or Ḳuṭb el-Ghóth (the Ḳuṭb of Invocation for Help), etc.; and simply, El-Ghós.▯ The orders under the rule of this chief are called ´Omud (or Owtád), Akhyár, Abdál, Nujaba, and Nuḳaba: I name them according to their precedence.▯ Perhaps to these should be added an inferior order called Aṣḥáb ed-Darak, *i.e.* "Watchmen," or "Overseers." The members are not known as such to their inferior unenlightened fellow-creatures, and are often invisible to them. This is more frequently the case with the Ḳuṭb, who, though generally stationed at Mekkeh, on the roof of the Kaạbeh, is never visible there, nor at any of his other favourite stations or places of resort; yet his voice is often heard at these places. Whenever he and the saints under his authority mingle among ordinary men, they are not distinguished by a dignified appearance, but are always humbly clad. These, and even inferior saints, are said to perform astonishing miracles, such as flying in the air, passing unhurt through fire, swallowing fire, glass, etc., walking upon water, transporting themselves in a moment of time to immense distances, and supplying themselves and others with food in desert places. Their supernatural power they are supposed to obtain by a life of the most exalted piety, and especially by constant self-denial, accompanied with the most implicit reliance upon God, by the services of good genii, and, as many believe, by the knowledge and utterance of “the most great name” of God. A miracle performed by a saint is distinguished by the term “karámeh” from one performed by a prophet, which is called “moạjizeh.”

El-Khiḍr and Ilyás (Elias), are both believed to have been Ḳuṭbs, and the latter is called in the Ḳur-án an apostle; but it is disputed whether the former was a prophet or merely a welee. Both are said to have drunk of the Fountain of Life, and to be in consequence still living; and Ilyás is commonly believed to invest the successive Ḳuṭbs. The similarity of the miracles ascribed to the Ḳuṭbs to those performed by Elias or Elijah, I have remarked in a former work.▯ Another miracle, reminding us of the mantle of Elijah in the hands of his successor, may here be mentioned. — A saint who was the Ḳuṭb of his time, dying at Tunis, left his clothes in trust to his attendant, Moḥammad El-Ashwam, a native of the neighbouring regency of Tripoli, who desired to sell these relics, but was counselled to retain them, and accordingly, though high prices were bidden for them, made them his own by purchase. As soon as they became his property, he was affected, we are told, with a divine ecstasy, and endowed with miraculous powers.▯

Innumerable miracles are related to have been performed by Muslim saints, and large volumes are filled with the histories of their wonderful lives. The author of the work from which the above story is taken, mentions, as a fact to be relied on, in an account of one of his ancestors, that, his lamp happening to go out one night while he was reading alone in the riwáḳ of the Jabart (of which he was the sheykh), in the great mosque El-Azhar, the forefinger of his right hand emitted a light which enabled him to continue his reading until his naḳeeb had trimmed and lighted another lamp.▯

From many stories of a similar kind that I have read, I select the following as a fair specimen: it is related by a very celebrated saint, Ibráheem El-Khowwáṣ.— “I entered the desert [on pilgrimage to Mekkeh from El-´Iráḳ], and there joined me a man having a belt round his waist, and I said, ‘Who art thou?’ — He answered, ‘A Christian; and I desire thy company.’ We walked together for seven days, eating nothing; after which he said to me, ‘O monk of the Muslims, produce what thou hast in the way of refreshment, for we are hungry:’ so I said, ‘O my God, disgrace me not before this infidel:’ and lo, a tray, upon which were bread and broiled meat and fresh dates and a mug of water. We ate, and continued our journey seven days more; and I then said to him, ‘O monk of the Christians, produce what thou hast in the way of refreshment; for the turn is come to thee:’ whereupon he leaned upon his staff, and prayed; and lo, two trays, containing double that which was on my tray. I was confounded, and refused to eat: he urged me, saying, ‘Eat;’ but I did it not. Then said he, ‘Be glad; for I give thee two pieces of good news: one of them is that I testify that there is no deity but God and that Moḥammad is God’s Apostle: the other, that I said, O God, if there be worth in this servant, supply me with two trays: — so this is through thy blessing.’ We ate, and the man put on the dress of pilgrimage, and so entered Mekkeh, where he remained with me a year as a student; after which he died, and I buried him in [the cemetery] El-Maạlà.” “And God,” says the author from whom I take this story, “is all-knowing:” *i.e.* He alone knoweth whether it be strictly true: but this is often added to the narration of traditions resting upon high authority.[]

The saint above mentioned was called “El-Khowwáṣ” (or the maker of palm-leaf baskets, etc.) from the following circumstance, related by himself.— “I used,” said he, “to go out of the town [Er-Rei] and sit by a river on the banks of which was abundance of palm-leaves; and it occurred to my mind to make every day five baskets [ḳuffehs], and to throw them into the river, for my amusement, as if I were obliged to do so. My time was so passed for many days: at length, one day, I thought I would walk after the baskets, and see whither they had gone: so I proceeded awhile along the bank of the river, and found an old woman sitting sorrowful. On that day I had made nothing. I said to her, ‘Wherefore do I see thee sorrowful?’ She answered, ‘I am a widow: my husband died leaving five daughters, and nothing to maintain them; and it is my custom to repair every day to this river, and there come to me, upon the surface of the water, five baskets, which I sell, and by means of them I procure food; but to-day they have not come, and I know not what to do.’ Upon hearing this, I raised my head towards heaven, and said, ‘O my God, had I known that I had more than five children to maintain, I had laboured more diligently.’” He then took the old woman to his house, and gave her money and flour, and said to her, “Whenever thou wantest anything, come hither and take what may suffice thee.”▯

An irresistible influence has often been exercised over the minds of princes and other great men by reputed saints. Many a Muslim Monarch has thus been incited (as the Kings of Christendom were by Peter the Hermit) to undertake religious wars, or urged to acts of piety and charity, or restrained from tyranny, by threats of Divine vengeance to be called down upon his head by the imprecations of a welee. ´Alee, the favourite son of the Khaleefeh El-Ma-moon, was induced for the sake of religion to flee from the splendour and luxuries of his father’s court, and after the example of a self-denying devotee to follow the occupation of a porter in a state of the most abject poverty at El-Baṣrah, fasting all the day, remaining without sleep at night in a mosque, and walking barefooted, until, under an accumulation of severe sufferings, he prematurely ended his days, dying on a mat. The honours which he refused to receive in life were paid to him after his death: his rank being discovered by a ring and paper which he left, his corpse was anointed with camphor and musk and aloes, wrapped in fine linen of Egypt, and so conveyed to his distressed father at Baghdád.▯

Self-denial I have before mentioned as one of the most important means by which to attain the dignity of a welee. A very famous saint, Esh-Shiblee, is said to have received from his father an inheritance of sixty millions of deenárs (a sum incredible, and probably a mistake for sixty thousand, or for sixty million dirhems) besides landed property, and to have expended it all in charity: also, to have thrown into the Tigris seventy hundred-weight of books, written by his own hand during a period of twenty years.▯

Sháh El-Karmánee, another celebrated saint, had a beautiful daughter, whom the Sulṭán of his country sought in marriage. The holy man required three days to consider his sovereign’s proposal, and in the mean time visited several mosques, in one of which he saw a young man humbly occupied in prayer. Having waited till he had finished, he accosted him, saying, “My son, hast thou a wife?” Being answered “No,” he said, “I have a maiden, a virtuous devotee, who hath learned the whole of the Ḳur-án, and is amply endowed with beauty. Dost thou desire her?”— “Who,” said the young man, “will marry me to such a one as thou hast described, when I possess no more than three dirhems?”— “*I* will marry thee to her,” answered the saint: “she is my daughter, and I am Sháh the son of Shujáạ El-Karmánee: give me the dirhems that thou hast, that I may buy a dirhem’s worth of bread, and a dirhem’s worth of something savoury, and a dirhem’s worth of perfume.” The marriage-contract was performed; but when the bride came to the young man, she saw a stale cake of bread placed upon the top of his mug; upon which she put on her izár, and went out. Her husband said, “Now I perceive that the daughter of Sháh El-Karmánee is displeased with my poverty.” She answered, “I did not withdraw from fear of poverty, but on account of the weakness of thy faith, seeing how thou layest by a cake of bread for the morrow.”

One of my friends in Cairo, Abu-l-Ḳásim of Jeelán, entertained me with a long relation of the mortifications and other means which he employed to attain the rank of a welee. These were chiefly self-denial and a perfect reliance upon Providence. He left his home in a state of voluntary destitution and complete nudity, to travel through Persia and the surrounding countries and yet more distant regions if necessary, in search of a spiritual guide. For many days he avoided the habitations of men, fasting from daybreak till sunset, and then eating nothing but a little grass or a few leaves or wild fruits, till by degrees he habituated himself to almost total abstinence from every kind of nourishment. His feet, at first blistered and cut by sharp stones, soon became callous; and in proportion to his reduction of food, his frame, contrary to the common course of nature, became (according to his own account) more stout and lusty. Bronzed by the sun, and with his black hair hanging over his shoulders (for he had abjured the use of the razor), he presented in his nudity a wild and frightful appearance, and on his first approaching a town, was surrounded and pelted by a crowd of boys; he therefore retreated, and, after the example of our first parents, made himself a partial covering of leaves; and this he always afterwards did on similar occasions, never remaining long enough in a town for his leafy apron to wither. The abodes of mankind he always passed at a distance, excepting when several days' fast, while traversing an arid desert, compelled him to obtain a morsel of bread or a cup of water from the hand of some charitable fellow-creature.

One thing that he particularly dreaded was to receive relief from a sinful man, or from a demon in the human form. In passing over a parched and desolate tract, where for three days he had found nothing to eat, not even a blade of grass, nor a spring from which to refresh his tongue, he became overpowered with thirst, and prayed that God would send him a messenger with a pitcher of water. "But," said he, "let the water be in a green Baghdádee pitcher, that I may know it to be from Thee, and not from the Devil; and when I ask the bearer to give me to drink, let him pour it over my head, that I may not too much gratify my carnal desire."— "I looked behind me," he continued, "and saw a man bearing a green Baghdádee pitcher of water, and said to him, 'Give me to drink;' and he came up to me, and poured the contents over my head, and departed! By Allah it was so!"

Rejoicing in this miracle, as a proof of his having attained to a degree of wiláyeh (or saintship), and refreshed by the water, he continued his way over the desert, more firm than ever in his course of self-denial, which, though imperfectly followed, had been the means of his being thus distinguished. But the burning thirst returned shortly after, and he felt himself at the point of sinking under it, when he beheld before him a high hill, with a rivulet running by its base. To the summit of this hill he determined to ascend, by way of mortification, before he would taste the water, and this point, with much difficulty, he reached at the close of day. Here standing, he saw approaching, below, a troop of horsemen, who paused at the foot of the hill, when their chief, who was foremost, called out to him by name, "O Abu-l-Ḳásim! O Jeelánee! Come down and drink!" — but persuaded by this that he was Iblees with a troop of his sons, the evil Genii, he withstood the temptation, and remained stationary until the deceiver with his attendants had passed on and were out of sight. The sun had then set; his thirst had somewhat abated; and he only drank a few drops.

Continuing his wanderings in the desert, he found upon a pebbly plain an old man with a long white beard, who accosted him, asking of what he was in search. “I am seeking,” he answered, “a spiritual guide; and my heart tells me that thou art the guide I seek.” “My son,” said the old man, “thou seest yonder a saint’s tomb; it is a place where prayer is answered; go thither, enter it, and seat thyself: neither eat nor drink nor sleep; but occupy thyself solely, day and night, in repeating silently, ‘Lá iláha illa-lláh’ (There is no deity but God); and let not any living creature see thy lips move in doing so; for among the peculiar virtues of these words is this, that they may be uttered without any motion of the lips. Go, and peace be on thee!”

“Accordingly,” said my friend, “I went thither. It was a small square building, crowned by a cupola; and the door was open. I entered, and seated myself, facing the niche and the oblong monument over the grave. It was evening, and I commenced my silent professions of the unity, as directed by my guide; and at dusk I saw a white figure seated beside me, as if assisting in my devotional task. I stretched forth my hand to touch it; but found that it was not a material substance; yet there it was: I saw it distinctly. Encouraged by this vision, I continued my task for three nights and days without intermission, neither eating nor drinking, yet increasing in strength both of body and of spirit; and on the third day, I saw written upon the whitewashed walls of the tomb, and on the ground, and in the air, wherever I turned my eyes, ‘Lá iláha illa-lláh;’ and whenever a fly entered the tomb, it formed these words in its flight. By Allah it was so! My object was now fully attained: I felt myself endowed with supernatural knowledge: thoughts of my friends and acquaintances troubled me not; but I knew where each one of them was, in Persia, India, Arabia, and Turkey, and what each was doing. I experienced an indescribable happiness. This state lasted several years; but at length I was insensibly enticed back to worldly objects: I came to this country; my fame as a calligraphist drew me into the service of the government; and now see what I am, decked with pelisses and shawls, and with this thing [a diamond order] on my breast; too old, I fear, to undergo again the self-denial necessary to restore me to true happiness, though I have almost resolved to make the attempt.”

Soon after this conversation, he was deprived of his office, and died of the plague. He was well known to have passed several years as a wandering devotee; and his sufferings, combined with enthusiasm, perhaps disordered his imagination, and made him believe that he really saw the strange sights which he described to me; for there was an appearance of earnestness and sincerity in his manner, such as I thought could hardly be assumed by a conscious impostor.

Insanity, however, if not of a very violent and dangerous nature, is commonly regarded by Muslims as a quality that entitles the subject of it to be esteemed as a saint; being supposed to be the abstraction of the mind from worldly affairs, and its total devotion to God. This popular superstition is a fertile source of imposture; for, a reputation for sanctity being so easily obtained and supported, there are numbers of persons who lay claim to it from motives of indolence and licentiousness, eager to receive alms merely for performing the tricks of madmen, and greedy of indulging in pleasures forbidden by the law; such indulgences not being considered in their case as transgressions by the common people, but rather as indications of holy frenzy. From my own observation I should say that lunatics or idiots, or impostors, constitute the majority of the persons reputed to be saints among the Muslims of the present day; and most of those who are not more than slightly tinged with insanity are darweeshes.

A reputed saint of this description in Cairo, in whom persons of some education put great faith, affected to have a particular regard for me. He several times accosted me in an abrupt manner, acquainted me with the state of my family in England, and uttered incoherent predictions respecting me, all of which communications, excepting one which he qualified with an “in sháa-lláh” (or “if it be the will of God”), I must confess, proved to be true; but I must also state that he was acquainted with two of my friends who might have materially assisted him to frame these predictions, though they protested to me that they had not done so. The following extract from a journal which I kept in Cairo during my last visit to Egypt, will convey some idea of this person, who will serve as a picture of many of his fraternity. — To-day (Nov. 6th, 1834), as I was sitting in the shop of the Pásha’s booksellers, a reputed saint, whom I have often seen here, came and seated himself by me, and began, in a series of abrupt sentences, to relate to me various matters respecting me, past, present, and to come. He is called the sheykh ´Alee el-Leythee. He is a poor man, supported by alms; tall and thin and very dark, about thirty years of age, and wears nothing at present but a blue shirt and a girdle and a padded red cap. “O Efendee,” he said, “thou hast been very anxious for some days. There is a grain of anxiety remaining in thee yet. Do not fear. There is a letter coming to thee by sea, that will bring thee good news.” He then proceeded to tell me of the state of my family, and that all were well excepting one, whom he particularized by description, and who he stated to be then suffering from an intermittent fever. [This proved to be exactly true.] “This affliction,” he continued, “may be removed by prayer; and the excellences of the next night, the night of [*i.e.* preceding] the first Friday of the month of Rejeb, of Rejeb, the holy Rejeb, are very great. I wanted to ask thee for something to-day; but I feared, I feared greatly. Thou must be invested with the wiláyeh [*i.e.* be made a welee]: the welees love thee, and the Prophet loves thee. Thou must go to the sheykh Muṣṭafà El-Munádee and the sheykh El-Baháee. Thou must be a welee.” He then took my right hand, in the manner commonly practised in the ceremony which admits a person a darweesh, and repeated the Fátiḥah; after which he added, “I have admitted thee my darweesh.” Having next told me of several circumstances relating to my family — matters of an unusual nature — with singular minuteness and truth, he added, “To-night, if it be the will of God, thou shalt see the Prophet in thy sleep, and El-Khiḍr and the Seyyid El-Bedawee. This is Rejeb, and I wanted to ask thee — but I feared — I wanted to ask of thee four piasters, to buy meat and bread and oil and radishes. Rejeb! Rejeb! I have great offices to do for thee to-night.”

Less than a shilling for all he promised was little enough: I gave it him for the trouble he had taken; and he uttered many abrupt prayers for me. In the following night, however, I saw in my sleep neither Moḥammad, nor El-Khiḍr, nor the Seyyid El-Bedawee, unless, like Nebuchadnezzar, I was unable on awaking to remember my dreams.

Some reputed saints of the more respectable class, to avoid public notice, wear the general dress and manners of their fellow-countrymen, and betray no love of ostentation in their acts of piety and self-denial; or live as hermits in desert places, depending solely upon Providence for their support, and are objects of pious and charitable visits from the inhabitants of near and distant places, and from casual travellers. Others distinguish themselves by the habit of a darweesh, or by other peculiarities, such as a long and loose coat (called dilḳ) composed of patches of cloth of various colours, long strings of beads hung upon the neck, a ragged turban, and a staff with shreds of cloth of different colours attached to the top; or obtain a reputation for miraculous powers by eating glass, fire, serpents, etc. Some of those who are insane, and of those who feign to be so, go about, even in crowded cities, in a state of perfect nudity, and are allowed to commit with impunity acts of brutal sensuality which the law, when appealed to, should punish with death. Such practices are forbidden by the religion and law even in the cases of saints; but common and deeply-rooted superstition prevents their punishment.

During the occupation of Egypt by the French, the Commander-in-chief, Menou, applied to the sheykhs (or ´Ulamà) of the city for their opinion “respecting those persons who were accustomed to go about in the streets in a state of nudity, crying out and screaming, and arrogating to themselves the dignity of wiláyeh, relied upon as saints by the generality of the people, neither performing the prayers of the Muslims nor fasting,” asking whether such conduct was permitted by the religion, or contrary to the law. He was answered, “Conduct of this description is forbidden, and repugnant to our religion and law and to our traditions.” The French General thanked them for this answer, and gave orders to prevent such practices in future, and to seize every one seen thus offending; if insane, to confine him in the Máristán (or hospital and lunatic asylum); and if not insane, to compel him either to relinquish his disgusting habits, or to leave the city.

Of reputed saints of this kind, thus writes an enlightened poet, El-Bedree El-Ḥijázee: —

“Would that I had not lived to see every fool esteemed among men
as a Ḳuṭb!
Their learned men take him as a patron, nay, even as Lord, in place

of the Possessor of Heaven’s throne.
Forgetting God, they say, ‘Such a one from all mankind can remove affliction.’
When he dies, they make for him a place of visitation, and strangers and Arabs hurry thither in crowds:
Some of them kiss his tomb, and some kiss the threshold of the door, and the very dust.
Thus do the idolaters act towards their images, hoping so to obtain their favour.”

These lines are quoted by El-Jabartee, in his account of a very celebrated modern saint, the seyyid ʹAlee El-Bekree (events of Rabeeạ eth-Thánee, 1214). A brief history of this person will not be here misplaced, as it will present a good illustration of the general character and actions of those insane individuals who are commonly regarded as saints.

The seyyid ʹAlee El-Bekree was a mejzoob (or insane person) who was considered an eminent welee, and much trusted in: for several years he used to walk naked about the streets of Cairo, with a shaven face, bearing a long nebboot (or staff), and uttering confused language, which the people attentively listened to, and interpreted according to their desires and the exigencies of their states. He was a tall, spare man, and sometimes wore a shirt and a cotton skull-cap; but he was generally barefooted and naked. The respect with which he was treated induced a woman, who was called the sheykhah Ammooneh, to imitate his example further than decency allowed: she followed him whithersoever he went, covered at first with her izár (or large cotton veil thrown over the head and body), and muttering, like him, confused language. Entering private houses with him, she used to ascend to the ḥareems, and gained the faith of the women, who presented her with money and clothes, and spread abroad that the sheykh ʹAlee had looked upon her, and affected her with religious frenzy, so that she had become a weleeyeh, or female saint. Afterwards, becoming more insane and intoxicated, she uncovered her face, and put on the clothing of a man; and thus attired she still accompanied the sheykh, and the two wandered about, followed by numbers of children and common vagabonds; some of whom also stripped off their clothes in imitation of the sheykh, and followed, dancing; their mad actions being attributed (like those of the woman) to religious frenzy, induced by his look or touch, which converted them into saints. The vulgar and young, who daily followed them, consequently increased in numbers; and some of them, in passing through the market-streets, snatched away goods from the shops, thus exciting great commotion wherever they went. When the sheykh sat down in any place, the crowd stopped, and the people pressed to see him and his mad companions. On these occasions the woman used to mount upon the maṣṭabah of a shop, or ascend a hillock, and utter disgusting language, sometimes in Arabic, and sometimes in Turkish, while many persons among her audience would kiss her hands to derive a blessing. After having persevered for some time in this course, none preventing them, the party entered one day the lane leading from the principal street of the city to the house of the Ḳáḍee, and were seized by a Turkish officer there residing, named Jaạfar Káshif, who, having brought them into his house, gave the sheykh some food, and drove out the spectators, retaining the woman and the mejzoobs, whom he placed in confinement. He then liberated the sheykh ´Alee, brought out the woman and the mejzoobs and beat them, sent the woman to the Máristán and there confined her, and set at large the rest, after they had prayed for mercy and clothed themselves and recovered from their intoxication. The woman remained awhile confined in the Máristán, and when liberated lived alone as a sheykhah, believed in by men and women, and honoured as a saint with visits and festivals.

The seyyid ´Alee, after he had thus been deprived of his companions and imitators, was constrained to lead a different kind of life. He had a cunning brother, who, to turn the folly of this saint to a good account, and fill his own purse, (seeing how great faith the people placed in him, as the Egyptians are prone to do in such a case), confined him in his house, and clothed him, asserting that he had his permission to do so, and that he had been invested with the dignity of Ḳuṭb. Thus he contrived to attract crowds of persons, men and women, to visit him. He forbade him to shave his beard, which consequently grew to its full size; and his body became fat and stout from abundance of food and rest; for, while he went about naked, he was, as before mentioned, of a lean figure. During that period he used generally to pass the night wandering without food through the streets in winter and summer. Having now servants to wait upon him, whether sleeping or waking, he passed his time in idleness, uttering confused and incoherent words, and sometimes laughing and sometimes scolding; and in the course of his idle loquacity he could not but let fall some words applicable to the affairs of some of his listening visitors, who attributed such expressions to his supernatural knowledge of the thoughts of their hearts, and interpreted them as warnings or prophecies. Men and women, and particularly the wives of the grandees, flocked to him with presents and votive offerings, which enriched the coffers of his brother; and the honours which he received ceased not with his death. His funeral was attended by multitudes from every quarter. His brother buried him in the mosque of Esh-Sharáïbee, in the quarter of the Ezbekeeyeh, made for him a maḳṣoorah (or railed enclosure) and an oblong monument over the grave, and frequently repaired thither with readers of the Ḳur-án, munshids to sing odes in his honour, flag-bearers, and other persons, who wailed and screamed, rubbed their faces against the bars of the window before his grave, and caught the air of the place in their hands to thrust it into their bosoms and pockets. Men and women came crowding together to visit his tomb, bringing votive offerings and wax candles and eatables of various kinds to distribute for his sake to the poor.▯ The oblong monument over his grave, resembling a large chest, was covered, when I was in Cairo, with a black stuff ornamented by a line of words from the Ḳur-án, in white characters, surrounding it. A servant who accompanied me during my rides and walks used often to stop as we passed this tomb, and touch the wooden bars of the window above mentioned with his right hand, which he then kissed to obtain a blessing.

In most cases greater honour is paid to a reputed saint after his death, than he receives in his life. A small, square, whitewashed building, crowned with a dome, is generally erected as his tomb, surrounding an oblong monument of stone, brick, or wood, which is immediately over the sepulchral vault. At least one such building forms a conspicuous object close by, or within, almost every Arab village; for the different villages, and different quarters of every town and city, have their respective patron saints, whose tombs are frequently visited, and are the scenes of periodical festivals, generally celebrated once in every year. The tombs of many very eminent saints are mosques; and some of these are large and handsome edifices, the monument being under a large and lofty dome and surrounded by an enclosure of wooden railings, or of elegantly worked bronze. In these buildings also, and in some others, the monument is covered with silk or cotton stuff ornamented with words from the Ḳur-án, which form a band around it. Many buildings of the more simple kind erected in honour of saints, and some of the larger description, are mere cenotaphs, or cover only some relic of the person to whom they are dedicated. The tombs and cenotaphs, or shrines of saints, are visited by numerous persons, and on frequent occasions; most commonly on a particular day of the week. The object of the visitor, in general, is to perform some meritorious act, such as taking bread, or other food, or money, for the poor, or distributing water to the thirsty, on account of the saint, to increase his rewards in heaven, and at the same time to draw down a blessing on himself; or to perform a sacrifice of a sheep, goat, calf, or other animal, which he has vowed to offer, if blessed with some specific object of desire, or to obtain general blessings; or to implore the saint's intercession in some case of need. The flesh of the devoted animal is given to the poor. The visitors also often take with them palm-branches, or sprigs of myrtle, or roses or other flowers, to lay upon the monument, as they do when they visit the tombs of their relations. The visitor walks round the monument, or its enclosure, from left to right, or with his left side towards it (as the pilgrims do round the Kaạbeh), sometimes pausing to touch its four angles or corners with his right hand, which he then kisses; and recites the opening chapter of the Ḳur-án (the Fátiḥah) standing before one or each of its four sides. Some visitors repeat also the chapter of Yá-Seen (the 36th), or employ a person to recite this, or even the whole of the Ḳur-án, for hire. The reciter afterwards declares that he transfers the merit of this work to the soul of the deceased saint. Any private petition the visitor offers up on his own account, imploring a favourable answer for the sake of the saint, or through his intercession; holding his hands before his face like an open book, and then drawing them down his face. Many a visitor, on entering the tomb, kisses the threshold, or touches it with his right hand, which he then kisses; and on passing by it, persons often touch the window and kiss the hand thus honoured.

The great periodical or annual festivals are observed with additional ceremonies, and by crowds of visitors. These are called Moolids (more properly Mólids), and are held on the anniversary of the birth of the saint or in commemoration of that event. Persons are then hired to recite the Ḳur-án in and near the tomb during the day; and others, chiefly darweeshes, employ themselves during the night in performing zikrs, which consist in repeating the name of God, or the profession of his unity, etc., in chorus, accompanying the words by certain motions of the head, hands, or whole body; munshids, at intervals, singing religious odes or love songs during these performances, to the accompaniment of a náy, which is a kind of flute, or the arghool, which is a double reed-pipe. These moolids are scenes of rejoicing and of traffic, which men and boys and girls attend to eat sweetmeats, and drink coffee and sherbets, or to amuse themselves with swinging, or turning on a whirligig, or witnessing the feats of conjurers, or the performances of dancers; and to which tradesmen repair to sell or barter their goods. The visitors to the great moolids of the Seyyid Aḥmad El-Bedawee at Ṭanṭà in the Delta of Egypt, which are great fairs as well as religious festivals, are almost as numerous as the pilgrims at Mekkeh. During a moolid, the inhabitants of the houses in the neighbourhood of the tomb hang lamps before their houses, and spend a great part of the night listening to the story-tellers at the coffee-shops, or attending the zikrs.

These latter performances, though so common among the Arabs, are inconsistent with the spirit of the Mohammadan religion, and especially with respect to music, which was not employed in religious ceremonies until after the second century of the Flight. The Imám Aboo-Bekr Eṭ-Ṭoosee, being asked whether it were lawful or not to be present with people who assembled in a certain place and read a portion of the Ḳur-án, and, after a munshid had recited some poetry, would dance and become excited and play upon tambourines and pipes, — answered, that such practices were vain, ignorant, and erroneous, not ordained by the Ḳur-án or the Traditions of the Prophet, but invented by those Israelites who worshipped the Golden Calf; that the Prophet and his companions used to sit so quietly that a bird might alight upon the head of any one of them and not be disturbed; that it was incumbent on the Sulṭán and his vicegerents to prevent such persons from entering the mosques and other places for these purposes; and that no one who believed in God and the Last Day should be present with them or assist them in their vain performances: such, he asserted, was the opinion of the Imáms of the Muslims. Some eminent doctors, however, have contended for the lawfulness of these practices.

The following is an account of a Zikr I myself witnessed. The zikkeers (or performers of the zikr), who were about thirty in number, sat cross-legged upon matting extended close to the houses on one side of the street, in the form of an oblong ring. Within this ring, along the middle of the matting, were placed three very large wax candles, each about four feet high, and stuck in a low candlestick. Most of the zikkeers were Aḥmedee darweeshes, persons of the lower orders, and meanly dressed: many of them wore green turbans. At one end of the ring were four munshids (or singers of religious odes), and with them was a player on the kind of flute called náy. I procured a small seat of palm-sticks from a coffee-shop close by, and, by means of a little pushing and the assistance of my servant, obtained a place with the munshids, and sat there to hear a complete act, or “mejlis,” of the zikr; which act commenced at about three o’clock, Muslim time (or three hours after sunset), and continued two hours.

The performers began by reciting the opening chapter of the Ḳur-án, all together, their sheykh, or chief, first exclaiming, “El-Fátiḥah!” They then chanted the following words:— “O God, bless our lord Moḥammad among the former generations; and bless our lord Moḥammad among the latter generations; and bless our lord Moḥammad in every time and period; and bless our lord Moḥammad in the highest degree, unto the day of judgment; and bless all the prophets and apostles among the inhabitants of the heavens and of the earth; and may God (whose name be blessed and exalted!) be well pleased with our lords and our masters, those persons of illustrious estimation, Aboo-Bekr and ʹOmar and ʹOthmán and ʹAlee, and with all the favourites of God. God is our sufficiency; and excellent is the Guardian! There is no strength nor power but in God, the High, the Great! O God! O our Lord! O thou liberal of pardon! O thou most bountiful of the most bountiful! O God! Amen!" — They were then silent for three or four minutes; and again recited the Fátiḥah, but silently. This form of prefacing the zikr is commonly used by almost all orders of darweeshes in Egypt.

The performers now began the zikr itself. Sitting in the manner above described, they chanted, in slow measure, "Lá iláha illa-lláh" ("There is no deity but God") to the following air: —

Lá iláha illa-lláh. Lá iláha illa-lláh. Lá iláha illa-lláh.

bowing the head and body twice in each repetition of "Lá iláha illa-lláh." Thus they continued about a quarter of an hour; and then, for about the same space of time, they repeated the same words to the same air, but in a quicker measure and with correspondingly quicker motions. In the mean time, the munshids frequently sang to the same (or a variation of the same) air portions of a ḳaṣeedeh or of a muweskshaḥ; an ode of a similar nature to the Song of Solomon, generally alluding to the Prophet as the object of love and praise; and at frequent intervals one of them sang out the word "meded," implying an invocation for spiritual or supernatural aid.

The zikkeers, after having performed as above described, next repeated the same words to a different air for about the same length of time; first very slowly, then quickly. The air was as follows: —

Lá iláha illa-lláh. Lá iláha illa-lláh. Lá iláha illa-lláh.

Then they repeated these words again, to the following air, in the same manner:

Lá iláha illa-lláh. Lá iláha illa-lláh.

They next rose, and, standing in the same order in which they had been sitting, repeated the same words to another air. After which, still standing, they repeated these words in a very deep and hoarse tone, laying the principal emphasis upon the word "Lá" and the penultimate syllable of the following words, and uttering apparently with a considerable effort: the sound much resembled that which is produced by beating the rim of a tambourine. Each zikkee turned his head alternately to the right and left at each repetition of "Lá iláha illa-lláh.” One of them, a eunuch, at this part of the zikr, was seized with an epileptic fit, evidently the result of a high state of religious excitement; but nobody seemed surprised at it, for occurrences of this kind at zikrs are not uncommon. All the performers now seemed much excited; repeating their ejaculations with greater rapidity, violently turning their heads, and sinking the whole body at the same time: some of them jumping. The eunuch above mentioned was again seized with fits several times; and I generally remarked that this happened after one of the munshids had sung a line or two and exerted himself more than usual to excite his hearers: the singing was, indeed, to my taste, very pleasing. The contrast presented by the vehement and distressing exertions of the performers at the close of the zikr, and their calm gravity and solemnity of manner at the commencement, was particularly striking. Money was collected during the performance for the munshids. The zikkeers receive no pay.

The most approved and common mode of entertaining guests at modern private festivities among the Arabs is by a Khatmeh, which is the recitation of the whole of the Ḳur-án. Three or more persons of the inferior class of the professors of religion and law, who are called faḳeehs (vulgarly, fiḳees) are usually hired for this purpose. Schoolmasters, and students of the collegiate mosques who devote themselves to religion and law, are the persons most commonly thus employed. Their mode of recitation is a peculiar kind of chanting, which, when well executed, I found very agreeable, at least for an hour or so: but the guests seldom have to listen to the chanting of the whole of the Ḳur-án: the reciters usually accomplish the greater portion of their task, in a somewhat hurried manner, before the guests have assembled, each of them chanting in turn a certain portion, as a thirtieth part of the whole (called a juz), or half of one of these sections (a ḥezb), or, more commonly, a quarter (rubạ). Afterwards they chant more leisurely, and in a more musical manner; but still by turns. These recitations of the whole of the Ḳur-án are performed on various festive occasions, but are most usual after a death; the merit of the performance being transferred to the soul of the deceased.

In the year 1834, when I was residing in Cairo, a General in the service of Moḥammad ʹAlee hired a large party of men to perform a recital of the Ḳur-án in his house in that city, and then went up into his ḥareem and strangled his wife, in consequence of a report which accused her of inchastity. The religious ceremony was designed as preparatory to this act, though the punishment of the woman was contrary to the law, since her husband neither produced four witnesses of the imputed crime, nor allowed her to clear herself of the charge by her own oath. Another case of diligence in the performance of a religious duty, accompanied by the contemplation of murder, but murder on a larger scale, occurred in the same city shortly after. Suleymán Agha, the Siláḥdár, being occupied in directing the building of a public fountain as a work of charity to place to the account of a deceased brother, desired to extend the original plan of the structure; and to do this, it was necessary that he should purchase two houses adjoining the plot in which the foundations had been laid: but the owners of these houses refused to sell them, and he therefore employed a number of workmen to undermine them by night and cause them to fall upon their inhabitants. His scheme, however, but partially succeeded, and no lives were sacrificed. This man was notorious for cruelty, but he was a person of pleasing and venerable countenance and engaging manners: whenever I chanced to meet him, I received from him a most gracious salutation. He died before I quitted Egypt.

CHAPTER IV.

MAGIC.

An implicit belief in magic is entertained by almost all Muslims; and him among them who denies its truth they regard as a freethinker or an infidel. Some are of opinion that it ceased on the mission of Moḥammad; but these are comparatively few. Many of the most learned Muslims, to the present age, have deeply studied it; and a much greater number of persons of inferior education (particularly schoolmasters) have more or less devoted their time and talents to the pursuit of this knowledge. Recourse is had to it for the discovery of hidden treasures, for alchymical purposes, for the acquisition of the knowledge of futurity, to procure offspring, to obtain the affection of a beloved object, to effect cures, to guard against the influence of the evil eye, to afflict or kill an enemy or a rival, and to attain various other objects of desire.

There are two descriptions of magic: one is spiritual, and regarded by all but freethinkers as true; the other natural, and denounced by the more religious and enlightened as deceptive.

I. Spiritual magic, which is termed er-Rooḥánee (vulg. Rowḥánee), chiefly depends upon the virtues of certain names of God and passages from the Ḳur-án, and the agency of Angels and Jinn. It is of two kinds: High and Low (´Ilwee and Suflee), or Divine and Satanic (Raḥmánee, *i.e.* relating to "the Compassionate," and Sheyṭánee).

1. Divine magic is regarded as a sublime science, and is studied only by good men, and practised only for good purposes. Perfection in this branch of magic consists in the knowledge of "the most great name" of God (el-Ism el-Aạẓam); but this knowledge is imparted to none but the peculiar favourites of heaven. By virtue of this name, which was engraved on his seal-ring, Suleymán (Solomon) subjected to his dominion the Jinn and the birds and the winds. By pronouncing it, his minister Áṣaf, also, transported in an instant to the presence of his sovereign in Jerusalem the throne of the Queen of Sheba.□ But this was a small miracle to effect by such means; for by

uttering this name a man may even raise the dead. Other names of the Deity, commonly known, are believed to have particular efficacies when uttered or written; as also are the names of the Prophet; and Angels and good Jinn are said to be rendered subservient to the purposes of divine magic by means of certain invocations. Of such names and invocations, together with words unintelligible to the uninitiated in this science, passages from the Ḳur-án, mysterious combinations of numbers, and peculiar diagrams and figures, are chiefly composed written charms employed for good purposes. Enchantment, when used for benevolent purposes, is regarded by the vulgar as a branch of lawful or divine magic; but not so by the learned: and the same remark applies to the science of divination.

2. Satanic magic, as its name implies, is a science depending on the agency of the Devil and the inferior evil Jinn, whose services are obtained by means similar to those which propitiate, or render subservient, the good Jinn. It is condemned by the Prophet and all good Muslims, and only practised for bad purposes.

Bábil, or Babel, is regarded by the Muslims as the fountain head of the science of magic, which was, and, as most think, still is, taught there to mankind by two fallen angels, named Hároot and Mároot, who are there suspended by the feet in a great pit closed by a mass of rock. According to the account of them generally received as correct, these two angels, in consequence of their want of compassion for the frailties of mankind, were rendered, by God, susceptible of human passions, and sent down upon the earth to be tempted. They both sinned, and being permitted to choose whether they would be punished in this life or in the other, chose the former. But they were sent down not merely to experience temptation, being also appointed to tempt others by means of their knowledge of magic; though it appears that they were commanded not to teach this art to any man “until they had said, ‘Verily we are a temptation; therefore be not an unbeliever.’”▯ The celebrated traditionist, Mujáhid, is related to have visited them under the guidance of a Jew. Having removed the mass of rock from the mouth of the pit or well, they entered. Mujáhid had been previously charged by the Jew not to mention the name of God in their presence; but when he beheld them, resembling in size two huge mountains, and suspended upside-down, with irons attached to their necks and knees, he could not refrain from uttering the forbidden name; whereupon the two angels became so violently agitated that they almost broke the irons which confined them, and Mujáhid and his guide fled back in consternation.▯

Enchantment, which is termed es-Seḥr, is almost universally acknowledged to be a branch of satanic magic; but some few persons assert that it *may* be, and by some *has* been, studied with good intentions, and practised by the aid of good Jinn: consequently, that there is such a science as *good* enchantment, which is to be regarded as a branch of *divine* or *lawful* magic. The metamorphoses are said to be generally effected by means of spells or invocations to the Jinn, accompanied by the sprinkling of water or dust, etc., on the object to be transformed. Persons are said to be enchanted in various ways: some, paralyzed, or even deprived of life; others, affected with irresistible passion for certain objects; others, again, rendered demoniacs; and some, transformed into brutes, birds, etc. The evil eye is believed to enchant in a very powerful and distressing manner. This was acknowledged even by the Prophet.▯ Diseases and death are often attributed to its influence. Amulets,▯ which are mostly written charms, of the kind above described, are worn by many Muslims with the view of counteracting, or preserving from, enchantment; and for the same purpose, many ridiculous ceremonies are practised.

Divination, which is termed el-Kiháneh, is pronounced on the highest authority to be a branch of satanic magic, though not believed to be so by all Muslims. According to an assertion of the Prophet, what a fortune-teller says may sometimes be true; because one of the Jinn steals away the truth, and carries it to the magician’s ear: for the Angels come down to the region next to the earth (the lowest heaven), and mention the works that have been pre-ordained in heaven; and the Devils (or evil Jinn) listen to what the Angels say, and hear the orders predestined in heaven and carry them to the fortune-tellers. It is on such occasions that shooting-stars are hurled at the Devils.▯ It is said that “the diviner obtains the services of the Sheyṭán by magic arts, and by names [invoked], and by the burning of perfumes, and he informs him of secret things: for the Devils, before the mission of the Apostle of God,” it is added, “used to ascend to heaven and hear words by stealth."▯ That the evil Jinn are believed still to ascend sufficiently near to the lowest heaven to hear the conversation of the Angels, and so to assist magicians, appears from the former quotation, and is asserted by all Muslims. The discovery of hidden treasures before alluded to, is one of the objects for which divination is most studied. The mode of divination called Ḍarb el-Mendel is by some supposed to be effected by the aid of evil Jinn; but the more enlightened of the Muslims regard it as a branch of natural magic.▯

There are certain modes of divination which cannot properly be classed under the head of spiritual magic, but require a place between the account of this science and that of natural magic. The most important of these branches of Kiháneh is Astrology, which is called ʿIlm en-Nujoom. This is studied by many Muslims in the present day; and its professors are often employed by the Arabs to determine a fortunate period for laying the foundation of a building, commencing a journey, etc.; but more frequently by the Persians and Turks. The Prophet pronounced astrology to be a branch of magic.▯ Another branch of Kiháneh is Geomancy, called Ḍarb er-Raml;▯ a mode of divination from certain marks made on sand (whence its appellation), or on paper; and said to be chiefly founded on astrology. The science called ez-Zijr, or el-ʿEyáfeh, is a third branch of Kiháneh; being divination or auguration chiefly from the motions and positions or postures of birds or of gazelles and other beasts of the chase. Thus what was termed a Sániḥ, that is, such an animal standing or passing with its right side towards the spectator, was esteemed among the Arabs as of good omen; and a Báriḥ, or an animal of this kind with its left side towards the spectator, was held as inauspicious.▯ El-Ḳiyáfeh, under which term are included Chiromancy and its kindred sciences, is a fourth branch of Kiháneh. Et-Tefául, or the taking an omen, particularly a good one, from a name or words accidentally heard or seen or chosen from a book, belongs to the same science.

The taking a fál, or omen, from the Ḳur-án is generally held to be lawful. Various trifling events are considered as ominous. For instance, a Sulṭán quitting his palace with his troops, a standard happened to strike a "thureiyà" (a cluster of lamps, so called from resembling the Pleiades), and broke them: he drew from this an evil omen, and would have relinquished the expedition; but one of his chief officers said to him, “O our Lord, thy standards have reached the Pleiades;” — and, being relieved by this remark, he proceeded, and returned victorious.▯ The interpretation of dreams, termed Taạbeer el-Menámát, must also be classed among the branches of this science. According to the Prophet, it is the only branch of divination worthy of dependance. “Good dreams,” said he, “are one of the parts of prophecy,” and “nothing else of prophecy remains.” “Good dreams are from God; and false dreams from the Devil.” “When any one of you has a bad dream, spit three times over your left shoulder, and seek protection with God from the Devil thrice; and turn from the side on which the dream was, to the other.”▯ This rule is observed by many Muslims. Dreams are generally so fully relied upon by them as to be sometimes the means of deciding contested points in history and science. The sight, in a dream, of anything green or white, or of water, is considered auspicious; anything black or red, or fire, inauspicious.

This firm belief in dreams will be well illustrated by the following anecdote, which was related to me in Cairo, shortly after the terrible plague of the year 1835, by the sheykh Moḥammad Eṭ-Ṭanṭáwee, who had taken the trouble of investigating the fact, and had ascertained its truth.

A tradesman, living in the quarter of El-Ḥanafee, in Cairo, dreamed during that plague that eleven persons were carried out from his house to be buried, victims of this disease. He awoke in a state of the greatest distress and alarm, reflecting that eleven was the total number of the inhabitants of his house, including himself, and that it would be vain in him to attempt, by adding one or more members to his household, to elude the decree of God and give himself a chance of escape: so calling together his neighbours, he informed them of his dream, and was counselled to submit with resignation to a fate so plainly foreshown, and to be thankful to God for the timely notice with which he had been mercifully favoured. On the following day, one of his children died; a day or two after, a wife; and the pestilence continued its ravages among his family until he remained in his house alone. It was impossible for him now to entertain the slightest doubt of the entire accomplishment of the warning: immediately, therefore, after the last death that had taken place among his household, he repaired to a friend at a neighbouring shop, and calling to him several other persons from the adjoining and opposite shops, he reminded them of his dream, acquainted them with its almost complete fulfilment, and expressed his conviction that he, the eleventh, should very soon die. “Perhaps,” said he, “I shall die this next night: I beg of you, therefore, for the sake of God, to come to my house early to-morrow morning, and the next morning and the next if necessary, to see if I be dead, and, when dead, that I am properly buried; for I have no one with me to wash and shroud me. Fail not to do me this service, which will procure you a recompense in heaven. I have bought my grave-linen: you will find it in a corner of the room in which I sleep. If you find the door of the house latched, and I do not answer to your knocking, break it open.”

Soon after sunset he laid himself in his lonely bed, though without any expectation of closing his eyes in sleep; for his mind was absorbed in reflections upon the awful entry into another world, and a review of his past life. As the shades of night gathered around him he could almost fancy that he beheld, in one faint object or another in his gloomy chamber, the dreadful person of the Angel of Death: and at length he actually perceived a figure gliding in at the door, and approaching his bed. Starting up in horror, he exclaimed, “Who art thou?” — and a stern and solemn voice answered, “Be silent! I am ʹAzraeel, the Angel of Death!”— “Alas!” cried the terrified man; “I testify that there is no deity but God, and I testify that Moḥammad is God’s Apostle! There is no strength nor power but in God, the High, the Great! To God we belong, and to Him we must return!” — He then covered himself over with his quilt, as if for protection, and lay with throbbing heart, expecting every moment to have his soul torn from him by the inexorable messenger. But moments passed away, and minutes, and hours, yet without his experiencing any hope of escape; for he imagined that the Angel was waiting for him to resign himself, or had left him for a while, and was occupied in receiving first the souls of the many hundred human beings who had attained their predestined term in that same night and in the same city, and the souls of the thousands who were doomed to employ him elsewhere.

Daybreak arrived before his sufferings terminated; and his neighbours, coming according to their promise, entered his chamber, and found him still in bed; but observing that he was covered up and motionless as a corpse, they doubted whether he were still alive, and called to him. He answered, with a faint voice, "I am not yet dead; but the Angel of Death came to me in the dusk of the evening, and I expect him every moment to make his return, to take my soul: therefore trouble me not; but see me washed and buried."— "But why," said his friends, "was the street-door left unlatched?"— "I latched it," he answered, "but the Angel of Death may have opened it."— "And who," they asked, "is the man in the court?" He answered, "I know of no man in the court: perhaps the Angel who is waiting for my soul has made himself visible to you, and been mistaken in the twilight for a man."— "He is a thief," they said, "who has gathered together everything in the house that he could carry away, and has been struck by the plague while doing so, and now lies dead in the court, at the foot of the stairs, grasping in his hand a silver candlestick." — The master of the house, after hearing this, paused for a moment, and then, throwing off his quilt, exclaimed, "Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures! That is the eleventh, and I am safe! No doubt it was that rascal who came to me and said that he was the Angel of Death. Praise be to God! Praise be to God!"

This man survived the plague, and took pleasure in relating the above story. The thief had overheard his conversation with his neighbours, and, coming to his house in the dusk, had put his shoulder to the wooden lock, and so raised the door and displaced the latch within. There is nothing wonderful in the dream, nor in its accomplishment; the plague of 1835 entirely desolated many houses, and was mostly fatal to the young; and all the inhabitants of the house in question were young excepting the master.

The distinction of fortunate and unfortunate days should also here be mentioned. Thursday and Friday, especially the latter, are considered fortunate; Monday and Wednesday, doubtful; Sunday, Tuesday, and Saturday, especially the last, unfortunate. It is said that there are seven evil days in every [lunar] month: namely, the third, on which Ḳábeel (Cain) killed Hábeel (Abel); the fifth, on which

God cast down Adam from paradise, and afflicted the people of Yoonus (Jonas), and on which Yoosuf (Joseph) was cast into the well; the thirteenth, on which God took away the wealth of Eiyoob (Job), and afflicted him, and took away the kingdom from Suleymán (Solomon), and on which the Jews killed the prophets; the sixteenth, on which God exterminated and buried the people of Looṭ (Lot), and transformed three hundred Christians into swine and Jews into apes, and on which the Jews sawed asunder Zekeriyà (Zachariah); the twenty-first, on which Pharaoh was born, and on which he was drowned, and on which his nation was afflicted with the plagues; the twenty-fourth, on which Numrood (Nimrod) killed seventy women, and cast El-Khaleel (Abraham) into the fire, and on which was slaughtered the camel of Ṣáliḥ; and the twenty-fifth, on which the suffocating wind was sent upon the people of Hood.□

II. Natural magic, which is called es-Seemiyà, is regarded by most persons of the more enlightened classes of Muslims as altogether a deceptive art, no more worthy of respect than legerdemain; but it seems to be nearly allied to enchantment, for it is said to effect, in appearance, the most wonderful transformations, and to cause the most extraordinary visions; affecting the senses and imagination in a manner similar to opium. This and other drugs are supposed by some persons to be the chief means by which such illusions are caused; and perfumes, which are generally burnt in these performances, may operate in a similar manner. As such things are employed in performances of the kind called Ḍarb el-Mendel, before mentioned, these feats are regarded by many as effected by natural magic, notwithstanding what has been said above respecting the services of evil Jinn being procured by means of perfumes. Alchymy (El-Keemiyà) is a branch of natural magic. It is studied by many Muslims of the present day, and by some of considerable talents and attainments.

The most celebrated of the magicians who have gained notoriety in Egypt during the course of the last hundred years was the sheykh Aḥmad Ṣádoomeh, who flourished somewhat more than sixty years ago.□ Several persons of Cairo, men of intelligence and of good education, have related to me various most marvellous stories of his performances, on the authority of eye-witnesses whom they considered veracious; but a more credible account of this magician I have found in the work of the excellent historian of Modern Egypt. This author mentions the sheykh Ṣádoomeh as an aged man of venerable appearance who derived his origin from the town of Semennood in the Delta, and who acquired a very great and extensive celebrity for his attainments in spiritual and natural magic, and for holding converse, face to face, with Jinn, and causing them to appear to other persons, even to the blind, as men acquainted with him informed the historian. His contemporaries, says this writer, entertained various opinions respecting him; but, among them, a famous grammarian and general scholar, the sheykh Ḥasan El-Kafráwee, regarded him as a first-rate saint, who performed evident miracles; this learned man pronouncing as such the effects of "his legerdemain and natural magic." His fame he describes as having increased until he was induced to try an unlucky experiment.

A Memlook chief, Yoosuf Bey, saw some magic characters written on the body of one of his female slaves, and, exasperated by jealousy, commanded her with a threat of instant death to tell him who had done this. She confessed that a woman had taken her to the sheykh Ṣádoomeh, and that he had written this charm to attract to her the Bey's love. Upon hearing this, he instantly sent some attendants to seize the magician, put him to death, and throw him into the Nile; which was done.▯ But the manner in which the seizure was made, as related to me by one of my friends, deserves to be mentioned. Several persons, one after another, endeavoured to lay hold upon him; but every arm that was stretched forth for this purpose was instantly paralyzed, through a spell muttered by the magician; until a man behind him thrust a gag into his mouth, and so stopped his enchantments.

Of the stories related to me of Ṣádoomeh's miracles, the following will serve as a specimen: — In order to give one of his friends a treat, he took him to the distance of about half an hour's walk into the desert on the north of Cairo; here they both sat down, upon the pebbly and sandy plain, and, the magician having uttered a spell, they suddenly found themselves in the midst of a garden, like one of the gardens of paradise, abounding with flowers and fruit-trees of every kind, springing up from a soil clothed with verdure brilliant as the emerald and irrigated by numerous streamlets of the clearest water. A repast of the most delicious viands and fruits and wines was spread before them by invisible hands; and they both ate to satiety, taking copious draughts of the various wines. At length, the magician’s guest sank into a deep sleep; and when he awoke, he found himself again in the pebbly and sandy plain, with Ṣádoomeh still by his side.

The reader will probably attribute this vision to a dose of opium or some similar drug; and such I suppose to have been the means employed; for I cannot doubt the integrity of the narrator, though he would not admit such an explanation, — regarding the whole as an affair of magic effected by the operation of the Jinn.

CHAPTER V.

COSMOGRAPHY.

When we call to mind how far the Arabs surpassed their great master, Aristotle, in natural and experimental philosophy, and remember that their brilliant discoveries constituted an important link between those of the illustrious Greek and of our scarcely less illustrious countryman, Roger Bacon, their popular system of cosmography becomes an interesting subject for our consideration.

According to the common opinion of the Arabs (an opinion sanctioned by the Ḳur-án, and by assertions of their Prophet, which almost all Muslims take in their literal sense), there are Seven Heavens, one above another, and Seven Earths, one beneath another; the earth which we inhabit being the highest of the latter, and next below the lowest heaven.▯ The upper surface of each heaven and of each earth are believed to be nearly plane, and are generally supposed to be circular; and are said to be five hundred years' journey in width. This is also said to be the measure of the depth or thickness of each heaven and each earth, and of the distance between each heaven or earth and that next above or below it. Thus is explained a passage of the Ḳur-án in which it is said that God hath created seven heavens and as many earths, or stories of the earth, in accordance with traditions from the Prophet.▯

Traditions differ respecting the fabric of the seven heavens. In the most credible account, according to a celebrated historian, the first is described as formed of emerald; the second, of white silver; the third, of large white pearls; the fourth, of ruby; the fifth, of red gold; the sixth, of yellow jacinth; and the seventh, of shining light.▯

Some assert Paradise to be in the seventh heaven; and, indeed, I have found this to be the general opinion of my Muslim friends: but the author above quoted proceeds to describe, next above the seventh heaven, seven seas of light; then, an undefined number of veils, or separations, of different substances, seven of each kind; and then, Paradise, which consists of seven stages, one above another; the first (Dár el-Jelál, or the Mansion of Glory), of white pearls; the second

(Dár es-Selám, or the Mansion of Peace), of ruby; the third (Jennet el-Ma-wà, or the Garden of Rest), of green chrysolite; the fourth (Jennet el-Khuld, or the Garden of Eternity), of green coral; the fifth (Jennet en-Na´eem, or the Garden of Delight), of white silver; the sixth (Jennet el-Firdós, or the Garden of Paradise), of red gold; and the seventh (Jennet ´Adn, or the Garden of Perpetual Abode, or of Eden), of large pearls; this last overlooking all the former, and canopied by the Throne of the Compassionate (´Arsh Er-Raḥmán). These several regions of Paradise are described in some traditions as forming so many degrees, or stages, ascended by steps.

Though the opinion before mentioned respecting the form of the earth which we inhabit is that generally maintained by the Arabs, there have been, and still are, many philosophical men among this people who have argued that it is a globe, because, as El-Ḳazweenee says, an eclipse of the moon has been observed to happen at different hours of the night in eastern and western countries. Thus we find Ptolemy’s measurement of the earth quoted and explained by Ibn-El-Wardee: — The circumference of the earth is 24,000 miles, or 8,000 leagues, the league being three miles; the mile, 3,000 royal cubits; the cubit, three spans; the span, twelve digits; the digit, five barley-corns placed side by side; and the width of the barley-corn, six mule’s-hairs. El-Maḳreezee [† 1442] also, among the more intelligent Arabs, describes the globular form of the earth, and its arctic and antarctic regions, with their day of six months, and night of six months, and their frozen waters, etc.

For ourselves, however, it is necessary that we retain in our minds the opinions first stated, with regard to the form and dimensions of our earth; agreeing with those Muslims who allow not philosophy to trench upon revelation or sacred traditions. It is written, say they, that God hath “spread out the earth,” “as a bed,” and “as a carpet;” and what is round or globular cannot be said to be spread out, nor compared to a bed, or a carpet. It is therefore decided to be an almost plane expanse. The continents and islands of the earth are believed by the Arabs (as they were by the Greeks in the age of Homer and Hesiod) to be surrounded by “the Circumambient Ocean,” el-Baḥr el-Moḥeeṭ; and this ocean is described as bounded by a chain of mountains called Ḳáf, which encircle the whole as a ring, and confine and strengthen the entire fabric. With respect to the extent of the earth, our faith must at least admit the assertion of the Prophet, that its width (as well as its depth or thickness) is equal to five hundred years’ journey, allotting the space of two hundred to the sea, two hundred to uninhabited desert, eighty to the country of Yájooj and Májooj (Gog and Magog), and the rest to the remaining creatures: nay, vast as these limits are, we must rather extend than contract them, unless we suppose some of the heroes of the “Thousand and One Nights” to travel by circuitous routes. Another tradition will suit us better, wherein it is said, that the inhabited portion of the earth is, with respect to the rest, as a tent in the midst of a desert.

But even according to the former assertion it will be remarked that the countries now commonly known to the Arabs (from the western extremity of Africa to the eastern limits of India, and from the southern confines of Abyssinia to those of Russia), occupy a comparatively insignificant portion of this expanse. They are situated in the middle; Mekkeh, according to some, — or Jerusalem, according to others, — being exactly in the centre. Adjacent to the tract occupied by these countries are other lands and seas, partially known to the Arabs. On the north-west, with respect to the central point, lies the country of the Christians or Franks, comprising the principal European nations; on the north, the country of Yájooj and Májooj, before mentioned, occupying, in the maps of the Arabs, large tracts of Asia and Europe; on the north-east, central Asia; on the east, Eṣ-Ṣeen (China); on the south-east, the sea or seas of El-Hind (India), and Ez-Zinj (Southern Ethiopia), the waves of which (or of the former of which) mingle with those of the sea of Eṣ-Ṣeen, beyond; on the south, the country of the Zinj; on the south-west, the country of the Soodán, or Blacks; on the west is a portion of the Circumambient Ocean, which surrounds all the countries and seas already mentioned, as well as immense unknown regions adjoining the former, and innumerable islands interspersed in the latter.

These *terrae incognitae* are the scenes of some of the greatest wonders described in the “Thousand and One Nights;” and are mostly peopled with Jinn (Genii). On the Moḥeeṭ, or Circumambient Ocean, is the ´Arsh Iblees, or Throne of Iblees: in a map accompanying my copy of the work of Ibn-El-Wardee, a large yellow tract is marked with this name, adjoining Southern Africa. The western portion of the Moḥeeṭ is often called “the Sea of Darkness” (Baḥr eẓ-Ẓulumát, or, Baḥr eẓ-Ẓulmeh). Under this name (and the synonymous appellation of el-Baḥr el-Muzlim) the Atlantic Ocean is described by the author just mentioned; though, in the introduction to his work, he says that the Sea of Darkness surrounds the Moḥeeṭ. The former may be considered either as the western or the more remote portion of the latter.

In the dark regions (Eẓ-Ẓulumát, from which, perhaps, the above-mentioned portion of the Moḥeeṭ takes its name),▯ in the south-west quarter of the earth, according to the same author, is the Fountain of Life, of which El-Khiḍr▯ drank, and by virtue of which he still lives and will live till the day of judgment. This mysterious person, whom the vulgar and some others regard as a prophet and identify with Ilyás (Elias, Elijah), and whom some confound with St. George, was, according to the more approved opinion of the learned, a just man or saint, the Wezeer and counsellor of the first Dhu-l-Ḳarneyn, who was a universal conqueror, but an equally doubtful personage, contemporary with the patriarch Ibráheem (Abraham). El-Khiḍr is said to appear frequently to Muslims in perplexity, and to be generally clad in green garments; whence, according to some, his name (which signifies “green”). The Prophet Ilyás is also related to have drunk of the Fountain of Life. During the day-time, it is said, El-Khiḍr wanders upon the seas, and directs voyagers who go astray; while Ilyás perambulates the mountains or deserts, and directs persons who chance to be led astray by the Ghools: but at night they meet together, and guard the rampart of Yájooj and Májooj,▯ to prevent these people from making irruptions upon their neighbours. Both, however, are generally believed by the modern Muslims to assist pious persons in distress in various circumstances, whether travelling by land or by water.

The Mountains of Ḳáf, which bound the Circumambient Ocean and form a circular barrier round the whole of our earth, are described by interpreters of the Ḳur-án as composed of green chrysolite, like the green tint of the sky.▯ It is the colour of these mountains, said the Prophet, that imparts a greenish hue to the sky. It is said, in a tradition, that beyond these mountains are other countries; one of gold, seventy of silver, and seven of musk, all inhabited by angels, and each country ten thousand years' journey in length, and the same in breadth.▯ Some say that beyond it are creatures unknown to any but God:▯ but the general opinion is, that the mountains of Ḳáf terminate our earth, and that no one knows what is beyond them. They are the chief abode of the Jinn, or Genii.

It has already been said that our earth is the first, or highest, of seven earths, which are all of equal width and thickness and at equal distances apart. Each of these earths has occupants. The occupants of the first are men, genii, brutes, etc.; the second is occupied by the suffocating wind that destroyed the infidel tribe of Ad; the third, by the stones of Jahennem (or Hell), mentioned in the Ḳur-án in these words, "the fuel of which is men and stones;"▯ the fourth, by the sulphur of Jahennem; the fifth, by its serpents; the sixth, by its scorpions, in colour and size like black mules and with tails like spears; the seventh, by Iblees and his troops.▯

Whether these several earths are believed to be connected with each other by any means, and if so how, we are not expressly informed; but, that they are supposed to be so is evident. With respect to our earth in particular, as some think, it is said that it is supported by a rock, with which the Mountains of Ḳáf communicate by means of veins or roots; and that when God desires to effect an earthquake at a certain place, He commands the mountain (or rock) to agitate the vein that is connected with that place.▯ But there is another account, describing our earth as upheld by certain successive supports of inconceivable magnitude, which are under the seventh earth; leaving us to infer that the seven earths are in some manner connected together. This account, as inserted in the work of one of the writers above quoted, is as follows: — The earth [under which appellation are here understood the seven earths] was, it is said, originally unstable; "therefore God created an angel of immense size and of the utmost strength, and ordered him to go beneath it [*i.e.* beneath the lowest earth] and place it on his shoulders; and his hands extended beyond the east and west, and grasped the extremities of the earth [or, as related in Ibn-El-Wardee, the seven earths] and held it [or them]. But there was no support for his feet: so God created a rock of ruby, in which were seven thousand perforations, and from each of these perforations issued a sea, the size of which none knoweth but God, whose name be exalted; then he ordered this rock to stand under the feet of the angel. But there was no support for the rock: wherefore God created a huge bull, with four thousand eyes and the same number of ears, noses, mouths, tongues, and feet; between every two of which was a distance of five hundred years' journey; and God, whose name be exalted, ordered this bull to go beneath the rock; and he bore it on his back and his horns. The name of this bull is Kuyootà.▯ But there was no support for the bull: therefore God, whose name be exalted, created an enormous fish, that no one could look upon on account of its vast size, and the flashing of its eyes, and their greatness; for it is said that if all the seas were placed in one of its nostrils, they would appear like a grain of mustard-seed in the midst of a desert: and God, whose name be exalted, commanded the fish to be a support to the feet of the bull.▯ The name of this fish is Bahamoot [Behemoth]. He placed, as its support, water; and under the water, darkness: and the knowledge of mankind fails as to what is under the darkness."▯ — Another opinion is, that the [seventh] earth is upon water; the water, upon the rock; the rock, on the back of the bull; the bull, on a bed of sand; the sand, on the fish; the fish, upon a still, suffocating wind; the wind, on a veil of darkness; the darkness, on a mist; and what is beneath the mist is unknown.▯

It is generally believed that under the lowest earth, and beneath seas of darkness of which the number is unknown, is Hell, which consists of seven stages, one beneath another. The first of these, according to the general opinion, is destined for the reception of wicked Mohammadans; the second, for the Christians; the third, for the Jews; the fourth, for the Sabians; the fifth, for the Magians; the sixth, for the Idolaters; the seventh, by general consent, for the Hypocrites. Jahennem is the general name for Hell, and the particular name for its first stage.▯ The situation of Hell has been a subject of dispute; some place it in the seventh earth; and some have doubted whether it be above or below the earth which we inhabit.

At the consummation of all things, God, we are told, will take the whole earth in his [left] hand, and the heavens will be rolled together in his right hand;▯ and the earth will be changed into another earth;

and the heavens, [into other heavens];▯ and Hell will be brought nigh to the [tribunal of God].▯

CHAPTER VI.

LITERATURE.

Perhaps there are no people in the world who are such enthusiastic admirers of literature, and so excited by romantic tales, as the Arabs. Eloquence, with them, is lawful magic: it exercises over their minds an irresistible influence. “I swear by God,” said their Prophet, “verily abuse of infidels in verse is worse to them than arrows.”▯

In the purest, or Heroic Age of Arabic literature, which was anterior to the triumph of the Mohammadan religion, the conquest which the love of eloquence could achieve over the sanguinary and vindictive feelings of the Arabs was most remarkably exemplified in the annual twenty days’ fair of ´Okáḍh.

The fair of ´Okáḍh “was not only a great mart opened annually to all the tribes of Arabia; but it was also a literary congress, or rather a general concourse of virtues, of glory and of poetry, whither the hero-poets resorted to celebrate their exploits in rhyming verse, and peacefully to contend for every kind of honour. This fair was held in the district of Mekkeh, between Eṭ-Ṭáïf and Nakhleh and was opened at the new moon of Dhu-l-Ḳaạdeh; that is to say, at the commencement of a period of three sacred months, during which all war was suspended and homicide interdicted.... How is it possible to conceive that men whose wounds were always bleeding, who had always acts of vengeance to execute, vengeances to dread, could at a certain epoch impose silence upon their animosities, so as tranquilly to sit beside a mortal enemy? How could the brave who required the blood of a father, a brother, or a son, according to the phraseology of the desert and of the Bible,▯ who long, perhaps, had pursued in vain the murderer, — meet him, accost him peacefully at ´Okáḍh, and only assault with cadences and rhymes him whose presence alone seemed to accuse him of impotence or cowardice, — him whom he was bound to slay, under pain of infamy, after the expiration of the truce? In fine, how could he hear a panegyric celebrating a glory acquired at his own expense, and sustain the fire of a thousand looks, and yet appear unmoved? Had the Arabs no longer any blood in their veins during the continuance of the fair?

“These embarrassing questions ... were determined [to a great degree], during the age of Arab paganism, in a manner the simplest and most refined: at the fair of ´Okáḍh, the heroes were masked [or veiled]. In the recitations and improvisations, the voice of the orator was aided by that of a rhapsodist or crier, who was stationed near him, and repeated his words. There is a similar office in the public prayers; it is that of the muballigh (transmitter), who is employed to repeat in a loud voice what is said in a lower tone by the Imám.... The use of the mask [or veil] might, however, be either adopted or dispensed with *ad libitum*; as is proved by the narratives of a great number of quarrels begun and ended at ´Okáḍh....

“It was in this congress of the Arab poets (and almost every warrior was a poet at the age which I am considering) that the dialects of Arabia became fused into a magic language, the language of the Ḥejáz, which Moḥammad made use of to subvert the world; for the triumph of Moḥammad is nothing else than the triumph of speech.”▯ The Ḳur-án is regarded by the Arabs as an everlasting miracle, surpassing all others, appealing to the understanding of every generation by its inimitable eloquence. A stronger proof of the power of language over their minds could hardly be adduced; unless it be their being capable of receiving as a credible fact the tradition that both genii and men were attracted by the eloquent reading of David, when he recited the Psalms; that the wild beasts and the birds were alike fascinated; and that sometimes there were borne out from his assembly as many as four hundred corpses of men who died from the excessive delight with which he thus inspired them!▯ It may be added, that the recitation or chanting of the Ḳur-án is a favourite means of amusing the guests at modern private festivities.

In what may be termed the Middle Age of Arabic literature, beginning with the triumph of the Mohammadan religion and extending to the foundation of the Empire of Baghdád, the power of eloquence over the educated classes of the Arabs probably increased in proportion as it became less familiar to them: for early in this age they began to simplify their spoken language in consequence of their intercourse with strangers, who could not generally acquire the difficult, old dialect of their conquerors, which consequently began to be confined to literary compositions. That such a change took place at this period appears from several anecdotes interspersed in Arabic works. The Khaleefeh El-Weleed (who reigned near the close of the first century of the Flight), the son of ´Abd-El-Melik, spoke so corrupt a dialect that he often could not make himself understood by the Arabs of the desert. A ridiculous instance of the mistakes occasioned by his use of the simplified language which is now current is related by Abu-l-Fidà. The same author adds that the father and predecessor of this prince was a man of eloquence, and that he was grieved by the corrupt speech of his son, which he considered as a defect that incapacitated him to be a future ruler of the Arabs, who were still great admirers of purity of speech, though so large a proportion of them spoke a corrupt dialect. So he sent him to a house to be instructed by a grammarian; but after the youth had remained there a long time, he returned to his father more ignorant than before. Vulgarisms, however, would sometimes escape from the mouth of ´Abd-El-Melik himself; yet so sensible was he to eloquence, that when a learned man, with whom he was conversing, elegantly informed him of an error of this kind, he ordered his mouth to be filled with jewels. “These,” said his courteous admonisher, “are things to be treasured up, not to be expended:” — and for this delicate hint he was further rewarded with thirty thousand pieces of silver and several costly articles of apparel.▯

It may be added that this Khaleefeh was in the beginning of his reign an unjust monarch, but was reclaimed to a sense of his duty by the following means. Being one night unable to sleep, he called for a person to tell him a story for his amusement. “O Prince of the Faithful,” said the man thus bidden, “there was an owl in El-Móṣil, and an owl in El-Baṣrah; and the owl of El-Móṣil demanded in marriage for her son the daughter of the owl of El-Baṣrah: but the owl of El-Baṣrah said, ‘I will not, unless thou give me as her dowry a hundred desolate farms.’ ‘That I cannot do,’ said the owl of El-Móṣil, ‘at present; but if our sovereign (may God, whose name be exalted, preserve him!) live one year, I will give thee what thou desirest.’” This simple fable sufficed to rouse the prince from his apathy, and he thenceforward applied himself to fulfil the duties of his station.▯

In the most flourishing age of Arabic poetry and general literature and science, beginning with the foundation of the Empire of Baghdád and extending to the conquest of Egypt by the ´Othmánlee Turks, the influence of eloquent and entertaining language upon the character of the Arab sovereigns was particularly exemplified, as the following anecdotes will show.

It is related by El-Aṣma´ee that Hároon Er-Rasheed, at a grand fête which he was giving, ordered the poet Abu-l´Atáhiyeh to depict in verse the voluptuous enjoyments of his sovereign. The poet began thus: —

“Live long in safe enjoyment of thy desires under the shadow of lofty palaces!”

“Well said!” exclaimed Er-Rasheed: “and what next?”

“May thy wishes be abundantly fulfilled, whether at eventide or in the morning!”

“Well!” again said the Khaleefeh: “then what next?”

“But when the rattling breath struggles in the dark cavity of the chest,
Then shalt thou know surely that thou hast been only in the midst of illusions.”

Er-Rasheed wept; and Faḍl, the son of Yaḥyà, said, “The Prince of the Faithful sent for thee to divert him, and thou hast plunged him into grief.” “Suffer him,” said the prince; “for he hath beheld us in blindness, and it displeased him to increase it.”[]

The family of the Barmekees (one of the most brilliant ornaments of which was the Wezeer Jaạfar, who has been rendered familiar to us by the many scenes in which he is introduced in the “Thousand and One Nights”) earned a noble and enduring reputation by their attachment to literature and the magnificent rewards they conferred on learned men. It was peculiarly hard, therefore, that literature contributed to their melancholy overthrow. Poets were employed by their enemies to compose songs artfully pointed against them, to be sung before the prince to whom they owed their power. Of one of these songs, the following lines formed a part: —

“Would that Hind had fulfilled the promises she made us, and healed the disease under which we suffer!
That she had once, at least, acted for herself! for imbecile, indeed, is he who doth not so.”

“Yea! By Allah! Imbecile!” exclaimed the Khaleefeh, on hearing these verses: his jealousy was roused; and his vengeance soon after fell heavily upon his former favourites.▯

One of the Khaleefehs having invited the poets of his day to his palace, a Bedawee, carrying a water-jar to fill at the river, followed them, and entered with them. The Khaleefeh, seeing this poor man with the jar on his shoulder, asked him what brought him thither. He returned for answer these words: —

“Seeing that this company had girded on the saddles
To repair to thy overflowing river, I came with my jar.”

The Khaleefeh, delighted with his answer, gave orders to fill his jar with gold.▯

It has long been a common custom of Eastern princes to bestow dresses of honour upon men of literature and science, as well as upon their great officers and other servants. These dresses were of different kinds for persons of different classes or professions. The most usual kind was an ample coat. With dresses of this description were often given gold-embroidered turbans, and sometimes to Emeers (or great military officers) neck-rings or collars (called ṭóḳs), some of which were set with jewels, as also bracelets and swords ornamented with precious stones; and to Wezeers, instead of the ṭóḳ, a necklace of jewels.▯

The following striking record will convey an idea of the magnificence of some of these dresses of honour, or in other words of the liberality of a Muslim prince, and at the same time of the very precarious nature of his favour. A person chancing to look at a register kept by one of the officers of Hároon Er-Rasheed, saw in it the following entry:— “Four hundred thousand pieces of gold, the price of a dress of honour for Jaạfar, the son of Yaḥyà, the Wezeer.” A few days after, he saw beneath this written,— “Ten ḳeeráṭs, the price of naphtha and reeds, for burning the body of Jaạfar, the son of Yaḥyà.”▯

Arab princes and other great men have generally been famous for highly respecting and liberally rewarding men of literature and science, and especially poets. El-Ma-moon and many others are well known to us for their patronage of the learned. Er-Rasheed carried his condescension to them so far as to pour the water on the hands of a blind man, Aboo-Mo´áwiyeh, one of the most learned persons of his time, previously to his eating with him, to show his respect for science.▯ We have already seen how a Khaleefeh ordered the mouth of a learned man to be filled with jewels. To cram the mouth with sugar or sweetmeats for a polite or eloquent speech, or piece of poetry, has been more commonly done; but the usual presents to learned men were, and are, dresses of honour and sums of money. Ibn-´Obeyd El-Bakhteree, an illustrious poet and traditionist who flourished in the reign of El-Musta´een, is said to have received so many presents that after his death there were found, among the property which he left, a hundred complete suits of dress, two hundred shirts, and five hundred turbans.▯ A thousand pieces of gold were often given, and sometimes ten, twenty, or thirty thousand, and even more, for a few verses; nay, for a single couplet.

The prodigality of Arab princes to men of learning may be exemplified by the following anecdote. — Ḥammád, surnamed Er-Ráwiyeh, or the famous reciter, having attached himself to the Khaleefeh El-Weleed, the son of ´Abd-El-Melik, and shown a contrary feeling towards his brother Hishám, fled, on the accession of the latter, to El-Koofeh. While there, a letter arrived from Hishám, commanding his presence at Damascus: it was addressed to the governor, who, being ordered to treat him with honour, gave him a purse containing a thousand pieces of gold, and dispatched him with the Khaleefeh’s messenger.

On his arrival at Damascus, he was conducted before Hishám, whom he found in a splendid saloon, seated under a pavilion of red silk surmounted by a dome of yellow brocade, attended by two female slaves of beauty unsurpassed, each holding a crystal ewer of wine. His admission during the presence of members of the king’s ḥareem was a very unusual and high honour: the mention of the wine will be explained in the next chapter. After Ḥammád had given the salutation▯ and the Khaleefeh had returned it, the latter told him that he had sent for him to ask respecting a couplet of which he could only remember that it ended with the word “ibreeḳ,” which signifies “a ewer.” The reciter reflected awhile, and the lines occurred to his mind, and he repeated them. Hishám cried out in delight that the lines were those he meant; drank a cup of wine, and desired one of the female slaves to hand a cup to Ḥammád. She did so; and the draught, he says, deprived him of one-third of his reason. The Khaleefeh desired him to repeat the lines again, and drink a second cup; and Ḥammád was deprived of another third of his reason in the same manner; and said, “O Prince of the Faithful, two-thirds of my reason have departed from me.” Hishám laughed, and desired him to ask what he would before the remaining third should have gone; and the reciter said, “One of these two female slaves.” The Khaleefeh laughed again, and said, “Nay, but both of them are thine, and all that is upon them and all that they possess, and beside them fifty thousand pieces of gold.”— “I kissed the ground before him,” says Ḥammád, “and drank a third cup, and was unconscious of what happened after. I did not awake till the close of the night, when I found myself in a handsome house, surrounded by lighted candles, and the two female slaves were putting in order my clothes and other things. So I took possession of the property, and departed, the happiest of the creatures of God.”▯

In the beginning of the year of the Flight 305 (A.D. 917), two ambassadors from the Greek Emperor (Constantine VII., Porphyrogenitus) arrived in Baghdád on a mission to the Khaleefeh El-Muḳtedir, bringing an abundance of costly presents. They were first received by the Wezeer, who, at the audience which he granted to them in his garden palace, displayed a degree of magnificence that had never before been manifested by any of his rank. Pages, memlooks, and soldiers crowded the avenues and courts of his mansion, the apartments of which were hung with tapestry of the value of thirty thousand deenárs; and the Wezeer himself was surrounded by generals and other officers on his right and left and behind his seat, when the two ambassadors approached him, dazzled by the splendour that surrounded them, to beg for an interview with the Khaleefeh. El-Muḳtedir, having appointed a day on which he would receive them, ordered that the courts and passages and avenues of his palace should be filled with armed men, and that all the apartments should be furnished with the utmost magnificence. A hundred and sixty thousand armed soldiers were arranged in ranks in the approach to the palace; next to these were the pages of the closets and chief eunuchs, clad in silk and with belts set with jewels, in number seven thousand, — four thousand white and three thousand black, — besides seven hundred chamberlains; and beautifully ornamented boats of various kinds were seen floating upon the Tigris hard by.

The two ambassadors passed first by the palace of the chief chamberlain, and, astonished at the splendid ornaments and pages and arms which they there beheld, imagined that this was the palace of the Khaleefeh. But what they had seen here was eclipsed by what they beheld in the latter, where they were amazed by the sight of thirty-eight thousand pieces of tapestry of gold-embroidered silk brocade, and twenty-two thousand magnificent carpets. Here also were two menageries of beasts, by nature wild but tamed by art and eating from the hands of men: among them were a hundred lions, each with its keeper. They then entered the Palace of the Tree, enclosing a pond from which rose the Tree: this had eighteen branches, with artificial leaves of various colours and with birds of gold and silver (or gilt and silvered) of every variety of kind and size perched upon its branches, so constructed that each of them sang. Thence they passed into the garden, in which were furniture and utensils not to be enumerated; in the passages leading to it were suspended ten thousand gilt coats of mail. Being at length conducted before El-Muḳtedir, they found him seated on a couch of ebony inlaid with gold and silver, to the right of which were hung nine necklaces of jewels, and the like to the left, the jewels of which outshone the light of day. The two ambassadors paused at the distance of about a hundred cubits from the Khaleefeh, with the interpreter. Having left the presence, they were conducted through the palace, and were shown splendidly caparisoned elephants, a giraffe, lynxes, and other beasts. They were then clad with robes of honour, and to each of them was brought fifty thousand dirhems, together with dresses and other presents. It is added that the ambassadors approached the palace through a street called “the Street of the Menárehs,” in which were a thousand menárehs or minarets. It was at the hour of noon; and as they passed, the muëddins from all these minarets chanted the call to prayer at the same time, so that the earth almost quaked at the sound, and the ambassadors were struck with fear.▯

The Orientals well understand how to give the most striking effect to the jewels which they display on their dress and ornaments on occasions of state. Sir John Malcolm, describing his reception by the King of Persia, says, “His dress baffled all description. The ground of his robes was white; but he was so covered with jewels of an extraordinary size, and their splendour, from his being seated where the rays of the sun played upon them, was so dazzling, that it was impossible to distinguish the minute parts which combined to give such amazing brilliancy to his whole figure.”

A whimsical story is told of a King who denied to poets those rewards to which usage had almost given them a claim. This King, whose name is not recorded, had the faculty of retaining in his memory an ode after having only once heard it; and he had a memlook who could repeat an ode that he had twice heard, and a female slave who could repeat one that she had heard thrice. Whenever a poet came to compliment him with a panegyrical ode, the King used to promise him that if he found his verses to be his original composition, he would give him a sum of money equal in weight to what they were written upon. The poet, consenting, would recite his ode; and the King would say, “It is not new, for I have known it some years;” and would repeat it as he had heard it. After which he would add, “And this memlook also retains it in his memory;” and would order the memlook to repeat it: which, having heard it twice, from the poet and the king, he would do. The King would then say to the poet, “I have also a female slave who can repeat it;” and on his ordering her to do so, stationed behind the curtains, she would repeat what she had thus thrice heard: so the poet would go away empty-handed. The famous poet, El Aṣma´ee, having heard of this proceeding, and guessing the trick, determined upon outwitting the King; and accordingly composed an ode made up of very difficult words. But this was not his only preparative measure, another will be presently explained, and a third was to assume the dress of a Bedawee, that he might not be known, covering his face, the eyes only excepted, with a lithám (a piece of drapery) in accordance with a custom of Arabs of the desert.

Thus disguised, he went to the palace, and having asked permission, entered, and saluted the King, who said to him, “Whence art thou, O brother of the Arabs, and what dost thou desire?”

The poet answered, “May God increase the power of the King! I am a poet of such a tribe, and have composed an ode in praise of our Lord the Sulṭán.”

“O brother of the Arabs,” said the King, “hast thou heard of our condition?”

“No,” answered the poet; “and what is it, O King of the age?”

“It is,” replied the King, “that if the ode be not thine, we give thee no reward; and if it be thine, we give thee the weight in money of what it is written upon.”

“How,” said El-Aṣma´ee, “should I assume to myself that which belongs to another, and knowing, too, that lying before kings is one of the basest of actions? But I agree to this condition, O our Lord the Sulṭán.”

So he repeated his ode. The King, perplexed, and unable to remember any of it, made a sign to the memlook — but he had retained nothing; and called to the female slave, but she also was unable to repeat a word.

“O brother of the Arabs,” said he, “thou hast spoken truth, and the ode is thine without doubt; I have never heard it before: produce, therefore, what it is written upon, and we will give thee its weight in money, as we have promised.”

“Wilt thou,” said the poet, “send one of the attendants to carry it?”

“To carry what?” asked the King; “is it not upon a paper here in thy possession?”

“No, our lord the Sulṭán,” replied the poet; “at the time I composed it I could not procure a piece of paper upon which to write it, and could find nothing but a fragment of a marble column left me by my father; so I engraved it upon this, and it lies in the court of the palace.”

He had brought it, wrapped up, on the back of a camel. The King, to fulfil his promise, was obliged to exhaust his treasury; and to prevent a repetition of this trick, (of which he afterwards discovered El-Aṣma´ee to have been the author), in future rewarded the poets according to the usual custom of kings.

In the present declining age of Arabian learning (which may be said to have commenced about the period of the conquest of Egypt by the ´Othmánlees), literary recreations still exert a magical influence upon the Arabs. Compositions of a similar nature to the tales of the "Thousand and One Nights" (though regarded by the learned as idle stories unworthy of being classed with their literature) enable numbers of professional story-tellers to attract crowds of delighted listeners to the coffee-shops of the East; and now that the original of this work is printed and to be purchased at a moderate price, it will probably soon in a great measure supersede the romances of Aboo-Zeyd, Eẓ-Ẓáhir, and ´Antarah. As a proof of the powerful fascinations with which the tales of the "Thousand and One Nights" affect the mind of a highly enlightened Muslim, it may be mentioned that the latest native historian of Modern Egypt, the sheykh ´Abd-Er-Raḥmán El-Jabartee, so delighted in their perusal that he took the trouble of refining the language of a copy of them which he possessed, expunging or altering whatever was grossly offensive to morality without the somewhat redeeming quality of wit, and adding many facetiæ of his own and of other literati. What has become of this copy I have been unable, though acquainted with several of his friends, to discover.

The letters of Muslims are distinguished by several peculiarities dictated by the rules of politeness. The paper is thick, white, and highly polished: sometimes it is ornamented with flowers of gold; and the edges are always cut straight with scissors. The upper half is generally left blank, and the writing never occupies any portion of the second side. A notion of the usual style of letters may be obtained from several examples in the "Thousand and One Nights." The name of the person to whom the letter is addressed, when the writer is an inferior or an equal, and even in some other cases, commonly occurs in the first sentence, preceded by several titles of honour; and is often written a little above the line to which it appertains; the space beneath it in that line being left blank: sometimes it is written in letters of gold, or red ink. A king writing to a subject, or a great man to a dependant, usually places his name and seal at the head of his letter. The seal is the impression of a signet (generally a ring, worn on the little finger of the right hand), upon which is engraved the name of the person, commonly accompanied by the words "His [*i.e.* God's] servant," or some other words expressive of trust in God and the like. Its impression is considered more valid than the sign-manual, and is indispensable to give authenticity to the letter. It is made by dabbing some ink upon the surface of the signet and pressing this upon the paper: the place which is to be stamped being first moistened by touching the tongue with a finger of the right hand and then gently rubbing the part with that finger. A person writing to a superior or an equal, or even to an inferior to whom he wishes to show respect, signs his name at the bottom of his letter, next the left side or corner, and places the seal immediately to the right of this: but if he particularly desire to testify his humility, he places it beneath his name, or even partly over the lower edge of the paper, which consequently does not receive the whole of the impression. The letter is generally folded twice in the direction of the writing, and enclosed in a cover of paper, upon which is written the address in some such form as this:— "It shall arrive, if it be the will of God, whose name be exalted, at such a place, and be delivered into the hand of our honoured friend, etc., such a one, whom God preserve." Sometimes it is placed in a small bag, or purse, of silk embroidered with gold.

Many persons of the instructed classes, and some others among the Arabs, often take delight and show much ingenuity and quickness of apprehension in conversing and corresponding by means of signs and emblems, or in a conventional, metaphorical language, not understood by the vulgar in general and sometimes not by any excepting the parties engaged in the intercourse. In some cases, when the main metaphor employed is understood, the rest of the conversation becomes easily intelligible, without any previous explanation; and I have occasionally succeeded in carrying on a conversation of this kind, but I have more frequently been unsuccessful in attempting to divine the nature of a topic in which other persons were engaged. One simple mode of secret conversation or correspondence is by substituting certain letters for other letters.

Many of the women are said to be adepts in this art, or science, and to convey messages, declarations of love, and the like, by means of fruits, flowers, and other emblems. The inability of numbers of women in families of the middle classes to write or read, as well as the difficulty or impossibility frequently existing of conveying written letters, may have given rise to such modes of communication. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, in one of her charming letters from the East, has gratified our curiosity by a Turkish love-letter of this kind.▯ A specimen of one from an Arab with its answer, may be here added: — An Arab lover sent to his mistress a fan, a bunch of flowers, a silk tassel, some sugar-candy, and a piece of a chord of a musical instrument; and she returned for answer a piece of an aloe-plant, three black cumin-seeds, and a piece of a plant used in washing.▯ His communication is thus interpreted. The fan, being called “mirwaḥah,” a word derived from a root which has among its meanings that of “going to any place in the evening,” signified his wish to pay her an evening visit: the flowers, that the interview should be in her garden: the tassel, being called “shurrábeh,” that they should have sharáb▯ (or wine): the sugar-candy, being termed “sukkar nebát,” and “nebát” also signifying “we will pass the night,” denoted his desire to remain in her company until the morning: and the piece of a chord, that they should be entertained by music. The interpretation of her answer is as follows. The piece of an aloe-plant, which is called “ṣabbárah” (from “ṣabr,” which signifies “patience” — because it will live for many months together without water), implied that he must wait: the three black cumin-seeds explained to him that the period of delay should be three nights: and the plant used in washing informed him that she should then have gone to the bath, and would meet him.▯

A remarkable faculty is displayed by some Arabs for catching the meaning of secret signs employed in written communications to them, such signs being often used in political and other intrigues. The following is a curious instance. — The celebrated poet El-Mutanebbee, having written some verses in dispraise of Káfoor El-Ikhsheedee, the independent Governor of Egypt, was obliged to flee and hide himself in a distant town. Káfoor was informed of his retreat, and desired his secretary to write to him a letter promising him pardon and commanding him to return; but told the writer at the same time that when the poet came he would punish him. The secretary was a friend of the poet, and, being obliged to read the letter to the Prince when he had written it, was perplexed how to convey to El-Mutanebbee some indication of the danger that awaited him. He could only venture to do so in the exterior address; and having written this in the usual form, commencing “In sháa-lláh” (If it be the will of God) “this shall arrive,” etc., he put a small mark of reduplication over the “n” in the first word, which he thus converted into “Inna,” the final vowel being understood. The poet read the letter and was rejoiced to see a promise of pardon; but on looking a second time at the address was surprised to observe the mark of reduplication over the “n.” Knowing the writer to be his friend, he immediately suspected a secret meaning, and rightly conceived that the sign conveyed an allusion to a passage in the Ḳur-án commencing with the word “Inna,” and this he divined to be the following:— “Verily the magistrates are deliberating concerning thee, to put thee to death.”□ Accordingly, he fled to another town. Some authors add that he wrote a reply conveying by a similar sign to his friend an allusion to another passage in the Ḳur-án:— “We will never enter the country while they remain therein.”□ It is probable that signs thus employed were used by many persons to convey allusions to certain words; and such may have been the case in the above-mentioned instance: if not, the poet was indeed a wonderful guesser.

It is commonly believed by the Muslims (learned and unlearned) that all kinds of birds and many (if not all) beasts have a language by which they communicate their thoughts to each other; and we are told in the Ḳur-án□ that Suleymán (Solomon) was taught the language of birds.□ I thought that I could boast of an accomplishment very rare in Christian countries, in having learned in Egypt somewhat of this language; for instance, that the common cry of the pigeon is “Allah! Allah!” (“God! God!”); that of the ringdove, “Kereem! Towwáb!” (“Bountiful! Propitious!” — an ejaculation addressed to God); that of the common dove, “Waḥḥidoo rabbakumu-llezee khalaḳakum yeghfir-lakum zembakum!" ("Assert the unity of your Lord who created you, that He may forgive you your sin!"): but I afterwards found that several specimens of this language were given by Ez-Zamakhsheree, and had been published in Europe.▯ The cock cries, "Uzkuru-lláha, yá gh//áfiloon!" ("Commemorate God, O ye negligent!"): the ḳaṭà (a kind of grouse), "Men seket selim!" ("He who is silent is safe!") The latter, however, would do better if it did itself attend to the maxim it utters; for its cry (which to the uninstructed in the language of birds sounds merely "ḳaṭà! ḳaṭà!" — its own name) tells where it is to be found by the sportsman, and thus causes its own destruction. — Hence the proverb, "More veracious than the ḳaṭà."

An Arab historian mentions a parrot which recited the Soorat Yá-Seen (or 36th chapter of the Ḳur-án), and a raven which recited the Soorat es-Sijdeh (or 32nd chapter) and which, on arriving at the place of prostration (or verse which should be recited with prostration), would perform that action, and say, "My body prostrateth itself to Thee, and my heart confideth in Thee." But these are not the most remarkable cases of the kind. He affirms that there was a parrot in Cairo which recited the Ḳur-án from beginning to end. The Pásha, he says, desiring to try its talent, caused a man to recite a chapter of the Ḳur-án in its presence, and to pass irregularly from one chapter to another, with the view of leading the bird into error; but, instead of this being the result, the parrot corrected him!▯

CHAPTER VII.

FEASTING AND MERRYMAKING.

The Muslim takes a light breakfast after the morning-prayers, and dinner after the noon-prayers; or a single meal instead of these two, before noon. His principal meal is supper, which is taken after the prayers of sunset. A man of rank or wealth, when he has no guest, generally eats alone; his children eat after him, or with his wife or wives. In all his repasts he is moderate with regard to the quantity which he eats, however numerous the dishes.

In the Middle Ages it appears that the dishes were sometimes, I believe generally, placed upon a round embroidered cloth spread on the floor, and sometimes on a tray, which was either laid on the floor or upon a small stand or stool. The last is the mode now always followed in the houses of the higher and middle classes of the Arabs. The table is usually placed upon a round cloth spread in the middle of the floor, or in a corner next two of the deewáns or low seats which generally extend along three sides of the room. It is composed of a large round tray of silver, or tinned copper, or of brass, supported by a stool, commonly about fifteen or sixteen inches high, made of wood and generally inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and ebony or other wood, or tortoise-shell. When there are numerous guests, two or more such tables are prepared. The dishes are of silver or tinned copper, or china. Several of these are placed upon the tray; and around them are disposed some round flat cakes of bread, with spoons of box-wood, ebony, or other material, and usually two or three limes cut in halves, to be squeezed over certain of the dishes. When these preparations have been made, each person who is to partake of the repast receives a napkin; and a servant pours water over his hands. A basin and ewer of either of the metals first mentioned are employed for this purpose; the former has a cover with a receptacle for a piece of soap in its centre, and with numerous perforations through which the water runs during the act of washing, so that it is not seen when the basin is brought from one person to another. It is indispensably requisite to wash at least the right hand before eating with the fingers anything but dry food; and the mouth also is often rinsed, the water being taken up into it from the right hand. The company sit upon the floor, or upon cushions, or some of them on the deewán, either cross-legged or with the right knee raised: they retain the napkins before mentioned, or a long napkin, sufficient to surround the tray, is placed upon their knees; and each person, before he begins to eat, says, “In the name of God,” or “In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.” The master of the house begins first: if he did do not so, some persons would suspect that the food was poisoned. The thumb and two fingers of the right hand serve instead of knives and forks; and it is the usual custom for a person to help himself to a portion of the contents of a dish by drawing it towards the edge, or taking it from the edge, with a morsel of bread, which he eats with it: when he takes too large a portion for a single mouthful, he generally places it on his cake of bread. He takes from any dish that pleases him; and sometimes a host hands a delicate morsel with his fingers to one of his guests. It is not allowable to touch food with the left hand (as it is used for unclean purposes), excepting in a few cases when both hands are required to divide a joint.

Among the more common dishes are the following: — lamb or mutton, cut into small pieces, and stewed with various vegetables, and sometimes with peaches, apricots, or jujubes, and sugar; cucumbers or small gourds, or the fruit of the black or white egg-plant, stuffed with rice and minced meat, vine-leaves or pieces of lettuce-leaf or cabbage-leaf, enclosing a similar composition; small morsels of lamb or mutton, roasted on skewers, and called kebáb; fowls simply roasted or boiled, or boned and stuffed with raisins, pistachio-nuts, crumbled bread, and parsley; and various kinds of pastry and other sweets. The repast is frequently opened with soup; and is generally ended with boiled rice, mixed with a little butter and seasoned with salt and pepper; or after this is served, a water-melon or other fruit, or a bowl of a sweet drink composed of water with raisins and sometimes other kinds of fruit boiled in it, and then sugar, with a little rose-water added to it when cool. The meat, having generally little fat, is cooked with clarified butter, and is so thoroughly done that it is easily divided with the fingers.

A whole lamb, stuffed in the same manner as the fowls above mentioned, is not a very uncommon dish; but one more extraordinary, of which ´Abd-El-Laṭeef gives an account▯ as one of the most remarkable that he had seen in Egypt, I am tempted to describe. It was an enormous pie, composed in the following manner: — Thirty pounds of fine flour being kneaded with five pounds and a half of oil of sesame, and divided into two equal portions, one of these was spread upon a round tray of copper about four spans in diameter. Upon this were placed three lambs, stuffed with pounded meat fried with oil of sesame and ground pistachio-nuts, and various hot aromatics, such as pepper, ginger, cinnamon, mastic, coriander-seed, cumin-seed, cardamom, nut [or nutmeg?], etc. These were then sprinkled with rose-water infused with musk; and upon the lambs, and in the remaining spaces, were placed twenty fowls, twenty chickens, and fifty smaller birds; some of which were baked, and stuffed with eggs; some, stuffed with meat; and some, fried with the juice of sour grapes, or that of limes, or some similar acid. To the above were added a number of small pies; some filled with meat and others with sugar and sweetmeats; and sometimes the meat of another lamb, cut into small pieces, and some fried cheese. The whole being piled up in the form of a dome, some rose-water infused with musk and aloes-wood was sprinkled upon it; and the other half of the paste first mentioned was spread over, so as to close the whole: it was then baked, wiped with a sponge, and again sprinkled with rose-water infused with musk.

On certain periodical festivals, and on other occasions it has long been, and still is, a custom of Muslim princes to give public feasts to all classes of their subjects, in the palace. El-Maḳreezee quotes a curious account of the feasts which were given on the festival following Ramaḍán to the inhabitants of Cairo by the Fáṭimee Khaleefehs. At the upper end of a large saloon was placed the sereer (or couch) of the monarch, upon which he sat with the Wezeer on his right. Upon this seat was placed a round silver table, with various delicacies, of which they alone ate. Before it, and extending nearly from the seat to the other extremity of the saloon, was set up a kind of table or platform (simáṭ) of painted wood, resembling a number of benches placed together, ten cubits or about eighteen or nineteen feet in width. Along the middle of this were ranged twenty-one enormous dishes, each containing twenty-one baked sheep, three years old and fat, together with fowls, pigeons, and young chickens, in number 350 of each kind, all of which were piled together in an oblong form to the height of the stature of a man, and enclosed with dry sweetmeat. The spaces between these dishes were occupied by nearly five hundred other dishes of earthenware, each of which contained seven fowls, and was filled with sweetmeats of various kinds. The table was strewn with flowers, and cakes of bread made of the finest flour were arranged along each side; there were also two great edifices of sweetmeats, each weighing 17 cwt., which were carried thither by porters with shoulder poles, and one of them was placed at the commencement and the other at the close of this sumptuous banquet. When the Khaleefeh and the Wezeer had taken their seats upon the couch, the officers of state, who were distinguished by neck-rings or collars, and the inferior members of the Court, seated themselves in the order of their respective ranks; and when they had eaten, they gave place to others. Two officers distinguished themselves at these feasts in a very remarkable manner. Each of them used to eat a baked sheep and ten fowls dressed with sweetmeats, and ten pounds of sweetmeats besides, and was presented with a quantity of food carried away from the feast to his house, together with a large sum of money. One of them had been a prisoner at ´Asḳalán; and after he had remained there some time, the person into whose power he had fallen jestingly told him that if he would eat a calf belonging to him, the flesh of which weighed several hundredweights, he would emancipate him. This feat he accomplished and thus obtained his liberation.[]

With respect to clean and unclean meats, the Muslim is subject to nearly the same laws as the Jew. Swine’s flesh, and blood, are especially forbidden to him; but camel’s flesh is allowed. The latter, however, being of a coarse nature, is never eaten when any other meat can be obtained, excepting by persons of the lower classes and by Arabs of the desert. Of fish, almost every kind is eaten (excepting shell-fish), usually fried in oil: of game, little; partly in consequence of frequent doubt whether it have been lawfully killed. The diet consists in a great measure of vegetables, and includes a large variety of pastry. A very common kind of pastry is a pancake, which is made very thin, and folded over several times like a napkin; it is saturated with butter, and generally sweetened with honey or sugar; as is also another common kind which somewhat resembles vermicelli.

The usual beverage at meals is water, which is drunk from cooling, porous, earthen bottles, or from cups of brass or other metal: but in the houses of the wealthy, sherbet is sometimes served instead of this, in covered glass cups, each of which contains about three-quarters of a pint. The sherbet is composed of water made very sweet with sugar, or with a hard conserve of violets or roses or mulberries. After every time that a person drinks, he says, “Praise be to God;” and each person of the company says to him, “May it be productive of enjoyment:” to which he replies, “May God cause thee to have enjoyment.” The Arabs drink little or no water during a meal, but generally take a large draught immediately after. The repast is quickly finished; and each person, as soon as he has done, says, “Praise be to God,” or “Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures.” He then washes in the same manner as before, but more thoroughly; well lathering his beard and rinsing his mouth.

“Whoever,” said the Prophet, “believes in God and the day of resurrection, must respect his guest; and the time of being kind to him is one day and one night; and the period of entertaining him is three days; and after that, if he does it longer, he benefits him more; but it is not right for a guest to stay in the house of the host so long as to incommode him.” He even allowed the “right of a guest” to be taken by force from such as would not offer it.▯ The following observations, respecting the treatment of guests by the Bedawees, present an interesting commentary upon the former precept:—“Strangers who have not any friend or acquaintance in the camp, alight at the first tent that presents itself: whether the owner be at home or not, the wife or daughter immediately spreads a carpet, and prepares breakfast or dinner. If the stranger’s business requires a protracted stay, as, for instance, if he wishes to cross the Desert under the protection of the tribe, the host, after a lapse of three days and four hours from the time of his arrival, asks whether he means to honour him any longer with his company. If the stranger declares his intention of prolonging his visit, it is expected that he should assist his host in domestic matters, fetching water, milking the camel, feeding the horse, etc. Should he even decline this, he may remain; but he will be censured by all the Arabs of the camp: he may, however, go to some other tent of the nezel [or encampment], and declare himself there a guest. Thus, every third or fourth day he may change hosts, until his business is finished, or he has reached his place of destination.”

The obligation which is imposed by eating another person’s bread and salt, or salt alone, or eating such things with another, is well known; but the following example of it may be new to some readers. — Yaạḳoob the son of El-Leyth Eṣ-Ṣaffár, having adopted a predatory life, excavated a passage one night into the palace of Dirhem the Governor of Sijistán, or Seestán; and after he had “made up a convenient bale of gold and jewels, and the most costly stuffs, was proceeding to carry it off, when he happened in the dark to strike his foot against something hard on the floor. Thinking it might be a jewel of some sort or other, a diamond perhaps, he picked it up and put it to his tongue, and, to his equal mortification and disappointment, found it to be a lump of rock-salt; for having thus tasted the salt of the owner, his avarice gave way to his respect for the laws of hospitality; and throwing down his precious booty, he left it behind him, and withdrew empty-handed to his habitation. The treasurer of Dirhem repairing the next day, according to custom, to inspect his charge, was equally surprised and alarmed at observing that a great part of the treasure and other valuables had been removed; but on examining the package which lay on the floor, his astonishment was not less, to find that not a single article had been conveyed away. The singularity of the circumstance induced him to report it immediately to his master: and the latter causing it to be proclaimed throughout the city, that the author of this proceeding had his free pardon, further announced that on repairing to the palace, he would be distinguished by the most encouraging marks of favour.” Yaạḳoob availed himself of the invitation, relying upon the promise, which was fulfilled to him; and from this period he gradually rose in power until he became the founder of a Dynasty.

In the houses of persons of the higher and middle classes in Cairo, the different apartments generally resemble each other in several respects and are similarly furnished. The greater portion of the floor is elevated about half a foot, or somewhat more, above the rest. The higher portion is called leewán (a corruption of “el-eewán”), and the lower, durḳá´ah, from the Persian dar-gáh. When there is but one leewán, the durḳá´ah occupies the lower end, extending from the door to the opposite wall. In a handsome house, it is usually paved with white and black marble and little pieces of red tile inlaid in tasteful and complicated patterns; and if the room is on the ground-floor, and sometimes in other cases, it has in the centre a fountain which plays into a small shallow pool lined with coloured marbles like the surrounding pavement. The shoes or slippers are left upon the durḳá´ah previously to stepping upon the leewán. The latter is generally paved with common stone and covered with a mat in summer, and a carpet over this in winter; and a mattress and cushions are placed against each of its three walls, composing what is called a “deewán,” or divan. The mattress, which is commonly about three feet wide and three or four inches thick, is placed either on the floor or on a raised frame or a slightly elevated pavement; and the cushions, which are usually of a length equal to the width of the mattress and of a height equal to half that measure, lean against the wall. Both mattresses and cushions are stuffed with cotton and are covered with printed calico, cloth, or some more expensive stuff. The deewán which extends along the upper end of the leewán is called the ṣadr, and is the most honourable: and the chief place on this seat is the corner which is to the right of a person facing this end of the room; the other corner is the next in point of honour; and the intermediate places on the same deewán are more honourable than those on the two side-deewáns. To a superior, and often to an equal, the master or mistress yields the chief place. The corners are often furnished with an additional mattress of a square form, just large enough for one person, placed upon the other mattress, and with two additional (but smaller) cushions to recline against. The walls are for the most part plastered and white-washed, and generally have two or more shallow cupboards, the doors of which, as well as those of the apartments, are fancifully constructed with small panels. The windows, which are chiefly composed of curious wooden lattice-work, serving to screen the inhabitants from the view of persons without, as also to admit both light and air, commonly project outwards, and are furnished with mattresses and cushions. In many houses there are, above these, small windows of coloured glass, representing bunches of flowers, etc. The ceiling is of wood, and certain portions of it, which are carved or otherwise ornamented by fanciful carpentry, are usually painted with bright colours, such as red, green, and blue, and sometimes varied with gilding; but the greater part of the wood-work is generally left unpainted.

The ḳá´ah is a large and lofty apartment, commonly having two leewáns on opposite sides of the durḳá´ah. One of these is in most instances larger than the other, and is held to be the more honourable part. Some ḳá´ahs, containing three leewáns, one of these being opposite the entrance, or four leewáns composing the form of a cross with the durḳá´ah in the centre, communicate with the small chambers or closets, or have elevated recesses which are furnished in the same manner as the leewáns. That part of the roof which is over the durḳá´ah rises above the rest, sometimes to nearly twice the height of the latter, and is generally surmounted by a lantern of wooden lattice-work to admit the air.

The prohibition of wine, or rather of fermented and intoxicating liquors, being one of the most remarkable and characteristic points of the Mohammadan religion, it might be imagined that the frequent stories in the “Thousand and One Nights,” describing parties of Muslims as habitually indulging in the use of forbidden beverages, are scandalous misrepresentations of Arab manners and customs. There are, however, many similar anecdotes interspersed in the works of Arab historians, which (though many of them are probably untrue in their application to particular individuals) could not have been offered to the public by such writers if they were not of a nature consistent with the customs of a considerable class of the Arab nation.

In investigating this subject, it is necessary in the first place to state that there is a kind of wine which Muslims are permitted to drink. It is properly called nebeedh (a name which is *now* given to *prohibited* kinds of wine), and is generally prepared by putting dry grapes, or dry dates, in water, to extract their sweetness, and suffering the liquor to ferment slightly until it acquires a little sharpness or pungency. The Prophet himself was in the habit of drinking wine of this kind, which was prepared for him in the first part of the night; he drank it on the first and second days following; but if any remained on the morning of the third day, he either gave it to his servants or ordered it to be poured out upon the ground.▯ Such beverages have, therefore, been drunk by the strictest of his followers; and Ibn-Khaldoon strongly argues that nebeedh thus prepared from dates was the kind of wine used by the Khaleefehs Hároon Er-Rasheed and El-Ma-moon, and several other eminent men, who have been commonly accused of habitually and publicly indulging in debauches of wine properly so called, that is, of inebriating liquors.▯

Nebeedh prepared from raisins is commonly sold in Arab towns under the name of “zebeeb,” which signifies “raisins.” This I have often drunk in Cairo, but never could perceive that it was in the slightest degree fermented. Other beverages, to which the name of “nebeedh” has been applied (though, like zebeeb, no longer called by that name), are also sold in Arab towns. The most common of these is an infusion of licorice, and called by the name of the root, ´erḳ-soos. The nebeedh of dates is sold in Cairo with the dates themselves in the liquor; and in like manner is that of figs. Under the same appellation of nebeedh have been classed the different kinds of beer now commonly called boozeh. Opium, hemp, etc., are now more frequently used by the Muslims to induce intoxication or exhilaration. The young leaves of the hemp are generally used alone, or mixed with tobacco, for smoking; and the capsules, without the seeds, enter into the composition of several intoxicating conserves.

By my own experience I am but little qualified to pronounce an opinion respecting the prevalence of drinking wine among the Arabs; for, never drinking it myself, I had little opportunity of observing others do so during my residence among Muslims. I judge, therefore, from the conversations and writings of Arabs, which justify me in asserting that the practice of drinking wine in private and by select parties is far from being uncommon among modern Muslims, though certainly more so than it was before the introduction of tobacco into the East, in the beginning of the seventeenth century of our era: for this herb, being in a slight degree exhilarating, and at the same time soothing, and unattended by the injurious effects that result from wine, is a sufficient luxury to many who, without it, would have recourse to intoxicating beverages merely to pass away hours of idleness. The use of coffee, too, which became common in Egypt, Syria, and other countries besides Arabia, a century earlier than tobacco, doubtless tended to render the habit of drinking wine less general. That it was adopted as a substitute for wine appears even from its name, “ḳahweh,” an old Arabic term for wine; whence our “coffee.”

There is an Arabic work of some celebrity, and not of small extent, entitled “Ḥalbet el-Kumeyt,”▯ apparently written shortly before the Arabs were in possession of the first of these substitutes for wine, nearly the whole of which consists of anecdotes and verses relating to the pleasures resulting from or attendant upon the use of wine; a few pages at the end being devoted to the condemnation of this practice, or, in other words, to proving the worthlessness of all that precedes. Of this work I possess a copy, a quarto volume of 464 pages. I have endeavoured to skim its cream; but found it impossible to do so without collecting at the same time a considerable quantity of most filthy scum; for it is characterised by wit and humour plentifully interlarded with the grossest and most revolting obscenity. Yet it serves to confirm what has been above asserted. The mere existence of such a work, (and it is not the only one of the kind), written by a man of learning, and I believe a Ḳáḍee, (a judge), or one holding the honourable office of a guardian of religion and morality,▯ and written evidently *con amore*, notwithstanding his assertion to the contrary, — is a strong argument in favour of the prevalence of the practice which it paints in the most fascinating colours, and then condemns. Its author terminates a chapter (the ninth), in which many well-known persons are mentioned as having been addicted to wine, by saying, that the Khaleefehs, Emeers, and Wezeers, so addicted, are too numerous to name in such a work; and by relating a story of a man who placed his own wife in pledge in the hands of a wine-merchant, after having expended in the purchase of the forbidden liquor all the property that he possessed. He excuses himself (in his preface) for writing this book, by saying that he had been ordered to do so by one whom he could not disobey; thus giving us a pretty strong proof that a great man in his own time was not ashamed of avowing his fondness for the prohibited enjoyment. If then we admit the respectable authority of Ibn-Khaldoon, and acquit of the vice of drunkenness those illustrious individuals whose characters he vindicates, we must still regard most of the anecdotes relating to the carousals of other persons as being not without foundation.

One of my friends, who enjoys a high reputation, ranking among the most distinguished of the ´Ulamà of Cairo, is well known to his intimate acquaintances as frequently indulging in the use of forbidden beverages with a few select associates. I disturbed him and his companions by an evening visit on one of these occasions, and was kept waiting within the street door while the guests quickly removed everything that would give me any indication of the manner in which they had been employed; for the announcement of my (assumed) name,▯ and their knowledge of my abstemious character, completely disconcerted them. I found them, however, in the best humour. They had contrived, it appeared, to fill with wine a *china* bottle, of the kind used at that season (it was winter) for water; and when any one of them asked the servant for water, this bottle was brought to him; but when I made the same demand, my host told me that there was a bottle of water on the sill of the window behind that part of the deewán upon which I was seated. The evening passed away very pleasantly, and I should not have known how unwelcome was my intrusion had not one of the guests with whom I was intimately acquainted, in walking part of the way home with me, explained to me the whole occurrence. There was with us a third person, who, thinking that my antipathy to wine was feigned, asked me to stop at his house on my way and take a cup of “white coffee,” by which he meant brandy.

Another of my Muslim acquaintances in Cairo I frequently met at the house of a common friend, where, though he was in most respects very bigoted, he was in the habit of indulging in wine. For some time he refrained from this gratification when I was by; but at length my presence became so irksome to him that he ventured to enter into an argument with me on the subject of the prohibition. The only answer I could give to his question, “Why is wine forbidden?” was in the words of the Ḳur-án, “Because it is the source of more evil than profit."[] This suited his purpose, as I intended it should; and he asked, "What evil results from it?" I answered, "Intoxication and quarrels, and so forth."— "Then," said he, "if a man take not enough to intoxicate him there is no harm;" — and, finding that I acquiesced by silence, he added, "I am in the habit of taking a little; but never enough to intoxicate. Boy, bring me a glass." He was the only Muslim, however, whom I have heard to argue against the absolute interdiction of inebriating liquors.

Histories tell us that some of the early followers of the Prophet indulged in wine, holding the text above referred to as indecisive; and that Moḥammad was at first doubtful upon this subject appears from another text, in which his followers were told not to come to prayer when they were drunk, until they should know what they would say;[] an injunction nearly similar to one in the Bible[]: but when frequent and severe contentions resulted from their use of wine, the following more decided condemnation of the practice was pronounced:— "O ye who have become believers! verily wine and lots and images and divining-arrows are an abomination of the work of the Devil; therefore, avoid them, that ye may prosper."[] This law is absolute; its violation in the smallest degree is criminal. The punishment ordained by the law for drinking (or, according to most doctors, for even tasting) wine or spirits, or inducing intoxication by any other means, on ordinary occasions, is the infliction of eighty stripes in the case of a free man, and forty in that of a slave: but if the crime be openly committed in the course of any day of the month of Ramaḍán, when others are fasting, the punishment prescribed is death!

The prohibition of wine hindered many of the Prophet's contemporaries from embracing his religion. It is said that the famous poet El-Aạshà, who was one of them, delayed to join this cause on this account, until death prevented him. A person passing by his tomb (at Menfooḥah, in El-Yemámeh), and observing that it was moist, asked the reason, and was answered that the young men of the place, considering him still as their cup-companion, drank wine over his grave, and poured his cup upon it.[]

Yet many of the most respectable of the pagan Arabs, like certain of the Jews and early Christians, abstained totally from wine, from a feeling of its injurious effects upon morals, and, in their climate, upon health; or more especially from the fear of being led by it into the commission of foolish and degrading actions. Thus, Ḳeys the son of Áṣim being one night overcome with wine attempted to grasp the moon, and swore that he would not quit the spot where he stood until he had laid hold of it: after leaping several times with the view of doing so, he fell flat upon his face; and when he recovered his senses, and was acquainted with the cause of his face being bruised, he made a solemn vow to abstain from wine ever after.▯ A similar feeling operated upon many Muslims more than religious principle. The Khaleefeh ´Abd-El-Melik Ibn-Marwán took pleasure in the company of a slave named Naṣeeb, and one day desired him to drink with him. The slave replied, "O Prince of the Faithful, I am not related to thee, nor have I any authority over thee, and I am of no rank or lineage; I am a black slave, and my wit and politeness have drawn me into thy favour: how then shall I take that which will plunder me of these two qualities, and by what shall I then propitiate thee?" The Khaleefeh admired and excused him.▯

It was the custom of many Muslim princes, as might be inferred from the above anecdote, to admit the meanest of their dependants to participate in their unlawful carousals when they could have no better companions; but poets and musicians were their more common associates on these occasions; and these two classes, and especially the latter, are in the present day the most addicted to intoxicating liquors. Few modern Arab musicians are so well contented with extraordinary payment and mere sweet sherbet as with a moderate fee and plenty of wine and brandy; and many of them deem even wine but a sorry beverage.

It was usual with the host and guests at wine-parties to wear dresses of bright colours, red, yellow, and green;▯ and to perfume their beards and mustaches with civet, or to have rose-water sprinkled upon them; and ambergris or aloes-wood, or some other odoriferous substance, placed upon burning coals in a censer, diffused a delicious fragrance throughout the saloon of the revels.

The wine, it appears, was rather thick, for it was necessary to strain it:▯ it was probably sweet, and not strong, for it was drunk in large quantities. In general, perhaps, it was nebeedh of dry raisins kept longer than the law allows. It was usually kept in a large earthen vessel, called denn, high, and small at the bottom, which was partly imbedded in the earth to keep it upright. The name of this vessel is now given to a cask of wood; but the kind above mentioned was of earth, for it was easily broken. A famous saint, Abu-l-Ḥoseyn En-Nooree, seeing a vessel on the Tigris containing thirty denns belonging to the Khaleefeh El-Moạtaḍid, and being told that they contained wine, took a boat-pole, and broke them all, save one. When brought before the Khaleefeh to answer for this action, and asked by him, “Who made thee Moḥtesib?”□ he boldly answered, “He who made thee Khaleefeh!” — and was pardoned.□

Pitch was used by the Arabs, as it was by the Greeks and Romans, for the purpose of curing their wine; the interior of the denn being coated with it. A smaller kind of earthen jar, or amphora (báṭiyeh), and a bottle of leather (baṭṭah), or of glass (kinneeneh), were also used. The wine was transferred for the table to glass jugs, or long-spouted ewers (ibreeḳs). These and the cups were placed upon a round embroidered cloth spread on the floor, or upon a round tray. The latter is now in general use, and is supported on the low stool already described as being used at ordinary meals. The guests sat around, reclining against pillows; or they sat upon the deewán, and a page or slave handed the cup, having on his right arm a richly embroidered napkin, on the end of which the drinker wiped his lips. The cups are often described as holding a fluid pound, or little less than an English pint, and this is to be understood literally, or nearly so: they were commonly of cut glass, but some were of crystal or silver or gold.□ With these and the ewers or jugs were placed several saucers, or small dishes (nuḳuldáns), of fresh and dried fruits (nuḳl); and fans and fly-whisks, of the kind described on a former occasion, were used by the guests.

The most common and esteemed fruits in the countries inhabited by the Arabs may here be mentioned.

The date (belaḥ) deserves the first place. The Prophet’s favourite fruits were fresh dates (ruṭab) and water-melons; and he ate them both together.□ “Honour,” said he, “your paternal aunt, the date-palm; for she was created of the earth of which Adam was formed.”□ It is said that God hath given this tree as a peculiar favour to the

Muslims; that he hath decreed all the date-palms in the world to them, and they have accordingly conquered every country in which these trees are found; and all are said to have derived their origin from the Ḥijáz.□ The palm-tree has several well-known properties that render it an emblem of a human being; among which are these: that if the head be cut off, the tree dies; and if a branch be cut off, another does not grow in its place.□ Dates are preserved in a moist state by being merely pressed together in a basket or skin, and thus prepared are called ´ajweh. There are many varieties of this fruit. The pith or heart of the palm (jummár) is esteemed for its delicate flavour.

The water-melon (biṭṭeekh, vulg. baṭṭeekh), from what has been said of it above, ought to be ranked next; and it really merits this distinction. “Whoso eateth,” said the Prophet, “a mouthful of water-melon, God writeth for him a thousand good works, and cancelleth a thousand evil works, and raiseth him a thousand degrees; for it came from Paradise;” — and again, “The water-melon is food and drink, acid and alkali, and a support of life,” etc.□ The varieties of this fruit are very numerous.

The banana (móz) is a delicious fruit. The Prophet pronounced the banana-tree to be the only thing on earth that resembles a thing in Paradise, because it bears fruit both in winter and summer.□

The pomegranate (rummán) is another celebrated fruit. Every pomegranate, according to the Prophet, contains a fecundating seed from Paradise.□

The other most common and esteemed fruits are the following; — the apple, pear, quince, apricot, peach, fig, sycamore-fig, grape, lote, jujube, plum, walnut, almond, hazel-nut, pistachio-nut, orange, Seville orange, lime, lemon, citron, mulberry, olive, and sugar-cane.□

Of a selection of these fruits consists the dessert which accompanies the wine; but the table is not complete without a bunch or two of flowers placed in the midst.

Though the Arabs are far from being remarkable for exhibiting taste in the planning of their gardens, they are passionately fond of flowers, and especially of the rose (ward). The Khaleefeh El-Mutawekkil monopolized roses for his own enjoyment; saying, “I am the King of Sulṭáns, and the rose is the king of sweet-scented flowers; therefore each of us is most worthy of the other for a companion.” The rose in his time was seen nowhere but in his palace: during the season of this flower he wore rose-coloured clothes; and his carpets were sprinkled with rose-water.▯ A similar passion for the rose is said to have distinguished a weaver in the reign of El-Ma-moon. He was constantly employed at his loom every day of the year, even during the congregational-prayers of Friday, excepting in the rose-season, when he abandoned his work and gave himself up to the enjoyment of wine early in the morning and late in the evening, loudly proclaiming his revels by singing, —

“The season has become pleasant! The time of the rose is come! Take your morning potations, as long as the rose has blossoms and flowers!”

When he resumed his work, he made it known by singing aloud —

“If my Lord prolong my life until the rose-season, I will take again my morning potations: but if I die before it, alas! for the loss of the rose and wine!

“I implore the God of the supreme throne, whose glory be extolled, that my heart may continually enjoy the evening potations to the day of resurrection.”

The Khaleefeh was so amused with the humour of this man that he granted him an annual pension of ten thousand dirhems to enable him to enjoy himself amply on these occasions. Another anecdote may be added to show the estimation of the rose in the mind of an Arab. It is said that Rowḥ Ibn-Ḥátim, the governor of the province of Northern Africa, was sitting one day, with a female slave, in an apartment of his palace, when a eunuch brought him a jar full of red and white roses which a man had offered as a present. He ordered the eunuch to fill the jar with silver in return; but his slave said, “O my lord, thou hast not acted equitably towards the man; for his present to thee is of two colours, red and white.” The Emeer replied, “Thou hast said truly;” and gave orders to fill the jar for him with silver and gold (dirhems and deenárs) intermixed. Some persons preserve roses during the whole of the year in the following manner. They take a number of rose-buds and fill with them a new earthen jar, and, after closing its mouth with mud so as to render it impervious to the air, bury it in the earth. Whenever they want a few roses, they take out some of these buds, which they find unaltered, sprinkle a little water upon them and leave them for a short time in the air, when they open and appear as if just gathered.▯

The rose is even a subject of miracles. It is related by Ibn-Ḳuteybeh that there grows in India a kind of rose, upon the leaves of which is inscribed, “There is no deity but God:”▯ But I find a more particular account of this miraculous rose. A person, who professed to have seen it, said, “I went into India, and I saw at one of its towns a large rose, sweet-scented, upon which was inscribed, in white characters, ‘There is no deity but God; Moḥammad is God’s apostle: Aboo-Bekr is the very veracious: ´Omar is the discriminator:’ and I doubted of this, whether it had been done by art; so I took one of the blossoms not yet opened, and in it was the same inscription; and there were many of the same kind there. The people of that place worshipped stones, and knew not God, to whom be ascribed might and glory.”▯ Roses are announced for sale in the streets of Cairo by the cry of “The rose was a thorn: from the sweat of the Prophet it blossomed!” in allusion to a miracle recorded of Moḥammad. “When I was taken up into heaven,” said the Prophet, “some of my sweat fell upon the earth, and from it sprang the rose; and whoever would smell my scent, let him smell the rose.” In another tradition it is said, “The white rose was created from my sweat on the night of the Meạráj;▯ and the red rose, from the sweat of Jebraeel;▯ and the yellow rose, from the sweat of El-Buráḳ.”▯ The Persians take especial delight in roses; sometimes spreading them as carpets or beds on which to sit or recline in their revellings.

But there is a flower pronounced more excellent than the rose, that of the Egyptian privet, or Lawsonia inermis.▯ Moḥammad said, “The chief of the sweet-scented flowers of this world and of the next is the fághiyeh;” and this was his favourite flower.▯ I approve of his taste; for this flower, which grows in clusters somewhat like those of the lilac, has a most delicious fragrance. But, on account of discrepancies in different traditions, a Muslim may with a clear conscience prefer either of the two flowers next mentioned.

The Prophet said of the violet (benefsej), “The excellence of the extract of violets, above all other extracts, is as the excellence of me above all the rest of the creation: it is cold in summer, and hot in winter:” and, in another tradition, “The excellence of the violet is as the excellence of el-Islám above all other religions.”[] A delicious sherbet is made of a conserve of sugar and violet-flowers.

The myrtle (ás or narseen) is the rival of the violet. “Adam,” said the Prophet, “fell down from Paradise with three things; the myrtle, which is the chief of sweet-scented flowers in this world; an ear of wheat, which is the chief of all kinds of food in this world; and pressed dates, which are the chief of the fruits of this world.”[]

The anemone[] was monopolized for his own enjoyment by Noạmán Ibn-El-Mundhir (King of El-Ḥeereh, and contemporary of Moḥammad), as the rose was afterwards by El-Mutawekkil.[]

Another flower much admired and celebrated in the East is the gilliflower (menthoor or kheeree). There are three principal kinds; the most esteemed is the yellow, or gold-coloured, which has a delicious scent both by night and day; the next, the purple, and other dark kinds, which have a scent only in the night; the least esteemed, the white, which has no scent. The yellow gilliflower is an emblem of a neglected lover.[]

The narcissus (narjis) is very highly esteemed. Galen says, “He who has two cakes of bread, let him dispose of one of them for some flowers of the narcissus; for bread is the food of the body, and the narcissus is the food of the soul.” Hippocrates gave a similar opinion.[]

The following flowers complete the list of those celebrated as most appropriate to add to the delights of wine: — the jasmine, eglantine, Seville-orange-flower, lily, sweet-basil, wild thyme, buphthalmum, chamomile, nenuphar, lotus, pomegranate-flower, poppy, ketmia, crocus or saffron, safflower, flax, the blossoms of different kinds of bean, and those of the almond.[]

A sprig of Oriental willow[] adds much to the charms of a bunch of flowers, being the favourite symbol of a graceful woman.

But I have not yet mentioned all that contributes to the pleasures of an Eastern carousal. For what is the juice of the grape without melodious sounds? “Wine is as the body; music, as the soul; and joy is their offspring.”[] All the five senses should be gratified. For this reason an Arab toper, who had nothing, it appears, but wine to enjoy, exclaimed, —

“Ho! give me wine to drink; and tell me ‘This is wine;’”

for in drinking his sight and smell and taste and touch would all be affected; but it was desirable that his hearing should also be pleased.▯

Music was condemned by the Prophet almost as severely as wine. “Singing and hearing songs,” said he, “cause hypocrisy to grow in the heart, like as water promoteth the growth of corn:”▯ — and musical instruments he declared to be among the most powerful means by which the Devil seduces man. An instrument of music is the Devil’s muëddin, serving to call men to his worship. Of the hypocrisy of those attached to music, the following anecdote presents an instance: — A drunken young man with a lute in his hand was brought one night before the Khaleefeh ´Abd-El-Melik the son of Marwán, who, pointing to the instrument, asked what it was, and what was its use. The youth made no answer; so he asked those around him; but they also remained silent, till one, more bold than the rest, said, “O Prince of the Faithful, this is a lute: it is made by taking some wood of the pistachio-tree, and cutting it into thin pieces, and gluing these together, and then attaching over them these chords, which, when a beautiful girl touches them, send forth sounds more pleasant than those of rain falling upon a desert land; and my wife be separated from me by a triple divorce, if every one in this council is not acquainted with it, and doth not know it as well as I do, and thou the first of them, O Prince of the Faithful.” The Khaleefeh laughed, and ordered that the young man should be discharged.▯

The latter saying of the Prophet, respecting the Devil, suggests another anecdote related of himself by Ibraheem El-Móṣilee, the father of Isḥáḳ; both of whom were very celebrated musicians. I give a translation of it somewhat abridged.— “I asked Er-Rasheed,” says Ibraheem, “to grant me permission to spend a day at home with my women and brothers; and he gave me two thousand deenárs, and appointed the next Saturday for this purpose. I caused the meats and wine and other necessaries to be prepared, and ordered the chamberlain to close the door, and admit no one: but while I was sitting, with my attendants standing in the form of a curved line before me, there entered and approached me a sheykh, reverend and dignified and comely in appearance, wearing short khuffs, and two soft gowns, with a ḳalensuweh [sugarloaf hat] upon his head, and in his hand a silver-headed staff; and sweet odours were diffused from his clothes. I was enraged with the chamberlain for admitting him; but on his saluting me in a very courteous manner, I returned his salutation, and desired him to sit down. He then began to repeat to me stories, tales of war, and poetry; so that my anger was appeased, and it appeared to me that my servants had not presumed to admit him until acquainted with his politeness and courteousness. I therefore said to him, ‘Hast thou any inclination for meat?’ He answered, ‘I have no want of it.’— ‘And the wine?’ said I. He replied, ‘Yes.’ So I drank a large cupful, and he did the same, and then said to me, ‘O Ibraheem, wilt thou let us hear some specimen of thy art in which thou hast excelled the people of thy profession?’ I was angry at his words; but I made light of the matter, and, having taken the lute and tuned it, I played and sang; whereupon he said, ‘Thou hast performed well, O Ibraheem.’ I became more enraged, and said within myself, ‘He is not content with coming hither without permission, and asking me to sing, but he calls me by my name, and proves himself unworthy of my conversation.’ He then said, ‘Wilt thou let us hear more? If so we will requite thee.’ And I took the lute and sang, using my utmost care on account of his saying, ‘we will requite thee.’ He was moved with delight, and said, ‘Thou hast performed well, O my master Ibraheem:’ — adding, ‘Wilt thou permit thy slave to sing?’ I answered, ‘As thou pleasest:’ — but thinking lightly of his sense to sing after me. He took the lute, and tuned it; and, by Allah! I imagined that the lute spoke in his bands with an eloquent Arab tongue. He proceeded to sing some verses commencing, —

‘My heart is wounded! Who will give me for it a heart without a wound?’”

The narrator continues by saying that he was struck dumb and motionless with ecstasy; and that the strange sheykh, after having played and sung again, and taught him an enchanting air (with which he afterwards enraptured his patron, the Khaleefeh), vanished. Ibraheem, in alarm, seized his sword; and was the more amazed when he found that the porter had not seen the stranger enter or leave the house; but he heard his voice again, outside, telling him that he was Aboo-Murrah (the Devil).▯

Ibraheem El-Móṣilee, his son Isḥáḳ, and Mukkáriḳ▯ (a pupil of the former), were especially celebrated among Arab musicians and among the distinguished men of the reign of Hároon Er-Rasheed. Isḥáḳ El-Móṣilee relates of his father Ibraheem that when Er-Rasheed took him into his service he gave him a hundred and fifty thousand dirhems and allotted him a monthly pension of ten thousand dirhems, besides occasional presents [one of which is mentioned as amounting to a hundred thousand dirhems for a single song], and the produce of his (Ibraheem's) farms: he had food constantly prepared for him; three sheep every day for his kitchen, besides birds; three thousand dirhems were allowed him for fruits, perfumes, etc., every month, and a thousand dirhems for his clothing; "and with all this," says his son, "he died without leaving more than three thousand deenárs, a sum not equal to his debts, which I paid after his death."▯ Ibraheem was of Persian origin, and of a high family. He was commonly called the Nedeem (or cup-companion), being Er-Rasheed's favourite companion at the wine-table; and his son, who enjoyed the like distinction with El-Ma-moon, received the same appellation, as well as that of "Son of the Nedeem." Ibraheem was the most famous musician of his time, at least till his son attained celebrity.▯

Isḥáḳ El-Mósilee was especially famous as a musician; but he was also a good poet, accomplished in general literature, and endowed with great wit. He was honoured above all other persons in the pay of El-Ma-moon, and enjoyed a long life; but for many years before his death he was blind.▯

Mukháriḳ appears to have rivalled his master Ibraheem. The latter, he relates, took him to perform before Er-Rasheed, who used to have a curtain suspended between him and the musicians. "Others," he says, "sang, and he was unmoved; but when I sang, he came forth from behind the curtain, and exclaimed, 'Young man, hither!' and he seated me upon the couch (sereer) and gave me thirty thousand dirhems."▯ The following anecdote (which I abridge a little in translation) shows his excellence in the art which he professed, and the effect of melody on an Arab:— "After drinking with the

Khaleefeh [El-Ma-moon, I think,] a whole night, I asked his permission," says he, "to take the air in the Ruṣáfeh [quarter of Baghdád], which he granted; and while I was walking there, I saw a damsel who appeared as if the rising sun beamed from her face. She had a basket, and I followed her. She stopped at a fruiterer's, and bought some fruit; and observing that I was following her, she looked back and abused me several times; but still I followed her until she arrived at a great door, after having filled her basket with fruits and flowers and similar things. When she had entered and the door was closed behind her, I sat down opposite to it, deprived of my reason by her beauty; and knew that there must be in the house a wine party.

"The sun went down upon me while I sat there; and at length there came two handsome young men on asses, and they knocked at the door, and when they were admitted, I entered with them; the master of the house thinking that I was their companion, and they imagining that I was one of his friends. A repast was brought up, and we ate, and washed our hands, and were perfumed. The master of the house then said to the two young men, 'Have ye any desire that I should call such a one?' (mentioning a woman's name). They answered, 'If thou wilt grant us the favour, well:' — so he called for her, and she came, and lo, she was the maiden whom I had seen before, and who had abused me. A servant-maid preceded her, bearing her lute, which she placed in her lap. Wine was then brought, and she sang, while we drank, and shook with delight. 'Whose air is that?' they asked. She answered, 'My master Mukháriḳ's.' She then sang another air, which she said was also mine; while they drank by pints; she looking aside and doubtfully at me until I lost my patience, and called out to her to do her best: but in attempting to do so, singing a third air, she overstrained her voice, and I said, 'Thou hast made a mistake:' — upon which she threw the lute from her lap in anger, so that she nearly broke it, saying, 'Take it thyself, and let us hear thee.' I answered, 'Well;' and, having taken it and tuned it perfectly, sang the first of the airs which she had sung before me; whereupon all of them sprang upon their feet and kissed my head. I then sang the second air, and the third; and their reason almost fled with ecstasy.

"The master of the house, after asking his guests and being told by them that they knew me not, came to me, and, kissing my hand, said, ‘By Allah, my master, who art thou?’ I answered, ‘By Allah, I am the singer Mukháriḳ.’— ‘And for what purpose,’ said he, kissing both my hands, ‘camest thou hither?’ I replied, ‘As a spunger;’ — and related what had happened with respect to the maiden: whereupon he looked towards his two companions and said to them, ‘Tell me, by Allah, do ye not know that I gave for that girl thirty thousand dirhems, and have refused to sell her?’ They answered, ‘It is so.’ Then said he, ‘I take you as witnesses that I have given her to him.’— ‘And we,’ said the two friends, ‘will pay thee two-thirds of her price.’ So he put me in possession of the girl, and in the evening when I departed, he presented me also with rich dresses and other gifts, with all of which I went away; and as I passed the places where the maiden had abused me, I said to her, ‘Repeat thy words to me;’ but she could not for shame. Holding the girl’s hand, I went with her immediately to the Khaleefeh, whom I found in anger at my long absence; but when I related my story to him he was surprised, and laughed, and ordered that the master of the house and his two friends should be brought before him, that he might requite them; to the former he gave forty thousand dirhems; to each of his two friends, thirty thousand; and to me a hundred thousand; and I kissed his feet and departed.”[]

It is particularly necessary for the Arab musician that he have a retentive memory, well stocked with choice pieces of poetry and with facetious or pleasant anecdotes, interspersed with songs; and that he have a ready wit, aided by dramatic talent, to employ these materials with good effect. If to such qualifications he adds fair attainments in the difficult rules of grammar, a degree of eloquence, comic humour, and good temper, and is not surpassed by many in his art, he is sure to be a general favourite. Very few Muslims of the higher classes have condescended to study music, because they would have been despised by their inferiors for doing so; or because they themselves have despised or condemned the art. Ibraheem, the son of the Khaleefeh El-Mahdee, and competitor of El-Ma-moon, was a remarkable exception: he is said to have been an excellent musician and a good singer.

In the houses of the wealthy, the vocal and instrumental performers were usually (as is the case in many houses in the present age) domestic female slaves, well instructed in their art by hired male or female professors. In the "Thousand and One Nights," these slaves are commonly described as standing or sitting unveiled in the presence of male guests; but from several descriptions of musical entertainments that I have met with in Arabic works it appears that according to the more approved custom in respectable society they were concealed on such occasions behind a curtain which generally closed the front of an elevated recess. In all the houses of wealthy Arabs that I have entered, one or each of the larger saloons has an elevated closet, the front of which is closed by a screen of wooden lattice-work to serve as an orchestra for the domestic or hired female singers and instrumental performers.

To a person acquainted with modern Arabian manners, it must appear inconsistent with truth to describe (as is often the case in the "Thousand and One Nights") such female singers as exposing their faces before strange men, unless he can discover in sober histories some evidence of their having been less strict in this respect than the generality of Arab women at the present time. I find, however, a remarkable proof that such was the case in the latter part of the ninth century of the Flight, and the beginning of the tenth: that is, about the end of the fifteenth century of our era. The famous historian Es-Suyooṭee, who flourished at this period, in his preface to a curious work on wedlock, written to correct the corrupt manners of his age, says:— "Seeing that the women of this time deck themselves with the attire of wantons, and walk in the sooḳs (or market-streets) like female warriors against the religion, and uncover their faces and hands before men to incline (men's) hearts to them by evil suggestions, and play at feasts with young men, thereby meriting the anger of the Compassionate [God], and go forth to the public baths and assemblies with various kinds of ornaments and perfumes and with conceited gait; (for the which they shall be congregated in Hell-fire, for opposing the good and on account of this their affected gait;) while to their husbands they are disobedient, behaving to them in the reverse manner, excepting when they fear to abridge their liberty of going abroad by such conduct; for they are like swine and apes in their interior nature, though like daughters of Adam in their exterior appearance; especially the women of this age; not advising their husbands in matters of religion, but the latter erring in permitting them to go out to every assembly; sisters of devils and demons, etc. etc.... I have undertaken the composition of this volume.”[] A more convincing testimony than this, I think, cannot be required.

The lute (el-´ood) is the only instrument that is generally described as used at the entertainments which we have been considering. Engravings of this and other musical instruments are given in my work on the Modern Egyptians. The Arab viol (called rabáb) was commonly used by inferior performers.

The Arab music is generally of a soft and plaintive character, and particularly that of the most refined description, which is distinguished by a peculiar system of intervals. The singer aims at distinct enunciation of the words, for this is justly admired; and delights in a trilling style. The airs of songs are commonly very short and simple, adapted to a single verse, or even to a single hemistich; but in the instrumental music there is more variety.

Scarcely less popular as an amusement and mode of passing the time is the bath, or hammám, — a favourite resort of both men and women of all classes among the Muslims who can afford the trifling expense which it requires; and (it is said) not only of human beings, but also of evil genii; on which account, as well as on that of decency, several precepts respecting it have been dictated by Moḥammad. It is frequented for the purpose of performing certain ablutions required by the religion, or by a regard for cleanliness, for its salutary effects, and for mere luxury.

The following description of a public bath will convey a sufficient notion of those in private houses, which are on a smaller scale and generally consist of only two or three chambers. The public bath comprises several apartments with mosaic or tesselated pavements, composed of white and black marble and pieces of fine red tile and sometimes other materials. The inner apartments are covered with domes, having a number of small round glazed apertures for the admission of light. The first apartment is the meslakh, or disrobing room, which has in the centre a fountain of cold water, and next the walls wide benches or platforms encased with marble. These are furnished with mattresses and cushions for the higher and middle classes, and with mats for the poorer sort. The inner division of the building, in the more regularly planned baths, occupies nearly a square: the central and chief portion of it is the principal apartment, or ḥarárah, which generally has the form of a cross. In its centre is a fountain of hot water, rising from a base encased with marble, which serves as a seat. One of the angles of the square is occupied by the beyt-owwal, or antechamber of the ḥarárah: in another is the fire over which is the boiler; and each of the other two angles is generally occupied by two small chambers, in one of which is a tank filled with warm water, which pours down from a spot in the dome; in the other, two taps side by side, one of hot and the other of cold water, with a small trough beneath, before which is a seat. The inner apartments are heated by the steam which rises from the fountain and tanks, and by the contiguity of the fire; but the beyt-owwal is not so hot as the ḥarárah, being separated from it by a door. In cold weather the bather undresses in the former, which has two or three raised seats like those of the meslakh.

With a pair of wooden clogs to his feet, and having a large napkin round his loins, and generally a second wound round his head like a turban, a third over his chest, and a fourth covering his back, the bather enters the ḥarárah, the heat of which causes him immediately to perspire profusely. An attendant of the bath removes from him all the napkins excepting the first; and proceeds to crack the joints of his fingers and toes, and several of the vertebrae of the back and neck; kneads his flesh, and rubs the soles of his feet with a coarse earthen rasp, and his limbs and body with a woollen bag which covers his hand as a glove; after which, the bather, if he please, plunges into one of the tanks. He is then thoroughly washed with soap and water and fibres of the palm-tree, and shaved, if he wish it, in one of the small chambers which contain the taps of hot and cold water; and returns to the beyt-owwal. Here he generally reclines upon a mattress, and takes some light refreshment, while one of the attendants rubs the soles of his feet and kneads the flesh of his body and limbs, previously to his resuming his dress. It is a common custom now to take a pipe and a cup of coffee during this period of rest.

The women are especially fond of the bath, and often have entertainments there; taking with them fruits, sweetmeats, etc., and sometimes hiring female singers to accompany them. An hour or more is occupied by the process of plaiting the hair and applying the depilatory, etc.; and generally an equal time is passed in the enjoyment of rest or recreation or refreshment. All necessary decorum is observed on these occasions by most ladies, but women of the lower orders are often seen in the bath without any covering. Some baths are appropriated solely to men; others, only to women; and others, again, to men during the forenoon, and in the afternoon to women. When the bath is appropriated to women, a napkin, or some other piece of drapery is suspended over the door to warn men from entering.

Before the time of Moḥammad, there were no public baths in Arabia; and he was so prejudiced against them, for reasons already alluded to, that he at first forbade both men and women from entering them: afterwards, however, he permitted men to do so, if for the sake of cleanliness, on the condition of their wearing a cloth; and women also on account of sickness, child-birth, etc., provided they had not convenient places for bathing in their houses. But notwithstanding this license, it is held to be a characteristic of a virtuous woman not to go to a bath even with her husband’s permission: for the Prophet said, “Whatever woman enters a bath, the devil is with her.” As the bath is a resort of the Jinn, prayer should not be performed in it, nor the Ḳur-án recited. The Prophet said, “All the earth is given to me as a place of prayer, and as pure, except the burial-ground and the bath.” Hence also, when a person is about to enter a bath, he should offer up an ejaculatory prayer for protection against evil spirits; and should place his left foot first over the threshold. Infidels have often been obliged to distinguish themselves in the bath, by hanging a signet to the neck, or wearing anklets, etc., lest they should receive those marks of respect which should be paid only to believers.[]

Hunting and hawking, which were common and favourite diversions of the Arabs, and especially of their kings and other great men, have now fallen into comparative disuse among this people. They are, however, still frequently practised by the Persians, and in the same manner as they are generally described in the “Thousand

and One Nights.”▯ The more common kinds of game are gazelles, or antelopes, hares, partridges, the species of grouse called “ḳaṭà,” quails, wild geese, ducks, etc. Against all of these, the hawk is generally employed, but assisted in the capture of gazelles and hares by dogs. The usual arms of the sportsmen in mediæval times were the bow and arrow, the cross-bow, the spear, the sword and the mace. When the game is struck down but not killed by any weapon, its throat is immediately cut. If merely stunned and then left to die, its flesh is unlawful food. Hunting is allowable only for the purpose of procuring food, or to obtain the skin of an animal, or for the sake of destroying ferocious and dangerous beasts; but the rule is often disregarded. Amusement is certainly, in general, the main object of the Muslim huntsman; but he does not with this view endeavour to prolong the chase; on the contrary, he strives to take the game as quickly as possible. For this purpose nets are often employed, and the hunting party, forming what is called the circle of the chase (ḥalḳat eṣ-ṣeyd), surround the spot in which the game is found.

“On the eastern frontiers of Syria,” says Burckhardt, “are several places allotted for the hunting of gazelles: these places are called ‘masiade’ [perhaps more properly, ‘maṣyedehs’]. An open space in the plain, of about one mile and a half square, is enclosed on three sides by a wall of loose stones, too high for the gazelles to leap over. In different parts of this wall, gaps are purposely left, and near each gap a deep ditch is made on the outside. The enclosed space is situated near some rivulet or spring to which in summer the gazelles resort. When the hunting is to begin, many peasants assemble, and watch till they see a herd of gazelles advancing from a distance towards the enclosure, into which they drive them: the gazelles, frightened by the shouts of these people and the discharge of fire-arms, endeavour to leap over the wall, but can only effect this at the gaps, where they fall into the ditch outside, and are easily taken, sometimes by hundreds. The chief of the herd always leaps first: the others follow him one by one. The gazelles thus taken are immediately killed, and their flesh is sold to the Arabs and neighbouring Felláḥs.”▯ Hunting the wild ass is among the most difficult sports of the Arabs and Persians.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION.

In few cases are the Mohammadans so much fettered by the directions of their Prophet and other religious instructors as in the rearing and education of their children. In matters of the most trivial nature, religious precedents direct their management of the young. One of the first duties is to wrap the new-born child in clean white linen, or in linen of some other colour, but not yellow. After this some person (not a female) should pronounce the adán▯ in the ear of the infant, because the Prophet did so in the ear of El-Ḥasan when Fáṭimeh gave birth to him; or he should pronounce the adán in the right ear, and the iḳámeh (which is nearly the same) in the left.▯

It was formerly a custom of many of the Arabs, and perhaps is still among some, for the father to give a feast to his friends on seven successive days after the birth of a son; but that of a daughter was observed with less rejoicing. The general modern custom is to give an entertainment only on the seventh day, which is called Yóm es-Subooạ.

On this occasion, in the families of the higher classes, professional female singers are hired to entertain a party of ladies, friends of the infant's mother, who visit her on this occasion, in the ḥareem; or a concert of instrumental music, or a recitation of the whole of the Ḳur-án, is performed below by men. The mother, attended by the midwife, being seated in a chair which is the property of the latter, the child is brought, wrapped in a handsome shawl or something costly; and, to accustom it to noise, that it may not be frightened afterwards by the music and other sounds of mirth, one of the women takes a brass mortar and strikes it repeatedly with the pestle, as if pounding. After this, the child is put into a sieve and shaken, it being supposed that this operation is beneficial to its stomach. Next, it is carried through all the apartments of the ḥareem, accompanied by several women or girls, each of whom bears a number of wax candles, sometimes of various colours, cut in two, lighted, and stuck into small lumps of paste of ḥennà, upon a small round tray. At the same time the midwife, or another female, sprinkles upon the floor of each room a mixture of salt with seed of the fennel-flower, or salt alone, which has been placed during the preceding night at the infant’s head; saying as she does this, “The salt be in the eye of the person who doth not bless the Prophet!” or, “The foul salt be in the eye of the envier!” This ceremony of the sprinkling of salt is considered a preservative for the child and mother from the evil eye; and each person present should say, “O God, bless our lord Moḥammad!” The child, wrapped up and placed on a fine mattress, which is sometimes laid on a silver tray, is shewn to each of the women present, who looks at its face, says, “O God, bless our lord Moḥammad! God give thee long life!” etc., and usually puts an embroidered handkerchief, with a gold coin (if pretty or old, the more esteemed) tied up in one of the corners, on the child’s head, or by its side. This giving of handkerchiefs and gold is considered as imposing a debt, to be repaid by the mother, if the donor should give her the same occasion; or as the discharge of a debt for a similar offering. The coins are generally used for some years to decorate the head-dress of the child. After these presents for the child, others are given for the midwife. During the night before the seventh-day’s festivity, a water-bottle full of water (a dóraḳ in the case of a boy, and a ḳulleh in that of a girl), with an embroidered handkerchief tied round the neck, is placed at the child’s head while it sleeps. This, with the water it contains, the midwife takes and puts upon a tray and presents it to each of the women; who put presents of money for her into the tray. In the evening, the husband generally entertains a party of his friends.

On this day, or on the fourteenth, twenty-first, twenty-eighth, or thirty-fifth day after the birth, several religious ceremonies are required to be performed; but they are most approved if observed on the seventh day. One of these is the naming. I believe, however, that it is a more common custom to give the name almost immediately after the birth, or about three hours after. Astrologers were often consulted on this occasion; but the following directions are given on higher authority, and are generally followed.— “The father should give his son a good name, ... not a name of self-praise, as Rasheed [Orthodox], Emeen [Faithful], etc.... The Prophet said, ‘The names most approved by God are ´Abd-Allah [Servant of God] and ´Abd-Er-Raḥmán [Servant of the Compassionate], and such like.’ He also said, ‘Give my name, but do not distinguish by my surname of relationship:’ but this precept, they say, respects his own lifetime, ... because he was addressed, ‘O Abu-l-Ḳásim!’ and now it is not disapproved; but some disapprove of uniting the name and surname, so as to call a person Moḥammad and Abu-l-Ḳásim. And if a son be called by the name of a prophet it is not allowable to abuse or vilify him, unless the person so named be facing his reproacher, who should say, ‘Thou’ [without mentioning his name]: and a child named Moḥammad or Aḥmad should be [especially] honoured.... The Prophet said, ‘There is no people holding a consultation at which there is present one whose name is Moḥammad or Aḥmad, but God blesseth all that assembly:’ and again he said, ‘Whoever nameth his child by my name, or by that of any of my children or my companions, from affection to me or to them, God (whose name be exalted) will give him in Paradise what eye hath not seen nor ear heard.’ And a son should not be named King of kings, or Lord of lords; nor should a man take a surname of relationship from the name of the eldest of his children; nor take any such surname before a child is born to him.”□ The custom of naming children after prophets, or after relations or companions of Moḥammad, is very common. No ceremony is observed on account of the naming.

On the same day, however, two practices which I am about to mention are prescribed to be observed; though, as far as my observations and inquiries allow me to judge, they are generally neglected by the modern Muslims. The first of these is a sacrifice. The victim is called ´aḳeeḳah. It should be a ram or goat; or two such animals should be sacrificed for a son, and one for a daughter. This rite is regarded by Ibn-Ḥambal as absolutely obligatory: he said, “If a father sacrifice not for his son, and he [the son] die, that son will not intercede for him on the day of judgment.” The founders of the three other principal sects regard it in different and less important lights, though Moḥammad slew an ´aḳeeḳah for himself after his prophetic mission. The person should say, on slaying the victim, “O God, verily this ´aḳeeḳah is a ransom for my son such a one; its blood for his blood, and its flesh for his flesh, and its bone for his bone, and its skin for his skin, and its hair for his hair. O God, make it a ransom for my son from hell fire." A bone of the victim should not be broken.▯ The midwife should receive a leg of it. It should be cooked without previously cutting off any portion of it; and part of it should be given in alms.

After this should be performed the other ceremony above alluded to, which is this: — It is a sunneh ordinance, incumbent on the father, to shave or cause to be shaved the head of the child, and to give in alms to the poor the weight of the hair in gold or silver. This should also be done for a proselyte.▯ On the subsequent occasions of shaving the head of a male child (for the head of the male is frequently shaven), a tuft of hair is generally left on the crown, and commonly for several years another also over the forehead.

Circumcision is most approved if performed on the same day;▯ but the observance of this rite is generally delayed until the child has attained the age of five or six years, and sometimes several years later. (See).

The Muslims regard a child as a trust committed by God to its parents, who, they hold, are responsible for the manner in which they bring it up, and will be examined on this subject on the day of judgment. But they further venture to say, that "the first who will lay hold of a man on the day of judgment will be his wife and children, who [if he have been deficient in his duty to them] will present themselves before God, and say, 'O our Lord, take for us our due from him; for he taught us not that of which we were ignorant, and he fed us with forbidden food, and we knew not:' and their due will be taken from him."▯ By this is meant, that a certain proportion of the good works which the man may have done, and his children and wife neglected, will be set down to their account: or that a similar proportion of their evil works will be transferred to *his* account.

The mother is enjoined by the law to give suck to her child two full years, unless she have her husband's consent to shorten the period, or to employ another nurse. "For suckling the child, a virtuous woman, who eateth only what is lawful, should be chosen; for the unlawful [food] will manifest its evil in the child; as the Prophet ... said, 'Giving suck altereth the tempers.' But it is recommended by the Sunneh that the mother herself suckle the child;

for it is said in a tradition, ‘There is nothing better for a child than its mother’s milk.’ ‘If thou wouldst try,’ it is added, ‘whether the child be of an ingenuous disposition in its infancy or not, order a woman who is not its mother to suckle it after its mother has done so: and if it drink of the milk of the woman who is not its mother, it is not of an ingenuous disposition.’”

Children, being regarded by Muslim parents as enviable blessings, are to them objects of the most anxious solicitude. To guard them from the supposed influence of the envious or evil eye, they have recourse to various expedients. When they are taken abroad, they are usually clad in a most slovenly manner, and left unwashed, or even purposely smeared with dirt; and as a further precaution a fantastic cap is often put upon the child’s head, or its head-dress is decorated with one or more coins, a feather, a gay tassel, or a written charm or two sewed up in leather or encased in gold or silver, or some other appendage to attract the eye, that so the infant itself may pass unnoticed. If a person express his admiration of another’s child otherwise than by some pious ejaculation, as for instance by praising its Creator (with the exclamation of “Subḥána-lláh!” or Má sháa-lláh!” etc.) or invoking a blessing on the Prophet, he fills the mind of the parent with apprehension; and recourse is had to some superstitious ceremony to counteract the dreaded influence of his envious glance. The children of the poor from their unattractive appearance are less exposed to this imaginary danger: they generally have little or no clothing and are extremely dirty. It is partly with the view of protecting them from the evil eye that those of the rich are so long confined to the ḥareem: there they are petted and pampered for several years, at least until they are of age to go to school; but most of them are instructed at home.

The children of the Muslims are taught to show to their fathers a degree of respect which might be deemed incompatible with the existence of a tender mutual affection; but I believe that this is not the case. The child greets the father in the morning by kissing his hand, and then usually stands before him in a respectful attitude, with the left hand covered by the right, to receive any order or to await his permission to depart; but after the respectful kiss, is often taken on the lap. After the period of infancy, the well-bred son seldom sits in the presence of his father; but during that period he is generally allowed much familiarity. A Syrian merchant, who was one of my near neighbours in Cairo, had a child of exquisite beauty, commonly supposed to be his daughter, whom, though he was a most bigoted Muslim, he daily took with him from his private house to his shop. The child followed him, seated upon an ass before a black slave, and until about six years old was dressed like most young ladies, but without a face-veil. The father then thinking that the appearance of taking about with him a daughter of that age was scandalous, dressed his pet as a boy, and told his friends that the female attire had been employed as a protection against the evil eye, girls being less coveted than boys. This indeed is sometimes done, and it is possible that such might have been the case in this instance; but I was led to believe that it was not so. A year after, I left Cairo: while I remained there, I continued to see the child pass my house as before, but always in boy's clothing.

It is not surprising that the natives of Eastern countries, where a very trifling expense is required to rear the young, should be generally desirous of a numerous offspring. A motive of self-interest conduces forcibly to cherish this feeling in a wife; for she is commonly esteemed by her husband in proportion to her fruitfulness, and a man is seldom willing to divorce a wife, or to sell a slave, who has borne him a child. A similar feeling also induces in both parents a desire to obtain offspring, and renders them at the same time resigned to the loss of such of their children as die in tender age. This feeling arises from their belief of certain services, of greater moment than the richest blessings this world can bestow, which children who die in infancy are to render to their parents.

The Prophet is related to have said, "The infant children [of the Muslims] shall assemble at the scene of judgment on the day of the general resurrection, when all creatures shall appear for the reckoning, and it will be said to the angels, 'Go ye with these into Paradise:' and they will halt at the gate of Paradise, and it will be said to them, 'Welcome to the offspring of the Muslims! enter ye Paradise: there is no reckoning to be made with you:' and they will reply, 'Yea, and our fathers and our mothers:' but the guardians of Paradise will say, 'Verily your fathers and your mothers are not with you because they have committed faults and sins for which they must be reckoned with and inquired of.’ Then they will shriek and cry at the gate of Paradise with a great cry; and God (whose name be exalted, and who is all-knowing respecting them) will say, ‘What is this cry?’ It will be answered, ‘O our Lord, the children of the Muslims say, We will not enter Paradise but with our fathers and our mothers.’ Whereupon God (whose name be exalted) will say, ‘Pass among them all, and take the hands of your parents, and introduce them into Paradise.’” The children who are to have this power are such as are born of believers, and die without having attained to the knowledge of sin; and according to one tradition, one such child will introduce his two parents into Paradise. Such infants only are to enter Paradise; for of the children who die in infancy, those of believers alone are they who would believe if they grew to years of discretion. On the same authority it is said, “When a child of the servant [of God] dies, God (whose name be exalted) saith to the angels, ‘Have ye taken the child of my servant?’ They answer, ‘Yea.’ He saith, ‘Have ye taken the child of his heart?’ They reply, ‘Yea.’ He asketh them, ‘What did my servant say?’ They answer, ‘He praised thee, and said, Verily to God we belong, and verily unto Him we return!’ Then God will say, ‘Build for my servant a house in Paradise, and name it the House of Praise.’”

To these traditions, which I find related as proofs of the advantages of marriage, the following anecdote, which is of a similar nature, is added. A certain man who would not take a wife awoke one day from his sleep, and demanded to be married, saying as his reason, “I dreamed that the resurrection had taken place, and that I was among the beings collected at the scene of judgment, but was suffering a thirst that stopped up the passage of my stomach; and lo, there were youths passing through the assembly, having in their hands ewers of silver, and cups of gold, and giving drink to one person after another; so I stretched forth my hand to one of them, and said, ‘Give me to drink; for thirst overpowereth me;’ but they answered, ‘Thou hast no child among us; we give drink only to our fathers.’ I asked them, ‘Who are ye?’ They replied, ‘We are the deceased infant children of the Muslims.’”[] Especial rewards in heaven are promised to mothers. “When a woman conceives by her husband," said the Prophet, "she is called in heaven a martyr [*i.e.* she is ranked, as a martyr in dignity]; and her labour in childbed and her care for her children protect her from hell fire."▯

"When the child begins to speak, the father should teach him first the kelimeh [or profession of faith], 'There is no deity but God: [Moḥammad is God's apostle]' — he should dictate this to him seven times. Then he should instruct him to say, 'Wherefore exalted be God, the King, the Truth! There is no deity but He, the Lord of the honourable throne.'▯ He should teach him also the Throne-verse,▯ and the closing words of the Ḥashr, 'He is God, beside whom there is no deity, the King, the Holy,'" etc.▯

As soon as a son is old enough, his father should teach him the most important rules of decent behaviour: placing some food before him, he should order him to take it with the right hand (the left being employed for unclean purposes), and to say, on commencing, "In the name of God;" to eat what is next to him, and not to hurry or spill any of the food upon his person or dress. He should teach him that it is disgusting to eat much. He should particularly condemn to him the love of gold and silver, and caution him against covetousness as he would against serpents and scorpions; and forbid his spitting in an assembly and every similar breach of good manners, from talking much, turning his back upon another, standing in an indolent attitude, and speaking ill of any person to another. He should keep him from bad companions, teach him the Ḳur-án and all requisite divine and prophetic ordinances, and instruct him in the arts of swimming and archery, and in some virtuous trade; for trade is a security from poverty. He should also command him to endure patiently the chastisements of his teacher. In one tradition it is said, "When a boy attains the age of six years he should be disciplined, and when he attains to nine years he should be put in a separate bed, and when he attains to ten years he should be beaten for [neglecting] prayer:" and in another tradition, "Order your children to pray at seven [years], and beat them for [neglecting] it at ten, and put them in separate beds."▯

Circumcision is generally performed before the boy is submitted to the instruction of the schoolmaster.▯ Previously to the performance of this rite, he is, if belonging to the higher or middle rank of society, usually paraded about the neighbourhood of his parents' dwelling, gaily attired, chiefly with female habits and ornaments, but with a boy's turban on his head, mounted on a horse, preceded by musicians, and followed by a group of his female relations and friends. This ceremony is observed by the great with much pomp and with sumptuous feasts. El-Jabartee mentions a fête celebrated on the occasion of the circumcision of a son of the Ḳáḍee of Cairo, in the year of the Flight 1179 (A.D. 1766), when the grandees and chief merchants and ´ulamà of the city sent him such abundance of presents that the magazines of his mansion were filled with rice and butter and honey and sugar; the great hall, with coffee; and the middle of the court, with fire-wood: the public were amused for many days by players and performers of various kinds; and when the youth was paraded through the streets he was attended by numerous memlooks with their richly caparisoned horses and splendid arms and armour and military band, and by a number of other youths, who, out of compliment to him, were afterwards circumcised with him. This last custom is usual on such occasions; and so also is the sending of presents, such as those above mentioned, by friends, acquaintances, and tradespeople. At a fête of this kind, when the Khaleefeh El-Muḳtedir circumcised five of his sons, the money that was scattered in presents amounted to six hundred thousand pieces of gold, or about £300,000. Many orphans were also circumcised on the same day, and were presented with clothes and pieces of gold.▯ The Khaleefeh above mentioned was famous for his magnificence, a proof of which I have given before (ff.). At the more approved entertainments which are given in celebration of a circumcision, a recital of the whole of the Ḳur-án, or a zikr, is performed: at some others, male or female public dancers perform in the court of the house or in the street before the door.

Few of the children of the Arabs receive much instruction in literature, and still fewer are taught even the rudiments of any of the higher sciences; but there are numerous schools in their towns, and one at least in almost every moderately large village. The former are mostly attached to mosques and other public buildings, and, together with those buildings, are endowed by princes or other men of rank, or wealthy tradesmen. In these the children are instructed either gratis or for a very trifling weekly payment, which all parents save those in indigent circumstances can easily afford. The schoolmaster generally teaches nothing more than to read, and to recite by heart the whole of the Ḳur-án. After committing to memory the first chapter of the sacred volume, the boy learns the rest in the inverse order of their arrangement, as they generally decrease in length (the longest coming first, and the shortest at the end). Writing and arithmetic are usually taught by another master; and grammar, rhetoric, versification, logic, the interpretation of the Ḳur-án, and the whole system of religion and law, with all other knowledge deemed useful, which seldom includes the mere elements of mathematics, are attained by studying at a collegiate mosque, and at no expense; for the professors receive no pay either from the students, who are mostly of the poorer classes, or from the funds of the mosque.

The wealthy often employ for their sons a private tutor; and when he has taught them to read, and to recite the Ḳur-án, engage for them a writing-master, and then send them to the college. But among this class, polite literature is more considered than any other branch of knowledge, after religion. Such an acquaintance with the works of some of their favourite poets as enables a man to quote them occasionally in company, is regarded by the Arabs as essential to a son who is to mix in good society; and to this acquirement is often added some skill in the art of versification, which is rendered peculiarly easy by the copiousness of the Arabic language and by its system of inflexion. These characteristics of their noble tongue (which are remarkably exhibited by the custom, common among the Arabs, of preserving the same rhyme throughout a whole poem), while on the one hand they have given an admirable freedom to the compositions of men of true poetic genius, have on the other hand mainly contributed to the degradation of Arabic poetry. To an Arab of some little learning it is almost as easy to speak in verse as in prose; and hence he often intersperses his prose writings, and not unfrequently his conversation, with indifferent verses, of which the chief merit generally consists in puns or in an ingenious use of several words nearly the same in sound but differing in sense. This custom is frequently exemplified in the “Thousand and One Nights,” where a person suddenly changes the style of his speech from prose to verse, and then reverts to the former.

One more duty of a father to a son I should here mention: it is to procure for him a wife as soon as he has arrived at a proper age. This age is decided by some to be twenty years, though many young men marry at an earlier period. It is said, “When a son has attained the age of twenty years, his father, if able, should marry him, and then take his hand and say, ‘I have disciplined thee and taught thee and married thee: I now seek refuge with God from thy mischief in the present world and the next.’” To enforce this duty, the following tradition is urged: “When a son becomes adult and his father does not marry him and yet is able to do so, if the youth do wrong in consequence, the sin of it is between the two” — or, as in another report,— “on the father.”▯ The same is held to be the case with respect to a daughter who has attained the age of twelve years.

The female children of the Arabs are seldom taught even to read. Though they are admissible at the daily schools in which the boys are instructed, very few parents allow them the benefit of this privilege; preferring, if they give them any instruction of a literary kind, to employ a sheykhah (or learned woman) to teach them at home. She instructs them in the forms of prayer and teaches them to repeat by heart a few chapters of the Ḳur-án, very rarely the whole book. Parents are indeed recommended to withhold from their daughters some portions of the Ḳur-án; to “teach them the Soorat ed-Noor [or 24th chapter], and keep from them the Soorat Yoosuf [12th chapter]; on account of the story of Zeleekhá and Yoosuf in the latter, and the prohibitions and threats and mention of punishments contained in the former.”▯

Needle-work is not so rarely, but yet not generally, taught to Arab girls, the spindle frequently employs those of the poorer classes, and some of them learn to weave. The daughters of persons of the middle and higher ranks are often instructed in the art of embroidery and in other ornamental work, which are taught in schools and in private houses. Singing and playing upon the lute, which were formerly not uncommon female accomplishments among the wealthy Arabs, are now almost exclusively confined, like dancing, to professional performers and a few of the slaves in the ḥareems of the great: it is very seldom now that any musical instrument is seen in the hand of an Arab lady except a kind of drum called darabukkeh and a ṭár (or tambourine), which are found in many ḥareems, and are beaten with the fingers.▯ Some care, however, is bestowed by the ladies in teaching their daughters what they consider an elegant gait and carriage, as well as various alluring and voluptuous arts with which to increase the attachment of their future husbands.

I have heard Arabs confess that their nation possesses nine-tenths of the envy that exists among all mankind collectively; but I have not seen any written authority for this. Ibn-´Abbás assigns nine-tenths of the intrigue or artifice that exists in the world to the Copts, nine-tenths of the perfidy to the Jews, nine-tenths of the stupidity to the Maghrabees, nine-tenths of the hardness to the Turks, and nine-tenths of the bravery to the Arabs. According to Kaạb El-Aḥbár, reason and sedition are most peculiar to Syria, plenty and degradation to Egypt, and misery and health to the Desert. In another account, faith and modesty are said to be most peculiar to El-Yemen, fortitude and sedition to Syria, magnificence or pride and hypocrisy to El-´Irák, wealth and degradation to Egypt, and poverty and misery to the Desert. Of women, it is said by Kaạb El-Aḥbár, that the best in the world (excepting those of the tribe of Ḳureysh mentioned by the Prophet) are those of El-Baṣrah; and the worst in the world, those of Egypt.▯

CHAPTER IX.

WOMEN.

That sensual passion is very prevalent among the Arabs cannot be doubted; but I think it unjust to suppose them generally incapable of a purer feeling, worthy, if constancy be a sufficient test, of being termed true love. That they are not so, appears evident to almost every person who mixes with them in familiar society; for such a person must have opportunities of being acquainted with many Arabs sincerely attached to wives whose personal charms have long vanished, and who have neither wealth nor influence of their own, nor wealthy or influential relations, to induce their husbands to refrain from divorcing them. It very often happens, too, that an Arab is sincerely attached to a wife possessed, even in the best portion of her age, of few charms, and that the lasting favourite among two or more wives is not the most handsome. This opinion, I am sorry to observe, is at variance, as far as the Arabs of the *towns* are concerned, with that entertained by one of the most intelligent and experienced of modern travellers who long resided among this people, — the justly celebrated Burckhardt:▯ but it is confirmed by numerous facts related by respectable Arab authors (and therefore not regarded by them as of an incredible nature), as well as by cases which have fallen under my own observation. The tale of Leylà and Mejnoon, the Juliet and Romeo of Arabia, is too well known to be here repeated; but among many other anecdotes of strong and constant love, the following may be inserted.

The Khaleefeh Yezeed, the son of ´Abd-El-Melik, had two female slaves, one of whom was named Ḥabbábeh and the other, Selámeh, to the former of whom he was most ardently attached: he had purchased her for a hundred thousand dirhems, and the other for ten thousand. In their company he sometimes shut himself up for three months together, utterly neglecting the affairs of his people. At length, being reproved for this conduct by his brother Meslemeh, he promised to return to his duty: but the two slaves diverted him from his purpose; and on the following morning excited by their songs and caresses and by wine, he became frantic with pleasure, and danced and sang like a madman, till a fatal accident put a stop to his joy: — Ḥabbábeh, eating a pomegranate, was choked by one of the grains, and immediately died.

The grief of Yezeed was so poignant that he would not quit the corpse, but continued to kiss and fondle it, until it became corrupt. Being then admonished by his attendants that proper respect required its burial, he consented to commit it to the earth. After five days, however, his desire to behold again the object of his love induced him to open the grave, and though the corpse had become hideous he declared that it was lovely as ever in his eyes. At the earnest request of Meslemeh, he ordered the grave to be closed again, but he was unable to exist when deprived of the sight of the remains of her who was at the same time his slave and his mistress: he threw himself upon his bed, speechless, and after lingering seventeen nights, expired and was buried by the side of Ḥabbábeh. “May God,” says the narrator, “have mercy on them both!”[]

In the same work from which the above is taken, it is related that Hároon Er-Rasheed, visiting Suleymán the son of Aboo-Jaạfar, one of his chief officers, saw with him a female slave, named Ḍa´eefeh, of excessive beauty, and being smitten by her charms demanded her as a present. His request was granted; but Suleymán, from grief at the loss of his mistress, fell sick; and during his illness was heard to exclaim, —

“I appeal unto God against the affliction which He hath sent upon me through the Khaleefeh.
“The world heareth of his justice; but he is a tyrant in the affair of Ḍa´eefeh.[]
“Love of her is fixed in my heart as ink upon the surface of paper.”

Er-Rasheed, being informed of his complaint, restored to him his mistress, and with her his peace of mind. This anecdote is given as a proof of strong love; but perhaps may not be thought much to the purpose. The following, from the same work, is more apt.

During the hottest hour of an excessively sultry day, the Khaleefeh Mo´áwiyeh the son of Aboo-Sufyán was sitting in a chamber which was open on each side to allow free passage to the air, when he beheld a barefooted Bedawee approaching him. Wondering what could induce this man to brave the scorching heat, he declared to his attendants that if he were come to demand of him any favour or aid or act of justice, his request should be granted. The Bedawee addressed him in verse with a pathetic appeal for justice against the tyranny of Marwán the son of El-Ḥakam (afterwards Khaleefeh, Mo´áwiyeh's fourth successor), by whom he had been forcibly deprived of his beloved wife Soạdà. The Khaleefeh requiring a more particular account of his case, he related the following facts. He had a wife, the daughter of his paternal uncle, excessively beloved by him, and possessed a number of camels, which enabled him to live in comfort; but a year of terrible drought deprived him of his property and reduced him to utter want: his friends deserted him, and his wife was taken away from him by her father. To seek redress he repaired to Marwán, the Governor of his district, at El-Medeeneh, who, having summoned the father of his wife, and herself, was so smitten by the beauty of the woman that he determined to obtain her for himself in marriage. To accomplish this, he threw the husband into prison, and offered the father of the woman a thousand deenárs and ten thousand dirhems for his consent to his marriage with her, promising to compel her actual husband to divorce her; and this latter object, having obtained the father's approval, he gained by severely torturing the unfortunate Bedawee. It would have been vain for the woman to attempt resistance; and so she became the wife of Marwán.

The oppressed Bedawee, having related these circumstances, fell down in a swoon, and lay on the floor senseless, coiled up like a dead snake. As soon as he recovered, the Khaleefeh wrote a poetical epistle to Marwán, severely reproaching him for his baseness, and commanding him, on pain of death, to divorce the woman and send her with his messenger. She was accordingly divorced and sent, with an answer composed in the same measure and rhyme, assuring the Khaleefeh that the sight of Soạdà would convince him that her charms were irresistible; and this proved too true. Mo´áwiyeh himself no sooner saw her than he coveted her, and offered to give the Bedawee, if he would resign her to him, three virgins from among his female slaves, together with a thousand deenárs and an ample annual pension. The Bedawee shrieked with dismay, as though he had received his death-blow, and indignantly rejected the offer. The Khaleefeh then said to him, “Thou confessest that thou hast divorced her, and Marwán has married her and acknowledged that he has divorced her: we will therefore give her her choice: if she desire any other than thee as her husband we will marry her to him, and if she prefer thee we will restore her to thee.” She, however, had the merit to prefer the destitute Bedawee, and the Khaleefeh gave her up to him, with a present of ten thousand dirhems.

Numerous instances of unreasonable love are recorded in the writings of Arabs. It is related that a man fell in love with a lady from seeing the impression of her hand upon a wall; and, being unable to win her, died. Many men are said to have conceived a violent passion for damsels seen in dreams; others, again, to have been affected thus merely by the ear. An author relates his having been acquainted with an accomplished schoolmaster who lost his heart from hearing a man sing the praises of a woman named Umm-´Amr, and two days after shut himself up in his house to mourn for her death, in consequence of his hearing the same man sing, —

“The ass went away with Umm-´Amr; and she returned not, nor did the ass return.”[]

The reader should have some idea of the qualifications or charms which the Arabs in general consider requisite to the perfection of female beauty. He must not imagine that excessive fatness is one of these characteristics, though it is said to be esteemed a chief essential to beauty throughout the greater part of Northern Africa: on the contrary, the maiden whose loveliness inspires the most impassioned expressions in Arabic poesy and prose is celebrated for her slender figure, — she is like the cane among plants, and is elegant as a twig of the oriental willow. Her face is like the full moon, presenting the strongest contrast to the colour of her hair, which (to preserve the nature of the simile just employed) is of the deepest hue of night, and falls to the middle of her back. A rosy blush overspreads the centre of each cheek; and a mole is considered an additional charm. The Arabs, indeed, are particularly extravagant in their admiration of this natural beauty-spot; which, according to its place, is compared to a drop of ambergris upon a dish of alabaster or upon the surface of a ruby. The Anacreon of Persia affected to prize the mole upon the cheek of his beloved above the cities of Samarḳand and Bukhárà.

The eyes of the Arab beauty are intensely black,▯ large, and long, of the form of an almond: they are full of brilliancy, but this is softened by a lid slightly depressed and by long silken lashes, giving a tender and languid expression that is full of enchantment and scarcely to be improved by the adventitious aid of the black border of koḥl; for this the lovely maiden adds rather for the sake of fashion than necessity, having what the Arabs term natural koḥl. The eyebrows are thin and arched; the forehead is wide, and fair as ivory; the nose, straight; the mouth, small; the lips of a brilliant red; and the teeth, "like pearls set in coral." The forms of the bosom are compared to two pomegranates; the waist is slender; the hips are wide and large; the feet and hands, small; the fingers, tapering, and their extremities dyed with the deep orange-red tint imparted by the leaves of the ḥennà. The maid in whom these charms are combined exhibits a lively image of "the rosy-fingered Aurora:" her lover knows neither night nor sleep in her presence, and the constellations of heaven are no longer seen by him when she approaches. The most bewitching age is between fourteen and seventeen years; for then the forms of womanhood are generally developed in their greatest beauty; but many a maiden in her twelfth year possesses charms sufficient to fascinate every man who beholds her.

The reader may perhaps desire a more minute analysis of Arabian beauty. The following is the most complete that I can offer him.—"Four things in a woman should be *black*, — the hair of the head, the eyebrows, the eyelashes, and the dark part of the eyes: four *white*, — the complexion of the skin, the white of the eyes, the teeth, and the legs: four *red*, — the tongue, the lips, the middle of the cheeks, and the gums: four *round*, — the head, the neck, the forearms, and the ankles: four *long*, — the back, the fingers, the arms, and the legs:▯ four *wide*, — the forehead, the eyes, the bosom, and the hips: four *fine*, — the eyebrows, the nose, the lips, and the fingers: four *thick*, — the lower part of the back, the thighs, the calves of the legs, and the knees: four *small*, — the ears, the breasts, the hands, and the feet."▯

Arab ladies are extremely fond of full and long hair; and, however amply endowed with this natural ornament, to add to its effect they have recourse to art. But the Prophet, abhorring all false attractions that might at first deceive a husband and then disappoint him, “cursed the woman who joined her own hair to that of another, or that of another to her own, without her husband’s permission: if she do it, therefore, with his permission, it is not prohibited, unless she so make use of human hair; for this is absolutely forbidden.”▯ Hence the Arab women prefer strings of silk to add to their hair.▯ Over the forehead, the hair is cut rather short; but two full locks hang down on each side of the face: these are often curled in ringlets, and sometimes plaited. The rest of the hair is arranged in plaits or braids which hang down the back. They are generally from eleven to twenty-five in number, but always of an uneven number: eleven is considered a scanty number, thirteen and fifteen are more common. Three times the number of black silk strings (three to each plait of hair, and each three united at the top), from sixteen to eighteen inches in length, are braided with the hair for about a quarter of their length; or they are attached to a lace or band of black silk which is bound round the head, and in this case hang entirely separate from the plaits of hair. These strings, together with certain ornaments of gold, etc., composed what is termed the ṣafà. Along each string, except from the upper extremity to about a quarter or (at most) a third of its length, are generally attached nine or more little flat ornaments of gold, which are usually all of the same form. The most common form is oblong, round at the lower extremity and pointed at the upper, or the reverse. They are affixed (each by a little ring at its upper extremity) about an inch, or a little more, apart; but those of each string are purposely placed so as not exactly to correspond with those of the others. At the end of each string is a small gold tube, or a small polygonal gold bead, beneath which is most commonly suspended (by a little ring) a gold coin, a little more than half an inch in diameter. Such is the most general description of ṣafà; but some ladies substitute for the gold coin a fanciful ornament of the same metal, either simple, or with a pearl in the centre; or they suspend in the place of this a little tassel of pearls, or attach alternately pearls and emeralds to the bottom of the triple strings, and a pearl with each of the little ornaments of gold first mentioned. Coral beads are also sometimes attached in the same manner as these pearls. The ṣafà I think the prettiest, as well as most singular, of all the ornaments worn by Arab ladies. The glittering of the little ornaments of gold, and their chinking together as the wearer walks, have a peculiarly lively effect. A kind of crown — a circle of jewelled gold (the lower edge of which was straight, and the upper fancifully heightened to four or more points) surrounding the lower part of a dome-shaped cap with a jewel or some other ornament at the summit — was worn by many Arab ladies of high rank or great wealth, probably until about two centuries ago. Another kind of crown is now more generally worn, called a ḳurṣ. This is a round convex ornament, generally about five inches in diameter, composed of gold set with a profusion of diamonds, of open work, representing roses, leaves, etc. It is sewed upon the top of the ṭarboosh; and is worn by most of the ladies of Cairo, at least in full dress.▯

The gait of Arab ladies is very remarkable: they incline the lower part of the body from side to side as they step, and with the hands raised to the level of the bosom they hold the edges of their outer covering. Their pace is slow, and they look not about them, but keep their eyes towards the ground in the direction to which they are going.

The wickedness of women is a subject upon which the stronger sex among the Arabs, with an affectation of superior virtue, often dwell in common conversation. That women are deficient in judgment or good sense is held as a fact not to be disputed even by themselves, as it rests on an assertion of the Prophet; but that they possess a superior degree of cunning is pronounced equally certain and notorious. Their general depravity is pronounced to be much greater than that of men. “I stood,” said the Prophet, “at the gate of Paradise; and lo, most of its inmates were the poor: and I stood at the gate of Hell; and lo, most of its inmates were women.”▯ In allusion to women, the Khaleefeh ´Omar said, “Consult them, and do the contrary of what they advise.” But this is not to be done merely for the sake of opposing them, nor when other advice can be had. “It is desirable for a man,” says a learned Imám, “before he enters upon any important undertaking, to consult ten intelligent persons among his particular friends; or if he have not more than five such friends, let him consult each of them twice; or if he have not more than one friend, he should consult him ten times, at ten different visits; if he have not one to consult, let him return to his wife, and consult her, and whatever she advises him to do, let him do the contrary: so shall he proceed rightly in his affair, and attain his object.” A truly virtuous wife is, of course, excepted in this rule: such a person is as much respected by Muslims as she is (at least, according to their own account) rarely met with by them. When woman was created, the Devil, we are told, was delighted, and said, “Thou art half of my host, and thou art the depository of my secret, and thou art my arrow, with which I shoot, and miss not.” What are termed by us affairs of gallantry were very common among the Pagan Arabs, and are scarcely less so among their Muslim posterity. They are, however, unfrequent among most tribes of Bedawees, and among the descendants of those tribes not long settled as cultivators. I remember being roused from the quiet that I generally enjoyed in an ancient tomb in which I resided at Thebes, by the cries of a young woman in the neighbourhood whom an Arab was severely beating for an impudent proposal she had made to him.

Marriage is regarded by the Muslims in general as a positive duty, and to neglect it without a sufficient excuse subjects a man to severe reproach. “When a servant [of God],” said the Prophet, “marries, verily he perfects half his religion.” He once asked a man, “Art thou married?” The man answered, “No.” “And art thou,” said he, “sound and healthy?” The answer was, “Yes.” “Then,” said Moḥammad, “thou art one of the brothers of the devils; for the most wicked among you are the unmarried, and the most vile among your dead are the unmarried; moreover the married are those who are acquitted of filthy conversation; and by Him in whose hand is my soul, the devil hath not a weapon more effective against the virtuous, both men and women, than the neglect of marriage.”

The number of wives whom a Muslim may have at the same time is four. He may marry free women, or take concubine slaves, or have of both these classes. It is the opinion of most persons, I believe, among the more strictly religious, that a man may not have more than four women, whether they be wives alone, or concubine slaves alone, or of both classes together; but the practice of some of the companions of the Prophet, who cannot be accused of violating his precepts, affords a strong argument to the contrary. ´Alee, it is said, "was the most devout of the companions; but he had four wives and seventeen concubines besides, and married, after Fáṭimeh (may God be well pleased with her!), among all that he married and divorced, more than two hundred women: and sometimes he included four wives in one contract, and sometimes divorced four at one time, taking other four in their stead."▯ This may perhaps be an exaggerated statement, but it is certain that the custom of keeping an unlimited number of concubines was common among wealthy Muslims in the first century of the Mohammadan era, and has so continued. The famous author of the work above quoted urges the example of Solomon to prove that the possession of numerous concubines is not inconsistent with piety and good morals; not considering that God in the beginning made one male and but one female.

It has been mentioned that a Muslim may divorce his wife twice and each time take her back. This he may do, even against her wish, during a fixed period, which cannot extend beyond three months, unless she be *enceinte*, in which latter case she must wait until the birth of her child before she will be at liberty to contract a new marriage. During this period the husband is obliged to maintain her. If he divorce her a third time, or by a triple sentence, he cannot take her again unless with her own consent and by a new contract and after another marriage has been consummated between her and another husband who also has divorced her.

It is not a common custom, especially among the middle ranks, for a Muslim to have more than one wife at the same time; but there are few of middle age who have not had several different wives at different periods, tempted to change by the facility of divorce.▯ The case of ´Alee has been mentioned above. Mugheyreh Ibn-Sheabeh married eighty women in the course of his life;▯ and several more remarkable instances of the love of change are recorded by Arab writers; the most extraordinary case of this kind that I have met with was that of Moḥammad Ibn-Eṭ-Ṭeiyib, the dyer of Baghdád, who died in the year of the Flight 423, aged eighty-five years; of whom it is related on most respectable authority that he married more than nine hundred women!▯ Supposing, therefore, that he married his first wife when he was fifteen years of age, he must have had, on the average, nearly thirteen wives *per annum.* The women, in general, cannot of course marry so many successive husbands, not only because a woman cannot have more than one husband at a time, but also because she cannot divorce her husband. There have been, however, many instances of Arab women who have married a surprising number of men in rapid succession. Among these may be mentioned Umm-Khárijeh, who gave occasion to a proverb on this subject. This woman, who was of the tribe of Bejeeleh, in El-Yemen, married upwards of forty husbands; and her son Khárijeh knew not who was his father. She used to contract a marriage in the quickest possible manner: a man saying to her, “Khiṭb” (“I ask” — in marriage), she replied “Nikḥ” (“I give”), and thus became his lawful wife. She had a very numerous progeny; several tribes originating from her.▯

For the choice of a wife, a man generally relies on his mother or some other near female relation, or a professional female betrother (who is called “kháṭibeh”); for there are many women who perform this office for hire. The law allows him to see the face of the girl whom he proposes to marry, previously to his making the contract; but in the present day this liberty is seldom obtained, except among the lower orders. Unless in this case, a man is not allowed to see unveiled any woman but his own wife or slave, and those women to whom the law prohibits his uniting himself in marriage: nay, according to some he is not allowed to see his own niece unveiled, though he may not marry her.▯ It should be added that a slave may lawfully see the face of his own mistress; but this privilege is seldom granted in the present day to any slave but a eunuch. An infringement of the law above mentioned is held to be extremely sinful in both parties: “The curse of God,” said the Prophet, “is on the seer and the seen:” yet it is very often disregarded in the case of women of the lower orders.

A man is forbidden, by the Ḳur-án▯ and the Sunneh, to marry his mother, or other ascendant; daughter, or other descendant; his sister, or half sister; the sister of his father or mother, or other ascendant;

his niece, or any of her descendants; his foster-mother who has suckled him five times in the course of the first two years, or a woman related to him by milk in any of the degrees which would preclude his marriage with her if she were similarly related to him by consanguinity; the mother of his wife; the daughter of his wife, in certain conditions; his father's wife, and his son's wife; and to have at the same time two wives who are sisters, or aunt and niece: he is forbidden also to marry his unemancipated slave, or another man's slave, if he has already a free wife; and to marry any woman but one of his own faith, or a Christian, or a Jewess. A Mohammadan woman, however, may only marry a man of her own faith. An unlawful liaison with any woman prevents a man from marrying any of her relations who would be forbidden to him if she were his wife.

A cousin (the daughter of a paternal uncle) is often chosen as a wife, on account of the tie of blood which is likely to attach her more strongly to her husband, or on account of an affection conceived in early years. Parity of rank is generally much regarded; and a man is often unable to obtain as his wife the daughter of one of a different profession or trade, unless an inferior; or a younger daughter when an elder remains unmarried. A girl is often married at the age of twelve years, and sometimes at ten, or even nine: the usual period is between twelve and sixteen years. At the age of thirteen or fourteen she may be a mother. The young men marry a few years later.

The most important requisite in a wife is religion. The Prophet said, "A virtuous wife is better than the world and all that it contains." "A virtuous wife," said Luḳmán, "is like a crown on the head of a king; and a wicked wife is like a heavy burden on the back of an old man." Among the other chief requisites are agreeableness of temper, beauty of form (undiminished by any defect or irregularity of features or members), moderation in the amount of dowry required, and good birth. It is said, "If thou marry not a virgin [which is most desirable], marry a divorced woman, and not a widow; for the divorced woman will respect thy words when thou sayest, 'If there were any good in thee thou hadst not been divorced;' whereas the widow will say, 'May God have mercy on such a one [her first husband]! he hath left me to one unsuited to me.'" But according to another selfish maxim, the woman most to be avoided is she who is divorced from a man by whom she has had a child; for her heart is with him, and she is an enemy to the man who marries her after.

Modesty is a requisite upon which too much stress cannot be laid; but this, to an English reader, requires some explanation. ʻAlee asked his wife Fáṭimeh, "Who is the best of women?" She answered, "She who sees not men, and whom they see not." Modesty, therefore, in the opinion of the Muslims, is most eminently shewn by a woman's concealing her person, and restraining her eyes, from men. "The best rank of men [in a mosque]," said the Prophet, "is the front; and the best rank of women is the rear," — that is, those most distant from the men: but better than even these are the women who pray at home. Fruitfulness is also a desirable qualification to be considered in the choice of a wife: "it may be known in maidens," said the Prophet, "from their relations; because, generally speaking, kindred are similar in disposition, etc." Lastly, contentment is to be enumerated among the requisites. It is said, on the same authority, "Verily the best of women are those that are most content with little." To obtain a contented and submissive wife, many men make their selection from among the classes inferior to them in rank. Others, with a similar view, prefer a slave in the place of a wife.

The consent of a young girl is not required: her father, or, if he be dead, her nearest adult male relation, or a guardian appointed by will or by the Ḳáḍee, acts as her wekeel or deputy, to effect the marriage-contract for her. If of age, she appoints her own deputy. A dowry is required to legalize the marriage; and the least dowry allowed by the law is ten dirhems, — about five shillings of our money. Moḥammad married certain of his wives for a dowry of ten dirhems and the household necessaries, which were a hand-mill to grind the corn, a water-jar, and a pillow of skin or leather stuffed with the fibres of the palm-tree (leef), but some he married for a dowry of five hundred dirhems. With the increase of wealth and luxury, dowries have increased in amount; but to our ideas they are still trifling: a sum equivalent to about twenty pounds sterling being a common dowry among Arabs of the middle classes for a virgin, and half or a third or quarter of that sum for a divorced woman or a widow. Two thirds of the sum is usually paid before making the contract, and the remaining portion held in reserve to be paid to the woman in case of her divorce or in case of the husband’s death. The father or guardian of a girl under age receives the former portion of her dowry; but it is considered as her property, and he generally expends it, with an additional sum from his own purse, in the purchase of necessary furniture, dress, etc., for her, which the husband can never take from her against her own wish.

The marriage-contract is generally, in the present day, merely verbal; but sometimes a certificate is written and sealed by the Ḳáḍee. The most approved or propitious period for this act is the month of Showwál: the most unpropitious, Moḥarram. The only persons whose presence is required to perform it are the bridegroom (or his deputy), the bride’s deputy (who is the betrother), two male witnesses, if such can be easily procured, and the Ḳáḍee or a schoolmaster or some other person to recite a khuṭbeh, which consists of a few words in praise of God, a form of blessing on the Prophet, and some passages of the Ḳur-án respecting marriage. They all recite the Fátiḥah (or opening chapter of the Ḳur-án), after which the bridegroom pays the money. The latter and the bride’s deputy then seat themselves on the ground, face to face, and grasp each other’s right hand, raising the thumbs, and pressing them against each other. Previously to the khuṭbeh, the person who recites this formula places a handkerchief over the two joined hands; and after the khuṭbeh he dictates to the two contracting parties what they are to say. The betrother generally uses the following or a similar form of words: “I betroth to thee my daughter [or her for whom I act as deputy] such a one [naming the bride], the virgin [or the adult virgin, etc.], for a dowry of such an amount.” The bridegroom answers, “I accept from thee her betrothal to myself.” This is all that is absolutely necessary; but the address and reply are usually repeated a second and third time, and are often expressed in fuller forms of words. The contract is concluded with the recital of the Fátiḥah by all persons present.

This betrothal, or marriage-contract, is often performed several years before the wedding, when the two parties are yet children, or during the infancy of the girl; but most commonly not more than about eight or ten days before that event. The household furniture and dress prepared for the bride are sent by her family to the bridegroom’s house, usually conveyed by a train of camels, two or three or more days before she is conducted thither.

The feasts and processions which are now to be mentioned are only observed in the case of a virgin-bride; a widow or divorced woman being remarried in a private manner. I describe them chiefly in accordance with the usages of Cairo, which appear to me most agreeable, in general, with the descriptions and allusions in the “Thousand and One Nights.” The period most commonly approved for the wedding is the eve of Friday, or that of Monday. Previously to this event, the bridegroom once or twice or more frequently gives a feast to his friends; and for several nights, his house and the houses of his near neighbours are usually illuminated by numerous clusters of lamps, or by lanterns, suspended in front of them; some, to cords drawn across the street. To these or other cords are also suspended small flags, or square pieces of silk, each of two different colours, generally red and green. Some say that the feast or feasts should be given on the occasion of the marriage-contract; others, on the actual wedding; others, again, on both these occasions.▯

The usual custom of the people of Cairo is to give a feast on the night before the nuptials, and another on the wedding night; but some begin their feasts earlier. Respecting marriage-feasts, the Prophet said, “The first day’s feast is an incumbent duty; and the second day’s, a sunneh ordinance; and the third day’s, for ostentation and notoriety:” and he forbade eating at the feast of the ostentatious.▯ It is a positive duty to accept an invitation to a marriage-feast or other lawful entertainment; but the guest is not obliged to eat.▯ The persons invited and all intimate friends generally send presents of provisions of some kind a day or two before. The Prophet taught that marriage-feasts should be frugal: the best that *he* gave was with one goat.▯ He approved of demonstrations of joy at the celebration of a marriage with songs, and according to one tradition by the beating of deffs (or tambourines); but in another tradition the latter practice is condemned.▯ The preferable mode of entertaining the guests is by the performance of a zikr.

On the day preceding that on which she is conducted to the bridegroom’s house, the bride goes to the public bath, accompanied by a number of her female relations and friends. The procession generally pursues a circuitous route, for the sake of greater display; and on leaving the house, turns to the right. In Cairo, the bride walks under a canopy of silk borne by four men, with one of her near female relations on each side of her. Young unmarried girls walk before her; these are preceded by the married ladies; and the procession is headed and closed by a few musicians with drums and hautboys. The bride wears a kind of pasteboard crown or cap, and is completely veiled from the view of spectators by a Kashmeer shawl placed over her crown and whole person; but some handsome ornaments of the head are attached externally. The other women are dressed in the best of their walking-attire. In the case, however, of a bride of high rank, or of wealth, and often in the case of one belonging to a family of the middle class, the ladies ride upon high-saddled asses, without music or canopy; and the bride is only distinguished by a Kashmeer shawl instead of the usual black silk covering, one or more eunuchs sometimes riding at the head. In the bath, after the ordinary operations of washing, etc., a feast is made, and the party are often entertained by female singers.

Having returned in the same manner to her home, the bride’s friends there partake of a similar entertainment with her. Her hands and feet are then stained with ḥennà, and her eyes ornamented with koḥl; and her friends give her small presents of money, and take their leave. “It is a sunneh ordinance that the bride wash her feet in a clean vessel, and sprinkle the water in the corners of the chamber, that a blessing may result from this. She should also brighten her face, and put on the best of her apparel, and adorn her eyes with koḥl, and stain [her hands and feet] with ḥennà [as above mentioned]; and she should abstain, during the first week, from eating anything that contains mustard, and from vinegar, and sour apples.”[]

The bride is conducted to the house of the bridegroom (on the following day) in the same manner as to the bath, or with more pomp. In Cairo, the bridal processions of persons of very high rank are conducted with singular display. The train is usually headed by buffoons and musicians, and a water-carrier loaded with a goat’s-skin filled with sand and water, of very great weight, which is often borne for many hours before (as well as during) the procession, merely to amuse the spectators by this feat of strength. Then follow (interrupted by groups of male or female dancers, jugglers, and the like) numerous decorated open waggons or cars, each of which contains several members of some particular trade or art engaged in their ordinary occupations, or one such person with attendants: in one, for instance, a kahwejee, with his assistants and pots and cups and fire, making coffee for the spectators: in a second, makers of sweetmeats: in a third, makers of pancakes (faṭeerehs): in a fourth, silk-lace manufacturers: in a fifth, a silk-weaver, with his loom: in a sixth, tinners of copper vessels, at their work: in a seventh, white-washers, whitening over and over again a wall: in short, almost every manufacture and trade has its representatives in a separate waggon. El-Jabartee describes a procession of this kind in which there were upwards of seventy parties of different trades and arts, each party in a separate waggon, besides buffoons, wrestlers, dancers, and others; followed by various officers, the eunuchs of the bride's family, ladies of the ḥareem with their attendants, then the bride in a European carriage, a troop of memlooks clad in armour, and a Turkish band of music. It was a procession of which the like had not before been seen.▯

The bride and her party, having arrived at the house, sit down to a repast. The bridegroom does not yet see her. He has already been to the bath, and at nightfall he goes in procession with a number of his friends to a mosque, to perform the night-prayers. He is accompanied by musicians and singers, or by chanters of lyric odes in praise of the Prophet, and by men bearing cressets — poles with cylindrical frames of iron at the top filled with flaming wood; and on his return, most of his other attendants bear lighted wax candles and bunches of flowers.

Returned to his house, he leaves his friends in a lower apartment, and goes up to the bride, whom he finds seated, with a shawl thrown over her head, so as to conceal her face completely, and attended by one or two females. The latter he induces to retire by means of a small present. He then gives a present of money to the bride, as "the price of uncovering the face," and having removed the covering (saying as he does so, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful"), he beholds her, generally for the first time. On the occasion of this first visit, which is called the "dukhool" or “dukhleh,” he is recommended “to perfume himself, and to sprinkle some sugar and almonds on the head of the bride and on that of each woman with her (this practice being established by existing usage and by traditions): also, when he approaches her, he should perform the prayers of two rek´ahs, and she should do the same if able: then he should take hold of the hair over her forehead, and say, ‘O God, bless me in my wife, and bless my wife in me! O God, bestow upon me [offspring] by her, and bestow upon her [offspring] by me! O God, unite us, as thou hast united, happily; and separate us, when thou separatest, happily!’”[]

An astrological calculation is often made with the view of determining by what sign of the zodiac the two persons are influenced who contemplate becoming man and wife, and thence ascertaining whether they will agree. This is often done in the present day by adding together the numerical values of the letters composing his or her name and that of the mother, and, if I remember right, subtracting from 12 the whole sum if this is less than 12, or what remains after subtracting, or dividing, by 12. Thus is obtained the number of the sign. The twelve signs, commencing with Aries, correspond respectively with the elements of fire, earth, air, water, fire, earth, and so on; and if the signs of the two parties indicate the same element, it is inferred that they will agree; but if they indicate different elements, the inference is that the one will be affected by the other in the same manner as the element of the one is by that of the other: thus, if the element of the man is fire, and that of the woman, water, he will be subject to her rule. Among other calculations of the same kind is the following: — The numerical values of the letters composing the name of each of the two parties are added together, and one of these two sums is subtracted from the other: if the remainder is an uneven number, the inference is unfavourable; but if even, the reverse.

Next to the service of the husband or master, the care of her children, and attending to other indispensable domestic duties, the most important occupation of the wife is that of spinning or weaving or needle-work. “Sitting for an hour employed with the distaff is better for women,” said the Prophet, “than a year’s worship; and for every piece of cloth woven of the thread spun by them they shall receive the reward of a martyr." — ´Áisheh, the Prophet's wife, thus declared the merit of spinning:— "Tell the women what I say: There is no woman who spins until she hath clothed herself but all the angels in the Seven Heavens pray for forgiveness of her sins; and she will go forth from her grave on the day of judgment wearing a robe of Paradise and with a veil upon her head, and before her shall be an angel and on her right an angel who will hand her a draught of the water of Selsebeel, the fountain of Paradise; and another angel will come to her, and carry her upon his wings, and bear her to Paradise. And when she enters Paradise, eighty thousand maidens will meet her, each maiden bringing a different robe; and she will have mansions of emeralds with three hundred doors, at each of which will stand an angel with a present from the Lord of the Throne."▯ — The arts above mentioned are pursued by the females in the ḥareems of the middle and higher classes. Their leisure-hours are mostly spent in working with the needle; particularly in embroidering handkerchiefs, head-veils, etc., upon a frame called mensej, with coloured silks and gold. Many women, even in the houses of the wealthy, replenish their private purses by ornamenting handkerchiefs and other things in this manner, and employing a delláleh (or female broker) to take them to the market, or to other ḥareems, for sale.▯

The separation of the sexes undoubtedly promotes the free intercourse of people of the same sex and of different ranks, who thus are able to associate together, regardless of difference of wealth or station, without the risk of occasioning unequal matrimonial connections. This separation is therefore felt by neither sex as oppressive, but is regarded by them as productive of results which constitute the Muslim's chief enjoyments, — the highest degree of domestic comfort, and the most free and extensive society of his fellow men. Thus it is with both sexes; and neither would give up the pleasure that they hence derive for a different system of society, somewhat extending their domestic intercourse, but often destroying the pleasures of home, and contracting into a compass comparatively narrow the fellowship which they enjoyed abroad.

I must now remark upon some other effects of the same system. First, the restriction of intercourse between the sexes before marriage renders indispensable, to some, the facility of divorce; for it would be unjust for a man who finds himself disappointed in his expectations of a wife, whom he has never before seen, not to be enabled to put her away. Secondly, it sometimes renders indispensable the licence of polygamy; for a man who finds his first wife unsuited to him may not be able to divorce her without reducing her to want; and the licence of polygamy becomes as necessary in this case as that of divorce in another. Thirdly, the liberty of polygamy renders the facility of divorce more desirable for the happiness of women; since, when a man has two or more wives, and one of them is dissatisfied with her situation, he is enabled to liberate her. Fourthly, the licence of divorce often acts as a check upon that of polygamy; for the fear of being obliged, by the influence of his first wife, or by that of her relations, to divorce her if he take a second, often prevents a man from doing this. Thus both these licences are required by the most important principle of the constitution of Muslim society, and each is productive of some moral benefit. In considering the question of their expediency, we should also remember that barrenness is much more common in hot climates than in those which are temperate.

The Christian scheme is plainly opposed to polygamy; but as to divorce, some have contended that it only forbids putting away a wife against her will, unless for one cause.▯ Christians are often most unjust in their condemnation of Muslim laws and tenets, and especially condemn those which agree with the Mosaic code and the practices of holy men; such as polygamy (which Moḥammad *limited*), divorce, war for the defence of religion, purifications, and even minor matters.▯ Moḥammad endeavoured to remove one of the chief causes of polygamy and divorce, by recommending that a man should see a woman whom he proposed to take as his wife.▯ We might imagine that he could have made these practices less common than they now are, and always have been, among his followers, had he given more licence, allowing the man to enjoy a limited association with the object of his choice in the presence of her female or male relations (the former of whom might be veiled), without infringing further the general law of the separation of the sexes. But he saw that such liberty would very seldom, if ever, be allowed: scarcely any parents among the Arabs, except those of the lower classes, permit the little licence which he recommended. Instead of condemning him for allowing a plurality of wives, I think we should be more reasonable if we commended him for diminishing and restricting the number. I think, too, that as Moses allowed his people for the hardness of their hearts to put away their wives, and God denounced not polygamy when the patriarchs practised it, we should be more consistent as believers in the Scriptures if we admitted the permission of these practices to be more conducive to morality than their prohibition, among a people similar to the ancient Jews to whom Moses allowed such liberty. As to the privilege which Moḥammad assumed to himself, of having a greater number of wives than he allowed to others, I have elsewhere remarked,[] that, in doing so, he may have been actuated by the want of male offspring as much as impelled by voluptuousness.

"On the subject of polygamy," says a writer who has deeply studied Muslim institutions and their effects, "a European has all the advantage in discussion with a Turkish woman, because her feelings are decidedly on the side of her antagonists; but then she has a tremendous power of reply, in the comparison of the practical effects of the two systems, and in the widely spread rumours of the heartlessness and the profligacy of Europe. All the convictions of our habits and laws stand in hostile array against the country where the principle of polygamy is admitted into the laws of the state; but yet, while we reproach Islamism with polygamy, Islamism may reproach us with practical polygamy, which, unsanctioned by law and reproved by custom, adds degradation of the mind to dissoluteness of morals."[]

It should further be remarked that by sanctioning polygamy Moḥammad did not make the practice general: nay, he could not. It is a licence for the hard-hearted, which restrains them from worse conduct, and in some cases, as already shown, a resource for the tender-hearted. "The permission," observes the author just cited, "does not alter the proportions of men and women. While, therefore, the law of nature renders this practice an impossibility as regards the community, it is here still further restrained among the few who have the means of indulging in it, both by the domestic unquiet that results from it, and by the public censure and reprobation of which it is the object."

I have remarked in a former work that polygamy "is more rare among the higher and middle classes [in Egypt, and I believe in other Arab countries] than it is among the lower orders; and it is not very common among the latter. A poor man may indulge himself with two or more wives, each of whom may be able, by some art or occupation, nearly to provide her own subsistence; but most persons of the higher and middle orders are deterred from doing so by the consideration of the expense and discomfort which they would incur. A man having a wife who has the misfortune to be barren, and being too much attached to her to divorce her, is sometimes induced to take a second wife, merely in the hope of obtaining offspring; and from the same motive he may take a third, and a fourth; but fickle passion is the most evident and common motive both to polygamy and to repeated divorces. They are comparatively few who gratify this passion by the former practice. I believe that not more than one husband among twenty has two wives."▯

I hope I have shown that though I consider polygamy as necessary in the constitution of Muslim society, to prevent a profligacy that would be worse than that which prevails to so great a degree in European countries, where people are united in marriage after an intimate mutual acquaintance, I consider it as a necessary *evil*. When two or more wives of the same man live together, or when they visit each other, feelings of jealousy are generally felt and often manifested, and especially on the part of the wife or wives who cannot claim precedence by having been married before the other or others, or by reason of being more favoured by the husband.▯ The wife first married usually enjoys the highest rank: therefore parents often object to giving a daughter in marriage to a man who has already another wife; and it frequently happens that the woman who is sought in marriage objects to such a union. The law provides in some measure against the discomforts arising from polygamy, by giving to each wife a claim to a distinct lodging, affording conveniences for sleeping, cooking, etc.; and further enjoins the husband to be strictly impartial to his wives in every respect. But fruitfulness and superior beauty are qualifications that often enable a second, third, or fourth wife to usurp the place of the first; though in many cases, as I have already remarked, the lasting favourite is not the most handsome.

There are, however, many instances of sincere affection existing in the hearts of fellow-wives. The following story of two wives of the father of El-Jabartee, the modern Egyptian historian, related by himself, and of undoubted truth, is a pleasing example. — Speaking of the first of these two wives, the historian says, —

“Among her acts of conjugal piety and submission was this, that she used to buy for her husband beautiful slave girls, with her own wealth, and deck them with ornaments and apparel, and so present them to him, confidently looking to the reward and recompense which she should receive [in Paradise] for such conduct. He took, in addition to her, many other wives from among free women, and bought female slaves; but she did not in consequence conceive any of that jealousy which commonly affects women. Among other strange events which happened was the following. When the subject of this memoir [the author’s father] performed the pilgrimage in the year 1156 [A.D. 1743-44], he became acquainted at Mekkeh with the sheykh ´Omar El-Ḥalabee who commissioned him to purchase for him a white female slave, having such and such qualifications. So when he returned from the pilgrimage, he searched for female slaves among the slave-dealers, to choose from them such a one as was wanted, and ceased not until he found the object of his desire, and bought her. He brought her to his wife, to remain with her until he should send her with a person to whom he was commissioned to entrust her for the journey; and when the period at which she was to depart arrived, he informed his wife of it, that she might prepare the provisions for the way, and other necessaries. But she said to him, ‘I have conceived a great love for this maid, and I cannot endure separation from her: I have no children, and I have taken her as a daughter.’ The girl Zeleekhá also wept, and said, ‘I will not part from my mistress, nor ever leave her.’ ‘Then what is to be done?’ he asked. She answered, ‘I will pay her price from my own property, and do thou buy another.’ He did so. She then emancipated the girl, gave her to him by a marriage-contract, prepared her paraphernalia, and furnished for her a separate apartment; and he took her as his wife in the year 1165. The former wife could not bear to be separated from her even for an hour, although she had become her fellow-wife, and borne him children. In the year 1182, the [emancipated] slave fell sick, and she [the first wife] fell sick on account of her [friend's] sickness. The illness increased upon both of them; and in the morning the slave arose, and looked at her mistress when she seemed about to die, and wept, and said, 'O my God and my Lord, if Thou hast decreed the death of my mistress, make my day to be before her day.' Then she lay down, and her disease increased, and she died the next night; and they wrapped her up by the side of her mistress. And her mistress awoke at the close of the night, and felt her with her hand, and began to say, 'Zeleekhá! Zeleekhá!' They said to her, 'She is asleep.' But she replied, 'My heart telleth me that she is dead: and I saw in my sleep what indicated this event.' They then said to her, 'May thy life be prolonged!' And when she had thus ascertained the event, she raised herself, and sat up, and said, 'No life remaineth to me after her.' And she wept and wailed until the day appeared, when they began to prepare for the speedy burial of the slave; and they washed the corpse before her, and carried it to the grave. Then she returned to her bed, and fell into the agonies of death, and died at the close of the day; and on the following day they carried her corpse to the grave in like manner."

CHAPTER X.

SLAVERY.

A slave, among Muslims, is either a person taken captive in war, or carried off by force, and being at the time of capture an infidel; or the offspring of a female slave by another slave or by any man who is not her owner, or by her owner if he does not acknowledge himself to be the father: but the offspring of a male slave by a free woman is free. A person who embraces the Mohammadan faith after having been made a slave does not by this act become free, unless he flies from a foreign infidel master to a Muslim country and there becomes a Mohammadan. A person cannot have as a slave one whom he acknowledges to be within the prohibited degrees of marriage. The slaves of the Arabs are mostly from Abyssinia and the Negro countries: a few, in the houses of very wealthy individuals, are from Georgia and Circassia.

Slaves have no civil liberty, but are entirely under the authority of their owners, whatever may be the religion, sex, or age, of the latter; and can possess no property, unless by the owner's permission. The owner is entire master, while he pleases, of the person and goods of his slave, and of the offspring of his female slave, which, if his, or presumed to be his, he may recognize as his own legitimate child, or not: the child, if recognized by him, enjoys the same privileges as the offspring of a free wife; and if not recognized by him, is his slave. The master may even kill his own slave with impunity for any offence; and he incurs but a slight punishment (as imprisonment for a period at the discretion of the judge) if he kills him wantonly. He may give away or sell his slaves, excepting in some cases which will be mentioned; and may marry them to whom he will, but not separate them when married. A slave, however, according to most of the doctors, cannot have more than two wives at the same time.

Unemancipated slaves, at the death of their master, become the property of his heirs; and when an emancipated slave dies, leaving no male descendants or collateral relations, the master is the heir; or, if the master be dead, his heirs inherit the slave's property. As a slave enjoys less advantages than a free person, the law in some cases ordains that his punishment for an offence shall be half of that to which the free is liable for the same offence, or even less than half: if it be a fine or pecuniary compensation, it must be paid by the owner to the amount, if necessary, of the value of the slave, or the slave must be given in compensation.

When a man, from being the husband, becomes the master, of a slave, the marriage is dissolved, and he cannot continue to live with her but as her master, enjoying, however, all a master's privileges, unless he emancipates her, in which case he may again take her as his wife with her consent. In like manner, when a woman, from being the wife, becomes the possessor, of a slave, the marriage is dissolved, and cannot be renewed unless she emancipates him, and he consents to the re-union.

Complete and immediate emancipation is sometimes granted to a slave gratuitously, or for a future pecuniary compensation. It is conferred by means of a written document, or by a verbal declaration (expressed in the words, "Thou art free," or some similar phrase) in the presence of two witnesses, or by returning the certificate of sale obtained from the former owner. Future emancipation is sometimes covenanted to be granted on the fulfilment of certain conditions, and more frequently to be conferred on the occasion of the owner's death. In the latter case the owner cannot sell the slave to whom he has made this promise: and, as he cannot alienate by will more than one-third of the whole property that he leaves, the law ordains that if the value of the said slave exceeds that portion, the slave must obtain and pay the additional sum. When a female slave has borne a child to her master, and he acknowledges the child to be his own, he cannot sell this slave, and she becomes free on his death.

Abyssinian and white female slaves are kept by many men of the middle and higher classes, and often instead of wives, as requiring less expense and being more subservient; but they are generally indulged with the same luxuries as free ladies, their vanity is gratified by costly dresses and ornaments, and they rank high above free servants; as do also the male slaves. Those called Abyssinians appear to be a mixed race between negroes and whites, and are from the territories of the Gallas. They are mostly kidnapped and sold by their own countrymen. The negro female slaves, as few of them have considerable personal attractions (which is not the case with the Abyssinians, many of whom are very beautiful), are usually employed only in cooking and other menial offices. The female slaves of the higher classes are often instructed in plain needlework and embroidery, and sometimes in music and dancing. Formerly many of them possessed sufficient literary accomplishments to quote largely from esteemed poems, or even to compose extemporary verses, which they would often accompany with the lute.

Slaves of either sex are generally treated with kindness; but at first they are usually importuned, and not unfrequently used with much harshness, to induce them to embrace the Mohammadan faith; which almost all of them do. Their services are commonly light: the usual office of the male white slave, who is called “memlook,” is that of a page or a military guard. Eunuchs are employed as guardians of the women, but only in the houses of men of high rank or great wealth. On account of the important and confidential office which they fill, they are generally treated in public with especial consideration. I used to remark, in Cairo, that few persons saluted me with a more dignified and consequential air than these pitiable but self-conceited beings. Most of them are Abyssinians or Negroes. Indeed, the slaves in general take too much advantage of the countenance of their masters, especially when they belong to men in power. The master is bound to afford his slaves proper food and clothing, or to let them work for their own support, or to sell, give away, or liberate them. It is, however, considered disgraceful for him to sell a slave who has been long in his possession; and it seldom happens that a master emancipates a female slave without marrying her to some man able to support her, or otherwise providing for her.

The Prophet strongly enjoined the duty of kindness to slaves. “Feed your memlooks,” said he, “with food of that which ye eat, and clothe them with such clothing as ye wear; and command them not to do that for which they are unable.”▯ These precepts are generally attended to, either entirely or in a great degree. Some other sayings of the Prophet on this subject well deserve to be mentioned — as the following:— “He who beats his slave without fault, or slaps him on the face, his atonement for this is freeing him.”— “A man who behaves ill to his slave will not enter into Paradise."— "Whoever is the cause of separation between mother and child, by selling or giving, God will separate him from his friends on the day of resurrection."— "When a slave wishes well to his master, and worships God well, for him are double rewards."▯

It is related of ´Othmán, "that he twisted the ear of a memlook belonging to him, on account of disobedience, and afterwards, repenting of it, ordered him to twist *his* ear in like manner: but he would not. ´Othmán urged him, and the memlook advanced, and began to wring it by little and little. He said to him, 'Wring it hard; for I cannot endure the punishment of the day of judgment [on account of this act].' The memlook answered, 'O my master, the day that thou fearest, I also fear.'"— "It is related also of Zeyn el-´Ábideen, that he had a memlook who seized a sheep, and broke its leg; and he said to him, 'Why didst thou this?' He answered, 'To provoke thee to anger.' 'And I,' said he, 'will provoke to anger him who taught thee; and he is Iblees: go, and be free, for the sake of God.'"▯ — Many similar anecdotes might be added; but the general assertions of travellers in the East are more satisfactory evidence in favour of the humane conduct of most Muslims to their slaves.

It sometimes happens, though rarely, that free girls are sold as slaves.▯ A remarkable instance is related in the Mir-át ez-Zemán.▯ — Fátimeh, surnamed Ghareeb, a slave of the Khaleefeh El-Moạtaṣim, the son of Hároon, was a poetess, accomplished in singing and calligraphy, and extremely beautiful. Her mother was an orphan; and Jaạfar, the famous Wezeer of Hároon Er-Rasheed, took her as his wife; but his father, Yaḥyà, reproached him for marrying a woman whose father and mother were unknown, and he therefore removed her from his own residence to a neighbouring house, where he frequently visited her; and she bore him a daughter, the above-mentioned Ghareeb, and died. Jaạfar committed her infant to the care of a Christian woman to nurse; and, on the overthrow of his family, this woman sold her young charge as a slave. El-Emeen, the successor of Er-Rasheed, bought her of a man named Sumbul, but never paid her price; and when he was killed, she returned to her former master; but on the arrival of El-Ma-moon at Baghdád, she was described to him, and he compelled Sumbul to sell her to him.

This Sumbul loved her so passionately that he died of grief at her loss. On the death of El-Ma-moon, his successor, El-Moạtaṣim, bought her for a hundred thousand dirhems, and emancipated her. The historian adds that she composed several well-known airs and verses.

CHAPTER XI.

CEREMONIES OF DEATH.

The ceremonies attendant upon death and burial are nearly the same in the cases of men and women. The face or the head of the dying person is turned towards the direction of Mekkeh. When the spirit is departing, the eyes are closed; and then, or immediately after, the women of the house commence a loud lamentation, in which many of the females of the neighbourhood generally come to join. Hired female mourners are also usually employed, each of whom accompanies her exclamations of “Alas for him!” etc. by beating a tambourine. If possible, the corpse is buried on the day of the death;▯ but when this cannot be done, the lamentation of the women is continued during the ensuing night; and a recitation of several chapters, or of the whole, of the Ḳur-án is performed by one or more men hired for the purpose.

The washing consists, first, in the performance of the ordinary ablution that is preparatory to prayer, with the exception of the cleansing of the mouth and nose, and secondly, in an ablution of the whole body with warm water and soap, or with water in which some leaves of the lote-tree have been boiled. The jaw is bound up, the eyes are closed, and the nostrils, etc., are stuffed with cotton; and the corpse is sprinkled with a mixture of water, pounded camphor, dried and pounded leaves of the lote-tree, and sometimes other dried and pulverized leaves, and with rose-water. The ankles are bound together;▯ and the hands placed upon the breast.

The grave-clothing of a poor man consists of a piece or two of cotton, or a kind of bag; but the corpse of a man of wealth is generally wrapped first in muslin, then in cotton cloth of a thicker texture, next in a piece of striped stuff of silk and cotton intermixed, or in a ḳafṭán (a long vest) of similar stuff merely stitched together, and over these is wrapped a Kashmeer shawl.▯ The colours most approved for the grave-clothes are white and green. The body thus shrouded is placed in a bier, which is usually covered with a Kashmeer shawl, and borne on the shoulders of three or four men, generally friends of the deceased.

There are some slight differences in the funeral ceremonies observed in different Arab countries; but a sufficient notion of them will be conveyed by briefly describing those which prevail in Cairo. The procession to the tomb is generally headed by a number of poor men, mostly blind, who, walking two and two, or three and three together, chant, in a melancholy tone, the profession (or two professions) of the faith, “There is no deity but God” and “Moḥammad is God’s apostle,” or sometimes other words. They are usually followed by some male relations and friends of the deceased; and these, by a group of schoolboys, chanting in a higher tone, and one of them bearing a copy of the Ḳur-án, or of one of its thirty sections, placed upon a kind of desk formed of palm-sticks, and covered with an embroidered kerchief. Then follows the bier, borne head-foremost. Friends of the deceased relieve one another in the office of carrying it; and casual passengers often take part in this service, which is esteemed highly meritorious. Behind the bier walk the female mourners, composing a numerous group, often more than a dozen; or, if of a wealthy family, they ride. Each of those who belong to the family of the deceased has a strip of cotton stuff or muslin, generally blue, bound round her head, over the head-veil, and carries a handkerchief, usually dyed blue (the colour of mourning), which she sometimes holds over her shoulders, and at other times twirls with both hands over her head or before her face, while she cries and shrieks almost incessantly; and the hired female mourners, accompanying the group, often celebrate the praises of the deceased, though this was forbidden by the Prophet. The funeral procession of a man of wealth is sometimes preceded by several camels, bearing bread and water to give to the poor at the tomb; and closed by the led horses of some of the attendants, and by a buffalo or other animal to be sacrificed at the tomb, where its flesh is distributed to the poor, to atone for some of the minor sins of the deceased.▯

The bier used for conveying the corpse of a boy or a female has a cover of wood, over which a shawl is spread; and at the head is an upright piece of wood: upon the upper part of this, in the case of a boy, is fixed a turban, with several ornaments of female head-dress; and in the case of a female, it is similarly decked, but without the turban.

A short prayer is recited over the dead, either in a mosque or in a place particularly dedicated to this service in or adjacent to the burial-ground. The body is then conveyed, in the same manner as before, to the tomb. This is a hollow, oblong vault, one side of which faces the direction of Mekkeh, generally large enough to contain four or more bodies, and having an oblong monument of stone or brick constructed over it, with a stela at the head and foot. Upon the former of these two stelae (which is often inscribed with a text from the Ḳur-án, and the name of the deceased, with the date of his death), a turban, cap, or other head-dress, is sometimes carved, showing the rank or class of the person or persons buried beneath; and in many cases, a cupola supported by four walls, or by columns, is constructed over the smaller monument. The body is laid on its right side, or inclined by means of a few crude bricks, so that the face is turned towards Mekkeh; and a person is generally employed to dictate to the deceased the answers which he should give when he is examined by the two angels Munkar and Nekeer. If the funeral be that of a person of rank or wealth, the bread and water before mentioned are then distributed to the poor.□

Towards the eve of the first Friday after the funeral, and often early in the morning of the Thursday, the women of the family of the deceased repeat their wailing in the house accompanied by some of their female friends: male friends of the deceased also visit the house shortly before or after sunset; and three or four persons are hired to perform a recitation of the whole of the Ḳur-án. On the following morning, some or all of the members of the deceased’s family, but chiefly the women, visit the tomb; they or their servants carrying palm-branches, and sometimes sweet basil, to lay upon it, and often the visitors take with them some kind of food, as bread, pancakes, sweet cakes of different kinds, or dates, to distribute to the poor on this occasion. They recite portions of the Ḳur-án or employ people to recite it, as has been already mentioned.□ These ceremonies are repeated on the same days of the next two weeks; and again on the eve and morning of the Friday which completes, or next follows, the first period of forty days after the funeral; whence this Friday is called El-Arba´een, or Jum´at el-Arba´een.

It is believed that the soul remains with the body until the expiration of the first night after the burial, when it departs to the place appointed for the abode of good souls until the last day, or to the appointed prisons in which wicked souls await their final doom; but with respect to the state of souls in the interval between death and judgment, there are various opinions which Sale thus states.▯ As to the souls of the good, he says, “1. Some say they stay near the sepulchres; with liberty, however, of going wherever they please; which they confirm from Moḥammad’s manner of saluting them at their graves, and his affirming that the dead heard those salutations as well as the living, though they could not answer. Whence perhaps proceeded the custom of visiting the tombs of relations, so common among the Mohammadans. 2. Others imagine they are with Adam, in the lowest heaven; and also support their opinion by the authority of their prophet, who gave out that in his return from the upper heavens in his pretended night-journey, he saw there the souls of those who were destined to paradise on the right hand of Adam, and those who were condemned to hell on his left. 3. Others fancy the souls of believers remain in the well Zemzem, and those of infidels in a certain well in the province of Haḍramót, called Barahoot:▯ but this opinion is branded as heretical [?]. 4. Others say they stay near the graves for seven days; but that whither they go afterwards is uncertain. 5. Others that they are all in the trumpet, whose sound is to raise the dead. And 6. Others that the souls of the good dwell in the forms of white birds, under the throne of God. As to the condition of the souls of the wicked, the more orthodox held that they are offered by the angels to heaven, from whence being repulsed as stinking and filthy, they are offered to the earth; and, being also refused a place there, are carried down to the seventh earth, and thrown into a dungeon, which they call Sijjeen, under a green rock, or according to a tradition of Moḥammad, under the devil’s jaw, to be there tormented till they are called up to be joined again to their bodies.” But the souls of prophets are believed to be admitted immediately into paradise, and those of martyrs are said to rest in the crops of green birds which eat of the fruits of paradise and drink of its rivers.▯

Of the opinions above mentioned, with respect to the souls of the faithful, I believe the first to be that which is most prevalent. It is generally said that these souls visit their respective graves every Friday; and according to some they return to their bodies on Friday, after the period of the afternoon prayers, and on Saturday and Monday; or on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday; and remain until sunrise.▯ — I believe also, from having heard frequent allusions made to it as a thing not to be doubted, that the opinion respecting the Well of Barahoot commonly prevails in the present day. El-Ḳazweenee says of it, “It is a well *near* Haḍramót; and the Prophet (God bless and save him!) said, ‘In it are the souls of the infidels and hypocrites.’ It is an ´Adite well [*i.e.* ancient, as though made by the old tribe of ´Ad], in a dry desert, and a gloomy valley; and it is related of ´Alee (may God be well pleased with him!), that he said, ‘The most hateful of districts unto God (whose name be exalted!) is the Valley of Barahoot, in which is a well whose water is black and fetid, where the souls of the infidels make their abode.’ El-Asma’ee hath related of a man of Haḍramót that he said, ‘We find near Barahoot an extremely disgusting and fetid smell, and then news is brought to us of the death of a great man of the chiefs of the infidels.’ It is related, also, that a man who passed a night in the Valley of Barahoot, said, ‘I heard all the night [exclamations] of O Roomeh! O Roomeh! and I mentioned this to a learned man, and he told me that it was the name of the angel commissioned to keep guard over the souls of the infidels.’”▯

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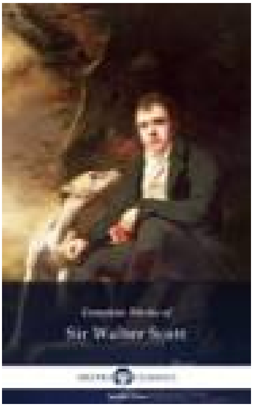

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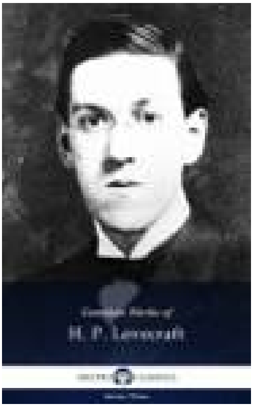

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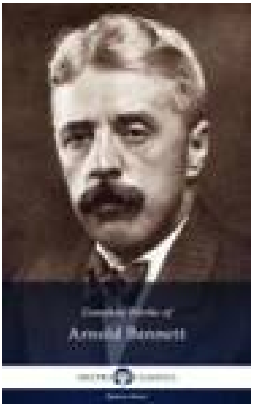

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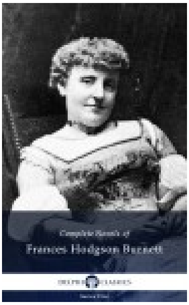
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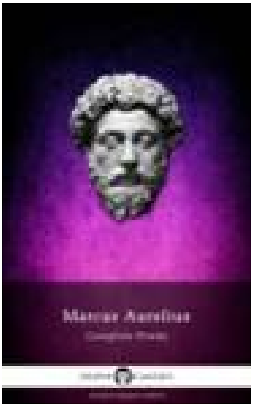

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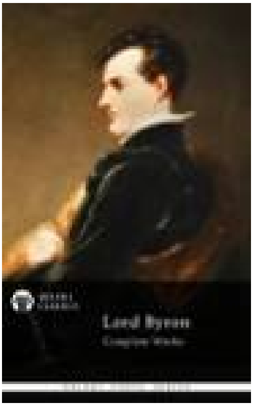

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Sunset in Cairo, the setting of the last tale of ‘One Thousand and One Nights’: ‘Ma’aruf the Cobbler and His Wife Fatimah’